

FIFA '97 · STREET FIGHTER ZERO 2 REVIEW! · AREA 51

issue twelve october '96

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PLAY

UK's Fastest Growing PLAYSTATION Magazine!

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The coin-op quality racer screams onto PlayStation!

FIRST UK REVIEW

RESIDENT EVIL 2



FIRST news on Capcom's super sequel!

IMPORT INVASION!

EXCLUSIVE ten pages of oriental madness inside!

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TM



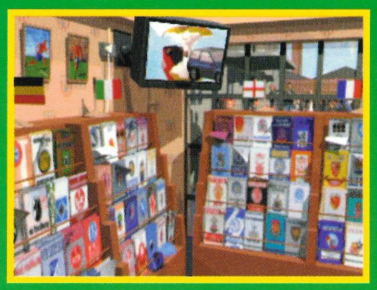
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SQUARESOFT

Six new games from the top Japanese developer and we've seen 'em all!











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elite

PlayStation

Some soccer games just look beautiful...



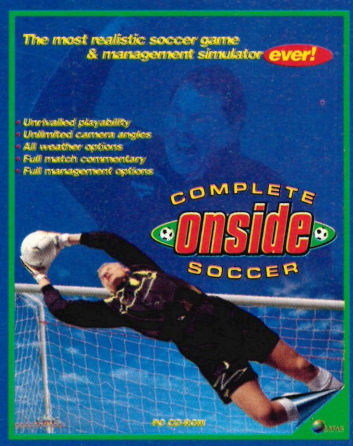
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TOTAL PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE



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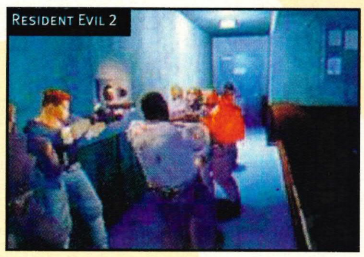
TELSTAR Electronic Studios

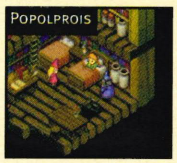
BIG in Japan













20 Seven pages of unadulterated coverage of the Japanese gaming scene. Find out what's going to be big at the Tokyo Games Show, gorge yourself with a huge feature on *Final Fantasy VII* and then wash it all down with *Resident Evil 2*!

FINAL FANTASY VII







5 WAYS TO CONTACT PLAY!

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Home page: http://www.paragon.co.uk/play/
Tel: (01202)200228 (5-6pm weekdays only!)

THE REGULARS...

PLAYSTATION WIRED
06 We cast a topical eye over the very latest news stories breaking on Planet PlayStation. Brand new games you've never heard of, secret sequels, new peripherals – the bloomin' lot!

WALL OF GAME
49 A selection of ultra-useful cheats and tactics for you to pull out of the mag and stick on the wall until wretched. This month the epic *Tekken 2* and the first part of our complete moves guide for every single character.

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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.

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94 Want to know the games that PLAY really rates? Then you'd better turn to Playback, where we've rated the ten best games in each genre. Sports, shoot-'em-ups, racing games – they're all there in this handy buyers' guide.

A PIE AT LEEDS FC WITH...
96 This month we corner Team 17's development manager, Martyn Brown who has taken the Ossett based to new heights (hand over the money now, Martyn, was that alright?)

inside PLAY issue twelve

Best selling Unofficial PLAYSTATION Magazine!

FIGHTING FRENZY!



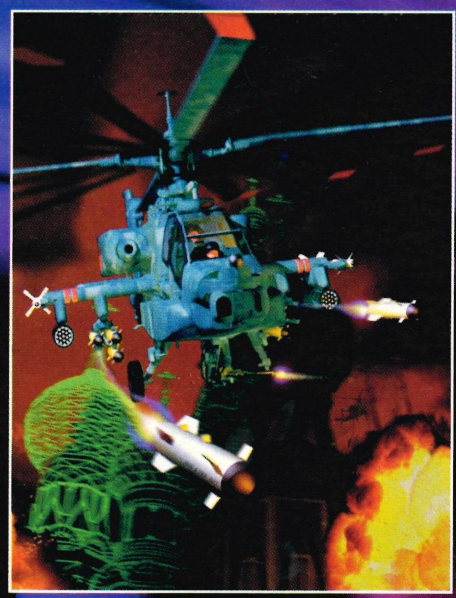
44 SquareSoft prove that you don't have to be Capcom or Namco to produce a brilliant beat-'em-up.

BURNING ROAD

EXCLUSIVE!

40 Exclusive review of the greatest balls-out racing game since *Ridge Racer Revolution!*





SOVIET STRIKE

36 Big helicopters, lots of explosions, Vodka quaffed in large amounts. *Soviet Strike* is here!

STREET FIGHTER ZERO 2



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RESIDENT EVIL 2

06 Exclusive pictures and news on Capcom's super sequel. You won't find it anywhere else!

WIN!

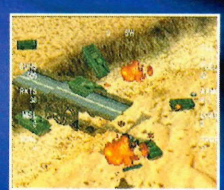
17 A complete surround sound system and copies of *Formula 1*

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

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WIRED UP

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

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PLAYSTATION WIRE

all things p

news • snippets • rumours • h

WORLD FIRST shots of *Resident Evil 2* came in right on the wire, just as this issue of PLAY was going to print. What you have in your hands is the first news and pictures of the follow-up to Capcom's million selling horror adventure game. No-one else even came close.

In our ceaseless search for the very latest news stories from around the globe we have uncovered many gems but this must be the most exciting yet. With such a magnificent beginning to PLAY issue twelve, can you handle a hundred more pages of pure unadulterated PSX power?

This month we've had the superlative *Tobal No.1* from SquareSoft. The best beat-'em-up on the PlayStation we thought, until *Street Fighter Zero 2* arrived on import (VIE will be releasing officially at the end of the year and they will sell bucket-loads!). *SFZ2* is the most intuitive, playable and downright competitive game ever.

And before I go off to play my exclusive copy of the top racer, *Burning Road*, or perhaps marvel at *Final Fantasy VII* again, I'd also like to bring your attention to the fact that for your £2.95 this month we've given you two FREE double sided posters AND a FREE 64-page tips and solutions book (only in some countries – sorry!). Hope you enjoy them. Thanks for reading PLAY – the 100% unofficial PlayStation magazine.

Damian Butt
Editor



RESIDEN

CAPCOM'S SUPER SEQUEL, AMONG OTHERS, WAS SHOWN IN JAPAN FOR THE FIRST TIME THIS MONTH AND PLAY WAS THERE!

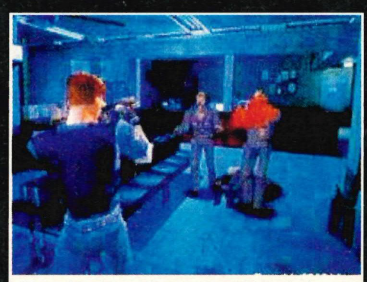
BIOHAZARD 2

JAPANESE software giants Capcom recently held a press conference at the Tokyo Game Show to unveil a number of important new titles scheduled to be released for both arcades and home consoles over the next 12 months.

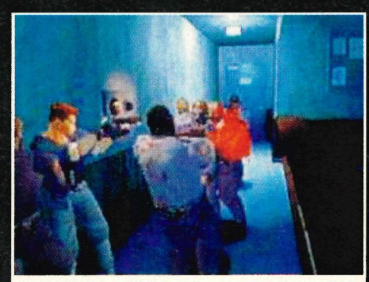
Easily the most anticipated video game sequel ever, *Biohazard 2* (*Resident Evil 2*) is already nearing completion and will be hitting the stores in Japan before Christmas, followed by the US in Spring '97. During the press conference, developers showed a three minute video tape which blew journalists away with extensive in-game footage. From the information we've received, it's safe to say that *Resident Evil 2* should be an even bigger hit than its predecessor.

Just as went to press our intrepid news team managed to uncover some super-secret plotlines for Capcom's forthcoming gorefest. Utilising the same basic game engine as the original, *Resident Evil 2* begins back in Racoon City where the sinister Umbrella Corporation (responsible for the chaos in the first title) is under investigation concerning the testing of biological weapons.

Then, two months after the project had apparently been terminated, Racoon City itself comes under attack from a deadly zombie army. Within a matter of weeks, the entire town has received the undead treatment and the only survivors are rookie cop, Leon S Kennedy, and Racoon University student, and motorcycle racer, Elza Walker. *Resident Evil 2* commences in the Raccoon City Police Department where poor old Leon is surrounded by his reanimated flesh-eating colleagues. As with any great horror flick, help arrives in the nick of time as Elza bursts through the front



[ABOVE] **And here they are – world exclusive shots of *Resident Evil 2*, taken from level one.**



[ABOVE] ***RE 2* will be set in town locations which have been overrun by zombies.**



RESIDENT EVIL 2!

EXCLUSIVE!

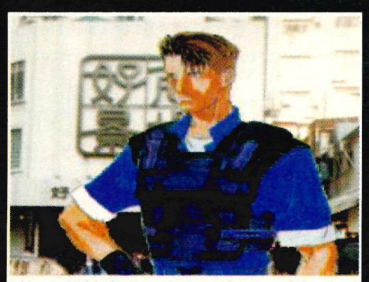
door riding her chopper.

Capcom is promising that *Resident Evil 2* will now boast multiple characters onscreen, for instance the initial opening sequence sees Leon tackling six zombies at once! As players are attacked, their clothes will become shredded and as monsters are dispatched at close range, your outfit remains blood-stained for the rest of the game. Talking of clothes, apparently your character's costume changes when they collect armour, flak jackets and other outfits. A cool touch, we're sure you'll agree.

Resident Evil 2 is now scheduled for a March '97 release in Japan, with those lucky sods in the US getting the terrifying treatment roughly a month later. There's still no word on a PAL release, but Virgin has definitely picked up the rights to this shocking sequel so we should have more information soon.

We have also heard that *X-Men VS Street Fighter* is on the cards. Yep, you read that correctly. Marvel's merry mutants are all set to go head-to-head against the world warriors in the beat-'em-up of the decade. Opinion in the PLAY office is already divided over Capcom's decision to mix these two titles, but one thing's for sure, *X-Men VS Street Fighter* will be one game you won't want to miss.

So far there are 16 characters to select (no word on bosses as yet) and these are, from the *X-Men*: Cyclops, Wolverine, Storm, Juggernaut, Magneto and three new faces, Gambit, Rogue and Sabretooth. On the *Street Fighter* side there's Ryu, Ken, Chun-Li, Zangief, Dhalsim, Charlie, M. Bison and a re-drawn Cammy from *SSFII*. Gameplay is similar to *X-Men: Children of the Atom*, with super-high jumps and mid-air combos, but more intriguing is the "Variable Attack System". This allows players to choose two fighters and switch between them, tag-team style, as well as perform devastating combos. Expect both *Street Fighter Zero 2 Alpha* and *X-Men VS Street Fighter* to hit UK arcades before the end of the year.



[ABOVE] **This is Leon S Kennedy, one of the two new characters in *Resident Evil 2*.**



[ABOVE] ***Biohazard 2* (*Resident Evil 2*) is thought to be being shown at the Tokyo Games show.**



X-MEN VS STREET FIGHTER

INTERNATIONAL PLAY BOYS

WHO TO CONTACT AT PLAY MAGAZINE...



DAMIAN BUTT

Damian is the editor and is therefore responsible for everything that goes into the mag (God help us!). Send your letters/complaints/congratulations to **play@paragon.co.uk**, or mark letters for his attention.



ASAM AHMAD

Games, games and more games. Asam is your man if you want to know what's coming out and when, or especially a technical query. Send your letters to him now. Or e-mail **caveman@paragon.co.uk.**



MATT YEO

Matt is the undisputed king of *Tekken 2*, in fact a master of all beat-'em-ups really. There is no better gamesplayer. Contact Matt for tips and gaming advice. E-mail **myeo@paragon.co.uk.**

NOZIN' AROUND

NOZIN' AROUND

RUMOURS WE can't substantiate, whispers of secret projects, general snooping, that's what this regular column is all about – we'll do our utmost to find out all the juicy titbits that the Sony PlayStation has to offer.

We have heard that coin-op giant, Williams, is alledgely planning to release *Arcade's Greatest Hits Vol 2&3*. after the success of *Vol 1* which featured *Defender*, *Robotron* and Joust (among others). The new compilations are thought to include such household names as *Missile command*, *Centipede*, *Tempest*, *Tapper*, *Spy Hunter* (yes!) and *Asteroids*.

Rumours also abound that Capcom are thinking of releasing their old coin-op back catalogue, perhaps in compilation form, for the PlayStation. We have no details on prospective titles, but personally we'd hedge our bets with *Bionic Commandos*, *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts*, *1942*, *Final Fight* and maybe even the original *Street Fighter*.

Apparently, the RAC are using *Ridge Racer Revolution* to cure drivers of road rage, particularly at stressful driving times such as Bank Holidays. This is a joint collaboration between the motoring organisation and Sony, who know a chance to grab some headlines when they see it.

A partly finished version of the *Tekken 3* coin-op is believed to be being shown at the Tokyo games show on the 22-24 August. We'll have a full report next issue.

Activision are alledgedly releasing the Japanese wrestling game *Powermove Pro Wrestling* in the UK. The game has 12 chubby blokes running around in tights as you would expect and each has a vast repetoire of moves. News soon.

THE FUTURE OF PlayStation DEMOS?

GAME DEMOS in the UK are a bloody shambles! But as usual, Japan is showing the way. At present in the UK there is only one way to get hold of PlayStation game demos and that's on a single magazine. All other magazines are prevented from cover-mounting demos because Sony set the price prohibitably high, deliberately so. Unlike the PC scene, where anyone can cover-mount the latest game demos as long as they have a CD writer, every PSX demo must be scrupulously vetted by Sony and then duplicated soley by them. The problems with this monopoly are obvious. Sony has precious few duplicating slots for third party games, let alone demos of as well, and there are only so many CDs that can be duplicated from just one plant. The sad fact is that if you want a demo, you may have to wait a couple of months for it to go through Sony and by then the game itself is either out, or the press have lost interest. Look at the demos disks already available. Oh sure there are a few cool playable games around, but the majority of them are filled with old demos just to make the CDs worth the money. A CD can hold 600Mb of data remember, and your average PSX demo takes up but a fraction. With so many demos needing similar production slots to be included on the same month's demo disk, is it any wonder that you, the public, are so often disappointed when the demo you've been waiting for doesn't materialise? You might think this is a problem for Sony worldwide, but you'd be dead wrong.

This issue of PLAY features a review of the Jap import, *Tobal No.1*, by SquareSoft, and if you read it carefully you will find mention of a demo disk bundled with the full copy of the game showing some of Square's new year releases. The white disk features a fully playable mini-demo of Square's incredible *Final Fantasy VII* (including an amazing intro sequence), plus rolling looks at *Final Fantasy Tactics*, *Bushido Blade* and *SaGa Frontier*. It certainly makes *Tobal No.1* even better value for money, and for the cost of a CD Square has a captive audience who can start saving their pennies based on this sneak preview.

Capcom, the makers of *Street Fighter Zero 2* (also reviewed this issue) has gone a step further by including a running demo of their RPG, *Breath of Fire III* on the options screen of the actual game disk. Surely this is the way all software companies should present their future products. It's cheap, is beamed directly to a target audience, and more importantly, it makes games better value for money. Let's face it, if you're paying £50 for *Resident Evil*, surely a peak at the sequel, or Capcom's other games is not much to ask is it? Tell us what you think of the PSX demo situation.





[ABOVE] **A playable *Final Fantasy VII* demo came free with our import copy of *Tobal No.1*.**



[ABOVE] **And *Street Fighter Zero 2* had *Breath of Fire III* included in the game code. Cool.**

IN(DISRUPTOR)BLE

INTERPLAY SNAP UP UNIVERSAL'S FIRST TITLE

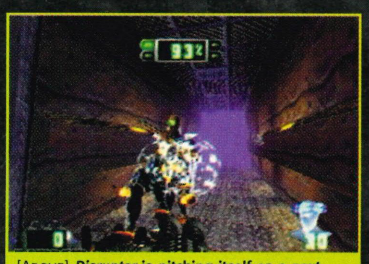
TENECIOUS as ever, we couldn't rest until we'd found out who had signed up Universal Interactive's first game, *Disruptor*, for the UK. Interplay is releasing it officially and we now know that in the game you are a LightStormer trooper employed by the New Solar Government to vanquish its many enemies. Apart from an impressive array of conventional weapons (pistol, laser, plasma gun, machine gun) you can also use the power of your mind to exterminate enemy soldiers and move switches to progress. The FMV in the game has been handed over to the MCA Corporation (a movie subsidiary of Universal pictures) and so hopes are high for something truly cinematic. *Disruptor* certainly looks like something usually found dangling from a canine and it is set for a US release in October. Review soon.



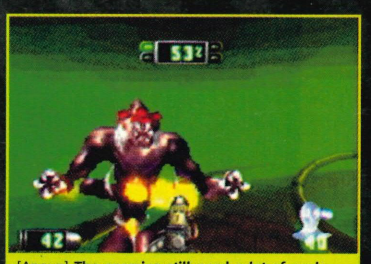
[ABOVE] **Armed with a laser weapon you enter an illusion tunnel which messes with your mind.**



[ABOVE] **One of the levels is set in an ice world and the rendered ice blocks are amazing.**



[ABOVE] ***Disruptor* is pitching itself as a next generation *Doom* game with a brain.**



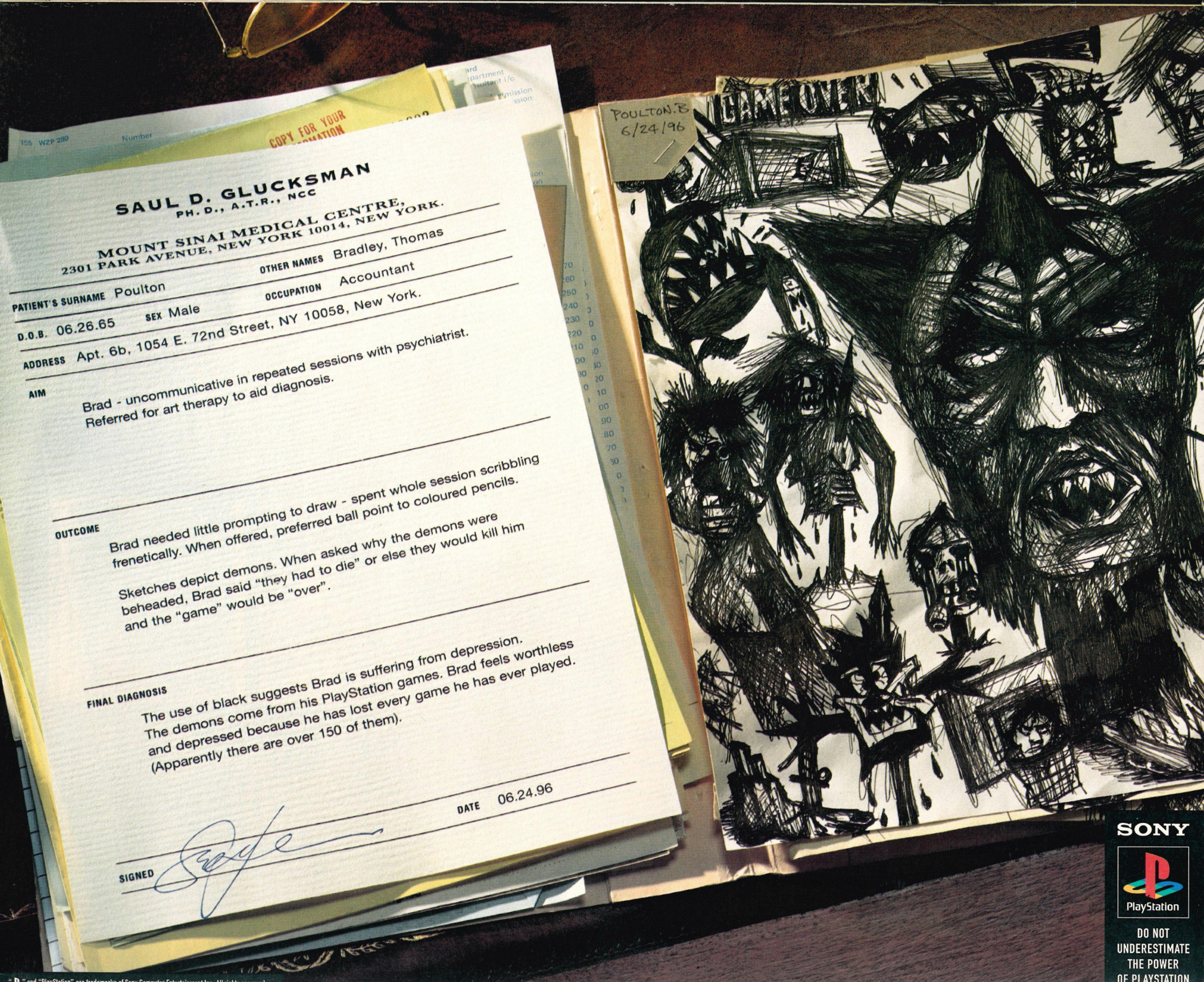
[ABOVE] **The enemies still need a lot of work though. I mean what the hell is this?**

BOTTY

BOLT ON robot games are suddenly all the rage. After *Mechwarrior* and *Robopit*, Sony is offering gamers *Carnage Heart*, an attractive looking shoot-'em-up that allows you to completely customise your attack force. Set on the moons of Jupiter and in a furious war, you command a team of battle robots with four different bodies and nine weapons which can be mix 'n' matched at will. You can even save your tank/robot /whatever to a memory card and then challenge a mate head-to-head. *Carnage Heart* is set for release at the end of the year.

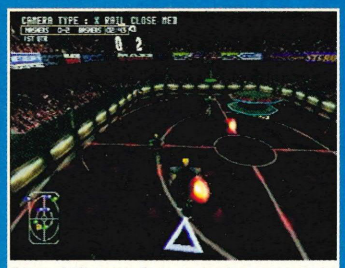


[ABOVE] ***Carnage Heart* from Sony, a big robot game with mix 'n' match elements...**

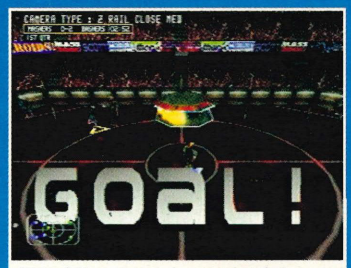

SAUL D. GLUCKSMAN
PH. D., A.T.R., NCC
MOUNT SINAI MEDICAL CENTRE,
2301 PARK AVENUE, NEW YORK 10014, NEW YORK.
PATIENT'S SURNAME Poulton
OTHER NAMES Bradley, Thomas
D.O.B. 06.26.65
SEX Male
OCCUPATION Accountant
ADDRESS Apt. 6b, 1054 E. 72nd Street, NY 10058, New York.
AIM
Brad - uncommunicative in repeated sessions with psychiatrist.
Referred for art therapy to aid diagnosis.
OUTCOME
Brad needed little prompting to draw - spent whole session scribbling frenetically. When offered, preferred ball point to coloured pencils.
Sketches depict demons. When asked why the demons were beheaded, Brad said "they had to die" or else they would kill him and the "game" would be "over".
FINAL DIAGNOSIS
The use of black suggests Brad is suffering from depression. The demons come from his PlayStation games. Brad feels worthless and depressed because he has lost every game he has ever played. (Apparently there are over 150 of them).
SIGNED
DATE 06.24.96
POULTON.B
6/24/96
GAME OVER
SONY
PlayStation
DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF PLAYSTATION

RIOT IMMINENT

RIOT from Psygnosis is a futuristic *Rollerball*-style sports game which could prove to be the *Speedball 2* for the PlayStation. The game (still in early development and nowhere near complete) features all the options and views you've become accustomed to with EA Sports titles, but adds a much needed violent element. Selecting one of the many death-dealing teams, the object is to score goals by first charging up the ball in your team colour (via a recepticle at the track side) and then hurl it at a massive rotating goal suspended in the middle of the pitch. Added high jinx ensue as your opponent can temporarily invoke a shield in front of the goal to block your shots. Sounds interesting and we'll have more news on *Riot* next issue.



[ABOVE] **All sports features are here – scanner, triangle showing controlled player, crowd...**



[ABOVE] **Players score by ramming their coloured ball into the floating goal, like this.**

SONY DISK SWAP SHOCK!

OI! What's happened to all those free demo disks you promised us Sony? If you've bought a brand new PlayStation then you can't have failed to notice a FREE disk included in the box with some demos of the early Sony releases such as *Ridge Racer*, *Toshinden* and *Wipeout*. But did you know that this disk has now changed? Yep, the latest disk being bundled with the console contains playable demos of *Tekken 2*, *Ridge Racer Revolution* and even trailers for movies, the first one being *The Net*, starring Sandra Bullock. This raised all sorts of questions, notably, what happened to all those FREE disks that Sony was meant to be mailing out if you registered as an owner? We have not heard of a single PlayStation owner who has received this or any other new disk through the post since sending off their card. Our Japanese correspondant regularly sends us new of disks that he has received which feature not only playable demos of the very latest games, but also adverts for other products, interviews with developers, and music tracks. Isn't it about time we got the same priviledged treatment?

If you've seen a new disk, or indeed had something new from Sony this month, please let us know. We believe that playable demos should be either freely distributed among all PlayStation magazines (for the cost of a CD, not three times the price Sony), or given away FREE to registered users. We should not be expected to pay for them as well as front the cost of a £50 game. Come on Sony, if you can afford to lower the price of the PlayStation by £100, surely something extra for loyal users is not much to ask?







[ABOVE] **The new disk features playable demos of *Tekken 2*, *Descent* and *Ridge Racer Revolution*.**



VIRGIN SNAP UP STAR GLADIATORS

LUCKY sods that they are, Virgin has managed to nab the rights to publish Capcom's first 3-D beat-'em-up, *Star Gladiators*. We were recently treated to a hands-on playtest of this potentially huge fighter and came away suitably impressed by the blinding speed, motion-blurred weapon effects and solid gameplay, the latter being the trademark of any Capcom beat-'em-up.

Even though the game was running at a mere 30fps, characters moved incredibly smoothly thanks to some clever motion capture, and even at this early stage it's safe to say that *Star Gladiators* will be a monster hit. The Japanese version has been directly converted from the recent coin-op of the same name and should be hitting the streets over there in early November.





[ABOVE] ***Star Gladiators*** **features nine playable characters plus an end-of-game boss. So there.**

CHARTS

In association with ChartTrack

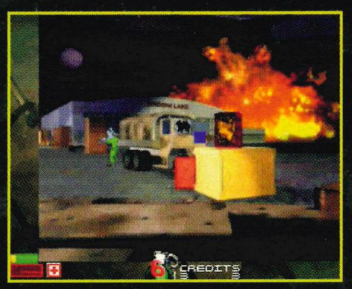
POS	GAME	DEVELOPER	PUBLISHER	PLAY SCORE
1.	RESIDENT EVIL	CAPCOM	VIE	95%
2.	FADE TO BLACK	DELPHINE	KONAMI	90%
3.	RIDGE RACER REV	NAMCO	SONY	90%
4.	INT TRACK & FIELD	KONAMI	KONAMI	85%
5.	OLYMPIC GAMES	US GOLD	EIDOS INT	89%
6.	NAMCO MUSEUM VOL 1	NAMCO	SONY	70%
7.	ALIEN TRILOGY	PROBE	ACCLAIM	91%
8.	NEED FOR SPEED	EA CANADA	EA	94%
9.	FIFA SOCCER '96	EA	EA	78%
10.	SPACE HULK	KEY GAMES	EA	84%

AREA 51 EXISTS!

If *Virtua Cop* style shoot-'em-ups are to your liking then Konami has a treat in store for PlayStation owners. The surprise arcade hit, *Area 51* is currently being giving the home conversion treatment and is scheduled to appear on import sometime in early October. Unlike the polygon delights of the aforementioned *VC*, *Area 51* utilises CG rendered backgrounds, with digitised characters overlaid. The game takes place in the infamous US airbase synonymous with UFO sightings. Players must prevent the spread of an alien virus which has taken over the base, turning soldiers into zombies (hmm, sounds familiar). Konami intends to release its own lightgun for the PlayStation version of *Area 51* and sources tell us that it may even include the recoil feature present in the arcade.













SONY INTO TOP GEAR!

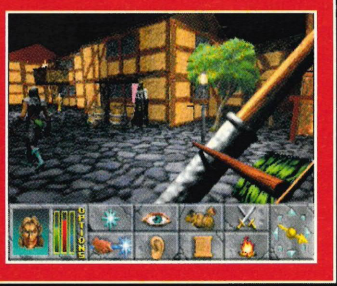
Spotted at the recent Top Gear Live show held at Silverstone was a small but perfectly formed Psygnosis pit garage packed with test versions of *Formula 1*, *Destruction Derby 2*, *Wipeout 2097* and *Monster Trucks*. Sony was also heavily sponsoring the event, with challenges all day and video walls galore during the live shows. A top day out actually.



[Above] **The Psygnosis playtesters even took time out to beat everyone at *Ridge Racer*.**

MOST WANTED

Last issue we told you about *Terminator* from Bethesda, but what about a conversion of *Daggerfall*, their superb adventure using the same engine? *Daggerfall* is a completely open RPG with endless possibilities. If you want to become an assassin, just go out and buy a dark cloak and a knife. Fancy popping to the next town for a fight, well then buy a horse and get bevvied up in the local tavern. There are of course serious objectives to complete, but the really great thing about this game is that you can do them when you want and how you want. *Daggerfall* would set new precidents of gameplay and depth on the PlayStation and we want it converted now!



LOADED!



Ten cool games to while away those torturous CD access times...

1. Pong
2. Painter
3. Missile Command
4. Pac-Man
5. Manic Miner
6. Thrust
7. Trashman
8. Arkanoid
9. Centipede
10. The Hobbit (only joking)

TANK

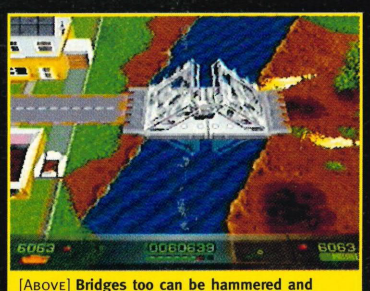
Rommels worldwide will soon have the chance to play tank commander with BMG's forthcoming *Return Fire*-style game, *Tank* (provisional title). *Tank* features much better graphics than the Warner game, and your buggy style instrument of destruction is equipped with multiple weapons systems, notably, missiles, machine guns and the rather fanastic looking flame-thrower, which spews tons of flame at anything it's pointed at. The objective of the game varies, with plenty of varied missions to complete in the one player mode, but hold onto your hats because the two player mode must rate as *Tank's* best feature. Expect a preview soon.



[Above] **The flame-thrower in *Tank* is a truly amazing weapon and shows what the PSX can do.**



[Above] **Buildings, military bases and power stations are just some targets of opportunity.**



[Above] **Bridges too can be hammered and you'll be glad to know your tank is waterproof.**



[Above] ***Tank* promises to be a stunningly playable game, especially in two player mode.**

USA ENTERTAINMENT

ENTERTAINMENT USA



CAT BUCANNON brings you all the news on what's hot in the land of crappy Olympic organising and serial killers.

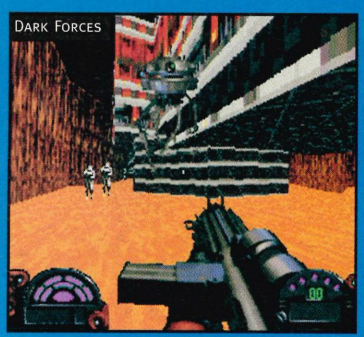
Sculptured Software has been beavering away on a brand new PlayStation for quite some time now, but it is only this month that I was invited for a look and can tell you about it. Rattlesnake Red is a 3-D action game which has been in development for just over a year and even now it is only 30% complete, which gives you an idea of the scale and depth of the game. Sculptured is of course world-reknowned for their development skills and Rattlesnake Red was snapped up by Acclaim and is in fact their only non-licenced game. You play Red, a prospector searching for gold and facing up to 25 different enemies. Although the game is mainly 3-D exploration, there are also some platform elements in the in-door levels. Sculptured is keeping quiet about a release date just yet and who can blame them. I'll give you more news when I get it. One to watch.



Tecmo, who has been quiet for ages has suddenly popped back into the limelight with Deception, an RPG/strategy game based around a deal made with the devil. From what I can tell, you must hold sway over a demonic castle; regularly offering sacrifices to please your Satanic master and you can gradually upgrade your castle to include many different traps and rooms. The game is entirely 3-D generated and looks... interesting, if only to see whether the devil-worshipping antics will upset Religious groups.



And finally. Well I'm told that you guys are not going to see LucasArts' Dark Forces for a while yet, but over here it has been shown in an almost completed state; ready for a US release in the next couple of months. It runs just as smoothly as a high end PC with no loss of detail and it even retains the improved front end of the Macintosh version. I'll tell you what I think when I have the final copy in my hands. Ciao!





[ABOVE] Cat Bucannon – live via satellite in the USA.



PSX FOR ~~£199~~, ~~£129~~, £99!?

ELECTRONIC Boutique has announced that it will be offering PlayStations for £129 in the UK, provided you trade in an as yet undisclosed number of Super NES and Mega Drive carts or Sega Saturn CDs. This move has long been expected because a similar scheme has been in operation in the USA for a number of months, with the PlayStation being offered for the even more attractive price of $99. Many believe that Sony itself will lower the price of the PlayStation yet again just before Christmas in an final move towards mass-market; meaning more owners, but sadly not cheaper games. The incredibly cheap price of the console will mean that the only way Sony can make money is on the software. Bugger!



SSSTRIKE ONE!

STRIKEPOINT from Elite is a 3-D helicopter shoot-'em-up which includes a funky split screen two player mode (see below). You play a pilot in the newly formed Strikepoint team fighting against a diabolical organisation called Hex. Elite says that you can fly up to nine different choppers and that the game shifts up to 50,000 texture mapped polygons at any one time. The only trouble is that *Strikepoint* is up against the might of EA's *Soviet Strike* and Virgin's *Black Dawn*. Oops. Full review next issue.

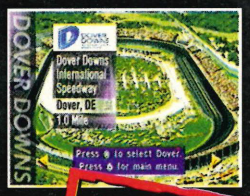


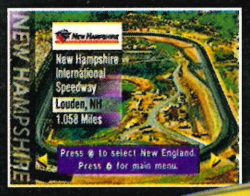


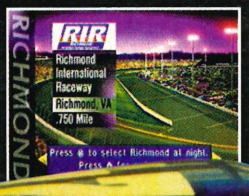
[ABOVE] The nifty two player simultaneous mode allows you to go on bombing raids with your mates, but can *Strikepoint* hope to compete with the likes of *Soviet Strike* and *Black Dawn*? We'll see...

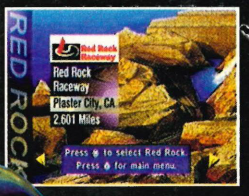












NASCAR RACING

EXCLUSIVE!



FIRST LOOK AT PAPYRUS' TRASH-'EM-UP STOCK CAR SIM!

DESTRUCTION *Derby 2* may have the name on PlayStation, but *NASCAR Racing* by US developers, Papyrus has the heritage and the realism. First released on the PC in 1994, the game is a simulation based on the US sport of stock car racing and it won universal acclaim because the complex 3-D engine allowed you to dent and generally wreck the cars in any way. Wheels fly off, bonnets dent, axles twist and body panels distort in real time and affect the overall handling of the car at pace.

And it's the same for your rivals. Get annoyed by that slow moving lane hogger and you can simply shunt him out of the way; spinning into the side wall at lethal speeds and in a cloud of smoke and mechanical bits. And if you're feeling particularly sadistic you can always overtake the flash red git, pull in front of him and then jam on the brakes; wrecking the front of his car but barely scratching yours. Who needs a bumper anyway?

But of course that's just the emotional side of the game, there's also the cool and collected professional racing angle which offers enough car tweaks and calibrations to comfortably bore the crap out of your mates down the pub. *NASCAR Racing* contains 21 tracks (which includes the entire US season, some fantasy tracks, and some night versions of the more popular circuits. The car physics are entirely accurate (Papyrus are simulation experts) and this means when you hit the wall at 160mph+ – you're sure as hell gonna feel it!

NASCAR Racing features just about everything you'd encounter in the real sport. Black flags for naughty behaviour, pace cars, pits, sponsorship, and you can even connect up a Negcom or a Mad Catz steering wheel for the full effect. *NASCAR Racing* is published by Sierra and is coming out officially at the end of November.



[ABOVE] **A replay mode allows you to view lethal crashes from many different angles.**



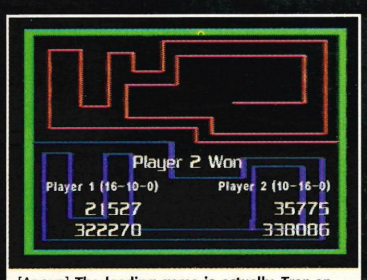
[ABOVE] **While racing you can call up pit details so that they are prepared when you come in.**







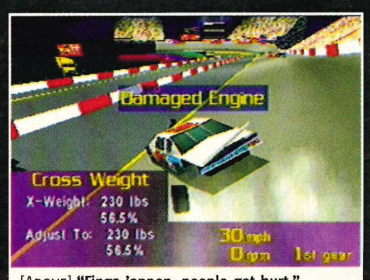




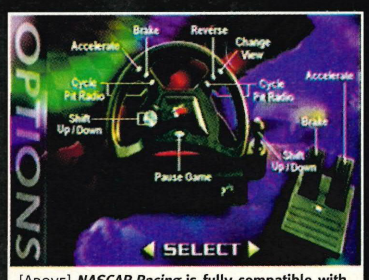
[ABOVE] **The loading game is actually *Tron* on the ZX Spectrum. Nostalgia-tastic mate!**



[ABOVE] **"And yes I think I can see why he's crashed..."**



[ABOVE] **"Fings 'appen, people get hurt." Especially when you drive round backwards!**



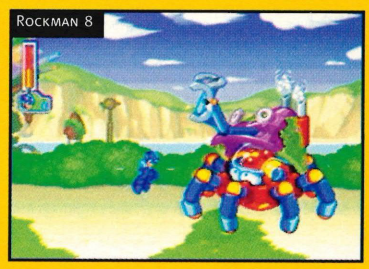
[ABOVE] ***NASCAR Racing*** **is fully compatible with the Mad Catz steering wheel – oh yes!**

JAPS EYE

ALL THE LATEST NEWS from the land of the rising sun brought to you by Konishki San...



Fancy strapping a plank of wood to your feet and plunging headfirst down the nearest snow-covered incline? You do, well then you'll be glad to hear that Tokyo based, UEP, has just unveiled its latest game (said to have been picked up by Sony to publish worldwide) – Coolboarders. This is a 3-D snow boarding action game which features lightning fast runs, bonus points for cool aeriel moves and tricks, and realistic texture mapped mountain courses. The word on the Tokyo subway is that Electronic Arts in America are also developing a snow-boarding game called *Shred-Fest*, and so the race is on to see who can get it out first.



The Japanese press over here are currently going nuts over Rockman 8 which is of course the latest Capcom platform game to feature the Rockman character (he is called *Megaman* everwhere else). This has to be the longest running videogame series ever, if you don't count the many different incarnations of Mario, and the latest game (due out next here in Japan) features more of the same action as the past seven games. The big news is that this game is on PlayStation and makes use of the more powerful hardware by having huge animated bosses, and even some racing sections with Rockman using a floating skateboard to get around.



Bushido Blade from SquareSoft is one of the demos found on the disk that comes FREE with *Tobal No.1* but you couldn't play it. Well now it is being shown to the Japanese press in a more advanced form and it looks incredible. The 3-D characters have been specifically designed so that different sword hits affect your future performance, so for instance if you get slashed badly in the arm, you cannot use it for the rest of the match, and may even have to change sword arms. This has to be the first sword-based combat game on the PSX and Square is certainly pulling no punches, with many different moves for each character (the exact number has not been decided on yet), and large arenas which can be used to your advantage. One fight takes place in a small village square, and the surrounding buildings and courtyards can be used to hide from or ambush your opponent. You will also be able to attack on different levels; gaining a distinct advantage over your opponent. Bushido Blade looks incredible!

THOSE RELEASE DATES IN FULL

All these games should be out on the shelves by the time you read this. Dates are correct at the time of print.

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

Actua Golf (Gremlin)
Andretti Racing '97 (EA)
Bubble Bobble (Acclaim)
Complete Davis Cup Tennis (Telstar)
Darkstalkers (VIE/Capcom)
Die Hard Trilogy (Fox)
Formula 1 (Psygnosis)
Onside Soccer (Telstar)
Supersonic Racers (Mindscape)
Tekken 2 (Sony)
Time Commando (EA)
Tunnel B1 (Ocean)
Wipeout 2097 (Psygnosis)



[TEKKEN 2]

AND THE SLIPPERS...

GAME (PUBLISHER)	WAS	NOW
Dark Forces (VIE/LucasArts)	Nov	1997
Rebel Assault 2 (VIE/LucasArts)	Dec	Never
Sampras Extreme Tennis	July	October

MOST WANTED

Shadowrun, the classic isometric cyberpunk adventure developed by Beam Software in Australia was a fanastic game-among-games but it was only ever available on the Super NES. You began the game on a mortury slab with no idea how you got there, and the ensuing adventure had you battling gangs, zombies and even a giant dragon god! The adult theme of the game (drugs, prostitution, murder) would be perfect for today's more mature players and even for a 16-bit machine the graphics were still top notch. Surely the PSX, with its incredible processing power could handle an entirely re-vamped version? I got three words for ya: make it so.



BOOYAKKA, BOOYAKKA, JUNGLE IS MASSIVE!

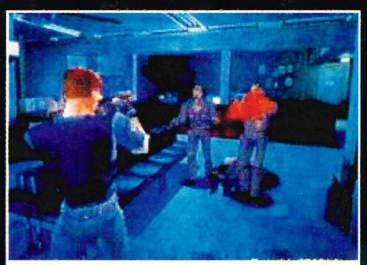
RAVE it up with the impending release of a music CD containing exclusive new tracks from the many artists featured in *Wipeout 2097*. The Chemical Brothers, Prodigy, FSOL, Underworld, Photek and Fluke have all contributed to the CD called simply, Wipeout. There are 14 new tracks to crank up to maximum volume while playing the game and it will be released on the 30 September on CD, double LP and double cassette.



RESIDENT EVIL WAS JUST THE START...

HORROR, MAIMING and all manner of digital butchery in Capcom's *Resident Evil* could be just the beginning as a new wave of 'adult' entertainment sweeps the PlayStation. What other horror games could be on the horizon? Surely Vincent Price's classic *Theatre of Blood*, starring the titular Pricemeister as an embittered actor seeking vegeance on the critics who destroyed his career has the makings of a great 2-D scrolling platform game with beat-'em-up elements. *The Thing* – a tense 3-D adventure using the digitised sprite of a chin-gloved Kurt Russel as the central character, and a final scene where players have to bash the buttons to discover whether they are the Thing or not. And of course not forgetting *Halloween Trilogy*, *An American Werewolf in London* (with Jennie Aghuter shower scene sub-game), *Evil Dead Trilogy* (comes with a free plastic eyeball to suck while playing!), *Zombie Flesh Eaters* (strong uncut version) and that *Hammer House of Horror* with the werewolves and Diana Doors. Fertile ideas for games every one.

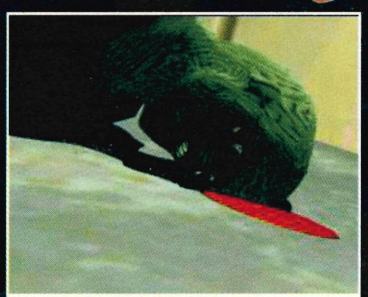
On a more serious note, you've probably already heard of Capcom's *Resident Evil 2* being shown in Japan, but there's also a glut of like-minded games, such as *Overblood* and *Dracula Detective*, just on the horizon. All of a sudden, games developers have re-discovered that horror does indeed sell shed-loads of videogames.



[ABOVE] ***Resident Evil 2*** **promises to be even more bloody than the first game, with an entire town of the undead to conquer.**





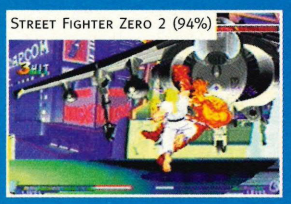


[ABOVE] ***Overblood*** **is a gory 3-D adventure, but as yet has no UK publisher.** [ABOVE RIGHT] **Michael Myers has yet to appear in a game.**

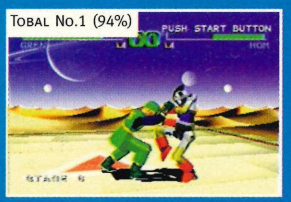
PLAY RECOMMENDS...

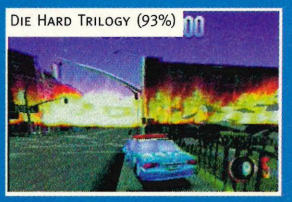
PlayStation software is getting better and better and here's the proof. These games are the absolute must-haves according to our panel of experts and Mertyl the dog. If you haven't got at least two in your collection then by jingo you're missing out.





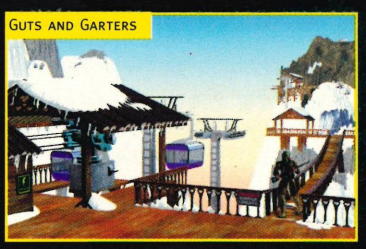


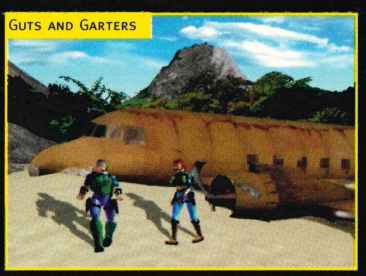




I'LL 'AVE YOUR GUTS...

GUTS AND GARTERS is a badly named horizontally scrolling platform game from Ocean. The two main characters are called Hank 'Guts' Carter and Stacy 'Garters' Pringle, which hilariously makes them quite literally Guts and Garters. Oh that must have had them rolling in the aisles when they thought that one up. Fortunately, the game looks to be immensely playable, although how many people will refuse to buy it just because of the naff name? *Guts and Garters* boasts over 100 locations although we've yet to see any screens showing the gameplay. All that has emerged from Ocean so far are these exquisite rendered scenes. Release in November, possibly.





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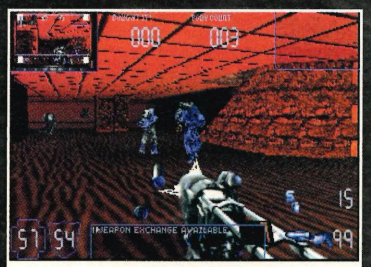
LOOK WHO'S STALKING

BE HONEST. You don't come across gladiator simulation every day now do you? *XS* from London based SCI is just that, a first person perspective futuristic fighting game which features 60 intelligent opponents, an arena, and plenty of weapons. The object of *XS* is to kill as many other gladiators as possible, thus ensuring that your killCard is filled and promotion looms. Dropped into a pit you must fend for yourself using whatever weapons come to hand – boy is this going to be bloody! More news soon.









[ABOVE] **You're alone, being chased by hoardes of maniacs, but you've still got good old Bessy.**

THE WINNERS!

LUCKY winners from the last three issues. If your name's not here, don't worry, we've got tons of great competitions every issue!

ISSUE 9

I'LL ROLL UP FOR A TV!

The winner of a 25" NICAM Stereo IQ SuperTrinitron TV is: Pete Munro (Aberdeen).

I'M A CONTROL FREAK!

First prize winner of a remote controlled car is: Jason Sinclair (Mitcham).
Second prize of a remote controlled car is: Thomas Mace (Carnforth).
Third prize of a remote controlled car is: H Duhre (Doncaster).

ISSUE 10

LIGHT UP MY LIFE PLAY!

First prize winner of a Sony projector is: Mr J Hampson (Harpenden).
Four runners up each winning a copy of Fade to Blade are: N Beattie (Roxburghshire).
A Wright (Walsall)
Keir Nolan (Enfield
Brian Scott (Inverness).

Congratulations from the PLAY team!

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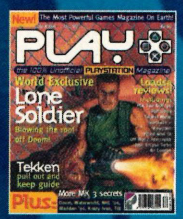
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ISSUE [2]
Lone Solider exclusive review, *Doom* + 16 others. *Tekken* tipped!



ISSUE [3]
FREE pin badge, *Impact Racing* exclusive, DD and *Rayman* tips.



ISSUE [4]
Magic Carpet fully explored, *Resident Evil* first report and more!



ISSUE [5]
Tekken 2 issue! World first look and massive feature.



ISSUE [6]
Viper and *Tunnel B1* exposed, *addidas Soccer* FREE postcards.

Back ISSUES

ISSUE [7]
Dark bloody *Forces* exclusive news, *Mayhem*, weird Jap games.



ISSUE [8]
Resident Evil issue. Huge review + *Duke Nukem 3D* news!



ISSUE [9]
Massive *Soul Edge* feature, *Wipeout 2*, *DD2*, *Project Overkill*.



ISSUE [10]
Tomb Raider exclusive look, *Crash Bandicoot* FREE sweet!



ISSUE [11]
Die Hard, *Terminator*, *Formula 1*, *Soviet Strike* – fantastic!

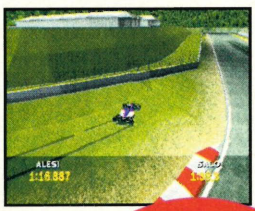


SURROUND yourself with SOUND

PLAY CLASSIC







FORMULA ONE is the best killer game for the PlayStation so far. It makes the most superlative use of the PlayStation, both graphically and sonically. Sonically? Yup, *Formula One* has several different modes for sound, the most fantastic being the full Dolby Surround mode. This month, to help you enjoy surround sound to its full, were giving away a full Dolby ProLogic amplifier and speaker system, courtesy of Psygnosis. You can plug your PlayStation, TV, or video into this system and it will bring your living room into the world of home cinema with one of the most up-to-date pieces of technology available. Alone, this speaker set is worth nearly £400! As well as the speakers, were giving a copy of the game and a special edition book *Who's Who in Formula One*, a bible on the sport, to the first prize winner, plus a copy of the game to five runners-up.

TO WIN, just answer this straightforward multiple-choice question...

Damon Hill is the current leader in the F1 drivers championship. Which team does Damon Hill drive for?

A) WILLIAMS B) FERRARI C) MCLAREN

As ever, simply write your answer on the back of a postcard or a stuck-down envelope, together with your name and address and send it to:

Surround me with Sound, PLAY!
PLAY Magazine, Paragon House,
St Peter's Road, Bournemouth BH1 2JS

FIRST PRIZE

The Sony DPL-VE100 Surround Sound Speaker System is comprised of two front, a centre and two rear speakers, PLUS a powerful active subwoofer to really pump those bass notes. The power of the system is rated at over a stonking 100Watts! PLUS, of course a copy of the 92% rated *Formula One* and a special edition book on Formula One racing entitled *Who's Who in Formula One*.

RUNNERS UP

Each of five runners-up will receive a copy of the fantastic 92% rated *Formula One* from Psygnosis



PSYGNOSIS
DPI VE100 CINEMA KIT

Please note: The editor's decision is final. No correspondence may be entered into. Employees of Paragon Publishing or its suppliers Psygnosis may not enter. Multiple entries will ALL be disqualified. So will any from a certain driver for Ferrari. The closing date for the competition is Friday 11 October 1996. 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 sponsors reserve the right to supply a prize of equivalent value should the illustrated prize be no longer available. No cash alternatives, sorry.

THE GAM

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!

BIG in Japan

20 A massive feature on every Japanese game to appear at the Tokyo Games Show, including an in-depth look at Square's incredible Final Fantasy VII.



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...

PLAY CLASSIC

90-100 If a game scores this highly it's an essential purchase and receives the PLAY Classic logo as a stamp of approval.

85-89 We recommend these games as they are fun, lasting and value for money.

75-84 A decent, solid and dependable game which offers good value for money and won't disappoint fans of the genre. There are some gameplay flaws, but nothing serious.

50-75 These are average games that may be entertaining but are fundamentally flawed or don't have any lasting appeal.

30-50 Games that should be avoided by everyone except die-hard fans of the genre and masochists.

0-30 Complete tripe. Avoid at all costs!

PLAY ICONS

These symbols are designed to give you vital information about the maximum number of players and whether or not you can use a specific device with the game. Mad Katz steering wheel or the NegCom joypad come under steering/analogue.



One player
eg Project Overkill



Multiple Players
eg Tekken 2



Steering/Analogue
eg Mad Katz wheel



Multi-Tap compatible



Mouse compatible



Memory Card
(for save games)



Split Screen
eg Bust-A-Move 2



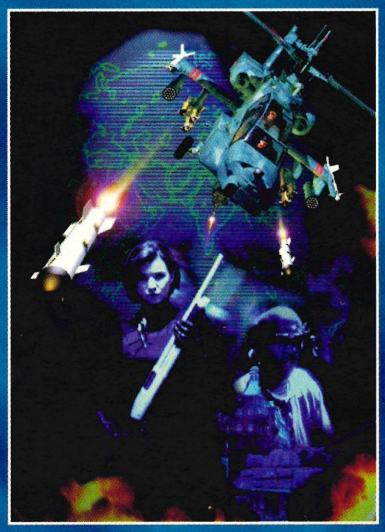
Link Cable
eg Need for Speed



Enforcer gun
eg Die Hard Trilogy

ES

REVIEWS ▸ WORKSTATIONS ▸ WIRED UPS



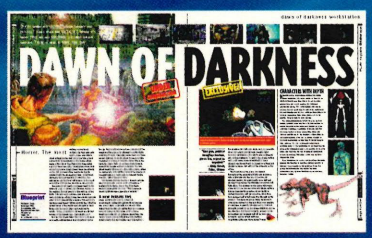
WORKSTATIONS

You want in-depth features on the latest software? You got it!

GRIDRUN 28
BLACK DAWN 30
NANOTEK WARRIORS 31
DAWN OF DARKNESS 32
SOVIET STRIKE 36









CHALLENGE BOX

This clever little box is designed to show you instantly how long a game will last (in our opinion) based on the review. The one player game (in red) will more often than not be lower than multiple players because it's more fun playing a friend than the computer. Although it is entirely subjective, we hope it gives you a rough guide to a games lifespan.

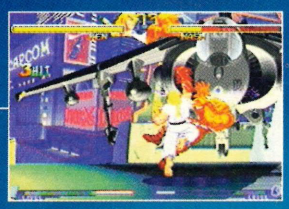


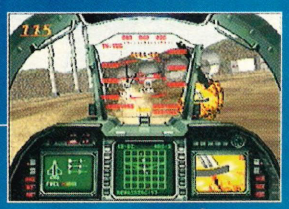
PLAY REVIEWS

Nobody does it better. PLAY reviews are the only place you should turn if you want authoritive advice. Never buy a PlayStation game without seeing what we gave it first.

BURNING ROAD 40
TOBAL NO.1 44
SF ZERO 2 54
SIM CITY 2000 58
BLAM! MACHINEHEAD 60
MADDEN '97 64
RAGING SKIES 66
EARTHWORM JIM 2 67
ONSIDE SOCCER 68
CASPER 70
ROBOPIT 71





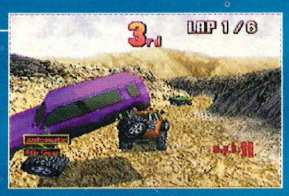




WIRED UP

A short look at a game which is either too big to be ignored, or a final look before it's reviewed.

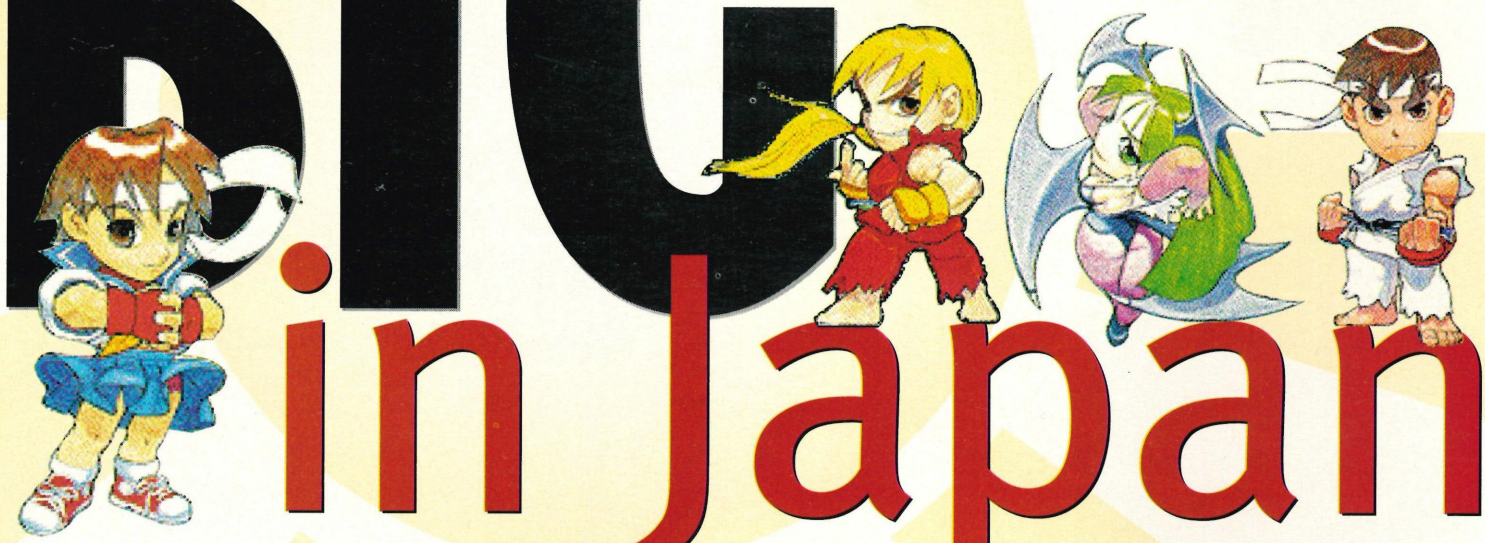
HARDCORE 4X4 80
BUBBLE BOBBLE 2 82
STREET RACER 84
FINAL DOOM 86
VICTORY BOXING 87
INCREDIBLE HULK 88
WARHAMMER 89
BREATH OF FIRE III 90





BIG in Japan

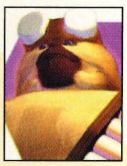
With Japanese developers unveiling their latest creations at the Tokyo Game Show, Matt Yeo heads east and takes a look at the next generation of PlayStation software being developed in the Land of the Rising Sun...



Written By Matt Yeo

CAPCOM

BIG IN JAPAN スチハオケチスヌウエ



[Resident Evil 2]



Promising to be every bit as frightening, atmospheric and chilling as the original, *Resident Evil 2* is heading your way! Currently pencilled in for a Spring '97 release, Capcom's forthcoming horrorfest is this time set in a towering city office block and will feature not only a whole host of even grizzlier creatures but also a completely new cast of principal characters.

A press conference was recently held in Japan to offer journalists a few tasty game morsels yet keep them begging for more. At the time of this writing it's known that





the levels in *Resident Evil 2* will be significantly larger than before, with plenty of secret passages, hidden items and red herrings just waiting to be uncovered. In fact Capcom has stated that the game will be "1.5 times better than the first" although how they arrive at that figure is a bit of a mystery.

What is clear though is that *Resident Evil 2* will knock the socks off PlayStation owners and, with the Saturn receiving the first *Resident Evil* at around the same time, Capcom will set even higher standards that ever before.

[Star Gladiators]

Capcom's first 3-D beat-'em-up was recently unveiled to an awed Japanese public and rightly so. Featuring nine extraterrestrial fighters, *Star Gladiators* is a major departure for Capcom and sees them venturing into unknown territory. The coin-op utilises System 11 hardware and so a direct arcade to PlayStation conversion has been speedy to say the least. With *Soul Edge*-style motion blurred weapons, anti-gravity Ring Out arenas, and short loading times this is one title that really delivers a powerful punch. After







[Breath of Fire 3]

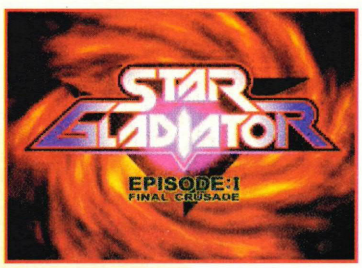
If you're lucky enough to be in possession of an import copy of *Street Fighter Zero 2*, you'll no doubt have watched the exclusive *Breath of Fire 3* demo included on the disc. After the success of both *Breath of Fire 1* and *2* on Super NES, it was inevitable that Capcom would develop a 32-bit sequel. From what we've seen so far, this latest instalment in the highly-acclaimed fantasy series should easily be able to go the distance against *FFVII*. *Breath of Fire 3* features smooth 3-D texture-mapped landscapes, populated with a host of crazy characters, transparent warping spells and enough questing to quench the thirst of any RPG nut. Japanese gamers can expect to be playing *Breath of Fire 3* before Christmas with a US date set for Spring '97.











playing an unfinished PAL version, we're confident that this title will prove to be a major hit when it's released officially later this year. Meanwhile Japanese combat fans can look forward to getting their hands on *Star Gladiators* in early November.





[Marvel Super Heroes]

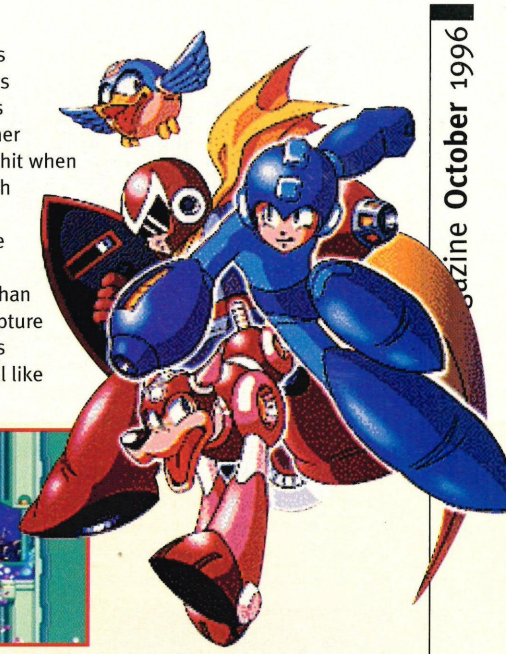
Hey, it's another 2-D Capcom beat-'em-up! Yes, the masters of flat fighting are also converting their successful *Marvel Super Heroes* coin-op to PlayStation and, after the success of *SFZ 2*, this should be something special. Featuring The Incredible Hulk, Iron Man, Captain America and a host of spandex clad super types this is definitely one title for beat-'em-ups fans to watch for. *Marvel Super Heroes* is due out in Japan in early October so start saving those pennies now folks.



[Rockman 8]

Better known to UK gamers as *Megaman*, the *Rockman* series reaches its eighth outing. This colourful PlayStation platformer should prove to be a massive hit when it's released in September with FMV intro footage from the Japanese cartoon series of the same name, screen-filling bosses and more power-ups than ever before. If Capcom can capture the classic feel of the previous games, *Rockman 8* should sell like the proverbial hot cake.





[Major Damage]

Side scrolling shoot-'em-ups don't come any more manic than this baby. *Major Damage* features 16 action-packed levels, hilariously demented enemies and non-stop violence galore. Players guide the Major and his mate-in-mayhem, Colonel Carnage, as they take on the forces of the evil Lord Fugu. With such available weapons as the Mega Ball Gun, Vorp Gun and Tactical Nuclear Hand Grenades you can be sure *Major Damage* will easily blow away the likes of *Johnny Bazookatone*. The US should receive this nasty piece of work sometime in October.



[Puzzle Fighter]

Fresh from its recent arcade debut, *Puzzle Fighter* is a weird *Puyo Puyo*-style game featuring characters from both the *Street Fighter* and *DarkStalkers* series. Players attempt to line up rows of coloured blocks and stack others on their opponents. The winners are greeted with *SF* style Super Finishing animations. Wacky but unlikely to ever appear in the UK.



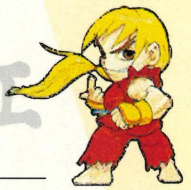




KONAMI

BIG IN JAPAN

スチハオケチスヌウエ



[Contra: Legacy of War]

Konami fans have been screaming for 32-bit versions of such classics as *Castlevania* and *Contra* and now it looks like their pleas may have been answered. Already well into its development, *Contra: Legacy of War* is looking every bit as action-packed as its 16-bit cousin. Players can expect plenty of overhead mayhem, powerful weapon upgrades, massive end-of-level bosses and the kind of pyrotechnic excitement generated by the original series. A brief mention must also go to *Contra*'s 3-D mode where players will be required to stick a daft pair of 3-D glasses on for the full in-yer-face experience. Expect to see this title bursting onto PlayStation later this year.





[Genso Suikoden]



With SquareSoft finally ready to unleash a tidal wave of product over the next 12 months, it's heartening to see that there are loads of quality PlayStation RPGs due soon. Konami's entry arrives in the form of the much-anticipated *Genso Suikoden*, a graphically detailed title boasting a mind-boggling 108 (!) playable characters, a stunning soundtrack, awesome spells and at least 20-30 hours worth of questing. *Genso Suikoden* has already been picked up for a UK release and, assuming there's a swift translation, should appear on these shores in late November.

[Broken Helix]

First person 3-D adventures are still hot properties at the moment , with the phenomenal success of *Resident Evil* and *Fade To Black* paving the way for other titles such as Konami's *Broken Helix*. Players take on the role of explosives expert Jake Burton and explore a dangerous world of treachery, corruption and murder. Look for *Broken Helix* to emerge in early '97.



NAMCO

BIG IN JAPAN

スチハオケチスヌウエ



[World Stadium Ex]

Namco also has a brand spanking new baseball game up its sleeve. *World Stadium Ex* is slightly unusual in that it not only features cute, anime style characters but the whole game is controlled via NeGcon making for an altogether unique sporting experience. However, it's unlikely this title will receive the PAL conversion treatment.

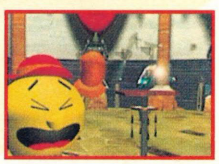






[Namco Museum Vol 4 & 5]

With the third instalment of Namco's retro compilation series currently available in Japan, the final two discs are already being prepared. Confirmed for *Namco Museum Vol. 4* are such memory-jolting hits as *Assault*, *Ordyne*, *The Genji & Heike Clans* and *The Return of Ishtar*. Reliable sources inform us that the final release will feature the likes of *Metal Hawk*, *Baraduke*, *The Legend of Walkyrie*, *Dragon Spirit* and (finally!) *Pac-Mania*.





[Soul Edge]

Easily the most anticipated beat-'em-up of the year, *Soul Edge* is scheduled to hit Japanese stores on 8 September. Guaranteed to be a monster hit, Namco has added new features for the home version, with rumours of hidden characters and exclusive play modes. The Japanese publication, PlayStation Magazine, recently ran an exclusive competition for readers to design character costumes, with the winner's creation appearing in the final game. We'll have a full *Soul Edge* review next issue!



SONY

BIG IN JAPAN

スチハオケチスヌウエ



[WILD ARMS]

Eagerly anticipated by RPG fans world-wide, *Wild Arms* has actually been programmed in-house by Sony of Japan. Destined to go head-to-head with SquareSoft's *FFVII*, this mystical title will feature detailed 3-D polygon battle sequences, silky smooth streamed video and a host of loveable fantasy characters. *Wild Arms* is set to be released in October and should appear in the UK early next year.



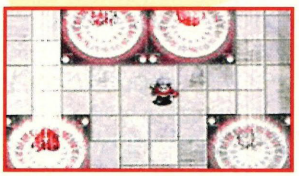


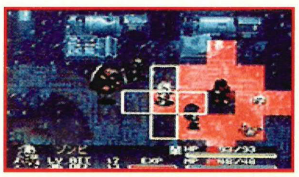
[POPOLPCROIS]

A final RPG nod goes to the bizarrely-titled *Popolpcrois*. Although currently available on import we've not reviewed this visually impressive fantasy game due to the copious amounts of Japanese text. With a US release scheduled for October, we'll take an in-depth look at it in a few issues. However, from the looks of things, this could be a major PlayStation hit.

[ARC THE LAD 2]

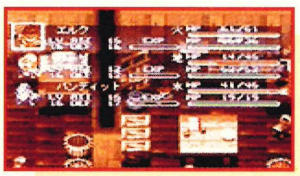
Still unavailable in Europe, Sony's first RPG outing, *Arc the Lad*, is due to receive a sequel in November. Originally conceived as a two CD set, the series may be bundled and sold as one package. Both *Arc the Lad 1 & 2* may be picked up by Sony in the UK but they're going to need some badgering, so start writing those "We demand more PlayStation RPGs" letters now.















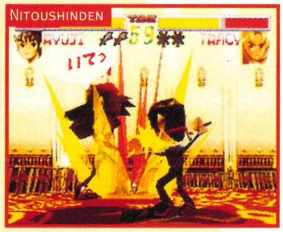


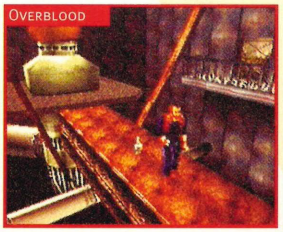
THE BEST OF THE REST...

BIG IN JAPAN

Also due for an imminent release is the 3-D-style adventure, *Overblood*. Developed by Riverhilsoft of Japan, this adult-themed mystery title is already garnering rave previews in the Japanese press... Those 3-D beat-'em-ups just keep on coming as Taito is just putting the finishing touches to *Psychic Force*. Players will be able to roam and fly anywhere within the many combat arenas and attacks are graphically spectacular... Following half-decent *Toshinden 2* reviews, Takara has decided to unleash yet another 3-D sequel. *Toshinden 2 Plus* includes a few new characters, different costumes for the existing fighters and a reworked combo system. Keen to milk this product even further, Takara is also set to release *Nitoushinden* which is essentially a *Virtua Fighter Kids* parody. Players can expect *Motor Toon GP* style limb-stretching and "cute" violence. Both titles should get the full PLAY treatment next month... The "Gimmick Game of the Year" award surely has to go to Bandai's *ZXE-D: Legend of Plasmalite*. Players actually plug 12-inch plastic robots into the PlayStation's memory card slots and interchange weapon and body parts. The finished droid is then taken into a 3-D environment where players battle each other in *RoboPit*-style combat... Thanks to reasonable fan response, developer Zoom is hard at work on *Zero Divide 2*. This second robot-bashing outing now boasts 60fps action and a range of improved mechs... And finally we've just received shots of an extremely promising title from Time Warner Interactive of Japan. *Shinrei Jusatsushi Taromaru* promises to be a *Castlevania*-style 2-D romp with massive bosses and some superb graphical effects. One to watch out for.













FINAL FANTA



Sleepless nights?

Tense, nervous headaches? Hey, stop your fretting, folks! For months now, die-hard RPG fans have been chomping at the bit for a glimpse at SquareSoft's first 32-bit *Final Fantasy* title secure in the knowledge that the PlayStation would be receiving a game of incredibly high calibre. Well, the good news is, the wait is finally over and your prayers have indeed been answered.

This month we received a copy of the outstanding *Tobal No. 1* (check out the full review on page 44), with which was packaged a *Final Fantasy VII* demo disc. What we were expecting to see was a short, grainy, five minute FMV snippet.

Blueprint

Publisher: SquareSoft
Developer: In-house
% Complete: 75%
Expected Release Date: December (Japan)
Origin: Japan
No of Players: 1

But what we actually got was a whole lot more. *FFVII* is due to go on sale in Japan this December as a low-priced (5800 yen = $55) two-disc set. TV and specialist press advertising has already begun in earnest over there, with loyal SquareSoft fans anxiously anticipating their first real 32-bit RPG experience. And what an experience they should have. This fully playable adventure begins in the mystical city of Midgar as you guide a group of adventurers on a dangerous terrorist hit-and-run mission. Although it's possible to race through the demo in around half an hour, the real entertainment comes from exploring each section of the city, experimenting with character attacks and figuring out which spells to use in certain situations.

"The CD-ROM's data storage allows the expression of a game that appeals to the emotions of the users. This is the realisation of a dream, passion and excitement never experienced before."
SquareSoft.



[Above] Ealis unleashes one of the game's more impressive spells by summoning a huge Leviathan which in turn generates a monumental tidal wave.

Magical Mystery Tour

The famous *Final Fantasy* battle system is present once more and has been finely honed, making complicated spell-casting a doddle, with the addition of Steal and Blitz options (seen in the US *FFIII*) allowing characters to attack using almost *Street Fighter* style joypad moves. Players move (or run if the × button is held down) through some truly beautiful rendered city streets, interacting with other travellers and battling hordes of guards, demons and mythical creatures. When a battle begins, a dramatic graphical blur 'wipes' the screen, dissolving from street map to



Future Fantastic

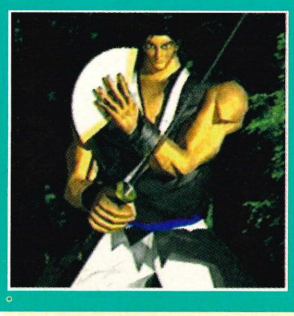
SquareSoft has stated that it is intending to release a staggering 20 titles before the end of 1997! That works out at roughly one new game every three weeks. Of course most of these will probably never see the light of day in this country but the *FFVII* demo disc offers exclusive shots of just four of the most impressive titles currently being developed...



[Bushido Blade]

Square's second 3-D beat-'em-up will offer players Samurai Shodown style weapons-based combat set in feudal Japan. Unlike other fighting games that take place within a fairly limited enclosed environment, the levels in Bushido Blade are sprawling affairs with the idea being that players will attack each other then retreat, using scenery for cover and sneaky ambushes.

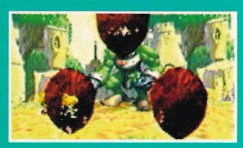


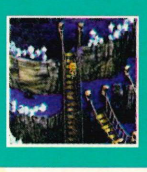


[Sa•Ga Frontier]

The successful Romancing Sa•Ga series continues with a PlayStation adventure that may appear slightly 16-bit in appearance but contains some incredibly detailed isometric levels, spectacular battle sequences and an extremely familiar RPG feel. Fans of the series will be thrilled to hear that some of their favourite Sa•Ga characters are set to reappear when the game is released in early '97.



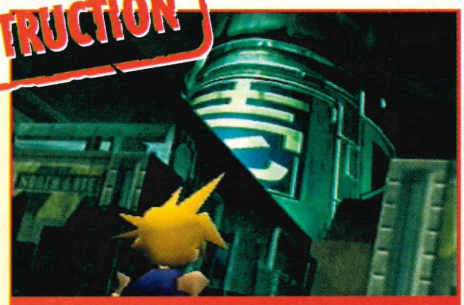





ASY VII

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

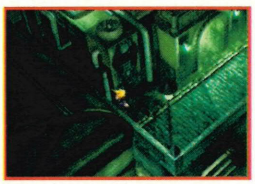




[Above] Cut scenes are also rendered, linking overhead map sections. Loading times are completely unobtrusive.









isometric combat screen.

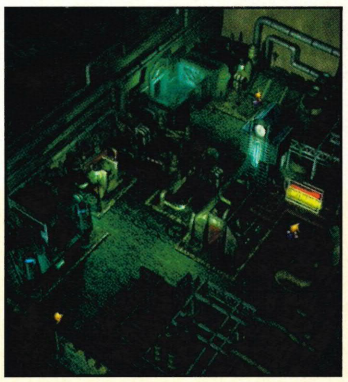
Battles are commonplace, even in this limited demo, with enemies attacking at a frightening rate. Of course the good guys aren't exactly defenceless and each character is capable of dishing out plenty of damage with both weapons-based attacks and magical spells. In fact the spell-casting conjures up plenty of gasps from many a casual observer as they're often screen-filling, pyrotechnic affairs evidently designed to show off the PlayStation's ability to handle transparencies and complicated lighting effects. For instance, Ealis, the beautiful warrior maiden, uses most of her magic points to summon a glowing water leviathan that proceeds to unleash a mile-high tsunami causing immense amounts of damage.

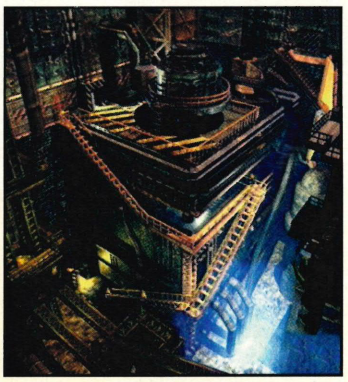
Creative Review

Hard-core fans of the series will no doubt be overjoyed to hear that the original *Final Fantasy* series' creators are back once more, including Producer Hironobu Sakaguchi, Director Yoshinori Kitasei and

TOURIST TRAP

The awesome *FFVII* adventure begins in the mystical city of Midgar. The town was initially designed by architectural whizz-kid, Motonori Sakakibara, whose distinctive levels designs continue the classic SquareSoft RPG style. Each section is at least three screens high and players move around z-buffered locations each of which features amazing detail and effects such as smoke-emitting pipes, flickering flames and gushing waterfalls to name a few. Here are some maps we knocked up.





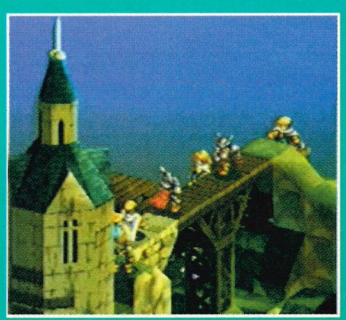


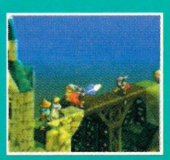




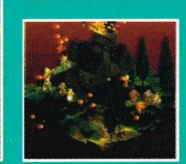
[Final Fantasy Tactics]

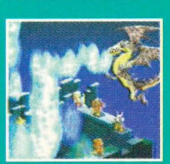
Unlike its big brother, *Final Fantasy Tactics* is actually more of a strategy game based upon the *FF* role-playing series. Characters from both games will cross over and it's hoped that this title will appeal to the more traditional RPG player. However, *Final Fantasy Tactics* could have some stiff competition from Konami's excellent *VandalHearts*.







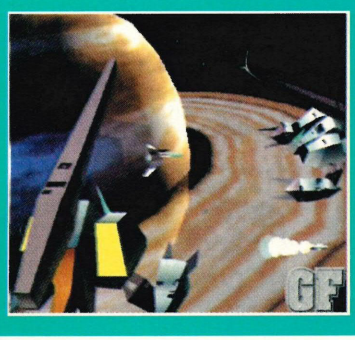




[Zauver]

In Japan, shoot-'em-ups are enjoying something of a resurgence at the moment but SquareSoft's very own forthcoming blaster should set the standards for years to come. *Zauver* features detailed polygon ships, impressive lighting effects and the kind of all-out action *Galaxian3* wishes it had. Expect massive motherships and an *Independence Day* style build-up.





FFVII begins with a beautifully rendered, lengthy intro sequence that merges seamlessly with the beginning of the adventure.



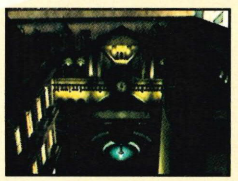




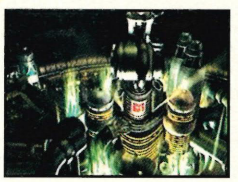














[Above] Tension within the group runs high as Barrett and Cloud share a few well-chosen words. Square's characters form the heart of every RPG.



[Above] Cloud, Barrett and Ealis are part of an elite terrorist squad. SquareSoft is keeping the actual mission details strictly under wraps for now...

Composer Nobuo Uematsu. With this level of creative talent hard at work SquareSoft is virtually guaranteed massive success which is made even more impressive when you consider the fact that this is the first opportunity they've had to work with the PlayStation's hardware. SquareSoft's decision to switch from ROM cartridges to CD-ROM as a viable storage medium was certainly a wise one, as both discs should be packed with hours of speech, rendered cut scenes and many environments just begging to be explored. SquareSoft explain:

"The CD-ROM's data storage allows the expression of a game that appeals to the emotions of the users. This is the realisation of a dream, passion and excitement never experienced before."

Er...right. Anyway, if you want to find out what all this fuss is about, unfortunately you've got a bit of a wait. With the Japanese version due in December and the US scheduled to receive the game in Spring '97, UK RPG fans should finally get their mitts on *FFVII* sometime next summer.





Until then we'll keep you up to date with regular *FFVII* updates and review the finished game in a few issues time. Until then gawp at the jaw-dropping visuals on this page and start saving those pennies.



SOFTOGRAPHY

SQUARESOFT:
Square has been producing high-quality RPGs for years. Take a look at this lot:

Final Fantasy (NES, 1987)
Final Fantasy II (NES, 1988)
Magic Warrior Sa•Ga (GB, 1988)
Final Fantasy III (NES, 1990)
Sa•Ga 2 (GB, 1990)
Seiken Densetsu (GB, 1991)
Final Fantasy IV (SNES, 1991)
Sa•Ga 3 (GB, 1992)
Romancing Sa•Ga (SNES 1992)
Final Fantasy V (SNES, 1992)
Seiken Densetsu 2 (SNES, 1993)
Final Fantasy USA - Mystic Quest (SNES, 1993)
Romancing Sa•Ga 2 (SNES, 1993)
Final Fantasy VI (SNES, 1994)
Breath of Fire (SNES, 1994)
Front Mission (SNES, 1995)
Chrono Trigger (SNES, 1995)
Seiken Densetsu 3 (SNES, 1995)
Secret of Evermore (SNES, 1995)
Romancing Sa•Ga 3 (SNES, 1995)
Bahamaut Lagoon (SNES, 1996)
Front Mission - Gun Hazard (SNES, 1996)
Super Mario RPG (SNES, 1996)
Treasure Hunter G (SNES, 1996)
Tobal No. 1 (PlayStation, 1996)



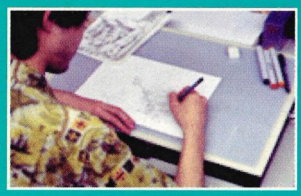


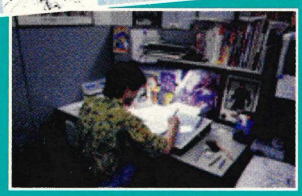


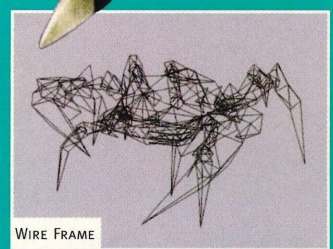
THE MAKING OF FFVII...

As expected, every character in *FFVII* has been fully rendered, Gouraud-shaded and light-sourced even though actual detailing has been kept to a minimum. The three main heroes boast around 300 to 600 polygons a piece, although larger creatures and spells (such as the Leviathan) contain nearly three times that number. Initial character sketches by artist extraordinaire, Tetsuya Nomura, were converted into wireframe models then texture-mapped.

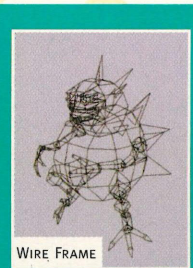




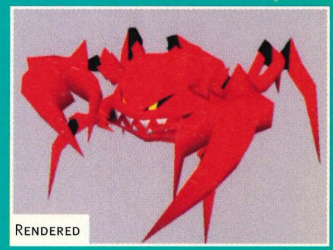




Wire Frame



Wire Frame



Rendered



Rendered

WASHINGTON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
Department of Psychiatry, Chicago, Illinois.

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

No. 3765

PATIENTS SURNAME Delgado OTHER NAMES James, Jesus

SEX Male RACE Hispanic D.O.B. 4/31/71 SESSION 1

ART THERAPIST Kath MacDonald

RELEVANT HISTORY

Initial assessment diagnosed Jimmy as having an acute personality disorder. There is no history of mental illness in his family.

COMMENTS

To confirm diagnosis I asked Jimmy to draw a self portrait. He proceeded to draw a picture of an aggressive Ninja War Lord committing Hari-Kari - labelling the drawing as "me". Jimmy told me his name was Yoshimitsu and is convinced he has supernatural powers to heal himself.

Suicidal tendencies and Jimmy's confident belief that he can cheat death are very worrying. I now believe Jimmy may be in some form of manic psychosis.

NOTES

Yoshimitsu is a character from Tekken II, Jimmy's Sony PlayStation video game, which he plays continually.

WASHINGTON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

SIGNED Kath MacDonald DATE 7/15/96

№ 3765



SONY

PlayStation

DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER

namco

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GRIDRUN

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

TAKE A GREAT BIG DOLLOP OF PLAYABILITY FROM CLASSIC GAMES LIKE *ROBOTRON* AND *PAC-MAN*, ADD A PINCH OF 32-BIT TECHNOLOGY AND A MULTI-PLAYER MODE AND YOU GET *GRIDRUN* – AN ADRENALINE PUMPER LIKE MOMMA USED TO MAKE.

WRITTEN BY DAMIAN BUTT

Virgin Interactive

Entertainment's presence on the PlayStation has been subdued to say the least. *Agile Warrior*, *Criticom* and *Street Fighter Alpha* pretty much completes the line-up, and only recently has *Resident Evil* finally reared its head officially. But what the software publisher of the year (twice running) has in spades is developers working like b*stards to come up with the goods. Long term rival Electronic Arts has already landed its beachhead with games like *Space Hulk*, *The Need for Speed* and *FIFA '96* and VIE is in danger of being left behind. It desperately needs decent PlayStation product and fast. And we think we've found it. Here's a taster of VIE's winter line-up.



[ABOVE] The white blobs all over the screen are mines you've just dropped to hinder your opponent. Now you are building blue blocks to escape.

Blueprint

Publisher: VIE
Developer: VIE US
% Complete: 80%
Expected Release Date: October
Origin: USA
No of Players: 1-2

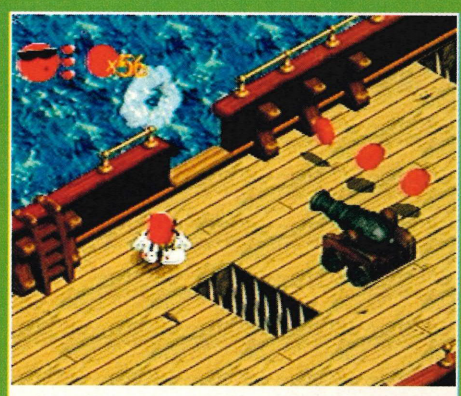
RUN TO THE HILLS

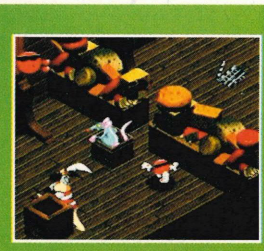
Developed in Irvine California at Virgin's US development arm, *GridRun* (formerly *Gridrunner*, but wouldn't you know it – there was a Spectrum game with the same name!) is an arcade action game where the aim is to collect a pre-specified number of flags before your opponent. This takes place on scrolling pseudo 3-D maze levels made up of suspended platforms. The higher the level, the more complex the path layout, the more flags and the faster your opponent becomes. Like all good coin-ops of the mid Eighties (*Defender, Robotron, Dropzone*), *GridRun's* playability relies on accuracy and a good memory as well as a cool trigger finger. A few goes on this game and you come away thinking it's 1984 all over again...

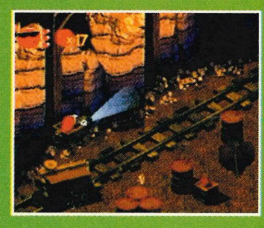
GridRun boasts 48 levels, plus 16 bonus rounds used to power-up your speed and strength ratings. You play Axel, a space explorer unwittingly dragged into an alien spaceship and forced to run

LOCAL SPOT MAKES GOOD!

SET FOR A RELEASE NEXT YEAR, *SPOT GOES TO HOLLYWOOD* IS A CARTOON ADVENTURE FEATURING THE RED SPOT IN THE 7-UP LEMONADE LOGO. QUITE AN ORIGINAL CONCEPT FOR A HERO WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT, AND SPOT IS DEFINITELY GOING TO GO DOWN A STORM WITH THE YOUNGER END OF THE PLAYSTATION MARKET. FEATURING STUPENDOUS MUSIC BY JOHN "ET, STAR WARS AND INDIANA JONES" WILLIAMS, THE GAME HAS A SMOOTH CINEMATIC INTRO, AND THE GAME IS A SIMPLE BUT ADDICTIVE CASE OF STROLLING THROUGH 40-ODD ISOMETRIC LEVELS SET IN DIFFERENT FILM LOCATIONS AND COLLECTING SPOTS AND AVOIDING OBSTACLES AND BOUNCING ON ENEMIES. IT MAY NOT SOUND REVOLUTIONARY AND IT'S NOT, BUT THE FAMILIAR MOVIE SETS (*2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY*, PIRATE SHIP, INDIANA JONES TEMPLE AND MINE CAR CHASE, WILD WEST AND EVEN JURASSIC PARK COMPLETE WITH T-REX!) MAKE IT ENJOYABLE TO PLAY, IF ONLY TO SEE WHAT FILM YOU'RE TRANSPORTED TO NEXT. THERE ARE ALSO TONS OF SECRET LEVELS AND BONUSES AND EVEN, WE'RE TOLD, A HIDDEN "THE MAKING OF SPOT GOES TO HOLLYWOOD" FMV SEQUENCE WHEN YOU COMPLETE IT – JUST LIKE A BURT REYNOLDS FILM! SPOT GOES TO HOLLYWOOD IS MOST DEFINITELY COMING TO THE PLAYSTATION AT THE START OF 1997 AND FOR NOW, THAT'S ALL FOLKS!







[ABOVE] The isometric action in *Spot Goes to Hollywood* is simple to master and perfect for younger players.











[Left] Each time you change a flag to your colour, a message tells how many you still have left and it's the same for your opponent. Here both of you are trying for the red flag.

[Right] Interspersed between each main zone you will find these bonus levels which enable you to power-up your magic levels in preparation for the next set of mazes. There is a strict time limit.



the gauntlet for a super being called the Vorga. A pretty common occurrence by all accounts. Your opponents are 16 rendered characters who vary in agility and intelligence. The Minox is a Minotaur man with a bad breath problem, and you'll also encounter the likes of Lethotep (lizard man), Krayken (lobster man strangely) and Kolo, who is half mammoth half Chelsea supporter. Corner him at your peril! Levels include cloud, desert, lava and ice worlds and each one is split into three sub-zones of increasing difficulty. By the end of each you are collecting roughly four times as many flags and the enemy is ten times as smart.

A major part of *GridRun's* appeal is the fact that you can play against a friend in split screen, or link-up two PlayStations and go for it head-to-head. The developers have even included a double split screen option so that four players can enter the arena simultaneously, although our research still says link-up never happens in the real world.

Magical combat enhances what is essentially a game of 'collect and hoard the flags' and spells can be used to blast opponents to the other side of the maze or slow them down to a crawl. Magic power is maintained by collecting coloured icons scattered around each level or in the bonus games. To round off the frantic action, the developers have also included blow-holes which can be used to warp around the screen and gain the edge over players who stick to their pins, arrowed sections which speed you up, and cannons to reach inaccessible areas.

GridRun is certainly a laugh to play, and the multi-player is definitely the lasting option

"GridRun's playability relies on accuracy and memory as well as a cool trigger finger. You come away thinking it's 1984 all over again..."

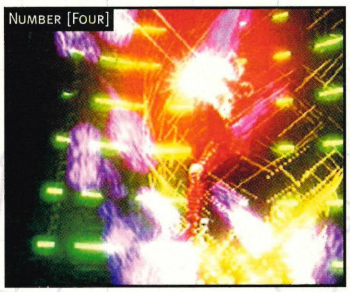
RUN OF THE MILL

IT'S ALWAYS THE SAME ISN'T IT, YOU POP OUT FOR A PINT OF MILK AND 20 B&H AND YOU END UP BEING SUCKED INTO AN ALIEN DIMENSION DISGUISED AS A CORNER SHOP AND FORCED TO PLAY MAZE GAMES. *GRIDRUN'S* IMPRESSIVE OPENING SEQUENCE IS SOMETHING TO BE SAVOURED, BUT AS WITH ALL THESE MINI-MOVIES, YOU'LL ONLY WATCH IT ONCE.



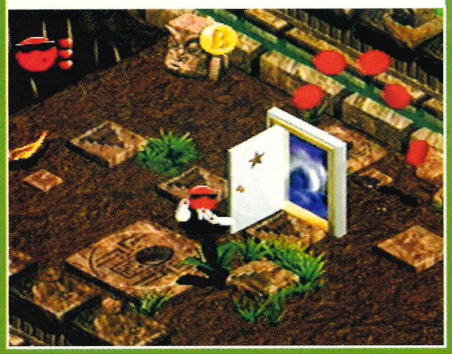








[Below] At the end of this Inca temple there's a magic door which transports you to a secret world. Note the floor tiles which depress and fire poison darts. [Right] As in *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, Spot must leap these pits full of spikes.











BLACK DAWN

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

THE SEQUEL TO *AGILE WARRIOR* REARS ITS HEAD FOR A FULL PLAYTEST AND WE LIKE IT, YES WE DO.

Whup, whup, whup

whup. Two shiny black helicopters appear over the horizon, each bristling with instruments of death. Ahead is a city, besieged by the enemy until only a few scattered pockets of resistance are left. These are the people you must rescue. But there's a problem. To get within range you must fly directly into the enemy's sights and then pluck each hostage from under their noses while your co-operative team mate draws their fire and retaliates. It wouldn't be so bad if you had air superiority of course, but oh no, the general's thought it would be more fun if you went in without cover and with countless enemy MiGs buzzing around waiting to take you apart. All in a day's work when you're in the Black Operations unit.

AIRWOLF

Black Dawn from VIE is the sequel to the early PlayStation effort, *Agile Warrior*, from developers Black Ops, only now instead of jet fighters you are controlling helicopters. The really unique aspect of the game though is that you can adopt a two player simultaneous mode which works co-operatively instead of competitively. While you attack, the other player could be watching your back, and vice versa. A neat touch, but we'll have to playtest it for longer to see if it is ultimately satisfying or whether people prefer to blow their friends out of the sky! We suspect the latter is true.

Blueprint

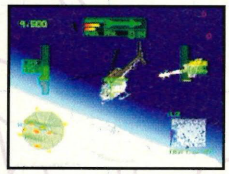
Publisher: VIE
Developer: Black Ops
% Complete: 70%
Expected Release Date: November/Dec
Origin: USA
No of Players: 1-2



[ABOVE] There is an impressive amount of detail on the many aircraft in Black Dawn, and when they explode, you can see the fuselage fall apart and plunge to the ground. Very satisfying.

BOOM – YOU'RE DEAD

TO ILLUSTRATE THE GREAT ATTENTION TO DETAIL IN *BLACK DAWN*, HERE'S A SERIES OF SHOTS SHOWING THE LAST SECONDS OF A BLIND-SIDED ENEMY RANGER.



MISSILE LOCKED ON, SIRENS SCREAMING, FIRE! YOUR MISSILE INSTANTLY FIRES OFF TOWARDS THE TARGET.



BARELY HAVING TIME TO REACH MAX SPEED, THE STINGER RIPS INTO THE FUSELAGE.



A STAGGERING EXPLOSION RIPS THROUGH THE CHOPPER AND SENDS IT REELING. SCRATCH ONE.



[ABOVE] The exterior view is detached and not as thrilling to play. You do get a wider perspective of the action though.



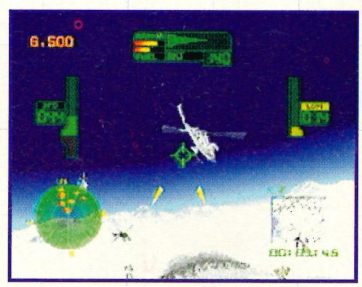
[ABOVE] BOOM baby! A command centre hidden in the Arctic wastes explodes. A hundred men die leaving the world no poorer.

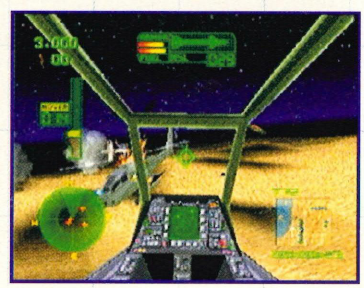
Black Dawn gives you two views to play with. One is outside the chopper so that you can see all around and the screen tracks you automatically, and the traditional cockpit view which gives you full instrumentation, weapon HUDs and warning lights. Like *Agile Warrior*, you have plenty of offensive weapons such as missiles and the front chain gun and these are locked onto targets before launch or you'll miss them completely.

"To get within range you must fly directly into the enemy's sights and then pluck each hostage from under their noses..."

BLUE THUNDER

There is certainly a marked similarity between *Black Dawn* and *Agile Warrior*, not least in the fact that everything including the kitchen sink is chucked at you when you so much as step into enemy territory. Planes, aircraft, tanks, jeeps, AAA guns – the lot. It makes for an exhilarating ride (a





NANO... WHAT?

ALSO FROM VIRGIN IS THE CURIOUSLY NAMED *NANOTEK WARRIORS* WHICH WAS SNEAK-PEAKED IN OUR NEWS SECTION A COUPLE OF ISSUES AGO. THE BASIC PREMISE IS THAT IT IS THE 23RD CENTURY AND ALL THOSE DOMESTIC ROBOTS THAT MANKIND HAS CREATED TO DO THE SCUMMY JOBS HAVE REVOLTED AND STARTED KILLING THE "SQUISHIES" WITH CARELESS ABANDON. THE ROBOTS ARE KNOWN AS NANO-MACHINES AND THE OBJECT OF THIS ARCADE SHOOT-'EM-UP IS TO TAKE ON THE ROBOT HORDES AND DEFEAT TEN NANO-BOSSES. YOU FLY THE STATE-OF-THE-ART NANOTEK FIGHTER SO I GUESS THAT MAKES YOU THE NANOTEK WARRIOR OF THE TITLE. CLEVER THAT.

YOUR NANOTEK FIGHTER IS OF COURSE EQUIPPED WITH A VERITABLE CAR-BOOT LOAD OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION, AND THE GAME ROCKETS ALONG AT A CRACKING PACE. ENEMY ROBOTS HURTLE TOWARDS YOUR CRAFT THROUGH A CONSTANTLY SCROLLING TUBULAR LEVEL AND YOU MUST BANK, ROLL, DIVE AND BLAST ANYTHING THAT GETS IN YOUR WAY. THIS IS NO STRATEGY GAME, THE ORDER OF THE GAME IS TRYING TO GET AS MANY BULLETS IN THE AIR AT ONCE AND SWEATING BUCKETS. LIKE *GRIDRUN*, THIS GAME IS PURE ARCADE AND NONE THE WORSE FOR THAT.



NANOTEK WARRIORS AIMS TO MAKE THE MOST OF THE PLAYSTATION'S AMPLE TECHNOLOGY AND SPECIAL EFFECTS WITH AMONG OTHER THINGS: TRANSLUCENT OBJECTS, GOURAUD SHADING AND HIGH RESOLUTION TEXTURE MAPS – ALL RUNNING SMOOTHLY AND WITHOUT BREAK-UP. VIRGIN ALSO CLAIMS THAT THERE IS A TWO PLAYER SIMULTANEOUS/CO-OPERATIVE MODE, BUT WE HAVE YET TO SEE THAT IN ACTION AND THEREFORE CANNOT COMMENT.

NANOTEK WARRIORS LOOKS TO BE AN ENJOYABLE BLAST, BUT IT'S STILL IN EARLY DEVELOPMENT AND WE WON'T SEE ANYTHING MORE EXTENSIVE FOR SOME MONTHS.



[ABOVE] One of the impressive bosses in Nanotek Warriors. Note your shield glowing as it is hit by lasers. The way to defeat this sucker is to blow its legs off first, just like in that classic Super NES game, StarWing.

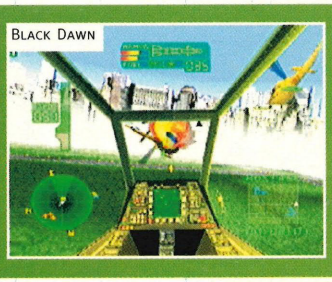




LOOKS A BIT SIMILAR TO...

... *AGILE WARRIOR* ON PSX. *BLACK DAWN* IS IN FACT THE SUCCESSOR TO *AGILE WARRIOR*, A JET FIGHTER SHOOT-'EM-UP. BOTH GAMES ARE SIMILAR IN STYLE AND STRUCTURE, BUT BECAUSE YOU CONTROL A HELICOPTER IN *BLACK DAWN*, YOU CAN HUG THE GROUND AND USE THE TERRAIN TO YOUR ADVANTAGE IN A WAY THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE WITH A FIXED WING AIRCRAFT. BOTH GAMES FEATURE TWO PLAYER OPTIONS.





SOFTOGRAPHY

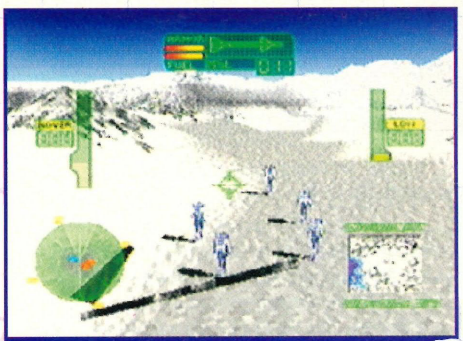
VIE AND AFFILIATES

Agile Warrior (PSX)
Street Fighter Alpha (PSX)
Resident Evil (PSX)
Criticom (PSX)
Command & Conquer (PC)
SuperKarts (PC)
Screamer (PC)
Dark Forces (PC)
Rebel Assault 1&2 (PC)
The Dig (PC)
Full Throttle (PC)
Lion King (PC, Super NES, Mega Drive)
Aladdin (PC, Super NES, Mega Drive)
Too many to mention.

bit like an aerial motorbike), and what's really impressive is that every object is highly detailed and explodes in a shower of sparks and shrapnel.

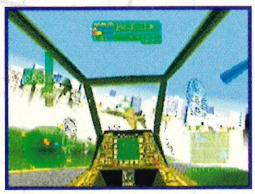
With 28 missions, the game should prove a challenge, especially as it is considerably tougher than *Agile Warrior* (a good job in our opinion) and there are even more things to do. Trying to rescue stupid people who ignore your winch and simply run around aimlessly is not the easiest thing in the world, especially with a SAM missile up your rotor blades!

Black Dawn should be ready at the end of the year and looks like being an intense shoot-'em-up and the only real rival to EA's *Soviet Strike*. Brains should be left at the door though.



[ABOVE] Some levels require you to pick up and drop off commandos (in this case Navy Seals) at strategic sights. There they are legging it into the snow.







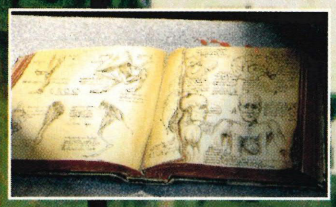
AND FINALLY...

VIRGIN ARE ALSO CURRENTLY WORKING ON *HEART OF DARKNESS*, WHICH HAS BEEN IN DEVELOPMENT FOR TOO FLIPPIN' LONG ALREADY AND IN ANY CASE WILL BE COMING OUT ON THE SEGA SATURN FIRST (FOOLS). EXPECT TO SEE IT IN 1997. *COMMAND & CONQUER* AND *DARK FORCES* LOOK TO BE FANTASTIC TITLES WITH PROVEN TRACK RECORDS (ALTHOUGH DF HAS NOW BEEN DELAYED), AND THERE'S ALSO *GOLDEN NUGGET* (A GAMBLING SIMULATOR FEATURING EVERYTHING YOU'D FIND IN LAS VEGAS), *TILT* (PINBALL IN THREE DIMENSIONS), *LANDS OF LORE II* (SEE NEWS LAST ISSUE) AND NOT FORGETTING *STAR GLADIATORS* AND *RESIDENT EVIL 2*. THINGS ARE DEFINITELY MOVING AT LAST DOWN AT CHEZ VIRGIN.





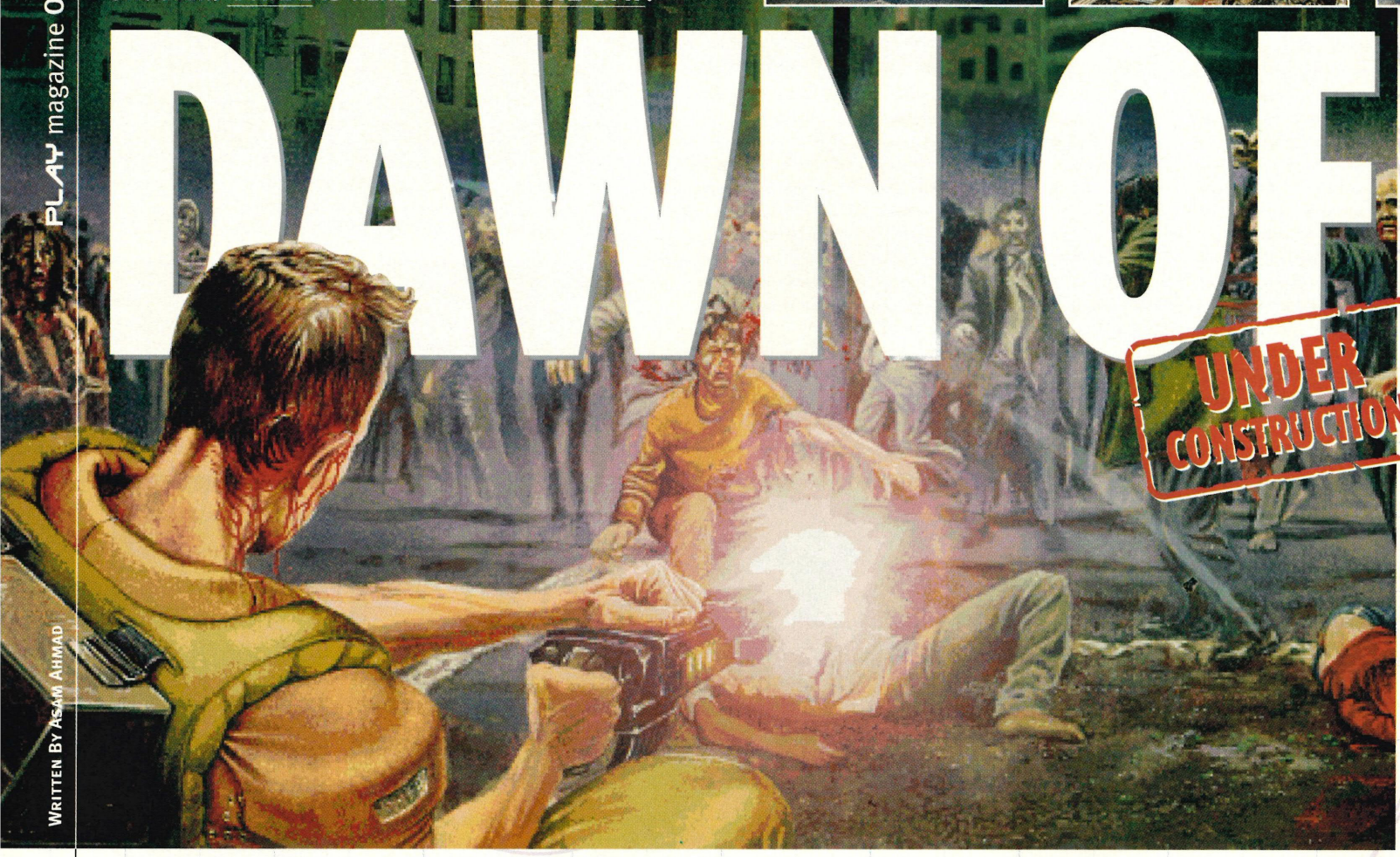
DOOM GIVING YOU **GLOOM?** ***ALIEN TRILOGY*** TOO **TRIVIAL?** ***SPACE HULK*** TOO **TACTICAL?** MAYBE IT'S ABOUT **TIME** WE HAD **ANOTHER** 3-D FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER. **TRIBE** IS HERE TO **SAVE THE DAY.**







DAWN OF



WRITTEN BY ADAM AHMAD

Horror. The most striking of emotions. Nothing can tear your guts apart, cause your skin to crawl, or frighten the shit out of you like a good horror flick. Indeed horror is the theme which many of the latest PlayStation hits have relied upon for their gameplay. Unsurprising then, that Ocean's in-house development team are already on the ball with the impending *Dawn of Darkness*. But more than just another *Doom* clone, the indications are that *DoD* will indeed be the most superlative first person shoot-'em-up on any console.

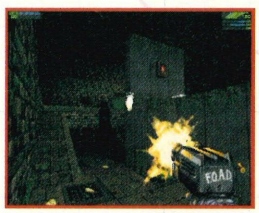
The game is set nearly a hundred years in the future in 2095. A century ago Mordae, leader of the undead, led his armies to the surface of the Earth. Through mass carnage, and gruesome body-snatching, whole towns were destroyed and what at first seemed like a bizarre TV news story became a real threat. Within months the collective armed forces of the world were brought to their knees and the great cities were reduced to rubble. Today, a handful of survivors are all that remain of the human race.

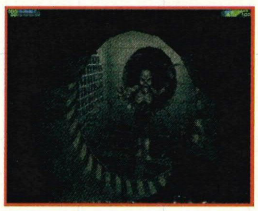
In *DoD*, the player takes the role of a survivor in a vastly outnumbered and outgunned unit of troops. This rebellious force has gathered all the weaponry they can in an attempt to rid the Earth of Mordae's reign. Gameplay-wise, there are three modes planned. In single player mode, you take command of a team of soldiers, rather like in the fantastic *Space Hulk*, on a large scale mission against the zombie mutant onslaught. The two-player modes allow you to play with a mate, either co-operatively both battling against the enemy, or competitively in a 'every man for himself' kinda scenario called 'Lands of Gore.'

"We though that the George A Romero zombie films would make a good point of reference," explains Andy Gavin, one of the Tribe team leaders, responsible for *DoD*. "This tongue-in-cheek splatterhouse approach is evident."

A NEW PERSPECTIVE

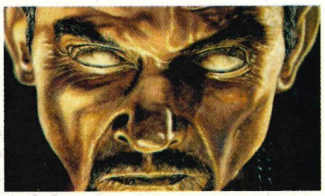
Dawn of Darkness is set in a true 3-D environment, taking first person shoot-'em-ups to new heights. Rather than the flat 2-D sprites that are common for most games in this genre, *DoD* is being developed with full 3-D polygon characters. The 'horror' genre is done full justice with startling visual effects that are realistic and 'interactive' – the graphics are dark and dingy, and, for example,





Blueprint

Publisher: Ocean
Developer: Tribe
% Complete: 15%
Expected Release Date: February '97
Origin: UK
No of Players: 1 or 2




DARKNESS

EXCLUSIVE!



[Above] Explosions are also light-sourced and illuminate the surrounding area. The weapons are ballistic and pack an immense punch. Enemies are deadly, and some may even require hand-to-hand combat should ammo get low.

"Get gun, point at naughty creature, press fire, repeat as required."
– Andy Gavin, Tribe, Ocean.





shoot out a light and through complex light-sourcing calculations, the whole area is plunged into further darkness. To add to the drama further, a full movie-score soundtrack is being planned which won't just be based on a standard playlist of tunes, but will suit the intensity of the action.

The locations in the game are spread throughout the devastated Earth and include a fully explorable city the size of London, rat infested sewers, shopping malls from Hell and Mordae's Lair, where the ultimate showdown will take place. The enemies in the game take many forms and if you can avoid the ectoplasm spitting human undeads then watch out for packs of mutant dogs who will eat you alive! Enemies will also attack from the sky as well as the ground – the game engine is being designed to offer more degrees of freedom than your average *Doom* game, hopefully allowing you to look left and right as well as up and down whilst moving in any direction. Evil flying mutants, undead crows and mutant bat creatures will all be swooping around in vicious attack patterns.

Thankfully (although these haven't been finalised), a plethora of weapons such as the Dazantii energy blaster, Rur Tsarl

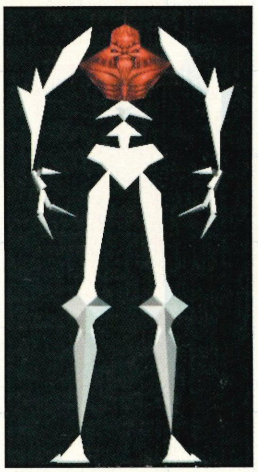
CHARACTERS WITH DEPTH

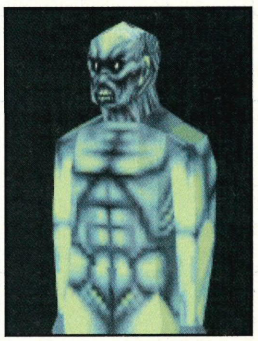
Despite the whole first person perspective genre being inherently 3-D, most games of this ilk on the PlayStation have been guilty of not actually making full use of 3-D technology. Apparent limitations are all too often bandied around as excuses for not being able to effectively reproduce polygon enemies and all too often we have seen poor 2-D flat characters that leave a lot to be desired. Tribe is here to save the day.

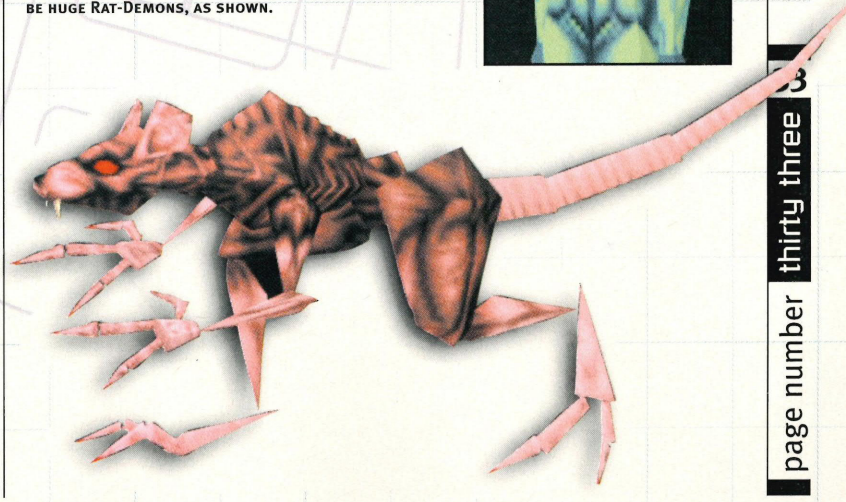
The characters/enemies in *DoD* will all be flat shaded, light-sourced and fully texture mapped to ensure maximum detail when encountered at close quarters. Generally comprised of around 300-400 polygons, more for boss characters, there are obvious limitations to the number of simultaneous on-screen enemies, with only a certain number of polygons displayable in real-time.

However despite this, through the use of advanced intelligence routines, each of the characters in the game will be much more formidable than your average *Doom*-style enemy, and through the use of smaller characters for drone attacks, the enemy count will be kept high.

Also, depending on your location within the game, enemies are tailored to ensure a certain amount of realism – for example in the sewer sections the levels are rat-infested and indeed the main adversaries will be huge Rat-Demons, as shown.



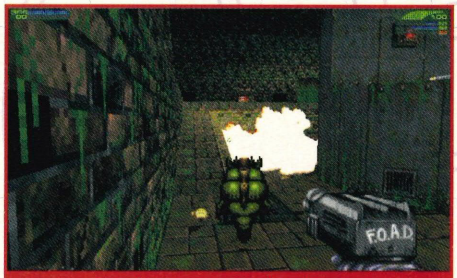






[Above] Expect floods of attacks from the undead, spread around the oxymoronical world of Dawn of Darkness. Notice the realistic light-sourcing effects in the distance.





[Above] A demon flys for cover when he realises your intentions. There's a switch in the top right which needs to be activated. Getting there is the problem.

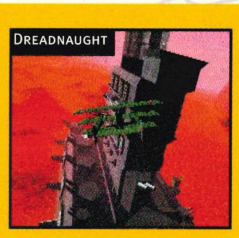


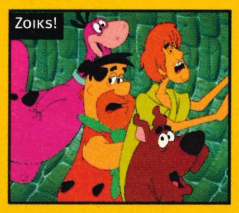
[Above] The undead take many forms. Rats, bats, ghosts, skeletons, zombies and Games Animals appear with frightening regularity. Will the onslaught ever end?

TRIBAL GATHERING

TRIBE IS THE NAME GIVEN TO THE IN-HOUSE DEVELOPMENT TEAM AT OCEAN'S MANCHESTER-BASED SOFTWARE HIVE. THERE ARE OVER 80 MEMBERS IN THE CLAN, SPLIT INTO AROUND FIVE, OR SO CONCURRENTLY WORKING PROJECTS. AT THIS MOMENT, THEY ARE WORKING ON *DAWN OF DARKNESS*, *DREADNOUGHT* – A FUTURISTIC WAR GAME SET IN A WORLD WHERE STEAM AND ELASTIC(!) POWER ARE STATE-OF-THE-ART, AND *ZOIKS!*, AN INTERACTIVE CARTOON FEATURING THE ENTIRE HANNA BARBERA FAMILY.

TRiBE





SOFTOGRAPHY

OCEAN:
Recently...
Raiden Project (PSX)
Power Serve (PSX)
True Pinball (PSX)
Zero Divide (PSX)
Cheesy (PSX)
Tunnel B1 (PSX)
Worms (PSX, Amiga, PC, Mac...)

666 Nuke-pod and the suicidal Devistatar will ensure that you have at least a slim chance against the armies of evil that populate this new twisted earth.

THE LAST WORD

"At the end of the day, *DoD* is a first person perspective gorefest," admits Gavin. "We are not ashamed of this, nor will we attempt to suggest any subtler elements. The basic rule of thumb is 'kill or be killed!"

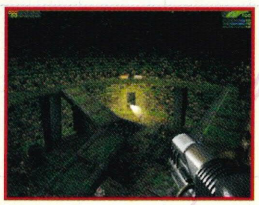
Fair enough – let's face it, who really gives a toss about feature A or feature B if the game doesn't play right. Thankfully, at least *Dawn of Darkness* has all the elements slotting into place for a very promising title.

"Get gun, point at naughty creature, press fire, repeat as required." Gavin says boldly. Let's face it what else is there?

Over the next six months or so, Gavin's team are going to have a hard task translating the title over from the PC version. In the process, details are likely to change. However, given the commitment to quality product that Ocean have been ensuring through their last few releases, we have no doubts that the team will make as much use of the extra power the PlayStation offers without losing out too much through the machine's inherent limitations.

Dawn of Darkness is certainly an interesting title to look forward to, PLAY will bring you more news of this exciting project as more details are released.

"At the end of the day, DoD is a first person perspective gorefest. We are not ashamed of this, nor will we attempt to suggest any subtler elements. The basic rule of thumb is kill or be killed!"
– Andy Gavin, Tribe, Ocean.





BLOW 'EM TO SQUID SPIT





"The only way to describe In the Hunt is to combine all the best shooters you have ever played in one game." EGM - February 96

IN THE HUNT™

PlayStation

Kokopeli digital studios™

T•HQ INTERNATIONAL LTD, 4 THE PARADE, EPSOM, SURREY KT18 5DH

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PLAY magazine October 1996

SOVIETS

EXPLOSIVE, DARING, NERVE-WRECKING – THESE ARE JUST SOME OF THE WORDS THAT APTLY DESCRIBE EA'S LATEST SHOOT-'EM-UP. DOES IT LIVE UP TO ITS PROUD HERITAGE?

WRITTEN BY ASAM AHMAD



[ABOVE] This submarine outpost looks unprotected, but a swarm of enemies is likely to turn up at any point. quick thinking and an active trigger finger are required.

Roulette

Vodka. The Kremlin. Weird dancing. Only one thing can be signified by these things... Russia. The Soviet Union. And for all this strangeness, they deserve getting a strike, doncha think? Praise be then to those EA characters for it is them who are here to save the day. *Soviet Strike's* the name. Wanton destruction's the game. Hallelujah.

The latest chapter in the incredible *Strike* series, *Soviet Strike* boasts the most dynamic, feature-filled and realistic display of action, strategy and all-out warfare of all, and it's just about ready for its PlayStation assault. With a heritage to be proud of, this 'thinking man's shooter' will cause quite a stir when it breaks out on to those perestroikaed shelves in a couple of months.

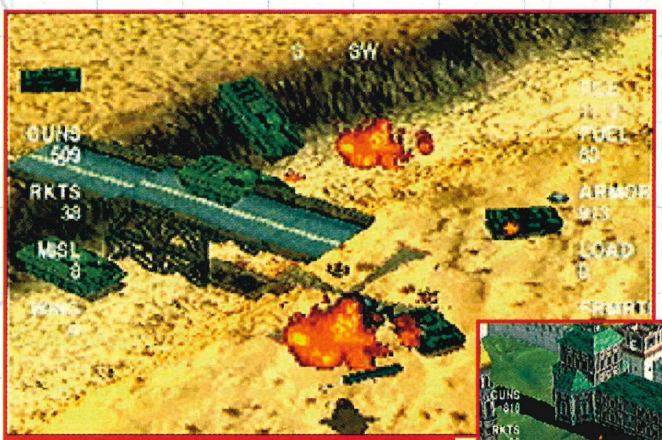
NIET. NIET. NIET.

The story is based around the collapse of the USSR. Shadowman, a sinister ex-KGB general, has organised a clean-up of Russian military arms in an attempt claim any nuclear warheads and other vile weapons now in disuse. Obviously, in the control of a

STRIKE

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

"We are able to create richer and more complex stories than before, giving the impression of greater reality..." Developer, **Soviet Strike.**



[Above] **Destroying bridges is an effective way of curbing the enemy campaign. Here I've just sustained a major hit from the side.**







megalomaniacal nutter, these arms are deadly and quite naturally, with news of this operation, the rest of the world is decidedly nervous.

Over the 40+ missions making up the game, it's your job to curb Shadowman's stockpiling of weapons and to ultimately thwart and vanquish him. *Soviet Strike* starts off in Crimea, where on discovery of the Shadowman's plans, you move on to the Black Sea to prevent capture of ICBM ships, amongst other things. The action then follows a trail to Transylvania, through several stages and finally to Moscow itself for the final showdown.

Over the five main stages, *Soviet Stike* boasts some of the most intelligent adversaries in what has been coined as a 'Living Battlefield.' The enemy vehicles, their tactics and responses constantly change based upon your activities and indeed have no specific predefined actions. Further still, it's up to you to fathom out their strategies by means of careful observation and by scrutinizing an 'OnLine Cluebook.' Videos, cut-scenes and voice clues that are presented to you as you progress.

Da. Da. Da.

"Now that we have a CD platform for *Strike*, we are able to create richer and more complex stories than before, giving the impression of greater reality," enthuses *Soviet Strike's* project leader. [Unfortunately we're not able to reveal the names of development team, due to the sheer number and also for the simple reason that if we did, they might get poached...]

"Indeed from what we've seen and played, the campaigns do indeed seem to be ripped from the headlines and feature real characters that live and die depending on what you do."

One of the characters in the game, a spy named Andrea (Aun-drey-ah) is rather convincingly played by EA's Aussie 'beaudy', Andrea Griffiths – *Soviet Strike's* PR manager and general all round 'goer' (Er, I think you'll find it was just an actress Asam – stop getting carried away – Ed). Presented via some very smart multi-windowed FMV throughout the game, these characters and your objective are relayed to you through footage of events, stills, audio snips and instructive advice. Pacily presented with an exciting

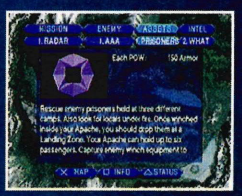
TACTICS MY FRIEND, TACTICS.

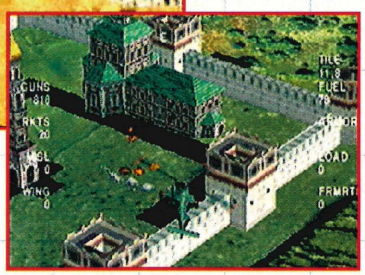
Over the 40+ missions, you'll encounter literally hundreds of different scenarios involving villages, enemy camps and troop concentrations, even large parts of Moscow itself. Each of these situations will test both reflexes and thinking to discover the intelligent way of dealing with the problem at hand. Sometimes it's best to go all out and shoot everything in sight. Other times it's best to rescue everyone without doing any damage at all. Only be reviewing your briefings and on-line intelligence transmissions will the player be able to understand the best tactic for each situation.



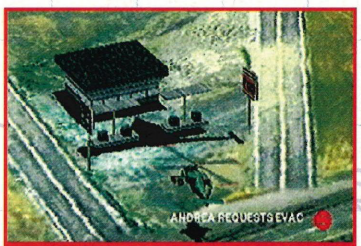




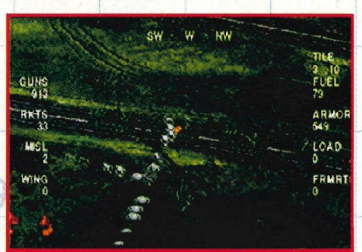








[Above] **Messages from StrikeNet are constantly sent through and appear on the display, usually with audio verification. Andrea wants to come out of the cold.**



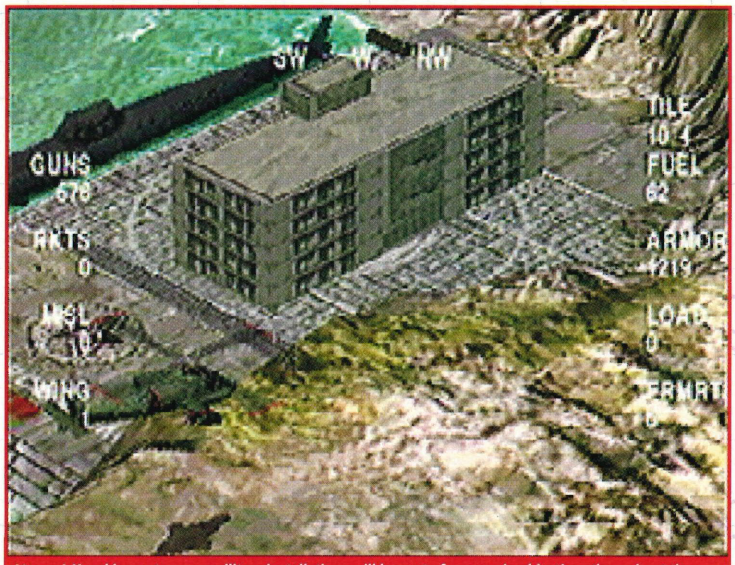
[Above] **A party of tanks heading to the seaside was attacked and mugged by a lone man in a helicopter, wearing a balaclava and sunglasses. Allegedly.**

Blueprint

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: Electronic Arts
% Complete: 80%
Expected Release Date: 25 October '96
Origin: USA
No of Players: 1

SOFTOGRAPHY

Electronic Arts:
There are quite literally hundreds of games on a myriad of platforms that have been developed by Electronic Arts over the years, but specific to Soviet Strike, here's a list of the previous games in the series.
Desert Strike
(Mega Drive, Super NES)
Jungle Strike
(Mega Drive, Super NES)
Urban Strike
(Mega Drive, Super NES)



[Above] Knocking out enemy military installations will be part of your main objectives throughout the various campaigns. The destruction is wanton, and exciting.

storyline that really plunges you into the heart of the action, *Soviet Strike* is indeed a true next-gen title that doesn't hold back on the gameplay.

Stolichanaya, spasiba

Where the previous incarnations of the *Strike* series were limited to an isometric viewing angle, to take advantage of the new freedoms that next-gen machines allow, a new trailing camera view has been added.

"The game engine is entirely new and 3-D based," explains a Developer. The decision to keep the view outside the cockpit was apparently deliberate.

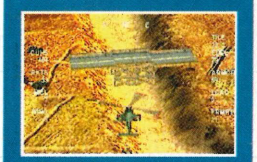
"Since it allows you to see the people and objects you are attempting to winch up as resources or as rescue missions."

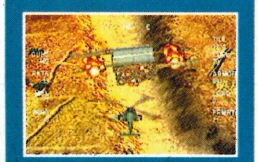
Apart from this aspect, it's a practical necessity to be able to see as much around you as possible, especially when there are a myriad of enemies all firing at you simultaneously.

With the immense amount of detail in the plot, the jaw-dropping realism of the visuals, and one of the most extravagant presentations yet seen in a PlayStation game, *Soviet Strike* has all the hallmarks of a classic. An eagerly anticipated sequel, Electronics Arts' formula of winning gameplay and immersive action, honed to perfection for the fourth in the *Strike* saga looks set to be one of the most explosive titles on the PlayStation this year. With any luck, we'll have a full in-depth review next issue and then those Ruskies will rue the day!

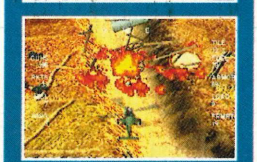
[Bridge Rectifier]

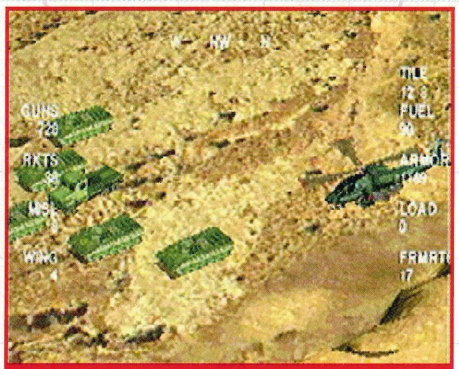
The explosions in *Soviet Strike* are quite awesome. Here a bridge is being destroyed. The number of frames used and the progressive damage all add to the realism of the game.



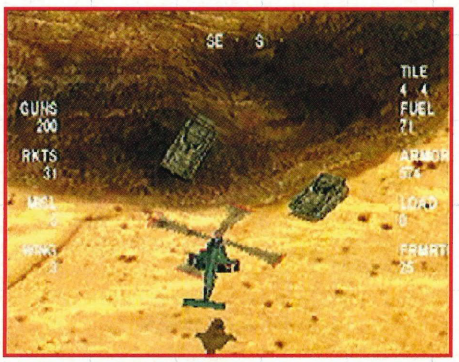








[Above] Operation Goose. A formation of tanks is escorting the transport of a captive hostage. Careful shooting is required to ensure you don't kill the prisoner.



[Winches of Eastwick]

Picking up weapons and other supplies is essential to replenish stock and stay in the game. On many occasions, picking up humans will be necessary to evacuate them to safety.







Like being there

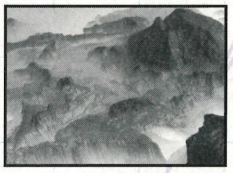
The graphics in *Soviet Strike* are stunning. The landscapes upon which all the action takes place are some of the most realistic ever seen, with perfect pixel representations of real scenery. Unsurprisingly, creating such photo-realistic worlds was a painstaking process. The reference material for the landscapes was created by the Strike Air Force art team who flew from Oregon to Texas and Mexico, photographing the terrain from a private plane. Indeed the plane was made to bank at incredibly sharp angles so that the photographers could shoot straight down. This process was repeated several times – ad nauseum(!) – to create the levels in *Soviet Strike*.

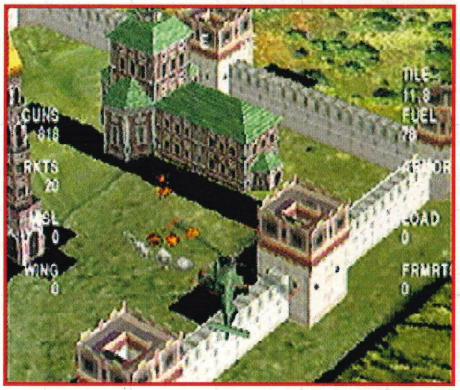












Running rings

One of the best tactics to employ when trying to defeat an actively hostile craft is to continually fly around in circles, almost like strafing, whilst pointing directly at the object. This keeps you moving and helps avoid getting hit. Notice the light sourced explosion in frame one, lighting up the surrounding water.

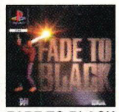








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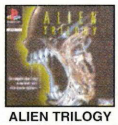
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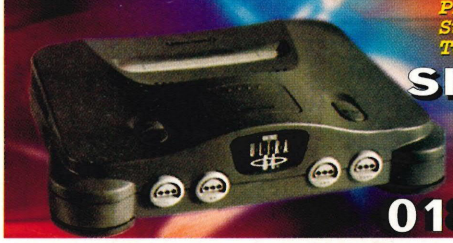
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BURNING

PLAY CLASSIC

SPEED, VIOLENCE, LITTLE DANGLY THINGS ON YOUR REAR VIEW MIRROR – *BURNING ROAD'S* GOT IT ALL, BUT DOES IT PLAY AS WELL AS IT LOOKS?

Written By Damian Butt

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Funsoft
Customer support: 0181 748 7565
Price: £44.99
Release date: October

ONE PLAYER

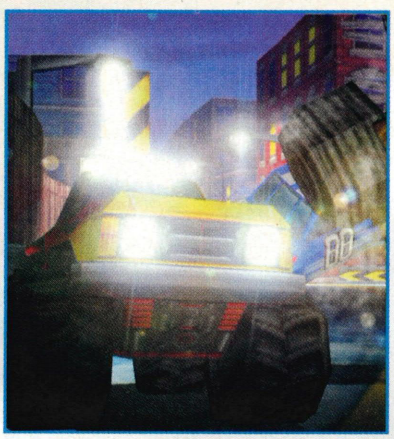
MUTIPLE PLAYERS

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"Burning Rooooaaaad"



The French temptress who belted out the theme tuned for this extraordinarily flash speed-fest certainly earned every Franc, because once you've heard it, you'll be singing the damn thing for months! A one, two, three, four. Bur-ning Roooooaaaeeeeeeed! Yeah, that's the spirit.

Let's be honest. The PlayStation is not exactly starved of racing games. *The Need for Speed*, *Ridge Racer Revolution*, *Motor Toon GP2*, *Formula 1*, you only have to glance at our Playback section to see that they're coming out of our ears, so why release another one? The answer comes within nano-seconds of stomping on the "fast" pedal belonging to the Mad Katz steering wheel. *Burning Road* is more coin-op than any other racing game on the PlayStation; a thoroughbred stallion with mustard smeared on its testicles!

Gurning Toad

Choose any one of the four completely different vehicles (red sports, blue muscle, 4x4, heavy metal) and the moment the race starts and the countdown begins you can feel the bass of the throbbing V8 engine through your entire body. Best played in the cockpit view, the effect is completed with a steering wheel set-up (you will never go back to joypads if you've bought one) and once configured it's the closest thing to actually breathing in petrol fumes.

Burning Road is almost a parody of all other racing games, in particular Sega's *Daytona* arcade machine. Like a damp and

ROAD

EXCLUSIVE!



[Above] This is the toughest track and it's set in an industrial district of a city at night. Cornering hard you suddenly get hit by a torrential thunderstorm which makes the roads slippery and blinds you with lightning. That's all you need!

NICE MOTOR

All four vehicles in *Burning Road* are built for different drivers. Skilled experts use the red or blue cars because they have naff-all grip, but loads of power. Beginners use the 4x4 for obvious reasons; it may not be fast but it'll get you there. And the green devil is for people who like Skid Row.





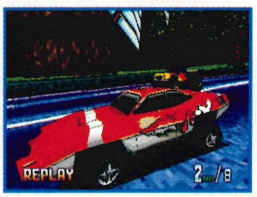
[Above] As in all classic racing games – OutRun, Ridge Racer, Daytona – you must reach each checkpoint before the timer runs out.















BURNING ROAD DEUX?

What would we like to see in the sequel?

1. More cars and secret cars.
2. Some background interaction (bridges lifting, rocks falling etc)
3. An endurance mode with pits to repair damage.
4. Cars that dent more and can be completely wrecked.
5. Speed starts.
6. Parts shop to beef up your car between races.
7. The return of the "Burning Roooeed" woman.
8. Stunt mode (jumping cars, buses etc)
9. Improved presentation (intro, flashy menus).
10. Split screen mode.

"Forget about your steering... you're pavement pizza!"

over-affectionate sheep dog it welcomes you with such familiar and over-used features as the helicopter or glider which buzzes the track as you race; diving perilously close to your car and then rocketing back into the air to reappear on the next lap. The sudden adverse weather conditions that spring out of nowhere to ambush you mid-corner (snow, rain, lighting etc). Crash barriers and barrels that litter the tracks just waiting to get jammed in your front wheels or be sent 'zinging' off into the air; crashing down on one your opponents. And not forgetting the other racing double act, Mr dangly object in the cockpit mode (a la *Rad Mobile*), and Auntie "let's emblazon the developers name in every conceivable location." There are many others (all explained elsewhere in this review) and Toka, the developer of *Burning Road*, has incredible managed to cram them all into the game. It's not so much a brand new racing game, as a compilation of everything that has gone before.

Learning Crows

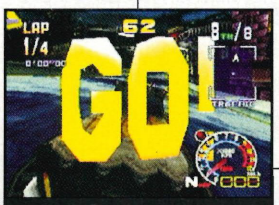
Snatch first gear and the world becomes a blur. The engine screams in your face and the glorious textured scenery whizzes past at a cracking pace. Before you've had a chance to adjust your trousers you're at the first hairpin and deep in the throng of the other cars, all jostling for position and ramming each other in the side walls. Wrench the wheel to the left, then the right and your blue beast groans on its suspension; the tyres scrabbling for grip, and failing miserably.

The red line reached you punch it into fourth, staying level with the green dude in the dragster. Then the first of the many jumps unexpectedly hurls you both into the air and as your nose digs up some Macadam you cross the

TIERS OF MY TRACKS

PLAY'S ANSWER TO JEREMY CLARKSON TAKES YOU ON A CRASH COURSE AROUND THE MOST DIFFICULT TRACK. REMEMBER, CLUNK, CLICK ON EVERY TRIP.

1



[ABOVE] Keep the revs high then go, go, go! The first section of track is a simple straight followed by a couple of smooth left and right turns. Nothing to worry about.

2



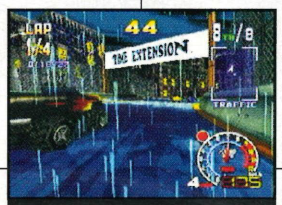
[ABOVE] Then we're straight into a brightly lit tunnel, but you've got to be careful because although you can see far ahead, there are still plenty of traffic cones and barrels.

3



[ABOVE] Out of the tunnel and into a thunder storm with rain starting off light as you head for a tight right hand bend underneath a bridge. The chevrons indicate the severity of the turn.

4



[ABOVE] And it's really hammering it down now; making the road slippery and reducing visibility. Just after the bridge is the first checkpoint. Note the buildings with their lights on either side.

5



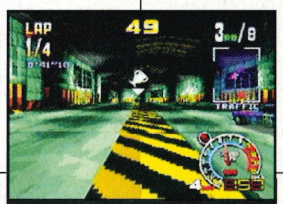
[ABOVE] Another long straight, this time punctuated by flashes of lightning and the roar of thunder. Just past the huge Funsoft sign is a left followed by a thin alleyway between houses.

6



[ABOVE] Up onto the girder bridge and the rain stops, lulling you into a false sense of security. Just after the bridge there is a hidden jump and then a tight right turn.

7



[ABOVE] From a tight right into a crippling left and then through a small garage entrance into a long empty factory. The cup in the distance indicates the leader of the race.

8



[ABOVE] The road turns into high quality motorway for a stretch as it passes through the city airport. Each time you pass this point, a jet airliner is landing or taking off.

9



[ABOVE] With the whine of the plane's jets in your ears, you then hang a left then a right under some steel girders before emerging on the final straight.

10



[ABOVE] And with only a long straight between you and the finish line you can afford to put pedal to the metal and ram any opponents into the wall.

End



[ABOVE] Just before the snow storm part of the second track there is a huge hidden jump. This is what happens if you get it wrong...



[ABOVE] When you've completed all three tracks in BR, you then have to race around them backwards. Here you clash with another 4x4 and the green car on the reversed second track.

first checkpoint. Ten other nutters want you dead and they've got three more laps to catch you...

So do you think you've got what it takes to handle *Burning Road*, eh? Guess what – not happening. This the fastest racing game since *RRR*. It's also the most traumatic. Not only are the other racers not averse to ramming you off the road if you get too cocky, but there are also plenty of hidden jumps spread all over the three tracks and once you're airborne, you can forget about your steering too. Time it badly and you're a pavement pizza!

Burning Road has the dubious honour of being one of the few games that could make you violently sick.

CHURNING LOAD

You can tell that *Burning Road* is going to be a sizzler right from the start, and that's always a good sign. The graphics are impressive enough to gather admiring looks from all passers by, it's probably the fastest PlayStation game so far (especially in the first person view), and Toka, despite this being its first game on PSX, has made it just as playable as anything you'll find down the arcades. There's no strategy involved, it's all in the reflexes.

Of course there are some faults. The front end presentation is terribly simplistic and rough looking, and because there are only three tracks it does become repetitive very quickly. But there is one aspect of the

BURNING CLICHE?

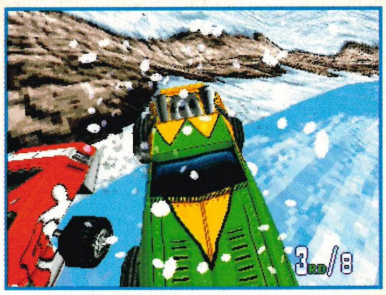


WHY IS IT ALL RACING GAMES HAVE TO BE INUNDATED WITH THE SAME OLD CLICHED GUBBINS? THE ANSWER IS OF COURSE TO TAKE YOUR EYES OFF THE ROAD AND CAUSE YOU TO CRASH MORE OFTEN AND MAKE THE GAME LAST LONGER. *BURNING ROAD* HAS EVERYTHING BUT THE KITCHEN SINK...

1. THE PUBLISHER'S NAME PRINTED ALL OVER THE SHOP (SIGNS, CARVED IN ROCK ETC).
2. UNPREDICTABLE WEATHER (RAIN, SNOW, DARKNESS ALL ON THE SAME TRACK!)
3. A STUPID VOICE (IN THIS CASE, A DAFT EUROTRASH BLOKE COMMENTATES).
4. LOW FLYING AIRCRAFT (GLIDERS, DC-10S, HELICOPTERS).
5. REPLAY MODE (SHOWS THE ENTIRE RACE FROM DIFFERENT ANGLES)
6. OBSTACLES (BARRELS, CRASH BARRIERS, GRANNIES, HEDGEHOGS ETC).
7. CAR MASCOTS (FURRY DICE, CUE BALLS – ALL HANGING FROM THE MIRROR. TASTEFUL).
8. BOUNCY CRASH (NO TWISTED METAL WHEN YOU CRASH, JUST A FEW BOUNCES AND YOU'RE BACK IN THE RACE. IF ONLY JAMES DEAN HAD THE SAME).
9. INEVITABLE DESIRE TO DRIVE ROUND THE TRACK BACKWARDS.
10. MIRROR TRACKS. WHY DESIGN SIX TRACKS WHEN YOU CAN HAVE THREE AND GO ROUND THEM BOTH WAYS!

"*Burning Road* has the dubious honour of being one of the few games that could make you violently sick!"





game that makes every fault redundant – the two player mode, which offers one of the best competitive experiences I've ever encountered.

The one player game offers virtually no "ramming off the track and into a sheer rockface" enjoyment because the CPU cars are for the most part, indestructible. However this all changes when another human is sitting next to you at the traffic lights. And what's more, as you exchange blows, the cars become more and more damaged; subtly affecting the handling and making it even more difficult to negotiate the windy courses. Two up, *Burning Road* offers fun unlimited, especially if you've just won the lottery and are both armed with steering wheels and pedals – the way this game was meant to be played.

To be honest, before this review I thought *Burning Road* was going to be disappointing. Although stunning to look at, it lacked tracks, cars and variety. But after playing it solid for a medically dangerous length of time I'm converted. It may not last very long in one player (the three tracks are in fact reversed when you complete them as in *Ridge Racer*, thus doubling the challenge!), but link it up and it offers almost unlimited entertainment for your brain and body.

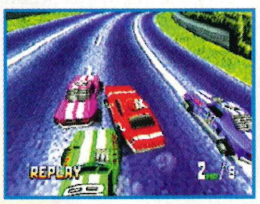




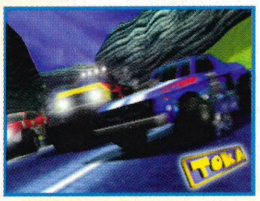


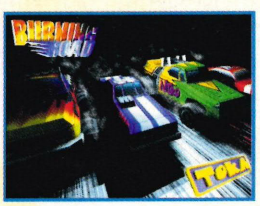




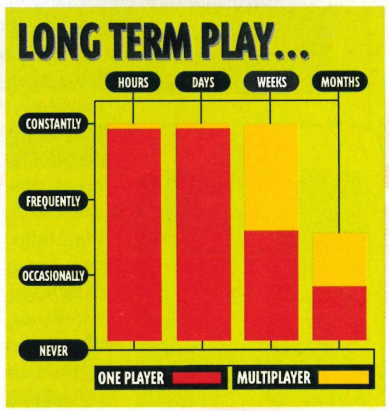


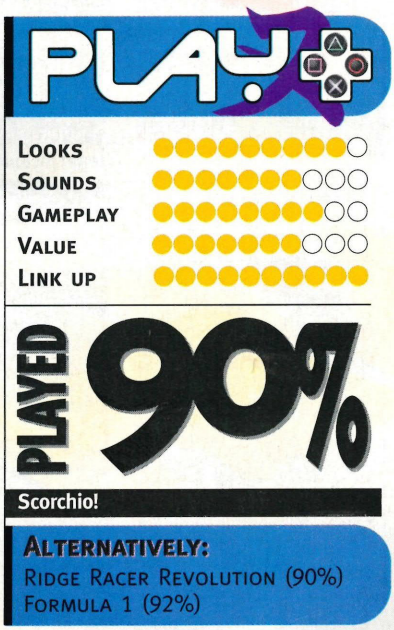






[Above] Jeez who is that guy! As in many arcade racing games, Burning Road is full of suicidal pilots buzzing the track in various aircraft. It may show off the polygon crunching ability of the PlayStation, but it is also extremely annoying.





TOBAL NO

THE CREATIVE GENIUSES BEHIND THE *FINAL FANTASY* SERIES TAKE ON THE *TEKKEN 2* TITANS AS THE PLAY TEAM DISCOVER JUST WHO IS THE KING OF FIGHTERS...

WRITTEN BY MAT YEO

"Up yours Nintendo!" Came the cry from stalwart 16-bit RPG king, SquareSoft, last year when it announced that it was splitting from the big "N" and would henceforth be putting all its polygon eggs in one PSX-branded basket.

If there were ever any fears that SquareSoft would fail to deliver a killer PlayStation title and cause the kind of ripples throughout the video games community that most developers can only dream about, they must surely have been silenced. With *Tobal No.1*, not only has the PlayStation been graced with a superb 3-D beat-'em-up that equals Namco's *Tekken 2* in terms of playability, speed and visual excellence, but it's worth remembering it's also Square's first 32-bit title.

Think about it. What we have here is a software company renowned for its addictive, multi-layered RPGs, yet taking an expensive gamble and stepping into the combat arena for the first time, ready to take on the big guns of Capcom et al. Not that there was ever anything to worry about. Thankfully, *Tobal No.1*'s development team includes some of the finest fighting game minds in the world, boasting programmers who have worked on the likes of *Virtua Fighter 2*, *Soul Edge* and *Tekken 2*.



[ABOVE] Defeat all your opponents then take on three of the toughest bosses in the galaxy. Is there a cheat to play as these guys? Find out next month...

FORBIDDEN PLANET

Set in a distant galaxy, the Tobal Tournament provides an opportunity for planetary warriors to defend their home worlds by defeating the resurrected evil Emperor Udan in unarmed combat.

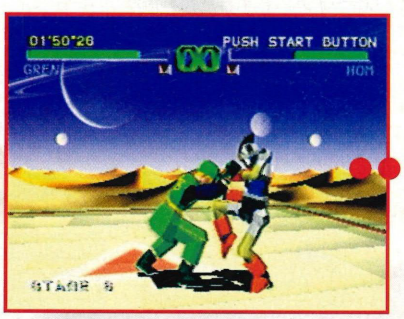
As with every beat-'em-up under the sun, *Tobal No. 1* offers players a variety of gaming modes ranging from the longevity of the two player Vs Mode to the dungeon-exploration/training of the Quest Mode. As befits the otherwordly setting of the Tobal Tournament, each of the eight playable characters (and three bosses) is suitably sci-fi-themed, with a few token humans thrown in for good measure. A character such as Chuji is ideal for novices eager to get to grips with the game's many moves. But fighting veterans should instead opt for the likes of Oliems and Ill who offer an altogether more satisfying challenge. Combat takes place in a variety of futuristic settings ranging from the barren wastes of a desert world to the darkened depths of a mine shaft. Unfortunately, there's no actual interaction with background objects, although *Virtua Fighter* fans will be more than familiar with the concept of Ring-Outs, whereby a player is forced out of the arena and sent plummeting to their doom.

PLAY INFORMATIO

Publisher: SquareSoft
Customer support: The Video Game Centre on 01202 527314
Price: £79.99
Release date: Now (import)

ONE PLAYER | MUTIPLE PLAYERS

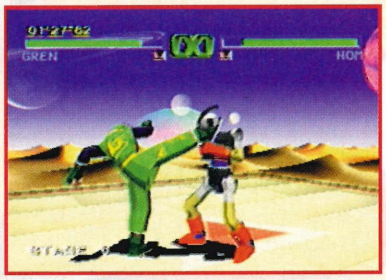
MEMORY CARD







PLAY CLASSIC





DUNGEON MASTER

Completing *Tobal No. 1's* Tournament Mode is simple enough, so for a further test of skill, Square has included a Quest Mode. Dripping with traditional RPG elements, there are over 30 dungeon levels intended as tough training grounds with enemies to overcome and obstacles to avoid. Make it through each section and you're awarded with a boss character who may then be accessed in either the Tournament or Vs Modes and saved to a memory card. Cool.



Indicates how many lives your character has. Players begin a Quest with only one life but there are precious extra hearts hidden in each level.

Collect all the blue crystals in each dungeon to access the many lifts. These are vital for progression into the further reaches of each level.

The Defence Points may be altered in a similar fashion and only a fighter with plenty of stamina will survive all the Quests.

Represents a fighter's Attack Points. Locating potions and Mammoth Meat will upgrade your character's overall strength, aiding in battles.

Each characters life bar may be increased or decreased depending on the foes encountered on your journey and the potions and food you consume.

Collect objects, such as potions, crystals, food and other devices to improve a fighter's well-being. There are also mini-shops to be found in each level.

The timer obviously informs players how long their Quest is taking them but also comes in handy when saving your character's progress.

The initial levels feature helpful posters on the walls, informing players how to control their character in this strange 3-D environment.

Keep an eye on the map to find out where you're headed and what treacherous obstacles may be lurking around the corner.

"Tobal No. 1 lives up to its promise..."

Square Bashing

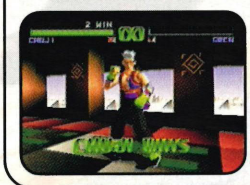
Unlike other fighting titles that "claim" to be 3-D, *Tobal No. 1* actually lives up to its promise; allowing players to move into and out of the screen by pressing up or down on the joypad. There's none of this fake *Toshinden*-style rolling to one side malarkey. Instead movement around each arena is extremely intuitive as are the character's moves and attacks.

Utilising a three-button set-up, each character is capable of unleashing high, medium and low attacks. By hammering buttons in the correct sequence combination moves may be achieved, with solid punches and kicks sending opponents reeling. Certain special moves are accompanied with subtle, but impressive, *Soul Edge*-style after-blurs which add to the speed and fluidity of an already visually

[CHUJI-WU]

Height: 175cm
Weight: 70kg
Age: 17

Monkey Kick: B, B, ■
Spinning Backhand: B + ▲
Power Punch: F + ■
Kubi Nage: B + L1 + ■
Spinning High Kick: L1 + ▲, ▲



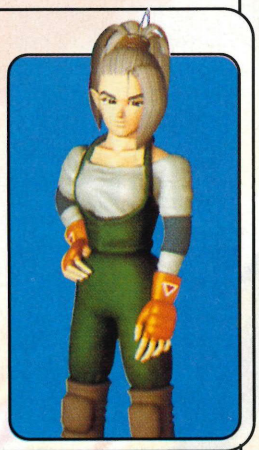


[EPON]

Height: 167cm
Weight: 50kg
Age: 18

Cartwheel Kick: ▲, ▲, ■, ■
Armlock Reversal: B + L1 + ■
Spinning Back Kick: F + ■
Side Hook Kick: ×, ■, ■
Jumping Roundhouse: B, B + ▲





KEY – F = Forward B = Backwards D = Down U = Up

[OLIEMS]

Height: 198cm
Weight: 110kg
Age: 19

Triple Hammer Uppercut: B + ■, ■, ■, ■
Spinning Knuckle: B, B + ■
Powerbomb: F + L1 + ■
Chicken Dance: Crouch + L1, F + ■, ■
Blur Punches: B + ▲, ▲, ▲, ▲



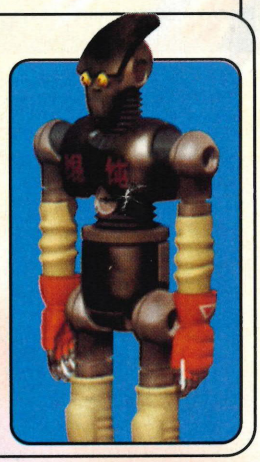


[HOM]

Height: 180cm
Weight: 150kg
Age: 20

Axe Kick: ■, ▲
Infinite Kick: F + ■, ■, ▲
Self Termination: D + L1 + Jump
Split Kick: B + ■, ■
Spinning Punch: F, F + ▲





DEJA VU?

It's fairly common knowledge that Square is currently employing programmers who have also worked on *VF2*, *Tekken 2* and *Soul Edge*. These guys are the cream of fighting game developers and as such have been given free reign with Square's first 3-D beat-'em-up. In fact there are many character moves and attacks in *Tobal No. 1* that have obviously been "borrowed" from other sources. *Tekken 2's* King springs to mind, as various fighters seem to utilise his range of throws and holds. Worra rip-off!





outstanding title. Square has also added an innovative grapple system which proves to be a godsend particularly against players who use cheap moves time and again. The advantage of the grapple is that players can grab an opponent and then throw them, break a limb, drag their foe around the arena, or simply release their grip and try another spectacular move. The player who's quickest with their button-bashing will always triumph making for some truly tense gaming moments.



[Above] Initiate a grapple then drain your opponent's energy with a swiftly executed throw. These cause major damage and look spectacular.



[Above] He may look like an old fart but Fei-Pusu is a nimble little bugger capable of pulling off some of the most impressive moves in the game.

Killer Kuts

After the graphical excess of *Tekken 2*, some of you may be put off by *Tobal No. 1*'s sparse, flat polygon characters and environments, but fear not, this unique style does have its advantages. For a start the game runs at a smooth 60fps in the PlayStation's high-res mode and running through a Scart TV has to be seen in motion to be appreciated. There's never any slowdown or polygon glitches and each fighter moves with a grace and swiftness Namco's programmers would undoubtedly kill for.

A brief mention must go to *Tobal No. 1*'s in-game music. Let's be honest 95% of the time you never notice there's any

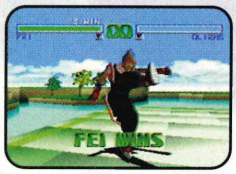


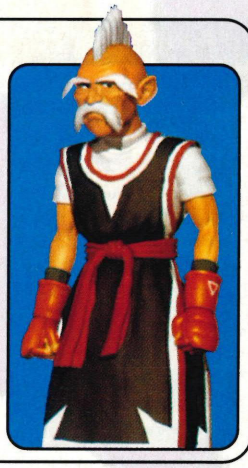
background tunes in a video game unless it's a sampled theme tune or recognisable song. Square's titles have always been strong in the audio department and *Tobal No. 1* is no exception with beautifully arranged symphonic harmonies shifting to tweakin' acid house beats as each level is visited. I'd recommend readers check out their local import shop as Square have already released two music CDs featuring *Tobal No. 1*'s awesome tracks.

[FEI-PUSU]

Height: 161cm
Weight: 50kg
Age: Ancient

Crawling Uppercut: B + ■, ■
Double Breakdance Sweep: B + ×, ×
Roll Kick: F, F + ×, ■
Double Spin Toss: F + L1 + ■
Overhead Kick: Crouch + L1, F + ■

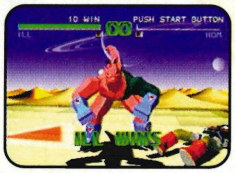


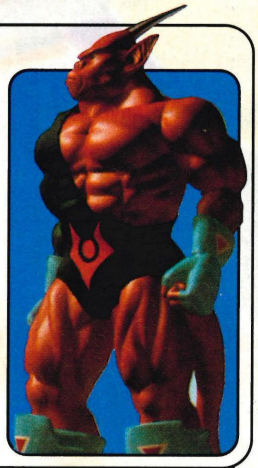


[ILL-GOGA]

Height: 201cm
Weight: 180kg
Age: 25

Roundhouse: ▲, ■, ▲, ■
Triple Headbutt: F, F + ▲, ▲, ▲
Double Arm Punch: ▲, ■, ×
Uppercut: B, B + ■
High Tailswipe: B + ▲





[MARY IVONSKAYA]

Height: 189cm
Weight: 140kg
Age: 32

Side Hook Punch: B + ▲, ■
Ali kick: F + ×, ■, ■
Jumping Punt Kick: F, F + ■
Backfall Suplex: B + L1 + ■
Left Hook Punch: B, B + ■



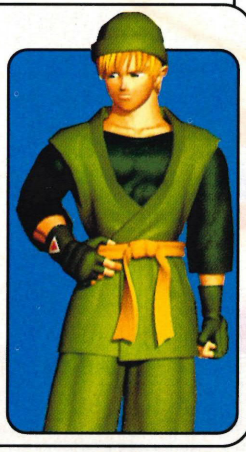


[GREN-KUTS]

Height: 175cm
Weight: 70kg
Age: 17

Shaolin Kick: L1 + ▲, ▲, ▲
Brainbuster: B + L1 + ■
Hiptoss: F + L1 + ■
Lunging Sweep: F, F + ×, ■
Double Spinning Kick: L1 + ▲, ▲, ■, ■



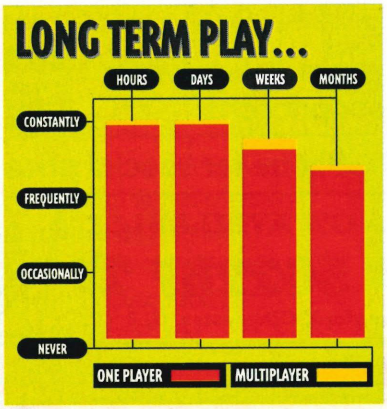


Tobal or not Tobal?

As far as loading times go, Square has managed to keep them to a bare minimum and are non-existent between bouts. If Sony has any sense whatsoever, it'll distribute every future SquareSoft title itself, thereby ensuring that the PlayStation remains the premiere 32-bit console on the face of the planet. You'll



LONG TERM PLAY...



SMASH 'N' GRAB

Tobal No. 1's unique grappling system allows players to really get to grips with their opponents. By simultaneously pressing R1 and ■ when near an enemy, fighters will grab their foes allowing a variety of throws, moves and special attacks to be initiated. The sequence below should also give you some idea of just how smoothly moves flow into each other.



[MUFU]

Height: 201cm
Weight: 60kg
Age: ?

Crab Kicks: B + ■, ■, ■
Arm Stretch: F + ■
Jumping Piledriver: F + L1 + ■
Backhand Uppercut: B, B + ■
Scissor Punch: F + ▲, ▲, ▲, ▲



[NORK THE MYSTERIOUS]

Height: 304cm
Weight: 350kg
Age: ?

Spinning Uppercut: B + ■
Sit & Slam: F + ■, ■, ■
Sweep: L1 + ×
Overhead Punch: F + ×, ▲, ▲
Powerbomb: F + L1 + ■







[EMPEROR UDAN]

Height: 152cm
Weight: 45kg
Age: Infinite

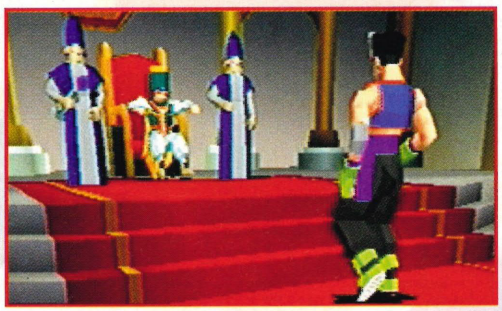
Twisting Neck Throw: L1 + ■
Shoulder Charge: B, B + ■
Piledriver: L1 + ■
Hopping Spinning Hook Kick: B + ▲
Flying Stomp: B + ■

?



[Above] Race through each dungeon level, dodging obstacles, increasing your character's offensive and defensive capabilities, and searching for the elusive exit.





"SquareSoft deliver a killer PlayStation title!"

have to excuse the ranting and raving in this review but once you've tasted the likes of *Tobal No. 1* and *FFVII* and know there's more on the way (Square has stated it'll be releasing at least 20 PSX titles over the next 12 months), even jaded old hacks like us are reduced to quivering masses of flesh. Sell your granny and play *Tobal No. 1* till your fingers bleed. As yet Sony has not announced the UK date for *Tobal No.1* – sort it out!





[Above] Players move around a true 3-D environment by pressing left and right on the joypad. This close-up view shows the high-quality of Tobal No. 1's visuals.

PLAY

Looks	9
Sounds	7
Gameplay	9
Value	7
Squareness:	7

PLAYED 94%

Tobal No.1 tumbles *Tekken 2*!

Alternatively:
Tekken 2 (95%)
Street Fighter Alpha (93%)

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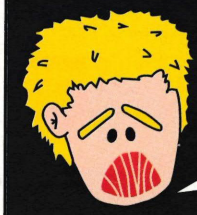
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WALL OF GAME

The undisputed king of 3-D beat-'em-ups finally arrives this month as Namco unleash the truly awesome Tekken 2. We're printing a complete moves guide for all ten selectable characters this month, giving you details of the many complex throws, special attacks and unblockable assaults you'll need to become a fighting legend. Next issue we'll complete the guide with information on all the Sub-Bosses and Bosses as well as loads of secret stuff. Get scrappin'!



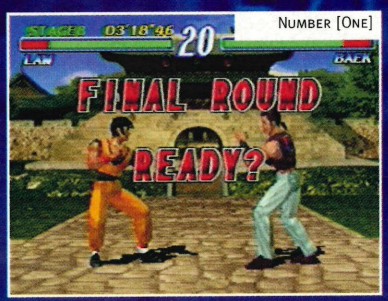
TEKKEN 2

Top *Tekken 2* Tips

[One] To obtain all the Sub-Bosses, set the options to one round and a 20 second bout. Start each fight with a few quick hits then back off until the timer runs down. Beat all of the characters, and the Devil himself, and you'll then be able to save your character's Sub-Boss to a memory card.

[Two] In Practice Mode, leave your character standing still for a few seconds and a weird comedy thought bubble will appear above their head!

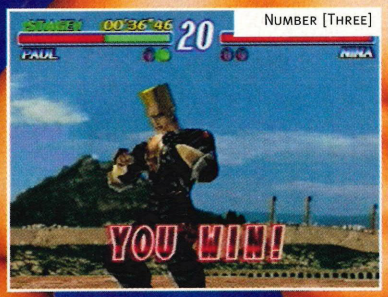
[Three] After giving your opponent a damn good smacking, hold down a combination of buttons to see each character's many winning poses.



Number [One]



Number [Two]



Number [Three]

PLAY Information

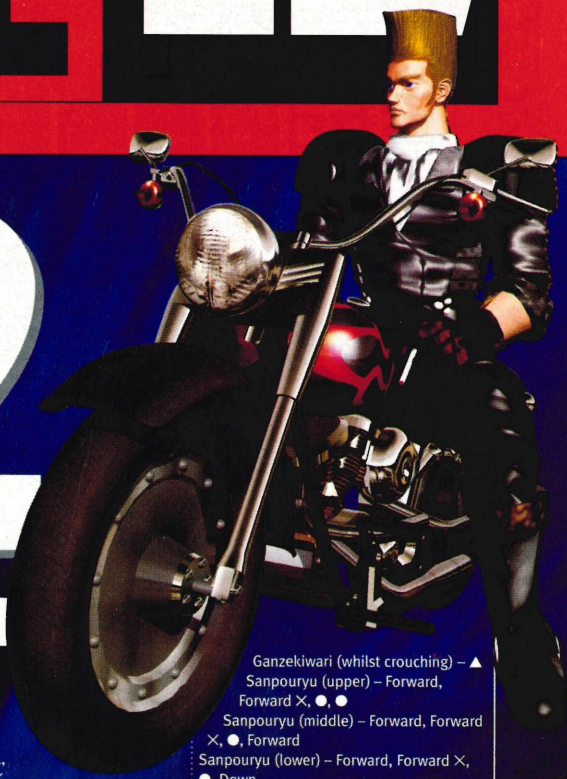
Publisher: Sony Computer Entertainment Europe
Customer Support: 0881 505505*
Price: £44.99
Release Date: Out Now

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

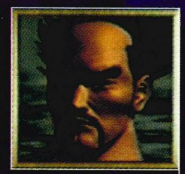
PLAY PLAYED 95%
A reet hard nut!

WALL OF GAME NUMBER 12

TEKKEN 2



HEIHACHI MISHIMA



[THROWS]
Kongo Otoshi – ▲ + ●
Hadakajime – ■ + ×
Nioukudaki (from behind) – ■ + × or ▲ + ●
Super Pachiki – Foward, Forward ■ + ▲

[SPECIAL MOVES]
One-two punch – n, s
Rasenshujinkyaku – Forward/Up + ●, ●
Senkourekken – ■, ■, ▲
Kikoku – ■, ▲, ▲
Musou Renken – Forward/Down ■, ▲
Fujinken – Forward, Down, Forward/Down + ▲
Raijinken – Forward, Down, Forward/Down + ■
Kishinken – Forward, Forward + ▲
Kuzankyaku – Forward, Forward, Forward + ×
Migi Kakatootoshi – Forward + ●
Hidari Kakatootoshi – Forward, Forward + ×
Kakatootoshi (Whilst getting-up) – ●, ●
Narakubarai – Forward, Down, Forward/Down + ●, ●, ●
Narakubarai Kakatokiri (during Narakubarai) – ●, ●
Hasaishu – ●, ×
Risenkujinkyaku – Forward/Up + ×, ●
Poken – Down, Forward/Down, Forward + ▲
Gekizankyaku – Forward, Down, Forward/Down + ×
Chizankyaku – Forward, Down, Forward/Down (hold) + ×
Kageashi – Back, Back × + ●
Kawarawari (whilst crouching) – ■
Kawarawari Ponken (whilst crouching) – ■, Forward + ▲
Onigeta (whilst an opponent is floored) – Down (hold) + ●
Uraken – Forward (hold) + ▲
Uraken Nidan – ▲, ▲

[UNBLOCKABLE ATTACK]
Onigawara – Down (hold) + ■ + ●

PAUL PHOENIX

[THROWS]
Udetorigyakujuji – ▲ + ●
Ipponzeoi – ■ + ×
Tomoenage – ■ + × Back (hold)
Seotoshi (from behind) – ▲ + ● or ■ + ×
Uraate – Forward, Forward + ■ + ▲
Fuga – Forward/Down + ■ + ▲
Ultimate Tackle – Back/Down + ■ + ▲
Yamikumo (during Ultimate Tackle) – ▲, ■, ▲, ■, ▲
Yamikumo Jime (during Ultimate Tackle) – Down + ▲, ■, ▲, ●, ■, ■ + ▲

[SPECIAL MOVES]
One-two Punches – ■ + ▲
Souhitenkyaku – Forward/Up + ×, ●
Ponken – Down, Forward/Down, Forward + ▲
Punch & Kick Combo – ▲, ×
PDK Combo – ▲, Down (hold) + ×
Reverse PDK Combo – ■, Down (hold) + ●
Shower Kicks – Forward, Forward ●
Rakuyou (whilst crouching) – ●, ▲
Hazakura (whilst crouching) – Forward/Down + ▲
Hazakura Tekki (whilst crouching) – Forward/Down + ▲, ▲
Hazakura Ponken (whilst crouching) – Forward/Down + ▲, ■
Ganzekiwari (whilst crouching) – ▲
Sanpouryu (upper) – Forward, Forward ×, ●, ●
Sanpouryu (middle) – Forward, Forward ×, ●, Forward
Sanpouryu (lower) – Forward, Forward ×, ●, Down
Kawarawari (whilst crouching) – ■
Kawarawari Ponken (whilst crouching) – ■, ▲
Kawarawari Rakuyou (whilst crouching) – ■, ●, ▲
Hayate – Forward, Forward (hold) + ▲

[UNBLOCKABLE ATTACK]
Banseiryuouken – Back (hold) ■ + ▲

LEI WULONG

[THROWS]
Erijime – ▲ + ●
Hikukyaku – ■ + ×
Rakugansai (from behind) – ▲ + ● or ▲ + ●
Haraitaoshi – Forward, Forward (hold) + ■ + ▲

[SPECIAL MOVES]
Lie down – Down (hold) × + ●
Back turn – Back (hold) × + ●
Back down (whilst lying face down) – ■
Kousouenbu – Back/Down ●, ●
Senpurenkyaku – ×, ●
Koryutai – ●, ×
Ryusei Chudankyaku – Forward + ■, ▲, ■, ●, ●
Ryusi Gedankyaku – Forward + ■, ▲, ■, ▲, ×
Rouga Kosonzan – Forward, ●, ■, ▲, ×, ●
Tenshinrenhou – ■ + ▲
Youshingeki – Forward, ×, ●
Kosonzan – Forward, ×, Down (hold) ●
Kyokankyaku – ×, ●
Raikou Chudankyaku – Forward (hold) ●, ■, ▲, ●
Raikou Gedankyaku – Forward ●, ■, ▲, ×
Raikou Choukyaku – Forward, Forward, Forward + ×
Sousouga – Forward + ▲, ■, ▲, ■
Kenzanrenkyaku – ●, ●, ×, ×
Leap and up (when lying & opponent is by feet) – × + ●
Choukyukyaku (when lying & opponent is by head) – × + ●
Gyoushin-kousouenbu (when lying & opponent is by head) – ×, ●
Haishin Kasouda (when an opponent is behind) – Down + ■
Haishin Tai (when an opponent is behind) – ●
Haishin Kousouenbu (when an opponent is behind) – Down + ■, ■
Haijinraku (when an opponent is behind) – × + ●, × + ●, × + ●,
Fukushin Koryutai (whilst lying on back) – ●, ×
Fukushin Soutai (whilst lying on back) – ×, ●
Hisuichou – Back (hold) ■ + ●
Yousourenkyaku (during Hisuichou) – ×, ×, ×, ×.

[UNBLOCKABLE ATTACKS]
Houousenpukyaku (during Hisuichou) – ●
Houousenpukyaku (during yousourenkyaku) – ●

JUN KAZAMA



[THROWS]
Hebimawashi – ▲ + ●
Udejuji Gatame – ■ + ×
Tsuriganewari (from behind) – ▲ + ● or ■ + ×
Counter attack – Back ▲ + ●
Hakuzan – Forward/Down × + ▲

[SPECIAL MOVES]
Hakuro Yubu – ■ + ●, ▲, ●
Hakuro Yubu Gedan – ■ + ●, ▲, Back/Down + ●
Taizan Hakuro – ■ + ●, ▲, ■
Taizan Hakuro Kariashi – ■ + ●, ▲, ■, ●, ■, ●
Taizan Hakuro Suiren Shiun – ■ + ●, ▲, ■, ■, ●
Taizan Hakuro Suiren Shoutai – ■ + ●, ▲, ■, ■, ×
Suiren Kei – ■, ■
Onigoroshi – Forward (hold) + ▲
Shinku Kariashi – Back/Down + ●, ●, ●
Ryuntsui – × + ●
Kariashi Ryuntsui – ×, ●, ●, ●, ×
Kariashi Hakuro Yubu – ×, ●, ■ + ●, ▲, ●
Kasumi Geri – Forward (hold) + ●
Suikeishitageri – ■, ×
Sourenkei – ■, ▲
Shiun Nidangeri – Down (hold) × + ●
Suiren Shoutai – ■, ■, ×
Suikei Kariashi – ■, ●, ●, ●
Kasumi Shouken – Forward (hold) + ■
Ryushageri – Back (hold) + ×
Ryushageri Kariashi – Back (hold) + ×, ●, ●, ●
Ryushageri Onigoroshi – Back (hold) + ×, ▲

[UNBLOCKABLE ATTACK]

Hajshin Da (when an opponent is behind) – ■

Suiren Shiun – ■, ■, ●

Unikubi Otoshi – Forward (hold) + ×

MARSHALL LAW



[Throws]

Sekkan Punch – ▲ + ●
Dragon Dive – ■ + ×
Face Crasher (from behind) – ■ + × or ▲ + ●
Dragon Fall (during Sekkan Punch) – Down (hold) ■, ▲, ■ + ▲
Dragon Knee – Forward, Forward × + ●

[Special Moves]

One-two punches – ■, ▲
Hidarirenken – ■, ■, ■, ■, ■
Dragon Knuckle Combo – Forward + ▲, ▲, ▲
Step-in Middle Kick – Forward/Down + ×
Spin Kick Combo – ●, ×, ●
High Kick Combo – ×, ×, ×
Dragon Slash – Forward, Forward, Forward + ×
Dragon Low (whilst crouching) – ×
Sliding (whilst crouching) – Forward/Down, Forward/Down (hold) + ×
Dragon Breath – Down (hold) + ×, ×, ×, ×, ×
Dragon Tail – Back/Down + ●
High Somersault – Down (hold), Up (hold) + ●
Low Somersault – Down (hold), Up + ●
Somersault Drop – Down (hold), Up + × + ●
Jump Side Kick Somersault – Up, ×, ●
Dragon Somersault – ●,Up + ×
Dragon Low Left Somersault (whilst crouching) – ●, ×
Front Kick Left Somersault (whilst standing) – ●, ×
Side Kick Right Somersault (whilst standing) – ×, ●
High Kick Right Somersault – ×, ●
Low Kick Left Somersault – ●, ×
Sit Straight Left Somersault – Down, ▲, ×
Quick Somersault Kick – × + ●
Double Somersault Kick – × + ●, ×
Sit Spin Kick Somersault – Down (hold), Down/Back + ×, ●
Kick Somersault (after low kick) – × + ●

[Unblockable Attack]

Dragon Fang – Down/Back + ■ + ▲

NINA WILLIAMS



[Throws]

Izori – ▲ + ●
Izori Hijiotoshi – ▲ + ●, ■, ▲
Izori Hijiotoshi Waki Gatame (during Izori Hijiotoshi) – ▲, ■, ×
Shihounage – ■ + ×
Kakaekomihijiunchi – Forward/Down, Forward/Down + ■
Kubikarinage – ■ + × + Forward (hold)
Shouaku – Down, Forward/Down, Forward + ■ + ▲
Kubikarijuji Gatame (during Shouaku) – ×, ●, ×, ■ + ▲
Tachigyakuwaki Gatame (during Shouaku) – ■, ×, ▲, ■
Urakannukitakahajime (during Tachigyakuwaki) – ×, ■, ●, ■ + ▲, ■ + ▲
Sutegyakuwaki Gatame (during Shouaku) – ▲, ■, ×, ●, ■ + ▲
Udehishigihara Gatame (during Shouaku) – ▲, ×, ●, ▲, ▲
Kubihinerikao Gatame (during Udehishigihara Gatame) – ■, × + ●, ■, ▲, ■ + ▲
Kanibasami – Down, Forward/Down, Forward, × + ●
Zentenudejuji Gatame (during Kanibasami) – × + ●, ×, ●, ■ + ▲
Achilles Tendon Gatame (during Kanibasmi) – × + ●, ●, ▲, ■ + ▲
Hizajuji Gatame (during Achilles Tendon) – ×, ■, ●, ● + ▲
Kaiten Achilles Tendon Gatame (during Achilles Tendon Gatame) – ■, ×, ● + ▲, × + ●, ■ + ▲

[Special Moves]

Soushouha – Forward, Forward ■ + ▲
Kneel Kick – Forward, Forward ●
Hunting kick Combo – Forward/Up ●, ×, ●
Rave Kick – ■, ●
Bone Cutter – Forward, Forward, Forward + ×
Divine Cannon – Back, Back/Down + ×
Slicer – Back/Down + ●
Divine Cannon Combo – Back/Down + ●,

MICHELLE CHANG



[Throws]

Front Suplex – ■ + ×
Fisherman's Suplex – × + ●
German Suplex (during Haimentori) – ■ + ▲
German Suplex (from behind) – ■ + × or ▲ + ●
Full Nelson Suplex – Forward/Down + ■ + ▲

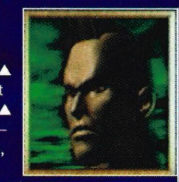
[Special Moves]

Haimentori – ▲ + Backwards
Tenshintai – × + ●, ●
Koshinchu – Forward, Forward (hold) + ■
Koshinrenkou – Forward, Forward + ■, ●
Shipposhouken – Down, Forward/Down + ▲
Totsusoushou – ■ + ▲
Resshintou (as you start a forward jump) – × + ●
Kousoutai (as you're about to crouch) – ●
Senkyutai (during Kousoutai) – ×
Tenhou – Forward + ■
Tsu Tenhou – Forward/Down + ■, ■
Zensoutai (whilst crouching) – ●
Zensourentai (whilst crouching) – ●, ■
Zensousentai (whilst crouching) – ●, Down (hold) ●
Jinkyaku Zensoutai – ●, ●
Jinkyaku Zensoujujiha – ●, ●, ■
Jinkyaku Zensousentai – ●, ●, Down (hold) + ●
Zangeki – ×, ▲
Zangeki Zensoutai – ×, ▲, ×
Zangeki Zensoujujiha – ×, ▲, ×, ■
Zangeki Zensourentai – ×, ▲, ×, ●
Zangeki Zensousentai – ×, ▲, ×, Down (hold) + ●
Zangeki Tsutenhou – ×, ▲, ■, ■
Zangeki Soukyutai – ×, ▲, ■, ●, ×
Zangeki Houchu – ×, ▲, ▲
Shoutai – Forward/Down + ×
Shoutai Tsutenhou – × + ▲, ■
Housui – Forward/Down + ▲
Housui Joudankyaku – Forward/Down + ▲, ●
Housui Gedankyaku – Forward/Down + ▲, ×
Daiten Housui (after hitting Housui) – ■
Renken – ■, ▲
Renken Joudankyaku – ■, ▲, ●
Renken Gedankyaku – ■, ▲, ×

[Unblockable Attack]

Zesshou Tsutenhou – Forward (hold) + ■ + ●

JACK-2



[Throws]

Grab and Slam – ▲ + ●
Hell Press – ■ + ×
Pile Driver – Back/Down, Forward + ■ + ▲
Backbreaker – Down, Back/Down, Back + ▲
Pyramid Driver – Down, Forward/Down, Forward + ■
Catapult – Forward/Down (hold) + ▲ + ●
Catapult Plus – Forward/Down, Forward/Down + ■ + ▲
Death Shoot (from behind) – ▲ + ●

[Special Moves]

Spring Hammer Punch – Down (hold) + ■ + ▲
Machine Gun Knuckle – Back/Down + ■, ■, ■, ■, Forward/Down + ▲
Elbow & Uppercut – ▲, ■, ▲
Hammer Combo – ■, ■, ■
Mega Ton Punch – Back, Back/Down, Down, Forward/Down + ▲
Power Scissors – Forward + ■ + ▲
Hip Press – Forward/Up + × + ●
Wild Swing (whilst crouching) – ■, ▲, ■, ■
Hammer Rush Low – Down (hold) + ■, ■, ■, ▲, Down (hold) + ■
Hammer Rush Middle – Down (hold) + ■, ■, ■, ▲, Forward/Down (hold) + ■
Hammer Rush High – Down (hold) + n, n, n, s, Back (hold) + ■
Bravo knuckle – Down + ■ + ▲
Scissors Melt Down – Forward + ■ + ▲, ■ + ▲
Scissors Mega Ton – Forward + ■ + ▲, Forward/Down + ▲
Melt Down (whilst crouching) – ■ + ▲
Mega Ton Sweep – Back, Back/Down, Down, Forward/Down (hold) + ■
Mega Ton Strike (whilst crouching) – ■ + ▲
Face Basher (after Hell Press) – ■ + ▲
Sit & Jump (Whilst sitting) – Up (hold)
Sit & Jump Press (whilst sitting) – × + ●
Giga Ton – Back, Back + ■, ■

[Unblockable Attack]

Giga Ton Punch – (Back, Back/Down, Down, Forward/Down, Forward) + × ■

YOSHIMITSU



[Throws]

Shizuku – ▲ + ●
Futaba – ■ + ×
Ninpou Fujin (from behind) – ■ + ▲ or ● + ×
Ninpou Yaguraotoshi – Down, Back/Down, Back (hold) + ■ + ▲

[Special Moves]

Ninpou Kagerou – Forward, Forward + × + ●
Ninpou Kusanagi (during Ninpou Kagerou) – ■ + ▲
Kusanagi Hou (during Ninpou Kusanagi) – ● + ×
Ninpou Manji Kazura – Back (hold) + ■ x 6
Ninpou Manji Sou – Back/Down + ■ x 5
Ninpou Manji Giku – Back/Down + ▲ x 6
Toubokushu (during Ninpou Manji Sou) – Forward + I
Ninpou Manji Guruma – Forward/Up + ● + ×
Manji Uraken – Forward + ▲
Inazuma – ● + ×
Sazanka – ●, ●, ●
Fubuki – Forward, Forward + ●
Tsuyuharai (as you're about to crouch) – ×
Punch & Kick Combo – ▲, ×
PDK Combo – ▲, Down (hold) + ×
Manji Agura – Down (hold) + ● + ×
Hikuken – Forward/Up (hold) + ■ + ▲
Madoi – Forward, Forward (hold) + ■ + ●
Hyugahou – ● + ×

[Unblockable Attacks]

Zankokuken – Back/Down + ■
Rengokuken – Back/Down + ■ + Back/Down (hold)
Zetsumeiken – Back, Back + ■
Senpuken (during during Zetsumeiken) – ■
Madoinashiu – Forward, Forward (hold) + ■ + ●
Kegon (whilst crouching) – Back/Down, Back (hold) + ■
Ureinashi – Down + ■ + ●

KING

[Throws]

Backfall Suplex – ▲ + ●
Coconut Crash – ■ + ×
DDT – Back/Down, Back/Down + ■ + ▲
Tombstone Piledriver – Back/Down, Forward + ■ + ▲
Archilock Face Buster (during Jaguar Driver) – ■ + ▲
Boston Club (during Jaguar Driver) – ■ + ▲, ×, ●, ■ + ▲
Giant Swing – Forward, Back, Back/Down, Down, Forward/Down, Forward + ■
Figure Foreleg Lock – Back/Down + ■ + ▲
Standing Achilles Hold – Forward, Forward/Down + × + ▲
Scorpion Death Lock (During Standing Achilles) – ■ + ▲, ×, ■, ■ + ▲
Indian Death Lock (during Standing Achilles) – ■ + ▲, ■, ×, ■ + ▲ + ●
Romero Special (during Indian Death Lock) – ■ + ▲, ×, ●, ■ + ▲, ■ + ▲ + × + ●
Jaguar Backbreaker (when Grand Smash connects) – ■ + ▲
Jumping Power Bomb (When Grand Smash connects) – ■ + ▲, Up, Down, × + ●
Reverse Arm Clutch Slum – Forward, Forward/Down + ■ + ×
Back Drop (during Reverse Arm Clutch Slum) – ■, ▲, ■ + ▲
German Suplex (during Back Drop) – × + ●, ■ + ▲
Powerbomb (during German Suplex) – ■, ▲, × + ●
Cobra Twist (from behind) – ▲ + ●
Half Boston Club (from behind) – ■ + ×

[Special Moves]

One-two Punches – ■, ▲
One-two Uppercut – ■, ▲, ■
Smash Uppercut – Forward, Forward + ▲
Dynamite Uppercut – Down, Forward/Down + ▲
Drop Kick – Forward, Forward × + ●
Satellite Drop Kick – Forward, Forward, Forward × + ●
Jail Kick – Forward, Forward + ●
Knuckle Bomb – Forward/Up + ■ + ▲
Elbow Drop (at the start of a jump) – ▲ + ●
Flying Cross Chop – Forward, Forward ■ + ▲
Double Knee Drop – Up + × + ●
Elbow Swing – Down + ■ + ▲

PLAY

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PLAY, MAY '96



PLAY's news section is the envy of the world! With late-breaking exclusive stories, PlayStation revelations and items on every new game coming to the console. It's always in PLAY first!

The Big Game busts open the game of the moment and devotes up to ten pages of shameless coverage to something we think you should be excited about.





PLAY reviews are the best in the world. Every aspect of the game is laid bare and we try to give you the most honest opinion. Long term challenge, value for money – all things to consider when you whop out yer wonga. We also review more games per month than anyone else. Fact!

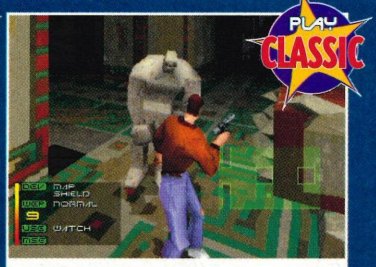


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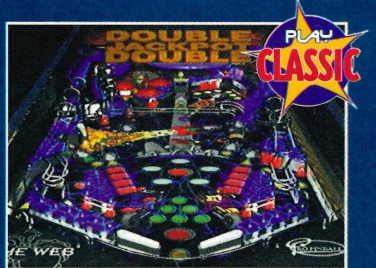
[ABOVE] *Resident Evil* – a gothic horror game that fully exploits the PlayStation's power. Awesome!



[ABOVE] *Fade to Black* – unbeatable sci-fi adventure that combines great graphics with frenetic action.



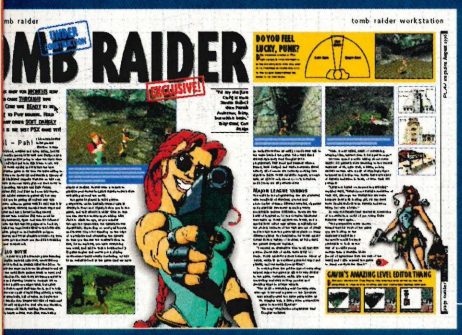
[ABOVE] *Int Track & Field* – already Storming the charts, this 11 event sports game is great in multiplayer!



[ABOVE] *Pro Pinball* – By far the best pinball game on the PlayStation by a long way.



In-depth Workstations reveal behind-the-scenes information and pictures on the games *you* want to know about.





Play previews are packed with all the information you need to assess a game before the review. Detailed captions explain every facet of gameplay as this is our last chance to comment on the game before it is submitted to Sony.

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STREET FIGHTER ZERO



THE MASTERS RETURN. FROM ARCADE EXCELLENCE TO CONSOLE PERFECTION, CAPCOM DELIVER THE GOODS ONCE AGAIN.

WRITTEN BY MATT YEO

Bugger me!

After just four measly months as an arcade title, Capcom's truly amazing *Street Fighter Zero 2* has received the 32-bit home conversion treatment. And what a conversion it is. If there's any justice in the world then any doubters out there who have been questioning the PlayStation's ability to handle the latest 2-D beat-'em-ups will be reduced to the simpering fops that they are.

Although *Street Fighter Alpha* (*Zero*) managed to garner high scores in most UK reviews, the same complaints were levelled at it time and again. The backgrounds were poor, characters weren't correctly balanced and loading times were a pain in the butt. Always one to listen to consumer criticism, Capcom has taken the advice of *SF* fans world-wide and produced a 32-bit sequel that manages to easily surpass their previous 2-D efforts.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Capcom
Customer support: The Video Game Centre on 01202 527314
Price: £69.99
Release date: Out Now



ENTER THE DRAGON PUNCH

FOR SOME STRANGE REASON, *SFZ 2's* INTRO. SEQUENCE FEATURES SOME OF THE WORST QUALITY FMV TO EVER GRACE THE PLAYSTATION. CONSIDERING CAPCOM IS NO STRANGER TO THE ART OF PRODUCING CRYSTAL CLEAR 32-BIT STREAMED VIDEO (TAKE A LOOK AT *RESIDENT EVIL*) WHY IS THIS ARCADE INTRO SO BAD? THE SITUATION IS MADE EVEN MORE PUZZLING CONSIDERING THAT THE *BREATH OF FIRE* DEMO, ALSO INCLUDED ON THE DISC, IS ACTUALLY A LOT CLEARER.

CHARACTER STUDY

Okay, for a start, let's take a look at the most obvious change that's occurred: the addition of new characters. All 13 fighters return: Dan, M Bison and Gouki (Akuma) are selectable without the need for a code, plus there are five new faces to be found. The inclusion of Sakura, Rolento and Gen has proven a controversial choice amongst hard-core arcade beat-'em-up aficionados. Sakura is a Japanese schoolgirl who's infatuated with Ryu and attempts to emulate his fighting style with her own Dragon Punch and Shoken variations.

Next up is Gen, a veteran from the very first *Street Fighter* coin-op. What's so unique about Gen is that he's almost two characters in one. By holding down three punches or three kicks, this ancient master can actually switch between Crane and Mantis fighting styles each of which takes some skill to master. Finally there's Rolento who some of you may remember as the fourth level boss from *Final Fight*. Players missing the wall-diving antics of Spanish bullfighter Balrog, should feel right at home with this staff-wielding warrior as his many slides and roll attacks appear to have been directly swiped. Each of the new characters obviously takes some getting to used to, but given the choice of picking a fresh face or opting for the likes of Guy (why is he back again?) and Dan, most players will enjoy the challenge these fighters bring.

SFZ 2 also sees the return of *SFII* old-timers Dhalsim and Zangief, although both characters are virtually identical to their 16-bit versions, but for nostalgia's sake they're fun for a few rounds. The existing fighters all receive improved moves, such as Adon's Air Jaguar Kick, Birdie's Flaming Bull Head and Guy's Dashing Elbow, but essentially they're the same lovely, cuddly combatants you gave a kicking to last time.

STREETS OF RAGE

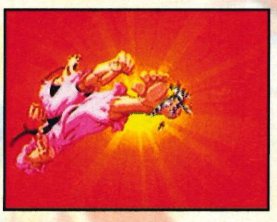
Gameplay, as you'd expect, is as tight as ever, with intuitive moves and combos simple to pull off, yet for some reason Capcom have seen fit to remove Chain Combos and replace them with their latest













SFZ 2

PLAY CLASSIC

beat-'em-up feature, Custom Combos. This decision has both its pros and cons as even the worst *Street Fighter* players will now be able to impress onlookers with impressive multi-hit attacks, yet even when performed close-up, the Custom Combo only saps a small amount of energy. Also missing are some character's two-in-one moves such as Ryu's Standing Roundhouse, the removal of which has succeeded in weakening him significantly.

The visual disappointments of *SFA* have been all but forgotten, with lush backgrounds, multiple layers of parallax scrolling, superb lighting effects and the kind of attention to detail that Capcom's artists are renowned for. Splashing water in Gen's



[Above] Super Attacks, such as Ken's Flaming Dragon Punch, are still available and guaranteed to cause multiple hits.



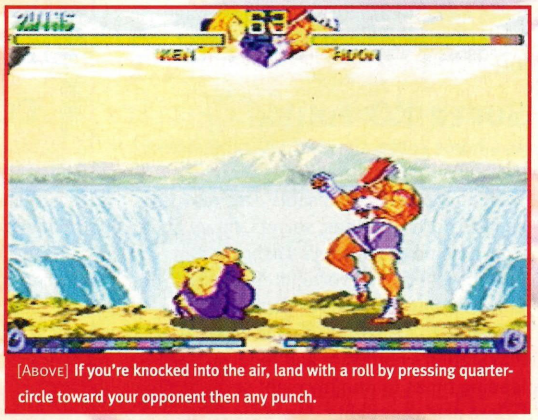
TRAINING MODE

The Training Mode is an extremely useful feature that allows players to set up a practice match against a CPU opponent who never fights back. Perform Super Moves, Custom Combos Special Moves, whatever it takes to hone your world warrior's skills to perfection. Thanks to the handy Recording option players can replay the match over and over again to analyse their fighting style for any weaknesses.



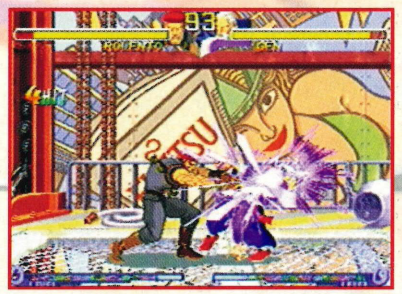






[Above] If you're knocked into the air, land with a roll by pressing quarter-circle toward your opponent then any punch.







[Above] Perform a double fireball motion then press Select to watch Dan launch into his ridiculous Super Taunt. A useless move but hilarious as hell.



SECRETS GALORE

A whole host of hidden goodies have been tucked away in *SFZ 2* with even more just waiting to be found. Here's a few cheats just to keep you busy until next month's Station Master.

[Super Turbo Chun-Li Outfit]

To kit Chun-Li out in her old togs, just highlight her character box on the selection screen then press and hold Select for five seconds. Whilst holding, press any button and this Chinese minx will now be wearing her old frock.



[Selectable Win Poses]

When you win a round, hold Start and any button. Your character's win pose will change accordingly. Cor!



[Extra Colours]

To choose your character's alternate colours, select that fighter by pressing two punch or two kick buttons simultaneously instead of just the one.



BLAST FROM THE PAST

Long-time fans of *Street Fighter* will be overjoyed to learn that Capcom has dusted off both Dhalsim and Zangief and introduced them to the *SFZ* series. The Russian wrestler remains as slow and cumbersome as he was in his 16-bit incarnation, but the Indian mystic gains an aerial Yoga Flame and a really weird voice. Welcome back fellas!

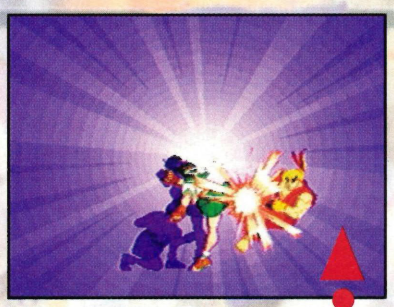




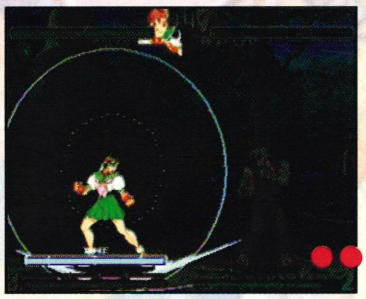


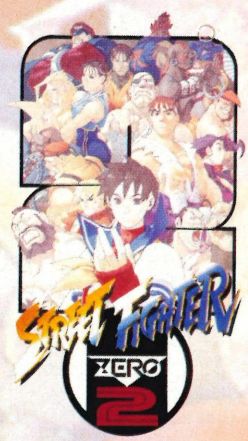
CUSTOM COMBOS

The latest addition to the many fighting techniques utilised in *SFZ 2*, Custom Combos are essentially a method for players to unleash some amazing chained attacks. A Custom Combo requires players to have charged their Super Meters to at least level one, then they must press Jab Punch, Strong Punch and Short Kick. The screen then flashes and the Super Meter is transformed into a timer. As the timer counts down, players can hammer away at the buttons to pull off some awesome moves each of which is chained together and accompanied by a trailing blue Super shadow. Once initiated, any, and we do mean, any, attacks may be linked together into one silky-smooth sequence, racking up massive 20+ hit combos.









backstreet level, shafts of sunlight in Akuma's darkened cave and even lens flares bathing Bison's VTOL aircraft stage are just some of the treats to watch out for.

Super KO Finish!

As a home conversion *SFZ 2* also receives the obligatory optional extras such as a Training Mode, customisable controls, eight (!) Turbo settings, secrets galore and even a demo of Capcom's forthcoming RPG, *Breath of Fire*. Fortunately, the programming geniuses at Capcom have managed to get to get to grips with the PlayStation's hardware and reduced loading times to roughly eight seconds before and after fights. To reduce them further, players can even set up a short cut on the options screen, removing between match introduction screens.

"Intuative moves and satisfying combos..."

It's a shame to think that we're seeing the final generation of 2-D Capcom beat-'em-ups on the PlayStation, with rumours flying that the current crop of home consoles will be unable to handle the graphical excesses of *SF III*. For the moment though, *Street Fighter Zero 2* is guaranteed to restore any beat-'em-up fan's faith in Sony's machine and should pave the way for excellent conversions of *Marvel Super Heroes* and *X-Men*.

YOU'RE A FAKE, BABY!

One bizarre feature in *SFZ 2* is the ability of certain characters to pull off Fake Moves. These are intended to sucker opponents in, then set them up for some real damage. The moves are pulled off by performing a fireball motion on the joypad then pressing Select. They include Ken's Fake Roll, Dan's Roll Taunt and Ryu's Fake Fireball.







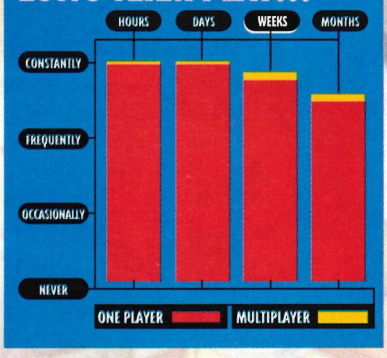


[Above] Avoid being hammered in mid-air by pulling back on the joypad as you leap in to attack. However this won't stop Super Moves so beware.



[Above] Eagle-eyed players will spot famous Capcom faces lurking in some backgrounds. These include Felicia from Darkstalkers and Final Fight's Haggar.

LONG TERM PLAY...



AND NOW, THE END IS NEAR...

So far we've completed *SFZ 2* a number of times on level six using a few continues. Unlike in *SFA*, there's no real incentive for finishing the game that we can discover, such as a Dramatic Battle option, although each character is given their own end sequence. As a bonus, after the credits have rolled, there's a cool piece of Capcom art to drool over.





PLAY

Looks	9
Sounds	9
Gameplay	9
Value	9
World Warriors	10

PLAYED 94%

The 2-D titan triumphs!

ALTERNATIVELY:
Tekken 2 (95%)
Tobal No.1 (95%)

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SIMCITY 20

ONE OF THE OLDEST, GREATEST GOD GAMES EVER HAS MADE IT TO THE PLAYSTATION. IN A WORLD WHERE POLYGONS ARE POWER, CAN THERE BE ANY PRAISE LEFT FOR ANYTHING LESS?

WRITTEN BY ASAM AHMAD

God. It's here.

All the power you could ever wish for – dominion, control, destruction. There's only one thing that these three words together can mean: *SimCity*. One of the first, and longest surviving, 'God' games ever created has finally crossed the PC gulf to the Sony PlayStation.

SimCity, albeit in a revamped 2000 edition, for the uninitiated, is all about creating an entire civilisation. And destroying it too, if you want to. You start off with a plot of land which you can landscape into the city of your dreams, and of course you are God. You can create, treating the fine upstanding citizens of your little microcosm to wondrous constructions such as theatres and stadiums, or destroy, exposing your woeful crime-ridden slums to fierce attacks by monsters and aliens or other natural disasters. Sounds good, dunnit?

PLAY INFORMATION

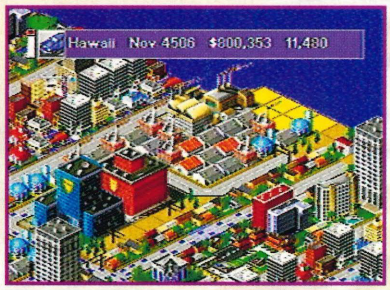
Publisher: Maxis
Customer support: 0171 505 1650
Price: £40-45
Release date: 20th September '96

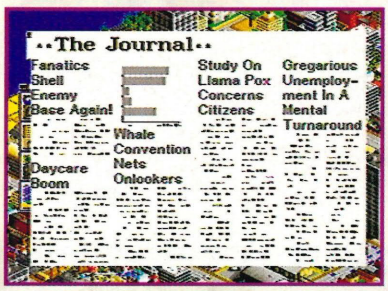

One Player


Memory Card


Mouse









I'M A CONTROL FREAK

However, it might all sound rather exciting, this omnipotence, but this game isn't just about callous megalomaniacal control. Ultimately, as the mayor of your city, it's your job to carefully govern a myriad of elements, such as taxes, crime, pollution, town-planning, roads, sewage... the list goes on, in an attempt to create yourself a dream city – on a budget.

As you successfully manage these elements, the population of your city will expand, bringing in additional revenues for commerce and industry, and consequently necessitating affluent geographical expansion. Or alternatively, things could go horribly wrong with soaring crime, asphyxiating pollution and a few natural disasters thrown in for good measure.

JUDGEMENT DAY

The PlayStation version of the game, despite retaining all the aspects of the original concept, has suffered slightly in translation from desktop computers to our

THE NATURAL DISASTERS

TO ADD A BIT OF SPICE TO YOUR GAME YOU CAN INFLICT VARIOUS DISASTERS ON YOUR CITY, EITHER MANUALLY OR ON AUTOMATIC. APART FROM THE OBVIOUS ENJOYMENT OF SEEING WANTON DESTRUCTION OCCUR, THESE DISASTERS CAN ACTUALLY PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN THE GAME – YOU CAN BUILD UP A CITY, DESTROY PART OF IT, AND SET YOURSELF A GOAL TO REBUILD YOUR CITY WITHIN A CERTAIN PERIOD OF TIME. INDEED THE GAME ACTUALLY COMES WITH A WHOLE HOST OF DIFFERENT SCENARIOS WHERE THIS IS THE PRECISE OBJECT OF THE GAME. HERE'S A LIST OF THE VARIOUS DASTARDLY DISASTERS.

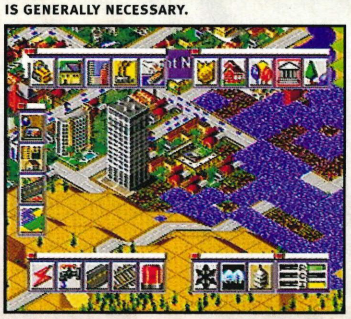
[FIRE]

CAUSES A FIRE TO BREAK OUT SOMEWHERE IN THE CITY LIMITS. YOU MUST DEPLOY FIRE-FIGHTERS AND REPAIR DAMAGE.



[FLOOD]

THIS CAUSES A WAVE OF WATER TO WASH AWAY ANYTHING IN ITS PATH. MAJOR RECONSTRUCTION IS GENERALLY NECESSARY.



[AIR CRASH]

CAUSES AN AEROPLANE TO CRASH SPECTACULARLY, WIPING OUT SEVERAL CITY BLOCKS AND CAUSING PLENTIFUL DAMAGE.



[TORNADO]

QUITE SIMPLY SETS A TORNADO LOOSE, THROWING YOUR CITY INTO A WINDSWEPT TURMOIL.



000

"You feel like you're driving around a ghost town..."

television-bound console. The isometric view remains, but with only two magnifications to view your city from. This isn't too much of a problem, but it would have been nice to have an intermediate, or zooming, view in between 'tiny' and 'huge'.

Another aspect of the game that has suffered in translation is the control system. Maxis has done its best to get around the fact that the PlayStation doesn't come with a mouse and have designed the pop-up menu system that works well. Unfortunately, these menus can be somewhat obtrusive at times, but they can be hidden so you can see your city during tense moments. To make things easier however, should you get hold of a mouse and this certainly does add to the accessibility of the game.

My one's bigger than yours

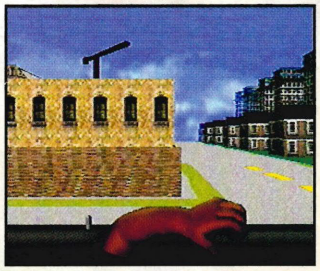
One part of the game that is new and exclusive for the PlayStation version is the drive-around feature. Once you have constructed a city, you can plonk yourself into it for a little road-trip around town. This feature, although amusing at first, is actually rather badly implemented, with some awful polygon pop-up, dodgy clipping and awful polygon bending. This plus the fact that you feel like you're driving around in a ghost town actually renders driving around town more of a distraction than of any real use.

Drive time

THE ONLY NEW FEATURE THAT *SimCity 2000* HAS OVER THE ANCIENT PC VERSIONS IS THAT YOU CAN NOW DRIVE AROUND YOUR CITIES ONCE THEY'VE BEEN BUILT. A GREAT ADDITION YOU MIGHT THINK, BUT YOU'D BE WRONG BECAUSE IT'S SLOW, JERKY, BLAND TO LOOK AT AND WHERE ARE ALL THE SODDING PEOPLE?!



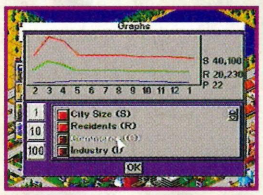




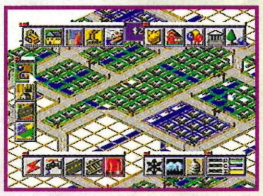
Yes, but is it really for the PlayStation?

Despite the PlayStation being one of the most desirable commodities ever as far as videogames are concerned, it is also true that there are some genres of games that will have a hard time on the console format. Not to take anything away from the game, but *SimCity 2000* despite being very playable indeed, is a labour to play on the PlayStation. This game is going to have an immense battle to usurp racing games, immersive 3-D Doom clones, or any other multi-player game from pride of place at the top of the games pile. Gamers that know *SimCity* are most likely to have some kind of computer version already, and those that don't are more likely to want a game that exploits the potential of their console, rather than a plodding game that requires more cerebral activity than your average PlayStation showpiece. A good game that's going to face a tough battle out there. Shame.

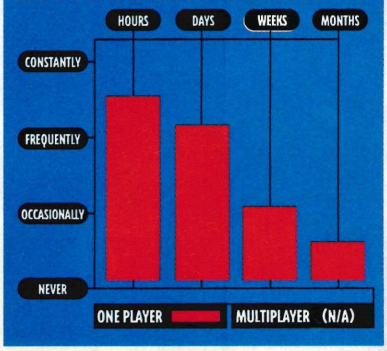


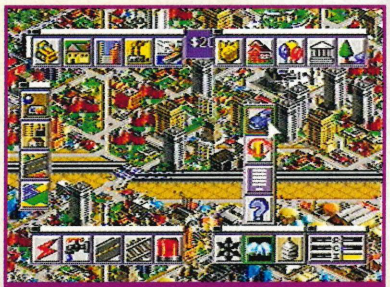






Long term play...





[ABOVE] Here a fire is spreading rapidly through the town. Quick action must be taken to deploy fire fighters, and police to curb rioting.

PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●●○○○○
SOUNDS	●●●●●●○○○○
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●●●○○
VALUE	●●●●●●●○○○
DEITY	●●●●●●●●●○

PLAYED 75%

Like watching paint dry (or a city grow)

ALTERNATIVELY:
AIV EVOLUTION GLOBAL (A-TRAIN 62%)
TRANSPORT TYCOON (NOV '96)

[EARTHQUAKE]

RAPID DEMOLITION IS THE NAME OF THE GAME WITH AN EARTHQUAKE TO BRING DOWN THE WALLS OF YOUR JERICHO!



[MONSTER]

PERHAPS ONE OF THE BETTER DISASTERS, AN ALIEN MONSTER/SPACECRAFT DESCENDS ON YOUR CITY.



[HURRICANE]

CAUSES DAMAGING WINDS AND FLOODS TO ATTACK YOUR CITY, TURNING THE PLACE INTO A MESS OF RUBBLE AND WATER.



[RIOT]

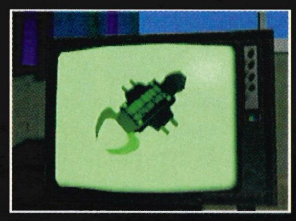
CAUSES ANGRY FIRE STARTING PROTESTERS TO RAMPAGE THROUGH THE CITY, PILLAGING, LOOTING, AND GENERALLY BEHAVING BADLY.



CHICK FLICK

There's certainly no doubting Core Design's ability to produce smooth FMV intro sequences as *Thunderhawk 2*, *Shellshock* and now *Blam! Machinehead* boast the kind of professional movie quality visuals usually associated with big budget motion pictures.

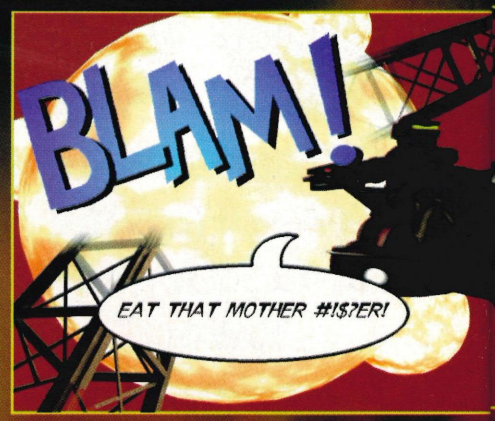








BLAM! MACHINE



WHEN CIVILISATION AS WE KNOW IT IS THREATENED, ONLY A WOMAN WITH COURAGE, DETERMINATION AND A 36-DDD CUP CAN SAVE THE DAY!

Written By Matt Yeo

Swiftly following the reasonable success of both Thunderhawk 2 and Shellshock, Core Design's third PlayStation title retains their tried-and-tested first person perspective shoot-'em-up style of gameplay, but this time adds a bizarre futuristic twist.

The "Machinehead" of the title refers to one Tony Defresco, an overweight scientist who has been developing nanotechnological lifeforms, essentially molecule size machines that form a living 'engine'. Unfortunately, Tony has since become a victim of his own creation and has spent the last ten years ravaging the earth as a god-like being, re-animating whatever species happened to crawl across his path. The last hope of the planet rests with a reluctant buxom brunette and 200lbs of flying atomic death. You see thanks to the backt-stabbing antics of her perverted colleague, the lecherous Orville McCandle, scientist Kimberly Stride has been hardwired into a sophisticated phallic-shaped nuclear weapon and sent on a one-way suicide mission to stop old two-ton Tony. So there you have it. Blam! Machinehead is essentially the tale of a bomb, a bitch and a bloody big bike.

Sleazy Rider

The game begins with the now obligatory FMV intro and the appearance of the pervy Orville briefing players on the forthcoming objectives to be tackled. With four main missions, split into three or four separate levels, players are required to perform a variety of bewildering tasks before access is granted to the next stage. For instance within the first section a series of Unreality devices must be activated, each of which alters the fabric of the



[ABOVE] Scuttling multi-legged creatures desperate to pounce on your face. Wait a second. Where have I seen these guys before?



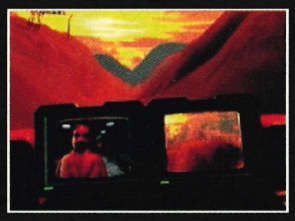
[ABOVE] Once activated, the Unreality Chambers alter the topography of the level allowing previously inaccessible areas to be reached.

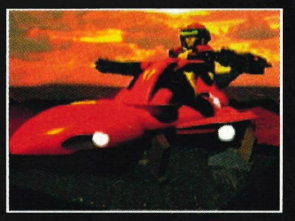
PLAY Information

Publisher: Core Design
Customer support: 01332 297797
Price: £44.99
Release date: September

ONE PLAYER MEMORY CARD

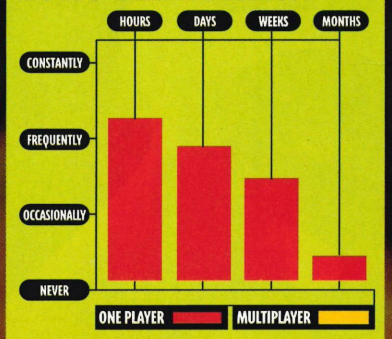






LONG TERM PLAY...



HEAD

"A bomb, a bitch and a bloody big bike!"

space/time continuum resulting in shifting landscapes. With previously obstructing mountains out of the way more of that particular level is open for exploration. Actually figuring out what to do and where to go should be half the fun but the nature of the backdrops often means much-frustrated backtracking before your bearings are established.

Of course there are a bewildering array of mutated creatures out to stop our top-heavy heroine, including such abominations as giant spiders, zombies, and massive poisonous bugs. Fortunately, the hover bike (or 'Vorpal Blade') is equipped with powerful chaingun cannons and a selection of missiles with which to dispatch nanotech-enhanced enemies. Extra devices may be obtained by destroying weapons crates and wandering weirdoes.

Hover Bovver

Easily the most annoying aspect of playing Blam! Machinehead in the PLAY office was the constant natter of onlookers all puzzled by the appearance of yet another first person PlayStation shoot-'em-up. My stock answer of "It's Blam! Machinehead. It's from Core Design and yes it does look a bit like Krazy Ivan, doesn't it?" seems to keep them happy but they do have a point. We've seen this all before. Blam! Machinehead really offers nothing new to fans of this particular genre especially when considering that the low in-game frame rate and poorly texture-mapped landscapes of Thunderhawk seem to have been blatantly utilised once again. The apocalyptic future scenario has been done to death countless times before and even Core's first person game engine must surely be in need of a major overhaul by now. With the likes of Tunnel B1 and Alien Trilogy setting the standard for this genre, Core need a serious rethink if they're going to aim high with their next products. Thankfully at least Tomb Raider seems to have the makings of a class A product.



[ABOVE] Destroy this hulking abomination to clear the powerlines to the battered generator. Once removed, the power may be restored and various doors opened.





THE BIG BANGS

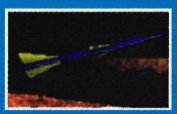
Hey, straddling a thermonuclear weapon semi-naked isn't all fun you know! Fortunately for Kimberly Stride, the Vorpal Blade is equipped with enough offensive hardware to keep her alive until she can locate these little beauties:



[Health]
Battling mutated morons can take its toll on ever the toughest players. Stay alive by collecting these power-up icons, usually deposited by a defeated enemy.



[Missile]
Carried by the Vorpal Blade as standard, missiles are ideal for mass destruction. Keep an eye on your supply though as numbers are strictly limited.



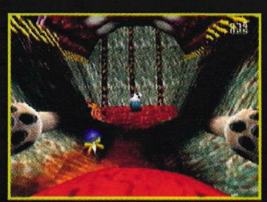
[Homing Missile]
Even if an enemy has taken cover, the Homing Missile will lock-on and seek out its target with pinpoint accuracy. Useful for taking out cliff mounted gun emplacements and boss monsters.

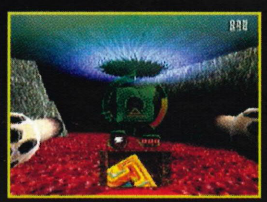


[Flame-thrower Fuel]
Essentially a close combat weapon, the flame-thrower proves handy for tackling those darn pesky mutant spiders, but regular fuel pick-ups are required to keep it running.



[Lightning Bomb]
The mutha of all weapons, the Lightning Bomb is launched into the stratosphere unleashing a devastating energy strike over a wide area. Ideal for targeting multiple enemies.







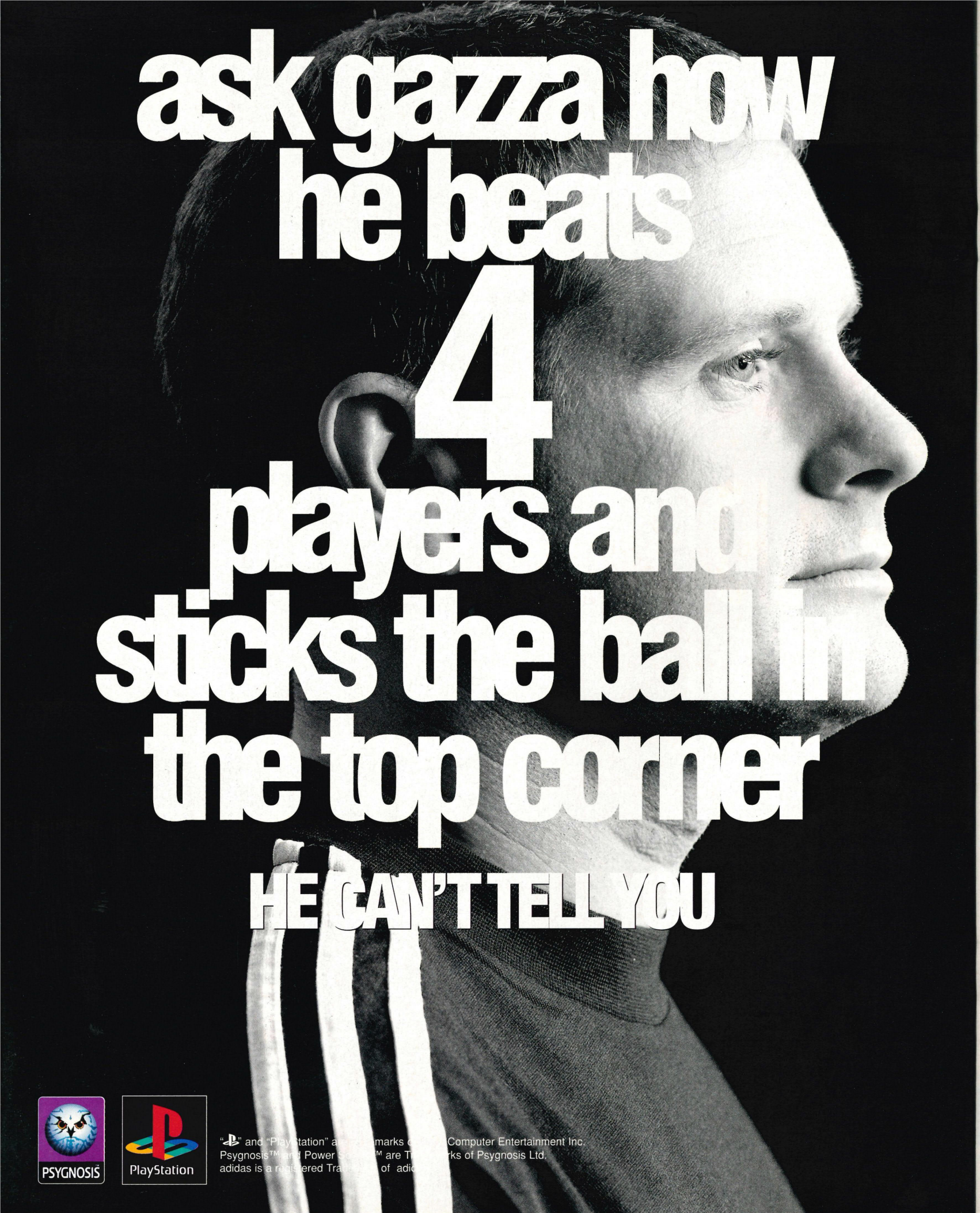
PLAY

Looks	●●●●●●●●●●
Sounds	●●●●●●●●●●
Gameplay	●●●●●●●●●●
Value	●●●●●●●●●●
Radiation level	●●●●●●●●●●

PLAYED **79%**

Definitely a damp squid

Alternatively:
KRAZY IVAN (90%)
ASSAULT RIGS (81%)


ask gazza how he beats
4
players and sticks the ball in the top corner
HE CAN'T TELL YOU
PSYGNOSIS
PlayStation
"PlayStation" and Computer Entertainment Inc.
Psygnosis™ and Power ™ are T rks of Psygnosis Ltd.
adidas is a registered Tra of adi

ask us why adidas power soccer is the best football game ever

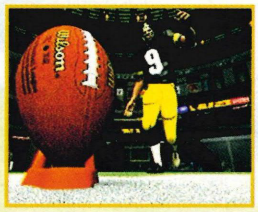
WE CAN'T TELL YOU

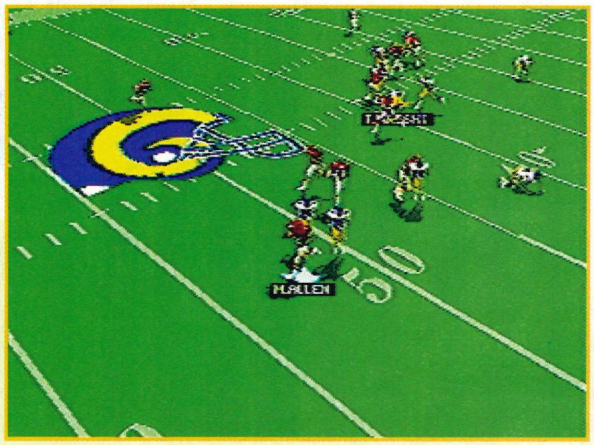
some things just are

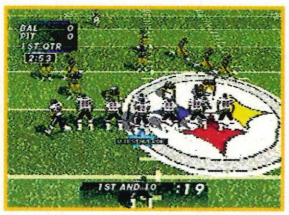


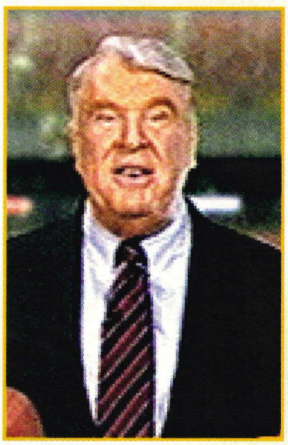
PURE CLASS. NO EFFORT. NO COMPETITION.

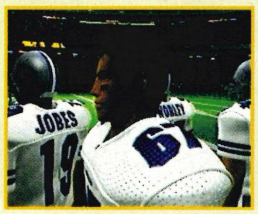
5/5 MAXIMUM • **95%** PLAY • **93%** PLAYSTATION PLUS • **9/10** PSX PRO • **96%** TOTAL PLAYSTATION • **4/5** C&VG

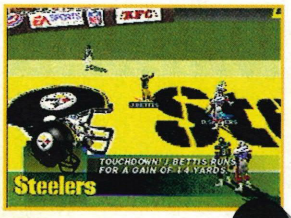




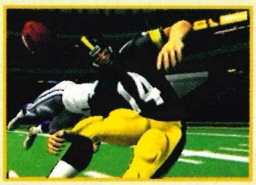


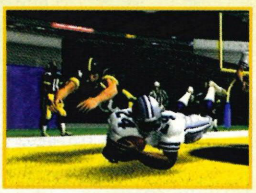






MADDEN '97





He's old, wrinkled, looks like an amusingly shaped potato, but to the world of American football he's a god. Who is he? John Madden of course...

Gridiron

Nothing more nothing less. American Football is indeed a curious game, and one you either love or hate. Personally, I fall into the latter category. Why? Perhaps it's the banality of the whole thing or just that it's American, either way I hate it. Gimme footy any day. Real football that is. Thus, imagine my joy when *Madden '97* appeared on my desk...

The problem with American Football is that the game is played like a war, rather than a game. Without a doubt, some of the tactics employed are the most complex you'll ever see, let alone try to fathom. And it is this aspect that is the main factor that might just alienate the casual browser. That holds true for *Madden '97*.

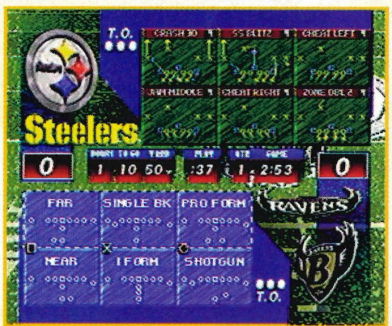
I sat, I played

Madden '97 is without a doubt the best presented gridiron game on the PlayStation. Apart from the long loading times before each game (around 15 seconds), there is little else that detracts from the overall presentation. All 30 teams from both conferences are included, plus of course the Madden All-Star Team. More interestingly, the game also features many of the famous teams from the NFL through different years. For example, you could play the current Broncos team against one from several years back. This feature in itself will doubtless enamour fans of the sport. There are nearly 100 teams in total.

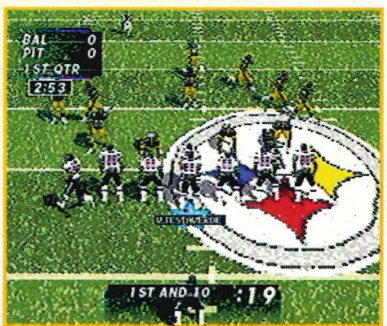
All the players are also included, with pictures, and although you cannot see individual stats, this nevertheless doesn't detract from the gameplay. And of course all the home stadiums, which are impressively presented through EA's virtual stadium technology are included, with options for weather or pitch conditions. You couldn't ask for more.

Offensive defence

In play, *Madden '97* has the most offensive and defensive plays of all the current PlayStation NFL games. Of course the *Madden* licence has a lot to do with this. For the beginner, the wealth of plays and options can actually be rather daunting – without a strong knowledge of the tactical aspects of the game, working out the best strategies is nigh impossible. But it gets better. After about five hours of solid play, things start to become apparent. Of course a crash course in gridiron from a colleague helped. Indeed



[Above] Fathoming out what all the various moves actually do is often a game of chance – there are literally about three hundred options.



[Above] Apart from being able to select from all the home stadiums of the teams, weather is also selectable. Here it is snowing rather hard.

PLAY Information

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Customer support: 01753 546546
Price: £40-£45
Release date: 27 September '96

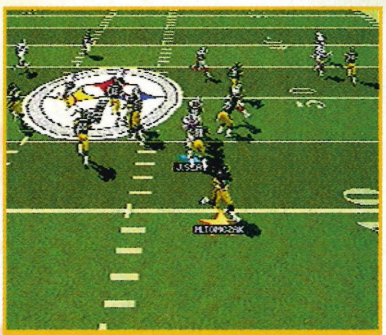


Written By Asam Ahmad





[Above] In this shot, a passing play is taking place. Pressing one of the buttons will hurl the ball towards the indicated player.



[Above] The current player is highlighted with a star. This Madden Camera view is the easiest to work with and see as much of the action as possible.

"The game suffers, quite fundamentally, through the nature of the sport itself..."

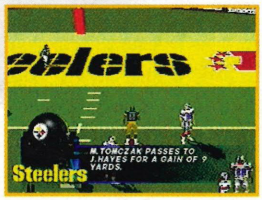


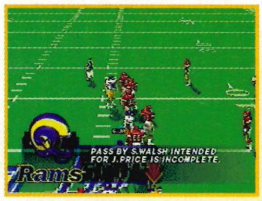
[Above] Although through the game the players are generally sprite-based, whenever a touchdown is scored, the characters subtly transform into fully motion captured players rejoicing in victory.

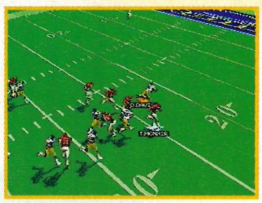
after this schooling, the game started to exhibit a whole new dimension – playability.

The level of detail in the game, graphically and within the game mechanics, is good. You can even control the penalty levels to tailor each game to suit different styles. Being able to choose the harshness of decisions for foul play does actually improve the flow of the game which is traditionally very sporadic. The control system is extensive, with many options for hurdling, diving and running, and there are eight useful camera angles to view the action. But despite this, the game suffers, quite fundamentally, through the nature of the sport itself. Like baseball, and unlike *real* football, American Football is predominantly turn based, and in that respect like an 'active' game of chess.

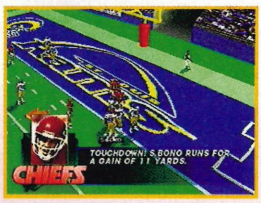
If you know the sport, and more importantly understand it, you'll love *Madden '97* – it is certainly the best NFL game out there. Even if you know just the basics, it does have some appeal and it is very playable. If not however, be sure to 'try before you buy.' Due to the complexity of the sport, *Madden '97* is a difficult game to get to grips with for the unenlightened; requiring extreme patience and a very fast, developed, strategical mind. With patience, you might just hack it. If you want a game that's easy to get into, without being overly technical, steer clear. If you want an NFL game, *Madden '97* is your best bet.

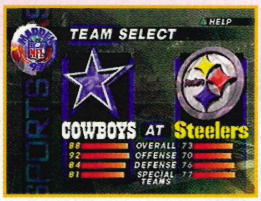


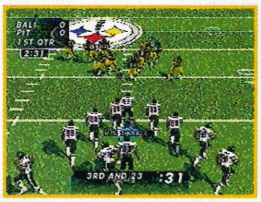


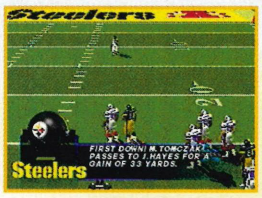


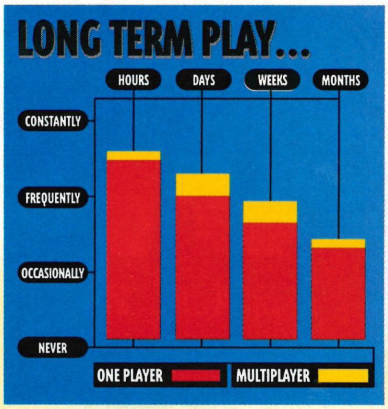


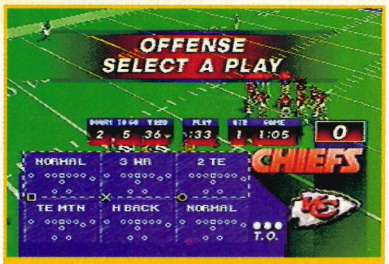




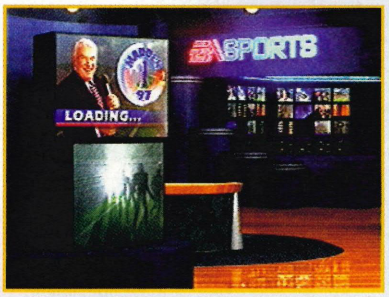








[Above] If you take too much time to make your attack or defence decisions, the game prompts you to hurry up. Run out of time at your peril.



PLAY

Looks	●●●●●●●●○○
Sounds	●●●●●●●○○○
Gameplay	●●●●●●●●○○
Value	●●●●●●○○○
Maddenisms	●●●●●●●●●○

PLAYED 81%

Strictly for gridiron fans

ALTERNATIVELY:
NFL Quarterback Club (80%)
NFL GameDay (73%)

RAGING SKIES

NOT SINCE *AGILE WARRIOR* HAS A JET FIGHTER SHOOT-'EM-UP GRACED THE PLAYSTATION AND NOW SONY ARE GIVING IT ANOTHER SHOT. WILL IT SEND YOU HYPERSONIC OR INTO A FLAT SPIN?

WRITTEN BY ASAM AHMAD

Air combat

games can be some of the most exhilarating to play on a console, requiring precise judgement and rapid responses to stay alive. *Raging Skies*, Sony's latest offering in this department indeed does present the player with a realistic flight model with finely tuned dynamics. So, convincing to fly and with a responsive control system, all the elements are set for a top notch bird o' prey shoot-'em-up...

Unfortunately, *Raging Skies* is let down by a fundamental lack of depth in gameplay. There are three modes in the game – Training, Mission and Vs battle, with only three training missions, which are limited not only in number, but actual training aspects. The battle mode is a two player link-up mode which is actually quite fun, but gets a little monotonous after a while as there is very little to actually do save for blasting your opponent out of the sky. And of course there is the standard mission mode.

LIKE A BIRD IN THE SKY

Unlike most games of this style, there is only one war campaign to fight in, with very rigid objectives to achieve. As you progress, more planes become available to fly, each with different weapons at your disposal – a good touch, as you're not stuck with the same craft throughout and there are new skills to learn. However, as *Raging Skies* is quite arcadey to play, you have a certain number of lives which are used up each time you buy the farm. This means that you don't really get to feel as if you're part of the action. The war campaign is rather superficial and there are no long-term objectives to accomplish. You don't actually appear to be fighting for any discernible reason, but that's true of most wars I suppose.

Raging Skies had the potential to be a top notch game, a high altitude *Gunship* in fact. The graphics are impressive, the sound effective and the flight model well calculated. Apart from the lack of views (you're stuck quite claustraphobically in the cockpit of your plane) there is little to fault the presentation. It's compatible with the new analogue joystick too, which is quite smart. Ultimately however, *Raging Skies* plummets earthbound because of its shallow gameplay.

"You don't actually appear to be fighting for any discernible reason, but that's true of most wars..."

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Sony Computer Ent.
Customer support: 0881 505505*
Price: £40
Release date: End September

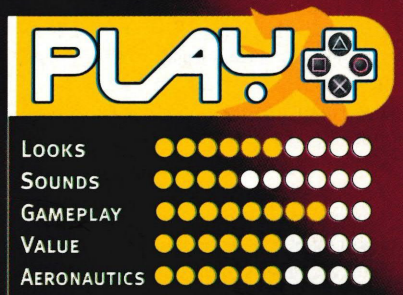
ONE PLAYER | MUTIPLE PLAYERS
STEERING/ANALOGUE | MEMORY CARD
LINK CABLE



[ABOVE] **Some of your objectives can be to destroy sea targets, such as this battlecruiser or to take out this bridge, for example.**







PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●●○○○○
SOUNDS	●●●●○○○○○○
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●●○○○
VALUE	●●●●●●○○○○
AERONAUTICS	●●●●●●○○○○

PLAYED 73%

Eject, eject, eject!

ALTERNATIVELY:
STARFIGHTER 3000 (85%)
TOP GUN (76%)

*calls charged at 39p/min (peak) 24p/min (off peak)



[Above] Hmm. There's a bonus level around here somewhere. I wonder...



[Above] Get too close to an electric chair and it's fried worms for tea.



[Above] Plop some pigs on the platform to raise the plug. Naturally!

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Virgin Interactive
Customer support: 0171 368 2255
Price: £44.99
Release date: September '96

One Player | Memory Card

EARTHWORM JIM 2

THE WORM THAT TURNED? NOT THE CAMP BAWDY COMEDY FROM THE TWO RONNIES' LOINS, JUST A MAGGOT THAT THINKS HE'S FUNNY.

Written By Asam Ahmad

Wriggles aside, let's face it, Earthworm Jim was one hell of a super hero on the 16-bit platforms of yesteryear. Not content with the limitations imposed on him by those now archaic consoles, Jim is back and with a vengeance. Let's play.

Like its predecessor, *EWJ2* is a 2-D scrolling platform affair where working your way through to the end of each level is your main objective. Of course on the way there are many obstacles to navigate, enemies to blast and bonus levels to reap. What sets this game apart from most other games in this genre is the humour. The warped, sick, depraved, humour that permeates throughout.

ONE FOR THE EARLY BIRD

EWJ2 is indeed a very playable game. Jim has several 'abilities' up his sleeve, such as the multiple weapons that he can pick up, his whip (which is in fact his head and neck and is very useful for traversing gaps), and of course his buddy, Snott. Yup, Snot is up his sleeve and can help Jim swing around the place using his, ahem, snot-like adhesive properties. So Jim is versatile, but what about the game?

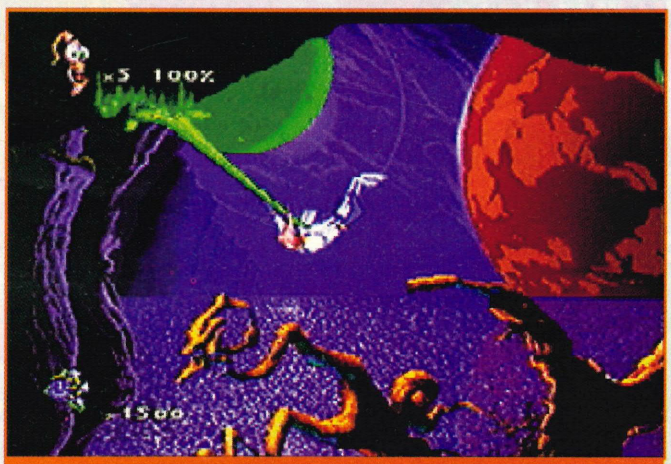
The levels in *EWJ2* are big. Huge in fact, with a plethora of secret areas to hunt out, and several bonus areas to find. Initially, the game starts out in a straightforward manner, with logical, albeit comical puzzles to solve which progressively get harder – and stranger. There aren't just platform levels either, with a good mix of other weird stages requiring you to learn different skills.

Perhaps the biggest problem with the game is the dated gameplay. Humour aside, *EWJ2* is fairly formulaic. There are several unexpected little twists and turns, which do indeed bring out the odd chuckle, but it feels as if the focus of the gameplay has been blurred by this emphasis on weirdness. On many occasions, due to the strangeness of the tasks you have to accomplish, staying alive is actually more infuriating than dying. If you've never played *Earthworm Jim* before, this game is going to have limited appeal – look at *Rayman* for its visuals, sound and next generation playability and then compare. If you know the game, there will be some appeal, but sadly *Earthworm Jim 2* isn't a major leap forward in playability like *Earthworm Jim* was when it was first released. Not so much a sequel just more of the same. Amusing gameplay, with only very average presentation. It's not funny anymore

"The gameplay has been blurred by this emphasis on weirdness..."







[Above] Snott, Jim's eternal friend, can be a major help, as a parachute and as a rope to swing across chasms.

PLAY

Looks	6
Sounds	6
Gameplay	5
Value	6
Elasticity	7

PLAYED 69%

For the birds...

ALTERNATIVELY:
Rayman (87%)
Johnny Bazookatone (85%)

ONSIDE SOCCER







PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Telstar
Customer support: 01932 222232
Price: £44.99
Release date: 19 September



ONE PLAYER



MUTIPLE PLAYERS



MEMORY CARD

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

IN ITS FAVOUR, IT HAS TO BE SAID THAT WHEN IT COMES TO OVERALL GAME PRESENTATION AND OPTIONS GALORE, ONSIDE SOCCER REALLY DELIVERS. FOR A START THERE ARE A MULTITUDE OF PRE-MATCH PLAY SETTINGS TO TINKER WITH INCLUDING VARIOUS PITCH AND WEATHER CONDITIONS AS WELL AS ALTERNATIVE CAMERA ANGLES AND PROFESSIONAL TEAMS FROM ALL OVER EUROPE.





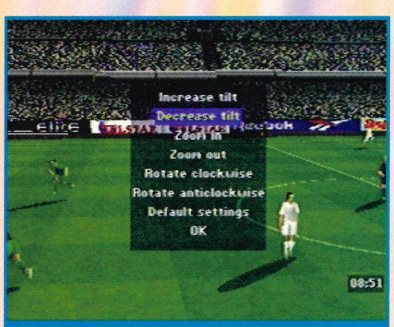


CAN LITTLE LEAGUE HOPEFULS, TELSTAR, SCORE A HAT TRICK WITH THEIR NEW SIGNING? IT'S A REVIEW OF TWO HALVES, FOLKS...

Written By Matt Yeo

Balls!

It seems like the PlayStation's been inundated with quality football games over the past few months. Enough we say! Surely a handful of decent soccer titles should be more than enough to keep all you Alan Shearer wannabes happy for months? Well, apparently not. After the likes of *Actua Soccer*, *Olympic Soccer*, *addidas Power Soccer* and countless others, Telstar strap on their boots and head out onto the pitch for a spot of passing and shooting.



[ABOVE] For those of you who like to experience the full TV style soccer coverage, Onside allows players to change the viewing angle via an in-game menu screen.



[ABOVE] Goooooall! There's nothing more satisfying than hammering the ball into the back of the net accompanied by the roar of the crowd.

DOWN THE WING...

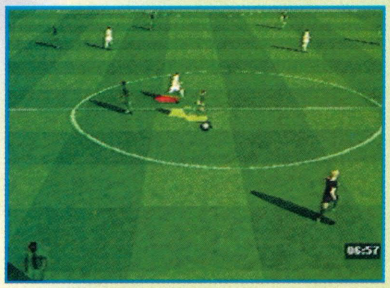
Onside Soccer unfortunately failed to inspire the footballing nuts in our office, myself included. Everything seemed promising enough, as a rather smart FMV intro sequence presented itself, extolling the virtues of living in the good old UK where soccer is every Englishman's god-given birthright. But it went swiftly downhill from there. The main problems lies with the game's overall playability. Any football game wishing to compete in the big leagues should have speed, spot-on gameplay and generate the kind of hysteria usually reserved for the packed terraces of Whitehart Lane. After extensive playtesting it's fairly obvious that *Onside Soccer* lacks the real edge and sporting prowess to make it a winner. Nit-picking, football-loving games journos will no doubt cry "Yeah, but look, you can take part in a full League, Knockout Tournament, Five-a-Side match and even take the Management route!" So what. If the bare bones of the game are lacking, what's the point of trying to add bells and whistles in a vain effort to disguise a product severely lacking in gameplay, style and fun?

...HE SHOOTS, HE SCORES!

Perhaps, instead of churning out yet another football title, simply because there are sports fans out there who'll buy anything as long as it's got the word "soccer" stamped on it, software companies will put a little more effort and originality into their ball-based games. As it stands, I'm afraid that *Onside Soccer* fails to inspire first time players and novice ball-bashers alike. Surely relegation must be on the cards?



"Soccer is every Englishman's god-given birthright!"



PLAY

LOOKS	7/10
SOUNDS	7/10
GAMEPLAY	5/10
VALUE	7/10
BALL BOYS	8/10

PLAYED 76%

Needs a healthy dose of gameplay

ALTERNATIVELY:
ADDIDAS POWER SOCCER (95%)
ACTUA SOCCER (94%)

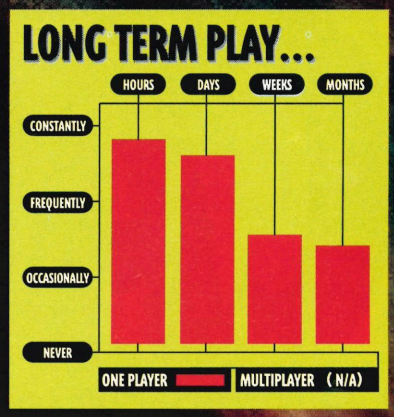


[Above] Some door switches are hidden behind crates. The best way to get through the game is to basically destroy anything and everything.





[Above] Your weapons are less effective at a distance, and sometimes the best way to defeat enemies is to race up close and batter the hell out of them, before the get a chance to shoot.



TUNNEL B1

DUE TO AN OVERSIGHT, THE REVIEW OF *TUNNEL B1* WAS REVIEWED TOO EARLY IN ISSUE TEN AND SO HERE IT IS AGAIN IN ITS ABRIDGED FORM, 'COS WE'VE GOT TO...

"The adrenalin-rush in battle can be overwhelming..."

The first thing that grabs you about this game is without a doubt the impressive visuals. Graphically, the game's 3-D engine is one of the most advanced yet seen on the PlayStation. It's not entirely the fastest, but the mix between graphic detail, special effects and speed has been balanced well to produce a playing arena that is beautiful to look at without any sacrifice to the flow of the game.

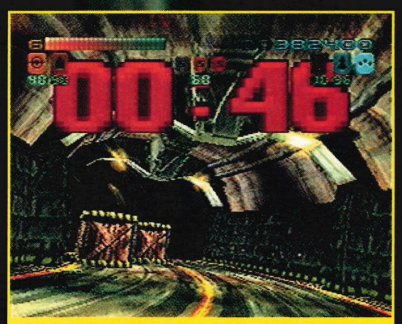
The abundance of graphical effects that have been employed work well together to produce an immensely realistic environment. Light sourcing and mist haze on lamps, tranparency effects for explosions and different colour schemes as you progress through different areas, all help to immerse you into bleakness of the game. At least for a while. After you get over the initial splendour of the visual feast before you, it's time to grip the game by its balls.

Critical to a game's playability is the control system and how you 'interface' with the whole thing. Thankfully in Tunnel B1, the dynamics of your hover ship, the B1 craft, have been honed to a level that is both responsive and calculable. The inertia has been well defined, and the flying model feels precise and realistic, allowing you to intuitively 'feel' your ship even after only a short period of play. The accuracy with which you can move is also good – you can turn on the spot, move back and forth, and also strafe for further precise positioning.

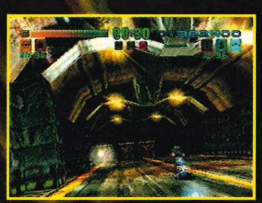
It's a blast

The range of weapons available to you is also comprehensive, with many options, from a standard gun, to mines, flares, rockets, lasers and more. You can use up to two different weapons at a time, though you can carry many more. Still further into the game, a whole array of foes, from helicopters to tanks, start appearing, determined to make your life hell. With the acute AI programmed into the enemies, at points the adrenalin-rush in battle can be overwhelming, with a barrage of bullets, grenades and rockets all speeding towards you at once. Time to retreat and rethink, if you haven't already been forcibly retired!

Tunnel B1 does indeed play well. The game has delivered a lot of what it promised – the action is explosive, the graphics are superlative, and even the sound is brilliantly dramatic. However, with little variety in the missions, the long-term appeal can be limited.



[Above] Timed rounds require you to reach certain way points within allocated time periods. These are often hampered by drones. Collecting boosters is essential.



PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Ocean
Customer support: 0161 832 6633
Price: £40-45
Release date: Out now



PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●●●●●●
SOUNDS	●●●●●●●●●●
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●●●●●
VALUE	●●●●●●●●●●
SPECIAL FX	●●●●●●●●●●

PLAYED 87%

Definatley worth a look

ALTERNATIVELY:
DESCENT (85%)
VIPER (OCT '96)

CASPER



A GHOST THAT ISN'T SCARY? WRONG. ALL WRONG. IT'S LIKE A BICYCLE WITHOUT WHEELS, AN ALIEN THAT ISN'T GREEN, A GAME WITH NO GAMEPLAY...

WRITTEN BY ASAM AHMAD

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Interplay Productions
Customer support: 01628 423723
Price: Approx. £40
Release date: End September


One Player


Memory Card

Ghoulies, ghosties, and all things spooky. Devilish behaviour? Nope. Not in this game. It's squeaky clean, and as a result, distinctly plastic. *Casper* is the latest movie licence to hit the PlayStation and by god it'll wish it hadn't. You see 32-bit games need something very special to survive these days; astounding graphics, out-of-this-world gameplay, and *Casper*, not to put too fine a point on it, doesn't. What's wrong with it? Well nothing really I suppose, if you're a prepubescent child of five still interested in lollipops and *Blue Peter*...

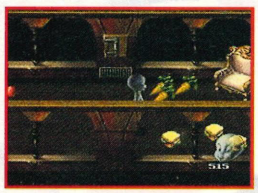
Casper is your basic explorational romp, loosely based on the tear-jerking film. You play the titular spirit who wants to make friends rather than a foes, and it's your job to help him accomplish this task. The game is presented as a part-scrolling, part flip-screen affair with a plethora of rooms to explore for food, objects and switches. The puzzles you must solve are fairly basic, revolving around finding parts of jigsaws to piece together, or activating switches in the correct order to gain access to other areas. Decidedly 16-bit in both presentation and gameplay, *Casper* has very little to offer the discerning PlayStation gamer.

"*Casper* has very little to offer the gamer..."

IT'S A YOUNG THING

Casper's unique points are few and far between. Although the obvious licence will appeal to a younger crowd, there is very little the game offers to anybody over the age of ten. Casper himself is cute enough and has some cunning morph moves (where he can change into another form) up his sleeve, but nice features alone do not make a good game. The puzzles are generally laboured but even more annoying are the intermissions where new sections are loaded – the access times aren't too long, it's just that it happens every few seconds andbrings the game speed down to a crawl.

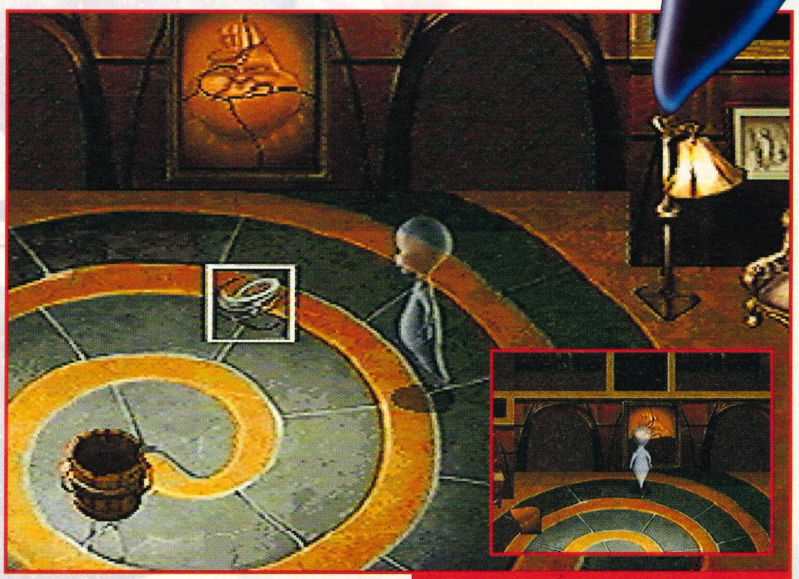
Casper is the kind of game that will attract kids. This is probably just as well, for they won't be too critical about the very average graphics or the uninspiring sound. Even the repetitiveness of the puzzle-solving might just slip past without too much of a grumble. For anybody else though... let's face it, this game is pants even for kids.

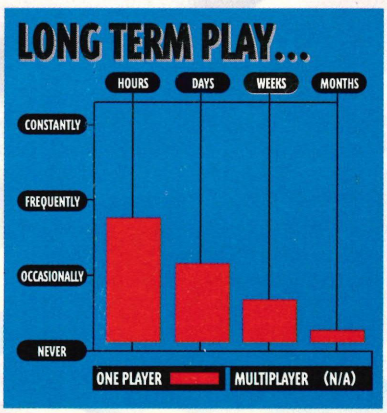







[ABOVE] Are these gold coins trying to tell me something?


[ABOVE] Completing puzzles, such as assembling all the pieces of this painting, rewards you with a morph icon. In this case, Casper has acquired the ability to morph into a puff of smoke to travel through the air-vents. I thought ghosts could travel through anything already...



PLAY

LOOKS	6
SOUNDS	5
GAMEPLAY	4
VALUE	6
KIDDY-APPEAL:	8

PLAYED 65%

One for the kids... maybe.

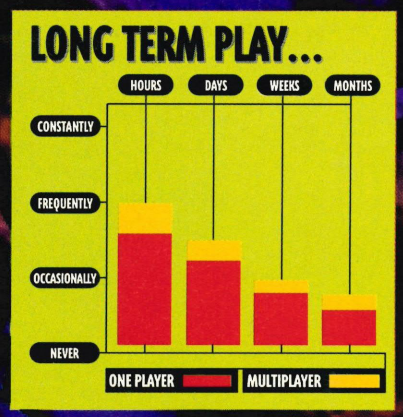
ALTERNATIVELY:
RESIDENT EVIL (95%)
SWAGMAN (EARLY 1997)



[Above] Each robot has varying speeds, attack patterns and personalities. One method of beating an enemy may not work against another.



[Above] Robots with powerful legs can leap Jumping Flash-style and cause plenty of damage by landing on top of their opponents.



ROBOPIT

TAKE TWO OF THE MOST POPULAR VIDEO GAME GENRES AND CHUCK IN A BUNCH OF BIZARRE 'BOTS. SHOULD BE A HEAVY METAL HIT RIGHT? HMM...

Written By Matt Yeo

Transformers

Metal Mickey, Tweaky from Buck Rogers and that wittering mechanoid in Power Rangers. Yep, everyone loves wacky robots yet there's nothing more entertaining than watching two hunks of junk giving each other a damn good twatting. Enter TH•Q's RoboPit, an ambitious title that gives players the chance to construct their very own mechanoid warriors, unleash them within futuristic arenas, then stand well back and watch the sparks fly.

In one player mode gamers go head-to-head against over a hundred tinpot titans in a desperate attempt to win the RoboPit tournament. Progression through the game requires players to defeat their opponents in a single round of combat with the victor claiming a foe's weapons for use in later matches. Of more interest is the Robot Making option, where hundreds of droids may be assembled using a variety of colourful body parts, bizarre limbs and both offensive and defensive weaponry. Save the finished creation to a memory card then take it round to your mate's house and find out whose ferrous fella is the fiercest.

"Makes Beirut look like a picnic..."

Rise of the Robots?

With its unique visual style and mish-mash of game styles RoboPit should be something special, but extensive play-testing soon reveals gaping holes in the overall concept. For a start, surely these Manga-influenced droids should have access to truly outrageous, MotorToon GP2 style cartoony weapons instead of such pathetic devices as the spear and crossbow? Secondly, these are robots for gawd's sake! Where's the metal-crushing, limb-tearing, bolt-busting action that we really want? Watching a couple of Technicolor titanium twits slapping each other around should be accompanied by amazing graphical displays, suitable sound effects and the kind of wanton destruction that would make Beirut look like a picnic site.

Unfortunately, Robopit comes across as a poor hybrid of both the beat-'em-up and platform genres, yet never quite manages to raise itself above the level of second-rate next generation title. Still at least TH•Q is consistent. Its 16-bit titles were largely plodding, yawnsome affairs so why change a winning formula, eh guys (Ouch – Ed)?



[Above] The two player split-screen mode is a cramped affair with glitchy action and painfully obvious slowdown.



[Above] As with many traditional beat-'em-ups, connect with enough hits and your character is capable of unleashing a powerful super attack.



[Above] There are three selectable viewpoints to choose from, including an in-yer-face angle ideal for catching a glimpse of those wacky Robo faces!

PLAY Information

Publisher: TH•Q
Customer support: 01372 745222
Price: £39.99
Release date: September '96

One Player | Mutiple Players | Memory Card

PLAY

Looks	●●●●●●○○○○
Sounds	●●●●○○○○○○
Gameplay	●●●●●●○○○○
Value	●●●○○○○○○○
Rust in peace	●●○○○○○○○○

PLAYED 55%

Best left on the scrap heap

ALTERNATIVELY:
Jumping Flash (86%)
Assault Rigs (81%)

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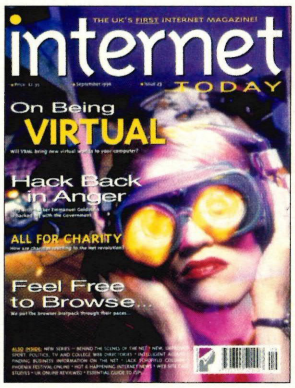
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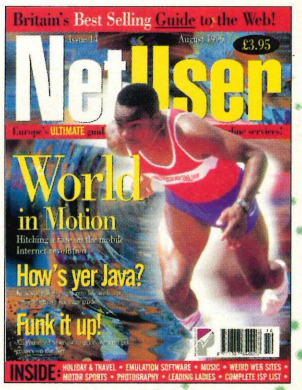
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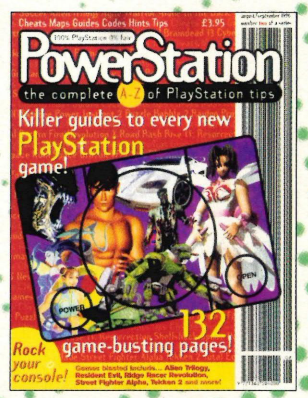
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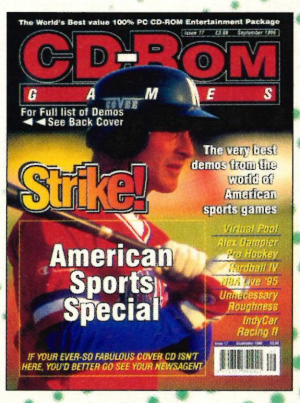
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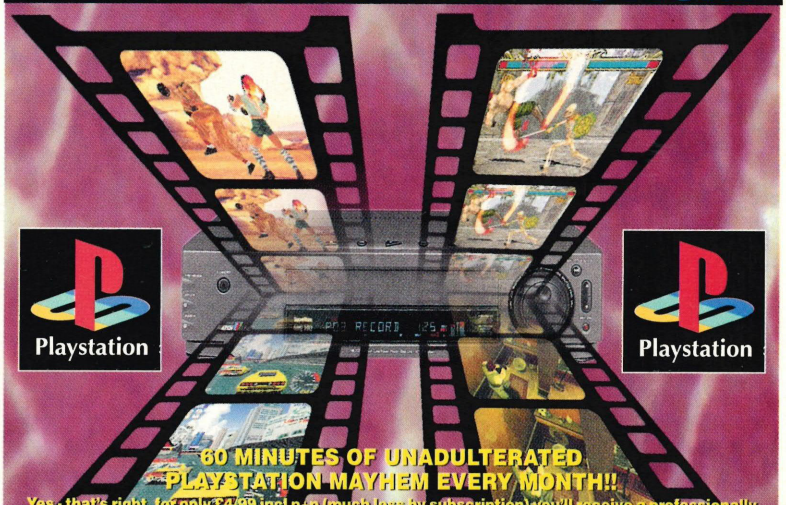
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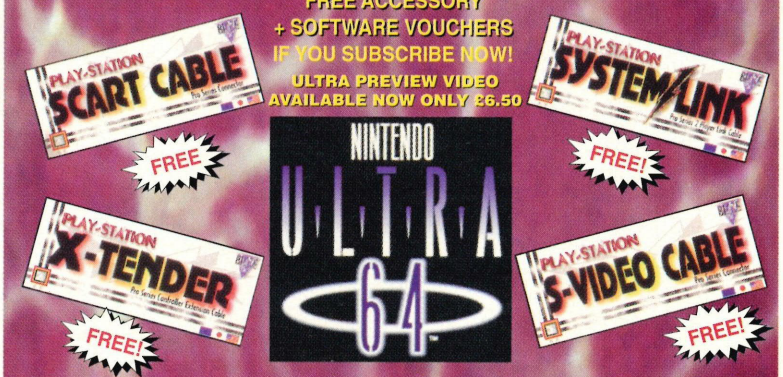
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STATION MASTER

CHEATS ▸ TIPS ▸ LETTERS

WELCOME FOLKS, TO YOUR ONE-STOP **TIPS** STATION. WHETHER YOU'RE LOOKING FOR **LEVEL SELECTS** AND SECRET CHARACTERS OR **POWER-UPS** AND HIDDEN **GOODIES**, THIS IS THE **PLACE TO VISIT**. IF YOU'VE STUMBLED **ACROSS** ANY CHEATS, **TIPS**, OR HANDY HINTS **SEND THEM TO**: STATION MASTER, PLAY MAGAZINE, PARAGON HOUSE, ST PETERS ROAD, BOURNEMOUTH BH1 2JS OR EMAIL MAT YEO AT MYEO@PARAGON.CO.UK.





RESIDENT EVIL

Reset Game

If you've got an import copy of *Resident Evil* use this code to reset the game at any time during play. Start a regular game, pause it and hold Start + Select for a couple of seconds. The game will reset itself and go back to the main menu.

Change Difficulty

At the title screen press R1, L2, R2, L1, ×, ▲, ×, ■. If the code is successfully entered you'll hear a zombie scream. When playing the game, just hold R1 + R2 + L1 + L2 and press Select to alter the game's difficulty level.

RETURN FIRE

Exploding Vehicles

Go to the Vehicle Selection Screen. Press and hold L1 + L2 + R1 + R2. A vehicle will explode in the row that is highlighted. Highlight another row, do the trick again and one of those will be destroyed. This will then handicap your game, making each level harder to complete.



GALAXIAN3

Test Mode

Although not exactly the most exciting cheat we've ever printed, this Test Mode is an exact reproduction of the start-up film that coin-op operators get to watch when switching on their *Galaxian3* machines. To watch it, wait for the rendered Namco logo to fly on and press L1, R2, R1, L2, Up, Down, Up, Down.



Ghost Gunner

Go to the Play Record screen and set it to 'ON'. Begin a game and play through as far as you can. When the mission finishes, go to the Gunner Battle option and press right twice to select 'Ghost'. Now start another game and you'll actually be able to team-up with yourself as your own partner.



WILLIAMS' ARCADE CLASSICS

Hidden Options Screen

There's a hidden options screen contained within this retro compilation. To access it: hold L1 + L2 + R1 + R2, then push Select. Repeat this twice. This code will take you to the operator's option screen. You can now select how many lives you want and other useful stuff. This trick works for all the games on the disc.





MOTORTOON GP2

Extra Goodies!

For those of you who don't have what it takes to get all the goodies legitimately, here are some super-secret codes:

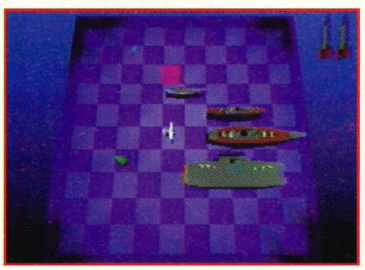
Extra Characters (4E43)
Additional Tracks (4154)
Tank Combat (5443)
Submarine X (5358)
MotorToon R (4631)

The codes in brackets are hexadecimal numbers which you must enter in debug mode to activate the hidden extras. First of all go to the goodies screen. Press the necessary button combinations then press Select to enter the digit. Once you have entered the appropriate code the goodie will appear and can be saved! The key for entering the codes is as follows:

1 R1	2 R2
3 R2 + R1	4 L1
5 L1 + R1	6 L1 + R2
7 L1 + R2 + R1	8 L2
9 L2 + R1	A L2 + R2
B L2 + R2 + R1	C L2 + L1
D L2 + L1 + R1	E L2 + L1 + R2
F L2 + L1 + R2 + R1	







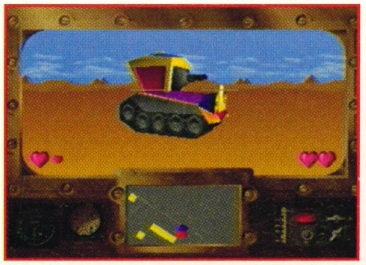
PUZZLE BOBBLE 2 :

Credit Cheat

Go to the Option screen and highlight credits, then press: Left, Right, R1, R2, L2, L1, Up, Down then keep pressing ● to increase your credits. Try to notch up as many credits as possible before the timer runs down.







PLAY Q&A

COME ON THEN YOU LOT! GIVE US YOUR TOUGHEST TIPS QUESTIONS, YOUR HARDEST HELP ADVICE AND YOUR PUMPED-UP PROBLEMS. WE CAN TAKE THE LOT AND DISH OUT THE KIND OF AWESOME ADVICE THAT'S GUARANTEED TO LEAVE YOU QUIVERING IN YOUR BOOTS.

SEND ALL QUESTIONS, QUIPS AND QUERIES TO: *Q&A, PLAY MAGAZINE, PARAGON HOUSE, ST PETERS ROAD, BOURNEMOUTH BH1 2JS.*

Dear PLAY

I've just bought a PlayStation and a copy of the excellent *Mortal Kombat 3*. Unfortunately, I haven't got a clue how to do any of the characters fatalities, animalities or friendship moves. So can you give me all the *MK3* tips you've got?
Lee Ashton, London

Blimey, you don't want much do you? I'm afraid that printing a full list of moves for each and every single character would take up too many pages. We ran a complete MK3 guide way back in issue three of PLAY but if you haven't got a copy, try giving our back issues department a call on (01202) 200200. Meanwhile, to keep you busy, here's a handy cheat that allows you to access the hidden robo-ninja Smoke as well as a few other neat tricks. During the opening demo, quickly press ×, ●, ▲, R1, R1, R2, R2, R1, R1. You'll hear Shao Kahn say, "You'll never win!" Now press Start. When the stone block appears with the word "Kombat" in red, press Up to access a secret cheat menu.

Dear PLAY

I'm a massive Capcom fan and have just bought *Street Fighter Alpha*. My mate says that *Street Fighter Alpha 2* is coming out in Japan so when's it due over here?
Colin Dennis, Loughborough

The age old import problem rears its ugly head again. Your mate's right about SF Alpha 2 appearing soon as it's actually out this month in Japan and we've reviewed it on page 54. Unfortunately, only owners of NTSC PlayStations will be able to play this little beauty. As for the UK, it looks like SF Alpha 2 will be released towards the end of the year or early next year so you've still got a bit of a wait.

Dear PLAY

First of all, congratulations on producing such a top magazine. I read PLAY from cover to cover every month and it's brilliant. Okay, now that I've finished creeping, is there any chance you can help me out with any cheats or tips for *NBA: In the Zone*?
Michael Moore, Croydon

Thanks for the praise Michael. Obviously we don't like to blow our own trumpet but yes, you're right, we are without a doubt the coolest PlayStation magazine in the world! There are no actual cheats for NBA: In The Zone but we can give you some general playing advice. Alley-Oop: Press both ■ and × when your player is under the basket with the ball. Fade Away: Press ■ and away on the joypad whilst shooting. Double Clutch: Press Left when dunking. Fake: Tap ■.

Dear PLAY

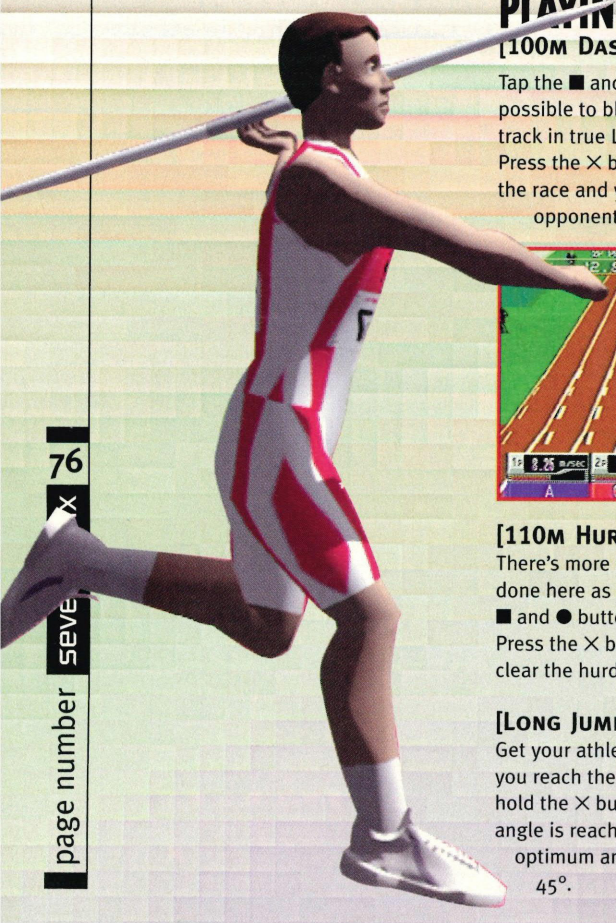
Please save me from insanity! I'm totally stuck on level 14 of *Magic Carpet*. I have destroyed all the creatures, claimed ownership of all the mana and villages, killed the three other wizards and destroyed their castles. I hope you guys can help me otherwise this game will soon be on a one-way trip to my local trade-in shop.
Gary Gibbons, Bracknell

Stop banging your joypad in frustration. Here's a code that'll get you to level 50 and beyond. Enter the options screen and press ▲, ▲, ●, ■, ▲, ●, ▲, ■. A hidden option will appear allowing access to all 75 levels. Also, while the code is in effect, enter any level and press pause. Hit ▲ to activate all the spells, ■ to increase your mana supply and ● to complete the current level. Howzat?

INTERNATIO
TRACK AND F

THE OLYMPIC GAMES MAY HAVE FINISHED BUT PLAYSTATION OWNERS CAN HAVE TOP SPORTING ACTION ALL YEAR ROUND THANKS TO KONAMI'S EXCELLENT *INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD*. TO HELP STRUGGLING ATHLETES REACH THE WINNERS PODIUM IN STYLE, WE'VE COMPILED A LIST OF TRIED-AND-TESTED TIPS AS WELL AS SOME WACKY CHEATS THAT'LL LEAVE YOU SCRATCHING YOUR HEAD IN BEWILDERMENT.

SOLVED



GENERAL PLAYING TIPS

[100M DASH]

Tap the ■ and ● buttons as rapidly as possible to blast your way along the track in true Linford Christie style. Press the × button to lean at the end of the race and you should pip your opponents to the finish every time.



[110M HURDLES]

There's more finger-blistering to be done here as players need to slap the ■ and ● buttons as rapidly as possible. Press the × button in plenty of time to clear the hurdles.

[LONG JUMP]

Get your athlete up to speed before you reach the foul line. Then press and hold the × button until the desired angle is reached before releasing. The optimum angle to aim for is around 45°.



[TRIPLE JUMP]

Hit the ■ and ● buttons speedily, before reaching the foul line. Press the × button to jump then tap it again as you come down for the second jump. Press and hold the × button until you hit a 45° angle for the final jump and a smooth sandy landing.

[HIGH JUMP]

Approach the high jump as fast as you can then press and hold × to perform the actual leap. Remember to release the button once you've cleared the bar.



[POLE VAULT]

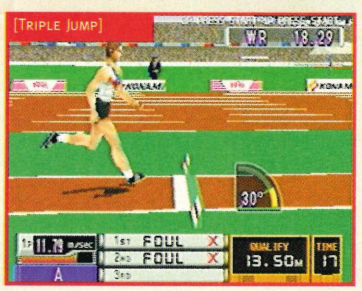
Firmly grasp your pole and begin pounding the ■ and ● buttons to begin your run. As you approach the line, the pole will automatically plant itself. Press and hold × to get your body over the bar. Release it to kick your legs over.

[HAMMER THROW]

Commence your spin using the ■ and ● buttons. Press and hold the × button when you start the fourth spin. When you reach 45°, release the button and watch that hammer fly!

[JAVELIN]

Begin your run by giving the ■ and ● buttons a good bashing then, as you approach the start line, press and hold



NAL ELD

CHEATS AND SECRET STUFF

[Change Swimsuits]
Fed up with the fashions in the 100M Freestyle? To change the swimsuits to bikinis, enter this cheat: Before selecting the event, press Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right, ×, ●.

[Shot Put]
When throwing the shot put, try to achieve scores with the same four digits such as 11.11m, 22.22m etc. Pull this off and a huge dinosaur will appear in the crowd.

[Javelin Throw]
Throw the javelin with maximum power and at an angle of more than 60°. A UFO will crash into the stadium with the javelin stabbed through it.

[Pole Vault]
Qualify with your first attempt then adjust the bar by more than 40cm and clear it again. During the third jump, a space shuttle will appear on screen.

[Long Jump/Triple Jump]
In either event, get a jump where the last three digits are the same. For example: 15.55m. If performed correctly a mole will pop up out of the ground.

[High Jump]
Clear the first two jumps making sure that there's a minimum distance of at least 40cm between them. If all goes according to plan players can expect to see the Konami airship floating by.

[Hammer Throw]
Make sure the first two digits of your throw match the second two. For example: 64.64m. If this is attained, the crowd celebrate by releasing hundreds of balloons.

[Discus]
As with the hammer throw, make sure the last two digits of your score match the first two. Pull this off successfully and a flock of doves flies past the screen.









×. Aim to get as close to 45° as possible before releasing all the buttons.

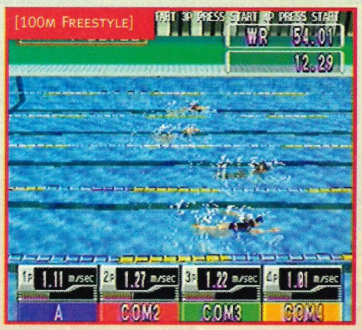
[Discus]
Rapidly press both the ■ and ● buttons to begin your athlete's spin. Press and hold × when you begin the second spin. Release when the counter reaches 45°. A high score should be relatively easy to achieve.

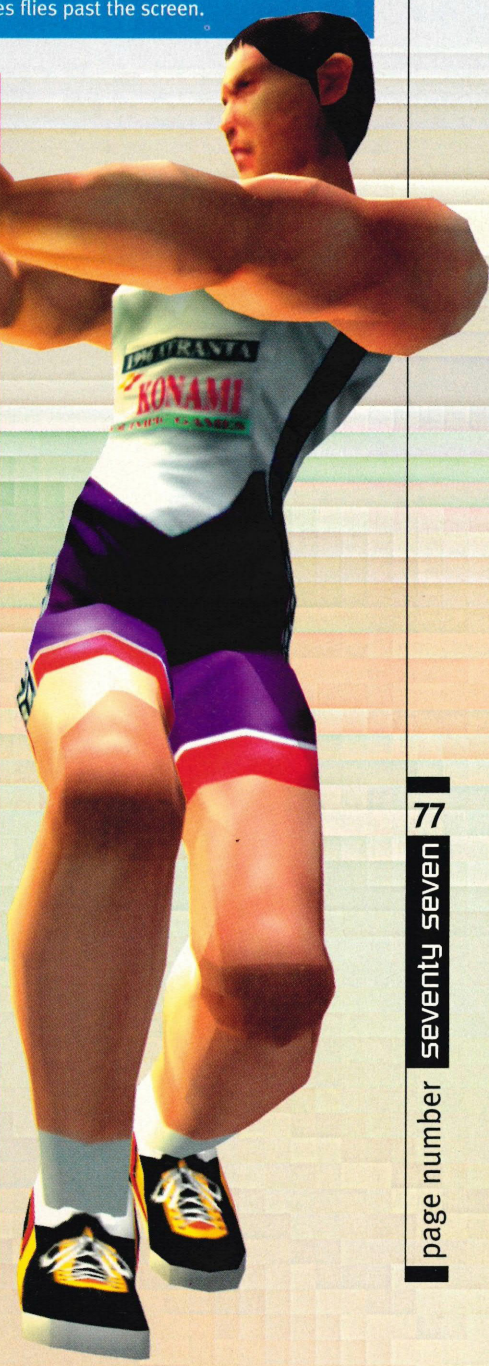
[Shot Put]
To send your balls screaming into the stratosphere, keep tapping the ■ and ● buttons to get up to speed. When you get near to the front of the circle, press and hold × until you reach an angle of around 45° then release.

[100M Freestyle]
Keep hammering away at the ■ and ● buttons to keep your swimmer at a speedy but constant stroke. Just before you reach the 50m wall press the × button to turn around. Before you know it you'll be good enough to put even Duncan Goodhew to shame.







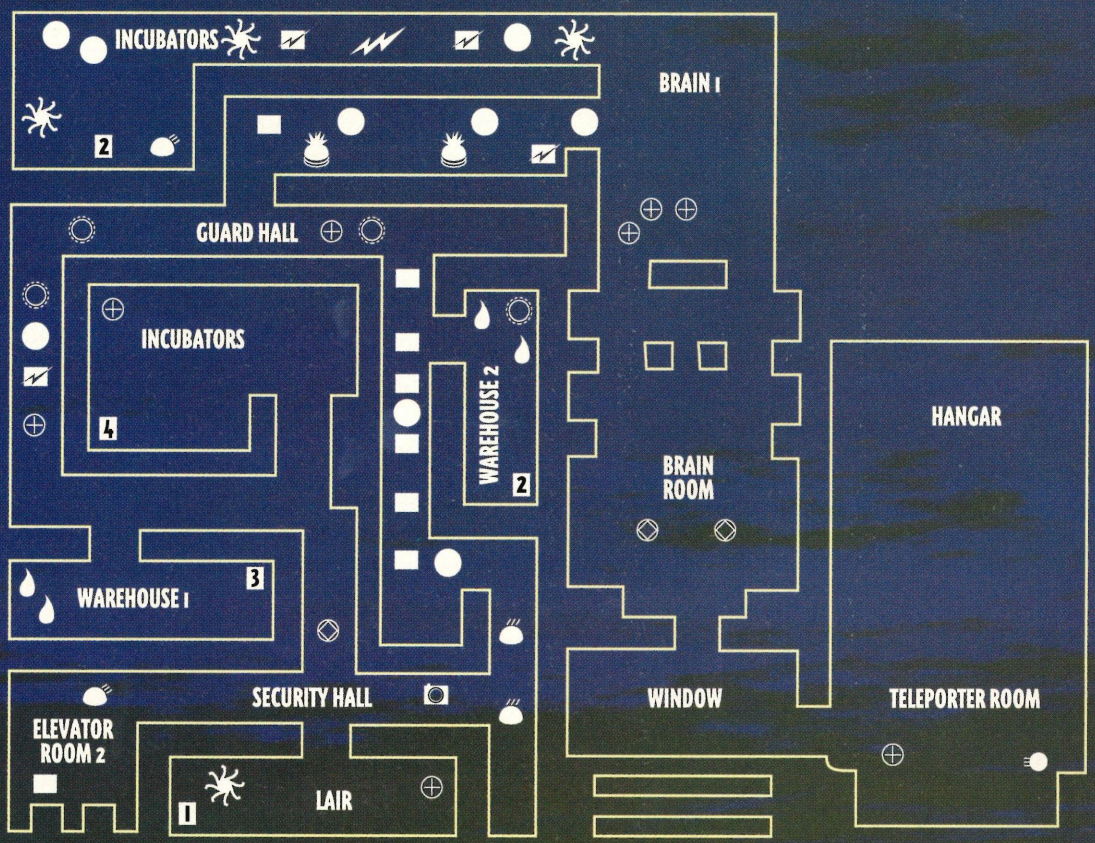


FADE TO BL

SOLVE

CONTINUING ON FROM LAST MONTH, WE HAVE THE THIRD PART OF OUR INVALUABLE PLAYING GUIDE THAT'LL TAKE YOU THROUGH THIS AWESOME ADVENTURE. WHEN WILL THE NIGHTMARE EVER END? NEXT MONTH MATEY, WHEN THE FINAL PART REVEALS ITSELF AND WE SHOW YOU THE EXCITING CLIMAX.

LEVEL 8



LEVEL 8 OBJECTIVES

Witness John's defection from the cause with his alliance with the Master Brain.

LEVEL 8 HINTS

▶ Exit south from the Hangar at the start. Use the middle elevator from Elevator Room One and immediately you enter Elevator Room Two, step on the pad in front of you to stop the gun from firing.

▶ Enter the Security Hall with your gun drawn, preferably with some decent ammo. Take out the floating camera and wait for the stabbing morph. Take him out and proceed south, weapon drawn.

▶ In the Lair, having killed the quick morph, turn to the west and rapidly blast the tentacled creature. Jump over the pressure pads, get the key from the locker, exit north and take a right. Continue east and then take a left, heading north.

▶ Take out the two drones and head cautiously to the Incinerator Hall. Avoid the beams and the pressure pads to traverse the corridor. To open the door on your right, step on the last pressure pad on the right hand side of the corridor. Enter Warehouse Two to collect the energy recharger, turning quickly to shoot the two morphs that appear. Shoot the button to prevent any further morphs appearing.

▶ Return to the Incinerator Hall and then north to the Guard Hall. Shoot the morph behind the bars before retreating east to deactivate them. Run all the way west to the end of the corridor and then south.

▶ Kill the morph in the Trap Hall, press the button to deactivate the beam and jump the electrified plates and exit south to Warehouse One.

▶ Grab the plasma bullets from the locker, eliminating the morphs that appear. Exit north and then east, north up to the Incubators for Key Two.

▶ Make your way back round through the Trap Hall and then north to the Booby Trapped Hallway. Save off here. Step on both pads to deactivate the beams, and then time your run along the left wall to Brain One. Kill the three morphs and head northwest.

▶ Shoot the tentacles and jump the plates to get to the locker with the energy recharger, retrieving it as fast as you can to avoid getting shot by the camera too many times. Save before returning to the gauntlet in Brain One.

▶ Head south to face two morphs. Plasma bullets will come in handy if you have them. Exit South to the Window room to witness a heinous sight, then rush to the Teleporter Room to the east to escape.

ACK PART 3

- Access Panel
- Barrel
- Barrel – exploding
- Camera
- Drone – Smart
- Drone – Hover
- Electric Floor Panel
- Floor Panel
- Force Field
- Gun
- Kartrac
- Lockers (Level 8):
  - 1 Key 1
- 2 Energy Recharger
- 3 Plasma Bullets
- Lockers (Level 9):
  - 1 Locker Empty
  - 2 Armour Piercing Bullet Chip
  - 3 Camouflage Shield
  - 4 Energy Scanner
  - 5 Magnetic Pulse Bullets
  - 6 Advanced Plasma Clip
- Mines
- Mines – Bouncing
- Morph drop
- Morph existing
- Morph patrol
- Recharger
- Red Button
- Robot
- Spider
- Special
- Starting Point
- Transporter
- Ship
- Freeze Weapon
- Code Panel
- Blue Light
- Stone Golem
- Statue
- Bird
- Incinerator Beam
- Shuttlecraft
- Lava Burst
- Flame Burst
- Blue Flame
- Electric Field
- Tentacles
- Mechanical Rover
- Rebel

LEVEL 9

Level 9 Objectives

Get the Master Key from the captive Security Officer

Level 9 Hints

▶ Waste the three morphs that attack, avoiding the mechanical drone – there's no way to destroy it. Exit North.

▶ Kill the morphs that appears in the Warehouse, and use the recharger. Remember its location. Ignore the lockers, they are empty, and head back south to the Hangar and then northwest to the Control Room.

▶ Don't move! The drone is motion sensitive, so destroy it without moving, then head north to Elevator Room Three. Talk to the rebel and take the elevator.

▶ As you enter Elevator Room One, there will be a gunfight in progress. Ignore the fight and head through the east door. At the window, you'll witness an execution. Kill the morphs and run to the southeast door, gun ready.

▶ Enter the room blasting, to distract the morphs from shooting a rebel, who'll now escape. Kill the morphs and head north. Kill the morph that's hiding in Elevator 2B and then head back south to Elevator Room. Take the west door, gun drawn.

▶ As soon as you enter Picture Window Two, exterminate the morph to save the rebel's life. Leave the rebel to escape and exit through the west door.

▶ Kill the morphs in Hallway One and a rebel will give you the pass to the Command Post. Exit back east, and then to the north door of Picture Room Two.

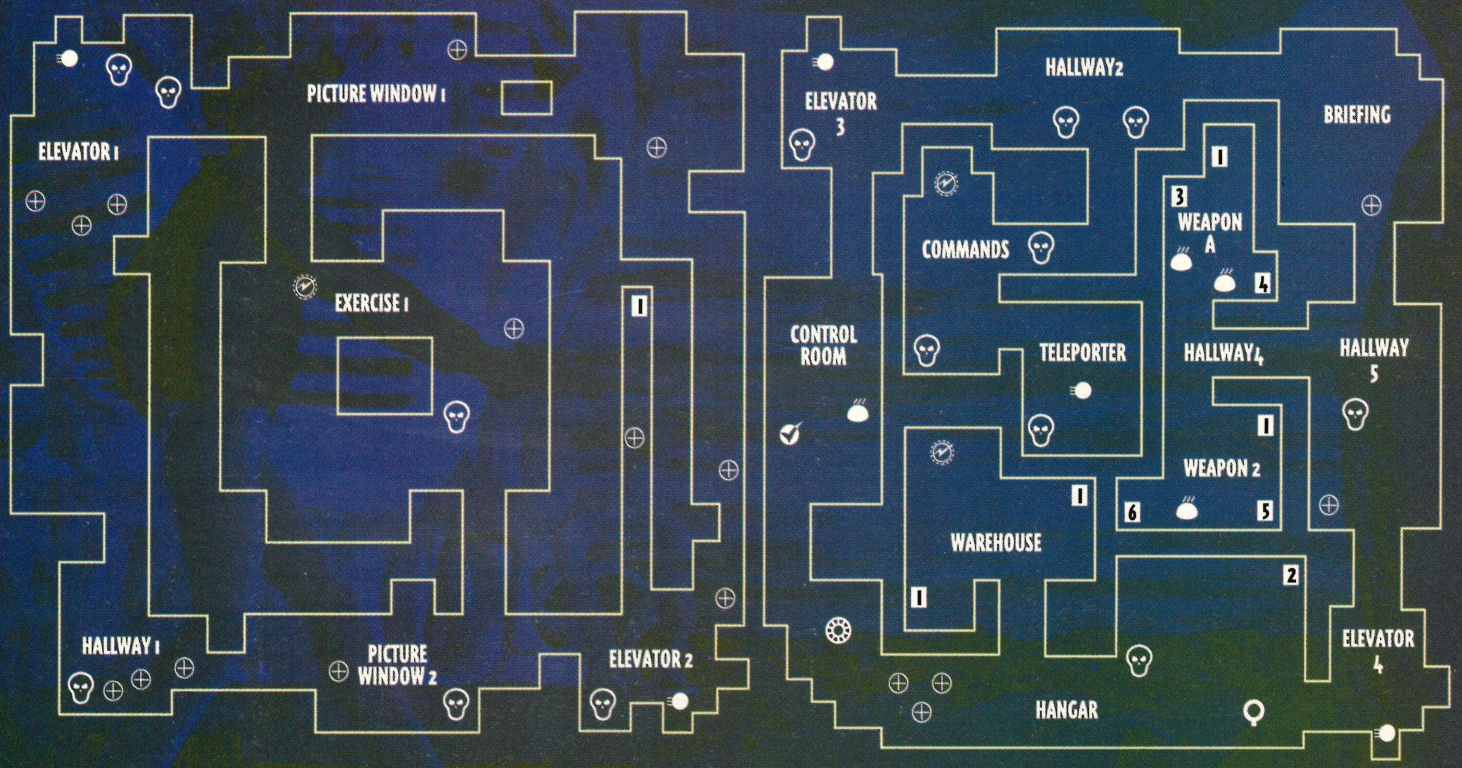
▶ Kill the morphs in Exercise Room Two then back south again to Picture Room Two, taking the east door to Elevator Room Two. Jump on the available elevator to Elevator Room Four. Save and proceed north to Hallway Five.

▶ You must kill the morph before he kills the rebel. Follow the rebel through the north door to the Weapons Room.

▶ Eliminate the Halo Drones carefully, and grab the Camouflage Shield and the Energy Scannner, exiting south to Hallway Four, and south again to Weapons Room Two.

▶ Again, eliminate the Halo Drones. Grab the Magnetic Pulse Bullets and Advanced Plasma Bullets from the lockers and then head north to Hallway Five.

▶ Use the north door for the Briefing Room, and take out the morph on guard. Go northwest to Hallway Two. Head south to the Command Room. Talk to Hank and exit east to the Teleporter. Take the right teleporter and press the button.



A NEW CAR?

ALL THE SIX CARS HAVE NOW BEEN IMPLEMENTED. THE CARS ARE MODELLED ON REAL LIFE CARS, AND AS A RESULT HAVE HAD 'REAL-WORLD' PHYSICS PROGRAMMED INTO THEM, VARYING THEIR HANDLING. AS YET THE DIFFERENCES SEEN TO BE SUBTLE, BUT WILL BE MORE PRONOUNCED AND ACCURATE IN THE FINAL VERSION.



GRIPPING HARDCORE 4X4

Reality sucks!

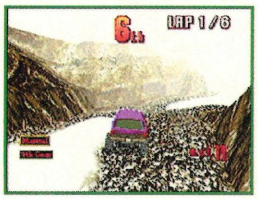
Let's get digital – it's safer. Progressively making its way along the dirt-track that is PlayStation game publishing is the latest racing game from Gremlin. It sounds like a game about pornographic group sex, but in fact it's an off-road racing game. When we saw *Hardcore 4x4* last month, it was just a bare shell of a driving engine. Now four of the six planned tracks have been implemented and all six cars are now selectable.

The cars in *Hardcore 4x4* have been modelled on real life cars, and have specific handling characteristics rated in eight different categories. These govern speed, suspension, weight, acceleration and the like, and as a result will affect overall performance. But of course this performance is all related to the different tracks...

PLAY INFORMATION

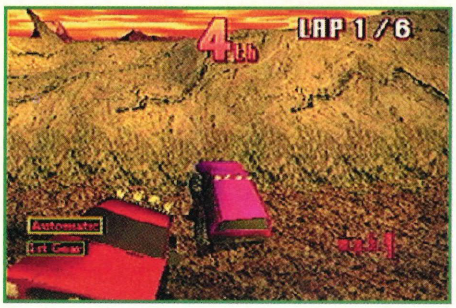
Name: Hardcore 4x4
Publisher: Gremlin Interactive
% Complete: 75%
Release Date: November '96













[ABOVE] Get too close to another car or slam into a wall and bits fall off. Your car that is.

Using a 'real world engine' the physics of motion are dynamically calculated as your cars travel around the tracks. Depending on the handling of your car, the performance will vary from track to track – sounds all very straightforward, but there are several differences from your standard driving model. Most notably, the tracks. Rather than being rigidly defined in the route you must take, the courses are actually carved into expansive areas which can be explored fully. This means that, although you have to race around in laps you can find short-cuts to help you get an edge over your opponents. In play, this degree of freedom works very well, giving you the feeling of much more freedom than your average racer.

HURT ME BABY

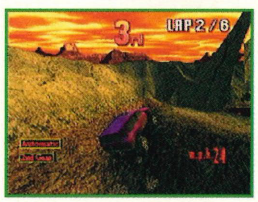
The vehicles aren't indestructible either, and will sustain damage as you play. When they roll over or collide with other competitors any damage will progressively affect their performance, reducing your speed and the possibility of taking more hazardous short cuts.



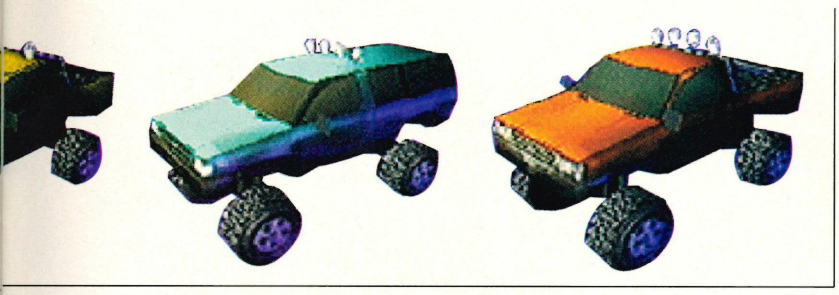
[ABOVE] A tank looks menacing in the background of the Gobi Desert track.



















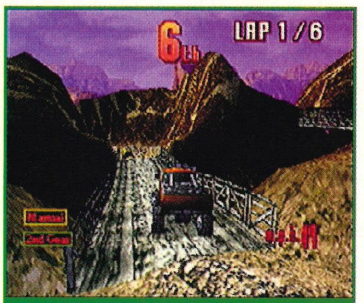
[Above] The first person perspective view can be quite hair-raising, especially when other cars come close and you're bouncing around through the course.



[Above] An opponent's car tries to take a corner too fast and flies sideways to the ground. The motion of the cars is very realistic.

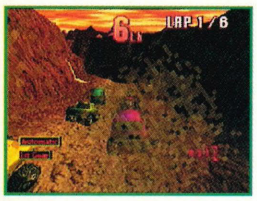


[Above] The game is probably best played in manual gears, as the automatic transmissions traditionally have problems with hills, especially when they're off-road.



[Above] A bridge forms a handy way to get you across the chasm. Notice the other bridge in the distance. This is a good example of the detailed landscapes in the game. Honest.











Hardcore 4x4 can be played in either Championship, Time Trial or Practice modes, with races structured into three classes based on engine size. There's also a link-up mode planned. To rise up a racing class requires winning of your current championship level through the whole season of six courses. Completing the game in all three classes won't be an easy task, with the off-roaders getting more difficult to handle as you progress.

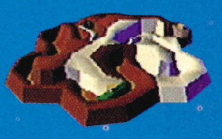
The game is due in a couple of month's time, and from the exclusive look we were lucky enough to see of this latest version of the game, *Hardcore 4x4* has all the makings of a very promising game. As yet there are still several things to finish and many bugs to iron out. Fans of the racing genre will no doubt find Gremlin's approach refreshing. If they manage to get everything just right, it should be hit.

TRACK ATTACK

There will be six tracks in all in the game, plus the possibility to race them backwards. There may even be secret ones too, but as yet only four have been implemented. All the courses are actually quite long, with laps commonly taking several minutes to complete. This will ensure the longevity of the game. Here's a run through of the tracks so far.

[Grand Canyon]

One of the easier tracks, the scenery is splendid, with some nice touches such as the bridges across the chasm.



[Siberia]

A very difficult course, requiring a good memory for the layout – the visibility is very poor, as is the traction.



[Gobi Desert]

Fairly expansive, without too many difficult sections to negotiate, the course is good for bulding up decent speed.



[Snake Pass]

Very windy and bumpy, this track is quite hard to speed around, with some tricky sections where it's easy to roll over.



GUMMY BUBBLE BOBBLE II

Jeez! If last month's bubble burstin' bonanza wasn't enough for you, this month a copy of *Bubble Bobble II* flew its way into the PLAY office, consequently stealing even more man-hours and turning the whole team into a collection of gibbering wrecks foaming at the mouth. Will this insanity never end?!

Bubble Bobble II is a conversion of the Taito hit from the arcades. Also known as *Bubble Symphony*, *Bubble Bobble II* is the latest in the long line of coin-op hits from the original *Bubble Bobble* to *Rainbow Islands* and *Parasol Stars*.

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Bubble Bobble II
Publisher: Virgin Interactive
% Complete: 70%
Release Date: October '96



YOUR TURN KIDS

The game revolves around the adventures of Babby and Bobby (Bub's and Bob's grandchildren) and their two friends Curun and Coron. The objective is to work your way through 120 crazy action-packed levels in this room-based platform game, clearing each stage of all enemies to progress. Killing enemies is as easy as blowing bubbles, trapping your foes inside, and then bursting them using the spikes and fins on your character's back.

The four bubbly dinosaurs you can choose from have varying attributes such as speed and bubble-blowing speed, but they can all improve their powers using power-ups found throughout the game. There are over 50 different types of enemy to defeat, plus ten end-of-level bosses for a real challenge.











[ABOVE] **As ever, the gameplay is incredibly pacey, with so much going on at once. Get ready for a full-on mesmerising experience.**





[ABOVE] **Typically in Bubble Bobble style, the game is colourful, charming and fiendishly addictive.**

TWO'S COMPANY

Of course the game is complemented with the usual entourage of secret areas, bonus levels and multi-player action, but additionally the game can be played in co-operative or competitive modes and has a non-linear branching structure which means that there are several 'routes' through the game. Classic gameplay, non?



Hopefully, Bubble Bobble II will also come with a health warning to warn unsuspecting PlayStation owners about the damage that this game will undoubtedly cause. Symptoms such as loss of sleep, degradation in health, square eyes and broken relationships are all likely. Hmm. Sounds good actually...



[ABOVE] **Bubble Bobble II will actually feature four bubble blowing dragons to choose from, two of which are girlie dragons wearing bows. Aaaah.**

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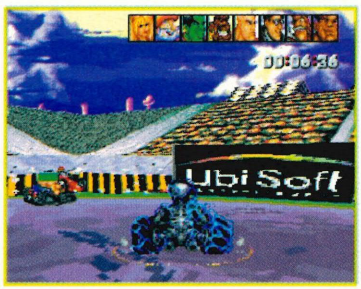
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KARTOGRAPHIC STREET RACER

If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery then surely UbiSoft's forthcoming *Street Racer* must eternally bow its head in respect to the now legendary *Super Mario Kart*. Super NES and Mega Drive owners will be more than familiar with this cute, cartoony racing title as both 16-bit versions shifted significant numbers when originally released in 1994. The fact that *Street Racer* bore more than a passing resemblance to a certain Italian plumber and his hi-octane mates was neither here nor there. We were demanding a *Mario Kart* sequel and if Nintendo weren't going to give it to us then we were going to look elsewhere.





Get your motor running...

For the uninitiated out there, *Street Racer* is a wacky driving game featuring a line-up of larger-than-life characters, all of whom have their own individual vehicle handling attributes, special attacks and eccentric personalities. As expected the game has been completely re-written from scratch for its next generation console debut and both the PlayStation and Saturn versions have been designed to maximise the potential of each machine. In fact when it comes to brand spanking new features *Street Racer* packs in more goodies than Jo Guest in tight lycra!

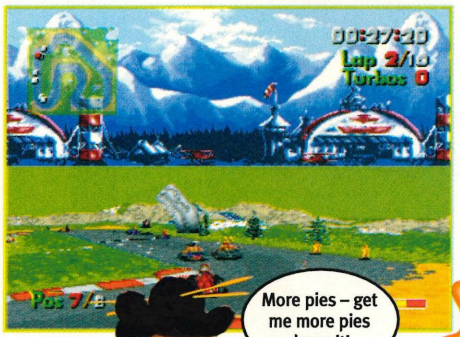


From the nearly-completed version we've played it's safe to say that *Street Racer*'s 3-D multi-player modes will be its single greatest attraction. How does eight player, split-screen racing grab you? Both human and CPU players can bomb round a selection of 28 varied tracks and the frame rate never drops below an amazing 60fps. If this proves too confusing then players can tackle the single screen Micro Mode, where a bird's eye view provides an optimum driving angle for all





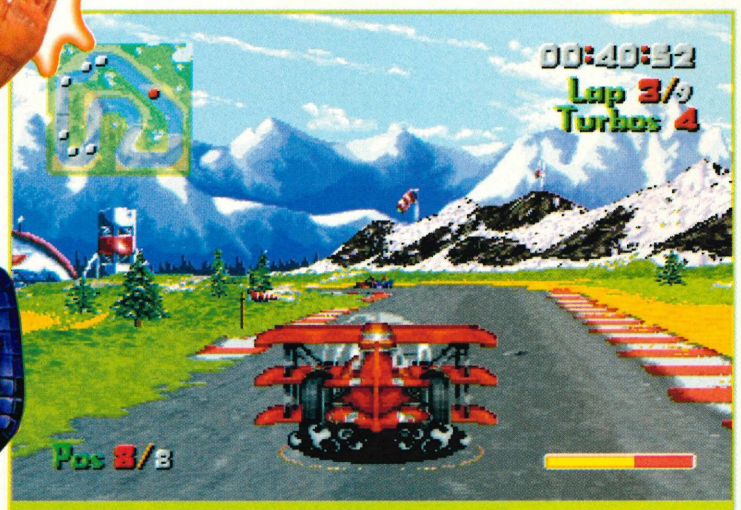
[Above] **Players can select a variety of racing viewpoints. Even in multi-player modes, each driver can choose a separate racing angle.**



PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Street Racer
Publisher: UbiSoft
% Complete: 85%
Release Date: 25 October '96





[Above] **The monocled flyer Helmut Von Pointenegger takes to the roads in his trusty tri-plane. Offensive moves include Side Saws, Walking Stick Strike and the ability to fly for short periods.**



LET'S SPLIT!

GET YOUR MATES ROUND, SLAP IN YOUR MULTI-TAP AND GET READY FOR SOME INCREDIBLE FOUR TO EIGHT PLAYER RACING ACTION. *Street Racer* BOASTS BOTH HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL SPLIT-SCREEN DRIVING MODES AND EVEN WITH ALL THE ON-SCREEN MAYHEM, THE FRAME RATE REMAINS A COOL 60FPS. DEVELOPER VIVID IMAGE HAS TO BE COMMENDED FOR TAKING THE PLAYSTATION TO EVEN LOFTIER HEIGHTS.









THEN AND NOW...

FANS OF THE ORIGINAL 16-BIT *Street Racer* CAN LOOK FORWARD TO MORE OF THE SAME TYRE-BURNING, HIGH-SPEED CRAZINESS THAT MADE THIS TITLE A SMASH HIT THE FIRST TIME ROUND. OF COURSE AS THE PLAYSTATION IS A TRUE NEXT GENERATION MACHINE PLAYERS CAN EXPECT SUCH IMPROVEMENTS AS 3-D MODELLED CHARACTERS, FMV INTRO, CD-QUALITY SOUND EFFECTS AND A HOST OF HIDDEN GOODIES. HOWEVER, THESE NEW ADDITIONS WILL BE WASTED UNLESS THE CLASSIC GAMEPLAY IS RETAINED.







[ABOVE] E Honda look-a-like Sumo-San blasts round his Future City stage taking corners at break-neck speed and lapping opponents.







[ABOVE] Take out opponents for a short while by attaching bombs to their cars and waiting for the timer to count down.

characters. Each track has its own unique theme such as Frank's spooky Haunted House level or Sumo-San's shiny, chrome-covered Future City, with each stage having its own tricky obstacles and surfaces.

FAST, FASTER, FASTEST!

There are three basic modes of gameplay: Head-to-Head, Practice and Championship, with Bronze, Silver, Gold and the tough-as-nails Platinum Cups to obtain. As each mode is completed, players are treated to extra goodies such as hidden tracks and other secrets which we're unable to divulge at the moment. Once a race is finished, the handy Playback Mode allows players to view the entire event over again from a variety of camera angles. Add to these modes Sudden Death laps, the Endurance challenge, the completely mental Rumble Game, the fact that the CPU cars actually adapt to your driving style so even expert players will be truly tested, and it's safe to say that *Street Racer* is destined for the winner's podium.



GORE!

FINAL DOOM



[Above] Background objects have received a lick of paint with improved texture-mapping increasing the detail level.

Hell's bells!

id's first-person satanic shooter has gone back to the drawing board and been tinkered, tightened and targeted for an October release. The PlayStation version of *Doom* was a huge seller when it was originally released late last year. As faithful conversions go, the Williams' development team took a selection of the best PC levels, beefed up the visuals and produced a gory, chilling title which remained in the video game charts for what seems like forever.

Now, as a treat for all you blood-thirsty *Doom* fanatics world-wide, GT Interactive is putting the finishing touches to a sequel of sorts that should keep players occupied until the release of both *Hexen* and *Quake*. PC owners are more than familiar with *Doom*'s innovative level construction feature and so the Williams' team has compiled 32 all-new stages, based on amateur WAD level designs, exclusive id sections, and more monsters and mayhem than ever before.

PLAY Information

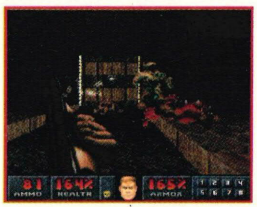
Name: Final Doom
Publisher: GT Interactive
% Complete: 90%
Release Date: October '96

Creature Shock

GT Interactive is pitching *Final Doom* as more of an expansion disk than a true sequel, with the N64 version no doubt due to receive the lion's share of additional new enemies and features. Of course PSX owners aren't being left out, as all your favourite creatures are set to return, with rumours flying that the ultimate boss character will be something previously only seen in the PC version of *Doom 2*. Spooky!

Visually, the *Doom* engine appears to have received only minor tweaks and tucks, with walls, floors and ceilings boasting improved texture-mapping and extra anguished ambient tunes guaranteed to soil the clean underwear of even the toughest player. Hopefully, with just over half the levels as the original PSX version, GT Interactive will see sense and release the game as a low-priced title thereby ensuring massive sales without the need for consumers to dig too-deeply. Expect a full *Final Doom* review next issue and further *Hexen* and *Quake* updates in future issues.





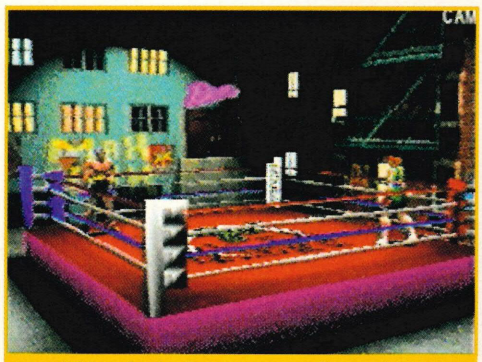




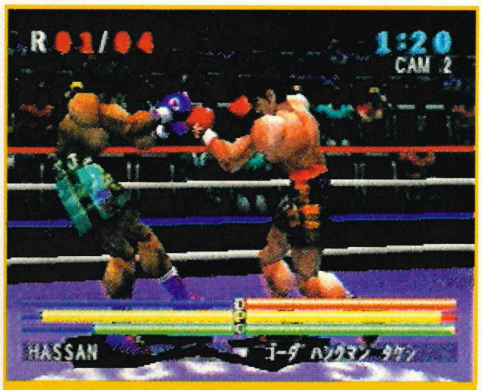
[Above] As in the original PlayStation game, Final Doom features all of the blood-letting high-tech weaponry required to kick some serious demonic ass.



[Above] Yet another lost soul is sent screaming back to Hell after messing with the business end of a shotgun.



[Above] Fights take place in gyms, proper stadiums and even outdoors to add variety to the game. All the venues are fully 3-D and light-sourced, with great backgrounds.



[Above] Fights are displayed in full polygon glory, adding a realism not often found even in 3-D beat-'em-ups.



[Above] Players can be customised to a large degree. Here Phillis from Coronation Street squares up to Dennis Pennis in the red corner. Everyone adopt the gravelly voice and shout "Percy!"

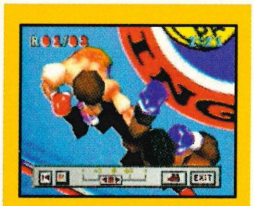
KNOCKOUT

VICTORY BOXING

Rocky Balboa?

Who are you?!? You ain't nothin' compared to these guys... *Victory Boxing's* the name, all-out fighting's the game. The PlayStation has been pretty lacking in boxing games, the only one we've seen in action so far being the commendable, but indecipherable, *Boxer's Road*, a Japanese import. Until now that is. After nearly a year of waiting, *Victory Boxing* has almost completed its transition from the Saturn, and it's been enhanced to take advantage of the PlayStation's superior processing power.

Fully Gouraud shaded, light-sourced, texture-mapped and motion-captured, *Victory Boxing* has an almost unlimited number of boxers to choose from, with customiseable height, weight, sex (?), facial features and colour. Even the fighting style of your boxer can be customised, giving him bias to a particular method. More than this though, to ensure that your fighters stay as realistic as possible, different motion-capture sequences have been used for boxers of different builds, reaches and fighting styles.







In order to help you hone your fighting style, replays are available from a variety of camera angles, showing you strikes in glorious slow-motion.

Pugilist's Paradise

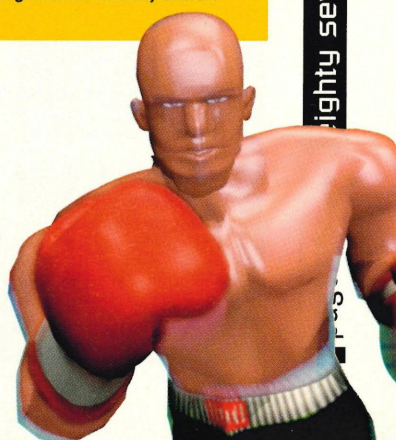
Apart from the obvious fighting elements in the game, *Victory Boxing* also necessitates a certain amount of strategy. An advanced matchmaking system presents you with possible future fights, of which you must choose wisely to ensure a successful rise through the rankings to number one. With advanced AI and unique computer fighting styles, this ain't gonna be easy. Indeed, if you're playing a bit too well, expect some mean adversaries to challenge you if you get a decent unbeaten run.

Of course you can play in two player mode, and act out your heartfelt emotions against a 'mate' through the pain-relieving format of a virtual head-to-head fight. More curiously though, there is an auto-fight mode where you can watch the computer pit two opponents against each other – obviously handy for working out how different fighters perform. In fact, in this mode, the computer can take charge of your own custom player and, using 'samples' of your fighting style, drop him in a ring with another player, so you can also see your own weaknesses. Cool.

An exciting sounding title is *Victory Boxing* – intricate and involved yet obviously bestial. Pugilism rules. Exclusive review next issue.



[Above] Various power bars indicate strength and stamina. Different fighters have naturally different fighting styles and Victory Boxing mimics this superbly.



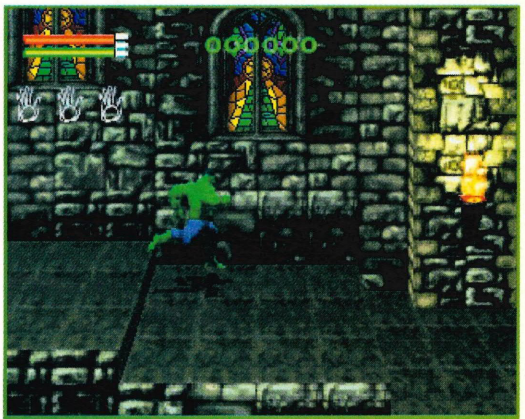
PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Victory Boxing
Publisher: JVC
% Complete: 80%
Release Date: November '96



[Above] Incredible Hulk combines 2-D platform action and a 3-D adventure format, seamlessly blending the two.





[Above] The texture maps used for the detail are very well drawn, making the most of the 32-bit technology available.

SCHIZOID

– Madness.

That's what does it. Mutating you into a gargantuan ape-thing known as the Incredible Hulk is the basis for Eidos Interactive's latest PlayStation offering. Based on the Marvel Comics and Bill Bixby/Lou Ferrigno-starring TV series of the same name, *Incredible Hulk* sees you in charge of the green-gilled giant in an adventure through five levels. *The Pantheon Saga* as it is subtitled, follows the storyline through five comic strips, providing objectives to accomplish and various hero-bosses to defeat in a crusade for a good supplier of chequered shirts.

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Incredible Hulk
Publisher: Eidos Interactive
% Complete: 70%
Release Date: November '96







WHERE D'HE GET THEM PANTS?

Incredible Hulk combines elements of 2-D platform and 3-D exploration games, such as *Loaded*. You're stuck with playing as the Hulk all the time, which is probably no bad thing as Dr David Banner has been sent to Mr Benn's costume shop for a lesson in fashion and style (remember those flares and collars?!). Fighting your way through the five scenarios isn't going to be easy, especially with a barrage of Marvel characters with advanced AI popping out of the woodwork to impede your progress. More than this though, the puzzle-based nature of the game should ensure plenty of mind-boggling logistical tension to overcome.

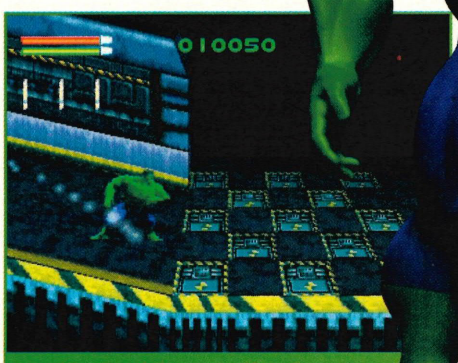


[Above] Although the camera view is seen from one general direction, there is a degree of freedom on lateral placement.

INCREDIBLE HULK – THE PANTHEON SAGA



The adventure culminates in a goliath battle where the Hulk must duel his future evil self – the Maestro. Armed with various powers, and more to collect on the way, this encounter is destined to be quite a climax. But, before you all get too mad with excitement and start bursting out of your clothes, let us sedate you with a choice selection of screenshots to tide you over until d-day.



[Above] Now, how do I get across this section... Puzzles will vary from the easy to the damn hard.



MERCENARY

WARHAMMER: SHADOW OF THE HORNED RAT

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Warhammer: SOTHR
Publisher: Mindscape
% Complete: 90%
Release Date: November '96

Warhammer is of course based on the hugely popular Games Workshop board game of the same name and features not only every conceivable monster and heroic character from the cardboard equivalent, but also a cornucopia of tricks that can only be manipulated digitally, such as artificial intelligence, a zoom facility, and of course highly detailed graphics which can be rotated at any time and include different terrain and weather conditions.

You play Morgan Bernhardt, the leader of the Grudgebringer mercenaries; swords for hire who undertake missions for the dollar not the damsel. Missions range from attacking, defending and escorting, as well as more juicy tasks like assassinations or kidnapping. The game is played in real time on a small section of 3-D map. The bulky status panel depicting your regiments and their abilities on the PC has been replaced by a small joypad shaped multi-function display, which tells you all you need to know and leaves more space for the action. Battles are initiated by clicking on your men and then directing them to the enemy, but the real strategy comes into play when you set traps and engage in complicated pincer movements and use special units such as archers and magicians to up the death rate. *Warhammer* is for serious enthusiasts and lead miniature lovers.



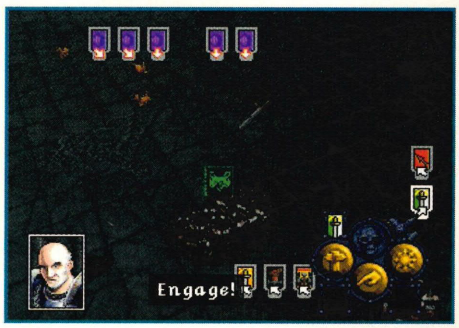
[ABOVE] **The armies look like sheep to the generals on the hill. Control in** Warhammer **is similar to** Command & Conquer. **Just click & slay!**

AT LEAST I'VE GOT ME ELF!

Mindscape is keen to stress that the PlayStation version (delayed for some months) is significantly different and enhanced over the PC game which found many homes with those pale of skin and void of social life. But of course many PC owners are really 'into' in-depth strategy role playing games and PSX owners, on the whole, aren't. What is Mindscape thinking of?

The answer is that the PlayStation is obviously gagging for an isometric real time battle simulator set in a world of orcs, goblins, elves, and suicidal dwarfs going round chinning people and yelling "Stitch that Jimmy!" To some extent they're right. Sony's wonder console is sorely lacking in games which tax the old grey matter, and *Warhammer* is just the first of a new breed of strategy games. By Xmas we'll be inundated with the buggers!











[ABOVE] **Rip 'em to shreds!" Defending a small town you suddenly get into a scrap with a band of goblin marauders. Each unit has its own banner.**





[ABOVE] **Up to your knees in snow, your brave men split in half and attack two Orc divisions. The fire trails emanate from your magic sword strutting its stuff.**



[ABOVE] **The mother of all battles is about to begin. Each one of the icons around the screen represents an army and the arrows below tell you where they are in relation to your lot.**



[Above] Thanks to the PlayStation's superb graphical capabilities, magical effects, such as this wall of fire, appear as transparent pyrotechnics.



[Above] By utilising the PlayStation's shoulder buttons, players are able to rotate each level, revealing concealed entrances and waiting enemies.



[Above] Spell-casting forms an essential part of combat rounds. This black hole effect warps opponents between dimensions, sapping energy.

HALITOSIS

BREATH OF FIRE 3

Assuming you've been reading PLAY from front to back (unless you're one of those awkward sods who flips straight to the next month page) you'll no doubt notice a slight bias towards SquareSoft this issue. And rightly so. The RPG king is renowned for its epic fantasy titles and the thought of a PlayStation *Final Fantasy VII* is enough to send fans of this genre into fits of hysteria.

But back in the days when 16-bit ruled supreme, SquareSoft weren't the only company launching quality quests for the Super NES. Although better known for the ass-kicking shenanigans of *Street Fighter*, Capcom also masterminded such awesome titles as the successful *Breath of Fire* series. As the demand for lengthy, involved, next generation RPGs rises, it seemed a logical step to continue the *Breath of Fire* saga yet utilise the technological advances of the PlayStation to deliver a killer game that could go head-to-head against the best that SquareSoft has to offer.

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Breath of Fire 3
Publisher: Capcom
% Complete: 80%
Release Date: December '96



[Above] Players can expect to encounter all manner of beasties in Capcom's first 32-bit RPG. This creature is just one of the weird denizens lurking within.

You're the FireStarter!

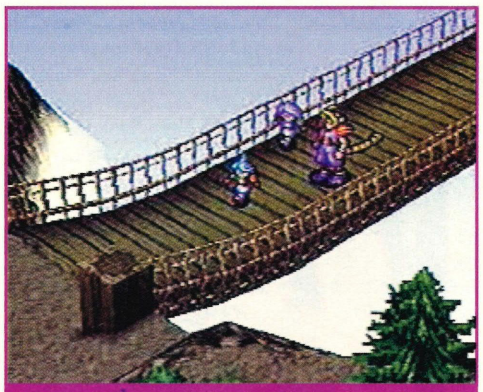
As we've mentioned in the Japanese Feature this issue (see page 20), the PlayStation version of *Street Fighter Zero 2* includes an exclusive *Breath of Fire* demo that raised more than a few eyebrows in this office. At first glance it would appear that Capcom has attempted to retain the overhead scrolling screens of the first two games as well as the isometric battle sequences. Well, yes and no.



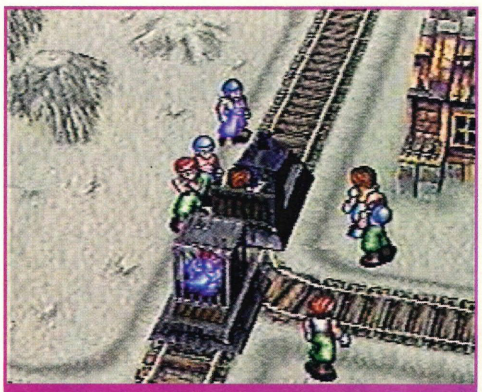








[Above] A precarious rope bridge always leads to danger. Players can expect many obstacles to tackle in each enchanted land including daunting terrain.



[Above] Although only a rolling demo, Breath of Fire 3 promises to deliver hours of exploration, role-playing and fun for all the fantasy family.



[Above] It's important for characters to explore each and every room as important items, gold and even potential team-mates could be waiting within.





[Above] One particular underground section sees our heroes moving past the decaying remains of an ancient green dragon. Brrr!













[Above] From haunted forests and crumbling castles to underground caverns and desolates plains, Breath of Fire 3 has it all.











In actual fact, each level is an incredible 3-D construction featuring light-sourced backdrops and amazing detail. Players will be able to alter their viewpoint and rotate around each section at will which will no doubt prove handy when locating hidden items and enemies. Isometric battles remain but the addition of transparent spells, magical warps and screen-filling monsters promises to give *Breath of Fire 3* a real edge.

Arma-geddon outta here!

There's no word yet on actual storyline details, but it may be that players resume their role as a member of the legendary Dragon Clan and attempt to save the world from an ancient evil once more. As the original games featured over 160 combination characters, it's safe to say that *Breath of Fire 3* should boast an impressive array of personalities to choose from, although the demo only contained parties of up to four players. Also retained from the original games are such diverse activities as fishing and house building as well as the now familiar icon combat system. Players can be assured that this is also guaranteed to be one looong adventure. Both *Breath of Fire 1* and *2* clocked in at around 40-80 hours worth of playing time so expect this sequel to keep RPG fans burning the midnight oil for many weeks. *Breath of Fire 3* is due for a Japanese launch sometime before Christmas and we'll have a full review as soon as we can swipe a copy of the import game.

ARENA

VIEWS·QUESTIONS·CRITICISMS·IDEAS

HELLO, THIS IS THE PLAY LETTERS PAGE. WE'RE NOT IN AT THE MOMENT, PLEASE LEAVE YOUR NAME AND A MESSAGE FOR THOSE PLUCKY PLAY BOYS AFTER THE BEEP...
AND DON'T FORGET, THE MORE INFORMATIVE AND OPINIONATED YOUR VIEWS, THE MORE LIKELY THEY ARE TO GET IN. SEND YOUR PIECES OF PROSE TO: *ARENA, PLAY MAGAZINE, PARAGON HOUSE, ST PETER'S ROAD, BOURNEMOUTH BH1 2JS*. OR E-MAIL US AT PLAY@PARAGON.CO.UK.
BEEP.

DEAR PLAY,

A day has not passed when I haven't owned one computer or another and played a computer game since 1981. I would just like to say a big thank you to Core Design. In issue 10, according to the company profile, they actually seem to want to produce games that players want. I hope that Eidos Interactive don't spoil this. I think your mag is great except for PlayBack. It's a great idea, but can you make the text for the number one section, the same size as the rest. Also, why is *Street Fighter Alpha* higher than *Tekken*. *SFA* is shite and my 11 year old son kicks my ass all over the screen!
Mr P Pearson, Halesowen

The company profile is designed to let the software companies (or 'Softies' if you come from Bath) have their say and tell you what they think of the PlayStation and what their plans for the future are. Obviously, there's a tendency to just tow the company line (they're not exactly going to say "Well, we produce rubbish games quickly and then try to flog them to morons," are they?), but it is fascinating to hear the many different philosophies. Companies are now clamouring to get on-board PLAY and this means more contact generally which is a good thing.

SFA is better than *Tekken* in that the gameplay is pure and doesn't rely on 3-D flashy graphics to carry it off. The *Street Fighter* series boasts the proudest and most durable bloodline in the games industry and we still think the game is one of the best. *SFA* is also proof that you don't have to be 3-D to make it on PlayStation.

DEAR PLAY,

I am an avid reader of your great magazine and rushed out to buy the August issue with the possibilities of *Resident Evil 2*, *Mechwarrior 2* and (gasp, there is a god!), *Shadows of the Empire* coming to the PlayStation. I am truly a grateful PlayStation owner. However, I am also a fan of (3-D) role playing games like *Ultima Underworld I&II*, *Lands of Lore*, *Stonekeep* and *Ultima VII* on PC and *Secret of Mana* on Super NES. In issue eight of your magazine (USA news section) you mentioned the possibility of Bethesda doing some PlayStation releases. What I would love to know is whether their huge PC title, *Elder Scrolls: Daggerfall* will be making a PlayStation debut next year? A recent PC review of the game mentioned awesome details like SVGA graphics, 100+ non-player characters, dozens of different monsters and a library of spells and different weather effects. This game would make RPG fans weep for joy and would certainly fill a gap in the PlayStation catalogue.
Martin Lambert, Blackrock



[ABOVE] Fool your brain into thinking there are no loading delays with this ingenious old Spectrum game or coin-op! See letter from Simon Farrugia.

Bethesda have not announced any plans for *Daggerfall* on PSX, but *Terminator: Future Shock* will be coming soon and it does use the same 3-D engine, so you never know...

DEAR PLAY,

I have only just gone from a Pentium PC to a brand new PlayStation and am totally amazed at the quality of the games on PlayStation compared to the computer. Your mag is far better than the others and I especially liked your *Resident Evil* review, and am now planning to buy

it. First, a few questions:
1. Have you any idea of a few release dates for *Quake*, *Mortal Kombat Trilogy*, *Duke Nukem 3D* and *Command & Conquer*?
2. Which do you think is the best 2-D beat-'em-up on the PlayStation at the moment?
3. Do you think *Crash Bandicoot* will have as much appeal as Sega's Sonic, or Nintendo's Mario, and will he end up starring in a few more games?
4. Do you suggest me buying an official Sony Euro-AV SCART cable, or buy a cheaper third party RGB/SCART cable instead? My friend said that he bought a third party lead for his PlayStation and at least a tenth of the left hand side of the screen on his Sony TV is missing!
James Thomas, Cornwall

1. *Quake* – way after the PC version. *Mortal Kombat Trilogy* – November/December. *Duke Nukem 3D* – Xmas. *Command & Conquer* – Xmas.
2. *Street Fighter Alpha* or *Street Fighter Alpha 2*.
3. Crash is a decent enough fella, but he will not generate anything like the mass hysteria of Sonic or Mario. Those were 'crazy' days and we will never again see the like. If the game does well (all indications are that it will) Crash WILL rise again.
4. Listen to your friend, buy official every time. If you've got a Sony TV, it will even change the channel for you when you turn the PSX on. Now that's magic!

Dear Play,

I was wondering if you could help me with a query? I've heard a rumour that Sensible Software is planning on converting its titles onto the PSX. Is this true? As an avid *Sensi* fan I need to know!
Steve Smith, Southampton.

Sensible is indeed developing for the PlayStation as we speak. The first titles will be *Have a Nice Day, Sex, Drugs and Rock 'n' Roll*, and... wait for it... *Sensible Soccer 2000* – yowee! We love you Sensi, we do (repeat to fade).

Dear Play,

I have just bought a PlayStation (for the kids – honest!) and I am in desperate need of advice as to which games would be suitable for two five year old boys who are still into Sonic, the Flintstones, Bugs Bunny and Mickey Mouse. I have read in your mag about *Crash Bandicoot*, *Zoiks!* and *Firo & Klawd* but need games that are available now or it's back to the Mega Drive!
Jim McCracken, Carlisle.

Crash Bandicoot, yep you can't get more wholesome than that – good clean fun, perfect for the kiddies. *Zoiks!* Well that's got Scooby Doo in it, it's got to be safe. *Firo & Klawd*, yeah, same again, I doubt you'll find any gory moments in that, but it might be a bit too hard for five year olds. Other games to look out for are *Supersonic Racers* from Mindscape, *Lomax in Lemmingland* from Psygnosis, and *Rayman 2* from UbiSoft. There's no shortage of games on the console that likes to say "yes."

Dear Play,

I have recently subscribed to Play as I think it is the best PlayStation magazine on the shelves at present and will take a lot of beating. Here is a selection of questions that I would be grateful if you could answer:
1. Could you tell me if there are any good two player link-up games on the horizon?
2. Which is the best Olympic game on the PlayStation?
3. Will *Killer Instinct* be making an appearance on the PlayStation?
4. My brother would like to know if *Chase HQ* is coming to the PSX?
Sam Standfield, Northfleet.

Anything for a subscriber.
1. *Formula One*, *Final Doom*, *Alien Vs Predator*, *Wipeout 2097*, *Destruction Derby 2*, *Command & Conquer*, *Dark Forces*, *Ballblazer*.
2. *International Track & Field* looks the best, but *Olympic Games* plays well.
3. Hope not.
4. No.

Dear Play,

I am a keen gamesplayer and always have been, from the Spectrum to my now somewhat updated PlayStation. But I do have one complaint with Sony's otherwise excellent system – it taking so bloody long to load games. I understand that information can be read from a cartridge faster than that of a CD, but why give the PlayStation a puny dual speed CD-ROM drive? A PC CD-ROM drive at dual speed is laughed at, so why give the world's greatest games console a bottom of the range CD drive?

A quad or even six speed drive would greatly increase its performance and the cost would only be around £30 more, and after the massive price cuts (£100) in the Sony/Sega war, this seems fairly reasonable. To add insult to injury games certainly let you know when they are accessing the CD with a "now loading" message which is so irritating. Why not have an animation or even a screen shot to occupy the gamester? I know this is a small criticism but some of the games lose a lot of esteem and excitement. Please print this letter so producers can get their acts together!
Simon Farrugia, no address given.

The answer surely was shown by Namco with *Ridge Racer*. Just bung in a little old coin-op to fiddle with and you don't even notice the loading times. Every game could have one of these simple puzzles that take up no more than 50k, but are set against a time limit, perhaps with a cheat accessed if you complete it. Imagine the loading times of say *Alien Trilogy*, or *Formula One* (loooong loading times) with a sliding picture puzzle or a *Space Invaders* type game to occupy your time? Mindscape's *Starwinder* has such a puzzle and you don't notice the gaps between levels – it's a winner.

Yes Sony are a bit crap for augmenting the PlayStation with a frankly sad dual speed CD drive, but hey – they were obviously getting them for a good price and the fact that such drives are so cheap now is a major contributing factor in the dramatic price cuts. Would you be willing to pay the full price for a quad or six speed PSX whilst still being able to pick one up for £199 or even £130? I wouldn't. Maybe Sony will update the PlayStation around Christmas including a faster drive, but that's highly unlikely. You'll just have to put up with it and hope that software publishers ease the loading times for you.



[Above] Are these the first games to cater for the PlayStation's new younger audience? See letter from Jim McCracken

Dear Play,

I read the article about the price cut for Sony and at the bottom it said "letters please," so that's what I'm doing. If what you say is true, that the lower price will mean the average age of PlayStation gamers will be lower, then maybe it will have a negative effect on game developers. They will begin making more games for a younger audience and that I don't want that. Here are some questions I hope you can answer:
1. Why are games always delayed?
2. When are the following games coming out? *Formula One*, *X-Com2*, *AIV Evolution Global*, *Sim City 2000* and *Destruction Derby 2*?
Marcel Dijk, Netherlands

Like it or lump it, Marcel, many new PlayStation owners are younger than 18 and the funky grey slab has gone from a cool state-of-the-art gizmo for Yuppies to a mass market replacement for Mega Drives and Super NESs. On the lighter side though, the price has dropped, there will be more games and us PlayStation mags should sell more copies. Remember kids, when you get a PlayStation, buy the only mag that counts – Play. In fact buy two copies each month!
1. Never ever bloody anything ever. I think that says it all.
2. *Formula One* – September. *X-Com: Terror from the Deep* – Jan '97. *AIV Evolution Global* (aka *A-Train*) – September. *Sim City 2000* – September. *Destruction Derby 2* – November.

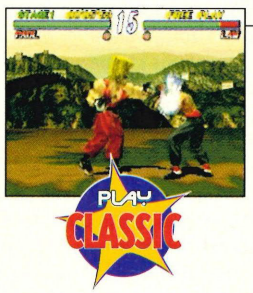
We reserve the right to edit your letters and regret we cannot reply personally. If you want us to print your e-mail address for further electronic discussion, please give specific permission at the end of your letter.

PLAYback

BUYERS GUIDE · BUYERS GUIDE

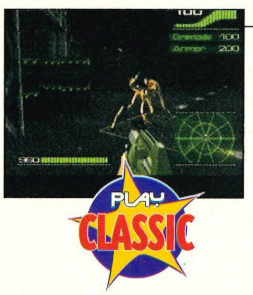
PLAYBACK IS YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO WHAT'S HOT AND WHAT'S NOT IN THE WORLD OF PLAYSTATION GAMING. THE LISTS BELOW HAVE BEEN COMPILED BY THE ENTIRE PLAY TEAM IN WHAT STARTED AS AN AUTHORITIVE DISCUSSION BUT QUICKLY TURNED INTO A VIOLENT DRUNKEN BRAWL. IN OUR OPINION THEY REPRESENT THE BEST GAMES IN EACH GENRE AND THE ONES YOU SHOULD SERIOUSLY CONSIDER ADDING TO YOUR COLLECTION. EVERY MONTH WE ASSESS THE CURRENT CROP OF GAMES THAT HAVE BEEN REVIEWED AND ADD THE CHOICE CUTS TO THESE DEFINITIVE TOPS TENS. PICK ANY OF THE GAMES IN OUR TOP THREES HERE AND YOU CAN'T GO AND IF IT'S NOT HERE, IT'S WORTHLESS!

BEAT-'EM-UPS



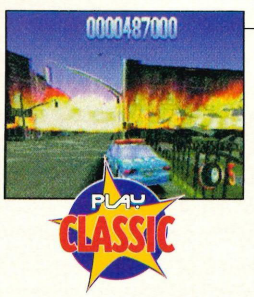
	GAME	DEVELOPER	PUBLISHER	REVIEW DATE	REVIEW SCORE
1.	Tekken 2	Namco	Sony	May '96	95%
2.	Street Fighter Zero 2 (import)	Capcom	Capcom	Oct '96	94%
3.	Tobal No.1 (import)	SquareSoft	Sony	Oct '96	94%
4.	Street Fighter Alpha	Capcom	Capcom/VIE	May '96	93%
5.	Tekken	Namco	Sony	Nov '95	95%
6.	Darkstalkers	Capcom (Japan)	Capcom/VIE	Aug '96	88%
7.	MK3	Williams	Sony	Nov '95	93%
8.	Rise Of The Robots 2	Mirage	Mirage	Mar '96	88%
9.	Criticom	Vic Tokai	VIE	Feb '96	87%
10.	Primal Rage	Probe	Warner Interactive	Feb '96	85%

FIRST PERSON PERSPECTIVE SHOOT-'EM-UPS



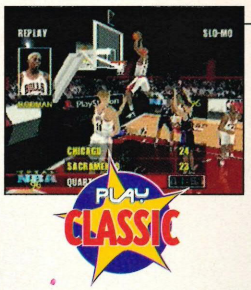
	GAME	DEVELOPER	PUBLISHER	REVIEW DATE	REVIEW SCORE
1.	Alien Trilogy	Probe	Acclaim	Easter '96	91%
2.	Doom	id Softwave	GT Interactive	Jan '96	93%
3.	Magic Carpet	Krisalis/Bullfrog	Bullfrog/EA	Apr '96	90%
4.	Tunnel B1	Neon	Ocean	Aug '96	87%
5.	Descent	Interplay	Interplay	Apr '96	85%
6.	PO'ed	Studio3Do	Warner Interactive	May '96	87%
7.	Shellshock	Core Design	Core Design	Apr '96	85%
8.	Krazy Ivan	Psygnosis	Psygnosis	Feb '96	90%
9.	Assault Rigs	Wheelhaus	Psygnosis	Jan '96	81%
10.	Lone Soldier	Tempest	Telstar	Dec '95	92%

ARCADE SHOOT-'EM-UPS



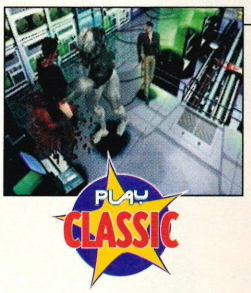
	GAME	DEVELOPER	PUBLISHER	REVIEW DATE	REVIEW SCORE
1.	Die Hard Trilogy	Probe	Fox Interactive	Aug '96	93%
2.	Gunship	MicroProse	MicroProse	Jun '96	90%
3.	Loaded	Gremlin Interactive	Gremlin Interactive	Nov '95	85%
4.	Starfighter 3000	Krisalis	Telstar	Jun '96	85%
5.	Return Fire	Silent Software	Warner Interactive	May '96	84%
6.	Thunderhawk 2: Firestorm	Core Design	Core Design	Jan '96	85%
7.	Williams Arcade Greatest Hits	Williams	GT Interactive	Jun '96	84%
8.	Shock Wave Assault	EA	EA	Jan '96	87%
9.	Top Gun	Spectrum Holobyte	MicroProse	Jul '96	76%
10.	Air Combat	Namco	Sony	Dec '95	81%

Sports Sims



Game	Developer	Publisher	Review Date	Review Score
1. Total NBA '96	**Sony**	**Sony**	**Mar '96**	**94%**
2. Olympic Soccer	Silicon Dreams	US Gold	Jul '96	84%
3. Actua Golf	Gremlin Interactive	Gremlin Interactive	Aug '96	88%
4. Konami Track & Field	Konami Japan	Konami	Jul '96	85%
5. Actua Soccer	Gremlin Interactive	Gremlin Interactive	Feb '96	94%
6. Olympic Games	Silicon Dreams	US Gold	Jul '96	89%
7. Sampras Extreme	Codemasters	Codemasters	Jul '96	90%
8. Striker '96	Rage Software	Warner Interactive	Nov '95	89%
9. Big Hurt Baseball	Iguana Ent	Acclaim	Jul '96	81%
10. adidas Power Soccer	Psygnosis	Psygnosis	Apr '96	95%

Strategy/Adventure Games



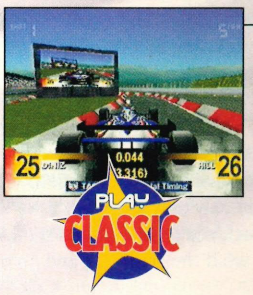
1. Resident Evil	**Capcom**	**VIE**	**Jun '96**	**95%**
2. Fade to Black	Delphine	EA	Jul '96	90%
3. Space Hulk	Key Games	EA	Aug '96	84%
4. X:Com	MicroProse	MicroProse	Apr '96	82%
5. Theme Park	Krisalis/Bullfrog	Bullfrog/EA	Nov '95	86%
6. Wing Commander 3	Origin	EA	Apr '96	82%
7. Alone In The Dark	Infopgrames	Infogrames	Feb '96	77%
8. Discworld	Perfect 10	Psygnosis	Nov '95	74%
9. Defcon 5	Millennium Interactive	Psygnosis	Jan '96	88%
10. Sim City 2000	Maxis	Maxis	Oct '96	75%

Puzzle/Party Games



1. Bust-A-Move 2	**Taito**	**Acclaim**	**Jun '96**	**88%**
2. Bubble Bobble	Probe	Acclaim	Sep '96	85%
3. Pro Pinball	Empire	Empire	Aug '96	90%
4. Worms	Team 17/Ocean	Team 17/Ocean	Nov '95	92%
5. Hebereke's Popitto	Sunsoft	Marubeni	Dec '95	43%

Racing Games



1. Formula 1	**Psygnosis**	**Psygnosis**	**Sep '96**	**92%**
2. The Need for Speed	EA	EA	Apr '96	94%
3. Ridge Racer Revolution	Namco	Sony	May '96	90%
4. Supersonic Racers	Supersonic Software	Mindscape	Sep '96	91%
5. Burning Road	Toka	Funsoft	Oct '96	90%
6. Wipeout	Psygnosis	Psygnosis	Nov '95	94%
7. Ridge Racer	Namco	Sony	Nov '95	93%
8. Motor GP2	Sony (Jap)	Sony	Aug '96	79%
9. Andretti Racing '97	EA	EA	Sep '96	74%
10. Destruction Derby	Reflections	Psygnosis	Nov '95	86%

Platformers



1. Jumping Flash 2	**Sony**	**import**	**Jun '96**	**86%**
2. Rayman	Ubisoft	UbiSoft	Nov '95	87%
3. Jumping Flash	Sony	Sony	Nov '95	87%
4. Earthworm Jim2	Shiny Entertainment	VIE	Oct '96	69%
4. Johnny Bazookatone	Arc Development	US Gold	Feb '96	85%
5. Gex	Crystal Dynamics	BMG Interactive	Apr '96	76%
6. Herme Hopperhead	Sony	Import	Dec '95	53%
7. Cheesy	Ocean	Ocean	July '96	50%

BETTER KNOWN FOR THEIR PINK WRIGGLY THINGS, OSSETT-BASED DEVELOPER TEAM 17 HAS BEEN IN THIS BUSINESS FOR DONKEY'S YEARS. WITH THE CROSS PLATFORM SUCCESS OF *WORMS* AND A LOAD OF TOP SECRET PLAYSTATION TREATS UP THEIR SLEEVES, PLAY QUIZZED GAMES ADDICT MARTYN BROWN ONLY TO DISCOVER HE HAD HIS MOUTH FULL...



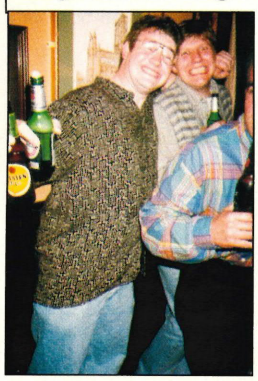
A PIE AT LEEDS F.C.

WITH MARTYN BROWN



PLAY: INFORMATION

Name: Martyn Brown
Job title: Director development
Company: Team 17
Fave meal: Beer/pies
Fave game: Football Manager



PLAY: What exactly do you do at Team 17?
MB: I'm "director of development." I oversee all entertainment software development.

PLAY: What is the secret of Team 17's success, from small Amiga developer to multi-format mega stars?
MB: I wouldn't use the term "multi-format mega stars" but we've done okay. As for the reasons for our success, well, we've always has a keen interest in developing quality games – we aren't in it for the quick buck. We pride ourselves on our work and have very high standards.

PLAY: What do you say to people who even now still claim that *Worms* is not a true next-gen game?
MB: I'd say "so what." It's a damn fine game and a hugely playable one and although there are far superior games in technical terms, I can't think of many more with the same lasting appeal or playability. It was meant to be played, not glared at. If people aren't mature enough to understand what gameplay is all about then tough luck on them, they're welcome to the "next-gen" novelty fix.

PLAY: What makes a good game?
MB: One which evokes emotion, whether that be humour, pressure, elation, even horror or panic. One that you can return to and get a good "feel good factor" from. A lot of it is down to the feel and atmosphere, which is difficult to define.

PLAY: How do you decide which ideas to work on?
MB: Just a feeling, it either feels right or it doesn't. There's no great plan, it's a perception/intuition thing.

PLAY: Team 17 are famous for being one of the few companies who still take the public's ideas seriously and can turn them into huge selling games. Is this still the case now you've "gone all big"?
MB: Of course, and we haven't "gone all big" (apart from my gut). At the end of the day we are producing and developing games for the public and there's no use producing something that people just aren't interested in.

PLAY: What is Team 17's philosophy/motto?
MB: Our basic philosophy is to develop games that are technically stunning and gorgeously playable. That's not always possible (ie. *Worms* was not technically stunning). I think our developers are very honest in what they're doing and no one just "bangs it out."

PLAY: As director of development you must keep your eye on everything that's new. What non-Team 17 game has impressed you of late and why?
MB: I really enjoyed *Tekken*, because I found it very playable and I'm no great beat-'em-up fan. Lately we've been playing *Track & Field*, mainly because we still have the original arcade board somewhere in the office! I don't get that much time to be involved with other teams games these days, so I prefer something I can just pick up and have a bash at for 30 mins.

PLAY: What do you really think of the way the PlayStation is going? Is it the ideal platform for your games and if not, what could Sony be doing better?
MB: Well, it's certainly a games platform, it wasn't produced for







anything else. Technically I'd have preferred a wee bit more RAM, but we can't grumble. I think Sony could be a bit tighter on some of the games that are passed for production as some are a bit weak, to say the least, especially on the playability side and so it's important that the PSX gets a good stock of "must have" games that don't rely on graphical whizz-bangs.

PLAY: Why do so many games simply seem to be variants on a successful formula, is it hardware limitation, lack of imagination or something else?
MB: I think games have always been variations on a theme, since whenever. Coming up with new ideas is a very difficult thing, especially new ideas that make good games. In the past we've stuck with ideas that we know people enjoy and I don't think there is anything wrong with taking older ideas and giving them a new twist.

PLAY: Do you think the PlayStation can change this?
MB: It certainly allows a lot more ideas to come forward, it all depends on time really. Developing games is very high pressured these days and the more time we get to spend on simple R&D then the more new stuff will appear.

PLAY: Video games were once famously labelled "the new rock 'n' roll" – what happened?
MB: I felt it became too much of a production line, stamping out this licence and that licence, just selling names not games. We still trash hotels though!

PLAY: Is developing for the new machines any more fun that the older ones?
MB: No, there are guidelines we have to stick to which we find quite irritating but it does make sense. It's fun for a while but the deadlines come back to haunt you. I think it's easy to look at say *X2*, and know we've had some fun.

PLAY: What's going to be different about *Worms 2*?
MB: It will not be on PSX for a start. That's not down to sales but memory constraints and what we're trying to do. We refuse to do a 3-D version of it simply because people expect it.

PLAY: When are you going to do the decent thing and produce a football management game for the PSX? Do you believe that there is a market for such a game, perhaps using a Leeds United licence?
MB: I don't. There isn't enough save-data space to do it justice and I just do not even want to contemplate a LUFC licence right now...



PLAY: What next for Team 17 on PSX (in no more than 25 words)?
MB: *X2*, *Ballistic*, *Allegiance*, Sheep and other stuff. You'll love 'em!

PLAY: *X2* is a good old fashioned *R-Type* shoot-'em-up, do you think more developers should look to the past for inspiration and update the games using modern technology, or should we live in the now?
MB: I can't see the harm. People have been crying out for a quality blaster with all the next-gen frills and *X2* is it. If people lived in the now, they wouldn't drink decent wine from a few years back.

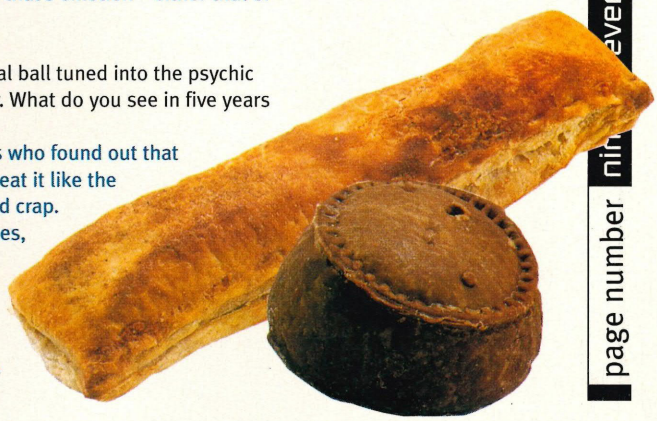
PLAY: Were games better in the old days?
MB: I think in playability terms, yes, but not always. I think there were a higher ratio of more playable games simply because the programmers had such limited resources that they had to really think about what they were doing. It's also unfair to compare the relative technologies from ten years ago to today. They looked awful but you didn't expect much – like a good book, your mind filled in the rest.

PLAY: What is your all-time favourite game on any platform and what is your fondest memory of it?
MB: I have a few choices but I can remember (as an ardent footie fan) playing *Football Manager* on my 48K Spectrum, I took Lincoln City to the FA Cup semi's and hid behind the couch whilst the match highlights were on. Now that's emotion – either that or I should be locked up!

PLAY: And finally... You have a crystal ball tuned into the psychic renounces of the software industry. What do you see in five years time?
MB: Less suits, less of the big boys who found out that you can't just dive into a market, treat it like the music market and throw out any old crap. New platforms, stunning 3-D engines, stunning FMV sequences. Playable games based on the classics, revisited. I'd also like to see a line of successful Team 17 games on the PlayStation and look back with pride – better get to it!







PLAYED OUT...

NEXT MONTH IN PLAY

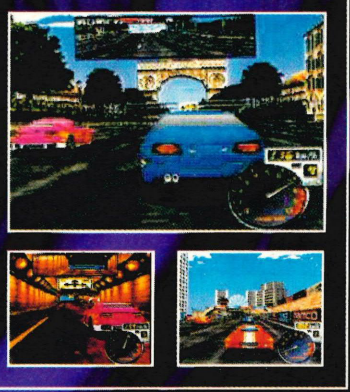
FIFA '97

Next month we sneak into the dressing room of EA's *FIFA '97* to bring you the full story on how it aims to be the greatest footy game on PlayStation.



RIDGE RACER 3?

Uncovered just as the magazine went to print wer these screenshots claiming to be *Ridge Racer 3*, find out more next issue.





SOUL EDGE

We get to play it at long last!

PROJECT OVERKILL

A full review at long last surely?

WIPEOUT 2097

Full review – nothing less

PLUS!

Hardcore 4x4, Micro Machines V3, Soul Edge, Street Racer, Wipeout 2097, Final Fantasy VII, Dark Forces, Blast Chamber, Exhumed, Syndicate Wars, Grand Theft Auto, Jonah Lomu Rugby, FIFA '97, Soviet Strike, The Hive, ReLoaded, Robotron X, Final Doom, Casper, Wild 9's, Suikoden, Road Rage, Sim City 2000, VandalHearts, Star Trek, Dawn of Darkness, Monster Trucks and as ever much, much more...

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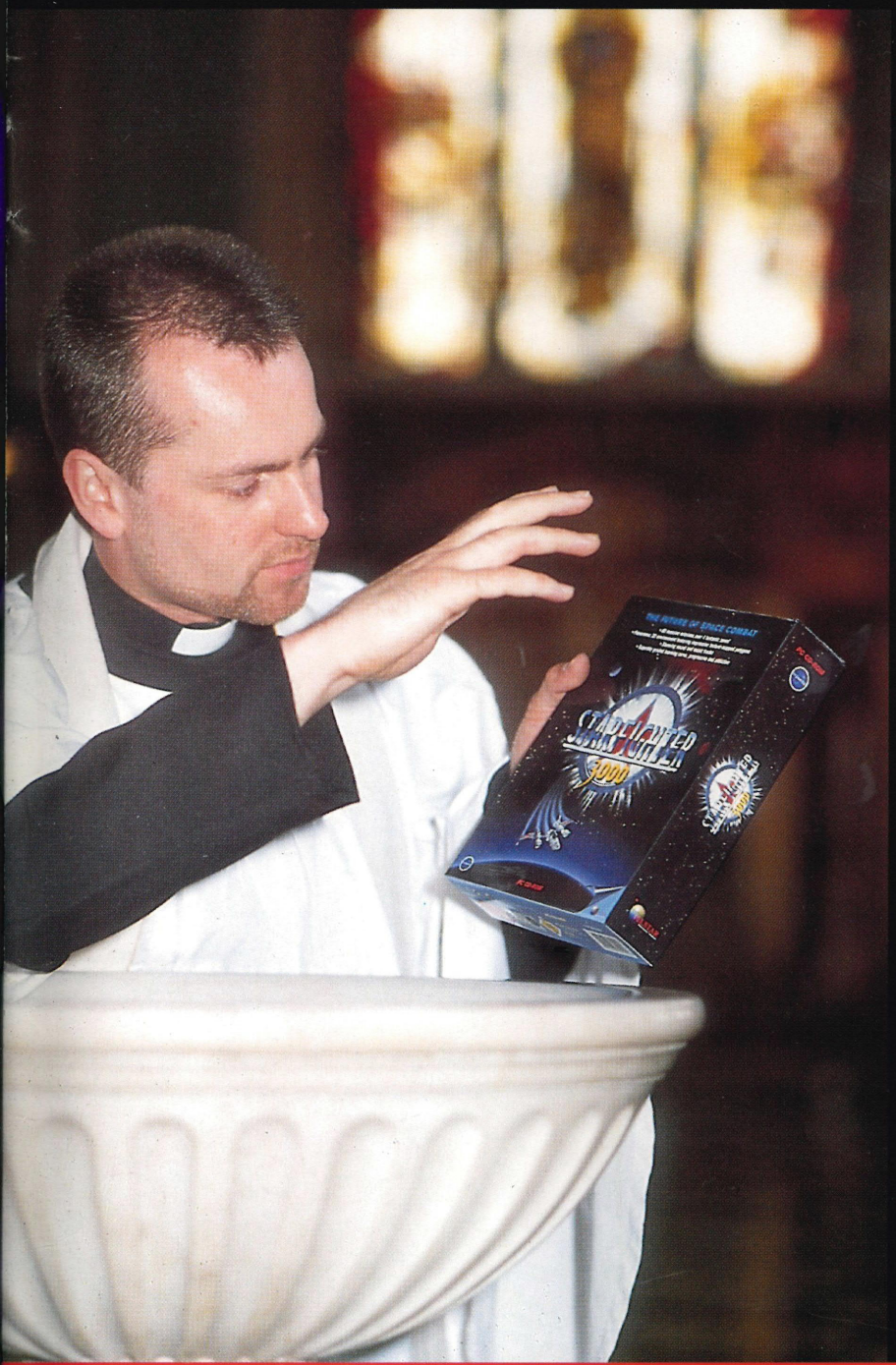
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