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issue twenty six November '97

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The UK's Best Unofficial PLAYSTATION Magazine!

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F1'97

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97%

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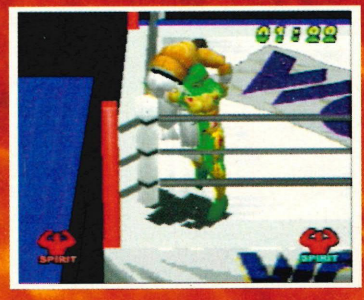
Total PlayStation

88%

"Finally somebody has released a wrestling game worth playing. Brilliant, just brilliant."

PlayStation Plus





RAPID RACER

20 WHO NEEDS AN N64? WE PRESENT THE EXCLUSIVE REVIEW OF SONY'S HIGH-PACED SPEED BOAT RACING GAME, THAT IS IF WE DON'T GET DASHED TO DEATH ON THE ROCKS FIRST!

THE BIG GAME



EXCLUSIVE!

5 WAYS TO CONTACT PLAY!

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

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The UK's Best Unofficial PLAYSTATION Magazine!
プレイステーション magazine November 1997



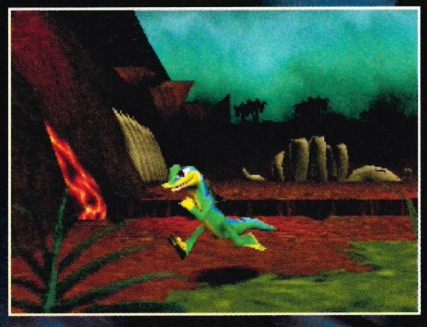
ROSCO McQUEEN



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56 The first wasn't without its faults, so the big question now is whether or not Psygnosis can come up with a belting sequel to silence all the critics?

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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!

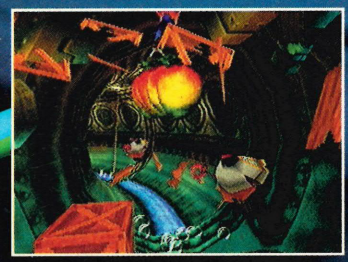
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SO, WE MEET AGAIN! Does the name ring a bell? Apart from being Damian's sibling (and thus knowing better than most how his warped mind works), I helped launch this magazine way back when, and a lot of water has passed under the bridge since then, I can tell you.

For the past year, I have been editing PowerStation magazine – Play's inbred darker cousin if you will. A magazine that provides the reader with nothing but full game guides, hints and tips (as well as plenty of dry humour). So I certainly know what makes a good game tick.

Rest assured that Play will continue to provide you with the most comprehensive reviews and previews the only way we know how. Now that big bro has left to pursue his managerial duties, he felt it fitting to keep it in the family and pass the reins over to me, and what an exciting prospect that is!

As the months tick by, the PlayStation is only now beginning to flex its mighty wings and show exactly what it is capable of, especially with the Nintendo at last starting to make a fight of it. Only now do we start to see such delights as *F1 '97, Rapid Racer, Abe's Oddysee* and *Grand Theft Auto* – a more fitting game for the Nineties you be hard pushed to find.

Sony also continues to surprise with a very impressive Winter line-up, all of which were recently showcased at the ECTS show (see page 34 for a look at every new Sony game this year!). Many combine exciting new programming techniques and effects never before seen on the PSX. And *Bushido Blade* really is coming to the UK. Now it's official. There is no better time to own a PlayStation and no better magazine to read than Play if you're serious about your gaming.

Ryan Butt
(new) Editor



news • snippets • rumours • h

MEN IN BLACK – PROTECTING THE PLAYSTATION IN APRIL!

GREMLIN never fails to pull a few surprise games out of the bag just when you least expect it, and the recent ECTS trade show (held in London's Olympia) offered the chance for another 'shocka' to be unveiled.

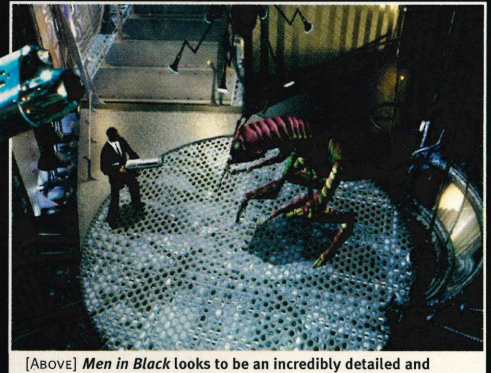
After *Judge Dredd*, Gremlin now has plans to release a PlayStation version of its *Men in Black* adventure game for the PC, and it is due to arrive console-side in April 1998. Obviously based on the hit movie starring Will Smith and crusty old Tommy-Lee Jones. *Men in Black: The Game* is an adventure game viewed from an isometric perspective. You begin by taking control of Jay Edwards, the wise cracking New York cop played by Smith in the movie. An alien race is apparently half-inching human brains to construct a vast processor and the idea is to a) look cool, b) wear dark sunglasses – even at night, and c) stop the aliens at all costs.

It is also thought at this time that you will be able to play Tommy-Lee and Linda Fiorentino on certain levels of the game, as well as being tooled up with gleaming silver weapons. *Men in Black* contains over 200 locations populated with regular humans and aliens disguised as regular people, and all key actors from the film have been digitised for added realism. It sounds like a right laugh and we'll have more on this, the coolest of film licences, soon.









[Above] ***Men in Black*** **looks to be an incredibly detailed and atmospheric adventure. This is only the PC version though.**



INTERNATIONAL PLAY BOYS

WHO TO CONTACT AT PLAY MAGAZINE...



RYAN BUTT
He went to the ECTS show, wandered, drank, gazed, talked, introduced himself, gazed, partied, ate, drank, drank, drank... and ultimately, fell over. Doh!
play@paragon.co.uk.



GRAEME NICHOLSON
He went to the ECTS show, got lost, missed appointments, stayed sober, starved, cried, got harassed, drank (water), and got given a joystick.
silencio@paragon.co.uk



TOM SARGENT
He went to the ECTS show, ignored the games, talked to wrestlers, got tacky photos of himself standing with uninterested models, and left a game in the car!
tomsargent@paragon.co.uk

BATMAN & ROBIN DELAYED

BAD NEWS for all you Batman fans waiting patiently for Acclaim's *Batman & Robin* game. It has now been delayed until March of next year due to Probe needing more time to get it absolutely right. This means more time spent on getting the control system perfected, and many new features are being added. Sorry.

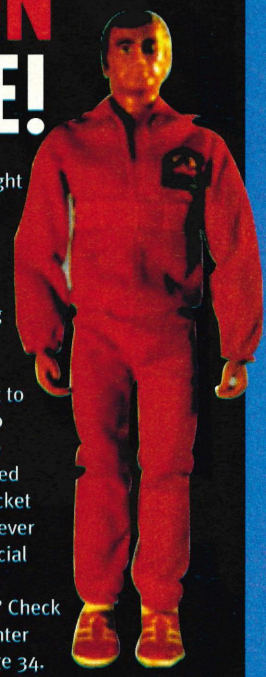
THE SIX MILLION SALES CONSOLE!

SALES OF the PlayStation in Europe are predicted to hit six million by the end of the year according to Sony – an unprecedented sales success, and one that sees Europe almost catch up with the American market.

Total sales of the PSX now stand at 19 million (Japan 8.5 million, USA 6.4 million, Europe 5.1 million), and this proves that we are just as valid a market as the traditional big two.

It has certainly worked to Sony's advantage to fully support UK and European gamesplayers and to minimise the gap between imports and the official release. Games such as *Rage Racer* proved to be better packaged than the import copies and even the launch of the Dual Analogue pad was brought forward to reduce the number of Japanese versions being bought.

This is in direct contrast to Nintendo, who seems to have always regarded Europe as 'pocket change' and never made any special effort. Who's laughing now? Check out Sony's Winter line-up on page 34.



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.

Japanese developer, Riverhillsoft recently held a conference at Fukuoka to announce the sequel to its hit PSX game *Overblood*. *Overblood 2* is set in the year 2115 in the city of the East Edge, the twin CD pack is scheduled for release in January 1998 in Japan. A UK release is not confirmed so far, but is likely.

Rumour is rife this month that THQ has bought the American and European rights to Square's magnificent beat-'em-up *Tobal 2*. We asked a spokesman at THQ to deny or confirm the rumour, but as far as THQ UK was concerned, the rumour was unfounded.

Just in is news of the Spice Girls game called *Spice World*, due for release at Xmas. Aimed at younger PSX owners, you can make up your own dance routines and watch copious video of the girls – all for around £20.

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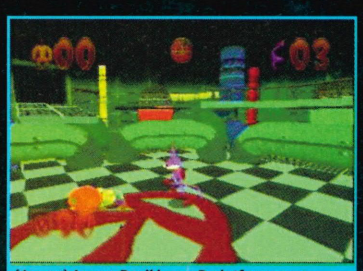
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OCEAN BUYS UP MEGAMAN

RIDING HIGH after the incredible success of *V-Rally*, Ocean, one of the most respected 'old school' software publishers has just unveiled its Xmas line-up. Recently Ocean bought up a sizeable portion of the *MegaMan* franchise from Capcom, and so due for release in the UK are *MegaMan Battle & Chase* (reviewed as *Rockman* – 41%), *Super Pang* (reviewed as *Buster Bros Collection* – 86%), *Dynasty Warriors* (reviewed as *Sangoku Musou* – 71%) and *Total Drivin'* (reviewed this month) – all out in October. *Lucky Luke* and *Jersey Devil* are scheduled for November and *V-Rally 2* has a tentative release date of June '98.



[Above] ***Jersey Devil*** **is a 3-D platform game which is a hot property in the USA. Hmm.**



[Above] ***MegaMan Battle & Chase*** **– a similar idea to *Motor Toon GP*, but not as good.**



[Above] ***Super Pang*** **is the UK version of this classic 'pop the balloons' puzzle game.**



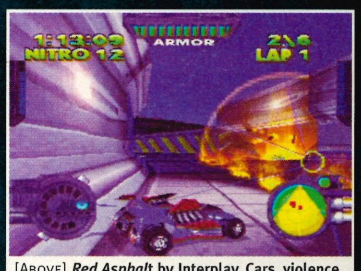
[Above] ***Dynasty Warriors*** **is a terrific looking beat-'em-up with huge central characters.**

MORE CAR-NAGE! (FOR TM2 FANS!)

RED ASPHALT is the latest racing/combat game to hit the PlayStation and it has been developed by Interplay in America.

This game will certainly appeal to those who liked *Twisted Metal 2* because you get six cars to choose from, six extreme drivers, 25 levels, and plenty of wheel-spinning, rubber burning, napalm throwing action. Levels include Hell World, Cloud World (sounds a bit wimpy) and Neo Tokyo.

Interplay says you can customise your vehicles to suit your own personal fighting style. *Red Asphalt* (so named because of all the blood you smear on the road) scores you on a combination of enemies killed and speed, and this makes it very similar to SCI's *Carmageddon*. Look for an import release near the end of the year and something official at the start of 1998.



[Above] ***Red Asphalt*** **by Interplay. Cars, violence – we like it a lot.**





X-FILES GAME *WILL* HAPPEN!

FOX INTERACTIVE has revealed to PLAY magazine that there will be an *X-Files* action game for the PlayStation. Featuring the ginger whirlwind Gillian Anderson, and David Duchovny in live action footage which took 40 days of concentrated shooting to complete, the game will feature all your favourite *X-Files* characters (Slapper, sorry, Skinner, Lone Gunmen and of course Cigarette Smoking Man), and is being developed by Hyperbole Studios in the States. *X-Files* is set for an April 1998 release and will be released through Sony.





CHARTS

In association with ChartTrack

Pos	Game	Developer	Publisher	Play Score
1.	V-Rally	Infogrames	Ocean	87%
2.	Lost World	Dreamworks	EA	79%
3.	Warcraft 2	Blizzard	EA	86%
4.	Rayman	UBI Soft	Platinum	87% (old)
5.	Tomb Raider	Core Design	Eidos Int	94%
6.	ISS Pro	Konami	Konami	84%
7.	Worms	Team 17	Platinum	92%
8.	Fade to Black	Delphine	Platinum	90% (old)
9.	Alien Trilogy	Probe	Platinum	91% (old)
10.	Road Rash	EA	Platinum	75% (old)

READERS' MOST WANTED

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

Pos	Game	Developer	Publisher
1.	Nightmare Creatures	Kallisto	Sony
2.	Final Fantasy VII	Square	Sony
3.	Bushido Blade	Square	Sony
4.	F1 '97	Bizarre Creations	Psygnosis
5.	Colony Wars	Psygnosis	Psygnosis

WING OVER

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90% TOTAL PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE



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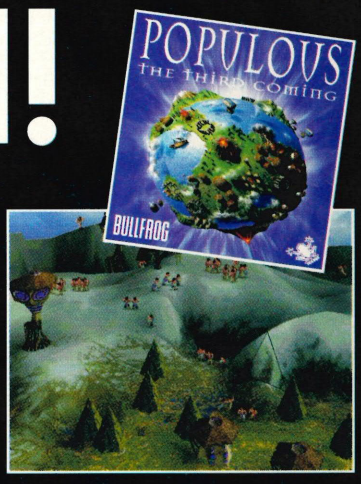
BULLFROG TARGETS PLAYSTATION!

PETER MOLYNEUX created the original *Populous* game in 1989 and it was incredibly successful and converted to almost every new games format.

News on *Populous: The Third Coming* has been scarce up until now, but with Molyneux now gone from Bullfrog, information has emerged on the PlayStation version and it looks a mighty tempting prospect. Like the first two games, *Populous 3* is a god sim, with you taking the part of the deity and creating new life and civilisations who must then worship you.

New features include a multi-player mode (not confirmed for the PSX) and reincarnation, and you will be able to shape the land, instigate settlements, and cast spells to help or hinder. A choice of perspective lets you play the game from ground level or a 'cosmic view' and the game is more graphically polished than any other sim game. Hopefully *Populous 3* will be mouse and Dual Analogue compatible (the sticks on this pad work as mouse buttons if you press them).

Bullfrog is confident of a winter release for the PlayStation version, but when has one of its games ever been on time?



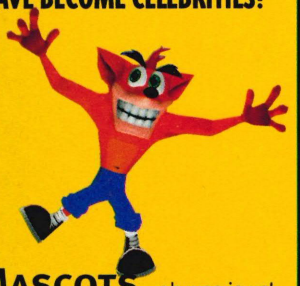


[ABOVE] ***Dungeon Keeper*** **from Bullfrog is also on the cards for the PSX. Don't hold your breath.**



[ABOVE] ***Populous: The Third Coming*** **is scheduled for the end of the year. Hmm.**

TOP FIVE...
WOODLAND CREATURES WHO HAVE BECOME CELEBRITIES!



MASCOTS – oh woe is us! It seems innocent woodland creatures are no longer content to scrabble around in the undergrowth looking for nuts and berries – they've all got to be superstars. Curiously, they all seem to appear in similar platform games with very little imagination.

1. Croc (crocodile)
2. Zero the Kamikaze Squirrel
3. Crash Bandicoot
4. Aero the Acro-Bat (bat)
5. Sonic the Hedgehog

FACE-HUGGER ALERT!

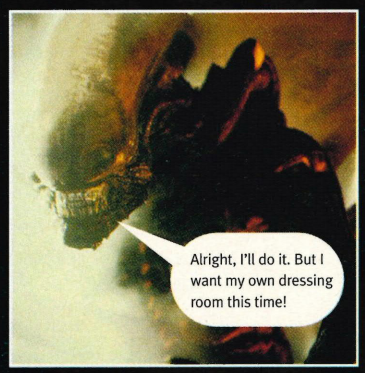
TWO ALIEN games are currently in production for the PlayStation – both by Fox Interactive which owns the original licence.

Alien Resurrection is based on the fourth Alien film starring Sigourney Weaver and Winona Ryder, and although details are scarce as to what the gameplay consists of, we do know that a release date of March 1998 has been confirmed by Fox. This means it will be out at about the same time as the film.

In an interview with John Richmond (President of Fox Interactive) we did discover that the plot of game will not be identical to the film, and that the source material has been liberally interpreted, rather than strictly adhered to.

Aliens Vs Predator is the UK developed title and was seen at the E3 in a very early form. This has now been delayed until Autumn 1998 so that the game can be expanded even further and more elements added in. Evidently, transforming the Dark Horse comic series into a videogame has proved a bit of a challenge.

We do however know that the game will be viewed from a first person perspective and that when playing the alien, you can run up the walls and leg it along corridors upside down! Suffice to say this will be one of 1998's biggest PlayStation games if developers Rebellion pull it off. More news soon.



THOSE RELEASE DATES IN FULL

SEPT/OCTOBER

Actua Golf 2 (Gremlin)
Croc (EA)
Dynasty Warriors (Ocean)
Explosive Racing (JM Int)
F1 '97 (Psygnosis)
Fantastic Four (Acclaim)
Fighting Force (Eidos)
Formula Karts (Telstar)
Herc's Adventures (V***** Int)
Kick Off '97 (Maxis)
Lost World, The (EA)
MegaMan Battle & Chase (Ocean)
Moto Racer (EA)
Namco Museum Vol 4 (Sony)
NFL Madden '98 (EA)
Nuclear Strike (EA)
Ray Storm (Sony)
Ray Tracers (Sony)
Rosco McQueen (Sony)
Super Pang (Ocean)
Total Drivin' (Ocean)
VR Baseball (Interplay)
Xevious 3D/G (Sony)

AND THE SLIPPERS...

GAME (PUBLISHER)	WAS	NOW
Aliens Vs Predator	March '98	Autumn '98
Batman & Robin	Xmas '97	March '98



SONY

PlayStation

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USA ENTERTAINMENT

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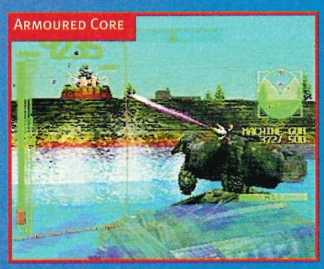
CAT BUCANNON brings you all the news on what's hot in the land of *Only Fools and Horses* remakes and zero tolerance.

Armoured Core was first mentioned in PLAY during the E3 report written by Damian and myself, but now it has been properly shown to the US gaming press and looks pretty good. Basically it's a shoot-'em-up featuring big robots, or 'Mechs' as the locals call them, and this means it's very similar to Activision's *Mechwarrior 2* on PSX.

Sony's effort though is far more impressive graphically, with huge rendered robots kicking each other about intricately textured levels. The main screen is overlaid with heads-up-displays which help to give *Armoured Core* a highly technical look, but the action is simple blasting, although there are loads of possible Mech configurations.

The best news I've saved till last though, because I have heard that the game is able to be linked-up to allow two players to battle head-to-head. *Armoured Core* has been developed by From Software and should be out in October on import. An early 1998 UK release seems likely.





Mortal Kombat fans will be glad to know that the coin-op version of *MK4* is now three quarters complete and a PlayStation version is thought to be in the process of development, despite the very similar *MK Mythologies* scheduled to appear just before.

The new game will feature characters made from polygons for the first time (just like *Street Fighter Ex Plus*), although the fighting will still take place on a 2-D plain. A new feature is the fact that you can select different weapons for each of the characters at the start of each bout, and bonus points will be awarded for knocking weapons out of your opponent's hands and then finishing them off. At this time I know that the fighters in *MK4* will come from the previous *MK* games, plus some from *MK Mythologies* and even the forthcoming MK movie.





[ABOVE] **Cat Bucannon – gets to the news that other mags simply cannot reach, apparently.**





PLAYSTATION GOES ON THE RAMPAGE!

COME ON you must remember this one? As reported in our E3 report in issue 24, Midway is indeed working on its coin-op conversion of *Rampage* for the PSX.

Arcade veterans will no doubt have heard of the multi-player monster smash-'em-up first seen in the mid Eighties, and the PlayStation game is a steroid-pumped version. Instead of just randon violence, you now have set objectives.

Hidden among the 130 normal levels are 16 secret research laboratories of the SCUM organisation which must be destroyed to finish the game, and the developers have also included 14 new bonus levels and some grudge matches for all three players to kick crap out of each other.

The monsters you control are George (King Kong), Lizzie (Godzilla) and Ralph (giant werewolf) and the idea is to punch holes in the cityscape until each building collapses.

Terrified civilians occasionally appear at the windows, and like every self-respecting demon you can chew on these to increase your life bar. As a direct result of the havoc you cause, various police and military units will be scrambled to attack you. Stomp these into the ground, or swat choppers like angry wasps. It's all good fun, but it remains to be seen if the 2-D gameplay remains fresh on the PlayStation.

Rampage World Tour is expected on import before Christmas, with a smart publisher picking it up for release in early 1998.



[ABOVE] ***Rampage World Tour*** **– batter everything in sight and then eat what's left. Cool.**



[ABOVE] **You can play as one of three monsters who must destroy everything in sight.**

WHATEVER NEXT?

NEW FROM FIRE is an innovative range of PlayStation joypads which show exactly what that dull Sony effort can be transformed into with a little imagination.

First up in the Hyper range is the Fighter, which is a standard pad with turbo fire and is decorated in a tasteful blood splat effect. Hmm, nice.

The Hyper Drive comes in various colours (even transparent) and features a small analogue steering wheel around the D-pad, plus a joystick attachment. This is specially designed for driving games, but from experience we've found that the serrated edges on the wheel itself could cause blistering after prolonged *Rage Racer* sessions.

And finally Fire has the Hyper Combat (normal pad decorated in camouflage pad) and the Hyper Extreme (glow-in-the-dark). All the above joypads are going for £19.99, which was a bargain until Sony introduced the superb Dual Analogue pad for £24.99 and thus reduced the standard pad to just £17.99.

The Erazer MP5 is a new light gun from Fire which is shaped like a real MP5 and actually has a recoil/vibration feature – all for £29.99. The makers say it will be *Time Crisis* compatible.

For more information call Fire on (01302) 321905. We will be reviewing all these products in the long term.



FFVII HITS THE STREETS (EARLY)

FINALLY, after months of waiting, the Square RPG, *Final Fantasy VII,* has been released on import in America and if you have a PlayStation that can play NTSC games then you can get it now from importers.

In fact the epic game went on sale five days earlier than the proposed 8 September, with outlets in San Francisco selling copies from 4.00pm on 3 September.

This was not planned by Sony, nor was it a careful marketing stunt to provoke media interest. Some shops simply could not hold back the number of people begging for the game.

Final Fantasy VII broke all the sales records when it was released in Japan earlier this year; selling 2.5 million copies in the first three days. The total sales of the game at the time of going to print was 3.5 million, but the surge of new owners in the US will no doubt take the running total to well over 5 million. And that's before Europe has even had a sniff!

The initial number of copies of *FFVII* for America was thought to be 750,000, and the game is being backed by an unprecidented Sony marketing campaign that will ensure that PSX owners will be RPG crazy right up to Christmas and beyond.

Will UK gamesplayers take to the quirky Japanese adventure? Judging by the number of calls we receive regularly, the answer's yes, but it has to be said that *FFVII* is nothing like the sort of game PlayStation owners are used to and it will be refreshing to see how such an intelligent and imaginative product fares in the cut-throat UK games market. We think it's probably the most significant piece of software since *Tetris.*

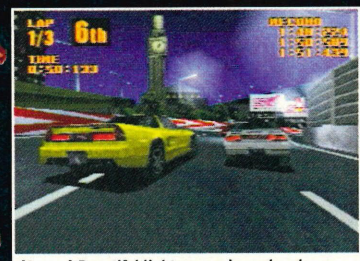


SCORCHIO TOURISMO!

HOT from Sony in Japan is *Gran Tourismo*, a blistering new racing game (uh-oh, the PLAY team find ANOTHER racing game to get excited about!) which features over 120 cars and the same physics model as, would you believe it, *Motor Toon GP 2.*

Gran Tourismo boasts real time lighting, incredible attention to detail (creator Yasuhide Kobayashi is obviously a car nut!) and both one and two players can compete, although it is not clear whether this will be link-up or split screen. You can use NeGcon or Dual Analogue controller though. We'll have more details next month





[ABOVE] **Beautiful light sourced cars bomb around the many courses like no other game!**



[ABOVE] **Over 120 cars to choose from once you've won them all. Now that's amazing!**

POWERSTATION – BEST TIPS MAG IN EUROPE!

IF CHEATS are your life then you might have seen PLAY's sister publication, the tips-tastic POWERSTATION magazine.

Just recently confirmed as Europe's best selling hints 'n' tips magazine (Source: ABC), POWERSTATION is dedicated to giving you detailed and accurate solutions to every new PlayStation game as soon as they are released.

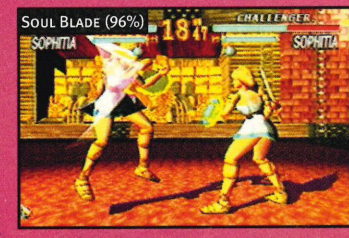
Instead of just devoting a few pages to each game, as many of the review magazines do, POWERSTATION has over 130 pages of raw cheats, hints and full maps. The latest issue, for example (pictured right) has full solutions to EA's *The Lost World*, a moves guide for *Street Fighter EX Plus*, *Toshinden 3*, *Namco Museum Vol 4*, *Kick Off '97*, *Hercules*, *Super Pang Collection*, *Dynasty Warriors*, *King of Fighters '95*, *Air Combat 2*, and a mammoth complete solution to *Nuclear Strike*.

POWERSTATION is a monthly magazine priced at £3.95 for 132 pages of prime PSX tipping heaven. If you're stuck on a game, give it a try!



PLAY RECOMMENDS...













JAPS EYE

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

Tenchu is a new adventure game from Sony Music in Japan (the division responsible for *PaRappa the Rapper*).

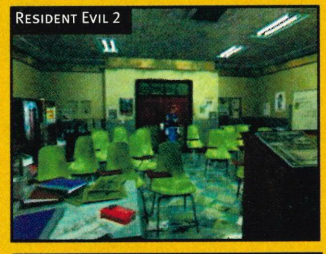
You play a ninja in 12th century Japan, and the game is a free roaming affair which includes RPG-style character interaction with combat similar to *Bushido Blade*. As you can see the characters are smaller than the Squaresoft beat-'em-up, but the surroundings are far more detailed, and as you are a ninja, stealth must be used in some areas. *Tenchu* will be out in Japan soon, but a UK or even a US release date is not confirmed. We can but hope.

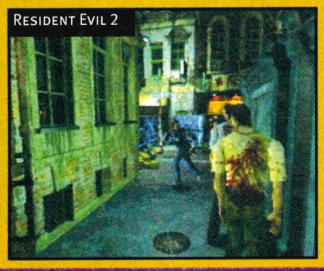

TENCHU

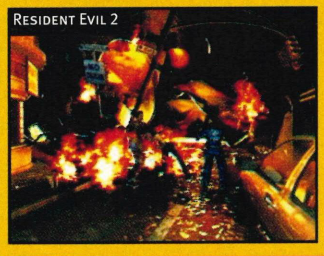

TENCHU

The Saga continues as *Resident Evil 2* is now scheduled for the first quarter of 1998. The facts at the moment are that it will occupy two disks. It is bigger than the first game. And a playable demo will be packaged with the *Directors' Cut* of the first game.

Over the next six months we will give you a report on the latest news and gossip and provide you with any more exciting screenshots.


RESIDENT EVIL 2


RESIDENT EVIL 2


RESIDENT EVIL 2

GT BACK AFTER HIBERNATION

AFTER A DULL summer GT is back with a Winter line-up packed with promise. *Maximum Force* sounds like the latest *Dirty Harry* movie, but is in fact the semi-sequel to *Area 51* – a light gun game very much like *Time Crisis*. You play the leader of an anti terrorist force in the game, and apart from the usual shooting random bad guys hiding behind items of machinery, there will be far more secrets rooms and bonuses than *Area 51*. *Maximum Force* is due in September in the US, so expect a UK version by the end of the year.

San Francisco Rush is the fabulous looking racing game developed by Midway and it's coming out on the PlayStation and N64. The US version of the game is set for November, so don't expect anything vaguely official until the first quarter of 1998.

Also look forward to more information on *Duke Nukem 3D* (now scheduled for before Christmas), *Mace: The Dark Age* and a review of *Abe's Odysee* on page 38.

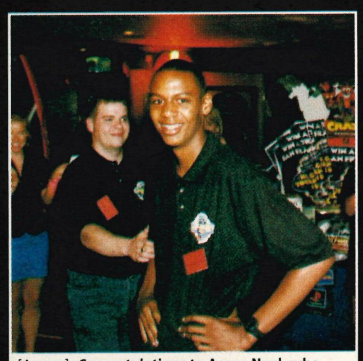


[ABOVE] ***Maximum Force*** **– good news for PlayStation owners with third party light guns.**

BLOCKBUSTER CHAMPION CROWNED

OVER 10,000 gamesplayers entered the Blockbuster PlayStation Games Tournament held in August, but in the end there could only be one winner, and it was eventually found to be 14 year old Aaron Noel from Woolwich.

After preliminary heats on Namco's *Rage Racer*, the 26 finalists then had to battle it out on surprise guest *Crash Bandicoot 2*. Aaron wins a trip to San Francisco and the chance to star in a Sony game. Jo Guest was the token celebrity, along with Dominik Diamond.



[ABOVE] **Congratulations to Aaron Noel, who beat 10,000 people to the Blockbuster crown.**

POWER CHEATS

BEAT EM UPs ☎0891 424117
Including Soul Blade, Mortal Kombat Trilogy and many more...

RACING GAMES ☎0891 424119
Including Micro Machines V3, Rage Racer, Porsche Challenge and many more...

SHOOT EM UPs ☎0891 424118
Including Mech Warrior 2, Doom and many more...

PLATFORM GAMES ☎0891 424120
Including Pandemonium, Crash Bandicoot and many more...

REGULAR UPDATES OF THE LATEST CHEATS
Calls cost 50p per minute at all times. Please seek permission from the bill payer before making the call. This may be a long call.

Ais, Cambs CB2 5LR

PaRappa The Rapper

I gotta believe !

TM



Instructor Mooselini



Parappa



Sunny Funny

"The skunk over here will bring you luck"



Prince Fleaswallow

"I'll have a ginger soda"



Cheep Cheep
The Cooking Chicken



Katy Kat

"Sounds Cool"

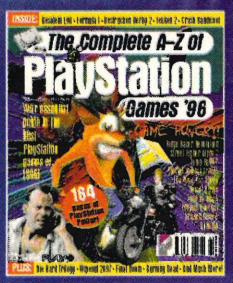


PJ Berri

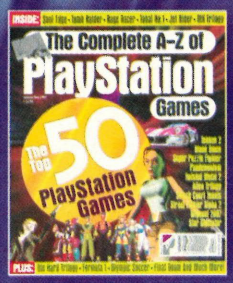


£29.99

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A-Z VOL 1
A huge 162 page A-Z of PlayStation games taken from the pages of PLAY! £5.50



A-Z VOL 2
The top 50 PlayStation games (taken from reviews in PLAY magazine.) £5.50



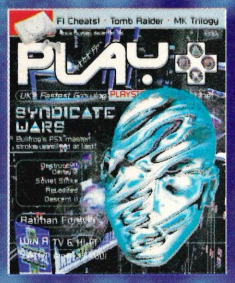
ISSUE [3]
First review of *Impact Racing* and *Alien Trilogy* FREE pin badge!



ISSUE [4]
Magic Carpet first look, *Resident Evil*, *Ridge Racer Rev*, *Wing IV*!



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!*

BACK ISSUES

MISSED A MAGAZINE OR BOOK? SNAP IT UP NOW BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!



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

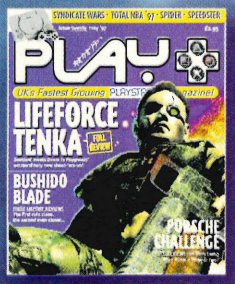


ISSUE [16]
Rage Racer reviewed, *Porsche Challenge* in-depth look, *Tekken 3* news!

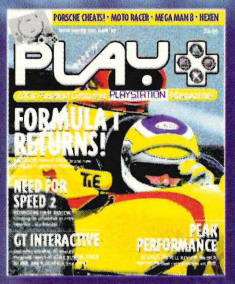


ISSUE [19]
LBA exclusive review, plus *Rally Cross*, and *Micro Machines V3*!

PLAY ISSUES ONLY £3.50!



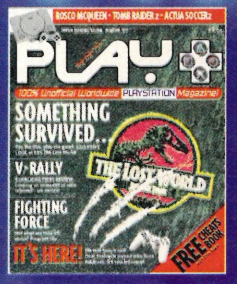
ISSUE [20]
Full review of *Tenka*, massive *Syndicate Wars* preview, plus *Porsche* and *Bushido Blade!*



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



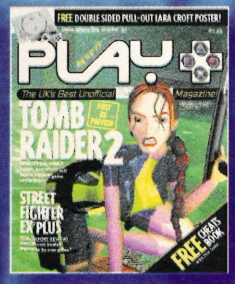
ISSUE [22]
First import review of *Tobal 2*! *Syndicate Wars*, *Actua Soccer 2*, *Overblood* and *MDK!*



ISSUE [23]
Lost World exclusive, *V-Rally* review, *Rosco McQueen*, *Fighting Force* and *F1 '97!*



ISSUE [24]
Massive *Time Crisis* review, *E3 show report*, *Colony Wars*, *Deathtrap Dungeon* and *G-Police!*



ISSUE [25]
First UK preview of *Tomb Raider 2*, *Rapid Racer*, *Nuclear Strike*, *Street Fighter EX Plus!*

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SONY

PlayStation™



MAYBE LUNCH WASN'T SUCH A GOOD IDEA.



RAPID RACER

SOUNDTRACK BY APOLLO FOUR FORTY.

THE ULTIMATE POWERBOAT RACE.

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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 If you think *Rapid Racer* looks good on these pages, just wait until you see it running! The innovative *Wipeout* on water is finally here and we've got the EXCLUSIVE review over six packed pages of water sport action. If hurtling down-river in your very own customised speedboat against numerous other proffessionals sounds like your type of thing, turn to page 20 for the ultimate in thrills 'n' spills!



GUIDE TO THE GRADES

1 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.

76-84 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.

51-75 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 only
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


Dual Analogue

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 occasionally means the game is rushed or of poor quality.

WORKSTATIONS

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

GEX: ENTER THE GECKO 28
BATMAN & ROBIN 32
SONY WINTER LINE-UP 34





CHALLENGE BOX

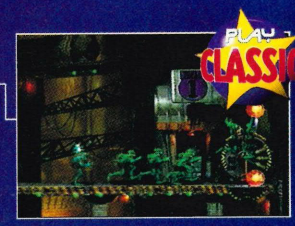
This clever little box is designed to show you instantly how long a game will last (in our opinion) based on the review. The one player game (in red) will more often than not be lower than multiple players because it's more fun playing a friend than the computer. Although it is entirely subjective, we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

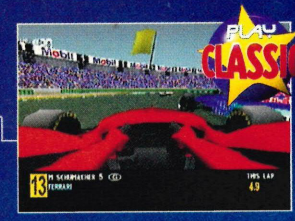


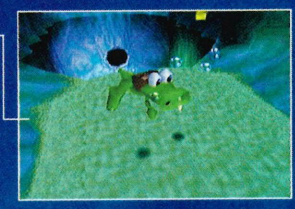
PLAY REVIEWS

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.

RAPID RACER 20
ABE'S ODDYSEE 38
NUCLEAR STRIKE 40
COOL BOARDERS 2 44
4-4-2 46
GUNBULLET 47
FORMULA 1 '97 56
TOTAL DRIVIN' 60
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MOTO RACER 66
FANTASTIC FOUR 69
METAL SLUG 70





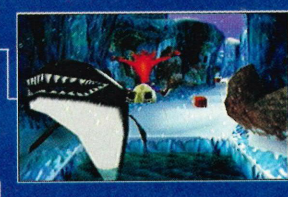




WIRED UP

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

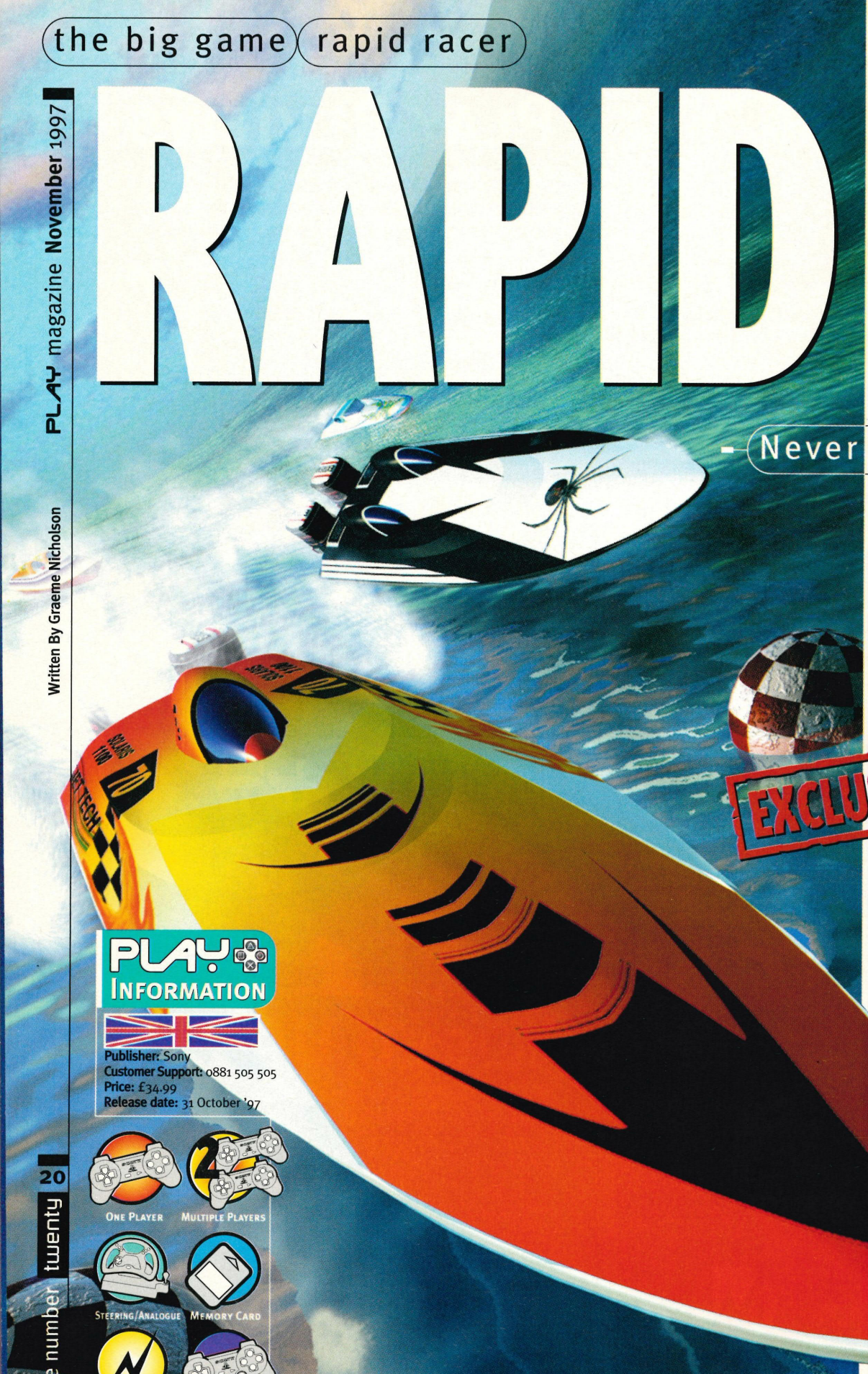
CRASH 2 80
PANDEMONIUM 2 82
FROGGER 83
FORMULA KARTS 84
OVERBOARD! 86
AUTO DESTRUCT 87





RAPID RA

Written By Graeme Nicholson



Never wanting to feel left out by a gaming trend, Sony has produced its own racing-on-water game in the form of *Rapid Racer*. This is clearly in response to the release of *Wave Race 64* for Nintendo's little machine, but we at PLAY honestly don't see what the fuss was about, although many are still singing the praises of that particular game.

What sets *Rapid Racer* apart from other PlayStation racing games is the weird control brought on by the new physics that boats and water create together. Something very different from any motor car or anti-gravity vehicle to have gone before. This new combination makes for a very interesting few hours of initial play as you hurtle down the rivers unsure of how the speedboat is going to react to your joypad commands or the uneven rushing water. It's like the excitement you felt when you first played *Wipeout* because you've never tried anything like it.

EXCLUSIVE!

You must learn to use the water to your advantage. For example, hitting the turbos on the calmest stretch of river will get you up to a higher speed because the engine isn't lifting out of the water off the back of big waves. If you choose to ride along the easiest areas on some tracks though, you won't be carried down the valley as quickly as in the rough white water patches, where control is made more difficult.

WATERGATE

To start with there are three courses to try, with another three blacked out that you have to work hard to obtain, although there are many more to come. The same goes for the speedboats, with the few available having neat little glowing gauges on the selection screen to indicate their performance

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Sony
Customer Support: 0881 505 505
Price: £34.99
Release date: 31 October '97



CER



[Above] If you value your physical safety, don't cross onto the other guy's wake – it makes for a very bumpy ride.

YOU'RE IN FOR A SESSION OF WHITE WATER POWER-BOATING, COURTESY OF SONY WHO CERTAINLY HOPE ITS LATEST GAME WON'T SINK...

THE BIG GAME



[Above] The relatively easy Wild Water river, set in the canyons and valleys of Arizona is one of the best looking courses.



[Above] You should have known from the yellow arrow pointing him out that you were being hotly pursued, but it's too late now!



[Above] As you progress, *Rapid Racer* gets incredibly fast. Surely this can't have come from the same minds as *Porsche Challenge?*

strengths and weaknesses. Eventually you'll win yourself ten to choose from. Some have twin motors that swing in perfect tandem on the rear of the boat, thers are single-engined creations with an incredibly thin dart-like appearance that helps them cut through the waves. But they are all made from wonderfully smooth curves and painted in luminous, vibrant colours so bright they'll give you a headache on the wrong morning.

From the moment you press the accelerator you know you're in for one wild ride as the engines force the back of the boat down, pushing against the water and launching you on your way down the river. It feels odd for a while, especially as the moving surface of the rapids can throw the boat around at unexpected angles and there's no way of telling what's going to happen on some bends until you've been round them at least once.

Beginning with a simple stretch of river that follows a lazy man-made canal with soft inclines and wide, slow corners you are given as easy an introduction to the world of powerboating as is possible. Before you reach the fury of the Canadian rapids it is advisable that you use this track to play around with the controls. Don't worry – you can still win this one, even after a few mistakes!

WATERTIGHT

Control is particularly suited to the analog pad as it's so natural to ease in and out of those smooth bends using the graduation that the thumb sticks allow. Just the

"Different from any motor car or anti-gravity vehicle to have gone before!"











[Above] You are against only yourself on the Time Trial mode, so look for the sweet-spots where you can exit a corner and safely fire off a turbo.



[Above] This kind of thing creeps up on you rather quickly. Who put a break-neck hairpin bend here anyway?

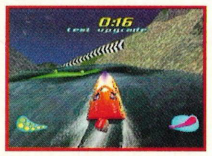


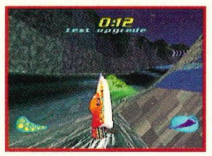
[Above] Get caught in the wrong place as you attempt to overtake and an opponent can drive you right up onto the rocks!

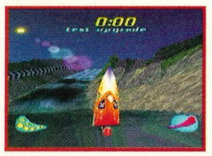
TESTING, ONE, TWO, THREE

EACH VICTORY PUTS YOU ONE STEP CLOSER TO THE NEXT UPGRADE FOR YOUR BOAT, BE IT A MORE POWERFUL MOTOR, BIGGER PROPELLER OR BETTER FOILS. IF YOU WANT TO SEE WHAT YOU'RE MISSING, YOU CAN CHOOSE TO TEST ANY OF THESE ADD-ONS FOR A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME ON A MYSTERY NIGHT TRACK. GOOD FEATURE.









left stick is implemented by default, because of the number of symbol buttons you'll need to press, so you do miss out on analog acceleration. It's no great loss to the game though, as an accelerator isn't anywhere near as precise and responsive on an underwater motor as on dry land with a car. The boats can also roll to each side like a speeding motorbike rider to help you lean around bends if you're using the regular digital pad.

Though the artificial intelligence is lacking on the competitors, in that they drive a very straight and determined race, just learning the layout of the tracks and testing the powerboats is enough fun to get you back in the bucket seat again for another few goes. Various goodies floating just above the surface give you turbo boosts (green) or take them away (red), and there's a less powerful yellow booster. A full 360° environment means you can get spun around by the buffeting waves at a corner and end up facing your pursuers as they crash through the water towards you.

"It's like the excitement you felt when you first played *Wipeout*!"

WATERLOGGED

The theory is sound behind *Rapid Racer*. Introduce a whole new style of racing that takes a lot of playing to get used to. But it is somewhat sad that one of the most vital elements could have been done better – the water. The first thing you'll notice about *Rapid Racer* is the quality of the boat models, which are great, but then you'll wonder what that is they're sitting on.

The problem is simple: the water isn't even slightly translucent, so no matter



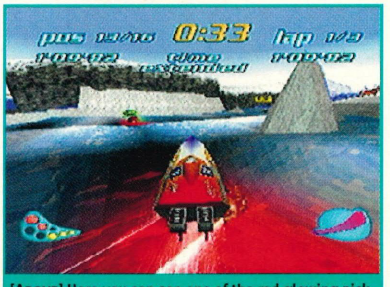
[Above] Who could have resisted sticking Disney World's killer whale, Shamu, in the Florida track?



[Above] How disappointing! "Beware of Bears" the sign says, and we haven't seen a single grizzly yet!



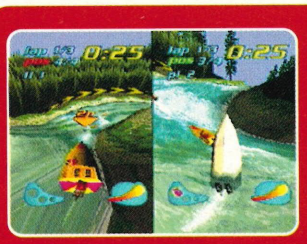
[Above] Tall humps in the river launch you into the air and bring you down with great force.

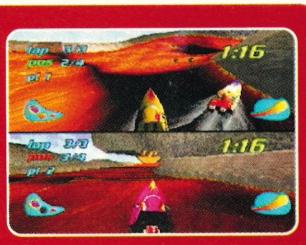


[Above] Here you can see one of the red glowing pick-ups lighting the spray from your motor.



[Above] As a beginner it's all too easy to lose control and plough into the river banks, even on this tranquil Miami waterway.

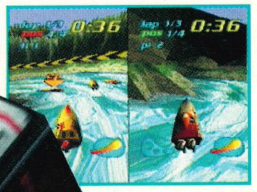




ANY WHICH WAY YOU WANT IT

THE SPLIT SCREEN RACING IS QUITE RESTRICTED WITH ONLY FOUR BOATS IN THE RACE AND THE LOSS OF THE FULL HIGH RESOLUTION VISUALS, BUT IT DOES GIVE TWO EVENLY MATCHED OPPONENTS A GOOD CHALLENGE. OF COURSE IT HAS THE OPTION TO SWITCH BETWEEN HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL SPLIT SCREEN MODES.







how well it dances around, rushes downstream or flows over the rocks it doesn't look convincing. Most probably for this very reason, the boats never plunge beneath the surface even when you take a huge drop and point the sharp nose of your boat down, like you would see in something like *Wave Race 64*. Because the surface is opaque, the boats would momentarily disappear completely from view, highlighting the problem. As the PlayStation normally excels at implementing translucent graphics – from tyre marks to missile smoke – presumably this is another side-effect of the super sharp high resolution screen mode.

The effort to get the most out



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[Above] Infuriatingly, you'll get swung around often with the flow of the water and the new controls, but only until you gain confidence.

"Colours so bright they'll give you a headache on the wrong morning!"







RACE AGAINST TIME

TIME TRIAL MODE WON'T LET YOU PLAY THE TRACKS YOU HAVEN'T YET WON LIKE SOME OTHER RACING GAMES, BUT IT HAS A COOL WIREFRAME COPY OF YOUR OWN BOAT REPRODUCING YOUR LAST LAP FOR YOU TO RACE AGAINST AND IMPROVE ON.





of the console by forcing it into the mode which rivals the PC and tramples on the Nintendo in terms of screen resolution is commendable, but to be honest the graphical touches like clear water and more interesting scenery would have been preferable.

WATERSHED

Vertical and horizontal split screen modes are included, but again there is a price to be paid. Counting you and the other player there are only four competitors in a split screen race, compared to 16 in the single player mode. The high resolution display is also lost, but the detail remains pretty good when you consider everything that is being shifted around by the PlayStation's straining



[Above] The track designer really let his imagination go wild with the lava track, and it's totally confusing at first.



[Above] Only four powerboats are permitted to run, but the two player split screen is still fun if you're both competent.



[Above] Bounding between the crests of the waves, watch for the spray trails vanishing as they would in real life.



[Above] Now, if they'd taken this engine and produced *Spy Hunter* PSX, we would be over the moon! Yes, it's sad.

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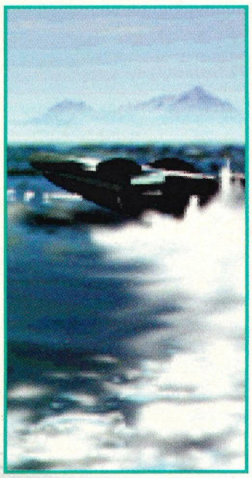
PlayStation™

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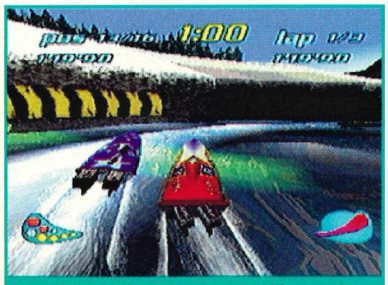
[Above] Now you can see why there are no spectators on the banks – they're terrified of being speared by the Wavehammer!



[Above] The stronger light-coloured streams can push you in quite a different direction from where you want to go.



[Above] The spray effect from the boat's engines is nice and realistic, though the river itself could have been better.



[Above] Ah, that famous racing game dilemma: do you carry on to finish the race, or get your own back and slam this guy into the side?



[Above] We would've had a *Wave Race* beater before it even came out here if *Jet Rider* from Single Trac had looked this good.



[Above] Moving between areas of light and dark you can see the clever lighting effects doing their work on the boat.

graphics chips.

While *Rapid Racer* is certainly capable, inventive and has that clean Sony-produced quality to it, it doesn't actually stand up to longer term play as well as it should. Unquestionably enjoyable in the beginning, you cannot escape the feeling eventually that once you've been down one raging river you've been down them all, although it should be noted that the terrain editor adds well over 200,000 possible levels.

Rapid Racer will not be everyone's cup of tea, but you do get a clever bonus level which only appears if you're skillful enough to collect all the yellow power-ups on each level, and it is clever touches like this that make it more attractive than, say, *Porsche Challenge*.

The specially composed Apollo 440 soundtrack though is first rate and actually changes according to how well you are racing. Overall *Rapid Racer* is certainly not as rapid as something like *Rage Racer*, but offers a significant challenge and represents state-of-the-art PlayStation gaming.





PLAY

LOOKS	9
SOUNDS	9
GAMEPLAY	7
VALUE	8
WAVES	7

PLAYED 87%

Powerful and glossy, but repetitive...

ALTERNATIVELY:
JET RIDER (88%)
WIPEOUT 2097 (93%)

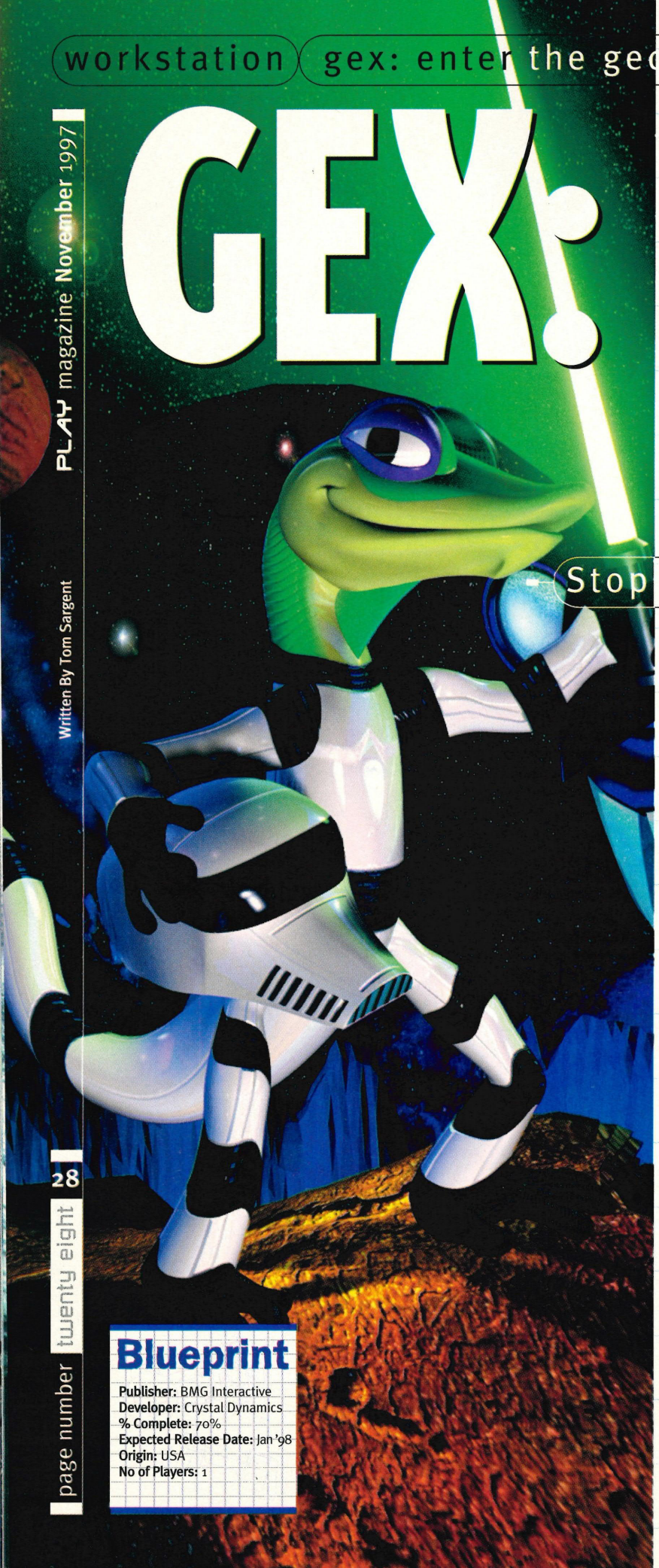


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YES, YOUR THUMBS WILL HURT, YOUR BRAIN WILL HURT, BUT YOUR SOUL WILL BE PURE. ALL PROCEEDS GO TO THE PRINCE'S TRUST.

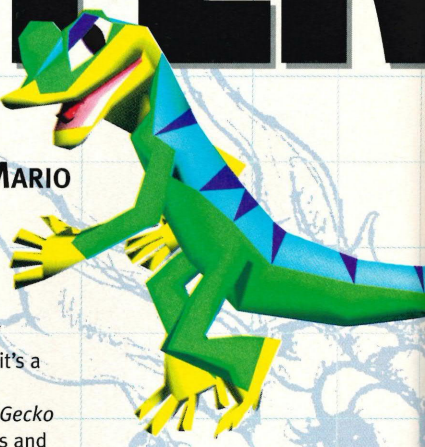


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GEX: ENTER



He's cute, beautifully animated and gonna give Mario the biggest scare of his life. Enter the Gecko...

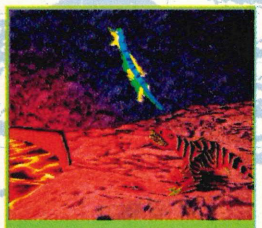


Written By Tom Sargent

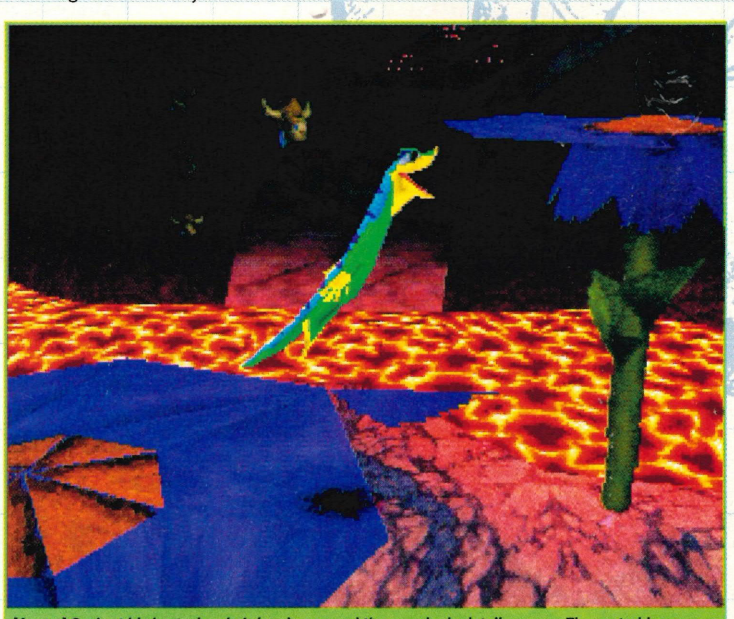
Stop press! We've seen the future of Playstation gaming and it's a small green lizard with adhesive pads on his toes. *GEX: Enter the Gecko* is the inspired creation of Crystal Dynamics and stands poised to shake the foundations of PlayStation gaming as we know it.

With the exception of the technically superlative *Tobal No 2* and the forthcoming space epic, *Colony Wars*, we haven't been so impressed by a game for a long, long time. It's essentially a 3-D actioner in the same mould as *Mario 64* featuring the TV-addicted, tail-whipping, wise-cracking titular gecko. Against his wishes, Gex's snapped-up by secret government agents to keep his arch nemesis, Rez, from taking over the country's television broadcasts. Set in the battleground known as the Media Dimension, it's up to Gex to make it through all of the multiple levels, each designed as a parody of popular films, to stop the might Rez.

The game certainly looks set to stun



[Above] Oi! Don't bite my arse. Time to put that big jump to good use.



[Above] Gex's at his best when he's leaping around the amazingly detail scenery. The control is excellent too.

Blueprint

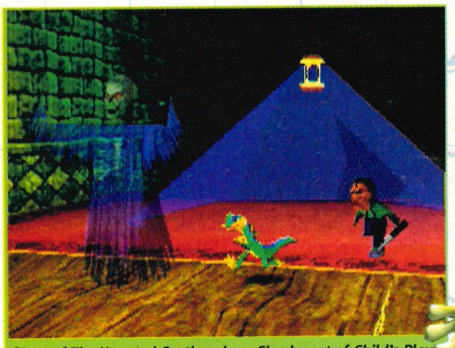
Publisher: BMG Interactive
Developer: Crystal Dynamics
% Complete: 70%
Expected Release Date: Jan '98
Origin: USA
No of Players: 1

THE GECKO

UNDER CONSTRUCTION



[Above] You can rotate the camera around Gex at any time. Here he's having a well-earned scratch.

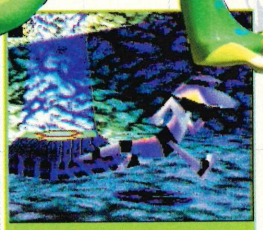


[Above] The Haunted Castle, where Chucky out of *Child's Play* wants to stick a knife in your head.

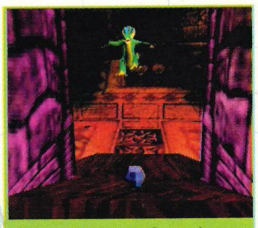




[Above] In the prehistoric stage, you'll bump into colourful and wonderfully animated dinosaurs.



[Above] There's even a sci-fi level where you get to wear what looks like a Stormtrooper's uniform and use a light sabre.



[Above] Gex can perform a huge double jump to get to those annoying 'out-of-reach' places.



gameplayers with its superlative 360° free roaming gameplay and brilliantly detailed 3-D levels, but as we all know, most games rarely play as well as they look, so it was with caution (and deep pools of saliva) that we prized the joypad from the Crystal Dynamics team to experience the game first hand at the recent ECTS show.

"We're pushing every technical button on the PlayStation..." Scott Steinberg, Crystal Dynamics

Gex, Flies and Videotape

So what's all the fuss about? After complimentary drinks and the sort of hospitality and attention usually reserved for visiting heads of state we asked Scott Steinberg, vice-president for marketing at Crystal to spill the beans. When work started on the game, what was the brief. Just to create a sequel or to create something on PlayStation that could rival *Mario 64*?

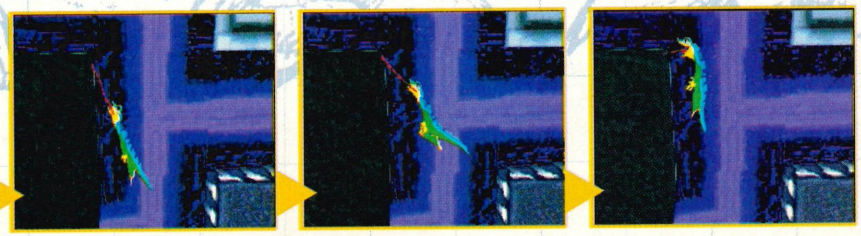
"Yeah. The whole concept of the game is to bring the character into the third dimension. The PlayStation itself, is quite capable (as you can see) of doing games with the equivalent of *Mario* graphics. What we're trying to do instead of just having a character without a lot of personality is build Gex, who'll have a top UK comedian as a voice-over to mock and play with pop cultures – especially TV and movie genres. There'll be over 500 celebrity impressions and funny one-liners."

Have you got any idea who's doing the UK voice-over?

"We haven't finalised that decision yet, but it's not going to be a large job, because we want the character to be the first thing that you notice about Gex. The personality will be not unlike what we did with Dana Gould in the US on the first game, and that's

TONGUE TIED

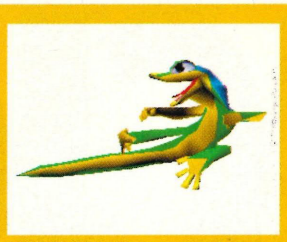
If Gex leaps towards a ledge and falls just short, sometimes his tongue will stop him from falling by conveniently attaching itself and allowing him to safely swing over and climb up.



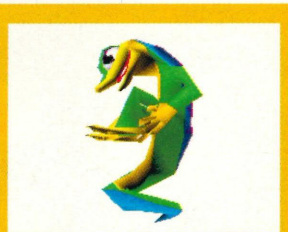
ANIMANTICS

Prepare for an onslaught of creature animations. Significant steps have been taken to ensure that Gex himself performs some fantastic new moves. Whether he's just standing around waiting for you to make a move or gracefully running and leaping, your jaw will be left firmly on the ground.





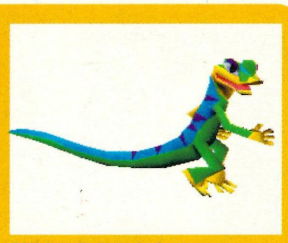
FLYING KICK. Kick some ass as a Kung Fu gecko.



TAIL JUMP. From a standing point Gex can leap high into the air.



Gex can't stand still for even an instant. Here, he's scratching.



TAIL WHIP. One of Gex's main attacks. Face away and whip 'em.



CRACK KNUCKLES. As it sounds – he cracks his, er knuckles.



LURCH. Gex, the definitive leaping lizard, takes to the air.



TONGUE. As painful as it looks, Gex can swing onto ledges with his tongue.



RUNNING. The little fella runs around the screen like a gazelle!

have someone who understands movies and television and can really build the character's reverential humour."

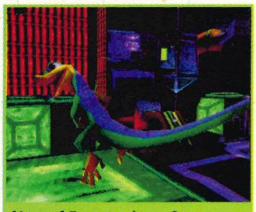
Gex Scandal

GEX: Enter the Gecko is being produced with over 3,400 frames of character animation, including in-game lip-syncing. Having seen the main character and those he interacts with while running around the stunning levels, we're inclined to agree with Crystal Dynamics when it states that it's not been hampered by any hardware limitations or time constraints.

"This game has been in development for over two years and has become the company masthead. When we started it, we wanted to make sure that we were really pushing all the capabilities of the hardware. We've got Z-buffering and real-time lighting. We're pushing every technical button on the PlayStation and have taken a good two years to work on an engine that can do it. Delaying it until January is a statement from Crystal that missing the Christmas rush for software isn't as important as ensuring the game is as good as it can be."

Instead of having masses of levels which usually means repeated themes sooner or later, the developers have decided to concentrate on fewer (although still humongous) levels, but make each one so different that you get better value for money and a longer lasting challenge.

"In *GEX*, each world is radically different from the other, and consequently, we've needed a big team to achieve this. The value for the games player is that it's like five or six games in one and this is our biggest team – we're close to 30 people, including all the artists, designers programmers."



[Above] Even up close, Gex looks perfectly rounded with no pixelation in sight.

Gex Directory

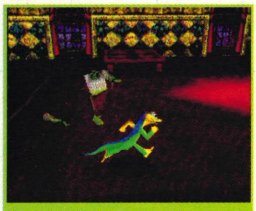
Take it from us, each level is completely different and Gex himself dresses differently for each one too. But what about the all-important gameplay elements and a quick rundown of the levels? Steinberg adds that there will be enough new power-ups in each level to learn regardless of the fact that similar running and jumping skills will be incorporated in each level and adds:

"We've decided on five or six strong themes which skirt the issues of trademarks by not incorporating strong branded identities. For example, Godzilla is kind of an extended joke that everyone is familiar with. The setting for this world is downtown Tokyo and Gex is really large in the environment; stomping on everything that moves. Other themes include the surreal-looking *Loony Toons*, Sci-Fi meets *Star Wars*, *Kung-Fu* and *NYPD Blue*."

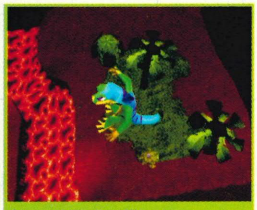
Although only 70% complete *GEX: Enter the Gecko* is measuring up beautifully. The levels look fantastic, the feel and seamless movement of the main character is near faultless, and the gameplay is being tweaked to ensure the gamer will be playing it long into the early hours for weeks on end. Crystal Dynamics is justifiably proud of its creation and we'll bring you all the latest developments in a preview of what could, and should be a ground-breaking game soon.



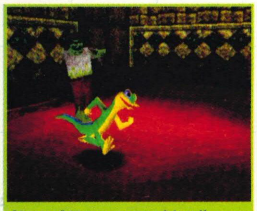
[Above] Even watching the little chap run is a joy to behold. Lets hope that there's going to be a Dual Analog option too.



[Above] Dismember zombies and they still limp after you. Two more hits should do it.



[Above] The intelligent camera angle works well already. It's better than *Tomb Raider's*.



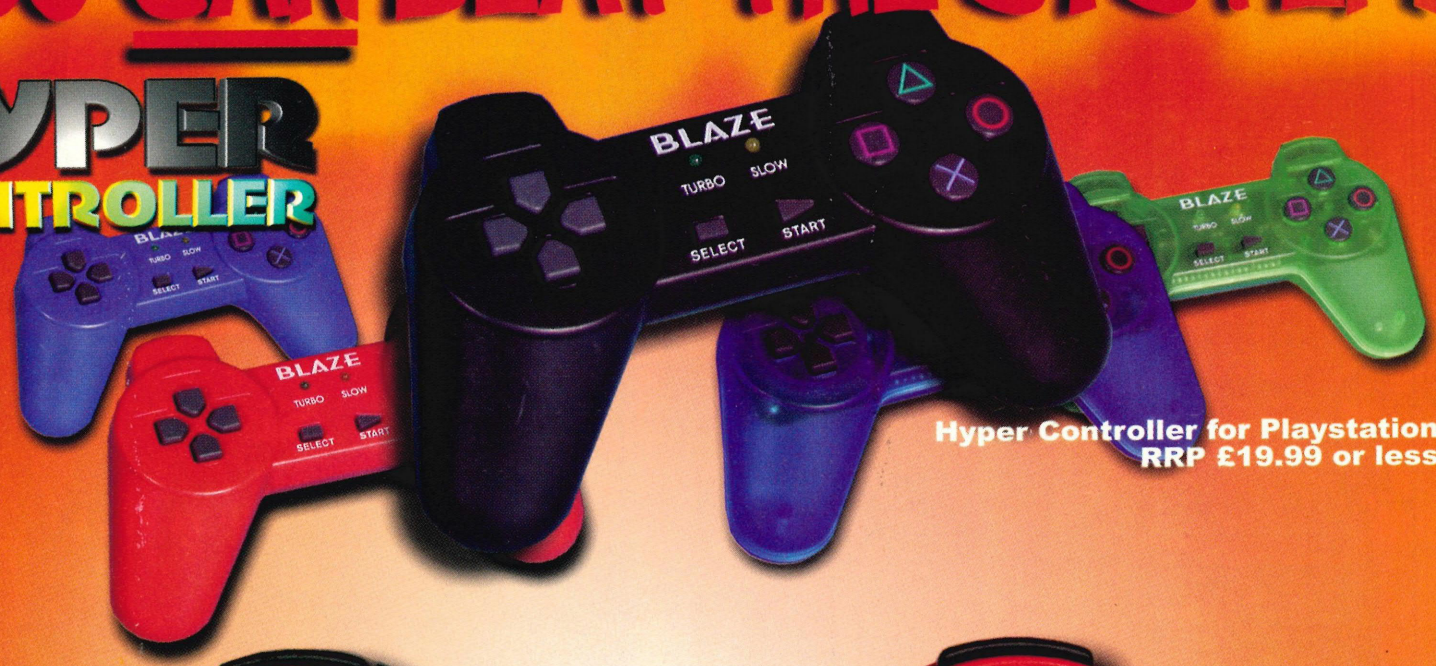
[Above] Not content with tail whipping the zombie, Gex insists on doing a Madness number.

SOFTOGRAPHY

Gex (1995)
Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain (1997)

YOU CAN BEAT THE SYSTEM!

HYPER CONTROLLER

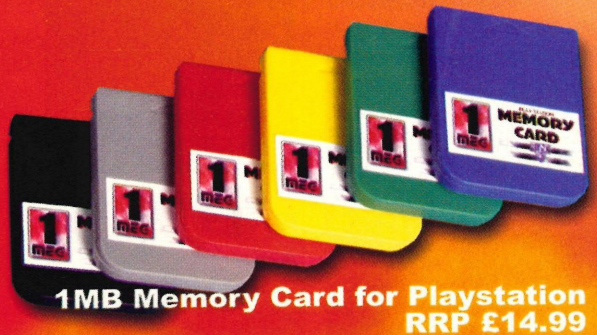


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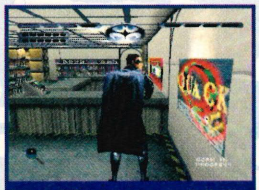
A HUGE HOLLYWOOD FILM LICENCE THAT LOOKS LIKE IT'S GOING TO BE A TOP GAME – CAN IT POSSIBLY BE TRUE?

Written By Graeme Nicholson

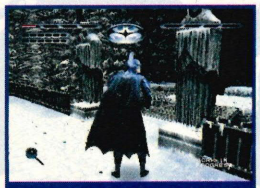
You wouldn't think we would ever have to go as far as South Central to glean news and information on the latest games in development, but to see *Batman and Robin* that's exactly what we did. South Central Croydon might not sound just as frightening as LA's notorious gang land, but trying to navigate its peculiar one-way system in 90° heat is as close to hell as any human could go without bumping into Beelzebub.

Once inside a cool, air-conditioned office at Probe, with *Batman & Robin* running and a couple of important gentlemen from the development team going over the details, the obnoxious motorists, asphyxiating fumes and beating sun were instantly forgotten.

Batman & Robin is immediately good-looking, with a floating camera pointing at an exceptionally realistic Batman model, your central character. Old Clooney has been recreated in such detail that the build and motion of the model really make it look like a man in a suit, rather than a collection of polygons. Part of this is thanks to motion-captured movement and fighting moves that combine well with the painstaking work of the artists who made the suit.



[Above] The characters periodically look left and right so they still look realistic even if you don't move them.



[Above] On the third and last day of the adventure, Gotham is covered in snow and ice, requiring new tactics and vehicles...



RUBBER FETISH

The whole adventure is set over three days (split into 21 separate levels) in Gotham City, and you have to be part martial-artist and part detective to complete each section. As Freeze runs around town stealing diamonds, you are alerted to each place he hits and have to get there quickly to search for new evidence. Due to the varied puzzles that stand in your way, all three good characters from the film are selectable.

"From the Batcave, you can choose to be Batman, Robin, or Batgirl" explains producer Peter Jones, "and they all have different strengths and weaknesses."

"For example, to enter a certain room, Batman may have to break the door down with brute force and draw a lot of attention to himself, whereas Batgirl might be able to climb into a vent in the ceiling and crawl through to the next room that way."

You have to manually travel to each location across the city, which means you have total freedom over what route you take and how fast you get there. To demonstrate how these sections look, Peter shouts in the direction of his keyboard-tapping team, "Dave, have you got external Gotham?" Dave directs him to a stack of recordable CDs and before long we are driving at



[Above] Finally, you get your confrontation with the dastardly Mr Freeze – but did you remember to put on your Batbelt this morning?

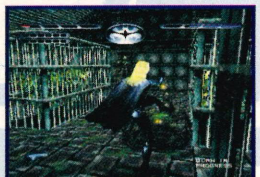
'It's actually going to be a good *Batman* licence!' – Peter Jones, producer



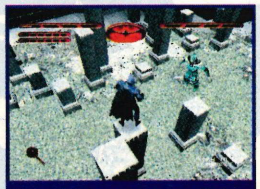
[Above] Some monsters were created that were not in the film to keep the action moving along, but they all fit in perfectly.



[Above] The game engine really lets you explore Gotham in depth and go anywhere you desire.



[Above] Superhero infant Batgirl, alias Alicia Silverstone, is more athletic and gymnastic than Batman.



[Above] Batman can jump, climb and use the rocket boots. Freeze has quite a fight on his hands!

Blueprint

Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Probe Entertainment
% Complete: 75%
Expected Release Date: October '97
Origin: UK
No of Players: 1

ROBIN

UNDER CONSTRUCTION



[Above] Having this type of car does attract a lot of attention, but you'd be surprised at the insurance benefits being a superhero brings.





[Above] Every inch of the rubber moulding is there on the exquisite suit, and parts of it even stretch properly when you move around.



high speed through those very streets.

At this point it becomes obvious that it's not only Batman himself which has received such special treatment, as the new Batmobile is essentially a huge work of art with similarly intricate detail, and the streets are also dynamically lit and less repetitive than in most city-based games. Screeching to a halt outside the first crime scene, the museum, Batman even climbs out of the car using a motion captured sequence.

LATEX KING

Along the way you see some weird things going on, the odd mugging for example. You can stop to get out and help, as every superhero should, but as everything functions in real time, suspects and clues could be gone from the crime scene that you would have caught had you arrived earlier. The same goes for trying to discover secret rooms and power-ups – only risk it if you have spare time. Unfortunately, you are rapidly transported back to the Batcave for running pedestrians down!

Both Warner Bros and DC Comics are constantly sent updated versions of the game for approval, and they are keeping some of the programmers from including a few unsavoury elements. Blood in the fight scenes is not allowed, nor can Batman die (he merely falls unconscious and wakes up back in the cave), but it still has fewer limits than most games and, as Jones says, "It's actually going to be a good *Batman* licence!"

BATBELTS

ALL THREE SELECTABLE CHARACTERS HAVE A COLLECTION OF 17 WEAPONS AND GADGETS THAT THEY ALL SHARE, AND FIVE EACH THAT ARE INDIVIDUAL TO THE CHARACTER. THESE INCLUDE THE FANTASTIC ROCKET BOOTS, WHICH WEREN'T IN THE FILM BUT ARE GREAT FUN. AND ALL MANNER OF DANGEROUS PROJECTILES LIKE THE MOTION-SEEKERS THAT HANG IN THE AIR WAITING FOR ANYTHING TO PASS IN FRONT OF THEM BEFORE ATTACKING.

SOFTOGRAPHY

Die Hard Trilogy
Alien Trilogy

SONY

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

NOT CONTENT WITH WHAT IT HAS GOT, SONY HAS BROUGHT IN THE HEAVY ARTILLERY THAT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO SINK ANY RIVAL CONSOLE IF IT'S NOT CAREFUL. YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED!

Turn the clock back

12 months and what exactly did you notice about the games industry? For a start there were only two real runners in the race for console supremacy, and one of them was a bit of a lame duck!

But anyway, to cut to the chase, the PlayStation was just starting flourish with a nice selection of games in the pipeline for the run up to Christmas, and if you were pleasantly surprised at the prospect of owning *Crash Bandicoot* or *Destruction Derby 2* , then you just wait until you cop an eye-full of this lot.

Showcased in full at the recent ECTS show at Olympia, Sony was proud to not only wipe the floor with the best (and biggest) stand at the event, but also claw straight for the jugular with the most drop-dead gorgeous array of titles any of us had the right to expect.

THE STARTERS

TREASURES OF THE DEEP

Developer: Namco
% Complete: 60%
Expected Release Date: January '98
Origin: Japan
No of Players: 1

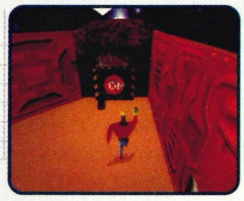
SET IN THE VAST, UNEXPLORED UNDERWATER KINGDOMS OF THE WORLD, *TOTD* IS A 3-D SUBMARINE GAME WHEREBY YOU GET TO SEARCH FOR HIDDEN GLOBAL TREASURE IN A FRANTIC AQUA-ADVENTURE THAT SPANS THROUGH SOME OF THE WORLD'S MOST PICTURESQUE AND DANGEROUS WATERS.

YOU PLAY EX NAVY SEAL JACK RUNYAN, WHO MUST USE HIGH-TECH WEAPONRY AND SUBMERSIBLES TO COMPLETE 12 MISSIONS WHICH WILL TAKE YOU THROUGH THE SHARK-INFESTED WATERS OF THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, THE MYSTERIOUS BERMUDA TRIANGLE, THE FROZEN WASTES OF ANTARCTICA, AND THE AZTEC RUINS OFF THE YUCATAN PENINSULA. THROUGHOUT THESE LOCATIONS, YOU ARE REQUIRED TO SEARCH SUNKEN VESSELS, DEFUSE NUCLEAR WARHEADS, TACKLE POWER-CRAZED LUNATICS AND EXTREMELY LARGE SEA MONSTERS – JUST LIKE THE ONES YOU SEE IN A TYPICAL DOUG MCCLURE MOVIE!

BY COLLECTING THE TREASURES ALONG THE WAY, YOU CAN UPGRADE YOUR SUB AND PURCHASE A WHOLE HOST OF GIZMOS TO ASSIST YOU IN LATER MISSIONS INCLUDING BETTER WEAPONRY, NIGHT VISION GOGGLES, ROBOTIC VEHICLES AND STEEL-MESH WET SUITS.

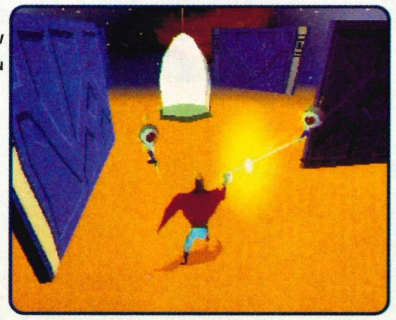
EARLY IMPRESSIONS ARE CERTAINLY VERY FAVOURABLE, *TOTD* CERTAINLY LOOKS AND MOVES VERY SMOOTHLY, AND THE GAME COMBINES ARCADE, ADVENTURE AND STRATEGY ELEMENTS IN EQUAL MEASURES. MORE INFORMATION COMING SOON.

CAPTAIN BLASTO



Developer: Sony of America
% Complete: 70%
Expected Release Date: November '97
Origin: USA
No of Players: 1

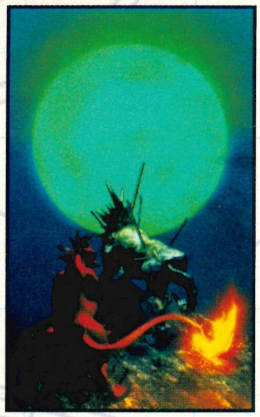
COMBINING THE VERY BEST ELEMENTS OF THE PLATFORM, ACTION AND SHOOT-'EM-UP GENRES, CAPTAIN BLASTO IS HERE TO SAVE THE UNIVERSE (ALLEGEDLY!). PRODUCED AS ONE LONG GALACTIC ADVENTURE THAT IS CONSTANTLY STREAMED OFF OF THE DISC (NO BORING LEVELS HERE!), *BLASTO* IS A CHARACTER-BASED SHOOT-'EM-UP FILLED WITH PUZZLES, ENEMIES TO ZAP AND BIG BOSSES TO OUTWIT. THERE ARE EIGHT DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENTS TO EXPLORE THAT PROVIDE FREE-ROAMING NON-LINEAR GAMEPLAY AND SUPERB ANIMATION ON THE CENTRAL CHARACTERS. CAPTAIN BLASTO HIMSELF IS A POMPOUS SEND-UP OF THE TRADITIONAL SUPERHEROES WE ALL KNOW AND LOATHE, AND HE IS UP AGAINST SOME OF THE WORST SCUM EVER TO EMERGE FROM THE FAR REACHES OF THE GALAXY. THE WHOLE PROJECT IS SHAPING UP WELL, WITH REVOLUTIONARY NEW LIGHTING EFFECTS ON THE CHARACTERS TO REALLY BRING THEM TO LIFE AND ENSURE THAT THEY HAVE THEIR OWN PERSONALITIES AND ON-SCREEN PRESENCE.



THE MAIN COURSE







Final Fantasy VII

Developer: Square
% Complete: 80%
Expected Release Date: November '97
Origin: Japan
No of Players: 1

One of the most eagerly awaited adventure games of the decade, largely fuelled by its tremendous success in Japan, Square's jewel in the crown is now nearing completion in preparation for its European release.

We may not see over-eager punters camped out in the street on the eve of the big release, but *FFVII* is certainly going to shift. Having already sold 3.4 million units in Japan alone (two million in the first three days!), Sony has got every right to expect a hit of immense proportions, and the murmurings of similar success are already being echoed over here. Chris Deering, President of SCEE said "As one of the most popular videogame franchises in history, created by premiere game developer Square Soft, *Final Fantasy VII* is a ground-breaking game that will redefine videogames altogether."

To avid follows of the long running *Final Fantasy* series, *FFVII* is much more than just a video game – compare it more to a Hollywood blockbuster and you should have a more accurate picture. What you get in this three CD package is a complex and engrossing story-line, out of this world visuals and cutting-edge technology that maximises the use of 3-D graphics for gameplay, animation and the many comprehensive battle sequences that take place.

Incorporating a cast of thousands, a wide variety of unique worlds, an epic soundtrack and hundreds of hours of gameplay, *Final Fantasy VII* has every ounce of potential to be the biggest release on the PlayStation so far. We'll have the full review next issue.





Bushido Blade

Developer: Square
% Complete: 80%
Expected Release Date: November '97
Origin: Japan
No of Players: 1-2

This is our favourite fighting game, well, not so much a fighting game, more of a Samurai simulator that combines all aspects of the noble art and keeps things concise and to the point without ever stepping into territory already dominated by the likes of *Tekken 2* and the mighty *Soul Blade*.

Choose from several individual characters and weapons and embark on a strategic fight to the death. This plays more like chess than your standard beat-'em-up, as players face-off and battle to outwit, out-strike, and even out-run their opponents. Being true to life, there are no energy bars and one well aimed slice will maim an opponent straight away. Let's face it, who would get up after having a three-foot sword embedded in their head anyway? Most of the fights consist of parrying your opponent's swipes and counter attacking. If you catch them on a limb, it will just cease to work – leading to many humourous moments when one of the characters is knelt on the ground, unable to stand, whilst the attacks keep coming. The surroundings are also realistic in the sense that you can roam anywhere whilst still engaging in combat, with the tension heightened when a tree obscures the action, or when a player chooses to interact with the various levels of terrain around them. This is one of the most bloodthirsty



[Above] *Bushido Blade* – we've played the official version and it's just as good as the import version.

SONY
PlayStation

5716383581

Find within the number above, two numbers, one of which is double the other, and which when added together make 10743.

Warm up your brain for

TOPICS
KURUSHI

Kurushi ™ ©1996 Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Developed by Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved. Published by Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. £29.99.

fighting games around, due purely to the simplicity and the often dramatic and sudden way the fights are brought to an abrupt end with one cutting blow. We've been waiting for a PAL release of this game for ages, and now that the translation is nearly compete, we'll be able to savour of the elements that were lost in the wealth of Japanese text!







Nightmare Creatures

Developer: Kalisto
% Complete: 80%
Expected Release Date: 31 October '97
Origin: UK
No of Players: 1

We first looked at this in issue 13 when it was being developed for Mindscape, but so impressed was Sony that it promptly bought the rights. Set in the seedy underworld of Victorian London, *Nightmare Creatures* is a haunting 3-D adventure in a similar vein to *Resident Evil,* that offers 20 levels of tense, monster-bashing action.

Choose from two different characters and get to work slaying the dark dangers that lurk around every corner of the intricately-designed, textured city, which includes just about every ghoulish creature known to man. Zombies, werewolves, demons, and banshees all make a sinister appearance and won't hesitate in ripping your throat out if you aren't nimble enough with your broadsword.

When we spoke to the programmers about *NC,* they were gushing about the various techniques used to give the game its chilling appearance, including the stretching method used on the polygon characters to make them look more realistic. But more bizarre was where the inspiration came from... *Double Dragon!*

The game will be analogue compatible when it is released, rather fittingly, on Halloween, and will also feature multiple weapons, an assortment of different fighting moves and combos, plus plenty of atmospheric cinematics in-between levels. Production has already started on the sequel, but for now this is one to look out for.

THE DESERT

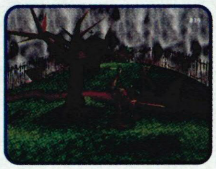
Medievil

Developer: Millennium
% Complete: 60%
Expected Release Date: January '98
Origin: UK
No of Players: 1



Assume of the role of skeletal knight Sir Daniel Fortesque and embark on a free-roaming shoot-'em-up that incorporates elements of puzzle solving and adventure.

Your aim is to track down and defeat the evil sorcerer Zarok and the crazed victims of his magic, such as re-animated zombies who just keep on coming. *Medievil* features over 50 different enemies, numerous pick-ups to improve your weapons, and seven big bosses before the ultimate showdown with Zarok. In-between the levels are several FMV sequences that further the storyline and act as a reward for the player as they progress further into the game. The whole thing is presented in full 3-D, with a dynamic camera effect which allows a great number of in-game perspectives. Anil Malhotra, Millennium's development director reckons that *Medievil* could become one of the most talked-about games of the year, well, we'll take his word for it, for now!



Broken Sword II – The Smoking Mirror

Developer: Revolution Software
% Complete: 70%
Expected Release Date: January '98
Origin: UK
No of Players: 1



The original was great fun, and now we can pick up on George and Nico's adventures from where we left off. An American tourist has uncovered an ancient Mayan prophecy that details the events that will lead to the end of the world, when Tezcatlipoca, the Lord of Darkness, is released from his eternal imprisonment. Naturally, the aim is to prevent this prophecy becoming a reality.

Rich in high-resolution sprites, multi layered perspectives and background and foreground animation this sequel is a visually stunning extravaganza. It is essentially more of the same kind of puzzle solving shenanigans, but now with added special effects (including the ability to walk behind transparent objects such as smoke and glass), deeper story-lines and faster loading times.

Broken Sword II is certainly looking very nice indeed. Charles Cecil, Director of Revolution Software offered his enthusiastic comments "We were thrilled by the success of *Broken Sword* on PlayStation last year. *Broken Sword II* is greatly advanced in every aspect and we expect the game to sell even better. We had a lot of fantastically positive feedback from players of the first game and we have tried to integrate some of their suggestions into the sequel. For example, the loading times are much faster and the sprite animation is improved. We are very pleased with the results." So are we Charles! Expect a full preview next issue.



THE AFTER-DINNER MINT

Z

Developer: Bitmap Brothers
% Complete: 70%
Expected Release Date: December '97
Origin: UK
No of Players: 1



Like *Broken Sword*, *Z* started life on the PC and was one of the Bitmap Brothers' finest moments. It is a strategy game played across 20 challenging levels on five separate planet scapes – each boasting its own terrain. You are given a choice between six different robot soldiers, each with 40 individual actions and must wipeout the enemy before they crush you in an almighty battle for territory. Eric Matthew's of Bitmap Bros said "We are very glad to be on PlayStation for the first time and hope that many more gamesplayers will now be able to enjoy *Z*. Watch out for Commander Zod !"



FIRE POWER

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SPECTRA VIDEO

Unit 27, Northfield Industrial Estate, Beresford Avenue, Wembley, Middlesex, HAO INW, U.K.
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Logic 3

ABE'S ODD

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR GAMEPLAY, YOU'VE COME TO THE RIGHT PLACE – THE ODDWORLD UNIVERSE.

Written By Graeme Nicholson

Something unbelievable has happened! The PlayStation, master of 3-D texture mapped graphics, has finally received an essential platform game after so many failed attempts. *Abe's Oddysee* is so playable and compelling it makes *Pandemonium* look pants and *Crash* look like trash.



Reminiscent of the quality of the best platform games from years ago, you control Abe himself on a good old fashioned 2-D plane doing a great amount of running, jumping and climbing. The first levels take place in Rupture Farms meat processing factory, a colossal, dingy industrial monstrosity where Abe and the other Mudokons tirelessly work the factory floor in slave-like conditions. The crystal clear opening FMV shows how Abe stumbles on his bosses as they plan to construct a new snack from the bodies of Mudokons, with supplies of Paramites and Scrabs decreasing due to imminent extinction.



SCRAB CAKES

The task is not only to escape from the factory, but to free as many of your fellow workers as you can on the way out. Although Abe's capable of many varied actions, the perfect learning curve means that you pick up each command as you need it. Along with the normal platform game moves, you can talk to those you are trying to save ("hello", "follow me" and "wait here") as well as laugh, whistle and hum a mystic chant. Chanting has different uses, but most often you will engage in this magical activity to possess the body of weak-minded enemies, who you can then control.



You see, Abe can never be directly violent – he can't punch, kick or shoot – so you constantly have to use your head to find ways around this girlie behaviour, and the game is all the more unique and addictive as a result. Inhabit a disgusting, drooling Slig's body and you can blow away other opponents with its machine gun and use its own set of spoken commands to give instructions to a Slog – the *Abe's Oddysee* version of a guard dog. You can also cause harm indirectly by pulling a level that plunges a guard through a trapdoor, minces him with the meat saw or flattens him with a falling rotten carcass.



PARAMITE SURPRISE

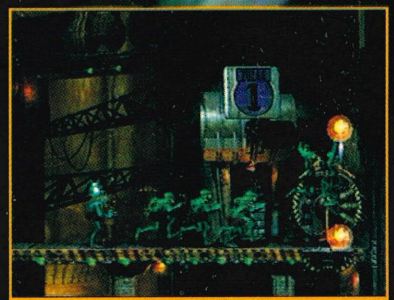
New and inventive puzzles constantly confront you, making use of an ever expanding array of objects. In some screens you'll simply have to use the shadows to hide from nearby trouble or disarm a bomb to make the route safe for



[ABOVE] In the Grinding Area you have to dodge hefty ribcages that are cascading onto spinning blades below – yuck!



[ABOVE] Using the whistling and farting commands you must remember and copy the patterns of these Mudokons to pass. And it gets hard.



[ABOVE] You can feel you have done your good deed for the day when you set a whole crowd of oppressed Mudokons free. Run! Save yourselves!

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: GT Interactive
Customer support: 0171 258 3791
Price: £44.99
Release date: Out Now

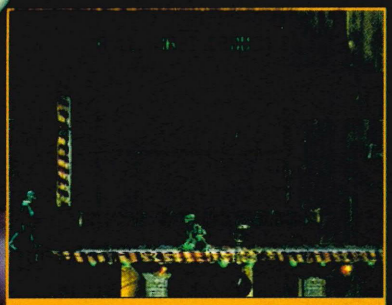
ONE PLAYER MEMORY CARD

YSEE

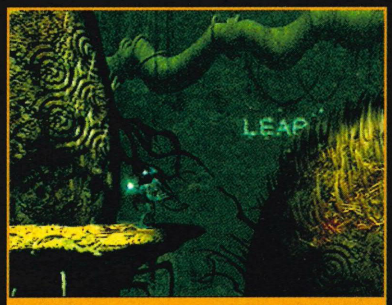
PLAY CLASSIC



[Above] Beware the pink motion detectors. If you so much as flex a muscle while the beams pass over your body, this will happen.



[Above] To get you used to the many controls, there are glowing LED signs in the background that teach you each move during play.



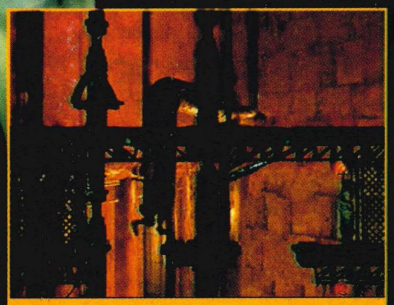
[Above] Rub your hands together and chant when you see fireflys and they will spell out helpful hints for you to ponder. "Leap of faith" this one says...

"So playable and compelling it makes *Pandemonium* look pants and *Crash* look like trash!"

your friends. But before long you will find really challenging brain-teasing situations that call for nimble joypad control and several kilojoules worth of brain power.

Each exquisitely designed level is bound together with high quality full motion video, which does more than just illustrate the next chapter of Abe's spiritual journey. Similar to the effect seen occasionally in *Final Fantasy VII*, you can walk through a door after a good 30 minutes of platforming and the game will seamlessly switch to an FMV sequence that takes the camera to the next starting point, where the gameplay continues without a single fadeout. It leaves you with an impression of great production quality and the feeling of taking part in something bigger than the average game, although the many PSX owners with stuttering FMV problems may not view it so keenly.

Abe's Oddysee is easily the best platform game on the PlayStation, with such devious puzzles, humorous characters and beautifully drawn, enchanting worlds that being 2-D just doesn't matter. Pack your bags – you're going to Oddworld!



[Above] In the tradition of *Another World* and *Flashback*, expect chase scenes where you have to jump deep pits while being hunted down.



[Above] The magical forest may be a little Ewok-inspired with its tribal carvings and ancient technology, but the scenery is beautiful.

BLOWN AWAY

EXPLOSIVES PLAY A BIG PART IN *ABE'S ODDYSEE*, WITH MINES, GRENADES AND BOMBS LITTERING SOME LEVELS. IN THIS SEQUENCE YOU FIND AN ACTIVE CANISTER BOMB THAT YOU MUST DEACTIVATE SO OTHERS CAN PASS.



CROUCH DOWN AND TRY TO PRESS THE LIGHT WHEN IT GLOWS GREEN...

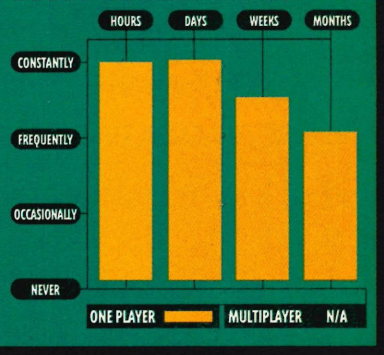


...DOH! A SLIGHTLY MIS-TIMED MOVE AND FIRE FILLS THE HALL...



...AS DO VARIOUS BODY PARTS OF OUR BELOVED HERO!

LONG TERM PLAY...



PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●●●●●●
SOUNDS	●●●●●●●●●●
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●●●●●
VALUE	●●●●●●●●●●
SPARE RIBS	●●●●●●●●●●

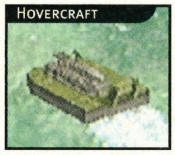
PLAYED 90%

The most addictive and involving platform game on PSX!

ALTERNATIVELY:
MEGAMAN 8 (82%)
DRACULA X (84%)

OLIVER'S ARMY

IN *NUCLEAR STRIKE*, YOU CAN CONTROL OVER TEN EXCITING COMBAT VEHICLES. EACH HAS INDIVIDUAL STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES AND IS OFTEN VITAL IN COMPLETING CERTAIN MISSIONS. HERE ARE THE ONES WE'VE FOUND AND WREAKED HAVOC WITH...

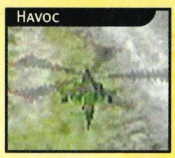




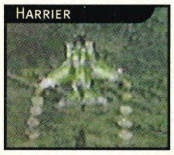














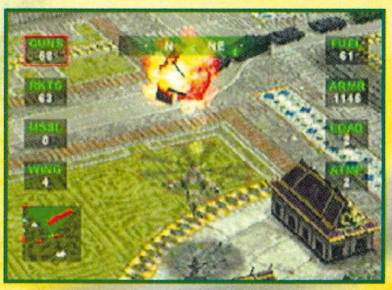














NUCLEAR STRIKE

THE EAGERLY-AWAITED SEQUEL TO *SOVIET STRIKE* HAS ARRIVED, AND IT'S NO SURPRISE TO LEARN THAT THERE IS ANOTHER POWER-CRAZED NUTTER IN OUR MIDST!

Written By Ryan Butt

Strike now whilst the iron is hot! A philosophy was perhaps never more apt than used to describe EA's impressively hasty production of the eagerly awaited sequel to *Soviet Strike*.

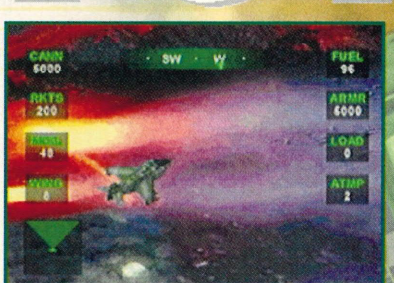
If you were of the cynical school of Judas' that believed the *Strike* saga was beginning to waver on the spanking new platform, then up yours, because *Nuclear Strike* is the tops! Mind you, this coming from a typical *Strike*-head who has played the series religiously since its emergence on the Mega Drive all those years ago.

HOT STUFF

Nuclear Strike abolishes the claustrophobic feel of playing the whole game cooped-up inside a single chopper and instead allows you to venture out and experiment with a whole host of new vehicles. This gives the game greater scope, as you take each mission on board and decide how best to tackle it and with what vehicle.

Like *Soviet Strike*, there are five different campaigns on offer here which get progressively more difficult. Each one averages about eight missions and there are two ways to go about them. You can either play it by the book and carefully follow the correct procedures, or go storming in with guns, missiles and hellfire's blazing and nuke every enemy threat before they realise where the hailstorm of lead is coming from.

Despite this devil-may-care tactic, you are still only restricted to flying each mission in turn, because Strike-net only submits new information once the mission in hand has been completed. The general feel of the game as a whole is very similar to *Soviet Strike* and you start to think whether or not you can really be bothered

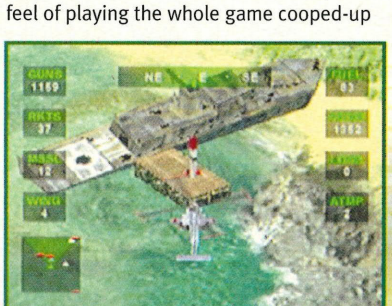


[ABOVE] Despite your efforts, a nuclear strike is inevitable, and this is the result it had on North Korea.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Customer support: 01753 549 442
Price: £39.99
Release date: 3 October '97

ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD



[ABOVE] Seek out the enemy silo bases and destroy the offending warheads before they launch.



[ABOVE] It's a race against time in the final campaign to stop LeMonde's ICBMs before they launch.



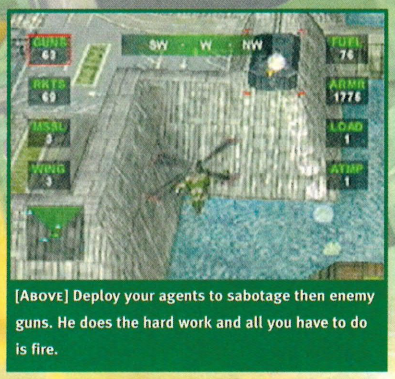
[ABOVE] With your newly-acquired Warthog, you can take out enemy convoys with ease.



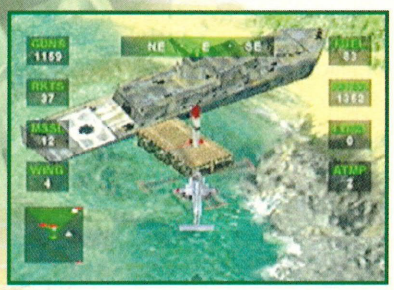
[Above] In order to blank your transmissions, the enemy are operating these smoke pits to fill the air with electro-static particles. We say nuke 'em!

RIKE

"*Nuclear Strike* abolishes the claustrophobic feel of playing cooped-up inside a single chopper..."



[Above] Deploy your agents to sabotage then enemy guns. He does the hard work and all you have to do is fire.



to go through the same type of thing again. However, this thought vanishes as soon as you get into the later missions because the action and tension really starts to hot up.

Tactical maneouvres

Take, for example, the third campaign. Set in a North Korean city you begin the missions with a pathetic news chopper which is equipped with nothing more than machine guns, tear gas and smoke canisters – hardly state-of-the-art weaponry! With this you must rescue diplomats and fend off enemy onslaught until a new chopper becomes available.

Also, campaign four is a real humdinger to get to grips with. The action is set over one big battlefield with allied forces at the south and enemy activity in the north. All you are required to do here is hold off the enemy and stop them descending to the south until the allied bombers arrive (25 minutes to be exact). This may sound like a pushover, but believe me it isn't. Before you know it, the whole map is crawling with high-powered enemy tanks and you're left flying around like a blue-arsed fly trying desperately to stop them. This campaign is the most tactical of the bunch because you must command your comrades and position them in certain positions for optimum effect against the enemy. You can also land your chopper and take control of tanks and rocket-launching Skar-style vehicles in a bid to thwart the mass spillage of enemy activity.

Elvis lives!

The whole format of the game has undergone several changes since *Soviet Strike*, most notably you now have an on-screen radar that distinguishes between the targets, enemy vehicles in general, allies and the pick-ups. Plus you can also switch on a new targeting device to make shredding those convoys a lot less lacklustre.

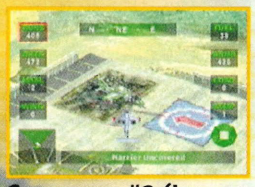
CARRY ON CAMPAIGN

Nuclear Strike is riddled with taxing missions that would make even Stringfellow Hawk (y'know, *Airwolf!*) weep into his cello. Here we break down the campaigns and uncover the highlights...




Campaign #1 (Delta Strike)

Setting: Indocine, a sweltering jungle somewhere along the river Delta
Missions: 8
Highlight: Storming the river fort.



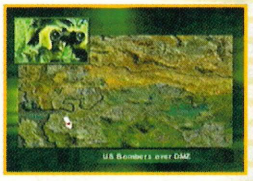

Campaign #2 (Island Strike)

Setting: Lavu Royale, a small island chain somewhere in the South China Sea.
Missions: 8
Highlight: Finding the harrier.



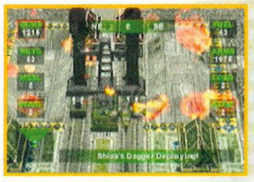

Campaign #3 (Peace Strike)

Setting: Pyong Yang, heart of the North Korean capital.
Missions: 9
Highlight: The actual nuclear strike.




Campaign #4 (DMZ Strike)

Setting: The 38th Parallel. A South Korean airfield near the demilitarised zone.
Missions: 3
Highlight: The adrenaline rush as the allied bombers approach the battlefield.

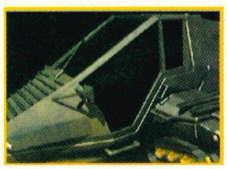


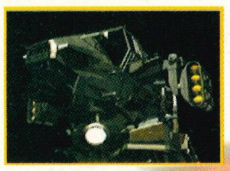

Campaign #5 (Fortress Strike)

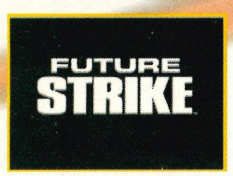
Setting: An undisclosed archaeological dig, somewhere in Siberia.
Missions: 6
Highlight: Taking out the guardian guns

I'VE SEEN THE FUTURE...

Nuclear Strike has only been in the can two minutes and already the sequel is planned! Upon completing *Nuclear Strike*, you'll be treated to a teasing little preview of the next gripping Strike installment... *Future Strike*. There's hardly anything to tell at this point other than the fact that is utilises walker-type vehicles similar to those seen in *Return of the Jedi*. Sounds dead exciting.



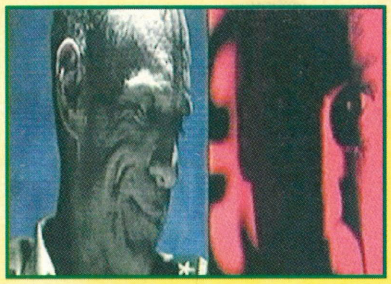


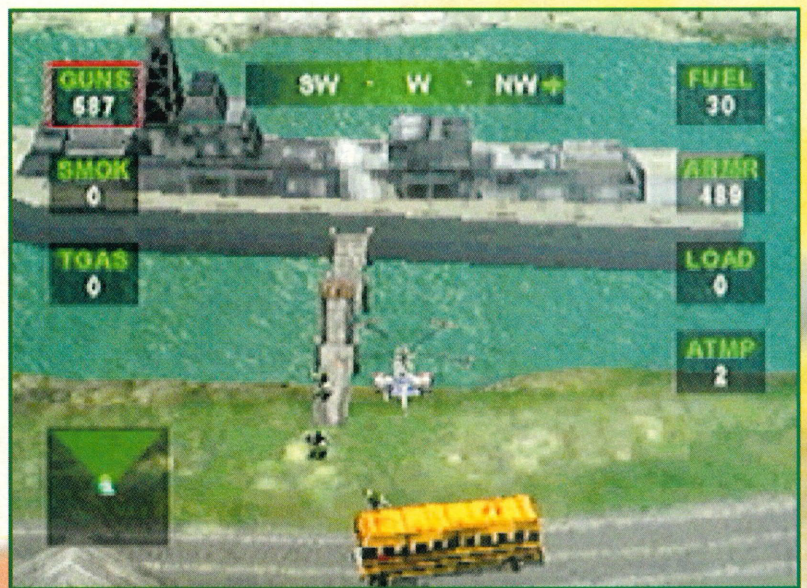












[Above] Having been escorted a bus-load of diplomats across the war-torn North Korean capital, your mission is complete when they've dropped safely at the frigate.



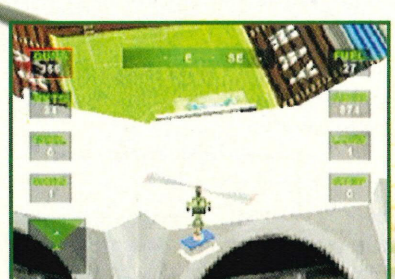
[Above] As we said, *Nuclear Strike* utilises a nice light shading effect to convey the time that elapses as you carry out your missions.

Also, whereas *Soviet Strike* was a bit rough around the edges and at times jerky, these problems have now been rectified with a super smooth frame rate and lots of new special effects such as light sourcing and intricate shading. As always, the detail is very fine, and the beauty about games such as this is the way you can destroy absolutely anything you'd care to turn your sights on. Unfortunately unlike with *Soviet Strike*, the in-house programmers seem to have lost their sense of humour as there is no Elvis or Santa to be seen... but then it's early days yet!

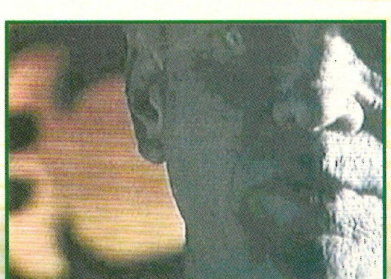
Many of the familiar traits of the last *Strike* game are evident in this sequel. The same impressive use of FMV footage, the same characters (Andrea's got a new hair-do, Nick croaks it early on, Delta's still the same wise-cracking techno-freak he always was), and the same wealth of information concerning all aspects of the missions and locations that are available to the player at the touch of a button.

If you liked *Soviet Strike* then you're going to love this, as it is basically more of the same sort of stuff with added trickery and re-jigging, although perhaps it isn't quite as challenging as it could have been. We found that some campaigns tended to peak in the middle and trail off towards the end rather than build a steady level of difficulty that reaches fever pitch at the climax. Still *Nuclear Strike* is a very challenging and well thought out game that will keep you riveted for weeks.





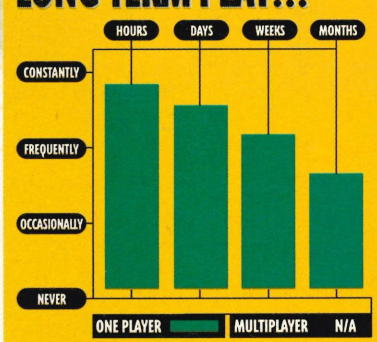
[Above] This is no time to watch the north London Derby... there's a nation to save and... THAT WAS NEVER OFFSIDE, ARE YOU BLIND REF?!



[Above] As we say, another *Strike*, another nutter, and this bloke is definitely a few pebbles short of a beach.

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Sounds	●●●●●●●○○○
Gameplay	●●●●●●●●○○
Value	●●●●●●●○○○
Hellfires	●●●●●●●●●○

PLAYED 88%

Another striking performance from EA!

ALTERNATIVELY:
Soviet Strike (83%)
Viewpoint (74%)

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FINAL FANTASY VII (PURCHASE A FINAL FANTASY T-SHIRT FOR JUST £7.00)	41.99
FORMULA 1 97	38.99
G-POLICE	41.99
HERCULES	41.99
HERC'S ADVENTURE	38.99
JERSEY DEVIL	41.99
JURASSIC PARK 2	39.99
MAGIC:THE GATHERING	39.99
MARVEL SUPER HEROES	39.99
MLB 98	39.99
NASCAR 98	41.99
NFL GAMEDAY 98	39.99
NFL QB CLUB 98	39.99
ODDWORLD INHABITANT	41.99
PERFECT WEAPON	42.99
RESIDENT EVIL - DIRECTORS CUT	41.99
TIME CRISIS	41.99
TOMB RAIDER 2	43.99
TOSHINDEN 3	39.99
WARCRAFT 2	39.99
WILD ARMS	38.99
WIPEOUT	19.99

PLAY

COOL BOARD KILLING SESSION

SNOWBOARDING IS SERIOUSLY AND LITERALLY A CHILLED-OUT SPORT, BUT IS UEP'S SEQUEL A COOL COOKIE OR JUST MELTED SLUSH?

Written By Tom Sargent

Okay, so Autumn's here. It's still pretty warm, you can go surfing, swimming and still enjoy staggering back home after a pub crawl in Bournemouth without wearing a jacket. The last thing we want reminding about is Winter. So what landed on our desks like a bolt from Thor's mighty hammer? *Cool Boarders 2: Killing Session*, no less. Great.



[Above] The sunset course looks absolutely gorgeous. it's also one of the quickest.

We could almost feel the numbness spreading through our toes as we loaded it up. After wiping the frost from the monitor, however, the game soon gets the circulation flowing again, as it's actually pretty good. The original game, reviewed in issue 16 was easily the best snowboarding game available on the PlayStation, but was essentially a solo experience, lacking a two player option and rival boarders to compete against. So it's with a sigh of rèlief that the sequel has redressed this lack of interactivity as well as improving the overall look of the graphics.

Ice, Ice Baby

If you haven't played *Cool Boarders* before, the idea is to mix speed with stunts to gain the maximum points by taking part in a number of snowboarding disciplines including: Snowboarding Combined, Half Pipe, One Make Jump, Free Ride, Vs Battle and Practice. The first of these consists of two freestyle jumps followed by a downhill race against other riders.

The more points you score in the jump section the better your starting position in the race. At certain points in the race, you are given the chance to pull off tricks and stunts, which increases the overall points tally, so it's not just about who gets to the end first. The detail of the riders is only slightly better than the original, but the nine regular courses on offer look far more detailed than the original. The Sunset course is particularly good. Next up is the Half Pipe, where you can bring out the gymnast in yourself by performing some unbelievable complex and bizarrely-named stunts, such as the 'Misty 360 Indy Grab'. This section is excellent and allows you to really let rip with some gravity defying self-indulgence. Before long you're successfully completing tricks that look impossible on paper.

Stay Frosty

There's also a special section where a tutorial is given cataloguing a range of stunts which increase as you progress down the course. Perhaps the most fun is when you compete against another



[Above] Not the two player mode, but a coming together between a rival computer rider. They try to knock you over too.

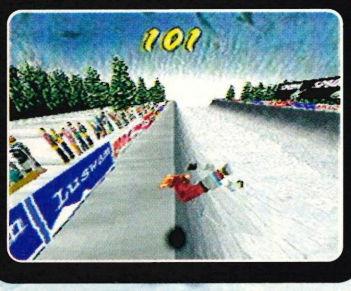


[Above] The player on the left is too close to the edge of the cliff and yes, they do tumble spectacularly over the edge.

PIPE SMOKIN'

THE HALF PIPE PROVIDES YOU WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO REALLY SHOW OFF. JUST GATHER MOMENTUM BY RIDING UP EITHER SIDE OF THE 'PIPE' AND THEN PULL OFF SOME BIG AIR STUNTS TO GAIN POINTS. THERE'S A HANDY REPLAY FACILITY TOO.





PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: UEP Systems
Supplier: The Video Game Centre on 01202 527314
Price: £74.99
Release date: Out Now (Import)

ONE PLAYER | MULTIPLE PLAYERS

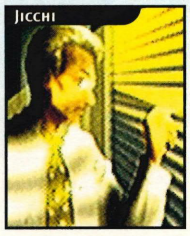
MEMORY CARD | SPLIT SCREEN

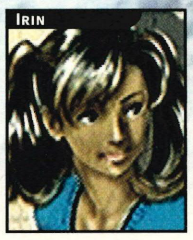
LINK CABLE

PISTE OF THE ACTION

EACH RIDER YOU ENCOUNTER OR CHOOSE TO PLAY AS COMES EQUIPPED WITH THEIR OWN WARDROBE, BOARD STYLE (ALL-ROUND, ALPINE OR FREESTYLE) AND SPECIFIC SKILLS. THESE INCLUDE BALANCE, QUICKNESS, MAX SPEED, POWER, TECHNIQUE AND JUMP.









ERS 2:



[Above] The Ice Fang course, where speeds well in excess of 120 km per hour can be achieved. Now how do I turn this thing?



"Perform unbelievable complex and bizarrely-named stunts..."

human opponent. There's a handy split screen option which doesn't slow down at all and also a link-up facility if you've got two copies of the game. The feeling of weaving in and out of trees, doing stunts and keeping control of the board as you hurtle down the slope is superb and different each time you come back for another go.

Cool Boarders offers something for every potential snow bum, including the return of the 'Ghost mode' and even a special section where you can design your own board-pixel by pixel! It's a fab game if you're into the sport and even if you're not there's still hours of fun awaiting you. If you have the first game though, it's pretty similar aesthetically, but with the all the new features still represents good value in our books.



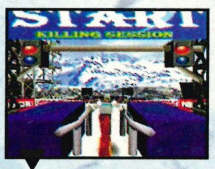




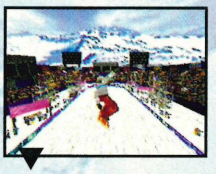


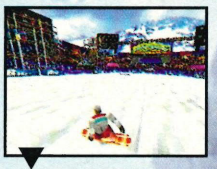
SPIN ON THIS

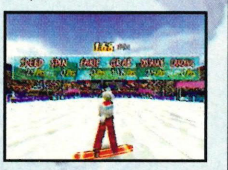
HURTLING DOWN THE HUGE SLOPES AND LEAPING INTO THE AIR IS ONE OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF *COOL BOARDERS 2*. HERE YOU CAN PERFORM ALL SORTS OF TECHNICAL JIGGERY POKERY WITH A BIT OF IMAGINATION A SNAZZY SNOWBOARD AND A DEATH WISH.













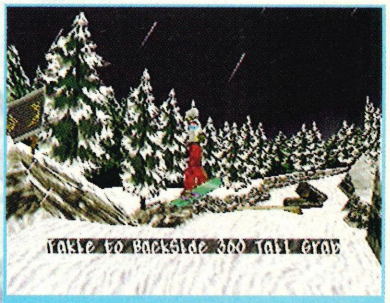
[Above] Each of the initial eight riders has certain skills and attributes to bear in mind before you choose them.



[Above] There's absolutely no slowdown in the two player split-screen mode



[Above] This is the only way to play *Cool Boarders 2* – against a friend. It adds immeasurably to the longevity of the gameplay.



[Above] The Fakie to Backside 360° grab. There are literally stacks of stunts and tricks to master besides going as fast as you can.

LONG TERM PLAY...



PLAY

LOOKS	8
SOUNDS	8
GAMEPLAY	9
VALUE	9
CHILLS	8

PLAYED 81%

Ice, ice, baby (if you haven't got the first one).

ALTERNATIVELY:
COOL BOARDERS (82%)
2XTREME (52%)

4-4-2

THE FOOTBALL SEASON IS UPON US ONCE MORE AND SO, UNFORTUNATELY, IS ANOTHER FORGETTABLE FOOTBALL WANNABE.

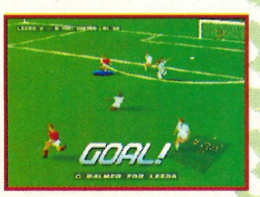
Written By Tom Sargent

Balls! One day

a football game is going to arrive in the post that finally gets it right. Until then we'll just have to reminisce back to the good old days of *Sensi soccer* or look forward to the up-and-coming *Actua Soccer 2*. *4-4-2* adheres to the well-trodden theory that simplicity works best. In fact, there are only three buttons to worry about while playing; one for kicking, one tackling and a useful speed-up button.

But as a wise old Indian once said (probably), simple isn't always best. You'd think that because of the uncluttered 'sticky ball' control system *4-4-2* would really flow, but alas, the slowdown is utterly deplorable, especially after the goalie kicks the ball up-field.

This crippling shortcoming is doubly unforgivable when you look at how small and sparsely detailed each player is. You can barely make out the glorious colours of Leeds United from any of the seven camera settings. The stadium view makes the players look like ants and consequently makes the game unplayable.





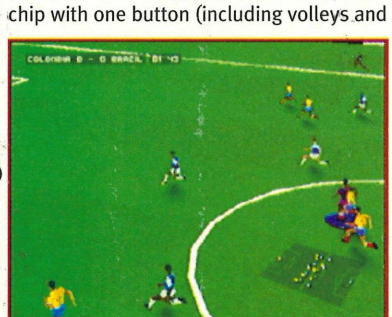
[Above] As your team trots out onto the pitch you're given a quick polygonal piccy of each star. C'mon Leeds!

Wemberlee!

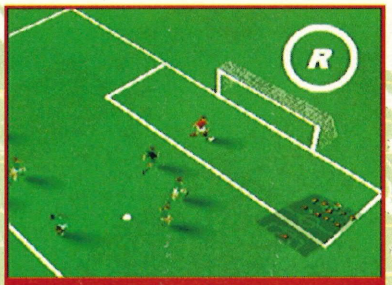
On a lighter note, the kicking system is pretty good, in that you can pass, shoot or chip with one button (including volleys and overhead kicks) a la *Sensi* and the overall pace of the game is pretty good. The time that you keep the button pressed generally determines shot strength and how high and far it travels.

Scoring can be a bit easy though, thanks to the sprint button, which enables you to round the goalkeeper 80% of the time. Options-wise, there's everything you could expect, including Cups, Custom Cups and Leagues for both internationals and domestic squads; there are even a few domestic European squads thrown in for good measure.

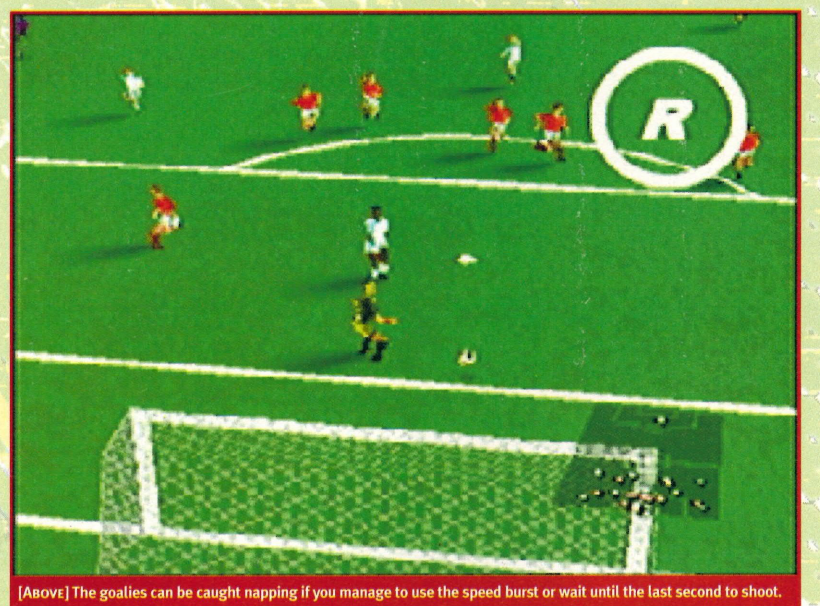
But the overriding feeling with *4-4-2* is one of a fleet-footed yet flawed game that plays reasonably well if you can forgive its many faults, but ultimately relegates itself to the third division of footy games. Near the bottom. About where Darlington are in fact.



[Above] The Colombian striker has just been fed a dream ball from the midfielder. It's just him against the goalie.



[Above] The isometric view nicely demonstrates how easy it is to go around the 'keeper.



[Above] The goalies can be caught napping if you manage to use the speed burst or wait until the last second to shoot.

"Slowdown is utterly deplorable..."

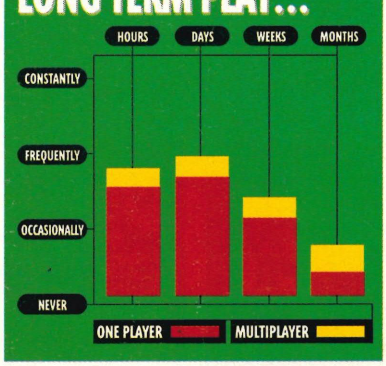
PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Virgin
Customer support: The Video Games Centre on 01202 527314
Price: £29.99
Release date: Out Now

ONE PLAYER | MULTIPLE PLAYERS

MEMORY CARD

LONG TERM PLAY...



PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●○○○○○
SOUNDS	●●●●●○○○○○
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●○○○○
VALUE	●●●●●○○○○○
GOALS	●●●○○○○○○○

PLAYED 57%

Dated and disappointing Sunday league football

ALTERNATIVELY:
ISS PRO (84%)
SOCCER '97 (82%)

GUNBULLET

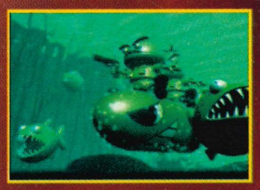
SHOOT FROM THE HIP AS NAMCO INVITES US TO ITS TWO PLAYER SHOOTING GALLERY.

Written By Tom Sargent

Time Crisis was an almost arcade-perfect shoot-'em-up thanks to the bundled GunCon, fantastic attention to detail, and superlative learning curve. If you're one of the lucky owners of the best gun currently on the market, *GunBullet* is another quality product from the Namco stable and its burgeoning range of software.

The setting for this one or two player 'clay pigeon shoot' is much more light-hearted though, concerning the cartoon escapades of two gun-toting egg-heads. The majority of the gameplay is very reminiscent of the shooting galleries found at fairgrounds, in that most rounds consist of shooting all or specific targets as they pop up or float into view.

This may sound simplistic, but there's so much variety in the absolute stack of levels on offer that you just can't wait to see what the next stage is going to look like, or what novel twist on shooting Namco has come up with next. On the options screen, you are presented with an Arcade or PlayStation-specific mode, which again, really adds to the value – as it did in *Time Crisis*.







LOCK 'N' LOAD

After choosing, you are presented with three columns filled with small pictures (each one consisting of between four and 12 stages), which could consist of absolutely any scenario. We've already come across some pretty wacky levels, including shooting shoals of fish as they swim by, birds carrying people at sea, UFOs hovering around the screen, an apple from some bod's head, and even blasting bouncing balls.

It's all completely mad, but one aspect which remains constant throughout is that there's always a strict time limit (dependent on the difficulty of each stage) and a minimum hit level required.

Gameplay is always fast and frantic and naturally more points are given if you finish each stage in under the time limit. It's just so much fun using the GunCon due to sheer accuracy, so it always leaves you craving for 'just one more go'.

GunBullet has more variety than the London Palladium and is a must-buy for all GunCon owners.

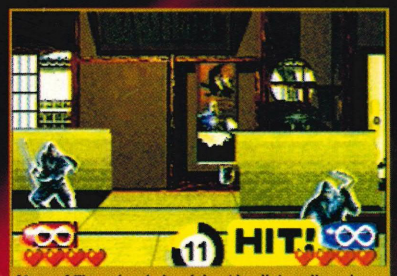




[ABOVE] Don't shoot the bombs which sometimes pop up next to the skeletons, or you loose a life.



[ABOVE] In many instances, you have to avoid shooting innocent bystanders or you can loose a life.

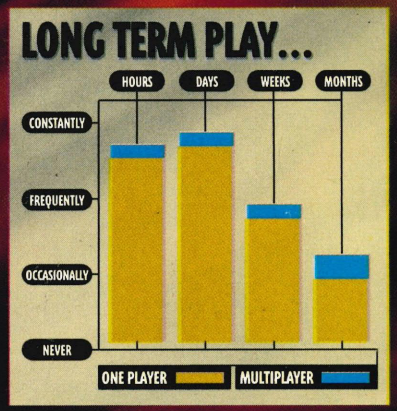


[ABOVE] These levels involving 'deadly' cardboard cut-out Samurai warriors are some of the best.



[ABOVE] Shoot the glass out on this scrolling city section, avoid hitting innocents and kill the baddies.

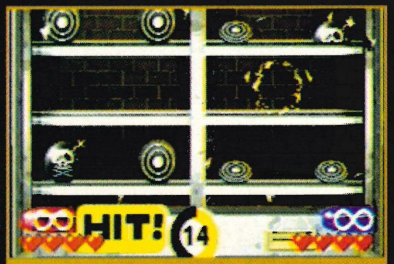




> **"More variety than the London Palladium..."**



[ABOVE] Take out the giant seagulls as they fly over the island to gain extra points.



[ABOVE] Typically, you must avoid one type of object and pick out others. Here it's plates and bombs.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Namco
Supplier: The Video Game Centre on 01202 527314
Price: £69.99 on its own or £89.99 with GunCon
Release date: Out Now (Import)



PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●●●●●●
SOUNDS	●●●●●●●●●●
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●●●●●
VALUE	●●●●●●●●●●
P'TANGS	●●●●●●●●●●

PLAYED 85%

A real blast for one or two players...

ALTERNATIVELY:
TIME CRISIS (90%)
AREA 51 (68%)

132 PAGES OF HINTS, TIPS & SOLUTIONS



100% PlayStation 0% fair

issue 14 £3.95 US$9.95

PowerStation

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Kick Off '97
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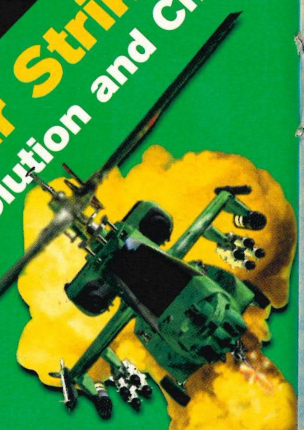
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Every character, every move!



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THE GREAT PLAY READERS' SURVEY '97

WELCOME TO THE GREAT PLAY SURVEY, THE PART OF THE MAGAZINE WHERE WE WANT YOU TO GIVE US AS MUCH INPUT ABOUT THE MAGAZINE AND YOURSELF AS POSSIBLE, SO THAT WE CAN FINE TUNE IT TO SUIT YOUR NEEDS. IF YOU DON'T LIKE A PARTICULAR FEATURE – IT'S HISTORY! OR IF YOU REALLY THINK PLAY IS MISSING OUT ON SOMETHING – TELL US, AND WE'LL MAKE SURE IT GOES IN.



OVER £2,500 WORTH OF PRIZES TO BE WON!

The 1997 PLAY Reader's Survey is sponsored by Sony Computer Entertainment Europe, and it has got some incredible prizes up for grabs. All you have to do to be in with a chance of winning them is to fill in the survey and send it back to us. We will then throw the huge stacks of completed surveys into a huge tumbler and pick one at random, and if that so happens to be you, here's what you could win...

PlayStation

- A SUPER TRINITRON, 28" WIDESCREEN TV COMPLETE WITH NICAM DIGITAL STEREO AND DOLBY PRO-LOGIC SURROUND SOUND!
- AN EXCLUSIVE 'GRATIFIED' PLAYSTATION DESIGNED BY ETCH – THE CHAP RESPONSIBLE FOR THE HIGH ATTRACTIVE DECOR THAT SURROUNDS THE NEWLY-OPEN PLAYSTATION SKATE-PARK IN NOTTING HILL.
- AS IF THAT WASN'T QUITE ENOUGH ALREADY, THE LUCKY WINNER WILL ALSO WIN A YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION TO THE HOT LIST, WHICH, IN CASE YOU DIDN'T KNOW, MEANS THAT YOU'LL GET A YEAR'S SUPPLY OF FREE PLAYSTATION GAMES DIRECT FROM SONY!

- **Have you ever called the PlayStation Customer Careline, and if so, how would you rate the service you received?**
  - Poor ☐
  - Average ☐
  - Good ☐
  - Excellent ☐
- **Have you ever called the Official PlayStation Powerline, and if so, how would you rate the service you received?**
  - Poor ☐
  - Average ☐
  - Good ☐
  - Excellent ☐
- **If you could improve the Official PlayStation Powerline, what would you do to change it?**

  .....
- **After you have read a review of a new game, would you try before you buy through Sony's rental scheme?**
  - Yes ☐
  - No ☐
- **Apart from in the specialist games press, where do you regularly see/hear about PlayStation?**
  - Local Press ☐
  - National Press ☐
  - Lifestyle Magazines ☐
  - Local Radio ☐
  - National Radio ☐
  - TV Shows ☐
  - Other ☐

  If 'Other', please specify

  .....
- **Where did you buy your PlayStation?**
  - Game Store ☐
  - Record Store ☐
  - Electrical Store ☐
  - Variety Store ☐
  - Other ☐

  If 'Other', please specify

  .....
- **Why did you buy a PlayStation?**
  - Price ☐
  - Service ☐
  - Software ☐
  - Bundle Pack ☐
  - Other ☐

  If 'Other', please specify

  .....

ABOUT YOU

1: Your name

.....

2: Your address

.....

.....

.....

.....

3: Are you:
- Male ☐
- Female ☐

4: How old are you?
- Under 10 ☐
- 10-15 ☐
- 16-18 ☐
- 19-24 ☐
- 25-29 ☐
- 30+ ☐

5: Which of the following best describes your occupation? *(Tick one only)*
- Manager/assistant manager ☐
- Clerical/administrative ☐
- Creative ☐
- Self employed/freelance ☐
- Shop worker ☐
- Manual worker ☐
- Factory worker ☐
- Unemployed ☐
- Student ☐
- School ☐
- Other ☐

6: What is your average annual income?
- Below 5k ☐
- 5-10k ☐
- 11-15k ☐
- 16-20k ☐
- 21-30k ☐
- 31k+ ☐

7: Do you live *(tick more than one if applicable)***:**
- With your partner/spouse ☐
- With family ☐
- With friends ☐
- Alone ☐
- In your own home/flat ☐
- In rented accomodation ☐
- In council accomodation ☐

8: Does your household have any of the following? *(Tick more than one if applicable)*
- Satellite/cable TV ☐
- Car(s) ☐
- Video ☐
- Hi-fi ☐
- PC or Mac ☐
- Internet connection ☐

9: Do you own any of the following games consoles?
(Tick more than one if applicable)

- Nintendo 64 ☐
- Sega Saturn ☐
- Nintendo Game Boy ☐
- 3DO ☐
- Nintendo Super NES ☐
- Sega Mega Drive ☐
- Atari Jaguar ☐
- Other ☐

10: What are your interests other than videogames?

- Playing indoor/outdoor sports ☐
- Watching indoor/outdoor sports ☐
- Music ☐
- Education/reading ☐
- TV and video ☐
- Films ☐
- The Internet ☐
- Travel/holidays ☐
- Sci-fi ☐

11: What types of non-game magazines do you read?

- Football ☐
- Other sports ☐
- Cars ☐
- Music ☐
- Film ☐
- TV ☐
- Sci-fi ☐
- Travel ☐
- Lifestyle (please state: eg *FHM*, *Loaded*)

.....

12: Where do you usually buy your:

Clothes.....

.....

Music.....

.....

Videos.....

.....

Food.....

.....

13: Which of the following games magazines do you buy?

- None ☐
- Official PlayStation magazine ☐
- PlayStation Plus ☐
- PlayStation Pro ☐
- PowerStation ☐
- PlayStation Power ☐
- C&VG ☐
- Edge ☐
- GamesMaster ☐
- EGM ☐
- GamePro ☐
- Other (please state)

.....

14: Which of the following newspapers do you read regularly?

- None ☐
- Guardian ☐
- Telegraph ☐
- Times ☐
- Independent ☐
- Sun ☐
- Mirror ☐
- Star ☐
- Express ☐
- Mail ☐
- Other (please state)

.....

15: Of the following, which do you have?

- Credit card ☐
- Cashcard bank account ☐
- Savings account ☐
- Personal pension ☐
- Mortgage ☐
- Personal loan ☐
- Company car ☐
- Health insurance ☐
- House insurance ☐
- Life insurance ☐
- Shares ☐

16: Of the following, which do you have?

- Cheque book ☐
- Mastercard ☐
- Visa ☐
- Building society account ☐
- Switch/direct debit card ☐
- Diners Club card ☐
- American Express (green) ☐
- American Express (gold or above) ☐
- Other charge card ☐



ABOUT PLAY

17: How many issues of PLAY Magazine have you bought to date?

- All ☐
- Most ☐
- Some ☐
- 1 ☐

18: What prompted you to buy your first issue of PLAY?

- Friend's recommendation ☐
- Cover image ☐



- Specific feature/game ☐
- General look of the mag ☐
- Reviews ☐
- Free gift ☐
- I buy all the PSX mags ☐
- Other (please state)

.....

19: How many people read your copy of PLAY?

- 1 ☐
- 2 ☐
- 3 ☐
- More ☐

20: Where do you get your copy of PLAY?

- Supermarket ☐
- High street newsagent ☐
- Local newsagent ☐
- Petrol station ☐
- Subscription ☐
- Other(please state)

.....

21: Do you intend to subscribe?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

If not, why?

.....

22: Please rate PLAY in the following categories.
(Tick one box only for each category.)

Section	Good	Average	Poor
Cover	☐	☐	☐
Design	☐	☐	☐
News	☐	☐	☐
Features	☐	☐	☐
Reviews	☐	☐	☐
Tips	☐	☐	☐
Previews	☐	☐	☐
Wall of Game	☐	☐	☐

23: What do you think of the writing in PLAY?

- Informative, clear and witty ☐
- Informative but lacks humour ☐
- Well-written and concise ☐
- Contains waffle ☐
- Lacking in detail ☐
- Not enough critical comment ☐
- Too much text, too few pics ☐
- Too many pics, not enough text ☐

24: On the whole, do you agree with our reviews?

- Agree ☐
- Disagree ☐
- Don't know ☐

25: What do you most like about the magazine?

.....

.....

26: What do you least like about the magazine?

.....

.....

27: Do you think PLAY magazine should have a CD cover demo bearing in mind it would then cost £4.99?

- Yes ☐
- no ☐

28: If PLAY featured a cover-mounted video every 5-6 months would you definitely buy it?

- Yes ☐
- No (go to question 30) ☐

29: If yes, how much would you be prepared to pay for the magazine?

- £2.95 ☐ (no change)
- £3.95 ☐ (Extra £1)
- £4.95 ☐ (Extra £2)

30: How does PLAY compare to other PlayStation magazines?

	Better	*Same*	*Worse*
Official	☐	☐	☐
Plus	☐	☐	☐
Power	☐	☐	☐
Pro	☐	☐	☐

31: If you answered 'worse' to any of the above, please explain why:

.....

.....

.....

32: Name three things which you think PLAY has over the other PlayStation magazines?

1. .....

2. .....

3. .....

33: Is there any area of PLAY which could be improved?

.....

.....

34: Have you ever entered a competition in PLAY?
Yes ☐
No ☐

35: Do you think we give enough coverage to Japanese and American news?
Yes ☐
No ☐

36: From the coverage you read in PLAY, which software publisher/ developer do you think makes the best games?

.....

37: If you could add one new regular feature to PLAY, what would it be?

.....

.....

38: Do you have any comments/ criticisms about PLAY in general?

.....

.....

.....

.....

ABOUT YOUR PLAYSTATION

39: Do you own a PlayStation?
Yes (go to question 41) ☐
No ☐

40: When do you plan on getting a PlayStation?
Immediately ☐
1 month ☐
2-3 months ☐
Christmas ☐
When the price falls again ☐
Don't know ☐

41: Where did you buy your PlayStation?
Comet ☐
Dixons ☐
Electronic Boutique ☐
Game ☐
HMV ☐
Virgin ☐
Our Price ☐
Toys R Us ☐
Independent computer shop ☐
Mail order ☐
Other ☐

42: How long have you owned your PlayStation?
Less than a month ☐
1-2 months ☐
3-8 months ☐
9-12 months ☐
More than a year ☐

43: Is your PlayStation a:
PAL machine (official) ☐
NTSC machine (import) ☐
Chip converted PlayStation ☐

44: Are you happy with your PlayStation?
Yes ☐
No ☐
If not, why not?

.....

.....

45: Where do you buy your games?
Comet ☐
Dixons ☐
Electronic Boutique ☐
GAME ☐
HMV ☐
Virgin ☐
Our Price ☐
Toys R Us ☐
Independent computer shop ☐
Mail order ☐
Other ☐

46: Which of the following statements best describes your feelings about the current PlayStation software range?
(Tick more than one if applicable)
The games are all excellent ☐
The games are mostly good ☐
A few classics and a lot of dross ☐
Disappointing ☐
Overpriced ☐
There are too few games available ☐
Games take too long to reach the UK ☐
The PAL conversions are a let-down ☐
The games are aimed at kids ☐

47: How many PlayStation games do you own?

.....

48: What are your top five PlayStation games?

1. .....
2. .....
3. .....
4. .....
5. .....

49: What PlayStation game are you most looking forward to?

.....

50: How often do you play link-up games with two TVs?
Never (Go to question 54) ☐
Daily ☐
Weekly ☐
Monthly ☐

51: Do you consider the link-up option to be a vital part of PlayStation gaming?
Yes ☐
No ☐

52: Are you disappointed by the lack of link-up games on the market?
Yes ☐
No ☐

53: What is your favourite link-up game?

.....

54: What is your favourite type of game?
Shoot-'em-ups ☐
Beat-'em-ups ☐
Racing games ☐
Sports games ☐
Platform games ☐
Adventure games ☐
RPGs ☐
Strategy games ☐

55: Which of the following influences your decision to buy a PlayStation game?
TV/radio advertising ☐
Magazine advertising ☐
Billboard advertising ☐
Review in Play ☐
Review in other magazine ☐
Friend's recommendation ☐
In-store promotion ☐
Price ☐
Game type/genre ☐
Internet newsgroups ☐
'Big name' (eg *Resident Evil 2*) ☐

56: How are you made aware of the games that are available?
Coverage in PLAY Magazine ☐
Coverage in other magazines ☐
Advertising ☐
In-store displays ☐
Word of mouth ☐
TV/radio coverage ☐
Internet news ☐

57: Do you own, or plan to buy, any of the following PlayStation peripherals in the next six months?
Extra controller(s) ☐
Multi-tap ☐
Memory card ☐
Dual Analogue ☐
Steering wheel ☐
Link cable ☐
Other ☐

58: Which of the following statements best describes your attitude to consoles?
The quality of the game is more important than which console it runs on ☐
I am loyal to Sony and would not buy a console from another company ☐
I would only ever own one console at a time ☐
I buy every new console as it comes out ☐
I buy a console in order to play one specific 'killer app' ☐
I buy consoles based on which is the most advanced technically ☐
I buy the console that all my friends own ☐
I have no loyalty to any specific brand ☐

59: Have you ever bought an import copy of a game?
Yes ☐
No (go to question 61) ☐

60: If so, how often do you buy import games?
Once a week ☐
At least once a month ☐
Rarely ☐

61: Do you have an Internet ready PC or are you connected to the Internet in some way?
Yes ☐
No ☐

62: Have you ever visited the PLAY web pages?
Yes ☐
No ☐

63: If you answered yes to the above question, how often do you go to the PLAY web pages?
Daily ☐
Weekly ☐
Monthly ☐
Rarely ☐

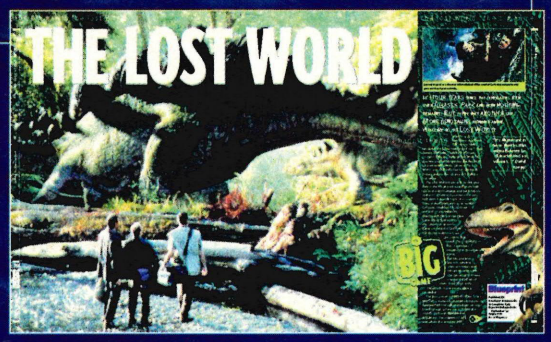
If you don't want to receive further information, please tick this box ☐

Thank you for completing the Great PLAY Survey. If you have answered ALL the questions you will now be entered into the competition. Send this pull-out form immedaitely to **The Great Play Survey '97, PLAY, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH 1 2JS.** Get them in as quickly as possible to stand a chance of winning the fantastic prize. The competition closes on 28 October 1997. The editor's decision is final. No employees of Paragon Publishing or SCEE many enter.



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



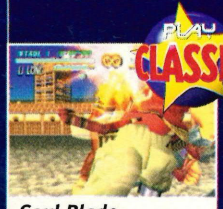


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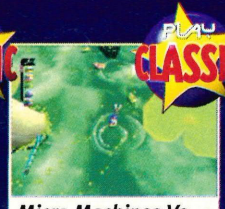


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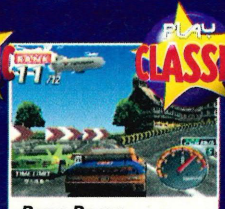
AND CHOOSE FROM ONE OF THESE GAMES!



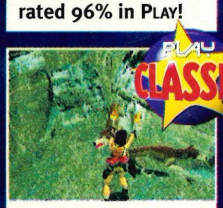
Soul Blade – rated 96% in PLAY!



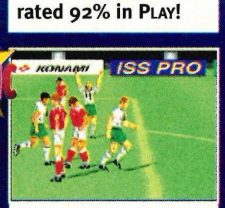
Micro Machines V3 – rated 92% in PLAY!



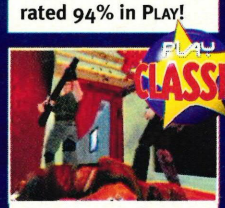
Rage Racer – rated 94% in PLAY!



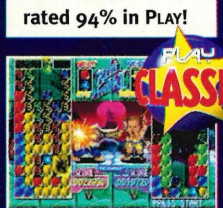
Tomb Raider – rated 94% in PLAY!



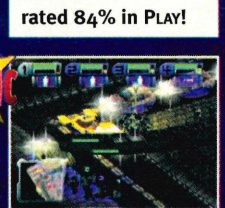
ISS Pro – rated 84% in PLAY!



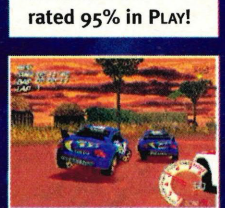
Resident Evil – rated 95% in PLAY!



Super Puzzle Fighter – rated 90% in PLAY!



Syndicate Wars – rated 85% in PLAY!



V-Rally – rated 87% in PLAY!



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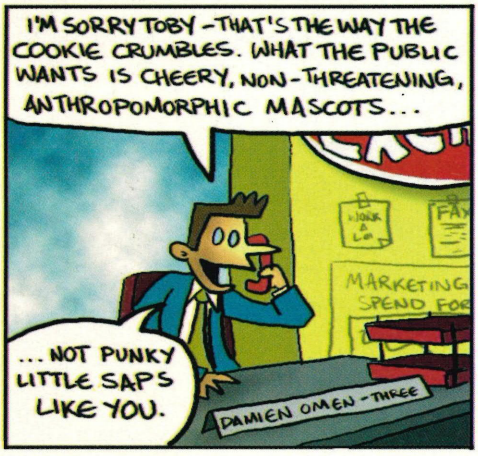


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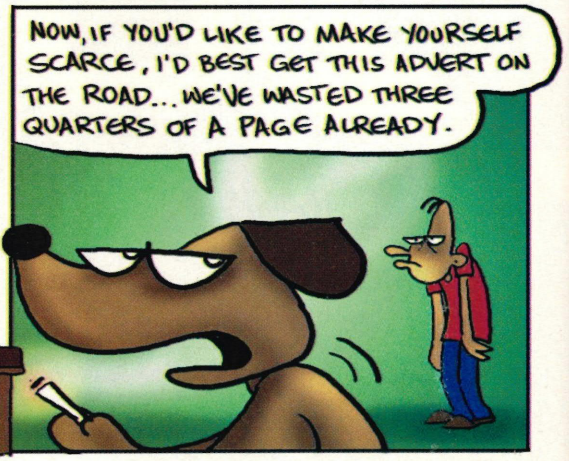






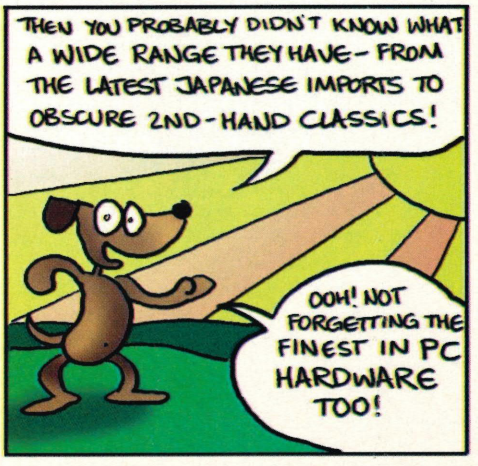












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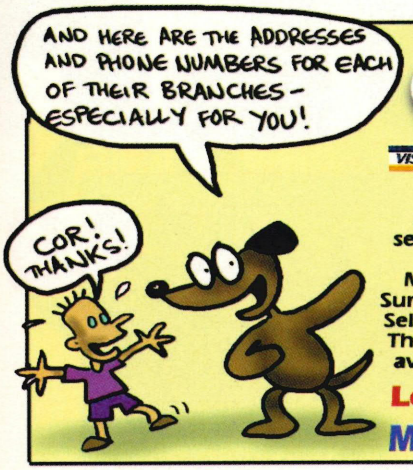
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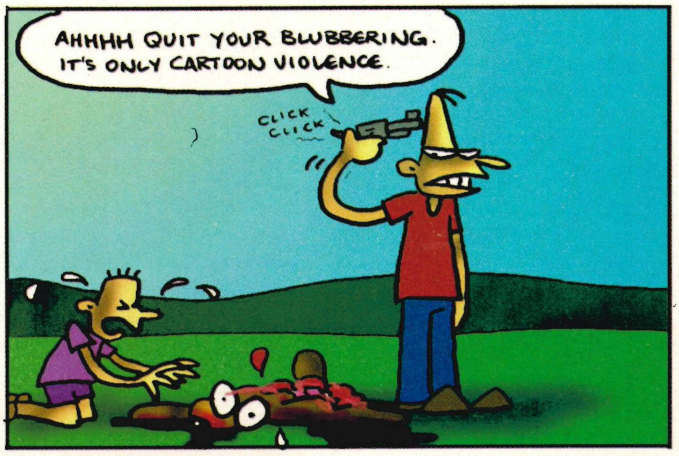
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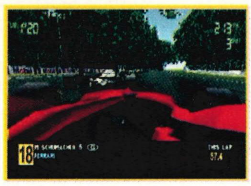
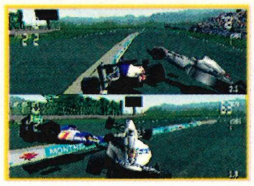
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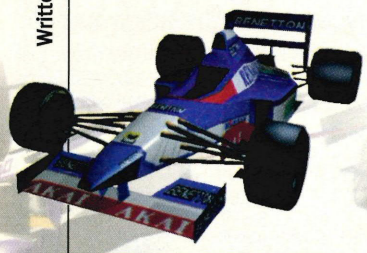




FORMULA

THE F1 SEASON IS GOING BERSERK AT THE MOMENT WITH ALL THE THRILLS, SPILLS AND GLORY IT IS FAMOUS FOR. THE PERFECT TIME TO BUY THE NEW F1 GAME THEN?

Written By Graeme Nicholson

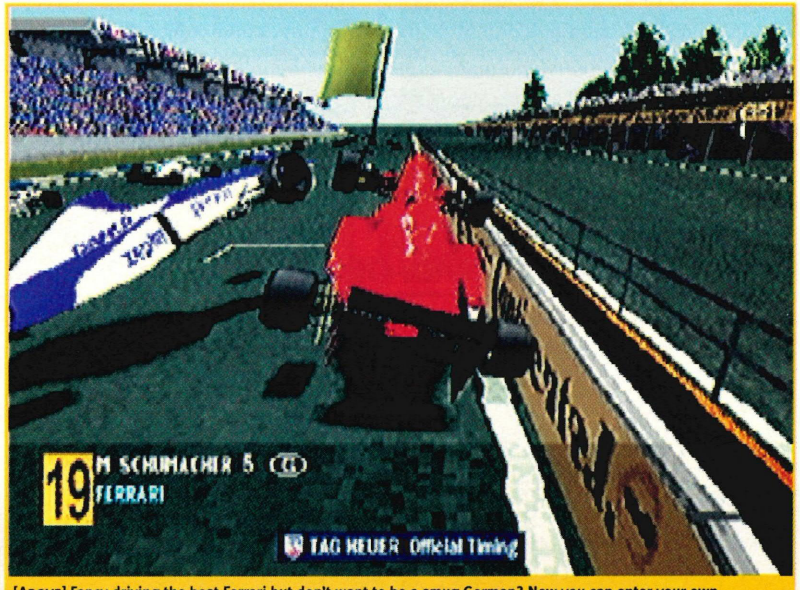
Remember *Formula 1*?



By now sales must have exceeded those of Michael Jackson's *Thriller*, but the whole craze is about to be repeated when *Formula 1 '97* screeches onto British shelves this month. Thousands of eager fans of the first game have already made the decision to buy *F1 '97* when it comes out, but we believe that as a reader of PLAY you are somewhat more discerning than that and need some hard evidence.

One of the most keenly awaited titles designed for the machine, we found a happy mix of old and new during the intensive test period we put the game through. The roaring cars are finely detailed, sporting shading around their aerodynamically efficient bodies that changes according to your angle to the sun, and the clearer display allows for an even more realistic representation of these sweetly purring beasts.

Eight camera angles are included to ensure you get a perspective you are comfortable to race 70 laps with. Most are similar to the views found in the original *Formula 1*, with the exception of the bloody fantastic cockpit mode. Sadly absent from the last game, you now get to soar through the chicanes of Imola peering over the top of a full cockpit, with a faithfully reproduced 3-D steering wheel and even driver's arms stretching out in front of you to clasp it. Still no working dials and gauges in the cockpit itself though, but the usual speedometer, gear, position and time readouts take care of that admirably. However, this view is strictly for driver's with thousandth-of-a-second reaction



[ABOVE] Fancy driving the best Ferrari but don't want to be a smug German? Now you can enter your own name! Excellent!

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Psygnosis
Customer support: 0151 282 3000
Price: £44.99
Release date: 26 September '97



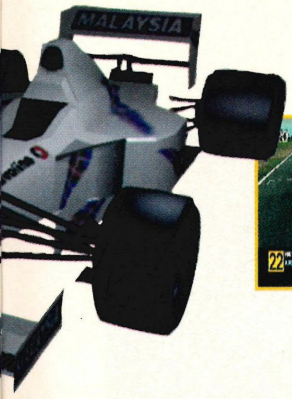


[ABOVE] That first corner on the Brazil circuit always was a bit tricky. The tyre marks are realistic and stay on the track for ages.



[ABOVE] Take a fleeting look back at the competition by depressing the left Dual Analogue stick or pressing down on the D-pad. Handy.

"The red hot, rock-drilling whine of the engines is even better than before!"













F1 '97

PLAY CLASSIC

FLAGGING

What do those little flags mean that the Formula 1 penalty system uses, both in the real sport and this game?

BLACK FLAG

You've done something so awful that you've been disqualified. Hang your head in shame, for you belong not in this league of the elite.

BLACK AND WHITE FLAG

This signals that you are portraying "unsportsman-like behaviour". Keep carrying on this way and you'll be given the Black Flag.

RED FLAG

Red indicates that the race has been stopped, hopefully because there's been a massive accident somewhere and the track is blocked.

YELLOW FLAG

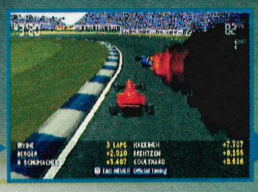
This flag is issued when you are approaching a danger zone, like a stationary car on the road. No overtaking until you see the Green Flag.

GREEN FLAG

All clear! When you see this, you know you can be on your way and get back to causing all manner of frowned-upon incidents.

In our copy of *Formula 1 '97* we found that when the Failures option was enabled, other cars occasionally completely blow their engines in a violent torrent of flames. As the F1 association didn't like it, Psygnosis was considering keeping it as a secret option only...









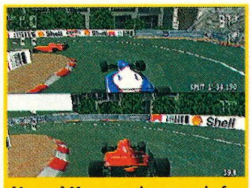
rates or fanatics who know the tracks as intimately as the real Michael Schumacher does.

REDLINING

The red hot, rock-drilling whine of the engines is even better than before, rattling the fillings out of most people within 100 meters of the speakers. And that classic shrill resonance alone makes you want to drive the car as fast as it will go. It may appear trivial, but the highly realisticand fierce engine tone goes a long way to turning a flat television screen and plastic joypad into your own private race car! Crank up the stereo, sit a little closer to the screen and instantly you are participating in this year's F1 season.

Along with the '97 line-up of drivers and tracks, Murray Walker has now been joined in the commentary box by the thankfully more eardrum-friendly Martin Brundle to supply an up-to-date and professional alternating voice-over to the action. As before it is entertaining for a while, but Murray's piercing voice affects the serious competitor like a child's laugh affects a Rottweiler, and in under an hour you will angrily pause the race and gag Murray by way of the sound levels option in one swift, instinctive movement. The only thing you might miss is the crackling pit radio ("We're ready for you if you want to get that damage fixed!") but that also gets repetitive.

Fundamental changes to the way the game plays include the optional flag penalty system (the last game had none) so you can be given, for example, the black flag and ordered to leave the race, and of course the far more impressive crashes...



[Above] Monaco: playground of the rich and stupid. Watch out for road cars more expensive than your own Williams.



KRUNCH

Described by Psygnosis as "3-D collisions" compared to the "2-D collisions" of the first game, you can go through some really scary moments as your frail F1 car is prised into the air by some idiot who didn't expect you to drive round backwards screaming "coming through!"

The developers have refused to go all the way with this new feature unfortunately, so the cars are restrained from doing violent flips and rolls until nothing more than a steering column and two charred axles remain. Basically, one point of any vehicle has to be touching the track surface during a crash, and they can never turn right over. It is probably for the same reasons of taste and decency that the explosions you may have seen in early screen shots have been removed.

Yes, it's a shame, but there are buckets of sparks which spill over the tarmac during collisions, front and back wings both bend and eventually come off with enough abuse, and if you put your back into it you'll even manage to snap a wheel off. In the cockpit mode you can clearly see real time damage on the chassis directly in front of you, crumpling and denting with each crash.

Another major change is the dropped link mode, replaced by the split screen two player option. Technical constraints mean you can only play against each other – the other 20 computer controlled cars that make up the rest of a Formula 1 pack are absent. It's fine for shaving seconds off lap times to see who has the most skill and precision, but the fact that you will never play a full championship together with a friend is a bit distressing.

GLORY SEEKER

On the whole though, developer Bizarre Creations has done everything it can to squeeze extras into its latest release.



[Above] You're just away from the starting grid and the young boy Magnussen gets a bit shaky, before you know it sparks are flying.



[Above] With real time weather changes, it gives you the chills when you realise the sky is darkening.



[Above] The racing line is now far more subtle on the tarmac, so it looks more like the real thing.



[Above] With no other cars on the track in split screen mode, it's more obvious who is the better of the two competing drivers.



[Above] The whole front end is friendlier, much, much quicker to load and appears automatically between races to simplify saving.



[Above] For the really hard rain storms, with thunder and lighting, there are super-grippy "monsoon" tyres in addition to the wets.

WHERE FOR ART THOU JACK?

Psygnosis managed to get the official licence for F1 '97, but there is still one driver you won't find: Villeneuve. Jack has made a sly deal so that anyone seeking the official F1 licence for any product has to negotiate a separate deal with him, usually with massive financial consequences. Is he still your favourite driver?

[Above] There's nothing like a good start to the race, and this is nothing like a good start to the race! I thank you.

Bugs have been repaired all over the place to silence critics of the first game and make for a more pleasing race. Choosing the amount of fuel you take in laps instead of percentage can be used in conjunction with the new lap counter so that you never run out when you don't expect it anymore.

Other cars pit in sensibly. The weather can change dramatically during a race, with every condition between baking sun and thunderstorm. The game saving system is much quicker and more straight forward. The result is something which is even more playable than the last game, which can't have been easy, and with more beautiful graphics you would be mad to pass *Formula 1 '97* by.

[Above] Famous last words: "Nah, I don't need a bloomin' poncy practice lap, I'll learn it as I go!"

[Above] Losing the front wing takes away all that finely designed downforce off your front tyres, reducing steering power dramatically.

LONG TERM PLAY...

TUITION

Amazing! Select any track and then "Training" from the options and you get Martin Brundle experienced TV-style tuition as you hare round the empty track alone. He warns you of tight corners and chicanes, tells you when you can flatten the accelerator and reminds you every lap where the pits are so you remember for the full race.

"You would be mad to pass *Formula 1 '97* by!"



PLAY

Looks	●●●●●●●●●●
Sounds	●●●●●●●●●●
Gameplay	●●●●●●●●●○
Value	●●●●●●●●●○
Pit stops	●●●●●●●●●●

PLAYED 90%

Well upgraded and stuffed with excitement!

ALTERNATIVELY:
Formula 1 (92%)
Eidos F1 (March '98)

TOTAL DR

BOUNDING OFF-ROAD BUGGIES, SCREAMING INDYCARS, SLIDING RALLY CARS AND TOP PRODUCTION SPORTS MODELS – ALL IN ONE NEW GAME! IT'S MORE THAN ANY OTHER GAME CAN HANDLE... AND US FOR THAT MATTER!

Written By Graeme Nicholson



World politics, ethics and musical taste aside, there's one thing we always agree on at PLAY: you can never have too many car games!

We've brought you news and previews on this next big racing title since we caught sight of it last year because it looked so promising, and now only weeks from release, it appears we were not wrong to expect something special.

It is the dizzying variation that makes *Total Drivin'* extremely playable for extended periods of time. Before each race, you don't choose a car, you choose a team. There are eight teams, and they all have one car for each racing class, so selecting say the Morgen team and then one of the off-road Egyptian tracks would give you the springy Morgen buggy to drive. Five different racing classes, from Indycar to Dakar rally in each team means you have an unbelievable 40 vehicles to play with. All are available from the moment you load the game.

AND THERE'S MORE...

Before secrets there are 36 international circuits to compete on, which you unlock as you become increasingly proficient on the roads. Though your top speed is intentionally limited on the first courses in each location, it is still possible to get up enough momentum on most tracks to smash and roll your way off the main path to make use of the liberating freedom of movement employed in *Total Drivin'*. It is surprisingly open and lets you go almost anywhere.

You can end up cart-wheeling over an embankment into the sea, grinding along the edges of sheer cliffs with no barriers or simply driving around on a bit of road or field you're not meant to be on. This ingenious game engine provides the kind of ability and depth people want these days and puts something as confining as *Porsche Challenge* to shame. The same applies during the split screen and link-up sessions too, so you can smack your friends off those very same cliffs.

Of course, it doesn't look quite as nice as *Porsche*, so it depends where your priorities are. Innovations like the spraying and splashing water effects that accompany you car when you blast through a ford or fall into a river are clever, but the overall picture is rather more garish than, for example, *V-Rally*.

TURNABOUT

The engine sound is also a bit of a turn off on the first tracks with the limited top speed, as you tend to get the car up to full throttle quickly and keep it there without incident for much of the race. This causes the engine to moan a fixed pitch throaty tone that sees you hitting the brakes just to make it change. The same problem does not plague the later levels where your revs are constantly shifting up and down.

However, *Total Drivin'* not only offers better choice and freedom than the competition, it has a new control system that gives you as much precision as is possible with the standard digital pad. For

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Ocean
Customer Support: 0191 460 6060
Price: £44.95
Release date: 1 October '97

ONE PLAYER
MULTIPLE PLAYERS
MULTIPLE PLAYERS
SPLIT SCREEN
STEERING/ANALOGUE
MEMORY CARD
LINK CABLE
DUAL ANALOGUE

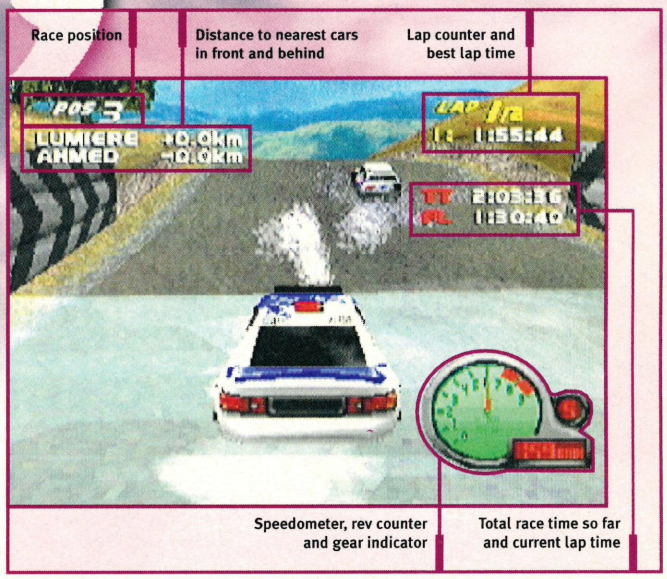


[ABOVE] The little buggies are light and easy to flip, but their excellent agility is well suited to Easter Island and Egypt.



[ABOVE] Barely audible amongst the whistling wind and roaring engine, a tiny voice cries out: "Does this thing have airbags?!"

RIVIN

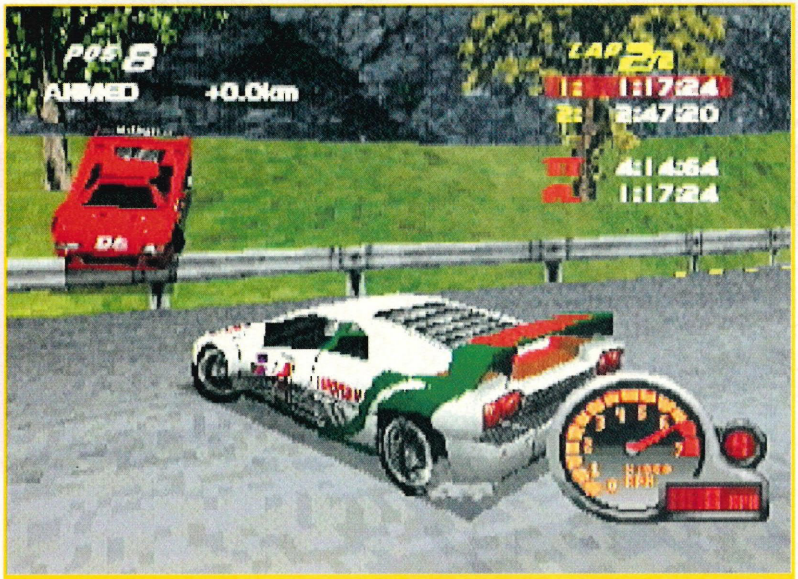


THE THREE DEGREES

MOVING THE D-PAD LEFT AND RIGHT WILL STEER YOU QUITE SOFTLY TO EITHER SIDE, BUT USING THE R1 AND L1 BUTTONS WILL GIVE YOU THE EQUIVALENT OF FULL LOCK ON THE CAR'S STEERING. HOLDING THE D-PAD ALONG WITH ONE OF THE SHOULDER BUTTONS GIVES YOU SOMETHING IN BETWEEN THOSE TWO EXTREMES. AND THERE YOU HAVE IT, THREE DEGREES OF STEERING WITH AN ORDINARY PACK-IN PAD!



[ABOVE] Water-covered tracks affect the car handling accordingly, so you slide out really easily. Note the water trails snaking behind each wheel.



[ABOVE] This poor competitor has had such a large collision that he's managed to throw himself over the railing. He's now completely out of the race, and won't be any more trouble!

those of you who still haven't taken the step into the world of analog control, this is the best way you can drive with your old pad. See the boxout for the details.

Yes, it would be nice to have excellent gameplay with Silicon Graphics visuals, but there is nothing you could call disappointing about *Total Drivin'*. With more motors than the average car dealership and tracks in picturesque honeymoon locations from the highlands of Scotland to the mountains of Switzerland, you can't really go wrong with this one.



[ABOVE] Link two split-screen games to make a four player race of outstanding proportions. That is, if Sony doesn't remove it before release...





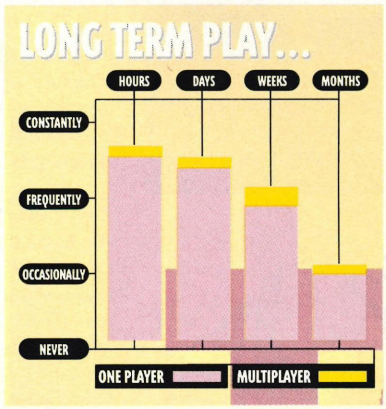
[ABOVE] Try not to make a sudden turn before you jump the river in Egypt – it will only end in tears.



[ABOVE] The beautiful warm glow of a sunset that is only possible in the skies of Scotland's countryside.



"More motors than the average car dealership!"



AKA

LOOKING FOR AN NTSC VERSION OF *TOTAL DRIVIN'*? IT IS PUBLISHED BY ACTIVISION IN THE US AND IS KNOWN AS *CAR & DRIVER PRESENTS: GRAND TOUR RACING '98*. STUPID NAME IF YOU ASK US!

PLAY

LOOKS	7
SOUNDS	6
GAMEPLAY	8
VALUE	8
TORQUE	8

PLAYED 84%

Thrilling racing with excellent variation.

ALTERNATIVELY:
V-RALLY (87%)
PEAK PERFORMANCE (85%)

ROSCO MC

BURN, BABY, BURN! SONY'S ENEMY OF COMBUSTION STANDS CENTRE STAGE WHILST HOLDING A VERY BIG NOZZLE INDEED.

Written By Damian Butt

What a flamer!

Rosco McQueen is the sort of game you want to pick up and play as soon as you set eyes on it. The vivid colours, Seventies disaster movie soundtrack, and simple platform action work perfectly together, and will especially appeal to younger players.

No-one's ever done a fire-fighting game on the PSX before and so the plot of *Rosco McQueen* (Tower XS architect Sylvester T Square goes bonkers and re-programs the service droids to burn the structure to the ground while he laughs insanely in the penthouse) is fresh and suspiciously similar to the movie, *The Towering Inferno*.



[Above] Further into the game you will be faced with rooms full of poisonous gas. Collect the breathing apparatus before crossing them.



[Above] "Rosco McQueen, first man on the scene!" The blazing infernos are an impressive feature of the game and they are entirely realistic.

BACKDRAFT

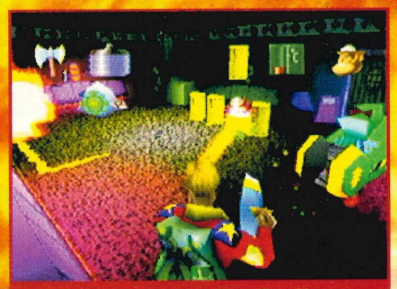
You begin the adventure in the laundry of the Tower XS and the idea is to search every sealed room for trapped civilians, food for health, water to top up your ever-spurting hose, and the purple robots who are setting fire to everything. Viewed from above and behind the hero, you play *Rosco McQueen* a lot like *Tomb Raider*, with the camera zooming in and out depending on where you stand, but mainly surveying the action from afar.

Each level is themed and contains different objects, people to save and bigger and meaner enemies. Heading up the Tower you will go through such levels as the garages, Harrolds (posh shopping zone), the gym and sports complex, living quarters, and finally the penthouse and water tanks area (wonder what they're used for?). With each floor, new hazards are gradually introduced, but luckily you can pillage every locker for special items and supplies. All you've got to worry about is the ever-present thermometer which shows the heat build-up of the level. If the mercury boils over, you're history!

The first thing to say about *Rosco McQueen* is that developer Slippery Snake has done a fantastic job. Every aspect of the game is polished, and while Rosco himself is a righteous superman with a wardrobe full of casual one liners, the real ace in the pack is his floating sidekick, Digit, who provides you with clues and vital information using the voice of John Inman on helium. From the lurid colour scheme, almost high resolution cartoon graphics, and the superb atmospheric sound effects, you can tell that the developers had fun making it, and you will enjoy playing it from beginning to end.



[Above] With Digit looking on you encounter a bizarre robotic cleaning maid who uses her broom to smash you over the head. Terminate her.



[Above] Throwing axes are brilliant for taking out robots without putting yourself in harm's way, but you can also accidentally set off chain reactions. Whoops!

Although the action can get repetitive at first – chop, squirt water, save moaning people – you are then introduced to new features and situations which completely open up the game, such as the poison gas which means you must find some breathing apparatus before entering that room. *Rosco McQueen*'s perfect learning curve means you are never overwhelmed by each new floor; rather you are instructed by Digit gradually. Typically, new objects, such as the throwing axe, water bomb or co2 gas appear right before the object you use them on the first time. Clever level design also breaks up the game into manageable chunks, so you always want another go.

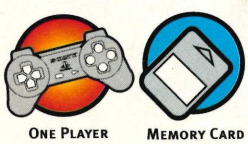
CRAZY WORLD OF ARTHUR BROWN

Using water bottles as refills instead of lugging a cumbersome hose around the place is a great idea and one that means



PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Sony
Customer support: 0881 505505
Price: £34.99
Release date: October '97



ONE PLAYER

MEMORY CARD



DUAL ANALOGUE

QUEEN



[Above] As the building is on fire, you'd expect hot steam to erupt from the floors now and then, right? Time your jumps here.



[Above] This is what *Rosco McQueen* is all about. Standing in the path of sheets of flame with only your gushing hose for protection.



[Above] The minute your unfeasonably large chin pokes through the door, all robots drop their incendiary devices and then rush to attack you. Use your axe!

there are some tense moments when you're facing a raging inferno with only a trickle of tap water left. Such instances mean a frantic locker search must be carried out sharpish – and all this to a strict time limit. Later on in the game there are also instances where you can see the flames and feel the heat, but you must accomplish many other tasks before you finally dowse the danger.

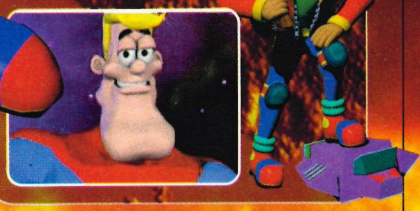
Special mention must got to the flame effects themselves, which are utterly convincing – right down to the burning embers which fly off and start other fires. On later levels you even get lines of flammable liquid which can set a whole room ablaze if so much as a spark is created. Scary stuff.

"Hotter than a mambo on Montserrat!"

Rosco McQueen is an immensely playable game which juggles clever ideas with solid and dependable platform action. Older gamers might find it a wee bit childish, but the innovative fire-fighting premise, coupled with action that's hotter and more frantic than a mambo on Montserrat, makes it a winner in our books!

SEPARATED AT BIRTH

It really is quite amazing how similar Sony's new mascot, Rosco McQueen is to ancient 3DO galaxy-saviour Captain Quazar. It's almost as if the developers had a copy of 3DO Magazine and surreptitiously traced it and 'en[illegible]ed new clothes. Surely not.

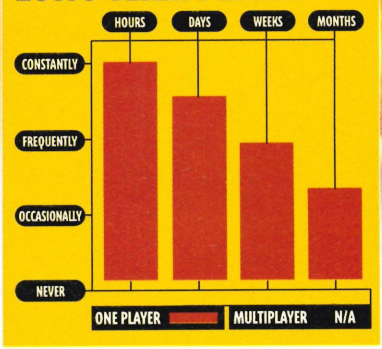


TOWERING CLICHES

Wait a minute. You can't have a fire/hostage/hero-saving-the-day scenario without some of the key elements you would normally find in every disaster movie. Cue the cliches.

- Adulterer caught in burning room with mistress.
- Couple celebrating wedding anniversary (one of them dies).
- Heroic older man with hidden heart trouble.
- Stupidly improbable rescue plan that always comes off.
- Someone always opens that obviously smoking door.
- A thousand fire trucks outside, but you only see ten fire-fighters in total.
- The selfish bloke who rushes the escape trolley and dies horribly when the cable snaps.
- The old drunk who somehow lives through it all (with bottle intact).

LONG TERM PLAY...



PLAY

Looks	8
Sounds	8
Gameplay	9
Value	6
Flamers	9

PLAYED 88%

A totally twisted firestarter!

ALTERNATIVELY:
Excalibur 2555AD (86%)
Crash Bandicoot (84%)

CROC: LEGEND OF THE GOBBOS

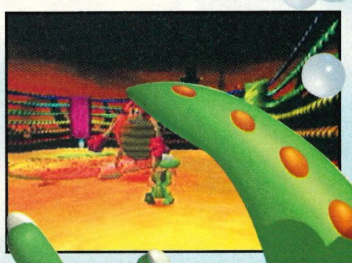
A BRAND NEW CUTE GREEN MASCOT STOMPS ONTO THE SCENE, WITH MORE THAN A FEW TRICKS THAT HE SEEMS TO HAVE LEARNED FROM A CERTAIN 64-BIT PETITE ITALIAN...

Written By Graeme Nicholson

IN A WHILE CROCODILE

Croc is almost illegally similar to *Mario 64* in terms of moves and design, but do you really want to see your PlayStation struggling to emulate something it isn't suited to? We need innovation, not imitation!





It had to happen

sooner or later, didn't it? The PlayStation owners of the world watched in awe as *Mario 64* was launched along with the Nintendo 64 hardware, and it felt bad. There was nothing like it on the PlayStation and it didn't even look technically possible. This created an obvious gap in the market for a free-roaming 3-D platformer on the PSX, and developer Argonaut Software was only too happy to deliver...



To condense the story, the gobbos found Croc when he was just a tiny abandoned crocodile, and brought him up as one of their own. Now that he has outgrown his adoptive parents many times over and decides to leave home. However an evil magician named Baron Dante has storms the village and they urgently need Croc's help. Dante's creations form the bosses you encounter, such as insects and other natural life forms that the Baron has put evil spells on to make them expand and want to hurt you.

The little creatures you are out to save, the gobbos, are major contenders for the cutest sprites of all time. With their small furry bodies and huge expectant eyes it is almost impossible to leave one behind on any of the 50-odd levels even if you can't find the damned key for its cage.

Croc is an open and blatant work of plagiarism, and *Mario 64* is definitely the biggest victim of it's idea-robbery. The short, podgy central character waddles, runs, jumps, stomps and even sounds like Mario at times! Surely this game should be renamed "Crook" instead of "Croc!" You collect crystals instead of gold coins, usually by breaking open 'smash boxes', and to reach bonus stages you jump down concrete wells.

WHAT A CROC

Being such an unashamed mimic is what makes it so easy to see *Croc*'s flaws. First of all, the PlayStation will never be able to reproduce the kind of graphics seen in *Mario 64*. The hardware just won't allow the depth of colour among other things. So when *Croc* makes no attempt to be seen as anything except a clone of Nintendo's game, it looks worse than if it were an original game being judged on it's own merit.

Polygon clipping and warping occurs regularly (although it's no worse than in something as good as *Tomb Raider*), and that freedom of movement is far more restricted than Mario's.

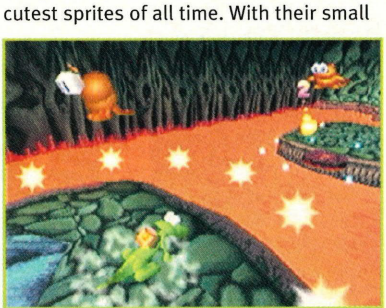
While you can walk in any direction, you will find yourself hemmed in by walls far more often and there are no large landscapes to explore. Most of the game is constructed from a series of relatively small room puzzles. Unnecessary obstructions such as blackness and loading when you jump into the water for a swim strip away yet more from any feeling of freedom.

The sad part is that *Croc* is actually a

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Fox Interactive
Customer support: 01753 546 546
Price: £44.99
Release date: 10 October '97

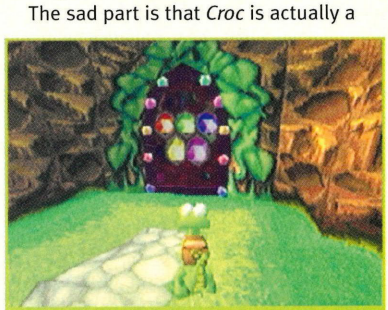
ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD | DUAL ANALOGUE



[Above] With the Dual Analogue controller, the right stick moves the camera independently of the action for that perfect view.



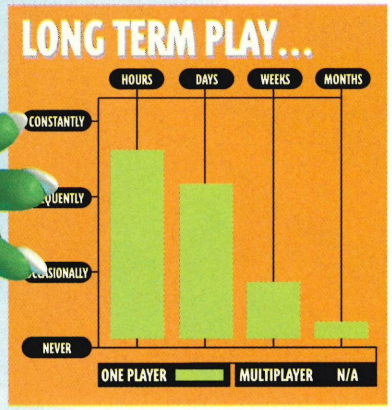
[Above] All it takes is one look at the little gobbo's eyes and to one listen to his squeaky cries for help to motivate you!



[Above] Collect enough of the coloured crystals and you gain entry to a special room near the end of each level containing a few bonuses.



[Above] Awww, so endearing with his big blinking eyes and protruding infant tooth. Not at all a cynical marketing ploy, no.



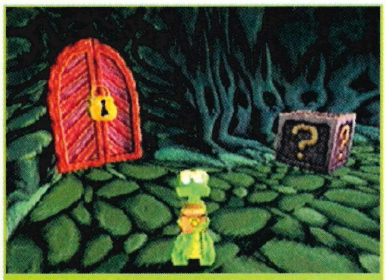
perfectly likable platformer if you forget about that little plump plumber for a while. Being able to walk anywhere within a given room, climb the walls and descend on balloons make it instantly more immersive than *Crash Bandicoot* and its forced linearity. The level design is nothing original, but that lets you keep moving at a good pace instead of standing around scratching your head. It also happens to have one of the best jaunty musical scores in quite some time.

ANIMAL MAGIC

Croc is very agile, with a couple of moves of his own, and he is better drawn than any of the scenery with rounded surfaces and a sweet, if predictable appearance.

If you have played *Mario 64* and are looking for a similar experience on your PlayStation, resist the temptation to buy *Croc* as you will be disappointed. It is not as polished as the N64 killer app. However, if you're just in the market for a fun new platformer, *Croc* is worth a look, especially for younger players.

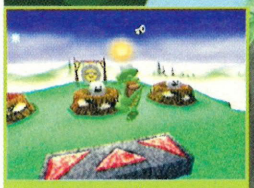
"*Croc* is an open work of plagiarism!"



[Above] A gleaming great padlock means you are going to have to search for a gleaming great key – child's play!



[Above] Yes, he can swim, but each water section has to be loaded separately to the dry land levels. Sigh.



[Above] A totally bizarre sub game in a bonus room sees you jumping on panels to detonate several sheep. Honest.

PLAY

Looks	8
Sounds	9
Gameplay	8
Value	5
Scales	10

PLAYED 78%

It's intellectual theft, but fun nonetheless!

Alternatively:
Crash Bandicoot (84%)
Jumping Jack Flash 2 (86%)

MOTO RAC

HANG ON TO YOUR CROWN JEWELS IN EA'S HUGELY EXHILARATING ARCADE RACER!

Written By Tom Sargent

Huge metal pins might be holding Barry Sheen's legs together, but we doubt that he's got many regrets, considering how many times he's been able to hammer the hell out of a 1,000cc superbike at break-neck speeds on some of the world's best circuits.

And now, thanks to a ridiculously fast 3-D racing engine, you can enjoy what is undoubtedly the best motorcycle game on PlayStation, without worrying about snapping your legs at right angles, or worse – being prodded by a group of student doctors and eating hospital food.



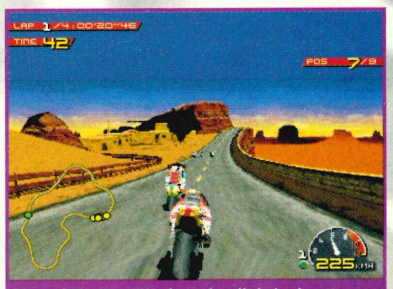
Let's get one thing straight from the start, *Moto Racer* displays little pretence toward simulation. You simply get on whatever bike you've chosen and try to reach the end of each circuit. There are six courses to begin with: Speed Bay, Dirt Arena, Rock Forest, Great Wall (of China), West Way and Lost Ruins. There are also three others hidden away in there for you to find by winning in Championship mode, but all of the typical stages and handling challenges that you inevitably find in a game of this nature are all present and correct, including peeling-out on tarmac, sliding on snow, fish-tailing in sand and splashing across water.



[Above] The first person view is spectacular and really takes your breath away. The feeling of being on a Superbike is uncanny.



[Above] Another fantastic level is the Great Wall, where tight turns and ramp-like jumps provide a perfect setting for doing mid-air stunts.



[Above] The West Way is set in a little back-water town out in the middle of nowhere. A good level to open up the throttle.

MOTO MADNESS

Every track lasts between two and four laps, but they're pretty long and give you a sporting chance to get to grips with all of the twists and turns. The graphics themselves are totally smooth and display no apparent slowdown or glitching, which is astonishing considering the long horizon you are given and impressive absence of pop-up.

There are tons of roadside objects and animations too. Every level has its own theme and displays the sort of vivid colours usually only seen in a Sega coin-op. *Moto Racer* has some excellent texture mapping on the bikes and riders too, but it doesn't quite match the high resolution of the graphically-accelerated PC version.

Aesthetically, however, the game is still spot on. You can almost feel the wind in your hair as hills and canyons rush by in a colourful blur. Gameplay-wise, *Moto Racer* handles beautifully, especially with the sublime Dual Analogue Controller plugged in. If you haven't bought one of these babies already, we suggest you get one. Using a traditional controller is fine, but having changed our allegiance to the newer device,

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Customer support: 01753 549442
Price: £49.99
Release date: 17 October '97

ONE PLAYER | MULTIPLE PLAYERS | DUAL ANALOGUE | MEMORY CARD

REPLAY VALUE

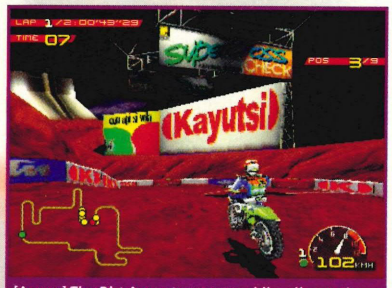
AFTER WINNING OR COMPLETING A RACE, RELIVE THE BEST MOMENTS FROM A ROVING CAMERA. THEY'RE COMPLETELY RANDOM AND COMPLIMENT ANY VICTORY.







CER



[Above] The Dirt Arena tosses your bike all over the place and it's bloody brilliant with the Dual Analog controller.

"A quick fix, mother of a racer that offers instant gratification and high-speed thrills..."

leaning into bends astride a superbike or leaping off of huge mounds of dirt on a motocross bike is so much smoother, and more importantly, fantastic fun.

Throttle

Okay, so we've got superlative graphics and precise bike handling for smooth control. There's got to be a fly in the ointment somewhere, right? Well yes, there are a few areas which could have been improved and one of these rears up in the two player mode. The speed is still there, but somehow the vertical split doesn't seem to give you the same degree of freedom that playing in the one player mode does. Yes it is great fun playing







Bonus Bonanza

Completing the game on the three different skill levels allows access to the three hidden bonus stages.



The City Level. Cut a swathe through a huge cityscape, with long winding motorway sections.



The Desert Level. Fishtail through the sand in this sprawling level.



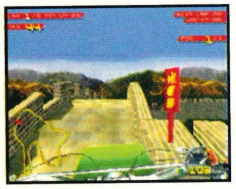
Every race game has a snowy section. Moto Racer is no different and tests your handling skills to the limit.

SAY CHEESE

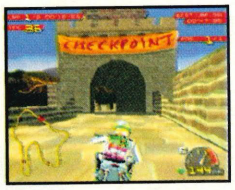
Since our preview in issue 24, two more playing perspectives have been added making a total of four. They're all fun, but by far the most enjoyable is the first person view.



Third person (far).



First person (literally on the bike)



Third person (directly behind)



Third person (behind)

against a mate, but I prefer the huge open road and massive hills to leap off that only the single player option can provide.

This becomes even more evident when you swap between one of the four different perspectives that are available. There's simply no substitute for playing in the first person view, where you can only see the bike dials and handlebars. You genuinely feel as though you're riding one of these beasts, not to mention the vomit-inducing effect it produces.

LEATHERS

We challenge anybody to play this and not come away sweaty-palmed and nauseous. Another area of concern is when you collide with other bikes, instead of knocking the riders off their ride or sending the bike into a nearby hedge, you get bounced forward in a similar fashion to the old Spectrum game *Full Throttle*.

The AI of non-player riders is excellent though. Often you can be hurtling around a bend only to find that two bikes ahead of you have collided, spilling the riders all over the road. A neat touch. We can see why EA intends to use a similar engine for its forthcoming title, *Road Rash 3-D*, because *Moto Racer* feels so damn good to play.

With regard to lastability, you could argue that the game does suffer as it's an arcade racer at heart, but that never stopped people feeding quid coins into such arcade classics as *Super Hang On* all those years ago. No, slight niggles aside, *Moto Racer* gets my vote any day of the week. A quick fix, mother of a racer that offers instant gratification and high-speed thrills.



[Above] Head out on the highway on the Rock Forest level. The horizon is extremely long in Moto Racer and there's no real pop-up.





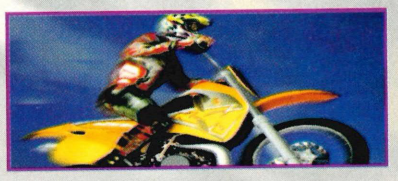
[Above] This looks more like a section of the M23 heading north for London from Brighton.



[Above] The two player mode is great fun and the speed of the game doesn't abate to a noticeable level.



[Above] Tear up the dirt in the Lost Ruins. The tracks are narrower here, so real skill is needed to win.





[Above] You ride Motocross bikes and Superbikes. Here you're topping the enormous mounds of the dirt Arena.



[Above] Take on seven other opponents in the Championship mode. There are three difficulty levels to test your mettle.



PLAY

Looks	8
Sounds	8
Gameplay	9
Value	8
Pistons	9

PLAYED 86%

A seat-of-the-pants roller coaster ride.

ALTERNATIVELY:
International Moto X (77%)
Road Rash (75%)

FANTASTIC FOUR

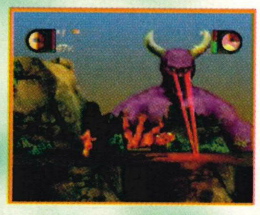
BEARING IN MIND THAT THERE HAS YET TO BE A HALF DECENT MARVEL LICENCE ON THE PLAYSTATION, WHAT ARE THE CHANCES OF THIS BEING ANY DIFFERENT?

Written By Ryan Butt

Those cheeky chaps at Acclaim! Not only have they released another scrolling beat-'em-up in the hope that we wouldn't notice, but it just so happens to be a half decent one! We'd be lying if I didn't snigger slyly to ourselves upon getting our hands on this, eager to laugh mercilessly at its crudeness and give it a proper slating. Imagine the dismay when the game was booted up and it turned out to be not that bad.

The early cynicism for this game was founded on the fact that when it was showcased at the E3 show in Atlanta, everybody was more content with playing the *Super Sprint* style loading game rather than the main one. A bad sign.

In *Fantastic Four*, a token villain going by the name of Dr Doom is attempting to construct a time machine which will enable him to rule all worlds in every time line. However, to make this time machine requires many rare components, and Doom's plan is that the Fantastic Four can be manipulated into getting these bits for him, hopefully destroying themselves in the process. In other words, the bunch of heroes (all of whom can be controlled ny four players simultaneously) must walk through five scrolling levels full of repetitive aliens and apes before taking him on and promptly booting him off of the planet.



PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Acclaim
Supplier: The Video Game Centre (01202 527314)
Price: £34.99
Release date: Out now

ONE PLAYER MULTIPLE PLAYERS

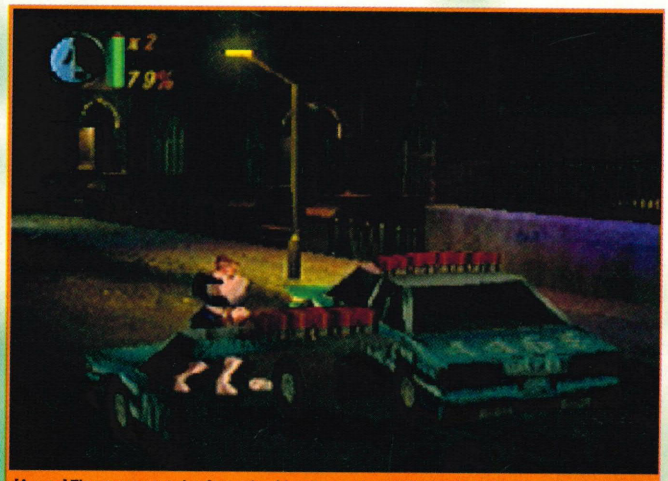
"You'll get bored of this quicker than a Tamagotchi..."

A GRAND SCALE

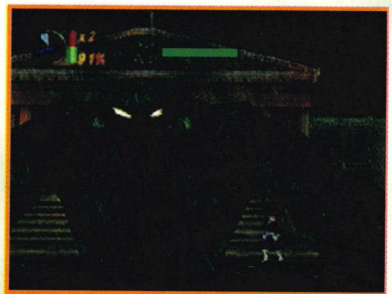
The game opens with a very cheesy FMV intro, but gets better once the action starts. It is then that you're treated to some lovely scaling effects and interesting morphing techniques and the real battle. Each character has several methods of kicking people's heads in, as well as an amusing form of defence (Mr Fantastic is especially cringeworthy as he transforms into a fridge!), and with these, as well as certain inanimate objects you can hurl, you must overcome the hordes that lie in your path.

We know that this is nothing too special, and let's face it, you'll get bored of this quicker than a Tamagotchi! *Fantastic Four* is lacking in anything even vaguely original, and looks dire at times – especially the glitches that occur on stationary cars when you move around them. Even if you're a Marvel fan, this is no fitting tribute to the well-known characters. Just plain old boring fighting action that ages badly.



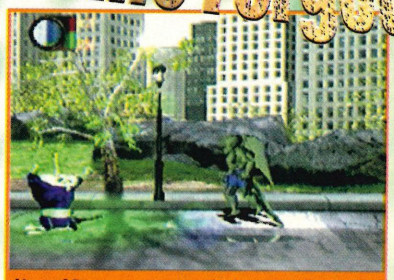


[ABOVE] The appearance is often ruined by the way in which objects in the foreground disappear when you're in the background. Most annoying.



[ABOVE] You'll meet this huge monster at the end of level one. It tends to throw temper tantrums and punch the ground, so make sure you're not stood nearby when it does.

The GAMES that Time Forgot



[ABOVE] Prove your worth and take on this fiendish demon geezer. The chances are though, like us, you'll not be able to get near him for fireballs.



PLAY

LOOKS	7
SOUNDS	6
GAMEPLAY	5
VALUE	5
LEOTARDS	8

PLAYED 69%

Hardly fantastic, but playable.

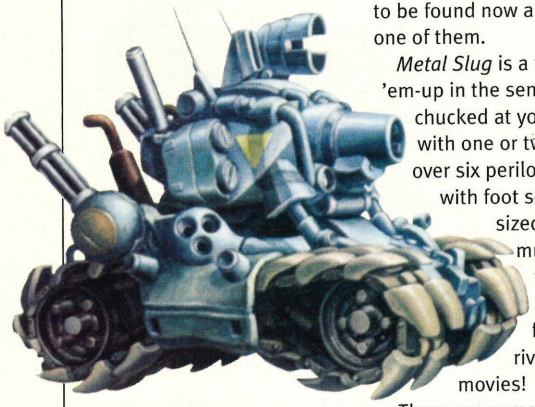
ALTERNATIVELY:
FIGHTING FORCE (OCT '97)
TOBAL NO 1 (94%)

SUPER VEHICLE-001 METAL SLUG

A STRAIGHT CONVERSION OF THE HIGHLY ENTERTAINING NEO-GEO BLAST-'EM-UP, SO WHAT THE HELL IS IT DOING ON THE PLAYSTATION?

Written By Ryan Butt

The Neo-Geo, what was it good for? Fighting games of the 2-D variety? Making suckers part with hundreds of bucks? Indeed it was second to none in both of these departments, but despite the high prices and distinct lack of original software, the odd good game was to be found now and again... and this was one of them.

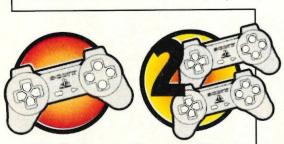


Metal Slug is a frantic scrolling shoot-'em-up in the sense that whatever can be chucked at you, is. It can be played with one or two players and is set over six perilous terrain's infested with foot soldiers and obscenely-sized battle vehicles. These must be hit several thousand times before blowing up amidst fancy pyrotechnics to rival even the *Die Hard* movies!

There are numerous pick-ups to collect along the way which include sizzling new weaponry, POWs and, oddly enough, animals that boost your score. At strategic points throughout the level, your GI character can hop into the Metal Slug of the title (which is a laughable little combat tank that wouldn't look out of place in *Blake 7!*) to do even more damage to the surrounding hillsides.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: SNK
Supplier: The Video Game Centre on 01202 527314
Price: £74.99
Release date: Out now (import)



ONE PLAYER MULTIPLE PLAYERS



MEMORY CARD

MASS DESTRUCTION

What is especially good about this game is the way you can obliterate absolutely anything. You name it, it goes down in a torrent of mortar and smoke. This does have a downside though. Whenever the screen is erupting in such an explosion, it makes it increasingly difficult for the player to see what the hell is going on – and this often results in lives, not to mention decent weapons, lost.

On the Neo-Geo, *Metal Slug* was frustratingly slow due to the amount of action on-screen, but somehow, SNK has eradicated all trace of this for the PlayStation version. When you actually see it moving, it is very impressive.

However, everything pays a price, and to have the game running at a constant high speed was at the expense of having mid-level loading times, whereby the action just freezes for a few seconds while the next chunk of information is accessed. This isn't too much hassle though because elsewhere the loading times are short, and you'll often be grateful of a three second breather after a particularly hectic fight before the next death-defying charge kicks-in.

GENOCIDAL TENDENCIES

The format may be older than Frank Carson's jokes, but there's something strangely compelling



[ABOVE] Burn baby, burn! I bet these poor sods wish they'd never signed up!



[ABOVE] A whole battalion is reduced to fleshy chunks with one well-aimed shot.



[ABOVE] Use whatever means at your disposal to get through the enemy flak, including this handy mounted machine-gun.



[ABOVE] Yikes! Each mega-guardian has a stupidly-sized weapon to maim you with, all fire to predictable set routines though.

SLUG TEAM

IT'S TIME TO MEET THE GUYS WHO DISH OUT DEATH IN FREQUENT ABUNDANCE IN *METAL SLUG*... BUT WHY HAVE THEY GOT SUCH STUPID NAMES?



◀ MACHRIUS DENNIS ROSSI
NO RELATION TO THE AGEING STATUS QUO FRONTMAN, FRANCIS. DENNIS IS THE MAIN GEEZER WHO IS CONTROLLED BY PLAYER ONE.

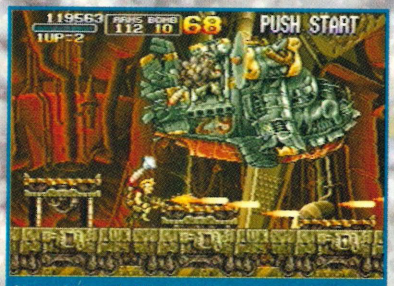
TARMICLE ROVING III ▶
HIS PARENTS MUST HAVE REALLY HATED HIM! PLAYER TWO CONTROLS TARMICLE IN THE FRANTIC SIMULTANEOUS TWO PLAYER GAME.



[Above] As you come under attack from numerous tanks on this cliff-top, shoot the ledges to send them toppling to destruction.

"The format may be older than Frank Carson's jokes..."





[Above] Big end-of-level baddies come in all kinds of strange shapes and sizes, none pose much threat though.



[Above] Yes folks, this is the mighty Metal Slug, a crappy contraption that you can hop into at various points throughout the levels.

SPLATTER BOX

With several high-powered bits of weaponry up for grabs in *Metal Slug*, let us now examine the exact effect they have on the unsuspecting foe...

Machine Gun

Belting-out bullets by the dozen every second, this weapon rips



through torsos like nobody's business.

Flame-Thrower

Turn up the heat and fry those scum-bags to a frazzle with this state-of-the-art torch.



Hmm, you can almost smell that meat cook!

Shotgun

Line them up, pull the trigger and watch the whole lot of them explode into a sticky,



mangled mess of muck! Lovely.

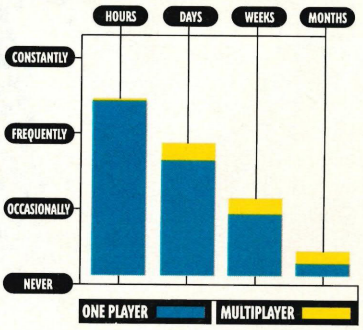
Rocket Launcher

What better way to disperse those enemy hordes than to fire a bazooka rocket up



their arse? Wham, bam, thank-you Mister!

LONG TERM PLAY...









[Above] Our trigger-happy hero demonstrates extreme measures for getting rid of unwanted punters come closing time.



Sophia Greenville

This fair maiden is the controller of the whole *Metal Slug* operation. She'll also put you through your paces in the Combat School mode.

about watching comical cartoon sprites exploding into a splatter of red goo – even more so when you pick up the shotgun, which can blow a whole battalion away in one go!

Grizzly gore aside, however fun this game may be to pick up and play in the short-term, there just isn't enough here to keep you going for very long. To make matters worse, you can start a new game on the same level in which your previous, extensive, offering of credits expired on. So you should be able to complete *Metal Slug* within an hour. Sad but true. Enjoyment is rekindled, albeit in a limited supply, due to the 'Combat School' mode in which you enlist in a special army and must complete certain tasks to better your skill.

But like we said, this is just a mere boost to an otherwise distinct shortage of a game.





[Above] The arch-baddie, Donald "Devil Rebirth" Morden crops up now and again to deal with you personally.

PLAY

Looks	●●●●●●●○○○
Sounds	●●●●●●○○○○
Gameplay	●●●●●●●○○○
Value	●●●●○○○○○○
Pyrotechnics	●●●●●●●●●○

PLAYED 74%

Top maiming action, but not enough of it.

ALTERNATIVELY:
Project Overkill (89%)
Rapid Reload (71%)

STATION M

CHEATS ▸ TIPS ▸ LETTERS

THIS IS NOT A DRILL. YOU HAVE OFFICIALLY JUST ENTERED TIPS HEAVEN. EVERY NEW CHEAT THAT YOU COULD POSSIBLY WISH FOR IS HERE FOR YOU TO DIGEST, BUT IF YOU THINK THAT YOU KNOW BETTER, DON'T HESITATE TO SEND IN ANY JUICY HINTS OF YOUR OWN TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS. *STATION MASTER, PLAY MAGAZINE, PARAGON HOUSE, ST PETER'S ROAD, BOURNEMOUTH, DORSET, BH1 2JS*. OR E-MAIL PLAY@PARAGON.CO.UK

TIME CRISIS

CHEAT MODE:

Wait until the main screen with the three target boxes appears, then shoot the exact centre of the letter 'R' in the word 'CRISIS' and shoot twice inside the cross hairs that are next to the word 'TIME'. A cheat menu with life, credit, and shot options will appear. They may be used to enable nine lives, unlimited credits, and no reload mode.



XEVIOUS 3D/G+

FIVE CONTINUES

Highlight the '*Xevious 3D*' option. Hold L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 and rapidly tap ● at the game selection screen.

DEBUG MODE

Press ■ + ✕ + Start at the Xevious title screen. The original *Xevious* game will begin in debug mode.

BLACK SHIP

Highlight the 'Reset' option at the title screen. Hold L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 + Start. Press Start after the 'Start' is highlighted and hold all buttons until the ship transforms.

WIDE SHIP

Enable the 'Black ship' code. Return to the title screen and highlight the 'Exit' option of the configuration mode screen. Hold L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 + Start. Press Start after the 'Start' is highlighted and hold all buttons until the ship transforms.

TWISTED SHIP

If using the NegCon controller, twist it to also twist the ship.

STREET FIGHTER EX PLUS A

MINI-GAME FROM *STREET FIGHTER 2*

Highlight the 'Practice' option on the mode selection screen and press Start. Then, press ⇧, ⇧, ⇨, ⇧, ⇨, ⇧ and Start. A message will appear to confirm correct code entry. Select the 'Bonus' option under practice mode to play the bonus barrel game from *Street Fighter 2*.

CPU CONTROLLED TEAM BATTLE ROUND

Select team battle mode. Hold L2 + Select at the 'Vs Loading' screen until the match begins. The CPU will control your fighter for this round. Note: This code may only be enabled once per team battle.

VIEW HITS IN SURVIVAL MODE

Press Select at the survival result screen to display the number of hits completed.

CPU VEGA, GOUKI, AND GARUDA

Select expert mode. Highlight Vega, Gouki, or Garuda on the character selection screen and hold Start while selecting that character. The border around the character will turn from white to yellow to confirm correct code entry. Note this code may only be enabled after a specific number of points have been accumulated.





WARCRAFT 2 DARK PORTAL LEVELS PASSWORDS

Human DP 1	
Alleria's Journey	LLRSJR
Human DP 2	
The Battle For Nethergarde	BTTLFR
Human DP 3	
Once More Into The Breach	NCMRNT
Human DP 4	
Beyond The Dark Portal	BYNDTH
Human DP 5	
The Shadows Seas	SHDWSS
Human DP 6	
The Fall Of Auchindoun	FLLFCH
Human DP 7	
Deathwing	DTHWNG
Human DP 8	
Coast Of Bones	CSTFBN
Human DP 9	
Heart Of Evil	HRTFVL
Human DP 10	
The Battle Of Hellfire	BTTLFH
Human DP 11	
Dance Of The Laughing Skull	DNCFTH
Human DP 12	
The Bitter Taste Of Victory	BTTRTS
Orc DP 1	
Slayer Of The Shadowmoon	SLYRFT
Orc DP 2	
The Skull Of Gul'dan	SKLLFG
Orc DP 3	
Thunderlord And Bonechewer	THNDRL
Orc DP 4	
The Rift Awakened	RFTWKN
Orc DP 5	
Dragons Of Blackrock Spire	DRGNSF
Orc DP 6	
New Stormwind	NWSTRM
Orc DP 7	
The Seas Of Azeroth	SSFZRT
Orc DP 8	
Assault On Kul Tiras	SSLTNK
Orc DP 9	
The Tomb Of Sargeras	DPTMBF
Orc DP 10	
Alterac	LTRC
Orc DP 11	
The Eye Of Dalaran	YFDLRN
Orc DP 12	
The Dark Portal	DPDRKP



ASTER

DYNASTY WARRIORS

Note: This game is also titled *Sangoku Musou*

Fight as Zhuge Liang

Finish the game with Guan Yu, Zhang Fei and Zhao Yun.

Fight as Cao Cao

Finish the game with all characters except Guan Yu, Zhang Fei, and Zhao Yun.

Fight as Lu Bu

Finish the game with Zhuge Liang and Cao Cao.

Fight as Toukichi

Enable Zhuge Liang, Cao Cao, and Lu Bu. Quickly press ⇩, ⇩, ⇨, ⇧, ●, ▲, R1, R2 at the title screen in the US version of the game.

Fight as Nobunaga

Enable Lu Bu. Quickly press ■, ⇧, ▲, ⇩, ● at the title screen. A sound will confirm correct code entry. Nobunaga is located to the right of Shun Shang Xiang. For the Japanese version of the game, quickly press ■, ⇧, ▲, ⇩, ✕ at the title screen. Choose this character by pressing L1 or R1 at the character select screen. He has basically the same attacks as Lu Bu.

Fight as Sun Shang Xiang

Quickly press Left (twice), ⇧, ⇩, ▲, ■, L1, R1, on the one player battle screen. The sound of a sword will confirm correct code entry. Choose this character (a girl), by pressing L1 or L2 on the character select screen.



WCW VS THE WORLD

Eight secret wrestlers

Meet the following conditions to make the corresponding wrestler selectable:

The Giant (Andre The Giant)
Complete all of the leagues with a Heavyweight wrestler. A new "Super Heavy" league will appear. Complete this league and defeat The Giant.

Jaguar (Tiger Mask)
Complete all of the leagues with a Lightweight/Junior weight wrestler. A new "Super Junior" league will appear. Complete this league and defeat Tiger Mask.

Jeff Jarrett
Complete the WCW league with any wrestler.

Grizz Lee (Bruiser Brody)
Complete the Independent Union Wrestling league with any wrestler.

Le Mascarade (Mil Mascaras)
Complete the Samurai Wrestling Federation with any wrestler.



Major Tom (Terry Funk)
Complete the Empire Wrestling Federation with any wrestler.

Steel Talon (Antonio Anoki)
Complete the Neo-Strong Wrestling league with any wrestler.

Shanghai (Karl Gotch)
Complete the Dead or Alive league with any wrestler.

Alternate wrestlers

Highlight Hulk Hogan, Sting, or Masahiro Chino at the character selection screen and press Start instead of ✕ to play their old versions.

PLAY Q&A

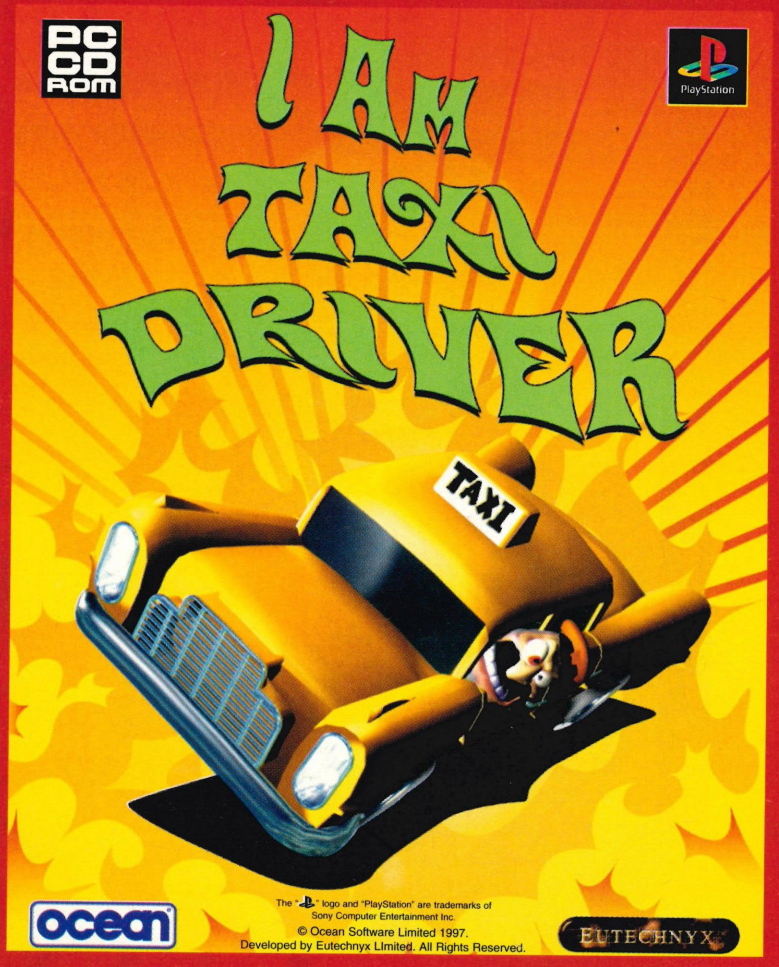
Are you stuck-fast in the middle of a game? Why not contact us at the following address: *Q&A, Play Magazine, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 2JS.*

Dear PLAY,
Help! I'm a 50 year-old PlayStation addict, and I'm stuck on *Rayman*. I've got some cheats but they don't work. Is there something wrong with my CD?
Cliff Wagsaff, Leicester

This 'All levels and Abilities' password should help you on your way, Cliff. Simply go to the Password screen and enter the following: FJSJ!C620P.

Dear PLAY,
I have recently bought *Machine Hunter*. However, I'm stuck on level 2 (Mines). I've planted the dynamite, but I can never escape in time. If you've got any passwords, it would be a great help to me.
PS Please print this as my friend bet me a fiver you wouldn't.
C. Utting, Stoke Holy Cross

Enter these cheats in the password screen for a number of effects. For unlimited continues, enter URANUS – now you won't have to start from the beginning again. For one hit kills, enter: GRIMREAPER – a single shot kills all types of baddies. Finally, for the demo droids, enter: DEMODROID. Do we get a fiver too?



AIR COMBAT 2

THIS TOP-NOTCH SEQUEL IS BRIMMING WITH ALL THE USUAL NAMCO TRAITS – EXTRA AIRCRAFT, HIDDEN MISSIONS, SECRET ELEMENTS. HERE WE REVEAL THEM ALL!

MISSION OBJECTIVES & REWARDS

There are 28 standard missions in *Air Combat 2*. However, you can't fly them all in sequence because you access some by taking a different route through the game. Here is a brief account of what they all are...

MISSION 1 – INTERCEPTION OF INVASION UNIT

Code name: Gambit
Reward: 20,000 credits
Targets: 4
Planes: X-29 or KF-C7
Medals: None

MISSION 2 – PURSUIT OF RECONNAISSANCE UNIT

Code name: Easy money
Reward: 18,000
Targets: 5
Planes: A-6
Medals: Superfly

MISSION 3 – SURPRISE ATTACK ON THE SUPPLY BAY

Code name: City on fire
Reward: 25,000
Targets: 1
Planes: F-16
Medals: None

MISSION 4 – ATTACK ON THE FRONT BASE

Code name: Tin castle
Reward: 35,000
Targets: 2
Planes: X-29
Medals: Ricochet

MISSION 5 – DESTRUCTION OF THE OFFSHORE OIL FIELD

Code name: Opera house
Reward: 25,000
Targets: 9
Planes: SF-35
Medals: D Cowboy

MISSION 6 – THE BREAKTHROUGH AT THE RAVINE BASE

Code name: Greased lightning
Reward: 25,000
Targets: 1
Planes: A-10
Medals: None

MISSION 7 – NIGHT-TIME PURSUIT PLANE

Code name: Midnight assassin
Reward: 30,000
Targets: 5
Planes: MiG-29
Medals: Razorback

MISSION 8 – ATTACK ON THE MINE

Code name: Bear tracks
Reward: 25,000
Targets: 6
Planes: MiG-29
Medals: Razorback

MISSION 9 – ESCORTING OUR ATTACK OPERATION

Code name: Sledge hammer
Reward: 30,000
Targets: 8
Planes: None
Medals: ZOE Captain

MISSION 10 – HIGH ALTITUDE CHASE

Code name: Rising high
Reward: 30,000
Targets: 4
Planes: TND-F3 or F-14
Medals: None

MISSION 11 – TAKING OVER THE ENEMY ARMS PRODUCTION SITE

Code name: Swordsmith
Reward: 40,000
Targets: 1 (but you're not allowed to hit it!)
Planes: F-117A
Medals: Tallman & Metal Sphere

MISSION 12 – DESTROYING THE ENEMY'S PROTOTYPE BOMBER

Code name: Toy box
Reward: 30,000
Targets: 5
Planes: MiG-31 or R-Mo1
Medals: Stalker

MISSION 13 – ASSAULT OF THE MOBILE FLEET

Code name: Seagull
Reward: 35,000
Targets: 5
Planes: SF-39 or EF-2000
Medals: ZOE Major

MISSION 14 – BREAKING INTO THE ENEMY SUBMARINE BASE

Code name: One night stand
Reward: 40,000
Targets: 1
Planes: EF-2000 or F/A-18E
Medals: None

MISSION 15 – TAKING OVER THE HYDRAULIC POWER PLANT

Code name: Powerplay
Reward: 32,000
Targets: 1
Planes: SU-35 or F-15S
Medals: ZOE Colonel

MISSION 16 – DESTRUCTION OF THE ENEMY MISSILE SILO BASE

Code name: El Dorado
Reward: 40,000
Targets: 7
Planes: YF-23A
Medals: Max & Goose

MISSION 17 – PURSUIT ON THE ENEMY'S TRANSPORT PLANE UNIT

Code name: Darkstar
Reward: 22,000
Targets: 9
Planes: YF-23A
Medals: Deathrave 2000

MISSION 18 – ESCORTING THE BREAKTHROUGH CHANNEL OPERATOR

Code name: St Elmo's Fire
Reward: 28,000
Targets: 6
Planes: XFA-27 or F-22
Medals: DAO, JIAN, XIAO

MISSION 19 – LOW ALTITUDE SURPRISE ATTACK OPERATION

Code name: Dead end
Reward: 35,000
Targets: 5
Planes: XFA-27
Medals: Fox Force Four

MISSION 20 – BREAKING INTO THE GEOTHERMAL PLANT BASE

Code name: Visiting hours
Reward: 55,000
Targets: 1
Planes: None
Medals: None

MISSION 21 – ATTACK ON THE ENEMY'S ASSEMBLED FLEET

Code name: Juggernaut
Reward: 38,000
Targets: 6
Planes: None
Medals: None

HIDDEN EXTRAS

MUSIC PLAYER

IF YOU COMPLETE THE GAME WITH A RANK HIGHER THAN THAT OF FIRST LIEUTENANT, A NEW FEATURE WILL APPEAR INSIDE THE OPTIONS MENU CALLED 'MUSIC PLAYER'. IT IS HERE THAT YOU CAN CHOOSE TO SAMPLE ANY OF THE 28 TRACKS INCLUDED IN THE GAME.

MISSION SELECT

IF YOU FIND THE SECRET GAME ENDING BY COMPLETING THE KINGPIN MISSION, A NEW OPTION WILL APPEAR WHEN YOU NEXT SELECT THE 'START GAME' OPTION. INSTEAD OF JUST PRESENTING YOU WITH THE 'NEW GAME' OR 'LOAD GAME' OPTIONS, THERE WILL ALSO BE 'FREE MISSION' WHICH WILL ALLOW YOU TO PLAY AND PRACTICE ANY OF THE MISSIONS.

LOCK REPLAY VIEW

IF YOU PRESS AND HOLD THE ■ BUTTON DURING A REPLAY, THAT PARTICULAR CAMERA ANGLE WILL BE LOCKED AND REPEATED AS MANY TIMES AS YOU LIKE.

ALTERNATE MISSION MAP VIEW

HIGHLIGHT THE 'MISSION' OPTION ON THE MISSION SELECTION SCREEN, THEN PRESS SELECT. BY DOING THIS, THE MAP VIEW WILL SWITCH BETWEEN THREE DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES.

MODEL DISPLAY

BY COMPLETING THE GAME WITH A RANKING OF GENERAL, YOU'LL OPEN UP THIS NEW FEATURE ON THE OPTIONS SCREEN. BASICALLY, IT ALLOWS YOU TO VIEW EVERY SINGLE AIRCRAFT IN THE GAME BY BRINGING UP A PICTURE AND LETTING YOU ZOOM IN AND ROTATE IT AROUND. IT EVEN TELLS YOU IF IT IS AN ENEMY OR ALLIED CRAFT – WHICH MAKES IT EASIER FOR YOU TO TELL IF YOU'VE FOUND EVERY SINGLE FLYABLE PLANE IN THE GAME (THERE ARE 24 IN TOTAL!).

PLANES, PLANES AND MORE PLANES

Like in the first *Air Combat* game, you start off with a couple of bog-standard aircraft to fight through the earlier missions, then more become available to buy as you go on. There are 23 in total, and we've got them all. Most planes are gifted in certain areas that may be useful for certain missions (eg the X-29 is good for the high altitude chase because it has good climbing ability and can handle high altitudes without stalling), although some are just utter tripe. The best planes come much later in game and usually have stealth qualities that make them essential for later missions.







































Mission 22 – Rescue operation of the downed plane

Code name: Cavalry
Reward: 50,000
Targets: 14
Planes: None
Medals: None

Mission 23 – Destroying the coast radar facility

Code name: Sentinel
Reward: 43,000
Targets: 12
Planes: None
Medals: None

Mission 24 – Breaking through the enemy's last defence line

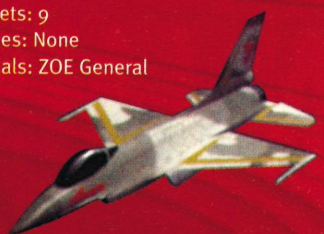
Code name: Final countdown
Reward: 45,000
Targets: 10
Planes: None
Medals: None

Mission 25 – Attack on the enemy-controlled city

Code name: Jewel box
Reward: 50,000
Targets: 6
Planes: None
Medals: None

Mission 26 – Attack on the enemy's headquarters

Code name: Kingpin
Reward: 80,000
Targets: 9
Planes: None
Medals: ZOE General



Mission 27 – Pursuit of giant submarine

Code name: Last resort
Reward: 90,000
Targets: 1
Planes: None
Medals: None

Mission 28 – Attack on the enemy's headquarters

Code name: Fighter's honour
Reward: 100,000
Targets: 3
Planes: None
Medals: ZOE Commander

Secret Missions

Upon accessing the Free Mission mode, if you play through the familiar missions again and complete them all on Easy, Normal and Hard modes, you'll be rewarded by two bonus missions that aren't in the normal game. These two can only be accessed in the Free Mission mode, so enjoy!

Bonus Mission – Interrupt the enemy's supply operation

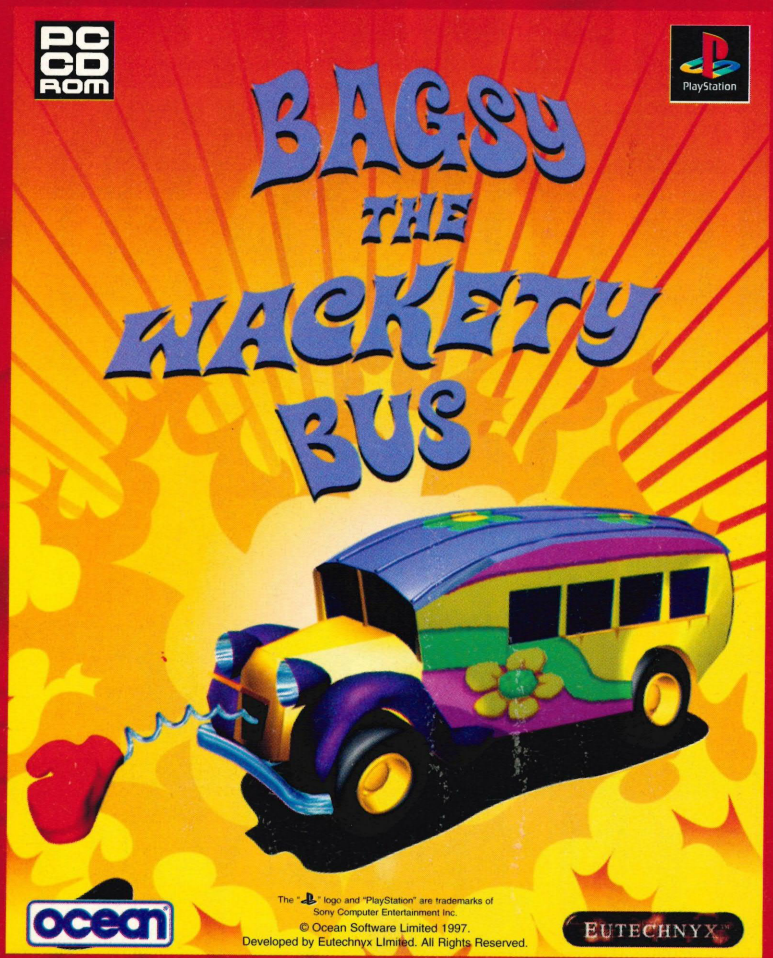
Code name: Cuckoo's nest
Reward: None
Targets: 20
Planes: None
Medals: None

You have to intercept and destroy the enemy ammo supplies that are being dropped to the ground bases via parachute. You have to take them all out with guns whilst fending off enemy planes. Please note that the amount of crates you have to shoot down depends on what difficulty setting you play the mission on.

Bonus Mission – Attack the enemy's elementary particle lab

Code name: Electric dreams
Reward: None
Targets: 1
Planes: None
Medals: None

Under heavy missile attacks, you must storm the enemy particle lab and take out the many surrounding targets. There are various air-to-air encounters to contend with, but this is pretty straightforward stuff.



THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO ALL THE *AIR COMBAT 2* MISSIONS, INCLUDING THE SECR

THE PLAY TOP GUN MISS



MIG-29

ATTACK ON THE MINE
BEAR TRACKS

SF-35

DESTRUCTION OF OIL FIELD
OPERA HOUSE

ATTACK ON SUPPLY BAY
CITY ON FIRE

F-16

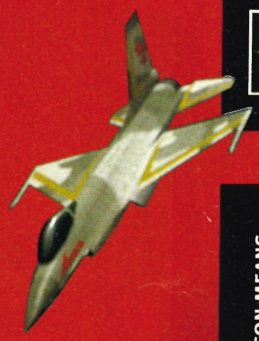
PURSUIT OF RECONNAISSANCE
EASY MONEY

A-6

INTERCEPTION OF INVASION UNIT
GAMBIT

X-29

KF-C7



MEDALS ARE REWARDED FOR SHOOTING DOWN CERTAIN PLANES. THESE MEDALS ARE PICTURED NEXT TO THE MISSION ON WHICH YOU COULD EARN THEM.

THIS ICON MEANS THAT YOU HAVE TO LAND THE PLANE AFTER THE MISSION.

F-14

HIGH ALTITUDE CHASE
RISING HIGH

ESCORT ATTACK OPERATION
SLEDGE HAMMER

NIGHT-TIME PURSUIT PLANE
MIDNIGHT ASSASSIN

A-10

BREAKTHROUGH AT RAVINE BASE
GREASED LIGHTNING

ATTACK ON FRONT BASE
TIN CASTLE

TND-F3

MiG-29

SU-25

X-29

ETS, MEDALS AND EXTRA AIRCRAFT!

ON CHART

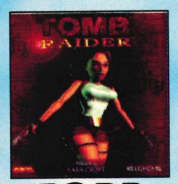


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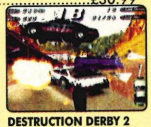


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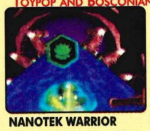


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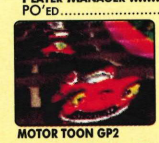


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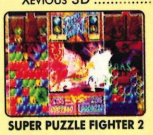


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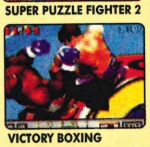
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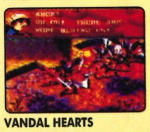
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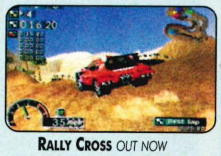
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BUBSY 3D.....15TH AUGUST
CASTLEVANIA.....OCTOBER
CLAYFIGHTER EXTREME.....4TH SEPTEMBER
CONQUEST EARTH.....SEPTEMBER
DEATHTRAP DUNGEON.....NOVEMBER
FANTASTIC 4.....5TH AUGUST
FIGHTING FORCE.....SEPTEMBER
HARD BOILED.....15TH AUGUST
HERC'S ADVENTURE.....AUGUST
KILLING TIME.....AUGUST
LETHAL ENFORCERS 1 & 2.....AUGUST
LOST WORLD.....SEPTEMBER
MAGIC THE GATHERING.....AUGUST
ODDWORLD.....18TH SEPTEMBER
QUEST FOR FAME.....AUGUST
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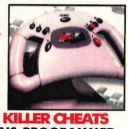


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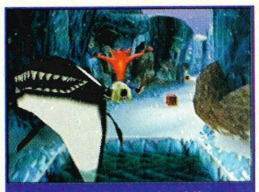
MARSUPIAL

CRASH BANDICOOT 2: CORTEX STRIKES BACK

Crash was a smash

in '96. The little Australian marsupial stormed the charts, sold by the bucket-load, and from a technical point of view, impressed the pants off most people. The gameplay was a tad linear, in that your path was pretty much predetermined, but the dazzling colours and snazzy special effects more than made up for any restrictive gameplay shortcomings. Crash was here to stay and was instantly heralded as the PlayStation's official mascot. It's little wonder that exactly a year later Sony is preparing to woo gamers with a second installment of riotous rodent tomfoolery in what looks to be another sure-fire winner.





[Above] Leap huge gaps riding a runaway polar bear, dodging killer whales in this snowy setting.

Bang!

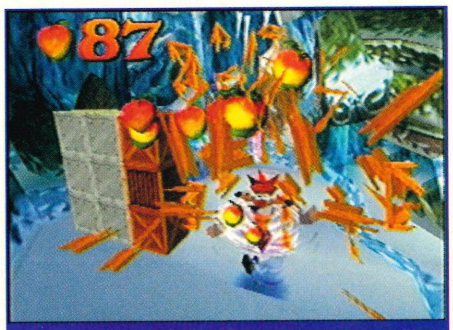
In the unlikely event that you've never played or seen the original game (shame on you), it was essentially a revolutionary 3-D action platformer that mixed running into and out of the screen with the more traditional sideways-on scrolling platform action.

This time around Sony is trying to take a similar formula to all new heights with a number of enhancements, which Sony hopes will enhance nearly every aspect of the gaming experience. Having played the extensive demo for a fair few hours, you can see why Sony is so optimistic – the game looks superlative and more importantly, plays better than the first game already.

The most noticeable improvement is in the control. Not only does Crash respond a lot quicker than he did before, but you'll now be



[Above] Activate the infamous 'bandicoot spin' to break open crates and kill enemies. Mastering this will set you well on the way to negotiating the harder levels.



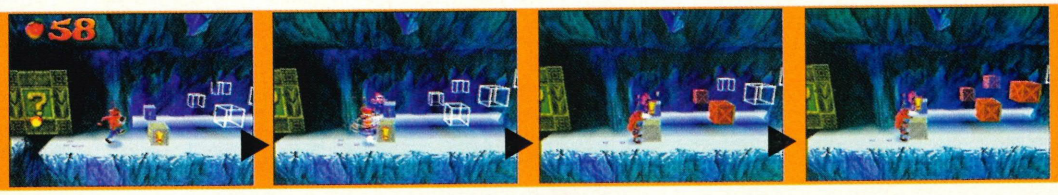
[Above] Crash enjoys nothing more than causing havoc with his excellent spinning manoeuvre.



[Above] You're on thin ice here as Crash attempts to skate around and break the crates.

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Crash Bandicoot 2: Cortex Strikes Back
Publisher: Sony
% Complete: 80%
Release Date: December '97



Crash will come across heaps of mystery or action boxes to smash open. This particular box turns the transparent boxes into solid breakables that are full of goodies to collect.





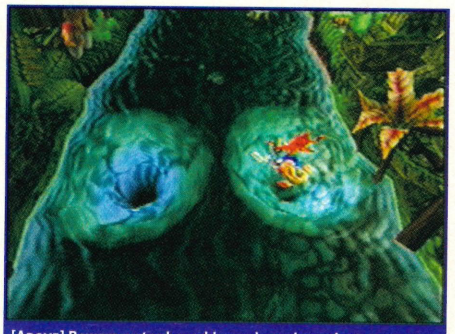
[Above] Take a leap of faith to the juicy bonuses below and hopefully a save point, which incidentally will be more frequent this time.



[Above] At the end of this pier you get to ride on a jetski, which is great fun and you can even use the jumps throughout the level to collect aerial bonuses.



[Above] As with the original, there are plenty of the more traditional sideways scrolling sections too.



[Above] Beware water-bound hazards such as giant whirlpools. Oops!









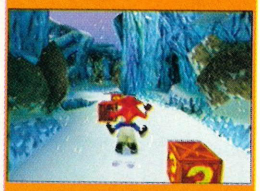


RIDE A WHITE BEAR

SONY IS ATTEMPTING TO ADD SPICE TO A SIMILAR THEME WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF VARIOUS NEW FORMS OF TRANSPORT. BELOW ARE A SELECTION THAT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO TRY OUT.



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JETPACK. PERHAPS THE TRICKIEST OF ALL THE NEW GADGETS, BUT FUN NONETHELESS.

able to use one of those swanky new Dual Analog pads if you're feeling smug.

Expect another humourous storyline to set the scene once more and some even lusher environments to cavort in. This time around there will also be multiple camera perspectives to ensure that you see the whole playing area at all times. The high resolution non-player-characters look even more impressive too; boasting some beautiful animation sequences. Look out for some familiar face such as the infamous Dr Neo Cortex, plus the introduction of new characters including N Gin, Kimodo Mow, Joe and Crash's little sister.



WALLOP!

Fans who are familiar with Crash's antics should get plenty out of the sequel thanks to a number of new moves and gadgets to play around with, including sliding, swinging, flying, jet skiing and bear-riding! The levels that we've seen are awash with vibrant colours and frantic action, which constantly keep you on your toes throughout the well-designed levels. You will also be able to manoeuvre in and around the fully animated worlds, taking on new hidden levels, sub-levels and other secret paths.

Crash 2 is twice the size of the original and immerses players into a series of warp rooms or 'centralised rooms', consisting of multiple areas which allow you to choose from five or six levels at a time, thus providing a more mobile, non-linear path through the game.

We still have our reservations about exactly how much freedom your character has, as you are still strapped to a pre-defined path, but somehow it feels much tighter to play in its new form. The final version should be hitting the streets around December, so no prizes for guessing who'll give you the definitive review in a couple of month's time.



PSYCHEDELIC PANDEMONIUM 2

Blindingly surreal





PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Pandemonium 2
Publisher: BMG Interactive
% Complete: 80%
Release Date: October '97

and more obscure than you could possibly imagine. Without making too much reference to a certain mind-altering drug, *Pandemonium 2* is er, 'off its head.' If you thought the first foray into the bizarre world of Nikki and Fargus was trippy, you're in for an even more wacky experience second time around.

Pandemonium 2 is essentially a platform game, where you'll now be able to shoot, climb, swing and grab edges to pull yourself up. As in the original there will be a dynamic 'Freestyle' camera which still controls the view at all times, but pans in spectacular fashion around the player.

If you've played the first game, you'll be familiar with the control system and overall look of the graphics. Crystal Dynamics has stuck to the same formula, but for the sequel it is hoping to offer the player increased longevity by making them return to certain points in each level, along with a number of new additions.

CHAOS

Real-time lighting effects, terrain morphing animations, multiple animated background elements, multi-layered transparencies, and gouraud shading are already giving the backgrounds a dramatic and dizzying feel, and it runs extremely smoothly. Besides the new mechanics for deeper gameplay, there will be new attacks for each character. The Sid-throwing 'Siderang' attack, the 'flaming Fargas' fire attack and Nikki will utilise the double-jump again as well as a new crop of magic projectiles.

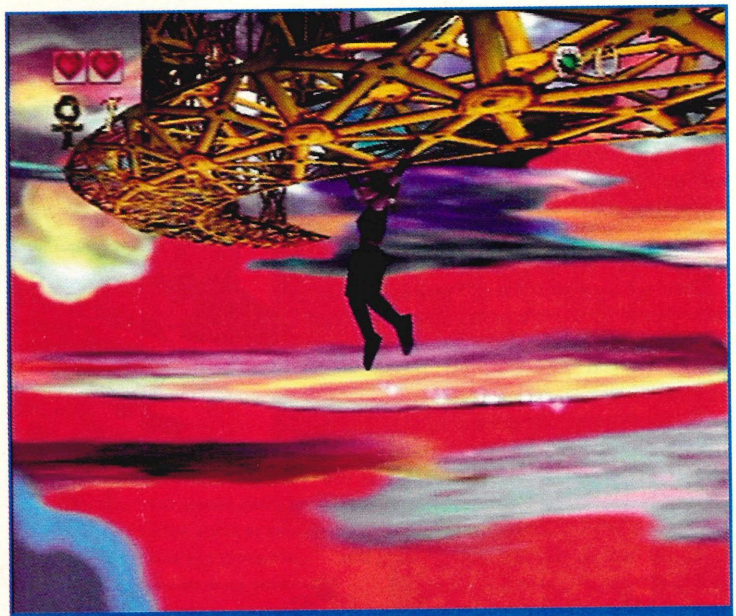
All together, *Pandemonium 2* will contain 14 convoluted, roller-coaster levels, four bosses and a special flying level, with plenty of hidden bonus areas and secrets to discover along the way. Although extremely similar to the original, there appears to be enough gameplay enhancements to satisfy fans who want more of the same and newcomers looking for an unusual platform challenge. We'll bring you the full authoritative review soon.



[ABOVE] The dynamic camera returns in the sequel giving you the best view at all times. Like *Pandemonium*, the game scrolls around you while you press left or right.







[ABOVE] Among a host of new moves is the swing, which comes in handy to reach new areas.



[ABOVE] Huge bosses bound effortlessly around the screen, like this big Cod creature.

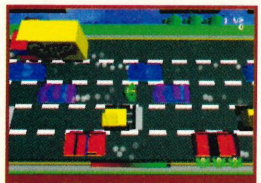
PANDEMONIUM 2

HOPPIN' FROGGER

Frogger's back

and he's in 3-D! The diminutive croaker and Eighties icon from the era of shoddy graphics but fiendishly addictive gameplay has emerged from a 16-year hibernation, and he's looking hot to hop with some all-new moves and the kind of graphical polish that's bound to thrill the punters second time round.

Look out for new Frogger features such as a Power Croak, Super Jump and Heat Seeking Tongue. Let's hope they've not weighed him down with too many add-ons and left room for him to 'hop' too! Players who like multi-player action won't be disappointed by the sensible inclusion of a four player quad split screen option, but the game is thankfully set to remain true to the addictive original, albeit with sophisticated 3-D graphics. As we write, there should be in excess of 40 levels set across nine unique play environments.



[Above] There's even the original version thrown in for good measure. It still plays as well today as it ever did.







RIBBIT

As players leap into the congested 3-D computer world that Frogger inhabits, they must guide the slimy green amphibian to safety past various potentially lethal encounters. These include multiple lanes of busy traffic, a treacherous river filled with moving logs, swimming turtles and ravenous alligators, a desert wilderness filled with herds of buffalo, rattlesnakes and falling boulders among others. Additionally, the old music's been retained, but spiced-up for the PlayStation – you may even remember the tunes if you're over 25!

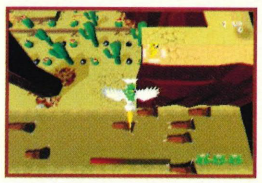


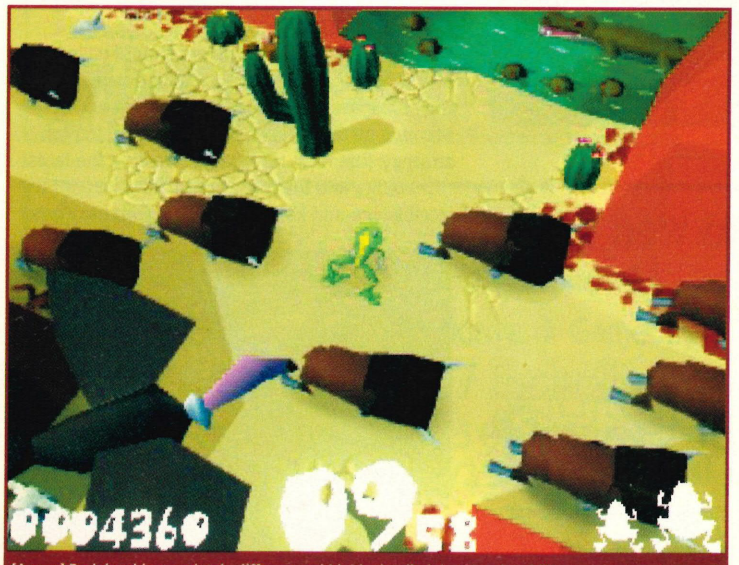
[Above] One of Frogger's new moves is the heat-seeking tongue. It homes in on flies to gain bonuses.



[Above] The graphics have been completely rehashed for Frogger's return. Where's he been for the past 16 years?

The best option has to be the multi-player mode, and here you'll be able to try to beat your opponents on the time clock and gain power-ups as you race simultaneously through specially designed world maps in split screen. It's great to see the little fella back in action. Check out the review next month!





[Above] Each level is completely different and highly detailed, but the playability remains true to the first game.

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Frogger
Publisher: Hasbro Interactive
% Complete: 90%
Release Date: November '97

NIPPY

FORMULA KARTS SPECIAL EDITION







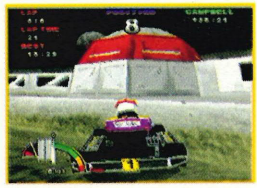
Ah! Spain'88– two weeks of vulgar self-indulgence and some seriously memorable karting sessions. But that's enough of my holidays. Go-karts don't quite live up to the glamour of F1, mastering the handling of these diminutive demon racers is excellent fun, and thanks to Telstar, we'll be pulling the rip-offs from our helmets and hanging on for dear life come early November. Expect some frantic kart racing action as you're invited to plonk yourself inside one of these motorised sleds, and although you won't top 70 mph, the exhilaration as you sit only a few inches above the ground should give the player a genuine karting experience.

Formula Karts is a full 3-D racing game that features polygon tracks and karts with 'motion-sampled animated drivers', alleged realistic handling and nine tracks (plus an extra hidden lunar track) to put players through their paces. Special attention has been given to the AI, so hopefully there'll be moments in each race where opponents display unpredictable driving behaviour, ie smashing into other karts as opposed to you.



[Above] You'll have eight unique teams to choose from.





Screeeeech!

The good news is other drivers should have their own driving style, capabilities and desires. As in the real sport, each lap lasts for about 20 seconds on average, so there's no time to plan strategy, just race, race, race! Boasting the latest technology and the most advanced driver intelligence and kart physics too, *Formula Karts Special Edition* certainly looks like it could be a welcome change to the predictable racing themes of late. And with a two player split screen option thrown in, there should be added long term interest.

Add to this a wide variety of road surfaces, each with different characteristics with a hat-full of different modes, including Championship, Practice, Single Race and Arcade, and you can see why we're already revving our engines in anticipation of whiling-away some gas-guzzling hours on the track.



[Above] Bridges and detailed backgrounds hurtle past you, but you'll hardly notice as you whizz by.





[Above] Choose from a number of camera angles and feel really sick in the cockpit view!



[Above] Play at night besides the usual day-time races. *Formula Karts* will have comprehensive options.

PLAY Information

Name: Formula Karts Special Edition
Publisher: Telstar
% Complete: 90%
Release Date: 6 November '97

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SCURVY OVERBOARD!

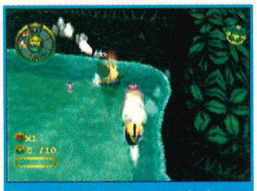


Avast ye scurvy

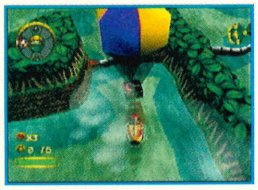
land lubbers! It's time to take to the high seas with Psygnosis in its exquisitely cute-looking arcade puzzler. Initial impressions of the game are rather misleading, because if you didn't know better, you could be fooled into thinking that *Overboard!* is a strategy-based trading game.

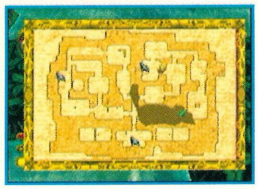
Not so. By all accounts and having played a beta version of the game, gameplay is strictly arcade based, with a few puzzle elements chucked in to break up the shooting and dodging. Taking control of a galleon ship you must patrol the sea in a quest to find treasure from five regions around the world. Along the way you'll take out enemy strongholds, ports and shipyards while upgrading and building specially-enhanced ships to help you.

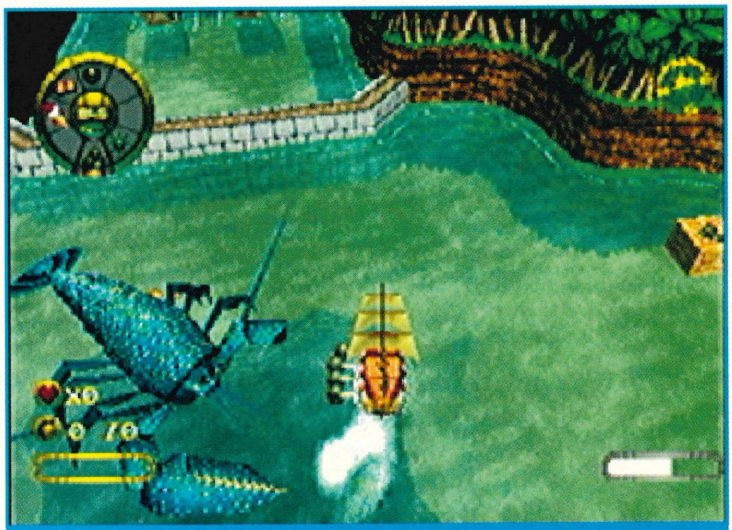
All the views of your ship are external and there are three in total: a close up (showing only the immediate surroundings), a panned-out view (giving the player a better view of obstacles and enemies nearby), and a useful overhead camera, which looks pretty groovy. The water effect is also excellent. When you sink other ships, for example, you can watch them descend into the depths, and there are some top notch explosions too.



[Above] You'll encounter rival ships throughout the game. Get in there quick and sink the buggers.







[Above] Pinch yer bum! The end-of-level Lobster is a bit of a handful on level three.

Shiver me Timbers!

The learning curve is typical in the sense that puzzles and attacks will increase steadily as you progress through the levels, and as you sail through the Caribbean, Inca world, Arctic and Middle-East, various obstacles, from huge flame-throwing outlets to airships dropping bombs, will try to destroy you and your scummy crew. The attention to detail is already superb – expect to see flaming ships as they take damage, huge pillars of smoke rising up in 3-D, volcanoes, light progression from sunrise to sunset and, of course, whopping great end-of-level bosses.

Overboard! looks not dissimilar to a water-based *Micro Machines V3*, which is no bad thing of course and up to five players will be able to compete at any one time! From the cute forced-perspective 3-D graphics to the tight turning circles and excellent control system, Psygnosis seems to have a successful, fun formula on its hands. Look out for an in-depth (ho-ho) review next issue.







[Above] Negotiate huge flame-throwers to reach bonuses and reach some of the more inaccessible areas.



[Above] Each new port or town that you encounter welcomes you with a barrage of fire. Charming!

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Overboard
Publisher: Psygnosis
% Complete: 85%
Release Date: 24 October '97

CARNAGE

AUTO DESTRUCT

Who wants to drive like a nutter and career around a city in a very fast car where you'll have total freedom of direction and a massive cache of weapons to obliterate everything in your path?

You do, then read on, because *Auto Destruct* is only at its alpha stage and already wooing hordes of spectators around the office monitors. Based in the cities of the future you fill the boots of a champion motor racing driver who has witnessed the slaughter of his family (remember *Mad Max*?) and teamed up with a mysterious organisation in an attempt to exact some kind of retribution.

Put simply, this scenario is just an excuse to destroy everything and anything, more specifically the Disciples of Lazarus who patrol the streets trying to stop you. The player races around fully interactive 3-D cities, including San Francisco, New York and Tokyo; smashing up pedestrians, buildings and other vehicles and following set missions as directed by your allies.





Crash 'n' Burn

Some of the missions will include searching the streets for an enemy car and taking it out. Picking up people and taking them to certain destinations in a given time. Even escorting and protecting potential targets from enemy vehicles. Of course, *Auto Destruct* features straight, no rules, races from one location on the map to another. The game will also incorporate a degree of strategy; encouraging you to handle resources carefully, fuelling up, ammunition and armour are all vital to attain each goal. Apparently the cities will include real traffic AI, but let's hope the developers don't model it on the taxi drivers of Istanbul!

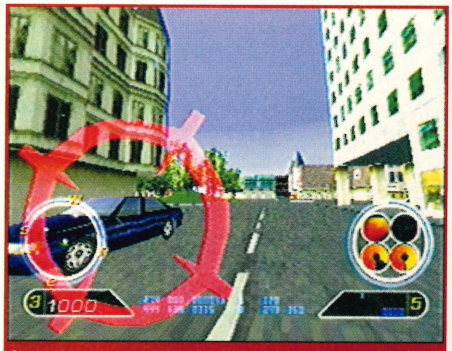
Already *Auto Destruct* is highly playable thanks to some excellent car handling and many of the weapon pick-ups are in there already. Just watching five homing missiles rip into an unlucky enemy car and sending it into the air amidst a massive explosion is totally spectacular. If EA can tidy up the graphics a little and perfect the collision detection, then we can expect a hit of mass proportions, thanks to the added depth and blast-'em-up action that *Auto Destruct* offers.



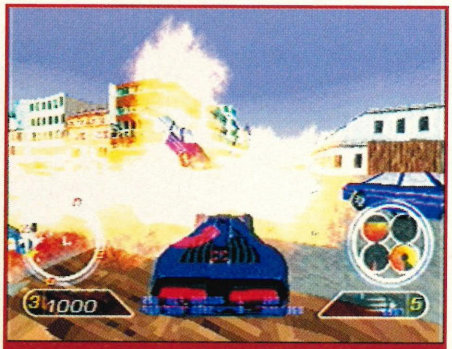
[Above] Blowing up other cars is enormously satisfying. The explosions are nothing short of mind-blowing, but very similar to the ones in *Die Hard Trilogy* and *ONE*



[Above] You can view the action from a multitude of views, including this useful overhead camera.



[Above] As enemy vehicles come into view, a huge target indicates that they're in range.



[Above] Cars get hurled into the air when you hit them with a well aimed missile.

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Auto Destruct
Publisher: EA
% Complete: 60%
Release Date: December '97

arena

views · questions · criticisms · ideas

VIEWS · QUESTIONS · CRITICISMS · IDEAS

THE MERITS OF THE N64 COME UP FOR DISCUSSION THIS MONTH. IS IT A SERIOUS RIVAL TO THE PLAYSTATION OR WILL IT ALL END IN TEARS? THERE ARE ALSO MORE OPINIONS ON CONSOLE PIRACY FLYING AROUND. TO WHAT EXTENT DOES IT REALLY HARM THE INDUSTRY? HAVE YOU EVER BROUGHT ILLEGAL COPIES OF GAMES, AND IF SO, WHY? SEND YOUR LETTERS TO: *ARENA, PLAY MAGAZINE, PARAGON HOUSE, ST PETER'S ROAD, BOURNEMOUTH, DORSET BH1 2JS. OR E-MAIL US AT: PLAY@PARAGON.CO.UK.*

ALL LETTERS ARE READ AND ONLY THE BEST AND FUNNIEST ARE PRINTED.

DEAR PLAY,

I am writing about an article you printed called "Who do you think you are kidding Mr Nintendo?" Well rest assured PLAY because Nintendo is going to be breathing down all your backs. Yet you go on to say that the "PlayStation has over 200 games on offer." Yes it has, but I think it is disastrous to flood the market. Some are utter cheese!

Quality over quantity. The Nintendo software market has seen a boost of 20% to claim 34% of territory. N64 *ISS* sold more units in the first week than PlayStation *ISS Pro* did. Compare the N64 version to the PlayStation, I won't embarrass you.

With Nintendo becoming the fastest selling console in history and titles such as *Goldeneye*, *Turok 2*, *Resident Evil* and *Blast Corps,* can you afford to ignore the figures?

Nintendo launched the Rumble Pak before the PlayStation, and with news of a price reduction on the software, what ammunition are you going to throw at it. Oh dear.

The PlayStation was launched in September '95 and has sold 14 million. The N64 was launched in March '97 and has sold six million. Not bad considering the two year difference. Don't get me wrong, I also bought a PlayStation. I waited and collected mine at 12 in the morning (27 September '95). I still own it, but I was just blown away by the power of Nintendo.

Christopher Phillips, Birmingham

Why is it disastrous to flood the market? Yes there is a lot of cheese, but everyone's taste is different. It can only be a good thing to be spoilt for choice rather than wait with baited breath for the next release, unsure of exactly when it's going to come. Be honest though, don't you feel slightly conned by Nintendo's whole approach?

The launch was less than remarkable. Games at the time were scarce. And then there was the sudden price drop to boost flagging sales – don't for one minute think it was a good will gesture. Yes *ISS64* was a fabulous game, and yes the PlayStation version was disappointing, but the fact remains that for every decent N64 title, there are at least ten PlayStation ones. So come on then... what stunners does the N64 offer that couldn't be done on PlayStation (*Goldeneye* being the obvious exception because words cannot describe how utterly brilliant it is!)? Don't even start preaching figures to us because you don't know the half of it mate, and if the system is so destined for great things, then it certainly doesn't need to be defended by the likes of you!



[Above] Christopher Phillips has gone all misty-eyed over the N64, but apart from *Goldeneye*, what has the N64 ever done for us?

DEAR PLAY,

Can you please tell me what is happening to JVC's *Wing Over* game? I was very much looking forward to its release, but it keeps being delayed for some reason. What I did read about it made it look like a very cool game. Also, when will *Air Combat 2* come out on general release, as it is rather expensive on import? Thank you for your help I very much enjoy reading your magazine, I think it's one of the best on the market.

Raymond Griffiths, Essex

***Wing Over* is finally finished and due for release any day now. Although we can't honestly see what the delay was for because it looks just the same as it always did. *Air Combat 2* will also be out very soon and is miles better.**

Dear Play,

I am wondering why you put *Tomb Raider* above *Resident Evil* in your Playback guide in the strategy/adventure games list. Everyone knows that *Resident Evil* is better! Alright, so *Tomb Raider* may run at a faster pace, but nothing beats meeting and killing your first zombie. No game can compete with the atmosphere that the storyline sets in *Resident Evil*. All my mates love *Resident Evil* and prefer it to *Tomb Raider*. Even my friend who owns a Saturn is waiting anxiously for it to come out. I couldn't play *Tomb Raider* over and over, as I got bored with it, but not *Resident Evil*. I think that *Resident Evil* deserves to go top of the adventure games list and should be second to none.
Lawrence Benson, Bristol

***Tomb Raider* is tops because in our opinion it is technically better and offers more long term appeal and intrigue than *Resident Evil*. You may have got bored with it, but thousands of happy punters are still plugging away quite happily.**

Dear Play,

I am writing to you concerning Mr, "Fan of yours from Eire", in issue 24.I I would just like to say that I think he is a real sad muppet in the first degree! I know You've probably had about 73 letters already from this area of discussion, but I just couldn't help myself!!

I don't how old Mr Eire is, but I am 25 years of age and have had every sort of computer game there is from watches, hand-helds, Spectrums, Commodore 16's and 64's and 500's and 1200's and I've not known any better than the PlayStation! I've played on the Sega Saturn but never liked or bought one!

I've had a Nintendo (the first one!) and this was great fun! The N64 is over-rated and over-priced and doesn't live up to the gameplay of the PSX. All the people that I know who had a Saturn sold it and got a PSX! The N64 will die!!

Anyway, how can this guy say that *Rage Racer* is boring? I bet there isn't a *RR* fan out there who doesn't want to get all of them cars and finish both GPs! I reckon this guy should get a life.
Jon, Hants
PS I love the magazine because your reviews are 110% accurate!

Still the great 'is *Rage Racer* in actual fact, pants' debate rolls on, and there's very little else to add except that it's all down to individual taste. We loved it, apart from the fact that the powersliding was awful, and yes, it did get a little repetitive after a while. But hey! It's a Namco racing game, and Namco knows what it is doing as far as we're concerned.

Dear Play,

First of all, I would like to congratulate you on a fine magazine. In response to Simon James, Robin Brown, and John Turner's letters, I agree to a video on Play. The free books are ace too, but write guides for older games as well. The reason I have written in is I am wondering if you will answer these questions...
1. How do you connect the Namco Guncon to the video out socket when it is used by the RF unit?
2. In issue 19 you said that the software was to be reduced to £34.99, but it is still £44.99, Why?
3. When will *Air Combat 2* and *Time Crisis* be released in the UK and for how much?
4. Can you play import games on a UK PlayStation, if so, how?
5. Finally, what is the latest news on the Dual Analogue pad, and will *Air Combat 2* Support it?
Chris Wilson, West Midlands

Glad you like the books, and we've got some real corkers on the way, rest assured. Now onto your questions...
1. Simply by using the audio to RF adaptor (see 'What's the story... ?', page 96).
2. The £34.99 price applies only to official Sony games like Ray Tracers and Rage Racer and not ones made by third party companies such as EA or Gremlin. The latter can charge what they like for their games, but many are now beginning to see the advantages.
3. Time Crisis will be out on 21 November (priced £59.99) and *Air Combat 2* will be out in October (priced £34.99).
4. You can either get your PlayStation 'chipped' to run any kind of games, or you can try the infamous 'disc swap' method, but it depends on how old your PlayStation is.
5. There's no new news really, it's out, it doesn't have the force-feedback, and yes, *Air Combat 2* does support the product.

"The N64 is over-rated and doesn't live up to the gameplay of the PSX..."



[Above] Chris Wilson will be delighted to learn that *Air Combat 2* will be on the streets in October, and it will be supporting the Duel Analogue controller. Beano!

Dear Play,

I would like to know how Mr Barrow had the cheek to compare the PSX with N64 in issue 23. OK, I can understand that some games are the same old thing time and time again, but he wrote his letter as if there are only a few games out of a hundred that are worth buying. There are plenty of games that can hold your attention, that are exciting and that can be improved upon (eg *Resident Evil, Tomb Raider, Broken Sword, Overblood*, the list goes on).

He also pointed out that if Sony doesn't buck up its ideas, PSX owners will move to the N64. He must be a fool to go out and pay £150 for the console, and then pay double the money on software for slightly better graphics.

Just one more thing to say. Tell Mr Barrow to look in the back pages of Play 23 and compare the percentage of games I mentioned and the games he mentioned. I'm sure he'll be surprised.
Mr Attridge, Kings Lynn

Well said, Sir.

Dear Play

I am writing in with a few ideas that I think will improve your magazine (not that it's not good enough already!). Firstly I think that the Arena section should be changed. I think that you should do a letter of the month or something similar, and the person who sent the winning letter wins PlayStation peripherals, a game, or maybe some sort of voucher thing which entitles you to a tenner off of games when you buy them at a certain shop.

On the other hand, instead of doing a letter of the month you could ask us readers to send in guides to games, and if they're good enough to get printed then prizes should be duly handed out.

Also, instead of giving away endless cheat books, which are pointless if, like me, you like to complete games without cheating, you should give



Matthew Nash really NEEDS a copy of Square's *Final Fantasy VII* – it's out in November in the UK, but you can already get it on American import.

THE MAILBAG FILLETH

The majority of letters this month are about:

- N64 Vs PlayStation. These pointless debates have dated way back to the NES and Master System days, so it would be too much to hope that the wars didn't continue to rage with the new super consoles.
- Piracy. More ranting about the pros and cons of software piracy. We say to hell with the lot of them.
- Will the GunCon be compatible with new PlayStations? Absolutely. No question.
- Why are £34.99 games STILL £44.99? The lower price point only applies to official Sony games, not ones made by other companies.

away posters and suchlike. I have recently been to the States on holiday where I purchased a magazine called *Electronic Gaming Monthly* (what a turd name!) which, coincidentally, has exactly the same cover as issue 25 of PLAY! Anyway, I don't know whether anybody knows this, but according to this mag, Sega is making a new system but is denying it. But the magazine's sources within Sega are telling a different story! The mysterious machine is known as the Black Belt and was developed in the US by SegaSoft, Microsoft and 3DFX. This is just about all they said, but you can get more information as they get it on the internet at www.videogamespot.com. Hands up if you think it'll be tat!

From Owen Wattley, E-mail

PS *Final Fantasy VII* was just about to be released over in the States (it looks cool), and there are pics in the magazine that show swearing in the game, I bet that won't be in the UK version!

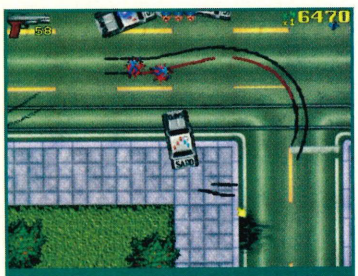
A letter of the month sounds like a great idea, the only problem is that every letter is just so entertaining that we'd be pushed to judge a winner. We are also looking into different kinds of promotions for the magazine, including posters (did you like the Lara Croft one last issue?), but keep the ideas coming. Well, well, the Sega Black Belt – is the old name for the proposed 64-bit Saturn, but details are scarce or wrong and it is now going under the codename Black Dragon, which is an equally rubbish name.

DEAR PLAY

This is the first time that I've ever contacted you, I hope you can help me with this little enquiry of mine. Does anyone have any information on the release date for *Grand Theft Auto*? Although looking fairly visually unimpressive, it strikes me as a game which is potentially oozing with gameplay and sheer entertainment value. I believe it's a BMG release, although I could be wrong.

Also, something which has occurred to me is that the nature of the game could possibly cause problems with it getting ANY release date in this country. What do you think? If this is going to affect the release of the game in this country, which routes could I take (other than the old clandestine method!) to obtain it, import or otherwise?

Matthew Hale, E-mail



[Above] Despite the politically incorrect subject matter, BMG are adamant that Grand Theft Auto will be screeching around the corner and killing several innocent pedestrians on the PlayStation in November!

***Grand Theft Auto* is being released by BMG and a November release is scheduled. Having played the game, we were initially shocked by the subject matter, I won't go into it here, but needless to say it breaks just about every political taboo going! We'll be very surprised if the game gets released without several alterations, but a 15-certificate looks like being the obvious route, although changes may still occur.**

"Have any of these pirates considered the consequences of their actions?"

DEAR PLAY

I am writing in response to Mr Tyler's letter on software piracy in your September issue. First of all, being a consumer myself, I am neither jealous nor sad, just angry that the mentality of these so-called consumers (I tend to think that they are no better than common thieves) could be so immature and ignorant. Living in Hong Kong, software piracy is in abundance here. However, none of My Tyler's points convinces me that piracy is acceptable. Yes, no doubt the pirated software is significantly cheaper, mainly based on the fact that there is virtually zero investment in setting up the business. However, the way I see it, from the moment anyone invests in a PlayStation, they should have realised that they have to budget for the software. Claiming that the software is too costly after the hardware investment is absolute rubbish.

Also, have any of these pirates ever considered the consequences of their actions? One of the reasons why I invested in a PlayStation is to ensure that my hardware will not be made outdated by new software as quickly as in the case of PC software. Now, if people continue to rob software developers of their well-deserved royalties, then who is going to support them? The way I see it, they could only increase the prices of the legal software (in which case, genuine consumers will suffer), or they might even abandon the idea of writing software for the PlayStation which uses the easily pirated CD format (in which case, ALL PlayStation owners, including the pirates, will suffer). So c'mon fellow PlayStation owners, help promote the growth of the system and stop killing the proverbial golden geese for the few miserable golden eggs (in this case, disks). There are really not too many of them left in the business.

Andre Ong, Hong Kong

You highlight the point that we've been trying to make for ages. Pirate low-life's do need to wake up and get an honest job before the whole industry collapses. The sad fact is that piracy will never cease though. Whatever the system, no matter how tight the security is, pirates will always find a way around it. The only way to truly clamp it down would be for consumers to stop buying these pale imitations. But at a third of the price, the temptation is often too great, so we're stuck with it. Catch 22, I believe.

DEAR PLAY

This is the first time I have ever written to a magazine, but I have recently thought of a few things...

1. PlayStation 2. Is it backward compatible? Is Sony going to give money off for current PlayStation owners? Will it be linkable?
2. What is Sony doing; advising developers to drop the link option in new games? *Doom, F1, Need for Speed, Wipeout 2097* – all made better by the inclusion of a link mode. *Need for Speed* most noticeably, as it is smoother than in split screen. It is sadly missed by my link up partner and I in *V-Rally* (and two other mates for four player games).
3. When will *Final Fantasy VII* get released over here, I NEED that game! Likewise for *F1 '97*, *Resident Evil 2*, *Aliens Vs Predator* (I'll come back to that later) and *Tomb Raider 2*?
4. *Aliens Vs Predator*. It was the best Jaguar game, if not one of the best games I ever played, not at all crap and dull. I remember being in my mate's small office in his garage crapping ourselves at three in the morning (OK, I was only 13 and had only just bought the game). I hope that a link-up will be included when the final game is released.
5. Is *F1 '97* linkable or not?
6. Is there any news of *Soul Blade 2*? The original was too easy.
7. After buying a Multi-tap I have just discovered the joys of four player games. Are there any more in the pipeline?

Matthew Nash

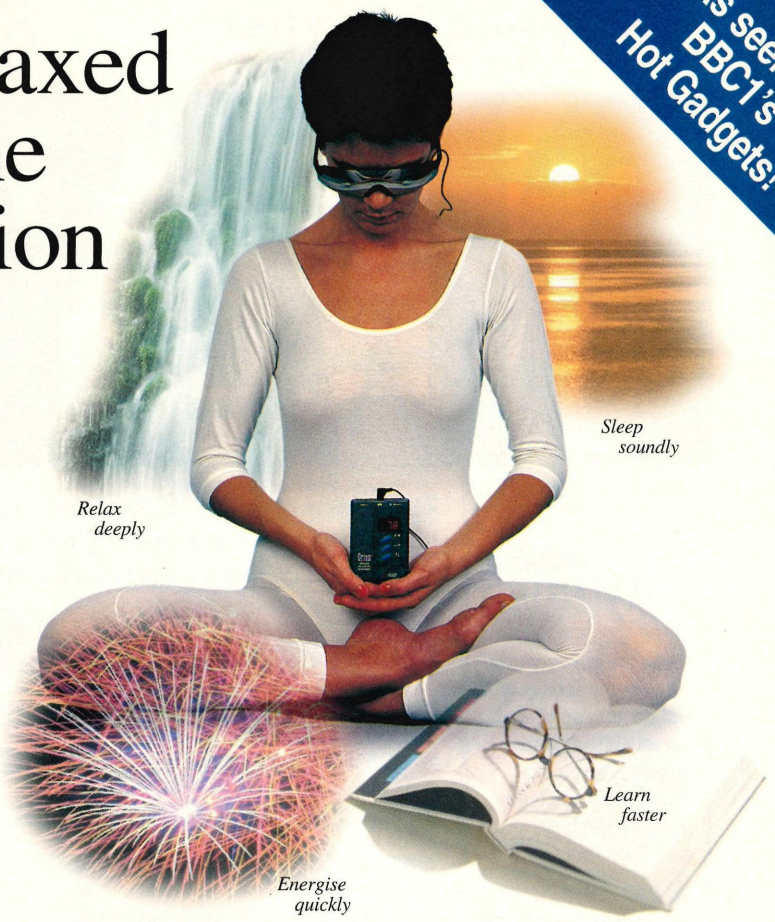
PS *Rally Cross* is rubbish. The four player mode is the best part of the game, it kept us amused for all of half an hour! It's just as well my local store let me change it for *V-Rally*!

1. Don't talk to us about the PlayStation 2, nothing has been confirmed, nobody knows anything about it, and it is too far away to even bother thinking about right now.
2. This has continued to baffle us. Everybody knows that the link-up modes are one of the best and most important aspects of the games. So what is going on Sony? Full report next issue.
3. *FFVII* will be out in November, as will *Tomb Raider 2*. *Resident Evil 2* won't appear until next spring, *F-1 '97* is reviewed in this issue, and *Aliens Vs Predator* is set for Autumn '98.
4. Hmm.
5. Not.
6. Nothing at all.
7. Try *Supersonic Racers 2*, *Madden '98*, *NHL '98*, *FIFA: Road to World Cup*, *Motor Mash* and *Overboard* – and that's just the tip of the iceberg – even more will be revealed next month.

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.

As seen on BBC1's Hot Gadgets!

Feel profoundly relaxed in minutes – with the NEW MindLab Orion



Tune in and turn on to shut out everyday pressures – and unleash the natural resources of your mind – *writes Chris Payne*

Dazzling patterns of colour swirled in front of my closed eyes, and gyrating shapes soared across my visual field as hypnotic rhythmic tones caressed my ears.

All I'd done was put on the liteframes and headphones, pressed a few buttons on the MindLab Orion's compact console and lay back with my eyes closed.

As the patterns and sounds slowed down I felt my mind sink deeper and deeper, and it seemed as if I was rolling back through space.

Clear your mind in minutes

Ten minutes later I re-emerged – relaxed, alert and with no mind chatter. The serene state lasted for the next two hours. This was my first experience of using the remarkable MindLab Orion.



Slip on the liteframes and headphones, press a few buttons on the MindLab Orion and you'll feel deeply relaxed within 15 minutes

It may at first sound like a way out Spielberg creation, but the MindLab Orion is far from science fiction. This is science fact, tried and tested to help you cope with life's stresses and strains.

Using light and sound patterns matched to your own natural rhythm, the machine can induce a state of relaxation, and even aid learning.

Far from being futuristic, the MindLab Orion is based on ancient techniques blended with sophisticated technology.

In 2000BC Ptolemy noted that sunlight flickering through the spokes of a rotating wheel caused fascinating visual patterns and a feeling of euphoria.

UK research validates the technology

Then in the late 1940s a British neuroscientist, W. Gray Walter, measured the effects of an electronic strobe using an EEG, which monitors brainwave activity.

He found that rhythmic, flashing lights altered activity across the whole cortex, producing trance-like states of profound relaxation and vivid imagery.

Since then, a series of independent studies have confirmed Walter's findings. Research now suggests that machines using light and sound can dramatically reduce stress.

Change mental states easily

Benefits include deep relaxation within minutes, improved learning ability and enjoyment of music, increased alertness, enhanced ability to visualise new goals, and better sleep at night.

The user of the MindLab Orion chooses the state of consciousness that he or she wishes to obtain, and is lulled by a rainbow array of colours and rhythms into the chosen state of awareness.

Just press a few buttons and you can choose to relax, sleep, visualise, energise or learn. Lie back, close your eyes and let the kaleidoscopic light patterns and rhythmic tones gradually shift your consciousness.

The press raved about the original MindLab

"The MindLab has received rave reviews from both the scientific community and the public... After a few minutes the dazzling spectacle winds down into a deeper state of consciousness." – *New Scotsman*

"The systems reliably produce visual effects and relaxation... the experience resembles the closing sequences of 2001: A Space Odyssey." – *New Scientist*

"The MindLab produces a feeling of total inner calm where once there was chaos. The technology of tomorrow really is with us today." – *Fit Body magazine*

"The machine really does need to be experienced to be believed." – *Computer Life*

"The MindLab gives you hundreds of different methods, via amazing sounds, music and light displays, of achieving Nirvana." – *London Evening Standard*

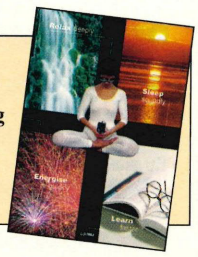
"The MindLab really works!" – *Ms London*

Here's what the testers said on Hot Gadgets!

Said tester Anuj Nayor on **BBC1's Hot Gadgets:** "I thought the MindLab Orion was a top gadget. I felt perky and alert. The first program I tried was the sleep one. I went into the deepest sleep in ages. I was *so* late for work the next day."

James Mayor, a medical student, commented "I feel quite relaxed. That exam: sorted!"

Find out why thousands of people in the UK and one million worldwide are using this technology – ring 01625 502602 for your FREE brochure TODAY!



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PLAYLIST

THE COMPLETE A-Z OF PLAYSTATION GAMES REVIEWED IN PLAY AND YOUR INVALUABLE GUIDE AS TO WHAT TO BUY AND IF £20 FOR A DUSTY COPY IS REALLY WORTH IT. CARRY A COPY OF PLAY WHEREVER YOU GO, OR ALTERNATIVELY, MAKE A SPECIAL CONTAINER FOR IT. PLEASE NOTE THAT '*' INDICATES AN IMPORT REVIEW.

playback

These are our very own top tens for each genre and do not conform to the rating they were originally given. It's simply what the team feels are the best games on PSX.

BEAT-'EM-UPS



1. Soul Edge	**96%**
2. Tekken 2	95%
3. Bushido Blade	94%
4. SF EX Plus	91%
5. Tobal 2	92%
6. SF Zero 2	94%
7. Tobal No.1	94%
8. Tekken	95%
9. SF Alpha	93%
10. MK Trilogy	92%

FIRST PERSON SHOOT-'EM-UPS



1. Mechwarrior	**91%**
2. Doom/Final	93%
3. Tenka	86%
4. Exhumed	84%
5. Alien Trilogy	91%
6. Disruptor	87%
7. Magic Carpet	90%
8. Tunnel B1	87%
9. Descent	85%
10. PO'ed	87%

GAME									SCORE	WE SAY...
2Xtreme	1-2	●							52%	Tedious multi sports effort – fading fast.
3D Lemmings	1	●				●			69%	Famous puzzle game, now in 3D! Average.
Ace Combat*	1-2	●							81%	Slightly repetitive flight sim.
Ace Combat 2*	1	●							84%	Far better graphically and playability wise.
A-Train*	1	●				●			62%	Complex resource management with trains.
Actua Golf	1-4	●	●						88%	Best golf game on PSX so far (until *Golf2*).
Actua Golf 2	1-4	●							80%	Not as good graphically, but still great fun.
Actua Soccer	1-2	●							94%	Slick looking footy sim, now dated.
Actua Soccer: Club Edition	1-2	●							62%	Cynical re-badged version of above.
Adidas Power Soccer	1-4	●	●						95%	Great then, now failing against the competition.
Addidas Power Soccer '97	1-4	●	●						52%	Same game, but with UK teams. Poor.
Agile Warrior:F111X	1	●							79%	Simple brainless shoot-'em-up from Virgin.
Alien Trilogy	1	●							91%	Deeply scary space shoot-'em-up. Great fun.
Allied General	1-2	●							51%	Hexagonal strategy for bores and generals.
All-Star Soccer	1-8	●	●						80%	Superb comic commentary, not bad footy !
Alone in the Dark 2	1	●							77%	Intruiging French 3-D adventure based on PC.
Andretti Racing '97	1-2	●		●	●		●		74%	Average split screen American racer.
Aquanaut's Holiday	1-2	●							58%	Impenetrable and dull underwater guff.
Area 51	1-2					●		●	68%	Rough coin-op conversion using light gun.
Assault Rigs	1-2	●		●					81%	*Tron*-like tank blasting game. Good link-up.
Atari Collection, The	1	●							81%	Many classics. Best: *Missile Command, Asteroids.*
Ayrton Senna's Kart Duel	1-2	●		●			●		71%	Ropey racing engine, jerky action.
Ballblazer Champions*	1-2	●			●				69%	Dull as dishwater futuristic sports.
Batman Forever	1-2	●							41%	Bloody awful film licence – avoid!
Battle Stations	1-2	●							51%	Flat and unconvincing naval strategy...
Bedlam	1	●				●			78%	Muggy and complicated *Syndicate* wannabe.
Big Hurt Baseball*	1-2	●							81%	Moderately successful sports conversion.
Black Dawn	1	●							76%	Average helicopter shoot-'em-up.
BLAM! Machinehead	1	●							79%	Graphical masterpiece, but no depth at all.
Blast Chamber	1-4	●	●						82%	Clever puzzles with rotating rooms.
Blood Omen: LOK	1	●							81%	Be a vampire – top bloody fun.
Broken Helix*	1	●							75%	Absorbing 3-D adventure, but bad graphically.
Broken Sword	1	●				●			84%	Slick point 'n' click adventure.
Bubble Bobble	1-2	●							85%	Arcade fun from the early Eighties.
Bubsy 3D	1-4								82%	Passable 3-D cartoon romp.
Burning Road	1-2	●		●			●		90%	Turbo nutter action with big trucks.
Bushido Blade*	1-2	●		●			●		94%	Stylish and brutal sword-fighting.
Bust-a-Move 2	1-2	●			●				88%	Simple, yet totally addictive puzzler.
Buster Bros Collection*	1-2	●							86%	*Pang* gets the 32-bit treatment.
Carnage Heart	1	●							57%	Dull robot strategy adventure on the moon.
Casper	1	●							65%	Plain and unimaginative film game.
Cheesy	1	●							50%	It certainly is...
Chessmaster 3D	1-2	●							68%	Chess. On PlayStation. Hmm...
Choro Q*	1	●							70%	Quirky but rough cartoon racer.
Choro Q 2*	1-2	●			●		●		85%	More cars, big miniature fun.
Chronicles of the Sword	1	●				●			43%	Tedious adventure – avoid!
City of Lost Children	1	●							78%	Slow moving French 3-D adventure.
Command & Conquer	1								79%	PSX version slow and sorely lacking.
Contra: Legacy of War	1-2	●							62%	Scappy arcade shoot-'em-up from Konami.
Coolboarders	1	●							82%	High speed stunts on a snowboard.

GAME									SCORE	WE SAY...
Crash Bandicoot	1	●							84%	Technically brilliant platformer.
Criticom	1-2	●							87%	Early average beat-'em-up. Now forgotten.
Crow: City of Angels	1	●							21%	Absolute shite!
Crusader: No Remorse	1	●							80%	Decent shoot-'em-up from the PC.
Crypt Killer	1-2							●	38%	Blocky, dreary, shoddy shooter.
Cyberia	1	●							67%	'On rails' FMV shoot-'em-up. Ugh!
Cybersled	1-2	●			●				55%	Vivid colours, but ultimately dull.
CyberSpeed	1	●							65%	Putrid futuristic *Hi-Octane*-style racer
D	1	●							69%	Mediocre 3-D adventure – Slow.
Dark Forces	1								75%	Appalling *Star Wars* conversion.
Darklight Conflict	1								79%	Fantastic looking, but sadly boring.
Darkstalkers*	1-2								88%	Very playable beat-'em-up from a coin-op.
Defcon 5	1	●							88%	Run-of-the-mill space adventure. Slow.
Descent	1-2	●		●					85%	Was good, now utter cack!
Descent 2	1-2	●		●					63%	Almost the same game. Not that fun to play.
Destruction Derby	1-2	●		●					86%	PSX showpiece and good two player.
Destruction Derby 2	1	●							82%	Better, but lacks link-up – bah!
Die Hard Trilogy	1	●				●	●	●	92%	Utterly brilliant three film games in one.
Discworld	1	●				●			74%	Unfunny cartoon adventure.
Disruptor	1	●							87%	Impressive 3-D *Doom* clone.
Doom	1-2			●					93%	Top link-up, but now looking dated.
Dracula X*	1	●							84%	Japanese vampire platformer.
Dynasty Warriors*	1-2	●							71%	Restrictive and bizarre beat-'em-up, but pretty.
Earthworm Jim 2	1	●							69%	16-bit fun, but joke is wearing thin.
Epidemic*	1	●							71%	Slow and boring disease adventure.
ESPN Extreme Games	1-2	●							73%	Tiresome sports, no fun at all!
Excalibur 2555 AD	1	●							86%	Imaginative and lush RPG.
Exhumed	1	●							84%	Compelling Egyptian 3-D shoot-'em-up.
Explosive Racing	1	●		●			●		82%	Quick and playable racing, but not all new.
Extreme Pinball	1-2	●							54%	Miserable pinball sim with bad physics.
Fade To Black	1	●							90%	Gripping sci-fi alien adventure!
FIFA '96	1-4	●	●						81%	Unexceptional footy flannel.
FIFA '97	1-4	●	●						70%	Graphically better, but plays worse
Fighter's Impact*	1-2	●							76%	Dated and blocky 3-D beat-'em-up. Buy *Tekken2*.
Final Doom	1-2			●		●			82%	New levels, but otherwise the same.
Firemen, The*	1	●							78%	16-bit looking fire-fighting action game.
Firestorm: Thunderhawk2	1	●							85%	Playable helicopter blast-'em-up from Core.
Firo & Klawd	1-2								64%	Garish cartoon cop adventure. Dodgy.
Formation Soccer*	1-2	●							58%	Expensive and dated-looking footy guff!
Formula 1	1-2	●		●			●		92%	Exhilerating and glorious F1 sim!
Galaxian 3*	1-4	●	●			●	●		69%	Repetitive and confusing shooter.
Gex	1	●							76%	Wretched 3DO platformer with dumb lizard.
Goal Storm*	1-2	●							69%	Disappointingly slow, fails to score...
Grid Run	1-2	●	●		●				53%	Banal maze game with few rewards.
Gunship	1	●							90%	Has not stood the test of time...
Hard Boiled	1	●							29%	A disasterously wasted licence...
Hardcore 4X4	1-2	●		●			●		81%	Hellish and repetitive off-road action.
Hebereke's Popitto	1-2	●							43%	Why bother with this when *Puzzle Fighter* exists?
Herc's Adventures*	1-2	●							70%	Cute-looking run-of-the-mill adventure.
Hercules*	1	●							63%	Sweet and innocent, but simple and dull.
Hermie Hopperhead*	1	●							53%	Worthless cartoon platform banality.
Hexen	1	●							35%	One of the PSX's worst ever games!
Hi-Octane	1-2	●			●				80%	Reasonable Bullfrog racer.
Horned Owl*	1-2	●						●	73%	Poor excuse for a light gun game.
Hyper Tennis	1-4	●	●						78%	Utterly pointless tennis sim. There are better.
Impact Racing	1-2	●		●					87%	Good then, now utter tripe!
Incredible Hulk, The	1	●							45%	Nothing 'incredible' about it. Poor.
Independence Day*	1-2	●		●	●				47%	Wretched film-inspired nonsence!
International Moto X*	1-2	●		●					77%	Moderate motorbike racer.
Int Superstar Soccer Deluxe	1-4	●	●						83%	16-bit footy conversion, no frills.
Int Superstar Soccer Pro	1-2	●							84%	One of the best football games on PSX!
Int Track & Field	1-4	●	●						85%	Superb multi-player sports special!
In The Hunt*	1-2	●							69%	Miserable sub shoot-'em-up. Tosh!
Iron & Blood	1-2	●							75%	Passable medieval beat-'em-up.
Iron Man & Manowar	1-2								47%	As much fun as genital surgery!
Jet Rider	1-2	●							85%	Super-fast jetbikes, poor graphics.
J-League: Winning Eleven	1-2	●							73%	Early and now extremely dated 3-D football.
Johnny Bazookatone	1	●							85%	He's supposed to be cool. He's not.
Jonah Lomu Rugby	1-2	●	●						86%	Accurate and enjoyable rugby sim.
Jumping Flash	1	●							87%	Highly imaginative first person platformer.
Jumping Flash 2*	1	●							86%	Psychedelic sequel to above (only better).

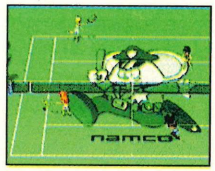
playback

ARCADE-STYLE SHOOT-'EM-UPS



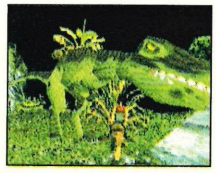
1. Time Crisis 90%
2. Die Hard Trilogy 93%
3. Twisted Metal 2 88%
4. Syndicate Wars 85%
5. Soviet Strike 83%
6. Tempest X3 86%
7. X2 77%
8. Darklight 80%
9. Ace Combat 2 84%
10. Project Overkill 89%

SPORTS SIMS



1. Smash Tennis 86%
2. Total NBA '97 92%
3. Soccer '97 82%
4. ISS Pro 84%
5. Actua Golf 88%
6. Int Track & Field 85%
7. Victory Boxing 90%
8. VR Baseball '97 80%
9. ISS Deluxe 83%
10. Sampras Extreme 90%

STRATEGY & ADVENTURE



1. Tomb Raider 94%
2. Resident Evil 95%
3. Warcraft 2 86%
4. Fade to Black 90%
5. X-Com: TFTD 88%
6. Suikoden 80%
7. LBA 83%
8. Wild Arms 85%
9. Space Hulk 84%
10. Broken Sword 84%

playback

Puzzle & Party Games



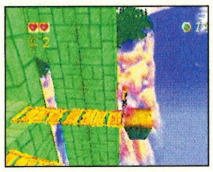
1. Puzzle Fighter 90%
2. Bust-A-Move 2 88%
3. PaRappa the Rapper 82%
3. Bubble Bobble 85%
4. Pro Pinball 90%
5. Worms 92%
6. Atari Collection 81%
7. Supersonic Racers 91%
8. Namco Museum IV 79%
9. Buster Bros 86%

Racing Games



1. Rage Racer 94%
2. Micro Machines 91%
3. Rally Cross 89%
4. V-Rally 87%
5. Need for Speed 2 90%
6. Wipeout 2097 93%
7. Formula 1 94%
8. Porsche 82%
9. Peak Performance 85%
10. DD2 82%

PLATFORMERS



1. Pandemonium 90%
2. Crash Bandicoot 84%
3. Mega Man 8 82%
4. Dracula X 84%
5. The Lost World 79%
6. Rayman 87%
7. Jumping Flash 2 86%
8. Jumping Flash 87%
9. Earthworm Jim 2 69%
10. J Bazookatone 85%

GAME									SCORE	WE SAY...
Kick Off '97	1-2	●							68%	Doesn't do the name justice!
Kileak The Blood	1	●							57%	Sparse *Doom* clone that lacks any kind of thrill.
Kileak The Blood 2	1	●							65%	The same only with a '2' at the end.
Killing Zone*	1-2								57%	Contemptible beat-'em-up. Avoid.
King Bowling	1-4	●							37%	Uninspiring cartoon bowling sim. Duff.
King's Field	1	●							61%	Long lasting RPG, looks crap though.
King Of Fighters '95*	1-2	●							62%	Utterly pointless 2-D beat-'em-up!
King Of Fighters '96*	1-2	●							59%	Rips off every fighting game. Still crap though.
Krazy Ivan	1	●							90%	Sumptuous visuals hide a real stinker!
Lifeforce Tenka	1	●							86%	Grisly polygonal *Doom* clone – flashy.
Little Big Adventure	1	●							83%	Outstanding graphical adventure!
Loaded	1-2	●							85%	Gutsy and mindless, but repetitive.
Lomax in Lemmingland	1								70%	Dull as dishwater platform game.
Lone Soldier	1	●							92%	Overrated Rambo rubbish!
Lost Vikings 2, The	1-2								72%	Playable platform strategy. Looks old though.
Lost World, The	1	●							79%	Stunning-looking platformer, but shallow.
MK Trilogy	1-2								92%	Gory orgy of 16-bit gameplay. Not bad.
Machine Hunter	1-2					●			72%	Decent *Paradroid*-inspired shooter.
Madden '97	1-4	●	●						81%	Solid and playable US football sim.
Magic Carpet	1	●							90%	Magnificent magic carpet ride!
Mechwarrior 2	1	●							91%	Top class big robot shoot-'em-up!
Mega Man 8*	1	●							82%	Playable and colourful, but ultimately shallow.
Mickey's Wild Adventure	1	●							79%	Standard cartoon platformer. Yawn!
Micro Machines V3	1-8	●	●						92%	Blistering racing game. Fantastic!
Monster Trucks	1	●							74%	Competent, but dull off-roader.
Mortal Kombat 3	1-2	●							93%	Don't buy this, get *MK Trilogy* instead.
Motor Toon GP 2*	1-2	●			●			●	79%	Highly playable cartoon racer.
Myst	1	●							68%	Humdrum static screen adventure. Sad.
Namco Museum 1*	1-2	●							70%	Retro collection – best: *Pacman* and *Galaga*.
Namco Museum 2*	1-2	●							70%	Worse than Vol 1 – best: *Xevious*.
Namco Museum 3*	1-2	●							73%	Decent retro fix – best: *Pole Position II*.
Namco Museum 4	1-2	●							79%	Some cool games – best: *Pacland*.
Nanotek Warrior*	1								76%	Tired shoot-'em-up set at molecular level.
Nascar Racing '96	1	●						●	80%	Comprehensive racing simulation – a bit jerky.
NBA In The Zone	1-2	●							79%	Solid sports sim, not as good as *Total NBA*.
NBA Jam Extreme	1-2	●							79%	Over exaggerated arcade port-over. Numb.
NBA Jam:TE	1-4	●	●						90%	Two-on-two multi-player mayhem. Good fun.
NBA Live '96	1-2	●							82%	Stale and lifeless basketball sim. Not much cop.
NBA Live '97	1-2	●	●						89%	All the latest stats and players – better engine.
Need For Speed, The	1-2	●			●	●		●	94%	Classic supercar OTT racing. Superb link-up!
Need For Speed 2, The	1-2	●				●		●	90%	Rough looking, but actually more fun – long term.
NFL Game Day	1-2	●							73%	American football – who cares?
NHL '97	1-8	●	●						86%	Intense ice hockey action – smooth and fast.
NHL Face Off	1-2	●							78%	Admirable attempt, but a bit cumbersome.
Novastorm	1	●							38%	Contemptable FMV-spooled shoot-'em-up arse!
Off World Interceptor	1-2	●				●			77%	Jerky 3-D buggy battling disgrace. Avoid.
Olympic Games	1-8	●	●						89%	Utterly fantastic multi-player event.
Olympic Soccer	1-2	●							84%	Highly playable footy game, basic graphics.
Onside Soccer	1-2	●							76%	Uninspiring footy with management aspects.
Overblood	1	●							86%	Atmospheric, innovative 3-D space adventure.
Pandemonium	1								90%	Enjoyable platform game, but too restrictive.
Panzer General	1-2	●					●		73%	Strategy war game for dedicated anoraks.
PaRappa the Rapper	1	●							82%	Tap the buttons, sing the rhyme. Brilliant!
Peak Performance*	1-2	●				●		●	85%	Blistering 28-car joyriding – a great laugh!
Perfect Weapon	1	●							65%	Slothful 3-D adventure, lacking visual flair.
PGA Tour '96	1-8	●							86%	Well, it's golf innit. Buy the updated version.
PGA Tour '97	1-4	●							81%	Extremely able golfing sim. It's got the lot.
Philosoma	1	●							85%	Great looking shoot-'em-up, but badly dated.
Pitball	1-4	●	●						66%	Rough and confusing futuristic sports.
Player Manager	1-2	●					●		74%	Banal management game. No frills and slow.
PO'ed	1								87%	Scrappy *Doom* clone, meant to be humerous.
Porsche Challenge	1-2	●				●		●	82%	Superb looking, technically brilliant. Too slow.
Power Instinct 2*	1-2	●							52%	Cheap and nasty beat-'em-up – stay well clear.
Powermove Pro Wrestling	1-2	●							51%	Men, in tights, absolutely awful game.
Powerplay Hockey '97	1-4	●	●						82%	Yet another hockey game, actually quite good.
Primal Rage	1-2	●							85%	Claymation-based beat-'em-up. Piss poor now.
Prime Goal EX*	1-2	●							62%	Very average sprite based footy. Worse than *FIFA*.
Pro Pinball: The Web	1-2	●							90%	Definitely the best pinball game on the PSX!
Project Overkill	1	●							89%	Violent, bloody, but repetitive and no two player!
Psychic Detective	1	●							75%	Wholly FMV erotic fantasy. Utter tosh.
Psychic Force	1-2								73%	Unusual floating beat-'em-up. Nothing special.

GAME									SCORE	WE SAY...
Quarterback Club '96	1-8	●	●						80%	Yet again, who cares?
Raiden Project, The	1-2	●							68%	Dazzling, but ultimately weak shoot-'em-up.
Rage Racer	1	●						●	94%	Super fast, varied, playable racer. Get it now!
Raging Skies	1-2	●			●			●	73%	Adequate flight shoot-'em-up, but linkable!
Rally Cross*	1-4	●	●			●		●	89%	First class off-road antics. Two and four player!
Rapid Reload	1	●							71%	Cutesy side-on cartoon shoot-'em-up. Dated.
Rayman	1	●							87%	Colourful platform game, now looking tired.
Ray Storm*	1-2								75%	Overwhelming two player space shoot-'em-up.
Ray Tracers	1	●							74%	Super fast *Chase HQ*-style racer. A bit basic.
Re-Loaded	1-2	●							61%	Actually worse than the original. Sloppy.
Rebel Assault 2*	1	●							60%	*Star Wars* shoot-'em-up. Boring and reptitive.
Resident Evil	1	●							95%	Gothic horror adventure – recommended!
Return Fire	1-2	●				●			84%	Average 3DO split screen army romp.
Revolution X	1-2						●		40%	Dire Aerosmith mouse shoot-'em-up. Bad.
Ridge Racer	1	●						●	93%	Launch game, now looking very sad indeed.
Ridge Racer Revolution	1-2	●			●			●	90%	A better game, with link-up and nicer cars.
Riot	1-2	●							72%	Moribund futuristic sports – like *Rollerball*.
Rise 2: Resurection	1-2	●							88%	Hideous robot beat-'em-up. A bad date.
Road Rage	1-2	●						●	24%	Detestable and trashy shoebox sim. Ugh!
Road Rash	1-2	●							75%	Dodgy visuals, but fast and fun. Now cheap.
Robopit	1-2	●				●			55%	Abominable robot beat-'em-up.
Robotron X	1-2	●							85%	Classic gameplay, very fast, we prefer original.
Rockman Battle & Chase*	1-2	●				●			41%	Basic and unrewarding cartoon racer.
Runabout*	1	●							77%	Highly playable racer, but way too short.
Salamander Deluxe Pack	1-2								74%	Aged, but enjoyable Eighties shoot-'em-up.
Sampras Extreme	1-4	●	●						90%	One of the best tennis games on PSX. Slick.
Samurai Showdown*	1-2	●							62%	Should be called *Samurai Slowdown!*
Sentient	1	●							84%	Absorbing and intelligent adventure. Bizarre.
Shellshock	1	●							85%	Passable tank game, now looks basic.
ShockWave Assault	1	●							87%	Limited surface-based shoot-'em-up. Dull.
Sim City 2000	1	●					●		75%	A fantastic game. Not suited to the PSX.
Skeleton Warriors*	1								56%	Grotesque import beat-'em-up.
Smash Court Tennis	1-4	●	●						86%	Supremely playable, addictive cartoon tennis.
Soccer '97	1-4	●	●						82%	UK teams version of *Olympic* – very playable!
Soul Edge*	1-2	●							96%	The best weapons-based beat-'em-up on PSX!
Soviet Strike	1	●							83%	Decent helicopter shoot-'em-up, rough looking.
Space Hulk	1	●							84%	Claustrophobic and intense 3DO strategy game.
Space Jam	1-6		●						39%	Pants cartoon basketball game, based on film.
Speedster	1-2	●				●		●	80%	Overhead racer with okay handling, but slow.
Spider*	1	●							75%	'On rails' arachnid platformer. Can get boring.
Spot Goes to Hollywood*	1	●							72%	Uninspiring cartoon platform game. Yawn.
Stahlfeder*	1	●							65%	Old-style vertical shoot-'em-up – too easy.
Star Gladiator	1-2	●							88%	Competent beat-'em-up from Capcom.
Starblade Alpha	1	●							68%	Lots of blasting action, no control at all...
Starfighter 3000	1								85%	A decent stab at a sci-fi shooter/strategy.
Starwinder	1	●							77%	Linear space-based racer. Lacks excitment.
Steel Harbinger	1	●							80%	Controlling a violent nympho isn't much fun.
Street Fighter Alpha	1-2	●							93%	Classic 2-D beat-'em-up, now been replaced.
Street Fighter Ex Plus	1-2	●							91%	It's absolutely EXcellent!
Street Fighter: The Movie	1-2	●							35%	The original PLAY score was a misprint! Crap!
Street Fighter Zero 2*	1-2	●							94%	Simple, colourful graphics – total gameplay!
Street Racer	1-8	●	●			●			84%	Childish *Mario Kart* wannabe, good multi-player.
Strikepoint*	1-2	●				●			54%	Shoddy and unconvincing helicopter sim.
Striker '96	1-4	●	●						89%	Extremely playable, but now extremely dated.
Suikoden	1	●							80%	Endearing and lasting Manga RPG.
Super Puzzle Fighter 2*	1-2	●							90%	Fan-bloody-tastic Japanese puzzler!
Supersonic Racers	1-8	●	●						91%	Chaotic Wacky Races-style multi-player romp.
Swagman	1	●							82%	Proficient cutesy overhead cartoon adventure.
Syndicate Wars	1-4	●	●				●		85%	I love the smell of napalm in the morning!
Tail Of The Sun*	1	●							84%	Innovative caveman adventure. Badly presented.
Tekken	1-2	●							95%	Was the ultimate 3-D beat-'em-up, still decent.
Tekken 2*	1-2	●							95%	Ultimate 3-D beat-'em-up – essential purchase!
Tempest X3	1-2	●							86%	Ancient coin-op brought up-to-date. Good fun.
Ten Pin Ally	1-6								60%	Dismal and utterly pointless bowling sim.
Test Drive Off-Road	1-2	●				●			35%	A turkey! Tarnishes the Test Drive name.
Theme Park	1	●							86%	Build your own Alton Towers – very in-depth.
Tiger Shark	1								62%	Decent water and aerial shoot-'em-up. Rough.
Time Commando	1								78%	Restrictive, but graphically impressive adventure.
Time Crisis*	1	●							90%	Stupendous light gun shooting action. Top.
Tobal No. 1*	1-2	●							94%	Cracking high res beat-'em-up with quest mode.

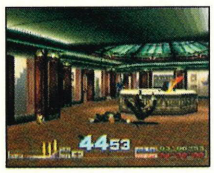
LONG TERM TEST



NAME: TEKKEN 2
LENGTH OF TEST: 10 MONTHS
REPLAY VALUE: 5/5

TEKKEN 2 VS SOUL BLADE! WHAT A TRUE BATTLE OF THE TITANS IF EVER THERE WAS! OPINION IS STILL DIVIDED AS TO WHETHER SOUL BLADE ACTUALLY PIPPED NAMCO'S PREVIOUS GOLIATH ON TRUE MERIT OR JUST DAZZLING VISUALS. SURE SOUL BLADE IS FANTASTIC, BUT AS A FIGHTING GAME, DOES IT OFFER THE PLAYER MORE TO GRASP AND REALLY GET THEIR TEETH INTO? WE THINK NOT. IN TERMS OF CHARACTERS AND MOVES, TEKKEN 2 IS SECOND TO NONE. THERE ARE STILL NEW MOVES BEING FOUND TO THIS DAY FOR CRYING OUT LOUD, AND THIS IS ON TOP OF EXISTING LISTS THAT WOULD RIVAL WAR AND PEACE IN CHUNKINESS IF THEY WERE BOUND IN A HARDBACK BOOK! IT WASN'T JUST THE DEPTH OF PLAY THOUGH, JUST LOOK AT THE WAY THE WHOLE THING IS PRESENTED – THE FAMILIAR NAMCO TRAITS ARE ESPECIALLY EVIDENT IN THE SHEER ATTENTION TO DETAIL ON THE INTRO AND ENDINGS THAT MAKE PLAYING AND COMPLETING IT TIME AND TIME AGAIN ALL THE MORE SATISFYING. ABOVE ALL THOUGH, TEKKEN 2 WORKS BECAUSE IT IS BARE-KNUCKLE FIGHTING, NO PONCEY SWORDS HERE, JUST FISTS THAT FLY FASTER THAN A LOCOMOTIVE AND ARE MORE HARD-HITTING THAN A SCORSESE GANGSTER FILM. THIS IS WHAT WE WANT FROM A FIGHTING GAME, AND TEKKEN 2 IS THE UNDISPUTED KING OF THE RING WHEN IT COMES TO IMAGINATION, PLAYABILITY AND THAT UNMISTAKABLE "JUST ONE MORE GO" QUALITY MISSING IN MUCH OF THE PRESENT-DAY COMPETITION.

LONG TERM TEST



NAME: TIME CRISIS
LENGTH OF TEST: 3 MONTHS
REPLAY VALUE: 3/5

THERE WAS NO DENYING THE SHEER BRILLIANCE AND AWESOME SPECTACLE THAT WAS TIME CRISIS WHEN IT FIRST ARRIVED, COMPLETE WITH GUNCON, IN THE OFFICE THREE MONTHS AGO. NOW THAT THE GAME IS ABOUT TO BE GRANTED ITS EUROPEAN RELEASE, LET US EXAMINE HOW WELL IT FARES AGAINST THE TEST OF TIME...

WITH THE FANTASTIC SHOOTING-A-KNAT-OFF-A-WATERBUFFELO'S-ASS ACCURACY OF THE GUNCON, IT WAS NEVER GOING TO TAKE THAT LONG TO STORM THE NUMEROUS LEVELS ON OFFER AND NOTCH-UP AN IMPRESSIVE DEATH-TALLY. BUT THE REAL SELLING POINT OF THIS GAME WAS THE PLAYSTATION-ONLY LEVELS AND NOT THE ARCADE MODE, AND IT IS THESE ALONE THAT KEEP DRAWING US BACK. OFFERING AN IMMENSE CHALLENGE AND MULTIPLE ROUTES THROUGH A SCUM-INFESTED HOTEL, THE PLAYSTATION LEVELS STILL POSE THE MOST SIGNIFICANT REASON WHY THIS GAME CAN NEVER BE FORGOTTEN, BECAUSE THEY ARE JUST SO DAMN HARD. THE RECENT DISCOVERY OF A CHEAT THAT ENABLES NINE LIVES, NO RELOAD, AND INFINITE CONTINUES WILL KILL THE GAME STONE COLD THOUGH, UNLESS A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF RESTRAINT IS SHOWN BY THE PLAYER. DESPITE THIS THOUGH, TIME CRISIS WILL ALWAYS BE THE DEFINITIVE SHOOTING GAME – FILLING POLYGON SCUMBAGS FULL OF LEAD WILL NEVER BE DONE BETTER ON THIS SYSTEM – AFTER ALL, HOUSE OF THE DEAD WILL NEVER BE CONVERTED, WILL IT?

GAME								SCORE	WE SAY...
Tobal 2*	1-2	●					●	92%	Highly advanced sequel. More of everything!
Tokyo Highway Battle	1	●						73%	Great concept, let down by low overall speed.
Tomb Raider	1	●						94%	Superb Indiana Jones-style 3-D adventure.
Top Gun: Fire at Will	1	●						76%	Lack-lustre combat flight sim based on film.
Toshinden	1-2	●						76%	First *Tekken* rival, graphically fantastic. Dated.
Toshinden 2*	1-2	●						74%	Far worse than the original. Avoid like plague.
Toshinden 3	1-2	●						78%	An average beat-'em-up. Nothing more.
Total Eclipse Turbo	1	●						69%	Poor third person shoot-'em-up. From 3DO.
Total NBA '96	1-8	●	●					94%	The best basketball game on PSX, until...
Total NBA '97	1-8	●	●					92%	The most advanced basketball game ever!
Transport Tycoon	1	●				●		78%	Absorbing strategy about transport networks.
Trash It	1-4	●	●					55%	Average hammer-based puzzle game.
True Pinball	1							85%	Highly overrated pinball tosh. No save game!
Tunnel B1	1-2	●						87%	Glitzy graphical showpiece. Short lived.
Twinbee Deluxe Pack*	1-2	●						65%	Vivid Japanese cartoon shoot-'em-up. Naff.
Twisted Metal	1-2	●			●			78%	Visually scrappy, but paved the path for...
Twisted Metal 2 (World Tour)*	1-2				●			88%	Remarkably compelling two player blast-a-thon!
Vandal-Hearts*	1	●						81%	Very Japanese fantasy strategy RPG. Bloody.
Victory Boxing	1-2	●						90%	Fast and smooth rendition of the 'sport.'
Viewpoint	1	●						74%	Glossy isometric shoot-'em-up. Bad slowdown.
Virtual Golf	1-4	●						61%	Drab golf sim, *Actua Golf 2* is much better.
Virtual Pool	1-2	●				●		68%	Great PC game, awkward and slow on PSX.
V-Rally	1-4	●			●		●	87%	Fast and accurate rally sim with great split screen.
VR Baseball '97	1-2	●						80%	Excellent and comprehensive sim of the sport.
V-Tennis	1-2	●						75%	Bland tennis game. Get *Sampras* or *Smash Court*.
Warcraft 2: The Dark Saga	1	●						86%	Utterly compelling medieval strategy fest!
Warhammer: SOTHR	1	●						82%	Unbelivably complex, but rewarding war game.
Warhawk	1	●						68%	Distinctly adverage helicopter shoot-'em-up.
WCW Vs The World	1-2	●						79%	Best wrestling game on PSX, until the next one.
Wild Arms*	1	●						85%	Hugely enjoyable RPG with serious challenge.
Williams' Arcade's Greatest	1-2	●						84%	Decent retro pack. Best: *Robotron*, *Defender*.
Wing Commander III	1	●						82%	Expensive space opera, involving plot.
Wing Commander IV	1	●						67%	Even more costly, but minus originality.
Wipeout	1-2	●		●				94%	A state-of-the-art pop culture racer. Now weary.
Wipeout 2097	1-2	●		●			●	93%	Far better than *Wipeout* – a stunning game.
World Cup Golf	1-8	●						71%	Wholly rendered golf sim. Better than average.
Worms	1-4	●						92%	Crap looking, but oh-so playable in multi-player.
Wrestlemania	1-4	●	●					74%	Wrestling – not a real sport. Game sucks.
X2	1-2							77%	Amazing looking shoot-'em-up, but too hard!
X-Com: Enemy Unknown	1	●				●		82%	Compelling turn based strategy adventure.
X-Com: Terror from the Deep	1	●				●		88%	Deeply involving underwater strategy game.
Xevious 3D/G*	1-2	●						72%	Collection of every *Xevious* game. Not bad.
Zeitgeist*	1	●						51%	Incredibly slow shoot-'em-up. Worthless.
Zero Divide*	1-2	●						68%	Hopelessly clumsy robot beat-'em-up.

POUND STRETCHER

THE LOWEST NEW & USED GAMES PRICES UNCOVERED WITH TIGHT FISTED EDDIE!

ALRIGHT ME OL' MUCKERS! AS ALWAYS, I HAVE BEEN SCALING THE HIGH STREET GAME STORES IN SEARCH OF CORKIN' BARGAINS FOR ALL YOU PENNY-PINCHING SKINT-FLINTS. AMAZIN' NEWS THIS MONTH FROM THE CATALOGUES, KAYS AND CO ARE PRACTICALLY GIVING TOMB RAIDER AWAY FOR £22! WHILST ELSEWHERE, GAME ARE DOING WRESTLEMANIA, PO'ED AND CHEESY FOR 20 NOTES! TEN TOO MANY IF YOU ASK ME!

WHAT'S THE STORY...

WITH THE NAMCO GUNCON?

PLAY HAS BEEN INUNDATED WITH LETTERS IN RECENT WEEKS CONCERNING THE NAMCO GUNCON, AND THE POTENTIAL COMPATABILITY PROBLEMS WITH THE NEWLY-REDESIGNED, STREAMLINED PLAYSTATION. NOW COME ON AND GET A GRIP OF YOURSELVES. DO YOU HONESTLY THINK THAT SONY WOULD GO THROUGH ALL THE HASSLE OF RELEASING A GAME (TIME CRISIS) WITH A DEVICE THAT WOULDN'T WORK ON THE NEW MACHINES? WE DIDN'T THINK SO, BUT JUST TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT ONCE AND FOR ALL, HERE'S WHAT WE KNOW...

TO BE RELEASED ON NOVEMBER 21, TIME CRISIS WILL COME BUNDLED WITH THE NAMCO GUNCON... SCREECH! HANG ON A SECOND, IN THIS COUNTRY THE GAME WILL BE RELEASED UNDER THE HYPER-FUNKY NAME OF THE G-CON 45... JUST TO CONFUSE MATTERS. THE WHOLE PACKAGE WILL COST £59.99, BUT WHAT ISN'T KNOWN AT THIS TIME IS WHETHER OR NOT THE AUDIO TO RF ADAPTOR THAT ALLOWS YOU TO USE THE GUN WITH THE NEW PLAYSTATIONS WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE PACKAGE. BUT WE'LL KEEP YOU POSTED...



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MYST	34.99	29.99
NAMCO MUSEUM	35.99	27.99
NEED FOR SPEED 2	36.99	29.99
NHL '97	25.99	22.99
NHL FACEOFF	37.99	27.99
NBA JAM EXTREME	35.99	29.99
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TOMB RAIDER 2

SINCE her last outing, Lara has escalated in public awareness. Gallivanting around with u2, blagging record deals and becoming the very first icon of game girl power. Now she is back doing what she does best, simply being a videogame character. *Tomb raider 2* – the full review next issue. Oh yes!

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England
Tel: +044 (0) 1202 299900
Fax: +044 (0) 1202 299955
play@paragon.co.uk
http://www.paragon.co.uk/play

Managing Editor
Damian Butt
gecko@paragon.co.uk

Editor
Ryan Butt
ryan@paragon.co.uk

Senior Staff Writer
Graeme Nicholson
silencio@paragon.co.uk

Staff Writer
Tom Sargent
tomsargent@paragon.co.uk

Art Editor
Tim Peach

Contributor(s)
Cat Bucannon

On-Line Editor
Stuart Wynne
ssw@paragon.co.uk

Advertising Manager
Michael Halton
Direct line (01202 200224)
mhalton@paragon.co.uk

Advertising Production
Dave Osborne, Ross Andrews, Jo James

Senior Production Manager
Jane Hawkins

Systems Manager
Alan Russell

Bureau Manager
Chris Rees

International Licencing
Catherine Blackman
Tel: +44 (0)1202 200205
Fax: +44 (0)1202 200235
cathyb@paragon.co.uk

Art Director
Mark Kendrick
mkendrick@paragon.co.uk

Sales Director
Trevor Bedford
trevorb@paragon.co.uk

Finance Controller
Mike Daly

Jt Managing Directors
Di Tavener
ditavener@paragon.co.uk
Richard Monteiro
richardm@paragon.co.uk

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Peter@Sony, Richard @Codies, Simi@EA and the Video Game Centre **(01202) 527314**. Cheers to you all.

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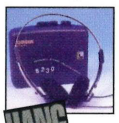
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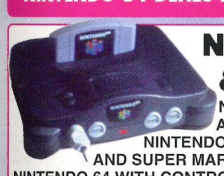
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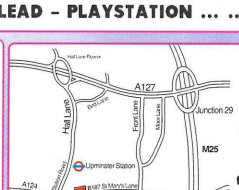
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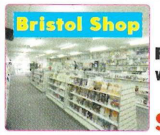
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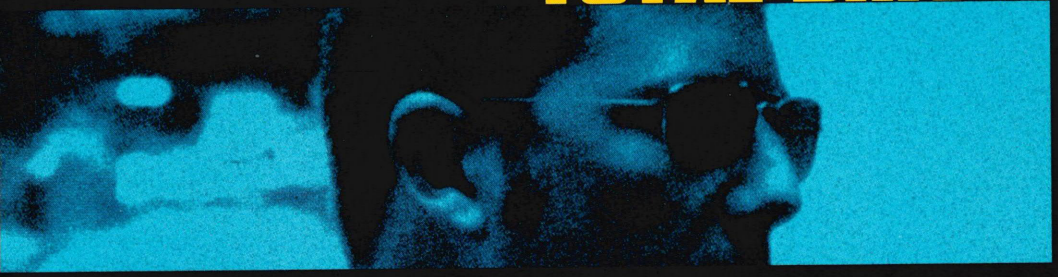


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ALL OR NOTHING



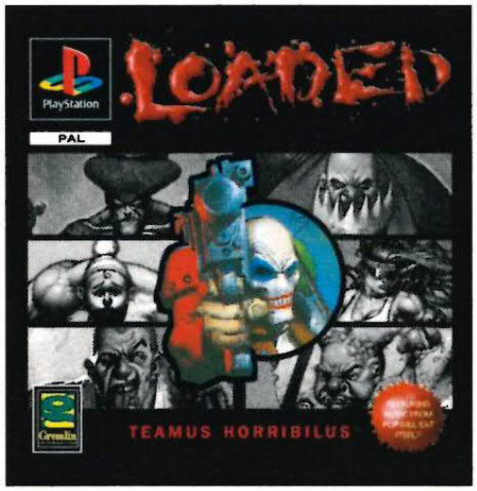




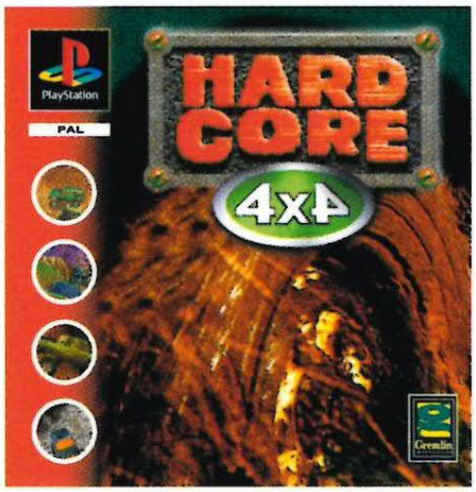
ocean

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loaded

Big guns, Big explosions, Big violence, Big fun! - Multi player shoot 'em up - Digital soundtrack featuring Pop Will Eat Itself - This is what next generation is all about! - Weird imagination & incredible detail - 15 massive levels to destroy - Twisting story - Loaded is different & strange! - Top down 3D view - Cut throat graphics and a storming adventure.



re-loaded

Mamma, Butch, Bounca, Cap 'n Hands have been joined by Sister Magpie and The Consumer, blasting their way through 6 huge blood soaked worlds to inflict brutal revenge upon C.H.E.B. Obliterate the enemies and solve the puzzles in your bloody quest to save the universe...Prepare to Re-Load...



hardcore 4x4

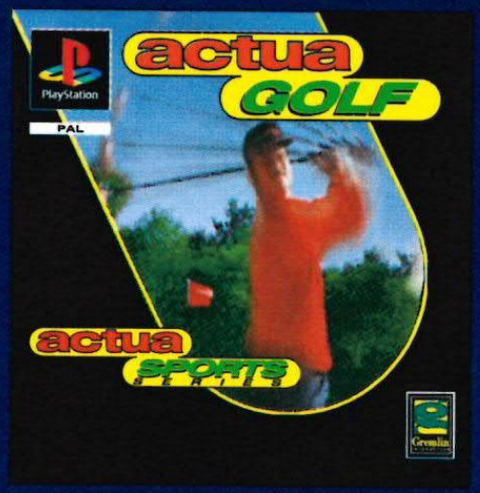
It's dirty and dangerous...opponents don't care how they force you off...the adrenaline pumps as you battle against six of the dirtiest off-road terrains...the soundtrack thumps as you sweat and slide through impossible turns and axle-busting drops... only extreme skill and concentration can keep you in the game now...because you're having the toughest, dirtiest experience of your life.

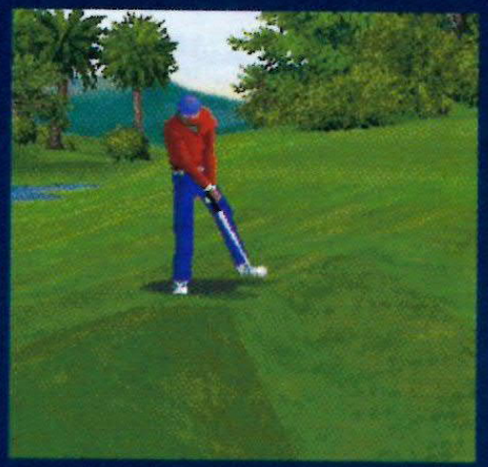
ahead of the game

Gremlin Interactive Limited
Carver House • 2-4 Carver Street • Sheffield • S1 4FS • England • Tel: +44 (0) 114 279 9020 • Fax: +44 (0) 114 276 8581

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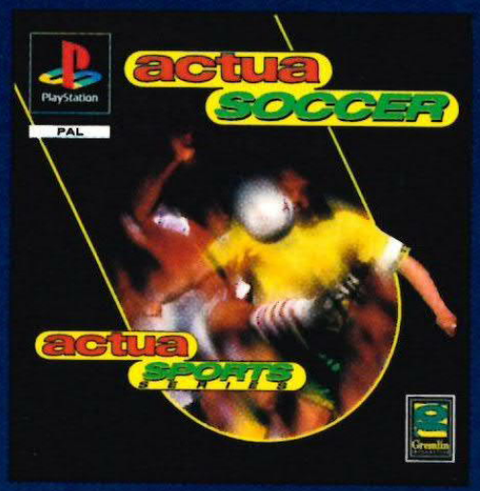
ahead of the game





actua golf

Real chipping, real driving, real putting and really tasty trousers! True 3D golf courses - real time motion capture technology makes this the most realistic 3D golfing environment you've come across in a golfing sim. With up to 3 views on screen at any one time. Live commentary from the voice of golf, Peter Alliss. Multiple camera angles and multi-player options.





actua soccer

Revolutionary action football sim - Realtime motion captured top international footballer's - Most realistic true 3D pitch and players ever seen! - Full commentary by Barry Davies! - 44 teams - Editable skills - Cup tournaments & leagues - Real atmosphere - Real immersive - Real cool - Play it!

ahead of the game