

ACTUA SOCCER 2 • CRASH 2 • BUSHIDO BLADE • GEX

issue twenty eight Christmas '97

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PLAY

プレイステーション

The UK's Best Unofficial PL Magazine!

9 771358 947002 13 printed in the UK

TOMB RAIDER 2

FIRST FULL REVIEW!
Storm in a D-cup, Lara Croft, is back in this silicon-injected sequel!

GRAND THEFT AUTO

The most controversial game of the decade!

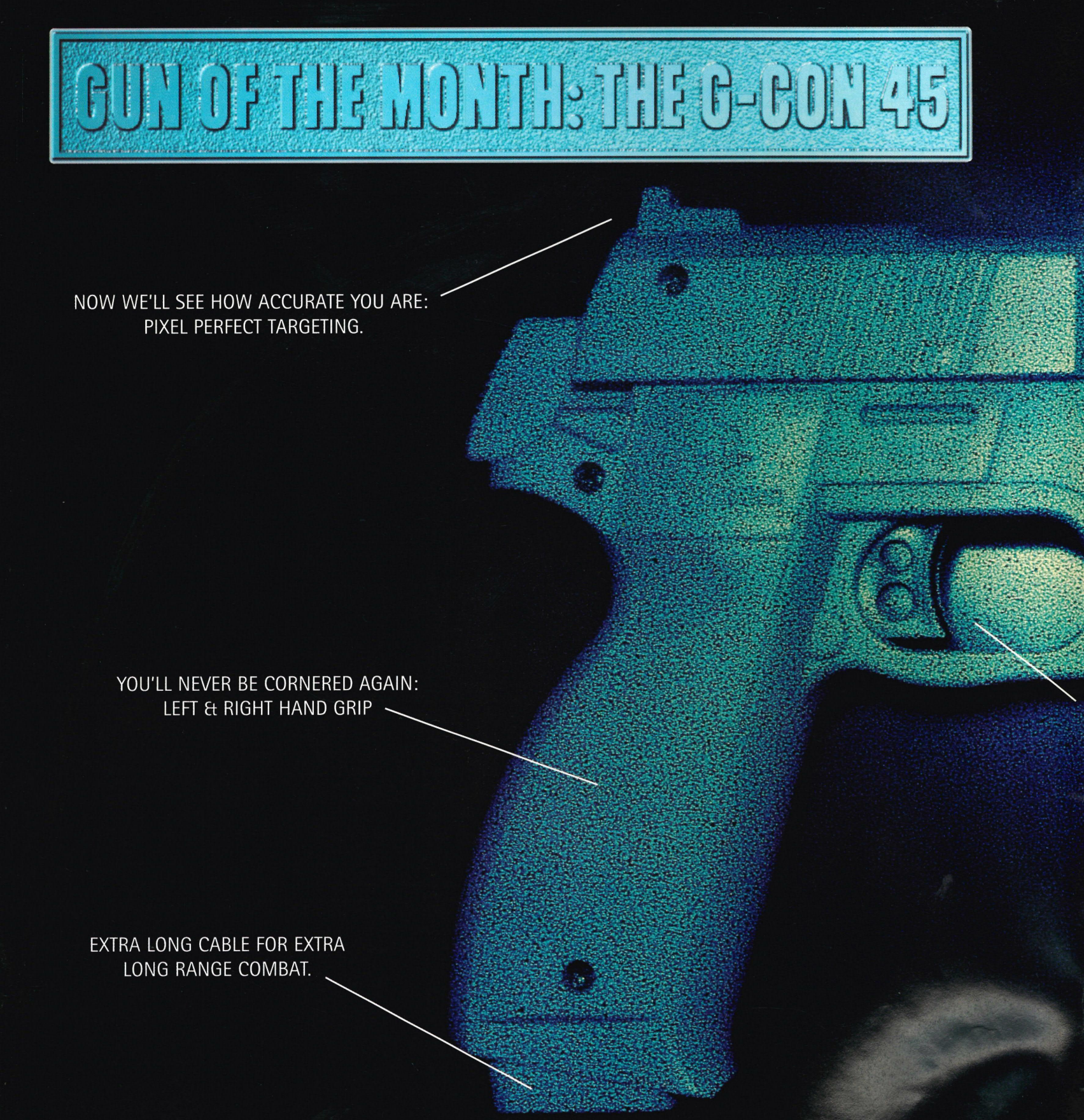
PANDEMONIUM 2

FULL REVIEW See how she's GROWN!

EVERY NEW PSX GAME REVIEWED!

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GUN OF THE MONTH: THE G-CON 45



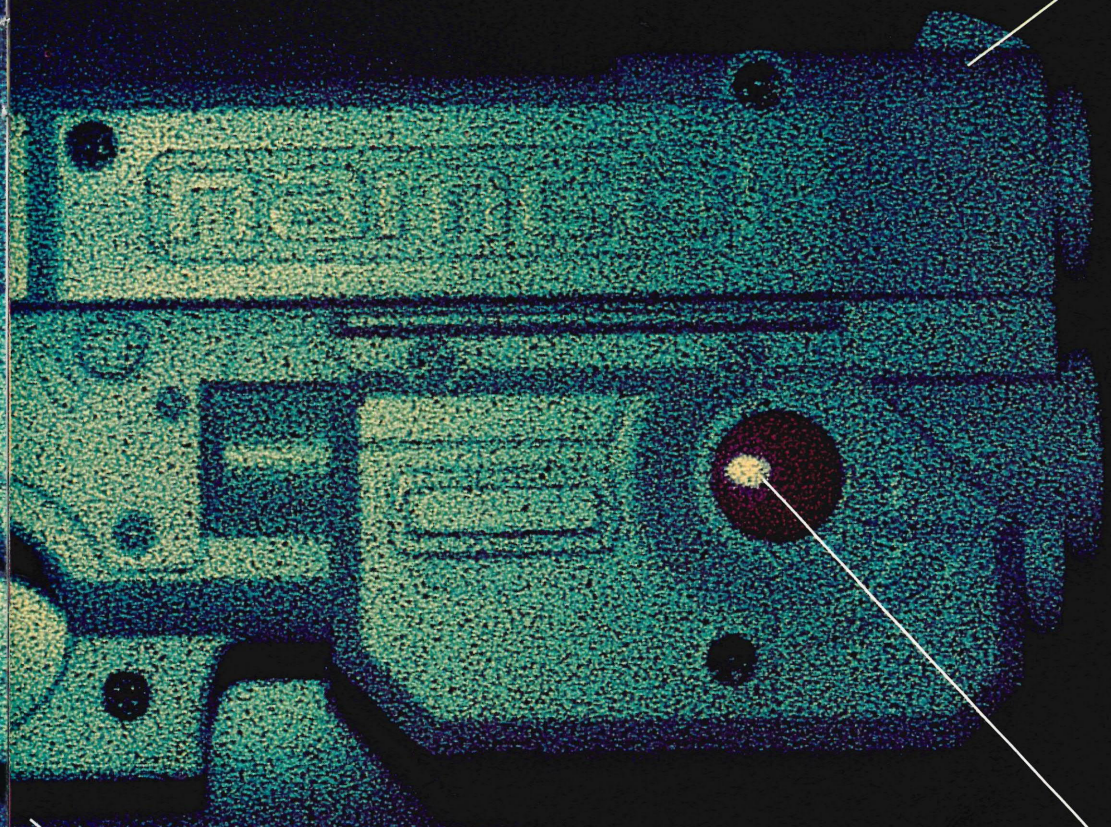
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G-CON 45™ is also compatible with "Point Blank

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REMEMBER: NO SAFETY CATCH.

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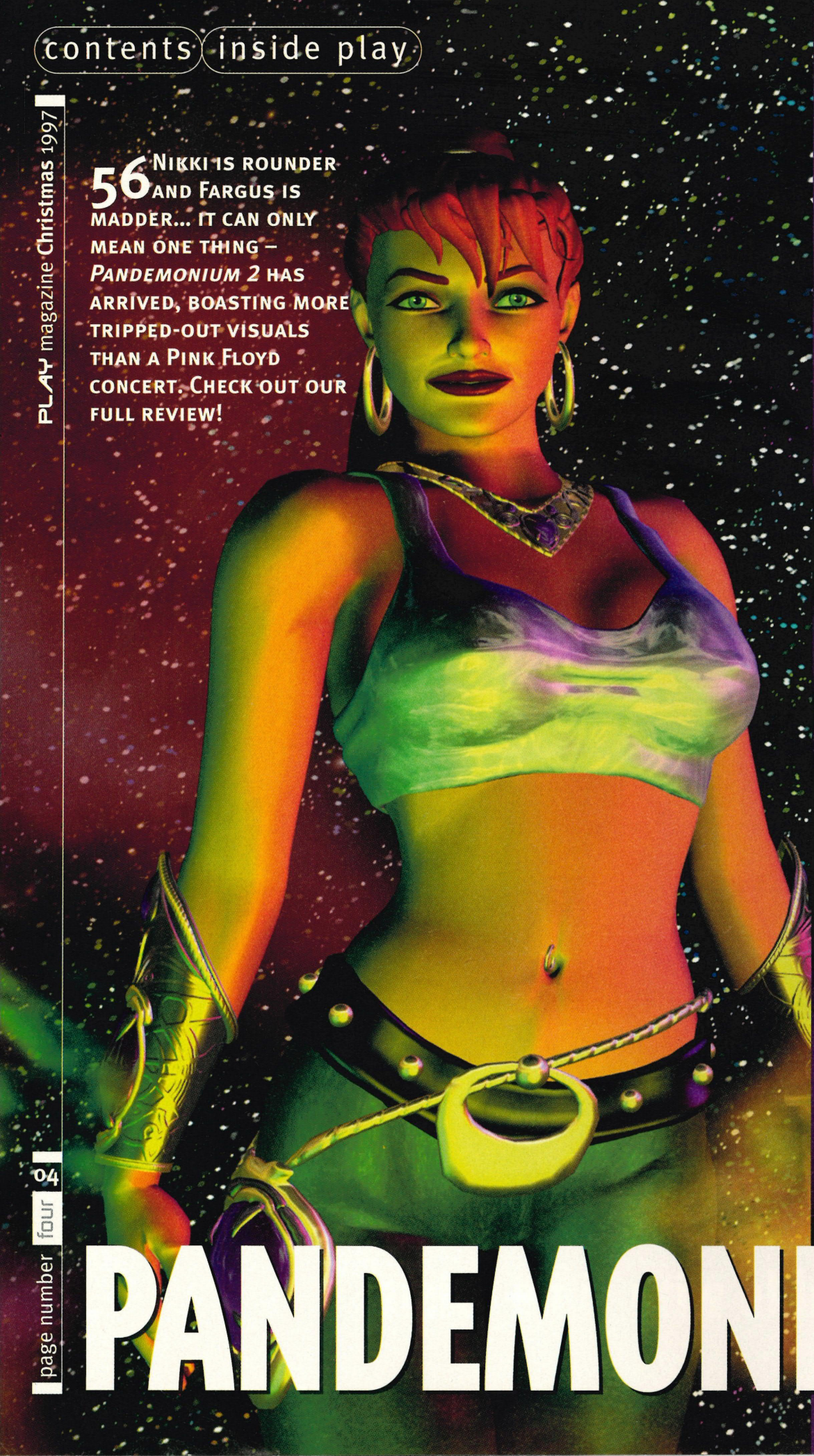
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TIME CRISIS

PlayStation™

56 NIKKI IS ROUNDER AND FARGUS IS MADDER... IT CAN ONLY MEAN ONE THING – *PANDEMONIUM 2* HAS ARRIVED, BOASTING MORE TRIPPED-OUT VISUALS THAN A PINK FLOYD CONCERT. CHECK OUT OUR FULL REVIEW!



PANDEMONIUM 2

5 WAYS TO CONTACT PLAY!

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

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[ARENA]

88 This is where you really get a chance to talk to the members of the PLAY team and air your views to the entire PLAY readership. We want your opinions on the mag and the industry as a whole – get writing now!

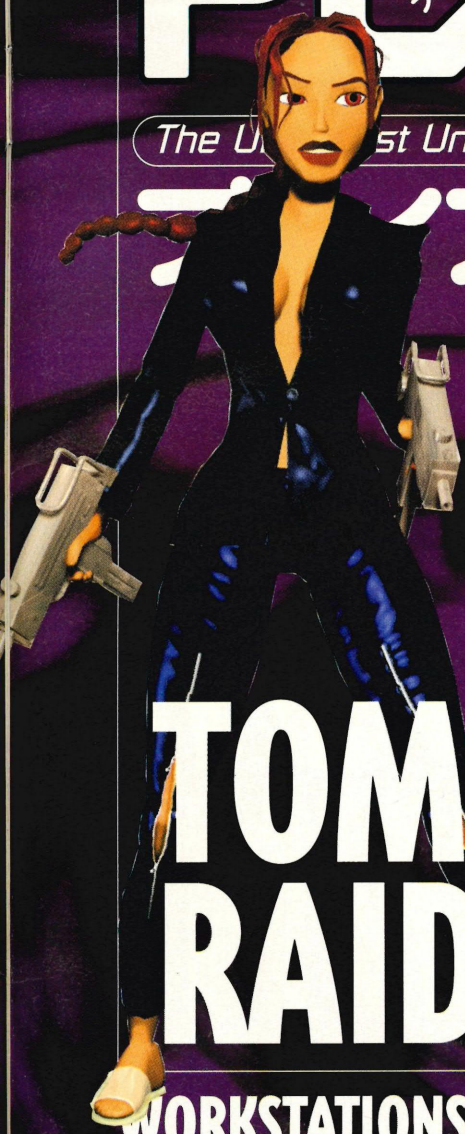
[THE PLAYLIST]

92 A completely new section with reviews of every PlayStation game every covered in PLAY, plus our Playback recommended games, long term tests and any other cool features we can stick in to make this the ultimate buyers' guide!

inside PLAY プレイステーション

issue twenty eight

The Ultimate Unofficial PLAYSTATION Magazine!





GRAND THEFT AUTO

28 Mow-down nuns, sell drugs, pick-up hussies... you're in it for the money in DMA's fantastic joyriding sim!

DISCWORLD 2

42 Once again we're dragged off to Terry Pratchet's loony dreamworld to explore more magic and mystery, our expert panel of warlocks give their verdict.





TOMB RAIDER 2

20 She's here (at last) and itching for adventure in the biggest release of the year! PLAY goes digging for treasure and intrigue in the essential eight page review!

TEST DRIVE 4

36 Driving four-wheeled sex machines at alarming speeds is the name of the game in EA's surging racing game. PLAY tags along for the ride, offering comments en route!

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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WIRED UPS

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

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WIN!

34 A Sony surround sound speaker system worth £400, plus Gamestar steering wheels and copies of Telstar's speedy *Formula Karts* game. Strike it lucky on page 34!

PLAY REVIEWS

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

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CONSOLE wars all over again, and it looks like Nintendo is ready to do anything (except perhaps *that*) to make people buy its console! This can only mean good news for the gamesplaying millions out there because anything Nintendo can do, Sony has always got to do one better, and the buzz word here is 'value.'

Speaking of value, what do you think of the video then? Pretty impressive huh? That tape is your key to exploring the biggest and most promising releases to land on the PlayStation before and after Christmas, and it is free!

Apart from the vid of course, this issue also boasts the biggest review you'll find to the year's biggest release – *Tomb Raider II*. The hype surrounding this game has escalated to something larger than any of us could have ever believed possible. Think about it, first there was that article in THE FACE, then Lara was shaking her tush along with Bono and chums at Popmart, the countless magazine articles, and then there was the so-called single.

Until recently, I refused to believe that this record existed, thinking that in actual fact it was some elaborate PR stunt set-up to hype the game further, and that Dave Stewart had been merely bunged a couple of grand just to stand around and set tongues wagging. However, I was wrong, and although I still haven't heard the song, it is alleged to actually be "quite good." But why did Lara/Rhona apparently turn down the chance to perform the song on The National Lottery Live?

Hmm, anyway, back to the game. I must admit that it turned out a lot better than I expected too, and you can read the full review for yourself on page 20. Also in this issue we've got our hands on the very first PlayStation copy of *Grand Theft Auto*, which is simply awesome, plus *Actua Soccer 2, Broken Sword II, Pandemonium 2* and *Discworld II* – blimey, talk about the month that the dreaded sequels came back to haunt us! Enjoy the magazine.

Ryan Butt
Editor

PLAYSTA WIRED

news • snippets • rumours • h

DOWN, DOWN AND DOWN!

N64 DROPS TO £100, BUT WHAT HAS SONY GOT UP ITS SLEEVE FOR CHRISTMAS?

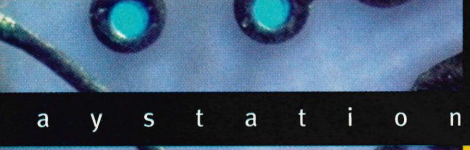
THE CONSOLE wars took another dramatic twist last month as the RRP of the N64 dropped to £99.99 in a bid to prise control of the videogames market back from Sony.

It coincides with what we speculated last issue about Sony releasing its Value Pack, which includes a PlayStation, two controllers and a memory card all – for £129.99. Just for the record, the sales of the N64 have plummeted in recent months according to trade paper CTW, with only 4,000 units being sold compared to 24,000 PlayStations in the second week of October. To make matters worse, any punters who defected to the Nintendo stable before the drop in price came into effect will NOT be compensated!

The move by Sony to release the Value Pack is a very shrewd one, considering that if the market slumps next year, they will have something to fall back on if a price-drop is required. On the other hand, what will Nintendo do now? N64 for £49.99 anybody?

However, just as this issue was going to press, PLAY heard rumours (see Nozin' Around) that the PlayStation would see a similar drop with the basic unit plummeting to £79.99, and the Value Pack to £99.99 before Christmas. Although





a y s t a t i o n



a p p e n i n g s

INTERNATIONAL PLAY BOYS

WHO TO CONTACT AT PLAY MAGAZINE...



RYAN BUTT
Football-loving Ryan was left gobsmacked at the realism of *Actua Soccer 2* this month. "Look, there's Shearer!" he said, but why was Gazza bald as a coot?
play@paragon.co.uk.



GRAEME NICHOLSON
Graeme was the FIRST journalist in the country to get a PlayStation version of *GTA*, which would explain why there are no Hare Krishnas in Bournemouth. Gouranga!
silencio@paragon.co.uk



TOM SARGENT
Tom awarded *Broken Sword II* a PLAY Classic, and ever since he has been moving wherever the rest of the team pointed him to go, like the dole office (only joking Tom!).
tomsargent@paragon.co.uk

N, DEEPER

Ray Maguire, Managing Director at Sony Computer Entertainment UK recently told the industry trade weekly, CTW, that Sony had anticipated the Nintendo price drop, and the only retaliation would be the Value Pack (at £129.99). With the sales figures stated above, it would perhaps be ludicrous for Sony to even consider slashing the RRP of the PlayStation when there seems no real reason to do so.

To tie-in with the new £50 drop in the wallet, the N64 games will now be £49.99 which is great news for all current N64 owners, but judging by the verbal lynching that many dissatisfied dished out to THE Game (Nintendo's UK distributor) for unexpectedly dropping the N64 price without warning before, they should perhaps be bracing themselves for a similar air of displeasure. It does put the two consoles in good stead for the ultimate Christmas showdown, but PLAY certainly wouldn't back Nintendo as coming out on top.





[ABOVE] **Repackaged and looking great – The PlayStation Value Pack!**

THE MAIN EVENT!

ROLL up for the fight of the century! As both super consoles prepare to go head-to-head once more with the N64 having trimmed down its price to be in with a better chance of nabbing the ultimate prize, let Play refresh your mind on how these two titans have fared in the past. It's worth mentioning that the Saturn bottled it at the last minute. When Play relayed the wild rumours about the PlayStation price drop, a spokesperson merely said "F***!" So without further ado, seconds out...

	PLAYSTATION	N64
Launched Price	September 1995 £299.99	March 1997 £249.99
1st Push Price	May 1996 £199.99	May 1997 £149.99
2nd Push Price	March 1997 £129.99	October 1997 £99.99
Next	Value Pack Price drop?	Nothing

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.

It has been announced that Codemasters is to follow-up its cracking racing game, TOCA Touring Car Championship with *Colin McRae's World Rally*, due out early next year.

After the incredible news of the N64 price drop, rumours were flying around that the PlayStation would follow suit and drop to £79.99 for the standard console unit, and £99.99 for the value pack – which would seem odd considering that the value pack has only just been introduced. However, when we confronted SCEE with this rumour, a spokesperson flatly denied the rumours and stated categorically that there would be "No way" that the PlayStation will drop in price, adding that "We're not interested in dropping the price, only offering more value."

50 million PlayStation discs have now been manufactured in total worldwide, which, when you think about it, doesn't seem a lot, and that takes into account sample and demo disks. Still, what goes around comes around because Sony has started to buy back old titles from many stores in Japan to clear the path for new software to invade the shelves and thus reduce the possibility of having to reduce the price of games. Clever sods!

And finally, there's a rumour that the last few issues of PLAY have sold over 50,000 copies. Thanks to you all.

F1'97 SCREECHES TO A HALT!

DESPITE notching up record-breaking first day sales of 40,000 copies, Psygnosis' *F1 '97* has now entered the pits (or should that be docks?), only to emerge as a totally new game after the company ran into legal trouble.

It would appear that Psygnosis' lucrative Formula One license expired in September, meaning that when the game hit the streets, the company was no longer entitled to use the official F-1 teams, drivers or circuits. The upshot of it all was the mass withdrawal of the original batch, and a hasty ship-out of 'new' version which will not include the FIA logo or indeed any references to the Formula One Administration (FOA). So hang on to your original copy and it could be worth a bit in years to come, maybe.

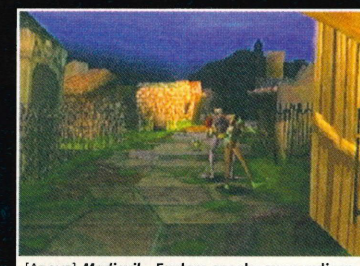


[ABOVE] **The game formerly known as *F1 '97* will rise again, but expect numerous alterations to have occurred.**

GET MEDIEVAL ON YOUR ASS!

NEARING completion this month is the fantasy adventure, *Medievil* from SCEE. The game is an action/adventure that combines elements of shoot-'em-up and puzzle solving, and draws its inspiration from Tim Burton's surreal showpiece, *A Nightmare Before Christmas* and the *Addams Family*.

Medievil features a central character called Sir Daniel Fortesque, who is in actual fact a walking undead who cannot R.I.P until a crazed sorcerer stops spreading his demonic plague of jolly zombies throughout the land. The game makes impressive use of 3-D, as Fortesque scales the 30 levels bashing killer ants, wolfs, demon and assorted monsters – a lot like Pandemonium. The game is released early next year, and you can expect a full preview next issue.



[ABOVE] ***Medievil* – Explore spooky surroundings whilst being pursued by freaks.**



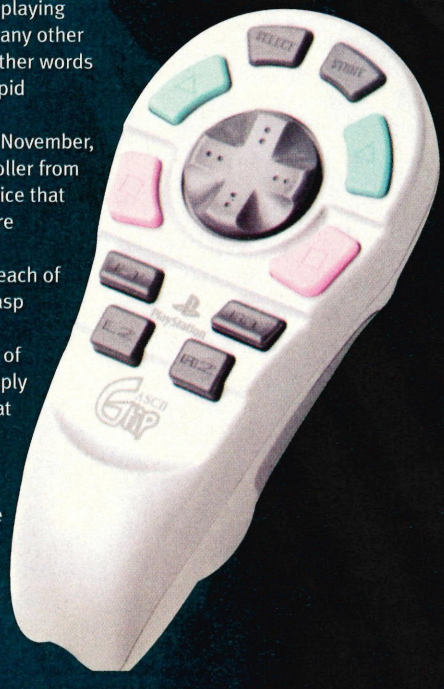
[ABOVE] ***Medievil* is a colourful 3-D action game where you get to hack things to a pulp.**

GET A GRIP!

"A CAN of lager in one hand, the ASCII Grip in the other... " This, according to ASCII Entertainment is all you need for a top night in playing *Final Fantasy VII* or indeed any other RPG or strategy game (in other words one that doesn't require rapid movements to succeed).

Released in the UK on 7 November, the new one-handed controller from ASCII is indeed a novel device that has the D-pad and the entire PlayStation joypad button configuration within easy reach of five digits on an easy-to-clasp unit.

If you fancy winning one of ten ASCII Grip joypads, simply jot down on a postcard what else you could be doing with the other hand whilst using The Grip, apart from swigging lager (and not the obvious one!). The most amusing answer will win, so send your witty answers to the usual address before 20 December. Mark your entries "Gripper Compo."



CHARTS

In association with ChartTrack

Pos	Game	Developer	Publisher	Play Score
1.	Croc	Fox Interactive	EA	78%
2.	V-Rally	Infogrames	Ocean	87%
3.	Formula 1 '97	Bizarre Cr	Psygnosis	90%
4.	Nuclear Strike	EA	EA	88%
5.	Abe's Oddysee	GT	GT	90%
6.	Int Track & Field	Konami	Platinum	85% (old)
7.	Worms	Team 17	Platinum	92% (old)
8.	Lost World	Dreamworks	EA	79%
9.	Actua Golf 2	Gremlin	Gremlin	80% (old)
10.	Rayman	UBI Soft	Platinum	87% (old)

READERS' MOST WANTED

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

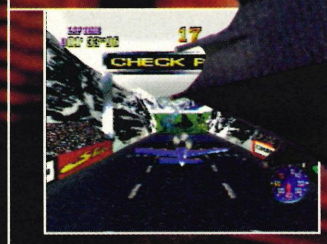
Pos	Game	Developer	Publisher
1.	Gran Tourismo	Sony	Sony
2.	Grand Theft Auto	DMA	BMG
3.	Actua Soccer 2	Gremlin	Gremlin
4.	C&C: Red Alert	Westwood	V*rgin
5.	Crash Bandicoot 2	Naughty Dog	Sony

STIMULATION

NOT SIMULATION











"leaves conventional race games standing"

High speed, gravity defying action

-

11 authentic planes to race

-

Split-screen two player mode

-

Hidden supersonic aircraft to earn and master

-

Stunningly rendered 3D courses

-

No parachute provided

AirRace

THE SKY REALLY IS THE LIMIT

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Tel: 01372 745222 Fax: 01372 740380

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SPICE UP YOUR LIFE!



THEY'VE done it now. After the records, the film, the adverts, the perfume and the nudey pictures in The Sun, the Spice Girls have now gone one better and agreed to star in their very own PlayStation game.

Spice World, released by Sony, has been touted as a Christmas release, but we at PLAY can't quite see how the game will make such a tight deadline, but still. The game isn't your conventional run, jump and shoot affair, it's more of a multimedia package that allows you to mix your own exclusive 'Spicy tracks', conduct press interviews and probably even dress the fair maidens in all kind of outrageous attire.

Little concrete information is known about what another aspects will be included in the game, but PLAY can flatly deny on Sony's behalf that there will be any nude cheats included.

WHERE'S ME RENT?

TRY BEFORE you buy has always been an appealing prospect to gamers, especially considering the price of console games nowadays. Well now the PlayStation rental scheme is gathering momentum with Sony releasing several titles that will be 'exclusive' to the scheme.

What we would normally interpret this to mean is that the games are simply too crap to bother releasing into the shops, and so Sony is trying to recoup its money by renting them out. However, although some of the rental-only titles such as *King of Fighters '96*, *Samurai Shodown* and *Toshinden 3* are a bit dodgy to say the least, others such as *Armoured Core* (previewed this issue) would probably do alright if sold in the shops. The rental-only scheme is already attracting third-party publishers such as Gremlin, so maybe there is money to be made!



[ABOVE] ***Armoured Core*** **– rent it today.**



[ABOVE] ***Toshinden 3*** **– don't bother!**

OVERBOARD WITH WOOLIES!

PSYGNOSIS has gone overboard to offer PlayStation owners a chance to jet off on holiday on the cheap. The software company has teamed up with Woolworths and ABTA to dish out £100 discount vouchers to anyone that buys a copy of *Overboard!* from the high street stores. So now there's no excuse to shiver your timbers in chilly blighty this winter!



[ABOVE] ***Overboard!*** **– buy it from Woolies and slash £££s off your hols!**

CRASHING IN!



[ABOVE] **Stoned again! No wonder the daft animal didn't get to the office for review!**

ALTHOUGH we hoped to bring you the full review of *Crash 2* this month, Sony wanted to hold it back another month so that they could put the finishing touches to the wild Bandicoot's second instalment, which hopefully, from Sony's point of view at least, will set the PlayStation scene alight like he did last Christmas.

A huge TV advertising campaign is scheduled for when the game goes onsale at the start of December and will feature an old couple supping soup before being disturbed by a strange thumping noise (similar to that heard in *Jurassic Park* when the T-Rex approaches for the first time). These vibrations will cause ripples to appear in the aforementioned soup – but they won't just be circular ripples, they'll be square, triangle and cross ripples as well. Fiendish!



[ABOVE] ***Crash 2*** **– More of the same? Or will it offer a fresh new challenge? We doubt it.**

THOSE RELEASE DATES IN FULL

THE SPARKY MONTH OF NOVEMBER

Tomb Raider II (Eidos)
PGA Tour '98 (EA)
NASCAR '98 (EA)
Moto Racer (EA)
Tennis Arena (Ubi Soft)
Pinbal Fantasies Deluxe (Ubi Soft)
FIFA: Road to World Cup 98 (EA)
Test Drive 4 (EA)
NBA Live '98 (EA)
Broken Sword II (SCEE)
Discworld II (Psygnosis)
Actua Soccer 2 (Gremlin)
Pandemonium 2 (BMG)
Grand Theft Auto (BMG)
TOCA Touring Car (Codemasters)
Final Fantasy VII (SCEE)
Resident Evil: Director's Cut (Virgin)
Air Race (THQ)
MDK (Interplay)
Colony Wars (Psygnosis)
Total Drivin' (Ocean)
Time Crisis (SCEE)

AND THE SLIPPERS...

GAME (PUBLISHER)	WAS	NOW
Fighting Force	October '97	Nov '97
Tera Kasi: Star Wars	January '98	April '98
Nightmare Creatures	31 October '97	January '98

RAGE AGAINST TYRANNY



PLAYSTATION POWER

Colony Wars is a triumph, and "space epic" is certainly an accurate description

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JOIN THE STRUGGLE. FIGHT FOR FREEDOM.

WATCH THE WAR ON CHANNEL 4 12.15 A.M. 7/11/97

COLONY WARS

PlayStation

PSYGNOSIS

USA ENTERTAINMENT USA



CAT BUCANNON brings you all the news on what's hot in the land of Star Wars prequels and murderous nannies.

Never a nation to let a major sporting event pass us by, Konami is set to bring next year's Winter Olympics to the PlayStation in a sizzling (or should that be chilly) package that will feature 13 events and athletes from 16 different countries. The games, set in Nagano, Japan, will bring-in a world-wide audience of billions, and Konami iscarefully re-creating all aspects so as to ensure a button-tapping-tastic time is had be all who have the stamina to storm ahead and take the medals in the virtual Olympiad.

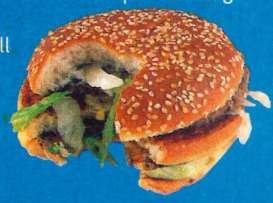


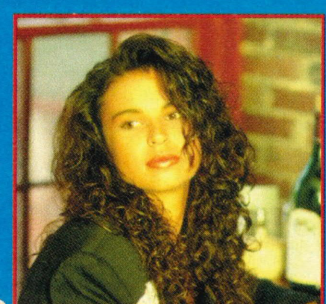
Strategy fans will be delighted to learn that the eagerly-awaited sequel to *Command & Conquer* is soon with us. *C&C: Red Alert* is a must for control freaks and features over 40 missions to test your powers of global domination. It also comes complete with mouse compatability (which was conspicuous by its absence in the original) plus a link up mode so that you can battle it out with your nearest and dearest. As if that wasn't enough, there are a whole host of new gizmos to utilise, such as hot new weaponry, radar-jammers and loads of eager new troops to send out to their doom... sorry, glory.





Forget your Boxsters and your McLarens, the new breed of racing game will feature insects! *Bugriders* from GT is an intriguing two player game whereby you can opt to be wizards and sorcerers who bomb-it around on nippy creatures of the insect variety. The are eight bugs to choose from, each has its own unique handling skills and suchlike. We'll have a full preview next month.



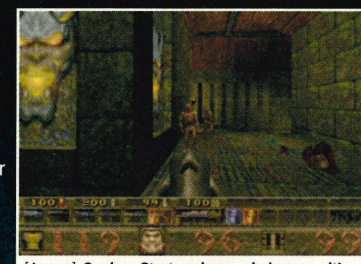


[ABOVE] **Cat Bucannon – could forget more about the software industry than you will ever know!**



QUAKE ALERT!

HAPPENING, not happening, and now happening again! This is the official word from GT Interactive, concerning the recent reports that *Quake* had been scrapped on the PlayStation. The developers originally thought that the insufficient amount of RAM contained in the PlayStation would make it impossible to get a decent game engine running that could support the bulk of *Quake*. But now it would appear that they have re-evaluated the situation and are now going to have another stab at converting the game. A release in the last quarter of 1998 now looks a dead cert!



[ABOVE] ***Quake*** **– Start saving again because it's going to happen, at least until next month.**

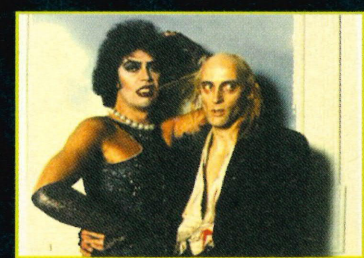
RHONA STILL IN (APPARENTLY)

THERE has been a huge turnaround in the story we published last month about actress Rhona Mitra being sacked as Lara Croft by Eidos. Although PLAY was led to believe that this was the case, Core Design – the makers of *Tomb Raider* flatly denies that her position was ever in jepardy, only that her promotional duties have been "scaled down." Therefore, PLAY would like to apologise to Core Design for any harm caused to both itself or Rhona as a result of the story. The fate of the Lara Croft record is still not known though.

TV HORROR!

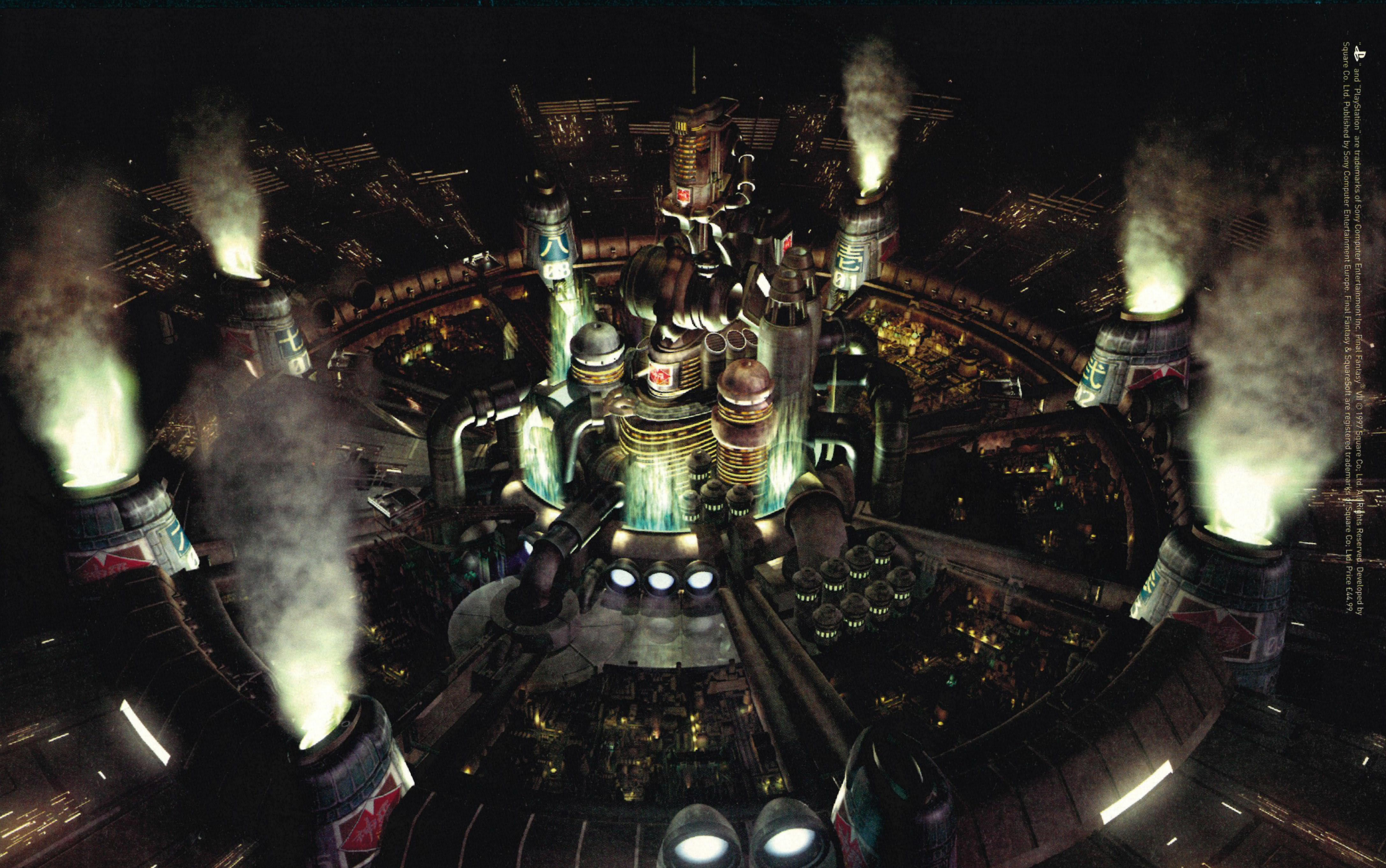
TIME WARP all over again as the cult movie and stage show, The Rocky Horror Show prances to PlayStation. The title, which is being touted as "an interactive experience" will combine footage both old and new, and will feature the show's original actor, Richard O' Brien (that spooky-looking bald bloke who used to do the *Crystal Maze!*).

The player can opt to be either of the central characters who become immersed in the freaky spectacle, and will also be treated to a full re-recording of the famous soundtrack plus additional new FMV sequences. It is also rumoured that Hammer horror veteran, Christopher Lee will provide chilling voice-overs. *The Rocky Horror Show* should appear in the third quarter of 1998 in Europe only. Excellent.



[ABOVE] ***Rocky Horror Show*** **– Bald Ricard O' Brien, and 'friend.'**

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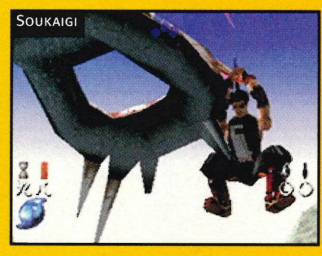
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JAPS EYE

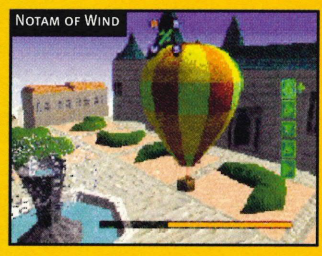
ALL THE LATEST GAMING NEWS FROM JAPAN – THE HOME OF THE SONY PLAYSTATION!

The very first screenshots of Squaresoft's incredible new 3-D action adventure game have been revealed. Due out in December in Japan, *Soukaigi* is a one player extravaganza that follows hot on the creative heels of *Final Fintasy VII* by featuring three disks packed with action and mind-blowing cinematics. More news on this epic title next month when we'll have the full scoop.





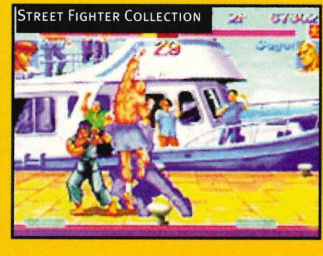
The Japanese are reknowned for their varied tastes in video games. Apart from countless horse racing titles, and more recently a train driving simulator complete with special control console peripheral, Artdink Corporation has done one better this month by releasing *Notam of Wind* – a hot-air balloon simulation game! The game includes competition modes, fly-ins (to test landing accuracy) and challenge modes whereby you must fly under certain weatrher conditions. *Notam of Wind* is out now in Japan.



If you're a puzzle-freak, then you might be interested to learn that Data East has just released *Magical Drop III*, a colourful looking two-player puzzle game similar to *Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo*. The game still involves stringing together formations of coloured blocks, but you have to do it upwards like *Bust-A-Move2* instead of the conventional *Tetris* style.



Finally this month, Capcom has just released *Street Fighter Collection* which features a collection of the classic beat-'em-ups games that caused punters to flock to the arcades all those years ago. What you've got here is *Super Street Fighter II, Super Street Fighter II Turbo* and a special version of *Street Fighter Zero 2* which was only available to play in arcades in Japan – does that mean that the evasive b***ard, Evil Ryu will actually be in it? Find out for yourselves in the full import review featured in next month's issue of PLAY.



PIRACY RUMBLED?

COULD SOFTWARE piracy be a thing of the past? Well according to software encryption specialist C-dilla, punters forking out pittance for 'gold discs' will soon have to give-up their dark ways and pay full whack like us normal people. C-dilla has teamed up with Pan Technology to introduce a revolutionary new system for 'wrapping' the games digitally to control the access available. What this basically means is that when the unfinished discs are sent out to the specialist press and indeed the other people needed to evaluate the game before the official release date, the data will be protected for a pre-determined time period meaning that inevitably it will expire – rendering the disc useless. This is so far being put into practice for CD-ROM titles which require installation onto a machine, but in time there is no reason why the technology can't expand to the PlayStation. More news soon.

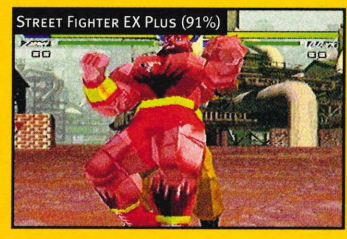
TOCA LOOK AT THIS

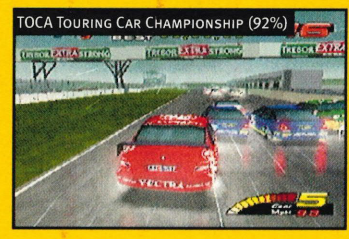
CODEMASTERS proudly unveiled its hot new *TOCA Touring Car Championship* web page this month. The site will feature downloadable demos, reviews, regular news stories and a high score 'Hall of Fame' for the best drivers out there in cyberspace, with prizes given away regularly. The site will be launched to tie-in with the release of the game on November 21, and can be logged-on to at: www.TouringCar.com.



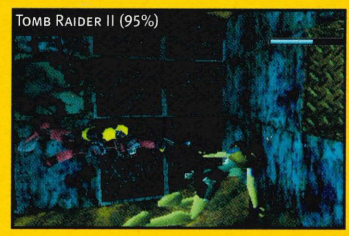
[ABOVE] **Codemasters' very own *TOCA Touring Car Championship* web page, yesterday.**

PLAY RECOMMENDS...













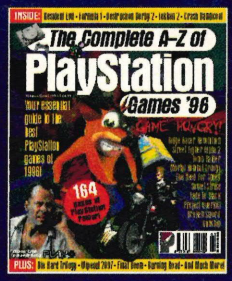


CANE IT

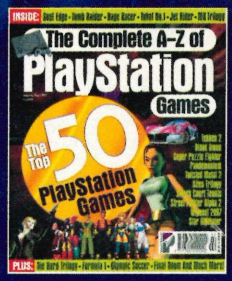
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21st November 1997





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



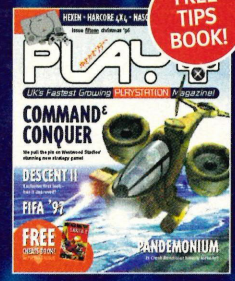
A-Z VOL 2
The top 50 PlayStation games (taken from reviews in PLAY magazine.) £5.50



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



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



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



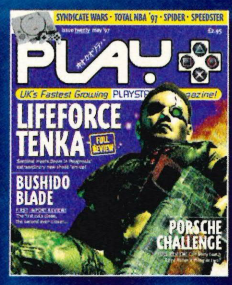
ISSUE [16]
Rage Racer reviewed, *Porsche Challenge* in-depth look, *Tekken 3* news!

BACK ISSUES

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



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



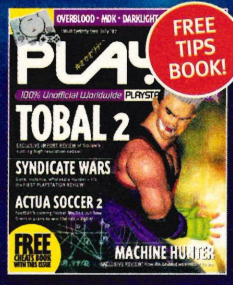
ISSUE [20]
Full review of *Tenka*, massive *Syndicate Wars* preview, plus *Porsche*



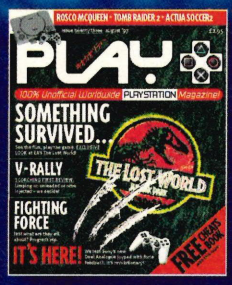
ISSUE [21]
Exclusive look at *Eidos F1*, preview of *Tobal 2*, and hot reviews of *NFS2* and *Peak*

PLAY

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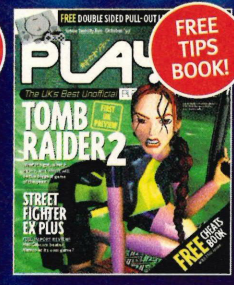
ISSUE [22]
First import review of *Tobal 2*! *Syndicate Wars, Actua Soccer 2, Overblood* and *MDK!*



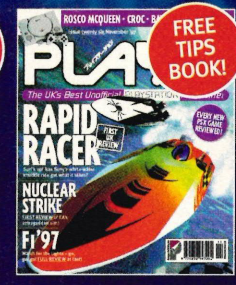
ISSUE [23]
Lost World exclusive, *V-Rally* review, *Rosco McQueen, Fighting Force* and *F1 '97!*



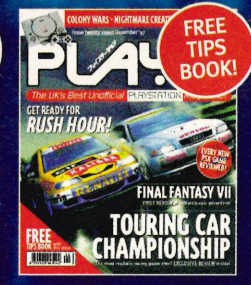
ISSUE [24]
Massive *Time Crisis* review, *E3* show report, *Colony Wars, Deathtrap Dungeon* and *G-Police!*



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



ISSUE [26]
First UK review of *Rapid Racer*, plus *F1 '97, Abe's Oddysee* and *Batman & Robin!*



ISSUE [27]
First review of *TOCA Touring Car*, plus *Final Fantasy VII, Colony Wars, Fighting Force!*

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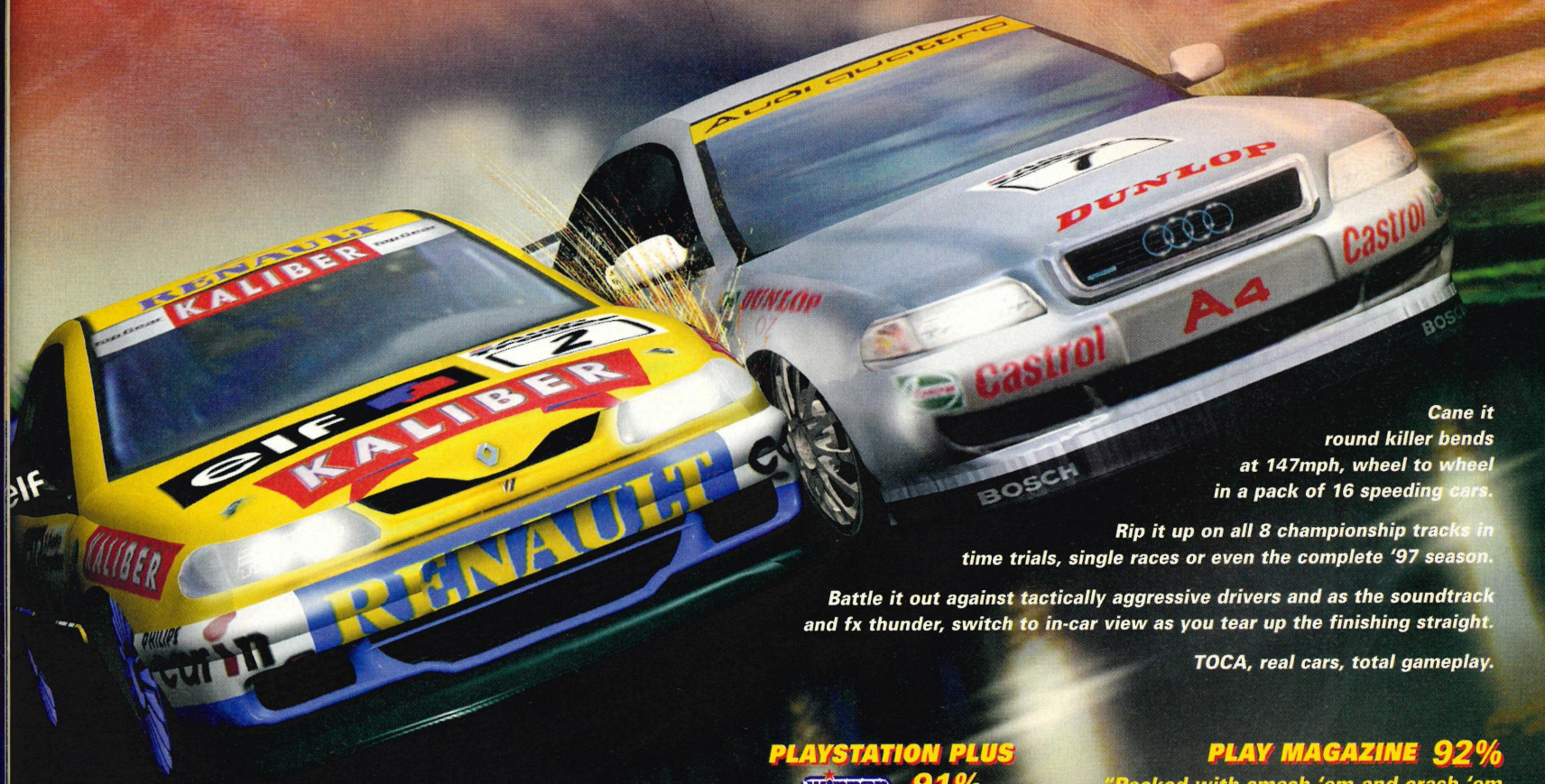
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Official PlayStation Magazine STARPLAYER

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Battle it out against tactically aggressive drivers and as the soundtrack and fx thunder, switch to in-car view as you tear up the finishing straight.

TOCA, real cars, total gameplay.

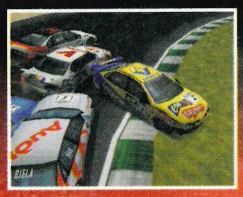
PLAYSTATION PLUS winner **91%**

PLAY MAGAZINE 92%

"Packed with smash 'em and crash 'em gameplay! Even more advanced than Formula 1 '97... Incredible. Really fast, really fun, really racing"

Which of these codes enables you to pass through your opponents?

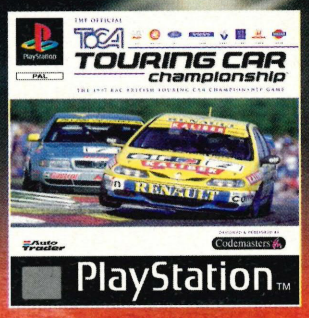
CMCOLLOFF CMNOHITS CMPASS (1 of 3)



Crash Out



Bump & Grind





Thrash It Out



Cane It

PlayStation

Codemasters

PC CD-ROM

www.TouringCar.com

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1997'S REAL CARS, REAL TRACKS, REAL TEAMS, REAL DRIVERS, REAL VIEWS

TOCA

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!

GUIDE TO THE GRADES

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

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 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

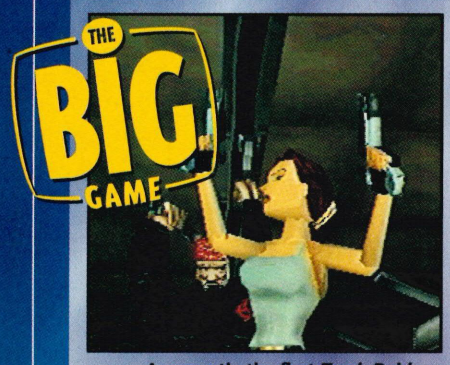

Uses a Memory Card
(for save games)


Split Screen
eg Bust-A-Move 2

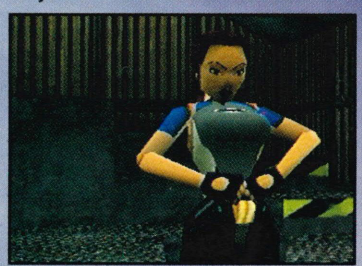

Link Cable compatible
eg Formula 1


Light gun compatible
eg Die Hard Trilogy


Dual Analogue



20 Apparently the first *Tomb Raider* game sold quite well. We've never heard of it of course (yeah right – Ed), but this is the sequel, and developers Core Design rightly believe it to be the biggest game of the year. Lara's animation has been refined, there's more levels, bad guys, vehicles you can drive, and moves – in fact it's probably the best game on the PlayStation. Well that's what we think.



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!

Grand Theft Auto 28

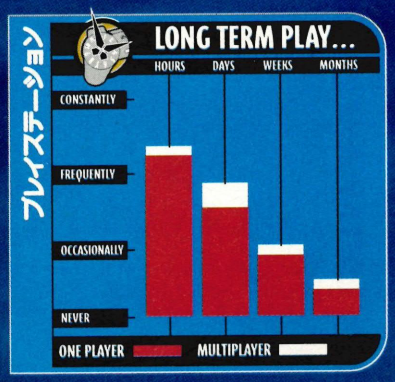
FIFA: RTWC '98 32





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.

Tomb Raider II 20

Test Drive 4 36

Broken Sword II 40

Discworld II 42

Actua Soccer 2 44

Monopoly 46

PGA Tour '98 48

Judge Dredd 54

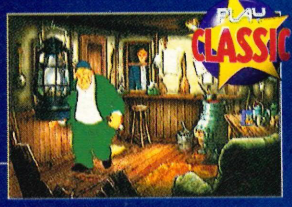
Pandemonium 2 56

NASCAR '98 58

The Note 62

Formula Karts: SE 64

Tennis Arena 66









Wired Up

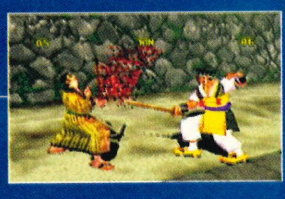
A short look at a game which is either too big to be ignored, or a final assessment before it's reviewed.

Steel Reign 80

Bushido Blade 82

Yusha 84

Armoured Core 86





ENEMIES

This time there are more of them and lots more types, including many different human adversaries.



TIGER: Not exactly a pussycat, but a few bullets should send them nearer to extinction.



RAVEN: They swoop down from on high, clawing at Lara's face if not shot quickly enough.



SPIDER: Big scary ones which lurk in dark corners. They make a strange rattling noise, until blasted.



DOG: Not poodles, but vicious Dobermans whose bite is worse than their bark. Howl when shot.



RAT: Squeaking vermin. Shoot down at the little bleeders before they bite your ankles.

TOMB RAIDER

ATTRACTIVE, INDEPENDENT YOUNG WOMAN SEEKS ADVENTURE AROUND THE WORLD. A BIT OF A CHALLENGE... BUT WELL WORTH IT.

Written By Phil King

You may have drooled over the recent pictures of fleshed-out Lara Croft, Rhona Mitra in *FHM* and *Maxim*, but me, I prefer the real thing. Yes, a mere year after the original *Tomb Raider* shook the video games world (well, didn't the earth move for you?), its superstar heroine Lara is back, bigger and better than ever.

It seems the silicon surgeons at Core Design have been working overtime to slice away the few imperfections and pump up the best bits. It would have been so easy to ride on the megababe Lara hype and churn out a standard sequel, but what we have here outdoes the original in every department.

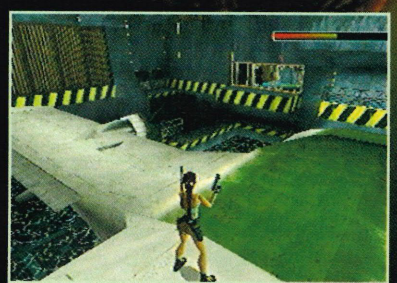
Even Lara herself has gone under the 'knife'. Not only is her body animation smoother, but she now has a more rounded figure – yes, it seems she's finally thrown out that Jean-Paul Gaultier bra! Another neat touch is the

"Lara's propensity for exterminating endangered species continues..."

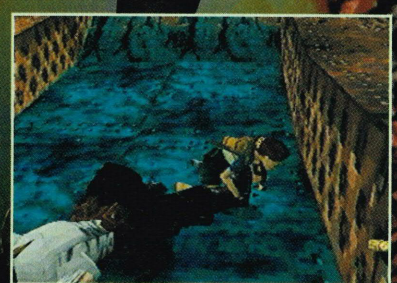
PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Eidos
Customer support: (01332) 297797
Price: £44.99
Release date: 21 November

One Player | Memory Card



[Above] No wonder those plane tickets were cheap. Lara finds herself on an oil rig packed with villains.



[Above] No she's not cleaning some guy's boots – it's always worth searching dead baddies for pick-ups.



[Above] Lara needs to find the right key to open certain doors.



SHARK: Make sure you've got your harpoon ready or you'll soon be exploring its cavernous mouth.



BARRACUDA: Talk about a big fish, this toothsome terror can bite chunks out of you, if it gets near.



MORAY EEL: Scary-looking blighters which inhabit the depths of the ocean. Harpoon 'em.



GOLDEN EAGLE: Another protected species on Lara's hit list. These flap around in the mountains.



LEOPARD: Prowling about the snowy levels, they can get quite catty about Lara's fur coat.



HUMAN: There are several types, ranging from gun-toting gangsters to stick-wielding Tibetan monks.



YETI: Does it really exist? Find out as Lara explores the remote parts of the Himalayas.

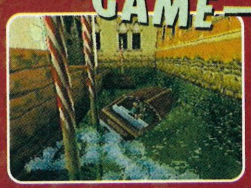
AIDER 2

PLAY CLASSIC THE BIG GAME



[Above] Death in Venice. Lara locks onto a baddie up on the balcony.

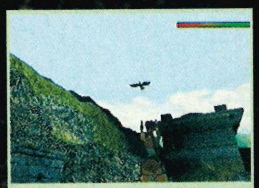
TAKE A RIDE



One of the most exciting new features is the ability to drive/ride vehicles. The novelty of climbing into a speedboat and driving it around Venice is a truly joyous experience. It also comes in essential for reaching a timed gate before it closes. Later on, Lara gets to grips with a skidoo to speed around the snowy slopes. It really is brilliant fun.



[Above] Sharks patrol this rusting shipwreck, aiming to take a bite out of our tasty heroine.



[Above] Lara's pistols lock automatically onto a soaring raven.

way her long pony tail swishes about realistically as she frolics around the world.

AGILE FIGHTER

Fans of the first game will know how agile this girl is, jumping sideways, swimming, shimmying along ledges, and rolling on the ground (ahem), but she's got even more moves to play with this time. A midair roll comes in very handy during combat, and she can also roll 180° while underwater – a welcome inclusion as it could get a bit tricky manoeuvring through tight tunnels in the original. Most impressive, and important to the gameplay, is her ability to climb ladders and rock-face handholds – and in any direction; up, down, sideways.

The one glaring omission is that there's no analogue joypad support – which anyone who's played *Super Mario 64* will know can be supremely instinctive. Nevertheless, Lara's control system is easy enough to learn and largely unchanged from her first outing. Before the game proper begins, you can practice the controls in the comfort of Lara's home with its army-style assault course in the garden and spoken directions from Lara to help you master every move. Naturally, you can go inside her beautiful house and – surely the dream of a million Lara fans – even get into her bedroom!

When you've calmed down a bit, it's time for the real adventuring to begin. Somehow, as in Bond films, the plot doesn't seem to matter very much, but if you're interested, this time Lara (the world's sexiest archaeologist) is searching for the Daggers of Xian, which she believes are hidden in an emperor's palace in the Great Wall of China. Naturally they aren't, otherwise it'd be a pretty quick game, which leads her on another trek through various scenic locations all around the world – she must do a hell of a lot of shopping on her Am-Ex card to rack up all those free air miles!



TO THE WALL

Dropped off by a chopper at

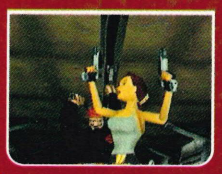
STORY SO FAR

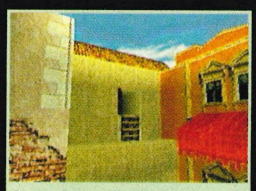
Upon restarting a saved game, you may want to know where you're up to. Well, this special option gives a resumé of the story, by letting you watch all the interlevel cut scenes accessed so far – a great idea. You can press a button to flick to the next scene if you get bored.

Another nice touch is that from the inventory screen you can peruse Lara's vital statistics, including secrets found, the time taken so far on the current level, and even how far she's travelled.

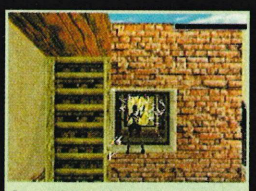








[Above] Upon flicking a switch, you're often shown which door it opens.



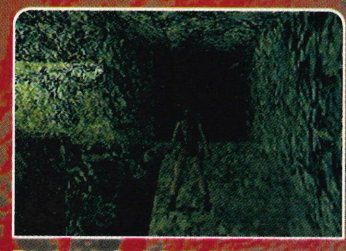
[Above] Breaking and entering. Lara can now fire at windows to smash them and go through.



[Above] You need to speed to the open gate before the clock strikes thirteen. Oops, did I mention the mines?

the Great Wall, Lara slides down the rocks into a cavern which looks pretty similar to something from the first game, but this déjà vu is soon dispelled. Splashing into a water pool, you notice she can now wade through shallow water, as well as swimming in deeper pools. Climb up a few ledges and leap a few gaps – using the old 'safe walk' feature to ensure she can't fall off the edge – and she emerges on the Great Wall itself to admire the spectacular view. Using an enhanced level editor, Core have been able to produce stunning exterior landscapes in addition to the usual rectangular rooms and tunnels.

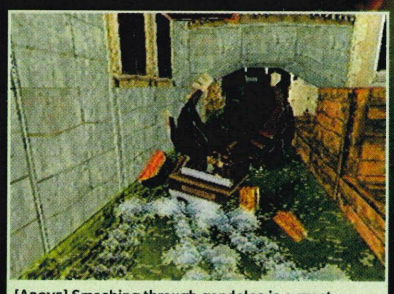
Another thing you'll soon notice is how challenging this first level is, including being chased by boulders, avoiding twin sets of sliding spikes, running past crumbling blocks and scything blades, not to mention tackling a fair few tigers and a roaring T-Rex! Yet this is just a taster for things to come. Core admit the game is far tougher than its predecessor, but then if you managed to complete that without cheating, you'll undoubtedly enjoy the new challenge. Games-playing novices may find it all a bit too much, though – and I'd advise them to cut their teeth on the original game first (but then who hasn't by now?).



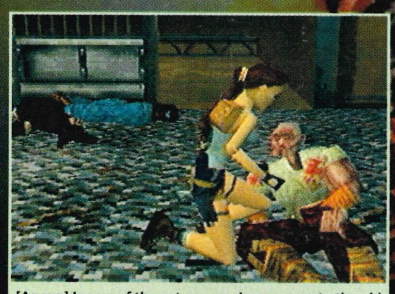
FLARES ARE IN

Hey, who turned the lights out? Some areas feature a complete lack of lighting that can leave you flummoxed. Luckily, Lara carries a limited supply of flares to shed a light on things. This often reveals previously hidden switches etc. She can also drop or throw the flare to engage in combat. Why such a modern girl doesn't just carry a torch is a mystery – maybe she used the batteries for something else?





[Above] Smashing through gondolas is a great wheeze.



[Above] In one of the cut scenes, Lara comes to the aid of an injured man before undressing in front of him!



"You can now save your position at any point during play..."

Ah, but where are those lovely purple crystals where I can save my position you ask? Horror of horrors, they are nowhere to be seen, but fear not, because you can now save your position to a memory card at any point during play. This excellent feature means an end to the frustration of having to repeat the same section over and over again after dying. It also puts to shame some other recent releases which have cut right down on the number of restart points – *The Lost World*, for one – in order to make things more difficult. *Tomb Raider II* doesn't need to resort to such artificial methods; its substantial challenge is created by the clever puzzles, thrilling combat, daring platform jumping, and an incredible amount of exploration.

For the latter, Lara's new moves really do come into play, in particular her vastly



Total PlayStation
"We strongly recommend you grab a copy"

PlayStation Power
"Highly recommended"

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PC spec: P133 with Windows '95 and 3D accelerator card.

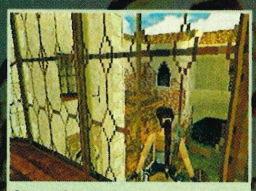
Download the demo from www.overboard.co.uk.

PlayStation

PSYGNOSIS

ACCELERATOR ENHANCED GRAPHICS

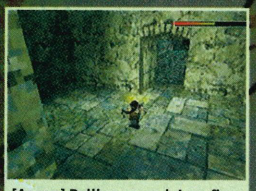
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Allow 28 days for delivery of demo. 1000 demos available while stocks last.



[Above] Lara plans her next move from an ornate bridge.



[Above] As well as climbing up and down, Lara can shift sideways on ladders.



[Above] Rolling around, Lara fires at strange rattling spiders.



[Above] Uh oh, it's Lost Valley time again as a T-Rex stomps out of the darkness.

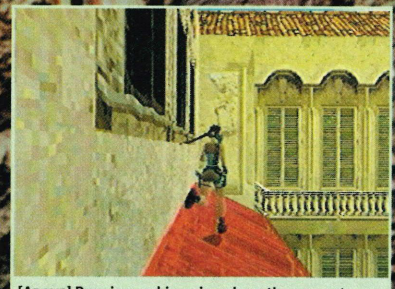
improved climbing. Add to this the ability to smash through windows to reach new areas – not to mention driving the odd vehicle, such as speedboats and skidoos – and the possibilities are near endless. Her limited movements in the original meant that you could pretty much see where it was and wasn't possible to go, but things are a lot less signposted now – also aided by the lack of those purple save crystals which indicated you were on the right track.

BIG ONES

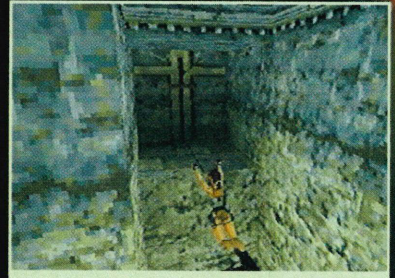
There's certainly some sort of exploring to do. As far as Lara's concerned, size does matter: some of the 18 levels are immense. For instance, if you thought the multilayered St Francis' Folly was amazing in the first game, the sequel's fourth-level Italian opera house will surely leave your jaw embedded in the floor. Ornately decorated from domed roof down through three storeys to the stage itself, the only thing missing is Pavarotti warbling away. As on other levels, what really will have you gasping in disbelief is the sheer scale and complexity. Just when you think you've explored every area, yet another secret passage turns up to take you into a whole new section. The areas are cleverly interlinked in three dimensions, so you often eventually emerge through a hidden door into a previous location.



[Above] Running out of air, Lara pulls an underwater lever to open a hatch – hopefully to the surface.



[Above] Running and jumping along the parapets, Lara explores Venice in her own way.



[Above] As before, Lara often needs to jump and grab onto ledges. Once she's pulled herself up, she can flick that switch.



[Above] Spot the Lara... ah, there she is on the Great Wall of China. You get an occasional distant view like this when you reach an interesting location.

COSTUME DRAMA

That old blue vest must be sweatier than Bruce Willis's by now, so Lara gets to change kit now and again in *Tomb Raider II*. The first time it happens, she undresses right in front of an injured man: clearly the shock is too much for him as he croaks shortly afterwards! Sadly, we don't get the same view of lovely Lara changing into her skin-tight wetsuit, and don't ring us asking for a 'nude cheat' – there isn't one. Later on she dons a fur-lined coat for the mountain levels. Let's face it, that scanty outfit could prove a bit chilly in the Himalayas, if you know what I mean.

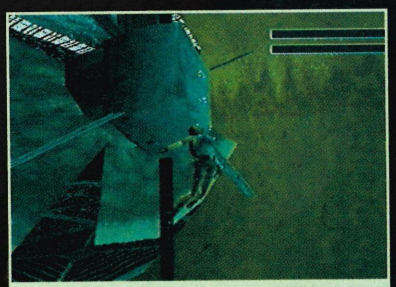


"Size does matter: some of the 18 levels are immense..."

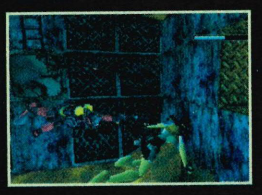
Finding your way around such immense and convoluted levels can prove a headache, never mind searching for secrets. This time there are three secret statues to collect on every level, but they're often hidden in the most inaccessible, darkest nooks and crannies. That's another new aspect: some areas range from poorly lit to pitch black. This is where Lara's flares come in handy; often essential. She can even chuck one forwards, if she needs her hands free for combat etc, and pick it up again later. Trouble is, her supply is strictly limited, so more need to be collected along the way. This is perhaps the only potential for frustration in the game: if you run out of flares, you could easily find yourself trapped in a dark



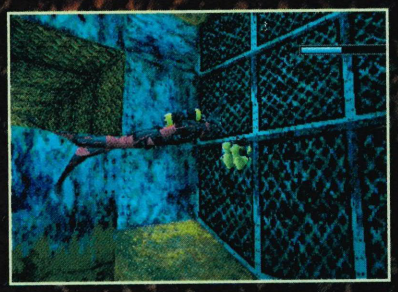
[Above] Phew, that was close. Lara hauls herself up just in time to avoid the sliding spikes.



[Above] When swimming, watch out for propellers which suck Lara to her doom.

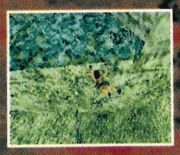




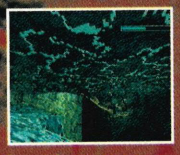


LARA'S MOVES

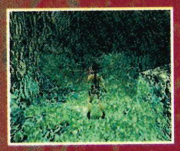
PHEW, CAN THIS GIRL MOVE? HERE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE THINGS SHE CAN DO.



SHIMMY: AS BEFORE, LARA CAN GRAB HOLD OF LEDGES AND CREVICES TO SHIMMY ALONG.



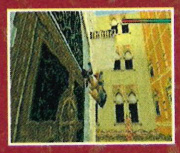
SWIM: LARA CAN DIVE INTO POOLS FOR A SWIM, BUT ON LATER LEVELS COLLECTS A HARPOON TO PROTECT HER.



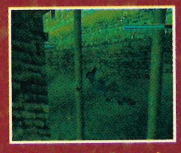
WADE: SHE CAN NOW WADE THROUGH SHALLOW WATER, RATHER THAN SWIMMING.



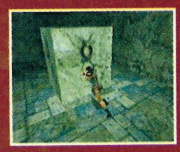
CLIMB: LARA CAN CLIMB UP/ALONG LADDERS AND HANDHOLDS IN THE ROCK.



MIDAIR ROLL: ANOTHER NEW MOVE, LARA JUMPS FORWARD AND SIMULTANEOUSLY ROLLS AROUND.



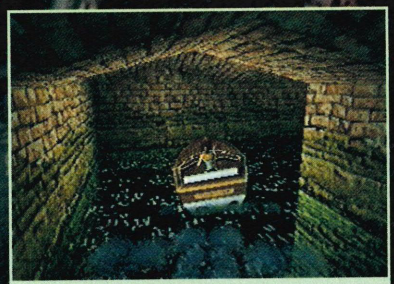
UNDERWATER ROLL: A HANDY ABILITY, THIS LETS LARA DO A QUICK 180° TURN WHILE SWIMMING.



PUSH/PULL: AS PREVIOUSLY, LARA CAN PUSH OR PULL CERTAIN BLOCKS TO OPEN PASSAGES ETC.



[Above] After grabbing a ledge, Lara can shimmy along it.



[Above] With flare in hand to light the darkness, Lara speeds through the sewers.



[Above] Beautiful but deadly, this prowling pussycat wants Lara for dinner.



tunnel – and even with Lara for company, that's not a happy prospect.

ANIMAL BLOODLUST

Gunning down a few enemies will soon relieve any pent-up aggression, however. Lara's aristocratic propensity for exterminating endangered species continues with a cull of the local wildlife, including tigers and golden eagles. One of the criticisms of the first game was the scarcity of the enemies, particularly on the later levels. This seems to have been addressed with plenty of animals and, in particular, lots more gun-toting humans to shoot at.

Lara starts her adventure with pistols and shotgun. Ammunition and more potent weapons can be collected throughout the game, often from dead humans, so it's always worth searching them. New weapons include an M16, grenade launcher, and harpoon gun – for tackling underwater enemies such as sharks.

As before, however, it's not the visceral thrill of combat which dominates, but the cerebral challenge of the puzzles and traps. Fans will be familiar with the standard lever pulling and block pushing, but it's less formulaic, with switches to move items which you might have thought were merely decorative, such as chandeliers, paintings, and curtains. Such subtlety adds to the



KEEP A SECRET



The first game featured a differing number of secrets on each level, so you never knew if you'd found them all until you'd completed the current stage. This time there are always three per level: red, green, and white figurines. That doesn't make finding them any easier, though: they're usually hidden away in the most hard-to-reach and hazardous places. You'll have to be a better explorer than Marco Polo to find them all. It's highly unlikely that you'll achieve this when completing the game the first time – no mean feat in itself – so you'll want to go back and look for them afterwards.



[Above] A-ha, Lara discovers a secret figurine – there are three on each level.



[Above] The light-sourcing from weapons fire is impressive and can substitute nicely if you've run out flares.

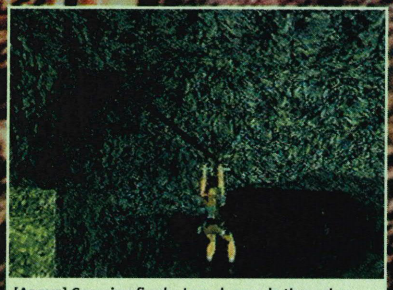


[Above] Attacked by an enemy diver, Lara fires back with her new harpoon gun.

enjoyment and you always get a big buzz from solving a tricky conundrum.

BETTER THAN EVER

So there you have it. *Tomb Raider II* is an enthralling giant of a game, packed with countless delights (not forgetting the superb dramatic music) and a mammoth challenge to keep you playing for weeks on end, at the least. Some may note the lack of real innovations, apart from a few new moves and the inclusion of vehicles, but that would surely be nit-picking. Yes, it may lack the sheer impact that the original had on us and be noticeably similar, but then that's the bane of every sequel to a milestone product. Once you're immersed in the gameplay, you'll realise that Core has managed to improve considerably on one of the greatest PlayStation games ever made – no mean feat. There's no doubt that this is video-gaming at its very finest.



[Above] Grasping firmly, Lara descends through a cavern on a rope slide.



[Above] Whoah, look at the size of those two boulders! Better keep running.



[Above] Getting around those Venetian canals is made easier by climbing into a speedboat.

"An enthralling giant of a game!"



PLAY

Looks	●●●●●●●●●●
Sounds	●●●●●●●●●●
Gameplay	●●●●●●●●●●
Value	●●●●●●●●●●
Sexiness	●●●●●●●●●●

PLAYED 95%

Lara does it again!

ALTERNATIVELY:
TOMB RAIDER (94%)
NIGHTMARE CREATURES (90%)

EYE FOR AN EYE
TOOTH FOR A TOOTH



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STARRING KURT HECTIC IN

"THE ULTIMATE SHOOT'EM UP"

PLAYSTATION PLUS

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GRAND TH

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

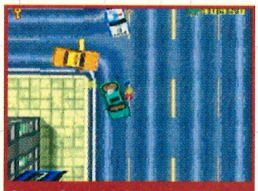
TIRED OF BEING THE GOOD GUY? BECOME A PROFESSIONAL FELON IN THE LATEST FROM LEMMINGS CREATORS DMA, *GRAND THEFT AUTO!*

Written By Graeme Nicholson

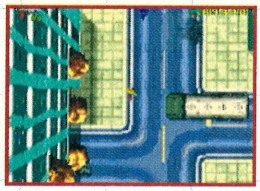
For too long the emphasis in video games has been on squeaky clean heroes. For too long we have been sent to rescue captured princesses from despicable overlords. For too long we have been the "good" in the fight between good and evil. It's time to try something new. Something different. Something bad.

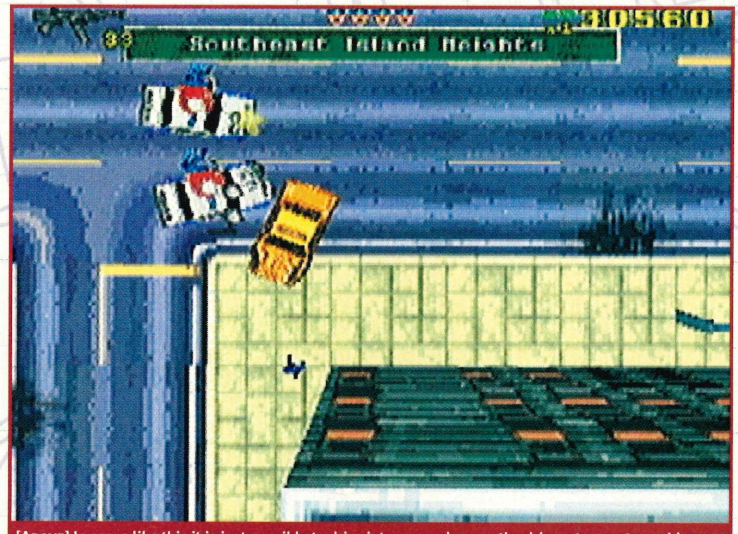
Grand Theft Auto brings out the worst in people, and gives you a totally original concept that gamers have been crying out for since they were first told to save those little men in *Defender* instead of bomb them. You adopt the bitter persona of a merciless low life crook with no redeeming qualities but the ability to handle a getaway car on the city streets like your life depended on it – probably because it does! You're on the other side of the law, with nobody to look out for but yourself in this totally fabulous "crime sim."

Viewed entirely from above on the streets of three inconceivably large cities based on New York, San Francisco and Miami, the aim of *GTA* is to build up your criminal record by doing jobs for crime families in the area. Using any means necessary and usually involving the illegal acquisition of cars, you must carry out the orders of your current boss to get to the bigger, more profitable assignments and eventually move on to the next city.



[Above] Rule number one: when a policeman is anywhere near, never ever get out of the car!





[Above] In cases like this it is just possible to drive into a squad car as the driver steps out, crushing him underneath.

NARCOTICS

On foot you can walk around, punch and shoot when you find a weapon. It's not much, but then you're not meant to spend that much time strolling around, you're meant to be stealing cars! A single button press is all it takes to heave a respectable citizen from his vehicle – LA riots-style – and take his place in the driving seat. Do be careful not to drag the spinning wheels over your dazed victim as you make good your escape.

The massive cities are packed with a full range of travelling automobiles, from mundane little Nissans to Lamborghini Diablos. School buses to stretched limos. No matter what kind you're after, if you can catch it you can steal it. The sounds, performance and appearance vary greatly to make the ongoing theft tirelessly exciting. It is possible that the majority of your first hours with *GTA* will be spent yanking people out onto the

"*Grand Theft Auto* brings out the worst in people!"



[Above] Steal a stretched limo and take the passengers for a city ride they'll never forget. Dump it in the Hudson when you're done.



[Above] The doors may open the wrong way, but the Lamborghini Diablo is one fast car in *GTA*. Careful though – it's not too tough!

SCANNING AND PAGING

TECHNOLOGY PLAYS A PART IN GTA. YOUR PAGER LETS YOU MONITOR OTHER JOBS THAT YOUR BOSS IS DEALING OUT, SO YOU CAN TRY TO HELP HIM IF YOU'RE IN NEED OF A JOB. ALSO, YOUR RADIO SCANNER LETS YOU HEAR THE POLICE FORCES COMMUNICATING AND REPORTING ON YOUR CRIMES AS YOU CARRY THEM OUT!

Blueprint

Publisher: BMGie
Developer: DMA Design
% Complete: 75%
Expected Release Date: 21 November '97
Origin: Bonny Scotlaaaaand!
No of Players: 1

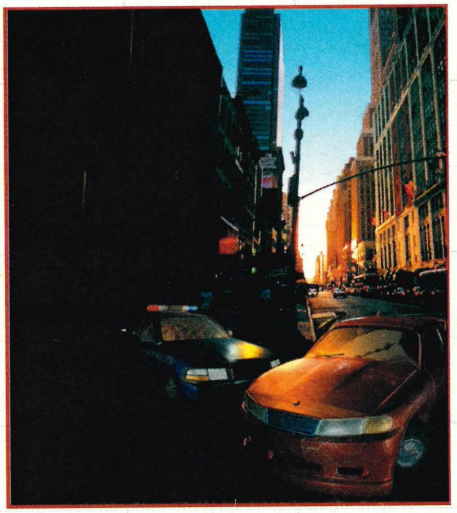
HEFT AUTO

CAR CRIME

IF YOU ARE VERY, VERY LUCKY IN GRAND THEFT AUTO, YOU'LL FIND A COUPLE OF THESE VW HIPPY VANS MYSTERIOUSLY PARKED AROUND THE SAN FRANCISO-THEMED LEVEL. AS YOU CLIMB INSIDE, YOU GET A HUGE "KILL FRENZY!" LOGO ON THE SCREEN AND GAIN CONTROL OF A TINY, EXPLOSIVE-FILLED BUGGY THAT YOU HAVE TO DRIVE UNDER UNSUSPECTING EXPENSIVE CARS AND DETONATE – JUST LIKE IN THE DIRTY HARRY *DEAD POOL* MOVIE! IT'S SICK.

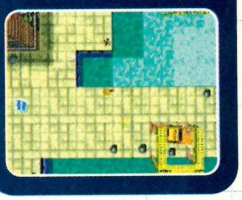






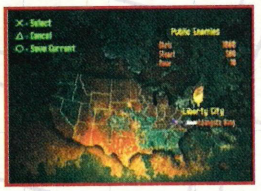
BIT ON THE SIDE

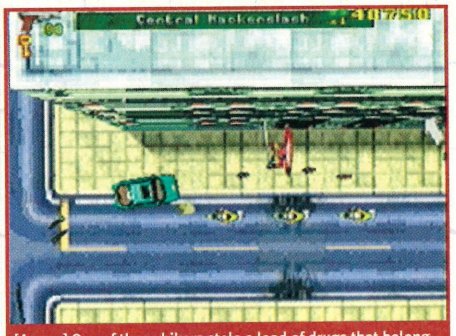
IT IS POSSIBLE TO TAKE A BREAK FROM THE ONGOING MISSIONS AND SELL COOL CARS TO THE ILLEGAL TRADERS AT THE DOCKS OF EACH CITY. IF YOU GET A NICE SPORTS CAR TO THEM IN EXCELLENT CONDITION THEY'LL HAND YOU $12,000 ON THE SPOT – BUILD UP THAT CASH!



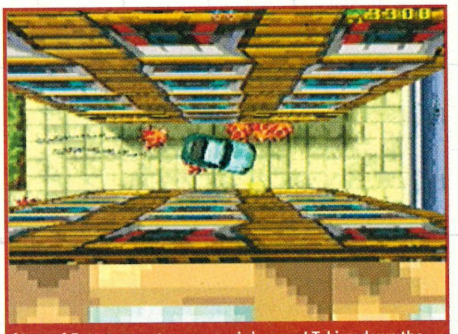


[ABOVE] You try to make a quick getaway, but the traffic may ruin your plans – it *is* New York City after all.



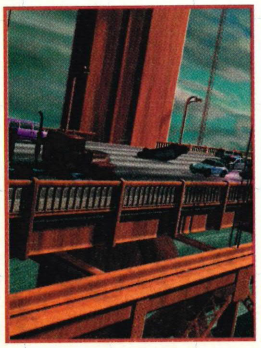


[ABOVE] One of these bikers stole a load of drugs that belong to your boss, so you'd better get them back.



[ABOVE] Eat pavement orange weirdo scum! Taking down the whole row of Hare Krishna's gets you the "Gouranga" bonus.





road and just hammering around city blocks, over bridges and down tight alleyways in their cars. You can carry on doing this indefinitely unless an officer of the law gets close enough to collar you or you kill yourself. The freedom to explore your vast surroundings and pinch a limitless number of cars for your joyriding pleasure is inventive and will no doubt help to shift a few copies when *GTA* is released.

MURDER

When you feel it's time to do some work, your first instructions come via the payphones in Central Park. You answer any phone to receive instructions from an impatient Mr Big who likes to use hysterically colourful language. Although there are 200 missions, the game has been cleverly designed to keep the tasks from being too similar.

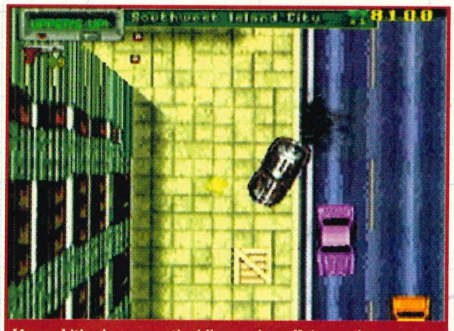
You could be running down rival mob members, picking someone up fresh from a bank job, or making a discreet suitcase drop. The office favourite is currently the spectacular mission where a bent copper wants a little more cash from various dodgy dealings than your host family is prepared to give. You are told where to find a bus parked well off the road that is crammed with explosives, which you then have to park under the police station and abandon seconds before it explodes; setting the whole block alight!

Naturally there are casualties with the amount of reckless high speed driving you do through densely populated cities. Occasionally you will jump a curb and smear a couple of citizens across the pavement – it's unavoidable really – but this is what usually alerts the police. Especially if you were to

CRIME SPEAK

YOUR PHONE MESSAGES FROM THE BOSS COULD BE SEEN AS DOWNRIGHT OFFENSIVE UNLESS YOU LEARN THE UNDERGROUND LINGO. HERE ARE A FEW IMPORTANT WORDS WHICH HAVE DIFFERENT MEANING IN *GTA'S* WORLD OF ORGANISED CRIME.

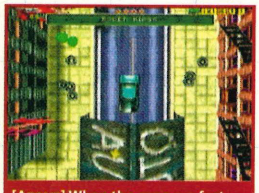
SHIT: ILLEGAL DRUGS
BITCH: ANY FEMALE
BUNS: YOUR BUTTOCKS
SCREWED: KILLED



[ABOVE] It's always worthwhile running off the road to open a crate if you see one. It could be a heavy weapon or even a police bribe.



[ABOVE] The handbrake allows some truly inspired city driving, especially with this smart convertible Porsche Turbo.



[ABOVE] When the cops are fast on your trail, pop into one of these auto-shops for new licence plates or a respray.



[ABOVE] On arriving at an abortion clinic with an employee in the back of the car, you find it's been over run by pro-lifers and you have to get out of there!

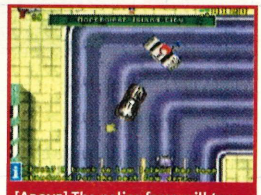


accidentally thunder over a whole line of foot-shuffling, book-selling, lazily-chanting Hare Krishna's simply for bonus points!

EXTORTION

The cops will relentlessly hunt you down and they are a constant worry whilst you try to continue working. The amount of them following you depends on the severity of the crime, so accidentally knocking somebody over will only put a single squad car onto you. However, leading said cop on a foot chase down a side street only to turn and hose him down with a fully automatic machine gun will have them constructing road blocks at every turn. Reverse over them, blow up their cars, pin them in with traffic, just don't get caught! You can even pay cash at corrupt auto-shops around town to change the licence plates or get a respray to throw them off the trail.

Graphics are clearly *GTA*'s weakest point, with minimal use of 3-D and no dazzling special effects to speak of. While gameplay should always come first, the rather crummy scrolling movement present in this unfinished version of the code can bring on a migraine in minutes. Let's hope they've sorted this out by the time we have the full review copy. *GTA* is so morally incorrect that merely loading it up will guarantee you a swift rejection at the pearly gates, but how will it compete against the other big end-of-year games? Find out next month!

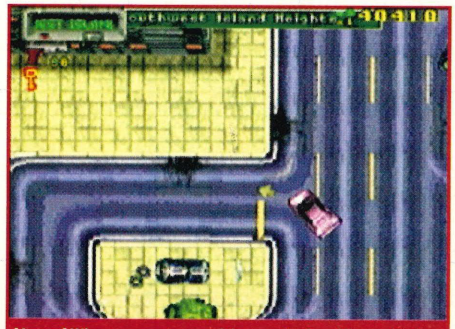


[ABOVE] The police force will try to fishtail your car or even pull handbrake skids right in front of it to stop you!

"Merely loading it up will guarantee you a swift rejection at the Pearly Gates!"



[ABOVE] All vehicles obey the traffic lights, which gives you a perfect opportunity to get out and steal any car you like with ease.



[ABOVE] When you spot a suspicious parked car like the Dodge Viper here, it will normally have a carphone message for you inside.

SOFTOGRAPHY

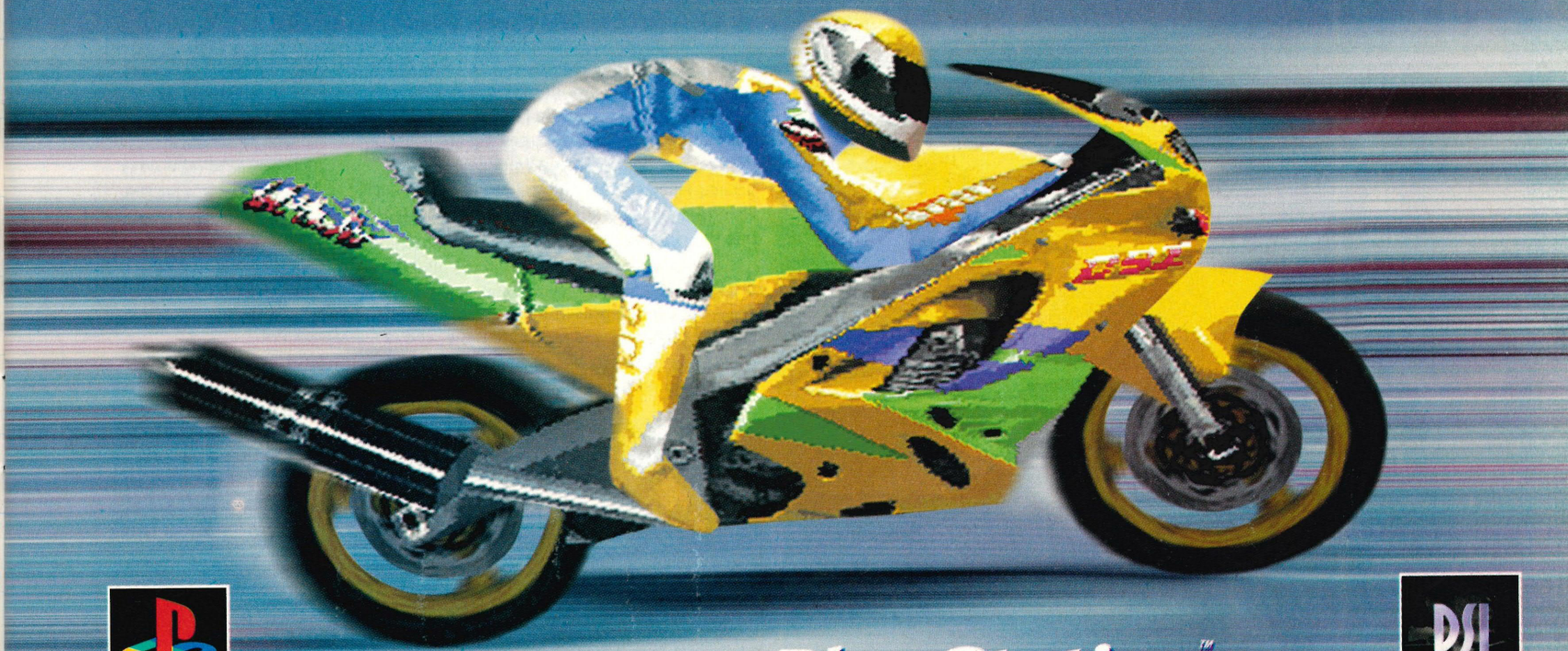
Tanktics (in development for PSX)

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PlayStation

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FIFA: ROAD TO

ANOTHER YEAR, ANOTHER FIFA GAME. BUT 98'S OUTING CASHES-IN ON THE IMPENDING WORLD CUP FINALS IN FRANCE NEXT YEAR. SO THE QUESTION NOW IS WILL THE GAME SELL ON ITS OWN MERITS OR GLEN HODDLE'S?

Written By Ryan Butt

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Let's not beat about the bush here, the last two PlayStation FIFA games have been diabolical, and yet they stormed to the top of the console charts. Why? Well it certainly had nothing to do with the reviews in the specialist press. It was more a case of cunning marketing, for which the EA crew should be nominated for an award! *FIFA : Road to World Cup 98*, is somewhat of a departure from the norm. You can still play as your favourite league teams, but with the World Cup finals looming, you can also opt to play as one of the 172 international squads all battling it out for a place in France. There are 16 international stadiums that pay host to these grudge matches, including Wembley. All are accompanied by some attractive FMV upon each visit, that gives the player a tourist-like insight into the city the game is staged in.

FEVER PITCH

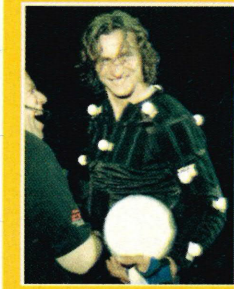
To be honest, the presentation in all of the existing FIFA games is second to none, and in *RTWC' 98*, EA Sports has once again commissioned the verbal delights of top telly



[ABOVE] The attention to detail in *FIFA: Road to World Cup* is very impressive, but will the gameplay compliment it... ?

FRENCH FANCY

TO ASSIST THEM IN OBTAINING THE MOST REALISTIC LOOK EVER SEEN IN A FOOTBALL GAME, EA SPORTS HAS COMMISSIONED THE TALENTS OF FRENCH ACE, AND BREAKER OF WOMEN'S HEARTS, DAVID GINOLA. WITH SENSORS ATTACHED TO HIS BODY, DAVID PERFORMED A SERIES OF SKILFUL MANOEUVRES TO PROVIDE A SUPER-SMOOTH MOTION-CAPTURED ELEGANCE TO THE PLAYERS ON-SCREEN. PLAYING *FIFA: ROAD TO WORLD CUP 98*, IT IS EASY TO SEE THAT THE EFFORT HAS PAID OFF BECAUSE THESE CHAPS CAN REALLY MOVE!

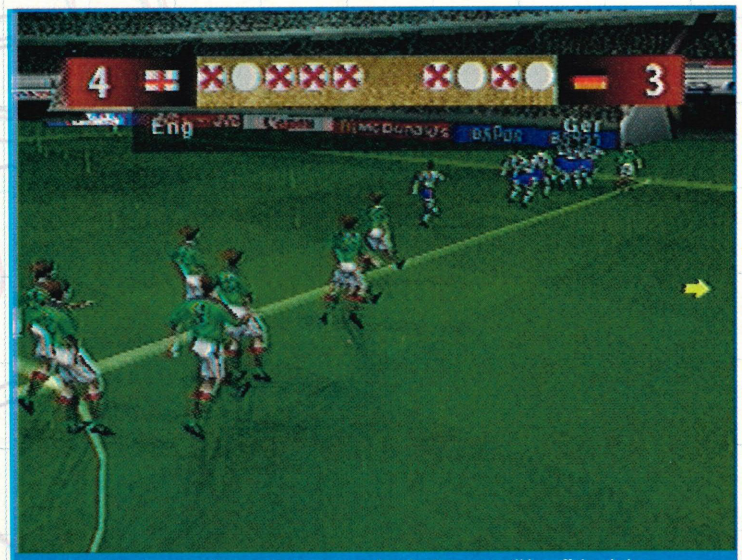




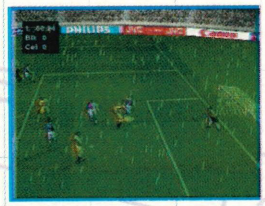
Blueprint

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: EA Sports
% Complete: 70%
Expected Release Date: November '97
Origin: USA
No of Players: 1- 8

WORLD CUP 98



[Above] Now there's something you don't see every day, the Germans walking off the pitch, disgruntled at having just lost a penalty shoot-out to England!



pundits Des Lynam, Andy Gray and John Motson for some light-hearted banter and on-the-spot analysis.

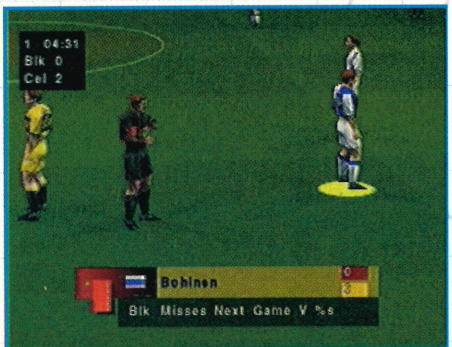
Behind the scenes though, *FIFA: Road to World Cup 98* has utilised a task force of over 150 programmers, artists and audio specialists to help capture the full razzmatazz of the global spectacle that promises to engross over 32 billion people next summer, upsetting several million 'other halves' in the process, no doubt!

To give the players a realistic, motion-captured appearance, EA Sports teamed up with French International and Tottenham supremo, David Ginola. Then, with movement-sensitive balls taped all over his torso, Ginola performed numerous acrobatic skills (see box-out). Hopefully, these fluid movements have been carried across and utilised to full effect to give the game a smooth, easily-accessible control system – and not the awful trudge-through-treacle sham that has dogged the series for the last two consecutive appearances!

"Commitment, attitude and skill are what keeps us ahead of the competition..." EA Sports

SOFTOGRAPHY

FIFA '96
FIFA '97
Madden '97
Madden '98
NHL '97
NHL '98
Nascar Racing '96
Nascar '98



[Above] Blackburn hothead, Lars Bohinen is sent off in a tense Champion's League grudge match against Celtic.





[Above] Each international stadium that you visit is accompanied by a short tourist film showing what delights are situated in the surrounding city... oooh! London!

Crowning Glory

There's no denying that this game has got one hell of a lot to live up to, and the World Cup aspect could swing it for the majority of soccer-loving gamesplayers out there. The version we had in the office was very early, and featured several howling errors, but the scope is there for, well, if not greatness, then at least decency, the chance to put a decent FIFA game at the top of the charts if you will. You can certainly score some SCREAMING goals from all kinds of outrageous angles, and no expense has been spared to capture that authentic "we're in it together" sense of euphoria that surrounds the most prestigious of all sporting occasions. Mark Aubanel, the Producer on *FIFA: Road to World Cup 98* reckons that this is because... "We have more professionals involved in this year's game than ever before. Each of these professionals are chosen because of their commitment, attitude and football skills."

If this is the case, then how could such professionals ever let the last two games to pass through the quality control net. Surely half the fun of a football game is actually playing it, as opposed to wading through attractive front ends and reams of stats and figures. Anyway *FIFA: Road to World Cup 98* is looking better than you would imagine, and it is scheduled for release in November.

SHEAR CLASS

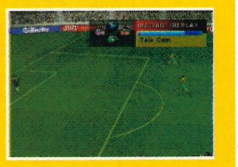
WE'VE PLAYED *FIFA: ROAD TO WORLD CUP '98*, AND YOU'LL BE SURPRISED AT THE VARIETY OF SCORCHING WAYS IN WHICH YOU CAN SCORE. HERE, MR ALAN SHEARER DISPLAYS ONE OF HIS OWN FAVOURITE SCREAMERS...



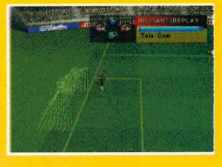
1. A QUICK GLANCE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE KEEPER IS FATIGUED AT STAYING UP THE NIGHT BEFORE TO PLAY *TOMB RAIDER* (SEE DAVID JAMES, LIVERPOOL FC).



2. HE PULLS BACK AND SWIPES AT THE BALL WITH THE POWER AND FINESSE OF A PLAYFUL ITALIAN COPPER.



3. THEN HE WATCHES WITH A WRY SMUGNESS AS THE BALL SAILS INTO ORBIT (IN A MANNER OF SPEAKING) AND SURGES TOWARDS THE NET.



4. JUBILATION'S ALL ROUND AS THE BALL INEVITABLY OPENS THE SCORING. STILL, IT WAS ONLY AGAINST MOLDOVA, AND NOT AGAINST A GOOD TEAM, LIKE ITALY!

EXPERIENCE THE *ULTIMATE* IN AURAL DELIGHTS FROM THE COMFORT OF YOUR FRONT ROOM!

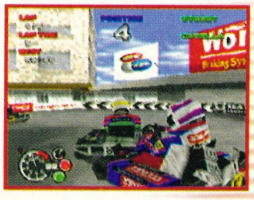
WIN A SONY SURROUND SOUND SPEAKER SYSTEM WORTH £400!

FORMULA KARTS Special Edition



Now you'll not only be able to hear the other karters breathing down your neck, but sample every dirt-churning reverberation as you hare around each course at break-neck speeds! To coincide with the release of ***Formula Karts: Special Edition***, we've collaborated with the nutty speedsters at Telstar to give away these superlative Sony SA-VA15 speakers to one lucky reader.





This impressive wall of sound features:

- **Floor standing style**
- **Total power output 100W**
- **2 built-in subwoofers**
- **2 audio inputs/2 outputs**

Here's the catch. To drive away with this marvel of sound immersion you must first answer the simple question below. The winner will receive the surround sound speakers, a Gamester LMP PSX Steering Wheel and a copy of *Formula Karts: Special Edition*.

What is Telstar's forthcoming monkey game called?

A. Yellow Snow
B. Gizza Go
C. Joe Blow

Four runners up will each receive a Gamester LMP PSX Steering Wheel and a copy of *Formula Karts: Special Edition*. Send your entries on the back of a postcard or a stuck-down envelope, together with your name and address and sent to:

Get a head start in a Formula Kart!
PLAY Magazine
Paragon House
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BH1 2JS

THE EDITOR'S DECISION IS FINAL. NO CORRESPONDENCE MAY BE ENTERED INTO. EMPLOYEES OF PARAGON PUBLISHING OR ITS SUPPLIERS TELSTAR MAY NOT ENTER. THE CLOSING DATE IS 20 DECEMBER 1997. ALL WINNERS WILL BE AVAILABLE IN WRITING ON REQUEST FROM PARAGON PUBLISHING. THE SPONSORS RESERVE THE RIGHT TO SUPPLY A PRIZE OF EQUIVALENT VALUE RATHER THAN THE ONE ILLUSTRATED. NO CASH ALTERNATIVES, SORRY.







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PlayStation

Disney INTERACTIVE



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TEST DRIV

RACING AROUND THE WORLD AT EYE-WATERING SPEEDS IN A COLLECTION OF CLASSIC CARS – SOUND LIKE YOUR CUP OF TEA?

Written By Graeme Nicholson

There's something so exciting about illegal driving. Yes, *Formula 1*, *NASCAR* and *Touring Car* are fast and demanding events, but organised sports can hardly come close on the adrenaline scale of doing something you know you shouldn't. Having the police chasing you while streaking through the traffic of a populated city against a handful of other cannon-ballers can only be a good experience. From Washington DC to Kyoto, this is exactly what *Test Drive 4* invites you to do, and at speeds faster than that vicious contraption at Space Mountain in Euro Disney.

You could be wondering how *Test Drive 4* could be released when you haven't yet seen the first three. This is because *Test Drive*, *Test Drive 2: The Duel* and number three were released many years before the PlayStation was even a twinkle in Sony's eye, on the old 16-bit systems. Although laughably primitive by today's standards, these were some of the first popular driving simulators that have grown into your favourite racing games.



[Above] Spin around and stuff it into reverse to practice your movie-style getaway move at high speed.

CHARGER

Times change though and you'd be doing well to find much to link the old games to *Test Drive 4* besides sports cars and the use of the words "Test" and "Drive." Now instead of being bolted inside the cockpit, you have no less than five perspectives to choose from, of which the first person view is easily the best for really feeling the incredible belting speed.

Unfortunately, the full cockpit mode being considered during the design of the game was dropped at some stage – a hearty "boo" to ex-*Destruction Derby 2* team members (now named Pitbull Syndicate) who have coded the game. Still, everything else about the game's appearance is terrific.

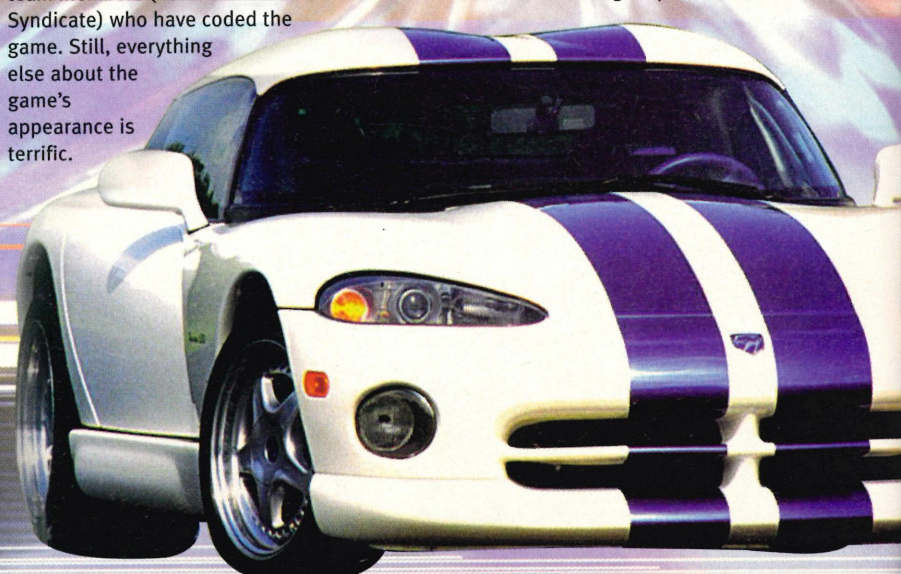


[Above] Thundering into downtown Washington in the glorious new Corvette proves difficult with the road hogging civilians everywhere.

The remarkable track graphics that impressed us so much at preview stage have been used over hundreds of miles of roads based on existing locations like San Francisco, England and Switzerland. Just as effective are the finely detailed cars, each one an officially licensed rivet-by-rivet copy of a real performance car. The intricacies of these machines is most obvious with the Dodge Viper – it's such



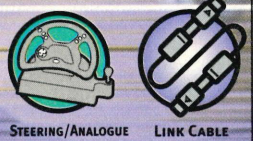
[Above] The stylish TVR Cerbera slides out rather quickly on the cobbled streets of Bern in Switzerland, leaving smoke and tyre marks behind.



PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Customer support: 01753 549 442
Price: £44.99
Release date: 28 November '97





E4

"Gives you *Rage Racer* speeds on public roads!"



[Above] You can't help but feel you are being given an advantage in the old cars – did the old Camaro really go 163 miles per hour? No.

GOT A NEW MOTOR?

Just in case you were wondering exactly what cars have been included, here's the list. Remember, all are licensed from the real manufacturers so they look great and sound even better!

THE NEW
- Dodge Viper (1998)
- TVR Cerbera (current)
- Chevrolet Corvette (1998)
- Jaguar XJ-220 (current)
- Nissan 300 ZX (1995)

THE OLD
- Shelby Cobra (1966)
- Plymouth Cuda (1971)
- Chevrolet Camaro (1969)
- Chevrolet Chevelle (1970)
- Chevrolet Corvette ZL-1 (1969)



[Above] Sometimes it's worth a go to see if you can bash the cops out of the way, but if it doesn't work you lose a lot of time.

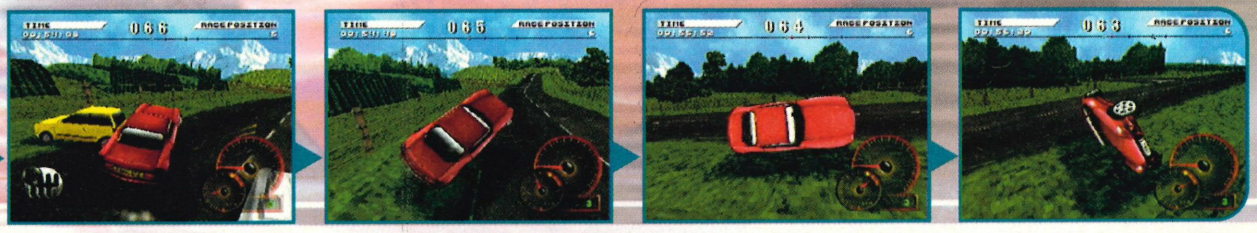


[Above] The challenge is tough, but at least you'll find computer controlled drivers who crash together and come off the track.



[Above] The insanely steep streets of San Francisco can be a nightmare if you make a small error before jumping.

A REGULAR RACE TURNS INTO LIVING HELL WHEN A CORVETTE FORCES YOUR CERBERA OFF THE ROAD AND INTO A SMALL CIVILIAN CAR.



a common inclusion in racing games from *Need For Speed* to *Peak Performance*, but this is the closest yet to the real 450 brake horse power, eight litre monster.

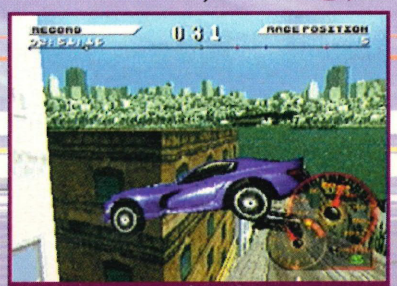
CHALLENGER

There are five different ways to play a single player game of *Test Drive 4* (no simultaneous two player here except by linking two PlayStations). There's a single race or four championships with different rules, but the idea in every race is simply old-against-new. Five of the ten selectable cars are ancient American classics such as the old Chevy Camaro from 1969, and the tasty 1966 Shelby Cobra. The other five cars are modern wonders, the oldest being the 1995 Nissan 300 ZX and the newest the '98 model of Corvette. In a series of races with six competing cars and many more non-competing-and-frankly-terrified civilians you have to reach each of the checkpoints in order to keep the clock ticking and make it to the end ahead of the pack.

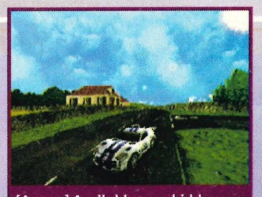
Half a dozen guys going over 150 miles per hour in a 55 zone attracts the law of course, so as well as the twists, bumps and jumps of the courses you are up against the black and whites of whatever city you happen to be shooting through at the time. Like the traffic, the police are area-specific, so in England it's white Escorts and in the US it's the wide, groaning Lincolns.

CHEVY

Test Drive 4 gives you *Rage Racer* speeds on public roads and the chance to run policemen flaming from the road, but a very fun game is kept from being fantastic by one element: the crashes. In the early versions of this title there wasn't even a hint of the vehicles going up on two wheels, but since then those Pitbull boys have



[Above] Traffic cutting across sideways can have an adverse affect on your course to the bay!



[Above] Available as a hidden car, the cool white Viper is definitely a nice little runner, even if it does cost £238 to fill the tank.



[Above] The lowest view is not very practical as it hides much of the road, but you can really see the moving cloud reflections down here.



[Above] A poor Seat Ibiza driver, moments ago enjoying a sedate journey in the Swiss countryside, is belted by two irresponsible racers.



[Above] This is what it's all about. The original '69 Corvette up against the '98 model in a battle of brute strength against finesse.



[Above] The high sided walls at the beginning of San Francisco 1 are ideal for crushing your opponents into the edge to delay them.



gone right over the top. Upsettingly, they have implemented a physics system not unlike the one you'd find on the moon. The whole game seems to switch to slow motion each time you get into a roll, and from there on it is so exaggerated you don't have control of the car for a long time. In instances when you know a real car would finally settle on its roof, more often than not your toppled motor will find enough false momentum to slothfully tumble over a few more times. It is quite infuriating being forced to wait. This also means that when you just nudge a car in front by mistake you can end up flipping your own car far too easily.

With thumb-grinding practice the frequency of these collisions subsides, but this part of the game engine could have been designed better to fit in with the arcade-like playability of the rest of the package. If you can cope with this, *TD4* is well suited to those who liked the gameplay of the first *Need For Speed*, but looks much more attractive and is so fast it leaves *Porsche Challenge* on the hard shoulder!

"Run policemen flaming from the road!"



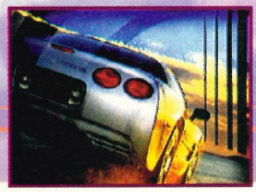
[Above] Don't you get the impression that normally a driver would flip on the headlights in a tunnel this dark? Visibility is awful.



[Above] What else is the Jaguar XJ-220 bathtub good for but thumping little cars off the road with ease? Not much.



[Above] The lumbering police cars are just meant to force you to slow down, but they don't half get in your way!

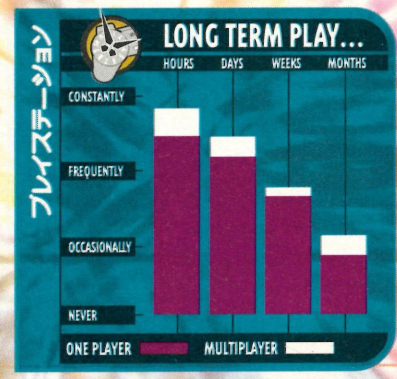




[Above] The Nissan 300 ZX was discontinued back in 1995, but you still use it to show these oldies a thing or two in handling.



[Above] Finding a police car with the siren already going means he's after one of the other five maniacs and not you – so step on it!



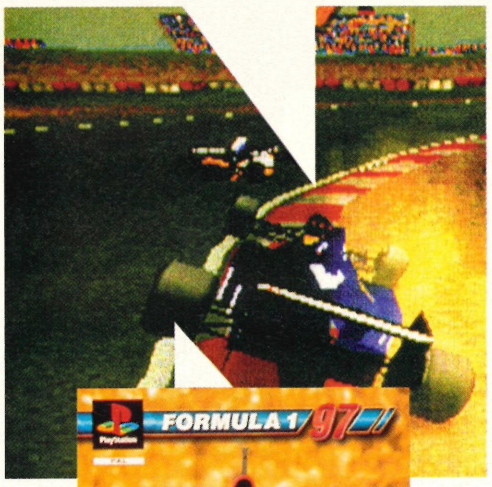
PLAY

Looks	8
Sounds	9
Gameplay	8
Value	7
Fuzz	9

PLAYED 86%

Enough to blow your gasket!

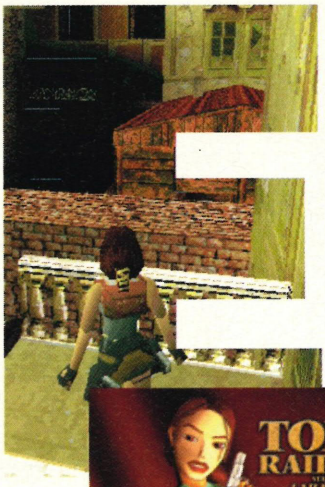
ALTERNATIVELY:
NEED FOR SPEED 2 (90%)
PORSCHE CHALLENGE (82%)

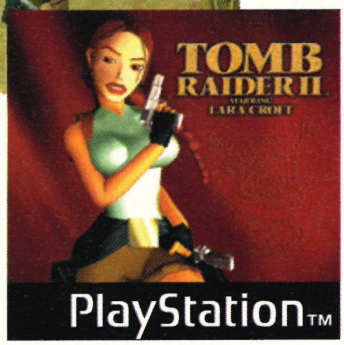




Formula 1 97
Reader offer† £44.99
(In-store £49.99 SAVE £5)
2 player game

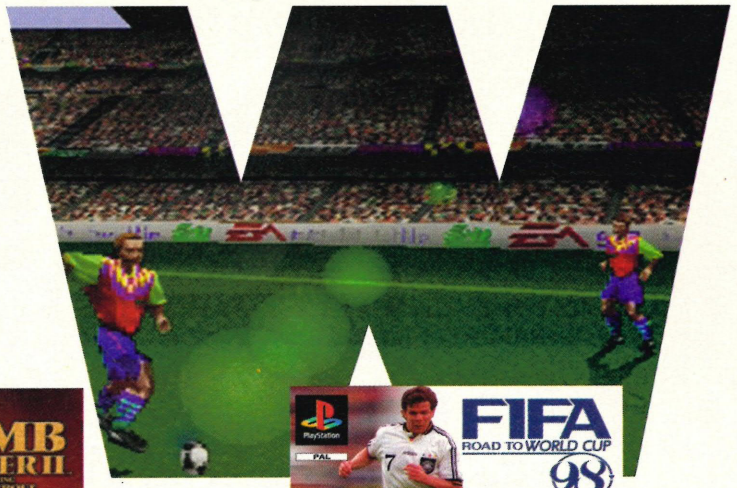
Laps ahead of the original F1 bestseller, the stunning new F1 97 boasts even more dazzling graphics, improved performance plus a two player split screen option. Comes with blow by blow commentary from Murray Walker and Martin Brundle.
Available now.





Tomb Raider II
Reader offer† £39.99
(In-store £44.99 SAVE £5)

Lara Croft is back in the most talked about Playstation game this year. And this time she's got even more tricks tucked up those cute sleeves. Starting at the Great Wall of China, your search takes you to Venice, Tibet and underwater worlds, where new enemies stand between you and your goal.
Available on 21st November.





FIFA 98: Road to the World Cup
Reader offer† £34.99
(In-store £39.99 SAVE £5)
2 player game

Attempt to qualify for the most famous football tournament in the world. Choose a country and a squad, then get ready to kick-off. There are motion-captured players, loads of special moves and even commentary from Andy Gray, the voice of football John Motson and that old smoothy Des Lynam.
Available on 28th November.

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BROKEN SWORD
THE SMOKING MIRROR



INTRIGUE, SACRIFICE, ANCIENT ARTEFACTS AND A SARCASTIC AMERICAN. THIS CAN MEAN ONLY ONE THING – GEORGE STOBBART'S BACK FOR ANOTHER ADVENTURE...

Written By Tom Sargent



[ABOVE] The graphics in *Broken Sword 2* are gorgeous. Each scene or episode is usually played out within one area, before you move onto the next one.



[ABOVE] Your first task is to get rid of the advancing killer spider. Answer bookcase, push, splat. Easy when you know how.



[ABOVE] Everything you carry is displayed at the top of the screen, where they can be moved, manipulated or used.

Pointing and clicking

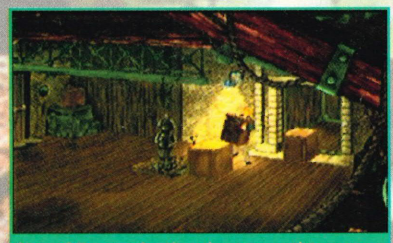
isn't to everybody's taste. You either love 'em or hate 'em. Personally speaking, there aren't enough of them around on PlayStation, and ever since Revolution created the ground-breaking *Lure Of The Temptress* and *Beneath A Steel Sky* on the Amiga and PC, I've been a fan of this forward thinking and talented company. Without grovelling too much and drowning in my own drool, it's one of the few companies that has successfully taken on the might (and manpower) of LucasArts with the *Monkey Island* series, and beaten it at its own game.

Where the first, and to an even greater extent, the second, *Broken Sword* game triumphs is in the totally intuitive interface, superlative animation and sumptuous backgrounds. The game has been honed to such an extent that all of the frustration endured in many other games of this ilk have been thoughtfully removed. For example, you never find yourself in a position where the cross-hair has to be dragged over every inch of the screen in a tedious pixel-hunt. Also, when interacting with other non-player-characters, the more customary 'ask every question from a choice of six until you find the relevant one' scenario has been replaced by a more sensible and direct topic icon, which makes everything a lot tidier and uncluttered.

JUST THE ARTEFACTS MAM

The story itself revolves around the antics of the main protagonist, George Stobbart, and his girlfriend, Nico, as they attempt to thwart a deranged drugs dealer called Karzac, who is obsessed with an ancient legend involving ancient artefacts. Through manipulation of an eminent Mayan archaeologist, Professor Oubier (addicted to the cocaine that Karzac pedals) he hopes to discover the secrets of Tezcatlipoca (an bloodthirsty ancient God), the relevance of an imminent solar eclipse and three magical stone shields. So, the plot is set for yet another *Indiana Jones*-type excuse to travel the world in search of high adventure, gorgeous women and cheesy one-liners.

From the outset, where George is tied to a chair with a fire burning out of control at one end of the room and the world's scariest (and hairiest) spider advancing ominously towards him, the humour, pace and difficulty level are just about perfect. Of particular relevance is

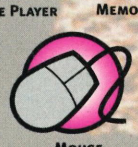


[ABOVE] By arranging these boxes correctly, you can get to the mechanism that will allow you to move the statue.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Sony
Customer support: 0881 505505
Price: £34.99
Release date: 5 December '97





D 2:

"One of the best 2-D adventures ever programmed..."



[Above] Getting past this mutt, called '2o' is quite tricky and involves a long pole and a packet of biscuits. Don't ask me, I only write this stuff...



[Above] At last you find Nico. Now you can make your escape and travel to South America for the next part of the adventure.

way in which each part of the game is played out in roughly one area, thus reducing that unnecessary travelling between rooms and locations that plagues similar games.

Broken art

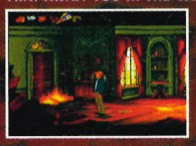
This really gives you an incentive to think carefully and to make use of the user-friendly cross-hair, which changes shape to one of four icons (a cog, grabbing hand, pointing finger and flashing cross)



[Above] By carefully timing the action, you can knock this angry American Indian guard flying into the harbour below. Ho ho.

One step at a time

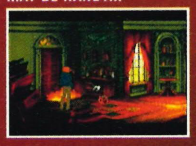
This early sequence of events is typical of the puzzles and challenges that await you in the game.



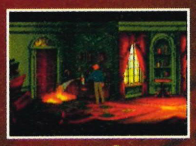
After gathering all of the most obvious objects in the room, George must find a way to get past the fire and through the door.



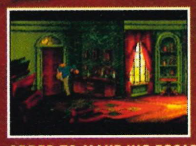
There's an empty water siphon bottle on the sideboard, maybe there's a gas bottle inside. Now how do you open the sideboard door. That dart may be handy...



There's a gas bottle in there okay, but it's too hot to handle. Maybe Nico's red knickers could help. I knew they'd have a use...



Attach the gas bottle to the siphon and you can finally make your escape. Simply point the 'Fire extinguisher' at the blaze...quirt, squirt.



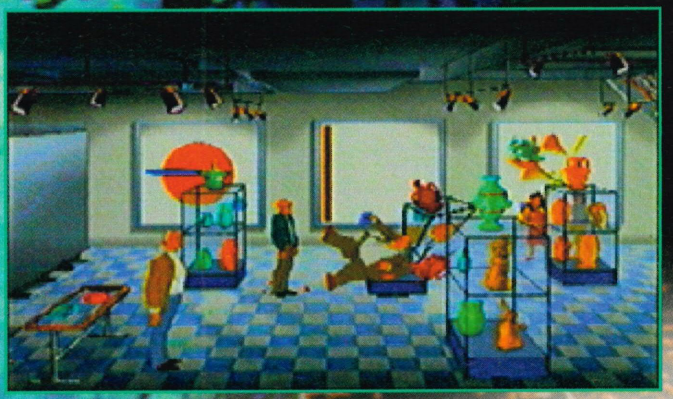
Most satisfying of all, George decides to boot the door down in order to make his escape. Now the real adventure begins in paris.

depending on what object or structure it passes over. The short loading time between locations and the ability to double click and leave a location without having to walk through the doors adds immeasurably to the enjoyment. Each location now boasts a range of visual improvements too – a higher resolution, parallax scrolling, translucency, extra puzzles and a continuous orchestrated musical score.

Revolution has taken the point 'n' click adventure theme to its limits thanks to some wonderful animation and an absorbing story. With a projected 6o hours of playing time, it also represents excellent value for money. Take our advice and pull on your best adventuring boots, a copy of the Observer's book of South American Obsidian Death Shields and enjoy one of the best 2-D adventures ever programmed.



[Above] The game contains loads of 'colourful' characters like this stubborn guard. Now how do you reach all of the goodies in his hut and get rid of him?



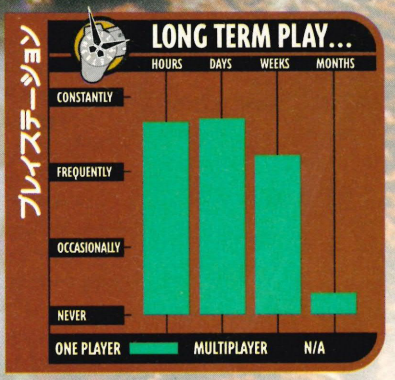














Looks	9
Sounds	8
Gameplay	9
Value	9
Christies	9



Beautifully intuitive point 'n' clicker.

Alternatively:
Broken Sword (84%)
Discworld 2 (80%)

DISCWORLD II
MISSING PRESUMED...!?



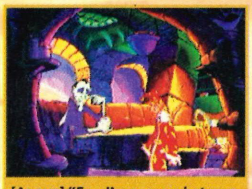
***DISCWORLD II* IS SET ON A MAGICAL WORLD WHICH IS TOTALLY FLAT AND TRAVELS THROUGH SPACE ON THE BACK OF FOUR ELEPHANTS RESTING ON A GIANT TURTLE. WEIRD, YES, BUT IS IT ANY GOOD?**

Written By Roy Kimber

You're back on the Discworld again, and there's a problem. Death, that cheerful chap with the scythe, is missing presumed... er, gone, and the dead are walking the Disc.

Actually, the dead were already walking the Disc, a lot of them self-respecting and valued members of community. These 'newly undead' are a different matter entirely though, unsettled and unhappy, they wander about to the considerable discomfort of the rest of the Discworld population. After all, who wants their dead mother-in-law coming back from her funeral to live in the spare room?

Eventually the Wizards at the unseen University become aware of the problem after one of their number mysteriously refuses to die on his 'Deathday' (Wizards, being magical, know the date in advance). This rather spoils the Wizards' plans for a drunken wake that afternoon, and yet they are unwilling to be dragged away from their essential duties (eating, drinking and sleeping a lot), the Wizards select their most junior colleague, Rincewind – who is to Wizarding what your average hamster is to brain surgery – and send him off to sort out the problem.



[Above] "Er... I'm sorry, what was that?" Rincewind guests on 'The Late Show With Nosferatu.'

Enter Rincewind The Wizard!

Which is where you come in. Your task is to help Rincewind solve the mystery of what has happened to Death, work on his social skills and generally keep him alive. This is one skill that Rincewind, a consumate coward, excels at. Draw a sword on him for example, and he'll instantaneously leap into action, so that before you can say "Surrender or Die" he'll be cowering on the floor grovelling for his life.

The gameplay in *Discworld II* is much like that in the first adventure, as Rincewind wanders around chatting to strange characters and hunting for various objects with which to solve many bizarre puzzles.

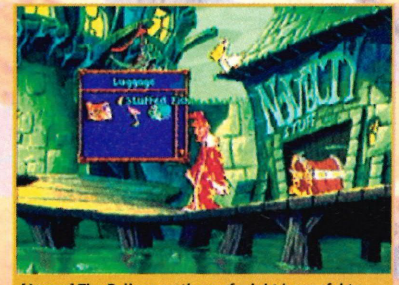
Graphically, the game is very different from its predecessor. Unusually for a sequel, the graphics have been completely re-vamped, giving the characters a far more cartoon-like appearance, and the overall effect is that of taking part in an actual cartoon, or at least it would be, if there weren't so many pauses for disc access!

A Puzzling Problem...

As with *Discworld*, the characters you meet are fairly static, which makes them easy to find. Visual and verbal clues abound, some obscure, others less subtle. When



[Above] The High Energy Facility is on the forefront of magical research. Strange really, considering that Mad Drongo sounds just like hippie Neil from *The Young Ones*.



[Above] The Pelican on the roof might be useful to you in the University garden. But how do you get it off the roof? A fishy problem, certainly...

PLAY Information



Publisher: Psygnosis
Customer support: 0171 349 5008
Price: £39.99
Release date: November 14



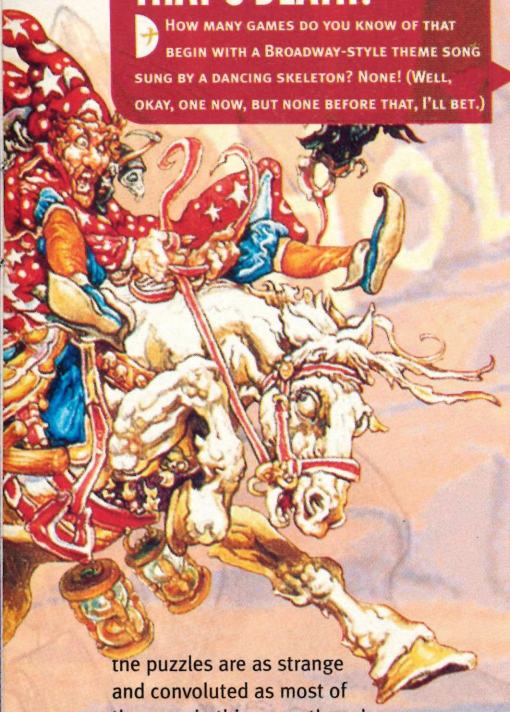
One Player | Memory Card | Mouse

THE WANDERING SHOP

The wandering shop is a bizarre feature unique to the Discworld. It vanishes and appears at random at different places around town, complete with 'Tardis' sound effects. It does contain all manner of useful items, like, er... stuffed Flamingos!

THAT'S DEATH!

How many games do you know of that begin with a Broadway-style theme song sung by a dancing skeleton? None! (Well, okay, one now, but none before that, I'll bet.)









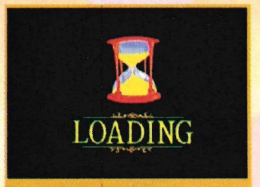




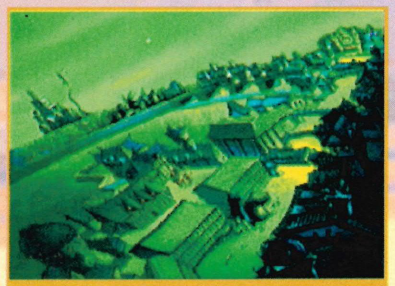
[Above] Click on a character and you'll be given several 'talk' options. These vary depending on the character, the situation, and what's been said already.



[Above] The machine in the High Energy building has a computer run by ants. A relevant part of the storyline, or just a chance for lots of 'bug' jokes?



[Above] You'll grow to hate this screen. It pops up every time you change locations, and sometimes even when you just attempt to look at things. Ooh, it's so slow!

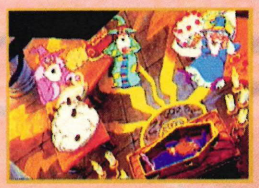


[Above] The city of Ankh Morpork is a particularly colourful town, due to the regurgitated foodstuffs that appear on the pavements every night.

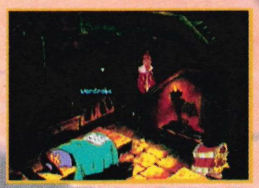
"Death is missing presumed... er, gone..."









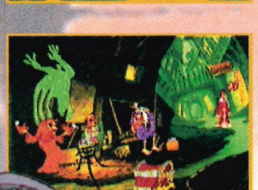




[Above] Hmm... the Odium cinema. Wonder if they'll be showing the Spice Girls Movie? For the sake of the Discworld, let's hope not!



[Above] Move the pointer around the screen and you'll find items of interest have been tagged. How exactly is a compost heap interesting though?







tne puzzles are as strange and convoluted as most of the ones in this game though, you'll be needing all the help you can get.

One refreshing change is the absence of the "that doesn't work" response from Rincewind when you try to make him do something... well, that doesn't work. This was very frustrating in the first game, as it was of no help whatsoever and more importantly, it wasn't funny! Now everything you do or try will have a response tailored to suit it, and will contain a clue as to what you really should be doing.

Discworld II is basically a point 'n' click adventure, and not the sort of game you can switch just on and bang through in half an hour (it takes about that long just to get through the intro sequence!). If you like this kind of game, then you should enjoy this, although the speed of the animation can be annoying at times. If you're a fan of Terry Pratchett, then *Discworld II* is a must, even though many of the jokes seem to been lifted directly from the pages of his books. A hearty adventure that proves to be enjoyable, but not as polished as *Broken Sword 2*.

PLAY

Looks	●●●●●●●●○○
Sounds	●●●●●●●●●○
Gameplay	●●●●●●●○○○
Value	●●●●●●●●○○
Turtles	●●●●●●●●○○

PLAYED 80%

Humourous off-the-wall adventuring...

ALTERNATIVELY:
DISCWORLD (74%)
BROKEN SWORD 2 (5 DECEMBER)

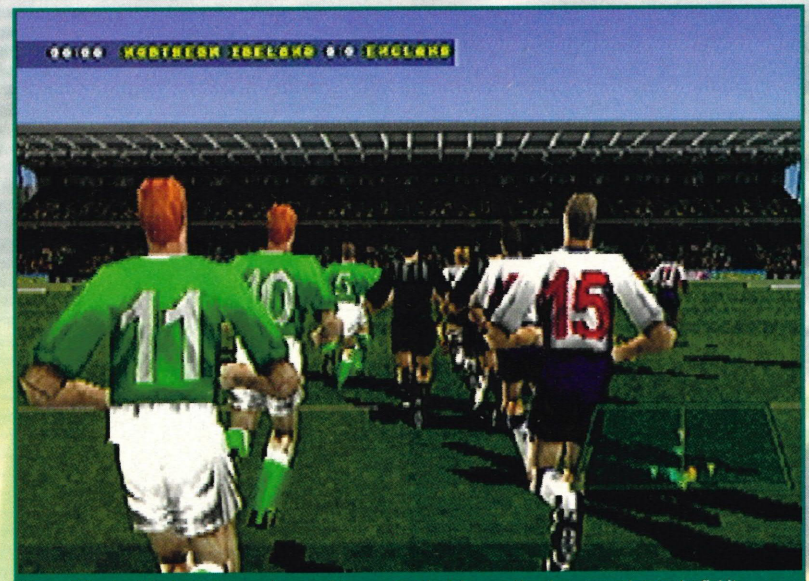
ACTUA SOCCER

PLAY CLASSIC

IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME COMING, AND AFTER THE SOCCER FARCE THAT WAS *ACTUA SOCCER: CLUB EDITION*, CAN GREMLIN BRING FOOTBALL WELL AND TRULY HOME?

Written By Ryan Butt

With England bobbing happily along on a euphoric trip after Hoddle and the boys did the biz in Rome (up yours Maldini!), the only thing we needed was the definitive PlayStation football game to arrive and keep our footie hunger at bay until France '98... and it's just arrived!



[Above] The detail in *Actua Soccer 2* is second to none. Just look here as the players march onto the field!

Two-faced

Actua Soccer 2 puts every other football game to shame, no question. In fact, this game makes *ISS Pro* look like the struggling Doncaster team at the arse-end of the third division! Where shall I start?

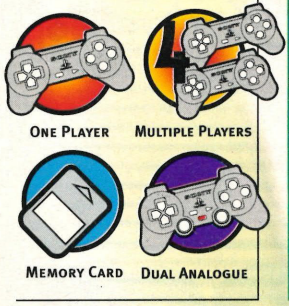
Okay, well for a start, *Actua Soccer 2* has the three main elements that, for me, make a good football game. Firstly there are the options – full seasons can be played, cups can be fought-out and customised, and there is a team editor mode which allows you to create you own merry band of reprobates to thrash it out with the International cream. Included in this editor is a name edit, but you won't need this for normal play because *Actua Soccer 2* has my second favourite element – realism. If you thought that *ISS Pro* was witty and clever because of the way it featured players that looked vaguely like the real-life superstars, then you haven't seen anything yet because in *Actua Soccer 2*... it actually *is* the players in name and likeness! You might say it's rather freaky having computerised players that actually look like their real-life counter-parts, but just imagine what it adds to the game. All the greats are here – Shearer, Ince, Wright, Zola... the list goes on, and it's pure comedy seeing them for the first time!

The last essential element *Actua Soccer 2* excels in is the freedom of play, the ability to do whatever you want on the pitch without restriction or the come-down of pre-set methods of scoring. All this is coupled with an electric pace that never lets-up for a second and at times you almost need a second sense to read the play in advance and plan where to move players into a position whereby they'd pose the biggest threat. But with prolonged play and a love of the sport in general, you'll persevere and become of a true champ very quickly.

The whole game is very well presented (providing you like Alan Shearer because he's everywhere!) and it has top-notch commentary from the likes of Bazza Davies and Trevor Brooking (and as a colleague of mine pointed out, Trevor's ramblings are so realistic that you find yourself nodding off, just like on *Match of the Day*!). Scorching replays show the direction and speed of the ball, with childish scribbles, just like Andy Gray. There are also real Premiership stadiums to play in, variable weather conditions, scuff marks in the turf from sliding tackles that actually remain for the duration, and every conceivable camera angle known to man to fiddle with.

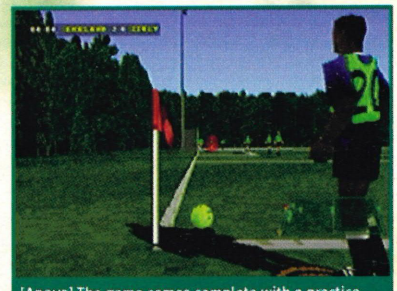
PLAY Information

Publisher: Gremlin Interactive
Customer support: 0114 275 3423
Price: £44.99
Release date: 21 November '97





[Above] The Team Edit mode allows you to create your own team from scratch, design the kit, make up the names, and even allocate certain strengths and weaknesses to your players from a pool.



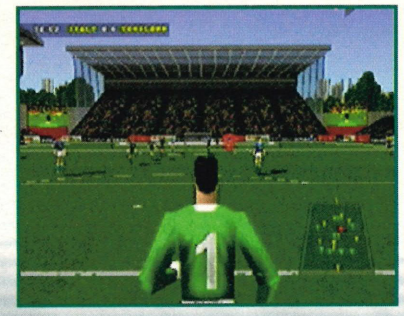
[Above] The game comes complete with a practice mode in which you team (in this case, England) don their training togs and have a kick-about on a secluded pitch.

FACE-OFF

IN *ACTUA SOCCER 2*, EACH PLAYER (OR AT LEAT IN MOST CASES) LOOKS LIKE THEIR REAL LIFE COUNTERPART. FOR THIS EFFECT, THE FEATURES WERE INDIVIDUALLY TEXTURE-MAPPED ONTO THE POLYGON PLAYER, THUS GIVING THEM THEIR OWN DISTINCT PERSONALITY. DO THESE TWO CHAPS LOOK FAMILIAR?

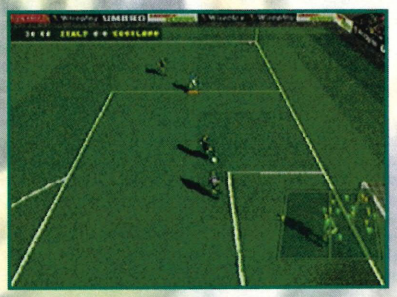


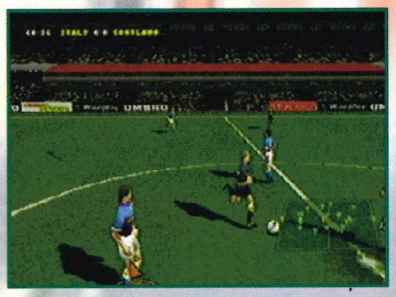
ER 2





[Above] The penalty kicks are a bit dodgy because you don't control the keeper when attempting to save.





SHEAR CLASS!

The slick look of *Actua Soccer 2* is simply incredible. The movements for each player were motion captured by Kop prodigy, Michael Owen (still only 17 and already on about 25 grand a week, lucky get!). Alan Shearer has played a big part in applying just the right amount of realism to the game, whilst still retaining the deft touch that is quite simply the playability that is leagues ahead of any footie game you've ever played before.

If *Actua Soccer 2* could be faulted in any area then it would probably be the speed which the whole thing moves at, which at times can be a little hard to keep up with, and the fact that the goalies still seem to have those amazing warping hands that can somehow get to the ball in a micro-second, even though they are about five yards between you!

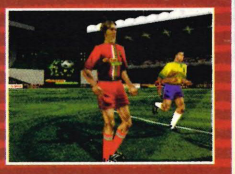
The penalty system also comes under ridicule, mainly because you can't actually control the goalie when attempting to save, meaning that the whole thing relies purely on chance, and the fact of whether or not the computer can guess right on your behalf. Obviously, this makes those Seamen-like glory saves (see England Vs Spain, Euro '96) impossible, but yet it can be argued that, taking on the stance of the players, you would have to rely 100% on the individual skill of the goalie, rather than simply tapping directions. But believe it or not, this does actually make the whole penalty experience a lot more tense and dramatic.

So there you have it, as we predicted, Gremlin arrives with an almighty kick in the goolies for every other footie game with the balls to even compete. *Actua Soccer 2* is nothing short of footie perfection, a more complete and flaming enjoyable package you'd be hard pushed to get on the PlayStation. A true prince among games!

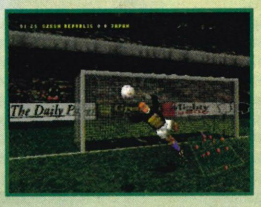
SUPER FURRY SOCCER FANS

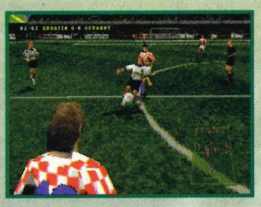
IT'S NO SECRET THAT TOP WELSH POP COMBO, SUPER FURRY ANIMALS ARE HUGE SOCCER FANS, AND EAGLE-EYED READERS MAY WELL HAVE NOTICED THEM BASHING AWAY ON *ACTUA SOCCER 2* IN THE VIDEO FOR THEIR LAST SINGLE, PLAY IT COOL. HOWEVER, WHAT PERHAPS YOU DIDN'T KNOW WAS THAT THE BAND HAVE BEEN FULLY TEXTURE-MAPPED AND INCLUDED IN THE FINISHED GAME. ALTHOUGH IT ISN'T YET KNOWN HOW TO PLAY AS THE GROUP, A CHEAT WILL BE REVEALED SOON IN PLAY.







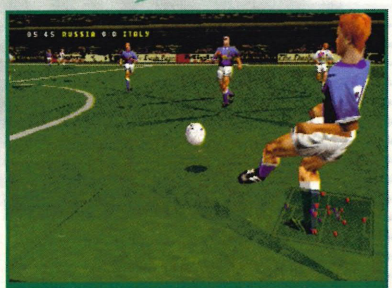




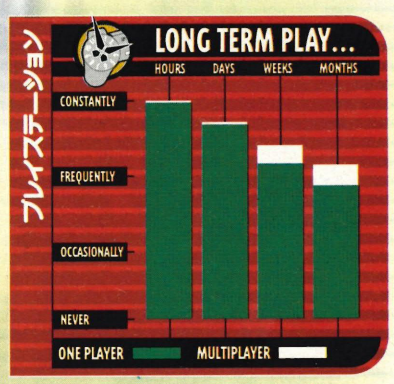




"Nothing short of footie perfection..."



[Above] Actua Soccer 2 has standard passes, one-twos, and through-balls for accuracy. All of which are exceedingly easy to master.



PLAY

LOOKS	9
SOUNDS	9
GAMEPLAY	8
VALUE	9
SHEARER	10

PLAYED 90%

Relegation for *ISS Pro*, as a new champ emerges

ALTERNATIVELY:
ISS PRO (84%)
ACTUA SOCCER (94%)

MONOPOLY

"Hasbro has really pulled out all of the stops..."

THE MOST FAMOUS BOARD GAME OF ALL TIME DEBUTS ON THE WORLD'S BEST SELLING CONSOLE.

Written By Tom Sargent

Rich Uncle Moneybags, *Monopoly*'s monocled icon certainly seems excited enough about the translation of the world's best-selling board game to PlayStation, judging by his enthusiastic welcome on the opening screen. But how has everybody's favourite Christmas pastime really faired in its new incarnation?

As if you haven't already guessed by the screenshots, Hasbro has lovingly recreated the classic family board game into a fully playable digitised version, incorporating every aspect of the original and adding a few unique touches to bring polish to this very simple game. The important thing is it looks great and plays nearly as well as the original, but you still get that feeling that you'd rather play the real thing. For example, when the dice are thrown, you don't get that 'I feel lucky this time' feeling when they scatter across the board. You know that, although not evident in the gameplay, the computer is well and truly in control of proceedings.



[Above] Each figurine has its own unique FMV sequences to enjoy. You can turn them off if you get sick of watching them.



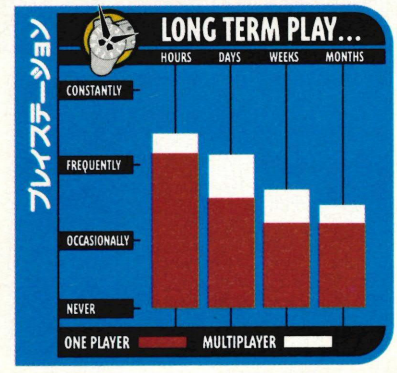


[Above] Mayfair – the property that everybody wants to land on, but it'll cost you a whopping 400 nicker.

Go to Jail

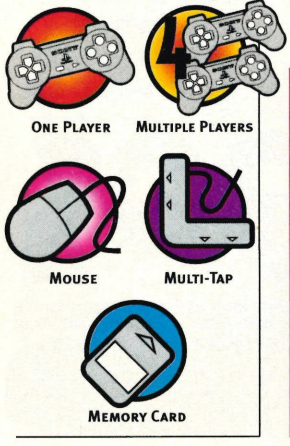
That aside, Hasbro has really pulled out all of the stops to ensure that the game is made as engrossing and fun as possible for PSX owners, thanks to some wonderful attention to detail. Every time you throw the dice a short sequence of FMV shows your chosen piece hop, skip and jump around the board until it reaches its destination. These are fun to watch for a while, but thankfully there's an option to speed things up and turn this, and countless other options on or off – many of which can be changed to suit your own style of play. In an effort to produce the most comprehensive and flexible game, the development team consulted many of the world's top players about variations in the rules, many of which can be toggled. And it's fair to say that all the other familiar playing tokens and locations have been brought to life in a well presented and user-friendly manner, ensuring that you'll be buying, selling and re-mortgaging well into the early hours.

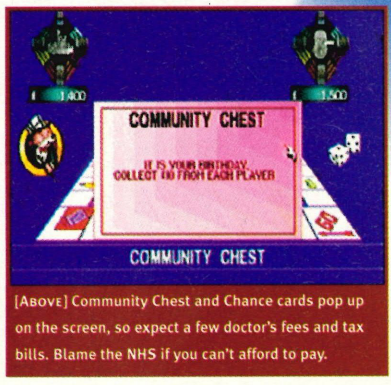
Hasbro should be proud of what they have achieved with PlayStation *Monopoly*. A console version could never be as much fun as physically playing the real thing, but Hasbro's come damned close to doing so. If you don't own the board game, and happen to have a wedge of spare cash, then maybe this should be carefully considered. Otherwise wait for *Star Wars Monopoly* next year.



PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Hasbro Interactive
Customer support: 0181 569 1234
Price: £39.99
Release date: 31 October '97





[Above] Community Chest and Chance cards pop up on the screen, so expect a few doctor's fees and tax bills. Blame the NHS if you can't afford to pay.



[Above] All the information you need is presented in the most user-friendly way, and any deal is only a mouse click or button press away.

PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●●○○○○
SOUNDS	●●●●●○○○○○
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●●○○○
VALUE	●●●●●●●○○○
LOADED	●●●●●●●○○○

PLAYED 75%

A fun and faithful conversion of the original.

ALTERNATIVELY:
RISK (OUT 7 NOV%)
TRANSPORT TYCOON (78%)

universal interactive studios

NAUGHTY DOG

PLEASE FASTEN YOUR SAFETY BELT.

YOU ARE ABOUT TO CRASH.

PlayStation™

Crash Bandicoot 2: Cortex Strikes Back™ & © 1997 Universal Interactive Studios, Inc. All rights reserved. Source Code © 1996, 1997 Naughty Dog, Inc. All rights reserved. Price £39.99.

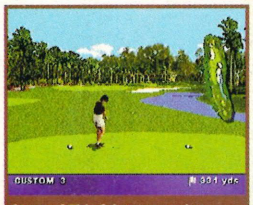
PGA TOUR GOLF '98

YES! IF, LIKE US, YOU HAVEN'T KNOWN HOW TO FILL THE TIME SINCE THE RELEASE OF *PGA TOUR '97*, YOUR WISHES HAVE BEEN GRANTED!

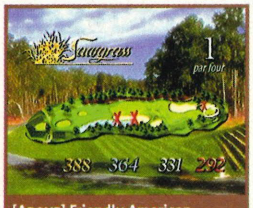
Written By Graeme Nicholson

Perhaps if all one million of the UK's PlayStation owners united and signed a petition of some kind we would never have to look at another awful golf game on our beloved system. Anyway, here is the latest attempt from Electronic Arts, perhaps it will break the mould and suddenly interest everyone in the high skill, high risk business of professional golf?

Sadly, no. *PGA Tour '98* doesn't have any significant enhancement over any of the previous golfing games you will have already played and dismissed. The draw quality of the courses and oddly dressed men is a bit nicer than either *Actua Golf* title, a bit smoother and slightly more realistic, but they remain simply functional and it's difficult for a scene to look realistic when your player is stood right next to an eight-foot tall power meter.



[Above] This feisty young lass proves an old point – it's true what they say about women drivers.



[Above] Friendly American advice before each hole using a diagram of the course is handy for avoiding embarrassment.

CADDYSHACK

At least there are four full 18 hole courses to stroll around, with some quirky elements thrown in from time to time, like when you have to tee-off from the edge of a sheer drop and so can only see the ocean stretching out in front of you. There is the usual overload of slightly different types of golf (Skins, Matchplay and so on) but there are some very basic things missing that actually put *PGA Tour '98* over par against the competition.

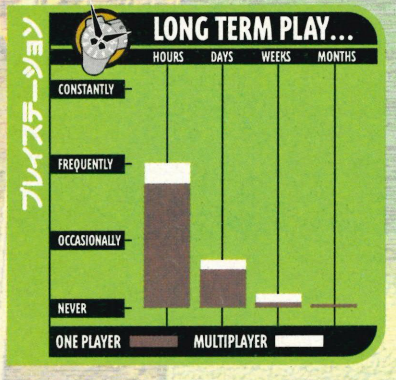
Weather, more specifically wind, affects real world golf radically and can mean the difference between winning and losing a championship depending on how deviously you compensate for the bustling headwinds. In *PGA* there is not even a simple random weather generator for realism – you just pick between three different speeds of wind that stay constant throughout. Very bad show.

The last bad point is the lack of response. When you set up a shot using the standard power meter from every golf game since time began, you can often wait a good five or six seconds before the bloke realises what's happening and actually swings for the bloody ball. Imagine 18 holes of that and you've got no reason to load *PGA Tour '98* unless you're some kind of masochist.



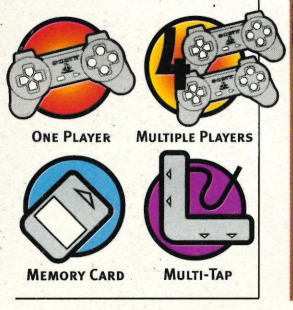
[Above] Chunky grid overlays still make judging angles much harder work than in real golf, but beginners have most of the work done for them.

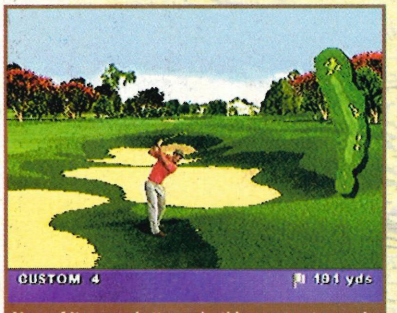
"You've got no reason to load *PGA Tour '98* unless you're some kind of masochist!"



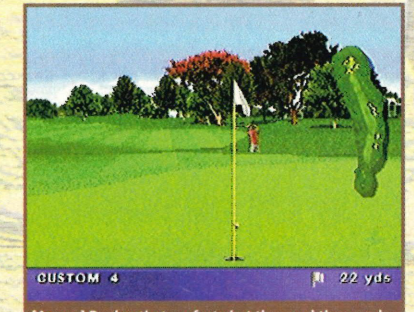
PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Customer support: 01753 549 442
Price: £44.99
Release date: 7 November '97





[Above] Now, you better make this one count or you're going to be knee deep in the golden grains.



[Above] Replay that perfect shot time and time again from a variety of views like this reverse angle.

PLAY

LOOKS	5
SOUNDS	4
GAMEPLAY	2
VALUE	3
YAW	4

PLAYED 63%

Best looking golf but with hampered gameplay.

ALTERNATIVELY:
ACTUA GOLF 2 (80%)
PGA TOUR '97 (81%)

universal interactive studios

NAUGHTY DOG

CRASH BANDICOOT 2
CORTEX STRIKES BACK



HE'S BACK

AND THIS TIME HE'S MAD FOR IT.

Buckle up, you're in for the most insane trip of your life. Crash has learnt to swing, belly-flop, crawl, skid and even fly with a jet pack since his last adventure. Are you mad enough for it?

PlayStation

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神鶏

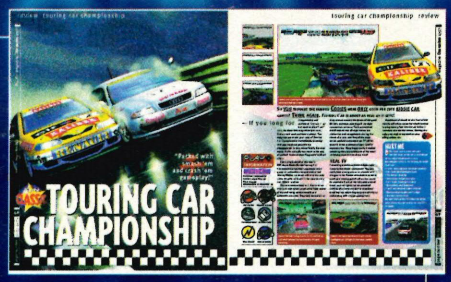

PLAY
FINAL FANTASY VII



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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.



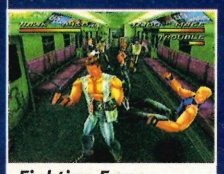


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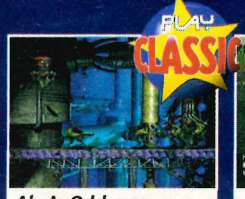


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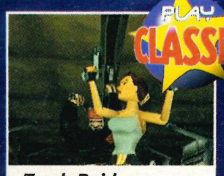
Fighting Force – rated 89% in PLAY!



Abe's Oddysee – rated 90% in PLAY!



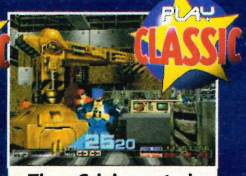
Formula 1 '97 – rated 90% in PLAY!



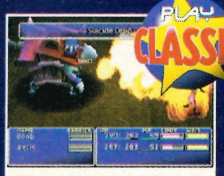
Tomb Raider 2 – rated 95% in PLAY!



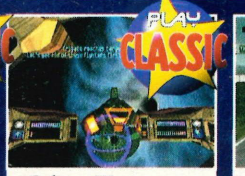
MDK – rated 90% in PLAY!



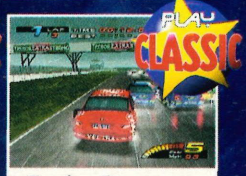
Time Crisis – rated 90% in PLAY!



Final Fantasy VII – rated 93% in PLAY!



Colony Wars – rated 92% in PLAY!



Touring Car – rated 92% in PLAY!



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JUDGE DREDD

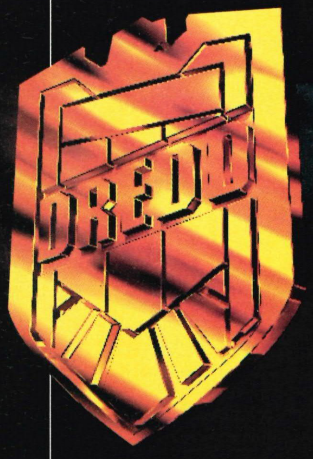
JUDGE DREDD MEETS *TIME CRISIS*. THIS HAS GOT TO BE A MATCH MADE IN HEAVEN. ACTUALLY, IT'S NOT.

Written By Tom Sargent

Old Joe Dredd is the coolest hero/antihero of all time. He doesn't wear a stupid cape or speak with an over-dramatic voice (apart from when Sly Stallone ruined the whole film by exclaiming "I am the Luuuuurrrrww!" Oh dear. He simply scares the living shite out of villains and innocents alike, while maintaining the iron fist of the law in the Mega cities of the 22nd century.

Luckily, Gremlin has employed a new actor for its own cut scenes (who looks and acts convincingly) in a game which bears more than a passing resemblance to another game involving Time and a Crisis. In this typically grim vision of the future, you are the law, taking on the role of 'Old stony face' himself against a former colleague, Tek-Judge Royston Bean, who has lost his marbles and seized the Halls of Justice and commissioned a bunch of deranged androids to help him take over Mega city one. And as things couldn't get any worse, he's kidnapped the Mayor too. Drokk! What are you gonna do about it?





GIVE IT UP CREEP!

If you're the proud owner of a GunCon or another light gun, prepare yourself for an onslaught of pre-rendered mayhem where you must blast your way through 17 danger-filled levels. Each one has been themed and broken down into three or four stages, but the technique used to complete each one is basically the same: eradicate all of the crazed robotic denizens with as much authentic Dredd weaponry hidden throughout the 'interactive' scenery, and ensure that you don't take out innocent bystanders.

In Easy mode, flashing red arrows indicate where the bonuses are, and to add them to your inventory, simply blast the highlighted area and then the bonus itself. They come in various forms (see panel) and increase both health and firepower – Rapid fire and Armour piercing are among the best, and shred even the most stubborn enemies. Robots either materialise out of thin air in a stylish blue haze, or they jump out from behind strategically positioned buildings to try and catch you out.



[ABOVE] Although part of the 'on rails' background all kinds of vehicles zoom around the screen, usually packed with deranged robots.

JUSTICE IS SERVED

Unlike *Time Crisis*, where most enemies take only one or two hits to put them on







[ABOVE] Robots frequently issue a warning of their arrival by a blue shimmering haze. At this point it's a good idea to start firing. You learn to anticipate.



[ABOVE] The penalty for shooting innocent passers-by is a massive reduction in your energy... regardless of how much fun it is.

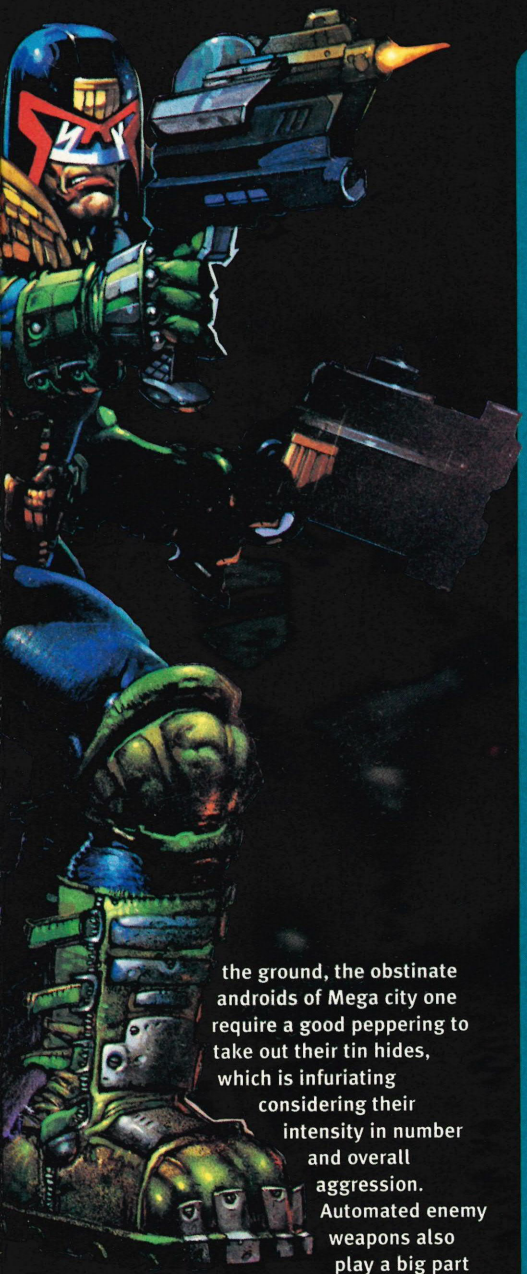


[ABOVE] On the bottom left-hand corner, your rounds visibly deplete. When this happens you're reminded to fire off screen to reload.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Gremlin Interactive
Customer support: 01142 753423
Price: £39.99
Release date: 21 November '97

ONE PLAYER
MEMORY CARD
LIGHT GUN COMPATIBLE



the ground, the obstinate androids of Mega city one require a good peppering to take out their tin hides, which is infuriating considering their intensity in number and overall aggression. Automated enemy weapons also play a big part and inflict major league damage, so take these pesky buggers out first and concentrate on the cyborgs later if you want to make it to the next level. Keep your eye on other pitfalls such as lock-in rooms where an ambush is almost guaranteed to sap your life-force.

Another massive gripe, if you play the game on the medium or hard setting, is that you can't work out where the bonus weapons are, as the backgrounds provide no clues to their whereabouts thanks to their muted appearance – although most of them are beautifully rendered, somehow they don't work well with this type of game.

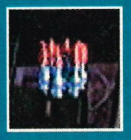
Judge Dredd is one of those games which showed early promise, but ultimately lacks the feel-good-factor of *Time Crisis*. Graphically it is incredibly primitive and the gameplay is bone-jarringly repetitive. It's on a par with *Area 51*, but as a Dredd licence, it is very poor.

GO AHEAD, MAKE MY DAY

Success in *Judge Dredd* relies heavily on acquiring the best weapons and knowing where to find them. Repeated play ensures that, theoretically, you should eventually get to the point where you can pick up the most destructive weapons. Take note that the scenery tends to scroll at a fair old pace so you must be swift. Here's the low-down on what's available.



EXTRA ROUNDS. You don't want to run out of bullets – that would be bad. Collect these at all times.



ARMOUR PIERCING. Rips through your adversaries a bit quicker than the standard round.



RAPID FIRE. As it sounds. It doesn't last long, but really rips into those pesky robots.



HIGH EXPLOSIVE. A powerful projectile which inflicts heavy damage by exploding on contact.



FULL ENERGY. Restores your energy to one hundred percent. Very useful.



BULLET-PROOF. Limited invulnerability – excellent pickup when the going gets a bit tough.



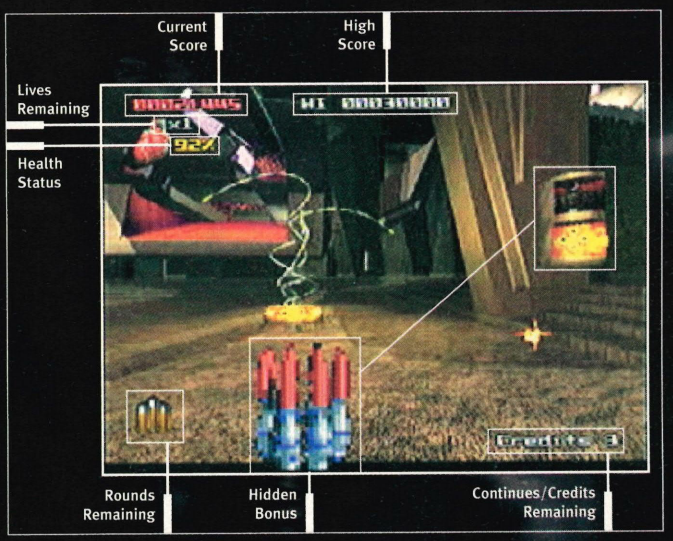
HEAT SEEKER. Fantastic projectile which always hits the spot. Limited, but deadly.



STREAK BONUS. There are a couple of these on every level.



[Above] Although difficult to find, hidden bonuses can be found by shooting areas of the 'interactive' scenery. On the Easy setting active areas are highlighted by red arrows.





[Above] After shooting the crate, you can collect the High Explosive icon (as shown on the screen).



[Above] If you don't take them down quickly, androids won't think twice about demonstrating their Kung-Fu fighting skills. They're fast.



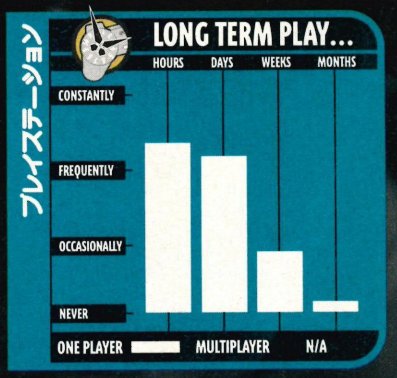








"Prepare yourself for an onslaught of pre-rendered mayhem..."



PLAY

Looks	●●●●●●●●●●
Sounds	●●●●●●●●●●
Gameplay	●●●●●●●●●●
Value	●●●●●●●●●●
Perps	●●●●●●●●●●

PLAYED 62%

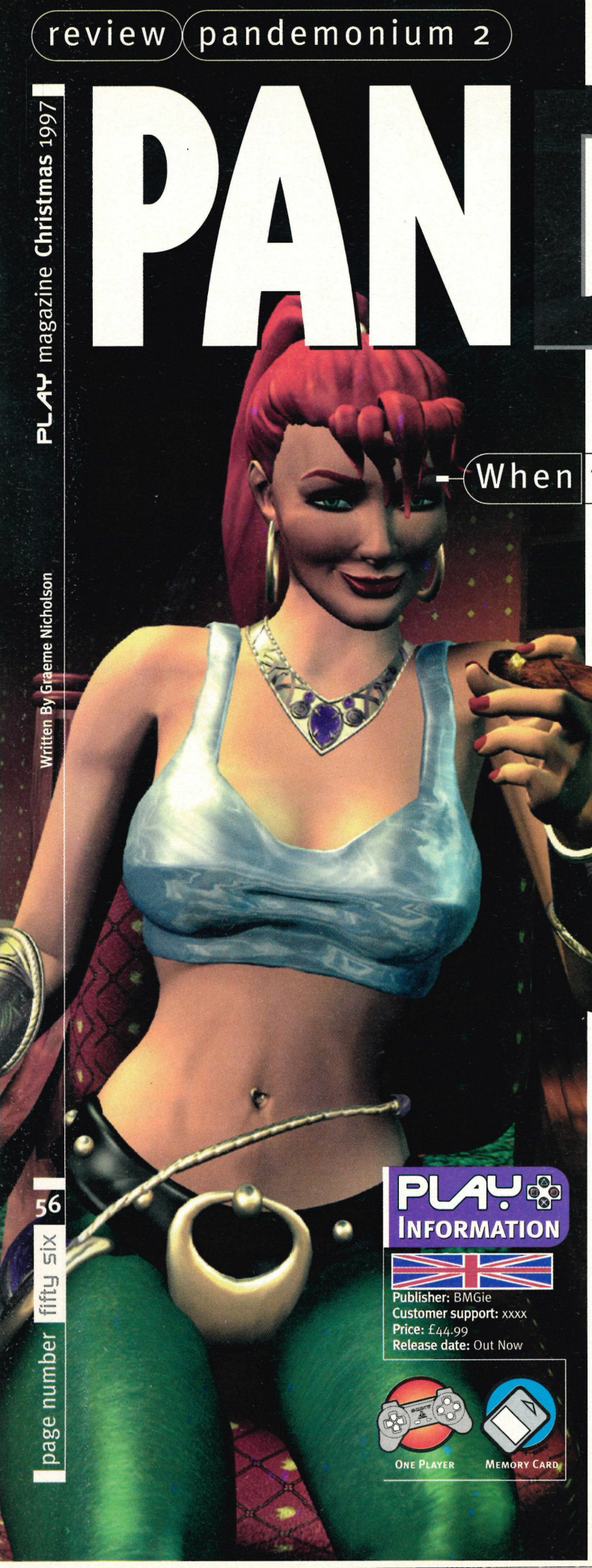
Fantastic license, disappointing game.

ALTERNATIVELY:
Time Crisis (90%)
Area 51 (68%)

PANDEMON

THE FIGHT OF THE BIGGEST-SELLING PLATFORMERS ENTERS ROUND TWO – WHO WILL BE LEFT STANDING?

Written By Graeme Nicholson



When they were in competition last year, *Crash Bandicoot* and *Pandemonium* spawned two viciously opposed groups of followers. Nobody liked both games – you picked one and you stuck with it. On one side the *Pandemonium* fans raved about the dazzling colours and superior speed of their game. Meanwhile, the *Bandicoot* sympathisers went on about the better variation in gameplay and the fact that Crash could walk in any direction. Now that *Crash 2* is nearing completion and *Pandemonium 2* has arrived, nothing has changed.

The Comet of Infinite Possibilities has come back into the skies of Lyr, the land where shapely sorceress, Nikki and her old pal Fargus, live. Nikki has matured and subsequently "filled out" in a few areas during her transition from girl to woman. More than anything now, she desires to harness the overwhelming magical power of the comet to become the Sorceress Supreme. The jester-like Fargus is really in on the adventure because Nikki is the only one who would have him, but you can still choose to control him instead of Nikki in the platform mayhem to follow, just like before.

HALE BOPP

The coming of the legendary comet has not gone unnoticed by the scum of the land either. The evil Goon Queen Zorrscha is having her slaves build a whole fleet of rockets to fly her right to the comet, where she plans to get her clawed hands on all that mystic energy and use it for all the wrong reasons. Whether you pick Nikki or Fargus, you have to get there



[Above] These inflated, rolling bad guys are tough to face without Nikki and her double jump move.



[Above] One of those kinetic energy desk toys is the inspiration for this particular puzzle. Can you think how to make it across?



[Above] The Pandemonium world just gets weirder and weirder as you near the end – here you're running along the bottom of a huge inverted bug.



[Above] The fast-moving camera can give you a kind of perspective that churns the stomach in these multi-level arenas.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: BMGie
Customer support: xxxx
Price: £44.99
Release date: Out Now

ONE PLAYER MEMORY CARD

IUM 2



[Above] A massive end of level dragon boss arrives, and all you have is a rather weedy catapult to fend him off with. Things look bleak.

before Zorrscha.

Mostly identical to the original, you have a few new moves to jazz up your journey to the comet. If you miss the intended target platform for a jump, you can now grab onto the edge and pull yourself up, reach heady heights by climbing vertical ropes and chains, and once you've located the right power-up, you can do some shooting until you next get hit. Unfortunately though, that's basically all you get for your £45!

QUICKENING

The same forced linear gameplay remains in place, with only a strict form of two-dimensional movement dressed up in magically colourful 3-D graphics. Even though it appears that you are in a large world that's just waiting to be explored, you never escape the rigid confines of left-right only motion. There is no denying that with brighter colours and some crazy camera angles *Pandemonium 2* is quite a treat to watch, but the alterations in the way the game plays are too subtle to interest anyone who didn't like it the last time. The lack of any real enhancement would seem to be laziness on the part of the coders at Crystal Dynamics if they were not the same people who are beavering away at PSX development systems right now to finish the brilliant-looking *Gex 2!*

If you really enjoyed *Pandemonium* then there is no question that you will like the sequel with such remarkably similar gameplay. If you didn't like it before, you won't like it now – wait to see what *Gex 2* turns out like.



[Above] The electricity-themed level has voltage bursts running through the ground and platforms that fry the slow gamer.

NIKKI

NICKNAME: RED DEATH
IDOL: TINA TURNER
PASSIONS: SPELLCASTING, AERIAL ACROBATICS, JUGGLING GERBILS AND CHAINSAWS
HATES: LOSING, BEING OGLED BY GOONS
MOTTO: "WHO'S NEXT?"
HOBBY: JOYRIDING ON HOT-WIRED ROCKETS
LAST BOOK READ: HOW TO CONQUER THE UNIVERSE

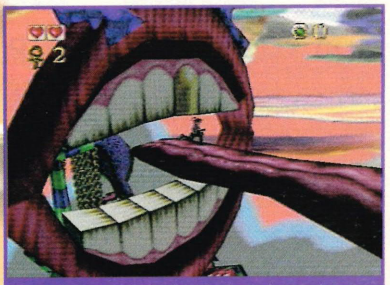


"The same forced linear gameplay remains in place..."

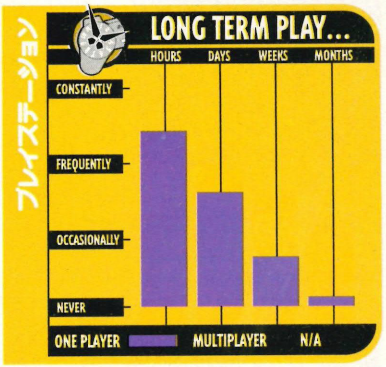


[Above] That new climbing move will get you out of harm's way on many occasions throughout the game.





[Above] Okay, so Nikki does look good enough to eat in *Pandemonium 2*, but this isn't what she had in mind!



FARGUS

NICKNAME: HEATSEAKER
IDOL: WERNER VON BRAUN
PASSIONS: CHOCOLATE, ANYTHING TOASTED, PLAYING DRESS-UP
HATES: SHOWERING, GETTING GUM ON HIS SHOE
MOTTO: "THROW ANOTHER GIMP ON THE BARBIE."
HOBBY: HURLING A FIREBALL INTO SOMEONE'S DENTAL WORK
LAST BOOK READ: CAN'T READ



PLAY

LOOKS	8
SOUNDS	5
GAMEPLAY	3
VALUE	3
ACROBATICS	4

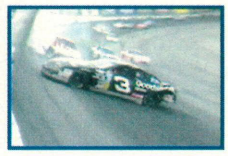
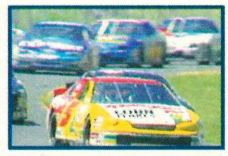
PLAYED **72%**

Linear but lovely-looking platformer.

ALTERNATIVELY:
GEX 2 (DECEMBER '97)
PANDEMONIUM (90%)





NASCAR '98

GENTLEMEN, START YOUR PLAYSTATIONS! EA IS BACK AND REVVING HARD WITH AN ALL-NEW NASCAR GAME. BLAZING A TRAIL OR RUNNING ON EMPTY?

Written By Tom Sargent

It's not very often you get to drive a counter-weighted muscle car with more horse power than the average Space Shuttle launch. In fact, it was probably only Sierra's *NASCAR Racing '96* which bravely tried to make what is effectively a bunch of gum-chewing hillbilly psychos racing each other on left-hand lock around spectacularly unimaginative concrete ovals, an interesting console racer.



[Above] Race against six other cars besides another human, but you can't race against the 23 on offer in the single player mode.

To be fair *NASCAR '96* was quite a comprehensive package, but it jerked along uncomfortably in places and didn't have a two player option which is deemed essential these days. Moving swiftly along then, we come to EA's foray into the world of throbbing engines, burning rubber and high-speed collisions.

As we've come to expect from EA, absolutely every option you could dream of has been included to make the whole NASCAR experience as authentic as possible – they've even thrown in a two player split-screen mode to add that human touch to the racing. Not that you'd really miss this option, because the AI of the other 23 drivers in each race is superb. Try and nudge them off the road in a totally unsportsmanlike manner and they react instantly by straightening up and darting out of the way.

PLAY INFORMATION

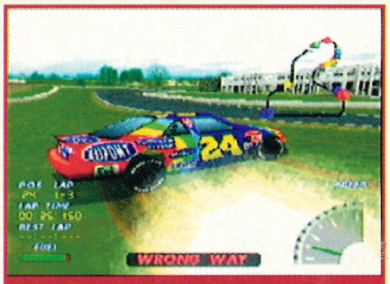
Publisher: Nascar '98
Customer support: 01753 549442
Price: £39.99
Release date: Out now

ONE PLAYER
TWO PLAYER
DUAL ANALOGUE
SPLIT SCREEN
MEMORY CARD

THUNDERY DAYS

Other drivers take each other out too, it's not just you they interact with. Sometimes you have to keep a beady eye on cars directly in front, so as to avoid the crashes that regularly occur without your intervention. The cars themselves bobble, judder and visually take damage in a realistic manner and handle really well, especially with the good old analogue controller, although they look a bit blocky.

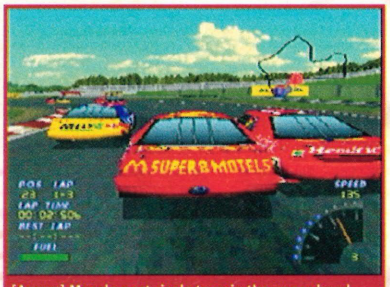
If you're not happy with the car's set up, there are a wealth of options to tweak the performance. Depending on which kind of track or oval you find yourself on, the tyres (pressure), rear spoiler (downforce), wedge (oversteer) and gear ratio (acceleration) can be adjusted accordingly. From the main menu, you can enjoy a one or two player game, select from one of 24 cars and driver (all with authentic, living drivers and bang up-to-date, apparently – not that I'd know one of them from Adam), play an entire season in the Championship



[Above] Skidding through the grass means that it's pretty difficult trying to regain control quickly. It looks good though.



[Above] Choose from a huge range of cars and drivers and customise them to stupendous levels of detail.

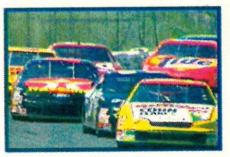
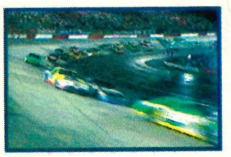


[Above] Muscle past rivals to gain the upper hand. It's an aggressive sport you know.



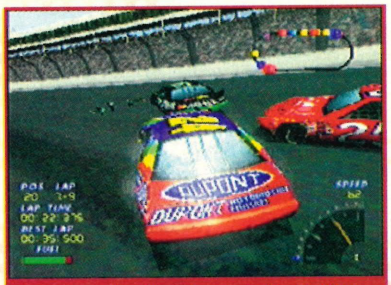
[Above] The crashes are spectacular, but this doesn't compensate for the ommission of multi-player pile-ups.






[Above] It may look like this bloke is giving you a bottle of Champagne, but he's a member of the pit crew.



[Above] Smashing into other cars is all part of the NASCAR experience. Bits fly off all over the place and it's very satisfying sending rival cars into the barriers.

mode and check out driver stats. *NASCAR '98* is certainly the complete package and the programmers have made a conscious effort to keep the number of mind-numbing ovals to a minimum.

Oval

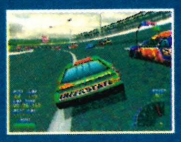
In total, there are 11 real NASCAR and six fantasy tracks (included in these are nine road and eight oval courses), but as with previous efforts it's only the twisty courses that are any fun to play. It's fun edging-up to the leading pack and brushing past them on a tight bend... for a while. The speed is there, but with regard to the patience-testing ovals, the interest isn't.

Attention to detail is excellent as you'd expect, with four-tyre skidmarks (and those in your trousers), roof flaps popping up on cars when 180° or 360° spin outs happen so that they stay on the track, and the exact track specifications. Commentary is provided by the authentic voice of Bob Jenkins, and real pit and crowd sounds have been painstakingly reproduced too.

No doubt about it, fans of this gas-guzzling sport are well-catered for in nearly every department, but you have to question the longevity and suspicious absence of any multi-car pile-ups. It's an exciting sport to watch, but does it translate well to a PlayStation game? The answer is yes, but to a limited degree.

LIGHTS, NASCAMERA, ACTION!

To immerse the player into an authentic NASCAR environment, there are five different camera views.



THIRD-PERSON (CLOSE). One of our faves this – watch your back end shake and bobble as opponents are left in your wake.



THIRD-PERSON (FAR) Another great view that gives you a bigger picture. You can check out any potentially dangerous collision ahead.



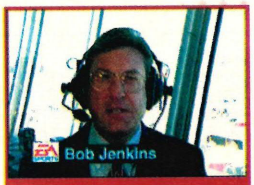
FIRST-PERSON Easily the fastest and most immersive view. You can almost smell the burnt rubber and axle grease.



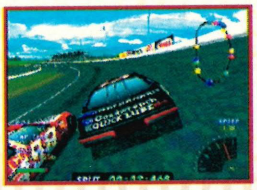
BONNET-CAM Unusual angle, but still fun to play. In this mode you really feel in control of the car.

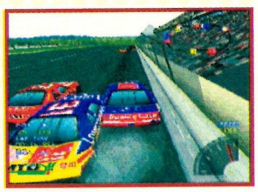


COCKPIT The worst way to drive around any course. The silhouetted arms look absolutely shite.

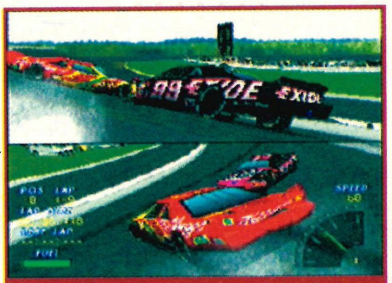


[Above] Bob Jenkins is the voice of NASCAR... apparently.

"Drive a muscle car with more horse power than the average Space Shuttle..."



[Above] Oh dear, the two player split screen action provides some hairy moments, and six other computer-controlled makes up the gaps.



HEAD OVER HEELS

The ups and downs of being a NASCAR driver! Before long you'll be somersaulting down the road and smashing into cars. We put the classic 'going around the track the wrong way' experiment to the test. Here are the results...



PLAY

Looks	8
Sounds	8
Gameplay	8
Value	8
Ovoid	8

PLAYED 82%

The complete NASCAR package

Alternatively:
NASCAR Racing '96 (80%)
Rage Racer (94%)

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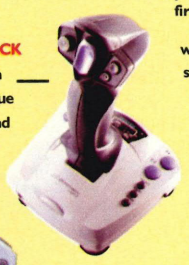


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PLAY

EYE SPY

THE GAME IS VIEWED IN A FIRST PERSON PERSPECTIVE, LITERALLY THROUGH THE EYES OF YOUR CHARACTER. EVERY FEW SECONDS HE/SHE BLINKS AND AS YOU TAKE DAMAGE OR BECOME SLEEPY, THEY EYE CLOSES ACCORDINGLY.



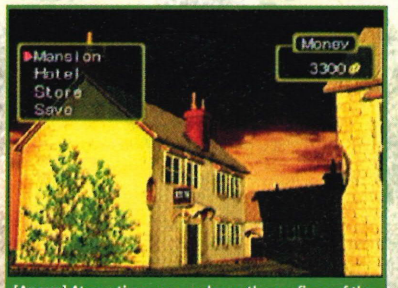
THE NOTE

"The plot of *The Note* reads like an episode of *Scooby Doo!*"

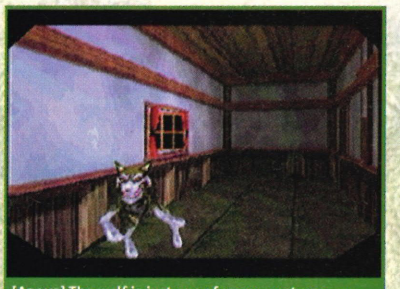
MISSING CHILDREN, THE OCCULT AND TWO INEXPERIENCED INVESTIGATORS. SUNSOFT'S SPOOKY ADVENTURE IS NOT FOR THE FAINT-HEARTED.

The plot of *The Note* reads like an episode of *Scooby Doo*, albeit a more adult version. You and your sidekick are freelance occult journalists investigating the disappearance of a group of kids. It's up to you to find out where they are and rescue them – simple plot, but then since when has that ever mattered?

The action is viewed in a first person blink-O-vision instead of *Resident Evil*'s third-person. By blink-O-vision, we mean that the programmers have tried to be clever by combining as much realism as possible, right down to the sense that the action is constantly obscured for a split-second whilst your character blinks! It works well as far as creating a haunting claustrophobic atmosphere is concerned. Unfortunately, the graphics are extremely blocky, which is a shame because creeping around the mansion and being scared witless by the inhabitants (wolves, bats and an assortment of unearthly spirits) is disturbingly addicted. It's a pale imitation of the mighty *Resident Evil* though, but there are some cunning elements such as a shop whereby you can stock up on as much ammo and other essentials as you can afford or inventory allows.



[ABOVE] At any time you can leave the confines of the mansion to visit the Store. Here you can buy or sell items to increase the inventory.



[ABOVE] The wolf is just one of many creatures you come across. Line them up in the centre of the screen then blow them away.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Sunsoft
Customer support: 0171 374 2766
Price: £39.99
Release date: Out Now

ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD

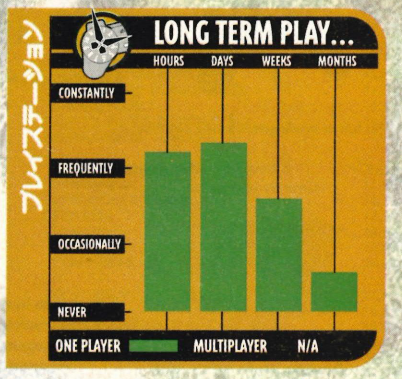
NIGHTMARE

The most noticeable aspect of *The Note* is its use of light; littered throughout each room are lanterns, which require oil and matches to illuminate the interior. Curtains shed light too, and quite often you won't be allowed to examine pieces of furniture until you can 'see' them properly. Puzzles are solved in the traditional adventure manner: use object A on object B in area C. There are a number of cut-scenes to keep the plot flowing nicely, although the character animations are nothing to write home about.

You can walk a round freely in the environment, strafing and looking up and down, but for some reason you can't run or jump. This can be incredibly tiresome when you know where you want to go, but have to do it at a snail's pace. This wouldn't be so bad, but some of the creatures are annoying to avoid (especially the bats which are a bugger to kill unless you're deadly accurate). All in all, *The Note* is a playable game with mildly exciting subject matter, but suffers from an unfriendly menu-driven interface and shoddy graphics.



[ABOVE] Upon arrival at the mansion, a short (badly acted!) sequence introduces the two characters before the first person action begins.



PLAY

LOOKS	6/10
SOUNDS	7/10
GAMEPLAY	7/10
VALUE	7/10
SPOOKS	6/10

PLAYED 72%

Above average first person adventure.

ALTERNATIVELY:
RESIDENT EVIL (95%)
OVERBLOOD (86%)

Written By Tom Sargent

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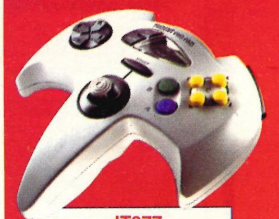


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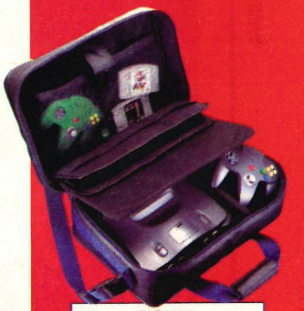
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Logic 3

FORMULA KARTS:

TIRED OF THE OVERSIZED THROBBING ENGINES OF *RAGE RACER* AND THE OTHERS LIKE IT? THEN GIVE THESE TINY ROAD TERRORS A TRY!

Written By Graeme Nicholson

In motorised go-carts, you are quite literally racing by the seat of your pants! A vehicle made from low grade steel tubing, a crude moulded seat and a Flymo engine leaves you so exposed that you feel as though you're nearing the sound barrier at only 30 miles per hour. Without doubt a fun experience, but can the Formula 1-for-idiots exhilaration translate properly to a video game?



In *Formula Karts* you get strapped in to your tiny buggy and throw yourself around a track with seven other carting morons for a minimum of six laps. Control is extremely basic, mainly because manual gears would be a bit out of place and so would a handbrake. Telstar has also decided not to allow use of the Sony Analog Controller because of incompatibility problems. The option would still have been better included, but unless you own a NeGcon or analog steering wheel then it's tappety-tap-tap time on the corners for you. Not very up-to-date.



[ABOVE] The movements of the drivers are meant to be motion captured, but they do so little it's hard to tell!



[ABOVE] Use your momentum on the corners to bash into the pesky over-competitive drivers.



[ABOVE] Getting a good start is very important as catching up the others later on is difficult.

K-KART

You can race the eight international tracks from Germany to Japan as single races in any order, or in sequence as a championship. In the spirit of the real sport the courses are absolutely tiny – perhaps the shortest of any racing game – and a good quick lap can be as low as 20-30 seconds depending on the complexity of the circuit. This design does make for a race where you learn the courses early on and so can be more concerned with rattling into the other drivers and cutting those corners tighter each time, but it also makes any race above the six lap minimum (the 10, 20 and 40 lap versions) incredibly repetitive.

One fun inclusion is real fuel consumption, so you have to watch the little meter on the longer races to avoid grinding to a halt. To refill you must nip out into the pit lane where you are slowed down but not stopped, just like *Wipeout 2097*. A recurring problem on a few tracks is that it's too easy to slide into the wide pit lane by mistake, and the total decrease in speed will usually lose you the race as well as turn your hair curly with rage. At least you can have some fun by knocking your mate in there during the two-cart-only two player race.

FORMULA LAWN MOWER

To add a little excitement you can go for the arcade mode, where you have the added elements of turbos that rapidly



[ABOVE] The computer opponents are nasty and they don't think twice about ramming you out of the way.



[ABOVE] Until you master the braking you can expect to bang into the sides at each right-angled bend.



[ABOVE] There are only two views, but the smart cockpit mode is most like the real thing.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Telstar
Customer support: 01932 222 232
Price: £44.99
Release date: 21 November '97

ONE PLAYER | MULTIPLE PLAYERS

SPLIT SCREEN | MEMORY CARD

SPECIAL EDITION



[Above] With only the two human players in split screen it is less frantic than the single player races, but it can be entertaining.



[Above] The Japanese track is crammed into the city and has loads of extremely tight corners – it's definitely the toughest!



[Above] At the back of the pack in Arcade mode you have to hold onto those turbo boosts until you see a clear stretch of road.

FLY ME TO THE MOON

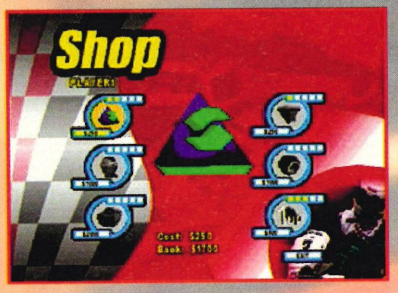
THE BONUS NINTH TRACK OF *FORMULA KARTS* TAKES PLACE ON THE MOON, JUST LIKE *NEED FOR SPEED'S* "LUNAR" COURSE! YOU DON'T GET REDUCED GRAVITY UNFORTUNATELY, BUT YOU GET TO DRIVE PAST THE FAMOUS APOLLO LANDING SITE AND THROUGH PART OF A NEW SPACE STATION.



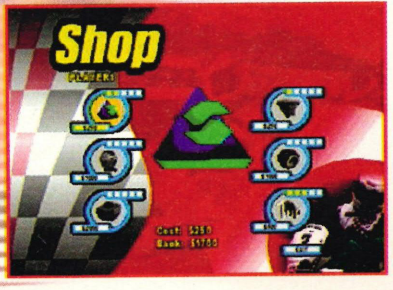
"You are quite literally racing by the seat of your pants!"

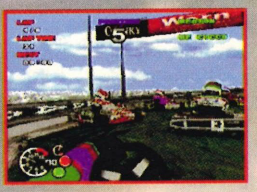
propel you for a few seconds and Supergrip power-ups which give you a brief period of ultra-traction to tear around a tricky bend at full speed. Not the most inventive additions it has to be said, but you can learn to use them in a tactical way and lengthen the game's life a little.

When driving something similar in power to most vacuum cleaners, there isn't much sense of "handling" as such and so *Formula Karts* feels pretty shallow compared to any of the full-size car games. There is nothing unpredictable in the way they respond, unlike the heart-in-your-mouth instances when your rear wheels lose traction in *Rage Racer* or you graze the grass in *Touring Car Championship*. Overall this means you don't feel as challenged in the reflexes and agility department, but the game does succeed in what it sets out to do and provides uncomplicated knock around gameplay which is as care free as the real thing. However, the more essential racing titles will cost you the same amount of cash for bigger thrills, so only buy *Formula Karts* after you've got those.





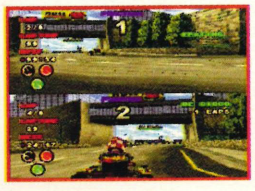


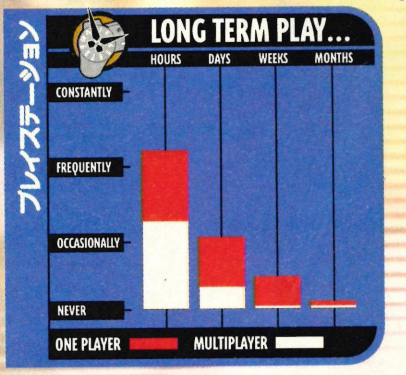












PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●●○○○○
SOUNDS	●●○○○○○○○○
GAMEPLAY	●●●●○○○○○○
VALUE	●●●○○○○○○○
TWO-STROKE	●●●●●●○○○○

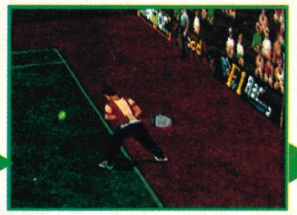
PLAYED **75%**

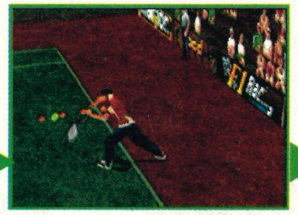
Too simplistic for mass appeal.

ALTERNATIVELY:
AYRTON SENNA'S KART DUEL (71%)
STREET RACER (84%)

LOVELY, SMASHING, SUPER

THE SPECIAL SHOT. YOU CAN ONLY GET THIS IF YOU RETURN THE BALL SIX TIMES IN A ROW (A STAR WILL APPEAR UNDERNEATH THE PLAYER). IT CAN BE UPGRADED TO A UNIQUE SUPER SPECIAL SHOT (WAIT FOR A FURTHER THREE RETURNS), WHICH IS DENOTED BY A FLASHING STAR.







TENNIS ARI

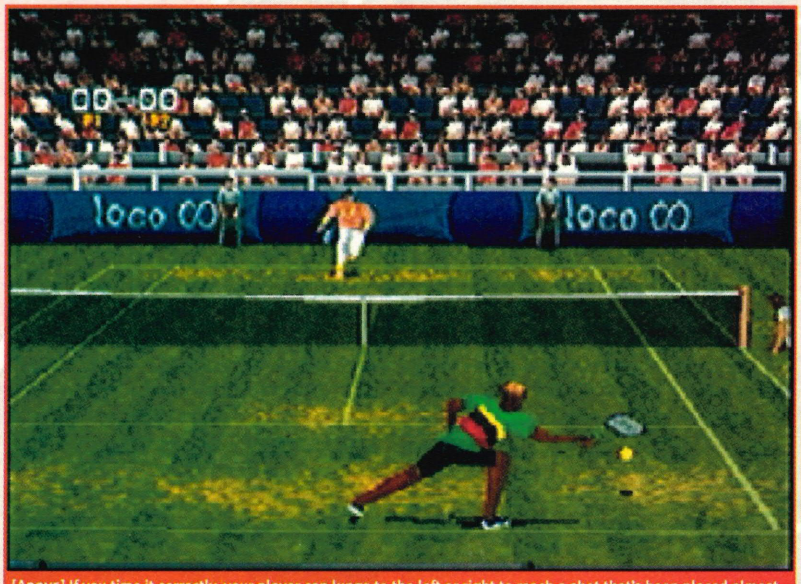
TAKE TO THE COURT AND WHACK YOUR GREEN, HAIRY BALLS AROUND IN UBI SOFT'S RATHER NIFTY NEW TENNIS SIMULATION.

Written By Tom Sargent

After dislocating an arm trying to emulate Greg 'not quite British, but who cares now that we've got a chance of winning Wimbledon' Rusedski, this reviewer decided to chance his remaining good arm at the slightly less limb-wrenching sport of armchair tennis – and jolly good it is too.

From the point where you choose one of the six full motion captured characters, to the shaking of hands after a five set thriller, the attention to detail is quite excellent. Players grunt, lunge, and power their way through a whole range of superbly animated moves, which are made doubly enjoyable by the individual mannerisms that each one exhibits. They throw their racquets in disgust, spin them on fingers, whack the air and tap their heels with the racquet head amongst many, many others.

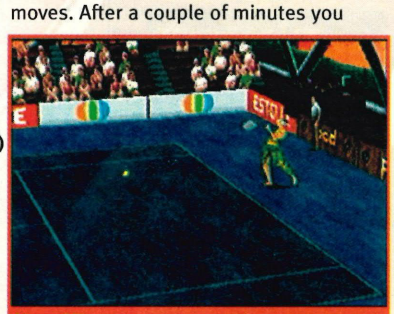
What lingers most in the memory about *Tennis Arena*, other than its relatively low-key appearance on the PlayStation scene, is the way it slowly draws you in thanks to the comprehensive, yet easy to pick-up moves. After a couple of minutes you advance from simply returning the ball, to pulling off your first sneaky cross court pass or a drop shot at the net.



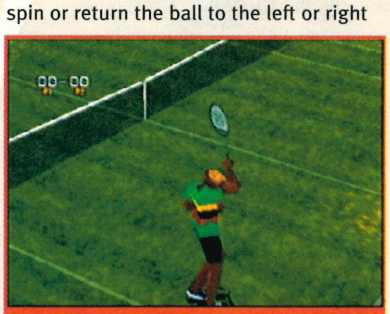
[ABOVE] If you time it correctly, your player can lunge to the left or right to reach a shot that's been placed almost out of reach. It looks great if you make it!

OH I SAY!

The balance between enjoyment and authenticity is also spot on. You don't have to be hyper-accurate every time you hit the ball, but if you want to add extra spin or return the ball to the left or right of the other player, you must position yourself correctly and use the D-pad and shoulder buttons accordingly. The matches take place in five nicely detailed settings including City Centre, Roman Amphitheatre and Harbour. Before and during each game, the camera pans around to set the scene, and during play you can choose from four different views. This proves to be more than enough – we've seen tennis games with more variety, but many of them turn out to be unplayable because of the restrictive view. More importantly, you can change the view so that you are always at the bottom, playing up the screen. There are a few downsides to *Tennis Arena*,



[ABOVE] The camera pans around between some shots and after each game, and shows how well detailed each of the courts are.



[ABOVE] Each character displays individual mannerisms, whether it's mopping their brow or tapping their heels with the racquet. Cool.







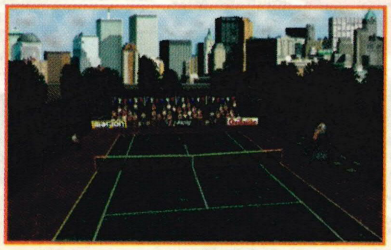
PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Ubi Soft
Customer support: 0181 944000
Price: £39.99
Release date: November '97

ONE PLAYER | MULTIPLE PLAYERS | MEMORY CARD | MULTI-TAP



:NA



COURT ON CAMERA



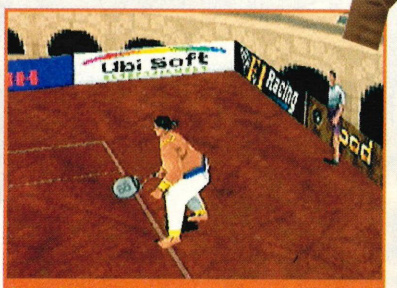
ARGUABLY THE BEST VIEW BECAUSE IT ALWAYS HAS THE FULL COURT ON SCREEN AT ONCE.



AGAIN A HIGHLY PLAYABLE VIEW, BUT THE CAMERA PANS DOWN ONTO THE COURT MORE.



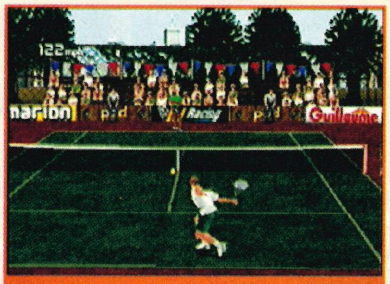
YOU GET TO SEE ALL OF THE MOVES HERE, BUT IT'S HARD TO SEE WHERE THE BALL'S LANDING.



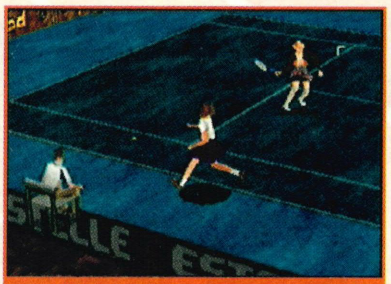
[ABOVE] Chan is one of the most bizarre characters we've ever seen in a tennis game. He's bare chested and sports heavy gold chains. They'd never allow this at Wimbledon.



"The balance between enjoyment and authenticity is spot on..."



[ABOVE] All kinds of shots are available depending on where you're standing and the positioning of your player in relation to the ball.

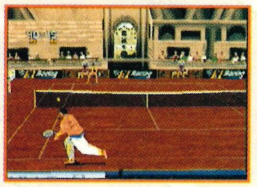


[ABOVE] If a shot is played out of court or hits the net, eager ball girls rush around efficiently picking up the balls. Even they are well animated.



[ABOVE] The World Tour is a one player seeded competition and follow your progress by checking out the Rank and Points screen.







however. There are only six players to choose from (plus a couple of special hidden extras endowed with potent ball skills) and just a few arenas to play in, which obviously don't affect the enjoyment, but it's a bit stingy!

CHALKDUST!

To be honest, the difficulty of the game is just about perfect, but due to the capacious range of animations, that old chestnut 'lag' makes lunging for a wide ball at the last second that much harder. You can compensate for this by anticipating your opponent's next shot, but it's irritating when you know that you could have and should have made the shot.

Thanks to a multi-tap option four human players can slug it out in mortal... well, sweaty combat and it's even more fun than the single player mode. If the prospect of playing one off games makes you yawn, the World Tour option provides a more lasting challenge, and as you'd expect, opponents become tougher as you edge your way to the finals. *Tennis Arena* is a fun, simple and enjoyable game – especially in multi-player mode and even the AI of the CPU-controlled all-stars is well executed. Not perfect, but could give the forthcoming *Actua Tennis* a run for its money.

PLAY

LOOKS	8
SOUNDS	8
GAMEPLAY	9
VALUE	6
LETS	8

PLAYED 84%

Slick, addictive and playable...

ALTERNATIVELY:
SMASH COURT TENNIS (86%)
ACTUA TENNIS (NOVEMBER '97)



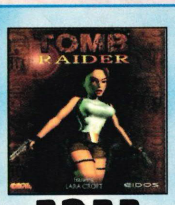
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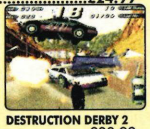

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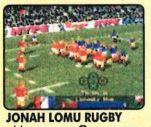

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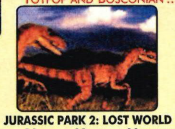
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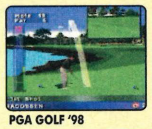

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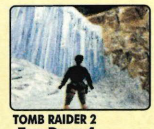

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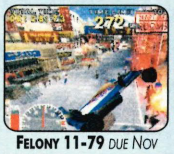
CASTLEVANIA DUE NOV



COLONY WARS DUE DECEMBER



FINAL FANTASY 7 DUE DEC



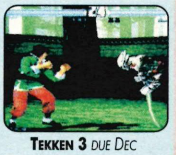
FELONY 11-79 DUE NOV



WAR GODS DUE NOV



TEST DRIVE 4 DUE DEC



TEKKEN 3 DUE DEC

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ACE COMBAT 2	NOVEMBER
ACTUA SOCCER 2	14TH NOVEMBER
ACTUA TENNIS	DECEMBER
APACHE LONGBOW	DECEMBER
AUTO DESTRUCT	26TH DECEMBER
CASTLEVANIA	NOVEMBER
CLAYFIGHTER EXTREME	DECEMBER
CRASH BANDICOOT 2	DECEMBER
DISCWORLD 2	NOVEMBER
FIFA ROAD TO WORLD CUP	14TH NOVEMBER
FINAL FANTASY 7	NOVEMBER
HERC'S ADVENTURE	DECEMBER
KILLING TIME	NOVEMBER
LETHAL ENFORCERS 1 & 2	OCT/NOV
MAGIC THE GATHERING	NOVEMBER
MOTO RACER	14TH NOVEMBER
NASCAR '98	7TH NOVEMBER
PREMIER MANAGER '98	JANUARY '98
SCREAMER 2	END NOVEMBER
TEST DRIVE 4	12TH DECEMBER
TIME CRISIS	NOVEMBER
TOMB RAIDER 2	21ST NOVEMBER
TOTAL DRIVIN'	21ST NOVEMBER
TOURING CARS	21ST NOVEMBER
WAR GODS	OCTOBER

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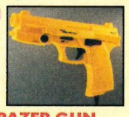
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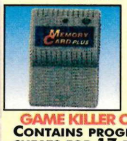
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STATION MA

CHEATS ▸ TIPS ▸ LETTERS

LIKE A SQUIRREL GATHERING HIS NUTS FOR THE WINTER (YOU WHAT? – ED), THE STATION MASTER IS MAKING SPECIAL HIBERNATION ARRANGEMENTS OF HIS OWN BY SHARING A VERITABLE FEAST OF TOP CHEATS TO SEE EVERYONE THROUGH THE NEXT FROSTY MONTH. IF YOU HAVE ANY CHEATS, TIPS OR PRICELESS PLAYSTATION NUGGETS OF YOUR OWN SEND THEM, AS USUAL, TO: *STATION MASTER, PLAY MAGAZINE, PARAGON HOUSE, ST. PETER'S ROAD, BOURNEMOUTH, DORSET BH1 2JS*. OR E-MAIL PLAY@PARAGON.CO.UK

RESIDENT EVIL: THE DIRECTOR'S CUT

UNLIMITED ROCKET LAUNCHER

Finish the game within three hours but don't rescue anyone. A rocket will appear after the credits. Choose to continue playing after the game restarts. The rocket launcher will be available when the new game begins. Note that the rocket launcher doesn't shoot well upwards or downwards.

UNLIMITED MAGNUM

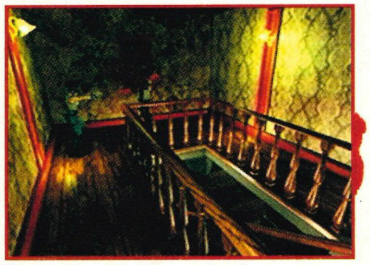
Select Advanced mode and complete the game with either character in any amount of time. The unlimited magnum will be available when the game is replayed. This weapon makes it easier to complete the game in under three hours for the unlimited rocket launcher, at which point both weapons will be available for another game.

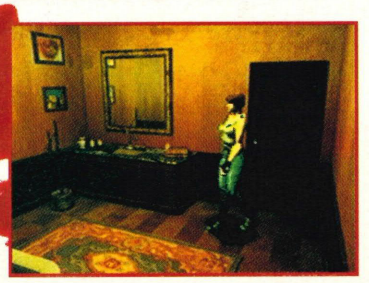
RESET GAME

Pause the game during play and press Start + Select together. The game will reset and return to the main menu.

CHANGE CLOTHES:

Rescue the other two players and finish the game. The phrase "You've got the special key" will appear after the credits. Now save the game. Start the game that was just saved. Enter the room with the large mirror on the second floor of the mansion. Unlock the door in the back. Enter the closet and move all the way to the end of the rack of clothes. A message asking "There is an outfit that fits you perfectly, do you want to put it on?" will appear. Select 'Yes' to change your character's clothes.





WARCRAFT 2: THE DARK SAGA

CHEAT MODE

Press Start during game play and select the password option. Enter one of the following passwords to activate the corresponding cheat function.

Effect	Password
10000 gold. 5000 lumber, 5000 oil	GLTTRNG
All spells, full mana	VRYLTTL
Disable complete victory	NVRWNNR
Disable magic traps	NGLS
Display full map	NSCRN
Faster woodchopping	HTCHT
Flashing red line background	NTPRF
Full upgrades	DCKMT
Invincibility, boost unit strength	TSGDDYTOD
Level skip	NTTHCLNS
Lose game	YPTFLWRM
Quick building and upgrade	MKTS
Win entire game	THRCNBNLYN





NUCLEAR STRIKE

RECON MODE

Enter EAGLEEYE as a password. You may fly over the level one map freely without any enemy fire.

BONUS CONTINUES

Enter PHOENIX as a password.

FLY FURTHER

Enter MPG as a password to fly a greater distance without refuelling.

Level	Password
2	CUTTHROATS
3	COUNTDOWN
3B	PLUTONIUM
4	PUSAN
5	ARMAGEDDON
Bonus	LIGHTNING

SYNDICATE WARS

SKIN CHEAT

At long last some genuine cheats!

1. On the last level Options screen, go to Cryovat.
2. Make sure all of your people have got level 3 in everything, including your reserves.
3. Click on 'All Agents' and then on one of your reserves. You should now only be able to buy the three body modifications, so buy him/her level 3. Do this for all your reserves in turn (go back to 'All Agents' then another person) until they have all been done but not for your main team.
4. Now click on number 1 and you'll have one of the improved skin types. The type of skin you get depends on the number of reserves you have.

ASTER

COOL BOARDERS 2

REVERSED COURSES

Complete all nine rounds in 'Snowboarding Combined' mode and achieve any ranking. Hold R1 and select 'Freeride' or 'Snowboarding Combined' modes to play reversed versions of the courses.



COURSE SELECT

Quickly highlight the following selections in order at the mode selection screen: SBC, Onemake, Freeride, Option, Boardpark, Halfpipe, Freeride and press ●. Then, hold L1+ L2 + R1+ R2 and press ● after the one player and two player selection screen.

PLAY AS ALIEN AND SNOWMAN

Complete all 100 moves in Master mode, set all records in Freeride mode.

BONUS BOARDS

Enter Freeride mode with all the tracks. Set all the records for all the tracks.

MIRROR MODE

Complete SBC mode and enter the options screen. Press Select on controller two, then press R1 + ■ at the mode selection screen.

NHL '98

VIEW STANLEY CUP FMV

Enter STANLEY as a password.

SMALL PLAYERS

Enter NHLKIDS as a password.

LARGE PLAYERS

Enter BIGBIG as a password.

POWERPLAY AWARDED TO LAST TEAM WHO SCORED

Enter GIPTEA as a password.

LARGE HEADS

Enter BRAINY as a password.

EA BONUS TEAM

Enter EAEAO as a password.

HERCULES

Note: This is the game by Disney, not to be confused with *Herc's Adventures* by Lucas Arts.

Level	Password
The Hero's Gauntlet	Serpent, Medusa, Coin, Medusa
Centaur's Forest	Centaur, Hercules Silhouette, Minotaur, Archer
The Big Olive	Centaur, Coin, Serpent, Hercules Silhouette
Hydra Canyon	Coin, Gladiator Helmet, Coin, Soldier
Medusa's Lair	Archer, Pegasus, Archer, Centaur
Cyclops Attack	Gladiator Helmet, Pegasus, Hercules Silhouette, Archer
Titan Flight	Soldier, Coin, Coin, Thunder Bolt
Passageway of Eternal Torment	Medusa, Soldier, Centaur, Pegasus
Vortex of Souls	Soldier, Lightning Bolt, Soldier, Centaur
End	Pegasus, Soldier, Centaur, Soldier

PLAY Q&A

Where we make the impossible possible, the unfeasible feasible, the... (okay, that's enough – Ed). What we're trying to say is if you've got problem, (no medical conditions please), we'll solve it – simple as that. Help is only a letter away, and you can contact the team at the following address: *Q&A, Play Magazine, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 2JS.*

Dear PLAY,
I am an avid female reader of your magazine and am stuck on *Resident Evil*. I am in the 'Lab' section and there is a door with three flashing lights. How do I get the passcode as it is locked? Secondly, what relevance does the dial on the end of the snooker table have? Thank you in advance.
Miss S.J. Harvey, Doncaster

The door you refer to is the cell where your fellow S.T.A.R.S team member is being held captive. To open the door, you must first find the three MO disks and then take them to the passcode terminals. You will then receive three pass codes which you insert into the terminal next to the door to gain entry. Oh, and don't pay too much attention to the snooker table, it is somewhat of a red-herring.

Dear PLAY,
I am but a feeble woman and I'm stuck on *Resident Evil*, sad eh? I have the two doom books, but don't know how to use them. Also, I have two MO disks, but the third one and all three Terminals are located in rooms that I can't find: – Laboratory, Private Room A, Mortuary and Power maze B? Please can you help me?
Moz Boz, Merseyside



There's nothing feeble about getting stuck in Res, Moz. To open the fountain that leads to the lab, simply go to your inventory and highlight each Doom Book in turn. Now go to 'Check Item' and rotate each book in the window until the pages are facing outwards. Now press the action button to make the book open, revealing either a Wolf or Eagle Medal inside. Don't worry about the terminals, all will become clear when you get into the lab.

Dear PLAY magazine,
I am stuck in the bar in Ireland on the game *Broken Sword*. I have spoken to the old poacher in the corner, but was not quick enough to grab the snare. without this I cannot fix the glass washer and therefore get down to the cellar. Please help a desperate player.
Terry Stone, Stevenage

You may have to start this section again if he won't show you the snare again. Go to MacDevitts. Talk to Ron the Poacher, then say good-bye. Wait until Ron leaves the snare on the table, then take the snare when he sneezes – you'll have to be quick.

V-RALLY SPECIAL UPDATE

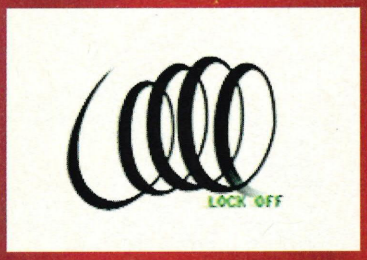
SOLVED

FINALLY THE PROGRAMMERS OF V-RALLY HAVE CRACKED UNDER THE INTENSE PRESSURE (AND THUMBSCREWS) TO PROVIDE US WITH ALL OF THE CHEATS FOR THEIR SUPERLATIVE RALLY RACER. SIT BACK, STRAP YOURSELVES IN AND ENJOY THE RIDE ...



THE CHEATS

To activate the cheat mode, load the game and wait for the Infogrames logo to appear. Then quickly press: ⇧ ⇩ ▲ ● ⇧ ⇩ ▲ + ● (press the last two buttons together to activate the cheat).

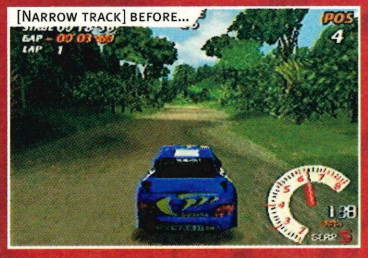


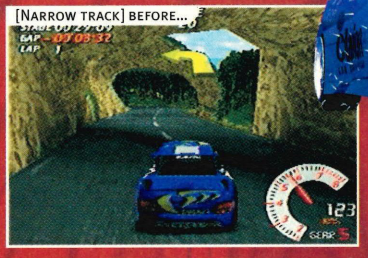
The phrase 'Lock Off' will appear to confirm that you've entered the code correctly (and unlock all the Arcade tracks). Before the screen changes, press one of the following controller actions to activate the corresponding cheat function...

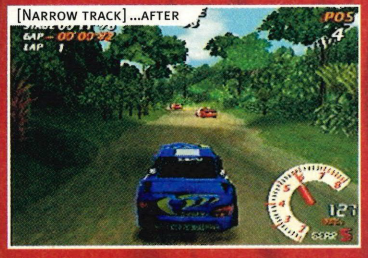
UNLIMITED TIME

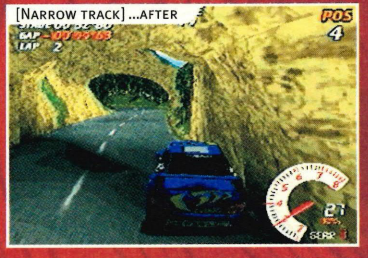
Press and hold ⇦ + L1 to get infinite time on Arcade mode. Now the race continues even if the checkpoints are not crossed before the time expires, so you should have no trouble going round backwards and crashing into other drivers just for the hell of it.











NARROW TRACKS

Press and hold ⇦ + L2.

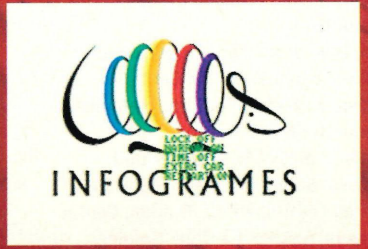
The Arcade tracks now become much narrower – as confirmed by the 'Narrow Tracks Loading' message before a race. These tracks are usually earned by completing the Arcade Hard courses when the difficulty level is set on Ace. You will need sharp eyes indeed to spot the slight difference between them and the normal tracks, but it is there (we think!).

RESTART RACE

Press and hold ⇦ + R2 to allow an Arcade mode race to be restarted. This gives you infinite continues which should help when the computer-controlled bandits run you off the road five yards from the finish.

FOUR CHEATS

If you want four of these cheats activated at the same time, simultaneously press and hold ⇦ + L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 when the 'Lock Off' message appears.



DEGUB MODE

When 'Locl Off' is displayed, press ⇦ then ⇨. Game debug information will be displayed. Press Start to access a 'Memory' option that displays more information. Quite how useful this can be is a mystery. Unless, that is, you happen to have programmed the game.

JEEP

Press and hold ⇦ + R. A small Jeep will replace the Peugeot 106 Maxi (see next page for details). This cheat also activates the secret Roller coaster track.

TOYOTA CELICA

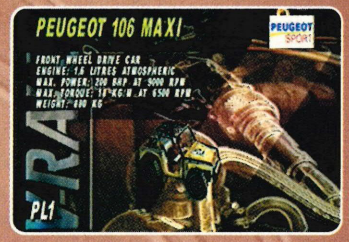
Its existence is still a mystery. Latest reports suggest that you have to complete Arcade and championship on Ace level , then race the Corsica ES1 in Time Trial, and set a lap record in under a minute. The barrier on the left after the start should rise: drive down the lane to obtain the Celica.



THE JEEP

0-90 MPH: 5.9 SEC
TOP SPEED: 130 MPH
DRIVE: FOUR WHEEL
THIS BABY HAS ULTRA-SLICK HANDLING TO ENABLE YOU TO TAKE CORNERS ON A SIXPENCE AND A MAXIMUM SPEED TO MAKE YOUR HEAD SPIN. IT'S ACCELERATION FAR OUTCLASSES ALL THE OPPOSITION VEHICLES, LEAVING THEM EATING YOUR EXHAUST FUMES AT THE START LINE. UNFORTUNATELY, THIS IMPRESSIVE POWER COMES WITH A PRICE, AS YOU'LL SOON FIND OUT WHEN YOU TRY TO BRAKE FOR A CORNER AND END UP EATING WINDSHIELD AS YOU SPIN HELPLESSLY OUT OF CONTROL. SO REMEMBER, START BREAKING EARLY TO REMAIN ON FOUR WHEELS.











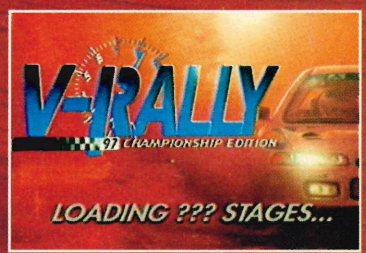
SECRET ROLLER COASTER TRACK

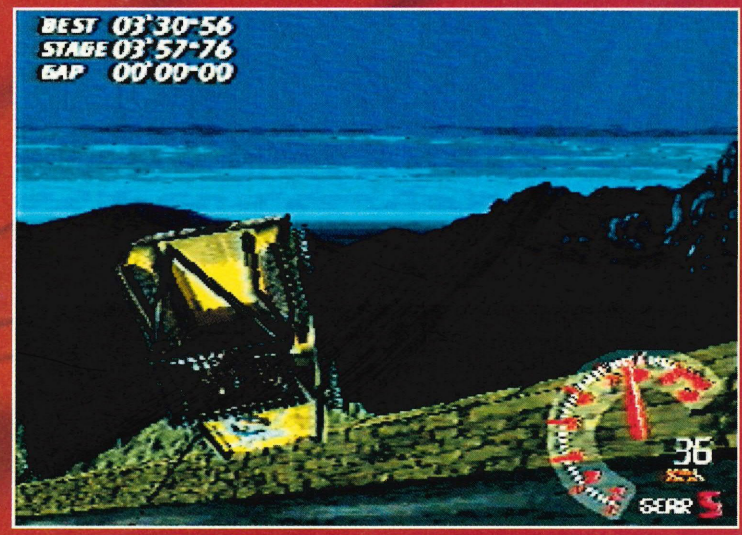
To get this stomach-churning course, simply activate the cheat for the Jeep, then select the 'Sweden1' Championship track in Time Trial mode. The screen should say its loading the '????' stages to indicate you have accessed the secret circuit.

The track itself is real beauty. You can put your foot down at the start as the two bends you come to are very slight, but as soon as you're on the viaduct, hit the brakes and slow right down. The reason for this is that the small bumps following it are extremely deadly – even a fraction of excessive speed can send you spinning , or worse make you crash into the invisible barrier that seems to cover the top half of the screen.

When you're past this bit you can really put the peddle to the metal. Come out of the next hard left corner at high speed and head down the dip, Don't go too fast, though, as there's a sharp right turn as you get to the tunnel. Cruise round the selection of corners and head up the steep hill with your foot down hard – avoid hitting the sides or you'll stall the engine and be dragged to the bottom again. Be wary of losing control on your way down this mother of all drops, as you'll be approaching speeds of 270 kph or more – we're talking terminal wipe-out if you balls-up.

Following this, there's an even bigger hill for you to ascend, and going down the other side is no picnic as there are heaps of deadly corners to get round. When you're past this nightmare, there's only a small dip and right bend to negotiate as you head for the finish line, looking a bit green around the gills. All in all then, tremendous fun, and a bloody fantastic freebie when you've become bored.





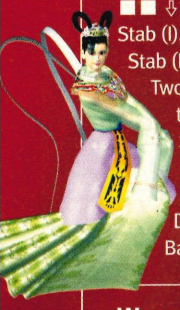




DYNASTY WARRIORS

WE COULDN'T QUITE SQUEEZE ALL OF THE SOLUTION INTO LAST MONTHS ISSUE. BUT AS PROMISED, WE'VE DRAGGED THE FINAL PART KICKING AND SCREAMING (INCLUDING ALL OF THE EXTRAS AND BOSSES) ONTO ONE PAGE.

DIAO CHAN



Weapon Oo Choice: Enchanted Maces
Before The Three Kingdoms
Hit, turn-around hit, uppercut hit – ■ ■ ■
Stab, backhand hit mid, then low – ▲ ■ ■
Slash, turning slash, spinning low slash – ■ ■ ⇩ + ■
Stab (I), slash – ⇨ + ▲ ■
Stab (I), low slash – ⇨ + ▲ ⇩ + ■
Two-hit combo ending with back towards opponent – ▲ ⇦ + ■
Stab, turn and hit, kick – ▲ ⇦ + ■ ■
Jumping hit – ⇗ + ■
Ducking stab, sweep – (ws) + ▲ ■
Backward spin, low hit – (ws) + ■ ■
One-legged stab, kick – ⇩ ⇨ + ▲ ■
Low sweep – ⇩ ⇦ + ■
Uppercut, down hit – ⇨ ⇨ + ▲ ■
Cartwheel – ⇨ ⇨ + ■
Strong uppercut – ⇨ ⇩ ⇘ + ▲
Spin slash and with back towards oppo. – ⇨ ⇩ ⇘ + ■
Spin, slash, reversal low kick – ⇨ ⇩ ⇘ + ■ ■
Backflip – ⇨ ⇦
Immediately after backflip:
One-legged stab, kick – ▲ ▲ ■
Low spinning slash – ■
With back towards opponent:
Two stab combo and kick – ■ ■ ■
Stab, slash, kick – ▲ ■ ■

WARRIOR: TAISHI CI

Weapon of Choice: Steel Tusks
Kingdom Of Wu
Three-slash combo – ■ ■ ■
Charged stab (I) – ⇦ + ▲
Power stab – ⇩ ⇨ + ▲
Overhead chop – ⇩ ⇨ + ■
Leg sweep, stab – ⇩ (hold) ■ ▲
Uppercut slash – (ws) + ■
Mid stab – (ws) + ▲
Spinning low slash, uppercut – ⇗ + ■ ■
Stabbing combo – ⇩ ⇦ + ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲
Stab combo and power slam – ⇩ ⇦ + ▲ ▲ ▲ ✻ + ▲ ■
Stab combo, power slam, power stab – ⇩ ⇦ + ▲ ▲ ▲ ⇨ + ▲ ⇦ + ■ ⇩ ⇨ + ▲
Spinning upper – ⇩ ⇦ + ■
Power slam – ⇨ ⇨ + ▲ ■
Power slam, power stab – ⇨ ⇨ + ▲ ⇦ + ■ ⇩ ⇨ + ▲
Uppercut – ⇨ ⇩ ⇘ + ■



LU BU

Weapon of choice: Halberd Of Eclipse
Before The Three Kingdoms
Side hit, slash, overhead hit – ■ ■ ■
Side hit, slash, stab, turn and stab – ■ ■ ▲ ▲
Stab, overhead hit – ▲ ■
Advancing stab, follow-up stab – (ws) + ▲ ▲
Uppercut – ⇨ ⇨ + ■
Block, stab (I) – ⇦ + ▲
Double upper – (ws) + ■ ■
Double spin and mid stab – ⇩ ⇦ + ■ ■ ▲
Triple spin – ⇩ ⇦ + ■ ■ ■
Double overhead chop – ⇨ ⇘ ⇩ ⇗



⇦ + ■
Impaling stab, kebab throw – ⇩ ⇨ + ⇧ ⇦ (hold) ■ + ▲
Musou extension:
Kebab throw extension – Stab mosou, ⇦ (hold) ■ + ▲

WARRIOR: XU ZHU

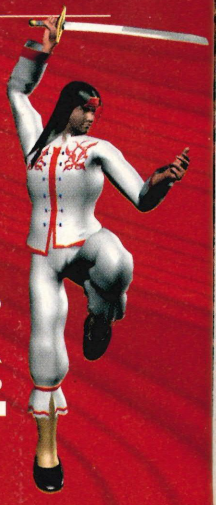
Weapon of Choice: Mortal Thorns
Kingdom Of Wei
Side swing: overhead hit – ■ ■
Three-level stab combo – ▲ ▲ ▲
High stab, swing , overhead – ▲ ■ ■
Swing then three level stab combo – ■ ▲ ▲ ▲
Triple swing – ⇦ + ■ ⇨ + ■ ⇦ + ■
Leg sweep, stab – ⇩ (hold) ■ ▲
Mid and low hits – (ws) + ▲ ▲
Uppercut – (ws) + ■
Overhead bash (I) – ⇨ + ■
Hopping over head, arse up strike – ⇩ ⇨ + ■ ⇧ + ■
Power swing – ⇩ ⇦ + ■
Triple spin – ⇦ ⇗ ⇩ ⇘ ⇨ + ■ ■ ■
Two-level spin – ⇦ ⇗ ⇩ ⇘ ⇨ + ■ ⇩ + ■ ■ ■
Three-level triplw spin – ⇦ ⇗ ⇩ ⇘ ⇨ + ■ ⇩ (hold) + ■ ■ ■
Mid stun hit, backbreaker, power swing – ⇨ ⇨ + ▲ ▲ + ■ ⇩ ⇦ + ■

WARRIOR: LU XUN

Weapon: Phantom swords
Kingdom Of Wu
Spinning three-slash attack – ■ ■
Back flip slash (I) – ⇦ + ■
Mid slash – (ws) + ■
Mid stab – (ws) + ▲
Uppercut – ⇘ (hold) ■
Double slash & stab spin – ⇨ ⇨ + ■ ▲ ■
Triple spin (6 hit) – ⇩ ⇨ + ■ ▲ ■
Bilateral side slash, uppercut – ⇩ ⇦ + ■ ■
Stab – ⇨ ⇨ + ▲
Uppercut – ⇨ ⇩ ⇘ + ■
Five-hit chain – ⇨ ⇘ ⇩ ⇗ ⇦ + ■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Double overhead chop – ⇗ (hold) + ■ ■

WARRIOR: ZHOU YU

Weapon of Choice: Ancestral Sword
Kingdom Of Wu
Three-slash combo – ■ ■ ■
Three-slash combo and sword stance – ■ ■ ⇦ (hold) + ■
One-legged stab, slash, stab – ▲ ■ ▲
One-legged stab, cross-legged low slash – ▲ ⇩ + ■
low slash, circle slash – ⇩ (hold) ■ ■
Circle slash – (ws) + ■
Mid thrust – (ws) + ▲
Advancing slash – ⇩ ⇨ + ■
Uppercut – ⇨ ⇩ ⇘ + ▲
Uppercut and turn into sword stance (S) – ⇨ ⇩ ⇘ + ▲ ⇦ + ■
Double midair hurricane slashes – ⇗ (tap) + ■ ■
Sword stance (S) – ⇦ (hold) + ■
Two low slashes – ⇗ (hold) ■ ■
Moves from sword stance:
Mid, mid, low slash combo – ■ ■ ■
Mid stab combo – ■, ■, ▲
Two slashes then return to sword stance – ⇗ (hold) ■ ■



REVEAL EXTRAS & BOSSES

SUN SHANG XIANG (EXTRA)

AT THE TITLE SCREEN PRESS THE FOLLOWING: ⇦ ⇦ ⇧ ⇩ ▲ ■ L1 R1. YOU'LL HEAR A CHIME SIGNIFYING CORRECT ENTRY. (SAME MOVES AS ZHOU YU)

NOBUNAGA (EXTRA)

COMPLETE THE GAME WITH LU BU, THEN PRESS THE FOLLOWING AT THE TITLE SCREEN: ■ ⇧ ▲ ⇩ ●. YOU'LL HEAR A CHIME SIGNIFYING CORRECT ENTRY. (SAME MOVES AS LU BU)

TOUKICHI (EXTRA)

COMPLETE THE GAME WITH NOBUNAGA, THEN PRESS THE FOLLOWING AT THE TITLE SCREEN: ⇩ ⇩ ⇨ ⇧ ● ▲ R1 R2. YOU'LL HEAR A CHIME SIGNIFYING CORRECT ENTRY. (SAME MOVES AS CAO CAO)

ZHUGE LIANG (BOSS)

COMPLETE THE GAME WITH GUAN YU, ZHAO YUN, AND ZHANG FEI.

CAO CAO (BOSS)

COMPLETE THE GAME WITH XIAHOU DUN, DIAN WEI, AND XU ZHU

LU BU (BOSS)

COMPLETE THE GAME WITH ZHOU YU, LU XUN, TAISHI CI, DIAO CHAN, ZHUGE LIANG, AND CAO CAO

NOTE: ALL THESE FABULOUS EXTRA CHARACTERS CAN SUBSEQUENTLY BE SELECTED AT THE CHARACTER SELECT SCREEN BY MOVING TO THE LEFT OR RIGHT OF THE SCREEN ONCE THEY HAVE BEEN ACTIVATED.

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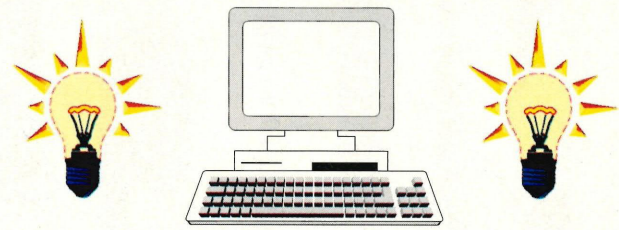
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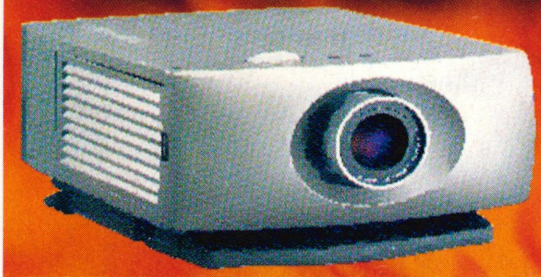
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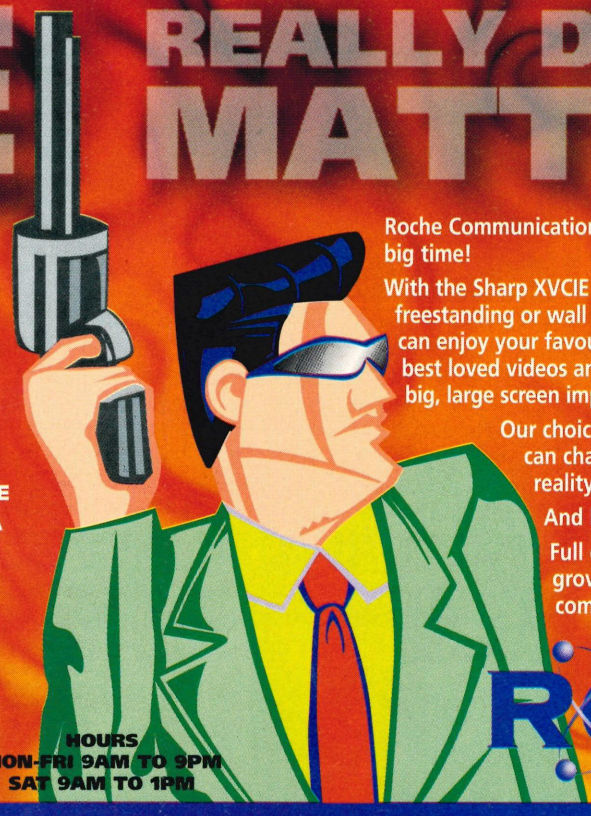
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NUCLEAR STR

Welcome to the second part of our *Nuclear Strike* walkthrough. This month we conquer Campaigns three and four, as well as providing all the latest tips and tactics to make the carnage that bit easier. Lock 'n' load...

CAMPAIGN 3: PEACE STRIKE

Password: COUNT DOWN
Setting: Pyong Yang, heart of the North Korean capital.

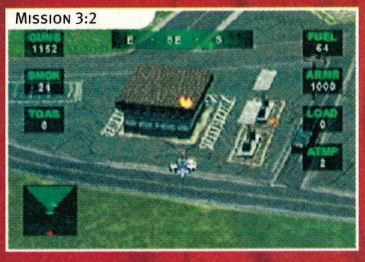
Mission 1: Rescue agents

Pick up the quick ladder from the fire station next to your home base, then go to each marked building in turn. Once there, shoot at the buildings to send troops scurrying into the courtyard. While this is occurring, the agents will make a break for it, so watch out for them and winch them up before they get killed.

Mission 2: Stop transports

Due to new weapons, pinpoint each vehicle and then scout on ahead to see what surroundings can assist you in destroying them. In most cases, they pass a petrol station, so get ahead of them and start shooting at the station – the idea being to make it blow up as they go past, thus taking them out as well. Electrical pylons can also be used as a means of destroying them.

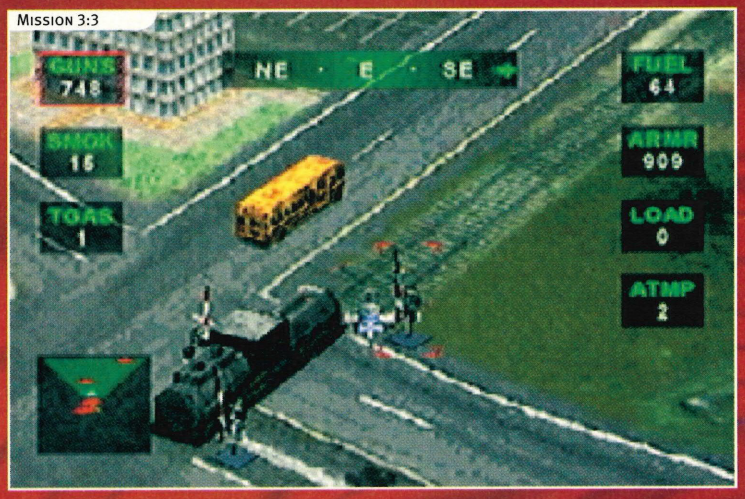
Mission 3:2



Mission 3: Escort bus

Shoot the troops that attack the bus as the diplomats are boarding, then stay closely behind it as it pulls away. After ramming the statue, the bus will turn onto the roads. There will be two motorbikes hidden behind the roadside billboards to take out before they can cause any damage. Shortly into the journey, you'll be asked to shoot a road barrier to determine the route that the bus takes – make sure you shoot the one on the left, this way you will have to tackle very little by way of danger. Just keep following the bus to the frigate and winch up Andrea to complete the mission.

Mission 3:3



Mission 4: Get Cobra

Very simple. Go to the museum marked on the map and drop off Andrea. Then destroy the two tanks and the groups of soldiers that attack the building before landing your new chopper and transferring vehicles.

Mission 5: Cover airlift

Airlift the dignitaries to safety and drop Andrea at the city centre LZ, then provide cover for these helicopters. Drop off Andrea and then pick off the red targets that close in around the building. As long as get to the enemy targets quickly, they shouldn't pose too much threat to the allied helicopters.

Mission 6: Escort diplomats

Before dropping off Andrea at the LZ, first clear the immediate area of enemy targets. Once the route to the shelter is clear, drop off Andrea and prepare for a hectic race against time. Andrea will escort the diplomats out of the building and down the road. However, they will come under heavy attack from enemy troops and tanks. Cover all sides and scoot ahead to clear the path. If too many diplomats are shot, it will result in a mission SNAFU, so be careful.

Mission 3:6



Mission 7: Collect supplies

Seeing as the nuclear detonation is imminent, in the time left you must transport any remaining supplies to the football stadium in the bottom-right corner of the map. This isn't essential though because you won't find yourself short later on. Simply make your way to the stadium and prepare to be rocked!

Mission 3:3



Mission 3:5



Mission 3:7



NEW CHEATS AND TIPS

RECON MODE
Enter EAGLEEYE as a password. You may fly over the level one map freely without any enemy fire.

BONUS CONTINUES
Enter PHOENIX as a password.

FLY FARTHER
Enter MPG as a password to fly a greater distance without refuelling.

BONUS
Enter LIGHTNING as a password

FUTURE STRIKE
By typing COMMERCIAL as a password, you can take a sneak preview of the next game in this burgeoning series.

RADAR ORIENTEERING
One of the most welcome additions to the Strike format is the on-screen radar that allows you to monitor exactly what's around you at all times. Each blob represents a different; here's what they mean:

- Enemy targets
- Allies
- Mission targets
- Collectable objects

RIKE

CAMPAIGN 3 PART 2

Password: PLUTONIUM
Setting: The remains of Pyong Yang, minutes after nuclear detonation.

MISSION 8: ESCORT TRAIN

Scout around and clear the general area of all enemy activity, then drop off Andrea and hover over to the train. Straight away, an enemy train will pull up behind, so hit the engine carriage with missiles. Now the allied train will pull away and start proceeding along the northbound line. Another train will strike on the first bridge, so use the same measures as before. Now things will really start to hot up as enemy tanks and others start closing in. At one point you'll need to shoot a switch to alter the lines, thus avoiding a head-on collision with an enemy train.

MISSION 9: DESTROY BRIDGES/HQ

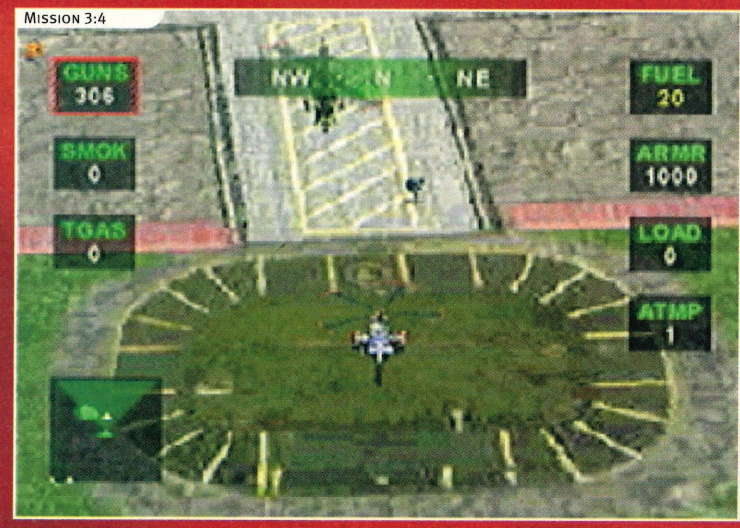
Go south and take out the bridges, thus preventing the enemy convoys from escaping, then turn whatever firepower you have left onto the actual vehicles themselves. What better way to end a campaign than with mindless violence!









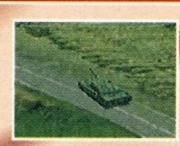




THERE ARE FIVE NEW MEANS OF DESTRUCTIVE TRANSPORT AVAILABLE IN CAMPAIGNS 3 & 4


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M-1: CAMPAIGN 4


MLRS: CAMPAIGN 4


NEWS CHOPPER: CAMPAIGN 3

CAMPAIGN 4: DMZ STRIKE

Password: PUSAN
Setting: The 38th Parallel. A south Korean airfield near the demilitarised zone.

MISSION 1: COLLECT ANDREA

Very straightforward. Go to the US camp marked on the map and winch up Andrea. You'll find the quick ladder right next to her.

MISSION 2: MAIN BATTLEFIELD

All hell has broken out! This is where things start to get really heavy, so listen up soldier... First of all, do what Andrea says and head off the troop invasion that is threatening in subs from the south/west. Hit them before they move, to irradiate what little danger they pose. Next on the agenda is a small troop of tunnel commandos: again get to these quickly and shoot them before they impose any damage.

At this point the whole area will light up like a Christmas tree with enemy activity. Go to each allied camp marked on the map and deploy the soldiers to the indicated positions, then fly north into enemy airspace and take out the Scud-launchers.

Once accomplished, fly back down to the Southwest LZ and transfer to the A-10X plane. This has tremendous armour and weapons, so start taking out the massive fleet of tanks that start descending from the north. By staying close to the bottom, you'll be able to pick them off before they head south, thus preventing the chances of a mission SNAFU.

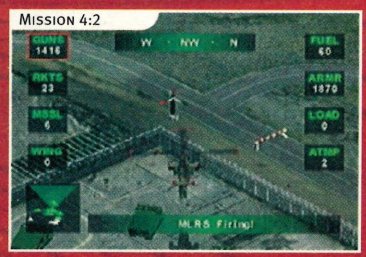
There are a whole host of other ways to keep the enemy from attacking – such as changing signposts, crushing them by shooting statues and dropping mines, bazookas and other high-powered weapons to your ground troops.

There are also tanks and rocket-launching vehicles that you can switch to, if desired. Each has good defences and powerful weaponry. Once you take control of the situation though, keeping the enemy forces at bay isn't too hard. Just keep collecting the new weapons such as high-powered wingtips and tank guns, and keep obliterating each chain of tanks they try to get past. Within 20 minutes, the allied bombers will arrive and wipe out the whole threat, so sit tight until then and try not lose too many tanks.

MISSION 3:

Make sure you collect Andrea (if you deployed her to wreck the tunnels) and return to your home base. That's another mission completed. See y'all next month for the final confrontation with Shiva in the fifth, and final Campaign entitled Fortress Strike.

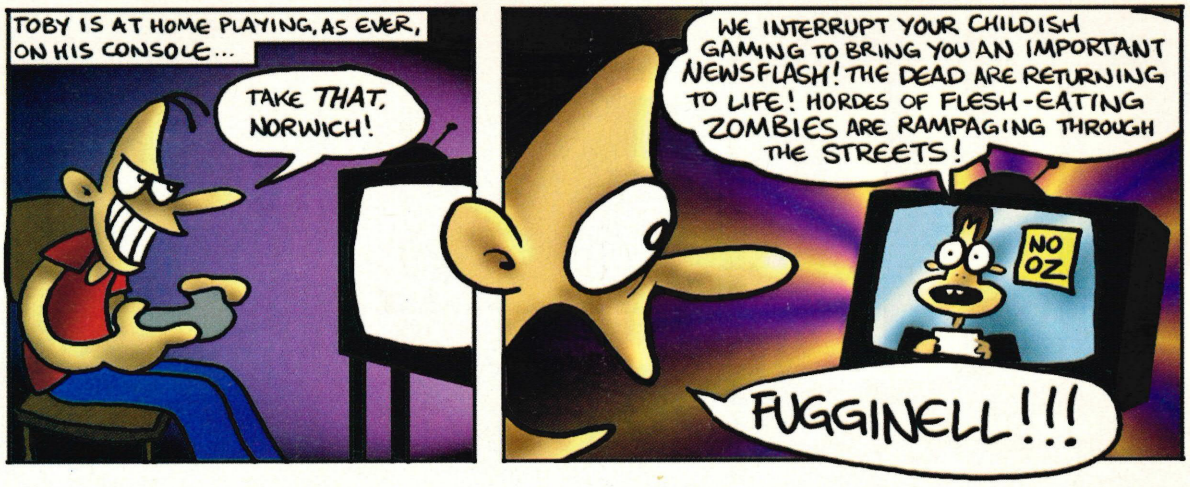


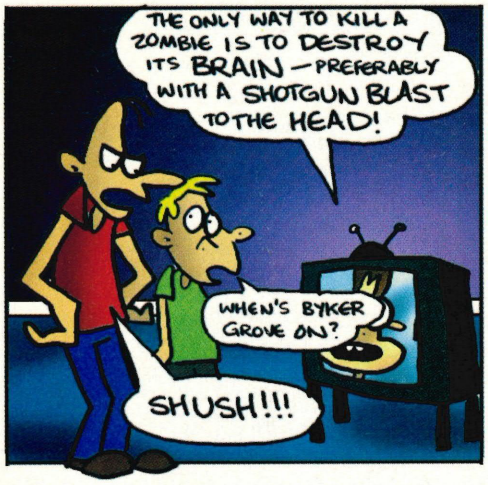


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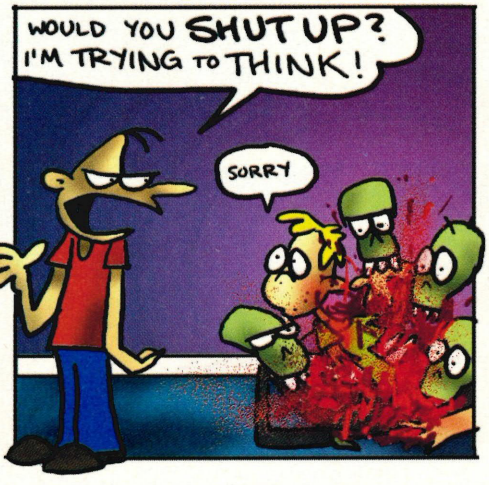
















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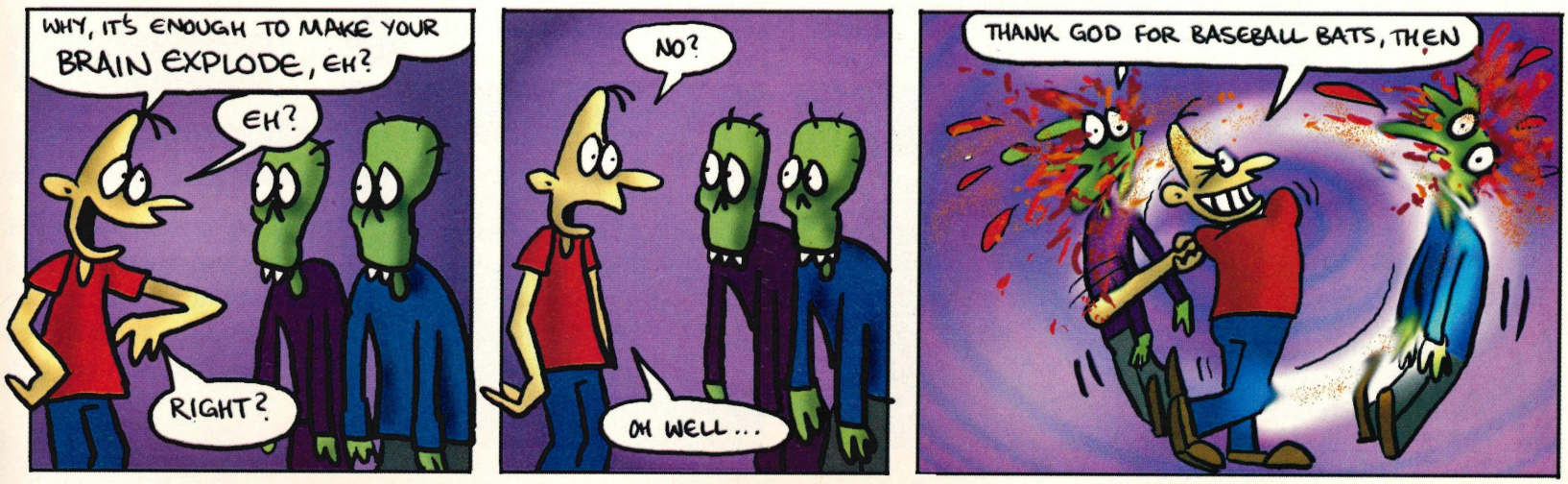
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METALIC STEEL REIGN

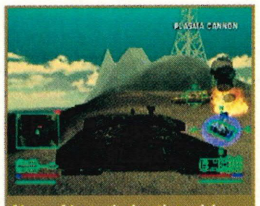
The first playable copies of this already well known title have escaped from Sony's clutches, so we can finally play it to exhaustion and tell you how the game is progressing. All that was seen of the game previously was the fairly empty desert level which made it look as though you were participating in Desert Storm itself, but there are also battlegrounds within cities, thick forests and freezing mountain ranges to explore in one of three hulking great tanks.

The reason for such explosive conflict is slightly different from the usual nuclear-equipped-madman line, and affects the gameplay enough to keep it fresh. Your character is a combat veteran who has been commissioned to help design a revolutionary new type of "supertank."

While the tanks are still in the experimental stages an evil plotting maniac unites several paranoid militia groups into a single sizeable army with the aim of destroying the government. Not only do you have to track these nutters down across the ten main levels using your smart new inventions, it is of much importance that they don't get their hands on any of your prototypes. Your creations are the most powerful and agile mobile attack units on the planet and the fight would be almost impossible if the enemy nabbed the technology and made their own!



[Above] Going berserk in the city streets is more confining than the desert but you get to show a great disregard for public property.

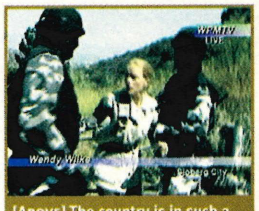


[Above] Just missing the quick moving grunt across the way sets a nearby cactus on fire with the lovely pulse cannon.

RIGHT TANKING

Rolling on your way to victory solo or with a handy mate in the split screen game, you crunch across rough terrain, through rocky rivers, over cars, walls, trees and anything else that is dumb enough to get in your way. The turret can be rotated independently of the tank, so some previous cockpit time with *MechWarrior 2* should have you well prepared. As you pick helicopters from the sky and devastate enemy buildings, you sort through various lasers, guns and missiles for both the secondary and primary weapons and let rip. There's even the occasional foot soldier to obliterate.

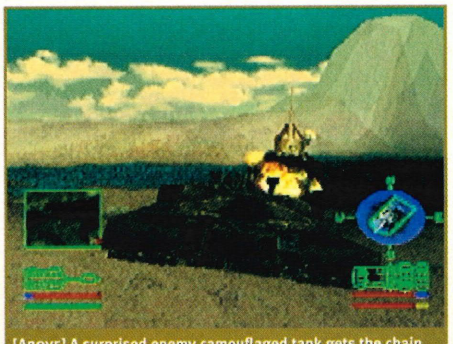
Currently though, *Steel Reign* doesn't seem to be faring as well technically as we once thought it might. Countless graphical glitches are evident throughout and the draw distance is not good at all, so we can only hope some big fixes are in the works. Find out soon in the full review!



[Above] The country is in such a state of anarchy that even the local newscaster gets abducted on the air by the militias.



[Above] The powerful Phoenix missile takes out a tank and a helicopter in one huge explosion. War is fun.



[Above] A surprised enemy camouflaged tank gets the chain gun treatment at the water's edge!

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Steel Reign
Publisher: Sony
% Complete: 70%
Release Date: January '98

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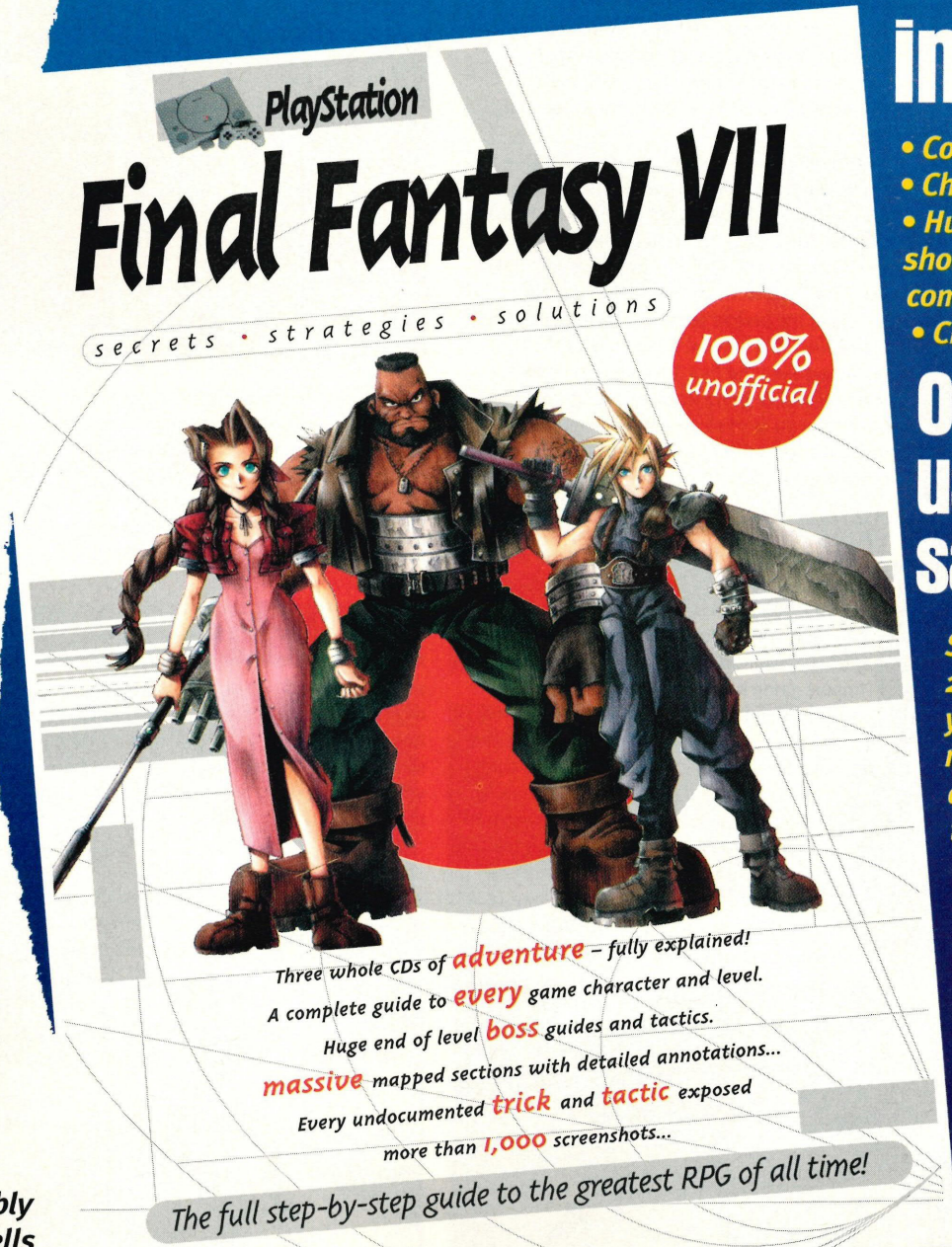
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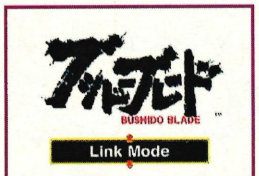
Final Fantasy VII Secrets, Strategies & Solutions is out at the start of December, priced £9.95. It's available from all computer bookshops. Don't miss it!

HONOURABLE

BUSHIDO BLADE

After a long unhappy waiting period since April when we captured a Japanese copy for ourselves, *Bushido Blade* now exists on PAL format. Using a combat system so beautifully designed and wonderfully complex that it alienated those wretched button-bashers completely, this is the fighting game you can play forever.

The biggest worries whenever a great title is converted to our peculiar television system are picture size and speed. Well, *Bushido* seems to have survived this imprecise process so far, which is really good news if beat-'em-ups light your fire. The black borders at the top and bottom of the screen are small enough that there is no detectable vertical squashing of the characters (see the first *Tekken* for a good example of this going horribly wrong) and the game's speed is so close that you would only notice a slight difference by running the original and PAL versions side by side.



[Above] Definitive proof that the link mode is still there in a Sony published game!



SWORDPLAY

The best change is the spraying dark red blood that follows a particularly severe slice of the blade! Who would have guessed that we'd get a more violent version than the Japanese? It always seemed a bit unfortunate that the import game had so many innovations in terms of realism but only brightly coloured clouds in yellow and green to illustrate the hits. Now there's buckets of the red stuff sloshing around and it fits the nature of the game perfectly. Suddenly it becomes twice as satisfying when you dodge around an advancing foe and drive the point of your blade into his brain stem in one swift motion!

In case you are not familiar with the wonders of the original version, it was already breaking new ground with an excellent area-sensitive damage system. When your player receives a substantial leg wound they are no longer able to support themselves and so are forced to play out the match shuffling around on their knees, with a drastically reduced set of moves.



[Above] Utsusemi's chest lets out a plume of blood on the large and open cherry blossom level.



[Above] Tatsumi staggers at the end of a fight, with a thick bandage over one eye from a bad skewering incident.





CONTEMPT

An arm goes totally limp if speared too, making your strikes with a two-handed weapon less effective, and so lightning quick defensive moves become necessary to prevent being disabled in some way. In the one player mode you can see your fighter getting more and more bandages on their bodies as you make your way to the end.

The impenetrable Japanese language that was spread throughout has been overcome at this stage in the most tasteful way possible – the original speech remains but with English subtitles. You can finally understand the story



PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Bushido Blade
Publisher: Sony
% Complete: 90%
Release Date: November '97



[Above] It's surprising how fast and dangerous you can be with this massive hammer, as Red Shadow is just finding out at great cranial expense.



[Above] One of the three initially available arenas is Executioners Cove, a beach scene complete with softly lapping waves.



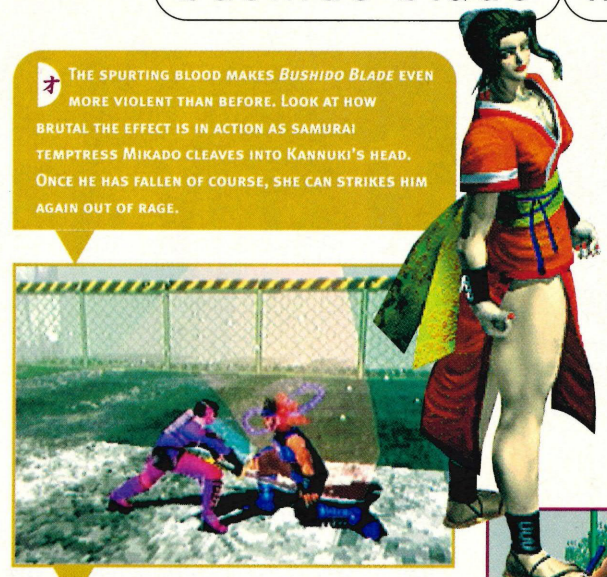


[Above] The close up replays let you see the fatal move in gory detail and show off the highly detailed characters.

line, read the menus and choose weapons with pronounceable names! With the dramatic scenes which follow each death in Story Mode, the quantity of blood and the subtitles, *Bushido Blade* strongly resembles one of those "Heroic Bloodshed" category Hong Kong movies.

At half the price of the import version but with splattering blood and English text *Bushido Blade* will be excellent value for money. Review next month.

THE SPURTING BLOOD MAKES *BUSHIDO BLADE* EVEN MORE VIOLENT THAN BEFORE. LOOK AT HOW BRUTAL THE EFFECT IS IN ACTION AS SAMURAI TEMPTRESS MIKADO CLEAVES INTO KANNUKI'S HEAD. ONCE HE HAS FALLEN OF COURSE, SHE CAN STRIKES HIM AGAIN OUT OF RAGE.

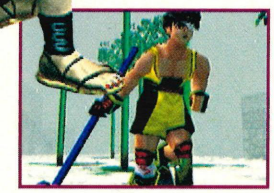
















[Above] Young upstart Tatsumi gets a moral lesson from Kannuki before he expires.





HEAVENLY YUSHA

Bloody hell!

Heaven's gate's changed its name... to *Yusha*? There's got to be a connection there somewhere, but we totally understand why JVC has decided to change the name of its rather colourful looking beat-'em-up. What with those odd-ball cultists eagerly awaiting their one way ticket to the afterlife in a space ship conveniently towed along in the tale of the Hale-Bopp comet, it was a wise move to change it.

The new version promises a faster frame rate, added characters and a shed-load of fantastic new moves, most noticeably the all-new 'awesome creature moves' whereby a character can summon a monstrous beast within a cloud of mystic magic to obliterate his or her opponent. Could this be a kind of *Mortal Kombat* in 3-D perhaps? There will be 16 different warriors, each with totally individual fighting styles which makes use of the game's all new bounded walls and ceilings (whatever that means! – we presume they're enclosed arenas that characters will be able to climb up and cling to).



[Above] *Yusha's* strong point are the spectacular special moves. There are supposedly 77 special and secret moves per character. Er, wow.





Beastly

Besides the regulars, there are ten ultra-secret bosses to find including Angel of death and Under Lord. A nice touch is the fact that you must earn your special moves, so a good battling performance in the ring will give your character valuable energy points. When they reach a certain level, they'll be able to use them to maximum effect. Menu-wise, there will be four fighting modes, including a training arena and tough guy zone? Six difficulty levels should give even the hardest Kung Fu masters a run for their money too.



We're certainly looking forward to this little known fighting game, and particularly like the idea of the beast moves and the fact that you can bounce opponents off walls and ceilings with multi-hit combos, and as the tumble back, you'll be able to dish out more of the same. Everything you can think of has been thrown in, but we're not sure if an unfolding story seen in *Tobal No 2* and *Soul Blade* exists. You'll just have to wait and see in our review next month.



[Above] There will be stacks of authentic Japanese mythical fighting moves to master. How did they get their arms to glow then?



[Above] The backgrounds look great and contain walls and ceilings to make fighting more interactive. After throwing your opponent against the wall, he'll coming bouncing back!

PLAY Information

Name: Yusha
Publisher: JVC
% Complete: 90%
Release Date: November '97

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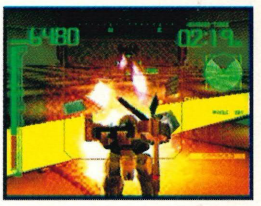
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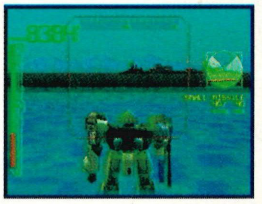
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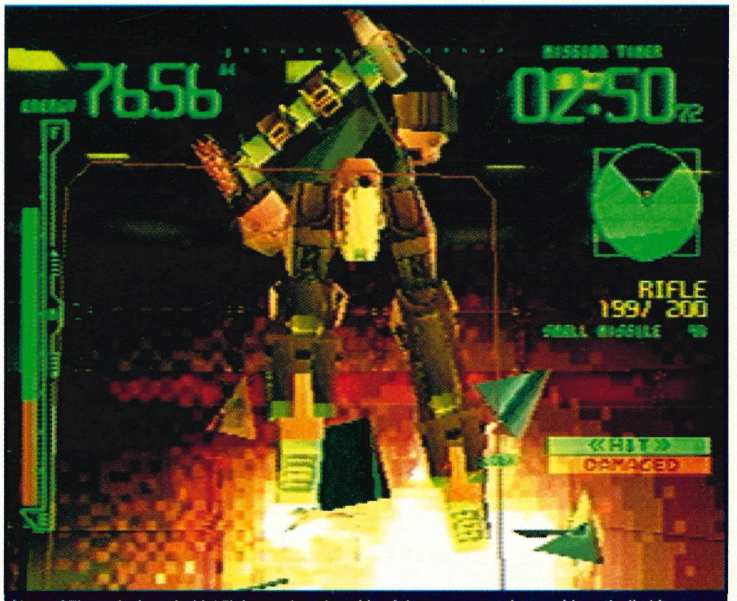
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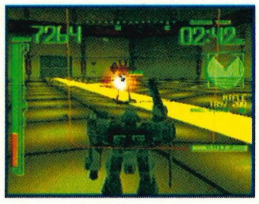


If you thought *Carnage Heart* was boring, you were right. Hours and hours of setting up a gigantic robot brawl and then having to sit back and watch didn't sound like the kind of thing most avid gamers would want. If you go to all the bother of painstakingly preparing a huge robotic beast for battle, you damn well want the chance to drive it yourself!

In *Armoured Core* you get that chance. Taking the role of a hired gun in a the future, you control a large but agile "AC," much like some of the Mechs from the *BattleTech* universe. You take on missions to make money, and plough any spare cash into development of your robot. Stronger, lighter arms, faster pairs of legs, anything you can see on your AC can be upgraded. The level of customisation is so good that you can even choose from six different paint patterns to give you a slight advantage in the widely varied terrain. After all, a quick coat of that leafy green emulsion could keep an even bigger enemy from seeing you for a split second in the trees – just enough time to switch weapons and defend!



[Above] Those devious droids! Flying to the other side of the arena you take a sudden missile hit – retaliate immediately!



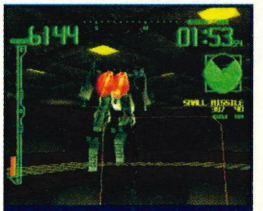


[Above] Pop into the garage between missions and spend all that early profit on wonderful new parts for your AC.

MOTHMAN

After all the technological tweaking, you accept a task and set off to satisfy the demands of the corporation paying your fees. Outside in the woods or in the city streets at night, enemy AC machines ambush you with some almost human tactics and try to separate your vital parts with terrifying firepower. Using your hard earned weapons, munitions and devices like the flaming jetpack on the robot's back to out-manoeuvre and destroy your assailants, lightning quick reactions are still essential to get the best out of your equipment.

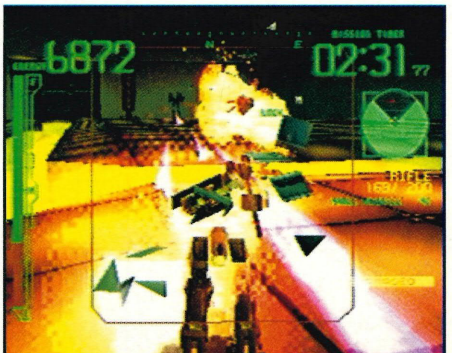
A split screen option lets you pit intricately designed ACs against each other with fast two player action. The link mode is also included at the moment, but we all know how likely that feature would be to make it to the final version! You'll only find out in our review of *Armoured Core*, soon to be seen on these very pages.



[Above] Those handy jet engines come in useful for propelling yourself away from danger, but watch the fuel meter.



[Above] The split screen game is fast and demanding, but you can always see what your opponent is looking at and vice versa.



[Above] Trying to prove yourself to the mysterious and exclusive Raven clan in this training area isn't so easy as the competition is pretty tough.

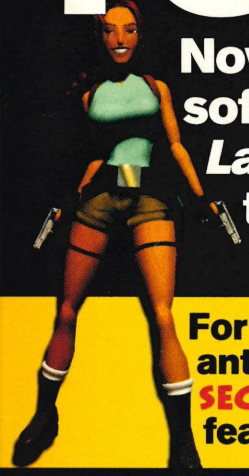
PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Armoured Core
Publisher: Sony
% Complete: 85%
Release Date: December '97

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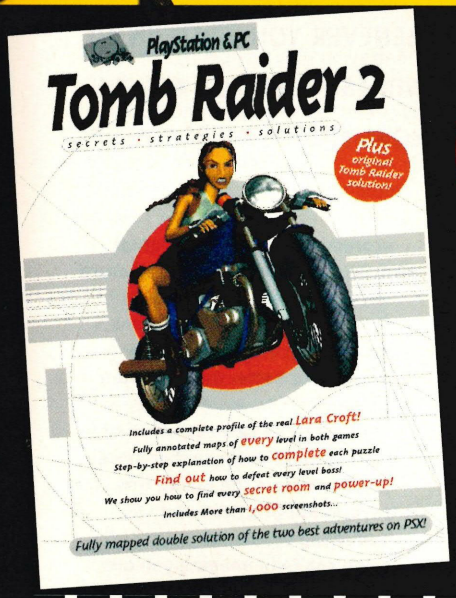
TOMB RAIDER 2!



November will see the biggest and most eagerly awaited software launch of 1997 – TOMB RAIDER 2

Lara's back! **And to celebrate the release of the game, we've put together the following *sensational* money-saving offer...**

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arena

views · questions · criticisms · ideas

VIEWS · QUESTIONS · CRITICISMS · IDEAS

GAMEplay

BIG NEWS IN ARENA. AFTER MONTHS AND MONTHS OF BAITING BY OUR READERSHIP, PLAY HAS NOW TEAMED UP WITH BRITAIN'S LARGEST MAIL ORDER SUPPLIER OF PLAYSTATION GAMES, GAMEPLAY, TO OFFER YOU THE CHANCE OF WINNING A GAME OF YOUR CHOICE BY COMING UP TRUMPS WITH THE ALL-NEW LETTER OF THE MONTH! SO NOW, WHENEVER YOU WRITE IN TO PRAISE, SLAG OR INQUIRE, WRITE DOWN THE NAME OF THE GAME YOU WOULD LIKE TO WIN (SHOULD YOU GET THE PRESTIGIOUS LOTM AWARD) AND GAMEPLAY WILL DO THE REST. SO GET WRITING NOW. RIGHT, ONTO THIS MONTH'S OFFERING...

DEAR PLAY

I have read your magazine for some time now, and I think it is the best on the market, however, my opinion changed when I read your review on *F1 '97*. Having played the original for the best part of a year, I was looking forward to the sequel, as always, I waited for the review in PLAY.

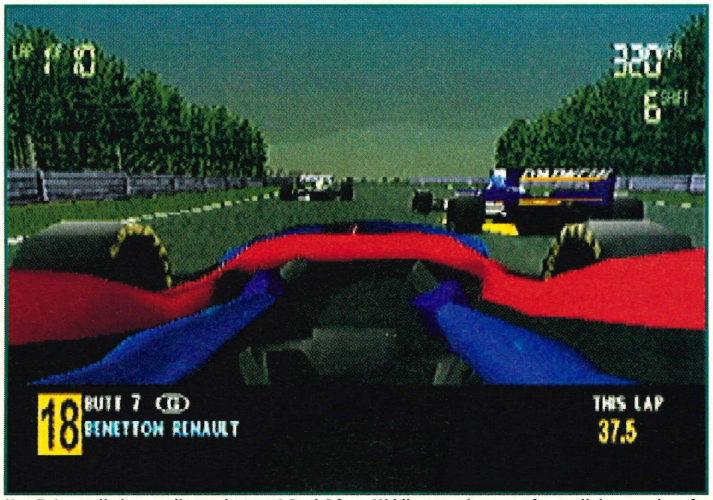
As you failed to mention one bad thing about the game, and even went as far to say "You would be mad to pass *F1 '97* by", I went out and bought it immediately.

After a day or so of playing, I started noticing some faults. These are listed below:

1. Pop up is terrible. Whole buildings construct themselves as you pass, stands and bridges suddenly appear, hell, even an entire rock face is formed along the back straight at Spa. The 'locked' option does help, but the frame rate suffers.
2. The two player mode is utter pants as you cannot play in a field of cars, and the track-side detail is crap and non-existent.
3. Car detail is not a patch on the original. The sponsor names and slogans are all blurred.
4. For some reason, the racing line totally disappears when the rain starts, why?
5. This is a good one, occasionally, a bright green light appears on the horizon which distorts the screen. This looks like and alien invasion.
6. Where the hell is Jacque Villeneuve?

Believe it or not, I still think that it IS a good game and has some nice touches which you mentioned, but I can't help feel that the original was better.

Paul C, Middlesex



Has *F1 '97* really been a disappointment? Paul C from Middlesex reckons so after outlining a series of bugs. We put him straight though.

I'm sensing a lot of bitterness here Paul. Take a stroll, do some deep breathing, and peruse these points:

1. Look at the detail of the 20 cars on screen, plus the real-time damage, sparks, skidmarks and smoke. This is bound to take its toll somewhere – your PSX isn't a Silicone Graphics workstation you know! And at least you have the choice of extending the draw distance at the cost of frame rate at busy sections. If you weren't such a girl and played in the cockpit view this wouldn't be a problem anyway!

2. As mentioned in the review, the split screen mode is fine for trading lap times but is no replacement for the link-up mode. This is partly why *F1 '97* was scored lower than the original.

3. You are clearly playing *Andretti Racing* by mistake. Increased resolution since the first game means the cars are smoothly curved and better detailed than before.

4. It has to be said that none of us have spotted this one, but surely you don't need the racing line after several dry practices and qualifying sessions?

5. We can only imagine you are referring to the Realistic Lens Flaring effect. This probably took Bizarre Creations months to code, and this is the thanks they get. Tch.

6. Jaques has a contract with the FOCA people that means he has to be approached separately if you want to use his picture or name in any official F1 product. For this he asks for a LOT of cash. This was in the review by the way Paul.

The best solution for the real F1 buff is to keep hold of your original game AND buy the new one! The superior pitting system in F1 '97 is far better than last time though, and the realistic failures option is something we could only dream about last year. Also, everyone apart from you thinks that the game looks quite a bit nicer this time, so F1 '97 remains recommended.

Dear Play

I just wanted to ask if you could send a letter to Namco and ask if they are making a *Tekken 4* game. If they are, could they perhaps keep Paul Pheonix in it, and have Ryu from *Street Fighter* also. Ryu against Paul would make a great match fight and people would pay more attention to it. I am desperate for a reply.
Mark Tuner, Verwood

Frankly Mark, such a letter would hardly qualify for bog-roll status because it's never going to happen! You may only be 13 years old, but you don't 'arf dream up some utterly ridiculous and implausible scenarios! Seriously though, copyright laws ensure that the two will never meet.

Dear Play

I have been reading your magazine since issue 22, and it's obviously the best one around. Though I have not got a PlayStation yet, I was thinking of getting one for Christmas. I thought about it more when I heard the price would drop, is this true? I was completely convinced when I went to my mate's house and played on a five-month old machine. I didn't take a lot of convincing though, I mean, what would you rather have under your tree at Christmas... a Mega-Drive CD 2, or a PlayStation, which has the likes of *V-Rally*, *Tekken* and the *Tomb Raiders*?

But should I not wait until the PlayStation 2 comes out? When is it coming out by the way? I am worried because I don't want to get a PlayStation for it to be outdated and forgotten about like the Mega-Drive.

Also, what is this about the latest PlayStation's lacking the three composite phono plug outputs? This means that stuff like the GunCon (that requires the video output socket) will not work. To use it you will need to buy a new RCA adaptor which will cost an extra £19.99. Tell me why this should happen, everything was alright as it was before.

Lastly, can you set someone straight. It's my brother, he thinks *Tekken* and *V-Rally* are just adequate games, he's obviously a bit of an idiot isn't he!
Robert Selby, Sevenoaks

You have indeed made the right console choice in a PlayStation, but you shouldn't worry about waiting for the PlayStation 2 because it isn't going to happen for quite some time yet. Sony axed the composite outputs to bring the price of the PlayStation down, but the Guncon will come with an adaptor which means you can use either type of composite output. As for your Brother, he would be right to say that *V-Rally* and *Tekken* are adequate games. There are far better driving games than *V-Rally*, and *Tekken* is vastly outdated by *Tekken 2* and *Soul Blade*.

Dear Play

As you're the greatest PlayStation magazine around, I thought I had better tell you my findings, although it's not really anything major (you're telling me! – Quality Control Ed). You know in *Ridge Racer* were you take out the game CD and then put in your own music CD to listen to whilst racing, well I tried it with a few other games and it also worked. These games are *Cool Boarders*, *Destruction Derby* and *Destruction Derby 2*.

Also, can you tell me exactly how this works? Is it that it loads the graphics of the game into the PlayStation RAM and continues? Also, why do you go on about *Soul Blade* so much? It has to be one of the worst games I have ever played. Good graphics, but poor moves and it's soooooooo easy! *Tekken 2* and *Street Fighter Ex +* are far, far superior.
Alex Gladwin, Eastcote

"Why do you go on about *Soul Blade*, it has to be the worst game I've played!"

You've basically got it in one Alex. The graphics for the tracks are stored in the system's RAM, enabling you to switch the CD without the game having to stream any additional information off of it. In fact most racing games work in this way, so get your techno CDs at the ready lads! As for *Soul Blade*, you obviously don't know what you're talking about, so we'll just let our other readers make their own assumptions on that one.

Dear Play

I am writing to you confused about why the game producers do not get in touch with the members of the public to ask what sort of games they want. I know that they try to cater for all tastes, yet I see as many football management games as sober Scotsmen! I also want to see more games like the stunning *Lords of the Realm*, where you get to send peasants with pitchforks up against knights on horseback.

Basically, people want a realistic bloodfest where you can join an army and then turn your back on them and stage an in-castle massacre. The producers should listen to the public, as we know what we want.

I personally think that your magazine is great as it is, yet adding a demo disk would make it so much better, Maybe you could grace your pages with suggestions that the public have for a new game as well. I also have a few questions you could help me with...

1. Will there be an *X-Files* game? If so, will it be a point and click game or a *Resident Evil* style game?
2. In *F1 '97*, can you save the game halfway through a race?
3. Due to the success of the Platinum range, could you print some cheats for every new Platinum release?
4. Which game should I buy next: *F1 '97*, *V-Rally*, *Tomb Raider 2* or *Warcraft 2*?
5. Are Sony planning on making a PlayStation 64, due to the amazing popularity of the PlayStation?
Adam Clatworthy, e-mail

We know how you feel Adam. Trying to get programmers to make the definitive football game is like trying to thread Jo Brand through the eye of a needle – hard work at best! It would be great if development companies take more note of the public's suggestions on how to improve games. Perhaps it would be a good idea to include a survey with each game released, so that when the punter plays the game to death, they can answer a series of questions on how that game could be improved (with a prize incentive to send it back). By doing this, the developers would have clear guidelines as to how to undergo programming the sequels. Now, your questions...
1. Yes, Sony is releasing it, but not even Sony knows what kind of game it's going to be. According to Fox Interactive though, it is currently into the second month of filming and features an entirely new game engine to support the special-episode-of-the-programme-within-a-game scenario which the eagerly-awaited project will supply.
2. No.
3. They should have all appeared in the cheats book two issues ago.
4. *Tomb Raider 2*.
5. The PlayStation 2 is scheduled, although the exact specifications aren't known at present, and the direct quote from Sony is "Don't expect it this century!", so now you know.

THE MAILBAG FILLETH

THE MAJORITY OF LETTERS THIS MONTH ARE ABOUT:

- N64 VS PLAYSTATION. THE BATTLE OF THE BRAIN-DEAD IS STILL RAGING WITH GOONS FROM BOTH SIDES OF THE FENCE CLAIMING THAT THEIR SYSTEM IS BETTER THAN EVERYONE ELSE'S. WHO CARES? NOT US, WHICH IS WHY WE REFUSE TO PRINT ANY MORE OF THIS NONSENSE.
- *F1 '97*. OUR MAILBAGS HAVE BEEN BURSTING WITH A DELUGE OF LETTERS FROM ANGRY READERS WHO HAVE BEEN SHOOTING THEIR MOUTHS OFF ABOUT BUGS, BUGS AND MORE BUGS. STRANGE HOW WE DIDN'T SPOT THEM!
- THE GREAT *V-RALLY* DEBATE. WE STILL THINK THAT *RALLY CROSS* WAS BETTER, BUT THE ARGUMENT IS DEAD NOW SO WHO CARES!



Soul Blade – Is this the worst game ever? According to Alex Gladwin it is, but then again what does he know?

Dear Play

This is the first time I've written to you, and I'd just like to say that I think your magazine is superb. I think that Owen Wattley had a good idea in issue 26 about having a letter of the month in each issue with a prize if you win it. I also think you should have a demo disk with every issue, but instead of making them £4.99, which my friends and I think is too expensive, you should

make them £3.50 or something, then more people would buy your magazine. I would like your advice on which game I should buy out of the following... *Broken Sword*, *Nuclear Strike* or *Fighting Force*.

If you do have a demo disk at the price of £3.50 with each issue of PLAY from now on, don't stop producing the tips books, will you!

Daniel Clapson, Penzance

We've looked into demo disks on numerous occasions, but they're just far too expensive to produce whilst keeping the cost of the magazine down. But you never know... ! You will have perhaps also noticed that PLAY does now feature a letter of the month, but sadly you didn't win.

DEAR PLAY

First of all, congratulations on a fantastic magazine. It's informative, funny and full of glossy pictures and excellent reviews. Despite having a brilliant crew, I do have a few complaints about your rating system. Now don't get me wrong, but beat-'em-ups, what's the big obsession?

Surely your scores on beat-'em-up games are absolutely out of this world and completely bias. Just take a look at Playlist. It's a good guide, but nine out of ten games that feature in the beat-'em-up category are awarded a 'Play Classic'! Now come on PLAY, clean up your act (you what? – Ed). I'm, not knocking you, but the beat-'em-up genre has got to be the worst in the business, it's complete rubbish!

Take a game like *Tobal No. 1*, what is it? It doesn't deserve to be on the PlayStation, it's just an absurdly colourful piece of toss with laughable characters, and is far too easy. *Mortal Kombat* – dated as hell, *Tekken* – as slow as a spastic snail, *Star Gladiator* – nuff said. As for the *Street Fighter* series, it's as ongoing and boring as *Neighbours*. Now please don't write me off as a tosser because I've bought and read every single one of your magazines and they're great, but clean up your act with beat-'em-ups.

My other complaint is some of your scores. For example, *Loaded*. You rated this at 85%, fine, but *Re-Loaded*, which was a much better game, got 62%. What's going on, surely a sequel that has been improved and is a better game should get a higher rating that its dated counterpart.

These are my only complaints as I find your magazine stunning otherwise. Please print this letter as I'm sure other PLAY readers agree with my gripes.

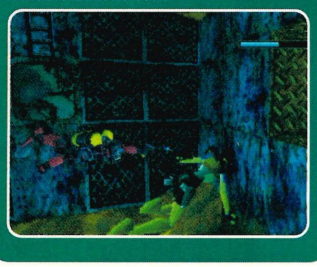
John Harris, Australia

We will certainly print your letter John, but only so as to expose you and your opinions as being a bit, well, suspect. You're entitled to your say, but we happen to think you're wrong. The beat-'em-up genre is one of the most successful and popular of the lot. If a game is rated highly, it's not because it's a beat-'em-up, but because it's a stunningly accomplished product that puts the machines capabilities to good use. You go on to dig your own grave in the credibility stakes by saying that *Re-Loaded* was better than *Loaded*. RUBBISH! We defy any SINGLE PLAY reader to agree with this ridiculous statement because it is utter twaddle. *Re-Loaded* was awful and inferior to the original in every conceivable way.

STRANGE MOMENTS IN VIDEO GAMES #1

THIS MONTH... *TOMB RAIDER 2*

FORGET ANY TALK OF A NUDE RAIDER CHEAT BECAUSE IT ISN'T GONNA HAPPEN. HOWEVER, OUR SISTER MAGAZINE, POWERSTATION OBTAINED A NIFTY CHEAT IN *TOMB RAIDER 2* THAT ALLOWS LARA TO TURN GOLD AND START SWIMMING IN THIN AIR. THIS OBVIOUSLY HELPS YOU REACH IMPOSSIBLE-TO-GET-TO SECTIONS OF THE LEVELS, AND BEFORE YOU START RINGING-IN, IT IS ONLY PRESENT IN THE EARLY PREVIEW COPIES OF THE GAME. BUT STILL, WHAT BETTER WAY TO KICK-START THIS NEW COLUMN WITH A BIT OF AEROBIC LARA ACTION?



DEAR PLAY

Help! I am a widow aged 65. My son bought me *Disruptor* for my birthday, as I love shooting things. The game turned out to be faulty, very slow to start, and ultimately refusing to even kick-in at all. I phoned the number on the instruction booklet and the man (I was connected to someone dealing with faulty games) said to send it to the address in the book and they would exchange it for a new one.



***Doom* fans such as Robin Stead will soon be able to savour the hedonistic delights of *Duke Nukem* from GT Interactive which even has levels exclusive to PlayStation. Still no word on Quake though, darn!**

I posted the game a month ago and I've heard nothing from them ever since. Foolish women that I am, I didn't keep a note of the phone number or address, and even worse, I didn't send it recorded delivery. I am angry at myself and upset at the treatment I received. Please can you advise me, or supply an address so that I can try and get my game back – preferably one that works!

Mrs June Coleman, Bedworth

We're sorry to hear about your unfortunate predicament, June, we have spoken to Interplay (the company that released the game) on your behalf and they have promised to send you a copy, which you should have by the time you read this. Just for the record though, the customer service number you misplaced was (01628) 423723. Hope this helps you out!

DEAR PLAY

I have been the owner of a PlayStation from the very beginning, and I have many great games in my collection such as *Doom*, *Tomb Raider*, *Rage Racer* and *Soul Blade* to name but a few.

You would think that I would be happy, but there is a big problem – there simply aren't enough hours in the day to play all of these great games. With many others on the way such as *Tomb Raider 2*, *FFVII*, *Duke Nukem* and *Resident Evil 2*, the situation is going to get a lot worse. Please help as I'm not sure what I'm going to do.

Could you also answer the following questions...

1. Is there any news on *Championship Manager* or *Premier Manager* on the PlayStation?
2. I love *Doom*, will there be any other *Doom* games appearing on the little grey box, maybe a conversion of *Doom 64*?
3. Could you please send me Cat Bucannon's address so that we can swap saucy photos of each other?
4. Will *Magic Carpet 2* or *Civilisation 2* be coming to the PlayStation?
5. Is *Gauntlet* going to be on Atari's *Greatest Hits 2*?

Many thanks for listening and keep up the good work.

Robin Stead, Warley

Maybe you should consider moving to the poles then Rob. At least you'd be guaranteed daylight around the clock to indulge in your monster gaming sessions. Here's your answers...

1. *Premier Manager '98* is currently being coded by Gremlin Interactive, but it probably won't surface until Easter next year. This is because the PlayStation (being only a 2Mbit machine) isn't too hot at number crunching (for which the Amiga was amazingly good), so it's causing the programmers no end of headaches trying to condense everything into the game.

2. Not *Doom* as such, but *Duke Nukem* is looking pretty smart. Hopefully, we may even see *Quake*.

3. Nah! She don't wanna know mate, besides, if anyone is going to swap saucy snaps then it'll be us.

4. Nothing has been announced.

5. It would be a travesty not to include it on any forthcoming Atari compilations.

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

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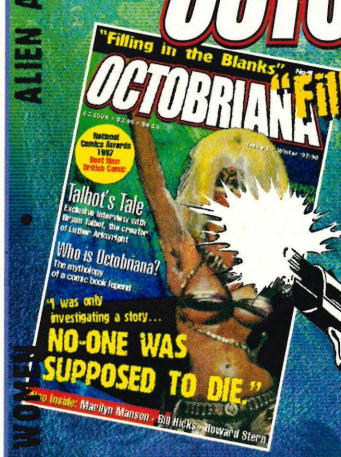
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PLAYLIST

THE COMPLETE A-Z OF PLAYSTATION GAMES REVIEWED IN PLAY COMPLETE WITH SCORES AND COMMENTS.

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. Fighting Force	89%
7. SF Zero 2	94%
8. Tobal No.1	94%
9. Tekken	95%
10. SF Alpha	93%

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...
4-4-2	1-2	●							57%	Dated and disappointing sunDay league stuff.
2Xtreme	1-2	●							52%	Tedious multi sports effort – fading fast.
3D Lemmings	1	●					●		69%	Famous puzzle game, now in 3D! Average.
Abe's Oddysee	1	●							90%	The most addictive platform game on the PSX!
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 *Golfz*).
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.
Air Race	1-2	●							68%	Humdrum racer offering short-term appeal.
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.
Clock Tower	1	●							83%	Stylish, and utterly chilling murder mystery!
Colony Wars	1	●							92%	Gorgeous, totally playable space blasting.
Command & Conquer	1								79%	PSX version slow and sorely lacking.

GAME									SCORE	WE SAY...
Contra: Legacy of War	1-2	●							62%	Scappy arcade shoot-'em-up from Konami.
Coolboarders	1	●							82%	High speed stunts on a snowboard.
Coolboarders 2*	1-2	●		●	●				81%	The definitive snowboarding game.
Crash Bandicoot	1	●							84%	Technically brilliant platformer.
Criticom	1-2	●							87%	Early average beat-'em-up. Now forgotten.
Croc: Legend of the Gobbos	1	●							78%	It's intellectual theft, but fun nonetheless!
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!
Fantastic Four	1-4	●	●						69%	Hardly fantastic, but playable.
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*.
Fighting Force	1-4	●							89%	Brutally destructive two-player action.
Final Doom	1-2			●		●			82%	New levels, but otherwise the same.
Final Fantasty VII	1	●							93%	The final word in adventure!
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!
Formula 1 '97	1-2	●			●		●		90%	Well upgraded and stuffed with excitement!
Frogger	1-4	●	●						69%	Genuinely disappointing frog-'em-up.
G-Police	1	●							84%	Atmospheric, pulse-raising 3-D arcade thrills!
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.
Gun Bullet*	1-2	●						●	85%	A real blast for one or two players...
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.

playback

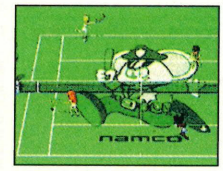
ARCADE-STYLE SHOOT-'EM-UPS



1. Colony Wars 92%

2. Time Crisis 90%
3. MDK 90%
4. Die Hard Trilogy 93%
5. Twisted Metal 2 88%
6. Syndicate Wars 85%
7. Nuclear Strike 88%
8. G-Police 84%
9. Gun Bullet 85%
10. Darklight 80%

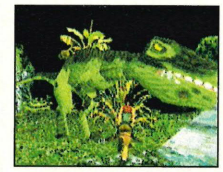
SPORTS SIMS



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. FFVII 93%
4. Nightmare Creatures 86%
5. Warcraft 2 86%
6. Fade to Black 90%
7. X-Com: TFTD 88%
8. Clock Tower 83%
9. LBA 83%
10. Broken Sword 84%

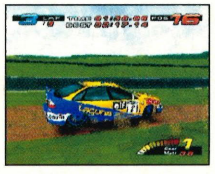
playback

Puzzle & Party Games



1. Puzzle Fighter 90%
2. Bust-A-Move 2 88%
3. Kurushi 88%
3. PaRappa the Rapper 82%
4. Bubble Bobble 85%
5. Worms 92%
6. Pro Pinball 90%
7. Supersonic Racers 91%
8. Atari Collection 81%
9. Buster Bros 86%

Racing Games



1. Touring Car 92%
2. Rage Racer 94%
3. Micro Machines 91%
4. Rally Cross 89%
5. Rapid Racer 87%
6. Need for Speed 2 90%
7. Wipeout 2097 93%
8. Formula 1 '97 90%
9. V-Rally 87%
10. Moto Racer 86%

Platformers

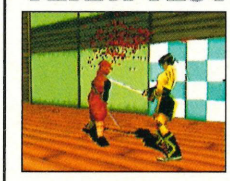


1. Abe's Oddysee 90%
2. Pandemonium 90%
3. Crash Bandicoot 84%
4. Mega Man 8 82%
5. Dracula X 84%
6. Rayman 87%
7. The Lost World 79%
8. Jumping Flash 2 86%
9. Jumping Flash 87%
10. J Bazookatone 85%

GAME									SCORE	WE SAY...
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).
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!
Kurushi	1	●							88%	Ultra high quality puzzler.
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.
MDK	1	●							90%	Brilliantly conceived 3-D shooter.
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.
Madden '98	1-8	●	●						82%	A fine, albeit rough-looking Gridiron game.
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.
Metal Slug*	1-2	●							74%	Top maiming action, but not enough of it.
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.
Moto Racer	1-2	●							86%	A seat-of-the-pants roller coaster ride.
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.
Nightmare Creatures	1	●							90%	A fantastic, full-on splatter flick!
Novastorm	1	●							38%	Contemptable FMV-spooled shoot-'em-up arse!
Nuclear Strike	1	●							88%	Better looking and bigger than *Soviet Strike*.
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.
Overboard	1-5	●	●						75%	Fun, repetitive and simple boat-'em-up.
Pandemonium	1								90%	Enjoyable platform game, but too restrictive.
Panzer General	1-2	●					●		73%	Strategy war game for dedicated anoraks.

GAME								SCORE	WE SAY...
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.
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 Racer	1-2	●			●		●	87%	Powerful and glossy, but repetitive...
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!
Resident Evil: Director's Cut*	1	●						83%	Marginally better than RE, but dated.
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.
Rosco McQueen	1	●						88%	You play with fire, you get this sizzling game!
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.

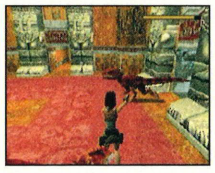
LONG TERM TEST



NAME: BUSHIDO BLADE
LENGTH OF TEST: 6 MONTHS
REPLAY VALUE: 5/5

DARING TO BE DIFFERENT FROM THE USUAL BEAT-'EM-UP FORMULA, *BUSHIDO BLADE* CAUSED QUITE A STIR WHEN WE GOT HOLD OF THE JAPANESE VERSION WAY BACK IN APRIL. FINALLY RELEASED IN THE US IN EARLY OCTOBER AND EXPECTED TO GO ON SALE IN BRITAIN DURING NOVEMBER, NOW SEEMS LIKE THE PERFECT TIME TO FIND OUT IF THE SWORD-BASED FIGHTING CHAMP IS STILL CHOPPING UP THE COMPETITION SIX MONTHS LATER. SOME PLAYERS WHO ARE NOT AS INTERESTED IN 3-D FIGHTING GAMES AND THEREFORE DON'T HAVE THE PATIENCE TO LEARN THE INTRICACIES OF SUCH A PECULIAR CONTROL SYSTEM DISMISSED *BUSHIDO BLADE* AFTER ONLY A FEW WEEKS. HOWEVER, FOR THE ONE-ON-ONE COMBAT MANIAC, THIS IS STILL AS GOOD AS IT GETS! IT DOES TAKE SOME TIME TO LEARN HOW BEST TO USE THE THREE STANCES YOUR CHARACTER IS CAPABLE OF TO ACHIEVE THE DESIRED SLICING OF YOUR FRIEND'S KNEE-CAP, BUT WITH NO TIME LIMIT OR ENERGY BARS THE GAME IS ABOUT TIMING AND HIGH-TENSION STAND-OFFS AS MUCH AS TORSO HACKING. THE CONTROL IS SO DIFFERENT AND DETAILED THAT *BUSHIDO BLADE* IS STILL ADDICTIVE AND PLAYABLE TODAY – YOU WON'T MASTER THE GAME FOR A LONG TIME. THE LONGEVITY COMES FROM THE ENDLESS TWO PLAYER ROUNDS BETWEEN A PAIR OF SKILLED SWORDSMEN AS IT'S FAIRLY EASY TO FINISH THE SINGLE PLAYER MODE, AND WITH NEW SPURTING BLOOD IN THE WESTERN RELEASE YOU CAN'T GO WRONG!

LONG TERM TEST



NAME: TOMB RAIDER
LENGTH OF TEST: 12 MONTHS
REPLAY VALUE: 3/5

WHEN *TOMB RAIDER* FIRST APPEARED WAY BACK IN DECEMBER OF LAST YEAR, PEOPLE (INCLUDING OURSELVES) WERE JUSTIFIABLY BLOWN AWAY. THERE WAS NOTHING ELSE QUITE LIKE IT AT THE TIME, AND THE GAMESPLAYING PUBLIC, AND INDEED MANY MORE BESIDES, SEEMED TO GO GA-GA OVERNIGHT AT LARA CROFT. A YEAR ON AND THE INEVITABLE SEQUEL HAS ARRIVED THAT IS BIGGER AND BETTER THAN THE ORIGINAL IN MOST RESPECTS, BUT SHOULD THIS DETER PEOPLE FROM BUYING THE ORIGINAL? NOT A CHANCE! *TOMB RAIDER* IS STILL SELLING CONSIDERABLY AND, AFTER ALL THESE MONTHS, STILL POSES A REAL CHALLENGE FOR EVEN THE MOST HARDENED OF PLAYERS. ALTHOUGH THE SECOND GAME FEATURES MORE ENEMIES, MORE WEAPONS, BIGGER LEVELS AND NIFTY VEHICLES TO COMMANDEER, THE ORIGINAL STANDS OUT MAINLY AS A GROUND-BREAKER THAT PAVED THE WAVE FOR OTHERS TO FOLLOW. THE 3-D EFFECTS ARE MIND-BLOWING, AND THE AMOUNT OF MOVES THAT LARA COULD PERFORM MEANT THAT THERE WERE A VAST ARRAY OF METHODS FOR TACKLING EACH SITUATION AND PUZZLE THAT CROPPED UP. OBVIOUSLY, THE SEQUEL SHOULD BE TOP OF YOUR LIST IF YOU DON'T ALREADY OWN THE ORIGINAL, BUT IF YOU DON'T THEN BUY IT IMMEDIATELY AND SEE WHAT YOU'VE BEEN MISSING OUT ON. TO FUEL THIS ORDER STILL FURTHER, IT IS HEAVILY RUMOURED THAT THIS GAME WILL GO PLATINUM SOON!

GAME									SCORE	WE SAY...
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.
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 Drivin'	1-4	●		●	●		●		84%	Thrilling racing with excellent variation.
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!
Touring Car Championship	1-2	●			●		●		92%	Really fast, really fun, really racing!
Transport Tycoon	1	●				●			78%	Absorbing strategy about transport networks.
Trash It	1-4	●	●						55%	Average hammer-based puzzle game.
Treasures of the Deep*	1	●							83%	Atmospheric underwater adventure.
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 average 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.
Wing Over	1-2	●		●			●		50%	Dated airborne shoot-'em-up.
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.

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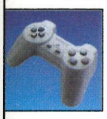
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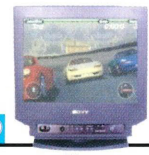
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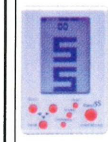
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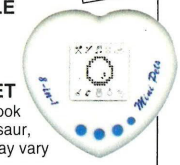
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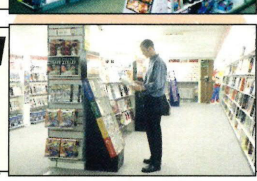


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