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inside

PLAY magazine May 1996

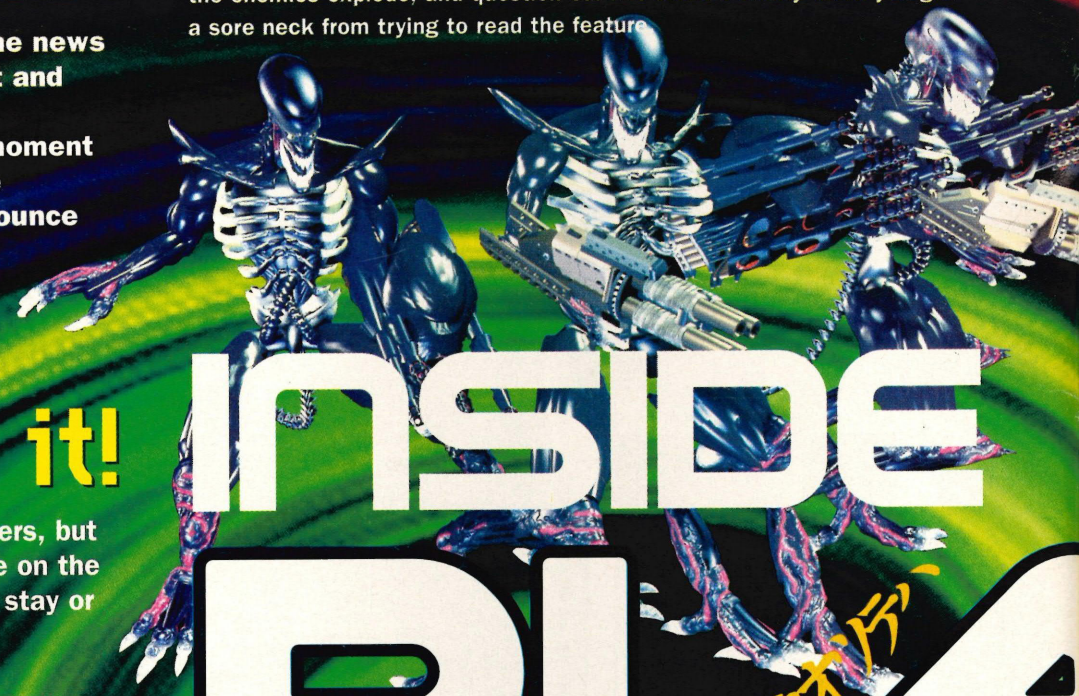


Cover story
Dark Forces!

06 Yes it's true and PLAY has the news first. LucasArts – the largest and most successful third party developer in the world are at this moment converting their juiciest cuts to the fabulous Sony PlayStation. We announce the first titles!

Mayhem First Look!

16 *Syndicate* started it all, but *Mayhem's* here to finish the job! Join us for an exclusive look behind-the-scenes at Mirage's latest robot shoot-'em-up. Stare in awe at the gorgeous graphics, 'whoop' with joy as the enemies explode, and question our Art editor's sanity when you get a sore neck from trying to read the feature.



Strat's the way I like it!

70 They are a staple diet for PC owners, but do strategy games have any place on the ultra-vibrant PlayStation? Should they stay or should they go?

Sex, fish and video games!

42 The Japanese may be responsible for some of the most innovative software in the world, but they can also be a bit weird too. Take a look and see what we mean.



INSIDE PLAY

キオカオバ

Britain's Best selling P

Tekken 2 reviewed!

46 The biggest beat-'em-up on the PSX and we've got it first. 24 characters, hundreds of special moves, in short – the best looking fighting game ever!



WIN!
A complete hi-fi system, courtesy of software geniuses Bullfrog on page 14.

WIN!
Fives sets of Adidas Power Soccer gloves, boots, caps and t-shirts, plus copies of this incredible game on page 28.

The Regulars...

PlayStation Wired

06 News, news, glorious news. We cast a topical eye over the wonderful world of PlayStation.

Wall of game

49 This month we totally bust open Vic Tokai's smash beat-'em-up, *Criticom*, with a list of all the secret moves that are guaranteed to give you the edge. If you want us to print a Wall of game on a specific title, write to Arena and tell us. Who knows, the star of the poster – could be you!

Station Master

80 Yell "Eat this!" a lot and blast evil alien scum in our top tips guide to *Alien Trilogy*, courtesy of Ultimate Player magazine. We've also got a massive players' guide to that king of basketball games, *Total NBA* and four pages of cheats and tips to all the latest games. We PLAY to win!

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issue 7

PLAYSTATION Magazine

Subscriptions

91 Save yourself an absolute fortune on the cover price (plus the effort of going down to the shops and buying a copy) by subscribing to the Most Powerful Games Magazine on Earth. Go on, you know you want to...

Arena

92 Oi, PLAY - sort it ahhhht! Yep this is the letters section, where you get the chance to voice your opinions on the magazine, the Sony PlayStation – in fact anything you want really. Remember, without your letters, these two pages would be empty – so get writing and you could win some top prizes.

Playback

94 Want to know the games that PLAY really rates? Well then you'd better turn to PLAYback, where we've rated the best games in each genre. Sports, shoot-'em-up, racing games – they're all there in this handy buyers guide. Got a few spare quid, go here first.

In Fast Eddie's with...

96 More rye chat with an industry somebody in the confines of their local tandoori. Magazine journalism – best in the world!

The Games

Workstations

Your first look at the latest games still in development. If it's behind closed doors, we're the ones with the battering ram!

International Track & Field



Track & Field and *Hypersports* are revived by Konami in this terrific looking sports simulation. Prepare to loose the skin off your thumbs – pad waggling is back!

Burning Road



Daytona launched the Sega Saturn, but now PlayStation gets *Burning Road* (provisional title), a rip-roaring arcade racer which bears more than a passing resemblance to the ancient coin-op, *Rad Mobile*. High hopes for this one.

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A short preview look at the hottest games before the full review next issue (hopefully). Space is tight, so only the most exciting prevail.

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Evaluation Station

The very latest official and import games are reviewed here by the experts – no other magazine gives you this many reviews per issue.

Tekken 2



A first review of the hottest beat-'em-up to grace the PlayStation. *Tekken 2* is bigger, better and even more brutal than expected, but you'll have to turn to page 46 to find out just how good it is... what a tease!

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Ten to one if you're reading this issue of Play magazine you're a *Star Wars* fan (and that means you Doug Johns). I didn't put this gorgeous image on the cover for nothing you know, I wanted your attention. The reason is the monumental news that *Dark Forces*, in fact all of LucasArts' top quality gear, is winging its way onto the Sony PlayStation this year – and Play readers are the first to hear the news. LucasArts are a massive publisher on PC CD-ROM but this is the first time they have dabbled with a next gen console and that's yet another vote of confidence for the world's greatest games machine; another string to our bow.

I am now the new editor of this proud vessel and before you get absorbed by the latest issue of Play, I'd just like to say that I come from a PC background, and before that Super NES, Amiga, ST, Commodore 64, Spectrum and Atari 800 – so I know a thing or two about games and what makes them great or complete arse.

Next issue, Play will be different. In order to greet the new wave of PlayStation games with gusto, the design of the magazine will be updated to make it easier to read and digest, and the reviews, wired-ups and workstations will go into far more detail than ever before. The biggest games will command up to eight pages of in-depth editorial; explaining every aspect in layman's terms.

What games magazines these days lack is basic wide-eyed enthusiasm. Most embittered old hacks have forgotten what it's like to rush home with a new game; chew open the wrapping, then slap it into the console and play it solidly until your fingers bleed. Well I haven't, and I'm looking forward to playing games like *Resident Evil* and *Die Hard Trilogy* until my PlayStation melts or I slip into a coma. Fantastic!

Enjoy the mag!

Damian Butt
(new) Editor

PLAYSTATIO Wired

LucasA bac Play

In a shock announcement this month, LucasArts, the largest and most commercially successfully third party developer in the world, have signed up to produce PlayStation games before the end of the year, and that means *Star Wars*, folks – in large amounts.

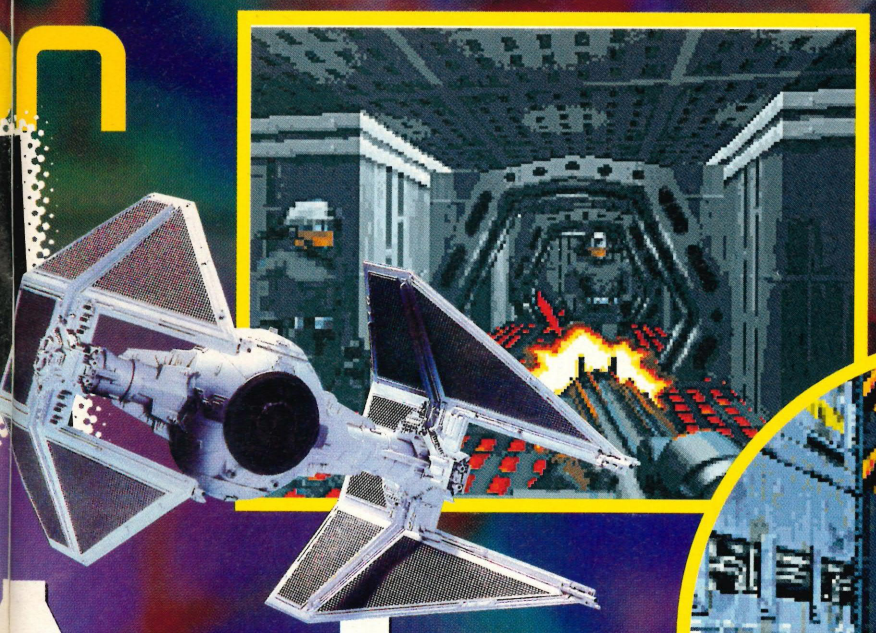
LucasArts have already wooed the PC market with accomplished titles such as *Full Throttle*, *Day of the Tentacle*, *X-Wing*, *TIE Fighter*, *Dark Forces* and *Rebel Assault II*, and the big news is that the cream of PC games will be converted and improved upon as the company, based in San Rafael in California, update its PC stock and add much needed multi-player modes.

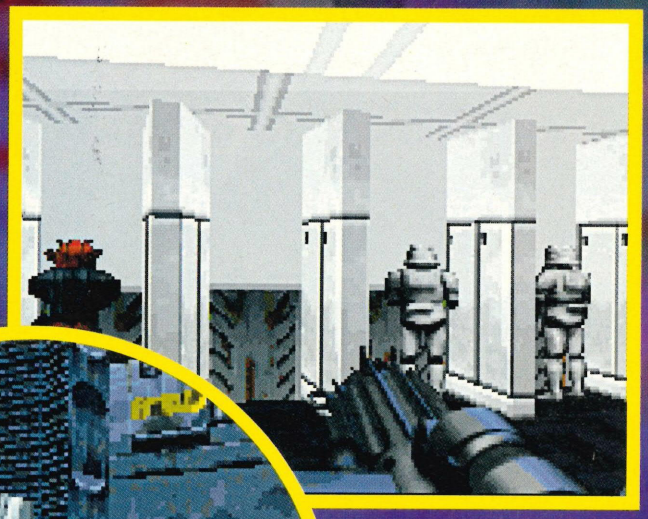
▼ Not that the storm troopers wouldn't see you in a pair of bright orange dungarees or anything. This is *Rebel Assault II* by the way.



The first PlayStation games to be released (and previewed officially at the E3 show in Los Angeles at the beginning of May) will be *Dark Forces*, *Rebel Assault II*, *Myth Adventures* and *Ballblazer*, although speculation is rife concerning a possible conversion of the Nintendo 64 'biggie', *Shadows of the Empire*, another *Star Wars* adventure of considerable scope. Many PlayStation owners will be in the dark where LucasArts is concerned as their prominence has been exclusively on PC CD-ROM, but we can tell you right off that this is great news for the super console because LucasArts' commitment to quality and gameplay is unparalleled, and they have done a superb job of bringing George Lucas's *Star Wars* trilogy to life.

Dark Forces, a massive hit on PC, will be one of the first *Star Wars* tie-ins to appear on PlayStation at the end of this year and it's a 3-D first person perspective shoot-'em-up (very much like *Doom*) where the player controls a rebel spy who must infiltrate many different Imperial installations in order to discover and possibly destroy their new secret weapon, a super storm trooper known as a Dark Trooper. *Dark Forces* uses a more







▲ The much vaunted picture of storm troopers taking a whizz. How high can you go?

Arts

k

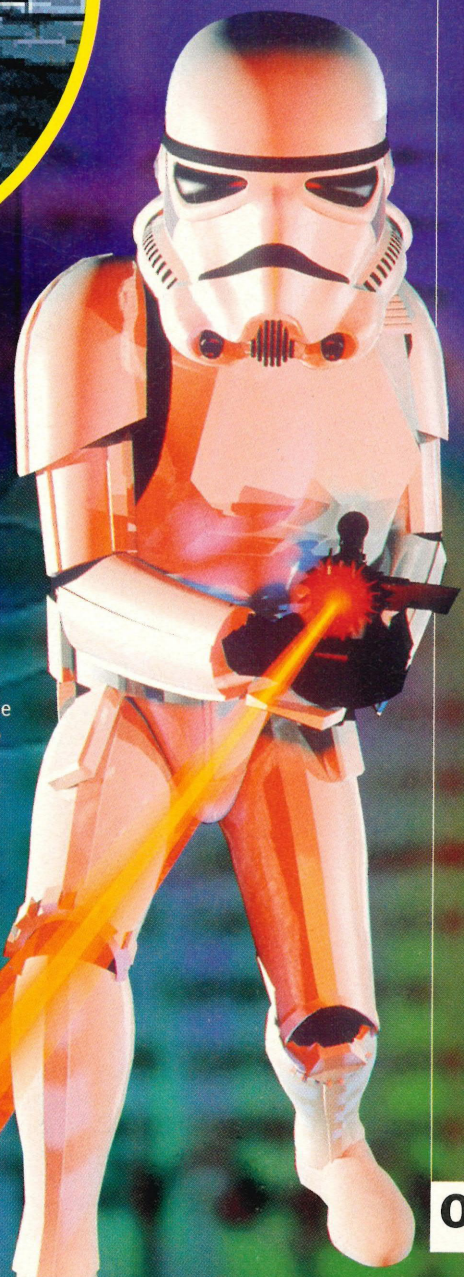
yStation!

versatile game engine than *Doom*; allowing you to look up and down, jump, crouch and crawl. The level design and detail is faithful to George Lucas' original vision (there's even a white corridor like the one at the start of *Star Wars*), and it's exhilarating to play because if you're a fan of the sci-fi trilogy, you'll recognise all the characters – and be able to blow them all away with eight different weapons! *Dark Forces* contains 14 levels, many different enemies ranging from the common storm troopers (who all wear conspicuous white outfits which makes them easy targets – bit of a design flaw that), to bounty hunters like Boba Fett, Ree Yees, and there's even the sewer beast to contend with. It's all held to together with the faultless presentation that have made LucasArts synonymous with quality gaming, and there's tons of cut scenes showing Darth Vader getting pissed off and crushing larynxes left right and centre. Marvellous. You might also be interested to know that *DF2: Jedi Knight*, will soon to coming to the PC, and if the original's a big hit on PlayStation, we should be getting that too.

Rebel Assault II is a filmic journey through the *Star Wars* universe; basically comprising of many different mini-games designed to test your skills in different ways. One minute you're pinned down by storm troopers in a first person shoot-'em-up section, the next you're high-tailing it out of there at the controls of a Corrilean freighter. On PC it was criticised for its similarity to the original game, but that's not a problem for the PlayStation, so it should be stunning.

The two unknown factors are *Myth Adventures* and *Ballblazer*; both new games that have not appeared on any format. The former is a light hearted arcade style game based around Greek Mythology, with two players battling various Gods and generally mucking about at the expense of history. *Ballblazer* is a '96 update of the venerable arcade futuristic sports game. The PlayStation game gets a multi-player mode and vastly improved graphics and it could be the surprise hit of the year; playability intact that is.

So now we've whetted your appetite for what will be a momentous assault on the PlayStation gaming scene, you better stay tuned to PLAY for more exclusive updates as we get them. Undoubtedly though this is a massive vote of confidence in the power of PlayStation from one of the industry big boys – one that will reap big dividends for console players who thirst for games with a little more bite! Nintendo 64 must now look like a poor second best. Ra-ra PlayStation – roll on the end of the year!



Command and Conquer is coming!

It sold over 500,000 units on PC CD-ROM, it's quite the best war game ever made, and it's coming to the Sony PlayStation. Baton down the hatches, clutch your family jewels and assume crash positions – *Command & Conquer* is on the way – there is a god!

Command & Conquer, the all-action strategy war game from Westwood will definitely be converted to the PlayStation in November say VIE representatives. At last it's been confirmed. If you haven't yet heard of the game (where the hell have you been?), it's an overhead war game where you control squads of troops and vehicles fighting for either the Global Defence Initiative (the good guys) or the Brotherhood of NOD (you figure it out). Best played with a mouse (you'll have a tough time with the joypad), you direct the units in real time and decide when to attack and how; using advanced tactics of your own choosing. Troops come in many flavours, including engineers (can take over enemy buildings), grunts, and rocket launching dudes, and in many cases you must build up your own bases and defend them before you're strong enough to counter-attack. The core of the game is mining, as a new mineral known as Tiberium is discovered and can be collected to give you the cash to fund your little Cuba or Vietnam.

Command & Conquer features over 30 missions set in different parts of the world and the miniature action is complemented by many different short films showing the harsh realities of war. *C&C* will be one of the biggest hits this Xmas and we'll have more news soon, and hopefully even an exclusive review closer to the time. The PlayStation goes from strength to strength.





NASCAR comes to PlayStation!

Since being taken over by Sierra, racing simulation specialists, Papyrus have been quiet. Earlier this year they released *Indycar II* on the PC, a sequel to their vastly popular Indycar racing game, but since then... nothing. That is until a representative of Sierra let slip that they're currently working on PlayStation versions of *Indycar* and the more impressive *NASCAR Racing*.

Both *Indycar* and *NASCAR* have similar roots, but one is a high-tech sim of the American's answer to Formula One, and the other is basically stock car racing. Both use the same game engine, but the really cool thing about *NASCAR* is that you can smash into your opponents and rip pieces of their car off! It's more satisfying. We have very few details on when these games will arrive, but Autumn/winter is a good bet. Given the popularity of *Destruction Derby*, both games should get a riotous reception, and it has been confirmed that they will be significantly better than the PC versions. Can't wait...

Mindscape go Supersonic!

(obvious headlines inc)

We've already brought you news of Mindscape's strategy war game, *Warhammer* (now delayed to September by the way), but this month we were privileged to see *Supersonic Racers*, a four player cartoon racing game that has been developed by the people who brought us the original *Micro Machines*. Best described as a 'wacky races' simulator, you and three mates (or computer players) must hack it around a series of immersive 3-D tracks whilst trying to keep up with each other. The graphics are just like *Micro Machines* in 3-D, or *Big Red Racing* on the PC, and you can control many different vehicles – from a blobby car to an articulated lorry. It is also worth pointing out that to keep up with the action and to give you a better chance of getting around the courses in one piece, the camera is constantly panning around to get the best angles.

Supersonic Racers looks very promising indeed, and we'll bring you a full report on how it plays after the ECTS next month. Until then, here's some screenshots to give you an idea what's it all about.



▲ Unlike *Micro machines*, the camera regularly zooms in on the action.

Bandicoot Crashes Out for Sony

In a bid to raise the 'playground' profile of the PlayStation, Sony Computer Entertainment are releasing *Crash Bandicoot*, featuring the "PlayStation's first star quality game character." Claiming to be the "most innovative and revolutionary platform game ever," *Crash Bandicoot* is to challenge the Sonics and Marios of this world as the mascot for next generation gaming.

Set across an island chain off the South East coast of Australia, the game takes the form of an odyssey, as the eponymous hero searches for his kidnapped girlfriend. Drawing on antipodean conditions and wildlife to bring the game to life the graphics in the game are being heralded as matchless, and with sound effects created by professional movie effects editors, the game should certainly sound good.

With over 30 levels full of hilarious talking cartoon characters to interact with, fully rendered texture-mapped 3-D environments, and a wide variety of settings, Crash Bandicoot sounds impressive. The game has no specific release date as yet, but we'll bring you more info as soon as we get it.

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PlayStation™

PLAY The charts

In association with

ChartTrack

No surprises this month as *Alien Trilogy* face-hugs its way to the top of the chart following massive sales all across the country. *Actua Soccer* is still riding high, and the *Need for Speed* shows no sign of abating. Expect to see *Resident Evil* storming the charts next month.

Pos	Game	Developer	Publisher	Current Score
1.	Alien Trilogy	Probe	Acclaim	91%
2.	Need for Speed	EA Canada	EA	94%
3.	Magic Carpet	Bullfrog	EA	90%
4.	Actua Soccer	Gremlin	Gremlin	94%
5.	Total NBA '96	Sony	Sony	94%
6.	Wing Commander III	Origin	EA	82%
7.	Road Rash	EA	EA	75%
8.	Doom	id	GT	93%
9.	Destruction Derby	Psygnosis	Psygnosis	86%
10.	FIFA Soccer '96	EA Sports	EA	79%

Space Hulk Hurtles On!



The classic Games Workshop strategy game *Space Hulk*, is near completion. For those of you who missed the WorkStation feature in the March issue of PLAY, *Space Hulk* is a fast-paced *Doom*-like game, but with a level of gameplay that is so deep you could drown in it. Played on a gargantuan mass heading towards the Imperial Planet Devlar III, you and your Blood Angel battalion must fend off all manner of mutants and hybrid nasties in a bid to divert the course of the hulk thus saving the precious planet.



We've cunningly managed to get hold of a near-finished version and have been blasting away at various Genestealers all day. Even at this stage, bar the odd bug, the game is looking very smart, with some great rendered aliens to blast away at, and some smart plot-setting FMV. We'll endeavour to bring you a full review of this eagerly anticipated game next month. Til then, some shots.

GT predicts a classic

(six of them, actually)

Nostalgia buffs, currently saying a big thank you to Namco and Sony for the release of the Namco museum CDs, will be pleased to hear of the imminent arrival of another new collection of arcade classics, *Williams Arcade's Greatest Hits*. The CD features full-working versions of six of the US coin-op giant's most famous games – *Defender, Robotron, Defender 2, Joust, Sinister* and *Bubbles* – together with an hour's worth of video interviews with each title's head programmer and over 3,000 words of text.

Published by GT Interactive, the guys who brought *Doom* to the PlayStation, the collection is scheduled for a May release and, unlike the full-price Namco CDs, will go on sale at a knock down rate of £30-£35.

We've played a 90% complete version and can already safely say that it appears better value than the two Namco CDs, especially at the lower price. Full review next issue.





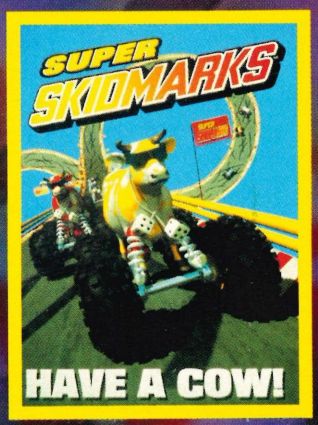


Codemasters plans Ultimate Skidmarks

One-time Amiga and Mega Drive hit, *Super Skidmarks*, is to receive a next generation facelift from publisher Codemasters.The next gen sequel to the game developed by talented kiwi coding team Acid Software, has been christened *Ultimate Skidmarks*.

Never one to miss the opportunity to get themselves into magazines the canny Codemasters marketing types are currently capitalising on BSE fever to plug the off-the-wall racer, which features Mad Cows on wheels as well as sundry other vehicles to choose from.

Given the title's pedigree on other formats, this is one we'll be taking a closer look at later in the year.



Konami lines up a killer

Killer-wise, we're talking *Project Overkill* here, and it really does sound like a corker of an idea.

Imagine a really, really clever version of *Loaded* and you're getting close to why the game is causing so much excitement amongst those fortunate enough to have seen the demo. It's basically an isometric 3-D shoot-'em-up which bids a passing nod to Miss Strategy before jumping into bed and getting down to business with Ms Wanton destruction. Like it already.

You play one of four mercenaries and genuinely have the option of adopting tactics in the way you approach the game. Want to storm in Rambo-style? Go for it, my son. Want to play it cagey, taking out one enemy at a time, be my guest Mr Bond.

The much-anticipated release is scheduled for July.



Euro heading for PlayStation?

Many of you have been writing to us crying out for a football management sim to be released on the PlayStation.

Well, it seems that all our prayers may have been answered because, although not finally confirmed, it looks like Team 17's PC game, *EuroManager '96* is PlayStation-bound.

The game promises to provide players with a totally interactive and atmospheric environment of football management. Over 500 teams will be available, including the entire English and Scottish Premier leagues (first and second division)

Other special features to look forward to will be the inclusion of all the European divisions, thousands and thousands of team players and updated history details on each club. The player will be able to adjust morale levels, increase team fitness and improve the individual play styles of each player.

Let's make no bones about it, we need a PlayStation footy management game and this could be just the thing.



Sony Mixes up Ridge Racer

Only a few weeks after the *Tekken* soundtrack remixes were released, JVC Dance have released their remixed version of the *Ridge Racer* soundtracks. These have all been compiled by Ray Keith, a remixer who has worked with dance acts including Orbital and Baby D. This remix has moved over from the usual jungle style to the more mellow, soulful vibes and this comes as recommended listening, even if you don't have any of the *Ridge Racer* games.

Tournament Time!

The latest and greatest PlayStation soccer game, *Actua Soccer*, has been selling extremely well, it seems. The developers, Gremlin Interactive, recently held a big launch party, and top soccer player Trevor Sinclair took on any willing members of the public for a game of *Actua Soccer* at HMV's Level One in Oxford Street. Pity, 'cos he only won one match! Better still, a seven year old boy named Luke thrashed Mr Sinclair by two goals to one! *Actua Soccer* is now available to buy, and it's the third best selling CD game of all time too. Oh, and it's current PlayBack rating is a stonking 92%.

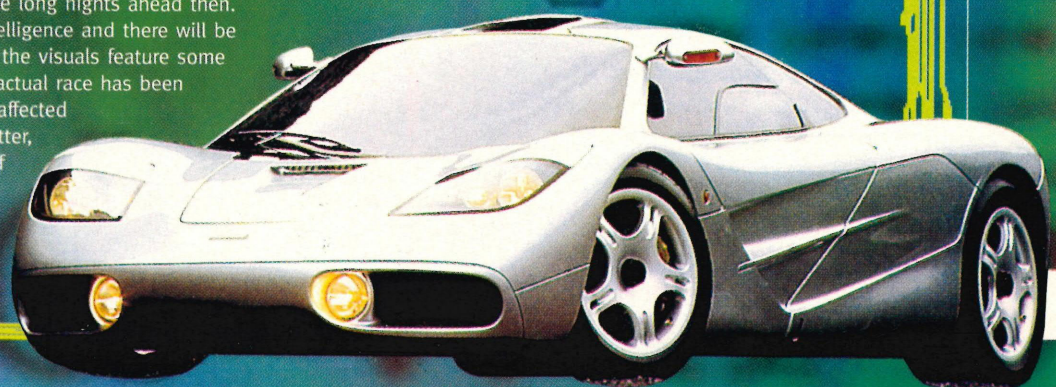
EA proffers 24 hours of joy

If you thought *F1* seemed a good idea, then how about *McLaren At Le Mans* from Electronic Arts.

Said to deliver the full experience of competing in the 24 hour Le Mans race, this features an accurate rendition of the eight mile long course.

All the proper racing teams we recognise are available, and players will be able to take part in either an arcade or a simulation mode, with cars going up to speeds of 220mph! An endurance mode will enable teams of players to race against 50 other computer controlled cars, lasting from three to the full 24 hours. Some long nights ahead then.

The computer controlled racers will have artificial intelligence and there will be vast amounts of lovely FMV footage throughout, whilst the visuals feature some glorious 3-D texture mapping. Digitised footage of the actual race has been specially recorded for the game, and each race can be affected by various weather conditions. To make things even better, *Mclaren at Le Mans* has been designed with the help of real designers, mechanics and pit crew members! Unfortunately, the game won't be released until September this year. Nevertheless, we've got the feeling this could be an astounding release, and we can't wait to get our hands on it at PLAY.



Competition Time Two?

What do we have here? Not one, but TWO competitions! Infogrames, the French software firm behind the classic *Alone in the Dark: Jack is back*, has some goodies to give away especially for PLAY readers. What a nice bunch they are.

Anyway, we've got three copies of the game to give away, PLUS three asciiware control pads. Erm that's six prizes in total. Hoorah!

You can enter for either or both of these competitions, but you MUST send in a separate entry for each. Oh dear – now we need two questions. Here we go.



For a copy of the game *Alone in the Dark: Jack is Back...*

Q: Which country is Infogrames based in?

A. France
B. Timbuctoo
C. Never Never land

To win a wonderful asciiware PlayStation control pad...

Q: Not including the D-Pad, how many buttons are there on a PlayStation control pad?

A. eight
B. 227
c. none

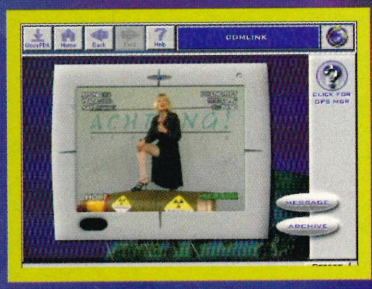
Send your entries on a postcard or a stuck-down envelope to:

Infogrames compos
PLAY magazine, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth. BH1 2JS

Please ensure you mark on the back of the card in block capitals, **GAME** or **PAD**, depending on which compo you're entering. All the usual rules apply, so you'd better follow them or we'll send round the boys.

Activision spies a winner

The title speaks for itself on this game – *Spycraft –The Great Game* is, surprisingly, a spy thriller of huge proportions, and it's coming to the PlayStation this autumn.



Spycraft puts the player in the shoes of a CIA operative, faced with the enormous mission of protecting mankind from the KGB, who don't take too kindly to CIA interference.

As a secret agent (we're getting into the old Mulder/Scully/X – Files territory now!) you will be able to track and monitor enemy agents, use all sorts of espionage, intercept enemy radio waves and even lead a crack team of special forces troops when the inevitable battle occurs. The slightly demented amongst us will be glad to know that you are able to capture potential suspects and torture them until they scream, assuming they don't give anything away of course. Yuk! If this all doesn't sound exciting enough already, *Spycraft* has some of the most atmospheric graphics around, and it includes some real life CIA footage. Naturally, this has got us all intrigued.

Be a lad!

Thanks to more than the odd grumble about the distinct lack of anything from Sony that could pass as an RPG to the visually-impaired on a dark night, Sony is beginning to get its act together as far as that particular genre goes. The firm's US hierarchy recently unveiled plans to release *Arc the Lad* which has sold more than 400,000 units in Japan and should be out over here before the end of the year.

The game's involving storyline features a boy named Arc, who, with the aid of six other characters, is on a ye olde mission to save the world. Arc and his friends encounter more than 60 different types of monsters during their journey and they can select from 63 different accessories that enable them to perform many feats. More news next issue.



PLAY is now Britain's biggest selling PlayStation magazine according to the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC). 25,424 of you now read PLAY and the figure is constantly rising. No other PlayStation magazine has bothered to post any sales figures, so we can only assume they are embarrassed.

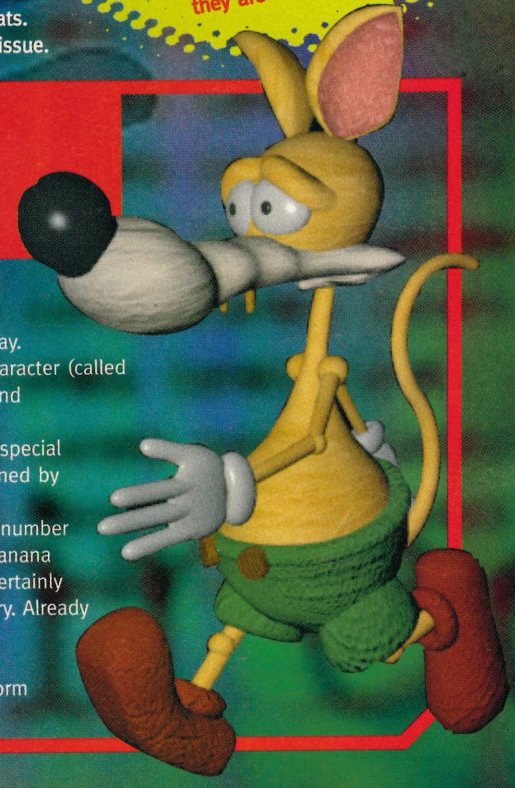
Ocean get cheesy!

Don't be fooled by the name, because *Cheesy* is set to be the next big thing in next generation platform games – so says a very happy Ocean anyway.

In *Cheesy*, you take the role of a comic mouse character (called Cheesy, strangely enough) who has been captured and imprisoned by a mad scientist inside a dark castle.

Cheesy must escape and collect ingredients for a special teleportation spell. Along the way he will be threatened by all sorts of creatures which must be defeated.

In addition to its 3-D graphics, *Cheesy* features a number of game styles, where Cheesy gets to take part in banana skin surfing (!), bungee jumping and UFO flying. It certainly sounds like *Cheesy* is going to be out of the ordinary. Already it is set to become a landmark in gaming as it will use 3-D modelling capabilities to produce some top visuals, and will have over 30 levels of classic platform gameplay laced with humour. Preview next issue.



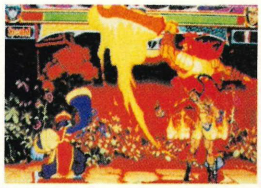
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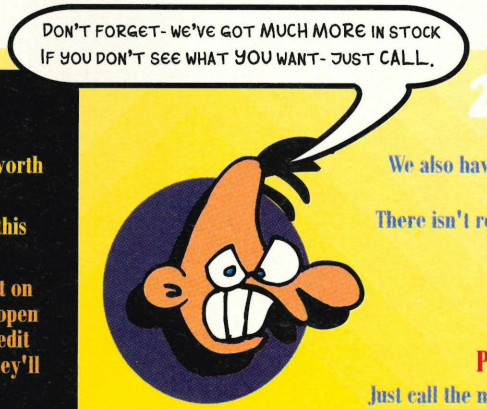
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Win a bevvy of Bullfrog's beauties!

Blimey! Are we unstoppable? Yet again, the number one 100% unofficial PlayStation magazine has another massive compo 'specially for you, our readers. Thanks to those lovely people at Bullfrog Productions, we're giving away a spanking new Mini Hi-Fi system with Dolby Pro-Logic Surround Sound and a copy of the awesome 90% rated *Magic Carpet* to our first prize winner, PLUS a copy of either *Hi-Octane* or *Theme Park* to FOUR runners up. Aren't we great? I know, I know...

To win, just answer this incredibly simple question...

Who were Ali Baba's consorts in his classic adventure?

a) The Seven Dwarfs
b) The Forty Thieves
c) A Hundred-and-One Dalmations

Simply write your answer on the back of a postcard or a stuck-down envelope, together with your name and address AND your choice of EITHER *Hi-Octane* OR *Theme Park* (should you win a runner-up prize), and send it to:

Upholster me now, PLAY!, PLAY Magazine, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth BH1 2JS.

All entries must reach the PLAY Offices by 24 May 1996.

Is this prize the business or what? Featuring a full 5-speaker Dolby Pro-Logic set-up, bass-boost, tuner, tape and CD players, this highly desireable piece of kit would certainly make your neighbours aware of your PlayStation! We're talking serious home-cinema quality audio. Plus you can link in a video or a TV and it's got a full remote control for couch vegetables. Lovely!

First Prize
A Sony MHC-901AV Mini Hi-Fi System with Dolby Pro-Logic and a copy of *Magic Carpet*

Runners Up
A choice of EITHER *Hi-Octane* OR *Theme Park*



Please note: The editor's decision is final. Employees of Paragon Publishing or its suppliers Bullfrog Productions may not enter or the forty thieves will come knocking on your door. Multiple entries will be used as prototype flying carpets, and err... flung. The closing date for the competition is Friday 24 May 1996, so get your entries in quicksmart. All winners will be notified in writing. A list of winners will be available in writing on request from Paragon Publishing at the above address.

the Games

At the end of the day, we all want to know about the latest PlayStation software, and there's no better place than right here in PLAY! Here are all the reviews, previews and early peeks at the best in PlayStation gaming.

Evaluation Station

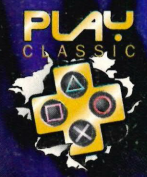
Once you've read enough previews and work in progress features, why not sample our tasty reviews? They're full of PLAY goodness and are guaranteed 100% unofficial, and 100% kind to the environment.

On the review conveyor belt...

Ridge Racer Revolution	30
PO'ed	34
NBA Live '96	40
Tekken 2	46
Extreme Pinball	53
Braindead 13	58
Return Fire	60
Street Fighter Alpha	64
Myst	78
Hyper Crazy Climber	79
Championship Wrestling	79

Guide to the Grades

We scrutinise all the games thoroughly, playing each for hours, even days, on end then we all get together to discuss the review scores to make sure we get it right. The individual reviewer also nominates their own personal category for each game. Game elements are scored out of ten, and the game is given an overall rating out of 100%. Here's how the scores break down...



94-100 If a game scores this highly it's an essential purchase and receives the PLAY Classic logo as a stamp of approval.

85-93 We recommend these games as they are fun, lasting and value for money, but they maybe aren't all that original.

80-84 One member of the team may want to score highly, the rest may disagree so a game will score in this band.

70-79 These are average games that may be entertaining but are fundamentally flawed or don't have any lasting appeal.

65-70 Games that should be avoided by everyone except die-hard fans of the genre.

0-64 Complete tripe. Avoid at all costs!

Wired Up

We bring you all the PlayStation previews before everyone else. This month we've got a corking collection of games destined to be classics!

Hot off the presses we've got...

Powerplay Hockey	20
Konami Links	22
Fade to Black	24
Tilt	26

Work Stations

You want in-depth features on the latest software? You got it! In our exclusive WorkStations this month we've got all the goss on five new games.

Babies in their cradle...

Mayhem	16
International Track & Field	16
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Gunship & other stories	70

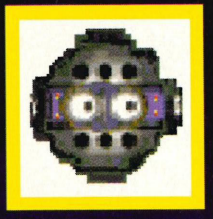
Know your tools



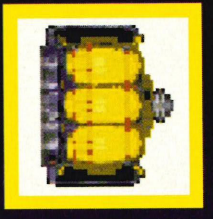
▲ SHRIKE ROCKET: A quick-moving, powerful missile.



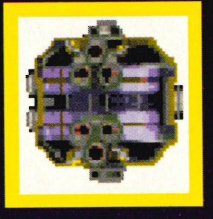
▲ REAPER MISSILE: Guided, but less effective Shirke rocket.



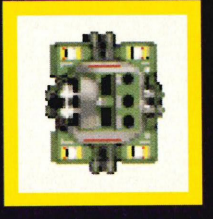
▲ PLASMA CANNON: Fires bolts of electricity.



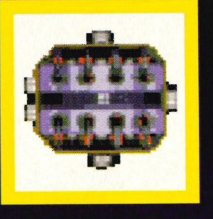
▲ NUKES: Generates a massive explosion.



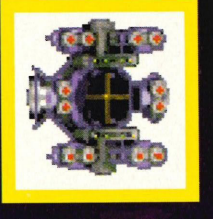
▲ NEEDLER CANNON: Fires AP shells at an Uzi-like rate.



▲ MINES: Similar to grenades, but detonate differently.



▲ GRENADES: come in three types of death-giving fourpacks.



▲ FLAME BOMBS: Fires a flame-spitting trail of napalm.

Mayhem

Someone, somewhere obviously noticed the lack of isometric 3-D shooters heading for the PlayStation. *Syndicate Wars* and *Gender Wars* are on the way, and now there's a third out to capture your cash. Ian Lynch discovers Mirage's plans to unleash Mayhem.

PLAY information

- **Design team:** Mirage
- **Team leader:** Paul Johnson
- **Where at:** 70% complete
- **Target release:** September
- **Publisher:** GT Interactive

The name says it all really, to play even an in-development version of Mirage's shooter is to experience *Mayhem*.

"We want *Mayhem* to be an all-action blaster, with strategic overtones," says project leader Paul Johnson. "The emphasis though is mainly on the blasting. We think *Gender Wars* (late autumn), Paul is content to pay lip-service to the strategy elements, and steer the conversation round to the core subject matter of this type of game, the action. That's violence, destruction, blood-spurting everywhere, speed, imminent death, big guns, explosions – you know, all the stuff that makes this type of game so enjoyable in the first place. But more of that later.

These days, shoot-'em-ups do have to have that little bit extra to give them lasting appeal and Paul is confident *Mayhem* scores in that department. Of all the games heading on down to 3-D violence party central, *Mayhem*, it would seem, is bringing a



people get fed up with strategy and just want a blast-fest now and then," continues Paul. "I thought *Cannon Fodder* was a great idea for a game, but poorly implemented, and correcting this is something we want to put right with *Mayhem*. We've included loads of different enemies, weapons, colours, effects, explosions and really gone to town to produce something special."

Whereas the Bullfrog boys were quite keen back in issue one to talk about the strategy elements of *Syndicate Wars*, (now due for release in June) and the SCI chaps pushed the additional element of humour in bottle of something special. It has the label "Deathmatch option."

Admittedly, this is a bit of a hangover from the game's PC roots (those whose games machines cost 'em £2,000 will get to experience *Mayhem* a little earlier than the rest of us). I won't annoy you be talking about their multi-player option, PlayStation deathmatch equates to an extra ten specially designed levels of link-up friend-killing for two players. Not bad.

Actually, there's also a co-operative mode where you can team up and go at it together, but, if you ask me, that's a bit of a wussy option to take. So stuff that.

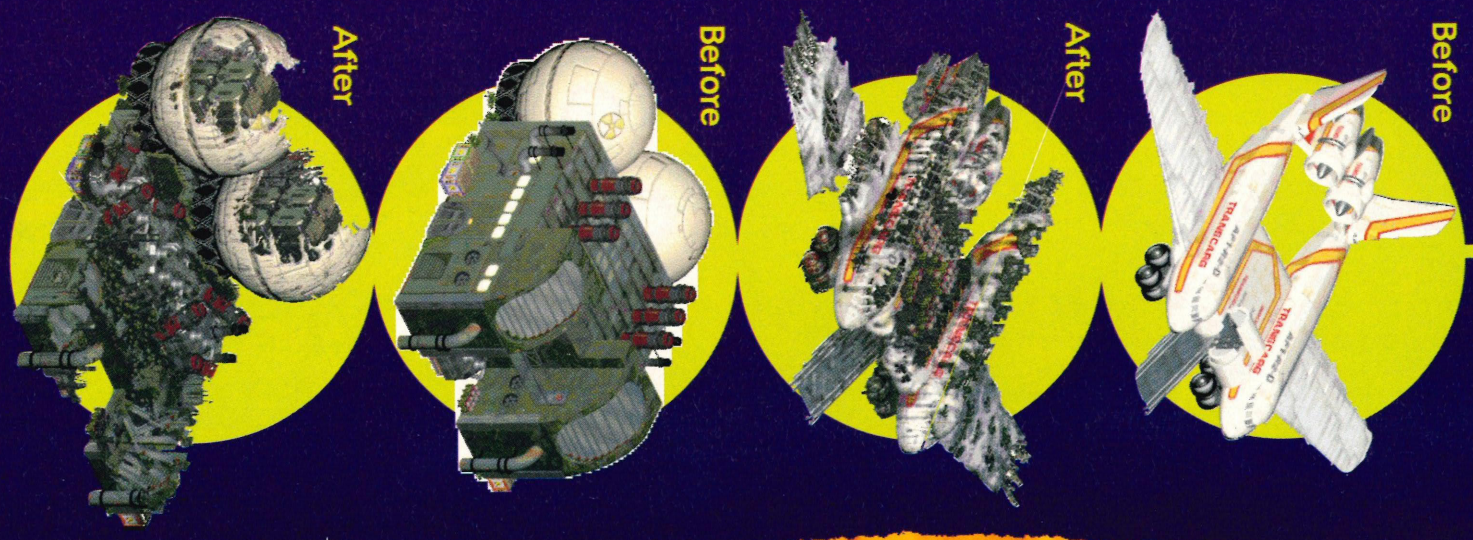
The combination of ideas obviously appeals to more than just yours truly, because GT Interactive, the guys that released *Doom* on PlayStation have been sufficiently impressed to give Mirage what is by all accounts a very large cheque for the publishing rights.



Appetite for destruction

The game itself is set in a post-industrial future where a race of bio-mechanical creatures built to do all the Sunday afternoon when you can't quite be bothered type of jobs – taking the trash out, cooking the dinner, walking the dog etc, have become thoroughly pissed off and turned on their human masters (*Terminator* alert! *Terminator* alert!). Then, the cunning little mechanical gits discovered how to engineer their own killing machines and promptly began over-running us poor humans in the avowed mad mechaniod manner (mutilate! destroy!! EXTERMINATE!!!).

Our particular part of that sad, sad world is a little island (not called the UK, by the way) comprising of five zones. A few plucky little humanoids are toughing it out there but mostly all that's left of the once proud island race is a few emaciated little zero gravity-born workers called spacers. These live on the relative safety of platforms orbiting the planet, centred



Demolition gang

Rendered in *3D Studio*, each object has been made up of component tiles. Hundreds of different buildings have been included in *Mayhem* and you can cause them all damage!

Here we can see the effects of using a nuke on an aeroplane and a power station. Heh-heh.

around one called Sat Net. The head spacers have reluctantly decided that this particular robot liberation movement has gone a little too far, and despite harbouring nothing but contempt for their Earth-bound cousins, figure that there is enough quality merchandise left on the planet to make it worth while building their own robot warriors and GIVING IT SOME BACK!

Three's company

To achieve this, the player has control of up to three robots, which must be kitted out with anything up to seven weapons at a time (plus ammo). Once tooled-up, it's time to nip back down to Earth and obliterate anything remotely in the way. Everything in the game can be destroyed – fellow bots, enemies, buildings, time-share salespersons (well, maybe not, they're impossible to get rid of). In fact, if you can put a name to it, you can blow it apart.

To do this, the gamer needs to get around the terrain, which will involve some button-pressing to raise or lower platforms to access different areas (another one o'dem strategy-type things to deal with).

Five's a riot!

Five themed zones play host to all the action, each representing an area of the city you're out to re-capture. But first you must attend a training level called boot camp, included so the player can learn all the icons and figure out what exactly they can and can't do during the game. This is particularly important in *Mayhem*, because it has been designed to force the player to make a lot of snap decisions. After doing your homework, it's time to deal with the biomechs. The game proper kicks off in the Airport zone, followed by Industrial, Docklands, Urban and Business area bases for 26 levels of mission-based blasting.

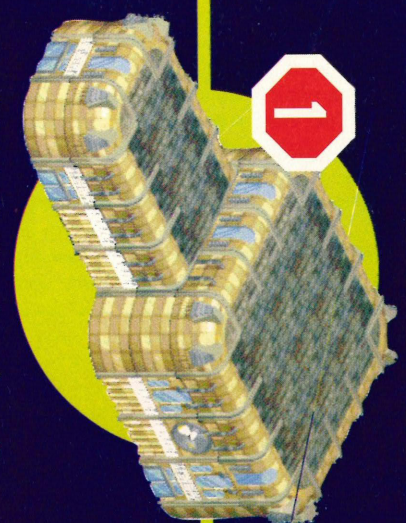


◀ If you leave one of your 'bots unattended, the biomechs send in an airstrike with devastating results.

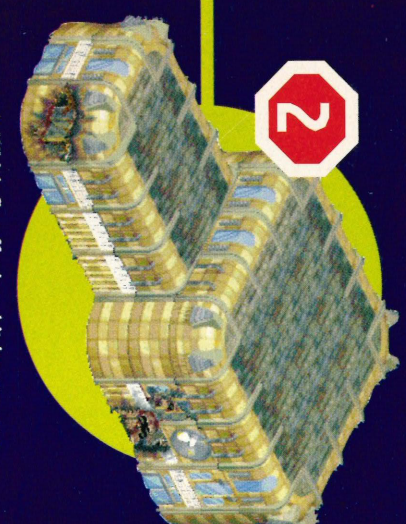
▼ Yeah! a power-up! That'll come in useful at the end-of-level trip to the ammo shop.



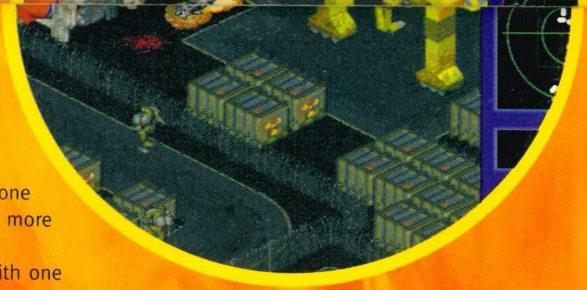




▲ Each building is made up of many tiles.



▲ Which fly off when hit by cannons.



Unlike the follow-me-leader basis its two rivals use, *Mayhem* splits your three mechs up, so that you have to constantly swap from one to another, making the action even more frenetic.

"You do actually only start off with one bot to control," says Paul. "But that's really just the beginning. Quite soon in the game - boom, a second appears and then a third. Ideally, this will require you to think in three slightly different ways if you want to get the best out of each of them. One method is to progress with one bot for about 30 seconds, try and clear some space for a breather, and then switch to another. We're going to make sure you will have to switch. For example, if you leave one on his own for too long, the biomechs will home in on him and launch an air strike with severely damaging consequences."

Big guns and nukes

From talking to Paul it seems that one of the keys to progressing in the game will be learning when to use what weapons.

"Weapon progression is one of the strategic elements to the game," he chips in, "without giving too much away the attributes of certain weapons will make them far more effective against different biomechs. Some also work better depending on what the terrain round you is like. But I'll leave that for you to work out. Subject to play testing," he continues, "we want to make it possible to finish the game with the default weapons, but it would be very hard. Really, if you're good enough to do that, you'll be in a position to substantially upgrade your weapons."

Indeed, along the way the player will find cash power-ups to then buy more weapons and ammo at the end of each level. Bonuses are also awarded for completing missions inside the time allotted.

"Yes, if you're doing well in the game you'll be able to buy a new weapon or so nearly every level. if you're kind of doing okay then the learning curve is set so it'll be every three of four levels."

Out to get you

The biomechs come in 12 different varieties, some of which have already been decided on, some are still being worked on. We'll talk more about the different enemies and the artificial intelligence when we come to preview the game in a couple of months. At this point we'll also discuss the mission structures and how the features we've already discussed have been developed. At the moment, these are the parts of the game structure still being worked on and we'd be lying if we pretended otherwise.

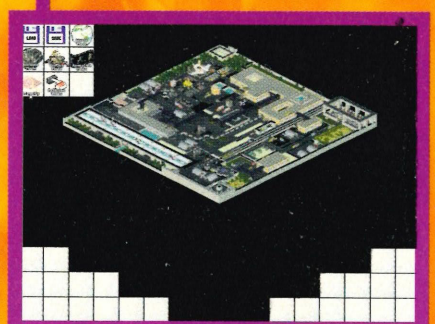
What we can say is that by deciding which of the three difficulty levels you choose, you'll also be deciding how tough each biomech is to kill, what kind of a punch they pack, how quickly they regenerate and how strong their AI is.

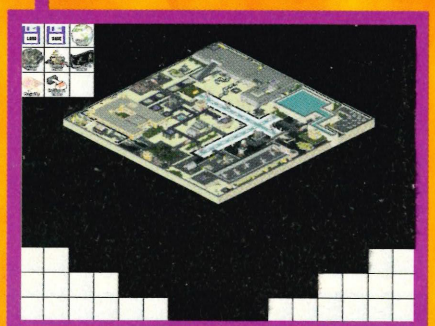
Mayhem is quite an involved project for what might appear to be just a simple blaster, so don't forget to keep buying PLAY so you can learn some more!



Working with Editors is hell!

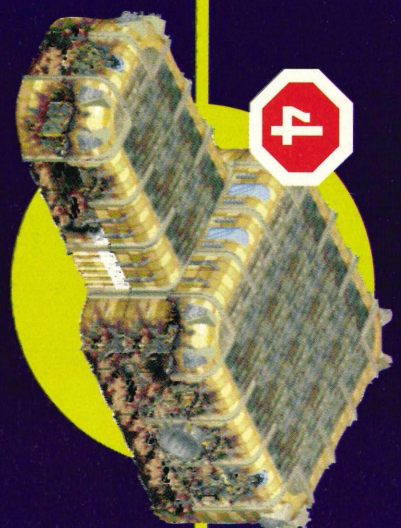
Not magazine editors you understand (oh, I dunno – Ian the designer) but level editors. Six unsung heroes of the *Mayhem* team have been spending the better months of their youth working on the level design. Each zone has five levels assigned to it, which, added to the boot camp introduction and the (at least) ten deathmatch special levels, makes 36 to create. Every single one is ten screens by ten (ie you can see a hundredth of the actual level at any one time) so designing each is quite a job. The lucky six are responsible for taking the basic area design and turning it into something playable. These are the guys who decide which buildings work best where, where to put the biomechs, where to put the platforms, what traps to put in and so on and so on. This is done by plonking the relevant item down on the level plan. Rather cruelly, the other members of the design team refer to the level designers as the 'plonkers.'







▲ Especially if you then use a Shirke rocket.



▲ In fact, you could completely destroy it.



▲ Lobbing a grenade on the roof to finish!

Coach trip



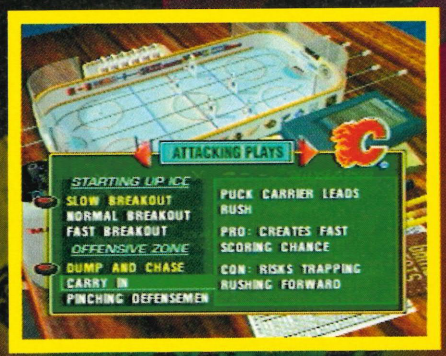
▲ Due to the high speed of Ice hockey sims, knowing your controls and being able to react quickly is a great help.



▲ Learning the game takes time, but once you have, try to refine your play by adopting strategies. Learn the basics first, though.



▲ This is the display used to edit your lines. Mix and match your resources to give you the best combination of players on each line.



▲ Offensive strategies are a bit easier to plan than defensive, 'cos you've control of the puck! Dump and chase is a good starting point.



Give

so

These Americans eh? They like their contact sports, don't they? Face it, you'd have to be a gun-toting, Marlboro-smoking Yank to turn a pair of poncey pastimes like hockey and Ice-skating into something Schwarzenegger, Van Damme and Chuck "I'm not famous enough to be referred to just by my surname" Norris would pause before joining in.

Ice hockey players don't mess about y'know, and the NHL is the roughest, toughest, meanest and biggest of all the 80,000 leagues over the sea (maybe). It's also fast, furious and other things beginning with "F". Cool.

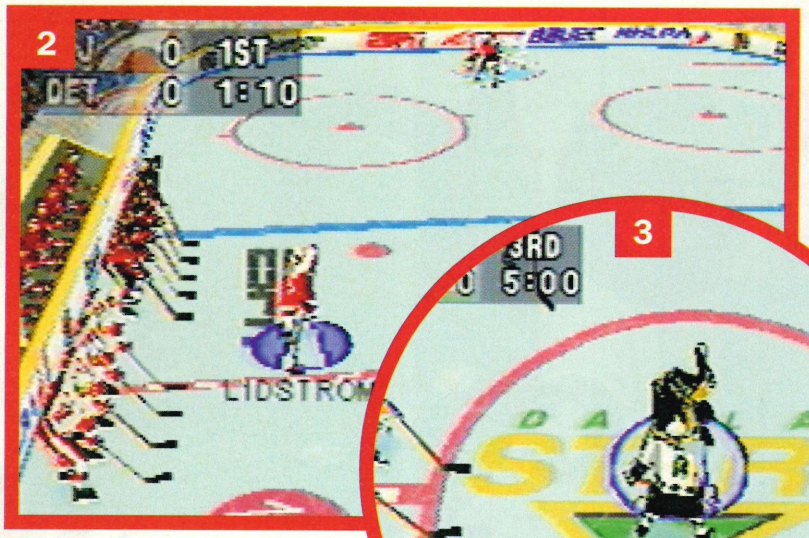
Quite a challenging sport for developers to turn into a video game then. You would think so, but that doesn't seem to have stopped EA. Electronic Arts, the acknowledged masters of the Ice hockey sim on Mega Drive (*EA Hockey* and the *NHL* series), are working on a super-duper PlayStation update, *NHL '96*, scheduled for release in August. No doubt that'll be the main challenger to this title, VIE's *NHL Powerplay Hockey '96* (out in June).

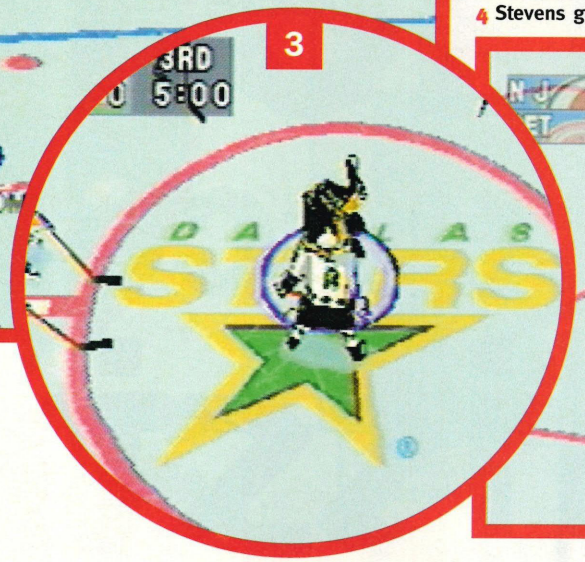
If the size of your name counted, the battle would be over now! Of course, it doesn't. What matters is good graphics, handy controls, a multi-player option and plenty of features. Well, lucky old Virgin, because a first look at *Powerplay* reveals it to be feature-packed and multi-tap compatible – it also boasts some very pretty motion-captured animation. The control system's pretty much sorted as well. The AI of the version we saw was at a very early stage, so we can't comment on that, but the whole thing looks very promising for ice hockey fans.

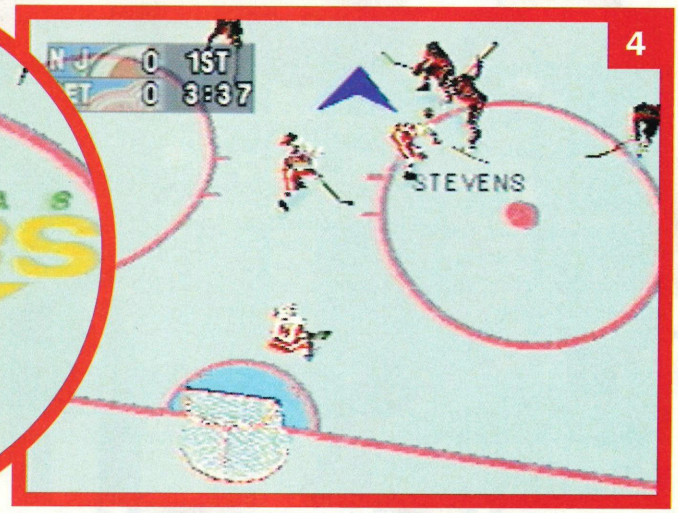
Ice to see you...

As far as the nitty gritty goes, well, the game features all the usual NHL and all-star teams, AND – wait for it – international line-ups (USA, Switzerland, Sweden, Spain, Russia, Norway, Japan, Italy, Germany, France, UK, Czech Republic, Canada, Austria and er, Australia – isn't it bit warm down under for skating shenanigans?). The gamer (we're told a six-player option is planned) can choose from exhibition, season, play-offs and world tournament modes (does that mean you could customise a league with a mix of club and national teams? That'd be cool).

Also, you can get in on the coaching side through editing the lines (a line is a group of either forward or defensive players, not just the red and blue things on the ice), and calling a nice choice of offensive and defensive strategies (see box-out). Instant-replay freaks are also catered for with the control-a-camera-and-position-it-anywhere option first seen







1 Centre Eric Lidstrom is finding it tough to get through the traffic. He should try and flick it through to his team-mate going through on goal.
2 Lidstrom has been awarded a penalty – the others must line up on the sides. What better time to indulge in a spot of taunting?
3 "Grr... we've all had your sister and she was crap." "Yeah? Well your mother must have slept with an orangutan to produce you!" Friendly banter is de-rigeur during face-offs.
4 Stevens goes to shoot, either that or to brain the guy in the way!

it me Stick!

in Sony's basketball stunner, *Total NBA '96*.

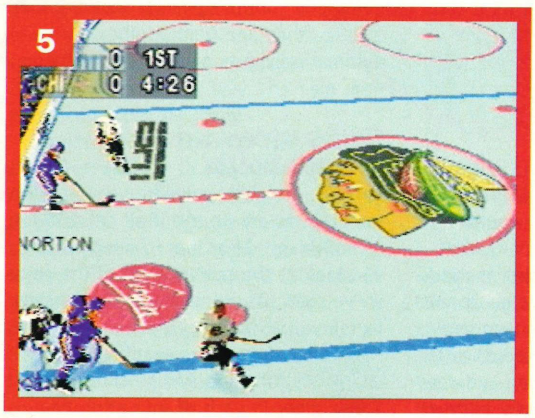
Puck off

Each team's ability, and the individual AI of every player is rated in general categories too, so can get a feel of both you and your opponent's strengths and weaknesses before the action starts. These are spilt into speed, passing ability, shot power, shot accuracy, stick handling, checking ability (for some reason, the Brits are the best at this - crap at everything else, but good at hitting people!), stamina, general offensive and defensive ability, and the capability of the team's goalie.

"Boring", I hear the harder of you cry, "what about fighting, it's got to have fighting in it, or it'll just be another Yank sports sim!" Chill out, there's no fighting mode as such, but you can always tell the referees to belt up (or switch them off), and get down to the serious business of whacking people around the head, tripping them up, slamming them against the boards and spearing them with sticks. I mean, without the violence it's just the same game girls and public school nonces play, but on ice. And where's the fun in that? So, *NHL Powerplay Hockey '96*, we'll see you in June, if you think you're 'ard enough.

PLAY information

- **Name:** NHL Powerplay Hockey '96
- **Publisher:** Virgin Interactive Entertainment
- **Where at:** 45% complete
- **Target Release:** June





5 Yeah, this is how you do it. Crunchin', munchin' and slammin' the other guy against the boards.
6 Gits! Just as Yzerman was breaking through on goal, the sod of a defender trips him up.

Konami discovers t missing l

PLAY information

- **Name:** Konami Links
- **Publisher:** Konami
- **Where at:** 30%
- **Target release:** June

1 look at the background – mirrored lakes! Cool.
2 Schwing! the side view reveals a bonny wee lassie.
3 The power bar drops back slowly, making low power shots easier!



Imagine the scene – the crew of the Starship Enterprise are back from a hard eon's cruising through the stars, pushing back the frontiers of space and encountering strange alien females in suspiciously short skirts, and now they are ready to chill a little with their favourite games console, a little grey thing we call the Sony PlayStation.

They settle back, switch on the TV and up comes *Konami Links*. "But what's this?", they say, "a whole new control interface in a golf game? That's outrageous, the intergalactic golf-game designer's union dedicated to ensuring every golf game ever since *Leaderboard* came out on the Commodore 64 ten years ago has the same bloody control interface will be after them with their phasers!" You can just see Bones turning to Kirk and uttering the immortal line "It's golf Jim, but not as we know it."

You what?

Well, perhaps I've just got an over-active imagination and a taste for remarkably poor jokes and you can't (or wouldn't want to, even) imagine that particular scene. Anyway, the point is that the lads and lasses at Konami have come up with a workable alternative to the standard golf game interface – you know, click to start swing, click to stop swing and set power, and the click in the right place to hit the ball straight – which, to this writer, seems to have featured in every golf game since Adam turned to Eve and said, "Sod the apple, let's play a round" (groan – Ed).

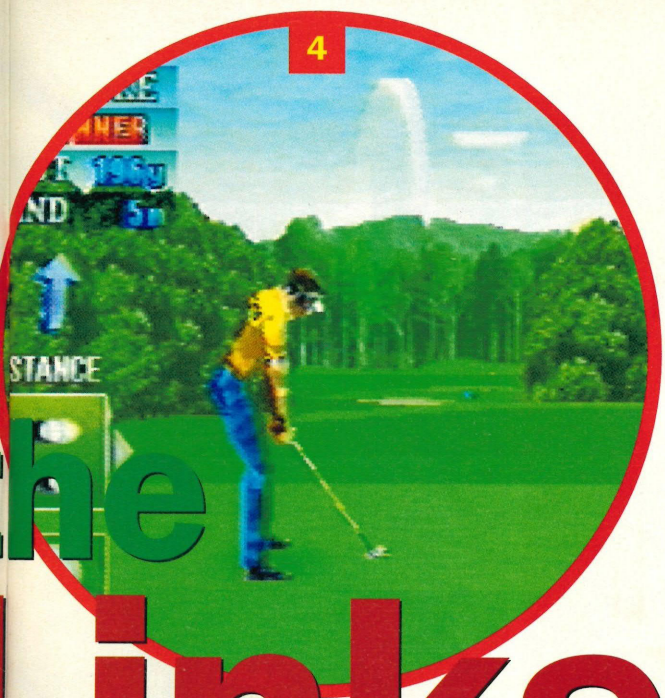
What happens is you're confronted with a giant golf ball on screen and have to determine the amount of fade, draw, topspin or backspin on the ball/in the shot by fixing a cross-hair on the ball (i.e. bottom left to put draw and backspin on the shot), but YOU CAN'T SET THIS AUTOMATICALLY! It has to be done through skill. The cross-hair is shaped by stopping two moving lines in position on the ball. The lines don't move so fast as to make this awkward, but do move quick enough for it to be a test of skill. Once you've done this, you can then set your stance, the view you want to watch the action from (seven different camera angles), and power, using the typical golf game power bar.

OK, they haven't discovered a cure for cancer or anything, but when it comes to golf game control systems, anything that distinguishes one from another automatically gets a grateful thumbs up from me.

Golf swings and roundabouts

Actually, the 30% complete version (all the features are in, but it all needs a lot of polishing – bear that in mind when you look at the screenshots) of the game we've seen has a few more nice touches to tell you about.

Konami Links offers six different characters for the player to choose from. These differ in each of four attributes –

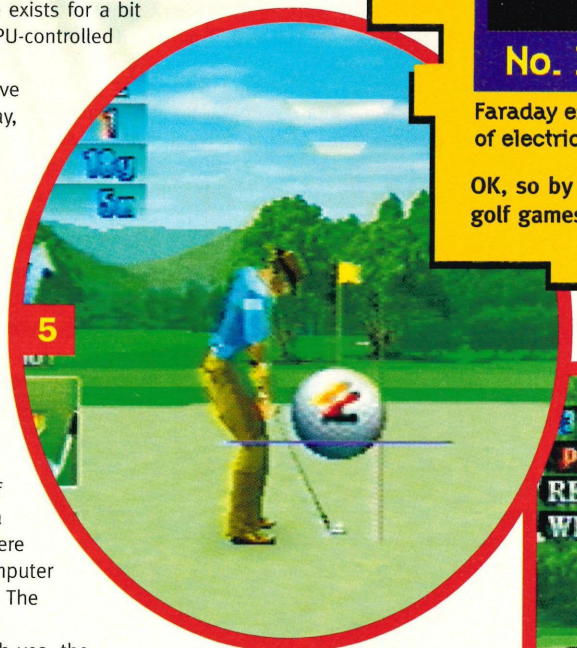


he Links

power, technique, stability and luck – with the gamer (that's you) free to choose which combination is best for them. Up to eight people can play the two (made-up) courses featured, as well as three computer players. So, even if you're on your own, scope exists for a bit of competition with the CPU-controlled golfers.

Three types of game have been included – stroke play, match play and the skins option which has now become standard to include thanks to the bloody Yanks. You all compete on one hole for a winner-takes-all cheque, lowest score wins the hole. If nobody wins the money it is carried over onto the next hole and so on, and so on. Pity it's only computer cash, although if you're competing against a few friends the option's there to say, right £1=$1000 computer dollars and do it that way. The game could pay for itself!

So what else is there? Ah yes, the choice of whether to play from the regular tees or the back tees, the option to place the ball anywhere on the tee (to combat problems posed by the hole layout). Finally, there's a neat little touch where, instead of just moving the direction around with the D-pad, you can fine tune the angle with the top L1 and R1 buttons. Review in a couple of months time.





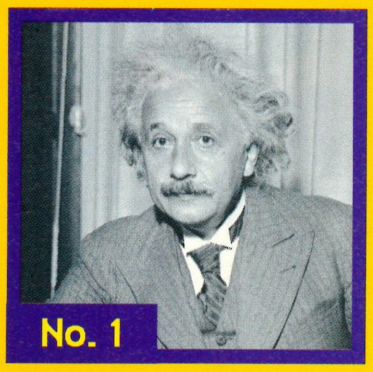
4 Another small innovation in the game is that you can move the tee from either side.

5 This is it! The wonder of wonders, the creme de la creme, the innovative golf video game control system!

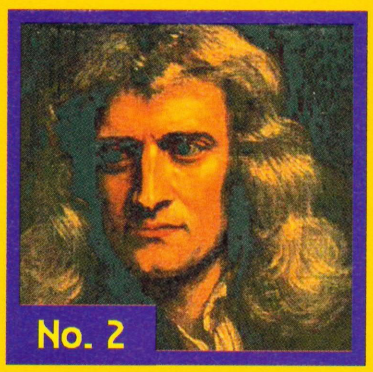
6 The obligatory screenshot where we let you see all the icon bars. We think of everything!

Great inventors of our time

Just how brilliant a discovery is the innovation of new control interface in a golf video game? PLAY ranked the world's greatest events and tried to figure out where Konami's achievement fitted.



Einstein invents the theory of relativity.



Sir Isaac Newton discovers the law of gravity.



Faraday establishes his principles of electricty.



Konami comes up with a new golf video game control interface.

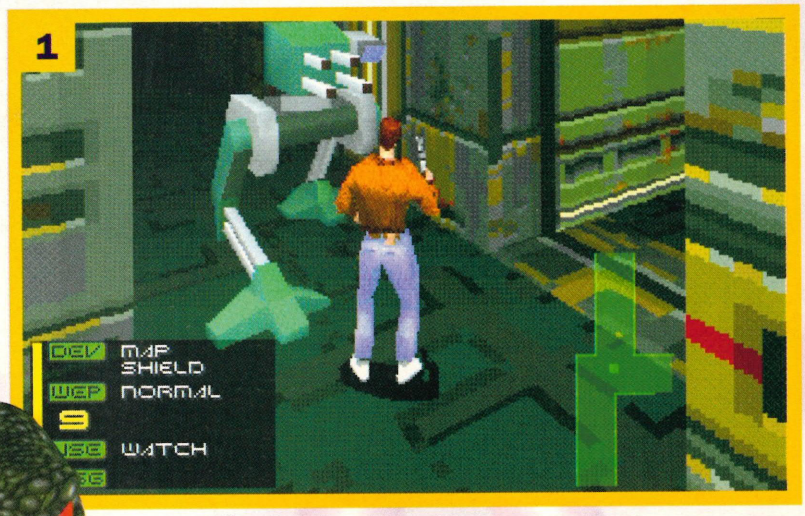
OK, so by world standards it isn't much, but in the conservative world of golf games, it's a mini-revolution!

Fade To

PLAY information

- **Name:** Fade to Black
- **Publisher:** Electronic Arts
- **Completion:** 70%
- **Target Release:** June

1 Conrad encounters the Morph's sacred walking egg whisk.
2 Check out the superb detail on that stone ogre.
3 Conrad runs into a wall, but then he always was a stupid boy.





"Look at me mother, I'm skipping!"

A smash hit on PC CD-ROM, *Fade to Black* (originally titled *Crossfire*) is the semi sequel to Delphine Software's two Rotoscoped platform games, *Another World* and *Flashback*. It's been a while coming (the original was released in November) but *Fade to Black* looks set to set the PlayStation alight this summer.

As in the first two games you play Conrad Heart, a scientist whose particle acceleration experiments back-fired one night causing him to be hurled into an alternative dimension. A bit of a bugger really, as he'd just bought a Ferrari. The first two games saw Conrad team up with the indiginous population to throw off their oppressors, and there was even an alien plot to destroy the Earth thrown in as well, but being a macho, Indiana Jones-type scientist (they're not all weedy guys in over-sized white coats moaning about Bunsen burners y'know!) Conrad took the fight back to the alien homeworld and gave them a napalm enema! End of story, or so he thought.

Take Heart

At the end of the mega successful *Flashback*, Conrad put himself into hypersleep for the long journey back to Earth and that's where *Fade to Black* picks up the thread of the story. Conrad's ship is intercepted by an evil race of aliens known as Morphs; so named because they can change shape at will to avoid detection. The Morphs sling Conrad in jail as they prepare to invade Earth, but fortunately, as happens in all great adventure movies, they forget to relieve him of his 9mm automatic pistol – doh!

Fade to Black is an incredible looking 3-D space adventure that uses revolutionary new roving camera techniques to portray the action. When Conrad is standing still for example, the view draws up close so that you can see the back of his head in the foreground



Black

"If only I looked as good in these clothes as Ian Lynch. Damn him!"

and a panoramic view of the area directly ahead of you. If you then begin legging it through some of the intricately detailed rooms, the camera pulls back so that you can see all around you, and as you move left and right, so the view switches to give you the most clear view of the road ahead. It sounds complicated, but once you've picked up the joypad and made it through the initial few rooms, you'll wonder why it hasn't been done before.

One of the key aspects of *Fade to Black* is the animation on all the characters. Conrad runs, crouches, and whips out his gun from behind a pillar in full motion captured-glory, even putting the previous Rotoscoped efforts to shame. Rotoscoping, as you may know or may not know, was the process whereby real actors were filmed and then their outlines used as individual frames of animation for the game. Well, with *Fade to Black* they've gone one step further and actually used fully animated actors not just outlines! The end result is the most convincing movement since *Actua Soccer*, and it all goes to make *Fade to Black* one of the most fabulous looking games ever programmed. And now it's PlayStation bound – you lucky people.

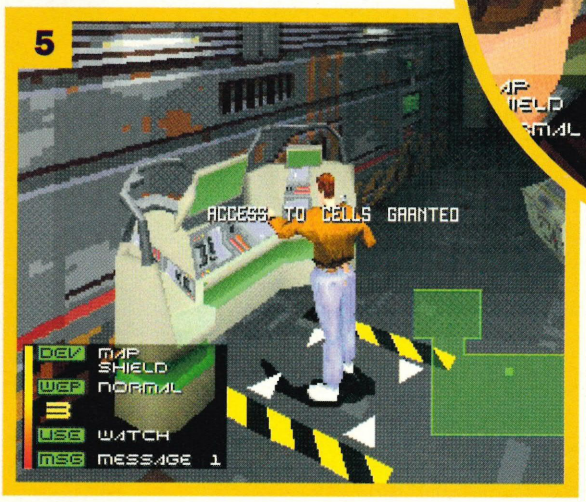
Better to burn out...

Like every good adventure game, *Fade to Black* is packed with things to do, as you must search many rooms, talk to people also trapped in the base (but be careful, they might be Morphs in disguise!), and of course fire that huge gun of yours as often as possible. Combat comprises of drawing your weapon (oo-er, obviously) and aiming the cross-hair before letting loose with a volley of lead. A threat indicator pops up when someone is firing at you and this is crucial if you want to dash into the nearest alcove for cover – remember, lasers don't make any noise – you see a flash and then you're dead.

The bottom line is that this game is terrific fun and with the PlayStation version comes improved smoother graphics (the PC's were always a tad blocky), enhanced sound, and of course the fact that you just slap it in and play, instead of having to fiddle with .CONFIG files. Delphine are the absolute masters of this style of game and so hopes are high for a top class conversion, especially seeing as they've had plenty of time to iron out the PC version's flaws (not many) and the PlayStation is perfectly suited to this kind of game. Watch out, it's going to be massive!



4



4 If this was on the PC, Conrad's head would be a plain brown colour and the gun; a grey rectangle. Ra-ra PlayStation!
5 The best looking adventure ever? Could be.
6 Conrad is hassled by two scouse Morphs.



Flipper-tastic!

Every film or major cartoon series that gets released will inevitably get its own pinball table – *Terminator 2*, *Lethal Weapon*, *Doctor Who* – the list is endless and predictable. In *Tilt*, the tables are incredibly varied, but all are worryingly addictive and crammed with bonuses.

Road King USA – Probably the easiest table to play, this takes the theme of all that's good in the good ol' US of A. Cars, open roads, beaches, burger bars, mass murder. Perhaps not.



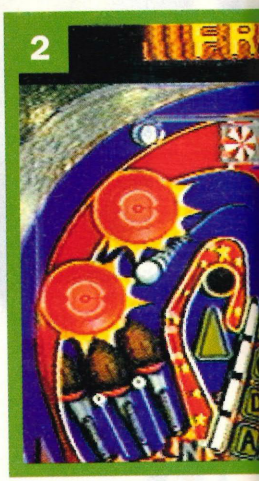


The Gangster – A much tougher table which requires some good timing if you are to reach those tricky bonus areas. There are also lots of special features hidden away. Practice makes perfect! But where's Jodie Foster?

Myst 'N Majik – This is a table that's not as forgiving as the rest. You need to aim the ball properly for some tricky ramp shots because you might not get many more chances once the bonus features are highlighted!



The Tables Have Turn



PLAY information

- **Name:** TILT
- **Publisher:** Virgin Interactive Entertainment
- **Completion:** 90%
- **Target Release:** End May

1 Try out the FunFair table if you're a beginner!



It has often been said that pinball games are no substitute for the real thing. Well, this is true, but when pinball games adopt a more mature, realistic approach then they are usually worth shouting about, and this is definitely the case with *Tilt* from Virgin.

From what we've seen, *Tilt* will be the nearest thing you can get to having a great big lumbering pinball table, complete with cigarette ash and burn marks, in your own home. There are five different tables in all, covering a variety of themes that we should all be used to seeing down at the local arcades or chippie. Believe it or not, the tables do vary in difficulty, with some requiring more skillful shots to reach those tricky little bonus ramps and holes. The simplest one is undoubtedly the car themed, Road King USA, which has all the usual pinball features such as flashing lights and car sound effects. Special areas like the subway tunnel for example, will give thousands of points if you manage to shoot the ball right through. *Tilt* also features a triple lock system, and those ever so handy buffers that pop up to stop the ball from falling in-between the flippers and out of play.

Virgin have included just about every aspect of proper pinball in *Tilt* - and let's not forget that you can switch the table to a 2-D viewpoint if you get scared by that extra dimension. The game has been designed so that players will recognise and feel comfortable with at least two of the tables, whilst the others adopt new feature and challenges. The Funfair table is a brightly coloured affair, complete with all the silly comical noises and sound effects that you hear on cartoons whenever the ball hits a bumper or goes out of play. This has the usual pinball stuff, requiring you to hit letters which spell out the word "FUN" to get lots of points. An extra ball is highlighted as a free ride, and it contains the usual multi-ball feature. Of the six tables, this is probably the simplest and therefore the one to get to grips with if you're a beginner.

The third table takes a horror theme, appropriately named The Monster, and is backed up by a suitably spooky soundtrack with sound effects such as cats screeching. The table is decorated with skulls and headstones, and if you shoot these, you will be able to go for a super jackpot! Shooting the skulls with the pinball will give points, as does spelling out words such as "Mummy "and "RIP!"





The Monster – A real spooky table, this. However, it is chock full of features which help to top up the old high scores. Apparently, this is the programmers' favourite table.

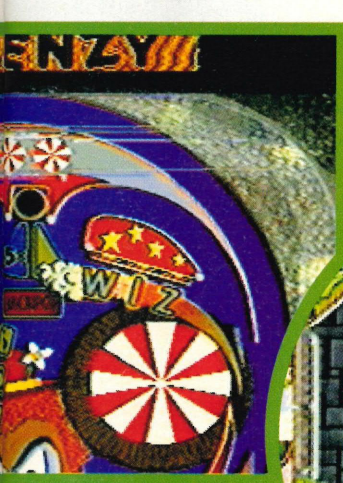
Star Quest – A very futuristic table. Like The Monster, there are all sorts of features and bonuses waiting to be discovered. You need to shoot down spaceships using the pinball and a cross-hair, so a bit more skill is required on this one.





The Funfair - There are fairground attractions galore here. Shoot the ball in the right direction and you could ride the roller coaster for loads of points. Plus, it comes complete with silly fairground related sound effects!

2 If you can, try to keep the pinball at the top of each table for as lomg as possible for huge point totals!
3 For a real medieval fantasy, Myst 'n' Majik has lots to offer. Storm castles and slay dragons for points!











ed

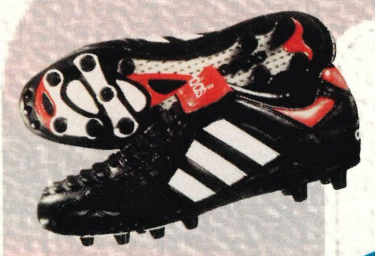
If all this doesn't sound good enough already, there are another three tables to come! Be warned that these tables are more unforgiving and require far more skill and faster reactions to master. A futuristic table named Star Quest requires the player to open airlocks with the ball, which activates the multi-ball feature. A digital display screen (very common in pinball games nowadays) occasionally shows a ship flying past a target sight. You must shoot the ball up the table at the right moment to successfully destroy this ship, as it will yield bonus points galore!

The Gangster table has a lot of special features and bonuses hidden away, all of which are highlighted by the digital display when they are accessed. The "Lightning Raid" enables the player to shoot at a bank icon (indicating a mob raid) for huge amounts of points. Remember that ramps are a common part of the tables in *Tilt*, and when "Ramp Millions" appears, each ramp that the ball travels over will give you five million points! The Myst 'N Majik table takes the medieval fantasy theme, as it's full of dragons, warriors and magic.

Basically, if it hasn't sunk in yet, we reckon that *Tilt* is going to be the best pinball game on the PlayStation yet. Anyone who fancies six tables of lunatic in-yer-face pinball action will just have to stay tuned to PLAY for the full review treatment next issue. Can you stand the wait? Hey, patience is a virtue...

4 There are high speed thrills galore on the USA Road King table!
5 Just one of the many features on this table is the siege of the castle. Avoid that area!
6 In 2-D mode everything becomes much clearer and play is made easier.

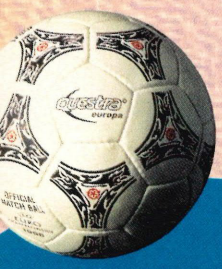














adidas power soccer

Not content with giving us free Euro '96 tickets and football tops to give away in issue five, the obviously-had-a-good-win-down-the-casino-lately *adidas Power Soccer* team at Psygnosis want to give more *adidas Power Soccer* goodies away! "Only give us better branding this time," they said. So, we've got FIVE full sets of *adidas Power Soccer* gear to give away! That's five *adidas Power Soccer* Traxion boots, five *adidas Power Soccer* fingersave gloves, five *adidas Power Soccer* t-shirts and five *adidas Power Soccer* caps! Can you *adidas Power Soccer*-ieve it?

Can you feel the power?

Prizes

Five lucky winners will be able to walk away kitted with collections of *adidas Power Soccer* gear comprising a set of boots, gloves, t-shirt and cap.



To win, just answer this ridiculously simple question.

Which is the greatest football video game in the world, ever, and recently notched a whopping 95% review score in PLAY?

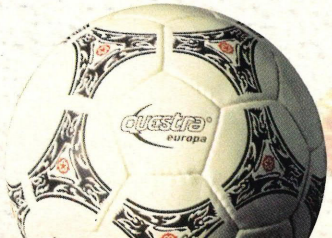
a) ***adidas Power Soccer* on PlayStation**
b) ***World Cup Carnival* on Spectrum**
c) ***Gazza* on Amstrad CPC**

Simply write your answer on the back of a postcard or a stuck-down envelope together with your name, address and choice of shirt, and send it to the following address.

***adidas Power Soccer* is cool,**
PLAY Magazine, Paragon House,
St Peter's Road, Bournemouth BH1 2JS

Please note: The editor's decision is final. Anybody who thinks its clever to send in multiple entries (you seem to have stopped it now – about bloody time), employees of Paragon Publishing, its suppliers, or those of Psygnosis may not enter and will have the adidas Power Soccer brand manager after them if hey try. The closing date for the competition is the 25 May 1996, so get your entries in now! All winners will be notified in writing. A list of winners will be available in writing on request from Paragon Publishing at the above address.











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PL2(5)

Ridge Rac Revol

The Good the Bad and the... Kid?

There are normally four cars to choose from in *Ridge Racer Revolution*. But if you win at *Galaga* at the front end of the game, you'll get eight extra ones to choose from. To get three more supercars though, you'll have to win on all three tracks, and then make sure you win in the time-trials mode.

Black Devil

The Black Devil car makes another appearance following its debut in *Ridge Racer*. Incredibly fast, it handles well and has a maximum top speed. Demon





Kid Car

Similar to the Black Devil, Kid car is fast and aggressive, but has low handling and grip. However this car is perfect for power sliding supremos. Like me of course.





Angel Car

Feeling good? Winning the time trial in expert mode allows you to own this dream car. It handles brilliantly with pretty much top everything, except for grip. I want one.





It's here. *Ridge Racer Revolution*. PAL. The definitive PlayStation racer. Asam Ahmad returns to the driving seat, slips on his string back gloves, fastens his belt... and burns rubber. Don't you just love that smell?

Ridge Racer Revolution is the game *Ridge Racer* should have been. Demonstrating the power of the PlayStation, this game's a revelation as much as a revolution. Just about all the criticisms that were levelled at Namco's first PlayStation racer have been addressed and corrected in this sequel. Before you all get carried away though, this game is not *Rave Racer*, Namco's latest arcade smash, but rather a filler to keep all you punters happy. And happy material it certainly is.

In single player mode *Ridge Racer Revolution* has one main track, but what a track it is. There are the obligatory three variations on it, all changing the route somewhat for each difficulty level, but this time the variety in route and scenery is absolutely breath-taking. Apart from the stunning visuals, all of which flow along incredibly smoothly with no slow-down, the tracks are devious little buggers, with some incredibly challenging sections to negotiate. It's sure to take even the most adept race-game fiends a good long while to perfect some of the sharp corners and narrow strips on this course!

Like the original, these courses are played backwards when you complete the first three variants, but unlike the original, there are a few new players in *Revolution*. The Black Devil car is still there, and you get to race him once you've completed all the tracks and try the Novice time-trial mode. The Intermediate trial allows you the opportunity to race Kid car (similar to the Black Devil car), and for die-hard racers, the Expert level presents you with a spanking new White Angel car that is nigh on impossible to beat. As in *Ridge Racer*, win in the time trials and you get to drive the extra cars. More importantly there is another new player, a human one. Yes, *Revolution* has a link-up option. Finally you can challenge a friend with another PlayStation to the ultimate in red raw racing! It's this link-up option that was the most sorely missed feature from *Ridge Racer*, but thank your lucky stars

The ultimate in red raw racing!

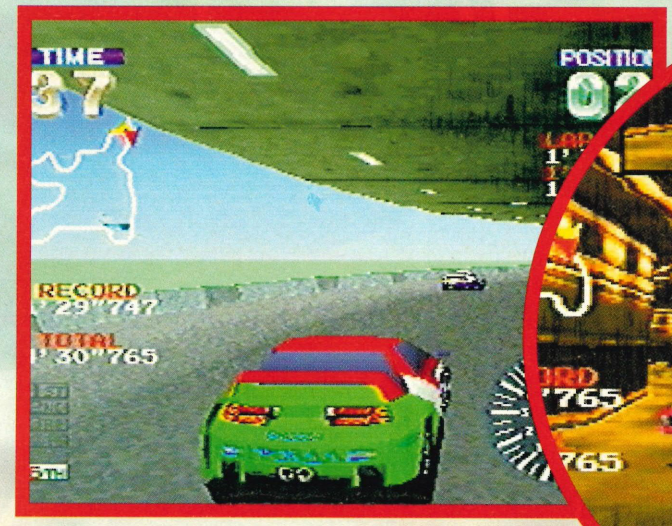
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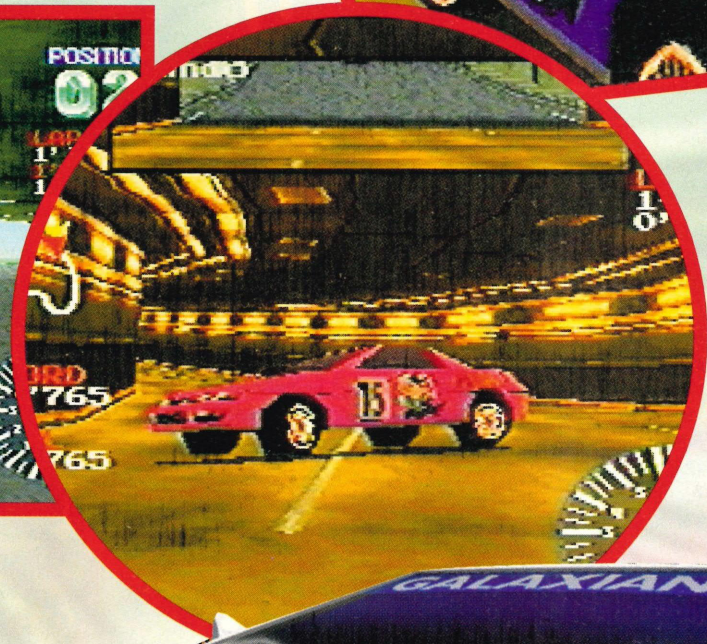


◀ *Revolution* features a plethora of special modes to further enhance the game. This mode allows you to drive buggies with big wheels. Great.

▼ Amongst other improvements throughout the game, the graphics have been markedly improved.







◀ The emphasis in play is not just to win, but to win dirty! Constantly prompted by the commentator, your job is to bash the crap out of the other cars in a bid for first place.

PLAY information

- **Publisher:** Sony Computer Entertainment
- **Customer support:** 0881 505505
- **Release date:** Out now!
- **Expected Price:** £44.99

it's here now, 'cos it's good. And as an added bonus, you can even race around the original track from *Ridge Racer* in link-up mode. There's nothing like challenging a mate to a blasting session with a bit of head-to-head. The addition of a rear-view mirror also means tactical blocking play is great for infuriating your lagging opponent. Great.

Apart from the obvious changes in gameplay, Namco have shifted the sonics up a gear and there are a handful of new tunes to complement the existing lot. The in-game commentary has also been improved, along with a few other little touches – it all goes to make *RRR* sound better than any other





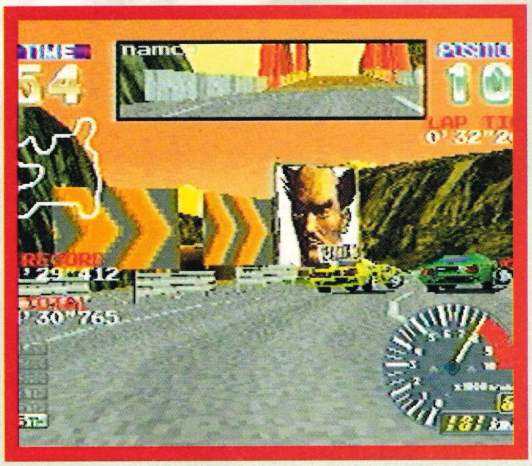
racing game. Fact.

We reviewed the import version of *Ridge Racer Revolution* back in the February issue of PLAY, where it received a stonking 93%. As you'd expect, the UK PAL version being reviewed here is virtually identical to the Japanese version. The aesthetic differences are limited to the text in the game being in English. But there is however one fundamental difference between this version and the import: speed.

The difference in pace between the two versions results from the frame rate of the PAL conversion being some 10%-15% slower than the NTSC game. This slow-down is not due to shoddy coding, but the differing television standards employed by the UK and Japan/America. As a game, the playability remains on par with the import, but the slight drop in speed is certainly noticeable. For this reason, and for the fact that we now have other games such as EA's *The Need for Speed*, I can't rate this game quite as highly as the import. Nevertheless, as a game in itself, *Revolution* is undoubtedly a superb. If you don't have the original *Ridge Racer*, *Revolution* is certainly a must-buy!



▼ **The rear view mirror is an invaluable aid to keep you ahead of the pack, allowing you to block any hopeful hoorays.**





PLAY verdict

Looks:	9
Sounds:	9
Linkability:	10
Value:	8

Played 90%

Revolution is a must buy!

PLAYSTATIONS



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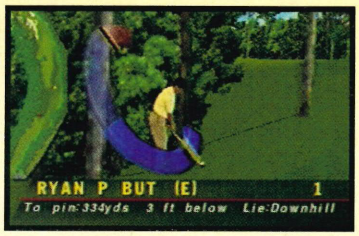
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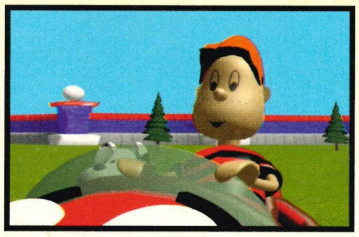
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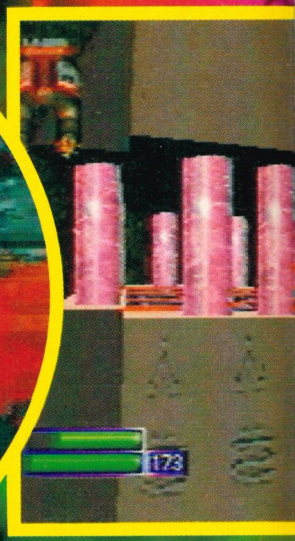
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PO'

PLAY information

- **Publisher:** Time Warner Interactive
- **Phone for info:** 0171 391 4300
- **Expected price:** £39.99
- **Expected when:** May

Steve Hardy meets his darker side as he tests the latest 3DO conversion, *PO'ed*. And you thought *Doom* was gory...

Ever had one of those days when you feel like getting out a meat cleaver and splitting someone's head like a melon before gobbing down their neck! No? Well, that's exactly what Ox the Chef has gone and done in *PO'ed*, the latest conversion from the 3DO. In fact he's probably gone much further!

Whilst serving on-board the spaceship, USS Pompous, Ox witnessed the death of most of his shipmates by an invading force of freaks, monsters and mutants. Worse still, one particular creature went and stood in one of his prize winning soufflés! As you can guess, he was not too pleased about that. In fact, Ox is PO'ed (which is apparently a polite abbreviation of "pissed off" – so now you know).

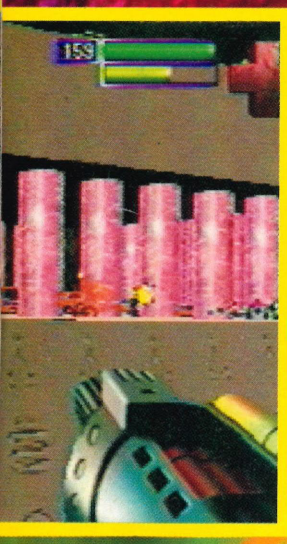
Being only a humble Chef (so was Steven Seagal in *Under Siege* – Ed) and armed only with a frying pan, a meat cleaver and a very bad attitude, Ox sets off on a mission to wreak revenge throughout the 20 3-D levels.

Initially the word "*Doom*" comes to mind as you wander around lots of dark corridors dimly lit by pulsing lights. It all feels very spooky and distinctly familiar. Still, *PO'ed* could be described as a stand alone original game because it offers the player complete freedom of movement, something that the mighty *Doom* does not. You can actually jump over any obstacles, which usually consist of holes in the floor, and you can use

▲ On each stage you must locate the coloured transporter to escape. Choices, choices!



▶ This is the core of the spaceship - use the jetpack to reach the top!





ed

this ability to leap over any missiles or other projectiles that the enemy fire at you.

The main action is viewed from a first person perspective, with only Ox's arm being visible whenever he uses a weapon. As the stages progress, you will encounter more and more adversaries who can't be taken out with a mere frying pan. Obviously, your main objective is to kill off as many creatures as possible, come through in one piece, and find a teleporter to escape. However, it's very important to find the stronger weapons that are hidden away on each stage. After the first few levels, you'll have ditched the frying pan because an arsenal of weapons is just waiting to be found. Meat cleavers are great at dispatching enemies from a long distance, but the laser gun is the absolute business; severing enemies with one blast.

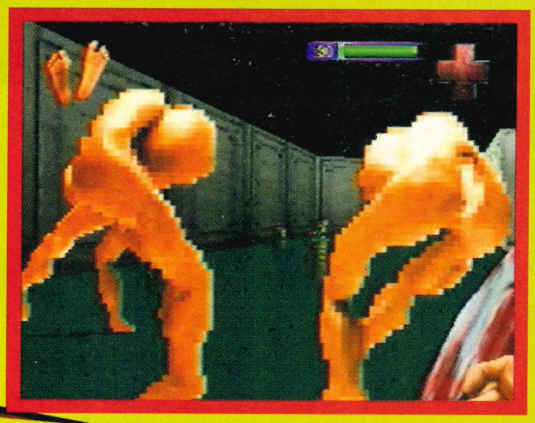
The further into the game



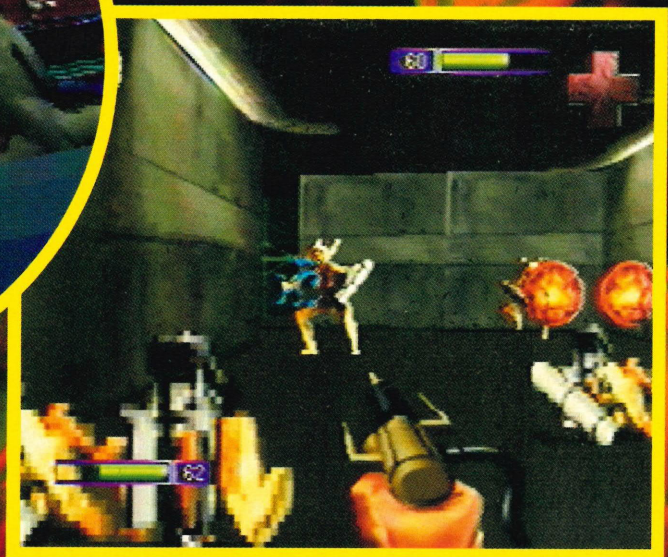
▲ Lock onto a target with your missile and this is what you see – guide it to its destination!

Bunch Of Arse (s)!

There's definitely a feeling of "what the heck am I doing here?" as you wander round with a large frying pan battering all kinds of mutants in the huge spaceship. Worse still, there are absolutely loads of walking backsides to contend with! Surely these are the strangest things ever to grace a video game? Have you ever seen anything stranger than this, or anything even more disgusting? Write in and tell us.



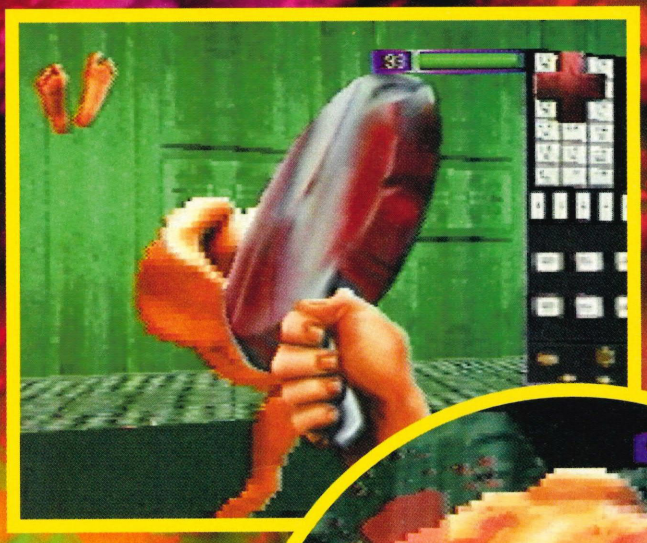




► Watch out for these deadly women armed with double-barrelled shotguns!



▲ For maximum effect, use the flame-thrower on the slime monsters in the game. Yuk!



◀ Everyone starts at the bottom, and to begin with you are only armed with a frying pan. Fancy a fry up?

▼ Don't let him run away – give him a good drilling!



If you thought *Doom* was violent, then check this out

you get, the heavier the weaponry becomes, and you find yourself in a frantic shoot- 'em-up that introduces new elements to the genre. For example, it isn't possible to reach every stage on foot, so a jet pack can be used to reach the higher stages. Lifts are also available for access to higher floors, and by flicking various switches Ox reveals new areas to explore. To top up your energy levels, there are lots of booster icons lying around each stage, and if you get lucky, a new weapon will also be revealed; enhancing your chances of success. For example, once the missile launcher has been collected, a special camera allows the player to direct the missile to its target by piloting it from the nose cone! Brilliant!

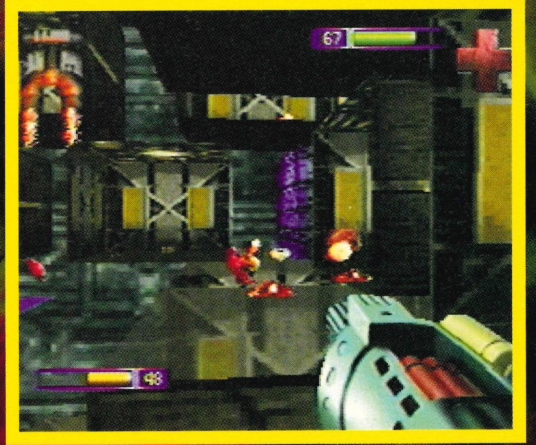
The visuals in *PO'ed* are fantastic, although a little too fuzzy at times. The backgrounds scroll along smoothly, and everything feels that little bit faster than *Doom*, although this does cause you to feel dizzy at times. The sensitive controls also prove tricky when tackling the areas that are higher up – one wrong move and you fall right down to the bottom again. Better still, *PO'ed* contains many puzzle elements as well as the frantic blasting action. The stages gradually become more and more complex and you need to remember the right route and take the correct lifts to have any chance of reaching the exit.

If you thought *Doom* was violent, the check this out – it's got electric drills, sharp knives, meat seekers (missiles that home in on flesh!), flame-throwers, and you've got an extremely involving, non stop action game that contains enough new stuff to set itself apart from other 3-D shoot-'em-ups.

PO'ed combines smooth gameplay with a huge challenge and top notch graphics, and it's also one of the most bloody games I've ever seen. Recommended.

▼ Jump over holes in the floor, but beware of those... things.



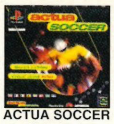


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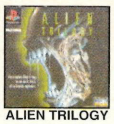
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Sounds:
Freedom:
Value:

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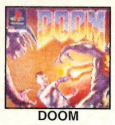
A bloody good game!



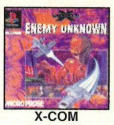
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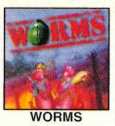
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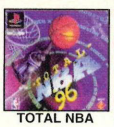
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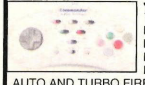
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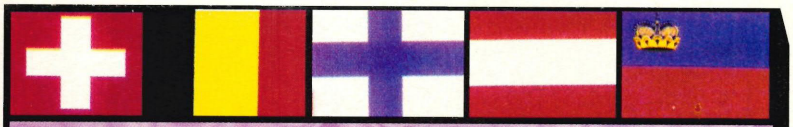
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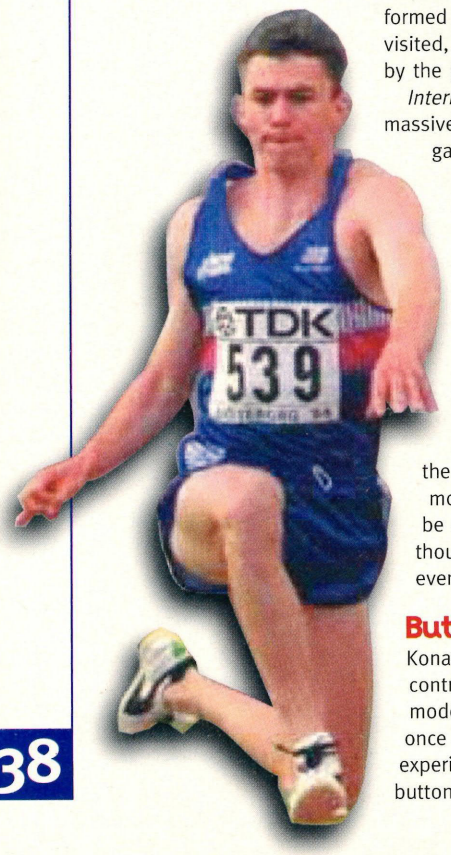
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International Track &

PLAY information

- **Design team:** In-house
- **Team leader:** Unknown
- **Where at:** 40% complete
- **Publisher:** Konami
- **Target Release:** July

Looking at the classic game compilations currently being touted around magazines we're rapidly coming to the conclusion that old games are enjoyable only as memories. But, what about re-makes of classic games using next generation technology? That might work. Ian Lynch takes a look at how this mix is shaping up.



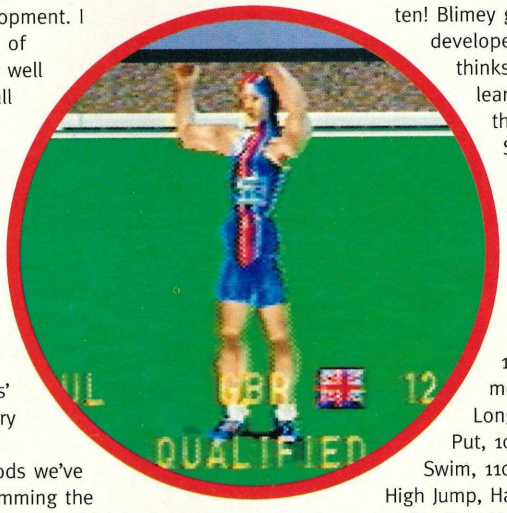
Being a bit of a sports nut (watching, rather than doing, I hasten to add), the idea of a bash on the PlayStation version of one of my all-time favourite coin-ops appealed immensely. Judging by the size of the crowd around the monitor which formed when the man from Konami visited, I wasn't the only one intrigued by the prospect.

International Track & Field owes a massive debt to the original arcade games (the 1983 released *Track & Field* and subsequent follow-up *Hypersports* a year later). It owes that debt because it retains the same frantic button pressing type of gameplay as the original duo, and then adds gorgeous graphics to the gaming equation. It could just work. At the moment the game is currently only 40% complete – the version we saw had four of the ten events up and running, with more work on the graphics still to be done. It still looks very nice though, particularly the swimming event.

Button loon

Konami has decided to keep the same control method as the original arcade model, so come release time you'll once again be able to enjoy the experience of frantically hitting two buttons to shift your athlete around (be it running, swimming, building up strength in throwing events, etc.) and trying to time pressing another for something extra (jump over a hurdle, breath when swimming, throw the shot etc).

Classic gameplay eh? Which is cool. But, given the shape of a PlayStation pad, this method does pose some intriguing problems for Konami to grapple with over the final stages of development. I mean, this kind of thing is all very well in the arcade, all you have to do is waggle furiously on the joystick, but trying to madly press the two buttons on a PlayStation pad? With those little 'legs' you hold. You try it.



So far, methods we've tried include jamming the pad between your legs (alright, but a bit painful after a while) and putting it on the floor and trying to hold it (weird). Still, I'm sure a big clever company like Konami will produce something to solve that problem (a brace holding the pad in place would be a good idea – hint, hint), but we'll have to see.

Run for glory

As for the game features, well, the design team have settled on their own kind of decathlon, with a maximum of ten events to be competed on. I say 'maximum' because there is talk that it'll feature three levels of difficulty, which will affect the number of events you can take part in. For example, if you play it on easy, six will be available, on medium it'll be eight, and on hard, all ten! Blimey guv'nor, a developer who actually thinks about the learning curve for their games! Strike a light and all that. So, if they keep the order as it is at the moment you'll start off at the 100m run, then move on to the Long Jump, Shot Put, 100m Freestyle Swim, 110m Hurdles, High Jump, Hammer, Triple Jump, Javelin, Pole Vault and Discus. And yes, you still have to beat a qualifying distance or time to move onto the next event.

Speaking of events, the player has a different polygon-packed sprite representing the nation you've chosen to play with for. The idea is that you control

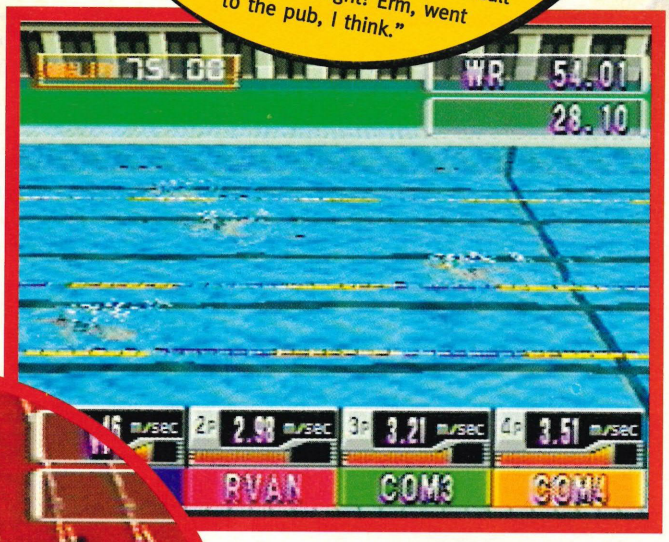
Field

Ancient pleasures

The editor interjects – "So, we've seen the ten events Konami plan to include this time around, but what about the original arcade machines? What did they have in, and can Ian Lynch remember anything that far back – trying to think back to what he did the night before usually causes him enough problems."

"Yeah, yeah, very funny Nick. Well, it just so happens I can – the original *Track & Field* game featured the 100m Run, Long Jump, Javelin, 100m Hurdles, Hammer Throw and High Jump. And *Hypersports* had the 100m Swimming, Clay Pigeon Shooting (I hope they put that in the new one somewhere), The Vault, Triple Jump, Weight Lifting and the impossibly difficult Pole Vault. Last night? Erm, went to the pub, I think."







▲ As yet, Konami haven't put in the 'breathe button.' It's hard enough as it is!

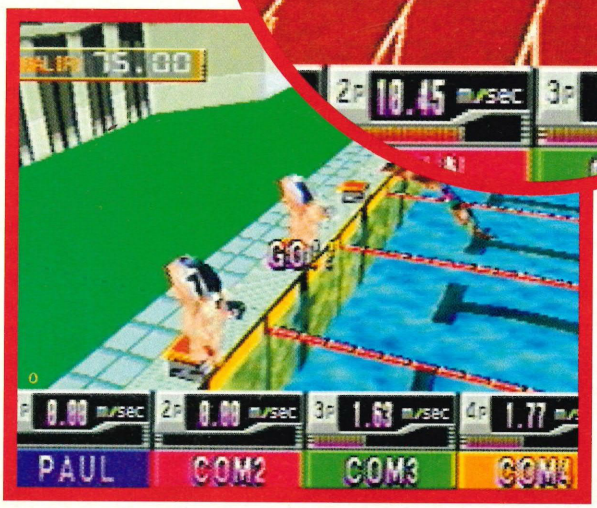
◀ A quick start is vital. I've screwed this one up. Now, pattatppattapattapattapatta!

▼Timimg is crucial for success in the Shot Put event. Otherwise, you"ll struggle.

a team, rather than a individual. So, your shot putter, for example, is a fair bit bulkier than your swimmer (as well as being a different gender – the swimmer characters are female).

Actually, the swimming event looks the closest to being finished at the moment – the water ripples, splashes and is strikingly similar in colour to a proper swimming pool.

With a release scheduled to coincide with the Olympics in late July (*International Track & Field* is actually the official Olympic licence in Konami's home country of Japan) you have to be optimistic about its prospects. We will have a proper preview for you in a few months time.





NBA Live '

PLAY information

- **Publisher:** Electronic Arts
- **Phone for info:** 01753 546465
- **Expected price:** £49.99
- **Expected when:** Out now!

Get ready to go slam dunking once more as Steve Hardy checks out the latest basketball offering from EA. It's time to go live – NBA Live!

It seems that the PlayStation is well suited to basketball games. After all, it's a sport that's becoming increasingly more popular, especially in the UK. If you read our top comparison of *Total NBA* and *NBA In The Zone*, you should have a pretty idea of what *NBA Live '96* is going to be like. It takes the realism and multiple camera angles from *Total NBA* and combines them with similar visuals to *NBA In The Zone*.

The game starts with an impressive intro which captures all those magic moments from various games of basketball, with slam dunks galore! Beginners should look no further, because this has just about every option you could think of, whether you're a rookie or an aspiring professional. All the top NBA teams have been included, and you can check the statistics of each player if you need to. Over 300 real NBA players are here, with 29 actual NBA teams thrown into the hat. Players can even create and perfect their own players from scratch, so a lot of thought has gone into making this game as user friendly as possible.

At the end of each segment you can check up on the best players of the game. Basketball fans will see some familiar faces in here! The simulation option is great to watch before you play your first game, although it's nothing we haven't seen before. There aren't many crucial differences between this and the other two games, but in *NBA Live '96* you can knock other players to the ground and lay into them if they get in the way. However, you will be penalised for this violation, depending on which setting you are using.

To further enhance that realistic feel that always goes down well in basketball games, there are 16 different ways of viewing the court. Each view represents a different camera angle, so the court can be viewed from either, side on from way up above, or even from the basket at the other end of the court. I won't make too many comparisons to *Total NBA '96*, after all, it still is the game by which all other basketball sims are measured. A few problems lie in the players themselves, which don't feel as smooth to control. Worse still, there isn't

▼ **If you don't think you'll make it to the basket zone, try a long shot!**





96



Take it slow...

Yes, should you ever perform a gob-smacking slam dunk or some other miracle on the court, you can pause the game and use this very handy replay mode. The player can rewind the action and play it back at a slow speed, even down to individual frames. This can also be viewed from anyangle and it's a very clever little addition to the game.



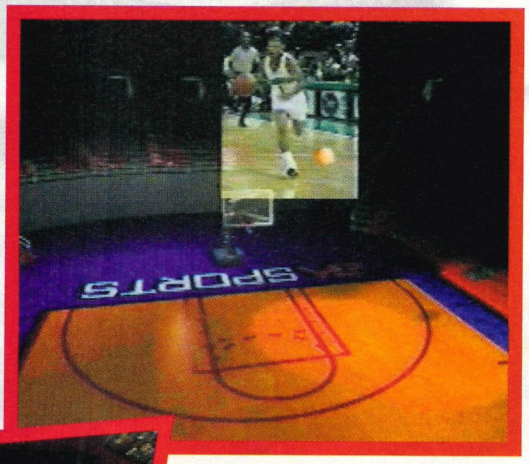


one camera view which allows a very clear or detailed view of the action. *Total NBA* coped perfectly with a load of people rushing about on screen yet managed to retain the fluidity of movement In *NBA Live '96* there's often too much confusion as all the players rush for the ball and this limits the gameplay somewhat because it's too difficult to determine where your controlled player is until he emerges into a clear space.

▼ This viewpoint makes a change from the usual side on views, but it's harder to see your controlled player.



▼ This smart intro sequence combines flashy graphics with actual footage from many different games.



Beginners should look no further

However, none of the detail has been lost, and the added bonus of the camera views, slow motion slam dunks and the ability to barge into other players makes *NBA Live '96* a worthy contender and it would have scored higher had the players not been so sluggish. What a shame.

If you're a beginner, then you could do worse than to check *NBA Live '96*, but I've got this feeling that most people will prefer to stick with *Total NBA '96* because it's a more accomplished game. EA may have the pedigree, but this time they've been pipped to the post.



PLAY verdict

Looks:
Sounds:
Challenge:
Value:

Played 82%

Quite sluggish, but a good all-rounder

Sex & video

They've brought us Sushi, the gameshow, *Endurance* and thousands of strange gadgets. These Japanese certainly are a bit weird, don't you think? And you should see some of their videogame Nick Roberts explores the software shelves of the rising sun.

When I started my research for this feature I knew their were a few odd Japanese games out there. I had read the PlayStation magazines from Japan and seen the strange pictures filling their pages (I had a few problems reading the reviews though). But I wasn't prepared for the sheer scale of the perverted and corrupt nature of this unique videogame market.

Games where you are the headmaster of a girl's school and have beautiful pupils who will do anything to graduate (yes, I mean anything!), mad *Tetris*-style puzzlers with beans, blobs and bunnies that float down the screen, and sports sims as diverse as sea bass fishing and horse racing! You don't get to see many of these on the shelves of your local Game or HMV – and you'd probably go blind and get hairy hands if you did!

To tell you the truth it made a refreshing change to play something a bit different. It takes a lot to get me excited these days, having played every shoot-'em-up and beat-'em-up to death and got completely fed up with racing games. All the Japanese marvels I discovered were original, challenging and most importantly – fun!

So lets take a wide-eyed trip into the Japanese software scene with a round-up of the weirdest games this journalist has ever played...

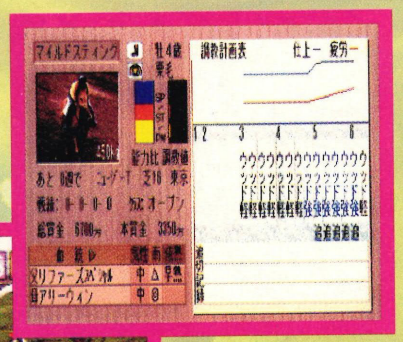
1. Grand National

Victor/JVC • ¥5,800

It may be a sport enjoyed mainly by men in raincoats and retired couples in this country, but horse racing is a multi-million Yen pastime in Japan. So why not convert the sport onto the PlayStation? Yup, it's all here from the breeding of your stallion to perfectly polygonised horses and a realistic feel to the race track.

You don't actually get to ride these steeds though, all you do is raise your nag, enter it into a race and bet on the outcome. It's a sort of football management sim, only with ponys instead of players.

Sound weird enough for you? Well, just take a look at the screenshots – it's a great looking game that really uses the PlayStation graphic abilities well. The only drawback is that it's all in Japanese (doh – really?). So come on Victor, why not convert this little beauty into English. I'm sure it would go down a storm, and would save on all those failed betting slips!



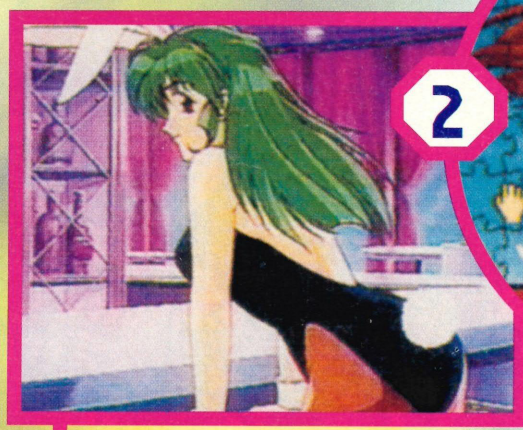
▲ Yes, I can read every word of it!



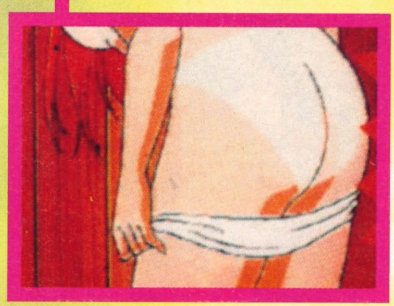
▼ Polygon horses?! Now that's PSX power!



fish games!







2. My Best Friends

Atlus • ¥6,800

If you're under 18 and reading this – avert your eyes right now! If there's one thing the Japanese are mad on it's games featuring girls that look about 12 years old and accidentally lose their clothes at the drop of a hat. If you've ever watched a Manga movie you'll now how twisted some people's minds are, and these games are simply an extension of that.

I couldn't quite catch the drift of *My Best Friends* (dodgy title for a start) but the aim seems to be to put together jigsaw puzzles of these girls in various states of undress. Complete the puzzle and you get a flash of white knickers, complete the next and a nipple (oh my God!) pokes out, and if you're a champion puzzle pelter you're in for a real treat! I apologise to any female readers out there reading this... but – wey-hey! This is what we want to see on the PlayStation!

Of course we couldn't show you the best screenshots in such an upstanding and respected PlayStation magazine as PLAY, so if you want the full monty send a stamped address... only kidding!



▶ Fishing on the PSX? Yup! And the great thing is you don't have to touch the maggots!



3

▲ There's no lying about the size of your catch, it's all saved into the memory for prosperity.

3. Sea Bass Fishing

Victor/JVC • ¥5,800

Another obscure sports game from Victor (the parent company to our JVC) and one which will most probably see light of day on the PlayStation over here sometime. This time it's fishing, yes that's fishing with a rod to catch... well... fish I think!

So how can they possibly have made a game out of such a boring sport? Well this is anything but boring. You've got the tension of your rod (we're getting back to that *My Best Friends* game again), speed you turn the reel and where you cast your line to think about. And there's the thrill of the competition to catch the biggest fish. It's just a shame they haven't invented virtual chips to go with them yet. In fact, virtual chips would be great! They would have a zero calorie in-take at least!

The Japanese really seem to have caught onto this videogame fishing lark. Arcade giant Sega (okay, I know they're not your favourite company of all time) have even gone as far as to release an arcade game called *Sports Fishing* with a real life fishing rod stuck on the front! You can get all the fun of deep sea fishing without getting wet. Talking of getting wet (sorry), take a look at the next game...

▼ Don't be late my dear, or you know the consequences!



4

4. Cross World Graduation

M2/Sofix • ¥6,800

Okay, so the female body on show in a videogame may outrage many. In fact I'm sure I can hear Mary Whitehouse at the door as I type! But stand by, because it's about to get much worse!

Not only does the game, *Graduation* have plenty of breasts, bums and err... brains? It's got a really perverted storyline and gameplay too! Most of the game is spent (oh no, not again) in the role of a gent (presumably the headmaster) who likes nothing more than creeping around a girl's school, peeping through cracks in doors and over screens to watch the girls undress. And they seem to like this too! They've always got smiles on their faces and seem to be posing for the camera.

I'm sorry, you can keep your *Wipeouts* and *Tekkens*, I'm going to be sticking (to the sheets?!) with *Graduation* for the foreseeable!

So have I whetted your appetite for Japan's finest? All these games may not be on sale over here, but you can buy them if you try hard enough. Just give one of the many import shops around the country a call and explain what sort of game you are looking for. They'll even send it to you in a plain brown paper bag if you ask nice enough – but you'll have to supply your own tissues (for wiping down the fish of course).

Personally I believe that the Japanese have got the right idea about games. They get all the best beat-'em-ups and shooters first, and all this 'specialist' software to play too. Now we all know why they talk so fast – they can't wait to get back to their PlayStations!



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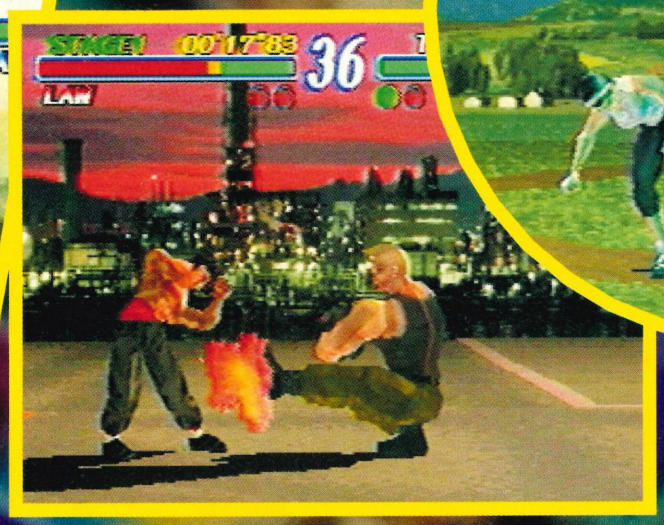
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Thank you.







▲ A clash of heads leaves the two combatants feeling dazed and confused.
◀ John Travolta eat your heart out!

Tekken

PLAY information

- **Publisher:** Namco
- **Customer support:** 0171 7347737
- **Expected price:** £69.99
- **Expected when:** out now on import

Judgement day has arrived and PlayStation owners can feel pretty damn pleased with themselves. On the strength of this game alone they've definitely backed the winning horse. The impossible is now a reality and Ryan Butt can't quite believe his eyes when confronting the raging demon of a game that is *Tekken 2*.

PLAY CLASSIC

This is impossible! It simply cannot be! Oh, but it's true, one of the most crunching beat-'em-ups circulating the world's dingy arcades at present has made the tough port over to PlayStation and in the process pushed every other piece of software into insignificance to become the best game to date on the home system.

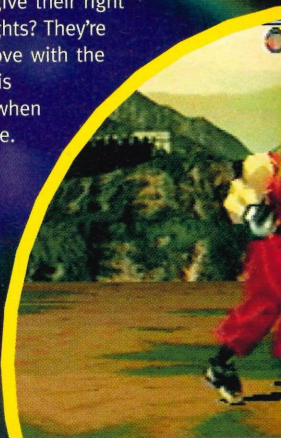
Style just ain't the word, *Tekken 2* boasts something momentous that kicks the pompous arse off of everything else on offer. Take the classic intro for example. This depicts the *Tekken* posse both new and old, gearing themselves up for the second do or die tournament. The rendered characters bound around with the sort of artificial life force that makes it hard to distinguish between reality and fantasy. We first encounter Nina Williams done-up like a prostitute hanging out in some seedy dive. Her attire will no doubt arouse activities in the loins of sad adolescent boys... but not this reviewer (ahem!).

The story behind *Tekken 2* revolves around the bitter feud between Heihachi Mishima and his power-crazed off-spring, Kazuya. You may remember that after apparently murdering his father in the first game, Kazuya chucked his poor daddy off a cliff-face in order to take over as head of the family business. Well, guess who's come crawling back to enforce a spot of parental discipline?

The character tally in *Tekken 2* has swelled to a staggering 23 assorted thugs. These consist of 10 standard characters (the original eight with Heihachi replacing his wicked kid, plus two new faces), a further 10 sub-boss characters (one for each of the main fighters), and to round things off there is Kazuya himself, his devil alter-ego, and another mystery combatant (there are even rumours of another two freakish killing machines hidden away somewhere). As you can imagine, the possibilities this line-up presents to the battles is phenomenal and you'll have to work harder than ever in order to rid the world of the dastardly Mishima legacy.

Bonus characters are the least of this game's upgrades though. The are many new moves to learn and master, new fighting techniques to grasp and utilise, plus a whole host of new options to play around with, including Time Attack, Practice, Team Battle and Survival.

Then of course there are the graphics – now who wouldn't give their right testicle for these delights? They're simply superb and move with the kind of accuracy that is intensewly satisfying when you drive a blow home. All this coupled with fabulously-authentic sounding fractures and snaps make for a gruesome experience that



Virtual Reality

Check out the draw-dropping intro on *Tekken 2*. Impressive? Naturally. Imaginative? Of course. Sexy? Erm... well once you clap eyes on Nina's stocking-clad pins you may feel slightly flushed!



◀ King crushes the Tekken newcomer, Jun into an early grave. Good night!
▼ The mean new sub-boss, Bruce unleashes a furious kick-boxing combo to spill Yoshimitsu's blood.







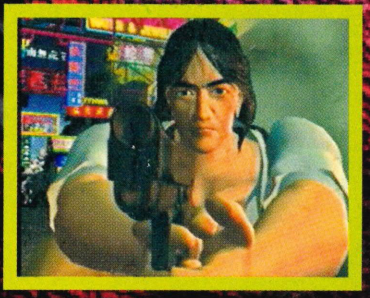
▲ "You're chucked!" Jack learns the hard way!
◀ Paul's huge ego goes to his head.







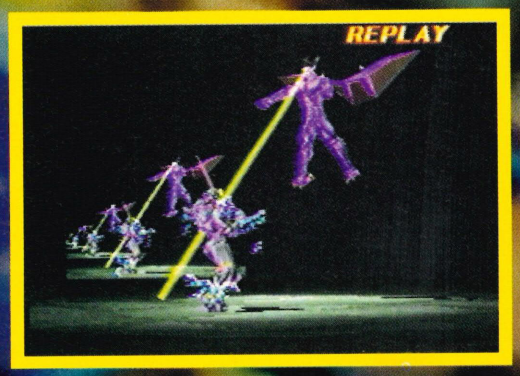






◀ The fashion-starved Seventies cop wannabe, Lei, dishes out his own unique form of justice.
▼ Some winning words for the press please Mr King? "Grrrrrrrr!"





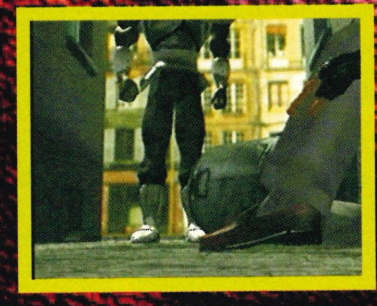








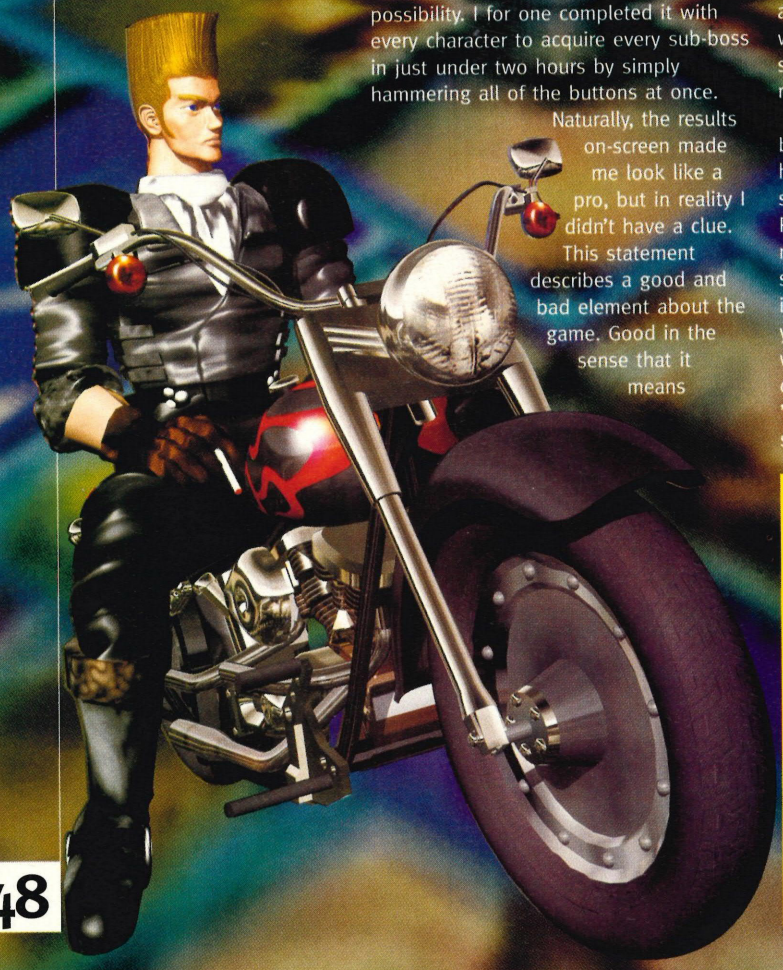




surpasses any so-called atmosphere *MK3* could ever produce. Learning the new moves and combo sequences doesn't take long, so getting a lot out of this game in the first day is a definite possibility. I for one completed it with every character to acquire every sub-boss in just under two hours by simply hammering all of the buttons at once.

Naturally, the results on-screen made me look like a pro, but in reality I didn't have a clue. This statement describes a good and bad element about the game. Good in the sense that it means anyone can instantly pick it up and perform miraculous feats of head-cleaving prowess. But bad because it means you can effortlessly plough straight through it without having to work very hard. The endings are amazing though and should really be seen to be believed. Naturally, there are numerous skill levels to attempt which will boast the difficulty somewhat, so hardened Tekken fans need not be dismayed.

Tekken 2 is undoubtedly the best fighting game on any home system and it whips the soppy Saturn's *Virtua Fighter 2*. PlayStation owners have got a masterpiece on their hands that should be bought at all costs. The import version is out now, but if you fancy some legible text then wait for the official release in a couple of months. The best beat-'em-up on any home or arcade system – no question. Get it.



PLAY recommended

Looks:	
Sounds:	
Crunchiness:	
Value:	

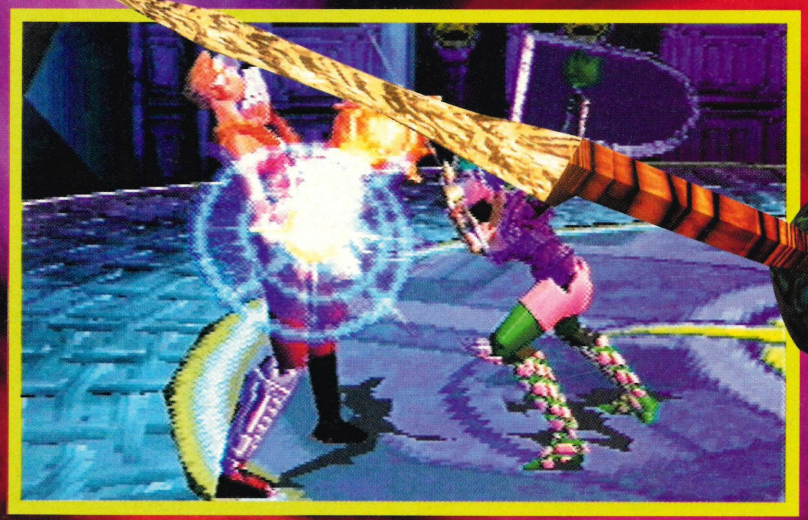
Played 95%
A reet hard nut!

Wall of Game

Welcome one and all to the part of PLAY where you don't need to ring in and waste hours of time and money on any old cheats hot line. Nope, we give you the full whack here, and this month it's *Criticom* from Vic Tokai that gets the PLAY Wall Of Game treatment as we return to the best beat-'em-ups for the PlayStation.



Criticom





Right, here we go then. For those of you who don't have a clue what *Criticom* is about, read on... The so called Chosen Ones, or the Nezom and Zerai clans are on the verge of war. They suspect each other of trying to steal a priceless Relic which gives great powers to those who have it. One-on-one battles take place, and these are presented in some excellent 3-D graphics. On the whole, *Criticom* is a neat rough 'n' tumble 3-D beat-'em-up. The characters are well detailed and each has a vast array of moves to crush their opponents with. Eight fighters are up for grabs, and all the moves are listed on the next couple of pages for you to stick on your wall when playing the game. Oh, and if you don't own *Criticom*, go and check it out as soon as you can – it gives *Toshinden* a run for its money!

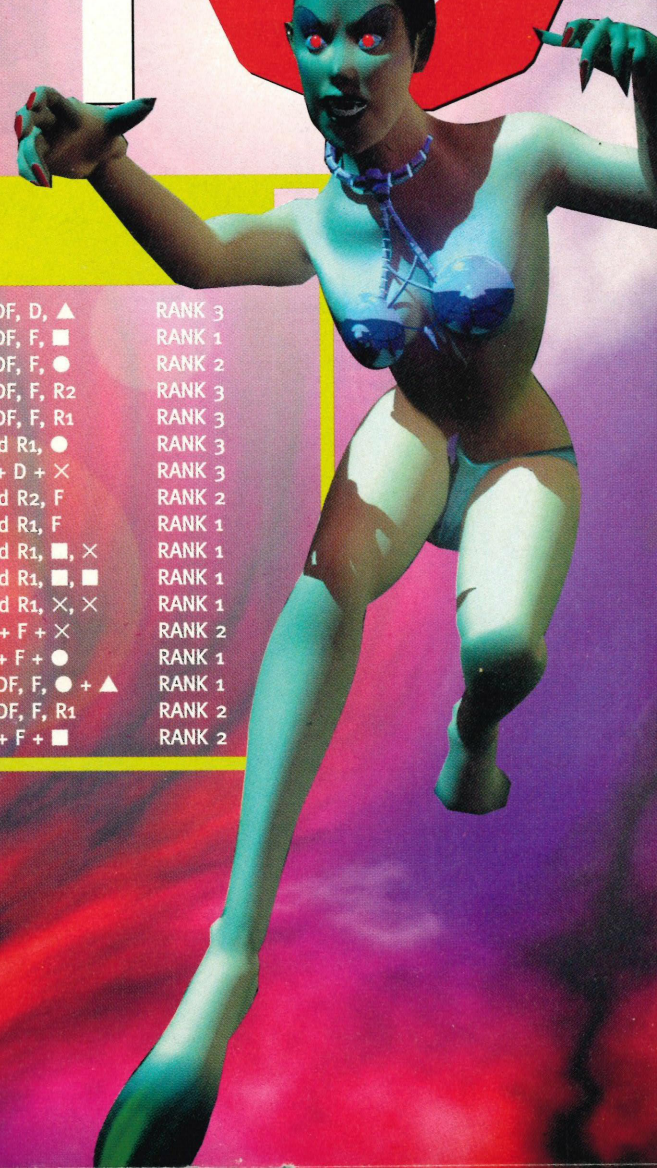
PLAY information

- **Publisher:** Vic Tokai
- **Customer Support:** 01604 671415
- **Expected Price:** £44.99
- **Expected When:** End April

Played 87%

Take your brain to another dimension!

the Play Wall of Game Criticom Number 6



Sgt. Exene Dulait

Short Range Tazer Projectile	D, DF, F, ■	RANK 1
Mid Range Rapid Fire Projectile	D, DF, F, R1	RANK 3
Long Range Electro Projectile	D, DF, F, R2	RANK 2
Slide	Hold R1, ×	RANK 2
Round House Punch Combo	Hold R2, F	RANK 1
Triple Swing Push Combo	Hold R1, F	RANK 1
Flip Forward Punch Combo	Hold R1, ▲	RANK 2
Flip Forward Multiple Punch Combo	Hold R2, ▲	RANK 2
Power Charge Uppercut Combo	Hold R1, ●, ■, ▲	RANK 3
Get Up Slash	Hold R1, D	RANK 1
Swing, Kick, Punch Combo	R1 + F + ■	RANK 1
Swing, Back Flip, Electro Combo	R1 + F + ▲	RANK 2
Round House, Tazer, Back Flip Combo	R2 + F + ▲	RANK 1
Double Punch, Power Charge Combo	Hold R1, ×, ×, ■	RANK 3
3 Hit Punch Combo	Hold R1, ■, ■	RANK 1
Get Up, Slash, Back Flip, Electro Combo	R1 + D + ▲	RANK 2
Get Up, Slash, Swing Combo	R1 + D + ■	RANK 1

Demonica

Up or Jumping Fireball	D, DF, D, ▲	RANK 3
Straight Fireball	D, DF, F, ■	RANK 1
Bouncing Fireball	D, DF, F, ●	RANK 2
Alternate Fireballs	D, DF, F, R2	RANK 3
Rapid Fireballs	D, DF, F, R1	RANK 3
Forward Flip Kick	Hold R1, ●	RANK 3
Flip Kick, Bouncing Fireball Combo	R1 + D + ×	RANK 3
Charge Spin Slap	Hold R2, F	RANK 2
Claw Charge	Hold R1, F	RANK 1
Triple Claw Combo	Hold R1, ■, ×	RANK 1
Triple Kick Combo	Hold R1, ■, ■	RANK 1
Triple Kick Combo 2	Hold R1, ×, ×	RANK 1
Spin Slap, Kick Combo	R2 + F + ×	RANK 2
Claw Charge, Punch Combo	R1 + F + ●	RANK 1
Oscillate Fireball Combo	D, DF, F, ● + ▲	RANK 1
Oscillate Bouncing Fireball Combo	D, DF, F, R1	RANK 2
Claw Charge, Fireball Combo	R1 + F + ■	RANK 2

Dayton Trent

Standing/Jumping Laser	D, DF, F, ■	RANK 2
Standing/Jumping Air Laser	D, DF, F, ▲	RANK 2
Rapid Laser	Hold R1, ×, ●	RANK 3
Multi Slash	Hold R1, F	RANK 1
Roll Slash	Hold R2, ■	RANK 1
Slide	Hold R2, D	RANK 1
Uppercut	Hold R2, F	RANK 1
Double Punch Combo	Hold R1, ×, ●	RANK 1
Triple Punch, Kick Combo	Hold R1, ■, ●	RANK 1
Roll Slash, Uppercut Combo	Hold R2, ■, ▲	RANK 1

S.I.D.

Rapid Fire Missile	D, DF, F, R1	RANK 3
Forward Missile	D, DF, F, ■	RANK 1
Up Missile	D, DF, F, ▲	RANK 2
Ground Projectile	D, DF, F, ×	RANK 2
Ground Shock	Hold R1, ▲, ■, ×	RANK 3
Air Roll Charge	Hold R1, ×	RANK 3
Charge Slash and Uppercut	Hold R1, ■, ■	RANK 2
Charge Slash and Leg Sweep	Hold R1, ●, ●	RANK 2
Double Side Kick	Hold R2, F	RANK 1
4 Hit Air Roll Charge Combo	Hold R1, ×, ■	RANK 3

Roll Slash, Slide Combo	Hold R2, ■, ×	RANK 2
Roll Slash, Rapid Laser Combo	Hold R2, ■, ●, ●	RANK 3
Slide, Laser Combo	R2 + D + ■	RANK 2
Slide, Uppercut Combo	R2 + D + ▲	RANK 2
Slide, Multi Slash Combo	R2 + D + ×	RANK 1
Multi Slash, Double Kick Combo	R1 + F + ■	RANK 1
4 Hit Punch Combo	Hold R1, ▲, ■	RANK 1
4 Hit Punch, Leg Sweep Combo	Hold R1, ■, ●	RANK 1

Gorm

Ground Projectile	D, DF, F, ×	RANK 1
Spin Blade Projectile	D, DF, F, ■	RANK 2
Earthquake	Hold R1, ▲, ■, ×	RANK 3
Body Torpedo	Hold R1, F	RANK 3
Low Jab	Hold R1, ×	RANK 1
Charge Low Jab	Hold R1, D	RANK 2
Triple Blade Combo	Hold R1, ■	RANK 1
3 Hit Punch Kick Combo	Hold R1, ■, ▲	RANK 1
Charge Low Jab, Hard Punch Combo	R1 + D + ●	RANK 2
Charge Low Jab, Low Jab Combo	R1 + D + ×	RANK 2
Triple Low Jab Combo	Hold R1, ×, ×	RANK 1
Earthquake, Ground Projectile Combo	D, DF, F, R1 + R2	RANK 3
4 Hit Blade Combo	Hold R1, ■, ×	RANK 1

Sonorak Nezam

Up Shot	D, DF, F, ▲	RANK 3
Single Shot	D, DF, F, ■	RANK 3
Long Range Blade Shot	D, DF, F, R2	RANK 2
Rapid Fire	D, DF, F, R1	RANK 3
Slide	Hold R2, F	RANK 1
Round House Kick	Hold R1, F	RANK 1
Triple Kick Combo	Hold R1, ●, ●	RANK 1
Round House, Uppercut Combo	R1 + F + ■	RANK 1
Up, Down, Blade Shot Combo	D, DF, F, R1	RANK 2
Up, Down, Blade Shot Combo 2	D, DF, F, R2	RANK 2
Triple Punch Combo	Hold R1, ■, ×	RANK 1
Slide, Punch, Kick Combo	R2 + F + ■	RANK 1
Slide, Low Kick, Ground Blade Combo	R2 + F + ×	RANK 2
Triple Punch, Rapid Fire Combo	Hold R1, ■, ●, ■	RANK 3
Triple Uppercut Combo	Hold R1, ×, ×	RANK 1
Punch, Kick, Round House Combo	Hold R1, ■, ■	RANK 1
Tricky Slide, Rapid Fire Combo	Hold R1, ×, ■, ▲	RANK 3

Yenji

Charge Claw	Hold R1, F	RANK 1
Multi Claw	Hold R1, ▲	RANK 2
Standing or Jumping Shuriken	D, DF, F, ■	RANK 2
Multi Shurikens	D, DF, F, R1	RANK 3
Fast Light Kick	Hold R1, ■	RANK 1
Mid Kick	Hold R1, ●	RANK 1
Low Charge Kick	Hold R1, ×	RANK 1
Get Up Spring Kick	Hold R2, F	RANK 1
Triple Lightning Kick	Hold R1, ■, ■	RANK 1
Double Kick, Charge Claw Combo	Hold R1 + ■ + F	RANK 1
Roll Jab, Charge Claw Combo	R1 + ▲ + D	RANK 1
Triple Punch, Kick Combo	Hold R1, ■, ×	RANK 1
Multi Claw, Kick Combo	Hold R1, ▲, ×	RANK 2
Triple Punch. Kick Combo	Hold R1, ■, ×	RANK 1
Low Charge Kick, Punch Combo	Hold R1, ×, ×	RANK 1
Get Up Spring Kick, Multi Claw Combo	R2 + F + ▲	RANK 2
Get Up Spring Kick, Lightning Kick	R2 + F + ■	RANK 1
Get Up Spring Kick, Low Charge Kick	R2 + F + ×	RANK 1
Get Up Spring Kick, Charge Claw	Hold R2, F, F	RANK 1

Delara Zeral

Roll Slash	Hold R1, D	RANK 1
Get up ,Roll Slash	Hold R2, D	RANK 1
Uppercut	Hold R1, F	RANK 1
Air Wave Projectile	D, DF, F, ▲	RANK 3
Ground Wave Projectile	D, DF, F, ×	RANK 3
Wave Projectile	D, DF, F, ■	RANK 2
Triple Blade Combo	Hold R1, ■	RANK 2
3 Hit Low Swing Combo	Hold R1, ×, ■	RANK 1
Roll Slash, Slide Combo	R1 + D + ×	RANK 1
Roll Slash, Uppercut Combo	R1 + D + ▲	RANK 1
3 Hit Blade Kick Combo	Hold R1, ▲, ■	RANK 1
4 Hit Blade Combo	Hold R1, ■, ×	RANK 2
4 Hit Blade Combo 2	Hold R1, ■, ▲	RANK 2
Get Up, Roll Slash, Punch Combo	R1 + D + ■	RANK 1
Get Up, Roll Slash, Slide Combo	R2 + D + ×	RANK 1
Roll Slash, Double Blade Combo	R1 + D + ■	RANK 1
Get Up, Roll Slash, Uppercut Combo	R2 + D + ▲	RANK 1
Get Up, Roll Slash, Double Blade Combo	R2 + D + ■	RANK 1

PLAY

Key

D – Down
U – Up
L – Left
R – Right

DB – Down block
DF – Down forward
× – X button
▲ – Triangle button
■ – Square button
● – Circle button
R1 – Right top button
R2 – Right bottom button

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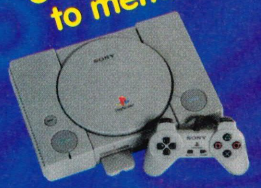
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Extreme Pinball

The PlayStation gets another pinball sim, but bad ones drive us flippin' crazy. *Extreme Pinball* goes on trial and Steve Hardy dons his black cap...

PLAY information

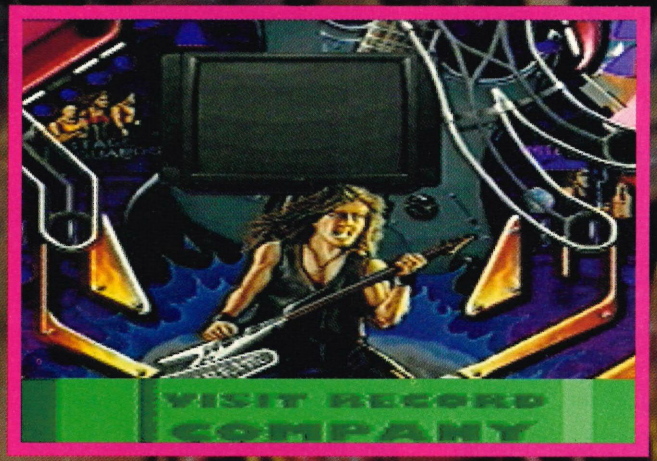
- **Publisher:** Electronic Arts
- **Customer support:** 01753 546465
- **Expected price:** £44.99
- **Expected when:** Out now

The PlayStation may still be in its infancy, but more and more different games are appearing – pinball sims being a perfect example. Still, it's about time that the console had some different game genres instead of the me-too racers/ shoot-'em-ups that keep appearing.

Extreme Pinball is another sim that tries to recreate that pinball feel, although first impressions indicate that it certainly isn't as realistic as *True Pinball* (reviewed in issue five). Four specially themed tables are on offer, each of which are viewed from the standadrd 2-D, or top down viewpoint. Rock Fantasy is, you guessed it, based on a rock group who have to make their way to the top. By hitting the ball in the right places, you can lead this band to the top, by getting them to record dealers and play at clubs. It doesn't sound like a normal theme for pinball, but it is original. Well, sort of.

Medieval Knights is the typical fantasy table, complete with dragons, castles and heroic warriors, whilst Urban Chaos takes the futuristic theme, where you must restore order to a rapidly declining society (Does this really sound like pinball to to you or me?). Monkey Mayhem is the subject for the last table, which is a brightly coloured affair. Your task is to protect an astronaut and help him escape from a planet of mad alien chimps (damn them all to hell!).

Now, this may all sound good, and the tables are all well detailed and colourful. There's a smart multi-player mode and lots of moving parts and features to discover, but the whole screen does tend to shudder when the ball is in motion, and this really is the main downfall of *Extreme Pinball*. Secondly, why on earth wasn't a 3-D mode included for each table? The ball itself moves OKish, but not smoothly enough to give that all important feeling of realism. What a shame! Granted, there are countless little features and bonuses hidden away, and the digital display screens look good, but for the most of the time the tables are static and there's not enough excitement, no flashing lights or speech. This reduces its lifespan considerably, and I had no incentive to carry on after playing each table after a few hours. I don't even think that pinball fans will be impressed with this, and it's a pity that Electronic Arts, who normally produce high quality games, has let things slip and produced a rather dull, and to an extent, unplayable package such as this.



PLAY verdict

Looks:	
Sounds:	
Challenge:	
Value:	

Played 54%

Don't flip out over this one

Burning Ro

The PlayStation will soon have its own off road racer in the form of *Burning Road* from Funsoft. Steve Hardy gets road senseless and puts this baby through its paces for a test drive...

PLAY information

- **Design Team:** Toka
- **Team Leader:** David Williams
- **Where at:** 60% complete
- **Release Date:** September '96
- **Publisher:** Funsoft UK





▼ **Once the replay mode is going, you'll get some decent views of your car.**



Off Road games are becoming extremely popular – just look at the mass coverage that *Sega Rally* got, both in the arcades and on the Saturn. Still, never mind that, because this is the PlayStation we're interested in, and it looks like the forthcoming *Burning Road* is going to whip up a storm and take racing games a step further. The mighty *Destruction Derby* didn't actually appeal to everyone, believe it or not, and it seems that developers, for one, are of the view there's still room at the top for PlayStation racing games.

All well and good you might say, but what we really want is some mean, filthy off road action with roaring great cars and monster trucks, right? Yep, *Burning Road* will provide all of these, and much more besides. From what we've seen of *Burning Road* so far, the visuals look outstanding. Easy to say, I know, but they do. Each of the three tracks, which differ depending on your choice of difficulty level (Beginner, Intermediate or Hard), are lavishly detailed and fly by at an alarming rate. Just take a look at the screen shots splattered around these pages and wonder at just how Funsoft and design team, Toka, did it. Each track has more to it than meets the eye, and is full of detailed backgrounds and lots of moving visuals.

Although the game is still at an early stage we've had a good sneak peek of the game and reckon it will give other racers a run for their money.

Handle a monster

Originally, *Burning Road* was intended to be an arcade game, but it now seems that us lucky PlayStation owners will get to sample its wonders in our own homes before it even hits the local amusement arcade. Kewl. Four vehicles are up for grabs, although they don't actually have any specific names just yet. The one noticeable stand out here is a thumping great monster truck which is great for driving on the tracks with rough terrain. The other cars are really just variants on rally cars with bigger wheels at the back and large suspension springs. Mind you, there will be a hidden car in the finished version as well.

Each one handles differently, and controlling the beasts, or not controlling them as it may be, is one of the features which sets *Burning Road* apart, at the moment. To start off with the cars feel extremely sensitive to control – so you end up sliding all over the place. This may sound bad, but it doesn't actually take long to get used to and if anything adds to the realistic feel which sets it apart from pure arcade racers.

Track-wise, you start off in a canyon set which bears more than a passing







◀ This ford may look harmless but you'll pay for it if you go too fast.
▶ This track must be in Holland... flat, scenic and full of windmills.
▼ Take time out from racing and admire that scenic splendour. Doh!

resemblance to the first track in *Daytona USA*, but we won't go into that too much! There are loads of rivals to deal with, all striving to get first place, so the competition heats up very quickly. A marker highlights which blighter is in first place, although you tend to be more bothered by blocking the sods desperately try to overtake you!

The backgrounds add some real depth, with old ruined buildings, giant windmills and



Play it again!

There's nothing better than being able to sit back and watch your best race, and grin smugly as you streak (not literally!) past the finish line in first place. This very smart replay option views your chosen car as it shoots round the track, showing a different camera angle every few seconds. Well, it has been done before, but not as well as this. I thought it was good anyway – oh well, please yourselves.













▲ If you see this screen, then you've pretty much cracked it! The camera pans round the car as you fly past the finish line.
▼ Driving in wintery conditions can be hazardous, although the monster truck does handle well compared to the rest.



▼ What did I tell you? Drive too fast on the icy track and this is what happens! Looks impressive though.

even waterfalls gracing the backgrounds on each of the tracks. The canyon track has some very neat rocky overhangs that make you sit back in awe, and the flurries of snow flying past your car on the icy track have to be seen to be believed.

Points of view

On various sections of each track, there will be obstacles to avoid, such as barrels, rocks and even a smart looking ford (the water, not the car) that lies across the road at one point; slowing down any gamer foolishly trying to drive through it at full pelt. There is absolutely no glitching to speak of, and the inclusion of different viewpoints makes things look even better. Your chosen car can be viewed from slightly above, from right behind (you get a closer view of the boot and rear bumper) or from inside the car itself. Yep, there's even a little swinging ornament hanging from the rear view mirror, that moves in time to the movements of your car. It's a nice little touch, and looks similar to the Sega arcade classic, *Rad Mobile*, except that was a small model of *Sonic The Hedgehog*.

Basically, if the pics haven't convinced you that this is going to be one spruced-up Sunday best of a racer, then we don't know what will.

Gore-fans will be a little annoyed to discover a complete absence of weapons to destroy the other cars with (unlike, say, *Impact Racing*). So no explosions either.

What the heck, this is no-nonsense racing. However, the crashes look pretty spectacular, and word has it that there will be lots more hidden stuff (including secret tracks) in the final version, so in the meantime we'll have to wait with glazed eyes and drool all over those lovely pictures. It'll be worth the wait though!



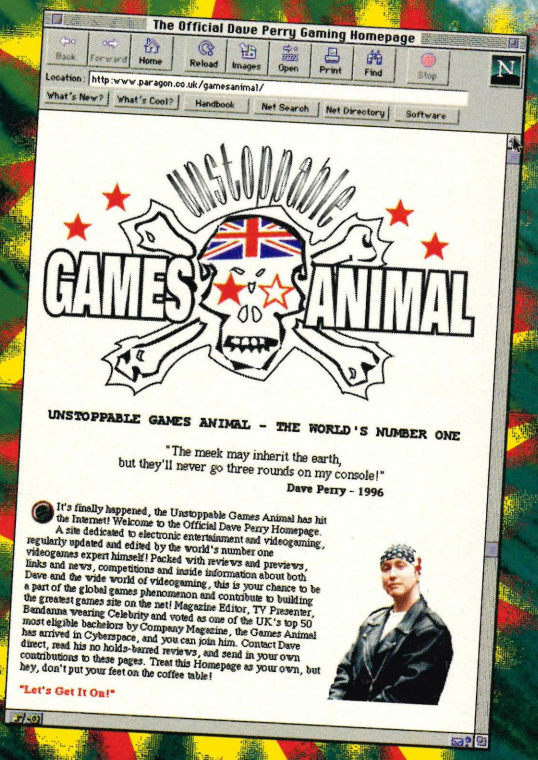




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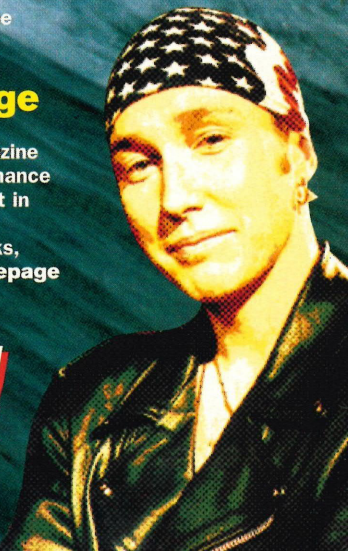
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▲ This puppet is like the twisted version of Pinnochio! Make sure he doesn't choke Lance with his strings!

Brain D

PLAY information

- **Publisher:** Empire
- **Phone for info:** (0181) 343 7337
- **Expected price:** £39.99
- **Expected when:** End April

What better way to relax than to watch a good, violent cartoon eh? Steve Hardy was clearly the main choice to review *Brain Dead 13*...

"Arse!" Is the first word that springs to mind when playing *BrainDead 13*, because Empire's first PlayStation release (just before *Pro Pinball*) is nothing more than a clone of *Dragon's Lair*, the ancient laserdisk coin-eater. It may be totally different cosmetically, but sadly this type of game does the PlayStation no favours because the gameplay is restricted and non-linear.

But first to the plot, as I'm sure you're all dying to hear about it.

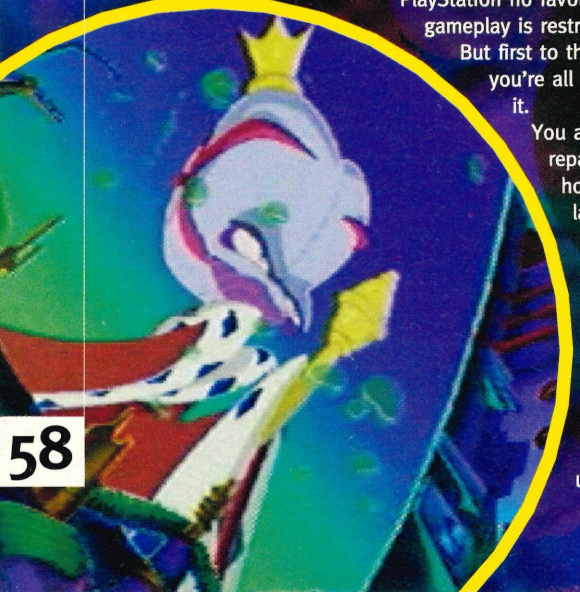
You are Lance, a computer repairman on call 24 hours a day, who's job, late one night, is to visit the abode of the megalomaniac Doctor Neurosis and fix his new super computer, *BrainDead 13*. What Lance doesn't know is that in order for the computer to ultimately take over the world, it requires a human brain, and guess who's the perfect donor? What follows is a cat 'n' mouse game throughout castle Neurosis, as Lance battles the Doctor's faithful henchman, Fritz, in an effort to get to the central control room and bugger up *BrainDead 13*.

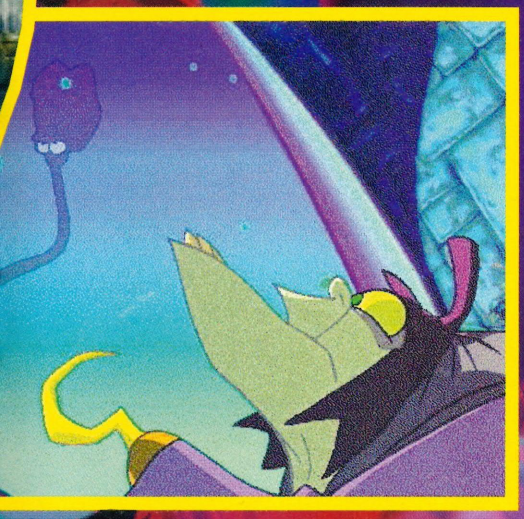
Unfortunately, because this game is based on the old *Dragon's Lair* philosophy that gamesplayers don't really need to choose where to go as long as the graphics are good enough, *BrainDead 13* is just as frustrating and ultimately linear as ever. All that's changed is the media – compact disk instead of laserdisk. Has ten years taught us nothing?

But let's be fair here. Quite clearly *BrainDead 13* is aimed at a far younger audience than us sceptical, poisonous journos, and in that sense it does have some redeeming qualities. The most noticeable and striking aspect of the game is the clarity and detail of the cartoon graphics. The backgrounds have real depth to them and the animation on each of the characters is brilliant, not to mention funny. The facial expressions that the characters pull will raise a laugh (among the young), but the difficulty of the mission and the frustration of being continually killed off has you reaching for the power button. For much of the game, Lance is pursued by Fritz, who possesses an arsenal of weapons under his cloak. Many of these weapons and sharp instruments can be attached to the little bugger's wrist, so

The animation on the characters is brilliant

▼ A classic case of water on the brain here: this thing encased in fluid is the evil Dr Neurosis!



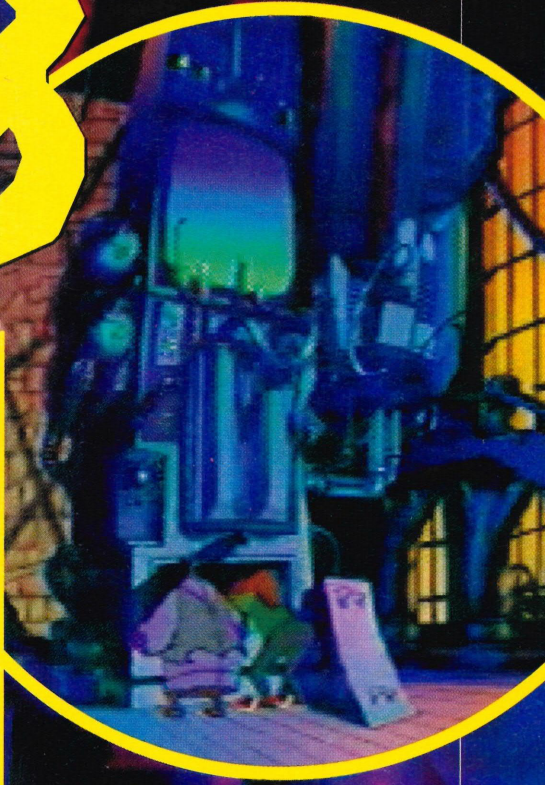


Brain Damage!

It's a tough life being a computer repairman you know! Lance dies in all manner of ways, from being burnt, shot, bashed on the head or even being fried by a force field. To put it simply, this guy receives more injuries in a day than the entire English rugby team do in a year! Here's an example.



ead 13



▼ This huge control room is a clear example of just how smart the graphics are in the game.



Lance must always be aware of an ambush and be prepared to run away at any time! Fortunately, there are more choices to make when this happens, but you have to be quick or yet another 'humorous' death will spool from the CD.

Lance usually only has a split second to make a decision otherwise he gets killed and you must begin again. There are absolutely loads of death sequences: Lance gets split in half, chopped up, burnt etc – all gory but funny in a *Tom & Jerry/Itchy & Scratchy* sort of way. As in most cartoons, no matter how much of a hammering Lance takes he always comes back for another go. Perseverance is the key because things become more enjoyable and the traps are more frequent towards the end. You certainly can't judge this game in five minutes as you can with a simple shoot-'em-up.

BrainDead 13 is enjoyable to play for a fair while and it's certainly challenging, although the control system does take a while to get used to and it can be a bit unresponsive, especially if the joypad is dripping with sweat after sustained play. It's the kind of game that makes you swear a lot.

There are lots of wacky characters to meet and different routes to take, so it has got guaranteed lastability and it's bright and humorous enough to appeal to younger gamers, whilst also being tough enough to put experienced players to the test.

BrainDead 13 is nothing that hasn't been seen before, but it's still worth a look if you fancy a mad cartoon world instead of a standard platform game.



▲ Which way to go? Lance only has a few seconds to decide!

PLAY verdict

Looks:

Sounds:

Humour:

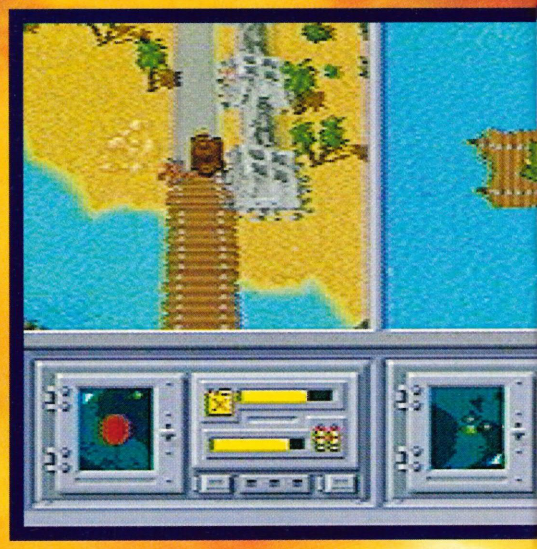
Value:

Played 64%

Decent cartoon adventure, but quite frustrating







Return

A refuge from the doomed 3DO, *Return Fire* proves it's just as playable as ever. Connor Hamill yells "Charge!"

PLAY information

Publisher: Time Warner Interactive
Customer support: 0171 3914300
Release date: April/May
Price: £TBA

▼ The split screen mode eliminates the need for a second PlayStation and is one of the game's best features.

Like all the best games, *Return Fire* revolves around a beautifully simple premise – annihilate your opponent. Like all of the best games again, lurking beneath this simple surface are engagingly complex intricacies that beg to be explored and mastered. A potent concoction of *Syndicate* and *Cannon Fodder*, *Return Fire* brilliantly implements an isometric / top-down view of the action with miniaturised dogs of war as its players. Static screenshots may not look much – but wait until you see the game's lightning moves, and impressive, true 3-D virtual display.

Every game pits the green forces against the brown, irrespective of whether you're playing a one or a two player game. Each side must send out a chosen vehicle (tank, APV, jeep or chopper) to journey through the enemy battlements to find the opponent's flag tower. The flag must then be returned (only the jeep can be used to actually recover it) to the Allied base to secure victory. Naturally though, it isn't that easy. Enemy battlements are huge, with Kafka-esque corridors of roads linking one encampment full of missile-firing turrets and gun-toting helicopters to another. The flag tower is often found right at the centre of enemy forces, accessible only after mad, deathly battle. Mines are everywhere you don't expect them to be; destroying your tank/whatever in one mighty explosion. Your opponent, moreover, may well have decided to abandon his search for your flag and just be gunning for you – chasing you down long, stretching roads in his helicopter gunship.

Vehicle selection is the most important immediate concern at the beginning of each game, but this is fairly simple at first. It's best to use the helicopter, initially, to recon the area, discover where the enemy flag tower is so that you can determine the fastest, most efficient route to get there. Unfortunately, the helicopters aren't the most effective vehicles to use against enemy battlements so, once you've worked out your way-points, it's best to fly back to your base and replace your craft with a









◀ Your Huey helicopter, bristling with weapons, swoops over the enemy camp searching for the flag. When flying, the music that accompanies you is the *Ride of the Valkyries* (as used in *Apocalypse Now*).

▼ "Losing power, multiple hits – I'm going down. Prepare for emergency voiding of bladder!"



n Fire

tank or APV and wipe out a path to the flag. The APV is particularly effective at destroying airborne enemies, but both are excellent at punching a hole through the enemy's line, leaving the way fairly clear for your weak, poorly armoured jeep to nip thorough to the flag and back.

The first one player mission lets you get used to the way the game works. There are no enemy battlements, no enemy craft – just the flag tower. At first, just shooting down an enemy helicopter with your tank is incredibly difficult, chances are it'll destroy you pretty quickly. But when you've stopped flailing wildly, and master the separately controlled turret, it begins to get a little easier. Eventually, with just a little bit of luck, you'll be shooting the things down left, right and centre.

While the game's design is undoubtedly exceedingly good it's the graphics that go a long way to explain *Return Fire's* success. The 3-D is perfect, the miniature craft and building are architectural marvels. The authenticity of the spiralling

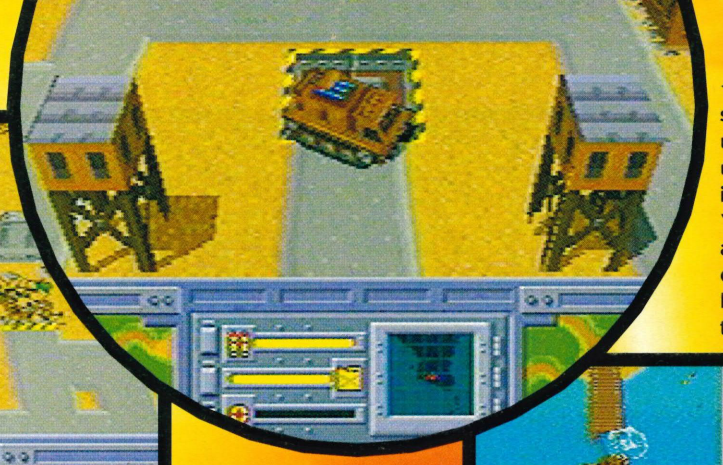








▲ Having blown open a hole in the wall with your chopper earlier, you sneak into the other player's camp with the APV.



◀ APV in the house. As you select each vehicle from the underground base, it pops up and you can only control it once it has been deployed.
▼ In two player mode the action is intense. On the left one player is taking out the bridge to prevent player two's escape. Tactics.



▼ Green has just blown up brown's jeep and now he's fighting back with a tank of his own.



landscape means that the terrain is usable – you can actually shelter behind buildings and creep up on opposing forces. Some of the buildings are also 'interactive' – the player can re-fuel at oil installations, or pick up ammo at enemy bases. Moreover, everything is up for being destroyed – most cities look like Beirut at the worst of its troubles, rubble and burning buildings lying prostrate beneath your feet. It's great fun levelling an enemy city in this way, especially in two player mode. Your devastating effect mirrored on your opponent's crumpled face as you destroy his buildings, run over his (populated) tents and waste his forces.

With your tank you can run them over and hear the sickest of squishy noises.

It's the graphic details within *Return Fire* that make the game such a joy. You'll get a real kick when you destroy your first building and watch its tiny inhabitants running for cover. With your tank you can then run them over and hear the sickest of squishy noises. And don't think this is mindless violence. Fail to run them over and they'll start lobbing grenades at you or taking pot shots from unreachable corners. A gorgeous touch is being able turn the jeep into an amphibious craft – it's vital, in fact, when you need to get to a remote island but the bridge, connecting it to the mainland, has been destroyed by the enemy.

Return Fire may seem like Sensible Software's much vaunted *Cannon Fodder*, and it is – but it's got so much more to it that you cannot fail to be blown away. Imagine *Cannon Fodder* with an instantly addictive, all-action, simultaneous two player mode, state-of-the-art graphics, a true 3-D terrain, four types of perfectly modelled vehicles of destruction and a game engine requiring sophisticated strategy and planning. It may be a conversion from the 3DO, but *Return Fire* is still worth a serious look.

▼ Don't know what that is. I hope it's not a dead horse. Actually I hope it isn't... sorry.





PLAY recommended

Looks:	8
Sounds:	8
Head-to-head:	9
Value:	6

Played 84%
Smells like... victory!

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Street Fi

PLAY information

- **Publisher:** Virgin
- **Customer support:** 0171 368 2255
- **Expected price:** £44.99
- **Expected when:** Out now

Well it's been out a while on import and we've been playing it non-stop. After endless delays and feeble excuses from PR types, the game has finally made it onto UK shelves... but is it still as good? Ryan Butt certainly reckons so.

So eager were we to get this knock-out fighting classic into our delightful mag a couple of months ago, we jumped the gun and blagged an import copy to review. However, we felt that this didn't convey the whole picture as to what PAL machine owners can expect so (pause to consume a slice of humble pie) now that the official copy has finally been coded and is ready for release, we thought we'd put our readers in the picture as to any differences.

Aside from the cramped screen display and black borders (damn our crappy telly system), *Street Fighter Alpha* comes across more or less completely intact.

As we mentioned before, you can forget your *Tekken*s and *MK3*s for a while because *SFA* offers such a refreshingly new challenge that you'll not crave for anything else once you get stuck in.

The two elements that come straight from the cult coin-op machine unscaved are the brilliantly defined Anime-style graphics and the superbly reworked game engine that enables veterans and novices to slog it out together on an even basis. It goes without saying though that you have to be an experienced master in the Street Fighter field to get the most out of this game. And now that the code has been translated across from its Japanese origins, this goal is at least a little more obtainable due to the fact that you can read and understand everything.

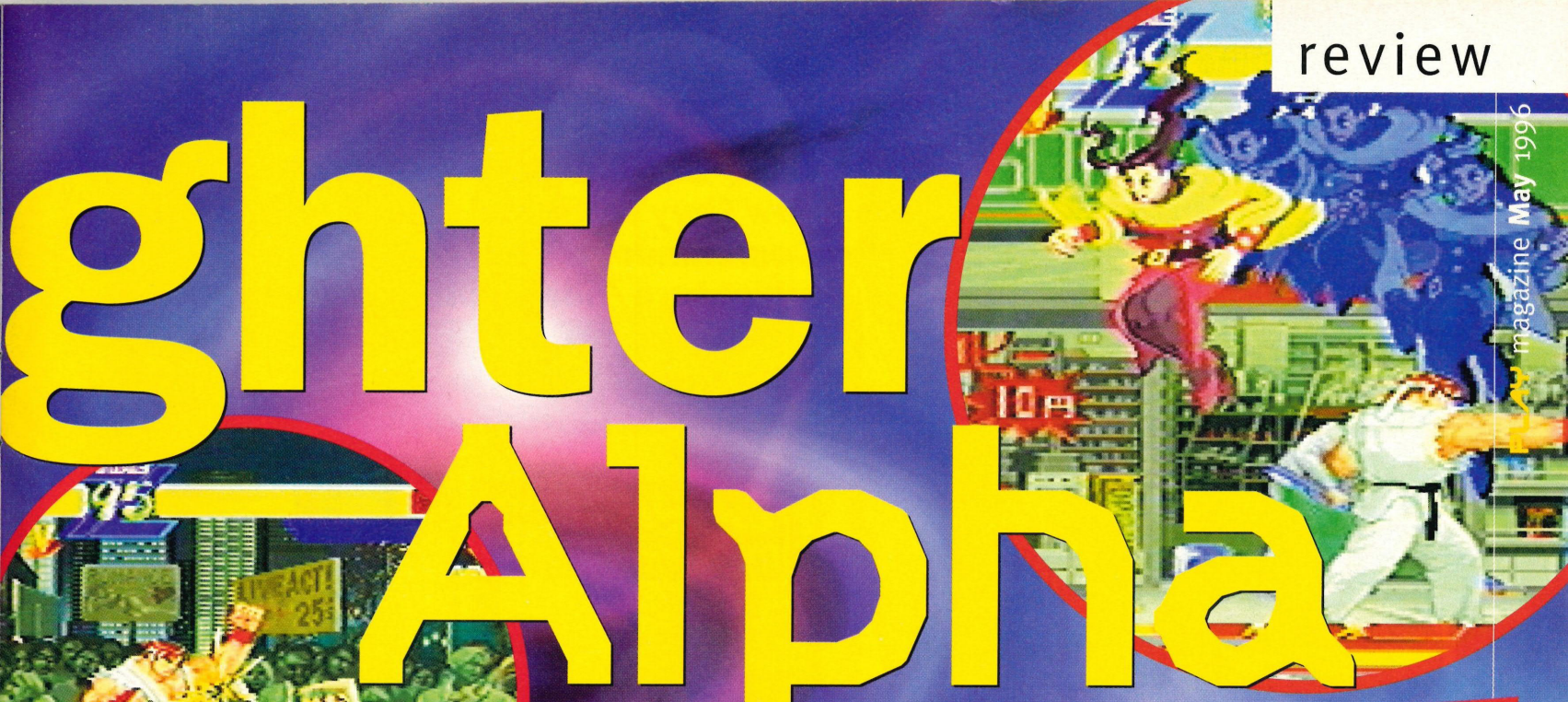
blood, sweat and tears encased in a huge shell of ecstasy

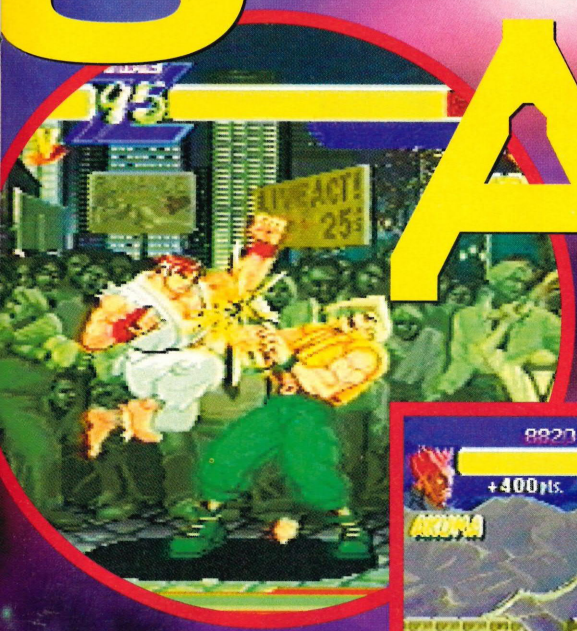
The other dramatic change which came as quite a blow to us journos is that the cheat codes have been changed. Although the boss characters are still accessible via the Jap codes, we are promised that there are far more secrets hidden away within the game that nobody has even dreamt of finding... sounds ominous!

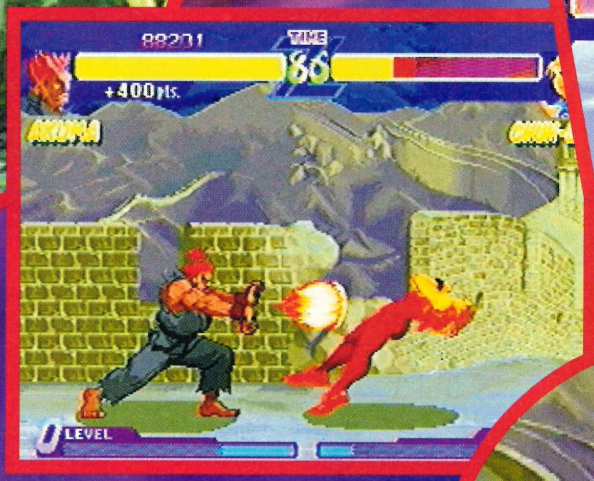
You don't need deeper knowledge though to experience the sheer adrenaline rush that playing this *SFA* induces, and by now we know that prolonged play just means that it gets better and better. By practising and perfecting the Chain Combos and Alpha Counters, there really is no excuse for you to sustain a hit, let



ghter Alpha









alone lose a match – such is their devastating effectiveness for stopping matches dead and turning the action around.

Everything about *SFA* is perfect, and the better you are, the greater the rewards. Bigger scores, improved endings and most noticeably enhanced features come to light if you prove your worth as a Street Fighter hard nut. Take for example the Dramatic Battle (the what?!) – simply beat the game on level five or higher and two of you can join forces to whip the cloaked ass of M Bison. Now who can honestly say they've never wanted to do that?

So what now? In *SFA* you've got a cracking beat-'em-up that you'll play again and again. Even if you got bored of the original series like me, you'll still welcome this with open arms once you get a taster for what it provides – and that is blood, sweat and tears encased in a huge shell of ecstasy.

Now I crave for a conversion of *Street Fighter Zero 2* which is currently doing the biz for Capcom at arcades everywhere. Who cares if it doesn't have a "3" after the title, with action as playable as this it could be *Super Street Fighter Champion Turbo Zero II with knobs on* for all I care. Now, anyone else for a pasting?

▲ "Eat fire bitch!" Akuma is in favour of equal opportunities for woman – especially as it means he can torch their worthless hides!

▼ Go, go gadget boots! Charlie bounds into battle.





▲ Dan exacts sweet revenge for his father's murder at Sagat's hands.

◀ Blood is drawn as Ryu lets loose a well-aimed roundhouse.

PLAY verdict

Looks:	
Sounds:	
Popularity:	
Value:	

Played 93%

The blood brothers belt on!

Time Bandits

Time Commando is set in nine different eras and each one is resplendent with the detail of that period. Cue a box-out explaining them all – it's almost as if I can see into the future...

PREHISTORIC/STONE AGE

Before Ford Mondeos, Rachel Welch stalked the Earth. This level contains sabre-toothed tigers, large ape-like creatures, and Neanderthals who throw spears at you. Weapons: Mainly spears and clubs.



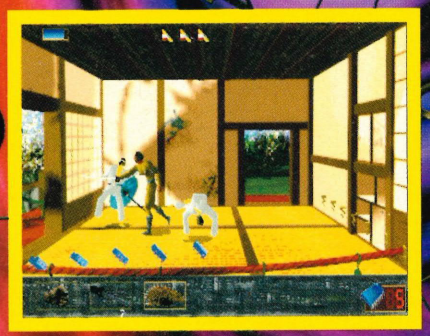
ROMAN TIMES

"Thwow him to the fwoor, centurion." Yep, it's time to go hand-to-hand with gladiators, Roman soldiers and lions. No sign of an orgy though. Weapons: Swords, spears.



FEUDAL JAPAN

As you would expect this place is full of fat geezers in big nappies, cool ninja dudes with a smart line in lethal bits of metal thrown at high speed, and paper houses. Weapons: Samurai swords.



Adeline have been in a coma since *Little Big Adventure* on the PC, but now they're fighting back with *Time Commando*, a stunning adventure/beat-'em-up guaranteed to make you drool. Damian Butt does a Jean Claude Van Damme and tackles a tricky time tribulation.

PLAY information

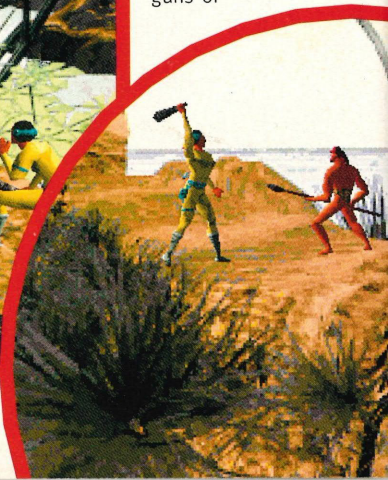
- **Name:** Adeline Software International
- **Team Leader:** Frederick Raynal
- **Where at:** 75% complete
- **Target release:** July/August
- **Publisher:** Electronic Arts

Tim Com

Time Commando. Conjures up all sorts of vivid macho images doesn't it? You can almost picture a bloke in a cut-off t-shirt, muscles gleaming with Mazola oil, sporting a ray gun and a spangley pair of spray on dungarees. (hey, isn't what they all wear in the future?). But Adeline Software International's *Time Commando* features a hero far less endowed with dress sense and cool; he's a computer repair man! But it's probably safe to say that what the character lacks in street cred (his name's Stan for gawd's sake!), he more than makes up for in ability. This is one member of the geek police you wouldn't want to be stick down a dark alley with.

Time Commando is Adeline's second game, but their debut on the mighty PlayStation. The first out of the gate was *Little Big Adventure* for PC CD-ROM which was a charming isometric adventure that combined a quirky European style of gameplay (the main character had four different 'moods' which affected what actions you could perform) with sumptuous high resolution graphics. A hit on this side of the pond, *LBA* was an instant flop with the massive American market because it was deemed too subtle and didn't have enough big guns or







◀ Stan enters a courtyard, it's quiet – too quiet.
▶ Enguarde! You come across a neanderthal with a big stick.
▼ "Look, mother, I'm skipping!"





ne mando



airborne body parts. Adeline's next game had to appeal to everyone – including the Yanks.

(A)Deline of Fire

Adeline is largely made-up of ex-Infogrames employees who became disillusioned with only working on sequels to *Alone in the Dark*. Frederick Raynal was one such programmer. Frederick worked on the first and second *AITD* games but became frustrated by the lack of new ideas and decided to join Adeline which offered an open atmosphere and the opportunity to start afresh. Lead programmer, Serge Plagnol also left Infogrames shortly afterwards and together they created *LBA* - the rest is history, for want of a better cliché.

Originally, *LBA 2* was to be the company's next game, but in order to fill the gap between *LBA* and its much bigger and more advanced sequel (two years in development so far), *Time Commando* was pencilled in for an Xmas '95 release on PC. The idea behind *TC* was that it was to be a simple game designed to bring in some quick cash for the company during those long months between *LBAs*. Pretty soon however, Plagnol realised that *TC* was overwhelming the limited team working on the project and the decision was made to increase resources and put the release date back so that the developers could get some sleep. And now *Time Commando* is set for a release in the late summer/autumn. Incidentally, Adeline is staying tight-lipped about a PlayStation conversion of *LBA2*, but we'll keep you posted (ahem).



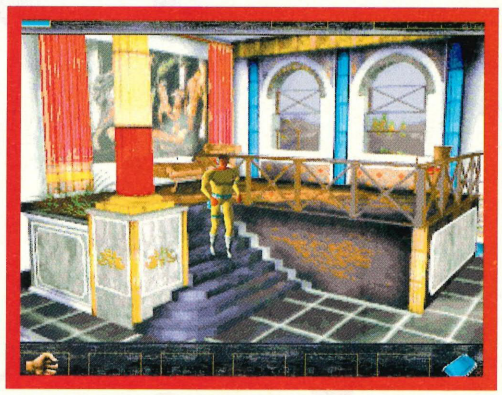
Time of your life

Guess you want to know about the game now, right? Well *Time Commando* is a 3-D adventure (aren't they all these days?) that takes place over nine levels (18 stages) – unsurprisingly, each level is a different time zone (prehistoric, feudal Japan, wild west, futuristic, Roman times to name a few) and they are all packed with a wide variety of enemies to fight and puzzles to solve. This is the same team who did *Alone in the Dark* remember.

The plot is sort of plausible. In the future, a mega-corporation develops a computer that has the fighting styles of every warrior since time began stored in its memory banks in order to train future troops for battle. All goes well until someone trying to install some sound samples from *Robocop* accidentally infects the computer with a virus that makes it go haywire; ripping open the space/time continuum and scattering vital memory chips from the stone age to the wild west. You are Stan, the computer technician hired to enter the time vortices and retrieve the chips, and then Sellotape the time lines back together. They don't want much, do they?

TC is best described as a cross between the System 3 *Last Ninja* series and *Toshinden*. The character you control, Stan (I'll mention it again), is a polygon creation who moves with all the grace of a motion captured comic book hero, and the animation is light years ahead of *LBA*.

▲ Xxxxx xxxxx xxxxx xxx xxx xx xxx xxx xxx xx xxx
▼ Xxxxx xxxxx xxxxx xxx xxx xx xxx xxx xxx xx xxx



▶ In the wild west you find an entire town. You can enter any building, and when you get into a shoot-out, this cross-hair appears. Great detail!
▼ Stan walks past a Roman statue. Wow.





The game is designed so that Stan walks along a pre-set path (as the screen scrolls, you cannot walk backwards) that is flanked by pre-rendered backgrounds giving the illusion of three-dimensions. Like the venerable coin-op, *Double Dragon*, you do have some freedom of movement so that you can explore the edges of the path, but eventually you must return in order to progress.

True to Adeline's origins, Stan's polygon form is Gouraud (the French made up the word, so they might as well use it as often as possible) shaded and light sourced so that, if for example you walk under a bridge, your character is steeped in shadow in all the right places. It's impressive stuff, especially given Stan's complex animation and the number of polygons being shifted around. No problem for the PlayStation, but the PC may have a job keeping up.

Spielberg smielberg

Both *Alone in the Dark* and *Resident Evil* use fixed camera points to convey the action, but because the guys at Adeline pride themselves on being innovators, they've developed a natty roving camera view that makes *Time Commando* easy to play and even highlights the tension at key moments. Imagine you're walking down a lonely forest path when suddenly the view zooms in dramatically. What would you think? "Hmm, nice visual effect, but I can't see what's in front of me; can't be anything important," or "bloody hell who's that bloke with the big spiky stick?!" See what I mean. And because the backgrounds are pre-rendered and the developers are masters of efficient programming routines, when the view changes, it's as if the camera is riding on a silk sheet smeared with sauce. (So, that's the kind of thing you and your better half get up to whenever she can drag you away from *Command & Conquer*, is it? – Ian).

Take it from me, the first time you see it in the shop you'll stand there – gob akimbo – for a good five minutes.

Time Commando will be released in the late summer and I think it's safe to say that you will want it in your collection as soon as you clap eyes on it. every character in the game has been designed and animated using the programmer's very own application, called *Animit* and it's pretty damn versatile, especially given the fact that the enemies – anything from sabre-toothed tigers, to gladiators and sumos – are all splendidly detailed; more so than perhaps anything yet seen on the PlayStation. Our appeties have been well and truly whetted after spending all day with Adeline, so stay tuned for a preview soon where we'll reveal even more about the game, and maybe even something on *LBA2*..

▼ "Hi-yaaaa!" In the land of rising sun, Stan prepares to commit hacky-uppie.



MEDIEVAL EUROPE

"Brave Sir Robin, when danger reared its ugly head, he quickly turned his tail and fled, brave, brave Sir Robin." So lampooned in Monty Python's Holy Grail, this is Arthurian England, with castles and wenches. Weapons: Maces, swords, pikes.

SPANISH CONQUISTADORS

Bad haircuts, lots of dribbling and – the comfy chair as a form of torture. Part of this level is set on a spanish galleon and there's even talk of running around the new world. Weapons: Flint-lock pistols, swords, pantaloons.



WILD WEST

Yee-hah! A fabulously detailed re-enactment of the life and times of Billy the Kid. You get to shoot it out in the saloon and even blow up a barn. Weapons: Six shooter, shotgun.



TODAY, ALMOST

Contempory scenes a-plenty, although this is one of the levels that they haven't done much on yet. Weapons: Threat of another Tory government.

FUTURE

This is the time where Stan belongs and it promises to be a world full of polished chrome, Manga-style violence and loads of spaceships. Weapons: Ray guns - yeah!

THE FINAL BATTLE

Well you've got to have a climax haven't you and this one's between Stan and the super-computer who's gone mad. Presumably you have to try and insert all the memory chips you've been collecting. Weapons: Norton Disk Doctor.

VISUAL IMAGES

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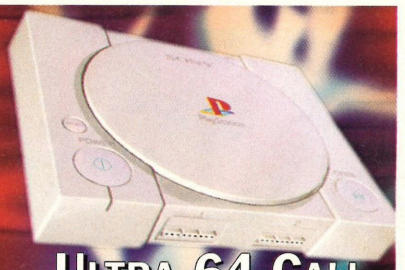
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Strat's The Way I Lik

(Uh-huh, uh-huh)

So you've pitchforked the Devil in *Tekken 2*, driven the black Lamborghini off the road in *Ridge Racer*, stepped on the Spider Mastermind in *Doom* and stitched up Brazil 23-0 in *Actua Soccer*... now what do you do? Andy McDermott has a radical suggestion – try playing a... strategy game?



"Waaaaait a minute," you say. "Strategy games? They're for people with large food-filled beards and snorkel jackets, aren't they? People who like to lay out tens of thousands of little cardboard hexagons on the floor and pretend they're invading Czechoslovakia? What have they got to do with my polygon-thrusting PlayStation?" You'd be surprised.

Strategy games have come a long way since the days of Fat Barry No-Mates and his 3,012 lead soldiers. Ever since programmers discovered that the PC wasn't, well, quite as crap as everyone had thought, brain food games have sprouted such minor additions as graphics, sound and excitement. Anything the PC can do, the PlayStation can do too (apart from spreadsheets, maybe) so the release schedules are slowly but surely starting to fill up with games which go just a little bit further than driving round and round in ever diminishing circles. Get those memory cards ready and power up the greatest weapon of all... the one between your ears!

3 X-COM: Enemy Unknown

MicroProse
Out now

One of the first, and still one of the most engrossing strategy games on the PlayStation, *X-COM* – a PC conversion – nicely cashes in on the current UFO fever (read our sister magazine *Encounters* for all the latest!) by putting you in command of an international alien defence network – the titular X-COM.

The game does feature a lot of construction and financial stages – if you're not careful, the accountants are an even more insidious and dangerous enemy than the aliens – but the bulk of the action takes place when you despatch commando teams to locate crashed UFOs or infiltrate alien bases. Combat works on a turn system. Each member of your team having a certain number of 'time units' with which to perform actions like moving around or letting rip with heavy weapons. Once each member of the team has done their bit, the aliens get a go – but you can only see what they're up to if they happen to enter the line of sight of your troops. You can hear them moving, but you don't know where... are they sneaking up behind you? Are they lurking behind a corner? You can never be sure, and this uncertainty gives *X-COM* a great deal of tension.

Captured aliens and weapons give your scientists the opportunity to learn from them, so before long you can begin production of high-tech gadgets of your own. You'll need them – the aliens start tough, and quickly become lethal. The ultimate aim is to chase the aliens back to their homeworld and wipe them out, but be prepared for a long hard fight before you can do this...

2 Dungeon Keeper

Bullfrog
Release date: November

Also from the Bullfrog pond is a very different kettle of spawn – *Dungeon Keeper*. This casts you as the eponymous Dungeon Keeper who, as might be expected, keeps a dungeon. This doesn't mean he's some kind of S&M hotelier, though. This dungeon is of the traditional 'and Dragons' variety, stuffed to bursting with monsters and treasure. The twist here is that you play the bad guy.

Instead of donning chainmail and silly cloak to become a heroic adventurer, your job as bitter and twisted old sadist is to brutally murder any do-gooders that enter your domain. To this end, you have a battery of spells and various breeds of subterranean creatures at your command, as well as tricks and traps to install in your dungeon as you build it. That's right – you get to construct your very own personalised killing (under)ground, and if you do it right you can lead parties of treasure-seeking busybodies to hideous screaming deaths while you doubtlessly laugh maniacally in the background.

It's not all hilarious eviscerations, however. Between visits from groups of sword-wielding cannon fodder, life in the dungeon goes on, amd it's your responsibility to make sure the denizens of your domain are kept in good order

e It

(Uh-huh, uh-huh)

and don't start killing each other. If the goblins are busy trying to attack the orcs, who's going to stop adventurers from giving it some high-knees to the exit with your hard-won treasure?

Dungeon Keeper adds a great new angle to the God-game genre, and even though the launch date has been put back, it still looks as though it will be worth the wait.

3 Syndicate Wars

Bullfrog

Release date: 19 June

Another PC conversion, the original *Syndicate* first appeared over two years ago, and was a jolly little game of high-tech Mafiosi, sinister mega-corporations, demented mercenaries in long raincoats and massive slaughter. The objective of the game was nothing less than world domination, using any and all means at your disposal. These means ranged from the subtle, such as manipulating national economies, to the not quite as subtle, namely despatching gun-toting enforcers to assassinate all opposition and raze entire cities to the ground. Business!

Syndicate Wars is set several decades after the original game, and a new breed of power groups have sprung up as the victorious syndicate starts to weaken and fall apart. Your aim now is to capitalise on the chaos and establish yourself as the leader of a new world order!

While the objectives may be much the same as before, the presentation of *Syndicate Wars* is very different to its predecessor. Gone are the simple isometric cities and stick-men mercenaries of old – the cities are now three-dimensional conurbations, resplendent in their cool 'n' moody lighting effects and viewable from any angle, which their inhabitants – human, robotic or



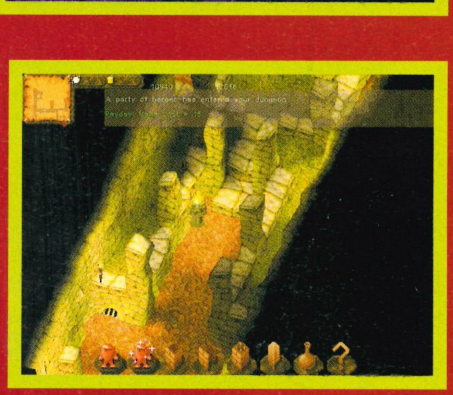
1

◀ A bunch of tough-looking soldier types from *X-COM*.



2

▲ Babes in armour prowl the dungeon, looking to give someone a big hand.



▲ Your dungeon under construction – *Dungeon Keeper* lets you play God.



◀ It won't be long before this peaceful scene becomes full of hideous violence.





3

otherwise – have also been given suitably detailed resprays. The hitmen still have those cool overcoats, though...

Syndicate Wars seems set to combine intricate strategy with ultra-large scale destruction and big guns – what more could you want? Look out for it soon.

4 Warhammer: Shadow of the Horned Rat

Mindscape

Release date: September

Still in a fantasy vein, *Warhammer: Shadow of the Horned Rat* (a possible contender for the prestigeous Convoluted Title of the Year award) gives wargamers the chance to send their armies sweeping across the landscape without having to worry that Thorarth the Mighty got left under the chair and is now in danger of being sucked up by Mum's Hoover (that was an obscure lead miniatures joke readers – Ed). The popular Games Workshop series of wargames has now made the transition to the PlayStation.

In *Warhammer: SOTHR*, a gang of scabby rat-men called the Skaven have come into possession of a super-powerful magic weapon, which threatens the balance of power between order and chaos. The Skaven and their allies must be defeated to restore order to the world.

The game is played from the traditional wargame viewpoint of high above the action, with the various armies and divisions visible below. The difference between *Warhammer: SOTHR* and most other games of this type is that it plays in real time, unlike the usual turn-based approach. If you move your forces and then nip off to the loo, the chances are that upon your return the once-glorious army will have been reduced to a widely dispersed array of leaking body parts. You have to keep a close watch on all areas of the battlefield, making sure that your troops are exactly where they are most needed at all times.

Warhammer: Shadow of the Horned Rat got mixed reviews when released on the PC, so it will be interesting to see whether Mindscape have beefed it up for its PlayStation launch later this year.

5 Panzer General

Mindscape

Out now

A more traditional kind of wargame now, in the lumbering shape of *Panzer General*. Unlike *Warhammer*, which played in real time over a 3-D landscape, *Panzer General* falls back on the dreaded hexagons and reams of statistics beloved of the real ale-quaffing wargame fraternity.

As the name suggests, you get to wear the square helmet of the Boche, in charge of the German army during World War II. Your Panzer divisions and Wehrmacht units are poised to roll over the Allied defences and conquer Europe – can you change history and bring about a victory for the one-testicled Fascist megalomaniac? If this unpalatable historical revisionism isn't your bag, you can always play as the Allies and punt Herr Kraut clean back over the Ruhr.

Panzer General really is a wargame of the old school, with pages of detailed battle reports to read and the need to account for absolutely everything that takes place on your side, right down to the last bullet. How appealing this will be to the average PlayStation owner is debatable – the in-game graphics are as bland as you would expect of something where the hexagon is the basic building block. If you want military detail that is anally-retentive to the nth degree and lots of FMV footage of Nazi tanks you might be interested, but *Panzer General* takes no advantage at all of the PlayStation's abilities, which does make one wonder why such a dated game was ever converted.

6 Command & Conquer

Virgin

Release date: November

One game that isn't dated at all is *Command & Conquer*. A massive hit on the PC, it looks certain to blaze onto the PlayStation in much the same way.

The setting is the near future, and the world has been divided into two massive power blocs – the GDI and NOD. The GDI are supposedly the good guys, prone to defending democracy and fighting against totalitarianism, while the NODs are a bunch of unprincipled bastards bent on world domination – guess who's more fun to play (and you get to play both)?

Viewed from a pseudo 3-D aerial vantage point, the game revolves around a mysterious new mineral called tiberium, which is a source of enormous power. Naturally, both sides want as much as they can get their hands on, so each war zone is home to a struggle not only to mine the tiberium, but also to keep hold of it once it's collected!

Each side starts out with basic infantry, tanks and the like, but as tyberium is collected increasingly powerful weapons become available, right up to orbital laser platforms and nukes. Part of the appeal of the game is the supremely easy way in which these weapons are deployed – just select one or more units, click on where you want them to go, and off to war they roll, engaging any enemy units they happen across en route. Naturally, a PlayStation mouse is essential.

Already a classic game, *Command & Conquer* genuinely does manage to combine strategy – careful management of your limited resources is essential if you hope to come out victorious – and action in one playable package. One to put at the top of the Most Wanted list.

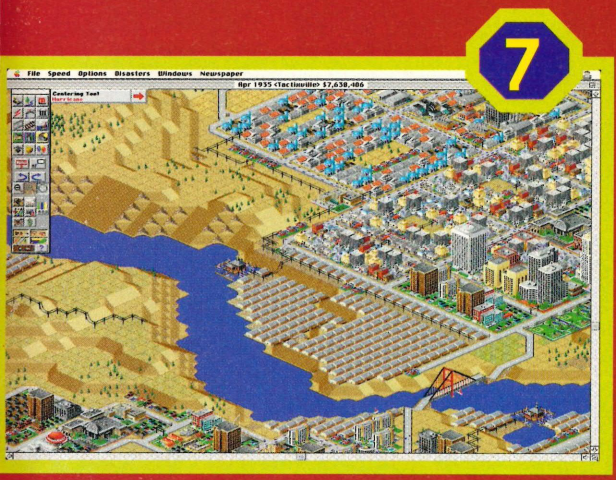




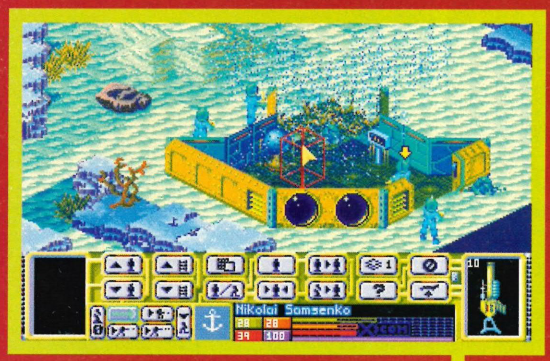
▲ No more dropping the Third Panzer Division down the back of the settee.



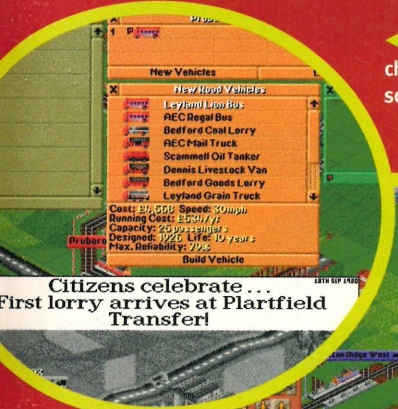




▲ *Sim City 2000* in all its high-resolution glory. If you look really closely, you can see my house from here.







◀ A very interesting chart, if you like that sort of thing.



7 Sim City 2000

Maxis
Release date: Summer

If you don't keep your citizens happy, you'll be at the top of *their* Most Wanted list. *Sim City 2000* tasks you with building up a community from scratch, starting off as far back as the 19th century and continuing until the year 2000 and beyond.

You have to plan and construct every aspect of your settlement, right down to ensuring each house is wired up to the electricity supply and plumbed into the sewage system. Get it right, and people will move into the town, bringing with them money which you can invest into the infrastructure in order to attract even more people and businesses. Get it wrong, however, and you'll quickly find the better-off people leaving in droves, while those who remain are plagued with crime and increasingly unhappy – potentially violently so – about living in filthy, dilapidated and poorly-served slums...

Sim City 2000 is an unusual strategy game, where there is no real fixed objective – the purpose of the game is simply to keep on playing for as long as you can in order to see how your city develops. Purist town planners have access to every conceivable bit of financial data to help them work out detailed strategies for future development, while the more cruel-minded can take pleasure in running their city into the ground and seeing how long it takes for civilization to collapse into anarchy. Random disasters can be dropped into the mix, from earthquakes to invasions by space aliens. Speaking of which...

8 X-COM: Terror from the Deep

MicroProse
Release date: September

Yes, they're back! The original posse of alien invaders – Greys, Reptoids and all their evil mates – may have been defeated, but the threat didn't go away. Some 30 years after the events of *X-COM: Enemy Unknown*, a new terror raises its head, and this time it's in our water!

Riled at being defeated in the first game, the aliens have sent a message to an advance party that arrived on Earth centuries ago and went into suspended animation deep beneath our oceans. Now, the deep-frozen monsters are making their presence felt by bubbling up from the briney to terrorise beachfront properties around the globe, and since X-COM was disbanded after the defeat of the first invaders, Earth's only hope has to begin again from scratch.

While the gameplay is broadly similar to the first game, the task facing humanity's defenders is much harder this time around, as the new breed of aliens tend to remain in their natural habitat – far below the oceans. The 'aquanauts' are further hampered by the need to wear bulky sub-aqua survival gear, while the aliens have been genetically engineered to breathe underwater, so they have a definite advantage in battle!

With the aliens more deadly than ever, players who breezed the first game will have their work cut out for them second time around, and if they somehow manage to chop the second wave into fish food, an even harder adversary looms for 1997 with *X-COM: Apocalypse*... can't wait!

9 Transport Tycoon

MicroProse
Release date: June

One game you won't have to wait quite so long for is *Transport Tycoon*, a sim for aspiring robber barons everywhere. Though it looks similar to *Sim City 2000*, there is a competitive aspect to *Transport Tycoon* that sets it apart from Maxis's game. While you try to develop your transport network and make your fortune, there are other people out there who are trying to do the same... and they will stop at nothing to see you bankrupt and penniless!

The PlayStation version of *Transport Tycoon* looks set to add a new twist to the game – you can actually travel through the cities you help to create in full 3-D! The winning gameplay of the PC version is unlikely to be altered, however; you still have to use high finance and low cunning to establish yourself as a major player in the fiercely competitive transport market, by road, rail air and sea.

The game begins in the 1930s, so the way to make money in the beginning is to invest in railways, but as technology advances it is essential that you keep pace with and take note of social and economic changes in the way people and goods move around. If you don't keep up, the only trip you'll be taking is down to the dole office!

Transport Tycoon should be further proof that the processing power of the PlayStation can be put to other uses than beating angular fighters to death. But having read through the list above, you should have worked that out already...

So what's the verdict then, do strategy games have a place on the ultra-vibrant PlayStation or should they be firmly consigned to smelly old PCs? Judging by the selection on offer here you'd have to say that they are a welcome relief from the endless racing and beat-'em-up games that have dominated the PlayStation scene since its launch. You can have too much of a good thing and strategy games on the PlayStation will help to consolidate its position as The definitive games console. What do you think? Send your views to *Arena, Play magazine, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth BH1 2JS.*

If there's one thing the PlayStation is eminently capable of, it has to be realism. With a relentless progression towards fully immersive 3-D worlds, all the major games publishers are coming together to bring us more polygons than you can shake a stick at. Time for a new stick? Yup. After the intriguing and gripping cerebral effort that was *X-Com: Enemy Unknown*, MicroProse is back. Back with their simulation hats on and a triumvirate of titles set to appear on our grey Sony boxes this summer.

The next three games in their line-up, include an updated version of the 'God' game, *Transport Tycoon*, a revamped version of their classic helicopter sim, *Gunship*, and a totally new 'interactive-movie-cum-sim' title, *Top Gun*. All set for release around June, the PlayStation should be set for a feast of fun throughout the lazy summer days.

As we move into the 'second phase' of PlayStation games, many of the big-game publishers of yesteryear are re-emerging with exciting line ups of games to satisfy an ever-growing demand for quality gaming. Not least MicroProse. Flying jacket adorned, Asam-Ahmad went to investigate...



▲ With smooth texture-mapped 3-D graphics, PlayStation *Gunship* is looking awesome.



PLAY information

- **Design team:** MicroProse
- **Team leader:** Grant Dean
- **Where at:** 90% complete
- **Target release:** June '96
- **Publisher:** MicroProse

Move over *Blue Thunder*...

Perhaps the biggest of the three games to be released over the next two months or so is *Gunship*. The game has been developed from the very successful PC and Amiga versions, but the PlayStation version is not just a simple conversion, but rather has had a complete overhaul in the graphic and audio departments. Making use of the PlayStation's special effects, the visuals in *Gunship* now include effects such as texture-mapping, light-sourcing and depth-cueing, to create incredibly realistic vistas and scenery.

The game has two slants to it. It can be played as a highly realistic flight-simulator, or in arcade-style mode as a frenetic shoot-'em up, using a selection of top military aircraft such as the Apache and

Electronic
The Wo





Commanche gunships. The activity takes place over two campaigns, both with their own agendas. From the Persian Gulf theatre, with missions to thwart enemy military activity in Iran and Iraq, to the Central Europe theatre with objectives to curb the Soviet Union's designs on communist expansion, the missions are varied and highly detailed. In precise military operations such as those presented in *Gunship*, nothing can be left to chance, and as a result, the game should provide hardened sim-addicts an intense challenge. Hardcore.





PLAY information

- **Design team:** Digital Amusement
- **Team leader:** James Hawkins
- **Where at:** 85% complete
- **Target release:** June '96
- **Publisher:** MicroProse



▶ *TT* has a smart new 3-D mode which allows you to 'view' your world with ease.

Your tickets please...

Another game due for release early this summer is the all new enhanced-for-PlayStation *Transport Tycoon*. A game in which you must build up a transport empire based on rail, road, sea and air travel, *Transport Tycoon*, drops you into the world of commercial cut-throats and backbiting businessmen.

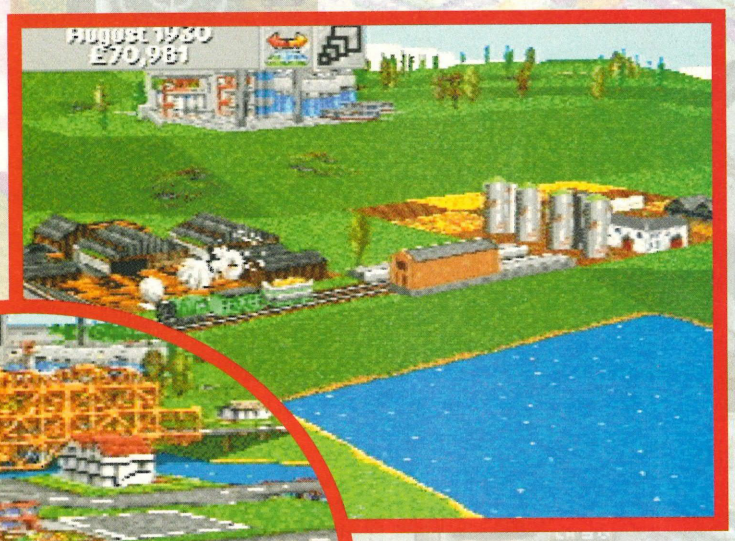
Starting with £100,000, you have 100 years to exert your prowess over you competitors to become the ultimate transport tycoon. You must do this by providing the best service possible for your travel-bound populace, competing against the best of the rest.

The PlayStation version has had several enhancements from the PC original, most notably the addition of a brand new 3-D view that

c Rhetoric

rld of MicroProse...

allows you 'visit' your landscape for a proper look around. Given how well the PC version of *Transport Tycoon* was received, fans of 'God' games should find the PlayStation version right up their street.

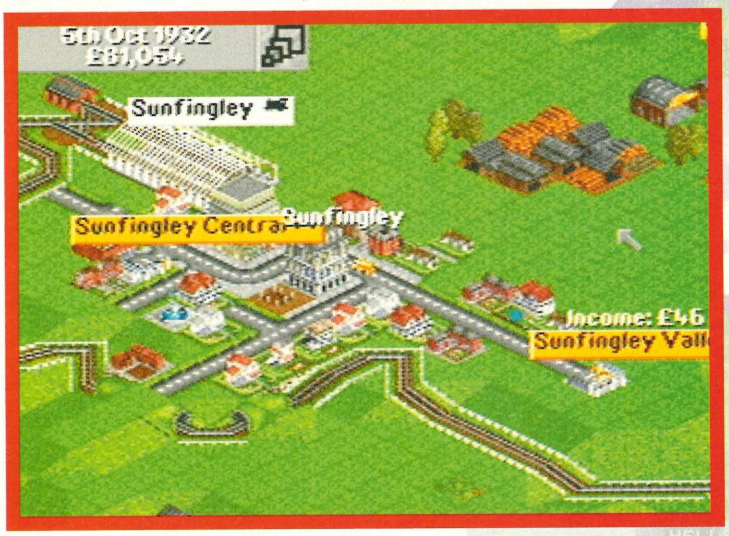




▲ Starting with £100,000 you have to build up a successful transport empire.
▼ Your network must be planned ahead meticulously.

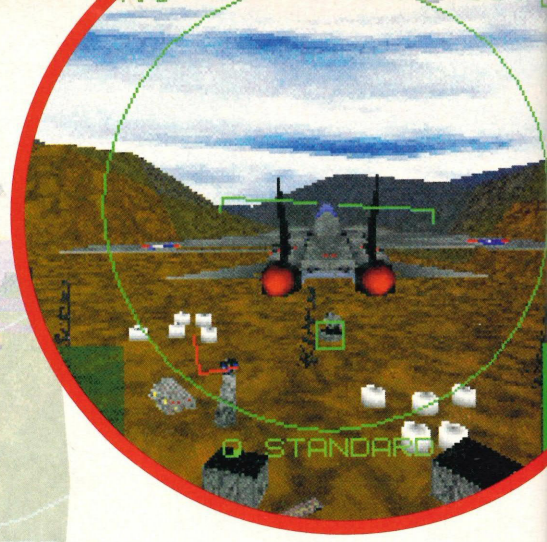


▼ As well as having competitors to contend with whilst bulding your empire, 'natural' disasters can often deal you a heavy blow. Prepare for contingencies...



PLAY information

- **Design team:** Spectrum Holobyte
- **Team leader:** John Vifian
- **Where at:** 80% complete
- **Target release:** June '96
- **Publisher:** MicroProse

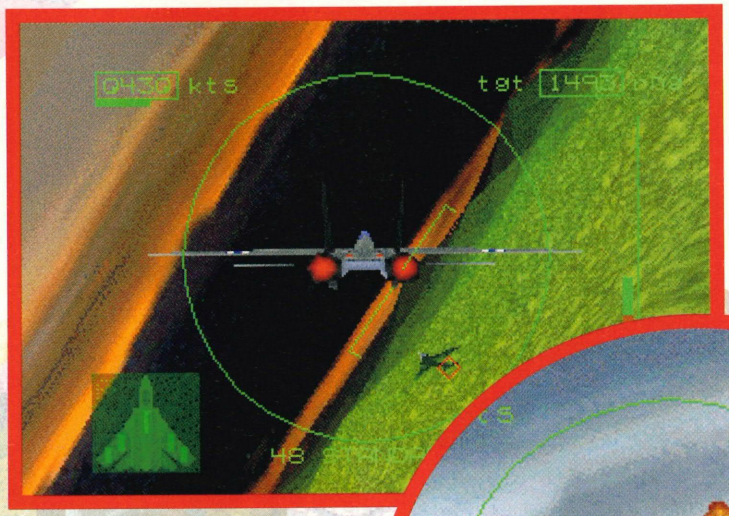


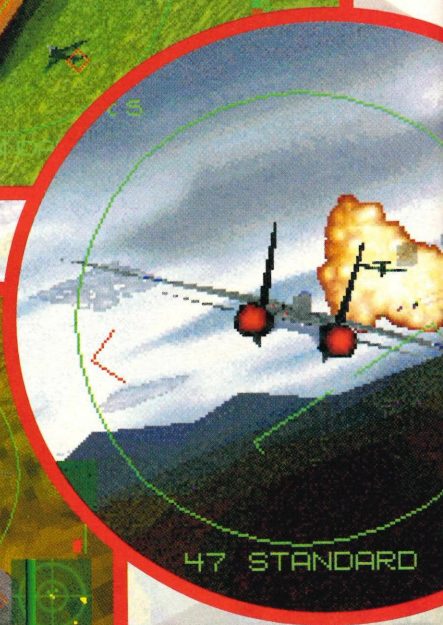
Just don't call me Ice.

The third title in the trio is MicroProse's new flight simulator, *Top Gun*. Rather than just being a simple flight sim though, MicroProse claims to have 'recreated' the film, with an 'interactive-movie' look and feel. Playing the part of Maverick, you must follow along the storyline, learning the ropes and gaining experience to help you in your missions as a top gun pilot.

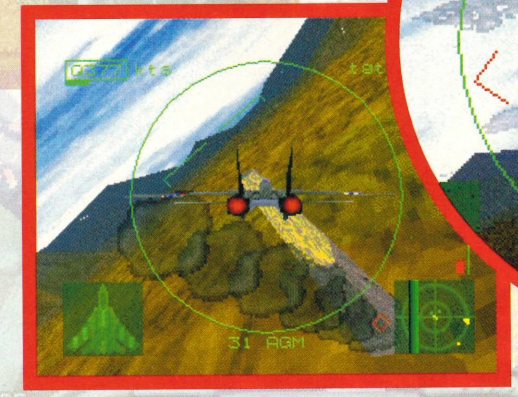
Featuring an abundance of scene-setting FMV clips, with 'true' first-person character interaction, the game even features actor James Tolkien – Maverick's actual commander from the film!

Another component is your in-flight co-pilot who gives you handy advice on aspects of your missions. Many of these missions are also 'blind' where the objectives aren't all necessarily apparent. With a music score featuring tracks from the film, and accurate-looking graphics jazzed up by the PlayStation's special effects, *Top Gun* should be a rather smart flight sim to look forward to.





▲ These are only early shots, but nevertheless still look good.



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Champion Wrestler

PLAY information

- **Publisher:** Taito
- **Contact:** The Video Game Centre on 01202 527314.
- **Price:** £69.99
- **Origin:** Japan

Wrestling is a difficult sport to convert into a videogame. There are so many moves and combinations that many have tried to make a sports game out of it, but most have failed. Acclaim have made the best attempt so far with *WWF Wrestlemania*, receiving 74% in Issue 1 – and now Taito in Japan have had a go.

This would be brilliant if it weren't for one thing – you can't control the bleedin' wrestlers! There are 34 of them to select in all, and all the graphics, although looking very 16-bit, work well, with convincing animation and hilarious moves. The lack of control over your wrestler completely ruins the game though. If you have a tag game against three computer players you might as well just give up - no matter what buttons you press you'll just end up being pulverised from all directions!

It's very doubtful this will ever get an official release, thankfully, so stick with *WWF* – that game could 'have' *Champion Wrestler* any time!

▼ **You'll find a gaggle of gormless goons to play in this Japanese wrestler.**





Played 52%

Looks good, but naff controls

Hyper Crazy Climber

PLAY information

- **Publisher:** Nichibutsu
- **Contact:** The Video Game Centre on 01202 527314.
- **Price:** £69.99
- **Origin:** Japan

Well they've got the title right at least! Those Japanese are absolutely crazy when it comes to videogames, and they must be crazy to buy something like this for the PlayStation! Apparently *Hyper Crazy Climber* is a conversion of an age-old arcade game – but I don't remember it.



The idea is to shuffle up the mountain/tower/building, or whatever, whilst avoiding banana-throwing monkeys, falling rocks and birds out to peck you. Sound simple? Well it is, but you still won't get far. You can be inexplicably knocked off by any off these enemies, until you discover that if you stay perfectly still you'll survive the knock.



There are fruit machine style sub-games to dampen the monotony of the gameplay, but you can't help thinking that the whole game looks decidedly 16-bit and should never have been converted to the PlayStation. If this were an official release it would be laughable, and at £69.99 on import you'd be mad to part with any cash!



Played 49%

Nothing special - a dated game!

Steve Hardy explores the fantasy island of *Myst*, the huge graphic adventure transferred onto Sony's grey box by Psygnosis...



Myst

The PlayStation has so far been starved of a "serious" game, and *Myst* is most definitely for the more serious player. Heck, the instruction booklet that comes with it is over 150 pages long! In fact, *Myst* has created quite a cult following since its early days on the PC. A book has even been published concerning the whole subject.

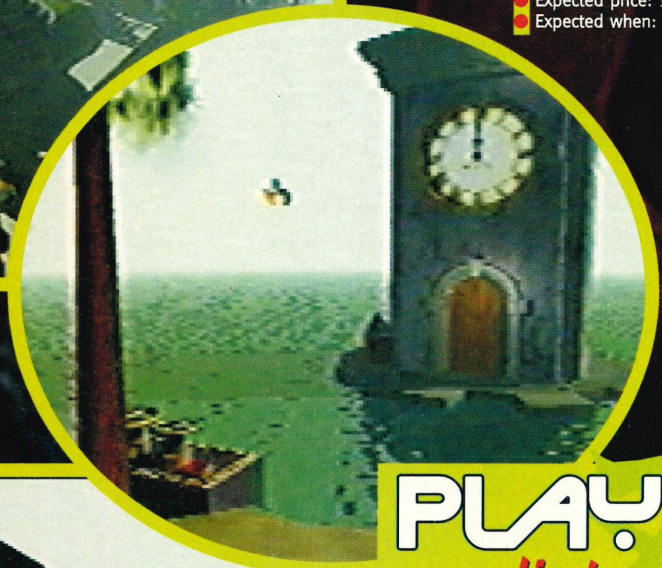
Back to the game – *Myst* is a huge graphic adventure based on the mysterious fantasy island of the same name. You are thrust into the shoes of someone (anonymous) who is placed on the picturesque island, and your objective is to solve the mysteries, riddles and puzzles that are located just about everywhere. Eventually, you must piece everything together, and with any luck, leave the island.

Visually, *Myst* looks wonderful enough, if static. Each sector or building on the island is shown as a still picture and progress through the game is a bit like sitting through a slide show you've been forced to attend, interesting at first, but ultimately irritating. Sound-wise, *Myst* has some good enough effects, such as the sea lapping against the shore and the wind whistling through the trees. What *Myst* lacks in excitement is made up for by its realistic atmosphere.

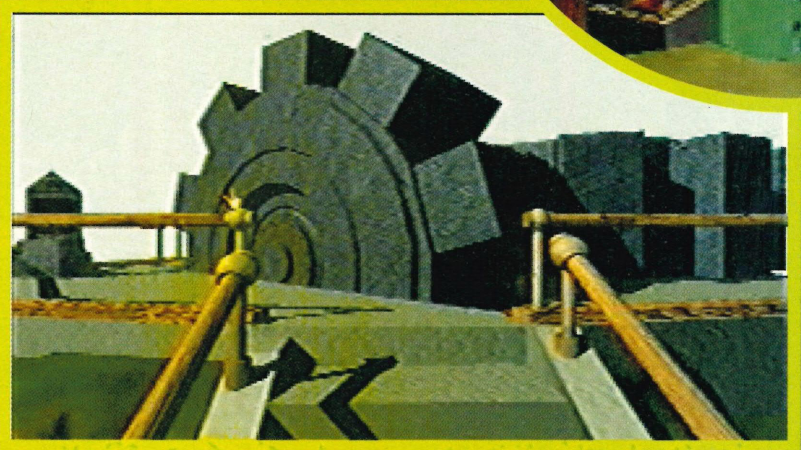
Essentially, this is a puzzle game, but things sometimes become too difficult and confusing. This is what put me off, and it will no doubt annoy others once they realise that some of the essential hidden items are too well hidden. However, once the first few puzzles have been solved, access is granted to new areas of the island and things get better after the first few hours of play.

To sum up, those who instantly groan when they here the word "adventure" might be pleasantly surprised by the *Myst's* feel, and the gameplay is certainly challenging enough, but it all gets a bit tedious after a while.





▲ This is one extremely strange island and you must explore temples for clues. ▼ Levers and cogs like this one all serve a purpose, as they can reveal new areas to explore...



PLAY information

- **Publisher:** Psygnosis
- **Phone for Info:** 0151 282 3333
- **Expected price:** £44.99
- **Expected when:** June

PLAY verdict

Looks:	
Sounds:	
Romps:	
Value:	

Played 68%

Nice looking, but ultimately dull.

Station Master

Tips, tips, glorious tips. There's nothing quite like them for cooling your bits! And this issue's Station Master is jam packed with top quality hints, cheats and guides to the best in PlayStation gaming. Check out our guides to *Total NBA* – wow! *The Need for Speed* – double wow! *Alien Trilogy* – triple wow! Then there are cheats for *ESPN Extreme Games* and *Defcon 5*. If you've got any tips then don't phone – it's just not funny. Instead write to: *Station Master, PLAY magazine, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth BH1 2JS.*

TIPS & CHEATS • TIPS & CHEATS • TIPS & CHEATS • TIPS & CHEATS • TIPS & CHEATS

ESPN Extreme games

Money, Money, Money

Money makes the world go round and this game is full of it! Here are three short tips that will help you make a big of extra wonga.

Extra money in race 1

Enter this password: 229, 013, 066, 016, 000, 000, 000, 000, 031 and then complete Utah, the first race using Paul Dillon as your character. When you've finished you will have $1,110 to play around with.

Money round

In this special round you must pass through all the gates on the course to enter a special bonus cash round consisting of $5 and $10 gates for loads of cash!

Last race

Use 254, 071, 216, 094, 085, 085, 177, 113, 104 as your passwords to begin with only one race left to play in San Francisco.

Utah shortcut

There's a secret cave to race through on this course. Just watch out for the train crossing overhead and then look for the cave on the left. But beware – there are a few surprises inside!





Firestorm: Thunderhawk 2

Level passwords

Many thanks to Colin Talbot of Lancashire for these level passwords to Core Design's great chopper simulation. Take it away Col...

South America – Arms Running
JJHBSV7JEBDUBJI
03GSV9BEFDQBU2
SRGJSVRJEJD6B8Q
8BBSUE3END2B52

South America – Stealth Down
97E9SUA7ARDEA21
8JELSU3AVDAAU2
BFD5S1LFA3DMALQ

Panama Canal – Canal Crisis
URDDSDTRM7CEBJQ
7BB94GCBNBCAAQQ
AJAT4GTBNFCMBCI

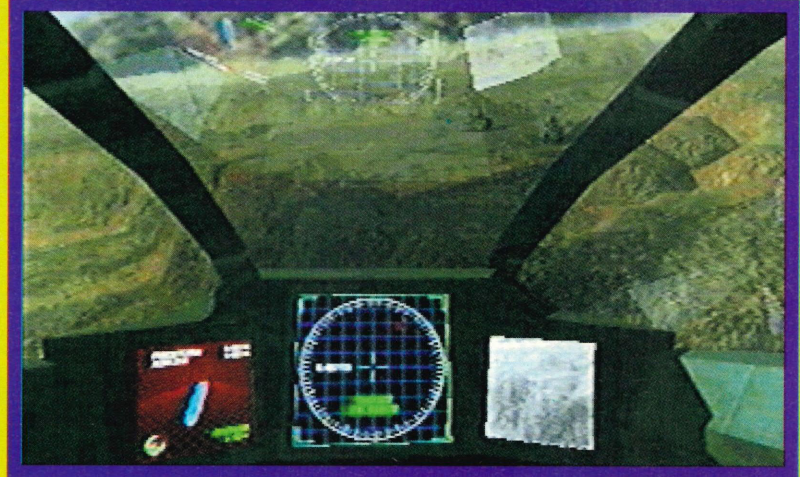
Central America – Recapture Town
MFAL40SFJJAEBKA
4VP440VNJJAABO2
3VO440UFJNAMASA

Eastern Europe – Escort Convoy
JRN444S3VVEEATI
13N45SQRV3EABVA
ORMK4CSROBEMBA2

Middle East – Recapture Territory
2VMK48UNSBMEALQ
2VLK4817SFMAAEI
URK448U3SJMMBVA

Middle East – Oil Dispute
9JKK40UR8J6EA22
VBJK40VR8N6AAVQ
G3144OT38V6MB82
OJ1K40SR836IAFI

South China Sea – Piracy
5JO440SJ426EBRQ
HRV440UJ426ABJQ





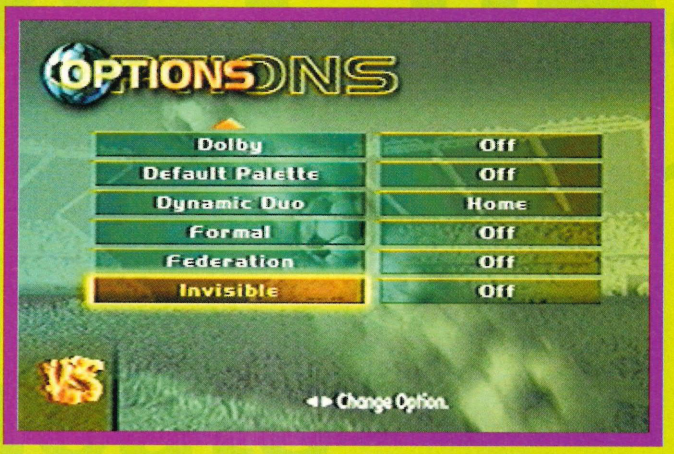
FIFA Soccer '96

More codes

We printed some of the secret options in EA Sports' *FIFA Soccer '96* back in Issue four, but there are some even we didn't know about. Try these for size – most of them give special outfits for your players!

Start your game as usual and pause it (using the START button). Select options and enter one of the following codes. You should hear a click sound. Now quit your game and go back to the main menu and select options once more to see the new choices on offer.

Formal STXSTTXT players wear Dinner Jackets instead of strips





Gex

Cheat codes

There are secrets hidden deep inside this cool platform game. To find them just pause the game and press and hold the R1 button. Now enter one of the following codes for the special result.

Electricity	Right, left, right, ○, △, right, ○, down, right
Instant speed	Down, pause, right, right, down, up, pause
Super Jump	X, ○, up, up, down, right, right
Invincibility	X, □, down, down, up, down, right
Infinite Lives	Up, ○, △, down, right, □, down
Fire Balls	X, up, right, up, right, right
Ice Balls	○, ○, left, down, ○, up, right

Defcon 5



I've been Defconned!

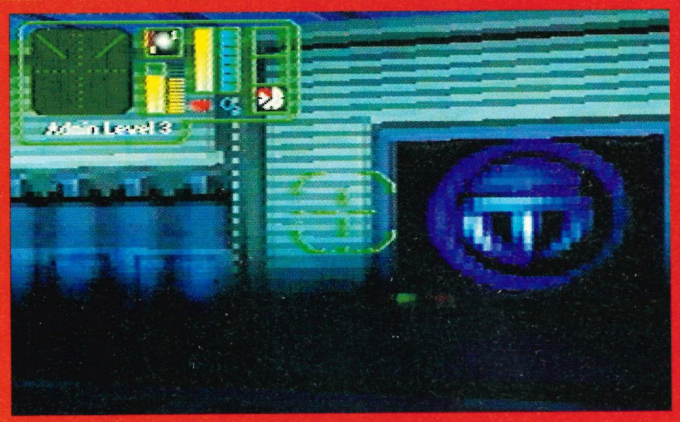
Noel Kennedy of Lisburn is one unhappy *Defcon 5* pla[yer]. Ten hours of play he discovered how to complete the g[ame] by just standing still and waiting. Now he's here to blow the game apart for everyone else, and make an official complain to Sony. Take it away Noel...

▶ From the start take LIMO to ADIM LEVEL 2.
▶ Take the lift to ADMIN 3 and collect DETONATION PAD (go through the door with the spanner sign and take the first door left).
▶ Return to the LIFT and go to ADMIN LEVEL 6.
▶ Go down corridor to far right of door with pink Tyron logo and collect SOFTWARE CONTROL PAD.
▶ Go back through the door with Tyron logo and take LIFT to CONTROL ROOM.
▶ Exit LIFT into CONTROL ROOM, go left then right (past VOS screens) and through door at the far side of the room. Go to the end of the corridor, through the door and collect the DROID CONTROL PAD.
▶ Now log on to VOS.
▶ Go to SOFTWARE CONTROL mode and choose INSTALL FROM PAD. This will activate the defence systems.
▶ Now select MANUAL ADJUSTMENTS and set the flags as follows:

MEF	111111					
GEF	111111					
ARF	000000					
TBF	100	100	100	100	100	100
DBF	100	100	100	100	100	100
RTM	000000					
RTP	000000					

▶ Once the flags are set, exit SOFTWARE CONTROL and select DROID CONTROL mode. Send a RECONNAISSANCE droid to the shuttle crash site (the WHITE dot). The droid will return with the SHUTTLE CONTROL PAD.
▶ Once you have sent the RECON DROID out, take the LIFT back to ADMIN 6.
▶ Go to the room at the far north east of the map and log on to the VOS.
▶ Select STATION MAP mode and lock the door to the room (to lock/unlock doors, move the cursor over the door and press the TRIANGLE button.
▶ NOW WAIT!
▶ After the next attack on the base the VOS will warn you of 'intruders in service levels'. Don't panic! Select the floor plan of ADMIN 6 and wait until the red dots showing intruders positions appear. They will automatically home in on you, moving down the corridor and outside the room only to find the door locked. The next shortest route to you is through the next room. As each intruder enters that room, lock the door behind it, but be ready to unlock the door to trap the next one coming back up the corridor. BE PATIENT. When you have all six intruders locked away you can unlock the door to the room you are in.
▶ Now exit the VOS and SAVE YOUR GAME.





The Endings

1. Load your saved game. Go to the CONTROL ROOM, set SELF DESTRUCT timer, sit back and wait for the base to go up.
2. Load your saved game. Go to the CONTROL ROOM, set SELF DESTRUCT timer and take the lifts back up to ADMIN 2, take LIMO to HANGAR A and take off.
3. Load your saved game. Send recon droids to crash sites until you get both FIGHTER PADS. Go to CONTROL ROOM, set SET DESTRUCT timers, take lifts back to ADMIN 2, take LIMO to HANGAR A and take off.
4. Load your saved game. Send recon droids to crash sites until you get both FIGHTER PADS and the TYRON WEAPONS DIVISION PAD which proves you have been 'framed'. Go to CONTROL ROOM, set SELF DESTRUCT timer, take lifts back up to ADMIN 2, take LIMO to HANGAR A and take off.

Notes

Recon droid targets
White dot – **PRIORITY 1** – Shuttle control pad, you can't escape without it.
Yellow dot – **PRORITY 2** – Fighter pads and TYRON weapons pad.
Green dot – **PRIORITY 3** – Missiles todd to base supply.
Blue dot – **IGNORE** – Nothing of any use.

▶ When you load the saved game you can roam freely around the base without being attacked by intruders as long as you locked all six away in ADMIN 6 and did not shoot any.
▶ There is no point roaming the base as there is nothing to see! In fact there is no need to leave the room when you've locked the intruders away except to go to the control room and set the timer.
▶ Especially when you are trying to see endings three and four you will hear the VOS warning about AIR QUALITY, INTRUDERS IN SERVICE LEVELS, etc. Ignore these messages, they appear to be default recordings.
▶ You need patience to see all the endings this way as you have to wait for the alien attacks before you can collect the necessary pads to continue. If you are getting bored you can go to one of the turrets and shoot a few craft down, or play the hidden game!

PLAY Q&A

Another couple of helpless critters line up for some Station Master style advice. We'll advise you on anything: what to do with your first girlfriend (or boyfriend), why your cat is malting, or even something about videogames. Just drop us a line to: *Q&A, PLAY magazine, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth BH1 2JS.* Steve Hardy is your clever trousers this month...

TIPS & CHEATS • TIPS & CHEATS • TIPS & CHEATS • TIPS & CHEATS • TIPS & CHEA

Roughing it in Rayman

First of all we have this letter from Chris Long...

Dear Station Master,

Yes, I'm talking about that infuriating game, *Rayman*. I've got all the cages so far saved on my memory card and I've been stuck on Pencil Pentathlon for four weeks – it's driving me nuts!

I've got through the first two stages of the level, but it's that oily slope that stumps me every time. I've read every possible Sony mag and each one instructs: to get through the two rows of pencils simply fall down the oily slope and there should be no need to jump or fly. IT DOES NOT WORK! I've lost endless lives and have only just managed to get through twice but to find that I'm then stuck on the bouncy platform! I'M GOING CRAZY, PLEASE HELP!

Chris Long, South Norwood

And *Rayman* has been causing problems for Ian Bell too...

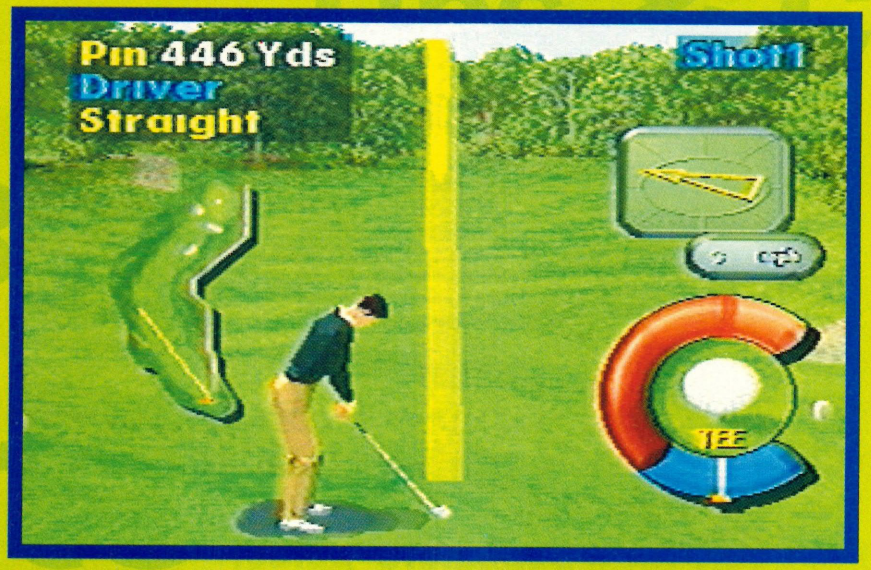
Dear Station Master,

How do you defeat Space Mama in Image level 11 on *Rayman*? I keep building up my lives so I have more chances to beat her, but I can't work out what to do when she hides behind the washing machine and shoots you with her laser. Please could you help me as it is doing my head in! Also, do you know any cheats or tips for *Destruction Derby*?

Ian Bell, Cumbria

Sorry Chris and Ian, the Rayman *solution that I've been sent from UbiSoft doesn't help much in these areas. Maybe you should try these codes to help you get past this annoying obstacle instead.*

99 Lives *– XNB9FM!Z2?*
10 Continues *– Up, Down, Right and Left several times on continue screen.*
Rayman demo *– Press and hold L1, L2, R1 and R2 and keep holding down on after the Ubi Soft logo until you get the animation of the brick wall and press and hold Start until the screen goes black, then release it.*
Final password – o D 2 K V 7 W W M D



Football Crazy!

Dear Station Master,

1. I currently own *PGA Tour '96* which is a very good game, albeit a little difficult (ie trying to play a perfectly straight shot is nigh on impossible). So, what I would like to know is: will *Actua Golf* be as difficult to control the power (swing) bar, and will it be better than *PGA*? Also, I've heard that there will be additional courses for *PGA*, which I take it will load into the game for you to play on. Is this correct?
2. Have you any cheats for *Theme Park* (ie loadsa money)?
3. One final request, is there any news on a football management game for the PlayStation?

Please answer all of the above as your info would be greatly appreciated

Duncan Snape, Woodbridge

You're a bit of a golfing fan then are you Duncan? Well PGA Tour *'96 is pretty good, but I must say I prefer Gremlin's* Actua Golf *just for the realism in the graphics. The power bar is quite a similar thing to control, it's just a matter of hitting that joypad button at the right time. Practice makes perfect you know! If you're interesting in new courses for PGA then you'll be sad to learn that the plans to release an upgrade disc have been scrapped. Instead there will be a new game,* PGA Euro Tour, *released in August.*

Unfortunately there are no tips at all for the PlayStation version of Theme Park, *but I do have a bit of good news on the football management side.* Onside *from Telstar Electronic Studios will be released in May which is a playable soccer game with management elements, similar to* Sensible World of Soccer *and there will be more released around August time, ready for the new football season.* Player Manager *is one of the names that crops up on my list.*

Creepy creatures

A good rule to follow in life is to never go down dark corridors if you don't know what you're going to find. Here's a look at the more mean creatures hiding away in the shadows of *Alien Trilogy*.



Face hugger

Urgh! Just the thought of one of these sticking it's ugly bits in you is enough to send shivers up your spine. They are fast and clever and can be found virtually anywhere in the game. Get practising your aim to take these out.



Alien

Don't even think about shooting at these with the pistol. You won't be able to kill them without losing a life yourself. The only effective weapon for these is the shotgun, and then they take three shots to kill.



Egg

The Queen alien has laid her evil all over the game, and these harmless looking eggs contain face huggers. If you go too close they will sense your presence and jump out!

Alien Tr

HR Giger's horrific alien creation has been brought to life in this amazing 3-D shoot-'em-up from Acclaim. It's dark, moody and challenging – just like *Ultimate Player*'s Paul Morgan. So, who better to give all you raggedly lot a beginners' guide.

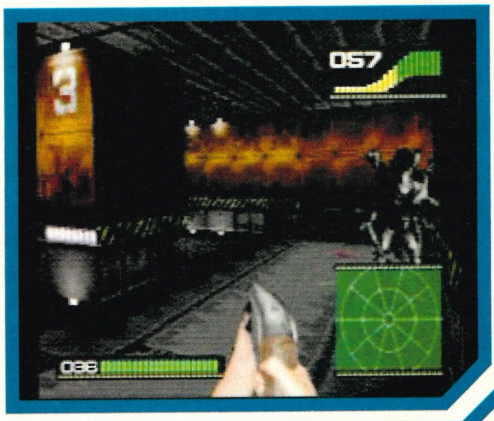
General tips

1. The first grimy creatures you'll encounter on your travels are the face huggers. They scuttle about and jump at your face to kill you off. Don't go wasting your best weapons on these pip-squeaks though. You'll need the shotgun and flame-throwers for the aliens themselves. Instead, try to use the 9mm automatic pistol to pop their clogs.

2. When you've burst an alien they will leak acid blood all over the floor. Always beware of stepping where they have been because it'll sap your energy away without even realising!

3. When shooting the crates and barrels always keep your distance. Not only do they set off chain reactions which can be damaging to your health, but they occasionally hide face huggers which will jump out when you're least expecting it.

4. In the missions that contain ID tags, the lockers play a big part. They can reveal all kinds of things: batteries, medikits and even automappers but they can also contain face huggers so beware!



Weapons & Accessories

It's always useful to know the strengths and weaknesses of the pick-ups in a game like *Alien Trilogy*. Here's a look at the weapons and accessories you'll encounter down those dark, gloomy corridors...

9mm Automatic

This is one weapon that has unlimited firing capabilities throughout the game, although it is pretty useless really. Keep it as a back-up weapon in case you have a sudden attack of face huggers – they're about all it can kill effectively!





Guard

These guards have been placed here to stop you from destroying a revolutionary weapon and they'll do whatever it takes to achieve their goal – even shoot you! The shotgun is again the best bet.



Androids

As strong in armour and might as the aliens, these take the form of Bishop from the original *Alien* movie. You can drop these in a similar way to the aliens with a few well placed shotgun bullets.



Colonists

These poor sods are the victims of the face huggers. They are stuck in the walls built by the aliens and simply wait to die. If you get too close to them a chestburster will come flying out for your throat.



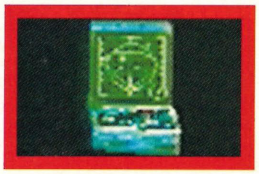
Queen

The big bitch herself, so big in fact that you only come up to her knee-caps! All we can say about killing the Queen is make sure you have as many grenades and seismic charges as possible when you go into battle. The shotgun and smart gun will keep her out of reach too. Any other weapon and you might as well forget it!

rilogy

These tips will get you started in Acclaim's alien blasting orgy, *Alien Trilogy*. If you want more help including maps, comprehensive guides to each alien and collectible and cheats then check out the next issue of *Ultimate Player*, on sale in June.

Auto Mapper



Your life will be made instantly less stressful if you stumble upon one of these. They're usually quite easy to find and allow you to zoom in and out on the map, pin-pointing mission objectives. Very useful indeed.

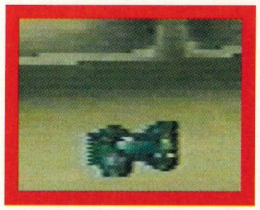
Flame-thrower



Shooting out a stream of scorching flames, this is another weak weapon, only slightly better than the 9mm pistol. It has a limited firing range so you'll only really test its abilities when going for the egg sacs.

Night Vision Goggles

Seen Jurassic Park? Well you'll know what these are about then. *Alien Trilogy* is a decidedly dark game, so anything that allows you to see better in a gloomy room has got to be a handy accessory.



Pulse Rifle



When things start to get hectic, this is definitely a weapon you need to have in your arsenal. It is a high-powered rifle with a grenade launcher built in for that extra special finishing touch.

Shotgun



This is an impressive weapon that doesn't need much accuracy to give a good effect. It's excellent for dispersing of aliens at close range with only three shots. Watch out though, you can easily run out of bullets.

Shoulder lamp



Every level that needs lightening up will have one of these hidden away. It does the same job as the night vision goggles, lighting up the way but it only lasts for a short time so use it wisely.

Smart gun



This is the most powerful weapon to be found in the game. It's very useful in crowded situations because it will take out two aliens standing side by side at once.

Bust some boards!

The complete guide to *Total NBA '96*



Judging by the charts at the moment, you'd have to say *Total NBA '96* has been a triumph for Sony. So, what better subject is there for a PLAY guide? Follow this advice and soon you'll be leaving your rivals sprawling on the floor as you burst down the court scoring basket after basket. Let's go!

Shooting

The two most important things to bear in mind about shooting is space and distance. The closer to the basket you are, and the more space you have, the better.



▲ When to shoot
▼ When not to shoot



Driving To The Hoop

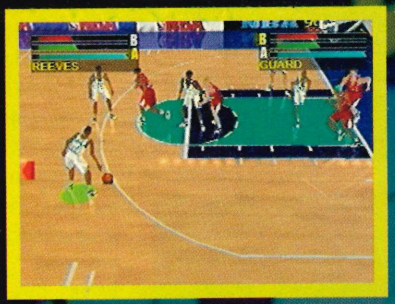
If you get the ball on the edges of the three-second zone, try to drive for the hoop by spinning, finding a gap and then holding down ■ and Turbo. If all goes well, you'll not only get to the hoop to dunk it for two points, but will be fouled by a defender and get to go to the free-throw line for a chance at an extra point. This is called a three-point play, and really annoys your opponent.

Jump Shots

Quite simply, don't shoot if there is a taller opponent in front of you, as even if you don't have the shot blocked, the computer reduces the chance of you scoring. If you have no-one in front of you at all, then go for it. Try and get the feel of each player: usually it's best to release the button as they get to the top of their jump.

Three point Shots

If you've got a good three-point shooter in your team (.45 rating or better), use



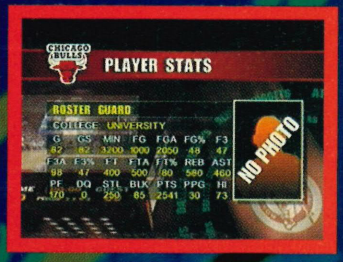


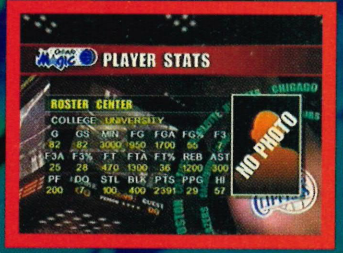
Position Key

PG – Point Guard
SG – Shooting Guard
C – Centre
SF – Small Forward
PF – Power Forward

Hello stranger!

'Ello, 'ello, 'ello, what's going on 'ere then? Methinks that the old programmers at Sony might have got round the name-licensing business. Missing from the game are Michael Jordan and Shaq O'Neal. But, ooh look, they may have shrunk an inch or two but the numbers for these two players look a bit familiar!



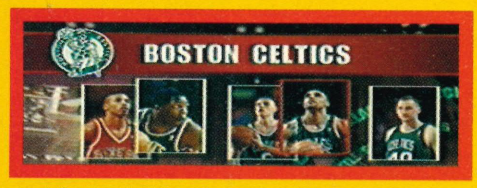




him! Success isn't that likely unless you can work an open shot, but getting one isn't that hard. And once you do, you can make it rain pain for your opponent. An easy way to get a three-point shot is a simple give and go, which you do like this...

Starting fives

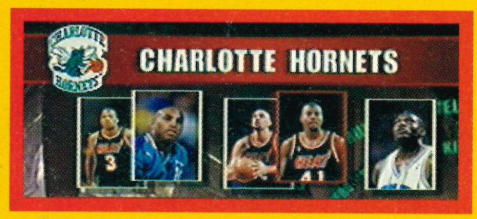
The guys and gals at Sony certainly did their homework, compiling every player stat known to Man, but we think we know better. PLAY reckons you need a three point shooter at SG, and a big guy at C. Check out our alternative starting fives, and see which you think works better.



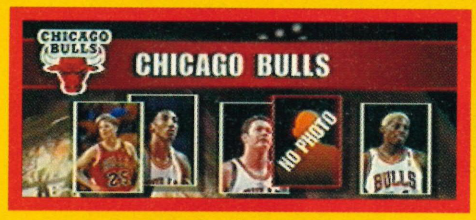
▲ Atlanta – Bring in Craig Ehlo to be a 3pt-shooting SG.



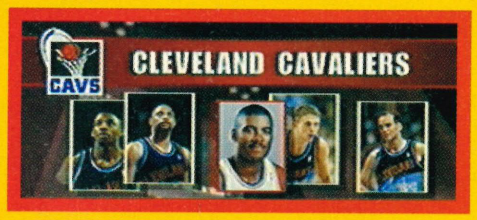
▲ Boston – Put Williams at SF, Fox at SG. Others are OK.



▲ Charlotte – No changes here, they're all fine and dandy.



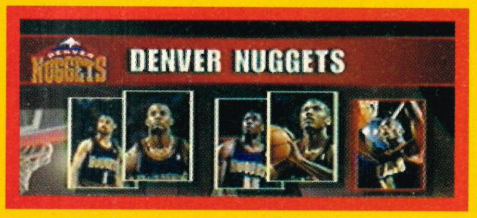
▲ Chicago – Put that mystery roster guard in, he's so damn cool.



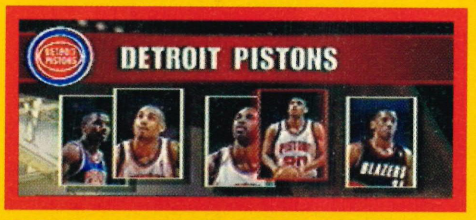
▲ Cleveland – Make Sura your SG, Daugherty your 1st choice C.



▲ Dallas – Jason Kidd ain't the best PG, make #1 your #1.



▲ Denver – Swap the two guards so Rose is at SG, Rauf at PG.



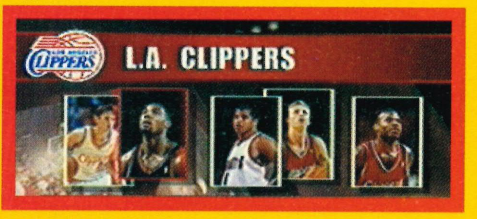
▲ Detroit – Guys, you want Hunter at PG and Houston at SG.



▲ Houston – Bryant should be the SF, the others are cool.



▲ Indiana – These five are fine, no changes required here.



▲ LA Clippers – Rogers is the right SF and Piatkowski the best SG.



▲ LA Lakers – Jones is the guy to be SG, and Miller Mr PF.

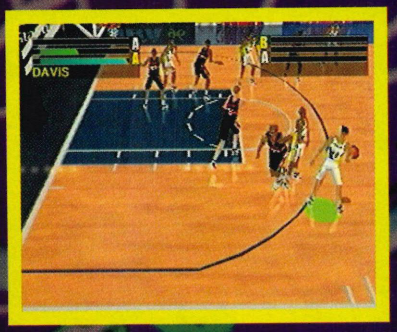


▲ Miami – Another correct call from Sony, no changes here.

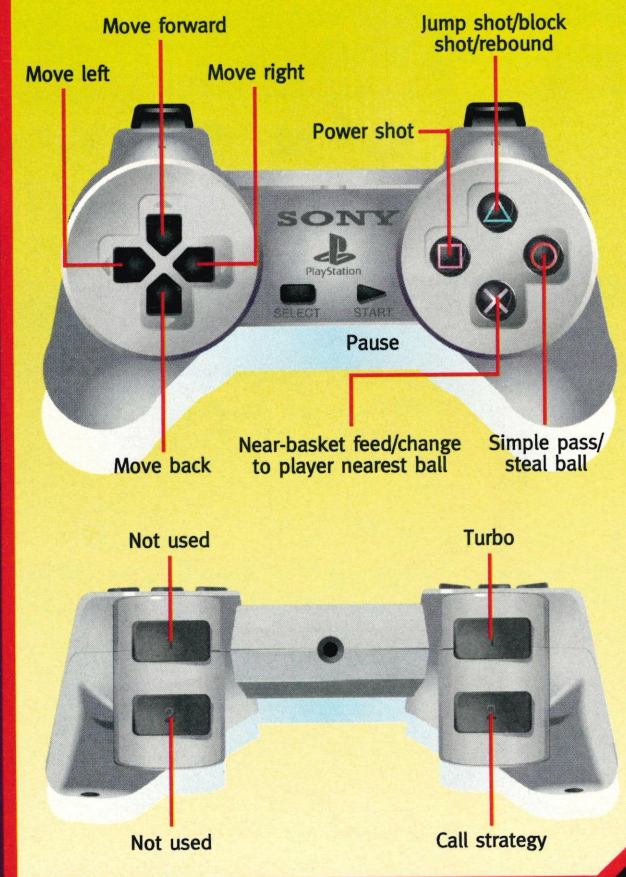
1. Get the ball in the hands of the guy you want to take a shot, somewhere outside the three-point line on the side of the court, closest to the camera view you're using.
2. Press the strategy button until one of your players gets onto the three-point line. Pass the ball to him.
3. If the defender marking the guy outside the three-point line comes to you, quickly pass it back to the now open three-point shooter, and take the shot.

Using A Screen

One way to get open is to use one of your colleagues as a screen between you and the opposition. You now have an unguarded shot. Smart huh?



Be the best!



Passing

This is vitally important, as the better you are moving the ball around, the better shot you will be able to create. Don't bother with the X pass at first, as you'll simply turn the ball over time and time again. Stick to using the simple pass in combination with the direction buttons. Using lots of passes stretches the defence so that you should be able to move the ball around to an open man – who should then take a shot.

Passing to someone isn't a guarantee they'll get it, the program doesn't ensure it automatically gets there, just that it goes in the right direction. So, make sure no opponent is about to run in between you and your target man.

Using The X Pass

Used properly, this is a deadly weapon, often feeding a man close to the basket for a dunk. There are three main scenarios for using it successfully...

1. Fast Break

Following on from a steal or blocked shot, you might be able to get in a fast break situation where one of your men is closest to their basket. Belt down court at an angle looking to open up a channel between you and your hoop-bound team-mate. Hit X and the direction button facing the basket and he should be in for a dunk.



2. Hand-Off

What we call a hand-off is roughly this: one of your players has got the ball close to the basket, the defenders come rushing towards him to try and block any shot, leaving (hopefully) another of your players open close to the hoop on the other (or weak) side of the court. A quick tap of the X button and an immediate press of the ■ shot and turbo once the ball is in your target's hands and Robert, as they say, is your mother's brother.



3. Weak Side Force

This is a bit like the hand-off, only over longer distance. With the ball in your point guard's hand, dribble from side to side behind the three-point line, looking to drag most of the defence to one side. Hopefully, your centre should be free, close to the basket on the opposite (weak) side of the court to you. Whilst heading one way, hit X and the opposite direction (towards your target), and do the quick ■ shot and turbo routine.





Using Strategies

Frankly, unless you're Billy Basketball head or something, you won't notice the strategies making that much difference. Indeed, all it means is the players will just be moving into different positions at the same time. This is actually important, for the movement can get men open for you to pass to, and then get good shots off. One tactic is to control the ball outside the three-point line with your point guard and keep pressing the strategy button so players continually move around. Sooner or later, you should see a guy open to pass to. So do it.

Defending

Defending is difficult, really difficult. Put simply, you just have to keep the opponent as far away from the basket as possible. They only have 24 seconds to set up a shot, so the further away you keep them, the greater the likelihood they won't be able to take a good shot.

The best way to do this is just aim to keep your player between the ball-handler and the basket. Try and do anything else and the chances are they'll be past you, driving towards the hoop to either dunk it, or hand off to a free man. Aim to keep the ball as far away from your hoop as possible, force a long-range shot and then try to block it.

Shot-blocking

This is actually quite easy if you're in the right position. Basically, if you're standing in front of an opponent going for a jump shot, let him start his jump, so that the arms go up, than press ▲ sharpish. If you've timed it right, and your bloke is big enough, you should have got in the way.



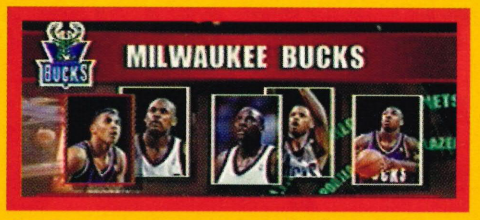
Rebounding

Once you or your opponent have got a shot off, switch to your player closest to the hoop and hit ▲. Don't wait to see if the shot goes in or not. Your guy is basically big enough to hang in the air longer, and higher (and thus get the ball) than anyone waiting to see what happens before they go for the rebound.

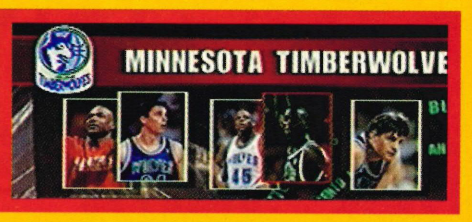
Substitutions

If you're going to play any game longer than three minutes a quarter, you're going to have to make substitutions. Get to know the better players on your bench (invite them round for tea or something) and work subs one at a time, in rotation. That way, you should be able to get away with only using your eight best players: the five starters and a reserve guard, centre and forward.

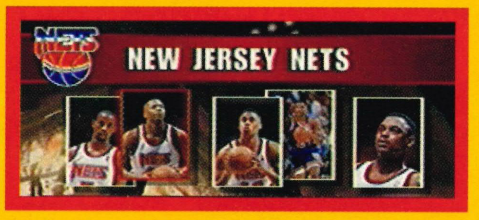




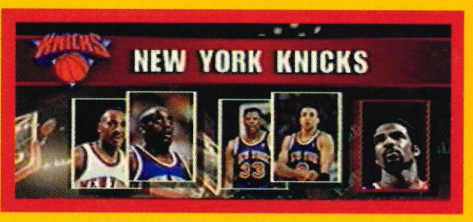
▲ Milwaukee – No changes. Tip: Use your C to hit the three.



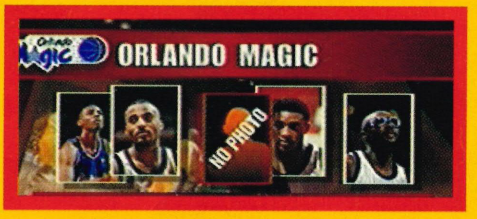
▲ Minnesota – Bring in Kevin Garnett as your #1 starting SG.



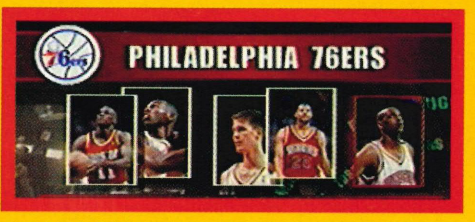
▲ New Jersey – Put Coleman at SF, PJ Brown at C and Mahorn at PF.



▲ New York Knicks – Sony know their knicks, no changes required.



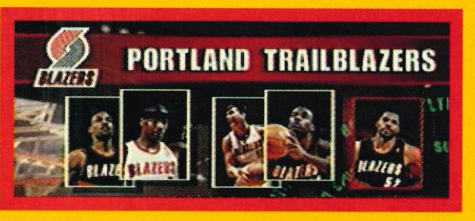
▲ Orlando – Who's that C on the bench, no, get him on the court.



▲ Philidelphia – Make Stackhouse SF, Malone SG and Williams PF.



▲ Phoenix – Another mystery man, try him at PF and Carr at SG.



▲ Portland – Sebonis should be the C, and Buck Williams PF.



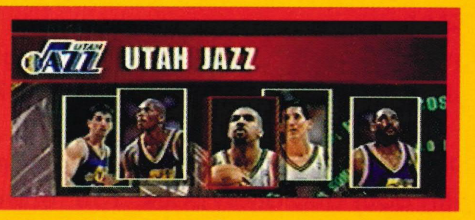
▲ Sacremento – The C is good at the three, make Marciulonis SG.



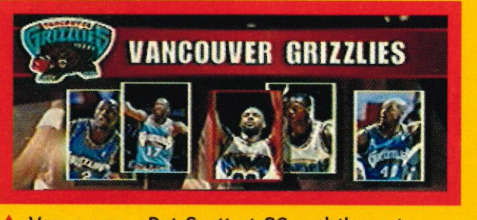
▲ San Antonio – All fine here, leave well alone as they say.



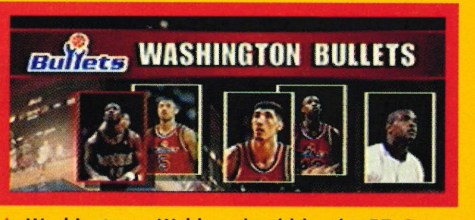
▲ Toronto – These five are as (not very) good as this team gets.



▲ Utah – What's this? Three unchanged line-ups in a row!



▲ Vancouver – Put Scott at SG and the 3pt shooting Harvey at PF.



▲ Washington – Webber should be the PF. Rest is OK.

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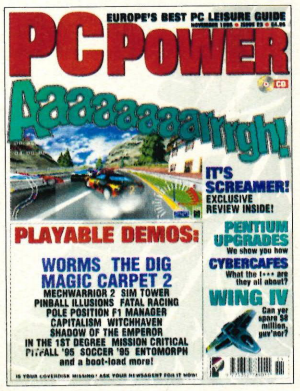
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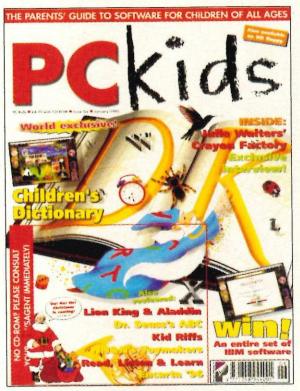
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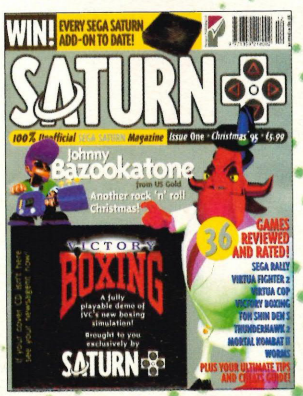












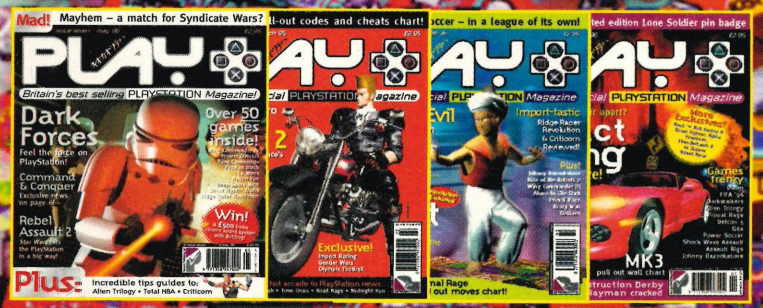


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Arena

Lots of interesting letters this month, and far too many from readers worrying about the future of the PlayStation with games from Psygnosis being converted to Saturn and the imminent launch of the Nintendo 64. The PlayStation is by far the most impressive console to be released in years and has some hot looking games. The others will always have games worth playing, but you've all got to stop worrying and get down to some serious gamesplaying instead. Life's too short, and that game over screen is just not on the cards for Sony's wonder machine.

Do you have a thought you'd like to put down on paper? If so, send it in to: *Arena, PLAY magazine, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth BH1 2JS.* Or E-mail to *nickr@paragon.co.uk.* We reserve the right to edit your letters and regret we cannot reply personally.

Nick Roberts, editor

Is he tapped?

Dear PLAY,

Please advise PlayStation owners who read your magazine that some third-party control pads are incompatible when used in conjunction with the Sony Multitap.

I recently purchased the Sony Multitap together with a Gamester LMP PSX 1 and a Gamester LMP PSX 2 control pad. When I connected all of the above to the PlayStation (using port number one) together with a copy of *FIFA '96*, I found that none of the four control pads would operate the game.

I experimented and found that by pulling out the Gamester control pads I could play *FIFA '96* using the two remaining Sony control pads. Once in the controller set up screen of *FIFA '96*, I attempted to reconnect both the Gamester control pads only to find that doing this defaulted all four control pads.

Further experimentation revealed that I could get three control pads to work by connecting a Gamester control pad directly into the PlayStation using port number two, together with two Sony control pads connected to port number one via the Multitap. At this time I don't know if any other third party control pads will cause this problem but I am sure you will investigate this.

I hope this letter will help other PlayStation owners (who intend to purchase the Sony Multitap) select compatible control pads.

Anthony Ace, Crawley

Many thanks for your letter, Anthony. I can only assume that the makers of the new control pads didn't take into account the Multitap when they did their design. Maybe there is something they didn't know about that makes the official Sony pads works with the Multitap, and Sony failed to disclose this to them. I can't think of a single third-party joypad that I personally like anyway. The original is still the best in my eyes, and not that much more expensive if you wanted to buy yourself a second, third or fourth pad. Consider yourself warned everyone! Maybe you should take your Multitap along to the shop before buying a new pad. Any worthy shop keeper should let you try it out before parting with your money.

Fine freebies

Dear PLAY,

Firstly, may I congratulate you on a fine and well put together magazine. It's definitely the best for all PlayStation news. Secondly...

Today I received my VIP disk ABSOLUTELY FREE from Sony. Brilliant. I now have at least three more games to play for a laugh. Never before have I received such kind and generous after sales help.

I am 110% satisfied with Sony and their attitude towards customers. Sega could never match this level of support. Thanks Sony.

From a very happy customer.

Anon

Well Mr Anon (if that is really your name) it's nice to see someone satisfied with their PlayStation and the support of Sony. Being a newcomer to the videogames market they obviously wanted to get everything right – and they seem to have done just that! Thanks for your letter. Does anyone else have a different story to tell?

Sold out to Sega?

Dear PLAY,

Could you print this letter so that those at Sony headquarters can see what is happening down on the streets.

I bought a PlayStation on the day it came out and went home, called my mates round for a gloat of the new Saturn killer, but suddenly Sega have well and truly taken over with their AM trio.

Now Sony, we've had *Tekken* and you promised much more. Why are you now selling your games to Sega? We may as well all buy Saturns! Then what would happen to your top-class mag PLAY?

A Barrett, Brentford

PS. If you need practice on *Galaga* at the beginning of *Tekken* wait for *Galaga* to load up then before *Tekken* loads, open the PlayStation lid.

It's true, Sega's trio from their AM research and development wing, Sega Rally, Virtua Fighter 2 *and* Virtua Cop, *are all great games and they've got more to come, but Sega are relying on their arcade port-overs to bring them good fortune. Sony have some excellent third party developers instead and have Namco exclusively for the moment. The reason you're seeing* Wipeout, Destruction Derby *and* 3D Lemmings *turn up on Saturn is that these were created by Psygnosis, not Sony, and had already been released on PC CD-ROM. No-one caused any fuss about their PC release, so why should the Saturn be any different? I'll tell you why – petty rivalry. All you should be about is that the PlayStation has some fantastic games and is getting them before the PC or Saturn owners. End of story.*

Where are the games?

Dear PLAY,

Before I start I would like to say what a great magazine you have, I have bought every edition so far.

I bought a PlayStation in November last year. Since then I have bought five games: Tekken, *MK3*, *Extreme Games*, *Ridge Racer* and *Rayman*. By now I have completed the ones that can be completed and I am bored with the rest. I read in a magazine that there were 400 companies signed up to make PlayStation games, if they all made just one each by now there would be 400 titles in the shops.

In your magazine I have seen so many titles I would like to buy, but how long will it take for most of them to be released in the UK? There are many companies selling imports which won't even be put on the shelves of UK shops within the next two months. I phoned up a few of these and asked them if I could play the US/JAP games on my UK PSX. They told me they had leads that would allow me to play these games but I needed to have a European television. Another told me that Sony are making a US/JAP converter but it wouldn't be released for another couple of months and it would cost around £35-40. So much for those 400 companies. At the moment I can only see Namco making a good effort. To the rest of those 399 companies, I say - hurry up!

Andrew Jones, Oxford

Come on Andrew. Do you know how long it takes to produce good quality 32-bit software? I'm sure you would be one of the first to complain if the shops did have 400 games in them - all complete crap with no gameplay! A decent game can take years to produce, so Sony may have 400 licensees, but nowhere near that many games world-wide. But they will come.

You can use Japanese and American games on your PlayStation, but only using an unrecommended method of adding a switch to your machine and playing them through a Scart lead. Many importers will do this adaption for you, but it invalidates your warranty. Datel Electronics, not Sony, are working on a less ruthless adapter which will plug into the expansion port and allow you to run software from any country, but they are a little way off at the moment. All the games we review in PLAY will eventually be released, but Sony have a habit of putting back their release dates much to our, and your, dismay. Sit tight, and check out the updated release dates in the news this issue.

We're all Doomed!

Dear PLAY,

Congratulations on your mag. It's probably the best one out at the moment, even beating the official magazine in my eyes. Now to the point...

1. In issue five, there are bonus stages of *Doom* which you printed, but they don't work! Could you please explain why, as I bought the mag on the strength of the guide.
2. Could you please tell me when *Actua Golf* is going to be released, and how many courses will the game have?
3. Is *Time Crisis* from Namco being released on the PlayStation?
4. Are Psygnosis producing games for the Ultra 64 and Sega Saturn? And if so, what is the deal with Sony and Psygnosis?
5. Are Namco producing games for the Saturn or Ultra 64? And if they are, surely Sony would lose out because people would buy other systems?
6. Could you please tell me why the PC CD-ROM and Sega Saturn are getting *Actua Soccer 2* and why the PlayStation is not?
7. Will there be a playable CD demo on your mag in the near future?

Keep up the good work and many thanks.

PD Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

Oh for Pete's sake, not the flippin' Doom codes again! Yes, I know that three codes didn't work, and I printed the corrections last issue – satisfied? Yeah, I'd like to know about Actua Golf *too, I've played the game and love it to bits, but the official release has been dragging a bit. It's now scheduled for April and as far as I know it only has the two courses – but they're stunners! We have no date for* Time Crisis *though, it's out in the arcades and is bound to get a conversion, but just not yet.*

Yes, Psygnosis are producing games for the Saturn, but not for the Ultra 64. They are a separate development company from Sony so can convert their games to any platform they like. They already do PC CD-ROM games, so Saturn was the next logical step. Namco are also producing for Saturn, with a conversion of Cyber Sled *planned, but Sega won't be getting* Ridge Racer. *But stop moaning, the PlayStation still has all the top games first... well, except for* Actua Soccer 2 *then. The Saturn version will be updated with new graphics and none of the Cadbury slogans, and called* Euro '96, *but the original is still one of the best football games around for the PlayStation.*

Finally, we are looking into CD demos, but they're unbelievably expensive things to produce. Rest assured, you'll be the first to know if we cover mount one.

Ultra worried!

Dear PLAY,

Congratulations on Issue five of PLAY. I just have a few questions...

1. Is the Ultra 64 a threat to the PlayStation?
2. I read in a magazine that Ultra 64 has a 32-bit data bus and a 32-bit memory bus but it's just not 64-bit. Can this be true?
3. Do you seriously think that people can be sad enough to want to own a Ultra 64 with games like *Zelda 64*, *Kirby Bowl 64* and *Mario 64*?
4. With games like these coming out I wouldn't be surprised if the cartridges came free with fossilised creatures stuck to them. Do you think that games like *Kirby Bowl 64* compare with games like *Quake* and *Resident Evil*?
5. My personal opinion about Sega Saturn is that there is a PlayStation game that is better than every Saturn game for example for Sega Rally there is *Dirt Dash*, for *Virtua Fighter* there is obviously *Tekken* and for *Daytona USA* there is *Ridge Racer Revolution*. Do you agree with me?
6. Do you think it is out of order that Sega brought out *Virtua Fighter* twice and do you think this is because they saw the graphics of *Tekken* and got worried so they brought out a remix?

Dean Hennessey, London

More worried readers fretting about the Saturn and Ultra 64. Why waste your energy? The PlayStation is all that matters. It's a brilliant console, undoubtedly the best there is on the market at the moment and has some wonderful games. The others will also have games that are fun and playable, but they're on those systems. I, for one, can't wait to see what the Ultra 64 (or Nintendo 64 as it will now be known) can do, but that doesn't mean I've deserted the PlayStation and will burn all those games I love. There's plenty of room for everyone, and Sony aren't going to give up on the impressive lead they've created for themselves in the next generation console business. Get on with the more important things in life, like playing videogames!

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Do you have a PlayStation you want to sell? Or are have you completed all your games and want to swap them for something else? Or maybe you've set up a PlayStation club that you'd like to advertise? Well you'll soon be able to do all these things, and more, in PLAY! Just fill in this coupon with your details, putting one word in each box and ticking a category. Then post it off to the address below. We'll compile all the classifieds into a new section free of charge! Aren't we kind to you?

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PLAY back

トネカタノカスヌ

No PlayStation game can escape the merciless judgement of Playback. This is the part of the magazine where we look at all the games we've reviewed and judge how the passing of time has affected them. After all, Toshinden was incredible when the PlayStation first came out, but now it's been surpassed many times and our expectations are higher – time to lower the relative score. Not only does this give you a valuable buyer's guide, but you can see which games grow old gracefully, and which plummet in our estimations.

Game of the month award has to go to *Tekken 2*, which has had us wasting valuable work time, along with *Ridge Racer Revolution* (UK version), *Street Fighter Alpha* (UK version) and the wonderfully strange and gory, *PO'ed*. Sadly, we have also been propping up our uneven desks on and stirring our coffee withChampion Wrestler , not to mention moaning with disappointment over Myst..

For easy reference, new entries are marked (-), and any changes to the original scores are highlighted in yellow.

Beat-'em-ups

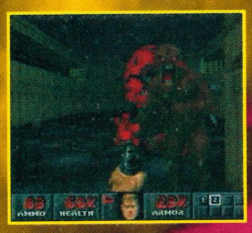


Game	Review Score	Comment	Date of Review	Current Score
1. (-) Tekken 2	97%	The game you wouldn't want to mess with	May '96	97%
2. (1) Tekken	95%	Not the best anymore	Nov '95	88%
3. (-) Street Fighter Alpha (UK)	94%	The blood brothers belt on	May '96	94%
4. (2) Street Fighter Zero	93%	From Zero to Hero!	Mar '96	93%
5. (3) MK3	93%	Still great, but no longer the champ	Nov '95	92%
6. (4) Rise Of The Robots 2	88%	Back with a vengeance!	Mar '96	88%
7. (5) Criticom	87%	Take your brain to another dimension	Feb '96	87%
8. (6) Primal Rage	85%	Plenty of Jurassic japes!	Feb '96	85%
9 (7) New Jap Pro Wrestling	84%	The fat boys done good	Dec '95	74%
10. (8) Battle Arena Toshinden	76%	Great looking stuff for beginners	Nov '95	72%

Others

Street Fighter: The Movie 68% (Nov '95) Zero Divide 64% (Nov '95) Power Instinct 2 52% (Jan '96) Toshinden 2 71% (Mar '96) WWF Wrestlemania 70% (Nov '95)

3-D Shooters



1. (1) Doom	93%	Smooth as silk, more cutting than glass	Jan '96	93%
2. (-) Alien Trilogy	91%	This time it's war!	Easter '96	91%
3. (-) Magic Carpet	90%	You can't beat this carpet!	Easter '96	90%
4. (-) PO'ed	87%	A bloody good game!	May '96	87%
5. (4) Descent	85%	Lots of ups and downs	Easter '96	85%
6. (4)Shellshock	85%	Top tankbusting action, for a while	Easter '96	85%
7. (6) Krazy Ivan	90%	Not the toughest to finish	Feb '96	84%
8. (7) Loaded	85%	big, bad blasting action	Nov '95	84%
9. (8) Firestorm: Thunderhawk 2	85%	Fast 'n' frantic airborne action	Jan '96	84%
10. (5) Philosoma	85%	Not as good as Firestorm	Dec '95	83%

Others

Assault Rigs 81% (Jan '96) Lone Soldier 92% (Dec '95) Starblade α 68% (Dec '95) Warhawk 65% (Jan '96) Kileak The Blood 57% (Nov '95) Kileak The Blood 2 65% (Mar '96)Cyber Sled 55% (Nov '95) Zeitgeist/ Jupiter Strike 51% (Nov '95)

Arcade Shoot-'em-ups

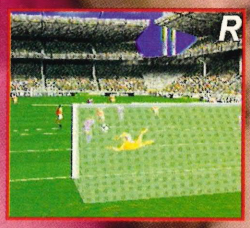


1. (1) Shock Wave Assault	87%	It's now got Operation Jumpgate with it	Jan '96	89%
2. (1) Return Fire	84%	Smells like...Victory	May '96	84%
3. (2) The Firemen 2	78%	16 bit graphics meets 32 bit gameplay	Mar '96	78%
4. (3) Off World Interceptor	77%	Stomach-churning, high-speed mayhem	Dec '95	77%
5. (4) Viewpoint	74%	Harder than a diamond	Dec '95	74%
6. (5) Horned Owl	73%	Good graphics, OK challenge	Mar '96	73%
7. (6) Rapid Reload	71%	Could use a rapid rethink	Nov '95	71%
8. (7) Namco Museum Vol. 1	70%	Just a bit dated!	Feb '96	70%
9. (-7 Namco Museum Vol. 2	70%	Worth a look for nostalgia fans	Easter '96	70%
10. (8) In the Hunt	69%	We've sprung a leak cap'n!	Feb '96	69%

Others

Total Eclipse Turbo 69% (Dec '95) Stahlfeder 65% (Easter '96) Twinbee Deluxe Pack 65% (Dec '95) Novastorm 38% (Nov '95) Raiden Project 67% (Nov '95)

Sports

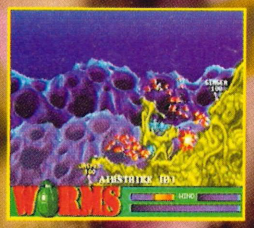


Game	Review Score	Comment	Date of Review	Current Score
1. (-) adidas Power Soccer	95%	Blinding, beautiful and brutal!	Easter '96	95%
2. (1) Total NBA '96	94%	Just a bit special	Mar '96	94%
3. (1) Actua Soccer	94%	Everyone's football fantasy!	Feb '96	92%
4. (1) Striker '96	89%	Not close enough to Actua to challenge	Nov '95	87%
5. (5) Boxer's Road	82%	Great boxing action – eventually	Nov '95	82%
6. (-) NBA Live '96	82%	Quite sluggish, but a good all rounder	May'96	82%
7. (4) PGA Tour '96	86%	Lack of variety is now a problem	Dec '95	80%
8. (-) NBA In The Zone	79%	Won't last a full season	Mar '96	79%
9. (5) FIFA '96	81%	Eventually, it gets irritating	Jan '96	78%
10. (7) NHL Face Off	78%	NHL '96 without the... er, '96!	Feb '96	78%

Others

NBA Jam: TE 90% (Nov '95) NFL Game Day 73% (Feb '96) World Cup Golf 72% (Mar '96) Goalstorm 69% (Dec '95) J - League Winning Eleven 66% (Nov '95) Ground Stroke Tennis 65% (Nov '95) Prime Goal Ex 62% (Dec '95) Hyper Formation Soccer 50% (Jan '96) King Bowling 37% (Dec '95) Champion Wrestler 52% (May '96)

Strategy/Adventure Games



1. (-) Worms	92%	Relentless wormy warfare action	Nov '95	92%
2. (1) Defcon 5	88%	Don't throw away the manual	Jan '96	88%
3. (2) Theme Park	86%	More fun than Thorpe Park	Nov '95	86%
4. (-) X-COM	82%	Very involving, but quite complicated	Easter '96	82%
5. (3) Alone in the Dark	77%	A disappointing conversion of a classic	Feb '96	77%
6. (-) King's Field	77%	Challenging RPG that's slightly flawed	Easter '96	77%
7. (-) Brain Dead 13	74%	Top cartoon adventure, but quite frustrating	May '96	74%
8. (4) Discworld	74%	Just don't mention the monkey!	Nov '95	74%
9. (5) 3D Lemmings	69%	Nice idea, but not for me	Nov '95	69%
10. (-) Myst	68%	Nice looking, but ultimately dull	May '96	68%

Others

Cyberia 67% (Feb '96) Hebereke's Popoitto 43% (Dec '95)

Racers



1. (1) Wipeout	94%	Still way up there!	Nov '95	95%
2. (-) The Need For Speed	94%	Scorching split screen racing	Easter '96	94%
3. (-) Ridge Racer Revolution PAL	90%	Revolution is a must buy!	May '96	90%
4. (2) Ridge Racer Revolution	93%	Good, but could have been so much more	Feb '96	90%
5. (3) Ridge Racer	93%	Buy the update... it's better!	Nov '95	84%
6. (4) Destruction Derby	86%	Fun, but durability is a problem	Nov '95	81%
7. (-) Impact Racing	87%	Not enough variety to be top class	Mar '96	80%
8. (6) Twisted Metal	78%	Slams on the brakes too early	Dec '95	78%
9. (5) Hi-Octane	80%	OK for one player	Jan '96	76%
10. (-) Road Rash	75%	Fast, addictive, and just plain brilliant!	Mar '96	75%

Others

ESPN Extreme Sports 73% (Dec '95) Cyberspeed 65% (Dec '95) Motor Toon GP 60% (Sum '95)

Platformers

1. (-) Rayman	87%	Broken free of the pack	Nov '95	87%
2. (-) Jumping Flash	87%	Addictive & surprisingly challenging. Smart!	Nov '95	87%
3. (3) Johnny Bazookatone	85%	Very playable, but eventually a little tiresome	Feb '96	79%
4. (-) Gex	76%	A bit too slimy!	Easter '96	76%
5. (2) Herme Hopperhead	53%	Unacceptable fodder	Dec '95	53%

Pinball

1. (-) True Pinball	85%	Realistic, playable – almost the real thing	Mar '96	85%
2. (-) Extreme Pinball	54%	Don't flip out over this one	May'96	54%

Interactive Movies

1. (-) Wing Commander 3	82%	Obi-Wan would be proud!	Easter '96	82%
2. (-) D	69%	Short lived thrills 'n spills	Easter '96	69%

Combat Flight Sims

1. (-) Agile Warrior	79%	Crash 'n' burn baby!	Feb '96	79%
2. (1) Air Combat	81%	Even a lobotimised tortoise could fly this	Dec '95	78%
3. (2) Ace Combat	79%	*Air Combat* in Japanese	Nov '95	76%
4. (-) Sidewinder	74%	Low on action, but pretty realistic	Easter '96	74%

So there you have it – the definitive guide to PlayStation games. Do you agree with our revisied ratings? Have you just bought a game and found that your impression was radically different to ours? Why not drop us a line and tell us? Letters to Arena please.

In Fast Eddie's with... Archer MacLean

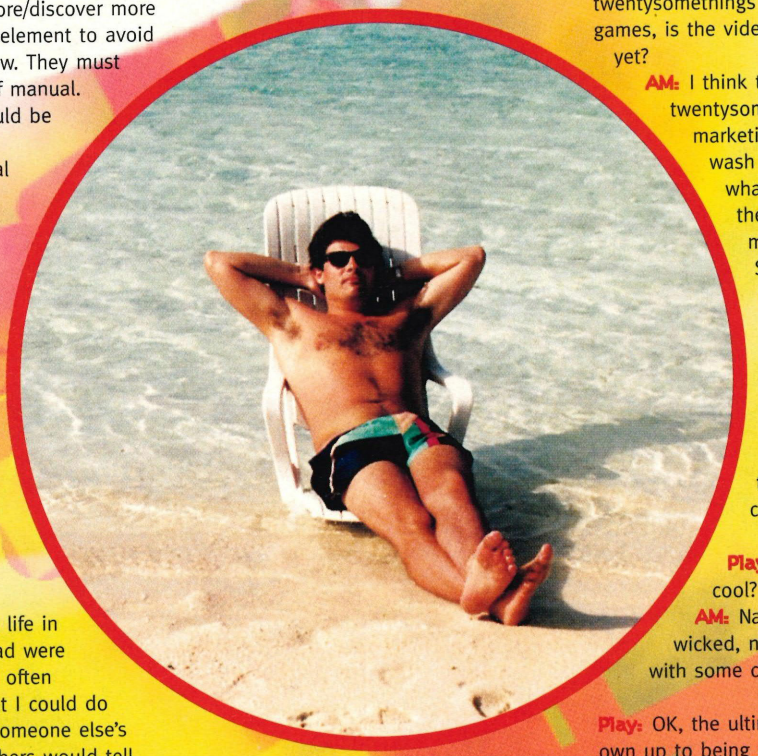
Dropzone-author Archer MacLean is one of the few true stars in the gaming industry, his last game being top five hit _Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker_. Archer's signed up to Virgin on PlayStation and to celebrate we took him out for a chat at Bournemouth's Fast Eddie's – the only all-day caff in the world to offer a 147 Clearance on the menu. How apt.

A 147 clearance if you please garcon, and don't spare the bread 'n buppy!

Play: What makes a good game?
AM: That used to be the £32,768 question, although it's more like the £1,0-48,576 one now. You can't pin it down to any one thing, otherwise life would be easy. I have quite often got a rough idea up and running, then tested it out on others for their feedback. I think good games have to be easy to pick up, but hard to master. They should draw you in within a few minutes so that you want to do more/play more/discover more etc, and have a random element to avoid boringly similar game flow. They must not require 500 pages of manual. The control method should be totally thought-out, with immediate sonic or visual feedback, with in game help screens if required. The player should never be left wondering what to do or what he's done wrong, and the game enviroment must have no holes.

Play: How do you decide which ideas to work on?
AM: Ten years ago I would get inspiration from any number of sources, be it films, cartoons, games, or just life in general. Many ideas I had were simply impossible, but I often found myself feeling that I could do something better than someone else's effort, at which point others would tell me it's still technically impossible and I'm being egotistical, but I would go off and single-handedly prove them wrong, whilst earning a few quid at the same time. Nowadays, games hardware is advancing at such a rate that my more ambitious ideas are actually going to be possible, but not without working with a team to finish it in before the century runs out. I am currently undergoing a shift from being a one man band to a muti-person team, and refining raw ideas by brainstorming with others.

Play: Why do so many games simply seem to be variants on a successful formulas – is it hardware limitations, lack of imagination or something else?
AM: These days it's more likely to be the something else category. For example, games players and mags demand ever bigger games which need huge development budgets. But, publishers are now far more reluctant to back an untested game design, when they know a lesser commercial risk will be to enhance an older tried and tested formula. It's also easier at retail to sell something familiar.



Play: Video games were once famously labelled the new rock 'n' roll, what happened?
AM: All the drum bangers who said that then, are now working for the *Guardian*, and rattling on about how wonderful the virtual digital super highway Internet reality stuff is (not! – at the moment anyway.)

Play: What's the most rock 'n' roll thing you've ever done, and did you respect yourself in the morning?
AM: I didn't stop the next morning, And yes I did. So did they.

Play: Sony is trying to make the PlayStation cool, and bring twentysomethings back into video games, is the video games industry cool yet?
AM: I think the twentysomething/cool stuff is a marketing exercise to brain wash us into buying more of whatever. Besides, Sony themselves have been making us aware of the S.A.P.S with some very uncool imagery on TV. Ideally, the industry should be developing outstanding games that are so cool that punters HAVE to buy the machine to play them. Then things could really shift.

Play: Is the PlayStation cool?
AM: Nah. But it is a well wicked, nicely sorted piece of kit with some cracking games.

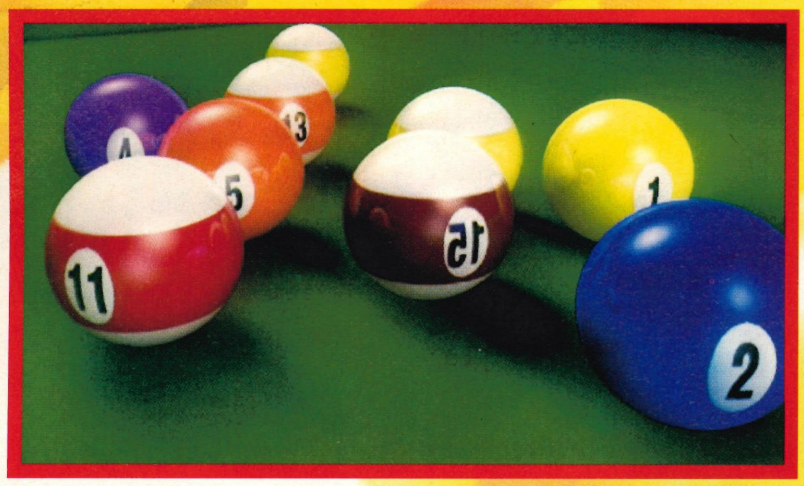
Play: OK, the ultimate question, do you own up to being a computer programmer at parties?
AM: Nope. If forced, I admit to being a cat burgular after their charms. But that's a bit slimy, so if Plan B doesn't work out, then it's time for Plan C, which involves impressive stuff like Games Guru or Interactive Entertainment conceptualizer. In fact, anything that doesn't conjure up images of a Dwight P Dibbley computer programmer.

Play: You've been very quiet on the PlayStation front. Can you tell us what

PLAY information

- **Name:** Archer MacLean
- **Job Title:** Boss, Awesome Developments
- **Fave Meal:** Tough one. But, egg and chips, pizza with everything at once, a huge roast etc.
- **Fave Game:** *Duke Nukem* at the moment, waiting for *F1GP2*.

▼ **Believe it or not this is a mock-up screenshot of Archer Maclean's next game, which is top secret, but if we had our way would be a complete pub simulator.**



you're doing for it? (The Terry Wogan "and your new book is" bit)

AM: We are starting work on two PlayStation titles. The first project incorporates a number of games including a monster revision to my last titles, *Snooker* and *Pool*, and the ideas for it are graphically very ambitious whilst the gameplay is a huge natural extension on a proven design. The second project is going to be an awesome true 3-D world with interaction with almost everything. Besides the fancy graphics, it will be fast paced and very addictive. But it is going to take a couple of years to sort out. Anyway, you'll be the first to know when there is something respectable to look at.

Play: We hear you really get off on having 600bhp of missile engine thrusting you along. Explain!

AM: OK here goes. Anyone who is hooked on *Daytona* or *Sega Rally* would give their right arm to do it for real. So, I've got this old group B Rally car, the "no rules" formula that was banned in 1986 for being too outrageous. It's a machine with a singular purpose, and wasn't designed with comfort in mind. It's a mid engined, lightweight, two seater, covered in ducts, inlets, scoops, oars, spoilers, fins and vents. It looks like nothing else on the planet. You sit strapped into a four point harness inside a roll cage, with four wheel drive, monster brakes and something like 600bhp to push you along. Believe me, this thing sounds angry when idling. Wind it up, and it sounds like a jet fighter with the afterburner on, and a Patriot missile can't catch it! And trying to keep it pointing the right way around Silverstone is a real fix, but unlike *Daytona*, you don't see "Wrong Way" printed up on the windscreen. Unfortunately, it doesn't cost 50p a game and it only does four mpg. And yes, I do give lifts to anyone who looks like they need frightening.

Play: Right, finishing up, can you list the following in order – cash, cars, beer, football, video games, sex?

AM: Er nope. Tricky one that. What is the difference?

Play: Stranded on a desert island time, big enough for its own Grand Prix circuit. Pick the most desirable combination of track, car, partner, drink, video game and games machine.

AM: Well it would have to be a bloody big island to get all 14 miles of the old Nurburgring race track on it, and the car would have to be something like a CanAm racer with at least 1,000 + bhp. As for the partner bit, I'll plead the 5th amendment, and besides Liz Hurley has been nominated by previous interviewees. I couldn't pin down one drink, so I'd like a well stuffed American style walk-in fridge that makes cubes. If I had any time for games, I'd need two machines to play DeathMatch *Doom* or *Duke Nukem 3D*, plus a level designer. I'd appreciate a supply of Bounty bars too.

▼ **Archer's prized Ferrari. Here shown with a disenchanted youth nearby about to throw a 50 pence coin at it. Jealous, moi?**





Played Out...

Another incredible issue of PLAY, the world's greatest PlayStation magazine, out of the way. We hope you enjoyed reading it as much as we enjoyed writing the bugger. But a retrospective is not what this page is all about – you want to know what splendiferous features we've got lined up for you next month, right? Well how about this...



Resident Evil

Crush, maim, and bursting its way onto the PlayStation next month is Capcom's blood drenched zombie movie, *Resident Evil*, a 3-D adventure that looks set to consign the myth that consoles are just for kids because it's fill to the brim with enough gory moments to send even George A Romero dashing for the sick bucket!

Resident Evil promises to be the best PlayStation game yet and just to prove how important we think it is, we'll be giving it a good going over with an eight page review explaining every aspect of the game in all its uncensored glory. Have your throat ripped out by satanic devil dogs, ham-strings chewed off by a salivating ghoul, and guts dined on by a group of mumbling zombies next month with the full review of *Resident Evil*. It's going to be a thriller!

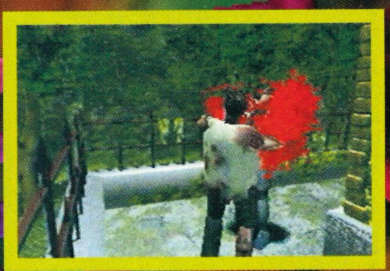
Compo winners

adidas Power Soccer

Claiming an awesome first prize of two train and match tickets, plus a replica football shirt is Ireland-loving fan... Jeremy Morais from York.

Four winners of replica shirts are Neil Vincent (East Ham, London), Daniel Walmsley (Pinner), Steve J Pickup (Blackburn) and David Douglas (Darlington). Congratulations all.





Plus!

Time Commando, Super Sonic Racers, Spycraft, Blast Chamber, Exhumed, Die Hard Trilogy, Dungeon Keeper, Deathtrap Dungeon, Le Mans, Soviet Strike, Actua Golf, Project Overkill, Worms: Reinforcements, Crypt Killer, Command & Conquer, Chronicles of the Sword, Sim City 2000, X-Com3: Apocalypse, F1, Destruction Derby 2 and all the latest news from the biggest European computer trade show – the ECTS.

PlayStation games a-plenty in issue eight of PLAY magazine, on sale 23 May – don't you dare miss it because it's got some exclusive news on a game that will change the face of the PlayStation.

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Please answer the following

	TRUE	FALSE
M2 IS A MOTORWAY!	☐	☐
ULTRA IS A WASHING POWDER!	☐	☐
JAGUAR IS A BIG BLACK PUSSY!	☐	☐
SATURN IS A PLANET!	☐	☐
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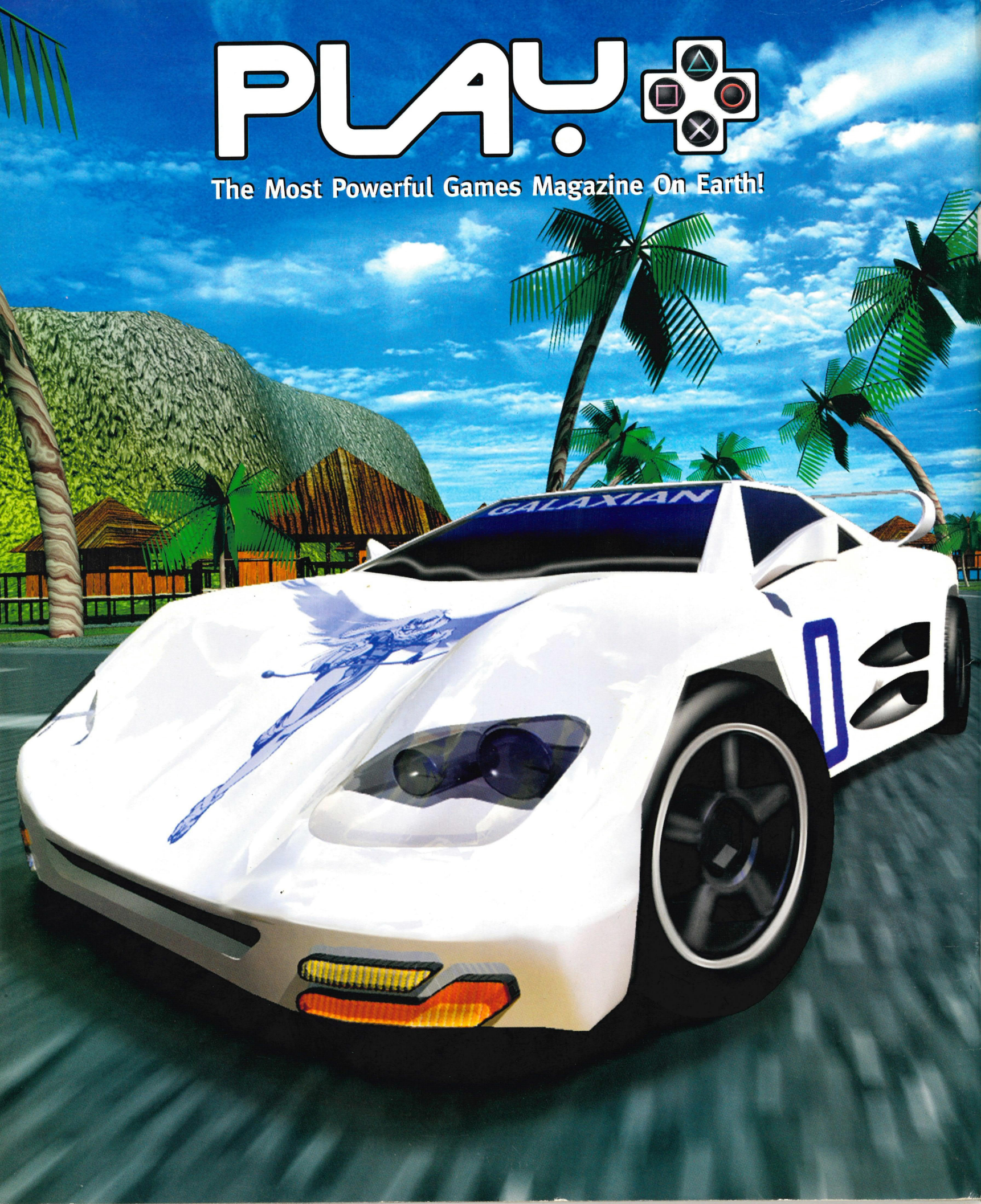
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