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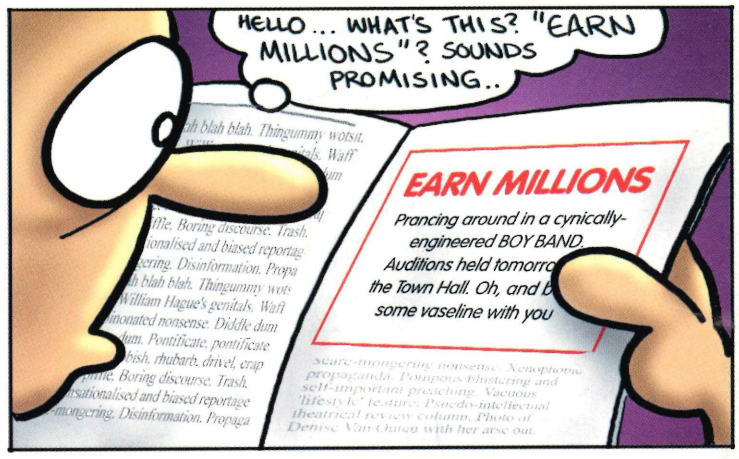
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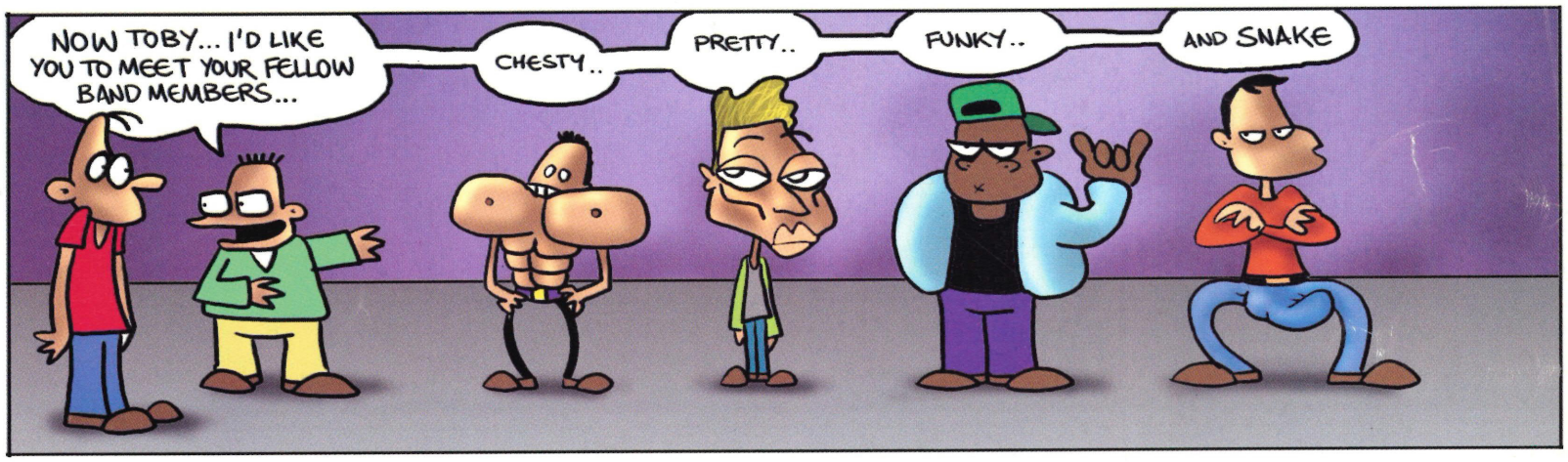




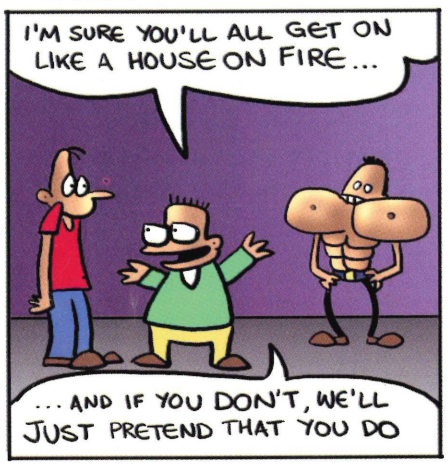


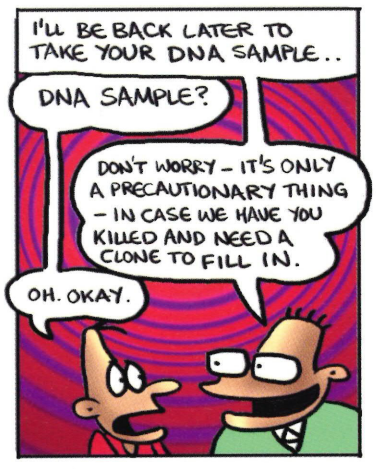


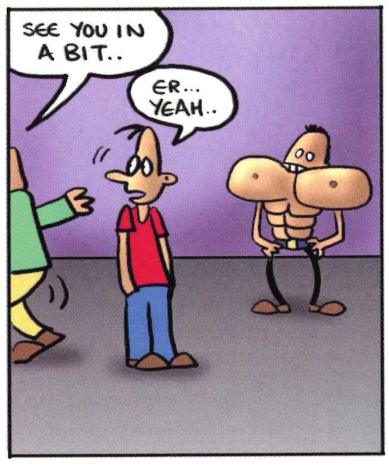


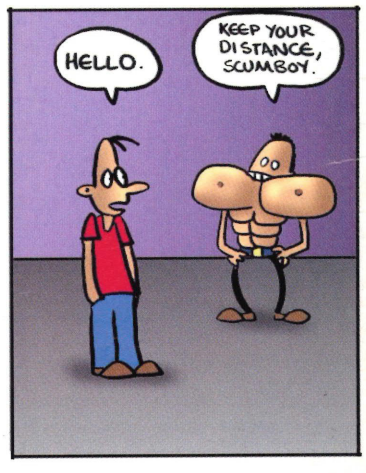


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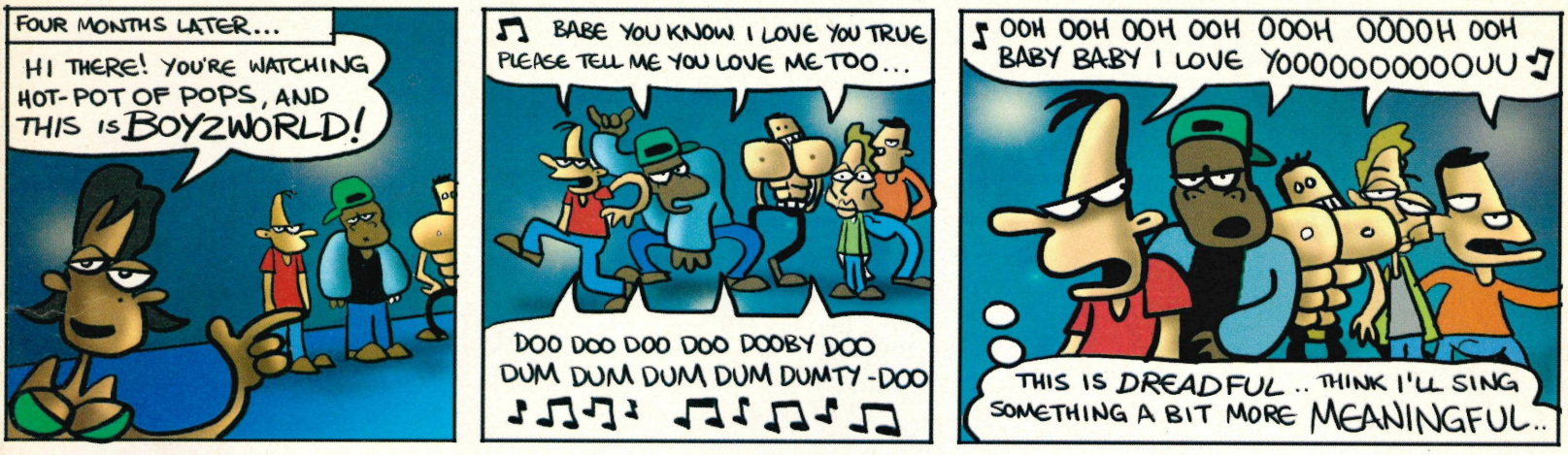
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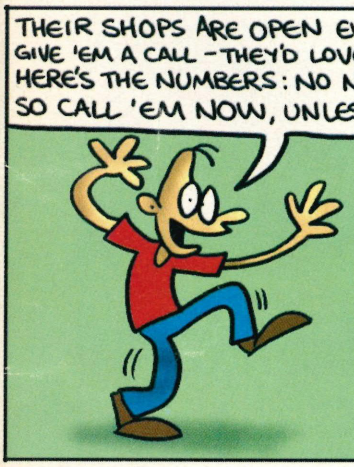
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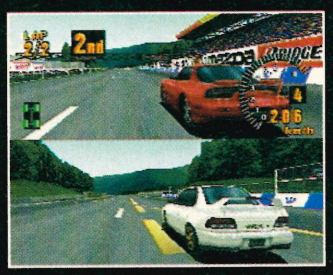
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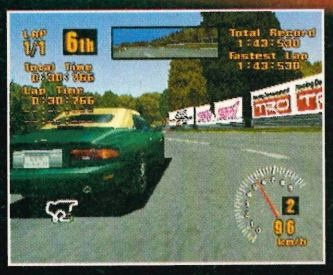


EXCLUSIVE!

20 IT'S JUST ISN'T POSSIBLE! THE GREATEST RACING GAME EVER CONCEIVED HAS ARRIVED AND DOESN'T JUST BEAT THE OPPOSITION, BUT COMPLETELY LAPS THEM! *GRAN TURISMO* – THE FULL EIGHT-PAGE REVIEW!







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

[THE PLAYLIST]

90 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.

[DON'T FORGET]

The Complete Game Guide for *Tomb Raider II* is out now, priced at £3.95 – available from all good newsagents. For this you get colour maps of all the levels, eight double sided Lara Croft posters, plus the original game solution as well. It's limited edition so get 'em while they're hot!



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issue thirty one
The UK's Best Unofficial PLAYSTATION Magazine!



プレイステーション

DIABLO

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SKULLMONKEYS

66 Squirty clay platform action invades the PlayStation this month as we do battle with bone-headed chimps, courtesy of The Neverhood!

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38 All the glamour and excitement from the forthcoming winter games comes to PlayStation! PLAY goes for gold, narrowly avoiding the mangling of limbs!



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PLAY REVIEWS

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

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PLAY returns after a particularly intoxicated Christmas only to be presented with the greatest racing game ever to grace a humble games console – *Gran Turismo!*

Not wanting to drive whilst under the influence, we had to down numerous cups of black coffee to get behind the wheel, and what an experience it was! You'll find the exclusive full eight-page review of this import beast on page 20, and also exciting news on the official version that will be released by Sony in May (count the days!).

Speaking of Sony, what a festive period it has been for the console King. With PlayStations sold out everywhere, it is unsurprising perhaps that Sony now announces, with glee, that the sales for PlayStation in the UK have topped the two million mark – so a big congratulations to all involved. Now here's pushing for three! What with Christmas done and dusted, and all of the big official games already out on the shelves and selling by the stack, the month of January has been particularly lame for UK releases and so you'll find this issue of PLAY bulging with import reviews, some good, some bad. Normal service will of course be resumed next month when these pages will be packed with exciting new official releases. Can't wait!

Apart from *Gran Turismo*, we feature full reviews for *Skull Monkeys, Brahma Force, Einhander* – which is superb, *Jet Moto 2*, and *Nagano Winter Olympics*, and previews for *Chill, Powerboat Racing, Puyo Puyo* and *Reboot*. So get stuck in with that lot. But better still, and at long last, we have finished compiling the results of our OFFICIAL 1997 PLAY READER'S SURVEY, and you'll find them listed from page 24. We'll think you'll find that the results are extraordinary!

We listen to your criticisms and ideas, and so expect to see a few changes in PLAY in the coming months as we tailor it to suit your needs.

Anyway, get saving for *Gran Turismo* and enjoy the rest of the magazine.

Ryan Butt Editor



TWO MILLION... AND CO

SONY CLEANS UP WITH A VERY MER

THE SONY PlayStation is big. Bigger than you ever thought possible, in fact probably bigger than Jesus... well, perhaps not. Sony is buzzing now with the hot news that there are now over two million units in homes all over the UK thanks to a monster Christmas season that saw many of the big high street stores completely sold out.

Great news indeed for Sony, but even better for the consumer is that Sony is marking the occasion by releasing *The Help Charity Compilation*. This three-disc set will feature full versions of *Road Rash, Broken Sword* and *Myst* for an expected price of £39.99 – with all proceeds going to childrens' charities.

To celebrate the vast new user base, and in a bid to keep the interest booming, Sony has promised to release a further 200 PlayStation titles in 1998, with the highlights including *Bushido Blade, Gran Turismo, Tekken 3, Spice World* and *Medievil*. Sony has also signed licenses to release games based on The *X-Files* (which is a project so secretive that there are only two scripts for the game in existence, and they have been printed on red paper to avoid them being photocopied!), *Spawn* and *The Fifth Element* (originally a futuristic film starring Bruce Willis).



Also, to further raise the public profile of the PlayStation, Sony has of course just launched a whole new range of trendy club-wear, featuring hats, T-shirts and bags (available only by calling the customer care line on 0990 998877), and is currently giving its internet site a major revamp (this will be fully operational and updated regularly from January 30 and can be found at: **www. playstation _europe .com).**

Of course, there are numerous big players arriving from third-party publishers that will also figure heavily in the success of the PlayStation in the forthcoming year. Top of the A-list is *Resident Evil 2* from Capcom, and Konami's *Metal Gear Solid*, both of which are looking exceptional. So all in all, 1998 is going to be the year that the PlayStation kills the opposition stone dead. If you know any N64-owning suckers, kick them up the backside and tell them they're doomed. Two million punters can't be wrong!

INTERNATIONAL PLAY BOYS

WHO TO CONTACT AT PLAY MAGAZINE...



RYAN BUTT

Hopes for the new year – Blackburn winning the Premiership, *Metal Gear Solid* being the best thing since pop-up toasters. Perhaps a day off.
play@paragon.co.uk.



GRAEME NICHOLSON

Hopes for new year – to own *Gran Turismo*, to become a goat-herder on a remote Scottish Isle, to grow an alarming ginger beard. Two out of three ain't bad!
silencio@paragon.co.uk

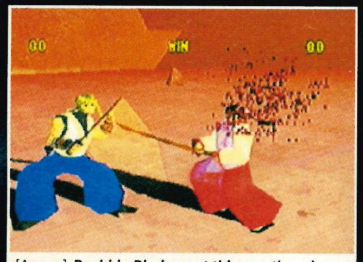


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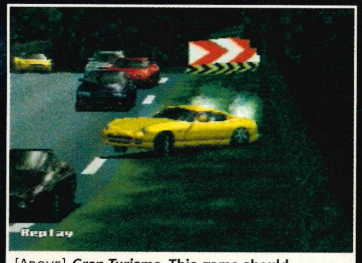
Hopes for new year – Leeds United qualifying for Europe, a jolly-good p*ss-up, *Sensible World of Soccer*, and to discover that money does indeed grow on trees.
tomsargent@paragon.co.uk

UNTING! FIFA PITCH!

RY CHRISTMAS EA SCORES ANOTHER WINNER



[ABOVE] ***Bushido Blade*** **– out this month and spear-heading Sony's assault for 1998.**



[ABOVE] ***Gran Turismo*****. This game should certainly shift a few more PlayStations!**

CONGRATS to Electronic Arts for achieving the much coveted Christmas number one slot in the gaming charts for the FIFTH year running thanks to *FIFA: RTWC98*. Amazingly, it has been a FIFA game that has held the spot for half a decade, often undeservedly so.

However, the latest *FIFA* game was a tremendous return to form, scoring 91% in PLAY and being heralded as the best football game ever. Obviously, the huge sales were partly due to the TV advertising campaign that once again captured the imagination of the gamesplaying public, especially with Blur's 'Song 2' commanding attention. Opinion is still divided by our readers as to which is the best PlayStation football game on the market, between *FIFA: RTWC98*, *Actua Soccer 2* and *ISS Pro*. Here are some of your comments...

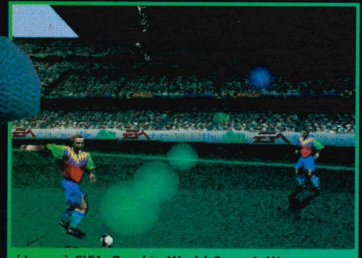
"I don't think it's a matter of which is the best game, but how long before the faults in each infuriate enough to start searching for the next best title. With all of that in mind *FIFA* keeps drawing me back." Pete Lambie, Glasgow.

"After reading your review of *FIFA 98* I decided to give it a go. The control is good, and you can vary the pace of the game well, but despite all of this my heart still yearns for *ISS Pro*." Spud, Lancaster

"How did you reach the decision that *FIFA*'s better than *Actua*? A few friends, a few drinks, and *Actua Soccer 2*. What a night!" Anon.

So there you go. The case continues...





[ABOVE] ***FIFA: Road to World Cup 98*****. Was a Christmas number one yet again!**



[ABOVE] **Blur – the hardcore, head-banging anthem that is 'Song 2' no doubt helped!**

NOZIN' AROUND

NOZIN' AROUND

Rumours we can't substantiate, whispers of secret projects, general snooping, that's what this regular column is all about – we'll do our utmost to find out all the juicy titbits that the Sony PlayStation has to offer.

Gamester LMP, the company responsible for the best-selling PSX Steering Wheel is currently developing its own third-party analogue joypad. Details are sketchy at the moment, but it should be released in March. Likewise, Fire International has also got interesting peripherals in the pipeline including a gold Walther PPK lightgun. Cool.

The future of *Future Strike* – the next game in the 'Strike' series, looks to be in jeopardy after the programmers allegedly requested more freedom for the new ground-based mech game. As a result it will no longer be tied to the series, and the *Future Strike* title has been dropped altogether. The 'Strike' series is by no means being killed off though, and a new game under the working title of *Next Generation Strike* is already said to be underway.

Capcom is rumoured to be hard at work on the sequel to *Star Gladiator* which will arrive on PlayStation later in the year. Based on Namco's System 11 hardware, *Star Gladiator 2* will incorporate many features already seen in Capcom games, including the varying capacity of super metre for each character that reflects the strength of the move, as seen in *Street Fighter III*. There are also new characters and vastly improved graphics to enjoy. Expect to see the game in the second half of 1998.

TEKKEN 3 DELAYED... AGAIN!

BAD NEWS for beat-'em-up fans this month as news of a possible delay for *Tekken 3* was leaked. Originally planned for a March release in Japan, to follow shortly in America, the game has now slipped, and May or June now looks more likely.

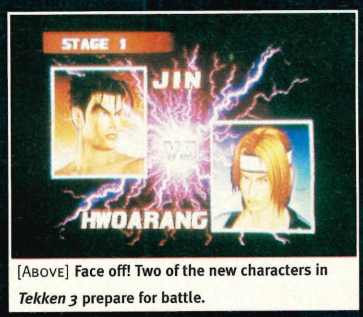
This will of course mean that the official version, due for release by Sony, has also toppled back down the release schedule and won't see the light of day in Europe until September at the earliest! The exact reason for this delay is unknown, but it might be just so that Namco can fine-tune the game and ensure that it is as close to the arcade original as possible.

On a slightly lighter note, Namco announced that the PlayStation version will feature an exclusive new, never-before-seen character, like the dynamic duo of Roger and Alex in *Tekken 2*. The character will be a small, fire-breathing dragon called Gon, who dons a pair of boxing gloves to pummel his significantly larger opponents. Gon is reported to be a famous Japanese comic book character with incredible strength and power, although how he made it into this game is a complete mystery... but we bet King, Kazuya and the gang are crapping themselves!

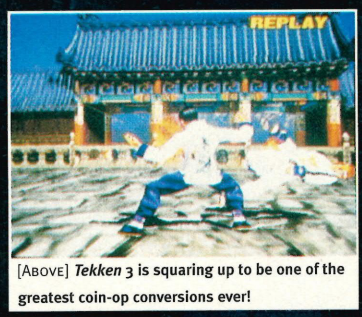
These new screenshots show how well the game is shapng up, but if you're craving for more information on *Tekken 3*, the Mishima dynasty, or indeed anything at all Tekken related, tune in for a special feature-lengthed report only in PLAY next month!



[ABOVE] *Tekken 3* – This early PlayStation screenshot clearly shows the presence of the exclusive new hidden character, Gon, who is big in Japan, apparently!



[ABOVE] Face off! Two of the new characters in *Tekken 3* prepare for battle.



[ABOVE] *Tekken 3* is squaring up to be one of the greatest coin-op conversions ever!



[ABOVE] Titchy dinosaur, Gon, gets serious by toasting Jin's footwear!



[ABOVE] Down and most definitely out, Gon makes sure of the kill!

CAPCOM GETS TOUGH!

CRIPES alive! Capcom's arcade division is churning out new games like there's no tomorrow, and the latest in its popular Marvel beat-'em-up series has just been revealed. *Marvel Vs Capcom: Clash of Super Heroes* features the classic comic-book stars against the finest cream of Capcom's own fighting stable, including offerings from *DarkStalkers*, *Street Fighter*, and even *Megaman* in the biggest rumble to date.

The game is thought to include about 30 characters in total (and it is rumoured that a couple from *Resident Evil* may even appear!) and will feature tag-matches as seen in previous recent Capcom fighting games.

Other news from Capcom this month is that *Street Fighter Vs X-Men* WILL appear on PlayStation, although we haven't got the faintest idea how! After already appearing on the Sega Saturn, a near-arcade perfect conversion was achieved via a special 4MB memory expansion cart which came free with the game. This plugged into the back of the Saturn and meant that hardly any frames of animation were lost and the loading times were practically none-existent.

Such a cart could surely not be produced for PlayStation, and seeing as the PlayStation RAM is smaller than the Saturn's to begin with, it leaves a big question mark over what will have to give in order for the game to appear intact. No definite release date has yet been announced, but given Capcom's track-record for producing PlayStation games of the highest calibre, fans needn't worry too much about it being under par. Now, whatever happened to the promised PlayStation version of *X-Men: Children of the Atom?*



[ABOVE] *Marvel Vs Capcom: Clash of Super Heroes* – the longest game title ever, probably.



[ABOVE] Ever wanted to knock that daft, smug grin off Mega Man's face? Now's your chance!

SYSTEM ADDICT...

VIDEO game addiction... is there anything more anti-social? Probably not, but who cares? Just in case you feel yourself succumbing to the intense draw of your PlayStation above everything else, here are five ways to tell if you are a true addict, as seen on the highly amusing website 'You Know You're Addicted When...' which can be found at:
http://www.gamepen.com/addicted/

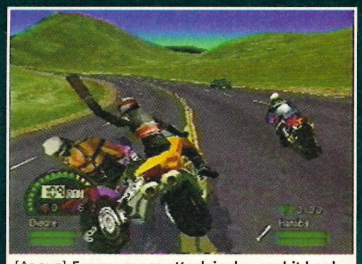
1. Your balls stick to the seat.
2. Eating is only between levels.
3. When the game machine starts to talk to you.
4. You spend all your crack money on Virtua Fighter 2.
5. Blockbuster goes out of business because you move.

ROAD RASH 3-D

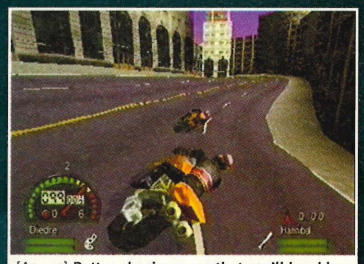
COMING to a PlayStation near you in March is the next chain-wielding installment of the age-old Road Rash series. *Road Rash 3-D* will delight fans of the highly illegal motorbike race by introducing true 3-D elements and doing away with the tried-and-failed 'on rails' racing system that dogged the previous PlayStation game (currently available on Platinum).

Actual motorcyclists were specially motion-captured in *Road Rash 3-D* to give the tense bike battle a more polished, realistic look, and this is evident in these first screen-shots.

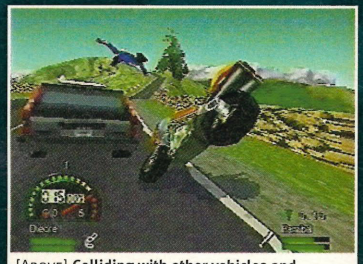
Other enhancements have been made in the long-term appeal, with four classes of custom bike to earn and buy throughout the numerous racing circuits, and enemy gangs of bikers who attack in packs and have their own unique fighting styles, personalities, bikes, and preferred terrains, plus more weapons for the player to obtain. *Road Rash 3-D* is currently about 70% complete, with last-minute tweaking of the in-game physics taking place as you read this. Expect to see a full preview in the next issue of PLAY.



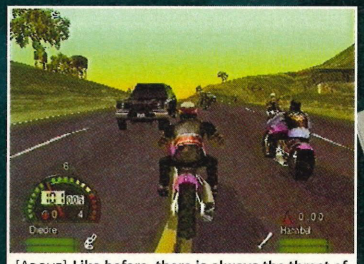
[ABOVE] **Enemy gangs attack in droves, hit hard before they do unto you!**



[ABOVE] **Better physics mean that you'll be able to take corners at full speed by leaning.**



[ABOVE] **Colliding with other vehicles and inanimate objects will knock you for six!**



[ABOVE] **Like before, there is always the threat of civilian traffic to contend with.**

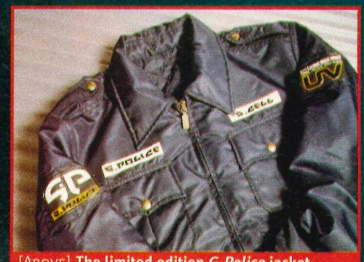


[ABOVE] ***Road Rash 3-D* – if you have ever played a *Road Rash* game in your life, and liked it, start getting very excited about this little beauty!**

FULL MENTAL JACKET

G-POLICE was good, but even better was the way in which it was promoted by publishers Psygnosis. Following on from the much saught-after Casio G-Shock watches are some great custom-made police jackets from Diesel, the leadin fashion label.

Diesel's logo features prominantly in the game on numerous neon signs, and its team of designers had no trouble coming up with some interestiny garments to capture the feel of the game. Seeing as there are only 50 G-Police jackets in the country, PLAY has obtained one to give away to a lucky, ultra-trendy reader. All you have to do is name of the star of the futuristic film, *Bladerunner*, and send it to the usual address before March 20. Mark your entry 'Jack it in compo'.



[ABOVE] **The limited edition *G-Police* jacket designed and manufactured by Diesel.**

KLONOA – OH NO!

DID you spot the huge goof in the last issue of PLAY? Oh you did. Well in that case you would have noticed something very strange about our review of *Klonoa* on page 40, and the fact that Graeme's review didn't quite suggest the 95% score that the game mysteriously received.

No, we haven't taken leave of our senses and started awarding sky-high marks to strange Japanese platform games, the game should have got 83%, but due to a design error, the wrong score was inserted. We are very sorry for any confusion, and if you see a quote on the advert when the game is officially released by Sony, take no notice!



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.	GRAND THEFT AUTO	DMA	BMG	88%
4.	TOCA TOURING CAR	CODEMASTERS	CODEMASTERS	92%
5.	CRASH BANDICOOT 2	NAUGHTY DOG	SCEE	86%
6.	FINAL FANTASY VII	SQUARE	SCEE	93%
7.	TIME CRISIS	NAMCO	SCEE	90%
8.	CRASH BANDICOOT	NAUGHTY DOG	SCEE	84%
9.	RAYMAN	UBI SOFT	PLATINUM	87%
10.	WORMS	TEAM 17	PLATINUM	92%

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.	METAL GEAR SOLID	KONAMI	KONAMI
3.	BUSHIDO BLADE 2	SQUARE	SONY OF JAPAN
4.	SPICE WORLD	SONY	SCEE
5.	ROAD RASH 3-D	EA	EA

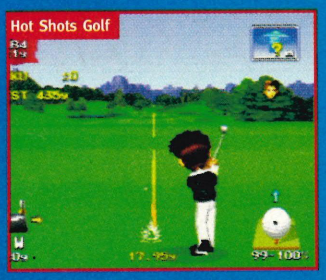
USA ENTERTAINMENT

ENTERTAINMENT USA



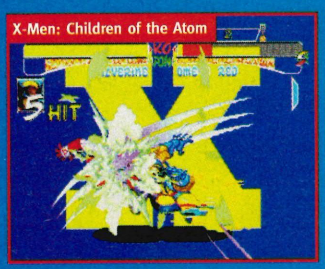
CAT BUCANNON brings you all the news on what's hot in the land of Starship Troopers and space shuttle disasters!

Universal Interactive Studios have this month unveiled its latest PlayStation release – *Running Wild*. This is a racing game with a difference, instead of hacking around in cars, bikes, boats or indeed any other mode of transport, you actually race on-foot. As reported several months ago when the game was called *Freakin' Fast*, you can choose to control several different creatures that can pick-up weapons to turn the tracks into perilous death-traps for the opponents. The game has been described as a cross between *Mario Kart* and *Crash Bandicoot*, with multiple routes through the levels and even boss creatures to beat and obtain. Expect a full import review very soon.

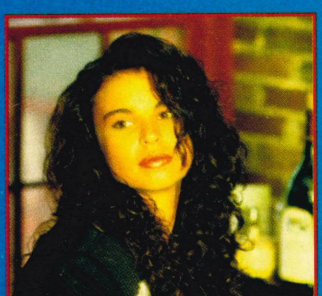




The fat cats in the States love their golf, and although the PGAs and the Actuas offer in-depth simulation, Sony is about to take the sport to the younger audience on PlayStation. Enter *Hot Shots Golf*, a fun-filled, easy-to-play, four player golf game that has remarkably quick loading times and offers enjoyment for all ages. The game is a very tongue-in-cheek affair with witty, big-headed players and quick-fire gameplay that should be a winner. It has already sold one million units in Japan, and this success should be repeated when it released in America in May. Look out for an official release in England at about the same time, although it will be called *Everybody's Golf*.



Coming soon from GT Interactive, an impressive-looking basketball game called *NBA Fast Break*. Also (gasp!) *X-Men: Children of the Atom* is now finished and WILL finally be released on PlayStation in the next month. Somebody pinch me to make sure I'm not dreaming!



[ABOVE] Cat Bucannon – A versatile lass who simply loves the jobs you hate!





COSMIC VIBES

MUSIC that exists purely for its own sake... the wonders of funky vibes inspired by video games. Hence the arrival of *Games* the new album by dance combo BBE. *Games*, according to its makers "takes you on a magical journey through a vast land of technology; sailing smoothly through all the levels that are encountered on its way" hmm, sounds iffy, doesn't it?

Well if you need proof that Bruno Sanchioni, Bruno Quartier and Emmanuel Top (BBE) mean business then you only have to look at their track record. Their first release, Seven Days In One Week, became a popular club anthem in Ibiza before invading the UK charts and peaking at number three in the top 40 and selling one million copies worldwide. The follow-up 'Flash' went top five, establishing BBE as one of the hottest properties on the dance circuit. We've got five copies of the *Games* CD to give away. To win, tell us which game featured a track by The Prodigy and send it to the usual address by March 20. Mark you entries 'Funky Vibes Comp'.



[ABOVE] **BBE – revolutionising the dance scene and plugging the PlayStation to boot!**

EVIL LOOMING

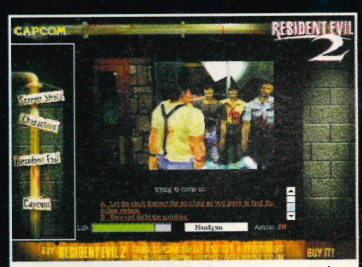
APOLOGIES for the lack of a *Resident Evil 2* review this month. Due to a tight deadline, and only getting the game in at the last minute, we felt that rather than rush out a quick-fire review, we should wait until next month when the definitive 8-page article will appear.

The hype bandwagon surrounding the game has escalated in the last month, with Capcom announcing that the games, and all properties related to them, has generated revenue of more than $200 million worldwide. *Resident Evil* (known as *Biohazard* in Japan)and *Resident Evil: The Director's Cut* have sold more than four million units across the globe, making it a hot licensing property for Capcom. Spin-off action figures, gizmos, comics and a feature-film are planned to tie-in with the sequel, which itself is being billed as the most anticipated game of 1998.

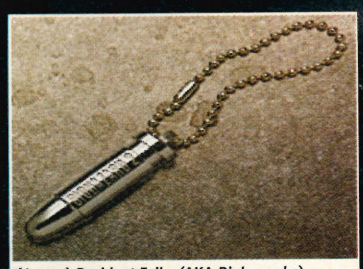
Robert Lindsey, senior vice president of Capcom Entertainment had this to say: "We are very proud of what *Resident Evil* has achieved within the industry. With revenue exceeding $200 million *Resident Evil* is already larger than most theatrical motion picture releases." If you haven't already splashed out for the playable *Resident Evil 2* demo that comes free with *The Director's Cut*, you can savour the game in step-by-step RPG form (plus all the latest news on the game) on the internet at **http://www.capcom.com/**



[ABOVE] ***Resident Evil 2*** **– The most eagerly anticipated game of 1998? You betcha!**



[ABOVE] **The *Resident Evil 2* internet game – play the demo step-by-step!**



[ABOVE] ***Resident Evil 2*** **(AKA *Biohazard 2*) keychains – a must have!**

WRIST BREAKER



[ABOVE] **The Glove – If you are a masochist with money to burn, then this 'innovative' new alternative to joypads will be just the ticket. If not, then avoid this like the plague!**

IT'S official! The PlayStation is now entering the *Lawnmower Man* era of virtual reality, or at least that's the way it is looking with the arrival of the Glove from American company Reality Quest.

The Glove is a high-tech joypad peripheral that you actually wear as opposed to handle, with buttons at your fingertips and movement controlled by twists of the wrist. This sounds quite intriguing in theory, but what about in practice? We tried it out for ourselves on a series of games to try and decide what kind of games it is designed for. Here are our results...

Need For Speed 3 – Started off well, with relatively comfortable controls and steering determined by smooth left and right movements of the wrist. However, it wasn't long before rigor mortis set in and the player was left with a numb, achy arm. **Verdict: Lame.**

Street Fighter EX – Ah, the beat-'em-up, surely this would be the one area where The Glove would dominate. You must be joking! Attempting to do fireballs resulted in a near-fracture. Very painful and very impractical. **Verdict: Och! Me bloody arm!**

Crash 2 – Forget it, 30 seconds into the level and our man complained of wrist pains the likes of which he hadn't encountered since he rented those Baywatch videos! **Verdict: Tear-jerking!**

Gamester LMP is the company that has been approached to distribute The Glove over here, but no decision has yet been made as to whether or not it will go ahead with the deal. The main problem being that The Glove will cost £69.99 – which is far too much to pay for a pointless contraption that is impractical for many games and makes your wrist ache for several hours!

"BAN THIS SICK GAME!"

MP'S MOVE TO RID *GTA*

THEY wouldn't let it lie! *Grand Theft Auto* is still the cause of much controversy after Conservative former Scottish Secretary Lord Campbell of Croy recently called for it to be banned at a House of Lords question time.

Lord Campbell has been an influential figure in the campaign against car crime, and it would appear that *Grand Theft Auto* (which was released with an 18 certificate several months ago), which features car theft, driving at excessive speeds, police chases and homocide, has enraged the MP. He had this to say: "Although only adults can legally buy the game, I reckon it is mostly young people who play computer games in their homes. This is a backward step for the efforts of some of us in Parliament to reduce car crime, especially by gangs of youths." Campbell intends to target the system for licensing video games which is currently being overseen by the BBFC. Come back Mary Whitehouse all is forgiven!



[ABOVE] ***Grand Theft Auto*** **– still kicking up a fuss, but no publicity is bad publicity!**

ALTERNATIVELY...

IF THE Glove doesn't tickle your fancy, why not wait for the forthcoming (probably) release of these equally useless gamesplaying alternatives...

The Sock – Attach to your foot and control the on-screen action by kicking your foot forward, shuffling it back, moving it left and right, and using the toe-buttons to jump and shoot.

The Hat – Lose brain-cells the heavy-metal way by banging your bonce to the beat. Note: Ideal for *Parappa!*

The Pants – Movement is controlled by gyrating your hips and performing rigorous pelvic thrusts. Note: A stiffy could cause a short circuit!



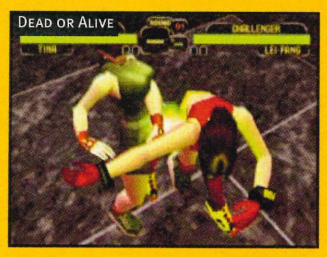
JAPS EYE

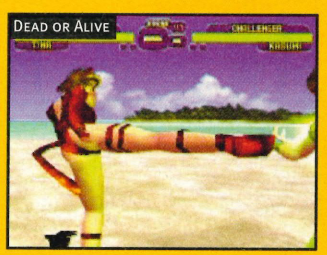
ALL THE LATEST GAMING NEWS FROM JAPAN – THE HOME OF THE SONY PLAYSTATION!

Namco is gearing up for a monster year! As if *Tekken 3* wasn't enough, the Japanese giant is also releasing *Tales of Destiny*, the sequel to *Tales of Phantasia*. The game is an RPG that has a very similar look to *Alundra*, and it is set in a fantasy world where science co-exists with magic derived from magical crystals. *Tales of Destiny* will be very text-heavy, so westerners will be advised to wait for the American version.

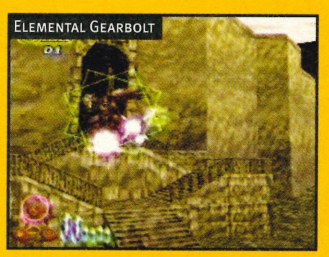


Techmo has also got a some interesting titles in the pipeline – the biggest being the forthcoming beat-'em-up *Dead or Alive*. Already a hit on the Sega Saturn, *DOA* is an advanced fighting game in a similar mould to the *Virtua Fighter* series. However, despite great use of light sourcing to convey the hits exchanged on-screen, perhaps the most talked about aspect of the game is the fully-animated breasts belonging to the female characters! *Dead or Alive* will be available to buy on Japanese import from March.

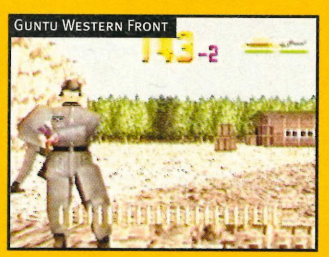




Coming soon are two shooting games that will be fully compatible with the Namco GunCon, *Elemental Gearbolt* from Sony and *Guntu Western Front* by Electrocoin. *Elemental Gearbolt* has a similar look and feel to Sega's *Panzer Dragoon*, whereby one or two players can blast their way through forest, desert and cathedral terrains. One unique feature is the way that the bullets are magnifyed after an accurate string of hits is achieved. *Guntu Western Front* is a WWII *Time Crisis* clone set in 1944. You must pepper the Nazis. This doesn't look too hot though.

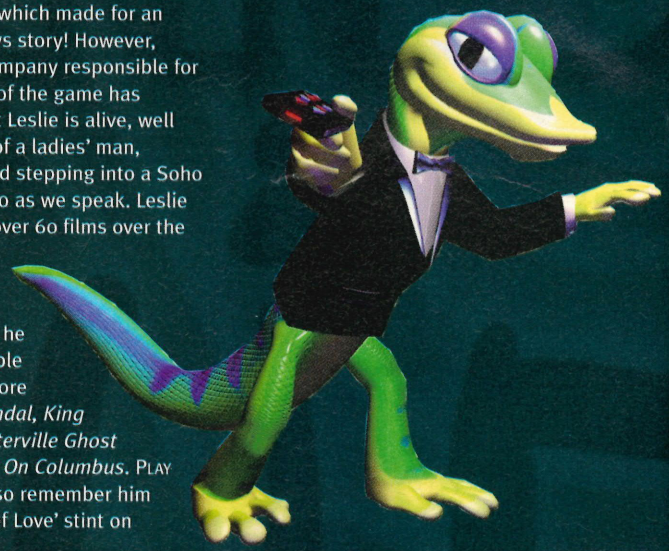


Parappa the Rapper 2 is a reality! After a Parappa party in Tokyo on January 8, news of the sequel was leaked after Sony announced that the original game had sold over one million copies worldwide. Masaya Matsuura – the man responsible for the music in the original *Parappa the Rapper* stated that work had begun on the sequel, although no background story was disclosed.

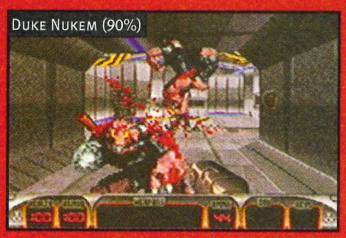


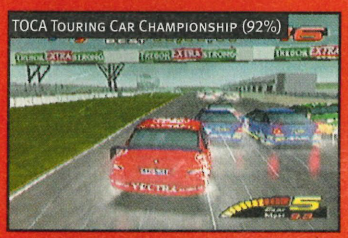
VOICE FROM THE GRAVE?

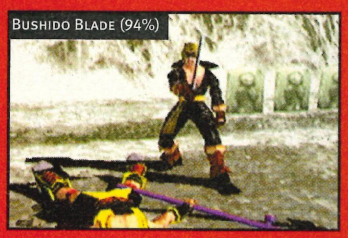
SPOOKY or what! Leslie Phillips, great British actor and institution has been assigned the voice-over task for the forthcoming *Gex: Enter the Gecko* game from BMG. The thing is, we here at PLAY thought he was dead – which made for an interesting news story! However, Bastion, the company responsible for the promotion of the game has assured us that Leslie is alive, well (and still a bit of a ladies' man, apparently!) and stepping into a Soho recording studio as we speak. Leslie has starred in over 60 films over the years, starting with *The Citadel* in 1938. However, he has made notable appearances more recently in *Scandal, King Ralph, The Canterville Ghost* and, erm, *Carry On Columbus*. PLAY readers may also remember him from his 'Lord of Love' stint on Chris Evans' TFI Friday show wherehe serenaded attractive young ladies with his sophisticated English wit. *Gex: Enter the Gecko* will be reviewed in PLAY next month.



PLAY RECOMMENDS...







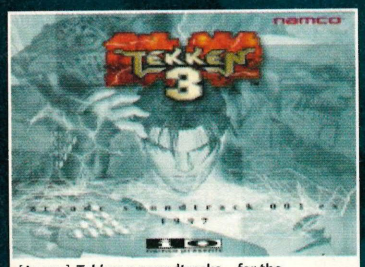






DATE WITH THE DEVIL

NAMCO has just released the 1998 version of its annual *Tekken* calender. Whereas last year's featured such delightful images as Michelle, Jun and Nina in skimpy bikinis,this year's takes on a darker tone with 12 of the *Tekken 3* characters playing musical instruments in an orchestra. Highlights include Kuma on the drums, Nina on the cello, and best of all, King standing menacingly behind a row of impressionable young choirboys. The calender is of exquisite quality with a hard-back cover and brilliantly rendered images that are mixed with actual photographs. Unfortunately, this product isn't for sale, and so is extremely hard to get hold of. As are the *Tekken 3* soundtrack CDs featuring 12 hard-hitting tracks.



[ABOVE] *Tekken 3* soundtracks – for the gamesplayer who has everything!

CHOCO-LATE SONY!

SQUARE'S latest adventure game, *Chocobo's Magic Dungeon* was released in Japan on December 23 complete with a demo disc of upcoming Square titles and other assorted goodies, but more about them later.

Chocobo's Magic Dungeon is a very polished-looking game that features amazing high-res FMV sequences, such is the style of Square's games. We obtained a copy of this game on Japanese import with the intention of reviewing it. However, due to the sheer amount of Japanese text within the game, we felt that we couldn't really do the game the justice it deserves.

However, when we contacted Sony in the hope that it would pick up the rights to release the game officially, we were regrettably informed that there were no plans to do so as yet. But fingers crossed.

Now back to that free disc. This offers CG movie clips of *Parasite EVE* (a cinematic RPG for release next winter), *Soukaigi* (action adventure for release at the same time), *Front Mission Alternative* (real-time simulation on-sale now), and *Bushido Blade 2* (which needs no introduction and should be ready by spring time). The free disc also contains a playable demo of *Xenogears*, the forthcoming futuristic RPG to be released in February.

Best of all though is chunk entitled 'Cortex Sizzling Saved Game Data'. This contains seven saved data files that can be copied down onto a memory card for use in the original game discs. This covers such classics Square games as *FFVII, Saga Frontier, Bushido Blade, Tobal 2, Einhander, Final Fantasy Tactics* and *Front Mission Second*. These files provide maxed out stats and brand new items. What a deal!



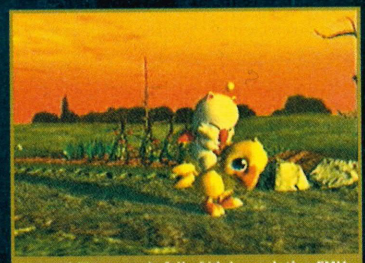
[ABOVE] *Chocobo's Magic Dungeon* – another great game from Square, but will Sony pick up the rights to release the game officially in this country? Watch this space for more news as we get it.



[ABOVE] Getting into Chocobo is simple enough, but very soon you're faced with Jap text.



[ABOVE] We're sure this creature has something very interesting to say, we just don't know what!



[ABOVE] The game is full of high-resolution FMV footage that looks gorgeous.

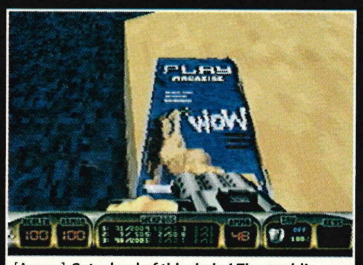


[ABOVE] Spells play a big part in *Chocobo*, but is there anything to make the text readable?

PlayStation Magazine STARPLAYER 9/10
CVG 4/5
BROKEN SWORD II
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Touchtone activated service. calls charged at 41p# per minute during daytime and 28p# per minute at other times. (#correct at Nov 1997). Maximum call cost £2.99. Please seek permission from the bill payer before calling. Service by Telecom Potential, P.O. Box 66, Clevedon, BS21 7QX.

PLAY NUKES 'EM

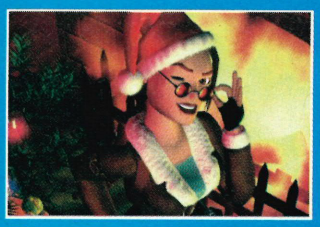
SPOTTED! The world's greatest PlayStation reviews magazine recently popped up on the counter of a comic-book store in GT's splendid *Duke Nukem* game. Although we don't recall running such a saucey cover, there was no mistaking the striking logo! You see, even blood-sucking alien scum have got taste. Come get some!



[ABOVE] **Get a load of this, baby! The world's number one PlayStation mag as in *Duke Nukem*.**

TOP FIVE

CHRISTMAS FREEBIES FROM SOFTWARE COMPANIES!



DON'T you just love Christmas! We know it is but a distant memory now, but PLAY would just like to take this opportunity to thank our friends at the software companies for their kindness in sending us gifts galore. Here are our top five favourites...

1. Miniature pool game (Gremlin)
2. Stylish travel bag (psygnosis)
3. Silver hip flask (Eidos)
4. Stocking & CD (Telstar)
5. Duke Nukem Doll (GT)

A LEAGUE OF ITS OWN!

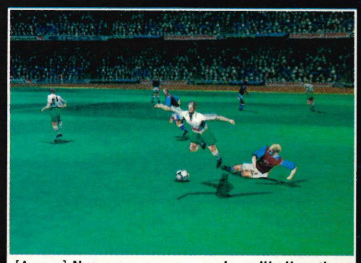
FRANCE '98 is singularly the most important event of the year. Forget everything else – exams, elections, your Grandma's birthday, football is life and life is football. This is why every software company is clambering over the competition to produce the definitive football game to coincide with the World Cup finals.

The latest addition to the rapidly growing number of titles is *World League Soccer* from Eidos. Due in May, the game "combines fast-paced action with immersive gameplay to take you into the next generation of football gaming" – well that's what the programmers say at least! *World League Soccer* includes over 190 different teams from all of the most respected Premier leagues around the world, plus an easy to grasp, yet intuitive control method, complimented by a whole range of original and innovative moves. The main attraction though is the breath-taking visual appearance and attention to detail. It actually looks like a cross between *FIFA: RTWC98* and *Actua Soccer 2*, except that it goes one further and actually features the correct, up-to-date sponsor names on the front of the player's shirts!

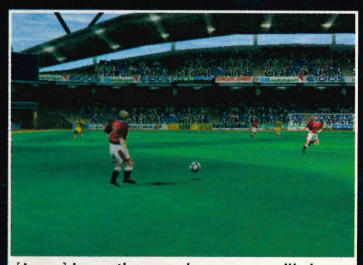
WLS utilises a new skeletal system which can use large amounts of fluid, motion-captured animation and also gives the advantage of generating higher-resolution players. New texture mapping technology also allows the programmers to greatly enhance the visual characteristics of the players, enabling muscle-tone, facial features, and of course the detailed kit design that we mentioned earlier. Other features of the the game will be full 'Dolby Pro Logic Surround Sound' for that unmistakable terrace atmosphere. Commentary will be provided courtesy of Sky TV's Martin Tyler and ex-England international, Fulham manager and soccer pundit Ray Wilkins. PLAY saw an early version of the PlayStation version of *World League Soccer* running at last year's ECTS trade show in London, and it plays rather like Sega's hugely successful *Virtua Striker* coin-op, which certainly isn't a bad thing, although many of the advanced moves that we're promised were not implemented at the time. We'll have a full work-in-progress next issue, so check in then.



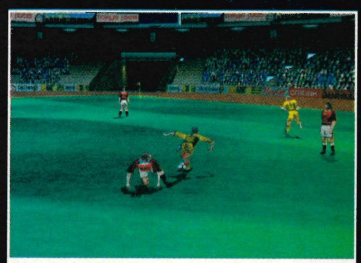
[ABOVE] ***World League Soccer*** **– could this be the definitive football game to grip the nation in the run-up to the World Cup finals? Early indications are promising, but we'll keep you posted next month.**



[ABOVE] **Numerous camera angles will allow the player to get right down onto the pitch.**



[ABOVE] **Innovative new player moves will alow you to string fluid-like plays together.**



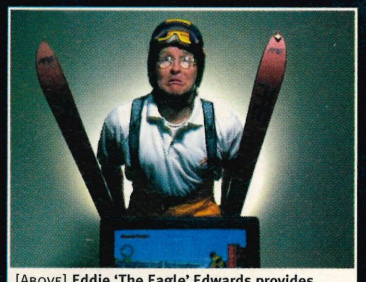
[ABOVE] **The detailed kit design clearly shows the unmistakable colours of Manchester United.**



[ABOVE] **The game plays rather like Sega's *Virtua Striker*, so this could well be a winner!**

THE EAGLE HAS LANDED

STARE into the eyes of this madman, does he look familiar? No? Well you be forgiven for thinking so because he is Eddie 'The Eagle' Edwards – Britain's infamous ski-jumper. Eddie has been appointed by Konami to help promote its forthcoming *Nagano Winter Olympics* game. Ironic really, seeing as Eddie (most famous for coming 58th out of 58 at the Calgary games) didn't qualify this time!



[ABOVE] **Eddie 'The Eagle' Edwards provides comical action poses to promote *Nagano*...**

WORK OF ARTS

EA STARTS THE NEW YEAR ON A HIGH

ELECTRONIC Arts has begun the new year with an exciting flourish of software that will be arriving on PlayStation in the next two months. First up, and great news for PlayStation newcomers is the release of *Soviet Strike* and *Die Hard Trilogy* on Platinum. *Soviet Strike* was the first 32-bit outing for the popular series that took the previous generation of consoles by storm, but far better was *Die Hard Trilogy!* This game re-wrote the rules by incorporating three different gaming styles in one, and now, at £19.99, there is no excuse for you not to own it.

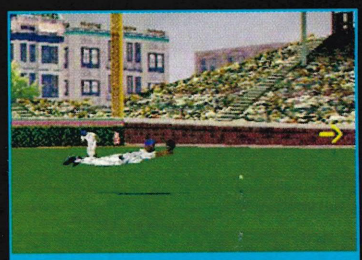
Next out of the EA stable is *SkullMonkeys* (reviewed on page 66) released this month, and then *Theme Hospital, Diablo, Triple Play '99* (a baseball game that features a realistic first-person perspective mode), *Warhammer: Dark Omen*, and *Reboot* – will all be released in March, and reviewed in PLAY next month. And finally, taking us out of the first quarter of 1998 and for release in April and May respectively comes *Road Rash 3-D* (see how this game is looking by the first in-game screenshots featured on page 9), *Need For Speed 3 (which can be seen exclusively in this issue of PLAY)*, *World Cup '98* and *Populous: The 3rd Coming*. *Populous*, incidentally is greatly enhanced over the original, offering more strategy and tactics. We'll have more on all of the titles in the next issue of PLAY.



[ABOVE] ***World Cup '98.*** **Big things are expected from this officially licensed football game.**



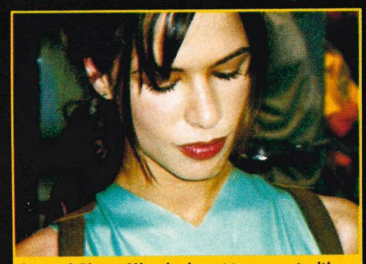
[ABOVE] ***Theme Hospital.*** **Has an appointment at the PLAY surgery for a full check up next month!**



[ABOVE] ***Triple Play '99*** **– Look, does anybody really give a hoot about baseball over here?**

RHONA UPDATE

READERS wanting to know how *Tomb Raider* girl, Rhona Mitra passes the time of day now that she's not posing as Lara Croft will be pleased to learn that she is about to start, ahem, fronting a new show on Channel 5. The Pepsi Chart will be a new weekly music program to compete with *Top Of The Pops* that will go out every Wednesday at 8pm, starting on February 4. Rhona will co-host the show with MTV's Eddy Temple-Morris, and it will be aimed primarily at the younger CD-buying generation. So now you know.

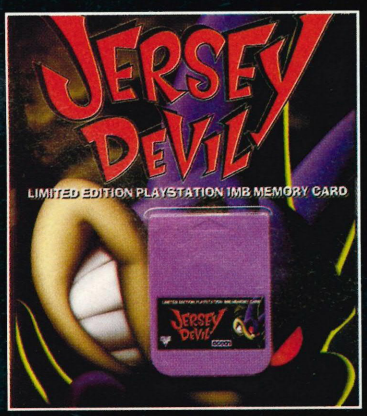


[ABOVE] **Rhona Mitra looks set to pop-out with her new show, The Pepsi Chart.**

FIENDISH!

JERSEY DEVIL MEMORY CARDS

GOLD dust accessory of the month is this limited edition Blaze/Ocean memory card from Fire International. Only 1500 units have been made, and they are presented to independant retailers for every three copies of *Jersey Devil* that the retailer sells. You can buy them from the shops for about 15 quid, but you'll have to be quick.



DROPPED BALLS!

COMING soon from GT Interactive is a futuristic sports game called *Drop Ball Zone*. It is kind of like football – only almost anything goes. Four players will be able to compete, the aim being to move the sphere around the court and score more goals than the opposition. Sounds easy, but not when you've got the defensive equivalent of *Robocop* kicking lumps out of you! More next month.



[ABOVE] ***Drop Ball Zone*** **– could this be the future of football? Nah! But it certainly looks like a laff!**

SECONDS OUT, ROUND TWO

JVC has just announced plans to release a 1998 sequel to its smash hit of 1996, *Victory Boxing*. The game, under the working title of *Victory Boxing 2*, will feature new and improved graphics, loads more characters, and best of all, bucket-loads of new fighting moves.

However, the release is still a long way off, currently nestling in the latter half of the year. We'll have more news on this game and early screenshots next month. Also in production from JVC is *Steep Slope Slider* – a snowboarding game. Currently available on the Sega Saturn, *SSS* is being ported over to the PlayStation as you read this, and many of the faults with the Saturn version (such as the lack of a two player mode) have been taken on-board and acted upon to ensure that the PlayStation version contends with the likes of *Cool Boarders 2* and *Chill*. Unfortunately, there's no news on a *Seabass Fishing* sequel as yet, but here's hoping, eh!



[ABOVE] ***Victory Boxing*** **– still the best boxing game on PlayStation, but for how long?**

WANT TO WIN (ALMOST) EVERY PERIPHERAL EVER?

Now you can!

Get the most out of your PlayStation by furnishing it with a heap of the hottest third party kit! PLAY has joined forces with Fire International to offer you the biggest pile of PSX-related bits and pieces you've ever seen in one place! Fan the flames of your gaming passion – games couldn't possibly become dull ever again with this huge list of accessories and peripherals attached to your favourite console!

WIN! ALL THESE GOODIES!



PERIPHERALS:

- VRF1 STEERING WHEEL
- ERAZER LIGHT GUN
- PRO ARCADE 2 JOYSTICK
- HYPER SPECIAL EDITION PAD
- HYPER CHROME PAD
- HYPER COLOURED PAD
- INFRA RED PADS
- MULTISTICK
- HYPER DRIVE PAD
- 1 MEG MEMORY CARD
- 8 MEG MEMORY CARD

CABLES:

- STEREO SCART LEAD
- LINK CABLE
- S-VIDEO CABLE
- GUNCON ADAPTOR
- X-TENDER CABLE
- RF UNIT



And the good news is, we've got two identical bundles like this to give away! "What do I possibly have to do for such an obscene amount of free stuff," you're thinking. Just answer the following question correctly:

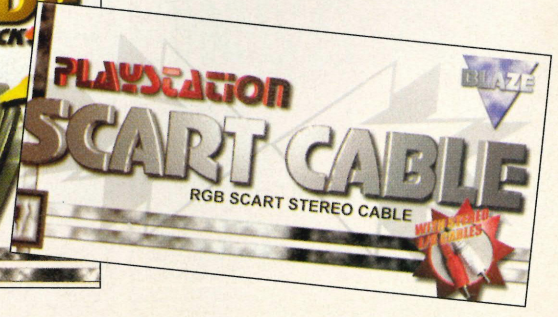
Which square-jawed PlayStation hero was also a "Fire-man" in his very own game last year?

A. Steve McQueen
B. HRH the Queen
C. Rosco McQueen

The first two correct entries out of the bag will each get everything you see on the lists above! Get scribbling, then send your entry on a postcard or stuck down envelope to:

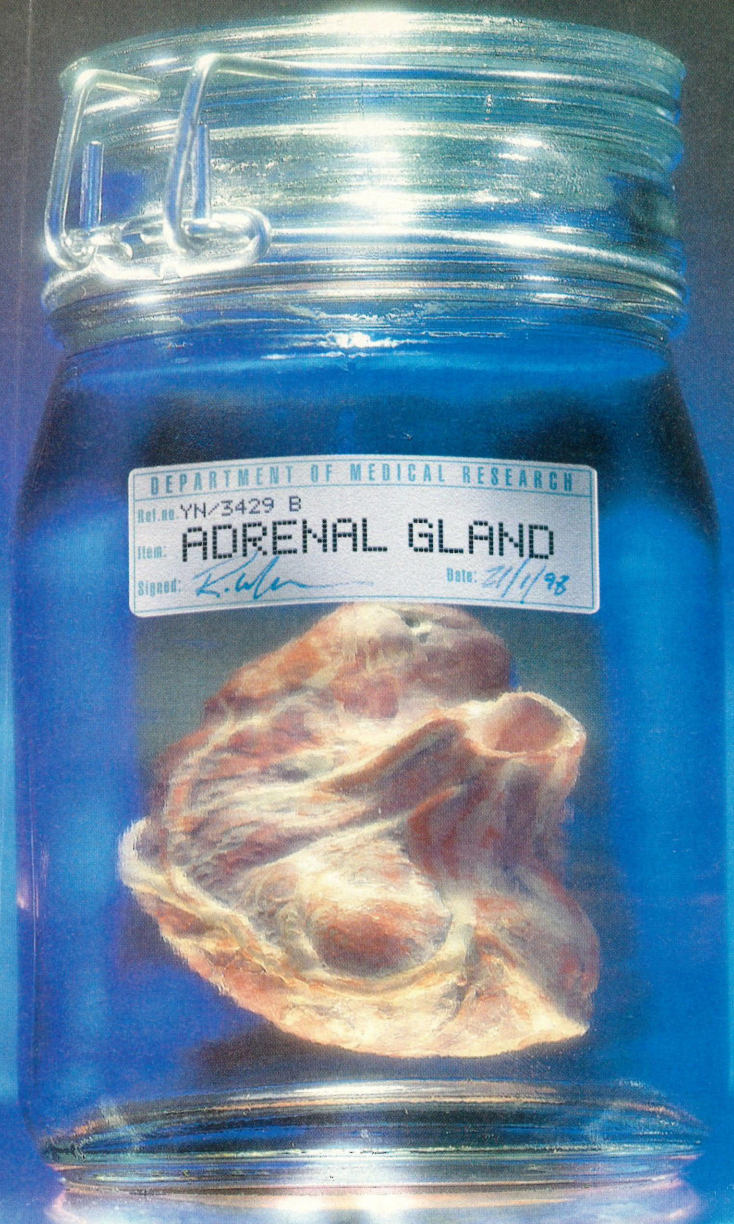
I want to get Fired!
Play Magazine
Paragon House
St Peters Road
Bournemouth
BH1 2JS





THE SMALL PRINT

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CREATED BY MOTHER NATURE
FUELLED BY PLAYSTATION PERIPHERALS


Official Colour Hand Controllers


Official Colour Memory Cards


Official Analog Controller

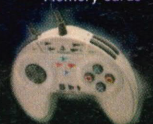

Official Mouse


Official Multi Tap

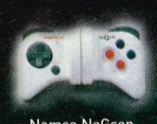

Official Link Cable


Official Analog Joystick


ASCii Specialized Joystick


ASCii Pad


Namco Arcade Stick


Namco NeGcon


Official Euro AV Cable


G-CON 45™



Official Disc Wipes

Offering superior design and proven quality, only official PlayStation Peripherals bring you the maximum power of the PlayStation experience. Remember, don't compromise, maximise.

DO NOT COMPROMISE THE POWER OF PLAYSTATION. ALWAYS BUY OFFICIAL PRODUCTS.

WARNING
Use of unofficial products may invalidate your console warranty

Official peripherals licensed for use with PlayStation but not featured in this advertisement are the Light Gun by Konami, Fighting Commander 200Y, Fighting Stick PS, Fighting Commander Special 10B & "X" Controller by Hori, Mad Catz's Steering Wheel, the Basic Controller and Grip by ASCii Entertainment and the Sunsoft Pad by Sun Corporation.

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DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF PLAYSTATION

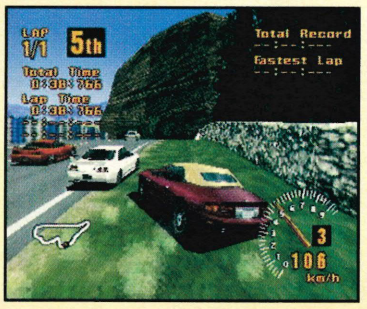
PlayStation™

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 **Thinking of buying a racing game? Don't! At least not yet anyway. The greatest racing game EVER has just spun into the PLAY offices and it makes everything else with four wheels seem like redundant bubble cars. *Gran Turismo* is the name, and it's a killer! We have the first import review, and take an early look at the official version, which promises to be even better. Buzzin'!**



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

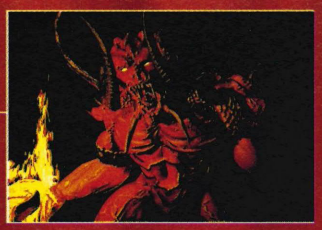
The GAMES THAT Time Forgot

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! The biggest games exposed.

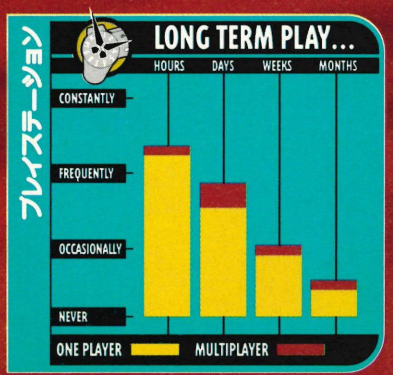
Diablo 28
Need For Speed 3 32





Challenge Box

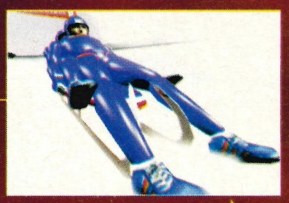
This clever little box is designed to show you instantly how long a game will last (in our opinion) based on the review. The one player game (in yellow) will more often than not be lower than multiple players because it's more fun playing a friend than the computer. Although it is entirely subjective,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

Gran Turismo 20
Nagano Winter Olympics 38
Rockman Dash 42
Brahma Force 46
Konami Antiques 49
NBA Hangtime 54
Rock 'n' Roll racing 2
Red Asphalt 55
Einhander 56
Tomba! 58
Midnight Run 61
Jet Moto 2 62
Poyo Poyo Sun 65
Skull Monkeys 66







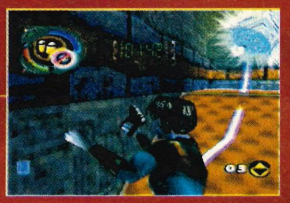


Wired Up

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

Power Boat Racing 78
Chill 79
Warhammer: Dark Omen 80
Crime Killer 81
Poy Poy 82
N2o 83
Reboot 84
Actua Ice Hockey 85





PLAY magazine Issue 31 1998

GT GRAN TURISMO

PLAY CLASSIC

Written by Graeme Nicholson

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Sony Computer Entertainment (Japan)
Supplier: The Video Game Centre on 01202 527 314
Price: £74.99
Release date: Out now (import)


ONE PLAYER

MULTIPLE PLAYERS

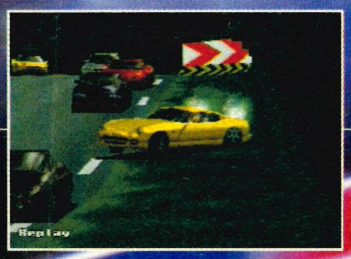

STEERING/ANALOGUE


MEMORY CARD


SPLIT SCREEN

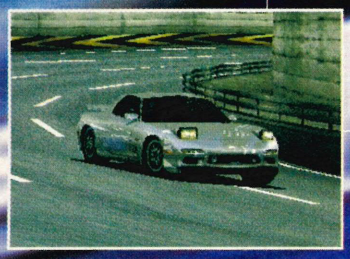

DUAL ANALOGUE





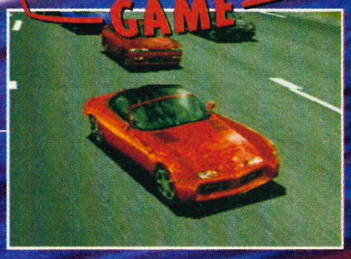


THE BIG GAME









THE WORLD OF CONSOLE RACING HAS BEEN CHANGED FOREVER BY THIS GAME. FIND OUT WHY...



[Above] The TVR Cerebera is powerful and fun to drive. It also happens to be easy to get onto two wheels...



[Above] Phwoar! This is what *Gran Turismo* is all about: extremely high detail, minimal polygon glitching and gorgeous fast cars!

Namco has lost

its crown. It's official! Since the beginning of the PlayStation's life with the Japanese hardware launch in December 1994, Namco has been up there at the leading edge of racing game design, producing the flagship title for the machine's debut in the form of an arcade-perfect *Ridge Racer*, following with the faster, linkable *Ridge Racer Revolution*. The series' finest moment then came with *Rage Racer*, which ingeniously combined car buying and simple customisation with the lightning fast arcade playability that people had come to know the games by.

But now, Namco has been knocked flying from the top spot. Not by Square, not by Psygnosis, but by Kazunori Yamauchi. Who? The genius creator behind *Gran Turismo* has, with the help of a few colleagues at Sony Computer Entertainment Japan, made the biggest, best and sexiest racing game ever. What we have here is a gigantic car game that's such enormous fun to play because of three main elements: unparalleled realism, ground-breaking graphics and the chance to spend a lot of money.





[Above] As the cars lean on their suspension, they give a realistic impression they are solid machines.



[Above] Mitsubishi's FTO Limited Edition – faster than most aircraft.

POSITIONS PLEASE

Once the disc has loaded, you have the option of going for a Quick Arcade one-off race, or entering the vast Gran Turismo mode to continue a non-linear motorsports career. Beginning with the Quick Arcade game, this is where to go when you first play *GT* as it can take some time to actually find your way into a race in the full Turismo mode.



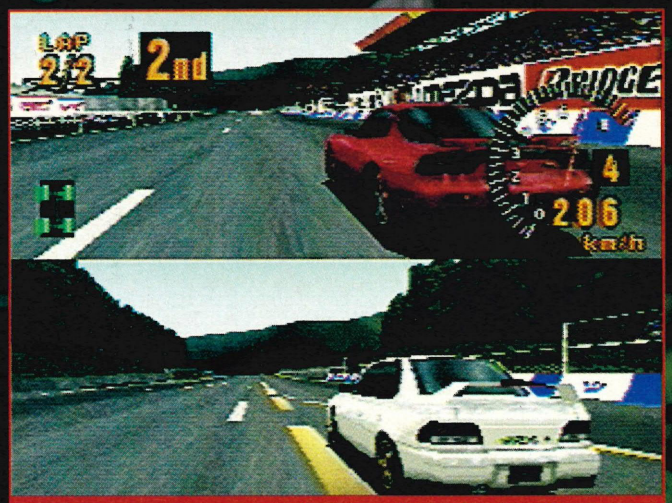
[Above] A peek behind confirms that nobody is about to challenge you for second place when you take this Viper on the bend.



[Above] Nice as it is, the two-ton monster Aston Martin DB7 (as seen on TV in Will Smith's Just Cruisin video) is a bit clumsy handling against lighter sports cars.



[Above] Semi-transparent tyre smoke slows down the frame rate drastically if you make too much of it. So don't. It will be interesting to see if this glitch really is absent from the PAL version of *Gran Turismo*...



[Above] To help keep the frame rate up with these complicated 3-D models, unfortunately the rest of the pack in a two player race is missing. But it's still cool!

"The biggest, best and sexiest race game ever!"

Choosing Single Race then from the arcade menu immediately presents you with a list of six car manufacturers (Toyota, Mitsubishi, Mazda and so on). The number of models available from each company differs, but in total there are approximately 40 cars here, all ready and waiting for you to drive them before you've even finished a race! Now that's the way to begin a game!

It's almost impossible to make a choice from so many excellent cars, and after you've made your mind up and gone for something suitably powerful you can also choose which colour you'd like it to be (the choices of hue are the available colours of the real cars), racing or "drift" (slidey) handling, and manual or automatic gears.

Out on the track, the beautifully realistic nature of the race simply astounds you. Including yours, there are six cars in any race, and they all have the most finely crafted authentic bodywork you can imagine seeing on a PlayStation. The curves, intakes, badges and logos are all precisely where they should be and, if you look closely, you'll even see tread on the tyres! The icing on the visual cake however, comes with a new technique known as "environment mapping" which has been applied to the vehicles. The result is a realistic shine complete with moving reflections on the cars that give them a solid, heavily waxed appearance as if they were under the spotlights at a motor show. It's a dream come true for seasoned videogame drivers that computer generated cars can look this good, and that's why from the first glimpse you'll be completely hooked.

READY

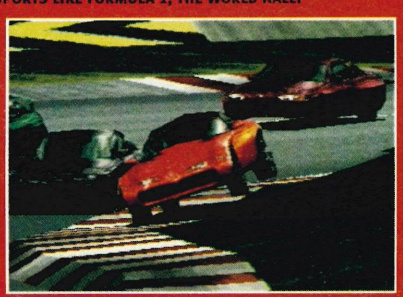
It is only once you finish a race and watch the television-style replay though that you really begin to take in the leap forward in realism that *Gran Turismo* has made. You get the chance to see how totally convincing the motion of the cars is, from smoking spin-outs to the way each one leans down on its suspension, forcing the tyres high into the wheel arches because of the momentum on tough corners.



[Above] A twinkling street lamp lights the way ahead as you drop a gear and pull out of the bend in a roaring Mazda RX7. Hit the accelerator at the wrong second and you'll find yourself staring back into the pack.

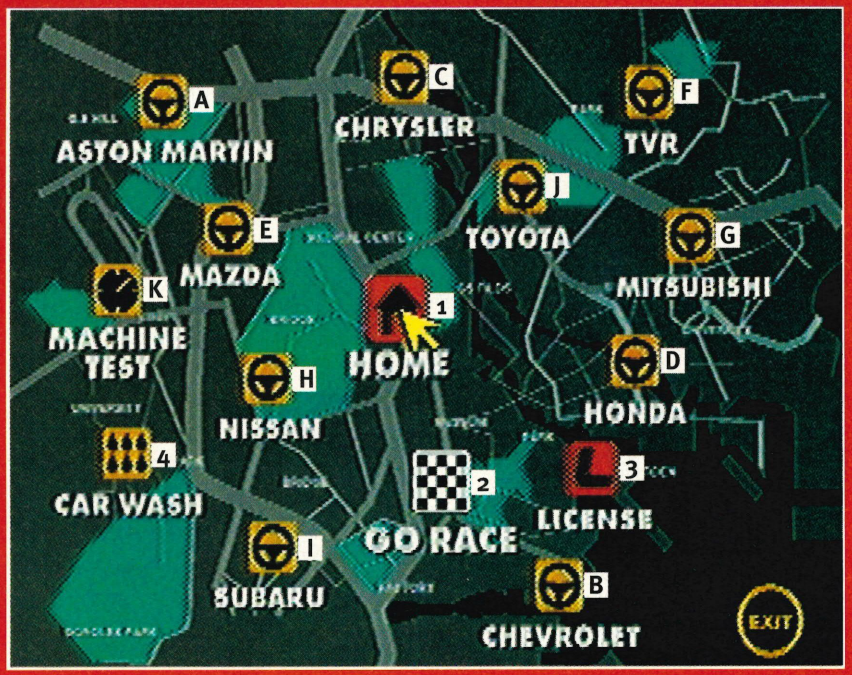
YAMAUCHI

The man behind the game, Kazunori Yamauchi has been developing racing games for over four years, and works as an in-house creator for Sony's Japanese computer entertainment company. The last game he worked on, *Motor Toon Grand Prix 2*, was technically impressive and utterly psychedelic, but he felt it was time for something much more realistic. As a long time fan of motor racing, he wanted to create the ultimate game about racing and its culture, which is why there are so many damn cars and features in *GT*. Inspiration came from real sports like Formula 1, the World Rally Championship and Le Mans (one race is 60-laps long!) but even with all those influences covered in *Gran Turismo*, Yamauchi isn't resting. He says his dream is "to own each and every sports car in the game," and to have a go at all the race categories available.

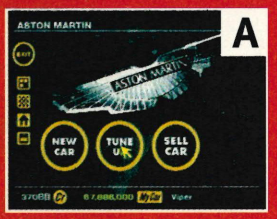


GRAN TURISMO LAND

As you can see, *Gran Turismo* can be quite confusing when it's in full career mode. We give you the price guidelines for all the showrooms, point out any best buys, and show you around the rest of GT Land!





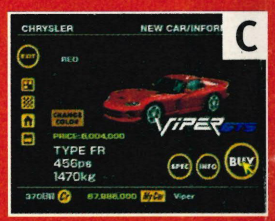


Aston Martin. They won't have anything second hand, but they do have both the beautiful DB7 Volante and Coupe models for 15 million and 17.4 million respectively.





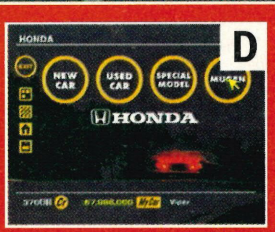
Chevrolet. Meaty American cars at prices you can afford! Pop in for the Camaro (2.4 million) or go the whole way with the Grand Sport edition 'vette (4.9 milion).



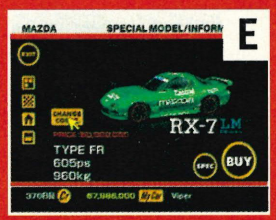


Chrysler. That means Dodge, and Dodge means Viper. The old flat Viper RT is still on sale here (6.8 million) but doesn't compare to that GTS for only 8 million!





Honda. In here you can pay anything from 1.5 million for the CRX, to 10.3 for your very own "Mr. Wolf" NSX. Mind, we still love the old used Prelude at 1.1 million.





Mazda. Home of countless used RX7s that give you that famous Wankel Rotary engine for less than a million credits. But the cool new RX7 RB is only 3.2...



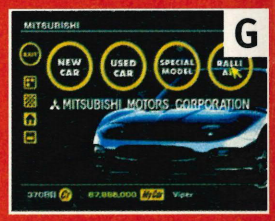
Home. Have a look in the garage, save your progress or sell to a second player.





TVR. Don't show up here without some serious readies. Prices start at 7.9 million for the frisky Griffith B340 and go all the way up to 8.4 for the Cerebera.





Mitsubishi. There are two reasons to visit the Mitsubishi garage: to buy a GTO Twin Turbo for 4.3 million, and to buy parts for your GTO Twin Turbo!



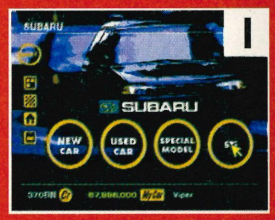
Go Race. Access all the leagues and championships from here. Good luck!



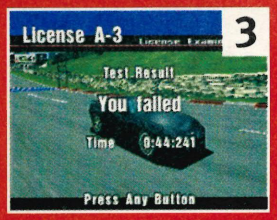


Nissan. You can start shopping here early on in your career – prices start at a very reasonable 1.7 million and stop at 3.2! 2.8 is a bargain for a Skyline too.



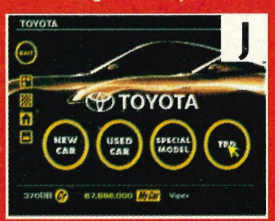


Subaru. Fuji Heavy Industries' auto range is a bit small at the moment, but they are the only ones who sell an estate car! Best buy, Impreza WRX for 3 million.



License. Come here whenever you want to attempt the next driving test.



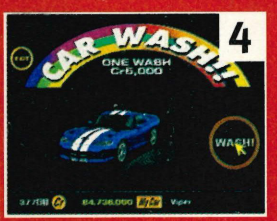


Toyota. Spend between 1.4 and 4.3 million, unless you're ready for the ultimate ride: the 50 million credit Castrol Supra! Realistically, the Supra SZ-R for 3.4.





Machine Test. See how fast your selected car will go over 400 metre, 1000 metre and unlimted dashes, then fiddle with the entire set-up to enhance performance.



Car Wash. 5000 credits to clean your car and no Rolls Royce theme tune?



[ABOVE]The blue Chevrolet Corvette shown here is a special Grand Sport edition of the classic car, and goes for 4.9 million credits. Maybe next year.



[ABOVE] On the one evening based course, the headlights are already flipped up and switched on when you start.

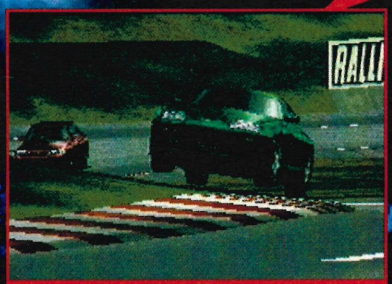
REPLAY THEATRE



AS THE REPLAYS ARE SO FANTASTIC, YOU CAN SAVE YOUR FAVOURITES ONTO MEMORY CARD, ONE BLOCK PER REPLAY, AND LOAD THEM UP AT A LATER DATE AS MANY TIMES AS YOU WANT IN THE REPLAY THEATRE, ACCESSED FROM THE MAIN FRONT END SCREEN. FROM HERE YOU CAN ALSO RENAME OR DELETE YOUR REPLAYS INDIVIDUALLY. IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE WHETHER YOU'RE USING ANALOGUE OR DIGITAL CONTROL DURING THE GAME – THE REPLAYS WILL WORK PERFECTLY WITH BOTH, UNLIKE SOME OTHER GAMES.



"...Unparalleled realism, ground-breaking graphics and the chance to spend a lot of money!"



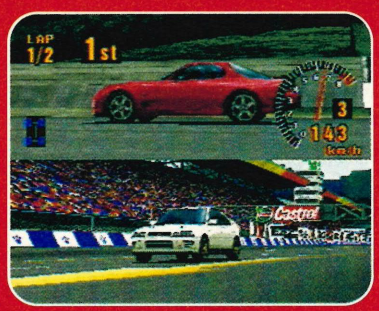
[ABOVE]Rumble strips can destabilise the car very quickly, so try not to blunder over them at full speed.



[ABOVE] The cars may not flip all the way over, but that's not to say they don't have a damn good go at it!

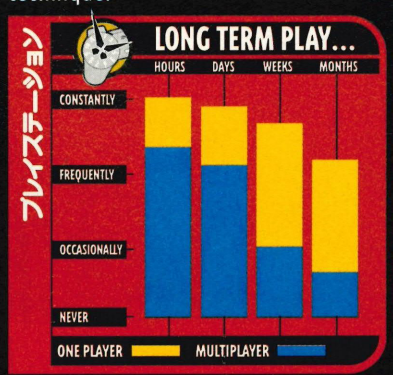
MEMORY CARD BATTLE

HERE'S A GREAT FEATURE. IF YOU AND YOUR MATE BOTH HAVE COPIES OF *GRAN TURISMO* (AND YOU SHOULD BOTH HAVE COPIES!), YOU CAN LOAD BOTH GARAGES UP FROM EACH OTHERS SAVED GAMES ON ONE PLAYSTATION AT THE SAME TIME, PICK YOUR HARD EARNED, WELL UPGRADED AND FINELY TUNED MOTORS AND PIT THEM AGAINST EACH OTHER IN A SPLIT SCREEN RACE! OUTSTANDING. SURPRISINGLY, THE REPLAY WILL THEN WORK IN SPLIT SCREEN ALSO!



It's incredibly real. After doing this it soon becomes a frenzy of testing out the remaining cars to see how their handling varies (which it does, radically) and of course to check out how cool they look in that replay! When you've had your fill of the thrilling but ultimately aimless single races and have done couple of split screen, one-on-one games, (with their own split screen replay!) it's time to move onto the unthinkably deep Gran Turismo mode.

Here, you enter a world that holds upwards of 140 individual cars with the introduction of a couple of American companies along side the Japanese giants. Everything here has to be earned and bought with cash, but you get a million credits to start you off. The first thing to tackle is getting your driver's license, well, the first of three driver's licenses actually. You see, you can't compete in any of the events taking place until you hold the relevant license. So it's off to the driving school for eight short driving exams that test your talent in everything from basic and complex cornering to advanced handbrake technique.

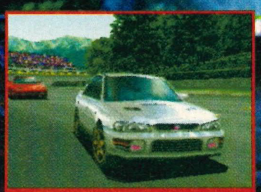


SET

With your first, easiest license in place, it's time for a trip around the ten showrooms to see what second hand deals you can pick up with your measly million credits in order to have something to race in. Some snobby dealers (Aston Martin for example) don't sell used motors, but keep at it and you'll come away with a bargain. One of the best to go for is the old-style used Toyota Supra, which could set you back anywhere from 750,000 to 890,000 credits.

As you can only compete in the amateur Sunday League event with the first license and with a beat up old car, you keep playing through its four tracks (there are 11 tracks in the whole game) until you make enough cash to buy a better model, then take the harder tests for the intermediate license when you feel ready. That will get you into more leagues and events which are much tougher to win, but pay a whole lot more. Eventually you get your International license and so can compete in anything you choose, including the prestigious GT races where everyone drives 50 million credit, ultra modified and enhanced road huggers that will take you to quite unbelievable speeds.

The path to the top races will take you a hell of a long



[ABOVE] Sometimes, even the grip of four wheel drive isn't enough to keep you from lurching across the road.



[ABOVE] Two player replays can be watched as separate split screens, or like this with a proper full screen display.



[ABOVE] Every car shop has one of these tuning areas where you can buy upgrades for nearly every aspect of your selected car.

CHANGING YOUR CAR?

Though you are free to offer your current car to any company when it comes time to sell up, the dealership from where your car originated will pay you substantially more money for it than any of the others – around 800,000 more credits in the case of my faithful Viper GTS for example.





[Above] The Mitsubishi 3000 GT will give you goosebumps with its perfectly reproduced contours.



[Above] Now, here's one you see on the road quite often, the lovely MR2. It's the same as a real one, isn't it?



[Above] Surprisingly, the Celica handles pretty well for such an average sports car. Why not pick one up?



[Above] The sandwich is a nasty situation when you're the filling – get outta there!



[Above] Watch what everyone else does through the "S" bend to find the best racing line! The fastest driver usually has two wheels up on the rumble strip, like the MR2 here.



[Above] Seeing a close opponent's brake lights come on half way round a corner helps you brake at the right time until you learn the course.

"From the first glimpse, you'll be completely hooked!"

time, and as you go you'll be selling the cars off necessary to stay solvent while keeping as many as you want in your infinite garage for your own amusement. At any time you can pick a car from the garage and race it, or make use of the dealers' extensive upgrading options to buy better shocks, tyres, separate engine components or even tweaked ROM chips to boost performance. After upgrading any aspect of your auto, it is wise to take it to the Machine Test track to find its top speed and alter the tiniest aspects of the downforce, wheel camber and much more. There just isn't another game that comes close to *Gran Turismo's* astonishing depth and detail.

GO!

So, is it the perfect game then? Well, there is one area which isn't perfect. The physics governing the motion of the cars aren't actually as realistic as they first seem. You can see this by the way



[Above] On some walls your car will get enough traction to pull itself into the air. Not recommended.



[Above] There's a lot of Japanese text, but nothing you can't figure out in a short time through trial and error.



[Above] There's nothing like a browse through your packed garage to inflate the ego!

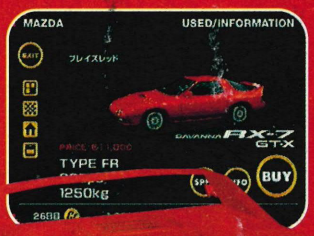


[Above] A 1992 fire engine red Mitsubishi 3000 GT (GTO in Japan) for 1.2 million credits? SOLD!

SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW

JUST LIKE AT A REAL DEALERSHIP, YOU'LL FIND THE OLD SHAPED VERSIONS OF CARS WHICH ARE STILL CURRENT IN THE USED SECTION, AND THE LATEST, UP-TO-DATE BODY SHAPES IN THE NEW AREA. SHOWN HERE ARE THE OLD RX-7 (RED) AND THE NEW ONE (WHITE).



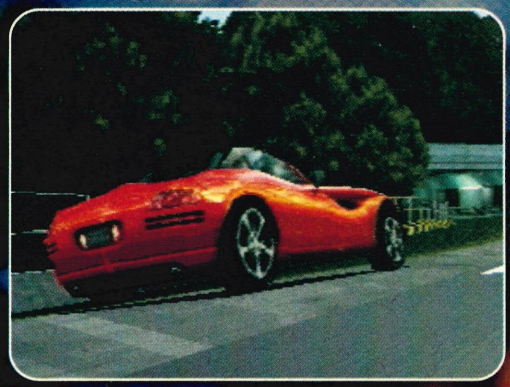


WHAT ABOUT US?

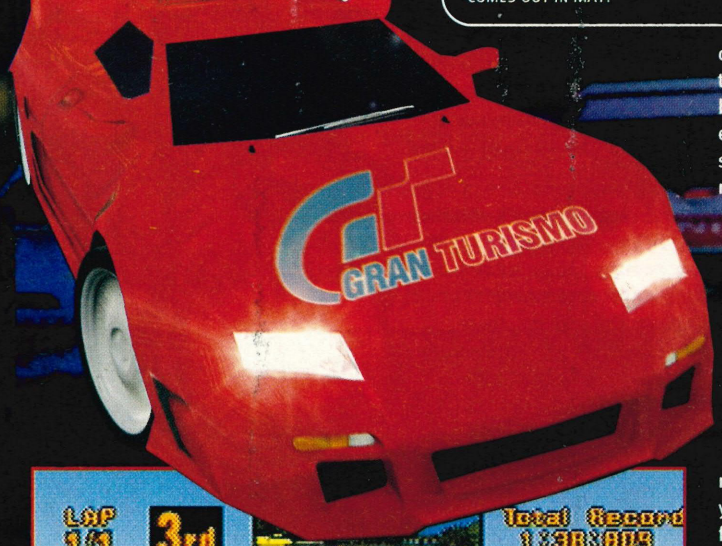
SONY IS PROMISING US THAT THERE WILL BE SOME FAIRLY HEFTY POSITIVE CHANGES MADE TO THE EUROPEAN VERSION OF *GRAN TURISMO*. WE HAVE NO WAY OF PROVING THEM RIGHT OR WRONG AT THE MOMENT, ALTHOUGH OF COURSE WE'LL BE LETTING YOU KNOW HOW THE PAL VERSION IS SHAPING UP OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS. UNTIL THEN, HERE ARE THE CLAIMED IMPROVEMENTS:

- THE GAME ENGINE WILL BE BETWEEN 15 AND 30% FASTER THAN THE JAPANESE VERSION. BEARING IN MIND THAT MOST CONVERSIONS TO PAL ARE WORSE AND SLOWER, THIS SEEMS INCREDIBLE, BUT WE'LL WAIT AND SEE.
- THERE WILL BE AN ALL NEW SOUND-TRACK TO REPLACE THE DODGY GUITAR TUNES AND KENNY G SAX SOLOS OF THE IMPORT VERSION. INCLUDED ON THIS SOUNDTRACK WILL BE THE MANIC STREET PREACHERS, ASH, GARBAGE, DUBSTAR, FEEDER AND CUBANATE.
- ENGLISH LANGUAGE. WELL, OBVIOUSLY.
- SOME CARS WILL BE SWITCHED AROUND, SO THAT EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN CARS ARE SELECTABLE IN THE QUICK ARCADE MODE. WE'VE SEEN THIS DONE ON AN EARLY PAL VERSION ALREADY.
- THE SLOW DOWN CAUSED BY THE SMOKE FROM THE TYRES WILL BE REDUCED OR REMOVED COMPLETELY. WHY DIDN'T THE JAPANESE WHIZ KID CODERS DO THIS IN THE FIRST PLACE THEN?
- A PAN EUROPEAN COMPETITION MODE WILL BE ADDED.
- A FEW MORE VIEWPOINTS, INCLUDING A TOCA-STYLE OVER THE BONNET VIEW WILL BE ADDED. THIS IDEA HASN'T BEEN FINALISED AS YET THOUGH.
- WELL, THAT ALL SOUNDS QUITE GOOD THEN. THE ONLY PROBLEM? IT COMES OUT IN MAY!

GRAN TURISMO



[ABOVE] This experimental beast that is on show but not for sale in the Japanese version of GT should be selectable straight away in the PAL release, as it's a Western car.

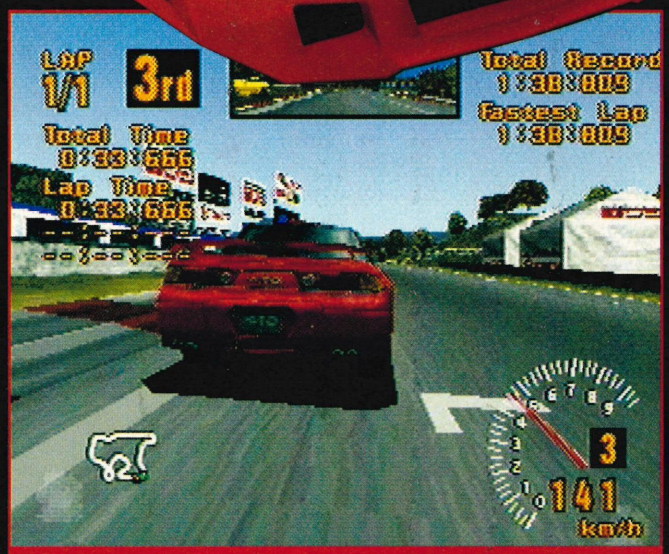


cars crash together when you inevitably try rocketing around the track backwards in a suicidal fit of exploration. On contact at combined speeds of 500 kilometres per hour or more, the colliding cars don't fly into the air as you would first imagine. Instead, your automobile will usually just bounce backwards a little way like it is a hockey puck hitting the edge of the rink.

The cars also tend to bounce off each other in a very Rage Racer inspired way if you try to muscle an opponent into the roadside while you're both speeding along neck and neck. These discrepancies might shake your confidence in the otherwise fabulous *Gran Turismo* game engine for a while, but once you've found them and accepted they are there, you'll probably get so caught up in the magical gameplay that you'll stop thinking about it.

The only other major gripe is the short-comings of the split screen two player mode, which does noticeably lower the frame rate and cause even the fastest of cars to run on treacle instead of super unleaded.

Despite these problems though, it has to be said that *Gran Turismo* is by far the most impressive game of any kind to appear on PlayStation for a long time. If there was ever a game worth getting on import and paying twice the Japanese retail price for, this is it, but bear in mind that it is due for an official release in May and Sony is confident that it will be much enhanced. Can't wait.



[ABOVE] Playing with the internal view is fast and gives you a rear view mirror that makes blocking that bit easier.



PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●●●●●●
SOUNDS	●●●●●●●●●○
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●●●●●
VALUE	●●●●●●●●●○
FUEL INJECTION	●●●●●●●●●○

PLAYED 97%

The best of the best!

ALTERNATIVELY:
RAGE RACER (94%)
TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP (92%)

Diablo

BLACK... BLACK! BLAAAACK!! FROM THE PITS OF HELL EA IS SUMMONING-UP A DEMON OF A GAME. COME IN BLOOD OMEN, YOUR TIME IS UP.

The Devil. Discuss.

Cruel beyond belief. Cunning. Most of these words can be found in the Ed's job description, but all of them are synonyms for *Diablo*, which just happens to be the latest epic role-playing project from the fruitful loin of developers, Blizzard. Although we've crapped ourselves with fear once before with the soul-sucking delights of *Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain*, games of this ilk have been conspicuous by their absence on the PlayStation. Perhaps it's the fact that they lack mind-blowing graphics, or a steering-wheel attachment?

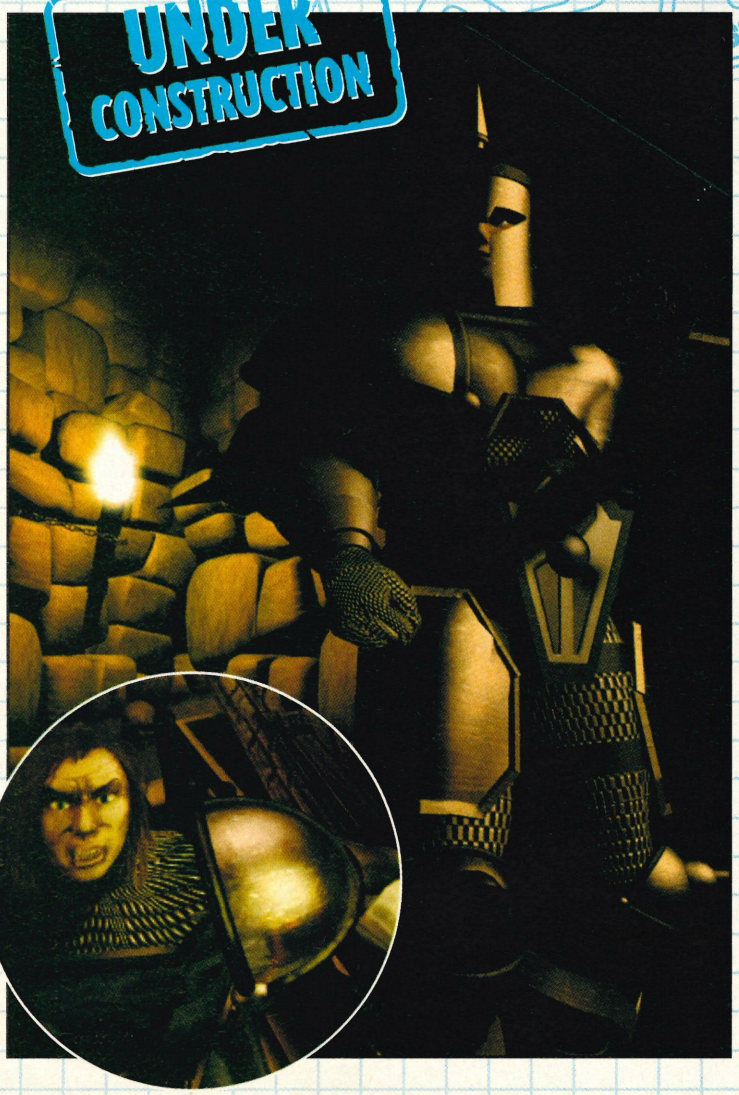
Whatever the reasons, there aren't enough RPGs doing the rounds, but judging by initial office reactions the future's bright for adventure games in 1998. If the name *Diablo* sounds vaguely familiar, this is because it was a massive hit on PC last year, and EA has been quick to realise the conversion potential. The game has a beautiful fairytale look consisting of sumptuous, highly detailed backgrounds viewed from an isometric perspective.

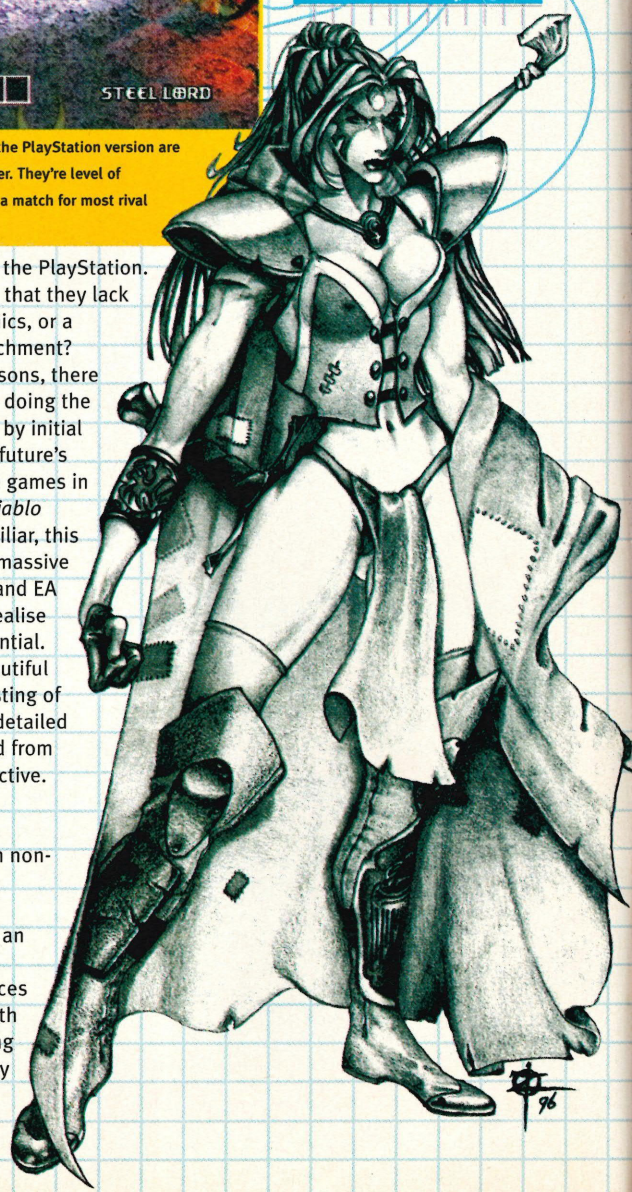


[Above] The creatures in the PlayStation version are bigger, bolder and brighter. They're level of intelligence is more than a match for most rival games too.

Blueprint

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: Blizzard Ent.
% Complete: 70%
Exp. Release Date: 27 March '98
Origin: USA
No. of Players: 1-2





BEELZEBUB

The moot point with non-role playing gamesplayers has always been one of an aversion to overly complicated interfaces (combine spell A with spell B while fighting off a hoard of mangy skeletons and simultaneously



hopping on one leg). Well, if you've ever longed for a quick stab at dungeon bashing without the 'boring bits', saddle-up, *Diablo's* coming to town and it's looking mean.

EA is promising an easy to learn action role playing game (RPG) consisting of randomly generated labyrinths providing a new challenge every time you start an adventure with one of the three character classes. These consist of Warrior, Rogue and Sorcerer – all of whom fight in a different style. For example, the Warrior will use brute force and no magic, the Rogue will utilise a combination of hand-held weapons and magic, and the Sorcerer only has the option to hurl magical abuse at enemies.

the game has a beautiful fairytale look consisting of sumptuous, highly detailed backgrounds...

The development team are currently beavering away and hope to squeeze in around 16 different labyrinthine levels to explore containing over 300 magical objects to find. To keep in the



[Above] Two Frost Chargers corner our unsuspecting hero. Expect loads of impressive special effects.



[Above] Some areas are well lit, but that doesn't seem to deter the undead. Bugger!



[Above] Although your surroundings are generally steeped in gloom, a warm glow surrounding your player and ailluminating everything nearby.



[Above] After murdering his under-nourished buddies, you face a slightly pissed off the skeleton Captain.



[Above] Some quests must be carried out at night. No rest for the wicked then.

CREATURES

Gallons of spurting blood and a full range of gristly death animation's are promised to spice up the carnage ... here's some of our favourite characters...


Zombie


Acid Beast


Blacknight


Bone Demon

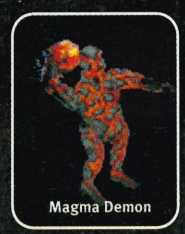

Gargoyle


Bow Goat


Goat Demon


Hidden


Horned Demon


Magma Demon


Mega Demon


Overlord


Serpant Man


Axe Skeleton


Storm Lord


Succubus


Wyrm



spirit of role-playing, spells will play a major part of the game (there'll be 22 in total) – all of them will be just a button press away thanks to the user-friendly inventory.

Prince Of darkness

To make things even easier, many of your options and functions have been assigned hot keys. Instead of wading through menu after menu to activate something really nasty you'll be able to attack with confidence by combining two button presses – a definite step forward for this type of game.

To compliment the level count, 16 randomly created quests await the resourceful protagonist. Those of you who can't stand the thought of travelling alone can take comfort in the fact that a single screen two player option is being implemented so that you can work as a team to slaughter the denizens and then make a mad dash for the gold that they drop. An obvious recommendation here is to have one character play as a Sorcerer to soften up the baddies from a distance, and the other player becomes a warrior to mop up afterwards. As you can see, the creatures themselves are superbly detailed and for a game of this genre move surprisingly well and with a high level of AI.



SOFTOGRAPHY
Warcraft II
Starcraft (Coming in 1998)



[Above] As you approach the entrance to the church, A wounded townsman utters a warning before drawing his terminal breath. You can always bring up what he said as a reminder from a menu in case you forget.



[Above] Pick up Potions of Mana and Magic to boost your flagging supply.



[Above] Playing as a sorcerer means you must master the arcane arts to defeat foes.





[Above] You'll begin your quest for fame and fortune in the tiny village of Tristram which has a host of locals to interact with and provides the base camp for each mission.

a single screen two player option is being implemented so that you can work as a team to slaughter the denizens...

Auld Clootie

You won't be able to see any of the enemies because of the same technique for hiding scenery used in Command & Conquer. Presently about a 100 different monsters have been pencilled-in for inclusion , which is impressive enough. However, for the PlayStation, larger player and creature graphics means that, come the final release, it will look even better than the PC game.

Spell and lighting enhancements will create an even more immersive environment too – as you make your way through the gloomy depths of each dungeon the effect is truly impressive and claustrophobic.

Could this be the game that will knock the acclaimed *Blood Omen* off the forced-perspective adventuring top spot? It's too close to call at this time, but we'll let you know over the coming months.



100% PlayStation 0% fair

PowerStation

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NEED FOR

NEED FOR SPEED – WERE YOU BURNED BY THE SECOND GAME OR DID IT LEAVE YOU CHOKING FOR MORE? *NFS 3* PROMISES A DIFFERENT TYPE OF RACING EITHER WAY.

Listen up, readers!

Electronic Arts is taking a stand. Its lucrative *FIFA* series was becoming progressively more battered and less desirable with the passing of each year, and even though the games have consistently put EA at the top of the charts over Christmas for the past five years, a radical redesigning has left us with a real gem: *Road To World Cup 98*.

The same overhauling is currently being applied by the company to its classic *Need For Speed* car racing series. An alarming number of people (including, it would appear, our entire letter-writing readership) failed to be impressed by *Need For Speed 2*, and so for this incarnation it was decided that a revival of the original's playability and a suffocating amount of new features would place this racer firmly back on the track.

For a start, the entire look is almost unrecognisable as another sequel. The Ferrari 355 *(Need For Speed* remains the only video game to be granted the official Ferrari license) in this early version of the software has cloud and sky reflections drifting across its glossy paintwork and windows, and fine enough detail to capture the supercar styling very well.

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Blueprint

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: In-house
% Complete: 70%
Exp. Release Date: 20 March
Origin: Canada
No. of Players: 1-2

SOFTOGRAPHY

Need For Speed
Need For Speed 2
FIFA '96
FIFA '97
FIFA: RTWC 98



[Above] A single press of a shoulder button gives you the reverse view of your car, taking the place of a rear view mirror on the external views. Is that 550 *smiling?*

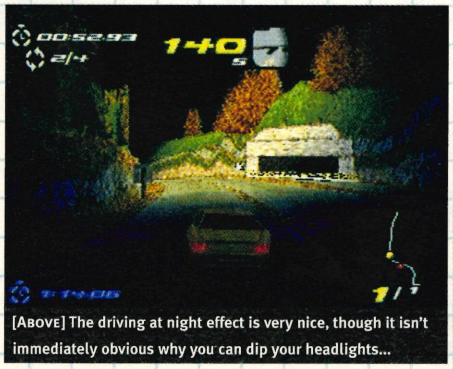
UP THE WALL

Probably the most important feature to win back disillusioned fans of the first *NFS* is the police force – they're back, and they're meaner than ever! The threat of law enforcement doesn't just come from a single road cop anymore. In fact, if you're fast enough in these illegal races you'll find yourself in the speed gun sights of up to three relentless police drivers who join the chase one at a time!

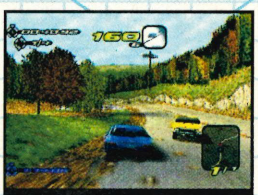
Cops will go after the other road racers too now, not just you, and they'll do anything they can to stop the fun by ramming your car, pulling out in front to box you in, and even form road blocks at certain points throughout the ten tracks. At areas where it is possible to drive off the edge and onto the grass or into ditches, it is intended that the boys in blue will lay the



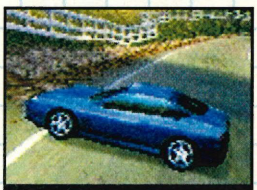
[Above] The police in the final version will be localised, like *Test Drive 4*, so each part of the world will have the correct cop cars. In this (extrmely) early version black and whites drop in from all over the world, all desperate to apprehend you.



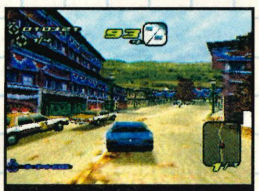
[Above] The driving at night effect is very nice, though it isn't immediately obvious why you can dip your headlights...



[Above] We like the new *Porsche Challenge* style rev counter window better than *NFS2's* thermometer inspired gauge.



[Above] As with the original *Need For Speed*, the car models have a solid, detailed appearance. Nice alloys!



[Above] They may look like like taxis, but the only place these guys want to take you is jail – it's the filth! Put yer foot down!

SPEED 3

"stinger" for you – a spiked metal chain which lies on the road to burst tyres. The idea is that you risk riding the rough terrain by the roadside to avoid blowing your tyres, but we haven't seen this in the game yet. We have however heard the cops hollering through their megaphones about how it's your "last warning" and you should "pull over," which is a realistic touch.

Night driving is another new feature and you can race any of the available tracks like this,



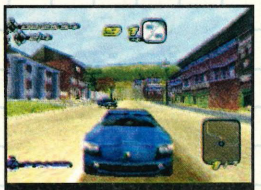
"YOU'LL FIND YOURSELF IN THE SPEED GUN SIGHTS OF THREE RELENTLESS POLICE DRIVERS!" EA



[Above] The lights cast from the police cars are a bit strong at the moment. It's like a scene from *Close Encounters* when one crests the hill.

with only your headlights to guide you. The lighting effects are quite striking; taking *V-Rally's* innovative midnight driving one step further with variable beam headlights and even the police cars casting spinning red and blue lights onto the walls and road from their roof mounted emergency lights. The environments can be changed further by enabling the "weather" option to bring elements like thunder and lightning, rain and snow into play. With all ten courses available to be raced in mirror and reverse modes also, you end up with a shed load of combinations too – replay value shouldn't be a problem for this game!

The physically calculated crashes that are the signature of the series are of course back again, as well as the intricate car showcases comprising of pictures, film and performance statistics. Although realism is the main thing *Need For Speed 3* has got going for it, we have yet to see any version of the code with the old cockpit view that used actual dashboard photographs in both previous games to enhance the feeling that you really were strapped into an expensive, gleaming supercar. Still, you can't have everything.

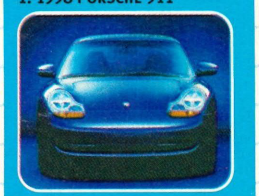


[Above] It might be difficult to drive this way, but you can't help but check out your car from the front during the race!

WISH LIST

THE LINE UP OF OFFICIALLY LICENSED CARS IS IMPRESSIVE IN *NFS 3*. HOWEVER, THERE ARE STILL A FEW FAVOURITES OF OURS THAT WE WOULD IDEALLY HAVE IN A RACING GAME OF SUCH REALISM. HERE'S THE TOP FIVE. NEXT TIME MAYBE EA WILL ASK US FIRST...

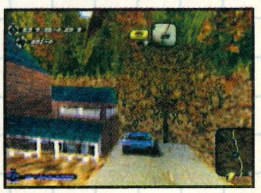
1. 1998 PORSCHE 911



2. MITSUBISHI 3000 GT
3. LAMBORGHINI CANTO
4. TVR CERBERA/SPEED 12
5. ASTON MARTIN DB7

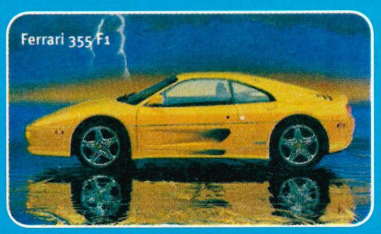


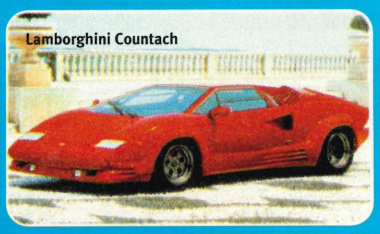
[Above] This would be an example of a sneaky shortcut that went wrong then. Avoiding those stingers will be hard work.

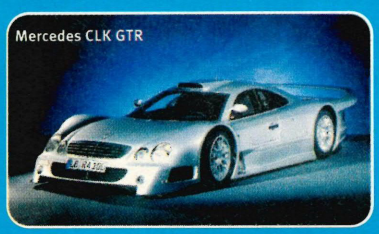


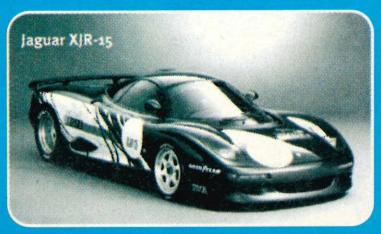
AUTO EROTICA

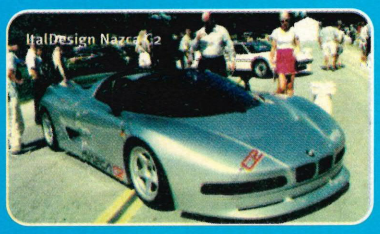
"SO," YOU SAY, "EXACTLY WHAT CARS ARE IN *NEED FOR SPEED 3*?" HERE IS THE CURRENT LIST, THOUGH EA TELLS US MORE COULD BE ADDED OR SOME COULD BE SWAPPED FOR OTHERS. THE BOLD INCLUSION OF THE OLD LAMBO COUNTACH IS A PARTICULARLY GOOD IDEA, THOUGH YOU'LL HAVE TO AGREE ALL OF THESE BEAUTIES REALLY ARE THE CREAM OF THE CROP.

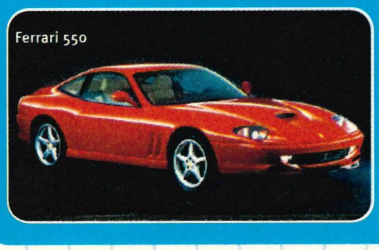


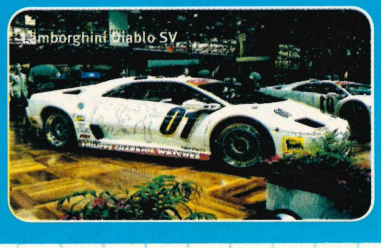


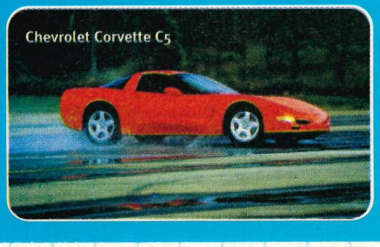












PLAY READERS SPEAK OUT!

SURVEY RESULTS

Written by Damian Butt

WAY BACK IN THE MISTS OF TIME WE ASKED YOU TO FILL IN AN EXTENSIVE QUESTIONNAIRE ABOUT PLAY, YOUR PLAYSTATION, GAMES, PERIPHERALS, AND WHAT YOU THOUGHT OF THEM. WELL NOW WE'VE COLLATED ALL THE RESPONSES AND NOW WE PRESENT THE MOST AUTHORITATIVE AND IN-DEPTH SURVEY OF MODERN PLAYSTATION OWNERS EVER COMPLETED.

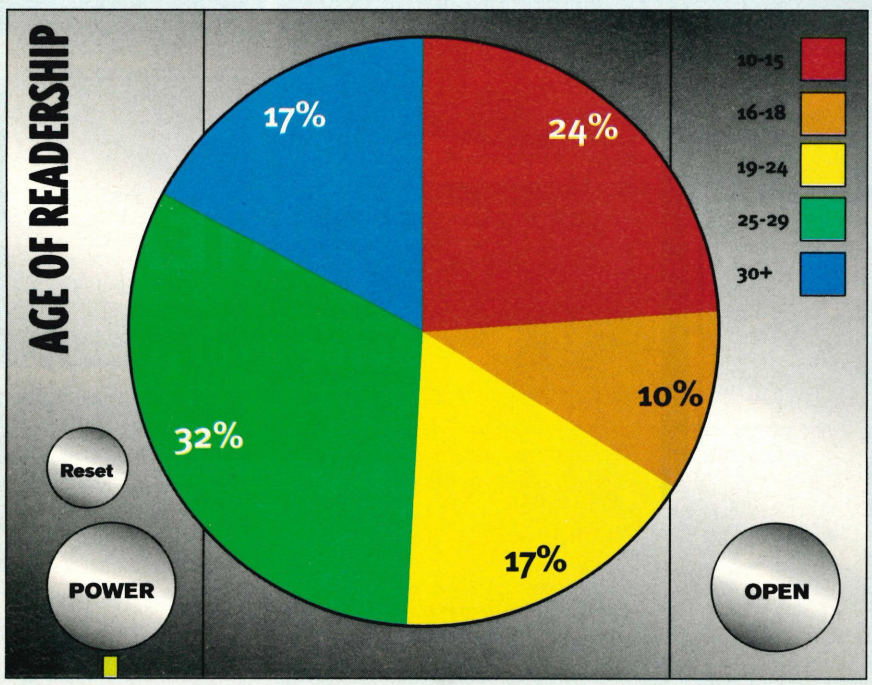




First of all many

thanks to all who replied to the survey enclosed in issue 26. The number of responses was absolutely staggering – over 3,500 in all, and each one gave us a vital insight into your buying habits and more importantly, what you thought of PLAY. Rest assured that there will be some changes around here because of your opinions, and from next issue, sections such as Playlist and the tips will be changing slightly to suit everyone's tastes. Without further a-do it's time to get right in amongst it and reveal everything you always wanted to know about PLAY readers. And it ain't pretty...

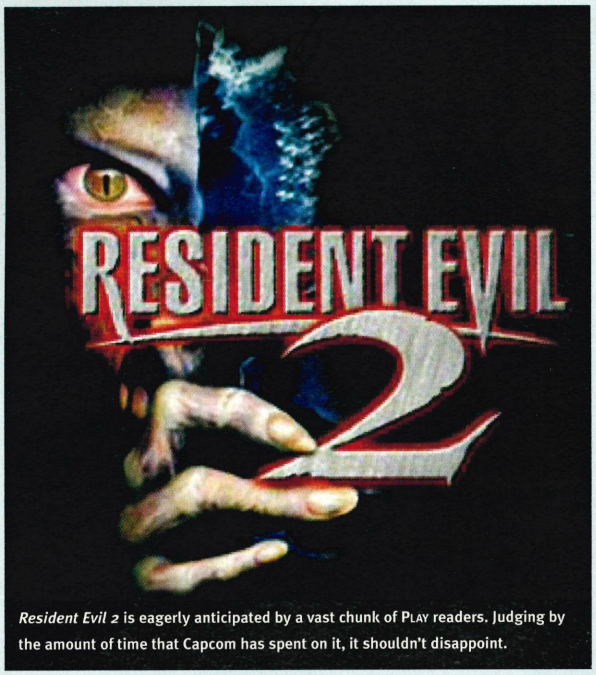
Surprise, surprise, the majority of the readers were male. In the end **5%** turned out to be female, with a whopping **95%** claiming to be all-man, and unlike last year, there were no transvestites (only joking). In fact 5% is about double the expected figure of women readers, and this is surprising given that computer magazines are traditionally male territory, not helped by the fact that many try to emulate 'lads' mags like Loaded and FHM. Even though many girls use PlayStations, and PLAY magazine constantly receives letters from them, they are in the definite minority. Perhaps with more games like *Parappa the Rapper*, *Bust-A-Move 2* and *Tomb Raider II*, this statistic will change.



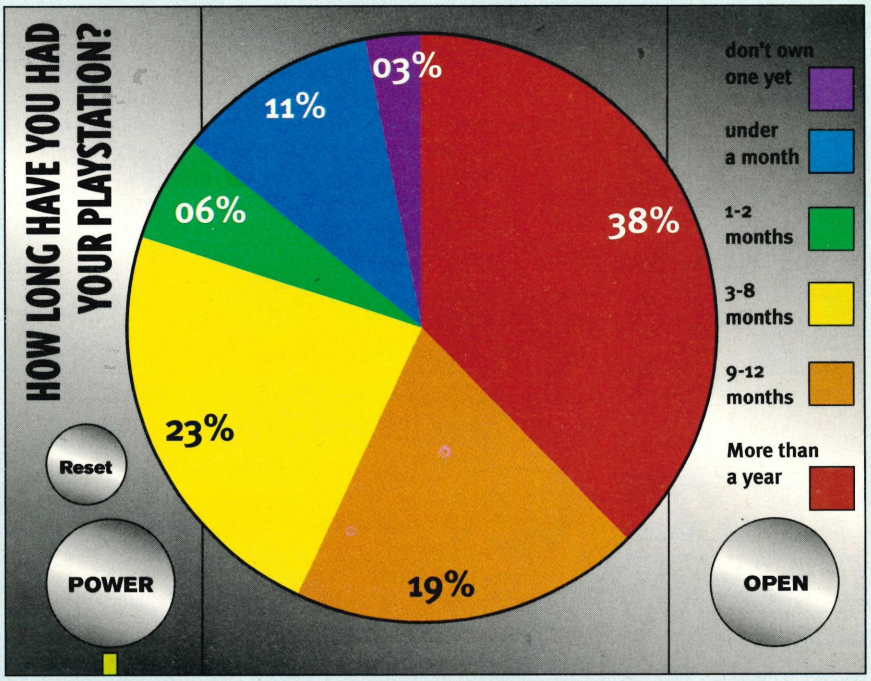
"5% is about double the expected number of female readers. Perhaps games like *Parappa* will increase this further..."



The age range was more predictable if you've been following PlayStation trends. When the console first appeared it cost £299 and was snapped up by affluent mid-twenties males with stacks of spare cash, two seater sports cars and Colgate smiles. Then as the PlayStation dropped in price, more and more younger players got their hands on it and consequently the average ages of magazine readers plummeted. A great many of PLAY's readers were still in the 25-29 bracket (**32%**), but creeping up alarmingly since the last survey was the 10-15 year olds who now make up some **24%** of the total readership. Incredibly, although the **17%** of 19-24s



Resident Evil 2 is eagerly anticipated by a vast chunk of PLAY readers. Judging by the amount of time that Capcom has spent on it, it shouldn't disappoint.



was expected, the **17%** of over thirty year-olds was not, and represents a large proportion of mature gamesplayers who, in many cases, are not as tuned in to the jargon and phrases as the younger ones.

This is something PLAY, and in fact all console magazines needs to address. There are plenty of new users out there who are buying a console for the first time and haven't a clue what terms such as CGI, FMV and FPS are all about? For you, there will be tutorials and jargon-busting features in the future, and our writers will try to explain themselves when using a potentially foreign term, instead of taking it for granted that you've had computers since you were two.

"There are plenty of new users out there who haven't got a clue what terms such as CGI, FMV and FPS are all about..."



When asked what other consoles were owned, a resounding roar for the lowly black and white hand-held Game Boy meant that **35.3%** of those who replied to this question had one as well as the PlayStation, and the next favoured machine was the Nintendo Super NES with **24%** of the vote. Bringing up the rear was **23%** for the Mega Drive, **7.6%** (N64 – ha, ha!), **5%** (Saturn – ditto), and **2.5%** each for the now ancient 3DO and Atari Jaguar. This question proved that there was still a large number of people for whom the PlayStation is their first games machine – something we cynical old hacks often forget.

But what draws people to PLAY over other magazines? The million dollar question. Readers were asked what prompted them to buy their first issue of PLAY? **30%** replied that it was a specific feature that attracted them, and this conforms with the fact that PLAY always leads with a strong story; often looking at issues in a more serious and thorough way which is appreciated by our more mature audience. **28%** were turned on by the general look of PLAY, and some even commentated that it was the Oriental appearance of the cover logo which made PLAY somehow more affiliated with Sony and the whole Japanese scene that made it more attractive than say, the stony-faced official-dom of its rivals. A quarter of the respondents named the cover image as the reason for purchase, while **20%** liked the reviews, **14%** bought it solely on a friend's recommendation, and **11%** wanted the free tips book so much, they bought the magazine regardless.

A meagre **2%** of PLAY's readers replied that they got every PlayStation magazine; a figure which ties in with the survey of rival magazines which showed a majority share (**57%**) getting the Official magazine as well as PLAY, with all other titles competing for a tiny share which wwas entirely dependant on a free gift or striking cover image. This also shows a lack of faith in the official PlayStation magazine, as it was expected that almost every PLAY reader would buy it for the demo disk. Demos was a touchy subject with PLAY readers as we shall soon see.

How many people actually read PLAY magazine? Currently, the magazine sells 50-65,000 copies. In order to find out actual readership (a more important figure for us) we had to discover how often and by whom your well-worn magazine gets carted off to the smallest room in the house for a crafty perusal. **35%** of those who answered this question said that they read their PLAY alone. **38%** shared with a friend, **12%** enjoyed a threesome, and finally **15%** let the whole town have a gander. Working this out roughly (and using as much skulduggery as possible), it means









that an astonishing 131,950 people scan a copy of PLAY every month – not bad!

And out of the readers who responded, **99%** thought the writing was informative, clear, witty and concise, but out of the same people **9%** didn't think there was enough critical comment, and **4%** thought the reviews lacked detail. No worries there then, especially since **77.1%** of those who expressed a preference agreed with PLAY's reviews. **20.8%** didn't know, and a measly **2.1%** disagreed. But then they are probably Saturn owners anyway.

"Most shocking of all was our delve into the murky world of the link-up gamer. When asked how often do you play link-up games, 76% said they never had..."

Concerning the PlayStation itself, 97% of you already own one, and of those, **11%** have had one for less than a month (welcome one and all!), **6%** have had it for between one and two months, **23%** for 3-8 months, **19%** for 9-12 months and a whopping **38%** for more than a year; proving without a shadow of a doubt that PLAY attracts a great many hardcore gamers who have been with the machine since early days. Out of those **97%** owners however, **93.8%** had an official UK PAL machine and only **6.2%** owned up to converting theirs using a special chip.

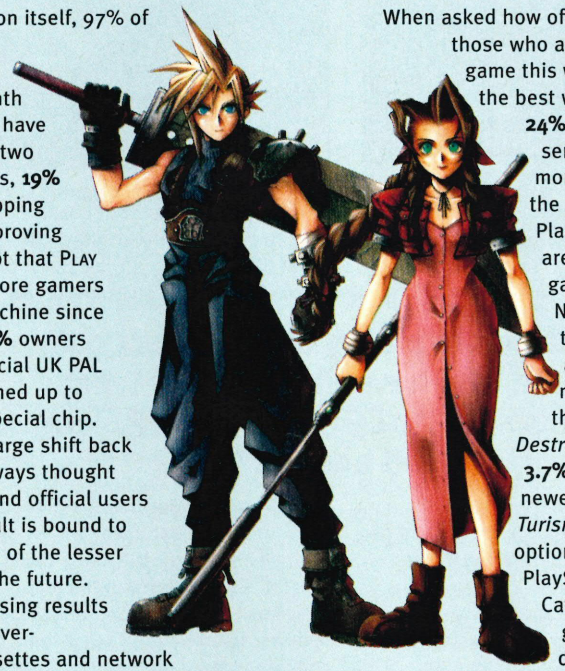
This is most certainly a large shift back to officialdom, as it was always thought that PLAY attracted import and official users in equal numbers. This result is bound to affect the coverage of some of the lesser known Japanese games in the future.

However, the most surprising results concerned the subject of cover-mounted demos, video cassettes and network play. Being such industry veterans we thought we could predict the results of these three questions accurately, but boy were we wrong. When asked, would you like PLAY to feature a CD on the cover every month? The replies were dead level – 50-50 between those who liked the promotion and those who detested it.

When asked about a cover-mounted video (remember, PLAY actually ran one of these on issue 28 and it was very successful) **80%** were in favour of the idea, and of those, **10%** were not prepared to fork out any extra cash, **53%** didn't mind an extra quid, and **17%** would even be prepared to pay £4.95.

Most shocking of all though was our delve into the murky world of the link-up gamer. As many of you are aware, we hold this feature dear to our hearts and regularly have two player games of *Need for Speed* and *Formula 1*, but according to Sony, only 2% of PlayStation owners actually have a link cable. 2% at the moment roughly equates to 40,000 gamers, and we were confident that the majority of these would be PLAY readers.

When asked how often do you play link-up games, **76%** of those who answered said they had never played a game this way. How can this be when it is surely the best way to use a PlayStation? Thankfully **24%** of you managed a link-up session on a semi-regular basis (**4.2%** weekly, **19.8%** monthly) and out of those, **73.5%** consider the link option to be a vital part of PlayStation gaming, and the same **73.5%** are disappointed by the lack of compatible games.

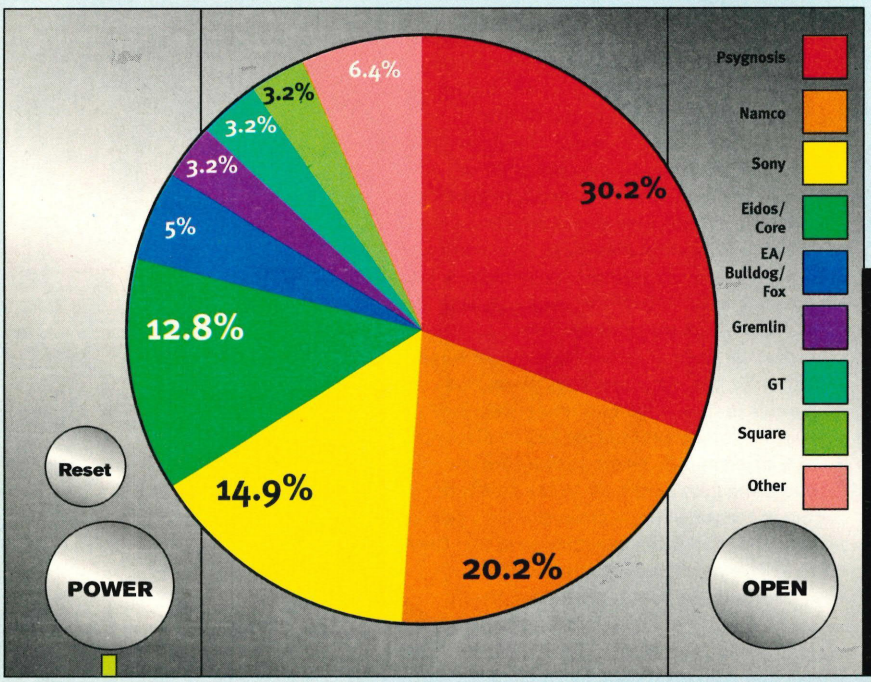


Next we ran a quick poll to see which of the meagre list of link-up games available were getting dusted off the most. *Doom* came out on top with **40.7%**, then *Formula 1* (**29.6%**), *Wipeout* (**18.5%**), *Destruction Derby* (**7.4%**) and *Descent* with **3.7%**. Perhaps if some of the PlayStation's newest and best games (*F1 '97*, *Gran Turismo*, *Duke Nukem*) came with a link-up option, a more significant proportion of PlayStation owners would use the cable.

Catch 22 innit. The less importance is given to the link-up option, the fewer developers will spend time adding the compatibility. It all looks bleak for those of us with two telly's and a lot of enthusiasm.

How many games do you own? Well **13.4%** of you had 1-3 games, **27.8%** owned 4-6, **12.4%** had 7-9 games cluttering up their lounge, and **46.4%** had ten or more titles. Incredibly, the top number of games owned was 27 – now that's a seriously rich gamesplayer.

But we'll finish up with some encouraging news about the state of PlayStation games. Out of the set answers provided (you did tick more than one), **53%** of you believed that the



KING OF THE SOFTIES?

AN INTERESTING QUESTION THAT HAS NEVER BEEN ASKED BEFORE WAS: BASED ON THE COVERAGE IN PLAY, WHICH IS THE PUBLISHER/DEVELOPER WHO MAKES THE BEST GAMES? QUITE A FEW COMPANIES WERE BANDIED AROUND BEFORE THE FRONT RUNNERS APPEARED AND DWARFED EVERYTHING ELSE. IT'S ONE OF THOSE QUESTIONS THAT EVERY PLAYSTATION OWNER CAN ANSWER AND HAS A DEFINITE OPINION ON. JUDGING BY THE COMMENTS GIVEN, THERE IS SOME TRUTH IN THE THEORY THAT THERE IS COMPANY LOYALTY AND INDEED SNOBBERY. PSYGNOSIS ROMPED HOME, DESPITE SOME CLOSE COMPETITION FROM NAMCO AND SONY. EIDOS/ CORE MANAGED A RESPECTABLE SHOWING (I WONDER WHAT GAME THEY WERE VOTING FOR HERE?), BUT ELECTRONIC ARTS SLIPPED RIGHT DOWN WITH ONLY **5.3%** OF THE VOTE, AND THE MIGHTY SQUARE ONLY GOT A PATHETIC **3.2%**. COME ON PEOPLE – WHAT ARE YOU THINKING OF?

games were mostly good, **23%** said there was a few classics, but a lot of dross, **39%** thought import conversions took too long to reach the UK, **33%** said the games were overpriced, 20% stated that all the games were excellent, and only **10%** said that the PAL conversions were a let down.

Finally, we asked what were the top five games since the PlayStation's birth up to October 1997? Out of the hundreds of titles that were nominated (many only had one or two votes) the winners became immediately obvious, and dare I say it, predictable. In reverse order, the top five games were: *V-Rally* (Ocean/ Infogrames), *Tekken 2* (Namco), *F1/F1 '97* (Psygnosis), *Resident Evil* (Capcom) and of course the top slot was occupied by *Tomb Raider* from Core.

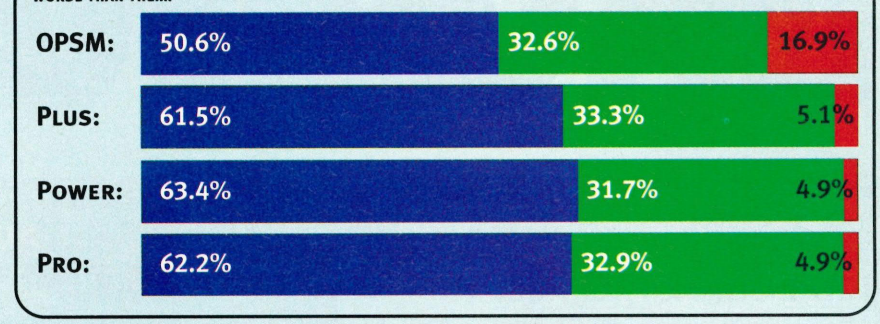
"93.8% of PLAY readers have an official machine – that's a large shift back to officialdom as PLAY used to attract import owners..."

Would *Tomb Raider II* have taken over from its predecessor if the survey was held a few months later? All indications are yes, it would, as we then asked what game PLAY readers were most looking forward to? Top of the heap was *Tomb Raider II*, followed by *Resident Evil 2*, *Final Fantasy VII*, *Tekken 3* and *Nightmare Creatures*. **92%** of those who completed the survey said they were happy with the machine, and the remaining **8%** cited over-heating and loading problems as the reason for their distress.



WHAT ABOUT OTHER MAGAZINES?

WE ASKED YOU TO COMPARE PLAY WITH OUR FOUR NEAREST RIVALS. THE BLUE BAR INDICATES YOU THOUGHT WE WERE BETTER THAN THEM, GREEN IS THE SAME, AND RED – GRRR, IS THAT YOU WERE MISGUIDED ENOUGH TO THINK WE WERE WORSE THAN THEM.



ONWARDS AND UPWARDS!

WE HAVE NOW HEARD THAT THE PLAYSTATION HAS SOLD 2 MILLION UNITS IN THE UK ALONE AND THANKS TO YOU, PLAY IS READY AND ARMED WITH THE INFORMATION TO SEE THE MAGAZINE THROUGH 1998 AND BEYOND. AS REPORTED IN ISSUE 29, THE WINNER OF THE 28" WIDESCREEN TV, SIGNED PLAYSTATION, AND SUBSCRIPTION TO THE SONY HOT LIST WAS MAURA IRELAND FROM LONDON. CONGRATULATIONS!

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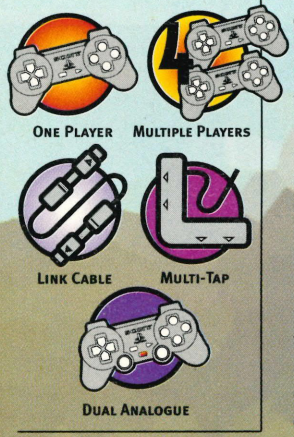
NAGANO WINTE

PULL ON YOUR WINTER WOOLLIES AS WE HEAD FOR THE LAND OF THE RISING SUN IN KONAMI'S TOTAL OLYMPIC PACKAGE.

Written by Tom Sargent

PLAY INFORMATION

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



First of all they introduced us to the delights of Sushi and then the grotesque, yet entertaining Sumo Wrestling. But perhaps the most famous Japanese export introduced to an unsuspecting British audience during the Eighties was a sadistic gameshow called *Endurance*, where contestants openly humiliated themselves in various torture-related 'tests'.

It's been all quiet on the Eastern front for quite some time now (not counting the collapse of their economy!), but come February the clatter of frost-bitten camera crews and stalwart presenters like David Vine will be bringing us the low-down from the slopes and arenas of the Nagano Winter Olympics. Quick to release the potential of such a celebrated occasion, Konami has not only claimed the prize of 'official licensee', but also managed to cram in nine official sports (comprising 13 different events) onto one PlayStation CD.

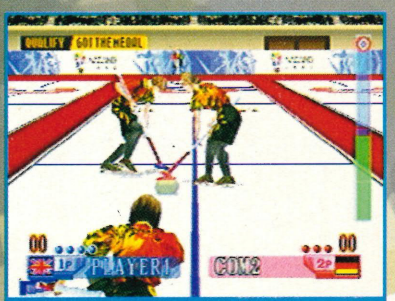
There are a few noticeable absentees from the full list of disciplines, but it has to be said *Nagano Winter Olympics '98* is a tasty piece of software which captures with gusto, the thrills and spills of many winter sports. Before the options screen pops up you're presented with a buttock-clenchingly cheesy statement of universal togetherness that only succeeds in making you reach for the sick bag as the hostess heralds the opening of the Games.



[Above] Before hurtling off down a mountainside you limber up nervously thousands of feet above your goal. Go on then, what are you waiting for?

KONNICHI WA

"Like a bird, like the wind, graceful and magnificent. Here in the silver wonderland the ultimate championship is about to begin." Before taking the plunge and choosing to compete in the main event, players can practice each sport to their heart's content until ready to challenge for an Olympic medal. All events can be played in any order and each one is cleared by attaining or exceeding the qualifying mark. Let's not beat about the bush, the best events and those that constitute the backbone of every Winter Olympics are those involving long, flexible waxy things.



[Above] Brush like mad to change the direction of the stone in the curling event. Yawn.

Six of the 13 events are ski-based and the first of these are the mountain-based shenanigans, consisting of Downhill, Super-G and Giant Slalom. The first time you attempt any of these you either crash dramatically into the barriers or fail to pass through one of the sets of gates. But before long, trying to shave another thousandth of a second off your best time soon becomes an obsession. With the Downhill, its important to build-up momentum by crouching like a public school boy waiting for his 'hot banana' initiation ceremony on the long straights.



[Above] The skating event is one of the most visually impressive . It's back to the old-fashioned button-bashing here and it's good fun!



[Above] You can play the 13 events in any order, in either the Challenge or Olympic mode.

R OLYMPICS '98

"Konami has done a thorough job of cramming in virtually all of the most entertaining sports..."

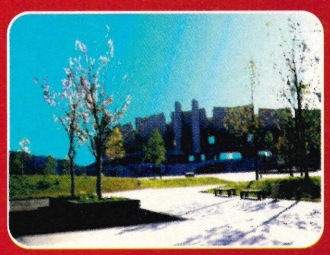


[Above] The luge is great fun considering you're charging down a hill on a biscuit tin lid.

Chill-Out

However, since increased speed means sharper turns, you have to try and strike a balance by standing up at certain parts of the course. In Super-G it's important to strike a balance between speed and technique, while taking the most direct route for the best times. The Giant Slalom is a different kettle of fish in that turning skills are paramount for success, but speed can be used once you feel comfortable with the controls. The snowboarding event, although a highly skilled sport hasn't translated so well, due to the fact that half of the skill in real life is staying on the damned thing. You have the choice of two stances, but compared to the skiing it's pretty monotonous.

Going for Gold



There are 13 different events arising from nine different sports. What makes Nagano such fun is that they all require different controller skills.

Downhill



The downhill is a race against time, but you have to go through all the gates on your way to the end.

Giant Slalom



In the Giant Slalom, you have to balance speed with technique. For the best time take the direct route.

Super-G



The Super-G is packed full of variation and requires a high degree of turning ability.

Snow Board



Snowboarding requires turning agility and balance. Make the most of your turning to push for the best time.

Skating Long



When Skating on the long track, cornering is the most important aspect to gain the upper hand.

Skating Short



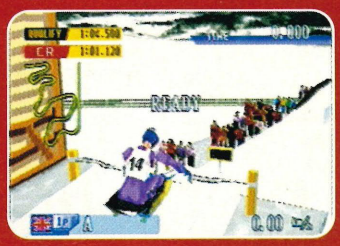
Skating on the short course, stamina and strategy are the key elements to success.

Bobsleigh

In the bobsleigh, shave off the maximum of time with a fast starting sprint, smooth boarding and skilful steering.



Luge



In the Luge, employ the same technique as above and remember, finishing times can differ by just 1/1000 seconds.

Ski Jump



With Ski Jumping, go for high marks by controlling your player not just for distance, but to maintain a good posture.

Aerial

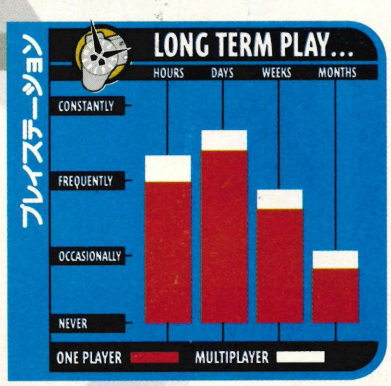


Freestyle Aerial requires one thing and one thing only – perfect timing. Achieve this and the medlas will flow.

Curling

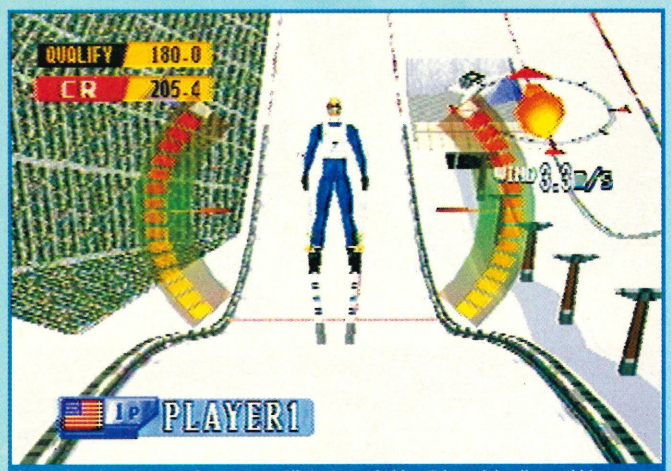


In Curling, manipulate the stone into the centre of the house with advanced throwing control and frantic sweeping!









[Above] Look at that – perfect posture. All that's needed is a Telemark landing and it's a gold medal for Britain. Bring back Eddy the Eagle.



[Above] The Bobsleigh is silky smooth and a real edge-of-the-seat challenge. Especially satisfying when you shave a millionth of a second off your mate's time.



Next up is the speed skating, comprising of four challenges set over both short and long Tracks. Each one requires the player to bash two buttons as fast as possible to build up speed (similarly to Konami's old arcade classic *Hyper Sports*) and is great fun in two player mode. In complete contrast, the bobsleigh and luge test your timing and judgement as opposed to hammering on the buttons. They're both fast and exciting – so much as touch the sides of the ultra-fast downward spiralling courses and it can mean the difference between winning the event or coming 10th.

MISSING IN ACTION

BECAUSE WE'RE SMART-ARSES, WE THOUGH YOU'D LIKE TO KNOW WHICH EVENTS HAVE BEEN DROPPED FROM THE GAME. THEY ARE THE NORDIC COMBINED, BIATHLON, CROSS-COUNTRY, FIGURE SKATING AND ICE HOCKEY.







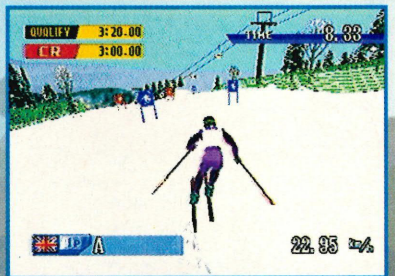
SAYONAI

If you hadn't gathered already, the beauty of *Nagano Olympics* is in the diversity of controller skills needed, and this becomes crystal clear in both the Freestyle Aerials and the Ski Jumping. They require perfect timing to attain top scores and look spectacular, which is more than can be said for curling. How this ever became an Olympic sport is beyond me – it's a cross between crown green bowling and road sweeping. Bizarre and crap.

Although in general the detail on the polygon-based contestants isn't the best we've ever seen, the amount of animations unique to each sport is excellent. For example before starting, each player goes through a warm-up routine, and after they finish, either a victory salute or a shameful shake of the head. The graphics, generally, are a bit of a mixed bag consisting of beautifully animated sportsmen, but the background detail is a bit ropy in places – especially the skiing sections.

Overall, Konami has done a thorough job of cramming in all of the most entertaining sports, which quadruples in fun when four of you are playing. This game does well to bring forth the euphoria of the Olympic Games, but once the actual event has ended and the athletes return to their native countries either jubilant in success, or miserable and twisted of limbs in defeat, there isn't a great deal to keep you coming back.





[Above]The Super-G is both a technical and speed-related event, where gate dodging and high-speed tucks are necessary for the best time.



[Above] If you're on the inside lane, you've got a definite advantage over the other skater.



[Above] An event that tests the boundaries of sanity. You've got to be quick on the button combinations here. Hot-dawg!

PLAY

LOOKS	8
SOUNDS	7
GAMEPLAY	8
VALUE	8
MEDALS	8

PLAYED 83%

Excellent multi-player challenge

ALTERNATIVELY:
INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD (85%)
OLYMPIC GAMES (89%)

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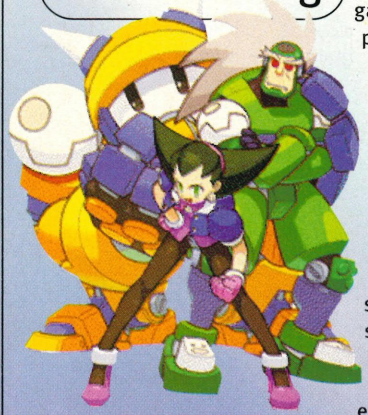
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ROCKMAN DASH

CAPCOM ADDS DASH TO ITS ENDURING MEGA MAN SERIES BY PLUMPING FOR A FULLY-IMMERSIVE 3-D TREAT.

For 11 long years, the *Mega Man* (*Rockman* if you're Japanese) bandwagon has gathered momentum and huge popularity thanks to modest appearances on both eight and 16-bit consoles. It was only a matter of time before Capcom heralded the appearance of its robot-smashing hero and his multifarious gadgets in glorious 32-bit. Well, the wait is finally over – the secure yet constrained environment of traditional side-scrolling action has been superseded by a decision to throw caution to the wind, and in doing so adding many new elements to a familiar theme.



Despite the fact that the PLAY team are utterly ignorant to even the most basic Japanese texts (cue aimless wandering around locations bumping into characters who, for all we know, are openly insulting us), the translation to three dimensions has been well worth the effort. The beauty of the game is that all the elements that made the 2-D game so much fun to play, such as responsive character control, loads of secrets, fiendish puzzles and massive bosses have been lifted out and chucked straight into the 3-D melting pot, a natural progression in fact.

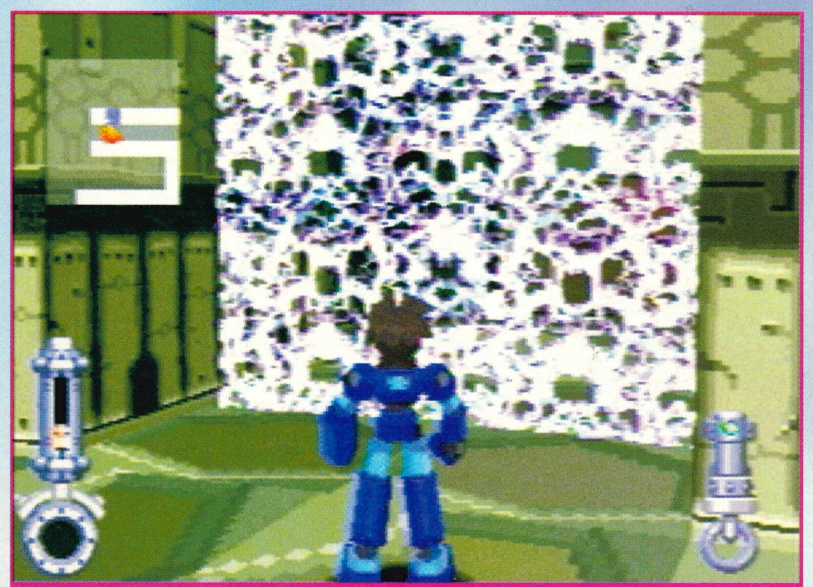
PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Capcom
Supplier: The video game Centre on 01202 527314
Price: £69.99
Release date: Out Now

ONE PLAYER MEMORY CARD



[ABOVE] Pressing one of the shoulder buttons allows you to check out creatures skulking on the ceiling (you can fire at them too in this mode).



[ABOVE] Fizzling force fields block your path and its up to you to find a way around or through.

"Fans of the old platform games will welcome *Rockman Dash* with open arms as it retains the spirit and feel of the classic 2-D action"

RUSH

The game begins in an underground bunker, replete with imaginative automated enemies patrolling corridors and rooms. But before you have time to say 'robotic arm extension', the pattern of play changes completely. *Rockman* is essentially a *Tomb Raider*-esque arcade jaunt viewed from the third-person. Bolted firmly onto this game engine is a comprehensive story-driven plot full of role-playing elements. Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to save the distinguished Hidden Legacy treasure, where mastery of all the weapons in his comprehensive arsenal is essential. Gameplay differs from previous *Mega Man* titles in that there's a lot more exploring to do within huge 3-D levels, and you can control all of the action from an adjustable camera revealing hidden secrets and battle hoards of baddies. as you flit between locations. The story is given even more impetus by the deluge of Anime cartoon cut-scenes. In fact, the characters and environments found within the game itself are also heavily influenced by this style, consisting of vivid well-rounded polygons.



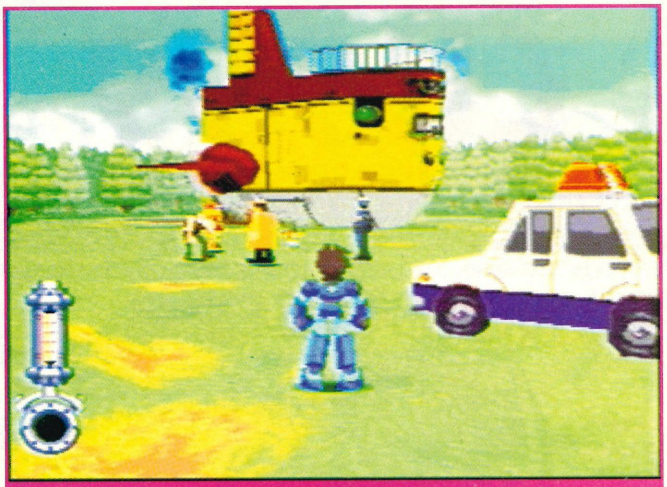
SPURT

By stark contrast, some of the background detail is ropy and uninspired. More often than not the walls warp more than the Starship

Written By Tom Sargent



[Above] Ulp. This giant Cyclops tank is the first boss you encounter (but by no means the last). Keep on the move while blasting his metallic hide.



[Above] Before long, you're wandering around outside in true role-playing style where you must interact with the strange locals.





Enterprise, especially when you rotate Rockman through 360°. The feeling of freedom is excellent however, almost similar to *Mario 64* (but nowhere near as technically advanced). People go about their business as they tend to do in RPGs and willingly interact with you. It's usually a matter of collecting one object so that you can get another, or open up another area of the map. Special mention must go to the gigantic bosses that you come across, plus the variety of devastating weapons,: from grenades and rocket launchers to power drills and spread blasters.

Fans of the old platform games will welcome *Rockman Dash* with open arms as it retains the spirit and feel of the classic 2-D action while at the same time updating and improving-upon the longevity. If you must have the Japanese version you'll struggle like mad to guess your way through the text. We recommend you hang on until mid February when the American version, entitled *Mega Man Neo* arrives in this country.



[Above] The currency in *Rockman Dash* is Zenny. The more you collect the better your weapons are when visiting a shop.



[Above] An example of just how big the bosses are comes in the form of this giant clanking spider thingy.

MOVES

MOVE IT, MOVE IT! ROCKMAN'S MOVES HAVE BEEN TRANSFERRED WITH THE MINIMAL OF FUSS. THIS LITTLE GUY WAS DESTINED FOR 3-D.



POINT HIM IN ANY DIRECTION AND HE RUNS LIKE A CHEETAH.



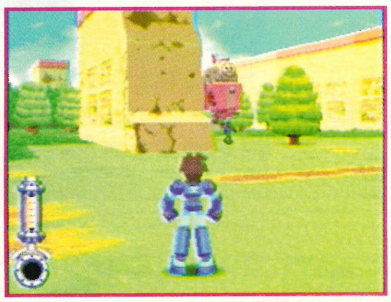
ROCKMAN LEAPS LIKE A SALMON DEPENDING ON HOW LONG YOU KEEP THE BUTTON PRESSED.

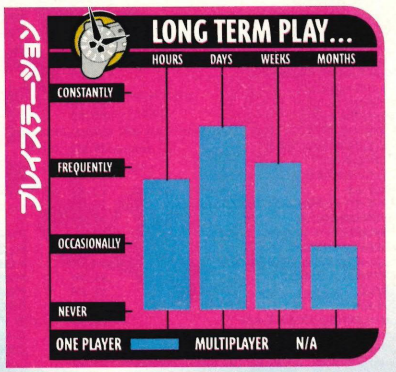


IF HE CAN REACH, ROCKMAN CLINGS TO LEDGES AND AUTOMATICALLY PULLS HIMSELF UP.



USE THE DEFAULT KICK WHEN CLOSE UP TO ENEMIES.





PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●●●○○○
SOUNDS	●●●●●●●●○○
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●●○○○
VALUE	●●●●●●●○○○
DRILLS	●●●●●●●●○○

PLAYED 80%

For smash get Dash.

ALTERNATIVELY:
TOMB RAIDER II (95%)
MEGA MAN 8 (82%)

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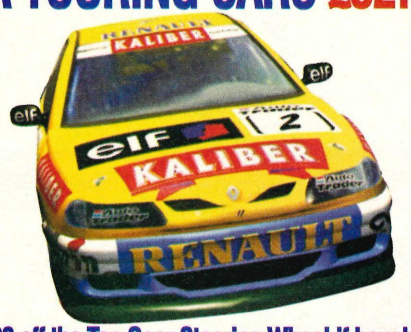
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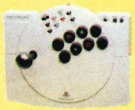
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BRAHMA FORCE

BRAHMA FORCE IS DESCRIBED AS: "THE THINKING MAN'S DOOM." DOES THAT MAKE DOOM "THE THICKIE BLOKE'S BRAHMA FORCE" THEN?

At first look

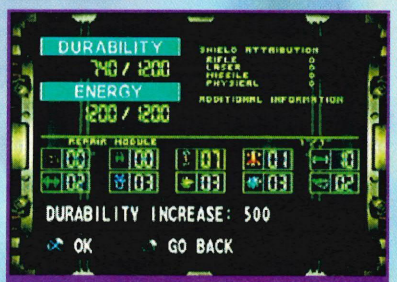
it's difficult to see how the PR statement about *Brahma Force* stands up. After all in *Doom*, you run around with a gun, finding keys to open doors and weapons with which to annihilate all manner of nasties. And in *Brahma Force* you... er, run around with a gun, finding keys to open doors and weapons with which to annihilate all manner of nasties.

That's just on the face of it though. Bubbling just beneath the surface there is more to *Brahma Force* than meets the eye (honest guv!). In fact, *Brahma Force* is a game that can be enjoyed on two levels. For the straightforward no-messing action fan, it can be played simply as a robotic version of *Doom*; blasting your way through level after level of mechanical assailants without a care in the world aside from making it to the end of the level in one piece. For the more discerning, thoughtful player though, there's more to it. Take the weapons for example...

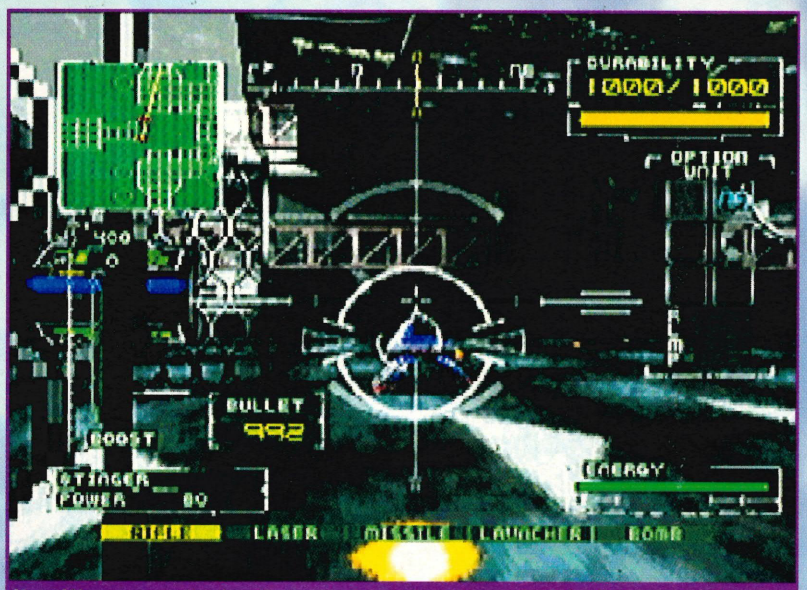
PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: JVC
Customer support: 0171 240 3121
Expected price: £44.99
Release date: Out February '98

ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD



[ABOVE] Collected items can be utilised here to upgrade your Brahma and bolster its defences. As you progress, this screen will become very familiar.



[ABOVE] The weaponry onboard your Brahma is autotargetting, all you need to do is point it in the right direction. Here one of the little blue skutter-type things gets on the wrong end of your stinger.

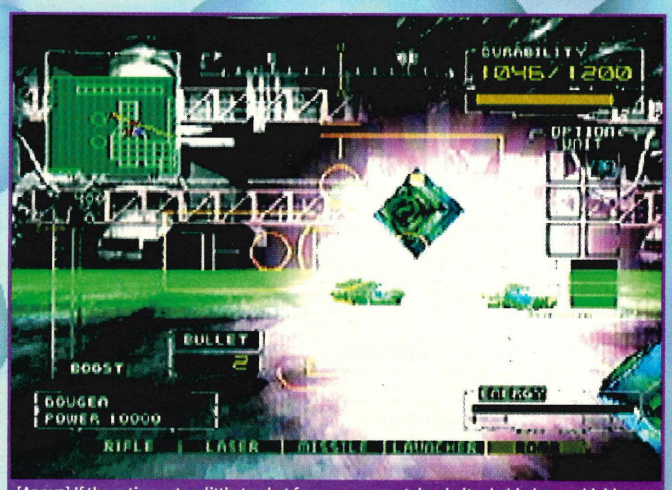
"The bigger they are, the harder they hit!"

YOU CALL THAT A GUN..?

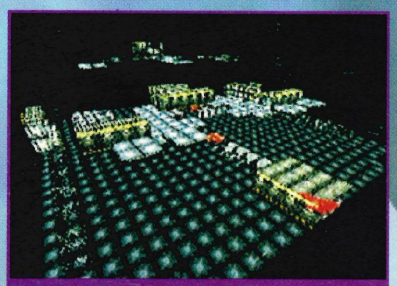
Numbering 22 in all, the various weapon systems vary in effectiveness depending on the construction of the target. This is something which the strategists amongst you can spend hours puzzling over as you use the analysis systems to work out which of your heavy weapons you're going to use. In particular to obliterate that annoying little blue robot who skitters around like a lethal version of one of the *Red Dwarf* skutters. Routes to the next level can be strategically planned using the onboard 3-D tactical mapping facility, and you even choose from a selection of optional extras that no self-respecting mech warrior should be seen without. No fluffy dice though... shame!

AND ANOTHER THING...

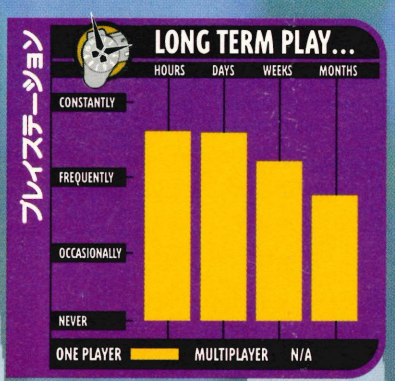
The second thing that separates *Brahma Force* from such mindless blast-'em-ups



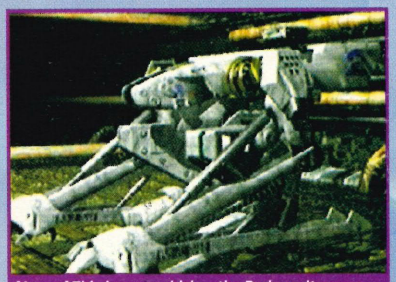
[ABOVE] If the action gets a little too hot for you, you can take shelter behind your shields. You can't actually fire while they're up though, so it's best not to use them for too long.



[ABOVE] Each stage is preceeded by a quick overview of the level in the form of a 3-D map. It gives you some idea of where you should be headed for.



Written By Roy Kimber



[Above] This is your vehicle – the Brahma. It moves an awful lot faster than its appearance suggests that it should be able to, and packs a hefty punch too!



[Above] Various electronic switches are scattered throughout the levels. This one operates a nearby lift, allowing you access levels unreachable by booster.

as *Doom* (not that there's anything wrong with mindless blast-'em ups – this just isn't one) is the storyline. The basic plot is fairly straightforward. Brahma Force is part of a naval assault on an asteroid station called Beltlogger 9.

However, things are not quite what they seem. To begin with, most of the Brahma Force – actually all of it apart from you – are wiped out on the initial attack run, shortly after receiving a strange transmission from some weird-looking bloke calling himself Dionisio Vega. And then there's the death under unusual circumstances of your girlfriend, or wife, or other close female relation, some time earlier. Could the events of the past be connected with the total cock-up that passes for your current mission? Do bears sit in the woods? Hang on, I think I miss-typed that...

Suffice to say that this game has hidden depths. They don't, thankfully, detract from the gameplay however. The action is generally smooth and fast. Your mech moves... well, like a large mechanical robot, so don't expect the action to be quite as fast as, say, *Doom* or *Duke Nukem*. It is fast enough though, and the enemy





[Above] This little blue thing looks fairly harmless, but in fact it's a mother-loving robot from hell! (Well, it's pretty nasty, anyway).

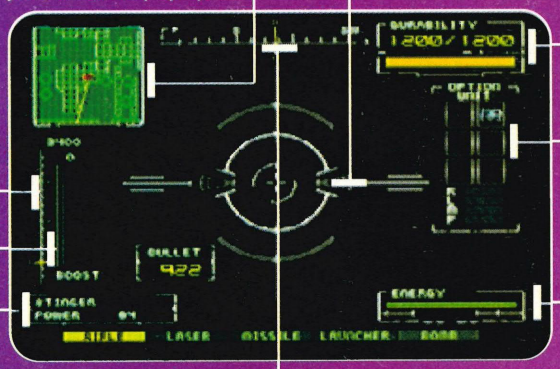


[Above] This screen pops up automatically when someone has a message for you. Initially it's a little disconcerting, but eventually you become used to it.

HUD, HUD AND MORE HUD

Your screen is positively crammed with the information that constitutes your Heads Up Display. Thankfully, the displays are compartmentalised, and can all be turned on or off.

1. Durability – you'd probably call it armour (but then what do you know?)
2. Option – this is where your 'optional extras' appear.
3. Weapon – your current weapon.
4. Booster gauge – shows the status of your booster, the Brahmas means of 'jumping'.
5. Sight – shows the cross-hairs for your current weapon.
6. Altimeter – lets you know how high up you are.
9. GPS window – Map if you prefer.



7. Compass gauge – it's a compass!
8. Navigation – helps you navigate (so what's the compass for?)

WOULDN'T WANT TO BE ON HIS TEAM!

IT'S ALWAYS A PROBLEM WITH GAMES WHERE YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE A PART OF AN AMAZINGLY LARGE COMBAT FORCE LIKE THE NAVY AND YET THERE ONLY SEEMS TO BE ONE OF YOU AGAINST ABOUT A MILLION ENEMY UNITS – TO EXPLAIN EXACTLY WHY THIS IS SO. IN BRAHMA FORCE THE SOLUTION IS SIMPLE – THE REST OF YOUR TEAM CAN'T FLY FOR TOFFEE. IT ALL HAPPENS SOMETHING LIKE THIS...



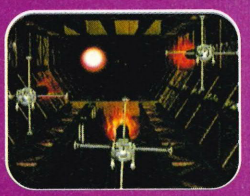
"BRAHMA LEADER TO BRAHMA FIVE. I'VE FORGOTTEN MY SANDWICHES. DO YOU THINK YOU COULD JUST POP BACK AND..."



"OH. UM... OKAY, BRAHMA FOUR... BRAHMA FIVE'S BEEN SUDDENLY INDISPOSED, DO YOU THINK YOU COULD JUST..."



"... AH. BRAHMA TWO AND THREE, WE'RE GOING IN! OH, AND SOMEONE SHOOT THAT... YOU KNOW, GUN-THINGY."



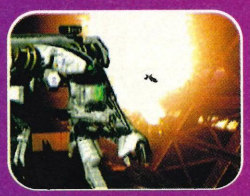
"OKAY, WE'RE IN! YOU TWO DROP BACK AND FLY *REALLY* SLOWLY WHILE I FLY AHEAD AND... ER, TRY AND DRAW THEIR FIRE."



"ROGER BRAHMA LEADER, DETACHING FROM BOOSTER UNITS NOW... WE HAVE SEPARATION."



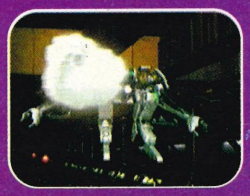
"WHICH BUTTON'S THE BOOSTER? THIS ONE? OH NO, THAT'S NOT RIGHT AT ALL. I... OH BUGGER."



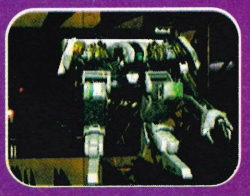
"BRAHMA LEADER, I THINK WE SHOULD HAVE SHOWN BRAHMA TWO HOW TO FLY BEFORE WE..."



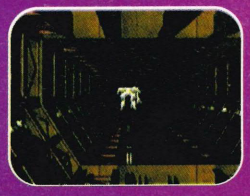
"...AAGH! WHERE THE HELL DID THAT COME FROM???"



"OW! I'M HIT, I'M HIT, OH NO, I'M HIT! THAT'S IT, I'M DONE FOR, I'M OUT OF IT, I'M..."



"... HANG ON. I'M ALRIGHT! I'M ALRIGHT! IT WAS JUST MY ARM, I'M OKAY! WELL, APART FROM..."



"... MY ARM. I... OH... OH DEAR."

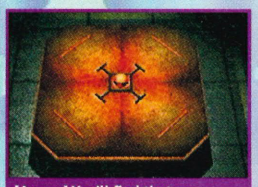


"KRRRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!!!!"



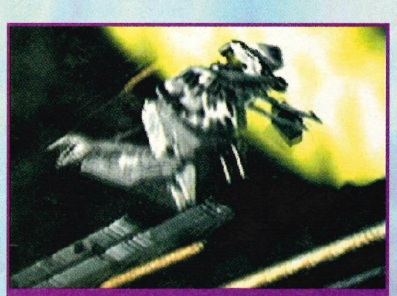
[Above] This huge robot is one that you will meet on the later levels. It bears a startling resemblance to your own craft – well, apart from being a different shape... and colour.



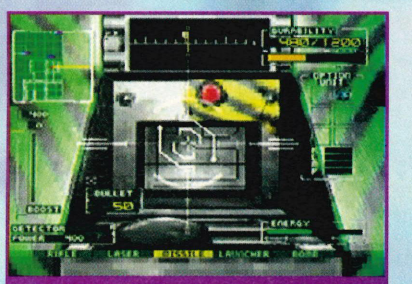


[Above] You'll find that you spend a lot of time using lifts.

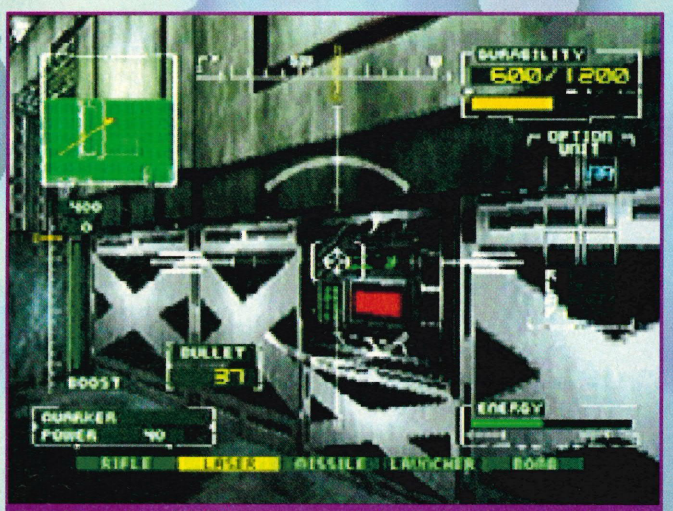




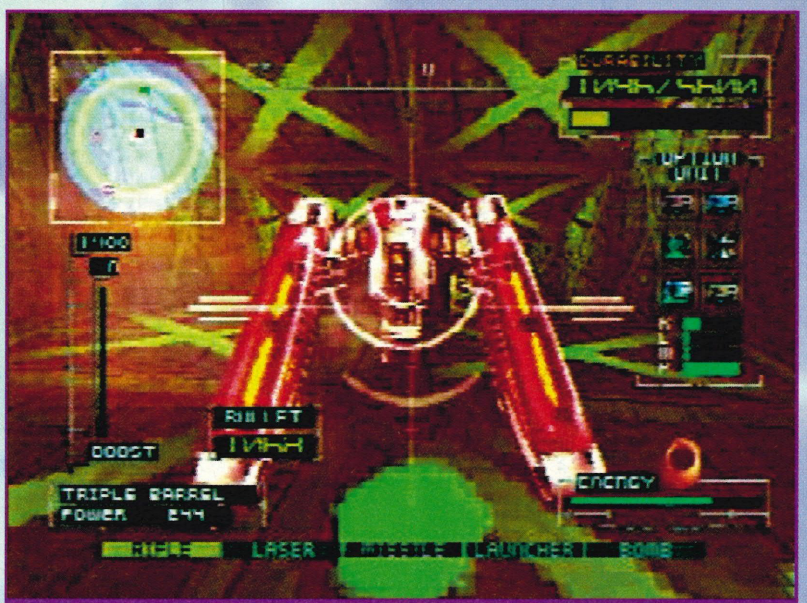
[Above] Your entry onto Beltlogger 9 doesn't go exactly as planned. Here we see yourn Brahma narrowly escape incineration in a nasty explosion.



[Above] This terminal is actually a save point, which allows you to save your progress to a memory card whenever you want – if you can find it of course.



[Above] Yet another switch. This one opens a nearby door. You know that because it is situated right next to... a door (not everything in this game has hidden depths).



[Above] This large red robot is NOT friendly. The extreme redness of the screen is a very bad sign, as is the low durability level. Both of them indicate that your Brahma needs to go and have a lie down. For a long time.

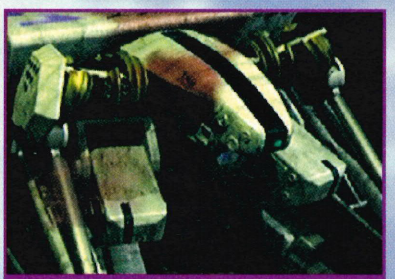
forces certainly don't drag their heels when it comes to attacking you. You know that old saying that your dad probably told you the day you came home after getting hammered in the school playground? "The bigger they are, the harder they fall"? Well *Brahma Force* exposed that lie quicker than "Big" Bruce Bryson did for me at primary school. In fact the bigger they are, the harder they hit.

Having said that, the smaller robot adversaries aren't exactly what you could call 'harmless.' Take your eye off them for more than a few seconds and you'll find yourself with considerably less mech than you started with.

The Technical Bit

For those among you interested in that sort of thing, *Brahma Force*, both the game and your illustrious combat unit, take their name from the vehicle that you pilot: the 'Bipedal Robotic Assault Heavy Mechanised Armour'. It should have been called 'One Bloody Big Mother Of A Robot', but 'Obbmoar Force' doesn't have quite the same ring to it, does it?

As far as summing up goes – *Doom* it's not, but then, it doesn't try to be. To get the most out of this game, you will need to put a bit of thought into your gameplay, but that's not a bad thing. *Doom* fans, for example, can raise the intellectual level of their gameplay. Die-hard strategic warfare fans on the other hand, can maybe let their hair down a bit, relax and enjoy a game that for once doesn't involve moving thousands of small plastic figures with daft names like 'Orcs' across their living room carpet. *Brahma Force* won't reunite people, put an end to war or abolish world hunger, but it's a great little game that offers shooting action and a fair dollop of strategy in equal amounts. Buy it, if only to hear the amazing ED209 stomping sounds as your Brahma smashes its way to victory. A good effort from JVC, but will there be a *Mechwarrior 3* to challenge it?



[Above] If you see this shot then you're in trouble - in fact, you're dead. You get to watch a nice little FMV sequence of your Brahma exploding though.

PLAY

Looks	8
Sounds	8
Gameplay	7
Value	7
Stomps	8

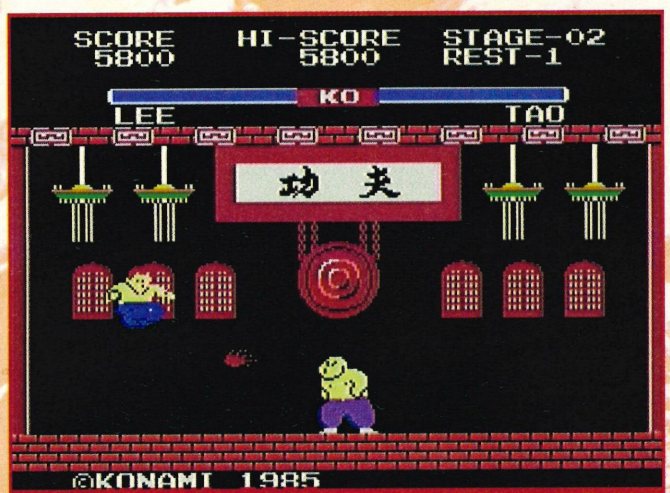
PLAYED 85%

Stompingly good mech-warrior action!

Alternatively:
Mechwarrior 2 (91%)
Duke Nukem (90%)

KONAMI ANTIQUES

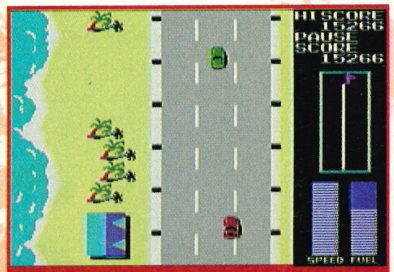
MORE ANCIENT 'CLASSICS' ARE HEART-MASSAGED AND RE-ANIMATED FOR RELEASE, BUT SHOULD THEY BE ALLOWED TO REST IN PEACE?



[ABOVE] *Yie Ar Kung Fu* – Not quite as you would remember it. There is no change of backdrop and some of the characters are different. It's still a classic game though.



[ABOVE] *Hyper Sports 2* – why are there only three events? What kind of sequel do you call this? A perfectly good game, tarnished, what a pity!

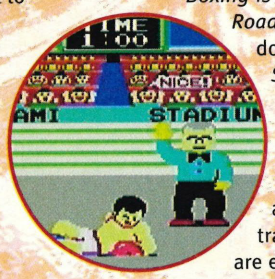


[ABOVE] *Road Fighter* – like Spyhunter only without the guns. It's also very hard, yet strangely addictive. Good fun, but not a classic by any means.

Written by Ryan Butt

Fans of the booming retro scene will be eager to sample this compendium of ten titles from the classic Konami arcade archives... but something very strange is amiss here.

There's no denying that this collection offers a wide and varied assortment of titles that cover most gaming spectrums (fighting, driving, sports, shoot-'em-ups), but why has Konami opted to include *Hyper Sports 2*? The original *Hyper Sports* was one of the greatest, not to mention addictive, sports packages ever made. *Hyper Sports 2* only has three poxy events (Skeet Shooting, Archery and Weight Lifting), so the enjoyment is very short lived. Also, *Yie Ar Kung Fu* isn't quite as you would remember it, with different characters and no change of scenery. Elsewhere within the dusty display cabinet are a couple of indisputable classics in *Gradius* and *Ping Pong* – the latter still serving up massive helpings of enjoyment, what with the spooky floating hands tip-tapping way in front of a comically stop and start audience.



PAST MASTERS

However, despite the gems, the rest of the games are relatively obscure affairs that alternate between the vaguely playable and the utterly dire. *Konami's Boxing* is reasonable, albeit basic, and *Road Fighter* is a quick-fire top down racing game – a bit like *Spyhunter* only without the guns. The rest are scraping the barrel stuff. *Mopiranger* is a quirky maze game set in a swamp. You have to battle against the current to rescue trapped swimmers before they are eaten by parasites, but it gets ridiculously difficult incredibly quickly. *Antarctic Adventure* is a simple, yet charming 3-D jaunt in which you play a penguin who must race *Out Run*-style against the clock to get from A to B, dodging and collecting things along the way. *Sky Jaguar* is just an utterly appalling shoot-'em-up with scrolling that judders, jerks, and shakes worse than a Elvis impersonator with Parkinson's disease! The antique collection is rounded off with a Japanese-titled game that looks reminiscent of *Salamander* – isn't bad, but redundant alongside the superior *Gradius*.

As a package (indeed a very expensive one on import), *Konami Antiques Vol. 1* is a generally enjoyable one, with the player feeling often a genuine glint of fond nostalgia. Unfortunately it is bogged down with too much crap and inferior versions of Konami classics (yes I am referring to *Hyper Sports* again, but I'm very bitter about it!).

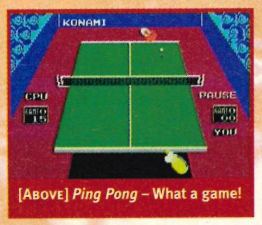
Like the *Namco Museum* collections, this is kept together with slick presentation and cool grooves, but also Like *Namco*, this first volume is very iffy as a whole. However, the scope for *Vol. 2* is considerably better. This is one for ageing gamers with one foot lodged firmly in the past.

PLAY INFORMATION

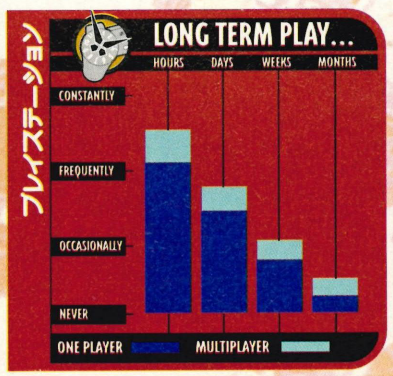
Publisher: Konami
Supplier: The Video game Centre on **01202 527314**
Price: £69.99
Release date: Out now (import)

ONE PLAYER | MULTIPLE PLAYERS | MEMORY CARD

"Scraping the barrel stuff..."



[ABOVE] *Ping Pong* – What a game!



PLAY

LOOKS	●●○○○○○○○○
SOUNDS	●●●●●○○○○○
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●○○○○
VALUE	●●●●○○○○○○
VARIETY	●●●●●●●○○○

PLAYED 58%

Varied, but dogged with too much rubbish

ALTERNATIVELY:
NAMCO ENCORE (79%)
ATARI COLLECTION 2 (OUT MARCH '98)

侍ブシドー

BUSHIDO BLADE™




PLAY

SUBSCRI P

AND CHOOSE FROM ONE OF THESE GAMES!



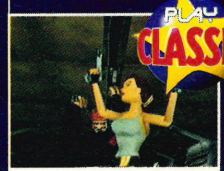
Fighting Force – rated 89% in PLAY!



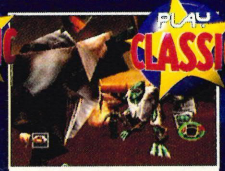
Abe's Oddysee – rated 90% in PLAY!



Formula 1 '97 – rated 90% in PLAY!



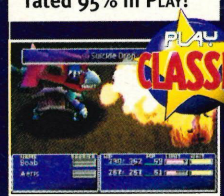
Tomb Raider II – rated 95% in PLAY!



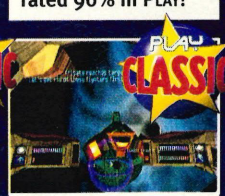
MDK – rated 90% in PLAY!



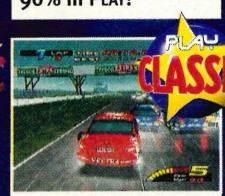
Duke Nukem – rated 90% in PLAY!



Final Fantasy VII – rated 93% in PLAY!



Colony Wars – rated 92% in PLAY!



Touring Car – rated 92% in PLAY!



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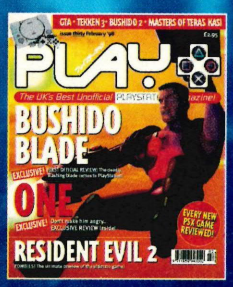
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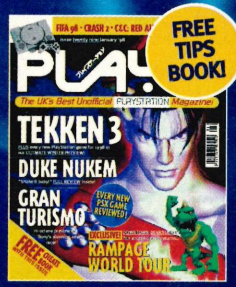
BE Save 25%

PLAY

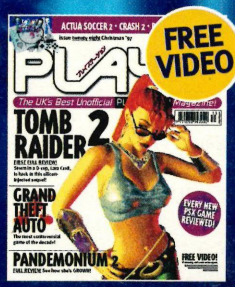
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Issue [30]
Exclusive first review of *Bushido Blade*, plus *Resident Evil 2*, *Foraken*, *Rascal*, *One*, and *GTA!*



Issue [29]
Look ahead to '98 with *Tekken 3*, plus reviews of *Duke Nukem*, *FIFA: RTWC 98*, and *Crash 2!*



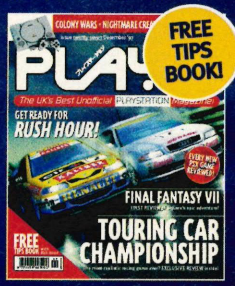
Issue [28]
First review of *Tomb Raider II*, plus *Actua Soccer 2*, *Grand Theft Auto*, *Broken Sword II!*



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



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



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

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NBA HANGTIME

SHOOT HOOPS AND SLAM DUNK WITH THE BEST OF THEM IN THE GAME OF GIANTS!

Bah Humbug!

Just when you think you've seen the last of something, back it comes to haunt you. The persistent stalker in this case is The Series That Would Not Die, the *NBA Jam* games! The latest in the long running line of fast-paced basketball games is *NBA Hangtime*, and it will be instantly recognisable as another sequel to anyone who has played one of these titles before.

In fact, that's half the problem. *Hangtime* isn't billed as a retro-style game, yet it looks quite astonishingly like *NBA Jam* on the Super Nintendo from several years ago. As the outdated appearance is the first thing you notice, it doesn't fill you with confidence about how good the rest of the game will be.

The gameplay is designed to be lightning quick with the minimal amount of fuss, so the only available way to play is with two towering American athletes on each team. Thanks to Multi-tap compatibility, any or all of these human skyscrapers may be controlled by you and your mates, and four player can be a real riot: "Pass me the ball for gawd's sake, I'm open!" is one of the few printable comments that crops up, as is "Are you insane? Don't shoot from... argh!"

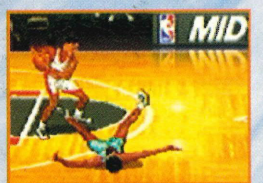
PLAY INFORMATION

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


ONE PLAYER


MULTI-TAP


MULTIPLE PLAYERS


[Above] On your arse, son. PLAY gets rough on the court.

SEE YOU IN COURT

It's all done with some very primitive player graphics that don't look anatomically correct, but at least you can recognise the major stars of the sport such as Scotty Pippen and Dennis Rodman – it's hard not to because every player has pumpkin-sized heads! Rodman's hair even changes colour from game to game in his trademark style, though he's yet to step onto the court in a skirt and high heels.

Known for its flaming hoops and over-the-top slam dunking action, the main additions to this version are subtler than you might expect. A handy new move lets you spin around a blocking member of the opposing team while you're in possession of the ball. There's also an all-new rooftop court high above the city, and even a quiz game relating to basketball trivia that will earn you secrets should you have all the right answers.

However, no matter how many new features are included, this NBA series is painfully showing its age. The developers can add as much as they like to the game engine, but the basic gameplay and dated appearance look absurd next to the truly next generation *Total NBA '97*. Considering you can buy that for the same machine and play that with four players too, there seems little point in going with *NBA Hangtime* unless you're looking for an altogether simpler after-pub arcade experience.


[Above] Playing on your own? It's always a worry whether your computer controlled team-mate will pass to you at the right time.


[Above] To make those famous players even easier to identify, or simply for hilarious comic effect, you can make their heads slightly larger.


[Above] Going for those extra tough three-point shots is a bit scary way up here on the new rooftop court. One gust of wind and it could be all over!

"Looks like *NBA Jam* on the Super Nintendo!"


[Above] Ah, you'd have to be soft to lose a game playing as the mighty Chicago Bulls. Hand pick your two players from the entire team line up.



PLAY

LOOKS	●●●○○○○○○○
SOUNDS	●●●●○○○○○○
GAMEPLAY	●●●●○○○○○○
VALUE	●●○○○○○○○○
HOOPS	●●○○○○○○○○

PLAYED 60%

Shoots but misses at the final buzzer!

ALTERNATIVELY:
TOTAL NBA '97 (92%)
NBA PRO '98 (FEBRUARY '98)

Written by Graeme Nicholson

ROCK & ROLL RACING 2 RED ASPHALT

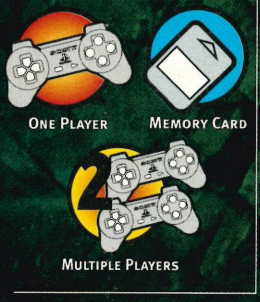
AFTER NEARLY TWO YEARS IN THE MAKING, IS INTERPLAY'S NEW HELL-RAISING ROAD BLASTER TOO LITTLE TOO LATE? YOU BETCHA...



Since Atari effectively invented the racing combat game with the classic *Road Blaster* (not to mention *Spyhunter*!), various incarnations of this simplistic, yet addictive type of game have sprung up on various consoles. It comes as somewhat of a shock to reveal that after nearly two years in development *Red Asphalt*, which adheres to this simplistic formula, is such a disappointment. The circuits are dull to the extreme, consisting of lack-lustre, blocky backgrounds that warp horribly up close. True, there's no pop-up, but this is hardly surprising considering the lack of overall detail that has been included, and the cars handle like a bull injected with morphine – all over the place!

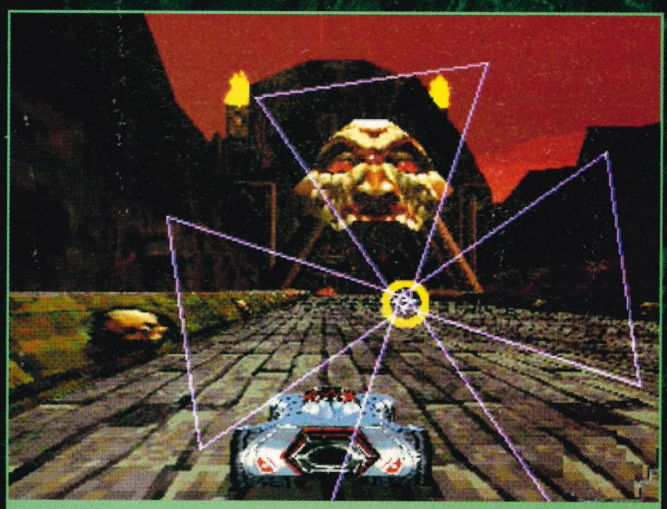
PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Interplay
Customer Support: 01628 423666
Price: £39.99
Release date: Out now





[Above] Allow an opponent who is tactically aware to get behind you and this will probably happen to you. Youch!



[Above] As you make progress, you can buy the best cars and really kick ass in the weapons department.



[Above] All too often you find yourself spinning through 360°. Frustrating? You don't know the half of it.



[Above] There are three different views to choose from: directly behind, above and behind and full screen (inside the car).

The GAMES THAT Time Forgot

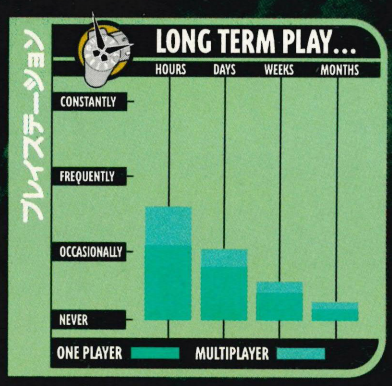
Even with the various upgrades (nitros, armour, new engines, tires and suspension) that are readily available to the player when enough cash has been generated from winning races, the sensation of rocketing around futuristic circuits on different planets is hardly warp factor nine.

ROTTEN ROLL

One of the better elements of the game are light-sourced weapons – they look extremely good; ripping into the opposing cars, even if the resultant explosions are feeble. As this is supposed to be 'Rock & Roll' racing, a special mention must go to the music, which is your typical grunge/rock/techno combination depending on which planet you're racing on. The sound effects are adequate, if a little repetitive and compliment the action well – especially the explosions.

Perhaps the biggest problem with the game is the control system. Your back-end tends to flip out far too easily, which means that you have to ease off the gas when negotiating a particularly long bend, thus losing precious ground on the leaders. Some of the add-ons that you can purchase later on relieve the frustration somewhat, but you can't help but have that nagging feeling that there's an awful lot of gameplay missing from what should have been a better game. The fact that Interplay rushed it onto the shelves without sending us a copy first speaks volumes. *Red Asphalt* is disappointingly mediocre.

"The cars handle like a bull injected with morphine – are all over the place!"



PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●●○○○○
SOUNDS	●●●●●●●○○○
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●○○○○○
VALUE	●●●●●○○○○○
ROAD HOGS	●●●●●●○○○○

PLAYED 55%

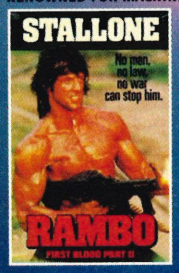
Banal blaster with some two player appeal

ALTERNATIVELY:
TWISTED METAL 2 (88%)
WIPEOUT 2097 (93%)

Written by Tom Seargent

EINHANDER, MORE FIREPOWER THAN...

IN *EINHANDER*, YOU'VE GOT A GAME THAT COULD SHOOT A FLY OFF A WATER BUFFALO'S ASS AT 40 PACES, PUTTING THE FOLLOWING GREAT SHOOTERS TO SHAME!



RAMBO – THE VIETNAM VET WHO IS IMPOSSIBLE TO KILL IS RENOWNED FOR MACHINE-GUNNING HIS WAY OUT OF A SCRAPE, BUT EVEN HE IS NO MATCH FOR THIS!



ARNIE – THE AUSTRIAN OAK AND GUNS GO HAND IN HAND, NOT EVEN THE TERMINATOR COULD OUT-SHOOT EINHANDER THOUGH!

ED-209 – THE SO-CALLED FUTURE OF LAW-ENFORCEMENT WOULD BE TRANSFORMED INTO A CHEESE-GRATER IN SECONDS IF IT HAD TO NICK EINHANDER!



[Above] The first mega-boss is this mechanical monstrosity. Following the tradition of shoot-'em-ups, you must blast the different sections to render it useless.

EINHANDER

Written by Ryan Butt

Nobody does it

better, ain't that a fact! Square has blessed us with quality from the word go, delivering some of the best PlayStation games ever with the type of consistency that would make lesser third-party publishers blush and cringe in equal measures. It would seem that no genre is unworthy of the golden Square touch, as it continues to prove by serving up perhaps the best old-school shoot-'em-up on the PlayStation in *Einhander*!

"IT HAS CONQUERED THE RPG AND BEAT-'EM-UP MARKETS, SO NOW THE JAPANESE MASTER TURNS ITS ATTENTION TO THAT OLD CLASSIC, THE SHOOT-'EM-UP!"

PLAY CLASSIC

ARMAGEDDON

The game is predominantly a side-scrolling shoot-'em-up with dazzling arrays of class that make it instantly accessible and incredibly addictive. You control the Einhander – a space craft with the type of firepower that could destroy a planet, just for the hell of it. With this vessel, the player must negotiate dozens of levels that throw just about anything up in your face. There are three different models of the Einhander craft to choose from, each varies in its weapon capacity, what it can handle and how quickly it chucks it out. The name 'Einhander' refers to the mechanical arm that is used to poach spare weapons from dying vessels and use them against the enemy



[Above] Huge billboards and neon lights make the atmosphere of Einhander very reminiscent of the classic futuristic Ridley Scott film, *Bladerunner*. Some can even be destroyed in a hail of gunfire.



[Above] This boss is particularly difficult. It will attack with a very unpredictable flaming yo-yo that takes you down in an instant.

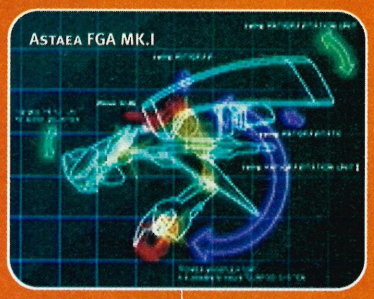
PLAY INFORMATION

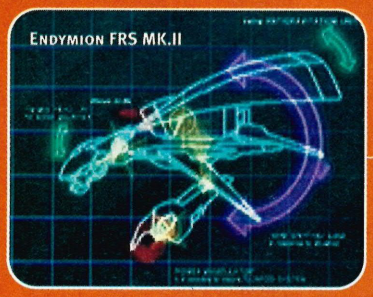
Publisher: Square
Supplier: Video Game Centre *on* 01202 527314
Price: 69.99
Release date: Out now (import)

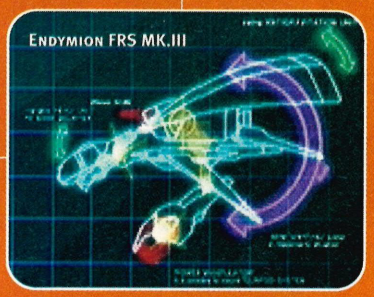
ONE PLAYER MEMORY CARD

EINHANDER DREI!

THERE ARE THREE DIFFERENT CRAFT TO CHOOSE FROM IN *EINHANDER*, THE MAIN DIFFERENCES BEING THE FIREPOWER AND ROTATION OF THE LIMB. AS YOU CAN SEE THOUGH, THEY DON'T VARY MUCH TO LOOK AT, BUT IN EXPERIMENTING WITH EACH CRAFT, THE DIFFERENCES BECOME INSTANTLY APPARENT. WE RECOMMEND MK. II AND III FOR BEGINNERS AND MK. I FOR SHARP-SHOOTING EXPERTS.









[Above] Techno city! *Einhander* stirs up some pretty stark images of the future – like this gleaming neon city that has particularly hostile inhabitants.

onslaught – such weapons include homing missiles, mines, laser cannons, spray-guns, photon swords and Armageddon-inducing blitz-rays. This arm can be rotated around the ship to fire from either above or below depending on how the enemy attack.

Initially, *Einhander* seems very reminiscent of such classic shoot-'em-ups as *Salamander*, *R-Type*, *Scramble* and more recently *Axelay*. However, the unique Square touch comes into effect by way of the surroundings and the way the dimensions are constantly changing throughout your charge. One minute it is basic 2-D action, then almost without you noticing, the perspective pivots so that you're surging into the screen. The main action that *Einhander* generates can only be described as intense. Things attack you constantly from the word go, and within no time at all the screen is congested with pint-sized crafts that can be picked off with ease, and huge mega-sprites that take prolonged effort to destroy. It has to be said that all of this occurs without any slow-down whatsoever!

OUT ON A LIMB

This really is classic stuff. Most games of this ilk can be effortlessly breezed through within a couple of goes, but not this monster. Despite having ten



[ABOVE] The incredible look of *Einhander* is partly die to the way in which the perspective changes at key points in the level.



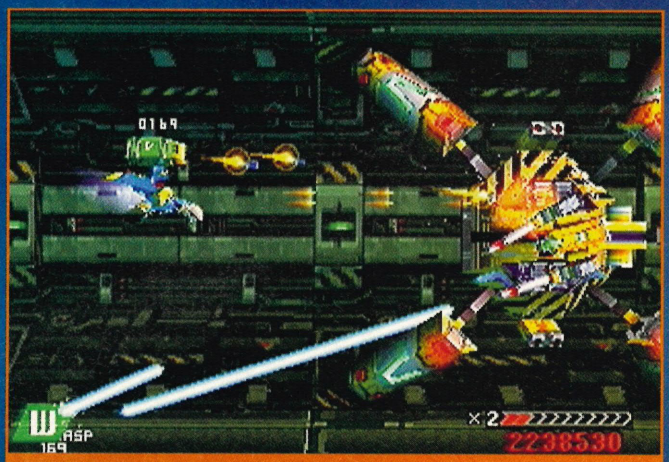
continues as standard, you'll lose them within the first three levels – leaving vast chunks of unexplored terrain that'll have you begging for extra credits.

The game follows the age-old shoot-'em-up formula – small ships scattered with a sprinkling of bigger ships, and then a huge, sorry HUGE mega-boss with multiple firing limbs that must be shot repeatedly if you are to have any chance of survival whatsoever. This, coupled with the pounding pacey soundtrack gives you one hell of a adrenaline rush!

On the rare occasions that you do divert your attention from the vast quantity of alien scum spewing bullets at you, you'll notice how atmospheric the surroundings are. The whole thing looks like a *Bladerunner* flashback, complete with huge digitised billboards and neon signs that can be blasted from your path.

Despite the dated nature of the game, *Einhander* air-brushes out any glitches and brings the side-scrolling shoot-'em-up bang up-to-date. Even if this type of game isn't normally of interest to you, only the bravest would deny that *Einhander* is nothing short of brilliance. Give 'em a hand, Square has done it again!

"*Einhander* air-brushes out any glitches and brings the genre bang up-to-date..."



[Above] Nimble reactions are essential if you are to out-manoeuvre the killer bosses and progress to the next stage, and believe us when we say that they take some shooting!







PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●●●●●○
SOUNDS	●●●●●●●●●○
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●●●●●
VALUE	●●●●●●●●○○
LIMBS	●●●●●●●●●○

PLAYED 90%

Another genre sewn-up by Square. Breath-taking!

ALTERNATIVELY:
XEVIOUS 3D/G (72%)
COLONY WARS (92%)





TOMBA!

ANY GAME THAT STARS A PINK-HAIRED, PIG-BATTERING CAVEMAN HAS GOT TO BE WORTH A LOOK, HASN'T IT? WELL, NO ACTUALLY.

What a month

it has been for obscure Japanese tosh, and nothing is more bizarre, and indeed, tosh, than this curious offering from little-known Whoopeecamp!

At face value, *Tomba!* seems very reminiscent of the old *Joe & Mac* games on the Nintendo Super NES, but there is a little more to it than just straightforward run, jump and bash. Unfortunately though, the RPG elements (which are undoubtedly the attraction with this otherwise mundane affair) are sadly lost on a western audience, making this little more than a pretty platform game with annoying Japanese text boxes that you can't skip through quickly enough.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Whoopeecamp
Supplier: The Video Game Centre on **01202 527314**
Price: £69.99
Release date: Out now (Import)

ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD



[Above] The Elfs thank you for the safe return of a villager.

PIG-POWER

The punkish caveman that you control starts off in a colour-splattered town populated by strange, and hostile pigs. Dispersing of said swines is bizarre in the extreme – bash them on the head, mount them (oo-er!), and then toss them against the nearest wall. This is not a game for vegetarians!

Other things also take exception to you, and are killed in the same way, such as snakes and spiders however, as is normally the case in low-budget obscure games like this, they all come back once you leave the area and return. How annoying is that?



[Above] The unintelligible Japanese text is a problem in *Tomba!*, but you can persevere quite far by using the old-fashioned method squinting until it looks like English words.



[Above] Hallucinogen central! Punk cavey enters the tripped-out confines of mushroom world, only to be chased by a floating squid. Far out man!

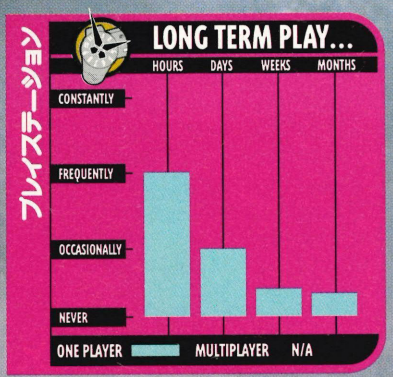
"This is not a game for vegetarians!"

The early sections of *Tomba!* can be negotiated and explored with the minimum amount of fuss – you generally get the gist that in order to progress past certain stages, you must find certain objects and use them at the point where progression is denied (starter clue: obtain the whirlwind from the mailbox, take it to the chimney and use – hey presto instant progression!).

Fair enough. But when the routes begin to diverse and the objects become more plentiful, things rapidly venture into the realm of the confusing. This is when the frustration sets-in as you find yourself traipsing back and forwards through the levels in the hope of finding something – anything, to give you some indication of how to get past some squiggly Japanese-symbol-sprouting troll, or how to propel yourself 20 foot into the air to grab an object which is vital to your quest.

Tomba! features the kind of rainbow eye-candy that you come to expect from a platform game of Japanese origin (see *Klonoa* last issue), and although there isn't really much to make this stand out as a 32-bit title, you will at least find yourself having fun, for a while. With no rational explanation of what the story entails and no real motivation for really being arsed with this whole affair, *Tomba!* ultimately comes across as being a complete waste of time. Even if you do have the will-power to fathom-out the various menus, maps and objects, we can see no real reward for doing so, other than another fluffy area filled with predictable baddies and perhaps the odd FMV sequence.

Even if you love games of this ilk, *Tomba!* is a waste of money, which would be better spent on, say, *Gran Turismo*. Stick it up yer jumper mate!



PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●○○○○○
SOUNDS	●●●●○○○○○○
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●○○○○
VALUE	●●●●○○○○○○
SWINES	●●●●●●●○○○

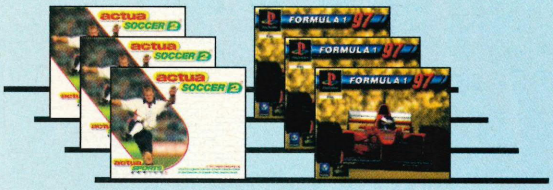
PLAYED 56%

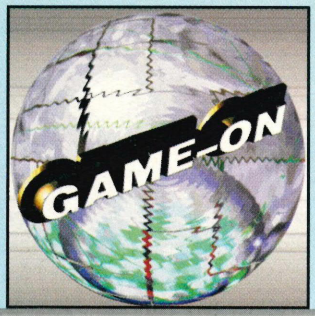
Unrewarding, dated platformer/RPG

ALTERNATIVELY:
FINAL FANTASY VII (93%)
SUIKODEN (80%)

Written by Ryan Butt

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MIDNIGHT RUN

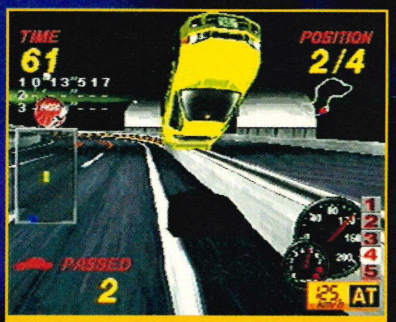
ROAD RAGE IN RUSH-HOUR! BELT-UP FOR KONAMI'S FUEL-INJECTED RACE THROUGH THE CHAOTIC STREETS OF DOWNTOWN TOKYO!

In the month



that sees the release of the stunning *Gran Tourism*, it's difficult to concentrate on anything else (eating and sleeping included) regardless of the fact that Konami's *Midnight Run* is a pretty decent racer. It's a game that offers absolutely nothing in the originality stakes, but remains faithful to the arcade version by providing more rushes than a sack of amphetamines!

From the main menu you can choose from just five cars initially (there are eight if you manage to win races on the hardest difficulty setting), which can be tuned to your own particular taste. The challenge of the game is to thrash it out around the streets and highways and beat your three rivals to the finish. There's no shooting or novel twist to the gameplay, but the crashes and full car flips help to gloss over the fact that it's a straight race from A to Z. There are eight difficulty levels stretching the longevity of the racing, and three track choices: Sunset Trial (easy), Starlight Heat (medium) and Midnight Run (hard).



[Above] Cars spin effortlessly through the air if you aren't careful. It looks fantastic but loses you time.

PLAY Information

Publisher: Konami
Customer support: Contact The Video game Centre on 01202 527314
Price: 69.99
Expected when: Out now (import)

ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD



HIGHWAY TO HELL

But this doesn't disguise the lack of a two player option or the general shallowness of the gameplay. Graphically, *Midnight Run* scores reasonably well. The cars bobble up and down convincingly and handle equally well. Just try zooming around a corner and clipping another car; if you're lucky the car will obligingly perform a metal-rending cartwheel down the highway. This might not impress the judges at a gymnastics display, but it spices up the chases tremendously.

Another impressive aspect is the way six or seven cars can be on-screen at once. It makes for some fun banger-racing confrontations – sometimes all you need to do is force your way past other cars to take the initiative. Konami may not have a world-beater in this shake 'n' bake racing game, but it's distracting for a while and manages successfully to bring the spirit of the arcade version into the home. However, you'd be better off feeding coins into that. At least that way you'll complete it for about two quid as opposed to 60!

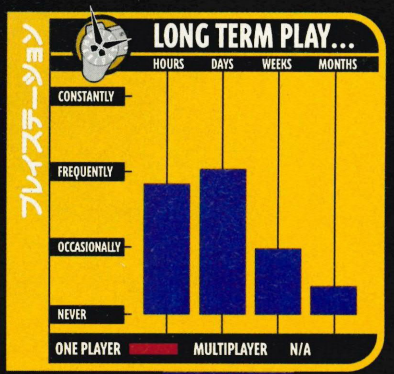


[Above] Choose from five cars, which can all be fine tuned to your own specifications.



[Above] If you smash into an opponent's car, the back end flips up into the air. Chances are you lose control for a split second too.

"More rushes than a sack of amphetamines!"



PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●●●●●●
SOUNDS	●●●●●●●●●●
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●●●●●
VALUE	●●●●●●●●●●
CARTWHEELS	●●●●●●●●●●

PLAYED 60%

Hum-drum racer with short term appeal

ALTERNATIVELY:
SIDE-BY-SIDE SPECIAL (63%)
RAGE RACER (94%)

Written by Tom Sargent

JET MOTO 2

AS THE SEQUEL - ALBEIT WITH A SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT TITLE - TO AN EXTREMELY WEIRD GAME, COULD THIS BE ANYTHING BUT STRANGE?

If someone offered to lend you their jet bike, what would you expect? If you'd think to find yourself freezing cold, stuffed in a life jacket with the spray in your face, the wind in your hair and the taste of salt in your mouth, then you should probably pop down to Bournemouth sea-front and hire an 'ordinary' jet bike. If however you fancy shooting along at incredible speeds barely a foot from the ground on a turbo-charged hover bike with magnetic-grapple cornering, then switch on your Playstation and take *Jet Moto 2* for a spin.



[Above] Tear down the earthquake-blasted streets of Los Angeles in the third level of the game. The blue and green trail behind the bike indicates is from the booster. Although limited, It regenerates at the end of each lap.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Sony
Supplier: The Video Game Centre on **01202 527314**
Price: £44.99
Release date: Out now (import)





ENTERTAINMENT COMMENCE!

Through the wonders of modern video gaming you have the chance to compete in the *Jet Moto* championships with the aim of showing the world that your hoverbike is better than everyone else's hoverbike.

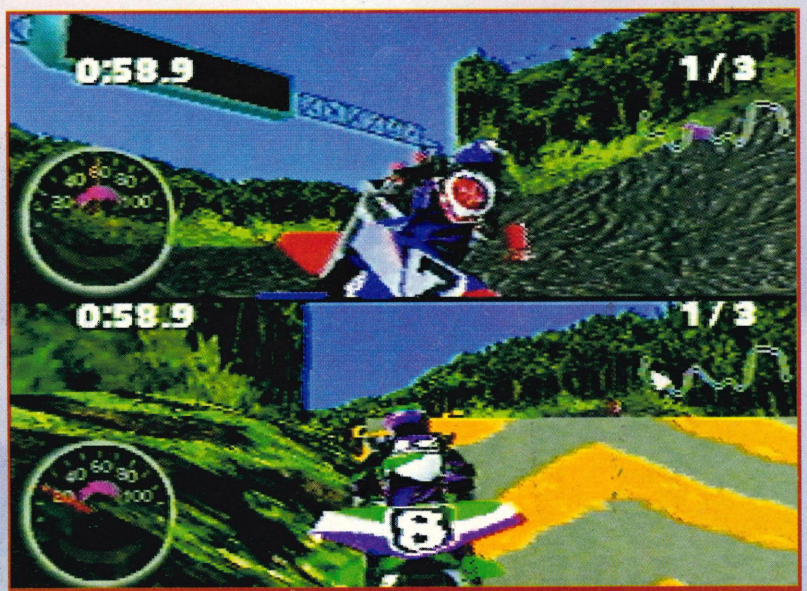
To accomplish this you assume control of one of ten colourful characters, each of whom have devoted all their free time to becoming the ultimate *Jet Moto* champion. In addition to being aesthetically different, each character also has their own unique handling characteristics, and as you learn the ins and out of the game, you'll gradually learn which racer is best suited to your own particular style of play.

Initially you'll be able to access just three tracks. They can be played in any order, or singly, but to successfully unlock new tracks, you must race the tracks in a preset order as a 'racing season.' Succeed, and you'll have access to newer, even weirder courses on which to demonstrate your jet biking prowess.

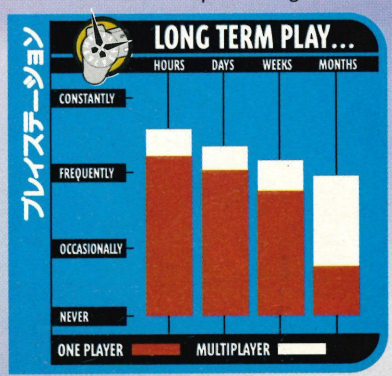
Hovering (at first) a foot or so off the ground, your bike has a simple control system and no brakes, so to slow down you have to release the accelerator and hope for the best. For tighter turns the L1/R1 buttons make your racer lean over, and for really tight turns you have the use of a magnetic grapple. This is an energy device which latches onto special magnetic poles strategically situated around the track. The positioning of the


[Above] The red markers indicate the track boundary. Not much use when you're in the air though...


[Above] ... and so you'll have to get used to seeing this message appear frequently.



[Above] The two player action can be viewed either split vertically, or split horizontally. Both views have their pros and cons. This view, for example, gives a nice wide view of the track but doesn't let you see very far ahead.



Written by Roy Kimber

THE USUAL SUSPECTS

You can choose from no less than ten (count 'em) different jet bike riders. Each character has different speed, acceleration and weight (the latter affecting their handling). They also seem to have somewhat 'eccentric' personalities.

Mark 'The Max' Corri



A 'seasoned racer', Mark is fairly average for speed, acceleration and weight, making him ideal for a beginner – provided that beginner doesn't want to win very often.

'Vampeera' Silver



Modelling herself on the legendary 'creatures of the night', Miss Silver has a higher top speed than 'The Max', balanced by a lower acceleration. She also has very bad taste in clothes.

Dak 'Gadget' Hogan



Looking remarkably like Howling Mad Murdoch from classic series *The A-Team*, 'Gadget' is faster than 'Vampeera' and 'The Max', but fatter too, meaning that he's heavier and therefore less manoeuvrable.

Vanessa Steele



A former stunt woman, Vanessa Steel now rides jet bikes to supplement her career as a swimsuit model. A high top speed is balanced by her heavy weight – most of which presumably as a result of her breasts.

Vladimir 'The Hun' Yurov

Presumably a German, this cold-faced rider has a high top speed, but carries a lot of weight and has a lousy acceleration, not making him a great choice if you're the sort of player who crashes a lot, as you'll lose time getting going again.



Dayna 'Bomber' Hogan



Dayna's incredible speed combined with her high weight (and doesn't she look just so fat?) means that she handles like her namesake - fast, dangerous and not that easy to turn. She also looks great in green.

'Li'l Dave' Katayama



Small and light, 'Li'l Dave' has a low top speed but an awesome acceleration, and corners like something that takes corners really sharp and, you know, smoothly.

Hari 'Wild Ride' Kelley

Despite a nasty accident with some blue hair dye, Hari Kelley is a very manoeuvrable racer, with a pretty useful acceleration. She also (apparently) likes to party hard, so the after-race party should be a lively one if you choose her.



Jeanine 'Blade' Fly



With a fairly average top speed and weight but a decent acceleration, 'Blade' is well named and cuts along the course like an attractive, lycra-clad knife.

Otomo The 'Technician'



With a surname like his, Otomo couldn't have become anything other than what he is: a techno-freak. His abilities rank alongside those of 'The Max', with just a slight edge due to a better acceleration.

"Although this game is a lot of fun, you have to wonder whether it really constitutes a sequel."

poles changes depending on the course – the roller coaster track, for example, has the poles are underneath and in the centre of the track, rather than at the side, thus enabling jet bike riders to cling to the track as they negotiate huge rises and dips.

Deja Vu, Anyone?

Although *Jet Moto 2* is a lot of fun, you have to wonder whether it really constitutes a sequel. Graphically and as far as the gameplay is concerned, *Jet Moto 2* is extremely similar to the original *Jet Moto* (or *Jet Rider* as it was known over here). So much so in fact, that *Jet Moto 2* could almost be an expansion disc for the original game, and as such, it's probably a little expensive.

That said though, the new tracks are well-thought out and great fun to play, and should keep anyone – even those who already have the original game – occupied for ages. The only complaint is one of direction – or rather – lack of it. When you're zooming around the landscapes at break-neck speed, it's not always obvious which way the track is going to bend next.

It's all very well having small coloured markers at ground level, but when you spend the majority of your time hurtling along half-way up walls or, more often than not, flying through the air, would it be too much to ask for some kind of aerial guidance too? You'll soon get tired of seeing the words "track boundary" come up as you're about to have yet another collision. Decent fun, but *Jet Moto 2* is not a vast improvement.





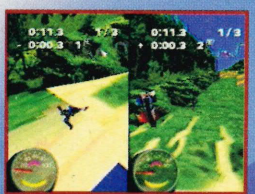
[Above] This early track is a fairly simple one; allowing players to familiarise themselves with the bike controls and practice manoeuvring skills.



[Above] One good thing about this game is the walls which can be used when negotiating tricky bends. Care must be taken not to lean too far over though.



[Above] In addition to broken roads, you'll encounter other obstacles – like this airliner. Oh, and you'll hit them...



[Above] Here both players misjudge a turn and decide to have a lie down for a while.

PLAY

Looks	8
Sounds	5
Gameplay	8
Value	7
Aerial Stunts	8

PLAYED 78%

Fun, but essentially more of the same

Alternatively:
Moto Racer (86%)
Jet Rider (85%)

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PUYO PUYO SUN



[Above] All Puyos are alive and actually have very cute facial expressions that change constantly during play. Go easy on them.

Bizarre Japanese curiosity or classic puzzler? You decide!

If your expereince of puzzle games begins with *Tetris* and ends with *Super Puzzle Fighter*, you only know half the story. The *Puyo Puyo* games have been available in some form over the years on almost any system you could think of, but these days they only tend to be published in Japan.

From Mega Drive to Macintosh, the series has always managed to be uncommonly playable and the good news is this incarnation continues the tradition perfectly! This is how it works: in a rectangular window filling half the screen, sets of two coloured blobs (the 'Puyos') drop down in much the same way as the blocks of *Tetris* do. You move the pairs left and right in the time it takes for them to hit the bottom of your screen and rotate them with the aim of grouping four or more blobs of the same colour on the steadily growing heap. When you manage this, all connected Puyos of the same colour vanish from your screen and gravity causes any suspended little cells to fall down; hopefully completing other groups as they drop into place.



[Above] The plot? Winged dragon babes are tampering with the sun to make it hotter, as is told by the insane intro anime sequence.

"You'll fall in love with Puyo!"

PLAY Information

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



One Player — Multiple Players



Split Screen



[Above] The lizard riding boy is going particularly tough on you – he'll have to pay dearly! Check out the wild colours!

BEAN THERE, DONE THAT

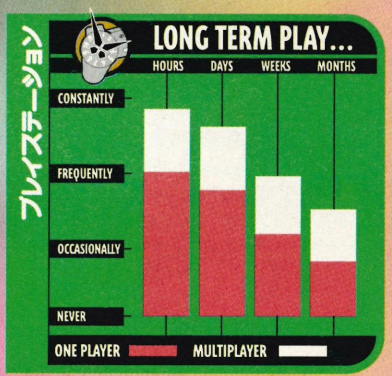
A great part of the strategy you must learn is working out lengthy chain reactions of this type that clear a nice big area of your screen by placing a key, triggering bean in just the right place. While you're doing all this, another player, whether virtual or physical, is having a go in their own similar window on the other side of the TV screen. The Puyos you are blasting away cause clear spheres to drop on top of the other guy's pile, blocking his intricately planned chain reactions with any luck. However, he's doing the same thing to spoil your game, and such is the battle of *Puyo Puyo*!

If you thought *Bust-A-Move 2* was fun, you'll fall in love with *Puyo Puyo* and its strongly addictive gameplay in seconds. This version comes with several variations on the classic game and even a 16 player league played out by two bean droppers at a time, not to mention Casio-beat intro music which must have been recorded by John Shuttleworth (awful keyboard comedian)! With a UK release unlikely, this is your only chance! Take it!





[Above] An AIDS message seems a bit heavy to flash up between games on a game like *Puyo Puyo*, don't you think?





[Above] A shaft of light indicates where a rogue ball from the overheating sun will land on your screen. keep an eye out!

PLAY Rating

Looks	6/10
Sounds	6/10
Gameplay	9/10
Value	5/10
Critters	9/10

PLAYED 87%

Don't delay! Pop a gelatinous bean today!

Alternatively:
Hebereke's Popitto (43%)
Super Puzzle Fighter 2 (90%)

Written by Graeme Nicholson

SKULLMONKEYS

IT'S MONKEY BUSINESS AS USUAL FOR THE TEAM WHO CREATED *EARTHWORM JIM* – THE INVERTEBRATE PACKING AN UZI. SET SAIL FOR AN ODD-BALL PLATFORMER FROM EA.

Not since the inconceivably weird (but wonderful) *Earthworm Jim*, has a game registered so highly on the Oddometer.™ Let's be honest, clay animation is scary stuff. Chaz and Morph from Take Hart are a prime example of the Devil's Putty, and the stop-go animation of Ray Harryhaussen (especially Talos, the giant metal God from *Jason and the Argonauts*) was enough to send you rushing behind the sofa.

SkullMonkeys, like it's half-cousin *Earthworm Jim* is a beautifully playable platform game that scores highly in the originality stakes and looks absolutely gorgeous. You play the part of Klaymen (the plasticine hero from the PC adventure game, *The Neverhood*) whose mission is to prevent the über-baddy, Klogg, from obliterating your home-world. You've stopped this nutter before, but now Klogg has conned the backward dwellers of planet Idznak, called Skullmonkeys, into helping him.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Customer support: 01753 549442
Price: £44.99
Release date: February


One Player


Memory Card


[Above] Kaboom! Butt-bounce on the Skullmonkey hordes and watch them explode!

SKULDUGGERY

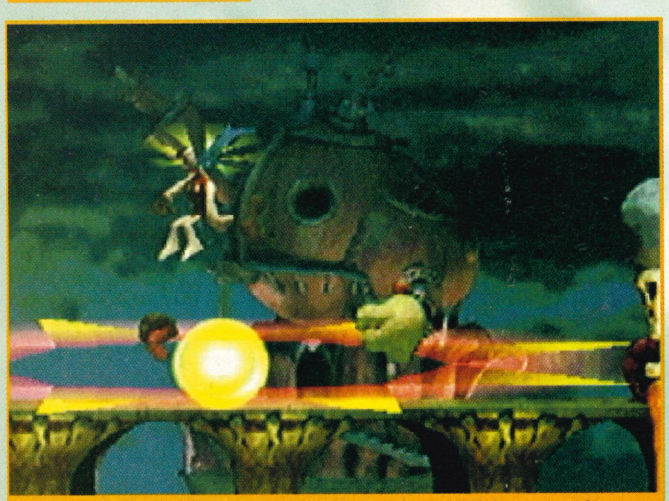
The intro sequence is noticeable for its originality, in that the oft-used FMV rendering has been renounced for a more old-fashioned clay animation technique used to such splendid effect in Nick Park's Wallace and Gromit. It may not be to everybody's taste, but this approach is a breath of fresh air and even more surprisingly, the main characters in the game are brought to life in exactly the same way. The animation is superb – totally seamless and consisting of over 20,000 frames. In what constitutes an enormous challenge, there are 100 levels of surreal action viewed from a 2-D, sideways scrolling perspective. The backgrounds, it has to be said, are stunning – consisting of multifarious ideas which create a wicked atmosphere.


[Above] The backgrounds look beautiful and consist of several layers of parallax scrolling.

Once you get over how irreverent the game is, ie the fact that you make use of such bizarre weapons as the 'Fart Head', 'Hampster Shield', 'Univeeerse Enema' and 'Phoenix Hand' to forge your way through the levels, it feels great to play. The meat of the game consists of destroying all the Skullmonkeys that thwart your progress through each level.

SKULLCAP

Skullmonkeys are ape-like creatures with skulls for heads (we told you this was strange) which come in various guises; some of them pose little problem other than getting in your way, where as others


[Above] Squish the Skullmonkeys by means of the 'butt-bounce'. This is an extremely satisfying manoeuvre that rids the screen of most of the buggers. Not like Mario at all.

MONKEY NUTS 'N' BOLTS

Collect an aggregation of weird and wonderful goodies. The early levels point-out what they all do too. That's terribly kind of them.

Bullets Collect 'em and blast the Skullmonkeys. Simple.

Clay balls collect 100 for an extra life. Huzzah!

Halo These will protect your clay ass from one hit.

Ma bird Jump on these checkpoints.

Swirly Q collect three of these and get transported to a secret area.

Teleport Jump into these to go to a new level.

Present Ball Pick this up to reveal, wait for it...a present.

Phart Head Press L2 to phart a Klaymen klone.

Phoenix Hand Press L1 to fire off a homing bird.

1970s Collect three to go to the 1970s, flares 'n' all.

Now get down to it monkey!

Written By Tom Sargent



[Above] He can wave his arms around all he likes, but nothings going to stop your special weapon. The further you get into the game, the more abstract it becomes. Still, it's a joy to play.



[Above] Some of the later levels are snow-covered. Nearly every scenario is conveyed in one way or another. It's always a case of hopping around on platforms though.



[Above] The boiler area is flaming hard – you need quick reflexes or you get fried.

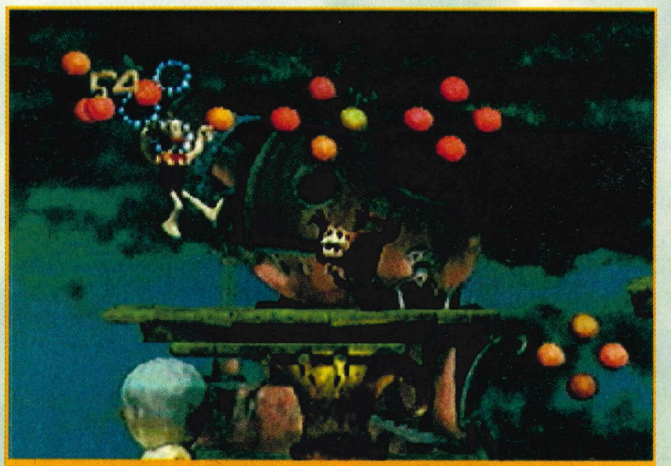


[Above] With his halo aglow, Klaymen spots an extra life, kindly ear-marked by the tutorial level.

"The animation is superb... totally seamless"



[Above] Pharting this deadly gas can be, well... deadly. Use it on enemies,then get out afterwards.



[Above] Clay balls are the currency of the game to maintain those all-important extra lives.

BORED OUT OF HIS SKULL

Let Klaymen stand around for more than a few seconds and he amuses himself with a number of comic routines. We let him stand for an hour and milked him dry.



Pants around the ankles.



Juggles his chest balls.



Head removal trick

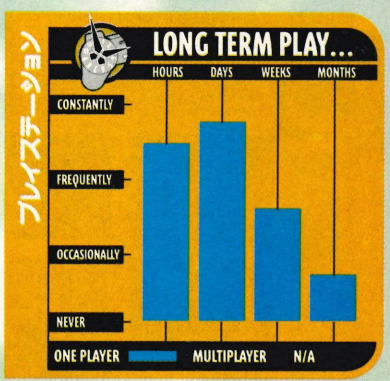


His head explodes!

carry objects or even glow red – making them indestructible for a few seconds. The easiest way to kill them is by way of the 'butt-bounce', a kind of jump which makes them explode into tiny giblets. But the real fun comes when you fire Klay at them, or better still, knock 'em dead with your special arsenal.

To spoil the party, *Skullmonkeys* does become a bit samey after a while and we don't reckon that it'll take professional platform gamers that long to crack. That's not to say that it is too easy – it isn't, but you soon get to grips with the gentle learning curve and in no time you're racing through the levels.

Platform games have been surprisingly thin on the ground for the PlayStation, but with the release of the brilliant *Abe's Oddysee* and now *Skullmonkeys*, perhaps more gamesplayers will sit up and realise that there's life aplenty in this genre.





[Above] These mid-level clock-face creatures fire balls of energy at you. There are tons of baddies to avoid or kill.



PLAY

Looks	●●●●●●●○○○
Sounds	●●●●●●●●●○
Gameplay	●●●●●●●●○○
Value	●●●●●●●●○○
Plasticine	●●●●●●●●○○

PLAYED 83%

Pleasurable plasticine playability

ALTERNATIVELY:
Abe's Oddysee (90%)
Pandemonium 2 (72%)

Gameplay

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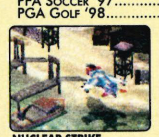

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RALLY CROSS

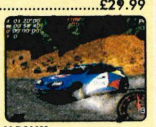
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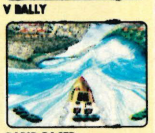

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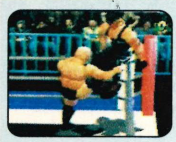
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Felony 11-79



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Actua Ice Hockey.....6TH FEBRUARY
Actua Tennis.....29TH MAY
Aironauts.....MARCH
Apache Longbow.....FEBRUARY
Broken Helix.....MID FEBRUARY
Bugriders.....28TH JANUARY
Chill.....20TH MARCH
Deathtrap Dungeon.....20TH MARCH
K-1 The Arena Fighters.....END JANUARY
Killing Time.....FEBRUARY
Mace.....29TH JANUARY
Metal Gear Solid.....END FEBRUARY
Midnight Run.....FEBRUARY
Nagano Winter Olympics.....FEBRUARY
NBA Hangtime.....FEBRUARY
NHL Open Ice.....FEBRUARY
Other Life Azure Dreams.....MARCH
Premier Manager '98.....MARCH
Pro Pinball Timeshock.....FEBRUARY
San Francisco Rush.....29TH JANUARY
Screamer 2.....FEBRUARY
Snow Racer.....FEBRUARY
WCW Nitro.....END JANUARY
Wrecking Crew.....END JANUARY

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PL2(3)

PLAY Q&A

Trust the PLAY experts take up the challenge and guide you through the stickiest moments of gaming hell and beyond. Oh yes!

Dear PLAY,
I have recently bought *The Lost World*. However I'm stuck on the fourth level. Got any codes?
Oliver Kettle, Enfield

For full level select, enter: ■, ×, ●, ▲, ▲, ×, ■, ●, ▲, ●, ×, ■ as a password three times. Note, you will also be able to view the FMV sequences as well – bargain.

Dear PLAY Magazine,
How do I get across the sewers in Sony's *Broken Sword II*?
A Mong, York

In the sewer examine the rightmost arch and use the sewer key to break a hole in the plaster. Pull the lever, examine the mechanism and board the boat. Move the boom over the right-hand path, then lower the chain. Take the chain hook and attach it to the exposed cog. Board the boat and turn the winch...

Dear PLAY,
I'd like to know if there are any cheats for *Felony 11-79* yet.
Chris Walchester, Stoke-on-Trent

There are indeed. For an alternate camera view, hold Select and s during play. For a couple of secret vehicles, try completing the Metro City track in under four minutes to drive the Diablo, and complete the Seaside track to drive the city bus.

Dear PLAY,
I'm struggling on *Final Fantasy VII*. Are there any cheats available?
Kelvin Jackson, Bournemouth

For easy Choccobo races hold L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 while racing a Chocobo to slowly restore energy. Additionally, for easy Battle Square handicaps rapidly tap ■ during the 'slot machine' handicap sequence in the Battle Square section at Gold Saucer. The slots will slow right down, allowing an easier selection of your handicap.

STATION

THE NEW YEAR IS WELL AND TRULY UNDERWAY AND RIDING ON THE CREST OF ALL THE NEW RELEASES COMES THE USUAL AVALANCHE OF NEW CHEATS AND PASSWORDS. KEEP YOUR OWN TIPS POURING IN AND SEND THEM 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

TOCA TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

Cheat mode
Enter one of the following player names to activate the corresponding cheat function. Tiff Needell will say "Cheat mode enabled" to confirm correct code entry.

Disable collision detection
Enter CMNOHITS as a player name.

Better traction
Enter FLEXMOBILE as a player name. A pink car with rear wheel drive and better traction will be selectable.

Night mode
Enter CMSTARS as a player name.

Volcanic track
Enter CMDISCO as a player name.

Helicopter view
Enter CMCOPTER as a player name.

Cartoon background
Enter CMTOON as a player name.

Starry sky background
Enter CMSTARS as a player name.

Bonus cars
Enter CMGARAGE as a player name.

Go-kart mode
Enter CMCHUN as a player name.

Aggressive cars
Enter CMMAYHEM as a player name.

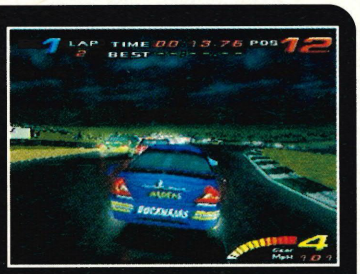
Shoot other cars
Enter TANK as a player name. Use the horn to shoot other cars.

Low gravity
Enter CMLOGRAV as a player name.

Reverse falling rain
Enter CMRAINUP as a player name.

Fast mode
Enter XBOOSTME as a player name. All cars will move faster.

Micro Machines-type view

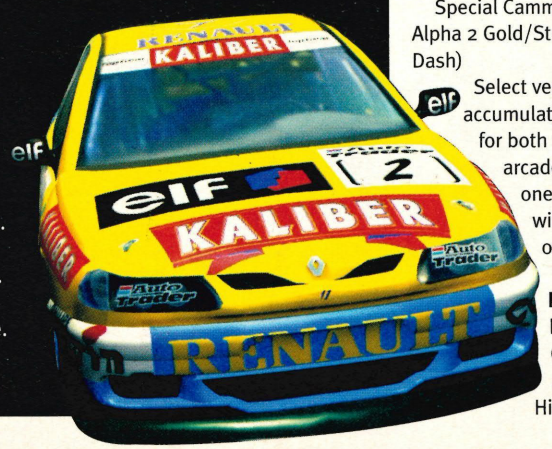




Enter CMMICRO as a player name. An overhead view similar to Micro Machines will be enabled.

Upside down view
Enter CMUPSIDE as a player name.

Film camera view
Enter CMFOLLOW as a player name. The camera angle will change to the one in the demonstration mode.



ONE

Level select
Enter **HEVYFEET** as a password.
All weapons
Enter **MAXPOWER** as a password.

Level		Password
1	–	(None)
2	–	DIYGIXRA
3	–	KCSVJTJB
4	–	RWLKLPBC
5	–	YQFZMLTC
6	–	FLZNOHLD

GRAND THEFT AUTO

Cheat mode
Enter **BSTARD** as a player name for level select, all weapons, all armour, and unlimited ammunition options.

STREET FIGHTER COLLECTION

Fight as Cammy (Street Fighter Alpha 2 Gold/Street Fighter Zero 2 Dash)
Select M. Bison (Vega) in arcade mode and complete the game in first place with a score greater than 50,000. Enter CAM as initials on the high score screen. Select versus mode, Highlight M. Bison (Vega), and press Start (three times).

Special Cammy ending (Street Fighter Alpha 2 Gold/Street Fighter Zero 2 Dash)
Select versus mode and accumulate a total of over 99 wins for both players. Then, complete arcade mode without losing one round. Cammy's picture will appear at the last part of the ending sequence.

Fight as Evil Ryu (Street Fighter Alpha 2 Gold/Street Fighter Zero 2 Dash)
Highlight Ryu on the

MASTER

character selection screen in arcade mode and press Start (three times).

Fight as classic version of characters (Street Fighter Alpha 2 Gold/Street Fighter Zero 2 Dash)
Highlight Ryu, Ken, M. Bison (Vega), Sagat, Dhalsim, or Zangief and press Start. For Chun Li, highlight her character and press Start (twice).

Fight as Akuma/Gouki (Super Street Fighter 2 Turbo/Super Street Fighter 2X)
Select versus mode, highlight Ryu, and press L1 + L2 + R1 + R2.

Alternate costumes (Super Street Fighter 2 Turbo/Super Street Fighter 2X)
Select versus mode. Highlight and fighter and press Select at the character selection screen.

G-Police

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

Fast civilian traffic
Enter **BENIHILL** as a password.

Enable sirens
Enter **WOOWOO** as a password.

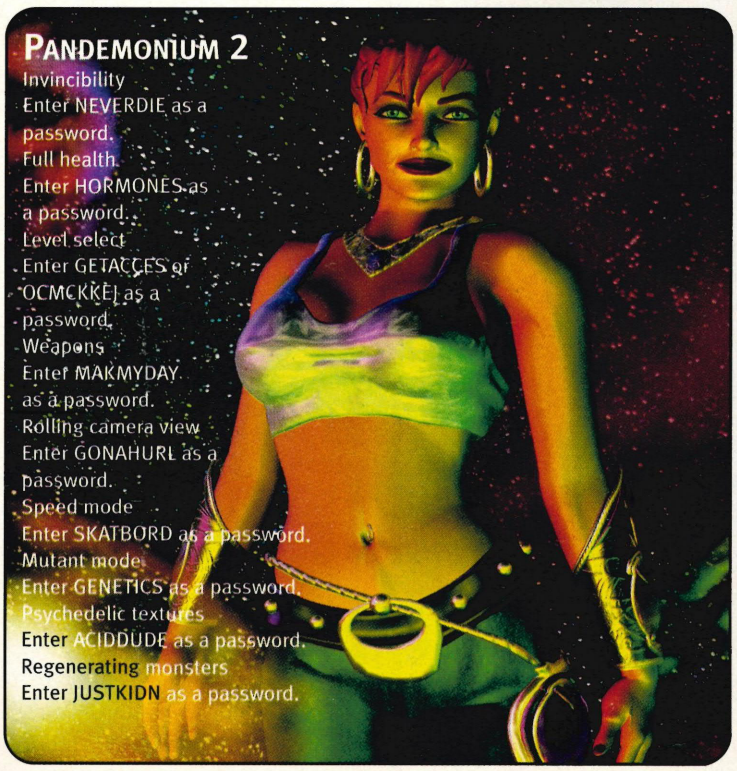
Bonus camera angle
Enter **SUPACAM** as a password. The camera angle will switch to a close-up of an enemy vehicle when it is destroyed.

Jet Moto 2

Cheat options
Win a trophy using the indicated racer to enable the corresponding cheat option.

Option	Racer
Cyberspace Cam	Technician
Ice Racing	The Hun
Remote Control	Steele
Super Agility	Vampeera
Super Brakes	Wild Ride
TV Cam	Blade
Unlimited Grapple	Gadget
Unlimited Turbos	The Max
Upside Down Cam	Lil' Dave
Zero Resistance	Bomber

Race as Enigma
Complete all ten tracks at the Master difficulty level. This will also enable the 'Insane' difficulty level.



Pandemonium 2

Invincibility
Enter NEVERDIE as a password.
Full health
Enter HORMONES as a password.
Level select
Enter GETACCES or OCMCKKEJ as a password.
Weapons
Enter MAKMYDAY as a password.
Rolling camera view
Enter GONAHURL as a password.
Speed mode
Enter SKATBORD as a password.
Mutant mode
Enter GENETICS as a password.
Psychedelic textures
Enter ACIDDUDE as a password.
Regenerating monsters
Enter JUSTKIDN as a password.

Crash Bandicoot 2

Bonus voodoo mask
Hold Up + ● after losing a life until Crash moves again.

Bonus lives
Jump on the baby polar bear's head in the second warp room (level 6-10) to collect ten extra lives.

Test Drive 4

Drive XPJ 198
Complete any track entirely in second gear with checkpoints on.

Nitro boost
Set a course record and enter **WHOOOOSH** as a name. Use the horn during game play for a nitro boost. **Note:** The 'Traffic' and 'Timer' options must be enabled to use this code.

Small RC cars
Set a course record and enter MJCIM.RC as a name. Note: The 'Traffic' and 'Timer' options must be enabled to use this code.

Parappa The Rapper

Change Parappa's voice
Complete the first two levels with a 'Cool' rating. Press X (three times), ▲, ●, ▲, ■ (twice), ⇨, ⇦, ■, ✕ and complete the next level as usual. On the level four, press ✕, ■, ▲, ●, ✕ to allow Parappa's voice to be changed. Hold R1 and press ● or ▲ to cycle through the voices of the other characters in the game.

Frogger

Zone select
Pause game play and press ⇨, ■, ▲, ■, ▲, R1, L1, R1, L1, ▲, ■. A message will confirm correct code entry.

Dear PLAY,
On the Trappings level of *Excaliber 2555 AD*, I can't find any fresh water to give to the prisoner. Please help.
ROSS BANAHAN, BRISTOL

Go to the room where you found the Water Pouch and from there go to the corridor east of the bridge, hit the secret door (right of the normal door) and go through it. Go forward and then right until you come to another door. Open it and use the Water Pouch with the Barrel of Water. Return to the prisoner and he'll give you a ring...

Dear PLAY,
I am stuck on section 3, Level 3 on *Alien Trilogy* and I have been for many months. I desperately need your kind assistance on the matter – is there a solution book.
Edward Klein, Herts

There's no solution book as such Edward, but feast your eyes on this awesome cheat. Enter 1GOTP1NK8CIDBOOTSON as a password. All weapons, unlimited ammunition, invincibility, and access to every level will now be available.

Dear PLAY,
Are there any cheats for *Duke Nukem: Total Meltdown*? If there are could you tell me them please!
Chris Martinez, Rotherham

There's one sneaky tip that you may find useful. For an energy refill destroy any water source, including fire hydrants, toilets and fountains. Stand in the water and hold the button configured as action to slow build up your energy again. Alternatively, stand in front of a toilet and press Action.

PLAY!
I am in desperate need of some cheats for Rayman. I keep dying on Blue Mountain: stage one. Also if possible could I have some cheats on Casper. If I could only pick one game to get help on it would be *Rayman*.
Yours sincerely, Aurie Green

For ninety-nine lives in Rayman, enter: XNB9FM!Z2. For free movement in Casper, move to the upper left corner of any location. Hold Up/Left + L1 + R1 + Start to pause the game. Release Up/Left + L1, and press Down/Right + ▲ while continuing to hold R1+ Start. Press R1, then use the D-pad to fly over any wall. Press L1 to resume normal game play.

ACTUA SOCCER 2

IT MAY BE A FUNNY OLD GAME, BUT GREMLIN'S SEQUEL TO THE GROUND-BREAKING MOTION-CAPTURE FEST RECENTLY SCORED A SERIOUSLY RESPECTABLE 90%. JUST FEAST YOUR EYES ON THESE FANTASTIC CHEATS AND TIPS THAT GREMLIN HAS PROVIDED.

FORMATIONS

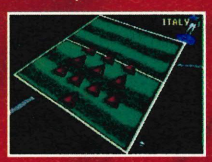
4-4-2



The standard English formation, solid as a rock. The defence play in a line and hold firm until opposing forwards are almost upon them. This formation will also give you a decent presence in midfield, allowing you to spring into attack.

4-3-3

Forward-thinking and quite adventurous – could leave you a little vulnerable if the opposition starts trying to play through balls in the centre of the park. However, the extra player up front will offer you more options and if faced by five at the back or a sweeper system. You may find that two forwards just aren't enough.

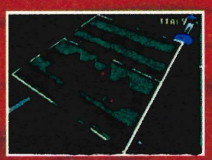


5-3-2



Cautious set-up, this should be a big consideration when faced by technically superior opposition, eg Brazil. Five at the back should help give you a platform from which to build attacks and should also help in controlling a couple of star strikers. Superstar attackers or vastly experienced *Soccer 2* players will rip the heart out of an inexperienced player with just four at the back. The extra man gives you a little longer to see attacks building – if you so wish you can wait until you control the sweeper and keep him under control by pressing the R1 button. You can then hang behind the two centre backs and position yourself where you think the attackers will penetrate and be ready to nip straight in and take the ball off them – simple!

5-4-1



Again, a more defensive formation than the first two. This should help you keep opposition strikers in check as well as ensuring a strong presence in midfield. The only drawback is you're left with a solitary player up front. The biggest consideration here is that your striker's up to it. He's not going to get a lot of support so if it's a custom team you'll need to ensure your striker has a lot of pace and an excellent shot. Make him pretty big as well, then he can shrug off any challenges.

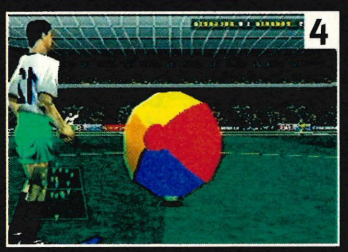
HAND OF GOD

MARADONA WOULD BE PROUD OF THESE CHEATS. STICK 'EM IN FROM THE MAIN MENU FOR SPECTACULAR RESULTS:

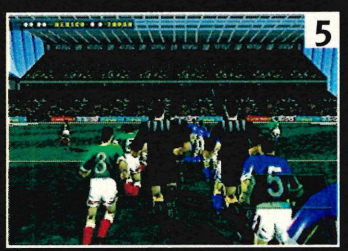
1] GREMLIN 11 – ⇦, ⇨, ■, ●, ⇧, ⇩, ■, ●
2] SUPER FURRY ANIMALS – G, ⇦, ■, ⇨, ⇨, ●, ⇧, ⇩
3] GHOST BALL – ■, ■, ⇦, ⇦, ⇨, ⇨, ●, ●
4] BEACH BALL – ⇦, ⇨, ⇦, ⇧, ⇦, ⇨, ■, ■
5] DWARVES – ●, ⇩, ⇩, ■, ⇧, ⇧, ⇦, ⇨
6] INVISIBLE PLAYERS – ■, ●, ⇩, ●, ⇧, ⇨, ■, ⇦
7] GIANTS – ⇧, ⇩, ⇩, ⇨, ■, ■, ●, ●
FLOODLIGHT FAILURE – ⇦, ⇦, ⇦, ●, ⇨, ⇨, ⇨, ■
8] BLACK & WHITE/COLOUR TV MODES – ⇧, ⇩, ⇧, ■, ●, ⇧, ⇩, ⇧

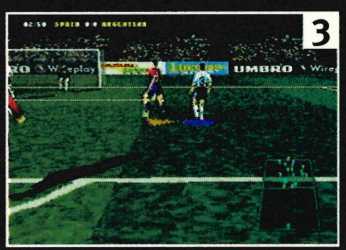
IF YOU HAVE SUCCESSFULLY ACTIVATED A CHEAT, A STRING OF TEXT WILL POP UP ABOUT 75% (THAT'S THREE QUARTERS FOR OUR NONDECIMAL FRIENDS) OF THE WAY DOWN THE SCREEN FOR A COUPLE OF SECONDS. SO YOU CAN EASILY TELL THAT IT'S WORKED.
NOTE THAT ALL CHEATS HAVE TO BE EXPLICITLY SWITCHED OFF. FOR EXAMPLE, ONCE YOU HAVE ACTIVATED THE GIANTS CHEAT, THE PLAYERS WILL BE GIANTS UNTIL YOU RE-ENTER THE CHEAT TO RETURN THEM TO NORMAL.

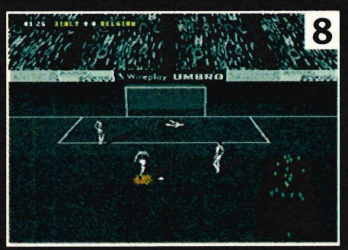




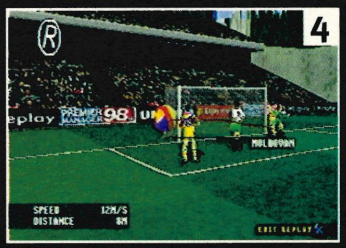


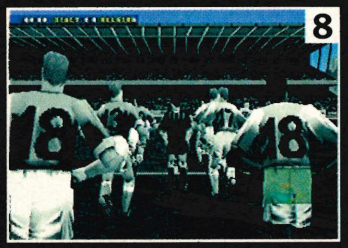








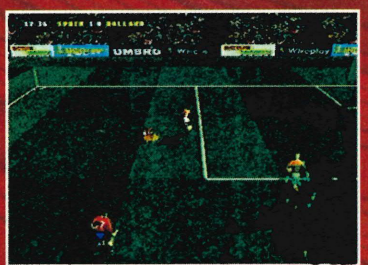




THE BASICS

Defending

There are a few basic rules to the art of defending:
1. Always think about what you're doing. Don't go doing anything rash – work out a strategy and stick with it.
2. Don't dive in too early or you'll open up space for the opposition if it's mistimed.



3. A revolutionary feature in *Actua Soccer 2* is the ability to choose a defender and stick with him – by keeping the R1 button pressed you can keep control of the same player rather than automatically switching to the

one nearest the ball.

4. There are two ways to perform a tackle in *Actua Soccer 2*: The first is to run into the player with the ball and try and 'barge' him off it. You don't need to press a particular button but you should try and make sure that you're ready if and when the ball breaks loose.

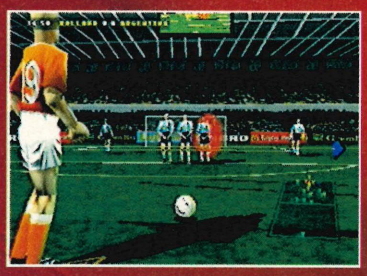
The other way to stop a player bearing down on your keeper is the 'sliding tackle.' This kind of challenge is best taken as a last resort or only when supremely confident that you can come away cleanly with the ball.

Tips From Mr Shearer

The range of shots available in *Actua Soccer 2* is almost infinite. From the overhead bicycle kick to the toe-poke over the line in a crowded box. To trigger a first-time shot, volley, overhead kick, diving header etc, get your player into position and hammer away on the shoot button whilst the ball is in the air. When you get through on goal, always try and check the keeper's position. For example, if you switch the attack across the pitch very quickly and the keeper's still on the far side of the net, a low shot right in the corner should be enough to beat him. Likewise, if you see him off his line, try a little chip by pressing the shoot button and rocking back on the pass button simultaneously.

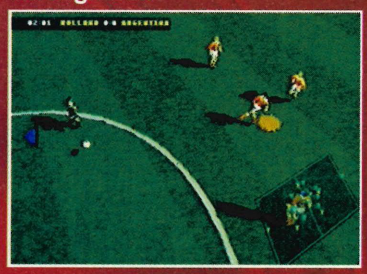
Free Kicks

By moving ⇧ and ⇩ once you've highlighted a player, your players should start moving around and trying to run into space. If you're close enough to goal you'll be able to have a crack. Highlight the player nearest the part of the net you want to aim for and then use the D-pad to bend the ball towards the net. You'll have more success on International setting as this



allows players to bend the ball more than at Amateur. Remember to let the power bar increase depending on how close you are to goal.

Through-Ball



The through ball should be used sparingly – there are no perfect positions to try and execute this from, but some players will have more success than others. The best time to try is when you're attempting to pass the ball up the pitch rather than sideways or behind.

Throw-Ins



You'll be able to steal a few yards here as long as you're discreet – don't go too far or the ref will give a free kick.

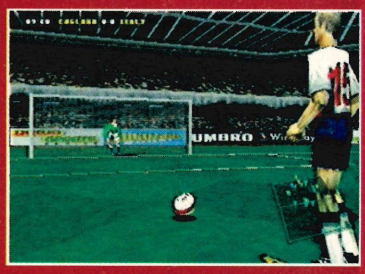


Corners

Again, by highlighting a player and moving ⇧ and ⇩, your players will start running around trying to find some space. A decent cross followed by the hammering of the shoot button will lead to your player trying a first-time move – header, volley etc.

Penalties

The keepers at penalties are all computer-controlled. Again, the amount of swerve and bend you can get on the ball will depend on which setting you're playing at and which player is taking the kick. Watch the



power bar, too – you don't need to blast it every time. Note which foot they kick with and adjust where you're shooting accordingly.

Armed with these fabulous tips, victory is assured!

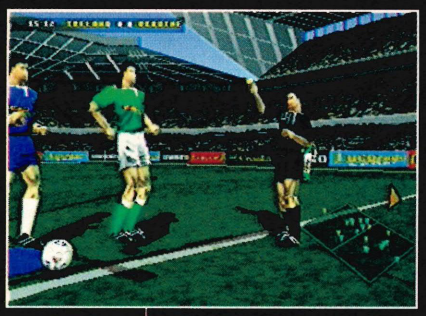
GENERAL HELP

Set-Piece Movement

At corners, pushing a will tell your players to move around, allowing you to vary your tactics.

Referees

Get to know the referees – it stands you in good stead if you're familiar with the varying degrees of strictness. The ref is less likely to award red cards once he's already sent some players off.



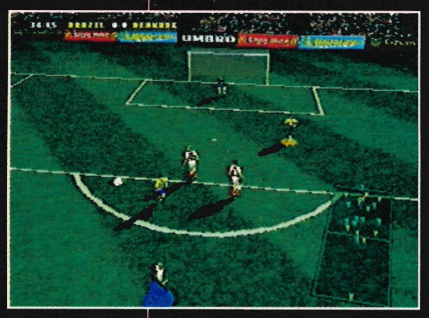
referees

Fast Counterattacks

If you manage a quick break it's possible to score with a long pass (lob) from just over the halfway line.

First Time Strikes

To trigger a first-time strike – volley, overhead kick, diving header etc – just keep hammering the shoot button when the ball is in the air. One of your players will attempt a move, but won't always succeed.



fast counterattack

Hammer Time

First-time control moves can be triggered by hammering the pass button when the ball is in the air. Again one of your players will attempt to control the ball, but won't always succeed. If the attempt is successful you'll have a couple of seconds when you can't be tackled.



subbing

One-Twos

Use one-twos to beat defenders.

Subbing

Bring on fresh legs in the second half.



The Editor

When designing a team in the editor, only spend points on 16 players. Since there are no suspensions, you only ever need 11 + 5 subs. Concentrate on speed, handling, and shooting when assigning players' points. Spend a lot on your keeper.

the editor

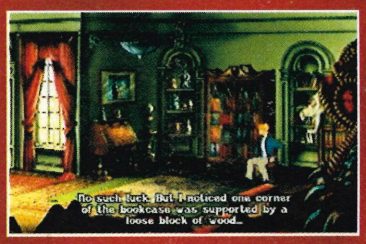
BROKEN SWORD II

THE SMOKING MIRROR

THE YANK'S BACK! AFTER THWARTING THE THUGS IN 'THE SHADOW OF THE TEMPLARS', UNLIKELY HERO GEORGE STOBBART AND HIS SWELTERING SIDEKICK, NICO, RECENTLY RETURNED IN THE SMASH HIT SEQUEL AND THANKS TO THE MIDNIGHT OIL BURNERS AT POWERSTATION, WE PRESENT THE COMPLETE SOLUTION!

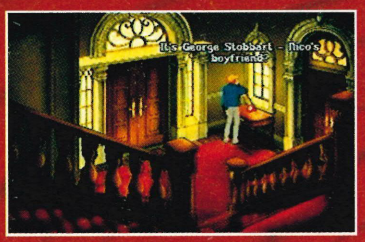
OUBIER'S MANSION

Right-click on the lower right corner of the bookcase. Now, left-click on the revealed wedge to knock the bookcase over to squash the spider. Left-click on the bracket to free yourself from the chair. Once unbound, left-click on the Bureau drawer. Now, right-click on the pot in your inventory; a house key is revealed. Pick up the poisoned dart lying on the green floor mat. Under the window sill you'll find Nico's handbag, left-click on it to reveal some lipstick, a note from Lobineau, and a pair of Nico's panties! Make your way to the fire, scrolling left. Now, use the dart on the locked cabinet, then use the panties on the small metal cylinder that is revealed in the bottom right of it. Next, use the cylinder on the soda fountain. Left-click on the fire with the soda fountain. With the fire out, left-clicking on the door is next on George's agenda. Go through the doorway.



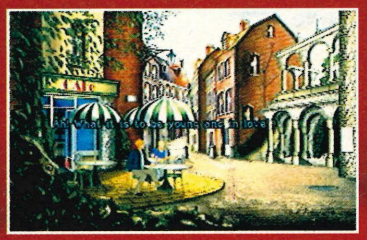
OUBIER'S PHONE

When you reach the bottom of the stairs, left-click on the telephone between the two doors, on the table. Left-click on the newspaper clipping next to the telephone. By examining the clipping (right-click), you'll find Oubier's bank statement wrapped inside. Now, unlock the main door (left of the telephone) using the house key. Left-click on the door to exit Oubier's mansion.



CAFE

Left-click on the old bloke behind you and he will ask you what brings you back. Select Nico. Whilst talking to the old fella, select the Gendarme icon at the bottom twice. When the waiter comes outside, left-click on him. He won't reply, so left-click on the old man once again. When the waiter returns, left-click on him once again. Left-click on the second from left. Keep pressing the left mouse button here, until all icons – except exit – have gone. Once you've finished talking to the waiter, Lobineau turns up. Ask him about the Mayan Stone, Oubier, and all the other icons at the bottom. When Lobineau leaves, left-click on the old gentleman once again. When you've finished talking to him, left-click on the flask containing absinthe. Exit the area and head to the Glease Gallery.



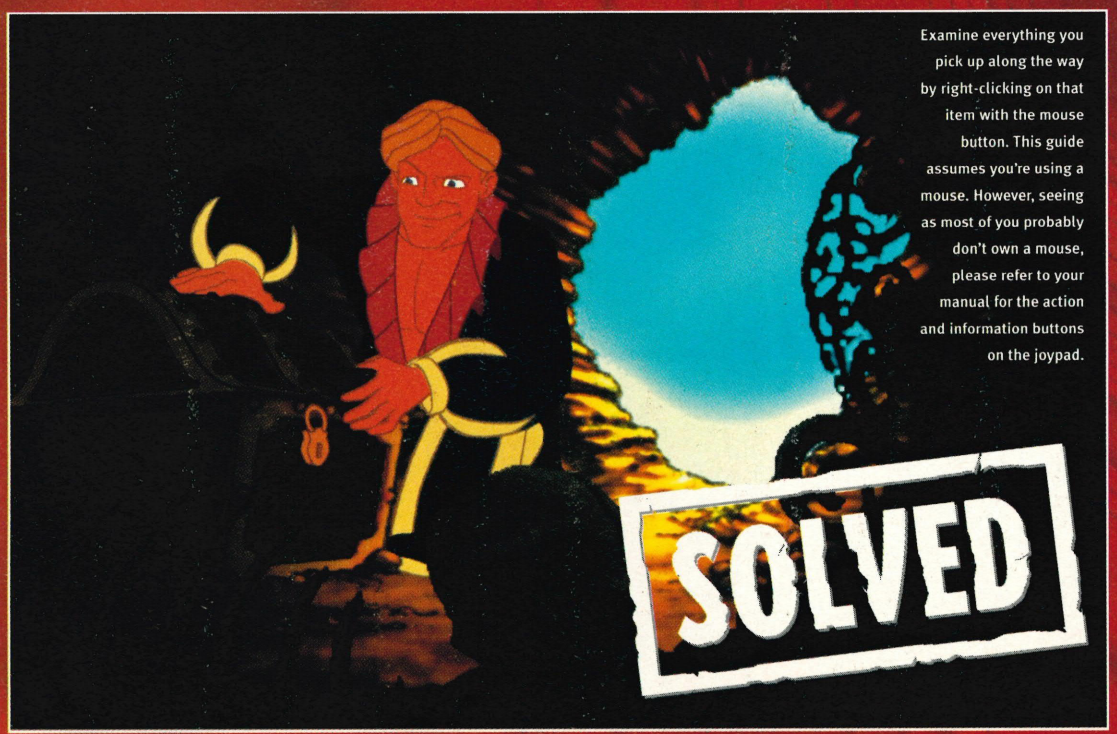
GLEASE GALLERY

When you arrive at the gallery, scroll left towards the fat bloke in the white shirt. You'll notice that he's holding his glass of wine up to his left shoulder. So, when he's not looking, select the flask icon and left-click on his glass. Now, this time, select the flask icon and left-click on the ignoramus himself. One more glass of absinthe should do the trick, so once again select the flask icon and left-click on the glass.



After the fat bloke then falls over, Glease then rushes over to check the damage. Left-click on Glease. After a short exchange of words, he mentions Oubier, and the pots. If you haven't checked already, right-click on newspaper clipping, you'll find a bank statement belonging to Oubier.

Walk/scroll left towards the numerous packing cases. Left-click on the packing case. Upon inspection of it, you'll find a torn label. Catch the night train to Marseilles.

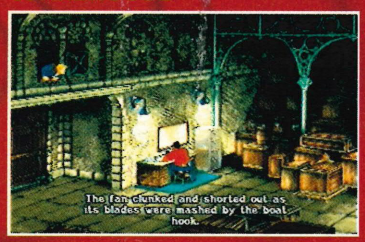


Examine everything you pick up along the way by right-clicking on that item with the mouse button. This guide assumes you're using a mouse. However, seeing as most of you probably don't own a mouse, please refer to your manual for the action and information buttons on the joypad.

Docks

Walk up to the hut and left-click on the window. Talk to the old crooner, say your good-byes and left-click on the steps. Just to the left of the buoy is a boat hook: left-click on it to pick it up. Now select the hook and left-click on the bottle floating directly under the hut. When you have the bottle, go back up the steps to the hut. Use the bottle on the chimney. Now, left-click on the chimney to remove the metal cone. Finally, replace the cone with the bottle to send the smoke back into the hut, forcing the watchman outside. Quickly head back down the steps and enter the hut through the trapdoor underneath it. Once inside, left-click on the blue box of dog biscuits, then exit the hut via the trapdoor. Just to the left of the hut is a platform. Select the dog biscuits icon and left-click on the platform. Then, whilst Twenty laps up a doggy treat, select the boat hook and left-click on the platform again. Now head back up the steps and left-click on the fence.

Warehouse



Scroll left and left-click on the ladder. Climb up and left-click on the window to the left. Select the boat hook and left-click on the fan. Now, left-click back on the window, then on the ladder. Once off the ladder, left-click on the door below the window. When the thug answers the door, select the Gendarme icon at the bottom to reply: "This is the Police." Now quickly climb back up the ladder , past the windows, to the barrels. Left-click on the front barrel; this then activates a pulley dropping the barrel into the sea. The thug will head over to investigate. While he's standing there, left-click on another barrel. Now, climb back down and go through the open door.

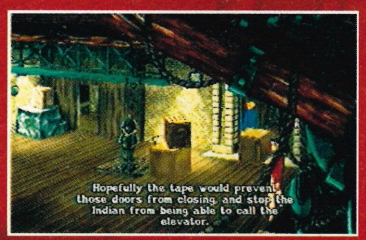
Inside Warehouse

When you enter the warehouse, left-click on the desk drawer where you'll find a small brass key. Scroll right. As you walk past some crates a small, foreign voice will start talking to you. Select the brass key icon and left-click on the manacled boy. Left-click on the call button for the elevator. You'll need something to block the light beam and keep the left doors from closing, so left-click on the nearest crate. With the crate in place, left-click on the light



switch located on the right of the elevator. Now walk over to the area where the light came on. On the floor before the wooden part of the wall you'll find a some scratch marks. Left-click on the wooden area to reveal a hidden door. Left-click on the hidden door to enter the secret room. Left-click on Nico. Then left-click on the robe tied around her wrists. Left-click on the carving next to the chair. Now exit the room.

Reunited



Left-click on Nico, and ask her about all the icons that appear below. Select the rope icon and left-click on the statue. Now, select the masked tape icon and left-click on the electric eye. With the elevator taken care of, left-click on the first crate (to push it back where it was before). Then, left-click on the top crate (with holes in) next to it. George will move the crate and put it on top of the first one. Finally, left-click on the third crate (next to statue), to push it out of the way. Left-click on the hand cart's pole. Now, left-click on the rope around the statue's neck, then left-click on the pulley. With the statue attached, left-click back on the hand cart to lower its wooden platform. Left-click on the statue, and left-click on Nico to ask for her assistance. Select the statue icon below to ask for her help, then select exit. Left-click on the newly opened platform doors. Outside you'll notice a cable heading downwards: select the manacles icon and left-click on the cable.

Market Place

Talk to the two musicians by left-clicking on them. There are only three things you need ask about – Miguel, music, and mines. Next, left-click on Pearl. After your conversation scroll right and make your way over to the truck in which Duane is sitting in. Left-click on Duane. Talk to him about everything, before heading back to the marketplace by scrolling left.
Next stop is the Police Station; you'll find the entrance just to the right of where Pearl is standing. As you enter (left-click), you'll overhear a conversation between the General and Professor Oubier. When they've finished, the Professor will leave and the General will welcome you. Ask him everything you can, before left-clicking on the chart hanging on the back wall. The General will quickly tell you to keep away from the chart. Left-click on Renaldo and ask him about everything. Leave the Police Station. When you get outside, talk to Nico about all the icons at the bottom.

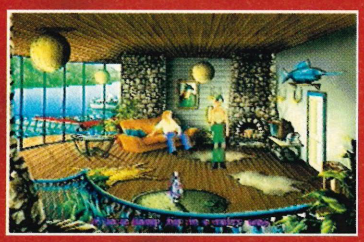
Duane's Truck

Scroll right until you reach Duane and Professor Oublier again. Before interrupting them, left-click on the cell window behind the truck; it's Miguel's cell. Now left-click on the chap sitting down behind the truck and ask him about everything. Now left-click on Oubier. Ask him about all the icons that appear at the bottom, then left-click on Duane. Make your way left and up the steps into the Mine Office (white building). Ask the woman about everything you can, then make your way back down the steps and scroll right until you reach Duane – yet again! This time when you left-click on Duane, two more icons will appear. Finally, ask Duane about the detonator. Exit the conversation with Duane and head back up into the mining office. Left-click on the woman and ask about the detonator, then tell her about the map in the General's office. Now finish up with her, and head back outside and left-click on Nico. Talk to her about the map. When you enter the Police Station, left-click on the General. Talk to him, then when he's gone off with Nico, left-click on Renaldo.

Police Station

Left-click on Pearl and select the Pyramid. Left-click on the chart. Now, head out of the Station, and back into the mining office. Left-click on the woman once again and select the chart icon. She'll give you permission to take the detonator, and tell you to free Miguel from his cell. Left-click on the large blue cupboard behind her to obtain the detonator. Exit the office and scroll right until you reach Duane. Left-click on Duane, then click on the Detonator icon below to give it to him. Now head back into the Police Station and enter the cell area. Left-click on the rather depressed-looking Miguel. Unfortunately, Renaldo arrives back sooner than one would have hoped, and ends up pulling a gun on you.

General's Flat



Controlling Nico, right-click on the lava lamp. Then, left-click on the tiger skin rug, the television, and the picture of the General's mother. Now left-click on the General and talk about all of these things. After Nico fibbing her way through a conversation, the scene then switches back to George and Miguel. With time starting to work against you, left-click on Miguel and ask him about Karzac and the noose. When you have the latter, select the noose icon and left-click on the window. Now pick up the untied part of the noose by left-clicking on it. Now, with the noose icon in hand, left-click on the window to tell Duane to tie it to his truck. The scene once again switches back to Nico, the General, and his mother.

Father Hubert

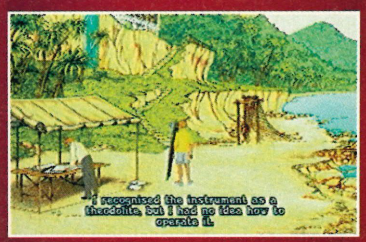
As George wakes up, you can hear some organ music in the background. First off, select Oubier's bank statement icon and left-click on the damp leaves next to the water wheel (under the hut). Now scroll right and left-click on the vine. Scroll back left and select the vine icon, before left-clicking on the two round stones to the left of the hut. Finally, select the flint statue icon and left-click on the water wheel.
When Father Hubert's done talking, left-click on Hubert

and ask him about both icons that show up, following onto the root icon. He'll finally give you his collar to press. When you get to the village entrance, Father Hubert will head back off. Talk to them about everything, before selecting the biscuits icon as a present for the Shaman. When the guard returns and asks for more biscuits, select the Mayan Stone icon and left-click on the biscuits icon. Now select the biscuits icon and left-click on the guard (nearest to front). He then takes the box to the Shaman, and promptly returns informing of the Shaman's wish to meet you. Scroll left and left-click on the old coot sitting by the fire.

The Shaman's Story

After a night of partying, you'll stagger back to Father Hubert's tree house. Left-click on the ladder to climb up. Now left-click on Nico. Unfortunately the root cannot be digested in this form, so head back out the tree house and down to the two stones where you pressed Father Hubert's collar. Select the funnel icon and left-click on the collar press. Then select the root icon and left-click on the collar press. Now left-click on the cross next to it, then left-click on the collar press once again. The juice from the root will be squeezed into the funnel, in a form which Nico can drink. Finally left-click on the ladder up to the tree house.

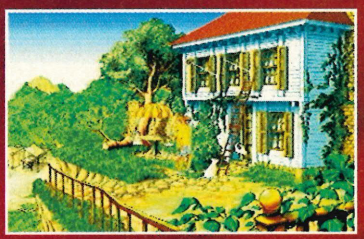
On the Beach



Right-click on the plans lying on the table, then left-click on them. Now, left-click on Bronson and talk to him about both icons that appear. After talking with Bronson, left-click on the theodolite. Left-click on the steps heading up to the house. When you reach the top, left-click on the cat. Turn your attentions to the ladder and left-click on it. Leave the ladder for now and left-click on the door. Then left-click on the steps to head back down to the beach. Scroll right and left-click on the boy fishing. Talk to him about everything, then scroll left and left-click on Bronson. Talk about everything with Bronson, then left-click on the steps once again to head back up to the house. When you get to the top, left-click on the old ladies. Talk to them about everything, and if at any point you have to answer 'yes' or 'no', select yes. When you're done, left-click on the steps to head back down to the beach. Scroll right, then left-click on Rio. When talking to Rio, ask him about all the icons that appear below, then exit.

Left-click on Rio, and select the fish icon below. Although Rio hasn't caught a fish, he did manage to catch a rather rusty bike wheel. Exit the conversation, then left-click on the rusty bike wheel beside him. Now, left-click on Rio once again and ask him about the inner tube. A little while longer and he should provide you with a fish. Make your way back up the steps.

Ketch House



When you reach the house, left-click on the ladder to climb it. Now, select the inner tube icon and left-click on the flag pole. When George is done, left-click on the ladder to climb back down. Then select the fish icon and left-click on the inner tube hanging down off the flag pole. This'll keep the cat busy for a while, so left-click on the red ball to pick it up. With ball in hand, left-click on the ladder. Now left-click on the inner tube hanging down off the flag pole. Left-click on the ladder once again to climb down the ladder. Select the inner tube icon yet again and left-click on the tree. Now, select the ball icon and left-click on the inner tube which is attached to the tree. The ball hits the theodolite marker spot on, and it comes tumbling down. Once he gets up the ladder, left-click on it to remove it and leave him stranded. He'll drop the new marker. Make your way down the steps. Left-click on the theodolite. Left-click on the plans on the table. Left-click on the steps to head back up to the house. Left-click on Bronson. Select the plans icon and left-click on the women.

British Museum

Scroll right and left-click on the cabinet housing the Jaguar stone (below mask). After confirming the Jaguar stone's presence, scroll left and left-click on the museum attendant. Ask him about each icon. Ask Oubier about the Jaguar stone. Then, when he leaves, ask the attendant about the stone. Left-click on the key which has been left in the Jaguar cabinet. Scroll left. Select the key icon and left-click on the cabinet containing the Obsidian dagger. Left-click on the cabinet once again to open it and take the dagger. Now, left-click on the key to lock the cabinet. Scroll right. Select the dagger icon and left-click on the attendant. Left-click on the curtain and select the dagger icon. Then, left-click on the exit to 'jimmy' the lock and exit the museum.

Inside Ketch Museum

Left-click on the quill. Now head right and left-click on the ship's wheel. Left-click on the portrait of Captain Ketch. Now, left-click on Captain Ketch's sea chest. Talk to girl then exit the conversation, and the museum.

Walk over to the cat, and select the quill icon. Then, left-click on the cat. Left-click on the feather that remains, then make your way down the steps and scroll right towards Rio. Left-click on Rio and talk. Head back up the steps and left-click on the door to enter the museum. Once inside, left-click on Emily. Select the conch to trade for the cross. Now, left-click on the chart. With chart in hand, left-click on the desk to place the chart on it. Select the cross icon and left-click on the pen holder. Then, left-click on the lantern to pick it up, and left-click on the ink well to place the lantern there. Exit the museum and head down the steps. Scroll right and left-click on Rio. Select the treasure icon, then the zombie icon.

Zombie Island Beach

Once out of the boat, right-click on the rocky outcrop. Then, left-click on the rocky outcrop before right-clicking on the boat. Left-click on Rio and ask him about the net. Now, exit the conversation and select the net icon. With net in hand, left-click on the rocky outcrop.

Underground Station



Select the hairgrip icon and left-click on the coin slot in the top right-hand corner of the large green vending machine. Now left-click on the reject slot to pick up an old coin. Select the coin icon and left-click on the weighing machine. You'll receive a card in exchange. Walk over to the small black cupboard and select the dagger icon. Left-click on the cupboard with dagger in hand. Select the card icon and left-click on the crack in the cupboard (left-hand side of it). The cupboard will open, revealing a button of some sort. Left-click on the cupboard to halt the next underground train so you can get on board. The scene now changes back to George.

Top of Zombie Cliff

Left-click into the forest. Now, left-click on the clump of reeds just in front of you to pick up a short, hollow reed. Exit this part of the forest by left-clicking on the path in the top right corner of the screen. This leads onto another part of the forest in which you'll find a large tree. Underneath it is a dark, damp hole. Select the long round reed and left-click on the dark hole. Finally, head back the way you came to the top of the cliff area.

Exit the cliff area once again, but this time follow the pointing finger in the bottom right corner of the screen. This path will take you to the boar's lair. Scroll right until you come across it. In the scenery just behind you is a long thing branch sticking out. Right-click on the branch, then left-click on the branch. Now, select the reed icon and left-click on the dart icon. Select the dart reed and left-click on the boar. Then, left-click on the branch again.

Left-click on either exit to the right of this area, as both paths take you to needle rock.

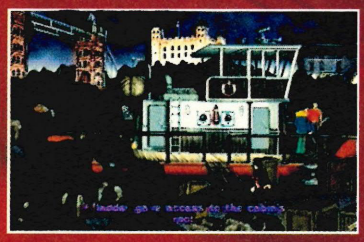
Needle Rock

Select the net icon and left-click on the marker icon. Now left-click on the needle. Then right-click on the needle. Left-click on the creeper. Select the netmarker icon and left-click on the creeper. Now, left-click on the creeper and, with that in hand, left-click on the needle. Left-click on the top path leading into the forest. Then, left-click on the top right path. Next, left-click on the top left path. Keep heading left by left-clicking on the far left path. Now, left-click on the path leading right just above you. The next screen is basically identical to where you found that furry little creature. Take the middle exit. Continue dead ahead, exiting the screen on the right-hand side. When you reach the top of the hill, you should notice some initials carved into the ground. Left-click on the initials. Then select the theodolite and left-click on the three holes which are just above the Ketch's initials. As you look through the theodolite, you'll need to turn it right 11 times until you see the marker. Now left-click on the marker, then left-click on the large rock in the centre of the screen. Now that you've located Ketch's hidden treasure, exit the view, and exit the area to the right of the screen.

London Docks

As George continues to explore Zombie Island, Nico finds herself playing hide

and seek at the London docks. When the patrolling guard wanders over to the right side of the ship, left-click on the crate to the left of Nico to move her nearer the ladder. The guard will walk around the back of the cabin and come out from the left side. When he wanders back over to the right of the ship, left-click on the ladder to climb on top of the cabin.



When the guard stops to talk to Pablo, left-click on the cupboard (left door). Nico will open the cupboard door. Now quickly left-click on the ladder to climb back on top of the cabin. When the guard comes round to the opened cupboard door, left-click on the door to close it. Then, left-click on the mop – to the left of the door – and left-click on the cupboard door to hold it shut. Next, left-click on the left porthole to witness a heated conversation between Oubier and Karzac.

After Karzac has put a couple of bullets into Oubier, Karzac will leave the cabin and Nico will – you guessed it – enter the cabin (what a woman!). Left-click on Oubier to check for any sign of life, then left-click on the Jaguar stone lying on the table. Whilst Nico takes a gander at the stone, Karzac creeps up behind Nico and tries to strangle her (surely it's not some sort of bizarre sex act!). So quickly left-click on the dagger and then left-click on Karzac. With a swift move of hand, Nico plunges the dagger into Karzac's leg and makes good her escape.

The Film Set

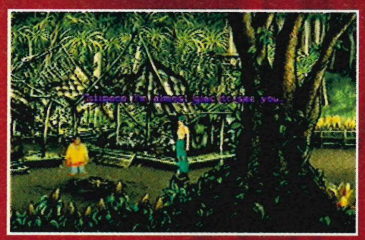
Just when you think George has stumbled onto some real-life pirates, a director appears from the left of the screen. You soon realise you've found your way onto a movie set. Talk to everybody on set: director, cameraman, stuntman, and actors. Next, head over to the table and take a pancake, a bun, and the syrup by left-clicking on them. Now, combine the syrup with the pancake by selecting the syrup icon and left-clicking on the pancake icon. When you've done this, left-click on the bush. Then select the syrup pancake icon and left-click on the stuntman, Bert.

Select the bun icon and left-click on the bush. The hornets within the bush certainly won't like that. So, naturally, pick up another bun and left-click on the bush once again. The hornets will fly out of the bush with a rage as great as PowerStation new boy Adam's and chase after Bert's syrup-covered chin. Once the tough (?) stuntman's finished cowering behind the set, the scene blanks out, and returns at the shores of the beach below.

Talk to each character on the beach, although the 'young movie star' (said with a sarcastic voice) has nothing better to say than, "Yeah man!". Left-click on the handheld camera, then left-click on the director. The director's enthusiasm for George's idea shines through, and George is set to become a movie star.

Once George has rushed into his costume, we see George climbing up the rock face, to the cave where Ketch's treasure has been hidden for all this time; and lo and behold, hidden within the treasure chest lies the Eagle stone.

Nico At Village



Nico arrives at the village – which George visited earlier in the game – only to find that it has been burned to the ground. And the only person still around is Titipoco, the little foreign fella George had uncuffed back at the warehouse where he rescued Nico. Left-click on Titipoco. Try to pick up the Mayan stone to the left of the barrel by left-clicking on it. Then, left-click on the barrel. Now, ask for Titipoco's help by left-clicking on him. Pick up the Mayan stone by left-clicking on it. Finally, exit the screen to the left.

Getting Into Pyramid

Right-click on the scaffolding. Then, left-click on the rope. With rope in hand, left-click on Titipoco. The little chap climbs up the scaffolding with the rope. Left-click on the rope, then immediately left-click on the engine to fasten the rope to it. Now, left-click on the small, screw fit cylindrical housing from the generator. Then, select the dagger icon and left-click on the fuel line (attached to the left of the generator). With the fuel line spilling fuel, select the screw fit cylinder icon and left-click on the broken fuel line. With the cylinder full of fuel, left-click on the fuel cap on top of the engine.

Left-click on the tiny red button to switch the engine on. Then left-click on the lever to pull it and raise the elevator platform. Now, left-click on Titipoco to ask him to copy your actions. Get on the elevator platform by left-clicking on it. Then left-click on Titipoco to signal him to copy. At the top of the scaffolding you'll find that Raoul and Pablo have tied George to the altar. Left-click on the ammunitions belt resting on top of the crates to pick it up. Then left-click on the pointing hand to go down.

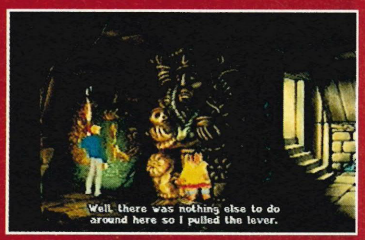
Scroll left and walk over to the guards at the base of the pyramid. Three icons will come up in the conversation; it doesn't matter which one you pick. Left-click on the torch (right side of steps), then left-click on Titipoco who will light the torch. Nico will automatically throw the burning torch into the small pool of fuel. Select the ammunitions belt icon and left-click on the burning fuel. The resulting gunshots will scare away the guards and alert Pablo who will quickly arm himself and head down the pyramid steps. At the same time, Nico will head back up in the elevator.

With Pablo out of the way, Nico can concentrate on disarming Raoul, so left-click on the General (that's Raoul!). With the General unarmed and out of the way, select the dagger icon and left-click on George. When you escape into the inside entrance, left-click on the two levers on the far wall. Nico is unable to do anything on her own, so left-click on George to help you.

Nico In Pyramid...

The one and only true puzzle in the game, and it's easy when you know how! Scroll right and left-click on the set of ten tiles. Then, left-click on the four glyph tiles surrounded by the huge monkey statue. All four full glyph tiles in the monkey statue need to be pressed in for a secret passage to be revealed. Each one of these four tiles is a combination of two partial tiles from the set of ten glyph tiles.

Set the first partial tile by left-clicking on the holes around the two enormous wheel devices (you must line up the top and bottom glyph pictures from the partial tiles so that they're facing each other), then press the appropriate partial tile. Now, using the wheels again, line up the second partial tile. You should now have two partial tiles pressed in. When overlaid, they will look something like one of the full glyph tiles from the four tiles within the monkey statue. So, go over to the monkey and left-click on the correct tile.



When all four tiles within the monkey have been pressed in, a secret passage to the right of the statue will appear. So, without further ado, left-click on the secret passage.

George In Pyramid

With Nico on her way to the main chamber, it's up to George to find his way there. Left-click on the torch, then left-click on Titipoco. Select the burning torch icon to get Titipoco to light the torch. Left-click on the wall lever just to the left of the statue. Left-click on the burning torch, then left-click on the torch hanging on the right wall. Pull the lever in the middle of the room by left-clicking on it. Enter the door to your left. Left-click on the right lever, then left-click on the left lever. Exit the room. Left-click on the lever furthest to the front, then left-click on the open door to enter. Left-click on the passage heading downstairs to the right. All that's left to do is to left-click on the final lever and continue down the stairs. Congratulations!



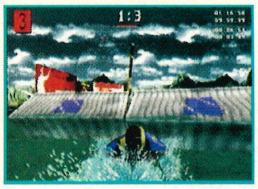
SPLASHING
POWER BOAT RACING

If skimming across the surface of the water at face-contorting velocities in a boat that looks more like a missile sounds like your idea of spending a pleasant afternoon, then Promethean Design's *Power Boat Racing* could be your escape. There's something for every budding boatster who's prepared to lay their skills (and balls) on the line in a bid to become the ultimate racer.

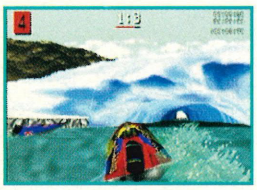
PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Power Boat Racing
Publisher: Interplay
% Complete: 85%
Release date: March '98

Each race takes you to a different location which features its own individual theme and character. For example, in New York, you can expect to negotiate your way around a harbour crammed full of buildings that are covered in graffiti, and in Russia, there's a heavy dose of military hardware on show. This is pretty stereotypical stuff, but it certainly gives the game colour and diversity of styles. *Powerboat Racing* is simple to play, but it's in the subtle control of the boats' water-related physics that will separate the men from the boys.



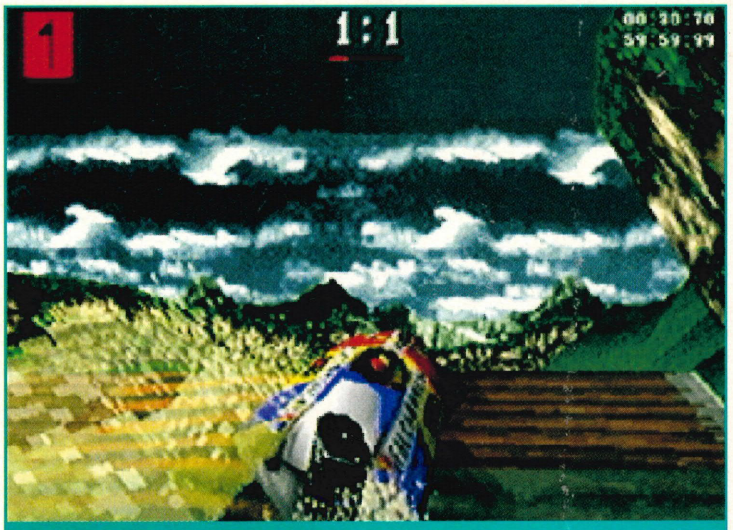




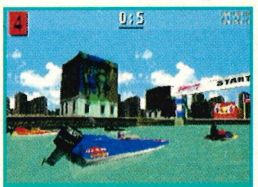


Trim

Huge jumps, obstacles, weather and collisions are probably what we'd expect from any racer of this nature, but these beasts utilise a strange anomaly called 'trim' which means when you up the power, the whole of the boat lifts out of the water giving you more speed, but less control and vice versa when the hull is fully immersed. The skill, naturally enough, is in mastering the trim and knowing when to ease off the gas or send the revs through the roof. There are five ways of playing in total: Championship (where you go through various qualifying stages) Slalom (here you must attempt to avoid various course markers), Arcade (which incorporates more action and stunts), Time Trail and finally, Shoot-out. Here you must pick a course and race against three other boats). There are still quite a few changes to be made to *Power Boat Racing*, more specifically the all-important water effects. It has to be said that this is an area that needs some attention if it wants to better Sony's *Rapid Racer*.



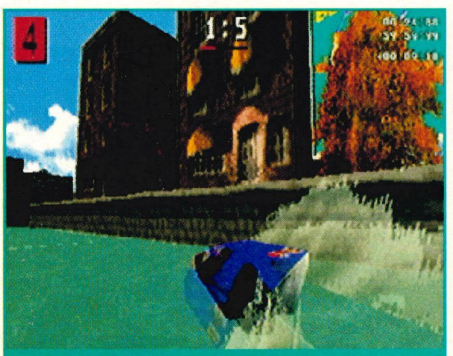
[Above] Make sure that your boat is facing forward before venturing skywards off one of the strategically-placed ramps. Flying through the air is great fun and (if the ramp is teep enough) can result in the boat submerging for a few seconds afterwards.



[Above] You race against three other competitors in similar class boats to your own.



[Above] After a particularly high jump, the boat splashes down into the water.



[Above] The spray and other water effects are due a major overhaul for the final game.



[Above] Quite often you'll find yourself gliding underwater like a submarine after a huge leap off a ramp.

PISTE-UP CHILL



Amidst an avalanche of new titles comes Eidos' new snowboarding game, *Chill*, and it's looking distinctly hot considering the climate. Developer Silicon Dreams is hoping to blow away the competition with an accurate representation of the sport, while maintaining the heart-stopping action of a 'boarder hurtling down an off-piste mountain side combining speed and tricks with amazing jumps.

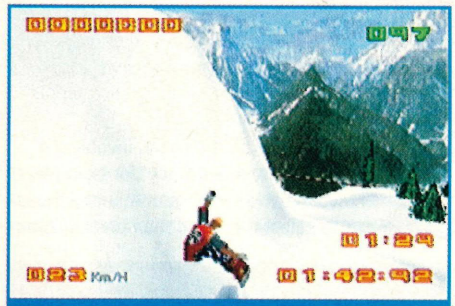
We're particularly impressed with the exquisitely-shaded snow effect that is being used in-game – it genuinely looks the real deal, especially with the sun glaring off the surface as you negotiate trees, log cabins, benches et al. What Silicon Dreams is attempting to do is approach the gameplay in a slightly different way. Instead of following a largely pre-defined course, players will be encouraged to make their own way to the bottom of the valley. There will be five mountains and five different boarders to choose from (plus a hidden one – reportedly not human) each with a selection of over 20 boards.

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Chill
Publisher: Eidos
% Complete: 75%
Release date: March '98



[Above] Numerous hazards litter your path on the perilous alpine slopes. Nimble twisting and leaning is essential for saving vital seconds by avoiding collisions. Should you be unfortunate and hit something, time will elapse whilst you compose yourself.



[Above] *Chill* is all about pulling-off ludicrously-flashy stunts for points and having as much freedom as possible to snowboard wherever you please.



[Above] Crikey! It's Liam out of the Prodigy!



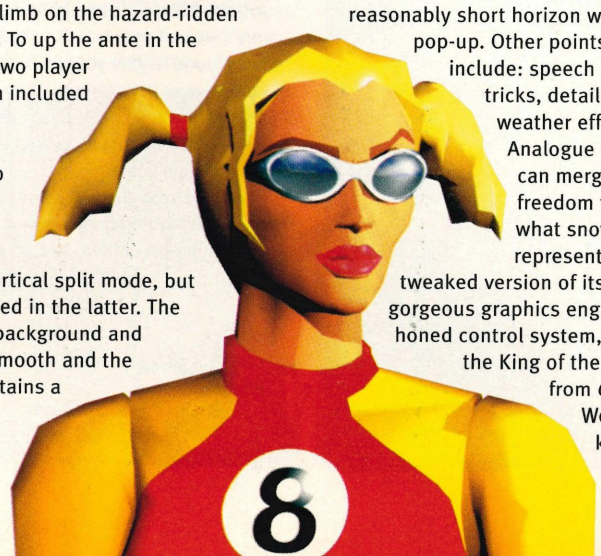
[Above] Sometime traversing the snow isn't enough. Look out for roads, vehicles and even roof tops.



[Above] Choose from one of five players and change their clothing and board style too.

The Big Chill

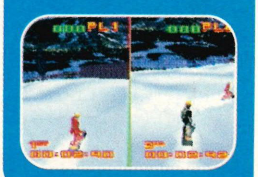
Players can practice on the beginner's slopes or have the option to jump in at the deep end; risking life and limb on the hazard-ridden extreme slopes. To up the ante in the thrill stakes, a two player option has been included – viewed either vertically or horizontally – to ensure a longer shelf life. At present this works well in vertical split mode, but appears squashed in the latter. The graphics (both background and character) are smooth and the frame rate maintains a healthy 30 fps throughout, but there's still a reasonably short horizon with a touch of pop-up. Other points of interest include: speech as you perform tricks, detailed action replays, weather effects and Dual Analogue support. If Eidos can merge the true freedom that encompasses what snowboarding truly represents with a slightly tweaked version of its already gorgeous graphics engine and tightly honed control system, it should snatch the King of the Mountain title from *Cool Borders 2*. We'll let you know soon...



SNOWED-UNDER

IN TWO PLAYER MODE THE ACTION CAN BE INTERCHANGED BETWEEN A HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL VIEW.





HEAVY

WARHAMMER: DARK OMEN

PLAY INFORMATION

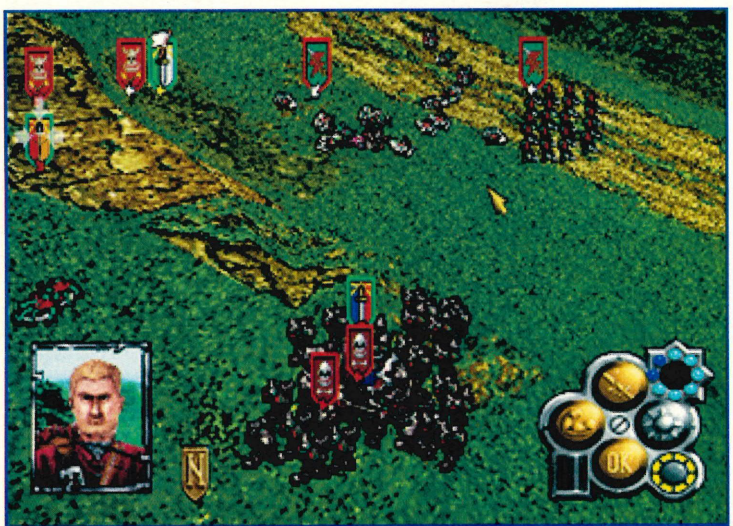
Name: Warhammer: Dark Omen
Publisher: Electronic Arts
% Complete: 80%
Release date: 22 March '98

Although all research seems to show that deep strategy games are played by 21-sided-dice-throwing, anorak-wearing social deviants, the PlayStation's first Warhammer game, *Shadow of the Horned Rat* sold fairly well. Well enough in fact for Electronic Arts to acquire the game from previous publishers Mindscape and release the technically updated sequel, *Warhammer: Dark Omen* on PlayStation.



A vast army of undead soldiers is sweeping across the Empire and, working as Commander Morgan Bernhardt, you have to stop them with the help of your mercenary task force and a little tactical know-how. While this will be no easy task, most aspects of the game have been improved to make the whole process of moving your troops around and entering into battle simpler and more logical.

The basic ideas are the same, involving a point 'n' click type interface (for example: move the arrow over your infantry, press X to select them and then press it again over the area of land you'd like them to go to) but the over complicated control panel has been replaced by a much cleaner four symbol display that changes itself depending on the situation, and the windows packed with ugly statistics have been removed for an otherwise uncluttered display.



[Above] An extended colour palette, boosted from 256 to 32,000 colours on screen means *Warhammer* looks better than ever before. The pop-up character animation's are even smoother too, and the spells your army casts really do look magical!

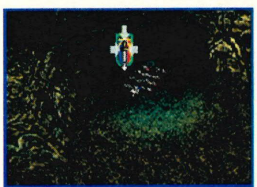


[Above] This time you can capture valuable battle assets in the form of weapons and troops from armies instead of just destroying them, and join with new allies.





[Above] Crumbs! All of those floating icons indicate a nearby army. Let's just hope they're friendly humans and not zombies!



[Above] The gold control panel's symbols are in the same formation as your joypads buttons so you can easily pick the right one.

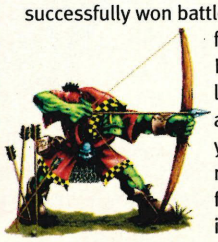


[Above] To start out in the great battle, the only "magic" you are capable of is hurling fireballs once in a while.

JERRY GOLDSMITH

The frame rate has been doubled from 15 to 30 frames per second, and the 3-D battlefield has been upgraded with shadows and lighting that were missing from *Shadow of the Horned Rat*. Terrain will play a bigger part in the confrontations, as you use hills, cliffs and buildings to block the enemy's view of your troops or manoeuvre onto the higher ground to give your archers a very real advantage over their targets. With the lay of the land being so much more important, you can rotate the battle ground as well as zoom in and out to get whatever angle you please.

With a more open plot that means you win cavalry, infantry and magic power with successfully won battles, and an altogether friendlier appearance, *Warhammer: Dark Omen* is looking like a better alternative than spending all your cash on lead miniatures. Read the full review next issue.



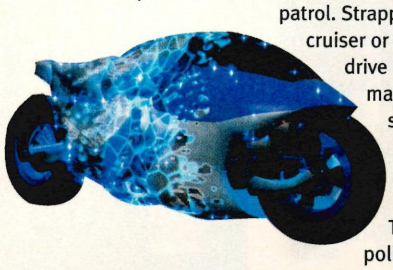
REAL LEGAL CRIME KILLER

There's nothing like flexing the military muscle of the law – in pursuit of peace and happiness of course! A kind of cross over in gameplay terms between *RoboCop* and the old *Chase HQ* games, *Crime Killer* throws you into the 3-D environment of a futuristic city that is riddled with wrong-doing, and asks you to solve the problem through the use of extreme firepower and driving skill.

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Crime Killer
Publisher: Interplay
% Complete: 60%
Release date: April '98

In this city, a man-made bacteria floats unseen in the air and eats its way through all of the gasoline and oil resources. People are miserable and suspicious and it's time for you to go on patrol. Strapped inside your super-charged police cruiser or straddling a nippy hyperbike, you drive around looking for undesirables making a nuisance of themselves, who should thankfully be highlighted on your built-in scanner.



PERP

The game is mission based, so a police captain issues you with objectives at the beginning of each level, but to keep from becoming monotonous you have to deal with new situations that arise along the way. Heading towards a procession made through the town by a dodgy new gang, for example, you may find speeding, shooting or just illegally parked perpetrators that are unconnected. Immobilise their engines, shoot at them or just blow them up with glowing guided missiles, it's up to you!

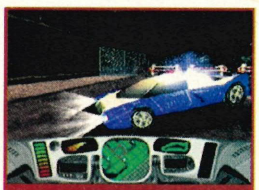
A bit like *RoboCop's* Omni Consumer Products, an organisation known as the URIEL Consortium is funding the state-of-the-art weapons and transport you are using, as well as a back-up Police Air Division that you will occasionally see swooping in during an emergency. But does the URIEL Consortium have something to gain? There are rumours that the supposedly awful motor-gang has the cure to the 'petrol bug' bacteria and plans to release it over the city – is URIEL trying to stop this from happening? Presumably all will be revealed very soon!



[Above] Here you have to race after a juggernaut and shoot out its tyres – hit the cargo and it will blow! But it isn't easy...



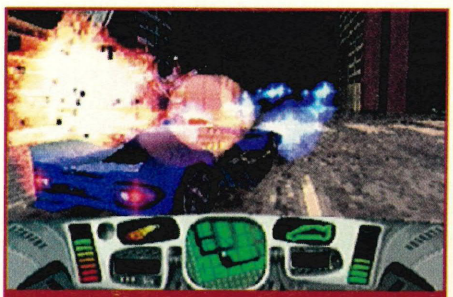
[Above] Split screen runs at the same speed as the one player game, but there's no talk of a co-operative mode.



[Above] Strong lighting effects are used throughout *Crime Killer*, what with it being night all the time, and they're very effective,



[Above] "Civilian Safety Warning" on your display usually means you've iced an innocent man by mistake. Those bullets get everywhere.

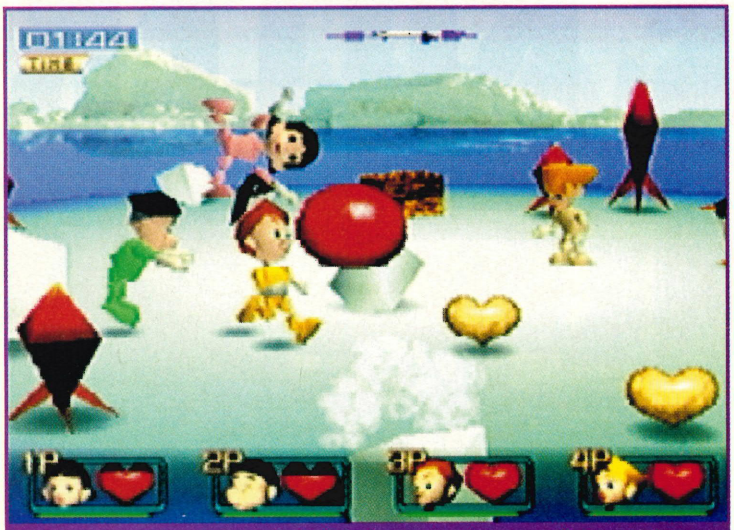


[Above] They burn nicely these criminals. If only the law was this tough on those people who stand on the wrong side of the escalator.

FLIPPED



POY POY



[Above] The four characters, whether living or dead, computer or human controlled, can also be picked up and thrown!



[Above] Playing on your own you must make money from each fight to buy the better gloves from this young lady.

It's not always

the most obvious titles that impress the hundreds of seasoned videogame hacks looking for the next big thing you know.

At last year's Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) show in Georgia, while *Colony Wars* was strutting its light sourced stuff in front of a stunned pack of journalists at one end of the hall, word was spreading of a new super addictive party game that was pulling an unexpectedly large crowd around its screen over at Konami.

The game was *Poy Poy*, a kind of Nineties *Bomberman* for the PlayStation that publisher Konami describes as a "knock out your opponents by throwing rocks, bombs or each other at them game." The decision was only made very recently by Konami to go ahead with releasing *Poy Poy* in Britain, as the company was originally sceptical about its cute Japanese-grown image being accepted and successful over here. Well, it didn't stop the *Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers* and it's certainly not going to stop *Poy Poy*!



[Above] The single player mode is set in a futuristic violent TV gameshow, like *The Running Man*, complete with unbearable smarmy host.



[Above] Each battle ground brings its own touches – the forest level has thick wooden logs to throw at each other. Toss the caber!

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Poy Poy
Publisher: Konami
% Complete: 85%
Release date: March '98

CHUCK ROCK

Designed for multi-player fun, up to four people can participate. In a confined 3-D arena that's no wider than the screen itself, you each control a stumpy little character with the aim of grabbing any object you can get your arms around and chucking it at the other little guys. Bigger boulders and bombs are tougher to hoist above head height and therefore leave you open to attack, but otherwise you can attempt to jump over the heat wave from an explosion or duck to avoid any airborne debris.

What brings variation to this simple if innovative formula is the use of special gloves that each players selects before a match. Slip on the Bomb gloves and you can throw rocks so high that they drop vertically onto their target like, you know, bombs. Try the hunter gloves on for size and you'll notice your projectiles have a new homing ability, and so on.

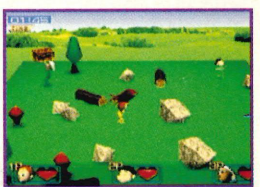
Check out these pages next month to find out if this quirky idea will make the earth move for you in the full review. We think it will, because the simplest ideas are always the best.



[Above] Choose from eight cute little characters before battle.



[Above] The blast from a bomb will throw bodies through the air.



[Above] The red bombs come in two sizes. Little Mike has found the large one, which he's just heaving above his head before taking aim.



[Above] As your laser spews out white hot death, it hugs the tunnel floor and even goes around bends (very unlaserlike!). Your ship starts off pretty slow, but in time-honoured shoot-'em-up tradition, gathers pace once you've collected a few speed-ups.



[Above] Double the commotion by playing with a friend in the two player split screen mode. The amazing thing is there's absolutely no slowdown whatsoever – the action keeps coming thick and fast (and more dazzling than a Jean Michel Jarre concert!)

TEMPESTUOUS N2O

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: N2O
Publisher: Gremlin
% Complete: 90%
Release date: March '98

Like a raging

er, tempest, your ship hurtles down an infinite tunnel filled with mutant bugs and an assortment of scaly enemies dispatching laser death as you go. Okay so Gremlin's beautiful-looking, ultra-smooth tunnel-based shoot-'em-up is an unashamed *Tempest* clone, but that aside it's shaping up to be a chronically addictive 'must have another go hit.

From the moment you pick up and play – in either one or two player split-screen mode, the action is unrelenting, colourful and fun. *N2O* is undoubtedly a throwback to the arcade glory days of the early Eighties, but as with so many re-vamps on the PlayStation, it looks fantastic – even in it's unfinished form. The handling of your ship is totally intuitive and allows you to 'grip' on any part of the tunnel as you thunder down each one collecting speed, shields and power-ups. The plot for this sort of caper is redundant, but for some strange reason developers always feel it necessary to make up something. Here goes... In time-honoured fashion you find yourself in the middle of a war, where federal Government spies have discovered a top secret plot masterminded by your enemies on Neptune.



[Above] Try to avoid colliding with other oblects and baddies.



[Above] The colours are fabulous and really psychedelic.

Bug-eyed

Their plan is to invade earth and to succeed in this dastardly deed they've developed a race of *Starship Troopers*-like bugs and you've just volunteered to take 'em out before they're fully developed (sounds like your first date at school). This all adds up to an adrenaline-pumping arcade blaster with attitude and Gremlin has stuffed in a total of 35 levels, crammed with aliens and bio-genetic mutations breathing the gas that is created here – *N2O*.

You'll be pleased to here that total annihilation is the order of the day and by taking out these freakish creations your *N2O* powered craft can harvest more fuel and consequently attain a greater speed. Some of the end-of-level bosses have to be seen to be believed, and apparently there will be Super bosses to look forward to (or run like hell from) on the last level.

All of the tunnels are totally dynamic (they shrink at one moment and split into two the next), but at this stage our only concern is that *N2O* might become a little too repetitive after a while.We'll be checking for bugs in the full review next month.



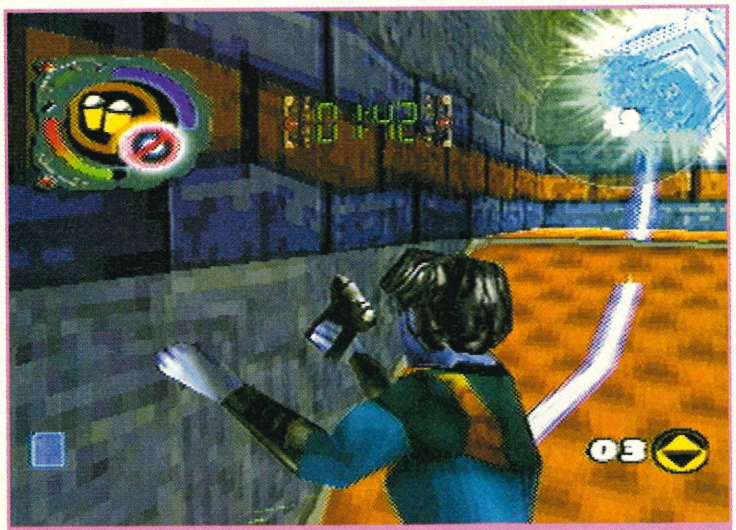
[Above] Fully automated wall-mounted lasers try and pick you off as the craft negotiates convoluted tunnels. Check out the cool lighting effects.



[Above] "Oh my god – it's full of stars!" (©obscurequote inc).

RAM RAID

REBOOT: COUNTDOWN TO CHAOS



[Above] Instead of destroying the Tears, Bob fixes them with his special gun. When repairing one, you'll have to be careful as they have a built-in defence mechanism which saps your energy. You've got to be pretty light on your board to avoid taking damage.

The working title, *Reboot: Countdown to Chaos* may sound like the everyday ritual that journos everywhere have to endure when their Apple Macs and PCs crash in the middle of writing an eight page review, but more specifically it's EAs spin-off title of the titular Children's ITV series.

As expected you take the role of a guardian named Bob and must combat the destructive forces of the robotic and despotic arch-villain known as Megabyte. All the action takes place in an enormous futuristic setting called Mainframe, but here's the twist – this entire mini-universe is set inside a computer. Clever eh? The 'not so clever' plot revolves around Megabyte's obsession to rule over everything and everybody, but the most important thing to know is that it's heavily action based. Your mission, as odd as this sounds, is to stop Megabyte's Tears, which would let viruses assail the Net and threaten the well-being of Mainframe. The odds are always stacked against you due to the relentless deployment of these infernal viral forces that must be stopped.

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Reboot: Countdown To Chaos
Publisher: Electronic Arts
% Complete: 75%
Release date: 27 March '98



[Above] At the moment there's just one intelligent roving camera which zooms in and around Bob.

Hard Drive

Bob isn't your everyday action hero either. He'll scoot around each of the 21 3-D levels on an ultra-manoeuvrable zipboard (not dissimilar to the flying skate boards first seen in *Back To The Future 2*) repairing Tears and taking on all-comers – tanks, liquid energy, hurricanes and stomping robots. Unlike other games, Bob has total freedom to move around in a non-linear 3-D environment and he'll be given the odd clue or three by smoothly-animated companions who he inevitably comes across to help him on his way.

At present the control of the zipboard needs some tweaking – especially taking into account the tight time limits needed to complete each task, but the world in which your character patrols is sumptuous and interactive. With eight bosses, 30 different enemies and a whole range of interesting gadgets to find, *ReBoot* promises to bring something new to the 3-D shooting genre.



[Above] By pressing one of the shoulder buttons you can change direction through 180°.



[Above] This is the basis of the game: repairing Tears with his special 'mendy' gun.



[Above] The world in which Bob resides is fraught with danger... look out another virus...



SILICON CHAPS

Meet Bob [left]. His hobbies include saving Mainframe and fixing the Tears and saving the day. Meet Megabyte [right]. He's a stereotypical bad bloke with a penchant for world domination.





FROSTY

ACTUA ICE HOCKEY

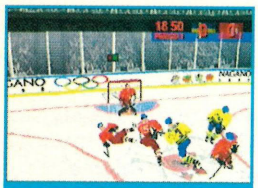
PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Actua Ice Hockey
Publisher: Gremlin
% Complete: 90%
Release date: February '98

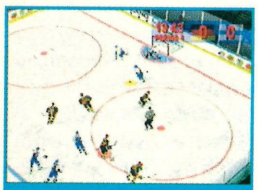
To say that

Gremlin has a successful brand name with its 'Actua' series of games is as obvious as stating that Bill Gates has a bob or two. With every subsequent release the Actua games seem to go from strength to strength. Is there any stopping the Sheffield coders from 'Actualising' the entire universe? We think not, and who can blame them if the latest sport to be given the motion-capture sheen, Ice Hockey is anything to go by.

Looking slicker than a Greek waiter's chat-up lines, the heavily-padded, stick-wielding warriors in *Actua Ice Hockey* are as graceful as Torville and Dean. This game is officially endorsed by the 1998 Nagano Winter Olympics too, which means it'll carry all the official advertising that, although purely aesthetic, means that it'll be the only game to feature the full, official competition. The programmers insist that this will be the first game to totally motion capture each player – smoothing over the slight delays that arrests the gameplay in so many other games.



[Above] This is a man's game as the Canadian defender discovers.



[Above] Five different camera angles to play with.



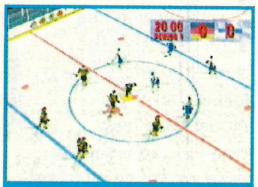
[Above] The action is fast and furious and often you'll find yourself swamped by opposing players eager to regain possession of the puck. The amount of highly-detailed players on screen at once is impressive too, and there doesn't appear to be a slowdown problem.



[Above] The referee may look as though he's waiting for a puck to be fired 'where the sun don't shine', but he is in fact concentrating on the face-off.



[Above] All of the International teams have been crammed in along with their relative strengths and weaknesses!



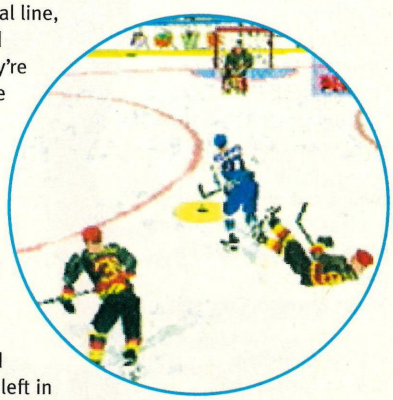
[Above] This is a fantastic view which gives the player a full view of the rink at all times.

Puck kinnel!

We've already witnessed the brand-spanking True-3 engine in *Actua Soccer 2* and *Actua Ice Hockey* is being given the same royal treatment, ensuring that the visuals are fantastic and the action runs as smoothly and realistically as possible. In keeping with Gremlin tradition, a professional team of sportsmen, in this case the Sheffield Steelers, are providing technical advice, and these are also the guys who provide the basis for the motion capture. There are five different camera angles including: goal line, goal line low to side line close up and isometric. From what we've seen, they're all practical to play with, but the close up view (although pretty) can be a little disorientating at times.

The atmosphere within the rink promises to be the most realistic ever heard too – a system called Ambient Realism, conceived in-house, should ensure that many of the sounds associated with the sport are thrown in – you know the sort of thing: cheerleaders, puck sounds and crisp commentary. Let's hope they've left in the sound of bones cracking and teeth splintering when a fight breaks out.

Can Great Britain beat the rest of the world? Probably not, but find out for in the full review soon.



arena

views · questions · criticisms · ideas

VIEWS · QUESTIONS · CRITICISMS · IDEAS

THE GREAT *FINAL FANTASY VII* DEBATE HAS SNOWBALLED THIS MONTH WITH MANY READERS WRITING IN EXPRESSING THEIR VIEWS ON WHETHER OR NOT THE GAME SHOULD HAVE BEEN AWARDED HIGHER. ONCE AGAIN, GAMEPLAY – BRITAIN'S LARGEST MAIL ORDER SUPPLIER OF PLAYSTATION GAMES, IS AWARDING A FREE GAME TO THE LETTER OF THE MONTH. SO GET SCRIBBLING WITH YOUR OWN VIEWS AND COMMENTS AND SEND THEM TO: *ARENA, PLAY MAGAZINE, PARAGON HOUSE, ST PETER'S ROAD, BOURNEMOUTH, DORSET BH1 2JS.* OR EMAIL US AT: PLAY@PARAGON.CO.UK

GAMEplay

FANTASY WORLD

Dear PLAY,

I think that your magazine is brilliant. This is the first time I have bought it, and it certainly won't be the last. I think that the bloke who wrote to you saying that *FFVII* should have been awarded 120% should wake up. I'm going to get *FFVII* so I must agree that it is an excellent game. He spent 20 hours playing it on the first day (what a strange man!), no offence, Charlie! Your choice of games are good, but anyway, here are my questions:

1. Am I thinking too far forward, but will we see a sequel to *FFVII*?
2. Could you tell us if there is another cracking game that will be worth the money coming out on PlayStation?
3. Please could you give me some hints or cheats for *Overblood*?

Stuart Dawson, Conssett

1. Most definitely.
2. *Gran Turismo* will certainly be worthy of your cash.
3. I have forwarded your request for help to the Q& A department matey.



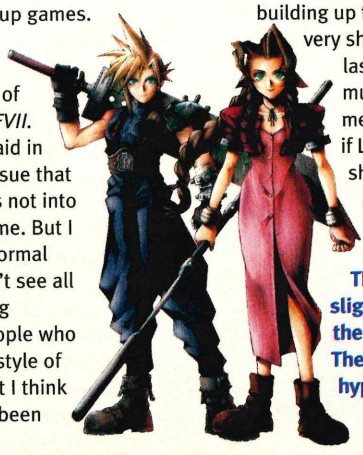
LEAN AND MEAN

Dear PLAY,

First of all, let me say keep up the good work and the chuckles. Also, I won't buy any game before I've read your review (a prime example was *Hexen*, bloody glad I waited for your review there!) because I find that they're pretty much about right and honest. And at least you admit to your leaning towards racing and beat-'em-up games. Which brings me to the point of this letter, *FFVII*. I know you said in the January issue that the reviewer is not into that sort of game. But I bet that's not normal policy. I just can't see all new games being reviewed by people who don't like that style of game. At worst I think it should have been at least the same mark as *Tomb Raider II* (both games being awesome in their own way). But *FFVII* should have really been marked at least 1% higher (but obviously not 100%!) for two reasons in particular. 1. You get three discs for the price of one, bearing in mind the total quality, time and effort (I know a lot of games that can boast that, but on three discs!?). 2. The ending of *FFVII* is pretty spectacular, whereas *Tomb Raider II* was a serious disappointment. All that hard work building up to it, and then a very short and easy last level. As much as it pains me to say it, even if Lara is wearing a short nightie!

Michael Elgie, Wimbledon

"*TOMB RAIDER II* WAS A DISAPPOINTMENT. ALL THAT HARD WORK BUILDING UP TO IT, AND THEN A VERY SHORT LAST LEVEL... AS MUCH AS IT PAINS ME TO SAY IT, EVEN IF LARA IS WEARING A SHORT NIGHTIE!" MICHAEL ELGIE



The *FFVII* was a slight exception to the normal rule. The game was so hyped that if it was good enough to convert Graeme to the RPG throng then it must be a fine game – hence the ultimate test. *Tomb Raider II* however, was reviewed by a freelancer who adores *Tomb Raider*, whether Lara was wearing a short nightie or not.

PUBLIC OPINION

Dear PLAY,

Firstly, thank you for giving us the literary equivalent of sitting on a tropical beach with a cold beer, whilst being fanned down by Cindy Crawford in a bikini! In other words, top magazine!

I wrote in to ask if anyone at PLAY had ever considered having a reader's opinion section as a regular feature. What I mean is that readers write in with their own review of a game, and the best one each month wins a game of the reader's choice.

Also, with regards to Charlie Skinner's letter in issue 29, I think that you were perfectly justified in giving *Final Fantasy VII* 93%. Although *FFVII* is the best PlayStation game at the time, to give it 100% (let alone 120%!) would be effectively saying that the PlayStation can never produce a better game. This of course would be a load of tripe because we know that thanks to your brilliant '98 preview, games like *Tekken 3* and *Resident Evil 2* are in the pipeline. Much respect to you all for superb news and reviews, with spot-on scores every time!

Simon Essex, Gosport

We haven't actually considered a

feature like this mainly because the games will actually be on the shelves in order for the reader to obtain it, and then given the fact that the magazine is produced a month in advance – the title will be deemed out-of-date. However, if any of you fancy yourselves as a reviewer, then you can send your work in to us and we'll be happy to evaluate, and maybe print extracts. Send your letters to *Reader's Wrights*. As for *FFVII*, to give the game 100% would be like saying the machine has reached its peek and we might as well start saving for the next console. But that most certainly isn't the case.

A LOT OF CRAP

Dear PLAY,

This is the first time that I have written to a magazine so please print this. Anyway, you could have given *FFVII* a better score, but your decision is probably best anyway like you always are. In your screenshots for *Duke Nukem*, the graphics looked very blocky compared to my PC version, should I buy it?

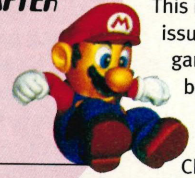
Also, why do publishers still release crap games like *Risk*? How boring to sit and program *Risk*, couldn't they see it would be crap?

Next up, the N64. How come everybody seems to be getting one? Some of my friends bought one after I tried to convince them otherwise. The system has one good game in *Goldeneye*, and maybe *Duke Nukem*, but that is it. *Mario* is boring, *Mario Kart* is crap, *Clayfighter* is crap, *FIFA 64* is crap... etc. Oi everybody, buy a PlayStation! N64 games are far too expensive anyway, and the controller with the widdly bit in the middle is crap. My Amiga is far better! Now some questions...

1. Any chance of a *Carmageddon* conversion?
2. What should I buy – *FIFA: Road to World Cup 98*, *GTA*, *Wild Arms*, Overblood or Little Big Adventure?
3. *Soul Blade 2*, any chance?

Peter Rankin, Carshalton Beeches

"NEXT UP, THE N64. HOW COME EVERYBODY SEEMS TO BE GETTING ONE? SOME OF MY FRIENDS BOUGHT ONE AFTER I TRIED TO CONVINCE THEM OTHERWISE. THE SYSTEM HAS ONE GOOD GAME IN GOLDENEYE... OI EVERYBODY, BUY A PLAYSTATION!" PETER RANKIN



***Duke Nukem* is a brilliant game, even if the graphics aren't on par with the PC version, and as long as there are good games, there will always be bad ones. Does everybody seem to be getting an N64? We don't think so. For a start, the PlayStation sold out everywhere over Christmas, so perhaps in some cases people were tempted to buy an N64 because they couldn't be arsed to wait for the next shipment of PlayStations to arrive. In which case they don't know anything about games to start with. Let them stew, that's what we say. Now, your answers...**

1. A *Carmageddon* conversion is on the cards.

2. *Grand Theft Auto* or *FIFA: Road to World Cup 98*.

3. Nothing as yet, although as reported in issue 29, Namco is currently working on a new weapon-based beat-'em-up.

TOMB WARRIOR

Dear PLAY,

The other night, I saw a news report on the Lara Croft phenomenon, but all I could think was who's the silly git who is criticising the 'morals' and what the f*** is 'Tomb Warrior' anyway? If you're going to knock the sexiest woman around, then at least get the bloody name right. Did you see it? Anyway, here's some questions...

1. I recently bought *FFVII*, which is now my best game. One thing could make it better however, and that is if they left in the swearing. It's annoying when all Barrat says is "____". What do you make of this?
2. Whilst I was in Scotland the thing that struck me most (apart from the kilts) was that every magazine was raving about the latest Namco beat-'em-up. I'd say that the speed makes *Soul Blade* the obvious winner, whatever moves it lacks (*Bushido Blade* is better than them all!), which do you enjoy the most?

Laurie Todd, Liverpool

We did see the programme you mention Laurie, and were equally amused at the 'Tomb Warrior' billing. Ain't it stupid?

1. This hardly spoils the game, and anyway, just insert your own foul language into the spaces. Hours of fun.

2. We probably play *Tekken 2* the most, but *Soul Blade* is still awesome.

STAR LETTER!
ACTUALLY, FIFA'S BEST!

Dear PLAY,

Congratulations on being the only magazine to accurately review *FIFA: Road to World Cup 98* and place it higher than *Actua Soccer 2*. I've bought your magazine since issue one and have never written in before, but I now feel the need. Pirouetting past the last defender and then slamming the ball into the top corner is proper football. Try doing that in *Actua Soccer 2*!

I bought both games on Electronic Boutique's ten-day money back guarantee. *Actua Soccer 2* I returned after three days because after playing a while on that I would walk around dazed and bewildered asking "why won't my defence come out of the area? Why won't my mid-field compete for headers from goal kicks?" In *FIFA*, I can even customise my Saturday side with a passing resemblance to the players and kit. All EA needs to do is nick the pace of *Actua Soccer 2*, the glorious snow-covered pitch and the multi-angle replay shots and then it's "pick that one out of the net keeper!" Unless of course you prefer the orgasmic cries of "Shearer! Shearer! Shearer!" before you indulge in your manly sport? Me, I prefer 'Song 2' – Woo-hoo!

Junior Bradshaw, London

Thank god for that! Ryan sold his soul to the devil and stuck his reputation on the line by claiming that FIFA: RTWC98 was the better game (which it was), hoping that others would share his opinion. Thankfully, you, a person of obvious sound-mind (ahem!) agree him, so he'll be able to sleep easy at night once more! Now, tell us which free game you want.

KEEPING ABREAST

Dear PLAY,

How the hell can you give *Final Fantasy VII* 93%, when you give crap like *Tomb Raider II* 95%? I reckon you must fancy Lara Croft you sad gits!

Caroline Jones, e-mail

Sad and proud it has to be said!

SHE'S A GOOD GIRL

Dear PLAY,

This is really about the top letter in issue 29. I agree that it *FFVII* is a top game and also that it should have been awarded a higher or at least a level score with *Tomb Raider II*. I disagree with the comments Charlie made about 120% scores etc. He is off his head, it would totally defile all standards of game reviewing to do such a thing and the game is not worth it, no matter how good it is. Yes it is the best thing around at this time, but what about *FFVIII* or *Tomb Raider III*? Because they would be (I presume) better than the prequels – what would we do then? Give them over 101% because their predecessors got 100%?? It would just go on and on. Boundaries have to be made somewhere. You do right to draw those boundaries. The game however, should have received a higher score as *Tomb Raider II* may be brilliant, but it doesn't do anything really spectacular that we didn't see in *Tomb Raider* or games before it, just the same things, but much better! *FFVII* however, has brought a totally NEW standard and style of game to players and brought the RPG into the real world for once, not locked in the bedroom with some spotty no-mate geeks!

People who would normally never entertain an RPG are now playing *FFVII* and loving EVERY minute of it, and showing interest in other RPGs because of it.

This is the kind of thing we want from games, ground-breaking stuff, not just more of the same, no matter how better it is! (I am not slagging off *TRII* as I love it, but it is essentially *TR1* with outside locations and lots of neat touches).The points I have made should really be taken in, as they are valid, in this case at least.

FFVII has broken limits set by gamers and brought a new level of game to many other people, at last. Incidentally, why mention as Charlie did, that his PSX was chipped? What bearing did that have on the letter?

Lastly, if you knew more about *FFVII* (Charlie I mean) you would realise that the last two disks contain all the info from the first disk as well, so they are not really more game, they are just there to make everything seem more seamless, as they keep everything flowing, the latter disks simply contain around 100 MB of additional info for that disk only. I have checked this and I am right.

Seeya guys!!

Danielle, e-mail

Some good points there Dani, *FFVII* has indeed revitalised the whole RPG genre and got people interested in a type of game that is a lot more rewarding and satisfying than your average shoot-'em-ups and beat-'em-ups. What you say about the discs is also correct, with about 60-70% of the actual

gameplay on the first disc, so although the game isn't perhaps quite as big as you would first imagine, it's still a monster waiting to be slain!

Death to Aeris

Dear PLAY,

This is the first time I have written to you, and I am sorry to say that I'm disgusted, not with the magazine, but for ruining the storyline to the greatest game ever created. In issue 29, Charlie Skinner from London wrote to you regarding *FFVII*. Included in his letter he said "the scene where Aeris dies" and "the scene with the weapon coming to life." Thanks a lot! That's fine him writing to tell you, but you didn't have to print the damn thing! Just for that, you can answer these questions...

1. I am a huge fan of *Doom*. Would you recommend *Duke Nukem*, or is it complete filth? And is it only a two-player via the link-up option?

2. Do you have any cheats for *Tomb Raider II*, *FFVII* and *Total Drivin'*?

3. Is *Test Drive 4* as good as it seems?

Finally, what's going on? People are saying that *Tomb Raider II* has a long life-span, I completed it yesterday after just 22 hours of play, and it isn't much better than the first.

Richard Harris, Birmingham

Sorry about that Richard, but surely knowing in advance that the dizzy bint was going to snuff it only acted to strengthen the bond between you and make the moment when she popped even more moving. And anyway, if you bought the game early like everyone else then you'd already have known wouldn't you. We'll answer your questions anyway though...

1. *Duke Nukem* is a great game. So good in fact that the Editor personally borrowed the office copy and played it for a whole weekend. Apparently, he enjoyed every minute of it as well! And yes, two player is via link-up.
2. We've already printed the *Tomb Raider II* and *Total Drivin' cheats*, there are none for *FFVII*.
3. It's alright, yeah!

Megaman

Dear PLAY,

I bought issue 27 of PLAY to read the reports of some of the games because I was deciding whether to get a Sony PlayStation or to keep with my Sega Mega Drive. The main reason I want a PlayStation is because EA isn't releasing *FIFA: Road to World Cup 98* on the Mega Drive. But then I saw that it was coming out on December 19. Your magazine has helped me to change my mind and get a PlayStation!

John Tomlinson, East Yorkshire

Glad to be of assistance.

Croc of ****

Dear PLAY,

I think that your magazine is excellent, but I'm writing to you about *Croc*. I think that 78% was a poor mark. This game should have got at least 90%! I think *Croc: Legend of the Gobbos* is by far the best platformer ever!

I bought this game weeks ago, and when I first turned it on, I just couldn't switch it off. I played it for ages and think it is brilliant. It has five different worlds and over 40 levels, not to mention the fact that it is 3-D throughout. I think *Croc* is a cool character, and that this game should have had a much better score. I'm only 11 and this letter wasn't easy to write, so please don't ignore it.

Matthew Fidler, Croydon

PS I am hoping to buy a new game. *Tomb Raider II*, *Crash Bandicoot 2* or *Porsche Challenge*. Which would you buy?

A *Croc* fan eh? You're entitled to your own opinion of course, and we here at PLAY write reviews to cover as broad a taste as possible. We do however challenge you to name one thing remotely cool about *Croc* as a character! You'd be a fool to discard *Tomb Raider II* as an essential purchase.

Rent Boy

Dear PLAY,

First of all, I would like to congratulate you on a first class magazine. I have bought a few games thanks to your unbiased reviews and I have never been disappointed. However, I think that the best way to decide what games to buy is to play the game first. When I had my Sega Mega Drive, I used to hire games from a video rental shop, but Sega stopped them because it didn't have a license. But full credit to Sony. Not only does it agree with the policy, but it actually releases rental versions of some of its own games. Many other PlayStation owners must also find this a great way to decide as well.

With the PlayStation apparently doing better than the N64 (rightly so), there are rumours of another price drop on top of the existing Value Pack, and with the sheer amount of games available, the superb Platinum range (*Wipeout 2097* being my next purchase), the drop to £35 for Sony games (come on other companies!), surely the trend will continue.

All I need now is a decent football management game to be released. Well done Sony, keep up the great advertising campaign and Nintendo wont know what hit it!

Lee Chamberlain, Northampton

The rental system is a great way of testing games, but just how much does Sony itself benefit from this scheme? Let's face it, it you were to rent a game for a night or two nights, the average lifespan of a game these days isn't too great, so the chances are that you'll be able to get quite a way into it before the point of return. You could even rent it a couple more times, complete it and then never have to bother buying it because you've seen everything. Hence, no sale for Sony. Still, we're certainly not knocking the system because it may indeed help people to choose what to buy, or enable skint people to savour the latest releases. As for as the price drop goes, as long as the PlayStation continues to do well, there is no reason why Sony would need drop the price. We join you in applauding the advertising campaign though, it kicks ass big-time!

Fist full of dollars

Dear PLAY,

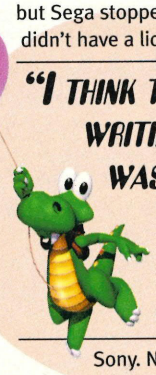
Thank you for producing the best magazine in the UK. Secondly, import games. Nearly all the other mags have run articles about how buying import is bad, and chipping your machine is bad – wrong! You guys always feature import games and that's why you are the most up-to-date magazine available. Everyone should get an import machine or have theirs chipped. True, some stores don't know what they're doing, but there are plenty that do. I have had my PlayStation, Saturn and N64 chipped for the past two years (ish) and have never had any problems at all. I have games that people have never heard of. There are around 300 games for the UK PlayStation and about 3000 on NTSC! In my opinion, PAL stands for Pathetic And Late! Why does Sony insist on treating us like some communist country with a limited choice of slowed down, censored, thick bordered, out-of-date games?

UK money is the same as Yen or Dollars, so why shouldn't I be able to play games before most other people? Sod Sony, and stop getting ripped off! Most stores and magazines haven't got a clue apart from yours.

Anand Vaid, Pinner

PLAY is a unofficial publication, we review import games, of course we do, without import games Play would be just another gutless, faceless magazine saturating the market. People don't always like what we do, but we like to feel as though we're painting a honest, informative picture that would be of interest to all PlayStation owners and not just those that shop at Dixons. You're not committing any crime by buying import games, although having a chipped PlayStation could be construed as being a bit naughty. But hey, it's your money, you take the risks, and you're perfectly happy to do so, so what's the harm in that eh? Just don't buy any pirate games OK!

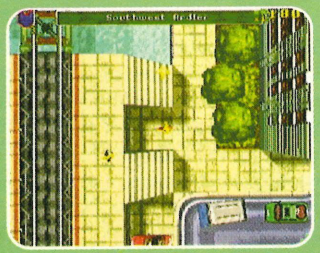
"I THINK THAT YOUR MAGAZINE IS EXCELLENT. BUT I'M WRITING TO YOU ABOUT CROC. I THINK THAT 78% WAS A POOR MARK. THIS GAME SHOULD HAVE AT LEAST GOT 90%! I THINK CROC: LEGEND OF THE GOBBOS IS BY FAR THE BEST PLATFORMER EVER!" MATHEW FIDLER



Strange moments in video games #4

This month... Grand Theft Auto

There's no doubt about it, *Grand Theft Auto* is the number one, bad-ass full-on crime spree of a game that rocked the house of commons to its foundations. However, it does contain a very strange moment in-between the carnage, and that is when you visit the train station in the first city. There are two sets of steps leading up to the platform, with a gap in-between. If you walk up the steps onto the platform, and then walk out over the gap, you'll find yourself walking in the air. Continue to walk out until the gap aligns with the edge of the steps, and you'll mysteriously topple to the ground. Strange but true.



We reserve the right to edit your letters and regret we cannot replay personally. If you want us to print your e-mail address, please give specific permission.

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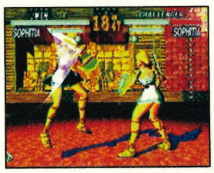
PLAYLIST

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	●	●						74%	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...
Beast Wars Transformers*	1	●							65%	Transforming fun that's far from easy.
Bedlam	1	●				●			78%	Muggy and complicated *Syndicate* wannabe.
Big Hurt Baseball*	1-2	●							81%	Moderately successful sports conversion.
Black Dawn	1	●							76%	Average helicopter shoot-'em-up.
BLAM! Machinehead	1	●							79%	Graphical masterpiece, but no depth at all.
Blast Chamber	1-4	●	●						82%	Clever puzzles with rotating rooms.
Blood Omen: LOK	1	●							81%	Be a vampire – top bloody fun.
Broken Helix*	1	●							75%	Absorbing 3-D adventure, but bad graphically.
Broken Sword	1	●				●			84%	Slick point 'n' click adventure.
Broken Sword 2	1	●				●			**90%**	Beautifully intuitive point 'n' clicker.
Bubble Bobble	1-2	●							85%	Arcade fun from the early Eighties.
Bubsy 3D	1-4								82%	Passable 3-D cartoon romp.
Burning Road	1-2	●		●			●		**90%**	Turbo nutter action with big trucks.
Bushido Blade*	1-2	●		●			●		**94%**	Stylish and brutal sword-fighting.
Bust-a-Move 2	1-2	●			●				88%	Simple, yet totally addictive puzzler.
Bust-a-Move 3DX*	1-2	●							88%	Once you pop, you can't stop!
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.

GAME		SCORE	WE SAY...
Chronicles of the Sword	1	43%	Tedious adventure – avoid!
City of Lost Children	1	78%	Slow moving French 3-D adventure.
Clock Tower	1	83%	Stylish, and utterly chilling murder mystery!
Colony Wars	1	**92%**	Gorgeous, totally playable space blasting.
Command & Conquer	1	79%	PSX version slow and sorely lacking.
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.
Courier Crisis	1	54%	Bring back the old Paperboy!
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...
Grand Theft Auto	1	88%	Criminally addictive road rage!
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	68%	Has not stood the test of time...
Hard Boiled	1	29%	A disasterously wasted licence...

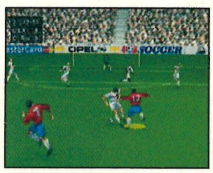
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ARCADE-STYLE SHOOT-'EM-UPS



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%

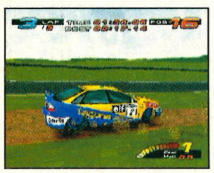
playback

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...
Hardcore 4X4	1-2	●		●			●		81%	Hellish and repetitive off-road action.
Hebereke's Popitto	1-2	●							43%	Why bother with this when *Puzzle Fighter* exists?
Herc's Adventures*	1-2	●							70%	Cute-looking run-of-the-mill adventure.
Hercules*	1	●							63%	Sweet and innocent, but simple and dull.
Hermie Hopperhead*	1	●							53%	Worthless cartoon platform banality.
Hexen	1	●							35%	One of the PSX's worst ever games!
Hi-Octane	1-2	●			●				80%	Reasonable Bullfrog racer.
Horned Owl*	1-2	●						●	73%	Poor excuse for a light gun game.
Hyper Tennis	1-4	●	●						78%	Utterly pointless tennis sim. There are better.
Impact Racing	1-2	●		●					87%	Good then, now utter tripe!
Incredible Hulk, The	1	●							45%	Nothing 'incredible' about it. Poor.
Independence Day*	1-2	●		●	●				47%	Wretched film-inspired nonsence!
International Moto X*	1-2	●		●					77%	Moderate motorbike racer.
Int Superstar Soccer Deluxe	1-4	●	●						83%	16-bit footy conversion, no frills.
Int Superstar Soccer Pro	1-2	●							84%	One of the best football games on PSX!
Int Track & Field	1-4	●	●						85%	Superb multi-player sports special!
In The Hunt*	1-2	●							69%	Miserable sub shoot-'em-up. Tosh!
Iron & Blood	1-2	●							75%	Passable medieval beat-'em-up.
Iron Man & Manowar	1-2								47%	As much fun as genital surgery!
Jersey Devil	1	●							83%	Devilish gameplay, well worth a look!
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.
Klonoa: Door to Phantomile*	1	●							83%	Fast and loveable Japanese platformer.
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	●							43%	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.
Marvel Super Heroes*	1-2	●							87%	A highly playable beat-'em-up.
Magic Carpet	1	●							**90%**	Magnificent magic carpet ride!
Mass Destruction*	1	●							80%	Enjoyable, destructive tank romp...
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.

GAME								SCORE	WE SAY...
Nascar Racing '96	1	●					●	80%	Comprehensive racing simulation – a bit jerky.
Nascar '98	1-2	●			●		●	82%	The complete Nascar package.
NBA In The Zone	1-2	●						79%	Solid sports sim, not as good as *Total NBA*.
NBA Jam Extreme	1-2	●						79%	Over exaggerated arcade port-over. Numb.
NBA Jam:TE	1-4	●	●					**90%**	Two-on-two multi-player mayhem. Good fun.
NBA Live '96	1-2	●						82%	Stale and lifeless basketball sim. Not much cop.
NBA Live '97	1-2	●	●					89%	All the latest stats and players – better engine.
Need For Speed, The	1-2	●		●	●		●	**94%**	Classic supercar OTT racing. Superb link-up!
Need For Speed 2, The	1-2	●			●		●	**90%**	Rough looking, but actually more fun – long term.
NFL Game Day	1-2	●						73%	American football – who cares?
NHL '97	1-8	●	●					86%	Intense ice hockey action – smooth and fast.
NHL '98	1-8	●						71%	Cool graphics, slushy gameplay.
NHL Face Off	1-2	●						78%	Admirable attempt, but a bit cumbersome.
Nightmare Creatures	1	●						**90%**	A fantastic, full-on splatter flick!
Note, The	1	●						72%	Above average first person adventure.
Novastorm	1	●						38%	Contemptable FMV-spooled shoot-'em-up arse!
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.
One	1	●						86%	The most destructive game ever!
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.
Power Soccer 2	1-4	●	●					63%	Basically, not much fun at all!
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!

LONG TERM TEST

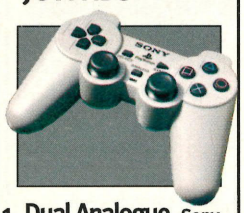


NAME: VICTORY BOXING
LENGTH OF TEST: 14 MONTHS
REPLAY VALUE: 4/5

IT SEEMS STRANGE WITH SUCH A MONEY-SPINNING AND POPULAR SPORT AS BOXING, THAT THERE ARE STILL ONLY TWO GAMES THAT FEATURE IT ON PLAYSTATION. THE FIRST WAS *BOXER'S ROAD* – A FANTASTIC SIMULATOR WHICH APPEARED ON THE IMPORT SCENE – BUT SADLY NEVER OFFICIALLY. AND THE SECOND WAS *VICTORY BOXING* – JVC'S MARVELLOUS ARCADE-STYLE, HARD-HITTING PACKAGE THAT WAS, AND STILL IS, IMMENSELY SATISFYING TO PLAY. MOST BEAT-'EM-UP GAMES (IF YOU CAN CALL IT THAT), ARE A GOOD MEANS OF CHANNELLING AGGRESSION, BUT BOXING JUST SEEMS MORE SO BECAUSE IT IS SO REAL, AND *VICTORY BOXING* STILL OFFERS THIS EDGE. EVEN AGAINST THE CREAM OF THE BEAT-'EM-UP CROP, BEING ABLE TO DESIGN YOUR OWN FIGHTER THAN THEN SEND THEM ON THEIR MERRY WAY UP THE WORLD RANKINGS IS A GREAT FEELING. THERE IS STILL NOTHING THAT COMPARES TO *VICTORY BOXING* ON PLAYSTATION AS IT UTILISES A GREAT DEAL OF TIMING AND STRATEGY AS OPPOSED TO ENDLESS SLOGGING. OF COURSE, YOU CAN OPT FOR THE STRAIGHT SLUG, BUT YOU'LL FIND THAT ONCE YOUR STAMINA IS DRAINED, THE FIGHTS BECOME SLOW, TIRED AND DRAWN-OUT AFFAIRS THAT AREN'T HALF AS EXCITING. WATCHING YOUR OPPONENTS EMERGE AS SPRITEY CONTENDERS AND LEAVE AS DAZED, WOBBLY WRECKS IS A GREAT EXPERIENCE, AND WHAT MAKES *VICTORY BOXING* A GREAT ONE OR TWO PLAYER PACKAGE. MONSTER!

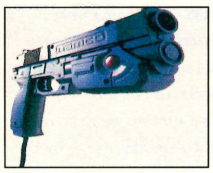
playback

Joypads



1. Dual Analogue — Sony
2. PSX 1 — LMP
3. Station Master — Logic 3
4. Cyclone — Phase 9
5. Program Pad — Interact

Light Guns



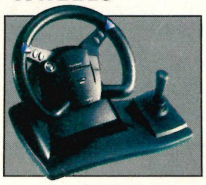
1. G-Con 45 — Sony
2. Erazer — Fire
3. Predator — Logic 3
4. PXS Light Gun — LMP
5. Protector — Logic 3

Joysticks



1. Dominator — Logic3
2. Pro Arcade 2 — Fire
3. EagleMax — ActLabs
4. Arcade Stick — Namco
5. PS Arcade — Interact

Wheels



1. Top Gear — Logic3
2. PSX Wheel — LMP
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.

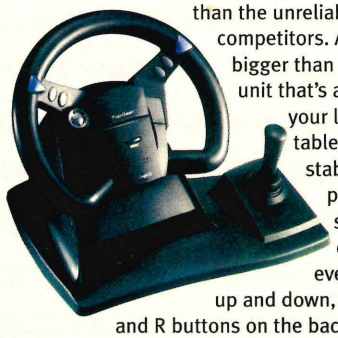
GAME								SCORE	WE SAY...
Road Rash	1-2	●						75%	Dodgy visuals, but fast and fun. Now cheap.
Robopit	1-2	●			●			55%	Abominable robot beat-'em-up.
Robotron X	1-2	●						85%	Classic gameplay, very fast, we prefer original.
Rockman Battle & Chase*	1-2	●			●			41%	Basic and unrewarding cartoon racer.
Rosco McQueen	1	●						88%	You play with fire, you get this sizzling game!
Runabout*	1	●						77%	Highly playable racer, but way too short.
Salamander Deluxe Pack	1-2							74%	Aged, but enjoyable Eighties shoot-'em-up.
Sampras Extreme	1-4	●	●					90%	One of the best tennis games on PSX. Slick.
Samurai Showdown*	1-2	●						62%	Should be called *Samurai Slowdown!*
Sentient	1	●						84%	Absorbing and intelligent adventure. Bizarre.
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.
Side by Side Special*	1	●					●	63%	Uninspiring, run-of-the-mill racer.
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.

GROOVY GADGETS

With so many RACING games available for PlayStation, STEERING WHEEL peripherals are CERTAINLY in VOGUE. But with so MANY on the market, and at HIGH prices, it is IMPORTANT to know which offers the BEST value for money. So without further ado, BUCKLE up, sit TIGHT and prepare to put your peddle to the METAL with the Play magazine DEFINITIVE steering wheel group TEST!

TOP GEAR STEERING WHEEL

Supplied by: Logic 3
Price: £69.99



Right out of the box, the Top Gear feels like the mutt's nuts. The first things you notice are all positive – a working gear stick, leatherette wheel cover and sleek modern design. In action, it doesn't disappoint either. The Top Gear uses a large metal spring to provide resistance when you're steering, a much more desirable method than the unreliable bands and pulleys of its competitors. And coupled with the bigger than average base of the unit that's almost as happy on your lap as it is on a table, you get smooth, stable control. The programmable gear stick adds a whole extra dimension of realism, even though it only moves up and down, but there are perfectly placed L and R buttons on the back of the wheel if you can't handle the stick. Bad points? You have to play in your socks to feel any resistance from the pedals and the gear stick is on the wrong side for us Brits. The Top Gear will even work with your Saturn (spit!) and N64 (hiss!), but the less said about that the better!

OVERALL: ★★★★★

VRF1

Supplied by: Logic International
Price: £59.99



Slightly cheaper alternative to most wheels on the market, this also comes with shiny plastic foot pedals that feel distinctly feeble, so the sensation of slamming down the accelerator isn't perhaps the satisfying experience that it should be. Generally, this wheel copes well under the rigours of the F1 circuits and offers more responsiveness than you'd think. The actual buttons could be better positioned though, because if you opt not to use the optional pedals, you'll find your thumb aching after a while. The only real area in which this wheel is a let down is in the look – it certainly isn't as sexy as the Top Gear and the light grey wheel clashes badly with the chrome-look pedals. The wheel adjusts for reach, but it's still set at an awkward angle.

OVERALL: ★★★½★

GAME								SCORE	WE SAY...
Space Jam	1-6		●					39%	Pants cartoon basketball game, based on film.
Speedster	1-2	●			●		●	80%	Overhead racer with okay handling, but slow.
Spider*	1	●						75%	'On rails' arachnid platformer. Can get boring.
Spot Goes to Hollywood*	1	●						72%	Uninspiring cartoon platform game. Yawn.
Stahlfeder*	1	●						65%	Old-style vertical shoot-'em-up – too easy.
Star Gladiator	1-2	●						88%	Competent beat-'em-up from Capcom.
Starblade Alpha	1	●						68%	Lots of blasting action, no control at all...
Starfighter 3000	1							85%	A decent stab at a sci-fi shooter/strategy.
Star Wars: Masters of Teras Kasi*	1-2	●						74%	A great license, but somewhat wasted.
Starwinder	1	●						77%	Linear space-based racer. Lacks excitment.
Steel Harbinger	1	●						80%	Controlling a violent nympho isn't much fun.
Steel Reign	1-2	●			●			58%	One to rent, not to buy!
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!
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.

LONG TERM TEST

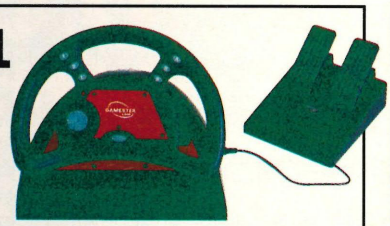


NAME: PARAPPA THE RAPPER
LENGTH OF TEST: 5 MONTHS
REPLAY VALUE: 4/5

THIS INNOVATIVE CULT CLASSIC SOLD LIKE MAD OVER CHRISTMAS AND AFTER ALL THOSE MONTHS SINCE WE REVIEWED IT, THE APPEAL AND CHARM IS STILL FIRMLY IN PLACE. WITH A LOW PRICE AND A HIGHLY ORIGINAL NATURE, *PARAPPA THE RAPPER* IS A GAME THAT YOU'LL COMPLETE IN NO TIME AT ALL, BUT STILL FIND YOURSELF COMING BACK TO AFTER A BOOZY NIGHT AT THE PUB OR A SEVERE GROUNDING. HOWEVER, IT ISN'T A GAME THAT YOU CAN MASTER AS SUCH, BECAUSE SUCCESS DEPENDS ENTIRELY ON WHAT YOUR RHYTHM IS LIKE AT THE TIME OF PLAYING. ADMITTEDLY, NOT A LOT OF SATISFACTION IS GAINED BY PLAYING ON YOUR TODD, BUT WHEN FUNKED WITH IN FRONT OF AN AUDIENCE, *PARAPPA THE RAPPER* STILL GENERATES HUGE LAFFS (WHICH ARE OFTEN AT YOUR MATES' EXPENSE) AND GREAT REPLAY VALUE. OK SO IT ISN'T A GAME THAT YOU'LL STILL PLAY WEEK-IN, WEEK-OUT AFTER COMPLETION, BUT YOU'LL BE WELL ADVISED TO HANG ON TO YOUR COPY BECAUSE WHEN DUG OUT OCCASIONALLY, PARAPPA AND ALL HIS TRIPPED-OUT CHUMS STILL PROVIDE ENOUGH INVOLVING GAMEPLAY AND SHEER ENJOYMENT TO MAKE THIS GAME ONE OF THE GREAT SURPRISE SUCCESS STORY'S!

PSX STEERING WHEEL

SUPPLIED BY: GAMESTER LMP
PRICE: £79.99



This wheel is currently undergoing a major redesign, although sadly we were not able to sample the new product in time for this test, but we'll give you the low-down next month. The PSX Steering Wheel has been the market leader for ages now, and it isn't hard to see why. Utilising the old bungee method of providing resistance, this wheel is great for hammering around those hair-pins, full-lock, at alarming speeds, and the pedals are certainly the best seen with any wheel. The general design and lay-out are awesome – you've got handy arcade-style gear-changer flaps positioned behind the wheel and numerous easy to reach buttons scattered on the face and rear for cool comfort. This wheel is second only to the Top Gear in the authentic look department, providing an appearance usually associated with a rally car – complete with metal panels and bulky housing. Long term tests show that this wheel isn't quite as responsive as the Top Gear and it desperately needs a gear stick, but it is still a very polished product.

OVERALL: ★★★★★



Each of the wheels was tried and tested on *Formula One '97* to see how they shape-up on the world's most notorious racing circuits. Thankfully, there were no Senna-like shapping of the steering columns to speak of, but a couple came close!

NEGCON

SUPPLIED BY: SONY
PRICE: £44.99



Few steering controllers can boast the same all-round responsiveness of this innovative gadget from the Japanese software giant, Namco. Although perhaps *F1 '97* wasn't the best game to full exploit the NegCon's quick-fire capabilities (this is unbeatable with *Wipeout 2097*!),it is still one of the best driving controllers around, and will be for some time to come. Admittedly, it is quite tricky to pick up and use straight away, but once you get the hang of it, you'll reap the rewards for months to come by shedding seconds off of your best lap times. The button configuration is also top-notch with two-styles available – the springy or hard-backed, either of which are very comfortable to the touch. Like we said, the only problem with this is the time is takes to adapt to this strange twisty style, and perhaps the price should have dropped by now, but then quality and expense come hand in hand we suppose.

OVERALL: ★★★★★

V3 RACING WHEEL

SUPPLIED BY: INTERACT
PRICE: £79.99



A good shape and adjustable height position are the main attractions with this wheel. However, its durability comes seriously into question when the first sample was wrecked after one hefty full-lock wrench. Obviously, no wheel is indestructible, but you would expect a product that commands eighty quid to be worthy of some punishment! The actual design is good with the buttons well laid-out and easily accessible. The pedals are also some of the best seen with a springy feel and a solid, deep base that doesn't slide around the floor after a firm pump. Not a bad wheel by any means, but not nearly as good or responsive as the Top Gear.

OVERALL: ★★★★★

NEXT MONTH – EVERY NEW PLAYSTATION GUN TESTED!

LONG TERM TEST



NAME: TOBAL 2
LENGTH OF TEST: 7 MONTHS
REPLAY VALUE: 5/5

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT SEVEN MONTHS HAVE ELAPSED SINCE WE WERE SPELLBOUND BY SQUARE'S AMAZING HIGH-RES BEAT-'EM-UP SEQUEL. WHAT'S PERHAPS EVEN HARDER TO COMPREHEND IS THAT THE GAME IS NO CLOSER TO AN OFFICIAL RELEASE. LIKE *TOBAL NO.1* – WHICH IN ITSELF WAS HIGHLY INNOVATIVE AT THE TIME, *TOBAL 2* IS ESSENTIALLY TWO GAMES IN ONE, A FANTASTICALLY PLAYABLE FIGHTING GAME ON ONE HAND, AND AN EPIC ADVENTURE QUEST ON THE OTHER. UNFORTUNATELY THOUGH, THE GAME IS STILL ONLY AVAILABLE ON JAPANESE IMPORT, SO MANY OF THE RPG ELEMENTS ARE SADLY LOST UNLESS YOU UNDERSTAND THE LINGO. HOWEVER, PROLONGED TRIAL AND ERROR WILL GET YOU QUITE FAR INTO THE GAME, AS WILL ONE OF THE HANDY TEXT TRANSLATIONS THAT CAN BE FOUND ON NUMEROUS INTERNET SITES. BUT EVEN IF A WEALTH OF GIBBERISH TURNS YOU OFF, THE BEAT-'EM-UP ASPECT IS STILL REASON ENOUGH TO TRY IT, AS IT STILL LOOKS BETTER THAN TODAY'S FIGHTERS AND BUILDS CONSIDERABLY ON THE FIRST GAME, INSERTING HOT NEW LIGHT-SOURCING EFFECTS AND COMPLEX ATTACK PATTERNS THAT TAKE TIME TO MASTER, BUT YET ARE IMMENSELY SATISFYING WHEN USED AGAINST CPU OPPONENTS OR LESS WELL-INFORMED MATES. WHATEVER THE REASON FOR THE ABSENCE OF THIS GAME DOWN YOUR LOCAL GAME STORE, *TOBAL 2* IS A GAME THAT IS WORTHY OF A HIGH IMPORT PRICE. AND IT'S NOT VERY OFTEN THIS HOLDS TRUE!

GAME									SCORE	WE SAY...
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	●							84%	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!
Tetris Plus	1-2	●							81%	Addictive, but antiquated puzzler.
Theme Park	1	●							86%	Build your own Alton Towers – very in-depth.
Tiger Shark	1								62%	Decent water and aerial shoot-'em-up. Rough.
Time Commando	1								78%	Restrictive, but graphically impressive adventure.
Time Crisis*	1	●						●	90%	Stupendous light gun shooting action. Top.
Tobal No. 1*	1-2	●							94%	Cracking high res beat-'em-up with quest mode.
Tobal 2*	1-2	●					●		92%	Highly advanced sequel. More of everything!
Tokyo Highway Battle	1	●							73%	Great concept, let down by low overall speed.
Tomb Raider	1	●							94%	Superb Indiana Jones-style 3-D adventure.
Tomb Raider 2	1	●							95%	A fine sequel that easily surpasses the first.
Top Gun: Fire at Will	1	●							76%	Lack-lustre combat flight sim based on film.
Toshinden	1-2	●							76%	First *Tekken* rival, graphically fantastic. Dated.
Toshinden 2*	1-2	●							74%	Far worse than the original. Avoid like plague.
Toshinden 3	1-2	●							78%	An average beat-'em-up. Nothing more.
Total Drivin'	1-4	●		●	●		●		84%	Thrilling racing with excellent variation.
Total Eclipse Turbo	1	●							69%	Poor third person shoot-'em-up. From 3DO.
Total NBA '96	1-8	●	●						94%	The best basketball game on PSX, until...
Total NBA '97	1-8	●	●						92%	The most advanced basketball game ever!
Touring Car Championship	1-2	●			●		●		92%	Really fast, really fun, really racing!
Transport Tycoon	1	●				●			78%	Absorbing strategy about transport networks.
Trash It	1-4	●	●						55%	Average hammer-based puzzle game.
Treasures of the Deep*	1	●							83%	Atmospheric underwater adventure.
True Pinball	1								85%	Highly overrated pinball tosh. No save game!
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.
Yusha	1-2	●							60%	Nice-looking, but dated in gameplay.
Z	1-2	●		●		●			85%	Hard as hell, but intensely rewarding.
Zeitgeist*	1	●							51%	Incredibly slow shoot-'em-up. Worthless.
Zero Divide*	1-2	●							68%	Hopelessly clumsy robot beat-'em-up.

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TEKKEN 3

FULL PREVIEW of Namco's trump card for '98! This is expected to be the fighting game of the year, and PLAY returns next month with all the right moves and information you need to know. Kickin'!

COMPLETE REVIEW of Capcom's horrific action adventure! Come zombie-hunting with PLAY next month!

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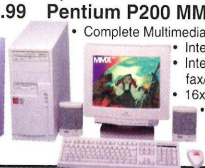
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Inevitably some products listed may not yet be available and prices may change. Please phone 01279 600204. Some items carry a £1 surcharge in our shops. SAVE = Saving off full recommended price. Sent to press 14/01/98 Errors & Ommisions Excluded. Inter-Mediates Ltd, T/A Special Reserve, The Maltings, Sawbridgeworth, Herts CM21 9PG



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