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PlayStation Wired

06 The only news pages to give you the real stories, welcome to PlayStation Wired. This month, it looks like Nintendo has shot itself in the foot over Ultra 64, which can only mean delight for PlayStation owners. Plus, we introduce a brand new Wired extension focusing solely on the hottest software that'll be pulling into the Station very soon.

Wall of Games

49 Our pull-out and keep guide to the hottest and hardest games around continues this month with everything you need to know in order to draw blood in Sony's spectacular *MK3*.

Arena

92 Up to two pages to compensate for all your queries and opinions, Arena is now a brimming coliseum of feed-back. Many apologies for all those letters left out. Lack of space you know! We can't believe it either.

INSIDE PLA

the 100% Unofficial PL

Cover Review
Impact Racing

30 Screeching into the *Play* pits this month amidst a cloud of acrid smoke comes a European exclusive of JVC's *Impact Racing*. Get your motors running and load up them guns!

Station Master

84 Yes, our resident tactical conductor returns to dish out the very latest and extremely helpful hints on the games you own, or probably will own very soon. Just don't get caught without a ticket. Plus massive guides on:

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Wired Up

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PLAYSTATION Magazine

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PlayBack

94 Your invaluable guide to what games deserve to be etched onto your Christmas list. With the this month's compendium of titles entering the fray, how will those old timers shape-up score wise?

In the curry house with...

96 Jon Hare – one eccentric half of the booming Sensible Software empire. What has the man got to moan about? Er, plenty actually.

Work, Test and Play part 2

80 In the concluding part of this feature, *Play* takes a light-hearted look into the lives and loves of two of the biggest 'characters' in the software industry, Dave Perry (the Shiny one – not ours!) and Eric Matthews of the Bitmap Brothers.

Big guns – Lone Soldier compo!

67 To tie-in with our brilliant cover gift (see cover!), *Play* in association with the kindly Telstar Electronic Studios gives you the opportunity to chase the games with guns – not real guns though, only paintball ones... but the pleasure is still the same. Ha ha ha!

Candidates worthy of being targeted for evaluation this issue include:

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"We wish you a Sony Christmas, we wish you a Sony Christmas, we wish you a Sony Christmas, and a Sony new year."

The season of goodwill is upon us, and as Santa scours the land for the last remaining PlayStation consoles with which to fill his sack, the only question that remains for the majority of us, is how to get our relatives out of the sitting room so we can turn off the *Eastenders* chrimbo special or trash the Queen's speech, and get some decent bone-crunching, rubber burning, mutant blasting 3D action going on the old 24 inch goggle box. Did I say season of goodwill? Not in my house pal! You come 'round to visit me, you'd better have brought your fighting spirit with you, not your Christmas spirit, or you're going to get a good old fashioned yule tide kicking from the Games Animal.

Sorry, but carol singing, sleigh bells jingling and flickering fairy lights may all be fine and dandy for most people, but when you've got a brand new PlayStation to power-up or a red hot new copy of *Tekken*, *Loaded* or some other similarly violent game to slip into your CD drive, the last thing on your mind is joy to the world. In fact if you've got a copy of *Doom* the world can quite literally go to hell. Nasty, me? Bah, Sega!"

See you in '96.



Dave Perry
Managing Editor

PLAYST

Wi

Ultra c

leaves Pla

£80 Sodding quid, that's how much an Ultra 64 game could cost. Anybody considering waiting for Ultra rather than going for PlayStation might want to think again...

The battle for the next generation console supremacy took a turn in the PlayStation's favour last month with the news that its main potential rival, the Nintendo Ultra 64, probably won't arrive in the UK until next summer at the earliest.

Despite unveiling some Ultra 64 units at the Shoshinkai Show in Japan last month, Nintendo of Japan has utterly failed to meet its target launch date of Autumn 1995, fuelling speculation over production problems. Now, the firm is all set, but won't be putting machines on shelves until April 21st next year.

Traditionally, new hardware formats are launched in Japan first, then the US and finally Europe once production catches up with demand. If this stays true for Ultra 64, and there seems no reason to think it won't, however much Nintendo protests otherwise, it means that the Ultra 64's won't go on sale in the UK before the summer at the very earliest. September would be a safer bet, and even Christmas 1996 is a possibility, although admittedly slight.

Play has heard that the machine will sell in the UK for at least £250, far higher than first touted. Although not yet

TATION ed



ock up way clear for ystation

confirmed at time of press, it has also been reported that games could cost 9,800 Yen (around £70), which given the increased costs of European publishing, means the final price could actually be as high as £80 each over here – double that of some PlayStation titles.

This is good news for the PlayStation. As we've said before, it's games that sell consoles, and whilst nobody can knock Nintendo's reputation for making quality games, the high cost of software does beg the question of how many third party games are going to be published on a late cart/CD hybrid. And one produced by a company which hasn't exactly been third-party friendly recently and is currently demanding firms make Ultra 64 games exclusive to that format. And would you fork out £80 a time?

Play has also heard whispers that many games companies are switching resources to PlayStation projects rather than certain other formats. This means that whatever happens, the vast majority of games will be out on PlayStation first, and at a reasonable price.

The PlayStation is here now, at the right price, with the right games from the right people. It has demonstrated that it's the business when it comes to technical specs and Sony have shown they can sell machines (Over 50,000 and rising in the UK, by the way), as well as keep prices just about liveable with and, apart from the odd teething trouble, work well with third party companies. The message is simple, PlayStation is the one.





***Wipeout* and *Destruction Derby*: Two of Sony's biggest to date. All together now, "C'mon and have a go if you think you're 'ard enough."**

Toshinden 2 Finished!

We can scarcely believe it ourselves, but the sequel to *Battle Arena Toshinden* has been completed by Japan-based Takara. The game will be making its debut in arcades all across the world in December, and with a home version following shortly afterwards. According to a spokesperson at Takara, *Toshinden 2* will feature three brand new combatants, plus a new boss character. Radical new programming techniques have also ensured that the 3D effects are by far the most mind-blowing ever seen in a game of this kind. More emphasis has gone into the lighting and shading to enhance the character's appearance and the animation has also been reported to have undergone a dramatic upgrade. Other details are vague other than the fact that the game will include a new power gauge that enables players to pull off devastating combo moves after accessing a tricky joypad combination. More details as they emerge.









Soul Provider

In a bid to stop *Toshinden 2* in its tracks, Namco of Japan have fought back by developing a stunning new beat 'em-up that could pummel Takara's efforts into the dirt. *Soul Edge* features eight varied characters who're all seeking an elusive mystic sword which enables the bearer to become completely invincible. Y'know, one of those!

Perhaps the most original aspects of the game are the real time fighting locations that change from night to day, and vice versa, whilst you fight. There are also loads of novel weapons and shields to make the bouts a little more entertaining for the average gore freak. Expect to see preview versions in arcades very soon and possibly a PlayStation to hit the streets late next year.



Hordes Alert!

The Horde, a mega hit game on the 3DO is to make its appearance on the PlayStation soon. Combining elements of arcade action and strategy, in this game you must fend off a big, fat offensive mass of little nasties known as The Horde. Made up of hordlings that consume anything in their path, be it trees, huts, cows or people, this group of mutants must be dealt with quickly and effectively. *The Horde*, is being published by BMGie and should be on the shelves around February.





Sony multi-tap promised for Xmas

Sony are confident of getting their official Multi-Tap and Euro AV Cable devices ino shops before Christmas. The Multi-Tap device allows you to get down to some four play, on PlayStation, simultaneously. Providing you've got three like-minded chums. And if you use two of them on a link up game, allows up to eight players to enjoy the fun. Amongst the games that make use of this facility are *Striker '96* and the forthcoming *Total NBA '96*. Multi-player mayhem!

The Euro AV Cable allows you to connect your PlayStation to a SCART equipped TV for a much brighter and sharper picture than through the modulator. It also leaves the audio connectors free so that you can link your PlayStation to a hi-fi.

Users might also want to note that if you have TV with a composite video/camera input, you can also connect your PlayStation directly via a simple phono-cable connected to the yellow composite signal output. This obviates the need for the modulator, and thus also frees up the audio outputs.



The brilliance of football. Just imagine it 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Football, football, football. Women are right, men have only got one thing on their mind. But then nothing else is likely to get a look in with Striker '96. (Awarded 93% and called:"Addictive,enjoyable,orgasmic fun" by Gamepro. While Dave Perry of Gamemaster TV said:"Striker '96 ,PlayStation soccer game of the year. Official!) It captures all the thrills and excitement of football and is even more absorbing than the game itself, with ultra smooth panning angles, perfectly animated players and unbelieveably fast 3-D graphics. It's definitely a black armband day. "Too right, Arsenal have lost again".

PlayStation

Rage Software

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Tekken Tops 'em all

As well as going straight into the UK charts, and receiving a whopping 95% in our launch issue, *Tekken* has now sold over a million copies world-wide. "We are proud that *Tekken* is the first PlayStation title to reach the million unit plateau," said Yoshi Homma, President of Namco Hometek.

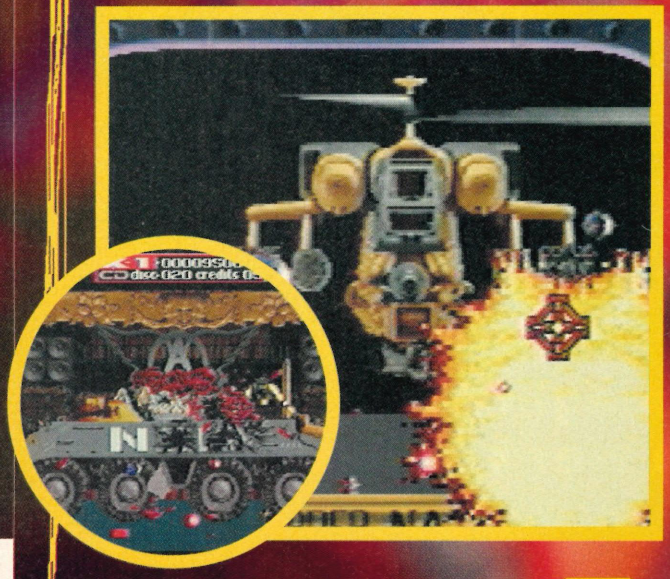
Along with Namco's other games, *Ridge Racer*, *Air Combat* and *Cybersled*, the sales of *Tekken* further solidify Namco's position as a major third-party market share leader for 32-bit software. And with *Ridge Racer Revolution* on the horizon, the PlayStation should have some rather special delights coming pretty soon. Hoorah!



Revolution now! Well, soon...

The first-person-perspective blood-filled action game that was a hit in the arcades a while ago, is nearing completion. The game boasts non-linear play, meaning you can choose the direction you want to go at various points in the game.

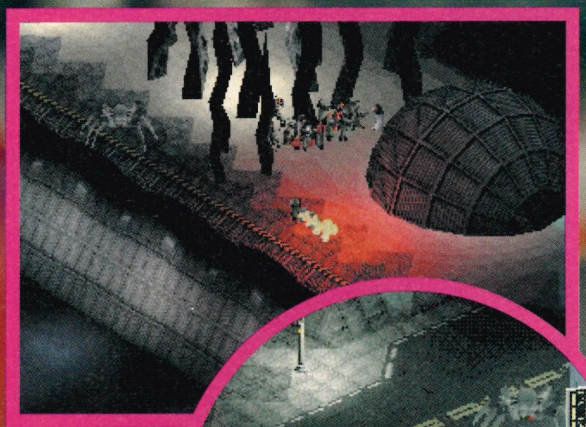
Revolution X is being published by Acclaim, and should be in for review next ish. Here's a look while you're waiting.



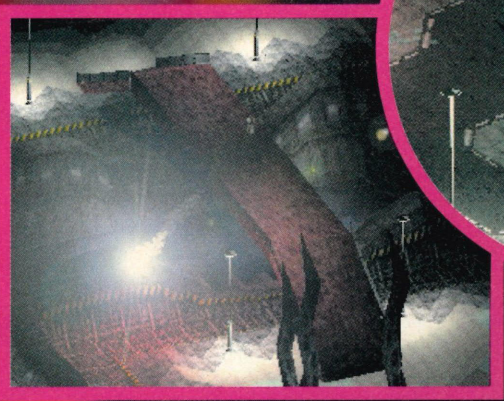
Syndicate Wars update

Here's the latest screenshots of *Syndicate Wars*, one of our featured WorkStations in the first issue of *Play*. Judging by the surveys, most of you can't wait for it to be finished, and, to be honest, neither can we.

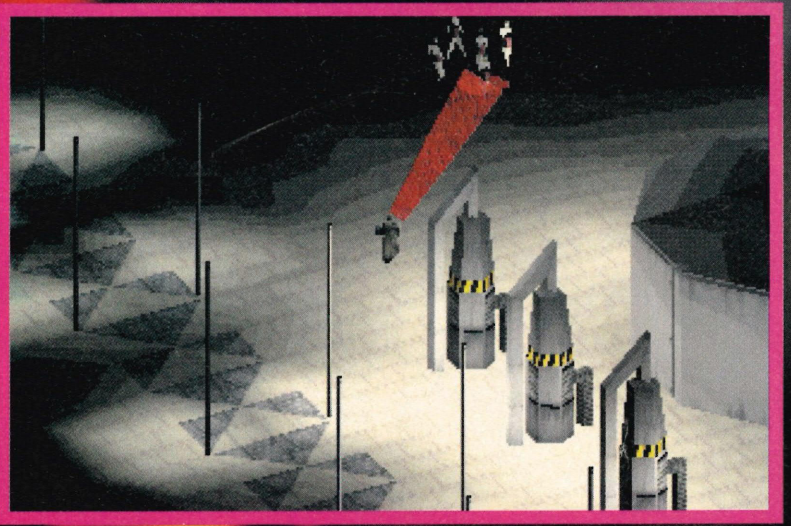
For those of you who missed the first issue and didn't manage to order one before they sold out, or haven't got very good memories, *Syndicate Wars* is the vastly improved sequel to the already impressive *Syndicate*. What you do is choose to be one of a corporate executive of the highly sinister type, a religious cult leader or a gang boss and then try and carve up as much of the 30-city strong *Syndicate* world as you can. To do this you have to complete a number of strategic objectives, primarily by using a little bit of thought and a whole load of weaponry. Loadsa guns! Actually, some 24 different ways of dealing out destruction are included. Thankfully, it's still scheduled for March '96. Roll on Spring.







◀ As well as a 3D landscape, it will feature amazing lighting effects.



Cyberia thaws out

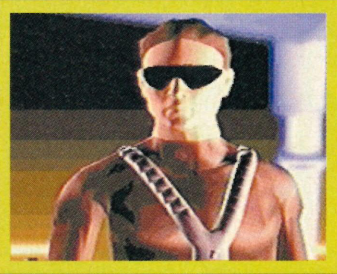
Interplay's *Cyberia* is almost near completion. The game is set in the frozen wastelands of Northern Asia, where global terrorists have hidden the *Cyberia* device – a huge doomsday thingy that threatens the future of world peace. And the world come to that. You take the role of Zak, a cyber-bounty hunter type character, and must travel through various sequences to find the bomb.

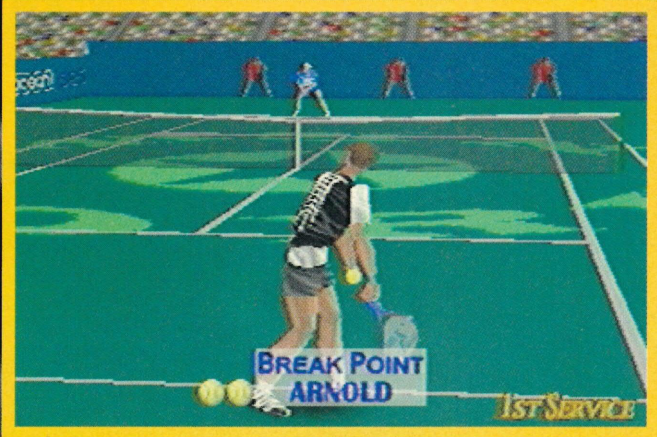
Cyberia combines elements of first and third person perspectives as you travel through the game, with several interspersed arcadey sections, including a flight-sim-like stage where you must perform an aerial attack.

Cyberia is now practically complete and we will have a full version for review in the February issue of *Play*. Defin-ite-ly





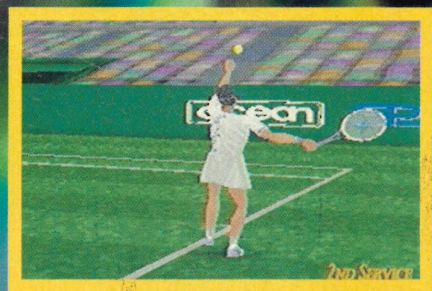




Ocean looks to serve up a winner

Manchester's Ocean Software are adding the finishing touches to their forthcoming tennis smasher, *Power Serve*. The game offers some fast action in a 3D polygon generated court, with multiple viewpoints, including two different split screen options.

Power Serve allows you to play on three different court types, with up to eight different players, and also tells you how bad you were after each game with a full statistical breakdown. With any luck, we'll have a review in the next issue.



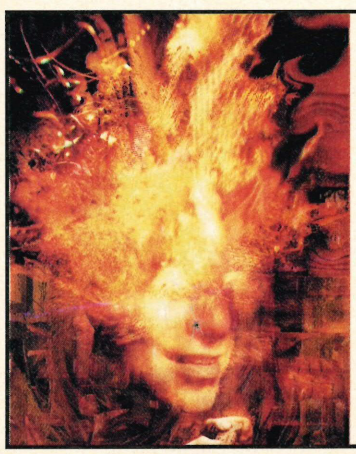
Third Dimension in Basketball

Another basketball game? Sure is, but *3D Basketball* claims to capture the 'wham-bam-thank-you-ma'am' thrills of basketball, like no other. Now, there's a surprise. Still, this the PlayStation upgrade of the nifty 3DO game *Slam 'n' Jam* and features full-on, full-court, five-on-five action so it might just be worth waiting for. We'll have to see.

3D Basketball is to have all the requisite elements such as multiple camera views, replays etc. and also 'vibrant' commentary from CNN's Van Earl Wright. The game is set for release in March.

Sony gets its skates on

As reported in the November issue of *Play*, Sony were sponsoring the British Open In-Line Championships. The events took place on November 25th 1995, in Northampton. Any reader who managed to make it would have seen some of the most inspirational acrobatics ever seen from some of the best street skateboarders. Radical man!



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Shocker sequel jumps in

No sooner had we got our sweaty mitts on EA's brilliant alien Earth invasion shoot 'em-up, *Shock Wave*, when the stunning sequel arrived in our office. The game is called *Shock Wave: Operation JumpGate* and it continues the same, tense and thoroughly compelling scenario of its predecessor.

After fighting off the alien's attempt to take over the world, Omaha, led by the stunningly attractive and incredibly foxy Commander Stewart, have decided to put an end to any future invasion by turning the tables around.

So it's all systems go to Mars as the elite crack team of F177 pilots embark on a perilous assault to wipe out all of the extra terrestrial invaders.

Set for release early next year, *Operation JumpGate* returns to the familiar mission-tackling territory as before only with dastardly new forces to infiltrate and destroy. The game is crammed full of fantastically texture-mapped landscapes bringing home the full atmospheric feel of the barren planet, plus oodles of super-smooth full motion video sequences and images that portray the danger and urgency of your mission. The rapid, non-stop gut-swilling action surpasses even that seen in *Shock Wave*, and once again the visual effects and sounds don't fail to astonish. We'll have the full in-depth account of our fight against the little green men in our next issue.







▼ Not the mysterious and rather attractive Commander Stewart – just a chick with scary eyebrows.





Actua Soccer the Football King?

Sheffield firm Gremlin Interactive, the guys responsible for *Loaded*, reckon they've come up with the best football game yet. They could be right, and the PC version has consistently scored higher than the slightly disappointing *FIFA '96* (see the review on pages 60-61) in the PC games press and the PlayStation version is looking like a cracker too. It features the top 43 FIFA-rated countries in the world and Wales (who were only ranked 50-something when Gremlin decided on which teams were going in). *Actua Soccer* is another beautifully presented game, the player animation has been developed using the firm's spanking new motion capture studio, and the quality is maintained in all the different angles used. Actually, it could be argued there's an infinite number of views to choose from, as you can zoom the camera in and out from any of the positions. Scheduled to arrive early next year, it should be reviewed very soon.







Coin-op Heaven

January sees the return of the annual ATE International show to be held at Earls Court, London. For anyone even remotely interested in the ever-popular world of Amusement machines, the ATEI show offers you unlimited play on the newest and hottest machines and systems to hit these shores in the next year. At the forefront will undoubtedly be the new wave of combat kings, *Toshinden 2* and *Soul Edge*, amongst others.

The show will run from 23-25 January, so apply for your tickets today by phoning 0171 713 0302. Who knows, we'll probably see you there!

Omen: Blood Legacy?

If you've ever felt that you might be a blood-thirsty kinda person, BMGie might have the game for you. *Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain* focuses on a blood hungry vampire out for revenge against a pack of brutal murderers and the chance to then return to his normal form.

Our vamp Kain can actually transform (a la Dracula) into three different forms – wolf, mist or bat – to help him on his quest. Quite handy really. This role-playing action adventure game is set for release around February.

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PlayStation

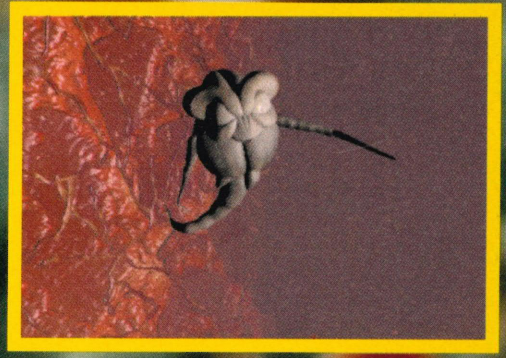
Psygnosis' Parasite Problem

If ever you thought game ideas were weird, check this out. In *Parasite*, from Psygnosis, you take the role of an unfortunate chappy infected by a space bug which fell into his pint of beer. Bad news eh, as pretty soon you're gonna mutate and die. Sad innit.

But there's hope! This parasite-thingy has given you super-human powers, and with these you must find the antidote. Through your trek though, you've got to fend off a few crims, so it won't be easy.

Parasite, the weeny wonder, will be infecting a PlayStation near you around March.



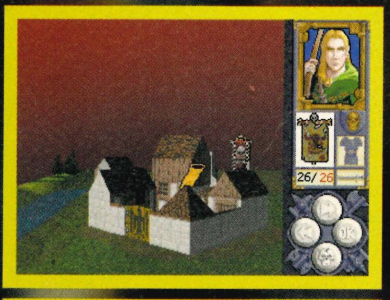


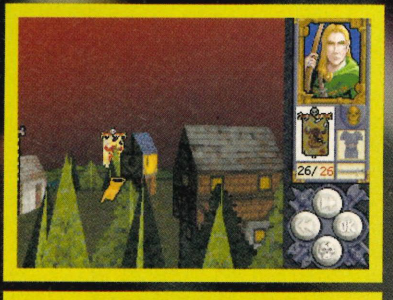
War Hammers on to PlayStation

Games Workshop fans and strategy buffs everywhere will be pleased to hear that *Warhammer* is coming to the PlayStation for January '96. *Warhammer* draws you into a world of battle and carnage where you must guide your troops through the Empire to victory over your lands.

Apparently, the game has been developed in conjunction with the GW design team, and as such, allows the player complete freedom in planning and executing your own war strategies and missions. *Warhammer* is being released on the Mindscape label.







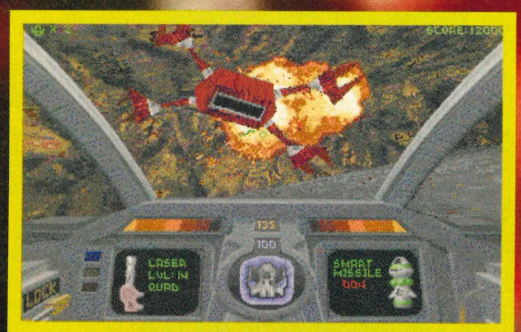


Descent looms for Interplay

A smash on PC, *Descent* is a new first-person perspective action game from Interplay not entirely dis-similar to *Doom*-style games. only here, you travel in your ship through winding mine-shafts on Pluto fighting alien forces hell-bent on taking on taking over the solar system, and in particular, Earth.

The main twist is that descent boasts a full 360° 3D environment and Interplay claims the enemies learn to adapt according to your moves. Also featuring a pounding industrial rock soundtrack, *Descent* should be pretty darn hot. The *Descent* begins in February '96.







A Spooky New Year Ahead...

Casper, that endearing ghosty character from the hit movie of the same name, is coming to the PlayStation in January. The spook-tacular apparition is being transformed from the big screen by Interplay Productions.

Casper is to feature over 20 different puzzles to solve and is meant to feature some hilarious 3D animation. Poor old Casper's task is to reassemble the Lazarus machine which, when fixed, will bring the little cutey back to the land of the living. Altogether now... aaaaaaaaahhhh.

Solar Eclipse Looming

A prequel after a sequel? Sounds a bit like *Twin Peaks* to me, but no, it's *Solar Eclipse*, the prequel to BMGie's *Total Eclipse*. *Solar Eclipse*, like its predecessor is a 3D space combat simulator, where your mission is to make your way to help out a space colony in distress. Their defence computer, THE GRID, is a bit up the spout and has started destroying everything, including friendlies. You must fly to the rescue... to certain death?



If you want to be a space hero in *Solar Eclipse*, you'll have to wait until it's released in February.

Win Babylon 5 Videos!

It may never rival the promiscuous antics of Captain Kirk, or the insane wafflings of Mr. Spock, but in the short time that it has run, *Babylon 5* has accumulated quite a loyal fan-base of avid viewers who just can't seem to get enough of the gripping sagas on-board the intergalactic space station.

That's why you'll be glad to know that the first series has just been released on video to buy courtesy of Warner Home Video. Featuring as an addition to their ever-growing Beyond Vision series, you can snap up volumes 1-7 (each feature two episodes) for £10.99, with the special feature-length pilot episode available singularly at the bargain price of £9.99. However, one lucky reader could win the entire collection by answering the following question:



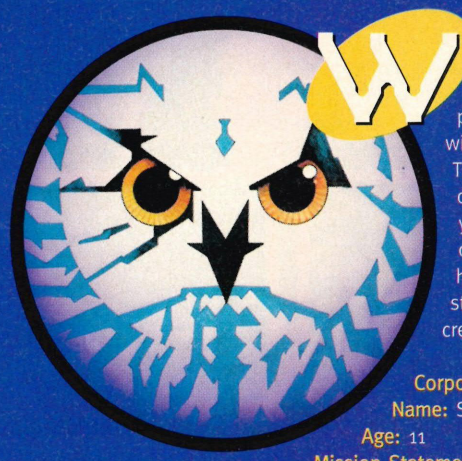


Question: What is Babylon 5?

a. Sun protector for infants.
b. A new hair colorant.
c. A space station.

Answers on a postcard to the usual address please.

Company Vitae



Wouldn't it be nice to never get ripped off by a software house? For all games to have been properly invested in, released without being rushed and over-priced? Those are the words we kick off this column with every month, just so you know the score. At *Play* we're doing our bit to keep the publishers honest. Come out from under those stones you corporate creepy-crawlies you.

Corporate File 3 – Sony Interactive
Name: Sony Interactive
Age: 11
Mission Statement: Nah, the way sales are going at the moment they're too hip, hip hoorah for that.

Umm, look, this has been puzzling me for a while now, why are Sony different from Sony Interactive, and why do you call them Psygnosis sometimes?

"Oh bollocks, I've been putting this off for ages. Look, Sony Interactive are Psygnosis right. Psygnosis set up eleven years ago and toddled along nicely releasing *Lemmings* games (and occasionally something else), winning a Queen's award for export and raking in the cash. Until a couple of years ago. Then, Sony decided they needed a foot in the videogames door and bought them out. Psygnosis became Sony Psygnosis, part of the newly set up Sony Electronic Publishing. After a releasing a load of crap 16-bit cart games that didn't sell, Sony Electronic Publishing became the rather grander Sony Computer Entertainment Europe in time for the PlayStation launch and are responsible for PlayStation hardware, software and distribution. (Deep breath) And a couple of months ago, to make Sony Psygnosis even more part of the big, happy Sony family, Sony Psygnosis became Sony Interactive (Europe). Actually, it became Sony Interactive Studios and Sony Interactive PC Software but we only have to worry about Sony Interactive Studios, thank God. That's not all, the corporate bosses might not be too impressed but the staff at Sony Interactive still like being referred to as Psygnosis in magazines. Oh, and the firm deals with 30 developers and has six UK in-house centres dotted around the UK. Remembering the phone numbers is a nightmare. Anyway, that all clear now?

As mud.

"Oh look, think of them as Psygnosis when they make games and Sony Interactive when they sell them. And remember that big Sony are actually called SCEE."

It's all a bit Jeckyl and Hyde isn't it?

"More like that well known firm of schitzo solicitors Jeckyl, Hyde, Shelley and Frankenstein."

OK, enough already, tell me something I don't know about them.

"'Gnosis' is Greek for 'to know'"

That sounds cool, they should have stuck to the first name.

"Oh piss off. As long as they don't decide to call themselves Sony PsyInteractivegnosis Entertainment Europe, I don't care anymore.

Ok, calm down, what are the games like?

"Eh? Are you daft? These are the guys that did *Wipeout* and *Destruction Derby!* Not to mention *Discworld.*

Oh right, excellent then.

"Well, they also did the dodgy *Novastorm* and the disappointing *3D Lemmings.*"

We're back to Jeckyl and Hyde, aren't we?

"Pretty much. Their best titles have been dominating the charts though, outselling even SCEE's big titles (apart from the awesome *Tekken*). So far, they've been the most successful publisher of all them. They've got some good stuff coming up too in the shape of *Parasite, Assault Rigs, Power Soccer, Defcon 5, Myst* and *Chronicles of the Sword* and a few other biggies for the second half of next year."

A brand name you can trust then?

"Which one?"

Most likely to

"Release one more *Lemmings* game next year"

Least likely to

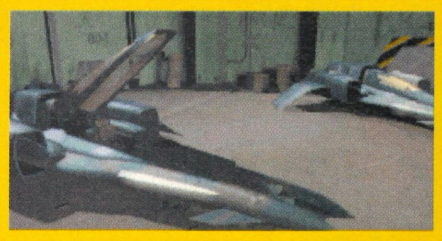
"Change their name to something simple, like Sony Games"

Ravens swoop on Mindscape

The Raven Project is a deep-space action/adventure game featuring four different styles of play. You must battle against alien encroachment in your combat fighter, challenge huge mechanised warriors in a battle suit, defend against planetary-surface attack and protect your rear with some tail-gunning action.

To top it all off, *The Raven Project* is to feature plenty of full-motion video that sets the scene and unravels the plot as you play. Mindscape's cinematic space blaster is being developed by Cryo Interactive Entertainment and is set for release in February '96.







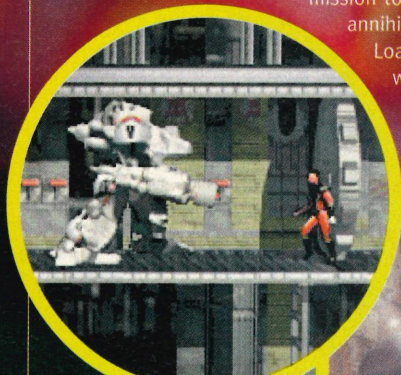
Suffer the Aftermath



Wanna kill, maim and destroy to an ear-piercing techno soundtrack? *Aftermath* might just be the game for you. Set in the year 2495, Aftermath takes you into a world of destruction and mayhem on a mission to destroy the top-secret weapon that threatens to annihilate the city-state of Seatac.

Loaded with special hi-tech weapons, you must battle your way through twelve levels, through a 3D environment where the action is almost too real...

Aftermath, from Interplay, should be hurtling towards a PlayStation near you next April.





▲ *Aftermath* – where you wear your Superman outfit for a bloody good reason!

Ridge Racer Revolutionised

Well, looky here! We've dug up some early screenshots of the eagerly awaited sequel to *Ridge Racer*. *Ridge Racer Revolution* promises to address many things that were missing from the original, like extra tracks, and a link-up option, plus many new features.

There will be new cars, new viewpoints, a rear view mirror plus many other little touches to make up what should be the ultimate PlayStation racer. Lovely jubbly. *Ridge Racer Revolution* is set for release sometime during 2nd/3rd quarter of 1996.







Bitmaps Burst Back with Z

After a little lull in activity on the console front, those cheeky monkeys, The Bitmap Brothers, are about to storm back on to the next generation scene with the highly acclaimed *Z*. The new all-action wargame is being published by Warner Interactive Entertainment, and promises to take the head-to-head genre to a new level with fast real-time action in a totally free playing environment.

Z was very well received by the computer press for the PC (ugh) version, and we have discovered that the PlayStation version should be just a little special. Unfortunately we don't have a release date as yet, summer '96 is the best bet, but they'll be more news as it happens in future editions of *Play*.

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The Games

On with the serious stuff. The pages you paid out for. The games, the whole games, and nothing but the games. This section is broken into two, oops sorry, three main categories.

Wired Up

Hang on a minute, what's all this then, ANOTHER new section. Yup, more survey shenanighans have made us all creative (kinda). Of the 800 odd (and some of you seem very odd) of you who've replied so far, loads want even more early looks at games. Which, given the in-depth selective nature of our WorkStations, left us with a bit of a puzzler. The answer is Wired Up, a mix of extended looks at games making the news in our Wired section (hence the name) as well as run downs of what you might expect from games nearing completion that aren't really workstationable.

Just don't say we never listen...

Conceived this issue are:

Trilogy	20
NBA – In The Zone	22
Primal Rage	24
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Evaluation Station

Boiiiiing. Boiiiiiiing. Boiiiiiiiiiiiing. Ask not for whom the bell tolls oh software publishers, 'cos it tolls for you. This is where the *Play* review crew get tough, mean and nasty, and every now and then, are seriously impressed.

At the end of every review each title is given a totally honest and unbiased Played rating. 100% unofficial – 100% honest. As we keep saying, the only people we answer to are you.

Guide to the Grades

In *Play*, games are rated on looks, sounds and also value for money. Any game priced at more than £40 had better make sure it delivers big-time or we'll want to know why not. The writer will also add an extra category, particular to that game. Some of these will be fun, some may give an important hint at a particular feature of the product itself.

All of these categories are marked out of ten and are followed by the Played score, which is judged entirely on how much fun the game is. This is rated out of 100, and breaks down like this:-

94-100 These games are exceptional. They're fun, stay fun and are groundbreaking. They're also marked with a coveted Play PLUS logo. We've only had two to date, and if you've seen the high quality of most PlayStation games, you'll know how tough we are.

85-93 Games we recommend. Fun, lasting, value for money, but not necessarily hugely original.

80-84 Games that maybe one member of the team would score at 85+, but the others don't really feel is worth splashing out over £40 on. There are a few of these this issue, oh did we have some rows.

70-79 Games that are entertaining, but we don't think have lasting appeal OR games that are above average but slightly flawed.

65-70 Average games which may appeal to fans of the genre but should be avoided by everyone else.

0-64 Not good enough.

Ready to be strangled at birth this time up are:

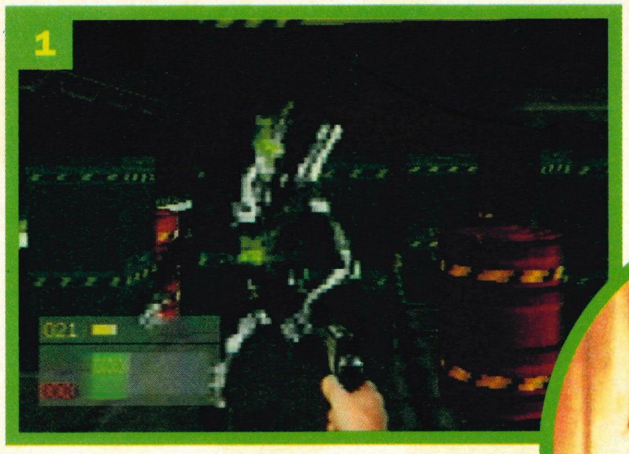
Hi-Octane	34
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Assault Rigs	54
Shock Wave Assault	56
FIFA '96	60
Thunderhawk2: Firestorm	68
Warhawk	70
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Work Stations

Still here, in all their glory, these are the in-depth features where we chat to the designers on what they're trying to achieve with some of the hottest PlayStation CDs in development. Only the biggest up and coming releases get featured here. First screenshots, artworks, hell there's even some pre-drawing board stuff this time, ensure that you guys get all the gen on the next big thing(s). And no messing.

Gestating nicely this month are:

Impact Racing	30
Street Fighter Alpha/ DarkStalkers	42
Street Racer	58
Rock 'N' Roll Racing	62
Johnny Bazookatone	72







1 See the acid fly as you fill the metallic parasites full of lead.
2 This is the hydrolic-jawed monster from the third *Alien* film... not a very pretty chap.
3 Several rounds of ammo later and the alien is reduced to pulp.

Aliens in our midst

PLAY information

Name: Alien Trilogy
Publisher: Acclaim
Where at: 50% Complete
Target release: May

Since 1979, the world has been scared senseless thanks to director Ridley Scott's stark vision of futuristic horror, *Alien* – undoubtedly the most terrifying Sci-Fi movie ever made.

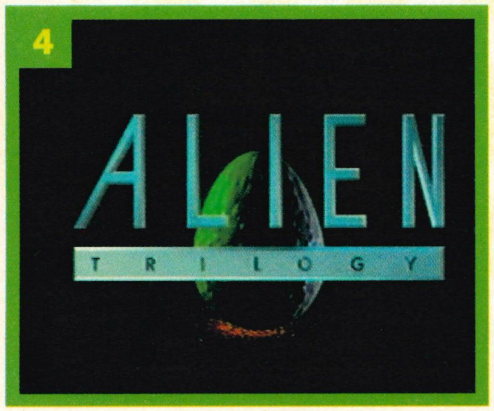
An instant blockbuster, the film told the chilling tale of the ill-fated crew on-board the commercial starship, Nostromo. Awoken from deep hyper-sleep to answer an urgent distress call from an uncharted planet, the rescue mission lead by Captain Dallas soon encountered a derelict spacecraft – and an alien force hell-bent on killing them off. Ignorance led to the alien being brought back on board the Nostromo where the seven crew members were powerless to escape from the unknown terror they faced!

The film's immense success and impact meant that a sequel was inevitable and this time James Cameron (*Terminator 1&2*, *True Lies*) took up the directing reigns to transform the tense, claustrophobic atmosphere of *Alien* into a thrill-a-minute action feast. Now backed by a huge budget, Cameron was able to introduce more elaborate locations, more mind-blowingly scarey special effects, but more importantly... many more aliens!

This once again had the audiences screaming for more, hence the untimely arrival of *Alien 3*. Directed by virtual unknown, David Fincher (who was only previously famed for directing pop videos), *Alien 3* returned to the tense grit and bone formula of the first film – with only one solitary alien doing the damage. However, the box-office interest indicated that the punters didn't want to go back to basics... they wanted loads of aliens and loads of big guns – which means I can finally get to the point, and tell you that they're the two elements guaranteed by Acclaim's forthcoming PlayStation gore ticket, *Alien Trilogy*.

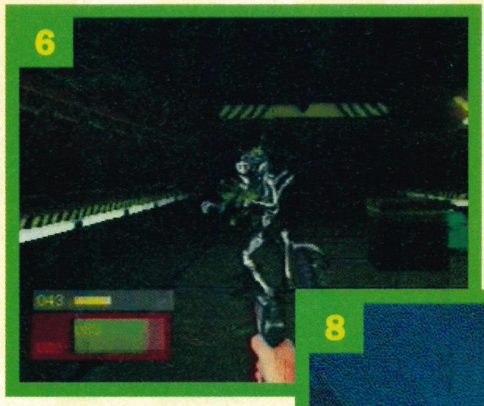
Alien Trilogy could only have ever been a *Doom clone* – no other area would have been able to convey the sheer tension-packed claustrophobic scenarios depicted in the films.

Developed by the Probe team, the game kicks off in rather familiar fashion by chucking you straight into the heart of an alien-packed Nostromo with only a poxy pistol of spud-gun qualities to defend yourself. Thankfully, very little exploration is needed before you can upgrade to a Corporal Hicks-style



4 Retaining every ounce of atmosphere from the films, the titles roll.





5 Poorly lit beneath the dim lights, these suckers move like lightning. Watch you back at all times.
6 Keeping a safe distance away to avoid the acid spray, you successfully make an alien warrior explode into pieces.
7 Aargh! By not monitoring closely what's around you, a disgusting face-hugger grabs onto your mush for a spot of nookie.
8 Where's your manners, don't you know it's impolite not to bow in front of the Queen?!





shotgun and start offing serious amounts of the ugly intergalactic parasites. Not bad!

It's not all kill, kill and more kill though (honest) and as you start to progress you'll realise certain tasks must be completed in order for you to finish the levels. For example, you must find particular objects needed to unlock doors and reach new sectors – which is no easy job when you've also got an abundance of alien warriors and face huggers nibbling at your gibbets.

Justifiable homicide

Unbeknown to your character at the start of your mission is that the alien forces aren't the only danger stalking the dimly-lit corridors. The greatest foe, and indeed the one that signalled the eventual demise of the three film's starring heroine, Ripley, is the corporate reps who've been dispatched to capture an alien for their bio-weapons division. As witnessed in the films, these tyrants will stop at nothing to obtain one of the aliens, and if you stand in their way, they'll think nothing about going through you to get it. So, if you see something that isn't a reflection of yourself, blast it to kingdom come.

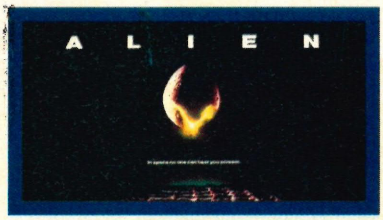
All this looks like it's going to make for a gripping game which simulates the blast-a-thon atmosphere of the second film tremendously – you just power-up and pepper everything in sight with bullets... it's great!

Basically, if it was in the films, it's in the game – the vast arsenal of marine firepower included. As the threat grows ever greater, you can bet your life that there'll be the ultimate in state-of-the-art firepower concealed in the next crate, already loaded and ready for use.

Alien Trilogy is scheduled for a March release, and is presently only just over half complete. However, even at this early stage we at *Play* instinctively know that it's going to be pretty damn special when it eventually arrives complete. That just leaves us with enough time to perfect our witty one-liners and nip-down to the army surplus January sales to stock-up on some top, and incredibly mean-looking marine gear with which to put the willies up them damn aliens!

That body count in full

Let's face it, since H.R. Giger's demonic parasites burst onto the big screen in the late seventies, a lot of stars and walk-on extras have has their mortal coil mercilessly severed (kicked the bucket in other words!). Just in case you were wondering, here, to the best of our knowledge, is the death tally in full!



Alien

There were only seven recipients of the alien wrath in the original movie. The blood-shed kicked off in spectacular fashion with John Hurt's exploding stomach, and continued to wreak havoc with a chain of grizzly deaths including head-chomping, body-popping, and in the case of poor Cpt. Dallas it's left up to your own imagination. Only the quick-thinking (and fleshy-bummed) Ripley survived. Oh... and Jones the cat!

Aliens

As the elite team consisting of 12 marines, a humanoid, a bungling corporate rep called (appropriately) Burke, and Ripley headed off to the now populated planet where the aliens were first discovered, in order to regain lost communication with the inhabitants. Little did they know that only people leaving the confounded rock would be half a humanoid, orphan Annie, a semi-conscious marine, and of course Ripley. Burke eventually got his come-uppance by starring in a pathetic American sit-com called *My Two Dads*! Please note that it was impossible to say exactly how many colonists kicked the bucket.



Alien 3

Strewth! We're not even five minutes into the film and the semi-conscious marine, and orphan Annie are mauled to death as they sleep. This leaves Ripley to face a planet full of randy prisoners alone. Even Ripley meets her maker in the film's climax so you can expect a vast death tally. Just how many of the mad monks fell victim to the alien is a mystery for you to solve, we're just glad that Brian Glover was among the first!



Get out of my Zone!

PLAY information

- **Name:** NBA – In The Zone
- **Publisher:** Konami
- **Where at:** 75% Complete
- **Target release:** April

These were the harsh words dished out by Konami's hot new PlayStation basketball sim, *NBA – In The Zone* upon receiving news that it would have to twist, turn, and alley oop past Sony's *Total NBA '96* game in order to become the definitive rim rattler.

Scheduled for release early next year, *NBA In The Zone* will have its work cut trying to pip Sony's effort to the numero uno spot – especially with Sony's recent marketing clout behind it. However, now that *Play* has had the pleasure of playing both games, we can report that there is very little in it as far as features and playability go. Both games have opted to go for the lavish texture mapping approach of attaching real-life, recognisable features of the NBA's top players onto the polygon figures to ensure that the maximum illusion of realism is obtained.

Like *Total NBA '96* though, major names such as Michael Jordan and Shaq won't be making an appearance due to hefty deals elsewhere (i.e. they'd rather star in crap platform and beat 'em-up games respectively).

1 Let's see that hot three-pointer again.
2 A basket by Carl Malone evens the score.
3 Man to man all the way.





Smooth Operator

For Konami's *NBA In The Zone*, the character movement was carefully choreographed utilising real time motion capturing – thus ensuring that the highest level of smoothness and flair was achieved. The finished result is an astronomic bound forward in the standard of sports sims in general as the action can be viewed from multiple perspectives – even one that enables the player to get right down onto the court amidst the thick of the action, where the players themselves are as big as the whole screen.

Before we go on, let us take a 'time out' (ha! We just had to get a tacky American saying in here somewhere) to examine why the names given to sports sims such as this are getting stranger and stranger. Well we can make no assumption for Sony's imaginatively titled *Total NBA '96*, but Konami named theirs after a popular phrase given to outstanding basketball players that are doing rather well. Similar to 'on fire', 'in the zone' is a favourite saying amongst the NBA commentators... not that anyone sane gives a cat's chuff what they are saying anyway!

So what else is headline news for Konami's slam dunking extravaganza? Well you get all 29 NBA teams, plus All-Star line-ups, the ability to guide your desired team(s) through an entire season... and beyond. And get this, with the aid of two PlayStation multi-tap devices (which are rumoured to be released around about the time of *Total NBA '96*), you can summon up eight different persons to jam it out on the court simultaneously.

We certainly look forward to taking a back seat while Sony and Konami battle it out for overall basketball supremacy... one thing's for sure, you'd have to be a basket-case to buy both of them!

NBA In The Zone is looking pretty damn smart alright, and for the final summarisation, we passed the buck



straight over to Konami themselves where a spokesperson issued us with this brief statement that should leave you in no doubt that basketball, like soccer before it is Konami's next target for total world domination:

"*NBA In The Zone* is going to be the biggest of the basketball games to be released on the PlayStation for some time. It includes the full excitement of speed, real-life movements and interesting camera angles, and for the full challenge of mastering over 30 real life NBA teams in a choice of 'Exhibition' or 'Playoff' encounters. Is it possible for any other basketball game to have so much excitement and detail crammed onto a single CD? I don't think so!"







4 The ref feeds in the ball to start the game.
5 Aerial antics... view that action from any angle.
6 I think this may be what is known as an alley oop!





7 Having evaded his marker, lofty has a clear shot!
8 A chance opens up after a foul was committed.
9 Boom shakalakka!
10 This chap is asking for trouble committing a lewd act whilst dangling from a basket.





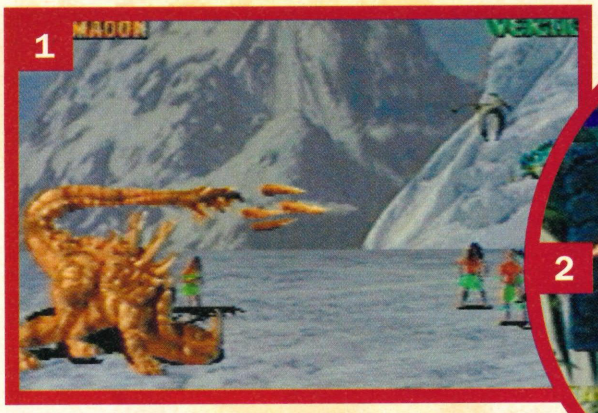
Trash Talkin'

Americans eh! What the hell are they on? Here is a short list of some of the wicked inclusions in Konami's stunning new *NBA In The Zone* game... the only thing is, we haven't got a clue what they mean!

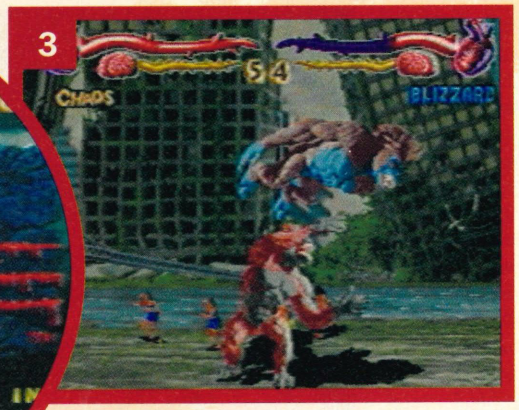
- **Alley oops**
- **No-look passes**
- **Behind the back dribbling**
- **Fade aways**
- **Special spinning steal avoidance**

News just in...

We've just heard that Konami is lining up their MLBPA Baseball game for an April '96 release in the US. However, they were unable to confirm when the promising title would make it over to these shores. We'd guess around August next year.







1 Armadon pulls off a deadly tail defence.
2 The arcade hit is nearly finished on PlayStation.
3 The two apes battle it out.

PLAY information

- **Name:** Primal Rage
- **Publisher:** Time Warner
- **Where at:** 95% complete
- **Target release:** February

Get re

to

4 He'll take them all on.
5 Blizzard is now able to attack the defenceless Sauron.
6 There are seven roaring dinos to choose from.







Primal Rage has slipped until February next year, so we though it was about time to give you the full round of what'll you'll be able to expect from the best conversion yet of the popular dinosaur coin-op.

If you hadn't heard, the game features ferocious dinosaurs and a manic ape in some fearsome head-to-head fighting action along with realistic stop-motion animation. Players choose from seven different giant fantasy creatures, including a vicious Tyrannosaurus Rex, a tyrannical giant ape and an eerie Cobrasaur, in an attempt to dominate the new Urth. Combatants use a combination of normal fighting moves, special moves and graphic finishing sequences to eliminate their opponent. *Primal Rage* also uses a proprietary new stop-motion animation technique that provides realistic and life-like character motion plus something called Total Immersion Audio to give great stereo sound, serving to punctuate the high-impact game play.

Jurassic Lark

The game originated well over two years ago now as a showcase for two ferocious battling Tyrannosaurus Rexs, and is being converted to PlayStation by Probe Entertainment, the massive games design house recently snapped up by Acclaim. The team is striving to ensure, a storyline and an individualised set of moves for each one. Just as well really, given some of the competition out there.

Rather than limit the game to real dinosaurs, after all, there's only so many ways you can make slow, peanut-brain sized two legged monoliths interesting, the team invented an array of fantasy characters. For example, Armadon combines elements of Triceratops, Ankylosaurus and Stegosaurus. Vertigo is part Cobra and part Effraasia. Talon is mostly Deinonychus, with the striping and vocals of a tiger. Two giant apes, Blizzard and Chaos, both with wild hair and equally wild personalities, round out the character set.

In order to make even a single character-move seem fluid, fifty frames of animation needed to be generated, each different from the other, via a progressive series of small movements of arms, heads, legs, tails and any other appendages. From this massive number of frames, an appropriate number were selected to form a fluid move. This process was completed for each of the 70 sequences designed for every character – over 400 moves in all made up of many different types of punches, reactions to being punched, death



7 The most favoured move in the game has to be Chaos' Fart of Fury which makes the opponent dazed for a few seconds.
8 Long necked Vertigo has a bloody effect on helpless Talon.
9 Dinosaurs stomping cars in a city. Intros, all Hollywood B-movies, eh?





ady Rage

sequences, victory sequences, and ready 'poses', that a character adopts whilst between moves. In addition, each had to be designed with the others in mind, for every tail whack one character may have, there had to be a reaction created for each of the other characters. During the ready sequence for the character Vertigo, for instance, the head bobs and weaves, the tail moves as if it were a snake, the arms move and fists clench, and the neck flexes like a coiled spring. Manic.

One player *Primal Rage* is also a little different. Rather than fighting a special boss to complete the 1-player game, players must take the Primal Challenge, a fast-paced grudge match pitting the player against every foe. For players to master this mode they must be extremely good, not only knowing the moves needed to beat the useful computer opponents, but also being capable of executing hits and combos with precision timing.

There is little room for error. Which all sounds terribly serious and of course the main thing about *Primal Rage* is that it's a bit of a laugh, comedy dinosaurs with a few special extras and a fairly decent fighting game thrown in as well. You can expect the full evaluation treatment soon.





10 Diablo has had one of those spicy Pepperami chews and the after affect is a rather hot fireball!
11 It seems that dominant Blizzard has been coached my *MK's* Sub-Zero.

Oi! ref... no!

Power Soccer makes its own rules... end of story. You could play above board and with the minimum amount of aggro, but where would be the fun in that? With so many varied skills to master both good and incredibly bad, you could quite easily establish yourself as being the next 'ard-man of football. Here are the many skills you must master in order to be a ref's best friend... or not!

The Good

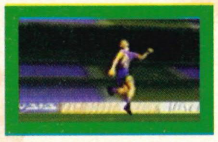
Diving Header



Back Heel



Ball Flick



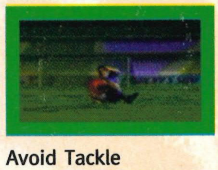
Overhead Kick



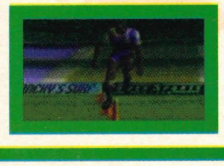
Shot



Tackle



Avoid Tackle



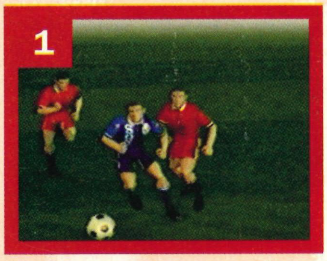
Puttin

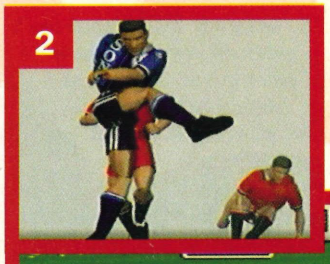
the bo

PLAY information

- **Name:** Power Soccer
- **Publisher:** Sony
- **Where at:** 70%
- **Target release:** March

1 He evades two defenders...
2 and shoots! Pity it's the intro!
3 Over-cautious defending alert.
4 That was a narrow squeak.
5 Surely a goal is on the cards.









Whahey! We love our football games here at *Play*... but that isn't such a good thing. If we were to tot up the amount of hours wasted each month playing *Striker '96*, our publishers would go mental! (er, can't we keep that quiet? - Ed)

But when something like *Power Soccer* turns up, you've just got to stand up and take notice, and then sit down and play it to death. So far *Striker '96* has remained cemented to the pinnacle of PlayStation footy perfection... until now perhaps?!

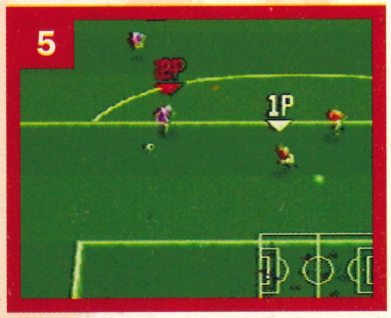
Power Soccer has all the elements required to catapult it straight to the top of the Premiership and way beyond, provided something doesn't go dramatically wrong between now and its estimated date of completion.

The version we saw was about 70% complete with fine tuning still to be inserted into the gameplay, and the intended international teams requiring some sorting out. As far as we can see though, *Power Soccer* could be the one.

Power Soccer isn't like your normal conventional football game – even we were taken aback by the sheer quantity of foul play included. Amongst the features relegated to the realms of the devious are shirt tugging, straightforward shoulder-barging, knee lunges, hand of God's, plus there's even a few dirty tricks lifted straight from Cantona's school of martial arts. It's not all Vinnie tactics so to speak, even if you stick to good, clean, wholesome tactics you can still get a mean passing and scoring game together.

Knock his block off!

Developers Psygnosis claim that the game has been put together in such a way that amateurs can easily grasp the basic skills and control, whilst hardened-players have a whole host of nifty skills and tricky joypad



combinations to master. The most bizarre of these skills is undoubtedly using the power shots in arcade mode. Picture this, you've just got the ball into your opponents half, and by executing the kind of shot that would knock a locomotive clean off its rails and into the next county, you can send the ball surging towards the goal like a meteorite (complete with smoke trails) and then such is the ferocity behind the tremendous punt that the poor, unfortunate goalie can't help but be forced straight into the back of his net with the ball!

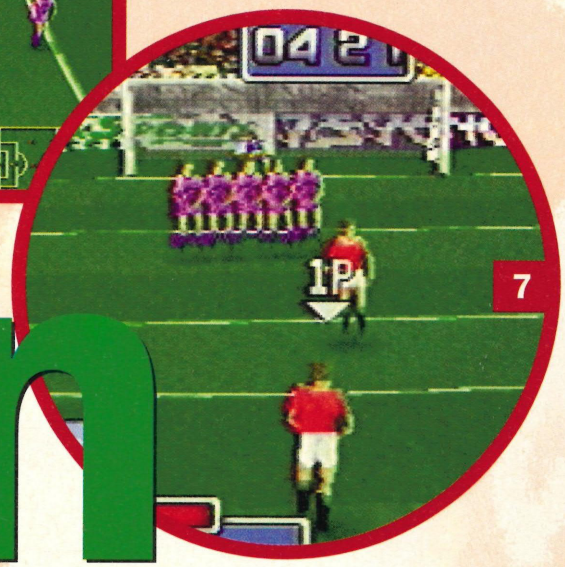
To improve the game's attraction still further, all of the player animation was motion captured using real players, thus ensuring that every ounce of skill portrayed on the pitch is as realistic and fluid as possible – and bloody nice it looks too!

There's certainly no denying that Psygnosis have captured the true grit behind the sport, and no stone is left unturned to ensure that the maximum capacity of realism is here for the player to root out and use to their advantage.

Whether or not promoting such violent play is politically acceptable is not for us to say, but if you compare this to US

g otin





6 With no opposing attackers taking the bait, this flash git takes time out to practice his ball control techniques.
7 Your mate wants to get his arse out of the way if any kind of shot is attempted.

The Bad

Shoulder Barge



Sliding Lunge



The Ugly

Cantona Kick



Hand of God



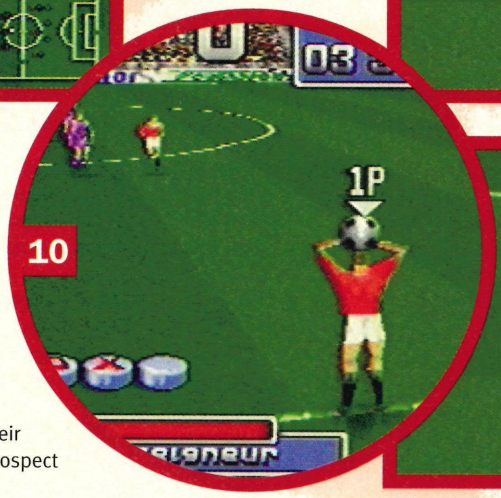
Two-Handed Shove





8 A long kick from the keeper signals the start of a mad scramble.
9 The ref must have been dead not to notice that deliberate shove.
10 One extra long throw coming straight up.

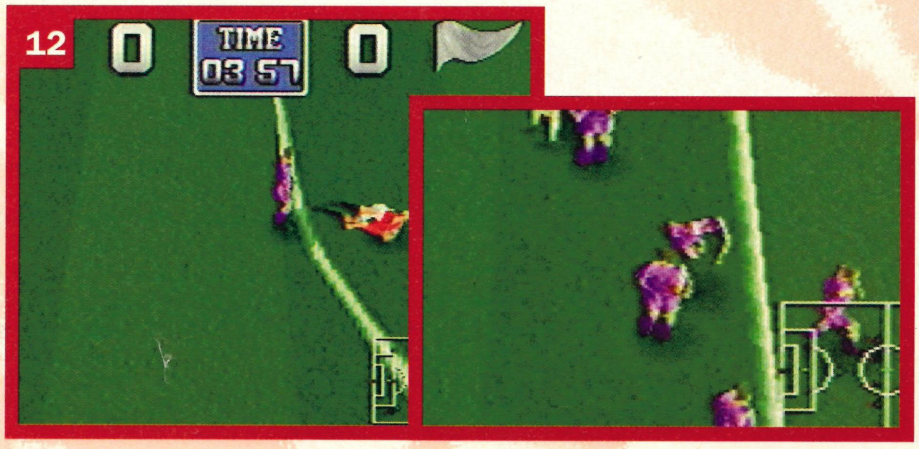






Gold's notorious *Fever Pitch*, we certainly know which would come off the worse in a pub brawl (clue: it wouldn't be *Power Soccer*). Sales-wise however, the flack *Fever Pitch* received from the national press certainly didn't harm its sales figures, and seeing as *Power Soccer* packs more of a punch in the shameless violence stakes, Psygnosis, and indeed Sony should be rubbing their hands together with glee at the prospect of yet another nice little earner.

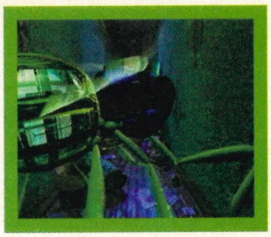
11 Crack! Looks like Graeme Le Saux is catching up on unfinished business with David Batty. "I want to score, it's not fair... boohoo!"
12 Get up you screaming nonce... it's only a very minor flesh wound.
13 How many defenders does it take to clear the ball?
14 I pity the keeper, them blasted super shots are a real bugger to save.





Roaming reptiles! Look at the intro!

Yes, if you too have a quarter of a million quid lying idle, why not buy a Silicon Graphics workstation. This is just some of the stunning effects you could produce (after intensive training I hasten to add!).







PLAY information

- **Name:** Gex
- **Publisher:** BMGie
- **Where at:** 90%
- **Target release:** End January

Meet the Lizard

The Gecko lizard – an amazing creature best noted for its ability to dispatch parts of its body when caught by predators, thus enabling it to make a clean getaway. Then, when all is clear, it can grow back the self-severed limb and carry on life as normal. It's an impressive feat and one which I bet John Wayne Bobbit would liked to have mastered. Just what this strange reptile creature is doing starring in the next big PlayStation platformer is anybody's guess, but even if his magnetic charm and wit recreate only a fraction of the success he had on the 3DO machine, then BMG Interactive (the company who picked up the UK rights to release this unusual Crystal Dynamics game) should be eagerly awaiting a colossal sized windfall.

The idea behind *Gex* came as some sort of rebellious act by Crystal Dynamics. For so long, the concept of a platform hero acting as a company flagship had only been executed with any degree of success by huge companies such as Sega and Nintendo – and even then the games in question appealed almost solely to kids. That's why a lot of time (over a year) and effort went into producing a platform game that would challenge the abilities of experienced, grown-up gamers, whilst keeping a strong hold on the younger market primarily through its appearance and content. The result is the immensely challenging and exceedingly playable *Gex*, which is due out (apparently) just after the silly season ends. Or January, in other words.

1 I certainly wouldn't want to annoy the thing that owns that tail!
2 Kaboom! I regret to inform you Houston, but the first ever lizard-controlled voyage to the moon was a complete and utter disaster.



Hey, It's Asam!

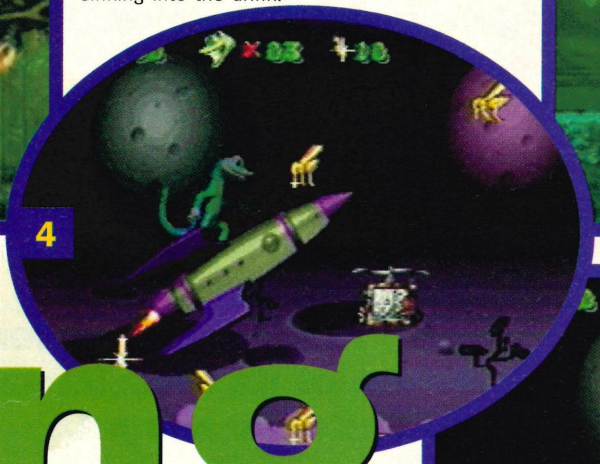
The central lime-lizard possesses all familiar Gecko traits, sticky limbs that can latch onto anything, a tongue of bull-whip proportions, and he even comes with his own witty dialogue courtesy of veteran US comedian, Dana Gould. Who? Well apparently, Dana works for one of the big cable television stations in the USA, *HBO*, and also crops up regularly on *Showtime*, although you'd have probably never heard of them either. Huh! Couldn't they have got in old Jim Carrey instead?

After a truly exceptional intro, rendered, somewhat stunningly, using state of the art Silicon Graphics workstations, the player is left to pick up the pieces after Gex, a good-for-nothing couch potato sucked into his



King















3 Judging by the way in which the cowardly tortoise hot-foots it away, Gex must be 'ard.
4 Take two, at least this time the stupid lizard is heading in the right direction.
5 After a particularly heavy rain-fall in quaint little China, Gex does his utmost to avoid sinking into the drink.

6 More rocket-related shenanigans prevail as Gex increases his determination to enter orbit.
7 Such is his fondness for flies, Gex leaps with super-human determination over a ravine, just to pig-out.
8 By using his extra-long tongue, grabbing that bonus power pod is no problem for our hero.
9 Gex proving himself to be the biggest sucker around.

television by a complete bastard called Rez (some kind of cyborg-like beetle!). Inside TV land, Gex is faced with five theme-based worlds, each containing approximately five individual levels. Strangely enough, Gex's goal is merely to locate a remote controller hidden deep within each level and scarper – there are no politically correct nature type themes in here matey!

Armed to the teeth with a wide array of Gecko skills, Gex must see off the threat from all kinds of ruthless dweebs en route. In keeping with the tradition of a good old fashioned platform game, he can also collect gold flies for bonus points.

Gex is to hit the streets in February, and it certainly looks like the strongest of the Crystal Dynamics PlayStation products being distributed by BMG. Whether or not leaping lizards can compete with jumping rabbits (*Jumping Flash*) remains to be seen, but we'll have a full review for you next month.

Wahey, maximum camage

Although you begin life with only a single laser and a handful of mines, you can power up your weapons on the Bonus Tracks by destroying cars and picking up the weapons icons that they leave behind.

Here's what you can get to bolster your holster...



X2 Icon
Double up. Doubles the power of your lasers.



Rocket Icon
A real straight-shooting surprise for anyone who gets directly in front of you.



X4
Quad laser



Missile Icon
Once a homing missile has locked on it takes a lot of skill to avoid.



Rear Armour Icon
Pick up these in order to save you getting goosed by an opponents attack.



Fire Icon
When dropped behind you the firewall can turn even the most expensive car into an instant hot metal kebab.



Front Armour Icon
Firewall attacks really hit hard.



Smart Bomb Icon
This is a bit like me. This will take out anything fast and sexy within range (Yeah, right – Ed)

Impa Ra

With the battle for the best racing game on next generation consoles being hotly contested by Sony's finest, *Wipeout* and *Ridge Racer* you can be sure that independent racers will have to hit the ground running. JVC's *Impact Racing* revs up for the race of its life...Gavin Slater hitches aboard.

For any teenage kid, there is a huge list of quests he must perform in order to get his life passport stamped 'Lad.' These involve drinking whole bottles of Woodpecker cider without redecorating rooms rainbow colours, convincing their Oxy-10 wielding contemporaries that they really have popped their cherry and being able to handle fast, sexy, weapon-packed cars with integral, gusset-moistening skill.

The latter can now be just as easily achieved by flipping open a PlayStation and slapping in the latest, munitions-enhanced racing game as nicking a handy Golf GTi and tearing madly round the local housing estate.

There are loads of racing games currently on the console circuit to choose from. Only the best manage to give the player the full feel of speed and control needed to send player's knuckles white and get them pulled into the early symptoms of binary road rage, and the level of competition means the stakes are up. Anything that doesn't set your adrenal glands pumping like a rabbit's scrotum on a hot first date, just isn't up to it.

Impact Racing hopes to do just that. Jap TV and VCR giant turned games firm JVC has enlisted the talents of Ireland and Norway (now there's a strange combination)-based games designer FunCom to develop *Impact Racing* for PlayStation. It's not just about racing though. Having to use all your skill to get around the tracks is one thing, but when your opponents are fully tooled up with high tech weaponry, all the driving ability in the world isn't going to help unless you have the skills of a low level Tornado pilot.



▶ Whyooahy! Psychedelic wall screen super frenzy! Why do I feel ill?

ct cing



Impact Racing is the first racing style game for both companies yet expectations are high on both sides. The game is being developed by FunCom's Dublin office, where producer Ronny Hanssen has very definite views on the game. He explained that they wanted to produce a fighting and racing game that was both fast and exciting, and also really fun to play but with the emphasis on driving the cars. Ronny believes that, "It's no good having a racing game which includes weapons unless the cars handle correctly right from the very beginning. Once you have believable handling traits you can then add unbelievable firepower.

"This is what we are hoping to achieve with *Impact Racing*".

Rebel yell

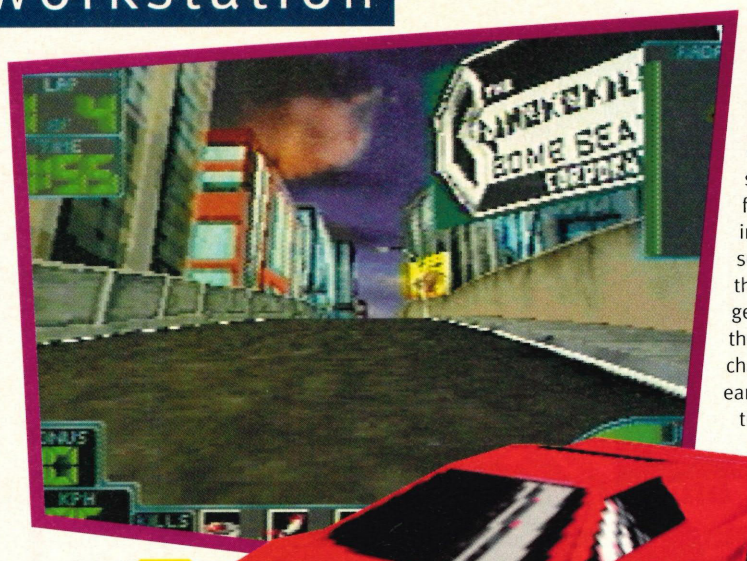
James Dean would tell you that high speed action and trying to cheat the death that lucks around every bend is a recipe for the best bang since the big one. Either that, or dying. Anyway, making the game accessible was at the forefront

You all ready for this?

The music in *Impact Racing* is appropriately fast and furious – a fusion of pulsating, beat-ridden tunes that could only be described (by you anyway – Ed) as post-garage. Brian Lewis, one of the game's programmers, worked on a lot of the music. Not a normal move for code monkey but multi-talented Brian has previously released a dance track in the US which did quite well, so his collaboration with Danish musician Martin Schilor was welcomed. Combining musicians and programmers makes for some nice touches too. The tracks all add echo when you are driving through a tunnel and when you finish the game and have sat through the end sequence and credits you're given a password which allows you to access a special music feature written by FunCom programmer Colm Cox. His special routine generates trippy graphics which syncopate colours and shapes in time with the music. You can even load your own music CD into the PlayStation and treat yourself to the one Barry Mannilow light show in the world which isn't a sea of dancing Zippos.

PLAY information

- **Design team:** FunCom
- **Team leader:** Ronny Hanssen
- **Where at:** 80% complete
- **Target release:** March
- **Publisher:** JVC









▶ This looks sharp, and wait till you hear the sounds! They change as you go into the tunnel. Smart.



of Ronny's production plans, hence the gun-fuelled mayhem. And this idea even extends to the game structure. "So that even poor players could get some way into the game and find it progressive, we've implemented a very sophisticated password system that means that you can always get back to a particular level with the complement of weapons and characteristics that you have earned when you started on it. As the game does get pretty tricky on later levels, we wanted people to be able to save their best positions without recourse to having to buy a memory card". You can still use a memory card like, but there's no real advantage in doing so.

Six of the rest

You begin with one of six cars, all having their own mixture of top speed, handling and armour but all with a standard forward firing laser and a small clutch of mines – useful for town driving and for reducing other cars into something less useful than a paper ashtray, and just as burnt out.

Each track has a countdown timer and you must complete each of the 12 stages before your time (or luck) runs out. "A time limit is the basis of most racing games, but whilst FunCom saw the need for speed, we also decided that by adding merciless destruction we should appeal to the Mad Max in all of us."

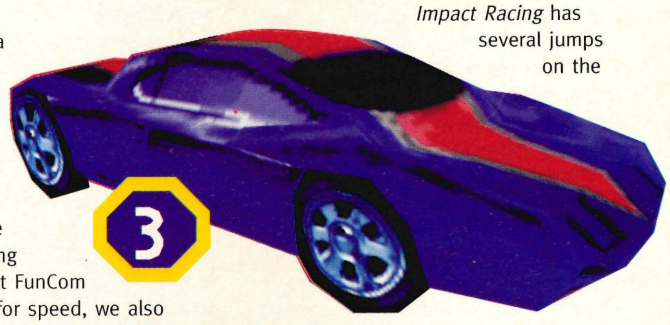
Bloody tools

And so the need to destroy is paramount. Like a blood starved Vamp drinking hard-core bloody Marys at a Virgin's ball, it's not long before your instincts tell you that you must kill to survive. Getting death-dealing weaponry strapped on in *Impact Racing* is far more straight forward than a six hour transplant op with Bungalow Bill (Eh? – Ed). Taking out contemporaries on each of the 12 stages leaves behind mine or power-up icons which will fuel your car, or one of your current weapon systems. But, once you destroy enough you are



treated to a bonus track where you are treated to a variety of impossibly shaped and coloured tunnels that have all the appearance of a drug induced bob-sleigh ride. Cars that you destroy here, drop weapon icons with which to upgrade your mobile arsenal so you can cause further carnage when you progress to the next track.

The 12 main tracks are all based upon three main courses set around a city, a mountain and a futuristic space track. Each of these tracks has a day and night course (except the space track which has different terrain), and each of the tracks is also mirrored on later levels. "This is not like taking the tracks backwards like *Ridge Racer*", Ronny explained, "as *Impact Racing* has several jumps on the tracks. If we just flipped the track direction, you'd be running into brick walls the other side of the jumps, so each one of the tracks is a unique, graphical experience".



Clever clever

FunCom seem to have racked up more tricks than Divine Brown in order to cram as much into the game as possible and have certainly made the PlayStation use its brains in making the racing experience a challenge. Each car in *Impact Racing* has its own unique top speed and handling characteristics which influence its ability in several areas including braking, skidding and cornering. The uniqueness of each car is also used by the games Artificial Intelligence System. As you progress through the levels and become more skilled at driving and using your rack of weapons, your opponents also learn a few tactics. Each successive track makes them more difficult to pass and also to shoot as they will become progressively more difficult to hit. Not only do they

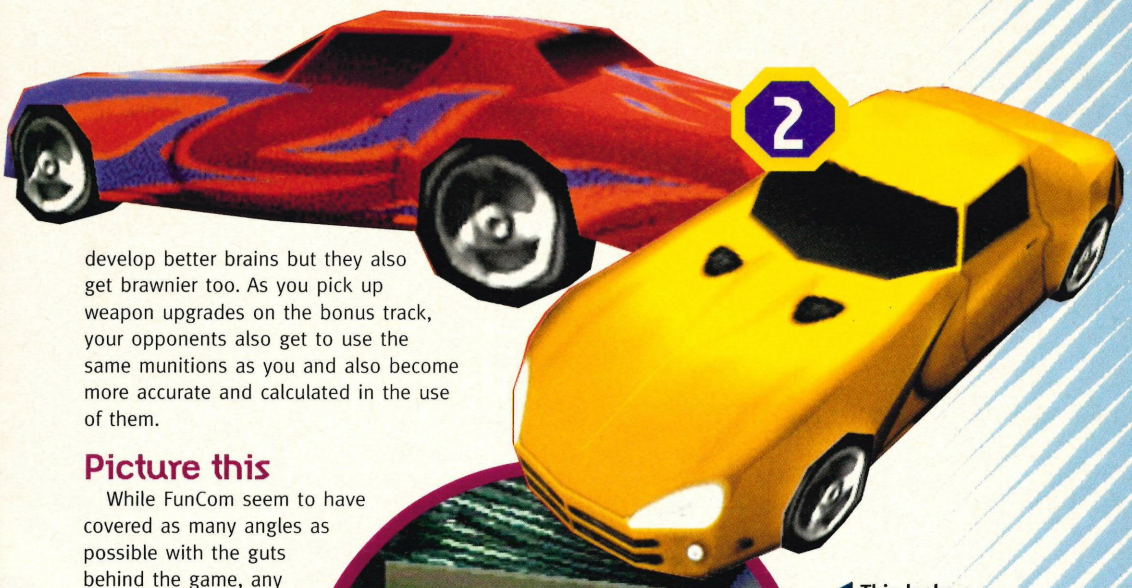
develop better brains but they also get brawnier too. As you pick up weapon upgrades on the bonus track, your opponents also get to use the same munitions as you and also become more accurate and calculated in the use of them.

Picture this

While FunCom seem to have covered as many angles as possible with the guts behind the game, any game on PlayStation has to pass the graphics test. Here the boys in Dublin have not disappointed either. "Even the best Guinness in world will leave you wanting if the head isn't right," points out Norwegian turned Irishman Ronny. "We put a lot of emphasis on the look and atmosphere of the game and used all of the 1Mbyte video memory on the PlayStation which as this is the lead format for the game, was far easier to utilise on *Impact Racing* than for the Saturn version where we had to re-jig the graphics to make it work.

On the City levels we tried to make the cityscape a little more dramatic, especially the sky. On the Mountain track we used some of our Norwegian team to add a snow section drawing on their own experience of Norway. On the space levels we weren't constrained with complicated backgrounds and landscapes but the roads do twist through all angles as the camera follows through. There are no ups or downs but the roads do have their own gravity. Einstein would have been proud of us for making our own rules. With the night settings we didn't just dim the colours like some games do. We even used moonlight and added lighting to the windows of houses to create a more realistic feeling and a real night-time atmosphere.

Anyway, it's a neat idea, it looks good, it shifts along at a fair old rate of knots and it'll be ready for review early next year. We'll keep you informed on how it's going until then.





◀ This looks a little bit like something out of *Doom*. Very strange. Anyway, let's consider which weapon to select.







Baby, you can drive my car

There are six different cars in the *Impact Racing* stable with each car being based on the shape of real models. All of the *Impact Racing* cars are based on real cars modelled in 3D Studio and then fully textured using Adobe Photoshop.

1. **Porsche 911**
   The Ford Escort of *Impact Racing*.
2. **Dodge Viper x 2**
   One car, two paint jobs and featured in the game's intro sequence.
3. **Audi 8UVS**
   The brand new Audi supercar.
4. **Ferrari Testarossa**
   Phwoor!! Eroll Flynn's preferred cod piece!
5. **FunCom Car**
   Savage or what? It's loosely based on a Mad Max creation.

Credits

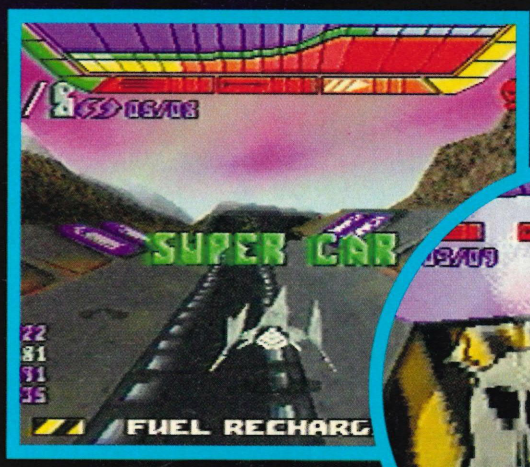
(From Left to Right) Edward Thomas (3D modeller), Jorund Teigen (programmer), Colm Cox (programmer), Martin Schioler (musician), Ronny Hanssen (producer), Richard Legg (3D modeller), Ivar Just Olsen (programmer), Philip Plunkett (graphic artist), Teresa Eddery (graphic artist). Oh, and there's Brian Lewis (programmer) and Hans Jorgen Kjaernet an' all, but they're shy.



▲ Stunts! Am I coooooool or what?



▶ Refuelling is simply a matter of driving through the purple fuel zones.



▼ This is a short cut, but that barrier keeps rising and falling, so correct timing is essential.



Hi-O

Racing isn't all about speed, strategy is just as important. Asam KV takes a break from his day job to career around a few bends and blast the crap out of anyone who stands in his way...

PLAY information

- **Publisher:** Bullfrog/EA
- **Customer support:** 01753 546465
- **Expected price:** £44.99
- **Expected when:** December '95

You buy your new console. You get it home. You want to show it off to your mates. What do treat 'em to? A superfast racing game that propels 'em back into gaga-land with sheer G-force. Yeahhhh. Unfortunately, the PlayStation version of *Hi-Octane* is not that kinda game. Not because it's a bad game, but more due to the fact that it lacks the sheer speed you might expect from a racer. However, and this is a big however, *Hi-Octane* is NOT your average racer. It IS a good game, very well thought out and fun to play, but not something you'd use to show off your machine. So how's it different? *Hi-Octane* is a game that involves so much more than being 'the fastest'. Fair enough, you can play the game that way, but if that's all you want you'd be better off sticking with *Ridge Racer* or *Wipeout*. However, what really sets this game apart from the field is the need for strategy. In order to get the most



Top ten ways to get higher...

1. See Charles, Eddie, Billy and Bobby all together in concert.
2. Go up in hot air balloon with your girlfriend.
3. Snitch on your boss.
4. Climb up Mount Everest wearing a string vest.
5. Do the wild monkey dance. With somebody else preferably.
6. A hot steaming bath. Brandy 'n' Coke with ice and a 'herbal cigarette'. Sorted.
7. Climb up some stairs.
8. Use an 'elevator'.
9. Stand on the top of a people pyramid on a scooter.
10. Kick the living daylights out of Dougal (our Art Editor).
11. Get wasted.

Alright. That's eleven then.

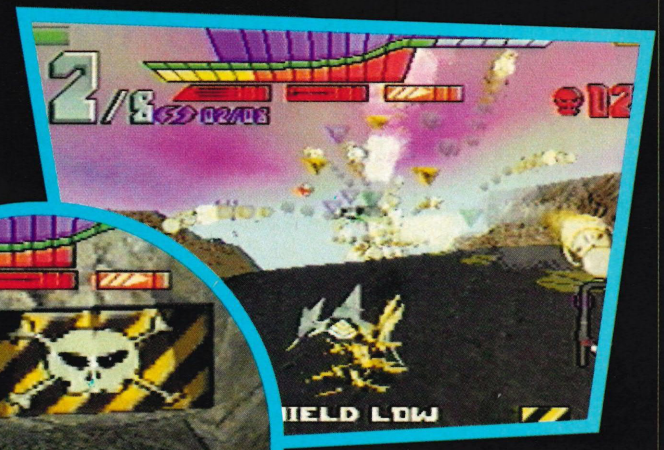
Octane

enjoyment out of this game, you must have a plan. And that plan is to kill. Or 'be killed' happens.

You have six hovercars to choose from and the game is played over nine tracks. These range from the straightforward to the wild, with varying terrain and multiple routes. The tracks provide you with quite a challenge, with some incredibly twisty turns, but once you've got used to the control of your vehicle, you might as well forget the 'real' routes. Come again? You see there is much more to *Hi-Octane* than just hurtling along predefined tracks – you can explore at will.

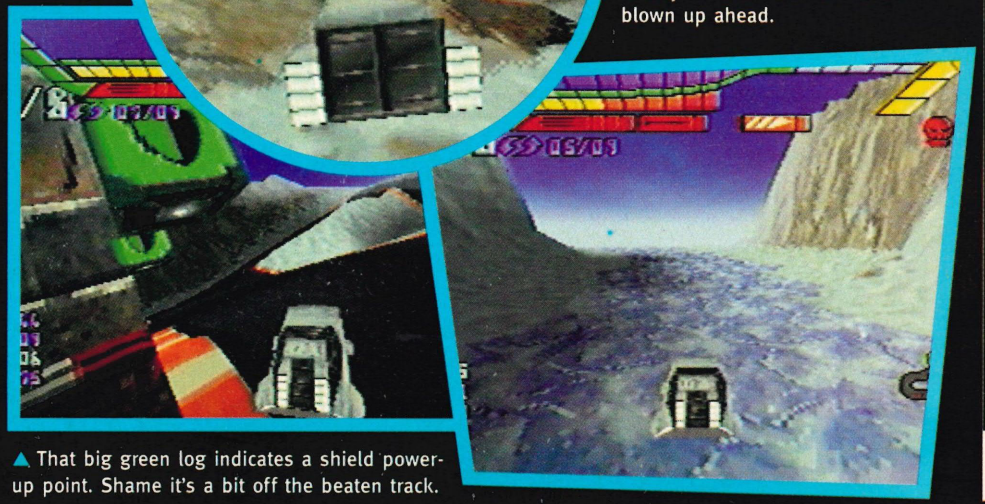
Rather than the restricted format you have with normal racers i.e. you are effectively 'stuck' with the track you're on, it has fully defined battle arenas. If you want to go off the track and see what's at the bottom of a ravine in your hovercar, then you can. If you want to 'hide' and set an ambush for an approaching car, you can. If you want to get lost, you can. It's this element of freedom that makes the game so darn appealing.

And there's more to think about. Do you take a short cut, and sacrifice passing an all important fuel or ammo point, or do you stick to the straight and narrow and chance an exchange of fire with a trigger-happy opponent? Do you bother to re-equip at all,

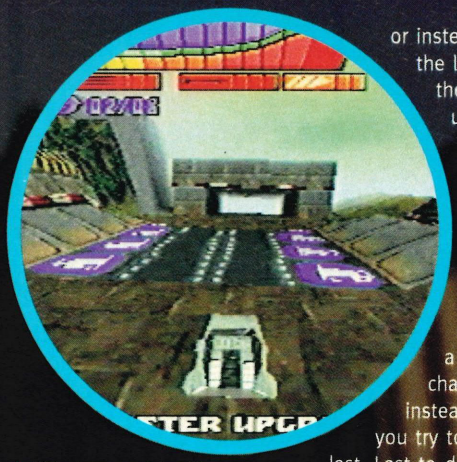


▲ Ha ha. Look at all those lovely bonuses from that car I've blown up ahead.





▲ That big green log indicates a shield power-up point. Shame it's a bit off the beaten track.



▲ This innocent looking fuel pad is actually a moving ramp. If you time it right, you can go over the water channel on the roof of the tunnel.

or instead tool up by blasting the living daylights out of the car in front to pick up all the goodies they drop when you usher them out of this cruel world? Combined, the choices are excitingly endless. And there's more! If you're fed up with racing, you can set up a Death Match challenge. In this mode, instead of trying to be first, you try to be last. Last to die. And if you feel a little bored during your fight for survival, you can even take your hover-car and perform a few stunts to earn some power-up bonuses. Brilliant...

...but not perfect. Despite *Hi-Octane* being superb in what it allows you to do, there are a few failings. As mentioned at the start, the speed isn't quite up to what it should be. It's not slow, just a little sluggish. Some of the high detail could have been sacrificed for a few more frames per second methinks. And the two-player split-screen mode? Well, it's not really worth considering. It's really really slow, more slothful than the *Play* team the morning after a night on the piss, in fact.

The biggest curse? Unlike the PC version, there's no link-up option. Horror! And to top it all, there's no FMV intro sequence. Shame! It's not a bad game, it's a very good game – just let down by a certain lack of 'polish'.





▲ Bugger! I've been killed. Hurry up and put me back on the track big ship thingy!

PLAY verdict

Looks:	
Sounds:	
Octane:	
Value:	

Played 80%

Great fun – for one player.

Your vehicle tonight is...

There are six vehicles to choose from in *Hi-Octane*. All of the hovercars have different attributes, varying through four key areas. As ever, it's a trade up between the various factors so to help you make your choice, here are those tech specs.

Jugga



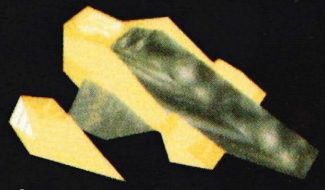
Speed ★★★★
Weight ★★★★★★
Armour ★★★★★
Firepower ★★★★★
This car is not so much a car as a beastly juggernaut. It's acceleration is a bit slow, but over all it's a decent vehicle to command, with decent armour and firepower.

Vampyr



Speed ★★★★★★
Weight ★★★★★★
Armour ★★★★
Firepower ★★★★
This rather strange looking vehicle is a very good all rounder, but is rather large, and can be a little sluggish round corners. It looks pretty cool though.

Outrider



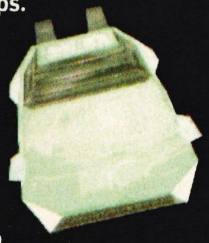
Speed ★★★★★★★★
Weight ★★★★
Armour ★★★
Firepower ★★★★★
This little craft looks like a shuttle from *Star Trek*, and maybe it is. It's fast and handles well, but is quite vulnerable, so lots of weaving is required to escape fire.

Flexiwing



Speed ★★★★★★★★
Weight ★★★★
Armour ★★★★
Firepower ★★★★
Like the outrider, this ship is fast and handles well, but it has slightly less firepower. And it's big, so watch the edges of your wings around tight gaps.

KD-1 Speeder



Speed ★★★★★★
Weight ★★★★★
Armour ★★★★
Firepower ★★★★★
This is my favourite little car. Probably because it looks like a DeLorean but also because it handles well, looks cute and has got decent firepower.

Berserker



Speed ★★★
Weight ★★★★★★
Armour ★★★★★
Firepower ★★★★★★
This mammoth of a ship is as slow as boats, but has good shields and a good arsenal. It's bloody heavy though, so manoeuvrability is low, and watch out for your wings.



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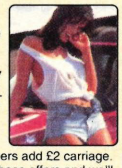
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DOOM

PLAY information

- Publisher: GT Interactive
- Customer support: 0171 258 3791
- Expected price: £44.99
- Expected when: Out Now

The game that inspired a thousand serial killers (only joking!) finally crashes in on the ultimate console for a spot of good old fashioned Demon-maiming. The question is whether or not the initial spark of excellence is still there. Ryan Butt goes dredging through the dungeons.



▼ A twist on the popular Mexican stand-off!

Clones come and go like a flash in the pan... and for one minute I nearly found myself getting a tad bored with this whole 3D maze, cum shoot 'em-up genre. However, after an hour or two's play, it once again became clear why *Doom* established itself as the king and refused to budge despite the heavy competition.

Nothing quite emulates the same tense, claustrophobic atmosphere generated by the master. And as you leg-it down thin windy corridors with a legion of machine-gun toting thugs on your tail, and a horde of demonic... er, demons waiting to pounce around the next corner, you'll agree. Ask any bloke on the street to name a game and *Doom* will undoubtedly top the bill. Ask what's the thrill and you'll be hurled a varied mix of replies ranging from the tactical link-up mode (your average video games journalist), just the sheer thrill of it (broad-minded gamers), and the blood, guts and hacking people up with a chain-saw element (certifiable head-cases).

Whatever your pleasure, you can rest assured that *Doom* caters for everybody – that's why it has won countless accolades and respect in the heart of serious gamers world-wide.

But what about now, nearly two years on from the original? Never fear, this PlayStation edition has been radically improved to keep the theme running smoothly, and rekindle the interest that perhaps may have strayed towards the likes of *Space Hulk*. So what is on show in this extra-large dollop of frenzied-splatter action? Basically a few graphical enhancements and new levels... lots of 'em. *Doom: Sony PlayStation Edition* (to give it the full title) combines the PC *Doom's* one and two, slightly alters the level layout and serves the lot up in one devilish helping that promises full throttle gore all the way. Yes psychos, this means that you get the full arsenal of weapons on one disc including rocket launchers, gatling guns and the notorious chain-saw.







▲ The anti-weight watchers appreciation society decides to invade the dungeons in search of cake and chocolate!

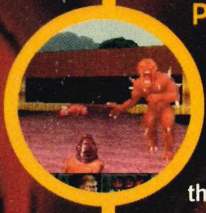


▲ Video killed the radio star? Surely it was me?



Bloody big guns!

Explosive is the only word that does the tense gameplay of *Doom* any justice, and this is mostly due to the incredible array of weapons that are just lying around idle for you to pick up and use. Here is a selection of the best bits of firepower available in the game:



Pistol

Standard single-shooter with a long range. However, it'll take several rounds to floor your average Satan, but thankfully ammo is plentiful.



Shot-gun

This comes with twice the power of the pistol thanks to the double-barrel set-up. Extremely effective against most evils.



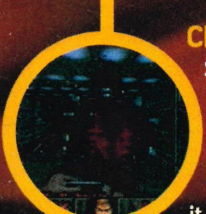
Rocket launcher

Just point this baby in roughly the right direction and it will do the rest. One shot from this rascal and the whole floor will erupt into a torrent of flames.



Gatling gun

This is the best weapon for the sheer buzz of offing whole legions of enemies amidst of squelching cascade of blood and guts... yeah!



Chain saw

Somewhat of a cult item this. The only disadvantage is that you've got to get in close to use it. When you crank it up into action though, you'll be surprised how enjoyable it actually is to stick it through some poor sod's stomach!

Pass the Ketchup

Doom goes down in history as being one of the most gruesome games ever devised. However, here are a few things that are even more grotesque:

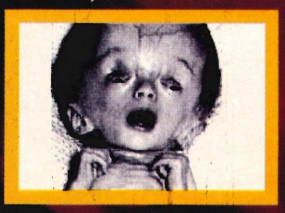
Body Modification

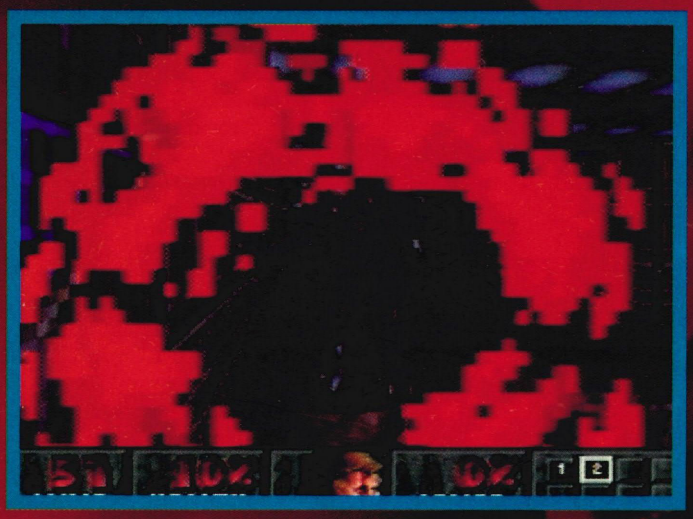
Nails through tongues, pins through willies, breast enlargements, lippo-suction... and what about the sad dork's that insist on having their teeth sharpened in order to look like vampires? What's the point, we are what we are etc. But seriously, why can't these people just get a life and stop being so s**ing self righteous.



Other Dodgy Net Sites

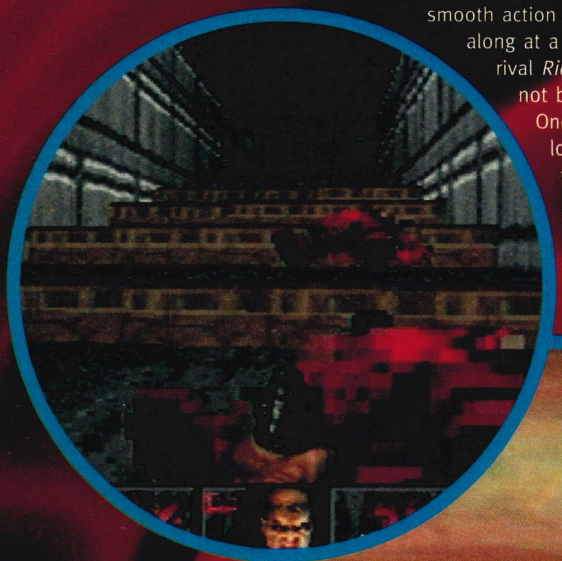
Dan's gallery was only the beginning, there is far more puke-evoking material to be found on the Internet. Take Roadkill Quarterly for example – a whole web site dedicated purely to creatures that have been run over by motor vehicles. Or what about The Booger Homepage – for any snot enthusiasts out there, or if that doesn't send you running to the nearest bog with one hand clenched over your gob then have a gander at David Dennis' Freakshow – a collection of hideous mutants with over-sized gonads, two noses, and the notorious Alien Boy.





▲ **You're supposed to get them BEFORE they get you!**

More important still is that the action runs at a formidable speed, one that would rival even the quickest of PC's. This basically amounts to super-smooth action that belts along at a velocity to rival *Ridge Racer*... not bad.



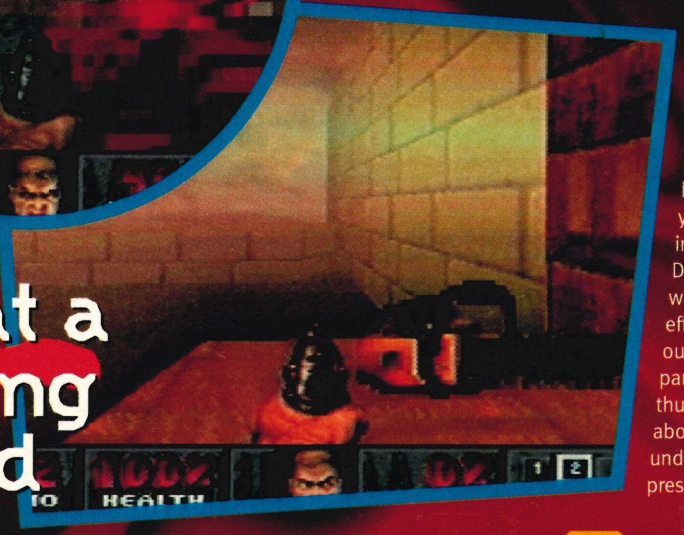
Once you're firmly locked inside the virtual world of *Doom*, the hardest thing is convincing yourself that it is just a game. The basic element is simple – get from one part of the level to another... ha! If only it really were that simple. Apart from encountering the dastardly horde of evils out to reduce you to a bloody, twitching mass of innards in the time it takes to scream, you must search for certain key cards that unlock other vital segments of the levels. Then of course if you want to join the pretentious realm of the obsessive elite, you can kill every life form and uncover every single secret room for extra bonus points at the very end of the level.

There are a few graphical extras, such as the flames and the translucent ghosts but it mainly just looks like it always has before, very chunky and very colourful. Literally just how you would imagine hell on Earth.

In fact everything about this game emulates pure unadulterated evil, right down to the eerie tunes, screams, and grotesque throaty growls that rip through the air whenever something nasty passes nearby. The key to success is to be conservative with your ammo and not, however tempting it may be, just blast in there with guns blazing and plaster everything with bullets. My favourite bit was the strategically placed fuel drums. If you shoot these whenever a throng of nasties are buzzing around, they'll explode and reduce everything within the blast radius to a mashed pulp of contorted bones and skin.

One-player *Doom* is a great laugh but just wait until you get it running in the link-up Deathmatch. This is when the sound effects are drowned out by real life panting and the thumping of hearts about to implode under the intense pressure of getting to

runs at a cracking speed



Faces of Death

Fit and eager to go into battle? Ha! Not for long matey, as soon as those enemy shots come crashing in, your fresh-faced 'ard man rapidly transforms into a deformed wimp. Here we track our hero's deterioration into a blood-soaked snivelling pacifist:

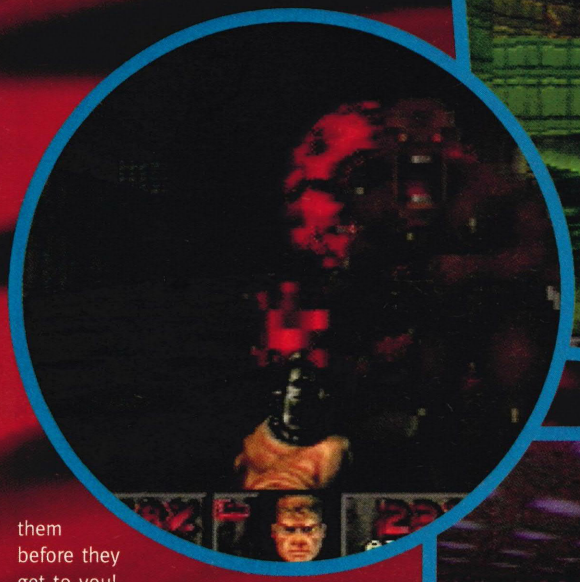


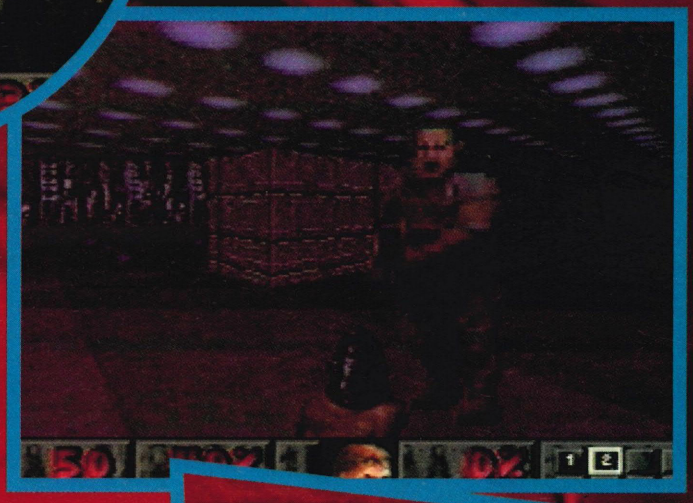
Untouchable
Ready for action.

Nicked
Just cut myself shaving!

▶ Switching to easy-pickings infer-green vision. Lets see those undead soldiers cower in the darkness now!



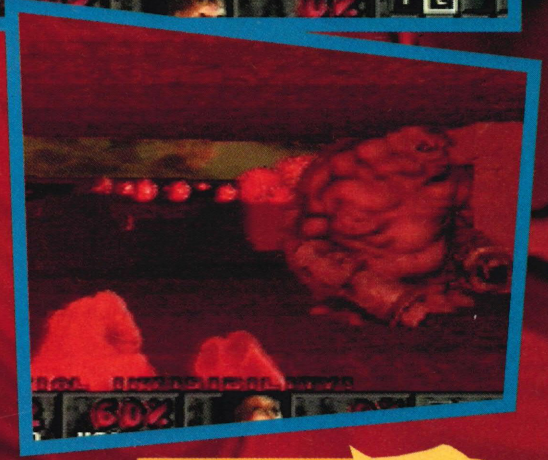




them before they get to you!

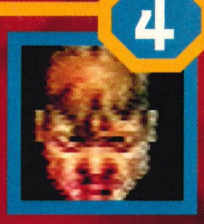
Ultimately, the daddy of them all may now represent dating formula, but if you've never experienced what all the fuss was about in the first place, PlayStation *Doom* is a damn sight cheaper than a top of the range Pentium with all the trimmings, and this is certainly one of the best *Doom's* I've ever had the pleasure of wetting my pants to. Oh bollocks, shouldn't have mentioned that.







Clumsy
You really should look where you're going.



Framed
He just fell down the stairs sir!



Trashed
"Did ya see, I had that Tyson geezer on the ropes, I did"

PLAY verdict

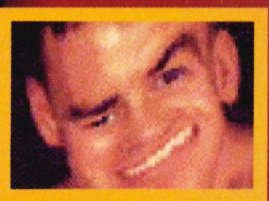
Looks:
Sounds:
Challenge:
Value:

Played 93%
Smooth as silk, more cutting than glass.



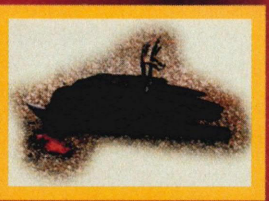
Dan's Gallery of the Grotesque

Undoubtedly one of the best (and worst) Internet sites around has got to be this strange offering from loopy yank, Dan. From John Bobbit's severed todger, to shocking pictures of O.J. Simpson's ex-wife Nicole after the frenzied attack, it's all here in glorious Technicolor for you to marvel and hurl at. If you really wanted to, you could even see what Kurt Cobain looks like without a face thanks to Dan's essential America's Least Wanted archive. Bleugh!



Mallo's Video Collection

Fellow Paragon colleague 'Mallo' hides the shocking revelation that he does in fact probably own probably the biggest and probably sickest collection of video nasties... ever! (probably). His Monday evening viewing material probably includes such timeless classics as *Island of Death*, *Blood Sucking Freaks*, *Rabid Grannies*, *Cannibal Apocalypse*, *Pink Flamingos* (for the singing ring-piece factor) and of course his personal favourite, a rare Betamax copy of *Evil Dead* signed by the star (prob, er, allegedly). Someone call the paddy-wagon.



DarkStalke & Street Fighter A

a new wave of heav

Just when you thought the *Street Fighter* legacy had run out of descendants to pass on the buck, two come along at once. Fine, but has the colossal whoopee cushion that was *Street Fighter II* blown its last raspberry? Is *DarkStalkers* man enough to carry the baton? And where the hell is Cammy?! Ryan Butt goes straight to Capcom of Japan for the answers.

Did you feel the Earth tremor around about spring time? That was *Street Fighter's* reputation clattering to the ground, ruined, broken and destitute!

After a hugely successful stint at the pinnacle of the arcade and console charts with a top-notch run of groundbreaking beat 'em-up action, they cocked it up big time by releasing *Street Fighter: The Movie*. Ok, so it wasn't quite that bad, we even quite liked it for a while here at *Play*, but to an eager throng of fanatics awaiting the next gripping instalment like slavering, ravenous wolves, it was an almighty flying-kick in the goolies!

But on the other hand, as *Street Fighter* reached the inevitable fork-in-the-road, other equally, if not better, beat 'em-up games emerged from Capcom, although unjustifiably overlooked by many of the world's gamesplayers. Take *X-Men: Children of the Atom* for example – cracking stuff that belted out the blows and fancy visuals at such a frantic pace, you could hardly take it all in. Another glory box was the eerie *DarkStalkers*, another fighting game that added the novel twist of drafting in an odd assortment of vampires and werewolves to exchange the blows on-screen. Well, we know that *DarkStalkers* is already under-going the conversion treatment, and to complete a knock-out double whammy, Capcom are also developing a PlayStation version of *Street Fighter Alpha*, their make-or-break prequel to the legendary theme that, if all goes according to plan, should help claw back some of the interest lost after the dreadful movie and its rather dodgy game tie-in wreaked havoc on the almighty *SF* reputation.

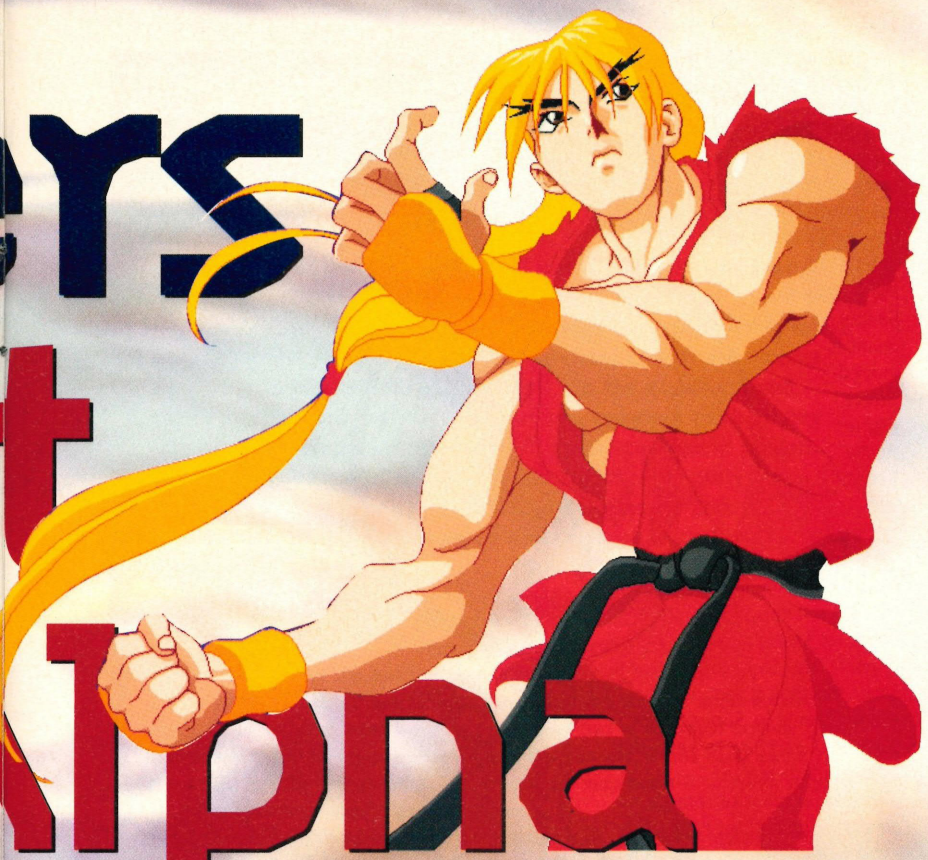
Street Fighter Alpha Features

- **Ten characters, which include the best from the *Street Fighter* series, new fighters created specifically for *Alpha*, plus hidden characters.**
- **Speed select. Yep, from sluggish to bionic, the choice is yours!**
- **Rechargeable Combo bars for even more devastating damage.**
- **The same auto-blocking facilities as seen in *X-Men: Children of the Atom*.**
- **Each character has at least two different Super Combos – providing an even bigger scope for mindless violence... yeah!**
- **New and improved visuals that take on more of a Manga-style appearance complete with stunning animation.**
- **Two different levels of play to compensate for all comers.**
- **Brand new player attributes. In other words characters will either be weaker or stronger than before.**

PLAY information

Design Team: Capcom in-house
Team Leader: Unknown
Where at: 50 % complete
Target Release: March 1996
Publisher: Capcom, distributed by Virgin Interactive

...ers ...t ...lpha ...y weights?



Ask your average gamesplayer on the street what they know about both of these cracking beat 'em-ups and you'd either get vacant stares all round, snippets of fact contorted into a whole lot of bollocks, or just plain assaulted. So first things first, here's what we already know...

Alpha bytes

You could go insane trying to fathom out where *Street Fighter Alpha* sits in the chain. You've got the original way back when, you've got *Street Fighter II*, and this latest addition doesn't appear to have a '3' tagging on anywhere, so what's happening? Simple, Capcom are creating a parallel universe to co-exist with the *Street Fighter* saga we all know and (just about) grasp. They've taken a step back in time to the void gaping between the first and second games, and decided to fill it by inserting an additional segment of plot, just to throw you completely off-balance. Then they've carried Ryu, Ken, Sagat, and





▲ Go on my son, give him one from me. Stretch those legs and see if you can knock that crap mohican straight off his fake-tanned bullet-like blonde bonce.

Meet the motley crew

Make way for a new (or old...er?!) generation of *Street Fighters*. You may be familiar with a few of them, but here's what they were up to before *Street Fighter II*, plus I'll even introduce you to the new blood.



Chun-Li

The continuous search for her father has led pretty Chunners to take up a career in the police force (sob! What a waste!). Now she is on the trail of a notorious drug cartel.

Moves
Burst Kick • Air Throw • Air Stomp
Split Kick • Spin Kick • Fireball

Super Combos
Rush Burst Kick • Super Fireball
Super Spin Kick



Charlie

Operating as a lone wolf, new guy Charlie seeks to expose dodgy dealing between drug cartels and the military. Just don't mistake him for Guile.

Moves
Sonic Boom • Air Throw • Flash Kick
Hop Spin Kick • Hop kick

Super Combos
Sonic Beam • Super Flash kick
Super Dash Kick



Ken

It would appear that Ken is only in the game because he is trying to root out Ryu, after the Jap lad's sensational victory over Sagat in the first *Street Fighter* game.

Moves
Overhead Strike • Ground Roll • Fireball
High Roundhouse • Hurricane Kick
Dragon Punch

Super Combos
Violent Dragon • Still Dragon





Guy

Another new bloke, Guy's in the game to try an turn his fancy ninja skills into real fighting prowess. Although he is successfully earning his stripes on the streets.

Moves

Overhead Strike • Tornado Kick
Bushido Run • Bushido Leap

Super Combos

Bushido Fury • Bushido Rage



Sodom

In his own words "I'm roaming the world in search of powerful allies to help me rebuild the dismantled 'Mad Gear Gang'" Reckon you're 'ard enough?

Moves

Slide Surprise • Sai Strike
Sai Pounce • Carpet Burn

Super Combos

Sai Rush • Sodom Nightmare



Birdie

This bad guy from the very first *Street Fighter* game reckons that the underpaid life of a bodyguard is for the birds. That's why he has set out in pursuit of money and fame... on the street for gawd's sake!

Moves

Headbutt Rush • Turnaround Rush • Chain Grab

Super Combos

Magic Chain Grab
Rush & Attack



Adon

Apparently, Adon is seeking to send the wounded Sagat to his grave, and then lay claim to the title of most dangerous man alive. Charming.

Moves

Jaguar Knee • Jaguar Kick • Wall Pounce

Super Combos

Kickboxer Fury • Slice & Dice



some chump called Birdie forward from the first game, dragged a character from the second game back to add an extra dash of familiarity, and then sprinkled in a generous helping of unknown fighters to make up the numbers. Simple eh? The result is indeed, *Street Fighter Alpha.* Naturally, no self-respecting gamesplayer would buy this tat in a million years, and so Capcom had to include all of the radical features that scored highly in *Super Street Fighter: Turbo* just to keep that ultra-modern feel.



Make no mistake though, *Street Fighter Alpha* runs off a completely different game engine to *SSFII:T*, and so the player must adapt their techniques dramatically in order to stand any sort of chance. Thankfully, there is a safety net for those that find the transition too taxing – namely the 'Super Easy Combo' mode that allows players to ease their way into the carnage by pulling off breathtaking special moves using only two buttons.

The PlayStation version will have all of this and more. Capcom have aimed straight for the coin-op perfection stakes, no extra fancy gimmicks here, just pure, unadulterated violence, as you would experience down at your local arcade.

Brief encounter

Still kept heavily under wraps by Capcom, PlayStation *Street Fighter Alpha* is currently anywhere between 50-75% complete, but for a more accurate picture, we spoke to the head honcho at Capcom of Japan's International Sales Department, Mr. Yamaguchi.

Play: So Mr. Yamaguchi, *Street Fighter Alpha* obviously made a big impact at the arcades, how does the home version compare technically, speed wise, and in the frame rate?

MY: Confidential.

Play: Right. (Um, I think we need to adopt a different approach here). Where does the appeal of *Street Fighter* derive from? What do you think is the secret of its huge success?

MY: Originally, *Street Fighter II* was made to target overseas countries since we noticed that people like to play using unknown characters. Therefore we decided to release not only an action game, but something new which would be accepted by the public. People then realised how well the game was set up.

Play: Does *Street Fighter Alpha* offer the player anything new that has never been seen in a *Street Fighter* game before? Basically, why is *Street Fighter Alpha* so special?

MY: The concept of *Street Fighter Alpha* was to create a game that can be played not only by advanced players, but by beginners as well. For advanced players, 'Super Combo' has evolved dramatically. All of the characters have more than two super combos, plus it now has three different levels of super combo gauge. For beginners, it has a new system called 'Super Easy Combo'. You may use this when pressing two buttons simultaneously when the gauge has climbed to the first level. Please note that the first level is as high as you can climb on the combo gauge in easy mode, therefore the player gets less opportunity to turn the tables.

Play: Where does *Street Fighter* go from here? Can you go on from here?

MY: We must consider the market situation first, however, if there is a market demand, we will supply a new version of *Street Fighter.*

Play: *SF 3D* – a viable concept?

MY: We are currently developing '*Street Fighter 3D*', however, we don't know whether the title of it will contain '*Street Fighter*' or not!

Very cagey these Capcom types.

Don't Look Back In Anger

Whoever could have believed that it has been eight long years since the phenomenon that has come to be known as *Street Fighter* was unleashed upon an unsuspecting world? Admittedly, the original arcade machine didn't exactly set arcades alight. But a bold move by Capcom back to the drawing board meant that the now legendary sequel was spawned as the dying embers of the original were pissed-on by the coin-toting punters. As we kiss goodbye to an era with the arrival of possibly the last ever *Street Fighter* game, let us bow our heads and remember the game that changed beat 'em-ups forever...

Street Fighter (1987)

A rather iffy coin-op that substituted joysticks for incredibly un-user friendly punch pads took an even bigger turn for the worse when it was converted onto the popular home computers of the time. Very dodgy to say the least, but at least this paved the way for improvement and introduced what were possibly to become two of the most famous game characters in recent years, Ryu and Ken. Who knows, if this early game was a success instead of a proverbial dog turd, we may never have been gripped by the compelling *Street Fighter II* dynasty.

Formats: Arcade, PC, Amiga, Atari ST, CBM 64/128, Spectrum 48K/+3

Street Fighter 2010 (1990)

Bleugh! The name implies that this game was in some way related to the series, but it should be treated as a money-grabbing distant relative. Write it out of the will, sever all communication and in no circumstances ever utter the confounded name again, not even in jest.

Formats: NES

Street Fighter II (1990)

All hail the arrival of the new king! *Street Fighter II* was to gaming what Ben Hur was to movies – a fabulous roller-coaster of slick presentation and amazing action that completely sucks you in. It featured eight selectable fighters plus four extra heavies that acted as end of game bosses. If you've never played this game... you've never lived, basically!

Formats: Arcade, SNES, PC, Game Boy(?)

Street Fighter II: Championship Edition (1992)

As the world's gamers went ballistic over *Street Fighter II*, Capcom were compelled to begin what has now become a long chain of upgrades to satisfy popular demand. This first upgrade featured selectable bosses, improved graphics and sound, plus it enabled two players to select the same character.

Formats: Arcade

Street Fighter II: Turbo (1992)

Otherwise known as *SFII: Hyper Fighting*, this further upgrade gave the existing characters new moves, whilst beefing-up their conventional attributes. More importantly though, it was a damn sight faster than the previous games offering an even greater challenge.

Formats: Arcade, SNES

Street Fighter II: Special Championship Edition (1993)

After what was thought to be an exclusive run on the SNES, Sega owners were delighted when, at last, the game was ported over to the Mega Drive. This version was the same as the arcade *Championship Edition*, apart from the inclusion of special tournament modes.

Formats: Mega Drive





Rose

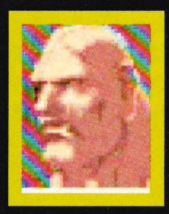
This bird was one of the babes in *DarkStalkers 2* fact fans! Her goal here is to track down dark forces and stamp them out with her 'Soul Power'. And she looks like such a sweet little thing.

Moves

Slide • Soul Spark • Soul Reflect • Soul Catch

Super Combos

Mega Soul Spark • Super Soul Catch
Soul Images



Sagat

This bloke has been a bad chappie in both of the previous *Street Fighter* games, so what the hell if pops up for another stab at the crown. Wounded by Ryu, this guy is really fuming now!

Moves

Tiger Wave • Tiger uppercut
Tiger Knee

Super Combos

Super Tiger Knee • Tiger Genocide • Tiger Fury

Akuma



The hidden character in *SSFII:T* returns to cast his evil influence over the proceedings. Mr. Akuma told us this morning: "After discovering the lethal Shoryuken, I now roam the world in search of opponents worthy of my skill". Hasn't he got anything better to do?!

Moves (gasp!)

Blue Fireball • Red Fireball • Air Fireball
Air Dive Kick • Air Rush • Air Rush Kick
Air Throw • Ground Roll • Hurricane Kick
Dragon Punch • Teleport Near • Teleport Far

Super Combos

Violent Dragon • Air Surprise
Super Fireball • Bison Killer



M. Bison

Who's this strange perverted geezer barely into puberty? Gosh, it's the great man himself. When pressed for his excuse for being in *Alpha*, Bison punched me and said "No one will be able to stop me from taking over the world!". Fine.

Moves

Energy Sphere • Air Stomp
Demon Flight • Teleport

Super Combos

Psycho Crusher • Knee Nightmare



Dan

Hot on the heels of Sagat (what? Another one?) for the death of his father, hard man Dan is probably the game's most ferocious adversary.

Moves

Overhead Strike • Fireball • Tornado kick
Dragon Punch

Super Combos

Super Fireball • Desperation Move • Still Dragon

Finally... the hidden characters

Tucked away deep within the circuitry of *Street Fighter Alpha* are three deadly foes that will make mince-meat of your worthless hide. Here they are!

Sheng Long

Ryu and Ken's fictional master is in actual fact a living, breathing nightmare.

Spiral

Oh no, it's an *X-Men* invasion, if Spiral gets hold of you, expect your entrails to be knotted into slushy pulp. Gulp!

Wolverine

Yep, even the legendary claw-meister is here. No laughing now!

Super Street Fighter II (1993)

After the conventional *Street Fighter II* upgrades were getting a tad monotonous, Capcom immediately hit back by releasing this mutha. Featuring four brand new fighters in addition to the existing eight (plus the controllable bosses taking the total up to a staggering 16!), plus extra backdrops to accompany the new blood, this was a step in the right direction towards the much speculated about *Street Fighter III*. The existing line-up boasted a whole host of fresh new moves and combos... the only problem was that the speed had been sacrificed.
Formats: Arcade, SNES, Mega Drive

Super Street Fighter II: Turbo (1994)

Surprise, surprise, no prizes for guessing why this upgrade was introduced. Give the game its credit though, this featured yet more moves for the existing players, introduced great new 'super moves' that are triggered via a special power bar, plus it even chucked a new character into the mix – a secret mystic geezer called Akuma.
Formats: Arcade, 3Do

Street Fighter: The Movie (1995)

Practically the same as *Super Street Fighter II: Turbo*, this swapped the familiar cartoon style visuals for digitally recreated scenes and characters from the ill-fated film. It was NOT good. However, it did introduce a brand new character from the movie, Sawada, but where the hell was Dhalsim?
Formats: Arcade, Sega Saturn, Sony PlayStation



◀ That's an awfully large protuberance atop your shoulders if I may say so madam. Who says the Play boys swear all the time?
▼ Crappin' hell, electric frying or what?

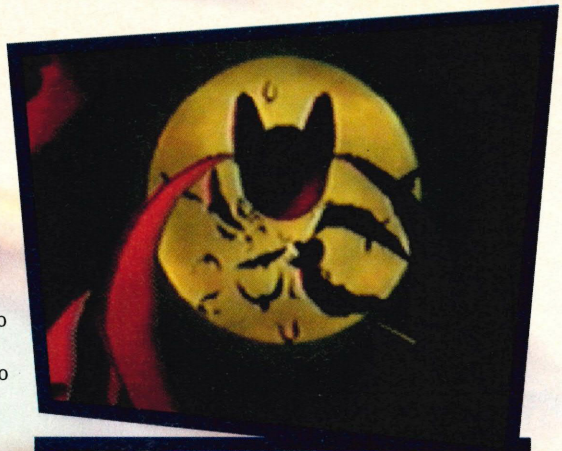




Features of Darkstalkers

- Ten varied ghoulish characters plus bosses.
- Special combo meter
- Super finishing moves similar to those in *SSFII:T.*
- Fabulously animated cartoon visuals that stretch the familiar *Street Fighter* appearance to breaking point.

Heart of Darkness



The lesser-known of the two corking Capcom beat 'em-ups currently on the way to the PlayStation is *DarkStalkers: The Night Warriors*. Fans of the *Street Fighter* series will be instantly able to get to grips with the savage gameplay – but relating to the grim assortment of characters could be a slightly harder task... they're all either weirdoes or monsters!



However, despite the horrific subject matter, *DarkStalkers* takes a slightly more tongue in cheek approach to the fighting theme with witty, and at times hilarious special moves and visual effects. Take the intro for example, it pounds along to an un-spooky song that sounds remarkably like the *Scooby Doo* theme music.

This game has already spawned a sequel in the arcades, but with the PlayStation version, Capcom are taking things one step at a time. According to Capcom, *DarkStalkers* was the first beat 'em-up to use monsters as characters, and so were able to give them far-out abilities and skills that couldn't feasibly be accessible to human characters.

Weird and wonderful

The game features ten unworldly fighters that range from werewolves to zombies, and from Frankenstein monsters to vampires – yes you've guessed, this isn't your normal or conventional fighting game.

Although *DarkStalkers* utilises the same basic game mechanics as *Street Fighter*, there are several noticeable differences that make this game stand out as something special in its own right. For starters the special moves can be pulled off in the air with the minimum of charge – making for quick-fire rapid rounds, the likes of which you've never experienced before.

Like *Super Street Fighter II: Turbo*, there is a special moves meter present on-screen that climbs as you dish out blows. When this reaches the top, your chosen character can unleash devastating combo and killer moves that rip straight through your unworthy opponent.

Having already taken the arcades by storm (although I can't say I've ever stumbled across a machine!), *DarkStalkers* has apparently been hailed as one of the most challenging, powerful, and absorbing fighting games of all time. If Capcom fulfill their promise of not leaving anything out for the PlayStation version, we should all be in for a thumping good time.



◀ This is how pissed off teddy bears get if you fill 'em full of steroids and pop 'em in the freezer.

Meet the Feebles!

Just to ease you into the style of *DarkStalkers*, here is the complete run-down of combatants. Oops... I think I may have just pooped my pants! (what, again? – Ed)

Huitzil

a strange goonish robot from Mexico. Similar to that walking Heinz baked bean can in *Lost in Space*!

Pyron

an odd bull-like alien from Hellstorm, wherever that is! I wouldn't like to be around when he gets the horn!

Victor

This guy is based upon Frankenstein's monster, except he's kitted out in trendy gear and has enormous fists. All the better for pummelling you with.

Morrigan

I don't quite know what this lass is supposed to be, but if her rubber attire is anything to go by, she's one hell of a vamp!

Anakasris

Missing your mummy, not this bloody one that's for sure! Come back Boris Karlof, everything is forgiven.

Bishamon

Not so much a monster, more a boring old Samurai from Japan. He could be dead however, we can't quite tell.

Demitri

This slick gentleman is a genuine vampire from Romania. I don't ever remember seeing Chistopher Lee in a purple leotard though.

Felicia

A catwoman would you believe! Michelle Pfeiffer's got nothing on this playful pussy!

Jon Talbain

This is England's offering, a hairy wolfman complete with foaming mouth and map of the Yorkshire dales.

Lord Raptor

The best Australia could muster was this jolly zombie. Obviously too much Fosters has had its toll on the poor sozzled chap.

Rikuo

This ponce is a merman from Brazil, not your conventional, everyday fish-tailed freak though, this guy's hard as nails.

Sasquatch

Self-explanatory really, this goon is a savage big-foot from darkest Canada. Quite cuddly really!

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Mortal Kombat 3



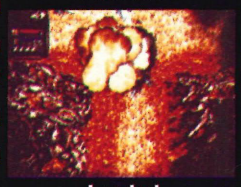
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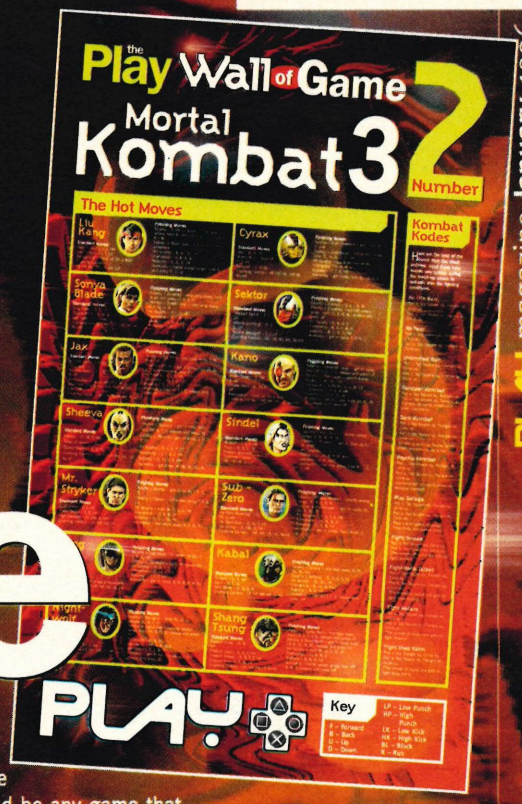
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Wall of Game



We're flying high now folks. Last month's Wall of Game series kicked off with a compendium of combat featuring the world's greatest heavy weight beat 'em-up, *Tekken*. Naturally, there was only one feasible way of following this up and that was by splashing the centre spread with a selection of killer *Kombat Kodes* and the harshest moves imaginable from... er, the second best beat 'em-up ever, *Mortal Kombat 3*.

Let us just say that squeezing the delicious delights of *MK3* onto two pages was no easy task, and inevitably, some things had to go. So selective were we in choosing what was to go in that several of the lesser-used standard special moves had to be dismissed (you should all know how to do them by now anyway). However, by doing this, we were able to ensure that each and every Fatality, Friendship, Babality, Grannyality and Bernard Manning-ality (sorry, we couldn't resist it!) took prime position on the legendary Wall of Game.

If you have any personal favourites, or games that you feel deserve a spot of special treatment then don't hesitate to write in and demand that they make an appearance.

Remember, it doesn't necessarily have to be a beat 'em-up, it could be any game that consists of complex commands or extensive strategies, you know, anything that takes more than a fleeting glance at the instruction manual to master. Get cracking.

Mortal Kombat 3

There may not be any swirly camera angles or polygon fighters to speak of, but if it's an unsurpassed two dimensional, skull-crushing gore-a-thon you're seeking from your next generation console, then few would dare deny *MK3* fits the bill perfectly. Featuring a vast collection of crazies both new and old, *MK3* doesn't shy away from splattering the player with more over the top sickness combined with devilish combat combos and ultra-original special moves that have made the hugely successful series a controversial topic of conversation. Simply bursting with deeply hidden secrets and trade-mark finishing moves, *MK3* pushes the *Mortal Kombat* dynasty to breaking point, brushing aside the boundaries of good taste and erecting its own standards for other lesser combat games to follow. Make no mistake, *MK3* goes straight for the jugular and will continue to shock and impress in equal measures for some considerable time to come.

Played 93%
Bloody unbeatable stuff gore fans!

PLAY information
- **Publisher:** Sony
- **Customer support:** 0881 505505*
- **Price:** £49.99
- **Out:** NOW

*Sony customer support line is charged at 39p/min (peak) 25p/min (off peak)

the Play Wall of Game

Mortal Kombat 3

Number 2

The Hot Moves

Liu Kang



Standard moves
High Fireball – F, F, HP
Low Fireball – F, F, LP
Bicycle Kick – Hold LK for 3 secs
Crushing Combo –
HP, HP, BL, LK, LK, HK, LK

Finishing Moves
Fatality 1 (Coin-op Splat) – From anywhere, hold BL and press U, D, U, U and R + BL.
Fatality 2 (Burn Out) – F, F, D, D, LK from anywhere.
Pit Fatality – R, BL, BL, LK
Friendship – R, R, R, D
Babality – D, D, D, HK
Animality – Inside sweep range, hold BL and press D, D, U.

Cyrax



Standard Moves
Net – B, B, LK
Bomb (far) – hold LK, F, F, HK
Teleport – F, D, BL
Crushing Combo – HP, HP, HK, HP, HK, BL+HK

Finishing Moves
Fatality 1 (Self Destruct) – get close, D, D, F, U+R
Fatality 2 (Heli-Slice) – full screen away, hold BL, D, D, U, D, HP
Pit Fatality – tap R+BL repeatedly
Friendship – R, R, R, U
Babality – F, F, B, HP
Animality – get close, hold BL, U, U, D, D

Sonya Blade



Standard moves
Ring Toss – D, F, LP
Bicycle Kick – B, B, D, LK
Leg Grab – D, LP+BL
Crushing Combo – HK, HK, HP, HP, LP, BL+HP

Finishing Moves
Fatality 1 (Crusher) – one jump away, hold BL+R and press U, U, B, D
Fatality 2 (Death Kiss) – one jump away, B, F, D, D, R
Pit Fatality – F, F, D, HP
Friendship – B, F, B, D, R
Babality – D, D, F, LK
Animality – LP, F, F, D, F, LP

Sektor



Standard Moves
Teleport Punch – F, F, LK
Missile (homing) – F, D, B, HP
Missile (straight) – F, F, LP
Crushing Combo – HP, HP, HK, HK, BL+HK

Finishing Moves
Fatality 1 (Flamer) – F, F, F, B, BL
Fatality 2 (Crusher) – outside sweep range, hold LP, R, R, BL, release and press LP
Pit Fatality – R, R, R, D
Friendship – R, R, R, R, D
Babality – B, D, D, D, HK
Animality – get in close, F, F, D, U

Jax



Standard Moves
Ground Slam – hold LK for 3 secs
Missiles (two) – F, F, B, B, HP
Backbreaker – tap BL whilst in air
Multislam – tap throw and then rapidly press HP

Finishing Moves
Fatality 1 (Big Foot) – one jump away, R, BL, R, R, LK
Fatality 2 (Slicer) – get in close, hold BL, U, D, F, U, release and press BL
Pit Fatality – D, F, D, LP
Friendship – LK, R, R, LK
Babality – D, D, D, LK
Animality – hold LP, F, F, D, release and press LP

Kano



Standard Moves
Knife Throw – D, DB, B, HP
Choke Hold – D, DF, F, LP
Kannonball – hold LK for 3 secs
Crushing Combo – HP, HP, HK, LK, BL+HK

Finishing Moves
Fatality 1 (Skeleton Grab) – get in close, hold LP, F, D, D, F, release and press LP
Fatality 2 (Eye Laser) – within sweep range, LP, BL, BL, HK
Pit Fatality – hold BL, U, U, B, LK
Friendship – LK, R, R, HK
Babality – F, F, D, D, LK
Animality – get in close, hold HP, BL, BL, BL, release and press HP

Kombat Kodes

Here are the best of the bunch from the cheat archives. Input these commands very quickly during the match-up screen to radically alter the fighting conditions.

No Life Bars
Pad 1: Tap Square x9, Triangle x8, Circle x7.
Pad 2: Tap Square x1, Triangle x2, Circle x3.

No Fear
Pad 1: Tap Square x2, Triangle x8, Circle x2.
Pad 2: Tap Square x2, Triangle x8, Circle x2.

Unlimited Run
Pad 1: Tap Square x4, Triangle x6, Circle x6.
Pad 2: Tap Square x4, Triangle x6, Circle x6.

Randper Kombat
Pad 1: Tap Square x4, Triangle x6.
Pad 2: Tap Square x4, Triangle x6.
(Fighters randomly morph into other characters)

Crushing Combo – HK, HK, D+HP, HP, BL, LP

Sheeva



Standard Moves
Fireball – D, DF, F, HP
Teleport Stomp – D, U
Quake Stomp – B, D, B, HK
Crushing Combo – HP, HP, LP, HK, HK, LK, B+HK

Finishing Moves
Fatality 1 (Ripskin) – get in close and hold HK, B, F, F, release and press HK
Fatality 2 (Pound) – get in close, F, D, D, F, LP
Pit Fatality – D, F, D, F, LP
Friendship – F, F, D, F, HP
Babality – D, D, D, B, HK
Animality – get close, R, BL, BL, BL, BL

Sindel



Standard Moves
Scream – F, F, F, HP
Float – B, B, F, HK
Fireball (ground) – F, F, LP
Crushing Combo – HK, HP, HP, D+LP

Finishing Moves
Fatality 1 (Hair Tangle) – inside sweep range, R, R, BL, R, BL
Fatality 2 (Scream) – get in close, R, BL, Bl, R+BL
Pit Fatality – D, D, D, LP
Friendship – R, R, R, R, R+U
Babality – R, R, R+U
Animality – one step away, hold BL, F, F, U, HP

Mr. Stryker



Standard Moves
Clothesline – F, F, HK
Ankle Swipe – F, B, LP
High Grenade – D, DB, B, HP
Crushing Combo – LK, HP, HP, LP

Finishing Moves
Fatality 1 (Bomb) – get close, D, F, D, F, BL
Fatality 2 (Taser) – full screen away, F, F, F, LK
Pit Fatality – hold BL, F, U, U, HK
Friendship – LP, R, R, LP
Babality – D, F, F, BL, HP
Animality – two steps away, R, R, R, BL

Sub - Zero



Standard Moves
Ice Rain (homing) – D, DF, F, HP
Ice Rain (far) – D, B, F, HP
Ice Decoy – D, DB, B, LP
Crushing Combo – HP, HP, LP, HK, B+HK

Finishing Moves
Fatality 1 (Freeze Breath) – inside sweep range, B, B, D, B, R
Fatality 2 (Ice Smash) – get in close, BL, BL, R, BL, R
Pit Fatality – B, D, F, F, HK
Friendship – LK, R, R, U
Babality – D, B, B, HK
Animality – get in close, hold BL+R, F, U, U

Kung Lao



Standard Moves
Hat Toss – B, F, LP
Teleport – D, U
Shield Spin – F, D, F, then tap R repeatedly
Crushing Combo – HP, LP, HP, LP, LK, LK, HK

Finishing Moves
Fatality 1 (Hat Slice) – in sweep range, F, F, B, D, HP
Fatality 2 (Tornado) – D+BL+R repeatedly
Pit Fatality – D, D, F, F, LK
Friendship – R, LP, R, LK
Babality – D, F, F, HP
Animality – get in close, R, R, R, R, R, BL

Kabal



Standard Moves
Fireball – B, B, HP
Spin – B, F, LK
Saw Blade – B, B, B, R
Crushing Combo – LK, LK, HP, HP, D+HP

Finishing Moves
Fatality 1 (Scare) – one step away, R, BL, BL, BL, HK
Fatality 2 (Inflate) – D, D, B, F, BL
Pit Fatality – BL, BL, HK
Friendship – R, LK, R, R+U
Babality – R, R, LK
Animality – hold HP, F, F, D, release and press HP

Night-wolf



Standard Moves
Arrow – D, DB, B, LP
Shield – B, B, B, HK
Axe Uppercut – D, DF, F, HP
Crushing Combo – LK, HP, HP, LP, HK

Finishing Moves
Fatality 1 (Skylight) – hold BL, U, U, release BL, B, F, BL
Fatality 2 (Lightning) – outside sweep range, hold HP, B, B, D, release and press HP
Pit Fatality – R, R, BL
Friendship – HP, R, R, R+D
Babality – F, B, F, B+LP
Animality – get close, hold BL, F, F, D, release and press BL

Shang Tsung



Standard Moves
Fireball (one) – B, B, HP
Fireball (two) – B, B, F, HP
Fireball (three) – B, B, F, F, HP
Ground Fire – F, B, B, LK
Crushing Combo – LK, HP, HP, LP, B+HK

Finishing Moves
Fatality 1 (Spike Bed) – one step away, hold LP, D, F, F, D, release and press LP
Fatality 2 (Soul Suck) – get in close, hold LP, R, BL, R, BL, release and press LP
Pit Fatality – hold BL, U, U, B, LP
Friendship – LK, R, R, D
Babality – R, R, R, LK
Animality – inside sweep range, hold HP, R, R, R, release and press HP

Dark Kombat
Pad 1: Tap Square x6, Triangle x8, Circle x8.
Pad 2: Tap Square x4, Triangle x2, Circle x2.
(Screen is dark but flashes briefly when someone scores a hit)

Psycho Kombat
Pad 1: Tap Square x9, Triangle x8, Circle x5.
Pad 2: Tap Square x1, Triangle x2, Circle x5.
(Combination of Dark Kombat and Randper Kombat)

Play Galaga
Pad 1: Tap Square x6, Triangle x4, Circle x2.
Pad 2: Tap Square x4, Triangle x6, Circle x8.
(Play a brief game of Galaga. Three lives, any button fires)

Fight Smoke
Pad 1: Tap Square x2, Circle x5.
Pad 2: Tap Square x2, Circle x5.
(The winner of round one gets to fight Smoke)

Fight Noob Salbot
Pad 1: Tap Square x7, Triangle x6, Circle x9.
Pad 2: Tap Square x3, Triangle x4, Circle x2.
(The winner of round one gets to fight Noob Salbot)

Fight Motaro
Pad 1: Tap Square x9, Triangle x6, Circle x9.
Pad 2: Tap Square x1, Triangle x4, Circle x1.
(The winner of round one gets to fight Motaro)

Fight Shao Kahn
Pad 1: Tap Triangle x3, Circle x3.
Pad 2: Tap Square x5, Triangle x6, Circle x4.
(The winner of round one gets to fight Shao Kahn)

PLAY

Key

F – Forward
B – Back
U – Up
D – Down
LP – Low Punch
HP – High Punch
LK – Low Kick
HK – High Kick
BL – Block
R – Run

Defending a mining outpost from attack isn't normally in an engineer's job description. Asam KV gets his overalls out and battles against the odds in...

Defcon 5

PLAY information

- **Publisher:** Sony Interactive
- **Customer support:** 0151 282 3333
- **Expected price:** £39.99
- **Expected when:** January 23rd

Before I get in to this review I must say that this game won't appeal to everyone. *Defcon 5* is a real tense action game, the sort that makes your heart beat that little bit faster – like hearing faint footsteps following behind you when you're walking down an unlit alleyway. The atmosphere keeps you on the edge of your seat, so you feel right in the thick of it. So, why won't it appeal to everyone? Well, you see, *Defcon 5* is a thinking man's game. This doesn't mean it's hard, though it is, but more that in order to complete this game, you really must keep your wits about you.

So what's it about then? In *Defcon 5*, you take the role of a 'cyberneer' given the seemingly simple task of installing automatic defence software on to the computer systems on a mining resource planet owned by, the Tyron corporation. However, all is not quite right, and during your spell on the planet, and for the first time in nearly 200 years, there is an alien attack. Well, it must be aliens, mustn't it?

Defcon 5 is a very varied game, combining several different styles of gameplay into one cleverly executed package. There are arcade sequences, played on the planet's surface, where you must shoot down your assailants mixed with a corridor style game where you must travel around the outpost complex, finding objects, accessing the computer VOS terminals and fighting any intruders that make it into the building.

Feel overcome by the taut atmosphere

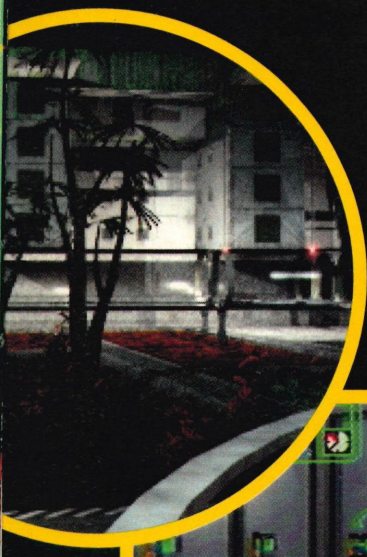
All the sections of the game are well designed, and as you play, you can't help but feel overcome by the taut atmosphere of the whole thing. No matter what you do, apart from when pausing the game, the action keeps on, and any hesitation can be fatal. This means that even if you are accessing the computer terminals, say to control combat or recon droids or to adjust the software parameters for the defence system, you still have to be aware of the possibility that an alien berserker might come up to you and shoot you in the back. The action is relentless. There is a small down-side to this speed, however. The game area is huge, with several levels and areas to explore. For this reason, it can take you several attempts to actually get anywhere in the

▼ This babe gives you your briefing for your mission the first time you log on to the VOS. And she blows you a little kiss to perk you up a bit...





▶ The self destruct PAD is required to destroy the base should it get overrun by nasties





▶ One of the alien berserkers has made it into the base. Tactical shooting and er, running away is advised.



▲ You'll need a droid PAD to control the little fellas, to salvage debris and guard the base at strategic points.





▼ The software control PAD is essential, to activate the automatic defence systems and control the parameters.



game, as you must also memorise how you did things, where you found the access control devices and things like ammunition or health. With constant voice prompts, you can easily feel out of depth when you can't keep up with the advice given to you, but it is most definitely worth persevering with. Once you have reached this stage though, having died several times in the process, the game really unfolds and actually does become very rewarding the further and further you get.

All in all, *Defcon 5* is a very well structured game that forces you to think fast to ensure survival. In this respect it is unlike any other game I have come across on the PlayStation. With most other games, you can start again should you die, having saved your game earlier. You can save your game in *Defcon 5* too, but with time at a premium, you'll probably want to go right back to the start each go to reduce as much time as possible time during the early stages. Top tense stuff.

PLAY verdict

Looks: ■■■■■■■■■■

Sounds: ■■■■■■■■■■

Suspense: ■■■■■■■■■■

Value: ■■■■■■■■■■

Played 88%

Don't throw away the manual.

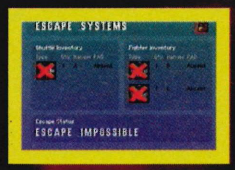
VOS all this?

The VOS is your lifeline to the whole game. This interactive computer system holds an immense array of information that must not be overlooked whilst playing the game. Apart from anything else, the information provided in the archives on the base systems can really help you to tweak the defence software for maximum efficiency and safety. Here are some of the VOS screens in full.



This is the main screen of the interactive 3D menu system. From here, you can access a 'globe tree system' for all the various screens.

This screen shows you what you will need should you need to make a hasty retreat. Unfortunately, I have to get the various shuttle and fighter pads at the moment.

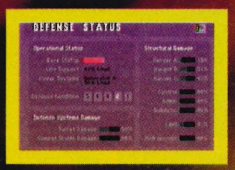




From here you can deploy either a reconnaissance or combat droid, once you have the relevant PAD.

You can direct your recon droids to salvage as much as possible from ships that have been shot down.





The status of your defence systems is very important to keep track of. From here you can see how badly your turrets are damaged.

The archives have lots of information contained within them. Be prepared to read very, very quickly...





Fancy a little jaunt? The VOS has a map of the area, so you can plan your destination, should you actually escape...

Assault Rigs

Trembling in the wake of *Wipeout* and *Destruction Derby* comes that difficult third game from Sony Interactive. We weren't expecting much but *Assault Rigs* left Ryan Butt mildly impressed.

I really didn't know what to think about this game at first. Even after we'd played it for a while, we all still differed in our opinion of its merits.

No problems at the very, very start, we were all suitably blown away by the intro that consisted of scantily clad rendered babes with wobbly boobs, and the futuristic Tron style visuals (hey, we're easy to please – Ed). But when we actually got into the game, you know the bit you pay for, a colossal tidal wave of disappointment swept across my face – it was like being a rich brat expect-ing a Porsche for Christmas, and your dad brings home a Ford Fiesta... aargh!



The flash shiny graphics of the intro had been replaced by *Cyber Sled* material that looks as though it had slipped off the back of a 3DO... and the control method was so sensitive that even the slightest touch of the directional pad had my rig cartwheeling across the battlefield like a pirouetting ballerina on speed.

After much cursing of the controls, I realised this game wasn't going to impress me straight away and so had to grit my teeth and get down to long-term playing sessions to form any sort of fair opinion. Yep, my favourite arsenal of insults had to be chucked in the bin... I knew deep down there was something good about this game, I just couldn't think what!

To assist me in my analysis, we set up an impressive television wall and got the link-up mode going in full force. It was only after thrashing Lynchy countless times (er, sorry, don't remember that – Ed) in the battle mode that I was finally sold. *Assault Rigs* is a pretty good game (shock, horror!).

What made this game for me was the tactical elements coupled with the wicked weapons from hell that you can accumulate and use to blow the crap out of everything – my favourite undoubtedly being the Guided Missile. Once you've got these babies, all you have to do is fire one off and then the view switches to that of the missile itself... as if some strategically placed camcorder had been accidentally sellotaped to the top. You can then control the direction of the missile, guiding it around the level until your opponent comes well into view and then pow!

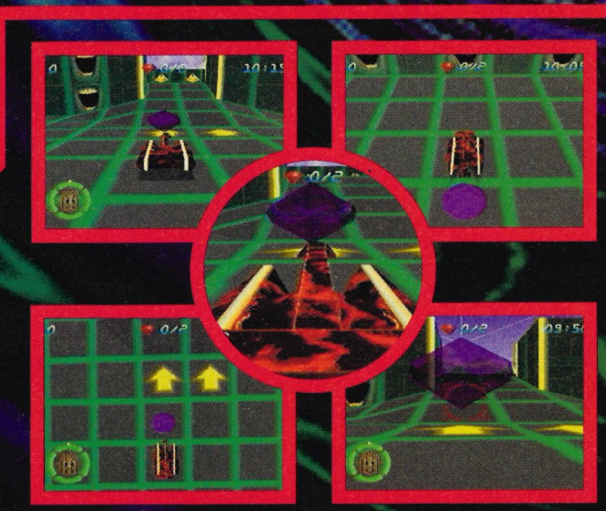
Once you get past the sensitive controls and actually learn how to effectively dart around the deviously constructed levels, this game

PLAY information

- **Publisher:** Sony Interactive
- **Customer support:** 0151 2823333
- **Expected price:** £39.99
- **Expected when:** January

Friggin' in the Riggin'

Why are these games so bogged down with different perspectives? Why don't the programmers just stick a couple in and be done with it? Instead they give the player the scope to view the action from inside, outside, above, below, here, there, and every bloody where. Just look at these angles, I ask you, are they really necessary?









These pretty twinkles mean you've just picked up a gem.

Never go into one-on-one combat without protection!

The controls are so sensitive

becomes compelling to play. Admittedly, the main one player game is a bit dull. You just zoom around collecting gems like in Jumping Flash, whilst obliterating enemy tanks and gun turrets. Once they've been nabbed, you just screech to the exit and progression is inevitable. No, what you need to fully appreciate this game are two TV's, a couple of PlayStations and a link-up cable... you know, nothing honest Bob down the market can't sort you out with (although the last time I bought a TV off of him, I accidentally incinerated my granny).

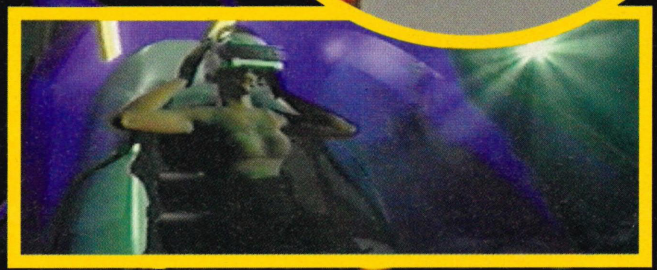
As you progress through the levels, the graphical appearance does take a turn for the better – everything becomes text-mapped with fabulous detail spilling out of every pore. Even the music gets better as it veers towards the realms of funky beats and screeching guitars... they even ripped off Herbie Hancock's 'Hang up your hang ups' track as well, very sneaky!

For strategically-minded sadists, the link-up game of *Assault Rigs* is unbeatable, but for those destined to play on their lonesome, I would perhaps recommend *Jumping Flash* or something a bit more up-tempo, as this gets stupidly hard and mind-numbingly boring before too long.

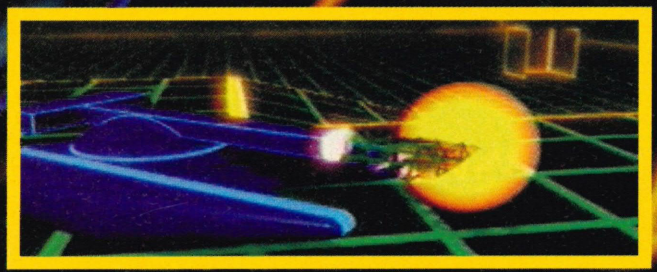


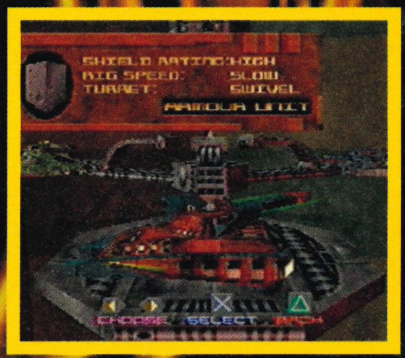


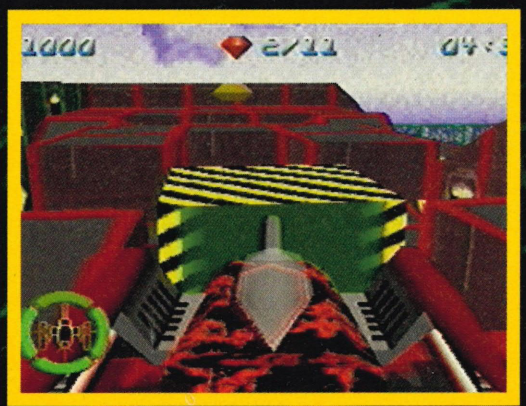
There are three different types of rig to select. The design of the vehicles alters slightly depending the levels.



If only the rigs in the actual game looked as smooth as this.









PLAY verdict

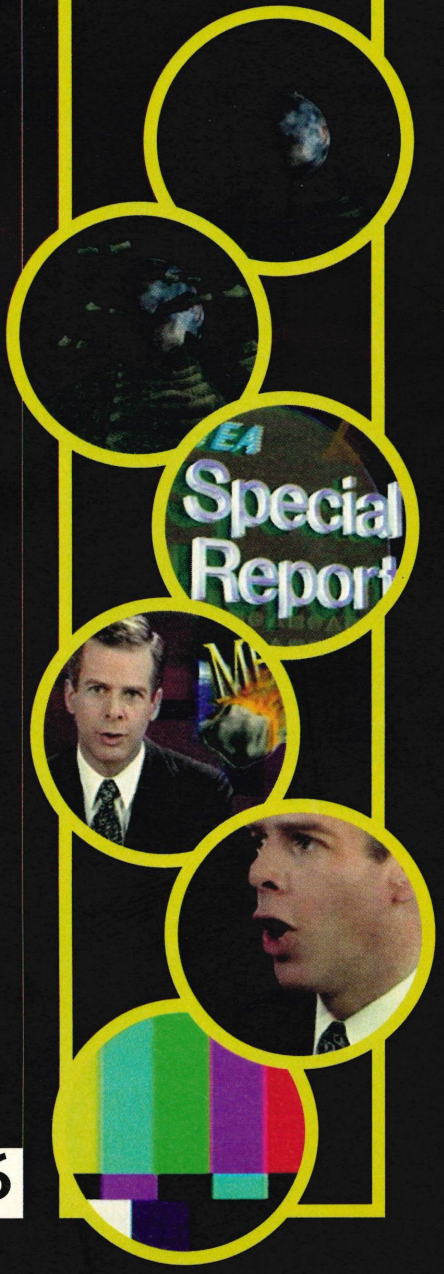
Looks:	
Sounds:	
Rig Link:	
Value:	

Played 81%

Mass assault or no assault I'm afraid.

Plan 9.5 From Outer Space

They're here! Yes, alien beings that would make even Sigourney Weaver cack herself have arrived in full force to steal our bodies and melt our brains... or so this game leads us to believe. Here is the rip-roaring intro that promises to get you into the "Oh crikey I've just crapped me whack!" type of mood.



Shock Assau

OK so maybe the Roswell Incident wasn't (an incident, that is), but that's no reason not to prepare for the unexpected. After playing *Shock Wave*, Ryan Butt is fully prepared for when the Martians come callin'.

The winner of this month's 2-Unlimited prize for outstanding originality undoubtedly goes to *Shock Wave* for its stunning Earth invasion scenario.

Yep, we're taking the piss alright, but deservedly so. This game not only mercilessly pulls the plot right out from under H.G.Well's classic sci-fi novel, *War of the Worlds*, but it even has the front to pinch the same tripod killing machines as well.

We can forgive the programmers ,though, because however inspirationally-impaired it may be, it is actually a hugely playable game. Kicking off with a brilliant full motion video intro that makes even Ed Wood's contributions to the silver screen seem like sophisticated works of art (this is classic disaster movie stuff!), the scene is set for a thrilling show down that promises plenty of E.T. bashing.

It completely draws you in

Basically, the Earth has been invaded by power-crazed little green men and the whole planet's combined armed forces prove somewhat incapable of vanquishing them so it's time to bring in the big boys – namely Omaha.

Omaha is an orbiting space carrier that houses a squadron of experimental F177 fighters... in other words heavy duty no-nonsense, ass-kicking aircraft which can do just about anything. Guess what? You're part of the elite team of Omaha pilots to have been assigned with the task of saving the planet... no problem.

Each level of the game takes you to a different part of the world where it is basically shoot 'em-up action all the way. You get the idea.

Graphically, *Shock Wave* is unremarkable. There is some nice texture mapping with the occasional polygon monument poking up, but nothing to really make you sit up and say "yeah I'm in America!" or "Yeah I'm in Egypt!". Although, saying that, the pyramids and the crude "Hollywood" sign are a bit of a giveaway!

This is simulation stuff in a sense. The action is viewed from the cockpit of one of these fictional F177 fighters and you have various weapons and skills at your disposal that should make saving mankind as we know it, a little less painstaking.

You progress is constantly interrupted by messages of praise or (more likely) piss-taking from your superiors and wingmen which helps the



PLAY information

- **Publisher:** Electronic Arts
- **Customer support:** 01753 546465
- **Expected price:** £44.99
- **Expected when:** Mid-December

Wave



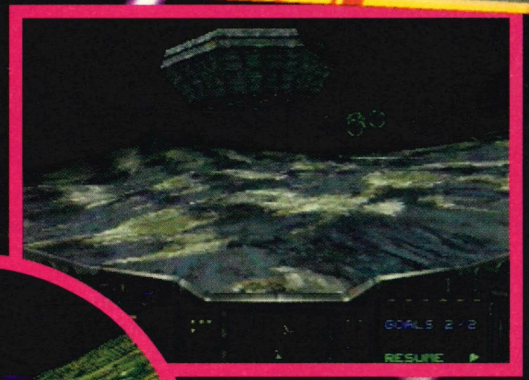
atmosphere sink in, but it does tend to grate rather like a scratched record after a short while.

The sound in general doesn't make as big an impact on the gameplay as it did in the 3DO version... your craft sounds more like a hoover than a jet fighter but never mind!

Whether or not you like this sort of game is besides the point. In this case, the sum of the parts is definitely greater than the components.

Nobody could shy away from *Shock Wave's* compelling blow away everything in sight hook, and even after five or so missions of doing pretty much exactly the same thing I certainly didn't get bored. The main beauty is the storyline which completely draws you in and gets you into character, and although the visuals don't excite, they do the job. *Shock Wave* is as addictive and absorbing as any shooter on the market, and should definitely be considered as a prime PlayStation purchase.







▶ Watch where you're shooting, some of the poorer cities aren't insured!

▼ Can you guess where we are yet?

▲ Cruise under this circular vessel to replenish your fuel and weapons.



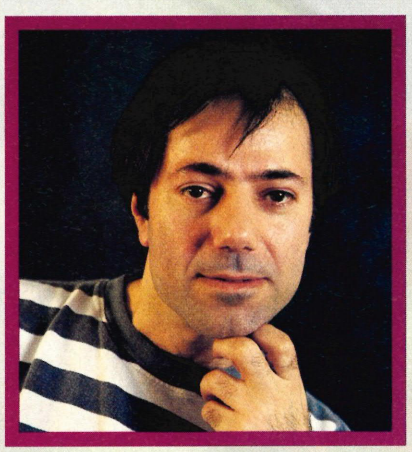


PLAY verdict

Looks:	8/10
Sounds:	8/10
Action:	9/10
Value:	8/10

Played 87%

Pick it up and kick some butt!



"So far, I've hardly seen any multi-player games on PlayStation. With *Street Racer*, four people will be able to play, each choosing from any one of four viewpoints, on one machine. I'm very proud of that."
- Mevlut Dinc, Vivid Image



Stree R

If you think PlayStation gaming is an all together solitary experience, fear not, multi-player games are on their way. Not least the pioneering PlayStation version of the Vivid Image-designed *Street Racer*. Ian Lynch reports back in the first of a special two-part WorkStation.

PLAY information

- **Design team:** Vivid Image
- **Team leader:** Mevlut Dinc
- **Where at:** 55% complete
- **Target release date:** April '96
- **Publisher:** Ubi Soft

For the uninitiated, *Street Racer* was one of the best 16-bit console games of last year. It employed a mix of cartoon characters, go-karts and, best of all, fighting. It also included two fun sub-games, a football in go-karts job and a WWF-style rumble.

Vivid are now working hard on PlayStation *Street Racer*, and it could be something a bit special.

Ok, but where are the screenshots I hear you say? Well, yes, but the way Vivid Image work is a little different from most game designers. You see, the team focus on the game design first and foremost, exploring the technical possibilities of what they can achieve. Once they've decided on just what it is the graphics are going to be showing off, they then construct a few basic models to experiment with, sort out the gameplay and only then really get cracking on the final graphics. Technically, PlayStation *Street Racer* is nearly complete but the team has only just started work on some of the visuals and refuse to let them appear in magazines until they're finished. Hence no screenshots for another month. I couldn't wait to start talking to you about it though, so I'll tell you just why Vivid Image's Mevlut Dinc says that PlayStation *Street Racer* is going to be a landmark in PlayStation gaming, and next month we'll back up it with some visual proof.

"PlayStation *Street Racer* is very much based on the original game design, which was after all very strong, but there are a few special extras. It will also have much more of a 3D feel to it," says Mev Dinc.



▲ Ex Page Three-cutie Suzanne Mizzi was hired by Ubi Soft to 'be' Surf.

▼ And Surf the character. Hmmm, I know which one I'd like to ride with...



Vive la difference

"One of the things we've done with is the introduce four viewpoints for the four-player split screen option. Because of the fighting we can't have a first person perspective, but we do have a very close-in look with the camera perched just behind the character's shoulder and then the other views move progressively back, ending up with a near *Micro Machines* look."

"That we can do this is mainly thanks to the power of PlayStation. The different viewing angles really come into their own in the extra sub-games of rumble and soccer, especially the soccer as you can pull away and see much more of the actual pitch, instead of chasing round looking to see where the ball has gone like you often ended up doing on the 16-bit console versions."

One of the other big improvements Vivid are working on is the new car model, which is now a much better drive in that it's much more realistic, although not so lifelike that you can't fight going round the bends.

More the merrier

The best thing about *Street Racer* though, is the multi-player mode. Something Mev feels is yet to be exploited by other firms.

"So far I've hardly seen any multi-player games on PlayStation. And they're only link-up. With *Street Racer*, four people will be able to play, each choosing from any one of four viewpoints, and all on one machine. I'm very proud of that. On previous versions the multi-player option allowed only for you to play with two or four players, but on PlayStation you can play two, three, four, five, six, seven or eight players if two machines are linked up. We can achieve with only two PlayStations what other racers would need eight machines to show. By doing all this we are

Discography - Vivid Image

1989 - *Hammerfist* (all reviews over 90%)
1990 - *Time Machine* (voted Most Original Game of the year)
1991 - *The First Samurai* (Voted Arcade game of the year)
1994 - *The Second Samurai*
1994 - *Street Racer* (SNES) - top ten hit, sold 220,000 copies
1995 - *Street Racer* (Mega Drive) - reviews as high as 96%, top ten hit.
1996 - *Street Racer* (PlayStation) - It's gonna be chuffing great man.





et acer

creating a bit of a headache for ourselves but we're sure that the users will enjoy it a lot more."

The game will also have four more tracks than the 16-bits, making 28 in all. Which is quite a few more than some games I could mention. And whereas in the Saturn game Mev is remodelling the original tracks, they're completely re-doing all of them on the PlayStation.

More tracks is definitely a good thing, but no new characters are planned. for now, you'll have to make do with Surf, Suzulu, Sumo, Raph, Hodja, Helmut, Frank and Biff for the moment.

Speed demon

It'd be difficult to improve the speed of the 16-bit version, but this being PlayStation, of course it's been managed. "We're going to get it running at the maximum, to give the best possible representation of speed. So that's 50 frames a second in the UK and 60 in the US. We're aiming at doing that and I believe we will, it's very important for us. The PlayStation is a great piece of hardware, and I can't understand why some companies doesn't use the maximum frame rate. "If you compromise, that's not good enough for me. We want to do great software that matches the great hardware."



The cars shown are vastly improved looks wise too, although you'll have to take my word for that at the moment as Vivid refuse to let screenshots be printed until the graphics are 100%. Don't expect masses of rendered FMV cut scenes though, Vivid aren't into all that.

"We spend our time creating the most playable game possible," says Mev. I could employ half a dozen artists and tell them to come up with intros and cut scenes but I'd rather employ a couple of artists and have them concentrate on what you'll see on-screen. It takes too much time, and it's far better to focus on other stuff, like including 28 tracks instead of just two."

Too right. Don't forget, first screenshots of *Street Racer* in next month's *Play*. On sale Jan 18th.

Credits

Mevlut Dinc
Producer

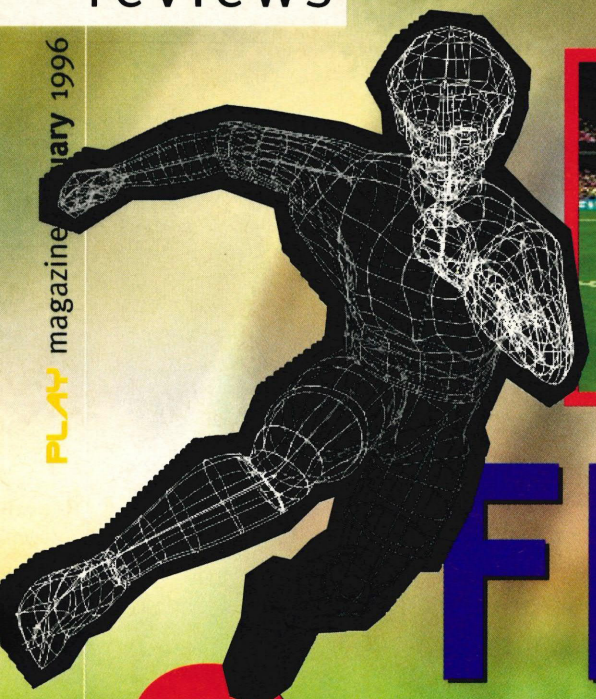
Steven Dunn
programmer

Lee Brown
Graphic Artist

Robert Brodie
Graphic Artist

Brian Marshall
Music

Richard Joseph
Sound FX





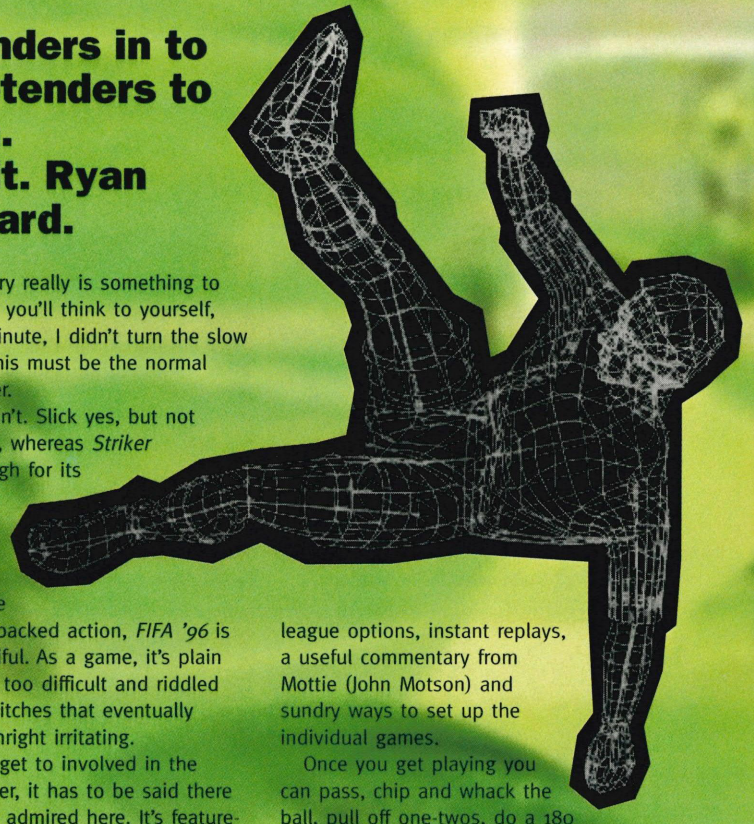


FIFA '96 Soccer

PLAY information

- Publisher: Electronic Arts
- Customer support: 01753 546465
- Expected price: £44.99
- Expected when: Mid-December

Bang! *FIFA Soccer '96* thunders in to tackle the PlayStation pretenders to its best footy game crown. Ian Lynch admires its spirit. Ryan Butt reaches for the red card.



Never has one game caused so many bloody arguments in the *Play* office. Things actually got quite heated down the pub the other day when I told Ryan the final review score. He was not happy, I think 'travesty' was mentioned somewhere, and you can read what he had to say in the box-out with the eye-catching headline over there. Anyway this is what I, Honest Ian – the punters' friend, think about it.

No doubt about it, this Virtual Stadium lark really is something. *FIFA '96* on PlayStation (the best version according to EA, by the way) is an absolutely stunning game, visuals-wise. Switch it on, start playing and you'll see that the way the slow motion replays beautifully depict the action in all its motion-captured animated glory really is something to behold. Then you'll think to yourself, hang on a minute, I didn't turn the slow motion on, this must be the normal pace. Bummer.

Quick, it ain't. Slick yes, but not quick. In fact, whereas *Striker '96* scored high for its instant accessibility, well-designed learning curve and fast fun-packed action, *FIFA '96* is merely beautiful. As a game, it's plain too complex, too difficult and riddled with minor glitches that eventually become downright irritating.

Before we get to involved in the faults, however, it has to be said there is a lot to be admired here. It's feature-packed for a start. As well as the usual culprits, national teams and the odd club side, you can chose teams from the Brazilian, Malaysian, Spanish, US, Dutch, Swedish, French, Italian, German and Scottish leagues. There are also loads of camera angles (only a couple are useful mind you), tournament, playoff and league options, instant replays, a useful commentary from Mottie (John Motson) and sundry ways to set up the individual games.

Once you get playing you can pass, chip and whack the ball, pull off one-twos, do a 180 degree spin move, indulge in close control sprint dribbling, go for headers in a vaguely realistically way and actually think about setting up moves. Which is good.

Actually, as long as you're a football nutcase (like me), can put up with the lack of in-game speed (like me), the



▼ **The teams take time out for some formation dancing routines.**



◀ He's either warming up, or the ball's just gone screaming over the bar.

▼ It's all up in the air here, well, the ball is anyway.



▼ Help, I'm surrounded, better start shooting.



Play's Virtual Spot The Ball

Ancient competition time, we've airbrushed out the ball, now you tell us where it is! To enter, cut out or photocopy this box-out, mark an X where you think the ball is and send it to the usual address. Nearest wins a mystery *Play* prize.

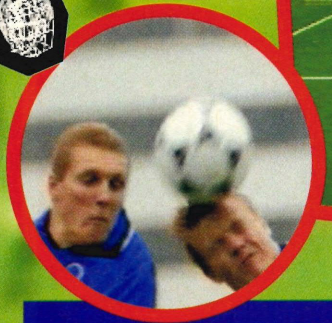




▶ With the keeper down, it's a race to the ball.

▼ Oi! Get this ball of me 'ead





FIFA '96 is the Chelsea of football games

ages it takes to get anywhere half decent at the game thanks to too many controls to remember (like me) and the poorly defined CPU skill levels in one player mode (like me, just, footy's for two players), you'll like FIFA '96. (like, well, me, I guess).

If you can't, be warned. This is the Chelsea of football games – it's very pretty, all the right components are there in the mix, but it doesn't quite score when it counts.

PLAY verdict

Looks:	9
Sounds:	7
Stadiums:	10
Value:	8

Played 81%

Slow motion replays at their finest.

FIFA '96 is Crap Shocker!

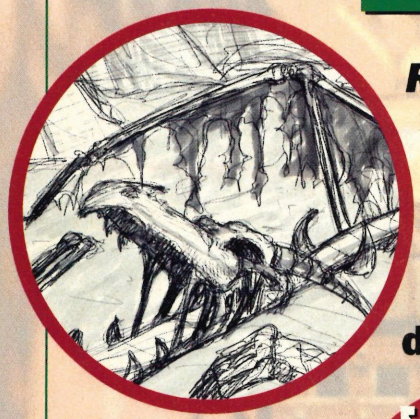
We all have a close look at the games we review before one of us sits down to write it up, which is why we don't normally have a second opinion box, but sometimes we just can't come to a consensus. Ryan Butt insisted on having his say on FIFA '96 and as he's the reigning office champion of *International Superstar Soccer*, and any other soccer game you'd care to mention, he's worth listening to. Our man was not happy with EA's offering at all...

"Don't listen to Ian, he hasn't got a clue about what makes a decent football game! [Bollocks – Ian] FIFA '96 is the most disappointing pile of steaming wombat puke I've ever had the misfortune of playing. The graphics look like a hideously distorted water-colour painting, the controls are an abysmal sham and distance the player from achieving even the simplest of soccer skills... and, and, well it's just bollocks. After all the waiting and hype surrounding this project, we were lead to believe that we were in for something special. Ha! If I receive this Mega Drive reject in my Christmas stocking this year, I'll sodding grab Santa by his grey wispys and shove it up his arse – ho, ho bloody ho!"

PLAY information

- **Design team:** Interplay Productions US
- **Team leader:** Feargus Urquhart
- **Where at:** 50%
- **Target release:** July '96
- **Publisher:** Interplay Productions

Rock 'n Racing



▲ All the concept graphics shown on these pages were sketched by Vance Kovacs. His drawings are being transformed onto the PlayStation as we speak...

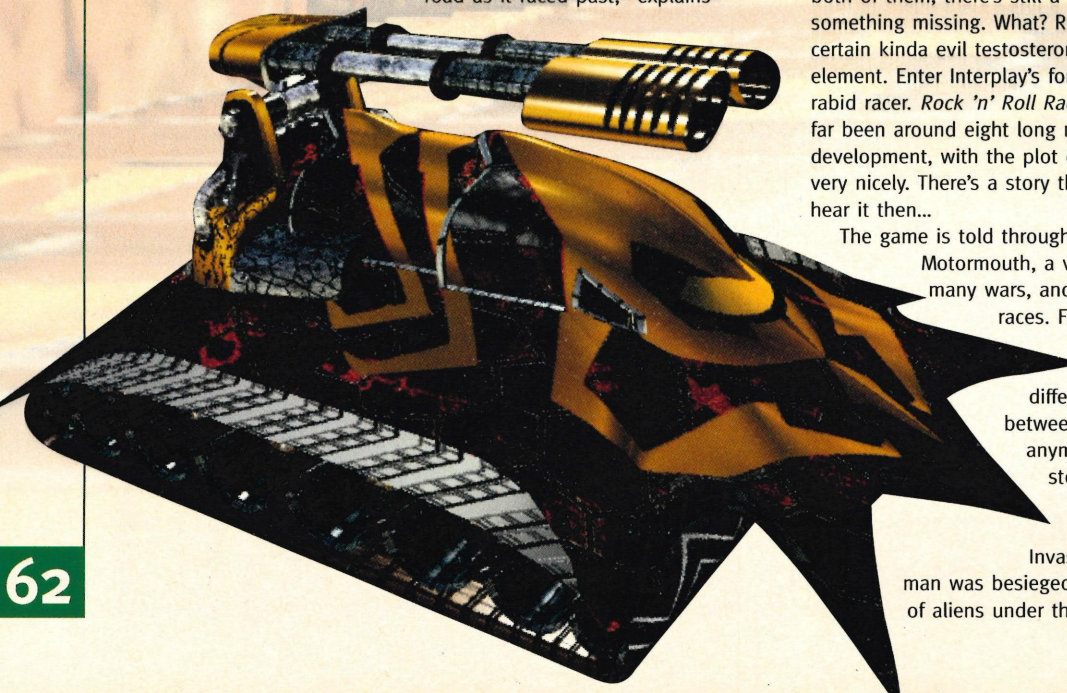
Ridge Racer is all very well, but there's no real aggressive element. _Wipeout's_ darn good, but the combat element in the game is somewhat sacrificed for speed. It would appear that there's a bit of a lack of good combat racing games out at the mo'... but there's a few on the way now. Not least _Rock 'n' Roll Racing II_. Ace driver Asam goes stateside to check it out.

"In its simplest form, the inception of *Rock 'n' Roll Racing II* started with us playing many hours of *Ridge Racer* on the original Japanese PlayStation. We played it for ages because it's a great game, but we always had the desire to blast that bloody black devil car off the road as it raced past," explains Feargus Urquhart, the game's producer. "So with that 'itching desire' and the pounding music from our original *Rock 'n' Roll Racing* for the 16-bit consoles, we decided to begin development on the game *Rock 'n' Roll Racing II*." And so the story began.

Let's face it, *Ridge Racer* and *Wipeout* are top racing games, but even between both of them, there's still a little something missing. What? Road rage. A certain kinda evil testosterone driven element. Enter Interplay's forthcoming rabid racer. *Rock 'n' Roll Racing II* has so far been around eight long months in development, with the plot coming along very nicely. There's a story there, so let's hear it then...

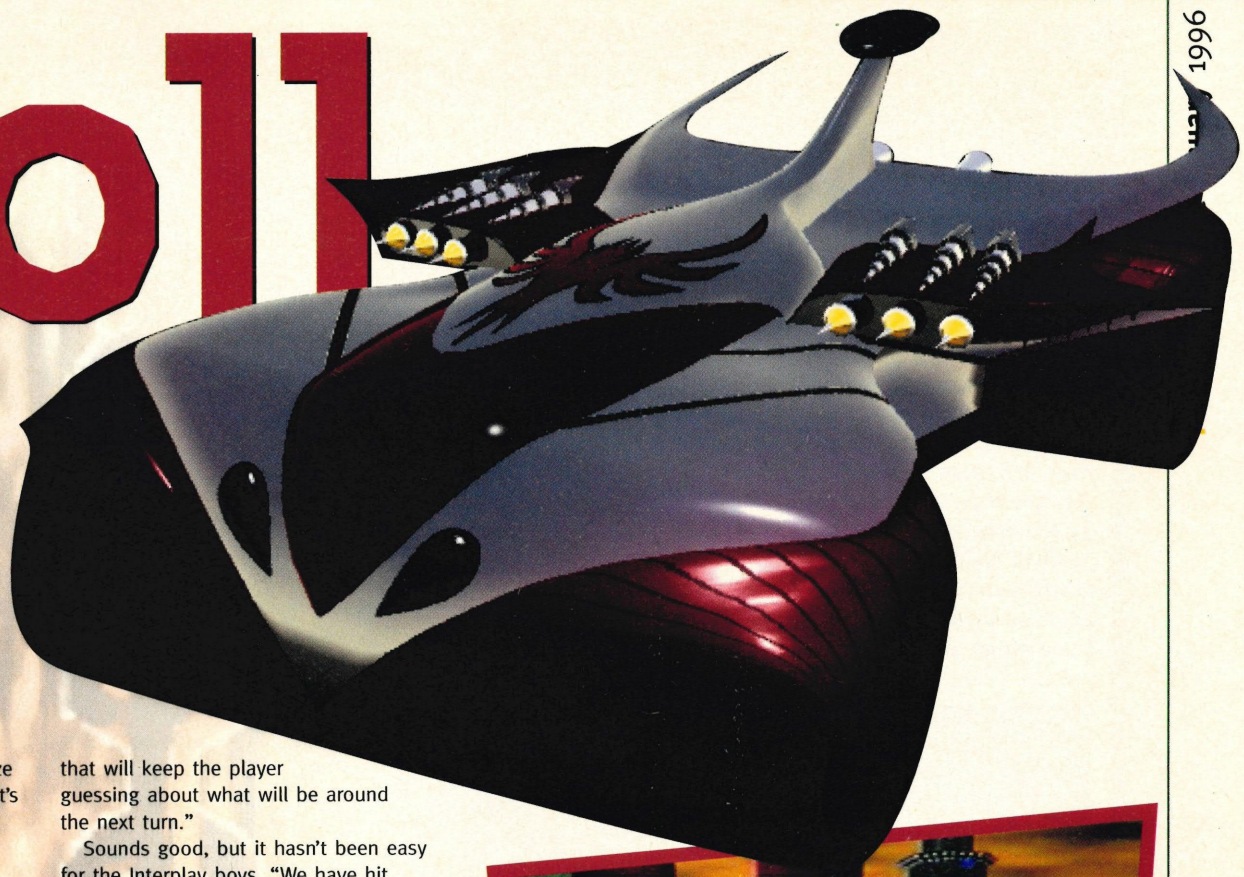
The game is told through the eyes of Motormouth, a veteran of many wars, and many races. For him there is not much of a difference between the two anymore. His story begins in the time of the Invasion, when man was besieged by hordes of aliens under the control of their merciless commander Draenek. Players are being forced to race for the amusement of Draenek on Motormouth's mother planet, Earth, which is seen by the new controllers of Earth to be no more than a huge stadium where their Saturday Sports take place. The drivers press on through the races, gather cash and experience towards an ultimate goal of capturing the winners trophy and possibly a chance at destroying Draenek's tyranny.

Sounds a bit more involved than *Ridge Racer*! "Sure is!" replies Feargus. "*Rock 'n' Roll Racing II* offers the player a choice of a number of cars and drivers with the ability to improve as they win more and more races. Each car has a number of times that can be improved such as weapons, armour, defensive weapons, engines, etc..., and each has four stages. An improvement in a





'Roll II



weapon might have the effect of improving its accuracy, rate of fire, size of shot etc. depending on the stage it's already at in the game."

Track attack

According to Feargus, there are over 30 different tracks to race on, plus the final level which will is a bumper to bumper fight with a new, previously-unfaced opponent. At this stage in the game, the tracks range across four main race areas and have the working titles of Old Los Angels, Hell World, Cloud World and Neo Tokyo. Let's see, that's got the US, Japan, Heaven and Hell covered, hmmm. "Each of the different areas offers different racing conditions and you'll need to re-evaluate what you've learnt on previous tracks. For example, you might find taking a turn by scraping along the wall in LA is a good way to get round the bend, however in Hell World this might just see you plunging into a huge lava lake. Each track will also have unique events that will keep the player guessing about what will be around the next turn."

Sounds good, but it hasn't been easy for the Interplay boys. "We have hit snags like any other development team. These problems have come up in the expectations that our designers had in creating polygon worlds that looked extremely realistic, and in the technological problems with dealing with a new hardware platform. However, we reckon that we've been able to represent most of what the designers wanted."

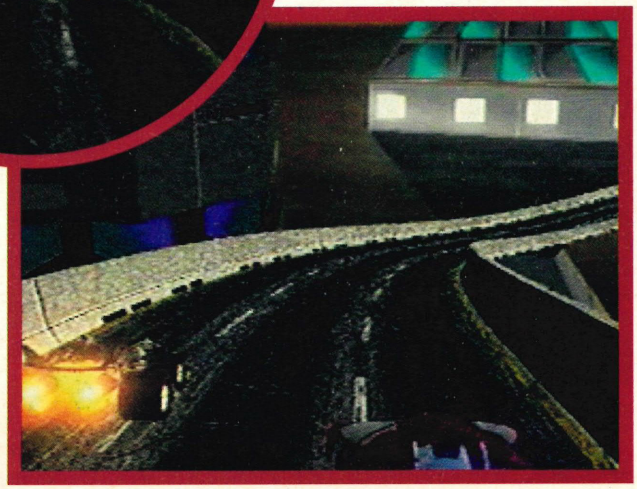
Duel mission

At the end of the day, *Rock 'n' Roll Racing II* represents a rather warped, but amusing, vision of futuristic duel racing. Outlandish ideas aside though,





◀ From the graphics to the rock soundtrack, the whole game has an eerie aura to it.

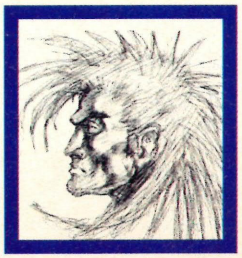


Motley Crew...?

These hand-drawn images represent the menagerie of mutants in the game that you might control. What a weird lot.







Warped Worldly Vision

One of the major points about this game, and what sets it apart from other racers, are the rather outlandish tracks that have been designed for the game. Let's face it, in *Ridge Racer* and *Wipeout*, the graphics are superb, but there is little variety in the actual feel of the visuals from track to track. In *Rock 'n' Roll Racing II*, though, we have loadsa variety. Through the different worlds in the game, the graphics change rather excitedly from cityscapes to hellish nightmare scenarios and more as you progress. These are some of the concept sketches, and final rendered versions of some of the tracks.









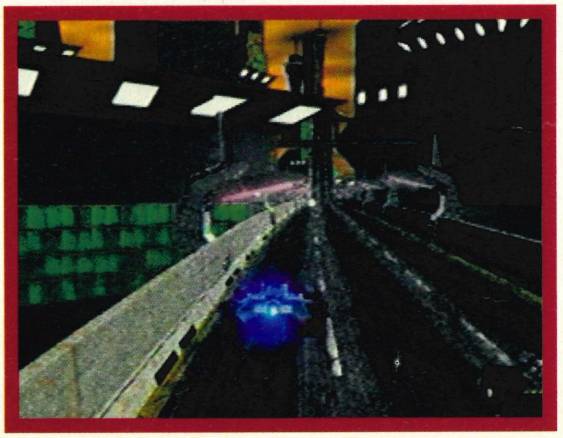
ultimately the game must live up to the rigorous demands of the videogaming public. "While we have seen a lot of advancement towards our vision, there are things that we've had to drop – begrudgingly. We have had to drop the polygon counts of our cars, to allow for smoother racing and better representation of the car at certain distances. That probably sounds like a sentence full of compromises, and, to a degree, you'd be right." But that's not a bad thing. At least this way, the game is likely to be the best it could overall.

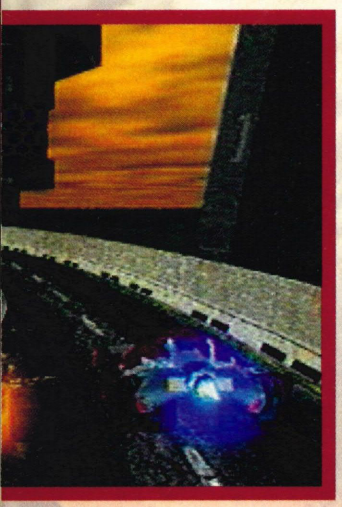
"Sure. Designing and producing games like this requires us to constantly make compromises with what we want and what we can have on the screen. The PlayStation may be superb but it can still only handle a certain number of polygons, so there has to be a trade-off between speed and detail. So in *Rock 'n' Roll Racing II* we have to figure out a good balance, still keeping the cars and buildings looking realistic and 'cool'." Personally, from a games guru's point of view, looks and sound are all very well, but it's gameplay that counts. It's too easy to fall into the trap of producing a game that looks brilliant and sounds superb, but plays like a dog. Luckily though, Feargus and the gang seem to have the right philosophy.

Playstation power

"The Sony PlayStation has come closer than any other machine before it in allowing game developers and producers to create games that fit their visions of what they want our games to be," remarks Feargus. "This includes the ability to show full motion video, play a large number of sample sound effects, create a realistic 3D environment, and store a huge amount of data in one place. It is a great feeling to see a piece of artwork on artists' PC workstations and know it is going to look almost identical when displayed on the PSX. With previous console machines and PCs we always needed to make a great number of compromises between something looking good and that it had to be displayed with a limited number of colours."

"The Sony PlayStation has come closer than any other machine before it in allowing game developers and producers to create games that fit their visions of what they want our games to be." Feargus Urquhart, Interplay Productions





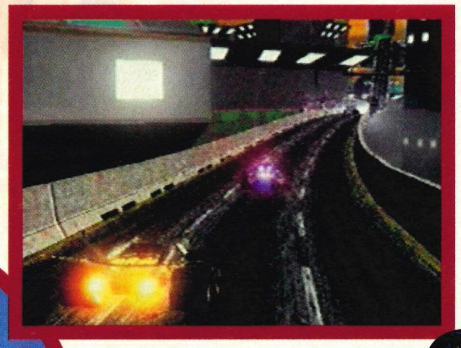
◀ In order to help you work out who you want to target, each car has different coloured tail lights.

▶ At the moment the graphics may seem a little spartan, but Feargus and the boys are beavering away to get them up to scratch.















Thankfully, it looks like we have a machine in our hands that can finally allow games creators like the Interplay boys to really explore their dreams.

"I want a game to be complete in every aspect, and for a game to flow from one point to the next. This may seem to be somewhat of a metaphysical way of looking at games, however it means that the player should get totally absorbed in what I have created."

Metaphysical? Sorry Feargus. That all sounds a bit David Lynch to me, but I think I know what you mean. Rather 'deep'. And probably a good thing too – if only every designer was as creative-driven rather than by the bottom line. Unfortunately, we'll have to wait awhile to find out how it goes as *Rock 'n' Roll Racing II* is still some months away. We'll be keeping you updated and seeing more of the game soon, but the expected release is sometime around July. I can't wait. Rock on dudes...

Special Thanks to...

Feargus is a modest old chap, and didn't want to take the credit for everything. He made me promise to do a thank-you-very-much box. So here it is. Over to you Feargus.

"I just want to thank some people at Interplay that have worked extremely hard the past year. Chad Moore has worked on the 3D worlds, and created the slickest car of them all – The HellFalcon. Vance Kovacs is responsible for a good deal of the design and concept art – the sketches are his creations. And finally Cheryl Austin for her work on the textures of the buildings, cars, and for being a high KPT Bryce disciple."

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Shoot the balls off the PLAY boys!

Telstar's

dark destroyer of a game *Lone Soldier* should be out soon, and to celebrate the launch of the 92% rated game, Telstar and *Play* are offering you the chance to play ball with the *Play* boys. Paintball that is.

Six readers will a have a chance to win an all expenses day out at Surrey's Cobham Forest in early January, regarded as the UK's best paintballing centre. Yes, you too could run around a freezing cold forest chasing down the *Play* review crew and the Telstar design team with a gun in your hands (sort of).

Each winner will also receive a *Lone Soldier* poster and the best shot of the day will be taking home the original cover artwork too. Not bad.

To win

get the answer right and sent it off to us on the back of an envelope or postcard together with your name, age and address to the address below.

Who played Rambo in the films of the same name?

A Asam Ahmad
B Julian Clary
C Sylvester Stallone

Please note: the editor's decision is final and employees of Paragon Publishing, relatives and disgruntled industry marketing executives may not enter. Closing date, January 2nd, 1996.

Send your answers on the back of an envelope/postcard to:

I wanna shoot a *Play* boy compo
***Play* Magazine**
Paragon Publishing
Paragon House, St. Peter's Road
Bournemouth. BH1 2JS.

Firestorm Thunderh

PLAY information

- **Publisher:** Core Design
- **Customer Support:** 01332 297797
- **Expected Price:** £44.99
- **Expected When:** January '96

Your mission: Forget the rules. Blast anything that moves. Kill, maim and destroy. Captain Cavey, the future of world peace lies in your hands. Are you up to it...?

Thunderhawk 2 is the sequel (really?) to the original hit game that appeared on the Mega CD (spit) a coupla years ago. Newies to consoles may not know anything about the first one, but I'm here to tell you 'bout the second. Hoorah!

So what's this game about. *Firestorm: Thunderhawk 2* (*T2* from now on – I'm not gettin' RSI for anyone!) is a helicopter flight simulator. However, the good thing about this sim is that it doesn't fall into the trap of having a control system so complex that you lose the fast edge needed for an action game. And there is plenty.

What those clever Core people have done is create a realistic chopper sim with a helicopter that handles well, but in no way compromises the playability of the arcadey element. The result is a fast and furious shoot 'em-up, combining speed and strategy with some really great airborne action.

There are, in all, 26 different missions that must be undertaken through your employment as a pilot of the AH-73M attack helicopter. These range from the straightforward to the devilishly hard, and almost impossible. This makes the game difficult to complete too quickly, adding to its longevity. There are also three difficulty levels, which is handy, 'cos starting in easy mode is most definitely advised at first, until you get the hang of the 'copter's controls.

Once you've mastered the handling, it's time for some real fun. The missions in *T2* are set around the world, involving 8 different war campaigns. These are played over different terrains, with some very well-defined undulating landscapes. Your enemies come in the form of ground attack missiles, tanks and jeeps, with aeronautics from assailant helicopters. There are even boats to attack, to add to the variety. Apart from your attackers though, there are also friendlies you must protect in certain missions, adding a certain strategic element to the game.

The soundtrack in *T2* is another bonus in the game. The missions can be flown to a back beat supplied in the form of some rather smart 'minimalist' techno. This means the tracks aren't too overpowering, but add quite nicely to the atmosphere of the whole thing. My only (minor) complaint on this front would be that you can't control the mix between the SFX and the background music – its either on or off for both.

Graphically, the game is up to the usual standard you might expect, although there are a few minor glitches that occur as it draws the scenery on the horizon, but this doesn't detract from the gameplay too much.

What there is, though, is quite realistic and detailed enough. So, all in all we have a top notch game that can't be faulted. Well, not quite. My only major criticism about the game is on the mission front. The game is certainly very playable, and the difficulty curve is set well, but the number of missions can feel a little restricted. It would have benefited from some kind of random mission generator that created missions for you as you progressed, matched to your previous performance. Otherwise, good stuff.

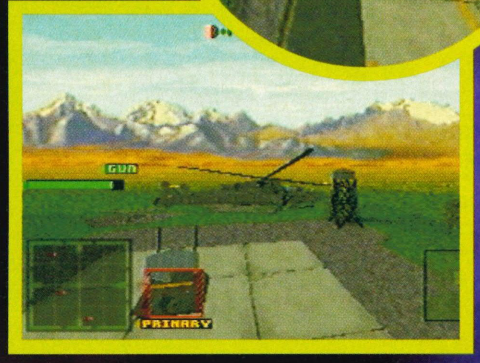
A fast and furious shoot 'em-up

▼ The green bar on the left indicates my damage. I'm alright. The other guy's not...



▼ The outside view's not bad for being able to see a wider area. Ah. Behind me.





hawk 2





▲ Having shot the tanks, chase the little blokes running for cover. Hear them scream.

▼ In this mission, I've got to save that big white ship from those nasty grey ones. Not quite the QE2, is it.



PLAY verdict

Looks:	
Sounds:	
Jet-lag:	
Value:	

Played 85%

Fast 'n' frantic airborne action.

Military Mnemonic Mania

If you don't know your AGMs from your AMRAAMs then this is the guide for you. Pub quizzes will never be the same again with *Play's* cut-out-and-keep guide to aviation artillery. Don't get caught cheating with it though... (And see if you can spot the ones we made up)

AAM - Anti-Aircraft Missile
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AGM - Air-to-Ground Missile
ALARM - Air Launched Anti-Radiation Missile
ALCM - Air Launched Cruise Missile
AMRAAM - Advanced Medium Range Anti-Aircraft Missile
ARM - Anti-Radiation Missile
ASAM - Advanced Spiritual Anatomical Miracle
ATGM - Anti-Tank Guided Missile
AWACS - Airborne Warning And Control System
DAVE - Destructive Anti-Vacation Entity
ECM - Electronic Counter Measures
EMP - Electro-Magnetic Pulse
ESM - Electronic Support Measures
EW - Electronic Warfare
FBW - Fly By Wire
FFAR - Free Flight Aircraft Rocket
FLIR - Forward Looking Infra-Red
HDD - Head Down Display
HMD - Helmet-Mounted Display
HMS - Helmet-Mounted Sight
HOTAS - Hands On Throttle And Stick
HSOS - Helicopter Stabilised Optical Sight
HUD - Head-Up Display
HUDWAC - Head-Up Display Weapons Aiming Computer
IANF - Infra-red Air Navigation Fontman
IANL - Inaudible Attack Nervegas Launcher
IC-PSX - In-Cockpit PlayStation
J-STARS - Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System
KENYON - Kill Enemy Now You 'Orrible Nobody
LABS - Low Altitude Bombing System
LGB - Laser Guided Bomb
LGW - Laser Guide Weapon
LOS - Line Of Sight
LMTS - Laser Marked Target Seeker
MAD - Magnetic Anomaly Dectector
MFD - Multi-Function Display
NVG - Night Vision Goggles
PGM - Precision Guided Munitions
RWR - Radar Warning Receiver
RYAN - Rolling Yaw Alteration Nozzle
SAM - Surface-to-Air Missile
SARAH - Seismic Air Radation Asbestos Helmet
SIMON - Stealth Inspired Missing Office Navigator
SRAM - Short-Range Attack Missile
STOL - Short Take-Off and Landing
VTOL - Vertical Take-Off and Landing







Warha

Death-dealing hardware. Stuff blowing up. Great graphics. Who could ask for more? Andy McDermott, that's who.

Warhawk. The very name conjures up images of explosions, high-tech hardware, ultra-large scale destruction, granite-jawed Tom Cruise clones and massive excitement, doesn't it? I mean, let's face it, with a name like *Warhawk* it's hardly going to be the PlayStation conversion of *Supermarket Sweep* with Dale Winton.

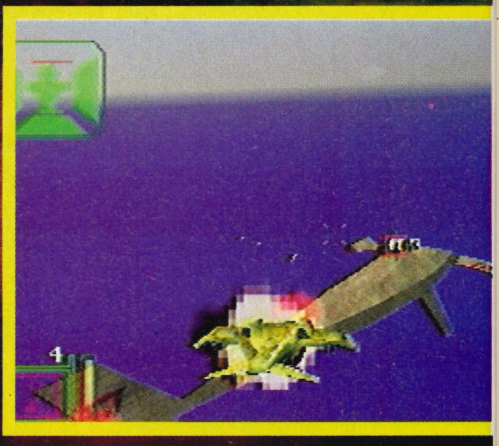
Well, four out of five's not bad, I suppose. You want explosions, high-tech hardware, ultra-large scale destruction and granite-jawed Tom Cruise clones? They're yours. Taking the controls of the eponymous *Warhawk*, a death machine so similar to the dropship from *Aliens* that if I were James Cameron I'd be tempted to get on the blower to my lawyers, it's up to you as – naturally – a granite-jawed Tom Cruise clone to dish out shrapnel-laden death to the bad guys of the moment. Said bad guys, thanks to a substance called red mercury, have the ability to appear and disappear at will, rather like David Copperfield but without the attractive wife. Your mission, not that you have any choice but to accept it, is to hunt down arch-villain Kreel and his teleporting minions and liberally apply Mr Sheen to their timepieces. Clean their clocks, in other, more simple words (He means kill 'em – Ed).

An adrenaline free zone

Viewed from various selectable perspectives, ranging from an in-cockpit view to one where your craft is so far away it's impossible to see what's going on, the action commences over an Egyptian-style city left over from Stargate. Tanks, planes, anti-aircraft guns and even a pyramid are out to turn you into the component particles of a new sand dune, but to even things up you're equipped with a jolly little arsenal of innard-bursting weaponry. Hoorah for our side! Once the pyramid has been rendered rather less geometrically perfect, other levels, including canyons, airborne convoys and cave systems, present themselves for sterilisation.

As with most PlayStation games, *Warhawk* can't be whinged about graphically. Reflections of the action shimmer across water, lightning bolts crackle through low clouds, missiles leave spiralling smoke trails as they home in on their targets... it all looks great. Unfortunately, the gameplay doesn't match up to the visuals. The one item missing out of the five listed earlier is, sadly, 'massive excitement'. Even though the Warhawk is under constant fire, there's no sense of danger as the missiles impact against the hull, just a farty little explosion sound and an occasional harmonica-like warning screech as your shields run down low. The game is an adrenaline-free zone, which is a real shame.

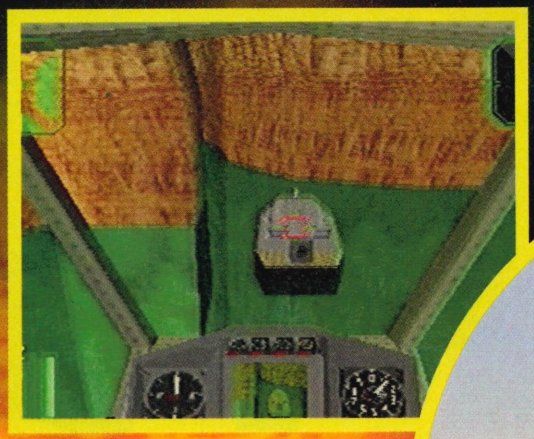
The enemies don't do much to add to the thrills, either; you might as well be mowing down milch cows with an Uzi for all the challenge they present. Once you've got them in your sights it's goodnight Vienna, and indeed any other capital city you can think of. Even the bosses present little challenge – it's just a matter of dodging incoming fire long enough to pick off their dangly bits.



PLAY information

- **Publisher:** Sony
- **Customer Support:** 0881 505505*
- **Release date:** Out Now
- **Price:** £39.99





◀ Who needs a lava lamp when you can have *real* lava?

◀ Rough Guide to Canyon Land, page 87: "The locals are noted for their friendly and welcoming manner. And large tanks."

▼ Have, as the saying goes, some of that.

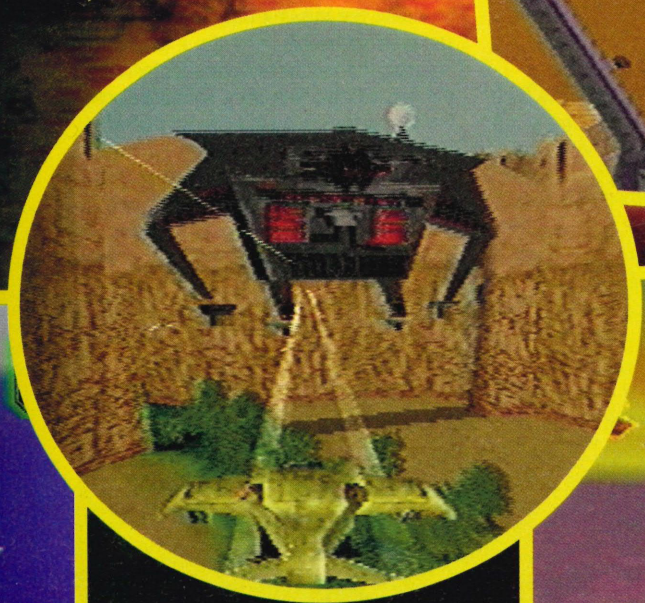


Warhawk

You won't be punching the air and going "Yyyyyeeeeessssssss!" at the end of each level, put it that way.

Ultimately, *Warhawk* is a reasonable attempt at a 3D shoot 'em-up spoiled by soporific gameplay – high-tech Horlicks. If your trigger finger is twitching, be advised that there will be better blasters along, and sooner than you think.







▲ If you were forced to fly through the caverns at high speed, *Warhawk* might be more exciting. But you aren't, so it ain't.

Yyyyyeeeessss!

Warhawk is a bit lacking in great jump-from-your-chair-and-chin-the-sky moments, so here are some to make up for it...

1966 World Cup final

"They think it's all over... it is now!" Tommy stuffs Jerry right on the final whistle with a fourth to add to that much-contested earlier goal. Stop moaning, Hans. Did we complain when Schumacher blatantly rammed Hill off the road in Adelaide to win the '94 championship? Er, probably.

End of Star Wars

Befringed yokel Luke Skywalker fnarr-fnarringly fires his torpedo into Darth Vader's exhaust port, whereupon it explodes. The galaxy is saved! Stitch that, asthma bloke!

Vivienne Westwood on Wogan

In a great moment of television, the audience burst out laughing at the fashion designer's latest, erm, 'outfits'... and she couldn't work out why. One up for the normal folk!

Maggie Thatcher resigning

Who can forget where they were the day the ash grey blonde one finally got kicked out? 'Twas the end of the eleven year reich, although sadly not the Tories. (By the way, 11 years is one less than Adolf lasted.)

PLAY verdict

Looks:	
Sounds:	
Mogadon:	
Value:	

Played 68%

Wake me when it's over.

*Sony customer support line is charged at 39p/min (peak) 25p/min (off peak)

Johnny Bazook

PLAY information

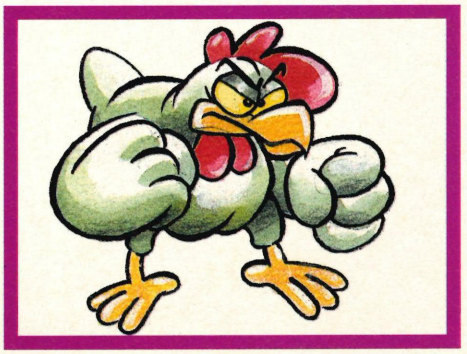
- **Design team:** Arc Development
- **Team leader:** Paul Walker
- **Where at:** 80% complete
- **Target release:** End January '96
- **Publisher:** US Gold



We'll leave the soppy classical princess-saving to Nintendo games, the PlayStation is Rock 'n' Roll, and so's its latest platform hero, Johnny Bazookatone. Ian Lynch dons his shades and heads backstage to chat with designers Arc Development.

A rabbit (albeit a flash Jumping one) and a blob with no arms and legs by the name of Rayman. I dunno, PlayStation owners haven't had much to shout about platformer-wise so far. We may be in the wonderful 3D polygon-shifting realms of the 32-bit generation but that's no reason to forget about one of the historically most favoured genres of video gaming, the loyal platformer. After all, the reason 16-bit consoles were inundated by the things was that good platform games are extremely playable and have a long lasting appeal. Unfortunately, average platformers are a pain in the neck as when you know what can now be done, the missing bits become seriously annoying.

Given the power of Sony's PlayStation, the fantastically improved colour palette, the scope for CD quality sound and all that stuff, isn't it about time the machine had its own, extremely marketable, platform hero? Preferably a bit harder than a blue hedgehog and a Brooklyn plumber – we hope. OK, I'm sorry guys, but the afore-mentioned rabbit and misshaped blob just don't quite cut it on the old hero stakes.









◀ **Groovemeister Johnny better hope his quiff is hardhat tough because if this guy connects, it could be a bit nasty...**

katone

Why the rant? Because that seems to be the thinking of Arc Development boss Paul Walker, the head man behind US Gold's forthcoming release, *Johnny Bazookatone.*

Out of the Arc

Arc, if you've never head of them, have been around for about eight years and are probably best known for Amiga titles such as *Forgotten Worlds* and *Crackdown* plus intro sequences to Bullfrog's *Syndicate* and Sensible's *Cannon Fodder.* Thanks to a couple of unfortunate business incidents they went very quiet for a while, and are now bent on re-establishing the Arc name and picking up a pile of cash on the way.

"We've now switched to producing entirely original games, of which *Johnny Bazookatone* is the first to come into the public eye," comments Paul.

"We develop concepts as much as anything. First and foremost we look to produce a good game but we also look to develop a property, something that has potential to cross-over into the mainstream and become a cartoon series, a comic, a range of clothes etc."

"Obviously, to do all that you have to get the game right first, and that's what we've spent the last two years doing with *Johnny Bazookatone*, making sure it has great graphics, sound programming and the right gameplay."

It's only Rock 'n' Roll

Having had a long look at an 80% complete version of the game, I've got to admit that *Johnny Bazookatone* certainly looks like fulfilling the first two elements of this mix, and is well on the way to completing the vital third, gameplay.

Arc has rendered around 5,000 frames of animation, 500 of which go into each character to make them super fluid. Indeed, with *Johnny B*, 23 frames are used just in his walk and nine simply for him to duck. Indeed, Arc has used no less than nine full-time artists on the project, along with eight programmers. In all, 33 members of the 60-strong Arc crew have contributed to the game's slick production, which I could say, if I wanted to, gives a whole new meaning to the







The plot sickens

Johnny Bazookatone **may be shaping up to be one of the PlayStation's first major platform stars. But, honestly, the game story is enough to put you off for life. The following is taken from publisher US Gold's propaganda, make of it what you will...**

"It's 2050 AD, and the planet is united in love and peace by the cool 'n' groovy toons of *Johnny Bazookatone*, the ultimate 21st century boy. Spreading love-vibes and funking-electric-bazooka-grooves, Johnny's unbeatable run of number one hits around the world has established him in Rock 'n' Roll annals as bigger than *The Beatles*, bigger than *Elvis*, even bigger than *Gary Glitter*. Hey, but he doesn't let it go to his quiff.

But, you guessed it, it's not all 100% good vibrations...

Festering within the blazing sulphurous chasms of Hell, Inc. Mr L Diablo and his associated Hordes of Hades are getting real hacked off with Johnny's rip-roaring success. Deep in the blackened core of his non-existent soul, L Diablo wants Johnny right out of the Billboard Top 100 and straight onto the Rock 'n' Roll scrap heap. He scratches his horn and stares at the huge array of Trinitron monitors that adorn his infernally damned penthouse.

"I am the God of Hellfire," bellows L Diablo,

"And I should have the greatest tunes in history.

"Bring me every single recording of Johnny B! And bring me Anita, his putrid perfectly pitched guitar!...

"The world is going to dance with me to my discordant tune!!!"

With that L Diablo sends forth The Four to do the dirty deed... Kung-Fu, Western, War and Sci-Fi (they just lurve the phrase designing by numbers, but it wouldn't be funny, so I won't.

Of course, being a title about a Rock 'n' Roll hero, you'd expect it to have some serious tunes...

"One of the reasons we went for the Rock 'n' Roll concept was that it was something new, and that with the advances in sound-quality and storage CD offers meant you can properly reflect the idea of Rock 'n' Roll in the music," says Paul. "We've included a phenomenal amount of what is basically CD-quality sound. Each of the 40 plus levels has its own theme tune of about five minutes long. We've worked with professional musicians such as *Sad Cafe* and *M-People* and we've also varied the mix as well, so it varies from soul to rock to jazz to classical depending on what level you're playing." Which is something you'd struggle to do on a 16-bit console. Actually, it'd be impossible.

Bazooka power

Believe it or not, *Johnny Bazookatone* actually started out as a 16-bit game but Arc soon decided that 32-bit platforms like the PlayStation were the future after seeing what the machines could do.

So, what you're basically going to end up with is a lavishly Silicon-rendered traditional-style platform game with a stylish soundtrack, and hopefully, a devil of a game in there too.

One thing it does have is size. There are over 40 levels split into six main worlds, Hell – The Prison, The Hotel



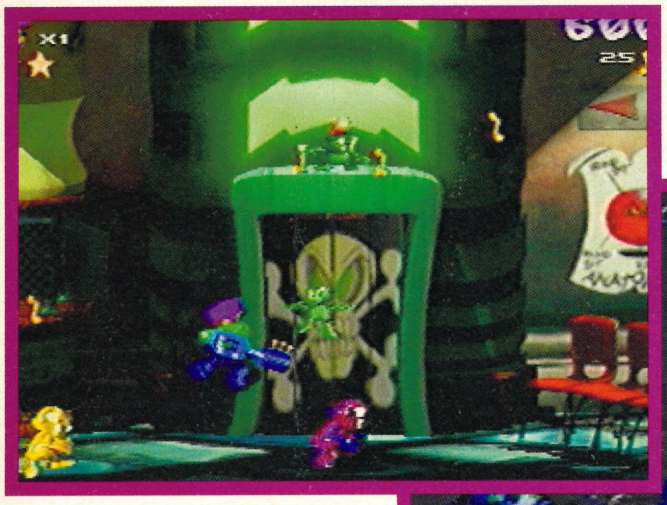
◀ **He don't look happy this chappy, not happy at all. What on Earth is he gonna do with his hands? Oooer.**







▶ **This is it, this is what you're after, the gorgeous, fenderesque little pink beauty that is Anita.**



◀ Nice background. Now, watch out for the frog jumping on top of you, whack off a quick riff at the purple thing and then run like buggery behind those chairs. Well, that's what I'd do anyway.



Demonique, The Ballroom, a restaurant called Hell's Kitchen, The Hospital and, should you get that far, a final showdown in L Diablo's fiery Penthouse.

Perhaps due to the game's 16-bit design origins, or perhaps by choice, *Johnny Bazookatone* doesn't try and incorporate 3D elements into the Platform genre, as did Sega's *Bug* and Sony's *Jumping Flash*. Which begs the question, why not?

"Well, there is a 3D element in that there's loads of parallax scrolling and the characters have a 3D look but we've really concentrated on producing a great platform game rather than anything else," explains Paul.

"Yes, 3D is nice and it's great that someone has tried to produce that kind of game. I'm a great believer in people trying something new. But in some respects, you have to wonder whether it's using 3D for the sake of using 3D. Unlike perhaps some firms, we don't have a vested interest in developing games to show what the hardware can do, but rather use the hardware to produce the best game that we possibly can."

And pretty soon, we'll be able to target it for evaluation and tell you just how good it is.

▲ It's a big. blue horrible fish like thing and it wants me! Swim, Johnny, swim.

▼ I'm in hell, can't you tell? Hear my rebel yell, or I'll ring ya bell. Huh, anyone can write songs.



"We've included a phenomenal amount of what is basically CD-quality sound. Each of the 40 plus levels has its own theme tune of about five minutes long." Paul Walker, Arc





movies). They reek complete and utter havoc throughout the record stores of the world before thieving Johnny's only pride and joy, Anita the guitar.

L Diablo snatches Anita from them there sweaty claws and tries to spank out a couple of hot licks but the resulting cacophony sends the Impmen cowering for cover. He tries in vain but hell, he just ain't got no soul.

"Well if I can't play, then the world will have no music!!!" Diablo smashes his fist down onto his brimstone desk-tidy in one hell of a bad mood. "Bring me Johnny" - he screams!

The world goes quiet....

The planet's rock fans slump into doom, gloom and despondency, records rot in their poor sleeves and a dejected Dr Pop slumps over his cobweb-encrusted Pop Desk. Johnny is equally gutted and no amount of Stiff Quiff or Boner-Hold Hairspray can put the bounce back in his bonce.

But alas, there's no rest for our heavy-metal guru. Johnny realises that the bad guys responsible for the missing musicians are probably the same bad guys who kidnapped Anita. He follows a trail of clues across the world until he comes to the outer reaches of L Diablo's domain, a crumbling disused prison. Diablo appears before Johnny via a live satellite link up from beyond the fiery Abyss.

"Good evening Mr Bazookatone, I've been expecting you..." slimes Diablo... "as you know, your precious guitar, Anita, is forever in my possession... and the world's greatest chart-toppers will never ever sing or play again, EVER!!!"

He cackles like only a true maniac can...

"And as for you, Bazookatone, you my boy, you will become a barbecued prisoner of my fiery dungeons from now until eternity and beyond!"

Johnny is far from impressed by these demonic threats. He nonchalantly grabs his guitar gun, checks his hair and threads in the mirror, and gets ready to battle thru the brimstone and treacle world of L Diablo, rescue Anita and teach the world to sing in perfect harmony once more."

Quite.

Power Instinct 2





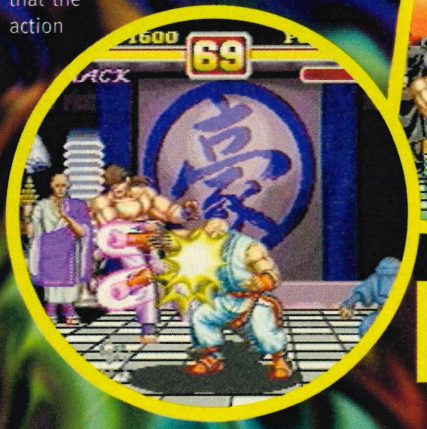
PLAY information

- Publisher: Atlas
- Customer support: No UK number
- Expected price: £69.99
- Expected when: Out now

Just as PlayStation beat 'em-ups were starting to get good, this prime lump of steaming excrement turns up. Dragging the genre back down the proverbial path of (censored, wash your keyboard out with soap - Ed), *Power Instinct 2* is an unfashionable leap back in time when 2D fighting games were all the rage and innovation was something that stretched no further than a new character in *Street Fighter II*. We can expect more nowadays though, and you'd have to be barmy to spend silly money on fourth-rate pig-sick game like this one.



On the defensive, *Power Instinct 2* offers the player a wide array of fighters with far-fetched moves, but everything is executed so appallingly you just give up trying to be enthusiastic. For example, Atlas have tried to be clever by incorporating nifty morphing moves – however, what they failed to realise was that the action freezes for several seconds whilst the disc accesses the changes – naff or what? Everything else on offer here is just instantly forgettable and frankly, not worth talking about.





Played 52%
Beaten up badly.

Hyper Formation Soccer









Given the competition, there's a lot expected of PlayStation football games. When someone goes and releases one where the Artificial intelligence is so bad the sprites walk and fall in formation (when they're not running like demented tortoises) it's in for a severe kicking from us.

Titles as *Striker '96* have made a big step from the 16-bit machines and have come up with stunning graphics and gameplay, but *Hyper Soccer* seems to stick in the realms of machines released years ago. The lack of speed is a major downside to this game, and one that is all the more noticeable when you start to think about how the real game is actually played on a pitch.

Some commentary and playability would have been nice, but sadly that's been forgotten too. Bog standard presentation like this does nothing for the PlayStation.

It's simply a bad SNES game that needs some serious labour put into it. But don't worry, with the likes of Striker '96 available as an alternative, it's definitely not worth crying over.

PLAY information

- **Publisher:** Human Entertainment
- **Customer Support:** No UK number
- **Expected When:** Now on import
- **Expected Price:** £69.99

Played 50%
...And they all fall over.

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Work, work

The videogames industry is massive. Ever-growing and eager, the public's demand for interactive entertainment is escalating wildly. However, with so many companies jumping on the bandwagon, creativity sometimes seems to have lapsed in favour of a more formulaic approach. But all is not lost. In the concluding part of this feature, Asam Ahmad quizzes two of the heroes of the games industry, Dave Perry of Shiny Entertainment and Eric Matthews of the Bitmap Brothers, about Zen and the art of videogames, past, present and future.



Last month, in the first part of this feature, we took a look at two of the biggest players in the videogaming industry, Psygnosis (Sony Interactive) and Electronic Arts. Both companies have produced some superb games in their times, but it hasn't always been the big boys that have had the biggest successes. Huge budgets don't necessarily mean huge games.
Before the industry went 'commercial', avid gamesplayers wouldn't care who a game had been published by, but rather who the game had been programmed by. People like Archer MacLean, Jez San, Andrew Braybrook and David Braben were all huge personalities in the games arena when it was much more of a niche hobby. Where are they now? Well they're still around, but perhaps a little overshadowed by the publishing houses' prominence. *Play* is here to correct that.

This month, *Play* has something special for you. We've been chatting to two of the biggest names in games design, who between them have produced some of the best games the industry's ever seen. In a light-hearted investigation, *Play* gets into the heads of Dave Perry (not our managing Ed!) of Shiny Entertainment, the team behind *Cool Spot* and the hilarious *Earthworm Jim* and Eric Matthews, team leader of those cheeky monkeys the Bitmap Brothers, the designers responsible for such classics as *Speedball* and *Xenon*.



Dave Perry,

Shiny Entertainment Incorporated.

"I'm really bad at playing basketball!" he says. You wouldn't think it, looking at him. At 6ft 8in, Dave's rather tall. He's got the kinda height which gives you neckache when you try and have a conversation. Stature's not the only thing Dave's big in though, with around 39 games under his belt, this guy has had some big ideas in the past, and nothing's about to stop him. With *Earthworm Jim 2* on the horizon, Dave Perry has a few plans afoot. Not least involving underwear. What?!? Read on...

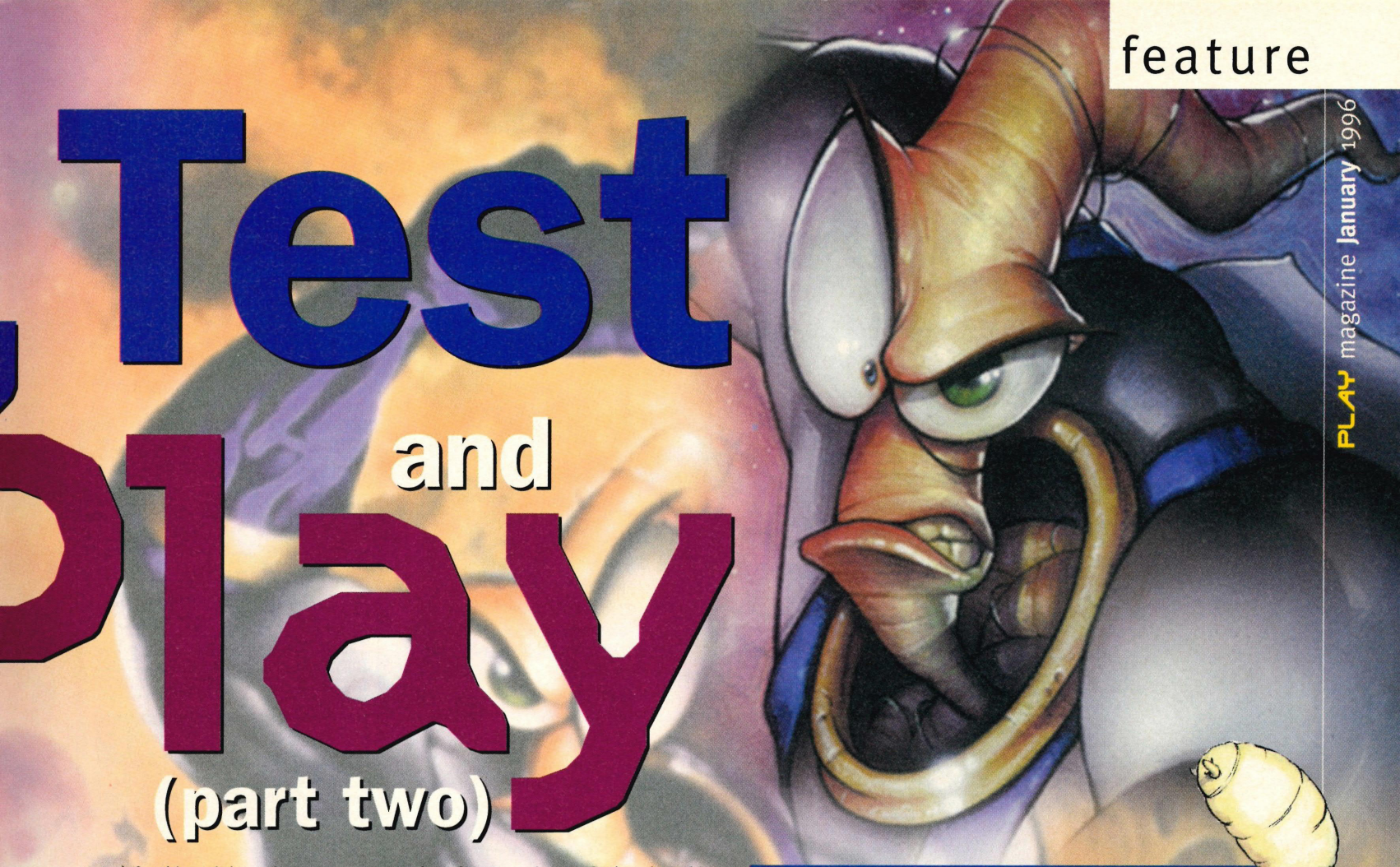
Dave Perry started off programming games around 12 years ago, on the Sinclair ZX81. Back then, when he should have been at school learning things, Dave was busy 'creating'. His first published game was the immense (for its time) *Pyjamarama* on the ZX Spectrum for Mikro-Gen. Since then, he's gone from strength to strength. The success of his programming talents steered him away from his ambition to be a juggling dentist, but he's not bitter. After all, if he wasn't a programmer he wouldn't have been able to move from Northern Ireland to California. Why California? "If you've lived here, you would kick yourself for asking that! Ever seen *Baywatch*?!" he replies grinning. Ah, I see. Got any jobs?

They're all nuts

Dave's got a keen sense of the ridiculous, and this has probably helped make his games such huge hits. The classically comical *Earthworm Jim* was incredibly well received by the computer press, and now has even migrated to the TV screen in the form of a cartoon. So, how do Dave and his team at Shiny come up with their ideas for games? "Our main focus is on humour. Very few games have this kind of appeal. We look at the weird, funky, funny and twisted public of today and making equally weird, funky, funny and twisted games. In the case of *EWJ* we actually designed the game backwards," he adds. "We started off with an incredibly funny ending, and designed the game around that. We added his indestructible suit and then his plasma gun, and finally many bosses to contend with." Weirdo.

But he's allowed to be. And so are team. Actually, the Shiny lot pride themselves on it. The main man responsible (sounds like blame-shifting

Test and play (part two)



to me) for this weirdness is Doug TenNapel, the 'Creative' Director at Shiny. As Dave says, "If you keep Doug awake for 36 hours in a row, you have all the weird stuff you could ever possibly want!"

Apart from being a bit strange, the other ingredients that go into making Shiny games are "Sweat, tears, pizza, late nights, more late nights, coffee, twisted weird CDs, strange toys, a lush Californian lifestyle and massages by the pool," (Sounds like writing for a magazine, but we don't get the California bits.)

More than this, though, it seems that the main driving force that compels Dave and his team is a real passion for what they do. At the end of the day, creating games is about giving the end user some sort of valued enjoyment, and not just about satisfying a market.

In the pink

Shiny aren't stopping at videogames though. Apart from the impending cartoon from Universal Cartoon Studios (to be shown on *Channel 4* soon), Playmates Toys Inc. have released *EWJ* merchandise, including a major line of toys. But Dave's plans for expansion go further than this. "Yup, we plan to take over the world, then the universe. Soon you will be wearing *Earthworm Jim* underpants!" he explains. Ooooer. Underpants? Little wriggly things? I dunno...

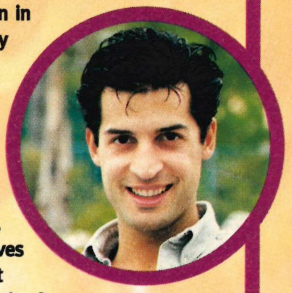
So then. *Earthworm Jim 2*. What about the PlayStation? "I flippin' love it! I can't wait for the Walkman version!" Well, you'll be pleased to know that even if Dave isn't yet ready to give a straight answer *Earthworm Jim 2* is coming to the PlayStation. The game is being published by Shiny's old friends Virgin Interactive, and is being converted to the PlayStation by Screaming Pink from Shiny's original designs. And it looks like it might be rather special, taking platform games to startling new, err... levels.

Anything else you want to add, Dave? "We are currently working on a game for Interplay. It will be on the shelves next Christmas. At the moment, it's all TOP secret though." Can you tell me anything else? "Yup. They don't sell Flakes, Ripples or Devon Custard in America." Thanks Dave. Anything else? "Get your sister to play *Earthworm Jim*!" I think I'll leave it at that. Cheerio Dave.

Shiny, Happy, People...

Dave Perry • Top bloke dude
Mike Deitz • Animation Director
Douglas TenNapel • Creative Director
Nick Bruty • Art Director
Nick Jones • Programmer
Andy Astor • Programmer
Tom Tanaka • Designer
Edward Schofield • Animator
Eric Ciccone • Animator Assistant
Steve Crow • Senior Artist
Mike Koelsh • Artist

Dave Perry - Profile



Dave Perry is 27 years old. He was born in Northern Ireland, but fled quite quickly to the sun and surf of California. Dave has four cars, a Dodge Viper (designed to excite police), a V8 Jeep Grand Cherokee and a 1961 Porsche 956B. And a Sonic the Hedgehog remote control car (to annoy people's ankles).

He listens to weird, twisted, funky music, oh and techno, classical, heavy rock and loves wailing in the shower each morning. His pet hates are the plastic wrapping on CDs, and the fact that he can't buy decent choccy in the US. So instead he gets into his Porsche when he's in a Flakey mood.

His cleaner, Nancy, taught him how to program really fast logic. And how to get a fridge sparkling clean.

He believes that the whip was invented to ensure deadlines were met (hear, hear).

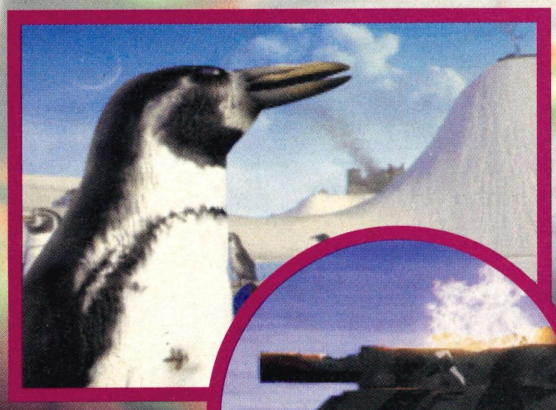
Eric Matthews - Profile

Eric Matthews is 33 years old. He was born in Bath, but now lives in London. Eric's got two cars – A 1970 Mercedes 280SL and a 1977 Jaguar XJ12 Coupe. But they're off the road at the mo' so he has to be chauffeured around by this chappy called John. Bummer.

Eric likes listening to most forms of music, including rap, indie, techno and ambient, but hates jazz and terrible folky crap.



His favourite TV programmes are *Cracker*, *The Sunday Show*, *Have I Got News for You* and the *Food and Drink* programme. He preferred *Star Trek* when Captain Kirk was still the main man. His favourite films are *Blood Simple* and *The 39 Steps* (the original version). Sounds like quite a normal bloke really.





Eric Matthews,

The Bitmap Brothers.

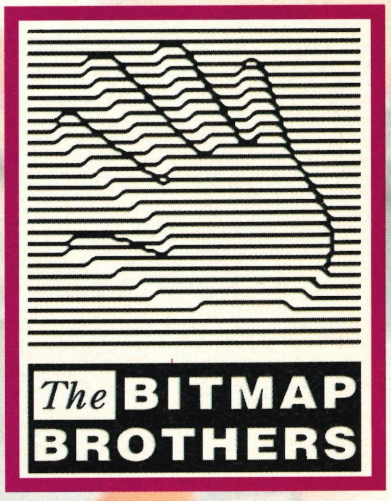
"I got into the videogames industry through buying a Sinclair Spectrum, teaching myself graphics whilst at art college, and then lying my way into a job," explains Eric Matthews. And thank God he did. For it weren't for Eric and the rest of the boys at the Bitmap Brothers, we wouldn't have had some of the best games ever to have been created for the home market.

The troublesome troop broke into the games industry in 1988 with the smash hit *Xenon* on the Amiga. They followed this with a collection of games that really showed the games industry what real games were made of. Detailed design, glorious graphics, superb sounds and, above all, perfect playability. "We take existing game genres, look at them from different angles and do them better," he explains. And one of the ways they make their games different is through outside inspiration and influence. "In *Z* there are references to both *Aliens* and *Apocalypse Now* etc. in terms of characterisation and atmosphere, for example."

You see with these crazy guys, videogames are much more of a lifestyle than just a job, and sod what the market research company says. "That stuff is bullshit, we basically write the games that we want to play, which sounds a bit crass, but unfortunately true! It just so happens that these games are the games that other people actually wanted to play. Thank Christ!"

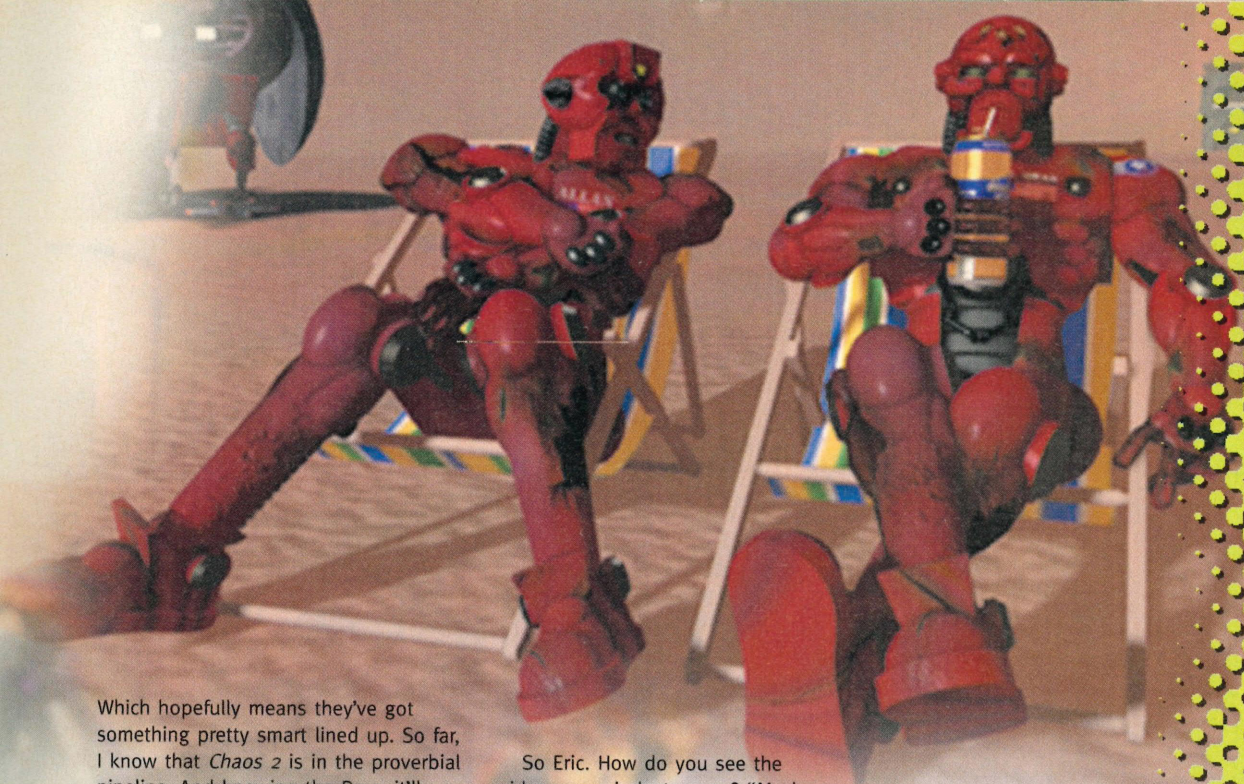
Oops, slipped again

And because these chaps make games for themselves, they're not the kinda guys that like to be rushed. And that's probably a good thing. "*Xenon* took eight months, *Z* has taken three and a half years," adds Eric. "And a game can change quite often through development. If we are working with ideas that are someway different or new, often it is a process of trying things out and reacting to what you've done. This usually involves scrapping loads of work and wasting lots of peoples' time and money, which is the fun bit! All we do is write the best game we can, and hope it's what people want." Thanks.



The boys have had a bit of a lull in activity recently, not through inaction, but more due to them being busy coding their latest blockbuster, *Z*. This strangely titled wargame should be out on our cool grey baby pretty soon. "The PlayStation is a very nice piece of kit, at a good price and technically better than anything else available," enthuses Eric.





Which hopefully means they've got something pretty smart lined up. So far, I know that *Chaos 2* is in the proverbial pipeline. And knowing the Bros, it'll probably be something rather spectacular on our next generation hero.

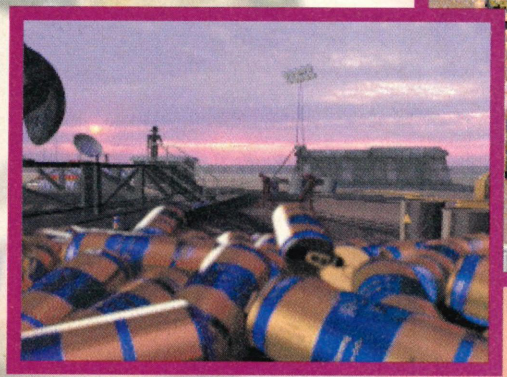
Not big, not clever

Anyway, apparently, creating videogames can be bad for your health, according to the man Matthews. "Whilst Simon Knight and myself were trying to complete *Xenon 2*, we hadn't slept for days and had to drive from Bristol to London to deliver the master copy to the publisher. We were out of our heads driving at ridiculous speeds down the motorway when Simon fell asleep and I had to steer the car from the passenger seat!" Oh dear. "It seemed a right laugh at the time, but in retrospect, it was neither big nor clever," he adds. It's okay. I won't tell.

So Eric. How do you see the videogames industry now? "Much more mass market, public awareness is far greater than it ever used to be. It's treated as a far more organised and serious business than in the mid-80's. However, not so adventurous in terms of ideas given the development costs involved, people are comfortable with formula, which is a shame." Thankfully there are still a few developers like the Bitmaps to hold the fort.







▲ This is a screenshot from the forthcoming *Z* from the Brothers. One thing that the Bitmaps have always prided themselves on is superlative graphical design.

The Brothers Grin...

Eric Matthews - Partner
Mike Montgomery - Partner
Steve Kelly - Partner
Simon Knight - Designer
Martin F. Godber - Designer
Steve Cargill - Programmer
Bruce Nesbitt - Programmer
John Phillips - Programmer
Mark Vick - Trainee Programmer
Terry Cattrell - Graphic Artist
Chris Thomas - Graphic Artist
Mark Coleman - Graphic Artist
Chris Maule - Musician
Abby Hains - Holds the fort

Over the two parts of this feature, we have seen four different approaches to game development. From Psygnosis' building-block approach to Electronic Arts' more scripted method, and from Shiny's weird humorous ingenuity to the Bitmaps' hands-on hedonism. It's unfair to say whether any of the approaches is better or worse than any other – it's the products that count. At the end of the day that's your decision. And the way you effect that decision is reflected in the games you buy. But how do you buy?

With the mass of money that is now being ploughed into the industry, videogames are becoming so big that they are almost now faceless against the hordes of other titles available on the shelves. Many of the games will be good. But many also will be crap. It's like cinema. Big budgets and fancy SFX don't necessarily make good films, and the same can be applied to videogames. Big isn't necessarily bad, but sometimes the best things come from small packages.

Thankfully, the boom in the industry also has the effect that more and more money can be spent where and when it is needed. And that's where *Play* comes in. Without independent editorial, to review games and to tell you things straight, as they should be, you might have problems telling the cream from the crud. Stay with us to bring you all the stories...
Feed your PlayStation the *Play* way.

Station Master

As more and more games arrive, more and more gamers are requiring assistance from the mighty Station Master. He's one member of ASLEF that never goes on strike. If you've got some advice you'd like to share with the *Play* boys and the nation drop us a line with your hints and cheats. Send them to Station Master, *Play* Magazine, Paragon Publishing, St Peters Road, Bournemouth, BH1 2JS. We'll sort out some kind of reward for the best one.

Mortal Kombat 3

Kombat codes

In addition to last months jam-packed page full of *MK3* codes, the Station Master has some more for you to try out. Remember, these codes need to be input on the versus screen just before combat.

Super Run Jumps

Pad 1: Square x3, Triangle x2, Circle x1
Pad 2: Square x7, Triangle x8, Circle x9



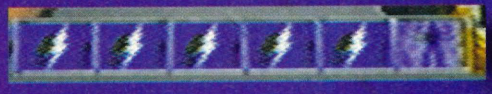
Combos Disabled

Pad 1: Square x7, Triangle x2, Circle x2
Pad 2: Square x7, Triangle x2, Circle x2



Specials Disabled

Pad 1: Square x5, Triangle x5, Circle x5
Pad 2: Square x5, Triangle x5, Circle x6



Fast Uppercut Recovery

Pad 1: Square x6, Triangle x8, Circle x8
Pad 2: Square x4, Triangle x3, Circle x3



You inflict half damage

Pad 1: Square x3, Triangle x9, Circle x0 1P Side



Super Endurance

Pad 1: Square x0, Triangle x2, Circle x4
Pad 2: Square x6, Triangle x8, Circle x9



Cheat Code

If you fancy a pretty cool option screen, then simply go past the prepare for combat screen, and don't enter the Ultimate Kombat Code. Now when the game is in attract mode, input the following sequence:

Triangle, Square, Circle, X, L1, L2. If you have done this correctly, a projectile sound will go off. Then press start to get to the main menu. Press up so that the cursor isn't on Kombat. You will see a "?". Now press start once again to take you to the cheat menu.

The options will be as follows:

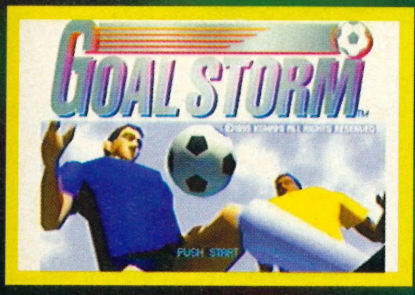
Free Play On/Off
Fatality Time On/Off
Smoke On/Off
Level Select On/Off

Street Fighter: The Movie

Secret Configuration

To get a configuration that is not in the manual, pause the game while fighting. Then if you press select, a select screen will appear allowing you to configure your buttons.





Goal Storm

Special Konami Team

To play with a top notch standard Konami team, simply do the following cheat on the "Press Start" screen, with the picture of the two footballers on it. By inputting the code on Pad 1, the team will have the home strip on, and with pad 2, the players will be wearing the away strip.
Up, up, down, down, left, right, left, right, X and O.

Now when you go to select any team, when they get on the pitch, they will have Komani strips on and look like they've got paper bags on their heads.





3D Lemmings

Still stuck guiding those little blighters around, well here are the first 20 level codes. Just input them on the password screen. Watch out next month for a continuation of these codes.

Level 2: BLIMBING
Level 3: FANAGALO
Level 4: DRICKSIE
Level 5: KURTOSIS
Level 6: GREGATIM
Level 7: WALLAROO
Level 8: AVENTAIL
Level 9: GAZOGENE
Level 10: JINGBANG
Level 11: DIALLAGE
Level 12: BUNODONT
Level 13: NAINSOOK
Level 14: YAKIMONA
Level 15: FUMITORY
Level 16: CINGULUM
Level 17: BESLAVER
Level 18: ANABELPS
Level 19: QUINCUNX
Level 20: TARLATAN

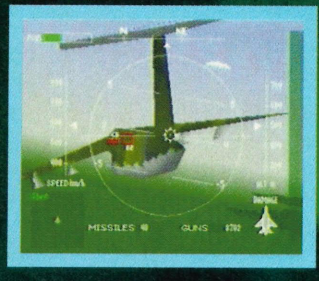
Air Combat

Various Cheats

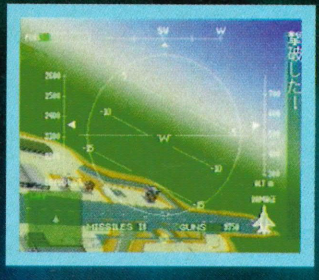
Bouncing CD's
Yes that's right. If you want a load of pointless CD's bouncing around the screen, then before the intro appears, press and hold down R1 and circle. Now you can press the following buttons for more weird and wonderful things:



Secret game
Press up, down, left, right for a secret game while you are waiting for the game to load.



Set colour plane
Press up, down, left, right, up down, left, right, R1 to allow you to use the set colour plane.



Wing man's paint
Press Start x10 and then R1. Your wing man's paint will now be the original colour.



Original paint jobs
To play the original paint jobs in two player mode, press left, right, left, right, down, up, down, up, circle, circle, triangle, triangle.



All planes
To get the full 16 planes, simply finish all of the missions on easy. Now when you start the game again, you will have all of the planes to choose from.

All wing men
Do the same, but now in normal mode. This time you will not only have all the planes, but you will have all the wing men to choose from!



Choose levels
Now when you compile the missions on hard mode, you will have all the planed, wing men and to top it off, you will be able to select any stage from the start!

Destruction Derby Guide

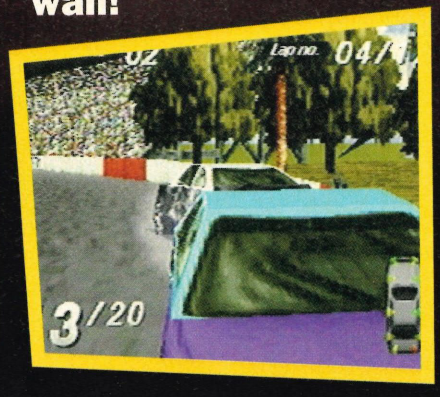
Due to popular demand, *Play* brings you a smashin' guide to that ground-breakin' game that's had everyone spinnin' their 360°s. We wreckin' (sorry) with these tips, it won't be your face up against the wall!

Driving with the Pro car

The Pro car can be a little difficult to master at first, but it is worth persevering with. Driving the Pro car allows for superior control and manoeuvrability, allowing you to perform wild tail out slides and 180° handbrake spins. When cornering, bear in mind:

Braking: throws some of the car's weight forward onto the front wheels, causing them to bite (at high speeds, this will force the rear of the car to swing out).

Accelerating: reduces friction on the rear wheel and has a similar effect to the above, but not quite to the same effect. Releasing the throttle brings the rear of the car back into line from a slide.



The best cornering can be achieved by employing 'left foot braking' – as you turn into a bend, jab the brake for a second whilst still holding down accelerate to swing the back end round and force the car into a sideways slide. Maintain the power-slide by holding the accelerator down and releasing the steering:

If the tail swings round too far: release the throttle to help bring it back into line and apply a small amount of opposite lock.

If the car understeers: dab the brake whilst cornering and accelerating to tighten the cornering line.

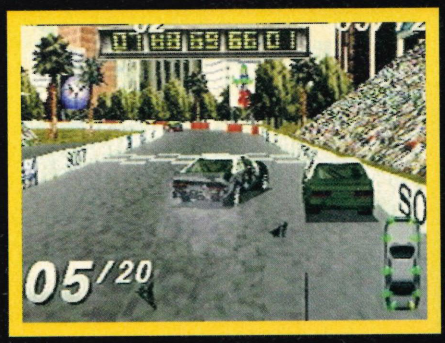
With a little practice, it's possible to maintain a smooth power-slide around the entire length of a bend by simply feathering the throttle and brake.

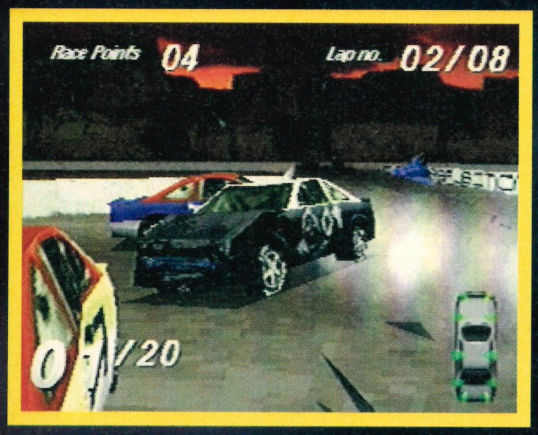
Racing techniques

At first, as a novice driver, you'll have a great deal of fun simply charging around the track and thumping into everything. However, in order to successfully win points and survive with you car intact, you'll have to learn to correct aggressive tactics necessary to win. Since Destruction Derby has been programmed with realistic car motion, with faithfully simulated collisions, this is fairly intuitive. Here are some sneaky moves you might use to become a smashin' supremo.

- Slamming your brakes on when followed by a smoking car knocks out the opposition whilst only damaging your rear end.
- Turning into the rear corner of another car, to try and force him to spin out.
- Slamming into the back of a car which was braking for a bend, causing him to overshoot and hit the wall (and hopefully taking out some other cars in the process).
- Squeezing another car sideways into the wall to slow him down.
- Ramming a car sideways at speed into some stationary wreckage.
- Stopping to push wrecked cars into the paths of oncoming cars.
- Overtaking very quickly on the inside of a bend by, 'leaning' heavily on the other car (hopefully pushing him into the wall or another car).
- Pushing a car from behind, so he can't brake to avoid an obstacle, or into the path of cross traffic at a cross-roads track.
- Lying in wait for a smoking car, then

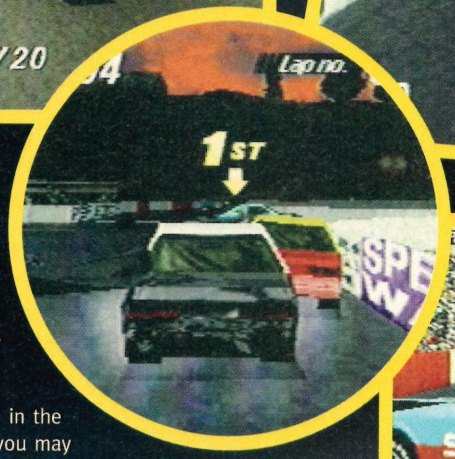


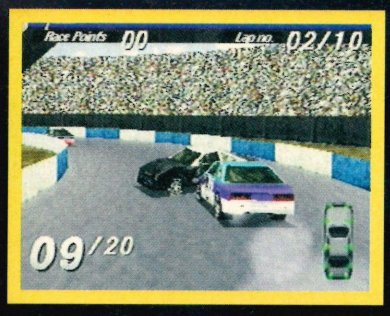
















Other useful tips

▶In Wreckin' Racing, aim for the 1st place man – he's worth double points!

▶ In the Destruction Derby, avoid the initial mad smash in the centre. That way, although you may miss out on a few points, you will start off with less damage.

▶ For maximum points, always aim for the rear side wings to force the other cars through a full 360°.

▶ In Total Destruction, always try to reverse away from collisions, rather than driving forwards – this softens the blow to your front end.

▶ When lodged against the wall, try to position the front end against the barrier and then reverse out. This protects the front of the car, leaving only your less-vulnerable rear end exposed.

simply ramming the front end to take him out (devious but worth ten points!).

▶ Driving towards another car head on then turning sharply to take the impact on the side of the car which is less vulnerable than the front.

These are just some of the attacking moves you can use. In time, you will learn to use other, more subtle, tricks as you gain experience. For example, as an advanced drive, you might 'squeeze' rather than ram other cars if possible, to minimise your own damage.



PLAY magazine January 1996

How to complete Rayman ...and live

That spunky chappie, Rayman had the Play team in rapturous fits of delight and agony as he bounced his way onto the PlayStation in traditional platform style. His antics won us a lorry load of booze as we battled against every other company to get the furthest, and it was only then that we discovered just how wickedly hard the game actually is. So to prevent any other gamers from experiencing the same psychotic bouts of aggression and depression, we decided to intervene and present our readers with a guide to get you on your way. So get cracking Raymen.

General Hints

1. Collect as many blue spheres as you can. Not only do they give you extra lives, but also lead the way to hidden cages and power-ups. Yeah! and I bet you thought they were just an added inclusion to emulate Sonic! Occasionally, you may see a single sphere enticing you to jump into the unknown – go for it! Who knows what you may find.

2. At certain points, you may hear a strange noise that indicates something special has appeared. However, you may not always be able to see this mystic gift straight away but it certainly won't be far away. Don't be afraid to retrace your steps because it could lead to a cage of Electoons.

3. You won't be able to gather all of the Electoon cages as you make your first pass through a level. Sometimes... or in fact most times, you'll have to get useful additional powers from Betilla the Fairy and then return to find and rescue them all.

4. You can only get to Mr. Dark's Candy Chateau once you have freed all of the Electoons – so be warned.

Pink Plant Woods:

▼ Jungle Level 1

Just after the red flower that bends, climb the vines and go left to discover an extra life.



▼ Jungle Level 2

Go to the very left of the screen and jump on the flower. Now grab the vine dangling above it and collect all of the blue tings hovering around it. Then jump over to the platform on the right, if you have collected ten tings, the magician will warp you off to the first bonus level.

You can defeat the hunter by hitting him when he lowers his pistol.



Jungle Level 3

Betilla the Fairy will give you the power to lob your fist. Go to the far right of the screen, and then jump up to knock down the purple grape. Jump on top of it and then up onto the platform to exit the level.

▼ Jungle Level 4

To get special powers that are suspended above the water, find the nearest purple grape and knock it down. Then simply push the over-sized blighter into the drink using your fist. By doing this you can also find another magician at the bottom right-hand side of the level.



Anguish Lagoon





▲ Jungle Level 5

As you pass the second floating platform, you'll see a bunch of blue tings. Jump off the platform and grab them – they'll lead you straight to a cage full of Electoons. Be prepared to duck though because there's a hunter waiting.

▶ Jungle Level 6

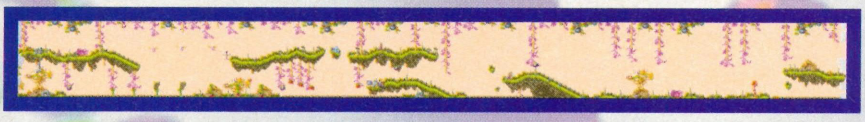
Try to stay in the middle of the screen so you can see which direction the mosquito is coming.

Mokito's Nest

▼ Jungle Level 12

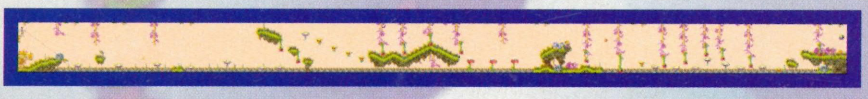
Climb up and get the tings on top of the mushroom tree at the beginning of the level. A cage will then appear on the ground. When you see the photographer while floating on the purple grape, don't get off yet. Stay on the grape and it will take you to a cage.

The tentacle can only be stopped by punching it in the mouth.



▼ Jungle Level 13

Climb up the tree to grab the tings and a cage will appear below. Before exiting this level, knock down the grape and push it to the left until it falls in the water. Now jump on it and float over to the right and you will find another cage.



Going Back:

Once you acquire the power to hang and punch, you can go back and pick up a few more cages. In Jungle Levels 2 &3, more cages will become accessible.

On Jungle level 5, get on the falling platform at the very top of the screen. As you are falling, wind up quickly and punch to the left... this will knock down a grape. You will fall on a platform with a grape. Jump on top of it and swing over to the left with the grapple until you see the cage. Then jump down to the mushroom tree and another cage will appear. In Jungle Level 12, climb the vine just after the photographer and get rid of the bad guys. You'll find a magician and a little bit further some flying hooks that will lead you to a hidden cage.

Once you've beaten a boss, when you return to that level you won't have to fight him again. Also, you can exit a level by touching the exit sign at the beginning or end of the level.

The Swamps of Forgetfulness

▶ Jungle Level 9



Jump up and knock down Tarayzan's clothes which are stuck on a vine above you. In the way of thanks, he will give you a magic seed. Plant this seed repeatedly and then jump onto the plants that grow to advance through the level. Please note though, you cannot plant one seed on top of another.

When you reach the exit, an extra life will appear on the left side of the screen. Try to get it if you have enough time before the water reaches you.

▼ Jungle Level 10

Knock the purple grapes off of the vines, in turn they will splat the enemies below.

On the second large island, you will see one of the scavengers and a bunch of Anitoons. Don't use the grape as a means of getting rid of the scavenger or you'll miss the cage of Electoons. Instead, approach the island from the left by water, using another grape. Punch all of the Anitoons while still perched on the grape and then knock down the grape that floats above the island. Push it to the right and into the water. (one way to move the grapes is to jump on top of them, punch in the opposite direction to the one you want to go and then duck. When your fist comes back it will bump into the grape and push you along.) When you arrive at the next island, a cage will fall from the sky.

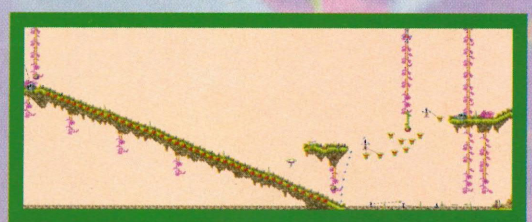


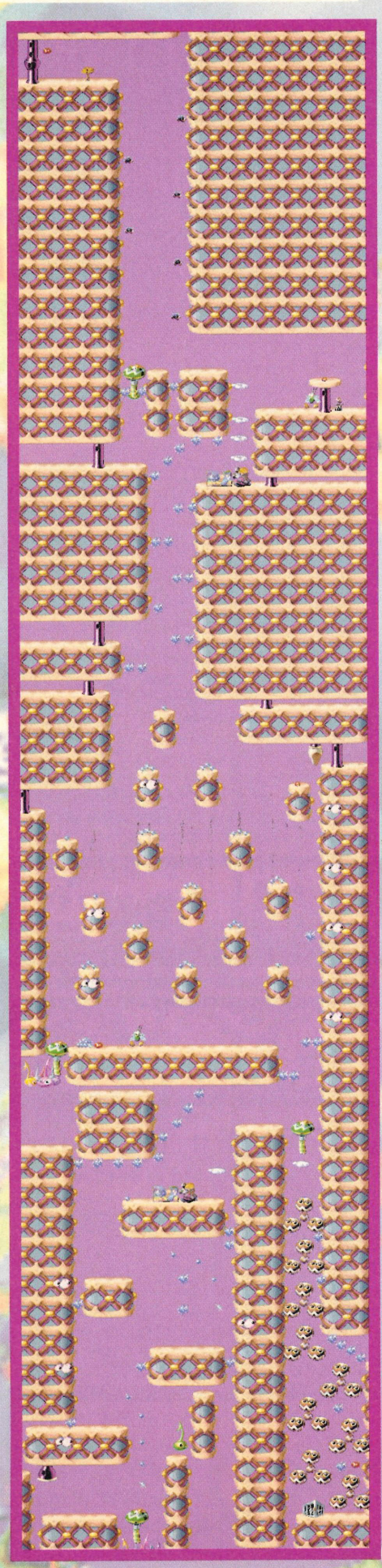


▼ Jungle Level 11

Climb up the first vine that's holding up the purple grape. Go to the top and then drop down and a cage will appear. Knock the grape down, jump on top of it and then use the punch and duck technique to move it along to enable you to ride it down the hill.

Before you reach the end of the hill, jump off of the grape and onto a floating platform. Jump over to the right again and you'll find another mystic magician. On the right side of the magician's platform, you'll notice a blue ting, jump off after it and magic platforms will mysteriously appear leading you across to another cage.



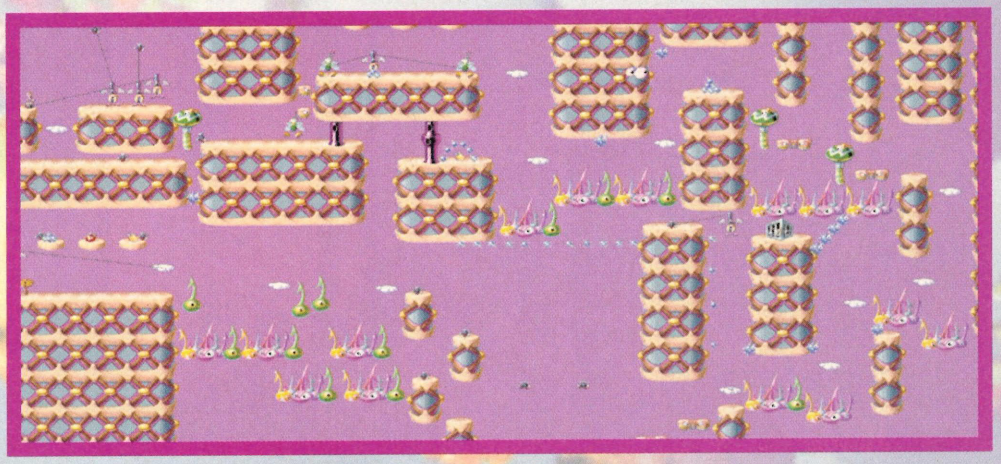


Bongo Hills

▼ Music Level 2

Advance forward to the end of the bongo, then retrace your steps, jumping over the cloud and you'll stumble across a extra life.

Jump above the exit panel at the end of the level. When you land on the left side of the panel, a cloud will appear off to the right side of the screen. Get on the cloud and it will take you to a cage.

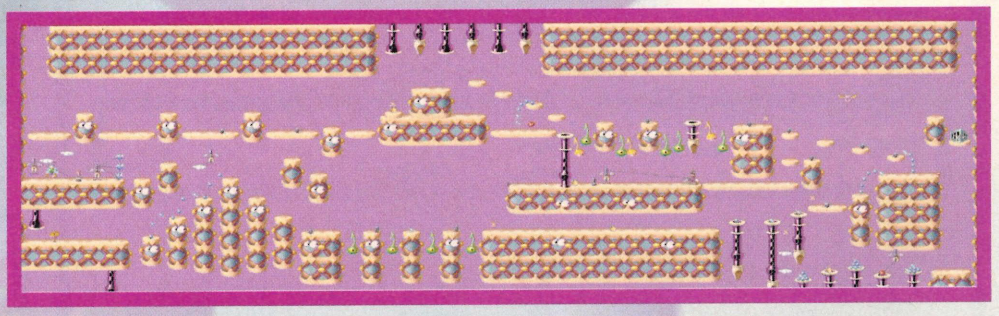


◀ Music Level 3

At the second flying maracas, just after the photographer, don't get on it straight away, instead fall beneath it. Continue going down until you find a cage and then retrace your steps.

▼ Music Level 4

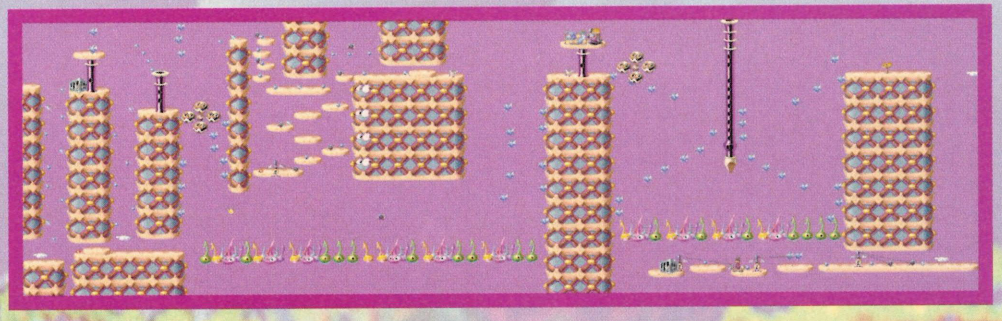
Go after the lone power-up hanging over the edge and you will find a hidden reserve of power-ups, tings, And a golden fist.



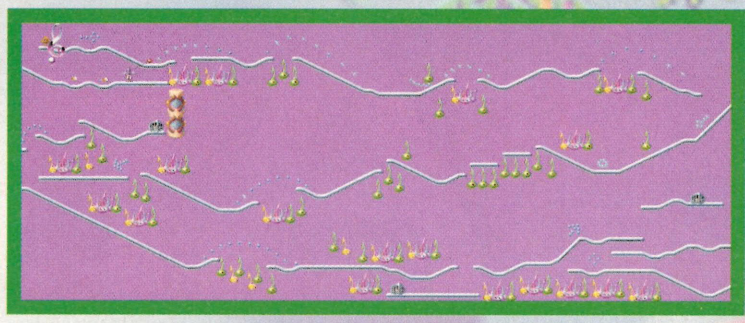
▼ Music Level 5

When you arrive at the first photographer, instead of continuing forward, jump back on the brown spinner and jump over to the platform on the left. Shrink by touching the fairy and follow the tings. Then fall down onto the brown spinner and descend until you see the notes, then jump off to the left. Take the second ascending cloud and you will see a cage. After freeing the Electoons, get back on the cloud and retrace your steps.

At the exit, jump over to the other side of the panel and fall down to the bottom. Go left and you should see another cage. Retrace your steps and on the far right side, jump and a cloud will appear to take you to the exit.



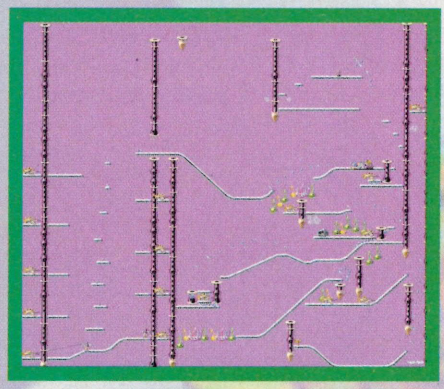
Allegro Presto



▶ Music Level 7

At the second arrow-shaped group of tings, just after the false notes (which you must get past by ducking), instead of continuing down, jump up to the ledge on the far left side of the screen and then jump over to the right and you will find a cage.

A little lower down, just after you see an arrow-shaped group of tings pointing upwards, pick up a lot of speed and with a big jump you will reach another platform where there is a hidden cage.



◀ Music Level 8

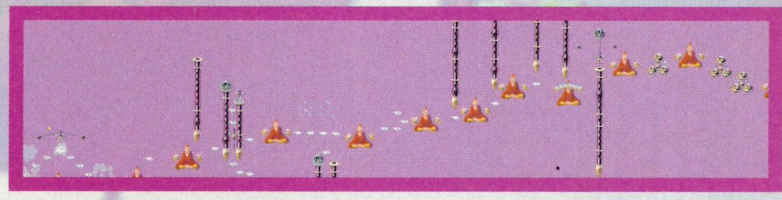
Timing is essential when the trumpets blow you back and forth. Try to jump early enough to reach higher platforms. After the photographer, instead of descending, climb up the platforms to find the extra free life.

Music Level 9

Move towards the right, jump on the first bongo and then retrace your steps and you will find a cage. After the photographer, jump on the two small platforms and then retrace your steps. A brown spinner will appear, simply ride it across and it will lead you to a cage. When you reach the walking drum, jump off onto one of the sliding platforms. You'll hear a noise which means that something has appeared. Jump back left to get to the bonus level.

At the end of the level, you will seem stuck because the exit panel is not in sight. Jump onto the upper slippery platform and a cloud will, get on it and the exit panel will magically appear.

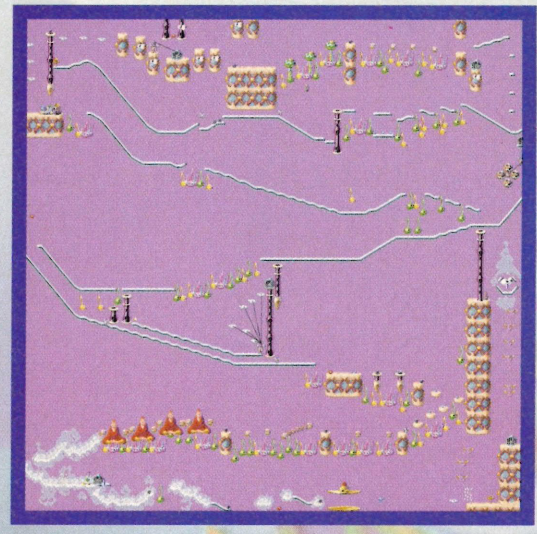
Going Heights



▶ Music Level 12

Jump on the clouds above the first Tibetan and a cage will appear near the entrance to the level. When you see a series of four clouds underneath a group of tings, drop down beneath the clouds to find another cage.

Mr. Sax's Hullabaloo



▶ Music Level 14

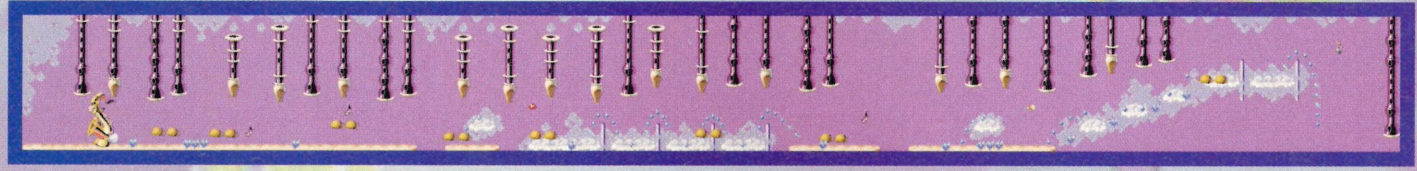
At the right hand side of the level, you will see a cage beneath you that's inaccessible for the moment. Take the steps going up which will lead you to another cage. After your picture is taken by the photographer, you will begin a long downward slide. Pick up as much speed as you can (take care to duck beneath the notes) and run all the way into the wall on the far right of the level (you should see some sparkling stars). If you picked up enough speed, brown spinning wheels will appear upon impact with the wall. Ride them up to another cage.

You can move from left to right on the cymbals, but when they start to vibrate, move to the middle. It's the only spot to avoid getting squashed.

The flying hooks will lead you to another cage. Continue going up and you will find a free life.

▼ Music Levels 15&16

Mr. Sax cannot feel your punches. To beat him, punch his false notes back into the hole in his horn.



Going Back

Once you get the helicopter power at the end of Allegro Presto, go back to Bongo Hills. In the fourth level (the one with the lightning) the helicopter will allow you to grab a flying hook which leads to a cage



Arena

Have you seen the size of our postman? Bloody huge he is. He has to be with the amount of mail you guys send in. At the time of writing this page, Issue 2 of *Play* had only just gone on sale, and already the response from PlayStation owners around the country has been big enough to see us increase this page to two pages.

Remember, this is your chance to show off, have a laugh, and voice an opinion. And if you don't know what to write about, here are a couple of subjects to get you started.

Demo CDs, do you want them on this magazine in the future? What do you think of Sony for making it almost impossible to produce them?

The games bottleneck. There are a lot of games ready for release so why aren't we already seeing them on the shelves? It's your machine, what do you think?

What do you think of your local games store? Let's find the best and worst PlayStation retail outlets in the country. Send us examples of their brilliance or lethargy.

Send us a picture of your PlayStation decorated for Christmas. Prizes will be going to the most original designs.

Okay, these are just a few ideas, but if have something you want to say of your own, or a question you want me to answer. Snail Mail or E-Mail me at either of the addresses featured below. I look forward to hearing from you.

Write to Dave Perry at: Arena, Play, Paragon Publishing Ltd, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth, BH1 2JS
or E-Mail me at: dperry@paragon.co.uk

Dear Dave,

Attention all *Destruction Derby* fans. Sick of facing the ultimate challenge? Why not face the impossible challenge and play *DD, Wreckin' Racing* or *Stock Car* in multi-player mode. I purchased my copy from HMV in Manchester and after the initial buzz of crashing cars decided to play a league with a couple of mates. We always finished at the bottom of the league and thought it was great that it was such a challenge. It continued like this and I became angry so I said, "Hey guys, something is wrong with this game!" They turned nasty, "Something wrong with *DD* on PS? Get him!" They beat me up and left me bruised and battered but I was still convinced something was wrong. I made notes of all scores and found that human scores are calculated correctly, but computer player scores are calculated incorrectly.

e.g. 1st Race
Player 1 50 points
Skum 40 points
Trashman 35 points
2nd Race
Player 1 50 points
Skum 40 points
Trashman 35 points
3rd Race
Player 1 50 points
Skum 40 points
Trashman 35 points

How it should look:
Player 1 (50+50+50) = 150 points
Skum (40+40+40) = 120 points
Trashman (35+35+35) = 105 points

How it actually looks:
Player 1 (100+50) = 150 points
Skum (120+40+120) = 280 points
Trashman (105+35+105) = 245 points

This incorrect calculating only happens in the multi-player option. Choose one or 20 players and it still happens. The Championship mode calculates correctly.

I rang Sony and was transferred everywhere until I finally managed to speak to someone who dealt with program faults. I explained what was happening and received some classic replies such as "I believe *DD* has a bizarre scoring system" and, "Don't you add all the human player's scores together?" I asked what five plus five was and he said 27, so I gave up. I returned my copy of *DD* to HMV and asked to try another. The result was still the same. I don't know if this is a national problem but all the batch received at HMV Manchester appeared to be faulty. Just thought I'd let you know as Sony don't seem that bothered with the problem.

Colin Lynch

I contacted my top mates at Sony on your behalf Colin and received this reply from Destruction Derby producer Tony Parkes: I

"In response to your reader letter (Colin Lynch, Salford). I have looked at Destruction Derby multi-player and can confirm that the scoring method is unusual but correct. The scoring method is based on how many people play a Multi game and the opponents score is the average of its total score after each player has finished the first race.

e.g. Based on a two-player Multi Player.

Race one, Player one:
Player One score s: 50
Skum scores: 40
Race one, Player two:
Player two scores: 50
Skum scores: 60
Total scores after the first race:
Player One: 50
Player Two: 50
Skum: 50 (the average of 40 and 60)

Obviously this can get quite complex to work out with 20 players and the opponents getting varying scores (10-99-60-etc.)

I hope this clears any confusion and helps you clarify any more complaints about the multi player scoring method. Please feel to contact our help department on 0151 282 3317."

There you go Colin, straight from the horse's mouth as it were. I hope this answers your question and that you'll continue to enjoy your game inspite of it's rather daft scoring system.

Dear Dave,

Congratulations are in order for producing a very polished magazine. It is very refreshing to read a magazine that is capable of catering for the "older" generation of gamesplayers as well as for the teenagers. The 'Definition of Sound' article was very well devised, not least because it managed to mention Rob Hubbard's *Crazy Cornets* soundtrack which still beats the hell out of anything written even in this technological day and age!

You many not be surprised to learn that I am a PlayStation owner. I bought the PS on evidence of

demos of games like *Destruction Derby* and *Tekken*. As I soon discovered – watching these games in motion on a TV screen really shows you just what games written on a PS are capable of. This, I'm afraid, is now where all magazines (even yours!) begin to fall down. Whereas before, in the days of the 8-bit and 16-bit computer consoles, magazines could print static screenshots of games and know they were still giving a realistic interpretation of how it looked, that just doesn't come across anymore. Owners of *Destruction Derby* and/or *Tekken* who see the games moving will know what I am getting at. That is why the idea of a demo CD on the front of your magazine should not be looked as an one-off bonus but as the future of games magazines which review 32-bit (and eventually 64-bit) games. I do understand the fact that your magazine is independent of Sony and major software houses and you therefore probably have to take what you can get in terms of demos, but I'm sure that the giant companies would let magazines such as yours have access to regular demos to complement a pictorial review if they thought it would sell more copies of their game.

I suppose that if demo CDs did not become a regular feature, the only alternative would be to scrap the concept of a magazine altogether and put the whole content of it ("the magazine") onto a video or CD format and sell that each month. Outrageous? Maybe not. I would be very interested to hear your views and your readers' view on the above argument, but for now a big "well done" to *Play* and a big "well done" to Sony. Judging by sales figures of the PlayStation, Nintendo have missed the boat and Sega have missed the point.

Your faithfully,

Paul Roberts

Scrap magazines? Are you sure? Brilliant, the next time you're sat on a train, or in bed, on the loo or in the bath and you fancy a read about your favourite hobby, a lot of good a video or a CD is going to be to you, isn't it? Give you a really sharp idea of how a game looks and plays... all you need is to carry a TV and Console with you everywhere you go and have copious amount of power sockets!

Sorry Paul, I went off on one then. No, whilst I appreciate your enthusiasm for demos, they will never replace magazines on their own because they are not portable and would cost too much to produce effectively with all the information on them that a magazine itself contains. People have tried to put mags on disc and video before (anyone remember Switch?), so it is not an original idea, and they have never ever been successful.

I agree with you that demo discs are an excellent way to test a game before you make a purchasing decision, and that is why Play magazine will definitely have covermounted demos in the future, as soon as possible in fact. The problem is not with companies giving us the demos, it's with Sony themselves not having put the procedure for duplication and approval into order yet. I hope you filled out the protest letter from Issue 2.

Still, cool as they are, demos are certainly not the be all and end all of a magazine. The two work hand in hand. You have to remember as well that a demo disc nearly always pushes up a publication's cover price, and many people like to have the option to have just the magazine and pay less. Anyway, a good writer should be able to tell you all you need to know about a game, and any decent game store should give you an opportunity to play before you pay.

Whilst I see your main point, that there is no better way to truly appreciate the three-dimensional qualities of the PlayStation's top titles than by actually seeing them running first hand, I think you still need magazines as well to provide a more portable and informative reference point. Yep, demo discs are cool, and as soon as we can, we will. But please don't let that spoil your enjoyment of Play in the meantime.

Dear Dave,

Congratulations on your first issue! Yours is the most enjoyable PlayStation magazine to read and the content balance is just right (this may sound like crawling but it is the truth!).

I don't actually own a PlayStation but have just hired one from my local 'Blockbuster Video Store'. To say I was astounded would be an understatement; I never thought I would see the day when home entertainment systems would match those in the arcades.

I am now saving up for a PlayStation and will keep reading *Play* to keep up to date with the PlayStation scene.

Now a few questions I hope you can answer:

1. Will there ever be an add-on to enable video CD's to be played on the PlayStation? I have seen contradictory answers to this question in other mags, so I would appreciate the God's honest truth!
2. Whilst playing *Destruction Derby* on Sony's demo CD, a car shunted me over the barrier and through the crowd. I was then driving behind the stadium and drove back through the barrier. Is this a bug in the game?
3. I am a bit of a tech-spec freak, so could you print the PlayStation's specifications?
4. Is the Sega Saturn really on par with the PlayStation? I saw *Virtua Fighter* on show and the colours looked a bit basic – nothing like the arcade version (and certainly nowhere near as impressive as *Toshinden*).

Yours Sincerely

Craig Thornton

Yes, the sheer power of the PlayStation is pretty impressive isn't it Craig? I hope you will have enough money to get your own machine very soon, and that you will continue to read Play. It's the only way to make sure you really know what is going on. Now to those questions:

1. At this moment in time there are no plans for any add-on to be developed that will allow the PlayStation to play Video CD. Sony have stated all along that the PlayStation is a games only console, and I think people are perhaps speculating a little because of the Saturn's MPEG capabilities and the fact that film footage in games for the Sony machine is so good.

I have been reliably informed though, that Sony do have a team working on a High Density CD machine at this moment in time, for a possible launch at the end of next year, but it will be a stand alone machine, and not an expensive add-on for the PlayStation. So I guess the simple answer to your question is - no.

2. As much as Sony Interactive would like to say that this was a hidden feature of the game, they have to admit that it is in fact a fault due to the fact that the demo had to be submitted to Sony so early on in its development, and hadn't had time to be fully debugged. I am assured however, that no such mistakes appear on the finished version.

3. Here are some of the most important PlayStation specifications for you. I would print them all, but I'm frightened I might fall asleep:

CPU: R3000A 32bit RISC processor running at 33MHz. Is capable of 30 MIPS (Millions of Instructions Per Second).

Graphics: A palette of 16.7 million colours; over 250,000 sprites on screen at once; 1.5 million flat-shaded polygons can be drawn every second or 500,000 texture-mapped and light-sourced polygons.

Sound: 24-channel stereo with a sample rate of 44.1kHz.

Memory: 2Mb of main RAM; Video RAM (VRAM) 1Mb; 512K allocated to Sound RAM; System Operating 512K.

CD: Double-speed drive which supports audio CDs and Sony's own Custom Polymer CDs (the black ones with the games on).

4. As you might imagine, we are a bit biased here at Play, because we think the PlayStation is the sexiest hunk of plastic ever to prise our hard-earned pennies from our pockets. However, in the interest of fairness, I have to say that jury is still out on whether the PlayStation is actually more or less capable than the Saturn. It is certainly easier to programme on than the Saturn, although a lot of developers believe Sega's machine to be ultimately more versatile. I would say though that you shouldn't judge the machine on the original Virtua Fighter, take a look at Virtua Fighter 2 when it arrives. You may be surprised.

Dear Dave,

I bought your magazine thinking it was just a normal everyday mag, when after buying it and studying it more closely, I realised that Ryan Butt was working for your magazine. Being a former-fan of the mag, *Super Gamer*, I recognised his name instantly and now know that the mag is going to be outstanding and have the best reviews of games for the PlayStation. It was a shame that Ryan and the rest of the old crew left *Super Gamer* as it went rubbish, the price went up and the pages down. Good luck with the new magazine as you have got my vote.

Yours faithfully

Robin Browne

Strike one for the Ryan Butt fan club. Funny that you both have the same initials(?). I'm pleased that you believe in Mr Butt, as he is known around here, he is a highly experienced and scrupulous reviewer, and a valuable member of our team. The only downside of this laid back, Kurt Cobain look alike is his terrible music taste, but then you don't have to put up with that do you Robin?

PLAY back

You've all seen buyers' guides in mags before... boring aren't they?

Ours is different though. We boldly go where no BG has gone before and tackle the problem of games becoming dated. A game may be excellent now, but in a few months time it could have been pummelled into submission by something even better, or we might just have got bored with it.

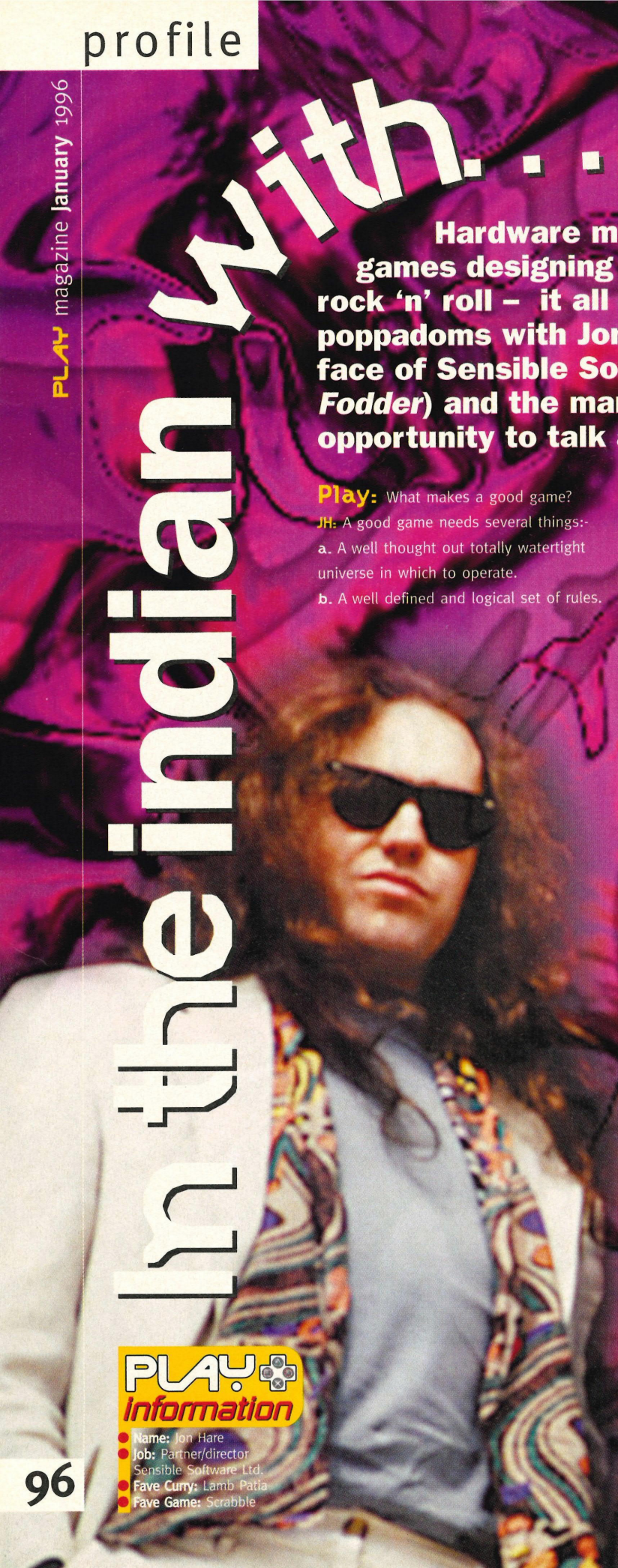
So to keep in touch with the times, every month the *Play* boys cast their votes on how the games we've previously reviewed fare in comparison to the newer titles. Our verdicts go under the 'Current Score' category... simple non? There hasn't been any ground-breaking alterations this month (although *SF: The Movie* continues to plummet!), but we have split the shoot 'em-up in half to cater for 3D blasters and standard arcade shoot 'em-ups. Heading the 3D category this month, straight out of hell, is the marvellous *Doom*, whereas *Defcon 5* crash lands in the Strategy section to pip *Theme Park* at the top. The games industry is always a-changin', and *Play* is the only mag that follows the rapidly increasing and declining standards.

Game	Review Score	Comment	Date of Review	Current Score
Beat 'em-ups				
1. (1) Tekken	95%	Simply the best (for now)	Nov '95	95%
2. (2) MK3	93%	Bloody unbeatable stuff gore fans	Nov '95	93%
3. (-) New Jap Pro Wrestling	84%	The fat boys done good	Dec '95	84%
4. (4) Battle Arena Toshinden	76%	Great looking stuff for beginners	Nov '95	76%
5. (5) Zero Divide	68%	We've found a free game of Phalanx!	Nov '95	**75%**
6. (6) WWF Wrestlemania	74%	Competent, if unspectacular, staged boredom	Nov '95	74%
7. (3) Street Fighter: The Movie	85%	It's really beginning to grate	Nov '95	**72%**
8. (-) Power Instinct 2	52%	Wake up and smell the opposition	Jan '96	52%
Combat Flight Sims				
1. (1) Air Combat	81%	Even a lobotimised tortoise could fly this	Dec '95	81%
2. (2) Ace Combat	79%	*Air Combat* in Japanese	Nov '95	79%
3D Shooters				
1. (-) Doom	93%	Smooth as silk, more cutting than glass	Jan '96	93%
2. (-) Lone Soldier	92%	In a class of its lone	Dec '95	92%
3= (-) Loaded	85%	Big, bad blasting action	Nov '95	85%
3= (-) Firestorm: Thunderhawk 2	85%	Fast 'n' frantic airborne action	Jan '96	85%
4 (-) Philosoma	85%	Not as good as Firestorm	Dec '95	**84%**
5 (-) Assault Rigs	81%	Mass assalt or no assault I'm afraid	Jan '96	81%
6 (-) Starblade a	68%	Light cruising on a mono rail	Dec '95	68%
7 (-) Warhawk	65%	Wake me when it's over	Jan '96	65%
8. (-) Kileak The Blood	57%	A weak corridor game	Nov '95	57%
9 (-) Cyber Sled	55%	Best left in the arcades	Nov '95	55%
10. (-) Zeitgeist	51%	Incredibly slow and highly repetitive	Nov '95	51%

Game	Review Score	Comment	Date of Review	Current Score
Arcade Shooters				
1 (-) Shock Wave Assault	87%	Pick it up and kick some butt	Jan '96	87%
2. (-) Off World Interceptor	77%	Stomach-churning, high-speed mayhem	Dec '95	77%
3. (-) Viewpoint	74%	Harder than a diamond	Dec '95	74%
4. (-) Rapid Reload	71%	Could use a rapid rethink	Nov '95	71%
5. (-) Total Eclipse Turbo	69%	Totally eclipsed by confusion	Dec '95	69%
6. (-) Raiden Project	68%	A perfect arcade conversion, shame really	Nov '95	68%
7. (-) Twinbee Deluxe Pack	65%	A temporary burst of insanity	Dec '95	65%
8. (-) Novastorm	38%	A definite disappointment	Nov '95	38%
Sports Sims				
1. (1) Striker '96	89%	We've learnt a few new tricks	Nov '95	**91%**
2. (2) NBA Jam: TE	90%	Sorted speedy sporty sim	Nov '95	90%
3. (3) PGA Tour '96	86%	Course-lacking, bogey-belting bliss	Dec '95	86%
4. (5) Boxer's Road	82%	Great boxing action – eventually	Nov '95	82%
5 (-) FIFA '96	81%	Slow motion replays at their finest	Jan '96	81%
6. (4) Goalstorm	69%	One goal wonder	Dec '95	69%
7. (5) J-League Winning Eleven	73%	Goalstorm with Jap teams	Nov '95	**66%**
8. (6) Ground Stroke Tennis	65%	Good looks, little substance	Nov '95	65%
9. (9) Prime Goal EX	62%	The EX should read Exile	Dec '95	62%
10. (-) Hyper formation Soccer	50%	...And they all fall over	Jan '96	50%
11. (10) King Bowling	37%	Strike it off your shopping list	Dec '95	37%
Strategy Games				
1. (-) Defcon 5	88%	Don't throw away the manual	Jan '96	88%
2. (1) Theme Park	86%	More fun than Thorpe Park	Nov '95	86%
3. (2) 3D Lemmings	69%	Nice idea, but not for me	Nov '95	69%
4. (3) Hebereke's Popitto	43%	Pop off Hebereke!	Dec '95	43%
Adventure games				
1. (1) Discworld	74%	Just don't mention the monkey	Nov '95	74%
Racers				
1 (1) Wipeout	94%	We've found the extra track	Nov '95	**95%**
2. (2) Ridge Racer	93%	Still great, but losing momentum	Nov '95	**90%**
3. (3) Destruction Derby	86%	Fun, but durability is a problem	Nov '95	**81%**
4. (4) Twisted Metal	78%	Slams on the brakes too early	Dec '95	78%
5. (-) High Octane	80%	Great fun – for one player	Jan '96	76%
6. (5) ESPN Extreme Sports	73%	A rolling geek gathers no cred	Dec '95	73%
7. (6) Cyberspeed	65%	Novel idea, same old story	Dec '95	65%
8. (7) Motor Toon GP	69%	Wild, wacky, but limited	Summer '95	**60%**
Platformers				
1= (1=) Rayman	87%	Fiendishly difficult, but fun	Nov '95	87%
1= (1=) Jumping Flash	87%	Grippingly addictive & surprisingly challenging. Smart.	Nov '95	87%
2. (2) Herme Hopperhead	53%	Unacceptable fodder	Dec '95	53%

In the Indian With...Jon Hare

Hardware manufacturers and arses, clueless games designing sheep, bad acid trips, sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll – it all came out when we started splitting poppadoms with Jon Hare, the relatively acceptable public face of Sensible Software (*Sensible Soccer*, *Cannon Fodder*) and the man who gave game journos the opportunity to talk about Sensi in print.



Play: What makes a good game?

JH: A good game needs several things:-

a. A well thought out totally watertight universe in which to operate.

b. A well defined and logical set of rules.

c. A brilliant control system.

d. Just the right balance between what the computer automatically does for you and what you have to do for yourself.

e. A high 'easy to play, hard to master' factor.

f. Non linearity and hidden depth to keep you coming back for more – so even when you've "finished" it once, you can still try it again another way.

g. To suck you into the extent that your psychology is altered so that you think you really were within the game. Therefore you automatically start to ignore the keyboard or the mouse or the joypad or the screen or the fancy graphics, because they just are, you don't question them anymore, they have become part of you and your world. (Yes kids this really is possible without virtual reality and no it does not warp your brayne (sic)).

Play: Who thinks up Sensible's games? How do you decide which ideas to begin work on?

JH: Basic game ideas have always been an amalgamation of ideas from myself and my partner Chris Yates dreamt up on the spin and then honed over a week or so.

Once we have got the basic idea sorted out, it is generally me who gets down to the nitty gritty of the finer details of how the thing will work in terms of writing up the initial "game spec." This is if you like, my specialised area, the boring bit about the infrastructure underpinning the whole game as well as many, many specific details, but I love it. Then as the game is written, the game spec is basically used as a guide, but always programmers and artists working on the game will build different things in to the game, or leave bits of the Game Spec out because they are crap, or because we are running out of time. The control system can never be written down initially, it is something the programmer has to evolve under our guidance.

We are working on three ideas at the moment. Another football game, *Sex 'n' Drugs 'n' Rock 'n' Roll* on the PC and a PlayStation number called *Have A Nice Day*. The source of inspiration for the football game is obvious, *SnDnRnR* is based on a game which we initially intended to design on the Spectrum about nine years ago called *Drugged Out Hippy* about a guy on the dole who has to support his seven different drug habits by drug dealing and constantly swinging between overdose and cold turkey. We always wanted to do it but we knew that first we had to modify the idea slightly and wait for a more adventurous market to evolve. And here we are. *Have A Nice Day* is inspired by a game design called *Office Chair Massacre* that is in itself about five or six years old and was thought up originally with the Amstrad CPC in mind. We are working on these ideas because they are the ones that we felt could be best adapted to the machines that we are now writing for.

Play: Is developing for the new machines any more fun than the ones you used to?

JH: The PC is a machine we have been

PLAY information

- **Name:** Jon Hare
- **Job:** Partner/director Sensible Software Ltd.
- **Fave Curry:** Lamb Patia
- **Fave Game:** Scrabble

avoiding for nearly ten years now. I am beginning to realise why. The amount of manpower it now takes to provide the graphics for a game is frightening. In general the new machines are much harder work, but at least the money is better.

Play: Now you've got staff and everything, how much actual work do you still do?
JH: I was a graphics artist/designer for the first seven years and now I am a sort of designer/director/manager. I would say that about two thirds of my time is still spent on game design either thinking/typing it up directing artists/programmers.

Play: Why do so many games copy someone else's hit formula? Are companies lazy, thick or what?
JH: It's mainly because most of the people buying games into retail haven't got a clue about what a good game is so there are three main ways to get them to take it:-
a. A really fancy intro with glossy graphics, requiring no interaction whatsoever.
b. A game that looks remarkably similar to something that they have sold before and therefore they do not really need to play it in order to judge it.
c. a game incorporating both of the above features.
Therefore publishers are no longer prepared to take the risk on titles that look too original or unusual for fear that they may not cut the mustard with those who choose which games go into the shops. Also, a lot of so called creative people in this industry are utterly clueless sheep.

Play: Do you think the PlayStation can change this?
JH: There will be a handful of original titles out on the PlayStation (Which will all probably look fairly familiar anyway) and then everyone else will rip them off until all the punters become disillusioned and then they will buy a new machine and so the cycle will repeat itself.

Play: Ok, moving on, video games were once famously labelled the new Rock 'n' Roll, what happened?
JH: Perhaps the reference was financial. What happened? Rock 'n' Roll is full of personalities for people to worship, love, hate, relate to and aspire to, computer games are full of sprites.
Play: Didn't you want to be a rock star at one point? what happened?
JH: Before Chris and I set up Sensible, we were playing in a band together. I still write songs, it is my passion, in fact I just finished one off this morning and this time I'm really convinced that this is going to be THE one, how sad. What happened? I never really learnt my lesson.
Play: So what was the most Rock 'n' Roll thing you ever did?
JH: The most Rock 'n' Roll thing I ever did was drop Acid at Stonehenge, it was a nightmare by the way.
Play: And now you're working on *Sex 'n' Drugs 'n' Rock 'n' Roll* the game, tell us a little about it.
JH: It's an 18+ adventure game about a singer who wants to become the greatest rock star that ever lived and it is probably a bit naughty.

Play: Do you want to be famous?
JH: I would like to be famous in a Dennis Potter sought of way

Play: Are you more sensible now you've got kids?
JH: I'm wiser now I have kids and I like being wise.

Play: Sony is trying to make the PlayStation cool, and bring the twenty-somethings back into video games. Is the video games industry cool yet?
JH: Machines are boring, in my eyes machines cannot possibly be cool. The video games industry is being forced up its own arse by the hardware manufacturers. When the hardware market is more compatible and more settled, then the focus can return to software and the personalities behind and the quirks within the software and then the software can become cool.

Play: Even the PlayStation?
JH: The PlayStation is just another machine that will die out within the next four years.

Play: Ouch. Moving swiftly on, on the coolness of computers front, do you own up to being a computer game designer at parties?
JH: I'm very happy to tell people that I am a computer game designer/manager at parties or whatever, because it is certainly a lot cooler than being a junior accounts clerk for a double glazing firm and anyway it's what I am.

Play: How's the footy team doing?
JH: Norwich are doing crap. Sensible FC's last two results have been lost 6-0, lost 6-2 (we were 2-0 up after five minutes as well)

Play: Any chance of a revamped PlayStation version of *Sensible World of Soccer* or *Cannon Fodder?*
JH: SWOS PlayStation is looking like happening. *Cannon Fodder* PlayStation, make us an offer.

Play: Just how big was that advance from Warner?
JH: Big enough to buy me a majority shareholding of Manchester United FC. I've told Ferguson to sell Cantona, Giggs and Pallister to Norwich for a fiver each or he's sacked.

Play: How many Porsches/Ferraris etc. do you own between you?
JH: Jools was on his fourth Porsche of the year when he left us recently to set up on his own. I've seen Porsches, Lotuses, Ferraris, F1 Mclarens etc. in our car park till I'm bored sick of them. But they do nothing for me, I just fly into work every morning on the back of my Dad's chopper.

Play: Crunch Time. List the following in order of importance – cash, cars, football, video games, sex.
JH: Sex, football, cash, video games, cars.

Play: Stranded on a Desert Island time, only this one's got its own car testing circuit. Pick the most desirable combination to have of car, partner, video game and games machine
JH: my wife, a car with a roomy back seat, who cares about video games.

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No thanks to: Erm, no-one really, it's been a bit boring on the getting thrown out of things front.
Better late than never award to...er, us.

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Played Out...



Cast your eyes downwards and you may find you've won one of the prizes from our spectacular launch issue. See all those things we gave away? Not bad. *Road Rash, Actua Soccer, Alone In the Dark, Johnny Bazookatone, Wing Commander III, Descent.* Just some of the games featuring in issue four of your favourite PlayStation mag. And no, we don't know whether the demo CD is going to happen in time. While we're waiting, thanks to everyone who wrote to/e-mailed Sony protesting their slothfulness in getting demo CDs sorted for anyone other than their licensed mouthpiece. Be patient, we've got some top stuff to put on ours and not just crap rolling demos neither, it's just a matter of when.

Primal Rage compo winners

Here you are, you lucky lot. Only thing is, *Primal Rage* won't now be released until February, so might have to wait a while to get your prizes. Never mind.

1st Prize

The top winner gets a spanking new PlayStation and a copy of *Primal Rage*

Richard Tilley, Bedford

2nd Prize

Three runners up get a PlayStation copy of *Primal Rage* and a limited edition poster

Paul Harris, Kent
William Docherty, Northants
Sharon Gregory, Staffs

3rd Prize

Another five runners up receive a limited edition poster to put up on their bedroom walls.

Joe Festa, Exeter
Rorie Mackenzie, Worcester
Michael Parkin, Cornwall
Billy Dampney, Lincs
Daniel Campbell, Oxford

Discworld winners

1st Prize

Ok fella, the following is coming your way: models of *Discworld* characters, a complete set of figurines, a signed copy of Terry Pratchett's *Men in Arms* and a PlayStation copy of *Discworld* for hours and hours of humorous enjoyment. And you are (drum roll please):

Neil Mackle, Aberdeen

2nd Prize

Ten lucky runners-up will receive a copy of the book *Men in Arms* (sadly not signed).

Andrew Wilson, Co Durham
Mark Duffy, Essex
Keith Orr, Lancs
Tom Dillinger, Middlesex
Joe Divall, London
Mr P Kennedy, London
S Maxwell, Co Durham
Gareth Welburn, Yorkshire
Andrew Gibson, Tyne-on-Wear
Matthew Atkinson, Lancs

Horror Vids Winners

Well done to the two following lucky entrants who have landed themselves a set each of four spooky horror videos. Sweat dreams to:

Mark Pearson, Lancs
Peter Wright, Poole



Reader Survey compo winners

Thanks to everyone who took the time to fill in the survey, over 800 of you as I'm writing this, and they're still coming in. Little Simon (our editorial assistant) is getting right cheesed off with writing up all you've been saying. So that's good. Anyway, winner of a PlayStation and a Jellybean dispenser is...**Dave Hodsoll, Essex.**

Runners up receiving a packet of Jelly Beans are:-

T Morton, Bristol
S Hall, Cardiff
Michael Keen, Herts
Andrew Millward, Chesterfield
Christopher Thornton, Surrey
Simon Keeling, Bracknell
Paul Swarbrick, Lancs
William Quigley, Manchester
Mark Mckain, Edinburgh
Nick Young, Wilts
Adrian Howe, Sheffield
Kevin Ashford, Manchester
Daniel Moss, Newcastle
Simon Leach, Leeds
Andy Mill, Norwich
Steve Loat, Hants
Adrian Smith, Staffs
Jo Chambers, Essex
Simon Holland, Briglington
Jonathan Rosenbaum, Barnet
Thomas Lange, West Yorks
Michal Smith, Lancs
David McConnel, Birmingham
Lincoln Charles, Yorkshire
David Caiels, Sussex
D Allen, Belfast
John Corbishly, Staffs
Nick Ward, Berks
Carl Jones, West Midlands
Mark Fogg, Manchester
Robin Passmore, Warwickshire
Edward Parker, Rutland
Justin Castle, Ilfracombe
Steve McCoy, Bristol
Steven Glover, Glasgow
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Matthew Foster, Cheshire
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Antony Weatherill, Hull
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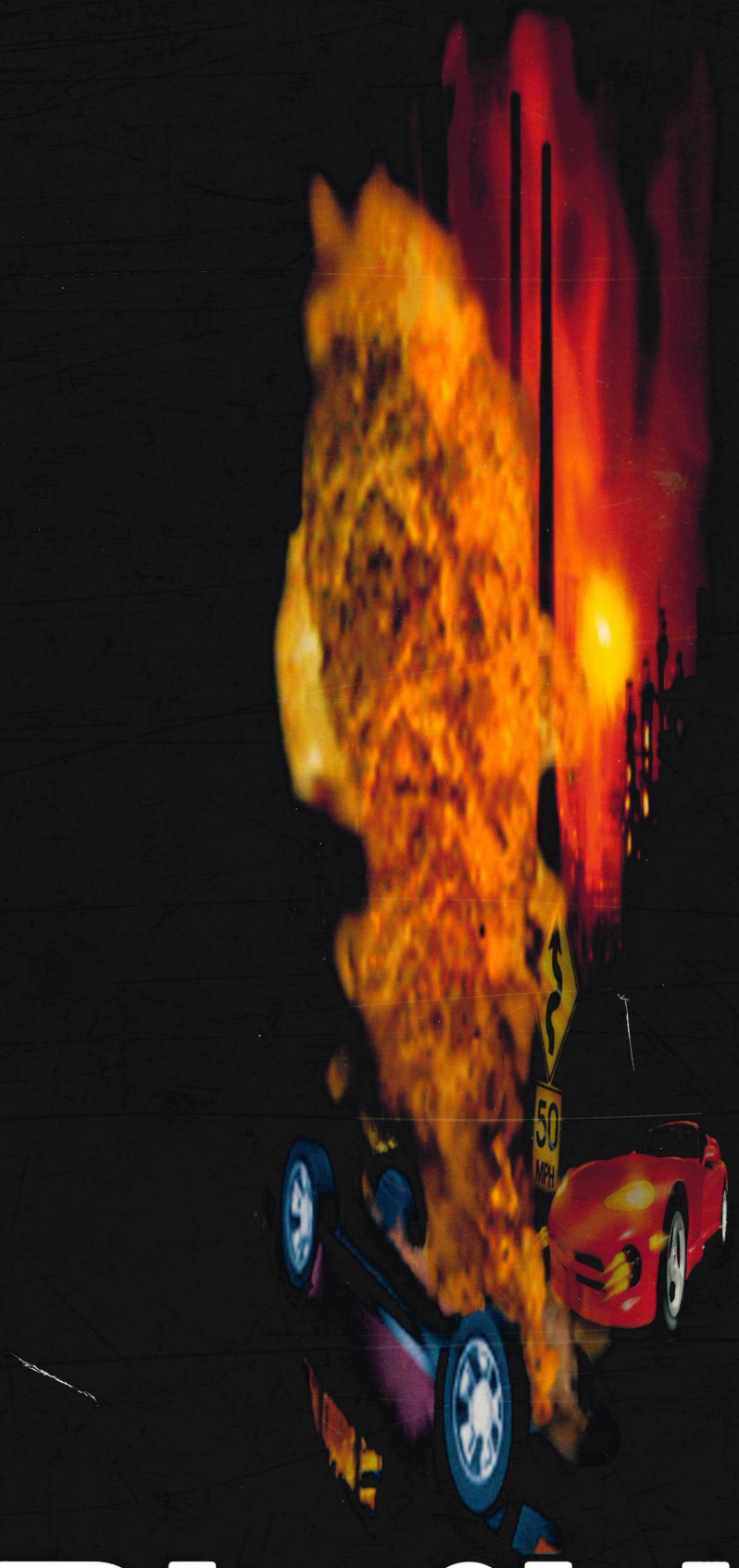
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