

GTA • TEKKEN 3 • BUSHIDO 2 • MASTERS OF TERAS KASI

issue thirty February '98

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PLAY

プレイステーション

The UK's Best Unofficial PLAYSTATI gazine!

BUSHIDO BLADE

EXCLUSIVE! FIRST OFFICIAL REVIEW! The deadly slashing blade comes to PlayStation!

ONE

EXCLUSIVE! Don't make him angry... EXCLUSIVE REVIEW inside!

EVERY NEW PSX GAME REVIEWED!

RESIDENT EVIL 2

ZOMBIES! The ultimate preview of the ultimate game!

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91%

"The one and only great wrestling game. Period."

Total PlayStation

88%

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

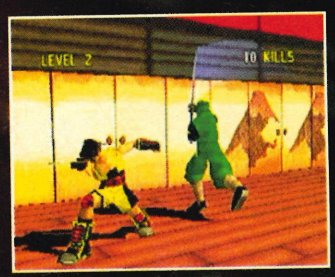
PlayStation Plus

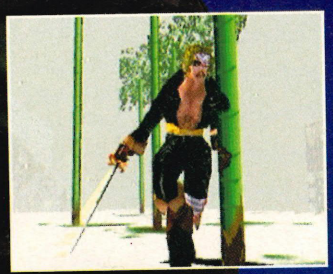
You only have a split-second to stop him.





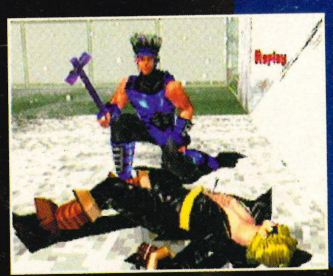
BUSHIDO BLADE

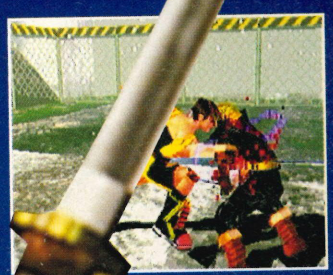






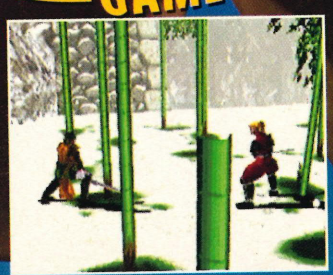


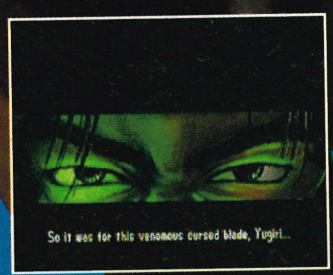


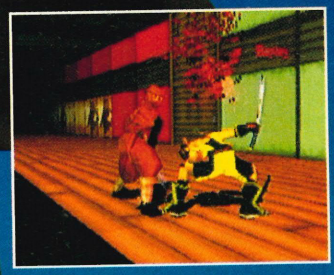


THE BIG GAME

20 THE WAIT IS OVER! SQUARE'S SOPHISTICATED FIGHTING MASTERPIECE, *BUSHIDO BLADE* HAS FINALLY BEEN GRANTED AN OFFICIAL RELEASE IN FEBRUARY. HERE WE PRESENT THE FULL, SIX-PAGE EXCLUSIVE REVIEW!







5 WAYS TO CONTACT PLAY!

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

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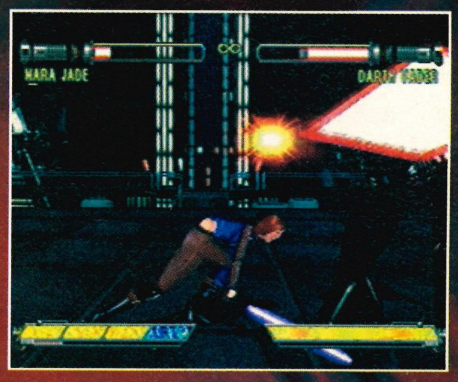
[THE PLAYLIST]
90 A completely new section with reviews of every PlayStation game every covered in PLAY, plus our Playback recommended games, long term tests and any other cool features we can stick in to make this the ultimate buyers' guide!



PLAY プレイステーション

issue t thirty

The UK's Best Unofficial PLAYSTATION Magazine!



プレイステーション



FORSAKEN

28 Join us for an in-depth look at Probe Software's incredible looking shoot-'em-up. Hmm... nice.





54 Obliterate alien invaders on a grand scale in quite possibly the most explosive 3-D shoot-'em ever devised! PLAY prepares for the ultimate battle of the big-gun brigade in our Exclusive review!

ONE



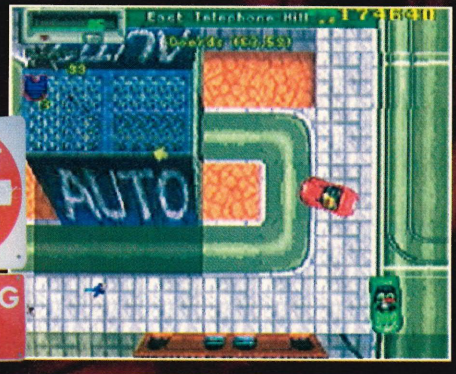
GTA

36 The game that shocked a nation and spawned a media backlash is finally released. Check out our outrageous review!



STAR WARS: MASTERS OF TERAS KASI

62 The very first *Star Wars* beat-'em-up has arrived on import under the guise of *Masters of Teras Kasi*, but despite the heavy license, is it any good?



WORKSTATIONS

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

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WIRED UPS

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

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WIN!

16 Some ultra-fashionable Sony clothing (including t-shirts, hats, and bags), plus ten copies of Sony's *Nightmare Creatures!*

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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news • snippets • rumours • h

WELCOME to a brand new PlayStation year – and what a corking 1998 it's going to be! This is the year that Sony's dream machine blasts off to dizzy new heights, and games such as *Resident Evil 2*, *Tekken 3* and *Gran Turismo* are your reward for getting the best console in the world. In fact, if the games technology continues to evolve and develop the way it has in the last 12 months, there is no reason why the PlayStation cannot remain, and kick-ass, in its present form until the turn of the century!

I say this because we are still being bombarded with queries about the PlayStation 2 – "where is it?", "When will it be out?", "What does it look like?" – shut-up the lot of you! I personally hate all this. It's happened before and it's happening again. As soon as the punters get a whiff of a new machine, they seem to forget the present one. The PlayStation 2 will arrive when it's good and ready, and nobody knows and hard facts about it – so don't be fooled by speculation and artists' impressions!

Now, what have we got for you this month. Well, in case you hadn't guessed, the post-Christmas software slump has come into effect, which occurs when the build-up to the silly season sees the release of the biggest games of the year, and then when the hang-over begins, there's very little product left to drool over. This is why many of this month's reviews consist of import games – but that's no bad thing!

Leading the assault is the eagerly-awaited *Star Wars: Masters of Teras Kasi*, which is the very first fighting game to incorporate the film characters. There's also *Klonoa* from Namco, and the big game is the fabulous official review of *Bushido Blade*. Sony has finally given the game the green light and it will be released in February. Of course, we just had to have the EXCLUSIVE review! Other big games this month include *Resident Evil 2*, *GTA*, *Rascal*, *Spawn*, *Alundra* and *Batman & Robin*, so get stuck in!

Ryan Butt
Editor

TEKKEN 3

FIRST PLAYSTATION SHOTS!

SKINT after Christmas? Well then you've got exactly four months to save up some cash and get down to your nearest import shop to reserve your copy of what we think could be THE game of 1998!

The speculation is but a distant memory because *Tekken 3* is a reality, and it's coming to a PlayStation near you in April. To celebrate the fact, PLAY has obtained the very first PlayStation screenshots (see right). Unfortunately, the actual game engine has had to be slightly downgraded for the PlayStation version. Whereas the coin-op utilised System 12 technology, this was not possible on PlayStation, and so the characters don't look quite so well defined and distinctly more angular in comparison.

It has also been said that the stunning backgrounds seen in the coin-op have been transformed in 2-D replicas for the PlayStation version, although we haven't actually seen the game running to be able to confirm or deny this. Apart from this though, the differences are minimal, with slight pixelisation on the connecting blows.

According to Namco of Japan, the game is still only about 40% complete, but judging by the pictures, this can surely not be the case. Namco was also reluctant to specify what other features the game will contain – eg CGI intros, Survival Mode etc.

Whatever the game will look like or contain, you can bet that Namco will ensure that the game is as close to the coin-op as is technically possible, although whether or not it will make the intended April release is debatable!



[ABOVE] *Tekken 3* – Although memory restrictions will mean that much of the coin-op's crispness is lost, Namco will still ensure that the game plays almost identically.

a y s t a t i o n

INTERNATIONAL PLAY BOYS

Who to contact at Play magazine...



Ryan Butt
All Ryan got for Christmas was a pair of footie boots (keeping his wild aspirations of becoming a professional footballer alive!), and 20 Benson!
play@paragon.co.uk.



Graeme Nicholson
All Greame got for Christmas was a copy of *Grand Theft Auto*, a tastless kilt, and a bottle of Bells Whisky – a shame seeing as he is the only Scotsman that doesn't drink!
silencio@paragon.co.uk



Tom Sargent
All Tom got for Christmas was a crumpled out-of-date ticket to watch a Leeds United reserve game and a bottle of Soviet Strike vodka (that not even Ryan would touch!).
tomsargent@paragon.co.uk

a p p e n i n g s



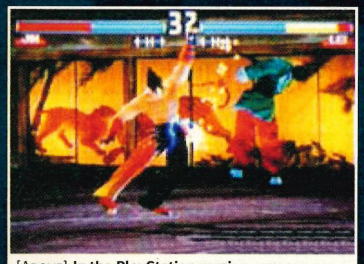
[Above] **Taking an identical picture and pose from the PlayStation and arcade versions...**



[Above] **...you can instantly see the differences in resolution. This won't spoil the fun though.**



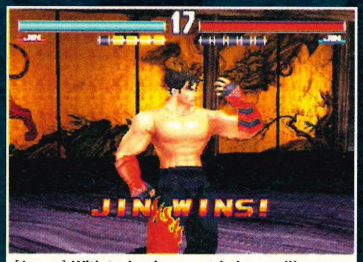
[Above] **Fans and arcade pundits can expect to see all of the moves and poses intact!**



[Above] **In the PlayStation version, you can see that much of the background detail is missing...**



[Above] **...when compared to the arcade original. Note the striped tigers on the wall!**



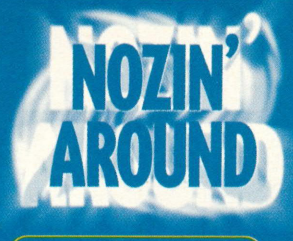
[Above] **With technology restrictions, will Tekken 3 amaze or just satisfy?**



[Above] **This PlayStation screenshot shows that many of the fancy special effects remain intact.**







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 last month's announcement of a game by MGM Interactive based on the new Bond movie, *Tomorrow Never Dies*, we now have some juicy gossip about its background. Apparently, according to developers Black Ops, it was due to be called *Bond Casino*, and feature the suave secret agent on a worldwide tour of the world's best casinos. Sounds great doesn't it? Fortunately, someone not snorting huge amounts of Charlie decided that this was a crap idea and promptly got the team working on a much more promising action game. More news as we get it.

Our spies at Konami have revealed this month that *Metal Gear Solid*, one of the games of 1998 in our opinion, has a secured release date of April in Japan, which could mean an Xmas '98 release in the UK. An American game is expected in September.

Rumour has it that *Gran Turismo* will be the very first game to fully utilise the capabilities of the new Dual Shock Analogue jopad – which has several different rumbling sensations (for the full story see 'What's the story... ' on page 96).

And finally, current rumour is that Kalisto has begun working on a sequel to *Nightmare Creatures* already!

THE SECOND CUTS CLOSE...

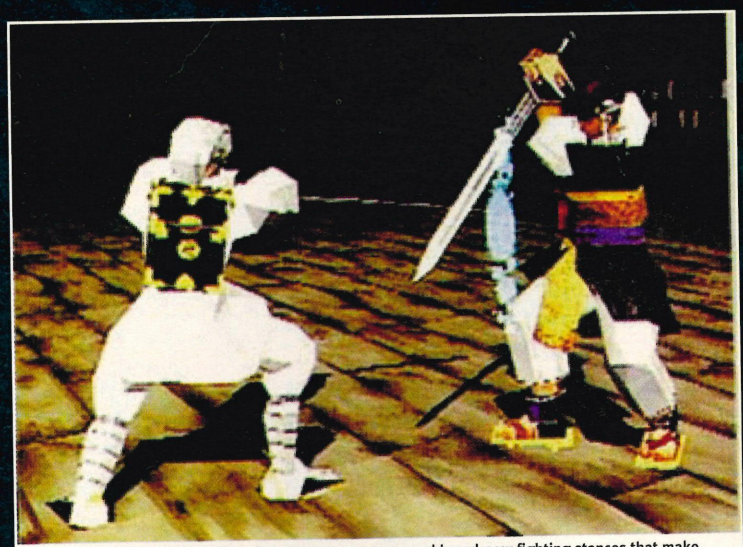
BUSHIDO BLADE GETS A SEQUEL (AND IT'S NOT EVEN OUT YET!)

AMAZING isn't it? You eagerly wait for one *Bushido Blade* game to arrive, and then two come along at once! Developer Square is already beavering away on the sequel sword slasher that is currently about 50% complete and is said to include at least three new characters.

Bushido Blade 2 will also have simplified controls, yet more stances to contend with and most of the actual combat moves will be controlled by two buttons – one holds the weapon vertically, the other horizontally. On a harder note, the defence system has been scrapped in favour of the Kenjutsu – a concept whereby you actually attack your opponent's attacks; making it much easier to defend yourself whilst on the offensive. Despite these changes, the close-up fighting has been radically tweaked, with the stronger player now able to overpower the weaker and push them to the ground. With these changes – especially the stances, there is now much more scope for devastating combo moves, with several savage attacks now accessible through stance, attack and finishing positions.

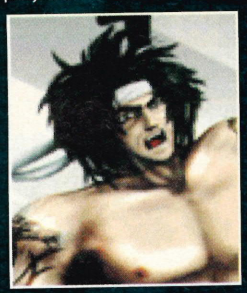
Obviously, different stances are better for attacking and defending, so the player much decide their approach to each bout and strategically position their characters accordingly. As far as we know, three characters have been added to the existing line-up, and they include Gengoro, the Shainto leader, Kaun, a mere student of the arts, and Jo, an afro-haired dude.

Bushido Blade 2 will arrive on import some time in the first half of the year. But don't expect to see a PAL version for quite some time yet.



[ABOVE] ***Bushido Blade 2***– **new characters, new moves, and brand-new fighting stances that make attacking in combos much easier.**









[ABOVE] **In the sequel, the stronger opponent can now overpower the weaker.**

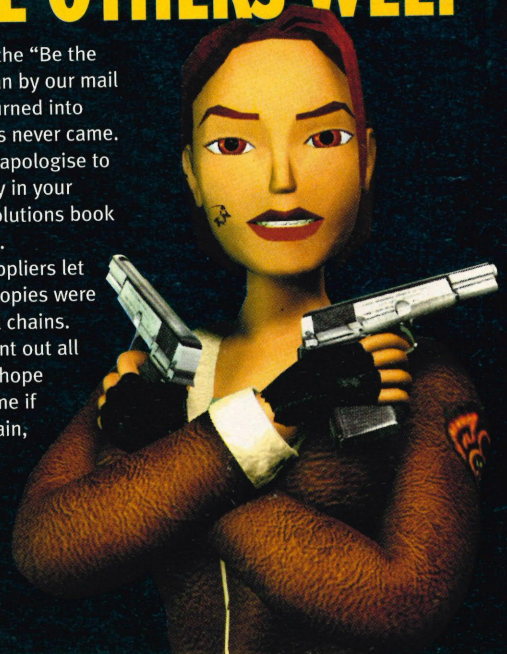
LARA SMILES WHILE OTHERS WEEP

AS PREDICTED *Tomb Raider II* became the fastest selling PlayStation game of all time when it was finally released on 28 November. Over 55,000 copies of the game were sold on the PlayStation alone (75,000 including PC) in just two days, according to the trade paper CTW.

It's not surprising really, as long term play of the game reveals even more cool features and fiendish traps – certainly we have no qualms about it being awarded 95% in issue 28.

Sadly, it was frowns all round for many retail outlets and mail order companies, as thousands of copies of *TRII* failed to materialise on the day of release. We too were a victim of stock starvation, and the "Be the first to own *TRII*" offer ran by our mail order department was turned into utter chaos as shipments never came. We at PLAY would like to apologise to our readers for any delay in your copies of *TRII* and the solutions book that was bundled with it.

Unfortunately, our suppliers let us down because their copies were snaffled by the big retail chains. Happily we have now sent out all copies of the game and hope you enjoy them. Next time if we run such an offer again, we will send severed horses' heads to the distribution companies if they don't deliver!



TOP FIVE...

WORST GAMES BASED ON BIG-SCREEN MOVIES



MOVIE tie-in games have been traditionally gash! Things have started to improve in recent years with *Die Hard Trilogy* and *Alien Trilogy*, but there's still a long way to go before the stigma connected to the phrase "movie tie-in" is banished for good. Here are some of the worst culprits...

1. The Crow: City of Angels
2. Street Fighter: The Movie
3. Space Jam
4. Independence Day
5. Batman Forever

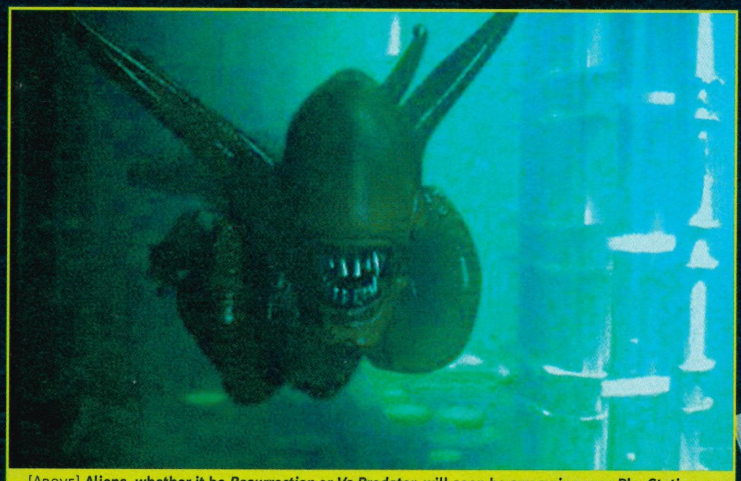
ALIEN FRATICIDE

SHOWING the same fraternal feelings as the aliens exhibit in *Alien Resurrection*, Fox Interactive has moved its tie-in videogame ahead of the late-running *Alien Vs Predator*. Although some reports have both games in development at Argonaut, the latter is actually a Rebellion project.

Originally scheduled for late '98, Argonaut's *Alien Resurrection* is now expected to arrive in time for the film's May/June debut as a rental video. *Alien Vs Predator*, by contrast, has slipped to late Summer and Fox Interactive's formidable marketing machine has already switched to the Argonaut project.

The London-based developers had a close involvement with the film's production, even producing the videogame which appears in the opening scene aboard the pirates' Betty spaceship. Watch the credits and you'll see Argonaut's name crop up near the end.

Aliens have been a big selling point since the 8-bit days, with Probe most recently delivering one of the PlayStation's best first generation games with *Alien Trilogy*. Argonaut's game is set to appear on PC, PlayStation and Saturn -- it'll actually be Fox's last release for Sega's troubled 32bit format.



[ABOVE] **Aliens, whether it be *Resurrection* or *Vs Predator*, will soon be swamping your PlayStation. Now, isn't that something to smile about?**

OLD SPICE?

***SPICE** World* – the game, was conspicuous by its absence over the Yuletide period. This was because the PlayStation game, originally set to coincide with the girls' new album and film, has been dramatically delayed until April at least. This could be construed as being somewhat of a disaster considering that the film was rubbish and the album has reportedly sold lower-than-expected.

Somehow, we at PLAY always knew that Sony didn't stand a chance of getting the game out on time. At least this gives Sony more time to assess the situation and consider whether or not it's worth releasing at all!



[ABOVE] **The Spice Girls – have they still got the marketing clout to sell a PlayStation game?**



NEED HELP?

WITH THE excesses of Christmas out of the way it's time to sit down and complete all those games you got from Aunt Mable. And what better way to sail past particularly tricky sections than with a trusty solution book by your side?

Paragon Publishing is proud to announce three new solution books – guaranteed to get your through the latest PlayStation games without a scratch. First up is **PLAYSTATION SECRETS, STRATEGIES, SOLUTIONS VOL 3.** This is a luxurious full colour 200+ page book full of all the latest games and cheats – from *2Exreme* to *Zero Divide* (£14.95, ISBN 1 873650 15 9).

Tomb Raider II (£9.95 ISBN 1 873650 13 2) and *Final Fantasy VII* (£9.95) ISBN 1 873650 12 4) are two 200 page books with complete solutions to the two hottest games on the PlayStation. **TRII SECRETS, STRATEGIES, SOLUTIONS** even contains the guide for the first game too!

Available from all good bookshops, all three of these books are out now!



CHARTS

In association with ChartTrack

POS	GAME	DEVELOPER	PUBLISHER	PLAY SCORE
1.	FIFA: RTWC 98	EA SPORTS	EA	91%
2.	TOMB RAIDER II	CORE DESIGN	EIDOS	95%
3.	TOCA TOURING CAR	CODEMASTERS	CODEMASTERS	92%
4.	FINAL FANTASY VII	SQUARE	SCEE	93%
5.	CRASH BANDICOOT 2	NAUGHTY DOG	SCEE	86%
6.	TIME CRISIS	NAMCO	SCEE	90%
7.	FORMULA ONE '97	PSYGNOSIS	PSYGNOSIS	90%
8.	GRAND THEFT AUTO	DMA	BMG	88%
9.	CROC	FOX INTERACTIVE	EA	78%
10.	ACTUA SOCCER 2	GREMLIN	GREMLIN	90%

READERS' MOST WANTED

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

POS	GAME	DEVELOPER	PUBLISHER
1.	RESIDENT EVIL 2	CAPCOM	VIRGIN
2.	TOMORROW NEVER DIES	MGM	MGM
3.	GRAN TURISMO	SONY	SCEE
4.	TEKKEN 3	NAMCO	SCEE
5.	DEATHTRAP DUNGEON	EIDOS	EIDOS

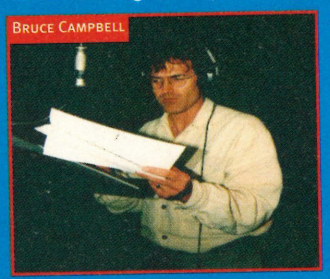
USA ENTERTAINMENT

ENTERTAINMENT USA

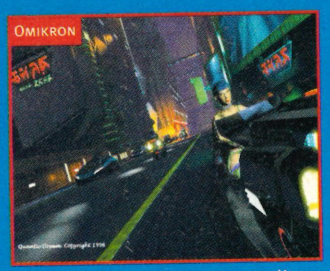


CAT BUCANNON brings you all the news on what's hot in the land of Frank Sinatra and The Backstreet Boys!

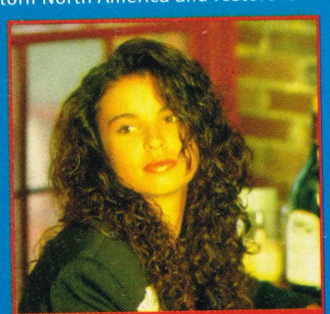
The forthcoming *Pitfall 3-D* game is shaping up very nicely indeed with the inclusion of cut-scenes that are in an animated comic book-style format. These are being done by Unlikely Films Inc – the company that produced the cut-scenes in *Twisted Metal 2*. Best of all though is the dialogue to fit-in with the scenes that is being specially recorded by Bruce Campbell, as the voice of adventurer Harry. You may be familiar with Bruce after his starring role in the hilarious *Evil Dead* films. It is thought that his unique talent and sense of humour will bring a lot of character to the role. Bruce will also be providing in-game quips for Harry. *Pitfall 3-D* will be released in February!


BRUCE CAMPBELL

Eidos has just announced plans to release *Omikron* – an arcade/adventure game that runs entirely in real time 3-D. The action is set in a futuristic city called Omikron. In this city, the player has complete freedom to move around and go absolutely anywhere they wish, pick-up objects, talk to passers-by and even indulge in a spot of bare-knuckle fighting and hop into an anti-gravity vehicle to go for a spin around the sprawling metropolis. *Omikron* is being coded by Quantic Dream and is scheduled for release in the second half of 1998.


OMIKRON

Also coming this year from Eidos is *Warzone 2100*, a real time strategy game set on Earth in the 21st Century. The main aim of the game is to conquer plague-ridden and war-torn North America and restore it to its former glory. The game features the development of Command Droids that learn tactics and develop their own personalities. How far a command droid's intelligence progresses depends on its capabilities. Abilities are learnt through play and represent the droid's experience. A smooth learning curve gradually introduces players to the key features of the game, and research plays an import part whereby the player must choose which line to pursue, with more options become available as the research develops. *Warzone 2100* will arrive in September!


[ABOVE] Cat Bucannon – Had Bruce Springstein round her gaff over Christmas!





THE THREE NEED FOR SPEEDOS!

EXCELLENT news this month for racing nuts who demand realism as well as speed from their driving games. *Need for Speed 3* is in production and is scheduled for a March 20 release in the UK!

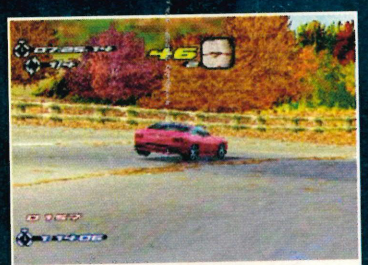
Publisher Electronic Arts says it expects *NFS 3* to be "a return to form, much like with *FIFA: Road To World Cup*," as the second game in the series failed to win any new converts, despite a 90% score from PLAY which proved to be our most contraversial; attracting the like-minded and the violently opposed in equal numbers.

To get that old excitement back, the Canadian development team have given us back the badly missed police chases of the original, and you can now be tracked by more than one cop car at a time. We have also heard that the police may deploy stingers ahead of you to burst your tyres!

Thankfully, the cars are based on real production models, and not the space-out concept cars of the second game, many of which will never even see a public road. The Ferrari 550 Maranello and 355 are already in there (*NFS3* is the only videogame to have the official Ferrari license), as is the classic Lamborghini Countach, Jaguar XJR-15, Mercedes SLK, Diablo SV, BMW Nazca C2 and the 1998 Corvette. At the time of going to press there's no news of a Porsche, Lotus, TVR or Aston Martin, but if our constant phone-jamming works, these might be added before our review.

Another new addition is that of operational headlights, *V-Rally*-style, that light up the scenery when racing at night! Apparently these can be used at full and half-beam like a real car too... but nobody knows why.

Look for a review soon (and we promise to keep Graeme firmly muzzled this time!). Is it third time lucky for *NFS?* Let's hope so.


[ABOVE] *Need for Speed 3* – Get your motor runnin', head out on the highway...


[ABOVE] Indulge in a spot of road rage and ram that damn stretched van off the road!


[ABOVE] *Need for Speed 3* with feature loads of recognised dream machines, but there are still plenty to be confirmed.

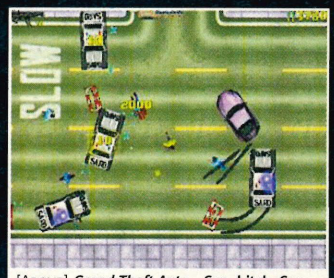
GTA – GUARANTEED TO OFFEND?

CONTROVERSY follows BMG's *Grand Theft Auto* like a guy with his hand trapped in the boot of a speeding getaway car!

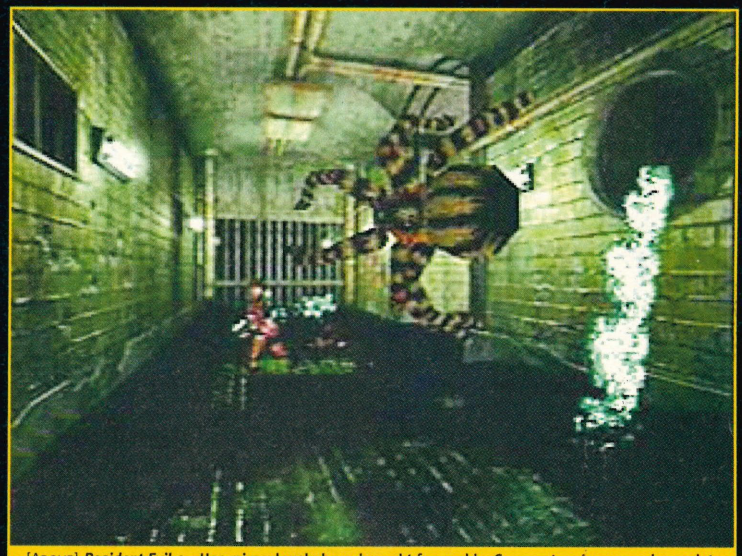
Released at the start of December, the game (finally reviewed this issue) is an extremely playable and successful attempt to bring the world of the professional car-jacker to the small screen. You get pedstrians turned into paté, policemen riddled with bullets, and of course the ritual auto-cide of a bunch of hare krishnas. Taseful it ain't, but then Scottish developers DMA enjoy indulging itself once and a while and if nothing else, *GTA* shows that the *Lemmings* creators are not destined to be type-cast.

But despite fury from MPs in the House of Commons, *GTA* is still a world away from nicking a real RS Cossie and then ploughing into a bus queue of Chelsea Pensioners! It's less personal than say, bottom-bouncing one of those fluffy Koopas in *Mario 64*. And certainly you can't see your victims' head ripped clean off and left to lie in front of you with a shocked expression on their face, as in *Quake*.

In fact, apart from copious swearing, the most offensive aspect of *GTA* is that it doesn't go far enough. No-one mention out-of-control limos, right? Hats off to the boys at DMA and BMG for convincing Sony to allow *GTA* onto the PlayStation, but it's a shame that the console's 2Mb of RAM won't allow more than six cars on-screen at once.



[ABOVE] *Grand Theft Auto* – Cop, bitch. Cop, bitch muthaf*cker! An Uzi lover?

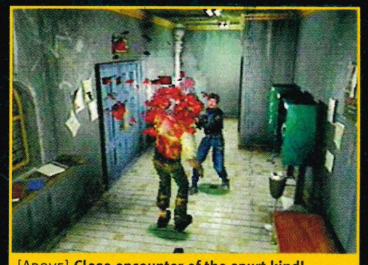


[ABOVE] *Resident Evil 2* – Has miraculously been brought forward by Capcom to a January release date in Japan. Arachnophobics, be afraid, be very afraid!

RESIDENT EVIL 2 COMES EARLY!

STRANGE things are happening. Just when we were bracing ourselves for yet more delays, Capcom of Japan has recently announced that *Resident Evil 2* will arrive on the shelves at the end of January! We don't yet know if this will be a worldwide release (although it seems very unlikely), but for those of you, like us, who simply can't wait any longer, then import shops all over the country must surely be bracing themselves for a stampede!

Many more details about the game have been revealed, including brand new weapons (the cross-bow looks damn smart!), new locations, and new characters. The latest additional being a wee little orphan girl. Hardly a useful ally for bashing zombies (but we could be wrong!). To celebrate the fact that the game has been brought forward, we present the full, unadulterated preview on page 82!



[ABOVE] Close encounter of the spurt kind! Zombie head, now you see it, now you don't!

NEW WEAPONS!



[ABOVE] New girly character nervously awaits some uninvited guests... with a cross-bow!

CLASSIC MOMENTS IN VIDEOGAMING!

GAMING was so simple back in the old days. Every title was ground-breaking, graphics didn't matter, and there was no wars or famine. Hmm.

In the spirit of retro gaming (it's the fashion deary!) Midway has produced its second *Atari Collection* and it's set to hit the streets in the first quarter of this year.

And just listen to the games included this time: *Paperboy, Millipede, Road Blasters, Marble Madness*, and perhaps the best of all, *Gauntlet!* Yes, you too could have arcade perfect conversions of some of the best games of all times in the comfort of your home.

Gauntlet is even four player compatible (through a multi-tap) and that makes it a contender for one of the best multi-player games on the PlayStation. Look for a full review in PLAY soon. We can't wait.



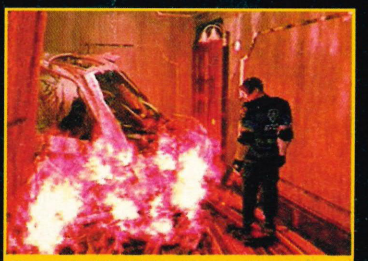
[ABOVE] *Gauntlet* – One of the greatest top-down killing games of all time. And it's coming back!



[ABOVE] *Paperboy* – Early morning anarchy, but will we see an authentic handlebar peripheral?



[ABOVE] The dramatic new autopsy scene is not for the faint-hearted!



[ABOVE] *Resident Evil 2* – If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen!

JAPS EYE

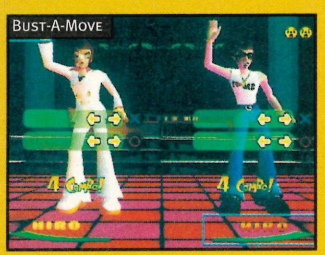
ALL THE LATEST GAMING NEWS FROM JAPAN – THE HOME OF THE SONY PLAYSTATION!

Square continues its PlayStation domination in all-fields (surely a racing game can't be far away!) by releasing *Einhander* – a truly fabulous-looking shoot-'em-up. The game is a straightforward side-scrolling affair, yet set within a 3-D environment with the camera swinging all over the shop for added atmosphere – although this doesn't affect your control. The Japanese version of the game boasts 60 frames per second, and the light sourcing effects are used to great effect to give added dimension and menace to the polygon models that attack. The good news also is that the game plays like an absolute dream, and puts other games of this ilk to shame. Everything about it oozes class, and you can pick up a copy on import now. PLAY will feature a full review next month!





Following hot on the heels of *Parappa the Rapper* is this new bizarre offering from Japan. *Bust-A-Move* (nothing to do with the *Bust-A-Move* puzzle games) is a wacky disco-dancing package whereby you must tap buttons to choreograph the funky dance routines of your chosen seventies throw-back character. Natural rhythm is required to succeed in becoming the ultimate Travolta, so the Spice Girls need not apply!



Enix – the company responsible for countless classic RPG's on the SNES is to release a brand new RPG on PlayStation called *Star Ocean Second Story* at the end of March. The game continues on from the last saga, but with many improvements over the original, including "full motion active battle" which basically consists of an enhanced real-time combat system whereby the characters and enemies can move around the 3-D polygon dungeons. The characters that aren't under the control of the player are operated by advanced computer AI. There are two controllable players to choose from, and the basic plot remains the same, with only slight variations depending on which character you choose.





WIN GTA GOODIES!

To celebrate the fact that *Grand Theft Auto* has really captured the imagination of the sadistic gamesplaying public (despite strong opposition from MPs and media alike), PLAY has teamed up with BMG Interactive to give away FIVE copies of the game, and two ultra groovy double CD Seventies music compilations, entitled 'Night Fever.' All you have to do to win is answer the following question and send your answer to: *Kill Frenzy, PLAY Magazine, Paragon Publishing, St Peter's Rd, Bournemouth Dorset BH1 2JF* by February 10 1998.

The first two correct entries out of the cop-cap will each get a game and a CD, and a further three winners will each get a game.

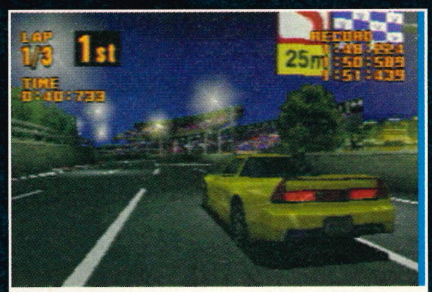
QUESTION: How many cities are there in GTA?

TURISMO DELAYED!

It's tip-toes all round for Sony after the recent trouble Psygnosis had with the FIA license. PLAY has heard that Sony is looking very carefully at its latest racing game, *Gran Turismo*, featured last month in our 1998 feature.

The reason for caution is that the game boasts up to 150 different cars from many different motoring manufacturers and Sony rightly doesn't want to wind up being taken to court by each one for using logos and trademarks without permission.

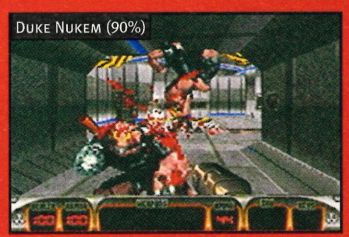
Sadly this added administration has meant that the game's initial release date of April has now slipped to June (at the very least), until Sony has complete permission. It might even be the case that some cars are dropped completely – a great shame.



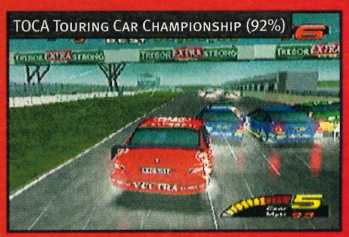
[ABOVE] ***Gran Turismo* has now been delayed while Sony checks every car trademark.**

PLAY RECOMMENDS...

DUKE NUKEM (90%)



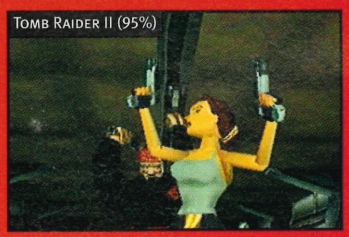
TOCA TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP (92%)



REAL DOLL (LONG TERM TEST)



TOMB RAIDER II (95%)



CRASH 2 (86%)



FINAL FANTASY VII (93%)



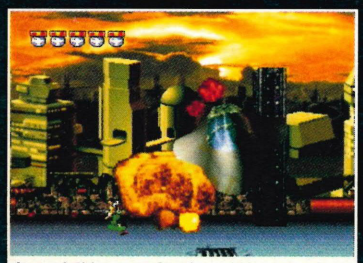
KONAMI REVEALS CONTRA 2 FOR PSX!

***CONTRA**: Legacy of War* was the PlayStation adaptation of Konami's ultra-successful *Contra* series in the arcades. It also popped up on the Super NES in the diluted form of *Super Probotector*. The PlayStation game was not bad, but didn't exactly cause the earth to shudder in quite the same as the original – hence we gave it 62% in issue 16.

The reason for this brief summary? Konami is about to bring the *Contra* franchise back to everyone's favourite grey box and here are the screenshots to prove it. There's no confirmed name (*Contra 2* probably would cause people to find out how good the first game was – *not* a good idea), but the game looks very similar and you can bet the developers will include the two player co-operative mode that has made the series so popular. A March release date in America is planned, so expect a UK version in either June or the Autumn.



[ABOVE] **Could this be a return to form for the Contra series? The pyrotechnics are certainly impressive!**



[ABOVE] **Cities are reduced to rubble as you do battle with the scum of the universe!**



[ABOVE] **The game will feature numerous new locations for alien-maiming action.**

THE SYNS OF SONY

***CARDINAL** Syn* is the latest 3-D beat-'em-up from Sony, first shown at the trade show in Atlanta last year. The game has collosal central characters wielding car-sized sticks with spikes, and the latest versions are said to include plenty of blood and gory effects. Just what the *Mortal Kombat* generation needs.

Graphically it's impressive, with some very neat special effects thrown in to give the game a gothic feel. The battles take place in a giant building, with fighting arenas connected by spike-filled passageways and pits of fire. These in turn become part of the action as unworthy opponents can be tossed into a fiery oblivion, or just skewered on the rusty spikes! There will be eight characters to choose from, each with their own blood-thirsty finishing moves. The game will be officially released in March.



[ABOVE] **Monster mash! Cardinal Syn features a folly of strange creatures with clubs!**



[ABOVE] ***Cardinal Syn*** **– big characters, big weapons and allegedly very heavy on the ketchup. The game will be released officially by Sony in March.**



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ALIEN RESURRECTION

FIRST SHOTS OF FOX'S NEW PSX BURSTER!

ALIENS! Fousands of 'em! The stage is set then for the most terrifying parasites in the galaxy to invade your PlayStation once more. Fox Interactive is currently working on what it describes as "a fast-paced action adventure based closely on the latest spine-chilling installment in Fox's horrific Alien motion picture series." If that doesn't make you want to start saving now then what's wrong with you?

Alien Resurrection promises to deliver diabolical (Fox's words not ours!) amounts of firepower, horribly frightening aliens and apocalyptic mayhem at levels of excitement and acid-dripping realism never before achieved. It will also boast a lightning-fast frame rate and segments of dialogue lifted straight from the film.

The player takes the role of one of five different characters in this third-person perspective blast-a-thon. There are 13 levels of mayhem as you must use both mind and muscle to prevent the alien invasion from spreading to Earth.

Alien Resurrection is scheduled for a Spring time release to tie-in with the video release of the film. PLAY will venture forth to the outer limits of the galaxy to bring you a full report next month!





[ABOVE] ***Alien Resurrection*** **– the game will feature vast chunks of rendered FMV footage to closely link it with the film.**



[ABOVE] **Congratulations Miss Ripley, you've just given birth to a lovely bouncing Alien Queen!**

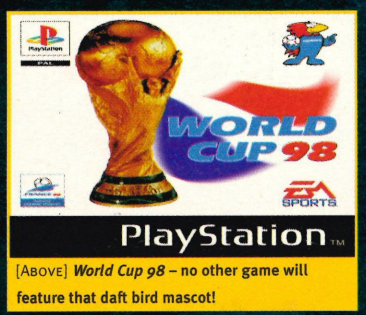
FEVER PITCH

FOOTBALL'S coming home alright, and it should be with you courtesy of Electronic Arts in May! As reported a couple of months ago, EA is currently working on the OFFICIAL World Cup '98 game (*FIFA: Road to World Cup 98* was only the beginning you see!) and have commissioned the vocal talents of some of the sporting greats both past and present to bring a tinge of world-class realism.

Among those paid to waffle are Kenneth Wolstenholme, John Motson, Des Lynam, Chris Waddle (he of the famous penalty miss of Italia '90) and jug-eared former-England hero, Gary Lineker!

World Cup 98 will also feature all of the qualifying teams of the 1998 finals, and a 'Classic Team Mode' which allows you to recreate the greatest ever World Cup finals (England '66, Brazil '70 etc). The game will also feature 'Star Moves' whereby the biggest stars of the sport will have their very own trademark skills, World Cup trivia to test your knowledge of the greatest event on the planet (yes, even better than topless darts!), cutting-edge motion captures (with the latest bizarre goal-celebrations on display) and realistic team strategies and tactics.

After the standards set by *FIFA: Road to World Cup 98*, we expect nothing short of perfection from the official World Cup 98 game. PLAY will feature a full workstation with more facts and screenshots next issue!



[ABOVE] ***World Cup 98*** **– no other game will feature that daft bird mascot!**

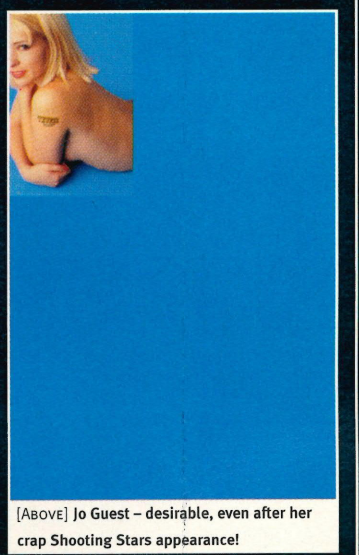


[ABOVE] **Gary Lineker – his goals helped England to a place in the 1990 semi's. Then we blew it!**

GAME FOR A GUEST?

SEX sells, or rather sexy Page 3 stunna Joanne Guest does! JVC is the latest in a long line of software companies to appoint the photogenic talents of the lovely Chesterfield lass.

Jo has been used to promote JVC's forthcoming *Tetris Plus* game (reviewed on page 38) for which she will appear on adverts in the specialist press and billboard posters, doing what she does best – wearing very little! Quite what impression these adverts will generate about the game is debatable, but fair play to JVC for being subtle and almost subliminal in their approach – even if the last thing you'll be looking at is the small *Tetris Plus* logo tattoo on her arm. Of course, JVC has got its money's worth and taken a few nudey pics for its own, private collection!



[ABOVE] **Jo Guest – desirable, even after her crap Shooting Stars appearance!**

A THOUSAND APOLOGIES!

YOU may have noticed the distinct lack of a free tips book on the cover of this issue of PLAY. Well we must apologise profusely for this. What with this issue going to press over the Christmas period, there was no 'slot' for the book to be printed, despite our pleas. However, the second part of our *Tomb Raider II* and *Final Fantasy VII* solutions will appear next month. Sorry for any inconvenience caused to any of our readers, and we'll make it worth your while next month!

With 2 players, half pipe and big air competition,
it's the coolest game not on earth.

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BECOME SYMBOLIC THIS YEAR WITH SONY!

Sony isn't just pushing its PlayStation symbols on the current batch of television ads for *Rapid Racer* and *Crash Bandicoot 2*: it plans to take the geometric shapes we all know and love onto the street in the form of some of the coolest gear we've seen! Forget those cartoon socks and cable-knit sweaters you got this Christmas from thoughtful relatives, this Sony kit is what you need for the coming year – and we've got two sets of it to give away, as well as ten copies of the PLAY Classic-rated gore game, *Nightmare Creatures!*

WIN! Bags of Sony goodies plus games!

The Sony-wear comes in two combinations, mens and womens. The bloke's set consisting of a record bag, a windcheater jacket, v-neck t-shirt and big beanie hat. Girls get spaghetti strapped vests, fleeces and rucksacks.

If you would like to be clothed for free, and entertained by some fine software during the dark winter nights, answer this question:



Which 'nightmare creature' was the central character of the *Nightmare on Elm Street* films?

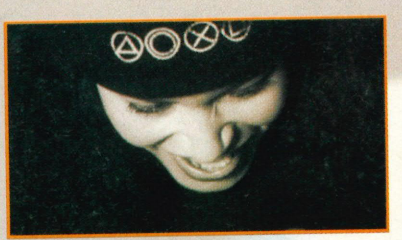
A. Freddy Kruger

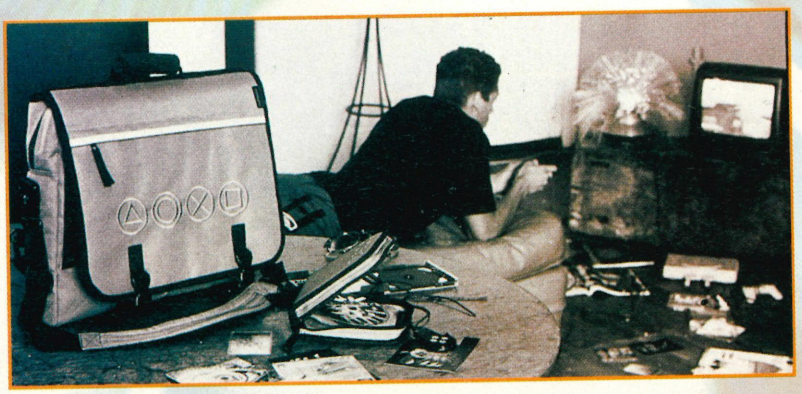
B. Freddy Laker

C. Freddy Starr

The first two correct entries will each get a set of the Sony symbol clothes and a copy of Nightmare Creatures, and eight runners-up will each receive a copy of the game. Please make it clear whether you would like the men's or women's set of clothes, and send your answer on a postcard or stuck down envelope to:

Oh what a night(mare)!
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Bournemouth
BH1 2JS







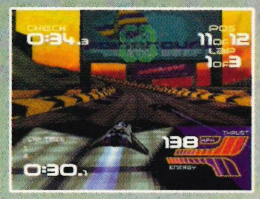
THE SMALL PRINT

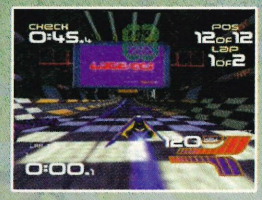
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9/10 *Official PlayStation Magazine*











9/10
PlayStation Power

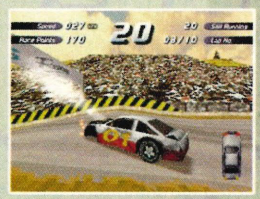
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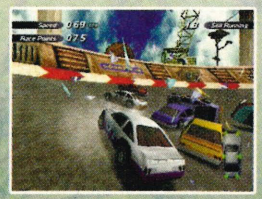
Need we say more?

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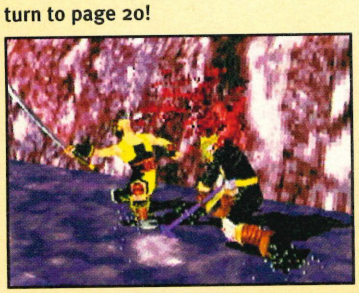
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THE GAM

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 It was reviewed on import months ago, it was then heavily delayed for the PAL release. But now *Bushido Blade* is backn in February! Naturally, seeing as PLAY has been championing the game since we first clapped eyes on it, we were the only magazine worthy enough to bring you the full, exclusive review. For the complete low-down on how it plays, turn to page 20!



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!

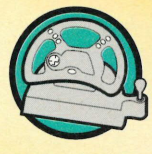
PLAY PUTRID

PLAY ICONS

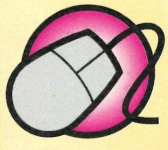
These symbols are designed to give you vital information about the maximum number of players and whether or not you can use a specific device with the game. PSX steering wheel or the Negcon joypad come under steering/analogue.


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.

Workstations

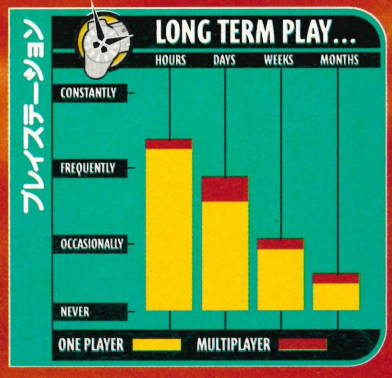
You want in-depth features on the latest software? You got it!

Forsaken 28
Spawn 34
Rascal 36



Challenge Box

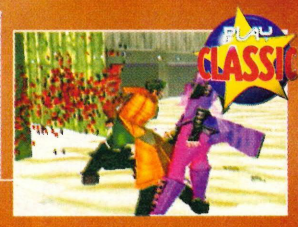
This clever little box is designed to show you instantly how long a game will last (in our opinion) based on the review. The one player game (in yellow) will more often than not be lower than multiple players because it's more fun playing a friend than the computer. Although it is entirely subjective,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



Play Reviews

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

Bushido Blade 20
Grand Theft Auto 36
Tetri Plus 38
Klonoa 40
Marvel Super Heroes 42
Beast Wars 44
Courier Crisis 45
Side-by-Side Special 48
Bust-A-Move 3 50
One 54
Yusha 56
Mass Destruction 58
Masters of Teras Kasi 62
Steel Reign 66
Jersey Devil 68
Power Soccer 2 70





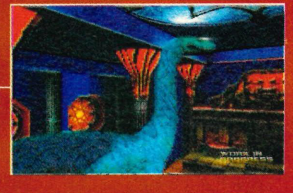




Wired Up

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

Alundra 80
Batman and Robin 81
Resident Evil 2 82
Theme Hospital 84
Brahma Force 85





Bushido

PLAY CLASSIC

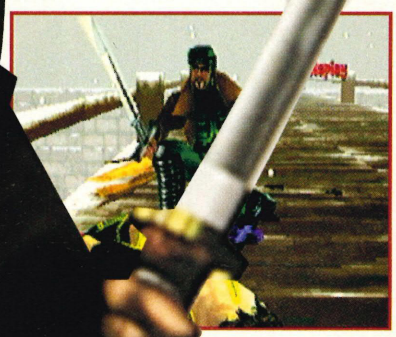
EXCLUSIVE!

Written By Graeme Nicholson

A REAL JAPANESE CLASSIC IS ABOUT TO BE UNLEASHED IN A STONKING PAL VERSION. YOU WILL BE WITNESSES.

Squaresoft might be full of geniuses, but the guys there aren't half a stubborn bunch. Even after sizeable e-mail protests from a boiling mad internet population, they refused to release their most technically gob smacking title, *Tobal 2*, outside of Japan after being hurt by *Tobal No.1's* low sales in the Europe and America.

Then it was discovered that there would be a legal problem using the word 'Bushido' for the British release of *Bushido Blade* (although this later turned out to be only a problem in European territories). But now it's all systems go for a new release date of late February. *Bushido Blade* isn't your average fighting game. It covers a lot of new ground where previous beat-'em-ups feared to tread, and you'll find that innovation is evident all the way through the game, from major





[Above] Red Dragon whips her blade into the legs of her already fallen opponent. It's a rough game this sword fighting business.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Sony
Customer support:0881 505 505
Price: £34.99
Release date: February '98

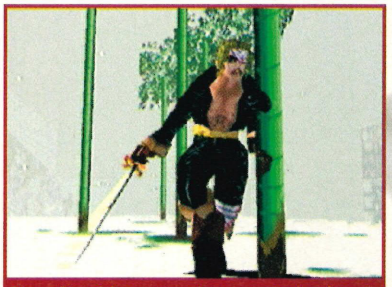


武士道

THE BIG GAME



[Above] The subtitled after-match scenes are very theatrical. You get to see your character saying goodbye to each of his former friends. Sob.



[Above] A quick cut scene shows you running through the bamboo trees (where you can play in two player) to the next and final round.



[Above]This is an example of a bad lunge – Tatsumi on the left has launched at the wrong time, giving the green samurai time to get behind.

gameplay elements, to the tiniest loving details.

GREEN HORNET

Beginning with the actual attack moves, there is a set of standard hits that any character can perform, based around high (▲), mid (●) and low (X) strikes. Nothing strange there. But to get into the deeper side of *Bushido Blade*'s particular brand of sword slashing combat, you have to forget all that you have learned before and master an entirely different method of control.

Each time you begin a new game, whether in the single player Story Mode or going up against a friend in Versus Mode, you pick one of the six characters and then a weapon for them to use. It is these eight weapons (six swords, a giant hammer and a long, pointy staff thing) that have their own moves assigned to them, not the characters.

Most weapons are capable of around 25 normal moves – various artfully performed slashing, stabbing and chopping actions – as well as anywhere from two to 15 combo strings that link some of those nasty flesh-slicing moves together plus a couple of dramatic special moves. The picture

"...Could teach *Soul Blade* a thing or two about realistic motion!"

starts to get more complex however when you discover that each fighter is capable of three or four additional strikes or combos when united with weapons they are suited to. Kannuki, for example, has two moves for the hammer, neither of which anyone else can do with the same weapon. The best combinations of combatants and weapons are not immediately obvious, so finding them can be the first challenge.

ZORRO

Another quirk of what has to be the most skilful control system yet is the ability to alter your balance by switching between three fighting stances as you clash swords. All of the weapon

THE BUSHIDO CODE

THE BUSHIDO CODE IS VERY STRICT. VIOLATE THE CODE AND YOU WILL BE TOLD AT THE END OF A GAME THAT YOU ARE BELOW POND SCUM IN THE HONOUR SYSTEM. TO TRULY TRIUMPH, YOU MUST FOLLOW THESE PREVIOUSLY UNSPOKEN GUIDELINES:

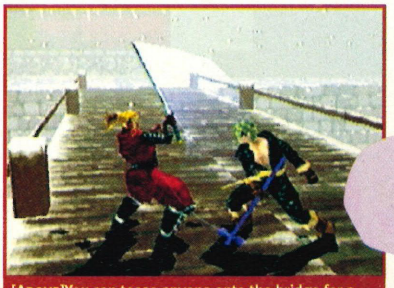
- NEVER ATTEMPT TO STRIKE YOUR OPPONENT WHILE THEY ARE SPEAKING BEFORE A FIGHT
- NEVER USE YOUR CONCEALED SUB WEAPON ON THE OTHER WARRIOR
- NEVER KILL AN OPPONENT WHO IS LAYING ON THE FLOOR
- NEVER KILL YOUR OPPONENT IF HE HAS HIS BACK TURNED AND IS RUNNING FROM YOU







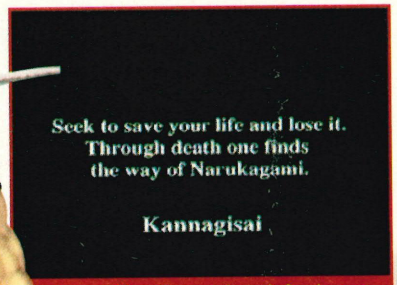
[Above] The instant replays show the last few strikes that bit closer to let you analyse your mistakes briefly.



[Above]You can tease anyone onto the bridge for a bout of swordplay, but try as we might we couldn't jab someone over the side.







[Above] All you'll see at the end of each game is one of these preachy text screens until you can fight honourably.

"The most skillful control system yet!"

and character moves mentioned are spread across the three stances, so roughly a third of your available attacks can be used when you're in any particular pose.

It may seem bizarre next to the kind of thing you're used to, but in practice it works very well to split up the many moves into three sets that can be better learned individually. Besides, it looks smart when you click a button to lean back and hold a samurai sword horizontally above your head.

Beat-'em-up veterans will probably be surprised by the lack of the traditional health bars that normally grace the top of the screen because in *Bushido Blade* you never know the exact energy level of you or the opponent. In fact, the only on screen display is the small two-digit number indicating the amount of rounds you've won so far. The clear screen lets you see the beauty of the crisp graphics in unobscured glory. The characters are not the most vibrantly coloured mob (although all six have much brighter alternative training clothes) but they are finely detailed and could teach *Soul Blade* a thing or two about realistic motion.



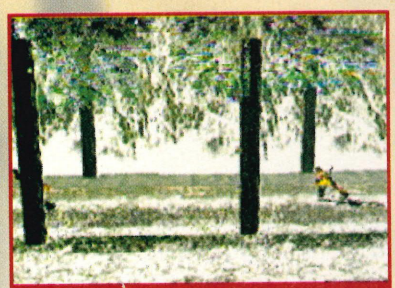
[Above] It might have taken the best part of a year to come out here, but we get real blood in the PAL version, rather than green flashes!



[Above] Mikado is fast and wicked. Try her with the long Naginata staff as she has a whole load of moves for it.

DARK AVENGER

While the brilliant Versus game is without doubt the best possible way to play *Bushido Blade*, the Story Mode is thoroughly involving too. The story goes that deep in the Chugoku mountainside is an ancient dojo, where the practitioners teach their subjects the spiritual lessons known as the 'teachings of the Echoing Mirror.' In the back of this peaceful place though, is a secret collection of people with a much darker purpose – the Kage. These are a group of



[Above] If you make a run for it, the view zooms out to keep both fighters on-screen at once.

EYE OF THE TIGER

LIKE THE FIRST PERSON PERSPECTIVE CHEAT IN *TEKKEN 2*, *BUSHIDO BLADE* COMES WITH A "POINT OF VIEW" MODE AS STANDARD. THE DETAIL THIS LETS YOU SEE ON THE OTHER PLAYER CLOSE UP IS AMAZING, BUT THE CONTROLS ARE MOVED AROUND SLIGHTLY MAKING IT WEIRD TO GET USED TO. LUCKILY, AN ANIMATED FIGURE IN THE UPPER RIGHT SCREEN LETS YOU SEE WHAT YOUR CHARACTER'S UP TO.







RAGE AGAINST TYRANNY

PLAYSTATION POWER

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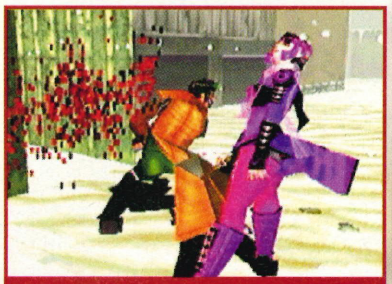
COLONY WARS

PlayStation

PSYGNOSIS

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[Above] Sometimes, for a swift second, your victim goes totally stiff before they roll back on their heels and hit the dirt.



[Above] When you die the eyes of your samurai eerily ping open the second you press the continue button. Brrr.

well trained assassins made up from a select few of the dojo's teachers.

As the other practitioners in this peaceful place must not be made aware of their colleagues' extracurricular activity, the fear of exposure builds until one preacher and Kage member decides to break free and escape from this pressurised way of life. You play the escapee, pursued every step of the way by your former close companions who have now been despatched to kill you for your dishonourable actions.

Fighting each Kage member only once (because each is a fight to the death), the battles are extremely intense.

As with the Versus mode, you are given an impressive 3-D arena to battle it out in, and using the 'Run' button you can wander off in any direction to explore the grounds of the castle where the story mode is set. You can also pull yourself up onto ledges for a very effective height advantage, and the chance to dive bomb the other player with your sword pointing down at them!

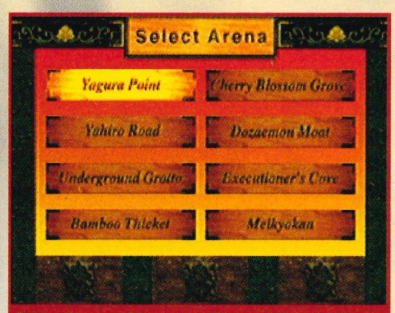


BIG BLADE

If you are off guard and your opponent makes a good hit with his sword, you can die from a single fatal wound in *Bushido Blade*. You learn to be very cautious and to deflect the slicing blades with lightening quick reactions. One common mistake is to lunge out and lean forward with the sword in an outstretched hand; leaving you totally open and close enough for the other samurai to make a simple swipe to the back of your neck, killing you instantly.

If you last a bit longer than that single blow, *Bushido's* unequalled sophistication can be seen again in the way the characters take damage. Not only do you get bloody bandages added to your limbs and head each time you continue a one player game, but each limb can be affected independently during a fight. Stab someone in their right arm, for example, and it will most likely fall limp by their side; leaving them only a single arm to control their weapon and defend

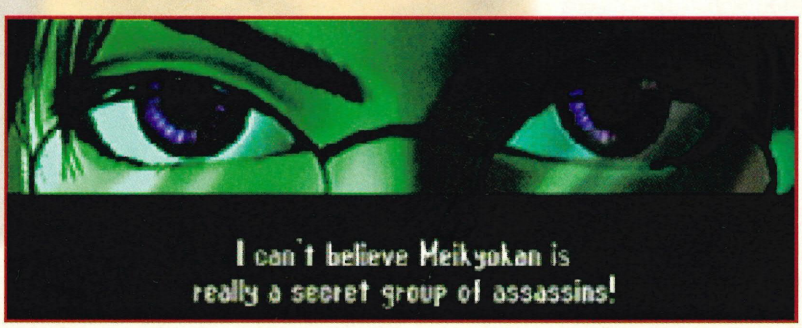
"*Bushido Blade* provides the finest gameplay money can buy!"



[Above] Choose from eight locations in which to fight a two player game. The best scraps tend to happen around the Cherry Blossom Grove.



[Above] In the Underground Grotto, fighting on the shallow stream you can swipe water into your mate's eye – then kill him.



SUICIDAL TENDENCIES

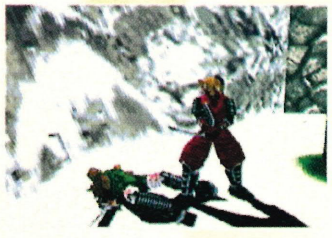
IF THE ODDS ARE AGAINST YOU AND IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'D JUST MAKE A FOOL OF YOURSELF TRYING TO CLAW THE GAME BACK IN YOUR FAVOUR, GIVE UP. PRESS SELECT WHEN YOUR LEGS ARE BADLY DAMAGED TO DROP THE SWORD AND BEG FOR AN END.



"NOW...KILL ME!" SAYS UTSUSEMI AS HE LOWERS HIS BLADE.

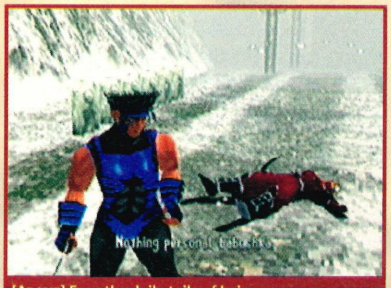


RED DRAGON OBLIGES WITH A GREAT CHOP OF HER SWORD.



UTSUSEMI SLUMPS LIFELESSLY TO THE SNOW. HIGH DRAMA OR WHAT?





[ABOVE] Even the daily toils of being a samurai don't get in the way of Kannuki's strict hair care regime.

YOUR BEST PAL

ALTHOUGH IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE, *BUSHIDO BLADE* HAS BEEN CONVERTED TO THE PAL TELEVISION SYSTEM VERY WELL. BLACK BORDERS ARE ONLY MINIMAL ABOVE AND BELOW THE SCREEN, AND SPEED IS NOT NOTICEABLY WORSE THAN THE IMPORT VERSION WE REVIEWED LAST MAY.

THE BONUS OF THIS LONG WAIT IS THAT WE GET PINTS OF SPRAYING BLOOD OF WHICH THERE WAS NONE BEFORE!





[ABOVE] A simple command will make you hop forward and stab at the chest of your opponent with the Katana sword.

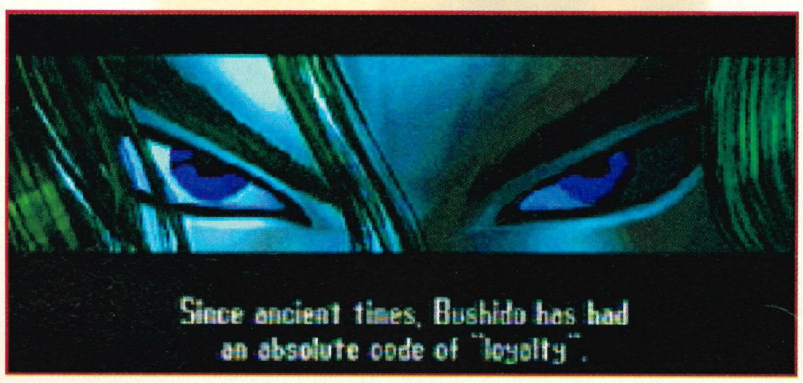


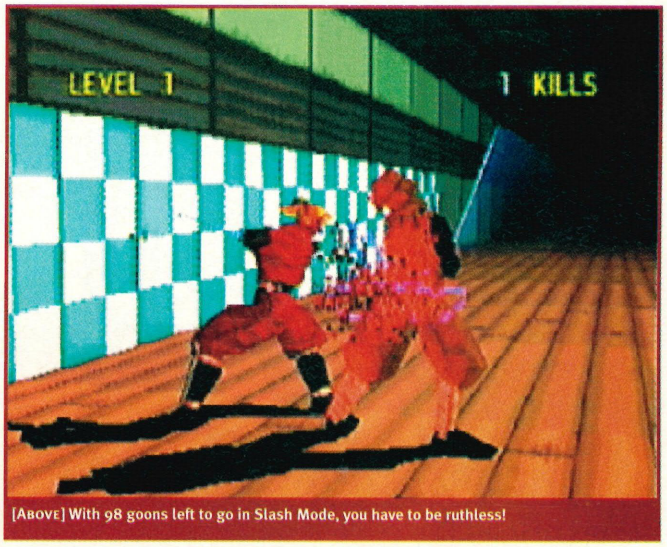
[ABOVE] When your blade gets hit, it will bounce backwards and leave you exposed for a critical second.

themselves. If you take too much damage to the legs then eventually you won't even be able to stand, instead left to crawl around on your knees with a severely limited range of moves until the end of the round.

SILVER CHOPPER

Being based around the code of the ancient Japanese honour system named Bushido, this is the first game ever where you have to fight honourably. That's why when you are on your knees, you can opt to drop your sword and ask the other player to finish you off! Also, you won't see the proper FMV endings when you complete the Story Mode unless you have fought honourably throughout – see the boxout for a description of honourable fighting *Bushido*





[ABOVE] With 98 goons left to go in Slash Mode, you have to be ruthless!

SLASH MODE

In some fighting games you get a Survival Mode, which you play to see how far you can get with a single life. Normally you win the game after about 12 or so bouts and feel pretty special for doing it. The equivalent in *Bushido Blade*, Slash Mode, is as serious as the rest of the game – you take on 100 trained ninjas one after the other to make it out alive. You can continue your game if you get slain, but you are only permitted to start off from the last batch of ten. So if you die at, say, ninja number 28, you'll restart at number 20 again. This is the ultimate test of your abilities!





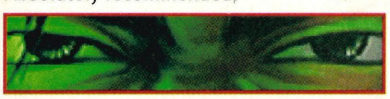


[Above] The intro sequence gives you a sneak peak at all those great big heavy weapons. Lovely.

Blade-style. All this talk of honour doesn't mean you have to play fair all the time, however. Most characters have a sneaky concealed weapon which they can whip from their baggy samurai clothes at any point during the action, like a fan or small throwing knife. If that dirty trick doesn't work, you can humiliate an opponent by chucking snow, water, or dirt in their eyes, and then running them through while they're off guard!

This is definitely the way to go if you are serious about your beat-'em-ups. *Bushido Blade* has no weird monsters, half humans, or anime special effects. It really is a serious game, better described as a samurai simulator than a beat-'em-up. For experienced players it provides the finest gameplay money can buy! However, newcomers will easily be confused by the odd controls and occasional one-hit deaths.

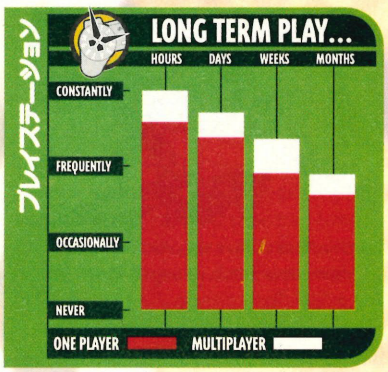
You genuinely have to be skilful to compete, unlike many other fighting games, and the freedom of movement element can make the two player bouts entertaining enough to keep you playing for hours on end. Absolutely recommended.





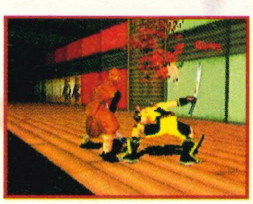














[Above] It has to be a tribute to the classic *Samurai Shodown* on Neo Geo. The big yucca plants even slice the same way.

PLAY

Looks	8
Sounds	6
Gameplay	10
Value	10
Honour	9

PLAYED 94%

Near-perfect sword play!

Alternatively:
Soul Blade (95%)
Tobal 2 (92%)

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Powerstation Magazine

★★★★★

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FORSAKEN

TAKE ON THE SCUM OF THE UNIVERSE STALKING THE REMNANTS OF A SHATTERED EARTH FOR LOOT AND WEAPONS IN ACCLAIM'S STUNNING FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER.





– "You went and did it, damn you... damn you all to hell!" Cue the dramatic finale to *Planet of the Apes*, where Charlton Heston in realisation that he's returned home 2000 years later to a post-nuclear Earth, stamps his fists into the sand as he gazes upon the half buried, weather-

Blueprint

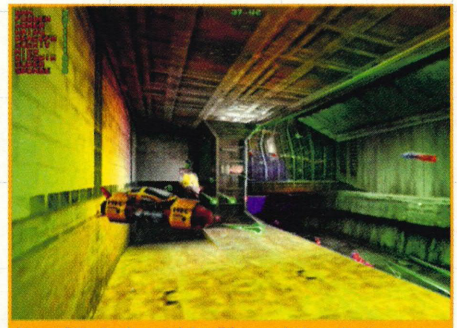
Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Probe
% Complete: 60%
Expected Release Date: April '98
Origin: UK
No of Players: 1 or 2



[Above] Although the populace are long dead and gone, expect some pretty stiff opposition from the automated drones.



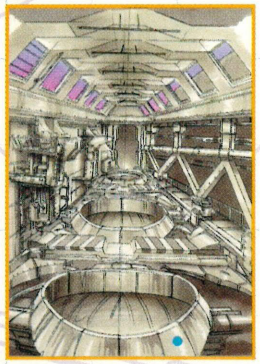
[Above] Huge rooms and corridors make up many of the backgrounds – ideal fodder for huge explosions and mayhem in general.



[Above] The background detail is superb throughout, and there are plenty of pick-ups to keep the action flowing. Looks good, doesn't it?



[Above] Tanks trundle around the environment nonchalantly picking off their flesh-covered foes (you!)







beaten Statue of Liberty.

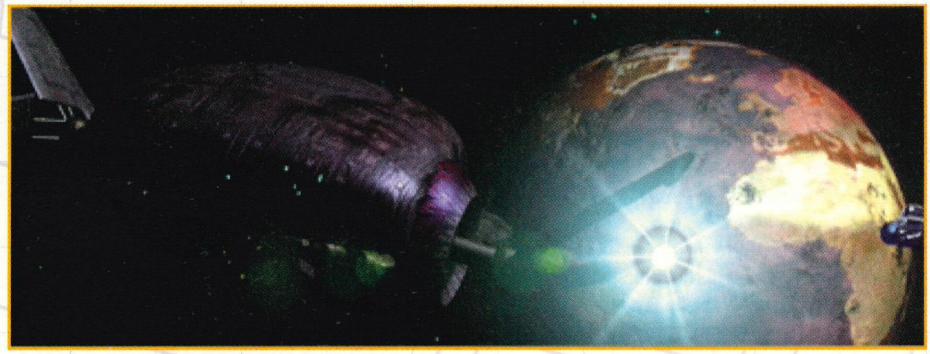
Disaster scenarios are probably the most popular settings for shoot-'em-ups and even more interest is generated when it involves 'old mother Earth.' Developer Probe has really gone to town in condemning the Terran system this time though, as it lies deserted and forlorn following a horrific experiment. For years, the Earth was sitting pretty, safe in the knowledge that thanks to an impenetrable defence satellite system, no one or thing could touch the blue planet or its inhabitants. Who would have thought that the planet's downfall would come from within?

After discovering how to manipulate matter at the lowest level, scientists accidentally triggered an uncontrollable fusion reaction which tore the planet asunder – the consequences of which spelled doom for the entire solar system. Earth and its constituent planets have been carved up like kebabs – lifeless husks that spin out of their orbits.

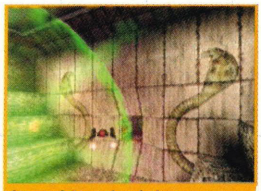
God-Forsaken

Some time later every bounty hunters' Christmas come at once as The High Senators of the Imperial Theocracy decree the system fair game – in other words, the perfect excuse to create a stunning 3-D first-person perspective shoot-'em-up. The action takes place within the Terran System, where players duke it out in an all-encompassing 360° of freedom. As you would expect from Probe, more than a dozen distinct levels are set to thrill an expectant Playstation audience and each of the mercenaries fight from specially modified airborne pioncycles (a bit like those seen in the *Judge Dredd* film).

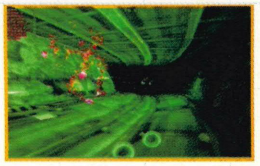
Each player's arsenal consists of in excess of 25 body-smashing weapons which light up the screen accompanied by stunning real-time lighting effects. Just watching the action underlines the way Probe is trying to elevate the 3-D shoot-'em-up genre to new heights.



"Forsaken represents a technological high watermark for 3-D 360° shooters..." Therasa Noonan, Probe



[Above] Some levels have an almost tomb-like appearance consisting of mazes and traps.







PlayStation Magazine STARPLAYER 9/10
CVG 4/5
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10 COOL THINGS ABOUT FORSAKEN

THINGS TO LOOK FORWARD TO INCLUDE:

1. JAW-DROPPING GRAPHICS WITH AMAZING ATTENTION TO DETAIL.
2. ULTRA-COOL DYNAMIC LIGHTING.
3. MORE COLOURFUL THAN AN HALLUCINATION
4. 40 STRONG TEAM OF DEDICATED PROGRAMMERS, ARTISTS AND TEA MAKERS.
5. 15 HUGE LEVELS
6. 30+ ENHANCEMENT PICK-UPS.
7. TWO PLAYER SPLIT SCREEN MAYHEM
8. DUAL ANALOGUE COMPATIBLE. OH YES.
9. 15 CHARACTERS/BIKES WITH VARIED AND DISTINCTIVE PERSONALITIES.
10. PROBE'S ASTOUNDING PEDIGREE. CAN THESE GUYS DO NO WRONG?

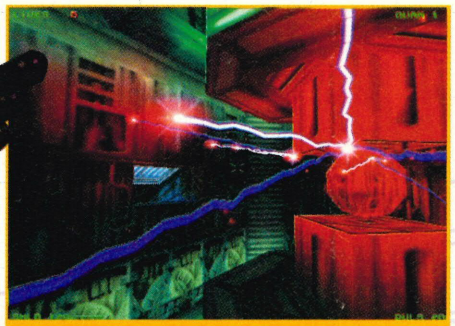
Therasa Noonan, Acclaim's UK Marketing Manager explains: "*Forsaken* represents a technological high watermark for 3-D 360 ° shooters. Immersion is absolute and the unyielding intensity, which is enhanced by a two-player option, throws gamers into a world that is truly forsaken."

Gore Blimey

With Earth torn apart by this shockwave, players take on the role of scavengers scouring the beautifully designed levels atop their anti-gravity pioncycles, each with individual characteristics – some are heavier than others but lack speedy and agility (you know the sort of thing). At the end of the day you choose the one you feel most comfortable with, as they are all fully customisable.

The idea is to investigate each location, looting as you go. Anything goes, including military munitions and equipment, or swelling your coffers with cash. Binding these exploratory and shooting elements together are environment-based puzzles', lush real-time lighting, fully-interactive backgrounds and (most importantly) bucketful's of gib-rending gore and a plethora of mutants milling around brandishing firearms of frightening power.

The team are keen to ensure that maximum enjoyment is provided in the killing stakes by the inclusion of optional "Missile Cameras" mounted on a projectile's nose, and a perverted device known as a "Mine Cam" – a nasty surveillance device planted in a bomb that lets the player 'blow off' whenever he sees fit.



[Above] One of the strongest parts of the game is in the way light reflects off objects and structures in real-time. Quite stunning.



[Above] You can't see to the end of some corridors, making surprise attacks, er surprising and all the more likely.

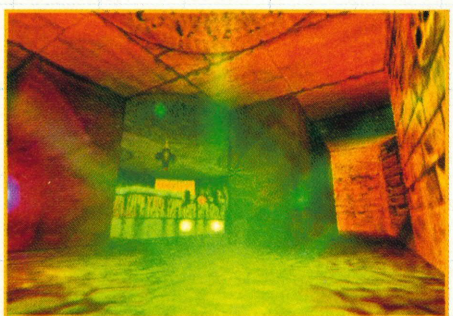
Let The Mayhem Begin...

Forsaken on Playstation may not feature a multi-player network, but a two-player split screen extravaganza is already in place and looks pretty stunning. Owners of Sony's Dual Analogue controller will be well catered for, ensuring that the 30 frames per second (FPS) action is as smooth as possible. Picking up the 30-odd enhancement pickups and hi-tech weapons should be a breeze. As the player progresses through the levels, stirring FMV will break up the onslaught nicely – then it's back to the death and destruction, not forgetting to turn up the original Drum 'n' Bass soundtrack to the max.

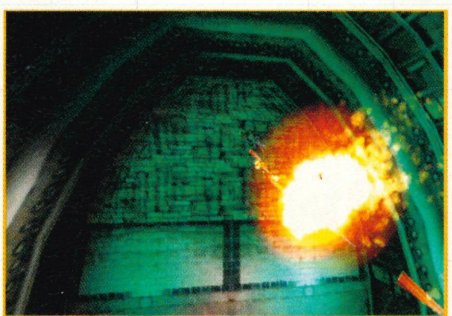
Probe is undoubtedly pushing the console to the limits and from what's on show, *Forsaken* looks certain to be one of the most exciting releases of '98. Come make your fortune... you'll be achin' for Forsaken.







[Above] The colour is truly stunning. Whether areas are brightly-lit or steeped in darkness, it always looks right.

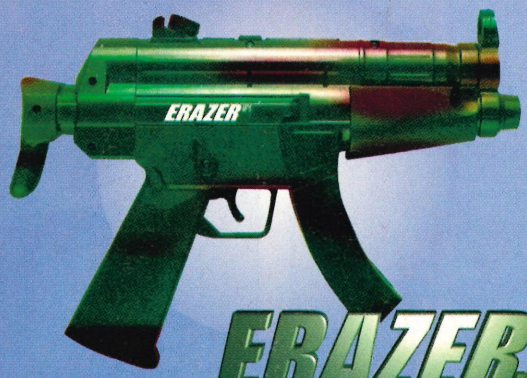


[Above] Explosions and weapon dispersal in general with feature heavily in the game and they look magnificent. Just like *Tunnel B1* in fact.

SOFTOGRAPHY

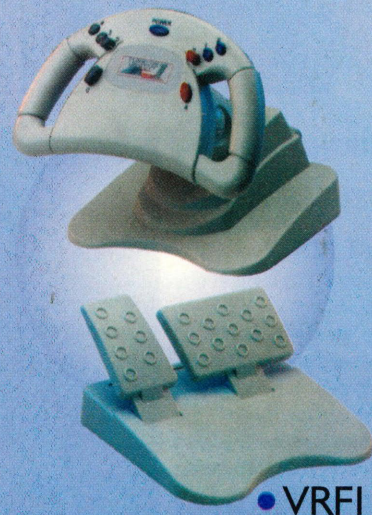
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SPAWN: TH

FINALLY, A GAME ABOUT FROGS GIVING BIRTH... ER NO, WAIT A MINUTE. SOMETHING EVEN MORE AMAZING – A CONVERSION OF COMIC BOOK HERO THAT ACTUALLY LOOKS GOOD!

Let's be honest, the transition for most comic book superheroes to home video game is a turbulent one at the best of times. A cursory glance through the past 12 issues of PLAY proves unequivocally that marrying the two a recipe for disaster. *Iron Man X-O Manowar*, *The Crow: City of Angels*, *The Incredible Hulk* and more recently, *Judge Dredd* are prime examples of how not to use a comic license.

Spawn however looks as though it could breathe new life into the super/anti-hero genre. Instead of plumping for something easy and unimaginative, such as a bog-standard platform romp, Sony has recognised the public's thirst for 3-D and concentrated on producing a more interactive and atmospheric game.

We've played it in an early alpha form, and there are plenty of new ideas to whet the appetite already thanks to constant input from comic book creator, Todd McFarlane. We hope that his intervention will be the defining factor in bringing Spawn's character to life.

Spawn's based on the comic book universe and not, thankfully, on the box office flop, which is a relief in itself. Interestingly, the game borrows from a number of different styles.

Blueprint

Publisher: Sony
Developer: SCEA
% Complete: 70%
Exp. Release Date: April '98
Origin: USA
No. of Players: 1

"Ideas to whet the appetite thanks to constant input from comic book creator, Todd McFarlane..."



SOFTOGRAPHY

NHL FACE OFF '98
CAPTAIN BLASTO
STEEL REIGN
RALLY CROSS

DOOMED

There's a smattering of *Tomb Raider*, *Resident Evil* and even the soon-to-released *Deathtrap Dungeon* in Spawn's fully interactive environment, and when he comes into contact with an enemy, a touch of *Tekken*, too. For most of the game, the action remains in a third-person perspective and only changes for close-quarter combat. We've heard rumours that during combat you'll be able to rip off enemy limbs and beat them to death with the soggy ends, but thus far, we've not managed to rip so much as a tissue.

In fact the fighting sections are pretty basic at the moment, but all this is set to change with the inclusion of multi-enemy attacks. The object of the game is to make it to the Tower of Hell by travelling through three unique time periods:



[ABOVE] At the end of each level you must jump through one of these shimmering blue warp gates.



[ABOVE] Smash open anything and you'll be surprised how many bonuses can be found.



[ABOVE] After carefully checking out every nook and cranny, you come across a rusty old key in Neil's Diner. All the scenery is breakable too.





[ABOVE] As you deliver the critical blow to an enemy boss, the camera pans immediately behind you to capture the glorious moment.

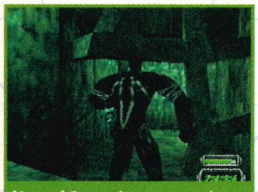


[ABOVE] You'll be using this function quite frequently – recharging your energy bar after a fight. To keep doing this, you must find the orbs hidden within crates scattered around the environment. There's plenty of them around, just smash up a few crates.

E ETERNAL



[Above] To get access to new areas, Spawn must activate switches or find specific keys.



[Above] Spawn is encouraged to use brute force in certain circumstances. Here he's smashed through some iron railings.



Medieval, Savage and Present day, slaughtering the beastly inhabitants as you go. If you're familiar with the comic, you'll recognise such favourites as the Violator, the Vaporiser, the Redeemer, the Vandalizer and even Angela. At the end of the game you will regain your lost humanity and also your soul.

Each, enormous, dynamically lit location is very reminiscent of *Fighting Force* and *Tomb Raider* in that you must avoid traps (rooms full of poisonous gas, crumbling scenery and spikes), while solving puzzles and interacting with the scenery.

Hell

Typically, you'll need to find an object, such as a cog to fix a piece of machinery before being able to continue. It's simplistic stuff, but should work well, considering the variety of elements within the game. Graphically, the polygonal characters are impressive indeed, consisting of beautiful, and often enormous, enemies. Spawn himself looks excellent too and will don a different costume for each world. He can leg-it around, jumping, kicking and punching objects along the way. The most common of these are crates which occasionally reveal power-ups and energy in the form of Cryomantic Orbs, door keys and power gauntlets.

The atmosphere is tense and forbidding and you really don't know what's around the next corner. It certainly looks as though Sony, in treading new ground with a comic book hero, has every right to feel optimistic.

We'll be keeping a watchful eye on all of the progress made over the next couple of months and there'll be a full preview soon.



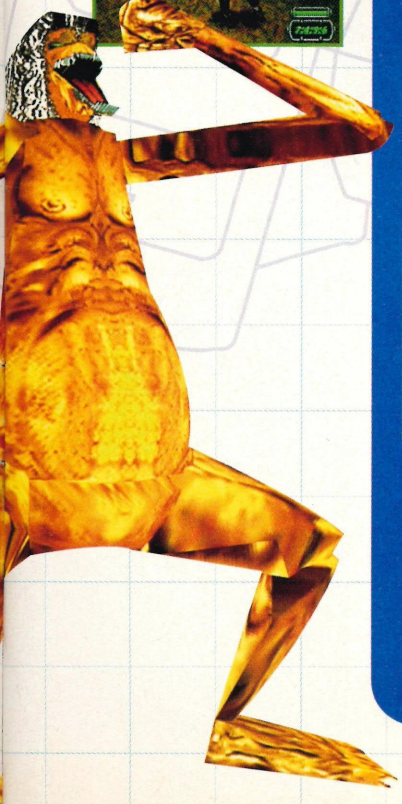
[Above] Our best mate, 'Gallons of blood' rears his ugly head in *Spawn*. As you can see, your enemies is donating a couple of pints.



[Above] Mmm, tasty. A pint of effluent please barman. Oh and can I have a twist of lime with it.

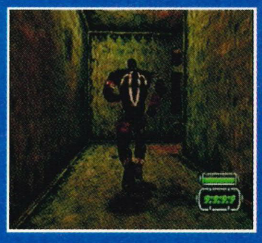


[Above] Energy Orbs can be found by breaking open crates. You can also find keys.



WHAT A MOVER!

Unlike the majority of comic-to-game conversions, Spawn runs around a fully interactive 3-D environment performing a number of different actions.



Run

Point him in any direction and he'll run at a canter in a third-person view. The animation of all characters is superb even at this early stage.



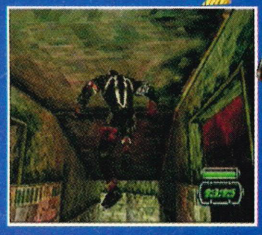
Fight

Close in on an enemy and the view will change from third person to sideways on for the duration of the confrontation.



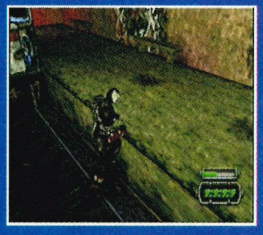
First Person

Slip into this mode to get a closer, more detailed look at your immediate surroundings, and the dead bodies.



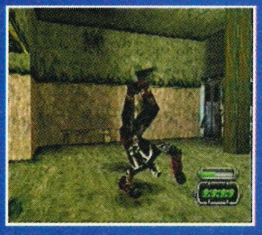
Leap

Jump. Our hell-bound hero leaps like a salmon around the scenery reaching bonuses and pick-ups as he goes.



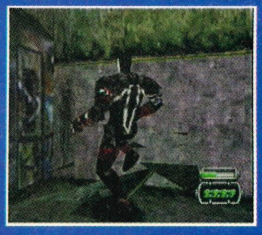
Pan Around

Holding one of the shoulder buttons allows you to pan around from above and below Spawn.



Tumble

Spawn performs a perfect forward roll. Useful for avoiding enemies and reaching hard-to-reach areas.



Break Things

Spawn's hobbies include smashing boxes to reveal hidden pick-ups. There's usually an orb of energy to discover.

RASCAL

MARTY MCFLY DID IT, BILL & TED MADE IT COOL AND VAN DAMME DID IT WHILE PRACTISING HIS ROUNDHOUSES. WHAT IS IT? TIME TRAVEL OF COURSE!

Written By Graeme Nicholson

Psygnosis is determined to win the 3-D platform game fight. Come March the Liverpool-based company is going to hit you with *Rascal*; super smooth 50 frames-per-second motion, huge fantasy environments and a central character designed to make you love him. Yes, that's right – if you found yourself inexplicably drawn to *Sesame Street*, *The Muppets Show* or even *The Dark Crystal* in your earlier years, it's likely Rascal will have the same effect. *Rascal* developer Travellers Tales explains: "We felt that the main character needed to be really strong and hence decided to rely on the experience of Jim Henson's Creature Workshop. They designed the characters of Rascal, Chronos the Evil Time Overlord and Rascal's father, Casper Clockwise, specifically for the game."

So you know the cast are of fine pedigree, what about the story? Normally the plot wouldn't matter much in a platform game of any kind, but in *Rascal* the storyline has been written to have a significant impact on your gaming experience.

Rascal's father, Professor Casper Clockwise, has invented a time travelling machine and then promptly been kidnapped by the Evil Time Overlord, Chronos. Chronos has obtained the plans for the professor's wonderful machine and, as you can guess, is screwing around with history and the future.



[Above] Feel free to try out your cute little bubble gun

TYKE

This is where the clever part comes in. By jumping into large silvery bubbles on each level it is possible to travel through the same time tunnels created by Chronos's meddling and see the past, present and future of your immediate surroundings. A good example of this is the pirate's ship level. When visiting the old version from hundreds of years ago, you'll find a fully operational Galleon crawling with ugly, violent pirates. Skip forward in time to arrive at the exact same location in 1997 and the whole ship is wrecked far beneath the waves; meaning you have to swim your way around that stage *Tomb Raider*-style. One final jump in the space-



[Above] You come all this way, expecting a mermaid in her natural state, and you get some male mutant prodding you with a fork.



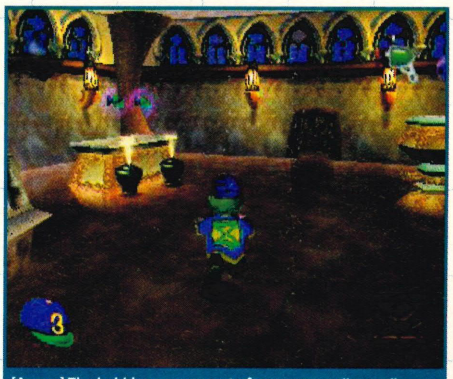
[Above] What's a game these days if it doesn't have dinosaurs in it? A flop, that's what, so Rascal doesn't disappoint.

Blueprint

Publisher: Psygnosis
Developer: Travellers Tales
% Complete: 80%
Expected Release Date: March '98
Origin: UK
No of Players: 1

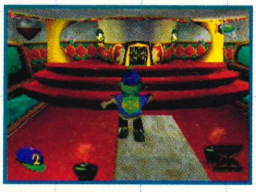


[Above] Flowers, a waterfall and a nice pink sunset. You expect to see the Care Bears ambling past hand in hand.



[Above] The bubble gun runs out of soapy green "ammo" fairly soon if you're careless, leaving you searching for more.





time continuum and you come out in the middle of a parched desert – the sea having evaporated at this point in the future! All six locations in Rascal can be visited in the past, present and future, which adds up to 18 individual levels. Besides the Galleon, you'll be on your way to a giant castle, an Aztec site, the wild West, the lost city of Atlantis, and finally the lab of Professor Clockwise.

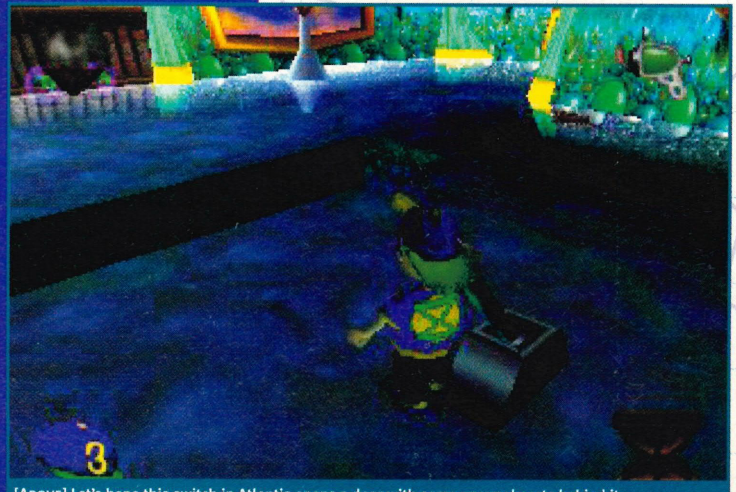
With all sorts of overgrown insects, rats, people and even robots in your way, you would expect some kind of meaty hardware for your personal protection, right? A pair of SMGs and some home-made pipe bombs, a la *Duke Nukem* perhaps? Well, unfortunately, Rascal is armed only with his dad's latest invention before the time machine: a quiet and inoffensive bubble gun. Wimpy it is!

LITTLE DEVIL

All the nasties you trap inside your bubbles during the length of the game have to be faced at the end in one terrifying hallway though, so it's better to run past them or jump unless you're trapped in a corner. Control of the little troublemaker will be in a similar "move in any direction" vein to *Croc* (hopefully with more intelligent cameras) so keeping out of harm's way should be pretty straight forward and instinctive.

Speaking of *Croc*, when Rascal's programmers at Travellers Tales were asked what makes their game better than the rapidly expanding range of competing titles (*Croc, Crash 2*, and *Jersey Devil* for example) they explained how increased variation, as well as a technical advantage, would put them ahead.

"Apart from the strong main characters, there are also hundreds of animated characters that have been redesigned in-house and lots of small, quirky creatures that lurk in dark corners. *Rascal* also boasts some stunning real time lighting and shading effects, which when combined with absorbing gameplay, makes a visually rich and exciting game." Time will certainly tell if this little rascal can beat off his competition – stay tuned!



[Above] Let's hope this switch in Atlantis opens a door with some energy hearts behind it

TALES OF WOE

TRAVELLERS TALES' STAFF MAY NOT HAVE THE BIGGEST GLOWING RECORD FOR PREVIOUS PLAYSTATION TITLES, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN THEY'VE BEEN SITTING AROUND DOING NOTHING BUT MOANING ABOUT THE PRESS RECEPTION TO *PUGGSY* FOR THE SEVEN YEARS SINCE THEY WERE FORMED. THEY'VE DONE GAMES ON OTHER SYSTEMS TOO – SOME GOOD, SOME NOT SO GOOD:

LEANDER
PUGGSY
DRACULA
MICKEY MANIA
TOY STORY
SONIC 3-D

AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST, THEY'VE EVEN DONE THE SEGA SATURN'S LAST STAND, SONIC R.

"...A visually rich and exciting game!"
Travellers Tales

SOFTOGRAPHY

This is Travellers Tales' first game on PlayStation., but you can bet it won't be their last.

GRAND THEFT A

COULD THIS BE THE MOST CONTROVERSIAL GAME OF THE PLAYSTATION'S EXISTENCE? PROBABLY.

Written By Graeme Nicholson

You will probably have heard all the fuss in December surrounding this fine game and its polluting of our children's minds. Newspapers, radio shows and TV all jumped on the bandwagon, desperate to stone *GTA* publicly like it was some kind of evil witch. Eamon Holmes almost bust a lung – he was so incensed!

The reality is that there hasn't been a better, more original game concept for years. Playing a criminal with a special interest in nicking cars, there are literally hundreds of possibilities for different missions, and developers DMA seems to have covered them all. So what if all the taboos of videogaming are here: drug dealing, gang fights, assassinations and wrongful deaths by the truckload – it's fun! Besides, it's hardly going to turn you into some kind of violent thug when you're away from your PlayStation, is it?



DUI

Starting a long and despicable underworld career on the grimy city streets of Liberty Island (inspired in no small measure by New York), the first stop is the line of payphones in the park where a big time crime boss will give you a relatively simple task, although it differs depending on which ringing phone you answer. There is a spectacular number of missions to complete (somewhere around the 200 mark) and the constant variation between them is staggering. Go back to the phones or answer somebody's car phone to get the next task.



[ABOVE] The hand-brake button comes in extremely handy when you're attempting to flee the long arm of the law on right-angled turns.

Whether it's running drugs for the mob or stealing a suitably fast getaway car for a bank job, you see everything from an elevated position looking directly down on the roads. Between stolen cars, which you end up nabbing just because you happen to like the colour or model, you control a little bloke. With him you can run around in any direction, punch and fire the various weapons found scattered around in wooden crates.

The freedom is quite amazing in the three giant cities the game is based in, and once on foot you can run to any car or bike, rip the driver from his seat and take off; leaving only tyre marks and a puff of smoke behind. As soon as you have taken a vehicle the music track changes to pump out whatever radio station the driver was listening to, complete with cheesy country tunes in pick-up trucks and stadium rock blaring away inside the flashier sports cars. A great idea, made even better by the radio reception going fuzzy when you drive under a bridge!

GBH

Although the rush of pulling hand-brake turns and speeding along the pavement past traffic to get away from the chasing police cars is incredibly strong, as is the buzz from rallying over a whole row of Hare Krishna's, *Grand Theft Auto* is not without its problems. The graphics are very basic with no shading or light sourcing to tart them up, but that is the least of it. If you park a tasty motor as your escape car before doing something awful like gunning down a street full of pedestrians, the car will be gone when you return if you walk

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: BMG Interactive
Customer support: 0171 384 7798
Price: £44.99
Release date: Out now

ONE PLAYER MEMORY CARD

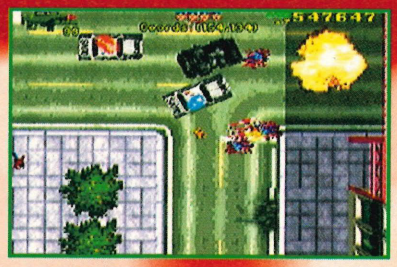
BANK ON IT

IT'S A DIRTY JOB, BUT SOMEBODY'S GOT TO DO IT! IN THIS MISSION THE CRIME BOSS LEADS YOU TO PICK UP A POLICE SQUAD CAR WHICH IS PACKED FULL OF EXPLOSIVES. YOU HAVE TO DELICATELY DRIVE IT UP TOWN THEN PARK IT OUT FRONT OF A BANK BEFORE MAKING A RUN FOR IT. THE BOMB GOES OFF, TEARS APART THE BANK'S DOORS AND YOUR EMPLOYERS GET THEIR CASH. IT DOESN'T ALWAYS GO AS PLANNED, THOUGH.





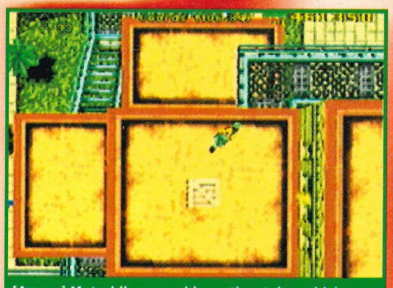
AUTO



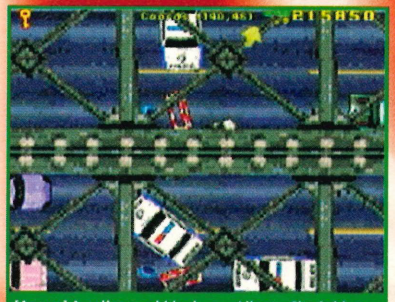




[Above] That bullet proof jacket you picked up will deflect a few shots from that cop, but can you make it to the Ferrari before his mates arrive?



[Above] Motorbikes can ride up the stairs, which means you can get them up onto the rooftops in certain bits of the city.



[Above] A police road block on a Liberty City bridge. The best course of action is to smash through the barrier and flatten the cop on the other side!



[Above] It's always wise to check out suspiciously parked vehicles for bonus missions, even though the alarm may be set to explode in a few seconds.

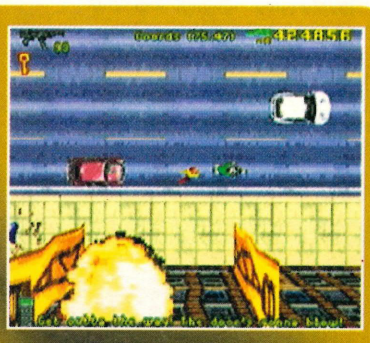


[Above] Here you have been sent to get a Chinese gang member's car resprayed blue for superstitious reasons. They're a weird bunch.

so much as a couple of screens away. Also, the game engine can only handle six cars on screen at one time, which is a bit of a bugger if you cause a traffic jam.

Don't get me wrong, *GTA* is a fantastic game and we have play-tested it for many months (both on PC and PlayStation), but there are a few niggles which mar an otherwise fine conversion. The scrolling can be extremely jerky at times, and it's also not uncommon for the frame rate to drop when heavy traffic or over-zealous police pursuits clutter the screen. Sadly this is the fault of the hardware, and where it is perfectly acceptable to shift this amount of detail around on a PC with 32Mb of RAM, the PlayStation has trouble keeping up with just two.

The concept is almost too good to be true though and the playability matches – you just have to decide what matters most to you: graphics or gameplay? We go for the latter every time. So should you.



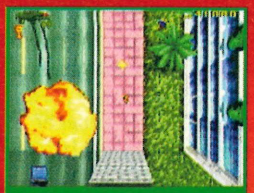
GOURANGA

IT'S IRRESISTIBLE. YOU ROUND A BEND ON SOME MISSION, ONLY TO FIND A PROCESSION OF HARE KRISHNA'S SHUFFLING ALONG THE PAVEMENT. YOU KNOW IF YOU LINE THE CAR UP PROPERLY YOU COULD GET THEM ALL AT ONCE. SLOWLY YOU FOLLOW THEM UNTIL THE ANGLE IS PERFECT – THEN FLOOR THE ACCELERATOR AND MASH THEM ALL INTO THE CONCRETE! THE POLICE WON'T BE PLEASED, BUT YOU GET BONUS POINTS AND A HEALTHY OUTLET FOR YOUR ANGER.

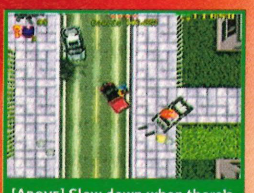






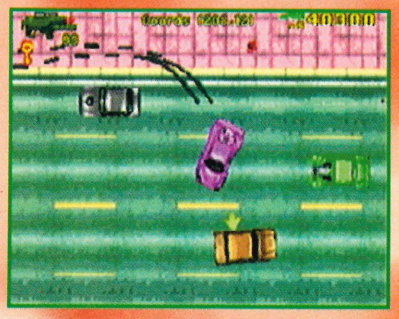


[Above] They're very rare, but the rocket launchers first found on the San Andreas level are fantastic fun!

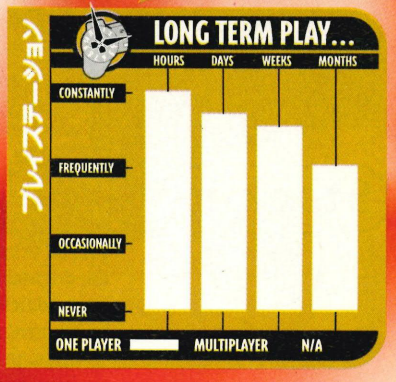


[Above] Slow down when there's a policeman after you and he'll drag you flailing from the car. Don't let this happen.





"What matters most: graphics or gameplay?"





PLAYED **88%**

Criminally addictive...

ALTERNATIVELY:
FELONY 11-79 (77%)
MICRO MACHINES V3 (91%)

TETRIS PLUS

TETRIS IS ARGUABLY THE BEST PUZZLE GAME OF ALL TIME AND NOW IT'S SPAWNED A TWO-PLAYER SEQUEL. BRING ON THE BRICKS...

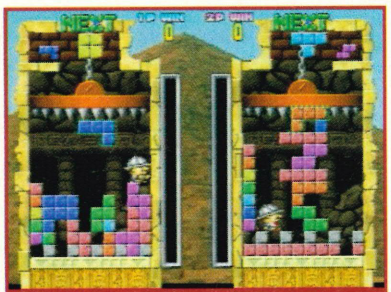


PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: JVC
Customer support: 0171 240 3121
Price: £34.99
Release date: Out Now

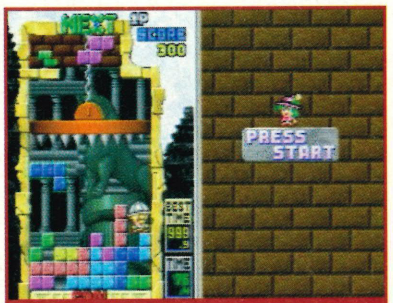
ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD | MULTIPLE PLAYERS





[ABOVE] Play against a fellow human being in either the Puzzle or Classic mode.

"By far the best option is the two player non-competitive Mode..."



[ABOVE] The are four different courses, each of them is represented by the changing seasons, such as summer, winter etc.

Written by Tom Sargent

Stacking little odd-shaped bricks that fall from the sky sounds about as much fun as buying a season ticket for Darlington FC! However, the original *Tetris* is arguably one of the most addictive games ever created due to its inherent playability.

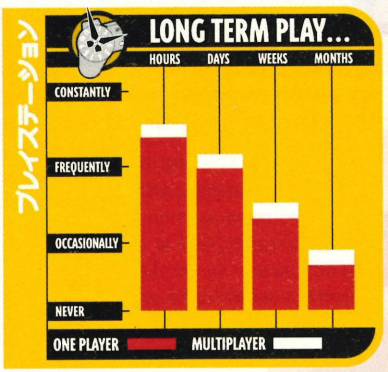
Although the game is well established on many computer formats, there's always room for a sequel, especially if it boasts a range of new features to test one or two players to the sweaty limits of dexterity. Besides the inclusion of Alexey Pajitnov's classic original, a number of new challenges make their debut in *Tetris Plus*; the first of which is a Puzzle Mode, where you assist the mad professor and his assistant to escape from the inner chamber of an ancient ruined temple. You must clear a path through the tumbling rocks while keeping a beady eye on a spiky platform that descends from the ceiling.

BLOCK ROCKIN'

Two Player Vs Puzzle Mode is similar to the Puzzle Mode, only now you must try and trap the your opponent. If you make a line on your side, it will be sent to the opposing chamber – a bit like *Super Puzzle Fighter Turbo II*.

The third and by far the best option is the Two Player Non-Competitive Play Mode, where you and a chum can play *Tetris* Classic or Puzzle Mode separately on screen at once. It doesn't end here, though. No siree. There's even a fun 'Edit' section, which allows players to develop their own puzzles (after successfully completing the 80 already in there) and 20 hidden bonus stages littered throughout the different levels.

Tetris Plus is simple, addictive fun and although boasting only slightly improved graphics over the original, plays even better thanks to the inclusion of the various two player modes. It's a bit dated now of course and we're dubious to say the least as to whether it's worth buying at 35 nicker, but like *Bust-A-Move 3* also reviewed in this issue it'll knock your blocks off if you're into the genre.





[ABOVE] From the Options screen, the Classic, Puzzle, Vs and Edit screens can be accessed. *Tetris Plus* is exceptional value for fans.



[ABOVE] The Classic game in either one or two player mode is still our favourite – it's also harder this time around.

PLAY

LOOKS	5
SOUNDS	5
GAMEPLAY	7
VALUE	8
CRUMBLING	6

PLAYED 81%

Addictive, but antiquated puzzler

ALTERNATIVELY:
BUST-A-MOVE 3DX (87%)
SUPER PUZZLE FIGHTER II TURBO (90%)

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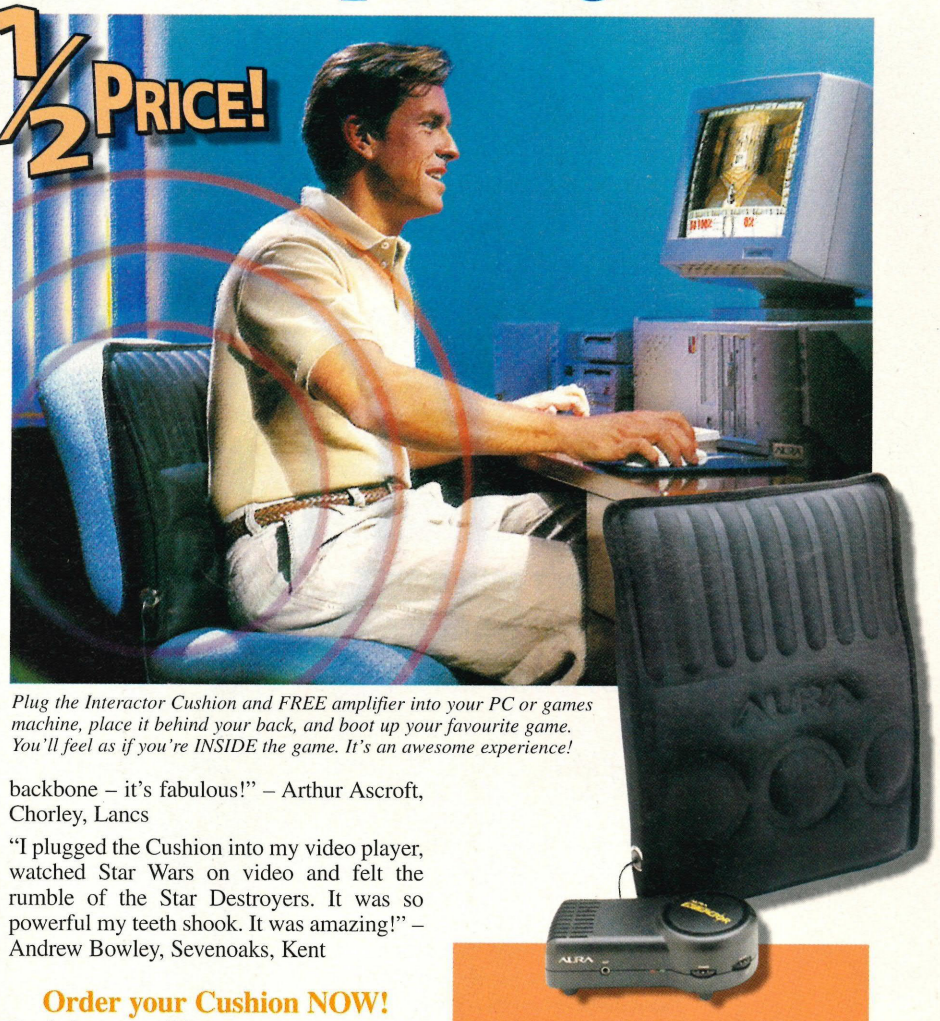
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Mr, Mrs, Ms, etc _____

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Signed _____

(I am 18 years or older) PY2

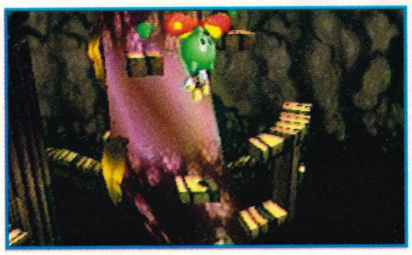
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KLONOA: DOOR T





WHAT CAN YOU DO THAT HASN'T BEEN DONE ALREADY IN A PLATFORM GAME? NOT MUCH, BUT NAMCO HAS A BLOODY GOOD GO!

Written By Graeme Nicholson

This little treat came in the same morning we heard 618 Japanese kids had just suffered simultaneous epilepsy seizures from watching Tokyo TV's *Pocket Monsters* cartoon too closely. It was with joypad extension cables and a small television set in a well lit room then that we cautiously explored this explosion of sound and colour from Japan.

An odd departure for Namco, Klonoa is an extremely pleasant and light hearted platform game, similar in theory to the *Pandemonium* games, in that you are constrained to left and right movement only through the 3-D graphics. In practice though, *Klonoa* is less limited and offers you a choice between different paths fairly often, or allows you to interact with the back and foreground in other ways, explained later on.

Klonoa himself, the main character in the adventure, defies conventional description. Try to imagine an anime version of Felix the cat, add a hat and some great big floppy ears and that's him. Those awesome auricles don't just make our hero look weird though – with a double tap of the jump button, Klonoa will leap into the air and flap his lobes for a couple of seconds; letting you float over to difficult platforms or hover while a nasty creature scuttles past below.



[Above] Some nasties even affix spikes to their shields so there's no way to tackle them from the front. Swines.

JAPLISH

Anyone who played the Kirby adventures on older Nintendo systems will recognise Klonoa's way of defending himself. All you have to do is grab hold of an enemy and throw it at the next one, the result being both exploding in a shower of confetti-like stars. You can also use your captured creature to burst under your feet to jump much higher than normal, or even chuck them into the fore or background of the screen. The latter ability is normally used when you see a floating egg (containing a bonus diamond) or bubble (containing one of the monkeys you are meant to be saving) way out in the air on either side of your platform. By hurling the ball-shaped foe at these objects you can break them open and retrieve whatever's inside. Some enemies later on try to dissuade you from grabbing them by waddling towards you brandishing shields, however you just need to nip over the top of them and grasp them from their unprotected side to pick them up. Easy.

MANGA

The game is pretty simple after you get the hang of lobbing the bad guys around

PLAY INFORMATION

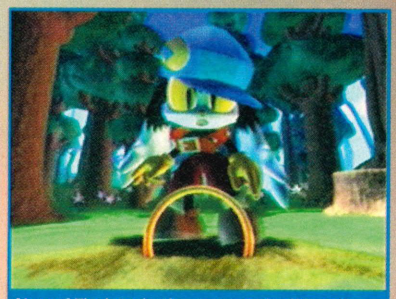
Publisher: Namco
Supplier: The Video Game Centre on 01202 527 314
Price: £69.99
Release date: Out now (import)


ONE PLAYER


MEMORY CARD



[Above] Occasionally you'll come across a super inflated version of the bog standard enemy creature. They're more fun to pop.



[Above] The introduction sequence is all in soft focus and captured our hearts immediately. Very nice.



[Above] Hit the "X" on this monolith with a live space hopper and it collapses to form a bridge across the infinite blackness.



[Above] For a change you get to ride an old mining cart into the screen like Crash Bandicoot's polar bear level. Jump out for the crystals!



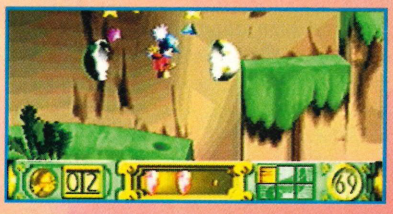


'O PHANTOMILE



[Above] Inside this secret cave, you have to grab yourself a particularly frisky green beast to bounce on and reach the bonus crystals.









"The action is smooth and satisfying..."







instead of jumping on them or shooting at them. Every few levels you'll find a sub game, like the mining cart, that takes you on a 3-D roller coaster ride underground, and at the end of each world a big boss will drive you mad until you learn the particular pattern of attack to finish him, a bit like *Crash Bandicoot 2*. Klonoa plays so well precisely because it is so simple. It doesn't look as good as *Pandemonium 2*, *Crash 2* or any of the other big platformers as the scenery is fairly plain and the characters go all blocky when they get too close. But the action is so smooth and satisfying because the levels have been designed to keep you moving and solving puzzles as you approach them instead of doing the same parts over and over.

There are lengthy cut scenes at key stages throughout that don't make any sense unless you can understand Japanese, but bypassing them doesn't impair the gameplay at all. Oh, and none of us felt even remotely disorientated while intently watching the beautiful intro sequence.

A pricey option on import (although Sony officially release it in March), but well worth a look.

PLAY

Looks	●●●●●●○○○○
Sounds	●●●●●●○○○○
Gameplay	●●●●●●●●○○
Value	●●●○○○○○○○
Monkeys	●●●●●●○○○○

PLAYED **95%**

Fast and loveable Japanese platformer

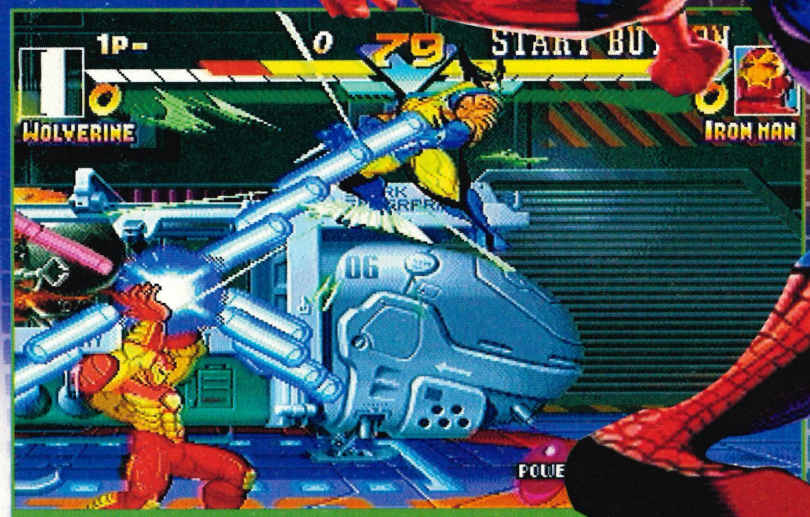
ALTERNATIVELY:
PANDEMONIUM 2 (72%)
RAYMAN (87%)

MARVEL SUPER HEROES

DON A RIDICULOUS COSTUME, CLENCH YOUR FISTS AND TAKE ON THE SCUM OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE IN CAPCOM'S FINE-TUNED, 2-D BEAT-'EM-UP!



[ABOVE] The Hulk is one of the most powerful characters in the game. He may not be the biggest, but boy does he deliver the goods when he connects.



[ABOVE] Wolverine has nowhere to hide as Iron man unleashes the devastating UniBeam. Learn to exploit each character's special abilities and Power gem.

Written By Tom Sargent

"Spinning Bird Kick."

There isn't a game fan in the land who hasn't seen or played one of Capcom's classic 2-D fighters. The sustained popularity of the Street Fighter label is testimony to this, and in the process of becoming the most revered beat-'em-up series' of all time, there have been some notable spin-offs too.

X-Men: Children of the Atom carried over the same trademark high standards we've come to expect from Capcom over the years, ie colourful characters, tight control and lightning-fast action. Now we have the follow-up, *Marvel Super Heroes*, which consolidates many of these very same characteristics and consequently offers little in the way of originality, but looks 'real purdy' and plays extremely well.

Every time a new Capcom fighting game comes out, it feels just that bit tighter and more professional. The ultimate beat-'em-up has always been a holy grail to the Japanese coders and on the evidence of their latest offering, they've just about got the 2-D genre licked. Although they bear more than a passing resemblance to 'Atom', the colour, size and animation of the characters in *Marvel Super Heroes* is far better.

LET'S GO, BUB!

Not a sign of any dodgy-looking polygons here. Each of the dozen or so Marvel favourites, including: The Hulk, Spider-Man, Captain America, Wolverine and Magneto are beautifully animated, although there's a smattering of slowdown when some of them exchange screen-filling projectile attacks.

The main difference comes with the introduction of Infinity gems which come in various colours and endow characters with special powers and attributes. This brings a whole new element of strategy to the bouts and it works a treat. These gems give you temporary special powers and if you give your opponent enough of a pasting, they'll drop them to the floor for you to pick up and use. There are six gems in total: Power, Mind, soul, Time, Space and Reality empowering the recipient with strength, speed and a number of other enhancements.

With these you can unleash Infinity Combos – devastating moves that inflict heinous amounts of damage when your Infinity bar is full. If you're skilful, enough these attacks can be countered by Infinity counters, similar to the Alpha counters from *Street Fighter Alpha 2*, turning your opponent's own Infinity Combo against them. Still with me?

GAMMA CHARGE

The fighting itself is very similar to *Street Fighter*, in that half and quarter turns on the D-pad are used together with light, medium and heavy attacks producing

PLAY INFORMATION

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

ONE PLAYER MULTIPLE PLAYERS MEMORY CARD



[ABOVE] The mighty Juggernaut performs a Smash to knock the wind out of captain America.



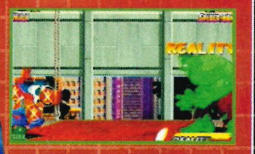
[ABOVE] Spidy finishes off The Hulk with a Spider Sting. Who'd have thought it.



[ABOVE] The Hulk's 'all raged up' as he nonchalantly tosses Shuma Garoth out of the ring.

INFINITY

The Infinity Combo is the most powerful move that can be performed when at least one level of the Infinity Bar is full. When you activate one, the screen will grow dark for a moment as the fighter gathers his/her energy.






CHARACTERS



Iron Man

Millionaire inventor Anthony Stark sports a weapons-laden body suit to blast enemies.

Special moves: UniBeam, Air UniBeam, Repulsor Blast, Smart bomb, Smart Bomb Drop, Flight, Knee Dive, Air Palm Beam, Rocker corner Slam, Repulsor Slam, Air Repulsor Slam.

Best Gem: Soul



Wolverine

A natural-born mutant with an indestructible skeleton made of adamantiumin. Most famous for his retractable, slashing claw.

Special moves: Berserker Barrage, Tornado Claw, Drill Claw, Double Knee Kick, Claw Slide, Dive Kick, Shoulder Mount Adamantium Hell, Ground Mount Adamantium Hell, Air Adamantium Hell.

Best Gem: Power



Psylocke

She uses telepathic powers, and send blasts of psionic energy.

Special moves: PsiFlash (Downward, Straight and Diagonal), PsiBlade, Ninjitsu, PsiDrill, Forward Flip Kick, Forward Slide Kick, Back Roll Kick, Double Jump, Vertical Launch, Rolling Slam, Roll Drop.

Best Gem: Power



Spider-Man

Chemistry student Peter Parker has great strength, agility and 'Spider Sense' thanks to being bitten by a radioactive spider.

Special moves: Web Ball (ground and air), Spider Sting, Web Swing, Web Throw (straight, up and diagonal), Triangle Jump, double Rolling Slam, Shoulder Toss, Air Double Rolling Slam.

Best Gem: Power



Captain America

Steve Rogers has heightened strength and stamina. Famous for his near-indestructible shield made of ademantium and a piss-poor TV series.

Special moves: Shield Slash (low, high and diagonal), Air Shield (down, across, diagonal), Stars 'n' Stripes, Cartwheel, Charging Star, Double Jump, One Hand Slam, Ground Launch, One Hand Drop.

Best Gem: Power



Magneto

Eric Magnus Lensherr has mastered the art of magnetism and is considered the most dangerous mutant alive. Special Moves: EM Disrupter, Magnetic Wave, Hyper-Grav, Gravitation, Scrap Hold, EM Repulse, Air Scrap Hold.

Best gem: Space



Shuma Garoth

A bizarre octopus-type creature from the same dimension as Dr Strange who uses all kinds of tentacle moves.

Special moves: Mystic Stare, Mystic Smash, Devitilization, Bite 'n' Throw, Energy Drain, Blob Drop, Stone Drop.

Best Gem: Time



Juggernaut

Real name, Cain Marko is a huge thundering bloke with a fishbowl head and earth-shattering power.

Special moves: Juggernaut Punch, Earthquake, Juggernaut Splash, Cytorrak Power Up, Double Fist Thrust, Headbutts 'n' Uppercut, Cackling Slam, Air Drop.

Best Gem: Space

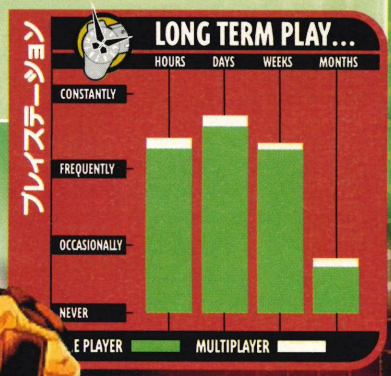


Blackheart

The son of Mephisto, lord of Darkness. Prides himself on being totally evil and summoning-up elemental attacks.

Special moves: Dark Thunder (forward, down, up), Lightning Inferno (close, mid-screen, far), Ice Inferno, Fire Inferno, Soul Absorb, Energy Surge, Air Energy Surge.

Best Gem: Reality



standard and ultra-spectacular 'Magic Series' combo attacks. Super-jumps, dashes, throws and safety measures are all in there too; making two player games exciting and stunning from a 2-D point of view.

To counter the slowdown problem encountered with some of the larger characters (Juggernaut and The Hulk being fine examples) and backgrounds with various animations going on all over the place, set the play to 'Turbo' before a bout and the problem is redressed to a certain extent. Overall, *Marvel super Heroes* is a very enjoyable fighting game, regardless of it's traditional 2-D origins. There's a real lasting challenge, especially for two human players as there are so many moves and counter-moves to learn and experiment with. Even in one player mode, it'll be quite a while before you beat the two super-bosses, Dr. Doom and Thanos. Pretty damn Marvel-ous.



[Above] Magneto dodges Spidy's attempt at doing the perfect Tarzan Impersonation.



[Above] Shuma Gorath and Psyclocke decided that opening up the box of fireworks prematurely was a bad idea.

PLAY

Looks	●●●●●●●●●●
Sounds	●●●●●●●●●●
Gameplay	●●●●●●●●●●
Value	●●●●●●●●●●
Heroism	●●●●●●●●●●

PLAYED **87%**

A highly playable beat-'em-up.

ALTERNATIVELY:
Street Fighter EX Plus (91%)
DarkStalkers (88%)

BEAST WARS TRANSFORMERS

THE LAST TIME WE PLAYED A TRANSFORMERS GAME, IT WAS ON THE SPECTRUM 48K. NOW THEY'RE BACK WITH A NEW LOOK, NEW NAMES AND A NEW GAME!

Transformers eh?

The old 'robots in disguise'? Yes, they've been brought out of retirement, given a makeover, and sent off to continue the battle against evil once again. Well, the good ones are battling against evil, the evil ones are obviously battling against good, but I digress.

These 'new look' transformers also have new names. In the old days it was the 'Autobots' versus the 'Decepticons.' Now though it's 'Maximal' versus 'Predacon'. There is probably some drawn-out convoluted reason for the change, possibly involving aeons of robot battle... or perhaps some marketing exec just decided he didn't like the old names.

Anyway, for the purposes of the game, the Maximal robots are the 'good guys', and the Predacon robots the 'bad guys.' Playing for the good guys we have: Optimus Primal (robot who transforms into an ape), Cheetor (who transforms into a crisp... sorry, a Cheetah), Dinobot (a dinosaur) and Rhinox (who transforms into... guess what? A rhino). On the away team are: Megatron (dinosaur), Scorpinok (a Scorpion), Inferno (an ant) and Tarantulus (turns into a spider).

Immediately upon start-up, you need to choose your affiliation, either Maximal or Predacon, and this choice will affect your choice of robots and your mission specifications.

Initially you'll be able to choose from two missions, giving you a total of four (two for each affiliation) with more missions becoming available as you complete the first ones. Once you've selected your mission, you need to choose your robot.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Hasbro Interactive
Contact: The Video Game Centre on 01202 527314
Price: £49.99
Release date: Out now (import)

ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD

Do You Have That In Red?

After viewing each transformer's energy and stats and selecting the most appropriate warrior robot for the task, you're sent to the drop point to start the mission.

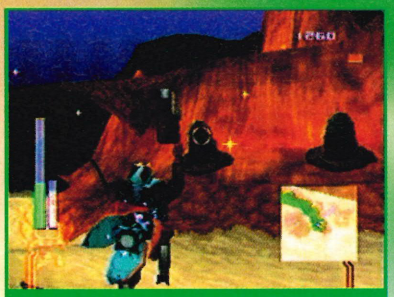
Gameplay takes place from a second-person perspective – directly behind your chosen 'bot (oo-er!), in a similar style to *MDK* and *Lone Soldier*. As you progress through your chosen mission, you'll encounter flying... er, 'things', gun turrets, natural hazards and of course, enemy transformers. Your 'bot can run, jump, shoot and transform his way around the landscape, and each transformation mode has a specific use. When in beast mode, for example, you can't shoot anything, but you run faster and your energy seems to charge up more rapidly.

Doors and energy fields will bar your way, and need to be opened by making use of obvious and not so obvious switches and triggers. Missions tend to have a transformers universe 'theme' throughout. For instance in one of the early Maximal missions you must prevent the Predacon's extraction of 'Energon' which is damaging the environment. How about that? An environmentally-friendly game!

The main criticism of Beast Wars would have to be the difficulty. Even on the easy difficulty, you'll find your transformer constantly getting blown to bits after about 30 seconds. However, once you've mastered not getting killed immediately you'll find *Beast Wars Transformers* quite an enjoyable romp, although its not in the same league as *MDK*, not by a long shot! Nothing more than average.



[Above] Rhinox turns into a rhino (bit of a clue in the name there). The animal forms seem to help with energy recharge, which is good, because they can't shoot whilst in this form.

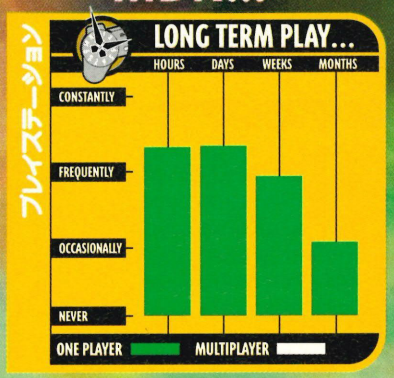


[Above] This is where you select your robot – sorry, transformer – by viewing their abilities and statistics. Let's see... Cheetor reminds me of crisps, so I'll have him.



[Above] Energy barriers crop up throughout the level. Usually these are deactivated by triggering switches.

"Not in the same league as *MDK*..."



PLAY

LOOKS	7
SOUNDS	7
GAMEPLAY	6
VALUE	6
BEASTIALITY	7

PLAYED 65%

Transforming fun that's far from easy!

ALTERNATIVELY:
MDK (90%)
LONE SOLDIER (92%)

Written by Roy Kimber

COURIER CRISIS

PLAY DELIVERY BOY IN THE WORLD'S FIRST COURIER SIMULATOR!

Written By Graeme Nicholson

"The horrendous technical downfalls will leave you speechless!"

Since we first heard of this one we've tried to imagine what could possibly make it fun. First of all, you play as a city package courier. But not the type of courier that gets to roar through the streets in a big oily Fed Ex van, running red lights and blasting his horn, nor the fearless leather-bound motorbike courier who violates the one-way system and bundles down pedestrian stairs to reach his target. No, you ride a little frail mountain bike.

Repeatedly referred to as "*Paperboy* for the Nineties" even by our own Cat Bucannon, you pedal through the dirty streets of *Courier Crisis* at fairly low speed (although it gets faster) and do your job. This consists of following an arrow on your display that points to the next customer who wants something delivered. Cycle up to the man in the suit with the yellow arrow above his head and you have the package – all you have to do next is follow the arrow again, which is now pointing in the direction of the target businessman. He's the one with the great big dollar sign above his head, shouting "Over here, over here!" in an annoying voice.

GAME CRISIS

As the streets get more congested during the game you find yourself bunny-hopping over oncoming traffic to make the next drop in time. Too late and you get paid less, or if the countdown reaches zero you get fired. But there are many other dangers to face. Packs of rabid dogs give chase and chew on your legs, angry citizens in the poorer parts of town just slap you for the sake of it and you may even find yourself timidly peddling through the middle of a ruthless drive-by shooting. Luckily there are left and right punches and kicks in the tradition of *Road Rash* to help you out, but you can expect to see the police coming in your direction if you break too many civilian necks.

Even if this appeals to you, the horrendous technical downfalls of the game will leave you speechless. The harsh and unbelievable scenery chugs along at only a precious few frames per second, with all sorts of textures missing and glitches that let you see chunks of people, cars and other objects through supposedly solid walls. The main character also looks pretty bad and moves poorly, very much like the bike levels of *2Xtreme*. The methodical gameplay can be mildly entertaining, but *Courier Crisis* would have to be released at budget prices to even bear thinking about.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: BMGie
Customer support: 0171 384 7798
Price: £39.99
Release date: Out now

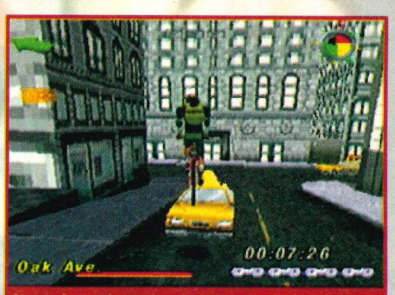
ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD



[ABOVE] Traffic moves in all directions across the city, and sometimes you can't avoid being prised from the saddle.

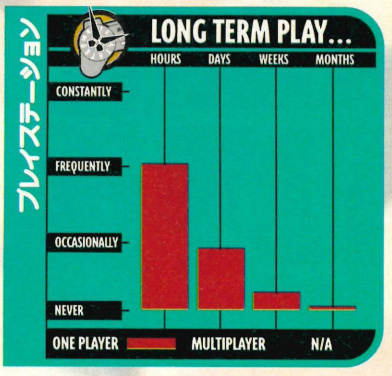


[ABOVE] To make things more difficult your customers begin standing around on hotel canopies and stacks of crates – use the ramp!



[ABOVE] Learning to bunny-hop oncoming traffic becomes vital if you don't want to snap both femur bones over someone's fender.





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PLAY

LOOKS	5
SOUNDS	3
GAMEPLAY	5
VALUE	3
REFLECTORS	4

PLAYED 54%

Bring back the old Paperboy!

ALTERNATIVELY:
2XTREME (52%)
ROAD RASH (75%)

Gameplay

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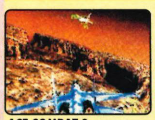
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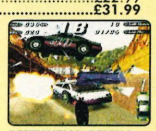

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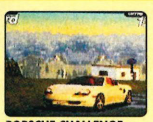
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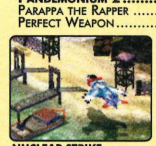

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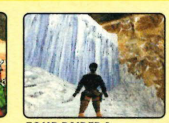

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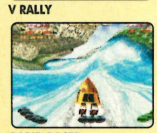

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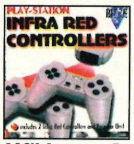




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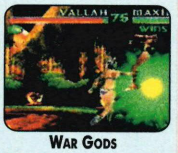
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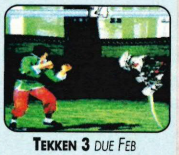
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AIRONAUTS	MARCH
APACHE LONGBOW	FEBRUARY
AUTO DESTRUCT	
BROKEN HELIX	MID JANUARY
BUGRIDERS	28TH JANUARY
HERC'S ADVENTURE	DECEMBER
K-1 THE ARENA FIGHTERS	MID JANUARY
KILLING TIME	FEBRUARY
MACE	29TH JANUARY
METAL GEAR SOLID	END JANUARY
MIDNIGHT RUN	MID JANUARY
NAGANO WINTER OLYMPICS	MID JANUARY
NBA HANGTIME	29TH JANUARY
NHL OPEN ICE	16TH JANUARY
OTHER LIFE AZURE DREAMS	MID JANUARY
PREMIER MANAGER '98	
PRO PINBALL TIMESHOCK	22ND JANUARY
SAN FRANCISCO RUSH	29TH JANUARY
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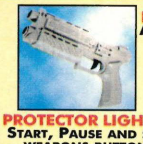
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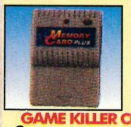


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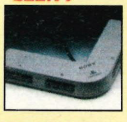
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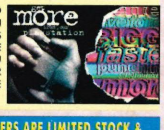


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PL2(2)

SIDE BY SIDE SPECIAL

IT'S BACK TO BASICS – QUITE LITERALLY, WITH TAITO'S LATEST QUICK-FIRE RACER. CAN IT COMPETE WITH THE LIKES OF RAGE RACER THOUGH?



A quick glance

at any of the recent Japanese import magazines reinforces the fact that (among countless other fads) car games are more popular than ever. Most of them never make it to Europe, but this one sneaked into our local import shop and if there was an award for the most bog standard racing game ever programmed, then bring on the fanfare – *Side By Side Special* is it.

After a typically slick rendered intro and a cheesy soundtrack, it's business as usual. Pick a car, decide what course to race on and from which perspective, and away you go. There are no weapons involved as in the almost identical *Ray Tracers*, where smashing into other cars and blowing them up kept you on the edge of your seat (at least for a few hours).

Essentially, this is a straight race around one of the ten courses and the only contact with other cars is when you hurtle around corners; gently nudging them out of the way. Sensation of speed is pretty good, but the recurrent problem of pop-up and glitching spoils much of the action – especially when playing from the high up third person view.

The cars themselves look and handle impressively enough and the game engine encourages loads of handbrake turns and skids, such is the contrivance of the courses. They are all based upon real Japanese models: Nissan, Honda, Mazda, Mitsubishi, Toyota etc, and look realistic to say the least.

Most of the seasonal tracks test the drivers handling ability on tarmac roads, but some of them include snow and gravel sections (or both). These can be tough, even on the easier settings, and require patience and dexterity to master. An intriguing anomaly with *Side By Side* is the lack of any progression made. You simply race around a track (hopefully winning), gain a few extra cars and access to two or three new tracks and that's it. Pah!

Entertainment for a few hours this may be, but there's no championship to win or any real feeling of fulfilment. Good racing games are ten-a-penny on the PlayStation and this is hardly shaking the foundations of the genre. There is also no two player mode which is quite frankly unforgivable.

"The recurrent problem of pop-up and glitching spoil much of the action..."

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Taito
Contact: The Video Games Centre on 01202 527314
Price: £69.99
Release date: Out Now (Import)

ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD



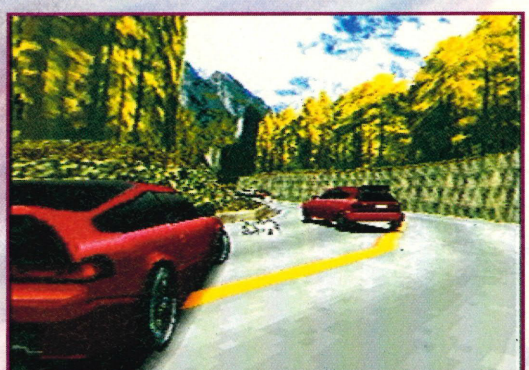
[Above] The are four different courses, each of them is represented by the changing seasons.



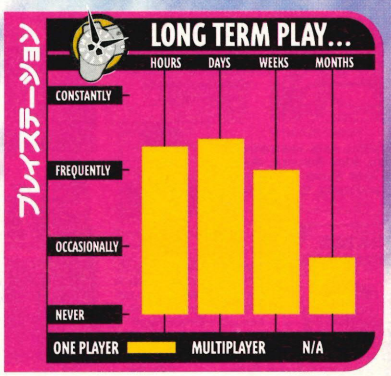
[Above] Graphically, the game is impressive, but there's a pretty short horizon and loads of pop-up.



[Above] There's plenty of physical contact between cars, but no rolling, burn-outs or damage. So pretty dull then!



[Above] You can really throw the cars into the corners, this feels excellent, as does the general handling of the cars.



PLAY

LOOKS	7
SOUNDS	6
GAMEPLAY	7
VALUE	6
SLIDES	6

PLAYED 63%

Uninspiring, run-of-the-mill racer.

ALTERNATIVELY:
RACGE RACER (94%)
RALLY CROSS (89%)

Written by Tom Sargent

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BUST-A-M

Helium-tastic!

Written by Tom Sargent

BUB 'N' BOB ARE BACK FOR THE THIRD INSTALMENT OF THE EVERGREEN BUBBLE-BURSTIN' SERIES. RETRO REVIVAL OR DATED AND DEFLATED?

During the eighties an unknown platform game, er... burst onto the games scene and became an instant classic. *Bubble Bobble* was simple, addictive and fun.

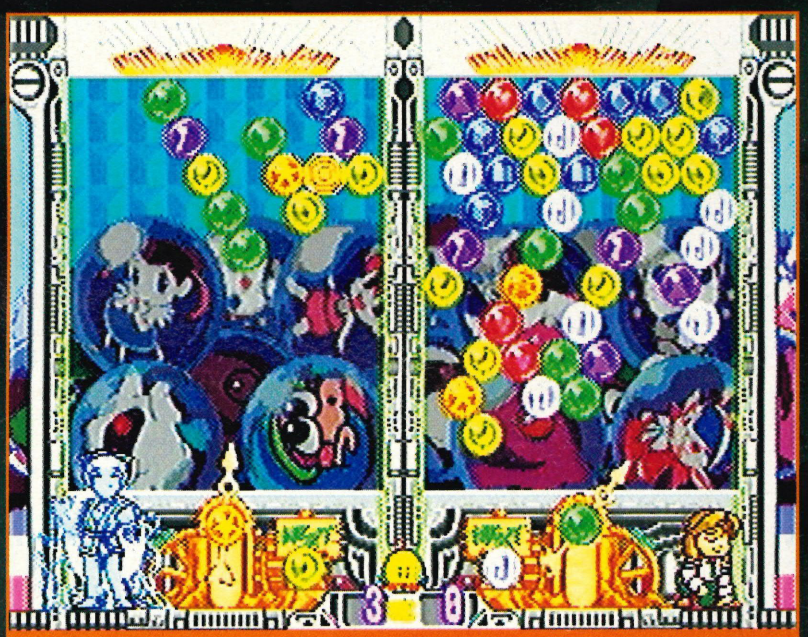
Two cute little dragons blew bubbles out of their mouths at enemies to encase them as they battled through 100 platform levels, collecting countless bonuses before rescuing their girlfriends.

Since then there has been a sequel and of course two *Bust-A-Move* games. Although the first one didn't appear on PlayStation, the second was a resounding success and it was only a matter of time before the third in the series appeared. If you've already got *Bust-A-Move 2*, chances are you're dubious about buying another one, but there are stacks of new features to justify a purchase.

Bust-A-Move 3 is very similar to the other two though, in that it's essentially a shooting/puzzle game whereby the player must clear a screen-full of bubbles by firing like-coloured bubbles from a gun at the bottom.



[Above] In Challenge mode you must take on all of the other characters,. They all play in a different style.



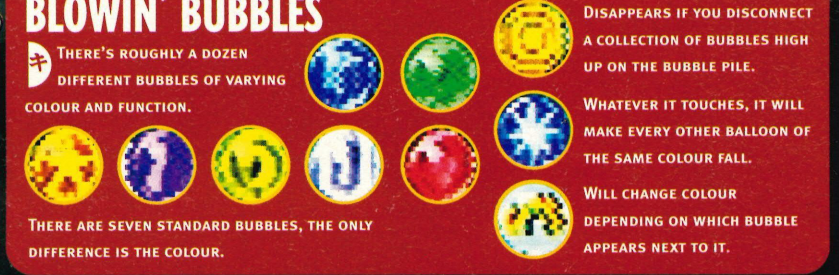
[Above] Special combos can be created, and the bigger they are, the more balloons tumble onto your opponent's side. A sure fire way to win.

PLAY INFORMATION

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



BLOWIN' BUBBLES



99 RED BALLOONS

The bubbles come in various colours and forms and you must connect three or more bubbles of the same colour until the whole screen has been cleared. Fail to pop them all in time and the ceiling will drop the remaining balls over the line at the bottom – game over in other words.

Unlike *Super Puzzle Fighter*, you can't make accidental connections. Clearing a screen requires a cool head and Herculean levels of precision control. Knowing your 'angles' is also paramount to beating the later levels. We presume that the majority of readers aren't trigonometry experts, so a good way to learn is playing the game with the dotted target pointer on. Once you've mastered this, the bubble-popping world's your oyster.

The learning curve is excellent and so fine-tuned you'll find that you pick up the necessary skills to make progress almost subliminally. It plays beautifully and before long, you've been sat in front of the screen for an unsociably-long period of time. Even lying in bed afterwards you'll still be able to see coloured bubbles in front of your eyes.

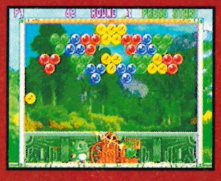
BUBBLE-ICIOUS

Now to the important bit. What's new to lure fans of the last game? Taito have wisely avoided making any earth-shattering moves to the gameplay, but there are some new balloons included to shake things up a bit. There are some that when shot, make all the other

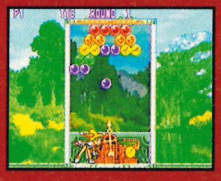
MOVE 3DX

MODES AND POPPERS

There are many different styles of play both in one and two player modes.



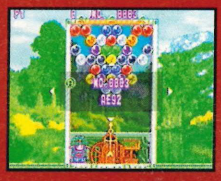
With dotted target pointer. Makes accurate placement of balloons much easier as you don't have to judge the angles.



Without dotted target pointer. For show-offs and trigonometry experts.



Completed all of the levels in the game? Why not use your DIY skills on the level designer.



Choose which level to play first from a list of ten. They get progressively harder.



In many instances you can play as a character other than Bub or Bob and they're all from previous Taito arcade titles.

bubbles of the same colour vanish. Rainbow bubbles change colour depending on which bubble disappears next to it, and finally, neutral bubbles dissolve only if you disconnect a collection of bubbles high up on the stack. The best way to play is in the impossible-to-put-down two-player mode. Choose from eight different characters (all from other Taito arcade games like *Sonic Blastman*) and fill up your opponent's screen before he does the same to you. You can learn all kinds of combos to speed things up – the bigger the combo the more bubbles appear on the other side.

Other novelties include a Challenge and the Collection modes, where a huge list of screens can be tackled, and a superb 'DIY' screen designer. All of this makes for a fun-fuelled game that you simply won't be able to put down until fire engulfs your house!

Read my lips: *Bust-A-Move 3* is brill, fab and the final word in addiction. Buy it without delay.



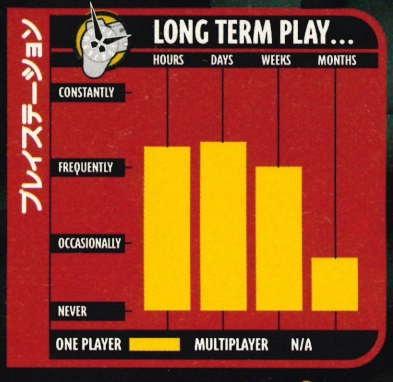
[Above] Both players are fighting for supremacy as they burst a group of balloons.

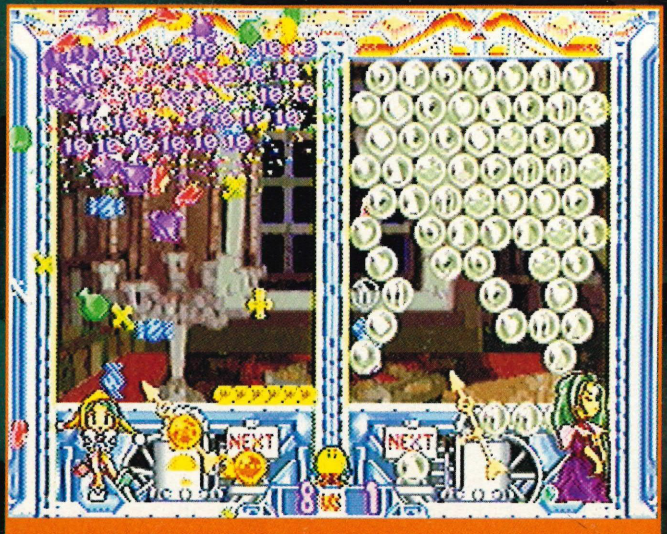


[Above] Player one desperately needs to get a row of three or the balloons will drop below the line.



"The final word in addiction.."





[Above] Burst enough balloons and pull off enough combos and your opponents side will fill up and crystallise. You've won! Kaboom!

PLAY

Looks	●●●●●○○○○○
Sounds	●●●●●●○○○○
Gameplay	●●●●●●●●○○
Value	●●●●●●●●●○
Bubbles	●●●●●●●●●○

PLAYED 88%

Once you pop, you just can't stop.

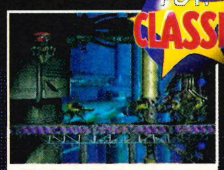
ALTERNATIVELY:
BUST A MOVE 2 (88%)
BUBBLE BOBBLE (85%)

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!



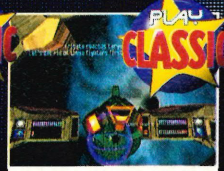
MDK – rated 90% in PLAY!



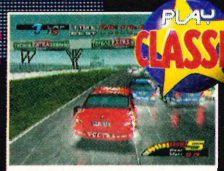
Duke Nukem – rated 90% in PLAY!



Final Fantasy VII – rated 93% in PLAY!



Colony Wars – rated 92% in PLAY!



Touring Car – rated 92% in PLAY!



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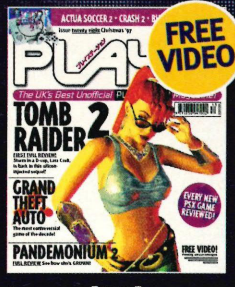
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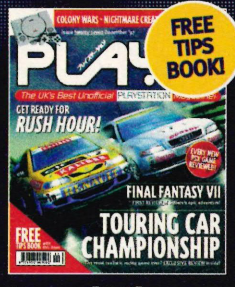
PLAY

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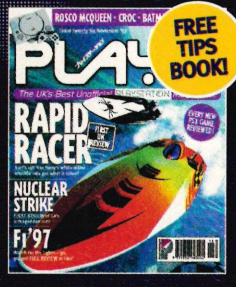
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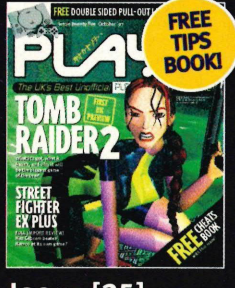
ISSUE [28]
First review of *Tomb Raider II*, plus *Actua Soccer 2*, *Grand Theft Auto*, *Broken Sword II*!



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



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



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*!



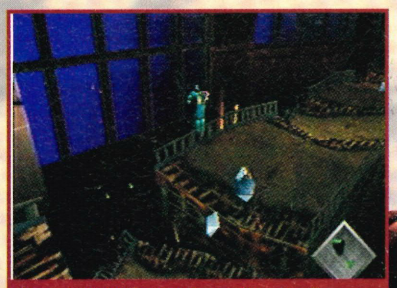
ISSUE [23]
Lost World exclusive, *V-Rally* review, *Rosco McQueen*, *Fighting Force* and *F1 '97*!

ONE

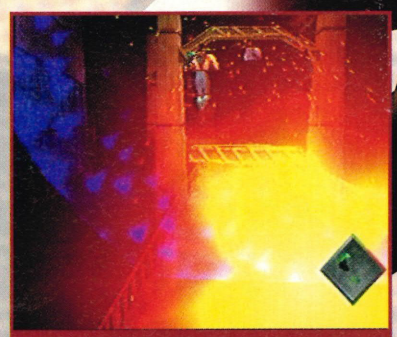
FLIPPING HIS LID, FREAKING OUT AND FOAMING AT THE MOUTH. NOT ONLY THE EDITOR'S CONSTANT STATE OF MIND, BUT ALSO THE BEST WAY TO PLAY ASC'S SPECTACULAR NEW SHOOT-'EM-UP.

Written By Tom Sargent





[ABOVE] On the first level, massive catwalks tumble into the abyss. You must keep moving at all times.



[ABOVE] Our favourite weapon – the flame-thrower. A joy to behold... burn in hell scum.

"Nothing even comes close to the sheer intensity of *One*..."

Prepare yourselves

for total Armageddon! We've played our fair share of shoot-'em-ups over the years and many of them have been pretty violent, but nothing even comes close to the sheer destruction and intensity of *One*.





Every corner you turn, every location visited is like a John Woo set piece (in fact, it wouldn't be surprising if he'd actually been responsible for directing the whole project). Each one of the five action-packed levels is pure eye candy and induces a constant feeling of awe. You simply don't have time to draw breath or blink because you might miss the next mind-blowing sequence. In fact, sometimes it's worth dying deliberately so that you can replay certain sections.

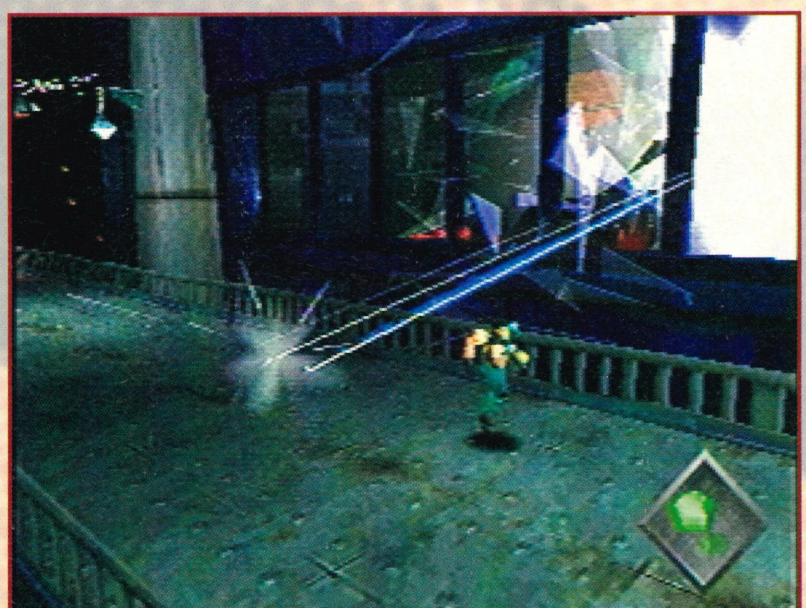
It's 40 years in the future and John Cain (you) is trapped in a world which he vaguely remembers. Why, however, does he have a huge robotic plasma cannon in place of his left arm... And why does he feel so angry? Questions, questions. The only way to find out is to battle your way through five gruelling levels and watch the story gradually unfold.

SEETHE

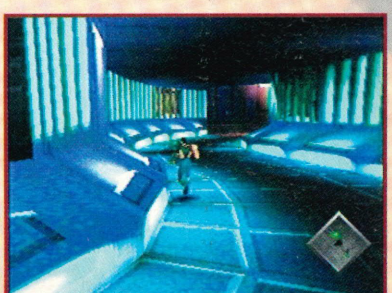
Although there are hundreds of shoot-'em-ups available on PlayStation, *One* is unique in that the main character performs and thrives on one emotion – rage. The angrier he gets, the more powerful he becomes and this is represented by a rage meter, which is colour-coded: green (a low state of rage), through yellow, red and finally white (the maximum state of rage, whereupon a smart bomb can be activated). The player's weapon power, accuracy and rate of firing increase as you destroy more enemies and objects.

We had reservations as to how this system would turn out, but we shouldn't have worried, it works surprisingly well. There are always plenty of enemies and objects to blow away and as long as you keep your momentum up, great progress can be made. All of the action is viewed from a third person perspective and, although the screen slows down during particularly processor-hungry moments, it looks quite stunning.

One employs a system called



[ABOVE] Straight away you're up against it – a huge gunship welcomes you to the world of *One* with spitting lasers and a volley of missiles. Wow.



[ABOVE] There are brief moments of respite. Here Cain takes a quick breather before attempting to make it through the next section of falling catwalks.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: No UK publisher at time of print.
Price: £44.99
Release date: February '98



ONE PLAYER

MULTIPLE PLAYERS



DUAL ANALOGUE



[Above] Your rage meter is on red which means your default arm laser is lethal.

'asynchronous loading' which basically means great wedges of data are streamed off the CD as you play which accounts for much of the gorgeous scenery.

Fury

Controlling Cain is simplicity itself, and although you can use a Dual Analogue pad, the standard controller is just as effective. Using the former can be a little too sensitive, especially as it's extremely easy to fall off ledges.

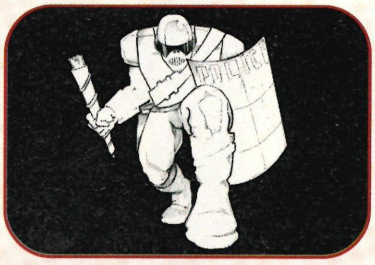
Cain does all the usual moves: jumping, close combat (which increases your rage meter quicker than long range destruction), evasive rolls, and the particularly useful somersault. The levels comprise of long tunnels, mountain top skirmishes, an underwater research laboratory, monorail rides, and the superlative rooftop setting.

So, *One* plays well and looks utterly fantastic, what's wrong with it then? Well, in order to play it well, you've got to keep moving and before you know it a level is over once the control and gameplay strategies have been sussed. It's all over a bit too quickly for our liking. There are some impressive weapons (the flame-thrower is divine), awesome bosses and a brilliant high tension wire section, but ultimately you find yourself shooting relentlessly in every direction and it can be very linear in places.

At the end of the day, One scores very highly in the thrill stakes, but not so well on longevity (unlike MDK). Like igniting a piece of Magnesium, this game burns very bright, but all too quickly fizzles away; leaving very little. If you want something that thrills the senses, this is it, but don't expect to be playing it a couple of month's down the line.

Bad to the Bone

One contains heaps of enemies dying to rip you apart. Here are a few from the Metropolis level.



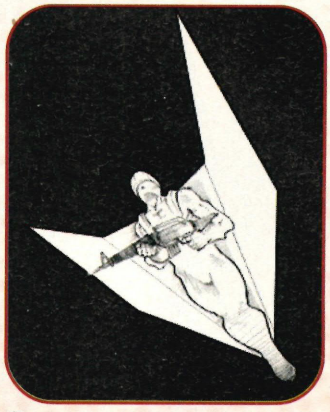
Riot Police

Well trained in crowd control, the Riot Police come equipped with tazer batons and armour-plated shields. Attack these guys before they get too close.



Rocket Trooper

Rocket Troopers are airborne soldiers equipped with single projectile cannons that fire exploding shells.



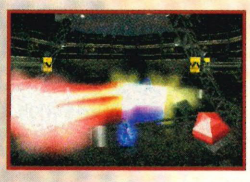
Glider

Metropolis Gliders are highly manoeuvrable, futuristic glider troops equipped with fully automatic rifles and nasty anti-personnel mines.

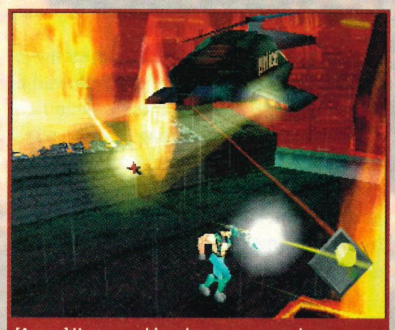


[Above] Perhaps one of the most innovative levels, this section forces you onto a thin deathslide. You must shoot enemies whilst sliding down.

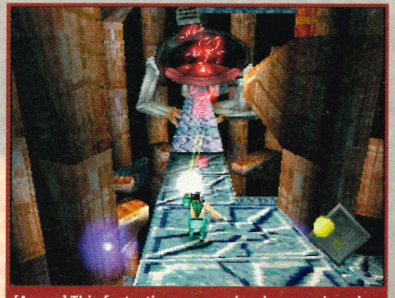








[Above] Huge gunships chase you everywhere. There's no where to hide either... ulp.



[Above] This fantastic sequence involves you hanging on for dear life along a wire slide while shooting enemies.



[Above] The roof-top area is easily the most spectacular. You're constantly bombarded by enemies and chunks of scenery explode around you.

PLAY

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

PLAYED 86%

The most destructive game ever!

Alternatively:
MDK (90%)
Lone soldier (92%)

YUSHA

AN OLD JAPANESE GAME, A MILLENNIAL SPACE CULT, AND YOUR FAVOURITE MAGAZINE. WHAT DO THESE THINGS HAVE IN COMMON?

Written By Graeme Nicholson

Getting *Yusha* into the shops has not been an easy task for poor old JVC. Originally programmed in 1995 in Japan and known as *Heaven's Gate*, all sorts of translation problems delayed the UK release of the game until early 1997.

Then, in March, another unforeseen problem cropped up when Marshall Applewhite convinced 38 of his followers in the Heaven's Gate cult to ingest lethal doses of Phenobarbital in preparation for the recycling of Earth.

JVC's adverts, game manuals, packaging, logos and everything else pertaining to the Heaven's Gate game had to be scrapped and entirely redesigned with the new title, *Yusha* ("Brave Warrior").

All these delays have not left this early beat-'em-up in an advantageous position against the more recently produced *Soul Blades* and *Tobal 2s* available today – it looks old when you load it up. The fighting arenas are covered with big, brash blocks of colour across the ground and ceiling, reminiscent of a time when 3-D fighting games were new. And it sends a chill down the spine to lay eyes on a collection of eight fighters who remind you more of *Toshinden* than *Tobal* with their twitching hips and all round lack of motion capture fluidity.



[Above] As you reel off a string of moves in quick succession, a combo counter pops in from the side to show how many hit home.

GEISHA

Once you get past that oldie appearance though, you find a beat-'em-up which is not outstanding, but still acceptable. The number of combatants available doubles once you've completed the game with the first eight characters, and the feel of the fighting is very like the *Toshinden* series especially with all the impossibly powerful magic-assisted moves.

The action is fast and lively; using a system similar to *Virtua Fighter*. Defend, punch and kick are on three separate buttons and more adventurous variations of each being triggered by short, snappy presses on the directional pad followed by an attack button. Many of the simple moves you may have learned before will get you through until you pick up *Yusha's* own peculiarities (tapping forward twice and then the kick button will usually result in some kind of flying kick, for example).

Consistently beating on someone, whether a human opponent or a computer-controlled adversary, will add to your magic power gauge. When this hits the top of the on-screen guage your

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: JVC
Customer support: 0171 240 3121
Price: £44.99
Release date: Out Now

ONE PLAYER MULTIPLE PLAYERS

MEMORY CARD



[Above] Kyosuke goes one step too far with his shiny red police batons, pushing A Hau into ballistic mode



[Above] Dulffer, who wears strikingly similar bondage gear to *Soul Blade's* Voldo, can get the upper hand by attacking from above.



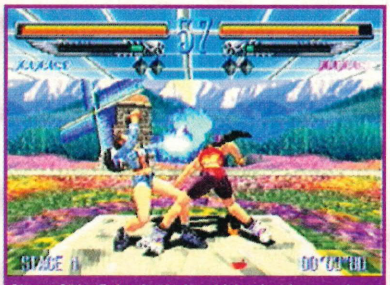
[Above] When plant-based Sasa is overflowing with power, she can bound forwards with a far reaching acrobatic axe kick.








[Above] That Dulffer is a nasty one. This shaven-headed leather lover will stab you many times in the back when you fall!



[Above] The fights in *Yusha* which take place against your evil twin are always the most difficult.



[Above] Nanase split-kicks her evil twin out of the ring! You can however turn the ringouts off.

combatant goes off like a champagne bottle, bursting into a super powerful battle mode accompanied by a pulsing anime energy orb that consumes your body for a second and leaves your arms blazing away on fire! For the short time it takes the power to burn up, a new series of special moves are unlocked that can help you devastate the other guy in seconds.

GUSHER

When both players achieve this state, *Yusha* turns into quite a spectacle. At times there are so many swirling beams of plasma and fire, as the players summon their paranormal powers, you begin peering through the pyrotechnics expecting to see Jean Michelle Jarre bursting into one of his "classics" at any second.

However, rage meters are nothing new anymore. Neither is anything, in fact, that you will find in *Yusha*. Except perhaps for Dulffer's ability to cling to the ceiling for a few seconds to attack from above! *Toshinden 2* has all those glowing magical moves, and the ringouts. *Soul Blade* has the weapons and radically better graphics.

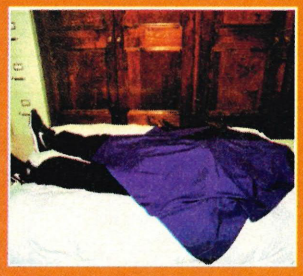
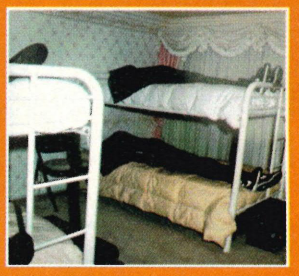
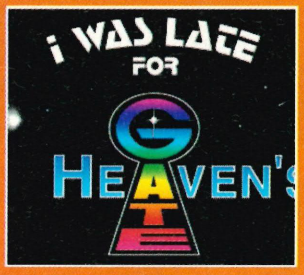
Both *Tobal* games give you true back and forth, left and right three-dimensional motion that *Yusha* lacks, and the latest *Street Fighter* brings the most tried and tested fighting system of all time to a superb 3-D environment. As you can imagine, *Yusha* is fairly average now that it's finally appeared, but there's absolutely no space for it when there's so much else on offer to beat-'em-up fans and new adoptees. Released two years ago, *Yusha* would have been acceptable. But not now...

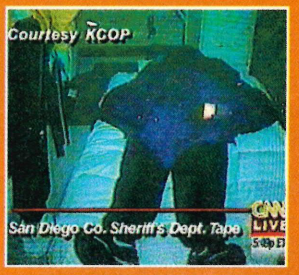


[Above] This is what it looks like when you become an all powerful magical fiend, as demonstrated by Jin.

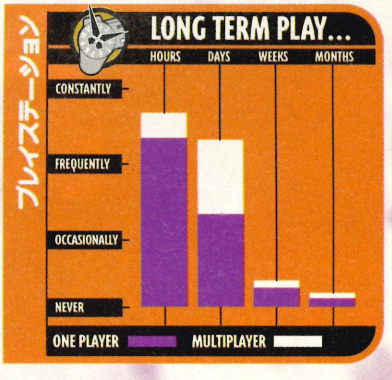
PRE MILLENNIAL TENSION

When our planet was not destroyed and rebuilt by aliens riding under cover of the Hale Bopp comet in March 1997, it was a relief to everyone. Except JVC, who had to begin painstakingly altering every existing piece of material with its Heaven's Gate logo printed on it. For the boys at JVC, we recommend these T-shirts at only £12 a pop. Originally intended for topical jokers, the message seems relevant!

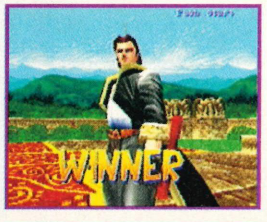






"Reminds you more of *Toshinden* than *Tobal!*"









PLAY

Looks	●●●○○○○○○○
Sounds	●●●●○○○○○○
Gameplay	●●●●○○○○○○
Value	●○○○○○○○○○
Manga Babes	●●●○○○○○○○

PLAYED 60%

Too little. Too late!

Alternatively:
Tobal 2 (92%)
Soul Blade (96%)

MASS DESTRUCTION

HMMN... MASS DESTRUCTION EH? SO IT'S NOT GOING TO BE A VIOLENT GAME THEN..?

Fancy blowing

hell out of a whole army single-handedly? That's why videogames were invented, wasn't it? In that case, look no further than *Mass Destruction*, which is (not surprisingly) about destruction. Lots of it. Masses of it in fact.

The storyline runs something like this: a rebellious army has invaded, or rebelled, or something like that, and it's your job to spearhead the re-invasion force and take back what is rightfully... erm, someone else's. Actually, although they say 'spearhead', you never actually get any support, so presumably this is just a way of attempting to explain why the enemy has a huge army containing thousands of troops, aircraft and vehicles, and you have... a tank. To be fair, you actually have a choice of three, although you can't switch between them during the game.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: BMG Interactive
Contact: Video Game Centre on 01202 527314
Price: £49.99
Release date: Out Now

ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD



[ABOVE] Bunkers are not a serious threat, as they are low armed and easily destroyed. They often conceal ammo and power-ups though.

CHOOSE YOUR WEAPON!

CHEETAH



SPEED: FAST
ARMOUR: POOR
GOOD FOR MISSIONS WHERE YOU NEED TO GET SOMEWHERE FAST (EG: INTERCEPTIONS) BUT DON'T EXPECT MUCH HEAVY RESISTANCE.

COBRA



SPEED: SLOW
ARMOUR: GOOD
GOOD FOR MISSIONS WHERE SPEED ISN'T IMPORTANT BUT YOU'LL MEET A LOT OF HEAVY-DUTY OPPONENTS.

VIPER



SPEED: MEDIUM
ARMOUR: AVERAGE
THE COMPROMISE CHOICE. USEFUL ON MISSIONS WHERE YOU MIGHT HAVE TO DO AN INTERCEPTION AND ATTACK A HEAVILY DEFENDED INSTALLATION.



[ABOVE] One of the best weapons is the flame thrower. Forget accuracy and aiming – just squeeze the trigger and flame those tanks!



[ABOVE] The semi-3D perspective means that buildings may obscure your tank. This problem is solved by turning the structures translucent when you pass behind.

LOOKS FAMILIAR...

Visually and gameplay-wise, *Mass Destruction* is very reminiscent of that classic combat game *Return Fire*, in that you view the action from above and slightly to the side. Your task is broken up into campaigns and then sub-divided again into missions. Some of these cannot be accessed on the lower difficulty levels, giving a little incentive to try your luck on the more difficult settings.

Each mission has various objectives based on a specific scenario, however, pretty much all the aims could be summarised in one of the following ways: blow something up, pick something up, and don't blow something up. It's that simple.

You'll be opposed by a wide variety of enemy vehicles, ranging from infantry through to various tanks, boats and up to airborne targets, such as helicopters, bombers and jets. In between the massive explosions you may just catch the very atmospheric and pacey music which perfectly complements the action.

In addition to your primary objectives, which *must* be completed in order to finish the mission, you may also receive secondary objectives, and also bonus objectives. The strange thing with the bonus objectives is that you aren't told what they are until you've done them! Fortunately, they pretty-much always involve destroying something, so all you need do is blow up everything!

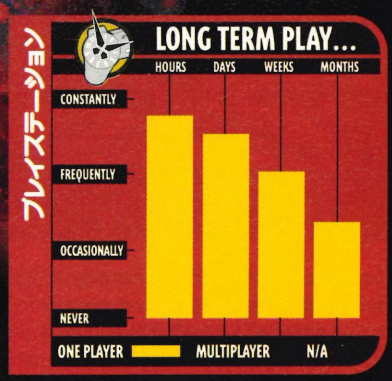
Mass Destruction is an awful lot of fun to begin with, but will probably lose much of its attraction as time goes on, primarily as a result of the simplicity of the missions. But then the simple, destructive gameplay is what makes this game so much fun in the first place. To be fair though, *Mass Destruction* doesn't claim to be an intellectual game – I mean, look at the title!

If you like your games loud, violent, and explosive, then look no further than *Mass Destruction*. It may not be intellectually taxing, but it's damn good fun!

"All you need do is blow up everything!"



[ABOVE] Your tank can acquire a variety of weapons. The Torus bomb causes a rotating circle of fire around the tank, obliterating any opposition.



PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●●●●●●
SOUNDS	●●●●●●●●●●
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●●●●●
VALUE	●●●●●●●●●●
HIGH EXPLOSIVES	●●●●●●●●●●

PLAYED 80%

Enjoyable destructive tank romp...

ALTERNATIVELY:
RETURN FIRE (84%)
NUCLEAR STRIKE (88%)

Written by Roy Kimber

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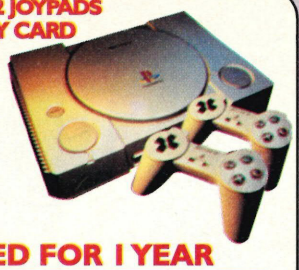
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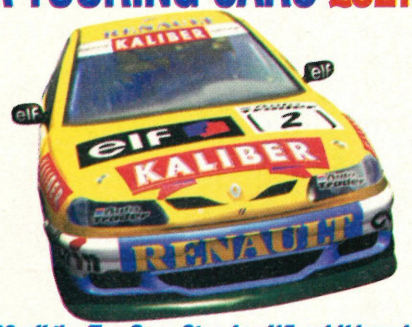
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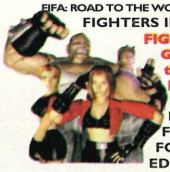
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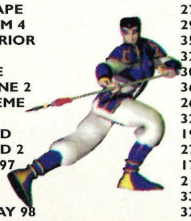
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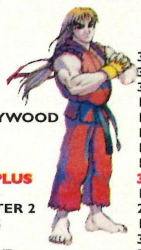
















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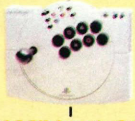
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STAR WARS: MAST

AFTER MONTHS OF SPECULATION THE *STAR WARS* BEAT-'EM-UP FINALLY ARRIVES, BUT IS THIS A LICENSE TOO FAR?

A long time ago

in a galaxy far, far away... Ah yes, feel the nostalgia ripple down your spine and the hairs on your neck stand firm as yet another *Star Wars* game crash lands on PlayStation. But wait, this is completely different. This one is a beat-'em-up, and oh how we've waited for such a game!

After the destruction of the Death Star, the Emperor orders swift retribution against the Rebel Alliance; deploying a young female assassin, Arden Lyn (a student of the ancient and mostly forgotten art of fighting known as Teras Kasi) to crush the Alliance from within. Lyn plans to terminate key Rebel members and weaken the threat posed by the Alliance. However, the plucky group of rebels learn of her crack-pot scheme and decide to tackle the problem head-on.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Lucas Arts
Supplier: Video Game Centre (01202) 527314
Price: £49.99
Release date: Out now (import)

ONE PLAYER | MULTIPLE PLAYERS | MEMORY CARD

The stage is set for fans and newcomers alike to re-live and enjoy those frantic light-sabre battles that captivated so many kids in the late Seventies/early Eighties. But how does this obvious money-making exercise fare against the current giants such as *Soul Blade* and *Tekken 2?*

As a fighting game, *Teras Kasi* seems immediately reminiscent of *Star Gladiators* – Capcom's first, and perhaps naive, entrance into the fully-fledged 3-D arena. It has the looks, packs the punches, but somehow just doesn't flow like it should. More about that later.

"The best thing about this game is the beauty of it all..."

THE FORCE IS STRONG IN THIS ONE!

Masters of Teras Kasi features only eight characters initially, and these range from Han, Luke, Leia and Chewbacca, to the slightly more bizarre ensemble of Hoar (whore!) the sandman, Thok (one of Jabba's Gamorrean Guards), Boba Fett and Arden Lyn herself. Each character has a limited range of hand-hand combat



[ABOVE] This gal can summon all of her Jedi powers and blow her opponents away with some pink ripples.



[ABOVE] Han does things with his gun that you never thought possible!



[ABOVE] Chewbacca shows, erm, Jodo Kast exactly what happens to people that go around baring an uncanny resemblance to Boba Fett. Wooky power!



[ABOVE] Short snippets of FMV footage are all you get by way of a game over sequence. What a swizz!



Written By Ryan Butt

ERS OF TERAS KASI



[Above] "Whooaar! Hang on mate, aren't you supposed to be a good guy like me?" The harsh reality dawns on Chewbacca that a friend in need will maim you with his light-sabre!

SPACEBALLS MODE!



There is a cheat in this game that allows you to radically increase the size of your character's head. When done with the hidden boss Darth Vader, you can instantly recreate those hilarious Dark Helmet moments from the spoof Mel Brooks film, *Spaceballs!*



[Above] The game invites you to fight in a mirror match after the other combatants have been killed off. How this fits into the storyline is anyone's guess.

moves, but if the going gets tough, most can draw weapons in the form of guns, sticks and light-sabres to start hacking lumps out of their opponents. Using weapons doubles the attack arsenal, but even so, the catalogue of moves at your disposal is distinctly desolate.

In fitting with other recent fighting games, the registered hits cause a meter (in this case, The Force) to rise. When this reaches the pinnacle, that fighter will then become "more powerful than you can possibly imagine" and super Jedi force moves instantly become available. These have the potential to rip your opponent apart, but are unfortunately excruciatingly hard to access.

The eight standard characters can be increased to 13 by completing the game in various ways and



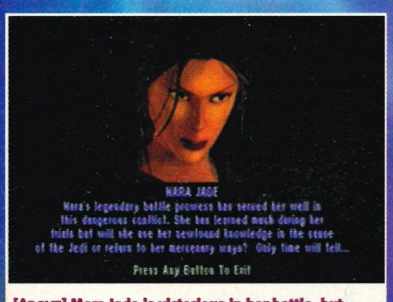
[Above] Han gives the frail Biker Scout what for with a devastating uppercut!



[Above] Never underestimate the powers of a pig guards' axe! "Oi, Leia, get back and pluck Jabba's bum hair!"



[Above] Hoar and Thok do battle to decide which has got the most ridiculous name. Our money's on Thok!



[Above] Mara Jade is victorious in her battle, but she's a secret character so no FMV for her!



[Left] Small Thok lunges in, but he just doesn't have enough menace to give Han the jitters... [Right] ...Until now! A swift button combo tranforms the pig into a huge, towering hulk!



RE-SIZE

OK, so Thok may be a poor choice of character, but a special move will allow him to grow in statue and become instantly more menacing and not so much of a short, fat, pig-faced goon!

WRETCHED HIVE OF SCUM AND VILLAINY

The barrel has been scraped for decent characters so we've compiled our own list of skull-beaters that should have been in this game.

What we've got...

Arden Lyn



Imperial assassin with strict orders to break down the Rebel Alliance from within.

Boba Fett



Bounty Hunter, with no financial reward, his presence in this contest is very suspect!

Chewbacca



Soft, strong, and thoroughly absorbent! A good choice with amusing combat moves.

Darth Vader



Nothing even remotely related to *Star Wars* would be quite the same without him.

Han Solo



Intergalactic wheeler-dealer who fights with his blaster. His unarmed skills are notably poor.

Hoar



Sandman bloke who fights with a strange, makeshift stick that fires green gas. Not like in the films then.

Jodo Kast



Boba Fett in a different guise, isn't this just stretching things a bit too far?

Luke Skywalker



The Jedi master kicks ass big time with his makeshift light-sabre and stylish attire.

Mara Jade



Servant of the Emperor and dedicated to bringing down the Rebels. Snotty trollop.

Princess Leia



Luke's sis fights with a stick and twirls it well. Too many clothes though, so try...

Princess Leia!



The exclamation mark means more flesh! This is Leia in her full slave gear. Remember *Friends?*

Stormtrooper



A top character, but if you win the game with him, he'll go on to rule the galaxy. A highly improbable scenario.

Thok



Pig guard from Jabba's Palace. Has no more right to be in this game than a Rancor turd.

What we want...

Ben Kenobi



The Jedi master long before Luke gatecrashed the party. Old, but agile, and he should have been here!

Emperor



Would have been the ideal candidate for the final boss, but sadly it was not to be.

Jabba the Hutt



Just for comic value! Who wouldn't want to tip salt on this fat tub of slime?

R2-D2



It seems wrong that the star of the trilogy isn't here to maim with his atomic screwdrivers!

Yoda



The ultimate Jedi warrior could have run the show with this mystic mind-tricks.



[Above] This is the main event of the game, father against son in the ultimate show-down. Beat the dark one and he'll be your slave to play as in subsequent games!

obtaining the five hidden characters. These include Darth Vader (of course!), a Stormtrooper, Jodo Kast (Boba Fett clone), Princess Leia in her skimpy slave cossie, and a real pleaser for *Star Wars* aficionados, Mara Jade – who was reportedly the Emperor's female servant and dark-side champ; sent to take out Luke Skywalker (but subsequently has it away with him according to the books!).

The best thing about this game is the beauty of it all – especially the

"As a beat-'em-up, it seems slow, repetitive and devoid of any real thrills..."

surroundings. Stage backdrops include an AT-AT battle on Hoth, the Rancor pit from Jabba's palace, carbon freezing chamber, Emperor's throne room, Cloud City and Yoda's home planet of Dagoba. Each stage is draped with lavish lighting effects that are well in-keeping with the stylish visuals of the films.

There's one, set for stun

The attention to detail on the characters is also very impressive. The way the glow given off by the light-sabre reflects on your opponent's clothing is a perfect example of how the high resolution graphics can be used with traditional programming techniques to create something really special. Each character is also well detailed; with classic costumes and alternate ones too if you hold buttons down while selecting them.

Naturally, the soundtrack follows the same high standard, with the well-known title sequence belting out the moment you

COSTUME OPERA

Each character in *Masters of Teras Kasi* come with two sets of togs, which you'll be familiar with from the various films. Here are a few examples...



Chewbacca



Han Solo



Princess Leia



Luke Skywalker







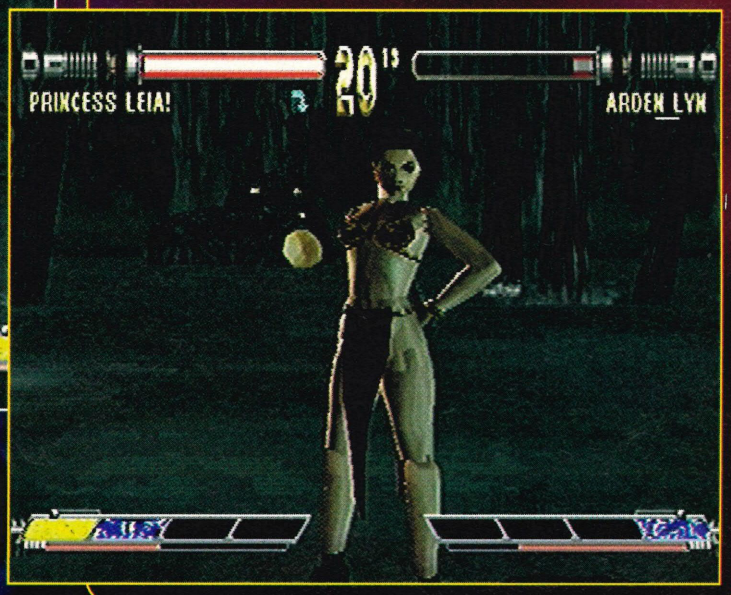




[Above] Things were never the same after the Rebel forces ballet company made stormtrooper costumes compulsary for the men.

OOH PRINCESS LEIA!

What is it with fighting games these days? First there was *Soul Blade* and Sophitia, and now this. In case you missed it, there were two hidden characters in *Soul Blade*, Sophitia! and Sophitia!! – each new exclamation mark meant less clothes and more flesh. The same rules apply here when you complete the game using Princess Leia on Jedi mode. Do this and Princess Leia! will appear, which is essentially Leia in her slave costume.



load up, and other familiar tunes cropping up on various stages. Each victory is accompanied by a snippet of sampled speech or grunt from the respective character, and the blaster and light sabre effects are also spot-on.

The only real problem With *Masters of Teras Kasi* (apart from the lack of juicy characters) is the rather dated and uninspired gameplay. It is very hard to string any decent combos together, and none of the moves are what you'd call exciting. Sure it conveys the atmosphere of the films down to a tee, but as a beat-'em-up, it seems slow, repetitive and devoid of any real thrills.

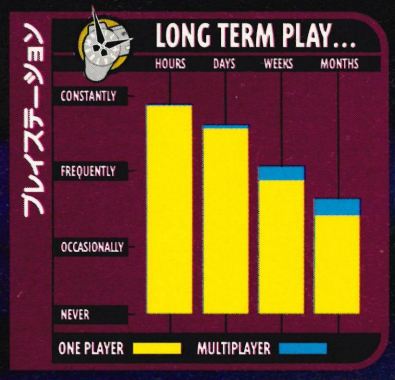
Star Wars fans may also be alarmed at some of the bouts that take place... Han bashing Chewy? Luke ensuring that sister Leia will never have kids? It's all great from an outsider's point of view, but distinctly disturbing if you're really into the storyline. And isn't that what the *Star Wars* universe is all about?

The familiar characters are all well and good, but it seems as though the makers have dredged the bottom of a lake to come up with exciting new blood to enter into the fray. The fat pig-guard from *Jedi* is useless, the sandman is also pants, and the only redeeming feature about Chewbacca is his strange tai-chi movements – always guaranteed to raise a laugh.

Masters of Teras Kasi is a stunning looking game that initially promises much, especially with such a proven movie pedigree. Ultimately though, it's shallow, and beyond gorgeous looks there's scant gameplay and long term enjoyment.



[Above] Thok unleashes a sucker punch in thew form of an imaginative axe uppercut. Hmm.





[Above] Jedi mistress, Mara Jade asks Darth for a pay-rise in the only way that he knows how!



[Above] With eight standard characters and five secret ones, the line-up is somewhat stretched.

PLAY

Looks	●●●●●●●●●●
Sounds	●●●●●●●●●●
Gameplay	●●●●●●●●●●
Value	●●●●●●●●●●
The Force	●●●●●●●●●●

PLAYED **74%**

A great license, but somewhat wasted.

Alternatively:
Soul Blade (96%)
Star Gladiators (88%)

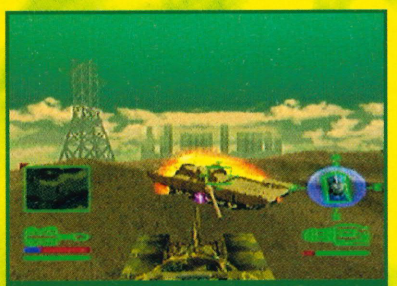
STEEL REIGN

IF YOU EVER WATCHED THE GULF WAR ON THE NEWS AND THOUGHT IT LOOKED LIKE FUN, TRY THIS OUT BEFORE YOU SIGN UP TO BE ALL YOU CAN BE.

Written By Graeme Nicholson

There are groups of like-minded people all over the United States, armed and rigorously trained, who are merely waiting for the day they have to enter into combat against their own government. Small, independent armies such as the 52nd Missouri Militia and the Arizona Paramilitary Group stock up on automatic weapons, explosives and foodstuffs in preparation, and with each day that passes they become more anxious to fight their war. You could set these guys off by bursting a balloon.

Playing on this threat, *Steel Reign's* plot starts with a single man, a Saddam Hussein of the West, who whips several of these militias into a frenzy, unites them to make a decent army, and leads them into a brutal assault against the government. As an experienced soldier you have been assigned to assist a research team in building a new breed of tanks, and you're going to have to take the prototypes onto the battlefield in an attempt to swing this war in favour of the US government with overwhelming experimental firepower!



[Above] How the hell did these garage GI Joe's get their hands on a bunch of real tanks? Run for your lives you fools!



[Above] This fools those little blighters for a while – drive across the street while shooting them side-on.

PLAY INFORMATION

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



ONE PLAYER



MULTIPLE PLAYERS



SPLIT SCREEN



MEMORY CARD



DUAL ANALOGUE



[Above] There is no better weapon than the humble exploding cannon shell, wiping out many enemies at once. They're in short supply though.

WHEELS IN MOTION

Only three tanks are complete enough to be used, and each have good and bad points where manoeuvrability, armour and weapon space are concerned. Rolling over the landscape, following the red arrow on your extremely handy radar to the next objective, you are under constant attack from all angles. Helicopters buzz you frequently (luckily your guns will auto-aim vertically themselves), camouflage tanks blast incessantly, armoured MPVs spew missiles in your direction, and there's no end of stationary cannons surrounded by sandbags pumping .44 millimetre shells into your electric shielding!

An extensive arsenal of lasers, rockets and bullets are at your disposal to deal with the flak, and with independently assigned weapons on both sides of the tank you can do a lot of damage very quickly. You can be streaming off heat-seeking Phoenix missiles from one side, roasting rogue militia vehicles, while rotating the turret to rip a target building apart with a Plasma Cannon.

Hefty weapons and constant explosions might sound great, but *Steel Reign's* game engine is about as solid as OJ's alibi! Everything you destroy, from simple trees to armoured tanks, can only exist in two forms – perfect condition or totally destroyed. So as you're pummelling something with the Ion Cannon it shows no sign of damage until it switches, very noticeably, to the twisted and blackened model of itself.

BIG DIPPER

There are also serious motion problems with the tank. In many areas around the levels, particularly the city, there are tight spaces and steep hills where you can get



[Above] Oh dear. Attempting to drive over someone's crumpled home results in your tank slipping straight through as though the house wasn't there!

PARANOID PANCAKE

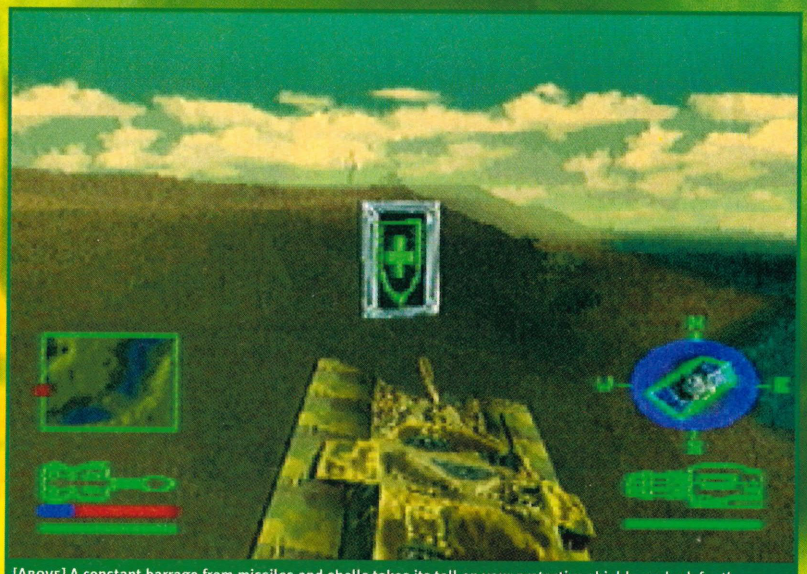
ONE OF THE MOST FUN THINGS YOU CAN DO IN *STEEL REIGN* IS KILL OFF THE LITTLE MILITIA MEN WHO OCCASIONALLY APPEAR WHEN YOU DESTROY THEIR TRAILER HOMES. SOME KIND OF CHAIN GUN IS OFTEN FUN, BUT SIMPLY SQUASHING THEIR REBELLIOUS HIDES UNDER YOUR TREADS MAKES IT MORE PERSONAL.











[Above] A constant barrage from missiles and shells takes its toll on your protective shields, so look for these replenishing power-ups.

stuck and the supposedly heavy tank will jump around uncomfortably like it's parked on a termite mound. There goes any illusion you had of the tank being a solid steel instrument of war. Parts of the chassis wriggle around and stretch on their own too, and you can often drive straight through some large objects because the collision detection is so poor.

And that's not all. The split screen, head-to-head game is really very bad. Each player gets one tiny quarter of the screen to himself where the action happens, the two remaining quarters are blacked out but for a few gauges. You both trundle around an unimaginative, small arena that could be shaped like, say, a zero. After two deaths, choose another simple arena (one shaped like an "L" perhaps) and repeat.

It all goes to show that *Steel Reign* is lacking a lot of the quality that usually oozes from a Sony release. Take your business in the direction of *MDK* if you're looking for an addictive and over the top shoot-'em-up, and rent *Steel Reign* if you really *have* to play it.







[Above] This is the two player, split screen mode. You can't help but feel cheated by the incy-wincy screens.



[Above] The odd-looking Sidewinder tank can strafe sideways, but the turret is fixed and its armour couldn't stop a bee sting!



[Above] The crazed rebels are all holed up in their trailers, and you get to level the whole place!









TANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

#1 You don't always need ammo in your tank to have fun. If, like us, you're a fan of morbid shows like *When Stunts Go Bad* or *When Animals Attack*, you'll recognise this news helicopter footage taken of a man who went berserk and stole an operational tank, seen on *The World's Scariest Police Chases 2*. Shown here driving through a white camper van, the ex-army nutter at the wheel had the time of his life flattening 26 vehicles before police prised the hatch open and shot him in the head.







"*Steel Reign's* game engine is about as solid as OJ's alibi!"



PLAY

Looks	●●●○○○○○○○
Sounds	●●●●○○○○○○
Gameplay	●●●●●●○○○○
Value	●●○○○○○○○○
Treads	●●●●○○○○○○

PLAYED **58%**

Tanks for nothing!

Alternatively:
MDK (90%)
Warhawk (68%)

JERSI

CROCODILES? BANDICOOTS? LIZARDS? BOBCATS? WHAT WILL THE NEXT PLATFORM STAR BE? HOW THE DEVIL SHOULD WE KNOW!

The devil may care,

or rather you may (or may not) care for this particular devil, who just so happens to star in the latest 3-D platform game to try and prise some glory away from the N64's Mario.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Ocean
Supplied by: Video Game Centre on (01202) 527314
Price: £44.99
Release date: Out now

ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD

Jersey Devil's plot is a well-trodden and well-familiar affair – evil scientist constructs army of deranged monsters to take over the world, and only one thing can possibly stop his wicked plan before the planet is engulfed with evil.

Enter the Jersey Devil, a freakish, purple little rascal who can jump, punch, fly and spin-leap in order to get through the incredibly large and taxing levels. The brunt of the action is exploration, coupled with the occasional killing.

To get through each level, the Jersey Devil must collect five letters that spell out the mad scientists name – KNARF, and then exit via a previously locked door. The game starts with JD roaming free around the town in which the game is set. However, unable to access any level from this point, you must instead progress to each one in turn.

In good platform tradition, JD can explore to find extra lives and pumpkins (which don't seem to have any apparent use), kill unsavoury beings that pop-up to hinder your progress, and then tackle the odd boss lurking at the end. When a level is fully completed, you can save the game before progressing.

There's no denying that *Jersey Devil* is a very polished product that looks and plays like a dream. The main problem with older 3-D platform games was that the perspective often meant that the player's view was obscured by some pop-up 3-D object. No such trouble here though, because the shoulder buttons control a free-roaming 360° camera which can be rotated at will to offer the definitive view of the proceedings.

SYMPATHY FOR THE DEVIL

This is certainly a lot more playable than



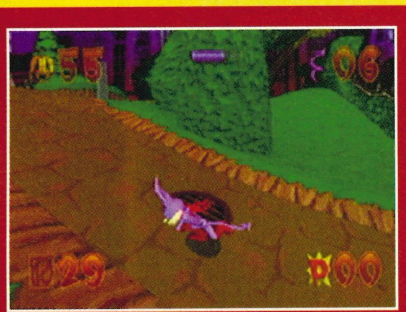
[ABOVE] One of the many bosses that this game hurls at you is this not-so-jolly-giant. Thankfully, he is a push-over in more ways than one!



[ABOVE] Watch your back JD! No place is a save haven from the terrors that lurk in the burning pit of this game's stomach!

DEVIL ANTICS

JERSEY DEVIL HAS MANY SKILLS TO HIS NATURE THAT WILL HELP HIM TO OVERCOME THE WEALTH OF OBSTACLES IN THE GAME, HERE ARE THE MOST PROMINENT...



PUNCH – ATTACK ENEMIES AT CLOSE RANGE WITH THIS POWERFUL WALLOP!



FLIP JUMP – ATTACK AIR ENEMIES AND BREAK BOXES BY SPINNING IN THE AIR!



FLY – GLIDE SAFELY OVER CANYONS AND GAPS BY SPREADING YOUR WINGS.

Written by Ryan Butt

EY DEVIL

Croc in the sense that it offers a greater, longer lasting challenge and smoother visuals that, although may not take your breath away, serve their purpose well and give the game a very cartoony, colourful appearance that is very inviting indeed.

Jersey Devil also has an atmospheric sound score that is scattered with festive jingles and big booming orchestral pieces that instantly gives the impression that big things were intended for this game. Indeed deservedly so, because if it's big looks, big thrills and big adventure you're after, without the need for something ground-breakingly original, then *Jersey Devil* delivers in fine style.

However, the learning curve does tend to go from simple tasks to mega-hard puzzles a bit too quickly for many players and this may put many people off persevering. You would assume that this cutesy stuff is aimed primarily at children, but its high difficulty level is at odds with this idea. A shame really, as *Jersey Devil* really gets going in the latter stages.

It is often annoying that you can't save your progress at more regular intervals, as it takes quite some time to clear each of the many stages on offer – even if you know them like the back of your hand.

Jersey Devil sets new standards in platform frolics, it may not be the most original game around, but it will capture your imagination and keep you enthralled long enough to get your money's worth. Better the devil you know.



[Above] *Jersey Devil* offers a vast assortment of hazards and pitfalls for the player to overcome. Perhaps the most frequent are the old moving platforms!



[Above] The use of 3-D wizardry in *Jersey Devil* is impressive to say the least. See here as the pesky little Satan dash up a winding flight of stairs.





[Above] These frightful young scamps attack with their heads, and seem a bit, well, dumb.



"This is certainly a lot more playable than *Croc*..."

PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●●●●○○
SOUNDS	●●●●●●●●○○
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●●○○○
VALUE	●●●●●●●○○○
JUMPERS	●●●●●●●○○○

PLAYED 83%

Devilish gameplay, well worth a look

ALTERNATIVELY:
CROC (78%)
GEX: ENTER THE GECKO (MARCH)

Adidas Power Soccer has **spawned** a son, but with *Actua Soccer 2* and *FIFA '98* **breathing** down its neck, can Psygnosis **pull off** a new year miracle?

POWER SOCCER 2

GRANDSTAND VIEW

There are five different camera angles to play around with. However, only two of them are remotely playable. The side-on view, virtual and to a lesser extent, the panoramic are all acceptable. None of them are particularly good though.



SIDE
Easily the most practical and playable. You'll be using this view the most.

Written by Tom Sargent

1997 has been arguably the PlayStation's finest year, specifically for games of the footy persuasion. Both *Actua Soccer 2* and the revitalised *FIFA '98* are proof that there's always room for one (or ten) more football simulations. Unfortunately, there's usually half a dozen turkeys and sadly *Power Soccer 2* is just such a game.

There's just no getting away from the primitive graphics and the fact that there's an annoying time lag between pressing a button and the move taking place. Personally, we prefer crisp passing and the ability to shoot instantly, but it's back to the old routine of winning the ball by sussing out the degree of anticipation needed to gain possession. Anticipation is part of any great game – take the seminal *Sensible Soccer* for example – but it can't be the basis of the whole game!

HASSELBAINK

Granted, each player has been motion-captured, but the end result is worse than traditional animation. There are lots of athletic moves – none of which flow together as they would in the real sport.

We must have mentioned this a dozen times, but why can't more emphasis be put on the way game actually plays well instead of concentrating on (a) the amount of moves each player can pull off,

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Psygnosis
Customer support: 0151 2823000
Price: £34.99
Release date: 16 January '98

One Player | Multiple Players | Memory Card | Multi-Tap



[Above] The speed burst sets you charging up the pitch. It's virtually impossible to tackle players.



[Above] No amount of glove flapping will stop this screamer from hitting the back of the net.



CURLY-WURLY

Set pieces are good fun, especially when you curl a free kick around the wall. The best thing to do is attempt to force the golie to parry, then you can follow up quickly.



The wall is set (ten yards away, naturally) and the player begins his run-up. You can either attempt to curl, or just blast it.



A split second before the shot, the men in the wall brace themselves and jump up defensively.



As the ball curles around the wall, one of the defenders turns away; allowing the ball to sail towards the far post. Will the 'keeper react?



At the last second the 'keeper manages to parry the shot away. Great reflexes!



Virtual
Follows the players around from above and around. Not bad for a good view.



Panoramic
Looks nice, but difficult to see what's going on, especially for ball control.



Close
A strange view indeed. You can't see more than a few feet ahead. Forget it!



Top
Similar to the close view, but worse! You cannot see far enough ahead.



[Above] The 'keeper pulls one out of the bag to deflect a Mega shot. They're good at saving, but bad at holding onto the ball.



[Above] The near view is absolutely awful, you can't see three feet in front of yourself, let alone control the ball. What a nightmare!

and (b) the flashy graphics. It's just so infuriating, because *Power Soccer 2* has the perfect amount of imaginative and easy-to-do-under-pressure moves and a superlative number of options to wade through.

Scoring is limited to waiting for the 'keeper to parry and then following up, but with practice other methods can be learned. One of the funniest bits in the game is trying out the Megashot, the dangerous kick and the reckless tackle. The last two have been included for comic value only, but work surprisingly well in 'Blind Ref' mode.

Do I not like that

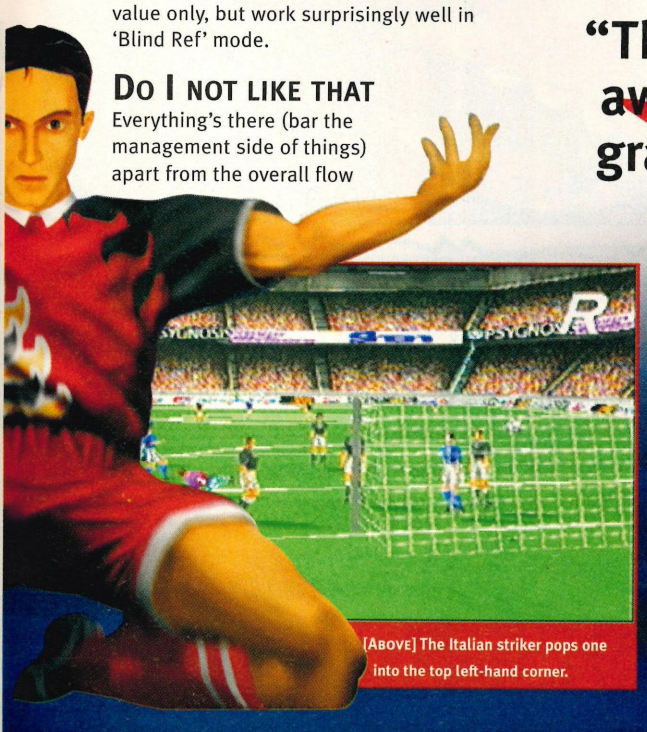
Everything's there (bar the management side of things) apart from the overall flow and feel of the game – surely the most important part! Even commentator supremo, Brian Moore sounds out of place here. His overly enthusiastic rantings are a far cry from his usually super-cool TV appearances. For example, some of his comments are wildly (and hilariously) inaccurate. All of a sudden there'll be a crunching tackle, followed by a cry of "This sort of behaviour is unforgivable." Then a split second later he'll declare that "Everyone is playing in the spirit of the game." Mad.

On a more positive note, there's an impressive 56 national sides to choose from, five of which contain 22 domestic sides. So you can replay Leeds' glorious win over Man United earlier on in the season if you want. Even so though, it's a far cry from the off-the-ball options in both *FIFA '98* and *Actua Soccer 2*.

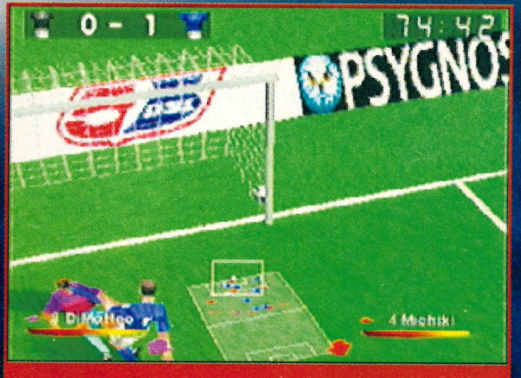
Power soccer was hugely overrated the first time around and is now getting its just desserts. Two years ago this could have passed for entertainment, but in the face of superior competition, it hides sheepishly in the dugout. Go for *Actua 2* or *FIFA '98* instead.



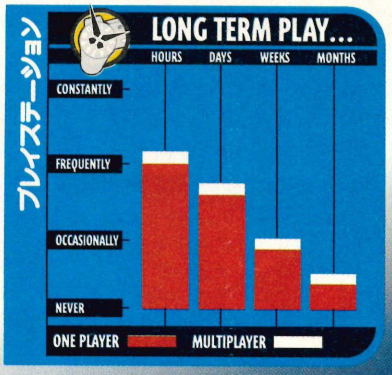
"There's just no getting away from the shoddy graphics and awkward gameplay..."



[Above] The Italian striker pops one into the top left-hand corner.



[Above] So unlucky. The ball thuds cruelly off the foot of the post. Oh well, better luck next time.



PLAY

Looks	6
Sounds	6
Gameplay	5
Value	7
Own Goals	6

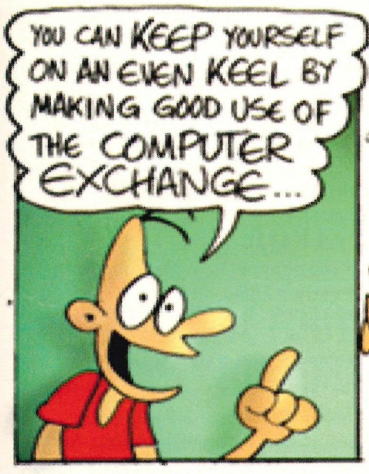
PLAYED **63%**

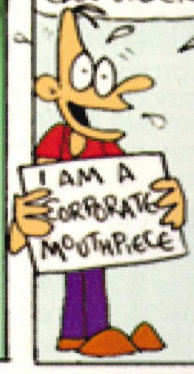
Basically, not much fun at all.

Alternatively:
Actua Soccer 2 (90%)
FIFA '98 (91%)


COMPUTER EXCHANGE
Presents...
Here's TOBY
WE JOIN TOBY AT THE END OF A MAMMOTH 24-HOUR NON-STOP "TUROK DINOSAUR HUNTER" GAMING MARATHON...
C-CAN'T STOP THE KILLING...
M-MUST SHOOT DINOSAURS IN F-FACE....
SUDDENLY...
I WANT A GO! IT'S MY TURN!
AAAAA!
OH! IT'S ONLY YOU!
I'VE BEEN PLAYING THAT STUPID GAME FOR TOO LONG... IT'S MESSED MY HEAD UP...
...PERHAPS I SHOULD GO AND SEE A SHRINK.....
AND SO....
ZO, TELL ME TOBY... VEN DID YOU START EXPERIENCING ZESE HALLUCINATIONS?
JUST THIS MORNING... MY LITTLE BROTHER TURNED INTO A SORT OF DINOSAUR...
...PROBABLY JUST TO SPITE ME...
...I'D BEEN PLAYING ON MY NEW NINTENDO 64 ALL DAY AND ALL NIGHT...
...DIDN'T EVEN GET UP WHEN I WENT TO THE TOILET...
MMM... I ZEE... AND DO YOU OFTEN PLAY GAMES ZO OBZEZZIVELY?
ALL THE TIME...
... EACH TIME I FINISH WITH ONE, I GET IN TOUCH WITH THE COMPUTER EXCHANGE.. THEY LET ME PART-EXCHANGE MY OLD STUFF TOWARDS ANY OF THE LATEST NEW RELEASES OR HARDWARE!
WHAT'S MORE, THEY'VE GOT AN ABSOLUTELY FLABBERGASTING RANGE OF 2ND-HAND TITLES - THE BIGGEST IN THE NATION - AND THEY'RE ALL DEAD CHEAP...
THEY EVEN DO PC HARDWARE, TOO! I JUST CAN'T HELP GETTING ALL THE LATEST KIT AT THE LOWEST PRICES!!
WILL THE MADNESS NEVER END?!?!?







LOOK AT THIS LOT FOR A START! PRETTY NEW RELEASES, ALL IN A ROW! YOU CAN PART-EX TOWARDS ANY OF 'EM... OR JUST BUY 'EM OUTRIGHT! GOT A CREDIT CARD? THEN YOU CAN ORDER ONE RIGHT **NOW** BY CALLING **0171 916 8440**! RAAAA!

PLAYSTATION			SATURN			NINTENDO 64		
Gran Turismo	JAP	CALL	Sonic R	JAP	CALL	Yoshi's Island	JAP	CALL
Front Mission Alternative	JAP	CALL	NHL Allstar	US	CALL	Hiryu No Ken (Golden Fighter)	JAP	CALL
One	US	CALL	Bust A Move 3	UK	CALL	Snowbow Kids (Snowboarding)	JAP	CALL
Gretzky '98	US	CALL	Sega Touring Car	UK	CALL	Zelda 64	JAP	CALL
Grand Theft Auto	UK	£34.99	Formula Kart	UK	CALL	Nagano Olympics	JAP	CALL
WCW Vs World	UK	£39.99	Duke Nukem 3D	UK	CALL	Aero Gage	JAP	CALL
Crash Bandicoot 2	UK	£39.99				Mischief Makers	UK	£44.99
Jersey Devil	UK	£39.99						
Fifa '98	UK	£32.99						

To order any of these titles, call 0171 916 8440 and ask for the Mail Order Department.

OR, JUST POP INTO ONE OF THEIR BARGAIN-PACKED BRANCHES IF YOU PREFER THAT TACTILE, HANDS-ON APPROACH! HEY-IT'S MORE THERAPUTIC THAN PROZAC!



COMPUTER EXCHANGE

CENTRAL LONDON:	CENTRAL LONDON:	MIDDLESEX:	Birmingham:
32 Rathbone Place	219 Tottenham	282 Station Rd	90 Corporation St
(Off Oxford St)	Court Road	(Opp. Debenhams)	(Beneath Virgin)
London W1	London W1	Harrow, Middx	Birmingham B4
Tel: 0171 636 2666	Tel: 0171 916 3110	Tel: 0181 427 5800	Tel: 0121 200 2330

All stores are open seven days a week.
Opening times: Mon-Sat 10-7pm Sun 11:30-5:30pm.
Selling an item for cash? Then bring some formal ID to avoid disappointment.

Goods in stock despatched within 48 hours. All prices correct at press time, E&OE. Please add £1.50 to cover Postage and Packaging for up to 2 titles, £3.50 for 3 or more. All items sent via recorded delivery. All major credit cards warmly accepted. Cheques payable to "CEX Games Ltd." Ta.

STATION MA

CHEATS ▸ TIPS ▸ LETTERS

SADDLE-UP FOR ANOTHER CHOICE SELECTION OF ALL THAT'S NEW CHEATLAND, INCLUDING OUR STUNNING *TOMB RAIDER II* TIPS. DON'T FORGET TO KEEP YOUR OWN HOME-GROWN CHEATS COMING IN AS WELL, TO: *STATION MASTER, PLAY MAGAZINE, PARAGON PUBLISHING LTD, PARAGON HOUSE, ST. PETER'S ROAD, BOURNEMOUTH, DORSET BH1 2JS.* OR E-MAIL: PLAY@PARAGON.CO.UK



TOMB RAIDER II: THE DAGGER OF XIAN

ALL WEAPONS

Lara will perform any of the following actions during the game. Hold Walk and side-step left, side-step right, side-step left, step back, step forward, spin three times in a complete circle in any direction, jump backwards and Roll in mid-air.

LEVEL SKIP

Hold Walk and side-step left, side-step right, side-step left, step back, step forward, spin three times in a complete circle in any direction, jump forward and Roll in mid-air.

EXPLODING LARA

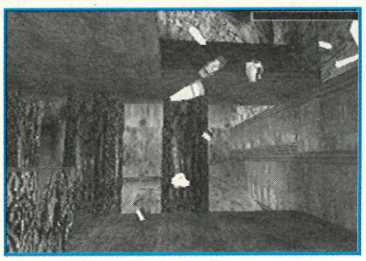
Walk one step forward, one step backward, hold Walk while spinning three times in a complete circle in any direction, and jump backward.

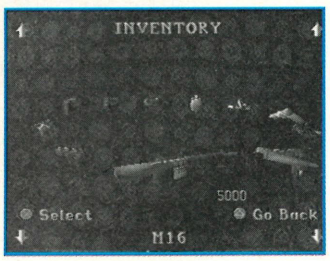
UNLIMITED FLARES

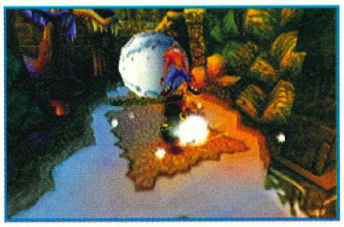
Press L2 four times during game play. Although the flares will not appear in inventory, they may be used by pressing ▲, L2 during game play. Note: This code assumes that the buttons have been left in their default configuration.

EASY VENICE EXIT

Press ✕ after pulling the switch (before the clock starts) to give Lara's boat extra power. This will allow it to travel up the long ramp that leads to some windows. Lara will crash through the windows and land in the canal just before the exit with plenty of time to spare.







COURIER CRISIS

ALIEN RIDER

Enter XFIFTYONEX as a password.

GORILLA RIDER

Enter SAVAGEAPES as a password.

Level	Password
1	EFLCIFCGKJ
2	IFLCIFCCKI
3	MFLCIFCOKJ
4	AFLCIFCKKJ
5	FHCLFIGCJL
6	FLCLFICCIL
7	FPCLFIOCJL
8	FDCLFIKCJL
9	KFLCIFCGII
10	OFLCIFCCII
11	CFLCIFCOIJ
12	GFLCIFCKIJ
13	FFCLFIGCJJ
14	FJCLFICCIJ
15	FNCLFIOCJJ

CRASH BANDICOOT 2: CORTEX STRIKES BACK

RETURN TO BOSS STAGES

Position Crash on the centre platform. Hold L1 + R1 + L2 + R2 + ▲ and press ⇧ when Crash points up or down.

BUSHIDO BLADE

HIDDEN BOSS AND ENDING

Complete the story mode without getting hit to fight each character's secret boss. Note: This includes not using any continues and following the code of Bushido.

FIGHT AS KATZE

Beat all 100 opponents in slash mode without getting killed.

OVERBOARD!

LEVEL PASSWORD

1-2	Ship, Skull, Fish, Anchor, Ship, Anchor
1-3	Ship, Anchor, Skull, Ship, Anchor, Fish
1-4	Skull, Ship, Fish, Anchor, Anchor, Ship
2-1	Fish, Fish, Anchor, Ship, Skull, Anchor
2-2	Skull, Anchor, Anchor, Fish, Anchor, Ship
2-3	Fish, Anchor, Ship, Ship, Ship, Skull
2-4	Anchor, Fish, Ship, Skull, Skull, Fish
3-1	Ship, Skull, Skull, Fish, Anchor, Skull
3-2	Fish, Skull, Anchor, Fish, Skull, Fish
3-3	Fish, Fish, Ship, Skull, Fish, Ship
3-4	Ship, Anchor, Ship, Fish, Anchor, Fish
4-1	Skull, Skull, Anchor, Ship, Fish, Fish
4-2	Ship, Anchor, Skull, Fish, Fish, Anchor
4-3	Skull, Ship, Skull, Skull, Fish, Ship
4-4	Ship, Fish, Ship, Fish, Ship, Anchor
5-1	Anchor, Ship, Fish, Skull, Fish, Ship
5-2	Fish, Ship, Anchor, Skull, Ship, Fish
5-3	Ship, Fish, Skull, Anchor, Anchor, Skull
5-4	Skull, Ship, Anchor, Fish, Ship, Skull

STAR WARS: MASTERS OF TERAS KASI

ALTERNATE COSTUMES

Press L1 at the character selection screen.

LEVEL SELECT

Complete the game as Chewbacca on Jedi level to enable level selection under versus mode.

FIGHT AS A STORMTROOPER

Complete the game as Han Solo.

FIGHT AS DARTH VADER

Complete the game as Luke Skywalker. Note: The hidden Mara Jane character will appear instead of a mirror match when playing as Darth Vader.

FIGHT AS JODO KAST

Defeat all ten fighters under survival mode.

FIGHT AS SLAVE LEIA

Complete the game as Princess Leia under the Jedi difficulty level.

BIG HEAD MODE

Hold Select after choosing a character and keep the button held until the match begins.

TEST DRIVE 4

EASY COURSE RECORD

Have the checkpoints on, go to the 1/4 mile, select the Jaguar, and get a time under 11.46.

BONUS TRACKS

Set a course record and enter KNACKED as a name to race on mirrored tracks at night.

BONUS CARS

Set a course record and enter SAUSAGE as a name. The Viper GTSR, TVR 12/7, '69 Dodge Daytona, and Pitbull Special will now be available.

ASTER

CRUSADER: NO REMORSE

FULL HEALTH AND ENERGY

Enter LoSR as a password, and ignore the invalid code message. Press ■ + R1 to get full health and energy during game play.

ALL WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION

Enter LoSR as a password, and ignore the invalid code message. Press ● + R1 to get all weapons and ammunition for the RP-22 and RP-32.

EASY RELOADS AND OTHER ITEMS

Find a jump pad that warps in an opponent. Kill the enemy, collect any items, and save the game. Reload from this point, and the enemy will warp in again. Repeat this procedure to stock up on items.

FROGGER

UNLIMITED LIVES

Pause game play and press ⇨, ■, ▲, ■, ▲, ×

LEVEL SELECT

Pause game play and press ⇨, ■, ▲, ■, ▲, R1, L1, R1, L1, ●.



INDEPENDENCE DAY: THE GAME

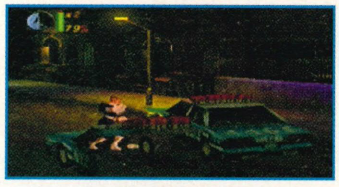
CHEAT MODE

Enter the options screen and enter GREG_FM as a player name. Enter the game selection screen and quickly press ⇦, ⇨, ■, ●, ▲ (twice), ⇩. All cheat options will be selectable.

FANTASTIC FOUR

HIDDEN TRAINING OPTIONS

Highlight the 'Training mode' selection on the options menu and press L1 + L2 + R1 + R2. Additional options will now appear under training mode.



K-1: THE ARENA FIGHTERS

UNLIMITED ENERGY

Quickly press ⇧, ⇨, ⇩, ⇦, ⇧, ⇨, ⇩, ⇦, Select when the phrase 'Push Start' begins to flash on the title screen. The sound of an explosion will confirm correct code entry. Note: This code affects both players.

VIEW ENDING SEQUENCE

Hold L1 + L2 + ▲ + ● + ⇦ on both controllers and power on the PlayStation. Continue to hold all buttons until demo mode starts to view the ending sequence and credits.

COLONY WARS

LEVEL SELECT

Enter Commander*Jeffer as a password.

Unlimited primary weapon power

Enter Tranquillex as a password.

Unlimited secondary weapons

Enter Memo*X33RTY as a password.

UNLIMITED SHIELDS

Enter Hestas*Retort as a password.

DISABLE ALL CHEATS

Enter All*cheats*off as a password.



PLAY Q&A

A haven for the harassed, the PLAY Q&A team work night and day to pull you out of the gaming quagmire. If you're stuck-fast, drop us a line at the following address: Q&A, Play Magazine, Paragon Publishing Ltd, Paragon House, St. Peter's Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 2JS.

Dear PLAY,

I have got *Discworld* – please could you help get the imp, and what do I do with the worm with the string on its tail and what do you do with the butterfly net and the glass? Also, what do you use the butterfly net and glass for?

Matthew Skidmore, Thorne

Go to the livery stable, open the bag and pick up the corn. Go to the alchemists in the alley. Use the corn in the flask. Click the RMB on the camera and release the shutter so the imp appears. Leave the cut and then click on the imp. He will disappear out to a hole in the alley. Use the worm on the string in the hole. You will now have the imp. Use the butterfly net to catch the pancake in Act 1 and to catch the butterfly in Act 2 (amazingly!). When the thief appears at the hideout, use the glass on the drainpipe to find out the password.

Dear PLAY,

I was hoping that you could tell me how to access the secret cars in *Ray Tracers*.

Steven, London

To beat Tsumuji use the Lynx on the Mountain track. There are loads of long bends which you can take at full speed thus keeping up with him. Stick with him for the first two laps and then as you near the end of the third, wait until you hit the last set of twists (the grassy ones). Mount the verges as you go into the twists and then you should be able to take him. Stay ahead for one more corner and victory is yours. Now save your data.

Dear Q&A,

I've got broken sword and I'm stuck in Syria. I can't get to the Bulls Head hill, because the taxi is broken. How do I fix the fan belt in the taxi. Please help me, I've been stuck for ages.

Owen Lennon, Ireland

Talk to Duane (the fat American in yellow jacket) and sell him the statuette in exchange for the $50 bill. Go back to the club and show Ultar the photograph. Talk to Ultar until he offers to take you to the Bull's Head hill, then give him the $50. Meet Ultar the truck and give him the roller towel.

Dear Sirs,

Can you help me with any tips on *Fade To Black*. I am stuck on the fifth level.

Mr P Rohhitt, Pudsey

We obviously couldn't print the whole level in this section, but here is a password to access the following level: ▲, ×, ×, ×, ×, ●

Dear PLAY,

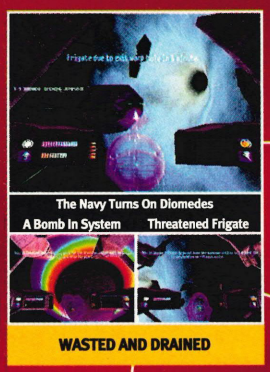
I'm stuck on *Wild Arms*. I can't seem to find the password at 'The Epitaph of Sea Wind'. I've found the memo saying Password is my name, but it's all clueless to me. Please help before I'm totally bald.

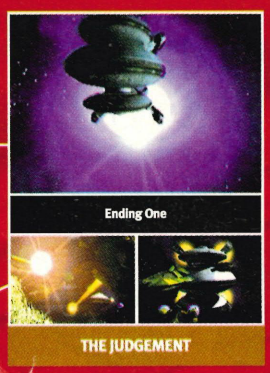
Spungie, Mid Glamorgan

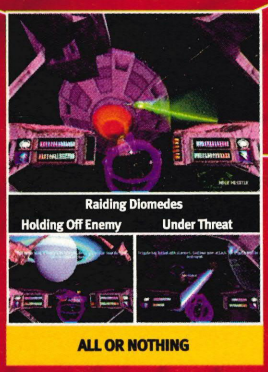
Okay, use the Wand on the Black Shadow and follow its path exactly to the door. Talk to it again to open the door. Use Hanpan to go through the hole in the wall and trigger the switch. Get the Metal Bird book and go to the door with the password 'Metal Bird'. Use the Duplicator Key to get the three chests. Next, get the Roller Skates tool and use the Wind Up Key on the three machines to get 'Fast Draw'.

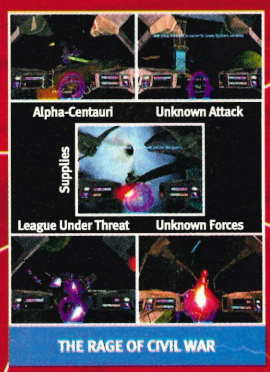
COLONY WARS

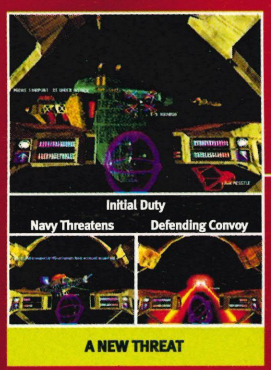
CRUISE THROUGH THE SOLAR SYSTEM AND TRACK DOWN VILE PIRATE SCUM WITH EASE THANKS TO OUR ESSENTIAL MISSION CHART FOR PSYGNOSIS' FANTASTIC *COLONY WARS*. NOW FIND THOSE GOOD ENDINGS WITH EASE!



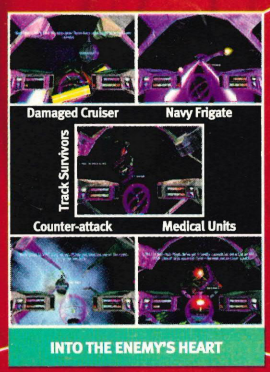




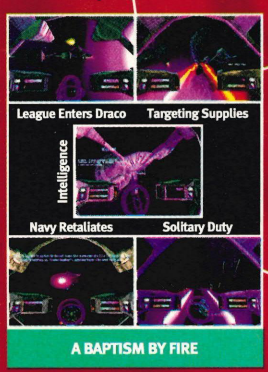


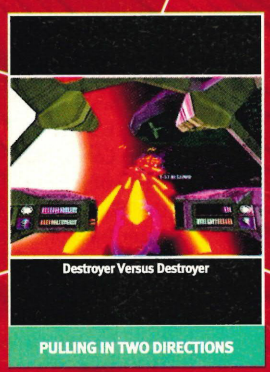


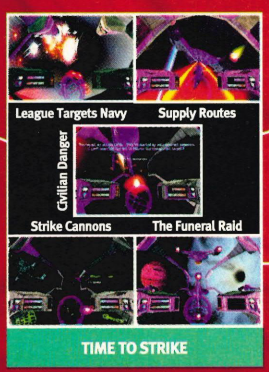


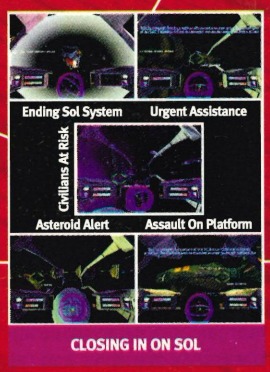




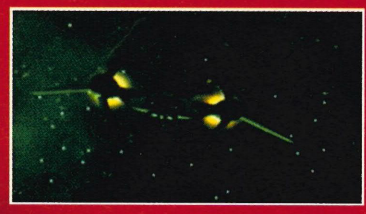
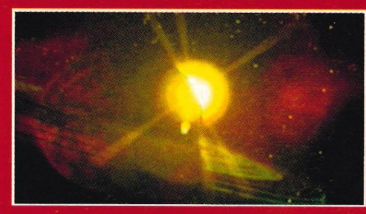










COLONY WARS

STORY STRUCTURE

GALLONIGHER SYSTEM

DIOMEDES SYSTEM

DRACO SYSTEM

ALPHA SYSTEM

SOL SYSTEM



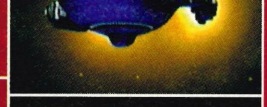


Under Attack | Faction Destroyer

Enemy Starport

Sabotaging Talks | Stranded

GLORY TOMORROW


Ending Two

THE OLD LIFE RETURNS





Virus Alert | VIP's Under Threat

Peace

Traitors | Commanders

THE LEAGUE IN AGONY





Dreadnought Versus Dreadnought

ONE LAST PUSH





Ending Three

THE CAUCUS FOR PEACE





Ending Four

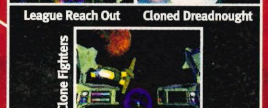
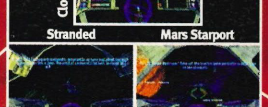
A SLOW LINGERING DEATH





A Titan Hits Back

DESCENT INTO HELL

League Reach Out | Cloned Dreadnought

Clone Fighters

Stranded | Mars Starport

COLLISION COURSE WITH EVIL





Destroy Arms Orbital | Enemy Commander

Transporter

Protect Command | Jupiter Starport

INSIDE THE ENEMY'S HOME





Preparing For The Last Assault

Insight Of Earth... | Fierce Resistance

FACING THE HEAT OF SOL





Ending Five | Ending Six

TIME TO MOVE ON | A NEW THREAT?

MDK

You've SURVIVED the perils of the first THREE Worlds. Now things really start to hot up as we provide all the AMMO you'll ever need to complete the next two. Game on...



World 4

Arena 1

Jump off and float down into the chasm. As you float down, turn around so that you're facing the opposite direction. You should now be in a direct line of sight with the large Sentry. Shoot at him with your chain gun to destroy him. There is also a Super Chain Gun pick-up on the platform to your right. You can kill this Guard and collect the Super Chain Gun to help kill the Sentry faster. Next, kill the rest of the Guards in the room and then climb up to the platform where the Sentry was floating. Here you will find a Snowboard: walk onto it and it'll launch you down the ramp, through the glass door.

Arena 2

Steer left and right to navigate the tunnel – holding e will make you brake. Shoot the Guards and Stop Boards in this arena as you approach them, and be careful to avoid the large rocks.

Arena 3

Once you have landed in this arena, shoot the Guard standing next to the Console, then fire a couple of shots at the Console to summon a Ship. Once the two emerging Guards have been destroyed, walk into the Ship to enter Bombing Mode. The Ship will now fly you around the arena, before returning you to the start area. Bomb everything the way you did the first time. Once back on the ground, destroy the small hut next to you and collect the Dummy Decoy pick-up from inside. Now run into the arena and make your way over to far side. If you missed any of the Gun towers or Gun Pods, use Sniper Mode to head-shoot the Gun Controllers. As you near the Exit in the far wall of the arena, collect the pick-ups and then throw the Dummy Decoy in front of you to distract the Guards and Sentry. While they are shooting at the Decoy, kill them with your chain gun. Once they have been destroyed, exit the arena through the cave and walk on to the next Snowboard.

Arena 4

As you snowboard down this tunnel, collect all ten Bones to receive a pick-up at the end. Also, collecting the Earthworm Jim pick-ups will give the enemies a nasty surprise by dropping a cow on their heads! When you reach the split level section of the tunnel, jump with your snowboard to land on the upper level. If you have collected all of the Bones in the tunnel, then when you reach the end a supply ship will fly down into the tunnel with a Twister pick-up hanging beneath it. Jump up as it passes over you to collect it.

Arena 5

Float down and shoot the three Flying Drones. Next, climb up onto the Submarine and make your way along to the tail section to collect a Sniper Grenade. Use this to destroy the Guards and a Tank will be flown into the arena. Blow up the Tank, from either a sniper position on top of the Submarine, or from the ground with your chain gun. Now collect the World's Smallest Nuclear Bomb and kill the remaining Guards.

Now find the Atomic Lock on the Submarines door and use the Nuke to open it. Enter the Submarine, and you will come face to face with the Sub Boss. Destroy him by throwing Grenades into the air current that holds his Pod in the air. Follow the passageway to the next arena.

Arena 6

Destroy all of the Guard Generators in this arena with your chain gun, then kill all of the Guards. Blow open the crates to reveal power-ups and pick-ups. Approach the floating Gun Pod and either use the chain or throw Grenades into the air current to destroy it. Use the air current to float up to the next level, and then walk onto the Snowboard to exit the arena.

Arena 7

Like the previous snowboarding level, collect all ten Bones for a Twister pick-up. When you reach the fork in the tunnel, take the path to the right to collect a Super Chain Gun pick-up. As you progress through the tunnel, collect the Earthworm Jim pick-ups to drop a cow on the enemy Gun Pods.

Arena 8

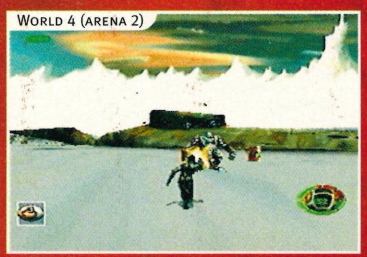
Jump into the air current to float up and collect the Super Chain Gun pick-up. Shoot down the enemy Ship and then drop down and collect the scattered pick-ups. Run into the next section of the arena and destroy the Guard Generator with the super chain gun. It will release a Most Cowardly Power Up. Collect this, then enter the last room of the arena. Avoid the Gun Pod Boss's bombs and destroy the crate to the left of the room. This will release a Dummy Decoy. Collect this and throw it to distract the Boss. Next, run over to the other side of the room and destroy the rest of the crates to receive a large supply of Grenades. Stand in front of the Gun Pod Boss and throw the grenades into the air-stream. Keep throwing the grenades until the boss is destroyed and you exit the arena.

World 5

Arena 1

Enter Sniper Mode and wait for the Mothership to fly overhead. Follow it and quickly shoot off each of the Gun Pods on its side to kill it. Exit Sniper Mode and run up into the arena. Use your chain gun to destroy all of the Guards in this area, and then find the ramp on the right which leads up to a secret Sniper Position, and a Dummy Decoy. Collect the decoy and enter Sniper Mode. Look through the slit in the wall and zoom in on the Alert Droid on the far side of the arena, in front of the Atomic Locked door. Kill it, then exit Sniper Mode and walk back into the centre of the arena. A ship with a World's Smallest Nuclear Bomb will fly into the arena and drop off two Guards. Destroy the Guards and then shoot down the ship to collect the Nuke.







Walk over to the left of the arena and throw the nuke at the Atomic Lock to open the Exit Door.

Arena 2

Kill both of the Guards and the Alert Droid at the start of this arena, then jump across to the next platform. Run and jump off the end of this block to reach the edge of the passageway in front of you. Stop at the entrance to the tunnel and enter Sniper Mode. Now zoom in and target the Exploding Crate at the other end of the tunnel. Shoot it to blow up a Sentry hidden round the corner of the tunnel. Move down to the end and collect the Sniper Grenade from the edge of the platform. Next, use the Sniper Grenades to kill the Sentry at the other side of the arena. Drop down into the arena and run over to the platform where the Sentry was floating. Climb up onto the platform and collect a Super Chain Gun pick-up. Use this to destroy the Gun Ship which takes off from the centre of this arena.

Once destroyed this will release a Forklift, which will try to ram you. Kill the driver by shooting the Glass Dome off it, and then use your chain gun to push it over to the yellow panel on the floor. This will deactivate the Force Field and allow you to leave.

Arena 3

Float up the air shaft and then drop down onto the ramp which leads up into the arena. Kill the two Guards and the Alert Droid at the top of the ramp and then face the far Control Room. Zoom in on the Technician in the control room and shoot him. Wait for the Support Arm to blow up and release the Ship. Shoot off each of the Gun Pods on the underside of the Ship. Run to the front of the Ship and use Sniper Mode to target the Ship's Pilot. Kill him and the Ship will lose control and crash. Kill all the Guards in the arena, then take out the Sentry. Now jump up through the broken wall and collect the Dummy Decoy to the right. Turn around and follow the left-hand path to the next arena.

Arena 4

Kill all the Technicians on the upper ring of this arena and then collect the Mortar pick-up on the other side of the room. Once the upper ring has been cleared, shoot repeatedly at the Spinning Globe in the centre of the room with your chain gun until it drops down and breaks the glass floor of the room. Then jump off the upper ring and float down into the room below. As you near the bottom, use your chain gun to kill two of the Technicians working at their consoles. When two have been killed, the last one will run into the centre of the room and open a secret hatch in the floor. Drop down the hole to exit the arena.

Arena 5

Stop at the entrance and zoom in on the Alert Droid and kill it. Next, zoom in on the two Sleeping Guards and head-shot them. Run over to the doorway on the right and throw the Dummy Decoy out in front of you before you reach it. The Floating Guard in the room will now track this and allow you to take him out with the chain gun. Next kill the two Guards in the room and collect the World's Smallest Nuclear Bomb and the Grenade pick-up. Run back out into the centre section of the arena and enter the doorway opposite the one you just left. Kill all the Sleeping Guards and the Alert Droid in this room and then climb the ramp in the corner to reach the upper level. Use the Grenades to blow up the three Guard Generators, then zoom in to the other side of the arena and target the Alert Droid standing next to the Thumper pick-up. Jump across to the small platform above the arena entrance, and then jump across to the other side. Collect these and then stand at the edge of the Green Ringed Hole. Use Sniper Mode to fire some mortars into the hole to kill the Floating Guard below, and then drop down. Kill the second Floating Sentry then walk out onto the balcony and throw the Nuke to exit.

Arena 6

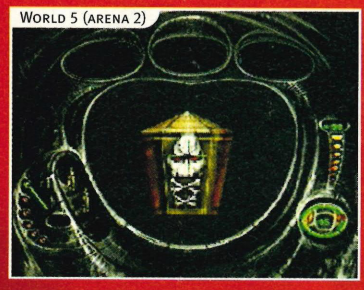
Collect the Super Chain Gun pick-up hidden behind the first spike, then make your way forwards through the canyon. Destroy the Guard Generators, Guards and any Flying Drones until you reach the end of the canyon. Quickly run into the last section and collect the Turkey health power-up and the World's Smallest Nuclear Bomb. Throw the Nuke at the Floating Guard standing in front of the Atomic Locked door and run back into the previous section of the canyon. Wait for the Nuke to explode and then kill the Floating Guard with your chain gun, then leave.

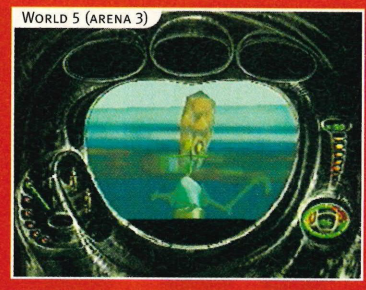
Arena 7

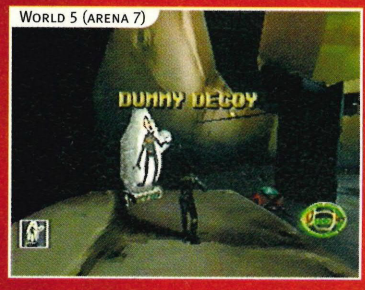
Climb up to collect a Dummy Decoy pick-up. Turn to face the Guards and throw the Decoy into the crowd to distract them. Now kill 'em all.

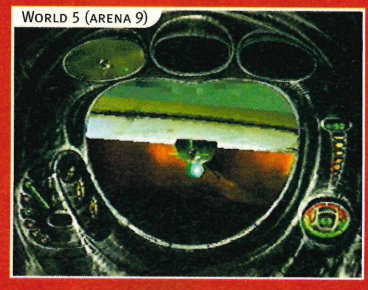
Next, jump down to the floor and run over to the blocks on the far side of the room, then climb up onto the one with the Super Chain Gun pick-up. Collect this and then use it to clear the room of the second wave of Guards. Kill the four Alert Droids, then take out the three Forklifts by shooting the Glass Domes. Drop down to the floor and use your chain gun to push one of the Forklifts over to the block on the left of the arena entrance. Push up against the block, and then jump up onto the Forklift. You can now reach the edge of the block and pull yourself up. Jump over to the next platform and then again to the walkway which runs across the centre of the room. Follow this across to the other blocks and jump onto the sloping block. Stand at the very top of this, and turn to face the upper platform which rings the room. Jump up onto it and make your way round anticlockwise until you're standing beneath a platform with an Apple Health power-up.

Wait for a Forklift to drive round towards you, then shoot at it so that it stops next to the platform. Jump onto the Forklift and then jump across the platform. Collect the Apple power-up and then jump across to the platform in the middle of the room. From here, turn left and float across to reach the Exit Door.









Arena 8

Stand at the top of the long ramp and zoom in on the Gun Pod floating at the far side of the arena and shoot it. Walk down the ramp and kill all of the Guards in the arena. After the guards have been killed, destroy the second gun pod by facing the tower it floats over and firing your chain gun. Run round to the other side of the tower. Enter Sniper Mode and use strafe to move out from behind the tower shielding you from the last Gun Pod. Look up and zoom in on the open section of the gun to kill the Gun Operator. Once all three Gun Pods have been destroyed, run back up to the top of the ramp and turn around. Jump off from the highest point on the ramp and float down to the right-hand tower. As you float over it, you will be lifted up to collect an Apple health power-up. Now, turn to face the middle tower and float over into the air current. Collect the next Apple power-up and then float over to the last tower. Collect the last Apple power-up and turn round to face the back down the way you came. Float across the arena into the door at the top of the arena to exit.

Arena 9

Zoom in on Gunta and shoot at him a couple of times and he'll jump up and activate a large door. Drop down into the arena and land on the mound in the middle of the room. Now stand at the edge and wait for a large stone boulder to roll past in the gully. Drop down after it and keep shooting at it until it explodes. Once this has been destroyed, run around the gully and collect the pick-ups. Find the path which leads back up to the top of the centre mound and wait for the large Mothership to fly overhead. When it does, enter Sniper Mode and shoot off all of the Gun Pods on its underside. When they have all been destroyed, the ship will explode and release a wave of Guards into the arena. Kill all the Guards and Gunta will open the door, jump out into the arena and kidnap Bones.

And that's Kurt's lot for now. Be sure to join us for the final instalment next month.



WINSOME ALUNDRA

Zelda – Schmelda!

Alundra may gesture an appreciative nod to the ancient Super NES classic, but thanks to the Playstation's graphical bells and whistles it's shaping up to be one of the most winsome RPGs ever seen.

PLAY INFORMATION

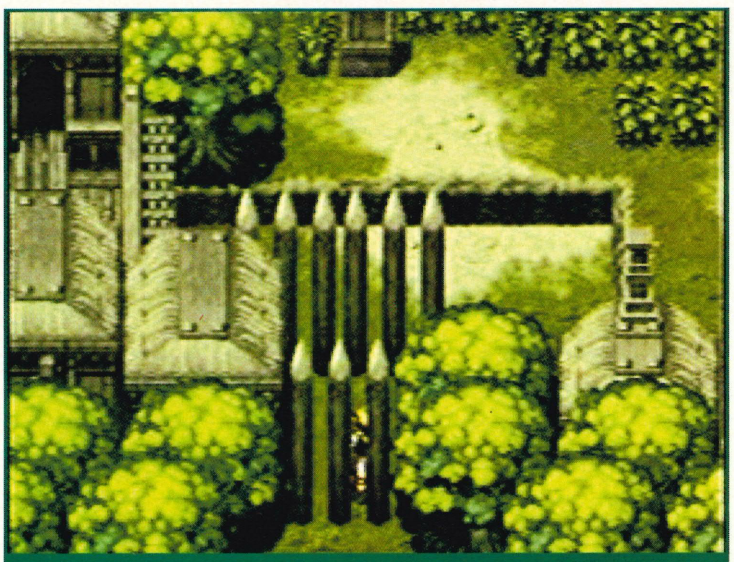
Name: Alundra
Publisher: Psygnosis
% Complete: 90%
Release Date: March '98

Before you start questioning the relevance of such a title, when you've already got a copy of *Final Fantasy VII*, think again, because all of the tedious turn-based fighting has been replaced with a much more user-friendly hack, slash and chuck-spells-by-the-handful system. The graphics may not be in the same league from a dramatic point of view (they're strictly 2-D), but look absolutely gorgeous nonetheless, with scenery that's just begging to be explored.

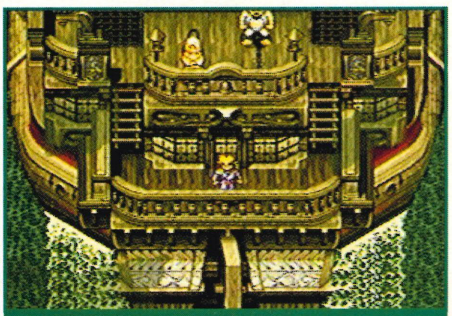
You play the part of Alundra, who has the ability to enter into the dreams of those who suffer from terrible nightmares (perhaps he could help out the PLAY team!). Suffice to say that after coming across a strange old bloke in one of your own dreams, you arrive at a village named Inoa following a particularly stomach-churning voyage on the ocean. And wouldn't you just know it, the locals are dropping like flies – the reason? They're having terrible nightmares... surely not, Freddy's dead!



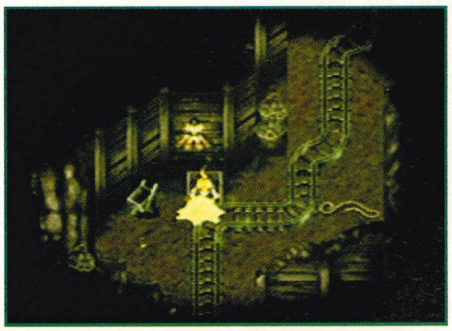
[ABOVE] *Alundra* is literally heaving with traps and puzzles. They don't usually tax the player mentally though.



[ABOVE] There are tricks and traps everywhere and you won't be able to make real progress without solving them.



[ABOVE] Alundra starts his quest aboard a (soon to be smashed on the rocks) galleon. The graphics are cute and colourful.



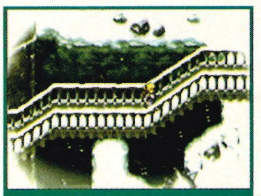
DREAM STALKING

The plot is atypical of this kind of game – become a saviour of the people and go on a huge quest-type-affair. As you bump into new characters, the plot unfolds and hundreds of quests and sub-quests must be completed before unfolding the mystery behind these evil goings-on.

Expect to find a throng of different weapons and enemies and a plot that would have the script-writers of *Brookside* tongue-tied. Playing *Alundra* is really good fun already, as everything the player needs to see and do is viewed from the same angle. If you enter a building, the view remains the same, but the roof is removed – simple, yet effective. Psygnosis reminds us that there are over 50 hours of gameplay stuffed into the CD, but more importantly, as with virtually every other game of this ilk, players will have the ability to pick up and throw clucking chickens. For the full low-down on this sumptuous RPG, check out our in-depth review next month.



[ABOVE] Here Alundra has to make his way through a burning village. Let's hope he can find a fire hydrant.



[ABOVE] As the scenery changes, so do the weather conditions. Snowball fight anyone?



[ABOVE] At given intervals your character picks up new skills such as swimming and cast spells.



CAPED BATMAN AND ROBIN

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Batman and Robin
Publisher: Acclaim
% Complete: 80%
Release Date: April '98

Holy bad movies!

Batman and Robin was a Summer turkey. Pants. Utter bilge. But still punters flooded to see it at cinemas everywhere. Even the paid-off celebrities who were privy to the premier found it difficult to state that it was the best thing they'd ever seen.



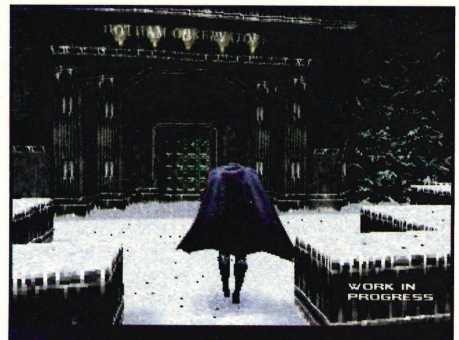
However, *Batman and Robin* – the console game, looks in a different league to its silver screen cousin. Acclaim is attempting to recreate a virtual Gotham City by spooling off great chunks of data from the CD as you play, and after seeing it run first-hand we can safely say, the system that's being used looks superb, although originally, there were a few memory problems.

The main characters in particular are exquisite looking – even more detailed than those in the recent smash, *Tomb Raider II*. To convincingly immerse the player into the dark and mysterious world of the caped crusader, the game will adopt a distinctly cinematic feel. Multi-dimensional crime fighting, a huge array of weapons, martial arts, puzzle-solving and tyre-screeching driving sections will ensure that the player is given a seat-of-the-batpants ride!

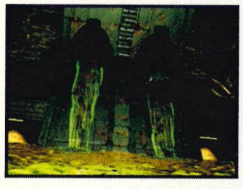
In keeping with the plot of the film, players will be able to play as Batman, Robin or Batgirl – interchanging at anytime during the game to thwart the pun-funny baddies, Mr Cheese, sorry – Freeze and gardener's favourite, Poison Ivy. All of the characters have been motion-captured and a dynamic camera system should ensure that hard-core gamers and batfans alike are in for a treat.

Controlling the bat team is simple, and there's plenty of punching, kicking, interaction and best of all – batgadgets to get to grips with. Batman will even be able to fly thanks to a pair of rockets boots (passable in a game, not in a film!), and each person will have around 40 different devices to experiment with. Everything will run in real time, so neglect to check out a mugging and witnesses will have disappeared from the scene if you go back. Finally, it appears that Batman et al will get what it deserves – a damn fine game. 'Bout time, we say.





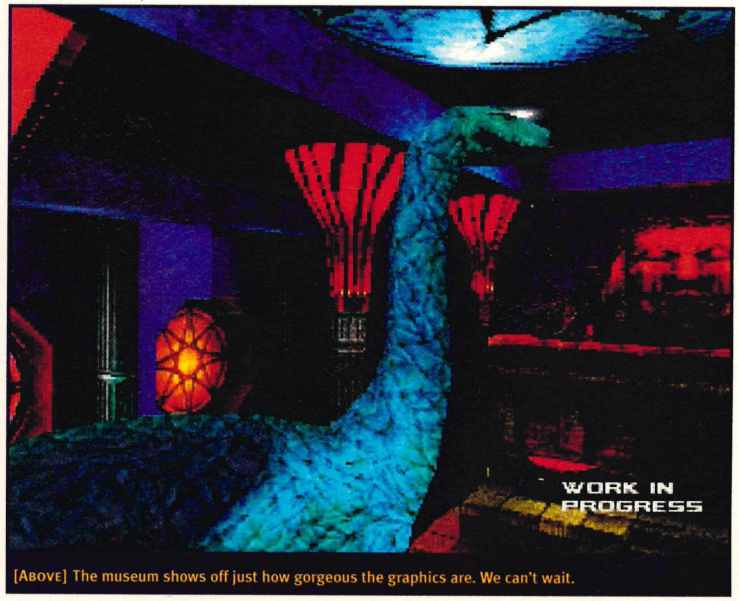
[Above] One cool dude, the Batman approaches a mansion during a flurry of snow. Those batpants must be chafing something chronic.







[Above] Freeze not only has the ability to come out with the worst one-liners of all time, but he's also Batman's deadliest rival.



[Above] The museum shows off just how gorgeous the graphics are. We can't wait.

RABID RESIDENT EVIL 2

If one thing could quickly over shadow the long awaited release of gorgeous racing game *Gran Turismo* in Japan this month, it could only be *Resident Evil 2* finally arriving only weeks later. Rumours began flying around about a sequel almost as soon as the first game went on sale and next month we will be playing the complete version for a full review in these pages. Until then, get yourself up-to-date on the changes that have been made to this gruesome horror adventure.

Unsubstantiated stories turned out to be true about Capcom rethinking some important aspects of the game after early versions were found to be good, but too similar to *Resident Evil*. The female lead character that could be seen all over our WorkStation in issue 17, Elsa Walker, has been completely removed! The 19 year old babe who made a great first entrance smashing through the iron shutters of the Racoon City police station on her hefty motorbike has been canned in favour of one Claire Redfield.

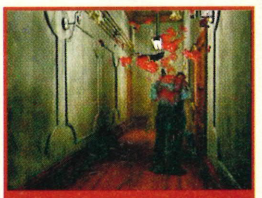
PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Resident Evil 2
Publisher: Capcom
% Complete: 90%
Release Date: January '98

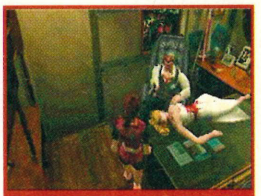
DIE NASTY

Claire is really just a stronger character, with more sides to her personality than Elsa, which is surprisingly important to make a game successful on Capcom's home turf of Japan. She's a rough and ready, try-anything-once kind of gal, but she's still womanly enough to support the romance aspect between her and Leon. Capcom says, "While Claire is a bit of a tomboy at times, she is very attractive and retains very feminine qualities."

Capcom also says of Claire "Her demeanour softens considerably when she deals with children," which is quite handy really, as another new character is 12 year old Sherry Birkin. You can't opt to play as Sherry if you have some unhealthy desire to assume the role of a pre-teens girl, she actually plays a part in the plot



[Above] Just angle the shotgun under a zombie's chin and pull the trigger to blow its head into bloody chunks.



[Above] Is this a helpful autopsy or a quick lunch for this mysterious man Claire has met? You never know in *RE 2!*



[Above] Claire meets Sherry Birkin and gets what she can out of her for information.

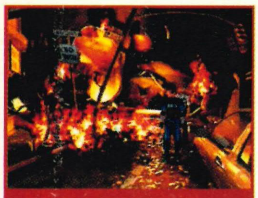




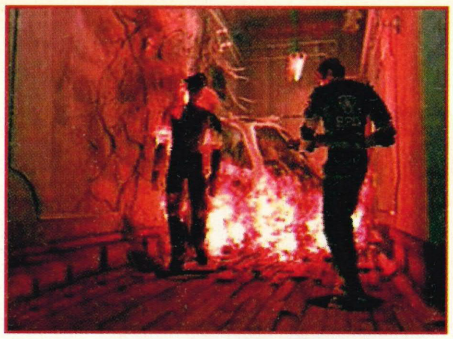
[Above] Poor old Leon. He doesn't seem to have any better luck than bonehead Chris from the last game – get out of there lad!

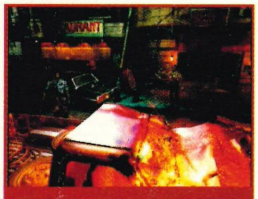


[Above] You can be forgiven for having flashbacks of the terrible film *Alligator* with this giant croc in the sewer scene!



[Above] You begin the game at a massive burning accident site, where the cars of zombie-attacked citizens smoulder.





[Above] Good news – the scenery in *RE 2* is rendered in far greater detail than before. It all looks... so real!

similar to Newt in the *Aliens* movie. Claire will find her frightened and alone; discovering that she is actually the daughter of William Birkin, an important Umbrella Corporation scientist (Umbrella being the organisation that leaked their secret zombie virus into the outside world).

SPLATTER FLICK

To aid the longevity of the game, Capcom also decided to make it slightly different the second time you play after completing it once with either Leon or Claire. Objects and weapons will be repositioned and there are even some different boss monsters to face with this clever feature.

As far as weapons go, there is now a crossbow to pin the zombies with, as well as a handheld Tazer thing that emits a huge electrical charge. Bigger weapons like the crossbow take up a couple of inventory spaces too though, so you'll really need to decide what goes with you and what stays for each section regarding health sprays and guns.

With all these new gameplay elements and cool weapons, we're really looking forward to solving the mystery of the mutant G-virus next month. Be here then for the full story, plus much, much more!!



[Above] Claire has backed herself into a corner, but luckily she's found the new crossbow – let those bolts fly baby!



[Above] Nobody can stand between you and the clues that will lead you to the truth, not even this burly policeman.

THE DECISION... IS YOURS!

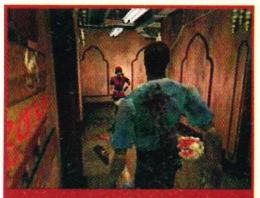
Do you agree with the decision to axe Elsa Walker for Claire Refield? Would you prefer waif Elsa in her one-piece red and white motorbike leathers or Claire with the cycling shorts and streetwise fingerless gloves? Our affection lies with Claire, as it's a simple matter of hotpants...



Claire Redfield

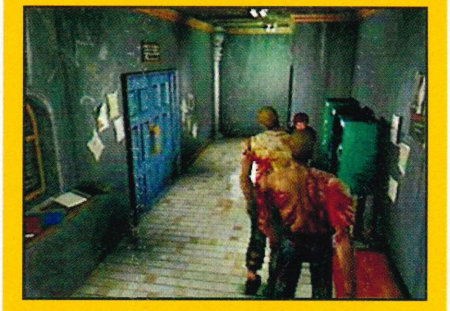


Elsa Walker



[Above] There are still plenty of those bone-chilling reverse angle scenes where the zombies are ambling towards you in front of the camera.

IT'S FOR YOU



"Listen, I just want to use the damn payphone."



"Alright you scum sucking disciples of Satan, take this!"





[Above] Conclusive proof that *Resident Evil 2* is in fact full of bugs! The winged, squashable kind though, thankfully.

PRESCRIBED

THEME HOSPITAL

Everybody's gone mad!

Conversion mad that is. It's becoming increasingly popular to convert PC games to console and the trend is set to continue into the new year with the release of the hugely popular *Theme Hospital* from EA. Like *Theme Park* before it (also released on Playstation in 1996), developer Bullfrog is combining business with humour, as players simulate the trials and tribulations of running a successful hospital.

But before you all fall asleep, this is a hospital with a difference. Making mountains of cash while having a laugh are the underlying themes and you are provided with a real world environment to build and run a fully-functioning hospital.

So as not to offend anyone, and to keep the laughter-factor up, all of the illnesses have been made up – before long, you'll be treating concerned patients for 'Hairyitis' (uncontrollable hair growth caused by overexposure to the moon), 'Bloaty Head' (sniffing too much cheese and drinking unpurified water), or 'King's Complex' (desire to wear suede shoes and eat cheeseburgers) to name but a few.

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Theme Hospital
Publisher: Electronic Arts
% Complete: 85%
Release Date: 27 march '98



[Above] Patients will only sit around for so long before becoming disgruntled. Make your service quick and efficient.

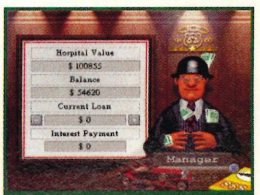




[Above] Expansion of your hospital means employing all the relevant staff, bearing in mind you have a limited budget.



[Above] An informative icon of a nurse pops up from time to time prompting you in the right direction. You even have to water the plants!



[Above] You may need to borrow more cash from the bank manager. Let's hope he wasn't one of your patients.

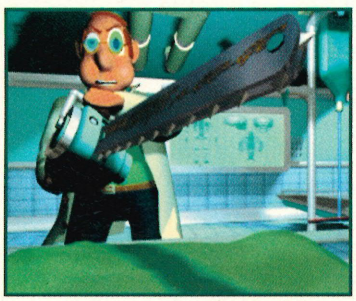
Bed Pans

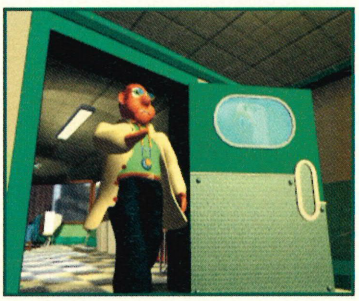
You fill the role of administrator and start by constructing a health centre where everything from researching cures for numerous illnesses to arranging office furniture must be looked into.

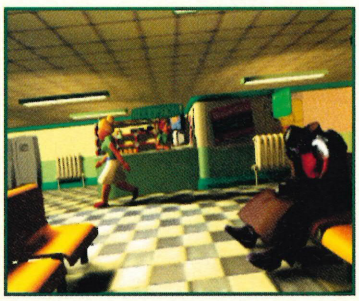
Your objective? Establish the most efficient medical facility possible and to attract the best qualified staff, offering the most effective cures for would-be patients. If you reach all of these goals while making a profit, the next tougher assignment awaits, where bigger and more complicated hospitals need running.

As you'd expect from creators Bullfrog, the attention to detail is exceptional – the player will have control of over 1,000 characters who fully interact with each other and everything else in the buildings. There have been some special modifications for PlayStation too, including a do-everything-from-the-controller interface to speed proceedings up somewhat.

To find out whether *Theme Hospital* is a fighting-fit out-patient or a terminally-ill weakling, check out our comprehensive medical report in the full review soon. If we make an early prognosis, we'd have to say the vital signs are looking good.









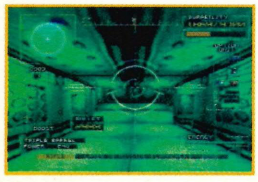
STOMPING

BRAHMA FORCE: ASSAULT ON BELTLOGGER 9

First came *Kileak the Blood*, and the imaginatively titled sequel *Kileak the Blood 2*. Both games were pretty dull but sold well in robot-obsessed Japan. Next came *Epidemic* the unofficial third game in the series, and almost a year later a further spin-off, *Brahma Force* is about to clank once more down long, gleaming corridors, only this time publisher JVC is hoping the great British PlayStation-owning public will suit up and enjoy a spot of *Mech Warrior*-inspired mayhem. In it's own words, *Brahma Force* is a thinking man's *Doom*.

The year is 2197 and the army have dispensed with tanks in favour of huge mechs: BRAHMAs to be more precise. For the uninitiated this stands for (deep breath) Bipedal Robotic Assault Heavy Mechanised Armour. You're strapped into one of these death dealing monstrosities and must pervade the titular Beltlogger 9 and kill a dude named Dionisio Vega. The action is set over 22 robot-filled levels.









PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Brahma Force: Assault on Beltlogger 9
Publisher: JVC
% Complete: 90%
Release date: February '98



[Above] Pick up keys, armour, and of course weapons to maintain a healthy stockpile of life-saving goodies.

VEE-CHUNK!!

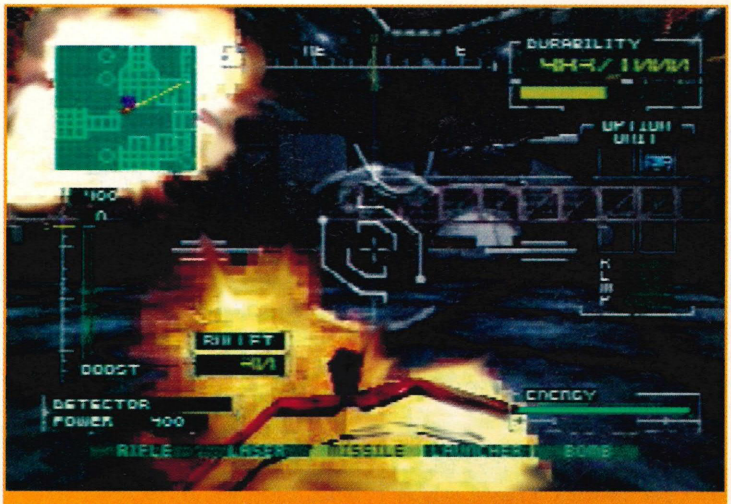
We've already seen an import version of the game, but a number of elements have been improved upon in both in the graphics and enemy count. The action comes thick and fast – there are loads of weapons to use and a healthy dose of strategy to immerse yourself in. It will be up to the player to his/her on-board support and weapons control systems.

A special storage facility is incorporated to stockpile power-ups and energy cells to use when the proverbial smelly stuff hits the fan. It's safe to say that there will be stacks of options to keep you occupied between bouts of carnage and there's tons of FMV which creates an excellent atmosphere.

Brahma Force is shaping up to be an absorbing mech-fest, albeit one which won't win any awards for good looks. Full review next month.



[Above] Look out for a large variety of enemies who'll think nothing of turning you into a mushy pulp and your exo-skeleton into iron filings.



[Above] Follow the enemy robots around and eventually you'll auto-lock onto them.



[Above] This is more like it – enormous full-screen explosions and shattered enemy robots.

arena

views · questions · criticisms · ideas

VIEWS · QUESTIONS · CRITICISMS · IDEAS

THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A BATTER TIME TO EXPRESS YOUR VIEWS IN THE PLAY ARENA THAN NOW! WE'VE TEAMED UP WITH COMET TO GIVE AWAY A FREE GAME AND PLAYSTATION TO THE BEST LETTER OF THE MONTH. THIS MONTH'S MAILBOX HAS SPEWED OUT AN ARRAY OF INTERESTING TOPICS, WITH *GTA* AND *TOCA* GETTING MOST PEOPLE'S ENDS UP!

COMET

COME ON DOWN!

COMET

FROM NOW ON, PLAY HAS TEAMED UP WITH COMET TO OFFER MORE INCENTIVE FOR OUR READERS TO WRITE IN AND GET ANY GAMES RELATED MATTERS OFF THEIR CHEST. IN CASE YOU DIDN'T KNOW, COMET STORES ACROSS THE COUNTRY OFFER GAMESPLAYERS THE PERFECT HAVEN IN THE GAME ZONE, TO PICK AND CHOOSE THE LATEST RELEASES BY TESTING THEM FIRST ON A BANK OF CONSOLES BEFORE DECIDING WHAT TO BUY. SO IF IN DOUBT, POP DOWN TO COMET AND TRY BEFORE YOU BUY!



PISTE OFF!

Dear PLAY,

Could you please supply me with your best prices for a weeks skiing for three (one double, one single room) in a chalet style hotel (breakfast and evening meal) travelling on the snow train leaving Friday 6/Saturday 7 February 1998. Resorts – Tignes, Les Area or Courchavel. We will also need a package deal for one person for a week's ski school – or is this something we can sort out there?

Kirsten Atley

Eh? Do we look like to organise cut-price skiing holidays abroad with optional extras included to you? Crazy woman.

IN DEEP

Dear PLAY,

Please note the following:

1. Brilliant magazine, I read it from cover to cover.
2. Thank you for the Playlist, as it helps me find the type of games I like.
3. If your reviewers are going to compare games with movies, make sure they know what they're talking about (issue 27, page 64 *Treasures of the Deep*), Raquel Welch was not in *The Deep*, it was Jacqueline Bissett.
4. A while ago, I am sure that I heard about a game based on the Iron Maiden mascot 'Eddie the 'ead'. Was it just my imagination or what?

Mike Pooley, Driffield

You're right, it was Jacqueline Bisset and not the lovely Raquel who starred in *The Deep*, obviously a particular favourite of yours. As for the Eddie game, like the band, it seems to have died without a trace.

DAYLIGHT ROBBERY

Dear PLAY,

I, a fully fledged PlayStation fanatic would first like to compliment you on such a good, informative and interesting magazine, and I really mean it.

There are few points that I would like to discuss, so bear with me for a minute. Firstly, I want to tell all those lovely developers to keep up the good work. One cannot believe the amount of high quality games out on the market at the moment, and my only criticism is that I can't keep up. I ask all those developers and producers – please slow down a tad!

Another thing is, I cannot believe that "Top Police Men" and a "Government Watchdog Committee" are considering banning *Grand Theft Auto* for Christmas. The fact that the game is to be awarded an 18 certificate should set aside the issue that children will be getting their hands on the game. I agree with top bloke, Dr Griffiths (News of the World, 23 November) that the 18 rating must be strictly regulated, because we don't want to corrupt all the kiddies. But to prevent the older generation of gamers from experiencing anything remotely interesting is both an insult and irritating.

If adults can watch such controversial films like *Trainspotting*, *Pulp Fiction* and *Natural Born Killers* (which was on telly not long ago I might add) shouldn't we have the right to play such games? *GTA* mustn't be banned, because if it is, who's to say that developers won't even bother producing games of an explicit or mature nature.

Finally, I would just like to say that even if this letter doesn't make it to print, then please keep up the good work, and as a fan of *Resident Evil*, I would just like to ask if you could keep printing more news on this game.

Stuart Branscombe



One of the greatest fighting games ever according to burley bouncer, Mark Ice Walker, who also reckons that Alex Gladwin can stuff his comments up his arse!

We're glad to know that you're enthusiastic about the quality PlayStation titles that are hitting the shelves, but don't fret too much because after Christmas things always die down a bit – leaving hungry punters like yourself a chance to catch up on the biggies. We also agree with your censorship views – at the end of the day, no person should decide what you view or play, and thankfully GTA has got through this predicament intact, albeit with an '18' certificate.

Soul man

Dear Play,

Firstly, may I compliment your team on producing a great magazine. I buy all the UK PSX mags and two US ones every month (very costly) as I need to keep up with import game releases and so on.

I have been playing videogames for 17 years now and have owned just about every console you could name – Spectrum, C64, Vectrex, Philips videopac, Atari 400, NES, Mega Drive, Mega CD, SNES and now an N64 and chipped PlayStation. I've also still got my Commodore 64 for a burst of nostalgia from time to time; *Commando* and *Paradroid* being my all-time favourite games. *Paradroid* was written by Andrew Braybrook who also did *Uridium*, is he still in the games industry?

Now I know that you may be casting doubt over my sanity by confessing to own a N64, but bear in mind that games such as *Mario, Goldeneye* and *Lylat Wars* won't be out on PlayStation. I shall have my cake and eat it thank you very much!

This is my second PlayStation which I've chipped (why? What happened to the first one? – Ed), and is a later spec one with the laser on the right. I have over 30 games including Soul Edge (Jap), *FFVII* (US), *TOCA, SF Ex Plus* (US) and *Bushido Blade* (Jap) to name but a few. I was very surprised to hear that the UK *Bushido Blade* will have blood in it. Very odd.

Regarding Alex Gladwin (Play 28), what a complete w*nker! The two biggest attractions in both arcade and home gaming are driving and fighting games. You should send the boys round to sort him out. If you like, I can arrange it. I worked as a bouncer, so I have some shady contacts. In all honesty though, anyone who slags off *Soul Edge* just isn't worth it – it's only one of the best-looking, well thought-out, smooth playing games, with an awesome intro. Finally, I have read that *Dead or Alive* is coming out on Saturn soon, is it going to be on PSX as well? What about *Masters of Teras Kasi?*

Mark Ice Walker, Chaddesden

The last we heard Andrew Braybrook was involved with a company 21st Century working on CD-ROM titles. But prolific programmers aren't in the spotlight as much these days, which is a shame. We're glad you agree with us that Alex was talking out of his brown starfish, and give *Soul Edge* the praise that it deserves. *Dead or Alive* from Tecmo is coming to PlayStation (on import) in early '98, and *Masters of Teras Kasi* is reviewed in this very issue.

VIDEO NATION

The free Sony video tape that was given away with issue 28, your views...

"I've just watched your free video, which was brilliant, but why not show the games full screen instead of the tiny shot in the corner?"
Jay Eltringham, Gateshead

"Great idea, but I can't help thinking that it showed us little more than how good Sony's film making skills are!"
Jeremy Courdelle, Basingstoke

"Pure magic, I could not believe the quality!"
Keith Conway, Killingworth

"F*** the copyrights, I want my video!"
Staf Heyndrickq, Belgium

"Blindin' mate, bloody blinding!"
Arnold Chisolhm, London

"Makes Natural Born Killers look slow in comparison!"
Fred Pike, Newport

"Help me, I'm going blind!"
Darren Merchant, Surrey

"Nice idea, but a demo would have been better!"
Mick Johnson, Liverpool

Smash TV

Dear Play,

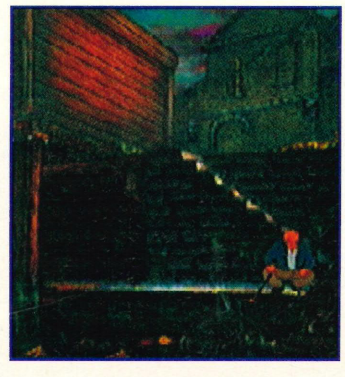
Your mag is great and has everything, and the Wired section is superb. Just one point, how come so many crap games sell so many copies? *Croc* was rubbish and went to number one. Likewise the *FIFA* games were crap and they sold more than any other football game. I just can't see why so many people are splashing out their money on rubbish games when magazines such as yours rate them so poorly. Now, can you answer the following...

1. Should I get *Broken Sword II?*
2. What does PSX stand for?
3. *GTA* looks impressive, will it be a long game, and will it be hard or easy?

Jean Cunningham, Dublin

Television advertising mate. It's a well known fact that out of all the PlayStation owners, only a fraction read specialist magazines. The others are slaves to advertising, and once they see a game splashed across their telly screens, they feel compelled to walk from their houses in a zombified state and hand over their sponds with no questions asked. Sad but true.

1. It's the best point 'n' click adventure, so, yes, if you like this type of game.
2. PlayStation, basically. It was a kind of working title you see.
3. It has loads of missions and interesting sub-games, each varies in difficulty.



Comet from the skies star letter!

Dear Play,

I have recently purchased *TOCA Touring Car Championship* for the PlayStation. Although I think that it is an excellent simulation, there are a couple of aspects I feel are detrimental to the game.

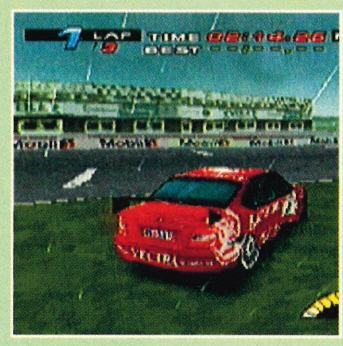
Casting my mind back to my son's Super NES and the Nigel Mansell Formula One program, I remember that it lacked a certain amount of realism, because basically, if you didn't win the race, then Gerhard Berger did. There was no variation of winner, which one assumed was because of programme limitations.

When I purchased a PlayStation and *Formula One*, I was pleased to notice that different races could be won by different top drivers. This brings me back to *TOCA* because having played several races, which have been single races and the first two rounds of championship, I noticed that Alain Menu has won every race except one. This race, I hasten to add, I won, but Alain still came in second. To me, this seems to indicate an unfortunate limitation.

The second aspect that I would like to mention is that I cannot understand what possessed the programmers to introduce this minimum number of points required to progress further than the first two rounds of the championship and unlock the other circuits. Not only has it meant that I have driven around Silverstone more times than I really want to, and still not achieved the necessary points total, but it has made the championship totally unrealistic because you will never be able to finish low in the table and gradually climb the ladder as your driving improves.

The points total that the programmers have set is so high that it means you will probably always have to finish in the top five. I hope there is a cheat available to nullify this minimum points requirement, because in my opinion it has spoilt a very realistic presentation of the Touring Car Championship. I would be very interested in your comments about these particular points that I have raised.

DG Thomas, Woking



One of the best games ever, but far from perfect as stated by DG Thomas of Woking, who moans about the scoring system. We told him though!

Rest assured that Alain Menu does not win every single round of the TOCA championship in Touring Cars! He is probably just programmed to do well so consistently because he is, after all, a pretty good damn driver. One thing you should be aware of is that each driver in the game is capable of bearing a kind of grudge against another racer – so if you're constantly cutting off Menu or sending him adrift at the corners then he will try that bit harder to pip you to the post. As for the strict scoring system, it's not such a bad idea, is it? By setting a high standard for you to meet before you are allowed to progress you are pushed to the limit of your driving skills and the challenge lasts longer than a more forgiving game. Just practice, dammit!

Fantasy deals

Dear PLAY,

I feel cheated. I have been a PlayStation owner for some time now and would never swap to another console, but I still feel that life is far from perfect in the land of the spinning disk. My main grumble is about Psygnosis's *F1 '97*. Fine game yes, worth £50 no. How can they be allowed to get away with charging such a high price for a game! It's certainly not because they're strapped for cash. Look at *FFVII* for example. Took years to programme with hundreds of people working on it, and now it finally appears on THREE disks for £45. Meanwhile, Psygnosis releases a mere update of an old game engine and charge more! It all adds up to simple extortion.

My gripes don't end there either. Having bought the game (yes, I was ripped off), I opened the box to find a card from Sony. It said "Dual Analogue sticks provide twice the control, faster turns and graduated acceleration and breaking." Falling once again for the clever marketing and good reviews, I rushed out and bought one; happily handing over £25. Imagine my dismay when I plugged it in to find that only the left stick is used in the game, leaving acceleration and breaking down to the hold buttons. This is not what the card told me. OK, it wasn't printed by psygnosis, but you would have thought that they would have checked the details were right before bunging it in every case.

Joshua N, Suffolk

You have every reason to be pissed off Josh. In our opinion, *F1'97* was a great game, but if you bought the first then it wasn't radically different enough to be sold at a higher price. If we had been aware of such a Sony card included with each pack then we would have naturally warned all our readers away from buying a Dual Analogue pad on the strength of this. Hang on to it though because there are loads of other games on the way which work fine with it.

Girl power

Dear Sexist Mag,

OK so you're not sexist, but I could name many magazines that are. I'm a 15 year old computer addict. What's different about me? I'm a girl! I'm writing to ask why so many computer mags take a sexist view to everything. Is it because they are simply ignorant male pigs or maybe they just want to feel superior to us? the lesser race.

Not that magazines are the only thing in the computer industry which is sexist – about 80% of the games are as well. It's not the statistics that worry me, but the sexist games all seem to be Classic ones. All of the top beat-'em-ups involve some pea-brained tart running around with an axe.

Why couldn't the lead character in *Tomb Raider* have been a Chippendale? Even children's games such as *Crash Bandicoot* feature larger than life females. I don't usually complain about this sort of thing, but women everywhere are being blown out of all proportion. Finally, here's a quick tip for all you lusty males out there. During the first loading screen of *Tomb Raider II*, tap out the tune of Twinkle Little Star and Lara will play the game with no clothes on.

Claire Langley, Morden

What's the matter sweetheart, feeling vulnerable in a predominantly male industry? You like the word 'sexist' don't you, but I can't help but feel that your aim is off with your points. It's true that the 'new lad' culture has embraced the video game world, but there is plenty of room for women. It can even be argued that popular heroines like Lara Croft and Sophitia are good role models for women and show womankind as being strong and independent – OK so their breasts may look like two zeppelins colliding in a bag, but they can sure kick ass! Of course, for every female character there are ten blokes, most of which are very hunky, and could probably kick lumps out of the so-called Chippendales!

Strange moments in video games #3

This month... *Rage Racer*

When Namco's unofficial third game in the *Ridge Racer* series arrived, we were teased at an early stage by the cryptic message and picture that appeared on a track-side billboard. The message, "Devil car? Full model change" seemed to lead us to believe that there was a hidden devil car in the game that was perhaps even a 2CV. However, having completed the game and won all the trophies, there was still no devil car to speak of (apart from the Assoluto Dragone). So basically, the question on our lips is what the hell was this teaser all about? Answers on a postcard please...



Cop killer

Dear PLAY,

Congratulations on a terrific mag, 50,000 copies sold eh, damned good show, well done. Anyway, on with my questions...

1. I have heard that *Wipeout 2097* is going Platinum, is this true?
2. A friend of mine has *C&C: Red Alert* for PC, will it be a perfect conversion?
3. *Grand Theft Auto* sounds like a really enjoyable game in theory, but knowing the way the system works, things will be left out such as cop killing, is this true? And will the top-down be the only view?
4. *Actua Soccer 2* was Premiership teams, but now it is international teams, why?
5. Will there be a *Twisted Metal 3?*
6. Dear Ryan, you used to work on POWERSTATION before PLAY, which one is easier, more enjoyable and pleasing to finish?
7. It's my birthday soon, which should I buy out of *MDK, Fighting Force, Time Crisis, TOCA, Tomb Raider II* or *G-Police?*

Endless thanks and the very best for the future

Keith Conway, Killingworth

Ta very much, just for being so nice, I'll answer your questions, but some were a bit boring so I left them out!

1. January 23 to be precise, buy it at all costs.
2. As near damn it as you're going to get.
3. Everything will be in there, viewed solely from above.
4. New license agreements made it too tricky, for the complete picture see 'what's the story ' in the Playlist.
5. Nothing has been mentioned as yet.
6. POWERSTATION was like stroking kittens compared to this monster!
7. It depends what genre you prefer, all are good games (*Fighting Force* is a bit boring though), so the choice is yours!

History

Dear Play

I'd just like to start by saying it's good to be back! I sold my PlayStation a few months ago and bought an N64. I know I'm a fool but it's history now and I am trying to flog my N64 to raise cash for another PlayStation. I've just read your Christmas issue and frankly the future's bright, the future's PlayStation!

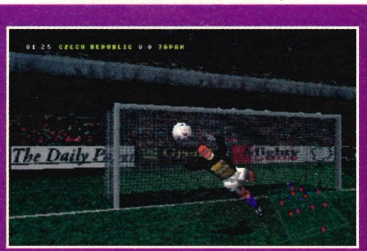
Mark Holliday, Glasgow

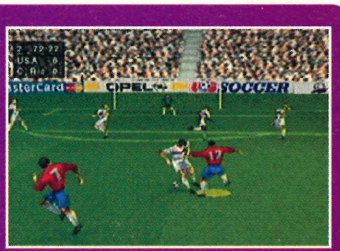
Ah, a happy ending, but it could have been very sad if Mark didn't realise the error of his ways and was lumbered with a hunk of black plastic and crap games for ever more. If you know of anyone who has endured a similar incident, kick them up the arse from us!

THE BIG ISSUE

WHICH IS BETTER *ACTUA SOCCER 2* OR *FIFA: ROAD TO WORLD CUP 98?*

WELL YOU'VE NO DOUBT TRIED THEN BOTH OUT BY NOW, SO WRITE IN AND EXPRESS YOUR OWN VIEWS ON WHICH IS THE BETTER GAME. WILL IT BE THE DEPTH OF *FIFA*, OR THE PACE OF *ACTUA?*





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PLAYLIST

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

playback

These are our very own top tens for each genre and do not conform to the rating they were originally given. It's simply what the team feels are the best games on PSX.

BEAT-'EM-UPS



1. Soul Edge	**96%**
2. Tekken 2	95%
3. Bushido Blade	94%
4. SF EX Plus	91%
5. Tobal 2	92%
6. Fighting Force	89%
7. SF Zero 2	94%
8. Tobal No.1	94%
9. Tekken	95%
10. SF Alpha	93%

FIRST PERSON SHOOT-'EM-UPS



1. Duke Nukem	**90%**
2. Doom/Final	93%
3. Tenka	86%
4. Mechwarrior	91%
5. Exhumed	84%
6. Alien Trilogy	91%
7. Disruptor	87%
8. Magic Carpet	90%
9. Tunnel B1	87%
10. Shadow Master	79%

* 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.
Adidas 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.*
Auto Destruct	1	●						84%	Ultra-violent Armageddon on wheels!
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%	Styiish 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.

GAME									SCORE	WE SAY...
Clock Tower	1	●				●			83%	Stylish, and utterly chilling murder mystery!
Colony Wars	1	●							92%	Gorgeous, totally playable space blasting.
Command & Conquer	1								79%	PSX version slow and sorely lacking.
C&C: Red Alert*	1-2	●		●		●			90%	The last word in real-time wargames.
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.
Crash Bandicoot 2	1	●							86%	Crash returns in style!
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.
Dragon Ball Z GT: Final Bout*	1-2	●							39%	Dismal beat-'em-upr.
Duke Nukem	1	●		●					90%	Fantastically playable shoot-'em-up.
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
FIFA: Road to World Cup 98	1-4	●	●						91%	Best all-round football game yet!
Fighter's Impact*	1-2	●							76%	Dated and blocky 3-D beat-'em-up. Buy *Tekken2*.
Fighting Force	1-4	●							89%	Brutally destructive two-player action.
Final Doom	1-2			●		●			82%	New levels, but otherwise the same.
Final Fantasty VII	1	●							93%	The final word in adventure!
Firemen, The*	1	●							78%	16-bit looking fire-fighting action game.
Firestorm: Thunderhawk2	1	●							85%	Playable helicopter blast-'em-up from Core.
Firo & Klawd	1-2								64%	Garish cartoon cop adventure. Dodgy.
Formation Soccer*	1-2	●							58%	Expensive and dated-looking footy guff!
Formula 1	1-2	●		●			●		92%	Exhilerating and glorious F1 sim!
Formula 1 '97	1-2	●			●		●		90%	Well upgraded and stuffed with excitement!
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.

playback

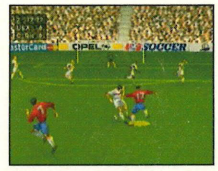
ARCADE-STYLE SHOOT-'EM-UPS



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. FIFA 98 91%

2. Actua Soccer 2 90%
3. Smash Tennis 86%
4. Total NBA '97 92%
5. Soccer '97 82%
6. ISS Pro 84%
7. Actua Golf 88%
8. Int Track & Field 85%
9. Victory Boxing 90%
10. VR Baseball '97 80%

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. C&C Red Alert 90%
9. LBA 83%
10. Z 86%

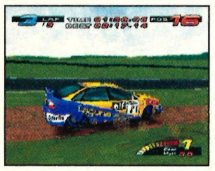
playback

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. Rampage World Tour 77%
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. Crash Bandicoot 2 86%
3. Pandemonium 90%
4. Crash Bandicoot 84%
5. Mega Man 8 82%
6. Dracula X 84%
7. Rayman 87%
8. The Lost World 79%
9. Jumping Flash 2 86%
10. J Bazookatone 85%

GAME									SCORE	WE SAY...
Hermie Hopperhead*	1	●							53%	Worthless cartoon platform banality.
Hexen	1	●							35%	One of the PSX's worst ever games!
Hi-Octane	1-2	●			●				80%	Reasonable Bullfrog racer.
Horned Owl*	1-2	●						●	73%	Poor excuse for a light gun game.
Hyper Tennis	1-4	●	●						78%	Utterly pointless tennis sim. There are better.
Impact Racing	1-2	●		●					87%	Good then, now utter tripe!
Incredible Hulk, The	1	●							45%	Nothing 'incredible' about it. Poor.
Independence Day*	1-2	●		●	●				47%	Wretched film-inspired nonsence!
International Moto X*	1-2	●		●					77%	Moderate motorbike racer.
Int Superstar Soccer Deluxe	1-4	●	●						83%	16-bit footy conversion, no frills.
Int Superstar Soccer Pro	1-2	●							84%	One of the best football games on PSX!
Int Track & Field	1-4	●	●						85%	Superb multi-player sports special!
In The Hunt*	1-2	●							69%	Miserable sub shoot-'em-up. Tosh!
Iron & Blood	1-2	●							75%	Passable medieval beat-'em-up.
Iron Man & Manowar	1-2								47%	As much fun as genital surgery!
Jet Rider	1-2	●							85%	Super-fast jetbikes, poor graphics.
J-League: Winning Eleven	1-2	●							73%	Early and now extremely dated 3-D football.
Johnny Bazookatone	1	●							85%	He's supposed to be cool. He's not.
Jonah Lomu Rugby	1-2	●	●						86%	Accurate and enjoyable rugby sim.
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 Mythologies	1	●							71%	Blood-soaked, but mundane platformer.
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 Encore*	1	●							79%	Catching up fast – best: *Rolling Thunder*
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!

GAME								SCORE	WE SAY...
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!
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!
Rampage World Tour	1-3		●					77%	Flawed in places, but enjoyable.
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.
Risk	1-4	●	●		●			35%	Boardgame – there's no contest.
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!*

LONG TERM TEST



NAME: NIGHTMARE CREATURES
LENGTH OF TEST: 3 MONTHS
REPLAY VALUE: 4/5

KALISTO'S *NIGHTMARE CREATURES* SCORED HIGHLY IN ISSUE 27 FOR ITS SINISTER, GOTHIC ATMOSPHERE AND TOUGH-COOKIE CHALLENGE FACTOR THAT WOULD KEEP EVEN THE MOST HARDENED OF BEAT-'EM-UP FANS SLUGGING AWAY FOR WEEKS ON END. HOWEVER, THE GAME WAS DELAYED FROM ITS ORIGINAL INTENDED HALLOWEEN RELEASE DATE AND WILL NOW SEE THE LIGHT OF DAY IN JANUARY. SINCE THE REVIEW WAS PRINTED, THE DIFFICULTY OF THE GAME HASN'T DIMINISHED AT ALL AND IT STILL POSES AN AWESOME THREAT AS WE CONTINUE TO ATTEMPT SLAYING THE HIDEOUS MONSTER ONSLAUGHT. HOWEVER, SINCE *TOMB RAIDER II* CAME ALONE, THE GRAPHICAL APPEARANCE HAS SOMEWHAT DIMINISHED AND NOW IT LOOKS JUST A LITTLE TOO DARK AND MOODY FOR ITS OWN GOOD. ALL OF THE OTHER GOOD TRAITS STILL REMAIN TRUE THOUGH, ESPECIALLY THE URGENCY OF THE EXPLORATIONAL ASPECT. OBVIOUSLY, HAVING A TIME LIMIT DOES PUT THE MOCKERS ON EXTENSIVE SEARCHING, BUT YOU NEED TO FIND THE HIDDEN OBJECTS – AND FAST, TO AVOID BEING SEVERELY HANDICAPPED BY CREATURES LATER ON AND WITH NO REAL MEANS OF FIGHTING THEM. ALTHOUGH *NIGHTMARE CREATURES* DOESN'T HAVE THE MASS APPEAL OF *TOMB RAIDER II*, IT IS STILL WORTH A LOOK AND PROVIDES PLENTY OF EXCITEMENT FOR YOUR AVERAGE RUN, JUMP AND SLASH FANATIC THAT LIKES THINGS MESSY!

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...
Sentient	1	●							84%	Absorbing and intelligent adventure. Bizarre.
Shadow Master	1	●							79%	Nice try, but lacks variety...
Shellshock	1	●							85%	Passable tank game, now looks basic.
ShockWave Assault	1	●							87%	Limited surface-based shoot-'em-up. Dull.
Sim City 2000	1	●					●		75%	A fantastic game. Not suited to the PSX.
Skeleton Warriors*	1								56%	Grotesque import beat-'em-up.
Smash Court Tennis	1-4	●	●						86%	Supremely playable, addictive cartoon tennis.
Soccer '97	1-4	●	●						82%	UK teams version of *Olympic* – very playable!
Soul Edge*	1-2	●							96%	The best weapons-based beat-'em-up on PSX!
Soviet Strike	1	●							83%	Decent helicopter shoot-'em-up, rough looking.
Space Hulk	1	●							84%	Claustrophobic and intense 3DO strategy game.
Space Jam	1-6		●						39%	Pants cartoon basketball game, based on film.
Speedster	1-2	●				●		●	80%	Overhead racer with okay handling, but slow.
Spider*	1	●							75%	'On rails' arachnid platformer. Can get boring.
Spot Goes to Hollywood*	1	●							72%	Uninspiring cartoon platform game. Yawn.
Stahlfeder*	1	●							65%	Old-style vertical shoot-'em-up – too easy.
Star Gladiator	1-2	●							88%	Competent beat-'em-up from Capcom.
Starblade Alpha	1	●							68%	Lots of blasting action, no control at all...
Starfighter 3000	1								85%	A decent stab at a sci-fi shooter/strategy.
Starwinder	1	●							77%	Linear space-based racer. Lacks excitment.
Steel Harbinger	1	●							80%	Controlling a violent nympho isn't much fun.
Street Fighter Alpha	1-2	●							93%	Classic 2-D beat-'em-up, now been replaced.
Street Fighter Collection	1-2	●							67%	Some stones are best left unturned!
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!

GROOVY GADGETS

WELCOME TO A NEWISH SECTION WHERE WE REVIEW THE LATEST PLAYSTATION PERIPHERALS TO HIT THE STREETS. WE TEST THEM ON LOOKS, STRENGTH AND HOW WELL THEY PERFORM, AND THEN RATE THEM ACCORDINGLY.

ARCADE REX



SUPPLIED BY: Act Labs
PRICE: £29.99

Arcade joysticks, you either use them avidly, or discard them like a piece of soiled bog roll! Unfortunately, this latest offering from Canadian company, Act Labs falls into the latter, erm, pan. Offering a sturdy base, eight large fire buttons to thump and the obligatory auto-fire functions, this stick is certainly designed with punishment in mind, but is unfortunately a discomfort to use. The best thing about the original Sony joypads is that everything is laid out just where you want it, for easy access. Although this design is great for many of the more simplistic beat-'em-ups, covering as many buttons as possible for swift and successful attacks is often awkward and frustratingly impractical. The Arcade Rex is fine if your needs are limited, but it doesn't offer anything even remotely new to the well-trodden joystick path that hasn't been trampled by just about every other peripheral company under the sun. Still, it's nice and colourful at least!

PLAY OVERALL ●●○○○

PSYCHOPAD JR

SUPPLIED BY: Act Labs
PRICE: £19.99



Guess what? Another programmable pad that can handle up to ten commands. After the ProgramPad by Interact stole the honours last month, this has nothing new to say. Of course, having fancy functions means Jack if the pad itself is a nightmare to use... and this most certainly is! Psychopad Jr has perhaps the worst directional buttons we've ever come across, and the whole thing has a distinctly cheap feel about it – especially the shoulder buttons which are prone to rattling. In joypads, we must command comfort and at the very least solidness. This has neither and is therefore an utter waste of time and money!

PLAY OVERALL ●○○○○

GAME		SCORE	WE SAY...
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.
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.

GUNZ

SUPPLIED BY: Act Labs

PRICE: £29.99



Think about it... how many light gun games are currently available for PlayStation? Seven at most. And how many guns are there? About ten. So why every software company and their mum is releasing a gun is anybody's guess, especially one as bloody awful as this! The Gunz looks more like something out of a Hollywood B-Movie than a desirable tool for killing on-screen enemies. This gun's a particularly lame affair because it offers what can only be described as the worst gun-sight imaginable! Instead of offering a precise eye-line for you to peek down and pick off perps at leisure, what you've actually got here is a large lump of plastic that totally obscures your vision. As if that wasn't bad enough, the accuracy is naff as well. What we want in this day and age is innovative designs that offering something new, such as recoil (like the Real Arcade Light Gun last month) or perhaps even laser sights like *The Terminator*. What we don't want is laughable ray guns with bugger-all menace about them. Gunz is just bobbins!

PLAY OVERALL ●○○○○

THE GRIP

SUPPLIED BY: ASCII

PRICE: £24.99

Credit where credit's due – an essentially useless peripheral that is marketed in just the right way to make it seem like it has a worth! "Can of larger in one hand, ASCII Grip in the other" ran the tag-line from the distributors... Yes, give me a bit of that. The thing with us older gamers is that we rely on numerous vices to get us through a gruelling gaming session – be it munchies, fags, or, in this case, lager. And what better way to enjoy both at once than with a pad that has all the buttons in strategic positions so that you can operate some of the less complex games with one hand. This is great for adventure games such as *FFVII* where not a lot of timing and urgency is needed. Use it for *Tekken 2* though and you're buggered! The Grip does what it claims very well, and is actually very comfortable and easy to use once you get the hang of it. So, if you're in search of a different kind of pad, or indeed only have one arm, then by all means get a Grip!



PLAY OVERALL ●●●○○

PS ARCADE

SUPPLIED BY: Interact

PRICE: £24.99



Still in search of the definitive PlayStation joystick, and wisely took a wide berth of the Arcade Rex? Well the search continues because this little number is unremarkable. As usual, it's a case of seen one, seen them all, and this stick doesn't offer the user anything new or exciting. What it *does* have is eight different fire buttons, auto and semi-auto fire, hands-free auto fire, slow motion, and attractive LED indicators. The solid stick holds up well to the rigours of modern gaming, although it sure isn't much to look at. You pays yer money, yer takes your choice, etc.

PLAY OVERALL ●●●○○

LONG TERM TEST

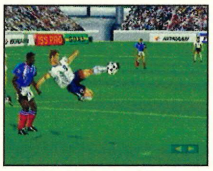


NAME: DRACULA X
LENGTH OF TEST: 8 MONTHS
REPLAY VALUE: 4/5

NOW THAT THIS GAME HAS FINALLY BEEN RELEASED BY KONAMI UNDER THE CATCHY HEADER, *CASTLEVANIA: SYMPHONY OF THE NIGHT*, LET US NOW CAST OUR MINDS BACK TO WHEN WE REVIEWED IT ON JAPANESE IMPORT, AND BOY WHAT AN IMPRESSION IT MADE! LET'S GET ONE THING STRAIGHT, THIS GAME IS PROBABLY THE HARDEST AND MOST IN-DEPTH PLATFORM GAME SINCE *SUPER METROID* DID PEOPLES' HEAD IN ON THE SUPER NES. THE IDEA IS TO SLASH AND JUMP YOUR WAY THROUGH LEVEL AFTER LEVEL OF INTENSE, UNDEAD SHENANIGANS. THIS PAL VERSION VARIES LITTLE FROM THE JAPANESE ORIGINAL, EXCEPT THAT THE TEXT IS NOW IN LEGIBLE ENGLISH AND THERE ARE SLIGHT BORDERS TO BE SEEN. THE ACTION ITSELF IS STILL THICK AND FAST THOUGH AND STILL OFFERS AN IMMENSE CHALLENGE AFTER THE LIKES OF *JERSEY DEVIL*. THE ONLY DOWNSIDE IS THE REPETITIVE NATURE OF THE GAMEPLAY, BUT OBVIOUSLY YOU WOULDN'T BUY THIS KIND OF THING IF YOU DIDN'T KNOW WHAT YOU WERE AFTER, AND *CASTLEVANIA* DELIVERS A KILLER BITE TO THE JUGULAR THAT WILL DRAIN YOU FOR MONTHS TO COME!

NEXT MONTH – THE DEFINITIVE STEERING WHEEL GROUP TEST!

LONG TERM TEST



NAME: ISS PRO
LENGTH OF TEST: 6 MONTHS
REPLAY VALUE: 4/5

DESPITE THE RECENT SPATE OF FOOTBALL EXTRAVAGANZA TO HIT THE PLAYSTATION, WE'VE STRANGELY FOUND OURSELVES RETURNING TO KONAMI'S MUCH-HYPED, BUT SLIGHTLY DISAPPOINTING FOOTY GAME OF THE SUMMER, *ISS PRO*. THE REASON FOR THE REVIVAL WAS A LATE NIGHT DRINKING BINGE AND CIVILIAN OPPONENTS THAT HAD BEEN PLAYING THE GAME FOR MONTHS AND COULD TEACH THE PLAY TEAM A THING OR TWO!

WHEN CONFRONTED BY EXPERT OPPONENTS, WE WERE ABLE TO SEE MANY ASPECTS OF SKILL THAT WERE PREVIOUSLY OVER-LOOKED – SUCH AS THE WAY YOU COULD CLOSE YOUR OPPONENTS DOWN WHEN NOT ON THE BALL BY HOLDING THE 'X' BUTTON. AGAINST SOUND OPPOSITION, IT ALSO HEIGHTENS THE SHEER BATTLE FACTOR OF SLUGGING IT OUT FOR THE VICTORY – THIS GAME REALLY DOES PLAY LIKE A SUNDAY LEAGUE MATCH DOWN THE LOCAL WRECK, WITH EACH TEAM LIVING ON TENDERHOOKS, EAGER NOT TO MAKE THAT ONE CRUCIAL MISTAKE. IT IS EASY TO SCORE, BUT THE CHALLENGE HERE COMES FROM GETTING INTO A SCORING POSITION, AND WHEN UP AGAINST HARDENED PROS, THIS IS A VERY TESTING EXPERIENCE! GRAPHICALLY, *ISS PRO* IS STILL ONE OF THE BEST LOOKING FOOTBALL GAMES, AND ALTHOUGH THE GAMEPLAY WAS DESCRIBED AS SHALLOW AT THE TIME, THIS IS AN ALTOGETHER DIFFERENT FOOTBALL GAME THAT SHOULD BE SAVOURED.

GAME									SCORE	WE SAY...
Toshinden	1-2	●							76%	First *Tekken* rival, graphically fantastic. Dated.
Toshinden 2*	1-2	●							74%	Far worse than the original. Avoid like plague.
Toshinden 3	1-2	●							78%	An average beat-'em-up. Nothing more.
Total Drivin'	1-4	●		●	●		●		84%	Thrilling racing with excellent variation.
Total Eclipse Turbo	1	●							69%	Poor third person shoot-'em-up. From 3DO.
Total NBA '96	1-8	●	●						94%	The best basketball game on PSX, until...
Total NBA '97	1-8	●	●						92%	The most advanced basketball game ever!
Touring Car Championship	1-2	●			●		●		92%	Really fast, really fun, really racing!
Transport Tycoon	1	●				●			78%	Absorbing strategy about transport networks.
Trash It	1-4	●	●						55%	Average hammer-based puzzle game.
Treasures of the Deep*	1	●							83%	Atmospheric underwater adventure.
True Pinball	1								85%	Highly overrated pinball tosh. No save game!
Tunnel B1	1-2	●							87%	Glitzy graphical showpiece. Short lived.
Twinbee Deluxe Pack*	1-2	●							65%	Vivid Japanese cartoon shoot-'em-up. Naff.
Twisted Metal	1-2	●			●				78%	Visually scrappy, but paved the path for...
Twisted Metal 2 (World Tour)*	1-2				●				88%	Remarkably compelling two player blast-a-thon!
Vandal-Hearts*	1	●							81%	Very Japanese fantasy strategy RPG. Bloody.
Victory Boxing	1-2	●							90%	Fast and smooth rendition of the 'sport.'
Viewpoint	1	●							74%	Glossy isometric shoot-'em-up. Bad slowdown.
Virtual Golf	1-4	●							61%	Drab golf sim, *Actua Golf 2* is much better.
Virtual Pool	1-2	●				●			68%	Great PC game, awkward and slow on PSX.
V-Rally	1-4	●			●		●		87%	Fast and accurate rally sim with great split screen.
VR Baseball '97	1-2	●							80%	Excellent and comprehensive sim of the sport.
V-Tennis	1-2	●							75%	Bland tennis game. Get *Sampras* or *Smash Court*.
Warcraft 2: The Dark Saga	1	●							86%	Utterly compelling medieval strategy fest!
Warhammer: SOTHR	1	●							82%	Unbelivably complex, but rewarding war game.
Warhawk	1	●							68%	Distinctly 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.
Z	1-2	●		●		●			85%	Hard as hell, but intensely rewarding.
Zeitgeist*	1	●							51%	Incredibly slow shoot-'em-up. Worthless.

POUND STRETCHER

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ALRIGHT ME OL' COCKNEY RHYMING MUD-SLINGERS! AH, NEW YEAR, NEW HOPE, AND WHAT A LOTTA BARGAINS WE'VE GOT FOR YOU THIS FINE MONTH. IF YOU 'AD A WHITE CHRISTMAS THEN YOU'RE GONNA 'AV A PLATINUM NEW YEAR BECAUSE IN JANUARY YOU CAN PICK UP *WIPEOUT 2097*, *RIDGE RACER REVOLUTION* AND *DESTRUCTION DERBY 2* FOR £19.99, FOLLOWED SHORTLY AFTERWARDS BY *ADIDAS POWER SOCCER* IN FEB. SORTED, ETC...

WHAT'S THE STORY...

WITH THE NEW 'DUAL SHOCK' JOYPAD?

THE PLAY OFFICES HAVE BEEN INUNDATED WITH PLEAS THIS MONTH FOR INFORMATION REGARDING THE NEW 'DUAL SHOCK' JOYPAD THAT HAS GONE ON-SALE IN JAPAN. WELL NOW ALL IS REVEALED! THE DUAL SHOCK ANALOGUE PAD IS CAPABLE OF MANY DIFFERENT LEVELS OF VIBRATION AND HAS REPLACED THE USUAL DUAL ANALOGUE PAD IN JAPAN. IT LOOKS IDENTICAL TO THE ANALOGUE PADS ON SALE HERE AND ABROAD ALREADY, EXCEPT THAT THE ACTUAL 'THUMB STICK' PARTS ARE SHAPED DIFFERENTLY. WHEREAS BEFORE THEY WERE CONCAVED TO ALLOW THE THUMBS TO SIT SNUGGLY INSIDE, NOW THEY'RE ACTUALLY BALL-SHAPED WITH SPECIAL GRIPS TO AVOID THE THUMB FROM SLIPPING. THE PAD IS SAID TO BE CAPABLE OF TWO DIFFERENT TYPES OF RUMBLE SENSATION – ONE WORKS WITH ALL PRESENT GAMES THAT UTILISE THE FEATURE (IE NOT MANY!), AND THE NEXT LEVEL IS DESIGNED FOR NEWER GAMES WHICH WILL BE SPECIALLY PROGRAMMED TO WORK WITH THE FEATURE. THE DUAL SHOCK PAD IS ACTUALLY THE STANDARD PACK IN-PAD WHEN YOU BUY A NEW PLAYSTATION IN JAPAN NOW. ALTHOUGH TO BUY THE DUAL SHOCK ANALOGUE PAD OVER HERE, AT PRESENT WILL COST YOU IN THE REGION OF £45 FROM AN IMPORT SHOP. SONY ITSELF HAS NO NEWS WHEN THE DUAL SHOCK ANALOGUE PAD WILL BE RELEASED OVER HERE. BUT JUDGING BY THE PROBLEMS IT FACED WITH THE ORIGINAL DUAL ANALOGUE PAD, AND THE COPYRIGHT PROBLEMS WITH THE 'RUMBLE' MOTOR, IT COULD BE SOME TIME YET! WE'LL HAVE A REVIEWABLE SAMPLE TO TEST NEXT ISSUE.

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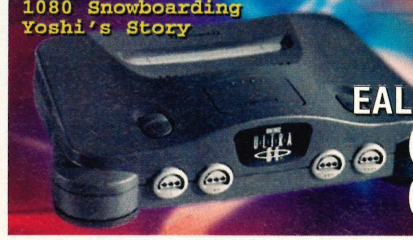
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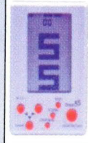


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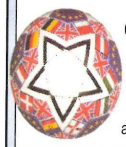
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