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issue twenty nine January '98

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PLAY

プレイステーション

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TEKKEN 3

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Total PlayStation
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PlayStation Plus
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20 See the delights of the forthcoming year with Play's Ultimate Preview of 1998! If you want to know what's out and when, this invaluable guide will help you all the way!

5 WAYS TO CONTACT PLAY!

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

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90 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!

THE BIG GAME

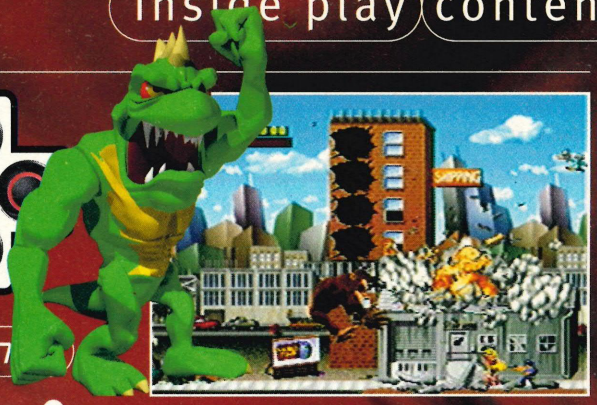






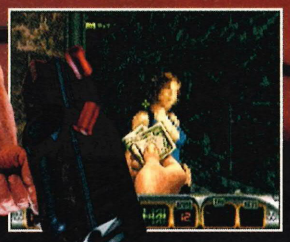
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issue twenty nine
UK's Best Unofficial PLAYSTATION Magazin



プレイステーション

FIFA 98







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RAMPAGE WORLD TOUR

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CRASH 2

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DUKE NUKEM

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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WIN!

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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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JOY! Christmas time again, and what a merry one it will be for PlayStation devotees! By the time you read this, *Final Fantasy VII* and *Tomb Raider II* will be battling it out for that much coveted Christmas number one spot – and only YOU can decide the outcome.

However, there are plenty of other leading contenders, such as *FIFA: Road to World Cup 98* – which I played to death in my quest for the best football game. And perhaps even *Duke Nukem*. But the top-spot place is almost certainly guaranteed by one deciding factor – TV advertising! This is the leading approach to selling games, and if often makes magazine game reviews redundant. Bung it on telly and sales are guaranteed to shoot to the moon! It happened with the last *FIFA* game, and more recently with *Croc*. So with Christmas approaching, expect to see adverts aplenty for all kinds of games – most notably *Crash 2*, which will be something extra special!

In this issue we've got full reviews of *Duke Nukem, FIFA: Road to World Cup 98*, *MK Mythologies*, *Red Alert*, *Crash 2* and *C&C: Red Alert*. We also delve into the import scene once more to thrash out reviews of *Street Fighter Collection* and the utterly awful *Dragon Ball Z GT* – so, if you're from an English software company and you're thinking of releasing it over here... DON'T. What with it being all festive an' all, we also feature a complete review of 1997 and a gaze into the misty wonders of '98 with the biggest games previewed.

Also, sorry for the lack of a *Grand Theft Auto* review this month – the game has held back pending the outcome of the BBFC and what certificate it would be granted, but already the national press backlash has begun with plenty of "Ban this sick game" headlines surfacing. Expect this saga to run and run! So, until 1998, have a great Christmas and all that, I'm now off to get slozzered. Enjoy the mag!

Ryan Butt
Editor

PLAYSTAT wire

MOVIE MADNE$$

TOMORROW NEVER DIES & WARGAMES CONFIRMED BY MGM!



[ABOVE] **Bond is back in *Tomorrow Never Dies*, the game will be heading for PlayStation in spring of next year, full of promise, we hope.**

THE Nintendo 64 may have its trump card in the form of Rare's *Goldeneye*, but news has leaked that the world's most famous secret agent will be defecting to the other side for an epic adventure on the PlayStation.

Courtesy of MGM Interactive, the planned game is a movie tie-in with Bond's forthcoming big-screen outing, *Tomorrow Never Dies,* starring Pierce Brosnan and Teri Hatcher. Versions of the game have been confirmed for PlayStation and PC CD-ROM, although strangely, the N64 hasn't been announced.

Scheduled for a release in the third quarter of 1998, the game should just about tie-in with the video release of the film, but similar lateness in regards to *Goldeneye* certainly didn't do the game any harm with the critics. Whether or not *Tomorrow Never Dies* will be as strong a game remains to be seen. According to an MGM source, the game will revive the unlamented custom of film conversions by incorporating different mini-games for each action scene. In *Tomorrow Never Dies*, there are to be at least five different sections, including driving, skiing, and shooting – although we wouldn't be surprised to see a couple of platform levels thrown in for good measure!

Traditionally though, games such as this have tended to suffer form the 'jack of all trades, master of none' syndrome, but by arriving much later than the movie's release, hopefully the producers will have less pressure on them to simply churn out anything.

MGM Interactive's acquisition of the license isn't a huge coup, however, given the parent company's funding of the movie. In fact, MGM is currently promoting the MGM Bond Collection with each video selling for £9.99 (two for £15!). From *Dr No* right through to *Goldeneye*, a £100,000 promotional campaign is already under-way; running through to Christmas. MGM insists the tapes will then be deleted from its range in Spring '98... no doubt making way for repackaged versions to tie-in with *Tomorrow Never Dies*!

Also coming to PlayStation in April 1998 is *Wargames*, a game set 20 years after the events in the original motion picture. The film, *Wargames*, was first released in 1983 and starred Matthew Broderick as a computer whizz-kid who accidentally gains access to the top-secret military computer that controls the United

aystation

ion

appenings

INTERNATIONAL PLAY BOYS

WHO TO CONTACT AT PLAY MAGAZINE...



RYAN BUTT
Sporty Ryan has had the hard task of deciding which is best between *Actua Soccer 2* and *FIFA 98*. This led to numerous headaches and the consumption of pills.
play@paragon.co.uk.



GRAEME NICHOLSON
Ginger Graeme had the hard task of upsetting software companies with his controversial comments, and then laughing as Ryan took all the stick. Scottish weasel!
silencio@paragon.co.uk



TOM SARGENT
Baby Tom had the hard task of succumbing to endless screenshot retrievals. But then again he got his own back by picturing Ryan as a pig-beast in *Duke*. Come get some!
tomsargent@paragon.co.uk



[ABOVE] ***Wargames*** **– control the destiny of the world from the comfort of your bedroom.**



[ABOVE] ***Wargames*** **–Sadly no Ally Sheedy present, but still, 20 years on, she'd be a boiler!**

States defence system; triggering the countdown to a war with Russia. He also exchanges bodily fluids with Ally Sheedy!

The game is a strategy affair that will feature 3-D landscapes and over 100 different types of land, sea and air units, with the ability to pan, rotate and zoom around the surroundings. It offers 30 different campaign scenarios and can be played either alone or with multi-players via link-up and split-screen. The missions and dialogue have all been scripted by John Badham, who wrote and directed the original film, and like in the movie, the onus is on hacking to gain extra cash, info and power-ups. Expect to see a preview soon.

FFVII SALES SET RECORD!

SONY Computer Entertainment will deservedly be popping open an expensive bottle of plonk to toast extraordinary first weekend sales of *Final Fantasy VII*. The game has become the fastest selling CD-ROM ever! First day sales topped the 31,000 mark, and the total first weekend sales exceeded an astronomical 48,000! *FFVII* has left the previous record of 35,00 for *Formula One '97* for dust!

Congratulations to all involved, and to help celebtrate this momentous feat, PLAY has teamed up with Sony Computer Entertainment to give away ten copies of this fantastic game that everybody is clambering over broken glass to get hold of. All you have to do to win is answer the following simple question and then send it to the following address:

Fantastic Fantasy, PLAY Magazine, Paragon Publishing, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth BH1 2JF.
All entries must arrive no later than Janury 20. So get cracking!

Question: What is the name of the hero in *Final Fantasy VII?*



[ABOVE] ***Final Fantasy VII*** **– If you wanna be a record breaker, yeah!**

OFFICAL PLAY 1997 READER'S SURVEY WINNER!

CONGRATULATIONS

to Maura Ireland from London for scooping the prizes in the PLAY Official 1997 Reader's Survey. She will win a Super Trinitron Widescreen TV, an exclusive decorated PlayStation and a year's supply of official Sony games. Nice one Maura! The full results of the survey are currently being processed, so we'll print the full results next month. Thank you all for taking time to post them back!

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.

After a boozey lunch meeting with the top cheese at Psygnosis, our resident 'hack' managed to extract some details about its software line-up for 1998. As well as the games featured in this issue, Psygnosis plans to release 50 titles next year, including several sequels. However, the exact detaisl of these are unknown, but PLAY could speculate that we'll see a sequel to *G-Police* and perhaps *Colony Wars*. A follow up to *Destruction Derby 2* has been ruled out, but expect to see *Wipeout 3* as a launch title for the PlayStation 2!

FIFA: Road to World Cup 98 – ISN'T the official World Cup game. EA Sports is programming a new game to tie-in with France '98 as we speak. The action will centre solely around the finals, and the team are thought to be devising an entirely new game engine.

Konami is developing a new *ISS* game and they've asked yours truly what aspects to include. Due out mid '98, the game, currently known as *ISS '98* should be a massive improvement over the last, what with the heavy competition from *Actua Soccer 2* and *FIFA 98*.

And finally, *Postal* from Take 2, is thought to be heading for a PlayStation coversion and possibly due out next June.

F1'97 OUTCOME

FOLLOWING on from the news story that PLAY ran last month concerning the legal problems that Psygnosis' *F1 '97* game ran into over the expiry of the license, we are now glad to report that the mess has now been sorted out and an agreement has been reached.

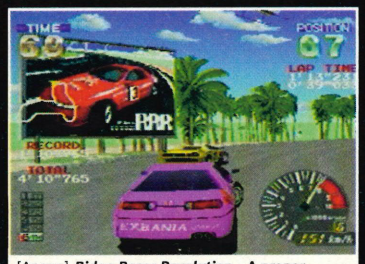
Basically, the game will now go back on sale (hopefully by the time you read this) with only minor amendments. The FOA logo has been removed from the packaging and the disc itself, but otherwise the game will remain intact. Which leads us to speculate what became of the 'lost' first batch of discs that couldn't be sold. Anyone for a spot of scuba!

PLATINUM POWER!

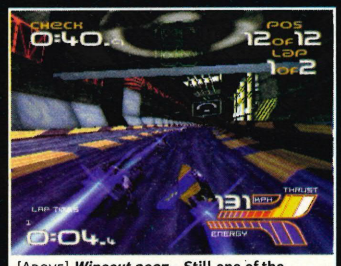
SONY has disclosed the next batch of official games to join the Platinum series. The first, to much joy no doubt, is the fantastically playable *Wipeout 2097*, which will be re-released at £19.99 on January 16. Then there is *Ridge Racer Revolution* on January 23 and *Adidas Power Soccer* on February 6. This will tie-in nicely with newcomers to the PlayStation scene over the Christmas period. However, there is still no news on *Resident Evil* and *Tomb Raider* joining the clan, although they must have clocked up respective sales of well over the 25,000 mark by now.



[ABOVE] ***Adidas Power Soccer*** **– Good at the time, but very dated now. Still, for 20 quid!**



[ABOVE] ***Ridge Racer Revolution*** **– A proper bargain, and an immense challenge!**



[ABOVE] ***Wipeout 2097*** **– Still one of the greatest racing games ever programmed!**

18 'TIL I DIE

GREAT news for all would-be hit-men and drug-smugglers (not real ones you understand!) this month is that *Grand Theft Auto* by BMG has been granted a certificate by the BBFC.

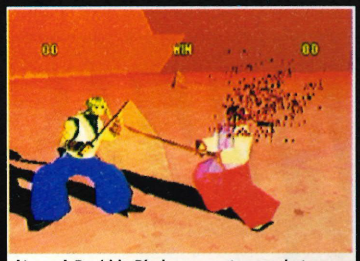
Due to the rather 'strong' content of the game, PLAY was initially sceptical about whether drastic 'cuts' would have to be made to tame the game down for a PlayStation audience. However, *GTA* has now been granted an 18 certificate by the board and now looks set to arrive 'uncut.'

The only previous change from the full throttle shocker that was the PC version, is that the female lead characters in the game were removed due to the often offensive manner in which they were referred to by the in-game crime lords. Still, this in no way detracts from the gameplay and it will now screech onto shelves (probably knocking down several predestrians on the way!) as originally scheduled. By the time you read this in fact.

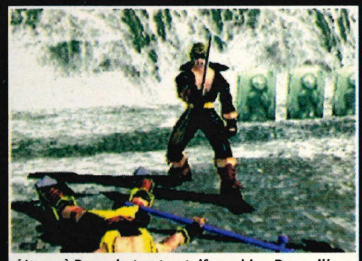
BUSHIDO SLIPS

BAD news for all Samurai wannabes out there, Square's ultra sophisticated beat-'em-up, *Bushido Blade* has slipped right down Sony's UK release schedule. The reason being that the word 'Bushido' is licensed over here, so to avoid any infringements, Sony will have to change the name if the release is to go ahead.

However, Square was reluctant to do this; leaving a huge question mark floating over the fate of *Bushido Blade*, or perhaps rather the game formerly known as! It is unlikely that the game will emerge within the first quarter of 1998 as a result of this matter – meaning that the eager punters who are already anticipating the game will have to wait much longer. We previewed the game in full last issue and exposed the all-new splattering of blood that was included into the PAL version. However, Sony recalled all preview discs shortly after the news was announced. Naturally, we clung onto ours, almost scared that we wouldn't get it back!



[ABOVE] ***Bushido Blade*** **– a great game, but unfortunately you won't be able to play it yet!**



[ABOVE] **Down but not out, if need be, PLAY will campaign for the release of *Bushido Blade*.**



CHARTS

In association with ChartTrack

POS	GAME	DEVELOPER	PUBLISHER	PLAY SCORE
1.	FINAL FANTASY VII	SQUARE	SCEE	93%
2.	CROC	FOX INTERACTIVE	EA	78%
3.	FIGHTING FORCE	CORE DESIGN	EIDOS	89%
4.	V-RALLY	INFOGRAMES	OCEAN	87%
5.	G-POLICE	PSYGNOSIS	PSYGNOSIS	84%
6.	COLONY WARS	PSYGNOSIS	PSYGNOSIS	92%
7.	CRASH BANDICOOT	NAUGHTYDOG	SCEE	84%
8.	WORMS	TEAM 17	PLATINUM	92%
9.	INT. TRACK & FIELD	KONAMI	PLATINUM	85%
10.	RIDGE RACER	NAMCO	PLATINUM	93%

READERS' MOST WANTED

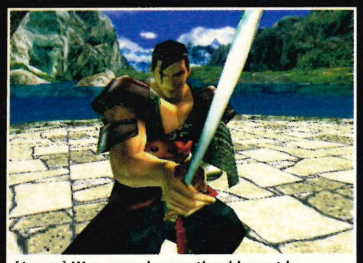
VOTED BY THE PLAY READERS BY FAX, E-MAIL OR LETTER...

POS	GAME	DEVELOPER	PUBLISHER
1.	TEKKEN 3	NAMCO	SCEE
2.	THEME HOSPITAL	BULLFROG	EA
3.	GRAN TURISMO	SONY	SCEE
4.	BUSHIDO BLADE	SQUARE	SCEE
5.	RESIDENT EVIL 2	CAPCOM	V*RGIN

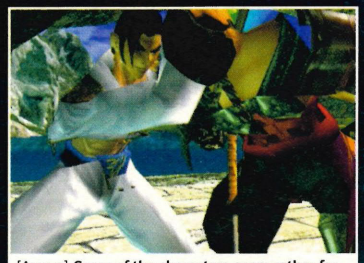
GEMS IN NAMCO'S CROWN

FIRST screenshots of Namco's brand new fighting game have been released to the drooling specialist press. Although the game is currently known under the working title of 'New Weapon Fighting Game,' it heavily resembles *Tekken 3* and *Soul Blade* in terms of looks. The action is predominantly weapon-based, but promises to be a lot more sophisticated than the standard slash and bash formula applied to *Soul Edge*. Developed by the 'Vs Development Division' that created the *Tekken* series, the main brunt of the game has been designed in conjunction with Japanese gamesplayers who have regularly been posting suggestions of what they would like to see in a fighting game.

Working this way ensures that the game is more or less guaranteed to be a worldwide hit. Considering that *Tekken 2* sold more than a million copies around the world, a PlayStation version of this hot new coin-op is definitely on the cards, although probably not until 1999 when the assured hype of the console version of *Tekken 3* dies down a bit. Also coming from the software heavyweight is a brand new coin-op football game, *Libero Grande*. The game utilises system 12 technology which means that fans can participate in the game from a virtual player viewpoint, with the roles switching from defence, to midfield and up-front. *Libero Grande* can also be linked to other units so that players can compete head-to-head without sharing the machine – or even compete against the opposition on the same team. The game looks very reminiscent of Sega's hugely successful *Virtua Striker* games, although the technology has moved on a bit since then and the results are plain to see in these exciting screenshots. Both these games should be available to play in an arcade near you from early 1998.



[ABOVE] **Weapons play another big part in Namco's exciting new fighting game.**



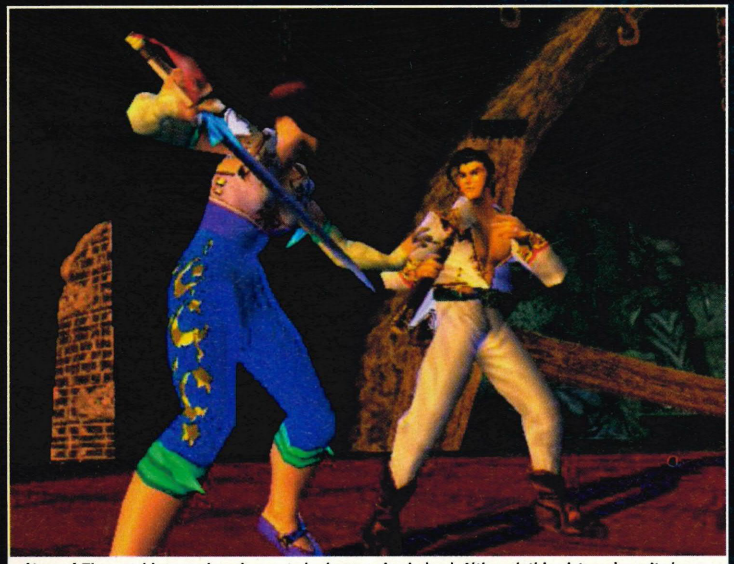
[ABOVE] **Some of the characters seem rather far-fetched. See how Elvis pounds his enemy!**



[ABOVE] ***Libero Grande*** **– Takes football games to another dimension.**



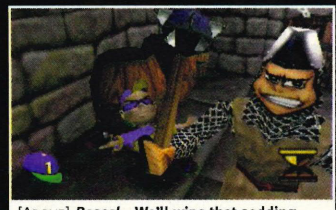
[ABOVE] ***Libero Grande*** **– A PlayStation conversion isn't confirmed, yet.**



[ABOVE] **The graphics are shapeing up to look very crisp indeed. Although this picture doesn't show the full extent of the intricate detail and texture-mapping involved, trust us, it'll blow you away!**

YA LI'll RASCAL!

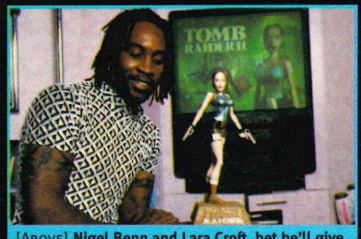
CHALLENGING for the position of top platform game next year is this cheeky game from Psygnosis. *Rascal* is a real-time 3-D platformer where you play the son of a scientist who has recently invented time machine. Cue a predictable bound along the time super highway as Rascal visits a Medieval castle, the Wild West, Atlantis and, of course, the Jurassic era. The main characters in *Rascal* were designed by Jim Henson's (of *Muppet* fame) Creature Workshop, and the "state-of-the-art" 3-D engine runs at an impressive 50 frames per second. There are 18 levels in total, each offering its own assortment of hazards to overcome as the wily nipper attempts to bring the downfall of the sinister forces that he finds to be meddling with the time-lines. PLAY will have the full review next month!



[ABOVE] ***Rascal*** **– We'll wipe that sodding grin off his face next month, no worries!**

LARA CROFT VS BIG BENN

BLATANT photo opportunity alert, as ex-boxing champ, Nigel Benn, otherwise known as the Dark Destroyer, gets to grips with a pint-sized Lara Croft. Apparently, Benn is well-chummy with Eidos and recently attempted to blag himself of copy of *Tomb Raider II*. PLAY just hopes that regulation head-gear was worn prior to the big knock-back!



[ABOVE] **Nigel Benn and Lara Croft, bet he'll give her a right battering in the ring!**

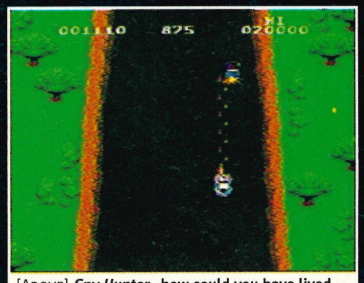
FREE FORMULA KARTS DEMO!

AFTER the success of the free *Excalibur 2555AD* demo, Telstar is offering the same deal again to PLAY readers for its *Formula Karts: Special Edition* game. However, this offer is limited to the first 100 people who apply within two weeks of this issue going on sale (in other words December 30). All you have to do is send a self-addressed envelope to *Telstar Electronic Studios, The Studio, 62-64 Bridge Street, Walton-On-Thames, Surrey KT12 1AP*. Be sure to mark your entry 'Dept. 1', otherwise it won't get through, and make sure that the envelope that you send is big enough to accommodate a CD-sized object. They also state that "no correspondence shall be entered into" – so don't go whining to them if they run out of stock.

GT GOES RETRO (AGAIN!)

FOLLOWING the success of the first collection, GT is about to release the second in the series of *Arcade Greatest Hits: The Midway Collection*. And standing out like a sore thumb from this nod to early Eighties gaming is the divine *Spy Hunter* – a classic arcade top-down car game, where you drive, shoot and nudge your way through level after level of car/boat-filled action.

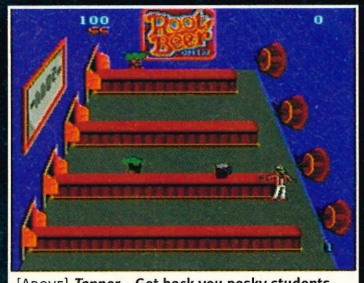
Other notable inclusions in this seven pack 'spectacular' are *Moon Patrol*, a sideways scrolling parallax shooter and *RootBeer Tapper*, a frantic 'fill up and collect the empties' arcade game. The remaining four titles: *Blaster, Burger Time, Splat!* and *Joust 2* make up the rest and the best of these is *Joust 2*. If retro-gaming is your bag, this compilation looks as though it will represent good value. Full review next month.



[ABOVE] *Spy Hunter*– how could you have lived without it for so long?



[ABOVE] *Joust 2* – Fun-fuelled retro gaming, straight from the dark ages!



[ABOVE] *Tapper* – Get back you pesky students, go on, wasting tax-payers money etc...



[ABOVE] *Moon Patrol* – The greatest game ever programmed. But not really.

STICK TO WHAT YOU KNOW!

WHAT'S up? Have all your mates coughed-up for lavish paint jobs on their PlayStations, and you're left with the crappy, dull grey colour? Fret no more because XS Gamewear has developed flashy new sticky kits to jazz up your console without the risk of getting high off of the paint fumes or spoiling your mum's carpet!

There are a whole range of designs available, including the England '98 collection, glow-in-the-dark carbon fibre and silver. The company is also looking into specific game designs in conjunction with the software companies, and even official football club kits – although PLAY wouldn't recommend taking your PlayStation down the terraces and waving it in an intimidating manner at the next away fixture. The sticker kits usually costs £11.99, but you can pick them up direct from XS Gamewear for £9.99 + p&p simply by mentioning PLAY. So call now on 0800 731 5063.

Naturally, PLAY had to test these kits out, although we were only prepared to sacrifice our knackered NTSC machine to the cause. After much fiddling and agonising, the stunning results are pictured below. We're sure you'll agree that the transformation is incredible!



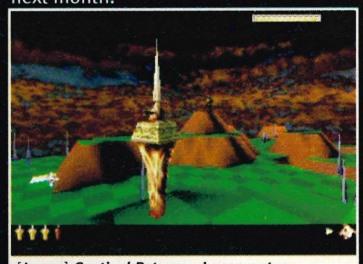
[ABOVE] The world's first come on Eng-gerrr-land PlayStation, it's coming home etc...

SENTINEL'S BACK!

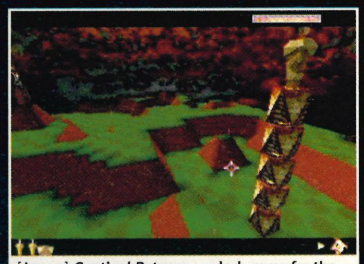
SENTINEL was a huge hit when it first appeared way back when in the era of the home computer. It was a strategy game devised by Geoff Crammond (who is now working on PC CD-ROM projects) in which you had to outwit a superior being – The Sentinel, by absorbing 'it' before it can do the same to you.

Well now the game is back in an updated version called *Sentinel Returns* – due out on PlayStation in April of next year. The game is being developed by Hookstone and John Cook for Psygnosis and features 650 levels of intense, face-off action, based around air, earth, fire and water. Many improvements have been made over the original – especially in the visual department, whereby the player now has to contend with different terrains and dimensions as well as the Sentinel itself.

The learning curve has also been greatly enhanced to ensure that the challenge increases gradually as you progress rather than up and down like a whore's drawers! As well as the huge amount of levels on offer, there is also a random generator that will increase the number to billions. Perhaps better still is the fact that the soundtrack was composed by John Carpenter – the chap behind the eerie tunes in such films as *Halloween*, *The Thing* and *Escape From New York*. PLAY will have a full preview next month.



[ABOVE] *Sentinel Returns* – Incorporates gruelling new terrains and pitfalls.



[ABOVE] *Sentinel Returns* – a dark game for the darker gamesplayer!

THOSE RELEASE DATES IN FULL

THE FESTIVE MONTH OF DECEMBER

Tomb Raider II (Eidos)
Auto Destruct (EA)
Mortal Kombat Mythologies (GT)
Duke Nukem (GT)
Rampage World Tour (GT)
Risk (Hasbro)
C&C: Red Alert (V*rgin)
Crash 2 (SCEE)
Z (SCEE)
Shadow Master (Psygnosis)
Street Fighter Collection (V*rgin)
Cool Boarders 2 (SCEE)
Felony 11-79 (ASCII)
Grand Theft Auto (BMG)
Test Drive 4 (EA)
Jersey Devil (O*ean)
Formula Karts: SE (Telstar)
Judge Dredd (Gremlin)
Marvel Super Heroes (V*rgin)
Power Soccer 2 (Psygnosis)
Nagano Winter Olympics (Konami)
Castlevania (Konami)

AND THE SLIPPERS...

GAME (PUBLISHER)	WAS	NOW
Bushido Blade (SCEE)	December '97	March '98
Deathtrap Dungeon (Eidos)	January '98	April '98
Spice World (SCEE)	December '97	February 9

GRAN DAY AT THE RACES



[ABOVE] After each race, you can play it all back and watch the best bits over and over again.

ALREADY billed by those that have seen it as the ultimate driving experience, *Gran Turismo* is a reality and it will be zooming to a shop near you in April! Featuring 87 different motors from some of the most respected manufacturers in the business (including Mazda, Toyota, Chrysler, Mitsubishi and Aston Martin), this game really lets even the saddest boy racer live out their wildest driving-related dreams!

Gran Turismo is a cross between *Need For Speed* (due the amount of cars available and the different ways they handle) and *Ridge Racer* (as in the frantic speed at which you speed along). The extensive replay option even allows you to view the whole race again in breath-taking detail.

The version PLAY received was far from complete and only featured one track and two cars, but we could see that, even at this early stage, everybody really should be starting to get excited about this game. You have to see it running to appreciate just how much detail there is. The cars themselves are photo-realistic and look like they've been lifted straight out of a car magazine.



[ABOVE] The game features two racing views, internal and external, both are fast enough.



[ABOVE] *Gran Turismo* – Looks and plays a bit like *Ridge Racer*, but more sophisticated!



[ABOVE] The speed at which the game runs is frightening, and the attention to detail superb.

Gran Turismo was created by Kazunori Yamauchi – the same bloke who worked on *Motor Toon GP* – which itself looked great at the time. We asked if the PLAY team could act as researchers to test the cars for a potential sequel, but strangely enough, we haven't heard anything back as yet. Looks like we'll just have to play the game!



[ABOVE] *Gran Turismo* features over 80 different cars from the world's leading manufacturers.



[ABOVE] Oooooooooh!



[ABOVE] Aaaaaaaaah!



[ABOVE] Ooooooooaaaaaaaaah!



USA ENTERTAINMENT

ENTERTAINMENT USA



CAT BUCANNON brings you all the news on what's hot in the land of fat Elvis and apparently innocent nannies.

The *Strange Name for a Strange Game* award this month goes to Jaleco for having the nerve to release a game called *Punky Skunk*. Developed by Japan-based Visit, *Punky Skunk* is a 2D platform game aimed at a younger audience. Think back to the days of the Super NES when platform games ruled the roost and you can probably think up an image of what the game will involve – ie bouncing on enemies, numerous bonus stages and a central character so sickly sweet it'll make elder gamers barf! Still, I'll reserve judgement until the February release date.



If all you adventure freaks have got over the spectacle of *Final Fantasy VII*, and returned, temporarily, to the real world then the good news is that Capcom is to release *Breath of Fire III* in the States! Details at this point are sketchy, but the game will arrive around about March time and still centres around the tribe of Dragon People who gave their lives so that an evil goddess be vanquished from the land. However, she's back and so are you in a familiar plot filled with swords and sorcery. More details soon.



The first was bizarre, and the second looks set to be equally as barking! Yep, *Jet Moto 2* is on the way and Sony of America has just announced the latest features to be included into the game. Highlights include ten new courses set in forests, canyons, perilous rivers, roller-coasters and even a post-earthquake LA – like I haven't seen enough of that already! The game will also include split-screen horizontal or vertical racing, more obstacles to overcome and better and more realistic physics on the actual bikes. All this plus a special trophy room that will allow secrets to become unlocked as it gradually fills up with silverware. Finally, and perhaps most Importantly, the game will support the Dual Analogue controller for steering and acceleration. It certainly sounds hot, so I'll infiltrate Sony's offices, steal the master disc and bundle it off to PLAY ASAP!



[ABOVE] Cat Bucannon – Can infiltrate high-security offices with the flutter of an eye!

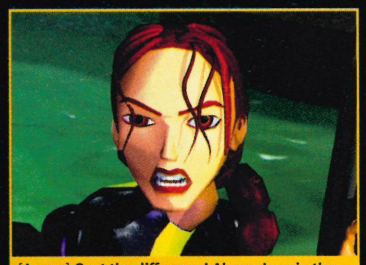




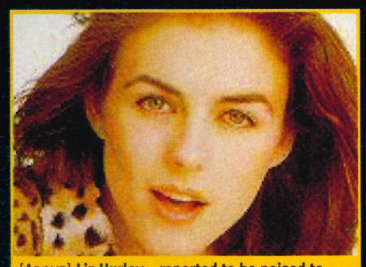
GAME FOR ANYTHING?

SPECULATION surrounding the rumoured *Tomb Raider* film took another intriguing twist this month as the tabloid newspapers ran a story saying that Liz Hurley was poised to sign a contract to play the ample-breasted heroine. However, this story was shrugged off by Core Design – the company responsible for the game. Hurley, who recently co-starred in the comedy *Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery* would have been "Perfect for the part" according to sources of *The Sun*, but despite hefty column inches and the fact that no concrete evidence surrounding the film or Hurley's true involvement was stated, PLAY can only assume that the story came from that pillar of general knowledge – the internet!

Obviously, the scope for such a film would be immense – kind of like *Raiders of the Lost Ark* meets *Gun Toting Babes in Bikinis*, and Hurley, who came fifth in our reader's poll to play the part (behind Sandra Bulluck and Posh Spice) would be ideal, least of all because she's English.



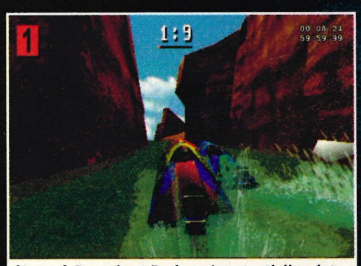
[ABOVE] Spot the difference! Above, Lara in the in-game form, arguably where she belongs!



[ABOVE] Liz Hurley – reported to be poised to sign on the dotted line.

RAW POWER

INTERPLAY has got an impressive release schedule lined-up for the opening months of 1998. For a start there is *Red Asphalt* – the sequel to *Rock 'n' Roll Racing* (classic SNES game), *Wild 9's* from Shiny Entertainment (creators of *Earthworm Jim*) and then there is *Powerboat Racing*, the ultimate adrenaline rush of surging down treacherous stretches of water in boats that go like the clappers! The overall look of the game is very polished and there are a number of craft to choose from. If all this sounds familiar though it is because the game comes hot on the trail of *Rapid Racer* – Sony's slightly disappointing game of a similar nature. Still, *Powerboat Racing* looks to improve on many of the aspects that let *Rapid Racer* down, such as realistic water movement to ensure that the player feels a sea-sickness feeling creep over them when playing! PLAY will have the full preview next month.



[ABOVE] *Powerboat Racing* – Is potentially a lot better than *Rapid Racer!*



[ABOVE] *Powerboat Racing* – A fast and furious white knuckle ride through treacherous waters!

Jack the Ripper was a Boy Scout compared to NIGHTMARE



CREATURES™



In the dank and grimy streets of Olde London town, a nightmare awaits you. Grotesque and evil creatures are on the prowl, scouring the city's darkest corners in search of fresh victims to satisfy their insatiable bloodlust. This gruesome game is one of the first to combine gothic cinematic horror with the action of a classic beat-'em-up. With more blood than your local abattoir, Nightmare Creatures will satisfy the depraved appetites of the most twisted gamer's mind.





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kalisto

PlayStation™

JAPS EYE

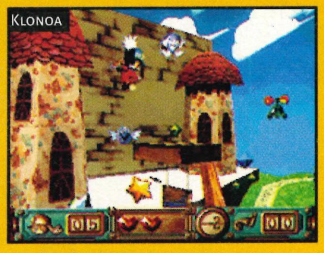
ALL THE LATEST GAMING NEWS FROM JAPAN – THE HOME OF THE SONY PLAYSTATION!

Capcom has recently announced plans to establish a new publishing label to concentrate solely on game soundtracks. Suleputer, as the label is to be known, is designed to strengthen the game music field both in Capcom's games and other publishers. The name originates from the phrase 'Capsule Computer' – the same as 'Capcom'. Suleputer will release its first soundtracks on January 29 next year, and they are thought to be for *Resident Evil 2* and *Private Justice School*. Capcom has also recently unveiled a brand new *Street Fighter III* coin-op featuring two new characters and enhanced moves for the existing fighters. It is unlikely that the game, *Street Fighter III 2nd Impact* will appear outside Japan.





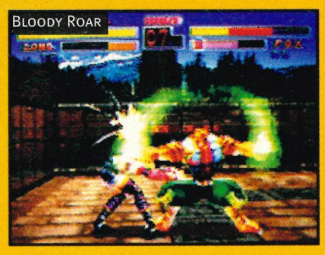
Hasbro of Japan has just released a new virtual pet featuring R2-D2 from the *Star Wars* films. The pocket-sized unit is strictly a limited edition with only 300,000 units going on sale in Japan. You must guide R2-D2 up until his meeting with Luke Skywalker, and the object is to increase the droid's intelligence level by solving a series of problems – a score being awarded upon completion.



New from Namco of Japan is a 2-D action platform game featuring 3-D polygon graphics. It is called *Klonoa*, and it will be released by Sony in the UK in March. The game features a strange character with huge ears that embarks on a mythical quest to find the enchanted world of Phantomile. *Klonoa* is out in Japan in December.



Hudsonsoft has just released *Bloody Roar* (don't laugh!), a 3-D fighting game featuring all kinds of strange creatures such as rabbits, foxes and tigers. The game will be known as *Beast* in England and will be released in January.



Late news just in this month is that *Resident Evil 2* has been miraculously brought forward to a January release date in Japan! More news and possibly a full review next month!

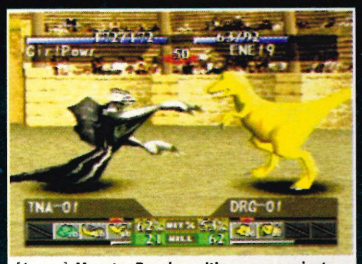
ANIMAL FARM

VIRTUAL pets are dead! Come on, who isn't bored pant-less of the bleeping buggers by now, eh? Well just in case there is life left in the flash-in-the-pan trend, Techmo has developed a game that takes the flooded market one step further!

Monster Rancher is a new PlayStation game that allows you to create your own monsters, raise them, and then watch them rip chunks out of other savage beasts – all in the name of good, clean fun! The real pull of this game, though, comes from how your own pet monster comes to be. You see by inserting any CD into your PlayStation – music, another game, whatever, the game draws information off of it and then uses it to generate how your monster looks, what colour it turns out and even help determine its stats.

Presumably then, if you chuck in a Spice Girls CD, you monster will turn into a manufactured, shallow, and brightly coloured slobbering wreck who will sack you as manager as soon as the going gets tough! And as for a Gary Glitter CD... well that doesn't bare thinking about!

Once you've created your monster, you can rear it on your farm; taking time to feed, and train it to become the ultimate killing machine. You can also put it to work on the farm for extra funds until the fighting tournament comes around. You can opt for the computer to control your creature on your behalf, but it is much more satisfying to do it yourself. Of course you can save your creation onto a memory card, then take it around to your mate's house and make them fight against each other. *Monster Rancher* should be available to buy on Jap import by the time you read this.



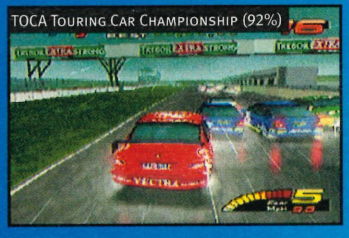
[ABOVE] ***Monster Rancher*** **– It's reaper against dinosaur. Go on my son, rip his 'ead off!**

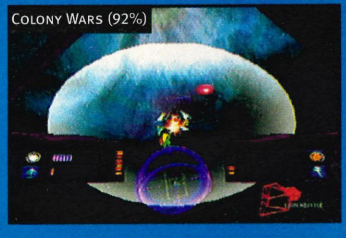


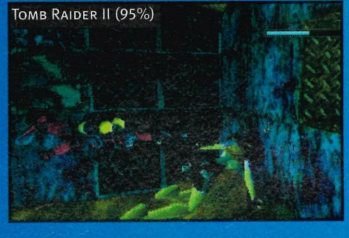
[ABOVE] ***Monster Rancher*** **– The Glitterthon, d'ya wanna be in his gang, his gang, his gang!**

PLAY RECOMMENDS...













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COLONY WARS

PlayStation

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HAVE A FIFA CHRISTMAS!



WHAT'S INCLUDED!

EACH OF THE 10 FIFA PACKS INCLUDE:

- ONE FIFA JACKET
- ONE FIFA BASEBALL CAP
- ONE FIFA SPORTS BAG
- ONE FIFA: RTWC '98 FOR YOUR PLAYSTATION

FIFA: Road to World





Cup '98 is the ultimate new footie game for your PlayStation, and sooner or later every sports nut in the neighbourhood is going to own it! What better way to feel superior around town than to be the only one strutting down the street in full, limited edition FIFA '98 gear? You'll be envied by the masses in your boundlessly cool FIFA jacket, the famous logo emblazoned on your forehead in the form of the highly collectable FIFA cap, with the useful AND gorgeous FIFA sports bag casually hanging from one shoulder.

To take part in this one time only, never-to-be-repeated offer that isn't available in any shops, all you have to do is answer the following question correctly.





What country hosted the 1986 World Cup?

A. Spain
B. Mexico
C. France

We have ten of these great packs to be won, and each of the winners will also receive a free copy of FIFA '98! So, get scribbling and send your entry on a postcard, crisp tenner, or stuck down envelope to:





Saturday Night FIFA
Play Magazine
Paragon House
St Peters Road
Bournemouth
BH1 2JS

THE SMALL PRINT

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Revolution

SEX AND DRUGS AND ROCK AND ROLES.

NO WONDER IT'S ADDICTIVE.

BROKEN SWORD II

ALL THE INGREDIENTS OF THE CLASSIC HOLLYWOOD ADVENTURE FILM.
APART FROM THE PREDICTABLE STORYLINE.



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THE GAM

AT THE END OF THE DAY WE ALL WANT TO KNOW ABOUT THE LATEST PLAYSTATION SOFTWARE, AND THERE'S NO BETTER PLACE THAN RIGHT HERE IN PLAY!



20 Gaze deep into our crystal ball and see what delights the forthcoming year is going to bring to your PlayStation! The Ultimate 1998 Preview weill tell you essential release dates and exactly what the prospects are for each title. With so many big ones on the way, every PlayStation owner will have a tough call deciding which ones to go for, that's why we've singled out some of the special games!



GUIDE TO THE GRADES

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

PLAY CLASSIC

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

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

76-84 A decent, solid and dependable game which offers good value for money and won't disappoint fans of the genre. There are some gameplay flaws, but nothing serious.

51-75 These are average games that may be entertaining but are fundamentally flawed or don't have any lasting appeal.

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

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

PLAY PUTRID

PLAY ICONS

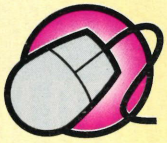
These symbols are designed to give you vital information about the maximum number of players and whether or not you can use a specific device with the game. PSX steering wheel or the Negcon joypad come under steering/analogue.


One player only
eg Project Overkill


Multiple Players
eg Tekken 2


Steering/Analogue
eg NeGcon


Multi-Tap
compatible


Mouse compatible
eg Sim City 2000


Uses a Memory Card
(for save games)


Split Screen
eg Bust-A-Move 2


Link Cable compatible
eg Formula 1


Light gun compatible
eg Die Hard Trilogy


Dual Analogue

ES

REVIEWS ▸ WORKSTATIONS ▸ WIRED UPS

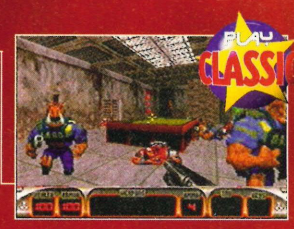
The GAMES THAT Time Forgot

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

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.

DUKE NUKEM	40
FIFA 98	44
MK MYTHOLOGIES	46
DRAGON BALL Z GT	48
C&C: RED ALERT	50
RAMPAGE WORLD TOUR	54
CRASH 2	56
RISK	62
NAMCO ENCORE	63
SF COLLECTION	64
Z	66
AUTO DESTRUCT	70
SHADOW MASTER	74







WORKSTATIONS

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

CIRCUIT BREAKERS	34
NEWMAN HAAS	36



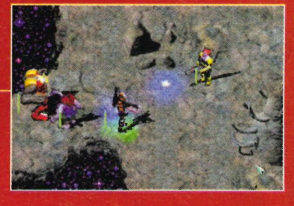


WIRED UP

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

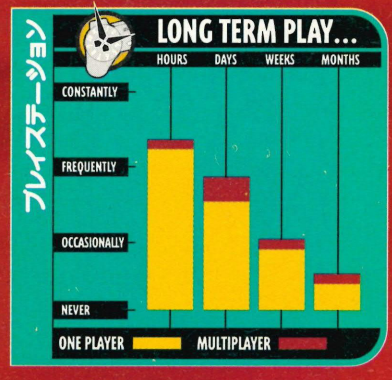
DEATHTRAP DUNGEON	82
NBA HANG TIME	83
ONE	84
YOUNG BLOOD	85



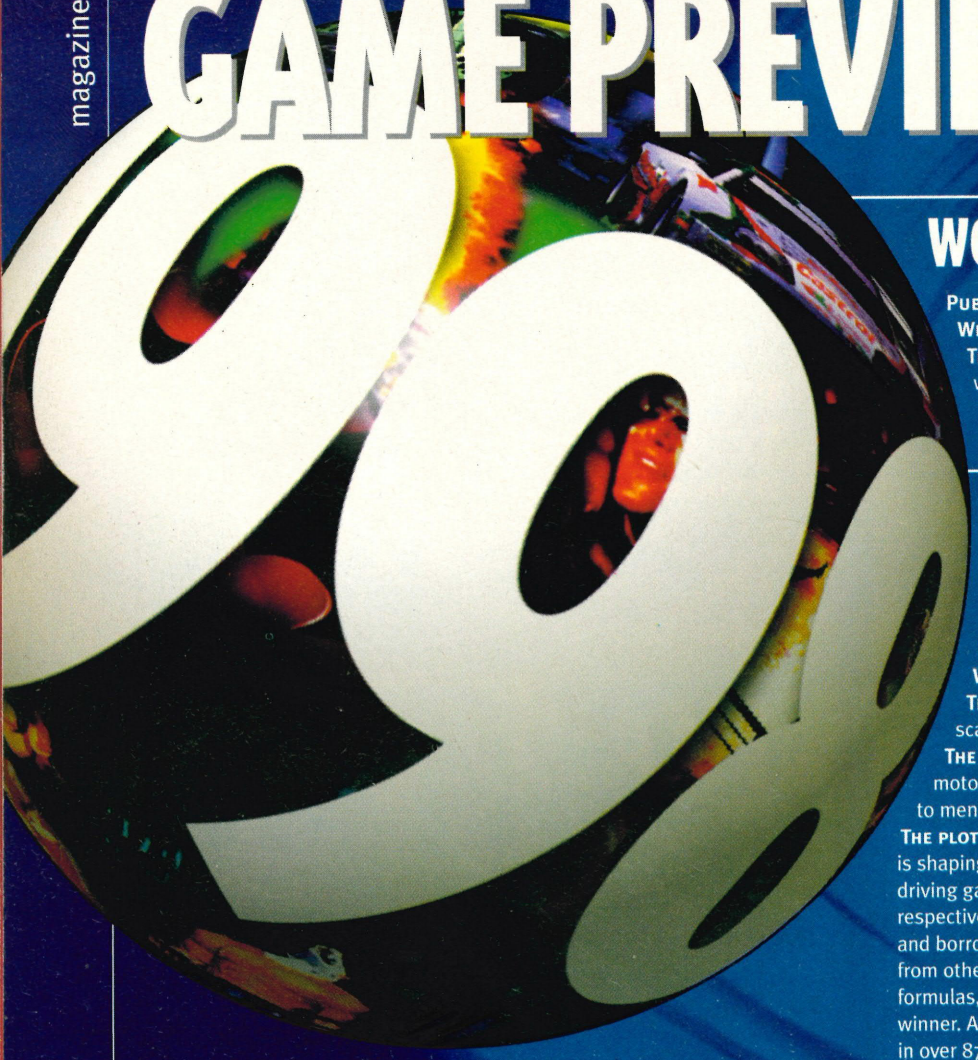


CHALLENGE BOX

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.

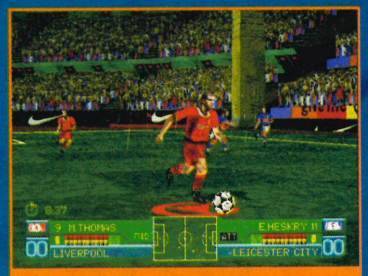


THE ULTIMATE WINTER GAME PREVIEW!



WORLD LEAGUE SOCCER

PUBLISHER: Eidos
WHEN: Spring
THE PITCH: A football game with added realism.
THE PROSPECTS: It certainly looks very intriguing. With the graphics and playabilty reminiscent of Sega's *Virtual Striker*, and impressive attention to detail, this could become the world's greatest, but then where have we heard that before?



[ABOVE] *World League Soccer* – Has good potential, and the detail is spot-on.

GRAN TURISMO

PUBLISHER: Sony
WHEN: April
THE PITCH: Car racing on a Gran scale!
THE PLAYERS: Almost any motorised totty-magnet you'd care to mention.
THE PLOT: Who needs a plot when this is shaping up to be the most realistic driving game ever devised! Nodding respectively at the *Ridge Racer* series, and borrowing and enhancing stuff from other well-established racing formulas, this game is guaranteed a winner. All this plus you can opt to race in over 87 different 'dream machines' from the world's leading sports car manufacturers and view those dazzling moments time and time again with a fabulous replay option.
THE PROSPECTS: *Porsche Challenge* sold a shed-load and that wasn't even that good. This is miles better and will (you heard it here first!) go through the roof!

WARGAMES

PUBLISHER: MGM
WHEN: April
THE PITCH: Kind of like an interactive sequel to the classic whizz-kid flick!
THE PROSPECTS: There are a lot of strategy games around, the fact that this is based on an old film that many youngsters of today probably won't have seen might not help its appeal.



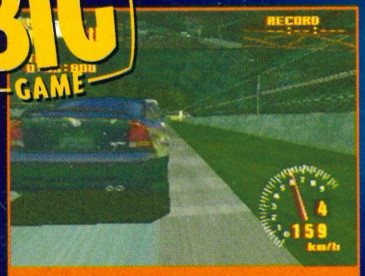
DEPTH

PUBLISHER: Sony
WHEN: March
THE PITCH: An ambient/dance mucus production game, bangin'!
THE PROSPECTS: This will go down very well with certain sections of the

Bigger, better

faster, sexier! If there's one fundamental rule of videogames, it's always apply these elements and do one better than your competitors! With the PlayStation now only showing its true power, the forthcoming year looks set to be the biggest and most exhilarating yet – with conversions, sequels, tie-ins and plenty of original stuff coming through like a massive power surge. PLAY presents the definitive look ahead to what's around in 1998.

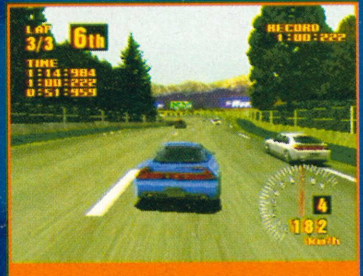
THE BIG GAME



[ABOVE] *Gran Turismo* – Probably the best racing game of 1998 (hopefully)



[ABOVE] *Gran Turismo* – Takes elements from all the best racers and combines them.



[ABOVE] *Gran Turismo* – More cars and tracks than any other racing game.



PlayStation audience that like to go clubbing and get 'off their 'ead', and yet can't afford decks to mix their own funky tunes.

X-FILES

Publisher: Sony
When: Spring
The pitch: A full-on interactive episode, no less!
The prospects: Come on, how can this not do well? There are enough fans out there to ensure that this is one of the big hits of the year. *X-Files* is being treated as a one-off interactive episode and it is being written and produced by the people that do the show.

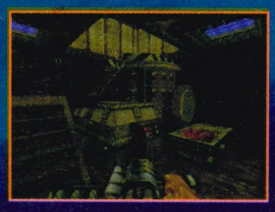
MEDIEVIL

Publisher: Sony
When: March
The pitch: Freakish goon likes to behead zombies in a Tim Burton-Style jaunt!
The prospects: The central character will scare kids and amuse adults, but otherwise, this impressive-looking 3-D slash-'em-up will have to rely on chance to determine its PlayStation success.



DAIKATANA

Publisher: Eidos
When: Spring
The pitch: Doom-clone with strange name = mixed response!
The prospects: A hit on the PC, but they go ga-ga over anything that looks remotely *Doom*-ish! Traditional PlayStation problems with a decent game could hinder this game's chances, but hopefully Eidos will sort that out.





[Above] *Ninja* – Could this be the *Tomb Raider* of 1998?

NINJA

Publisher: Eidos
When: April
The pitch: *Tomb Raider*... in a mask?
The prospects: This game has been a long time coming, but after the runaway success of *Tomb Raider II*, those Core guys must be looking to extend the unbeaten run. This 3-D fighting adventure has all the hallmarks of a classic.



LUNATIK

Publisher: Eidos
When: April
The pitch: 3-D inter-galactic shoot-'em-up!
The prospects: This game has been undergoing considerable tweaks in the graphics and gameplay, and with the shoot-'em-up market lacking that one, killer, title, Eidos would do well to produce a stunning work of art that shoots as well as it looks.

F1

Publisher: Eidos
When: Spring
The pitch: Retro Formula One driving from the '95 season!
The prospects: Psygnosis has set the standards and



TEKKEN 3

Publisher: Namco
When: April
The pitch: The latest instalment of the greatest fighting series ever devised!
The plot: Set many years after *Tekken 2*, this latest beat-'em-up features a couple of the older fighters who have aged significantly (apart from Nina who was in suspended animation to retain her beauty), and plenty of new blood. The plot reads like a bad episode of *Dynasty*, but here goes. After tossing his son into a volcano at the end of *Tekken 2*, Heihachi Mishima manages to gain control of the Mishima empire. However, as his son, Kazuya, lays burning in the volcanic heat, the devil spirit leaves his body to confront the pregnant Jun Kazama – eager to possess the infant living within her – Kazuya's son!

Jin Kazuya is born, and around 15 years later a strange force is encountered during the excavation of an archaeological site. When this force turns murderous, Heihachi is once again tempted to harness the power it possesses for his own sordid needs. However, the force goes AWOL; killing several key martial artists along the way. Sensing that she is next, Jun tells Jin everything about the past events before her untimely demise, and instructs him to seek the help of Heihachi. Four years later, the King of Iron Fist Tournament 3 is announced, in the hope that the ultimate evil will show itself and bow down to the challenge!
The prospects: Wallets at the ready! This is the next big beat-'em-up that everybody must to own just so that their credibility remains intact. The fact that 'they said it couldn't be done' merely acts as more of a prompt to buy it!





[Above] *Tekken 3* Looks to retain much of the coin-op look and feel.



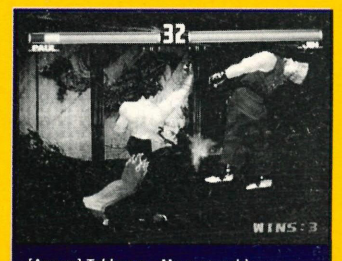
[Above] The game will be based on the latest coin-op with extra characters!



[Above] What other game lets you fight pandas?



[Above] Will it be a coin-op 'perfect' conversion?

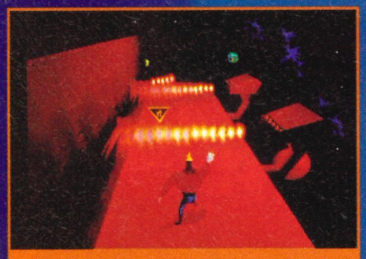


[Above] *Tekken 3* – More crunching combos than ever before!

laid the gauntlet down for others to follow. The fact that this is based on the 1995 season may deter people, but we'll wait to see what the game plays like.

CAPTAIN BLASTO

Publisher: Sony
When: May
The pitch: PlayStation superhero wanted... no time wasters please!
The prospects: *Blasto* impressed at this year's E3 show, but since then it has slipped down the release schedules. We can only assume that the hero to end all heroes is timing his entrance just right. But can he set pulses burning, or extinguish them like Rosco?



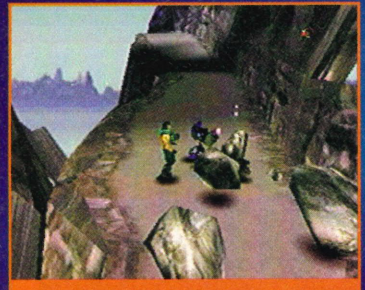
[Above] *Captain Blasto* – tight lycra is back in for '98!

ALUNDRA

Publisher: Psygnosis
When: February
The pitch: The PlayStation's answer to Zelda?
The prospects: This straightforward slash-as-you-go RPG (none of this turn-based action!) that was immensely popular in Japan is currently being translated in English.



[Above] *Alundra* – big in Japan, but will the success continue on these shores?



[Above] *One* – looks good with fancy effects, but is it the 'One' for you?

ONE

Publisher: ASC Games
When: January
The pitch: Big guns, big explosions, big thrills?
The prospects: *One* certainly looks the part, with more pyrotechnics that half a dozen Hollywood blockbusters, this game should be no less than explosive. The used multi-directional blaster format may prove to be its only downfall.



BUGRIDERS

Publisher: GT
When: February
The pitch: Like racing, only on insects!
The prospects: This has already been cruelly dubbed as '*Air Race* with bugs', displaying much of the awkward gameplay of the former racing-through-air game, with the intriguing new twist of using insects as your mode of transport.

SKULL MONKEYS

Publisher: EA
When: January
The pitch: *Planet of the Apes* meets Creature Comforts.
The prospects: Decent platform games are thin on the ground, and so this action-packed adventure should do well – especially with the added enhancement of claymation visuals that help the comic-feel of the game flow nicely.



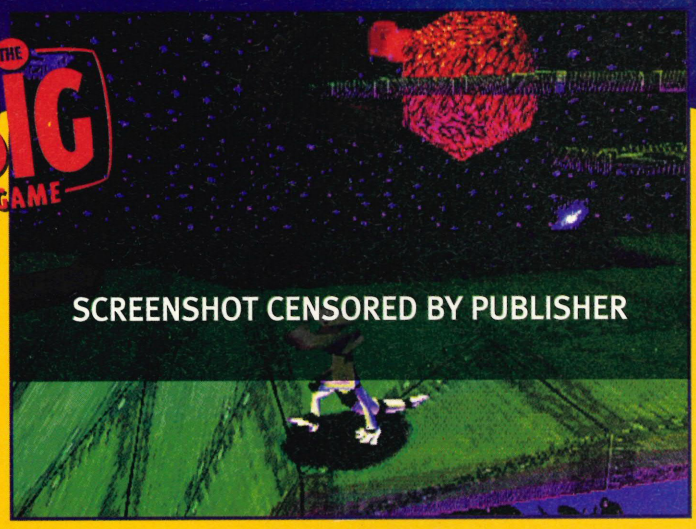
THEME HOSPITAL

Publisher: EA
When: March
The pitch: Carry on Doctor meets J.C Bradley!
The prospects: It went down a treat on PC, and PlayStation owners have been bugging Play for ages about whether or not the game will be converted. Well now you've got it!



[Above] *Theme Hospital* – You aksed for it, now you're going to get it!

THE BIG GAME

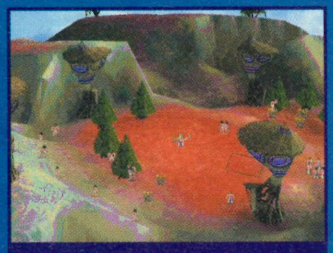


GEX: ENTER THE GECKO

Publisher: BMG
When: January
The pitch: The hottest-looking platform game yet. Mario, be afraid!
The plot: Gex is snapped up by government agents to help prevent his arch nemesis, Rez, from taking over the country's television stations. To clamp down on the wily serpent's antics, Gex must enter a zone known as the Media Dimension and combat his way through a multitude of parody levels that spoof popular films and television shows.
The prospects: Everybody loves platform games, and this is the one to look out for. The lounge lizard returns in more movie-related adventures in TV-land as he comes up against Stormtroopers and that demonic doll from Child's Play in a free-roaming extravaganza.



[Above] *Theme Hospital* – build your own rest home for sick people!



[Above] *Populous: Third Coming* – you determine the fate of the little people!

Rash 3D is being kept very tightly under-wraps, so much in fact that the only screenshots send out by EA are of rendered bikes! The name suggests something exciting and we're the only ones in the UK to have seen it running.

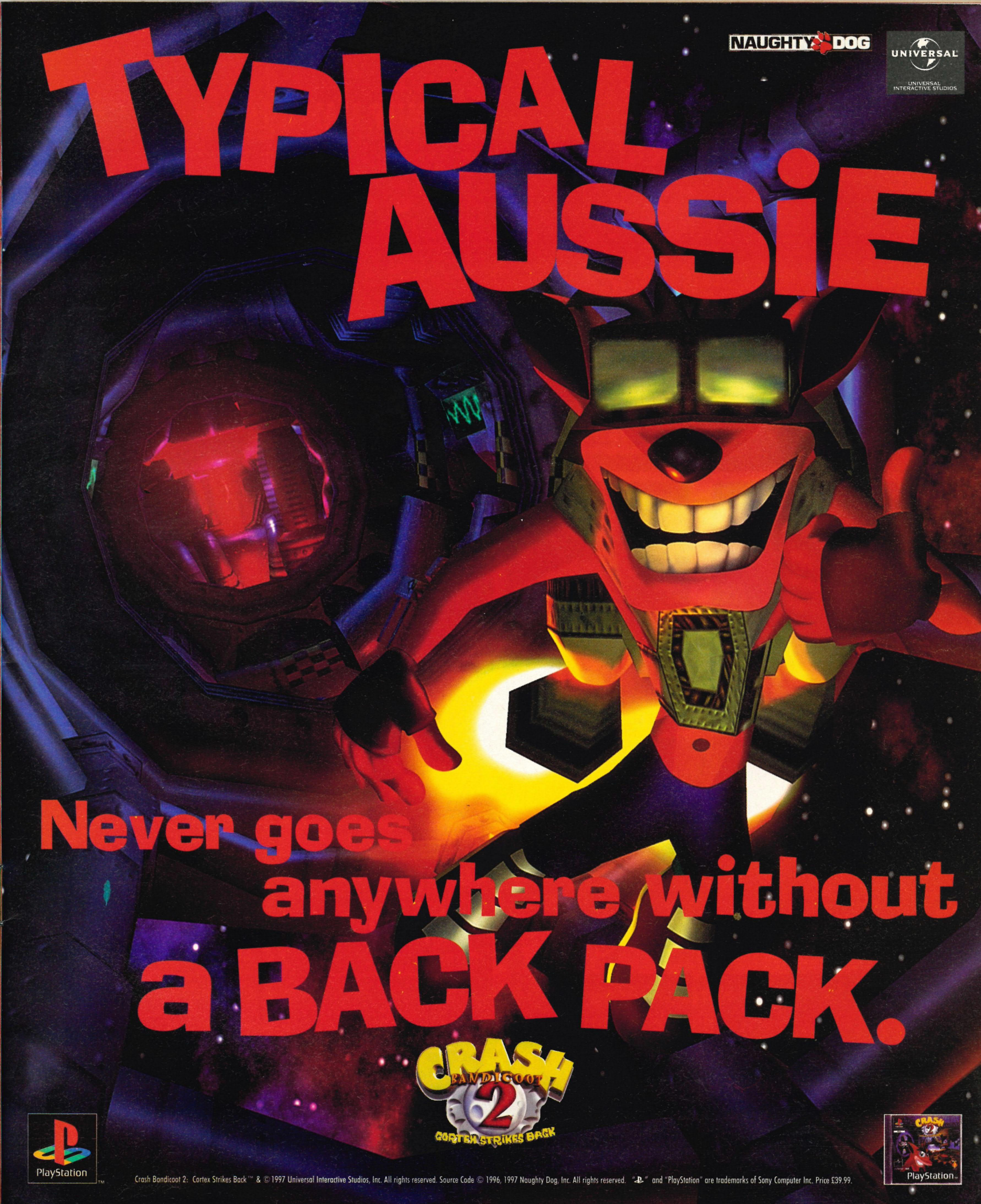
POPULOUS: THIRD COMING

Publisher: EA
When: February
The pitch: Play God... quite literally!
The prospects: A huge success on every format it previously invaded, now *Populous* comes to PlayStation in an updated form. Whether or not it will appeal to the masses doubtful, but it will certainly ooze quality nonetheless.

ROAD RASH 3D

Publisher: EA
When: Spring
The pitch: Bikes, Castrol, action!
The prospects: *Road*





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COLIN MCRAE WORLD RALLY

PUBLISHER: Codemasters
WHEN: March
THE PITCH: It'll stick the 'V' in V-Rally!
THE PROSPECTS: Codemasters know how to produce a good racer – *TOCA* showed that, but now it's steering for world domination. The prize being the definitive rally game that is still up for grabs.

MEN IN BLACK

PUBLISHER: Gremlin Interactive
WHEN: April
THE PITCH: Protecting your PlayStation from the scum of the universe.
THE PROSPECTS: We thought the film was crap, but then who needs a plot in a game? If even a fraction of the special effects wizardry is applied to this big license, then we can all expect a tasty product.

BUGGY

PUBLISHER: Gremlin Interactive
WHEN: February
THE PITCH: Radio controlled racing!
THE PROSPECTS: This is actually a very cool game. Being able to hack around a vast array of imaginative tracks using radio controlled buggies actually works a lot better than you'd think – and they handle like the real McCoy as well!

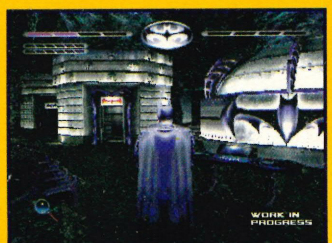


[ABOVE] *Buggy* – adds a whole new radio controlled twist to the racing genre.

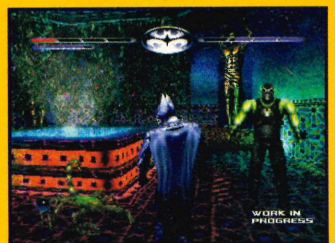
PREMIER MANAGER '98

PUBLISHER: Gremlin Interactive
WHEN: Spring
THE PITCH: What the world has been crying out for.
THE PROSPECTS: Football fever is growing on the PlayStation and every need has already been satisfied apart from that of the arm-chair manager. This game should change all that with the onus on decision making and not action. We can't wait.





[ABOVE] *Batman & Robin* – the film was rubbish, but the game looks smokin'!



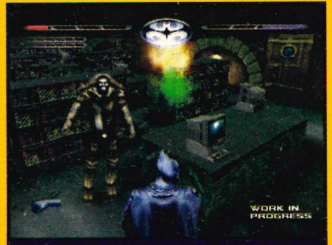
[ABOVE] *Batman & Robin* – thrills aplenty as Gotham prepares for the big chill.

BATMAN & ROBIN

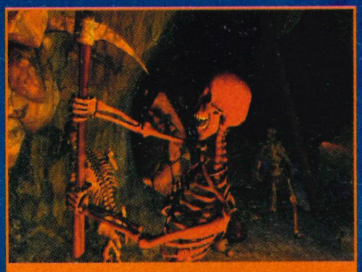
PUBLISHER: Acclaim
WHEN: February
THE PITCH: Holy crappy-sprites, a decent Batman game?
THE PLOT: Set over three days in Gotham City, you, as the Caped Crusader himself (or Robin or Batgirl) must prevent the evil Mr Freeze from stealing diamonds and hatching his malicious plan to give the city a frost it won't thaw out from. You rush to the scene of a previous crime – duff up hoods and obtain clues as to where the cool customer is going to strike next. The onus is on each character having their own strengths and weaknesses and the different ways they are able to overcome situations. You have total freedom within the city and can scout any area via the Batmobile. In short, Gotham is riddled with crime in all shapes and forms – you just have to decide which felony takes priority on your rather hectic crime-fighting schedule.
THE PROSPECTS: The film was bad, but it looks as though Probe has pulled out the stops to ensure that the game is an epic in its own right. With so much to see and do, and many different gaming elements at work, so could be a winner!



[ABOVE] *Batman & Robin* – Mr Freeze delivers Arnie-like witty one-liners!



[ABOVE] *Batman & Robin* – Explore the city, solve crimes, and hurt people.



[ABOVE] *Warhammer 2* – creepy strategy comes back to life in '98!



[ABOVE] *Warhammer 2* – Will leave strategy fans spellbound!

WARHAMMER 2: DARK OMEN

PUBLISHER: Mindscape
WHEN: February
THE PITCH: Win wars and influence people.
THE PROSPECTS: If the control system is simplified and the graphics tweaked, this could be a leading contender for top strategy game of the year. The posse down at the local 'White Dwarf' must be gagging with anticipation!



[ABOVE] *Warhammer 2* – the stage is set for the ultimate dwarf showdown.

RASCAL

PUBLISHER: Psygnosis
WHEN: January
THE PITCH: Lippy kid goes back in time to kick-ass!
THE PROSPECTS: Possibly a surprise hit. Play saw the game running recently and was very impressed with the speed of the engine and the fine graphics on offer.



PITFALL 3D

PUBLISHER: Activision
WHEN: February



[ABOVE] *Pitfall 3D* – Is reported to have Bruce Campbell (from *Evil Dead*) doing the voice!



[Above] *Pitfall 3D* – Hard Harry comes up against some very strange beings!

The pitch: The game that was born to run, and run, and run... !
The prospects: Pitfall upgraded well from ancient Atari 2600 cart to SNES, but with stiff competition from Lara Croft, is there really any caverns left for courageous Harry to explore?

MORTAL KOMBAT 4

Publisher: GT
When: April/ May
The pitch: Mortal Kombat goes 3-D!
The prospects: *War Gods* was crap, so why should this be any better? But still, if *Street Fighter* can succeed in a 3-D arena, then, theoretically, this can too. The coin-op has done pretty well, so there may be life in the twitching corpse yet!

WILD 9'S

Publisher: Interplay
When: February
The pitch: Earthworm Jim... without the worm!
The prospects: It would appear that everything Shiny-founder, Dave Perry touches turns to gold. This follows more of the same zany platforms antics displayed in 'Jim', but with the humour starting to grate a little.



[Above] *Bust-A-Move 3* – More puzzle-related bubble blowing!

BUST-A-MOVE 3

Publisher: Acclaim
When: May
The pitch: Bub and Bob are back and ready for popping!
The prospects: It wasn't everybody's cup of tea, but the last PlayStation version was the final word in fun-fuelled double-player puzzle fun. This looks more of the same.

HARDCORE 4X4 2

Publisher: ASC Games
When: March
The pitch: It's what roads weren't built for!
The prospects: Most games of this genre have tended to be rubbish, so ASC has got its work cut out in order to turn this disadvantage in its favour. Early impressions aren't too good though.





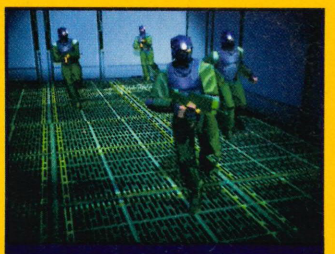
[Above] Undoubtedly, Konami's trump card for 1998. 3-D adventures are the hot property at the moment, but will the trend last into 1998?

METAL GEAR SOLID

Publisher: Konami
When: April
The pitch: Resident Heavy Metal!
The prospects: The looks alone command attention, and if the action holds up in this *Resident Evil* type 3-D adventure, then Konami may well be back on track after a series of disastrous blows.



[Above] *Metal Gear Solid* – Mass destruction on a very big scale.



[Above] *Metal Gear Solid* – Come and have a go if you think you're hard enough!

NAGANO WINTER OLYMPICS 98

Publisher: Konami
When: January
The pitch: The official Winter Olympics game!
The prospects: It certainly looks good enough with very polished graphics making the events look very inviting. International Track & Field was a huge success, so punters eager to inflict vast blisters on their thumbs will be happy once more.

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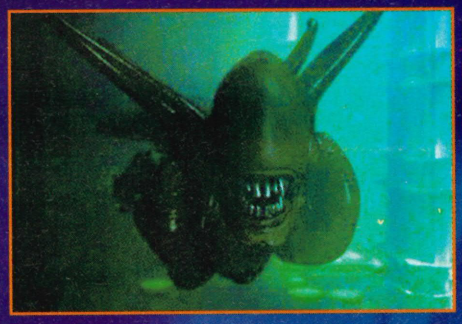
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ALIEN RESURRECTION

PUBLISHER: Fox Interactive
WHEN: Spring
THE PITCH: Movie tie-in spells M-O-N-E-Y M-A-K-E-R!



THE PROSPECTS: The film was a welcome return to the gritty bare bones of the original, and the game should thrill and terrify in equal measures. It isn't yet known what format the game will adopt, but don't be surprised if it is a full-on 3-D adventure.

THE FIFTH ELEMENT

PUBLISHER: Kalisto
WHEN: March
THE PITCH: Strange futuristic film starring Bruce Willis descends on PlayStation.
THE PROSPECTS: Those French boys at Kalisto sure know their 3-D engines, and this game is certainly shaping up to be something special. With 15 levels set around various scenes in the film, it could be a rare movie tie-in triumph.



[ABOVE] *Constructor* – build that house in the country that you've always fancied!

CONSTRUCTOR

PUBLISHER: Acclaim
WHEN: March
THE PITCH: Theme building anybody?



THE PROSPECTS: Those that have exceeded the boundaries of *Transport Tycoon* will take great delight in building a city from scratch. It looks miles better than *Sim City 2000*, but then looks aren't everything.

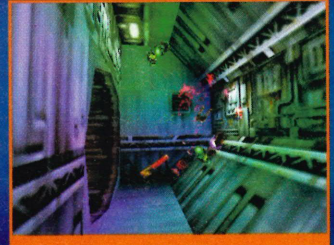
FORSAKEN

PUBLISHER: Acclaim
WHEN: February
THE PITCH: *Wipeout* meets *Tunnel B-1* for a mass rumble!
THE PROSPECTS: Potentially a great! This game looks good, and, if the version shown at the ECTS show is anything to go by, plays like a dream. We just hope Acclaim includes a link-up option.





[ABOVE] *Forsaken* – fly through tunnels and blast the opposition.



[ABOVE] *Forsaken* – not a game for claustrophobics who don't like the dark!

...AND THE REST

SPICE WORLD

PUBLISHER: SCEE
WHEN: February 9
PROSPECTS: Have the girls still got what it takes? This 'game' basically revolves around you mixing and editing their favourite tracks in a *Parappa the Rapper* kind of stylee.

ARMOURED CORE

PUBLISHER: SCEE
WHEN: 13 February
PROSPECTS: *Mech Warrior 2* was good, but flawed. This promises to be even better and will appeal to a greater market due to the amount of mech customisation you can do.

BABY UNIVERSE

PUBLISHER: SCEE
WHEN: February
PROSPECTS: This comes hand in hand with *Depth* in the sense that it provides tripped-out visuals for your favourite audio tracks!

KARTWORLD SERIES

PUBLISHER: SCEE
WHEN: February
PROSPECTS: *Formula Karts* was, in our opinion, probably the best karting game you could see on the PlayStation, but this could add more depth to prove us wrong.

NHL FACE OFF '98

PUBLISHER: SCEE
WHEN: March
PROSPECTS: Still room for the definitive ice hockey game... could this be it? Early signs are promising but the gameplay needs significant tweaks if it is to better the last.

EVERYBODY'S GOLF

PUBLISHER: SCEE
WHEN: April
PROSPECTS: Way-hay! Tongue-in-cheek golf! Hat's off to Namco. With so many stuffy simulations on the market, why not try something a bit different?

GHOST IN THE SHELL

PUBLISHER: SCEE
WHEN: April
PROSPECTS: A bit of a risk for Sony. Although the Manga film was met with critical acclaim, we can't imagine the dull game repeating this success.

WILD ARMS

PUBLISHER: SCEE
WHEN: April
PROSPECTS: This did very well on the import scene – although good adventure games were a bit short coming prior to *Final Fantasy VII*.

KULA QUEST

PUBLISHER: SCEE
WHEN: April
PROSPECTS: It's balls innit! Quirky puzzle games are still very much in demand for the 'thinking' PlayStation owner, and *Kula Quest* should provide plenty of party japery!

JET MOTO 2

PUBLISHER: SCEE
WHEN: April
PROSPECTS: With loads of new tracks and features, this should build upon the shock success of the first and shape the series into formidable unit to be reckoned with.

SPECIAL OPS

PUBLISHER: BMG
WHEN: January
PROSPECTS: A strategy war game whereby you are actually in the thick of the action and get to see your commands unfold first-hand. It's got looks to die for as well!

UEFA SOCCER

PUBLISHER: Ocean
WHEN: March
PROSPECTS: The onus here is on speed and ease-of-use, so this one is more for the arcade soccer fan than the armchair manager. It looks detailed enough and is packed with tricks.

CLAY FIGHTER EXTREME

PUBLISHER: Interplay
WHEN: January
PROSPECTS: The N64 version was crap. This will have to pull a spectacular punch if this is to topple the likes of *Street Fighter EX* and *Tekken 2* (or '3' for that matter!).

ALIEN VS PREDATOR

PUBLISHER: Fox Interactive
WHEN: April
Prospects: The first person 3-D adventure may be stretching a little, but with the right subject matter, namely aliens, the genre could be looking at a favourable year ahead!

STAR WARS MONOPOLY

PUBLISHER: Hasbro
WHEN: March
PROSPECTS: A license to print money! Although this would have tied-in nicely with the re-released Special Edition films, it should still shift a few to the die-hard fans.

PUMA STREET SOCCER

PUBLISHER: Sunsoft
WHEN: April
PROSPECTS: With an already flooded market (and one which is going to get significantly more so in the build up to the World Cup), the odds are against this one.

JOE BLOW

PUBLISHER: Telstar
WHEN: Spring
PROSPECTS: A monkey with a dodgy name, hmm! An interesting 3-D platformer with a incredibly cute central character. It's in the bag for Telstar!

WRECKIN' CREW

PUBLISHER: Telstar
WHEN: Spring
PROSPECTS: Already heavily delayed, this can either mean that the game is crap, or is actually going to turn out better than we hoped. Go figure!

STAR WARS: TERAS KASI

PUBLISHER: Virgin
WHEN: April
PROSPECTS: A fighting game with *Star Wars* characters – it's what the world's been crying out for for about ten years. High-drama light sabre battles beckon!

POWERBOAT RACING

PUBLISHER: Interplay
WHEN: February
PROSPECTS: *Rapid Racer* hardly sailed on the crest of a wave, but could it have been improved? Interplay is looking to take the racing boat genre to a whole new lagoon!



Total PlayStation
"We strongly recommend you grab a copy"

PlayStation Power
"Highly recommended"

Just When You Thought It Was Safe To Go Back On The Water

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The Multi-Player Game that's full of Maritime Mayhem

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PlayStation

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IT'S CHRISTMAS TIME, AND THE DAWNING OF A WHOLE NEW YEAR IN PLAYSTATION GAMING. SO WHAT BETTER WAY TO MARK THE EVENT BY CASTING A NOSTALGIC LOOK BACK OVER OUR SHOULDERS AND RECAPPING THE SIGNIFICANT EVENTS OF THE PAST 12 MONTHS. AND HOW THE PLAYSTATION ENGULFED THE WORLD...

JANUARY



We kick started the year with a full look ahead to 1997 with the big players being *Resident Evil 2*, *Street Fighter EX Plus*, *Soul Edge*, *Porsche Challenge* and *Final Fantasy VII* amongst others. After the hustle and bustle of the hectic Christmas period prior to this issue, there wasn't much quality software in for review. However, we managed to obtain a copy of the eagerly anticipated *Rage Racer* on import and promptly awarded it the only PLAY Classic of the issue.

THE NEWS IN BRIEF:

• Preliminary work began on the sequel to a game that did rather well from Core Design. Apparently, it will be called *Tomb Raider II*. We also speculated on the *Tomb Raider* film and the ensemble of beauties eligible to play the part of Lara.

• A major shortage in PlayStations meant that many a tear was shed by kids in Europe. The system had completely sold out in Italy, Spain, the Benelux countries and Scandinavia. The total number of units sold at this time was reported to be 10 million world-wide.

• The *Tekken 3* coin-op was unveiled for the first time at the PlayStation Expo in Japan; fuelling rumours of a console version that was being developed simultaneously.

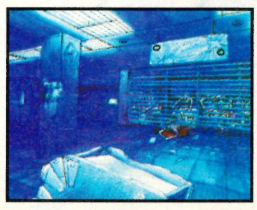
• Following the announcement of the Sony Yaroze PlayStation to be used as a development tool for bedroom coders, a limited edition 'White' PlayStation went on-sale in Asia only. This machine worked like a standard machine, except that it featured an MPEG card to enable the viewing of Video CDs.

BEST GAME
Rage Racer (94%)

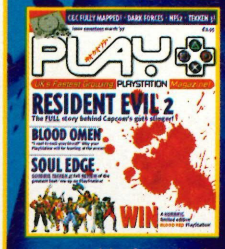
WORST GAME
Powermove Pro Wrestling (51%)

STAR OF JANUARY
Crash Bandicoot
Taking the world by storm with his zany platform antics over Christmas. Crash helped send PlayStation sales through the roof, and nobody even knows what a Bandicoot is!

VILLAIN OF THE MONTH
Fat zombie cop *(Resident Evil 2)*
We wrangled a peak at Resident Evil 2 and perhaps the most frightening sight was that of a grossly overweight cop who was one of the many walking dead. Grim.



FEBRUARY



The highlight of this issue was the *Resident Evil 2* preview that exposed many new aspects of the game that hadn't been reported before, including the characters (that would later change), and early sketches of some of the crucial areas. Thankfully, the software content picked up with nine reviews – the highlight being the incredible *Soul Edge*, and first looks at *Blood Omen*, *ISS Pro* and *Need for Speed 2*.

THE NEWS IN BRIEF:

• Namco dropped a bombshell for light gun owners by stating that the eagerly awaited *Time Crisis* game would only work with the official Namco GunCon (to be known as the G-Con 45 over here) and not third-party shooters.

• Hot news from Japan stated that Squaresoft was already well into the development of *Tobal 2*. Early shots showed better graphics, more characters and the inclusion of projectile attacks. Sadly though, the game would never see the light of day over here.

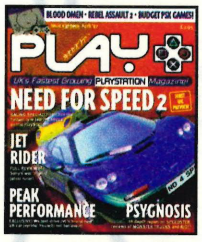






[Above] *Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo* – a classic puzzle game in every sense of the word.

MARCH



This month we nabbed the world exclusive extensive first look at *Need for Speed 2*, and *Final Fantasy VII*. On the reviews front there were many games that scored respectively in the 80s, including *Blood Omen*, *Crusader No Remorse*, and *Jet Rider*. But again there was only one PLAY Classic. This was also the month of the Platinum games, a great move by Sony to cater for all tastes, and re-release quality older games to mass interest from the public.

THE NEWS IN BRIEF:

• Sony released the first batch of Platinum games which included *Air Combat*, *Tekken*, *Ridge Racer*, *Toshinden*, *Wipeout* and *Destruction Derby*. They go on to sell shed-loads and stay in the PlayStaion charts for aeons. Overall, a booming success. And there more were to follow.

• Hollywood hard-man, Bruce Willis was reported to have signed a deal with Activision to star in their latest project, *Apocalypse*. The game will be a 3-D interactive movie whereby the wise-cracking slap-head will act as your partner as you battle in a futuristic world against the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.

• Interplay announced its 1997 line-up. Spearheading the assault was *Star Trek: Starfleet Academy*, *Rock 'n' Roll Racing 2*, and *Clayfighter 3*. Although other impressive pleasers were due in the form of Shiny Entertainment's *Wild 9's*, *VR Baseball '97* and *Descent 2*.

BEST GAME
Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo (90%)

WORST GAME
Crypt Killer (38%)

STAR OF MARCH
Pocket Ryu
Even in miniature form this crazy Jap looks mean! Ryu and co kicked ass big time in a puzzle game that brilliantly combined the look and feel of the highly successful *Street Fighter* games.

VILLAIN OF THE MONTH
Kain
The undead star of BMG's *Blood Omen* was a true villain in the conventional sense. Resurrected to take revenge on his assassins, Kain thinks nothing about sinking his teeth into poor street urchins who cry "Help me kind sir!" Pure evil.



[Above] *Crypt Killer* – officially one of the worst games to surface in 1997.

• Delays aplenty, with *Final Fantasy VII* completely missing the Christmas '96 target in Japan, and horrendously slipping in the American and European stakes. The reason was said to be problems in translation and the implementing of localisation. *Resident Evil 2* also suffered the first of its many delays – the original plan of a world-wide release in March was but a distant memory...

BEST GAME
Soul Edge (96%)

WORST GAME
Road Rage (24%)



STAR OF FEBRUARY
Sophitia Alexandra
Soul Edge arriveed (later to be called *Soul Blade* in the UK) and was an instant hit in the office, not hindered at all by the curvy charms of blonde bombshell, Sophitia.

VILLAIN OF THE MONTH
Butch (Re-Loaded)
It's hard to imagine a more sinister dealer of destruction than the cross-dressing and thoroughly mixed-up member of the intergalactic team of escaped cons!

EASTER



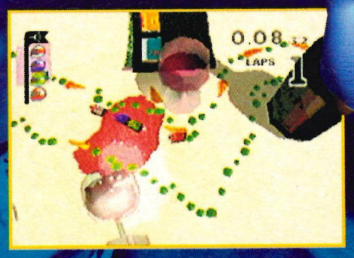
Being big fans of the PC version, we were delighted when Twinsun made his appearance in the EA conversion of *Little Big Adventure*, but yet the game didn't impress us enough for a PLAY Classic to be awarded. *Mechwarrior 2* and *Micro Machines V3* took the honours, and we also had first looks at *Apocalypse* and *Hexen 2*. The biggest event of the month was the reduction in the price of the PlayStation hardware and games, which didn't do the sales any harm at all.

THE NEWS IN BRIEF:

• Sony responded to the launch of the Nintendo 64 console by slashing the price of the standard PlayStation unit from £199 to £129 and lowering the price of its official games to £34.99. This price drop would send sales through the roof!

• Namco sign sa deal to produce an additional nine games that would be exclusive to PlayStation. We revealed these as *Time Crisis*, *GunBullet* (*Point Blank*), *Ace Combat 2*, *Namco Museum vol 4&5* (possibly also *Namco Encore*), *Treasures of the Deep*, *Tekken 3* and... well, what could be that final game? Answers on a postcard to...

• Capcom issued an official statement claiming that *Resident Evil 2* was undergoing character, scenery and plot changes and wouldn't emerge until the end of the year. Capcom also confirmed that the game would be on TWO CDs.







BEST GAME
Micro Machines V3 (92%)

WORST GAME
Allied General (51%)

STAR OF MARCH
Twinsun
It was a long time coming, but *Little Big Adventure* finally arrived on PlayStation and was met with a very warm reception from our reviewer. Courage, brains, and dress sense, Twinsun had it all!

VILLAIN OF THE MONTH
Beth – Daughter of Merlin
It was refreshing to see that not all game heroines were big-breasted centre-folds, but this was taking things a bit too far. The star of *Excalibur 2555 AD* was a po-faced trout of the highest magnitude!

APRIL



Scary covers-R-us with our devilish mean-looking Tenka cyborg peering menacingly out from the shelves. PLAY Classic awards went to the fabulous *Bushido Blade* and *Total NBA '97*, with *Exhumed*, *Jonah Lomu Rugby* and *Porsche Challenge* all coming close. We also gazed adoringly at *Syndicate Wars* and *Total Drivin'*, and realised the full extent of the horror of censorship with to regards to *Soul Blade*.





[ABOVE] *Bushido Blade* – one of the many triumphs of 1997. A good year for Square!



[ABOVE] *Need For Speed 2* – We thought it was grand, but you thought it was crap. Oh well!

THE NEWS IN BRIEF:

• The full extent of the censoring surrounding the official release of *Soul Blade* was revealed with Li Long's nunchakkas getting the chop in favour of strange flexible rods. Sophitia's arse was also covered up by a flimsy white skirt in the intro.

• The tie-in game for the year's summer blockbuster film was revealed. *The Lost World* – Spielberg's monster sequel to *Jurassic Park* was confirmed to be hitting the PlayStation courtesy of Dreamworks, a software company co-set-up by the multi-talented director.

• *Ninja*, the eagerly anticipated release from Core Design was delayed. With the demand for *Tomb Raider II* higher than a jumbo's undercarriage, the company perhaps opted to focus all its attention on the big money, rather than a lesser-known title. Early 1998 now looks likely.

BEST GAME
Bushido Blade (94%)

WORST GAME
Spot Goes To Hollywood (72%)

STAR OF APRIL
Spider
The game may have been a big let down, but original central characters don't come with more screen presence than this charismatic creepy crawly!





VILLAIN OF THE MONTH
Alien Beast
Fans of *Exhumed* will have come across this devilish freaky mutant that would cause lesser men to cack their pant – guns or no guns! As in-game enemies go, this thing is just pure evil!

THE NEWS IN BRIEF:

• Eidos challenged Psygnosis by announcing plans to publish its own Formula one game. Developed by French coders, Lankhor, *F1* (working title) promised to be the most realistic racing game yet. We're still waiting to find out!

• The Tamagotchi virtual pets officially arrive in the country, and PLAY nabbed a handful to see what all the fuss was about. They charmed us for days with their bleating for food and humorous toilet habits, then they died, and we got bored.

• *Croc* – the first game touted to give Mario a run for his money was unveiled. The title, developed by Argonaut, would go on to sell loads; helped by an ace-looking TV ad campaign. Despite all this, it wasn't that good!

BEST GAME
Need for Speed 2 (90%)

WORST GAME
The Crow: City of Angels (21%)

STAR OF MAY
Abe
PLAY ventured out to the offices of Oddworld Development to have a squint at its interesting, bizarre new title, *Abe's Oddysee*. Needless to say, we were instantly captivated by the star of the game, and all his strange noises.

VILLAIN OF THE MONTH
Alucard
You certainly wouldn't trust this bloke with your daughter!



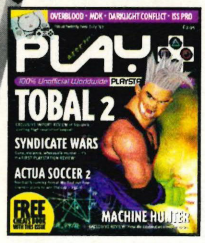
MAY



At last, a serious contender for the crown for best PlayStation Formula One game. Unfortunately, though, Eidos' effort still hasn't arrived to this day.

We also conjured waves of controversy this month by awarding *Need For Speed 2* 90% – was Graeme off his head, or was it a genuinely great game. The jury is out on this one, but to be fair, and being Scottish, this bloke doesn't award high scores lightly. Just look at *FFVII* two months ago, which caused a similar stir!

JUNE



Oh the joy! *Tobal 2* arrives on the import scene. The fighting aspect is great, but we couldn't understand a bloody word of the RPG elements, which was a pity really. But still an English copy must arrive soon – or perhaps not as Square isn't keen to release it outside of Japan. The aforementioned epic was the only PLAY Classic this month, but there were also a lot of other quality releases such as *ISS Pro, Syndicate Wars, Darklight Conflict* and *Overblood*.

THE NEWS IN BRIEF:

• Nintendo, already out-done by Sony at the launch, slashed a 100 quid off of the RRP of its N64 console to compete on equal terms with the PlayStation. However, the software remains at a hefty price.

• The new model PlayStation arrived! Sony released a new streamlined version of the PlayStation, with all phono sockets removed and tighter internal security to help eliminate the chances of being able to 'chip' the machine to play import games. The position of the laser had also been moved away from the power-point to avoid excessive heat building up. The reason for this cheaper unit is to ensure that the new lower price of the machine can be maintained with a dip in the profits.

• The new Sony Dual Analogue control pad is released in Japan, complete with a feedback mechanism that causes the pad to vibrate when various on-screen events occur. Importers flog them for £40 and make a killing!

JULY



We hopped on the summer blockbuster extravaganza by dedicating the cover to *The Lost World*; nabbing an exclusive preview in the process. We also tested *Tomb Raider II* for the first time and denounced *V-Rally* as being not as good as everyone else made it out to be. There were no PLAY Classics this month (something to do with the summer heat making us all tetchy perhaps?), but *Ace Combat 2* and more importantly, *V-Rally* came mighty close.

THE NEWS IN BRIEF:

• PLAY went behind the scenes to get some tasty first impressions of *Tomb Raider II*. We found it to be a vast improvement with the camera positioning and movement of Lara being a lot smoother. The massive hype bandwagon started here!

• A new version of *Resident Evil* was announced. *Resident Evil: The Director's Cut* was intended to bridge the gap whilst eager punters were still left waiting for the proper sequel. Changes included new camera angles, three difficulty settings and more monsters.

• True to form, Acclaim nabbed the license for the fourth Batman film. *Batman & Robin* is somewhat of a departure from the normal scrolling beat-'em-up format. The game is a 3-D adventure with plenty of fighting and puzzle solving thrown in for good measure.

BEST GAME
V-Rally (87%)

WORST GAME
Carnage Heart (57%)

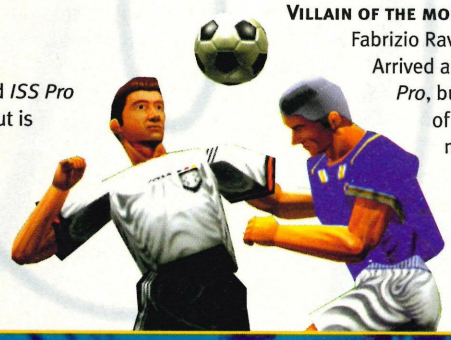
STAR OF JULY
Rosco McQueen
Just look at him, if this bloke isn't a star then who is? This fearless fire fighter is about to star in his very first 3-D adventure, and Play saw it first when we ventured out to Sony's offices to get the full scoop.

VILLAIN OF THE MONTH
Smasher
The multi-muscled hard man of Core Design's forthcoming beat-'em-up, *Fighting Force* is certainly not a man to be messed with – not if you wish the family jewels to remain intact anyway!

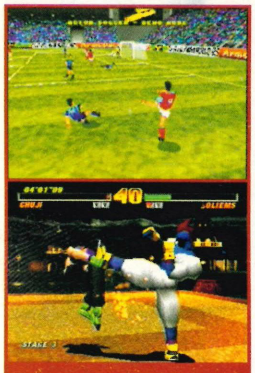
BEST GAME
Tobal 2 (92%)

WORST GAME
Actua Soccer Club Edition (62%)

STAR OF JUNE
Gazza
The long awaited *ISS Pro* finally arrived, but is somewhat disappointing having promised to live up to the sheer class of the N64 version. However, one thing stood out – the familiar players, not least a certain Mr Gascoigne, although he wasn't called by name in the game.



VILLAIN OF THE MONTH
Fabrizio Ravanelli
Arrived alongside Gazza in *ISS Pro*, but the real-life antics of the 'Silver Feather' made him the obvious candidate for this coveted award of grimness. In fact, he's still moaning about Middlesborough!



[ABOVE] *Tobal 2* – fighting sequels don't come much better. Shame you won't see it!

AUGUST



As summer drew to a close, we were literally foaming at the mouth over *Time Crisis*. Namco games have always been the cream of the crop as far as we're concerned, but this exceeded even our wildest dreams, with additional PlayStation levels that were miles better than the arcade ones. Damian went to Atlanta for the E3 show and come home laden down with goodies which were splattered all over a special 11-page feature. We also looked at *Colony Wars* and *G-Police*.

THE NEWS IN BRIEF:

• There was scandal over the version of *V-Rally* which hit the shops across the country without the link-up option, without the Dual Analogue support, and without the much-talked about track editor. The reason? Switched master copies, poor frame rate and the fact that the track editor couldn't handle the curves and would probably "Blow the game!"

• Copyright problems meant that the force feeback option on the official Dual Analogue pads had to be dropped. The upshot being that no official games would utilise the feature until the matter is resolved. This doesn't effect the import pad or games though.

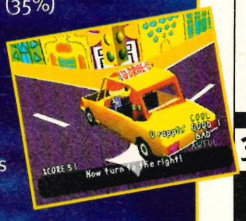
• PLAY ventures to the E3 show in Atlanta to check out the next big things. The highlights for us were *Final Fantasy VII, Rapid Racer, Street Fighter Ex Plus, Colony Wars, F1 '97, Metal Gear Solid, The Lost World* and, of course, *Tomb Raider II*.



BEST GAME
Time Crisis (90%)

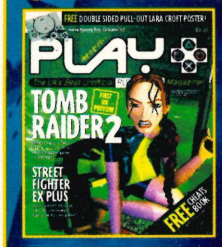
WORST GAME
Test Drive Off-Road (35%)

STAR OF AUGUST
Parappa
The love-sick two-dimensional dog captured our hearts with his wild 'n' wacky antics, his 'have a go' attitude and amusing rapping pals. One of the most original games of the year and a great party piece.



VILLAIN OF THE MONTH
Kantaris
The female villain in the PlayStation-only levels of *Time Crisis* gave us more heartache than any other foe, ever.

SEPTEMBER



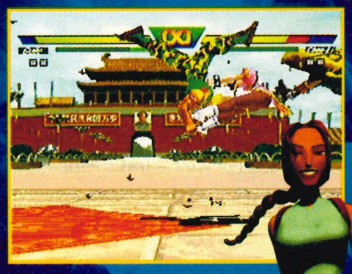
This issue has fond memories for all concerned because it sold so many copies. Of course, this wasn't at all down to the fact that Lara Croft was crawling on all fours on the cover (yeah right!). *Tomb Raider II* was obviously the highlight this month, but let us not forget *Street Fighter Ex Plus* which nabbed a PLAY Classic and *Hard Boiled* which was awarded an all-time crap review score, and a PLAY Putrid to boot! This month we also saw *Rosco McQueen*, *Fighting Force* and *Rapid Racer*.

THE NEWS IN BRIEF:

• Sony of America's development studio announced that it would begin converting PlayStation titles onto the PC. The plan was to covert *Twisted Metal 2: World Tour, Jet Moto*, and *Warhawk* – all of which were originally developed by Single Trac, the company which was later bought by GT Interactive.

• More Platinum games hit the streets. *Loaded* and *Actua Soccer* are the latest third-party titles to support the budget range. We also speculate on the possible Platinum release of *Tomb Raider* before the sequel hits the shops.

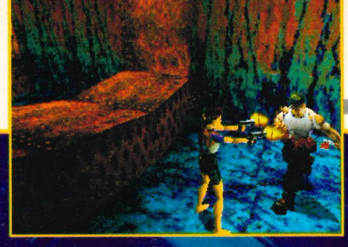
• We also printed an exclusive seven-page *Tomb Raider II* preview ahead of all the opposition and also grill the average punter on the street as to their knowledge of Lara Croft – the results are mixed.



BEST GAME
Street Fighter Ex Plus (91%)

WORST GAME
Hard Boiled (29%)

STAR OF SEPTEMBER
Lara Croft
The all-conquering Lara has had one hell of a year and has worked wonders to bring the video game and liftstyle sections closer together by popping up all over the shop. As if that wasn't enough, the game is looking pretty good as well.



VILLAIN OF THE MONTH
Raptor
The Lost World game arrived shortly after the film and was awash with scaly creatures of the big-toothed variety all roaming freely and devouring lesser dinos. The star of the game was the controllable raptor, but it was also the villain because who's ever heard of a good raptor?

THE TOP 10 BEST GAMES OF 1997

What review of the year would be complete without the definitive guide to what the real muscle of the year was. Here are our faves...

1. Tomb Raider II
2. Final Fantasy VII
3. Rage Racer
4. Bushido Blade
5. Time Crisis
6. Tobal 2
7. Abe's Oddysee
8. TOCA Touring Car Championship
9. Micro Machines V3
10. Soul Blade

OCTOBER



One of the most striking covers ever courtesy of *Rapid Racer*, although sadly the actual game was flawed. No worries though because *Abe's Oddysee* and *F1 '97* grabbed the PLAY Classic awards with both hands whilst being seriously challenged by *Total Drivin'*, *Rosco McQueen*, *Nuclear Strike* and *Moto Racer*. We also looked at *Gex: Enter the Gecko*, *Crash 2* and *Frogger*, whilst the ECTS show in London handed us plenty to talk about and speculate.

THE NEWS IN BRIEF:

• PLAY visits the ECTS show in London's Olympia and brings news of some hot new releases – including *Men In Black* by Gremlin Interactive. The mega-license is due for release in April 1998 and is an isometric adventure game.

• Two games focusing on the Alien license are announced. Both by Fox Interactive, the first was *Alien Resurrection* based on the fourth film starring Sigourney Weaver, and the second was *Aliens Vs Predator*. Fox is also working on an *X-Files* game for Sony.



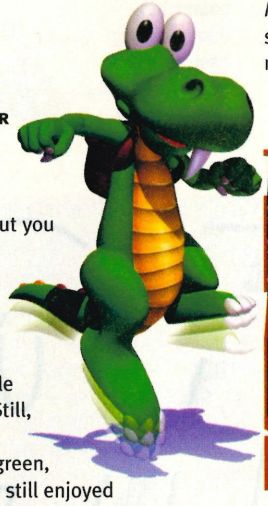
[ABOVE] *Abe's Oddysee* – a truly wonderful game that stodd out in an otherwise unoriginal year!

• Sony announced that they have sold six million PlayStations across Europe. One million of which are in Great Britain alone. This takes the world-wide tally to 19 million. So all raise a glass of champers to Sony's support and clever marketing.

BEST GAME
Abe's Oddysee (90%)

WORST GAME
4-4-2 (57%)

STAR OF OCTOBER
Croc
The game may have been disappointing, but you can't help but feel for the cute star who stops at nothing to battle for his little Gobbo friends. Still, despite everything, the green, bog-eyed reptile still enjoyed a stint at the top of the console charts!



VILLAIN OF THE MONTH
Mr Freeze
We went to see the new *Batman & Robin* game at Probe and were pleasantly surprised at how the project was shaping up, not least the on-screen presence of Mr Freeze (played in the film by Arnold Swarzenegger), who came across as nothing short of, erm, chilling!

NOVEMBER



Codemasters' new racer took the cover. Unfortunately, our original plans to commission the literary talents of TOCA champ, Will Hoy, were scuppered at the 11th hour when his PR executive went on holiday. Arse! However, we did present the very first review of *Final Fantasy VII* – and Graeme was his usual sceptical self. This was also a monster month for PLAY Classics, with *FFVII*, *Nightmare Creatures*, *TOCA*, *MDK* and *Colony Wars* all receiving top honours.



[ABOVE] *Formula One '97* – A corking racing game, but trouble was just around the corner!

THE NEWS IN BRIEF:

• *F1 '97* storms to the top of the console charts becoming the fastest selling PlayStation game in history. However, this is overshadowed by reports from readers that the software is bugged.

• We gave our verdict on the *Resident Evil 2* demo that came free with the *Resident Evil: The Director's Cut* game. It contains about 15 minutes of gameplay and shows

enough to make us believe that the finished result will be nothing short of breath-taking. The duff acting is still there though.



• We reveal Sony's £15 million PlayStation marketing campaign for the forthcoming Christmas period, and also its plans to synonymise the familiar joypad symbols with the system for a subtle, yet greater impact.



[Above] *Final Fantasy VII* – the second-best game of the year in our opinion. Everyone should have it!

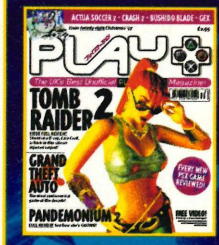
Best Game
Final Fantasy VII (93%)

Worst Game
Wing Over (50%)

Star of November
Cloud Strife
The main character in the long-awaited *Final Fantasy VII* had us captivated all month by leading us into his bizarre world in the greatest adventure game ever devised. Naturally, all of you will be familiar with him by now.

Villain of the month
Scissorman
This was a close call, what with numerous games emerging this month, all with convincing figures of badness. However, Scissorman won because of the sheer B-movie way in which he limped around ASCII's *Clocktower* game; chopping his shears in an intimidating fashion.

DECEMBER



Our original plans to feature an exclusive GTA review and cover were shot down by DMA when it wasn't happy with the copy of the game that we obtained. Fair enough, but is still one of the most exciting and original titles to emerge in '97. *Tomb Raider II*, however, did get the review treatment, and was awarded 95% by Phil King – Editor of PowerStation magazine. He reviewed it because he's doing the tips guide, and so knows it better than probably the programmers themselves! Classics also went to *Broken Sword II* and *Actua Soccer 2*, as the month of the sequel took a hold of us all!



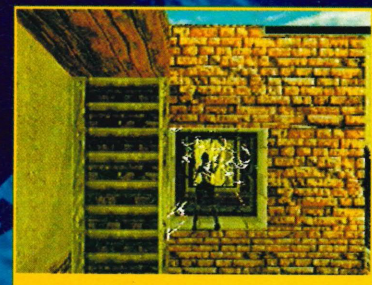
The news in brief:

• The price of the N64 dropped to £99.99 shocker! Sony once again retaliated by introducing the Sony Value Pack – which consisted of a PlayStation, two pads and a memory card for £129.99. However, as the issue went to press, rumours were rife that the PlayStation would also drop in price. But these were denied by Sony, of course.

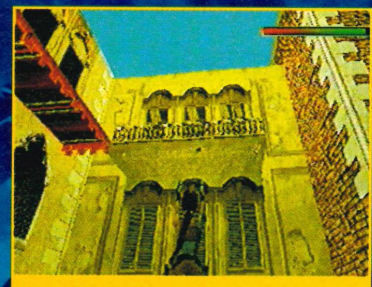
• More problems for *F1 '97* as Psygnosis were drawn into court by the Formula One Administration (FOA) over allegations that the F1 license owned by the developers had expired in September. As a result, all unsold copies of the game are withdrawn pending the outcome.

• News of a Spice Girls game brought much amusement to the office. The game was to be a interactive music experience whereby the player could mix tracks, dress the fab five and even conduct interviews.

Best Game
Tomb Raider II (95%)



[Above] *Tomb Raider II* – what a hell of a year it has been for Lara Croft!



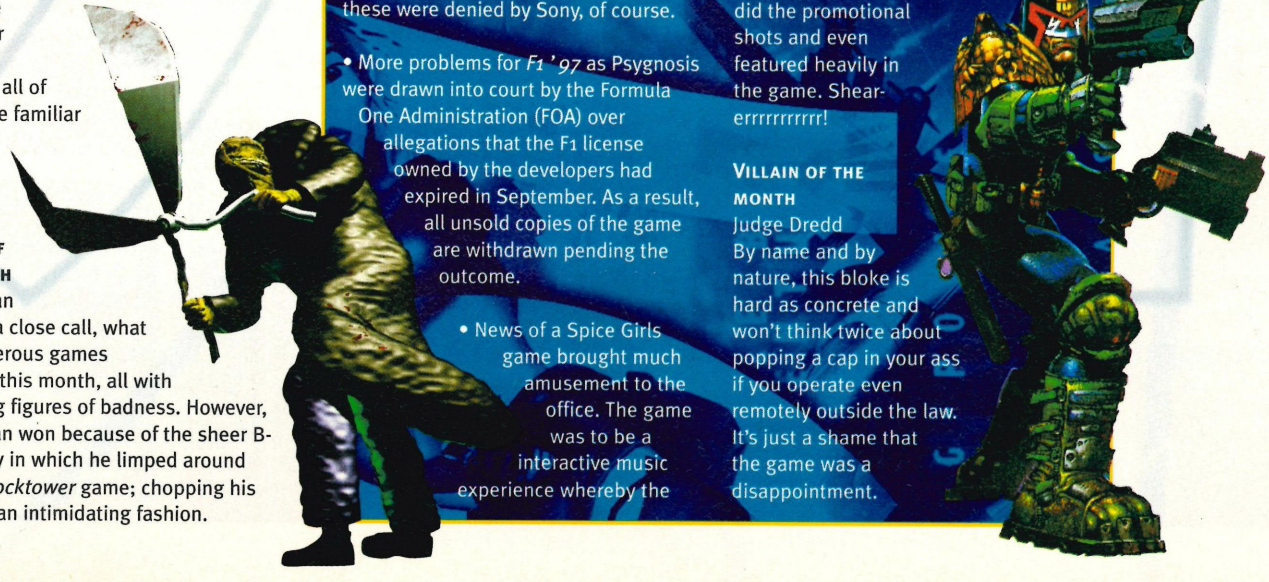
[Above] *Tomb Raider II* – PLAY's greatest game of 1997. Expect it to run and run!

Worst Game
Judge Dredd (62%)



Star of December
Alan Shearer
Actua Soccer 2 arrived, impressed, and was awarded a whopping 90%. It became the best football game on the PlayStation and it was heralded by Alan, who did the promotional shots and even featured heavily in the game. Shear-errrrrrrrrrr!

Villain of the month
Judge Dredd
By name and by nature, this bloke is hard as concrete and won't think twice about popping a cap in your ass if you operate even remotely outside the law. It's just a shame that the game was a disappointment.



THE TOP 10 WORSE GAMES OF 1997

Then of course there are the obligatory duffers, the chronic durge not fit for coasters...

1. The Crow: City of Angels
2. Hexen
3. Hard Boiled
4. Crypt Killer
5. Independence Day
6. Road Rage
7. Rockman Battle & Chase
8. The Incredible Hulk
9. Space Jam
10. Area 51

CIRCUIT B

MICROSCOPIC MOTORS ALWAYS HIT A SOFT SPOT WHEN IT COMES TO RACING GAMES. CAN IT PAY OFF A SECOND TIME FOR THE SUPERSONIC RACERS CREW?

Written By Graeme Nicholson

In the old days, before we had any *Micro Machines* on our PlayStations, *Supersonic Racers* claimed the tiny racing cars genre all for itself. It had a heap of cartoon-like themed tracks, weird vehicles, from submarines, to blimps and all kinds of devious obstacles like ski lifts, rafts and falling bamboo cages to make the journey a treacherous one. The gameplay was fast and fun, especially with anything up to eight players competing by way of two multi-taps.

The second game in the series, previously known as *Supersonic Racers 2XS* but now the rather more clever *Circuit Breakers*, is due in March. But what can it offer now that we've sampled the super-addictive qualities of *Micro Machines V3?* Well, some fine cartoon violence to rival even the hilarious wooden mallets of *MMV3* and a few neat toys.

Blueprint

Publisher: Mindscape
Developer: Supersonic Software
% Complete: 80%
Expected Release Date: March '98
Origin: UK
No of Players: 1-4

"We have spent loads of time making a genuinely 3D environment within which the players can race."

RACE DAY

Classic Wacky Races oil dispensers are available to send the car behind sliding uncontrollably off the cliff, steel spikes protrude from some wheels to aid the shredding of your opponent's tyres, and one car even has huge stereo speakers which blast the other players off the road with pure bass sound! So that's what the lads driving those custom £30,000 low-rider Astras are up to with their ominous techno thumping. They're clearly at war.

Not only is *Circuit Breakers* faster than its predecessor, it gives an altogether more fun ride, with the better use of 3-D. On each of the 32 tracks, the drops are deeper, the jumps higher and barely a moment goes by where you're not scraping along the edge of some cliff, just avoiding falling to a fiery death.

All of these levels are spread over eight different settings in a similar way to the original. The old wild west world makes a cameo appearance, with its red sandstone and shortcut-obstructing cacti, and there's the new highway track complete with dangerous working traffic that you must weave around. For better longevity, *Circuit Breakers* has the commendable feature of tracks which change once you complete them. Finish a championship, go back to an early level and you'll find new passages have opened and extra routes have been added at certain points around the track.

To discover everything *Circuit Breakers* has to offer, we cornered Supersonic Software's lead programmer, Peter Williamson, and asked him some questions:

PLAY: What do you think *Circuit Breakers* has that *Micro Machines V3* and *Motor Mash* are lacking?
PW: "Both *Micro Machines V3* and *Motor Mash*, although displayed in a 3-D manner, have essentially two dimensional gameplay. With *Circuit Breakers* we have spent loads of time making a genuinely 3-D environment within which the players can race.

We also think that *Circuit Breakers* differs from *Micro Machines V3* and *Motor Mash* in the quality of it's one player game. I think that both of these two games are great multi-player games, but perhaps suffer a little in the fun to be had within a single player game."
PLAY: What technical advances have been made since the first game?
PW: "*Supersonic Racers* was a two dimensional racer displayed in a 3-D world. Circuit Breakers action takes place in a genuine 3-D environment which as well as having a dramatic effect on the gameplay looks gorgeous compared to *Supersonic Racers!* We've also spent a lot of time minimising CD loading time."
PLAY: What types of vehicles are available besides the usual cars?



[ABOVE] The Suicide Bomb is bonkers. Set yourself alight and see how many opponents you can take down before the petrol tank blows!



[ABOVE] In *Supersonic Racers*, you simply lost sight of your car when it entered a tunnel. Now the camera pans down with you.



[ABOVE] The Mayan track has some tricky high speed, right-angled corners where you have the chance to make or break your race.

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

POWER EXTREME

NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, THE *CIRCUIT BREAKERS* WEAPONS ARE BIZARRE TO SAY THE LEAST. HERE ARE A FEW THAT THE SUPERSONIC CODING TEAM CAN REVEAL AT THE MOMENT.

SOFTOGRAPHY

SUPERSONIC RACERS

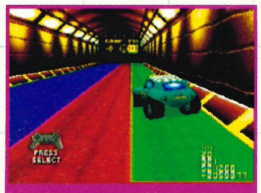
REAKERS



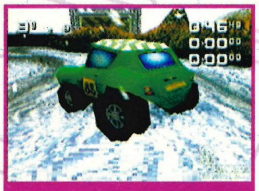
[Above] This is a definite hold-your-breath section. One error left or right can send you into the river!



[Above] Large embankments at the beach let you and the pack belt around bends at full speed.



[Above] The innovative game set-up methods hide loading times very well to give Circuit Breakers that cartridge feel



[Above] Expanding your chassis is bound to frighten the opposition if nothing else!

PW: "We have cars, boats, subs and snow-mobiles. There are two groups of four variations on each of these vehicles and each one is capable of lots of different stunts, so there's plenty of variety."

PLAY: Tell us about the new weapons and devices the characters can use.

PW: "Without giving everything away, we have amongst others: Shrink Car, Monster Car, After-burner turbo boost, Oil Drop, Glue Drop, Smoke Bomb, Fire Bomb, Suicide Bomb and a few more to be discovered as you play."

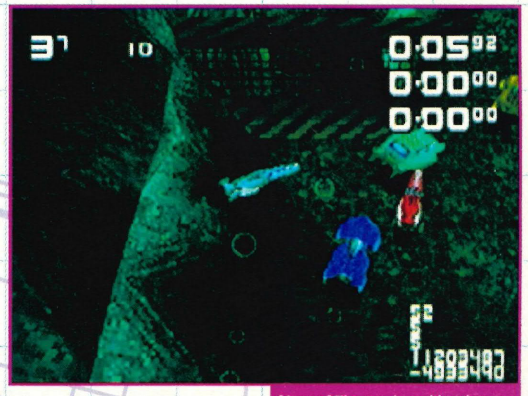
PLAY: Wasn't the game meant to be on the shelves in October? What happened?

PW: "Basically we bit off more than we could chew! When the original deadline for the October release drew near, we sat down with Mindscape and jointly decided that the game had such great potential that it would be a real shame to rush it in the last couple of months to hit a pre-Christmas release date."

PLAY: Give us some clue as to what secrets will be found in the game.

PW: "Firstly, all tracks can be played in reverse. Secondly all tracks can be played in a turbo mode for real experts. For true professionals there are secrets and rewards which allow most courses to be played at night, with only headlights for guidance."

PLAY: Thank you.



[Above] The sea-based levels are back, but the little subs are more detailed and look much better.



SHRINKING YOUR VEHICLE LETS YOU OUT-MANOEUVRE THE OTHER DRIVERS.



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A SUICIDE BOMB HELPS YOU GO OUT IN STYLE, TAKING OTHER PLAYERS WITH YOU!



MONSTER CAR LITERALLY BRINGS YOUR MOTOR CAR TO LIFE IN FRONT OF YOUR EYES!

NEWMAN HAAS

IT LOOKS AS THOUGH PSYGNOSIS HAAS THE RIGHT FORMULA WITH ITS LATEST AND POSSIBLY GREATEST DRIVING GAME TO DATE.



[ABOVE] It's oh so easy to let the back end flip out – especially on grass.



[ABOVE] Touching other cars produces heaps of sparks and gruesome rending metal noises!

"The game will feel better besides looking spectacular. Expect to see disk brakes glowing and motion-captured pit crews performing miracles in under ten seconds..."



SOFTOGRAPHY

NEWMAN HAAS RACING IS STUDIO 33'S FIRST GAME!

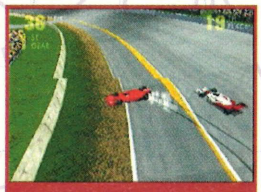
Blueprint

Publisher: Psygnosis
Developer: Studio 33
% Complete: 50%
Expected Release Date: March/April '98
Origin: U.K.
No of Players: 2

RACING

If you're British, you watch Formula 1, if you're American chances are it's Indy Car that gets your juices flowing. The only real differences, other than the slightly different tech-specs and handling, is that most of the races in Indycar take place on giant endurance-testing ovals, similar to those in NASCAR. They love going round and round in circles those Yanks, but luckily quite a few races take place on the more exciting circuits that we're used to witnessing here in Europe.

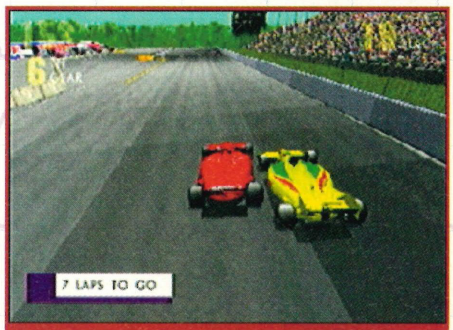
So it was with our company car stuck firmly on left-hand lock that we finally managed to reach the developmental heart of Studio 33 where we cornered them in the pits for all the low-down on this, the second Indycar racer on PlayStation. It's encouraging to note that the developers have gone for the best possible license from the off, by securing a deal with the Newman Haas team with which Nigel Mansell drove so brilliantly in the early Nineties. Classed as a Rookie driver, Nige swept the opposition aside by winning the title in a one year stint, collected a huge wad of cash, and flew home with a big smile on his face.



[Above] Skids on the track and skids in your pants. Either way Newman Haas Racing promises some seat-of-the-pants thrills.



[Above] As you'll appreciate, the graphics are gorgeous. This reverse view from the cockpit captures the chasing pack perfectly.



[Above] You really feel as if you're on the circuit battling it out for dominance. The physics of the cars are great even at this early stage.



[Above] Attention to detail on the cars themselves is quite breath-taking.

Haasta La Vista, baby

With the current team players will be able to control some other famous faces, such as Christian Fittipaldi and Michael Andretti along with the current drop of Indycar protagonists for the '98 season. With the PlayStation racing genre enjoying an abundance of quality, what has Newman Haas got to offer over and above the competition and why should punter part with their hard-earned dosh?



[Above] The external camera produces some brilliant shots of the cars going by.

PlayStation Magazine STARPLAYER 9/10
CVG 4/5
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[Above] There are so many options in *Newman Haas* that you can get dizzy trying to think of how to customise the car.

Well first impressions are very good and what impresses us the most when playing it for the first time are the high resolution graphics – they're gorgeous and they reflect light in real time. Although running a little jerkily in its present half finished form they will move at a very healthy 30 fps in the final version. A link-up version is unlikely to make an appearance as we write, what you can expect is a two player split-screen version, including up to six AI-controlled cars, with a hyper-realistic physics model. Already cars spin, collide, flip up into the air (although not over) and generally smash into trackside obstacles and other cars vary with breath-taking precision. Thank heavens they've included a cockpit view too – from here you can see a full LCD display, which currently looks a wee bit obtrusive on the screen, but will be reduced in size so we've been told.

Indycar Drones

On this display, all of the relevant readouts and general information can be checked, including current lap time, race position, revs and temperature. In this mode, you'll be able to check out how the opposition are doing behind you thanks to the inclusion of two wing mirrors.

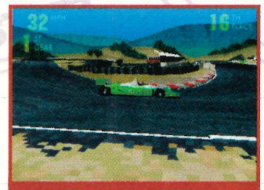
The game engine is instantly recognisable as being that of *Formula 1* (the original), but the handling of the cars is substantially different and includes some brand new features which will keep the punters happy. The game will feel better as well as looking spectacular. Expect to see disk brakes glowing, and motion-captured pit crews performing miracles in under ten seconds. There will be 15 tracks in total – 11 licensed (one test track, one track from 1998 CART season never seen before) consisting of two ovals, five permanent road, four temporary street, and four fantasy tracks.

"The high resolution graphics are gorgeous and they reflect light in real time..."





[Above] There are currently about six views to chhose from. We kinda' like this one.



[Above] Touching other cars produces heaps of sparks and gruesome rending metal noises!

It's a very wise move indeed to keep the number of ovals to an absolute minimum, but equally wise to have included a couple for good measure too. As we all know, the twisty-turny courses of *Formula 1* provide infinitely more challenge and sweaty-palmed excitement than any oval could hope to deliver, regardless of authenticity. Can you imagine driving 200 laps on an oval? No, neither can we!

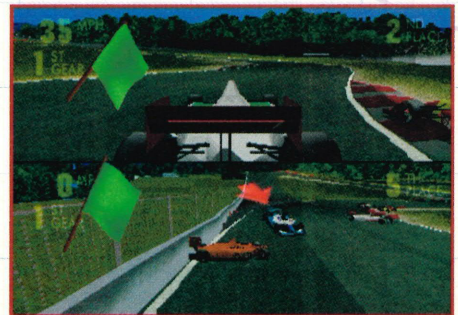
Circuit Training

Player will get to drive at some pretty exotic locations, including The Milwaukee Mile, Houston (new 1998 CART season circuit), Rio, Road America, Laguna Seca and Surfer's Paradise in Australia amongst others, so you can't complain about variety. As far as options are concerned, there'll be Amateur, Rookie, Pro and Hidden Superstar difficulty levels and a full season Championship mode. After each race, the best moments can be enjoyed once more with a replay facility and authenticity levels are kept up courtesy of that American invention Dual commentary. Messieurs Sullivan and Varsha will calling the shots and no doubt telling everybody a few 'humorous' anecdotes to boot.



[Above] Touching other cars produces heaps of sparks and gruesome rending metal noises!

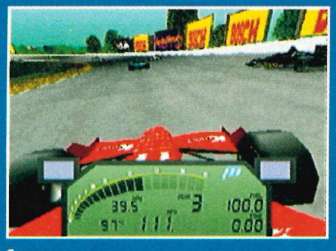
As we've come to expect from other similar racers, there'll be ample opportunity to customise just about any part of the race set-up, including chassis design, brakes, engine and probably underwear style. Add to this a stack of elevated camera views and a special crash camera which captures all of the carnage brilliantly and you can see why we're already pulling on our flame-proof undies in anticipation of *Newman Haas Racing*.



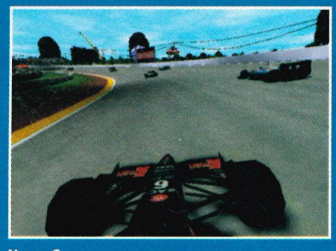
[Above] The split screen action should provide that doubly-enjoyable human-versus-human touch. There's no link-up mode though – shame.

INDY CAM

We hope to see heaps of in-car cameras, out of car, and wherever else they can put them to improve the playability of *Newman Haas* Racing. There are already quite a few, which look excellent already.



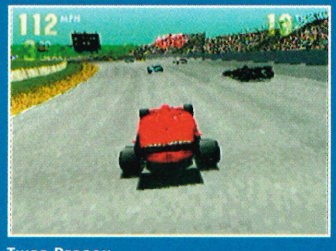
Cockpit



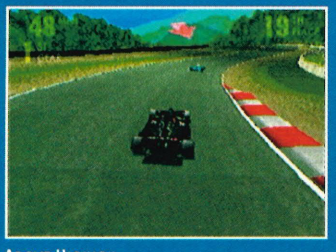
Nose Cam



Directly Behind



Third Person



Above Highish



Above High

EYE FOR AN EYE
TOOTH FOR A TOOTH



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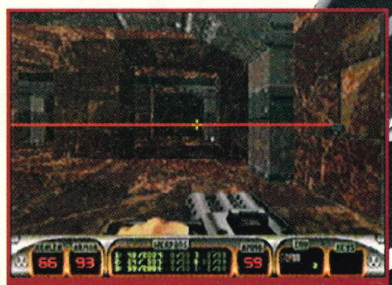
"THE ULTIMATE SHOOT'EM UP"

PLAYSTATION PLUS

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[Above] Watch the gibs fly when you unleash the devastating power of the, er Devastator!



[Above] Laser trip mines. Difficult to see if you're not aware of their presence, deadly nonetheless.

DUKE NUK
TOTAL MELTDOWN

DUKE'S BACK AND THIS TIME HE'S SPITTING BULLETS! HAVE YOU GOT THE BALLS (AND SENSE OF HUMOUR) TO TAKE ON THE SCUM OF THE UNIVERSE IN GT'S LATEST JAUNT?

Written By Tom Sargent

"Damn those alien b*stards are gonna pay for shooting up my ride!" A quote of near Shakespearean stature, and the perfect preamble for a game that shoots first and asks questions later.

Duke Nukem is most famous for being the first game to out-*Doom Doom* on the PC. It added masses of new features to the tired old first person shoot-'em-up formula and proved beyond doubt that there was life in the genre if new ideas were incorporated. The PlayStation version has been a long time coming. It must be getting on for two years since the original PC version caused such a stir.

But the wait is over and sing hosanna, it plays as well as ever and feels just as good thanks to the Dual Analogue controller (bless its cotton socks). The most amazing fact to consider with *Duke*, however, is the way it still holds its own against the likes of *Tenka*, *Exhumed* and *MechWarrior 2*. This is for one simple reason – killer playability.

Hail To The King, Baby!

You only need to pick up the controller and have a cursory run around to realise that you're on to something special here. Put simply, it's bloody good fun, literally! There's more gore and giblets flying here than a particularly busy day at the abattoir, and the action comes thick and fast.

Before we look at some of the reasons why *Duke* has stood the test of time better than most, let's set the scene for this thinking man's blaster. As with every other shoot-'em-up, the plot is ludicrous to the extreme, but who cares – this part is incidental and soon forgotten once the shooting starts.

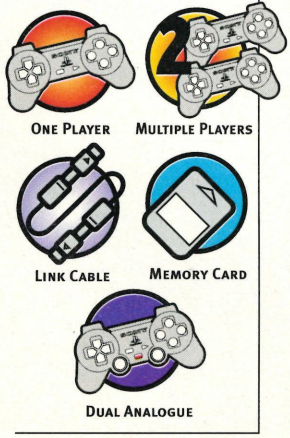
Murderous aliens have arrived in downtown Los Angeles and they've sharpened their knives and forks for a human feast whilst stealing our 'chicks' in the meantime. It's up to you to stop the onslaught against Earth by doing what you do best: kicking alien ass! The most noticeable aspect of the game is the immersive feel of the environment. From the beginning, you feel as though you're part of a dynamic and fully functioning world, thanks to some fantastic earthquake set pieces, where whole chunks of scenery shift; allowing access to new areas and closing off others.

Holy Cow!

The best part is you never know when one is about to happen,

PLAY Information

Publisher: GT Interactive
Customer support: 0171 258 3791
Price: £39.99
Release date: Out now!





[Above] Ah, the mighty boot. A last resort defence, but makes quite a satisfying crunch on contact.



[Above] Blow alien heads off thanks to the trusty shotgun and listen to them scream in pain!



[Above] Lobbing pipe bombs clears out the most stubborn adversaries in one go.

3D REALMS

EM:

PLAY CLASSIC

"More fun than pulling the legs off a daddy-long-legs.."



[Above] The best way to deal with these murdering swine is to get in early with the chaingun or the shotgun. Between shots duck behind the nearby scenery or strafe.



[Above] A homing drone is destroyed just before it self-detonates in your face.



[Above] Eat Uzi-pepper alien pig! Ahem, the chaingun cuts through enemies like a 'cutty' thing.

DUCK, BLAST-'EM



PISTOL – Rapid fire, inflicting normal damage.
AMMO – Packs contain 12 rounds and you can carry a maximum of 200 shells.



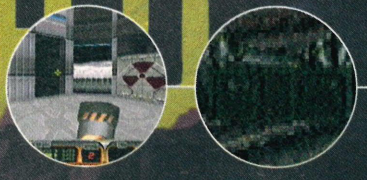
SHOTGUN – Far more powerful than a pistol at close range.
AMMO – Packs contain ten rounds and you can carry a maximum of 50 shells.



CHAINGUN – A great weapon for taking out multiple enemies at once.
AMMO – Packs contain 50 rounds and you can carry a maximum of 200 shells.



ROCKET PROPELLED GRENADE (RPG) – Superb at long range. Carefull, it can hurt Duke.
AMMO – Packs contain five rockets and you can carry a maximum of five rockets.



PIPE BOMB – Excellent for setting traps. After chucking a bomb(s).
AMMO – Packs contain five bombs and you can carry a maximum of 50 pipe bombs.



DEVASTATOR – Launches loads of stinger missiles in the direction of enemies.
AMMO – Packs contain 50 rockets and you can carry a maximum of 99.



TRIPBOMB – After a two second delay a red beam is emitted across to the opposite wall. Crossing the beam sets off a huge explosion.



FREEZETHROWER – Streams of charged molecular discharges fly everywhere.
FREEZETHROWER AMMO – Comes loaded with 50 shots and the maximum shots is 99.

WHAT A PERFORMANCE

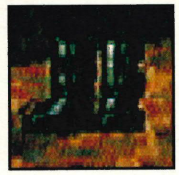
THANKS TO A PLETHORA OF HANDY PERFORMANCE-ENHANCING PICK-UPS, DUKE CAN STRUT AROUND SAFE IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT ALTHOUGH THE ODDS ARE AGAINST HIM, HE HAS THE EDGE OVER MOST ENEMIES. EVERY PICK-UP IS ESSENTIAL AT ONE STAGE OR ANOTHER, SO GRAB 'EM ALL.



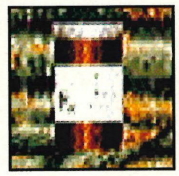
JETPACK. TURN IT ON, USE THE JUMP AND DUCK BUTTONS TO RISE AND LOWER, THEN TURN IT OFF. WORKS ON A PERCENTAGE BASIS



NIGHT VISION GOGGLES. TURN 'EM ON AND EVERYTHING GOES A BRIGHT GREENISH HUE AND ENEMIES GLOW.



PROTECTIVE BOOTS. AUTOMATICALLY PROTECTS DUKE WHEN HE'S STANDING IN TOXIC, HOT, OR HARMFUL SURFACES.



STEROIDS. PUMPS UP YOUR ADRENALINE GLANDS; MAKING DUKE MOVE QUICKER AND DISH OUT STRONGER KICKS.



SCUBA GEAR. PROVIDES AIR FOR A LENGTHY PERIOD OF TIME IN AREAS WHERE HOLDING YOUR BREATH ISN'T ENOUGH.



KEYCARD. DOORS INTO CERTAIN REGIONS OF THE WORLD ARE PROTECTED BY COLOUR-CODED SECURITY LOCKS.

10 COOL DUKE QUOTES

DUKE'S ONE-LINERS GIVE BRUCE CAMPBELL FROM THE EVIL DEAD SERIES A RUN FOR THEIR MONEY. HERE'S A FEW OF OUR FAVOURITES.

1. SHAKE IT BABY!
2. HMM, DON'T HAVE TIME TO PLAY WITH MYSELF.
3. WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR, CHRISTMAS?
4. DO YOU WANNA DANCE?
5. AHH, THAT'S BETTER!
6. GONNA RIP 'EM A NEW ONE!
7. HAIL TO THE KING BABY!
8. GONNA RIP OFF HIS HEAD AND SHIT DOWN HIS NECK!
9. COME GET SOME!
10. HOLY COW!



but when it does, the whole screen shakes and pieces of rubble and debris fly everywhere. The interaction doesn't stop here though and nearly every area you visit is crammed with breakable objects and secret areas meaning you can take time to explore every little nook and cranny if you so desire.

That's the beauty of *Duke*, you can treat the whole game in one of two ways – blast everything in your path and get to end of the level as quickly as possible in record-breaking time, or break up the intense blasting action to discover some of the game's more exploratory elements.

As there is no time limit, we think the best way to play is to (obviously) shoot the living crud out of anything and everything that moves, while taking time to find all the secrets. This way, you always increase your inventory with all kinds of useful items, and more importantly, hyper-destructive weapons. There are many weapons you can have in your arsenal, each one is useful for different reasons. Once you've picked them up they stay with you. The only thing you must be aware of is your ammo count – don't waste it by liberally spraying everything in bullets unless you have to. Each weapon requires different ammo (see boxout for full details) and some are better than others in certain situations.



[ABOVE] By looking up or down you can take out wall-mounted guns with two shakes of a lamb's tail... or a shotgun. Lock 'n' load...



[ABOVE] On this level, half of the city is flooded. You have to mix all kinds of diving, jumping and breath-holding skills to get through.

LET'S ROCK!

You begin with a measly pistol, but before long you'll find the shotgun and chaingun, which are excellent for making a mess at short range. For those memorable long-range 'exploding torso' moments the rocket-propelled grenade launcher, or RPG as it's affectionately known, will make you howl with delight as another unfortunate victim paints the town red. There's something for everyone weapon-wise, including the mouth-watering Pipe Bombs and Tripbombs. Those of you who are familiar with the antiquated game *Spy Versus Spy* on the Commodore 64 will know what we're on about here. Setting up wall-mounted Tripbombs for enemies to run blindly into is both sneaky and heinously enjoyable.

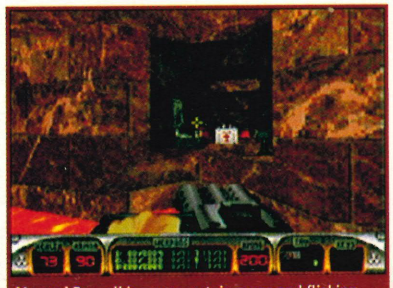
The world of Mr Nukem is also littered with a huge array of useful items and accessories, some of which are used the moment they're touched, and others are placed directly into your inventory for use later on. Among an impressive range are: medkits, armour, jetpack, night vision goggles and protective boots. Duke can even swim underwater, thanks to an aqualung (or a deep breath if you haven't



[ABOVE] These sociable slimeballs slink along ceilings and walls in an attempt to bite off your face! The pistol is enough to dispense with them.



[ABOVE] How could we omit the 'chicks'. The only way to save them is to blow their brains out. Oh, go on then.



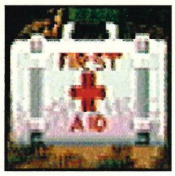
[ABOVE] By walking over certain areas and flicking switches you can activate secret panels stuffed full of goodies.



[ABOVE] These Octabrains are buggers to kill because you've got to avoid their telepathic mind-f*** projectile.



SMALL MEDKIT. As it sounds – adds ten percent to your health. Look out for the 30 percent medkit too.



PORTABLE MEDKIT. Take health with you and use it only when you really need it – 100 percent's worth. Very useful.



ATOMIC HEALTH. Boosts Duke's flagging energy by 50 whole percent. Grab 'em whenever you can.



ARMOUR. Duke suffers less damage from attacks when wearing armour. Needs replacing as you take damage.

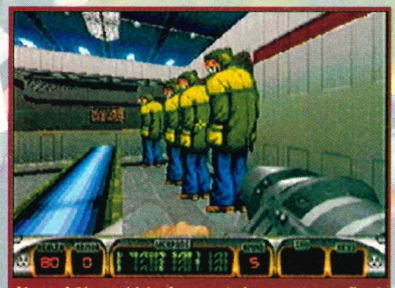


found it on the current level). Besides the slightly disappointing graphics and awfully blocky sprites, there are so many positive nuances to the playing experience, it's hard to criticise the game without being overly fussy.

Heh, Heh...What a mess!

One complaint is that the game runs a little too quickly at times, especially when negotiating narrow ledges and other tricky pieces of scenery. It's in the superlative attention to detail that makes *Duke Nukem* such a joy to play, though. The list of cool touches is impressive to say the least. His sense of humour is wicked, uncompromising and very funny and the funky soundtrack adds greatly to the atmosphere. During each fire-fight, you can make use of you immediate surroundings, which we highly recommend because most of the aliens generally need a few bullets to take them out. You can even take time out to have a leak, kill baddies who are doing the same and destroy the toilets themselves to reveal energy regaining fountains of water.

Duke Nukem is a truly first rate shoot-'em-up, and that it runs too fast is a testament to the programming prowess on offer. As Duke himself will tell the competition "Come get some!" More fun than pulling the legs off a daddy-long-legs, especially in the two player link-up mode. Buy it now.



[Above] Okay, which of you anoraks wants some first?

"Shoot the living crud out of anything and everything that moves, while taking time to find all the secrets..."



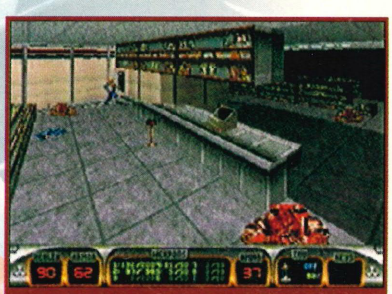
[Above] Sometimes, the crafty alien beggars fly around in little buggies. A couple of shots soon knocks them out of the air.

KICK HIS ICE

Pepper your opponent with ice shards to freeze him. But here's the best bit, to finish him off kick him into a thousand tiny pieces. (N)ice.







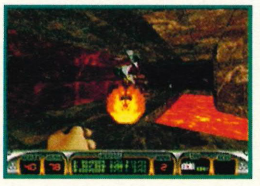
[Above] At various points, you can access hidden cameras to suss out new areas. From here, you can see where the alien nuggets are hiding too.

PIPE SMOKIN'

The pipebomb is unbelievable fun to use. Just chuck one (or two or three) and detonate them whenever you want. What a mess!











FIFA: ROAD TO WORLD CUP 98

Written by Ryan Butt

THE LATEST AND MOST IMPORTANT FIFA GAME EMERGES, WITH SO MUCH AT STAKE, EA HAD BETTER GET IT RIGHT THIS TIME!

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: EA
Customer support: 01753 549442
Price: £44.99
Release date: Out now



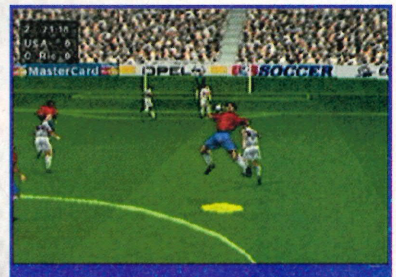
PLAY CLASSIC

- An amazing transformation has taken place. Two months ago, we would have dismissed *FIFA: Road to World Cup 98* as being another turd in the stagnant cess-pit of a wasted license. But a lot can happen in two months, and this game has pulled off the biggest turn around – from being deflated bladder to championship material, this reviewer can remember.

FIFA 98 has all the hallmarks of a potential classic – just like the previous games, but this time the gameplay has been so greatly enhanced that the stigma and access baggage that have laden this game down from birth has been ...nquished – leaving, what is in our ...ion, the best football game the PlayStation has seen!

ROUTE ONE

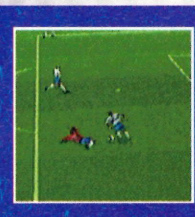
Of course, you won't believe this until you play it, but even at the start you'll notice that this game is instantly more accessible than its predecessors, and the wealth of options can be by-passed in an instant (to be returned to later) enabling you to get straight in kicking a ball around and grasping the controls. The most striking aspect of the game are the graphics. The players themselves are a lot better defined, and the improved flow of the game ensures



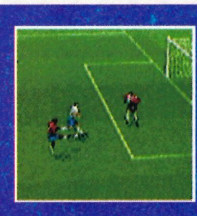
[ABOVE] High balls can be automatically controlled by the nearest player by jumping and chesting it to the their feet.

WANCHOPE CHIP!

HERE IS BUT ONE OF THE MANY GREAT GOALS YOU CAN SLOT AWAY IN *FIFA 98*. ATTEMPTING TO GUIDE COSTA RICA THROUGH TO THE FINALS, A CERTAIN PAULO WANCHOPE OF DERBY COUNTY FC TRIES TO GO IT ALONE AGAINST THE KEEPER...



1. HE WINS THE BALL WITH A CRUNCHING TACKLE AFTER THE DEFENDER FAILED TO CLEAR.



2. SEEING THE GOALIE STRANDED IN NO-MAN'S-LAND, PAULO CHIPS AN INTRICATE LOB.

that the intricate motion capture can now be fully appreciated without the 'running-through-quicksand' feel leaving vital frames of animation overlooked. Although most of the players sport Cliff Bastin haircuts, the attention to detail is superb, right down to the pained expression on the goalie's face when he lets one slip in. The pitch action can be viewed from any viewpoint you'd care to mention, including the conventional isometric camera from FIFA games gone by, to the new ball cam, which zooms right in on the action. Sadly the game is bloody hard to combat from this perspective.

Unlike *Actua Soccer 2*, the speed of FIFA is more on par with the real life sport; meaning that you can plan the build-up to each attack a lot easier and pass the ball around nicely without being scythed down the moment it touches your foot. Naturally, this approach makes for some spectacular goals – from Beckham specials to screaming Shearer volleys! The control system allows you to pass, shoot, chip and run with the conventional buttons, but for more experienced players, the shoulder buttons come into effect to trigger intricate on-the-ball skills and step-overs, plus the through-balls that are so essential in today's game.

What with the shooting being the most important part of the game, three different types of shot can be accessed here by the way in which you press the button. It's jab for a driving low shot. Hold it down for a powerful bullet, and double-tap for a lob. It's easy to forget yourself in the heat of the moment and frantically press the button for a random effect, but it's best mastered for devilish accuracy!

There was never any faulting the presentation of the *FIFA* games, and this version ups the hype for the build-up to the World Cup finals by including FMV footage from each city where the matches are held. Fabulous audio treats in the form of spot-on commentary by Des Lynam, John Motson and Andy Gray, plus the pounding get-up-and-jump music of Blur's 'Song 2' sets your pulse racing.

Crowning glory!

Although the way *Actua Soccer 2* and *FIFA 98* play are radically different, we favour this simulation approach more, as opposed to the all-out arcade dash around like a doped-up Maradonna seen in *Actua 2*. This isn't as easy to pick up and play, sure, but perseverance and a session on the training pitch soon irons out any grievances you may initially have. The area where this game most towers over *Actua 2* is in the sheer depth, and it is this element that will keep you coming back to this ages after its rivals have been put down.



3. Inevitably, the ball sails into an open net, and the Costa Ricans are well on the way!



[Above] The tackles are particularly nasty. Time them wrong and you could be sent to prison!



[Above] See the fine detail as this Blackburn player attempts a Sinclair overhead spectacular. It went in by the way!

Being able to steer any International side from the qualifying stages to the finals is good and long lasting enough, but to control your favourite club team and carry them forth to honours in the Premiership is an added bonus. The teams are fully up-to-date, and although the players may only bear a squinty resemblance to the actual stars, their names and stats remain intact.

Right, so you've got a game that plays brilliantly (after you get the hang of it), and with plenty of competitions to engage in, but then there is the managerial aspect. *FIFA 98* lets you do more or less anything you want – from buying and selling players from all over the world, to giving your team a stern talking to in the dressing room at half-time, and upping their aggression factor to encourage them to get out there and do it!

Believe us when we say that this has got more replay value than *Actua Soccer 2*. We played that to death, and we've played this too, and this is the one that we kept coming back to.

So, a triumph at last for *FIFA* and although its hurts to see a game as polished as *Actua Soccer 2* lose in the final, the possession and the most chances on target fell to *FIFA 98* – the deserved winners of the most coveted prize of all!

"This has got much more replay value than *Actua Soccer 2*..."



[Above] A stern talking to, or the tweak of the meters, will ensure that your players are well up for it in the second half!







[Above] A spot kick is conceded, but has he the nerve to slot it away? Inevitably, he does. Arse!

PLAY

Looks	9
Sounds	9
Gameplay	9
Value	8
Presentation	9

PLAYED 91%

The best all-round football game yet!

Alternatively:
Actua Soccer 2 (90%)
FIFA '97 (70%)

Written By Graeme Nicholson

MORTAL KOMBAT MYTHOLOGIES: SUB ZERO

FROSTY NINJA SUB ZERO TAKES THE STARRING ROLE IN THE LATEST MORTAL KOMBAT INSTALMENT FOR SOME MASS MONK MURDER!



What the hell's going on?

Released in between the last 2-D title in the series (*Mortal Kombat 3*) and the first to make use of full 3-D graphics and movement *Tekken*-style (*Mortal Kombat 4*) is this oddity, *Mortal Kombat Mythologies: Sub Zero*. Using the classic *Mortal Kombat* fighting system, it lets you break out of the usual confined beat-'em-up arena and take to the ledges, buildings, and bosses of a side-scrolling platform game. As if this wasn't a weird enough idea for one of the world's best known one-on-one fighting series, there are also very basic RPG elements included. RPG? Is *Mortal Kombat* going soft? Absolutely not.

MK Mythologies is terrifically tough and it's filled with the endless pints of blood that drew in the audience of the earlier *Kombat* games who were looking for something more sick and unholy than *Street Fighter II*. Whether it's someone hacking into your torso with an axe, being crushed to a fine puree under a falling weight, or becoming totally impaled on a dirty spike, there will be spurting blood with every injury!



[ABOVE] Long time Sub Zero adversary Scorpion makes a cameo appearance, with the objective of keeping you away from the next level.



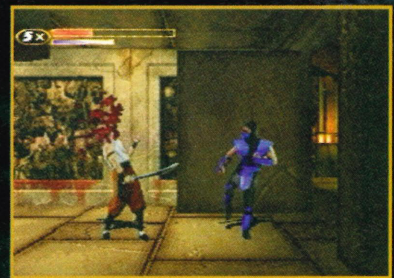
SUBSONIC

However, a less fortunate *Mortal Kombat* signature that is obvious throughout *Mythologies* is the patchy look of the characters. *Sub Zero* himself and every other humanoid person look like they were once photographs of real people that have been so compressed and robbed of any depth of colour. Now they resemble cut-outs from a cheap newspaper. Even with this



[ABOVE] The huge stone monster will be the cause of your death many times until you realise how to drop a great lump of stone on its head.

"It's filled with endless pints of blood!"



[ABOVE] If you time it right you can kick the monks under the crushing pillars before setting them off! Monk paté!

PLAY INFORMATION

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

ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD

KRAP AKTING

MANY YARDS OF PLASTIC SHEETING, PROTECTIVE BIKE GEAR FROM HALFORDS AND AWFUL ACTING MAKE THE FMV SCENES IN *MK MYTHOLOGY* RIVAL EVEN THE CHEAPEST, MOST FOREIGN CABLE TV. THERE'S HOURS OF THE STUFF BETWEEN LEVELS, BUT WORST OF ALL HAS TO BE THE AWFUL BLUE SCREEN SEQUENCE OF SUB ZERO 'FALLING' INTO THE 'CLOUDS' EVERY TIME YOU SLIP OFF AN OUTSIDE PLATFORM.



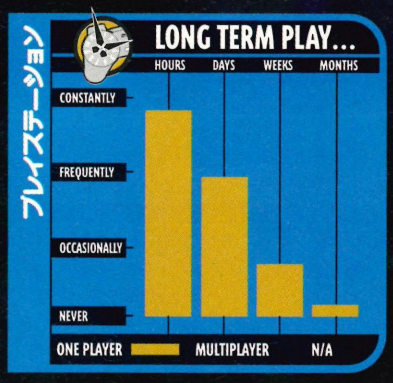






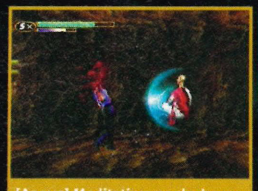


[ABOVE] Subsy, as he is known in *Mortal Kombat* circles, remains supple and agile even being continually beaten up since MK1.









[ABOVE] Meditating monks hover through the mine in electric spheres, zapping your head with the odd 3,000 volt beam.

B-movie appearance, there is still some great satisfaction to be gleaned from spin-kicking a crazy bald monk off of a ledge so high you don't hear him hit the ground. The animation is of fairly low quality too, but all the same the game can be strangely addictive.

The number of ways you can die in *MK Mythologies* is almost infinite and most are as wonderfully tasteless as the famous "Fatalities" from the earlier beat-'em-ups in the series. You get to see these gruesome ends to your life so often because this game is so terribly sadistic. You are not so much harmed, as brutally assaulted by the deviously designed scenery.

SUBVERSIVE

There are the usual shaky platforms that collapse under your weight and deep pits to fall into, but it never ceases to amaze how you often find your life in danger. On picking up one key, for example, in a mountain retreat, a giant fan switches on at the end of the room and sucks you flailing into its slicing blades! Electric eels fry you in the water, earthquakes crack open the ground beneath your feet, spring-loaded plates squash you to a mere red puddle, and the entire time there are monks coming at you with deadly weapons. Even on the lowest of five difficulty settings, *Mythologies* presents an awesome challenge.

Strutting around in your ski mask and Joan Collins shoulder pads, the action may pause for a second while you devour some herbs from your inventory to replenish health, or read a handy hint from a stone tablet you've found. With the more experience points you amass from using combos on your enemies, you gain special moves one at a time, along with instructions on how to perform them. The crippling ice blast move becomes invaluable.

Fun and amusing as it is, the poor production quality means that this game can only really be appreciated by true *Mortal Kombat* devotees who love the video-nasty atmosphere but know what to expect in terms of graphics – not much! If this isn't you, *Mythologies* will almost certainly be disappointing and there are several better presented new platformers available.



[ABOVE] The large axes are capable of liquidising you in a single swoop, and you'd better watch for spontaneous holes in the ground too.



[ABOVE] The old uppercut still works, and it's very effective for dispensing these sword-wielding maniacs.



PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●○○○○○
SOUNDS	●●●●●●●○○○
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●○○○○○
VALUE	●●●●○○○○○○
FATALITIES	●●●●●●●●●●

PLAYED 71%

Blood-soaked, but mundane platformer.

ALTERNATIVELY:
MORTAL KOMBAT TRILOGY (92%)
DRACULA X (84%)

DRAGON BALL Z GT: FINAL BOUT

IT HAD TO HAPPEN SOONER OR LATER, A REAL TURKEY AMIDST THE RECENT GLUT OF EXCEPTIONAL BEAT-'EM-UPS. ENTER DRAGON BALL...

"Characters move around the screen like a snail with gout..."

There's no other people on Earth who go quite as crazy as the Japanese when it comes to game-related fads. They're just mad about milking characters for all they're worth, and the Dragon Ball series is no exception. The fact that there's a bloody great anime cartoon with token cheesy song slapped on only serves to whip up fans expectations into a frenzy.

And how disappointed they'll be, for nothing can disguise the fact that *Dragon Ball GT* is utter pants, or 'Trunks', as one of the characters is called! What we have here is a 3-D fighting game of sorts, with ten characters who posses the ability to summon up mediocre fireballs, hover around unconvincingly, and move around the screen like a snail with gout.

Graphically, it's a real mixed bag. The fighters themselves have been rendered in high resolution and match the animated series' artwork. Some of the animation is reasonably smooth, but when they perform various gymnastic attacks, their general lethargy and jerky movement brings any semblance of gameplay to its knees.

SPINNING BERK KICK

The sad fact is that, although conceptually the game should provide at least a modicum of entertainment: hovering in the air (which looks daft after you've stopped moving), punching, kicking, exchanging projectile weapons and the token 'super' moves), somehow all these promising elements fail to gel into an exciting battle. To be fair, some of the 'beam' attacks are pretty good fun, especially when you both let one loose simultaneously; resulting in a projectile collision. The usual Versus, Tournament, Fighting and Training rules apply in the options screen, including a Special Tournament, where up to eight players can compete, but not on screen at the same time. It's the culmination of atrocious gameplay and a lack of variety in the character moves which puts you off initially, but the most thunderously anger-inducing aspect of every fight is the way the game annoyingly pauses whenever a special energy blast is activated, supposedly to give the other player a chance to counter.

With so many other quality beat-'em-ups to choose from, you'd have to a die-hard fan, crazy (perhaps the same thing) or both to buy this. Let's hope that this is the Final Bout.



[ABOVE] Exchanging projectile attacks is probably the best form of attack.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: BANDAI
Customer support: Video Game Centre on 01202 527314
Price: £49.99
Release date: Out Now (import)


ONE PLAYER MULTIPLE PLAYERS


MEMORY CARD



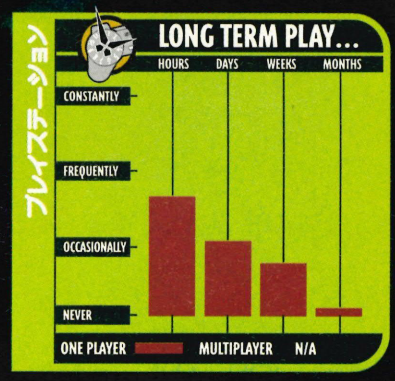
[ABOVE] Besides fighting in the more traditional way on the ground, players can take to the skies and exchange aerial attacks. Wow.



[ABOVE] Recharge your power bar by pressing two buttons together.



[ABOVE] It may look bizarre, but players can take to the skies and battle it out similarly to Psychic Force.



PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●●●●●●
SOUNDS	●●●●●●●●●●
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●●●●●
VALUE	●●●●●●●●●●
BALLZ	●●●●●●●●●●

PLAYED 39%

Dismal beat-'em-up. Don't buy it.

ALTERNATIVELY:
FIGHTING FORCE (89%)
TOBAL 2 (92%)

Written by Tom Sargent

WING OVER

"The Best PlayStation Arcade Flying Game Yet!"
90% TOTAL PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE



Special Launch Price £39.99



30 totally realistic fighter planes. Each a detailed copy of actual aircraft from WW1 to the Gulf War...

2 player modes using Sony Link Cable...

4 Modes of play - Tournament, Free Play, Survival and V's Mode...

Fully textured mapped polygon graphics. Varied real time 3D imaging locale with real world weather climates and flying conditions...

Compatible with Sony Analogue Joystick...

Upgrade options include Night Vision, Advanced Radar, Onboard Computer, Long Range Heat Seeking Missiles, Modified Body Kits etc...

3 View Points - First Person, Panoramic Camera and Trailing Camera...

On Sale Oct'97

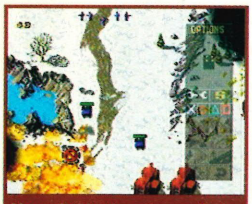
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COMMAND & CON

CRUSH YOUR ENEMIES BY LAND, SEA AND AIR IN WESTWOOD'S SUPERB REAL-TIME SEQUEL TO *COMMAND AND CONQUER*. THE WAIT FOR A MOUSE-DRIVEN WAR GAME IS FINALLY OVER!

Written By Tom Sargent

There aren't enough hours in the day to play *Command & Conquer: Red Alert*. Once you pick up the mouse (yes, Westwood remembered it this time!), you may as well wave goodbye to any semblance of a social life you imagined you ever had, because it'll leave you bleary-eyed and begging for more – it's *that* addictive!



[Above] Ahh, I love the smell of napalm in the morning!

The most important thing to remember is that the game is now link cable compatible and boasts a mouse option. This is very, very good news. But hold your horses, there's no mid-battle save option which brought such welcome relief (and the chance to experiment with suicide tactics) on the PC version. Two out of three 'aint bad as the saying goes, but as with last year's pretty groovy *Command & Conquer*, you'll be burning the midnight oil wading through each of the 28 missions.

For those of you who have had your heads buried in the sand for the last year or so, *Red Alert* is a real-time strategy game where you control either Allied or Soviet forces and battle for supremacy on some superbly designed maps. In a typical mission, you'll need to create and manage bases by mining resources,



[Above] *Red Alert* uses the now familiar fog of war to unfold the surrounding scenery, and very well it works too.

building different structures and vehicles and training personnel. How does it differ and improve on the first game though?

AFFIRMATIVE!

Visually, it's basically the same game: men run around looking more like extras from the *Rocky Horror Picture Show* performing amusing and varied animations. If you bought C&C, you'll recognise the Tiberium harvesters straight away, and typically missions begin with a construction yard to get things going – although sometimes you have to capture one from the enemy.

With regard to ground units, the engineers have probably been altered the most, because in *Red Alert*, to capture a building it must be weakened by weapon assaults first. You can always opt to sell captured buildings without repairing them for half the construction price of course.

Both air power and ships play more than a token part as well, and consequently a whole new range of

PLAY INFORMATION

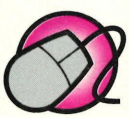
Publisher: Virgin US
Customer support: The Video Game Centre on 01202 527314
Price: £59.99
Release date: Out Now (Import)



ONE PLAYER



MULTIPLE PLAYERS



MOUSE



LINK CABLE



[Above] Build as many planes as your budget allows, as they provide excellent covering fire.

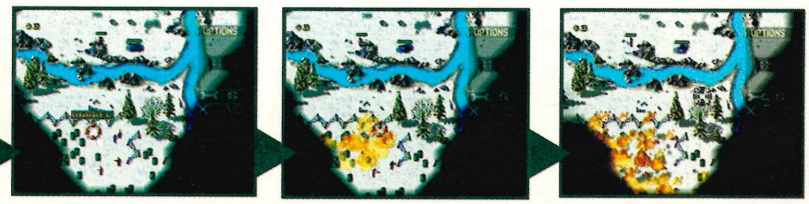


[Above] At the start of Allied mission 2, you can wait for reinforcements, or head off to battle.

"There aren't enough hours in the day to play *Command and Conquer: Red Alert*..."

IN THE MIDDLE OF A CHAIN REACTION

THIS IS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE, THERE ARE SOME ENEMY TROOPS STOOD (STUPIDLY) AMONGST A LOAD OF OIL DRUMS. LET ME THINK...

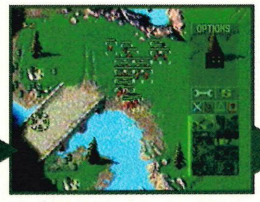


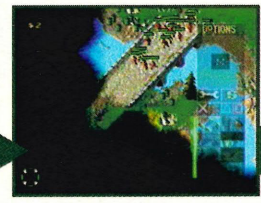
QUER: RED ALERT

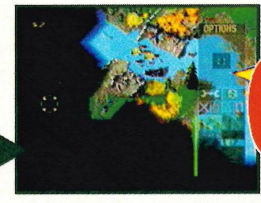
PLAY CLASSIC

BIG BOOBIES

YOU'VE AMASSED A HUGE GROUP OF MEN, AND THERE'S A BRIDGE TO CROSS AHEAD. LOOKS INNOCUOUS ENOUGH... WRONG, IT'S BOOBY-TRAPPED!









[ABOVE] From here, you must build a Tiberium harvester, which will keep the cash pouring in and subsequently boost the size and effectiveness of your forces.



[ABOVE] To group select your troops or transports, simply hold down the left mouse button and drag a box around them.

POINTING THE WAY

DIFFERENT ACTIONS ARE DEPICTED BY THE MAIN CURSOR ON-SCREEN. HERE'S THE LOW-DOWN ON HOW TO USE THEM.



THIS ICON IS DISPLAYED WHEN YOU MOVE AROUND THE MAP IN GENERAL.



YOU CAN'T MOVE ANY UNITS TO THIS PARTICULAR AREA, USUALLY TREES OR ROCKS.



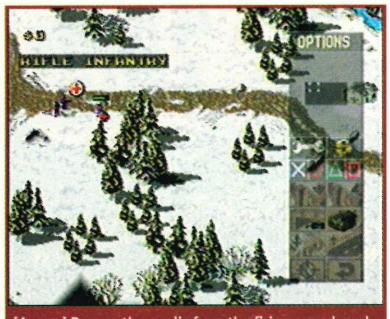
THIS TARGETING ICON APPEARS WHEN PLACED OVER ENEMY TROOPS OR VEHICLES.



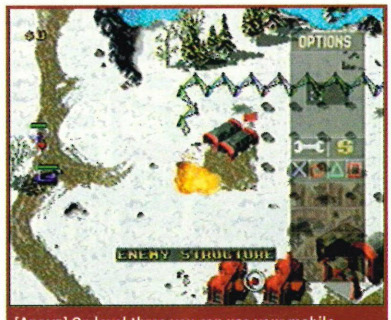
THIS APPEARS WHEN YOU PLACE THE ON-SCREEN CURSOR OVER AN OBJECT.



[ABOVE] Mobilise your planes ASAP, as they are absolutely devastating at taking out targets.



[ABOVE] Rescue the medic from the firing squad, and he'll happily heal your wounds but not his own ironically.



[ABOVE] On level three you can use your mobile artillery (that's a tank to you and me) to knock out the bloody annoying Flame Thrower.



tactics, usually protecting or providing cover for transports, need to be adhered to. Building airfields allows the construction of planes, paratroopers (effective as decoys and dropping behind enemy lines) and parabombs (cluster bombs used to take out bunkers and turrets).

Red Alert uses the now familiar 'fog of war technique' as seen in *Warcraft II* and more recently *Z*, which keeps the battle area covered until you walk over it. This keeps your troops on their toes, as the threat of a surprise attack is constant.

LET'S ROCK!

It's not unusual to discover that the prime spot to harvest Tiberium is precisely where the enemy hoards are massing. If you thought that the enemy units in the first game were tough, you're in for a shock this time – they're meaner and shrewder than ever before, using pincer movements and deploying troops to reinforce and sabotage attacks. In addition to mission play, there's a Skirmish mode where you can take on up to three different CPU-controlled adversaries, and in link mode, there are 20 different terrains and five armies – England, Germany, Russia, Ukraine and France.

The variety between levels, and tactics needed to win is *Red Alert*'s most attractive selling point. At no time do you feel that you've learnt everything, and consequently it keeps you interested. It's essentially a mineral collecting, base establishing, wear the opposition down type of game, with suicidal commando missions thrown in for good measure, but there's currently nothing on the PSX that comes even close to the quality of gameplay on offer here.







PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●●○○○○
SOUNDS	●●●●●●●●○○
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●●●●○
VALUE	●●●●●●●●●○
MISSIONS	●●●●●●●●●○

PLAYED 90%

The last word in real-time war games. Outstanding!

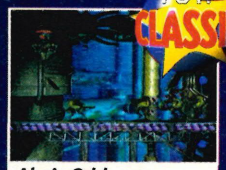
ALTERNATIVELY:
COMMAND & CONQUER (79%)
WARCRAFT 2: THE DARK SAGA (86%)

SUBSCRI P

AND CHOOSE FROM ONE OF THESE GAMES!



Fighting Force – rated 89% in PLAY!



Abe's Oddysee – rated 90% in PLAY!



Formula 1 '97 – rated 90% in PLAY!



Tomb Raider II – rated 95% in PLAY!



MDK – rated 90% in PLAY!



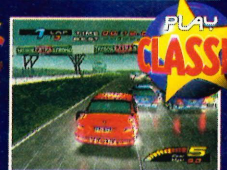
Time Crisis (+ gun) – rated 90% in PLAY!



Final Fantasy VII – rated 93% in PLAY!



Colony Wars – rated 92% in PLAY!



Touring Car – rated 92% in PLAY!



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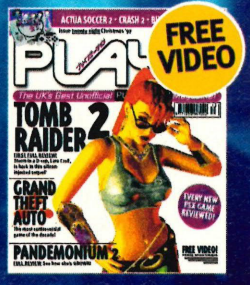
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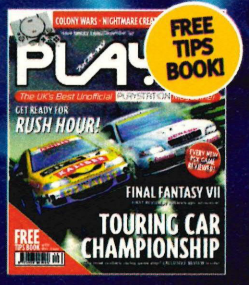
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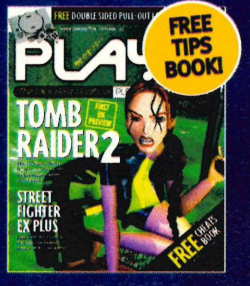
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First review of *Tomb Raider II*, plus *Actua Soccer 2, Grand Theft Auto, Broken Sword II!*



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



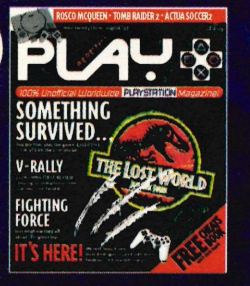
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ISSUE [25]
First UK preview of *Tomb Raider 2, Rapid Racer, Nuclear Strike, Street Fighter EX Plus!*



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



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RAMPAGE



HAVE YOU EVER NOTICED THAT WITH MOVIES, RE-MAKES ARE NEVER AS GOOD AS THE ORIGINALS?

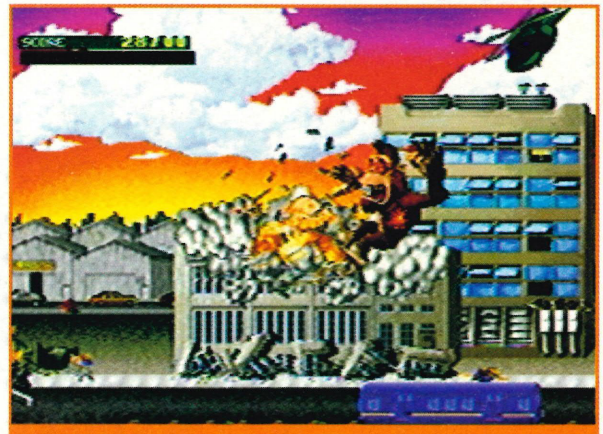
PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: GT Interactive
Customer Support: 0171 2583791
Price: £44.99
Release Date: December '97

ONE PLAYER | MULTIPLE PLAYERS | MULTI-TAP



[ABOVE] The little buggers that fly around with jetpacks and flame-throwers are a constant worry. They'll roast you in a heart-beat.



[ABOVE] Aargh! They don't make buildings like they used to. How come the Empire State Building could hold King Kong, and yet this structure crumbles like dust?

Rampage World

Tour plays like a kind of slapstick version of King Kong. All you have to do is choose from a giant gorilla, dinosaur or werewolf and then use your slobbering beast to tear apart a city. To keep the gameplay extremely simple for beginners the controls can be explained in a second: one button for jump, one to kick and one to punch! This system is a great way to make the game accessible to anyone who wants a quick smash without the need for a half hour coaching lesson on numerous joypad combinations.

By climbing up the side of the high-rise buildings and beating holes in the solid concrete with your bare fists, the structures eventually collapse under their own weight. Carry on like this and reduce one city to rubble in order to advance to the next – easy!

BING

Well, maybe not. You see, the streets of *Rampage* have more moving parts than Lara Croft on her morning jog. An endless number of tiny annoying humans take you on, desperate to drop your furry hide to the ground. Anarchistic residents take futile shots at you and drop bundles of dynamite from their windows. Soldiers launch grenades from the pavement. Fleets of Mig aircraft and attack helicopters streak through the sky and tanks trundle along and blast at your legs. All of this happens at once!

With buildings crumbling, burning and falling all around at the same time, *Rampage* sports a bewildering amount of on-screen action. However, the difficulty level is extremely inconsistent; making you feel like you are not building up to any particular goal. You can complete one crazy city with robots, tanks and spaceships hitting you from all sides only to find the next level is much smaller and calmer.

BANG

Your task is to trash cities all over the world in search of the six Scumlabs bio-facilities, responsible for your monstrous appearance (all three characters were originally normal humans) and demolish them. Protecting yourself is also fairly high on the agenda, which includes swatting those helicopters out of the sky like flies and battling with the odd rogue ED-209 droid. People and objects can be scooped up and eaten from the tower blocks or streets to top up your health, and you have to learn which of the hundreds of items your monster likes to devour.

COMING SOON

INCLUDED ON THE *RAMPAGE WORLD TOUR* DISC IS A ROLLING PREVIEW OF *OFF ROAD RACING* WHICH IS DUE FOR A PLAYSTATION RELEASE NEXT YEAR. THE GAME LOOKS LIKE A FAST AND FRANTIC RACER WITH VEHICLES LIKE THOSE IN *MONSTER TRUCKS* AND SIMILARLY BOUNCY PHYSICS. WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE...



PlayStation
Coming For The PlayStation™ Game Console. SPRING '98



[ABOVE] You need to take a plane to the next city, unfortunately all seats are booked. No problem!



[ABOVE] A peeved tenant of the block of flats you've been demolishing drops a stack of explosives!



[ABOVE] Dive! Dive! The lucky pilot manages to parachute to safty shortly before the planes crashes.

Written By Graeme Nicholson

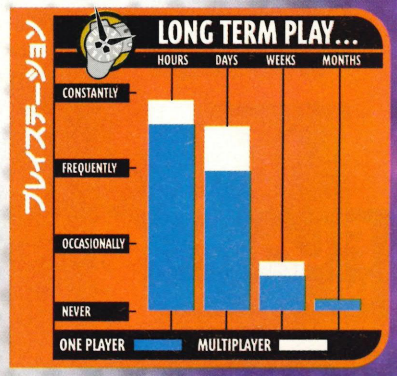
WORLD TOUR

"*Rampage* sports a bewildering amount of on-screen action!"



[Above] In *Rampage World Tour*, things attack you from all angles. Unfortunately, there is no real way to defend other than to attack, and even then they keep coming!





You can pick a man off his toilet in an apartment block and swallow him whole without incident, but grab the toilet itself and a plume of gushing water blows you onto the ground. Eat a wooden chair and you get bonus points, but try to suck down somebody's computer and you are rewarded with a skeleton-revealing electric shock.

Like the original arcade machine, up to three players can raise hell at once with the aid of a multi-tap, but two is ideal if you want to avoid kicking each other in the back of the head by mistake all the time. The co-operative nature of the carnage is fun, especially if you agree on some kind of loose strategy to efficiently ruin your surroundings. But any player disputes can be handled with the occasional grudge match that crops up between cities.

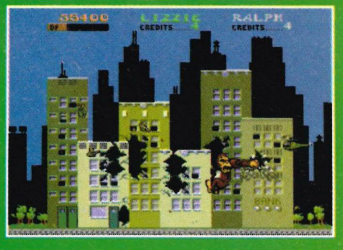
BOSH

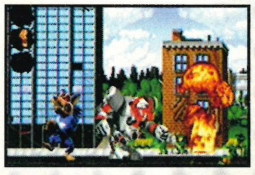
As well as the wildly erratic learning curve though, *Rampage World Tour* suffers from a couple of other problems that spoil the great idea. For a start, you can't reach back off the edge of one building and smash a nearby one – a dear and common tactic from the old *Rampage* coin-op machine. Also, there are more than 130 standard city-bashing levels, but they're never very different from each other graphically, so there's not any real force driving you on.

Undoubtedly, this game was designed for a mad-cap multi-player party atmosphere, and it works well in presenting a fun night in with three friends and a 12-pack. But with the single-player goal slightly uncertain and no save points to prevent you from having to start over if a power-cut interrupts your run of devastation,Rampage falls short. Like the coin-op, it offers only short-term fun!

GOLDEN OLDIE

With the release of *Rampage World Tour* we obviously had to dig up the ancient arcade game and have a go for old time's sake. All things considered, we prefer the gritty original!







[Above] Neon signs can block your way up the building, but try not to lash out when it's lit or this will be the result.



[Above] Gorilla George shows Liverpool exactly what he thinks of Brookside!

PLAY

Looks	●●●●●●●○○○
Sounds	●●●○○○○○○○
Gameplay	●●●●●●○○○○
Value	●●●●●○○○○○
Muscle	●●●●●●○○○○

PLAYED 77%

Flawed in places, but enjoyable.

ALTERNATIVELY:
THERE ARE NO ALTERNATIVES TO *RAMPAGE WORLD TOUR*.

CRASH BANDICOOT
CORTEX STRIKES BACK

HE'S THE CLOSEST THING WE'VE GOT TO A SYSTEM MASCOT AND HE'S RETURNING IN HIS BIGGEST ADVENTURE YET – ROLL OUT THE RED CARPET!

Written By Graeme Nicholson

There was a time, not too long ago, when there were hardly any platform games for the PlayStation. Now in the run up to Christmas there are loads of the things – *Abe's Oddysee*, *Pandemonium 2*, *Captain Blasto*, *Jersey Devil*, and now *Crash Bandicoot 2* – all of them competing for the limited space in Santa's big bag. Which will win? This one's a definite contender!

Proving that there really is no rest for the wicked, the intro for *Crash Bandicoot 2* shows Doctor Neo Cortex falling from his old rickety flying contraption, following on directly from the very last section of the first game, and landing unceremoniously in an underground cavern. Of course, he lands right next to a floating purple crystal of immense power and begins scheming immediately. Cut to a year later, and Crash is stretched out asleep in the Turtle Woods with his little sister as she types away on her pink laptop. Her battery goes dead and poor Crash is sent for a replacement, with no indication of the trap that awaits him in the forest...

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Sony
Customer support: 0881 505 505
Price: £34.99
Release date: Out now!

ONE PLAYER | DUAL ANALOGUE | MEMORY CARD

RAT BOY

From the first level you can see that there have been no radical changes to the *Crash* formula. In many levels you travel forwards into the screen along a slim path that doesn't allow much left-right movement, and when you're not doing this, you'll be walking from side to side and jumping around like a more traditional platform game. You break open wooden crates to collect extra lives, protective tribal masks and of course hundreds of rotating apples. So, the basics are the same, but this is no lazy reconstruction – there's all kinds of new bits and pieces to play with!

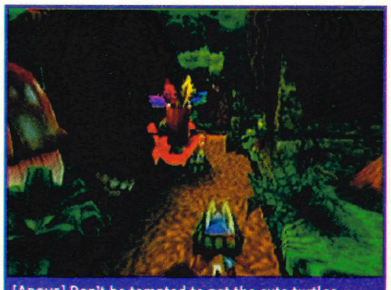
Where *Pandemonium 2* recently arrived with a depressing two new moves (shooting and climbing – yawn) Crash has been gifted with a whole set of tricks that make him so much more fun to use. He'll skate across ice with tricky inertia, duck and crawl into tight spaces, monkey swing over flaming pits by the tips of his little rodent fingers, and even ride a jetski upstream! This is one agile marsupial. An anti-gravity back-pack even helps you through the odd outer space level.

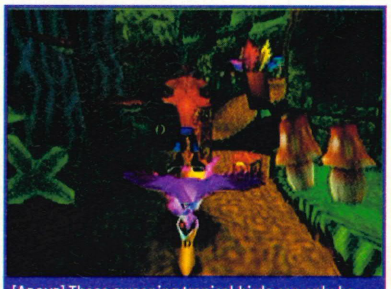


[ABOVE] Some tasty special effects accompany end-of-level warps and regeneration after death.



[ABOVE] Mines floating in the water are easy to spot due to their size but hard to avoid thanks to the jetski's weird control.


[ABOVE] Don't be tempted to pet the cute turtles – they have round saw blades stuck to their shells!


[ABOVE] These swooping tropical birds can only be killed with a well-timed jump. A bit like this.



OT 2:





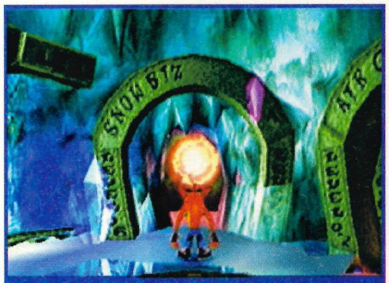
[Above] This is what all the fuss is about – Slave Crystals that Doc Cortex can manipulate from orbit.

BELLY FLOP

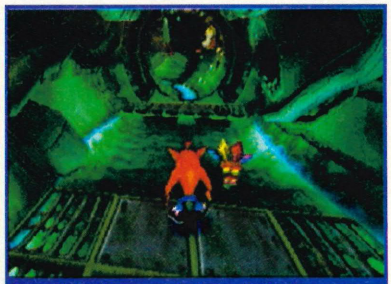
One of the best new moves Crash has learned in the past year is his belly slam. Jumping into the air and then pressing the crouch button at the highest point brings him down on the target below like a ton weight. This can be used to obliterate a whole pile of boxes or to smash stronger crates that can't be broken with the old spin move.







[Above] The central Warp Room that leads to all the snow and ice levels. Catch the elevator back down to try the old levels again.



[Above] It's always comforting to begin the sewer level with a mask to protect you, as enemies are all around you.

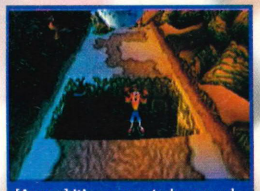
FUNKY MOVER

With the enduring instant playability of the original, it's impossible not to get hooked all over again with so much more to do. While the levels themselves remain as confined as before, the way you tackle them is very open. At the end of each level you will find yourself in one of the circular Warp Rooms where you can access any of five levels in any order you like by going through the labelled portal. This is also where you do the game saving, unlike *Crash 1* where you had to gain entry to and complete a tough bonus stage before you were allowed to save.

"It's impossible not to get hooked all over again!"

The new system is less frustrating but it does make progression a bit too easy, considering the heaps of extra lives also coming your way. You don't often reach the Game Over screen – getting stuck in *Crash Bandicoot 2* is almost always caused by your inability to figure out where a hidden crystal lies or how to kill a level boss, like the moronic Ripper Roo who makes a return appearance.

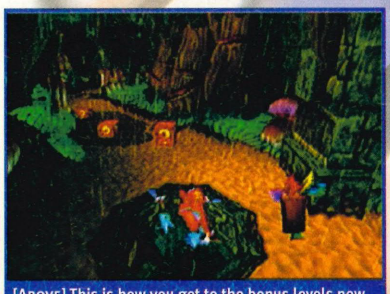
Still, if you were to finish *Crash 2* a bit too early (although Sony claims the game to be roughly twice the size of the first Bandicoot escapade) the replay value is very high. You can revisit levels which you've already done before you complete the game anyway, and even then they're not always the same. The Turtle Woods level has pouring rain when you go back to it, for example; creating suffocating patches of quicksand with



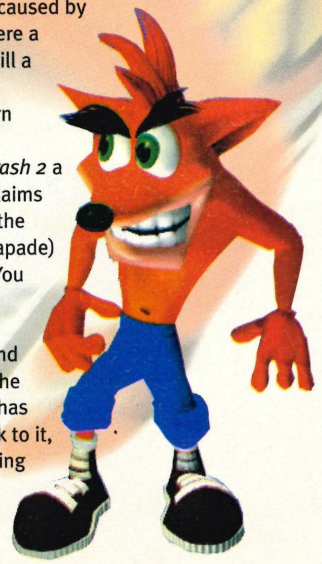
[Above] It's so easy to be scared into the bottomless pits as the huge stone ball rolls after you.



[Above] Run, press crouch, and Crash can slide along on his backside, smashing crates as he goes.



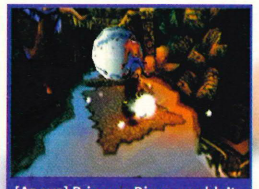
[Above] This is how you get to the bonus levels now, through marked openings in the ground.



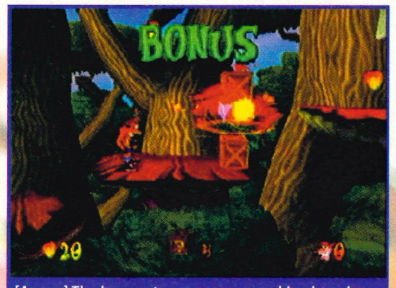
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[ABOVE] Princess Diana wouldn't be pleased – there are live land mines all over this level!



[ABOVE] The bonus stages are accessed by dropping through trapdoors from the main levels, and you can try them over and over.



[ABOVE] There are loads of new things you can do, but the old Tazmanian spin is still a classic.



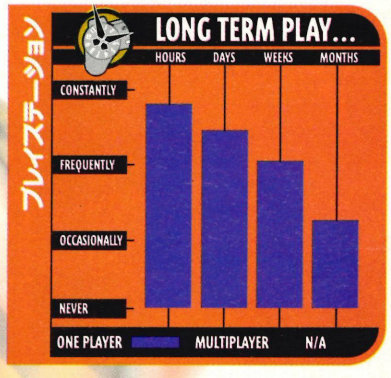
crates bobbing around in them. Why would you go back? Well, there are many secrets to be found and even just smashing every crate will earn you some goodies.

CRATE ESCAPE

Even though it was pretty startling last time, the whole look of *Crash* is more richly coloured and crisper in the new game, making it undeniably beautiful. The frozen arctic stages are good examples: you can see Crash's breath puffing realistically from his mouth; large sheets of ice show highly detailed reflections of your every move; Crash will even shiver and rub his arms to keep warm if you leave him standing. Our hero also comes with new touches like a clear grimace when performing his powerful belly slam attack, and a series of Ace Ventura-style celebratory moves that he does after retrieving a crystal. *Crash 2* has no equal in terms of graphics.

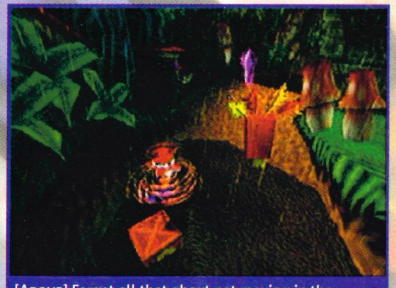
All in all, the game is packed with super-fast, super-addictive levels and Crash himself is so much more capable than before. The only problem is that your path is more restricted than *Croc*, and it's about time we had a real 3-D platform game that lets you explore in all directions, like *Mario 64*.

"*Crash 2* has no equal in terms of graphics!"

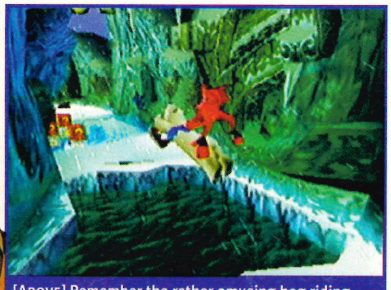




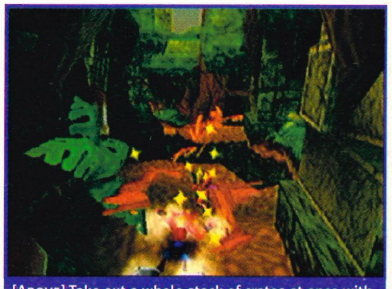
[ABOVE] Note to self: when the water is yellow, the electric eel is passing current through it. Stay out next time.



[ABOVE] Forget all that about not moving in the quicksand to avoid sinking – get your soggy behind out of there!



[ABOVE] Remember the rather amusing hog riding level of the last game? Now you get to saddle up a baby polar bear.



[ABOVE] Take out a whole stack of crates at once with the all new belly-smash move! If you get the timing right, it works on the nasties too...



PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●●●●●
SOUNDS	●●●●●●●○○
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●●●○
VALUE	●●●●●●●●○
HAIRBALLS	●●●●●●●●○

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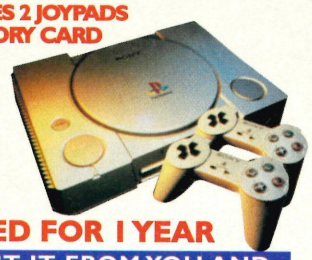
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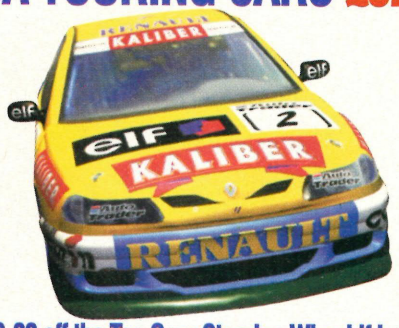
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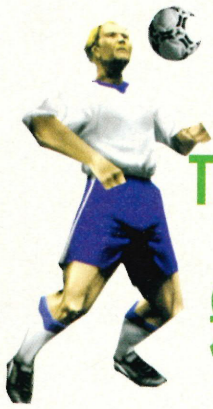
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PLAY

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RISK

PLAY PUTRID

ACE WORLD DOMINATION BOARD GAME RISK HAS FINALLY MADE THE TRANSITION TO THE PLAYSTATION. BUT IS IT ALL-CONQUERING? OR RUNNING SCARED?

Written By Roy Kimber



[ABOVE] I'm sorry, but I just can't get excited about a computer 'throwing' dice for me. And did you know there's no such thing as a truly 'random' electronically generated number?

The board game

RISK is excellent. There's few things more enjoyable than inviting a few friends round, challenging them to a game of world domination, pulverising their armies, and then beheading them in the cellar for being rubbish. Oh... hang on... forget that last bit.

Surely then, *RISK* on the Playstation will be even better? Just picture the beautifully rendered armies marching across a pseudo-3D world map and engaging in totally impressive armed conflict? Isn't that what Playstation *RISK* is? Er... no, actually.

This game could have been so good...

WHAT HAPPENED?

What Playstation *RISK* actually delivers is a two-dimensional world map, containing armies represented by a flag and a number. Oh... exciting! You don't even get the satisfaction of seeing your forces gradually building and building until they fill your territories like you do in the board game.

Combat takes place, as in the board game, with dice, although they are thrown by the computer without you even having to lift a finger. The only thing you do have to do is decide who to attack, and which territory cards to discard. Speaking of which, the computer cheats!

The rules allow you to collect five cards, at which time you must cash three of them in for extra armies – and yet the computer managed to cash in two sets of three at once – the cheating b*stard!

There is a second version of *RISK* on the disk under the promising title of *Ultimate RISK*. And it does offer more features, such as the building of forts for your territories, generals to command your armies, random weather conditions, rebellious locals and some nicely rendered combat cut scenes. However, this doesn't really bring any more excitement to the game. It's still very slow, and rather boring. Even the replacement of dice with battle cards for the combat sequences doesn't really help.

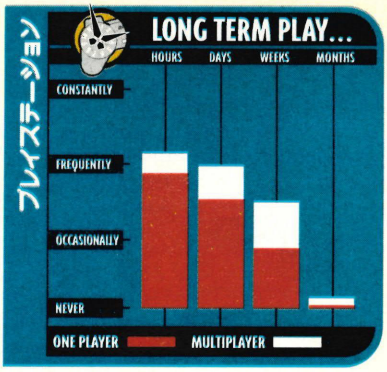
It's a shame, because the board game really is great, and this game could have been so good too. It's just that with all the other PlayStation wargame titles around – where you control every aspect of the battles and watch your massed armies marching across detailed maps, rolling dice to decide which flag vanishes from a specific location just isn't much fun!



[ABOVE] The battle cards are a good idea, but the outcome of the battle still seems rather random.



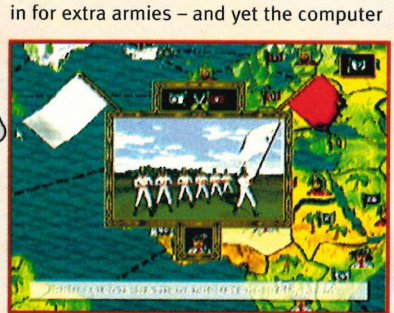
[ABOVE] The game opens promisingly enough, with this excellent map which unrolls on the table. Sadly the rest of the game isn't up to the same standard.



PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Hasbro Interactive
Customer support: 0171 490 1323
Price: £39.99
Release date: Out now

ONE PLAYER | MULTIPLE PLAYERS | MOUSE | MEMORY CARD



[ABOVE] During the *Ultimate Risk* animation sequences, the progress of the battle is portrayed by the state of the two flags.

FIVE GAMES THAT WOULD PROBABLY BE MORE FUN ON THE PLAYSTATION THAN RISK:

1: TWISTER
2: RUSSIAN ROULETTE
3: SHEEP WORRYING
4: COW TIPPING
5: WATCHING PAINT DRY

PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●○○○○○
SOUNDS	●●●●●○○○○○
GAMEPLAY	●●●○○○○○○○
VALUE	●●●○○○○○○○
COUNTERS	●●●○○○○○○○

PLAYED 35%

Boardgame – there's no contest.

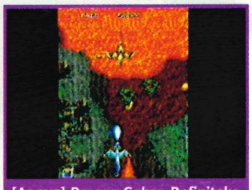
ALTERNATIVELY:
MONOPOLY (75%)
WARCRAFT 2: THE DARK SAGA (86%)

NAMCO ENCORE

YET ANOTHER BATCH OF AGEING WONDERS STUMBLES ONTO THE PLAYSTATION, ALMOST BREAKING A HIP.

Written By Graeme Nicholson

Having run out of letters to stick on the front of their packaging with all the *Namco Museum* discs released already, the Japanese entertainment giant has decided to squeeze the last few yen from its back catalogue with *Namco Encore*. Although the idea, as always, is to sell you famous coin-op gems from the past that you fell in love with down the arcade, in reality what you get on *Encore* is six games you've never heard of – and the totally sensational *Rolling Thunder!*



[Above] *Dragon Saber*. Definitely the second best game on the disc, it has that old arcade addiction.

The other supposedly classic titles in the collection range from the amusing novelty to the unplayable and eccentric. On the plus side there is the devilishly addictive *Dragon Saber*, that is extremely close to vertical shoot-'em-up *1942*, except that in this your dragon grows extra heads to fire the multi-shot weapons!

On the awful side is the bizarre game named in unreadable Japanese, where you play a girl who can only kick, jump and transform into some kind of Power Ranger. Odd for a game developed ten years ago! The worst part of this one is that the entire thing takes place on a theatrical stage so you can only scroll a few meters to either side whilst kicking the bad guys. You won't load this again.



[Above] *Motos*. Slide along the floating platform and attempt to knock metal featureless enemies into space. Yawn.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Namco
Supplier: The Video Game Centre on 01202 527314
Price: £69.99
Release date: Out now (import)



ONE PLAYER



MEMORY CARD



[Above] *Rolling Thunder*. The king of platform shoot-'em-ups in arcade-perfect glory on your PlayStation. Admit it – you're tempted!



[Above] *SkyKid*. Loop the loop to avoid enemy fire and make it to those heavy bombs. Joy.

BACKWARDS COMPATIBLE

King & Balloon is a very simple but compelling *Space Invaders* game with the twist being that the rows of invaders are little hot air balloons which attempt to swoop down and steal the King you're meant to be protecting.

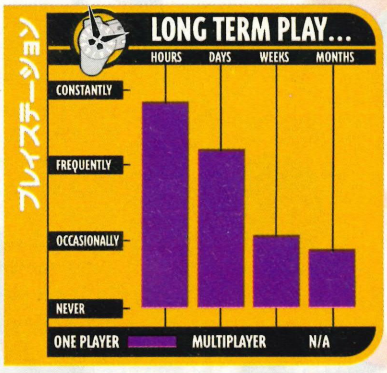
The remaining games (*Motos*, *Rompers* and *SkyKid*) offer a short period of amusement but the problem here is that ancient games only seem fantastic if you know them from the old days. Any of these that were actually released over here certainly were not hits, so you have to ask yourself: can I warrant £70 for arcade perfect *Rolling Thunder*? The sad answer for most of us weeping *RT* aficionados here is yes, but these are admittedly extreme cases. Still extremely playable and challenging 11 years on, walking around in flares, grasping your trusty automatic and blasting hooded thugs is retro bliss. At the very least, this game warrants considering *Namco Encore* when it is officially released over here.

"Ranges from the amusing novelty to the unplayable and eccentric..."



[Above] *Rompers*. Walk around small square levels collecting keys and trying not to get burned.

[Above] Stupid, just stupid. You haven't seen it before, and you don't want to see it again!



PLAY

LOOKS	●●○○○○○○○○
SOUNDS	●●●●●●●○○○
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●●●○○
VALUE	●●●●○○○○○○
CREDITS	●●●●●○○○○○

PLAYED 79%

If you must have Rolling Thunder...

ALTERNATIVELY:
THE ATARI COLLECTION (81%)
NAMCO MUSEUM 5 (DEC '97)

STREET FIGHTE

CAPCOM EXCELLED THEMSELVES WITH *STREET FIGHTER EX*, SURELY NOTHING COULD COME CLOSE TO THAT. NOT THIS SECOND-RATE REGURGITATION THAT'S FOR SURE!

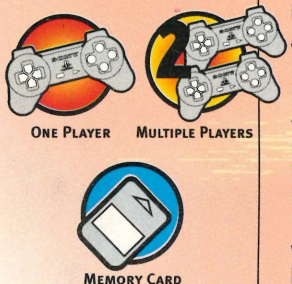
Written By Ryan Butt

Two years ago, this might have been a good idea. After all, three *Street Fighter* games on one (well, two) CD is not to be sniffed at. Or is it?

This collection combines the collective retro attractions of three *Street Fighter* games of yore – *Super Street Fighter II*, *Super Street Fighter II Turbo* and a rare version of *Street Fighter Alpha 2* that could only be found in a handful of dingy arcades scattered around Asia, apparently. As mentioned, a couple of years ago, we would have whooped for joy at such a tasty bargain, but nowadays, there just doesn't seem to be much of a point to it.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Capcom
Supplied by: Video Game Centre 01202 527314
Price: £69.99
Release date: Out now



WAY OF THE DRAGON

In case you're in need of a recap, *Super Street Fighter II* first emerged in the arcades in 1993 and was a vast step-up from the previous *Street Fighter* games... because it had four extra characters.

SSFII: Turbo came out a year later and was basically the same, only faster, better-looking, had a secret character in it (a *Street Fighter* first!), plus the introduction of Super Combo moves. As for this new *Street Fighter Alpha 2 Gold* game, who knows? However, it does include a brand new 'Gouki' mode which, erm, lets you fight against Gouki (or Akuma, whatever the sod is called!). But apart from that there are no real differences to speak of.

Although the *Street Fighter* games were undoubtedly the best fighting experience of their respective eras, playing the oldies now just doesn't seem very enjoyable at all. You feel an overwhelming sense of deja-vu as your mind spills back to the Super NES days when the satisfaction of being the only kid who could pull off Dragon Punches like they were going out of fashion was immense, and everybody feared you as a result.

Nowadays, everything has moved on, and a beat-'em-up just isn't a beat-'em-up unless your rendered 3-D character is able to unleash 50-hit combos before ripping off the opponent's head and excreting foul substances down their neck! *SF Collection*, needless to say, has none of this.

OI... WRINKLIES!

Each character (this package offers over 25!) only has about four special moves each, although experienced *Street Fighters* can up the tempo by stringing together standard light kicks and punches to inflict greater damage. But nothing here supplies that killer sucker punch that, say, *Tekken 2* lashes out with



[ABOVE] Ken belts out the very first Street Fighter super move in *SSFII Turbo*, and knocks the fat Indian for six.



[ABOVE] You gotta roll with it! Blanka (ahh... remember him?) uses extreme acrobatics to maim and mutilate.

SMACK MY CHIPS UP

STREET FIGHTER COLLECTION COMPRISES OF THREE *STREET FIGHTER* GAMES, HERE IS THE OBLIGATORY BREAK-DOWN...



SUPER STREET FIGHTER II

FIRST ARRIVED IN 1993 AND REVOLUTIONISED THE SAGA BY INCLUDING MORE CHARACTERS, NEW MOVES AND Q-SOUND, FOR A MORE ROUNDED AUDIO EXPERIENCE.

THEN: **** NOW: **



SUPER STREET FIGHTER II TURBO

WAS AN UPGRADE OF *SSFII* AND INCLUDED SUPER COMBO MOVES, MORE SPEED, AND A HIDDEN CHARACTER, AMONGST MANY OTHER MINOR TWEAKS.

THEN: ***** NOW: ***



STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 2 GOLD

VERY SIMILAR TO THE ORIGINAL, EXCEPT THAT THIS HAS A NEW 'GOUKI' MODE WHEREBY YOU CAN TAKE ON THE GRAND MASTER. IT ALSO HAS TWEAKS IN THE CHARACTER BALANCE.

THEN: N/A NOW: ****



[ABOVE] Tongues out for the lads! Cammy and Chunners in slightly suggestive light spirited mode.

ER COLLECTION

RESIDENT EVIL

IF YOU WERE ANNOYED ABOUT *STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 2* NOT HAVING ANY OF THE INTERESTING SECRET CHARACTERS SUCH AS EVIL RYU AND SUPER SAKURA THEN FRET NOT BECAUSE THEY'RE ALL IN THIS COLLECTION, AND THEY'RE DEAD EASY TO ACCESS AS WELL...




AKUMA – HE WAS THE FIRST SECRET CHARACTER IN SSFII: TURBO, AND HE'S HERE!




EVIL RYU – THE SAME AS GOOD RYU, ONLY HE CAN TELEPORT.




SUPER SAKURA – WE'RE BUGGERED IF WE COULD SPOT THE DIFFERENCE!




SHIN GOUKI (AKA AKUMA) – CAN NOW LOB TWO MID-AIR FIREBALLS!

BUT BEST OF ALL...

IF YOU BEAT *STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 2 GOLD* USING M. BISON, GET A TOP SCORE, AND THEN ENTER YOUR NAME AS CAM, YOU CAN ACCESS CAMMY FROM THE X-MEN VS STREET FIGHTER COIN-OP!




in abundance.

The graphics really have aged badly, and as for those backgrounds... urgh! OK so the *Alpha 2* characters are a step-up from the primitive-looking oldies in the first two games, but even they look distinctly feeble. The sound is also hideously outdated – and the familiar jingles that could once turn your head at 50 paces, now seem to induce a half-hearted groan.

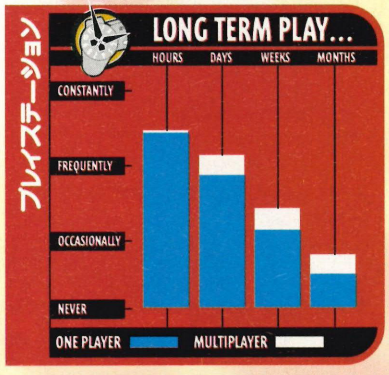
Street Fighter nuts may gain some sordid collectable satisfaction from this package, and indeed it is well worth getting if you don't already own *Street Fighter Alpha 2*. But otherwise it's just a sad excuse to cash-in on a hugely popular franchise which should have been laid to rest with its pride intact, to be fondly looked back upon over long discussions down the pub. Having it all served-up again is just a pale reminder as to how far things have shifted in the last three years... and it's frightening!

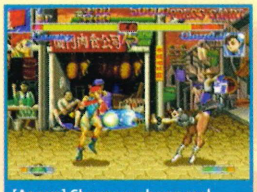


[ABOVE] Whereas in *SSFII Turbo*, the characters only have one Super Combo move, by the time *Street Fighter Alpha 2* Gold arrived, they have two, sometimes three to choose from.









[ABOVE] Chunners shows real (cl)ass in the projectile attack department.







"It's just a sad excuse to cash-in on a hugely popular franchise..."

PLAY

LOOKS	6
SOUNDS	5
GAMEPLAY	8
VALUE	7
HA-DO-KENS	8

PLAYED 67%

Some stones are best left unturned!

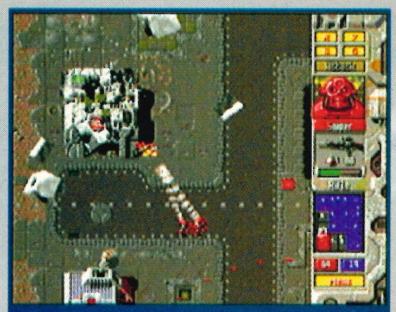
ALTERNATIVELY:
STREET FIGHTER EX PLUS (91%)
STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 2 (94%)



[Above] Aahh, sweet victory – the enemy fort is destroyed. You can either send in the troops or blow it up.



[Above] This home fort has no chance as the tanks move in for the kill.



[Above] A couple of your Toughs muscle in and take out an enemy with their mobile missile launchers.

At LONG last the game with the SHORTEST name arrives courtesy of Sony and it's got a LINK-UP option – Oh BABY. Could this be *Z* big one?

(That'll do – Ed).

Written By Tom Sargent

Why the Bitmap

Brothers decided to name their frantic real-time wargame *Z* is a complete mystery to us, because as catchy as the title is, the last thing you'll have time to do is sleep as you rush around the battlefield panicking like crazy.

The manual for *Z* describes the game as a "riotous race for supremacy between armies of space-faring robots" and we're inclined to agree with them. They have, however, managed to omit one small detail – it's unbelievably difficult to play.

Make a couple of tactically naive moves or commit the cardinal sin of 'battlefield dithering' on even the easiest levels and you can kiss your robotic ass goodnight. We implore you – read the manual thoroughly and bite your bottom lip, because in the short term you'll be swamped by the ruthless efficiency of the blue hordes and feel inclined to throw the TV out of the nearest window.

But patience young Jedi, unlearn what you have learned, let the Force fl...



[Above] A manufacturing plant where you create your weapons and vehicles of war.

Grunts reporting!

Lesson one consists of making a mad dash for the neutral ground with all your available units. This way you can begin production of further units and vehicles immediately. Your main objective on each of the 20 levels is to wipe out your opponent, be it computer or human, by destroying all of their forces or entering his/her fort, while simultaneously protecting your own army.

Your forces consist of robots that operate guns and drive vehicles over the battlefields which are divided into several territories. You always start at opposing ends, so it's crucial to send all of your available units and mark as much ground as possible for an early advantage. Like all the best games, the concept is extremely simple, but beating the fiendishly-intelligent computer opponent is deceptively tricky. As you can see, the graphics are very reminiscent of earlier Bitmap games, such as *The Chaos Engine*

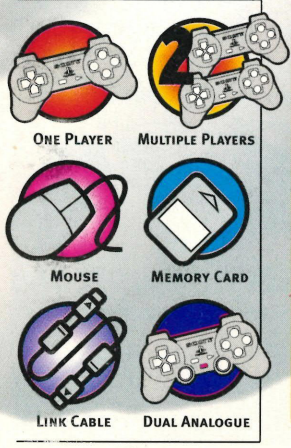







PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Sony
Customer support: 0881 505505
Price: £34.99
Release date: Out now!



KEEP THOSE WAGONS ROLLING

There are seven different types of vehicles that can be captured or manufactured during the game. They have different armour ratings, damage, fire rate and speed.



JEEP. Comes with a Machine Gun mounted and maximum fire rate. Kills basic units.



LIGHT TANK. Weakest of the tanks, but has a high fire rate. It's also the quickest.



MEDIUM TANK. Better armour, slightly slower fire rate. Pretty quick too.



HEAVY TANK. Excellent armour and damage, but slow fire rate. Awesome!!



APC. Variable damage, and well armoured to transport troops.



MOBILE MISSILE LAUNCHER. Maximum damage, good range and armour.



CRANE. Maximum armour rating to do what it does best – repair bridges.



[Above] Spectacular explosions occur when tanks and units clash. Bits of tanks fly up into the air.



[Above] Your troops can swim if need be. Here they are trying to cross the icy waters to reach an APC.

"In the short term you'll be swamped by the ruthless efficiency of the blue hordes..."

on the Amiga, but they're sharp, colourful and the multitude of robots, vehicles and explosions are very well implemented.

They're All Over Us!!

Some regions of the map contain buildings: factories, repair facilities and radar stations, where new units or vehicles can be produced. As you take more territory, your factories will construct everything faster and vice versa, if you're being pressed back by the enemy.

Controlling the six different types of unit, each with their own abilities, is easy if you're using a mouse, and they can perform around 40 different actions. It's a very similar system to that employed by *Command & Conquer*: Red Alert. To succeed in *Z*, you've got to be swift of thought and aggressive on the one hand, but tactically aware on the other. A good comparison is with speed chess. You know what moves you'd like to make given ample time to think about it, but you end up reacting to your opponent in a split second. Whether this is as much fun as the more pedestrian *C&C* is questionable, but once you get to grips with the razor-sharp thinking and strategies required to defeat the enemy, it's tremendous fun.



Soldier Soldier

There are six robot types, each with plus and minus points. They vary in intelligence, speed and armour. A robot's intelligence affects its awareness of the surroundings, accuracy, ability to lead targets, avoid shots and its route finding.



Grunt

Intelligence	5
Speed	6
Armour	2
Weapon: *Rifle*	
Range	5
Damage	1
Fire Rate	8



Tough

Intelligence	3
Speed	5
Armour	6
Weapon: *Missile Gun*	
Range	5
Damage	4
Fire Rate	8



Pyros

Intelligence	6
Speed	5
Armour	5
Weapon: *Flame Gun*	
Range	5
Damage	3
Fire Rate	10



Psycho

Intelligence	4
Speed	5
Armour	3
Weapon: *Machine Gun*	
Range	5
Damage	1
Fire Rate	10



Sniper

Intelligence	10
Speed	6
Armour	3
Weapon: *Rifle*	
Range	7
Damage	2
Fire Rate	8



Heavy

Intelligence	3
Speed	6
Armour	4
Weapon: *Laser*	
Range	6
Damage	3
Fire Rate	8

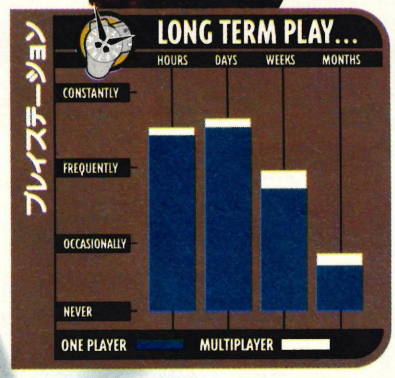




[Above] Mobile missile is a lethal weapon in taking out enemy vehicles and units.



[Above] Your Heavy Tank trundles relentlessly through the enemy defences. Chaaaarge!!

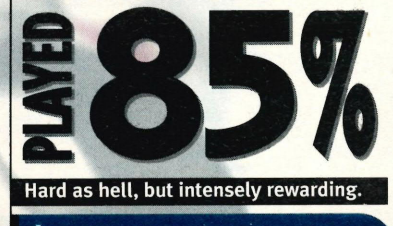




[Above] Capture those flags to gain/regain territory and you'll be able to produce more units and vehicles.



Looks	8
Sounds	8
Gameplay	8
Value	8
Speed	8



Hard as hell, but intensely rewarding.

Alternatively:
Command & Conquer: RA (90%)
Warcraft 2: The Dark Saga (86%)

GAMEplay

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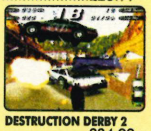

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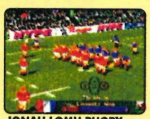

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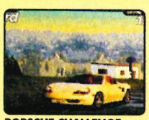
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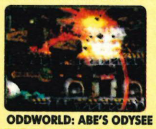
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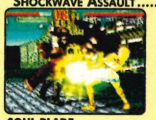

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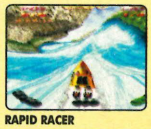

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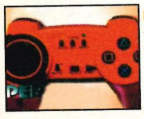
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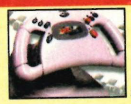
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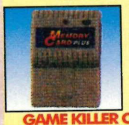
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APACHE LONGBOW	DECEMBER
AUTO DESTRUCT	26TH DECEMBER
CASTLEVANIA	NOVEMBER
CLAYFIGHTER EXTREME	DECEMBER
CRASH BANDICOOT 2	DECEMBER
DISCWORLD 2	NOVEMBER
FIFA ROAD TO WORLD CUP	14TH NOVEMBER
FINAL FANTASY 7	NOVEMBER
HERC'S ADVENTURE	DECEMBER
KILLING TIME	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
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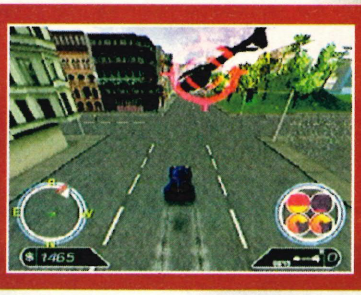
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PL2(1)

AUTO DESTRU

FIRE IN THE SKY

IT'S DIFFICULT TO HIDE YOUR SATISFACTION HAVING CHASED A HELICOPTER THROUGH THE STREETS OF THE CITY LOADED WITH A STASH OF HOMING MISSILES, AND YOU SEND IT CRASHING TO THE GROUND IN A HUGE FIREBALL.



MURDER TERRORIST CULTS FOR CASH AND **REVENGE** IN EA'S MAD MAX MEETS CHASE HQ **ROAD-RAGE** SIMULATOR.

Written by Tom Sargent

Revenge is a dish

best served cold so they say, or in the case of *Auto Destruct*, driving like Mad Max through city streets and parks in a souped-up sports car with near-volcanic power under the bonnet. Mind you, after losing your wife and daughter in a shopping mall massacre masterminded by fanatical terror cult 'The Disciples of Lazarus', it's hardly surprising that you're a bit miffed.

Auto Destruct (formerly *Cult Status*) is a 3-D mission-based car to car combat game, which provides the player with the opportunity to wreak havoc within the confines of three enormous cities. In your relentless pursuit of justice and revenge, you happen across a message from 'The Temple' – a group of do-gooder mercenaries who are prepared to hand you a truck-full of weapons, a monstrously powerful motor, and a copy of Razzle Reader's Wives. Your objectives are simple enough – take revenge on these terrorists, working on information supplied by your new 'employees'. After a quick audible briefing at the start of each level, you must enter each city and complete the multiple objectives while protecting the inhabitants from attack.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Customer support: 01753 549442
Price: £39.99
Release date: 19 December '97

ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD

ROAD REVENGE

Missions usually consist of taking out or protecting people, but there are all kinds of sub-missions such as speeding across the city to reach a ticking bomb, or protecting the Mayor's convoy from any assassination attempts. Naturally enough you get to play with loads of dangerous weapons, which is great fun – especially the laser and triple homing missiles.



[ABOVE] Oooh Baby! Explosions are absolutely spectacular to the extreme.

The carnage is magnificently extravagant, although it is quite reminiscent of *Die Hard Trilogy* (third section), with almost identical targeting systems and explosions. This certainly isn't a bad thing, because although the graphics are pretty blocky, the action remains fun and dramatic, with enough diversity to keep you coming back again and again. Slinging your car around corners at break-neck speeds is a real hoot due to the exquisite handling and ability to drive wherever you like. There's literally no limit to the places you can visit unless you're hampered by obvious fences or boundaries.

THROBBING ENGINES

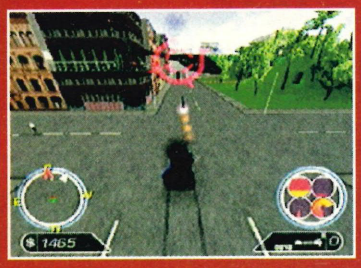
There's also a fair amount of strategy to consider in *Auto Destruct* which forces you to handle resources wisely. For example, many missions involve refuelling and car repair. Forget to do this or ignore the fact that bits are dropping off your car and you'll stop unceremoniously or die horribly, with smoke churning out all over the place. Although you're not supposed to, try

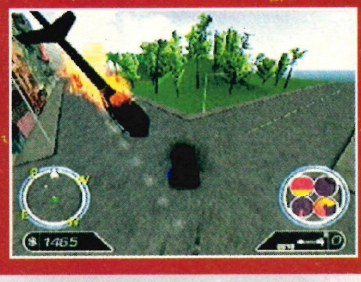


[ABOVE] You must be on your toes at all times, as missiles whizz past when you least expect them.



[ABOVE] Enemies are ruthless on the later levels, the best form of defence is attack.






CT

mowing down passers-by safe in the knowledge that Darth Vader has-been David Prowse won't be there to quote the Green Cross Code. Often you'll find yourself low on ammo. To replenish your arsenal simply look for one of the numerous hangers or garages scattered around each city, knock down the door and you might get lucky.

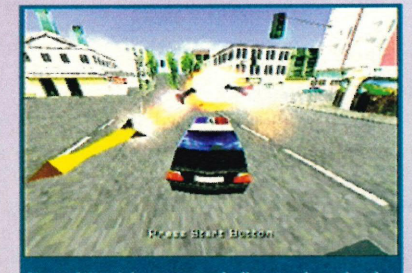
Auto Destruct is a bit of a rough diamond. There's quite a lot of glitching, and you can drive through trees and quite a few other road-side objects. Still, the attention to detail is impressive – your car produces four-tyre skid marks, reacts dramatically according to what or where its driving, and all of the weapons look fantastic as they rip through enemy vehicles. All in all it's great fun to play, offering a lasting challenge. Simple blasting fun.



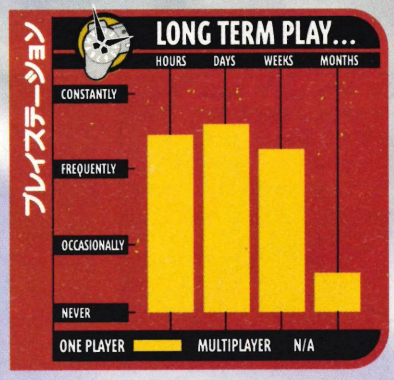
[Above] Chasing a helicopter in the top-down view is really exciting and the explosions look superb.



[Above] Enemies will try every trick in the book to try and lose you. Here he's polluting the atmosphere by releasing a wall of smoke.



[Above] Watch in terror as missiles streak overhead, it's vital to have complete control over your car.



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

Choose from four different view depending on what is happening on-screen. Some are more practical than others, but they all work surprisingly well.



Inside car

Inside the Car. The cockpit view provides the most seat-of-the-pants ride through the streets.



Third person

Third-person. Watch in awe as your car screeches and skids around bends in the this, the most dramatic view.



Quite high up

Above and behind. Excellent for seeing what's up ahead. Use this to find objectives and targets quickly.



Really high up.

A top-down view of the action, not very practical but pretty, nonetheless.



[Above] On this early level you have to chase a tank and take it out with only machine guns.

PLAY

Looks	8
Sounds	8
Gameplay	8
Value	8
Explosions	8

PLAYED 84%

Ultra-violent Armageddon on wheels.

Alternatively:
Ray Tracers (74%)
Die Hard Trilogy (92%)

COMPUTER EXCHANGE

Presents...

Here's TOBY

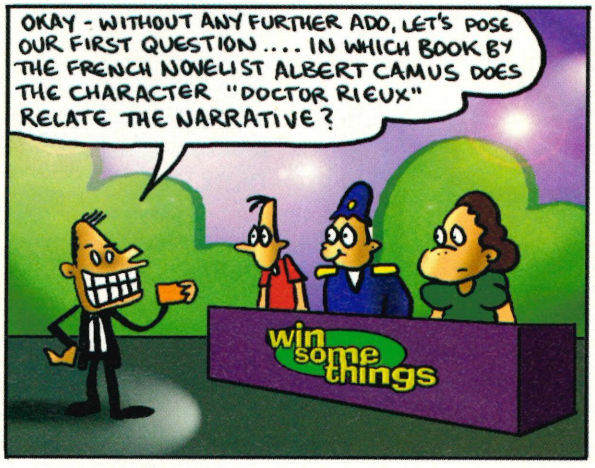






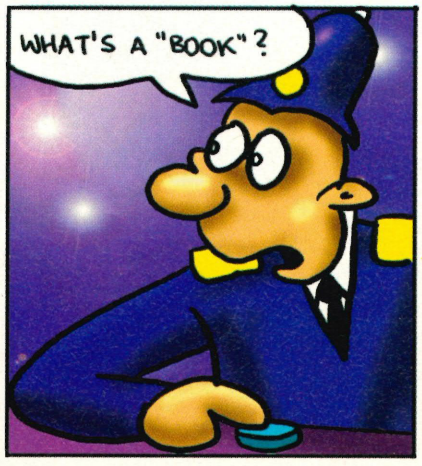




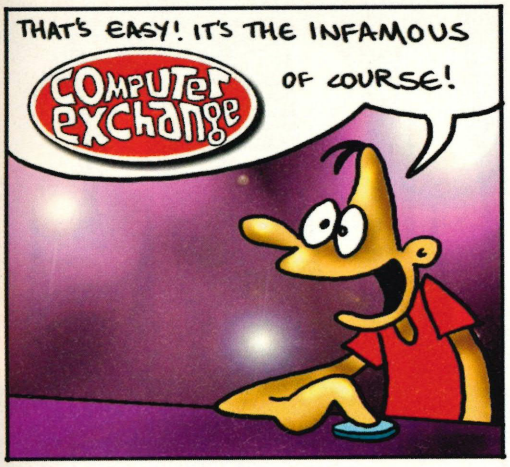














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COMPUTER EXCHANGE

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Experience in this field would be advantageous . A reasonable level of PC and games knowledge is desirable. Ability to work flexible hours. You will need to be hardworking, professional and have the ability to work under tight deadlines Excellent telephone manner. Must have customer service skills. **Salary: £9k up to £11k after 3 calendar months. Increasing with profit-related bonus within first year. First year OTE £14.5k.**

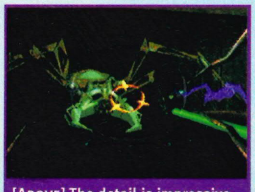
SHADOW M

FEEL LIKE TEARING APART CYBERNETIC ALIENS WITH PULSE LASERS AND MASS CANNONS? SO DO WE!

Written By Graeme Nicholson

When an alien dictator is involved, you can bet there's going to be trouble. In this case the dictator is the limitlessly evil Shadow Master, a being who has been creeping across the galaxy for thousands of years, commanding a ruthless army that leaves only devastated planets in its wake.

Losing too many troops in his eternal battle, the Shadow Master has invaded your solar system and has begun transforming most forms of life into mechanical warriors to be used in his continuing war.



[ABOVE] The detail is impressive on the nasty beasts that try to murder you throughout your quest.



[ABOVE] Anything you fry will leave a small crystal or two for you to absorb. They replenish your health.

SORDID

Your job is to visit each of the seven planets in your home system, exterminating these overgrown Zoids from the once peaceful lands and driving the Shadow Master into retreat. A super-huge boss blocks the exit at the end of each planet, and of course you ultimately find yourself up against the Master himself.

It sounds like your average first person shoot-'em-up, doesn't it? The difference with this blaster is that you are spraying out burning laser death from within a futuristic all-terrain buggy. Speed is therefore better than Joey Tenka or even Duke Nukem himself could muster striding around on foot. Oddly you can still strafe from side to side on your four wheels.

The control system makes particularly good use of the Dual Analogue pad, using the left stick for steering, acceleration and reversing, and letting you strafe with the right stick. In this configuration, the L and R buttons take care of all weapons firing, so you don't have to juggle the pad as much as in other games. Silky smooth motion of the buggy coupled with such precise control means you never feel trapped by your enemies, and embarrassing glitches like getting stuck to the edge of corners are a thing of the past.

MURKY

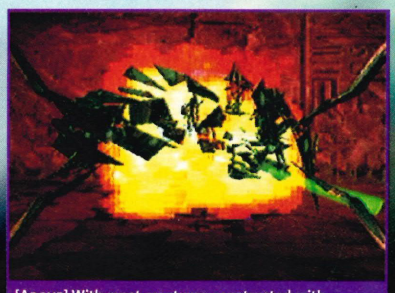
All over the strange alien plains you meet various hideous mechanised beasts in batches that are the same each time you play, which does tend to detract from the element of surprise.



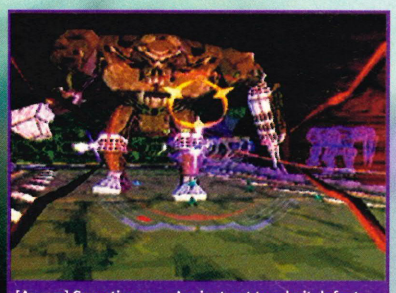
The very first time you round a bend to find a hoard of giant metal spiders rising from the dirt and scuttling towards you, you'll slam the buggy into reverse while frantically firing both weapons and using the kind of language that would make Heidi Fleiss blush!

When you later die though and return to the same bend, only to find the same sequence taking place, the sense of urgency is somewhat lost. If you are proficient enough to constantly progress through the 16 levels at a fair old rate then this kind of thing will go almost unnoticed, but a random element in the form of a few wandering robots would have made all the difference.

The Psygnosis quality control is evident elsewhere however. All enemies: from the mechanoid eagles in the sky to the rotating laser turrets, are real three-dimensional objects, with fine detail and light sourcing, yet *Shadow Master* never slows down. Everything is crisp, clear and



[ABOVE] With most creatures constructed with upwards of 200 polygons, they can blow into loads of tiny parts when you blast 'em.



[ABOVE] Sometimes you've just got to admit defeat. Don't even think of taking this metal oaf on without terrifying firepower.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Psygnosis
Customer support: 0151 282 3000
Price: £44.99
Release date: 6 January '98

ONE PLAYER

MEMORY CARD

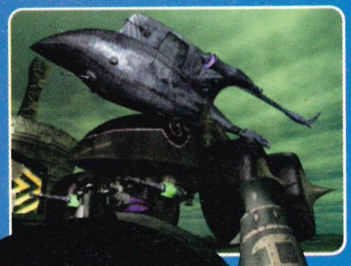
DUAL ANALOGUE

ASTER



AWRIGHT RODDERS!

Fantasy and sci-fi illustrator Rodney Matthews designed many of the enemies and even the buggy in Shadow Master for the programmers at HammerHead who put the game together. Most of his previous stuff was for more than 70 album covers for such rock legends as Thin Lizzy, The Scorpions and poodle-permers Magnum.





[Above] Beware – the chrome angelic beings are not your saviours! Shoot and run!



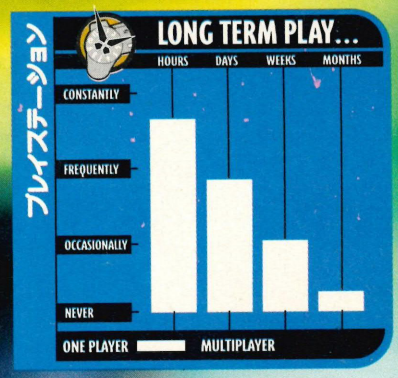
[Above] They make you itch all over, these little spiky spiders that travel in packs. Luckily, they're not too tough.



[Above] A cannon on a swivelling base gets "the good news" from your pulse laser.



[Above] The most common bad guys are the imposing, Aliens-inspired red guards.





[Above] Even ordinary plants have been mutated by the Shadow Master into manoeuvrable bendy laser turrets.

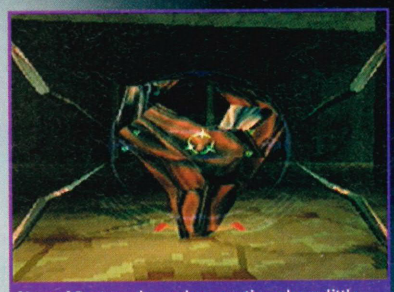


[Above] Not everything's as simple as aim and shoot – you've got to remember these symbols to unlock another door elsewhere.

"Use the kind of language that would make Heidi Fleiss blush!"

smooth; adding up to a convincing environment in which to do your killing. You can also see a long way into the distance, but that makes the absence of any zoom function as seen in *MDK* a bit sad.

In the end, *Shadow Master* is absorbing and technically clever, but doesn't come close to something like *Duke Nukem: Total Meltdown* for total playability. It's certainly worth a look if you enjoyed *Tenka*, but *Duke* takes the prize in this category every time.



[Above] Destroyed enemies sometimes leave little pods behind, containing anything from shield power to an alien plasma beam.





PLAY

Looks	8
Sounds	4
Gameplay	7
Value	7
Mecano	8

PLAYED **79%**

Nice try, but lacks variety...

Alternatively:
Duke Nukem (90%)
Lifeforce: Tenka (86%)

PLAY Q&A

The Q&A experts are always at hand to help, guide and provide calming drugs when you get a bit stuck. Drop us a line if you're in a gaming quagmire at *Q&A, Play magazine, Paragon house, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 2JS*

Dear PLAY,
I am stuck on level five of *Fade To Black*. I have everything except finding the oracle to which I must give the bird. I would appreciate your help.
Stephen Nachley, Cork

From the landing room, run to the same hall you visited first (with two Golems). Go through the first door on the left, here study the mosaic on the floor carefully – remember as you'll need it later. Use the teleporter and jump over the electric fields: you should be in the oracle room. Here you must 'follow the way of the oracle' – you must walk the same way as the mosaic on the floor of the previous room. You'll now hear a voice telling you to free the bird.

Dear PLAY,
I'm just crazy about *Total NBA '97*. Are there any cheats available for it?
Roy Byres, Dorset

To gain maximum skills on the Create Player screen, press Select + ⇦ + ■ + ● to raise your players skill bars.

Hello Sir!
I recently bought a copy of *City of the Lost Children*. Do you know how do get the key for the cashier's hut from Pelade?
James Deacon

Ask Pieuvre (Siamese twins) about robbing the cashier's hut. Leave by the door before you're locked in the cellar. Outside, talk to Pelade and he'll give you a key to the hut. Easy.

Dear PLAY,
In *Broken Sword* I'm stuck, as I do not know what to do when George returns from Syria.
Kevin Maple, Kent

We presume you're referring to Act 7: Montfaucon Church. Show the tarnished chalice to the priest and let him clean it. Next examine the right-hand tomb against the rear wall. Examine the scroll in the statue's hand and use the lens with the scroll.

STATION

CHEATS ▸ TIPS ▸ LETTERS

STATION MASTER'S SACKS ARE FULL AGAIN... WITH GAMING CHEATS GALORE. SEND YOUR OWN TIPS TO: *STATION MASTER, PLAY MAGAZINE, PARAGON HOUSE, ST PETER'S ROAD, BOURNEMOUTH, DORSET, BH1 2JS*. OR E-MAIL PLAY@PARAGON.CO.UK

ODDWORLD: ABE'S ODDYSEE

LEVEL SELECT

Hold R1 and press ⇩ ⇨ ⇦ ⇨ ■ ● ■ ▲ ● ■ ⇨ ⇦ at the first options screen, where Abe says 'Hello'.

VIEW FMV SEQUENCES

Hold R1 and press ⇧ ⇦ ⇨ ■ ● ▲ ■ ⇨ ⇦ ⇧ ⇨ at the first options screen, where Abe says 'Hello'.

NIGHTMARE CREATURES

CHEAT MODE

Enter ⇦ ⇧ ▲ ⇩ ● ▲ ■ ⇩ as a password.

PLAYING AS IGNATIUS

Level	Password
2	▲ ● ▲ ⇦ ▲ ■ × ■
3	▲ × ● ▲ ▲ ⇩ ■ ⇧
4	▲ ■ ▲ ⇦ ▲ ⇩ ⇧ ■
5	▲ ⇧ ▲ ⇧ ▲ ⇩ ⇩ ×
6	▲ ⇩ ▲ × ▲ ⇩ ⇦ ●
7	▲ ⇦ ▲ × ▲ ⇦ ▲ ●
8	▲ ⇨ ▲ × ▲ ▲ ● ●
9	● ▲ ▲ × ● ● ■ ×
10	● ● ▲ ⇨ ▲ ⇧ ⇩ ⇩
11	● × ▲ ⇨ ▲ ⇩ ⇦ ⇩
12	● ■ ▲ ■ ▲ ⇧ ▲ ■
13	● ⇧ ▲ ■ ▲ ⇩ ● ■
14	● ⇩ ▲ ⇨ ▲ ● × ⇩
15	● ⇦ ▲ ■ ▲ ▲ ■
16	● ⇨ ▲ ■ ▲ ● ⇧ ■

RESIDENT EVIL: THE DIRECTOR'S CUT

DOUBLE ITEMS

Highlight the 'Arrange' option on the game mode screen and hold Right until the pointer turns green. Begin game play and double the normal amount of items, including ink ribbons and ammunition, will be available.

MORTAL KOMBAT MYTHOLOGIES

Level	Password
2	THWMSB
3	CNSZDG
4	ZVRKDM
5	JYPPHD
6	RGTKCS
7	QFTLWN
8	XJKNZT

STREET FIGHTER COLLECTION

FIGHT AS CAMMY (STREET FIGHTER ZERO 2 DASH)

Select Vega in arcade mode and complete the game in first place with a score greater than 50,000. Enter CAM as initials on the high score screen. Select versus mode, Highlight Vega, and press Start three times.

RAPID RACER

EXTRA POWERBOATS

Enter _BOA as a player name. Note: '_' indicates a space.

DUCK MODE:

Enter _QAK as a player name. Note: '_' indicates a space.

HURRICANE MODE

Enter HURR as a player name.

ALL DAYTIME COURSES

Enter _DAY as a player name. Note: '_' indicates a space.

Race on specific daytime course

Enter D_ (number) as a player name, where (number) corresponds to the desired course number.

ALL NIGHT COURSES

Enter _NIT as a player name. Note: '_' indicates a space.

Race on specific night course

Enter N_(number) as a player name, where (number) corresponds to the desired course number.

ALL MIRROR COURSES

Enter RRIM as a player name.

Race on specific mirror course

Enter M_ (number) as a player name, where (number) corresponds to the desired course number.

ENABLE FRACTAL TRACK GENERATOR

Enter FRAC as a player name.

ALWAYS WIN RACE

Enter WINR as a player name.

PORSCHE MODE

Note: A memory card containing a saved game file from *Porsche Challenge* must be in the PlayStation. Enter BXTR as a player name.

COMMAND AND CONQUER

VIEW ENTIRE MAP

Hold R1 + R2 + L1 + L2 + ● + ■ while the game loads. Keep the buttons pressed until the mission briefing begins. The entire battlefield will be displayed. An alternate method to activate this mode is to pause game play and press ● ● ● ⇧ ● ■ R1 ● ● ●

INSTANT ION CANNON

Pause game play and press ⇨ ⇩ ⇦ ⇦ ⇩ ⇨ ⇨ ⇩ ⇦ × ■ ▲

INSTANT AIR STRIKE

Pause game play and press ⇨ ⇩ ⇦ ⇦ ⇨ ⇨ ⇩ ⇦ × ■ ●

INSTANT NUCLEAR STRIKE

Pause game play and press ⇨ ⇩ ⇦ ⇦ ⇩ ⇨ ⇨ ⇩ ⇦ × ● ×

UNLIMITED MONEY

Pause game play and press ⇨, ⇩ ⇩, ⇦, L1, ⇦, ⇨, ⇩, ⇦ for an additional $5000. Repeat this code as needed for unlimited money.

BONUS LEVEL

Enter PATSUX as a password on the GDI disc. A bonus level with $10,000,

MASTER

G-POLICE

ALL WEAPONS, UNLIMITED AMMUNITION

Hold L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 + ● + ▲ + ■ and press ⇦ at the weapons loadout screen after the mission briefing. A sound will confirm correct code entry. Note: The game will not progress past the current mission when this code is enabled. However, it may be used to try various strategies and options before playing in normal mode.



SECRET MISSIONS

Enter PANTALON as a password. The word 'Cheat' will appear in the lower right corner to confirm correct code entry. Enter the training menu to access six secret missions, including driving a car and also controlling a combat droid.

Level	Password	12	KIMBCHS	24	STEVEBOT
1	MADGAV	13	ANDYMAC	25	ANGUSF
2	DOLMAN	14	YERMAN	26	EUANLEC
3	SONAGAV	15	OLLIEB	27	EDFIRE
4	ACEDUF	16	THEYOLK	28	STUBOMB
5	JOJOGUN	17	TONYMASH	29	THONBOY
6	WENSKI	18	ANDYCROW	30	JIMMAC
7	SAEGGY	19	BIONIC	31	PUGGER
8	MAZMAN	20	TSLATER	32	ROSSCO
9	DAZMAN	21	IAINTHOD	33	CAKEBOY
10	DELUCS	22	JONRITZ	34	NIKNAK
11	ANDOOOO	23	CLAIREC	35	SAGLORD

extra tiberium, and 12 commandos will begin.

COVER OPERATIONS MISSIONS

Enter COVERTOPS as a password. This password may be enabled on either disc with different results.

JAPANESE NARRATION

Enter GODZILLA as a password.

TREASURES OF THE DEEP

ALL EQUIPMENT

Pause game play and press ⇩ ✕ ⇦ ■ ⇧ (twice) ▲ (twice) ⇨ (twice) ● (twice) L1(four times) R1(four times) L2(four times) R2 (four times)

LEVEL SELECT

Pause game play and press ⇩ ✕ ⇦ ■ ⇧ (twice) ▲ (twice) ⇨ (twice) ● (twice) ⇩ ⇨ ⇧ ⇦ ▲ ✕

ALL WEAPONS

Pause game play and press ⇩ ✕ ⇦ ■ ⇧ (twice) ▲ (twice) ⇨ (twice) ● (twice) R1(four times) L1(four times) R2 (four times) L2 (four times).

PANDEMONIUM 2

EXTRA LIVES

To gain an extra 31 lives enter IMMORTAL as a password.

Level	Password
1	MOACDCAJ
2	IDABIIOB
Boss 1	GCKAOFCA

FIGHTING FORCE

CHEAT MODE

Hold Left + ■ + L1 + R2 at the main menu. The words "Cheat Mode" will appear at the bottom of the screen to confirm correct code entry. Enter the options screen to access invincibility and stage select options.

CROC: LEGEND OF THE GOBBOS

LEVEL SELECT

Enter ULDLRLDULRRDRRU as a password.

SUPER PASSWORD

Enter LLLLDRRLLDRDLUR as a password to start at the final level of hidden island 5-B with all secrets.

TEKKEN 2

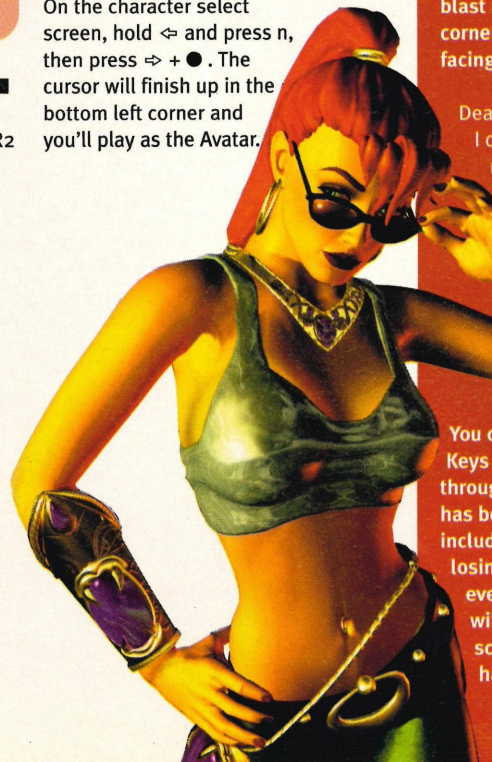
EVEN MORE POSES

Six of the fighters have have a third finishing pose after winning a fight: Law, Michell, Paul, P Jack, Jack 2, Kuma and Kunimitsu. Just hold both kick buttons down from the moment you win the fight, right through the replay to the end.

IRON & BLOOD

PLAY AS AVATAR

On the character select screen, hold ⇦ and press n, then press ⇨ + ● . The cursor will finish up in the bottom left corner and you'll play as the Avatar.



PLAY

Dear PLAY,
I'm totally stuck on the Edge Master mode of *Soul Blade*. I've completed it with every character except Taki and Mitsurugi. With both characters it says use the critical edge technique. I can only manage to get a fraction off their health, please help, cheers.
Russell Kimbell, Reading

Hitting these two can prove to be more luck than skill sometimes, but ensure that you carry the Mekkimaru weapon for the maximum damage and keep hacking away at their stubborn energy bars whenever you can. Bear in mind that you have to execute the entire Critical Edge combo to get the kill – just the first part of it alone won't be enough. Good luck.

Dear PLAY,
How the hell do you score a long range shot on *ISS Pro*. I've tried and tried, but I can't seem to get it on target or past the keeper. Please help.
Julian Nicholls, Fulham

Okay to score a 'straight crack' on goal juggle the ball around the defensive line and run diagonally to the centre of the 18 yard box from either the top or bottom. Keeping on a diagonal run, start to charge-up your power bar as you continue to surge forward. just as you reach the 18 yard line, blast a shot at goal aiming at the corner of the net which you're facing.

Dear PLAY
I can't get the two keys you need for the secret areas in *Crash Bandicoot*. I know the hyper password but I want to get them from normal play. Please can you help.
Marie Taylor, Fife

You can earn valuable Gems and Keys on various secret stages throughout the game. Once a level has been completed (not including Boss levels) without losing a life and braking open every crate, gem or key icons will be displayed on the map screen at the top (if that level has any secret areas).

MDK

MDK IS FANTASTIC AND STANDS AS ONE OF THE MOST ORIGINAL GAMES EVER MADE! THERE'S MORE GUNS, GUTS, GAGS AND GLORY THAN A JOHN WOO FILM AND WE'VE GOT THE SERIALISED COMPLETE WALKTHROUGH.



CHEAT

Before, we begin take a gander at the walkthrough feast your eyes on this juicy debug cheat, but don't use it unless you really must. When you get to the main menu screen, hold down all four shoulder buttons (L1 + L2 + R1+ R2) and press: ⇦ ● ▲ ⇧ ■ Then immediately release the shoulder buttons. Bob's a close relative! A level select.

WORLD 1

ARENA 1

Turn around and collect the 'Most Cowardly Power-Up'. Run up the corridor and kill the waving guard with your chain gun, then wait for the next two guards and kill the both of them. Now collect the 'World's Smallest Nuclear Bomb' from the left side of the arena and use it to blow up the Atomic Lock on the exit door.

ARENA 2

Zoom into the Guard on one of the parapets on the distant tower and shoot it to perform a 'head shot'. Repeat this for the next two guards, then wait for the Exploding Crate to drop down and come to rest and shoot it. Collect the grenade which drops down into the arena, then throw it at the red glass wall. Stand on the top step in front of the pedestal and jump and float with your Ribbon Chutes to collect the Mortar pick-up. Enter Sniper Mode and target the black hole above the centre glass wall. Fire a mortar into the hole and this will not only shatter the glass, it'll also kill those cheeky Guards. Run into the room and destroy the Guard Generator in the centre of the room and then the guards using the sniper mode, then collect the Dummy Decoy from behind the glass columns. Exit the area.



ARENA 3

Zoom in on the distant building. Target the area just above the closed door, and you will see three of the Exploding Crates. Shoot any of them to explode the structure and blow open the door. Now run across to the building's entrance, avoiding the Guards and the Tank as you go. Inside the building keep shooting the Guard Generator until it blows up, revealing the exit hole.

ARENA 4

Once in the Subway Station, destroy the Guard Generator to your left, then jump across the track and take out the one hidden in the alcove on the right. Collect the Grenades and then come back down to the Train. Cross over to the other side through the Train and approach the large door. When the Tank emerges, throw the Grenades at it repeatedly until it blows up. Then run into the Tank's room to find the exit.

ARENA 5

Kill the Guard, then shoot at the Console to the right a couple of times. Walk into the Ship and you will enter Bombing Mode. When in this state, bomb the crud out of everything using the crosshair. After the ship has dropped you of again, move towards the building in the middle, entering the two on the right or left to collect pick-ups. When you get near enough to the last building, a Tank will be flown down into the arena. A second ship will then appear above the building, so zoom in and target the Exploding Crate hanging beneath it. Shoot this to blow open the door and then enter it. Destroy the Generator and a Nuke pick-up will be revealed. Collect this and then exit the building. Run around to the rear of the structure and you will see the Exit Door. Use the Nuke to open the Atomic Lock and then leave.

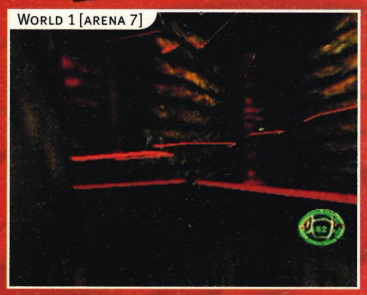


ARENA 6

Follow the canyon passage in this arena to the right and take out the five Flying Guards, then stand behind the last block on the right to shield yourself from the Cannon. Throw the Dummy Decoy to the left, then shoot at the Cannon while it is distracted. Once destroyed, jump onto the block and enter Sniper Mode. Now, select Mortars from your sniper weapon inventory, and fire a mortar into each of the four 'funnels'. After each Guard has been destroyed, the entire structure will explode to leave a chasm in the floor. Destroy the two Tanks which appear on the other side of the gap, then stand at the highest point on your side of the chasm. From this position drop down using your Ribbon Chutes to the bottom and the exit.

ARENA 7

Jump off the Glass Platform at the start of this arena and float down to the floor, avoiding the spikes. Use grenades to blow up the target dome in the centre of the room to reveal an air-vent. Jump onto the air-vent and you will float up with your Ribbon Chutes. When you reach the top of the air current, turn around until you're facing a long glass platform sticking out from a wall. Land on this and use the other Glass Platforms to work your way up to the top of the room. At the very top, collect the pick-ups and then leave through the exit.



ARENA 8

Follow the passageway round to the left and shoot the Alert Droid until a panel falls off it. Walk into the droid, then drive it back down the passage and around to the door which leads in to the corridor filled with Sentries. Now, while inside the Alert Droid, you can drive between them. Once you get to the end of the corridor jump past the big guard to the room beyond. Collect the 'World's Most Interesting




World 1 [arena 9]

Bomb' and throw it into the centre of the room. When all of the enemies have crowded round it, press 5 on your joypad to detonate it. Leave the corridor and collect the Nuke pick-up and use it to exit.

Arena 9

After floating up, stand on the highest section of the arena and face the distant tower above the glass walls. Zoom into the Mine Controller and select Sniper Grenades from your Sniper Mode inventory. Target the Controller's head and zoom right in on his face. Now shoot him and, if successful, you'll kill him with one shot. If you miss, or if you do not have any Sniper Grenades, you'll have to try again.

WORLD 2

Arena 1

When you can just see the Floating Guard, enter Sniper Mode and target the Guard. Use a couple of sniper grenades in quick succession to destroy him, then exit Sniper Mode and shoot the Alert Droid. When he has been killed, the glass ceiling will break and allow the World's Smallest Nuclear Bomb to drop down into the arena. Pick this up and exit.

Arena 2

Turn to the right so that you're facing the incoming fire, then use strafe to move left into the arena. Dodge the gun blasts and work your way across to the other side of the shooting range.

Arena 3

Walk up to the top of the ramp in the centre of this arena and wait for the Mortar pick-up to drop down. Collect this and turn to face the large glass wall. Enter Sniper Mode and target the rectangular hole with the chevron edges. Select the Mortar from your sniper inventory and fire one through the hole.

Arena 4

Walk up to the edge of the glass floor, then enter Sniper Mode and target the Grunt Foreman. Use mortars to kill him, then take out the two Warhead-Carrying Grunts to detonate the missile stockpile and open up the floor.


World 2 [arena 1]


World 2 [arena 4]

Arena 5

Kill the first Guard, then enter Sniper Mode and zoom in on the Second Guard hiding behind one of the far cannons. Walk down to the middle cannon with the Turkey Health power-up floating on top. Jump up on to the barrel then face down the length of the barrel. Fire repeatedly with your chain gun and enjoy the fall.

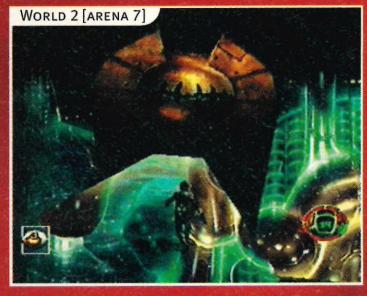
Arena 6

Float down to one of the floating platforms. Once you have landed, use the rest of the platforms to reach the Exit Door at the rear of the arena. If you fall off while you're moving, there are two air-vents that can be used to reach the platforms.

Arena 7

Float down to the first of the floating platforms, where the Leaping Guard is waiting. As you float, shoot at him to make him jump out of the way.

From this platform you will be able to attack the Leaping Guard without being hit by the Pendulum. From here, enter Sniper Mode and try to use the head-shot technique to kill the Leaping Guard, or just chase him around the arena and use your chain gun. A ramp will appear leading to the Exit Door. Jump across to this using the platforms, being careful to dodge the Pendulum.


World 2 [arena 7]

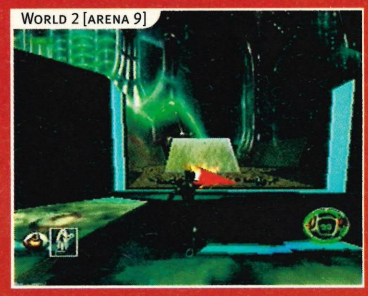
Arena 8

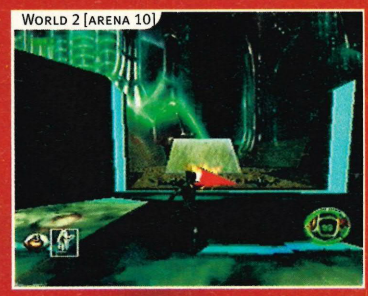
Shoot everything and collect any of the power-ups that drop down. After a while, a World's Smallest Nuclear Bomb will drop down somewhere into the maze of blocks. Collect it and move round to the back of the arena. Kill the Sentry and the two Alert Droids, then throw the Nuke onto the ground in front of the Atomic Lock.

Arena 9

After landing in this arena, walk round to the guards' Sky Sled landing bay and wait for one of the Sky Sleds to land. Jump onto it as the two Guards jump off and turn round to face them and shoot them both. This will then activate the Sky Sled, which will take off and fly around some battle arenas, where the Guards are practising their skills, before flying into the Mine Controller's tower. Once the Sled has stopped, it will drop you to the floor and allow you to enter the last arena.


World 2 [arena 8]


World 2 [arena 9]


World 2 [arena 10]

Arena 10

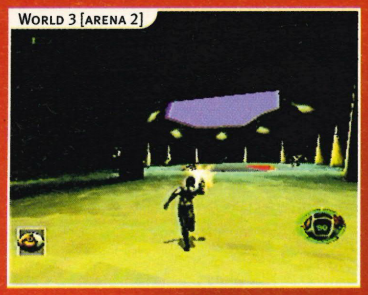
Follow the passageway up into the arena, then climb the ramp to your right to reach the upper platform and a health power-up.

From this position, face the window on the other side of the room and enter Sniper Mode. Zoom in on the Small Alien and shoot once to break the glass. Now zoom in further and shoot repeatedly at the Mine Controller until he seals the window. Once the window has closed, exit Sniper Mode and wait for the Controller to reappear in his Glass Ship. Shoot the Ship repeatedly until it explodes. The Controller will drop to the floor and run to each of the three doors in the arena to release a Guard. As he runs, shoot him with the chain gun until his health bar is depleted.

WORLD 3

Arena 1

Zoom in on the two Sentry Guns at the end of the arena. Destroy them both, then use the chain gun to kill the Flying Guard. Now float down into the arena. Take out the first set of Guards, then position yourself in the centre of the arena and zoom in on the two Doorstops that are holding the large door shut in the distance. Shoot both of these off and the door will crash down and destroy the Sentry. Head-shoot the two Suicide Guards who come running out towards you. Follow the ramp up and jump across to the upper platform. Kill the Leaping Guard, then climb onto the sloping platform on your left. Follow this up and jump over to the platform with the Super Chain Gun pick-up. Jump and float across to the other side of the arena to collect the Bones' Air-Strike pick-up. Drop back down to the arena floor and exit the level by the open doorway, killing any



surviving Guards in the arena.

Arena 2

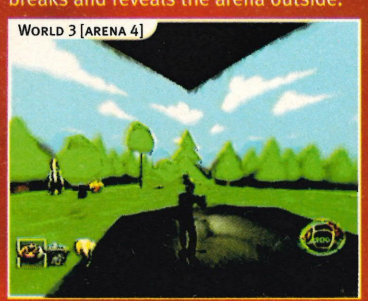
Kill both of the Sentry Guns, then destroy the guards to the left and right of the entrance. Run into the two alcoves behind the guards and collect the two pick-ups. Drop down into the drained pool and collect the Super Chain Gun. Climb back out of the pool and kill all of the Guards. Now walk behind the diving board to find the pool annex. Kill all of the guards in here and collect the Apple health power-up. Wait for the two Flying Drones and the Sky Sled riding Guard to break into the room through the window, and then kill the two drones. Throw the Dummy Decoy back towards the pool area to distract the Guard on the Sky Sled and then zoom in on his face and perform a head shot. Jump on to the Sled to collect the Worlds Most Interesting Bomb from the top of the room. Drop down the shaft to exit.

Arena 3

Kill both of the Sentry Guns, then enter the glass tunnel. Use a Homing Sniper bullet to head-shoot the Guard at the end of the tunnel and to break it open. Float down into the room and make your way to the room at the rear of the arena. Collect the Twister pick-up and then use your chain gun to shoot each of the three Guard Containers until they break. When the last one is destroyed, the pipe leading back in the main room will turn green and shatter. Come back out and jump on to the platform in the centre of the arena.

Arena 4

Collect all of the pick-ups in this tiny room and then shoot repeatedly at the wall with your chain until the room breaks and reveals the arena outside.





Use your grenades to blow up the seven Guard Generators in this room. Finally, kill the Sentry at the exit to unlock the door which leads to the arena.

Arena 5

Walk to the edge, then use Sniper Mode to shoot the two Sentry Guns.

Next, jump onto the Blue Triangular platform to your right, and enter Sniper Mode again. Target the Blue Exit in the top right of the arena and wait for the Floating Sentry to appear. Now shoot him until he's destroyed. Drop down to the floor and collect the Most Cowardly power-up. Watch out for the Leaping Guards in this room. Once they have been killed, jump up to the left red cave and follow the red passageway up to the green platform. Destroy the Guard Generator and the Alert Droid, then stand at the base of the arrow which points out into the arena. Follow the arrow by jumping across to the yellow platform in the middle of the room. Kill the two Guards here and then use the platform to jump across to the Blue Exit.

Arena 6

Stand at the top of the slop and zoom in and destroy the two Sentry Guards. Next, target the rotating Gun Pod and zoom in closer. Fire one shot at it to get its attention, the quickly shoot through its open front section to head-shoot the operator. Walk down the slope and kill all of the Guards. When you reach the end of the trench, jump into the air-current. At the top, quickly move forward and kill all the Guards at the top. Now, stand at the rear of the arena. Enter Sniper Mode and zoom in on the Sentry. Next, take out the two guards and then move up the trench's edge and collect the Apple power-up at the end. Four Flying Drones will fly down followed by two Guards on Sky Sleds. When they reach the end of the trench, they will pause and turn around to fly back up. Zoom in on them when stationary and use the head-shot technique to leave a Sky Sled floating in the air. Run back down to it and jump on. This will then fly you over to collect the Thumper and the Health power-up. Jump off the sled when it has stopped moving and exit through the door in the top left of the arena.



Arena 7

Stand in front of the glass window and select the Thumper from your inventory. Shoot the glass and then throw the Thumper down and jump down and finish the rest off. Once all of the enemies in this arena have been destroyed, jump up onto the block in the middle of the floor. Once on top, turn around until you can see a dark hole in a wall, above another block. Jump across to this block then enter the hole. Inside you will find a three-pointed object at the bottom of a slope, and a health power-up. Collect the power-up and then shoot repeatedly at the object to make it spin. Leave the room and the large door in the arena will now have opened. Walk through the newly opened door and collect the Sweet power-ups. At the end of the corridor, you'll find a large room with a strange Alien Structure guarded by two Leaping Guards. Kill both of the Guards and then shoot at the front left side of the structure with your chain gun so that it sprays red fragments. Once this section has collapsed, destroy the opposite side in the same way. When both sections have been destroyed, shoot the now exposed inside of the structure to reveal the Exit.

Arena 8

Follow the passageway to the left until you reach the arena entrance, guarded by an Alert Droid. Destroy this, then wait for the Guard on a Sky Sled to fly into the room. Use your chain gun to kill him and then jump onto the grounded Sled. This will then take off and fly you around the arena. As you move, turn on the spot and use your chain gun to kill the Flying Drones as they attack you. The Sky Sled will eventually crash through the far wall and you will enter the last arena.

Arena 9

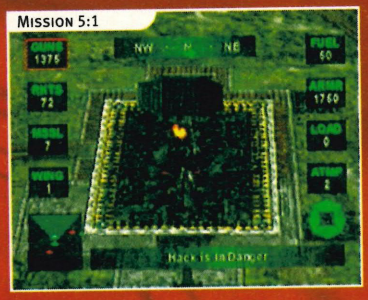
Stand in front of the large wheel on the rear wall of the room and kill the wave of growling mutts. The Mine Controller will start to rotate the wheel and wait for it to stop spinning. When it does, zoom in on the one of the four Red Domes that appear on the rim of the wheel. Shoot it off and then exit Sniper Mode. The remaining Domes will then shoot once before disappearing as the wheel starts to spin again. Repeat this process for the rest of the Domes: when they've all been destroyed, the Mine Controller will fall out of his room and explode.





NUCLEAR STRIKE

OKAY MEN, THIS IS THE BIG PUSH, THE THIRD AND FINAL PART OF A LONG AND ARDUOUS CAMPAIGN. IF YOU'VE SURVIVED THIS FAR, THERE SHOULD BE NO STOPPING YOU NOW...







CAMPAIGN 5: FORTRESS STRIKE

Password: ARMAGEDDON
Setting: Tiger Mountain, an undisclosed archaeological dig somewhere in eastern Siberia.

MISSION 1: PROTECT AGENTS

Make your way to the Northeast sector in question and swiftly take out the various T-55s, Gainfuls, APCs and BRDM-2s. Your agent will then climb into the driller and head to the building where Naja is awaiting. Upon arrival , the building will explode and both of your agents will be waiting to get picked up. It's also here that you'll switch to the Havoc chopper.

MISSION 2: DESTROY TOWERS

Destroy the nearest tower towards the west and then fly back down to the commando camp in the Southeast. Deploy the chopper to knock out the northern tower, and then use the ground units to block the eastern road. Now begin taking out each tower in turn. Go clockwise around the map and deal with each unit as quickly and effectively as possible. Once you get near to Hack's ground base , you'll have to break away briefly and assist him by taking out a tank that is threatening. also, take time out at some stage to fly east and expose the hidden Hokum helicopter that is concealed: it has better weapons and armour than the Havoc. The remainder of the mission is pretty simple.

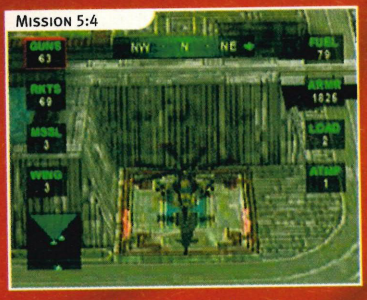
MISSION 3: EMP TRUCKS

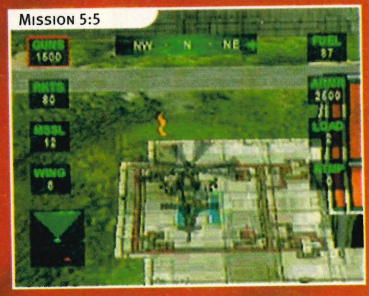
Do not follow the direct order of using Naja. By landing on the indicated LZ, she'll ride off on a motorbike and start dropping flares next to the relay trucks. However, each circle of trucks is guarded by T-90 tanks, which are very tough to knock out with guns only – Naja will ultimately ride away and die with very little you can do about it. Instead, just fly into the fortress and take out every truck and the surrounding tanks. You may well 'bite the bullet', but at least it won't be a mission SNAFU. Additionally, to get over the problem of not having any missiles, there is a super tank gun hidden inside a temple in the Southeast. Winch it up and rip 'em apart.



MISSION 4: GUARDIAN GUNS

Drop Cash at the LZ indicated on the map to assist you in destroying the guardian guns. Distract them while Cash gets to work and then take them out when they're vulnerable to attack. Use the rest of your high-powered weapons to take out the enemy vehicle fleets, towers, and any other threats that remain inside the fortress, then drop off Cash. He'll go clockwise around the perimeter , so hover close to the guardian guns and strafe to avoid their fire. Once Cash goes inside and exits, hit them with a wingtip and missile to destroy them. Make sure you have stacks of ammo, fuel, and armour before dropping off Cash.





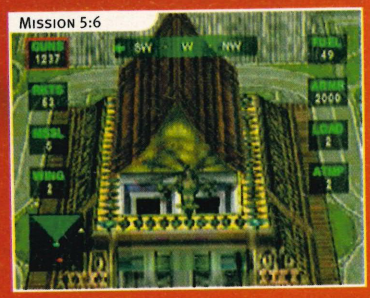
MISSION 5: DESTROY ICBMS

It is entirely random which towers contain the missiles, so it's a matter of trial and error. One thing is certain, however, whenever Andrea exposes the silos in the top-right and bottom-left, reinforcements will arrive and start attacking, so winch up Andrea quickly before she can come to any harm. Otherwise, blow the missiles to bits before they leave the launch pad.

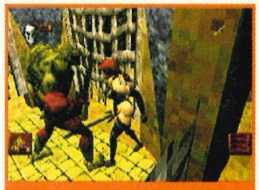
MISSION 6: SHIVA'S DAGGER

Drop off Andrea at the LZ to the left and she'll jump into a Hokum and follow you to the silo. Target the Dagger and fire everything you've got at it. After several missiles, wingtips and rockets, the Dagger will topple over and fire horizontally along the ground into the madman's base. Now just take out the guns around the silo to complete the mission. Beware, the area is crawling with Havocs, so pick them off before attempting the mission. When all danger is gone, fly back home for the cruddy ending. And that's it!



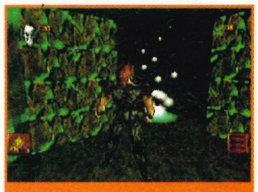


CHAFING DEATHTRAP DUNGEON



[Above] Red Lotus doesn't pull any punches. She just uses an enormous chopper to cleave the skulls of the dungeon dwellers.





[Above] The muscle-bound Conan look-a-like can get to new and otherwise inaccessible areas thanks to this teleport.

The warlock





of Firetop Mountain! Ring any bells? It was during the early Eighties that the concept of this multi-million selling interactive Fighting Fantasy series emerged, and now Eidos is perilously close to releasing an all-encompassing dungeon experience to match the claustrophobic ambience and close-quarter combat of the books. Although we previewed *Deathtrap Dungeon* a few months ago, it's now been changed and tweaked so significantly, we thought it was only fair to take another look. So what's the score with this 3-D action adventure?

First and foremost, emphasis has been put on producing a fun and simplistic control system. Combat is faster and more user-friendly – you'll now be able to block and deflect blows instantly by pressing one of the shoulder pads, as opposed to a combination of button presses seen in the earlier developmental copy. Another area of concern was the 'intelligent' camera, it's safe to say that the refined version we witnessed is far better.

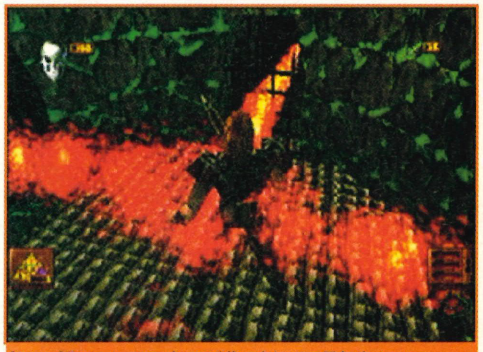
PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Deathtrap Dungeon
Publisher: Eidos Interactive
% Complete: 90%
Release Date: January '98

Lethal Weapons

The camera now pans out to give more of a panoramic view of the sprawling locations and frequently zooms spectacularly around your character regardless of their predicament. As the name suggests, and in keeping with the spirit of Ian Livingston and Steve Jackson's books, each of the ten atmospheric dungeons play host to a series of 'cunningly designed' traps. You play as either a Conan-type Warrior or the leather-clad Valkyrie bitch, Red Lotus (top name incidentally). The version we played still needs refining however, and control of both characters is still a little sluggish, but we've been assured that this will be rectified come the January release.

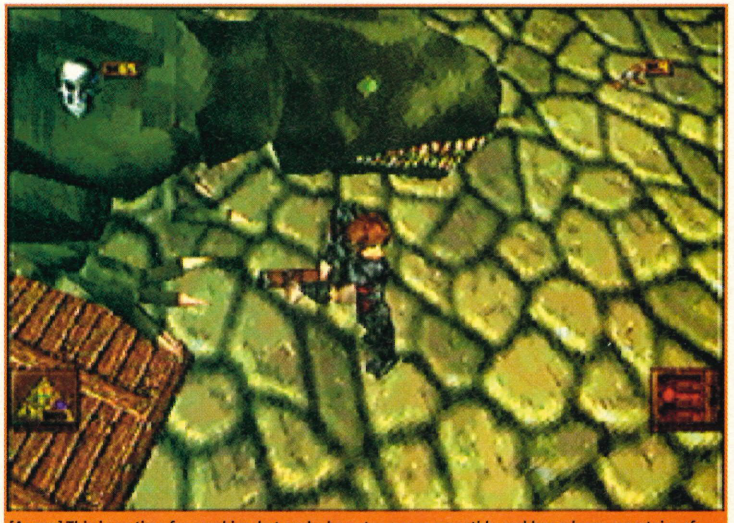
We like the fact that there's such a diverse range of monsters, ranging from dragons to zombies (55 types in total) and a hefty lump of puzzle-cum-trap-related tomfoolery too. It may not look as impressive as *Tomb Raider II*, but it has a depth of playability not usually associated with type of game, and consequently, we've ordered our tight leather pants, bodices and blunderbusses already in anticipation of this dungeon treat.



[Above] Traps, traps and more blimmin' traps. This three-way flamer lightly toasts your character. Best leg-it we say.



[Above] Potions and projectiles will play a major part in defeating the numerous inhabitants of each dungeon.



[Above] This is no time for aerobics, but each character moves smoothly and has a large repertoire of actions.



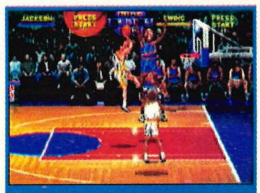
[Above] Play with the normal or enlarged heads of your favourite players.



[Above] Leap to enormous heights and perform physically impossible and hilarious slam dunks.

DUNKED

NBA HANGTIME



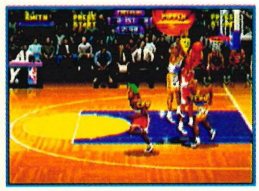
[Above] The action is always two on two, so up to four human players can thrash it out.



[Above] Pippen misses the basket, but leaps for he rebound.

Fans of the bizarre looking and hugely successful *NBA Jam* arcade series will be licking their lips in anticipation of the latest conversion to hit the PlayStation soon. GT is confident that this version will mimic the original in every way by incorporating all of the graphics and playability seen in the coin-op. As with every other NBA Jam game, the action will remain strictly two-on-two, where up to four players can join in thanks to the inclusion of a Multi-Tap option. The visuals and animation look good at this stage and already contain some spectacular and impossibly comic moves, including double dunks, spin moves and hooktop shots.

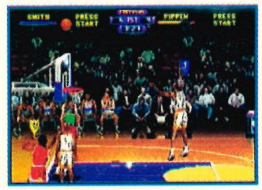
Expect all 29 NBA teams to put in an appearance, which will be represented with five man rosters. Additionally, there will be a host of secret codes, characters and an all new 'Create Player' feature, which should keep basketball aficionados satisfied.



He's On Fire!

Even at this preview stage, the action is fast, furious and end-to-end making for a relatively rule-free arcade experience. If you've never played a 'baggyball' game before, it doesn't matter a jot – if the gameplay remains the same anybody with two working hands will be able to pick up and play with the minimal of fuss.

One of the best scenarios occurs when you manage to get three baskets in a row. When this happens the player in question becomes 'On fire' which means any moves that he pulls off while in this stage are far more likely to result in a spectacular basket or dunk. This is fantastic when it happens to one of your own players, but a nightmare if an opposing player pulls it off. All the moves and options are present and correct and we can't wait to play the final version. Check out our full review in the next issue.



PLAY INFORMATION

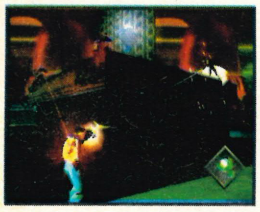
Name: NBA Hang Time
Publisher: GT Interactive
% Complete: 90%
Release Date: December '97

CALCULATED ONE



Even though it was a huge oversight on the part of ASC games not to sign up the "classic" Metallica tune of the same name for the soundtrack, otherwise *One* is shaping up quite nicely for its release. Since we saw it last most of the work has gone into refining the visual side of the action-packed levels. Moody lighting and constantly erupting pyrotechnics fill every step of the journey, and much detail has been added to the previously bare surroundings to enhance the film-like atmosphere of the game.





The plot concerns muscled hero, John Cain, who wakes on a medical table one night, without a clue who he is. All he knows is that somebody has replaced his left arm with some kind of bulky metal contraption and that he needs to find the person responsible.

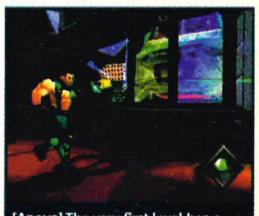
JUST ONE MAN

He feels only one emotion – rage – and this is where the game got its name. Throughout the adventure, anger plays an important part in your survival. How? Well, the more Cain kills, the more rage he feels; indicated by a throbbing crystal in the display. As this rage builds so does the power of the giant cybernetic laser cannon fused to his shoulder. The scurrying humanoid clones that plague you from the beginning, pointing their thin laser scopes at you, have no idea what's coming when your player is absolutely boiling over with hatred. Single-shot deaths from a rapid-firing, white-hot pulsing weapon take care of business surprisingly quickly. You can also punch and do spinning kicks if you like the up close approach, and you can get practically anywhere by climbing sheer walls, sliding along suspended ropes and doing other smart things like riding on the roof of a fast moving train while picking off villains.

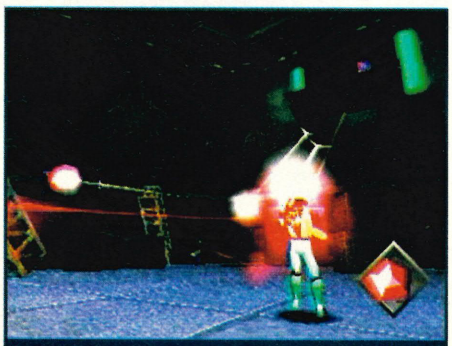
With the cameras panning all over the place, constantly changing the perspective of the game and those nicely realistic explosions, it looks like *One* shouldn't have any rival for cinematic presentation. Apart from a slightly worrying glitch we noticed where the game uses the wrong stick for movement when you switch to the dual analogue mode, *One* looks set to rage against the competition!



[Above] Rage is powerful, but no matter how mad you are those geysers of flame are going to be painful.



[Above] The very first level has a great big helicopter pouring streams of hot lead through the breaking glass as you escape. Scary!



[Above] The over-inflated red crystal only means one thing – John Cain is about to tear the place apart.



[Above] When we speak of massive pyrotechnical glory, we mean it. One can damage your eyes!

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: One
Publisher: ASC Games
% Complete: 90%
Release Date: December '97

SINGULAR YOUNGBLOOD

Amidst a deluge of new releases comes *Youngblood*, an interesting looking real-time mission based strategic role-playing game. What a mouthful. As you can see from the screen shots you guide a crack team of hardened criminals, assassins and scientist-type characters, who must hack, slash and think their way through 11 increasingly arduous levels; testing your reactions and strategic thinking to the limit. It's a bit like the recently acclaimed *Warcraft*. The action is set on various isometric landscapes, including: dense jungles, parched deserts, smouldering volcanoes and even a visit to the steamy confines of hell. The enemies become tougher and uglier as you make your way through each mission, and it's up to you and your motley crew to destroy them before the bad dudes, Giger and the traitor Dr Leviticus find the secret to global domination – the Drachma codex. Coo. From the menu, you will be able to choose six characters from a roster of 12, each has unique skills and power-ups, so careful consideration must be taken before hitting the battlefield.

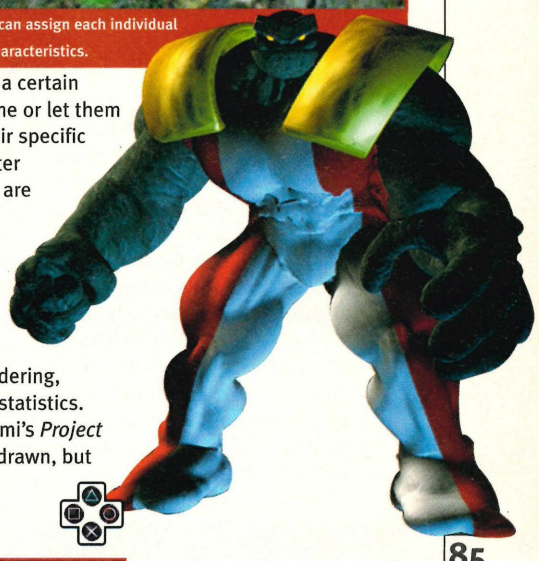
Warlords

Once you've chosen the meanest bunch of nutters imaginable, they must be built up, trained and honed to perfection; taking into account their strengths and weaknesses. There's a possibility that the action will be two player co-operative, but we can't confirm this as we write. One thing is for certain, the gameplay will involve sending characters individually or in tightly-knit groups across huge maps into battle. Even after sending a group or individual to do a certain task, you can take control at any time or let them automatically fight according to their specific attributes. We've had a lengthy potter around already, and although there are still a few rough edges that need smoothing down, there are enough encouraging elements in here already. These include large pre-rendered sprites, audible voices on screen and tons of juicy RPG elements, such as experience, plundering, conversational clues and character statistics.

Youngblood plays a lot like Konami's *Project Overkill* and many parallels can be drawn, but where that fell down was a lack of variety. Let's hope *Youngblood's* developers have learnt from this.

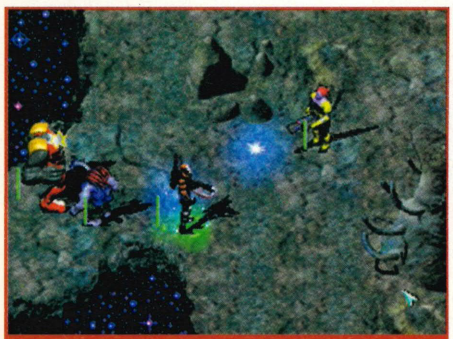


[Above] When enemies are encountered, you can assign each individual to fight in a set way according to their own characteristics.





[Above] Combat is played out in real time and involves various forms of combat including hand-to-hand and projectiles.



[Above] Here they are, absolutely bad asses! they make their way around the screen which is 'fogged' until each area is walked over.

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Youngblood
Publisher: GT Interactive
% Complete: 70%
Release Date: January '98

arena

views · questions · criticisms · ideas

VIEWS · QUESTIONS · CRITICISMS · IDEAS

GAMEplay

WIN THAT GAME YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED! PLAY HAS TEAMED UP WITH GAMEPLAY – BRITAIN'S LARGEST MAIL ORDER SUPPLIER OF PLAYSTATION GAMES TO AWARD A FREE GAME TO THE 'TOP LETTER' OF THE MONTH. SO GET SCRIBBLING WITH THOSE VALID POINTS AND YOU COULD BE IN WITH A SHOUT. THIS MONTH'S ARENA STIRS UP A MIX OF EMOTIONS ON VARIOUS GAMES-RELATED TOPICS. THE HIGHLIGHT BEING *FINAL FANTASY VII* – THE BEST GAME EVER. DISCUSS!

DEAR PLAY

Thank you. And I say again, thank you. Not only have I received a replacement copy of *Disruptor* for my faulty one (see Arena last month), but also a compensation copy of *Lost Vikings 2* from Interplay.

The letter I received from Rob Hooper of Interplay does not quite mention your name, but I know you must have been the instigator, as no one else knew of my dissatisfaction with its treatment. Apparently, it has done some good for everyone, as Rob Hooper says in his letter that he has looked into the procedures and has made a few changes to the way it deals with returns, which should stop others from suffering the way I did.



Wipeout 2097 is arguably one of the best link-up games of all time. Who cares? Well, opinion is divided as to the significance of this feature. We're all for it to continue as an essential element that often enhances the gameplay – but some of you, like Andy Brown, are still dubious.

Once again, thank you PLAY. My son (who spends his hard-earned money to buy your magazine) and I appreciate your help in this matter.

June Coleman, Bedworth

We're glad that your story had a happy ending, June. We're also glad that our involvement helped to get you the results that were short-coming before you contacted PLAY (prompting us to phone Interplay straight away).

DEAR PLAY

Your magazine is definitely the best one around. I had tried others before PLAY, but once I discovered this one, I started to buy it regularly. I bought the official magazine once, for the demos, only to discover they are not worth the extra two pound. It may be thicker, but only because it's full of rubbish. PLAY has all the information, but is not boring to read. Thank you for the magazine.

I am writing in response to all those people who think it is OK to buy pirate games. Do they not understand that the only people who benefit from this is the pirate? A friend of mine bought a pirate game, only to discover that it crashes seven out of ten times if it runs for more than half an hour. Now he wished he hadn't bothered. If everybody out there bought pirate copies, then the shops would stop selling official games, so then not even the pirates could get hold of them.

Now to the questions...

1. Should I buy *Resident Evil*, *Resident Evil: The Director's Cut*, or *Resident Evil 2*? Also, is *Resident Evil* coming out on Platinum?
2. Is the Mad Catz Steering Wheel compatible with *Rage Racer* and *TOCA Touring Car Championship*?
3. Would you advise me to buy *Warcraft 2*?

David Graham, Co. Down

Thank you for your views on PLAY and piracy Dave. It's good to know that youngsters like yourself, who perhaps don't have a lot of money to throw around, aren't tempted to buy third-rate gold discs.

Now to the answers...

1. You should own one version of the original *Resident Evil* – we recommend the *Director's Cut* because if offers more for your wedge. It's a bit early but *Resident Evil 2* looks like one of those games that everybody should own, so get playing the original now and then grab the sequel as soon as it comes out. *RE* is hotly tipped to join the Platinum range, but not before Christmas.

2. We tested the official version of the Mad Catz, which is essentially the PSX Steering Wheel by Gamester LMP, and that works fine.

3. Sure, if you like that sort of thing.

DEAR PLAY

I am writing to you about the Sharp XV-C1E projection system featured in issue 27. I am the owner of a 14 inch colour TV (which is pretty crap) and want to increase the size of the screen so that I can see every last detail of the game that I am playing. In issue 27, your brief review was quite good overall, but you did not mention the price. So what the hell is the price? Also, when will you be reviewing *Courier Crisis* (*Paperboy* for the Nineties or whatever you want to call it!), as the picture looks good, but looks aren't everything and I won't buy until you give the go-ahead.

John Chidgzey, Guildford

Ah yes, the price. Well, to own this top-notch bit of kit (which we're now using in the office to showcase new games) will set you back about £1,400! But don't panic, because if you give the guys at Roche Visual Communications a bell free on 0800 378563 they will tell you about the numerous deals they have on offer. The review of *Courier Crisis* has been delayed by BMG, but we'll have a score next month.

Dear Play

I've sent you this design of what I think the new Sony Gameman will look like, because you're by far the best magazine on the market. Sony has already got the Walkman and Watchman, so why not a Gameman? It would be a real kick in the teeth for Nintendo, whose Gameboy looked dated in the Eighties. The name Gameman would really highlight the fact that Nintendo products are aimed at boys, and Sony's at men. Would it be possible for Sony to use its new Mini Disc format? I'm sure Sony could have a crystal clear TV tuner add-on... the possibilities are endless (films, and music videos on Mini Disc), along with port-overs of all the best PlayStation games of course. And you could take it anywhere!

I really hope that you print this, it might get someone at Sony thinking.
Dave Phillips, Pembrokeshire

Dave, you're off your head! Just for the record, and for the benefit of our other readers, Dave sent us a crude photocopy of what can only be described as a Gameboy with a Sony logo under the screen, and four symbol buttons. We agree with you in principle though, the possibilities of a Sony hand-held are endless, but it could be a while before the technology needed would be cheap enough to produce a gizmo like this for a reasonable price for the mass market. Still, who knows?

Dear Play

The other month, I filled out your questionnaire purely to show my support for the link-up option, but it got lost and was never posted. I thought, never mind, I'm sure there will be loads of people voting for it and my vote won't matter that much. But after reading your reply to Mark Davis in issue 27, I went ape! You said that Sony only reckon that 2% of PlayStation owners use the link-up. Games with this feature died a death ages ago when played on your own. It's a good job for Sony that a good PC is so expensive, otherwise people like me who are gagging for a decent strategy game, like *Red Alert* linked-up, would have to look elsewhere for the ultimate gaming experience. If Sony continues to make developers drop the link option, a good test will be *Warhammer 2*, then a PC may be my only option. I sincerely hope your questionnaire proves that Sony is wrong, otherwise us 2% of dedicated link-up gamers are going to lose out badly! I hope you're listening, Sony!
C Dermott, Lancs

So do we, Mr Dermott. We must stress though that it isn't Sony demanding that the feature be dropped – more the case of tight deadlines restricting the time and attention needed to get the game working properly. Still, if our theories prove right and the are more link-up fans out there, then we must surely see a link-up come-back in more mainstream titles.

THE MAILBAG FILLETH

THE MAJORITY OF LETTERS THIS MONTH ARE ABOUT:

- LINK-UP GAMES. GOOD OR BAD? THIS MONTH WE HAVE LETTERS FOR AND AGAINST THE CAUSE. GET THE BALANCE RIGHT, THAT'S WHAT WE ALSO SAY!
- PLAY REVIEW SCORES – *FFVII* IN PARTICULAR. WERE WE TOO HARD ON IT? DID IT DESERVE MORE? AND IS IT REALLY THE GREATEST GAME EVER PROGRAMMED? EXPECT LOTS OF HEATED DEBATES IN THE COMING MONTHS, AND PERHAPS EVEN A FEW FIGHTS!
- MORE *F1 '97* GRIPES. LOOK IT GOT WHAT WAS COMING TO IT (ALBEIT DUE TO COMPLETELY DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES), SO LEAVE IT ALONE!

> **"*Final Fantasy VII* should have been awarded 120%!"**

Dear Play

I too thought link-up games would be a good idea when I bought my PlayStation but I now unfortunately have to agree with Sony. Link-up games really have no future for the majority of users.

Let's take a look at the reality for a moment (at least for me and I believe most PlayStation owners).

I bought a Playstation (in March '97) because I considered it good value for money, with games at a reasonable price. I now own a few games, a memory card and an extra controller – total spent, including the PlayStation, is about £350 – £400. I am happy with this and get hours of entertainment out of the system.

What if I wanted to play one of my games in link-up mode? Well, I need another PlayStation (£130) and a link cable (£20). OK, so I could ask my friend to bring over his PlayStation but what do we play? Oh yeah, we have to get TWO copies of the same game. Suddenly a £40 game costs £80! We wouldn't normally buy the same games. We swap and share them. OK, so I have two PlayStations, two games and a link cable, what do we play them on –

TOP LETTER

Dear Play

I would like to say thank you for a great magazine, but unfortunately I can't do this. The reason being your recent review of *Final Fantasy VII* which scored 93% and achieved a PLAY Classic award. I consider this to be quite simply shocking and utterly disgraceful that you could give this game such a score.

It should have been awarded at least 120%. I bought the game five days ago, and since then I have clocked-up over 60 hours of play – 20 hours non-stop on the first day (incidentally, my PlayStation has been chipped and I can play it for a wee bit more than 45 minutes at a time).

This game is quite simply THE most compelling and totally awe inspiring piece of multimedia that I have ever experienced. It is not simply a question of how did they manage it on PlayStation, but how did they manage it at all?

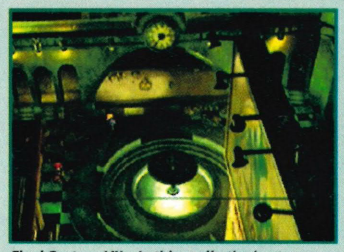
FFVII contains some of the most impressive CGI and animation ever seen. For example, the scene where Aeris dies is really quite moving, and as for the jaw-dropping scene of the weapon finally coming to life, I was speechless. The fact that Square had nearly every SGI machine in Japan working flat out is not really very surprising.

I must say that I had my doubts before buying the game. I am a *Soul Edge*, *Time Crisis* and *Rage Racer* player, and the very idea of turn-based combat is quite distasteful. But the action is fast and furious. Then there are the games within the game – chocobo racing, snow boarding and even an arcade beat-'em-up.

I can understand that your reviewer was working to a deadline and almost certainly didn't reach the end of the first disk. If this is the case then the review was based on only a third of the game, which is a pity. When I think about *FFVII*, the words 'sublime' and 'masterpiece' spring to mind. For once a game that truly lives up to the tremendous hype preceding its launch.

I am aware that every game is reviewed subjectively and on its own merits, but surely *FFVII* deserves a higher score than *Tomb Raider* or *Soul Edge*; both superb games.

When you review a game, your verdict is usually final, but don't you think that you could make an exception with the greatest game in video game history?
Charlie Skinner, London



***Final Fantasy VII* – Is this really the best game ever? Charlie Skinner from London thinks so, and he even has the balls to question out reviewing system. How do we respond? We give him the Top Letter award of course!**

When *FFVII* came in for review, we decided that the ultimate test would be to give to a reviewer that isn't really into RPG's as a rule – enter Graeme. If this game could impress Graeme then it is basically worth its weight in gold. He liked it, in fact he's still playing it now (which is a rare accolade in itself). I think perhaps you've become far too emotionally involved with the game and should perhaps get a grip of yourself (Aeris' death? Moving? Yeah right!). It's true, he didn't get to the end of the first disc, but then again 60% of the total gameplay is on the first disc alone, so to say that we have only reviewed a third of it is totally unfounded. It's also true that one American magazine (plus a couple of English ones) have given the game top marks... well squeeze me, but that is just ridiculous and totally unprofessional. To give a gave such as this 100% basically says that the game is totally faultless in every department, leaving no margin for error, and everybody is going to love it regardless. Is this really the case? Still, for opening an interesting debate and giving us a right good laff, you win this month's 'Top Letter' award, so get back to us with the game you want. Anyway, what do the rest of our readers think, should *FFVII* have got more?

we need ANOTHER TV... I'm sure you get the idea!

Don't get me wrong, I think link-up games are a great idea and I am truly sorry that Sony has stopped supporting them but the truth is most owners (98% according to Sony's figures) just can't afford to use the link-up option. The split screen approach is, of course, much more attractive to the average punter – all it costs is an extra controller (and not even that now that Sony has bundled it in with the machine itself!).

On a different subject, when do I expect to see *Premier Manager 98*? I am dying for a football manager game but have avoided *Player Manager* because of the poor review. Will we see it this side of Christmas?
Andy Brown, email

We can see where you're coming from Andy. The cost thing is what often deters people away from the link-up option. However, there are areas which you haven't explored. Let me explain. Link-up games are designed for groups of friends who all own a PlayStation (so no additional cost there). According to recent surveys, most houses are home to at least two TVs – so if yours isn't then the chances are one of your friend's is. Contrary to what you say, link cables are at most a tenner, which can be split over the participating parties (in other words get your mates to cough-up some of the sponds), leaving just the games. If one of you buys the game, likes it, and decides that the link-up option would be a right hoot, then another copy of the game can be rented out from a shop (often the popular choice), or can again be bought jointly amongst yourselves. PLAY believes that the link-up option is often as essential, if not more so, to the long-term enjoyment of the game than the single player, and should be explored. Some existing games have absolutely blinding link-up modes. But there are others, we feel, that would be much, much better if the option was available. What would be a solution is adopt the Japanese methods. Take *Motor Toon GP 2*. This came complete with a second disk as standard in Japan for easy link-up-ability. Now that would be something over here!

STRANGE MOMENTS IN VIDEO GAMES #2

THIS MONTH... NIGHTMARE CREATURES

THIS GOTHIC SPLATTER-FEST WENT DOWN A STORM WITH OUR REVIEWERS A COUPLE OF MONTHS AGO – ONLY TO BE DELAYED UNTIL JANUARY... ARSE! HOWEVER, WHEN BATTLING THROUGH THE FOGGY BACK STREETS OF LONDON'S CHELSEA, YOU COME ACROSS NUMEROUS ROTTING ZOMBIE-LIKE STREET-DWELLING – WHOM, CAN BE DECAPITATED WITH ONE SWIFT SWIPE OF YOUR BROADSWORD. HOWEVER ONCE THE OFFENDING 'HEAD' HAS BEEN REMOVED, THE ZOMBIES STILL COME BACK FOR MORE – EVEN MANAGING TO HOME-IN ON YOUR EXACT POSITION. WITHOUT ANY RUDIMENTARY SENSES STILL INTACT... HOW DO THEY DO THAT?



DEAR PLAY

They say that you have your best ideas whilst sitting on the throne! This must be correct because one day when I was entering another one or two sheets of 100 roll dilemma, I came up with this idea...

I am currently trying to buy a racing game, the choice being *Rage Racer*, *V-Rally*, *Rally Cross* or *Total Drivin'*. I decided to check out you reviews of each to help me. I found myself flicking open front covers and reading down each review list, only to find that I'd picked up the wrong mag. This happens three to four times on average and is very annoying. Therefore, would it not be a good idea to include the issue number that each game was reviewed in inside your Playlist?
Stig Hicks, Surrey

PS. Which of the four games mentioned would you choose?

It's good idea Stig, and we may well put it into practice soon. As for the racer, we'd say *Rage Racer*, but it's a close call. See if you can have a spin on each before investing.

DEAR PLAY

First of all, cheers from Greece for your fantastic mag. As this is the first time I'm writing to you, I would like you to inform me (and, I suppose, many other readers of the same preferences) why doesn't the Playstation have any good footy management games (at least I've seen none in your reviews). Also, what about *Premier Manager '98* and *Championship Manager* that are being advertised in the mail order companies? Are these games out yet, and if so, why haven't you reviewed them? Please answer because football managers are my favourite kind of games (ever since I bought my ZX Spectrum).
Agis Kermidas, email



Championship Manager 98 **– It would appear that there are many would-be Martin O'Neills out there that fancy take a football club from obscurity and propelling them into the Premiership. *Championship Manager 98* will allow you to do this, but when will it appear on PlayStation?**

A valid point Agis, where are the decent management games? *Player Manager* is the only game to date, and that was pretty average and frankly, not even up to David Pleat standards, let alone Roy Hodgson! No, we will be seeing *Championship Manager* by Eidos in mid-'98, and perhaps even *Sensible Soccer 2000*... well we can dream. Premier Manager should be April 1998. Remember Agis, even men with steel hearts love to see a dog on the pitch!

DEAR PLAY

Re-reading the April 97 issue, one reader wanted to know if he could connect a PlayStation to a PC monitor (which according to a reply in the June issue, he can't). My PlayStation shares a Phillips monitor with my Amiga 1200, and it looks and sounds fantastic. Another tip is that if you have trouble loading some discs because of the unreliability of the PlayStation laser unit, try taking the top off, and using a VERY small screwdriver to increase the laser power supply, by turning the VERY small gold circular thingy (on the left side of the unit) slightly clockwise. Continue until satisfied, or cooked. Stay good!
Gary Storm – Sci-Fi Channel

Yes, but HOW do you connect your PlayStation to this monitor – because if it is the kind of monitor I'm thinking of, then it has phono sockets in the back for easy access. However, the set-up is slightly different for the PC ones. We can only take your word on your nutty DIY tips, and other readers should be warned to try this at their peril.

DEAR PLAY

What is happening to the racing game genre? They are becoming too unrealistic and totally unplayable. *F1 '97* in GP mode was the first culprit. Forgive me if I am wrong but when I watch a Grand Prix on the TV the cars JUST DON'T go spinning out of control when they go over a blade of grass! And now we have *V-Rally* which is even worse and is not really a racing game at all. Why? Well because too much emphasis and priority is made on whether you can complete the course without rolling or spinning the car and there is a real sense of achievement when you do this regardless of what position you come, so you end up racing against yourself and nobody else... weird. So just what frictionless planet are these programmers from, and who taught them physics?
The Manchester Moaner
PS. More moans to follow as and when...

We can't wait.

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PLAYSTATION IMPORTS
- Time Crisis
- Final Fantasy VII
- Soul Edge
- Rage Racer
- Bushido Blade
- Street Fighter Collection
- Street Fighter X
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- Gun Bullet
- Bio Hazard
- Marvel Super Heroes
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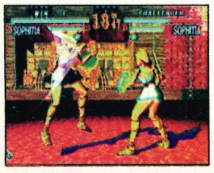
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PLAYLIST

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

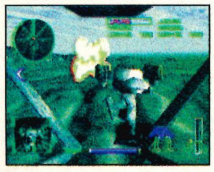
These are our very own top tens for each genre and do not conform to the rating they were originally given. It's simply what the team feels are the best games on PSX.

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%

* Indicates an import review

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 *Golf2*).
Actua Golf 2	1-4	●							80%	Not as good graphically, but still great fun.
Actua Soccer	1-2	●							94%	Slick looking footy sim, now dated.
Actua Soccer: Club Edition	1-2	●							62%	Cynical re-badged version of above.
Actua Soccer 2	1-4	●	●						90%	The best football game on the PlayStation!
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.
Broken Sword 2	1	●					●		90%	Beautifully intuitive point 'n' clicker.
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!

GAME		SCORE	WE SAY...
Colony Wars	1	92%	Gorgeous, totally playable space blasting.
Command & Conquer	1	79%	PSX version slow and sorely lacking.
Contra: Legacy of War	1-2	62%	Scappy arcade shoot-'em-up from Konami.
Coolboarders	1	82%	High speed stunts on a snowboard.
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.
Discworld II	1	80%	Humourous off-the-wall adventuring...
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 Fantasy 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!
Formula Karts: SE	1-2	75%	Too simplistic for mass appeal.
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!

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. Actua Soccer 2 90%
2. Smash Tennis 86%
3. Total NBA '97 92%
4. Soccer '97 82%
5. ISS Pro 84%
6. Actua Golf 88%
7. Int Track & Field 85%
8. Victory Boxing 90%
9. VR Baseball '97 80%
10. Sampras Extreme 90%

STRATEGY & ADVENTURE



1. Tomb Raider II 95%
2. Resident Evil 95%
3. FFVII 93%
4. Tomb Raider 94%
5. Broken Sword II 90%
6. Nightmare Creatures 90%
7. Warcraft 2 86%
8. Fade to Black 90%
9. LBA 83%
10. Broken Sword 84%

playback

PUZZLE & PARTY GAMES



1. Puzzle Fighter 90%
2. Bust-A-Move 2 88%
3. Kurushi 88%
4. PaRappa the Rapper 82%
5. Bubble Bobble 85%
6. Worms 92%
7. Pro Pinball 90%
8. Supersonic Racers 91%
9. Atari Collection 81%
10. 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...
Incredible Hulk, The	1	●							45%	Nothing 'incredible' about it. Poor.
Independence Day*	1-2	●		●	●				47%	Wretched film-inspired nonsence!
International Moto X*	1-2	●		●					77%	Moderate motorbike racer.
Int Superstar Soccer Deluxe	1-4	●	●						83%	16-bit footy conversion, no frills.
Int Superstar Soccer Pro	1-2	●							84%	One of the best football games on PSX!
Int Track & Field	1-4	●	●						85%	Superb multi-player sports special!
In The Hunt*	1-2	●							69%	Miserable sub shoot-'em-up. Tosh!
Iron & Blood	1-2	●							75%	Passable medieval beat-'em-up.
Iron Man & Manowar	1-2								47%	As much fun as genital surgery!
Jet Rider	1-2	●							85%	Super-fast jetbikes, poor graphics.
J-League: Winning Eleven	1-2	●							73%	Early and now extremely dated 3-D football.
Johnny Bazookatone	1	●							85%	He's supposed to be cool. He's not.
Jonah Lomu Rugby	1-2	●	●						86%	Accurate and enjoyable rugby sim.
Judge Dredd	1-2	●						●	62%	Fantastic license, disappointing game.
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.
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!
Monopoly	1-4	●	●				●		75%	A fun and faithful conversion of the original.
Monster Trucks	1	●							74%	Competent, but dull off-roader.
Mortal Kombat 3	1-2	●							93%	Don't buy this, get *MK Trilogy* instead.
Mortal Kombat Trilogy	1-2								92%	Gory orgy of 16-bit gameplay. Not bad.
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.
Nascar '98	1-2	●			●			●	82%	The complete Nascar package.
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 '98	1-8	●							71%	Cool graphics, slushy gameplay.
NHL Face Off	1-2	●							78%	Admirable attempt, but a bit cumbersome.
Nightmare Creatures	1	●							90%	A fantastic, full-on splatter flick!
Note, The	1	●							72%	Above average first person adventure.
Novastorm	1	●							38%	Contemptable FMV-spooled shoot-'em-up arse!

GAME									SCORE	WE SAY...
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.
Pandemonium 2	1	●							72%	Linear, but lovely-looking platformer.
Panzer General	1-2	●					●		73%	Strategy war game for dedicated anoraks.
PaRappa the Rapper	1	●							82%	Tap the buttons, sing the rhyme. Brilliant!
Peak Performance*	1-2	●				●		●	85%	Blistering 28-car joyriding – a great laugh!
Perfect Weapon	1	●							65%	Slothful 3-D adventure, lacking visual flair.
PGA Tour '96	1-8	●							86%	Well, it's golf innit. Buy the updated version.
PGA Tour '97	1-4	●							81%	Extremely able golfing sim. It's got the lot.
PGA Tour '98	1-4	●	●						63%	Best-looking golf, yet hampered gameplay.
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.

LONG TERM TEST



NAME: ACE COMBAT 2
LENGTH OF TEST: 6 MONTHS
REPLAY VALUE: 4/5

EDGE-OF-YOUR-SEAT ACTION FLIGHT GAMES JUST DON'T COME MORE ACCOMPLISHED THAN THIS GEM FROM SOFTWARE GIANTS, NAMCO. EVEN SEVERAL MONTHS ON FROM WHEN WE FIRST REVIEWED IT ON JAPANESE IMPORT, THE APPEAL AND THE THIRST TO SUCCEED IS STILL THERE. NOW THAT THIS HAS JUST ARRIVED OFFICIALLY, WE RECENTLY STEPPED BACK INTO THE COCKPIT FOR MORE AERIAL ANTICS AND DAREDEVIL DOG-FIGHTS. ADMITTEDLY, THE GAME SEEMS A LOT SLOWER WHEN STARTING OUT THAN IT DID ON AN NTSC MACHINE. EVEN WITH THE BOG-STANDARD PLANES, IT STILL FLEW AT A REASONABLE PACE, BUT ON PAL IT SEEMS SLOW AND RESTRICTED. THIS FEELING DOESN'T LAST TOO LONG THOUGH, AS ONCE YOU EARN ENOUGH FOR THE F-16, THINGS REALLY START TO TAKE OFF! THE IMMENSE REPLAY VALUE HERE IS THE VARIED MISSIONS AND THE SECRET STUFF TO FIND AS YOU GO. FOR EXAMPLE, COMPLETING CERTAIN MISSIONS BY FULFILING ALL OF THE OBJECTIVES AND TAKING-OUT BONUS GUN TURRETS WILL EARN YOU HIDDEN MISSIONS. THERE ARE ALSO LOADS OF PLANES TO UNCOVER, MEDALS TO GAIN AND EXTRA FEATURES TO UNLOCK. THE CONTROL IS ALSO TOP-NOTCH. IT'S AS IF THE DUEL ANALOGUE CONTROLLER WAS MADE FOR THIS GAME AS YOU CAN PERFORM AERIAL STUNTS THAT WOULD MAKE BIGGLES LOOK IN DESPERATE NEED OF MORE AIR MILES. OVERALL, A GREAT GAME THAT IS STILL FLYING HIGH!

playback

Joypads



1. Dual Analogue — Sony
2. PSX 1 — LMP
3. Station Master — Logic 3
4. Cyclone — Phase 9
5. Program Pad — Interact

Light Guns



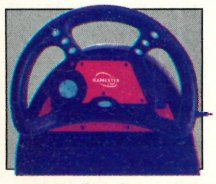
1. G-Con 45 — Sony
2. Erazer — Fire
3. Predator — Logic 3
4. PXS Light Gun — LMP
5. Protector — Logic 3

Joysticks



1. Dominator — Logic3
2. Pro Arcade 2 — Fire
3. EagleMax — ActLabs
4. Arcade Stick — Namco
5. PS Arcade — Interact

Wheels



1. PSX Wheel — LMP
2. Top Gear — Logic 3
3. NegCon — Sony
4. VRF1 — Fire
5. Per4mer — import

Please note, in the Playlist a '*' means that an import copy of the game was reviewed and may vary.

GAME								SCORE	WE SAY...
Space Jam	1-6		●					39%	Pants cartoon basketball game, based on film.
Speedster	1-2	●			●		●	80%	Overhead racer with okay handling, but slow.
Spider*	1	●						75%	'On rails' arachnid platformer. Can get boring.
Spot Goes to Hollywood*	1	●						72%	Uninspiring cartoon platform game. Yawn.
Stahlfeder*	1	●						65%	Old-style vertical shoot-'em-up – too easy.
Star Gladiator	1-2	●						88%	Competent beat-'em-up from Capcom.
Starblade Alpha	1	●						68%	Lots of blasting action, no control at all...
Starfighter 3000	1							85%	A decent stab at a sci-fi shooter/strategy.
Starwinder	1	●						77%	Linear space-based racer. Lacks excitment.
Steel Harbinger	1	●						80%	Controlling a violent nympho isn't much fun.
Street Fighter Alpha	1-2	●						93%	Classic 2-D beat-'em-up, now been replaced.
Street Fighter Ex Plus	1-2	●						91%	It's absolutely EXcellent!
Street Fighter: The Movie	1-2	●						35%	The original PLAY score was a misprint! Crap!
Street Fighter Zero 2*	1-2	●						94%	Simple, colourful graphics – total gameplay!
Street Racer	1-8	●	●		●			84%	Childish *Mario Kart* wannabe, good multi-player.
Strikepoint*	1-2	●			●			54%	Shoddy and unconvincing helicopter sim.
Striker '96	1-4	●	●					89%	Extremely playable, but now extremely dated.
Suikoden	1	●						80%	Endearing and lasting Manga RPG.
Super Puzzle Fighter 2*	1-2	●						90%	Fan-bloody-tastic Japanese puzzler!
Supersonic Racers	1-8	●	●					91%	Chaotic Wacky Races-style multi-player romp.
Swagman	1	●						82%	Proficient cutesy overhead cartoon adventure.
Syndicate Wars	1-4	●	●			●		85%	I love the smell of napalm in the morning!
Tail Of The Sun*	1	●						84%	Innovative caveman adventure. Badly presented.
Tekken	1-2	●						95%	Was the ultimate 3-D beat-'em-up, still decent.
Tekken 2*	1-2	●						95%	Ultimate 3-D beat-'em-up – essential purchase!
Tempest X3	1-2	●						86%	Ancient coin-op brought up-to-date. Good fun.

GROOVY GADGETS

WELCOME TO A BRAND NEW SECTION WHEREBY PLAY REVIEWS THE LATEST PLAYSTATION PERIPHERALS TO HIT THE STREETS. WE TEST THEM ON LOOKS, STRENGTH AND HOW WELL THEY PERFORM WHAT THEY ARE SUPPOSED TO, AND THEN RATE THEM ACCORDINGLY.

PROGRAMPAD

SUPPLIED BY: Interact
PRICE: £29.99



This is by far the snazziest PlayStation pad to date. Housed in an attractive transparent casing, the ProgramPad comes complete with ten programmable fire buttons and programmable digital directional control that can be saved in the non-volatile memory for easy access at a later date. This is a welcome feature, although we can't think of many instances where you'd need to save commands – unless of course it's to pound your mates with King's ten-hit combo in *Tekken 2!* This pad also has auto-fire and slow-motion capabilities and is very durable (believe us, we've dropped it from a multi-story car park!). In fact, there are few third-party control pads that are better than this. A great buy!

PLAY OVERALL ●●●●○

PIRANHAPAD



SUPPLIED BY: Interact
PRICE: £19.99

This company has certainly gone for the chunky approach with its new range of joypads. Although this doesn't boast half the functions of the ProgramPad, it is a rock-solid, simplistic affair that can take any punishment you'd care to dish out. The Piranha Pad comes with the now-standard (in all third-party pads anyway) auto-fire and slow motion functions (PLAY has never, ever felt the need to use them, but still!), but the real attraction here is the durability that never comes into question. There's certainly no-real incentive to fork out for this, but as a no-frills alternative, it's a worthwhile purchase.

PLAY OVERALL ●●●○○

GAME		SCORE	WE SAY...
Tennis Arena	1-4	84%	Slick, addictive and playable...
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.
Test Drive 4	1-2	86%	Enough to blow your gasket!
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.
Tomb Raider 2	1	95%	A fine sequel that easily surpasses the first.
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!

LONG TERM TEST



NAME: WIPEOUT 2097
LENGTH OF TEST: 13 MONTHS
REPLAY VALUE: 4/5

THIS GAME KICKED-ASS BIG TIME WHEN IT FIRST APPEARED ALL THOSE MONTHS AGO. NOW THAT A PLATINUM RELEASE IS LOOMING, IT IS STILL SAFE TO SAY THAT *WIPEOUT 2097* IS STILL ONE OF THE BEST RACING GAMES ON THE PLAYSTATION. EVEN TO THIS DAY, THE INCREDIBLY QUICK PACE AT WHICH THE WHOLE THING MOVES ENHANCES THE ULTIMATE GAMESPLAYING ADRENALINE BUZZ THAT THIS GAME GENERATES. ESPECIALLY WHEN USING THE NAMCO NEGCON. CONTROLLING YOUR SHIP IN THIS ULTRA SENSITIVE WAY SHEDS SECONDS OFF OF YOUR LAP TIMES, AND YOU COULD BE CRUISING ALONG QUITE HAPPILY AND THEN SUDDENLY, OUT OF THE BLUE, YOUR CONCENTRATION LAPSES AND YOU HIT THE EDGING – BANG! YOU COME BACK DOWN TO REALITY WITH A JUDDER, BLINK, AND THEN REV-UP ONCE MORE! GRAPHICALLY IT CAN STILL HOLDS ITS OWN AGAINST MANY OF TODAY'S RACING GAMES, AND AS FOR THAT MUSIC – PURE SEX! THE AREA IN WHICH THIS GAME MOST EXCELLED THOUGH WAS THE LINK-UP MODE. IF YOU WERE FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO HAVE TRIED THIS THEN YOU'LL KNOW THAT NOTHING ELSE COMES CLOSE TO BREAKING THAT TENSE RIVALRY BETWEEN TWO RACERS, THE SLIGHTEST MISTAKE RESULTING IN A COSTLY CASE OF CATCH-UP. WE AT PLAY WOULD STILL PAY FULL PRICE FOR *WIPEOUT 2097*, FOR £19.99, YOU'D BE STARK, RAVING BONKERS TO MISS OUT! PLUG IT IN, TURN UP THE VOLUME AND BE AMAZED!

LIGHTBLASTER

SUPPLIED BY: Interact
PRICE: £24.99

The market is slowly becoming swamped by third-party guns – the sad truth is, unless it is compatible with *Time Crisis*, then it might as well not exist at all. As a light gun, the LightBlaster is decent enough. Not much to look at, but it is accurate with the scattering of shooting games already available and comes with intelligent reload. This means that it automatically reloads when not firing for a short space of time. It also has attractive LED lights that flicker enthusiastically when you're blasting seven shades out of the on-screen scum-bags. Not as accurate as the G-Con 45, and indeed a bit over the top in the looks department, but this can at least hold its own against most of the other light guns.



PLAY OVERALL ●●○○○

REAL ARCADE LIGHT GUN



SUPPLIED BY: WILD IMPORTS (01908 640040)
PRICE: £44.99

An amazing bit of kit! So powerful that it comes with its own mains supply, this is basically as close to the coin-op gun used on *Time Crisis* as you're going to get on PlayStation. The Real Arcade Light Gun is a near replica of the *Time Crisis* gun right down to realistic recoil and foot pedal. We did find that the mass influx of leads can be a hindrance and the noise of the gun recoiling can be a bit off-putting after a while, but fans of the arcade *Time Crisis* that are looking to simulate that experience at home will be amazed at just how close this model is. The only major drawback is the accuracy which isn't as sharp as it is using the G-Con 45, but this is still a great bit of hardware that should be checked out.

PLAY OVERALL ●●●●○

ARCADE STICK



SUPPLIED BY: Ascii
PRICE: £34.99

Arcade-style sticks are everywhere, so why buy this one? Well, nothing stands out as being particularly original or special, but the appeal lies in the construction. This stick is made for a severe beating, the actual stick is solid, strong and can be yanked to and fro without any sign of wear. There are no gimmicky features here, just a plain and simple stick – which is essentially all you need. The only fault we found – and this is very picky – but it sounds rather hollow when you bash the buttons. They could have done with being a bit more rigid, with powerful spring to make it actually feel as though you're connecting. But this still remains one of the best, no-nonsense, don't mess with me sticks on the market!

PLAY OVERALL ●●●●○

WIN! PLAY has got five Arcade Sticks to give away courtesy of ASCII Entertainment. All you have to do to win is answer the following simple question and send it, along with your name and address to:

Give Me Some Stick, Play Magazine, Paragon Publishing, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth BH1 2JS.

Q. WHICH FORTHCOMING NAMCO FIGHTING GAME WILL BE IDEAL TO USE THE ARCADE STICK FOR?

LONG TERM TEST



NAME: SOVIET STRIKE
LENGTH OF TEST: 12 MONTHS
REPLAY VALUE: 1/5

THE FIRST 'STRIKE' GAME TO APPEAR ON THE 32-BIT MACHINES WAS SLIGHTLY DISAPPOINTING TO LOOK AT, BUT THE WINNING GAMEPLAY CARRIED IT. HOWEVER, THERE IS VERY LITTLE TO ENTICE YOU BACK AFTER THE MISSIONS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED. SATISFACTION CAN BE GAINED BY EXPLORING NEW AND REMOTE AREAS THAT PERHAPS YOU DIDN'T HAVE TIME FOR FIRST TIME ROUND, BUT THE EXCITEMENT FACTOR IS NON-EXISTENT. AFTER ONE OR MAYBE TWO COMPLETIONS, YOU'D BE WISE TO SELL IT!

GAME								SCORE	WE SAY...
Tunnel B1	1-2	●						87%	Glitzy graphical showpiece. Short lived.
Twinbee Deluxe Pack*	1-2	●						65%	Vivid Japanese cartoon shoot-'em-up. Naff.
Twisted Metal	1-2	●			●			78%	Visually scrappy, but paved the path for...
Twisted Metal 2 (World Tour)*	1-2				●			88%	Remarkably compelling two player blast-a-thon!
Vandal-Hearts*	1	●						81%	Very Japanese fantasy strategy RPG. Bloody.
Victory Boxing	1-2	●						90%	Fast and smooth rendition of the 'sport.'
Viewpoint	1	●						74%	Glossy isometric shoot-'em-up. Bad slowdown.
Virtual Golf	1-4	●						61%	Drab golf sim, *Actua Golf 2* is much better.
Virtual Pool	1-2	●				●		68%	Great PC game, awkward and slow on PSX.
V-Rally	1-4	●			●		●	87%	Fast and accurate rally sim with great split screen.
VR Baseball '97	1-2	●						80%	Excellent and comprehensive sim of the sport.
V-Tennis	1-2	●						75%	Bland tennis game. Get *Sampras* or *Smash Court*.
Warcraft 2: The Dark Saga	1	●						86%	Utterly compelling medieval strategy fest!
Warhammer: SOTHR	1	●						82%	Unbelivably complex, but rewarding war game.
Warhawk	1	●						68%	Distinctly adverage helicopter shoot-'em-up.
WCW Vs The World	1-2	●						79%	Best wrestling game on PSX, until the next one.
Wild Arms*	1	●						85%	Hugely enjoyable RPG with serious challenge.
Williams' Arcade's Greatest	1-2	●						84%	Decent retro pack. Best: *Robotron*, *Defender*.
Wing Commander III	1	●						82%	Expensive space opera, involving plot.
Wing Commander IV	1	●						67%	Even more costly, but minus originality.
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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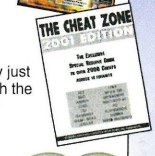


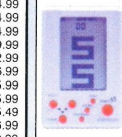
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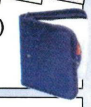
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