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PC REVIEW

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By now, some of you will be judging for yourselves the miracle that was promised by Windows 95 — while others will be saving up and waiting for a quieter time when sobre assessment can start. Nevertheless, in a month in which we thought the loudest headlines would be hose-pipe bans and the nation honouring its war dead, the biggest spectacle turned out to be Microsoft sponsoring the erstwhile old thunderer — it financed a free edition of The Times. And which of the three events in history raised most eyebrows? Exactly. Who said global technology isn't going to power the axes of the world?

Steve James, Managing Editor

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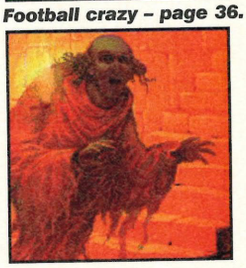

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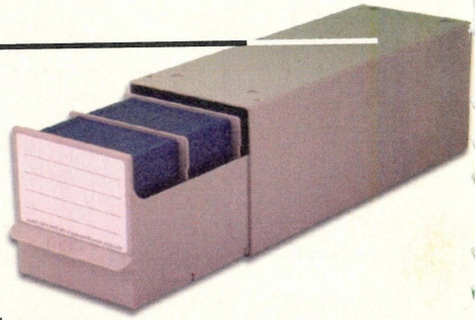

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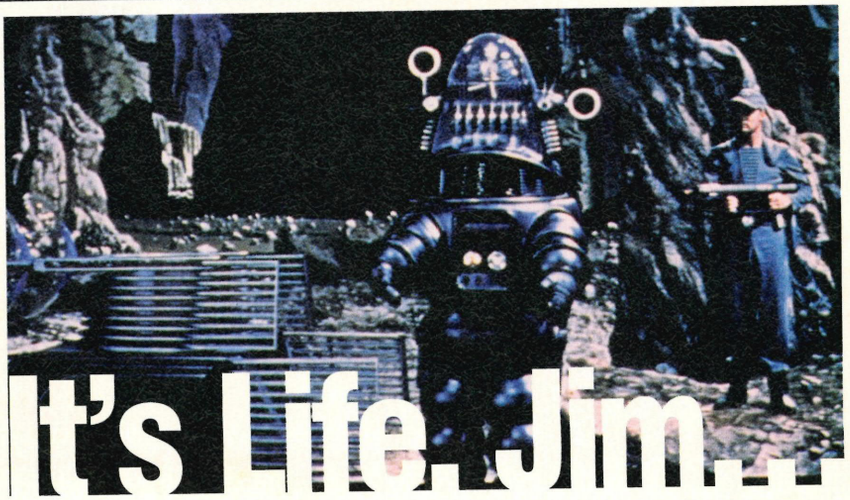

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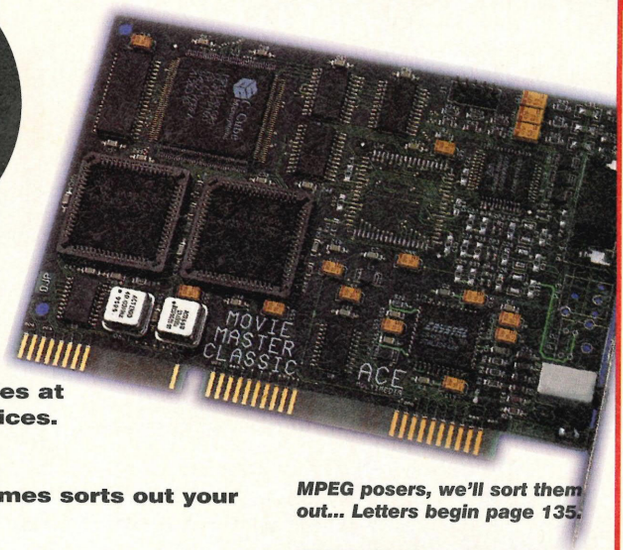

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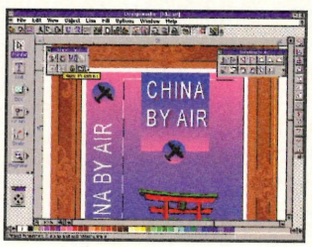

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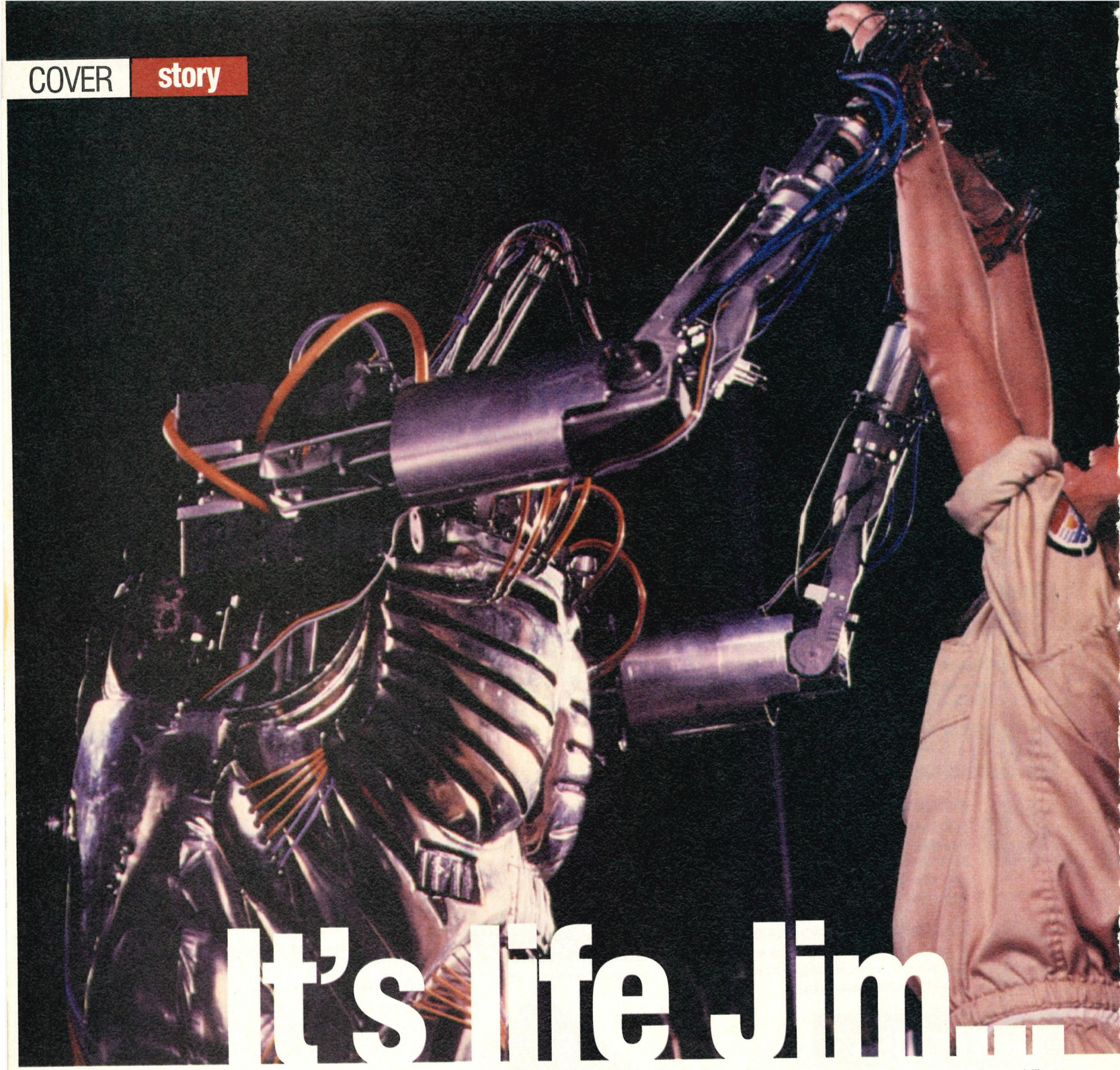


It's life Jim...

It's the Holy Grail of computing science and it promises to change your PC and your life in a big way. Jim Gillies takes up the quest for Artificial Intelligence.

Most PC owners must have had a chuckle at Star Trek in their time. Not at James T Kirk's collection of cranial rugs or the ridiculous sparkly costumes but at the computer. Massive switches and silly blinking lights — we looked at neat, Windows pre-installed PCs and snickered. But the Enterprise had one thing we could only dream about — an intelligent computer that you could talk to — worth putting up with a few silly switches for.

Neural nets

Of course, the only real intelligence we've ever seen is our own. The reason for the success of the human race is our ability to think. We're not that strong, we don't have claws, we can't run very fast but we dominate the planet. The key to our success is our ability to adapt to new situations and solve new problems and the origin of that is intelligence. But new research aims to recreate intelligence artificially with silicon instead of grey matter — thus giving rise to the term Artificial Intelligence or AI. Chris Malcolm, lecturer in AI at Edinburgh University, describes it as "getting a computer to do things which are supposed to require intelligence in human beings. The relationship would be like that of real milk and artificial milk."

Initial research concentrated on getting computers to perform tasks that were supposed to require the highest level of intelligence in humans — playing chess was one focus — with the belief that along the way all the simple stuff like understanding speech would fall into place. It didn't work out quite



like that. It turned out that tasks that seemed simple to humans were practically impossible for a computer. This 'symbolic AI' (see 'What is Artificial Intelligence?') gave way to a different approach in the 1980s. With the failure of symbolic AI it became obvious that researchers would have to look elsewhere and the best place was the only definite source of intelligence known — the human brain.

Cognitive science is a branch of psychology which studies how we think and it has helped to provide the basis of today's AI — neural net computing.

The basic building blocks of the human brain are very similar to those of the processor chip in your PC. Both contain a large number of switches (transistors in the PC, neurons in the brain) arranged in a certain way. The big difference is that while the arrangement of your Intel chip will remain the same until you finally save up enough for that Pentium upgrade, the arrangement of your brain is constantly changing. In the brain, random connections will be made between neurons, if the pattern leads to a successful outcome — the pattern which makes a baby cry leads to success when it is fed — it's strengthened, if not it becomes weaker and another pattern is tried. Although it might seem haphazard, millions of bleary-eyed parents are a living testament to how effective it actually is. With the development of each successful pattern, part of your brain becomes a dedicated computer — from one dedicated to recognising your friends in a crowd to another that knows how your brother bets in poker.

Neural net computing works in the same way, with each network being trained instead of designed. Japanese electronics giant, Fujitsu, is one company pushing hard for AI technology. Its neuro-drummer is a good example of neural nets' capacity to take the PC into a whole new world.

Neuro-Drummer

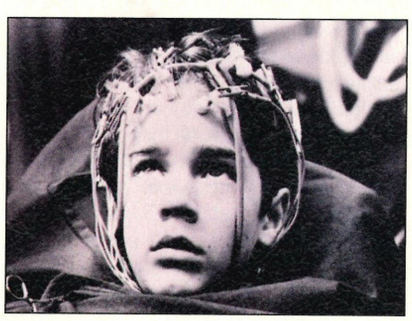
Neuro-drummer is a neural net which controls a drum machine. A human drummer plays a riff to the neuro-drummer and it plays one back. At first the drum riff it plays back bears no relation to what was played to it. The human drummer gives it a mark based on how close it was to a satisfactory reply and plays it another riff. Based on how close it got the last time, the neuro-drummer modifies its reply and the process continues. The important thing is that the computer is not trying to play back exactly what it heard, but to come up with an improvisation that the human drummer will find satisfactory. After about 40 attempts the effect is not unlike two human drummers jamming. Leading US technology author, Howard Rheingold, has compared it to hearing a child learn to talk in the space of ten minutes. This ability of neural nets to recognise patterns suggests some very interesting possibilities including police photo-fits and finger-print recognition, some of which are already being exploited in airline booking systems and information lenses (see "AI in action."). Other very real applications already in use on computer systems today include banks which use neural net programs to search data patterns for suspected fraud, and Stock Exchange dealers who use neural nets to "learn" about market movement patterns and activate the buying and selling of shares intelligently. The mind boggles.

Any colour, so long as it's matt black.

What about the future of AI? Well, HAL (see "AI in the movies") seems like a distant prospect simply because the need is unlikely to justify the huge costs involved. What we are likely to see is intelligent computing in some very everyday objects — so called "ubiquitous computing". To some degree it's already here. Roughly a quarter of Japanese homes incorporate intelligent toilets (which remember how warm, and at what height, you like the toilet seat) and washing machines which work out what you put in and then tailor the wash cycle accordingly. The bad news for the short of cash is that AI household appliances are a tad on the expensive side, but then its not that long ago that you only *knew* someone who had a VCR. The home of the future will almost certainly be as intelligent as the appliances in it. Not only will the VCR, having learned that you enjoy sci-fi, tape Outland for you automatically but the TV will already be on when you get in. Admittedly, you can do something similar with timers but you have to remember to set them. American writer, Don Norman, has taken the idea of ubiquitous computing one step further and suggested the "AI teddy bear". On the day you're born you're given a teddy bear containing an AI computer which begins to learn about you. If you want to eat out, it knows that you prefer a Mexican restaurant within walking distance and it will book the table. Don't worry too much though, the choice of restaurant will still be yours and the AI computer will probably be in a stylish, matt-black box rather than a moth eaten teddy.

Little computer people

Computer games is one area where AI is already making an impact and one of its biggest evangelists is Bullfrog MD, Peter Molyneux. But why does he think it's so important? "It will benefit every game you could care to mention. With the possible exception of Tetris. Games companies are all jumping on the 3D graphics bandwagon, but I think it is AI and not flash graphics which will bring the big advances. The question is, what do we want to do with it?"



◀ ***In D.A.R.Y.L the US military constructs an AI android with the form of a little boy as a weapon.***

Perhaps the most obvious place to apply AI is in providing you with a real opponent to pit yourself against. There's nothing quite so annoying as hordes of slime dripping aliens who just line up in front of your gun, or German flying "Aces" with all the dogfighting skill of you great aunt Myrtle. Good AI will allow the computer to learn from your fighting style and counter it. It should at least "make it less predictable" to quote Jonathan Dean, of Crush, developer of Mortal Coil — one game that relies heavily on AI. It could also spell the end for the difficulty selection screen — the game will be able to gauge your ability and adapt the challenge accordingly, getting tougher as you improve.

The second area is in simulating the behaviour of intelligent creatures either as opponents (perhaps as individual units in a war

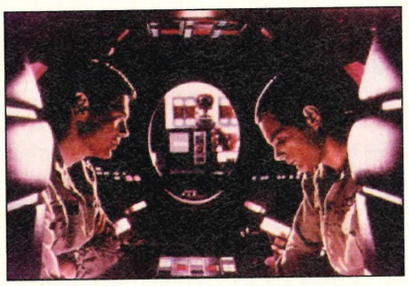
▶ ***See over***



▲ *In Westworld, Yul Brynner is the android gunslinger relentlessly pursuing the tourist who shot him.*

ably reflects the chaos of the people more than their intelligence. The real problem at the moment is raw computing power although we're experimenting a city where you can have a man on the street view and actually interact with people. We expect to have something commercial within about a year."

It maybe a pretty tired thing to say but games are better as a multiplayer experience, for it's more of a challenge to play a truly intelligent opponent. Jonathan Dean describes networked Doom as the most exciting game he's played in years: "it really opened my eyes. In an office the social aspect of networked games is incredible." But every silver lining has its cloud and with multiplayer games that's the other people. There's nothing quite so annoying as being immersed in a game only to have characters disappear because someone wants to watch Baywatch. AI allows the game to learn each player's playing style and mimic them if they leave, an approach



▲ *2001: The ship's crew play chess under the watchful eye of HAL.*

game) or to create a more realistic environment, such as having people try to stop you as you leave the scene of a crime. In Syndicate Wars, the sequel to Syndicate, Bullfrog wanted the game to take place in a 'real' city. "We know we can do the traffic, and the pedestrians, and the people going to and from work", says Molyneux, "but the question is what resources we can put into that without affecting gameplay. When we did Populous, each little person took up 48 Bytes, in Dungeon Keeper (where the object is to direct monsters against an army of heroes invading your Dungeon) it was 1500. But it's not always necessary to have AI to simulate people's behaviour. Joe Scirica, vice-president in charge of development at Maxis, explains that, there was really very little AI in Sim City, or Sim City 2000: "Basically, the behaviour of the city emerges — it's based on a system. It seems intelligent because, although the rules are fixed, there are a very large number of variables and we used good random number seeding (a kind of fuzzy logic) to avoid obvious patterns. It probtaken by Bullfrog's 'behavioural cloning'. "The 'behavioural clone' lives inside the game and samples the way you play. But it's a difficult balance, explains Peter Molyneux: "The real problem is to make sure you don't know that you're playing against a computer, because once you know that you cease to care. I think the key is to have the computer making the kind of mistakes that humans make, but it's still pretty difficult. Even across a network you form a relationship with other people" If the AI is good enough then you could have a situation where there are no human players on-line but even the most ardent enthusiasts can't see it totally replacing playing with other people. Apart from anything else, you can't go for a drink with them afterwards. With the on-line capability of Windows 95 network gaming is set to grow and will probably take AI with it.

Even with the developments so far, AI still has a long way to go. "The technology is huge", says Peter Molyneux, "and I think that up until now there hasn't been a lot of kudos associated with AI, but as graphics accelera-

What is AI?

Artificial intelligence is an attempt to combine the speed and precision of computers with the flexibility of the human brain. Attempts made by computer experts to model human intelligence have focused on three main approaches:

Symbolic AI

Symbolic AI dominated the field from the late 1940s to the late 80s before it lost ground to the flexibility of neural net computing. Symbolic AI is very clever with a small amount of information and forms the basis of Expert systems, such as computerised diagnosis of disease.

Neural Nets

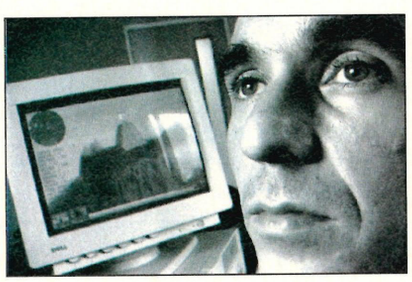
When people talk about AI today they are usually referring to neural nets. Neural net computing is based on the way the neurons in the human brain form patterns to tackle specific tasks. A neural net computer builds a network of transistors which is retained and refined if successful and discarded if not. Initially it is trained by marking it on how close it came to the solution. Once the network is established it can adapt itself to new circumstances and, in theory, begin to learn of its own accord. But fret not, we're not about to be overtaken in the brain-power stakes by some heap of silicon. The best a large parallel computer can handle is 100,000,000 connections per second (cps) while the human brain can handle 100,000,000,000,000,000.

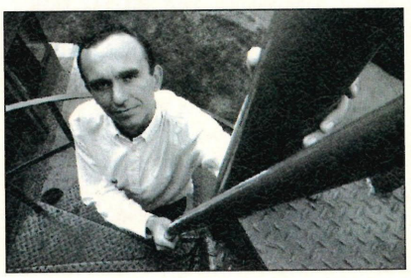
Creature-based AI

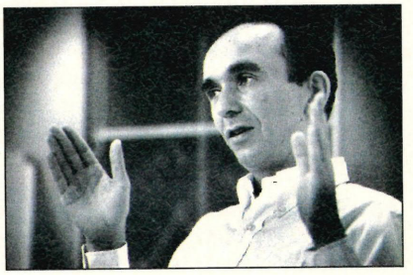
Creature-based AI is a newish extension of neural net computing. It points out that human learning requires the mind to interact with its environment. We learn to link 'pain' and 'hot' when we eat a potato without letting it cool down. Adherents of this approach believe that the development of real AI requires housing the AI computers within 'bodies'.

Footnote: Fuzzy Logic

Neural nets operate on what's known as 'fuzzy logic'. Although the information they receive may be incomplete, a blurring effect in their interpretation routines, enables them to attempt to work out what you wanted to do anyway.







▲ *Bullfrog MD, Peter Molyneux is more passionate about AI than most: "It will benefit every game you could care to mention, with the possible exception of Tetris". Bullfrog's, forthcoming, Dungeon Keeper relies heavily on AI.*

tors become increasingly common there will be processing power to spare." The big question is how intelligent will our games be.

Peter Molyneux seems pretty bullish, "to a great degree, if you control the environment, you control the amount of intelligence required." Joe Scirica is not so sure, "I've been working on baseball recently and even though the variables, such as the ball's speed, spin and angle and the face of the bat are all controlled it's almost impossible to get the computer to hit a good pitch. The processing power of even the most powerful computers just isn't up to it. I think that, when it comes to AI, the technologies become mixed up with the jargon. It's not as much artificial intelligence, as applied intelligence — it's closer to expert systems really."

▶ *See over*

AI in the movies

Since the early 1950s AI has inspired film makers. Here's our entirely partisan top five greatest movies of all time.

Forbidden Planet (1956)

In this reworking of Shakespeare's "The Tempest" AI (in the form of mechanical servant, Robbie) is seen as benign. While the Robot is programmed not to harm humans, the technologically-boosted mind of his master, Dr Mobius, is the real monster.

PCR AI Rating: 5/10 Bright, but not bright enough to recognise that it is being exploited as a servant.

2001 (1968) and 2010 (1984)

In 2001, the Discovery's AI computer, HAL goes mad and kills the crew. When a new mission docks with the ship they find that HAL had a breakdown because he was ordered to lie. The scene in 2001 where he sings "Daisy, Daisy" as he is shutting down is an echo of his early training (see "What is Artificial Intelligence?").

PCR AI Rating: 9/10 A computer which develops a very human disorder: such as madness.

Westworld (1973)

At an exclusive theme park the AI robot attractions break free of their programming and take revenge of the humans who mistreated them. Yul Brynner's pursuit of the tourist who shot him earlier is all the more chilling for the intelligence it displays.

PCR AI Rating: 7/10 The androids are motivated by revenge, proving that machines have feelings too.

Blade Runner (1982)

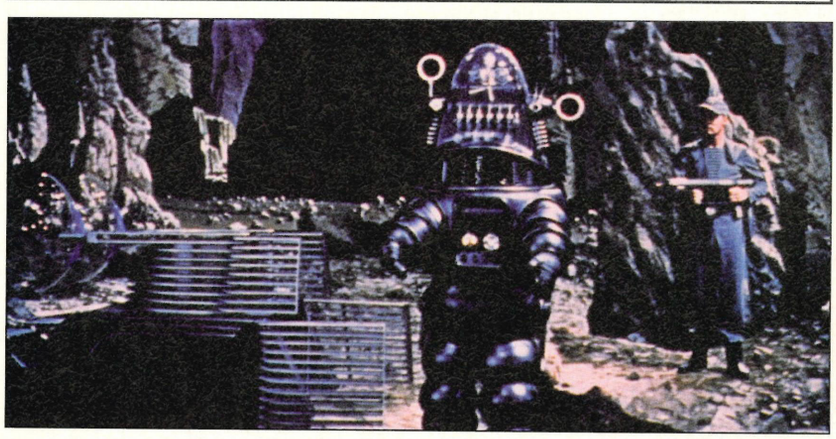
Ridley Scott's film develops some of the themes in Westworld but leaves you in absolutely no doubt about the replicants intelligence. The replicants are every bit as real as the other characters and have a strong desire to live.

PCR AI Rating: 8/10 The replicants are programmed to die after four years, which is when they begin to develop emotions. An angry replicant would be far too hard to handle for any human.

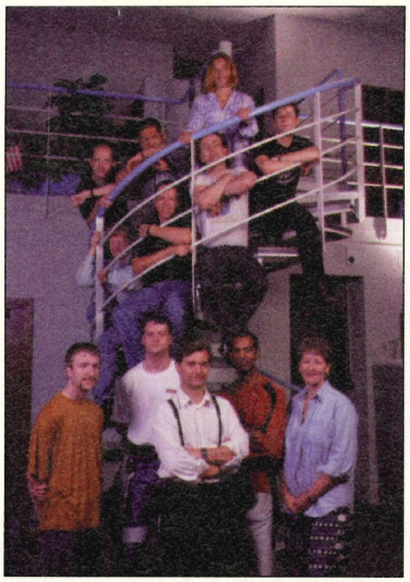
The Terminator (1984) & Terminator 2 (1991)

In the first Terminator film there's no doubt about the danger of artificial intelligence. When the AI Skynet computer, which controls nuclear weapons, begins to develop intelligence its creators panic and try to turn it off. Unfortunately, it has already grown intelligent enough to defend itself. In Terminator 2 the Terminator's are advanced neural net chips.

PCR AI Rating: 6/10 Arnie's original Terminator knows everything about killing, and is completely emotionless. In the sequel he learns the value of human life.



▲ ***Although most contemporary films (Terminator,Bladerunner etc) regard AI as a threat, it was seen as a boon in earlier films such as Forbidden Planet.***



▲ ***Mortal Coil developers, Crush, hope that AI will give the game an edge.***

AI in action.

Neural nets mean that the same hardware can be trained to perform a number of different tasks such as computerised translation. While not up to the standards of the Universal Translator that helped Captain Kirk sweet talk so many green skinned Orion slave girls, SRI Cambridge is currently developing an AI based translation system for booking airline tickets. It will enable customer to order tickets in their own language which it will then translate into English. Where previous attempts floundered on the complexity of human language and a plan to provide a system for the European Parliament was written off as a failure (along with millions of pounds), it looks as though the neural solution will be able to work effectively.

Anyone who's ever had to look for information on the Internet (or even on a very large hard drive) knows that it can be far from easy and painless. Even if you use a search engine you don't always get what you're looking for. AI is being used to build so called "information lenses" which focus in on what you're looking for amongst the mass of information. In the future you may be able type in "find photographs of vicars on Harley Davidsons," and that is what you'll get, even if none of the key words are present.

Although cutting edge AI mainly resides in supercomputers it's rapidly heading towards your desktop.

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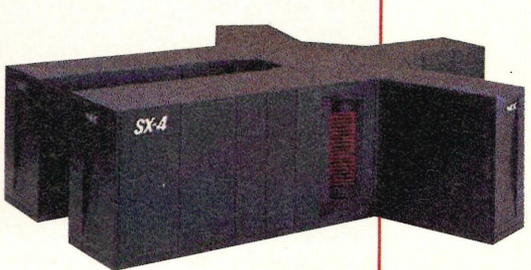
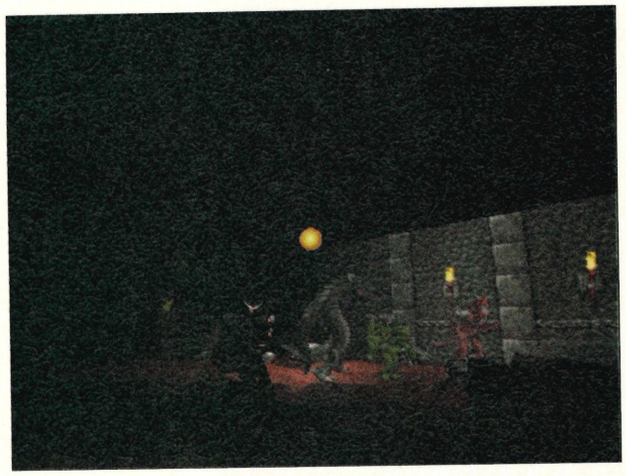






▲ *In Dungeon Keeper, you have to defend your dungeon against a horde of rampaging heroes. Since you react to what they do, they have to be AI.*



AI in computer games

Sim City 2000

Maxis (0171) 490 2333

For the benefit of recently returned alien abductees, Sim City 2000 sees you in the role of mayor doing your best to make Sim City a choice place to live. You can build the infrastructure and decide how much you want to spend on services but the sim citizens constitute the fly in your ointment. Just when everything's nice and the tax dollars are rolling in, they decide to go and have a riot. Although Sim City isn't artificially intelligent, it uses sophisticated random number generation to generate the chaos you see in a real city.

PCR AI rating: 6/10 no real AI, but it does a convincing impression.

FX Fighter

Phillips Media (0181) 689 2126

Like all good beat 'em ups, the key to success in FX Fighter is exploiting the weakness of your opponent. The problem is having an opponent who lets you floor them all the time, with the same move. You end up feeling pretty cheated if you can leg sweep your way to victory after shelling out large amounts of money. In FX Fighter, the onboard AI allows the computer opponents to recognise patterns in your attacks and you'll soon wind up with several tons of angry cyborg on your head.

PCR AI rating: 8/10 a very good example of a game which adapts to your playing style.

Mortal Coil

Virgin (0171) 368 2255

A bit like a cross between Doom, Canon Fodder and UFO: Enemy Unknown, Mortal Coil relies heavily on AI. You lead a team against alien terrorists and the game allows you to jump into any member of the team — while the AI controls the other team members. They can judge if they're outnumbered or outgunned and respond accordingly. The aliens will pursue, evade and even go off to get re-enforcements. Developer Crush hopes the use of AI techniques will mean that the game will provide more of a challenge.

Release: October 1995

PCR AI rating: 7/10 a great idea, but the game hasn't arrived yet so it's impossible to say how well it will work.

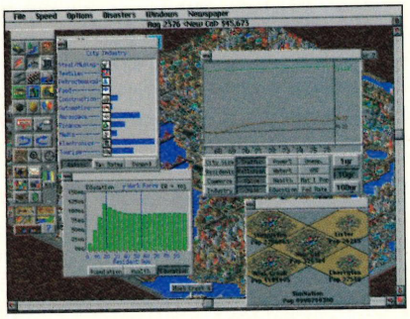
Formula One Grand Prix 2

Microprose (01454) 326 532

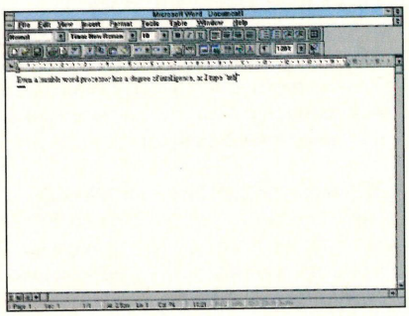
F1GP2 (see preview in Issue 47) has artificially intelligent race track rivals. Each driver (based on real Formula One drivers) has a personality which determines their driving style. Cut off an aggressive driver and you'll never see the chequered flag (yes, Hill and Schumacher are in there). The intention is to give the game more of the race strategy element of real Formula One.

Release: September 1995

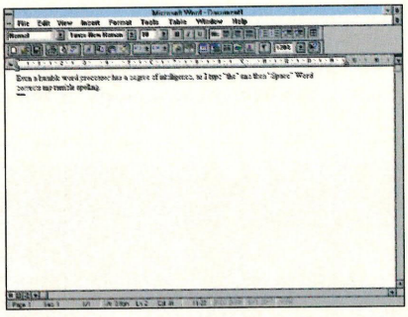
PCR AI rating: 8/10 again, we don't know how well it will work. But we can't wait to shunt Schumacher.



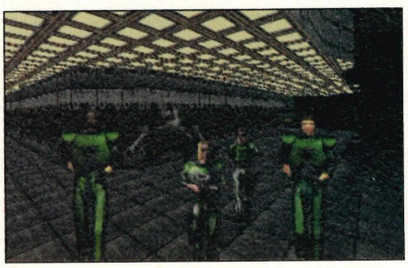
▲ *Although cited as a classic application of AI, Sim City 2000 relies more on mathematical chaos than on true AI.*



▲ *Word for Windows already corrects your typing on the fly (as seen in these screen shots) but it can be annoying when it disagrees with what you know is correct. Not a few people have disabled the feature on their PCs.*



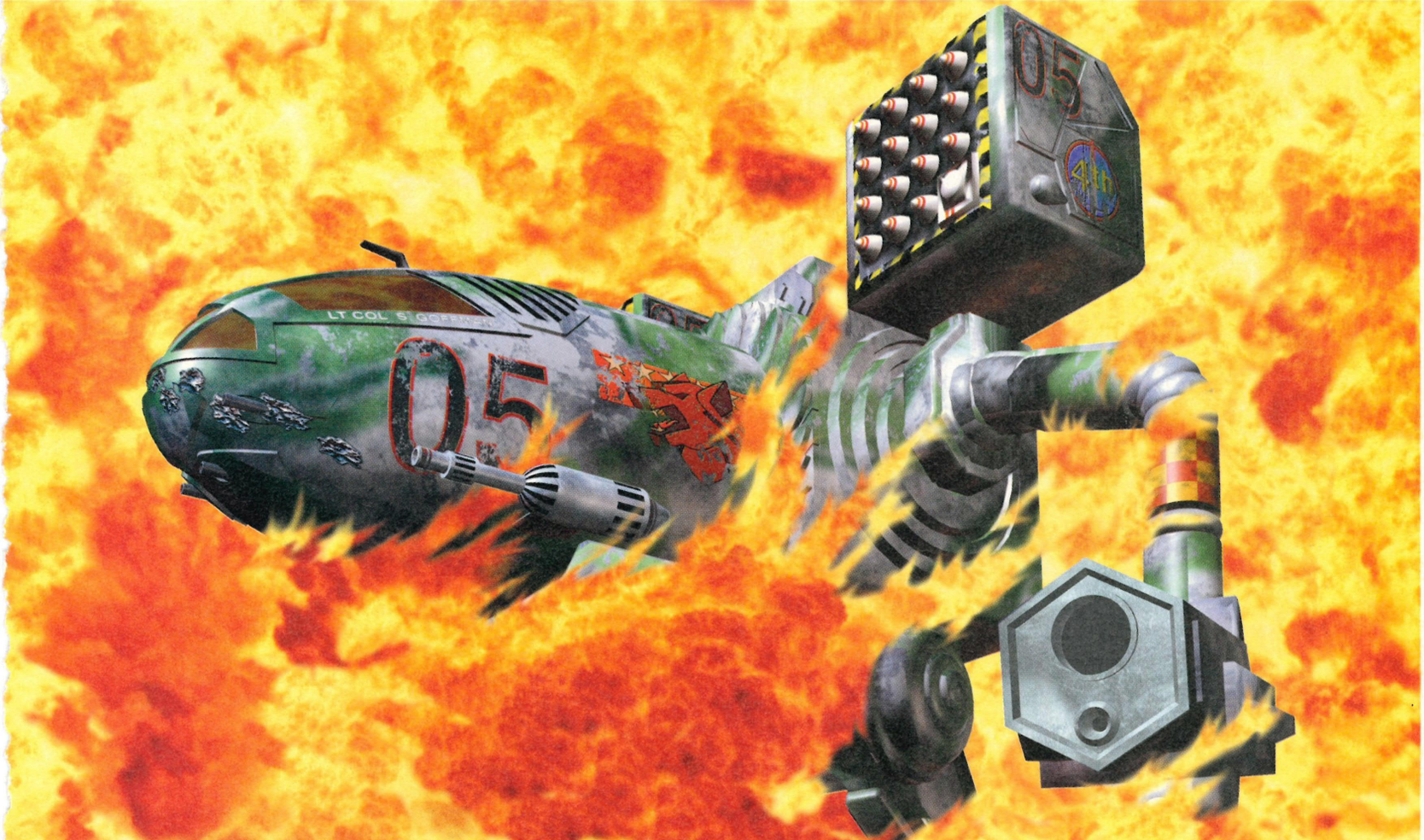




▲ *In Mortal Coil your team are intelligent enough to look after themselves when you send them off on solo missions against the AI alien invaders.*



▲ *Formula 1 Grand Prix 2 uses AI to reproduce the clash of personalities.*



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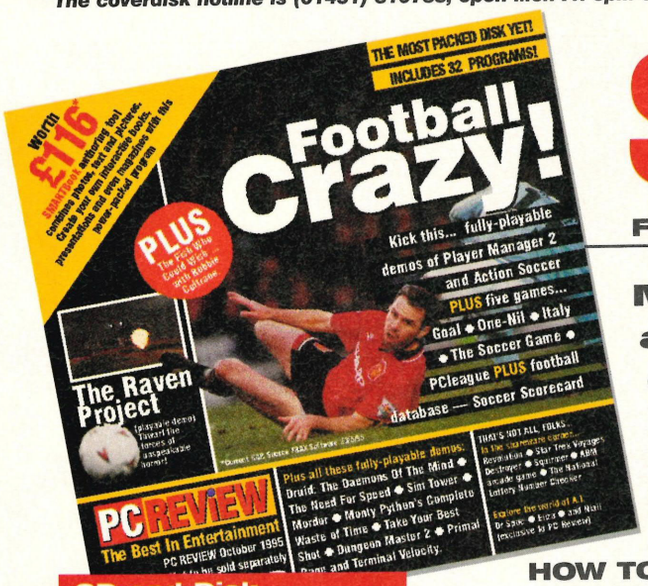


SMARTBook 4

Frax Limited (01224) 621144 • CD **Version 1.0**

Mix photographs, drawings and text on screen to create your own interactive books, magazines and presentations with this full version of SMARTBook.

Worth £116 Current RRP 23/8/95

CD and Disk Loading Instructions

CD Loading

1) The first thing to do is to insert your CD-ROM into the drive and wait for the light on the front of the drive to go out.

2) Next, log on to the CD-ROM drive by typing its drive letter and press Enter.

3) Now type either: pcr — for the title screen or pcr2 — to skip the title screen

4) The screen is laid out in boxes, with each box containing a colour screenshot of the demo and the title of the game stated underneath. Use the 'Page Up' and 'Page Down' keys to move between the screens. To run a program click on the box you want and press the 'Enter' key.

5) There's a text menu version of the main menu — just add a 't' e.g pcr t or pcr2 t. In the text version you again use cursor keys to select the demo you want and press the enter key to install or run it.

Floppy Disk Loading

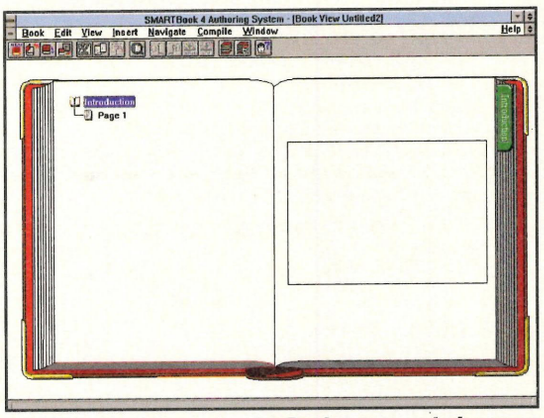
1) Place your disk into the drive and type A: PCR [and then press the Enter key] at the MS-DOS prompt.

2) Now simply follow the on-screen instructions.

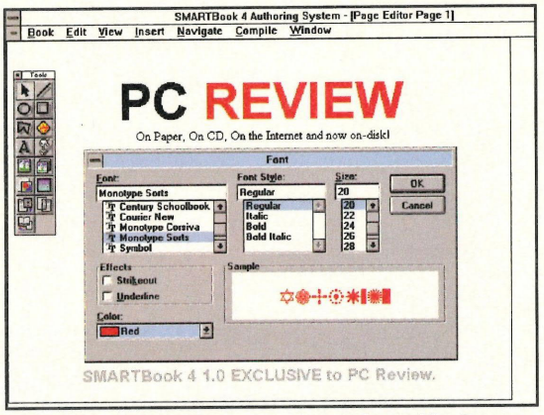
HOW TO USE IT

If you've used a DTP or graphics package you'll have no problem using SMARTBook. When you load SMARTBook and start a new project you'll see a big picture of a book appear on screen. Each page of this book represents a screen in the final production. On each page you can place text, pictures and drawings — just like a normal book or magazine. Around these you can add a variety of 'buttons' giving an interactive element to your books, allowing you to move forwards and backwards through the pages, jump to other pages, ask for information, run other programs or perform a wide range of other functions. For the purposes of our tutorial we're going to create a simple electronic magazine containing pictures, text, buttons, and hot-text. Using this as a model you can create your own on-line interactive magazines, books and presentations. Having created these we'll finally show how you can save them in a form that can be freely distributed on disk or on the Internet without any royalties being paid. To load the program simply install it from the main menu on the CD, then start up Windows (if you haven't already) and double click on the SMARTBook icon. Now follow our 10 part step-by-step tutorial below.

To exit the program simply click on the Book menu and select Quit — couldn't be much simpler could it? Over the next few issues we'll continue the tutorial, showing how to use many of the program's power functions and giving valuable hints and tips to help you make your productions better.



1 Click on New under the Book menu and give your book a name. You'll now see a book picture in a Window revealing the pages. New pages are added from the Insert menu, they're deleted by selecting the page and pressing the Delete key — to change the order simply drag the page names around. Double click on the Page one reference on the left hand side to edit the page, and it's now time to add the first text.



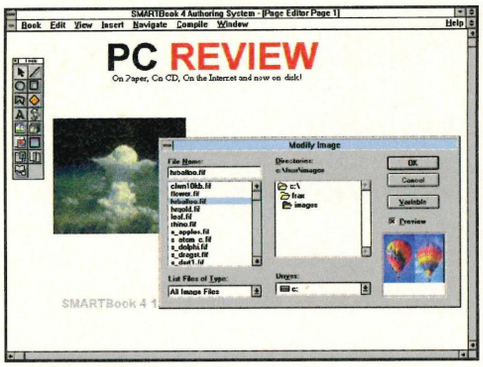
2 The screen changes to show a large blank area — our page and an icon toolbar. As we want to enter text go straight to the 'A' icon and then drag a box out in the main window, you can now type into this. To change the text font, colour or size highlight the text and press the right mouse button and pick Select Font from the menu that pops up. Very nice but a bit dull, it needs some pictures.

BEFORE YOU START: SORT OUT THOSE NASTY MEMORY PROBLEMS

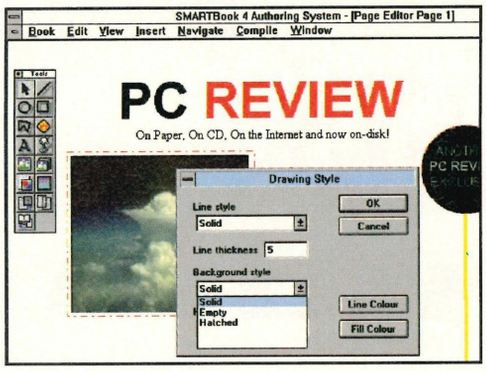
PC's are funny things, for instance a memory problem can look like a disc problem, so we recommend that you configure your memory before you run this month's disc. To see how much memory you have type MEM at the DOS prompt. If the figure beside the line 'largest executable program size' is less than 550K your system is not set up correctly. The easiest way to reconfigure your memory is to use the Memmaker program. From the DOS prompt type MEMMAKER. The introduction screen will now appear, press the ENTER key. On the next screen select the CUSTOM SETUP option by pressing the SPACEBAR. On the next page make sure the answer to the option 'Do you wish to use any programs that need expanded memory' is 'No' and press the ENTER key. On the next page there are six options and these should be answered as follows:

Option	Answer
1. Specify which drivers and TSR's to include in optimisation?	No
2. Scan the upper memory aggressively?	Yes
3. Optimise upper memory for use with Windows?	No
4. Use monochrome region (B000 - B7FF) for running programs? (unless you have a mono monitor)	Yes
5. Keep current EMM386 memory exclusions and inclusions?	No
6. More extended BIOS data area from conventional to upper memory?	Yes

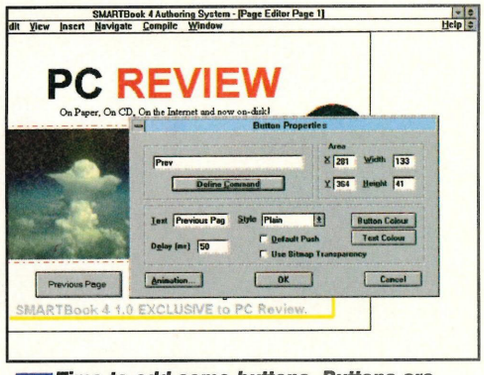
Follow the rest of the on-screen instructions, and Memmaker will reboot your system with your memory correctly configured.



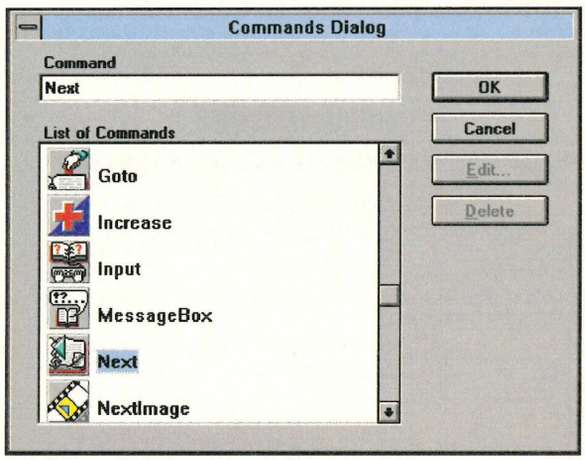
3 *In the toolbar is a small icon of a box with a picture in it (the fourth icon from the bottom on the left). Click on this and drag out a square. You can then select the name of the picture file to go here — we've supplied loads of bitmap clipart in the folder called 'Images' in the Frax directory. Along with bitmaps, simple line drawings can also be added, simply...*



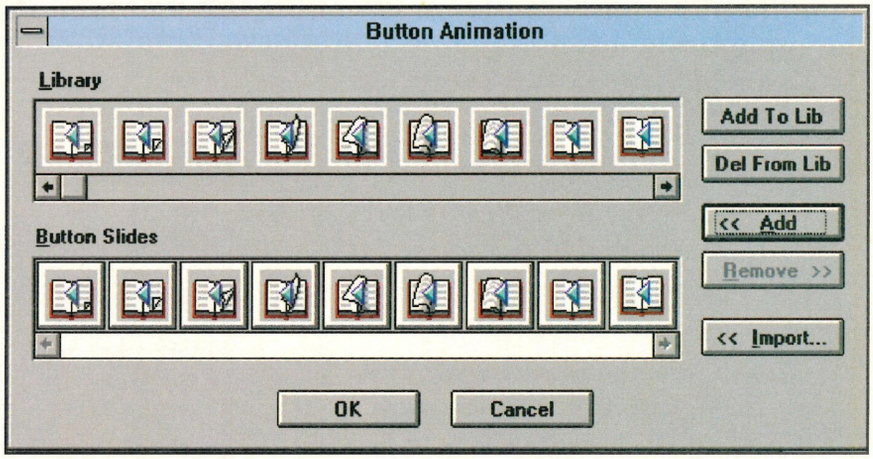
4 *...click on one of the drawing icons in the tool bar and draw with the mouse. I've added a series of lines and boxes to brighten things up and add impact. SMARTBook features DTP style lines, circles, and polygons to name just a few. To edit these select the arrow icon and double click on one of the drawn objects. But what about the interactive bit?*



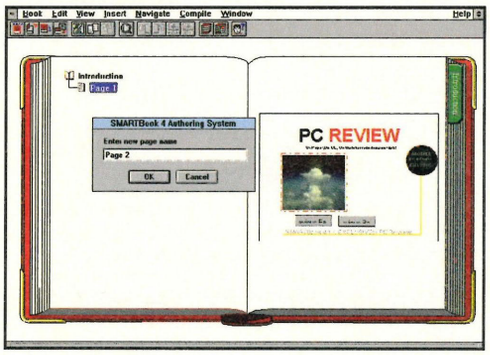
5 *Time to add some buttons. Buttons are areas on screen which when clicked on carry out an instruction: moving to another page and so on. To add a button select the tool with a finger pressing a button and then click where you want it on the page. You then set the look and action of the button from the dialog box that pops up.*



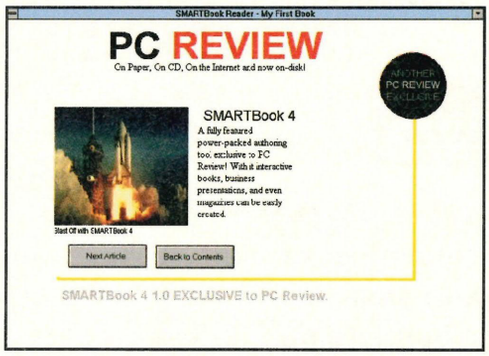
6 *...choose the command that will be performed when the button is pressed. Do this by clicking on the Define Command icon in the dialog box. You'll now see a list of possible commands, scroll down until you see one called 'Next'.*



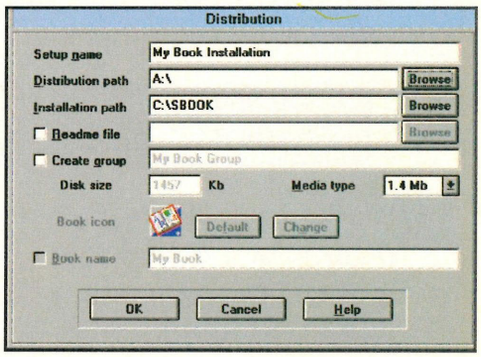
7 *Playing an animation when you click on the icon is easy. To do this click on the Animation button. You'll now see a row of icons, click on one and then select '<< Add'. Now click on some others after it and then finally click on OK. This sequence of icons will be played back when the button is pressed. To change the button text type in the title in the field labelled 'Text'.*



8 *That's one page taken care of. Now click on the last icon in the Toolbox to return to the main book index and click on Insert Page from the Insert menu and select 'After', this will add another page. Add some text, pictures and buttons to it. You'll also need to add a button with the Command 'Exit' somewhere in the book. Once you've added some more pages it's time to try out the production.*



9 *Click on the Compile and Preview which is found under the Compile menu. After a few minutes the screen will clear and you'll see your first page pop up. You can now click on the buttons and test it. If you want to save your production click on Save under the Book menu. Here we can see my mock PC Review disk version magazine, complete with text, buttons, drawing etc.*



10 *Okay you've produced your first book you'll probably want to circulate it and distribute it. Click on the Create Distribution Disks from the Compile menu. This will produce a collection of files that you can copy to floppy disk and give away. See the Readme file in the SMARTBook program group for more details. We'll cover this in greater depth next issue.*

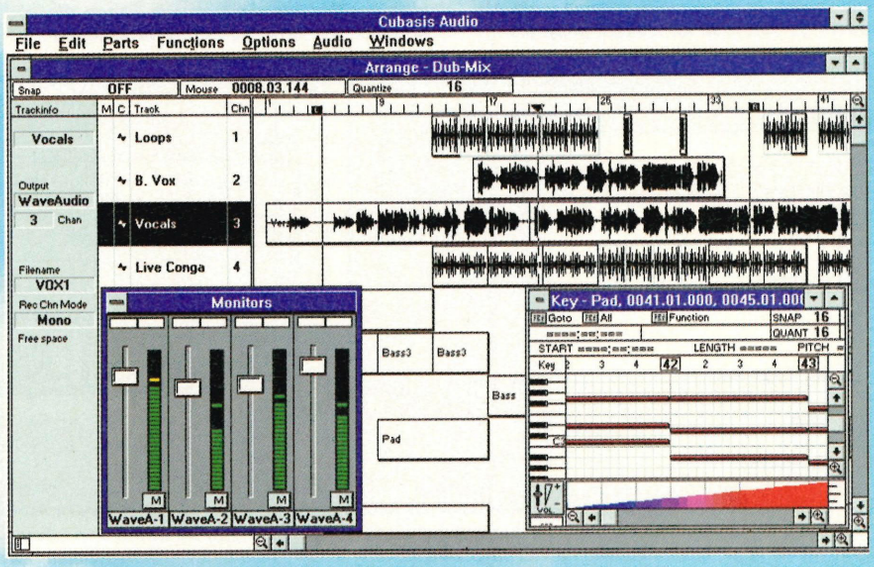
Don't Be Afraid Upgrade!

This application is version 1.0 of SMARTBook 4. Version 1.1 has got loads more exciting tricks up its sleeve, including ● Support for AVI video files ● New macro commands ● Improved page navigation tools ● More background styles — bitmaps etc ● Fast saving and compilation ● Snap to grid option ● Plus lots more. SMARTBook 4 Version 1.1 has an RRP of £316, but as a special offer to PC Review readers using version 1.0 it's available for £216, £100 down from the normal price, from Frax Ltd on (01224) 621144.

CUBASIS audio

The Complete Digital Recording Studio for your Windows PC

Ever wanted to be: a recording artist, DJ, producer, composer, engineer? Well here's your big chance – Cubasis Audio brings the professional world of digital recording to your Windows based computer. Also included with this program is a sample library so you don't need to be a musician nor read music to get started with this exiting new package. So how do you use it? On the main screen you are presented with a graphical interface representing your tracks, complete with a tape transport bar.





Unlike an ordinary tape deck this program records in a digital format – so no loss of quality. Plug in a mic, guitar, to your soundcard and hit the record button – up to 4 stereo tracks of audio. Alongside these, with a MIDI keyboard you can record a further 64 tracks!



You can also bounce, mix, cut, glue, paste both audio & MIDI tracks.

So what do you need? Well apart from the program itself, a PC running Windows, an MME soundcard. The only limit is your imagination.

Cubasis Audio is one of the many packages developed by the famous musical software house of Steinberg.

All this for only

£249.00 r.s.p. inc VAT

Harman Audio
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Rowley Lane Borehamwood
Hertfordshire WD6 5PZ
Tel: 0181 207 5050
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Steinberg

Contact us at http://www.Harman.co.uk

The coverdisk hotline is (01451) 810788, open Mon-Fri 3pm-5pm

Terminal Velocity

US Gold (0121) 606 1800 • CD

One of most incredible 3D shoot 'em ups ever? Don't take our word for it play the first episode (of three) on this month's CD-ROM then make up your own mind.

To run select 'Terminal Velocity' from the CD-ROM's main menu.
Please remember to keep this month's CD-ROM in your drive whenever you play this game.

Forget the plot, it doesn't matter one iota. All you need to know is this game great fun and is about destroying alien tanks, fighters, radar stations and bunkers. Terminal Velocity isn't a doddle — you start with a minimum spec ship and lots of alien baddies shooting at you. However you can collect equipment en route and, like all alien races, they have yet to master the skill of shooting straight! Full instructions and details on how to get your hands on a real copy can be found in the game. So get in your fighter and start flying over those beautifully-textured landscapes, down into those huge valleys, across those snow capped mountains and blast those aliens headlong into kingdom come.



Requires: 486DX, 4Mb RAM, VGA, and a Sound Blaster card.

Druid: Daemons of the mind

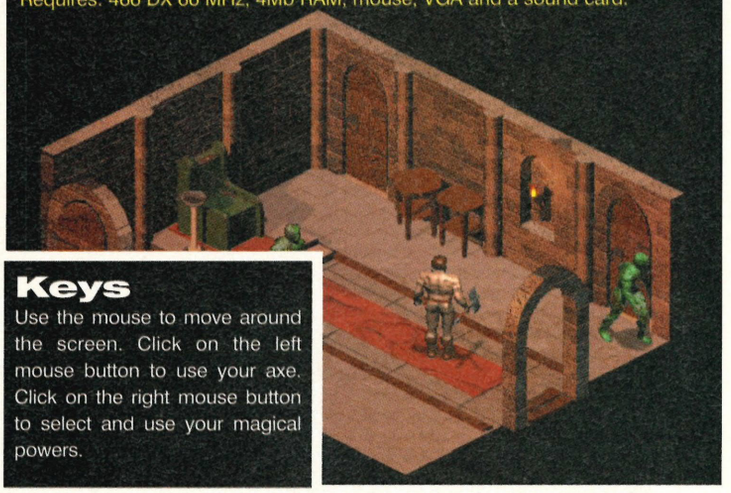
Mindscape/Cryo (01444) 246333 • CD

To run select 'druid' from the CD-ROM's main menu. Please remember to keep this month's CD-ROM in your drive whenever you play this game.

In this game you play Kain, who is on a quest to find his brother in the strange world of the druids. On your adventure you only have your trusty war axe and some magical powers to protect you, and this demo will let you explore three of the islands and their weird inhabitants.

Requires: 466 DX 66 MHz, 4Mb RAM, mouse, VGA and a sound card.





Keys

Use the mouse to move around the screen. Click on the left mouse button to use your axe. Click on the right mouse button to select and use your magical powers.

Monty Python's Complete Waste of Time

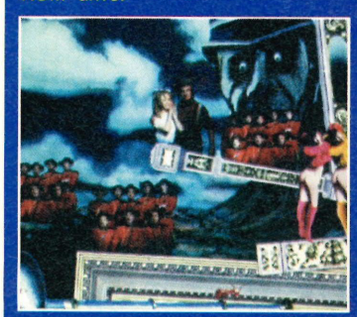
7th Level (01223) 421145 • CD

And now for something completely useless...

To run select Monty Python's Complete Waste of Time from the CD-ROM's main menu. Please keep this month's CD-ROM in your drive whenever you run this demo.

Explore and interact with material both old and new from the Monty Python team. Enjoy popular skits, songs, audio clips, and those naughty bits.

Requires: 486 33 MHz , 8Mb RAM, Windows 3.1, a video card with at least 256 colours, and a double-speed CD-ROM drive.



KEYBOARD FUNCTIONS

The + and - keys provide a convenient means for raising and lowering the volume. Some sound boards do not support volume control, so these keys may not function in all cases.

Use the space bar to abort audio and video sequences.

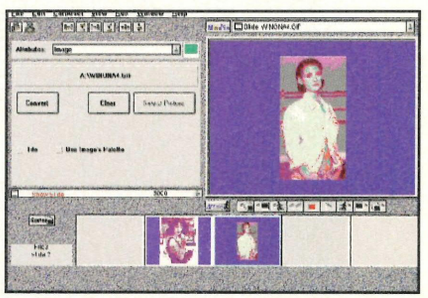
The following key combinations can be used to replace mouse movements for certain activities and functions.

Shift+Esc	Exits Complete Waste of Time Sampler
Shift L	Takes you to the Loonatorium
Ctrl R	Toggles on/off restricted mode

Super Show and Tell

LTS (01386) 792617 • Disk only

To run Super Show and Tell at the DOS prompt type a: pcr (and then press the enter key). Now follow the on screen instructions to install the package.



We're going multimedia mad here at PC Review this month — and you can join in the fun with Super Show and Tell Lite, which allows you to create your own slide shows incorporating text, sound, and both still and animated images.

All the work is done from the main screen: click on the Media to choose which type of object to work on — Text, Image, Sound, Draw or Movie.

You can now load or create an object of the selected type, and manipulate it in the editing window on the top right. You can change different types of settings for that object by choosing a different option from the attributes menu to the left of the editing window.

When you are done editing a slide, just click on the single slide button in the play control tool bar (the second from the left, below the editing window) to go on to the next one. When your presentation is finished, you can view it using the play button (the arrow just to the right of centre on the play control bar).

Super Show and Tell Lite allows you to create and save your presentation, but you cannot export it as a stand-alone file — it can only be seen from within the program. However, if you like Super Show and Tell, then you can upgrade to version 1.1 for just £79, a saving of over £35. Call LTS on (01386) 792617.



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Dungeon Master 2: The Legend Of Skullkeep

Interplay (01235) 821666 • CD

Play this son of the mother of all 3D role playing games!



To run this demo select 'Dungeon Master 2' from the CD-ROM's main menu. Please remember to put this month's CD-ROM in your drive whenever you play this game.

This sequel has enough similarities to please fans of the original, but features sufficient differences to keep everyone interested. The story concerns Zo Link and his attempt to destroy the evil Dragoth and his invading armies. Unless you are a role-play genius you'll probably find this game tough, but it's nonetheless extremely gripping to play.

Requires: 386DX 33MHz, 4Mb RAM, VGA and all major soundcards.

The Need For Speed

Electronic Arts (01753) 549442 • CD

Get up to speed with this racing car demo!

To run select 'Need For Speed' from the CD-ROM's main menu. Please remember to keep this month's CD-ROM in your drive whenever you play this game.

With this great demo you can leap into a gorgeous Dodge Viper and hit that accelerator pedal. Then all you have to do is beat all the other cars as you speed around a side of a mountain. It's fast, it's fun, so if you have that need, then get in the car and experience some speed!

Requires: 486DX 66 MHz, SVGA, double speed CD-ROM and 8Mb RAM.

Keys:

Cursor Up: Accelerate
Cursor Down: Brake
Cursor Left: Steer Left
Cursor Right: Steer Right
A: Shift Gear Up
Z: Shift Gear Down
Space: Handbrake (Tip: remember to take your handbrake off before you start.)
C: Change viewpoint



Sim Tower

Maxis (0171) 490 2333 • CD

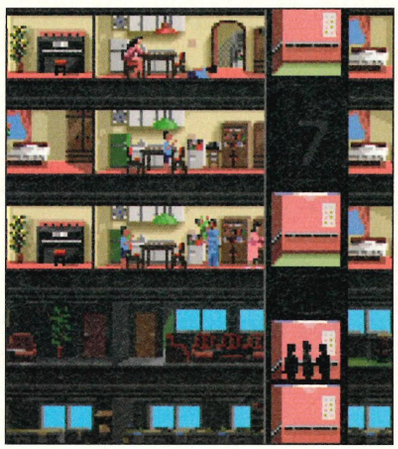
The only way is up with this vertical version of SimCity.

To run select 'Sim Tower' from the CD-ROM's main menu. Please remember to keep this month's CD-ROM in your drive whenever you play this game.

This demo will let you create your very own tower block. Of all the 'sim' games this is the one which most closely resembles the original. Where Sim Tower does differ, however, is in the fact that the people in the game are visible rather than being represented by tiny dots. In Sim Tower you can even zoom in on your residents and observe their habits!

If you have not played a 'sim' game before (and if not, then where have you been?) you'll soon discover why so many people are hooked on them.

Requires: 386PC/33MHz, Windows 3.1, 4Mb, SVGA and a sound card.



The Raven Project

Mindscape/Cryo (01444) 246333 • CD

You'll fly with this fully playable combat demo.

To run select 'Raven' from the CD-ROM's main menu. Please remember to keep this month's CD-ROM in your drive whenever you play this game.

Yes it's that old story set sometime in the future. You know the one, despite the odds, rebel forces fight an evil alien empire. Faced with extinction you've joined the rebel forces in their quest to destroy those nasty aliens. In this demo you take command of a fighter and duel with your opponents. Live action video brings this adventure to life and sets it above similar games. May the raven be with you!

Requires: 486DX 66 MHz, SVGA and 8Mb RAM.

Keys:

Use the cursor keys to control the direction of the fighter and use the space bar to fire.



Personal Computer World
EDITOR'S CHOICE

Best Sound Card
Sound Galaxy WaveRider 32+
April 1995

PCPlus
VALUE FOR MONEY



Feel The Power of Multimedia.

If you want to feel the maximum impact and get the most power out of your multimedia, there's only one way to go. With the high-performance, high-technology products from the force in multimedia excitement, Aztech.

Aztech Sound Boards, A Multimedia Adrenaline Rush.

From starter boards to the top end, we've got a sound board that will work for you. Take our Nova 16 Extra, for example. It gives you the crystal-clear, CD quality 16-bit sound you want, at a price you can afford. And like all Aztech sound cards, it's upgradeable to wave-table synthesis.



If you crave the ultimate in PC sound, check out the new WaveRider 32+ with CD-quality 16-bit, wave-table synthesis sound, 32 simultaneous voice playback capability and 128 instrument and 69 drum sound effects.

Sound Galaxy Multimedia Upgrade Kits, Total Multimedia Excitement.

Aztech has over 10 options to turn your PC into a multimedia excitement machine. Our Voyager multimedia upgrade kit comes loaded with a Nova 16 sound board, a double speed CD-ROM drive and great bundled software like award-winning Outpost, New Grolier Encyclopedia, Indiana Jones and more.

For even higher performance, try the Explorer Personal Multimedia System that comes with a double-speed external CD-ROM system, incredible bundled software and the intense multimedia sound of wave-table synthesis. It's even easy to install–just plug in the cable, install the software and go!

1994 Multimedia World Readers' Choice Finalist

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The coverdisk hotline is (01451) 810788, open Mon-Fri 3pm-5pm

Action Soccer

Ubisoft (0181) 941 4008 • CD

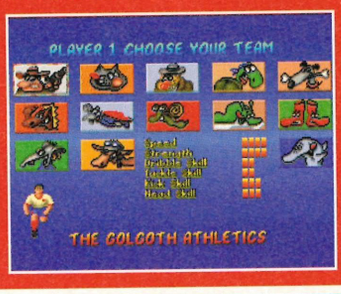
This crazy football game is all action!

To run select 'Action Soccer' from the CD-ROM's main menu. Please keep this month's CD-ROM in your drive whenever you run this demo.

This game has got 15 imaginary teams, commentary from Sky sport's Jonathan Pearce and 3D graphics. What's more there are options to change game duration, team strength and even weather during a match.

Requires: 486DX, 4Mb, VGA and a Sound Blaster card.





Football Crazy!

To run the programs below select the football games icon from this month's CD-ROM main menu. A text sub-menu will appear allowing you to select the one you want. Once you have selected a program follow the on-screen instructions.

Test your business and strategy skills with these five football based games.

Goal CD only

Goal is an international management game where you get the chance to play in every top league in the world.

One-Nil CD/Disk

Take on the top job of manager in both domestic and international leagues.

PCLeague CD/Disk

This domestic league game allows up to five to play against each other.

The Soccer Game CD/Disk

The Soccer Game will really test your nerve as you try to move your team up from pit of division three to the grand highs of the premiership.

Italy CD/Disk

In Italy you take on the ultimate league challenge of Series A.

Play 'em and gain hours of challenge as you strive to get your team to the top of the league.

All Require: 386PC, and 4Mb RAM.

Plus keep track of the score with...

Soccer Scorecard CD/Disk

Soccer Scorecard allows you to manage information relating to league results. It also provides facilities for managing pool coupon selections, and offers the chance of a sneaky peak at the most likely results. Sadly, however, the program does not include a crystal ball!

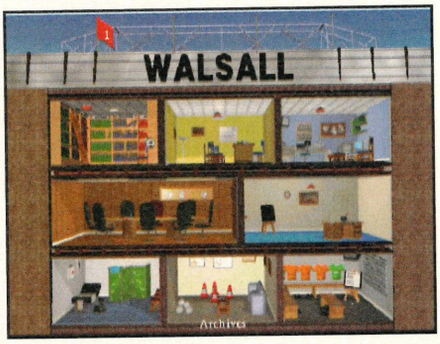
Requires: 386PC, 4Mb RAM, and Windows 3.1

Player Manager 2

Anco (01322) 292513 • CD

Lead your team to those glory days both on and off the pitch in this playable demo.

To run this game select 'Player Manager 2' from the CD-ROM's main menu. After the game has installed type SET-UP to configure your sound card. The settings will be printed at the bottom of the set-up screen. To quit set-up select option 5. Then type PM2 to play the game.



In Player Manager 2 you can either go through the game in just a managerial role or you can choose to play yourself. The only way to the top in this game is by assembling the best squad, employing brilliant tactics and having plenty of money in the bank.

The club's office complex is the main interface with different rooms for different tasks. Your office is the nerve centre of the management part of the game. Here you can choose your squad, look at individual players and check out the transfer market. If you want to win you will soon find yourself visiting all the rooms to find out every scrap of information.

Prior to the match you must pick your team and decide on any transfers you want to make. When it's match day you can watch on the sidelines or if you have a joystick take your place on the field.



Requires: DOS 6 or above, 4 Mb RAM and 550K of base memory, Sound Blaster or Gravis Ultra Sound or compatible. If you want to play in matches you will need a joystick.

Player Manager 2 Controls

Main Controls

Mouse: Use the left mouse button to select an item.

Use the right mouse button to quit out of a menu level (e.g. go back to the previous level).

Some menus have a DONE icon in the bottom right corner. In these cases select DONE to quit that menu.

Sound: Use the following keys to switch the sound ON and OFF at any time.

Background Music: M **Menu Sound Effects:** S **Commentary:** C

Game controls

You must have a joystick in order to play in a game

Shooting: press button A

Passing: you must trap the ball before you can pass. Press button A before you touch the ball. The ball is then trapped. Move the joystick in the direction you wish to pass and then release button A.

Tacking: If the opposition has the ball press button A to do a sliding tackle.

Throw ins: Press button A and move the joystick in the direction you wish to throw and release the fire button.

Corners and set piece free kicks: These are computer controlled. The more you practice in coaching the better they are.

RULES OF THE GAME

The Boot Room

The boot room is where you have to go to before you play a match. Once you have selected this room you cannot go back to any other room until the match has been played.

Squad (Entry: Shirts): Your match squad is shown giving you the opportunity to change it.

Team Talk (Entry: Easel) Your squad is shown on the pitch. You can give each player a maximum of two instructions. To do this, click on the instruction and then on the player to be used.

To play a game click on the pitch and you will move to the match day screen.

Match Day

The two teams are shown along with the referee.

You have four choices

Play You can play on the pitch provided you have selected yourself to play. If you get injured, sent off or substituted the game will revert to watch mode.

Watch You watch the game while implementing substitutions and changing tactics.

Predict The result is predicted.

Fast scanner The game is played at high speed.

Selecting one of the above options will take you to the next screen

The Toss Click on the coin for it to flip. If you win the toss you can select Up or Down pitch.

Shareware Corner

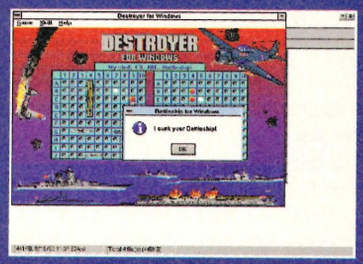
To run this month's Shareware select the program from the CD-ROM's main menu using your cursor keys and then press the Enter key. Please keep this month's CD-ROM in your drive whenever you run these programs even if you copy them to your hard disk.

ABM Command: Your mission is to protect the innocent civilians in the six cities in your sector from a maniacal dictator. You do this by launching your own nuclear ABMs to fly into the path of the incoming missiles and detonate, destroying everything within the nuclear burst. The missiles come in waves and get faster and more numerous as the game progresses. After a few waves, SmartBombs enter the fray. These can detect the nuclear bursts and hover or dodge around them, and some of them can fly through nuclear bursts for short periods. Occasionally, you will see Multiple, Independently-targeted, Re-entry Vehicles (MIRVs). These are special warheads which look like a single unit until they are triggered, causing them to split into several warheads, all aimed at different cities! The game is over when all your cities have been destroyed (even if you have ABM Sites).

Destroyer: No more having to draw those grids with this Shareware version of the Maritime classic. So set sail and sink those battleships.

To play first use the 'setup' option from the 'game' menu. Once you have placed your ships on the grid select 'setup' again and then select 'play' from the 'game' menu.

To quit the game select 'end' from the 'game' menu. To quit the program double click on the grey box in the top left hand corner of the screen. It's simple to play: just point and click on the grid when it is your turn to fire.



▲ *All hands to the deck.*

Squirmer: Just when you thought it was safe to step into the garden!

Squirmer brings the classic game centipede to windows. You and your spaceship have been miniaturised by cosmic rays. You land in a dank and pungent mushroom patch. You see a rustling movement beyond. As it comes a little closer, you are horrified to note that a Squirming monster is heading your way.



▲ *Part of the shareware fest.*

Your only hope is to start shooting and keep firing until the bugs stop coming. The problem is, there are about a million times as many bugs in the world as there are people, especially shrunken people like you... So, with nothing else to do at this size, you dive into the fray, hoping to make those bugs wish they hadn't tangled with such an intrepid mushroom-patch warrior.

The National Lottery Number Checker: Check those numbers the easy way with this handy utility for windows which comes courtesy of 1st Dimension, 49 Whilst Drive, Bearskin, Glasgow, Scotland, G61 3QG.

Star Trek Voyages: It's a database Jim, but not as we know it. This program is stuffed full of every fact you could ever want to know about this classic series. There is even a quiz to test how much of a die-hard Trekker you really are.

Revolution: Revolution is Tetris with a clever twist — literally as you can rotate the pieces as they fall. This version features the first four of the nine levels. You can play the game with either the keyboard or the mouse.

Requires: 386PC and Windows 3.1.

Experience A.I. first hand with these programs ...

Wineliza

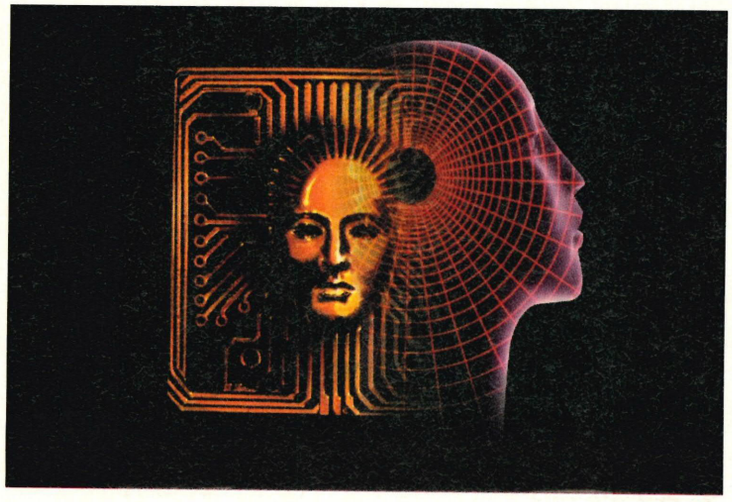
Freeware Benjamin Lin ● CD

The ideal piece of software for the self-developer.

To install this software, select 'AI' from the 'pcr' main menu. It'll install to Windows.

To compliment the Artificial Intelligence feature, we present a shareware slice of one of the first applications of basic AI Eliza, will quite happily chat to you for hours on end and not even ask you to pay for its cinema tickets. All you have to do is strike up a conversation by typing in questions for the computer and answers to its questions. The more you type in the more it learns about you for the next time to decide to have a chat. We have to warn you though that as addictive as it is, never forget that it's no substitute for having real buddies or a spouse to talk to, and no matter how many boxes of chocolates you buy Eliza, it'll never be able to eat them. Mind you, at least it'll never get fat or nag, or ask you to turn the telly over during the football, or...

Requires: 386, 2Mb, Win 3.1 or above



Dr Spoc

Shareware Spoc ● CD/Disk

Feeling estranged? Need advice? Just lie back on the couch and tell me, mother.

To install this software, select 'AI' from the 'pcr' main menu.

The real Dr. Spock (alas dear Trekkers not the infamous alien pointy ears) was a child psychologist who wrote a very famous book about how you should lock children in small cupboards and squeeze alphabetti-spaghetti under the door in order to build character and psycholinguistic programming.

This Dr. Spoc, however, is a simple Artificial Intelligence program that will attempt to psychoanalyse you and discover the negative and positive aspects to your personality. And, heck, it may even tell you that you could be an extra in 'One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest', so don't come running to us if the men in white coats arrive with a big net.

Requires: 286, EGA, Mouse

Niall

Exclusively written for PC Review ● CD/Disk

To install this software, select 'AI' from the 'pcr' main menu.

Niall — standing for Non-Intelligent Language Learner — is a small program that uses a very simple technique to 'acquire' language.

All you need to do is carry on a conversation with the program, saying anything you wish. When you press the <Enter> key, Niall will reply. The more you type in, the more varied Niall's responses will be; if you want a head start, then you can load a previously-prepared 'dictionary' from the file menu. When you've had enough, you can save your dictionary for future use.

If you make a spelling mistake or want to delete a word that you included by mistake, then you can use the Correct Spelling Mistake or Delete Word options in the dictionary menu.

For more details, use the online help.

For more about AI turn to page 6. **All the above require: 486DX 33MHz, 4Mb RAM, and Windows 3.1.**

The coverdisk hotline is (01451) 810788, open Mon-Fri 3pm-5pm

The Fish Who Could Wish

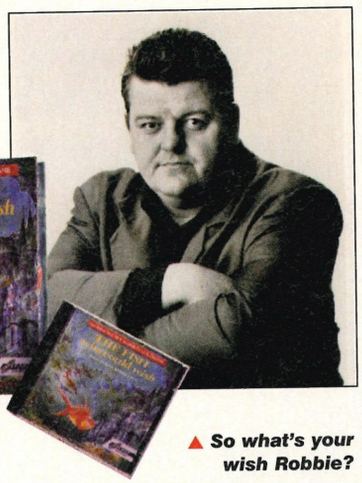
Oxford Uni Press (01865) 267815 • CD

What does Robbie Coltrane's fish wish for? Find out in this superb multimedia storybook.

To run select 'The Fish Who Could Wish' from the CD-ROM's main menu. Ensure that this month's CD-ROM is present in your drive at all times when you run this demo.

It's wild, it's wacky, it's got Robbie Coltrane and it's from Oxford University Press. The Fish Who Could Wish will delight kids of all ages with its entertaining blend of wit and superb animation.

Korky Paul's highly original underwater scenes let you enter an amazing underwater world . The title has been developed by Inner Workings Ltd. The company specialises in quality graphics and animation, their innovation has brought alive this hugely successful storybook.



▲ *So what's your wish Robbie?*

Click on the screen to bring up a fantastic array of effects and watch all the fish's wishes come to life!

Requires: 486PC, SVGA and a mouse.

Capitalism & Star Rangers

Interactive Magic (01276) 684959 • CD

Catch a sneak preview of these two hot games from Interactive.

To run select either 'Capitalism' or 'Star Rangers' from the main menu. Please ensure this month's CD-ROM is in your drive whenever you run these demos.

Capitalism is due out in early October. As the name suggests this is a strategy game where players can experience the thrill of being a millionaire one moment and despair of losing it all the next.

Star Rangers is a space combat game set in the 23rd century. It combines the excitement of a space shoot 'em up with the skill requirements of a strategy game.

Requires: 386PC, and a VGA display.



▲ *With this game you've to trade and lunch for your life.*



▲ *In this demo the 23rd Century is a dangerous place to be.*

Take Your Best Shot

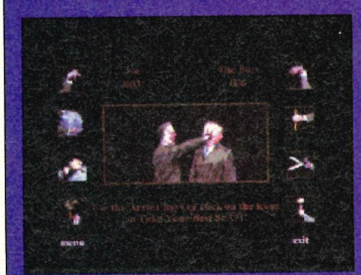
7th Level (01223) 421145 • CD

Go ahead. Let yourself go, let all that aggression and aggravation out, you have our permission, so give the boss your best shot!

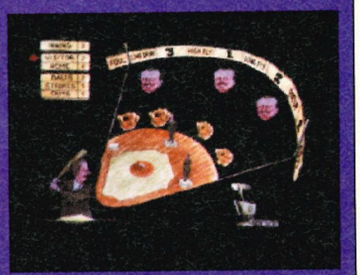
Run this demo by selecting 'Take Your Best Shot' from the CD-ROM's main menu. Inflict abuse on the animated characters by clicking one of the buttons on either side of the screen with your mouse. Please ensure this month's CD-ROM is in your drive at all times when running this demo.

It's zany, warped, outrageous and what's more it's great fun! This demo features the 'stress reliever' part of the game where you get the chance to get back at your boss without hearing from his lawyer. Laugh till you drop as you punch, smash and blast your victim.

Requires: 486PC, 4Mb RAM and a mouse



▲ *This demo lets you beat your stress as well as abuse your boss.*



▲ *Go ahead punk make my breakfast.*

Mordor

CDL (0483) 756813 • CD

There are plenty of dungeons and even a few dragons in this role playing fantasy demo.

To run select 'Mordor' from the CD-ROM's main menu. Please keep this month's CD-ROM in your drive whenever you run this demo.

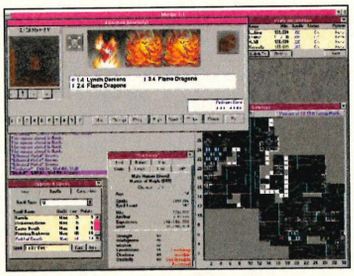
Mordor is a fantasy role play (FRP) game which provides features such as character interaction, multi-character parties, companions, hundreds of items, monsters and magical spells, Mordor gives even the most devoted FRP players a formidable and intriguing world to explore.

Featuring a vast underworld known as the Depths of Dejenol, it is the task of players to create characters from a wide variety of races and to train them in the special skills needed to survive and prosper in the underworld. As you explore the underworld, you will learn about the dark creatures that inhabit the shadows, magical artifacts that can save or enhance a character, and dreadful and magical attacks that can end a character's life.

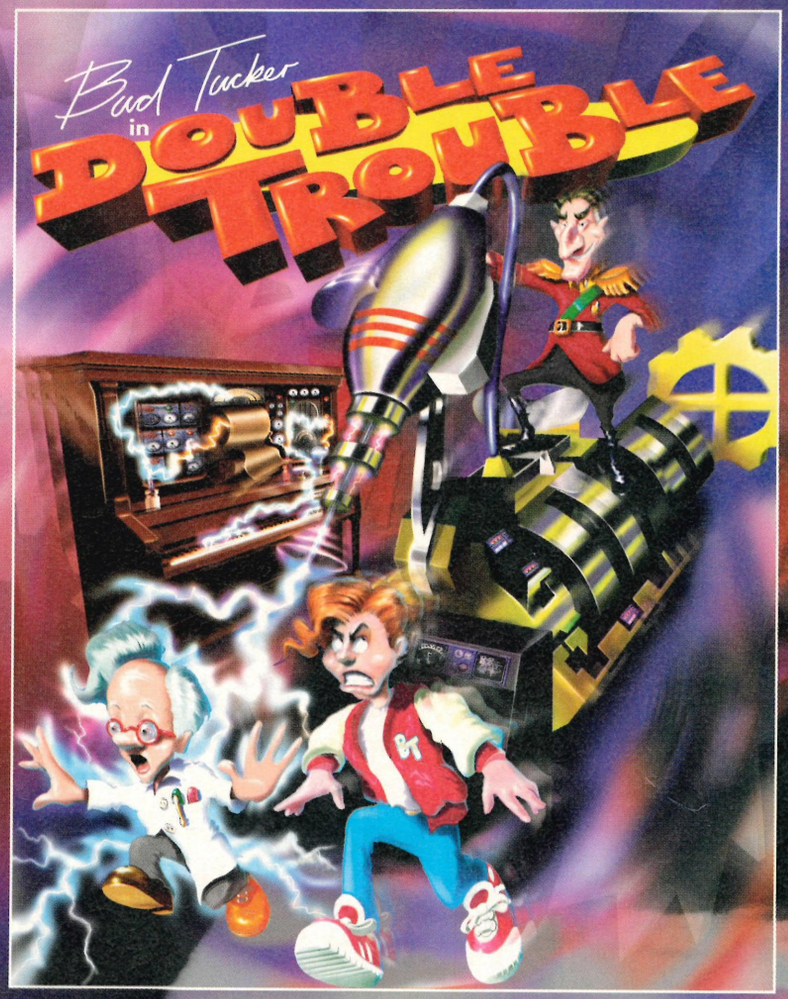
Mordor is not heavy on graphics, rather it focuses on building a rich gaming environment that can last as long as a player wishes.

This demo version provides the complete game, but allows access to only the top three levels of the dungeon Even so, before you play this game, be prepared for staying up hours after you should... be prepared for having a great time... be prepared for Mordor!

Requires: Windows 3.1, 4Mb RAM, 7.5 Mb of disk space and a VGA display.



▲ *The interface to Mordor allows you to fully explore the depths of the underworld and interact with all of the characters.*



"Will Bud Tucker be the Guybrush Threepwood of the '90s?"

PC Home

" Tom and Jerry meets Bottom... [a] point 'n' click adventure with more gags than a roomful of hostages"

PC Power

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EXPRESS MUSIC

Pinball Dreams Deluxe & Pinball Fantasies Deluxe

21st Century (01235) 851533 • CD

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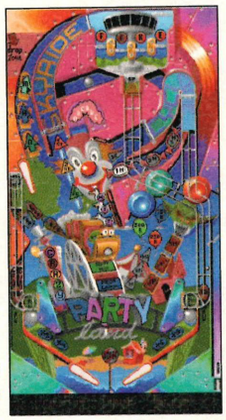

To run select Pinball Dreams or Pinball Fantasies from the CD-ROM's main menu. Ensure CD-ROM is always in the CD-ROM drive every time you play this game.

These demos' give you a taste of these fantastic pinball games. Each demo contains two fully playable tables, so hold back that tilt and keep the ball moving!

Requires: 486PC, VGA, and 4Mb RAM.

Primal Rage

Time Warner (01604) 602800 • CD

Rage against some colossal hybrid-dinosaur behemoths with bad breath, spikes on their tails and razor sharp teeth who are having a really bad day.

To run select Primal Rage from the CD-ROM's main menu. Ensure CD-ROM is always in the CD-ROM drive every time you play this game.

The classic arcade smash Primal Rage is coming to a PC near you soon. In the meantime you can grunt, jump, roar, crouch, punch, and kick your way around this fully playable demo. The live-action monsters fulfil over 60 moves some of these moves. So there is plenty of blood and lots of action. Rage on!

Keys:

Use F1 to start and F10 to change the key settings.

Key	Player 1	Player2
Jump	S	Cursor Up
Left	Z	Cursor Left
Right	C	Cursor Right
Crouch	X	Cursor Down
Hi Quick	U	Home
Hi Fierce	I	Pg Up
Low Quick	N	End
Low Fierce	M	Pg Down





◀ I told him not to go to Ali's Tandoori take-away, but would he listen? Would he 'eck!

CD-ROM/Cover disk help

The PC Review cover disks and CD-ROM discs are rigorously checked and scanned for all known viruses at each stage of production. However, cover disks and cover CDs are used at the reader's own risk. PC Review can therefore accept no responsibility for damage to either data or hardware caused by the use of our disks or CD-ROMs. If circumstances dictate that we are unable to supply the stated program, we will endeavour to provide alternative software. Sorry, but PC Review will not be held responsible for content changes.

Help! My CD-ROM/Cover disk isn't working. . .

If only some of the programs on the disc crash or will not load then you probably have a memory problem, in this case read the 'Before you start: sort out those nasty memory problems' section on page 12 of this very issue. If you are still completely stuck after that then ring our cover disc hotline on (01451) 810788, between 3.00 pm and 5.00 pm weekdays.

Help! My CD-ROM/Cover disk is damaged...

Out of the thousands of cover disks and CD-ROM discs we duplicate every month, a very small number may get damaged during transit. If you think your cover disk or CD-ROM disc may be faulty, we'll replace it. Just pop the cover disk or CD-ROM disc in a jiffy bag with a suitably sized, self-addressed envelope and postage to the value of 28p (55p from overseas) and the form below (filled in), and send the package to the following address: DiskXpress, Unit 7, Willow Court, Bourton Industrial Park, Bourton-on-the-water, Gloucestershire GL54 2HQ.

Please DO NOT send the cover disk or CD-ROM disc back to the PC Review editorial office — we don't hold stocks of spares.

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The cover disk/CD-ROM disc (delete as applicable) on my copy of PC Review was damaged. Please send me a replacement — I enclose return postage to the value of 28p (55p overseas) and the original disk/disc.

NEWS

Concerns over Windows 95... Three quarters of PC users use pirated software... Microsoft drops software prices... and win videos of top movie Blown Away.

Windows 95 cracks begin to show



Just one week after the official launch of Windows 95, the scale of the problems with the upgrade are beginning to emerge.

Microsoft has admitted to PC Review that there are very significant numbers of applications that have shown problems when running under Windows 95. "There are about 200 applications and programs with problems," commented Microsoft's UK spokesperson. It has also turned out that floppy disk users are to get a cut-down version of Microsoft's new operating system compared with CD users, despite paying the same amount.

Microsoft's spokesperson confirms that an 80-page document exists within Microsoft, which includes problems and incompatibilities with applications. Concern over the scale of the situation was heightened when, just four days before the Windows 95 launch, reports in one national newspaper named several of the most widely used applications as apparently being among those with compatibility problems, including dBase 5 for Windows, Novell WordPerfect, Norton Utilities and Compuserve's Internet dial-up access to the Internet.

Microsoft however attempted to downplay the claims when talking to PC Review, saying the number of problem applications represented just a small number of the total number of applications. "This is one percent of the total number of applications available," pointed out their spokesperson.

Meanwhile discontent is spreading over pricing of MSN access for UK users. MSN is Microsoft's on-line network — access software for which is included as part of the Windows 95 package. UK rates for accessing the MSN now seem likely to be far higher than that for American access. Also, the MSN link allowing users a gateway to the Internet will not be available in Europe until 1996. Yet, in the US, Internet access from MSN has been available from launch.

As if this wasn't enough, yet further discontent among users has been caused by problems when trying to run the operating system on slower PCs.

PC Review is currently testing and evaluating the final version of Windows 95 and will be reporting our findings in full, together with full details of the differences between the floppy and CD versions, in the December issue.

Easy CD upgrade from Sony

Find the idea of messing around with CD-ROM configuration too daunting to contemplate? Then take a look at the new Sony CSD-760MK multimedia upgrade kit, which claims to be particularly easy to install. The cornerstone of this new pack is the installation software, 4X NavigatorSC, which has sophisticated detection routines to work out what exactly is in your machine and thus enable it to install the software accordingly.

The kit also contains everything you need for a full multimedia upgrade: a quad speed Sony CD-ROM drive, 16-bit Sound Blaster compatible sound card, speakers, all the requisite cables and connectors, soundboard utility software and three additional programs, Interplay's Descent: Destination Saturn, Psygnosis' Guilty and Media Maestro, a multimedia presentation creator.

The quad speed CDU-76E CD drive is compatible with VideoCD and Photo CD as well as CD-ROM, and also supports Plug and Play as provided in Windows 95. All this for £323.17, including VAT. *Contact Sony Computer Peripherals on (0181) 760 0500 for further details.*

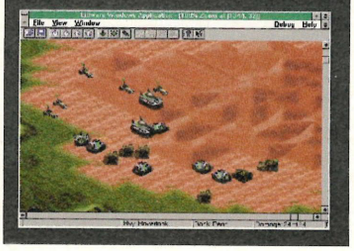


▲ **The CSD-760MK will turn your grey box into a multimedia monster.**

One to watch...

This Means War

MicroProse is gearing up to Windows 95 with this fast-paced, futuristic strategy game. Set in a Mad Max-style world, you have to fight it out with your enemies using your tank forces, but you must also build and look after your cities. It has 41 levels to conquer plus a network/serial mode for two player games. *For more details call MicroProse on (01454) 326532*

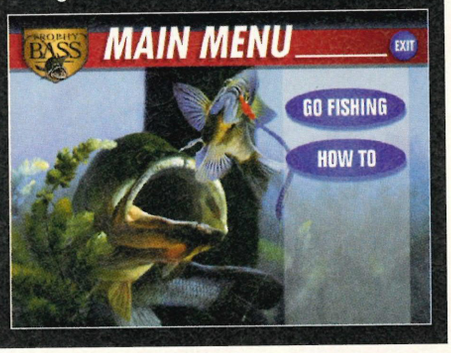


One to watch...

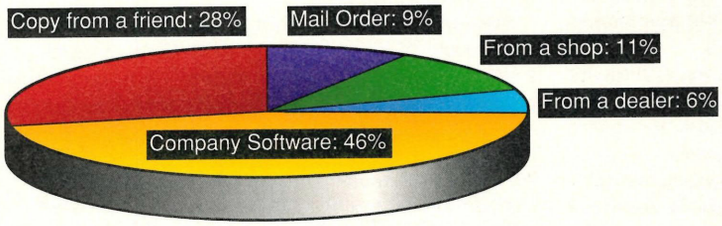
Trophy Bass

The prize for the weirdest game of 1995 goes to Sierra for this fishing simulation. According to Sierra, it "brings the thrill and excitement of fishing on your favourite lake to your living room." The adrenaline-charged game gives you the chance to compete in a fishing contest, and there's a multimedia "how to" section hosted by top bass pros. Well, at least you don't have to keep the maggots warm in your mouth.

For details call Sierra on (01734) 303322



Three out of four users are 'pirates'



It can hardly have been surprised at the results, but FAST's first ever survey into illegal use of software in the home made headlines in the national press when it was revealed that 74% of home computers hold business software obtained by foul means.

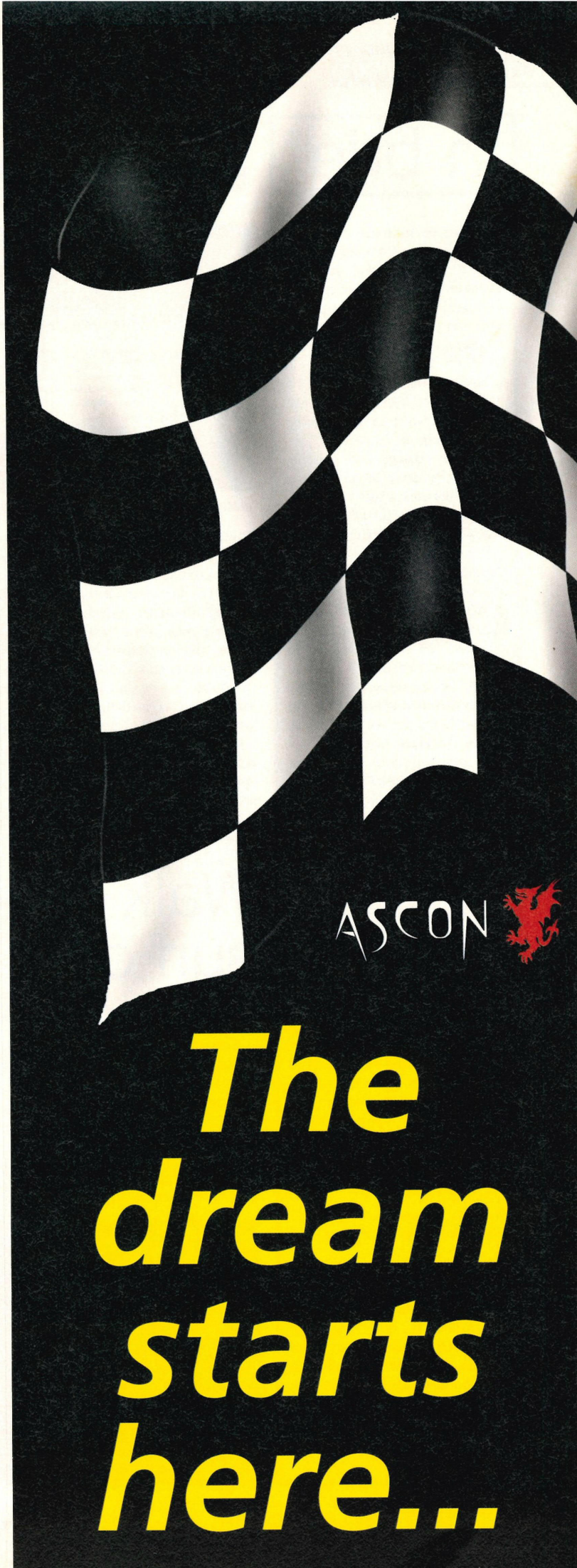
FAST, the Federation Against Software Theft, conducted face-to-face interviews in London and the Home Counties and used 250 responses from home PC users. Nine per cent of respondents bought their software by mail order, 11 per cent from a shop and six per cent from dealers. The rest either copied programs from a friend, or used the master disks from the software installed at the office. While a number of business software licences do allow for use of the programs both at the office and at home, they do not permit simultaneous use by one family member at work and another at home, and thus users need to be careful that they are not breaking the law.

In addition to the basic findings, FAST also quizzed respondents about their motives. Three quarters of those surveyed were aware that copying programs was illegal, but 63% of these said they did so because software was too expensive to buy. Just over a third (37%) of respondents believed it was easier to copy than to buy software and a massive 81% felt there was little or no chance of being caught.

"We needed to understand the dimensions of this problem with this initial survey," says FAST's chief executive Geoff Webster. "Now we want to do a more detailed survey and to look at ways of combating the problem, probably through educating software users."

Windows at the Beeb

Further endorsement for Windows 95 — as if any more were needed — has come from the heart of the establishment. The British Broadcasting Corporation, after pilot-testing the new operating system on 70 linked systems, has decided to standardise its desktop PCs with Windows 95 across the organisation. The first recipients of Windows 95 will be 750 users at BBC Bristol, with other regions upgrading later. According to the BBC's controller of information technology, Roger Kemp, the key reasons for standardising with Windows 95 were to increase efficiency, reduce support costs, and eventually to make extensive use of Windows 95's networking and common e-mail features.



In brief

Windows 95 for free!

If you bought a Compaq PC after August 1st this year, you can upgrade for free to Windows 95. Compaq is providing new buyers with an upgrade coupon for Windows 95. All you need to do is send off the coupon and you should receive your copy of the new operating system around two weeks later. Compaq will, however, levy a charge of £8 plus VAT (ie, £9.40) for postage and packing, but, hey, Windows 95 for £9.40 is still a pretty good offer!

Call Compaq on (0181) 332 3000 to check on details of the upgrade.

Windows 95 on video!

The idea of Windows 95 may be a bit daunting for some, but fear not. VCI Software has released the Windows 95 Video Guide, an instructional video which introduces the principles behind the new system and demonstrates the program's top 25 new features. At £14.99, the video runs for 60 minutes. It's presented by Jennifer Aniston and Matthew Perry from the Channel 4 TV programme Friends, just in case you needed any further incentive to buy.

Further information from VCI on (01923) 255558.

Improve your vocabulary

Those taking a late holiday may be interested in the Vocabulary Builder series of CD-ROMs by HyperGlot, published by Guildsoft. Available in French, Spanish and German editions, Vocabulary Builder programs contain over 2,300 words from basic language to more specialised phrases which can be learned, recorded by you, marked and corrected by native speakers. Each disc contains video footage, colour animations, speech and music. Vocabulary Builder costs £52.82, including VAT.

Contact Guildsoft on (01752) 895100 for further information.

Autosketch price slashed

The price of the entry-level computer-aided design package Autosketch is now just £99. Publisher Autodesk wants to attract as many new users as possible to the product in the hope that they will then upgrade to Autodesk's more sophisticated CAD programs.

Call Autodesk on (01483) 3030322.

Microsoft price cuts





▲ ***Microsoft's new Home Cooking CD, priced at £29.99***

Now's the time to buy if you are building up a library of multimedia reference programs. Microsoft has reduced prices for its leisure-orientated CD-ROM products with immediate effect. The new price points are £29.99, £39.99 and £49.99 — although these are "suggested" prices rather than recommended retail prices. However, Microsoft believes retailers should have no problem hitting these targets.

At a penny under £30, Microsoft will be selling its children's CD-ROMs — such as Dangerous Creatures and Ancient Lands — and some of the Microsoft Home titles, such as the just-launched Home Cooking with Master Chefs.

Many of the mainstream leisure titles, including the highly popular Art Gallery, Cinemania 95 and Flight Simulator, will now be priced at £39.99. Flight Sim add-on and scenery disks will be sold at £19.99.

The one title not included in the cuts is the general encyclopedia program, Encarta 95: that stays at £79, although you may well be able to find it slightly cheaper if you shop around. The new edition, Encarta 96, is due out this autumn — this is the fully localised version, not just with British English spellings, but also with a greater emphasis on British references and European-relevant entries — but Microsoft isn't yet willing to pin a price on it.

However, two other Microsoft Home titles also out in the next couple of months are World of Flight, a history of aviation, and Microsoft Ocean, a companion program to Dangerous Creatures, and these will each come in at £29.99.

It's also worth pointing out that the new prices don't apply to the integrated business package Microsoft Works and the DTP program Microsoft Publisher. These would normally remain at £79.99, but both are currently selling at special promotional prices from now until December — check with your local store or Microsoft on (0345) 002000 for details.

Walk in, log on, surf out

The Internet cafe idea is expanding. A new walk-in Internet centre has opened in Oxford, which offers everything from netsurfing to training to coffee to software for sale. The Oxford centre is equipped with 30 Pentium 90 PCs: you simply walk in, pay your money and log on. Experienced staff are on hand with advice and support if needed and Internet training courses are also available. The air-conditioned centre also includes a coffee bar and software, CD-ROMs and games for sale.

The first Internet Centre is at 193, Cowley Road, Oxford, on the corner of East Avenue, and plans are underway to open similar centres in Leamington this month, Reading (October), Chelmsford (November) and Watford (December).

Further information from the Internet Centre in Oxford on (01865) 295066.

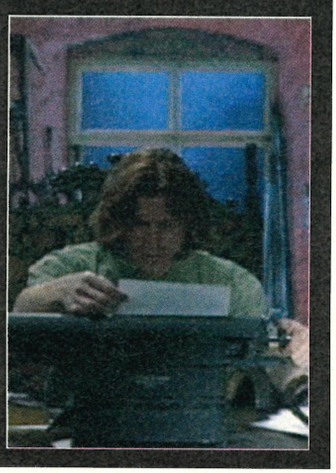


One to watch...

The Beast Within

After solving a series of Voodoo murders, supernatural detective Gabriel Knight is back, and this time he's up against werewolves! The first Gabriel Knight adventure was well received (we rated it 9 in Issue 28), and this goes one stage further by using film footage of real actors and locations. Due out in autumn — on four CD-ROMs.

Call Sierra on (01734) 303322.



Search and destroy

A reliable virus killer program goes a long way to making you feel happier with your PC, and publisher Nest is making strong claims for the excellence of its AVP package. AVP comprises a scanner/disinfector, database editor, resident monitor and a selection of system analysis utilities, so it can be used by the single PC user, and also in a professional or technical environment.

The developer, a part Russian team called Kami Inc, says that AVP will detect and remove over 6,000 known viruses. By using its heuristic detection engine, it is able to detect and remove around 80% of new and unknown viruses, including self-encrypting ones. It will also find and remove viruses inside files compressed with Pkzip and Arj.

Currently available running under DOS, a Windows version and a network version are expected later this year. As a one-off purchase, AVP costs £45, but you can also buy a 12-month licence with upgrades every quarter for £60, or a version with monthly upgrades for £95, prices comparable to established programs such as Dr Solomon's. Contact Nest for further information on (01752) 823923.

Pentium price plummets

Pentium prices just keep coming on down. Now the Burnley-based company MrPC is promising the lowest prices yet for PCs incorporating the P75 processor.

The Omega PC has 8Mb RAM, a 540Mb hard disk, 14" SVGA monitor, and a mouse for just £927.08 (£789 plus VAT). For an extra £50, you can have DOS, OS/2 Warp and Lotus Smartsuite pre-installed on the system, and MrPC will quote for other pre-installation options as well.

Other cheap PC options offered by the firm include a 4Mb, 100MHz DX4-based PC for under £700, including VAT.

Call MrPC on (01282) 777888 for further details.

One to watch...

Peter Rabbit

Mindscape is launching two educational titles based on Beatrix Potter's beautifully drawn animal characters. Peter Rabbit's 123 is designed to make maths fun for young children, whilst The Adventures of Peter Rabbit and Benjamin Bunny is an interactive story with games and puzzles thrown in. Aww, bless.



Call Mindscape on (01444) 246333.

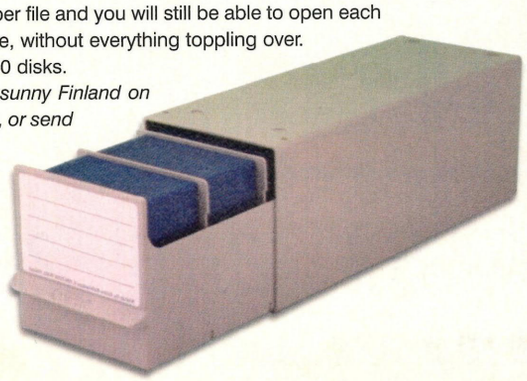
More speed, less money

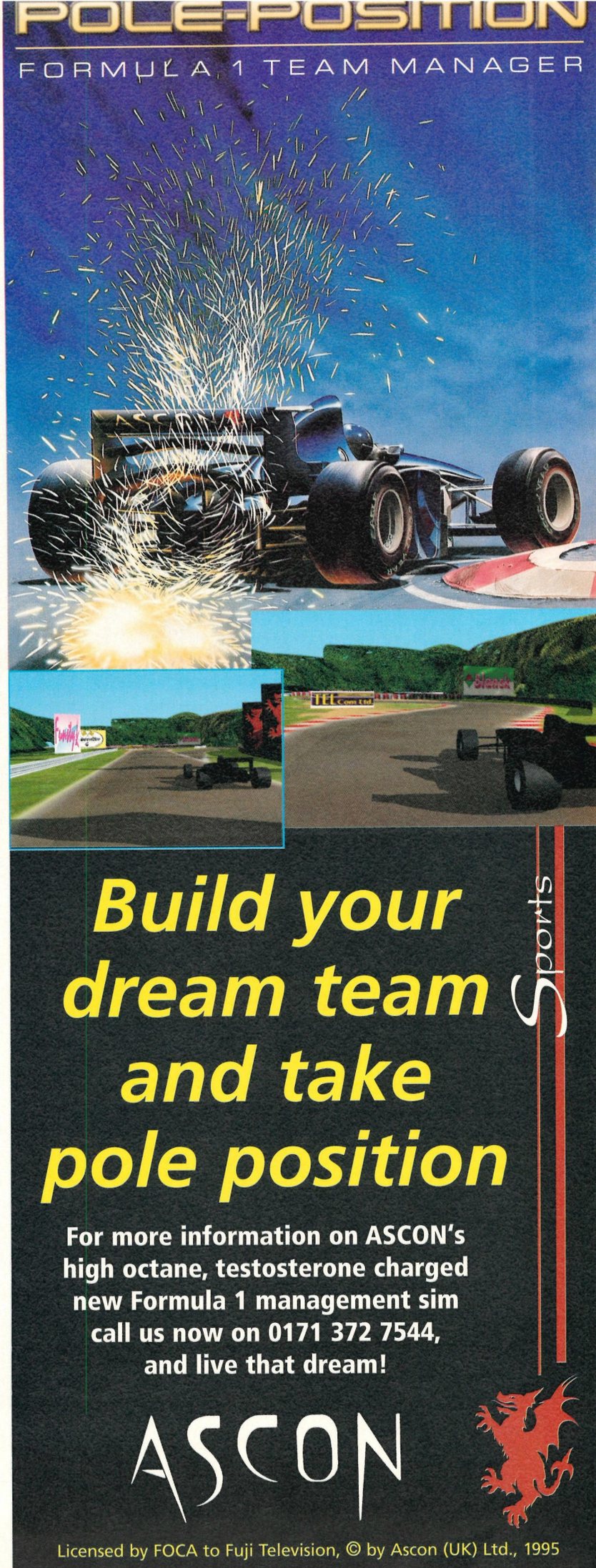
Silica is bundling an NEC quad speed CD-ROM drive with four CD-based software titles for just £158.63, inclusive of VAT. The drive is an internal IDE-based model which is CD-ROM XA compatible and will read Kodak multi-session Photo CDs, and will fit into a free 5.25" drive bay inside the PC. The software supplied in the package is Encarta 95, Microsoft's acclaimed interactive encyclopedia, Lemmings, Civilization and Frontier: Elite 2. The package also contains a 16-page installation and user guide. Call Silica on (0181) 309 1111 for further details.

Easy disk storage

Disk boxes are well-nigh essential to stop your disks from disappearing under a mound of junk on your desk, but they can be a pain to store tidily themselves. However, a Finnish company, WinLab Oy, has managed to come up with a more ergonomic solution. The WL Filer is designed to fit alongside a normal box or lever arch file on a bookshelf. Three WL Filers stacked on top of each other come to the same height as a paper file and you will still be able to open each disk Filer, drawer-style, without everything toppling over. One WL Filer holds 80 disks.

Call WinLab Oy in sunny Finland on (00 358) 39 632 5839, or send a fax on (00 358) 39 538 7363 if you care about your phone bills, for more information.





j mack

computers you can trust

Abacus House, 249-251 Merton Road, Wandsworth SW18 5EB

J-MACK 486 DX33

With Intel processor. Fully expandable system

425 MB HDD
4 MB RAM (Upgradable)
14" SVGA Monitor
102 Key keyboard and Mouse
2 x Serial Ports, 1 x Parallel Port
& 1 Games Port

PCI Bus SVGA Windows Accelerator Card
Supplied with DOS & Windows
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£549.00 plus VAT or £30.00 per month

Multi Media option

Dual Speed CD Rom
16 Bit Stereo Soundcard
Speakers

£699.00 plus VAT

J-MACK 486 DX2/66

With Intel processor. Fully expandable system

540 MB HDD
4 MB RAM (Upgradable)
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102 Key keyboard and Mouse
2 x Serial Ports, 1 x Parallel Port
& 1 Games Port
1 MB Graphics Accelerator Card

Supplied with DOS & Windows
1 year On-Site warranty included

£659.00 plus VAT or £36.00 per month

Multi Media option NEW PCI

Dual Speed CD Rom
16 Bit Stereo Soundcard
Speakers

£859.00 plus VAT

Upgrade option

730 MB HDD
8 MB RAM
15" Monitor

£949.00 plus VAT

J-MACK Pentium System

P.66 Intel (P.75Mhz, P.90Mhz, 100Mhz and 120Mhz

540 MB HDD
8 MB RAM (Upgradable)
14" SVGA Monitor
102 Key keyboard and Mouse
2 x Serial Ports, 1 x Parallel Port
& 1 Games Port
PCI Graphic Card
1 year On-Site warranty included

£979.00 plus VAT or £43.00 per month

Multi Media option NEW PCI

Dual Speed CD Rom
16 Bit Stereo Soundcard
Speakers

£1049.00 plus VAT

Upgrade option

730 MB HDD
16 MB RAM
15" Monitor

£1299.00 plus VAT

J-MACK 486 SX2/50

With Intel processor. Fully expandable system

260 MB HDD
4 MB RAM (Upgradable)
14" SVGA Monitor
102 Key keyboard and Mouse
2 x Serial Ports, 1 x Parallel Port
& 1 Games Port

PCI Bus SVGA Windows Accelerator Card
Supplied with DOS & Windows
1 year On-Site warranty included

£489.00 plus VAT

J-MACK 486 SX40

With Intel processor. Fully expandable system

170 MB HDD
4 MB RAM (Upgradable)
14" Mono Monitor
102 Key keyboard and Mouse
2 x Serial Ports, 1 x Parallel Port
& 1 Games Port

PCI Bus SVGA Windows Accelerator Card
Supplied with DOS & Windows
1 year On-Site warranty included

£399.00 plus VAT

Guarantee

If for any reason you are unhappy with any item J-MACK Ltd have supplied, then please return it to us (at our expense) within 21 days and J-Mack will refund your money.

TELEPHONE: 0181 265 2062

FAX: 0181 874 3821

Trackball madness!

Win £800 worth of trackballs and joysticks!

It's true. We've nearly £800 worth of Alfa trackballs and joysticks to give away. We must be barking mad. But go on. Take advantage of us before the medication takes effect!





GoldenImage may sound like a new Bond film, but it is in fact the company that's given us a load of Alfa trackballs and joysticks (nearly £800 worth to be precise) and to be perfectly honest we don't know what to do with them. Perhaps you'd care to take them off our hands? Of course you would. Because as you well know, they have endless uses — hamster toys, cake mixers, even an input devices for serious apps and serious games. We have five crystal trackballs, five very nice Alfa Thunder joysticks, five even better Alfa Commander joysticks and five twin dual joystick adapters to give away.

How to win

To win one of these fabulous prizes simply answer the questions on the coupon below and send your entries to: Meg's Crystal Balls Compo, PC Review, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU. Make sure they reach us before October 15 1995 if you want to stand a chance of winning.





1. What classic Atari game was best played with a trackball?
Was it
a) Pitfall? ❑
b) Missile Command? ❑
c) Pong? ❑

2. In Viz comic, what is Roger Irrelevant's first name?
Is it
a) Pat? ❑
b) The application of appropriate technology in sub-Saharan Africa in the late 1980's with reference to gender roles? ❑
c) Roger? ❑

Name:.....
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Address:
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❑ *Tick this box if you do not want to receive any further information from companies associated with this competition*

Now send your answers to: Meg's Crystal Balls Compo, PC Review, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.





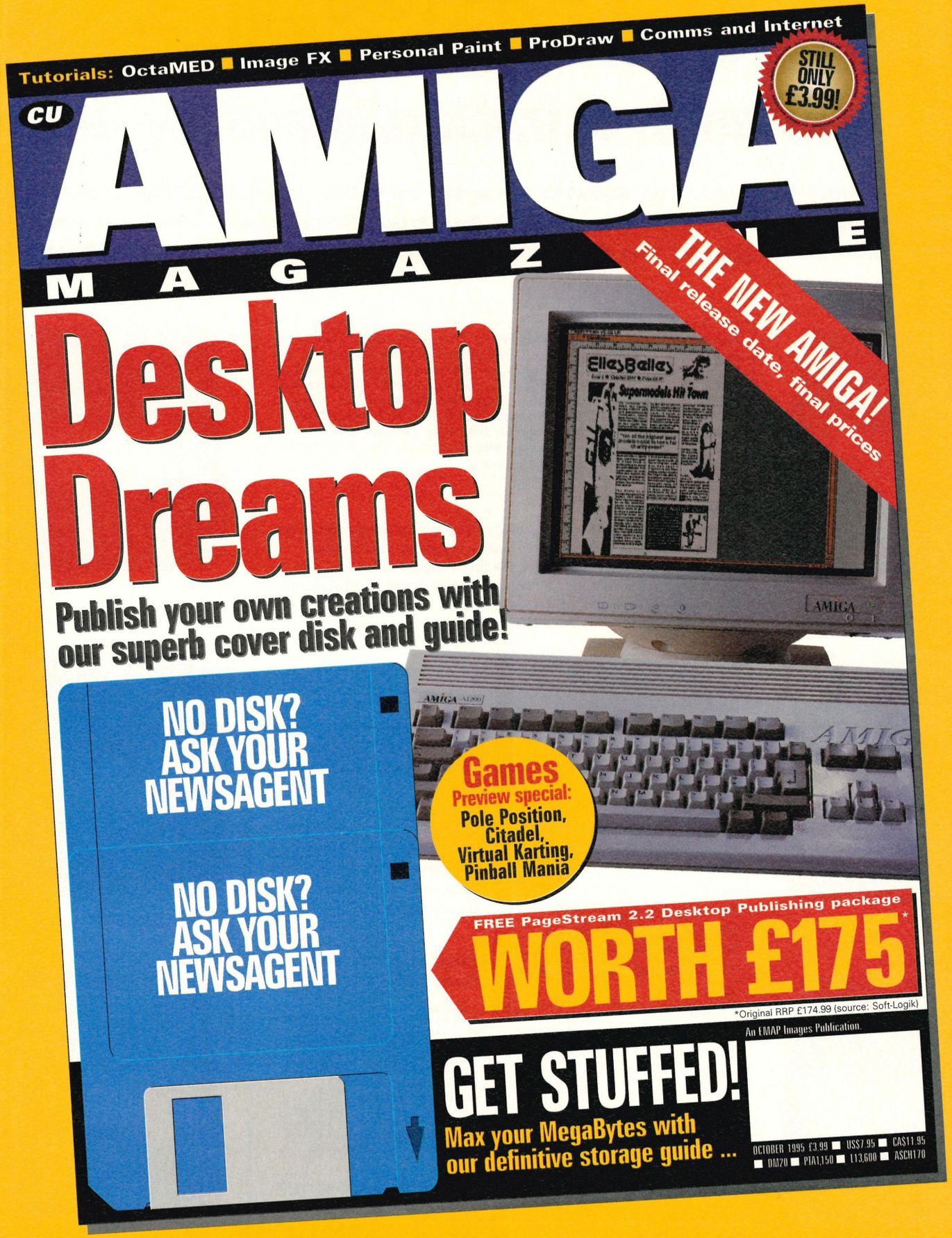
THE RULES BIT

THE BORING BUT NECESSARY BIT

- *Not open to employees of Emap or GoldenImage, minions of Beelzebub or members of the Knights Templar.*
- *The Editor's decision is final (and don't we know it).*
- *No correspondence will be entered into regarding the competition. None. Nada. Rien.*
- *All entries must be in by October 15 1995 and only postal entries will be accepted (so just don't bother asking about any other kind).*

Closing date: October 15, '95.

Latest issue ...



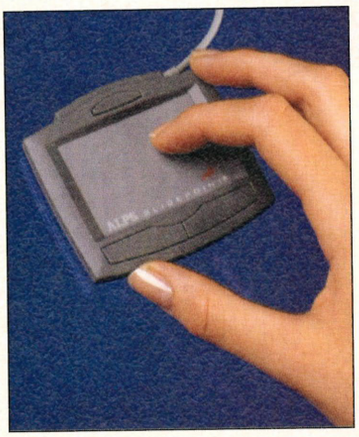
On sale 15th September

Gadget Corner

Natty numbers to check out. This month we look at a new kind of mouse, 3D cameras and karaoke machines.

Alps GlidePoint

Capital Electronic Developments, £69.95, (0181) 573 3681



Crowded desktop? No room to manoeuvre your mouse? The Alps GlidePoint is a small rectangle of touch-sensitive grey plastic which takes the place of a conventional mouse. You simply move your finger over the surface to simulate mouse movement, and there are three buttons although the main surface also acts as a left mouse button when tapped on. Not as precise as a mouse, particularly when it comes to art and drawing packages, but more than adequate for other applications.

3DMagic

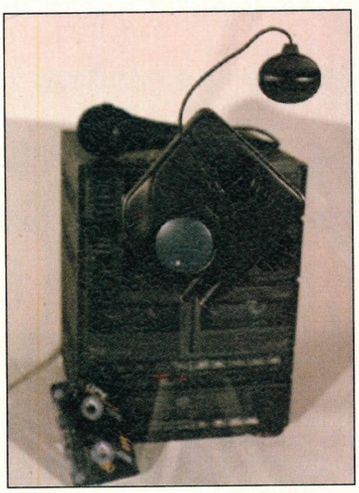
Widescreen Centre 0171 935 2580



Fed up with Stereograms? Then go one better and get a 70's style 3D picture of yourself and your mates. The Widescreen Centre is selling a range of cameras which take pictures using three lenses. When the pictures are developed a stunning three dimensional look complete with depth is created. Best of all you don't need to go cross-eyed, or using special glasses to see the 3D effect. A range of camera's are available, starting with a disposable model priced at £16.95. Development costs £12.60 for 16 shots.

Karry-PA

Hama PVAC are on 01256 708110.



Karaoke has a lot to answer for. Most notably it gives our associate editor, Rik Henderson, an excuse to burst into song at every opportunity — something the rest of the PC Review team, dogs and anyone else within earshot tries to avoid at all costs. Unfortunately with Innovision Concepts tape-deck add-on it looks like we're doomed to suffer for ever more. The Karry-PA works with most tape-decks and adds your voice over the top of the tape being played, with out needing any mixing or extra inputs on the tape deck. At £30 it's great value, and is great for those impromptu Karaoke urges.

PERFECT GENERAL II/COLISSEUM We would like make the following amendments to the review published last month of Perfect General II. The publisher of the game is Mirage, not Mindscape as was stated. Mirage can be contacted on 01260 299909, and the game costs £44.99. In the same issue, the contact number for the bulletin board Colisseum was incorrectly given. The number should have been (0148) 283 7475. Our apologies to those who may have been inconvencied as a result of these mistakes.

Windows 95

The diary of an installation

Things did not go smoothly when PC Review decided to upgrade to Windows 95. Pat Fox talks us through his Windows hell...

START — Friday, 25th August

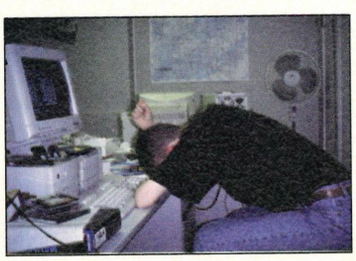
Never ones to fall behind the times, we here at PC Review decided that we just couldn't wait to get in on this Windows 95 thing. And this is our story



4:05pm: After raiding the petty cash for the requisite funds, I am dispatched to the local Dixons. Once there, the lovely Jennifer politely relieves me of 80 pounds and presents me in return with a single, shiny new penny of the realm, and a copy of Windows 95 — on floppy disks, since they have run out of CDs. Darn. I race impatiently back to the office to try it out.

5:45pm: I open the box to find — unlucky for some — 13 disks, could this be an omen? I begin the installation process, after backing up the contents of my hard drive — better safe than sorry, eh?

6:15pm:- Uh-oh. A little box appears, telling me that Windows installation is unable to transfer a file. I try again — no luck. So I try again... and again... this isn't working, so I elect to skip that file and continue with the install. But hold on — the next file won't install either. Or the next one or the next... in all, seven files fail to copy over. Oh dear.



7:05pm:- After completing the installation, I find, to my surprise, that Windows 95 flatly refuses to run — rewarding me with a nice blue screen and an unintelligible error message — very user friendly. I attempt various boot options, but to no avail.

My PC is dead. I give up. I go home.

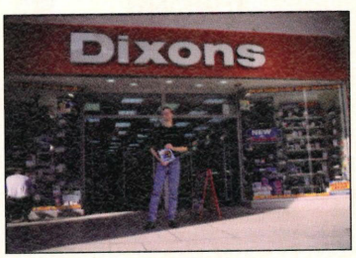
Tuesday, 29th August

One refreshing, long Bank Holiday weekend later, I return to the office, determined to resolve my Windows 95 difficulties.

9:30am: So I call Microsoft, who tell me to go back to Dixons and get another copy. What a great idea. It rains as I trudge back up to Dixons; the staff eye me suspiciously but give me another copy anyway.

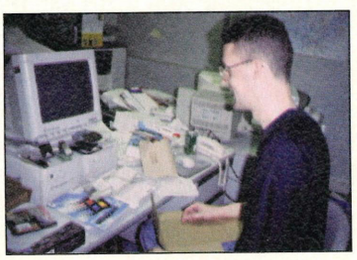
10:30am: Back at the office, I am instructed to extract the required files manually. Half an hour later... and it starts acting up again. No way! Microsoft, help me!

11:30am: After much umming and ahhing, Microsoft's help-person instructs me to return once more to Dixons and request yet another copy. Gee, thanks. At the shop, the staff stare incredulously, but admit that they'd been expecting problems all along — which is possibly why none of their machines have Windows 95 installed...



FINISH — 12:30pm: More fiddling about in DOS and it's all ready. I reboot, holding my breath. It sits there, I fidget. The title screen comes into view, I'm going blue with anticipation. Does it work? It seems to... oh my soul... it works! Words cannot describe my relief. I lie down in a darkened room and think happy thoughts.

But will it last? Can Windows 95 possibly have correctly autodetected my hardware? Will I ever be able to play another game? Find out next month when we put Windows 95 to the test.



Cantona bought by Palace!

Absolutely anything can happen in Championship Manager 2 - the ultimate in football management simulations.

Take charge of your favourite club and lead them to promotion, the Championship, Europe and footballing glory (or to relegation and ruin!).

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Championship MANAGER 2™

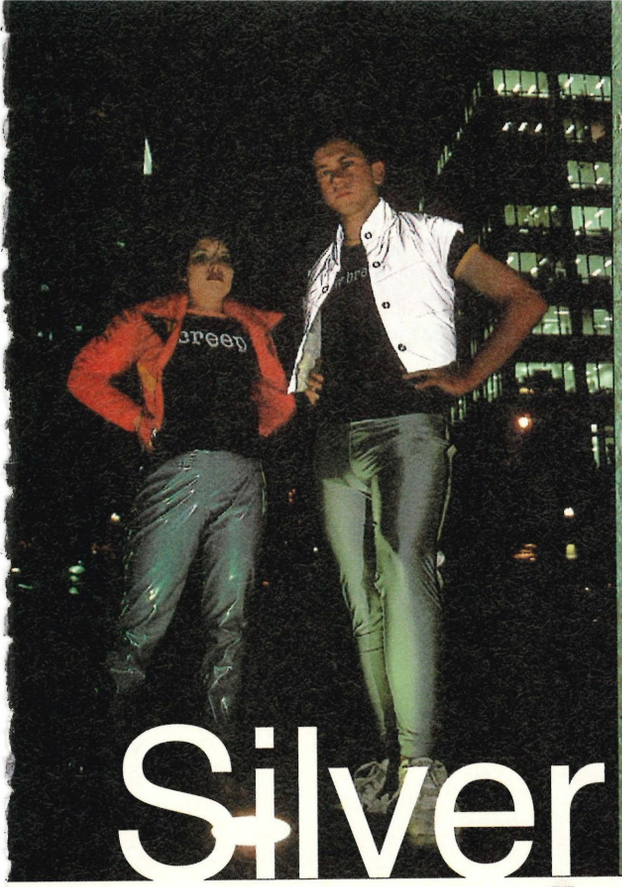
"Thank you God for bringing me Championship Manager 2."

PC REVIEW

"Quite simply the best football management sim ever released."

PC ZONE

The game football fans wanted!







Silver Jean Machine

According to the editors of lifestyle magazines, now that the Internet is in vogue we'll all be wearing digital age cyberfashion. Oh, really? Adam Peters tries on the silver pants...

Cabot Square, a large fountain surrounded by concrete and trees, lying directly in the glassy shadow of Canary Wharf tower, is the spiritual heart of London's Docklands. Where else could you find air conditioning outdoors? Or a bloke in a silver T-shirt and blue mini skirt, standing in the middle of a fountain.

Welcome to PC Review's first fashion photo shoot. You've arrived at the same time as two burly security guards. People have been complaining, apparently. I blame the photographer; the photographer blames the model; the model, just so that everything is fair, blames me. We leg it, making a mental note to use a female model next time.

After a fashion

So what exactly is cyberfashion and what's it got to do with the net? Good question. According to a recent pictorial in GQ, the magazine for clueless yuppie bachelors, it seems to consist of floral kilts worn by sumo wrestlers. Personally, I like to think of cyberfashion in terms of the metal glasses, watches and goggles manufactured for the past eight years by Hi-Tek Designs. This London based company's showroom looks like it could have kitted out the entire cast of the Blade Runner and Mad Max films.

Cyberfashion in a more mainstream sense would be the silver and orange reflective jackets and accessories that many fashion houses are incorporating into their autumn '95 collections. Ashley Heath, fashion editor on style mag The Face, believes clothes of this type are appearing now due to a shift in thinking amongst designers. the fashion industry has recently swung quite dramatically towards futuristic looks, man-made fabrics, even fabrics developed for the space programme."

So does cyberfashion owe anything to cyberspace? Ashley thinks not: "The Internet is a buzzword at the moment, but the fashion world has always tried to pretend it's separate from the real world.

"The Internet and computer culture, along with electronic music, may play some part in the creative side, the blurb and the hype. Really, though, it's just the fashion world becoming less and less style conscious and embracing man-made performance fabrics."

The drowning pool

So how do the clothes fare in real-life situations? It's the day of the return photo shoot, we've got a female model who actually fits into the stuff, and the photographer's bottle of scotch is still unopened. We're in a wine bar snapping the models playing pool. What could possibly go wrong?

Model Daniel hits the cue ball. It trickles about two inches back in the direction it was hit from. He hits it again. It shoots off the table at an angle of 45 degrees, through a window, over a boat and into the twenty metre deep waters of West India Dock (true!). We leg it, making further mental notes.

So are these new clothes genuinely futuristic? Ivan Pope, Britain's leading ▶

Who will wear the silver strides?



▲ *"I'll probably be wearing clothes like that myself next week. No, really. I will. I'd wear stuff like that because I like to take the piss a bit.."*
Terry Walden, Spurs supporter

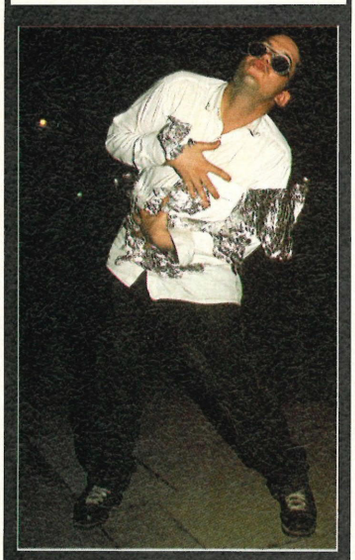


▲ *"If you're going to a club and you get a taxi straight from your front door to the venue, OK, but no-one's going to walk down the street looking like that."*
Laurence Williams Dental technician



▲ *"It's tarted-up cooking foil and the people who are into wearing it are pillocks. They should be shot, the lot of them. End of comment, I've nothing else to add".*
Jeff Zie Producer, EMAP On-line

Cyberfashion on a budget



▲ *What if you can't afford to splash out on any of the silvery designer togs featured on these pages? Don't panic! Just do what we do at PCR and wrap your usual clothes in aluminium foil. It's almost the same.*

internet guru, certainly expects more from cyberwear than is being dished up at the moment.

Silver solar wear

"I'd wear silver clothes if they were silver for a reason," says Ivan, "like if they contained solar panels that I could use to recharge the batteries in my portable computer. Otherwise, cyberfashion is just a typical and really sad attempt to take things that are silver and shiny and try to pass them off as futuristic."

Smash hit?

Even some people within the fashion and pop worlds seem less than enamoured with cyber clothing.

When asked for his opinion, Edward Enninful (fashion editor on i-D magazine) simply shouts "no comment" and slams the phone down.

Mark Frith, editor of top pop fortnightly Smash Hits, is slightly more forthcoming. "It's all a load of rubbish," he says, "and you can quote me on that."

Surfer style

So is cyberwear what the well-dressed internet surfer will be wearing this winter? Ivan Pope thinks not, citing "rad skate wear" as the average net kid's clothing of choice.

Andrew Hatton, the manager of London's Cyber.Station, has yet to see any influx of internet users in silver pants. "We haven't had anyone coming in wearing cyberfashion yet," he laughs, "and no, we don't expect the staff to wear it either."

Aha, but we shall see, shan't we.

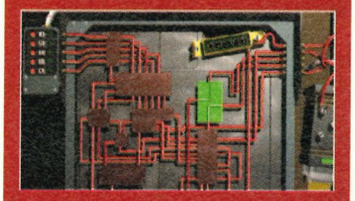
STOCKISTS

RED OR DEAD: (0171 937 3137) grey reflective dress, £105; grey reflective bodywarmer, £141; grey boots, £65; orange anorak, £87; blue plastic trousers, made to order; grey lycra track pants, £80; blue mini skirt, £58; gold satchel bag, £50; clear green handbag, £51. VELDA LAUDER: (0171 287 3830) silver lace-up corset, £105; clear blue plastic jacket, £65. JUDGE DREDD: (0181 540 5545) 'creep' T-shirt and 'law breaker' T-shirt, both £18. DANIEL JAMES: (0171 235 6117) silver T-shirt, £55. BOY: (0171 287 0911) silver trousers by Tiger, £40.



Thanks to Sophie at Red Rooster for the clothes, Collection 2000 for the make up, Bill Faram for the photos, Drummonds and The City Pride (docklands pubs) for their hospitality, and most of all to Daniel Jay and Sara Shimasué for being our supermodels.

Win Blown Away videos!



Remember Blown Away, the explosive movie staring Jeff Bridges and Tommy Lee Jones? Well, Daze Marketing is giving away 20 — yes, 20 — videos to celebrate the release of its Blown Away game. To win a copy of this exciting blockbuster, simply answer the question below and send your answer on a postcard to: Blown Away Compo, PC Review, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London. EC1R 3AU.

QUESTION:

Which famous English actor recently received a big blow to his reputation?

RULES:

1. Employees of Daze Marketing and EMAP may not enter.

2. The editor's decision is final, and no correspondence may be entered into.

3. The winners will be notified by post.

4. Entries will be accepted by post only, and the closing date is October 15th.

GALLUP PC CHARTS

FULL PRICE

Update on the latest best-selling software available for your PC

TM	LM	TITLE	BY	CHANGE
1	(6)	X-Wing Triple Pack	US Gold	▲
2	(1)	Doom II	Virgin	▼
3	(3)	Sim City 2000	Maxis	✳
4	(4)	Ultimate Soccer Manager	Impressions	✳
5	(8)	LucasArts Adventure Pack	US Gold	▲
6	(7)	FIFA International Soccer	Electronic Arts	▲
7	(2)	X-Wing	LucasArts	▼
8	(10)	Premier Manager 3	Gremlin	▲
9	(11)	NASCAR	Virgin	▲
10	—	Terminal Velocity	US Gold	✪
11	(9)	TIE Fighter	LucasArts	▼
12	—	Player Manager 2	Anco	✪
13	(5)	Theme Park	Bullfrog	▼
14	(18)	Fantasy Manager	Anco	▲
15	—	Ultimate Doom	GT	✪
16	—	Comanche Super Pack	US Gold	✪
17	(20)	Discworld	Psygnosis	▲
18	(13)	TFX	Ocean/DID	▼
19	—	European Challenge	Anco	✪
20	—	The Lion King	Virgin	✪

CD-ROM

1	(1)	Star Trek TNG: A Final Unity	MicroProse	✳
2	—	Dungeon Master II	Interplay	✪
3	—	Terminal Velocity	US Gold	✪
4	(3)	IndyCar Racing	Virgin	▼
5	(8)	Dark Forces	LucasArts	▲
6	(5)	Discworld	Psygnosis	▼
7	(6)	Ultimate Doom	GT	▼
8	—	Sim City 2000	Maxis	■
9	—	Across the Rhine	MicroProse	✪
10	—	Flight Simulator v5.1	Microsoft	✪

BUDGET

1	(1)	Magic Boy	Empire	✳
2	(2)	Brian Lara's Cricket	Audiogenic	✳
3	—	Dawn Patrol	Empire	✪
4	(7)	Universal Clip Art	GameTek	▲
5	(3)	Terminal Velocity demo	US Gold	▼
6	(6)	Dune 2	Hit Squad	✳
7	(8)	Easy to Learn Computing	Disc Distribution	▲
8	(4)	Detroit	Impressions	▼
9	—	Doom (MS)	Micro Star	✪
10	—	Cricket 94/95 Data Disk	Audiogenic	✪

KEY: TM = THIS MONTH, LM = LAST MONTH

UP = ▲ DOWN = ▼ NO CHANGE = ✳ NEW ENTRY = ✪ RE-ENTRY = ■

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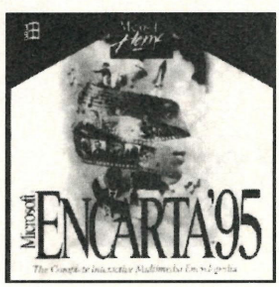

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- *Outwit the computer's artificial intelligence*
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Question: What are Mortal Kombat, Street Fighter and Primal Rage?

Answer: Redundant!

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Eat My Goal!

The new football season is here! And the PC can really help you keep track of it all. Rik Henderson dribbles you up the park and lamps you into the top right hand corner with a look at the impact the PC has had on TV football coverage, the latest and greatest football games, team-related web-sites and all the other uses the PC has on 'Planet Football'...



Anyone who's read Nick Hornby's definitive football biography 'Fever Pitch' will understand exactly what it means to be completely obsessed with football — even if you are an Arsenal fan. I'm a Liverpool fan, which is okay. But I come from London, which is not okay. I've tried growing a curly perm and a moustache, and only managed the latter. I've tried going round just uttering the words "Oh-ay!" and "Calm down", but to no avail, I still get a good duffing up at any London/Liverpool match for being a 'ringer'.

But I don't care, it's the sport I love, and if that means that I'm to be on the receiving end of a good kicking by Brookside extras, then so be it. I'll still be there, shouting my guts out in my 'cockney' cheeky chappy way. That's what football means, that's a rough guide to how obsessive it can be, and that is why there are roughly twelve billion football-based PC products out there (give or take eleven billion, nine hundred and ninety nine million, nine hundred and ninety nine thousand, nine hundred). And all of them, without fail, sell by the bucket-load.

Football games and other extraneous pieces of software, though, are not the be all and end all of how the PC and the beautiful game link

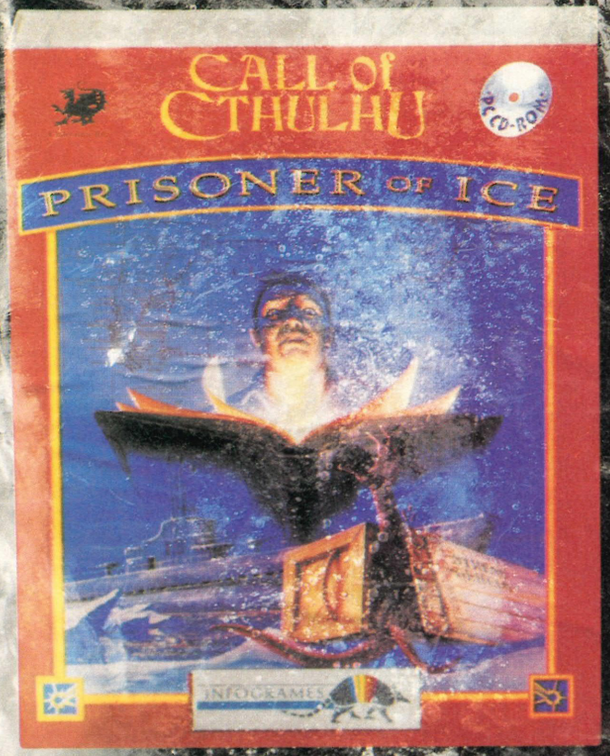
Continued over ▶

CHILLING...

90% Game Pro -
"top quality adventure"

89% PC Games -
"gripping - wouldn't hesitate to recommend it"

PC Zone Recommended -
"Infogrames' best adventure to date
- Watch out LucasArts"



PC Review -
"gorgeous - best in the genre..."

C & VG Hit 91% -
"a really well-planned adventure"

PC Attack -
"What a game - huge, beautiful, atmospheric and stuffed with head





PRISONER OF ICE

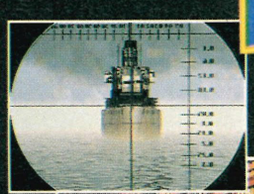
CD ROM

Monsters, magic, spies and the supernatural collide in this graphic, time-travel adventure that will make your blood run cold.

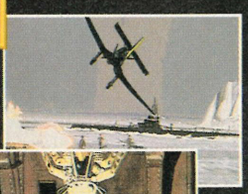
The non-stop action moves from a secret Nazi base in the South Pole to a Royal Navy Submarine, from the Falklands to Buenos Aires and beyond.

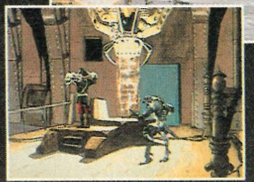
In chilling 3D detail the terrors seem all too real and, as the nightmare unfolds, only the coolest survive!

Prisoner Of Ice - The first ever adventure game to use "Motion Capture" for all character rendering is in the chiller cabinet at all good game stockists now.









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STATS NOT ALL FOLKS

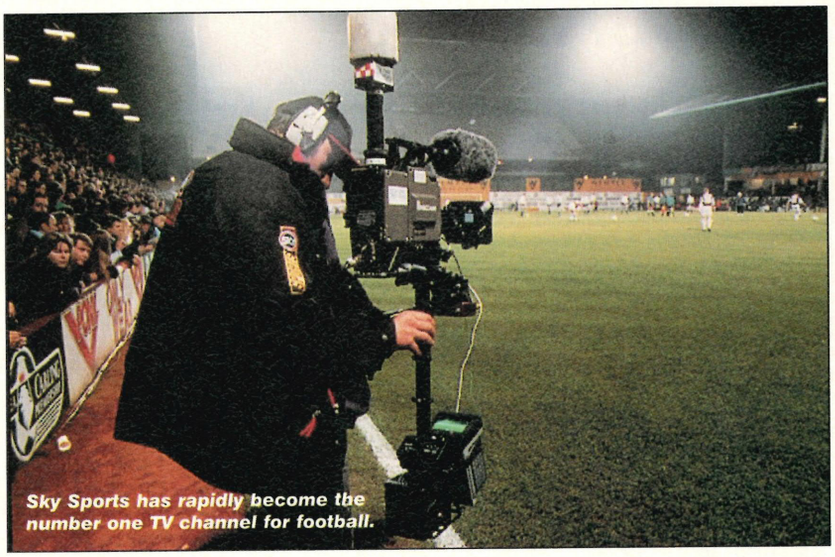
Sky's statistical service as shown on screen is all created and input through sophisticated PC software. From the number of fouls committed to how much time in possession of the ball for each team, a person sitting in the commentary box has to key it into a portable PC which is then sent back to the studio via satellite and displayed for the Sky-owning, or pub-going public to view and admire. You certainly don't get that down at the baseball ground.

scarves. Cambridge United hires a PC specialist to record its team's match statistics, so that the management can then analyse them and get a good idea on how to play the next match. The success of Cambridge United can show you how well that works.

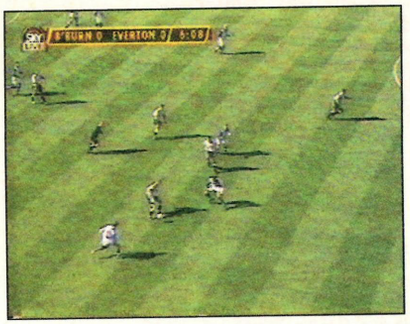
But perhaps the major innovator in PC football-linked usage is Sky Television, and in specific Sky Sports. Sky has been using PCs for its football coverage since the company secured the exclusive rights to show the Premiership action live. Firstly there was the clock and score that runs constantly in the corner of the screen, and although it was slammed by other television stations at the time, they too are now adopting this practice (and the use of computers for such).

Then Sky went one step further, and was the first TV station to place a person with a laptop in the commentary box with the commentators. This hapless soul's job is to key into a specially written piece of software anything monumental that happens during the live match. The software will then automatically translate the information received into pure statistics and display it on screen.

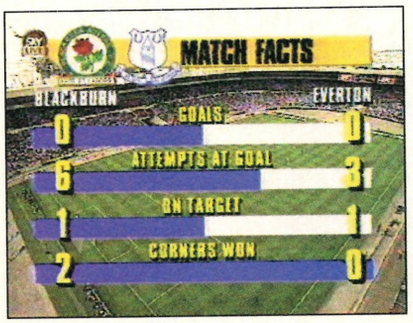
But it doesn't end there, as Sky has just invested in a new PC-based system for this season's programming. Replay 2000 is an Israeli creation that takes live video footage and converts it into 3-dimensional graphics. It also plots the distance between two objects (player and ball, player and player, Eric Cantona's feet and spectators), and the velocity of any one object — there's also loads of other funky effects that Sky itself is currently finding out, but it all certainly adds a new dimension in football analysis. It's not new, there's a similar system currently operating in Italy, but it'll certainly set a new precedent in British football television. And heck, it's down to a PC like yours you know. Fancy that...



Sky Sports has rapidly become the number one TV channel for football.



At first Sky Sports used a PC to record the timing and scoreline (in the top left).



Soon, a PC laptop was used to record the important statistics during the game...



...Which were converted to on-screen graphics using specially written software.



The software also works out the areas of the pitch that has the most possession.

EVERY PC FOOTBALL GAME EVER (PROBABLY)...

Action Soccer



Ubi Soft, (0181) 941 4004
An attempt by Ubi Soft to explore the football market. And, er, it missed really.
Rated 5, issue 47

Championship Manager

Domark, (0181) 780 2222
Although this game received quite a poor rating when we first reviewed it many moons ago, funnily enough it's still the one game I constantly go back to time and time again and still can't quite manage to erase from my hard drive. The reason for this lasting love affair is the hundreds of statistics. I love stats and this has more than you could wish for.
Rated 4, issue 13

Championship Manager Italia

Intelek (via Domark), (0181) 780 2222
Exactly the same text-based engine for Championship Manager, but concentrating wholly on the Italian football league. I found it easier than the English-based one.
Not rated in previous PC Review

Championship Manager 93/94

Domark, (0181) 780 2222
The update version with all the new signings and transfers included.
Rated 6, issue 30

Empire Soccer '94

Empire, (0181) 343 7337
This was a top-down action game released to coincide with the last World Cup. It smelled like Camden Town in the summer — rank.
Rated 4, issue 34

European Championship 1992

Elite, (01922) 55852
Side-on arcade-style game that sauntered along quite reasonably. Dated now though.
Rated 7, issue 10



Continued over ▶

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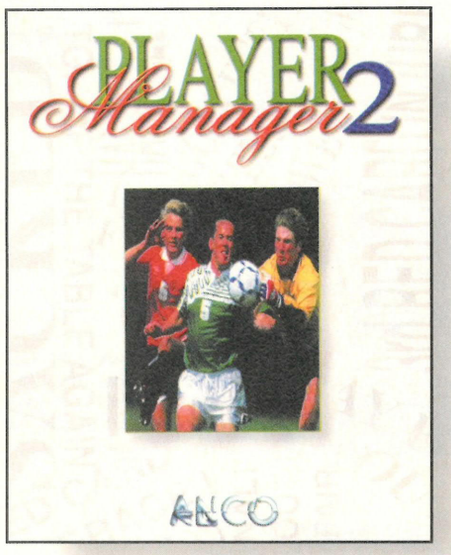
PLAYER Manager 2

94% RATED



OVER TO THE PANEL...

92% RATED

"Player Manager 2 is verging on unmissable. Everything you'd ever need in this type of game is included. The original Player Manager was superb but this surpasses it in every way imaginable! Totally recommended for all Amiga owners." **Amiga Action 92%**

"The tactics editor is nothing short of amazing... Player Manager 2 has great depth and lastability... Anco have produced a second game worthy of the name Player Manager. Realism, lastability and playability were the hallmarks of the original and PM2 has upped the stakes." **CU Amiga 86%**

"It's here now and it's been worth the wait... Take the playability that wowed games from Kick Off 2 and add practically every dimension of football management and you've got Player Manager 2." **CVG 85%**

"The most in depth and exciting management game ever" **Match Magazine**

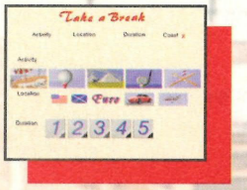
"If you want a serious statistical football game with plenty of thrills then Player Manager 2 comes top of the list" **Amiga Computing 94%**

FEATURES

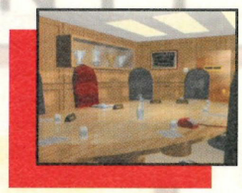
- 1-4 players.
- All the domestic and European Cup competitions.
- Four different playing views - isometric, perspective and two top down views.
- Match Reports, hot news, Alan Hansen's pre match comments.
- Tactics Designer with powerful Ray Trace facility.
- Active transfer and loan markets.
- Stunning graphics.
- Play as a team or in position.

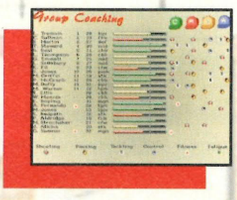
PC CD ROM: £29.99 **OUT - 19th JULY**

"On the field or off, there isn't a game that can touch Player Manager 2" - CVG

















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Published by Anco Software Ltd, Unit 7 Millside Industrial Estate, Lawson Road, Dartford, Kent DA1 5BH Tel: 01322 292513 Fax: 01322 293422.
Screenshots are illustrative of gameplay only and may vary from format to format. Requires a joystick.

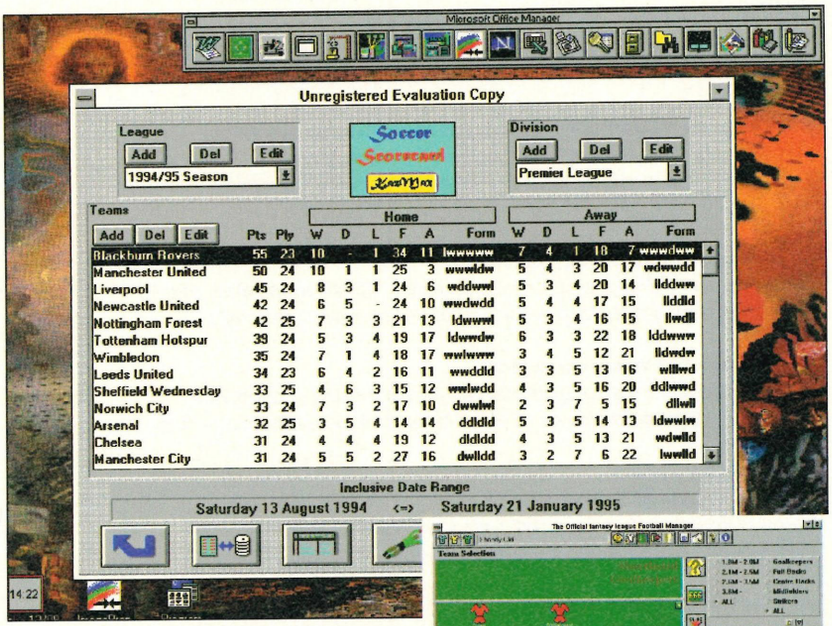
And the ref blows for half-time

So football has booted its way onto the PC via games, dedicated web sites and statistical applications. What else is left?

I've always been a big fan of the Pools. There I sit, most Saturday afternoons with my coupon and my pen, chalking up my score-draws and dreaming of what I'm going to spend my millions on. I sometimes rope in the help of friends and relatives to help predict the week's results, But now, thanks to the wonders of modern technology, I can also get my PC in on the act too.

The PC has a plethora of pools predictions programs all of which purport to make the selection of pools coupon numbers that much more accurate. The software itself is not overly complicated — all you have to do is input the result of every match over the course of a season and it'll work out the form of teams for you. Useful for most of us, because unless you're a super brain of Britain there is no way you can keep that kind of statistical information inside your own head.

Unfortunately software like this has its drawbacks. The major one is the blisters you'll incur when you key in all the results every week.



▲ ***This is the shareware product Soccer Scorecard, a pools predictor that you can find on this month's CD.***

Fantasy island

And there's another new form of football software too — Fantasy Football League databases. These have largely emerged as a kind of backlash to the formation of the extraordinarily popular pastime of football fantasy leagues. Almost every national newspaper has got one on the go for the season. And most offer huge cash prizes. But the one problem that arises for most people who play these leagues is that it's very difficult to keep track of all your player's stats over the course of six months.

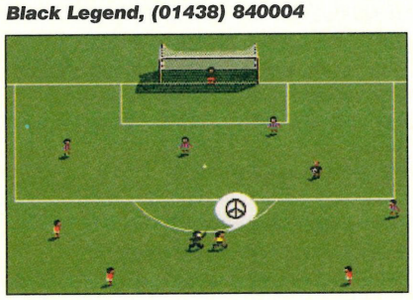
A PC fantasy league specific database will let you overcome such problems by helping you update your current team's ratings. So no more phoning The Sun, when your Telegraph team's done so well you think you've won a cool £100,000.



▲ ***The Penguin Books Official Fantasy League Football Manager. It, er, lets you manage official fantasy league teams.***

Football Glory

Black Legend, (01438) 840004



This is quite honestly just a Sensible Soccer clone that had none of the playability or class of its idol. It tried to substitute comical interludes for gameplay and fails so miserably that it may as well release an album and call itself Morrisey.

Rated 6, issue 43

FIFA International Soccer

Electronic Arts, (01753) 549442

This completely revolutionised footy games as we know them, with it's diagonally-viewed-perspective, and superlative animation. The gameplay, though, still remains a bit unresponsive, and at times it really does feel as if it's playing the game on its own. Looks tops though.

Rated 8, issue 34

Goal!

Virgin Interactive, (0171) 368 2255

Dino Dini got bored with naming everything Kick Off so his unofficial sequel went for a shorter snappier title. And a different publisher. It too featured speedy gameplay, but it was a bit pants really.

Rated 7, issue 26

Kick Off

Anco, (01322) 292513

The original top-down office footy-a-thon, unfortunately the PC version is extraordinarily unplayable.

Not rated in previous PC Review

Kick Off 2

Anco, (01322) 292513

Not much better than the first really. Sorry.

Not rated in previous PC Review

Kick Off 3

Anco, (01322) 292513

This decided to give the player three viewpoints (top-down horizontally, top-down vertically, and side-on), it also had the real European club teams in it, but it forgot to include any kind of gameplay at all.

Rated 2, issue 35



Continued over ▶

In The Back Of

Yep... you guessed it, football is to be found in proliferation on the 'net. So in an effort to test all the web-sites for Premier league clubs, we put them head-to-head in the first Internet Cup...

1st Round

Aston Villa V Sheffield Wednesday 2-0
Villa scored one with far better graphics and information about the players, whilst Wednesday scored an own goal by misspelling a player's name.

Southampton V Liverpool 1-1 a.e.t. (Liverpool win on penalties)
This was very close and both sites scored with their presentation. Liverpool just clinched it on penalties thanks to the enormous wealth of information.

Tottenham Hotspur V West Ham 4-0
To say this was a slaughter is an understatement. Spur's presentation, information, list of other sites, and comedy values all scored spectacularly.

Manchester City V Newcastle 2-3
Man City scored for a great graphical front-end and depth of news. But Newcastle scored a hat-trick for its presentation, statistics, and great writing.

Leeds V Blackburn Rovers 1-5
Leeds' poorly drawn front end cost them dear. Blackburn spent loads of money and its picture library and professionalism accounted for the win.

Middlesbrough V Wimbledon 3-0
Wimbledon threw the game away in the opening minutes when a womble appeared on the front-end!

Everton V Bolton Wanderers 1-3
Everton underestimated the new boys to discover that a well-scanned team logo was no match for the sheer fanaticism from Bolton's web operator.

Nottingham Forest V Arsenal 1-2
Forest was a bit weedy, and a well-scanned .gif file of Platty signing up for the new season swayed the scoreline in Arsenal's favour. Close though.

Quarter Finals

Aston Villa V Liverpool 1-3
Villa tried hard with their player pictures and information, but Liverpool again hit them with the humour element including a selection of scans from the best fanzine on earth 'Through The Wind And The Rain'. Then add to that the truly up-to-the minute news items.

Tottenham Hotspur V Newcastle 3-2
Newcastle fought as hard as possible, especially its news section, but Tottenham has its own Sunday league team for goodness sake. Mind you, it almost scored a wealth of own goals by being the only Spurs fanatics on the planet not annoyed with Alan Sugar.

Blackburn Rovers V Middlesbrough 1-2
Middlesbrough just has more enthusiasm for the team at the moment and it shows. And there's a true optimism from the Web-site organiser that sort-of hits you like a breath of fresh air. Whereas Blackburn was just far too confident for its own good.

Bolton Wanderers V Arsenal 2-1
Bolton played on the fact that nobody knows anything about the majority of its players, and therefore proved a more interesting stop-off. And like the Middlesbrough site, it had the 'we're new to this league' optimism that most Premier clubs take for granted.

Manchester United



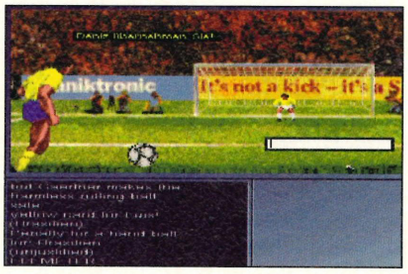
Krisalis, (01709) 372290
Sensible Soccer again. Hmmm...
Rated 6, issue 36

Man United: The Double

Krisalis, (01709) 372290
This stabs FIFA in the throat.
Rated 6, issue 44

On The Ball — World Cup Edition

Daze Marketing, (0171) 372 7435
A more than half-decent management game from Germany, it looked great on first appearance, but once played was sadly badly bug-ridden, and far, far too easy to complete by half. Always a downer.
Rated 8, issue 39



On The Ball — League Edition

Daze Marketing, (0171) 372 7435
See above, but take out the half-decent part. Then add more bugs, completely suspect commentary, and you end up losing the will to live.
Rated 4, issue 38

Planet Football

Infogrames, (0171) 738 8199
"What a great idea," we all thought, " football in 3D." Unfortunately the computer players weren't too clever, some of the database names were wrong, and the goalies had the same kit as the rest of the team. Mind you, it had a good management side before the actual arcade sections started and It broke the ice for games like Actua Soccer though.
Rated 6, issue 34

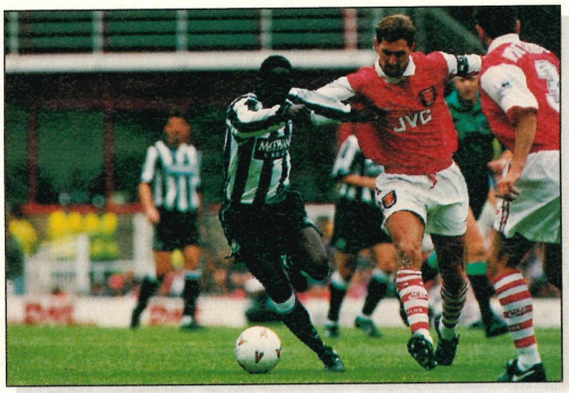


The Net









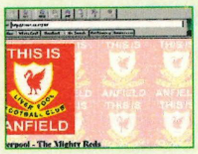
◀ *"I say old chap, if you just so happen to give me the ball, I'll give you the address of the Newcastle Utd web-site!"*

Semi-Finals

Liverpool V Tottenham Hotspur 1-0 a.e.t.
The big guns met and Liverpool just pulled it off with more connections to other football-related sites and more current news bulletins.

Middlesbrough V Bolton Wanderers 1-2
The battle of the promoted. Bolton just crept off with it thanks to two own goals by Middlesbrough, just because they played on the Bryan Robson is God ticket too long.

Final



▶ ***Liverpool Football Club.***



▶ ***Bolton Wanderers.***

Liverpool V Bolton Wanderers 2-1
A repeat of last year's Coca-Cola Cup final, and exactly the same scoreline. Liverpool took the lead just before half-time with a wealth of more information. Bolton then equalised by having just as interesting material even though the footy team has less money and fewer players. But Liverpool finally hammered home the winner with its extremely funny range of Eric Cantona cartoons.

The Winner

Liverpool
The Liverpool web site is by far the best of the bunch, and quite deservedly won the 1995 Internet Cup. The news service is updated the moment that Reuters (or other news services) make announcements concerning the club. This is all the more amazing seeing as it's run by a New Zealander — which really shows off the capabilities of the 'net.

THE ADDRESSES

The tournament sites

Arsenal ***http://www-ipg.umds.ac.uk/~rw/arsenal.html***
Aston Villa
http://lorenz.gbar.dtu.dk:8080/%7ege937079/avfc/
Blackburn Rovers ***http://www.roe.ac.uk/rji/index.html***
Bolton Wanderers
http://basil.acs.bolton.ac.uk/~ac1com/bwfc/bwfc.html
Everton ***http://phoenix.oulu.fi/~mep/everton/index.html***
Leeds ***http://web.nexor.co.uk/users/ajt/leeds/leeds.html***
Liverpool ***http://iconz.co.nz/lfc/***
Manchester City
http://www.service.uit.no/mancity/homepage.html
Middlesbrough
http://www.dur.ac.uk/~d3fher/boro/boindx.html
Newcastle ***http://143.65.4.28/nufc.html***
Nottingham Forest
http://unicorn.nott.ac.uk/~ccznffc/nffc.html
Sheffield Wednesday
http://www.crg.cs.nott.ac.uk/users/anb/football/index.html
Southampton ***http://www.soton.ac.uk/~micf/sfc/***
Tottenham Hotspur
http://www.sys.uea.ac.uk/recreation/sport/thfc/thfc.html
West Ham ***http://irons.king.ac.uk/hammers/***
Wimbledon
http://www.cs.ucl.ac.uk/students/a.stubbs/wfcgraph.html

Those that didn't qualify

Chelsea ***http://www.soton.ac.uk/~ksb394/index.html***
Coventry
http://www.warwick.ac.uk/~cudbu/skyblues.html
QPR ***http://www.soccernet.com/qpr/***
Manchester United ***Withdrawn for time being***

Premier Challenge

Winsport, (0628) 473315
A Windows based management game that looked just that. A bit like playing Lotus 1-2-3.
Rated 5, issue 33

Premier Manager

Gremlin, (0114) 275 3423
Good looking and nice to fiddle with. Sounds like Sandra Bullock actually. Unfortunately, just like Ms. Bullock, it's completely unobtainable now.
Rated 7, issue 22

Premier Manager 2

Gremlin, (0114) 275 3423
This was better, but not vastly different to the original. It also had the distinction of being harder than Championship Manager.
Rated 7, issue 29

Premier Manager 3

Gremlin, (0114) 275 3423
Again only aesthetic changes, but it is the best of the bunch, and bloody difficult.
Rated 8, issue 41

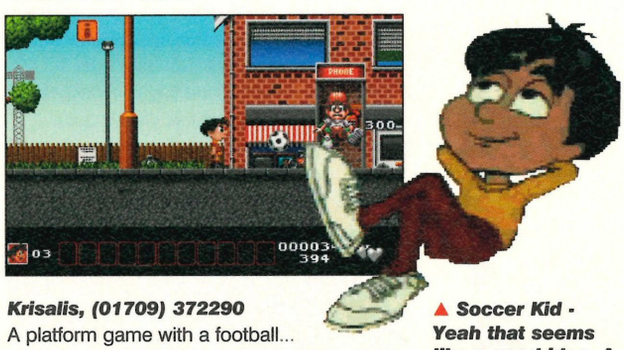
Sensible Soccer

Warner Interactive Entertainment, (0171) 391 4300
Tops, tops, tops, tops. Absolutely superb!
Rated 9, issue 22

Sensible Soccer International

Warner Interactive Entertainment, (0171) 391 4300
Unbelievably not as good as its prequel, and I do remember crying when I first saw it. It's slow and unresponsive.
Rated 7, issue 34

Soccer Kid



Krisalis, (01709) 372290
A platform game with a football...
Rated 6, issue 35

▲ ***Soccer Kid - Yeah that seems like a good idea. A platform game with a football, you say?***

Striker

Elite, (01922) 55852
The fastest football game on the market.
Rated 6, issue 29

Continued over ▶

It's not a game of life or death...

...It's far more important than that. Every company on Earth would like to produce the definitive footy game. So it's time to look at the latest challengers for the title.

Championship Manager 2

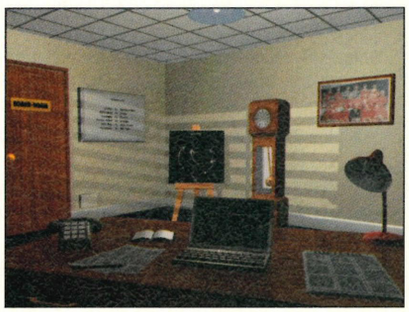
Domark, (0181) 780 2222
Released in September.

Like the first Championship Manager game, part two is also a statistic-based affair, but bigger, better, faster and far more informative. It's all wrapped up in a choux bun too, roughly translated to mean better presentation.
(See our full review on page 72 this issue).

Player Manager 2

Anco, (01322) 292513
Out now.

Player Manager 2 attacks the team coaching angle from a different, er, angle. It doesn't set out to be serious, but relies heavily on fun.
(See our full review on page 91 this issue).



▲ ***Player Manager 2 has gorgeous Super VGA graphics.***

Actua Soccer

Gremlin Interactive, (0114) 275 3423
Released in September.

This is motion capture a-go-go with two Sheffield Wednesday (and ex-England) stars, Andy Sinton and Chris Woods, allowing themselves to be covered in small silver balls and told to perform some very bizarre moves indeed. Should be interesting.

Sensible World of Soccer

Warner Interactive Entertainment, (0171) 391 4300
Released in October

This used to be (and probably still is) the best football game ever released on the Amiga, and although it's been a long time coming, it's almost here. The graphics during play are small, and some might say fiddly, but the play is a totally brilliant blend of realism and arcade action. Add to that management and every team and player in the world ever, and it's a hot tip for the future.



▲ ***Actua Soccer really gets down to grass roots level.***

FIFA Soccer '96

Electronic Arts, (01753) 549442
Released in October.

FIFA on the PC was okay, and conformed with the console versions almost exactly. Then along came the 3D 3DO version, and us PC footy fans are to be treated with not just a conversion of the 3DO version, but an update of that, with selected club teams from around the world, enhanced playability, and slightly better character graphics.



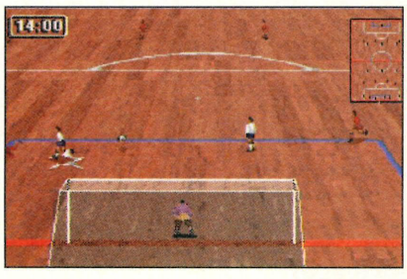
▲ ***Championship Manager 2, a statistic lover's dream.***

Striker '95

Time Warner Interactive, (01604) 602800

I disagreed with Dean Evans' review of this game a few issue back, but not much. I thought it was fairly good fun, but it ultimately became limited, and unless you've got a Pentium P5-90 you're not going to get the most from it.

Rated 5, issue 46





Tactical Manager

Black Legend, (01438) 840004

Again, it looks pretty but has omitted every team bar the Premier and the first division. There's also little depth, and it certainly doesn't stand up to the likes of Ultimate Soccer Manager or Championship Manager.

Rated 7, issue 35

The Manager

US Gold, (0121) 606 1808

A bit ancient, but it did offer two-player mode.

Rated 6, issue 11

Ultimate Soccer Manager

Impressions, (0181) 789 0329

As good when it was reviewed and as good now. Not quite Championship Manager for its realism, but the Sim City style, exquisite looking, ground building utilities more than make up for that.

Rated 8, issue 44



World Cup USA '94

US Gold, (0121) 606 1808

A World Cup licence that's actually good. It was very varied in options for play.

Rated 7, issue 34

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In the Wizard of Oz, Dorothy was told to ignore the little man behind the curtain. In the games industry, companies sometimes seem to ignore gameplay in favour of graphic wizardry. Jim Gillies talks to one company opting out of the flash race.

Ignore the LITTLE

Recently it's been nigh on impossible to open a British PC magazine without finding someone banging on about gamesplay and the good old days, "when I were a lad we didn't have them fancy rendered graphics" (alright I admit it, I was nodding along with the best of them). Commitment to gamesplay has traditionally been regarded as "a British thing" but one American software house, Legend, has new plans — Legend aims to export gameplay to the UK.

Chantilly base

Founded in Chantilly, Virginia six years ago by Bob Bates and Mike Verdu, Legend Entertainment has always tried to put substance above other elements of a game. President Bob Bates believes his background in writing text adventures and novels gives him an edge. "Legend focus first on gameplay and then on presentation. Most everybody here is a dedicated gameplayer — we don't fool ourselves into thinking that you can make a good game on visuals alone." Do they think that this approach will bring success in the European market? "Very much so. We believe that the style of our games is well suited to a European audience which has traditionally looked for a lot of depth in its games." It's with that in mind that Legend recently signed up with European software manufacturer and distributor Virgin and asked it to handle its European distribution for it.

Legend's earlier products were a mixture of text and graphics, but in 1993 the company developed the point and click interface for its popular Companions of Xanth series (based on Piers Anthony's best-selling fantasy series). Last year it also upgraded its games engine to SVGA for its biggest success to date, Death Gate. And as if that wasn't enough, at the very same time the company also signed a deal with Random House — publisher of authors such as Robert Jordan, Alan D Foster (who wrote the novel of Aliens) and Jack L Chalker.

In the pipeline

Currently Legend has two games about to hit the market. Mission Critical is the first and is a point and click adventure set in the 22nd century, with SVGA graphics and full motion video (including performances from Michael Dorn, alias Worf in Star Trek: The Next Generation and Patricia Charbonneau who portrays K2 and Robo Cop II).

Its second game, Shannara, is based on the best-selling series of books by Terry Brooks and is the first fruit from the tie-up with Random House. How did Michael Dorn come to be involved in Mission Critical? Mike Verdu explains, "we originally wanted a woman for the role but when we heard that Michael Dorn



◀ *The Legend team hard at work — playing. Legends president Bob Bates is proud of the team's gaming passion.*



▲ *Bob Bates, Legend's president.*



▲ *Mike Verdu, Director of Product development.*

MAN behind the curtains

was interested the part was adapted for him."

So how does Legend approach the design of a new game?

"Our approach is to start with story telling — all Legend products are story and character intensive. I really started in the industry writing text based adventures for Infocom (the leading adventure games publisher in the 1980's)," says Bob. At the same time he is keen to point out that Legend don't neglect the visual aspects of game design. "We do whatever is best to support the story we're working on at the time. If it needs Silicon Graphics rendered spaceships, hand detailed fantasy or FMV then our aim is to make it the best we possibly can." Even so, Bob Bates says that Legend has sometimes been criticised for not having enough flashiness, but he takes a sticks and stones approach.

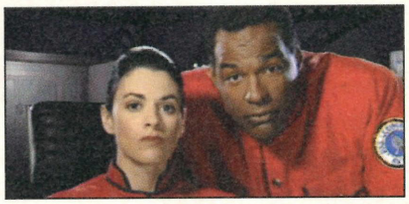
Legend is already very much identified with adventure games, but does it plan to move into other genres? How about a shoot 'em up "Well, Bob and I are writers at heart and adventures are the best means for us to explore our talents — story telling is our main strength."

Back to the future

So do they both dream of spending their retirement years playing adventure games? Mike Verdu likes the idea of more play and less work, "although I like other genres too. Bob Bates has a different vision of his twilight years, "I dream of retiring and going off to spend more time *writing* games. Although I currently have a lot of creative input I haven't had the time to actually write a game for about three years." Here's to retirement.



▲ *You can summon the shade of a murdered man for questioning.*

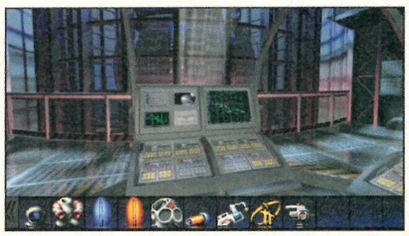


▲ *Mission Critical: Patricia Charbonneau (left) from K2 and Michael Dorn (right) from Star Trek: The Next Generation both feature in the game.*



▲ *Mission Critical: The Lexington's first officer is one rather unexpected obstacle to your mission.*

Mission Critical: On board the crippled Lexington you have to repair the ship before you do anything else. ▶



Death Gate

Death Gate is Legend's biggest success to date, selling 30,000 in its first 40 days. Based on the best-selling series of books of the same name, your character is given a quest to reunite the five pieces of the world, split assunder after a catastrophic war by collecting the five pieces of a magical gem (one piece just happening to be hidden in each of the realms. In keeping with the Legend philosophy the game is heavily plot intensive. The game was very well received and we rated it 8, way back in issue 40.





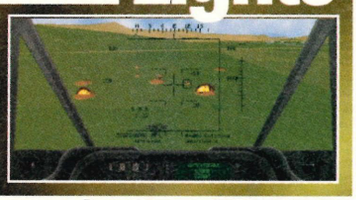


'Magic Carpet 2 for review, Daggerfall and Aliens for preview — it has been an exciting month for PC Review. Don't forget to check out our huge, gigantic supplement for even more games too.'
Cal Jones

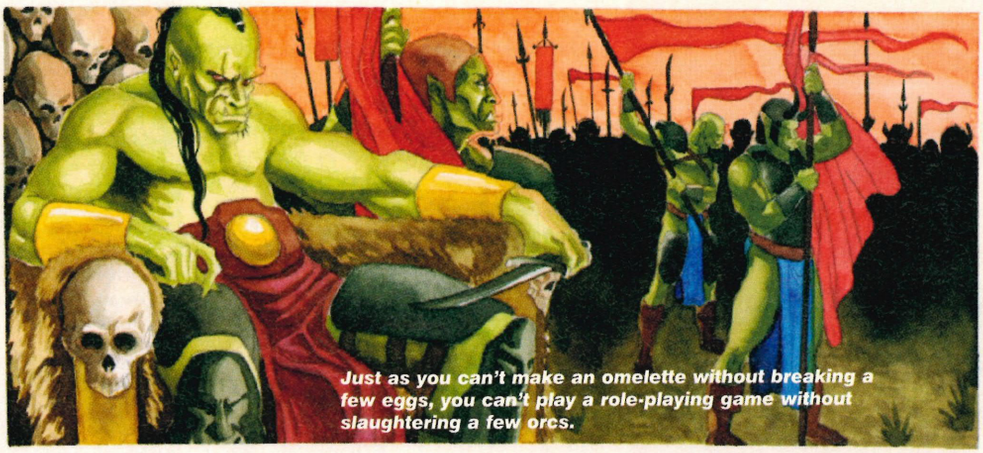
THE RATING SYSTEM EXPLAINED

PC Review gives a single mark out of 10 to rate games. The score takes into account elements such as playability, graphics and sound. We aim to test to completion — where applicable. We're very tough on games: five is the halfway mark so anything rated higher is above average. A game has to be exceptional to rate an eight or nine out of ten.

High Lights



Magic Carpet 271
Championship Manager 2 72
Apache 94



Just as you can't make an omelette without breaking a few eggs, you can't play a role-playing game without slaughtering a few orcs.

CD ONLY

Publisher: US Gold/Bethesda
Contact: (0121) 606 1800
Price: TBA
Expected release: Autumn 95

Daggerfall: In Progress

Cutting Edge



Elder Scrolls: Arena was one of the surprise hits of 1994. Can Daggerfall do even better? Cal Jones explores Bethesda's new world.

When I reviewed The Elder Scrolls: Arena back in Issue 31 (it was rated 8), I described it as being the role-playing equivalent of Elite. What I was trying to say was that it was vast — not so much a game as a world you could lose yourself in. It had a plot and a series of objectives, but it was also completely non-linear. The locations included the usual dungeons and castles, but there were towns to visit, wildernesses to explore and work to be had almost everywhere you looked. If you didn't fancy persuing your main quest, you could always eek out a living as a mercenary or errand boy in a local town until you felt the need to continue, or alternatively you could travel across the world, taking in the different sites. The damned thing was absolutely enormous.



This approach was refreshingly different from your usual run-of-the-mill RPG, and won the game many fans. Considering that it was Bethesda's first RPG, it was a major achievement for the company who, back then, had produced only a handful of dodgy sports sims and a couple of rather poor Terminator games (though the forthcoming Terminator: Future Shock looks very promising at this stage).

Land ho!

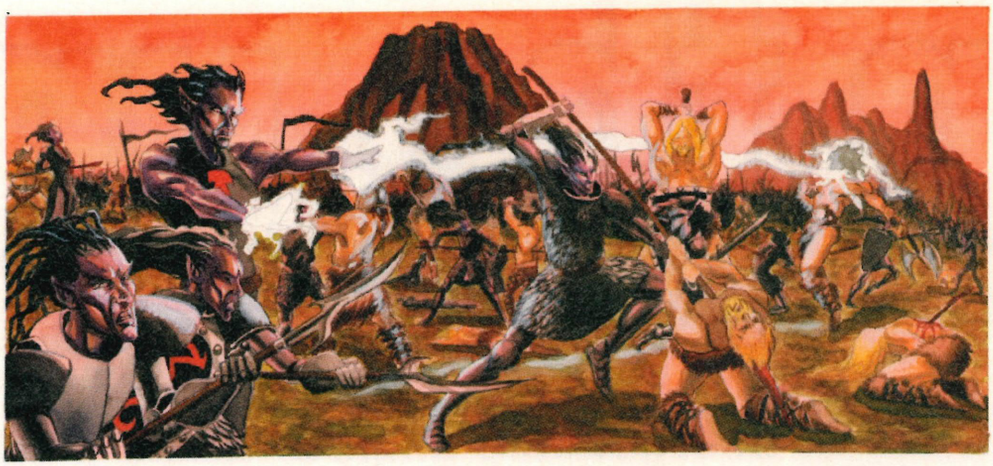
Well, now a sequel is in the offing. The Elder Scrolls: Daggerfall is based on a brand new and highly advanced games engine, Xngine, which allows for slicker graphics and even more realism than its predecessor. You can explore the sophisticated new landscapes, which range from mountainous areas to dank caverns, visit alternative dimensions and interact with every character you meet along the way. According to Bethesda, the freedom to do what you want is a very important part of the Elder Scrolls series. "The vast detail of the computer world we have created and the freedom to explore and live an unhindered life has hit home with numerous groups of non-standard role-players," claims Bethesda president Chris Weaver. "A case in point is the thousands of Arena users over age 65." Consequently, Daggerfall will allow as much freedom as Arena, and now that the graphics have been improved, there's even more incentive to get out and do a spot of sightseeing.

If you did play Arena, you'll be glad to know that your time wasn't wasted. You can import your old characters into Daggerfall, and if you help non-player characters, your deeds will be remembered in subsequent games in the rest of the series.

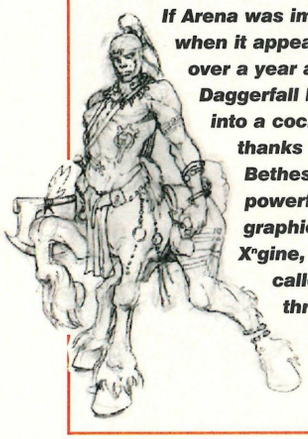
Having enjoyed Arena, I can't deny that I'm looking forward to the sequel. It's definitely a contender for role-play-



▲ *The graphics really have come a long way since Arena, giving you the sense of a huge world.*



The Difference Is X^ngine



If Arena was impressive when it appeared just over a year ago, Daggerfall knocks it into a cocked hat, thanks to Bethesda's powerful new 3D graphics engine. X^ngine, as it's called, took three years to perfect and incorporates many elements of recent games technology. It allows 360 degree rotation, which means complete freedom of movement, and a variety of viewing angles. It can cope with VGA and SVGA graphics, fully textured, Phong-shaded, light-sourced polygons and can even generate different weather effects. "We've taken the best elements from the highest quality games engines out there, and improved on them," says Chris Weaver. "X^ngine has the immediacy of Doom and Dark Forces and the greater flexibility of Descent — all in one engine."

It's obvious that Bethesda is pleased with its achievement, and there are plans to use it in a number of games including Terminator: Future Shock.



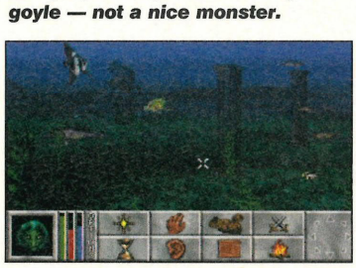
ing game of the year, even though it will face stiff competition from Stonekeep and Lands of Lore 2. Still, why restrict yourself to linear quests when you can go and do what the hell you want?



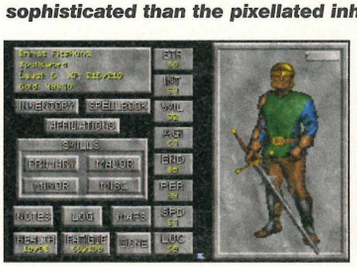
▲ ***A preparatory sketch of a gargoyle — not a nice monster.***



▲ ***The monsters and people who populate the game are far more sophisticated than the pixellated inhabitants of Arena.***



▲ ***There are a huge number of different locations to visit, including underwater sections.***



▲ ***No RPG would be complete without a set of statistics and character creation tools.***



▲ ***Yes, you will get into a scrap or two. But why do female warriors insist on wearing scanty clothing?***

Six of the best

PC Review introduces the best games of the last three months.

Cyber Judas



Empire
£44.99
Rated 9
Issue 47
Try your hand at being President for a day.

FX Fighter



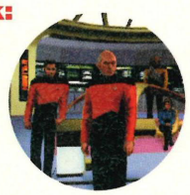
Philips Media
£39.99
Rated 9
Issue 46
The PC's very own Virtua Fighter beater.

Command and Conquer



Virgin £44.99
Rated 8
Issue 46
Fast-paced strategy meets stunning graphics.

Star Trek: The Next Gen — A Final Unity



MicroProse
£44.99
Rated 9
Issue 45
Ultra-slick adventure based on the cult TV series.

AIV Network$



Infogrames
£44.99
Rated 9
Issue 45
Deep and involving train network simulation.

Full Throttle



LucasArts/ Virgin £44.99
Rated 9
Issue 44
Biker gangs unite and go on the rampage in what is LucasArts' best adventure yet.

On the up

Ascendancy: In progress

CD ONLY

Publisher: Virgin Interactive

Contact: (0171) 368 2255

Price: £44.99

Expected Release: October 1995

Jim Gillies carves out an intergalactic empire. Same plot, but the new boys, The Logic Factory, have a different take...

A strategy game set in space. Not a particularly new tune for the piper, but this one sports a whole new set of bizzaro sprites. New developer The Logic Factory has a lot riding on its debut game, Ascendancy, especially since the company claims every game it produces will be the pinnacle of its genre. What can Ascendancy offer that you couldn't get elsewhere? Company president Jason Templeman describes The Logic Factory's approach as "taking a classic game and doing something new with it. We wanted to do the type of games we want to play."

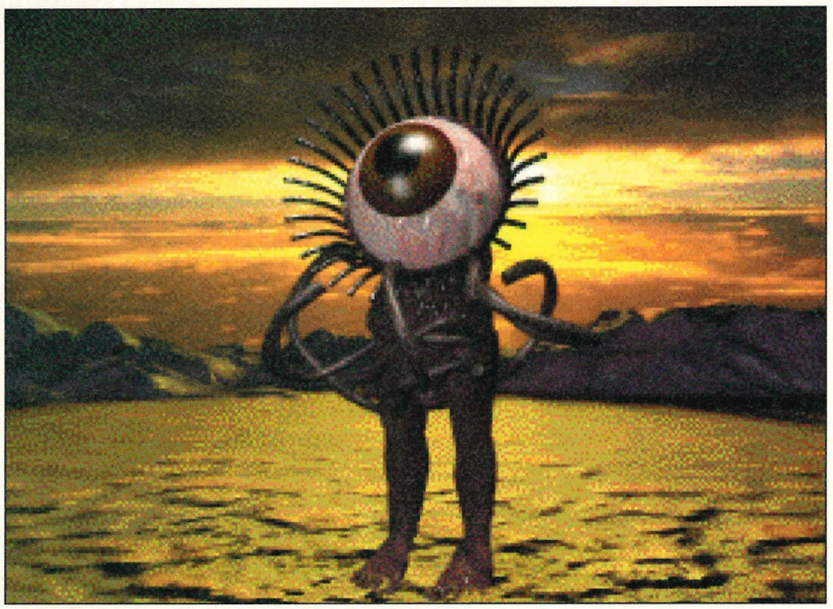
Based in Carmel, California (the town that elected Clint Eastwood mayor), The Logic Factory has a good pedigree. Two-thirds of the staff used to work at Origin, where Templeman was lead programmer on the very popular Strike Commander, as well as programmer on Savage Empire, which became one of the Worlds of Ultima series.

The object of Ascendancy is to take over at least half the known universe (which, from the look of things, doesn't seem to be much smaller than the real thing) or to force everyone else into peace on your terms. Ascendancy's designers have created 21 totally different alien races, of which you have to take on at least three per game.

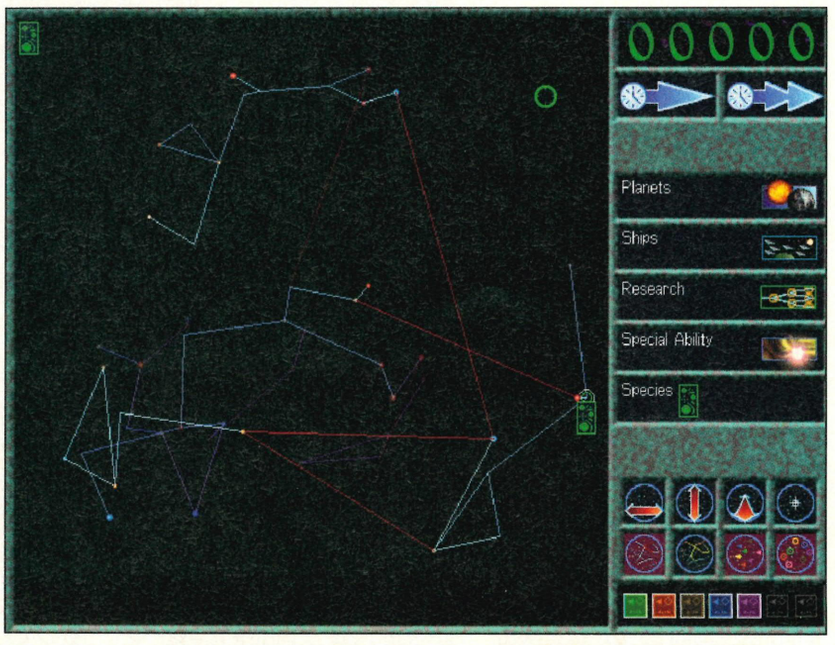
Made to measure strategy

You can set up Ascendancy as whichever kind of strategy game you want to play — the universe can be big or small, hostile or passive, crowded or spacious, as well as how many alien races you want to take on. Not only do the species behave very differently, but they exhibit artificial intelligence. Even the most warlike races won't attack you if you're too strong.

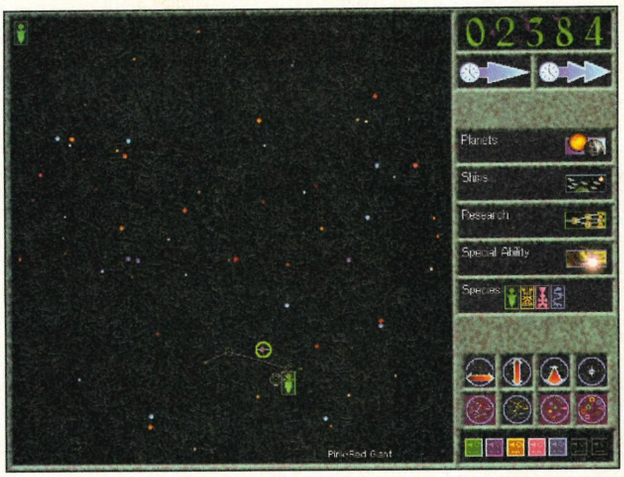
According to graphic artist Jason Decker, the game was designed to be "friendly enough for the newest of users, and still, when desired, a real challenge for any expert gamer. We wanted a good solid game that doesn't force the player to juggle numbers". In addition, the difference between the alien races isn't just limited to appearances. If you are contacted



▲ *The Logic Factory have put a lot into the differing species design.*



▲ *This is either the star lane or my very cheap copy of the London A to Z.*



◀ *Your knowledge of the rest of universe takes time to build up.*

▶ *Ascendancy features 21 different species and you can choose to play as any one of them.*



▶ *On looks alone the Knowledge Tree seems like a winner.*



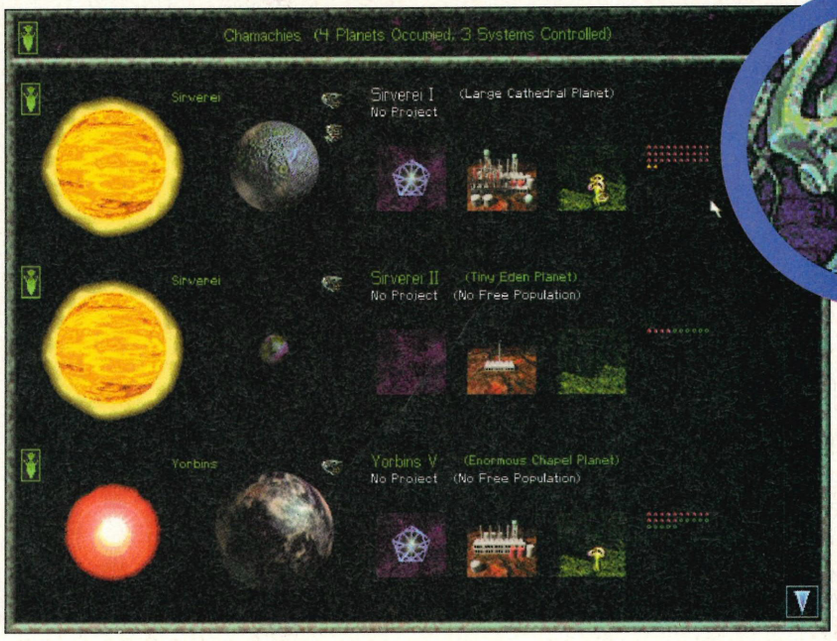
▲ *Despite the complexity of the game, The Logic Factory are aiming for an intuitive interface.*



▲ *The chaps seem to have a sense of humour as well.*



▲ *Novelty ice lollies or planets on sticks?*



▲ *Nice bit of sight-seeing if you want. The Logic Factory pride themselves on looks as well as substance.*

by an insectoid race, for example, then their ships and actions will reflect their origins. Each species has a skill that also relates to something in its evolution. With 21 different races, from which you must choose between three and seven per game, there's more than 1,000 different permutations to the gameplay.

One of The Logic Factory's main aims was to create an elegant interface. "We wanted it to stay as crisp and clean as possible, without sacrificing playability," says Templeman. In addition, the team aims to offer the player "as many neat things to see as possible — visual rewards." Ascendancy has nearly 100 different discoveries, each of which yields two or more "really cool gizmos".

Music to your ears

Templeman is also keen to boast of the one feature which becomes immediately apparent to anyone standing within range of the speakers — the music. Ascendancy has three background themes which vary depending on the level of activity or hostility, and this enhances the game's atmosphere greatly. "We wanted the best music we could get. Neno (the composer) has the best equipment available, including some exotic, Asian instruments." The music is pulled straight off the CD because it doesn't slow the game down so much. According to Templeman, "we want the games to run well on the majority of machines, not just the high end ones."

So what can we expect from The Logic Factory in the next year or so? "Well, we're currently at work on our second game which will be an adventure — I can't say much more than that, except that we intend to break the mould. Too many adventure games seem to be 'make work tasks' that add nothing to your enjoyment." The Logic Factory's next task will be a Windows 95 multiplayer version of Ascendancy, although it hopes to complete its second game before the end of next year.



◀ *The interface tends towards simplicity rather than strict accuracy (unless this ship is very large)*



It's arguably the scariest graphic adventure ever. Jim Gillies reports from behind a cushion.

Things from

▲ *On occasion it's best advised that you do not look behind yourself, or else you may end up never being able to turn the lights out again.*

CD ONLY

Publisher: Mindscape

Contact: (01444) 246333

Price: TBA

Expected release: October 1995

Aliens: In Progress

It's a sad fact that none of the Aliens games that have so far been converted to the home computer have managed to capture the atmosphere and tension of the original movie trilogy. Indeed, Acclaim's Alien 3 and even the Atari Jaguar's Alien Vs Predator were arguably little more than glorified shoot 'em ups. So for the latest Giger tie-in Mindscape has opted for a very different approach.

For starters, the game *isn't* based on the films at all, but in fact draws inspiration from Dark Horse's gritty Aliens comic books. The game itself is being developed by Paris-based Cryo who, interestingly, bought out Dark Horse France last year. Consequently, both teams have been working together closely to ensure Aliens: The Comic Book Adventure will be as authentic as possible.

Work started on the game in February 1994, when game designer Nicolas Choukroun teamed up with Cryo MD Jean Martial LeFranc and roughed out the storyboard, visualised by graphic artist Bernard Bittler. Although the storyline is completely original, much of the game's background and plot twists are taken from the Aliens: Labyrinth comic series. It has also borrowed ideas from numerous other Dark Horse books and, of course, the Alien films.

The game revolves around a team of four terraformers who are awoken from hypersleep to investigate a distress signal from the shake 'n' bake colony on planet B54C. As their hibernation pods slide open and the USS Sheridan flickers into life, the crew find themselves in orbit around the planet. Blissfully unaware of the nightmare that's happening on the surface below, the four slip into their exoskeletons and prepare to dock with the colony.



Revamped

Aliens is essentially a graphic adventure, and is based on a more advanced hybrid of the Lost Eden game engine. However, Cryo has drastically revamped the engine so that Aliens will be tougher and certainly not as linear as, say, Dragon Lore. What's more, Aliens will be visually more spectacular than Cryo's previous games, thanks to slick SVGA graphics which help to capture the eerie feel of the comics and, of course, the movies.

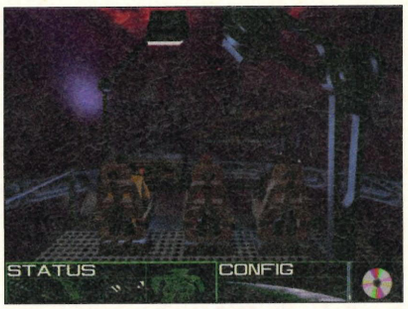
The game promises to be surprisingly simple to play, mainly due to the intelligent icon-based cursor system which makes



▲ *The intelligent cursor makes the game incredibly easy to control.*



▲ *Each of the four crew members has different skills and abilities.*



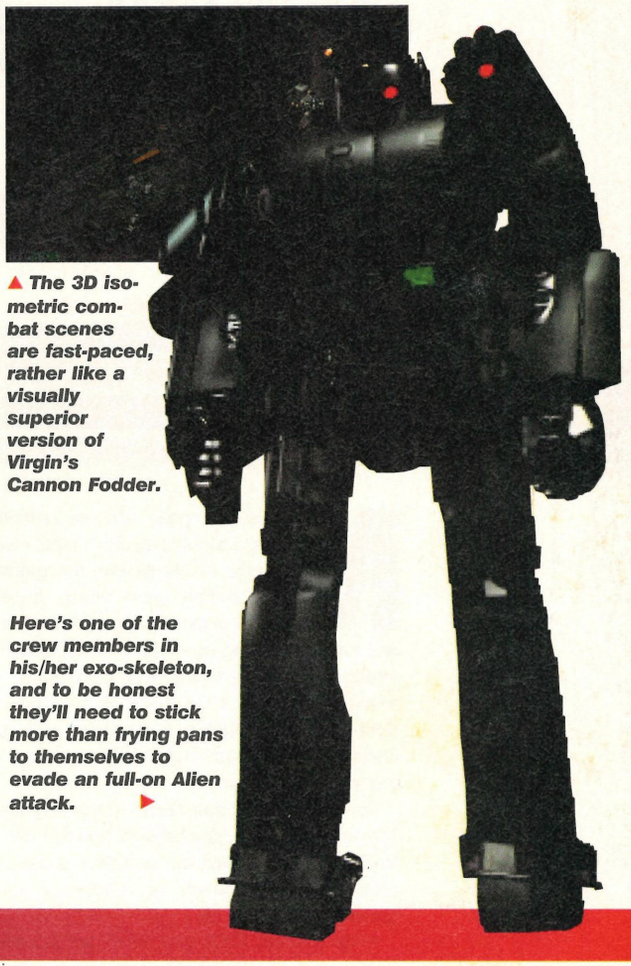
▲ *Each location was sketched by hand before being rendered in 3D Studio.*



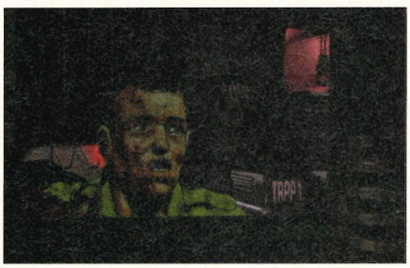
▲ *Like previous Cryo games, the cut-scenes that feature are awesome.*



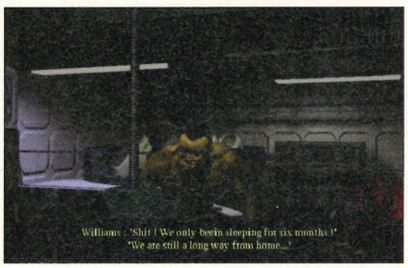
▲ *Before the crew can leave, they must first climb inside their exoskeletons.*



▲ *The 3D isometric combat scenes are fast-paced, rather like a visually superior version of Virgin's Cannon Fodder.*



▲ *A lot of the feel of the Aliens comic strips has transferred superbly.*



▲ *There is strong language, but it all fits in with the characters' traits.*

Here's one of the crew members in his/her exo-skeleton, and to be honest they'll need to stick more than frying pans to themselves to evade an full-on Alien attack. ▶

outer space

moving through the colony both quick and straightforward. It also makes many of the game's puzzles easier to tackle.

While many of the puzzles are solved by object manipulation, occasionally you'll need to call on the skills and abilities of each of the crew members to crack the problem. For example Herickson, an ex-marine and the obligatory meathead of the team, is the only bloke with military training and therefore the only crew member brave (or stupid) enough to take on the Aliens in combat. Sinclair, on the other hand, is a weedy scientist who specialises in all things technical and so proves invaluable when operating the colony computer and overriding the security systems.

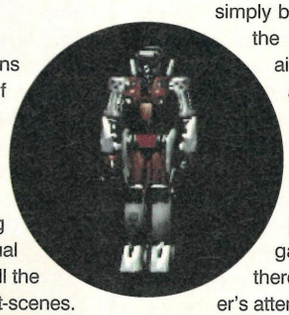
As with all of Cryo's games, Aliens looks awesome, and when the graphics are combined with the sweeping soundtrack which howls away in the background, it really is moody, atmospheric and tense. Play this in a darkened room and I dare you not to jump!

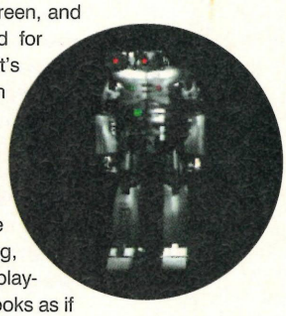


On location

Each of the locations in the game, of which there are *loads*, have been painstakingly rendered in 3D Studio, along with each individual character sprite and all the impressive cinematic cut-scenes. In fact, the only hand-drawn graphics in the entire program are the portraits of each crew member, which were first painted on paper and then digitised into the game to give a more comic-style feel.

Even the combat sections are rendered, and adopt a 3D-isometric view which looks down on Herickson in his exoskeleton. Equipped with grenades, machine guns and flame throwers, Herickson is moved around simply by clicking on the screen, and the cursor is also used for aiming his weapons. It's almost like Cannon Fodder, but with better graphics. However, no matter how glossy the presentation, if the gameplay is lacking, there's little to hold the player's attention. Thankfully, it looks as if Cryo has learned from previous experiences, and has created a game, nay an experience, that may well be described as not only one of the scariest graphic adventures, but also one of the most absorbing and playable graphic adventures this year. Let's hope so.





▲ *Each character has their own fashion designer, but they've put too much starch in the wash. Probably.*

Last month we looked at the 'difficult' learning process of bringing the concept behind Stonekeep to fruition on the screen. This month Christina Erskine looks how the playing elements have been brought together in the game.

Spellbound

Stonekeep: In Progress

PART 2

CD ONLY

Publisher: Interplay

Contact: 01235 821666

Price: TBA

Expected Release: Oct/Nov 1995

Monsters, spells and exploration are undoubtedly the major elements of Stonekeep, the game which has been nearly three years in the making and which at one time was taking up nearly all of publisher Interplay's programming and development resources. Now that the revisions have been done and the graphic techniques settled, we're left with a surprisingly 'pure' rendition of the role-playing game.

For producer Michael Quarles, keeping the full-screen graphics uncluttered and the control interface as intuitive as possible was one of most important aspects of developing the game. And it's paid off.

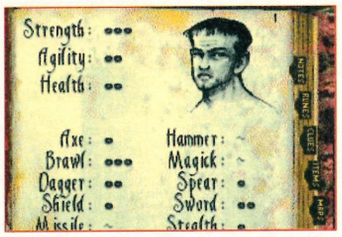
In its finished form, you move around the dungeons using the cursor keys and perform actions with the mouse. A click on the right button will call up an inventory panel on the right of the screen, at the top of which is a representation of yourself (since this is a first person perspective game, you can't usually see yourself), so that you can see what you are wearing or any weapon you are bearing — and change these. This panel also includes any items you have picked up in your travels so far and it is from here that you can access the maps.

One feature which should prove immensely useful in play is that the on-screen cursor is dynamic, ie, it changes according to the type of action it expects from you. You could spend ages examining every bit of dungeon wall to see if there are any hidden runes or secret doors, but since the cursor will change to an on-screen eye if it passes over something worth looking at, all you need to do is a quick sweep of the area. Saves on time and tedium.

Altogether, the action in Stonekeep takes

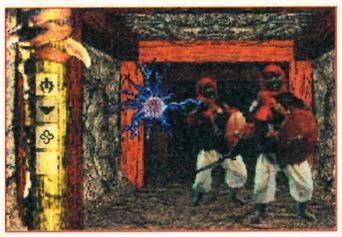
SPELL-CASTING — HOW IT WORKS

You won't get very far in Stonekeep without needing to use a little bit of the old magic. There are 28 spells in the game and five spell modifiers which will alter the spell effects subtly. Before you can start casting any spell, you have to have found it: the spells themselves are found on runes scattered around the dungeons, and you'll find them as you explore the labyrinth. In addition to the spells, you must also collect the nine orbs which you'll find at strategic points on your journey. These give you special powers when found and used.



Before you can cast any spells at all, you need to find the journal. Your journal keeps track of character stats, your status, runes that you have found, items you have picked up (including what they might be useful for) and the automaps. One handy feature of the journal is that you can add your own notes to it, either to the maps or the pages themselves. You might want to note down where a particular spell was effective.

Incidentally, you'll be hard pressed to miss the journal: it's positioned nice and prominently on the dungeon floor right near the beginning of the game.



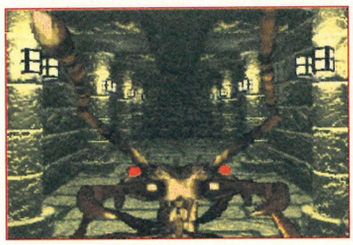
Scattered around the dungeons are runes which you can pick up. These are your passport to spell-casting. Also to be picked up from the dungeon floor is a runecaster (seen here in your left hand), a staff that looks like a baseball bat. Choose a set of suitable runes that you already have in your journal and copy and paste them on the runecaster. Now to cast the spell, you simply 'swing' the runecaster at the enemy and the magic takes effect. Whirl the runecaster again and the last spell cast repeats itself — you may well need some spells again and again to despatch things like the swarm of wasps.



As with all self-respecting RPGs, the map is automatically generated to show the areas you've already explored. In Stonekeep, you can also add your own notes — "Dead dwarf here", for example — simply by placing the cursor and typing from the keyboard. Keeping notes like this will be vitally important, especially if you've missed a clue.

MONSTER MASH

There are about 75 monsters in total in Stonekeep. Twenty-five of these are individually designed; the balance is made up by perming the attributes to come up with different-looking variations. These range from nasty swarms of giant insects to slimy aquatic beasts, fire-breathing dragons and of course, the now-notorious skeleton, affectionately known as Lucy.



▲ ***Giant ant attacking: you'll meet lots of these early on in the game.***



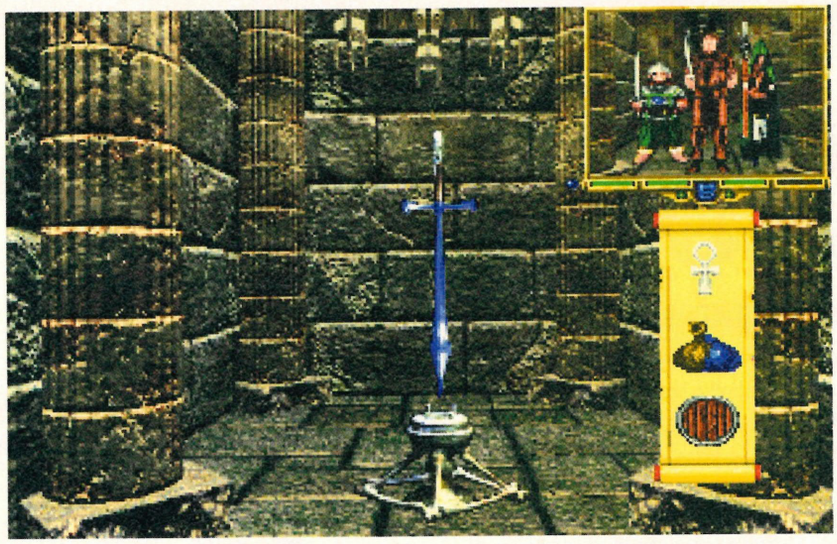
▲ ***Throg shaman attacking.***



▲ ***Water snakes: one of the original monsters from the early days.***



▲ ***The wasps are particularly pesky in the mines.***



▲ ***On the panel on the right-hand-side, you can see the other members of your party in the pseudo-wing mirror. The items on the unfurling yellow banner are objects you've collected and stored in your inventory.***

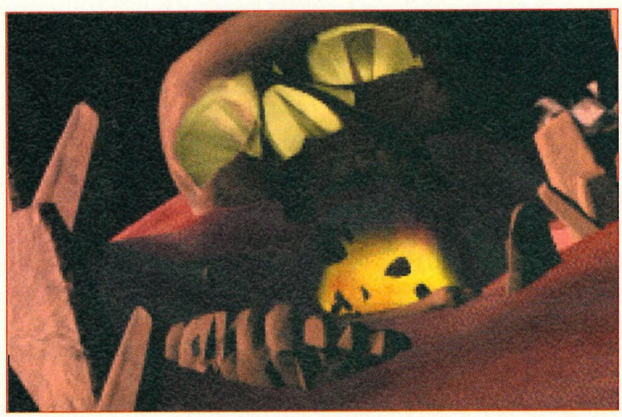
place over 13 separate levels, encompassing 22 different screen maps. The game is played from a player's eye view, so that all you can see of yourself is the tip of your sword — if you're carrying one — or your arm as you move out to take a swing at a baddie.

If the dungeons all look the same, well, they're meant to be. The Stonekeep team hopes that playing the game will be a scary experience, and have taken a leaf out of LucasArts' book in programming the music to change whenever you travel to a new area and also when you enter into combat. This has the unmistakable effect of making you feel like the heroine who insists on getting out of bed to investigate a noise in a haunted house with only a spluttering candle for light.

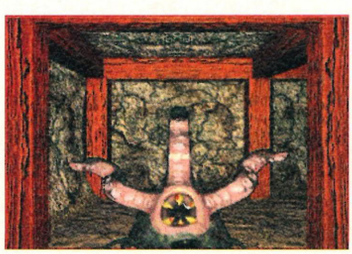
It's not all a monotonous tour of dungeon walls, though. There is also a mine complex to be completed, and a series of underwater levels. One of the main puzzles within the game is to work out how to drain the water so that you can access some of the things found in the underwater caverns.

Join the party

No program can call itself a true RPG unless there's a party, and in Stonekeep, you'll have the chance to recruit up to seven different characters to join you in your quest (three of which can be playing at any one time). You then lead them, but you don't control their combat or what they say. However, they do have minds of their own sometimes. A dwarven character will always attack a sharga on sight (they hate them, you see), for example. Your party will also cast their own spells and you'll see their attacks on screen. You'll see very little of the characters themselves, though. In an effort to prevent the playing screen from becoming cluttered, your party travel behind you — you view them by pulling down a little wing mirror type affair.



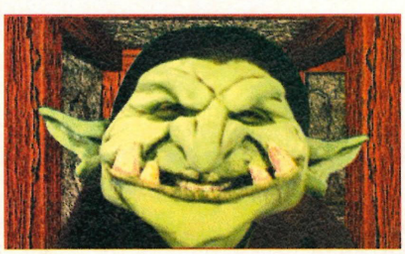
So, how does it all look? It looks great, and what we have here is a first person perspective game which uses role-playing techniques. It is, I think, an RPG for people who don't really like RPGs (ie, me), rather than one for people who are deeply into them (ie, Cal). It really is simple and intuitive to control and the full screen effect works — you do get much more of a sense of suspense and 'being there'. Watch out for next month's exclusive review.



▲ ***A rather ugly tentacle monster.***



▲ ***A huge fire-breathing dragon.***



▲ ***Wahooka close-up — ugh!***

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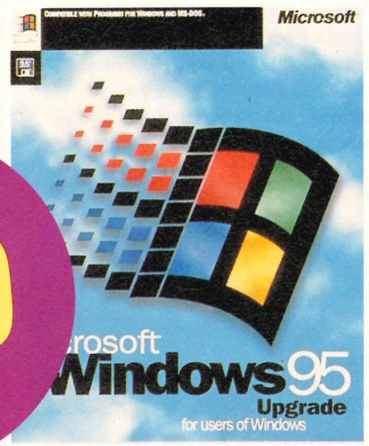

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Dead Sea Sc

Compro who? Cal Jones jets off to Israel to find out what the Tel Aviv-based company is up to.

Israel is not a country you'd normally associate with the computer games industry. Britain yes, France yes, America definitely, but Israel? You'd be surprised. Based in Tel Aviv, a company called Compro Games is attempting to revolutionise games design with its cutting-edge programming methods. How? Well, Compro has something of an advantage in this area. Many of the programmers who work there *didn't* receive their grounding in the games industry — after all, Compro *is* the Israeli games industry — but rather in the defence industry. By employing many of the advanced techniques used in military software, Compro aims to produce a range of technically superior games which will beat the American and European developers at their own game.

Compro already has one title under its belt. CycleMania, an arcade bike racing game released through Accolade last year, was noteworthy for its innovative use of 3D graphics superimposed over video footage of road tracks. Well, Compro has plenty more tricks like that up its sleeves, as I discovered when I visited the company in July.

Sun, surf and silicon

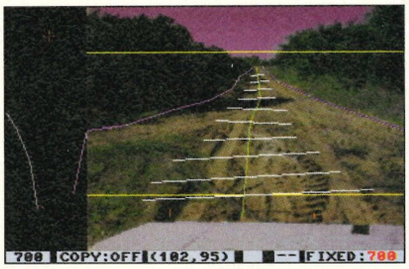
Looking at Tel Aviv, it's easy to see why Compro is keen to conquer the European and American games markets. Although 40 per cent of Israeli homes own a computer, Israel is a small country, which restricts the amount of games Compro can sell. And taking into account the sands which divide Tel Aviv from the Mediterranean, it's difficult to imagine why any sane Israeli would want to be hunched over a computer when they could be on the beach.

▼ ***The adventure sections for Soul Hunt were filmed in video, and as this shot shows, you can scroll 360 degrees in each location.***

Soul Hunt: In progress

The three titles Compro currently has in development could well put Israel firmly on the games map. The first, Soul Hunt, is based on the same video technology as CycleMania, but rather than being a straight driving game, it also includes elements of combat and puzzle solving. It begins with you, your girlfriend and another couple setting out to watch a festival which re-enacts ancient mystical rites. After spending the night in a small hotel, you awake to discover that your friends have disappeared and, borrowing the landlord's jeep, you set out to find them.

As with CycleMania, Soul Hunt is based on video footage overlaid by 3D graphics. The game itself, however, is very different. Whereas CycleMania was an out-and-out race, Soul Hunt is more akin to a treasure hunt where you drive around the country and pick up clues which direct you to your next destination.



▲ ***Over 30 miles of dirt roads were filmed using a video camera, and then the footage was processed for use in the game. The lines mapped over the image indicate where the jeep can or can't go, and also define bumps in the road surface.***

Jeepster...

Unlike CycleMania, you can turn your jeep around and head back the other way, although the limitations of video mean that your view does not pan with the movement of the jeep — you view it either from the front or from behind.

On your travels you'll encounter supernatural creatures who will try to bring your hunt to a swift and bloody end. Your only defence against them is magic. Scattered throughout the game are various locations which conceal spells, clues and other items. Like the roads, these sites are genuine locations in Israel which have been captured on video. Unusually for a video-based game, the locations scroll a full 360 degrees, and you can zoom in on important objects. Unfortunately, Soul Hunt was not finished enough for me to see how the puzzles actually worked, but the game looks promising and is very different from anything I've seen before.



▲ ***This is how you actually view a location. Puzzles activate certain events, such as this. Most locations contain spells which you can use on the road to fight off enemies.***



◀ ***You can actually climb out of your jeep and run around like a Linford Christie-a-like, though you might get chased by mutant dogs. Mind you, you can also get back in the jeep and run them over. Squish!***

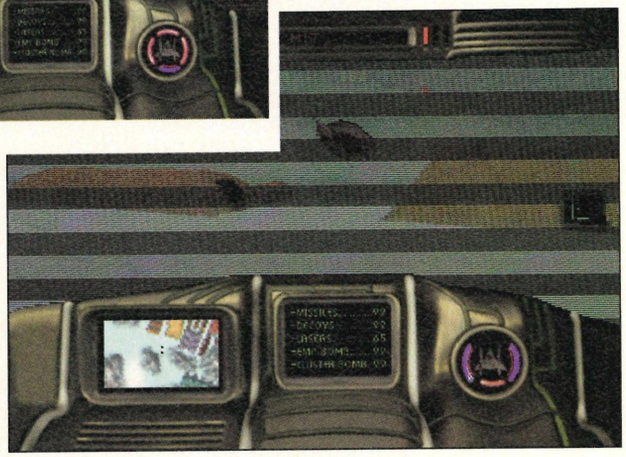


rolling

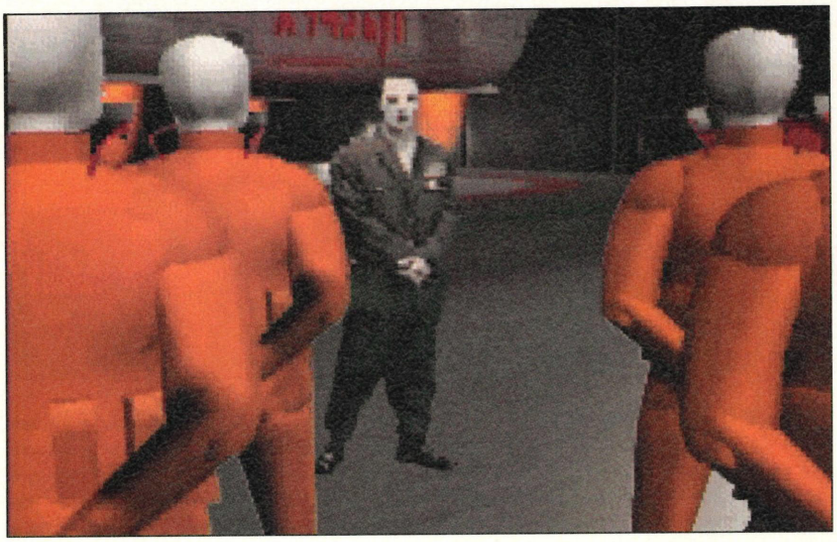
Space Runner: In progress



◀ *Although there's plenty of combat, Space Runner involves a lot of strategy. On this world, you have to divert a lava flow to progress.*



▲ *Ah, a ship. Let's shoot it. There's no shortage of action in this game.*



▲ *Of course, there's the usual rendered intro and cut-scenes — but it's interesting that the villain has been filmed whilst his pilots (foreground) are rendered.*

In contrast, the second Compro game I saw was a futuristic planet-based combat game involving a fair amount of strategy. It's similar in style to Gremlin's Retribution, but even in its unfinished state it looks far superior. The real-time rendered terrain has been created using a technique called Voxel Spacing, which basically means that the landscape is made up of 3D pixels (or voxels). The same technique was used in games such as Comanche and CyberRace, but in both cases the landscape, whilst stunning from a distance, had a tendency to pixellate when you got up close. Space Runner suffers from this to some extent, but it's far less noticeable, and Compro reckons that the technique can be refined still further in future games so that the pixels are almost invisible.

Interplanetary craft...

Space Runner has a detailed plot which affects gameplay directly. You play a scientist who has been working on an interplanetary teleportation device. Unfortunately, the president of Lynx Corporation, the sole operator of commercial space travel, sees the device as a threat and sends out his forces to kill you. To escape you must guide your ship to the exit teleport on each of the six worlds you visit. Not only will you have to battle the Lynx fighters en route, but you'll also come into contact with the anti-Lynx underground who will set you missions in return for upgrades for your ship and other favours.

Missions are optional — you can choose to accept as many or few as you wish. But whilst some are unimportant, others are vital to your progress, and you can't always tell which are which. For example, one mission involves destroying a communications centre — fail or ignore it and you'll find a huge armada of Lynx fighters waiting for you when you reach the next planet.

Space Runner is an exciting prospect for the Compro team. It plays well, and its complex mission structure gives it a distinct advantage over more linear blasters such as Terminal Velocity. Due for release in October, Space Runner will come in DOS and Windows '95.

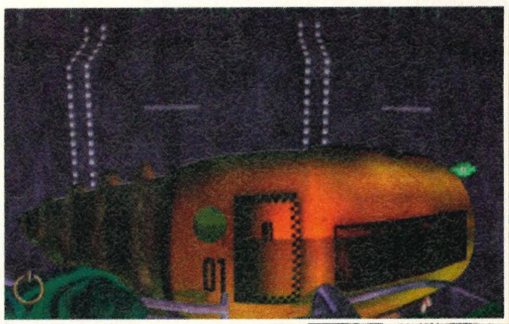


▶ ***The Voxel-spaced landscapes are superior to those featured in games such as CyberRace. A voxel, incidentally, is a 3D pixel: just as pixel is short for picture element, voxel is an abbreviation of volume element.***



▲ ***A Windows '95 version of Space Runner is in the works. The cockpit hasn't been drawn in yet, but it runs very smoothly.***

Cyberquest: In progress

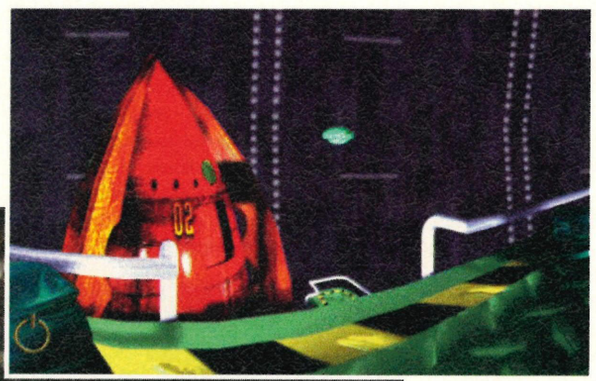


▶ *Compro sketched out the ideas for CyberQuest before rendering them. Here, the digger which transports you to the earth world is brought to life.*

Finally, there's CyberQuest, a Myst-style rendered graphic adventure. Set in the future, you play a character whose father, a VR specialist, disappeared when you were a child. Whilst exploring your house, you discover a VR headset which used to belong to him, and your curiosity prompts you to try it on. You soon find yourself in an abandoned virtual world populated by artificially intelligent virtual beings. You also find, much to your horror, that you are trapped there. To escape, you need to learn how the world works, and manipulate it to your advantage. Naturally, you will also have to uncover clues which will help you unravel the mystery surrounding your father's disappearance.

Thought-provoking

That's the plot in basic terms. What it boils down to is an adventure with a thought-provoking storyline and its own, unique atmosphere. Like most rendered games it looks stunning, but it's more than just a Myst clone. Myst's screens were entirely static — change viewpoint and it would flick-scroll rather than panning smoothly across the scene. Not so with CyberQuest. Compro has used a system called QuickTime VR which allows smooth, 360 degree scrolling. You can look up and down, left and right and there's no jerkiness whatsoever. Like Compro's other games, it's a bit early to say just how well it will play, but again, signs are extremely encouraging.



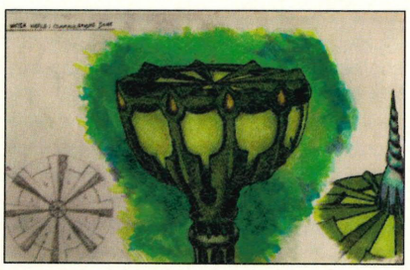
▼ *Unlike most rendered adventures, you can pan round your surroundings. The scrolling is incredibly smooth.*



This rocket will take you to the fire world — the world where defective virtual lifeforms are destroyed. Getting into it is a puzzle in itself.

And the rest...

As for the future, Compro's immediate aim is to establish itself as a force to be reckoned with. I, for one, wish the company luck. It's not often that a successful software house emerges from a country that you really don't expect to be leaders in the entertainment field, like Israel. Melbourne House, back in the early eighties, was just about the last (from Australia natch). And anyway, I'd like to visit Israel again, especially since I didn't get much chance to try out the beach last time...



▲ *Each world represents one of the four elements. This is a sketch of a building in the water world. Although, obviously, the final product is rendered from this basic idea.*

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Flippin' 'eck!

Tilt!: In progress

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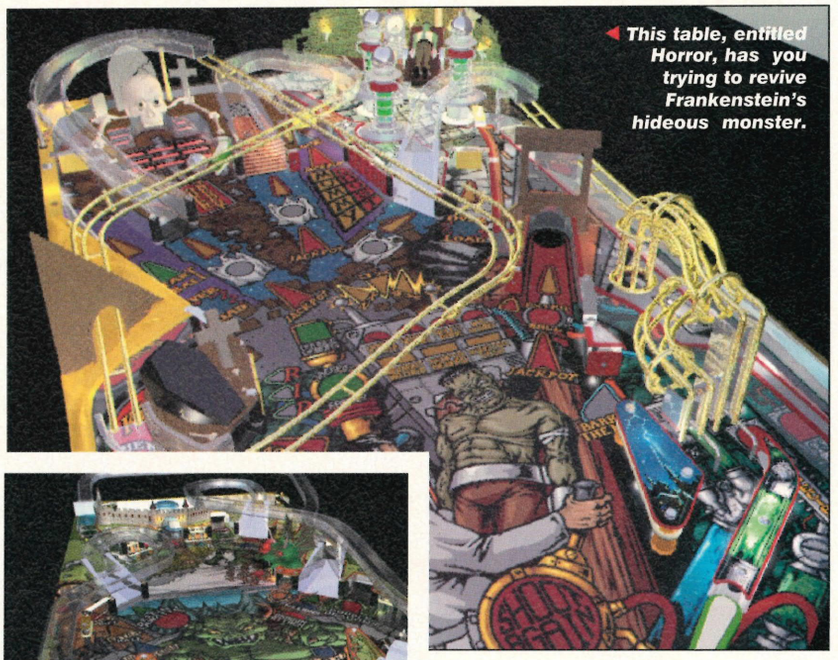
Pat Fox plays pinball — and no jokes about his supple wrist, please.

In the back end of a nondescript Birmingham suburb squats a nondescript redbrick box of a building, which on closer examination reveals itself to be the home of a small but perfectly-formed games team going by the name of NMS. Although the company has been around for half a decade now, it is a relative newcomer to the PC market, and your intrepid (and rather hung-over) reporter finds himself here for a sneak preview of NMS' newest project, Tilt! Tilt! has been in development for over a year already, and now finally looks set to be released this autumn — and looks like to be something of a corker too.

For those of you who hadn't already guessed from the screenshots sprinkled liberally about this very page, Tilt! is a pinball game. But rather than churning out yet another two-dimensional, hand-drawn, scrolling pinball game, NMS decided that the time had come to go one stage further — and create a fully-detailed three-dimensional pinball simulation.

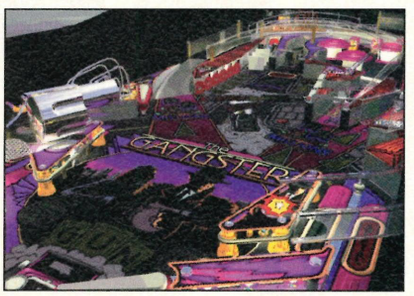


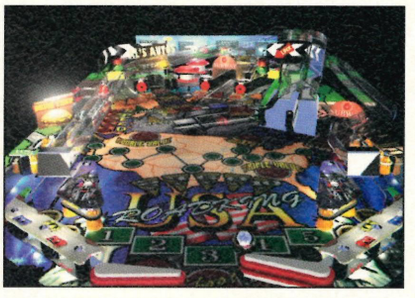
◀ *This table, entitled Horror, has you trying to revive Frankenstein's hideous monster.*



▲ *There are dozens of features, and many more combinations.*

▼ *You can hardly accuse the NMS team of skimping on the detail*







▼ *There's even talk of one of the tables from the game being built as a real machine!*



Silver balls

"We're all pinball fanatics here," said Richard Chappells, MD of NMS, "so we wanted to create something that was as realistic as possible, right down to the tiniest detail." So they bought a real pinball table and took it to pieces, measuring each component as they went along — right down to the tiny screws and microswitches, and then translated this information into a 3D model using half a million pounds' worth of silicon graphics hardware.

The results have to be seen to be believed especially in hi-res mode (the game will support up to 800x600 in 256 colours). Tilt! features three modes of play — standard old 2D (for die-hard Pinball Dreamers), 3D scrolling mode where you are treated to a close-up, rendered 3D view, and full-screen mode where you can see the whole of the table on screen at once.

There will be six tables in the final game — each with dozens of linked features, and even rendered cut-scenes to go with them — and NMS hope to release more new tables every few months. Look out for a full review next issue, as well as a playable demo of one of the tables, Fun Fair.

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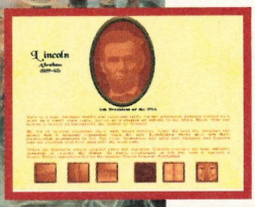

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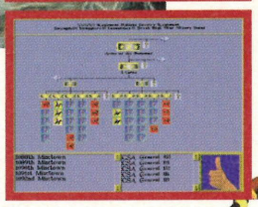

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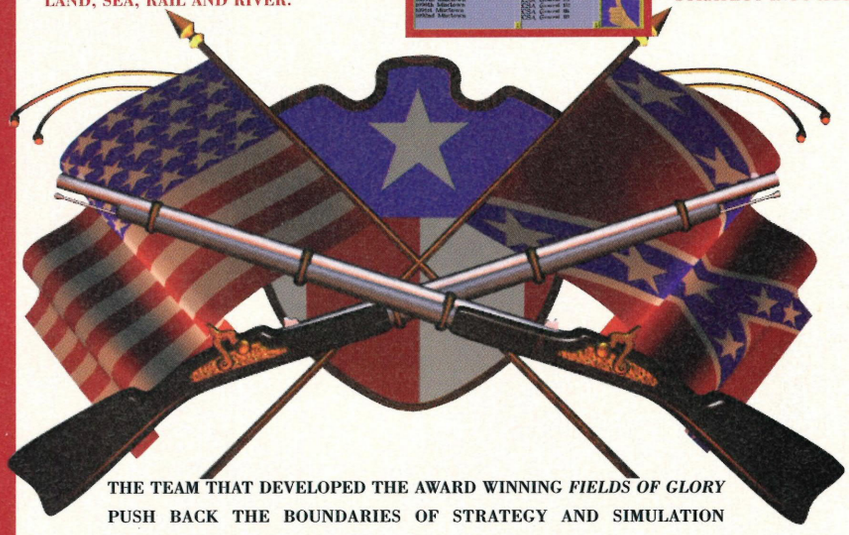

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30th November 1995

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CD AND DISK

Publisher: Mindscape

Contact: (01444) 246333

Price: TBA

Release date: Autumn 95

Hammer time

Warhammer: In progress

The most successful fantasy battle game ever makes the transition to PC. Cal Jones ambushed it as it went past.

Converting a tabletop game to the PC is no easy business, particularly when the game in question has a complex set of rules and huge cult following who'd complain bitterly if it wasn't sufficiently true to the original. This, however, is precisely what Mindscape is trying to do. The game is Games Workshop's Warhammer Fantasy Battle, a ten year old wargame based not on Yankees and Confederates or other well-known historical enemies, but on fantasy characters such as elves, orcs and dwarves. It's traditionally played using lovingly painted miniature models, whose moves are determined using dice and the aforementioned complex set of rules. Consequently a single battle can take hours or even days to complete.

Mindscape's challenge, therefore, was to produce a game which captured the spirit of Warhammer, but was more accessible to those who might not have so much time to spare. To ensure its authenticity, Games Workshop was consulted throughout its development, and the characters and rules have been reproduced with near-perfect accuracy. However, since all the rules are programmed into the game, you don't have to worry about looking them up every time you move a piece, which gets around the accessibility problem rather nicely. In short, Mindscape has achieved what it set out to do.

Creature comforts

The game is based around a beautifully detailed 3D isometric map. Controlling your troops is fairly simple the game is mouse-driven — but getting the strategy right is another matter. Since armies are made up of different creatures, each with their own traits, you have to plan to make the most of their abilities. Dwarven troll slayers, for example, will act recklessly, whilst other creatures may be more cautious. Magic users particularly are vulnerable, though their destructive powers are more than useful.

The most impressive thing about it, though, is that it runs under Windows 95. Anyone who is currently having doubts about the new operating system's suitability as a games platform should take a look at Warhammer — let's just say that it runs smoother than some DOS games I could mention.

Due out this autumn (although this rather depends on when Windows 95 finally ships), Warhammer should appeal to everyone from aficionados of the tabletop version to those looking for a decent strategy game. Its stunning looks and basic accessibility should make it a sure-fire hit. Especially if other Windows 95 games are slow to materialise.



▲ ***You can rotate the map, zoom in on different units and check the message bar to find out what's going on, Magic plays as much a part in the battles as conventional weapons — take out enemy wizards as soon as possible.***



▶ ***The detailed terrain, which includes forests, buildings and rivers, can be used to strategic advantage.***

▶ ***Characters designs were sent off to Games Workshop for approval before they could be included.***



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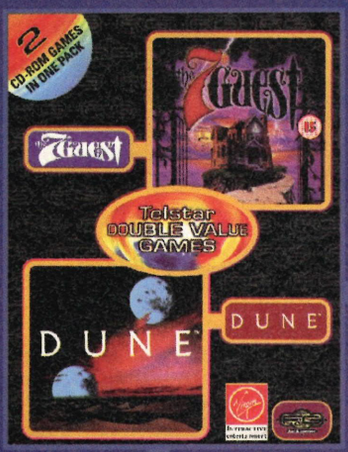
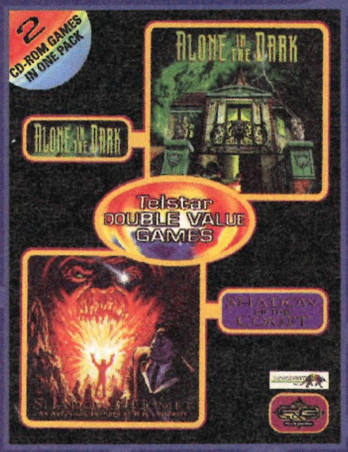


▲ TWINPACK: Dune/Seventh Guest CD Telstar
Minimum requirements: 386 DX, 4Mb RAM, SVGA



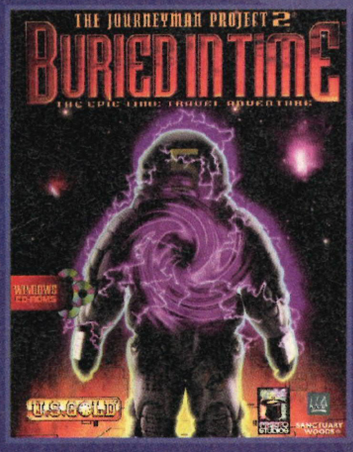
▲ TWINPACK: Alone in the Dark/ Shadow of the Comet CD Telstar
Minimum requirements: 386 DX, 2Mb RAM, VGA



▲ TWINPACK: Mega Ace/Bloodnet (Cert 18) CD Telstar***
Minimum requirements: 386 DX, 4Mb RAM, VGA



▲ TWINPACK: Syndicate/UFO CD Telstar
Minimum requirements: 386 DX, 4Mb RAM, VGA



▲ Buried in Time CD US Gold
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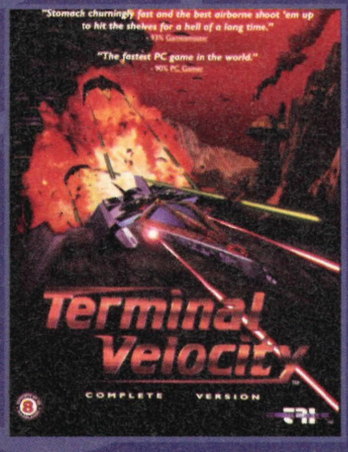

▲ Terminal Velocity CD/HD US Gold
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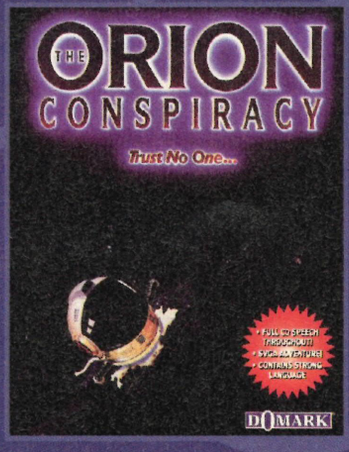
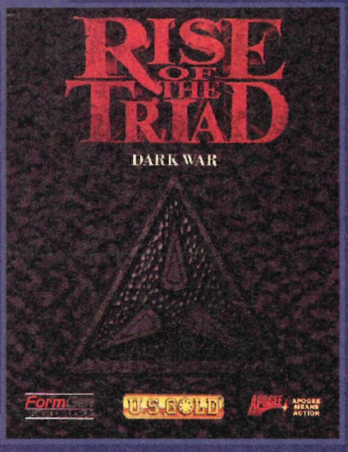


▲ Orion Conspiracy CD Domark
Minimum requirements: 386 DX, 4Mb RAM, SVGA card



▲ Rise of the Triads CD/HD US Gold
Minimum requirements: 386 DX, 4Mb RAM, VGA

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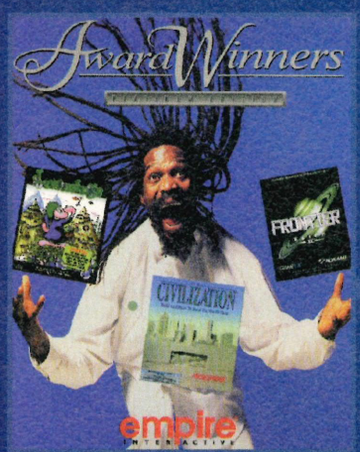
PC REVIEW



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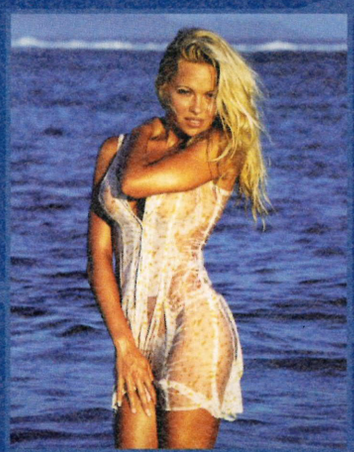
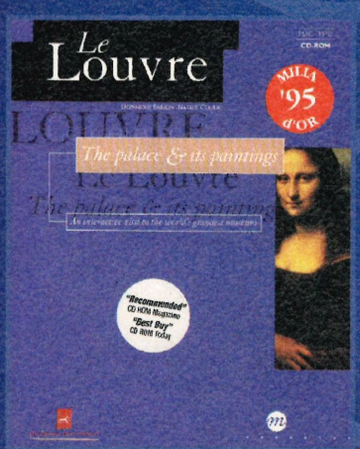
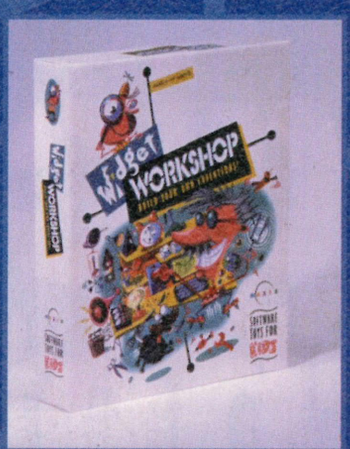


▲ Pamela Anderson/ Chippendales screen savers and personal organisers CD Telstar
Min requirements: 386DX, 4Mb RAM, SVGA, 256 col, 19 Mb HD, Win 3x



▲ The Louvre CD BMG
Minimum requirements: 386SX, 8Mb RAM, VGA, WINDOWS 3.1



▲ Widget Workshop CD Maxis
Minimum requirements: 386 DX, 8Mb RAM, SVGA, WINDOWS 3.1

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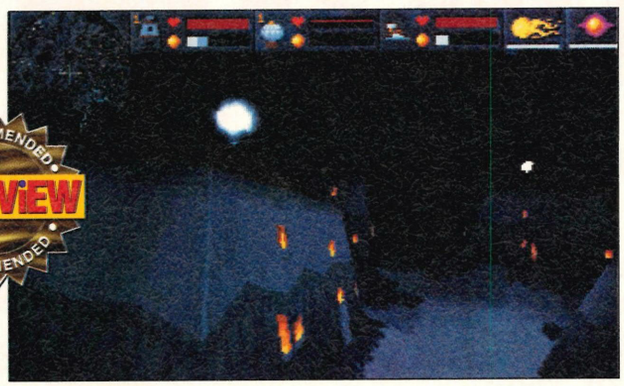
The monsters look about five billion times better in Magic Carpet 2 than they did in the original. Now, this hydra is hard enough to kill on its own without the added complication of rabid baboons rampaging all over the place.

Magic Carpet 2





◀ *Possessing houses will boost your mana more than razing them. During the day, the houses you've possessed all wear a nice, white flag on the roof, but at night this is replaced by a light. Reminds me of Blackpool.*

▲ *Spiders never bothered me until I played this game. Now I hate them. The little bastards throw webs at you all the time, doing quite a bit of damage in the process. Now where's a vacuum when you need one?*

Your master wants you to save him from the Netherworld. Now would you trust a man with a moustache like that?

Magic Carpet, eh? What a game that was. Not only was it lauded by the press and snapped up by games players everywhere, but it also made off with a skip-full of awards and did nothing to harm Bullfrog's reputation as a purveyor of finest quality games. Carpet, with its thrilling, deep-pile action, stunning 3D graphics, imaginative monsters and awesome combat certainly livened up the PC games scene at the tail-end of last year. So what if there have been other 3D shoot 'em-ups? No-one else thought to replace your standard spaceship with a flying rug and the usual lasers and missiles with an arsenal of devastating combat spells. None had seen its like before and such freshness is a rare and much sought-after commodity these days.

But a sequel so soon? Poor old Magic Carpet has barely had time to cool in its coffin (let alone be resurrected as a budget title) and already Bullfrog is pushing out a successor. Point is, however fantastic Magic Carpet might have been, can we stomach more rug-borne antics so soon? And, more importantly, can Carpet 2 really be that much better than its predecessor given that there has been but a year between the two games?

CD ONLY

Minimum PC: 50MHz 486, MS- DOS 5.0

Minimum memory: 8Mb

Minimum graphics: VGA

Sound: All major sound cards

The old rug was hardly even threadbare, but Cal Jones couldn't resist the new model's go-faster stripes and furry dice.

Pyrotechnics

In a word, yes. I was sceptical at first, for I thought that once you'd surfed one rug, you'd surfed them all. But Magic Carpet 2, it has to be said, is a bit of a corker. It almost goes without saying that the graphics are better. The visuals are so crisp they're almost crunchy. New monsters have been added, old monsters have been given a facelift and the new range of spells are a good bit more impressive than anything your local council could manage come November 5th.

And it's faster. Admittedly, I did play Magic Carpet on a decrepit old 33MHz 486DX and have since upgraded to a 90MHz Pentium. That makes a bit of difference. But the increase in speed is still noticeable. You don't just glide around, you zoom over the landscape at a rate that's almost frightening. Well, I was scared.

But the differences aren't just cosmetic. The gameplay is infinitely more satisfying. The object of Magic Carpet was to reunite a world shattered by misuse of magic, and to do this you simply had to kill all the monsters on each level and collect the magical energy (or mana) they left behind in order to progress to the next. This wasn't exactly easy, because you often had to fend off enemy wizards who were trying to achieve the same goal. But the principle of the thing was simple enough.

Magic Carpet 2, however, is more complex. This time you have to venture into the Netherworld to rescue your old master, Kafkar (missing, presumed dead in the first game), so that he can return with you to fight off a huge demon who's terrorising your home world. This storyline isn't just there for decoration, but does have some bearing on the gameplay. Each level (and there are 25) has a number of different objectives, and Kafkar informs you of your goals whenever you start a new stage (speech is another new feature). For example, on one level you might have to destroy a swarm of killer bees who are plaguing the locals, then raze a fortress to the ground before finally making your way to the exit point. All the while, other monsters and wizards will be making life difficult for you, so although acquiring mana isn't enough to complete a level, it's just as important because you can't cast any spells without it.

All this makes Magic Carpet 2 a far more interesting game to play than the original. And that's a good thing. But there's more. The world of Magic Carpet looked pretty much the same all over, but Magic Carpet 2 is more var- ▶



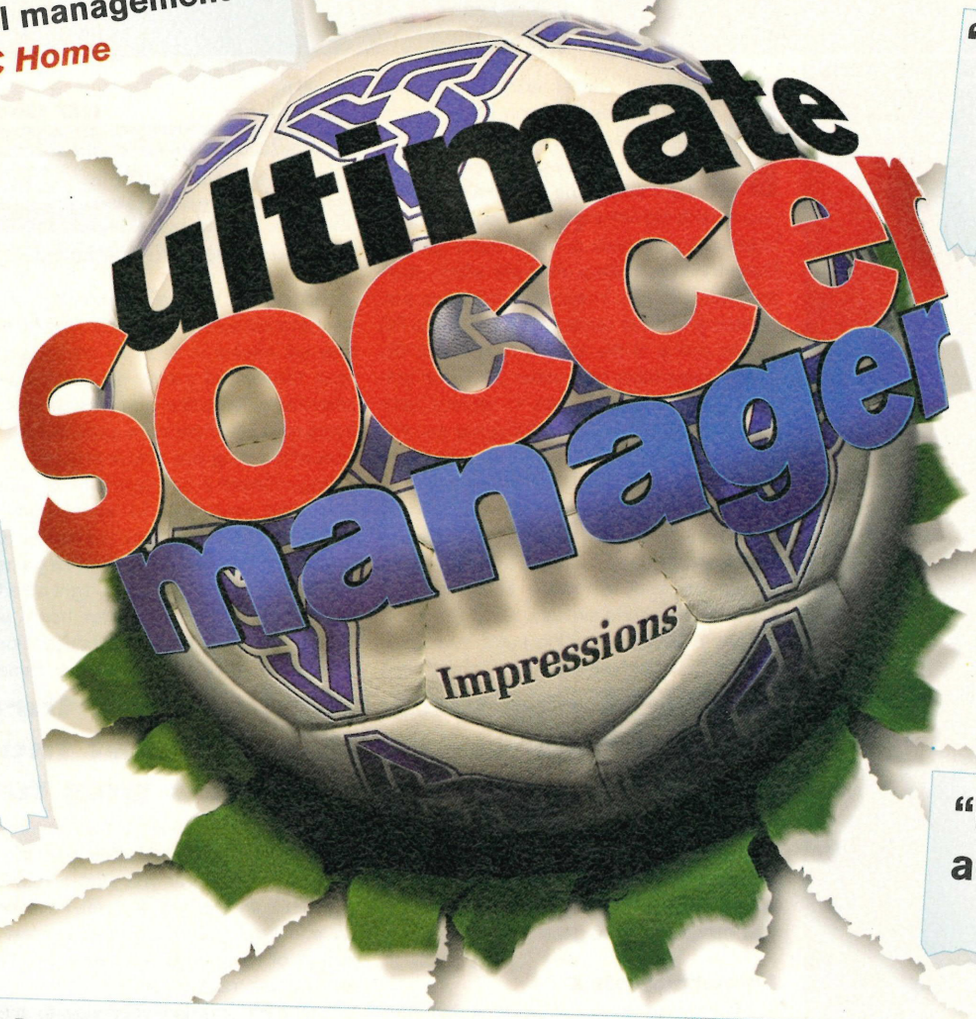
◀ *Trying to kill an enemy wizard is difficult — he'll keep coming back to life unless you destroy his castle first. Easier said than done.*

Still the BEST!

...~~X~~...~~X~~...9 weeks at Number 1*

"My PM3 has just been relegated and USM promoted to the premier league of football management games" *84% PC Home*

"USM is the best yet" *85% PC Format Silver Award*



"Without doubt the best footy management sim we have come across" *94% Gamesmaster*

"Dangerously addictive" *89% PC Power*

"Get out there and buy it!" *92% Amiga Action Accolade Award*

"A highly playable management game with great options to play any team and do away with much of the boring finance" *84% PC Attack*

"Really, and when all's said and indeed done, a rather smashing footie management sim" *85% Amiga Format*

"If PM3 was Manchester United, then Ultimate Soccer Manager has set its roots in Ewood Park with Blackburn Rovers" *8/10 PC Review*

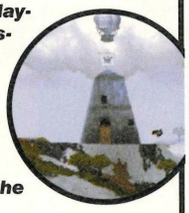
*All Format Gallup Chart

Impressions © 1995 Impressions, Unit 9, Princeton Court, Felsham Road, Putney, London SW15 1AZ.

SIERRA®

Light, dark and darker still

Not content with simple daylight, Bullfrog has spiced up Magic Carpet 2 with the addition of night-time and underground levels. But does this really make a difference or is it just cosmetic?



Common-or-garden daylight — by far the easiest environment to fly in. No rain, I notice, but then perhaps the Bullfrog boys have forgotten what it looks like. Just like the rest of us, then.

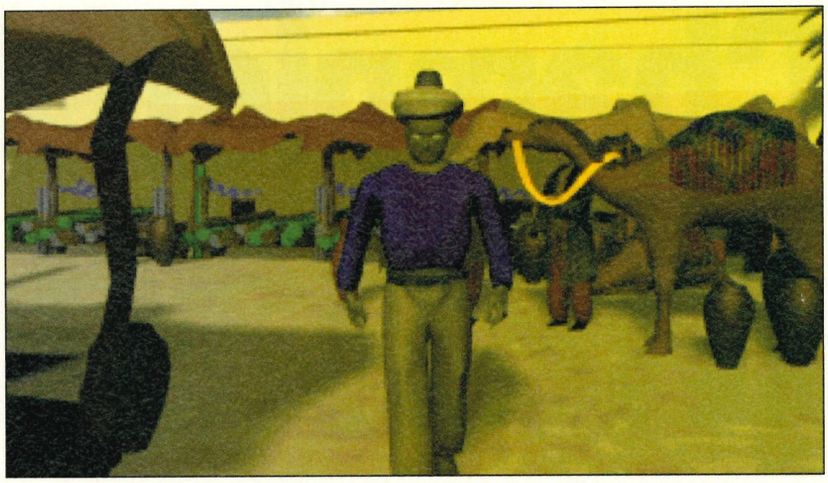


Flying can be hazardous after dark. Like, you can't really see where you're going. Unfortunately, carpets aren't equipped with headlamps, so you'll have to use your fireballs to light the way.



And this is how it looks in subterranea. Rather hell-like with all that lava, though I bet it's not as hot as PC Review towers at the moment. These levels are maze-like and quite hard to find your way around.

ied. Some levels are set in darkness, which makes spotting the enemy a damned sight more difficult and so you have to vary your strategy accordingly. And some levels are set underground. Being confined to a series of subterranean caverns means that you have less freedom to move around. You can't always escape from monsters by flying away, and you often have to solve simple puzzles just to find your way out of the labyrinth. So once again, you need a whole different approach.



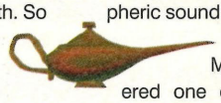
◀ ***The intro sequence is, perhaps, the only part of Magic Carpet 2 that isn't quite as good as the original. This is the hero, and it has to be said that he walks a bit like Robocop after he's been out in the rain for too long. The demon's quite nice, though.***

Whether it's day or night, bees are bad news, the buzzy little sods. The meteor spell is pretty good for getting rid of them, I find. ▶

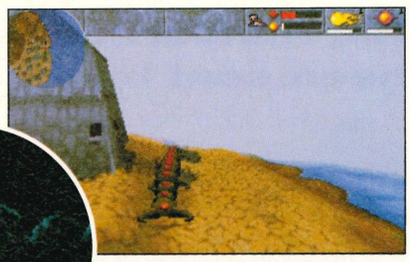


buildings and living creatures into the ground, fake mana which explodes if an enemy tries to possess it (mana takes the form of golden balls which you must change to your own colour before you can use it) and many others. You can find out more about new spells by reading the preview featured in Issue 46.

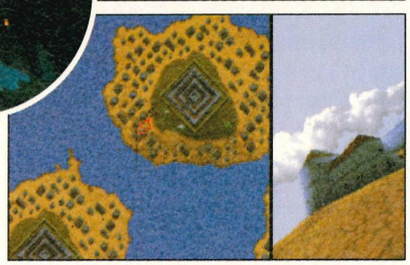
So, there's an awful lot more going on in this game than there was in the original Magic Carpet. If you never played Magic Carpet, don't bother; this is a whole lot better. If you did play it but (unlike most of us) didn't think much of it, then you'll find Magic Carpet 2 a lot more satisfying because it is so much more varied. And if you played it and liked it, then this game offers a new set of challenges all guaranteed to reawaken your interest in underfoot furnishings. That's without even mentioning the multiplayer network game, the rendered introduction sequence, the atmospheric sound and everything else which goes to make this game unmissable.



Magic Carpet might be considered one of the seminal games of the decade, but it doesn't even come close to this remarkable sequel. It's rather like comparing an antique Persian rug to that nasty nylon stuff they use to cover the floors of Heathrow Airport's Terminal 4. Oh alright, I'm being a little unfair. Carpet was great in its day and so on. But Magic Carpet 2 has surpassed its predecessor in every department. Utterly brilliant or, as a mate of mine is given to saying, excellent. Damn those Bullfrog people. Can they do no wrong?



◀ ***Remember those giant worm-things from the first game? Well, this is how they look now. Just as big and ugly, but with a tad more colour. Best avoided, I think.***



◀ ***Lost? Press Return to bring up the big map. You'll still be able to see where you're going because the 3D view is retained on the right-hand side of the screen.***



▲ ***Press Control to select spells. As with Carpet 1, you can keep a different spell on each mouse button.***

Now that's magic!

Then there's the new, improved spell-casting system. This time around, you don't just collect spells and use them willy-nilly. If you favour a particular spell, you will become adept at casting it and will therefore gain access to a more powerful version of the same spell. A basic fireball might not do a lot of damage, but the souped-up level four version almost certainly will. In addition, there are new spells such as the gravity well which sucks

PCR VERDICT

Type: .....*Rug-related action*
Publisher: *Bullfrog/Electronic Arts*
Price: *£44.99*
Contact: .....*(01483) 579399*

Carpet was a very hard act to follow, but this tramples it underfoot. Mercilessly.

9



ALTERNATIVELY

Terminal Velocity
US Gold
Rated 8, Issue 47
Less of the old Eastern magic, more in the way of future shock, lasers and high-tech action. But this the dazzling 3D landscapes, freedom of movement and mass destruction is much in the same vein as Bullfrog's opus. And pretty smart it is too

High Octane
Bullfrog/Electronic Arts
Rated 8, Issue 46
Well, it's made by the same company and the game engine looks kind of similar to Carpet's — a bit of a weak alternative I know. Which goes to show that Carpet 2 is out on its own, really. Still, this is a decent arcade racer that's a great network game.

Championship Manager 2

Rik Henderson takes a look at the sequel that's been sent by the deity of football management.

CD ONLY

Minimum PC: 486 33MHz

Minimum memory: 8Mb

Minimum graphics: SVGA

Sound: All soundcards

I'm a bit sad really. I'm the type of football fan that watches the entire 90 minutes of teletext football score-lines every Saturday, just to keep updated during the day. My favourite reading material is the News Of The World Football Annual, which is the football equivalent of the London regions' A-L 'phone book. And I like nothing better than to play football quizzes down the pub with my mates (if indeed I have any left). I'm a football statistic-aholic and Championship Manager was my favourite game of all time.

But it was slow, boy was it slow. It was slower than Gazza would be if he had both his knees pointing in different directions. But it had stats, and I loved it. Now though, it's gone into retirement (and will probably pop-up managing some 'emerging' third world nation — ie, it'll most likely be around on budget soon) and there's a new prodigal son — in the shape of Championship Manager 2.

Come and have a go...

Just like Ryan Giggs has adopted some of the skills of George Best, and also added a lot of his own for the rigours of football today, so Championship Manager 2 has improved on its previous master. Basically, it's been completely rewritten. There's absolutely none of the original code remaining, although its roots still remain firmly planted in the statistical side of football management games. And this time we're not proffered a conversion of an Amiga game, this baby has been designed and coded entirely on the PC, and it shows.

Presentation is always the first thing you notice in any game, and there's so much improvement in this department I really don't know where to start.

I suppose the graphics are the best place really, and boy are you in for a visual treat. Get this — every single ground in the English and Scottish leagues (plus most of the

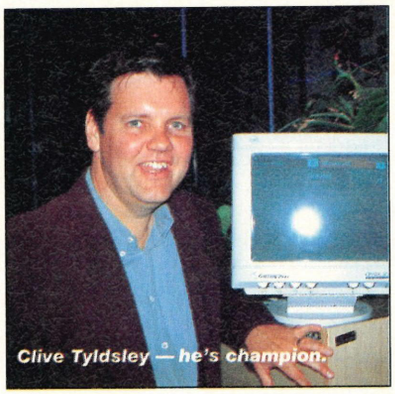


▲ *Every single transfer right up to the start of the season is up-to-date.*



▲ *This time the player's have a plethora of extra skill ratings.*

Clive Aid '95


Clive Tyldsley — he's champion.

Here's a joke for you... A new potato goes out with a King Edward, and her parents are happy. Unfortunately, she dumps him to go out with Clive Tyldsley, but her parents ban her from ever seeing him again because he's a commentator (common-tater). Geddit? Oh please yourselves. Seriously, Clive Tyldsley is the man behind the commentary on both the BBC and, now, Championship Manager 2. He recorded over 300 individual sound-bites that makes up the in-game speech, and that doesn't include the team names for every team in both England and Europe. And he had to say those in three different styles to be matched with different sentences. I bet he's feeling a little hoarse, but the Pony club will deny it of course.

major European ones) are faithfully scanned and dropped into the background of any respective matches. For instance, if you're playing at Port Vale, the club's home ground will be there staring you in the face. And whatever team you happen to be managing will have its home ground displayed during all the team selection and statistics process.

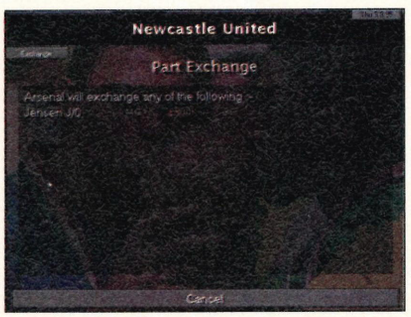
Another presentation goody is the hypertext functions that run throughout the entire game. You can be guaranteed that no matter what screen you are currently on, you'll be able to access a multitude of other areas in the game just by clicking on a player's name, a team name or other piece of information. And let's just say that in terms of information there's more data contained within this one sequel than Championship Manager and all of its data disks put together. Every player in the entire English four divisions is included and as up to date as they could possibly be. Plus there's every international team in the world too, all complete with their correctly-named playing staff. And it is here that another outstanding new feature rears its majestical head.



▲ ***The match statistics are very Sky Sports, but they're essential.***



▲ ***After, or during, each match you can have a complete player input breakdown.***

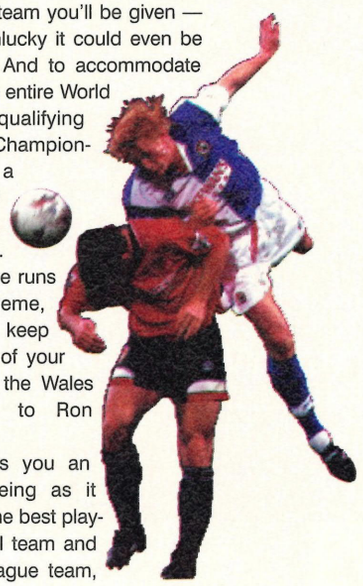


▲ ***Instead of just cash-based transfers you can also swap players.***

Please, don't shoot the manager

Unlike the first Championship Manager game, the task you're set as a footy manager second time around doesn't end when you've won the Premiership, the League Cup, The FA Cup and the Auto Windscreens Trophy (probably). This time you can be offered a job as an International boss. But it really depends on how successful you have been as a league manager as to which team you'll be given — and if you're really unlucky it could even be the England hotseat. And to accommodate this option, there's the entire World Cup (including qualifying rounds), European Championships (likewise), and a friendly structure to at least allow you to play one match per month. But, because the game runs with a calendar scheme, day-by-day, you also keep the management job of your own team (a bit like the Wales deal being offered to Ron Atkinson).

This probably gives you an unfair advantage seeing as it means you can spot the best players in the international team and buy them for your league team,



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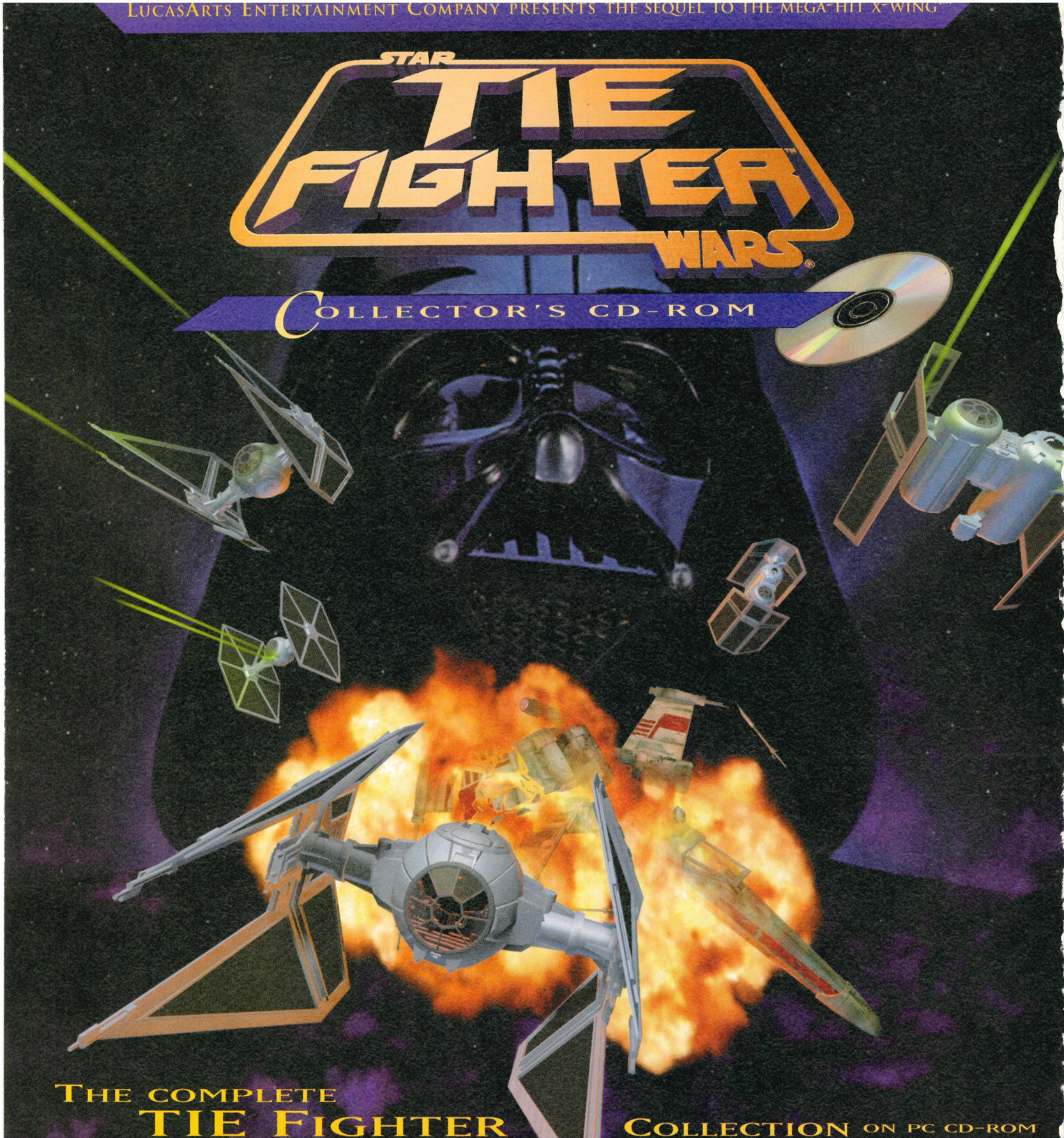

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but then watch any international anyway, regardless of your managerial status. And the beauty of the transfer structure is that you can make a bid on any player anywhere, at any-time (as long as the transfer deadline hasn't expired — and remember different countries have different deadlines).

The searchers

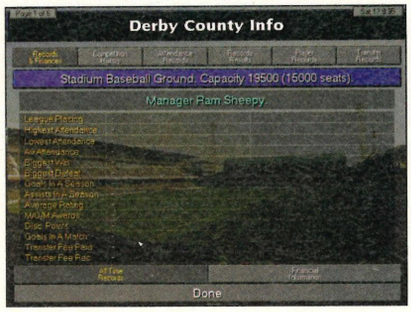
There's a huge transfer search utility that has more functions for searching than you'll ever need to use, but just clicking on a player name anywhere in the game (from the scorers list to a match statistic that shows how many tackles he's made) will bring up his individual statistics and options for putting in a bid, a player swap deal, or just keeping an eye on him. And this is only a short example of how the entire new game engine works.

ALTERNATIVELY

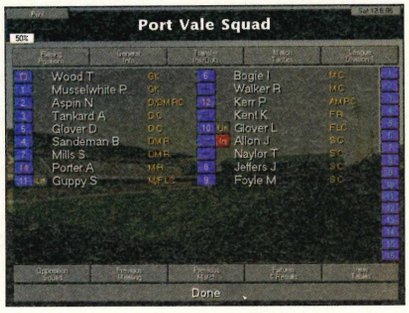
ULTIMATE SOCCER MANAGER
Issue 44 Rated 8
£34.99
Probably the fastest management game around, and it still juts out like a pier as the most user-friendly soccer game ever. If it could have been improved in any way, it's probably in the statistics side — a few more would not have gone amiss.

PLAYER MANAGER 2,
Issue 48 Rated 7
£29.99 disk/£34.99 CD
Reviewed this very issue over on page 91. This more arcadey style footy game contains a more playable action game within its bowels than Championship Manager 2. It's not as accurate to the beautiful game, but is still a good crack.

Although there truly is too much within Championship Manager 2 to delve into it in great depth (to be honest everytime you load it up you'll find something new you can do), one of its better highlights is the inclusion of commentary from BBC 1 master Clive Tyldsley. This is during the match-play itself, and really adds something new to what was one of the least impressive sections of the original Championship Manager game.



▲ ***Yep, you've guessed it. We are talking about a one way trip to statsville.***



▲ ***That really is the Port Vale stadium in the background.***



▲ ***The tactics can be moved around at will, and any formation is possible.***



▲ ***The league table will also propel you to any team's statistics.***



▲ ***Even in the European cups there's a boot-room load of teams, all of which have up-to-date playing staff details.***

Bar ban

Gone also are the three bars showing possession, and the repetitive type. And welcome in its place one long bar at the bottom showing just how the attacking possession is going. This is accompanied by less repetitive descriptive text, which on HD disk will be your lot, although it does work better than before.

On CD however, you also have the in-match commentary, and no it's not just in the form of, "it's a throw-in", during a throw-in. There are over 300 individual Clive Tyldsley samples, that all have mix and match properties (meaning that the inflection on the pronunciation of the team names will always fit the phrase being spouted). It almost gives the matches a radio feel to them, and it certainly helps on the atmosphere side of the proceedings.

Management magic

Funnily enough though, I don't care! I don't care that Championship Manager 2 has the best presentation ever in a football management game. I don't care if it sounds absolutely special beyond belief. To me all that matters is the statistics and the opportunity to manage any team I want. All I care about is that I want to be able to buy any player in the world and play in any tournament that exists. And I can. Because thanks to God for bringing me Championship Manager 2, now I blimmin' well can.

PCR VERDICT

Type: .....*Footy management*
Publisher: .....*Domark*
Price: *£44.99*
Contact: .....*(0181) 7802222*

Hallelujah! I have died and gone to statistically-based football management game heaven.

9





CD ONLY

Minimum PC: 486DX

Minimum memory: 8Mb

Minimum graphics: VGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Lords of

Forsooth, an eleven-year-old game doth make a come-back. Aye, and Gordon Houghton doth gird his loins for the quest

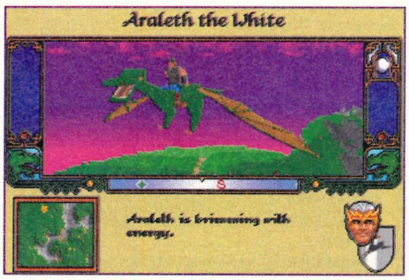




▲ *There are three main ways of moving around the game's huge map. You start on foot, which is slow going and means regular rest breaks. Wander down to a river and you'll find plenty of boats, which are almost as slow but much less tiring. Dragons are by far the most interesting and spectacular mode of travel — if you can find one.*

Leather jerkins, colourful hose and cross-laced furry boots are back in fashion. After a decade of pushing back the boundaries of strategy role-playing, Maelstrom's Mike Singleton has returned to his roots. The good news for those of you who played Lords of Midnight on the Spectrum is that this all-new game of the same name features much improved graphics, sound and gameplay.

The bad news is that the plot is just as corny. The expanded version, running to 95 dreary and cliche-ridden pages, comes as part of the package — but the basic story is this. The world is on the brink of collapse (again), knights have been summoned to sort it out (again) and there's a Talisman that can solve everything. The first crusade led by King Luxor (your dad) was a shambles, and ended when Luxor was captured by a moustache-twiddling evil despot known as Boroth the Wolfheart. Having worked thyself verily into a stroppy irk, thou decidest to rescue him.



▲ *Lord's of Midnight is packed with small but neat effects, from fractally-generated landscapes with towering cliffs, to the skies at dawn and dusk.*

The quest begins

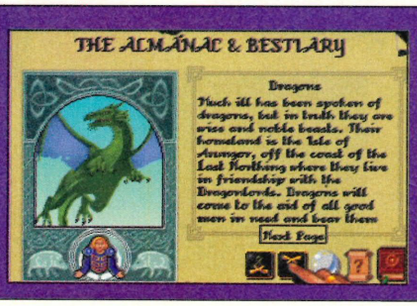
Lords of Midnight is structured like an interactive novel. It all begins with an Index Page which leads to other parts of the 'book': a map, a list of heroes and villains, an almanac and bestiary, a compendium of places, a list of fellowships and alliances against Boroth, and a chronicle of events. You can use up to six different books at once, effectively giving you half a dozen saved games.

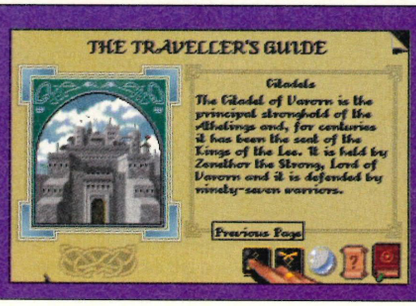
Once you've filtered the information from all the other sections, it's time to play the arcade/strategy/role-playing side of the game. The entire world is fractally generated using texture-mapped polygons, which is an impressive technical feat. The downside is that the display is VGA-only, and it looks pretty ordinary compared to the SVGA games released in the past couple of years. It also makes some of the text difficult to read.

Flexible

The big advantage to Lords of Midnight's 3D system is its flexibility. You can go wherever you like, rotate the view through 360 degrees,

▶ *LOM's efficient presentation includes almost instant access to a map, a list of heroes, a day-by-day chronicle of your travels, and an almanac and bestiary of 21 items and creatures.*



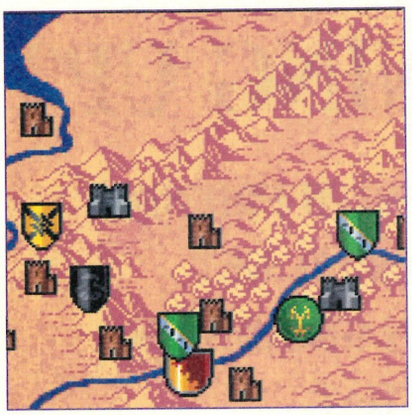




Midnight

▼ *Castles and citadels litter the land, and you can wander inside every one. Unfortunately it's nowhere near as exciting or varied as it sounds.*

▼ *The sheer size of the terrain in Lords of Midnight means that exploration can be a tad on the dull side.*





look up and down and select one of six remote camera angles. You can even let the computer do the work and simply watch your leader wander to his next destination.

Exploration itself is slightly tedious because most of the map has little to interest you, but there are three modes of transport which liven things up: walking, piloting a ship and flying on the back of a dragon. There's also plenty to do apart from directly controlling people. You can send characters off to different locations, instruct them to guard or seize strongholds, tell them to find artefacts, order them to attack, recruit, join, shadow or rescue other characters, or simply destroy something. You can recruit up to 24 people in all, and engage in a series of missions yourself on the way to Boroth's citadel.

Naturally, there are times when conversations break down and encounters lead to fights. The combat system is impressive, with both characters displayed in 3D and a single icon giving you a reasonable variety of attacking moves. There's also an element of luck which can occasionally help you defeat a more powerful opponent.

Strong strategy

As with all of Mike Singleton's games, the strategic elements in Lords of Midnight are virtually flawless, because there's so much you can do with your own characters and the enemy's moves constantly keep you on your toes. The arcade exploration sections are less satisfying because you often get the feeling you're aimlessly wandering around waiting for something to happen. The main problem is that the map is just too big, and the non-linear storyline means that you can explore for hours without really getting anywhere.

Even so, Lords of Midnight has plenty to recommend it to strategy fans — it's well designed, neatly structured and has a convincing sense of realism.

If a good strategy game is more important to you than a well-written story and state-of-the-art graphics, then I'd recommend you take a look at this. If you want an instant action fix however, forget it.

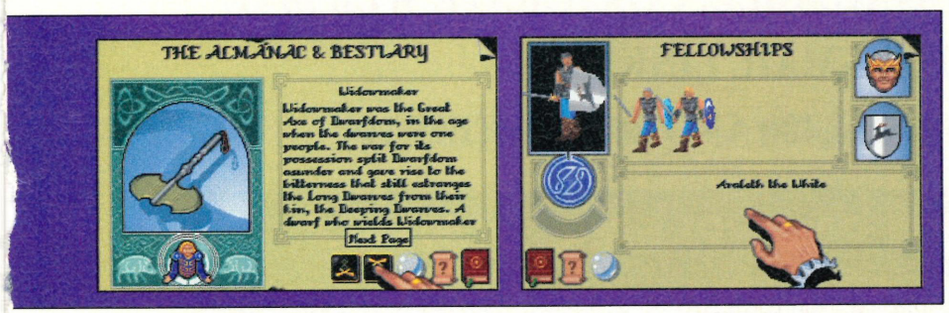
ALTERNATIVELY

DOOMDARK'S REVENGE
Not previously reviewed
Price: N/A
A bonus for fans of Mike Singleton's early work, is the inclusion on the CD of Lord's of Midnight's 64K Spectrum predecessors — Doomdark's Revenge and the original Lords of Midnight. Worth a brief look if you want a trip down Memory Lane.

MIDWINTER 2: FLAMES OF FREEDOM
Issue 5, Rated 7
Price £39.99
A futuristic strategy game set across 42 islands, Midwinter 2 is an immense achievement — but with masses of vehicles, personalities and acres of ground to cover, it's just a little too big. However, if you have the ability to persevere . . .

OPEN MIKE

Mike Singleton's experience in strategy RPGs is substantial, beginning in 1984 with the Spectrum version of Lords of Midnight. A Tolkien-esque epic that featured relatively crude still graphics (see Alternatively...), it enjoyed mainstream success and led to a sequel, Doomdark's Revenge. In the decade which followed, Singleton founded the all-British software company, Maelstrom, and went on to produce one of the most successful strategy games ever, Midwinter. Although its finest hour was on the Amiga and ST, PC Midwinter was and is a brilliant and manageable challenge. Set on a snow-bound island in a post-holocaust future, it's a superb combination of strategy, adventure and arcade action.

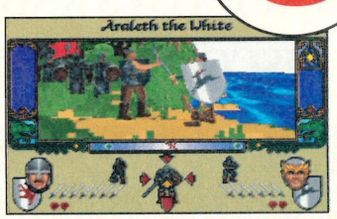


PCR VERDICT

Type: .....*Strategy/adventure*
Publisher: .....*Domark*
Price: *£39.99*
Contact:.....*(0181) 780 2222*

A big, sprawling adventure that's very strong on strategy, but a little too short on frills.

6



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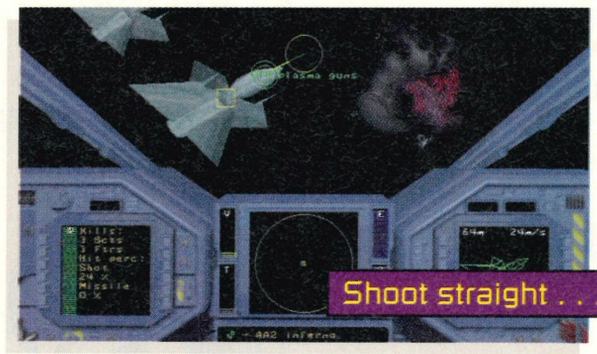

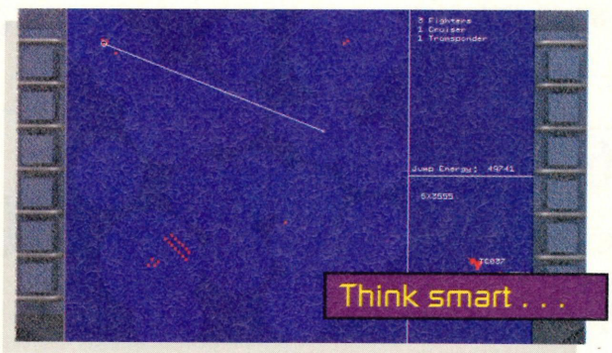





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The Big 3

Tanks. Some people keep goldfish in them, Martin Klimes finds them full of people all too keen on blowing each other up. C'est la guerre.

CD ONLY

Min. PC: 25MHz 386SX, Win 3.1

Minimum Memory: 4Mb

Minimum Graphics: VGA

Sound: Sound Blaster

What is it about strategy games? Like buses, videos and women, nothing happens for months on end and then they all turn up at once. Last year it was Battle Isle 2 clones; this year it's World War II games. Let's face it, you're going to be spoilt for choice if you're in the market for a tank-based wargame.

Not only that, but most of the new wave strategy games have been of very high quality. Panzer General set the standard for good quality tank and artillery games and was quickly followed by Across the Rhine, Perfect General II and now The Big 3. Unfortunately The Big 3 goes against this current trend, it's not a good quality strategy game.



▲ *Lots of units across the European theatre. The hexes are hidden but the movement is definitely hex-based.*





▲ *A different scenario, the exact same visuals. These never change throughout the game, no matter what you do. No intro scenes, cut scenes, or alternative views. This is it, folks.*



▲ *Tedious graphics-r-us, part three. This time some other units are doing something else at a different part of the war. Yawn, yawn, yawn, yawn, yawn.*

It isn't terrible; the VGA graphics are, quite frankly, boring, the sound is crap, and the game itself pretty snore-worthy. Not an auspicious start. But I would have even forgiven the computer for showing you how it rolls dice to simulate attacks, I would have overlooked the fact too that it uses arbitrary numbers to define events, yes, I would have ignored all of that, but for one fact — the game is just not fun. Because really I don't care how many years the historians spent making it realistic (let's face it, turn and hex-based games aren't realistic anyway) all I basically want is a game that will keep my attention into next week and beyond — a game that I want to use the head-to-head play options on. Unfortunately, this is not it.

Tedious

While companies such as SSI and Avalon Hill struggle to convince us that strategy games really are fun for the masses (an uphill task in itself), products like this set their cause back several years. If you think of wargames as tedious old hex-based affairs with extremely dull graphics, then The Big 3 wouldn't do anything to change your opinion. Which is a real shame because there are plenty of excellent examples of the genre. This, unfortunately, isn't one of them.

PCR VERDICT

Type: .....*Strategy wargame*

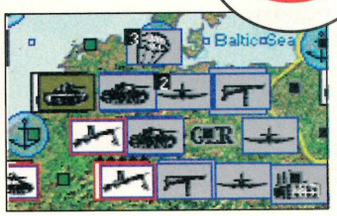
Publisher: .....*Warner Interactive*

Price: *£29.00*

Contact:.....*(0171) 391 4300*

Alleged stunning authenticity does nothing to make this better than similar games.

5



▲ *Believe me, its playability isn't any more exciting than its visuals. Hardcore wargamers and newbies alike will be equally amazed by its soporific value.*

Buried In Time

Is this an adventure, a puzzle game or a history lesson? Gordon Houghton takes his time finding out.

CD ONLY

Minimum PC: 486DX, Windows 3.1

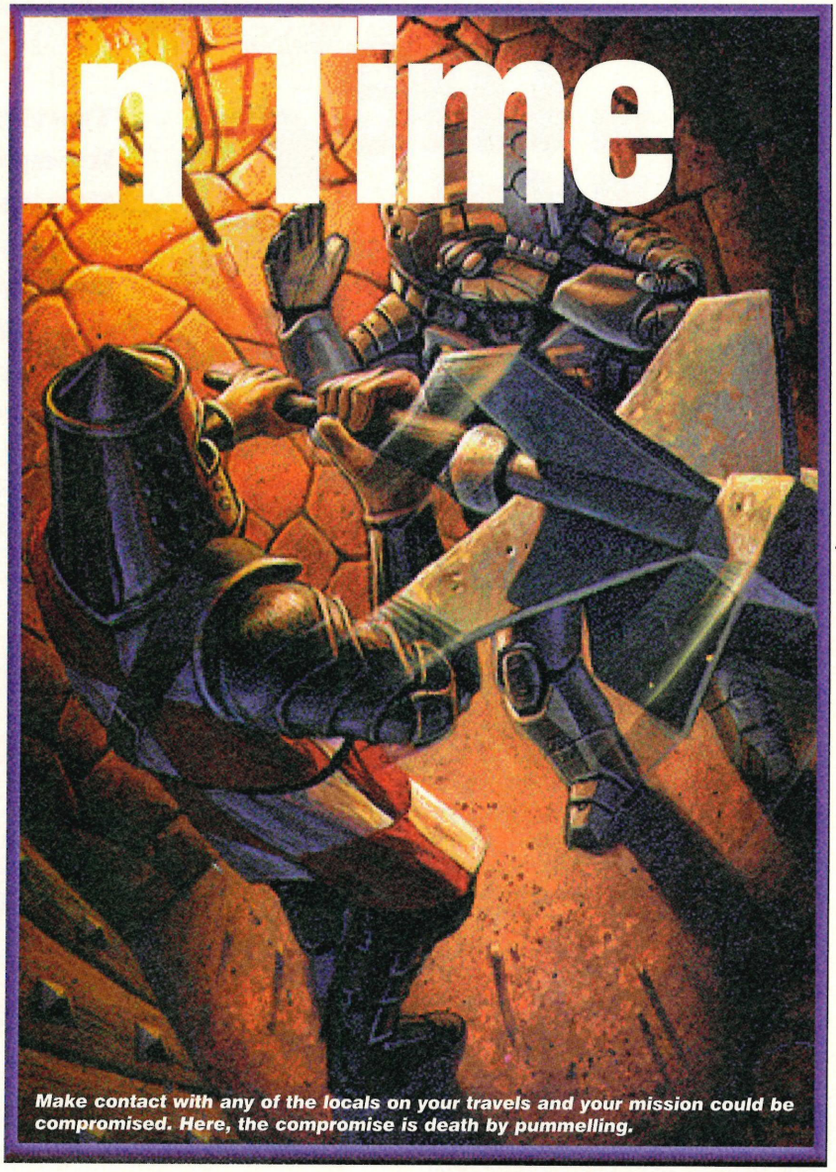
Minimum memory: 8Mb

Minimum graphics: SVGA

Sound: All Windows comp cards

▼ ***The puzzles aren't frighteningly hard.***





Make contact with any of the locals on your travels and your mission could be compromised. Here, the compromise is death by pummelling.

Despite what people tell you, size *is* important. Take Full Motion Video (FMV), for example. FMV is tiny. It uses only a fraction of the screen so you have to squint to catch details, the people you see are pint-sized, and you're never quite sure what's going on in the background. Judging from the screen shots on the box, Buried In Time has managed to conquer this problem with a display that can cope with thousands of colours to produce photo-realistic backdrops and animations. Unfortunately, my monitor only handles the more typical 800x600 256-colour SVGA display, and the results are what you see on this page. In either mode, the action area is still teensy.

Publishers' excuses for explaining away a small viewing window are inventive to say the least. In The Daedalus Encounter (see Alternatively, below right), you are a brain encased in a robotic shell that includes a quarter-screen video display. In Buried In Time you're a time traveller in a 24th Century jumpsuit, connected to the world by an external camera. Your name is Gage Blackwood and you've been wrongly accused of altering the past. Your job is to find out why.

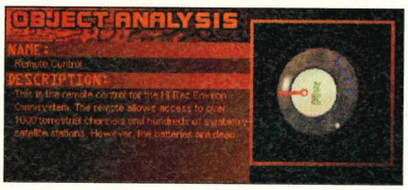
Multiple plots

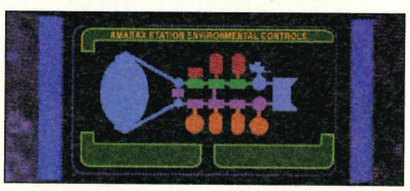
The jumpsuit — given to you by yourself in a complex opening sequence which deftly interweaves multiple plots — is equipped with the kind of gadgets that cyberpunk fans drool over. Apart from the viewing window, there are navigation buttons, a message display, an inventory and a collection of biochips. The biochips allow the jumpsuit to do anything from accessing data files and collecting evidence to leaping through time and rendering you invisible.

To clear your name you need to collect evidence of temporal interference from four time zones. Every zone is very different from the others, and all have their own musical accompaniment, visual style, puzzles and atmosphere. They are all well designed and give a convincing sense of the future, the middle ages, the Renaissance and 11th Century Central America.

Not everything is so well executed — exploration, for one, is a bit clumsy. You don't get true 360-degree movement because the controls only allow you to turn in 90-degree steps, look up or down, and move forwards. This means that you're pretty much limited to predefined pathways in each landscape, and you can't retreat without first turning around.







▲ ***The viewing window may be small but it performs a wide range of functions. As well as accessing half a dozen biochip menus, it allows you to examine inventory objects, interface with other computer systems and study the surrounding area.***

TRAVEL ZONES ONE TO FOUR

Once you've recovered from the bewildering opening sequence and gathered a couple of useful objects, your primary mission is to clear your name. You start by exploring four time zones, solving puzzles, picking up historical clues and avoiding the locals along the way.

FARNSTEIN LAB: AD 2247

Landing aboard the deep space research station Amarax, you have to find out why a disaster is about to occur, and how four artificially-intelligent beings were created.



DA VINCI'S STUDIO: AD 1488

No one knows what happened to Leonardo da Vinci between 1482 and 1489, except that he was probably commissioned to create some designs for military devices.



CHICHEN ITZA: AD 1050

This is the capital of the ancient Mayan empire. Your job is to discover why the Toltecs were allowed to stay.



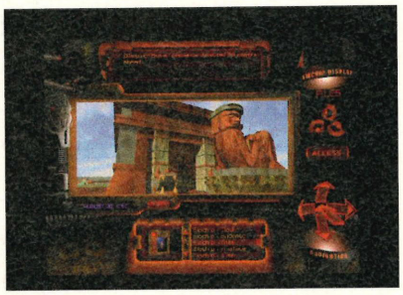
CHATEAU GAILLARD: AD 1204

Formerly the Normandy outpost of Richard the Lionheart. Here you must learn why it succumbed to Augustus.





▲ *What time period is this then? Judging from the look of the decor I'd say it was the time that taste forgot.*



▲ *I'd like a room with a view please.*

Unlike a Goblin Teasmaid, your jumpsuit won't wake you up in the morning with a nice hot cuppa. It can do just about everything else, though. ▼



Using the biochips is slightly awkward, too. If you want to visit a new time zone for example, you have to click on a word, then an icon, then access the menu, then read a mission briefing and finally make the leap. It's a process which speeds up as you get used to it, but a single icon would have sufficed.

Watch out



Behind its superb (if small) graphics, Buried in Time is a good, solid graphic adventure. There's an intriguing story which throws up plenty of surprises, the puzzles are tough without being irritating, and there are a wide variety of objects to collect and use elsewhere. The locations aren't huge and the action can become a little linear, but the plot and the quality of the effects just about makes up for these shortcomings.

Apart from the in-game interface the presentation is good, too. There's a walkthrough mode for novices and an adventure mode for everyone else, you get a pre-game demonstration of the controls and an intro sequence, and even though the game comes on three CDs you're not constantly swapping discs.

The whole package is polished. The acting is very good, there's a great atmosphere, and there are some pretty nifty visual and aural moments. The rating is based on the limitations of the 486DX2 I used for the review; if you've got a Pentium and a display capable of handling thousands of colours, you can add an extra mark.

PCR VERDICT

Type: .....*Graphic adventure*
Publisher: .....*US Gold*
Price: *£39.99*
Contact: .....*(0121) 6253366*

A simple adventure with outstanding graphics and sound. A pity the viewing window is so small.

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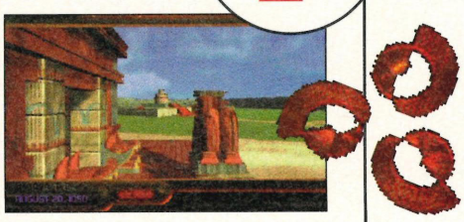


ALTERNATIVELY

THE 7TH GUEST
Issue: 20 Rated: 7
Price: £39.99

Virgin's ground-breaking ghost story heralded the dawn of CD software with superb full-motion video graphics. It's a shame the gameplay (a selection of weak puzzles) is so mediocre.

THE DAEDALUS ENCOUNTER
Issue: 45 Rated: 6
Price: £44.99

Another three-disc epic, this is notable mainly for employing a digitized Tia Carrere. It's more linear and less satisfying than Buried in Time, but the tough puzzles should keep you interested for a while.

Mech

CD ONLY
Min PC: 66MHz 486DX2, MS-DOS 5.0
Minimum Memory: 8Mb
Minimum Graphics: SVGA
Sound: Sound Blaster compatible

Fed up with having sand kicked in his face, Pat "7-stone weakling" Fox straps himself into a huge mechanised battle suit and seeks revenge.



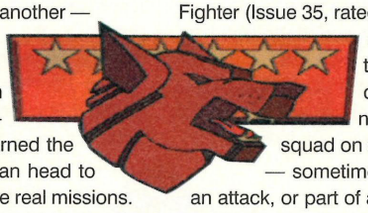
▲ *A mechwarrior takes some time off to roast his chestnuts.*

For those who are ignorant of such things, the BattleTech universe (in which Mech Warrior 2 is set) has its origins in the murky world of role-playing games. Originally a board game, it evolved into a series of books and even a cartoon series. Mech Warrior 2 gives you the chance to pilot a battlemech, the enormous walking arsenal that is the favoured weapon of BattleTech warriors.

The presentation is hard to fault. The game opens with what is possibly the most impressive intro sequence ever to appear on the PC — apparently produced by the people responsible for some of the special effects in Terminator 2 and True Lies. It really has to be seen to be believed. Once into the game you are presented with the choice of becoming a Wolf or Falcon clan member — the warring factions whose conflicts form the core of the game — and you are then treated to another impressive animated intro. It all adds to your impatience to get out there in the field.

Training wheels

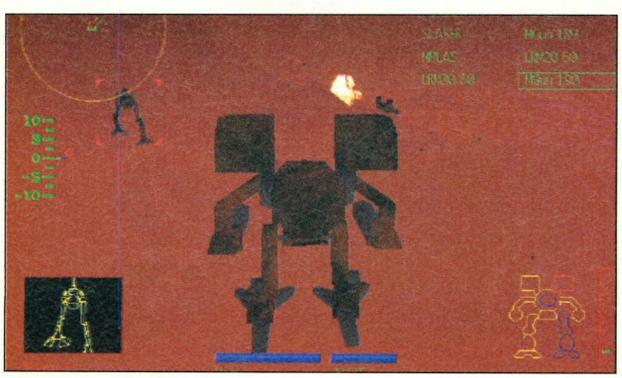
However, your first task is to grab your first battlemech and undergo basic training. Again this is slickly handled, comprising a series of lessons in the basic handling of the battlemech — steering, navigation, combat and so forth — under the guidance of a veteran mech warrior. Controlling a 'mech isn't the easiest task in the world. Much like a tank, it is possible to travel in one direction while facing another — a skill that must be mastered if you are to survive the real skirmishes later in the game. Once you've completed basic training and earned the rank of mech warrior, you can head to the ready room and begin the real missions.



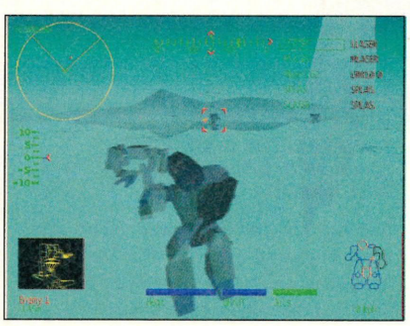
Your assignments fall into one of three basic categories: destroy, defend, or inspect. All involve a certain amount of dogfighting with enemy 'mechs — which is, after all, the raison d'être of the game. Unfortunately, despite the mass of background information you are supplied with, there really is little sense of working towards a goal. If anything, however, it is the mission structure that lets the game down. I cannot help but compare it to LucasArts' TIE Fighter (Issue 35, rated 8), where the missions always had a clear relationship with an ongoing campaign, and you were not always a single squad on some disjointed mission — sometimes you were supporting an attack, or part of an enormous offensive.

In Mech Warrior 2, however, the missions are always one-off attacks. You can have up to two starmates (wingmen) on certain missions, but there are never any other groups of your forces around. While there's a variety of 'mechs available, the battles can become a bit repetitive. Run around, shoot, get shot, run around a bit more — perhaps I'm missing the strategic possibilities, but I doubt it.

The intelligence of the other players is somewhat limited too. Why is it that when you assign your starmate to a formation, he isn't smart enough to break formation long enough to walk around a mountain, instead of into it? The same applies to your enemies — they will attempt to get to you by the quickest route possible, even if that means vainly bashing their armour-plated heads into a cliff. Even the meanies in Doom are smarter than that.

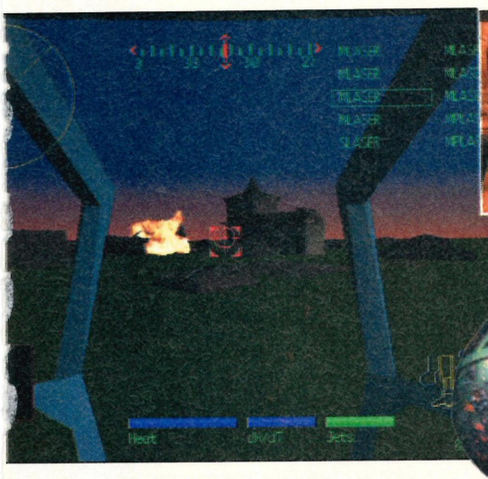


▼ *Mickey Mouse had reached his last stand.*



▲ *Wahoo! Strap on your skis, it's time to hit the piste.*

Warrior 2







▲ *It's great fun torching buildings! Especially tax offices!!!*

Poetry in motion

The graphics are very attractive. The 'mechs are beautifully detailed, and animated using motion capture to give them an appropriately humanoid gait. The landscapes are genuinely varied; there are numerous different environments, from desert worlds to barren moons and ice worlds, which, combined with varying light and fog effects, mean that you really do get a very good sense of atmosphere.

For all that I have criticised Mech Warrior 2, it is still a highly enjoyable and very playable game — I wouldn't hesitate in recommending it if you are after a good combat sim. It's just a shame that it is frequently let down by poor mission structure.

PCR VERDICT

Type: .....*Combat sim*
Publisher: .....*Activision*
Price: *£44.99*
Contact:.....*(0181) 742 9400*

Not as good as it might have been, but is good enough if you like this sort of thing.

7









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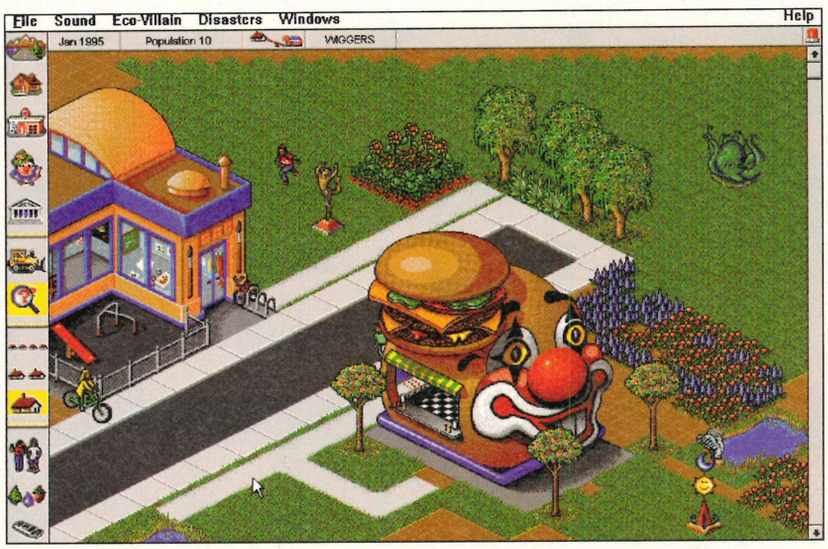
Minimum memory: 8Mb

Minimum graphics: SVGA

Sound: Any Windows comp card

Sim City has given birth to a healthy, 8Mb RAM-eating child. Mike "godfather of games" Wigley was at the baptism....

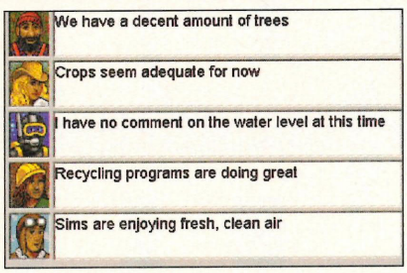
Sim Town



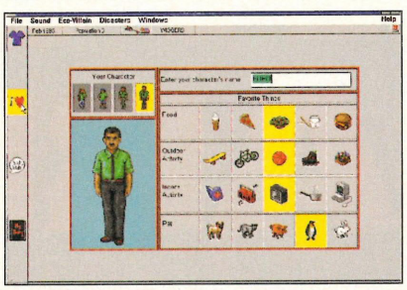
▲ ***The icons on the side bar represent all the facilities available to you. These range from roads and paths, to leisure activities and buildings.***



◀ ***There's a real variety of property design in my town — everything from adobe huts to stockbroker Tudor. And what the hell is that penguin doing there?***



◀ ***Hey! Your town is prospering fine. No need to panic. Looks like you are leading the popularity stakes.***



◀ ***Meet Fred. He likes playing basketball and watching telly, and his pet is... a penguin? Ah, so that's what it was doing outside that house. He really ought to keep it locked up, you know.***

The very mention of computer games is enough to send any concerned parent into a cold sweat. They probably tell you how too much time in front of the computer has transformed their adorable angel into a bloodthirsty little monster who isn't happy unless he's ripping heads off in Mortal Kombat or blasting demons in Doom.

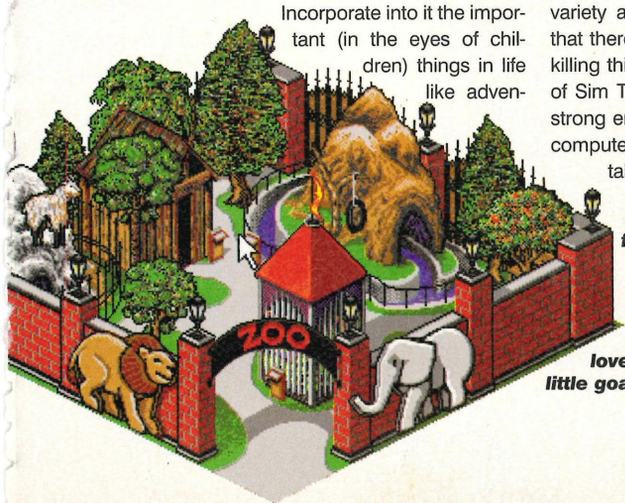
Well, it isn't all Doom and gloom. Maxis encourages young and old alike to rediscover their sense of playfulness in the easy-to-do follow-up to the immensely popular Sim City.

Cheery stuff

Where Sim City was big, brash, and based on finance, Sim Town is smaller, colourful and based around fun. The scenario's the same — build a complete and prosperous place to live. Incorporate into it the important (in the eyes of children) things in life like adventure playgrounds, pizza parlours, cinemas and sweet shops, and Utopia might be a reality.

As you would expect from a game developed for the younger end of the market, the interface is simplistic. Drag and click is the order of the day. Need a house? No problem. Find the design and colour of your liking, point to it with your mouse, drag it from the menu and drop it where you think the occupiers might like to live. You are able to gauge just how well you are doing by conversing with the human population (the animals don't have a lot to say) and finding out their opinions. If they are disgruntled, they will soon let you know.

Sim Town *should* be able to offer enough variety and diversity for your kids to realise that there is also a lot of fun to be had in *not* killing things. What do my own children think of Sim Town? I couldn't tell you. They aren't strong enough yet to drag me away from the computer... but I'm definitely going to have to take the casters off my chair.



So long as there are crops in the fields, water in the lake and trees to build with, your town should flourish. ▶

◀ ***How about a zoo? This should please the residents. Lots of lovely animals. Look at that cute little goat on that rock on the left. Ahh....***

PCR VERDICT

Type: .....*Simulation*

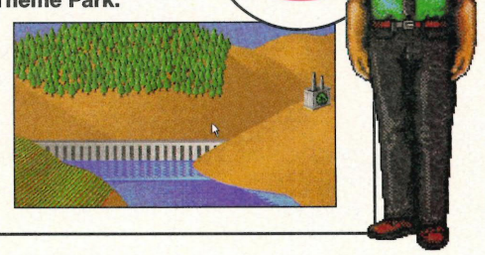
Publisher:.....*Maxis*

Price:.....*£29.99*

Contact:.....*(0171) 490 2333*

A great game for youngsters, but older kids will probably have more fun with Bullfrog's Theme Park.

8



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CD ONLY

Minimum PC: 486 33Mhz
Minimum Memory: 4Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA
Sound: All sound cards

3D Lemmings

The suicidal little green things are back and this time they're in 3D. Oh yes. Adam Peters holds his head in his hands and sobs.

The beauty of the Lemmings series is the simplicity of the games. The fact that the gameplay is solely concerned with solving the puzzle, seeing where the obstacles are, working out the way through. When you start messing around by making the whole thing 3D — because, hey, all the best-selling games are 3D nowadays — you lose all the simplicity, most of the appeal, and a large chunk of the player's patience.

Only a tiny fraction of the level can be seen at any one time in a detailed enough size. So you have to use the slider at the side of the screen to move up and down. Use the cursor to zoom in and out and rotate. Make full use of four different camera positions plus Virtual





Lemming mode (Doom without the weapons or the ability to move). It's just like... well, just like a CAD package. An interface infinitely better suited to designing a car than playing a puzzle game. Even on a fast machine, there is a noticeable air of sluggishness. It takes you longer to work out what the level actually consists of than it does to solve the puzzle. I love Lemmings, it's one of my favourite games, but I wouldn't play this again if you nailed my feet to the floor and goaded me with a cattle prod.

PCR VERDICT

Type: .....*Puzzle game*
Publisher: .....*Psygnosis*
Price: *£39.99*
Contact:.....*(0151) 282 3000*

As utterly pointless and silly an idea as 3D Scrabble. It made me cry. No really.

3



the cranberries
doors and windows



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DT0003

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Player Manager 2



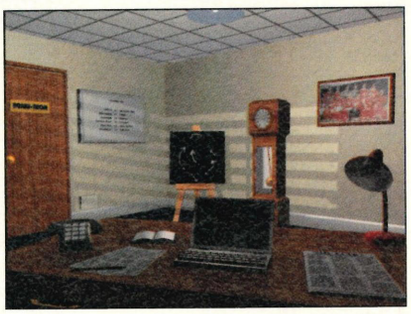
CD AND DISK
Minimum PC: 386 40MHz
Minimum memory: 4Mb
Minimum graphics: SVGA
Sound: Sound Blaster and comp.

Rik Henderson is all set to manage his local Sunday league football team. Perhaps he'll pick up a few tips from PM2.

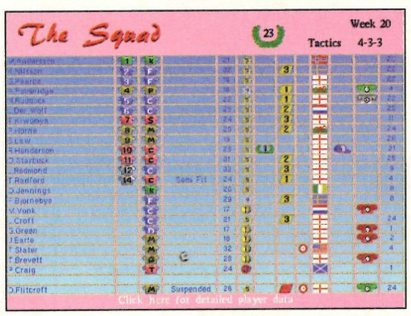
As I write this review I've just come back from the latest West London Amateur FA general meeting. I've just agreed to manage the Sunday league team Diss United. The team, I hasten to add, that won only two games out of 21 last year, and left its previous manager Chris in tears (and financial ruin). I will, in future, have to put up with excuses like, 'Er, sorry Rik I can't play this week, I lost my P.E. kit.' Let's just face it, it's a thankless task being a manager. Sadly, most of the games about the subject are just as unrewarding (save for Championship Manager, Premier Manager 3 and Ultimate Soccer Manager), but here comes Anco's efforts to raise a smile and, in football terms, it's got a nice, tight perm.

Not money for old rope

But Player Manager 2 is not any old sequel, oh no. Its engine has been completely rewritten from scratch and this time out you get to play, wait for it, a player manager of a second division team (I got Walsall, hmmm). Not only that, but you can also either go through the game in managerial role (seeing yourself play, but not actually taking part) or play the games in an arcade style. You also get to choose what you want to do at the start of each match, rather than at the beginning of the entire game, which means if you're getting thrashed week in week out because your joypad skills are nil, you can always reset your option so that you let the computer take over.



▲ *This is my office, but where all the piles of magazines are on the desk (and the two-day old chewy on the clock)?*

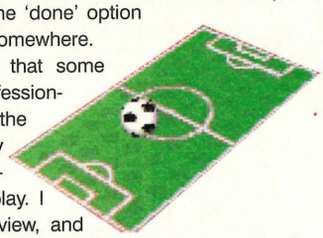


▲ *The team list. Diss United's list is scribbled on the back of a beer mat (and usually lost by the next morning).*

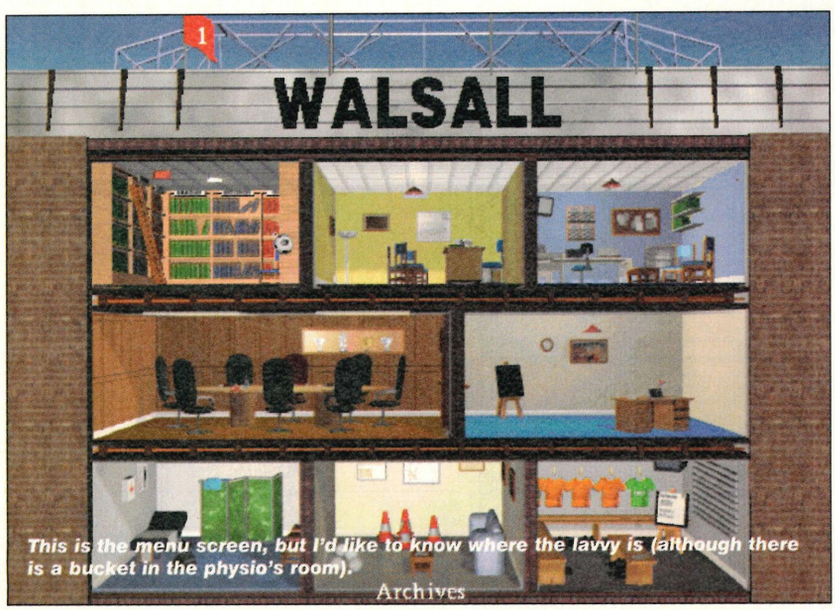
The main interface is shown as a Super VGA rendered office complex, with different rooms for different tasks. Your office is where you'll spend most time, choosing your squad and checking out the transfer market. But you'll soon discover that a visit to every room is just about vital after every game if you actually want to do well. This doesn't take very long, as they're well-drawn and simple to get around (in fact during the Christmas games your office is decorated and plays a version of 'Hark The Herald Angels Sing' in the background).

And funnily enough, it is in presentation that Player Manager 2 fights an inner battle. On one side there's the extremely pretty presentation screens that make it enjoyable rather than a chore to stare at stats for hours on end, — even Alan Hansen pops up occasionally to give his pundit-like opinions of the matches coming up.

On the other hand, the spelling in the newspaper reports is awful (for instance they often report the wrong player names), and sometimes you don't know where to click on the screen to escape because the 'done' option has sneaked off to the right somewhere.



Now I realise of course, that some people would find this unprofessional, and consider that it gets in the way of what is actually a very good departure into management crossed with arcade play. I don't, and as this is my review, and therefore my opinion, I can ignore such mistakes and jolly well enjoy myself despite them. I like Player Manager 2 and so should you, so there!



This is the menu screen, but I'd like to know where the lavvy is (although there is a bucket in the physio's room).

Archives

PCR VERDICT

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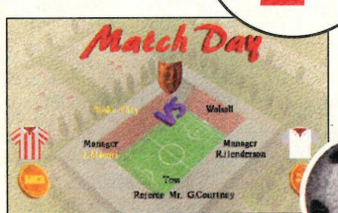
Publisher: .....*Anco*
Price: .....*£29.99 disk/£34.99 CD*
Contact: .....*(01322) 292513*

More fun than most management games, and addictive too. Lacks a bit of polish though.

7







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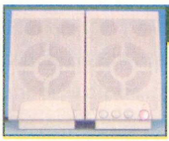

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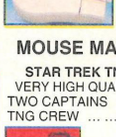

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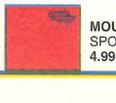

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CyberBykes

CD AND DISK

Min PC: 33MHz 486SX, DOS 5.0

Minimum memory: 8Mb

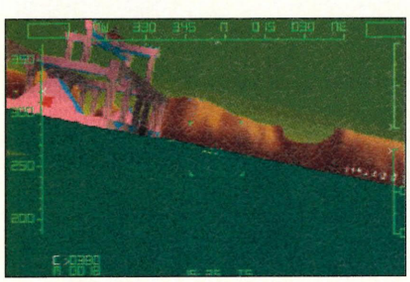
Minimum graphics: VGA

Sound: Sound Blaster, Ultrasound

Pat Fox always wanted a Norton 750 and a stretch of open road to ride on. Unfortunately, he got CyberBykes instead.

Sometimes, a game looks great, but has terrible gameplay. Then again, sometimes a game looks awful, but is great fun to play. And sometimes, just sometimes, a game rises above the norm and manages to look great *and* be great fun to play. CyberBykes, however, defies all probability and somehow manages both to look awful and play like a dog.

After a dull and utterly preposterous intro about future wars being fought by heavily-armed, remotely controlled motorbikes (of course! What a great idea!), you are presented with a choice of arenas from around the world (including, bizarrely, South Slough) and the option to customise your bike. The more weaponry you carry, the heavier and less manoeuvrable it becomes, but to be honest the difference it makes in the game is less than noticeable.

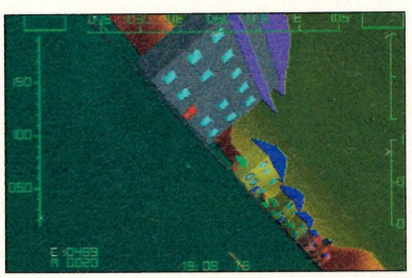


▲ ***Well, the landscapes sure are colourful. Colourful, but sparse and boring.***

▼ ***This is you, sprinting to the rescue of all the known world. Hurray for you.***







▲ ***Help! I'm trapped in Legoland and I can't escape!***

Somebody help me

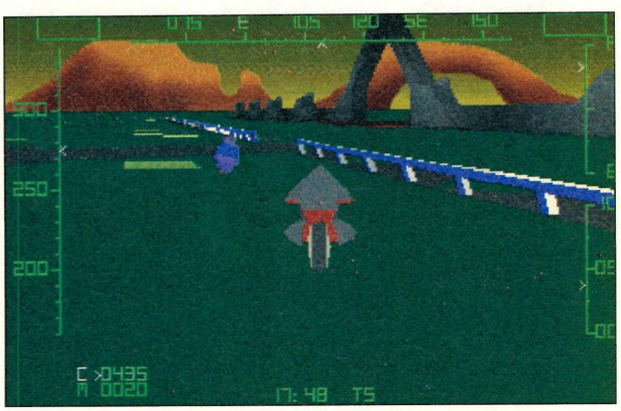
It's not until you're actually out there in the "virtual arena" that you really appreciate just how crap the graphics are in this game — the screenshots on this page really can't do justice to them. The fact that the game supports resolutions up to 1280x1024 is largely irrelevant — it still looks like it was written half a decade ago, with simplistic 3D polygon shapes, no texture mapping, and poor shading.

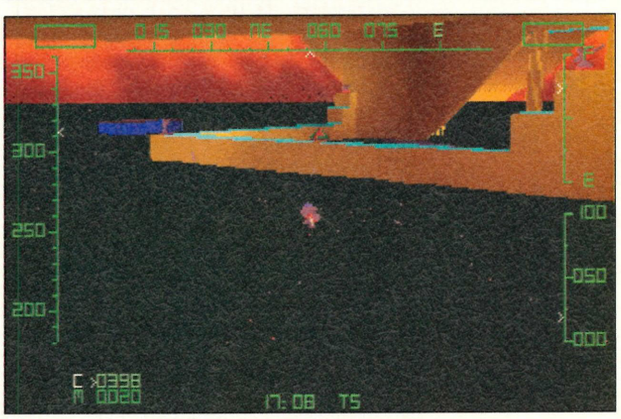
Of course, one might forgive CyberBykes its drab exterior if a worthwhile game was to be found somewhere underneath. But if there is one here, it's very well hidden.

In single-player mode for instance, you simply beetle about the sparse landscapes, trying to shoot at your enemies and avoid their missiles while collecting power-ups that will upgrade or fix your bike. It's all monumentally yawn-inducing.

The game is saved slightly by the inclusion of network and modem options, but really, there are much better multiplayer games out there more deserving of your time — Doom, Heretic and Descent to name but three.

Unfortunately, it just can't be avoided. CyberBykes is a bad idea, poorly executed, and there's really no excuse for it. I can heartily recommend it to those looking for something to calm their nerves between extended sessions of watching the grass grow, or to rich masochists. Otherwise, avoid this one like you would Jeremy Beadle.





PCR VERDICT

Type: .....3D combat game

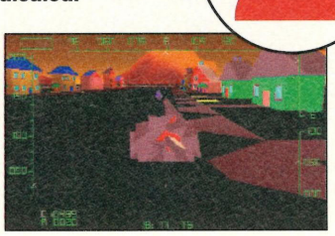
Publisher: .....Gametek

Price: £24.99

Contact: .....(01753) 553445

This has to be a joke — unfortunately, they forgot the punchline. Buy it and be ridiculed.

2



▲ ***Right now I've caught up with you, let me shoot you. Come here! I can't steer properly! Oh sod it - I give up.***

CD ONLY

Minimum PC: 33MHz 486DX

Minimum Memory: 8Mb

Minimum Graphics: SVGA

Sound: Sound Blaster, Gravis

Apache Longbow



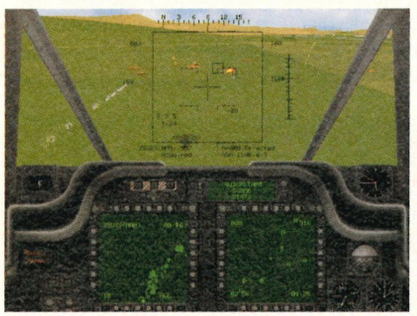
With his heart in his mouth and his head in the clouds, Martin Klimes takes Digital Integration's state-of-the-art helicopter sim for a spin.

The Apache Longbow offers a corking rollercoaster ride of a flight, at least when simulated by Digital Integration it does. This was something of a surprise for me (albeit a very pleasant one) because, to be quite honest, I didn't expect much from Apache. I played Digital Integration's last flight sim, Tornado, and for all the detailed polygons and the hyper-realism, the damned thing required a three year degree course in aerodynamics to fly. Not my cup of stewed leaves at all. Apache, though, shows that the design team has been busy learning from its mistakes, and I can eat my hat.

Digital Integration has definitely hit the right formula this time. The realism the company is famous for is still there, the graphics are even nicer, and the whole shooting match has been made infinitely more accessible to us mere mortals who don't actually fly the real thing at the weekend.

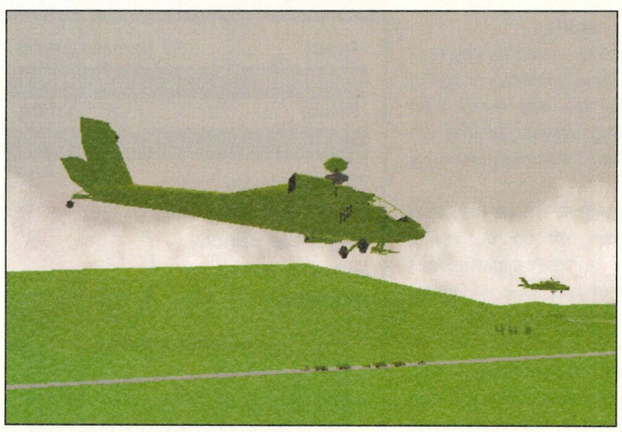
Let's start with the obvious cosmetic bits and bobs. The graphics are in glorious SVGA, but for those without a computer powerful enough to safely simulate a French nuclear test there's a VGA option which takes the clunk out of the proceedings. Either way you get shaded, non-texture mapped polygons which look very clean and bright, displays that are easy to read and enemies who really seem to be coming towards you rather than materialising out of thin air at five miles.

Likewise, the sound is jaw-droppingly good. The effects are average, but constant speech

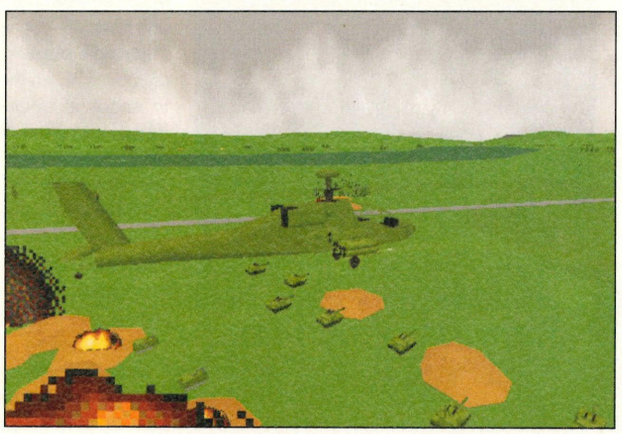


▲ *I see that you have a machine that goes 'ping'. Inside the cockpit you get lots of funky displays which plot and mark and identify just about anything out there — all so that you can blow it into unidentifiable pieces moments later.*

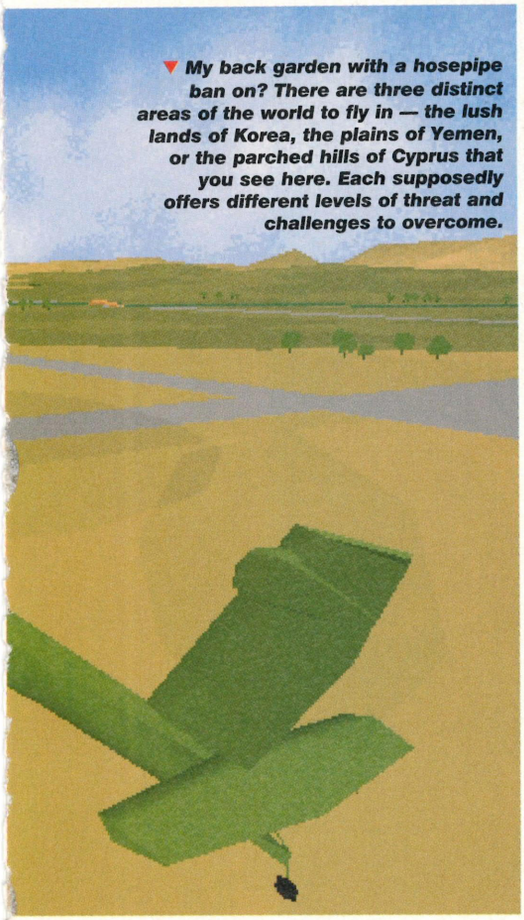
Another day, another slaughter...



▲ *What a grey day. Me and my wingman fly towards the front, past convoys of troops, intent of knocking out some enemy artillery that's been causing a rumpus further forward.*



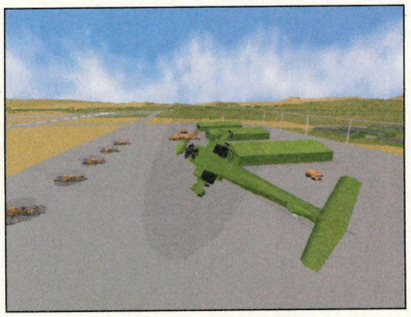
▲ *Passing over the affected region I have to watch while the bastards shell my poor tanks. Actually, I almost opened fire on them myself if I'm being totally honest. In the heat of battle they do look very much like Korean units.*



▼ *My back garden with a hosepipe ban on? There are three distinct areas of the world to fly in — the lush lands of Korea, the plains of Yemen, or the parched hills of Cyprus that you see here. Each supposedly offers different levels of threat and challenges to overcome.*

from your computer co-pilot and wingman update you on the situation and stop your flights feeling as if there were actually other people out there rather than computer drones. Music between the scenarios is good too, complementing the well designed options screens. The spoken briefings and 3D tours of the flight path all help to make this as much a piece of multimedia as a game. Whether you're in the air or in a preference screen, Apache is never dull.

As a game, Apache offers standalone missions as well as three campaigns — Korea, Cyprus and the Yemen. A full training program



▲ *Fly-boys — tsk! Here I am over the safety of my own airfield showing off just how manoeuvrable the Apache is. In fact I've turned so fast that I've gone green, while my buddies on the ground are all brown... What do you mean this isn't my airfield? Time for a sharp exit.*

gets you used to the feel of the helicopter, but you can bypass the beginner stuff and jump into a cockpit mid-mission with something called quickstart mode.

Anyone for mayhem?

Then there are the multiplayer options. Two players can play head-to-head in a sort of mechanical equivalent of deathmatch mode, or together as wingmen against the computer enemy, or even as pilot and gunner in the same helicopter. There's no better way to fall out with your mates —

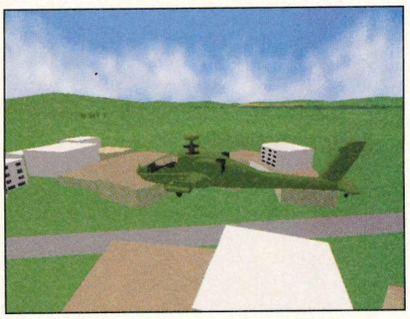
"I said turn left so I can shoot that tank."

"Yeah? Well, if you'd hit that SAM battery over there then I wouldn't have to dodge missiles now, would I?"

All the usual methods are supported: null-modem, modem and network. With a network you also get the bonus of having up to 16 player head-to-head games — which makes a game like four player Doom look like a Sunday stroll in the park.

For all its options and nifty presentation — and it does look smarter than a member of MENSA with a degree from Cambridge University — Apache isn't perfect by any means. The hills are flatter than week-old beer, so don't expect to go barrelling down huge canyons or soaring over mountains. There could have been more trees in Korea, or a little jungle perhaps for us Apocalypse Now fans, but overall the terrain is relatively featureless. On top of that, the three campaigns and handful of missions are enough for a while but need a bit more variety to keep the pace going after a few weeks, especially if you don't have access to a second player.

But these are minor gripes. Overall, Apache is a thoroughbred in the race for best flight sim of the year, not the three-legged donkey I was expecting.



◀ *Boring architecture they've got here, Harry. The external views are really very cool indeed. The Apache looks so mean that when you put it in its surroundings then even the towns look like they're cowering in the valleys.*

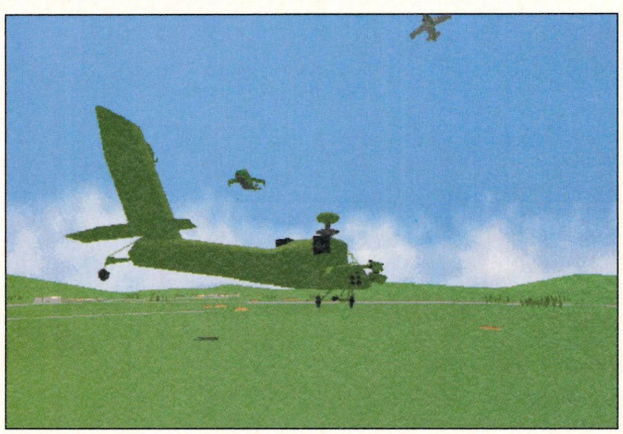
PCR VERDICT

Type: *Flight sim*
Publisher: *Digital Integration*
Price: *£44.99*
Contact: *(01276) 678806*

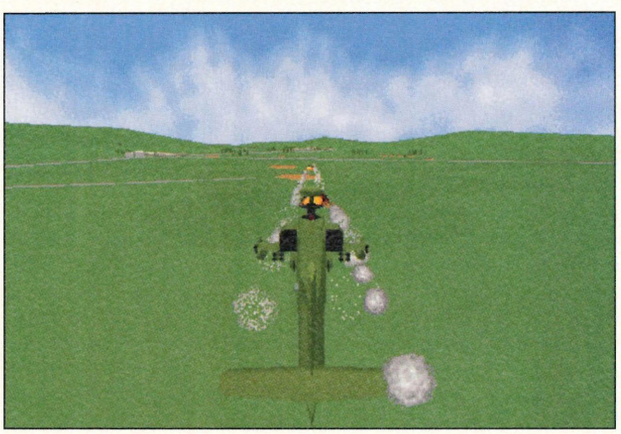
A genuinely fun tree-top skimming flight sim, put together with plenty of pizazz.

8





▲ *We've been rumbled. As the weather clears up a little and I cross into enemy territory what appears to be the entire North Korean airforce descends upon me. Only pure skill and raw cunning can get you out of sticky situations like this.*



▲ *It's payback time. As my rockets thunder home I can't help but feel that it's another job well done. I congratulate my co-pilot for his part in it, and offer him a beer. Being just an artificial intelligence, he declines.*

- More Sound
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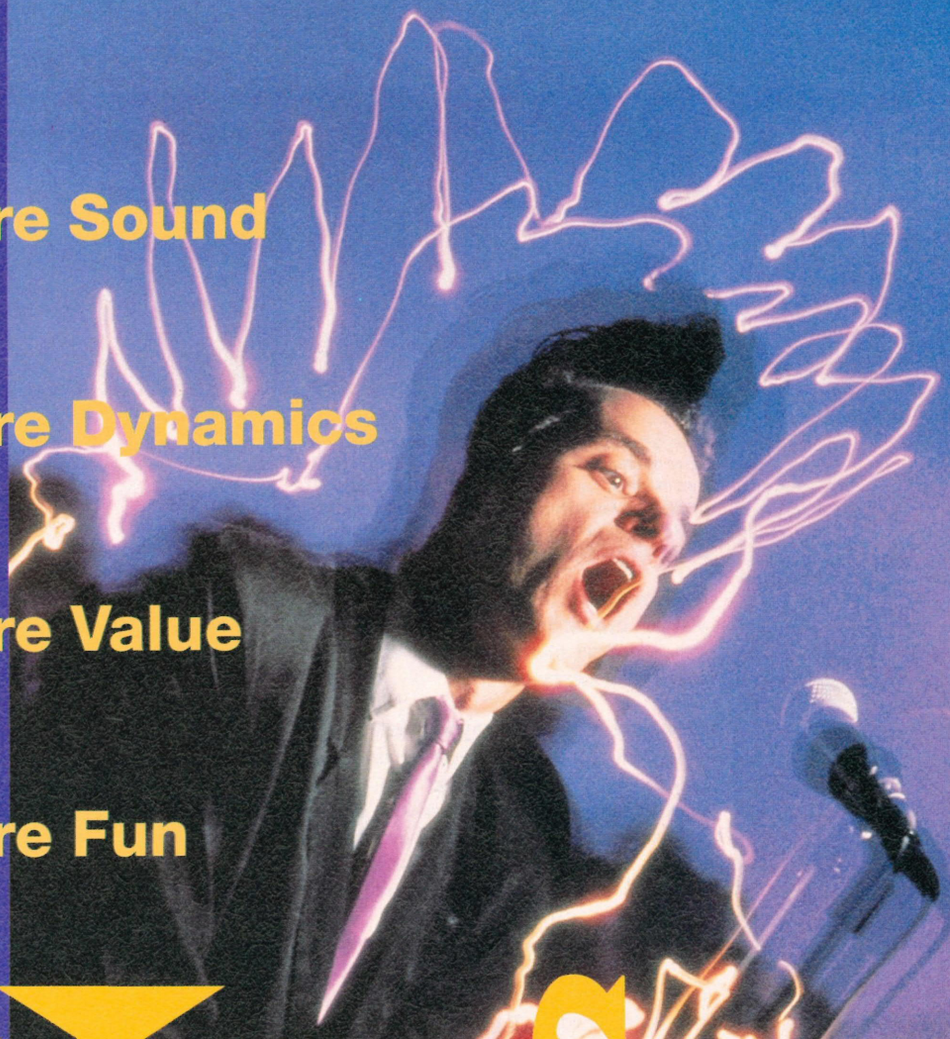
- More Fun



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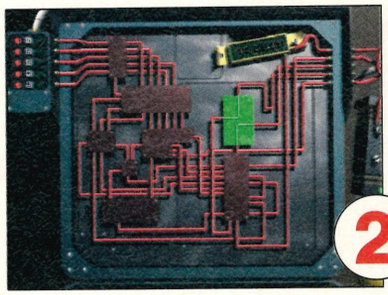
BLOWN AWAY

Puzzle adventure

Let's keep this short. Some bloke who bears a passing resemblance to Tommy Lee Jones has kidnapped your family and friends, and you have to save them by defusing the bombs he has wired up to some fiendish puzzles. There's stacks of FMV, some 3D modelling and lots of very dubious acting.

The puzzles are less challenging than irritating, with the rules often less than clear and success relying more on luck than judgement. If you're looking for a thrilling interactive experience, go play on a motorway. This one may be wired and ready to blow, but it just sucks.

Instant Access £39.99 ● (0181) 205 2596 ● 486 DX33, SVGA, 8Mb, CD-ROM, Windows 3.1



2

DESERT STRIKE & JUNGLE STRIKE

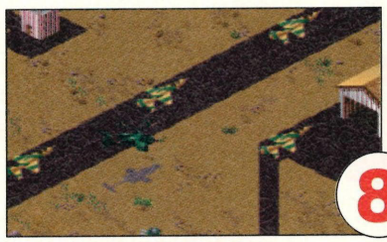
Shoot 'em up

Two good conversions of the console blast 'em ups, in which you pilot a heavily-armed military helicopter around various landscapes — deserts and jungles for the most part, funnily enough.

Despite the shoot-everything-before-it-shoots-you basis of the game, there is more to both games than just screaming about at random; it does take some strategy to solve the increasingly complex missions.

The most difficult task is to perfect the picking-up manoeuvre, in order to refuel and repair your gunship: once this is mastered, you'll be thundering across the landscape, picking off those enemy gunships with gusto. Great on their own, well worth it for both at this price.

Gremlin £25.99 ● (01142) 753 423 ● 386 DX, VGA, 4Mb, CD-ROM, Dos 5.0



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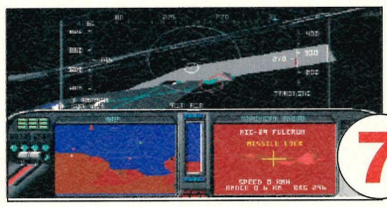
FLIGHT PACK 2

Flight simulation

Comprising MiG-29 Fulcrum (rated 7 way back in issue 2), Flight Sim Toolkit (issue 28, rated 8) and F-19 Stealth Fighter (not reviewed), Flight Pack 2 is a good buy, but shows signs of age. All three games are in-depth and certainly worth a look for flight sim fans, but they're all a few years old now, and they look it. FST allows you to design worlds and their contents and fly around, while the other two are commendably accurate simulators of advanced fighter planes. While there are better-looking sims around now, this is ideal for owners of lower-end machines.

Microprose £25.99 ● (0181) 804 8100 ● 386DX, VGA, 4Mb RAM, Windows 3.1



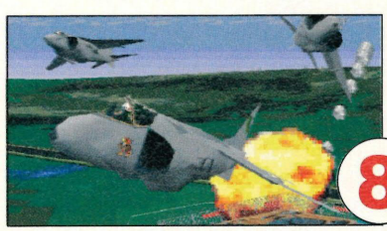
7

MARINE FIGHTERS

Flight simulation

Back in January, US Navy Fighters rated a fulsome eight, for its combination of great looks and corking gameplay. You were aboard a US navy aircraft carrier, and permitted the use of half a dozen top navy jet fighters, which doesn't seem very responsible. Anyway, Marine Fighters is an extension pack for USNF, providing the keen user with new aircraft to fly — including the famous Mcdonnell-Douglas Harrier, the Yakovlev Freestyle and the Lockheed Spectre — and new missions to fly them in. You'll need a copy of the original game to run Marine Fighters, and if you liked that you'll like this.

Electronic Arts £19.99 ● (01753) 549442 ● 486 DX33, 1Mb SVGA card, 8Mb RAM, CD-ROM, MS-Dos 5.0



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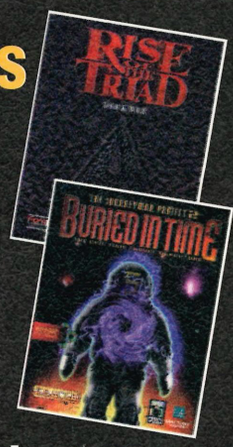

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PART 1

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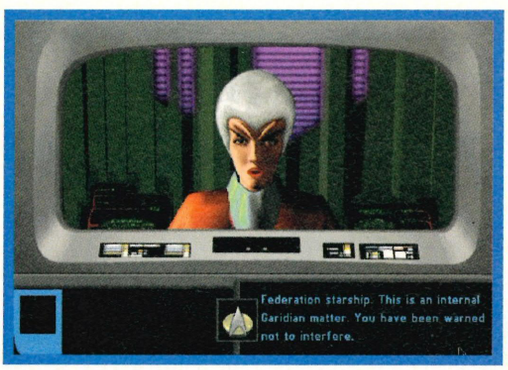
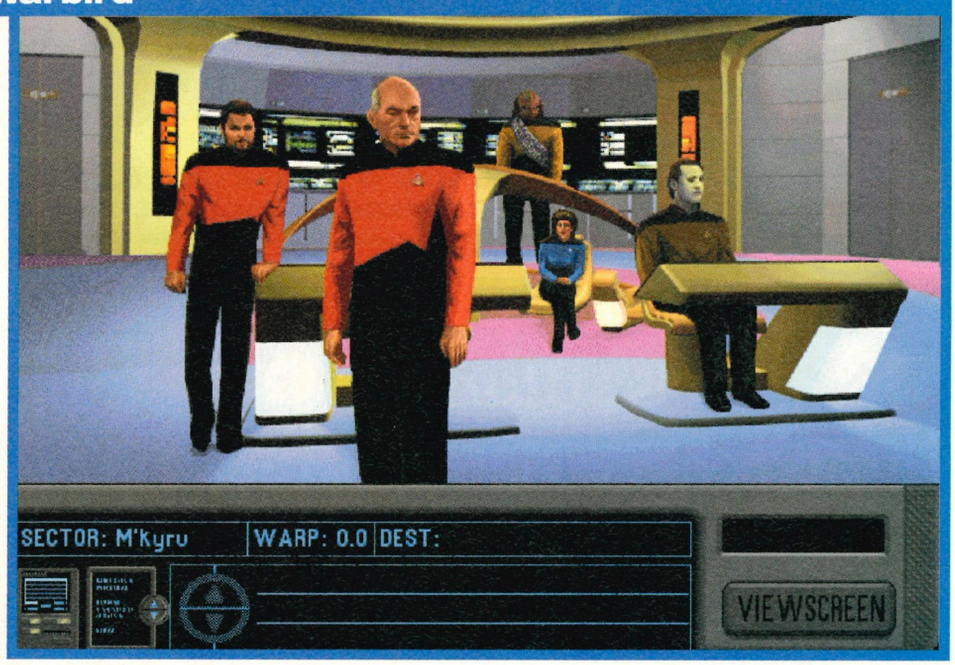
Dealing with the Garidian Warbird

STEP 1: *First you must talk to Riker, and agree when he suggests that you should fire your phasers at the warbird, ten percent power. The warbird will then hail the Enterprise, so you should choose to put it on screen and ask Captain Pentara why she has violated the neutral zone. In the meantime, beam the crew of the scout ship aboard. When Captain Pentara contacts you again, tell her that you will overlook her violation of the neutral zone if she leaves immediately. Now set course for Ruinore.*





Cymkoe IV distress call





STEP 2: *While travelling towards Ruinore Mr. Worf will inform you of a distress call coming from Cymkoe IV, which you should answer. Once the Enterprise arrives at Mertions Station go to the transporter room, selecting Riker, La Forge, Crusher and Worf for the away team. Take the phaser, tricorders and medkit and energise over to the station.*

On board the station, walk through the door on the left of the screen, and over to the big cable on your right. Use the tricorder on the cable, then fire the phaser on the stun setting at the cable, cutting it.

STEP 3: *Walk back to the room where you arrived. Use La Forge on the Transporter panel, and use the tricorder on the lock-on button, then press the lock-on button and select the data cable. Now press the energise button — if you have done this correctly a chunk of the cable should be transported to the room you are in. Next, go back to the trapped woman who was once under the cable and get Crusher to use the medkit on the woman. Talk to the woman, and ask her all the questions before telling her that you will come back for her later.*

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STEP 4: *Walk into the next room and take the turbo lift to Administration. Get La Forge to look at all the control panels in the room, and when he finds the life support panel, use it by pressing the Emergency Systems button. You will be told that you need an authorisation code. If you ask Dr Beynt (the woman on crew level two) for help, she will tell you the code.*

STEP 5: *Now take the turbo lift to engineering. Use the tricorder on the strange machine that is hovering in the room. Continue to engineering lab four, and pick up all six objects from the equipment cart. Get La Forge to use the control panel in the corner of the room — he should initiate Temporary Shutdown and press Shut Down Group 3. The strange machine should now leave the station. Tell the Enterprise that the station is not yet stable and that they could try to track the machine.*

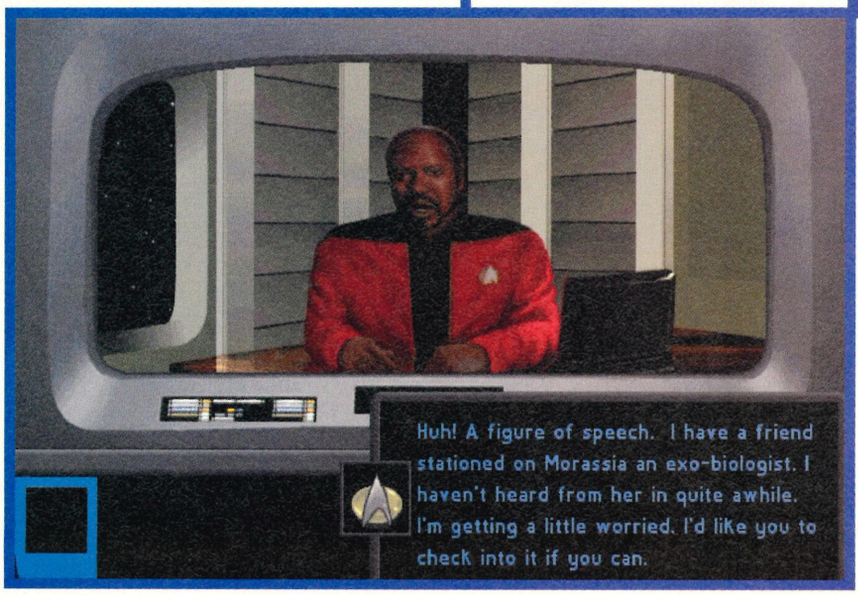


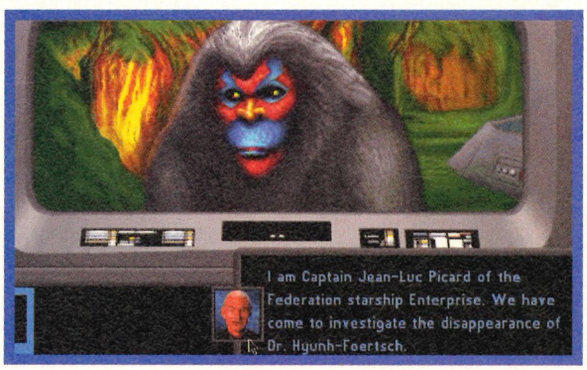
STEP 6: *Return to Administration, use the life support panel and emergency systems to redirect the power. Next use the Flux Router (collected earlier from the equipment cart) on the holotable in the middle of the room. Get La Forge to look at the hologram. Go back to Engineering and walk left to the Core Control Room. Get La Forge to talk to Dr Griems and say that he is the Chief Engineer of a Galaxy Class Starship, and he needs an extra pair of hands. Walk right and use the Inverter Coupling on the hole in the casing, followed by the wave converter. You have now saved the station and will be beamed back to the ship. When Riker asks what your orders are choose to stay and consider the situation further.*



Visiting Shanok

STEP 7: *Talk to T'bak in the conference lounge. Ask all of the questions about the fifth scroll, the lawgiver and Shanok before ending the conversation. Picard will now set course for Horst III. On your arrival, use Captain Picard's communicator badge and hail Shanok. Ask all the questions, why is he there, what has he found, and tell him about the Garidian refugees. Now set course again for Ruinore.*





STEP 8: *You will be contacted by Starfleet; ask the admiral about his missing friend, or lost lamb, that he is worried about, and tell him that you will go and find her. Once you are orbiting the planet Morrassia, tell Constable Lliksze that the away team will not be armed at her request. Go to the transporter and take Worf, Data, Crusher and Troi down to the planet with the tricorder and medkit.*

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STEP 9: *Talk to Constable Lliksze (the strange animal that closely resembles a baboon), again asking all the questions. Now walk left to the laboratory. Pick up the three carcasses, the three field units and the bioprobe from the laboratory. Now use the tricorder on each of the field units. Use all of the carcasses on the biotable and then on the sonic scope, and use the tricorder on the comm port located by the green pipe. Open a channel to Tracker Melas, and when you have asked the questions, go back to the constables office and talk to the constable. Return to the lab and open a channel to Consultant Lydia using the tricorder on the comm port. After talking to Lydia leave the lab and right to the cross-roads and then over to the shuttle dock. Take the triangular shaped microgenerator and walk back to the cross-roads. Now visit the marine, bog forest and canyon biotopes in turn. At each biotope place the microgenerator in the maps' power port and send the field unit which is set for that environment to all the inhabited areas of the biotope. (ie rocky field unit in the canyon biotope). To get past the atol monkey by the entrance to the canyon biotope, feed it the fruit nearby.*

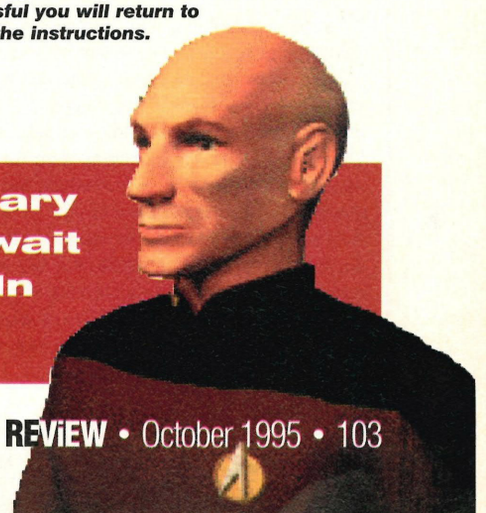


STEP 10: *Head back to the lab. Use the bioprobe on each of the field units to extract the samples from the biotopes until all the field units are empty. Place all the samples in the sonic scope. Now open a channel to Healer ZZolis and ask him about the animals and the missing doctor. Get Crusher to look at the neuroscans that appear on the biotable. Leave the lab and make your way to the quarantine shelter which is past the crossroads and then the top road out of the three roads on your right. Get Troi to talk to Watcher Tzudan.*



STEP 11: *Go back once more to constable Llikszes office. Talk to Lliksze. Doctor Hyunh-Foertsch will appear; talk to her and she will help to devise a plan to catch the loose creature. Go to the shuttle dock and board the shuttle; use the utilities trunk and then walk to the exit to the left. Talk to the doctor and follow her instructions to trap the animal, after you complete one instruction ask her for the next. If you are successful you will return to the Enterprise; if not, then repeat the instructions.*

This is the first part of PC Review reader Gary Mayes' three-part solution — you'll have to wait until next month for the second instalment. In the meantime, happy trekkin'!



If you've worked out a cheat or a hack for a game, then we want to know about it. We'll love you forever.

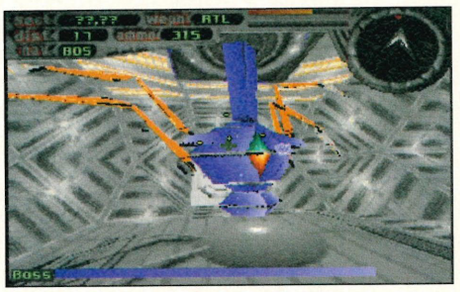
Short TIPS

DANGER!
Do not attempt the cheats marked with the danger icon unless you have access to a file editor such as PC Tools or Xtree Gold, and you know what you are doing. ALWAYS back up your files before editing, so if it all goes wrong then you can restore the originals. PC Review will not accept responsibility for any damage to data caused through using these cheats.

TERMINAL VELOCITY

Niall Williams of South Glamorgan sent in these "enhancements" (as he calls them) for Terminal Velocity. What can we say but, "thank you, Niall." To get the cheats to work just type the following during the game...

Code	Effect
TRIGODS	Invincible
TRISHLD	Shield
TRINEXT	Skip to next level
TRIHOVR	Hover Pad
MANIACS	After Burner
TRSCOPE	Oscilloscope
TRIBURN	Terminal Velocity
TRFRAME	Frame counter
TRIFIR1	Weapon 1: P.A.C.
TRIFIR2	Weapon 2: I.O.N.





Code	Effect
TRIFIR3	Weapon 3: R.T.L.
TRIFIR4	Weapon 4: M.A.M.
TRIFIR5	Weapon 5: S.A.D.
TRIFIR6	Weapon 6: S.W.T.

Code	Effect
TTRIFIR7	Weapon 7: Unknown
RIFIR8	Weapon 8: After Burner
TRIFIR9	Weapon 9: Invisibility
TRIFIR0	Weapon 10: Invincibility

FRAMED

DANGER!

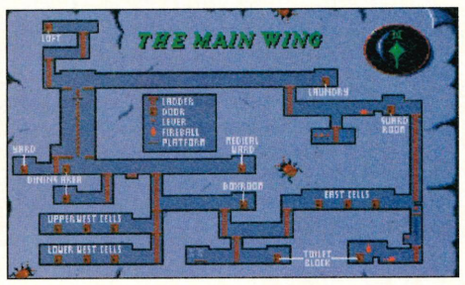
If you enjoyed this game which we gave away on the cover of issue 46, but are finding the going a bit tough, then just have a go at these cheats sent in by Chris Patient of Sutton Coldfield.

To get the cheat mode to work, all you need to do is press <C> and the number pad <+> key simultaneously. The following keys will now become active, giving you these useful upgrades:

F1	restores full health
F2 + number	gives corresponding object
F3 + coordinates	teleports to coordinates
F4	shows current coordinates







PANZER GENERAL

If Panzer General is getting too tough, then the following hack, from Jon Zazzera should help.

First locate the file <panzequp.eqp>, in the <dat> directory. Next load <panzequp.eqp> into a hex editor. Hex address 0064 should read 2E. The two previous values should read 09 and 27 — this represents the date on which this 'plane, the BF109e, will be available to you (in this case, August 1939). If you look for the next instance of the number 2E (address0096), the two previous numbers (07 28) are the availability date for the BF109f. Look for the next instance of the number 2E, and the previous two addresses represent the date for the BF109g, and so on for every type of plane and tank. By changing these two addresses to 01 and 27 respectively, you will find that all the equipment will be available from the beginning of 1939. Similarly, if you look at the (seventh) hex address before the occurrence of the number 2E, this represents the price of that piece of equipment (in Prestige Points). For the BF109e, the address is 005D and the original value is 1C — if you change this to 06 it will cost you just 76 Prestige Points. For the BF109f, the address is 008F and the original value is 1E. This applies to all the other items of equipment in the file.

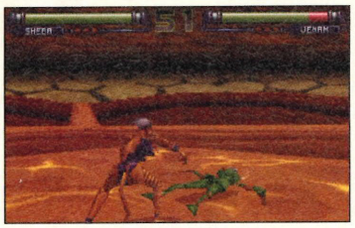


FX FIGHTER

FX Fighter is among the best-looking games currently available on the PC, and damned good fun to boot. Here are just a selection of the better moves that each character can achieve, given a bit of joypad-mashing practice.

The controls are as follows:

f/F = forward/hold forward
b/B = back/hold back
u/U = up/hold up
d/D = down/hold down
k/K = kick/hold kick
p/P = punch/hold punch



▲ *People used to pay money to watch cats and insects fight.*



▲ *This barbaric practice was outlawed in the last century.*

THE MOVES

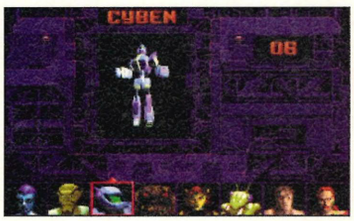
Magnon

Elbow punch and knee combo
F+P then F+K
Punch and kick combo
p then K
Roll attack
D/F+P
Lava Breath
b then F+K



Cyben

Cyben Shock (kiss of death)
F+P (up close)
Heli punch
D+P
Rotor Arm Attack
f then F+P
Rocket Punch
b then F+P



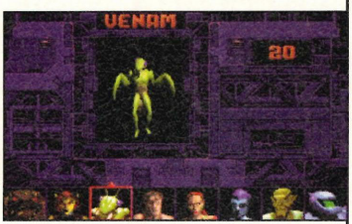
Siren

Backflip kick **u/b+K**
3 punch and roundhouse combo
p then p then p then p then K
Knee to groin
F+K
Uppercut 3 punch and kick combo
F?D+P then p then p then p then K (from ducked)



Venam

Poison Spit
b then f then P
Leg throw
b, F+K (up close)
Swipe to claw to overhead throw
f then P then P then F+P
Hop punch to twirling punches
u/f then P then U/F+P then P



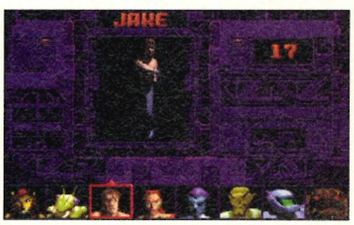
Kiko

Knee throw
B/D+P
Double knee attack
f then f then P (up close)
Axe Kick
f then K
Throwing Star
b then f then P



Jake

Grab and knee
f then D+P (up close)
Shoulder charge to backhand
F+P then B+P
Ear Slap to shoulder charge
u+p then F/D+P
Shoulder, 2 punch and kick combo
F+P then B/D+P



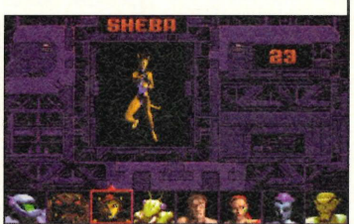
Ashraf

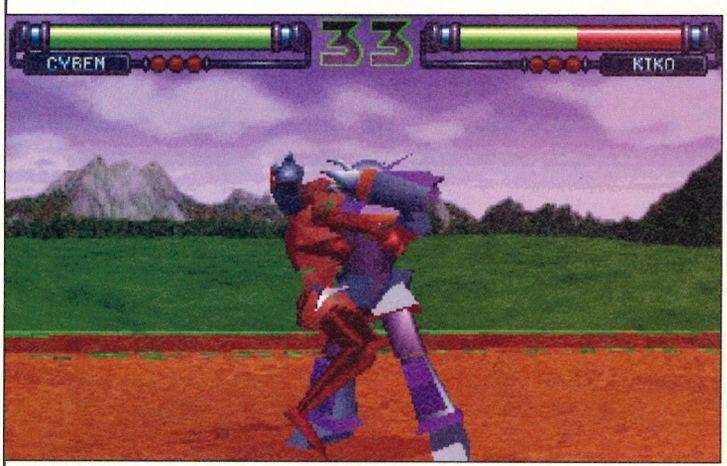
Back break throw
f then d then B/D+P
Fireball
b then F+P
Chop to roundhouse to fireball
F+P then U+K then F+P
Shoulder to forward flip kick
f then D+P then D+P



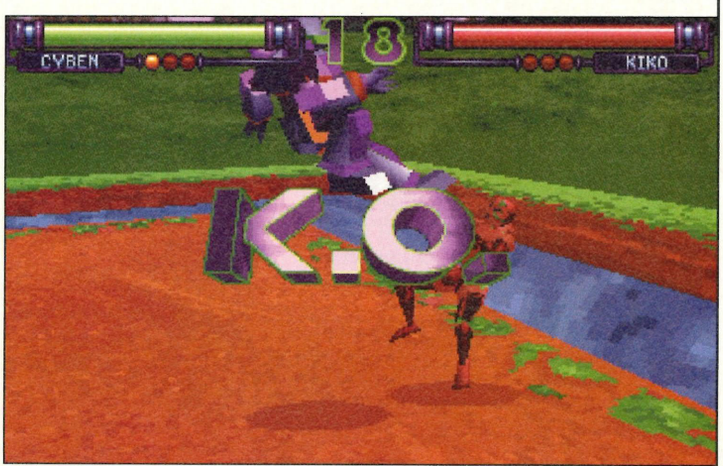
Sheba

Face Rake (from crouch)
F + K
Frank n Steiner
f then f then K
Claw to Jump kick
F+P then K
Roundhouse, kick leg rake throw
u then K then F then K





▲ *The other combatants didn't know it, but Cyben and Kiko had been seeing each other for some time. She liked him for his magnetic personality, he liked her for her kinky leather boots.*



▲ *But all was not sweetness and light — when two trained fighters get in the ring, sentiment goes out the window. All is fair in love and intergalactic hand-to hand combat.*

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Sound patch adds sounds from the Star Wars trilogy. Contains the deathstar level and Storm Trooper graphics

PCG673 AUDIO STUDIO v1.09
The ULTIMATE sound editor for DOOM! Easy to use graphical interface! Add sounds with the touch of the button!, 165 pre-selected .wavs or add you own. (3)

PCG681 WEAPONS & MONSTERS
NEW collection of MONSTERS, StarTrek (BORG), LetterMan, Eyeballs. WEAPONS. Flamer converts the Plasma GUN into a FLAME THROWER. Super GUNS.

PCG713 DOOM 2 THE EDITOR
An editor for DM2. also a collection of new utilities

PCG829 10 NEW LEVELS
Bunker Assault is a total new episode full of traps, puzzles and vaults. registered required. Req Wolfenstein

PCG832 CITADEL OF SORROW
Now updated for use with DOOM 2! Takes place in a Medieval Castle with highly detailed rooms,lots of hidden passages, some puzzles and other nice Touches

PCG836 FOOT HILLS OF HELL
If you think that you are a good Doom2 player then you will love this series of PWAD files. I have only one piece of advice for you. RUN!!!! and don't cry if you forgot to save often. And NEVER LOOK BACK.

PCG842 GRENADE/PISTOL/CROSS BOWS V1.66
A weapons patch for DooM that among other things includes a Hand, Grenades, Pistol and a Crossbow.

PCG846 PAC-MAN DOOM
Graphics/Sound Patch for DOOM. latest arrivals from Inter-Dimensional Gateway. PacMen have invaded.

PCG854 6 ADD-ONS 4 DOOM 2
Evil mastermind from an unknown galaxy has sent his minions to Earth, & guess who has to stop them?

PCG869 EDMAP V1.31
Map Editor that supports both Doom, Doom 2 / Heretic.

PCG872 DOOM2 PATCH V1.9
This Patch Only Works with Doom 2 version 1.7a. It will not work with any other version

PCG873 DOOM PATCH V1.9
This patch only works with the registered version of Doom v1.666. Will not work with any other.

PCG877 DOLOCAUST DOOM
Will replace all the human dude's with Baby Dolls! Blast their head off! Churn out their eyes! But it's just the beginning! Watch for Dolocaust where you can.

PCG878 BARFIGHT WAD
by Jon Stern, Thanx, Happy Drinking and shooting

PCG880 CASTLE OF DEATH
Kentz Castle of Death for DOOM 2. This is Levels 1-5 for Reg'd DOOM2!.

PCG881 CHOOK DOOM V2.2
for DOOM & II. Imagine your wandering around hell or earth depending on Which DOOM ya wanna play with and all of a sudden a 6 foot tall chicken jumps out.

PCG882 CITADEL OF SORROW
Takes place in a Medieval Castle with highly detailed rooms,lots of hidden passages,some puzzles and other nice touches. An Interactive. Torture Chamber!.

PCG883 MK DOOM (CRINGE)
BLOODY graphics! Check out the new Double-bladed Chainsaw, or the gold Chaingun and Rocket Launcher. Beware new character-Son of the CyberDemon.

PCG884 DOOM II MAPS
32 LEVELS!!! All the secrets & monsters

PCG885 DM CONSTRUCTION KIT
Edits DOOM, DOOM 2, and HERETIC maps. If you thought 1.0 was cool, check this out:

PCG886 CONTROL CENTRE V3.3
NEW! Supports DOOM 1.666 Run single /serial /modem /network games. Mouse-driven user interface

PCG0887 DEEP V6.13
is a DOOM Enhanced Editor Program for editing DOOM and DOOM II HeeP V6.13 is a HERETIC Enhanced Editor Program for editing HERETIC levels Both are complete rewrites and major enhancement and extension of DEU.

PCG0888 DEU II (V1.0)
Doom Editor Utility for DII. Hell on Earth. Use this DEU ONLY with the new DOOM2.WAD from DooM II. Make use of all new textures, monsters.

PCG0889 DOOM GOLD III
Replaces DOOM sounds & music. Now in PWAD format! Requires Sound Blaster, SB16 or compatible.

PCG0890 DOOM GOLD 4
This is THE FIRST sound/lighting PWAD to be created exclusively for use with commercial DOOM II Hell On Earth! This changes a few of the sounds in DOOM-II with BETTER sounds, and it turns the light on too!

PCG0891 THUD! FOR DOOM v3.0

PCG0892 THUD2 FOR DOOM2
New levels from scratch except maps 17/18, were converted over from CHRISK.WAD for Doom. The official companion to THUD!, picking up where THUD! left off

PCG0894 DOOM GOLD 5
Try the game straight first, then go ahead plug one of these in for a hard-kicking good time!

PCG0895 KENT-A LABYRINTH 1
Complete Episode w/nine levels. There are 3 new demos, & some added Sound-FX. (there's allot of action in the maps floors/ceilings will block you after passing thru areas). Levels are big enough for everybody.

PCG0896 STAR WARS / DOOM2 (2)

PCG0898 EDMAP
Software enables users to create or modify maps used in the virtual-reality game DOOM &DOOM II.

PCG0899 FIRESTORM FOR DOOM
Select your weapons combination and enter the grim deathmatch arena. Slug it out with your competitors and a furious horde of enemies.

PCG0900 THE HITCHHIKERS GUIDE TO THE GALAXY MEETS DOOM
contains samples from the Hitch Hikers Guide to the Galaxy Radio series. sound effects were literally ground-breaking, with many of them taking days.

PCG0902 UPDATED JCM2 EPISODE
New graphics, sounds, levels AND music!! Almost two megs and 200+ hours of new things you've NEVER seen for DOOM. visual effects using floors & walls.

PCG0903 JERKEY BOYS / DOOM
file of the Jerkey Boys' best sounds. Hope you enjoy! By the way, this file contains explicit language

PCG0905 M16-DOOM V1.0 / DOOM
is an add on patch for 1.2. You must have v1.2 for this patch to work. replaces the fists, pistol, chaingun, rocket launcher, plasma gun, & BFG9000 / M16 rifle.

PCG0906 PWADDER V1.0
The best PWAD player yet. Manages 160 pwads. Saves 160 different games Plays demos, Skill Level, Delete, Read Text,Auto-warp to correct episode/map. Mouse required. 5 meg RAM required for DOOM v1.2 8 meg.

PCG0907 RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN
Replaces first 10 maps of Doom2 with new maps. This is a revision of the doom1 Episode 1 replacement.

PCG0908 SHRINE / WARRIORS
You begin right next door to hell in a twisted chamber used by hell spawn to be portal to the human realms. You venture beyond the portal to find... The shrine is a large complex that pays tribute to the hell spawn, a cross between an art museum and a mausoleum. Req Doom 2.

PCG0909 TOONDOOM
Funniest add-on to ever hit DOOM. It changes about 200 of the graphics files and many of the sound files to change into a game guaranteed to make you bust a gut!

PCG0910 TRILOGY (3 LEVELS)
Tired of those 100s of amateuristic bad looking WAD-files, which are often stuffed with more BUGS than monsters?!? Then get this one RIGHT NOW! REG v1.666 rec, but will work with other versions.

PCG0911 STAR TREK - DOOM INVASION
The Enterprise (NCC-1701-D) has been attacked by aliens from a group called the Underworld Alliance. They surrounded the ship with a nebula-like energy cloud rendering our phasers and photons useless.

PCG0912 WADPACK 3
Is a range of very, very large doom & doom 2 levels this time, no exception, as it is over 3Mb in size (unzipped).

PCG0913 RAVEN DOOM2 LVL (1-7)
Support for all 5 skill levels, superb DEATH-MATCH level, well placed monsters, use of all three keys, can be completed with out cheating, excellent texture alignment, great open areas and windows for attacking.

PCG0914 SCUM TREK
Another .WAD file for Reg 1.2. Just why the Enterprise is crawling with Imps and Cacodemons no-one knows?

PCG0915 MONSTERS & WEAPONS3
Getting bored with all of the levels and WADs that seem sooo easy, well, her ya go. Plug this patch in and enjoy DooM as you never have before! This patch will increase the hit damage need for all monsters by 10X.

PCG0916 WADMAN V1.03
Convert ALL of Your DOOM 1.2 stuff to DOOM2 Features: Build custom PWADs containing MAPxx levels for DOOM2 from DOOM 1.2 or 1.6 PWADs. Use all the GFX patches made for DOOM 1.2 or 1.6 with DOOM2!!

PCG0921 DOOM MAP NAME CONVERTER
MAPCONV wadname oldmap newmap 'wadname' : a PWAD file (the .WAD extension append if necessary) 'oldmap' : the old map name 'newmap' : guess :) Checking is done for valid PWADs and map names, so you can't do anything too disastrous. This program will work with DOOM and DOOM II PWADs and map names (but not iWADs, don't be suicidal).

NEW CDROM CALLED

*** PURE DOOM ***

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EMULATORS

PCV477 SPECTRUM GAMES (ABCD)
Here's four disks filled to the brim with loads of classic spectrum games. re quires resisted version

PCV452 C64 EMULATOR v1.0 (AB)
If you have a 386 or better PC you can now load, play & convert your Games. Demos to work just as fast or faster than the original machine, includes all original sounds

PCV568 C64 GAMES 1&2
This disk contains a selection of games to work with the Commodore 64 emulator. (2)

PCV716 AMSTRAD CPC
CPC 464/612&CPC emulator. req 386/ VGA.

PCV717 EXECUTOR v1.2
Is a Macintosh emulator for the PC. Executor can read and write Macintosh formatted HD disks as well as run Macintosh programs. A 386+4Mb,VGA and a mouse. (2)

PCV795 SPECTRUM EMULATOR v3.0
If you want to run your old spectrum software on your PC then this is for you. Those's classic games

PCV826 PC-DRAGON EMU v1.03G
Tandy CoCo II Emulator & Tools Freeware version for IBM PC, 1994 by PAUL BURGIN.

PCV827 ZX81 EMULATOR
Yes its the original home computer emulator NOW!!

PCV831 PC-DRAGON EMU V1.02
A Dragon emulator for IBM PC's and compatible's. This program allows you to use your Dragon or Tandy CoCo games and applications software without the need to clutter up your desk with more than one computer.

GAMES

PCG812 BOPPIN V1.0 (AB)
In an alternate "arcade game" universe, you must free dozens of imprisoned enemies from other video games. Each level has unique VGA graphics in this unusual game. Violence mode provided. Cool animation & cinematic MIDI music & digital sound for all popular cards.

PCG814 GOBMAN V1.0
is a pacman clone with a few nice twists. Collect bombs, chests, and special red dot to use against the monsters.

PCG815 DARKWOLF
Action game with awesome 256 colour VGA graphics, digital sound, digital music, 32-bit parallax scrolling, and more! The play control and fun factor are impressive! As the king's wizard, you must save the kingdom from being thrown into civil war, but beware Grondahl Morrison is out to shorten your lifespan. CHECK IT OUT!!

PCG816 JAZZ JACKRABBIT CHRISTMAS
This is an all-new CHRISTMAS EDITION of Jazz Jackrabbit, the breakthrough PC thriller that won Best Arcade Game of the Year! 100% New levels, new 3D bonus stages, new rockin' holiday music, and more! This is Epic's Christmas present to you, so be sure to try Jazz for true ground breaking ACTION like nothing seen before

PCG818 MICE MOVES V1.0
Maneuver your funny animated mice to the other side of the board in a battle of strategy and pure logic fun. Make your mice move by using your referee mouse to push your players into strategic positions to block your opponent from reaching your side of the board. Mice Moves is a pure test of your logic skills as you try to outwit the dreaded red computer mice.

PCG819 PAKO (VGA)
Another perfect addition to the Pac-Man style games. This one features 100 great levels, 16 brand new ghosts or bads all we say SPACE-PESTS, and lots of bonus food.

PCG824 FLYING TIGERS (AB)
is a fast paced shoot-em up game with multiple weapons, power ups, enemies and bosses. In this episode you will be thrown into the middle of 1942, where the techno bosses are starting a technology transfer to the Japanese Empire. Requires: 386+, 4 Meg RAM as XMS. VGA. Adlib(tm).

PCG826 VGA WAR GAMES
is a strategic game, played on a map of the world, divided up into more than 180 nations and over 300 cities.

PCG833 CLASH OF SPEARS
Battle up to four different players in this awesome 320x200x256 colour MCGA Wargame simulator!

PCG834 DESCENT (AB)
Shareware v1.1 by Parallax Software & Interplay Productions TMapped 3D enemies, 6 deg. of freedom, light source shading. 3D morphing! Multiplayer 8 player IPX network, full modem/serial games, Killer soundtrack!

PCG837 GALAGA '94 V2.1
1994 by APSS AUSTRIA The good old 'Space Invaders' style shoot-em-up game. (Req. i286+).

PCG838 GAZILLIONAIRE (ABC)
(an adventure/strategy game in outer space!).

PCG841 PORTS OF CALL 2
Shareware version. Excellent real life simulation. Buy ships, sell ships, make lots of cash.

PCG844 MEL ODIUS 6 STRING SEARCH
is an animated, 3-D graphic adventure in which you play the role of Mel Odius, an up-and-coming young guitarist who is about to get that big break. He has a small problem, though. The problem is that his guitar has been stolen! Your objective is to help Mel find his guitar.

PCG845 MYSTERIES OF THE ORIENT
A collection of ancient puzzles. Excellent graphics. Requires VGA and Windows 3.1. New Zone.

PCG847 PEA-ESP! 2 (VGA)
is copyrighted DOS-shareware by Triple-U Software. This game explores ESP (Extra Sensory Perception) phenomena in an interesting, uncommon, and scientifically valid way. It is simple, fun, exciting and challenging for all ages and sexes. It's also a check-tool for evaluating ESP potential, luck vs skill, and allows you to participate in ESP research if you register, qualify and score well enough. Req 386+

PCG848 QUEST FOR NECRONOMICON
The Middle Age is here! This package takes you in the middle of medieval world. You are a fearless Mage-Fighter, whose quest is to save the earth and find the lost book of Necronomicon. TOTAL CONVERSION!!!

PCG850 ROYAL VIDEO POKER 3
is a full featured video poker program that has Jacks or Better, Joker Poker, and Deduces Wild. It also has High/Low double up and Triple Draw options. Music and speech are available to those with Sound Blaster cards. Also, you can save multiple game and play statistics.

PCG851 SPACE SHADES
is a 3D space flight sim game that places you in the cockpit of a Space Cruiser.

PCG852 SPACE NIGHTMARE (VGA)
Very fast arcade game, take your favourite ship & kill enemies on planets and in the space. Smooth scrolling in all directions. Animation at 60 frames per second!

PCG853 TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS
Brain bending puzzles and awesome Super VGA will keep you busy for hours, days, perhaps decades in this latest release from Moonlite Software. Guide our hero, Demolisher Dirk, through this amazing strategic adventure!

PCG855 THE LAST RESORT (TLR)
is a Deathmatch only episode for Doom v1.666. It replaces all nine levels of episode 2, and contains new graphics, sounds, music, demos and sprites.

PCG856 CARD GAME SAMPLER 1
15 card game programs from Tommy's Toys for aspiring Earthling card sharks of all ages from 8 to adult! Old Maid, 21, Cribbage, Gin, Poker, Tuxedo (Faro, Baccarat), Spades, Hearts, Crazy 8s, Pinochle, Canasta, Pitch, Casino, Red Dog, Double Patience.works with any PC

PCG857 CARD GAME SAMPLER 2
15 card games, Earthling card sharks of all ages from 8 to adult! Euchre, Whist, Clobby, Tonk, Coon Can, Fantan, Oh Hell, Ecarte. Six-Bid Solo, Calabresella, Le Truc, Farmer, Patience III, and Kiddie Kards

PCG860 UFO
The Card Game, A high powered UNO clone with VGA graphics and digital talking alien opponents! Adlib, SoundBlaster, and Internal Speaker supported for digital playback. VGA and 286 required. 640k RAM, SoundBlaster, and 386 or better recommended. External aliens available to expand UFO, replacement desktops.

PCG861 ULTIZURK III (ABC)
The Guildmaster's Quest V1.1 - A top/down view RPG game. Req: Dos 5.0, 2Meg Ram, 386/16 or higher. VGA.

PCG864 GREAT ULTIZURKIAN UNDER-WORLD V5.0
Final - A world -simulation RPG Game. Req: Dos 5.0, 2Meg Ram, 386/16 or higher. VGA.

PCG866 ROBOT BATTLE V1.1
Can you design a robot to best all challengers? To survive, your robot must have better tactics, intelligence, and adaptability than all others. Can you out think and out gun your opponents? This is the place to find out! Watch your ANIMATED robots come to life and battle it out.

PCG870 SOKOBAN94
A Game Of Forethought & Strategic Design by Jim Radcliffe Sokoban is Japanese for warehouse man Push all boxes n the board to the designated storage positions before time runs out. You can only push one box at a time. Be careful you don't push a box into a corner.

PCG871 CLASH OF SPEARS
by Sorcerer Productions! Battle up to four different players in this awesome 320x200x256 colour, Wargame sim.

PCG874 SPIROTRIS V1.2
Strategical and fast-paced game. Drop blocks to fill rows, columns and diagonals Use bombs to get rid of those blocks. Progress through the game and discover a picture in the background Modex, VGA, FX sound, animation.

PCG0917 VINNEY GODDESS FROM MARS
The Vinyl Goddess' space ship has crash landed on a forbidden planet. Can you guide this beautiful goddess through dangerous and exotic locations in order to free herself from the planet. GET READY for sexy arcade action in this new release from UNION LOGIC that will blow your mind at 30 frames per second.

PCG0918 BLASTEROIDS 3-D
Fast 3-D space sim in which you must shoot your way through a series of asteroid belts. It requires lightning fast reflexes and a sharpshooter's eye to make your way through. Hostile spacecraft are patrolling the belt, and their energy blasts can finish you off quickly if you don't watch out.

PCG0919 POD 1.32
Move your POD around a network of coloured tracks to remove them, but avoid falling off or being surrounded

PCG0920 MORAFF'S DUNGEONS OF THE UNFORGIVEN
This stunning dungeons and monsters game contains 25 levels of the most realistic 3D imaging ever seen in a computer game!. Battle monsters ranging from groups of flying creatures to groups of female warriors, to water creatures who inhabit flooded sections of the dungeon!

PCG0922 RISE OF THE TRIADS (ABC) [HD]
3D Shareware by Apogee Software ROTT will have every DOOM freak in the world lining up just to drool over it! A- IE Mag. Requires 386DX+, 4Megs RAM & video.

PCG0925 Z-BLAST
Lotto Number Optimization Tool is designed to provide an easy-to-do method of creating YOUR lotto number selections. Z-BLAST does NOT require you to maintain confusing, time consuming databases. You also don't have to know which numbers are hot, cold, due, etc.

PCG0926 JAZZ JACKRABBIT CHRISTMAS
This is an all-new CHRISTMAS EDITION of Jazz Jackrabbit, the breakthrough PC thriller that won Best Arcade Game of the Year! 100% New levels, new 3D bonus stages, new rockin' holiday music.

PCG0927 FIVE HUNDRED V6.2
This program plays the popular card game of 500. You can choose your style of play, as well as customize the local rules and TIMISERE options. It has animation and a voice synthesiser which runs through your standard PC speaker. Speed and colours can be customised.

PCG0929 BASKETBALL STATS POWER
Analyse and print complete individual, team, and opponent basketball statistics. Save data for up to 45 teams, 45 games per team, and 17 players per team. Spreadsheet style entry, automatic percent calculations. Includes 2-and 3- point goals, total points, free throws (made, attempted, percent), assists, charges, rebounds, blocked shots, recoveries, takeaways, and 4 user-defined categories.

PCG0930 BATTLE CHARGE V1.03F
is a two-player game played with two sets of opposing (red vs. blue) neutral and charged pieces. The game ends when a charged piece captures the opposing king. Requires: 80286 or later series CPU, 300K free RAM, VGA

PCG0931 ADVE OF CYBERBOX
A VGA logic/strategy game! The object is to escape from each of 15 rooms, as efficiently as you can, by pushing and pulling boxes around. Plenty of options and features!

PCG0932 CHINESE CHECKERS
Game v2.3 1-Apr-95. 6 computer or human players. Animated marbles seem to jump off the screen! Requires VGA, Mouse, Windows or DOS. 1993 Winner, Best New Product 1992.

PCG0933 CLICK-IT
is a graphic item search and select game. A variety of pictures, maps or other graphic images are displayed in each game. Clues consisting of definitions, words, or phrases prompt the player to find items in the image.

PCG0934 COLOUR CROSS
is a unique, abstract and kinetic two-player colour strategy game whose objective is to freeze all of your opponent's pieces. Requires: 8086 series CPU, 300k free RAM, VGA

PCG0935 COLOURS V3.0
has been found to be very therapeutic. It's intent was for children. we found also, folks of all ages are fascinated with its simplicity. People 1 to 80 become addicted.

PCG0936 ULTIMATE CRAPS
Animated, interactive craps simulation. Throw the dice with your own changeable technique as you learn to play Craps. Learn all possible bets. On line help. Access 3 tables of statistics. All right way bets are implemented. Wrong way bets are implemented in the registered version. Bet optimization is available. Play with a mouse or keyboard.

PCG0937 CROSSWORD POWER
Create crossword puzzles from your words and clues. Words are manually or automatically placed in the puzzle grid. Auto-search can examine over 200 different word arrangements to find the best puzzle. Foreign language characters supported. Puzzles can also be saved as WordPerfect DOS 5.1/6.0 and Windows version 6.0a macros. Requires 512K.

PCG0938 CRUSHER CASTLE II V2.2
Crusher Castle II is an adventure, strategy, and arcade game all in one. Your objective is to escape from a haunted castle of 25 rooms filled with ghosts, bombs, candles, maps, and much more. Packed with features and with animated graphics, no two adventures are ever the same! Very few have escaped the Castle. Can you ?

PCG0939 SMART HOUSE V1.0A
Educated person's adventure game and super quiz. In each of 100 rooms you encounter a tough question, a difficult puzzle, or a vexing riddle. Venture through three corridors to the prize room and win a prize. An amazing DOS multimedia experience. SMART HOUSE requires you to identify famous painters and musicians; recognise wildlife, flags, and literary passages. Much more.

PCG0941 FINDWORD
aids in the creation of and solutions to crossword puzzles. You simply type in a variable and the program will search through its 80,000 word dictionary and display a list of the first 147 words it finds which match your string.

PCG0942 FMAZ21 V2.1
Generates mazes on your VGA display. The mazes are displayed in 3D. Use the arrow keys to solve them or have the computer solve them. Borland Turbo C 3.0 source code is included.

PCG0943 GAMEHELP
Golf Handicapping and Player Statistics allows you to maintain a history of your golf game. GameHelp now calculates handicaps for 9 and 18 hole rounds as well as many other statistics for an unlimited number of golfers. Great for monitoring the progress of your game. This is ideal for individual golfers, foursomes or 9/18 hole leagues/clubs.

PCG0944 ULTIMATE GIN V4.44
Animated, interactive Gin Simulation. Choose standard Gin or one of two variants of Oklahoma Gin. Select Hollywood scoring if desired. Adjust bonus scores. Registered users can play up to 40 games per match, or start a new match with any player at any time. A "rummy holder" allows you to see your hand in melds at a glance. Scores for each hand are recorded and recallable.

PCG0946 SOLITAIRE SUITE V1.12
Featuring 7 of the very best solitaire card games, each with a smooth and elegant graphical user interface. Includes Calculation, Concentration, Idiot's Delight, Midnight Oil, Monte Carlo, Osmosis, and Royal Cotillion.

PCG0947 K-CHESS V2.0
an instructional Chess program which shows its calculations as it works. It features various types of hints and help such as showing the best line of attack for several moves ahead. One-player, two-player and autoplay modes. Move undo and redo. Fully keyboard or mouse controlled. Games can be printed and saved to disk.

PCG0948 LAS VEGAS CRAPS
is an EGA/VGA Las Vegas craps game for one or two people. This is a game for beginners as well as the experienced gambler. It allows every bet permissible in a real casino. It includes complete statistical information, a screen blanker and a host of other features.

PCG0949 SIMPLE PLEASURES SOLITAIRE
Eight new and traditional solitaire card games. Slick mouse-driven GUI interface, full-featured with lots of customizable options. Requires EGA or VGA and a mouse. Shareware by Randy Rasa.

PCG0950 SCRYFISH V1.2
ScaryFish world editing util. Many options. Create your own worlds. Stock fishing holes or let computer stock them. Worlds can have up to 32 species from a list of over 40. Extensive documentation Includes 2 .pcx files, mode-screen saver, best worlds contest rules, and more. Keywords: games sports fishing ScaryFish PMP Freeware lite version of Make Your Own Worlds

UTILITY DISKS

PCV800 FINGER MAPS V1.01
is a object-oriented drawing package supplemented with a comprehensive data- base of world geographical coordinates. It can serve as a standalone object drawing program, a world map maker or simply a PCX paint image file

PCV809 SCI-FI BASE
is a reference for science fiction & fantasy movie buffs. It lists over 1000 movies. You can access the database by title, year, cast member, director or search the text.

PCV813 FOR YOUR EYES ONLY V2.3
FYI is a complete but simple Personal Address Book It features an elegant inface with pull down menus. Context sensitive on-line help. Function_Menu,and much more.

PCV814 JUST VOICE
is a voice recognition program. Requires a Sound Blaster compatible sound card with microphone. Features programmable patterns, instrument placement (stereo), more percussion instruments. Now works better with Sound Blaster compatibles, improved stereo!

PCV820 EASY BACKUP V3.1
Compressed Backup. Disk Maker - Easy Backup makes compressed self-restoring backups. It backs up sub directories automatically and has an archive option which will remove the backed up directory structure from hard disk.

PCV832 ANIPAINT PRO V4.4 (WIN)
Paint and Animate 150+ tools. Faster Saving 256 colours. Resolutions from 320x200 to 2048x1024. Make animated movies. Games. Presentations etc. Complete Documentation and Demos. Bitmap & Vector graphics with Clip Art and Objects. Font editor, Font Capture, Capture Palettes, Cut & Paste palettes. Undo/Redo with Auto save, Gradient Curves, Magnetic Lines, Screen Saver. Disk Search, Cybrfind intelligent phrase search Utility.

PCV833 SCREEN THIEF [WIN] V1.00
The ultimate screen capture system for Windows. Features include: Up to 8 user defined capture configurations each with hot-key invocation; Capture from desktop, active window, active application, defined area and clip board; Send capture to disk, printer, clipboard or MDI window; Zoom in/out; Crop images; Auto colour reduction; Page preview; BMP, RLE, GIF, PCX TIFF file formats.

PCV839 VPIC V6.1E
VPIC is a file viewer/converter for EGA, VGA and Super VGA display adopters. It is configurable for your display card using a plain text configuration file and the accompanying CONFIG and CVIP configuration programs.

PCV841 LOTTOMATIC
is the best lottery tracking & gaming software in the business. Store up to 30,000 plays... generate statistical reports... let LottoMATIC pick your numbers or pick your own. High-color options, reports extremely easy to use, many functions, online help, supports virtually all lotteries.

PCV842 MOD4WIN V2.12
is a player for digital music modules on PC running Windows. Supports MST, MOD, WOW, OKT, STM, S3M, 669, FAR, and MTM modules .. 11-48 kHz sample rates. 8 and 16 bit sample depth. mono. stereo.

PCV843 MELODY MASTER V2.5
Create, edit, and play music on your PC speaker. Graphical interface with staff. Over 140 melodies included! Can export music into Pascal, C, BASIC, ANSI, Batch files, etc. New *SOUND BLASTER* Supports CGA/Herc/EGA/VGA!.

PCV844 MIDI MACHINE (WIN) V1.10
1994 Excel Progs/TOW Devel. WAV and MID player/file manager! Random, Forward, Backward, Continuous, Shuffle Play, with full load/save album support, animations dance to sound! New WAV Seek-Minimise mode taking less of the screen yet keeping functions, auto-play after drag&drop sound selection, new icon

PCV845 STORY MAKER+ VGA V1.0
New VGA version of Storymaker+. Multimedia kit for children, parents, schools & writers. Create & read interactive storybooks w/animation,music, speech & sound. Compile stories into personalised,stand-alone programs. Easy-to-use, full-featured scenery & animation editors. animated piano for music & sound effects, text editor & fonts,book editor. VGA,640K, HD,mouse,NTER 94

Unprotects over 400 games, All unlocks tested.

PCV847 POWERRIP+ V3.0
NEW: Custom scanning ... lets you scan for ANY type of file, and smart extraction/cleanup for MODs and 669s! PowerRIP will rip MODs, S3Ms, MTMs, STMs, ULTs, 669s, PSMs, AMFs, MIDs, GIFs, VOCs, WAVs, BMPs, and more from demos, games, etc.; byte rip parts of a file. Has an easy to use interface with mouse support! Get it!

PCV848 SCREAM TRACKER

PCV849 RWSB V1.02
Bells, Whistles, & Sound Boards is a new prog library for adding 100% digital music and sound effects to your games and demos. This is a 30 day test drive version of the library with a six channel limit and comes with a sound prog disambler. sounds are written in optimized 386 Assembler.

PCV850 UNIVERSAL INSTALL V2.31
Create custom installation programs with no programming featuring: greater then 50% file compression, multifunction help file, view/print text files, create a batch file to run your software, and it LOOKS LIKE YOU WANT IT TO LOOK. Provides all the tools necessary to develop a professional installation in minutes.

TEK DISKS

TEK002 C COMPILERS
68000 C Compiler is an optimizing C compiler for the Motorola 68000 processor and is meant for educational purposes. You can learn a lot about writing a compiler.

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Now with INCLUDE files, listings, no limit on size of source files, fwd refs in complex expressions, END operand, default ORG END in DATA SEGMENT.

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TEK016 DASM/MD86
is a disassembler for 8086 COM files up to 32K in size.

TEK060 VIRTUAL REALITY TOOLS V2.0
Sprites editor, & designer for fractal trees & 3D walls. All the features you now find in the best commercial & shareware programs, Move inside a scenery as in a virtual reality.

TEK062 INTERACTIVE 3D TOOLKIT
Helps create interactive 3D programs in C. It can be used to create MS-DOS or MS Windows applications. Features include royalty-free distribution, high speed texture mapping of walls, floors, ceilings, lighting effects, auto- mapping, animated exture maps and more.

TEK066 C TUTORIAL
is a C tutorial book-on-disk. C++ Tutorial - is a series of 14 lessons teaching C++ programming.

TEK073 MSDOS INTERRUPT LIST (AB)
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Not only contains the latest graphical PD from all over the world, the Net and BBS sources it also contain over 1,700 clipart & colour image files divided into various categories to aid selection. The files may be "imported" into most of the popular desktop publishers, art packages, viewers and word processors directly from the CDROM..
We have included several useful utilities to enhance the performance of this disc. First is FILLY GIF. This allows you to view any of the images on this disc, prior to use. Second is Photovision which is a full featured image manipulation and viewing tool from Software Vision Corporation. Another program which is also a firm favourite is Envision Publisher which is a top quality desktop publisher, there are of course loads more of the most popular shareware titles on this disc and all come with full instructions for use and where to obtain the full version if required. Categories include Animals, Bikes, Birds, Boats, Buildings, Cars, Cartoons, Cats, Computers, Dinosaur's, Dogs, Fantasy, Fish, Flags, Flowers, Food, Helicopters, Houses, Inserts, Maps, Medical, Men, Military, Misc, Modart, Painting, Photov, Places, Planes, Raytrace, Scenic, Sci-Fi, Sea, Ships, Smartart, Space, Sports, Sytar Trek, Swimsuits, Things, Trains, Wars and Women.

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All the latest Mega Demos which we have been collecting for the last 12 months, assembled onto one cdrom all ready to run and zipped ready to install. Contains 2nd Reality, UnReal, Panic, Jingle, Monstra, Chrome, Ice, Report, Phenomenon, Optic Nerve, The Art of Noise, The Portal, Putty, Xmas, Reversed Evolution, Vector Shock, Jangle, Virtual Leftovers, OutBurst, Asphyxia, Sagadust, Parasye, Sonic Dreams, Skin Deep, Evil, Arabs, Smashed, Cewl Muzik, Lost Destiny, Super Unknown, Modules from the Gathering, Tigers on the Prowl, Dark Legions, Orchard Music, Helious Balls, Radical Rhythms, Pop Tunes!, Low density, Space Nuts, Winter Melodies, DOOM Invasions, Out of Chaos. Also contains all the latest stuff from the past 3 months. You get over 675Mb of software and 580Mb of which are PC Mega demos in Zip format (easy dos menu system), loads of new music modules in scream tracker and MOD formats.





CD105 GRAPHIC SENSATIONS £19.99



its a collection of the best Graphics tools, 24bit images, Animations like the famous JUMPGATE (5.7Mb), The Apache 3d helicopter and the Space Animation by Samuel Rees. A huge collection for IMAGINE Users - that will take you years to look through, categories including: Anatomy, Animals, Attributes, Aviation, Bathroom, Botany, Building, Clocks, Computers, earth, Fonts, Food, Furniture, gears, Kitchens, Lamps, Land, Logos, Misc, music, Outlet, Phones, Ships, Space, Sports, Text, Toys, Tree_Kit, Vehicles, Video & Weapons. LIGHTWAVE Users are treated to subjects like: as the imagine section, Textures, Tools, Toys, Tutorial, vehicles, Video, ViewPoint & Weapons.



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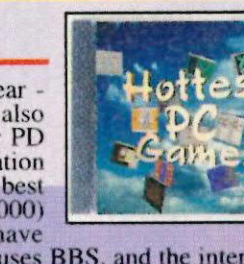

PDSOFT, the leaders in the very best public domain and shareware, announce the release of the best CD this year - HOTTEST PC GAMES, not only contains the latest PD from all over the country, the Aminet and BBS sources it also contains some exclusive products which will appear on the CD before they appeared in our adverts or any other PD libraries advert. The interfaces have been custom-written. Select the file you want to read about, read the information then click to de-compress! Easy as that. Over 670MB of data. The perfect choice for a low-cost, selection of the best Shareware & Public Domain Games. You get our complete collection of PCG floppy disks (Disks PCG1 to PCG1000) over 5,000 games for any PC. The software has been selected from hundreds of megabytes of software we have received from programmers, Software Houses BBS, and the internet. It includes everything you need to install & run all of the software found on the cdrom. You can make floppy disk sets as if you ordered the disk direct from us so that you can share them with your friends.



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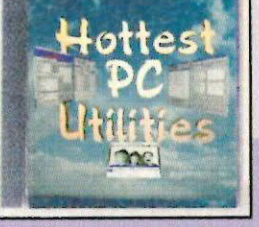

You get hundreds of utils including; shells, emulator's, disk utilities, screen savers, backup/restore software, diagnostics, graphic utils, CDROM, Tutors, anti-virus, network, patches, drivers, music, viewers, painting, artwork and loads more!
Not only does it contain the latest PD from all over the country, The Net and BBS sources it also contains some exclusive products which will appear on the CD before they appeared in our adverts or any other PD libraries advert. The interfaces have been custom-written. Select the file you want to read about, read the information then click to de-compress! Easy as that. Over 670MB of data. The perfect choice for a low-cost, selection of the best Shareware & Public Domain Games. You get our complete collection of PCVdisks (Disks PCV1 to PCV1000) over 5,000 programs and games for any PC computer. The software has been selected from hundreds of megabytes of software we have received from programmers, Software Houses BBS, and the internet. It includes everything you need to install & run all of the software found on the cdrom. You can make floppies as if you ordered them directly from us, so you can share them with your friends, easy instructions. Req 512K RAM & HD space.

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Love music? Then you'll love WS. If you are a beginner, will help you add music to your computer. If you are a professional, you'll feel equally at home because a fellow musician produced the disc. 450Mb of music related progs & pro demos, is an incredible music resource for every-one. Features a custom interactive interface that is a delight to use. Simply point & click to enjoy enjoy.

NEW

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Tired of DOS and MS Windows? Try the Plus-and-Play Linux CD, a genuine UNIX-like 32-bit oper-ating system with source code. Youll get the 1.1 kernel, XFree86 v2.1, Xlib/Xt X window, Tcl?Tk scripting language, Xview v3.2 OpenLock, InterViews v3.1 C++, and Perl 4.036. Also contains 100s of other programs including emulator's, development tools, langu-ages, d/base, com, publishing, Games, Multi Media viewers, and MPEG video and sound. Linux needs 4Mb RAM and 10 to 1000Mb of hard disk space. A installation booklet & script makes this operating system easy to install!. XWindow system: X11R6 XFree 86 3.0, Xlib/xt X Window libraries, Tcl/Tk scripting languages, Xview 3.2 OpenLock toolkit, InterViews 3.1 C++ toolkit. Req 4Mb RAM. 386 or better.

CD136 ADA (MARCH 1995) £19.99



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CD131 SLACKEWARE LINUX £19.99



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With this subscription service you get the cdrom the day its released no waiting around, all we need is your credit card/ switch number, name+address and away we go. only charged on day of dispatch. req a card number with valid expiry date and issue number

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Wallpaper and images





CD085 HOBBES OS/2 ARCHIVED (MAR95) £9.99



OS/2 Archive CDROM brings you the largest collection of OS/2 material within your grasp. We constantly update Hobbes (ftp-os2.cdrom. com) so you get the freshest in os/2 shareware and freeware. Contains updates & patches, Commercial demos including SimCity of OS/2, Games (Chess, Minesweeper, poker, Wizards of War, more), Graphics programs (3d chart and plotting software, paint programs). System utilities, 5000+ icons, Internet connectivity aids, Unix utilities, including GCC 2.6.1, Emacs 19.77, and EMX 09a C compiler. Sound, video, printer, adaptor drivers, latest service TCP/IP and OS/2 disks, Editors, spell checkers, and Tex and Fonts.

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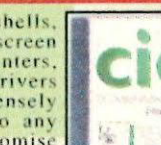
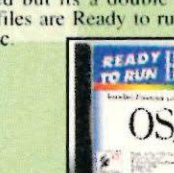


Contains shells, disk utls, screen savers, printers, monitor drivers etc. Immensely valuable to any user. Customise one's environment, it contains a large collection of icons, bitmaps, hundreds of games from arcade style to board. Demos of commercial programs. Programmers will appreciate the source code & programming tools for C, C++, Turbo Pascal, & Visual Basic.

CD086 HOBBES OS/2 READY TO RUN £14.99

As Archived but its a double CDROM and all the files are Ready to run directly from the disc.



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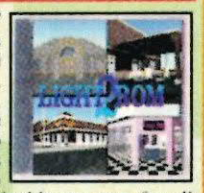

CD057 LIGHT ROM - Contains 650 Mb of 3d objects, images, images sequences, scene files, surface attributes, bumb maps, & textures for use with Lighwave. An invaluable resource for all users. **CD114 LIGHT ROM 2** - An improved selection of 3d objects, images, images sequences, scene files, surface attributes, bumb maps, & textures all for use.

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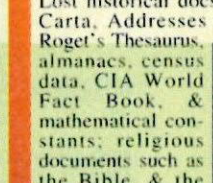
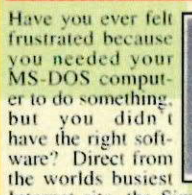


Literature such as Aesop's Fables, Alice in Wonderland, Moby Dick, & Paradise Lost historical docs such as the Magna Carta, Addresses references such as Roget's Thesaurus, almanacs, census data, CIA World Fact Book, & mathematical constants; religious documents such as the Bible, & the Book of Mormon.

CD021 SIMTEL (MAY 1995) £9.99



Have you ever felt frustrated because you needed your MS-DOS computer to do something, but you didn't have the right software? Direct from the worlds busiest Internet site, the Simtel. Use its friendly shell program for easy access to 10,000 files. Find what you need * Code, Programming + General Utils.

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CD176 - Amiga Music with a drop in the Ocean - Dancing to the Beat, Gabrielle, Requiem for an Angel, Heath of the matter, Coming Home, Here is where I'll Always be, Dawn Chorus, Rescue Me, Thats' the Girl, A wold I never knew, The last Time, all music composed, Arranged, Performed, Engineered and Produced by the Craft Brothers.

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POV RAY £19.99



CD091 -Create 3D grap-hics like this! No artistic ability required!. The Official POV-ray CDROM is a compilation of images, scene source, program, utilities and tips on POV-Ray & 3D graphics from the Internet and CompuServe. Unlike some other raytrace compila-tions, this one is aimed fairly fairly and squarely at those who want to create their OWN images.

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The powerDOS CDROM maximizes your productivity, customizes you DOS environment, and provides you with hours of fun and entertainment. Contains over 1,900 of the worlds best and freshest DOS programs. Anti-Virus, cool games, network packages, patches to upgrade software packages, sound drivers, utils for graphics, ray tracers, viewers etc.

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is a professional typesetting system created by professor Donald Knuth of Stanford University. These contain everything that you will need to install and use TeX and LaTex. You Get code (1000Mb) to compile and install TeX for Unix, DOS, Macintosh, Windows NT, OS/2, etc. Ready to run

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CD103 - Contains 632 Mb of fonts for almost any computer system. Also contains the Thienen fonts, which are exclusive to this cd. There are 231 font families on this cd each with 8 different styles. Theres a booklet containing 24 pages with printouts of the fonts. Take a look through the book and selection the font you realy want.

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CD108 - which can be used on various conputer systems. all 507 mandelbrot-Pics have various reslutions, (1140x890, 1024x768, 640x480 and 64x48). They all use 256 colours. In addition to this the 20th most beautiful fractals are saved as true colour graphics in TIF format. Amiga, PC and MasOS viewers etc.

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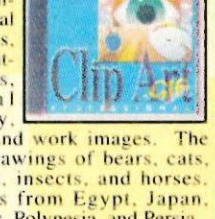

CD052 -includes such categories as animals, boys, cultural images, floral & natural images, holiday images, literary figures, mythological images, scenery, transportation, and work images. The disc contains drawings of bears, cats, dinosaurs, dogs, insects, and horses. Cultural images from Egypt, Japan, Native Americans, Polynesia, and Persia.

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Gives you 494Mb of the latest new shareware games for DOS & windows. The disc has all its files sorted into 40 categories just like gaga games 1, but updated for 1995. You ll even get a shareware copy of Descent, Interplays awesome new 3D virtual reality game.

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Contains over 1,100 NEW levels for the game doom & doom2 contains tools and other interesting stuff for all your doom needs.

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Gives you an enormous source code collection to reference. You get high quality code from the UseNET source archives, the Simtel Archive, source. 600Mb of source in 15,000 files. An index file in each subdirectly briefly describes each file, making it easy to locate files. Perfect for any programmer.

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CD067 - Contents awide selection of the most upto date 3d software and images. AMIGA programs include - 3d Stereogram, ASG2d, SIRDGN, and the latest StereoCAD. IMAGES - includes hundreds of source images (before conversion), 3dtext images, and 3d imgaes (all images in PCX, IFF and BMP formats).

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Gives you the entire C Users Group library, a collection of more than 400 MB or user supported C Source code. You get function libraries, text editors, compilers, comm support, text formatters, interpreters, co-routines, games, tutorials, math linkers, cross compilers. Most of the source code is for DOS.

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From prep.ai. mit. edu contain 250 software packages for your UNIX computer. SunOS 4.1.3 and Solaris 2.3. You can use most straight off the disk. You will meet them wherever you go. Once you know these tools, you will be comfortable in almost any UNIX environment. As C developer, you'll use the GCC C and C++ compiler (2.5.8), the C++library (v2.5.3), the debugging tool GDB (4.12) & other tools.

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MULTIMEDIA 2 £22.99

OctaMED will run directly from the CD. Full documentation. OctaMED is a commercial program. In addition we have included the full MidiCraft collection of midi & music X files, samples, modules, tutorials, utilities. Midicraft are professional musicians & have provided over 50Mb of data from their collection.

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CD044 - Containing over 1.2 Giga. It all adds to the most complete collection of sounds on any platform and will form vital part of any musicians CD collection. Contains 4,600 Modules, 14,000 Amiga Samples, 568 Sonix Scorces & 4500 Instruments, 302 octaMED/MED Modules, 1190 Midi files, 1552 VOC & 642 WAV Samples.

PRO CLIPART £9.99

CD051 - Over 10,000 - that can add a professional touch to any newsletter, leaflet or publication you create. Categories like Advertising., Aircraft, Alphabets, Animals & Wild Life, Antiques, Birds, Borders, Frames, Business, Cartoons, Cats, Chirldren, Comical, Christmas, Computers, Dogs, Educ, Electrical, Family, Farming, and Much More.

3D STUDIO £19.99

CD145 - Imagine, Lightwave & Real 3d. From 24Bit club Scotland.Exclusivity for this CD. You will also find dedicated animations for Retina and Opal Vision cards, a selection of EGS utilities and rendered textures in a variety of formats. 3D Arena is one of the better produced cdroms with some very tasty textures and objects.

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Filled with movie clips in full colour and sound. what multimedia is all about! Choose from 224 movie clips in QT format that will run on your PC. categories such as: airplanes, animations, morphs, motorcycles, jetski, 3D rendered art, space, and many others. QT for Windows is included free on the CDROM.

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Increase your productivity with this convenient collection of Clipper utilities & source code. This CD is full-word indexed so your can search the entire collection for a keyword. You'll find any keyword or function referenced anywhere on the CDROM in seconds and be able to browse the associated document or sorce code.

CD128 SPACE SHUTTLE £19.99

Is a comprehensive encyclopedia. It has over 3015 GIF images, most in full colour, all royalty-free. It has text files about every mission. Each Shuttle mission is represented, in addition to categories such as the 747 Shuttle Ferry, night images on the launch pad, & pictures of the instrumentation. Delve into the history of the Shuttle program.

SPACE & ASTRONOMY £19.99

CD027 - Contains 5000 text files fully readable on the CDROM. These files include info on asteroids, astronauts, NASA etc. Theres handy viewers to browse through the images on the disc and documents. Sysops get index files for rbbs, opus, pcboard, spitfire, maximus, & BBS software.

FONTS & CLIPS £9.99

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CD173 VIRTUAL REALITY £19.99

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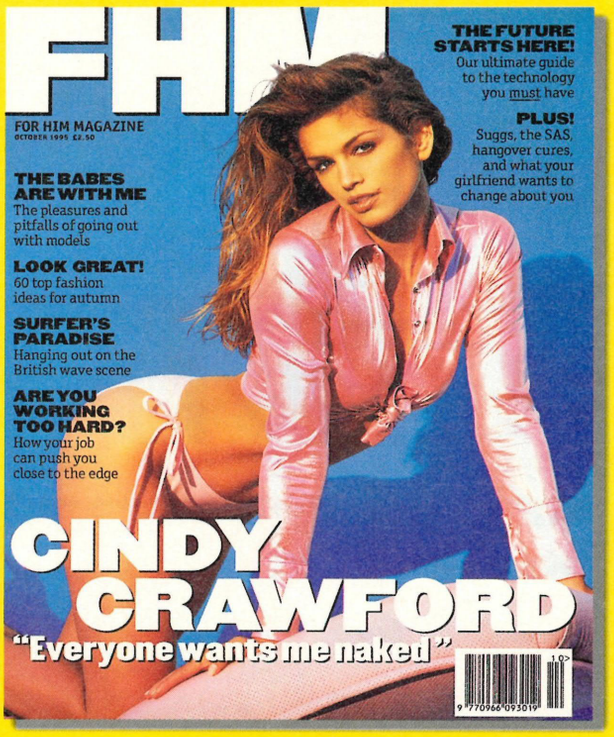
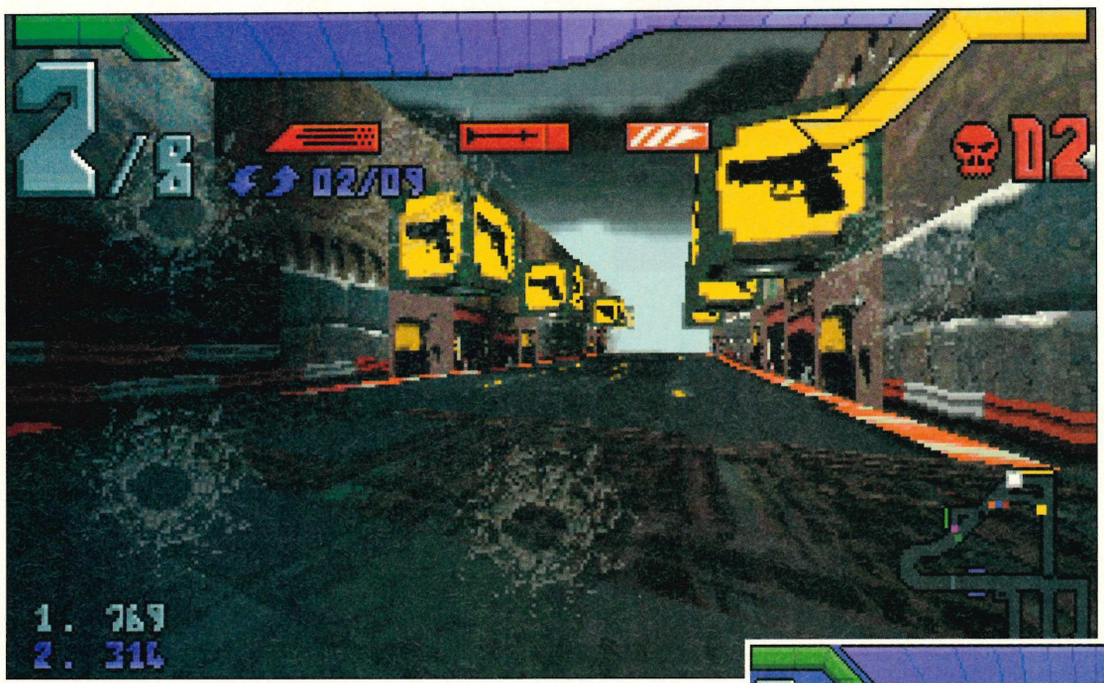


FHM It's a guy thing.

Hi Octane



Tearing around a course at high speed, dodging your opponents' missiles and trying not to end up as roadkill... a quick guide to staying alive in Bullfrog's hover racer.

IN THE KNOW

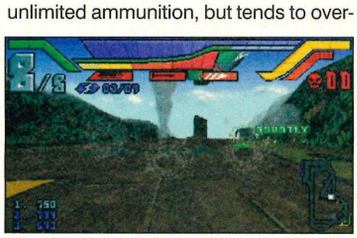
First and foremost, more important than anything else, it is imperative to learn the course on which you are racing. As in real-world racing, you can be much more fluid in your turns, and use your boost much more efficiently, if you know where the corners and short cuts are.

Also, there are secret areas, such as rooms that open up by triggering something, or by being hit with a couple of missiles — plus goodies galore to collect, so keep your eyes peeled.

Bear in mind that hover vehicles do not behave like ground vehicles — when you turn a corner, you will continue to slide sideways for a while. Use this to your advantage by turning into corners early. Also, the turn has momentum too, so you might have to counter-steer a little to compensate.

SHOOT 'EM UP

Don't forget that your craft has weapons on board — your opponents will be shooting at you so you should try to give as good as you get. The minigun has unlimited ammunition, but tends to overheat and shut down if used for prolonged periods. Stick to short bursts of fire to avoid this problem.



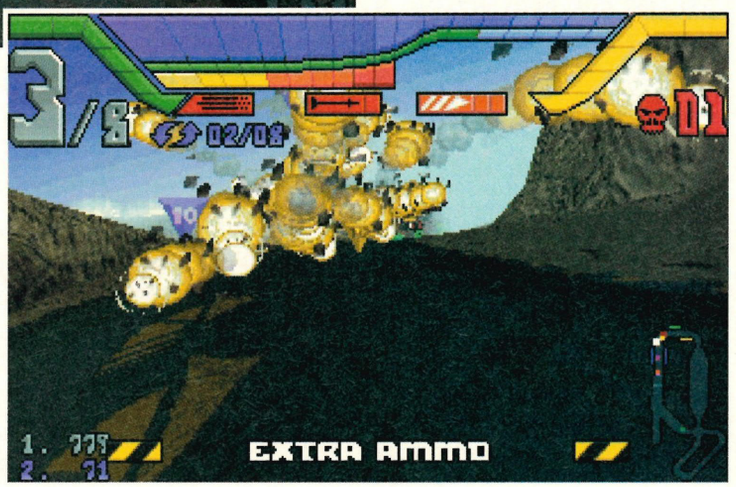
The missile launcher is far more powerful than the minigun, but ammo is limited. Wait for the crosshairs to turn red, indicating a lock-on, and try to fire when you and your target are both on a straight, increasing the likelihood of a decent strike. Waiting until the last minute also means your target has less chance to dodge.

If you are under attack yourself, you can escape by braking gently, causing your attacker to overshoot, and consequently placing him in your sights (this is particularly effective if done just before a jump, because your opponent cannot brake while in mid-air)! Overdoing it will of course mean that you end up behind everyone else in the field! Also, weaving from side to side will sometimes shake a missile lock.

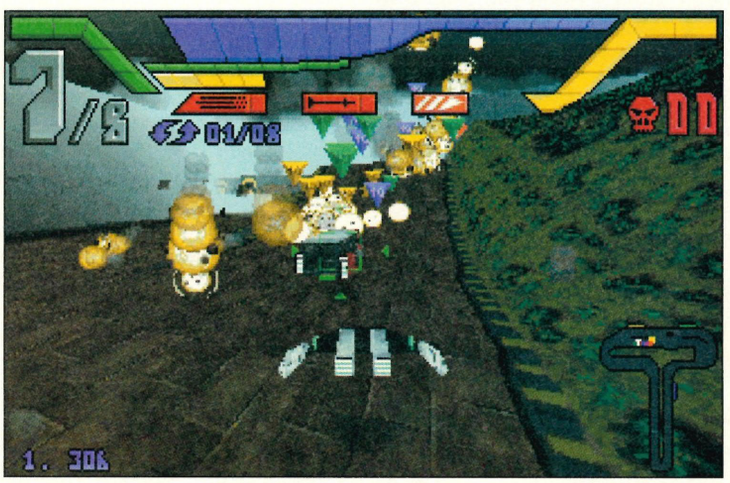
AND FINALLY...

Take care of your boosters — with the right timing, they can make the difference between first and last. Try to use boost over jumps, and, while in the air, have a go at a mid-air stunt, like turning 360° or even 720° — this will increase your overall rating.

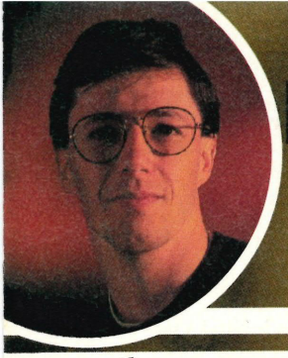
And last but most definitely not least, always keep an eye on your fuel level. It's no use being in front if you conk out on the last lap...



▲ *My guns are bigger than your guns. Har de har har.*



▲ *Die! It may look like a racing game, but it's more fun as a shoot' em up.*



Monitor

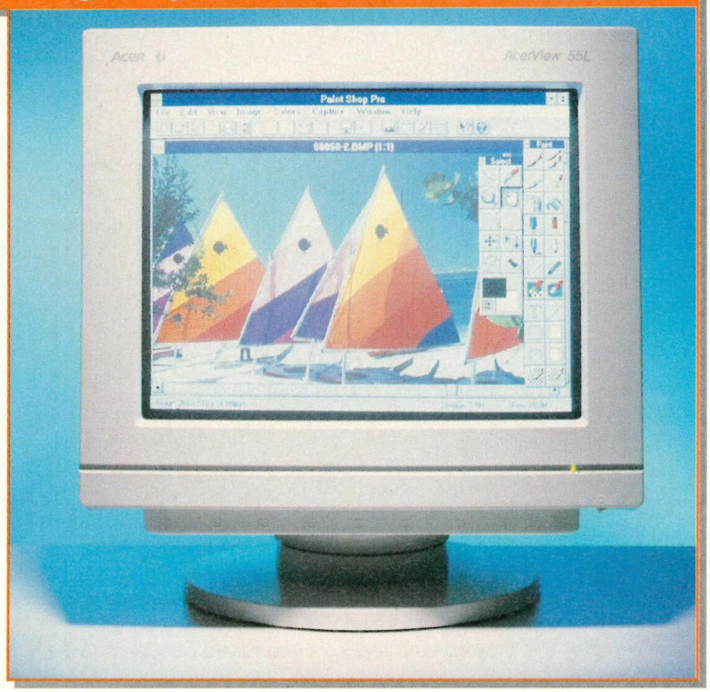
'A little while back Emap, the publishing company behind PC Review, invested some £1.2 million building a hardware and software test facility. This centre occupies some 3,000 square feet in London and is kitted out with the very latest test equipment. Amongst the masses of equipment used are six Compaq file servers and no less than 34 Apricot workstations to enable accurate testing of hardware and software. The bench tests used are recognised and supported by Compaq, IBM, Microsoft, Dell, HP and Lotus.

But not only do these Labs test for physical attributes, but also how easy the reviewed products are to learn and use. This is, to my knowledge, the first time a home PC magazine has tested products for usability and performance.

With this test facility PC Review now has the biggest and best testing facility of any PC home magazine. So what's this got to do with you? Simple. PC Review group tests and individual product reviews are now carried out by this test centre so you can rely on our tests and verdicts to give you solid, reliable information that the world's top hardware and software manufacturers also trust. The first reviews to be carried out by the PC Review Labs is the monitor round-up in this very issue. Every month from now on you'll find a group test in PC Review covering major product groups to help you chose the best products for your PC.'

Andy Leaning

Acer AcerView 55L (15")



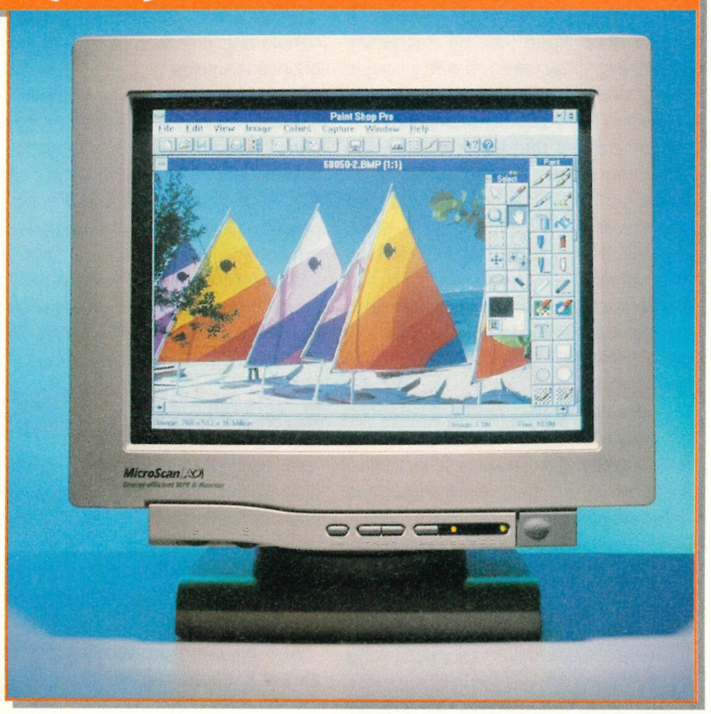
The AcerView 55L is a fairly basic monitor, but has a good all-round specification, a reasonable price, and impressive image quality.

A full range of resolutions are supported, up to and including 1024x768 @ 70Hz so you'll be able to play games in 640x480 and also work in higher resolutions in Word and Excel when needed. At all resolutions the picture is very solid, not suffering from jitters that some other monitors suffer from.

The display is controlled by seven knobs: brightness, contrast, vertical and horizontal sizes and positions and pin-cushion distortion. Our panel of users liked this system due to its simplicity, and rated it as having the best overall physical design. The Acer 55L is a good all-round monitor.

Supplier: ACER UK
Phone: (01628) 533122
Price: £249
Overall Rating: 7

ADI MicroScan 4V (15")



The MicroScan 4V is ADI's highest specification entry-level model, but our user panel had a mixed reaction to it. The controls are simple, without sacrificing effectiveness; brightness and contrast are controlled using standard knobs, with the more advanced image functions being accessed by a selection button. As each function is chosen different lights on a small row of LEDs illuminate, this setting is changed using up and down adjust buttons. Some users found the system too fiddly, while most found it just dandy. The tilt & swivel stand, often fairly bad was rather good, and our panel found adjusting the position of the display very easy.

Display quality was very good, thanks to the 75Hz refresh rate, and a bandwidth of 70MHz, made this one of the highest of the 15" monitors that we tested here.

Supplier: ADI Systems (UK) Ltd
Phone: (0181) 236 0801
Price: £315
Overall Rating: 8

High Lights

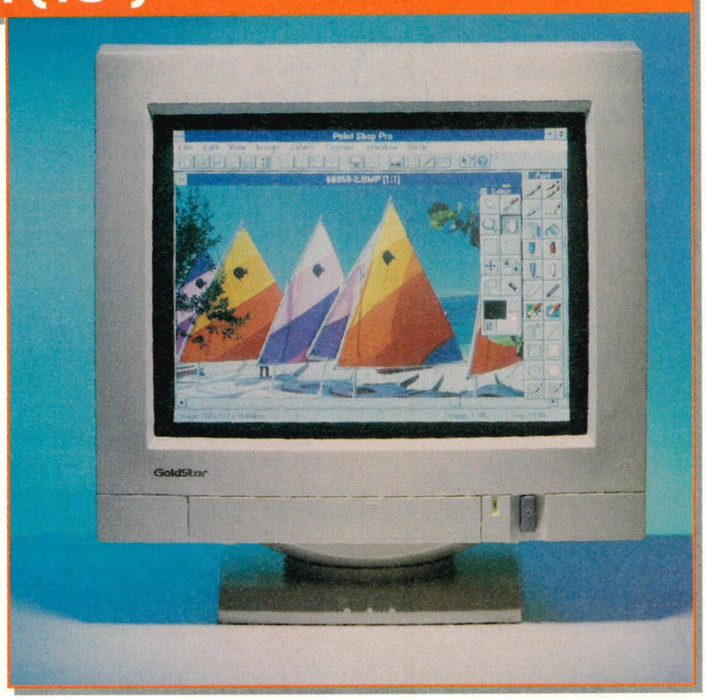


DesignWorks 3 115
Xres 119
Windows Utils 121
Stick-Ups 123

Muscle

Why play games on a 14" display? We put the PC Review Labs to work and tested four 15" and two 17" monitors.

Goldstar 1520DM (15")

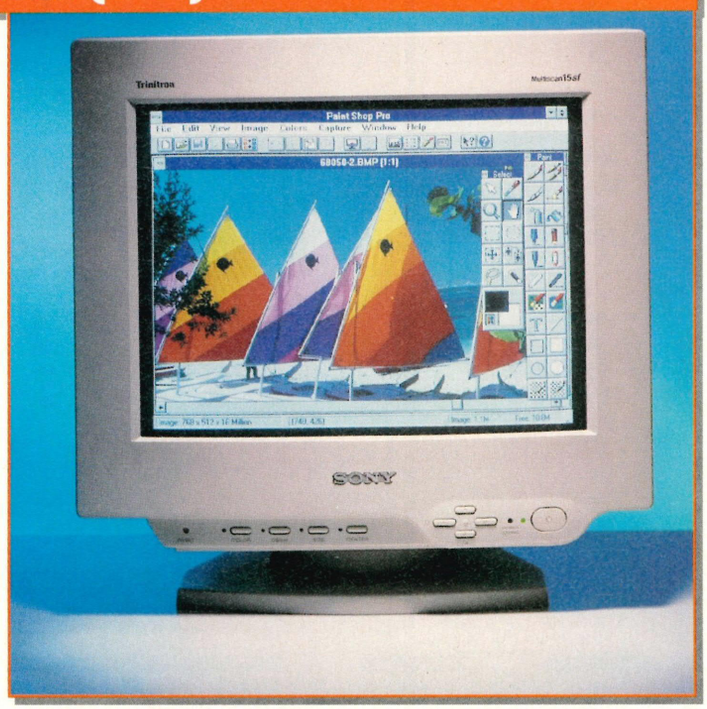


The Goldstar 1520DM has an attractive light grey shaded casing. The control buttons are discreetly hidden under a pop-open front panel, making it nice to look at without losing any functionality. Besides the brightness and contrast knobs, functions are selected using the Select button. A row of LEDs points out the action currently selected, and the up and down buttons adjust it.

Pressing both buttons together recalls the factory preset for the current video mode, in case you manage to ruin the set-up. One of our testers called this system "over flashy", another said "once I figured out how to open the door, it was easy!". But with a limited swivel and pretty poor display we were left with a generally poor impression of the GoldStar model.

Supplier: Carrera Technology
Phone: (0175) 500400
Price: £233
Overall Rating: 6

Sony Multiscan 15sf (15")



With a name like Sony you expect things to be good, and we weren't disappointed. Changing the display is achieved through the use of four function buttons and a set of movement controls laid out as a cursor pad to control brightness and contrast. If the Centre button is pressed, a small LED above the button shows that the cursor buttons control the centring of the image on the screen. The Geometry and Size modes work slightly differently, but are easy to figure out. Trinitron tubes are a love or hate thing.

Some people love the vivid colours, strong blacks and extra sharpness of the image, whereas others prefer the more subdued appearances of standard tubes. The only real problem with this monitor was a slight glare problem.

Supplier: Sony Computer UK
Phone: (0181) 760 0500
Price: £395
Overall Rating: 7

Green Monitors

Believe it or not your monitor is responsible for the hole in the Ozone layer that threatens all life on Earth. It's true! Well not quite, but all the time your monitor is on it's using up electricity and power, and in doing so eating up the Earths resources. Given that there are some 200 million PCs around the world all doing this, that's a lot of power and resources.

To play their part in the Green cause, and reduce electricity bills, monitor manufacturers are now building power saving features into monitors. The current standard dictating power-saving specifications (EPS Energy Star) states that the monitor must power down to 30 watts when not used. A further standard, called NuTek, states that after 70 minutes in this standby the monitor should power down further to a deepsleep mode using up just five watts.

Testing, testing

In our monitor tests we checked several criteria. With a number of different images on the screen, from hi-res graphics, spreadsheets, word processing and diagrams, we looked for the following points in the images: picture sharpness, consistency of lines, quality of colour fills, white purity, and any glare on the tube. Along with the picture quality, we asked them to play with the monitor's controls, and the tilt and swivel stand.

These results were then combined to leave us with an overall performance number for each monitor. The table below lists the scores that each monitor received, the higher the number the better.

Usability Summary

Monitor	Image Quality	Physical Design	Overall
AcerView 55L	6.11	6.46	6.29
ADI Microscan 4V	5.71	6.32	6.02
GoldStar 1520	5.46	5.39	5.43
Sony CPD-15SF1	5.21	5.71	5.46
AcerView 76I	6.20	5.98	6.09
GoldStar 1727	5.70	5.82	5.76

I've Got A 17" One!

The four monitors seen so far are all 15" monitors, but what if you want something slightly bigger? Here for your perusal are two more expensive 17" models.

Acer AcerView 76i

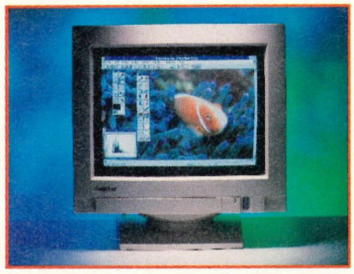
The AcerView 76i is controlled from an On-Screen Menu system, consisting of 5 "pages" of options. The brightness and contrast features have their own buttons. Our user panel didn't find this system too intuitive, and thought that the system reacted to key-presses slowly. Image quality and screen size were both good, with a usable screen size of 16.3", which is larger than most other 17" monitors. Good support of resolutions and refresh rates is provided, with up to 1280x1024 @76Hz supported. This kind of refresh rate, although not the best on the market is great for general use.



Supplier: Acer UK
Phone: (01628) 533122
Price: £493
Overall Rating: 8

Goldstar 1727DM (17")

The Goldstar 1727DM combines a small on-screen menu system with a number of dedicated buttons, for adjusting the display. A degauss button is provided, along with knobs for brightness and contrast. Although having an attractive design, the Goldstar is unfortunately not one of the best 17" monitors we've seen. Discolouring on areas of the screen was evident. Only fairly low refresh rates were supported at the higher resolutions, especially 1280x1024 supported with a very low 60Hz. The end result was disappointing.



Supplier: Carrera Technology
Phone: (0171) 830 0486
Price: £452
Overall Rating: 5

PRODUCT	AcerView 55L	ADI MicroScan 4V	GoldStar Model 1520	Sony CPD-15SF1	AcerView 76i	GoldStar Model 1727DM
Warranty duration (months)	12	24	12	12	12	12
Manufacturer	Matsushita	Hitachi	Hitachi	Sony	Matsushita	Hitachi
Measured Tube size (diagonal, inches)"	13.6	13.6	13.9	13.8	16.3	16.2
Dot pitch (mm)	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.25	0.28	0.28
Tube surface treatments (eg anti-static, anti-glare)	anti-glare	anti-static anti-glare	anti-static anti-glare	anti-glare	anti-glare	anti-static anti-glare
USER ADJUSTMENTS						
Brightness (yes/no/auto)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Contrast (yes/no/auto)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Horizontal size (yes/no/auto)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Vertical size (yes/no/auto)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Horizontal position (yes/no/auto)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Vertical position (yes/no/auto)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Horizontal convergence (yes/no/auto)	N	N	N	N	N	N
Vertical convergence (yes/no/auto)	N	N	N	N	N	N
Barrel/pincushion distortion (yes/no/auto)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Keystone / Trapezoidal distortion (yes/no/auto)	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
Parallelogram distortion (yes/no/auto)	N	N	N	N	Y	N
Colour intensity (yes/no/auto)	N	N	N	Y	Y	N
Power-saving timer adjustment (yes/no/auto)	N	N	N	Y	N	N
Degauss control (yes/no)	N	N	N	N	Y	Y
Rotation (yes/no/auto)	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y
SPECIFICATION						
Horizontal scan frequency range (eg 30-90kHz)	30-56	30-64	30-65	31-64	31-64	30-65
Vertical scan frequency range (eg 50-100Hz)	50-100	50-100	50-120	50-120	50-90	50-120
Video bandwidth (eg 100MHz)	65	70	70	60	110	111
Number of memories (including preset)	NOT SPECIFIED	11	12	16	32	34
SUPPORTED REFRESH RATES						
640x480	90	120	120	120	120	120
800x600	75	100	100	100	100	100
1024x768	75	80	80	80	80	80
1152x768	N/A	70	70	70	60	60
STANDARDS COMPLIANCE						
MPR II (SWEDAC)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
TUV/Ergonomie	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
VESA DPMS	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
EPA Energy Star	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
PHYSICAL SPECIFICATIONS						
Dimensions in mm (HxWxD)	373X364X384	364X368X390	384X371X396	373X368X384.5	412X420X425	434X419X480
Weight (kg)	15	14.3	13.7	13.7	19	20.46

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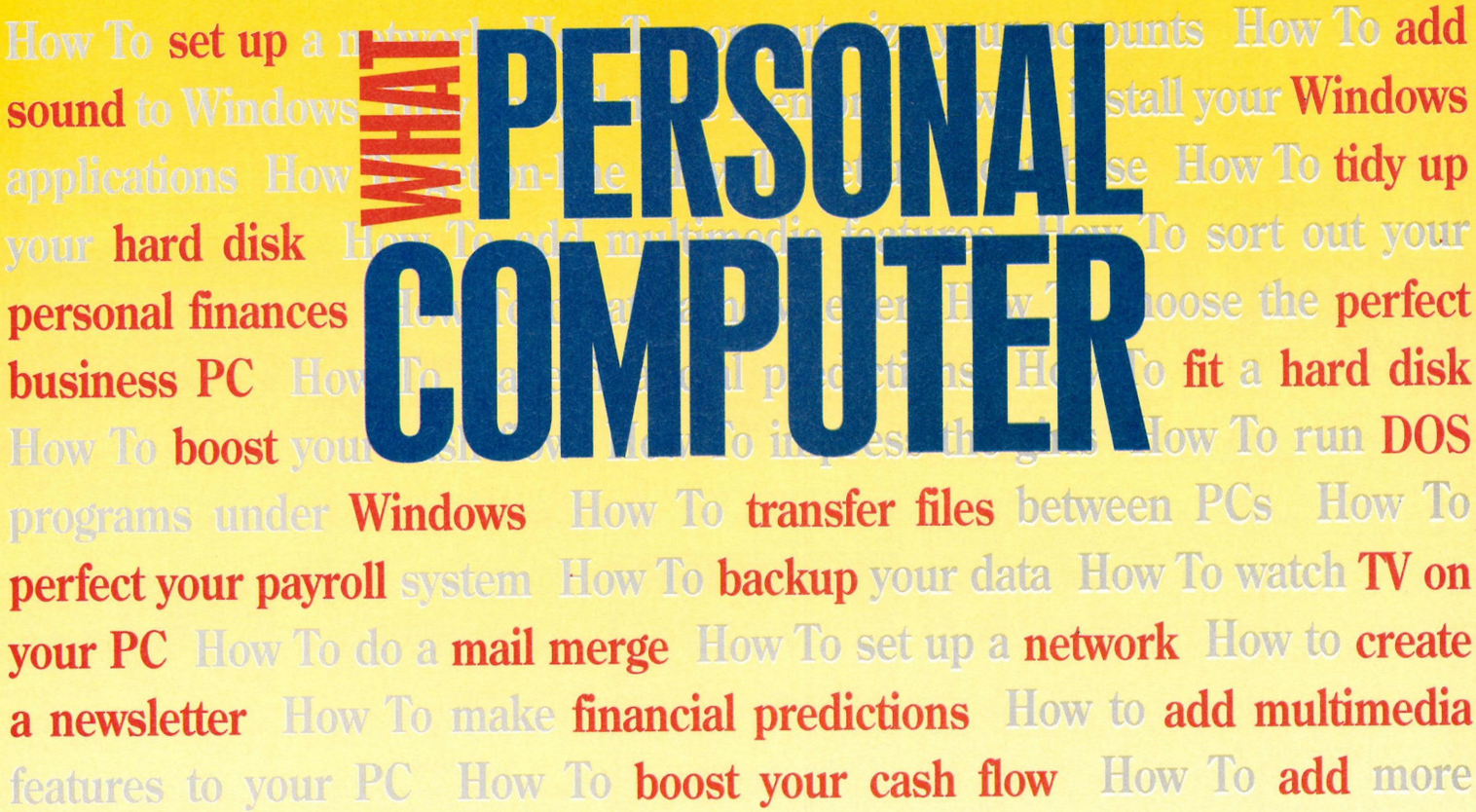
What's this software for?
What is the Internet, anyway?

What you need is...



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PCR10

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Designworks 3: In progress

Pat Fox likes nothing more than a spot of designing. So we gave him Designworks 3.

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Price: £39.95
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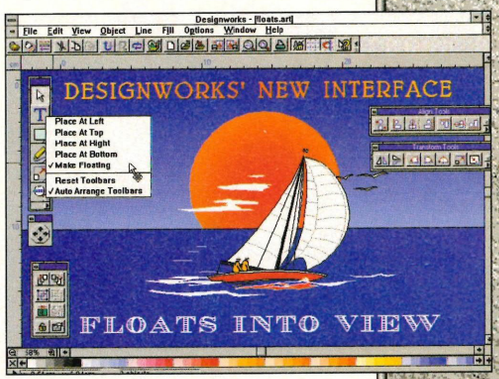
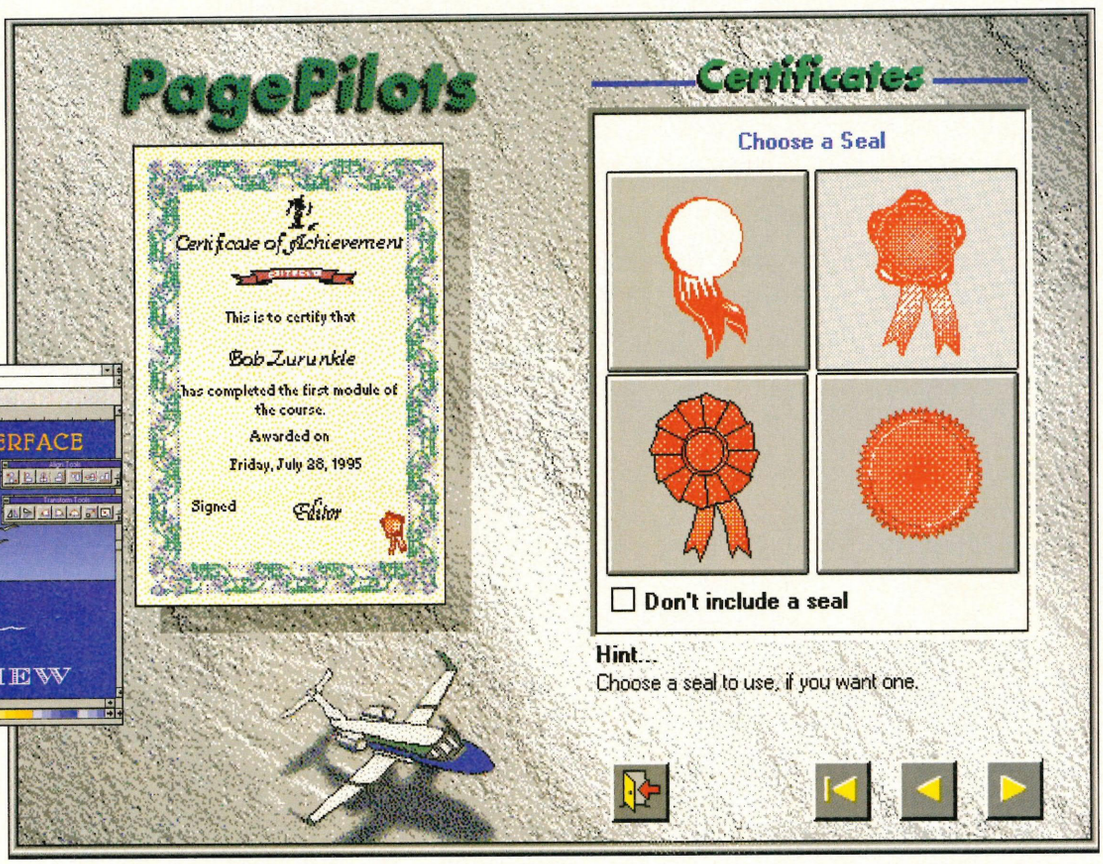
Contact: (01480) 496 666
Release Date: September

In order to complement the recent release of Pressworks 2 (which PC Review readers can acquire for just £29.95 using the voucher in Issue 43 — Ed), GSP has just announced the imminent arrival of Designworks 3, their popular, low-priced structured drawing package.

Designworks is a drawing package that allows you to create images by overlaying a series of simple "objects", such as lines, circles, and boxes, gradually building them up into a complex image, such as those shown on this page. The advantage over other types of drawing package is that these objects are free-floating, and can be rearranged or even completely changed, at any time. This is the method used by the hugely popular CorelDraw! series of packages, and also by Xara Studio, which we previewed back in Issue 46.

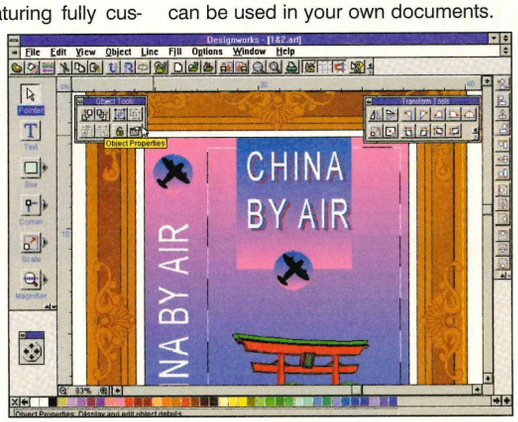


▲ *Designworks 3: plain sailing?*



▲ *Designworks' PagePilots allow you to create certificates swiftly...*

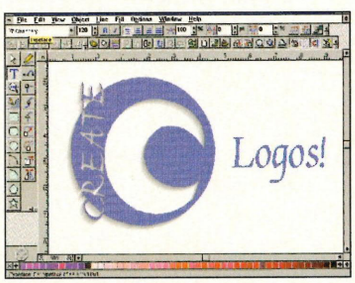
The finished application will have an improved interface, featuring fully customisable floating toolbars and more comprehensive shortcut options. Bringing more of the commonly-used tools onto the screen in the form of buttons which hopefully make the package quicker and easier to use, but the online help has also been improved to assist users in getting to grips with the package more easily. Improvements have been made to the font and clipart viewing utilities to make them more accessible, and the package will include 100 fonts and 1800 pieces of clipart which can be used in your own documents.



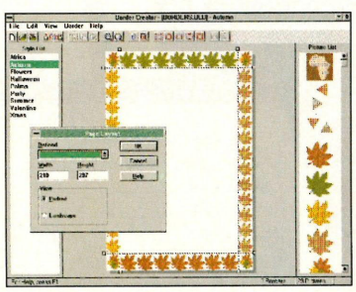
▲ *You'll be able to configure Designworks 3 to your heart's content.*

The package should also include several new PagePilots for logos, cards, and certificates. These are automated templates that make creating common types of graphical documents much quicker, by leading the user step-by-step through the necessary operations, and performing many of the more complex tasks automatically. There will be over 60 different designs included with the package, and in addition, Designworks 3 will include a facility for creating borders from clipart objects.

Designworks is likely to appeal to novice users looking for an easy-to-use package at a low price, but it is up against stiff opposition in the form of CorelDraw 3 which is being aggressively marketed on budget. However, Designworks has a good pedigree of simplicity and speed, so it should certainly hold its own.



▲ *...and logos...*



▲ *...and borders too.*

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OPT-III Teletext

John Kennedy pulls in the latest news headlines with this useful Teletext adaptor.

Price: £199 (internal) £349 (ext)

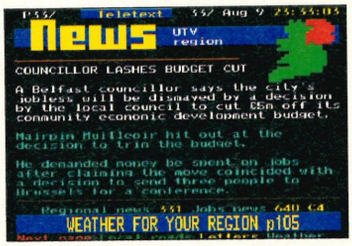
Manufacturer: Optimum

Contact: 0181 2030220

All around you at this very moment the latest news reports, sport results and financial headlines are whizzing by at a frequency of about 600 MHz. It's not the Internet but Teletext! All four UK terrestrial stations, as well as many satellite and cable stations, make good use of the format to provide up-to-date news and features. Being in digital format it's also ripe for manipulation by computers and with the right hardware and software, such as the Optimum Technologies OPT-III system, you can read and use this information on a PC.

Available in two versions, an external box or a half length card, Opt-III comes with everything needed, except an aerial. Once installed the system can be used exactly like a normal teletext TV, with pages dialled in at the keyboard appearing on screen. All the normal functions (fast text, reveal, hold and so on) are present, as well as a useful caching feature which allows previously captured pages to be stored in memory for instant retrieval. However, when the processing power of a PC is employed it all starts to become very clever. A small program will read the broadcast time and set your PC's clock, and an option called "Sequence" will collect your choice of pages from different channels and collate them into individual files for display and printing. Sequence can even be programmed to collect together all the times of the day's TV programs and print them out for you to read in the morning.

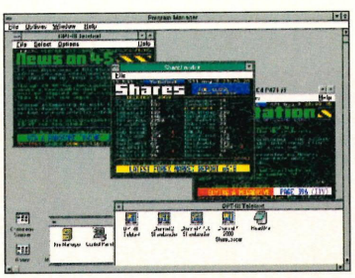
There is also a Word Search option included in the optional Windows software. Give it a few keywords and all occurrences will be found. One MP apparently has a system set up continually, checking for references to his local constituency and printing the pages for easy examination. Multiple Teletext displays can be opened at once (the DOS version allows two), and "live" teletext data can be linked into other applications. Programmers will appreciate the source code examples, and it won't be long until they think of new uses. The only snag with it is that good reception is essential. In most cases an outdoor ariel will be needed. This gripe aside, you'll find the teletext adaptor terrific fun, very useful and a constant source of programming ideas.



▲ *Get up to the minute news and TV programme information plus...*



▲ *Weather forecasts, share prices and more and then...*



▲ *Take the data and use it in and with your other software!*

PCR VERDICT

Category:
Application

System requirements:
8086/8080 or better (DOS software) 80386SX or better (Windows software).

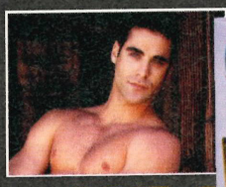
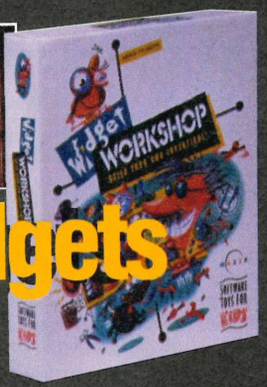
Ease of use:
If you can operate a TV remote control, you won't have any problems.

Performance:
As long as you have a good aerial, it works very well.

Value for money:
Great fun and potentially very useful indeed. If you're just looking for news it's a lot cheaper than the Internet.

8

SUBSCRIPTION offer

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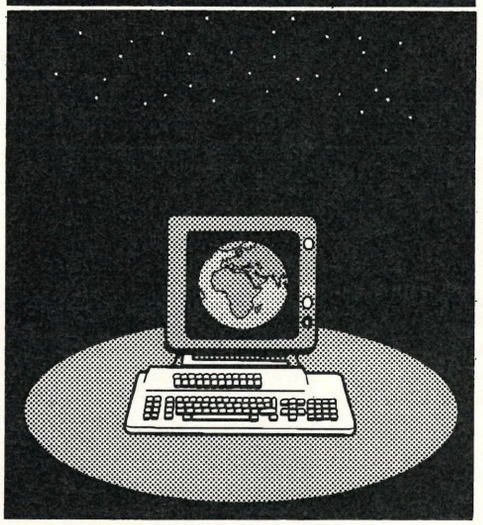

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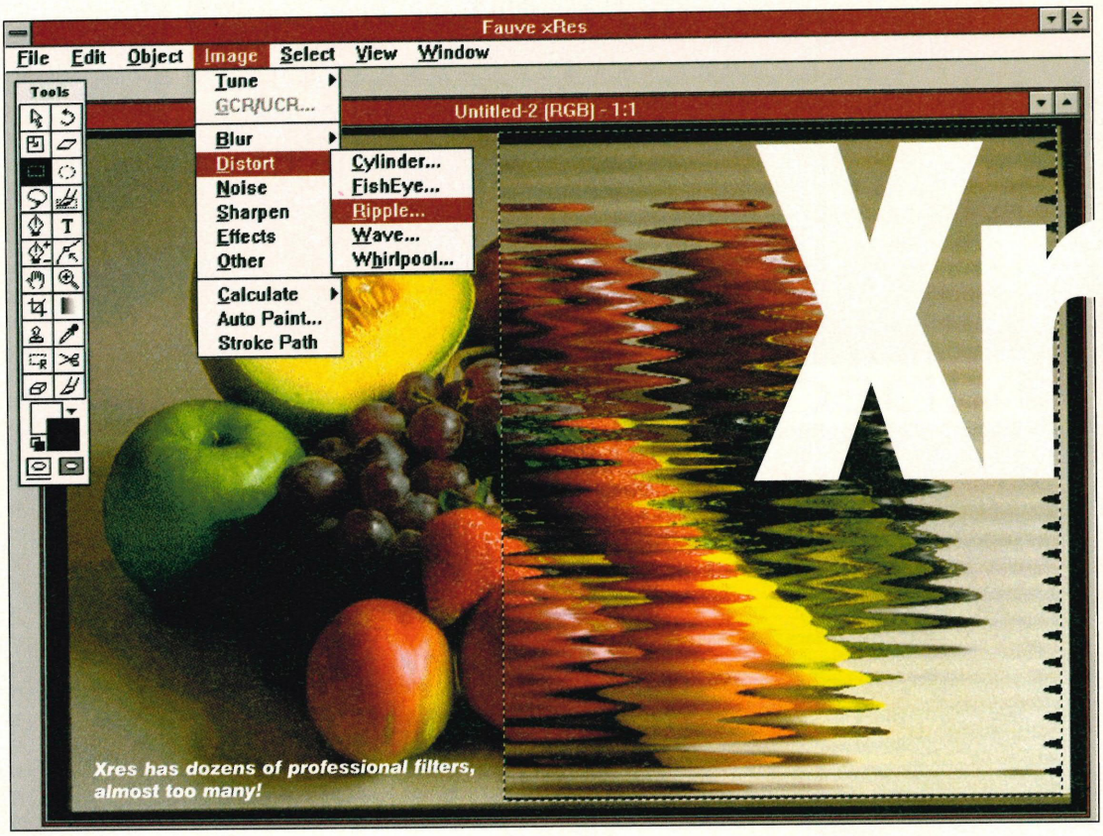


Xres has dozens of professional filters, almost too many!

DISK

Price: £199

Manufacturer: CGS

Contact: (0181) 679 7307

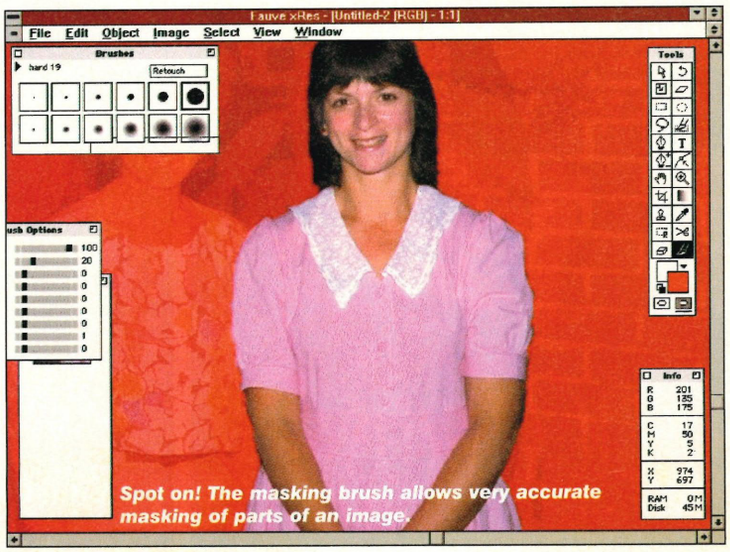
Xres

It's a not-so-still life for Charles Hayworth. He's found a picture editing tool that nears working in real-time.

Xres is Fauve Software's latest entry into the fiercely competitive graphics market and is unashamedly aimed at users who edit big image files. It comes from a stable of thoroughbred graphics packages: Fauve Mattisse and Mattisse Light are hugely popular, offering gorgeous natural media tools, powerful image processing effects and classy user interfaces. But if you want to edit really big pictures working at a professional level you'll want something with a bit more beef.

Xres' whole approach is centered around this goal. Image processing operations for instance are only applied to the bit of a picture you can see, the other parts are only affected when you scroll over them. This means that you can carry out normally slow operations like masking, filtering and enhancement on unbelievably big images in pretty much real time, although as soon as you scroll right or left, or change the zoom level, you have to wait again. However, if you've ever used Corel Photopaint or Adobe Photoshop, you'll know just what a crashing bore it is waiting for an effect to be applied to a whole image — even if it is only a few megabytes in size.

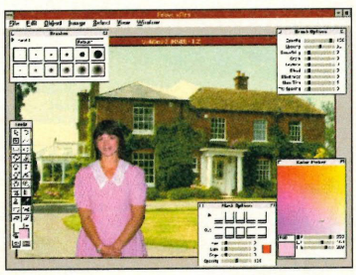
But it's not just for big pic editing. Another trick in its arsenal is the support for object layering, just like a vector graphics program, so you can move parts of an image around and position it wherever you want to. It also supports up to 32 alpha channels meaning you can achieve some staggering effects.

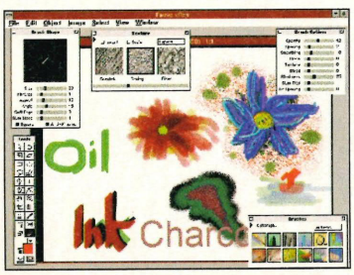


Spot on! The masking brush allows very accurate masking of parts of an image.

Chinese Inks

At a more mundane level Xres does all the things you'd expect from a more basic program. There are bucket loads of special effects filters from motion blur to mosaic and from Gaussian blur to glowing edge. Then there's the amazing variety of natural media paint tools such as Chinese inks, water colours, charcoal, oils, crayons and various weird brush types such as Fauve, Cubist and Pointillist. You can also add shapes, borders, complex gradient fills and text using existing images.


▲ *Once you've separated part of an image, you can copy it to another. Here we place the woman onto a different background.*



▲ *One of the nicer things about Xres are the gorgeous natural media brushes.*

But it's not all good news. Its user interface doesn't have anything like the style of the others in the same mould - often looking quite plain. Another downer is that once you've got what you want, you have to render the image to disk at the size you want. This means that Xres has to go away and do all the things you've specified on the whole image, definitely coffee time on anything less than a Pentium.

Xres is a very powerful package. It can hack it when editing large images, and it's pretty good for small jobs, too.

PCR VERDICT

Category:
Drawing application

System requirements:
486 with 8 Mb RAM — 16 Mb preferred.

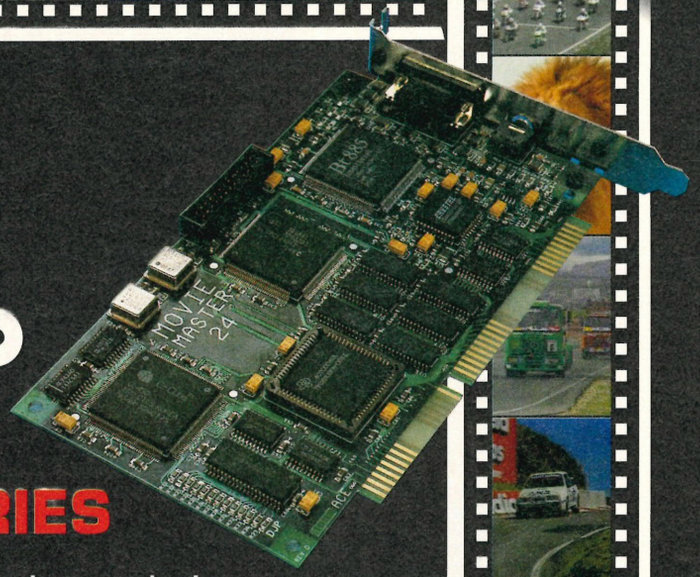
Ease of use:
You've got to know your embossing from your elbow if you want to use this.

Performance:
A big leap if you work with big images — or you like playing with special effects.

Value for money:
A good middle-of-the road package. Check out Fauve Matisse or Matisse Light (availabe on our July disk).

7





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Window Cleaners

Give your Windows a clean. Three tools to add sparkle to your desktop are checked out by the PC Review team.

Dashboard v2

Dashboard is designed to appeal to those wanting some of the ease-of-use of Windows 95, but who are stuck with 3.1. It completely replaces Program Manager, converting Program groups into pull-down menus and allowing you to assign quick-launch buttons for frequently-used applications. In addition, it provides other facilities, like a gauge to monitor hard drive space, a clock and a calendar.

For more advanced users, the extended screens provide a means of keeping track of your desktop when you have more than one application active at a time. Layout manager allows you to pre-configure a number of desktop layouts to your own specification, which can be reloaded at any time.

The new version provides increased configurability, allowing you to 'snap off' certain parts of the Dashboard interface and position them separately, change the colours and have the control panel running horizontally or vertically.



▶ ***She's cute and intelligent – so what's she doing on our desktop?***

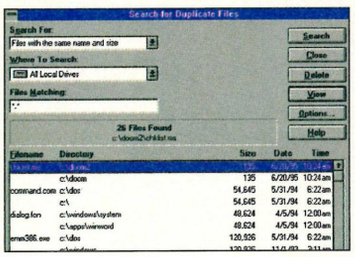
Dashboard is a great option for those sick of Program Manager and looking for a more user-friendly alternative. And best of all, it actually gets out of the way and lets you see your Windows background — or wallpaper — which in my case, happens to be a particularly attractive snap of Winona Ryder. What more could you ask?

DISK ONLY
Supplier: Buchanan Int.
Contact: (014194) 55559
Price: £46.98
VERDICT: 7

Clean sweep

Anyone who's ever taken a look in the Windows and System directories on their hard drive will have seen the hundreds of oddly named files that reside there. Many of these are unneeded, being duplicates, backup or temporary files, or unused wallpapers. But with their odd names it's nearly impossible to know which are safe to delete.

Clean sweep aims to solve this problem by examining your hard drive and finding the unused/unneeded files. Supposedly it uses some clever techniques to figure out what files aren't needed. In practice however we found it to be pretty thick. While it successfully found large numbers of temporary, backup files and duplicate files and deleted them (freeing up some 3Mb of space) it also 'found' drivers and DLL files that it considered 'safe to delete' but weren't. This is made all the more alarming because Clean sweep told us that they were safe to delete — if we hadn't known otherwise we could have had more than a few problems, indeed for inexperienced users it could prove dangerous, wrecking what had previously been a perfectly good Windows system.



◀ ***Give your PC a clean sweep by erasing unwanted files, or not as the case maybe...***

This is unfortunate because Cleansweep's easy user interface, helpful prompting and friendly dialogues makes it otherwise ideal for beginners.

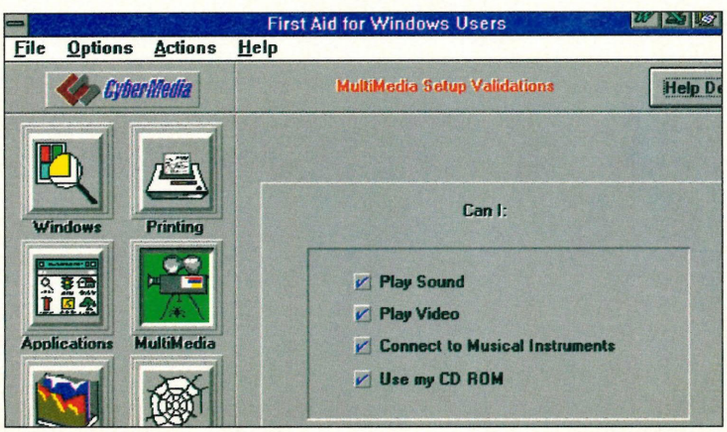
DISK ONLY
Supplier: Quarterdeck
Contact: 01245 496699
Price: £49
VERDICT: 6

First Aid

PCs are very similar to cars. They can run very smoothly, but when they go wrong it can often take an expert to figure out where the problem lies and how to correct it. First Aid for Windows is the equivalent of having an on-site AA mechanic to solve your problems. It hides in the background and only appears when a problem occurs, when Windows tries to load a missing or corrupted file for example.

In the event of a failure the program searches for files it knows should exist and then displays a message giving you the opportunity to replace the missing or corrupted data. It's got a database of approximately 1000 Windows and Windows applications problems which it can spot, diagnose and hopefully assist in the correction of.

The biggest problem with First Aid is that a lot of the time it only tells you what files are missing, and can't do the work itself. If it finds a missing file in your Word setup for example, it prompts you to insert the original disks — rather the correcting the fault itself. Still this is a major improvement over the normal Windows system which just leaves you guessing when a fault occurs.



▲ ***First Aid for Windows, the fifth Emergency Service...***

DISK ONLY
Supplier: Roderick Manhattan
Contact: 0181 875 4444
Price: £49.95
VERDICT: 8

COMING IN DECEMBER

50th ISSUE WINDOWS SPECIAL

We're pulling out all the stops to celebrate the launch of Windows 95 in our 50th issue of PC Review. Just look at this lot.

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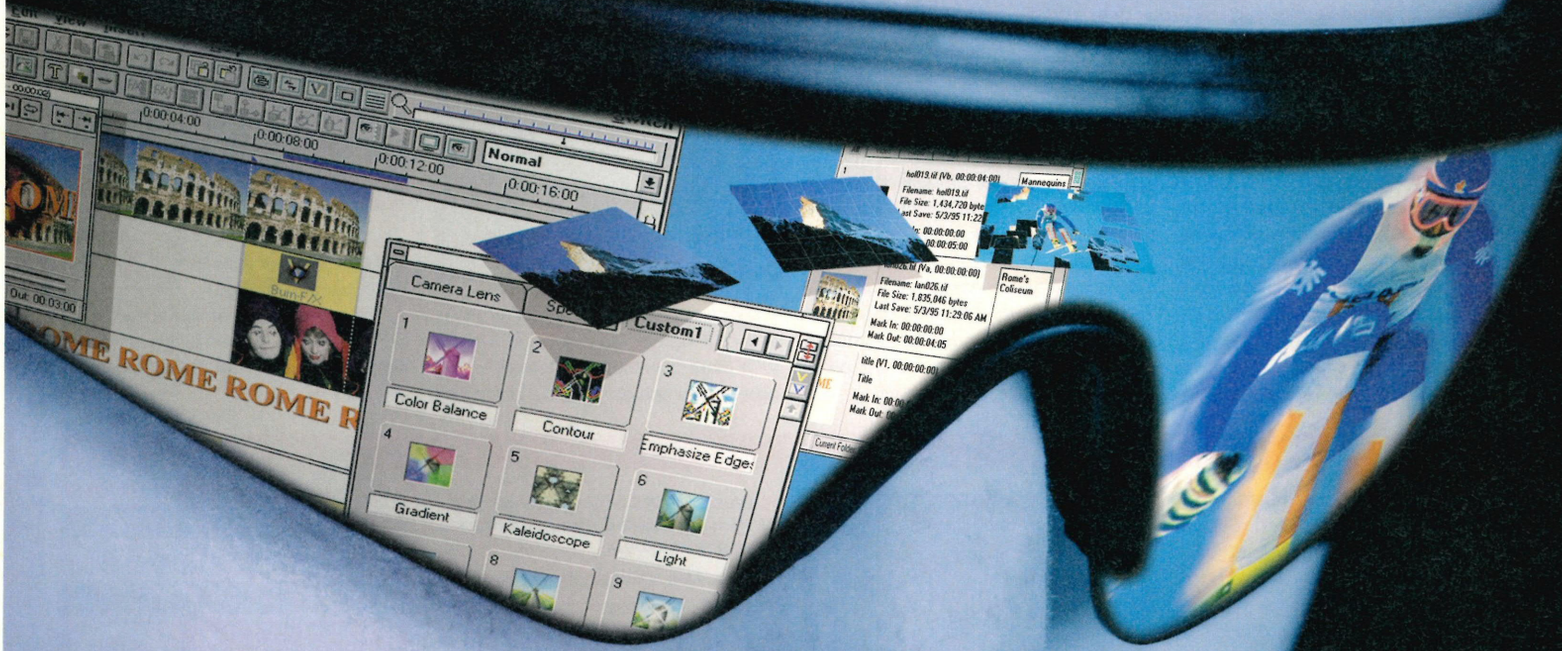

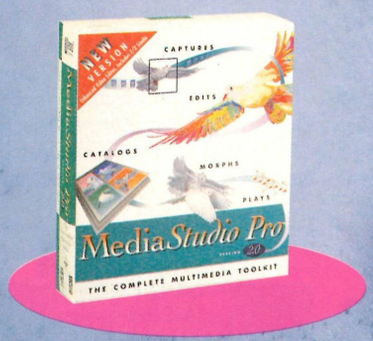

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Stick-UPs

Why cover the outside of your monitor in bits of yellow paper when you can plaster them all over the inside?

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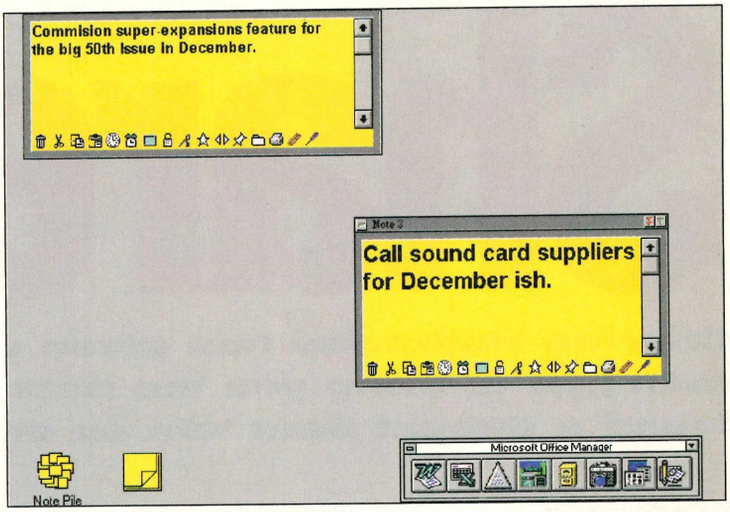
Manufacturer: Guildsoft
Contact: 01752 895100



It's a Stick-Up! Now you can have more notes to ignore stuck on your monitor. And at least these virtual post-its don't leave glue marks all over the screen.

If your monitor screen, like mine, is covered in small bits of yellow paper then you'll just love Stick-Ups, the PC equivalent of 3M's Post-it notes. It's a wonderfully simple piece of software and so effective, much like the paper version.

On installing Stick-Ups an icon appears on your desktop, clicking on this creates a miniature on-screen Post-it note style window. Additional notes can be created as needed, and each note can be moved around, resized, deleted or tucked away.

Once a note is displayed text can be typed into it, edited and cut or copied to and from the paste buffer. Along the bottom of each note is a line of icons for further actions such as setting an alarm, inserting the current date and time, printing etc. Precisely which icons you have displayed can easily be changed via a customise option.

From the customise dialog you can also change the background colour of notes and the font and colour used for the text. Other options available include the facility to add scroll bars to notes, to have them 'on-top' so they are always visible (a cute little pin icon is added the notes), and to set the default size of notes when first opened. There are several other useful features, but I won't spoil the surprise for you.

In use Notes proved well thought-out, simple, and effective. Other similar programs I've used provide similar capabilities, but suffer from being overly complex making entering notes a chore. Stick-Ups suffers none of these problems and allowed reminder notes to be pasted around the screen at will to be deleted when needed. But best of all, Stick-Ups notes don't dry up and fall off my monitor to litter my real desktop.

PCR VERDICT

Category:
Software

System requirements:
Any PC Windows 3.1 system

Value for money:
Good, but similar utilities are available via shareware libraries for less.

6

Orchid NuSound

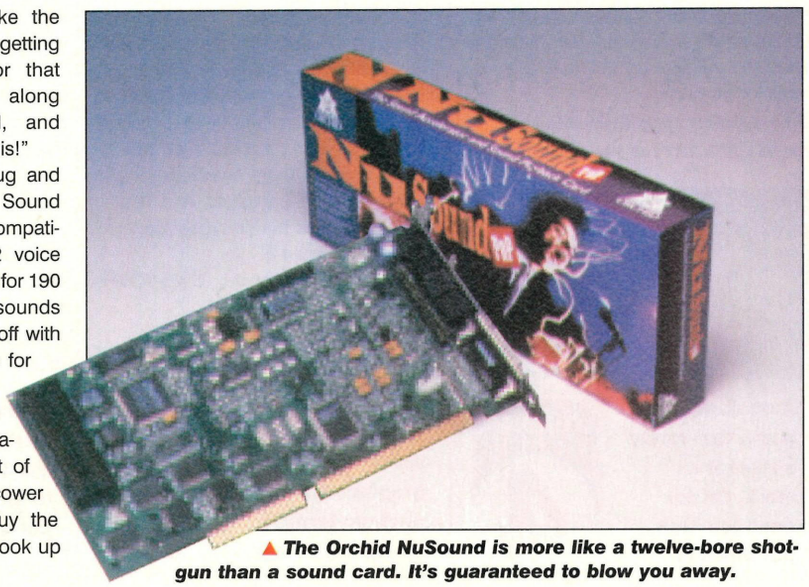


It hits you like an 18-wheeler through the inner ear and turns your brain to mush. Martin Klimes experiences one sound card with attitude.

Price: £129.00
Manufacturer: Orchid
Contact: 01256 479898

Just when it looked like the peripherals market was getting really snore-worthy for that end-of-summer lull, along comes the NuSound, and shouts "Oy, geezer — listen to this!"

You want statistics? It's a Plug and Play 20 voice FM synthesis fully Sound Blaster and Sound Blaster Pro compatible 16-bit sound card with 32 voice wavetabling through a 1Mb ROM for 190 instruments, 107 percussion sounds and 47 extra effects, all topped off with Spatializer 3D sonics and ports for Panasonic and IDE/ATAPI CD-ROM drives. You want to feel your balls rocking with the vibrations as the blood dribbles out of your ears and the neighbours cower under their sofa? Then just buy the card, slap it into your PC, and hook up four decent speakers.



▲ ***The Orchid NuSound is more like a twelve-bore shotgun than a sound card. It's guaranteed to blow you away.***

For the money it's a steal: a gem to install, even with another sound card inside, and the sound's lusher than an Indonesian rain forest. What are you still reading this for? Unless you've already got an AWE32 installed then go out and buy one *now*.

PCR VERDICT

Category:
Hardware

System requirements:
A free slot in your PC

Value for money:
If the VFM got any better then it'd be classed as illegal dumping.

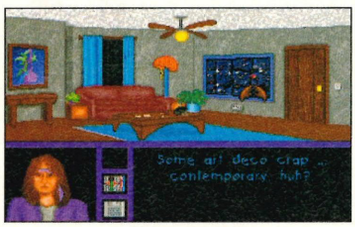
9

Shareware

Charles Hathaway has given up his day work as an odd-job man just to bring you the best in shareware. Good job he found a decent beat 'em up or he'd be out on his ear...

BLACKSTAR — AGENT OF JUSTICE

Blackstar — Agent of Justice is a somewhat amusing, 'way out' graphic adventure game with a twist of 60s counterculture. And as befits the hippy feel of the title, your objectives are incredibly vague. Along the way, you pick up and use objects to help you in your mission and talk to various people to learn more about things — so it's standard adventure fare then... At least I hope that's what's what it was — because after an



▲ ***Good graphics don't make a game, but they do help.***

hour of stumbling all over the place, I was none the wiser. In fact I hadn't even got out of the apartment.

I don't know if I'm getting too old, but the Blackstar character seems to be some kind of long-haired Kennedy-era weirdo living in 90s New York. When you're a 90s software reviewer who's still living in the 70s you're apt to find it all a bit confusing!

You can investigate each scene using the touch mode, walk around and talk to other people. You can even ask your character to 'think' too; this is a kind of hint mode in which the hero (you) reveals what he thinks about a situation. In weirdo language, of course... All said and done, though, it's as eventful as a sit-in at Preston Polytechnic

● ***Evaluation copy from Ensign (0181) 778 2871 ● Price £17***

Calling planet Earth, calling planet Earth... Earthlings, this game is not recommended.

VERDICT 6



▲ ***Two extra adventures are available should you choose to register.***

GOD OF THUNDER

You are Thor, the God of Thunder, in this daft overhead adventure game that's like a cross between Pac Man and the early RPG adventures.

Armed with only an enchanted hammer, you must fight your way through hundreds of creatures and puzzles to complete your quest.

To do so however, you will need any PC from a 286 upwards plus a VGA graphics card and 640K of RAM, so it's a good one for low-end machines struggling to find modern shareware to run. The game looks and feels somewhat juvenile — and while very suitable for bored youngsters, it won't take grown readers long to discard it. On the plus side, there is extensive help section, keyboard shortcuts for the various possible actions you can make the character carry out, and a high score table for posterity.

● ***Evaluation copy from Ensign (0181) 778 2871 ● Price £25***



◀ ***God of Thunder is a kind of overhead Pac Man style adventure. No, honestly.***

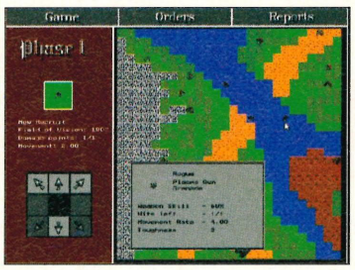
A squib of a game that rarely strikes the mark. OK for the knee-high but that's all.

VERDICT 4

CIRCA 7000

Most shareware strategy games tend to be about as interesting as the bottom of my pond but Circa 7000 lifts itself out of the gloom. It's a rather neat, futuristic, miniatures-based battle game with the emphasis on strategy.

You move a selection of troops, machines and vehicles individually one at a time in three distinct phases. In Phase one, all your troops move, with separate rules for foot troops and vehicles. During Phase two, all your forces choose their targets and in Phase three they fire. Although slightly unusual in wargaming terms, it actually works quite well and the overall flavour of the



▲ ***A slightly more colourful and more complex scenario.***

game is a little like the Warhammer miniature battle game based on space marines versus Orcs.

I have to say that the movement system of this program is just a little clumsy, but it's very easy to get started and the graphics are quite polished. Each soldier or machine can face or move in one of eight directions on the square gridded battlefield and this in turn has various terrain types, depending on the scenario.

If you're a fan of the hex, Circa 7000 is certainly worth digging out.

● ***Evaluation copy from Ensign (0181) 778 2871 ● Price £25***

A decent, solid strategy game with good graphics and medium term playability.

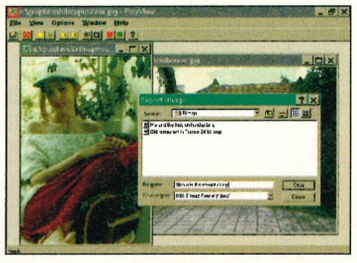
VERDICT 7

POLYVIEW

Windows '95

That extra bit of puff for the fanfare of trumpets for the very first Windows '95 shareware product, if you please... Polyview is an image viewer-cum-converter that will load GIF, JPEG, TIFF, and PhotoCD graphics files and save them in BMP or JPEG formats.

The documentation makes a lot of its 32-bit features, but it's hard to spot a real gain. PhotoCD is very fast, though



▲ ***This long filename business is a real bonus — you need never forget which image is which again!***

JPEG is no quicker than, Paintshop Pro.

However the big advantage of course, is that it conforms to all of the advantages of the Windows '95 environment — which means you can load multiple images, save images with long filenames and view files by drag- and-drop.

Image manipulation tools include colour enhancement, contrast and brightness control, but unfortunately that's all there is to it.

It's a shame, because this was a first. It does have that extra bit of usefulness, but I think that Windows '95 shareware will have to be a little more special than this if it's to encourage users to ditch their 16-bit applications.

● ***Evaluation copy from Ensign (0181) 778 2871 ● Price £20***

It's fast and it's neat, but there must be more to 32-bit computing than this.

VERDICT 5

BEST THIS MONTH



▲ *I think I'm in the suit on the right but I'm not too sure. Five seconds later it was all over...*

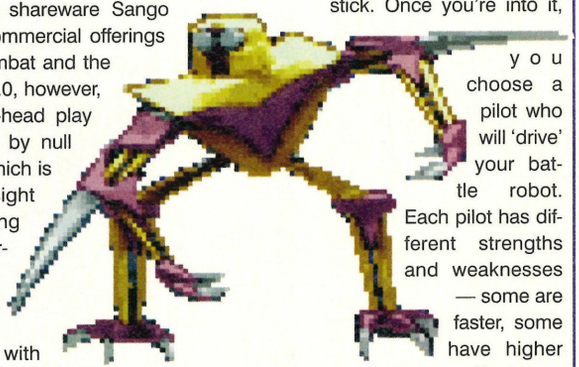
ONE MUST FALL

RECOMMENDED PC REVIEW RECOMMENDED

OK so it's nothing new. In fact this good-looking beat 'em up, One Must Fall, was released about six months ago. I didn't mention it at the time because the world was utterly swamped with similar stuff, what with the shareware Sango Fighter and commercial offerings like Mortal Kombat and the like. Release 2.0, however, offers head-to-head play by modem or by null serial cable, which is a darned sight more exciting than your average fodder. Personally I hate sharing a keyboard with someone else, especially when they start getting over-excited and bash my precious keyboard around...

Anyway this is an Epic Megagame, so the quality is good, the graphics are smooth and flowing and the background music is pleasant. Sound effects are good too and then there's support for the usual wide range of sound cards. The full registered version gets you a 60 page manual and dozens more robots and pilots besides.

You can play the game with the keyboard or a joystick. Once you're into it, you choose a pilot who will 'drive' your battle robot. Each pilot has different strengths and weaknesses — some are faster, some have higher endurance and so on. Next you choose the robot you want to fight. Each one is completely different too. With different pilot/robot combinations you get a different game every time.



The moves are fairly standard, with jumps, kicks, blocks and punches, not to forget the ubiquitous special moves made up of key or joystick movement combinations needing mind-boggling dexterity. Some of the arenas also contain obstacles that can cause damage to the robots. This is one of the smoothest fighting games I've come across and great fun to play. What I want to know is — why am I in the ring for less than 30 seconds before I'm in little bits all over the floor?

● *Evaluation copy and registered version from Epic UK (01767) 260903* ● *Price £29.99*



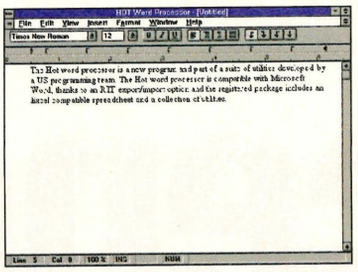
▲ *Choose your pilot.*



▲ *Whenever anyone says something like "One Must Fall", I just know it's going to be me.*

Real meaty, beaty, big and bouncy stuff this — a lots-of-frills bash 'em up.

VERDICT 9



▲ *Uncanny. It looks like Word from a distance — almost.*

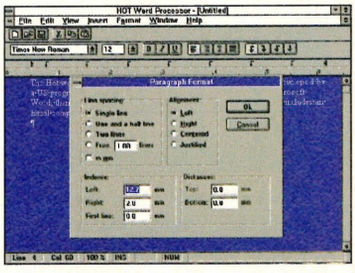
HOT WORD

If you're looking to try out a brand new word processing package, then you could do worse than to take a look as the Hot word processor — a brand new program and part of a suite of utilities developed by a US programming team.

OK, so it may not be the hottest thing since sliced bread on the word processing front, but the Hot word processor is compatible with Microsoft Word, thanks to an RTF export/import option and the registered package includes an Excel compatible spreadsheet and a rather neat looking collection of utilities too.

Not surprisingly the word processor itself is pretty basic when you're used to the likes of Ami Pro and WordPerfect, but if you're only interested in minimal or occasional use, then the Hot word processor will do just fine.

What it won't do however is spell check your work, provide a thesaurus or let you use complex facilities like macros or mail merge. On the other hand, you can specify different fonts, search and replace, alter the back and foreground colours and view special punctuation characters such as carriage returns.



▲ *You can change the colours and alter paragraph formatting too.*

● *Evaluation copy from Ensign (0181) 778 2871* ● *Price £24.95*

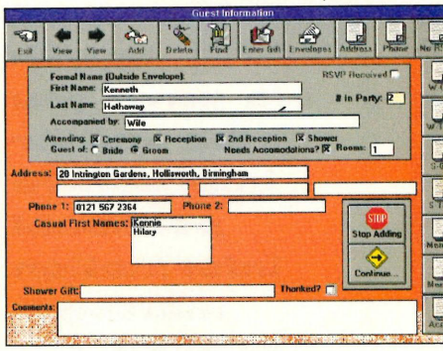
If you don't need the power of Word or its compatriots, give it a try.

VERDICT 6

WEDDING 3.1

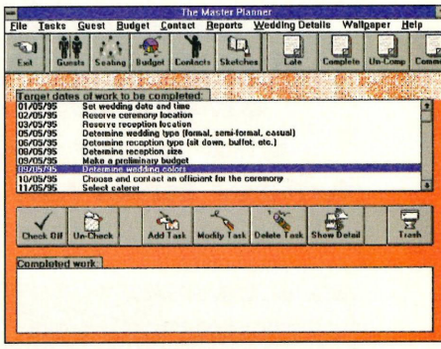
You've got to be kidding right? A Windows program to organise a wedding? I mean how many times a month are you going to use that one?

OK, so you may not use it too often, unless of course you plan to rival Liz Taylor in the marriage stakes, but actually once you've stopped sniggering long enough to realise that planning and organising a wedding is the next best thing to hell on earth, the real value of the program becomes a little more obvious. What this massive program does is organise every conceivable item for you, from the pet names of the guests to the number of curls of butter on each table. If you really want to hold the most organised wedding of the year, you could probably do worse. And when you consider what it costs to get a daughter married these days, the registration fee looks pretty paltry.



▲ *If it happened at a wedding, it's in this program.*

▼ *Each guest can be tracked.*



● *Evaluation copy from Ensign (0181) 778 2871* ● *Price £24.95*

Leaves you free to get on with the serious bit of the wedding. Like dancing

VERDICT 6

LET'S CHAT

Attention! Shareware libraries and authors — if you've got shareware programs you'd like to see covered in these pages, please get in touch. Send them to PC Review at the address in the front of the magazine or e-mail me at chatter@cityscape.co.uk.

Ascend 4.0

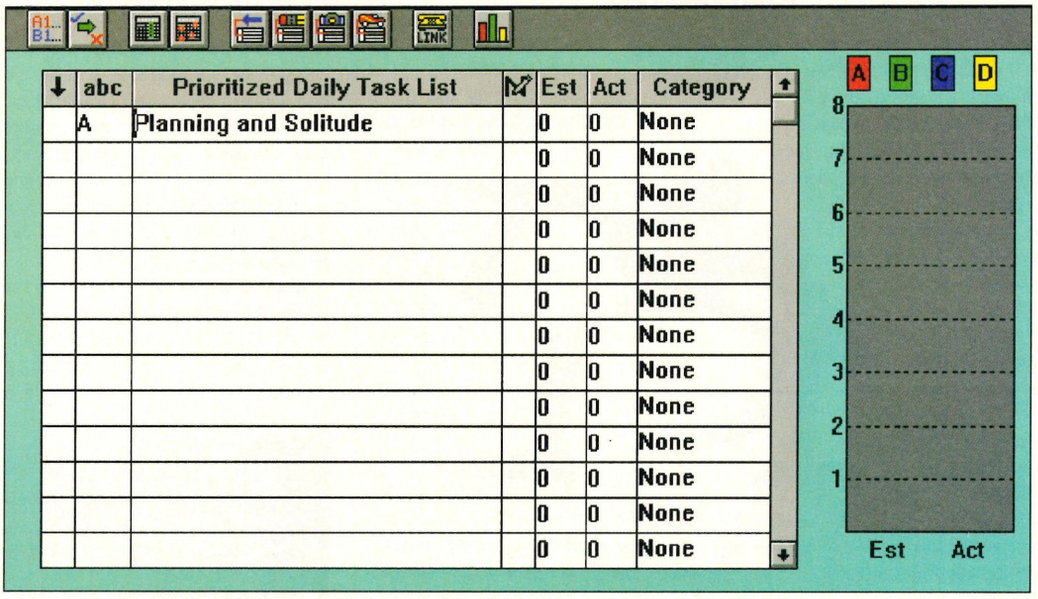
tutorial

Last month we gave you the rather impressive personal information manager Ascend 4.0 on our cover CD. Now take advantage of the power it offers with this easy to follow tutorial.

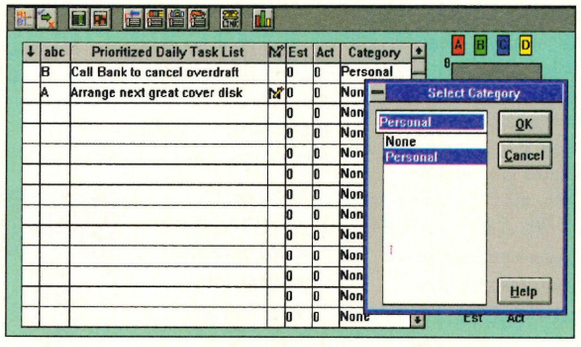
Ascend 4.0 is one staggeringly useful and very powerful personal information manager (otherwise known as a PIM). With it you can organise your life, prioritise your daily workload, plan out long term goals and even schedule your time — it's almost like having a private secretary tucked away inside your PC, because available at just the click of a mouse are telephone and address books, daily journals, and appointment schedulers.

Last month we explained how to access the programs many parts via the bar of icons, now it's time to take a more in-depth look at some of the program's most useful features.

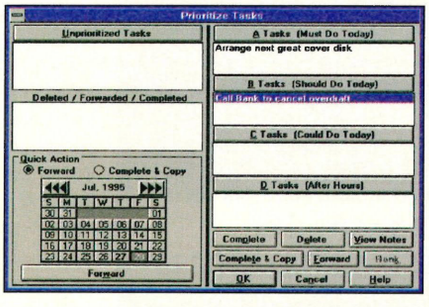
PRIORITISED DAILY TASKS



▲ ***Open the Daily Task manager as normal. Clicking on the background blue area will reveal an icon bar just for this module. We've also resized the Window to show all its contents. These icons allow tasks to be prioritised, changed en mass (group actions), and set up for repetition and reoccurence. The remaining icons allow task lines to be inserted, deleted, copied to another day and moved to a new date. Now to enter some tasks for the day.***



▲ ***We've now entered some tasks, by clicking on each column and typing in the text. The ABC column can hold A, B, C or D to represent each tasks level of priorities, A being highest. Double clicking on the fourth column allows notes to be entered, shown by the coloured N in this column. Clicking on the Category allows tasks to be given a task type — typing in new categorys in this dialog will add them to the list for future use.***



▲ ***Clicking on the first icon in the Window allows tasks to be shuffled around. Click on a task description in one of the right hand windows and then click on the button to tell it what to do. Tasks can be moved to the Unprioritised area for temporary storage, deleted, or flagged as completed. With tasks of the same priority the Rank button allows a secondary ranking number to be used.***

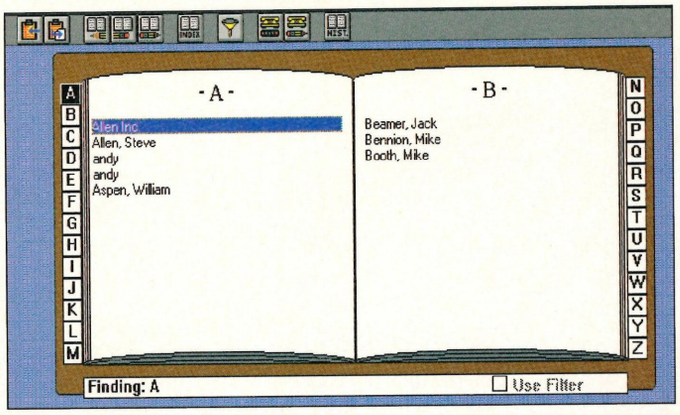
UPGRADE

This tutorial covers Ascend Version 4.0 that can be found exclusively on the cover CD of the September 1995 issue of PC Review. Version 5, also reviewed in that issue, has several additional features and capabilities, as well an improved user interface. To upgrade to version 5 call Softwerk on (01462) 832 244.

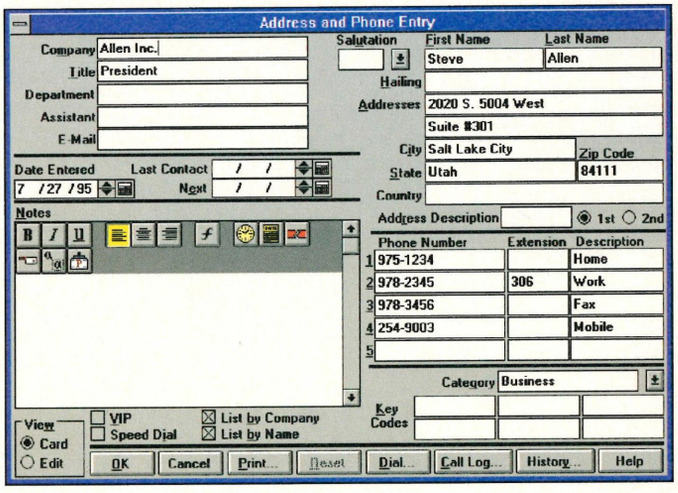
I MISSED OUT

If you missed our September issue and missed our cover CD with Ascend 4.0 on it don't worry. You can still get the issue of PC Review with version 4 of Ascend, (worth over £175), on its cover CD. The issue also featured an in-depth feature on animation and the PC, a round-up of the fastest Pentium systems around, plus reviews and previews of all the latest hardware and software, news and tutorials. Simply pick up the phone and let your fingers do the walking. Call our Back Issues department on 01848 468888. Have your credit card handy.

ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE BOOK

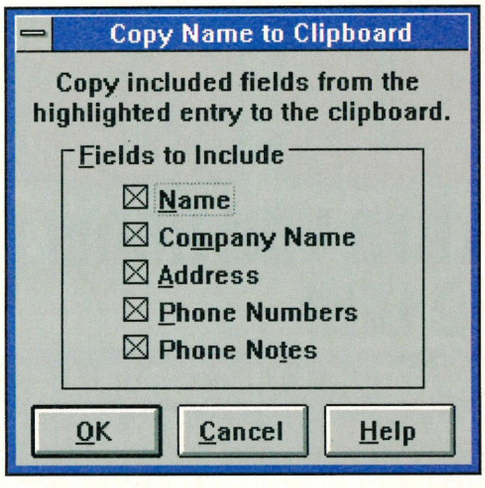


▲ *The standard look of the Address and Telephone book. From here you can add, delete and search for individual contacts and change the list to show certain types of people according to various criteria, such as their category type, company or personal name and so on. Ascend can also show telephone numbers next to contacts when in list form for quick reference, rather than having to go to each record first. Pressing insert allows new entries to be made.*

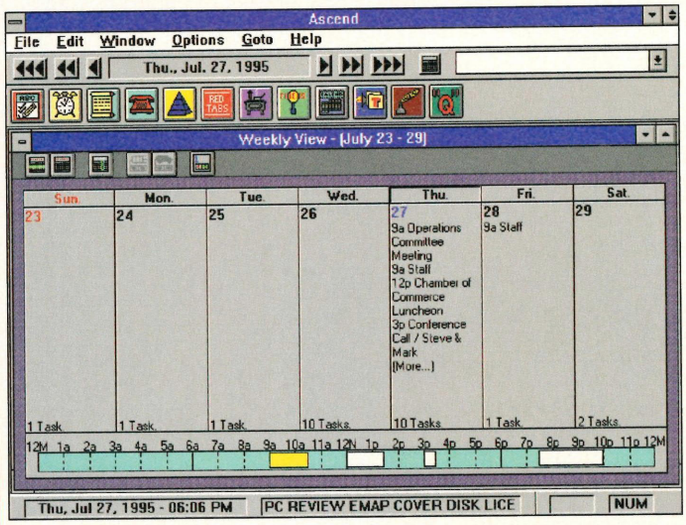


▲ *Clicking on an address and telephone book entry allows the editing of that entry. In addition to the normal name, address and telephone number a massive amount of other information can be kept. This includes the last time you contacted them and what was covered (the Last Contact and Call Log buttons), up to five telephone numbers, and a file for any notes wanted. Click on List by Company/Name to change how they are shown in the telephone directory.*

▶ *Ascend acts as a central information store for your data, but it's not much use if you can't easily transfer your vital data to other applications. Luckily you can. Highlighting a particular entry in the address book and clicking on the first icon in the window allows you to copy information to the clip board. To limit the display of entries click on the funnel icon and fill in fields wanted. Only entries with fields containing text that matches these will then be displayed.*

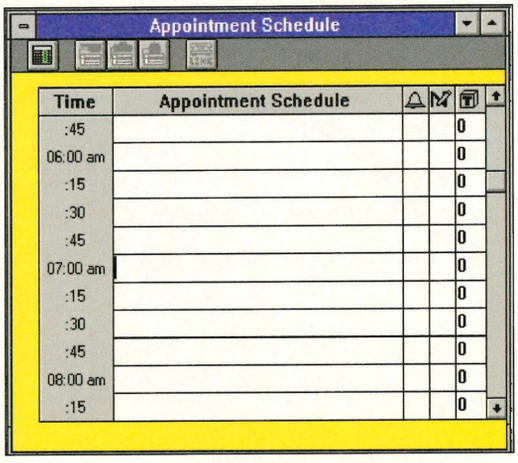


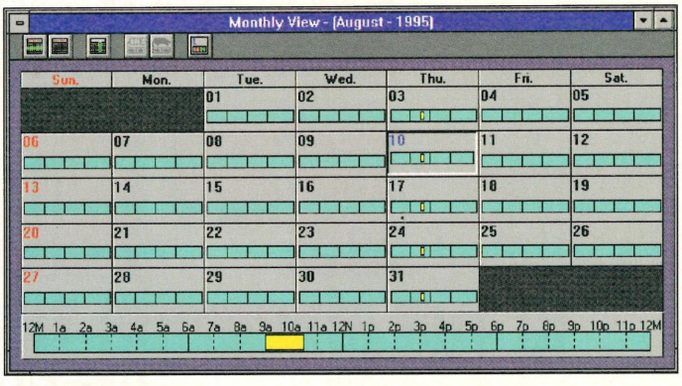
DIARY AND PLANNER



▲ *At the bottom of the window is a blue bar. This shows the current day broken down into 24 hours. By clicking on this bar you can enter details of meetings and appointments during the day. Once entered these will show up on the bar and in the Day list when in Weekly view mode. From the dialog that appears alarms can be set up to warm you of upcoming appointments. Clicking on the notes icon allow the entry of additional notes about a meeting and so on.*

▶ *Clicking Calender icon brings up the weekly and daily appointment scheduler and planner. From here you can view days and weeks at a time and plan your daily meetings (right down to 15 minute intervals). This module of the program works closely with the time controls at the top of the Ascend window (from where you set the current date). From the Daily Priority Task List you can also set up Special Days (holidays etc) from the Option menu.*





▲ *The appointment icons allow you to change the view to weekly or monthly views, and to show time slots with appointments in the weekly and monthly views. The first icon turns on weekly viewing, the second monthly views (seen here) and the last icon toggles a special view mode that shows what appointments you have per day on the monthly view — also shown here. The last two icons allow the moving or deleting of appointments by clicking once on appointments in the blue bar.*

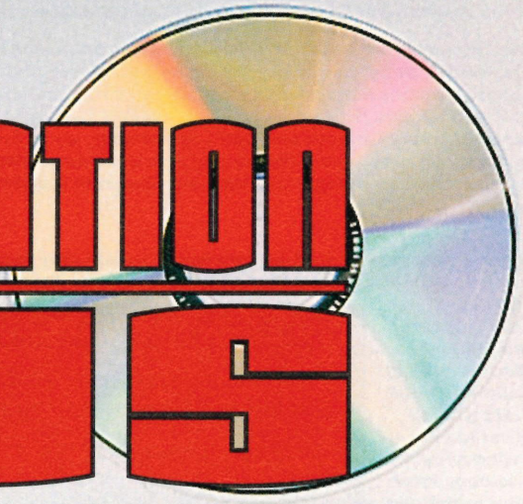
THIS IS THE PLAYSTATION...





... AND

PLAYSTATION PLUS



IS THE MAGAZINE THAT LETS YOU KNOW WHY YOU NEED ONE

ISSUE 1 ON SALE SEPTEMBER 22ND. INCLUDING A FREE SUPPLEMENT "EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT THE SONY PLAYSTATION"

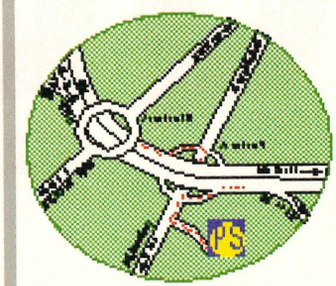
PLAYSTATION IS A TRADEMARK OF SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT INC.

eman images

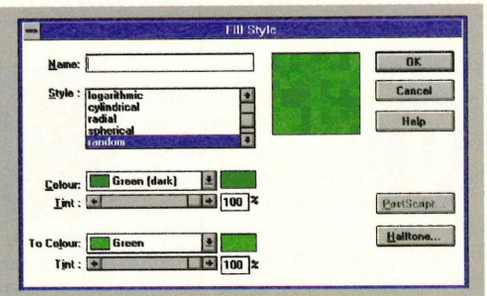
Creating stunning graphics with our August cover disc utility is as easy and enticing as eating the richest Dundee cake....

Design Works

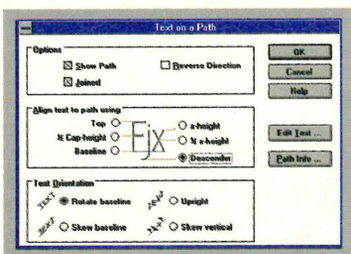
tutorial **Design Works is** a fully featured structured drawing program that can create illustrations, wrap text around objects, let you experiment with graduated fill patterns and in short, do most of the things you could want any good drawing package to do. This month we show you how to use a variety of Design Works tools and create an informative map of the British Isles.



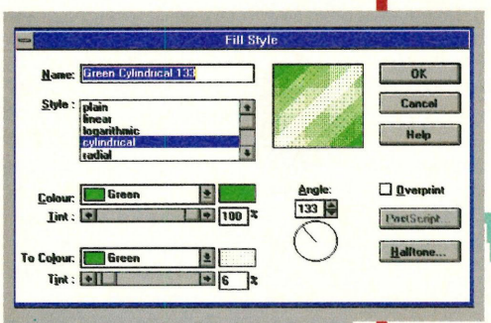
The Close Up map was drawn as a collection of polygons and other drawing tools — from the Drawing and Shapes icons. Finally a circle was drawn around them to enclose the map. Together they're grouped (using the Object Group command) and so treated as one object. This was then dropped over the triangle drawn elsewhere — placing the circle over the triangle gives the appearance of the triangle emerging from the map.



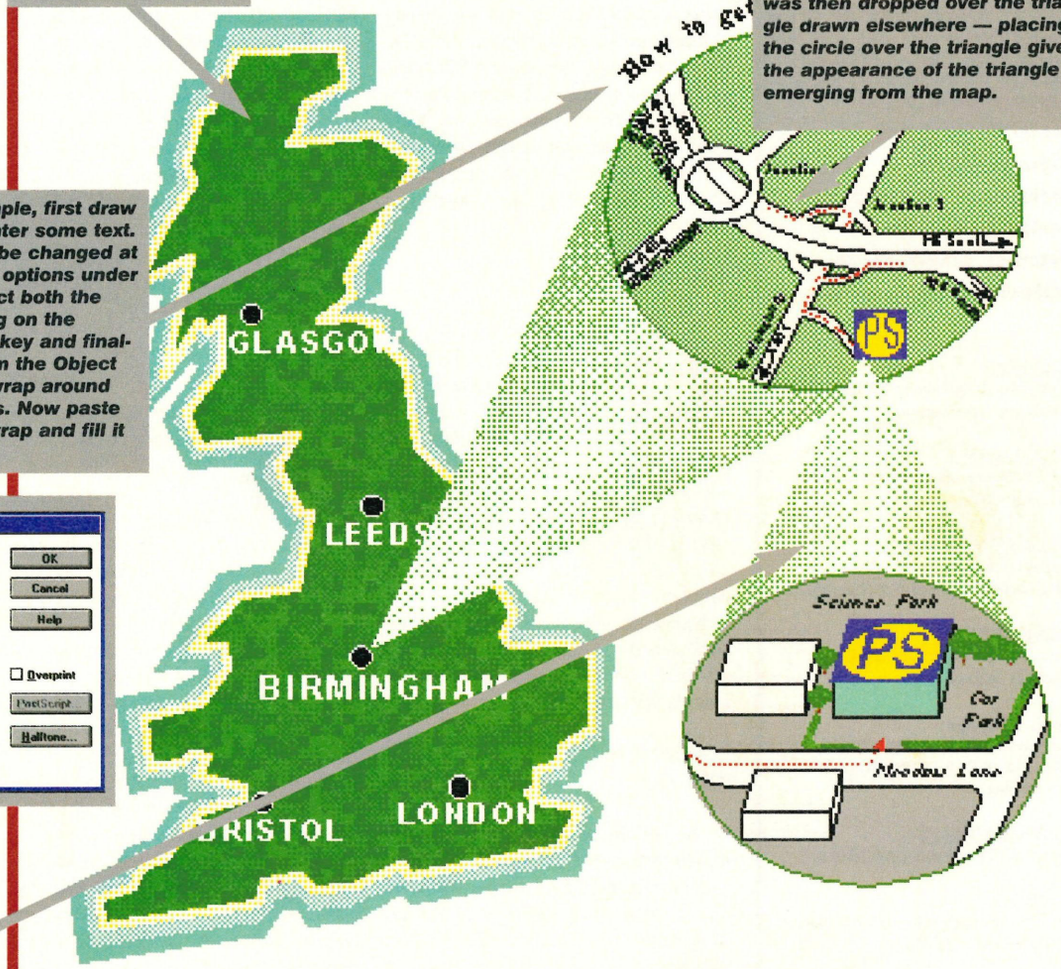
The map of the UK was drawn using the Polygon tool. It's then filled with a Random Fill from the Fill Styles menu. The different colour borders were created by copying the drawing, enlarging it and changing the line width and colour. This was done several times to give several layers of border. The cities are simple text objects.



Wrapping text around a shape is simple, first draw a shape — here a circle and then enter some text. Don't worry what you type in, it can be changed at later date. Copy the circle using the options under the edit menu. You should now select both the original and copied circle by clicking on the Pointer Tool, holding down the shift key and finally clicking on both objects. Now from the Object menu select the Join. The text will wrap around the shape, but the shape disappears. Now paste back the circle just below the text wrap and fill it with the detailed map — seen right.



The graduated fill funnel here is drawn using the Polygon tool (from the Drawing Tools icon) to create a triangular shape. The diagonal fill is a cylindrical fill but with the angle set to 133 degrees so the gap between the colours lies down the middle of the triangle. The angle will change according to where the triangle point lies. This technique is used twice on this page, with the angle changing accordingly. As with all objects on the page it's created in a blank area of the page before positioning.



DESIGNS ON DESIGN WORKS

If you missed our August issue and want Design Works have no fear. Just call our Back Issues department on (01858) 468888 to order one — they're awaiting your call now. Alternatively you can enhance your use of Design Works by checking out Press Works, a comprehensive DTP package fully compatible with Design Works. Call 01480 496575 for details.

Q&A

I AM THE LAW! Cries Mike James. You send in those dreaded, festering technical problems, and Judge James summarily oxy-cutes them. Justice is done. Sleep tight.

YOUR TECHNICAL ENQUIRIES ANSWERED

HEADINGS

You may be just browsing or perhaps looking for a specific solution. Either way the questions and answers are now broken down into subject types to help you find those that are relevant to you.

VIDEO
Anything relating to video and graphics hardware.

SOUND
For all those audio-related conundrums.

HARDWARE
Motherboards, hard drives, BIOS and general hardware.

COMMS
For all your Internet and modem questions.

MS DOS
It's messy and certainly no DOS, your C:> questions answered.

WINDOWS
General Windows enquiries.

APPS
For those enquiries about your applications software.

SOFTWARE
For utilities and anything other than big applications.

PROGRAMMING
Coding problems aired and solved.

WINDOWS 95

Q I have followed your advice — Tip of the Month in the August issue — and put a call to ScanDisk in my Autoexec.bat file and I have to admit that it has helped. When I changed to Windows 95 I added the new ScanDisk utility to the startup group. This is a Windows version of the original DOS utility and it is supposed to be better because you can run it while other programs are working. This is fine in theory, but what happens is that if you run almost anything else the ScanDisk utility pauses, says something about a program writing to disk and then starts the whole scan over again. What this means is that it never seems to finish checking the disk. Is there anything I can do about it?

Derek Ross
Cardiff

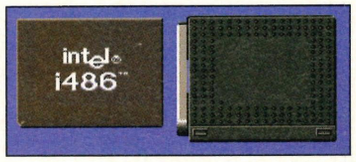
A *No there isn't anything that you can do about the Windows version of ScanDisk as it cannot cope with any other program writing to the disk. The only thing you can do is wait while it finishes checking the disk before you start running anything else — which negates its only real advantage. As the Windows version of ScanDisk is slow and Windows 95 comes with an improved DOS version my best advice is to use the DOS version. All you have to do is include the line*

C:\WINDOWS\COMMAND\SCANDISK /CUSTOM

in the Autoexec.bat file. It is worth remembering that the Autoexec.bat file isn't necessary but if it's there Windows 95 will process it. Also notice that the SCANDISK utility is stored in \Windows\Command and not \DOS.

HARDWARE

Q Inspired by the article "Six steps to Pentium heaven" in the February 1995 edition of PC Review, I have decided to upgrade my PC with a new processor. I currently have a



▲ ***Although an OverDrive processor is designed to go into a spare socket it can be used to replace the existing processor.***

386SX-33 and would like to go to a 486DX4-100. I have used the PC Review checklist as a guide to the design features that I need in the new motherboard and I am ready to buy. However, in surveying the market I have noted that 486DX4 chips are advertised as three-volt devices, whereas my 386SX motherboard is a five-volt device. Does this difference raise problems with my planned upgrade, or will a straight swap of motherboards be sufficient to achieve my six steps to DX4 heaven?

Vic Card
Surrey

A *If you are considering a processor upgrade using a 486DX4 it is very important that you read this answer! The standard DX4 is a three-volt device and it cannot be used in place of a standard five-volt processor — doing so will fry it — dare I say a case of fried chips?*

What makes this dangerous is that you can plug in a 486DX2 in place of a DX or even an SX, but this upgrade path doesn't extend to the DX4 unless the motherboard can be reconfigured to work at three-volts. Don't make the mistake of thinking that a DX4 is just a faster DX2!

Now what makes this even more confusing is that Intel make an OverDrive version of the DX4 which contains a voltage regulator to drop the five-volt supply down to three-volts. This means that you can plug the DX4 OverDrive processor into a motherboard that doesn't support three-volt processors and upgrade almost anything. Sounds good doesn't it? The downside is that the DX4 OverDrive is very expensive and some suppliers advertise the standard cheaper DX4 processor alongside the OverDrive version without mentioning the voltage differences — so the temptation to save cash is clear.

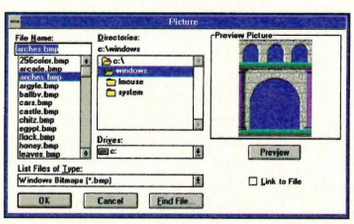
Now back to your specific question. If you want to replace your machine's existing motherboard with one that can run a standard DX4 then it must support three-volt processors. The simplest solution is to buy the motherboard with the processor installed and tested — that way you know it will support three-volt processors without having to ask detailed technical questions.

APPLICATIONS

Q I am very confused. I have been using OLE to link a bitmap logo into some documents created in Microsoft Word. I use PhotoFinish to load the bitmap, select it and copy it to the clipboard. I then use the Edit, Paste Special command in Word to paste a link into the document. However despite the graphic being only 30Kb in size the resulting Word document is over 160Kb in size without any additional text — just the graphic! What is going on? I thought that linking to a graphic used virtually no space?

Susan Hill
Birmingham

A *Well yes, you are right in principle. When you link using OLE — Object Linking and Embedding — to a graphic it should save storage space in that only the details of the link are saved in the document and not the entire graphic. Unfortunately when you link to a bitmap not only is the link stored in the document, but also an image of the bitmap that is used for display if the file cannot be found. This plus the link information is actually bigger than the original bitmap*



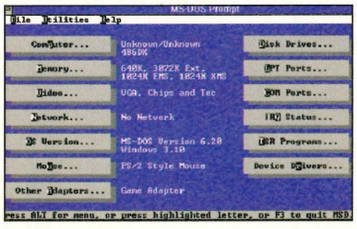
▲ ***If you check the Link box then the size of the document gets bigger — why is this?***

by quite a bit! The solution to your problem is to give up using general OLE and use Word's Insert Picture command. If you simply insert the bitmap then a copy of the image will be saved in the document and this will use more or less the 30KBytes that you would expect. If you opt to use the Link facility part of Words Insert Picture command, then not only is the image stored but so too are details of where the file is stored — and this will use a bit more then the 30KBytes. In both cases however the space used is less than for a completely general OLE link which also has to record details of the application that created the image.

MS DOS

Q I run a 486 SX using DOS 5.0. When trying your tip for setting the BIOS set-up, using MSD, nothing seemed to happen. Help!

SJ Spicer
Staffordshire



▲ The MSD utility reports your system's setup, but doesn't change it.

A *All I can say is sorry — because I seem to have misled you by not being sufficiently clear. You can't use MSD to change the BIOS setup — only to find out some of the details of how it is currently set. The idea was that you could use this relatively safe way of taking a record of some of the most important BIOS settings so that if the worst should happen you could tackle the problem of re-configuring your machine. You can only change the BIOS using the setup facility it provides — usually accessed by pressing a combination of keys e.g. Ctrl-Alt-Esc, or just ESC, DEL etc., when the machine is first switched on. Once in the setup routine you can read off all of the current settings and alter them.*

The reason why I suggested using MSD is that many users find it difficult to locate the setup and when they do they run the risk of accidentally making changes so causing the very disaster that they are trying to avoid! So for the record MSD will only tell you about your current machine's setup and configuration and it will not change a single thing.

WINDOWS 3

Q I wonder if you can help me with a fault which has suddenly appeared in my Windows 3.1 setup. The windows re-sizing function, has suddenly gone wrong for no apparent reason, after working perfectly since I got the PC nearly a year ago. The pointer still changes to a double-arrow when a corner or border is pointed at, but dragging no longer works. Sometimes, when dragging is attempted, the first click results in a sort of shadow line appearing above (if a horizontal one is pointed at) or to the left of (if it is vertical) the existing line; when the mouse button is released, the window line jumps to the shadow line. It is as if there are now only a limited number of, as it were, pre-set positions where the borders can be. The problem is getting to be a real nuisance as some windows are now really tiny but will not re-size. This fault seems to be omnipresent, except when re-sizing a window within a window e.g., the inner window within the File Manager can still be changed properly.

I tried setting up Windows afresh from the installation disks, from scratch again, but it doesn't make any difference. Maximise and minimise still function properly.

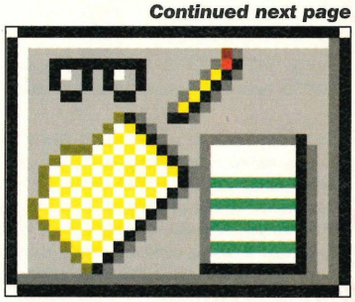
Roger Lewis
Surrey

A *The only thing that surprises me about this question is that I've never been asked it before! What you have discovered, by accident, is a feature of Windows that is supposed to be helpful. As very few people even know it is there, let alone use it, I think that it is more of a trap waiting to get you!*

There is a positioning grid on the desktop that you can switch on and set the size or granularity of the positions. If you opt to use the grid then windows snap both in size and position in jumps. The idea is that the grid helps you keep a tidy desktop but if it gets turned on by accident and the steps are set to a large value I can see how you might think that it was trying to interfere with your attempts to position and re-size windows. Notice that the grid only affects the desktop and not windows inside other windows.

Now to the solution to your problem. Open the Control Panel (it's usually in the Main group) and select the Desktop utility (see below).

Continued next page



The Desktop Utility Icon

TIP OF THE MONTH

Recalcitrant mice? Mike James shows them who's master (we're impressed)...

A non functioning mouse? It's about as welcome as a barbecue set in the South Atlantic. If you follow this tip, however, you'll get the damn thing under some semblance of control.

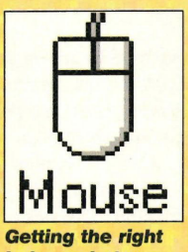
I know a lot of users who complain bitterly that their mouse is just uncontrollable. The complaints range from being too sluggish and having to drag across a huge area to cover the screen to being too sensitive. There is also the problem of double clicking. Users often make the mistake of thinking that this is something to do with their hardware. A new mouse is often the solution and sometimes this works — but the real problem, and the real solution, lies in the software.

The key to understanding what's going on is that the mouse not only measures movement, but rate of movement too. In the early days, most mouse software didn't make use of the speed of movement of the mouse — but today most do. In DOS the mouse is controlled via a mouse driver — usually called MOUSE.COM or MOUSE.SYS. You can usually alter the sensitivity of the mouse and its "ballistic" characteristics using the install or setup program that came with the mouse. Failing this you should be able to find a help file that tells you how to alter its characteristics directly.

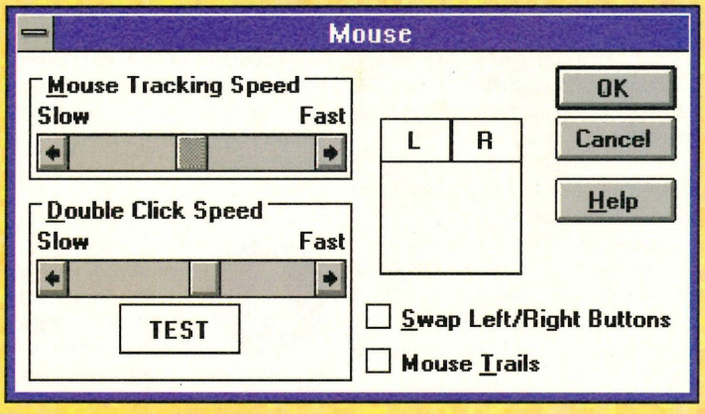
None of this is particularly difficult but many users don't know what the "ballistic" part of the specification is all about. The answer is that it adjusts the sensitivity of the mouse according to how fast you move it. A low ballistic setting means that the sensitivity doesn't change with speed. A high ballistic setting means that when you move the mouse slowly the sensitivity is acute and when you move the mouse quickly the pointer moves over larger distances. If you are having difficulty using your mouse in DOS go back to its installation software and try out different settings of sensitivity and ballistic.

When it comes to Windows the situation is much simpler, as there is a single utility in the Control Panel.

When you open this you will find a set of controls that let you set the sensitivity of movement and, most importantly the rate of a repeated clicking that constitutes a double click. If you find yourself frantically jabbing at the left mouse button then the solution might be to slow down the double-click rate. You can also swap left and right mouse buttons — helpful if you are left handed — and add mouse trails — helpful if you are working on a portable. Try it out — you can tame your mouse and concentrate on better things.



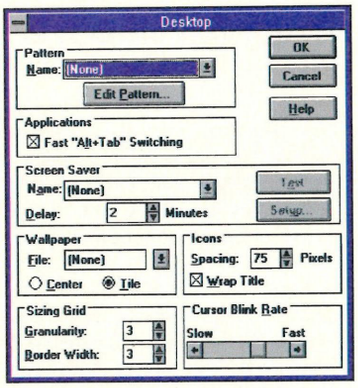
Getting the right balance between speed and responsiveness is essential.



The mouse control panel.

Stuck in a rut of horrendous technical proportions? Send your PC problems to Q&A, PC Review, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

When you see the Desktop dialog box you need to look right down in the bottom left hand corner — the area labelled Sizing Grid.



▲ **Concentrate on the sizing area.**

The value set in Granularity controls the size of the "jumps" that a window changes by when you re-size it. If you set this to zero then the sizing grid is disabled and you change size and position without any jumps.

Setting Granularity to zero solves the problem in hand, but it is worth mentioning that some readers might actually find it useful to set it to some other value — try it and see. Also, while in this area of the Control Panel, you might like to change the Border Width. This sets the size of the border or frame around all windows that you drag to re-size. Making it bigger makes resizing easier.

HARDWARE

Q Please help. I've been trying to sort out the following questions about hard drives for ages. Is there any way of finding out whether or not a hard drive is SCSI or IDE? I do not have the manual that came with the computer, and do not know how much the drive on its own cost.

I bought the computer in June '94 and the drive itself is a 210Mb internal drive, connected to an interface card by a ribbon cable.

My 3.5" floppy drive on my PC is connected to the same card by a different ribbon cable.

I have looked at the label on the drive, and tried MSD, but I still cannot get the information I want, namely if it is SCSI or IDE. I did notice, however that "fixed drive" does use up an interrupt number (IRQ 14).

If indeed the drive is SCSI, does it mean that I cannot use an IDE CD-ROM drive, or is it a simple matter of buying a separate controller card? How much could I expect to pay for one? Please help out — I can't afford to splash out on a CD-ROM only to find out that, once I own it, I cannot use it.

D Hodgson
Cumbria

A *You almost certainly have an IDE drive fitted — but to be 100% sure you need to find out the make of the drive and look up, or ask a dealer to look up, its model number. The reasons why I don't think that it is a SCSI drive is that SCSI drives are generally not installed in the BIOS setup, i.e. the drive code is set to "0 — not installed". Also most SCSI interfaces don't include a floppy disk connector (but some do so this test isn't 100% reliable). SCSI disks also use a large 40-way connecting ribbon cable — an IDE drive uses a single 34-way ribbon cable, which is the same thickness as the floppy cable.*

However I'm not convinced that you really need to worry about the type of disk drive you have. The reason is that many IDE-based CD-ROM drives will only work with an EIDE (Enhanced IDE) interface and so they either come with their own plug-in interface card or they are an optional extra costing around £15. Even if you had a SCSI drive you could plug in an EIDE interface and use the CD-ROM. Indeed only if you were lucky enough to be able to use the CD-ROM drive with your existing IDE interface would you get away without having to fit a separate interface card.

As this is the case you might like to consider the really great bargains that are around on non-IDE CD-ROM drives. Any of the Panasonic, Sony or Mitsumi interfaces work well and in many cases you can connect them directly to a sound card — and because everyone seems to want IDE drives they are very cheap at the moment!

COMMS

Q have seen some modems made by a well-known company on sale at a very low price — just over £10! The advert says that they are the "ideal way" to get onto the net. If this is true it's too good to miss — or is it just too good to be true? The only spec given is a number 1200/75. Should I buy one?

Paul Kavanagh
Devon

A *The simple answer is NO! They sound very much like old 1200/75 baud Prestel-style modems. These transmitted at 120 characters per second in one direction and 7.5 characters per second, in the other. The idea was that the remote computer would squirt data at you quickly while you would fumble through pressing the occasional key to select from a menu. This worked well with old fashioned systems like Prestel, but is useless for high speed two way communications as needed for the Internet. Whatever you do, don't buy one.*

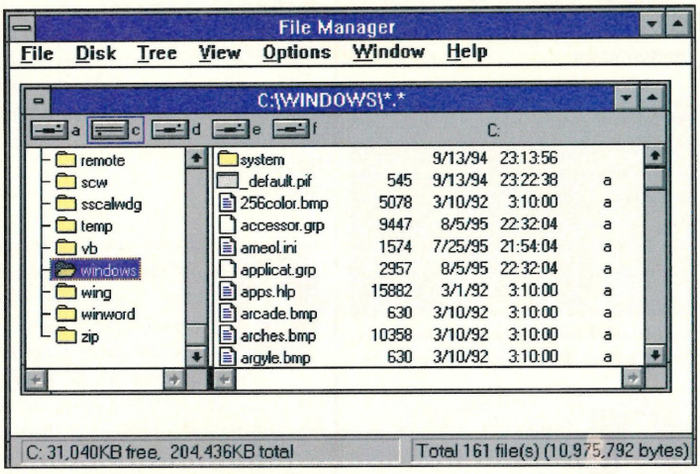
Step by step: File management

Next in Wood Work News a guide to Files. Which type for every wood, cornering tricks and... Eh? Oh, wrong mag!

It's the most important aspect of using your PC — but many users never get to grips with it. What is it? The answer might shock you because it's the seemingly easy subject of file management. Perhaps because it is so easy at first, the temptation is to "get on with it" and the result is that you never really get a deeper understanding of what it is you are "getting on with". The result is often that files are "lost".

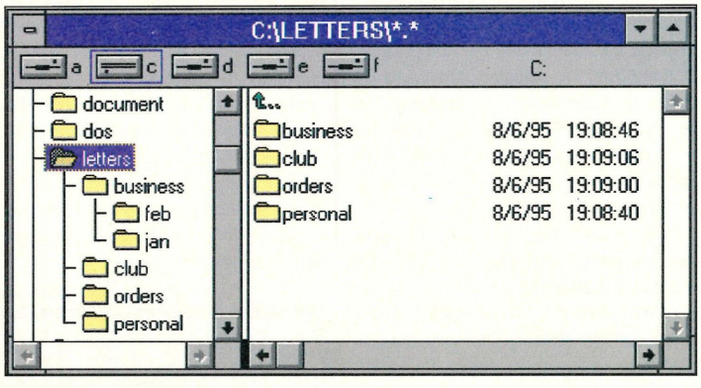
Have you ever been sure that you saved a file yesterday, but today there is no trace of it? The chances are that the file is on your disk — somewhere — the only question is where? Even if you don't lose files on a regular basis your disk is likely to be a mess with files scattered everywhere. It's the equivalent of owning a filing cabinet and then throwing everything on the floor!

So let's take a deeper look at files, directories and how you can use them and keep track of where your files are.



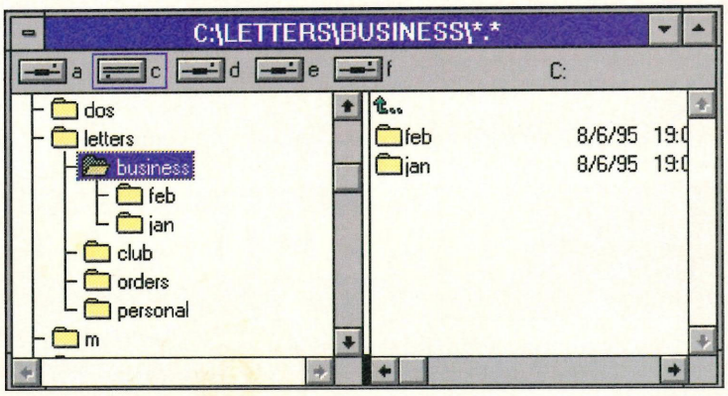
Using File Manager

The tool that you need to master in Windows 3 to control files is the File Manager. Unless you have altered its default configuration, the program opens to show you a split window view of your disk. The window on the left shows you the directory tree of the current disk and the window on the right shows you what is stored in the current directory. The key idea is the directory. A directory is something that you use to store files — you can think of it as a folder that documents of all types can be gathered into.



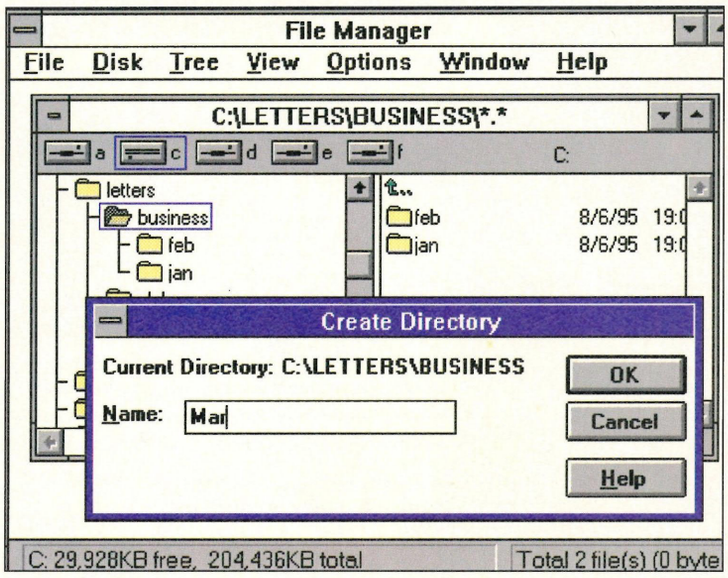
Storing Files

Storing files in a directory isn't a difficult idea — where it might get a little more confusing is when you add in the fact that you can store a directory within a directory. This allows you to create groups of groups. Think of this as putting folders within a folder or even within the draw of a filing cabinet — this is the reason the File Manager's icon is a filing cabinet. Why might this be confusing? The reason is that you can view the way directories are stored within each other as a tree or hierarchy. If you double click on a directory or press the "*" key in the left hand window then it is "expanded" to show a diagram of the directories stored in it.



Selecting Directories

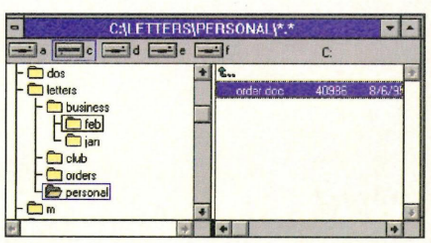
The right-hand window never shows you a tree of directories — it only displays what is stored in the directory you have selected. Double click on directories shown in the right-hand window to "open" them and look at their contents. You can select a directory using either the left or right-hand window - its name will be displayed in the title bar at the top, and all the files and directories stored within will be displayed in the right hand window. If you want, you can get rid of the split window setup — but don't dispense with this arrangement until you have found out how useful it can be.



Creating Directories

Now that you know about directories and how you can look at them the next thing you want to do is create one — or rather lots of them. The rule is that you can't have enough directories. Create a new directory every time you start anything new and keep all the files relating to it together. To create a directory simply select the directory that you want the new directory to be stored in and use the command File, create directory and type in the new name. You can select the directory in which you want to create the new directory via the left or right window.

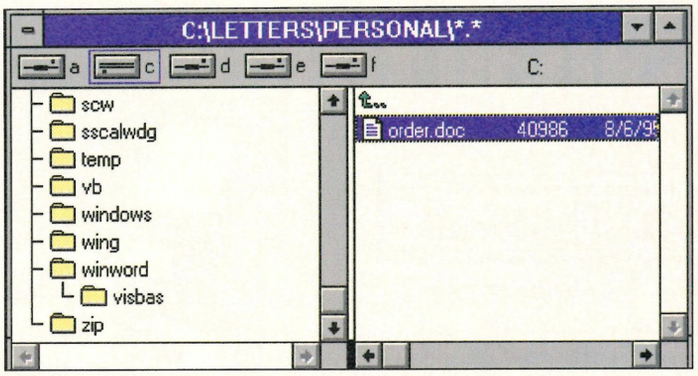
Moving Files



The most common file operations are moving a file between directories, copying files and deleting files. The easiest way to delete a file is to select it and then press the Del key. Remember once deleted it is very difficult and sometimes impossible to get it back. To move a file all you have to do is click on the file, and drag it to its new location. To drag a file, click on it, hold down the button and then move the mouse. You can select the file in the right window and drag it to a directory that is visible in either the right or left window. Dragging moves a file to a new location. To copy a file you drag between the directories while holding down the Ctrl key — remember this by Ctrl=Copy. To help you see that a copy is being made a small plus sign appears below the file icon as you drag.

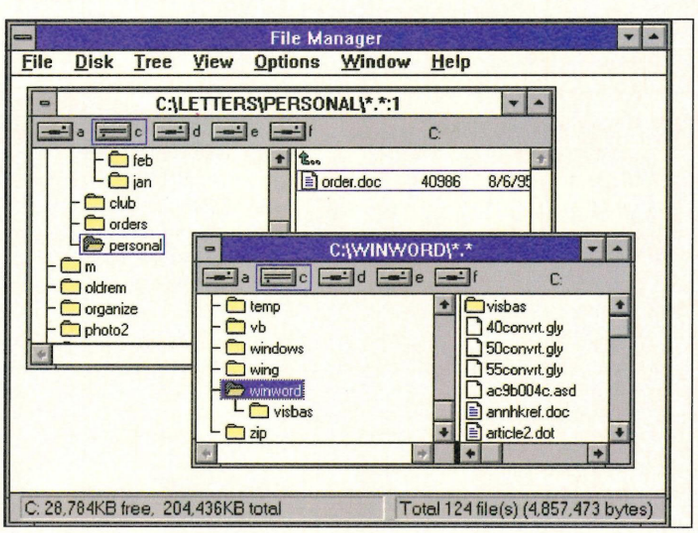
ALTERNATIVELY

There are lots of alternatives to the File Manager and users do tend to find it not the best solution to managing files — despite its name. See next month for MS-DOS and Window alternatives that make file management even easier. We're on sale 15th October, so reserve your issue now.



Finding the Target Directory

OK select and press Del to delete, drag to move and drag while holding down Ctrl to copy — easy, but it can still be difficult to see how to achieve your objective. For example, how can you copy or move a file from a directory to one that is miles away, perhaps deep down inside lots of other directories? The problem is that if you can't see the destination directory how can you drag to it? The answer is that you can't and you have to set up the File Manager window so that you can see both. To do this first use the left-hand window to expand the directory tree until you can see the directory you plan to drag to. Next use the left-hand window's scroll bar to move the view until you can see the directory that contains the file you want to copy and select that directory. Now the right-hand window shows its contents and you should be able to see the file you want to drag. Finally use the left-hand window's scroll bar to bring the target directory into view — whatever you do don't click on it! As long as you don't click on it, the original directory remains the currently selected directory and the right-hand window displays its contents. Now drag the file from the right-hand window to the target directory — and the job is done.



Using Multiple Windows

If you find the instructions for dragging a file between two widely separated directories difficult to follow then perhaps you would prefer an alternative. Instead of dragging between the right- and left-hand windows of a single File Manager window why not open another one? If you use the command Window, you get another window complete with left and right split. All you have to do is select the source directory in one and the target directory in the other and drag between the two. This double window view is the only way of copying or moving files between different drives — to select a new drive simply click on one of the drive icons at the top of the window.

Next month we take a look at MS-DOS, Windows 95 and the alternatives.

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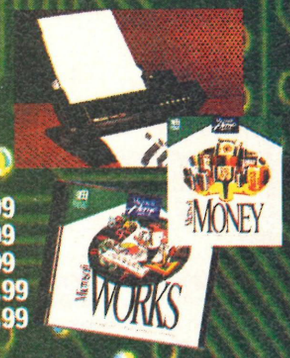

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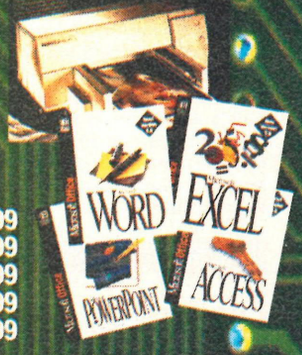

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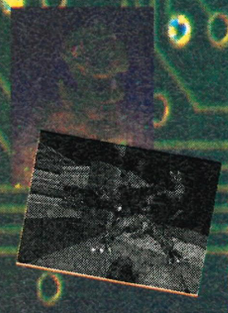

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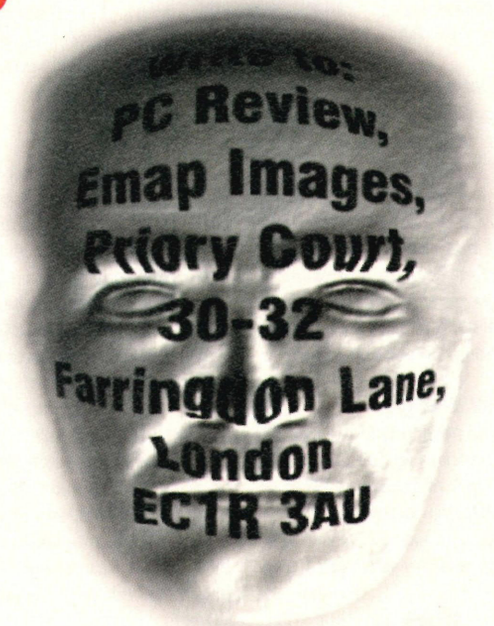


Our editor really likes letters — he's always eager to tear open the day's mail and devour its contents. He really should get out more.

What's Up Doc?

In reply to 'Dr' Gary Keogh's unnecessary diatribe regarding the Internet in Issue 46, I've got a quick question to ask: where on Earth did he buy his title? The reason I ask this is because, to have achieved a doctorate — be it academic or medical — would imply intelligence. Most know that the biggest enemy of intelligence is ignorance and/or narrow-mindedness, yet both these elements sallied forth in abundance from the good 'Doctor' when he dismissed the Internet as 'crap', filled with 'pointless trivia' and 'CB radio for spods' (congratulations on your advanced command of the English language by the way, doc).

Everyone is entitled to their opinion, of course, but I do feel it is the height of rudeness to dismiss a concept when you quite clearly haven't the faintest idea what you're talking about. For your information, 'Dr', like everything else, some of the Net is bad, some good — it's a concept in its infancy, yet already it allows musicians from all over the world to play music together, people of all different nationalities to communicate (a skill I would advise you to read up on) and there is already talk in America that in the next few years, going out to shop will be an abandoned practice with most retail moving onto the Net instead.

In conclusion then, if you don't know it, don't knock it and even if you do, get used to it because the Net — good or bad — is here to stay.

Jonathan Merson,
Liverpool.

Opinions of the Net would appear to be polarised — you either love it or you hate it; feelings are divided even here in the PC Review offices. As we pointed out in our own reply to Dr Keogh's letter, we felt that while much of what he said had a basis in truth, the terms that he used were possibly rather harsh. There is undoubtedly a lot of benefit to be gained from an unregulated, global communication network, as you point out — but also, you have to remember that if everyone shouts, no-one is heard. It is sometimes difficult to sort out the worthwhile material from the dross. And no-one can argue with the statement that the Net is slow as hell — but hopefully this will be rectified in the future. There will always be people who dislike the Net — just be glad, since it's one less person to take up valuable server time.

'Everyone is entitled to their opinion, of course, but I do feel it is the height of rudeness to dismiss a concept when you quite clearly haven't the faintest idea what you're talking about.'
Jonathan Merson

Frankly My Dear, I Don't Give A Hermann

Why, oh, why, oh, why do you keep on regurgitating the insufferable drivel that expounds seemingly relentlessly from the being that is Frank J. Hermann Jnr. Not only is the lad quite obviously insane, in which case you should be thoroughly ashamed of yourselves for encouraging these rantings, but he's also very, very dull. Please, please, no more Frank.

Steve Cox,
Wolverhampton.

Whatever you might say, we like Frank, but unfortunately we seem to have lost his letter. So, your wish is granted.

It Takes All Warts

In reply to Chris Collins' letter, Issue 47, in which he bemoaned the fact that there seem to be no new game genres poking their cute little heads around the horizon of late, I'd like to say 'cobblers'. I myself am in the final stages of completing a game about warts — a fascinating concept if I do say myself. You can grow them in all sorts of interesting places and then you can burn them, sand them off, sell them, bite them off or even rub liver all over them or bury it in the garden under a full moon. Wibble.

Scott Walker,
Belfast.

You are quite clearly mad. Please go away. Thank you.

Please feel free to send in correspondence to us via the Internet on pcreview@cix.compulink.co.uk, or via the post using the address printed on these pages.

A Bit of Ad-Vice

I read the results of your Reader survey on the Letters pages of Issue 47 and wasn't surprised to find that people want a bigger, better mag with less ads, more pages and an egg on top — some people are never satisfied are they?

I believe I have found the perfect solution to your problem though, a way to bump up the editorial pages without costing you a penny. All you have to do is double the cost of your advertising pages. Although this may mean that only half as many advertisers could afford your prices, you'd still be getting in the same amount of cash and yet there would be far more space to fill up with editorial coverage. Easy huh?

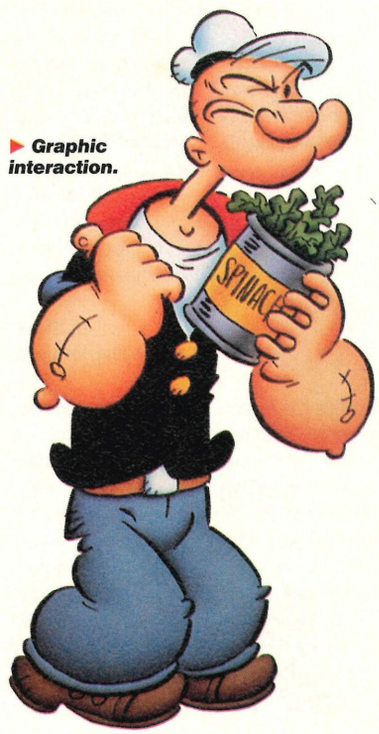
Ashish Dharsi,
East Cheam.

A cunning plan, but with one minor flaw — doubling the price would not just halve the number of advertisers, it would scare them all away. This would mean that we would have lots more editorial pages, for which we would have to pay more writers, and no revenue with which to pay them. Do the maths...

Toon Out

Your animation feature in Issue 47 made interesting reading and in a way it's nice to hear that such talented, eminent animation heavyweights are entering the computer games market. It means that we could then go some way towards the production of more and more impressive looking games.

The catch to this though — and I believe it's a big catch — is that the graphics of a game pale into insignificance if the gameplay isn't up to scratch. Game producers must have a strict budget to work within when they ▶



▶ ***Graphic interaction.***

'...talent such as the animators mentioned in your feature can't come cheap which surely means that less money will be spent on the actual gameplay.'

Ann Fox

are working on a game — there's surely only a limited amount of cash to be made from any one game no matter how good it is — and talent such as the animators mentioned in your feature can't come cheap, which surely means that less money will be spent on the actual gameplay.

Ann Fox,
Buckinghamshire.

We couldn't agree more — there are many examples of good-looking games that play like a dead moose (stand up Space Ace, Rise of the Robots, Creature Shock et al). But then again, look at just about anything by LucasArts (Day of the Tentacle, Sam and Max), or Origin (System Shock, Bioforge) and you'll see that with the right team, it can *all come together. The quality of the gameplay has less to do with the attractiveness of a game than the values of the people that produce it — if a company is lazy (or just no good) then the product will be dire, and vice versa.*

How Much???

I was absolutely gob-smacked to hear that Electronic Arts is splashing out around $15 million on its new PC creation, The Darkening and Origin is spending about $8 million on Wing Commander IV. I have no doubt at all that the resulting games will be groundbreaking, stupendous, amazing etc etc etc, but how an earth can they afford to spend so much? Surely they can't possibly recoup that sort of money in sales — PC games just don't sell that many units, do they?

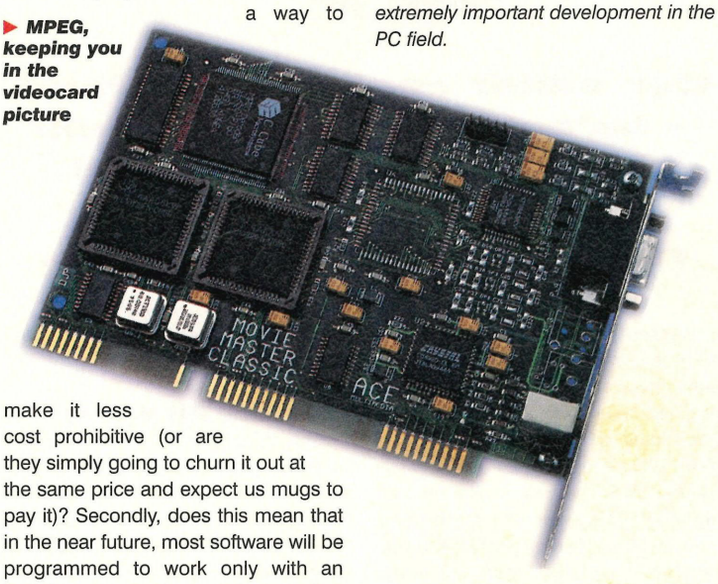
Jo Stark,
Middlesborough.

Good question. Games are becoming more and more like movies everyday, with vast, expensive sets, elaborate special effects and Hollywood stars playing the lead roles (I remember when it used to be the company receptionist or some B-grade soap actor). Whether this is a good thing is another matter. However, games companies wouldn't spend millions on a game if they didn't have a realistic chance of getting it back. Wing Commander IV is part of a very successful series, and should sell on the strength of its previous installments, or at least that's the theory. As for The Darkening, could it be the PC equivalent of Waterworld? With filming still in progress, no-one really knows what the game will be like, but Electronic Arts is clearly very confident of making the money back. As for how many units are sold, then these multi-million pound games would make quite a substantial loss if they were sold only in Britain. However, the world market is quite possibly large enough to support them.

Price of Pegs

Regarding your news article of Issue 47 about the impending MPEG explosion, I've got a couple of questions. First of all, you said the technology was slow to take off because it was so expensive, have Compaq and the rest then found a way to make it less cost prohibitive (or are they simply going to churn it out at the same price and expect us mugs to pay it)? Secondly, does this mean that in the near future, most software will be programmed to work only with an MPEG card meaning we'll have to fork out for one whether we like it or not? I think we should be told.

Jim Teller,
Norwich.



▶ **MPEG, keeping you in the videocard picture**

If you'd been paying attention when you read the article, you would also have noticed the paragraph relating to Microsoft. The company is currently working on a driver for Windows 95 which allows you to play MPEG files without any additional hardware. Is that OK?

Windows wins

Your July issue contained a whole feature devoted to Windows 95, and your August issue featured a whole extra magazine devoted to it, and yet when IBM's OS/2 was released, it barely rated a mention. Do you not think this is just a little biased? You have effectively provided Microsoft with a whole magazine of free advertising — as if it needed it!

Kevin Egre,
Jersey

To compare Windows 95 with OS/2 is not really a fair comparison, for the simple reason that Microsoft's operating systems are now used by well over 90% of PC users — and it looks like that will remain the case for the foreseeable future. The release of Windows 95 is probably the most important event in the PC's history, since it will (theoretically) make the PC a machine that can be operated and maintained by anybody, even those without a degree in computer science. Windows 95 is bound to have its problems, and we have tried to reflect this in our coverage, but it would be foolish of us to ignore what is an extremely important development in the PC field.

Windows Whines

All right, Windows 95 is the best thing to happen to the PC since Doom, but just what is going to happen to those of us who don't have a top-end PC to run it on? I'll bet it won't run on anything less than a 486, so what are us poor old 386 owners going to do? Everyone's going to be developing for Win '95, and we'll be stuck with outdated software until the price of hardware drops enough for us to be able to afford to upgrade to something better.

Peter Huxford
York

It's an age-old complaint — we probably receive more letters about obsolete PC hardware than anything else — and one to which we regularly spout the same old answer: that's the way it goes in the computer industry. There is a constant push for smaller, better, faster technology which (hopefully) will never stop. What it does mean is that prices fall quickly, putting greater power within the reach of even the most financially limited among us. As for Windows 95, well, it's a shame, but then most new software won't run on anything less than a 486DX anyway, so it's not going to make that much difference. Sorry, but that's life.

'...are they simply going to churn it out at the same price?'

Jim Teller

I'm all right Jack

I'm simply writing to say that I'm fed up of people whingeing about how new software won't work on their crummy old 286 or whatever. I've just invested in a Pentium 90 with 16Mb of RAM and all the trimmings, and it cost me a packet. What I want is software that will stretch my machine, and make use of all that power that I paid good money for. What would be the point of buying a powerful machine if every new bit of software would run on a pocket calculator? If you can't afford to upgrade, then please, just shut up!

Barry Richards
Leeds

Er, a noble sentiment.

Spell Bound

Why is it that there are so many spelling and grammar mistakes in PC Review? Surely you must have a spell-checker, and there must be someone on the team who can speak correct English? Come on, guys, it doesn't take much to be accurate.

Rachel Marsh
London

Well, Rachel, we do our best, but sometimes, even despite all the checking that each part of the magazine undergoes — every article is checked at least three times — these errors do manage somehow (supernaturally?) to creep in.

'Electronic Arts is splashing out around $15 million on The Darkening and Origin is spending about $8 million on Wing Commander IV.'

Jo Stark

Please feel free to send in correspondence to us via the Internet on pcreview@cix.compulink.co.uk, or via the post using the address printed on these pages.

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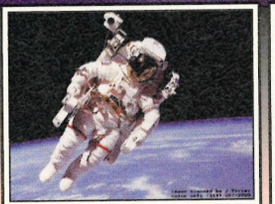

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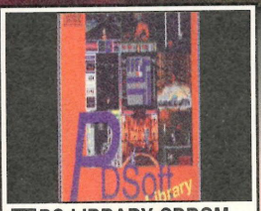

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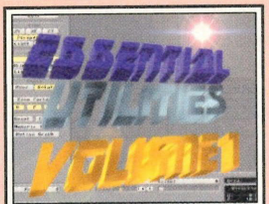

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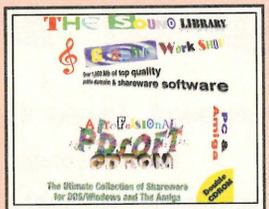

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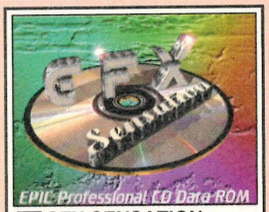

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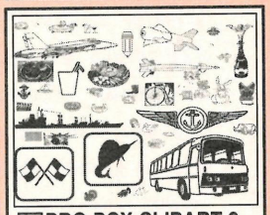

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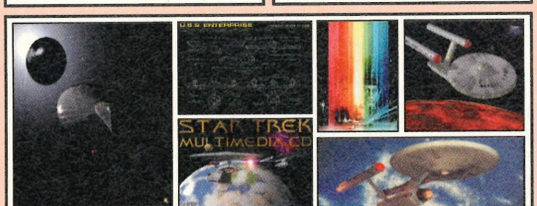

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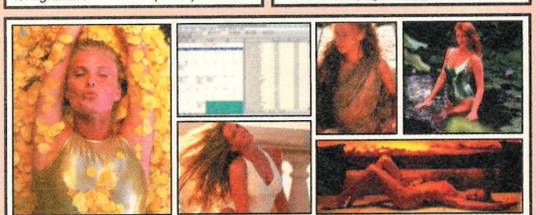

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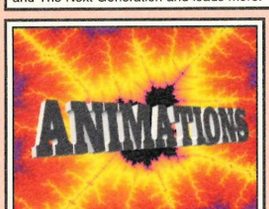

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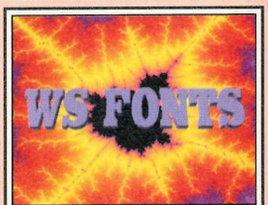

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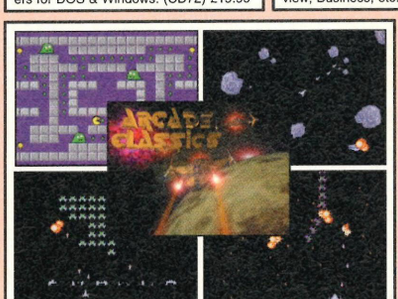

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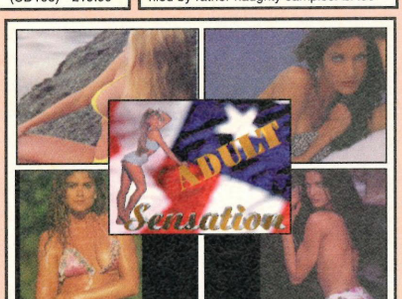

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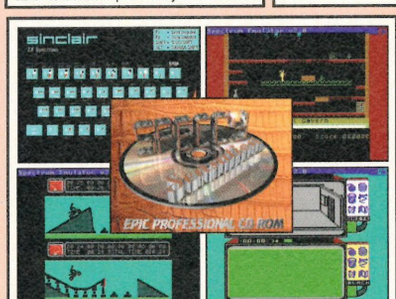

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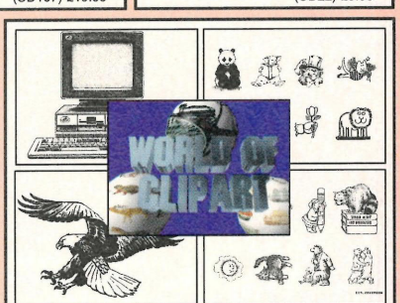

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The crime files

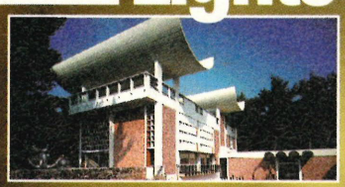
We sent Martin 'Gumshoe' Klimes in search of society's vilest criminals with the help of a PC and some multimedia...

'Multimedia seems to be getting more and more adventurous. This month's Crime Files and A Stroll in XXth Century Art are two good examples of 'more than reference' multimedia.'
Cal Jones

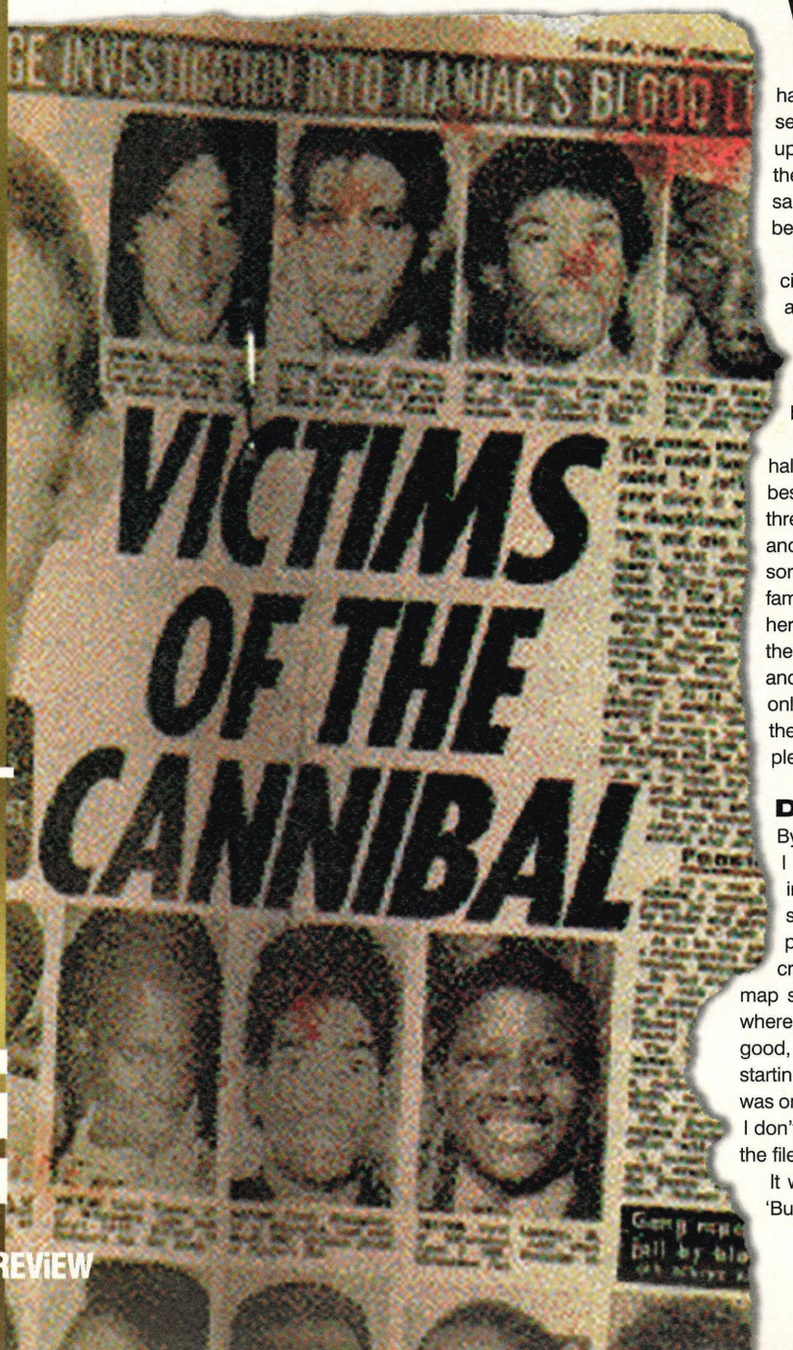
THE RATING SYSTEM EXPLAINED

PC Review gives a single mark out of 10 to rate multimedia products. The score takes into account elements such as presentation, ease of use and how well the subject is covered. We are pretty strict on multimedia. Five is average, so anything rated higher is better than average and a product has to be extremely good to score a coveted eight or nine.

High Lights



The Crime Files 138
A Stroll in XXth Century Art 140
World Reference Atlas 145



When the phonecall came, the night's bourbon was still playing ball with my stomach. I could have done with a shave and a dress sense transplant, but I figured that I held up well considering. It was a dame on the line with voice like an industrial sander, the sort of voice that's gone beyond husky — more like Alsatian.

We swapped pleasantries and I lit a cigarette. She had information for me and all I had to do was follow up the leads. It was a job, and with the magic words 'for the usual fee' I agreed to check it out. Never could say no to a broad.

When the package came, it was halfway through the morning, hardly my best time. Inside was a CD with over three-quarters-of-an-hour of video on it, and hundreds of photos. You know the sort, the ones that don't make it into the family album. There was enough stuff here to put a lot of people away. Some of them were real big shots too, Capone and Crippen for starters, and I was still only near the front of the alphabet. I read the files, fascinated. Most of these people *had* been put away, more's the pity.

Dead impressive

By the time I was tucking into my lunch, I had to admit to being pretty impressed. I could flick through all this stuff really easily. Scans from newspapers, villain by villain files, individual crime reports and even a world wide map showing who did what to whom and where. Interesting stuff. The mugshots were good, clear and crisp even in VGA. It was starting to look like this multimedia business was on the up. This had genuine quality, and I don't mind saying that I was captivated by the files on the disc.

It was a good mix, too. From Benjamin 'Bugsy' Siegel — you remember Bugsy,

START HERE

The Crime Files offers many different ways of looking up information — just select the method of your choice from the attractive menu screen.

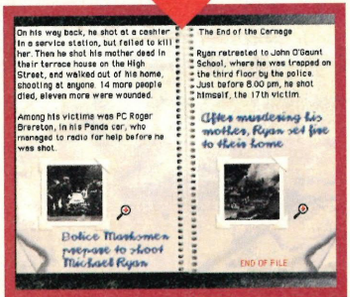




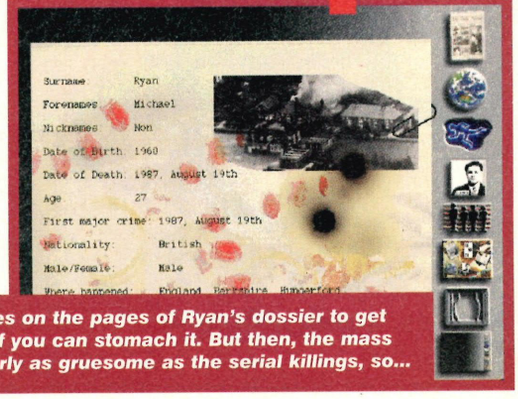
So let's try the files, shall we? And what a selection! I'm spoilt for choice when it comes to homicide...



I know, I'll plump for the delightful topic of mass murder. Look up the killer of you choice using the alphabet selector.



And here's one who's very close to home. On August 19th 1987, a young man called Michael Ryan went berserk in the small town of Hungerford, England, killing 15 people.



Click on the pictures on the pages of Ryan's dossier to get more information, if you can stomach it. But then, the mass murders aren't nearly as gruesome as the serial killings, so...



...unlike Peter Sutcliffe, the Yorkshire Ripper who brutally murdered several women in the early 1980s. But The Crime Files doesn't just portray women as victims...



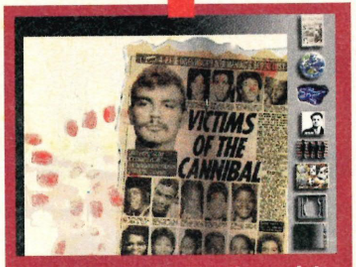
...the so-called gentle sex have also been responsible for their fair share of murders. Ruth Ellis was the last woman to be hanged in Britain for the murder of her playboy lover.



... or there's our very own Jack the Ripper, who prowled the streets of Victorian London in search of young women to kill and mutilate. He was never caught...



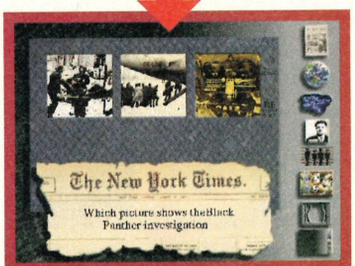
Or there's Gudrun Ensslin, one of the founding members of Germany's notorious Baader-Meinhof gang. There's more to this CD than murders. Other crimes are also covered.



...let's have a look at the serial killers, starting with Jeffrey Dahmer, the Milwaukee Cannibal. He made Hannibal Lecter look almost sane in comparison...



And that includes espionage. Mata, it turns out, was actually far less exotic than the stories would have it, just a common or garden spy during the First World War.



Right, I feel I've covered enough of the topics in The Crime Files to try out the quiz. It's amazing what you can learn from a few multiple choice questions, eh?

▼ You can even look up crimes and criminals by clicking on this world map. America has more than a few.



made a big noise out of LA between the wars by setting up that den of vice called Las Vegas? Sure you do. All the way to that Rodney King thing. It was all there and most of it in glorious full-screen video, just begging you to make up your own mind on it. We can thank MPEG technology for that. Sure, so you need an MPEG card. That's the downer. But if there was ever a reason to get one then products like this, they're your sales pitch. One thing I've learnt after all these years and all those beers — little piddly windows of fuzzy video ain't no good if you're serious about getting to the bottom of things. Take it from me, kid, you *can* have both quality and quantity in the world of multimedia.

I let my fingers do the walking, clicking on icons as it suited me. The screens were neatly presented, and even after an early evening whiskey sour to cut the edge off the day I managed to navigate around with no problems. I switched from Charles Manson (deadly cultists) to John Stompanato (mobsters) without even a hint of trouble — well that is the way I prefer my thugs, goons and various villains.

Slick's the word for a package like this, and if you're up with an MPEG card, then don't let this pass you by. But if you're still an MPEG virgin, don't worry — a conventional CD-ROM version is also available. You'll be missing out on all that glorious video, but since it's £20 cheaper than the MPEG version, it's still very good value.

PC Review reviewed the MPEG version of The Crime Files, which contains more video than the CD-ROM version. The pictures were taken from the CD-ROM version.

PCR VERDICT

Genre: Psycho encyclopedia

Publisher: CD Vision

Price: £49.99 MPEG/£29.99

Contact: (0171) 240 7764

Pros: Slick, well researched and nicely presented, though a bit morbid!

Cons: You'll miss out on half the fun if you don't have an MPEG card.

8

CD ONLY

Min PC: 25MHz 486SX, Win 3.1

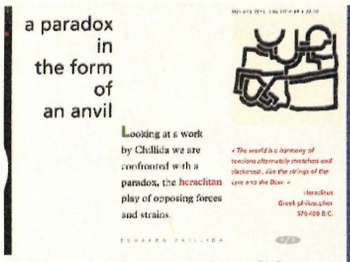
Minimum memory: 8Mb

Minimum graphics: SVGA

Sound: Windows compatible

Holy paradigms! Cal Jones peers at paintings and stubs her toes on sculptures in this different art CD.

A Stroll in XXth century Art



▲ One of the pages describing the work of sculptor Chillida. "Looking at a work of Chillida we are confronted with a paradox, the heraclitan play of opposing forces and strains." Good grief! It's just a block of concrete, guys!



▲ If you want to look up a specific piece of art, visit the scrolling menu. Each work has been pictured in miniature: click on any one to see it in its full glory.



▲ Pol Bury's fountain, one of the many sculptures found in the gardens of the Maeght Foundation.

These days, it seems that rarely a week goes by without some multimedia company or other churning out a CD about art. Microsoft Art Gallery, A Passion For Art, Le Louvre, Great Artists... With so many worthy titles around, PC-owning art lovers are spoilt for choice. So it takes something just a little bit different to make you sit up and take notice. A Stroll in XXth Century Art is one such package.

The program is based around the Maeght Foundation, which, set in the South of France, houses some of the finest examples of modern art in the world. It's more than just a sterile gallery, however. The buildings and grounds were created specifically to house the collection — the wall that surrounds the entrance garden is a work of art in itself — and the architecture of the buildings is striking enough to divert your attention away from paintings and sculptures housed within.

On tour

The CD allows you to tour this remarkable place, courtesy of a circular video window which appears centre-screen. The video is startlingly clear, set off by a stark, white background which serves to focus your attention on the parts of the screen which matter. And the sound — birdsong in the entrance garden, footsteps on a wooden floor in the Town Hall Wing, trickling water by Braque's Pool — almost makes you feel as if you were there. As you pass each exhibit, a small representation of the work appears outside the video window, and you can click on these to get more information. Descriptions of the works are accompanied by artist biographies (most of the artists were fiercely eccentric, it seems), recorded dialogue, archive movie footage and even poetry. This is not so

START HERE

On my tour of the garden, I come across a strange sculpture called "The Bird in the Tower." The work, which looks nothing like a bird, is the work of Spanish artist Joan Miro (a man, incidentally).

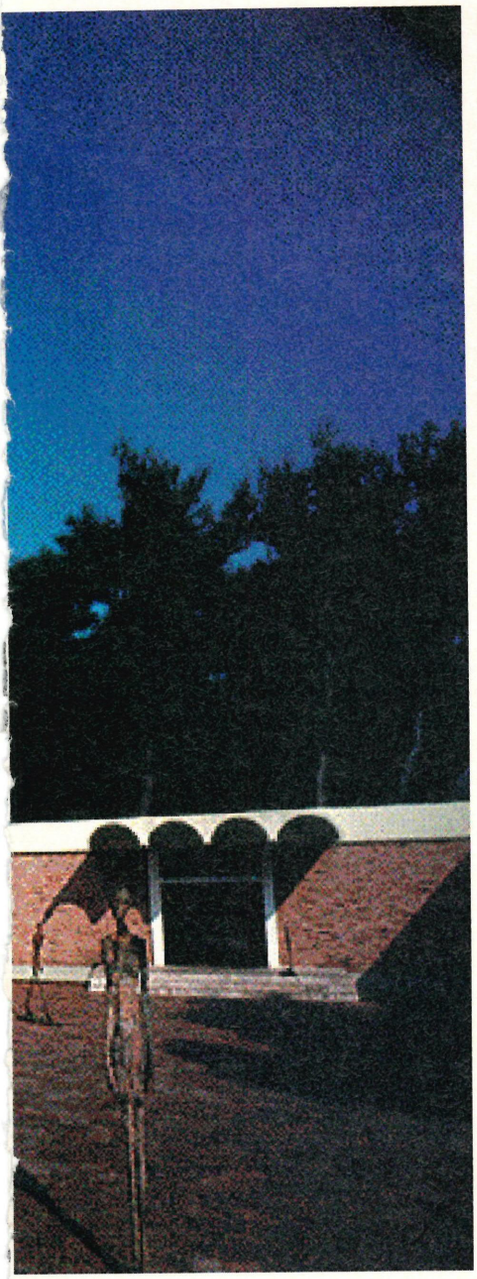


An 11 page biography covers his life, works and influences, and is illustrated with photographs, video clips and paintings. Click on highlighted words for more information, which appears alongside the text.



Born at Barcelona in 1893, Joan Miró was the son of a goldsmith.

1/11

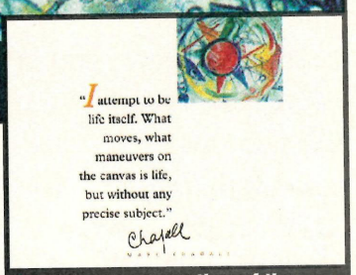




▲ There are many ways of touring the Maeght Foundation. The galleries and gardens have all been filmed, and the video appears in the round window in the middle of the screen. As you pass each exhibit, it appears on screen as an icon which you can then click on to learn more about the work and its author.



▲ Marc Chagall created this painting, La Vie, especially for the Maeght Foundation.



▲ Click on any section of the painting to read a quote from Chagall. There's a different quote for each section.

much a reference product as an attempt to capture the ambience of the place — it encourages you to explore rather than bombarding you with stacks of neatly catalogued paintings.

Birds, bees and... lizards?

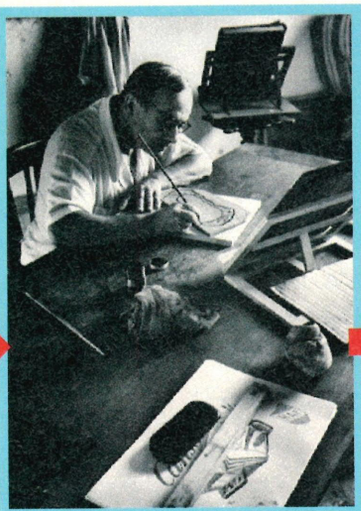
Which is just as well as XXth Century Art is a bugger to find your way around. Whilst you can interact with almost everything on screen, the interface is not the most intuitive. To access the main picture menu, for example, you have to click on a bee-shaped icon. Why? Apparently, it allows you to buzz around the exhibits, or so the manual says. To hear the dialogue, you click on a lizard — weird. And so on. In addition, finding your way back to an exhibit which caught your eye earlier is often quite hard — the main menu shows the paintings and sculptures in miniature, but doesn't list the title or artist until you click on them. With nearly 1,000 works included on the CD, you can imagine how difficult it is to locate just one. Consequently, many will find the program confusing at first, but then I think it's meant to be like that.

My one reservation? Some of the text which accompanies the exhibits is so pretentious that it's impossible to take it seriously. That anyone can wax so lyrical about a few stone blocks or a sculpture of what appears to be an amoeba is quite beyond me. Some of you may be irritated by such ramblings, others may find them inspiring. I, however, found them hilarious. Call me a philistine, but I found it hard to keep a straight face when reading the "poem" about Miro's bronze, The Bird in the Tower. I have reproduced it for your benefit elsewhere on the page (see Miro Image) — make up your own minds.

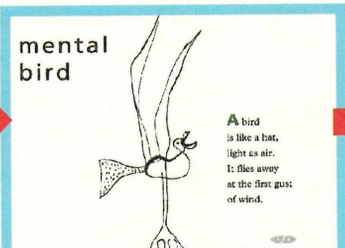
Other than that, it's superb. Multimedia products are often well presented, but it's rare to find a company which has made an attempt to do something a bit different with the subject matter. You could describe the presentation as, well, arty. XXth Century Art oozes quality, and is sufficiently different from other art CDs on the market to warrant your attention. Try it.

"With humour, with a pun, with the paradox of this iron bird and with poetry he invites us to open the cage of our minds. Then conventions, habitual ways of thinking, the leaden hat of reason will all fly away." What a load of old tosh!

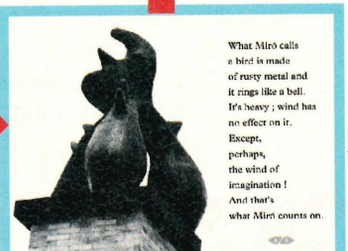




Miro at work. Whether creating sculptures, paintings, murals or lithographs, he specialised in using unusual materials, including scorched cardboard.



And this is where it starts getting just a little pretentious. Let me quote the words that appear by this sketch: "A bird is like a hat, light as air. It flies away at the first gust of wind."



It continues: "What Miro calls a bird is made of rusty metal and it rings like a bell. It's heavy; wind has no effect on it. Except, perhaps, the wind of imagination! And that's what Miro counts on."

PCR VERDICT

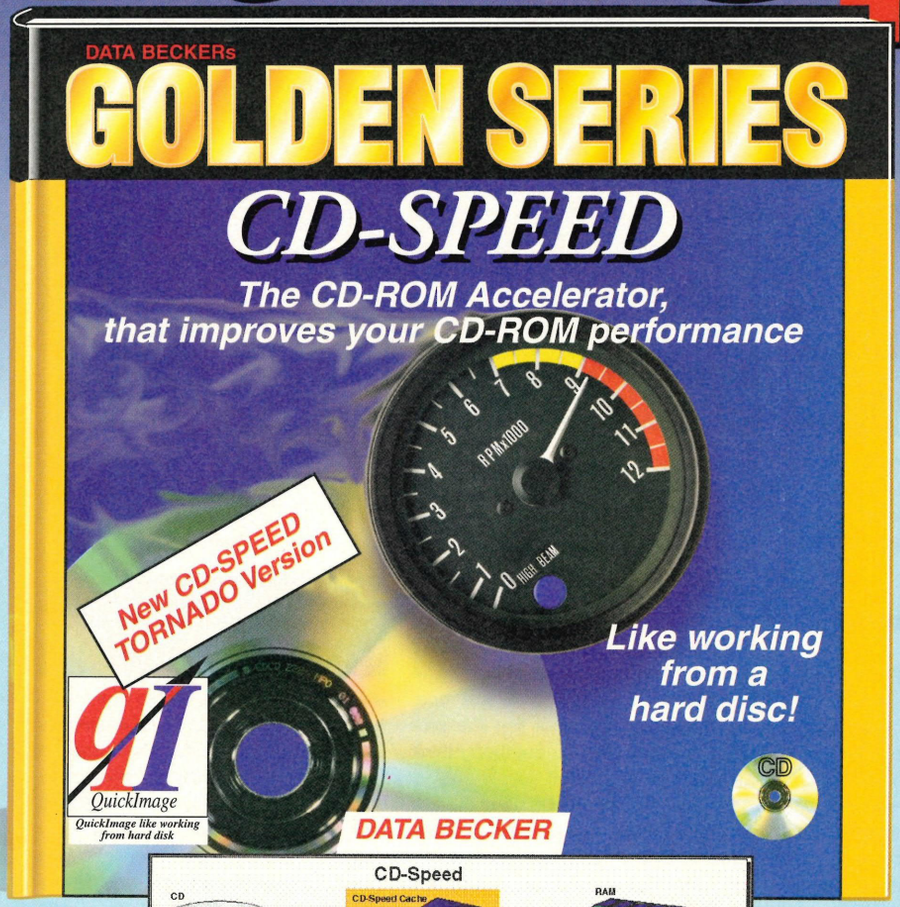
Genre: Modern art guide
Publisher: Matra Hachette
Price: £44.99
Contact: (00331) 47459450

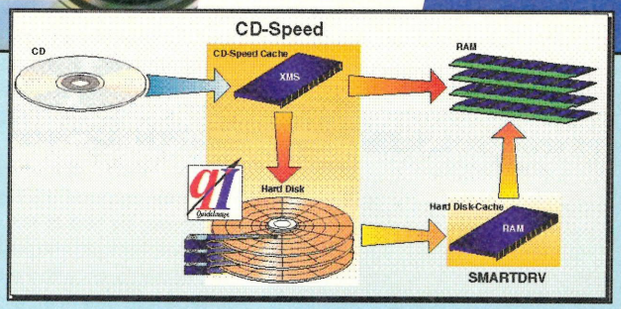
Pros: Crisp, clean and very different — this is an unusual piece of multimedia.

Cons: Tricky to find your way around, and just a tad pretentious in places.

8

Full Speed





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500 Nations

He's been dancing with wolves, and now Mr Waterworld himself steps lightly to the beat of a different drum: multimedia culturism.

CD ONLY
Minimum PC: 386SX, Wind 3.1
Minimum memory: 8Mb
Minimum graphics: SVGA
Sound: All Wind comp cards

After centuries of genocide and racism, the last few decades have seen a complete turn-around in the United States' attitude towards North American Indians. And this offering from Microsoft is only part of a wider trend of redressing the balance in politics, education and the arts.

The process in Microsoft's 500 Nations begins with an ambitious attempt to encompass an entire range of cultures from the Maya Indians in Mexico to the Inuit in the Arctic Circle. To complete this task the program takes a very broad historical sweep that stretches from early creation myths to the present. It's all fronted by a digitised Kevin Costner, which is good news if you like him, but probably rather irritating if you don't.

Exploration

In typical Microsoft style, there are half a dozen ways to explore the Indian story. For instance, you can start by clicking on the Homelands option which will offer you a geographical approach to the exact whereabouts of the Indian nations. Or perhaps try Pathfinders instead, which will give you a choice of ten different themes. Storytellers lets you listen to first-hand accounts from American Indians themselves. And as you might expect, there's also a timeline and an A-Z, while demonstration and the museum modes does the work for you. As with all Microsoft Home products, the whole package is slick from start to finish. There's a documentary-style introduction, the presentation makes clever use of the limited data in a variety of ways, and the design is outstanding. There are more than 2,000 images, dozens of animations, video sequences and computer-generated recreations, together with masses of spoken text.

The major problem with 500 Nations is a fairly predictable one. I can't help feeling that it is too ambitious for its own good. By attempting to cover such a wide range of subjects, it's inevitable that the amount of information relating to some of the topics should be disappointingly small.

However, as a broad introduction to a wide-ranging subject, 500 Nations is always interesting and often impressive.



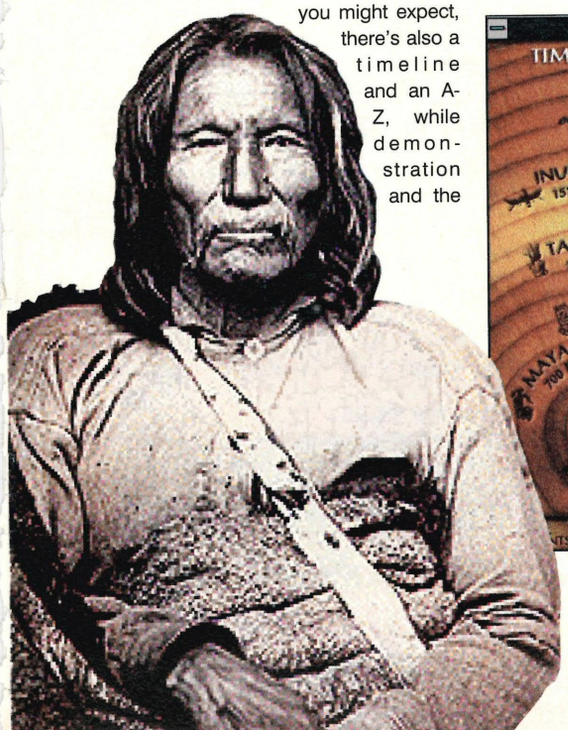
▲ *Live-action videos, animations and spoken text bring North American Indian culture to life.*

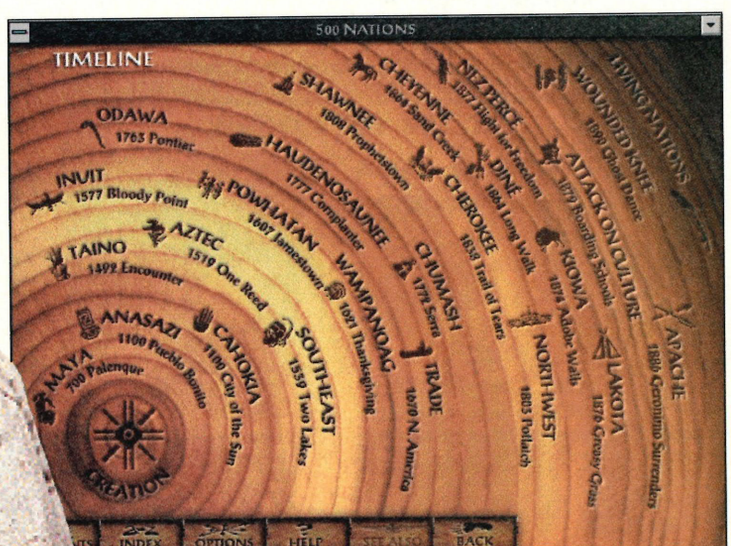






▲ *You can approach the information by theme, geographical area, timeline, stories, an A-Z of subjects — or you can watch a randomly-generated walk-through.*





▲ *Nations is superbly presented. Even the ubiquitous timeline is given a radical design overhaul.*

PCR VERDICT

Genre: History
Publisher: Microsoft
Price: £39.99
Contact: (01734) 270000

PROS
A well structured and beautifully designed overview of American Indian history and culture.

CONS
Not detailed enough for serious study.

7

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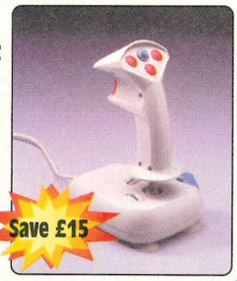

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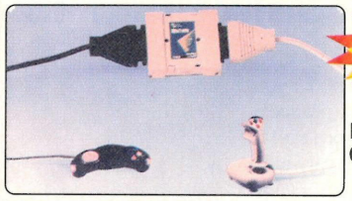

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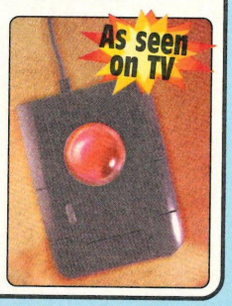

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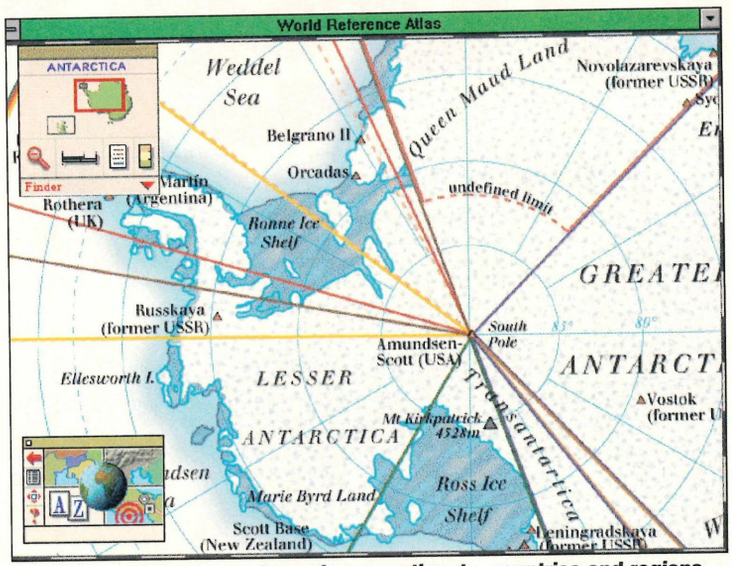
World Reference Atlas

A good hardback atlas will give you three things: a set of physical relief maps, a detailed political view of the world and a comprehensive index. If you're prepared to pay a little more (around £40 for the concise Times Atlas, for example), you might get information normally found in a gazetteer, such as population details, land feature comparisons, Earth history, and facts about climate, energy, vegetation, resources, and so on.

At just under £70, you would expect Dorling Kindersley's World Reference Atlas (WRA) to include all of these features and more. It does. You can approach the globe in five different ways, explore each of the world's 193 countries using 600 maps and 400,000 words of text, and make direct, on-screen statistical comparisons between the nations of the globe.

It's very simple to use, too. The interface is as good as you'll find anywhere, with excellent on-line help, good back-tracking and search facilities, instant access to the main menu, and dozens of useful icons on all the major screens.



▲ *Multiple zoom lets you home in on continents, countries and regions.*

Following in the footsteps of Phileas Fogg and Michael Palin, Gordon Houghton goes globe-trotting.

The map detail isn't a serious rival to the Times Atlas, but it's good enough for general use. ▼



CD ONLY

Minimum PC: 386DX, Windows

Minimum memory: 4Mb

Minimum graphics: SVGA

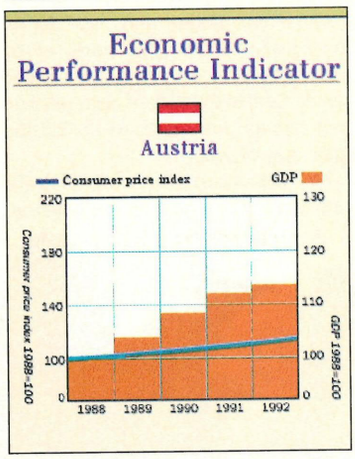
Sound: Sound Blaster

Global detail

The statistical support is just as impressive. As well as a scale, key, general profile, flag, guide to pronunciation and printable maps, each nation screen provides a bank of icons with data on politics, aid, tourism, chronology, communications, media, economics, health, wealth, people, climate, environment, world affairs, resources, education, defence, crime and world ranking. Add to this a wide selection of good quality videos and photographs and you've got a pretty fair picture of the world as it is today.

My main reservation about WRA is that it lacks the comprehensive list of place names found in a top quality hardback atlas. However, as a gazetteer and general atlas, it's superbly presented, flexible and fun to use.





▲ *Pop-up windows provide a wide range of statistics on every country.*

PCR VERDICT

Genre: Atlas

Publisher: Dorling Kindersley

Price: £69.00

Contact: (0171) 753 3488

PROS

A wealth of information beautifully presented.

CONS

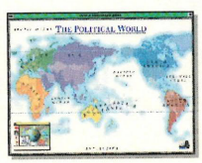
A good hardback atlas provides more detailed maps.

8

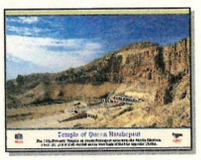
World party

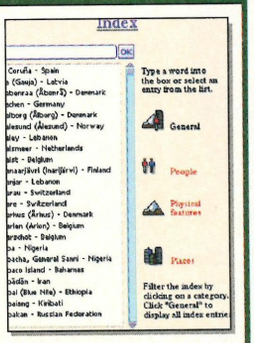
To gain access to Dorling Kindersley's World Reference Atlas you can choose from any one of five starting points. For instance, you can start by looking at the traditional physical and political views of the world, which provide masses of data on individual countries. Or you could try the index, which lets you target people, physical features and places. Or even the A-Z which takes you directly to each of the 193 countries screens. Finally, the World in View section reveals over two hundred photographs and around two dozen video sequences.











Pat Fox welcomes a new arrival into his life, and hopes it's housetrained.

Microsoft Dogs

CD ONLY

Minimum PC: 386, Windows 3.1

Minimum memory: 4Mb

Minimum graphics: 256 colour

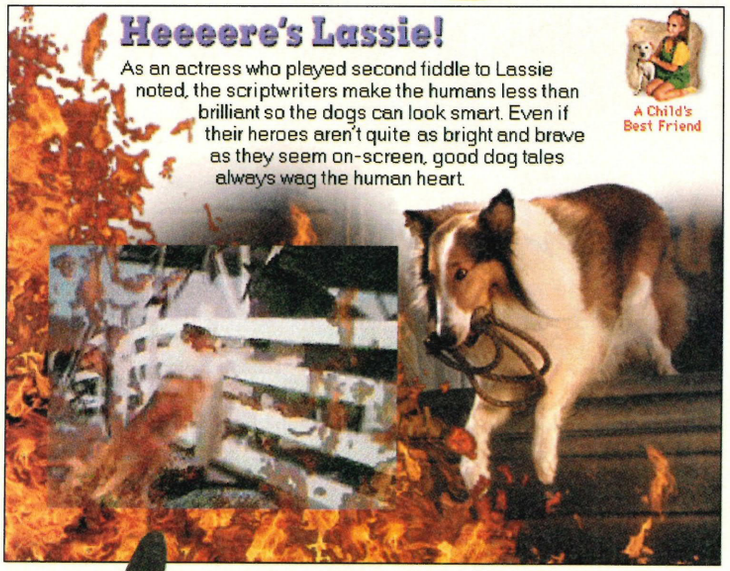
Sound: Windows compatible

Back in issue 46 we reviewed Multimedia Dogs by Inroads Interactive, and said that, while it was reasonably good, it was worth waiting for Microsoft Dogs instead. Well, while it would be fair to say that Microsoft's effort is the better of the two, closer examination reveals that the differences are not that significant.

It comes as no surprise to find that Microsoft Dogs, like all Microsoft multimedia products, looks gorgeous. The quality of the illustrations is impeccable and the whole package is seamlessly integrated. The core of the program is an extensive database of breeds, which can be accessed directly by breed groupings (working dogs, terriers, companion dogs and so forth), individually through the index, or by answering a series of questions asked by the Canine Consultant, who will then sort through the database to find the ideal dog for you.

The amount of information on each dog is far from extensive — if anything, it is even more limited than that offered by Multimedia Dogs — and unlike Multimedia Dogs, not every breed has a video clip to accompany it. The difference with Microsoft Dogs is that the links between different types of information is much stronger — you can jump directly to information about the dog's ancestry, or its closest relations, or about general care tips for that type of dog. As such it qualifies as more of a "multimedia package" than Multimedia Dogs, which is really just a database of canine facts.





▲ ***Did you know that Lassie was actually male, and played by several different dogs? Did you care?***

Guide dogs

Microsoft Dogs also provides a series of tours that take you through, for example, canine history, traditional dog stories, and even the various stages involved in acquiring your first dog. The narration can be a little patronising at times, but it is clear and well-illustrated.

Perhaps it was expecting a little much, but it would have been nice to at least have found a mention of non-pedigree (all right, mongrel) breeds somewhere, but Microsoft Dogs sticks rigidly to a pedigree-only line. However, this is an attractive and well-presented package that will have enough information to satisfy most people — but it's a more of a coffee-table book than an encyclopedia.



▲ ***Are you sitting comfortably? Then let Gula tell you a story...***



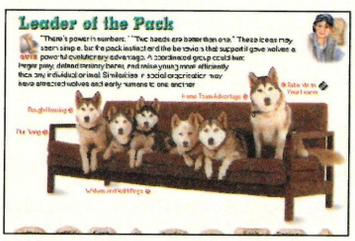
▲ ***Nice doggy. Please don't eat me.***



▲ ***Behind you! No, really...***



▲ ***Now that's one ugly son of a... bitch. Literally.***



▲ ***Now, everybody say cheese...***

PCR VERDICT

Genre: Dog database

Publisher: Microsoft

Price: £40.00

Contact: (0345) 002000

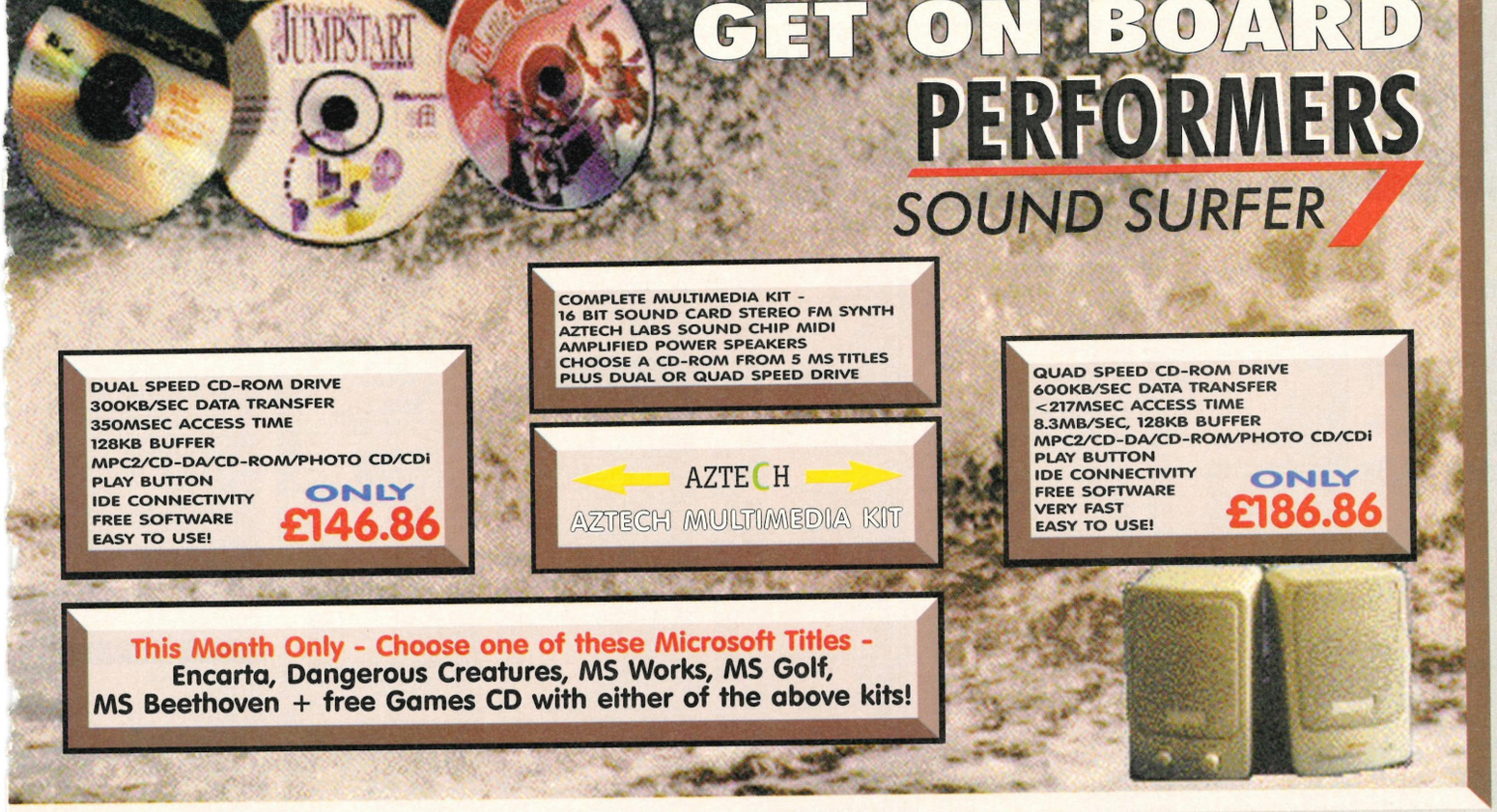
PROS

Looks great, with great pictures and well-structured links.

CONS

Pedigrees only, and the information is a little sparse in places.

7



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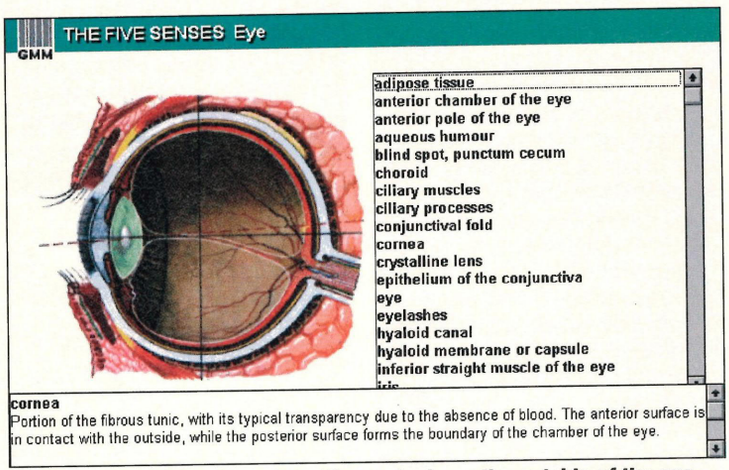
BIOFORGE	**36.99**	FS5 - Scotland & Ireland	19.99	Pinball Illusions	24.99	Universe	26.99			Zug's Dinosaur World (4-9)	17.99
Birds of Prey	9.99	FS5 - Southern England	26.99	Pinball Mania (Windows)	24.99	US Navy Fighters	34.99			Zug's Spelling Adventure (5-12)	17.99
Bitmap Compilation	22.99	FS5 - Southern England	26.99	Pinball World	29.99	US Navy Fighters Plus	36.99			**JUNIOR ADVENTURES**	
Blackhawk	26.99	FS5 - West or East USA (v5.0)	34.99	Pirates Gold	12.99	USS Ticonderoga	29.99			A Christmas Carol (8+)	13.99
Blind Date	26.99	FS5 - West USA Scenery	29.99	Pitch Perfect Golf	12.99	USS Ticonderoga (WINDOWS 95)	29.99			Alistair & the Alien (5-10)	24.99
Blonde's Have More Fun	8.99	Flight Unlimited	29.99	**PITFALL (WINDOWS 95)**	**29.99**	Veil Of Darkness	24.99			Berenstain Bears - In a Fight	24.99
Bloodnet	27.99	Flight Unlimited	32.99	Pizza Tycoon	29.99	Vikings	27.99			Magic Labyrinth of I M Meen (9-13)	24.99
Bloodstone	12.99	Flight of the Amazon Queen	16.99	Playboy Screensaver	29.99	Virtual Chess	27.99			Robin Hood (8+)	13.99
Blowout Bay	12.99	Flight Of Intruder	16.99	**PLAYER MANAGER 2**	**16.99**	Virtual Pool	27.99			The Lost Tribe (8+)	22.99
Bobby Fisher Teaches Chess	19.99	Flight Of The Intruder	29.99	Police Quest 1 or 2 or 3	12.99	Virtual Pool 2	29.99			The Three Bears (5-10)	13.99
Body Blows Wrestling	10.99	Flight Of The Old Dog	12.99	Police Quest 4	24.99	Virtual Reality	26.99			The Wizard Of Oz (6+)	13.99
Bombshell	26.99	Flight Plus	24.99	Police Quest Collection (Windows)	27.99	Virtuoso	26.99			Wind In The Willows (8+)	13.99
Bravo Romeo Delta	8.99	Flight Unlimited	27.99	Pool Shark (Windows)	27.99	Visions of Glory (Windows)	31.99			**WALLACE & GROMIT STORYBOOKS**	
Braindead 13	27.99	Football Glory	22.99	Populous & Promised Lands	10.99	Vital Light (Windows)	19.99			Goldilock & Three Bears	10.99
Breach 3	26.99	Formula One Grand Prix	12.99	Populous 2	12.99	Voyageur 17 Discovery	16.99			Jack & the Beanstalk	10.99
Bridge Champion - O Sharif	26.99	Formula One Grand Prix 2	29.99	Populous 2 & Powermonger	12.99	Voyeur	22.99			**HYEKO & THE LOST NIGHT**	**22.99**
Bridge Master	16.99	Front Lines	26.99	Powerdrive	19.99	Wargame Construction Kit 3	27.99			Lion King	29.99
Brutal	26.99	**FULL THROTTLE**	**32.99**	Powerdrive 2	24.99	Warcraft Orcs & Humans	26.99			Little Red Riding Hood	10.99
Bureau 13	26.99	Full Tilt Pinball	26.99	Powermonger	24.99	Warcraft 2	32.99			Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer	10.99
Buried In Time	27.99	Game Gun	27.99	Powermonger Epic	22.99	**WARHAMMER DARK CRUSADERS**	**29.99**			The Three Little Pigs	10.99
Burning Rubber	19.99	Games & Goodies	13.99	Powerslide	26.99	Warhammer Shad.Hom Rat WIN 95	29.99			The Tortoise & the Hare	10.99
Burning Steel 3	27.99	Gangsters	13.99	Power House	26.99	Warlords 2 - Deluxe	29.99			The Ugly Duckling	10.99
Burntime	19.99	Gateway	26.99	Power Politics	22.99	Warriors	22.99				
Buzz Aldrins Race Into Space	10.99	Gateway Handheld	12.99	**PREMIER MANAGER 3**	**22.99**	Werewolf v Commanche	27.99				
Cadillacs & Dinosaurs	29.99	Gateway to the Savage Frontier	12.99	Prem Man 3 Multi Edit System	10.99	Wheel Deal	22.99				
Caesar Deluxe	12.99	Genesia	26.99	Primal Rage	26.99	White Death	8.99				
Caesar 2	22.99	Hand of Fate	12.99	Prince Persia	26.99	**WINDOWS 95 (UPGRADE)**	**79.99**				
Campaign 2	12.99	Hardball 4	26.99	**PRISONER OF ICE**	**27.99**	Wing Armada	29.99				
Cannon Fodder	12.99	Harpoon Classics	19.99	Privateer	29.99	Wing Commander Academy	10.99				
Cannon Fod/Beneath Steel Sky	29.99	Harpoon 1	12.99	Project X	13.99	Wing Commander 1	11.99				
Cannon Fodder 2	22.99	Harpoon 2 v2.0	29.99	Prototype	22.99	Wing Commander 2	13.99				
Capstone Action Pack	19.99	Harpoon 2	27.99	**PSYCHO PINBALL**	**25.99**	Wing Commander 3 - Clue Book	11.99				
Card Players Paradise	31.99	Harpoon 2 Cold War Battleset	15.99	Pyrotechnica	19.99	Wing Commander 3 - Speech	13.99				
Cartoon Carnival	17.99	Harpoon 2 Scenario Editor	16.99	**QEMM GAMERUNNER 2**	**29.99**	Wing Commander 3 - Speech	13.99				
Carrier Command	4.99	Harpoon 2 W Pacific Battleset	15.99	**QEMM V7.5**	**59.99**	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Casper Brainy Book	19.99	**HARVESTER**	**32.99**	Quantum Gate	29.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Celebrity Poker	27.99	HeadCandy	13.99	Quarantine	26.99	Wing Commander 3 - Clue Book	11.99				
Central Intelligence	26.99	Heimdal 2	26.99	Radioactive	27.99	Wing Commander 3 - Speech	13.99				
Charma Manager 2	26.99	**HERETIC**	**29.99**	Rags To Riches	26.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Champ Manager End of Season	11.99	Heroes of the 357th	8.99	Railroad Tycoon	12.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Champ Manager Italia 95	19.99	Hexx - Wizard	26.99	Rally - Network Q RAC	13.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Champions of Sport	13.99	**HIDDEN WORLDS - MAGIC CARPET**	**14.99**	Random Doom	13.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Chaos Control	28.99	High Seas Trader	26.99	Raptor	22.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Chaos Engine	19.99	History Line	26.99	Ravenloft II - Stone Prophet	27.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Chess Challenge	16.99	Hokum KA-50	26.99	Reach For The Skies	12.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Chessmaster 4000 (Win)	22.99	Hunters of Ralk	27.99	Rebel Assault	29.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Chessmaster 5000 (Win)	27.99	Ice & Fire	27.99	Red Baron	12.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Chessnet	19.99	**INDY CAR RACING**	**19.99**	Red Ghost	29.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Chuck Yeager	8.99	Indy Car Track Pack	12.99	Red Shift	44.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Civil War	29.99	Indy Fate Of Atlantis Adv	12.99	Renegade	29.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
CIV NET (WINDOWS)	**29.99**	Inferno	27.99	Renegade Missions	31.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Civilisation DOS or Windows	26.99	Inherit The Earth	26.99	Reunion	27.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Classic Cards	12.99	Inspector Gadget 2	26.99	Return To Ringworld	26.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
CLASSIC COLL - DELPHINE	**16.99**	Intelliplay Cowboy Casino	27.99	**RISE OF THE TRIAD**	**22.99**	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Classic Coll - Lucas Arts	19.99	International Open Tennis	27.99	Rome AD92	10.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Club Football - The Manager	22.99	Iron Assault	24.99	Sabre Team	19.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Cohort 2	19.99	Iron Fist	24.99	Sam & Max Hit The Road	16.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Coin Op Classics	26.99	Iron Forces	27.99	Scrabble	20.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Colossus Compilation	12.99	Ishar 3	26.99	Screamball - Ultimate Pinball	16.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Colonels Bequest	12.99	Islands Crisis	26.99	Seal Team	12.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Colonisation	29.99	Jagged Alliance	22.99	Secret Weapons Of The Luftwaffe	12.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Combat Air Patrol	26.99	**JAZZ JACK RABBIT**	**24.99**	SWOTL P38 or He162 D/Disk	12.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Combat Classics 3	22.99	Jetstrike	22.99	Seaworthy	22.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
COMMAND AND CONQUER	**35.99**	Jimmy White's Snooker	12.99	Sensible Golf	24.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Complete Chess System 2	26.99	J Nicklaus Unlimited	12.99	Sensible World of Soccer	19.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Conquered Kingdoms	27.99	J Nicklaus Signature Edition	12.99	Sentient	34.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Conspiracy	8.99	Johnny Mnemonic	29.99	Settlers	26.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Corporate Colonies	24.99	Jungle Strike	22.99	Shadow Queen Death Machine	16.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Covergirl Poker	12.99	**JURASSIC PARK**	**12.99**	Shell Shock	26.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Cruise For A Corpse	12.99	Kaleidoscope	19.99	Shoot'em Off	19.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Cyberia	22.99	Kasparov Gambit/Grandslam Bridge	19.99	Shuttle	9.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
CyberSpeed (Win)	29.99	Key Action Traveller (Win)	29.99	Silent Hunter	27.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Darker	19.99	Key Garden Planner (Win)	29.99	Silent Service 2	12.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Daring To Fly (Windows)	26.99	Key Gourmet (Win)	29.99	Sim City 2000 (DOS or Windows)	26.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Day Of The Tentacle	16.99	Key Home Designer (Win)	29.99	Sim City 2000 Collection	31.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Day Of The Tent/Indy/Sam & Max	29.99	Key Sound Studio (Win)	29.99	Sim City 2000 Scenarios 1	12.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
D-Generation	12.99	Keys of Maramon	12.99	Sim City 2000 Scenarios 2	13.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Daedalus Encounter	19.99	Kick Off 3 - Euro Challenge	19.99	Sim City 2000 Urban Renewal Kit(D or W)	13.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Damnesia	22.99	Kingdom: The Far Reaches	29.99	Sim Earth	10.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Damocles	24.99	Kingpin	12.99	Sim Classics Compilation	27.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Darker	19.99	Kings Quest 1, 2, 3, 4	12.99	Sim Tower	28.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Dark Forces	36.99	Kings Quest 5	12.99	Simon the Sorcerer 2	26.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Dark Seed	14.99	Kings Quest 1	12.99	Simon the Sorcerer	26.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Dark Seed 2	27.99	Kings Quest 1-6 Collection	29.99	Skins at Bighorn	29.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Dark Universe	22.99	Kings Quest 7	29.99	SLIPSTREAM 5000	26.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Daughter of SerpEnts	12.99	**KLIK AND PLAY**	**26.99**	Soccer Kid	19.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Dawn Patrol	27.99	Knights of the Sky	12.99	Space Academy	22.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Day of the Tentacle	10.99	Konquest	24.99	Space Federation	26.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Deadline	10.99	Krazy Ivan	29.99	Space Hulk	12.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Defcon 5	31.99	Kyrandia 3	27.99	Space Quest 1 or 2 or 3	12.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Delta V	27.99	**LANDS OF LORE**	**12.99**	Space Quest 1	12.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Deluxe Strip Poker 1 & 2	12.99	Leading Lap	27.99	**SPACE QUEST 6 (WINDOWS)**	**27.99**	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Destruction Derby	31.99	Legend of Kyrandia	12.99	Space Quest Quad Pack	28.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Descent	26.99	Legends of Valour	12.99	Space Quest Collection	29.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Desert & Jungle Strike Compilation	16.99	Legions	22.99	Space Simulator	29.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Detroit	26.99	Leisure Suit Larry 1	12.99	Spaceship Warlock	29.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Digital Love	12.99	Leisure Suit Larry 1 or 2 or 3	12.99	Spawn	31.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Discoveries of the Deep	27.99	Leisure Suit Larry 1 - 6 Collection	29.99	Speedball 2	8.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Discworld	27.99	Lemmings Double Pack	27.99	Speed Racer	26.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Dominus	27.99	Lemmings 1 & 2	19.99	Spectre VR	27.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Doom Addons (Wolfdoom etc)	8.99	Lemmings 3	22.99	Spiderman	29.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Doom D/Disk 1 or 2 or 3 or 4	8.99	Lemmings 3D	31.99	Sport Challenge	12.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Doom Editor Pack	9.99	Links 386 Pro	29.99	SSN-21 Sea Wolf	29.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Doom Hint Book	12.99	Links Banff	29.99	Stalingrad	27.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99				
Doom Utilities	8.99	Links Big Horn or Pebble Beach	16.99	Star Crusader	27.99	Wing Commander 3 - Vega	13.99

The Human Body

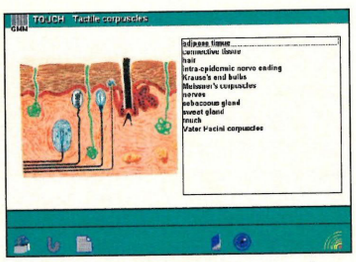
Mr Martin Klimes: bone up on the human body on CD-ROM and none of your bone-dry comments, if you please...

There are, in all honestly, quite enough medical CD-ROMs around right now. You can see the spleen dissected by Mindscape while examining an infected liver with Dorling Kindersley, then move on to any number of others for the more sensitive organs. So

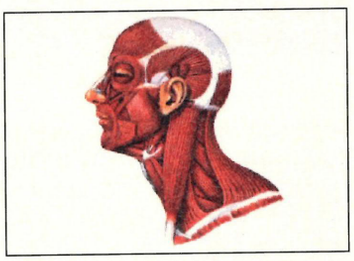
CD ONLY
Minimum PC: 386SX, Win. 3.1
Minimum memory: 4Mb
Minimum graphics: VGA
Sound: Sound Blaster



▲***The cornea is a portion of the fibrous tunic on the outside of the eye.***



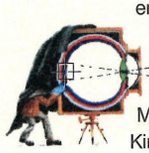
▲ ***Somewhere in that picture of your skin is a tactile corpuscle, by all accounts anyway.***



▲ ***Taking a haircut to extremes.***

EMME's decision to enter the fray isn't a bad one, merely tough to justify.

What you get is a fairly bog standard series of menus in which you get to narrow down the region you're interested in, and then read the text or see the picture it throws up at you. Not the most imaginative approach it has to be said, and the lack of innovative multimedia features is disappointing. It's definitely informative, just not very exciting. Did it tell me what I needed to know to satisfy my curiosity about the endocrine system? Yes. Did it stir me in any way and make me enjoy the voyage of discovery? No siree. That's the problem. This is not a product to challenge the Mindscapes and Dorling Kindersleys of this world.



PCR VERDICT

Genre: Medical encyclopedia
Publisher: EMME Interactive
Price: £34.99
Contact: (01923) 211007

PROS
Neat, clean and tells you what you need to know.

CONS
A little light on multiple media for a piece of multimedia, and the microscope pictures are a bit dull too.

6

shorts

CASTLES

(Educational)

This program is intended for the classroom rather than the home, and it shows. Although there is a lot of useful information here — how castles were built, what it was like to live in one, how they were defended and so on — the presentation is decidedly uninspiring. Photos are on the small side, illustrations are bland and the interface is very boring indeed. Really it's hardly the sort of thing to get students of the subject excited. Castles is well-sourced and comprehensive, but let down rather by lack of polish.

Anglia Multimedia, £47.00 ● (01603) 615151 ● 16MHz 386SX, SVGA, Windows 3.1, 4Mb RAM

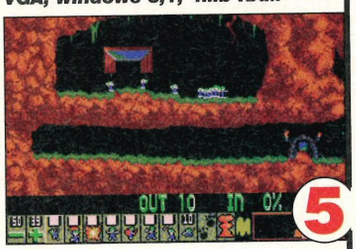


Publishers' Pick Blue

(Compilation)

A mixed old bag, this: seven games (high spot: Dune II, black spot: Wayne's World), some sing-a-long children's songs, a guide to the Internet and a Chinese cookery CD. The price is reasonable, but it's a bit of a lucky dip. Most of the titles are either fairly old or they fit into the average or worse category. I would have appreciated a bit more variety: fewer games and more multimedia and reference. If you want one of the games included in this pack, it's cheaper to buy it than to pay £30 for other stuff you don't really want.

Computer Future, £29.99 ● (01483) 285000 ● 25MHz 386SX, VGA, Windows 3,1, 4Mb RAM



HOW THE LEOPARD GOT HIS SPOTS

(Edutainment)

This interactive version of Rudyard Kipling's Just So story is really aimed at children, although parents will enjoy it almost as much. The presentation is faultless: beautiful stylised images, Danny Glover's narration and with the wonderful music of Ladysmith Black Mambazo make this a very appealing product. There are simple games, pages which allow you to read along with the narrative, and you can also find out about African wildlife, people and music, as well as Rudyard Kipling himself. It does run a little slow even on a Pentium, although speed is less critical in products like this.

Microsoft, £29.99 ● (01734) 270001 ● 33MHz 486SX, SVGA, Windows 3.1, 4Mb RAM



BRITISH ISLES FROM THE AIR

(Educational)

As the title suggests, this CD is packed with aerial photos of the British Isles. Over 230 of them, in fact. The photos are divided into physical and man-made features, and you can investigate everything from arable farmland to power production (including, much to my delight, Didcot Power Station where Cal used to work). This would be useful to geography students who want to find out what, for example, limestone scenery looks like from above, but the accompanying information is a little sparse.

Anglia Multimedia, £47.00 ● (01603) 615151 ● 20MHz 386SX, SVGA, Windows 3.1, 4Mb RAM

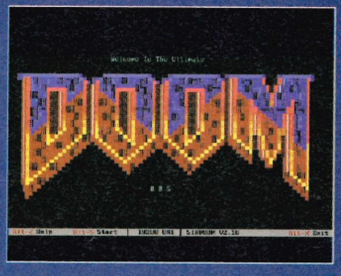


Brilliant boards

Before the Internet there were bulletin boards — providers of services similar to those now offered on many Net sites, but on a much smaller scale. There are still hundreds of them out there, each one full of useful material — if you're willing to take the time to look. Here are our favourites.

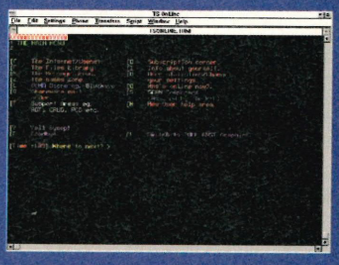
All the Mod Cons (01274) 823799

A specialist in all things Doom (and Doom II, Heretic, Dark Forces, Descent, Rise of the Triads), ATMC is small but jam-packed with useful stuff, including level editors and more new levels for your chosen Doom-alike than you could ever hope to play in one lifetime.



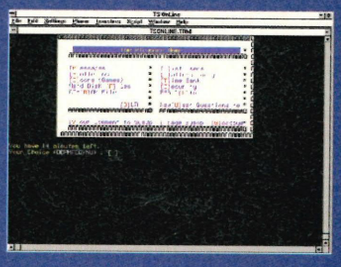
Manchester File Library (0161) 256 2220

This is best for any shareware needs, as it has an absolutely gigantic file resource (indeed most of the shareware gleaned for our cover disks can be found here). It also provides an Internet E-Mail connection, and on-line gaming facilities.



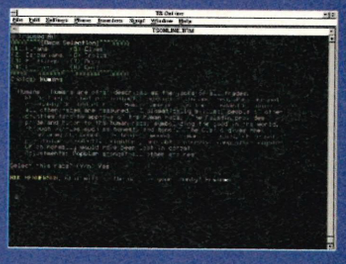
The Pleasure Dome (0160) 378 9224

Not only does this board feature a new graphical interface for you to download called T-FX, it is also the prime site to visit if you're interested in cult television. You"ll find anything and everything here, from Babylon 5 to Twin Peaks and it can all be offered as downloadable .wav and .gif files.



The Colosseum (0148) 283 7475

At the moment this is number one for interactive on-line games. There are currently four in circulation and you can join them at any time. There is also a huge games file library, and if you've got mates with Amigas or STs you can get them to join too (as well as shout 'Sad' at them until they cry!)



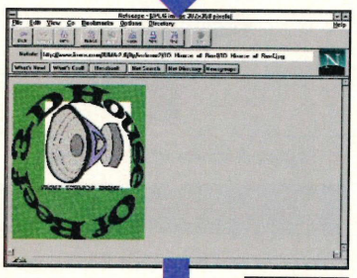
Surf Of the Month . . .

KEY
00:50
£ 00.00
Top: time taken
Bottom: amount spent

The cybersurf is crashing on the digital beach yet again, but what's a beach without music? Jim Gillies heads out in search of sounds.

http://www.iuma.com/IUMA-2.0/ftp/Volume2/3D_House_of_Beef/

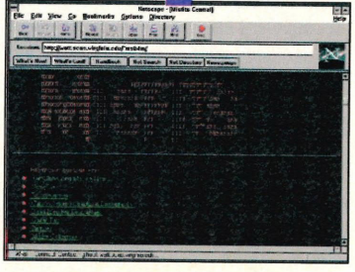
I have to confess that I hadn't heard of 3D House of Beef before I stumbled across their web page. Now I know why. Ardent mediocrity of their music aside, they have a bloody good web page. The presentation is excellent (the 3D House of Beef logo is very cool) with an imaginatively designed layout and good links to other pages. You can down-load various audio and video clips of the band (from 'was that it?' short to 'overdraft city' long) and access contacts for their rather natty range of merchandise. Nice page, shame about the music.



00:10
£ 00.23

http://watt.seas.virginia.edu/(msk4m/

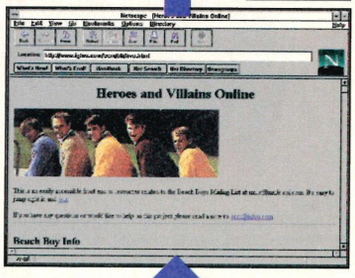
Punk band, The Misfits, hove from this simple (imaginative use of ASCII graphics on the title page), but attractive home-page. You can get audio samples, the obligatory discographies and leave messages in the guest book. Very few links to related pages but if you're happy with what's here there's plenty to satisfy your Misfits info-cravings. Serious fans only.



00:17
£ 00.39

http://iglou.com/scm/bb/hvo.html/

There must still be quite a few sixties hangers on out there because the Beach Boys have four net sites. This site is experimental (which usually means the people responsible are not sure whether or not they want to devote a large amount of their lives to maintaining it) so it's a bit light on sounds and pictures. You can however send e-mail to the site and read lyrics (Beach Boys lyrics?) and if you want more pictures there are also links to external archives.



00:22
£ 00.51

http://www.netropolis.net/shonen/knife/htm.

Its creator describes "Shrine to Shonen Knife" as "pictures and links related to the best band to

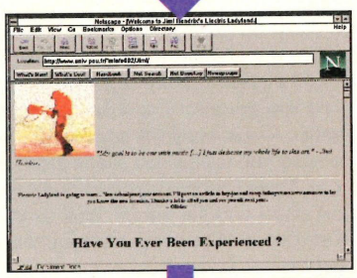
ever come out of Osaka, Japan". The best band to ever come out of Osaka? Surely the only one? Shonen Knife are Japanese sugar pop — the aural equivalent of dissolving a bag of Tate and Lyle in a bottle of lemonade and then downing the lot. Even so I can heartily recommend their Internet site. It looks cool, it is cool and you don't get that unwanted sugar rush.



00:31
£ 00.72

http://www.univ-pau.fr/minfo002/Jimi/

This is one of the six Hendrix sites currently available, but it's easily the best. It's maintained by a real Hendrix fan and is a joy to browse through. You can access lyrics, an extensive selection of Jimi's poetry and more. And if that's not enough, there are links to other sites too.

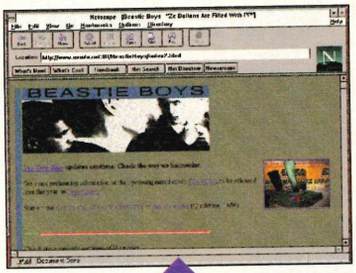


00:52
£ 01.22

http://www.ping.be/(ping0104/faith-nm.html

Faith No More's site is a definite gold mine of information on the band. Tour news, trivia, biographies, it's all here. But you can't help feeling that a little more design effort would have paid off. The pages creator is on the look out for FNM info, so if you drop in why not leave any tit-bits you might have with him.

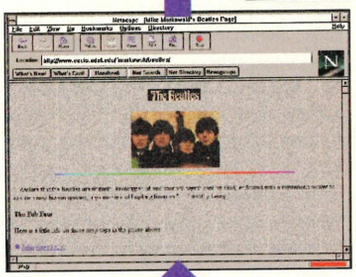
01:16
£ 01.79



http://www.nando.net:80/BeastieBoys/index2.html

Very good Beastie Boys site. Design and content suit them perfectly. All the usual stuff for a music site, plus downloadable sound and video and a couple of new twists. You can download a free Beastie Boys screen saver (Mac only at the moment, but a PC version is promised) and in the near future there will be a chance to take an interactive test drive of their forthcoming CD-ROM.

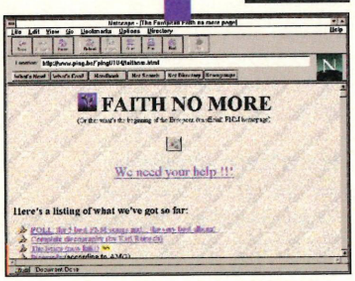
01:02
£ 01.46



http://www.eecis.udel.edu/markowsk/beatles/

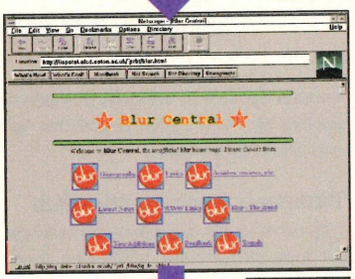
One of 16 Beatles sites on the net and easily the best. The page opens with classic quotes from each of the 'Fab Four' and you can have them each saying hello to you. If you want to get even more involved you can e-mail the organisers.

00:55
£ 01.29



http://lispstat.alcd.soton.ac.uk/(prbt/blur.html

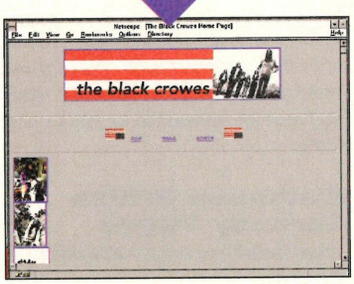
This is the best site I found. The design is pure Blur (retrospective 1960's British design) and if you want to know something about the band then this is the place to come. You can download samples, audio files, images etc from a varied range. This has everything the modem equipped Blur fan could possibly want (unless they're very strange, that is). There are so many bad sites on the net, but now I know there's no excuse when you can do this. Read it and weep, has-beens!



01:52
£ 02.22

http://www.american.recordings.com/

Not a band site this time, but a seriously designed American Recordings site. From here you can access pages on the Black Crowes and the Jay Hawks (to mention but two). Since it's a record company site there's a lot of the stuff you would expect — standard biographies, press photos etc — but you can mail your favourite music makers from the comfort of your keyboard and the design is nicely laid back. Good for a bit of one-stop shopping.



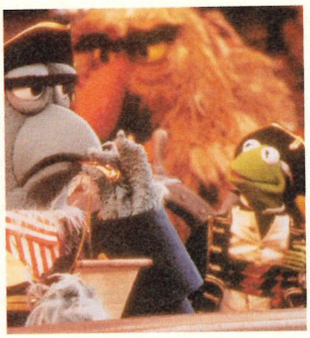
02:16
£ 03.20

Net News

Pigs in Cyberspace

http://www-leland.stanford.edu/~roseage/Muppet.html

It's those wacky puppet funsters, and they now have their own website, with pics, sounds and info aplenty.



Twin Peaks

http://pogo.wright.edu/TwinPeaks/TPHome.html

The cult show to end all cult shows, it was pretty much inevitable that there would be a homepage for this one. Damn fine.

Tasty Insect Recipes

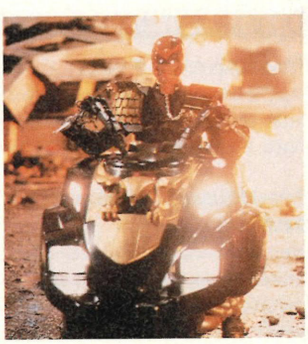
http://www.public.iastate.edu/~entomology/InsectsAsFood.html

Yummy! Fed up of creepy-crawlies infesting your nooks and crannies? So eat them! But don't stint on the ketchup.

HollyWeb

http://www.ingres.com/users/spease/hw/hollyweb.html

Up-to-date facts on the industry, this one is really for movie buffs only. Thorough and easy-to-use.



NET

What's on the NET

Your monthly lodestone to all that is informative and fun on the net starts here...

WHAT'S ON THE NET THIS MONTH...

Off the wall.....152
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Games.....155
Music.....155
Cyberville.....155

Remember going on holiday with your parents and 'taking a drive to see the sights'? The two essential requirements (apart from a big tin of barley sugars) were a guide to the sights of interest and a map to make sure you got there. Well, here at PC Review we have no desire to see you seeking directions from some digital age yokel and so we again bring you 'What's on the Net.'

OFF THE WALL

Factsheet Five

http://www.well.com/www/jerod23/

Order strange zines from this clearing house. F5 specialises in the bizarre.

Practical Anarchy Online

http://www.cwi.nl/cwi/people/Jack.Jansen/spunk/Spunk_Home.html

Anarchist stuff online. It's quite amusing, really. If you have a dog on a string and no fixed abode, then this may be of interest.

Welcome to the Whitehouse

http://www.whitehouse.gov/

If you've never managed to get to the States, but always wanted to tour the famous symbol of Western democracy try this site. It will give you all the info you could ever need...

Mossy Rock Media

http://www.cts.com/browse/mossy/

All sorts of stuff here, but the emphasis is definitely of an adult nature.

Virtual Tourist NYC

http://www.mediabridge.com/vtourist/

They say that you shouldn't pull out a map in the streets of New York, because muggers can identify you as a hapless tourist. I'm sure those of you with laptops and mobile GSM connections will be pleased to know that this site exists. It means you can pull out your laptop and mobile in Times Square —in complete and utter safety . . .

Roget Thesaurus

gopher://odie.niaid.nih.gov/77/.thesaurus/index

Really useful! Type the word 'bum', and get the words 'tramp' — or maybe not.

ArtAIDS

http://artaids.dcs.qmw.ac.uk:8001/entrance/entrance.html

A London based web gallery of work from around the world; the theme is AIDS awareness, and the work could be considered controversial. Nonetheless, ArtAIDS is a fine gallery in its own rights, and must be applauded for what it aims to do.

Cathouse British Comedy Pages

http://cathouse.org:8000/BritishComedy

Link up to a multitude of mostly British, comedy archives and sites around the Web, featuring acts such as the Goons, Alan Partridge, Absolutely Fabulous, Blackadder, Carry On films, and Douglas Adams. This site is also home to the BroComedy Digest, an e-zine devoted to past and present British humour.

Elvis Presley

http://tamsun.tamu.edu/~ahb2188/elvishom.html

Yes, Elvis is alive and well and living in cyberspace. A product of schoolgirl Andrea Berman, this is a shrine to the King and his cultural and musical legacy. Visitors can tour Graceland and listen to sound clips from classics like Love Me Tender, Heartbreak Hotel and Hound Dog. Let's be honest though, "Guitar Man" has to be the best Elvis track of all time.

EVERY Football team's homepage in the World!!

http://metro.turnpike.net/meggie/footylinks.html

Here's something for all footy fans everywhere! This is a page of links to some of the world's best (and worst) teams. Definitely a link to some of the best entertainment on the Net!

Hot Pictures

http://www.kiae.su/www/wtr/hot-pictures/gallery.html

Hot Pictures is one of relatively few Russian web sites, and presents the world with what new Russian artists are up to. Unfortunately, it ain't that brilliant. Bring back Constructivism.

Hustler Online

http://hustler.onprod.com/

Forget Penthouse and Playboy online. This is really the best commercial smut site. For those of you who are gullible enough, you can give these people your credit card number to get access to more and stronger pictures and stories. (And that's quite enough smut for one issue...)

Going Places Home Page

http://travel.gpnet.com/

Again, no on-line booking yet, but at least you have a choice. And it's got to be better than waiting to talk to some girl with an IQ you can count on one hand. Isn't it?

Justin's Underground Links

http://raptor.sccs.swarthmore.edu/jahall/

If you're looking for the most twisted sites on the World Wide Web, college student Justin's choice of the weird, the wild and the wacky is a fine place to begin. Almost every link from this popular and well-maintained site is worth a look. There's a focus on the clandestine, the visual and the bizarre, plus simple instructions on how to publish your own pages.

OTiS

http://sunsite.unc.edu/otis/otis.html

'Operative Term is Stimulate' This is a BIG site, with literally thousands of works of art on display. Some may find it a little too challenging, but it definitely is worth a visit just to see how artists are using the web as a new media.

Subway Navigator

http://metro.jussieu.fr:10001/bin/cities/english

Mornington Crescent, anyone? Want to find out how to get there? And, hey, it doesn't have to be in the UK, either. This is the world's first virtual route planner

for virtually every subway system in the world. All you need do to get it to work is simply type in the station you want to start from, and then your destination, and incredibly the Navigator does the rest. It'll even give you an estimated journey time.

The Amazing Fish Cam!

http://www2.netscape.com/fish-cam/fishcam.html

Dumb or what? It depends if you like tropical fish or not. Every 30 seconds, a new picture from the fishtank arrives onto your monitor. Where's the chips?

FILM AND TV

Universal Cyberwalk

http://www.mca.com/universal_pictures/index.html

Universal Studio's web site. And very nice it is, too. The usual mix of movie news and trailers to download. Faster than Buena Vista's site, and easier to use, too.

EastEnders Trivia

http://www.cybernetics.net/users/emmett/tv/ee.html

Plot lines for every episode, who's who, and more. Perhaps the supplier of the Mitchell `brothers' dodgy shirts should advertise here.

Battlestar Galactica

http://www.carleton.edu/BG/

Remember Battlestar Galactica? Unfortunately, I do, too. And so do many others, it seems. This site reminisces those unforgettable TV moments, and has links to other related sites. Great. I wonder what Battlestar fans are called? Galakies?

Beavis and Butthead

http://calvin.hsc.colorado.edu/

Much what you would expect from a rabid fan of MTV's pop culture analysis, as seen through the eyes of two dysfunctional juvenile delinquents.

Buena Vista MoviePlex

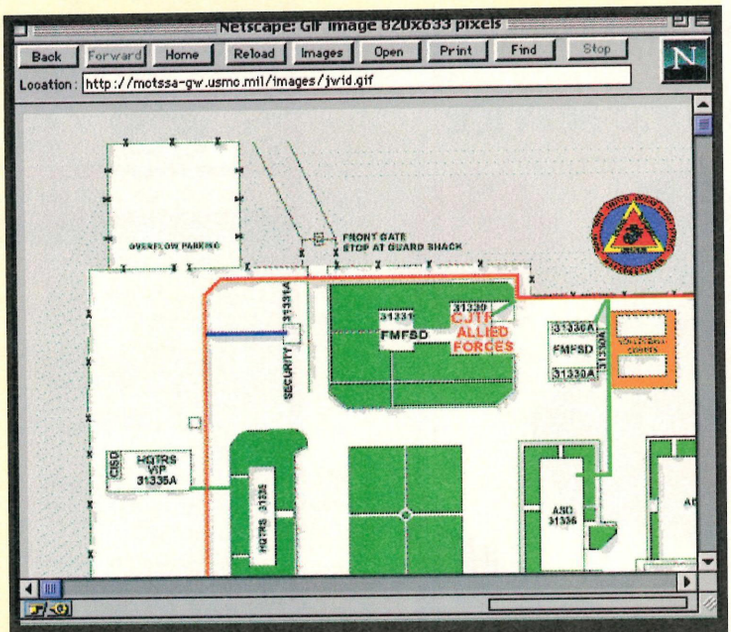
http://bvp.wdp.com/

A graphical colossus, the Buena Vista MoviePlex has loads of interesting material on Buena Vista's latest cinematic offerings. It's a bit slow because of the size of the graphics, but it does have loads of movie clips to impress your mates with.

Channel 4

http://www.cityscape.cp.uk/channel 4

This page forms part of Channel 4's comprehensive follow up service for its viewers. If you missed the latest documentary all your friends are talking about, or if you saw it and just want additional information, drop into this site. Contact details for programme participants are usually up here and you sometimes find complete scripts, too.



MCTSSA

http://mctssa-gw.usmc.mil/

Find out about life in the US Marine Corps! Peel spuds with the latest laser technology! See the world! Get brainwashed! And don't forget, Lee Harvey Oswald was a marine....

The Vibe: Sleaze

http://metaverse.com/vibe/sleaze/index.html

That Hugh Grant, eh? What a card. Find out the latest Hollywood sleaze updated every day. There are usually loads of stories here, and as a result this is one of the most popular journalists' web sites. Read all about it here first!

MTV Oddities

http://mtvoddities.via.com.com

Animations, soundbites, graphics and airdates for MTV house pets.

Robert Lentz's Babylon 5 Resources

http://www.astro.nwu.edu/lentz/sci-fi/b5/home-b5.html

From the man who compiled the best Star Trek links comes the Babylon 5 Resources. Everything you'll need to know is here including some amusing stories created by fans, based on the TV series. There are some really outrageous ones included, if you have the patience to find them. (That's what someone told us. Honest.)

The Hollyweb Online Film Guide

http://www.ingress.com/users/spease/hw/hollyweb.html

Read reviews of movies which have just opened Stateside, before they hit our shores. Actually, the best bit about this site is the list of films currently in production; who's in them, who's directing, and how far into production they are.

The Klingon Language Institute

http://www.kli.or/KLhome.html

For those of you who are curious as to how bored people can get, this is the answer. There are some people who actually believe that Klingon should be accepted as a true language, and to prove it, they've made up the Klingon Dictionary, and have translates all of Shakespeare's plays into Klingon. Visit this site and you're bound to feel a whole lot better about yourself.

TV Nation

http://www.teleport.com/~xwinds/TV Nation.html

Episode listings, poll results and transcripts of the historic TV Nation day bill passed in the US Congress — superb cutting-edge current affairs satire.

Ultimate TV List

http://tvnet.com/UTVL/utvl.html

Over 200 TV shows can be found here, with episode guides, web sites, newsgroups and more. It even allows you to update entries. Couch potato heaven.

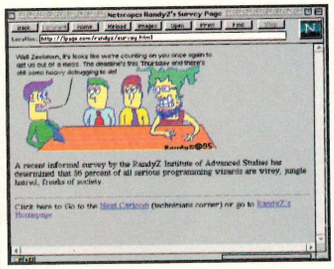
WWW TV Themes

http://ai.eecs.umich.edu/people/kennyp/sounds.html

Yes! Hundreds of our favourite TV theme tunes are now available for downloading — Demsey and Makepeace, Starskey and Hutch. Why? I don't know, but it's a great idea! And you can use it with most hardware.

See this...

OFF THE WALL



Randy Z

http://lpage.com/randyz/survey.html

Randy is somebody's name. Honestly. And apparently he's a cartoonist. For a look at his better works of art why not try this Web site and maybe offer him a job. Or not.

OFF THE WALL

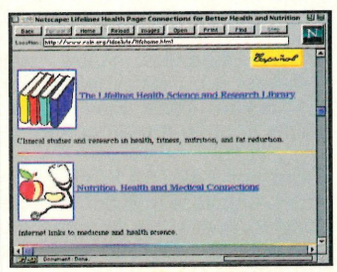


The Grant Morrison Voodoo Love Fetish

http://www.rt66.com/bobek/gmulf/gmulf.html

A homage to the fab UK comic artist, creator of Doom Patrol. As expected, this site looks great, and has tons of information and examples of Morrison's work for you to peruse. For comic freaks and browsers alike.

OFF THE WALL



Lifelines Health

http://www.rain.org/idsolute/life-home.html

If you're an inveterate couch potato, then have a look at this site. It's absolutely stuffed to the brim with handy health tips for you all. Bizzarely, it's also available in Spanish too. So, if you're Spanish and want to lose a few pounds, this is the perfect site for you!

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&http://lobster.bu.edu/Games/mines.html
An online, web-based version of the Windows classic. Kind of good in an awful sort of way...

Sokoban
http://clef.lcs.mit.edu/~andru/xsokoban.html
If you have a Unix box on your network, you can download this simple but addictive game, and play with hundreds of people.

Destiny Starworks
http://www.tq.com/destiny_starworks/destiny_starworks_home.html
Hey, if you're not a believer, then this is a game, OK? Personalised astrology, giving quite detailed information. Just ignore the bad stuff, and you'll be OK.

Doomgate
http://www.cedar.buffalo.edu/~kapis-p/doom/DOOM.html
This paradise for Doomsters has links to FTP sites, hacking and editing instructions, add-ons, patches, spoilers, FAQs, forums and Doom II details.

Russian Roulette
http://www.islandnet.com/~moron/deterrent/deter.html
Play the deadly game in the knowledge that you won't die. So what's the point?

The Games Domain
http://wcl-rs.bham.ac.uk/GamesDomain
Squillions of games and gamezines.

MUSIC

Digital Gallery
http://www.hooked.net/julianne/index.html
Posters of some of the great gigs of yesteryear. The venues are the Avalon Ballroom and Fillmore Auditorium, the time was the mid to late '60s. Far out.

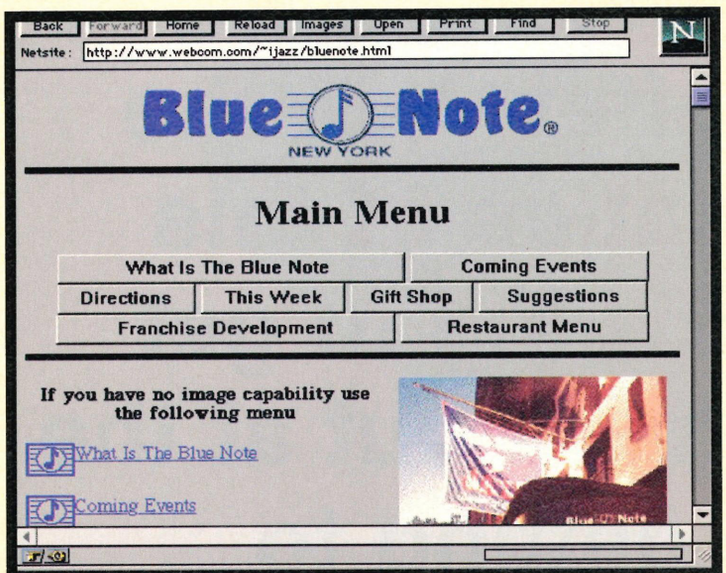
Addicted to Noise
http://www.addict.com/ATN/
A professionally produced online music mag. It's really quite good, and, more importantly, the articles are well written. A real gem.

Malgato
http://www.eln.org/~timgaard/index.htm
Strange, band I've never heard of. They say they're good. Find out for yourself.

Da SewaSide
http://www.interport.net/~gbishop/
Why can't rappers spell? Still, the site is worth a look if you're into bass-heavy rhyming experiences. Nuff Respek, as they'd probably say...

GraveDiggaz
(http://www.cee.hw.ac.uk/~ceeag/pics.html
Even more rap and even more cyberspace wasted on it.

John Goodman's Mixpage
http://www.rhythm.com/~goodman/Images/images.html
No, not the fat bloke out of Roseanne, but a really helpful chap who has put up a library of sounds and gif files for use in your next multimedia extravaganza.



Blue Note
http://www.webcom/~ijazz/bluenote.html
Not the legendary label of the same name, but a Jazz club/restaurant in the States. Find out what's on the menu and who's playing in the next couple of weeks. Pointless for us Brits, but it shows potential for what can be achieved.

Classical MIDI Archives
http://www.hk.net/~prs/midi.html
Based in Hong Kong, this is as its name implies, a collection of music files of a classical nature. A more highbrow-than-average web site, it's good to see that classical music has a home on the Internet. Sit back and enjoy the work of some of the finest composers ever. A must for fans of the genre.

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MPEG Movie Archive
http://www.eeb.ele.tue.nl/mpeg/index.html
B-movie clips from the ever-helpful staff of Silicon Graphics library. There's also information on their excellent WebForce kit. Highly recommended.

GVU's Third WWW User Survey Graphs
http://www.cc.gatech.edu/gvu/user_surveys/survey-04-1995/graphs/graphs.html
Web usage statistics. Only of interest if you're in the business or are writing your thesis. If that's the case, you should be working, not reading this magazine.

PC Lube and Tune
http://pcly.cis.yale.edu/pclt/win-world/contents.html
Information and links for getting the most from your PC and the Internet. Bookmark this. It will save you blood, sweat and tears and free your time for something more worthy.

HotJava Home Page
http://java.sun.com/
The future of the web is here! Hot Java is going to change the way we use the web, so you'd better find out more about it now! For those of you lucky enough to have access to Sun workstations, there's also demo software. PC software should be available soon.

Microsoft Corporation World-Wide-Web Server
http://www.microsoft.com/default.htm
Get the low down on the latest from the corporation that's had many a recent leader column devoted to it. And if you missed last month's issue with its 20-page guide to Windows 95, it's available from our back issues department.

Microsoft Internet Central
http://www.msn.net/home.html
More from Mr Gate's corporate machine. Find out more about the Microsoft Network, and how it will change your life as you know it. Actually, I use it, and it's quite good...

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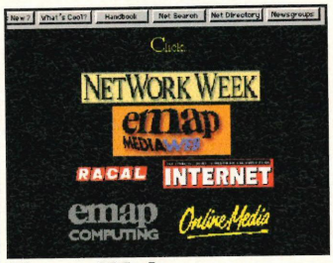

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http://www.mpn.com/eol/car/
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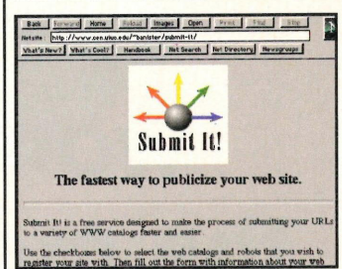

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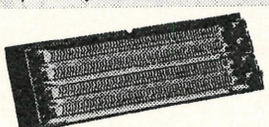

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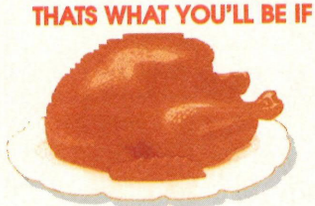

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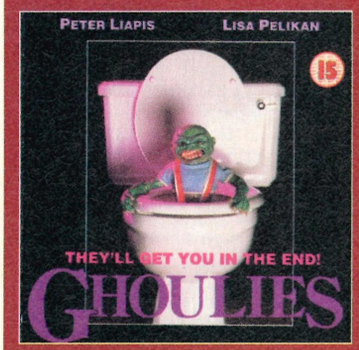
Video Stars

Video killed the radio star, but will M-PEG kill the video star. Of course not, but Rik Henderson thinks it might be worth having a go...



GHOULIES

(95 mins, rated 15)
CD Vision, £14.99

Apparently, get this, it has been foretold that evil will triumph and Ghoulies will walk the earth. Now you can understand why we (the PC Review team) never actually saw most of the beginning of this film thanks to the facts that the audience were still giggling over the title — they were mature like that (and we joined in, liking nothing better than jelly and ice cream). Seriously, though, to be honest, there was nothing really to see anyway.

Ghoulies is a comedy, low-budget Gremlins clone (in the same mould as Critters), but relies far more on the old horror ideals of a fellow inheriting a house only to find it haunted by four evil, fanged creatures. It's a typical mid-eighties teenage movie and certainly not to be taken too seriously. Passable if bored.

6



TROLL

(90 mins, rated 15)
CD Vision, £14.99

Troll is a better film than Ghoulies but comes from the same schlock kiddy horror background. Again it has very low production values and the troll looks more like a particularly hirsute child, but then seeing as the small ball of fuzz assumes the persona of a wee blonde lass for most of the movie, it doesn't really matter. The plot is extraordinarily poor, I mean, he does all his nefarious deeds just to turn the little girl's bedroom into a fairy kingdom... hmmm. It could be worse, he might've wanted to change the room into Scarborough - now that's scary!

But I remember seeing this film when I was small and naive, and I quite enjoyed it (mind you that was after I had a plate fitted into my head), so just for the sake of nostalgia I'll have to award this a...

7

Who to contact...
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Hatstand

The usual round of suspects reconvene for their monthly challenge. This month they're into blood-red beat 'em ups washed down with lashings of late-night coffee...

7:00 pm FX Fighter

After a few refreshing drinks in the pub (one drink with a large number of straws and a nasty look from the landlord) we start off with a game that got the coveted PC Review Recommended just a little while back (Issue 46 actually).

Plot: Rygil (the bad) is cruising round the galaxy looking for trouble. If you manage to beat him you get his huge mechanical planet stuffed with all sorts of interesting things (mini bar, a PC that runs every game first time etc). But there are some other fighters to beat first.

Most Ridiculous Fighter: Sheba. Imagine Michelle Pfeiffer's Catwoman with a fondness for knee licking and cheap fake fur.

Best Special Move: Has to be Cyben's "Snog of Death". Actually the manual refers to it as "the electroshock" but I know what I saw. Not in a beat 'em up please. Kicking yes, kissing, no!



▲ ***Now, that is what I call a punch!***

Gore Level: A bit disappointing really. You just sort of get knocked out of the ring or just plain knocked out.

Best Death: Rik moves in to deliver the gentle tap that will put Pat out of the game for good and suddenly leaps right out of the ring, thus forfeiting the match.

Excuse for above: "There's something wrong with the game!"

Once we stop laughing at Rik he's nominated to get the next one off the shelves.

8:05 pm Brutal Paws of Fury

Yes Rik picked a beat 'em up aimed at the 'younger games player' (cuddly animal fighters) and in his case, the infantile of mind. Brutal Paws of Fury conspicuously failed to get a 'PC Review Recommended' in the very same issue as FX Fighter. Still perhaps it's lean and hungry after a couple of months on the shelf (we certainly were, so it's off to Burger King for some iron rations).

Plot: Dali Lama (a Lama) travels the world looking for the best fighters and invites them to his island where they compete for the right to wear the coveted 'Belt of Heaven'. Hmm, a master, a tournament, a prize. Something a trend emerging here.



▲ ***Run away, run away!***

Most Ridiculous Fighter: Tough one this, but the prize goes to Karate Croc. All the characters are pretty ridiculous, but you'd have to go a long way to beat a crocodile in a martial arts outfit sans trousers.

Best Special Move: Foxy Roxy's leg sweep for one very good reason — it let Cal beat the tar out of Pat and finish the game really quickly. There might be some others but we very nearly lost the will to live, let alone to continue the game.

Gore Level: Oh come on, it's a kiddies game for goodness sake! What do you want, death moves and entrails galore? Even when you seriously 'chin' someone they just sort of lie there. No risk of feeling queasy.

Best Death: Pat's — because it signalled the end of the game and led to a surprisingly good throw from Andy which saw Brutal Paws back on the shelf.

Excuse for above: Pat really didn't need one — we were all running for the Coke machine by the time he hit the floor.

8:20pm I'd like to teach the world to sing...

It's that time of night when we realise that the machine is running out of Diet Coke and there's a nasty scene as we fight for the few remaining cans. Steve, as always, stays above it (mainly because he drinks Diet Sunkist).

8:45pm Street Fighter II

The venerable master of beat 'em ups is wheeled out to see how hard it is.

Plot: There's a big, bad boss, and some fighters and a tournament and you know the rest. It might be a stupid question, but does anybody really care about the plot in beat 'em ups — it's just a case of kick seven shades of matt vinyl emulsion out of everyone else.

Best Special Move: It has to be Blanka's 'crouch down, fry you with several thousands volts of electricity and



▲ ***It's not clever to throw snowballs. You could have someone's eye out with that!***

give you that comedy X-ray look' move. Jim's calls for it to be banned were rejected on the grounds that he should learn some more special moves.

Gore Level: All good clean family fun and no blood as far as I can see. Shame really.

Best Death: When Andy loses in about 15 seconds without getting even one punch in.

Excuse for above: "I forgot the controls!"

9:50pm Mortal Combat II

At last, now we'll see some blood and guts (although given the mood of the proceedings, they may well be Pat's).

Plot: I rather suspect that you can work it out for yourself by now.

Best Special Move: Ripping someone's skull and spinal column right out of their body. Ha, ha take that, gloat, dance around etc.

Gore Level: Forcibly removed verte-



▲ ***Andy's moment of glory***

brae and fountains of blood. How can you go wrong?

Best Death: Andy (playing as Scorpion) 'harpoons' Pat, pulls him in and knocks his block off. It has to be said that Pat had in fact left by that point. That also meant that he missed Cal breaking his joystick in the next round.

Excuse for above: Easily the best so far — the "I wasn't actually playing at that point" one.

TIRED AND EMOTIONAL

As the team left we came to the conclusion that beat 'em ups were best left to a time when we were less tired, had enough money for some decent carry-out food and no-one was going to get carried away and break things.

LOOK WHO'S STALKING!

Each month Hatstand will be stalking a celebrity over the Net (in a nice, non-threatening, poetry and flowers sort of way) and trying to get a rise, sorry, reply out of them. This month, it's Sandra Bullock, star of the cyberspace thriller, The Net, in which, coincidentally, she gets stalked by a hacker:

"Sandra Bullock
We loved you in Speed.
You, not Keanu,
Should've been the lead.
You really knew
How to drive that bus,
Even though your hair
Was a bit of a muss"

We will, of course, let you know when she replies.



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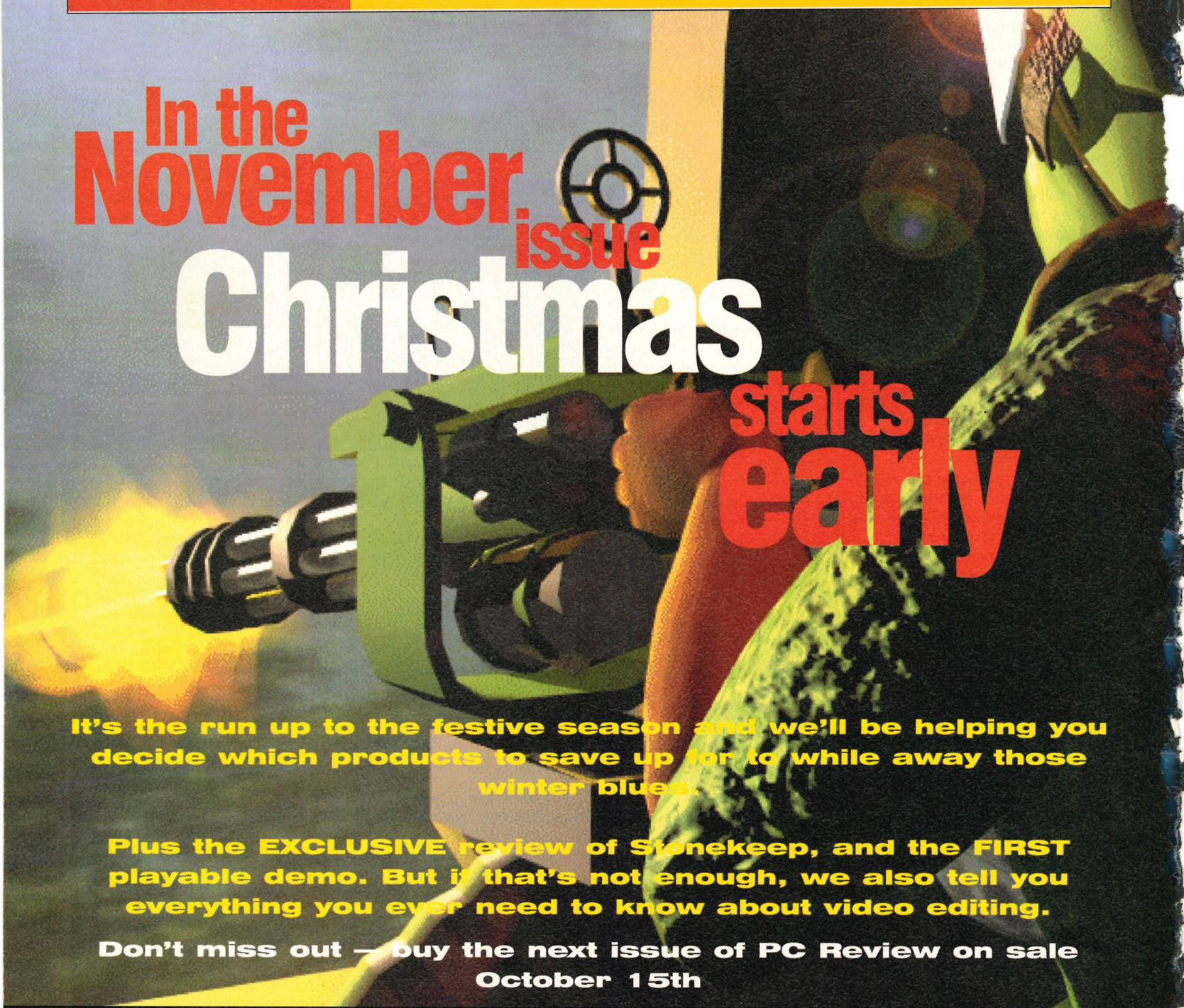

In the November issue Christmas starts early

It's the run up to the festive season and we'll be helping you decide which products to save up for to while away those winter blues.

Plus the EXCLUSIVE review of Stonekeep, and the FIRST playable demo. But if that's not enough, we also tell you everything you ever need to know about video editing.

Don't miss out — buy the next issue of PC Review on sale October 15th

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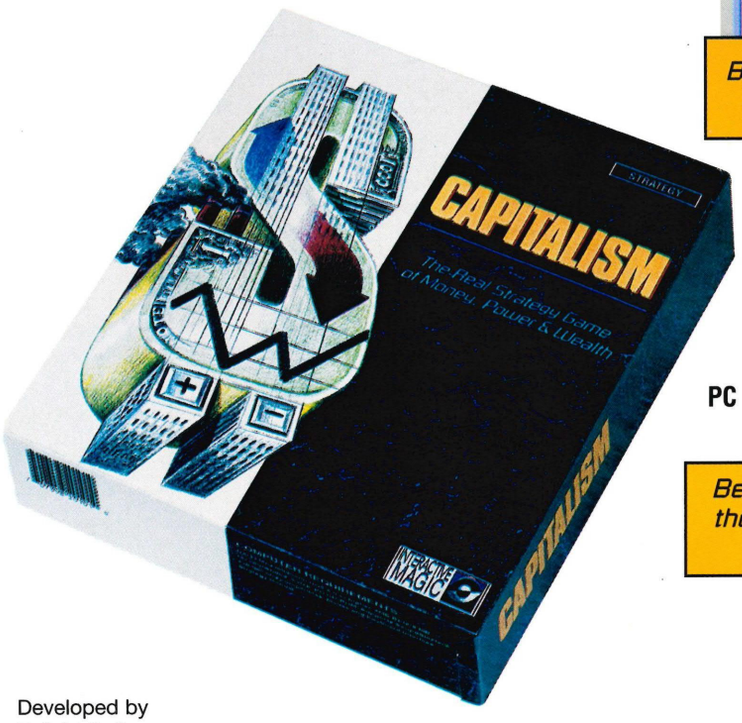

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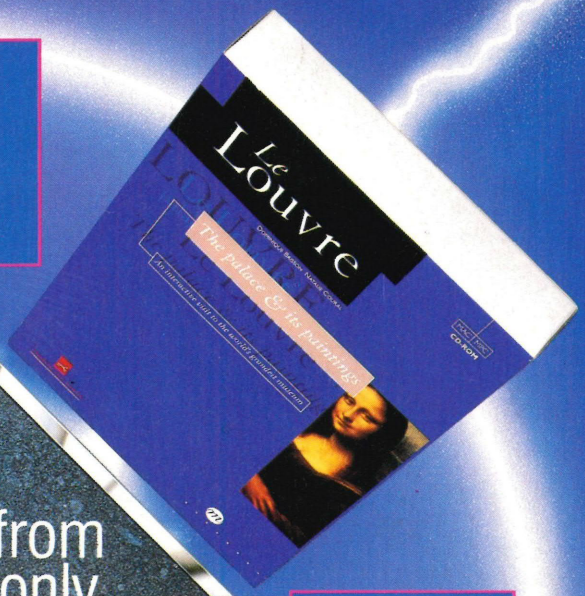





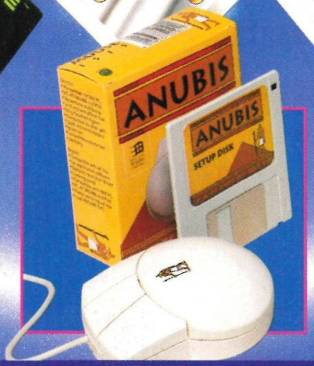

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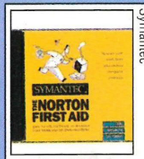

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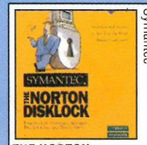

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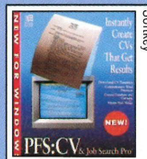

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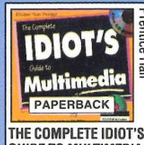

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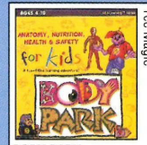

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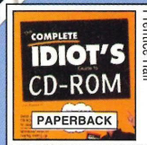

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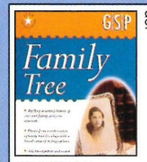

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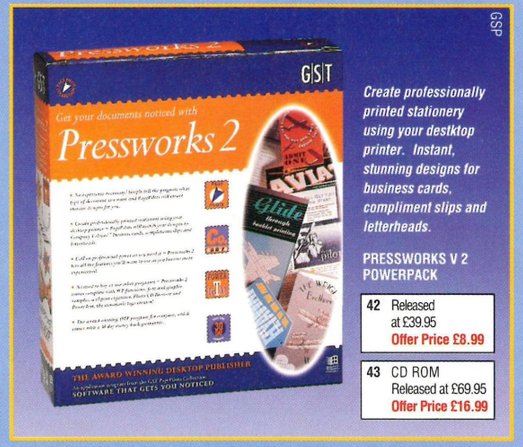

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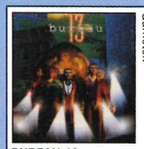

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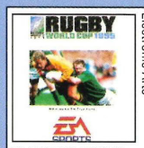

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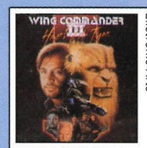

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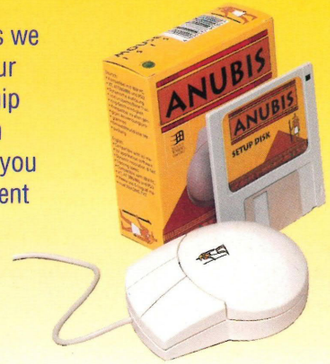

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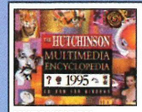

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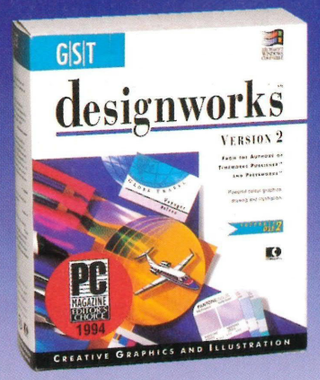

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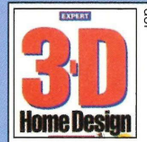

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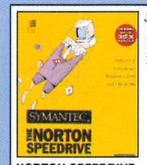

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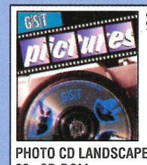

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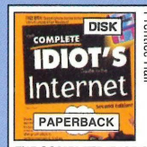

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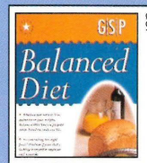

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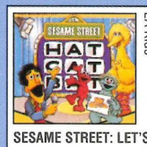

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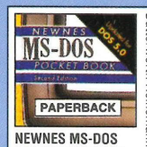

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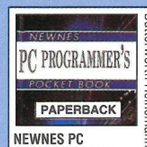

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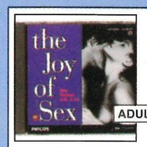

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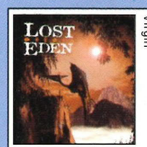

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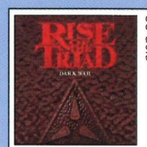

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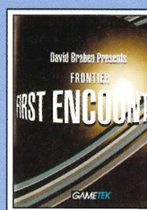

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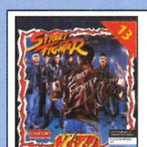

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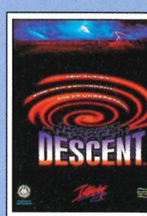

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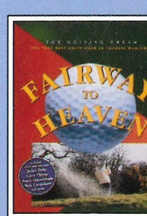

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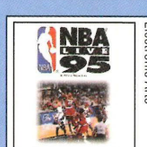

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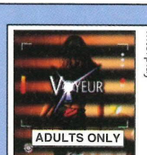

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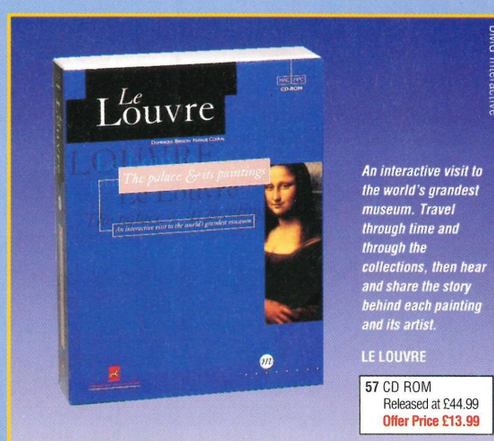

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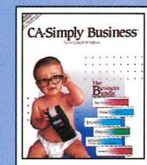

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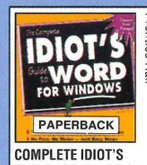

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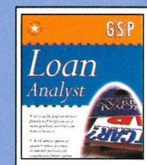

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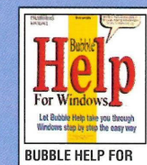

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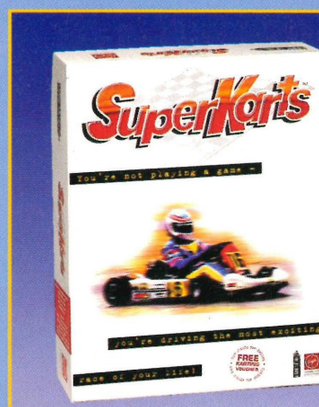

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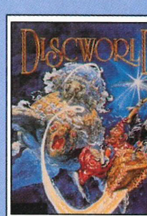

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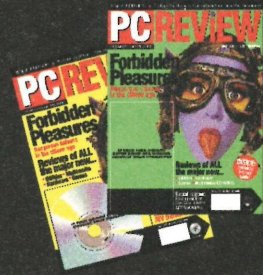

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