

OVERBLOOD • MDK • DARKLIGHT CONFLICT • ISS PRO

issue twenty two July '97

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PLAY

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TOBAL 2

EXCLUSIVE IMPORT REVIEW of Square's sizzling high resolution sequel!

SYNDICATE WARS

Guns, violence, wholesale murder – it's the FIRST PLAYSTATION REVIEW!

ACTUA SOCCER 2

Football's coming home! We find out how Gremlin plans to win the cup – again!

FREE CHEATS BOOK WITH THIS ISSUE

MACHINE HUNTER

EXCLUSIVE REVIEW! How *Re-Loaded* was meant to be.

RUSH HOUR CAN BE

MURDER

"More tra

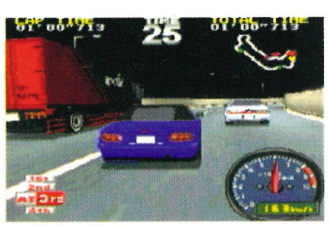
"Tokyo Highway Battle is a real shocker. Seemingly coming from nowhere, this will sell faster than naked pictures of Tiffany from Eastenders."

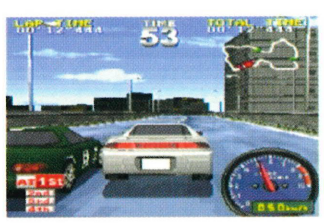
Total PlayStation **90%**

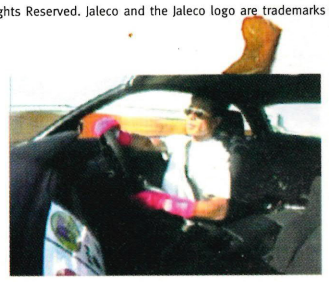
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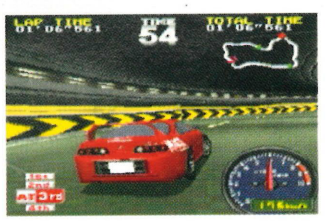
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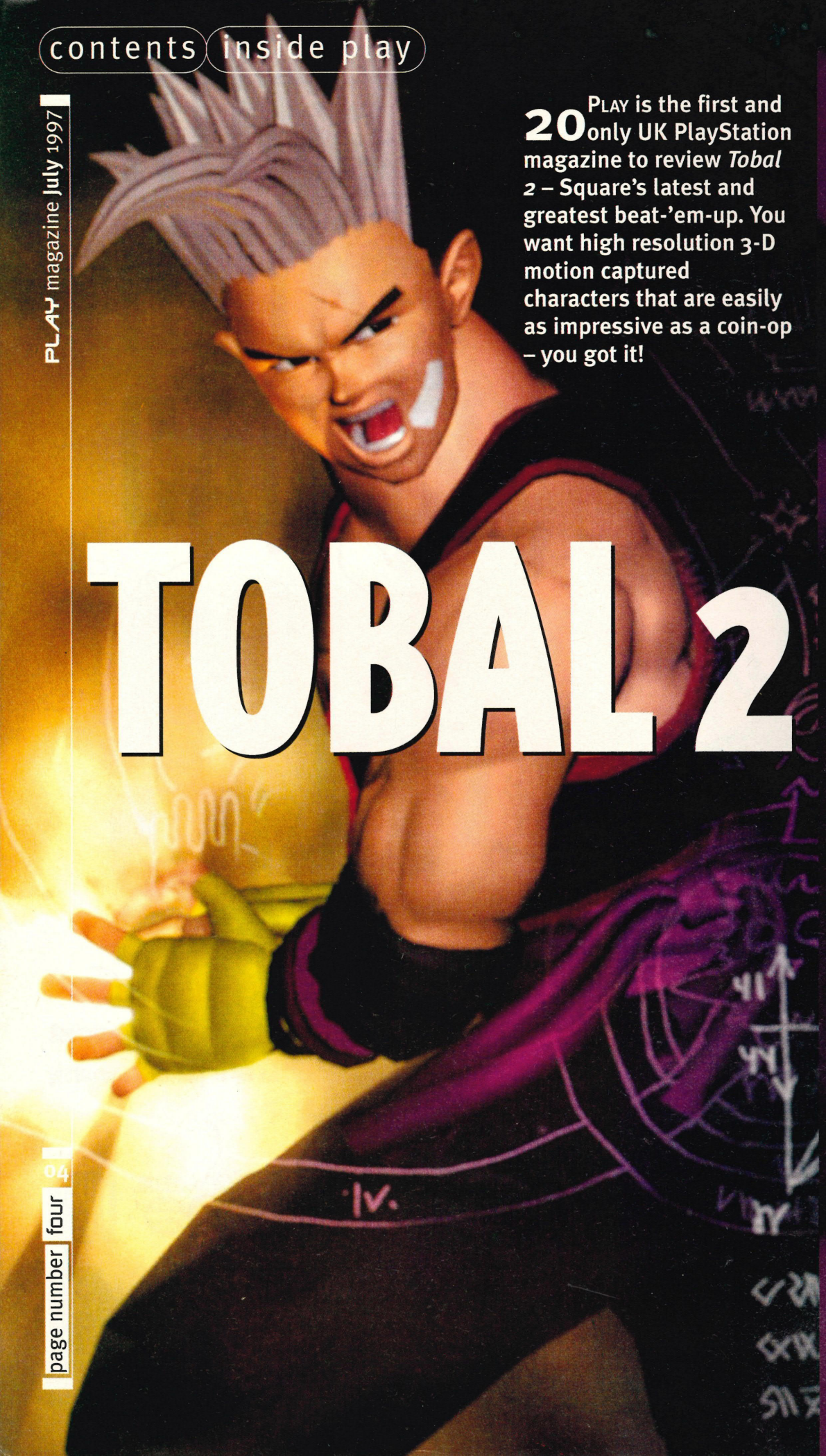


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"More tracks than Ridge Racer and more realistic handling..."



TOKYO HIGHWAY BATTLE



TOBAL 2

20 PLAY is the first and only UK PlayStation magazine to review *Tobal 2* – Square's latest and greatest beat-'em-up. You want high resolution 3-D motion captured characters that are easily as impressive as a coin-op – you got it!

5 WAYS TO CONTACT PLAY!

Fax us on: (01202) 299955
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E-mail: play@paragon.co.uk
Home page: http://www.paragon.co.uk/play/
Tel: (01202)200228 (5-6pm weekdays only!)

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96 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.

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UK's Fastest Growing PLAYSTATION Magazine!

...ine July 1997

OVERBLOOD

66 We'll have to wait until the end of the year for *RE2*, so what's this alternative horror game like then?





SYNDICATE WARS

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MDK

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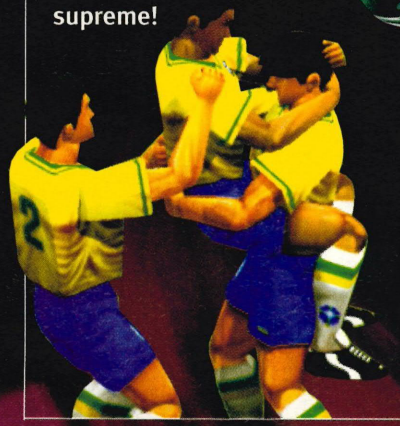
NFS 2 CHEATS

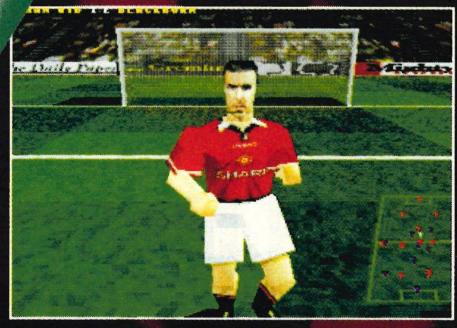
49 A pull-out poster containing every *NFS2* cheat and secret car including the T-Rex mode!



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44 Bombard the back of the net with Konami's striker supreme!





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WORKSTATIONS

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

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

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COME AND 'AVE A GO if you think yer 'ard enough Nintendo! Yes, in a desperate move to try and claw back some sales after interest for the N64 all but tailed off, Nintendo has dropped the price of the N64 by £100 and is now in PlayStation territory. But is this enough to give Nintendo any chance of taking the PlayStation's significant market share? I think not, and with the PSX featuring over 220 games – all at less than £50, and the N64 laying claim to just six, mostly over £60 each, I know which one I'd rather have, especially as PAL N64 games have crippling bad boarders and slowdown. Ouch.

This month the summer software slump has well and truly taken hold, with many software companies holding off their releases until August. Fortunately though we at PLAY are tenacious at best and have managed to review 14 new import and official games, including the fantastic and technically stunning *Tobal 2* from Squaresoft (please release it over here guys!), *Konami's ISS Pro* which finally arrived after months of pestering, and of course Bullfrog's piece de resistance – *Syndicate Wars*.

Yes that's right, just a few short pages away is the first full review of the game that has dominated most PLAY readers' 'must have' lists for the past year. Check it out on page 32 and it would have made 'The Big Game' but for the fact that Bullfrog teased us all month before finally relinquishing it just before the deadline. Suffice to say candles were well and truly burn at both ends to extract every ounce of gameplay for the review.

But let's not forget another totally FREE solutions book (you can look forward to a sequel next month), more PSX games than you can shake a suspension bridge at, and another packed news section with a one or two huge surprises. Enjoy!

Damian Butt
Managing editor

a l l t h i n g s p

PLAYSTAT wire

n e w s • s n i p p e t s • r u m o u r s • h

WHO DO YOU THIN KIDDING MR NINT

IT'S WORLD WAR THREE AS N64 PRICE PLUMMETS!

SHOCKWAVES ripped through the console community this month as Nintendo dropped the price of the N64 to £150 – shaving a cool £100 off the retail price!

This takes away any excuses and means the N64 now competes directly with the PlayStation on equal terms for the first time.

Of course it's not exactly a fair fight is it, because the PlayStation now has well over 200 games at the wallet-friendly price point of between £35 and £50, whereas Nintendo struggles to keep prices down to £50, with occasional big titles like *Turok* raising this to nearly £70!

The quality and cost of the games is now a key issue more so than ever because of the similar hardware prices, and it is here the PlayStation is still head and shoulders above the Nintendo. The sheer choice of PSX games is enough to satisfy many owners, and despite some magnificent launch games, the N64 is now floundering in the summer heat.

At the time of going to press there are only eight titles available in the UK, and although quality is high, the next wave of software, *Star Fox 64* withstanding, contains its fair share of clangers. Better hardware is certainly no guarantee of improved gameplay and the N64 is proving that right now.

What does the future hold? Well expect more and cheaper games from Sony, an extension of the Platinum budget range, and a price drop before Christmas to just £99. Nintendo will try to get more games out, but you can't even buy the N64 with a game yet. Software prices must come down.



Hardware price: £129.99
Launch date (UK): 29 Sept '95
Games available: 220+
Software price range: £35-50
Total hardware price drop (since launch): £170
Killer app: Ridge Racer
Software format: Compact Disc
Total number of units sold: 14 million



Hardware price: £149.99
Launch date (UK): 1 March '97
Games available: 8
Software price range: £50-70
Total hardware price drop (since launch): £100
Killer app: Mario 64
Software format: Cartridge
Total number of units sold: 6.1 million



INTERNATIONAL PLAY BOYS

WHO TO CONTACT AT PLAY MAGAZINE...



DAMIAN BUTT

A strangely detached month for our leader and he has been fathoming *Darklight Conflict* and spending great globs of time championing the cause of the magazine.
play@paragon.co.uk.



GRAEME NICHOLSON

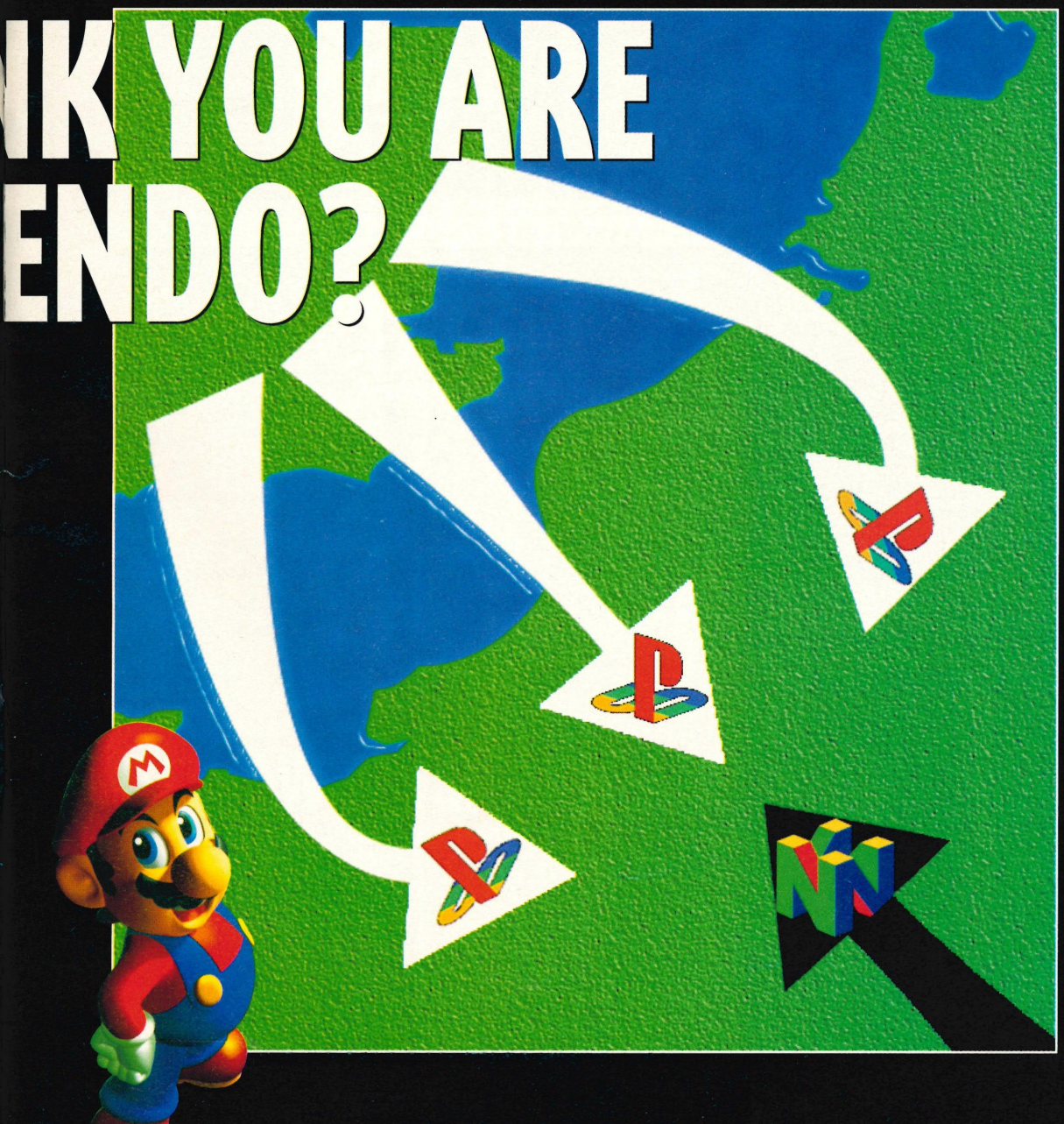
Sinking deeper into obsessive behaviour with his Tamogotchi, Graeme has also sated his desire for games with *Syndicate Wars* and *Tobal 2*.
silencio@paragon.co.uk



TOM SARGENT

This month Tom's been pummelling the onion bag with Konami's *ISS Pro* and unfortunately engaging the boarder words in EA's dreadful *Wing Commander IV*.
tomsargent@paragon.co.uk

NK YOU ARE ENDO?



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.

Neverhood is a division of DreamWorks and is currently rumoured to be working on a new PlayStation game called *Skullmonkeys*. Not much is known apart from the fact that it is being designed by the creators of *Earthworm Jim* and is a platform game featuring clay animated characters. Sounds interesting.

We have heard that EA is likely to announce soon the impending release of *Test Drive 4*, a supercar racing simulation which hopefully lives up to the other games on Amiga and Super NES.

We've had racing games of all different types on the PlayStation, from the sports models of *Rage Racer* to the demented ice cream vans in *Twisted Metal 2*, but N-Spaces' new game really takes the weird biscuit. *Bug Racers* has you riding different 22 insects in a true 3-D landscape set on the planet of Entymion. The emperor Leptus is dying and to choose a new leader, a great race is organised according to local traditions. It looks gorgeous, and we'll have a more in-depth look soon. The good news is that there is a two player mode.

Sony has released a list of games that will be on its stand at the E3 show in June. The games are: *Final Fantasy VII*, *Tobal 2* (A hint at an official release then?), *Cardinal Syn*, *Legion Spawn*, *Bushido Blade*, *Blasto*, *Steel Reign*, *Wild Arms* and the Underground disk

ACTUA SOCCER 2 KICKS OFF IN OCTOBER SAYS GREMLIN!

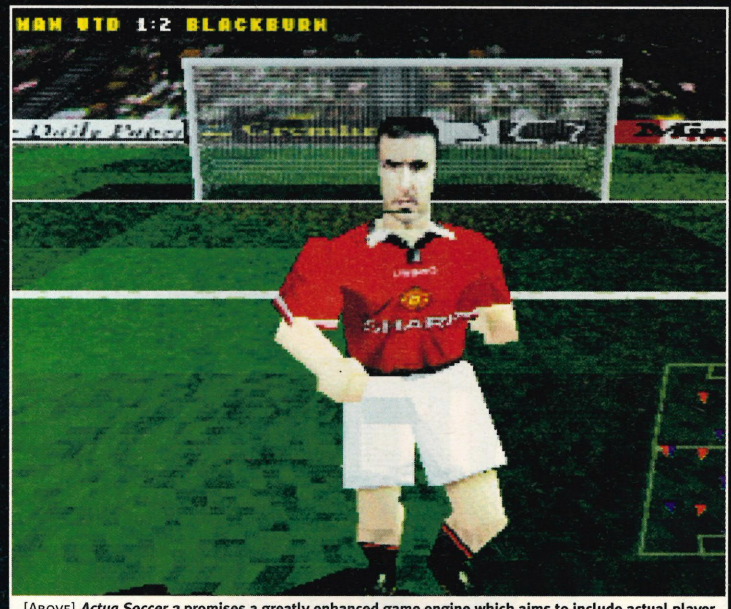
IT'S TIME for a new *Actua Soccer* game, and we're not just talking about the 'data disk' that was *Club Edition*, but the full blown sequel with all its enhancements. With *ISS Pro* from Konami raising the stakes, does Gremlin still have what it takes?

October looks to be the day for *Actua Soccer 2* and from these first shots you just know it's going to be awesome. As you can see, real faces have been texture mapped onto the slick new motion captured players (check out Eric Cantona to judge the sense of realism this process brings to the game).

For those of you who have been bombarding the PLAY offices with questions, *Actua Soccer 2* will feature all 92 English club teams with their respective kits and famous players, drawn from the '97-'98 season. Gremlin has included every stadium in the Premier league – from Old Trafford to Highbury and there are a host of improvements such as floodlit matches and your very own practice pitch for perfecting your moves (something which is missing from *ISS Pro*).

Barry Davis has been hauled in again, and Gremlin boasts over 30,000 sound samples – from crowd roar to cartilage ripping effects. As one of the most promising new sports games on the PlayStaton, PLAY will be keeping a close eye on *Actua Soccer 2's* development and hopefully we'll have an in-depth report next month.





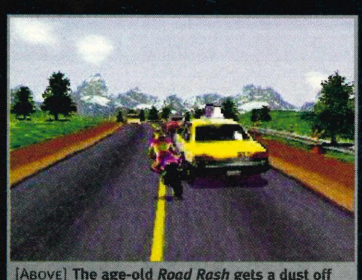
[ABOVE] ***Actua Soccer 2*** **promises a greatly enhanced game engine which aims to include actual player faces on the polygon players. Shame old Cantona's retired innit?**

DOUBLE PLATINUM

BUDGET BONANZA PT 2. Sony has announced the next phase of the highly successful Platinum £19.99 budget range and it includes many of the games we at PLAY predicted at launch.

As you will have seen if you paid attention to the monthly charts supplied by Chart Track, the Platinum games have featured heavily, with five in the top ten at the peak of their popularity. The next batch of Platinum games are not as famous as the six originals, but still decent games which are definitely worth a look if you have never played them before.

By the time you read this four prime EA games: *Road Rash, PGA Tour '96, Fade to Black* and *FIFA '96* will have hit the streets and they will be quickly followed by *The Need for Speed* on 25 July. Also on sale now is *Rayman* from Ubi Soft which is more suited to younger players but still offers significant challenge. Out of these new games, the top honours go to *Fade to Black*, which is still fantastic, and then *NFS, Road Rash* and *PGA Tour. FIFA '96* still has a way to go to beat the new football games out at full price, but it is still pretty tempting at £20. PLAY predicts the next run of Platinum games will feature *Resident Evil, Doom* and *Loaded*.



[ABOVE] **The age-old *Road Rash* gets a dust off and joins the Platinum range.**



[ABOVE] ***Fade to Black*** **is probably the best quality Platinum game to date. Now only £19.99!**

CHARTS

In association with ChartTrack

POS	GAME	DEVELOPER	PUBLISHER	PLAY SCORE
1.	SOUL BLADE	NAMCO	SONY	96%
2.	REBEL ASSAULT II	LUCASARTS	VIE	60%
3.	NEED FOR SPEED 2	EA CANADA	EA	90%
4.	TOMB RAIDER	CORE DESIGN	EIDOS INT	94%
5.	DESTRUCTION DERBY	PSYGNOSIS	PLATINUM	86% (OLD)
6.	ACTUA SOCCER CLUB	GREMLIN	GREMLIN	62%
7.	RIDGE RACER	NAMCO	PLATINUM	93% (OLD)
8.	TEKKEN	NAMCO	PLATINUM	95% (OLD)
9.	PORSCHE CHALLENGE	SONY	SONY	82%
10.	MICRO MACHINES V3	CODEMASTERS	CODEMASTERS	92%

READERS' MOST WANTED

VOTED BY THE PLAY READERS BY FAX, E-MAIL OR LETTER...

POS	GAME	DEVELOPER	PUBLISHER
1.	TOMB RAIDER 2	CORE DESIGN	EIDOS INT
2.	FINAL FANTASY VII	SQUARE	SONY
3.	TIME CRISIS	NAMCO	SONY
4.	TOBAL 2	SQUARE	SONY
5.	RAGE RACER	NAMCO	SONY

RAGE RACER

"A STUNNING GAME"

Play Magazine

94%

"RAGE RACER BREAKS ALL THE MOULDS, PUSHING EVERYTHING TO THE LIMIT"

PlayStation Plus

93%

namco

RAGE RACER £39.99 RRP. PLAYSTATION GAMES FROM £19.99 RRP.







SONY

PlayStation

DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF PLAYSTATION

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NEW PLAYSTATION ARRIVES!

RE-MODELLED, RE-PACKAGED, BUT EXACTLY HOW DIFFERENT IS IT?

THERE'S A NEW PlayStation in town, but it's not what you might think. This is no next generation machine designed to out-spec the N64, but the same slightly modified console first spotted in Japan at the end of last year.

At the time there was great concern, not least from this magazine that Sony was releasing a cut-down PlayStation which had the link cable port removed, thus eliminating the possibility of future multi-player games. Thankfully this is not the case.

The latest model (due to hit America this month and Europe soon after) in fact has very few external changes, the major one being the removal of the three separate phono sockets which brought the picture and sound to your television. Instead what you get is a new integral lead which connects to the Euro AV socket (the one which the SCART cable plugs into). A new lead to work with this layout is provided. What this means is that connecting up separately to your hi-fi is now impossible... unless you're a bit sneaky. As tested by our very own 'fiddler', Graeme Nicholson you can get proper stereo sound if you have a TV with two SCART sockets. Simply take a SCART block from the second socket in the TV, and connect up a standard phono lead from it to your hi-fi. Clever, eh?

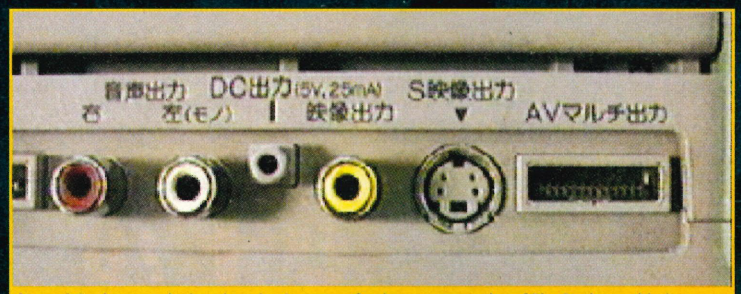
Other changes include a new internal configuration making 'chipping' (the insertion of foreign chips which bypass the PSX's security code) almost impossible. So far, only one chip has actually worked on the new PlayStation because of a new metal guard which protects the whole area.

The laser has also been moved to the other side of the internal housing (which is a dead giveaway if you buy a new one and want to know which one you've got) and this might be something to do with moving it as far away from the power pack as possible to avoid excessive heat building up. Does this mean the end of FMV skipping?

The new PlayStation has undoubtedly been created to cut costs so that the new price point of £129.99 (and possibly even £99) can be maintained without a serious dip in profits, and it is also worth mentioning that the disk swap method of playing import games has now been completely eliminated, as part of Sony's campaign against piracy. For official owners who want to play only PAL games, the new PlayStation means better reliability and an even cheaper base unit, but if you want to play import games, you now must seek out a much older model. Like buying a second hand car though, you never know how many times an older PSX has been around the block.



[ABOVE] **The new PlayStations will have symbols instead of words on the power and reset buttons.**



[ABOVE] **Cutting costs is thought to be the reason for the next generation of PlayStations, with the costly phono sockets being replaced by the single Euro-AV lead.**

CROC CONTINUES TO IMPRESS...

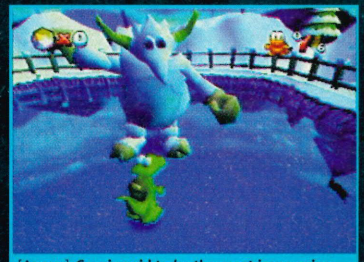
LAST MONTH we brought you exclusive news of Argonaut's brand new *Crash Bandicoot 2* rival, *Croc*, being developed in the UK and all set for a mega launch at the E3 show in June.

More details have arrived this month and we can reveal that the game features four islands (sounds familiar?) each with 13 sub-levels. The aim of every level is to find the gong and exit, but as with *Crash*, you can also discover special gems which open up new levels and rooms full of power-ups – all standard platform game fare we think you'll agree. In an interesting twist though, you can also rescue six Gobbo Islanders scattered throughout each location, and it would seem that Argonaut is giving the player plenty to do in an effort to mirror the supremely user-friendly style of Nintendo's *Mario* games.

Croc is shaping up nicely and Electronic Arts, who is publishing the game in the UK, has promised a visit to the developer soon – and that means priviledged access, interviews with the developers, and more shots of this amazing looking game.



[ABOVE] **As with *Crash Bandicoot*, the many levels each have colourful bosses.**



[ABOVE] ***Croc* is said to be the most impressive game so far on the PlayStation. Hmm.**





TOP FIVE...

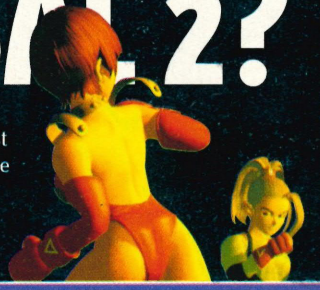
GAMES THAT NEVER SEEM TO ARRIVE WHEN PROMISED!



How many times have you turned to the back of a magazine and seen "Full review next issue!" only to find no trace of the offending game in the said issue? PLAY, just like anyone else is guilty of this, but it's not our fault (honest). Here's the worst offenders, although the list is long...

1. Syndicate Wars (Bullfrog)
2. Duke Nukem (GT)
3. Heart of Darkness (VIE)
4. Resident Evil 2 (VIE)
5. G-Police (Psygnosis)

SQUARE SHOCK! NO OFFICIAL TOBAL 2?



DEVASTATING NEWS for fans of Square's Tobal games is that *Tobal 2* (reviewed this issue and awarded a PLAY Classic) may not ever get an official release.

Just as the magazine was going to press, an announcement was made by Square that because of the poor sales performance of *Tobal No.1* in America and Europe, it would be likely that the sequel would not be translated because satisfactory sales targets could not be met.

In Japan, *Tobal No.1* was one of the fastest selling games of 1996 and sold well over 500,000 copies, but this was not the case over here, in fact only PLAY recognised that it was any good, with the majority of games magazines scoring it badly compared to *Tekken 2*.

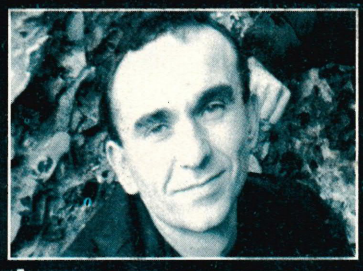
Although not a certainty, Square's decision is based on the theory that sequels only sell around three quarters of the original. The time and cost it would take to convert the game to run on PAL, not to mention the vast amount of Japanese text needed to be translated in the new quest mode, means it might not be worth the effort.

This is a big blow for us gamers because *Tobal 2* is a considerable improvement over the original, with a new and improved quest mode, a rumoured 200 secret characters, motion captured pugilists which are the smoothest we've seen since *Virtua Fighter 3* in the arcades, and of course it is still the only high resolution beat'em-up in the world. Not to bring out *Tobal 2* over here would be a big mistake. PLAY will have more news on this as we get it.



[ABOVE] ***Tobal 2*** **– a fantastic game, but Square cannot make up its mind about whether to convert it or not. Come on Square – do the decent thing!**

MOLYNEUX LEAVES BULLFROG!



AFTER MONTHS OF speculation, Peter Molyneux, the creator of *Populous* and founder of Bullfrog software (based in Guilford) has left his own company to form a new (as yet undisclosed) one. There were rumours that Molyneux might possibly go to Eidos, but this is not the case and despite signing up his first game with Electronic Arts, Molyneux remains independent. With *Syndicate Wars* just arriving on PlayStation, it is not yet clear whether Molyneux will be developing for PC, PlayStation, or all new formats.

SOUL BLADE STORMS IN!

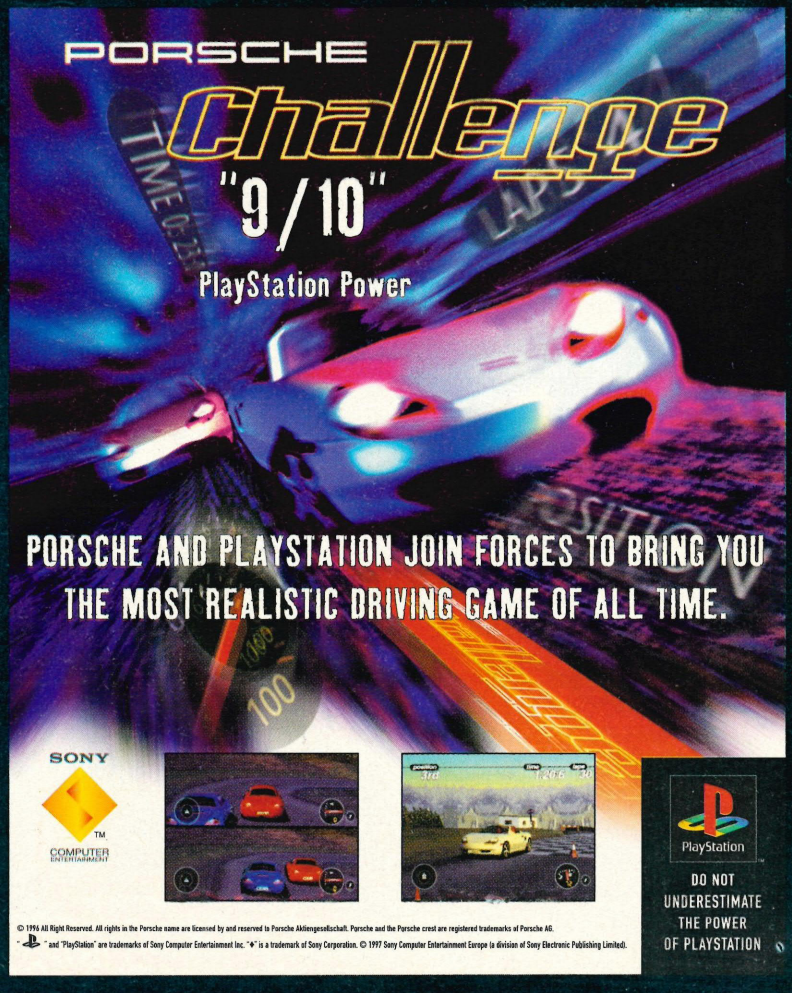
BAD PUNCTUALITY doesn't seem to have dulled PlayStation gamers' enthusiasm for Namco's *Soul Blade* as this month it stormed right in at the top of the PlayStation charts (compiled by ChartTrack) and nearly nabbed the top slot in the all-formats CD top 20 as well. Only beaten to the post by the humongously hyped *Star Wars* PC game, *X-Wing Vs TIE Fighter*, *Soul Blade* was nevertheless a massive opening week hit for Sony and a much needed 'must-have' game for the PlayStation this year. We scored it 96% in the March issue, and sales can't have been hindered by the attractive £40 price tag.



[ABOVE] **All-formats success for *Soul Blade* despite minor censorship and a late arrival.**



[ABOVE] **And as if by magic there's a full guide to the game in the cover-mounted book this issue.**



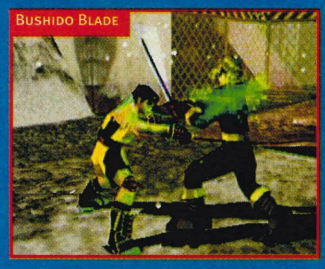
USA ENTERTAINMENT

ENTERTAINMENT USA



CAT BUCANNON brings you all the news on what's hot in the land of Miami tornados and the stars and stripes.

Bushido Blade has at last been confirmed as having an American release date this month and this no doubt means a UK release for you guys. Square US has said that *Bushido Blade* will be released in August of this year and there will be no censorship of any of the moves or graphical effects. The game is also fully compatible with the double analogue Sony joypad which should be arriving soon as it is now out in Japan.



New from ASC Games is a curious shoot-'em-up called *One*. Set 40 years in the future, you are John Cain, a man with a mysterious past which will be revealed as you progress through the game. Like Activision's *Apocalypse* and *Fade to Black*, *One* is viewed in a third person perspective and has you legging it through full 3-D levels with a gun in each hand (taken from dead enemies). You have a mechanical arm which helps to power-up weapons, and there is a 'Rage Meter' which tops up your health depending on how many enemies you kill. Without Rage, you will die. The good news is that there is a two player mode for co-operative and deathmatch modes. Look for *One* at the end of the year.





I believe you have already seen some shots of Dreamworks' fantastic new game, *Lost World*, based on the film sequel to *Jurassic Park*, as I sent my exclusive shots to the magazine last month, but now I've been playing the early beta version for a few weeks now and it's certainly looking like a contender for game of the year. Unlike most film conversions, the developers have added much to the original concept and never lost sight of the fact that it's an interactive game and not just a passive movie experience. Unfortunately, *Lost World* has been delayed somewhat, and is now expected to premier in the States in August, although you will be able to see more of it in the E3 show report next month.



[ABOVE] Cat Bucannon – No-nonsense reporting on all the gaming events in the good ol' US of A. Yee-haw!



GREMLIN EXPLAIN CLUB EDITION COCK-UP!

NOT LONG after the full review copy of *Actua Soccer Club Edition* arrived in the PLAY offices we were inundated with calls from readers who had bought the game and were very annoyed.

How could this have happened, we thought? Surely we are supposed to publish our reviews before the game hits the streets. Apparently not, and for just under a month, *Club Edition* has been vying for your cash without a PLAY review to back it up.

What is more alarming though is that many of the features we believed to be present in the PlayStation version (player photos, half time information) were missing from the final game with no explanation. The calls and e-mails continued; blaming PLAY for misinformation...

Fortunately Gremlin was only too happy to respond to our request for clarity, but if you're an agreeved *Club Edition* owner then you will not like what the publisher had to say. The official line is this:

"We sent out the preview shots to the magazines in good faith and they were the PlayStation, not the PC as some might think. However, just before the Sony approval process, we came to the decision that the CD access time was too great, and this would adversely affect the gameplay. The problem is that the 2,500 photos of all the players could not fit in the PlayStation's 2MB of RAM and we would have to have spooled each one from the CD, thus adding to the delay. In the end we decided to remove the photos to enable the game to load quickly."

We at PLAY are annoyed that, like you, we had to find out about this problem by loading up the final game and phoning Gremlin, but it would appear hardware constraints forced the changes. Gremlin did stress though that because of *Actua Soccer 2's* improved engine, all the missing features would be included in that game.

The message here is simple, don't buy the *Club Edition*, wait for the full sequel. And for all those who bought the game, well why didn't you wait until you had read the review in PLAY? If you want to get in touch with Gremlin, call them on (01142) 753423.

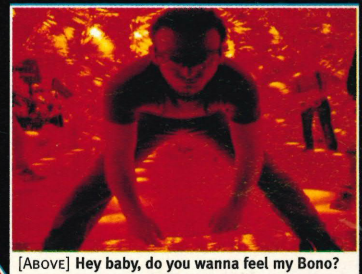


[ABOVE] *Actua Soccer Club Edition* – no player pics – lots of PLAY readers angry...

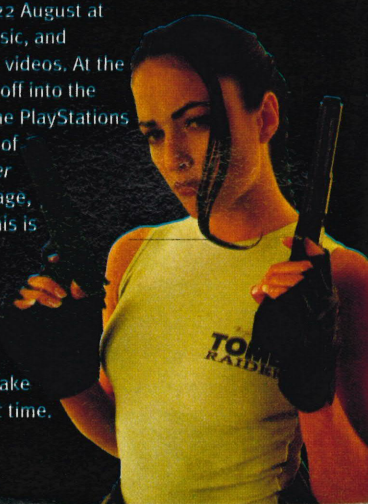
ACHTUNG, BABY!

LARA CROFT'S pop career may have been stalled, but the statue-esque female adventurer has at least made some impact on the pop world through U2 and their PopMart world tour.

PLAY has heard this month that U2 specifically asked Core Design to render some exclusive footage of Lara for the 7,000 sq foot video screen which will dominate the band's stage show which kicks off on 22 August at Wembley Arena. Lara will be seen dancing to the music, and performing acrobatics during fast cuts with U2's pop videos. At the end of the concert, it is believed that Bono will walk off into the sunset with Lara. Eidos has apparently given U2 some PlayStations and copies of *Tomb Raider* for back-stage, although this is unlikely to replace certain other activities that often take place at that time.



[ABOVE] Hey baby, do you wanna feel my Bono?



DOUBLE ANALOGUE OUT AT LAST IN JAPAN!



THE NEW Sony Dual Analogue pad was recently released in Japan at the same time as *Tobal 2*, one of only three games so far written to make special use of the controller's capabilities.

The basic design is very similar to the standard digital pad that comes with your PlayStation, but sports twin analogue joysticks that will change the way you play games. The horn-like grips have been lengthened to make your thumbs sit comfortably right on top of the two small joysticks, and the bottom two shoulder buttons (L2 and R2) are larger than before to make them easy to get to with the new design.

The smooth control allowed by the sticks isn't the only new feature. In a bid to add some arcade depth and thrills to the next generation of PlayStation games, Sony has included a feedback mechanism that causes the pad to vibrate when the specially written games trigger the system.

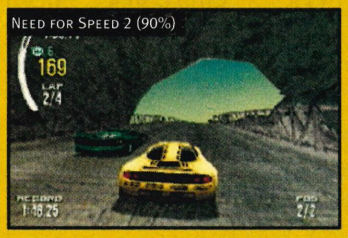
If for example you are playing *Rally Cross* with the new pad and suffer a bad crash, it will shake in your hands in time with you hitting the ground and other cars! In *Tobal 2* you will experience a similar vibrating in your hands when Chuji lands a solid boot on your chin!

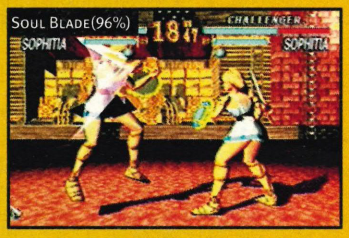
Currently only *Tobal 2*, *Rally Cross* and *Bushido Blade* support the feedback controls, but we hope to see many more in the coming months. The Dual Analogue pad is selling in importers for around £40.

PSYGNOSIS GETS '97 F1!

STOP PRESS! At the very last minute we've heard that Psygnosis has once again got the licence from the FIA to use real F1 teams, drivers and sponsors for its impending Formula 1 game tentatively called *F1 '97*. Murray Walker will once again do the commentary along with Martin Brundle and it is thought that different celebrities will be used for different countries. At this time Psygnosis has not confirmed a release date to PLAY magazine and is keeping very quiet about what the game will actually contain. What is certain is that Eidos' *F1* will be hampered by not having the most up-to-date information.

PLAY RECOMMENDS...

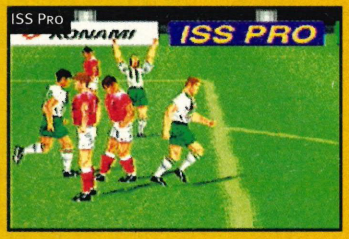












THOSE RELEASE DATES IN FULL

JUNE

Bedlam (GT)
Bubsy 3D (Telstar)
Carnage Heart (Sony)
Crypt Killer (Konami)
Darklight Conflict (EA)
Deadly Skies (VIE)
FIFA '96 (Platinum)
Independence Day (EA)
Megaman X3 (VIE)
Monster Trucks (Psygnosis)
Nanotek Warrior (VIE)
NHL Powerplay Hockey (VIE)
Overblood (EA)
Perfect Weapon (EA)
PGA '96 (Platinum)
Rayman (Platinum)
Road Rash (Platinum)
Super Puzzle Fighter 2 (VIE)
Ten Pin Alley (EA)
Vandal-Hearts (Konami)
Virtual Tennis (Acclaim)
Wing Commander IV (EA)

AND THE SLIPPERS...

GAME (PUBLISHER)	WAS	NOW
Syndicate Wars	April	June
Rage Racer	April	June



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ACCESS GAME MENU	0
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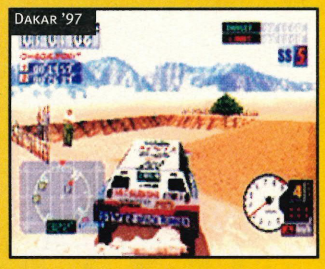
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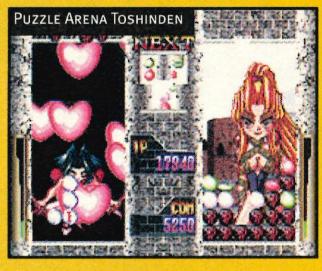
JAPS EYE

ALL THE LATEST GAMING NEWS FROM JAPAN – THE HOME OF THE SONY PLAYSTATION!

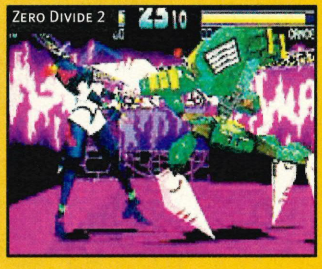
Virgin Interactive in Japan has just unveiled a new driving/rallying game which has not yet been shown in Europe and looks very promising indeed. *Dakar '97* is based on the world famous Paris-Dakar rally which takes place over many hundreds of miles of inhospitable sandy terrain. The courses in the game include mountainous regions, desert, dunes and full-on beach, with you controlling various off-road vehicles, although at the moment there are no motorbikes, so it's not quite a full simulation of the event. Unlike most driving games, the emphasis is on navigation as well as going full pelt, and so you must check the map and listen to your co-driver's advice to reach the many checkpoints. *Dakar '97* is compatible with the new double analogue pad and should be out over here within the next month. There is sadly no two player mode.



We've had *Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo*, which was a successful blend of the *Puzzle Bobble* engine with the *Street Fighter II* characters, and now Takara is doing it with *Toshinden*. *Puzzle Arena Toshinden* is a very similar game, both in looks and strategy and should be out at the end of June on Japanese import. Look for a review in PLAY soon.



If you liked *Zero Divide* then you'll be glad to know that *Zero Divide 2* is out this month in Japan and the developers have taken out the 'ring out' section of the game, making it more like *Tekken 2*. Running at 60fps and with some wild new characters, it might be worth a look.





Climax is certainly busy at the moment, with the ace driving game, *Runabout*, and a new RPG called *Alundra*, just out now over here. Looking like a cross between Capcom's *Breath of Fire 3* and *Dracula X*, the graphics don't exactly push the PlayStation; using sprites instead of polygon characters, but the story is well written, it boasts over 7,000 screens and promises to offer a substantial challenge. There's no word on a European release yet, but it is likely that Alundra could be part of a deal which includes the more commercial, *Runabout*.

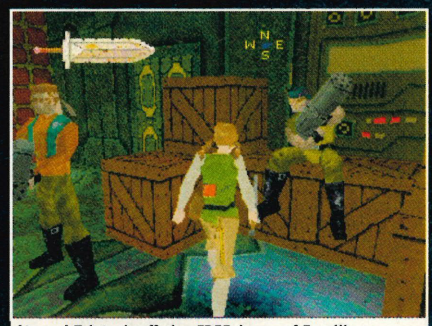


TELSTAR OFFERS FREE EXCALIBUR DEMOS!

INNOVATIVE AS EVER Telstar's attitude to PlayStation gaming has always impressed, but its latest deal amazed even us. Following the success of *Excalibur 2555AD*, Telstar is offering PLAY readers the chance to obtain a FREE playable demo of the game for a limited period only.

All you've got to do is send a stamped self addressed envelope to the following address and for the cost of a postage stamp, you get a shiny new demo. In addition you will also be entered into a prize draw to win over £100 of Telstar's PSX software. The address to send your envelope to is: *Excalibur Demo, Telstar Electronic Studios, 62-64 Bridge Street, Walton on Thames, Surrey KT12 1AP.*

We at PLAY applaud this move and believe that every software company should offer our readers the chance to get a playable demo direct from them, rather than having a buy an official magazine for £5. By all means if all magazines were allowed to run demo disks then this monopoly would be smashed, but until that happens, let's see more games publishers taking Telstar's lead and giving something back to the gaming community. Demos for all we say!



[ABOVE] **Telstar is offering FREE demos of *Excalibur 2555AD* – why can't more publishers do this?**

SHAMELESS N64 MAG PLUGGING

IF YOU'RE one of those ultra high disposable income people who has gone out an bought a PlayStation and a shiny new Nintendo 64 then you'll no doubt want the best accessory money can buy – an N64 reviews magazine from the makers of PLAY! And here it is!

The very latest volume of 64 MAGAZINE is out now price £3.95 and for your four shiny coins you get a WORLD EXCLUSIVE review of *Star Fox 64*, plus first Nintendo looks at *Duke NUkem 3D*, *Mission Impossible*, *Bomberman 64* and *San Francisco Rush!*

You can also relax in your favourite gamesplaying chair with eight comprehensive reviews, over 25 pages of tips for the few official games that are out at the moment such as *Mario 64*, *Turok* and *Shadows of the Empire*, and if you are in the mood for some meaty news stories, then look no further than 64 Showcase, which covers all the latest stories, plus a look at adaptors, compatibility problems, and an interview with the head of Nintendo of America! If you've got an N64, there's no better companion and we heartily recommend you buy it now! This has been a shameless plug production.



OFFICIAL RAGE RACER – SO WHAT'S IT LIKE THEN?



IT'S BEEN four months since we reviewed the Japanese version of *Rage Racer* and every month since there's a steady stream of calls from desperate racing game addicts wanting to know it's official release date.

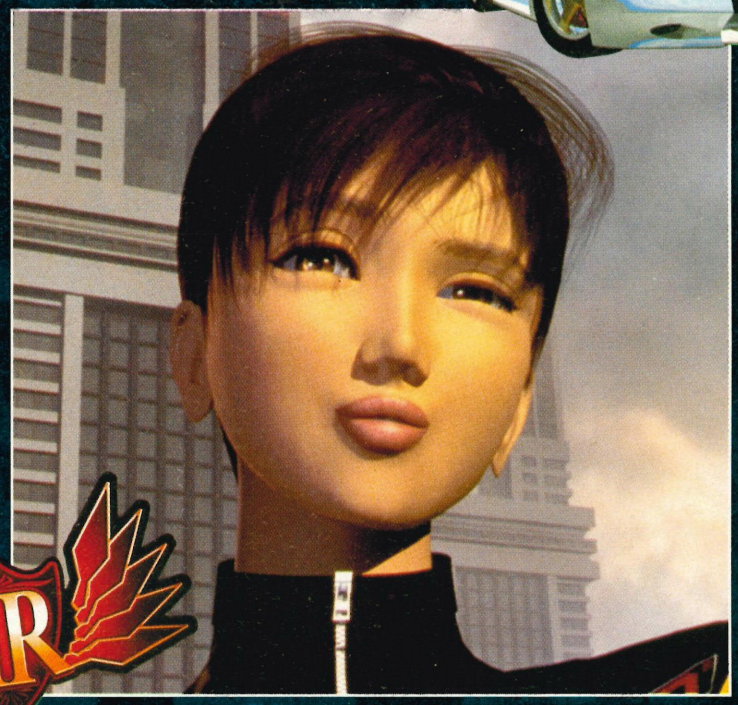
Well now it's here,and just before this issue went to press a shiny PAL *Rage Racer* flopped on the mat in advance of the full release this month. So what's it like?

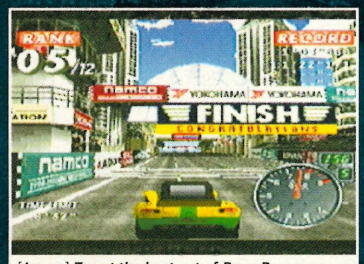
Well for a start the borders are not as obtrusive as some PAL games such as *Descent*, but they are still there and consequently turn the round rev counters into distinct ovals. Plus the mirror is much thinner and now sports the car maker's name.

The good news is that the speed is practically the same as the import version, and remember not to be put off by the initial couple of cars, because it does get much faster depending on whether you're driving the top metal.

Graphically, *Rage Racer* is almost identical and none the worse for that, but we did notice that the signs at the side of the road have now changed to include *Soul Blade* and *Air Combat 2*.

Rage Racer is certainly long overdue but it's worth the wait and still takes the chequered flag as the fastest racing game on the PlayStation. The customisation, being able to buy entirely new cars, and the most testing tracks in the business means we have no hesitation in saying that our import score of 94% still holds true. Naturally, if you want to get the best out of it, get a NeGcon or a steering wheel pronto.

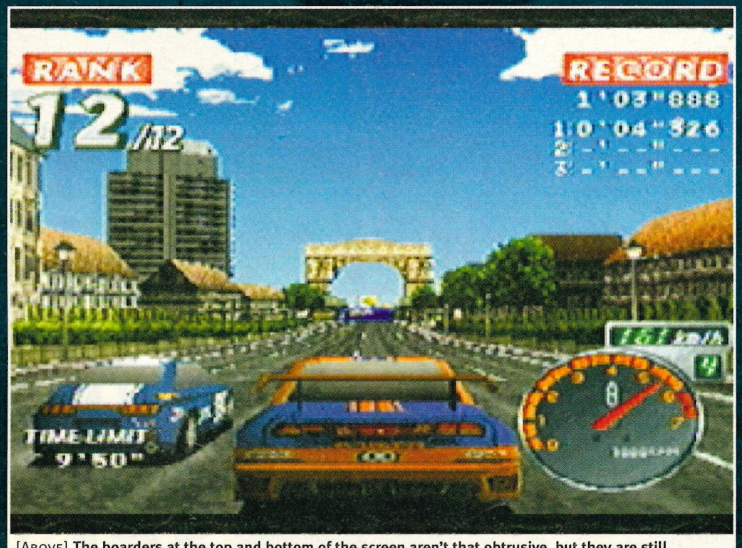




[ABOVE] **To get the best out of *Rage Racer* you really need to buy the top cars like this one.**

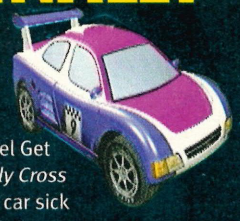


[ABOVE] **Fortunately, it is still very quick to play and suffers no slowdown whatsoever.**



[ABOVE] **The boarders at the top and bottom of the screen aren't that obtrusive, but they are still noticeable and squash the rev counters and mirror. Why has Sony not sorted this problem yet?**

RALLY CROSS FINALLY MAKES IT TOO!



AS ONE of the only magazines to state that *Rally Cross* is any good, we have to say the PAL version is just as much fun in the one and two players and there are practically no boarders which is certainly much better than Namco managed with *Rage Racer*.

The gameplay remains the same though and there is no difference in speed, although you have to remember that *Rally Cross* relies on its 'bouncy bouncy' handling to achieve thrills, rather than all-out speed. The highest you get up to is about 70mph, and at that speed the game is still ultra smooth and rapid.

Sony was meant to be enhancing the PAL game after some adverse comments made by the American press, but we could find little difference between the two and still found it as enjoyable as ever, especially in first person mode with a steering wheel Get a copy of *Rally Cross* and you'll be car sick within minutes!

Rally Cross was awarded 89% in issue 19 of PLAY and we still heartily recommend it despite initial grumps about the wayward handling. The four player mode is still a bit of a dog though, but the one and two player games are top fun.

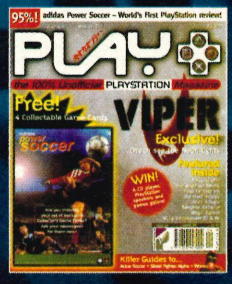


[ABOVE] **New and improved *Rally Cross*, no it isn't, but we love it all the same...**

Back ISSUES



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



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



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



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



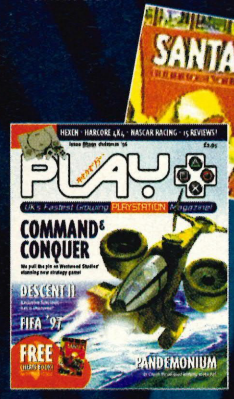
ISSUE [12]
Exclusive review of *SFZ2*, huge Jap feature, plus *Burning Road*!



ISSUE [13]
Massive review of *Project Overkill*, first look at *Nightmare Creatures!*



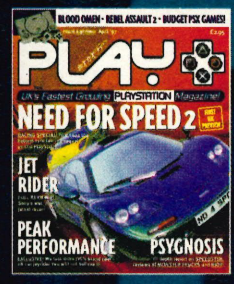
ISSUE [14]
Superb *Syndicate Wars* exposé and a huge review of *Tomb Raider* and *DD2!*



ISSUE [15]
Command & Conquer, Pandemonium, FIFA '97 reviewed!



ISSUE [16]
Rage Racer reviewed, *Porsche Challenge* in-depth look, *Tekken 3* news and more *RE2!*



ISSUE [18]
Massive exclusive *NFS2* feature, *Peak Performance, Jet Rider* and loads more!



ISSUE [19]
Stunning *LBA* exclusive review, plus *Rally Cross, Micro Machines V3* and *Apocalypse!*



ISSUE [20]
Full review of *Tenka*, massive *Syndicate Wars* preview, plus *Porsche* and *Bushido Blade!*



ISSUE [21]
Exclusive look at *Eidos F1*, preview of *Tobal 2*, and hot reviews of *NFS2* and *Peak Performance.*

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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!



20 You can't deny that *Tobal 2* from Squaresoft is the most impressive looking beat-'em-up this side of *Virtua Fighter 3* in the arcades. Amid speculation that it might never be released over here, we review the Japanese version of the game and find it to be absolutely stunning. Join us for the exclusive review of this mighty title.



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.

36-50 Games that should be avoided by everyone except die-hard fans of the genre and masochists.

0-35 Complete tripe. Avoid at all costs! Duly awarded the PLAY Putrid. Yuk!

PLAY PUTRID

PLAY ICONS

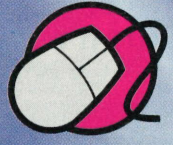
These symbols are designed to give you vital information about the maximum number of players and whether or not you can use a specific device with the game. PSX steering wheel or the Negcon joypad come under steering/analogue.


One player
eg Project Overkill


Multiple Players
eg Tekken 2


Steering/Analogue
eg NeGcon


Multi-Tap
compatible


Mouse compatible
eg Sim City 2000


Uses a Memory Card
(for save games)


Split Screen
eg Bust-A-Move 2


Link Cable compatible
eg Formula 1


Light gun compatible
eg Die Hard Trilogy

ES

REVIEWS ▸ WORKSTATIONS ▸ WIRED UPS

The GAMES that Time Forgot

You'll see this ominous logo every time a games publisher tries to sneak a game out onto the streets without us seeing it first. This is often a deliberate move and one that often means the game is rushed or of poor quality.

WORKSTATIONS

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

CONSTRUCTOR 26
PERFECT ASSASSIN 28



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 game's lifespan.



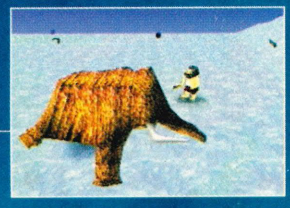
PLAY REVIEWS

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.

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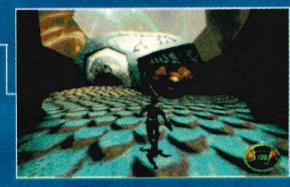




WIRED UP

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

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Written By Graeme Nicholson

HOLD IT RIGHT THERE! IF YOU THOUGHT *BUSHIDO BLADE* AND *SOUL EDGE* WERE IMPRESSIVE, WAIT UNTIL YOU SEE *TOBAL 2*. IT'S FAST, UTTERLY GORGEOUS, AND IT BELONGS IN YOUR HOUSE...

TO

THE BIG GAME

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Squaresoft
Contact: The Video Game Centre on 01202 527 314
Price: £79.99
Release date: Out Now (Import)

ONE PLAYER | MULTIPLE PLAYERS

DUAL ANALOGUE | MEMORY CARD

Despite Tobal No.1's various technical achievements, it was never accepted into the mainstream gaming world in the way that something like *Tekken 2* was, and you couldn't help but feel sorry for the Dream Factory programmers who had clearly put so much into producing such a dazzling game.

Luckily for us, the team made up of people who worked on the *Tekken* and *Virtua Fighter* series have tried again, and their product is simply astounding.

Tobal 2 features the distinctively sharp high resolution graphics that you will recognise from the original, but so much has been added and squeezed into the PlayStation's memory that new owners of

"*Tobal 2* is a total feast for the eyes!..."

TOBAL 2

PLAY CLASSIC

the game in Japan have begun speculating that Square and the Dream Factory must be privy to some special knowledge about the workings of the machine that all other developers are ignorant of. Just looking at the game run you can see why.

The graphics have the highest definition and detail of any game you care to mention, with characters that look solid because there is so little polygon glitching, and luxuries you normally don't see, like smooth and believable shading and properly rounded muscles, legs and torsos. It has yet to be seen if the Nintendo 64, with its tedious blurring effect, can handle something this beautiful.

Just watch after you win a couple of bouts and the camera zooms up close to the face of your player, and gawp as nothing gets ugly or blocky at such close range. The character even speaks with their mouth moving realistically. The whole way through, *Tobal 2* is a total feast for the eyes and you can really see that your console's graphical capabilities are being pushed to their limits. You half expect the little grey box to erupt into a puff of smoke under the strain.

EASTERN PROMISE

The control is split into high, middle and low attacks, making the system tough to learn for *Tekken* devotees who are used to independent control of each limb, but well worth the trouble to see what the game is capable of.



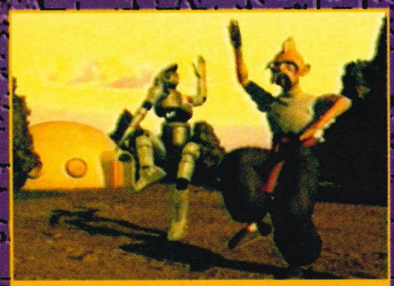
[Above] Great care has been taken to make the bodies react like they are solid humans, and even when they are getting thrown around they move properly at the joints.



[Above] He may still have the geekiest hair in the world, but check out the detail on that face.



[Above] A glorious fireball attack from Epon is timed just right and devastates Oliems' strength.



[Above] The magnificent intro shows Fei Long teaching his robot friend, Hom, who bungles a spinning move and collapses.



[Above] The alternative versions of the highly-strung Tobal crew are all nicely designed. Chuji has combat pants with braces that sway around as he moves.

FLOATING RUNNER

To give the game the essential arcade pace that fans of *Tekken 2* will admire, there are new improved floating combos that are a breeze to execute. In case you're new to this beat-'em-up lingo, a floating combo is what you call it when a sequence of moves, usually starting with a strong uppercut, is timed to keep bashing your enemy back into the air before they get the chance to land on the ground and retaliate.







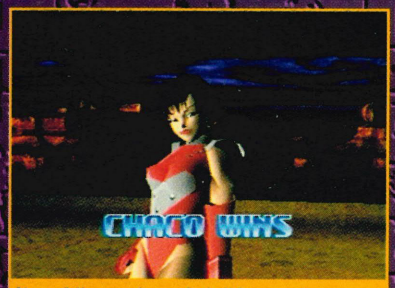






[Above] Ill often uses his tail to smack you around, but if you manage to get behind him you can grab it and swing him around at high speed.





[Above] Chaco makes us feel all funny and warm. Let's just say she possesses certain assets that are very realistically animated.

Once you and a friend have built up a good catalogue of moves, the fights become rapid and intense, looking like a Jackie Chan movie only with more expensive special effects!

The usual Tournament option is available, where you take one fighter through matches with eight others, and on to beat the three bosses culminating with the gargantuan Snork. But *Tobal 2* only really excels when you play round after round with a friend, finding new moves, chucking each other over the edge and sneakily dodging out of the path of your mate's pain-stakingly rehearsed ten-hitter.

A new practice mode has been included, just like the one in *Tekken 2*, and it is totally invaluable for getting the most out of the game and learning the intricacies of the new combat system. Using this mode also gives you the opportunity to really get the hang of the throws and other grabbing moves that you can't risk experimenting with during a full fight.

The method of learning the various combos is quite bizarre however, with a little chart on the right of the screen that lights up in certain places to show which buttons to press next, but admittedly the whole thing is probably explained perfectly in the Japanese manual.

The most surprising additions to *Tobal 2* are the *Street Fighter*-style fireball attacks, as all it takes is a very simple button combination and almost every character can create a gorgeous glowing fireball and launch it at will. To add some inspired strategy to the matches and to prevent over-use of this move each shot you fire saps your energy, and the longer you hold the shimmering ball in your hands the more energy you lose.

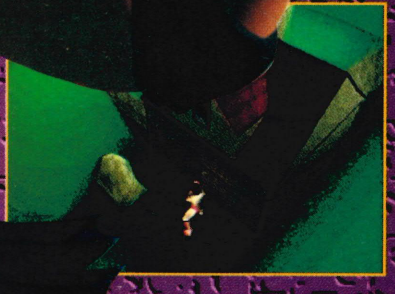
HIP TO BE SQUARE

One of the strengths that *Tobal No.1* had which has successfully carried over to this game is the true three-dimensional use of the battleground. In most beat-'em-ups, pressing Up would make you jump, and Down would make you crouch, but in *Tobal 2* these controls walk you away from or towards the screen, and you find that many unpredictable fighting scenarios occur because of this free movement, with possibilities constantly cropping up that keep you on your toes.

An ill-timed, over-confident lumbering move towards your opponent can leave





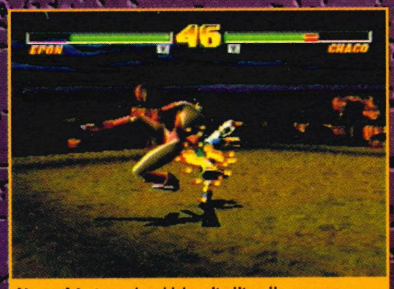




CLOSE QUARTER COMBAT

THE GRAPPLING SYSTEM IN *TOBAL 2* HAS BEEN IMPROVED ALONG WITH THE REST OF THE GAME, AND NOW THE CHARACTERS REACT IN A REALISTIC WAY THAT ADDS MORE VARIATION TO THE COMBAT. ONCE YOU GRAB SOMEBODY, WHICH YOU DO BY HOLDING GUARD AND PRESSING YOUR MID LEVEL ATTACK, YOU CAN USE THE D-PAD TO HEAVE YOUR OPPONENT AROUND THE ARENA, PUNCH THEM IN THE FACE REPEATEDLY, TRIP THEM UP, THROW THEM OVER YOUR SHOULDER – ALL MANNER OF THINGS. IN THIS SEQUENCE, EPON GRABS HOM AND HOLDS HIM WHILE SHE KICKS HIS LEG A FEW TIMES, AND IN THE END HE IS IN SO MUCH PAIN THAT HE CLUTCHES THE WOUNDED LIMB WITH BOTH HANDS AND HOPS AROUND ON ONE FOOT, MAKING HIM EXTREMELY VULNERABLE TO ANOTHER ATTACK.





[Above] A strong low kick quite literally sweeps Chaco off her feet. You can gain a healthy advantage by knocking your enemy off balance.



[Above] The original Chuji is dizzy with pain and swinging the wrong way involuntarily, the perfect set up for the all new Chuji to strike him in the back.



DOUBLE DRAGON

Being such an all-round top game, *Tobal 2* is also one of the first beat-'em-ups to use the new Dual Analogue controller, along with *Bushido Blade*. At this time it has been confirmed that the unit has force feedback, with the whole pad vibrating according to what's happening in the game, but as yet we haven't been able to get one in for review. Watch this space.



you facing the edge of the ring before a swift kick in the small of your back sends you flailing into the abyss. Staying too close without dodging around and keeping your wits about you will make you an easy target for the other player to grab hold of you, and then you are pretty much at their mercy.

There are also floating combos, where the timing in a string of moves keeps the character you are attacking aloft and helpless for several hits in a row. If you're quick there are a couple of moves you can pull with your back to the other player, which is risky but likely to catch them off-guard.

"It has yet to be seen if the Nintendo 64 can handle something this beautiful..."

DE JA VU

Already you have a fighting game well worth buying, but let's not forget the massive Quest mode that is included for long lasting challenge. Pick any of the eight main characters and you can head out into the vast colourful 3-D world for an epic action adventure.

The darkened dungeons of *Tobal No.1* still make an appearance, albeit looking much more attractive, but for the first time you can also explore the outside world, running around freely and visiting different buildings to get information from the people you meet. Not only are the graphics vastly improved with some very professional texture mapping, but an entire storyline lies in front of you, waiting to be discovered.

Unfortunately, most of the extra elements of the Quest mode are wasted on us westerners, because any time you reveal another part of the story by talking to someone, all you get is many screens of Japanese text. It's annoying, but not quite frustrating enough to make you go off and master a written language with 5,000 characters just to make it to Level 2.



















Fei may look like a helpless old man, but looks can be deceiving! He is actually one of the most agile competitors in the whole tournament, and his combos are staggeringly fast. Here he does a jumping cartwheel kick on Chuji, managing to hit separately with both feet! Little devil.












[Above] This is what happens when you talk to anyone in the adventure game. The story is probably very good, but we're not going to know about it until the US release.

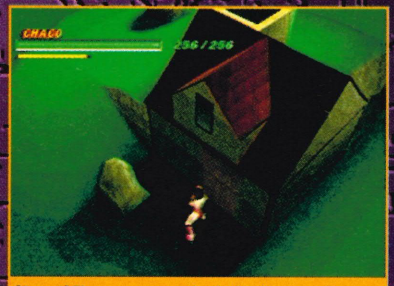
The remainder of the quest is still playable and a nice distraction from the main beat-'em-up, as you don't need to read Japanese to realise that if some squelching gelatinous beast is smashing your legs in, you'd better start fighting back.

All in all, *Tobal 2* follows *Bushido Blade's* lead in making a beat-'em-up as artful, refined and advanced as it can be. Hats are well and truly off to Square and Dream Factory for producing something that looks this good. In managing not to compromise the quality of the gameplay in a title this pretty they have done something unique.

Experience what your PlayStation can really do, get on the phone to the local importers and we'll have more news on whether Square will decide to convert *Tobal 2* for the West in the next couple of months.

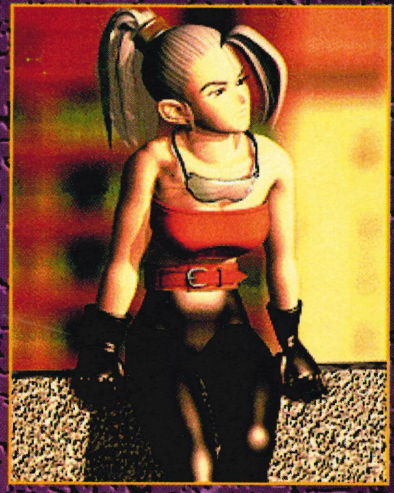


[Above] You can watch replays of the fights from the eyes of either player, and even save the ones you are particularly proud of.



[Above] The new perspective in the Quest mode limits your view a bit, but when you start fighting it shifts to the normal side-on view.





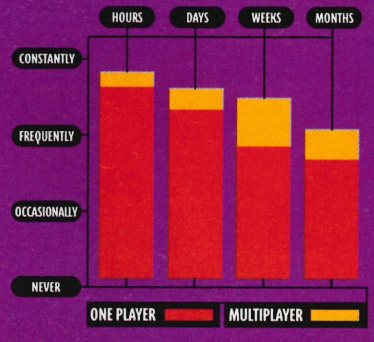


NOW SO BIG, NOW SO SMALL

A rather cool cheat mode lets you scale the size of the characters up and down during a fight. Simply hold L2 and R2 when choosing your player and use Triangle to select them. Now use R2 in the game to make them bigger and L2 to shrink them!



LONG TERM PLAY...



PLAY

Looks	●●●●●●●●●●
Sounds	●●●●●●●●●●
Gameplay	●●●●●●●●●●
Value	●●●●●●●●●●
Lycra	●●●●●●●●●●

PLAYED 92%

Wildly impressive stuff!

Alternatively:
Soul Edge (96%)
Tobal No.1 (94%)



YOU SHOULD BE AWARE THAT SONY HAVE INFLICTED THEIR NEW SAMPLER ON AN UNSUSPECTING PUBLIC.
POWER SOURCE CONTAINS: TOMB RAIDER, PORSCHE CHALLENGE, MONSTER TRUCKS 2 AND DESTRUCTION DERBY 2.
YES, YOUR THUMBS WILL HURT, YOUR BRAIN WILL HURT, BUT YOUR SOUL WILL BE PURE. ALL PROCEEDS GO TO THE PRINCE'S TRUST.



"PlayStation" are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

CONSTRUCT

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

IT'S TIME TO STRAP ON A HARD HAT, GO SITE PROSPECTING AND CALL YOUR QUANTITY SURVEYOR...

Written By Graeme Nicholson

With the multi-format success of Bullfrog's *Theme Park*, interest in entrepreneurial management games swelled and suddenly it became acceptable to take a break from fighting and shooting to spend a few simulated days in your virtual office, working on your empire.

Of course, the most corrupt aspect of *Theme Park* was merely over-salting the popcorn, driving the unsuspecting public to buy more watered-down cola. *Constructor* carries you deeper into the pits of dirty tactics, positively encouraging you to engage in cold, calculated evil behaviour.

Taking the role of a real estate developer, you begin the game with a single plot of land, and your first move is to build a company headquarters that will serve as your base for all future operations. To begin with you have only a few loyal workers, foremen and repairmen to assist you, but given time and some astute financial planning your company will expand to reflect your skills in the real estate market.

Blueprint

Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: System 3
% Complete: 25%
Expected Release Date: TBA
Origin: UK
No of Players: 1

INTIMIDATION

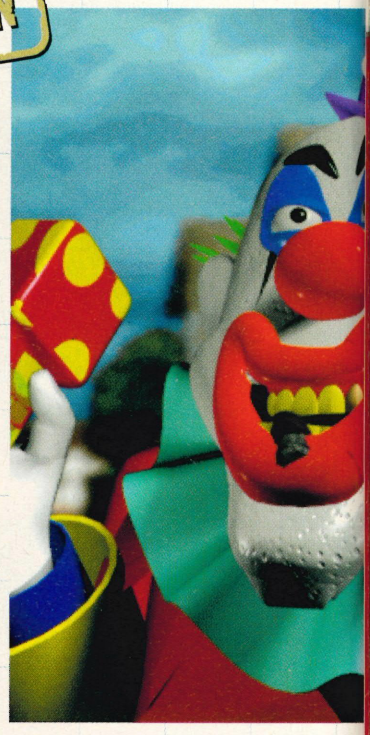
Far from being concerned solely with the buying and selling of land and houses in your area, much of your time will be spent maintaining the environment for the population and trying to stay one step ahead of the competition. If a rival firm moves in on a patch of ground that was next in your business plan, you'll try anything to get them out.

There are four mission objectives to choose from, and you pick what you want to aim for through the course of the game. Choosing Financial Conquest means your ultimate target is to amass so much money from your real estate business that you become the richest man in the world. Ego Mania will see you eventually having a hand in the production of every building on the planet. The World Domination mission can only be achieved by building strategically around the globe, in key areas, until you control Earth. And lastly, the only choice that is beneficial to the population, Utopian State gives you the mission of creating an entirely stress-free civilisation where everyone is happy and nobody has a care in the world. Clearly this option was dreamt up at the last minute. For girls.

If you want to keep the tenants you have and



[ABOVE] It may seem like a waste of company cash, but the little people like to see well kept gardens and gleaming white picket fences in town.



"*Constructor* carries you deeper into the pits of dirty tactics..."



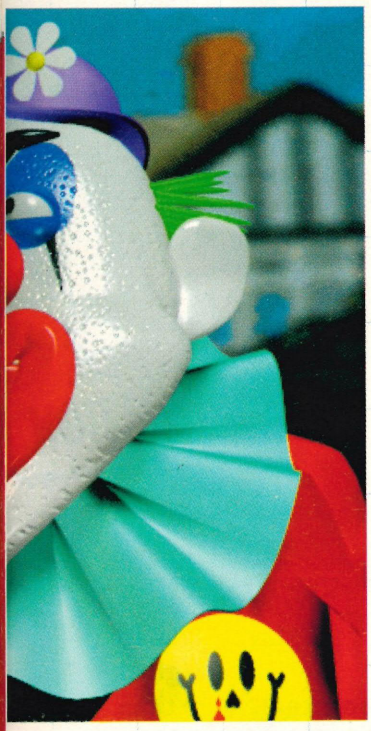
[ABOVE] Have the foreman repair a single empty house at a time before someone moves in, as fixing the whole street would be too costly.



[ABOVE] Nobody wants to live next door to a haunted house, so depending on your ingenuity they can be a blessing or a curse.



OR





[Above] Choosing the correct site for your next real estate venture is vital, but in parts like this it couldn't be easier. This is prime development land.



[Above] A quiet residential street, with good solid expensive housing and hard working inhabitants. Protect these areas with policemen.

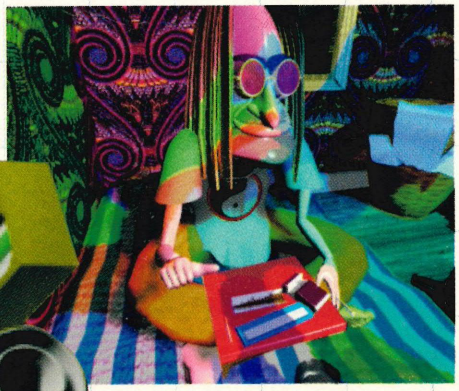
make your properties appeal to the classier folks you want in your neighbourhood, it is vital that you upgrade the housing, and a few trees in a nice clean garden wouldn't go amiss either.

Naturally money in the bank is finite and you must make sure you don't spend over the budget, but people like to have smarter furniture in their homes and even a good computer for their children to learn from.

SABOTAGE

Keeping the quality of life high in your area means that Desirables will move in or are maybe even be born there. The Desirables are the good half of society, the hard working, law abiding citizens that make great tenants. Some of them may even decide to become police officers, which is handy for defending the territory against computer controlled market enemies.

There is another side to this coin however. The grubby, cramped slums with low employment and little recreation besides booze and drugs will breed people known as the Undesirables. While





[Above] Demolishing derelict and unwanted property is a good way to save dollars on maintenance, but the chain reaction can damage buildings close by.



[Above] My, what a pleasant neighbourhood. Send your sledge hammer-wielding "handyman" round to "fix" some opponent's houses.

their distastefully lower-class behaviour may seem like your worst nightmare, you can use these yobs, psychopaths and mobsters to sabotage opponent's territory by sending them in to the streets of your rivals. Windows will get broken, houses will catch fire and nobody can point the finger at you. Sinister indeed.

Constructor will be released for those detestable IBM compatible machines in September, with the PlayStation version following in a few months. It looks to be great fun, and our only concerns are that the hopefully the gameplay will not be simplified too much for the console world, and that developer System 3 won't do a "*Command & Conquer*" by forgetting to implement the mouse.



[Above] Choose any house on any street and you can find out the life expectancy, stress level and happiness of the tenants.

CLOWNING AROUND

In areas of bad depression and crime, a type of people known as psycho clowns begin to appear. They scare away the clean and healthy people, disturb children and generally create problems. You can even lose your own house in *Constructor* to one of these eerie characters, but if you use them wisely they can be extremely instrumental in swinging things your way against the other property developers.



Pick out one of the psycho clowns in town, then select a despicable activity for them to perform. Molatov cocktail anyone?



One of the most unnerving Undesirables, the psycho clowns are prone to playing with matches in the most dangerous places.

SOFTOGRAPHY

The Last Ninja series
International Karate
Silly Putty

PERFECT



YE GADS! THE COSMOS IS ON THE VERGE OF TOTAL COLLAPSE. THE WORLD NEEDS A RUTHLESS BRUTE WITH BRAINS TO SAVE THE DAY. ANY VOLUNTEERS?

EXCLUSIVE!

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Written By Tom Sargent

You are the most feared and respected killer in the known universe. Not a bad title to bandy around among your peers, especially when it comes to who gets the next round in at the pub.

Perfect Assassin chronicles the plight of the part man, part machine character, Charon, who after mysteriously having his memory erased, is summoned for what promises to be the challenge of his life. Ulp! The summons has come from a fearful race of aliens, the Kobrai who are believed to control the very fabric of the universe, but are frantically worried that it is being threatened by the Pra'Min, their sworn enemies, who have managed to infiltrate the Kobrai Citadel. As a consequence of this dastardly deed, they have murdered the Guardian of the Citadel and stolen a glowing orb that will grant them access to the Fountainhead, the power source of the universe.

This, as you may have already guessed, is where you take up the gauntlet. You must guard this Fountainhead at all costs, but prior to this you arrive for your briefing on the planet Kar-Naq with the sole knowledge that you have to meet the important 'UI D'Grak', (sounds painful) at the 'Carteel'

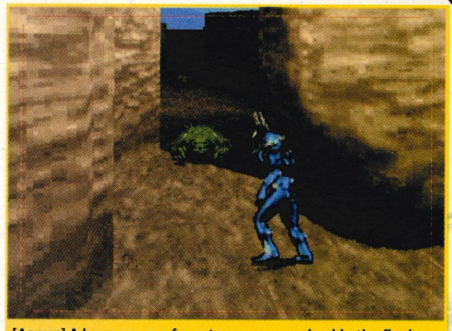


CATACLYSMIC

Perfect Assassin is a science/fantasy adventure, comprising of a plot that's got more twists and turns in it than a cow's intestinal tract, featuring time travel, armed combat and a countdown to the end of the universe! It's the brainchild of leading UK fantasy artist, Kev Walker, whose awesome talent should be familiar to both fans of the seminal sci-fi comic 2000 AD, and those of you witnessed the breath-taking scenery seen in the movie, *Judge Dredd*.

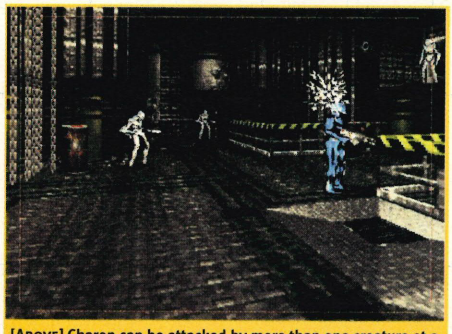
Perfect Assassin is Walker's first foray into videogames though, and when we met him he explained that this project has been bubbling under for quite some time.

"I originally came up with the idea for the main character, Charon, three or four years ago and started to write a script or storyline involving Charon and many other characters, as a possible

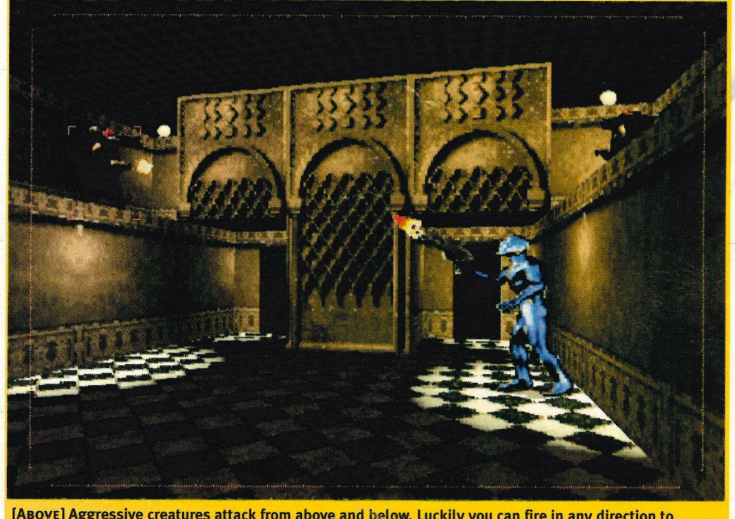


[ABOVE] A huge range of creatures are promised in the final version, hopefully around 200, keeping Charon pretty busy.

"*Perfect Assassin* is staying true to my original concept, more than I could ever have expected..."



[ABOVE] Charon can be attacked by more than one creature at a time. This should make for some pretty intense action involving strategy as well as blatant shooting.

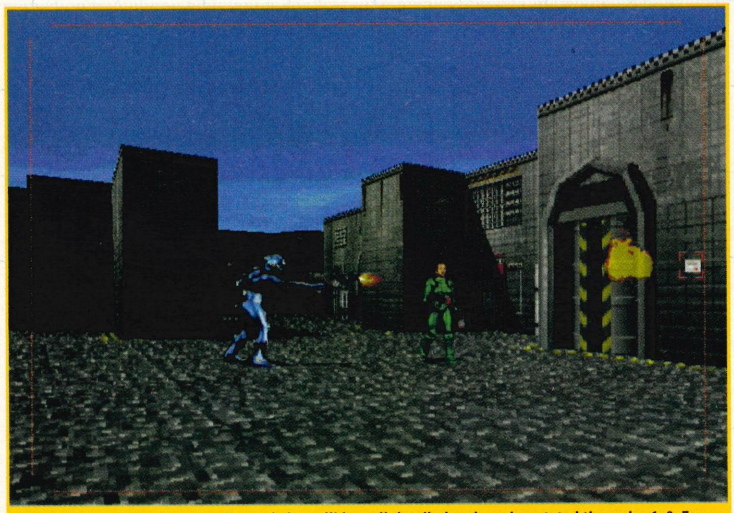


[ABOVE] Aggressive creatures attack from above and below. Luckily you can fire in any direction to compensate.

Blueprint

Publisher: Grolier Interactive
Developer: Synthetic Dimensions
% Complete: 50%
Expected Release Date: September '97
Origin: UK
No of Players: 1

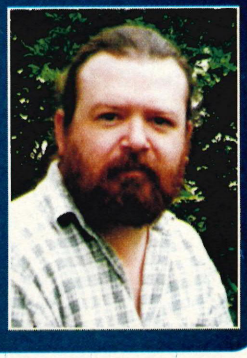
ASSASSIN

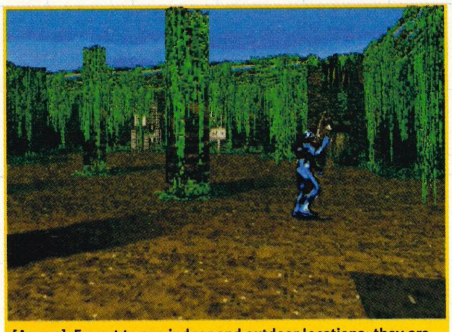


[Above] Your main character Charon is incredibly-well detailed and can be rotated through 360°. Even the enemies look impressive.

WALKER'S WAY

Kev Walker is a genius. And a bloody good one at that! Banished from art college at 18, he finally achieved freelance status gaining his first professional comic work with Tharg's Future Shocks and Rogue Trooper. In 1993 he spent three months in LA, as part of a small team of designers commissioned with bringing to the silver screen 2000 AD's favourite son, Judge Dredd. Walker's current works include: The Inspectre (for Judge Dredd: The Megazine) and of course, his most recent project the creation of *Perfect Assassin* for Grolier Interactive.





[Above] Expect to see indoor and outdoor locations; they are well-detailed and imaginatively designed.

idea for a comic strip. As the whole idea and plot evolved, I began to think that it might make a good computer game, which is something that I have been interested in for some years now."

These original ideas have been transformed into a game by Wolverhampton-based coders, Synthetic Dimensions and according to Walker himself, the transformation onto the PlayStation...

"...Stays true to my original concept, more than I could have expected."

The finished product promises a 'unique' AI engine, that generates varying levels of intelligence among the 200 or so characters that Charon interacts with. Ranging from a nominal intelligence (characters who are approachable, timid and trusting), medium intelligence(those who only give answers if you ask the right questions), and high intelligence (moody characters who roam freely around the city and may or may not be aggressive).

This means, theoretically, the plot should be non-linear and able to evolve at pace and in any given direction. Such a varying level of intelligence should certainly provide the player with a new challenge as opposed to the lemming-type behaviour we become accustomed to from non-player-characters (NPCs) in many adventure games.



[Above] When interacting with another character, the screen changes and various exchanges can be made.

SOFTOGRAPHY

Ghost Train (PC)
Legends of Valour (ST, Amiga, PC)
Terminator II (Spec, Amstrad, ST, Amiga, PC)

INTERACTIVE

According to the team the game will boast flashy real-time 3-D technology, strange detailed alien worlds to roam around in 27 chapters, varied gameplay including character interaction, puzzles and shoot-'em-up sequences with the overall emphasis on staying alive. To top all this, we're lead to believe that it will also contain smoothly animated characters, unique 3-D environments with a rollicking-good soundtrack to completely immerse the player in an authentic environment. Wow.

The recipe for something just a bit special? We think so and Kev Walker needs no convincing, now that the PlayStation version is over 50% complete.

"The project has been well received by the developers, publishers and press. I am really pleased with the way the character sprites look and move. They are almost exactly like my original sketches and have evolved like my drawings."

The clock is ticking and we'll bring more exclusive news and hopefully a review just before the release in September.



Big Bloke.
Big Game.

You're in a field...

The rain's lashing against your skin...

You've crashed into the mud dozens of times...

Your face is smashed in...

15 mad-as-hell men hate your guts...

...and you've got the ball!



PC CD-ROM

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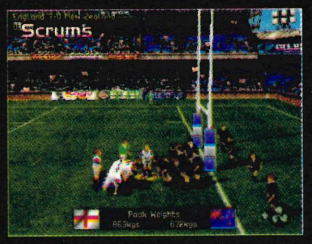
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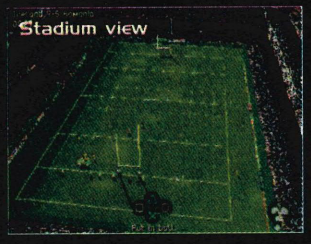


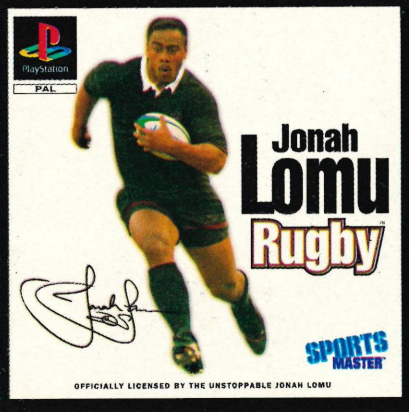
"THE BEST RUGBY GAME I'VE EVER COME ACROSS"

9/10 *PlayStation Pro*









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SYNDICA

WE HAVE WAITED AND THEN WAITED SOME MORE TO SEE THIS GAME, AND NOW IT HAS FINALLY ARRIVED. SHOULD YOU BELIEVE THE HYPE ABOUT THE MOST DISTURBINGLY BLOODY TITLE YET SEEN?

Written By Graeme Nicholson



[ABOVE] It's an ambush! Caught in the brutal crossfire of many EuroCorp Pulse Lasers, your cyborgs can barely hold their weapons up to fire.

So what is

Syndicate Wars? The most aggrivatingly delayed game of the PlayStation's history, and it also happens to have a permanent place atop your long term shopping list.

The original *Syndicate* was a fantastically successful two-dimensional isometric action/strategy game that people fell in love with on their PCs and Amigas. It portrayed the raging territorial war between several massive corporations that had become more powerful than even the largest countries, and showed the effects of a population controlling microchip. One corporation now controls the Earth – EuroCorp.

The Utopia (Universal Transferred Organic Processing Interface Architecture) chip is still very much a part of life, spread widely by the EuroCorp syndicate throughout the masses. Implanted in the back of the neck, the chip fools the human brain into believing that the world is a beautiful, clean place and that the implantee's life is flourishing and successful.

Meanwhile, the miserable, dark, bleak city around them continues to fester with malignant activity, from single mysterious assassinations to the open and brutal culling of rebels in the streets.

As lucid everyday life is unbearable and terrifying, EuroCorp implants the chips into civilians all over the world, giving them a powerful but false escape from their problems, and as the reigning global syndicate, EuroCorp couldn't be happier. The passive and distracted population is both easy to control and oblivious to their unsavoury behaviour.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Bullfrog/EA
Customer support: 01483 579399
Price: £44.99
Release date: July 4 '97





[ABOVE] When the weapon description reads "Nuclear Grenade," you had better believe it really means "Nuclear." Awesome.



[ABOVE] The last thing you want while trying to carry out a covert task cleanly is police interest, so it's time to switch everyone to rocket launchers!



[ABOVE] Always a wise trick to have up the sleeve, if you're being overwhelmed from one main direction a grenade should keep things fair.

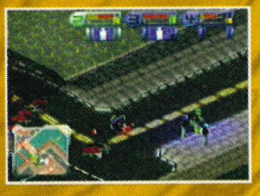
TE WARS



[Above] As you catch a lamppost in the sea of bullets, the ground glows red reflecting the explosion and then darkens completely because the light source is gone. Clever.

SAY YES TO DRUGS

Normally, your agents are entirely under your control and show no artificial intelligence at all. To remedy this and have the cyborgs look after themselves for short periods of time, they have all been fitted with intravenous devices that let you administer two psychotropic drugs. Blue Funk induces severe paranoia, causing the agent to fire on anything moving within range. Red Mist heightens awareness, so that they will attack any hostile target carrying a gun. Both substances improve running speed as well, but healing is slower and stamina quickly plummets, so you must use these drugs carefully.











As Sony has always told you, installing chips to play games is evil.

A bizarre cult calling itself The Church of the New Epoch has risen into existence, opposing the omnipresent multi-national megacorporation of EuroCorp. The Church has engineered a software virus, "Harbinger," which causes the Utopia chips to malfunction and lets the public experience a shocking breakthrough into real life.

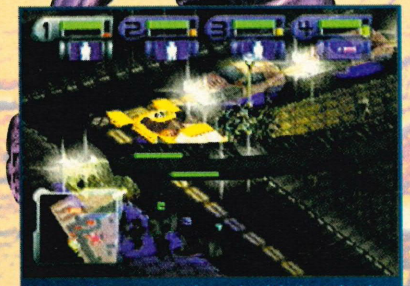
Hi-jacking the frequencies that broadcast peaceful scenes and ego-soothing scenarios to the chips, the acolytes also send out their own messages of propaganda and anti-establishment violence.

"So deeply involving you'll begin carrying weapons into public places..."

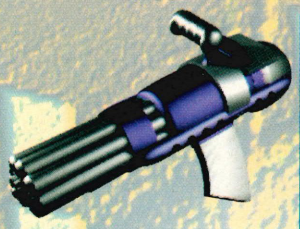
ONE WORLD CURRENCY

You choose to work for the sleek big business of EuroCorp or become a disciple of the Church of the New Epoch, and the missions you face differ accordingly. For example, your first task as a member of the Church is to shoot your way into a EuroCorp substation and release the new Harbinger virus there so it will be beamed to active Utopia chips across an entire city. The first EuroCorp mission is to take care of some rowdy citizens whose chips have malfunctioned due to the Church's meddling.

Whichever side you decide to take, the basics of the gameplay are the same. From the Marionette Remote Drone Operation Suite on the underside of an airship, you control four cyborgs around one of the huge murky cities in the game. You can move them one at a time, or group any number together to follow your directions simultaneously whether it's shooting, walking



[Above] You come back from a hard day's work only to find a traffic jam and some kind of riot. Time for a disgusting public slaughter.

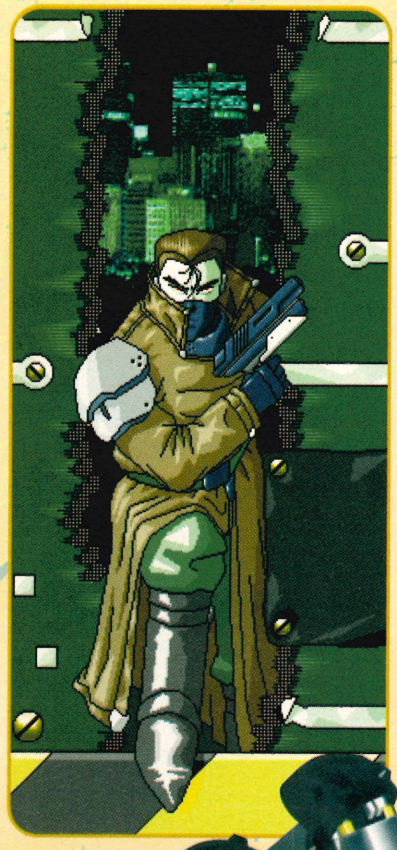




[Above] When you start out as an agent of terror, the choice of guns and gadgets is slightly lacking...



[Above] ... But by the time you have made your power felt in a few key areas around the globe, you'll amass a bigger collection of toys.





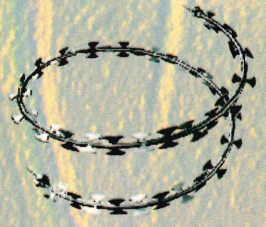
or driving a hovercar. Plugging in a Multi-tap lets up to four players each use a single cyborg.

The *Syndicate* environment is as wonderful and sinister as it's always been, with the ability to explore your surroundings, mow down ordinary unarmed people by the truckload, and get into vicious fights with local police all in addition to whatever mission you are trying to complete.

There is freedom of movement in *Syndicate Wars* that is second to none as far as action games go, and the existence of a whole sprawling three-dimensional city on each level helps to make the corrupt world so deeply involving that you'll begin carrying weapons into public places just to feel "safe."

ONE WORLD GOVERNMENT

As you advance through the levels, the designers in your armoury come up with all sorts of delightful gadgets that you can buy for your cyborgs, and just playing with these marvellous inventions to see what they are capable of can bring a crazed grin to the face. Long range rifles, chargeable lasers, mines, rocket launchers, insanity-inducing gas, nuclear grenades, flame





[Above] Rebellious civilians are prone to using the crippling Electron Mace on dodgy looking agents in raincoats, and from all directions.



[Above] During a surprise attack, trying to pick out the right weapon from the pull-down menu can be difficult with the mouse or joypad.

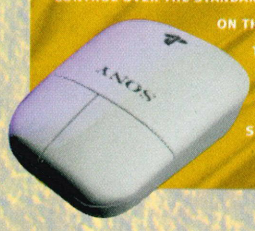




THE POWER OF CONTROL

Unfortunately for most of the PlayStation user base, there's no getting away from the fact that *Syndicate Wars* was designed to be played with a mouse and keyboard. The official PlayStation mouse (around £24.99) works very well with the game, allowing you greatly increased control over the standard pad. You can make your squad fire at any point on the screen, picking out individual targets instead of the joypad method which automatically aims for the most dangerous threat in range. For the other controls like rotating the view and activating shields, you must have a pad in your other hand.









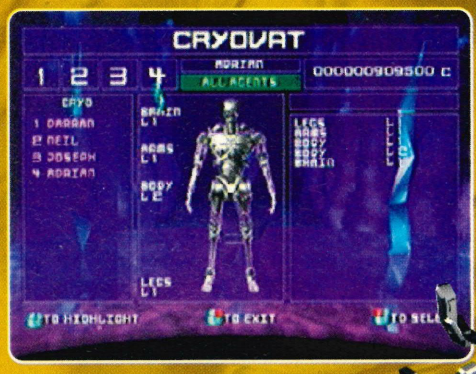
[Above] Rapid Mini-gun fire is capable of setting trees alight, along with many other guns. It's not of any use, but it's fun.



[Above] Whenever a big enough explosion rips through the air, the surface of the city is torn away and you can see the complex mechanical mass beneath.

INSIDE THE CRYOVAT

Between tasks, your agents and disciples are stored in your own private cryogenic facility. While your cyborgs are in this state you can buy enhanced body parts for them to improve their performance on the battlefield. Cybernetic arms improve aiming accuracy, plasteel legs increase running speed, and the triple-plated titanium alloy body keeps their organs safe. New versions of these parts become available as the game progresses, and it pays to always have the newest equipment.



throwers – it's a direct cerebral injection of high-powered, titanium-coated artillery. At the top end of the scale you even have gigantic, city-levelling attacks which you call in from orbit.

For atmosphere, mission design and weaponry, *Syndicate Wars* scores highly, but it's not the totally outstanding product it could have been. There's a problem with the Mission Briefing typeface in that it's clumsy and tough to read quickly, making you peer at the words to figure them out at times.

Remember that us console owners find even the smallest sections of text offensive in our games, preferring to work purely with moving pictures and sound, so sticking reams of the stuff onto your screen in pinkish-purple square letters is an idea that should have perished somewhere in the journey from PC to PlayStation.

Something which has unfortunately been lost between the two versions is the overall clarity of the graphics. Early claims from Bullfrog that the wonderful PlayStation technology was going to allow a true high resolution display sounded too good to be true, and they were. While the colours are more vivid and solid compared to the thin hues and tones of the PC palette, the slightly messy look to the game is a bit ugly next to the photographic zing of SVGA. It's closer to the humble VGA mode that the underprivileged players with anything less than a 90Mhz Pentium use to keep the speed up.

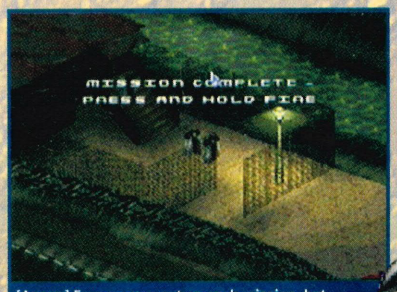
ONE WORLD ORDER

The remaining problems are side effects of *Syndicate*'s first leap into 3-D. You can rotate the viewpoint left and right to any angle you want, which is versatile and useful, but how closely the camera zooms in is determined solely by the firing range of the current weapon your group leader is holding, getting further away as the range increases, but it often feels like you could do with independent control of the zoom yourself.





[Above] The ordinary good people of *Syndicate Wars* often leave their hover cars unlocked and floating in the city's car parks. Borrow them to get around quickly.



[Above] Four may go out on each mission, but not everyone makes it back. A moment of silence, I think.

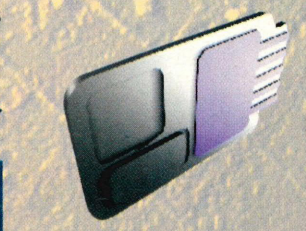
"It's a cerebral injection of high-powered titanium-coated artillery!"









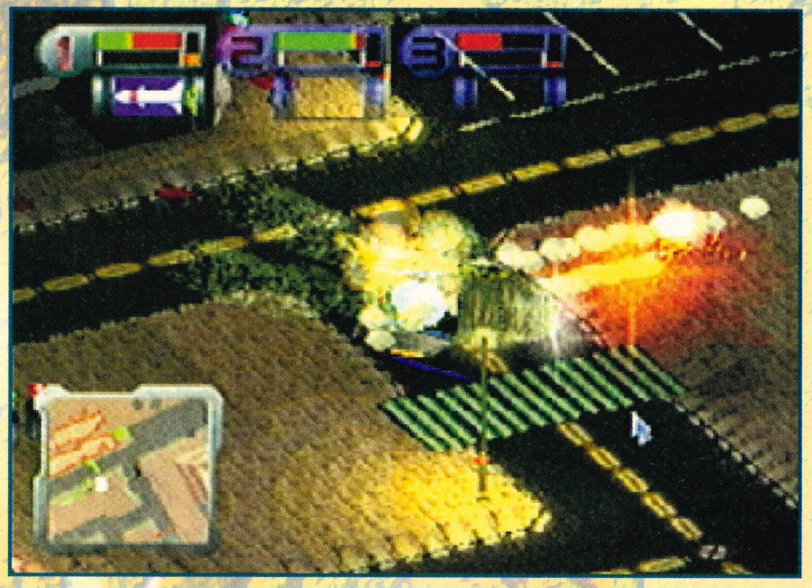




ART OF PERSUASION



"Persuading" members of the public has various selfish advantages. The EuroCorp agents use a piece of hardware called the Persuadertron, and the disciples of the Church use their own Indoctrinator gadget. Both devices have the same effect, that of seizing the brain functions of chip-bearing civilians, and once they are under your spell they will follow you and even pick up guns from dead bodies to defend you. Try getting a good 20 entranced devotees before a major attack and see how it helps. Their worthless bodies also stop bullets that are meant for you.

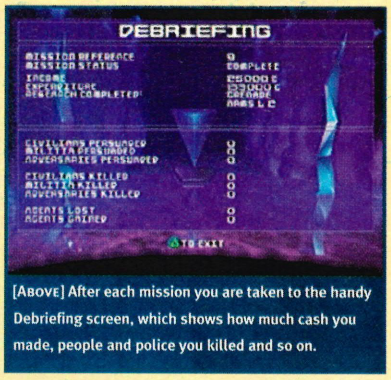


Another more annoying problem is that when you walk behind buildings, they go semi-transparent so you can see what you're doing on the other side without having to keep rotating the view. Yes, fine, but in an already extremely dark game you can only take so many grey polygons floating over a cyborg dressed in black standing in a shady corner at night with the nearest street light shot out before you have to admit to yourself you can't see a bloody thing.

Syndicate Wars is still a very playable game, and many hours of top class gameplay lies ahead of you, but the endless delays, leaked rumours and overly positive news about the game gave it a name it would have been almost impossible to live up to.

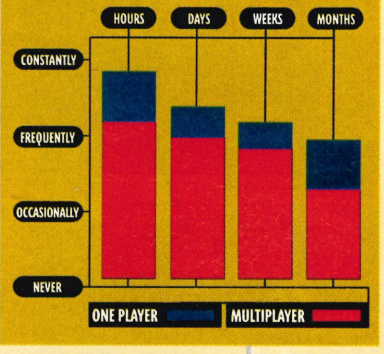
Despite the small worries mentioned, production quality has been otherwise exceptionally high, with the package just oozing class from the tension-building sub-bass rumble on the menu screens that you'll need a good stereo to hear, to the live light sourcing in the streets that gives it the Ridley Scott touch.

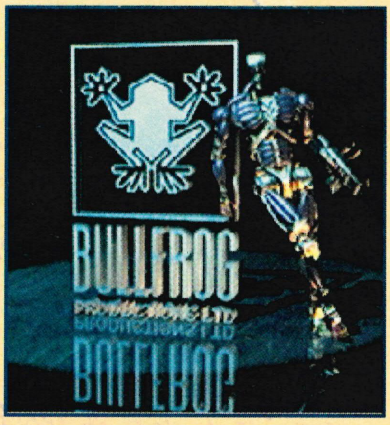
It's not the most amazing game of the year like everyone expected it to be, just a damn good one.

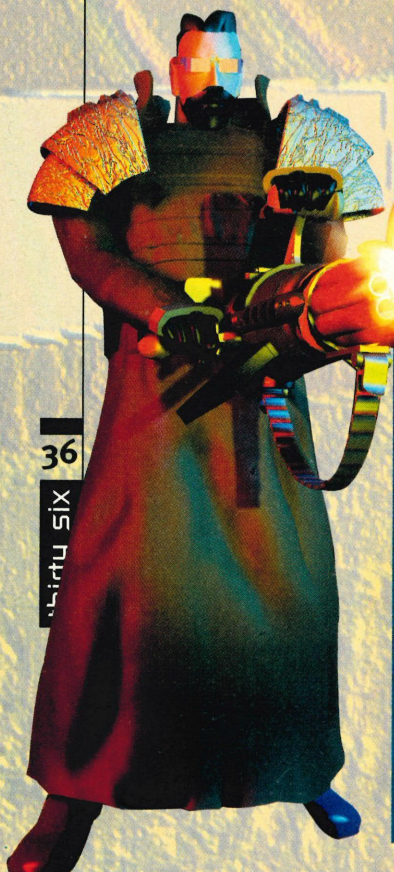


[Above] After each mission you are taken to the handy Debriefing screen, which shows how much cash you made, people and police you killed and so on.

LONG TERM PLAY...











[Above] "Leave this place." No s*it Sherlock – it's a flaming inferno!

PLAY

Looks	8
Sounds	9
Gameplay	8
Value	8
Weaponry	9

PLAYED 85%

Moody, brutal, corrupt and fun!

ALTERNATIVELY:
Bedlam (78%)
Crazed Public Massacre (not really)

Nintendo 100% action!

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VANDAL-H

IT MAY LOOK LIKE A GAME FOR THE KIDS, BUT *VANDAL-HEARTS* IS AIMED AT AN OLDER AUDIENCE WITH ITS CONSPIRACY STORYLINE AND SPURTING GORE!

Written By Graeme Nicholson



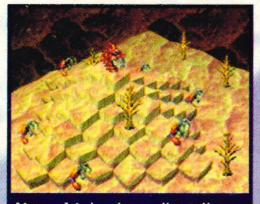
[Above] Your archer Diego takes out an evil floating ghoul, and as the camera zooms in you are rewarded with that fountain of blood.

No doubt grinning

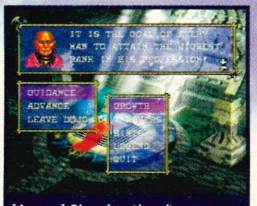
with the success of *Suikoden* in both Japan and America, Konami has recently dropped another cartoony role-playing game into the market, *Vandal-Hearts*. The two games are alike in several ways, in fact, if you were to be totally honest, it could be said that *Vandal-Hearts* is just *Suikoden* with some clever enhancements.

The sweet and innocent look of the characters has been retained, right down to the slightly off-putting pixelisation when the camera zooms in closer for the fighting moves, and even the plot involving the usual 'crusade against a corrupt government' is included. But don't let these RPG clichés put you off investigating *Vandal-Hearts* a bit further.

The majority of the game is spent fighting, as you travel from one side of the land to the other. These battle scenes take place on a full 3-D plane that can be rotated or zoomed in and out for you to get a viewpoint you are happy with.



[Above] A drunken sailor tells you he will transport you if you can defeat this sand monster.



[Above] Showing the clear Japanese origin of *Vandal-Hearts*, every town has a local Dojo where you can receive guidance.

SWASHBUCKLING

Of course the combat is turn-based which stops the action getting too fast-paced, but the battle system is very well designed and brings a whole host of variables into play that other games, including *Suikoden*, ignore.

You can climb up onto ledges or slopes in the land to gain an advantage over your enemy, and taking a hit in the side or back is often worse than a frontal attack because you are unprotected in those areas.

The sheer variation made possible by using your surroundings tactically and planning the attacks to hit the opposition where they can't defend themselves is what makes *Vandal-Hearts* considerably more playable than previous strategy-based games.

At the outset of each conflict a message appears that tells you exactly what you need to do to win, and what constitutes a loss. Instead of losing simply because your whole party was killed, usually it is the death of Ash, the hero of the story, that brings the game to an end. Even if you are controlling seven people and he is the first to die, it's still game over.

The most common objective for winning a fight is to kill every enemy in the current scene, but sometimes it can be something more adventurous like making a break for a switch that opens a drawbridge and getting your squad to the safety of a newly accessible building. In these cases

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Konami
Supplier: The Video Game Centre (01202) 527 314
Price: £59.99
Release date: Out Now (Import)



ONE PLAYER



MEMORY CARD

WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME?

JUST AS YOUR STOMACH IS BEGINNING TO COPE WITH YOUR ENEMIES BURSTING UPON CONTACT WITH A SWORD AND VENTING PINTS OF BLOOD INTO THE AIR, YOU COME ACROSS THIS GRUESOME SCENE WHERE KANE, THE MAIN BAD GUY, ORDERS HIS RED KNIGHTS TO KILL SEVERAL UNARMED MEN. THE UNSUSPECTING VICTIMS ARE HERDED JUST OUT OF SIGHT, AND ALL YOU SEE IS GREAT CLOUDS OF BLOOD APPEARING AT THE EDGE OF THE SCREEN. THE WHOLE MASSACRE TAKES PLACE IN A CHURCH.





[Above] You can transfer the various weapons, bits of armour and other items between the team members to find the perfect combination.

EARTS



[Above] After fighting you are shown the battle results, a tally of everything you killed and who was lost from your team during the confrontation.



you can leave opponents standing as long as you manage to achieve the task at hand, and it provides a welcome change to the normal battling to try something different.

ROPE SWINGING

The most striking thing about *Vandal-Hearts* is the surprising amount of gore involved in an otherwise cute game. When you kill an opponent using a sharp implement (as opposed to one of the dazzling magic spells) there is a short delay as the number of health points you have taken floats into the air, and then what can only be described as a geyser of blood sprays skyward from their chest!

You'll never hear any whinging from the PLAY team about grossly violent content, in fact it's something we actively seek out, so you might be asking where *Vandal-Hearts* loses points. The answer is in the repetitive and linear nature of the fighting and storyline. It is a never-ending circle of getting drawn into a fight, travelling somewhere on the map, going through another hundred boxes of text as more of the predictable plot is played out, and then stumbling into another battle.

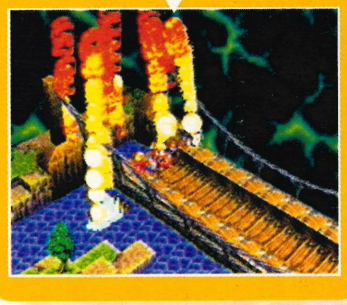
The praise-worthy new combat system is not quite enough to keep Red Bull drinking adrenaline seekers glued to the screen for any great length of time, given the monotony that creeps up eventually, but the clever mission-based scenes, versatile 3-D world and colourful graphics make *Vandal-Hearts* a step in the right direction for role-playing games.

BLOWN AWAY

SOME EVENTS IN *VANDAL-HEARTS* GIVE IT THE FEEL OF A BLOCKBUSTER MOVIE MORE THAN A ROLE-PLAYING GAME. IN THIS SECTION YOUR PARTY HAVE TO TRAVEL ACROSS AN OLD WOODEN BRIDGE, AND WHEN THEY SPOT BANDITS AT THE OTHER SIDE AND SMELL GUNPOWDER IT IS ALREADY TOO LATE – A HUGE EXPLOSION GOES OFF RIGHT BEHIND THEM. DURING THE REST OF THE FIGHT ON THE BRIDGE, YOU MUST KEEP MOVING YOUR TEAM ALONG AS MORE SECTIONS ARE DETONATED.



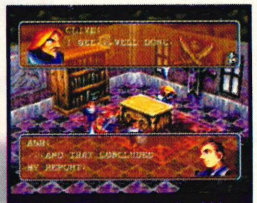




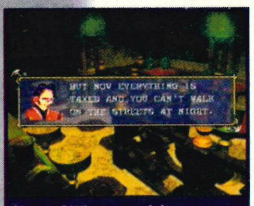


[Above] You encounter new people all the time, like this mysterious female warrior who rescues you from a tight situation, and she later joins your team.

"*Vandal-Hearts* is considerably more playable than previous strategy-based games..."



[Above] These scenes should be shortened. They offer absolutely no interactivity.

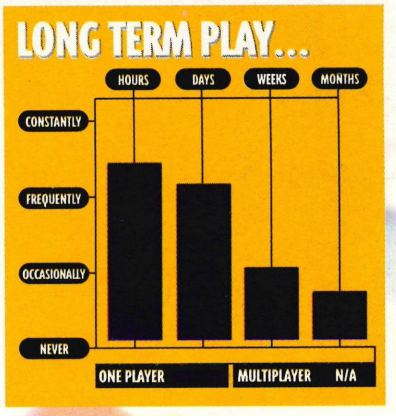


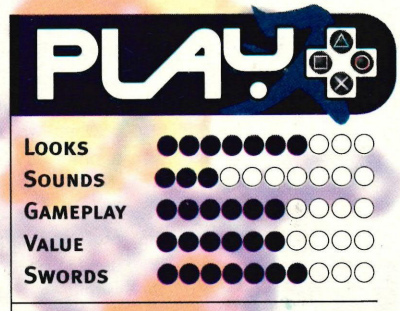
[Above] When you visit a tavern in any town, you just use a menu to choose who to talk to.



[Above] To analyse a confrontation in a more strategic, tactical style, every battle scene can be switched to this view.







PLAYED 81%

Repetitive, but generally a good RPG

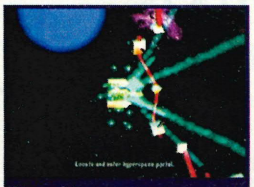
ALTERNATIVELY:
FINAL FANTASY VII (OUT IMPORT)
SUIKODEN (80%)

DARKLIGHT

SPACE... THE FINAL FRONTIER. THESE ARE THE VOYAGES OF THE STARSHIP VULNERABLE. ITS FIVE YEAR MISSION, TO STOP CRASHING INTO THINGS LONG ENOUGH TO APPRECIATE THE SCENERY.

Written By Damian Butt

Drooling is the involuntary action that *Darklight Conflict* illicits among players for the first time. As was stated in the preview a couple of issues ago, this game looks amazing, with a 3-D engine that's as smooth as a baby's behind, and sublime light sourced graphics which put the shoddy looking *Wing IV* to shame. This is how a space adventure should look – huge blazing stars with masses of lens flare, vast nebulas, space stations tumbling through the silence of space with fighters whizzing around like wasps around a jam jar.



[Above] As you enter a hyperspace portal, the energy tendrils suck you in.



[Above] This is the only briefing you get, and there's no choice of ships or weapons. Shame.

Graphically, developer Rage has excelled themselves, and everything from the smallest craft to the monolithic War Drum base ship is intricately detailed and convincing. For the record once more, I urge Rage to please get in touch with the two guys who own the rights to *Elite* and use this engine to bring it to the PlayStation. Now that would be an epic game...

DUCK DODGERS

But wide-eyed optimism must make way for the grim reality, and that is *Darklight Conflict* is not all its facade would have you believe. For a start the plot is woefully handled in the game itself, with a rudimentary series of training missions making way for a string of "do this, do that" tasks with no real rhyme or reason.

There are a fair variety of tasks to perform though, with a nifty tractor beam used to tow samples of ore or crippled satellites, and the many different weapons are excellent and very imaginative. A particular favourite is the convoy missiles, which when launched, orbit your ship until a target comes in range, and then they fire off in his direction.

The plot concerns you infiltrating a race of aliens in order to find out what their intentions regarding Earth are, and this means you get treated like scum for the first set of missions before you gain the Repton's trust.

Unfortunately, you are not given the choice of ships or armaments for each mission, and this gets annoying because you feel as if you're being guided through the whole game. The various ships displays are all pretty much identical, with a central scanner like the one first used in *Elite*, and a selection of arrows to guide you to warp gates, enemy fighters and mission objectives. It's all elementary stuff and should have been a glorious adventure were it not for one major fault...

SPACE DUST

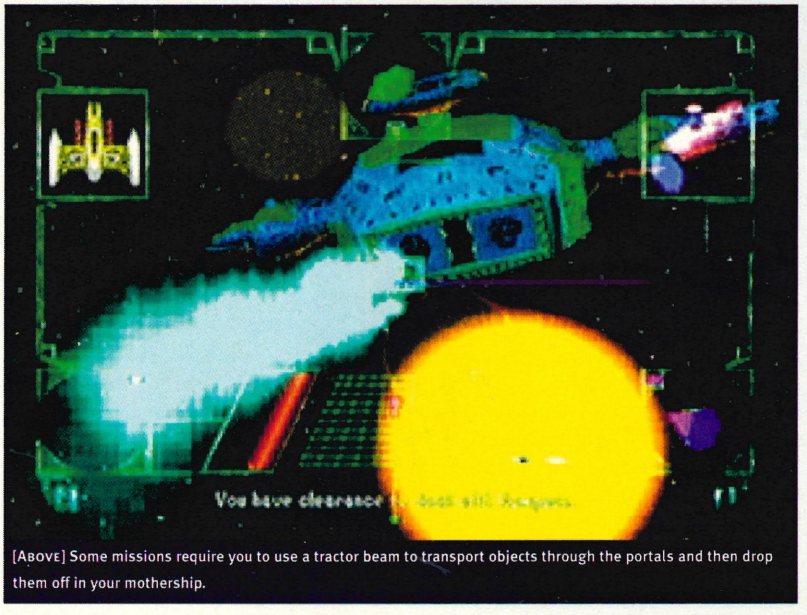
What's really teeth-jarringly bad is that you are so utterly fragile that many missions end in nano-seconds, with you blasted into dust by a sneak attack. The shields on any of your Repton craft are so ineffective they make a wet paper bag more preferable as a means of defence, and all-too often the cry is "what the hell hit me?"

Rage really need to have included a more beefy line of defence, and one that lets you know you're being attacked and how much longer you can hang on. The only prior warning of impending doom is a slight jarring of the ship and a barely audible "tchf" noise, which in the midst of battle can easily be mistaken for one of your own missile launches.



[Above] Docking and launching is a manually operated affair and you must match the rotation of the space station to do it safely – just like *Elite*.

Both *Elite* and *Wing Commander IV*, *Darklight*'s nearest contemporaries, had shields and warning signs which were used to judge whether it was safe to continue the attack, or bug out and retreat. This game has none of that; giving every mission a distinct flavour of kamikaze.



[Above] Some missions require you to use a tractor beam to transport objects through the portals and then drop them off in your mothership.

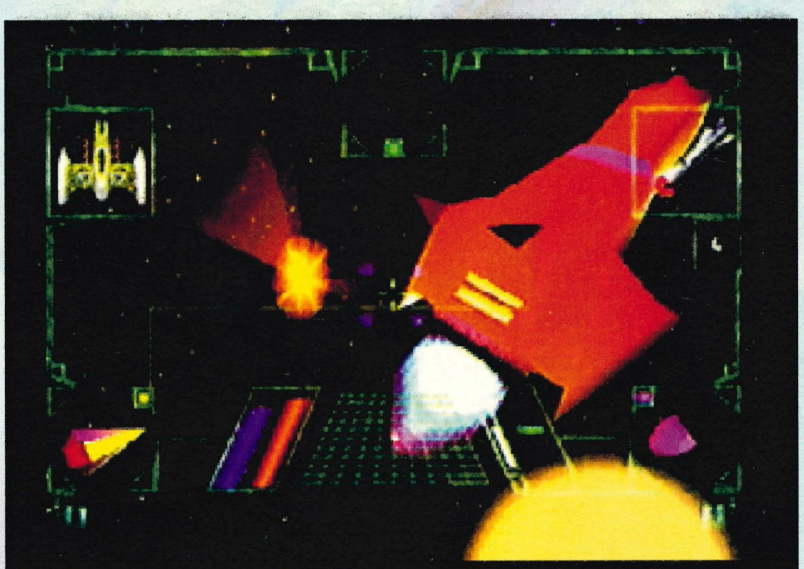
PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: EA
Contact: 01753 549442
Price: £44.99
Release date: Out June '97

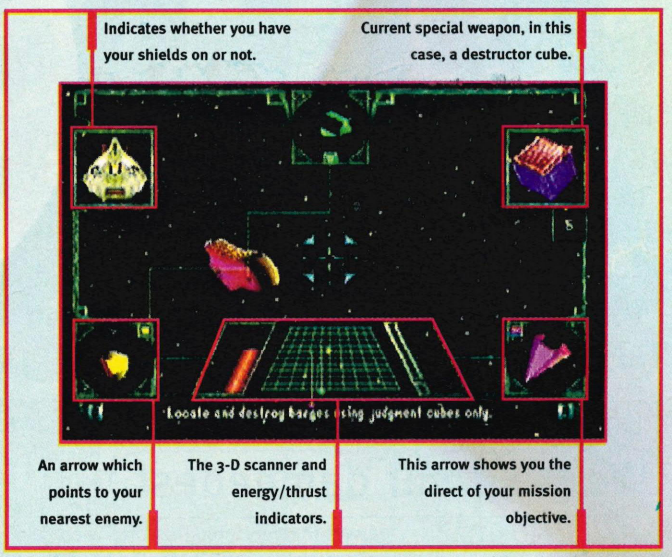


ONE PLAYER

T CONFLICT



[Above] You rarely get to see enemy craft this close up, as they will instantly vapourise you on contact. Note the gleaming laser ball – now that's PlayStation trickery for you.



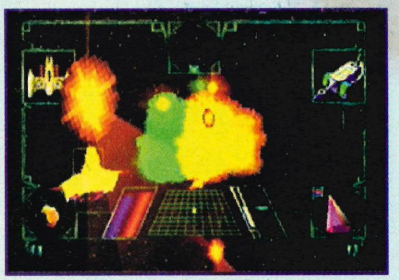




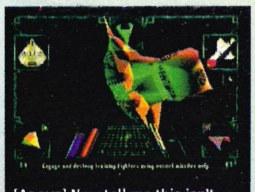
[Above] The training missions get you used to firing the vast arsenal of weapons. It's a shame to destroy these well crafted barges.











[Above] Now tell me this isn't some of the most impressive light sourced PSX graphics you've ever seen.

It is also far too easy to crash into enemy ships, as everyone seems to have a death wish and make no evasive manoeuvres. Dog-fights tend to descend into head-on games of chicken, with you hoping desperately that he explodes before you both smack into each other.

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

You also never feel involved in *Darklight* in anything like the way you do in the *Wing Commander* games, and therefore you begin to care less and less about the fate of your fellow Reptons. There maybe be plenty of intrigue and intergalactic double-dealing going on in *Darklight Conflict*, but I'll be buggered if I can find any of it!

"This is how a space adventure should look..."

Darklight Conflict is a solid space shoot-'em-up which trips up on some fundamental rules of engagement. With a stronger plot and a more enjoyable flight model it would be in PLAY Classic territory for sure, but the bottom line is it's not that enjoyable to play.

PLAY

LOOKS	9
SOUNDS	4
GAMEPLAY	7
VALUE	6
2001	5

PLAYED **79%**

A great engine which yearns for a better game!

ALTERNATIVELY:
WING COMMANDER IV (62%)
STARFIGHTER 3000 (85%)

INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR SOCCER PRO



THE FOOTBALL SEASON MAY BE WELL AND TRULY OVER, BUT NOBODY HAS TOLD KONAMI, WHO IS SET TO RELEASE THE EXQUISITE-LOOKING *ISS PRO*.

Written By Tom Sargent

We tried our damnedest.

Honestly we did. The powers that be stated that there were to be "strictly no corny football-related puns" in this particular review. The contract was made up, we signed it, and sat stony-faced chewing our pencils in nervous anticipation of attempting the impossible task that lay ahead.



You have to admit, though, it's a funny old game, *ISS Pro*. It seems only yesterday that we were frantically bashing the buttons playing *ISS Deluxe*, and now, before we've had time to draw breath, a swanky new version (polygonal magnificence and all) has arrived and been placed into our fetid palms.

You could go on and say that this particular series is a game of two halves too, because those of you who are familiar with the N64 scene will no doubt recognise the unmistakable similarities between this and a certain *J League Perfect Striker*, and they are one and the same, bar a few graphical enhancements and a modified control system on the N64.

I'D LOVE IT IF WE BEAT THEM...

If we had to lay our cards on the table and say which was the best football game currently available on the PlayStation, most of us would plump for the gameplay-fest, *Soccer '97*. However, after a couple of days wearing-down our thumbs playing *ISS Pro*, we're beginning to wonder if there is a new challenger to the revered footy-sim crown.

It's not that there is an obvious winner, because as far as we're concerned they are too divergent to make a direct comparison. *ISS Pro* is played at a much more pedestrian pace, which certainly isn't a bad thing, especially when you consider the extensive variety of player animations that have been incorporated into each player.

Attention to detail is superlative; the tackling, felling and dribbling animations have been given some special attention, and it shows when they run around the pitch performing their intricate skills. It's probably this close attention to detail that means it takes longer to get from one end

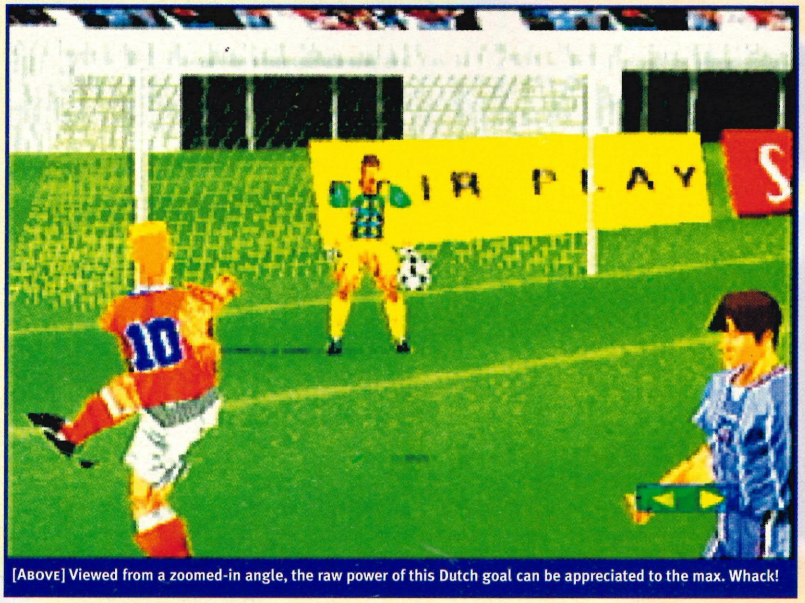
PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Konami
Customer support: 01895 853000
Price: £44.99
Release date: June '97





[ABOVE] There are two kinds of throw-in, long or short. When you've chosen the length and direction the view flicks back to the chosen in-game perspective



[ABOVE] Viewed from a zoomed-in angle, the raw power of this Dutch goal can be appreciated to the max. Whack!



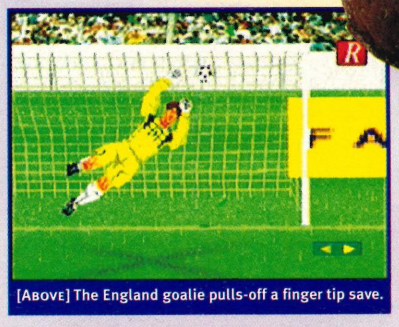
[Above] This camera shot from behind the goal demonstrates the effective use of replaying goals. Just look at the net bulge as the 'keeper dives in vain.



[Above] The ball is loose in the penalty area, the rain is pelting down and players are running around like headless chickens.



[Above] The penalty shoot-out. Simply pick your spot using the D-Pad and press the fire button. Fingers crossed and you'll fool the keeper.



[Above] The England goalie pulls-off a finger tip save.





"*ISS Pro* slowly draws you in the more you play, its just a matter of adjusting to the pace and style..."

of the pitch to the other, although you do certainly think more about player placement and when to make tackles.

Now do I not like that

The level of detail that has been lavished-upon each of the 30 international kit designs is second to none. Before each game, you're treated to the two teams trotting out onto the pitch, where they stand in line waiting for the anthems and every international team (no local ones and no real player names either!) is sporting their proper kit.

Playing *ISS Pro* takes some getting used to. After only a few minutes, it feels too sluggish to enjoy, as you have to adjust to the fact that the motion captured polygon players restrict the speed of play and, at times, lag behind the specific move that you're trying to pull-off. For example, when in possession of the ball, if you release the sprint button and attempt to change direction, quite often you will have the ball whipped from beneath your feet by a player from the opposing side as a direct result of the animation not being quick enough.

Questionable defending

You soon learn to compensate, however, and lurking beneath the surface of these few obvious niggles lies a truly compelling game of simulated football. *ISS Pro* slowly draws you in the more you play, its just a matter of adjusting to the pace and style that is required to



[Above] Corner kicks provide the opportunity for some diving headers, overhead kicks and volleys. Crossing accurately is pretty tough, however.



[Above] Before each game, the teams strut out proudly and line up, tears welling-up for their own National Anthems. Stirring stuff, and it looks fab.



[Above] Korea score the first of a hat-full of goals. The celebrations are particularly well done. Just looks at the dejected defender to the left.

TERRACE TREATS

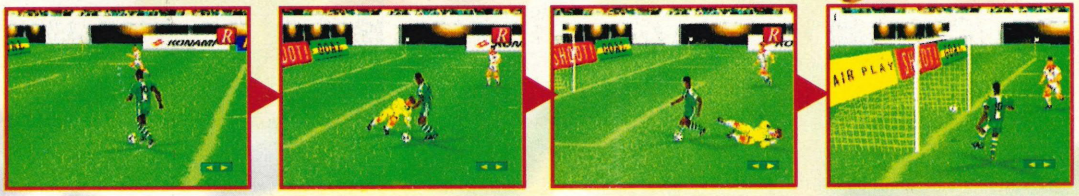
Those of you who regularly visit your local football ground will no doubt have sampled the culinary delights on offer. We've compiled a list of our own indigestible favourites.

1. The 'Growler' meat-pie
2. Sickly sausage rolls
3. Bovril
4. Plain flavoured crisps
5. Wilting pasties
6. Carpet burgers
7. Vinegar-soaked chips
8. Cardboard pizza
9. Lard butties
10. Cold tea (too strong in a plastic cup, oh and there's no sugar left)



MAGIC ROUNDABOUT

Rounding the Goalkeeper is one of the most satisfying skills in *ISS Pro*. The trick is to wait for him to commit himself without knocking the ball too far in front of your player.



ONE TO ONE

A LOVELY TOUCH WHEN MASTERED IS THE ONE-TWO. THIS IS ESPECIALLY EFFECTIVE WHEN YOU WANT TO FOOL OR GET AROUND THE OPPOSITION.



THE ENGLAND MID-FIELDER BACK HEELS THE BALL TO THE NUMBER SEVEN WHO RACES TO MEET THE PASS.



THE NUMBER SEVEN IMMEDIATELY RESPONDS BY RETURNING THE BALL TO THE ORIGINAL MID-FIELDER.



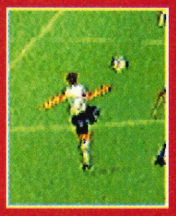
THE ORIGINAL MID-FIELDER IS NOW CLEAN THROUGH WITH PLENTY OF SPACE TO BEGIN AN ASSAULT DEEP INTO NIGERIAN TERRITORY.

DO THE HUSTLE

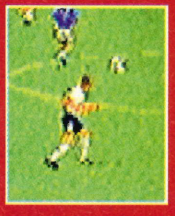
BECOME THE COMPLETE PLAYER BY LEARNING THE SUBTLE MOVES THAT ISS PRO HAS TO OFFER.



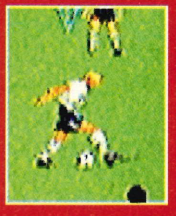
BARGE. THIS IS AN EXCELLENT WAY OF KNOCKING THE OPPONENT OFF THE BALL AND GAINING POSSESSION.



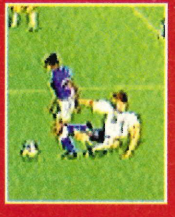
CHIP. BY GENTLY TAPPING THE LONG PASS BUTTON, A DELICATE CHIP CAN BE PERFORMED. THIS CAN FOOL THE 'KEEPER TOO.



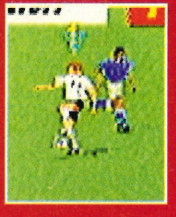
HEADER. REALLY EFFECTIVE FOR SCORING GOALS FROM SET PIECES AND CLEARING THE BALL FROM A TIGHT SPACE.



SHIMMY. THIS LITTLE MANOEUVRE IS BETTER KNOWN AS THE 'CHRISSY WADDLE' AND KEEPS YOUR OPPONENT GUESSING.



SLIDE. THE SLIDE TACKLE IS THE STAPLE DIET FOR ALL PLAYERS. VERY EFFECTIVE AT REGAINING POSSESSION, BUT CAN GET YOU SENT OFF.



TRAP. BY POSITIONING YOUR PLAYER CORRECTLY, YOUR PLAYER CAN TRAP THE BALL FROM A LONG CROSS.



[ABOVE] The goalkeeper vainly dives to his right, but the shot beats him on the near post. In replay mode, you can adjust the angles to your heart's content.

become proficient.

You've got a short pass option and there's also a longer pass which activates a yellow cross-hair at exactly the landing point of the ball. This is a real pain at times, because the computer always seems to have a player waiting precisely at this spot.

But undoubtedly, the real star of the ball skills show is the 'through ball.' Pressing the ▲ button sends the ball past defenders into the path of a striker, who has to keep running to catch it up. This works an absolute treat when mastered and provides some magic moments every time you successfully split the defence. If ever the saying "easy to play, hard to master" applied to a game, then this is surely it, and heading, sprinting, one-twos and overhead kicks provide the opportunity to let the veteran joypad-waggler really show off.

Set pieces such as corners and free kicks need considerable practice to master though, first, because the view changes when you execute the desired shot, and second, you never know quite who you are passing to because there's no arrow as if most other football games.

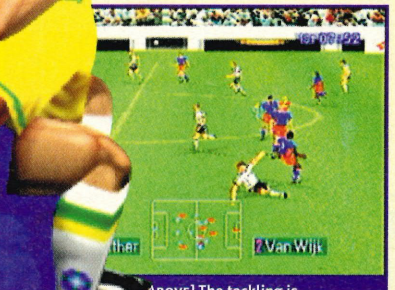
SAINT AND GREAVSIE

A special mention must go to the commentary, which is woeful in the extreme; who is this joker anyway? "Sorchio..." what? The referee is totally inconsistent too. Sometimes you can hack a player down in

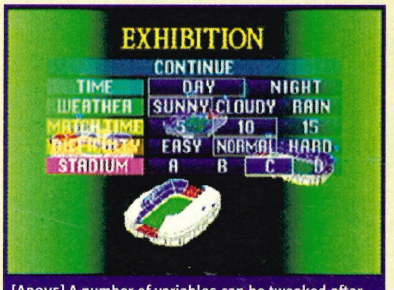




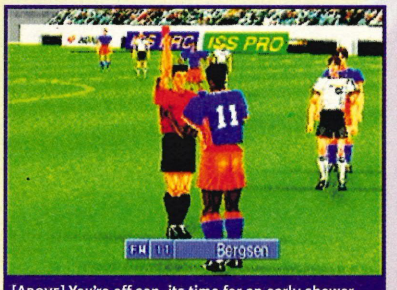




[ABOVE] The tackling is particularly well executed. You can usually get away anything.



[ABOVE] A number of variables can be tweaked after the mode of play has been chosen and matches can even be played during the day or night.



[ABOVE] You're off son, its time for an early shower. The referees are extremely inconsistent, dishing-out cards almost willy-nilly.

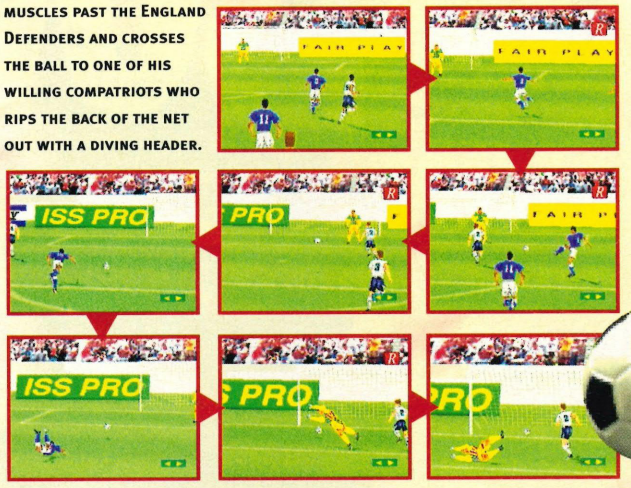


[Above] Set pieces, such as free kicks are difficult to pull-off, as it's hard to see who to pass to.



GOLDEN GOALS

The replay facility is second to none. You can watch your favourite goals again and again and from any angle, zoomed-in or from a distance. This sequence of events shows the supreme skills of the Brazilians, one of whom muscles past the England defenders and crosses the ball to one of his willing compatriots who rips the back of the net out with a diving header.





the box and get away with it, other times, it's a red card for something completely innocuous.

Our biggest gripe lies in the lack of variety of goals scored, especially at long range. This appears to due to the distinct absence of shot strength, regardless of the inclusion of a power bar. In fact, the best way to score is to wait for the 'keeper to parry the ball (which he does far too often), pounce on the rebound, and take it around him after he commits to a save.

At the end of the day Konami has done an admirable job in producing an excellent game of football, but we feel that *Soccer' 97* just pips it to the post in gameplay stakes. The method of passing and tackling in mid-field adds a whole new dimension to computer footy, but it's not that fast, and shot strength is sorely lacking. Great fun, but not as big a breakthrough as the N64 version, although technically it's definitely top of the heap.

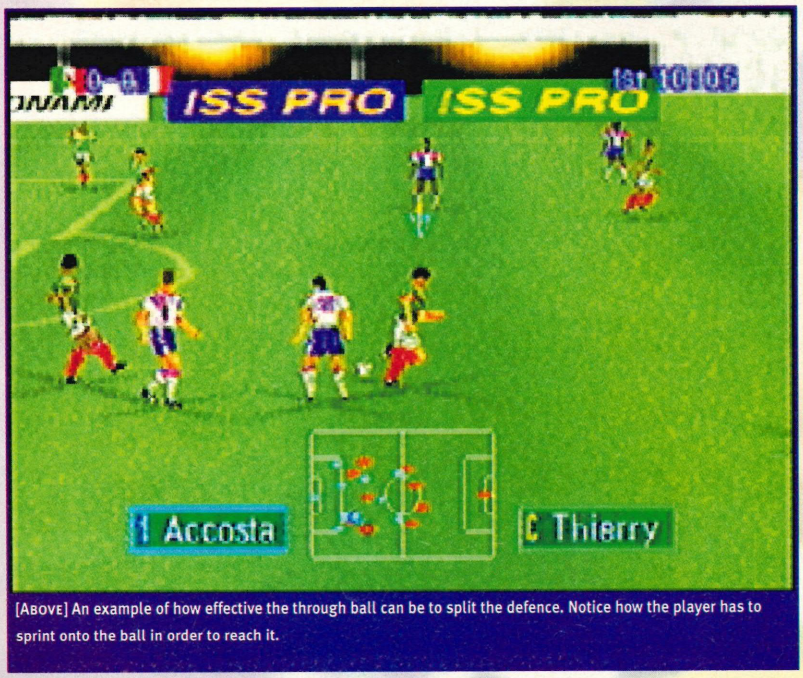
"Attention to detail is superlative..."



SCORCHIO!

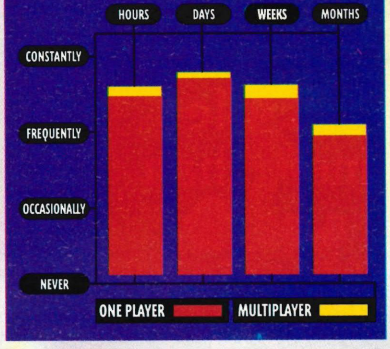
Quite a few goals are scored from the through ball, where the defence are split wide open, it's then a case of slotting it past the charging goalie. There you go my son, sweet as a nut.





[Above] An example of how effective the through ball can be to split the defence. Notice how the player has to sprint onto the ball in order to reach it.

LONG TERM PLAY...



PLAY

Looks	9
Sounds	4
Gameplay	8
Value	8
Skillful	8

PLAYED 84%

Aesthetically pleasing, but flawed in places

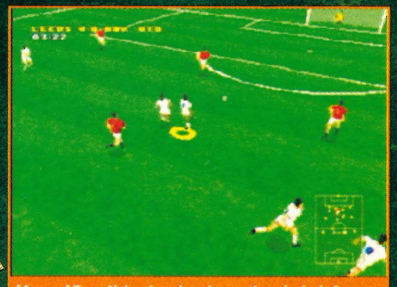
ALTERNATIVELY:
Soccer '97 (82%)
Int Superstar Soccer Deluxe (83%)

ACTUA SOCCER CLUB EDITION

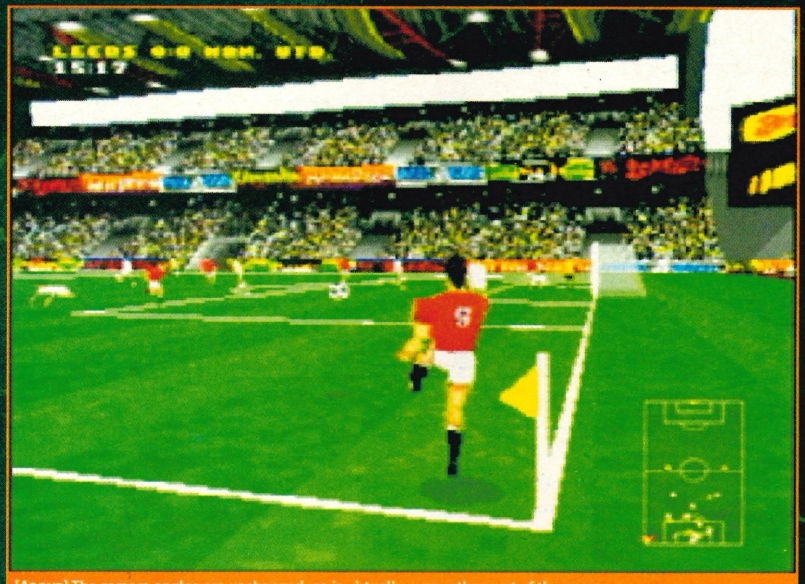
ACTUA SOCCER COMES HOME, BUT WITH ACTUA SOCCER 2 JUST AROUND THE CORNER, ARE WE REALLY THAT INTERESTED?

Written By Tom Sargent

The Games That Time Forgot



[ABOVE] Tony Yeboah unleashes a thunderbolt from over 35 yards. Standing still for a split second increases the shot power.



[ABOVE] The camera angles are unchanged, as is virtually every other part of the game.

The anticipation,

hype and expectation of the release of *Actua Soccer* two years ago caused more than a stir within the games industry. Its revolutionary motion capture technology sent football fans spinning with delight and everybody raved over its visual finesse. It was only after extensive play that people saw through this graphical veil and found that gameplay elements were severely lacking in a number of areas; the woeful goal keeping and your own players getting in the way of passes to name but a few.

It's pretty disappointing to discover that the most recent accretion to the series, *Club Edition*, is in fact little more than a barely glorified data disk, consisting of Premier League teams instead of the usual International teams. They've even had the audacity to omit the 'sticker album' style photos that were promised in the early press releases last month too. Also, the actual AI routines and graphics are exactly the same as the original PlayStation version, which means all the old bugs and an exclusive new one are back to plague you once more. Doh!

"Little more than a barely glorified data disk..."

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Gremlin Interactive
Customer support: 01142 753423
Price: £44.99
Release date: Out Now

ONE PLAYER | MULTIPLE PLAYERS | MEMORY CARD

OWN GOAL

More noticeably, the goalkeeper AI is unchanged; he won't come out for the ball when he should, it still bounces over his head far too easily, and he still insists on throwing it out to opposing players. Why-oh-why haven't the programmers adressed this? The goalie's diving is better, but now you can slip the ball either side of him, culminating in yet more comedy goals.

Player selection is unchanged too, where the wrong bloke can still be selected and you have to wait about half an hour for a tackled player to get up. Incredibly, there's a new bug to moan about, which rears its head in the simulation mode and causes the star players to kick more slowly than everyone else rendering this mode virtually unplayable.

This kind of programming incompetence is simply unforgiveable, but we can only hope that Gremlin remedy all of these bugs in the up-and-coming *Actua Soccer 2*, which could and should be fantastic. Forget this tosh and wait. Comprendé?



[ABOVE] Each player is rated out of 100 for a number of attributes ranging from Discipline to Stamina.



PLAY

LOOKS	6
SOUNDS	6
GAMEPLAY	4
VALUE	3
BALLS	3

PLAYED 62%

We want *Actua Soccer 2* – now!

ALTERNATIVELY:
ACTUA SOCCER 2 (OCTOBER '97)
SOCCER '97 (83%)

BUSTER BROS COLLECTION

"99 RED BALLOONS FLOATING IN THE SUMMER SKY..." POP! "98 RED BALLOONS FLOATING IN THE SUMMER SKY..." POP! (SING UNTIL YOU REACH ZERO).

Written By Tom Sargent

Buster Bros, or *Pang*, as it was affectionately known over here, was one of those stupendously addictive games which proved so popular in the arcades that it spawned two sequels: *Super Buster Brothers* and *Buster Buddies*.

Namco hasn't exactly rushed this compilation onto the shelves though, it's been nearly seven years since the third installment first appeared, but don't let that fool you; this is a seriously addictive game.

You could argue that the series proved to be such a winner due to the maddeningly simplistic gameplay, or perhaps it was the fact that each game relied almost entirely on reaction time and quick thinking – always a recipe for a classic arcade game. Whatever the reason, you soon find yourself uttering the immortal phrase, "just one more go," and before you know it, five hours have gone by.

BURSTING

Playing any one of the *Buster* series is a doddle. There are no hidden moves or combos and they all play very similarly indeed, with the exception of improved graphics and tweaked gameplay elements in each successive game. You control a man who runs along the bottom of the screen wielding a kind of harpoon gun which fires vertically to burst balloons. And that's it! No seriously. Apart from the fact that you make a mad dash for weapon power-ups and fruit bonuses there's really little else to test the old grey matter other than learning certain patterns and basic strategies.

Not that this game lacks a hugely addictive challenge. Basic it may be, but beneath this veil of simplicity lies a level of playability that is difficult to fathom. Why is this so? Perhaps it's the more subtle aspects of the game as you make headway through the levels, such as the freeze time, shield, destructible platforms and special balloons which either clear a whole level or provide huge bonuses. At the end of the day it has to be the culmination of a basic control system mixed with the attention to detail in gameplay which makes the *Buster Brothers* so endearing. Yes it looks rubbish, and yes we really are too old for this stuff, but who wants maturity when games are this fun?



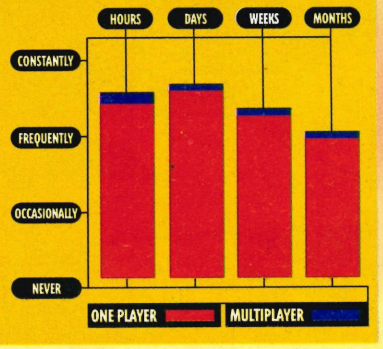
[ABOVE] On some levels a huge bomb appears. Burst this to take out any surrounding balloons.

TOP 'POP' TIPS

IN EACH VERSION OF THE BUSTER SERIES, A DEMO SECTION OUTLINES HOW TO USE EACH OF THE VALUABLE PICK-UPS THAT FALL FROM BURST BALLOONS. FOR EXAMPLE, THE CLOCK ICON FREEZES THE BALLOONS MOMENTARILY GIVING YOU A COUPLE OF SECONDS TO SHOOT AS MANY OF THEM AS POSSIBLE. OTHER BONUSES INCLUDE: AN EGG-TIMER (EXTENDS TIME LIMIT), VULCAN MISSILE (THREE WAY FIRE), BOMBS, POWER WIRE (WHEN FIRED, THEY STICK TO PLATFORMS) AND STAR BALLOONS (CLEAR THE WHOLE LEVEL).



LONG TERM PLAY...





[ABOVE] Two player mode is literally twice as much fun, especially when you race to collect the pick-ups.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Capcom
Supplier: The Video Games Centre on 01202 527314
Price: £59.99
Release date: Out Now (Import)

ONE PLAYER | MULTIPLE PLAYERS

MEMORY CARD



[ABOVE] When you burst balloons, various weapon-enhancing and bonus items fall out.



[ABOVE] Avoid contact with balloons or you spin out and loose a life.

PLAY

LOOKS	6
SOUNDS	5
GAMEPLAY	8
VALUE	8
POPPED	8

PLAYED 86%

Bursting with simplistic, addictive enjoyment!

ALTERNATIVELY:
BUBBLE BOBBLE (85%)
BUST-A-MOVE 2 (88%)

100% PlayStation 0% fair

PowerStation

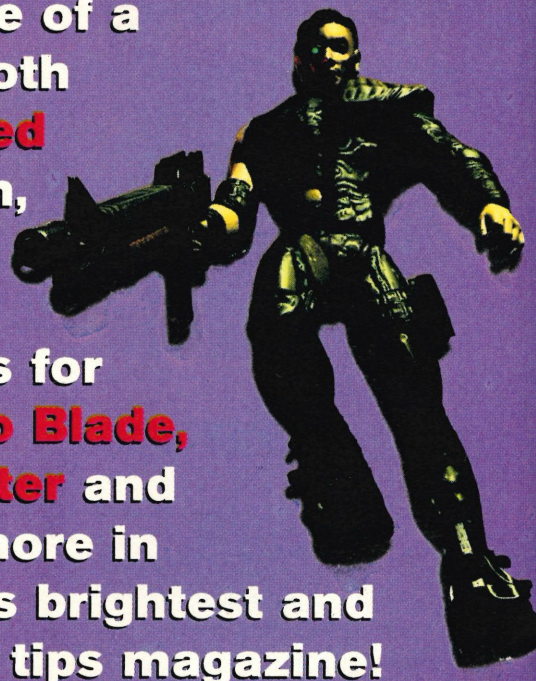
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WALL OF GAME

NEED FOR SPEED 2

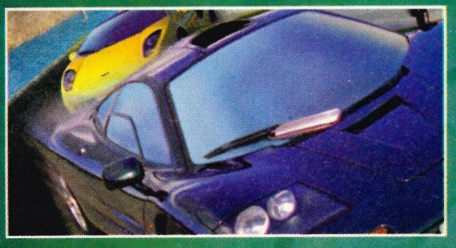
EXCLUSIVE!

Undoubtedly the most realistic and detailed racing game on the market, *Need for Speed 2* has eight of the world's most powerful cars and six nicely designed tracks to thrash them on. It has already earned itself a PLAY Classic in the pages of this magazine, and that was before we discovered the buckets of secrets which Electronic Arts has embedded in the game. Gentlemen, start your engines...

CHEATS

NINE CAMERA VIEWS

Set the game up how you would normally, choosing Tournament, Knockout or Single Race. After picking a car, select Race from the main menu and immediately hold L1, L2, R1, R2, ■, ▲, ● and ✕ until the race begins. You will have nine camera views to race with instead of the normal four. This code lasts for one race at a time.



BONUS CAR

Select Options from the main menu, and then choose Password. Enter the word LILZIP and press Start. A message will appear saying "Bonus Car," and when you go to the Player Car screen you will see the final licenced supercar of the game, the Ford Indigo, is selectable. If you save your game to the memory card after entering this code, you will keep the Indigo for good.



BONUS TRACK

Go to the Password screen again and enter SHOTME. Press Start and you will get a "Bonus Track" message. Look in the Location menu and the Monolithic Studios track will be there. Saving your game at this point means you don't need to enter the code next time you load *Need for Speed 2*.



PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Customer Support: 01753 549442
Price: £44.99
Release date: Out now





WALL OF GAME

NUMBER 22

NEED FOR SPEED 2

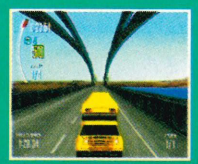
ENTER THESE CODES AT THE PASSWORD SCREEN FOR ANY ONE OF THE 26 SECRET CARS. IF YOU ARE PLAYING IN SPLIT SCREEN MODE, SUBSTITUTE "ME" AT THE END OF EACH CODE WITH "U" TO GIVE PLAYER TWO A SECRET CAR. FOR EXAMPLE, ENTERING "BUSU" WOULD GIVE THE SECOND PLAYER THE SCHOOL BUS AND SO ON. EACH CODE IS ACTIVE FOR ONLY ONE RACE.

CIVILIAN CARS

OLD ARMY TRUCK
ARMYME
TOP SPEED: 65 MPH
TRANSMISSION: 5 SPEED



SCHOOL BUS
BUSME
TOP SPEED: 67 MPH
TRANSMISSION: 6 GEARS



VW TYPE 3
BEETME
TOP SPEED: 82 MPH
TRANSMISSION: 4 GEARS



BMW 5 SERIES
BMRME
TOP SPEED: 129 MPH
TRANSMISSION: 5 GEARS



MERCEDES 500 SL
BNZME
TOP SPEED: 149 MPH
TRANSMISSION: 4 GEARS



VOLKS WAGEN BEETLE
BUGME
TOP SPEED: 82 MPH
TRANSMISSION: 4 GEARS



CITROEN 2CV
CITME
TOP SPEED: 63 MPH
TRANSMISSION: 4 GEARS



JEEP COMMANCHE
JEPME
TOP SPEED: 100 MPH
TRANSMISSION: 5 GEARS



TOYOTA LANDCRUISER
LCME
TOP SPEED: 90 MPH
TRANSMISSION: 5 GEARS



LIMOUSINE
LIMOME
TOP SPEED: 109 MPH
TRANSMISSION: 4 GEARS



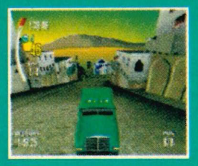
MAZDA MX-5
MAZME
TOP SPEED: 110
TRANSMISSION: 5 GEARS



AUDI QUATRO
QUATME
TOP SPEED: 110 MPH
TRANSMISSION: 5 GEARS



SEMI
SEMIME
TOP SPEED: 78 MPH
TRANSMISSION: 6 GEARS



NEW ARMY TRUCK
SNOWME
TOP SPEED: 65 MPH
TRANSMISSION: 5 GEARS



MONOLITHIC STUDIOS TRAM
TRAMME
TOP SPEED: 44 MPH
TRANSMISSION: 4 GEARS



VW VAN
VANME
TOP SPEED: 76 MPH
TRANSMISSION: 5 GEARS



VOLVO ESTATE
VOVME
TOP SPEED: 144 MPH
TRANSMISSION: 5 GEARS



JEEP YJ
YJME
TOP SPEED: 102 MPH
TRANSMISSION: 5 GEARS



NEED FOR SPEED II

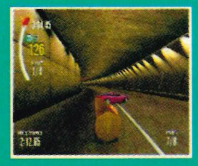
NEED FOR SPEED II

TRACKSIDE SCENERY

MYSTIC PEAKS CRATE
CRATME
TOP SPEED: 182 MPH
TRANSMISSION: 6 GEARS



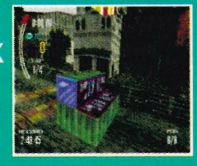
PACIFIC SPIRIT LOG
LOGME
TOP SPEED: 182 MPH
TRANSMISSION: 6 GEARS



NORTH COUNTRY OUTHOUSE
OUTHME
TOP SPEED: 182 MPH
TRANSMISSION: 6 GEARS



GREEN MEDITERRANEO KIOSK
STDAME
TOP SPEED: 182 MPH
TRANSMISSION: 6 GEARS



BLUE MEDITERRANEO KIOSK
STDBME
TOP SPEED: 182 MPH
TRANSMISSION: 6 GEARS



RED MEDITERRANEO KIOSK
STDCME
TOP SPEED: 182 MPH
TRANSMISSION: 6 GEARS



MONOLITHIC STUDIOS T-REX
TREXME
TOP SPEED: 182 MPH
TRANSMISSION: 6 GEARS



MONOLITHIC STUDIOS WAGON
WAGOME
TOP SPEED: 182 MPH
TRANSMISSION: 6 GEARS



PLAY

PLAY CLASSIC



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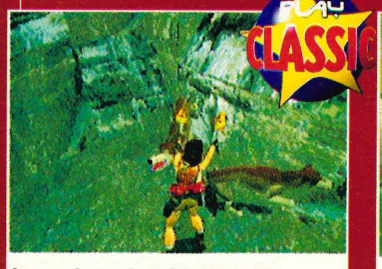
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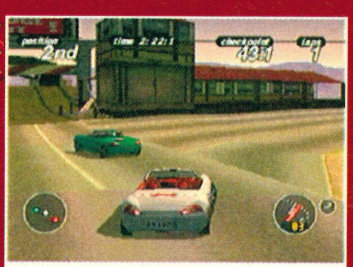
[ABOVE] *Tomb Raider* was rated 94% in issue 14 and we reckon it's the best PSX game ever!



[ABOVE] *Micro Machines V3* has already gone down a storm with the Play boys – get it now!



[ABOVE] Feel the force of *Soul Blade* – the most accurate and visually stunning beat-'em-up ever!



[ABOVE] *Porsche Challenge* looks gorgeous and is especially realistic when used with a steering wheel.



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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WING COM

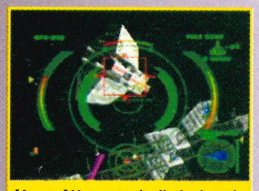


BLAIR IS BACK. NOT THE GRINNING POLITICIAN, BUT COLONEL CHRISTOPHER, IN THE LATEST SWEEPING FOUR CD EPIC FROM EA.

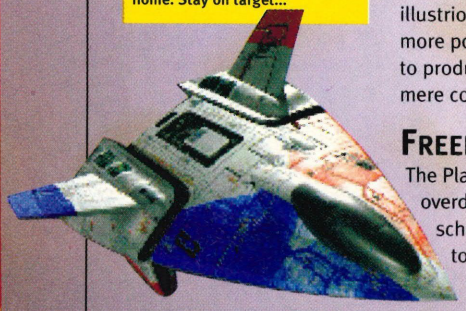
Written By Tom Sargent

Poor old Mark Hamill. The one time demi-god of the silver screen, who starred alongside a cast of fellow unknowns in what turned out to be the greatest space opera of all time, is now reduced to learning his lines in (arguably) the greatest computer space opera of all time.

How the mighty fall – but still manage to bring home a bob or two from the royalties and opening local supermarkets. For those of you who have been hibernating for the past couple of years, *Wing Commander IV* is the pretentious offspring of the illustrious third episode and looks bigger, more polished and cost a cool $10 million to produce. Which is quite staggering for a mere computer game.



[Above] You got missile lock and he's right in front of you, there's no way he's gonna make it home. Stay on target...



FREEDOM

The PlayStation version has been long overdue, when you consider those scheming PC owners have been privy to this cinematic tour-de-force for well over a year now. *Wing IV* falls into two distinct categories and this is where one of the main problems lies.

On one hand, there's nearly two hours of impressive FMV footage to drool over, which undeniably immerses the player into an authentic universe containing 'real' people.

But on the other, you're frantically blasting Pirates and members of The Black Lance out of the sky in a pretty average 3-D space combat simulator. The whole game leaves you asking the nagging question, is this supposed to be film with a shooting section thrown in for good measure, or vice-versa?

PLAY INFORMATION

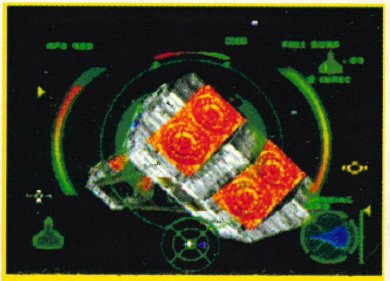
Publisher: Electronic Arts
Customer support: 01753 549 442
Price: £44.99
Release date: 13 June '97



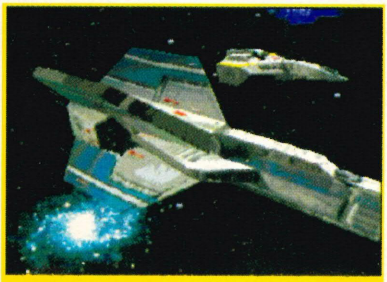
ONE PLAYER



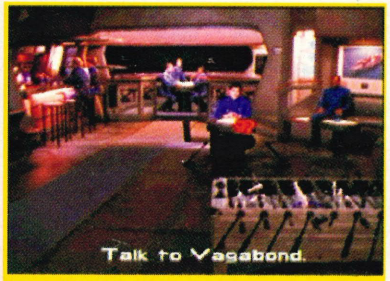
MEMORY CARD



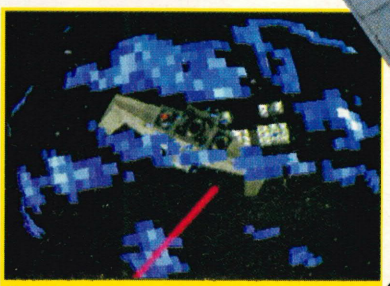
[Above] A fly-by past one of your own Corvettes that you're expected to protect at all costs.



[Above] After clearing out each area of baddies, it's a case of jumping to the next way-point.



[Above] The Officer's Lounge where you can catch up on all the gossip. There's bound to be a porn star to chat-up in here somewhere... Ginger?



[Above] When your enemies take a direct hit, a glowing blue orb surrounds your ship. These are your shields and they don't last forever.



As a stand alone movie it would die a slow and painful death, because most of the acting (bar a few notable exceptions) is hammier than a pig's arse! The 3-D action is too repetitive to warrant any real accolade, so put together, all you're left with is a strange hybrid that sits uncomfortably between two genres.

You are Colonel Christopher Blair, hero of countless heroic skirmishes with the Kilrathi, who has been recalled for duty to sort out a group of aggressors from the Boarder-Worlds. Basically, you listen to mission briefings, choose a wing-man and head-off into the void to rip open the hulls of the banditos.

Don't be fooled by the 'escorting' of Capital ships and Corvettes along the way, this is just a smoke screen for what essentially remains a simplistic 3-D shoot-'em-up. Sometimes, you get to fly on the surface of planets taking photographs or destroying vital installations, but this adds little to the long-term gameplay.

VIGILANCE

The space combat sections of the game are graphically unimpressive, with blocky explosions containing no more than three colours, and warped texture maps on the major ships if you get too close. It all becomes too familiar too soon, and you end up just rushing back to your base ship to catch up the with plot and get it over with.

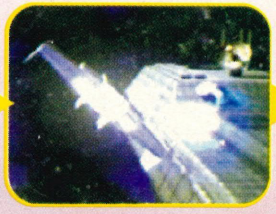
As with the third game you can interact

PESKY PIRATES

THE SCENE IS SET WITH AN EXTENDED OPENING SEQUENCE, WHERE A PEACE-LOVING HOSPITAL FRIGATE IS MERCILESSLY RIPPED ASUNDER BY A BAND OF ROGUE PIRATES (OR ARE THEY PART OF SOMETHING MORE SINISTER WE WONDER – HINT, HINT), WHO ARE HARBOURING A DEVASTATING NEW MAGNETIC LIMPET MINE AND FLY SWANKY NEW BANSHEE FIGHTERS, WHICH HAVE CLOAKING DEVICES AND AWESOME DESTRUCTIVE CAPABILITIES.



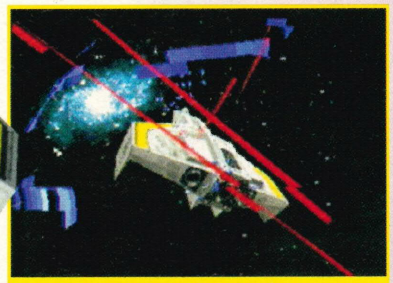




MANDER IV



[Above] Kaboom! This is what we want to see. Big, er, blocky explosions. Still it's good fun vapourising the enemy. Now where's the next victim...



[Above] Ouch! They're coming at you from every angle. Time to make like a tree and get out of here. Use your afterburners Chris!

"Hammier than a pig's arse!"

with other characters on your own ship, choosing different paths for each conversation, but ultimately you are steered inexorably to the next key scene. One section in particularly has you capturing the traitorous Admiral Tolwyn, and you get to choose his fate: release him or hold him for trial. No matter what route you take, Tolwyn escapes – what's so 'interactive' about this movie?

All in all, *Wing IV* is average *Battlestar Galactica* stuff, but nothing even vaguely ground-breaking. What keeps you interested is a fascinating story that's been filmed in real locations which just about manages to compensate for the mediocre battle sequences. A very expensive way to watch a B-movie!







HAMMY HAMILL

Mark Hamill has a pedigree that reads like a role of honour. But his success in the Star Wars trilogy has turned out to be his undoing. (If only he'd turned to the dark side, events might have been kinder to him).However – those on-screen grimaces and stony-faced acting have seen him through some pretty sticky encounters with numerous unsavoury characters. Here are a few magic moments from his repertoire:



The smug pose, or has he sat on something fruit-shaped?



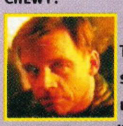
Surprise. What, you're really gonna slit my throat?



The threatening stare, or has he forgotten his lines again?



Pensive. Am I Luke or Blair in this game. And where's Han and Chewy?



The smouldering look. Don't mess with me, I'm a jedi knight. Or at least I was.

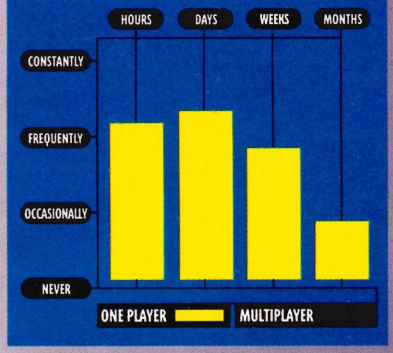




[Above] Federation Capital ships must be protected, escorted and even landed on. They play an integral part of the game.



LONG TERM PLAY...



PLAY

Looks	●●●●●○○○○○
Sounds	●●●●●●●●○○
Gameplay	●●●●●●○○○○
Value	●●●●●●●○○○
RADA	●●●●○○○○○○

PLAYED 67%

Fantastic production with below-par gameplay...

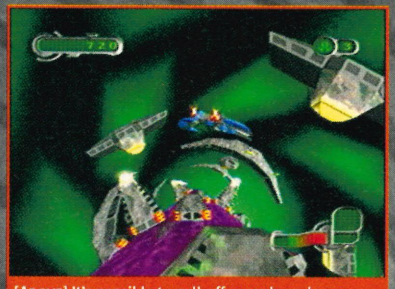
ALTERNATIVELY:
Wing Commander III (82%)
Darklight Conflict (out June '97)

NANOTEK

Join Virgin on its Fantastic Voyage into a deadly microscopic environment. No sign of Raquel Welsh though...



[Above] Halfway through a level, you'll be accosted by this bone-type alien which is a real tricky pest. Stick a couple of shots in him then scarper. Repeat until he's toast.



[Above] It's possible to pull-off some huge leaps. You go further the longer you hold the button down.



[Above] The colour schemes are varied and quite spectacular. Shame about the lack of gameplay.



[Above] To ease your burden, restart points are strategically scattered around each level.

Written By Tom Sargent

Hallelujah!

A shoot-'em-up that truly embraces the pure gameplay of the old school with open arms. It's not very often that you can walk into the office, plonk yourself next to the nearest PlayStation and play a new release without even glancing at the manual once.

Nanotek Warrior, however, relies entirely on your reactions and takes you back to a time when games were games, with none of this new-fangled graphical nonsense that we have to put up with... (er, thanks Tom, that'll do – Ed). It's a good job that this is a one player game, because within minutes sweat is pouring everywhere and you've got severe thumb ache from bashing the buttons. Better to suffer alone.

PLAY Information

Publisher: Virgin Interactive
Supplier: The Video Game Centre on 01202 527314
Price: £44.99
Release date: Out Now (Import)

One Player

Teeny-Weeny

The year is 2005 and the more traditional forms of combat have been abandoned in favour of a new miniaturised scientific terror. The 'plot', and we use this term extremely loosely, involves more techno-babble than an episode of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. Suffice to say you play the titular character in an attempt to prevent a group of rogue scientists who are using microscopic commando robots from assimilating the human race – cell by cell.

Nanotek Warrior places you in control of a Nanotek craft, which races along a pre-determined fibre-optic wire littered with obstacles and hyperactive enemies that spew forth all kinds of laser and bomb-related death. The frame rate is an ultra-fast 30fps, although the graphical pop-up can be horrific at times, which is unforgivable considering the technology that the programmers are dealing with.

Your ship is magnetically attached to the wire giving you freedom to move anywhere you please and it feels fantastic to play. Some of the levels take place on the outside of the tube, while others resemble that aged classic, Tempest. It is plainly evident that a great deal of play-testing has been lavished upon the control system too, because your ship can squeeze, leap, accelerate, turn and weave through any animate or inanimate obstacle in its path.

If a narrow gap suddenly appears, you can flip the ship vertically for a split

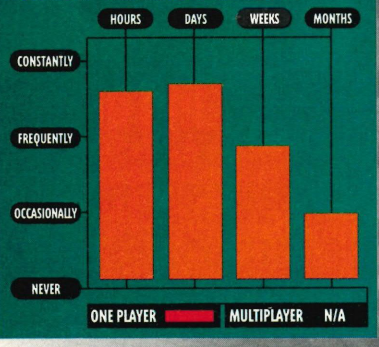
The Mother of All Microns

At the end of each level you are greeted by a Boss. A number of smaller drones orbit these monstrosities which protect the motherships in addition to spewing out valuable pick-ups for you to pilfer. Destroying them poses little problem after practice however, which proves to be a real disappointment when you consider how hard it is to reach them.



WARRIOR

LONG TERM PLAY...





[Above] You can move around and fire whilst in mid air which is essential. The control system is faultless and the game moves at a fair old pace.

second making for some inch-perfect escapes; additionally, you can swivel the direction of the ship on its axis left or right, which can really make a difference if you become adept enough.

WIRED

No shoot-'em-up would be complete without extra lives and power-ups and *Nanotek Warrior* doesn't disappoint. There are heaps of deadly projectiles to gather on your travels, some of which hug the surface and others which home-in on enemy robots. Before long you realise that it's worth keeping a few in reserve for particularly difficult areas, as things certainly become tough after a couple of levels.

Unfortunately, there are only ten levels and although graphically they're all pretty diverse, the gameplay remains uniform throughout. Left, right, jump, shoot. It soon becomes apparant that regardless of progress, each subsequent level offers very little to stimulate the player.

BIG BAD BOSSES

To be honest, the bosses are not really that bad at all. There are eight in total, each with distinctly different patterns of attack. Aesthetically speaking, they look superb, but at the end of the day, attacks always come from orbiting attachments, which attempt (usually in vain) to stop you destroying the main section in the middle.



This strange morphing alien has a pulsating shield which must be knocked out before finishing it off. Notice the weapon power-up to the right. That'll do nicely.



The second boss is quite unusual in that a giant metallic spider leaps around from a central platform, bombarding you with death-rays as it goes.



This beastie resembles one of the baddies in that ancient Sega classic, *Space Harrier*. This bugger is surrounded by shields which must be destroyed.



Huge transparent shields protect this throbbing mutha. To get through to the juicy central husk, wait until they momentarily flash off. Simple when you know how.

There's always the Bosses to look forward to, but they offer little challenge compared to the effort involved in actually reaching them. Ultimately, *Nanotek Warrior* is a hugely playable game considering it's 'on-rails' and looks the dog's danglies, but you have to question the longevity. Arcade fans will undoubtedly love its infectuous lure but sadly it won't last long.



[Above] There are plenty of extra weapons to collect, such as this horizontal scatter bomb. Use them sparingly and only when you really need them.



[Above] By using the shoulder buttons, the ship swivels left and right. Very useful indeed.



[Above] These annoying crab-like aliens are a real pest. You can leap over them but they are tenacious to say the least.



[Above] Your shields glow bright orange when you take a hit. Dodge or jump over the scenery to avoid collisions.

"Each subsequent level offers very little to stimulate the player..."

PLAY

LOOKS	8
SOUNDS	8
GAMEPLAY	9
VALUE	8
REACTIONS	8

PLAYED 76%

Playable, but ultimately shallow.

ALTERNATIVELY:
NOVASTORM (38%)
STARFIGHTER 3000 (85%)

BALLBLAZER



AN EIGHTIES CLASSIC MEETS MODERN DAY TECHNOLOGY IN THE FORM OF *BALLBLAZER CHAMPIONS*. DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO BE MASTER BLAZER?

Written By Graeme Nicholson

From *Speedball*

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: LucasArts
Contact: The Video Game Centre on 01202 527 314
Price: £49.99
Release date: Out Now (import)

ONE PLAYER | MULTIPLE PLAYERS | SPLIT SCREEN | MEMORY CARD

to *Riot*, it seems the futurists who put videogames together agree on one thing: at some point in the future the entire planet will be gripped by a sick fixation with a hideously violent stadium-based sport.

BallBlazer Champions follows this trend, and being the latest PlayStation release from George "I may look like an Ewok but I'm richer than most countries" Lucas' software publishing company, LucasArts, you would expect something fairly grand.

The inspiration for this game comes from the old Commodore 64 game *BallBlazer*, a 1985 hit with the players of that time, and a clear attempt has been made to introduce similar gameplay to a full three-dimensional, 32-bit environment.

A match is played in one of 12 strangely coloured arenas, and is fought out between just two ships, or "rotofoils" as they are called in this case. The idea is extremely simple. At either end of the arena is a goal, and you shoot the plasmorb into the other guy's goal to score a point. However if you were to try playing the game with only this knowledge, chances are you'd be more than a little bewildered by the experience as there is quite a bit more to grasp, and the games can often seem outrageously fast.

INTERSTELLAR

When you touch the glowing plasmorb, it becomes anchored in the air right in front of your rotofoil, even during the sharpest turns and large jumps, and you have to pilot the ship close to the goal and, when you think you have a clear shot, fire the plasmorb and hope for the best.

The goals have an eerie organic look to them, as they slowly expand and contract, and the coloured film that stretches across the goal mouth swirls like oil on water. In some stadiums the whole goal actually travels sedately from side to side, which adds a neat twist to the frantic action when you arrive at the other end of the pitch with the plasmorb that has just taken an eternity to get hold of, and the goal isn't where you remember it!

"Playing on your own is impossible, playing with a friend is unpleasant..."

Power-ups materialise with great frequency during a match, and they can be anything from homing missiles or lasers to the cloaking device which makes your rotofoil totally invisible.

When you are transporting the plasmorb your speed decreases greatly, making you an easy target for any of the other player's weapons, and if you get shot you're likely to lose the ball. And that happens a lot.

SYSTEM SHOCK

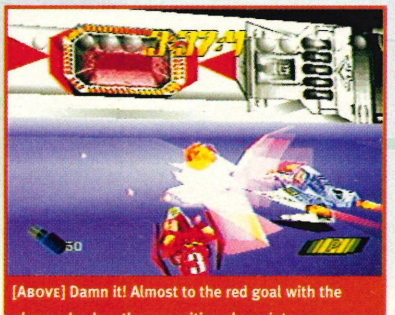
Brief experimentation with the split screen two player mode reveals that it is rendered almost totally unplayable due to major slow down problems, so you are left only with the one player game. While



[ABOVE] As your rotofoils are only just touching the floor, they handle a bit like you're on an ice rink which makes accurate aiming and movement unlikely.



[ABOVE] A game like this should have been designed around two player matches, but the screen jerks so badly that it's confusing at best.



[ABOVE] Damn it! Almost to the red goal with the plasmorb when the opposition slams into you, guns blazing, and regains possession – again!

CHAMPIONS





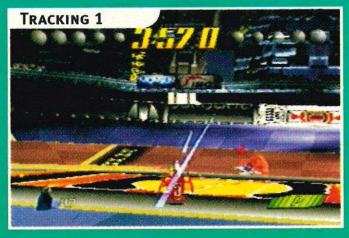


[Above] One thing *BallBlazer Champions* isn't short of is sharp graphics and good lighting effects, making good use of the PlayStation hardware.

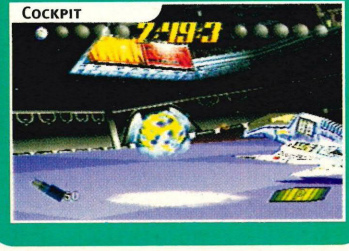
SEE NO EVIL

There are four perspectives available in *BallBlazer Champions*, ranging from the wide angle view of the first one to a kind of bumper camera. Initially you think a sports game like this, taking influences from ice hockey, basketball and a few others, would be best played from a distance so you can see the area around you, but the control just doesn't click like that. We found that the view from inside was the only way to be accurate in moving or scoring.

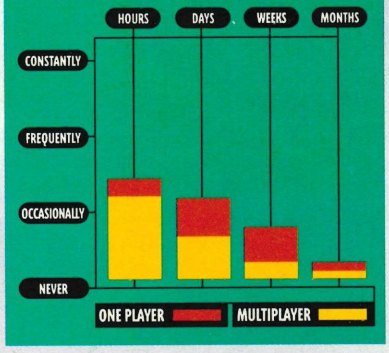








LONG TERM PLAY...



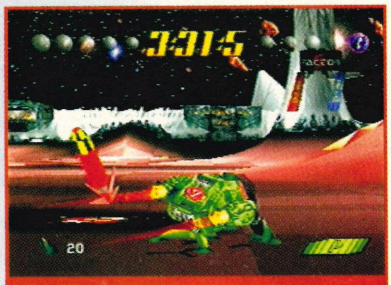
the graphics are very nice and tasteful, using a technique like *Motor Toon GP 2* where there is hardly any texture mapping and tons of smooth shading, playing against the computer controlled rotofoils is a wildly frustrating experience.

It doesn't appear that any work has gone into making your opponents more adaptable and instinctive, and instead it is blatantly obvious that you are competing against something which makes 66 million calculations per second.. The confusion caused by the speed was so obvious to the developers that they had to put in a 'Find' button, which points you towards the ball with one press. But this is a crude and temporary solution to the problem.

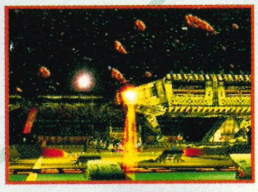
For *BallBlazer Champions* to be a winner, more attention should have been paid to the two player mode, which is after all where sports titles of any kind become most enjoyable. You won't be disappointed with the game's professional and crisp graphics, also using some gorgeous lighting effects and a good frame rate in the one player matches, but when playing on your own is impossible and playing with a friend is unpleasant, *Ballblazer Champions* ceases to have much use.



[Above] The speed, handling, ball launching power and energy stats help you pick the right rotofoil for you.



[Above] The floating red homing missile power up gives you four heat-seeking projectiles.







[Above] Earn tournament credits to buy various upgrades for your ship, from turbos to shields.

PLAY

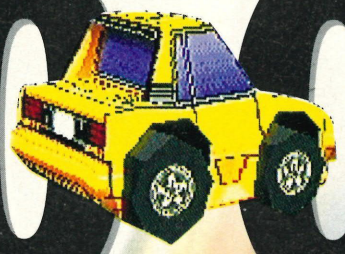
LOOKS	8
SOUNDS	4
GAMEPLAY	3
VALUE	3
ADDICTION	3

PLAYED **69%**

Looks better than it plays...

ALTERNATIVELY:
RIOT (72%)
TOTAL NBA '97 (92%)

CHORO Q2



REV-UP YOUR ENGINES AS TAKARO HERALDS THE RETURN OF THOSE WACKY RACERS FROM JAPAN!

Written By Tom Sargent

Just eight months after the original *Choro Q* (*Penny Racers* on PAL) was released, a visually similar sequel has been spawned from the creators of the enduring *Battle Area Toshinden* series.

Racing game fans will be delighted, however, to hear of a number of impressive enhancements over the original, most surprising of which is the fact that as you progress through the tracks, an astonishing 70 vehicles of varying shape and form become available to bomb around in.



[Above] You can check up on which upgrades have been chosen and possible areas that need to be improved.

Many of the cars are squashed down and extremely winsome versions of their real road-going cousins, such as the MR2 and VW Beetle, but to cater for just about everyone, there's also the chance to zip around in buses and even fire trucks. No complaints about variety then.





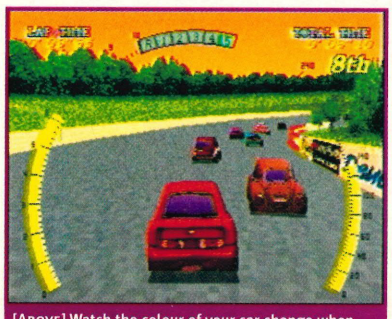
[Above] What a laugh! Driving up and down stairs is really exhilarating. Its harder to keep control too, so be careful.

SQUISHED

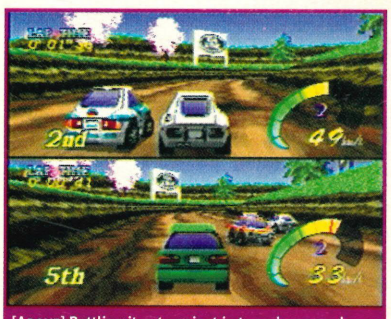
As anyone who exists for the sole purpose of driving pixellated cars at break-neck speeds will tell you (are you listening Graeme?), driving games live or die by three crucial factors: speed, driving model and that old chestnut, graphics. The latter is purely icing on the cake, but some would argue, an essential topping to give it the status of a classic.

So how does *Choro Q2* measure up in our trial-by-driving? Pretty damn well as it happens. Speed-wise, it happily pelts along, although at times there are noticeable signs of wait for it... s-l-o-w-d-o-w-n. Arrghhh! This doesn't detract from the fun-factor one iota strangely, because half of the time, you're wrestling with the controller as the back-end of your car flips out again.

This brings us nicely to the bizarre driving model, which certainly takes some getting used to. If you attempt to take a corner with your pedal to the metal, nine times out of ten the car will perform a perfect 360° spin-out. You soon learn to ease-up on the gas when performing this and it's a fantastic feeling when you regain control of your car and hit the accelerator once more on the peak of the bend.



[Above] Watch the colour of your car change when you play as the sun sets over the track.



[Above] Battling it out against in two player mode really gets the heart pounding.

"An astonishing 70 vehicles to bomb around in..."

CUSTOM-BUILD

Graphically, *Choro Q2* is no big deal. The game engine is very similar to the original and as such, looks rather dated. What it lacks in groovy visuals though, it more than makes up for in playability. We have a theory that the reason for the omission of road-side objects and general lack of detail is so that when your cars have been fully customised, the game engine allows for some seriously speedy vehicles.

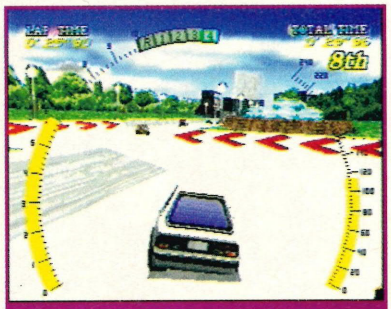
The cars themselves look fantastic, featuring some of the cutest designs ever. You can honk your horn, change gear, and pull-off some ridiculous hand-brake turns given practice.

The great thing about *Choro Q2* is the splendid learning curve, being easy to play initially, but hard to master properly.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Takara
Supplier: The Video Game Centre 01202 527314
Price: £59.99
Release date: Out Now (Import)





[Above] Negotiating the many hazards such as a chicane is an essential part of becoming an accomplished driver.



[Above] There's even a *Micro Machines*-style course where all the cars have chunky tyres.



[Above] Barge other cars out of the way. You won't be any worse for wear and it's good for stress relief.



[Above] You can play the game in one or two player modes. The single player game is better, as there's less slow-down.

SASSY CHASSIS

Other than tearing up the tarmac in your favourite roadsters, there's a whole section of the game dedicated to customising and testing. By accessing one of the (Japanese text) menus, a section dedicated to honing those driving skills and upgrades to the max is made available. Here are just a few...





A whole open-ended course which lets the player drive freely around discovering shops, garages and even a casino to spend your hard-earned cash. This isn't actually a racing circuit, more a novel approach to upgrading and testing your car.





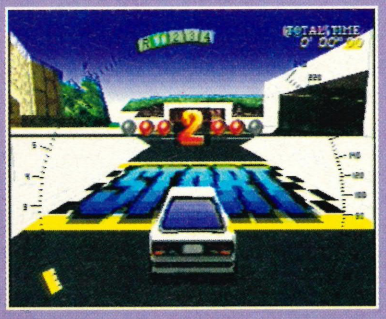
The Garage. Brakes, tires, engines, acceleration, steering, gears and even the horn can be upgraded, as well as giving your favourite vehicle a brand new paint job.





Test out your latest creation on this custom built driving course. Drive through and around specific cone configurations.





There's even a section of road put by specifically to test the speed of your car over a short distance.

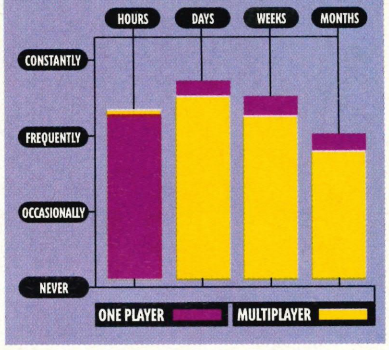


[Above] In this extra track, you have to negotiate an underground train system. There's also a shortcut after the Men at Work sign.



[Above] Playing against another human opponent is fun, but the limited view and slow-down overshadow the fun somewhat. One player is definitely better.

LONG TERM PLAY...



PLAY

Looks	●●●●●●●○○○
Sounds	●●●●●●○○○○
Gameplay	●●●●●●●●○○
Value	●●●●●●●●○○
Fuel Injected	●●●●●●●●○○

PLAYED 85%

The more you play, the better it becomes

Alternatively:
Choro Q (70%)
Motor Toon GP2 (79%)

Give it a day's play and you'll be driving like a demon (not Damon), eagerly looking for a new enhancement at the Garage, where cars can be upgraded, painted any colour and tested to your heart's content (which is explained elsewhere in this review).

There's no disguising *Choro Q2*'s main selling points: a great feeling of driving, almost limitless customisation, 70 cars to thrash, and excellent attention to detail. What more could you ask for? Well, okay, better graphics and no discernible slowdown, but provided you can live with these slight niggles (and you can) there are hours of tyre-screeching fun to be had.





[Above] Your village can grow to over 100 people, any of which you can choose to control. They all look a bit scary up close though.



[Above] Occasionally you run into other cavemen wandering around, but it's not clear whether they're from your tribe or not. They are not edible.



[Above] Each time you get a Cultural Level Up, you are shown which weapon has just been invented. It's a bone club!

TAIL OF

IF THERE WAS AN AWARDS CEREMONY FOR VIDEOGAMES LIKE THE FILM INDUSTRY'S OSCARS, *TAIL OF THE SUN* WOULD WIN THE MOST ORIGINAL CATEGORY HANDS DOWN.

Written By Graeme Nicholson

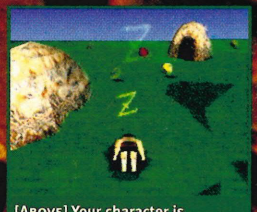
Hunting, eating

and sleeping don't usually come into the ultra-quick, flashing lights and vibrating machine gun style of today's videogames, but Artdink has recently plugged a gap in the market we never knew existed.

In what must be the console world's first evolution-of-man simulator, you find yourself on pre-historic Earth at the time of the caveman, with the task of helping a small village survive in the wilderness and ensuring they evolve in a desirable way.

Although it will expand over time, your tribe begins with only three members, and you must choose one of these to explore the world and to hunt for food. Your ultimate aim is to build an ivory tower high enough to reach the tail of the sun, and since woolly mammoths are your best source of ivory in these times, some big game hunting is most definitely on the cards.

It is unlikely that any member of your tribe will be successful in killing an angry mammoth, with their inability to run fast, blatant stupidity, and most importantly only their bare fists. It's time to learn about nutrition.



[Above] Your character is human, and he gets tired. If you don't let him sleep once a day he can collapse at some very worrying moments.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Sony
Supplier: The Video Game Centre 01202 527 314
Price: £59.99
Release date: Out Now (Import)



ONE PLAYER MEMORY CARD

GATHER

As you wander the planet, starting out from your village in the prairies, you will find an abundance of edible vegetation there for the taking, and particular species are good for certain parts of the body.

When you pluck them from the ground and devour them, the part of your caveman's body affected by the food will flash briefly. By checking an in-game diagram of the body, you can see how advanced each part of the body is, and so actively plan what to eat in order for crucial body parts to evolve. For example, plop your first tribesman into a river and he'll drown almost immediately, but spend some time eating the foods that are good for the lungs and they will get stronger and able to hold more air for longer periods of time underwater. This works with foods that make the legs stronger for running, develop more powerful arms and many other things.

"Some big game hunting is most definitely on the cards!"

Eating foods that develop the brain means that the people back in the village working on tools come up with increasingly better weapons for you to hunt with, the first of which is a humble stick. Over time they figure out that sharpening stones and pushing them onto the end of their stick invention seems to be even better, and so on.

HUNT

The concept behind *Tail of the Sun* is brilliant, and you will find it a surprisingly addictive change to explore an entire world, eat, sleep and hunt, rather than shooting terrorists in Dulles airport or mastering Paul Phoenix's 10-hit combo.

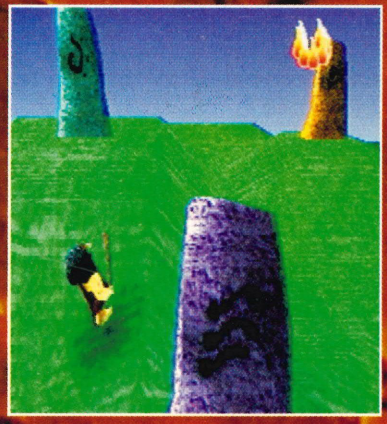
The game imposes absolutely no restrictions on where you travel as you play, asking only that you return home every once in a while with some meat from a pig, moose or any other unfortunate victim of the food chain, as well as the occasional mammoth tusk.

It is this freedom that can pull you into

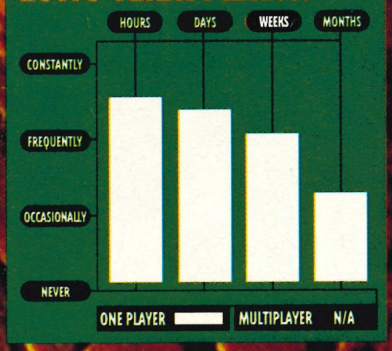
TRIASSIC TATTOOS

TRAVEL SOUTH OF YOUR VILLAGE FOR JUST A SHORT WHILE AND YOU'LL FIND THESE MYSTERIOUS STANDING STONES. EACH STONE HAS A DIFFERENT SYMBOL ON ITS FRONT, AND IF YOU WALK UP TO ONE OF THEM THE SYMBOL WILL APPEAR ON YOUR ARM. THEY PROVIDE AN EXTRA, MYSTICAL BOOST OVER AND ABOVE WHAT YOUR DIET CAN PROVIDE.

- **LEAP:** IMPROVES JUMPING DISTANCE. HANDY FOR JUMPING RIVERS OR GETTING DOWN MOUNTAINS QUICKLY.
- **SWIFTNESS:** INCREASES SPEED. COVER DISTANCES FASTER, OR USE IT TO CATCH YOUR LUNCH.
- **SWIM:** IMPROVES UNDERWATER TRAVEL. REACHING ISLANDS OR SUNKEN MYSTERIES BECOMES EASIER.
- **INNER EYE:** AN INTELLIGENCE BOOST. GET HOLD OF THOSE NEW FANGLED SPEAR AND CLUB INVENTIONS MORE QUICKLY.
- **FERTILITY:** INCREASES POPULATION GROWTH. LEAVE THIS ACTIVE AND THE VILLAGE EXPANDS RAPIDLY.



LONG TERM PLAY...

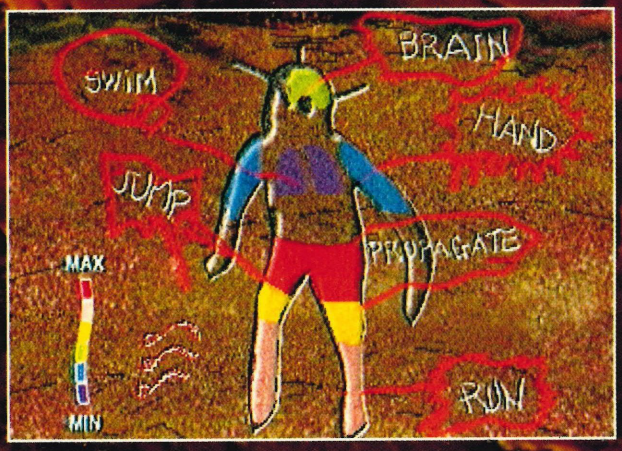




[Above] The weather changes often in *Tail of the Sun*, and both rain and snow are accompanied by the relevant overcast sky and dark clouds.

THE SUN

BODY ROCK



Flipping to the Body Status Screen during a game lets you see the current state of your character's evolution, which is the same throughout the entire tribe. Red parts are very advanced and blue parts are still in the early stages.

Brain:
Intelligence level. When increased your tribe's cultural level goes up more quickly.

Swim:
Lung capacity. Governs the ability to travel through water.

Hand:
Arm strength. Higher strength means you can hit harder with weapons or fists.

Propagate:
Reproductive ability. If this is well developed, your population will grow quicker, ensuring survival of the tribe.

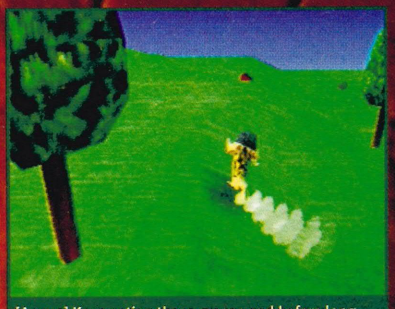
Jump:
Leaping height. Better advanced knees let you jump higher, handy for avoiding some animals.

Run:
Running speed. Improves the success rate of catching or fleeing animals.

Current Tattoo:
Shows which Power Tattoo you bear. (see other boxout).



[Above] When you have a decent hunting weapon, it's time to travel to the frozen north and have a go at your first mammoth.



[Above] Keep eating those greens and before long your little legs will develop more powerful muscles, letting you run at a fair old rate.

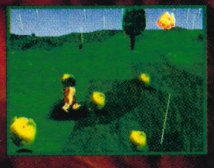
Tail of the Sun's marvellous environment for many hours at a time, although you can save to your memory card whenever you like so there's no worries about making it to the next save point. The quest to build that ivory tower is truly compelling, but it's watching your little village grow which is so captivating in the long term.

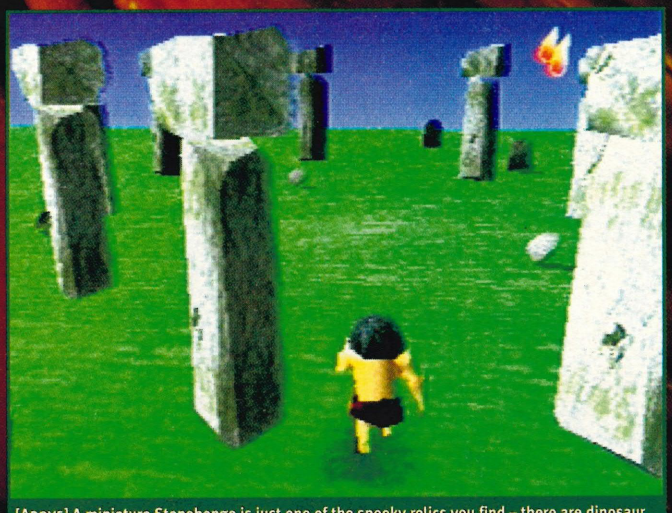
There are no real faults concerning gameplay, so we are left with a couple of technical problems that could have unquestionably been improved. First. This full US copy has PAL-sized borders, a rarity only seen before in the original *Descent*, so what will happen when the game is converted to our native system?

And second, the graphics are primitive to say the least, with bare textures and not much fine detail. Animation on your missing links is also woeful. A bit of a shame really, but fortunately the pioneering concept is enough to keep you captivated without worrying about aesthetics. If you're ready for something different, *Tail of the Sun* is certainly recommended.









[Above] A miniature Stonehenge is just one of the spooky relics you find – there are dinosaur footprints, skeletons, and even the body of an alien to discover.



PLAY

Looks	●●●●●●●●●●
Sounds	●●●●●●●●●○
Gameplay	●●●●●●●●●○
Value	●●●●●●●●●○
Body Hair	●●●●●●●●●○

PLAYED 84%

One of the PlayStation's most original games – great fun!

Alternatively:
Sim City 2000 (75%)
Populous 3 (TBA)

MACHINE



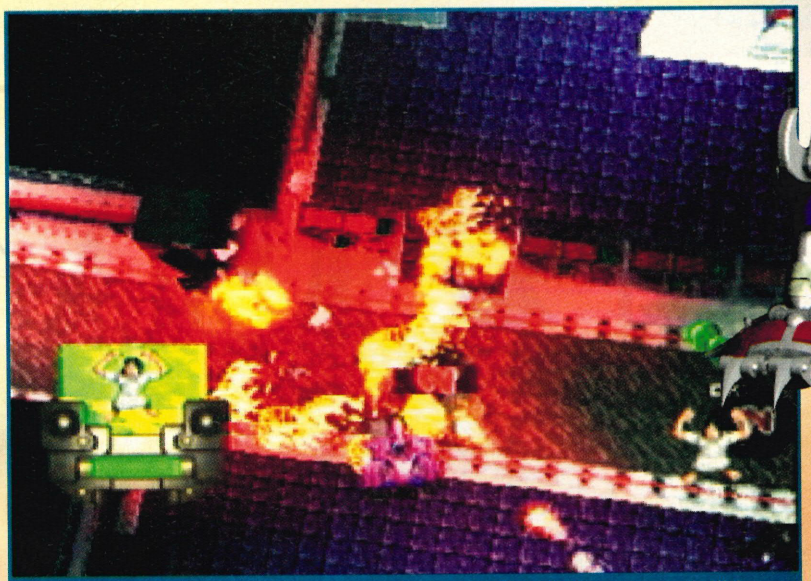
IF YOU'VE EVER FELT LIKE TECHNOLOGY IS AGAINST YOU, WHETHER IT BE AN OVERLY COMPLEX CELLPHONE OR JUST A PARTICULARLY STUBBORN MICROWAVE, YOU MAY TAKE WELL TO THE ROLE OF MACHINE HUNTER!

Written By Graeme Nicholson

Technology will be the death of us. *Machine Hunter* is set at some point in the next millennium where the human race has finally left the confines of Earth and our solar system to colonise planets right across the galaxy. Professors of artificial intelligence have not been sitting on their hands for the period leading up to this time, and the fruits of their labour are evident throughout society.

Droids have been created that are smart enough to take on many tasks that people used to do, but suddenly without warning the robots begin to turn on mankind. Scientists discover that an alien virus is the cause of all the mayhem, and when an antidote is found in a discarded alien probe it is given to you, to save the galaxy.





[Above] Happiness is rolling though a hospital in a small tank, setting fire to all who cross your path. All they leave is smoking ashes.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Eidos
Customer support: 0181 780 2222
Price: £44.99
Release date: End June '97



ZOIDS

Machine Hunter is a top down shoot-'em-up that suffers the unfortunate ailment of looking like the two *Loaded* games. Sure, *Machine Hunter* has lots of new bits and pieces that make it better than *Re-Loaded*, but show them both to your mum, for example, and she won't be able to tell you the difference.

One feature that is more versatile than Gremlin's ugly invention is the camera modes, as you can choose a view that follows from behind constantly, rotating the scenery swiftly around your player and making better use of the 3-D graphics, however this can become rather sickening after prolonged sessions and for this reason it's probably best to stick with the fixed perspective.

The idea is to destroy the rogue droids and hostile humans, rescuing stranded civilians as you go, but naturally there's a twist. When you have weakened a robot it starts to glow and spark, and if you walk into it at this time you can take control of the metallic monster, moving it around and making use of the various weapons it has. It's like the retro classic *Paradroid*, but much easier to get into, and continually switching between robots keeps the action interesting.



[Above] The civilians which you are trying to save change on each level. On this Powerplant level, they are little men in white radiation suits.

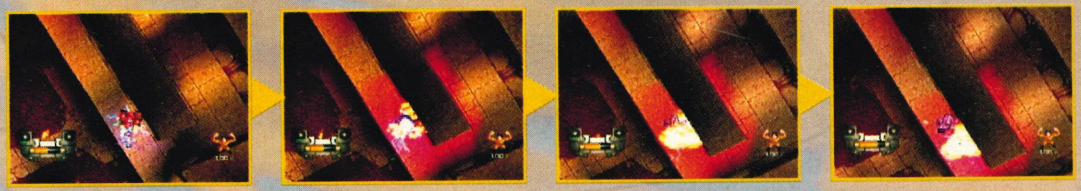


[Above] Every now and then you'll meet some of these huge purple beasts that make a lot of noise and launch wide shockwaves at you.

MOORE'S LAW

The controls are clever but tricky to learn, with each of the four symbol buttons used not for different guns and devices, but to shoot in all eight directions, irrespective of way you are facing. The ■ button fires to your left for example, and ▲ fires straight ahead, but holding them both down would direct the stream of lasers diagonally up and to the left.

Your ordinary, basic level unprotected bloke cannot fire backwards while running up the screen, but most droids can, and



HUNTER



EXCLUSIVE!



[Above] Not only are there murderous droids, mutants and people attempting to blast you to bits, there are places like this where red hot lava springs from the ground!

this makes you more determined to get hold of some decent hardware for their extra speed and manoeuvrability.

At first it does seem like *Machine Hunter* has stolen its plot from the *Terminator* movie and its gameplay from *Re-loaded*, but that isn't totally fair. There are some very good lighting effects in there, and most importantly none of *Re-Loaded*'s loathsome slowdown, no matter how many enemies, bouncing laser bolts and explosions are being animated.

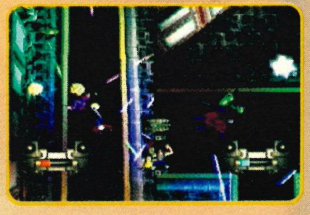
The pleasing appearance of the weapons and the ability to posses your opponents puts the game ahead of both *Loaded* titles, but the fact remains that most of the game consists of facing the next sprite and pressing one of the fire buttons until it dies. It doesn't matter how well your foes burst, bleed or ignite, it can only happen so many times before it gets boring.

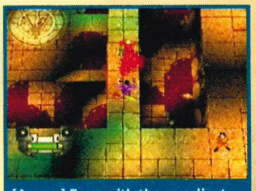
"It's like the retro classic *Paradroid*, but much easier to get into..."

DOUBLE BARRELLED

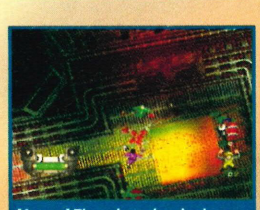
In *Re-Loaded*, the two player mode forces both of you to share the screen and often the action just grinds to a halt as one of you tries to walk in the opposite direction from the other. *Machine Hunter* has a superior, split screen mode which allows each of you to go your separate ways, and there's the option to play co-operatively or against one another. Although there can be some slowdown, this is the way to play a top down shoot-'em-up with a friend.





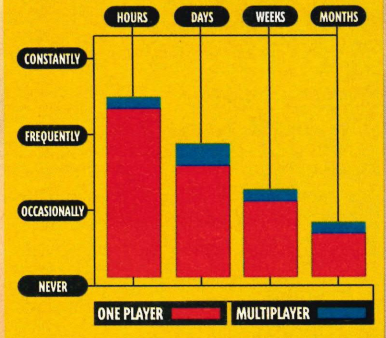


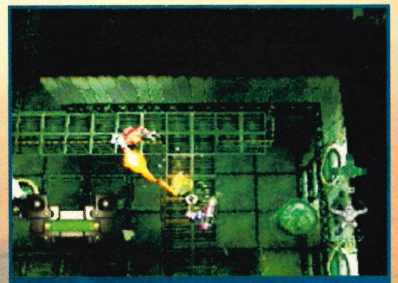
[Above] Even with the weediest of weapons, the human guards pop like water balloons.



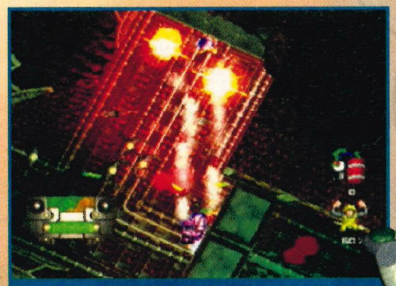
[Above] There is no barrier here, but you still can't shoot the guards and robots into the lava.

LONG TERM PLAY...

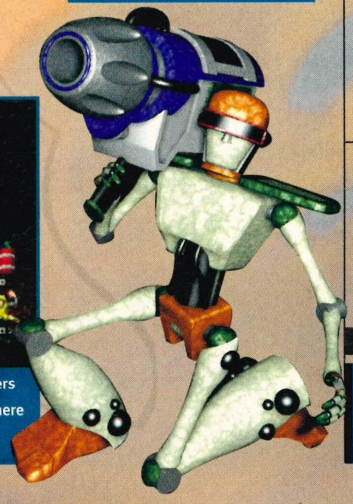




[Above] When you see a new droid that you'd like to inhabit, you have to stay constantly on the move as you close in, especially if you're just in your plain clothes!



[Above] This robot with the tear gas-style canisters is the best, and once you've nabbed a powerup there is little that can stand in your way.



PLAY

Looks	6
Sounds	7
Gameplay	6
Value	5
Mind Control	7

PLAYED 72%

Wanton violence does get boring... eventually!

Alternatively:
Re-Loaded (61%)
Contra: LOW (62%)

OVERBLO

IF SUFFERING FROM AMNESIA, GROWING A BEARD, AND CONTRACTING A DEADLY VIRUS IS YOUR IDEA OF HAVING FUN, THEN LOOK NO FURTHER THAN EA'S LATEST ADVENTURE.

Written By Tom Sargent

Many games claim to be the next big thing. You'd be amazed how many times we receive phone calls or demos from widely enthusiastic PR types, claiming that their product contains "genuinely ground-breaking" code or a "brand new gaming concept." It's quite refreshing, therefore, to review a product which simply landed on our desk without any pretensions to the crown of "greatest game ever." *Overblood* certainly isn't breaking any new ground genre-wise, but what it lacks in originality, it more than makes up for in the way it seamlessly gels a considerable number of gaming themes together into one hugely enjoyable romp.

OverBlood has been on the shelves in Japan for about six months and caused quite a stir on its original release. Officially described as a 3-D adventure game along the lines of the *Alone in the Dark* series (like so many others), it contains rather more styles than a cursory glance reveals.

This game certainly resembles *Alone in the Dark* as far as the dynamic camera angles are concerned. There are three views in total, two above and behind the player and an unusual one for this type of game – a first person perspective. As your player struts around the screen, the intelligent camera always gives you the best picture of the immediate surroundings and although it's not quite in the same league as the inspired roving camera used in *Tomb Raider*, it doesn't confuse or disorientate the player like so many other games of this ilk.



[Above] Don't get too close to that jar, Raz. Haven't you seen *Aliens?*



[Above] By manipulating this hovering statue, you can get your sweaty mitts on an anti-gravity device.

PLAY Information

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Customer support: 01753 549 442
Price: £39.99
Release date: May '97



One Player



Memory Card



[Above] Even in the robotic form of Pepo, you can work in tandem with Raz. Here you must find the right combination to rescue him.



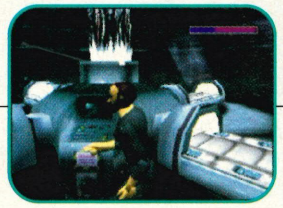
[Above] These disgusting alien creatures are thankfully quite secure within the glass jars. Have a look at them close up for a big surprise.

Rude Awakening

The story goes thus. You have suddenly awakened from a cryogenic sleep, freezing to death and unaware of who you are. The temperature in the the first room is minus ten degrees

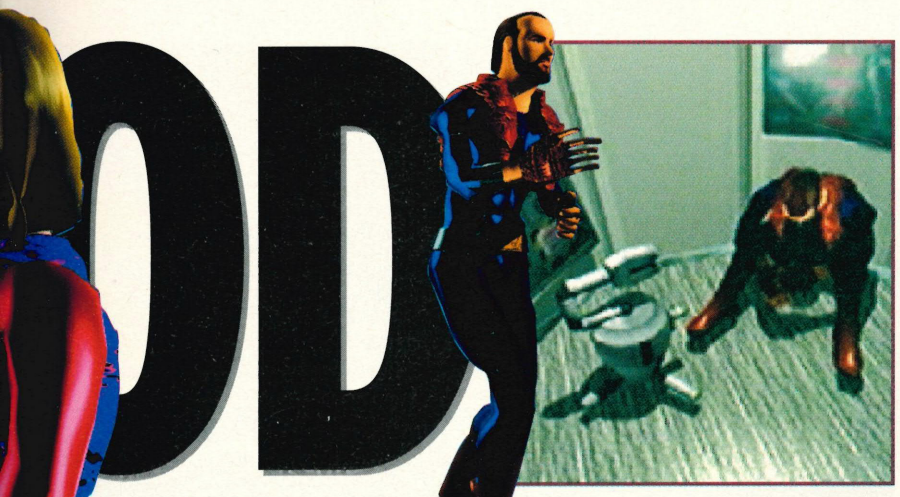
BRASS MONKEY

As you awake from what you soon learn was intended to be an eternal sleep, you must activate the heating system on the generator pretty quickly. Only then can you open a nearby door to find a jacket which will keep you warm throughout the duration of the game.







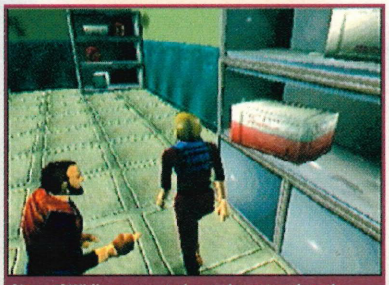




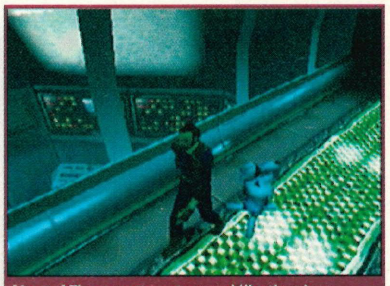
[Above] Go on Raz, stick one on him. The monsters are pretty aggressive and attack on sight.



[Above] Eventually, you should come across Mily, an invaluable friend.



[Above] While you control one character, the other one always follows.



[Above] The camera pans around like there's no tomorrow, capturing some spectacular views.

and unless you find a way of heating it up, it's goodnight Vienna. A rapidly-depleting bar (blue indicating 'healthy', red denoting 'death') representing your life-force appears at the top right of the screen, as it does sporadically throughout the game whenever particularly dangerous situation arises, and before you have time to rub the sleep from your eyes, you must swiftly activate the auxiliary power generator in the centre of the room.

As you can probably guess, this is just a taster of the teasers to follow. Puzzles come in many shapes, ranging from the sort of visual switch pressing challenges similar to those seen in *Fade to Black*, to the character swapping/monster bashing of *Resident Evil*. The surprise with *OverBlood* is that although it borrows from so many other games, it doesn't feel like a confusing mishmash of them all. It works fantastically well, in fact.

Infected

You control Raz, the bearded main character and before long you happen across Pepo, your charismatic robot sidekick, whose form you can take whenever a problem such as interfacing with a computer that cannot be solved in human form. This partnership between man and machine is endearing to say the least and although you control Raz for most of the game, it's always fun and interesting to switch to







Bits 'n' Bobs

Objects are littered throughout the game and generally serve as subtle indicators as to what to do next. Like Bournemouth buses, you won't come across one for ages then when all is lost a load of them appear from nowhere.



The Anti-Gravity Device. Useful for leaping large gaps on a couple of occasions.



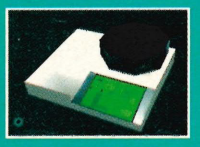
The Detonator. Deadly when mixed with the Chemical Explosive. Handle with care!



Artificial Intelligence Chip. Plug this into Pepo the doe-eyed robot.



Jacket. Find this quickly to stop yourself from freezing to death.



Thermostat. Used to cool or heat samples. The problem is it's broken.



Oil Canister. This container holds oil used to lubricate machinery.



Chemical Explosive. Don't jump around when you get hold of this stuff.



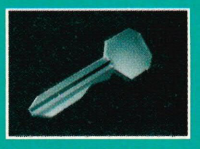
Voice Recorder. Basically a 'Save Game' device. Up to four saves in fact.



Memo. There are some important codes scribbled on this scrap of paper.



Pistol. Bang, bang. This useful weapon can be found in a train later on in the game.



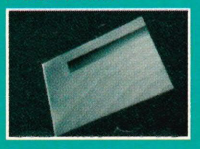
Key. This is a key to a high security-style lock. When used once it disappears.



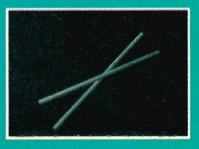
Laser Knife. Extremely useful for killing and cutting. Used more than once.



Virus Sample. Perhaps the answer to your own virus lies within this container.



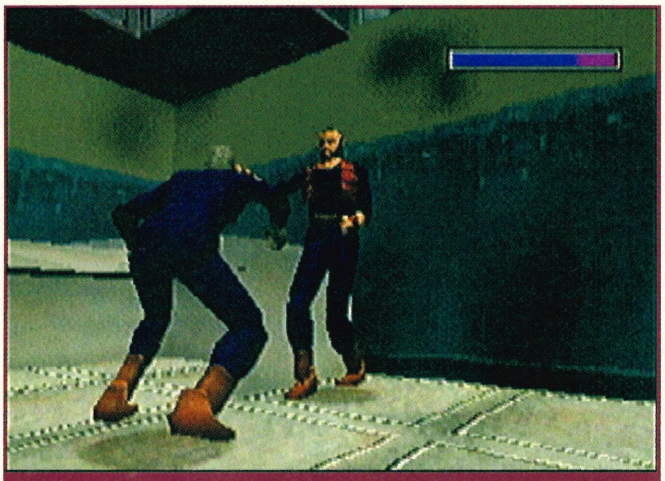
Silver Card Key. Opens an electronically-sealed locker to get to the laser knife.



Sticks. Not used for eating Chinese food.

"An absorbing plot which captures the imagination immediately..."

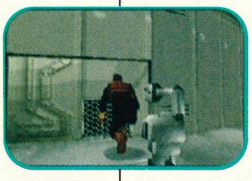




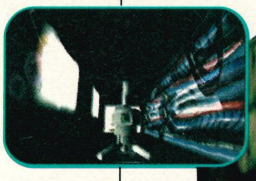
[Above] At last, an enemy grunt to kill, and boy are they ugly. Close combat is pretty tame consisting of just one attack button.

GRATE NEWS

You find a grate in the side of a wall and after opening it with a certain object, send the robot in to investigate further. Switching character control to Pepo, you can then interface with the main generator.









the other form and experiment in the problem solving.

Graphically, *OverBlood* is extremely slick, if a little bit bland in background detail. The characters are made up of polygons and strut around the levels purposefully. When Raz starts to run, however, he looks camper than dear old Kenny Everett, but this doesn't detract from the game at all. Character mannerisms are motley and superbly realised, consisting of gestures, head-scratching, shock, surprise; the list is endless, but there are some really memorable moments, such as when Raz is checking-out some jars in a storage facility. The screen pans to a close-up of him inspecting what appears to be a dead creature suspended in a solution. Suddenly it springs to life and Raz rears back in terror. Brilliant stuff.

Intrigue

On the downside, a world map is conspicuous by its absence, but getting around is pretty straightforward. There's not too much revisiting of locations which are well-designed as a rule, keeping the frustration factor down where it belongs. The puzzles are tough, but not to the point of that old chestnut: trying every object with everything in sight until, bleary eyed and thoroughly disillusioned, you eventually discover the correct and totally surreal combination.

Other mild annoyances emanate from Pepo in the form of his persistent chirping and warbling, the way the CPU kicks in and won't let you take control when walking up and down stairways, the occasional flicking from one point of view to the other by the camera as Raz moves around a room, slight pauses when walking through doors, and the fighting is a little simplistic and infrequent.

Minor quips aside, *OverBlood* provides the player with an absorbing plot which captures the imagination instantly. You want to find out what Raz is doing there and how he can find an antidote for the contracted virus. It's an unusual hybrid that manages, supremely well, to meld the best qualities of some of the finest games around without trying to steal their thunder.

RESCUE ME

Raz can run around and interact with all manner of different objects and terminals, but here are some of his more athletic attributes to master.



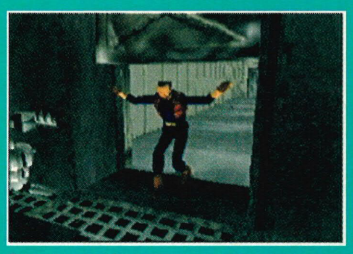
Kneeling. Quite often, Raz must get down and dirty by shuffling along tight passages to reach a new location.



Falling. Dropping long distances is another pre-requisite of reaching those 'hard to get to' rooms.



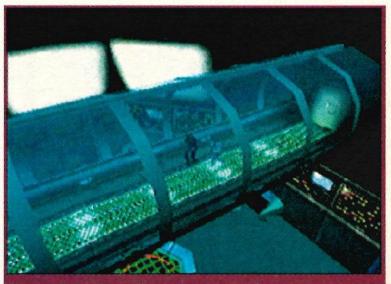
Swinging. Not going to an orgy where you swap partners, but taking a leap of faith to distant platforms.



Supporting. On a couple of occasions, you'll find yourself supporting a heavy door.

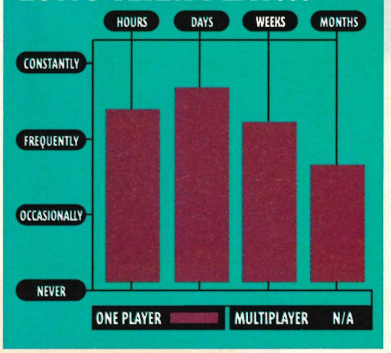


Push. In true *Tomb Raider* fashion, you can manipulate the scenery to reach certain areas within a room.



[Above] The long distance camera gives you a stunning view of you in the long glass passageway.

LONG TERM PLAY...



PLAY

Looks	8
Sounds	8
Gameplay	9
Value	8
Panorama	8

PLAYED 86%

Engrossing, amusing, interactive, buy it.

Alternatively:
Resident Evil (95%)
Fade To Black (90%)


Experience
the unique
rush
of
multiplayer PC
gaming
rush

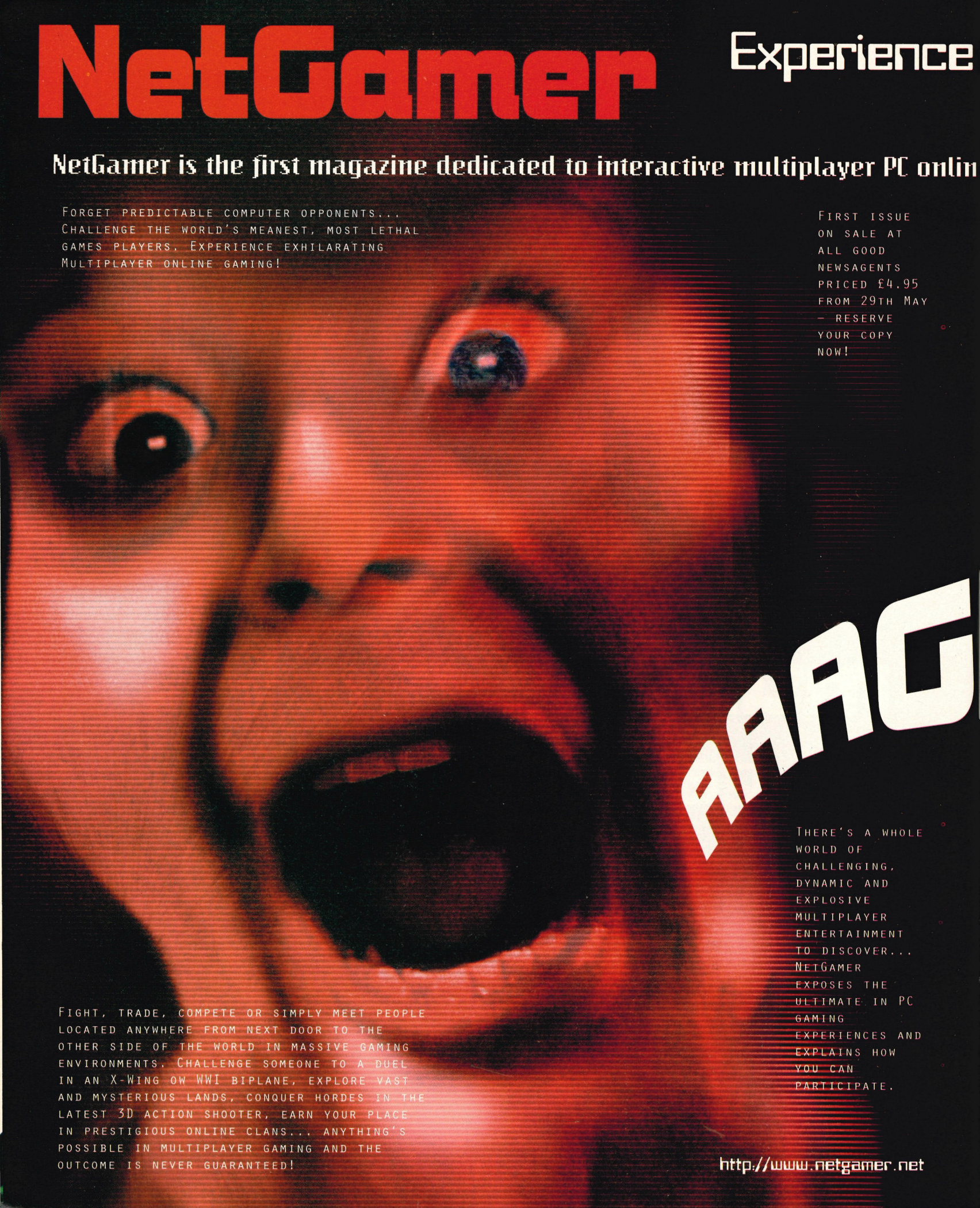
NetGamer

Experience

NetGamer is the first magazine dedicated to interactive multiplayer PC onlin

Forget predictable computer opponents... Challenge the world's meanest, most lethal games players. Experience exhilarating Multiplayer online gaming!

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STATION MASTER

CHEATS ▸ TIPS ▸ LETTERS

TIPS! TIPS! GET 'EM WHILE THEY'RE HOT! YES, ONCE AGAIN AND WITH FRIGHTENING REGULARITY, THE ALL-KNOWING, ALL-SEEING STATION MASTER OFFERS ANOTHER PLUMP PORTION OF PROBLEM-SOLVING PLEASANTRIES TO THE PLAYSTATION PUBLIC. DO YOU KNOW SOMETHING WE DON'T? IF SO, SEND YOUR CHEATS TO US AT: *STATION MASTER, PLAY MAGAZINE, PARAGON HOUSE, ST PETER'S ROAD, BOURNEMOUTH, DORSET BH1 2JS*. OR E-MAIL *PLAY@PARAGON.CO.UK*



MICRO MACHINES V3
LOADS OF CHEATS!

At the name entry:
CATLIVES – Gives you 9 lives in 1 player mode
GIMMEALL – Gives you access to all of the tracks in multi-player mode.

During gameplay, press Pause and do the following:

CHANGE THE CAR TO ANY OBJECT:
Down, Down, Up, Up, Right, Right, Left, Left

FLOATING OBJECTS:
■, ▲, ■, ■, ▲, ■, ■, ▲, ×

SLOW CPU CARS:
●, ▲, ■, ×, ●, ▲, ■, ×

CAMERA BEHIND CAR:
Left, Right, ■, ●, Left, Right, ■, ●



DOUBLE SPEED:
■, ×, ●, ■, ▲, ×, ×, ×, ×

During gameplay:
DEBUG MODE:
■, Up, Down, Down, ■, ■, ●, ●, ▲, ×

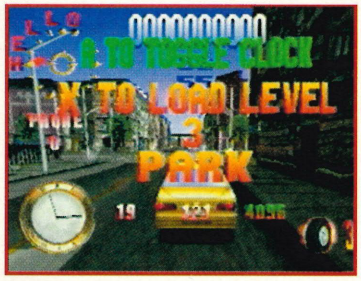
With in Debug mode:
Select + ×: Quit the current race and automatically win it.
Select + (Up, Down, Left, Right): Change the camera angle.
Select + (L2 or R2): Zoom in/out respectively.
Select + ■: Turns player's car into a CPU car.
× + ▲ + ● + ■: Blow up all cars.

BOUNCY MODE:
■, Right, Right, Down, Up, Down, Left, Down, Down

DIE HARD TRILOGY
DIE HARD 3 – X-FILES MODE

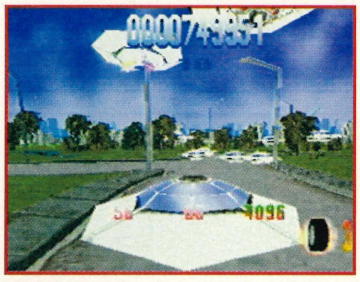
To access the X-Files mode, do so only on the Central Park 1 level. Here's how to access it from scratch...

1. Pause the game, hold R2 and press Right, Up, Down, ■. Various letters and numbers should appear on screen.



2. On controller 2, press Start to bring up the cheat options. Now move the D-pad to select the Central Park 1 level. Press Start to skip to it.

3. Once in Central Park, pause the game and highlight 'Quit'. Hold R2 on controller 1 and press Right, ■, ▲, ×, ×, × and a 'Roswell' screen should appear with aliens being blown up.



4. The level then restarts with flying saucers for cars and aliens for people! Note that you can still ditch your saucer in the water.



INDEPENDENCE DAY 4 (US)
LEVEL PASSWORDS

Washington: DBJHJ
New York: GBDHP
Paris: NBDHG
Moscow: LBDG6
Tokyo: RBDHY

PORSCHE CHALLENGE

Sneaky Short Cuts

Enter these short cut cheats to access the, er, shortcuts...

USA – Drain

After the first left corner, look out for a car park on the right. Occasionally there is a white truck there which means the Drain short cut is open. When about level with the truck, take a sharp left through the gate in the wire fence – try to avoid the water as it will slow you down. The exit is by the railway station.

Japan – Temple

Hit the first basket on the left side of the course (look closely, there should be an IO logo on it). Just past the starting grid, the Temple Gate short cut will now be open.

Alpine – Village

On the first lap, the gates are closed. When you reach the base of the track on the second lap, you will see a snowplough. The snowdrift to the left is blocked by some cones: knock these down and the plough will clear the drift, opening the doors for the next lap.



AREA 51

Shotgun Cheat

At the pause screen press ▲, ■, ▲, Left, R1 to start with a shotgun.



NBA JAM EXTREME

All Special Teams

On the Keep Records screen, answer 'Yes', then use the initials JBP and May 17. Note that your opponent must also enter the code to be able to access the special teams.

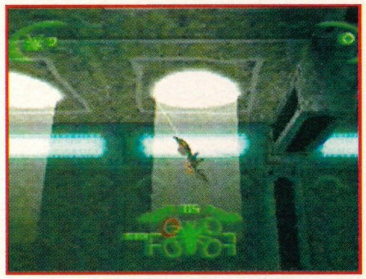


SOVIET STRIKE

Password Cheats

Enter the following passwords after inputting the desired level code. They can all be used at once.

MIDNIGHOIL Infinite ammo, fuel and invincibility
FUGAZI Infinite ammo, fuel and lives
THEBIGBOYS Infinite ammo, fuel and double damage
VULTURE Double mileage (slow fuel depletion)
ANGRYLOCAL Soldiers and hostages crowd round chopper
QUAKER Enemies don't fire at you



SPIDER

Final Level Password

Go to Options, then Load Game. Select Password and enter this code to reach the Evil Lab, near the brain boss:
68KB3Y118H56T1TMVM35



FORMULA 1

Spanish Mode

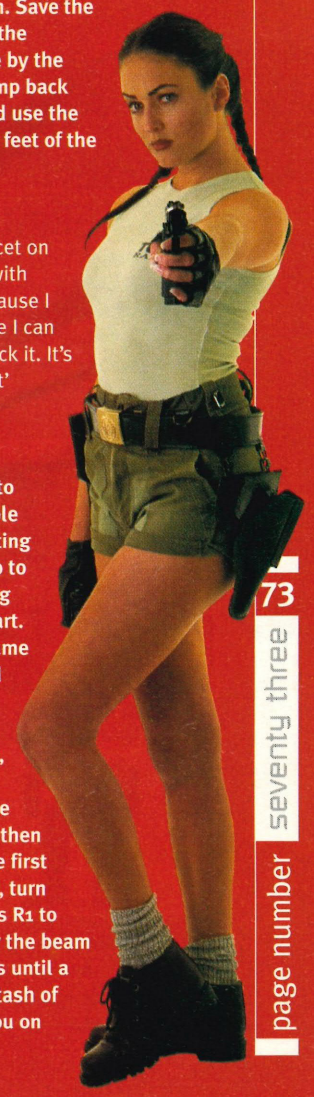
Here's a belated cheat for F1, although all this does is bring up the Spanish commentary. Hasta la vista, baby. Select a Single Race. On the Race Qualify screen, hold Select and press: ▲, ●, Right, ●, ▲, ●, Right, ● [which spells 'TORO TORO']
Note: As with the other F1 codes, you must enter it accurately and reasonably quickly (within a few seconds) for it to work.

PLAY Q&A

Stuck in an impossible situation? Swimming around in circles and getting nowhere? There's no need to fret, just send in your trials and tribulations to the experts here at Play Towers. Rest assured, we'll be up all night clearing a path for you to lighten the load. As usual, send all your quibbles to the following address: Q&A, Play Magazine, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth, BH1 2JS.

Dear Play
You've got to help me. I am playing *Tomb Raider* and I am stuck on level 12, Sanctuary of the Scion. I have opened the main door under the face and there is a long drop into water. I have been swimming around and around and found two doors and a lever that Lara cannot pull underwater. I have looked for a lever to let the water out, but I can't find anything. I am just stuck in the water. Please help me.
Larry Fisher, Cumbria

Okay Larry, enter the door between the Sphinx's legs and dive into the large pool. Dive deep to the left for shells, then between the Statues for Uzi clips. Surface for air, then enter the tunnel between the right statue's feet. Use the switch and let the current take you to the surface of a new room. Climb onto the low pillar, jump to the other on, then onto the steps on the write. Go up the stairs and into a dark cave-the now-drained pool room. Save the game and kill the winged demon. Facing the head on the left, safety drop to the ledge below. Jump to the ledge by the head, walk to the right and drop down. Facing left, jump back and slide down the ramp. Swim to the right statue and use the switch on its chest. Swim into the tunnel between the feet of the statue. This should put you in the right direction.



Dear Play
Please help me. I'm going insane trying to find the faucet on the PlayStation game *Casper*. I once filled the bucket with water by accident, but I'm getting really frustrated because I don't know how I did it. I've telephoned every help line I can think of and asked everyone I know and I just can't crack it. It's really annoying me that I can play all the more 'difficult' games, but get stuck with this relatively simple one!
Yours hopefully, Edward Cassar, Leeds.

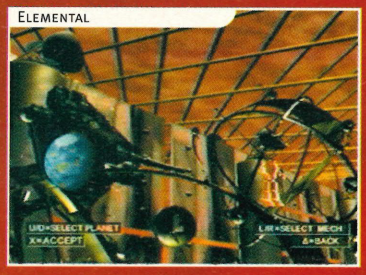
Tell you what Ed, try this killer cheat that allows you to float over any walls so that you can get to unobtainable areas without having to go through the trauma of getting the correct keys and suchlike. To activate it, simply go to the top-left corner of any room and press the following code: Top Left (diagonal on the D-pad) + L1 + R1 + Start. You should now notice that instead of pausing, the game will merely freeze. Keep those buttons held down and press s. The game will unfreeze and by pressing R1, you will be able to float up over walls. Now you will be able to find a room that contains every morph icon, every item required to defeat his uncle bosses, plus loads of keys and other keys and useful objects. In the main entrance, activate the drift over walls cheat and then go up to the left-hand flight of stairs leading up to the first floor. Once on the first floor (the one with blue doors), turn and face the staircase you just climbed and then press R1 to float upwards. The aim is to float high above and over the beam above the staircase and then keep drifting downwards until a new room rears up. Gasp in amazement at the huge stash of goodies before you. Hope that this little cheat help you on your way.

MECHWA

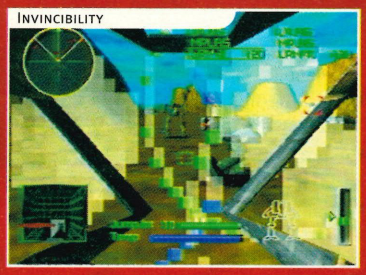
FOR THOSE WHO LIKE TO FEEL THE TWINGE OF ADRENALINE IN THEIR VEINS, *MECH-WARRIOR 2* HAS BEEN A GIFT FROM THE GODS. WE PROVIDE YOU WITH ALL THE COOL CHEATS AND UNDOCUMENTED CONTROLS FOR THIS GREAT SHOOT-'EM-UP!

The codes which follow should be entered in the password screen, just as if they were the level codes that you note down to continue your game. When you have finished entering a code, press X and then start your game as normal, not forgetting to check if the password has worked properly by stopping in at the Mech Lab or looking at the Mission Select screen. You do not need spaces between each password character.

Elemental



Invincibility



Unlimited jet-juice



UNLOCK ALL MISSIONS

T < X O / A X A < =

Make no mistake, it takes a valiant MechWarrior to get access to all the secret missions without cheating. If it's taking longer than you would like, this code gives you access to every mission in the game.

ELEMENTAL

T / X O / A Z < # *

This gives you a new Mech chassis called Elemental. It is very small and more like a bulky suit of armour than the usual 50 foot tall steel beasts. Hiding behind scenery is easier with Elemental, and you become more manoeuvrable.

TARANTULA

/ X O / A 4 < L Y

Another new Mech chassis, this time named Tarantula. As you can probably guess, it takes on the form of a huge robotic spider, complete with eight rickety legs for you to scuttle around on.

INVINCIBILITY

X O / A > < U Z

Just like it says, this code will make you invincible out there on the battleground. It doesn't spoil the game too much because your objectives are just as hard, and you still need to use your skills to protect vulnerable buildings and vehicles in some cases.

JUMPJETS ON ALL MECHS

Y X O / A > Y O L

The Jumpjets are the rockets that some BattleMechs have in their feet, enabling them to fly for short periods of time. When you get used to their various advantages, the Mechs which are Jumpjet free just don't cut it anymore. Upgrade them all with this password.

UNLIMITED JET JUICE

T X X O / A Z > + X

A major problem with the Jumpjets is their incessant gas guzzling, which at times can leave you quite literally high and dry. With the Unlimited Jet Juice code, you can fly all day long and gain

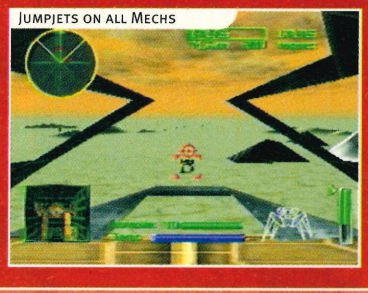
Unlock all missions



Tarantula



Jumpjets on all Mechs



Extra variants

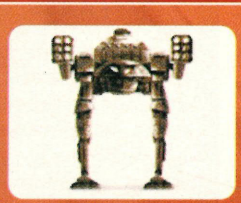




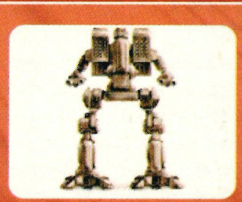
DIRE WOLF
WEIGHT: 100 TONS
TOP SPEED: 54 KMH
JUMP JETS: N/A



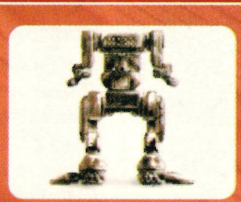
GARGOYLE
WEIGHT: 80 TONS
TOP SPEED: 86.4 KMH
JUMP JETS: N/A



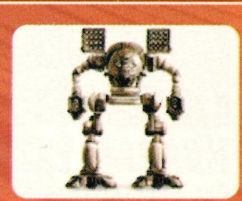
JENNER II-C
WEIGHT: 35 TONS
TOP SPEED: 151.2 KMH
JUMP JETS: 7 ENGINES



MAD DOG
WEIGHT: 60 TONS
TOP SPEED: 86.4 KMH
JUMP JETS: N/A



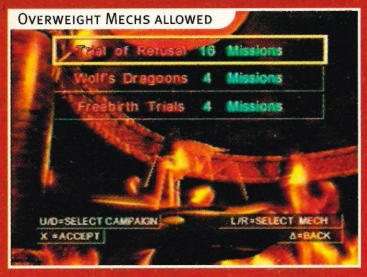
STORM CROW
WEIGHT: 55 TONS
TOP SPEED: 97.2 KMH
JUMP JETS: N/A

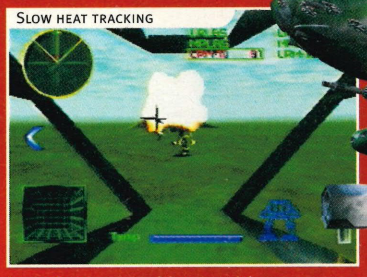


TIMBER WOLF
WEIGHT: 75 TONS
TOP SPEED: 86.4 KMH
JUMP JETS: N/A

RRIOR 2

SOLVED







a nice advantage over the ground-based enemies.

EXTRA VARIANTS

T # X O / A X < < <

Normally your Mechs each have two weapon variations for you to pick from, which you will see in the Change Mech screen. This code unlocks some extra weapons variants so that some Mechs can have as many as five different sets of weapons.

OVERWEIGHT MECHS ALLOWED

O X O / A > > O /

Sometimes the Dropship can't carry everything you want to take to a mission. This results in the "Mech Overweight" message appearing on the screen when you try to choose a heavily armoured brute with as many launchers and guns as will fit. This code lets you take any Mech to any mission.

CRUISE THROTTLE

A X O / A 4 Y Y A

This is like cruise control in a car, where all you have to do is set your forward speed and then let go. The Cruise Throttle is very handy for beginners who aren't yet used to the control system but want to get in on the action. You can concentrate on the shooting more.

SLOW HEAT TRACKING

X X O / A 4 > Y +

If you find that your Mech is always overheating too easily then this is for you. Grouped weapons can make your guns shutdown very quickly due to overheating, but this code slows the heat build-up considerably.





UNLIMITED AMMO

T O X O / A X > T U

You're stalking a weak, frightened Mech. It gets cornered against a building and you're just about to terminate it when you press fire and... click! Your favourite gun is empty and you get wounded in the delay. Never again, with unlimited ammo!

UNDOCUMENTED CONTROLS

There are a couple of things you can do in your Mech which Activision didn't print in the manual that comes with the game. Large scale warfare is made easier with PLAY!

GLANCE

To take a quick peek out either side of the Mech's cockpit, locate whatever button you have assigned to turning the torso left or right and tap it twice, like double-clicking a mouse. Handy in the heat of the battle.



GROUP FIRE

Hold down your Fire and Weapon Select buttons, and all your guns will fire almost simultaneously. This was something people learned to do on the PC version to quickly get rid of an enemy Mech. Watch the temperature gauge though, your guns will overheat rapidly.



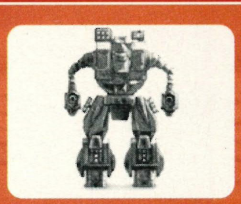
TARGET CLOSEST ENEMY

It can be really annoying when you can't seem to target that BattleMech right next to you, and sometimes in the confusion this can cause you to lose the game. Tap your Enemy Select button twice to make the targeting system highlight the nearest enemy. Normally pressing the Enemy Select button will target the Mech closest to the center of your screen.





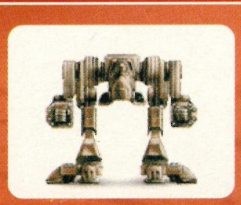
Firemoth
Weight: 20 tons
Top Speed: 162 KMH
Jump Jets: N/A



Hellbringer
Weight: 65 tons
Top Speed: 86.4 KMH
Jump Jets: N/A



Kit Fox
Weight: 30 tons
Top Speed: 97.2
Jump Jets: 5 engines



Nova
Weight: 50 tons
Top Speed: 86.4 KMH
Jump Jets: 5 engines



Summoner
Weight: 70 tons
Top Speed: 86.4 KMH
Jump Jets: 5 engines



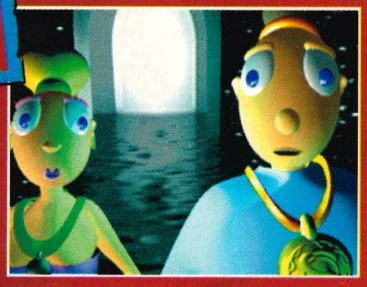
Warhawk
Weight: 85 tons
Tops Speed: 64.8 KMH
Jump Jets: N/A

LITTLE BIG ADV

PART 3

SOLVED

THE PLOT UNWINDS THIS MONTH WITH PART THREE OF OUR COMPLETE *LITTLE BIG ADVENTURE* WALKTHROUGH GUIDE.





NUMBER [ONE]



1. Arriving back at Citadel Island, run back to your house and poke around there until you find the cellar above the living room. The key is in a nearby plant pot. Step into the barrel in the cellar to gain entry to a secret room.

2. Because you picked up the Book of Bu earlier, you can read the runes on the door in this room. You will find that your inheritance lies behind some locked doors that can only be opened with an old key buried in pirate LeBorgne's treasure elsewhere.

NUMBER [TWO]



3. Get back to the ferry port, and talk to the grobo who earlier gave you a ticket for solving his crate problem. Buy a new ticket from him and catch the ferry back to Principal Island, where you should go to the Old Burg area.

4. The rabbibunny by the wall will tell you that pirate LeBorgne's log book is for sale in this area. Go to the shop where you got the Mecca Penguin earlier and talk to the shopkeeper.

NUMBER [THREE]



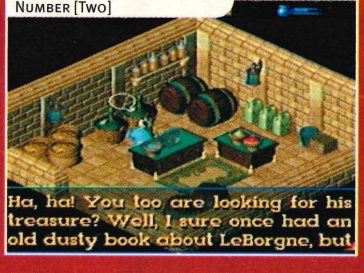
5. It appears the log book was just sold to a librarian – so get to the library as fast as possible. There, the librarian will tell you to see the grobo towards the back of the library. The grobo reads sections of the book to you, but you need only pay attention to the part about LeBorgne's Treasure. You find that the treasure is on Proxima Island.

6. Checking your holomap, Proxima Island should now have appeared on there. Go to the army camp and borrow the green buggy again, driving to Port Belooga. The astronomer's friend won't take you anywhere in his boat this time, but a nearby spheroid will sell his catamaran for 200 kashes. If you're lacking sufficient funds, check everything in the surrounding area.

NUMBER FIVE



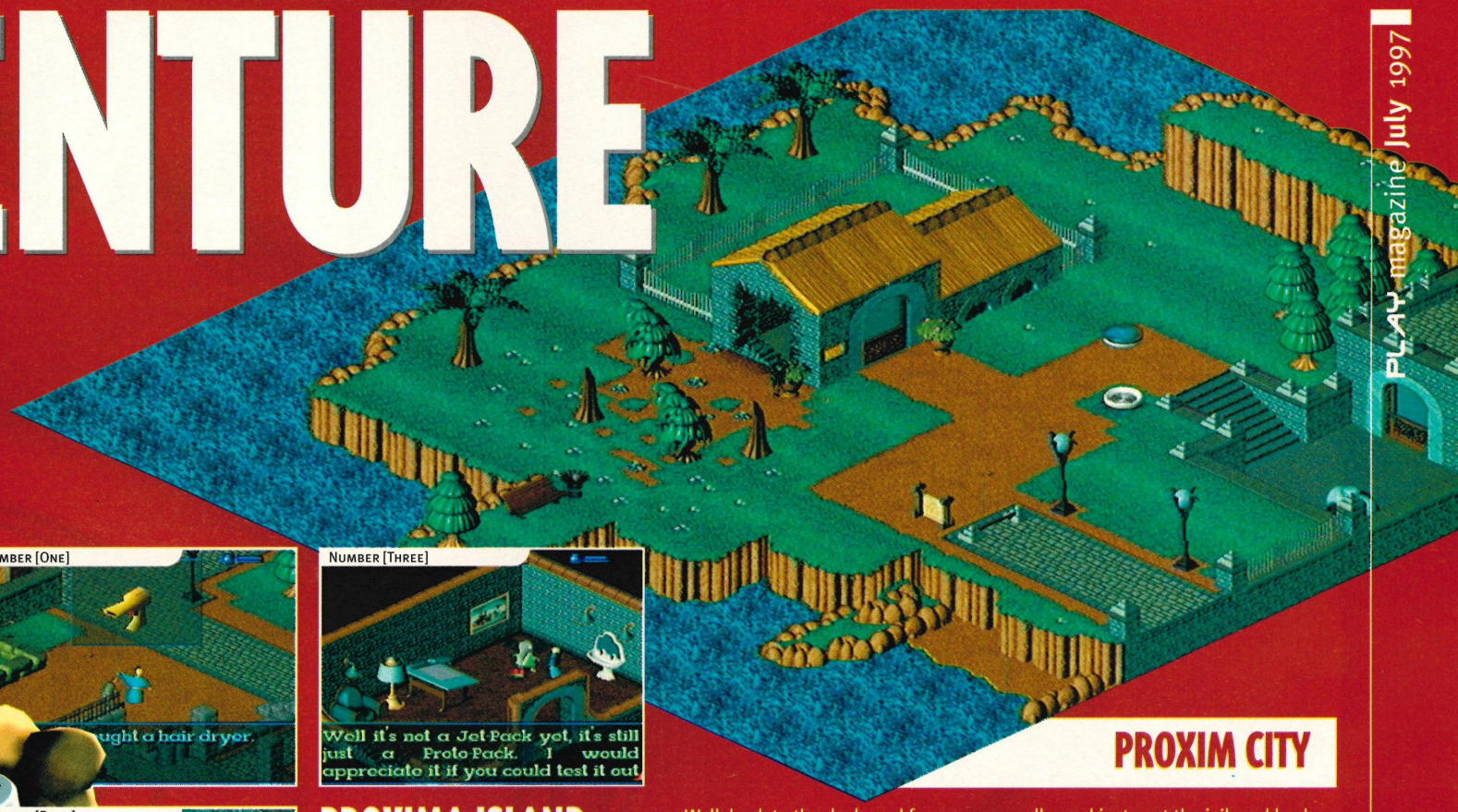
NUMBER [TWO]



NUMBER [SIX]



VENTURE



PROXIM CITY

Number [One]



Number [Three]

Number [Four]



PROXIMA ISLAND

1. Upon docking at Proxima City you will quickly find that LeBorgne's treasure is held in the museum. The salesman will sell you a hair dryer for 30 kashes, buy it. Now go into the building next to the sleeping guard and talk with the grobo inside about the security system. Then go through the grating to the underground network and pick up anything you find.

2. Get back above ground and exit the building, and go through the gate next to the museum which takes you to a house and shop. If you found the secret coffee pot earlier on, the grobo in the house will tell you where all the extra lives are and also give you a keypad for opening a door in the Teleportation Centre if you give it to him, but none of this is necessary to complete Little Big Adventure.

3. Walk back to the dock, and from there head west out of the city. Go inside the building with the big hole in it and talk to the inventor. Give him the hair dryer and take his jetpack. He will also give you 10 Kashes.

4. Exit the house and try to enter the other house nearby, which will cause a groboclone to teleport onto the screen with you. Kill him and use the key he drops to unlock the chained door and go inside. Speak to the Rabbibunny there and he'll tell you about his brother who is inside FunFrock's HQ. He'll give you the red security card if you find out about his brother.

5. Use the catamaran to get back to Principal Island and walk inside the HQ. Look for the prison cell below the mounted machine gun and talk to the Rabbibunny.

6. Now you can go back to Proxima Island and tell the guy in the house about his brother. Take the card he gives you and go to the museum again, using the card on the locked door. Find the treasure chest and pirate's flag, and remember where they are. When you are done, exit through the grating again into the sewers.

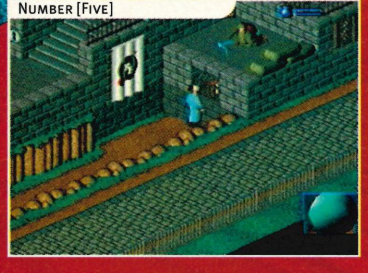
7. Take the lift to the jail area, wait for the Grobo to turn away and then hit the alarm button on the wall. Immediately go back into the sewers through the wall panel just past the jail, and back up to the museum via the grating.

8. Engage your jetpack to hover over the pressure sensitive floor and land on the display with the pirate's flag. Take the flag with you. Then go to the floor above and follow the wall to the treasure chest. Find the ancestral key in the chest, and fly to the old grating to get into the sewers.

9. Get out on the streets and head back to your catamaran, setting a course for Citadel Island. On arrival, walk to your house and down to your cellar, this time using the ancestral key to open the locked door. You will find Gawley's Horn and Sendell's Medallion, promoting you to level three magic power.

10. Read the runes on the wall, which will tell you about the runic stones, then use the horn on the "S" shaped symbol to get some extra clover leaves. Go to your boat and use your pirate's flag on it before sailing off to Rebellion Island...

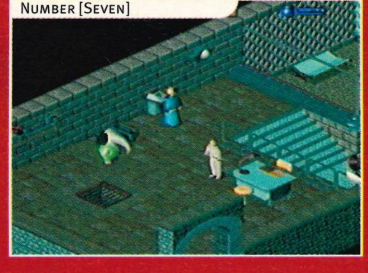
Number [Five]



Number [Six]



Number [Seven]



BLOOD OMEN: LEGACY OF KAIN PART 3

SOLVED

WELCOME TRAVELLERS, ONE AND **ALL**, TO THE **THIRD** INSTALLMENT OF KAIN'S **ONGOING QUEST** FOR **BLOOD** AND VENGEANCE.



THE WORLD MAP OF NOSGOTH

[ONE] Following the advice of the Oracle, go south to find the ancient Vampire, Vorador. Chop down the tree that's blocking the entrance to the stone keep. Enter and grab the Mist Form, checking the other rooms for goodies. On leaving, activate the bat beacon located to the east and head then south west where you should spot Vorador's mansion. Using the mist form, float over the lake to get there.

On arrival, continue walking south until you eventually come across a large open area. There are two caves, one containing a blood fountain which increases your strength, and three small dungeons. Use your overhead map to see this. After pilfering from the two caves, enter then exit from each of the three dungeons.

[TWO] To make progress, kill all of the enemies to lower spikes and raise bridges. Once in the Mind dungeon, you will come across the Control Mind spells which must be used to get past some of the humans. Now you'll be able to reach some of the previously inaccessible switches.

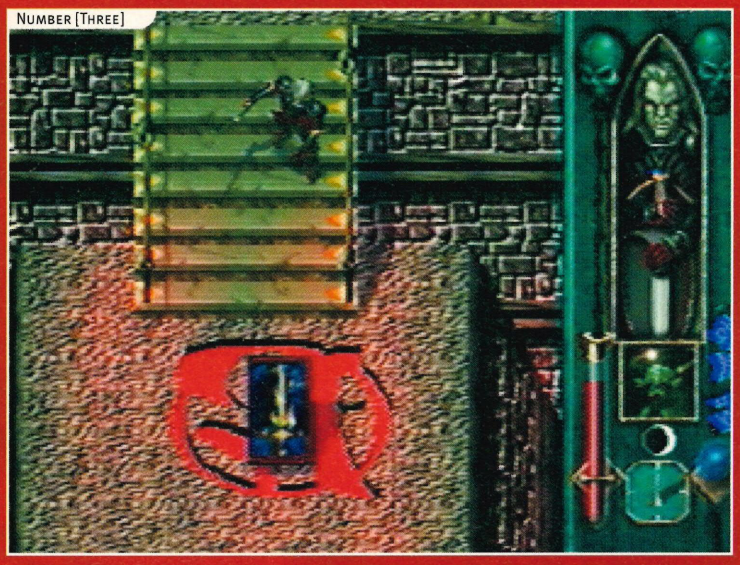
NUMBER [ONE]



NUMBER [TWO]



[THREE] Enter the Flame dungeon and when you come across a number of switches, the way to unlocking your path and finding the Flame Sword is to disable both red glowing switches (use the overhead map to see), then both green ones. Next, go down the steps and disable the two new red glowing switches. Now go back up the stairs and disable the green glowing switches. Collect the Flame Sword at the bottom of the steps. Once you've





explored these dungeons, head right and go to Vorador's mansion.
In the room to the right, use the save point. Now head north using the mist form to walk over particularly dangerous floors (spikes and sand). You need to use the Control Mind spell to reach some goodies and switches. On leaving the mansion, walk left to activate the Bat beacon.

[FOUR] Now go back and walk as far north as possible. Use the Wolf form and jump down the cliff and then head south into Uschtenhiem. After mopping-up all the items there, head north. On the way, you'll come across two caves: the first accommodates a blood fountain, the second a couple of secrets.

[FIVE] The path to Dark Eden is easy: a few trees, enemies, and loads of switches. Prior to reaching it, you'll arrive at a cave that you cannot enter- return to it later. To clear a path through the lava, use the Mind Control spell. Use it to take over the humans near the switches.

[SIX] Once in Dark Eden, most of the switches to doors etc. are hidden on this statue, so just walk into them to activate. After finding the Spirit Wrack, you should head for the bosses: Bane and Dejoule. To defeat Bane, attack as fast as possible using the Repel spell to deflect Dejoule's energy bolts. Now just hit Bane with the Flame sword until he dies. To kill Dejoule, use the Repel spell against her, and fire Flays or Energy bolts until she dies. Collect Malek's helmet. After speaking to the spirit, return to the cave that you previously couldn't enter using the Bat form and walk through. Continue walking all the way down. Immediately north of the landmark, you'll find the lightning cave, which leads to the Lightning spell. Return here when the moon is full. Now keep on walking, slaughtering everything until you come to Avernus. Having entered Avernus you will notice dead bodies strewn everywhere. Follow any of the paths to the Cathedral.

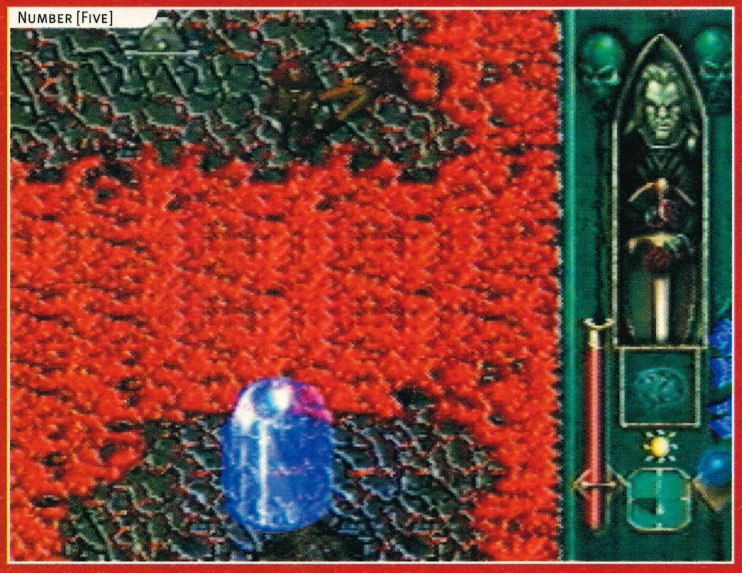






[SEVEN] Inside you'll come across a number of valuable items including The mighty Soul Reaver. shoot the switches to continue. Collect the Wraith Armour and Azimuth's Third Eye too. On leaving the Cathedral, activate the landmark then walk out. You'll be teleported back to the Pillars, where you put the eye in front of the dimension pillar.

[EIGHT] And here we must leave it. Next month, however, sees the final installment of Kain's gruelling adventure. Who knows what horrors lie ahead. Well, actually we do! So, if the suspense isn't killing you, hang on just one more month to discover his fate. Sleep well, my children.





KILLER MDK





[Above] The level designers clearly have a bit of suppressed Andy Warhol in their personalities, judging by the tacky abstract art on this level.

Free energy is something that could revolutionise the world as we know it. No more need for nuclear power with its repulsive hazards, no more covering acres of land with inefficient electricity-producing windmills, and a lasting solution to our rapidly diminishing fossil fuel resources.

In the time of *MDK*, free energy on Earth is a reality. Pollution is just an embarrassing memory. Ever since the discovery of the mysterious "energy streams" in space, the massively powerful electrical paths that the planet has learned to harness its energy from, things have been good on our home planet and the people have been happy.

That is until a race of pure evil aliens, known only as "stream riders" due to their light-speed travelling of the energy streams around the galaxy, arrive and begin to take the world by force. Eight huge floating cities push through the stratosphere and spread out all over Earth, crushing the terrestrial towns as they come to ground. Things don't look so rosy anymore, but there is a chance the population can be saved.



[Above] The decor in *MDK* changes substantially from level to level, but all of it is intriguingly spooky. The alien cities are weird indeed.



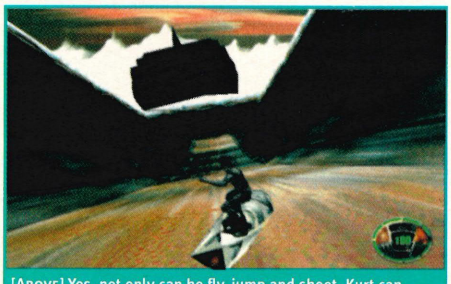
THE CROW

An inventor named Dr Fluke Hawkins is in orbit with Kurt, a young man learning what he can from this Emmet Brown character, when he sees the devastation taking place on the planet beneath them. Immediately he whisks Kurt off to his secret inventions room and furnishes him with a fetching gothic PVC suit that repels bullets, as well as hand items like "The World's Most Interesting Bomb", "Anti-Radar Spray Paint", "The World's Smallest Nuclear Explosion", and a ballistic curiosity named "The Human Mortar."

It appears the good doctor was never given the opportunity to test these eccentric creations, and he convinces Kurt to return to Earth and be his human guinea pig as well as save mankind.

MDK is the long awaited shoot-'em-up from renowned developer Shiny Entertainment, and judging by the hype surrounding the product it is apparent that some people believe it to be revolutionary.

Strutting around the shadowy, strange



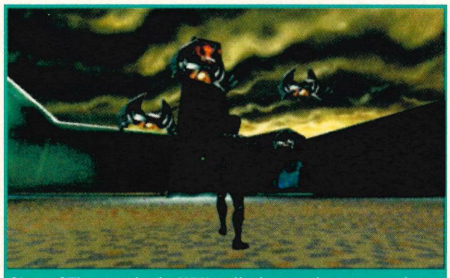
[Above] Yes, not only can he fly, jump and shoot, Kurt can snowboard! The inventor drops new contraptions like this down to play with as the game progresses.



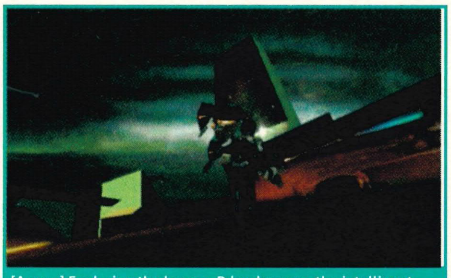
PLAY INFORMATION

Name: MDK
Publisher: Interplay
% Complete: 75%
Release Date: July





[Above] The enemies in *MDK* really do come in waves, and they're not always on foot. Luckily, Kurt's agility and arm-mounted chain gun will take care of these hovering nasties.



[Above] Exploring the large 3-D landscapes, the intelligent cameras follow your movement smoothly and produce some fairly cinematic moments.

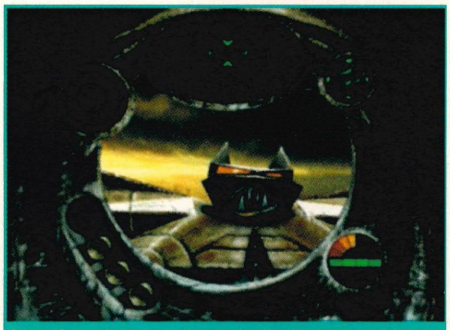
FLIGHT UNLIMITED

If you chuck yourself into a seemingly bottomless gorge, your chances of survival are not too high without the instant parachute on your from your back in cases like this. Doctor Fluke Hawkins has invented this clever mode of flight while in his orbiting laboratory for several years, and it saves your skin on more than one occasion.







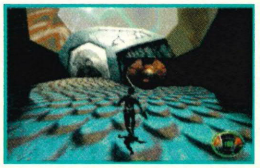


[Above] ...and here's what he looks like through your sniper camera! Get him right between the eyes and then hide before his mates arrive.





[Above] This hulking great monstrosity is just one of several boss characters that will try to keep you from your goal...







environment provided by the imposing alien cities, you control Kurt primarily in the third person, blasting at attacking soldiers with your shuddering machine gun and running around looking for a strategically convenient place to shoot from. But the best part of your offensive capabilities has got to be the sniper mode that lets you zoom your scope right up to the face of a bad guy who could be many hundred feet away, and pick him off with assassin-like accuracy.

BATMAN

There is a fine crosshair in the centre of the sniper screen, and because the detail is so high when zooming up close to an enemy you can choose to maim them with a cruel leg shot, hit an arm, or stop toying with them and go straight for the head. The power of these shots is increased greatly over your spraying machine gun, which is better suited to close range slaughter, so a single, well-placed bullet can be the difference between your death and survival.

To add to the 3-D action, Kurt can also fly. Or rather, he can float. When you jump over a ledge, into a chasm, or down to another level keeping the button held causes a four-hooped retractable parachute to spring from your back, letting you glide graciously in the air during a controlled descent.

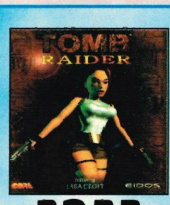
As you can see, *MDK* is packed with cool features and interesting ideas, and Neversoft seem to be doing a grand job converting the demanding graphics from the top-end PC version onto the PlayStation. We could be on the verge of receiving our best shooting title on the platform, but you'll have to wait until the full review in PLAY to find out!

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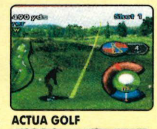
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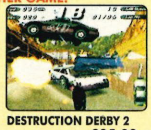


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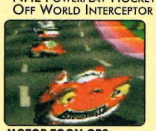


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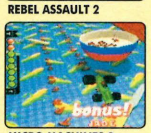
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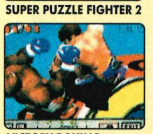
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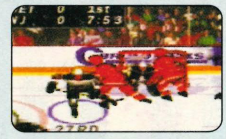
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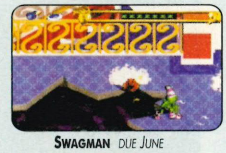

ACE COMBAT 2 DUE JULY


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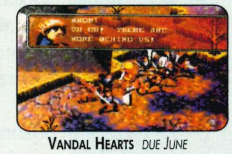

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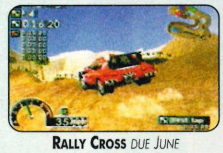

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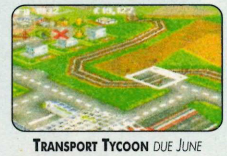

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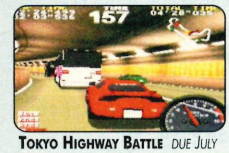


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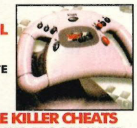


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ATARI GREATEST HITS	15TH MAY
BUBBLE BOBBLE 2	MAY
CASTLEVANIA	MAY/JUNE
CAESARS WORLD OF GAMBLING	EARLY MAY
CONQUEST EARTH	JULY/AUGUST
DARK FORCES	EARLY MAY
DARKLIGHT CONFLICT	13TH JUNE
DEATHTRAP DUNGEON	SEPTEMBER
DESCENT 2	EARLY MAY
INDEPENDANCE DAY	6TH JUNE
INT'L SUPERSTAR SOCCER PRO	MID MAY
KILLING TIME	15TH MAY
LETHAL ENFORCERS 1 & 2	MID MAY
MACHINE HUNTER	20TH JUNE
MAGIC THE GATHERING	15TH MAY
MEGAMAN X3	22ND MAY
NEED FOR SPEED 2	9TH MAY
NHL OPEN ICE	15TH MAY
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OVERBLOOD	23RD MAY
PERFECT WEAPON	30TH MAY
PSYCHIC FORCE	15TH MAY
REBEL ASSAULT 2	EARLY MAY
SENTIENT	MAY
SOUL BLADE	EARLY MAY
SWAGMAN	20TH JUNE
SYNDICATE WARS	4TH JULY
TEN PIN ALLEY	23RD MAY
THE DIVIDE: ENEMIES WITHIN	MID MAY
TRANSPORT TYCOON	JUNE
TRASH IT	15TH MAY
VR POOL	20TH MAY
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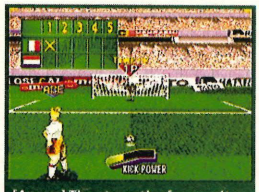
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ELEMENTARY

SUPER FOOTBALL CHAMP

It's raining football

games. It seems that everybody and his mother is trying to get a piece of the action these days. What with the review of Konami's excellent *ISS Pro* in this very issue and the forthcoming *Actua Soccer 2* from Gremlin, we're in for another busy summer, which is ironic considering that the football season is now over.



[Above] The strength of a penalty kick is represented by a power bar which goes up and down.

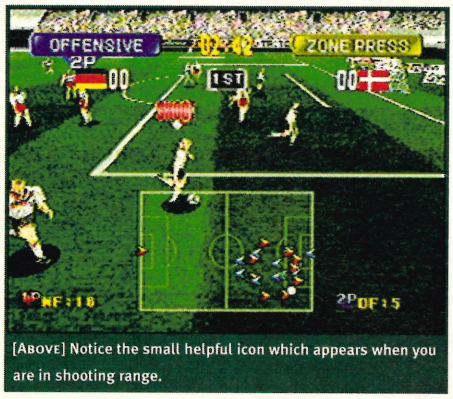
So it was with pristine kits and shiny new boots that Mindscape came bounding into the PLAY office clutching a brand new game, coded by none other than Taito, creators of countless arcade football games over the years.

Super Football Champ is not a direct conversion of any specific Taito arcade game, but it does borrow heavily from that pick-up-and-play style. Gone are many of the usual elements such as after-touch, sprinting and bycycle kicks, replaced with a more 'instinctive flowing football' experience. Hmm.

OFF-SIDE

You can expect to see 30 International teams battling it out over Exhibition, Tournament and Cup modes and although there's currently only one fixed view, the fully motion-captured 3-D polygon players run around reasonably smoothly. Having played an early version of the game, it's fair to say that the players are quite detailed, but they do have a habit of slowing down when there is a lot going on pitch-side. Each team has an 'Ace' player who is particularly good at one skill, such as shooting or dribbling, so getting the ball to him is of paramount importance.

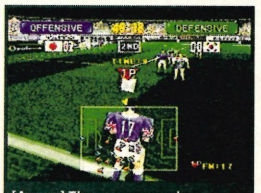
The Mindscape team was quick to point out that the idea behind *Super Football Champ* is to provide up to four players with a game that you can pick up and score with almost instantly. Sounds more like a dating agency to us, but there's no doubting that the concept is a good one. Whether this sort of game can stand up to the competition that's knocking at the door is another mater entirely, but in time-honoured tradition, we'll reserve judgement until the final review in a couple of months.



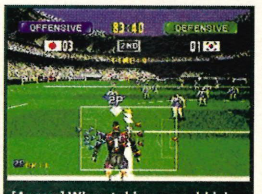
[Above] Notice the small helpful icon which appears when you are in shooting range.



[Above] Choose from 30 international teams, and toggle their formations.



[Above] The camera angle doesn't change while you take a throw-in.



[Above] When taking a goal kick the direction can be altered through moving the white and yellow arrows seen here.

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Super Football Champ
Publisher: Mindscape
% Complete: 80%
Release Date: July '97



[Above] As with free kicks and goal kicks, corners give a player the opportunity to kick the ball to wherever he wants via the arrow.



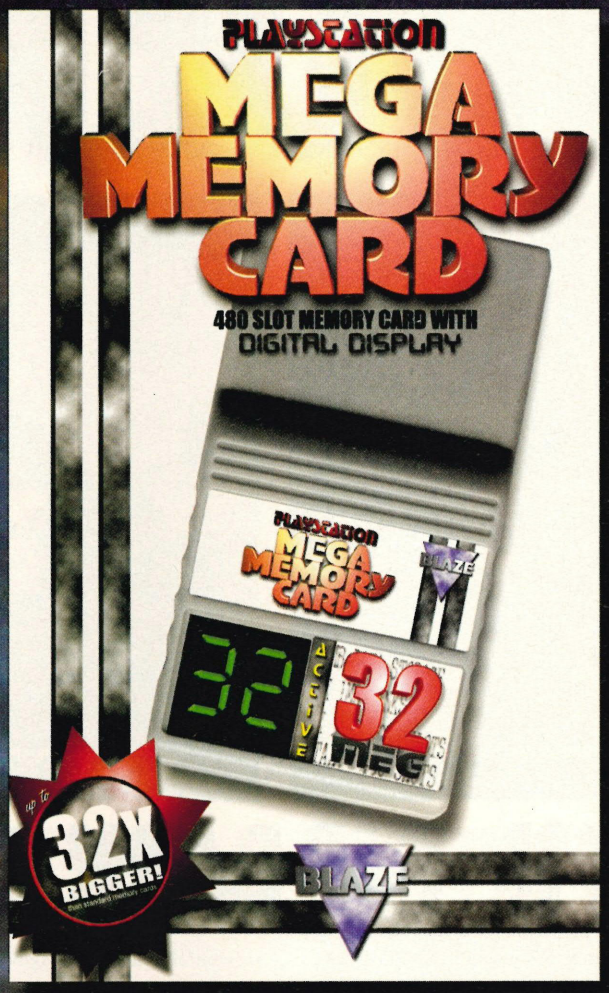
[Above] This is more like it, the 'Ace' player is about to take a free kick. About three-quarters power should send it over the wall.

HOW BIG IS YOURS?

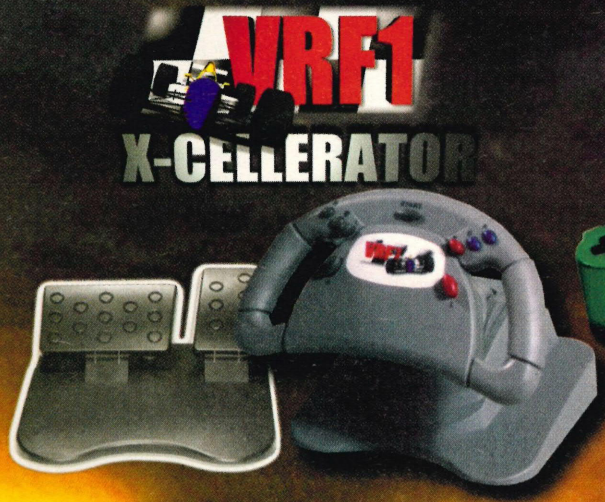
As the latest games become more and more complex, the amount of space required for saving games is getting bigger - some adventure games now eat up a whole 1MB Memory Card!!

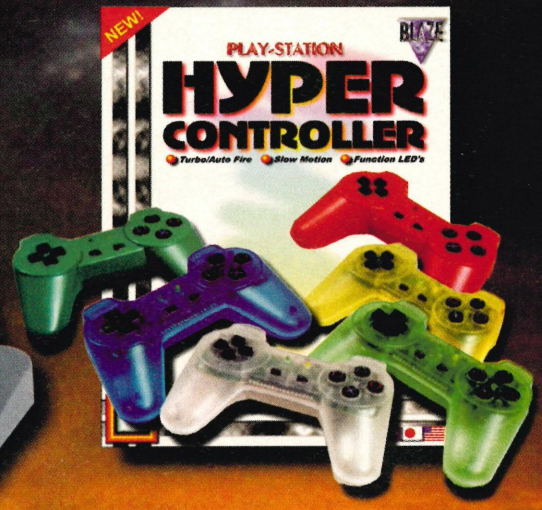
Utilising the latest data compression technology the Mega Memory Card has the capabilities of storing upto 480 game save positions - that's 32 times the size of a standard Memory Card!

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CONQUERING



[Above] By simply highlighting these Griffins, you collectively attack your foes and this saves a great deal of time.



[Above] As your ships attack the shoreline, huge flying monsters launch themselves against you to defend their positions.

WARCRAFT II: THE DARK SAGA

Warcraft II was an unbridled success on PC last year and there's no reason why PlayStation owners who have been previously starved of real-time strategy action shouldn't miss out on a spot of Orc-bashing this time around.

Electronic Arts has teamed up with Blizzard, the coders of the game, to bring us the *The Dark Saga*, which concentrates on the enduring clash between the Orc and Human civilisations. After the long and bloody war in the Kingdom of Azeroth, the Humans have endeavoured to cross the Great Sea to flee the cruelty of the Orcish hordes and reconstruct their empire. But the Orcs haven't finished with the Humans yet, and built countless sailing ships and flying beasts to engage them in battle once more on the coastlines. Ulp.

Depending on your own allegiance you can take command of the Orc or Human forces, where you must successfully build and rule their medieval empire in addition to kicking the real-time asses of your opponents in land, sea and air tactical warfare.

Ruse

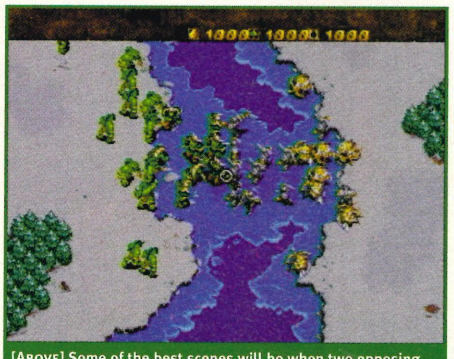
Set in this ancient fantasy world, there are over 50 missions spread over four complete campaigns to wade through which are based on well over a 100 customisable maps. Expect to find a simple and intuitive interface, which incidentally, has been engineered specifically for the PlayStation bringing this "addictive classic PC title to life on the 32-bit platform."

As you can see from the screenshots, the graphics look identical to the PC game and in this version players will be able to learn the art of sorcery as they champion multiple characters in a bid to rule the world. Potential conquerors take note; dominance in both the skies and seas with naval and air fleets will give you the edge over the enemy and see you home and dry.

Warcraft II will also be adorned with six new FMV clips that should set the scene and douse the player in atmosphere. Draw your swords for a late June release.



[Above] You point the on-screen 'Gauntlet' to dish out commands to your willing troops.



[Above] Some of the best scenes will be when two opposing armies clash for the mother of all battles.

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Warcraft II: The Dark Saga
Publisher: Electronic Arts
% Complete: 90%
Release Date: June '97

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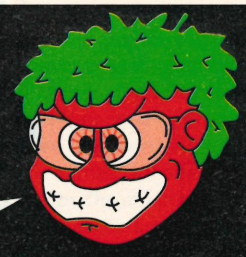
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Logic 3

FLAIL

WILD ARMS



[Above] A Japanese-style RPG wouldn't be complete with the regulation Anime cartoon bolted on to give the adventure some real polish.



Final Fantasy VII has gone down a storm in Japan and there's no reason why it shouldn't repeat this success in Europe when it eventually makes an appearance on PAL. Japanese-style RPGs in general are gathering momentum all of the time and Sony, in its wisdom, has another ace up its sleeves in the form of *Wild Arms*. Touted as a traditional role-playing game in the same vein as *Dragon Warrior* and *Breath of Fire*, it has already sold in excess of 260,000 units alone in Japan.

In true *Zelda* style, you can wander freely around towns and dungeons murdering everything in your path, pick up items and throw them, and generally manipulate the environment. Similarly, you'll have to move, break and swap certain objects to gain access to secret areas.



[Above] Just look at those cutesy characters interacting with each other. After finding this sword you gain four experience points.



[Above] The *Zelda*-esque perspective and playability will make *Wild Arms* a real RPG winner.

Zelda

The quest itself is split into three parts, where you have to control three different characters whose sub-quests you have to complete to move on to the next one. Beat all three and the game proper begins, which will give the player access to the entire world map and the opportunity to equip your party with more than one character.

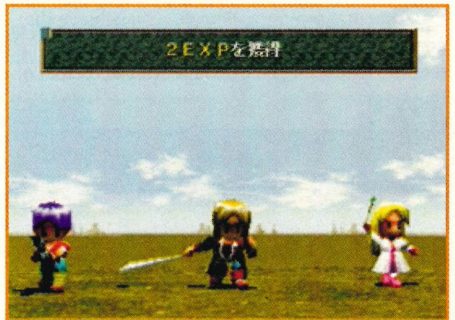
We've been reliably informed by those who have played the game that the tastiest sections in *Wild Arms* are the battles. Although pretty simplistic to begin with, the attention to detail on each of the polygonal characters and enemies together with the roaming camera angles more than makes up for these early skirmishes.

Combat is menu-driven and turn based, so that you can think out a fiendish strategy to dispose of your foes without panicking over a stringent time limit. All of the characters will be able to perform a standard attack pattern and incorporate magic into their offensive moves. A handy force-metre which grows with each hit that is dished-out and taken, your heroes will be able to unleash enormous magical assaults which range from code green (weak) to code red (devastating).

It's almost too much to take in, two fabulous-looking RPGs literally a couple of months away. Rest assured, when we finally get our oily hands on them, you'll be the first to hear about it.

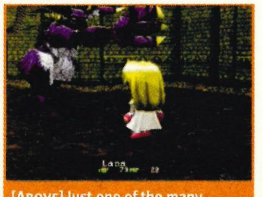


[Above] Magic attacks come in many forms, which become more powerful with experience.



[Above] Three of the main characters prepare for a battle against one of the many foes to be found throughout the land.





[Above] Just one of the many fearsome bosses that can be found.



PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Wild Arms
Publisher: Sony
% Complete: 85%
Release Date: August '97

EXOSKELITON

CARNAGE HEART

Destroy them

my robots! After looking at these screenshots, you'd be forgiven for assuming that *Carnage Heart* involves rampaging robots clashing on a blood-soaked battlefield, mashing each other to pieces. Great, let's get bailed-in and kick some ass then. But wait a minute, what are all these strategy elements doing here?

It is very deceptive in both name and looks. True huge 'mechs' do 'veee-chunk' around suitably post-apocalyptic environments letting rip with huge and devastating weapons, but only as a result of you programming them that way. You won't be controlling them directly on the battlefield.



[Above] Notice the electricity enveloping your mech as it gets squarely hit by an enemy tank.



[Above] An enemy tank gets blown to pieces. Just look at the debris fly!

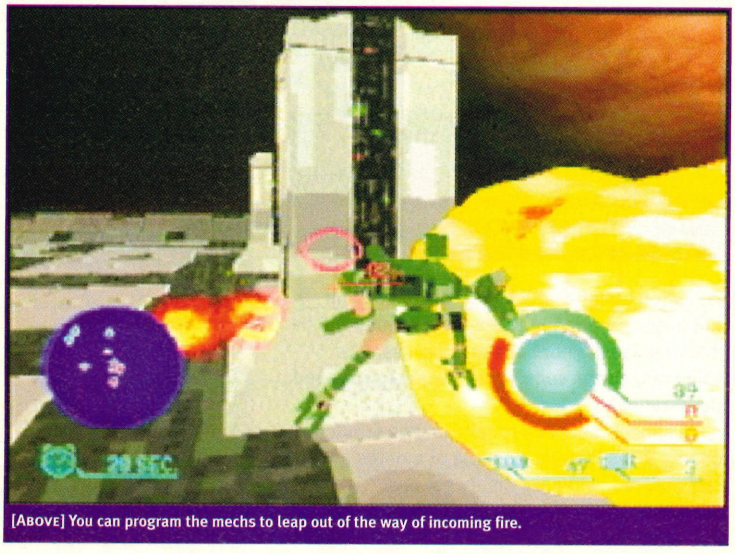
PLAY Information

Name: Carnage Heart
Publisher: Sony
% Complete: 95%
Release Date: Out now

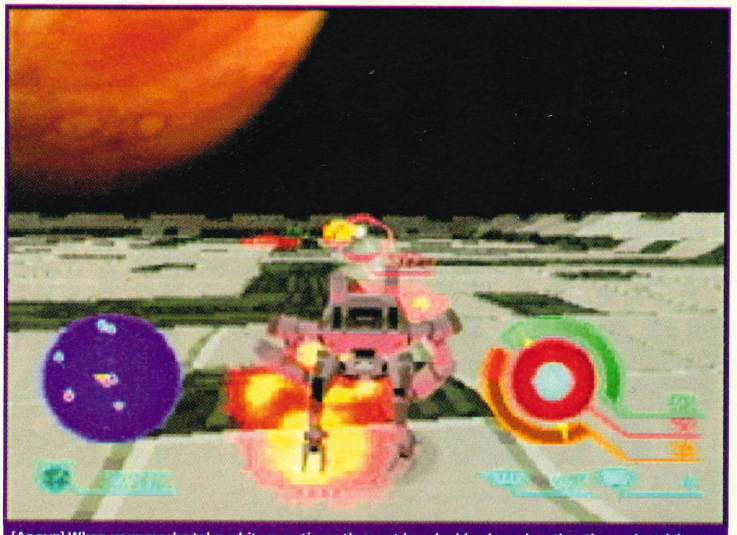
Mech yer mind up

For those strategy buffs amongst you who have a spare month free, there's certainly a huge challenge in the offing here. Those who are frustrated with controlling units in other real-time games that tend to wander off course as a result of ignoring your direct commands, will be pleased to note that developer Artdink has apparently addressed all of the shortcomings.

Carnage Heart will utilise an icon based system, where you must attach chips into the blank circuit boards of your chosen 'bots' (see Chips 'n' Scraps). Only through days of experimental programming will you achieve the goal of making them function exactly as you require, which means trial and error on behalf of the player.



[Above] You can program the mechs to leap out of the way of incoming fire.



[Above] When your mechs take a hit, sometimes they get knocked backwards, other times electricity surges all over them.

Artdink state that the most satisfying aspect of the game comes to light when the mechs fulfil your specific orders in battle, besides the fact that players will be able to constantly upgrade their chipsets too. The graphics, although fairly antiquated, serve more than a functional role, however. Watching your mechanical monstrosities leap out of the way and let loose a volley of high-tech weaponry into similarly designed enemies should raise *Carnage Heart* above the typical strategy fare and should heighten the excitement.

At the end of the day, the strategy elements serve only to improve your hardware, which will include: two-legged, flying, spider and tank varieties with the accompanying multitude of weapons and gadgets. There's a high quotient of decision-making, negotiating with other powers and design planning which may not appeal to everybody, but as a thinking man's variant of the robotic shoot-'em-up theme, should make a welcome change.



[Above] A map can be brought-up at any time, showing enemy emplacements and other points of interest.

Chips 'n' Scraps

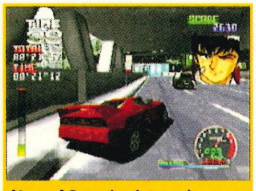
An integral part of *Carnage Heart* revolves around programming your mechs to do specifically what you tell them during battles. Starting with a blank circuit board you can gradually build up a unique behavioural pattern.



You can either let an engineer design a default chip, or actually build one up yourself. This is a fascinating idea and one that could do wonders for the longevity of the game.

SMASHING RAY TRACERS

This is a bizarre name for a game lacking in both rays or tracers, but Sony has one heck of a fast racing game on its hands here. Developers Taito is claiming one of the quickest 3-D routines to date and after having thrashed one of the sports cars around couple of the varied courses, nobody here is arguing with that.



[Above] Swerving into and around cars is great fun and quite easy to master.

Best described as a frantic arcade smash-'em-up akin to the arcade classic, *Chase HQ*, *Ray Tracers* is set over a multitude of winding, undulating highways and promises to be an adrenaline-pumping, seat-of-the pants experience. Even before a race as you rev the engine into the red, the car's suspension lurches forwards and backwards just aching to be let loose, and when the signal to race disappears it seems like only two or three seconds before you're haring along one of the many highways and byways at top speed.

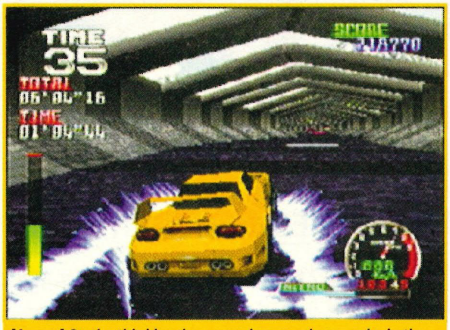
Chicken run

Realistic reflections and superlative light-sourcing should woo car game fanatics, along with the customary three views (one cockpit and two above and behind). The game consists of both Mission and Time Trial modes, the former throwing the player into a race against the clock to reach a boss vehicle where the idea is to smash it to pieces through liberal use of the turbo button. This has got to be a joy-riders' dream come true (keeping the buggers off the roads and in front of a screen) as the whole concept of the game revolves around crashing into obstacles and vehicles to gain points.

There are a number of cars to choose from and no doubt a few hidden ones to discover along the way, each of them vary in ramming strength, braking, speed and handling. Typically, a car that's got a high top speed and ramming strength, will be tough to handle, so they're all well balanced in the run of things. We're pretty excited about getting our hands on the full version of *Ray Tracers*, thanks to its pick-up and playability, so stay tuned for the full low-down in a couple of months.

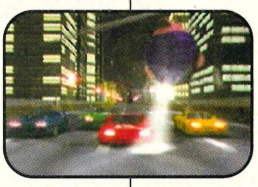
PLAY Information

Name: Ray Tracers
Publisher: Sony
% Complete: 85%
Release Date: August '97



[Above] On the third level your car leaves a huge wake in the water as you negotiate this tunnel which is populated by mini hover craft.

Ray Tracers contains an impressive opening sequence, which gives the player an insight into what he or she can expect. The cars fly over hills, smash into each other and perform massive skids. Basically it's just sets the scene, but it's welcome nonetheless.









[Above] Hit the nitro to get an instantaneous burst of speed.



[Above] Using the road-side embankments is useful for getting around awkward vehicles.

arena

views · questions · criticisms · ideas

VIEWS · QUESTIONS · CRITICISMS · IDEAS

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DEAR PLAY,

I am writing to you after reading issue 20 of your fantastic magazine and the letter in it by Aaron Vallely from Ballygally about running import software on his eight month old PlayStations with no modifications. You said it may work by tried and tested methods, but as the PlayStation was a relatively new one, it most probably wouldn't.

You then added that PlayStations of a somewhat older age (first on the shelves in the UK) are more likely to get away with running imports on basic hardware. How true is this?

See, I was lucky enough at the time to be able to buy a PlayStation and it is now coming up to about two years old and was bought in the first month of its official release (cost me about 300 big ones too...). Do you think I may own one of these machines which may run imports with no mods required?

Exactly how old does the hardware have to be to do this? I would very much like to be able to run imported software and play games as they were meant to be played before conversion for the UK market. Please dig deep and pull us out some answers PLAY!

Also, with all the recent one off jazzed up PlayStations you've been giving away (BloodStation, BladeStation etc), spare a thought for us unlucky folk who never seem to win anything and send us some jazzy stickers so that we can funk up our own old grey systems. I'm sure readers will agree. Cheers, PLAY, for a great magazine.

Merle Riseborough, Fakenham

It's no secret, Merle that on the first generation of PlayStations, you can use a UK disk to boot the PlayStation to the first black screen (with the PlayStation logo on it), and then when the disk slows for a second or two, you whip it out and replace it with the import disk. Of course to do this you need to keep the button at the back right of the PSX held down using a pen top or something.

The reason this is no great revelation is because practically everyone knows about it, and as soon as the problem was spotted, Sony promptly brought out next generation PlayStations where this was not possible. If you have a brand new PSX, you cannot swap the disks, and the only way to run imported software is to solder on a new chip direct to the board and this is risky and can result in you completely buggering up your machine.

Personally, I would never open up a PSX and mess about with the internals, but some people do and they take risks. Make no mistake, if you ruin your machine trying to make it run import games, Sony will not replace it under warranty.

DEAR PLAY,

I'm just writing this to you because I'd like to say a job well done to the team at Virgin Interactive Entertainment, at 2 Kensington Square, London. And also, I think that the Sony PlayStation is the best console around. The problem is that there aren't that many games around where I live, which is a pity. The team at Virgin helped me a few times when I was stuck, because I didn't know there was a games magazine for the PlayStation (how could you miss them all – Ed?). I just got your magazine the other day (issue 20) and I must say that you guys do a great job. I honestly didn't know there was that much going on until I saw PLAY.

PJ Dineed, Ballina

Congratulations to Virgin indeed – good to see a publisher taking responsibility for its games and helping out the public. It also sounds like Virgin recommended PLAY to you, but I'm sure that cannot be right. Thanks for your comments, PJ.



[Above] Praise for Virgin this month – game help and a Play recommendation – wow, we are truly touched.

DEAR PLAY,

Firstly, congratulations on a most excellent magazine. If I had rate you out of 100 you would get at least 99! Anyway to the point. At last *Bushido Blade* is here. I've been following its progress for a very long time now and seeing as you gave it such a good review I decided to lash out large amounts of cash to get my eager mitts on it, and what a most groovy game it is too.

The only trouble is all this bloody Japanese text stuff. Now seeing that I get my import gear from your source (Skill Academy), they said to give you a ring to see if you could help. That I did and got through to Damian's answer machine (lovely chap). I left my message thinking that no way would I get a call back, when lo and behold five minutes later the phone rang and it was the man himself (to say I was impressed was an understatement, well done PLAY!).

I gassed to Damian about the game (and a few others) and asked it there was any chance of an English translation – no problem, just send a SAE in the post and Bob's your uncle. So that's what I've done.

I wander, if I got *Final Fantasy VII* would you translate that for me (only kidding...), mind you from what I've gathered they are talking about censoring bits from that games as well before it gets a European release (like *Resident Evil* and *Soul Blade*).

Before I go, games I'm playing at the moment are *Vandal-Hearts, Soul Edge, Rage Racer, Bushido Blade* (obviously) and I'm still loving *Tekken 2*. Games I'm after are *Final Fantasy VII, Final Fantasy Tactics, Syndicate Wars, Tenka* and *Exhumed*. All of which were in your May issue. Well, thanks for your time and customer satisfaction. Keep up the fab and groovy work!
Gary Colman, Farnborough

***Bushido Blade* instructions are in the post, Gary. It has to be said that we were overwhelmed with the response to our *Bushido Blade* offer, and it is something we will do in the future because at the end of the day you buy the magazine because we help you find out about games and give you essential buying advice. Surely helping you play the games once you have them is all part of the service... *Final Fantasy VII* – hmm, that might be a bit too ambitious, but you can be sure that when the American version comes out, we will print a complete solution.**

DEAR PLAY,

Being a new PlayStation owner myself (two months) I thought I would take this opportunity to write to the only PlayStation magazine I have ever bought (not surprising really). I have noticed in Arena that in order to get printed I should either begin this letter by saying "First of all I would like to congratulate you on an excellent magazine," or "I was hoping you could answer a few questions," or "I don't expect this letter to be printed but..."

So I thought I would try my luck with all three. First of all I'd like to congratulate you on an excellent magazine, great value for money, only £2.95. I don't expect this letter to be printed, however I was hoping you could answer a few questions.

1. Is it worth waiting for *Peak Performance* to be released, or shall I just splash out on one of the other racing games, eg *NFS2, Porsche Challenge, Speedster* or *MMV3?* Also, when is it to be released?
2. I realise *Actua Soccer Club* is to be released soon, should I expect a much anticipated review or should I just persuade my mate to buy it and judge it myself?
3. *Actua Soccer 2* – when? And will it feature both club and international teams? I remember how cheated I felt when I bought the original game and realised it had only international teams.
4. When is *Time Crisis* going to arrive? It's a great game and I want to know whether to buy this, or perhaps *Smash Court Tennis?*
5. I am thirsty for an adventure game that will keep me up late nights and satisfy me for £40. Shall I get *Tomb Raider 2, Resident Evil 2* or is there something else?
6. Is there a cheat to play Mufu, Snork or Udan in *Tobal No.1*, as I am not that good in the Quest mode?
7. I thought the official price of PlayStation games had gone down to £34.99? I went into WH Smith the other day and I was asked £44.99 for *MMV3*. Explanation please.
8. Since PlayStation games are having mass price cuts, does it look like other PSX products will also receive cuts, such as the Multi-tap or other controllers.
9. Lastly, and this is more of a suggestion. Beat-'em-ups are always progressing in technology and looks. Wouldn't it be great if they actually talked to each other whilst fighting?
Gary Singh

Thanks for your input, Gary, it is most appreciated. And because I'm in a generous mood...
1. *Peak Performance* is good, but you might get more enjoyment out of *NFS2*, especially if you were a fan of the original. *Porsche Challenge* is still a bit slow for me, despite the cheats, and *Speedster* has now fallen by the wayside now that we have all the secret cars. *Micro Machines V3* is still excellent fun though. Don't forget if you are thinking of buying *Peak Performance* to wait for our evaluation of the PAL version. Although it got 85% in the last issue, this was the import version and we still haven't had confirmation that the official copy has no slowdown.
2. It's reviewed this issue, but didn't do too well. Your mate will cease to be your friend if you get him to buy *Actua Club Edition.*
3. I'm reliably told by Gremlin that *Actua Soccer 2* will be out in October and it will feature all 92 club teams.
4. They are two completely different games, Gary, so it's difficult to recommend either, especially as one is out and the other we haven't yet seen in great detail. *Smash Court* is good fun, and *Time Crisis* looks fabulous, but we'll have more news after the E3 show in Atlanta.
5. Both too far off to comment, but you might want to check out *Excalibur 2555AD* or maybe *Castlevania X* when it arrives officially in August.
6. I'm afraid not, you must complete the quest mode.
7. Official Sony games are now £34.99, such as *Porsche Challenge*. But *Micro Machines* is a Codemasters game and hence a third party publisher. All third party games will remain at the normal price, unless Sony or the retailers reduce their share of the profits, there is no other way.
8. Not likely.
9. If you want to talk, buy an adventure game, beat-'em-ups are for kicking people's heads in!



[Above] Is this the way PLAY should go? A cover-mounted video cassette every month? Robin Browne and Simon James think so, but we're not so sure...

"I would happily pay an extra £1 for a top quality video to go with the magazine..."

DEAR PLAY,

I am writing to congratulate D Garbutt on the idea of a video cassette of upcoming games for Sony's grey beauty. I would happily pay an extra £1 for a top quality video to go with what is an already excellent magazine. The tape wouldn't have to be longer than 30 minutes, filled with previews and mini tests (with larger in-depth reviews in the magazine). It really is a fantastic idea and if produced properly and every month, it would boost your sales tenfold. And I am not alone, as many other PSX owners that I know love the idea as well. So please do this for the sake of your readers.
Simon James, Exeter

Would PLAY readers want a video every month? I'm not convinced, but certainly at peak times of the year such as after shows and Christmas – it's a great idea which I am looking into. The big problem would be, are there enough hours in the day to make a decent vid and make sure PLAY is still the best PlayStation magazine?

DEAR PLAY,

I have to agree with D Garbutt's letter in issue 19 about video reviews. I used to get a magazine on video called "Click" which was mainly for the Amiga back in 1992 and it was good. It showed all the aspects to the games reviewed and if it was around today I would highly recommend it.

Another magazine recently gave away a free PlayStation video and it showed loads of brief shots of games which was interrupted by an hour glass showing how far through the video was. It did not provide reviews, just various cuts from games and it didn't really tell you much about the games, except what they looked like. This was about ten minutes, whereas Click was 50 minutes and much better.

Also, about Imaad Shan's censorship worries, I've heard that a crucial part of *Final Fantasy VII* may be cut from the game as it is judged to be unsuitable. What's the point of having a rating system if all they do is cut out all the risky bits?

Also, if Jon Doe's letter is genuine (issue 19) then I have to agree that *FIFA '97* is a lot better than the score many magazines gave it.

Robin Browne, Stockport

If Click was so good, then why didn't it make it onto other formats? I too have heard of the magazine, but there does seem to be a stigma about buying a video tape magazine every month (see last letter).

DEAR PLAY,

As a recent convert to the PlayStation from CDi, I find your reviews a great help when choosing a new title. With all those existing titles out there though it is difficult to know what older stuff to buy. Back issues are one way around the problem, but many have sold out. Why don't you charge a pound or so for a photocopy of the relevant review? You could even e-mail them to your readers.

Ian Whale, Stonnall

Unfortunately it is not really practical to photocopy old issues and keep sending them out – how would we produce the magazine as well? The best way is to ring us after 5pm and ask the team what they think of the game you are considering. That would be much cheaper than £1. But please, no long lists of games.

DEAR PLAY,

I'd like to say the Pal N64 is crap and is going to flop big time compared to the PlayStation. Anyone stupid enough to buy the over-priced, childish cartridge-based system deserves to be ripped off. I do however have one major quibble with Sony who is still charging too much for games.

If Sony can still make a profit charging £19.99 then why don't they charge less than £35 for new releases? It is a commendable move and really shows up how greedy Nintendo is.

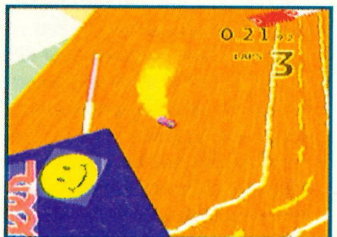
I still buy copies for £10-15 using an upgrade chip and I really hope you print my letter because I want to make the point that I wouldn't mind paying £10 for an original game instead of a copy. Sony would wipe out piracy altogether if it dropped the price of games again.

I must admit I am a PlayStation enthusiast and I really don't like lining the pocket of some crook when I know it damages the market.

Dave (The Wizard) Phillips, Pembrokeshire

"As a games pirate, you are worse than Hitler!"

As a games pirate, you are worse than Hitler. Playing import games on a chipped PlayStation is quite different from buying pirate copies and thus depriving the software companies of much needed cash. There is no excuse for piracy and this flimsy argument for lowering prices is nothing but an excuse. If you enjoy the games, then the people who made them have a right to be rewarded. Sony can afford to charge £19.99 for the Platinum games because these games have already sold hundreds of thousands of copies and have proved themselves. New games are a completely separate matter.



[Above] Why is *Micro Machines V3* still £50 when you said all games were coming down to £34.99 rants Gary Singh?



[Above] Will we do a translation offer for *Final Fantasy VII* as we have done with Bushido Blade, asks Gary Colman?

Quite right, Neil. There is no news on the state of *Bushido Blade's* official conversion. Let's hope no cuts are needed.

DEAR PLAY,

Having bought issue 20 of your fine magazine I was both shocked and appaled to see that the BBFC are censoring *Soul Blade* for its official release. I bought a US copy about a month ago and I have to say that it is the greatest game I have ever played – nunchakkas and all. But the point of this letter is to gripe about censorship in games in general. Alright, there are some games which require toning down, such as *Phantasmagoria 2* on the PC, but to censor weapons in a game that relies on them so much is stupidity in itself.

Another point that bothers me is that if the BBFC continue to believe that us mature (myself being almost 20) gamesplayers do not have the sense we were born with, where will it stop? Next time they will be censoring Mario because he can fly and kids may try it at home.

One last question is, will *Bushido Blade* be censored as well?

Neil Byrne, Basildon

DEAR PLAY,

I am impressed by the way you present your magazine, it's original and informative. One thing I would like to know is why are some of the sequels that are being released turning out to be worse than the originals. In issue 19 you reviewed *Adidas Power Soccer* International and *2Xtreme* which both got 52%. The original's weren't that good, so in this case the publishers should have tried to improve the sequels. Is there any point in the companies putting these games on the market? Why don't they spend a little more time on the games to improve them, like what Codemasters did with *Micro Machines V3*?

Lawrence Benson, Bristol

Thousands of new PlayStation owners have arrived since the release of the original games, Lawrence, and so the theory is that the new 'upgrades' are for them. I totally agree that in many cases they are substandard, and just releasing a game with minimal enhancements at full price is a bit of a con. Sequels too are often disappointing because once the name has been established, there is less of a need for it to as good.

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.

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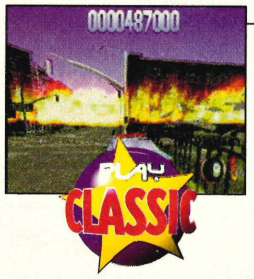
GAME	DEVELOPER	PUBLISHER	REVIEW DATE	REVIEW SCORE
1. Soul Edge (Import)	**Namco**	**Sony**	**March '97**	**96%**
2. Tekken 2	Namco	Sony	May '96	95%
3. Bushido Blade	Square	Square	May '97	94%
4. Street Fighter Zero 2 (import)	Capcom	Capcom	Oct '96	94%
5. Tobal 2 (import)	SquareSoft	SquareSoft	Jul '97	92%
6. Tobal No.1 (import)	SquareSoft	Sony	Oct '96	94%
7. Mortal Kombat Trilogy	Williams	GT Interactive	Dec '96	92%
8. Star Gladiator	Capcom	VIE	Feb '97	88%
9. Street Fighter Alpha	Capcom	Capcom/VIE	May '96	93%
10. Tekken	Namco	Sony	Nov '95	95%

FIRST PERSON PERSPECTIVE SHOOT-'EM-UPS



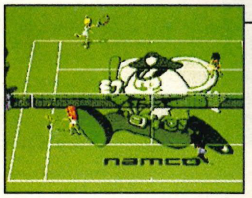
1. Mechwarrior 2	**Activision**	**Activision**	**Easter '97**	**91%**
2. Doom	id Softwave	GT Interactive	Jan '96	93%
3. Lifeforce Tenka	Psygnosis	Psygnosis	May '97	86%
4. Exhumed	Lobotomy	BMG	May '97	84%
5. Alien Trilogy	Probe	Acclaim	Easter '96	91%
6. Disruptor	Universal Interactive	Interplay	Dec '96	87%
7. Magic Carpet	Krisalis/Bullfrog	Bullfrog/EA	Apr '96	90%
8. Tunnel B1	Neon	Ocean	Aug '96	87%
9. Descent	Interplay	Interplay	Apr '96	85%
10. PO'ed	Studio3Do	Warner Interactive	May '96	87%

ARCADE SHOOT-'EM-UPS



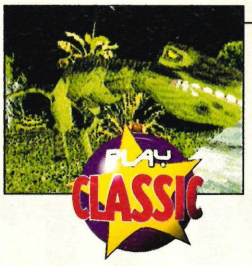
1. Die Hard Trilogy	**Probe**	**Fox Interactive**	**Aug '96**	**93%**
2. Twisted Metal 2	Single Trac	Sony	Feb '97	88%
3. Syndicate Wars	Bullfrog	Bullfrog/EA	Jul '97	85%
4. Soviet Strike	EA	EA	Dec '96	83%
5. Tempest X3	Interplay	Interplay	Feb '97	86%
6. X2	Team 17	Team 17	Jan '97	77%
7. Crusader	EA	EA	Apr '97	80%
8. Project Overkill	KCEC	Konami	Nov '96	89%
9. Loaded	Gremlin Interactive	Gremlin Interactive	Nov '95	85%
10. Starfighter 3000	Krisalis	Telstar	Jun '96	85%

Sports Sims



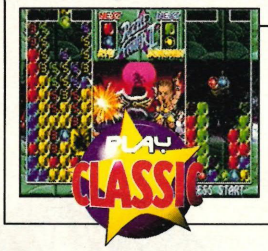
Game	Developer	Publisher	Review Date	Review Score
1. Smash Court Tennis	**Namco**	**Sony**	**Feb '97**	**86%**
2. Total NBA '97	Sony	Sony	May'97	92%
3. Olympic Soccer	Silicon Dreams	US Gold	Jul '96	84%
4. Int Superstar Soccer Deluxe	Konami	Konami	Mar '97	83%
5. Actua Golf	Gremlin Interactive	Gremlin Interactive	Aug '96	88%
6. Int Track & Field	Konami Japan	Konami	Jul '96	85%
7. Victory Boxing	JVC	JVC	Nov '96	90%
8. ISS Pro	Konami	Konami	Jul '97	84%
9. Actua Soccer	Gremlin Interactive	Gremlin Interactive	Feb '96	94%
10. Sampras Extreme	Codemasters	Codemasters	Jul '96	90%

Strategy/Adventure Games



1. Tomb Raider	**Core Design**	**Eidos Interactive**	**Dec '96**	**94%**
2. Resident Evil	Capcom	VIE	Jun '96	95%
3. Fade to Black	Delphine	EA	Jul '96	90%
4. X-Com: Terror from the Deep	MicroProse	MicroProse	Jan '97	88%
5. Suikoden	Konami	Konami	Feb '97	80%
6. Little Big Adventure	Adeline	EA	Easter '97	83%
7. Overblood	Riverhillsoft	EA	Jul '97	86%
8. Space Hulk	Key Games	EA	Aug '96	84%
9. Broken Sword	Revolution	Sony	Dec '96	84%
10. Command & Conquer	Westwood Studios	VIE	Feb '97	79%

Puzzle/Party Games



1. Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo	**Capcom**	**Capcom (import)**	**Apr '97**	**90%**
2. Bust-A-Move 2	Taito	Acclaim	Jun '96	888%
3. Bubble Bobble	Probe	Acclaim	Sep '96	85%
4. Pro Pinball	Empire	Empire	Aug '96	90%
5. Worms	Team 17/Ocean	Team 17/Ocean	Nov '95	92%
6. Atari Collection	Midway	GT	Jun '97	81%
7. Namco Museum Vol 3	Namco	Sony	Nov '96	73%

Racing Games



1. Rage Racer (Import)	**Namco**	**Namco**	**Feb '97**	**94%**
2. The Need for Speed 2	EA	EA	Jun '97	90%
3. Micro Machines V3	Codemasters	Codemasters	Easter '97	91%
4. Rally Cross	Sony US	Sony	Easter '97	89%
5. Wipeout 2097	Psygnosis	Psygnosis	Nov '96	93%
6. Formula 1	Psygnosis	Psygnosis	Sep '96	94%
7. Peak Performance	Atlus	JVC	Jun '97	85%
8. Jet Rider	Single Trac	Sony	Apr '97	85%
9. Porsche Challenge	Sony	Sony	May '97	82%
10. Destruction Derby 2	Psygnosis	Psygnosis	Dec '96	82%

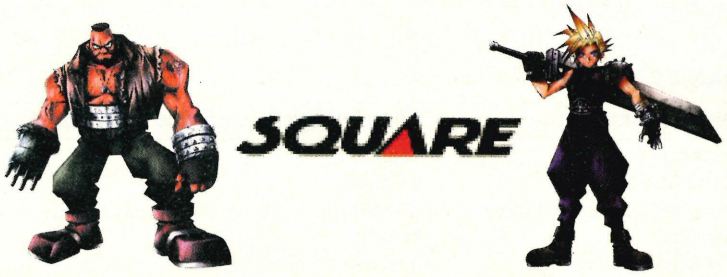
Platformers



1. Pandemonium	**Crystal Dynamics**	**BMGie**	**Jan '97**	**90%**
2. Crash Bandicoot	Naughty Dog	Sony	Nov '96	84%
3. Mega Man 8	Capcom	VIE	Jun '97	82%
4. Dracula X	Konami	Konami	Jun '97	84%
5. Jumping Flash 2	Sony	Sony	Jun '96	86%
6. Rayman	UbiSoft	UbiSoft	Nov '95	87%
7. Lomax	Interactive Design	Psygnosis	Dec '96	70%
8. Jumping Flash	Sony	Sony	Nov '95	87%
9. Earthworm Jim2	Shiny Entertainment	VIE	Oct '96	69%
10. Johnny Bazookatone	Arc Development	US Gold	Feb '96	85%

PLAYED OUT...

NEXT MONTH IN PLAY



HOW DO THEY DO IT?

WE LOOK at why Squaresoft is so successful at producing the most innovative and downright jaw-dropping software in the world and give you even more details on Final Fantasy VII, now due for an official release in November.

PLUS!

V-Rally, Croc, Nuclear Strike, Rapid Racer, Official Touring Car game, Steel Reign, Fighter's Impact, Double Analogue Joypad, Ray Tracers, Warcraft II, MDK, Runabout, world PlayStation news, Rosco McQueen **and many more fantastic PSX games! Oh yes. Play 23 is going to be hotter than hot tub with Terri Hatcher!**

PLAY ISSUE 23, ON SALE 3 JULY, DON'T MISS IT!

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Thanks to:
Simi Belo and Nick G at EA, for the second month running, Jon At Konami, departing Cathy Campos at Bullfrog, Steve at Eidos, Guy at Sony. And of course the Bournemouth Video Game Centre **(01202) 527314**. Cheers to you all.

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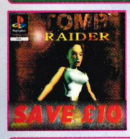
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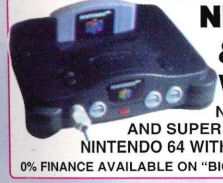
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