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TEKKEN 3 POSTER INSIDE!

issue thirty three Easter £2.95

PLAY

プレイステーション

The UK's Best Unofficial PL zine!

GEX 3D

ENTER THE GECKO

EXCLUSIVE! FIRST REVIEW! A karate-chop in the gut for the platformers?

BOMBERMAN

EXCLUSIVE! FIRST REVIEW! The multi-player classic comes to PlayStation

WORLD CUP '98

EXCLUSIVE NEWS! Football comes home with the official France '98 game from EA!

FREE CHEATS BOOK WITH THIS ISSUE

EVERY NEW PSX GAME REVIEWED!

"There are 55 Bru Dungeon and I'm give each and eve one of them a right good seeing to!"

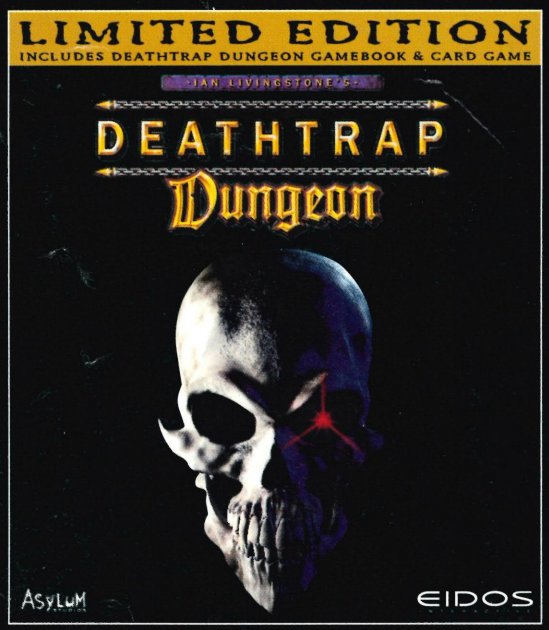
55 of the foulest species await you in Deathtrap Dungeon. Assume the role of Red Lotus or Chaindog then wade through gore in 20 enormous levels, overcome fiendish traps and avoid the bloody-death that lurks around every turn. You don't go empty handed; 33 weapons, spells and charms are there to find and use, you're going to need them all to get out alive!

I suppose we better not mention the T-Rex...

Multiplayer blood-fest included (PC Version)

SPECIAL LIMITED EDITION AVAILABLE AT LAUNCH! (PC Version)

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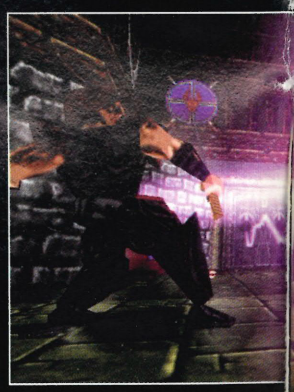


ASYLUM STUDIOS

PUBLISHER OF THE YEAR
EIDOS INTERACTIVE

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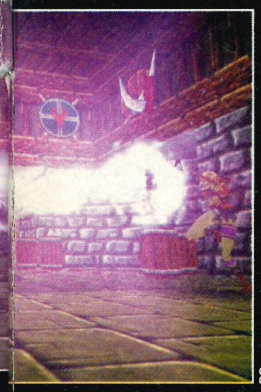
"...this game has got to be one of the best. Like a good book, once you've picked it up, you just can't put it down again"
92% ULTIMATE PC

"it's way up there with the best"
"a challenge beyond Tomb Raider 2"
8.5/10 Playstation Pro

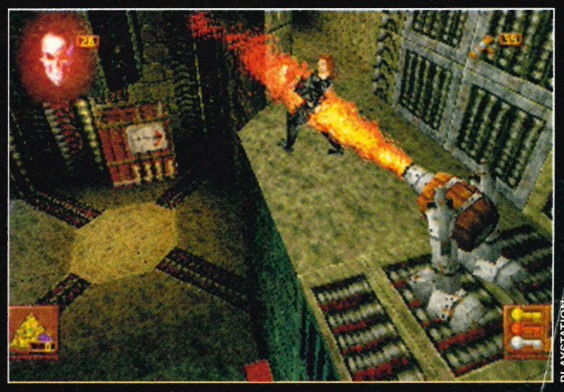
PC CD

PlayStation

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PLAY magazine Issue 33 1998

GEX 3D ENTER THE GECKO

THE BIG GAME



5 WAYS TO CONTACT PLAY!

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Home page: http://www.paragon.co.uk/play/
Tel: (01202)299900
(5-6pm weekdays only!)

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06 The very latest news from Planet PlayStation – first looks at brand new games, exclusive screenshots, wry articles on the games scene, and definitive top fives!

[SUBSCRIPTIONS]
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[ARENA]
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.

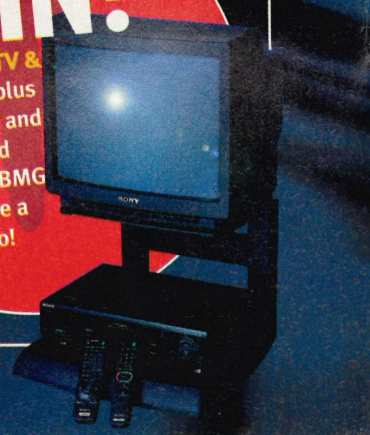
[THE PLAYLIST]
90 Reviews of every PlayStation game every covered in PLAY, plus our Playback recommended games, long term tests and any other cool features we can stick in.

FIRST OFFICIAL REVIEW!

20 HE'S MEAN, GREEN AND THINKS HE'S A LOVE MACHINE! WELL, TWO OUT OF THREE ISN'T BAD. GEX IS BACK, IN A GLORIOUS 3-D PLATFORMER THAT PILFERS FROM THE GOOD AND THE VERY BAD OF TV AND MOVIE LAND. TUNE IN!

WIN!

15 A SONY TV & VIDEO plus bags of games and James Bond goodies from BMG. You could be a winner too!



inside
PLAY プレイステーション
issue thirty three
The UK's Best Unofficial PLAYSTATION Magazine!
プレイステーション

DEATHTRAP DUNGEON

34 Fighting Fantasy comes to PlayStation! What will the cruel hand of fate deal this exciting new swashbuckling adventure?

FULL REVIEW



RASCAL

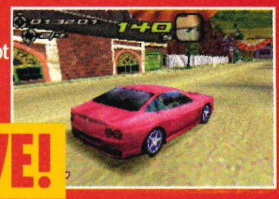
38 Psygnosis weaves its own platform wizardry, but how does it compare to *Gex*?



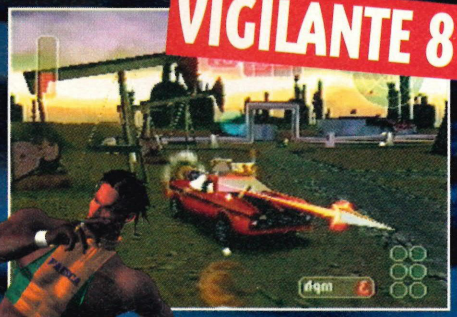
EXCLUSIVE!

NEED FOR SPEED 3

32 EA presents a new high-octane racer, but with *Gran Turismo* now on the track, has it got the acceleration to overtake?



WORLD EXCLUSIVE!



VIGILANTE 8



TEKKEN 3

WIRED UPS

A short preview look at the hottest games before the full review next issue.

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WORKSTATIONS

Your first look at the latest games still in development.

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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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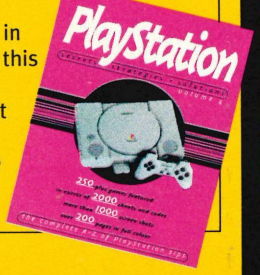
SAD days indeed when rubbish like *The Last Report* is released. Why are people who obviously know so little about what makes a good game allowed to operate within this industry? Forget play testers, the best way to judge a game is to take it home and show it off to your impartial mates whilst quaffing copious amounts of booze. You can't fool the public, you see, at the end of the day, they buy the games and they know best. A lot of folk, it would appear, wouldn't know a decent, distracting piece of software if it puckered-up and kissed them smack on the arse!

Despite the influx of polished poos onto the shelves, the PlayStation is truly enjoying good times, and these are reflected in this spankingly good issue of PLAY.

First there's the monster tips book that is free with this very issue, and then there's the wealth of quality reviews. Although *Gex 3-D* was the only game to earn a 'PLAY Classic' award this month, special praise should also go to *NFS3* with its fantastic two-player mode. Hope you enjoy the magazine, we sure did!

Ryan Butt **Editor**

Out now is Volume 4 in the PlayStation Secrets, Strategies, Solutions series. This 200+ page full colour tips compendium is packed with thousands of cheats and complete solutions to the PlayStation's most recent games, such as *Crash 2, GTA, Bushido Blade, Final Fantasy VII* and *Duke Nukem*. Decorated in lurid pink, this stunning book is out now for £9.95. The perfect gift!





news • snippets • rumours • h

PSX GAME-BOY?

SONY PLANS PSX PERSONAL DIGITAL ASSISTANT!

SONY Japan has announced it will release a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA), based on the PlayStation Memory Card which will be released in Japan next winter. Technical specifications have been made available to PlayStation licensees in Japan, with the aim of encouraging software support.

Most PDAs, such as Psions and Newtons, are business devices, but the PlayStation PDA is principally a games machine. Aside from functioning as a PlayStation memory card, it allows gamers to play on the move, with an LCD screen and a powerful 32-bit RISC processor.

The Sony PDA does have some personal organiser functions however, such as a clock, appointment scheduler and more whimsical seasonal change applications. Another PDA-type function is infra-red data transmission, allowing two PlayStation PDAs to beam information between them. Unlike other PDAs, most software will come on CD-ROM to load in data through the PlayStation and its memory card slot. Weird!

WHAT'S THE STORY, SONY?

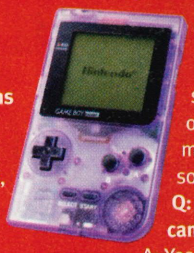
FOR more information on the Sony PDA, these questions were put to Sony of Japan...

Q: Is the PDA classed as a peripheral for the PlayStation?
A: It is not positioned as a peripheral, but as a new product.

Q: Are there any applications developed already?
A: It has only been announced just to licensees, and we have not received any application proposals yet.

Q: Are you thinking of applications other than games?
A: Applications, such as shedulers, memos, telephone directories and dictionaries will become possible.

Q: Is the PDA somethig similar to 'Tamagotchi'?
A: Depending on the application, it can play games like the Tamagotchi, however the PDA can be used for many applications by changing the software.



Q: What are the specs of the infa red communication capability?
A: Communication between two PDAs is a new, dedicated system. Communication with other infa red devices can be made possible with application software.

Q: Can it be used with a digital camera for example?
A: Yes, depending on the application software.

Q: Can the PDA be played on its own without the PlayStation?
A: Yes it can because it has a programmable CPU. Application software can be downloaded from the console, and conversely, uploaded from the PDA to the PlayStation.

SONY PDA TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

CPU: ARMT7T 32 bit RISC processor
Memory:SRAM 2K bytes. Flash RAM 128K bytes
Graphics: 32 x 32 dot monochrome LCD
Sound: Piezoelectric speaker (4 bit PCM)
Switches: 5 input buttons, 1 reset button
Others: Bi-directional infra red communication LED, Calendar function, Identification number, Battery



INTERNATIONAL PLAY BOYS

WHO TO CONTACT AT PLAY MAGAZINE...



RYAN BUTT
Ryan's favourite music is a fine blend of REM, Elvis, and The Stone Roses – which might explain why he is partial to cheeseburgers, and dances like a spaz!
play@paragon.co.uk



GRAEME NICHOLSON
Graeme listens to duff heavy metal and obscure Japanese drivel – which might explain why he looks like Lemmy's offspring and bleeps like a Tamagotchi.
silencio@paragon.co.uk



TOM SARGENT
Tom likes Oasis, and, like his idols, is a classic example of mouthy 'Northern Scum' – which might explain why he likes a crap football team and shies away from hard graft!
tomsargent@paragon.co.uk

AVENGING ANGEL!

STEP ASIDE LARA, HERE COMES NINJA!

CORE design, the same development team behind *Tomb Raider II* has just released these new pictures of its brand new game entitled *Ninja*. The game is a combat adventure which features a mysterious masked crusader who has a varied arsenal of slashing blades and magic at his disposal.

Set in ancient Japan, the story centres around two regions that are at war. The warlord of one of the regions summons the help of demon to help overthrow the enemy, and in doing so, an army of goblins soldiers is sent to aid the fight. However, the warlord is unable to control the goblin hordes and so the destruction of Japan is witnessed. Now, a year on, a young Ninja named Kurosawa emerges to right the wrong and seize Japan back from the clutches of evil.

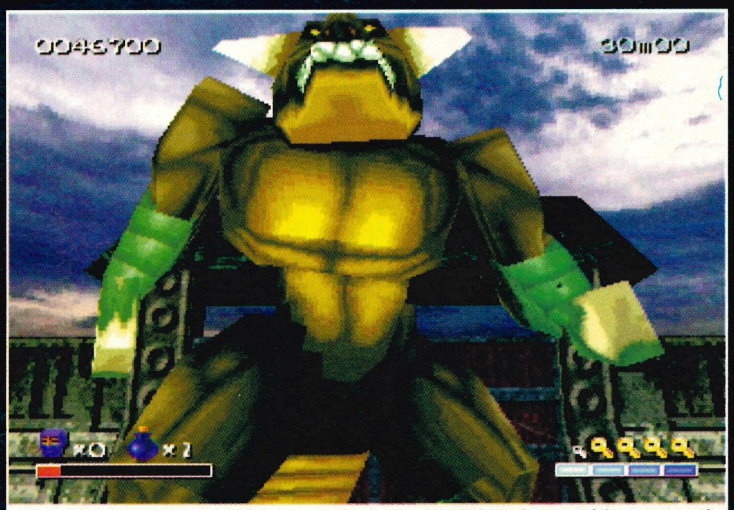
Ninja will feature 13 stages of full 3-D fighting action involving hand-to-hand and weapon-based combat. There are also a host of puzzles to solve, traps to avoid and big bosses to batter, as well as over 50 different types of enemy to scrap with during the travels. Unfortunately though, the release date of *Ninja* has slipped, rather drastically, to September. Bogus!



[ABOVE] **It's a mystical game not a realistic game, hence the giant crab scenario.**



[ABOVE] **The happy camp fire sing-along is rudely interrupted by the man in a mask.**



[ABOVE] **We thought it was real Ninjas, not the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles! One of the more surreal end-of-level bosses rears its ugly head.**

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.

Apparently, heavily discounted Sony products will go on sale in 150 Tesco stores around the country. Aside from the usual Sony gizmos, such as a Camcorder down £70 to £400, there will be PlayStations reduced from £129.99 to £99.99! Half a pound of spuds and a Value Pack please, luv!

Oh dear! It would seem that Janet Jackson's credibility has gone down the pan after a recent discovery that her song, Together Again sounds uncannily like the theme tune for the original *Sonic The Hedgehog* game on the Sega Master System. Reports that her next single will feature the same bass line as the third-level music of *Hermie Hopperhead* are completely unfounded!

Fire International is developing its own Action Replay-style device for PlayStation. Apparently, it will allow you to take a still of the game via a PC, touch it up in a paint program and then use it in the game. Nude Lara? No, we don't believe it either!

Sony is planning to release a special bundled version of *Tekken 3* that will come with a Dual Shock controller when the game first emerges in Japan. It is not known if a similar deal will happen over here, but it is thought that Namco *will* leave in the Dual Shock code for the American version released on the 30 April.

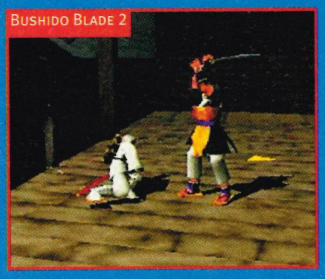
USA ENTERTAINMENT

ENTERTAINMENT USA

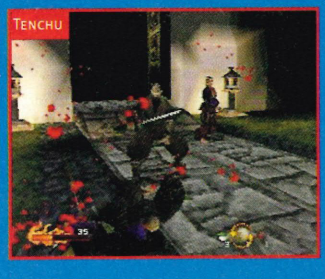


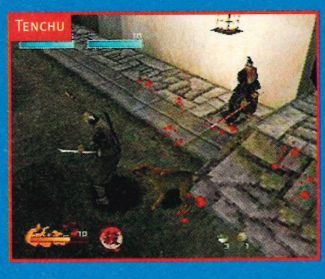
CAT BUCANNON brings you all the news on what's hot in the land of giant hot-dogs and Mariah Carey.

Square has release demo copies of *Bushido Blade 2* to all us lucky journos in the States. I can say now that it is looking absolutely awesome! The most striking aspect is the rendered intro that is amazing. In the actual game, the computer AI has been greatly improved to make you opponents more cautious and sneaky – they'll strike and sting in an instant you try for the quick kill. The copy is in the post to PLAY, so expect to see more next issue!



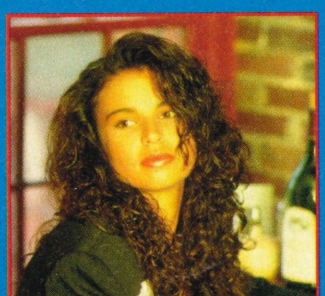
Also in my tight grasp this month is *Tenchu*. This game takes bits from *Nightmare Creatures* and *Metal Gear Solid* and jumbles them up in a cool mix of 3-D action and extreme violence. Believe me, this game is gut-wrenching. Picture the scene, you grab an opponent, swirl them around and place a knife at their throat and then... Slash! Blood spurts everywhere and they slump in a lifeless heap. Another cool aspect is the throwing stars. If you pull one out, the perspective switches to behind your shoulder and a aiming target appears to pin-point where you throw. It is thought that Sony of America is on the verge of signing *Tenchu*, so you can rest assured that you'll be seeing it in Europe before the end of the year, and you won't be disappointed!





Fans of the world's craziest 'sport' are in for a treat this summer with the release of Acclaim's *WWF: Warzone*. Following in the wake of *WWF: In Your House*, the new game will allow up to four players to kick ass with over 300 moves. other features include cage matches, a training mode, the ability to create your own steroid-charged 'athlete', weapons and the signature moves particular to each wrestler.





[ABOVE] Cat Bucannon – somehow managed to get hold of a copy of *Bushido Blade 2*, we won't ask how!



KINKY BOOTS!

PAGE 3 STUNNA IN DUNGEON SHOCKER!

STUNNING model Kelly Brook recently stopped the busy London traffic by posing for a series of publicity photos to promote the forthcoming *Deathtrap Dungeon* game from Eidos Interactive (reviewed on page 34).

Eidos, the company responsible for the *Tomb Raider* games and dressing Rhona Mitra up as Lara Croft, transformed Kelly into the raunchy Red Lotus character from the game by kitting her out in kinky bondage gear and recreating a dingy dungeon for her to dwell in.

Deathtrap Dungeon, released in March, is based on the popular Fighting Fantasy book by Ian Livingstone (who also gave a significant amount of input into the game). Now working at Eidos, Livingstone's dice-rolling, role-playing books have sold over 14 million copies worldwide, and we may even see other PlayStation adaptations in the future.





CHARTS

In association with ChartTrack

POS	GAME	DEVELOPER	PUBLISHER	SCORE
1.	MICRO MACHINES V3	CODEMASTERS	PLATINUM	92%
2.	DESTRUCTION DERBY 2	PSYGNOSIS	PLATINUM	82%
3.	COOL BOARDERS 2	UEP SYSTEMS	SCEE	81%
4.	FIFA: RTWC 98	EA SPORTS	EA	91%
5.	GRAND THEFT AUTO	DMA	BMG	88%
6.	NUCLEAR STRIKE	EA	EA	88%
7.	TOMB RAIDER II	CORE DESIGN	EIDOS	95%
8.	NAGANO WINTER OLYMPICS	KONAMI	KONAMI	83%
9.	TOCA TOURING CAR	CODEMASTERS	CODEMASTERS	92%
10.	CRASH BANDICOOT	NAUGHTY DOG	PLATINUM	84%

READERS' MOST WANTED

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

POS	GAME	DEVELOPER	PUBLISHER
1.	BUSHIDO BLADE	SQUARE	SONY
2.	TENCHU	SQUARE	SONY
3.	PARASITE EVE	SQUARE	SQUARE
4.	TEKKEN 3	NAMCO	SCEE
5.	RESIDENT EVIL 2	CAPCOM	VIRGIN

POP TART!

LARA SINGLE RELEASED ON THE HUSH

FIRST it was announced to gasps of disbelief from the specialist press. Then it was scrapped due to the apparent stroppiness and subsequent sacking of the real life Lara Croft. Then that in itself turned out to be (or at least that's what we are led to believe!) a vicious rumour. And now it's back on again! What are we on about? Why, the Lara Croft single of course.

We reported months ago how actress Rhona Mitra was teaming up with ex-Eurythmics geezer, Dave Stewart, to record a single under the guise of Lara Croft. Well now you can actually buy the thing after it was released on the hush and ended up stacked next to the *Tomb Raider II* game in various HMV stores. The song is called 'Getting Naked' and will set you back £5.49 for a CD. These pictures were supplied to us by loyal reader Jason Hulance who was as surprised as us to learn that the record had actually achieved the impossible and been released. What's it like? "Absolute gash", according to Jase! Well quite.



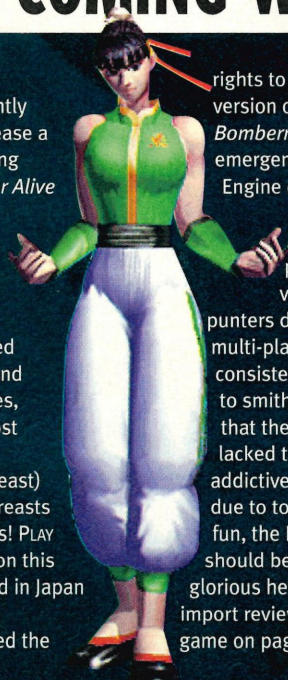
[ABOVE] **It's hard to see why people would be tempted to buy the single.**



[ABOVE] **NO! Don't do it! An unsuspecting punter spies a bargain, or not as the case may be!**

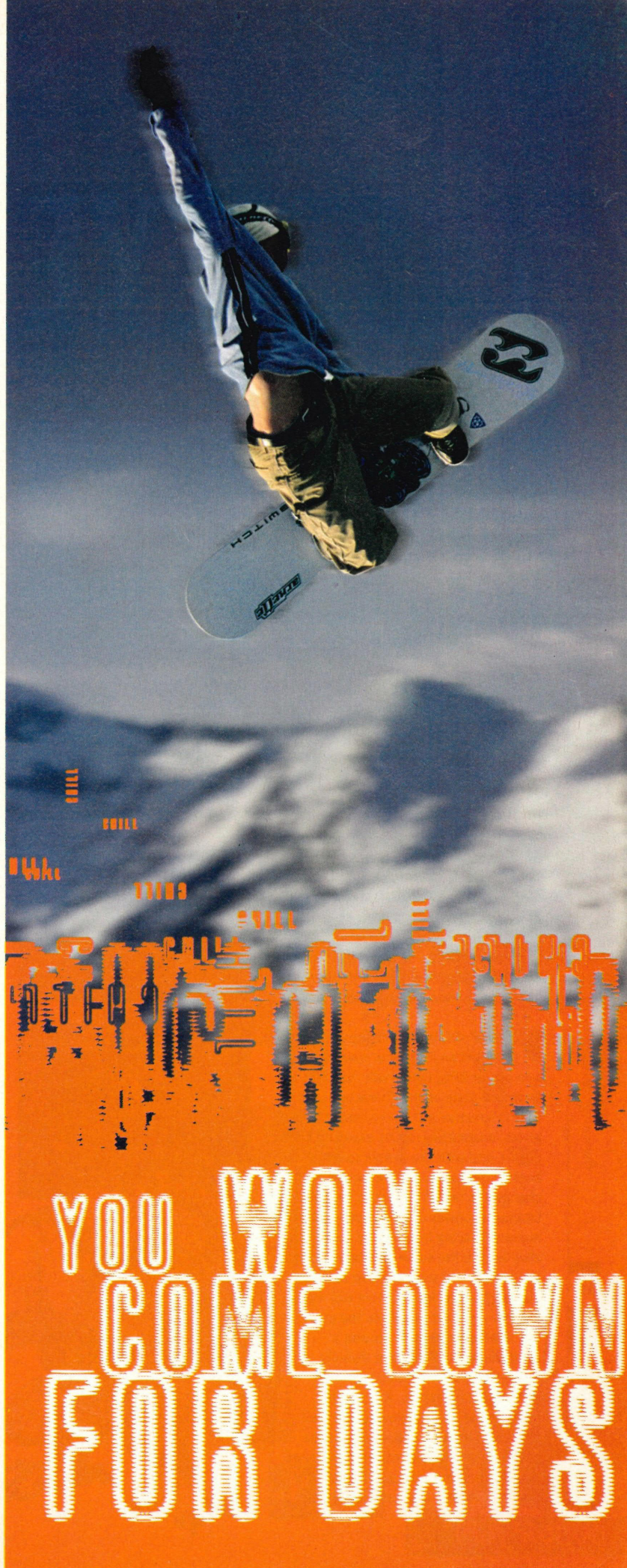
DEAD OR ALIVE

YOU'RE COMING WITH ME!



SONY Computer Entertainment has recently announced plans to release a version of the hard-hitting Techmo coin-op, *Dead or Alive* on PlayStation. The game, already a hit on the Sega Saturn, is a 3-D beat-'em-up in a similar vein to *Tekken*. However, despite a varied assortment of fighters and impressive special moves, the game is perhaps most famed (by the raincoat-wearing contingent, at least) for the fully-animated breasts on the female characters! PLAY will feature more news on this game when it is released in Japan in the next month or so.

Sony has also acquired the rights to release the official version of the PlayStation *Bomberman World* game. Since its emergence on the dusty old PC Engine console, *Bomberman* has enjoyed a string of sequels on various platforms, that have been very popular with the punters due to the compelling multi-player grudge matches that consisted of blowing your mates to smithereens. Although we felt that the recent N64 version lacked the initial spark and addictiveness of its forefathers due to too much 3-D, not enough fun, the PlayStation version should be a step back to the glorious heydays! Check out the first import review of this explosive party game on page 66!

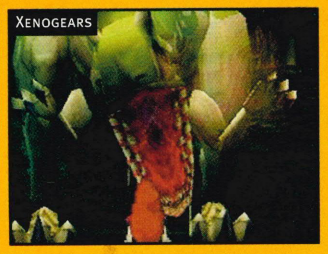


JAPS EYE

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

Square Soft's latest RPG, *Xenogears* has just hit the Japanese shelves. The game is a slap in the face to traditional RPGs, taking place in a fully 3-D environment. Add into the mix the ability to control huge robots and it's hats off to Square once again. The game spans two CDs, and features a unique combo system. As your character's abilities improve, they become more 'combo-capable'. The buttons on the pad enable the player to vary the strength of their hits, so the weaker the hit, the more times the player is able to strike. This system provides an excellent way for the player to view the progress of their characters as they progress from weedy little blows to full-on Jackie Chan style action.

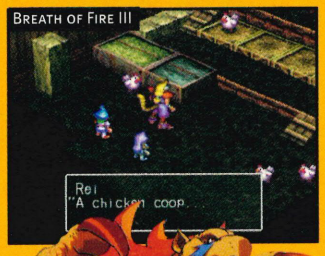




Following Nintendo's original lead of introducing multi-coloured peripherals Sony is set to release the Dual Shock pads in six different colours in Japan very soon. The imaginative colours on show will be Crystal, Smoke Gray, Emerald, Island Blue, White and Diamond Black. The same will be happening to the Sony memory cards.



Breath of Fire III from Capcom will be released any day now now Japan. A one player RPG, *BOFIII* will combine 2-D Japanese-style anime characters with a fully interactive 3-D environment. These lavish landscapes can be explored by the player, and with the simple touch of a button, the camera angle can be changed to reveal passages, hidden treasures, power-ups and even sinister monsters laying in wait. The game will also feature the same turn-based battle sequences that were evident in *FFVII*, although a new icon system will make it much more accessible to the player. The adventure centres around a mysterious warrior called (funnily enough), Ryu, who discovers the ancient myth of Miria. Ryu and his compatriots begin following the trail of these myths, travelling across the ocean, where they discover a darkened desert world and the sad remnants of the once mighty Dragon Clan. Hmm!



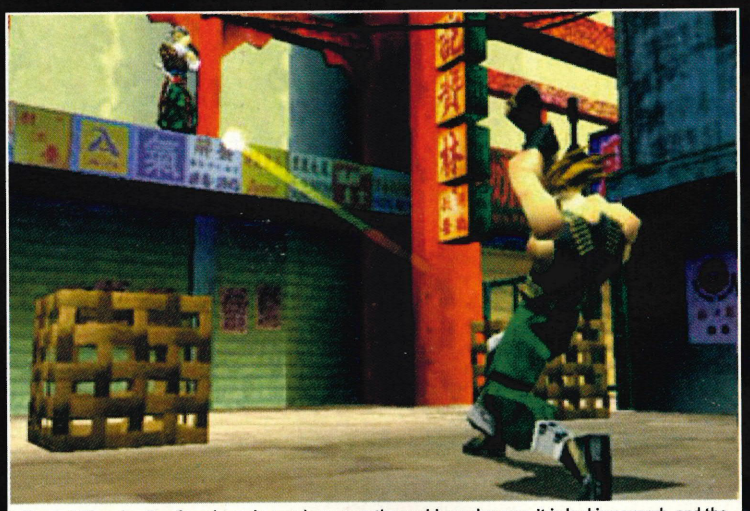


DREAM TEAM!

SQUARE AND NAMCO JOIN FORCES

Two of the heavyweights of the video games industry have teamed up to produced a stunning new arcade beat-'em-up!

Ehrgeiz is a joint venture for Namco and Square (or rather Dream Factory – a subsidiary of Square), and it will feature a whole host of characters – most notably Cloud and Tifa from *Final Fantasy VII*. Although nothing has been confirmed by either company, a PlayStation conversion must surely be on the cards. Watch this space!



[ABOVE] ***Ehrgeiz*** **– Due for release in arcades across the world any day now. It is looking superb, and the screenshot above shows innovative news ideas being incorporated.**

PLAY RECOMMENDS...

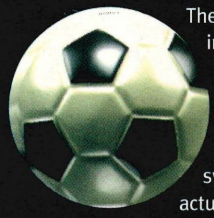


THREE LIONS

THE EN-GER-LAND GAME!

APRIL is the month when football comes home, because BMG Interactive will be releasing *Three Lions* – The Official England Team Game for France '98!

Developed by Z-Axis, *Three Lions* will feature over 50 international teams from the past and present – including England's World Cup winning side of '66 and the vintage Brazil team that took no prisoners in the Seventies.



Gordon Bellamy, the director of Three Lions, and a player himself commented: "To my eyes, too many of the recent soccer titles are not involving enough. We wanted to make a game that feels like you are actually playing a game of football rather than just watching it on TV. *Three Lions* is easy to play, but very hard to master, as what separates the great from the good in this game are the qualities that make great footballers; skill, timing, experience and tactical understanding."

The results are impressive – instead of looping commentary, you actually hear the players talking to the ref and each other. And for the shooter, there is an innovative target system to enable the player to actually shoot at the area of the goal they desire, instead of a pre-determined spot. The game is also tactic-heavy, so subs and formations play as big a part as scoring goals! *Three Lions* will be released in April.



[ABOVE] **Where's the bloody ball? You gotta watch those nippy Spaniards!**



[ABOVE] **It's a bullseye! Shoot wherever the hell you want in *Three Lions!***

SNOW JOKE

SONY DITCH £500,000 AD CAMPAIGN

SONY has been forced to scrap its ad campaign for *Cool Boarders 2* after complaints that it glamourised the use of hard drugs. The adverts (which appeared in PLAY #30 and on billboards around the country) contain a poem that reads "Powder I need powder, my body aches, yells, screams for powder. When I'm on it, I get a rush, a buzz the blood coursing through my veins. I get really high."

Powder, as any snowboarder will tell you, refers to snow. But hundreds have apparently complained to the Advertising Standards Authority saying that the ad refers to cocaine and heroin. A spokesperson for Sony Computer Entertainment had this to say: "The advert is written in snowboard speak, and is meant to reflect the adrenaline rush of the sport. Although the advert was designed to be purely a reference to the excitement of snowboarding, we now understand that some people perceive it to contain references to drugs. Sony Computer Entertainment therefore decided to remove all posters from UK sites and discontinue the campaign." *Cool Boarders 2* scored 81% in issue 26.

CHILL

THE ULTIMATE ADRENALINE RUSH



FEATURES

Combines the speed and freedom of extreme snow boarding like no other game.

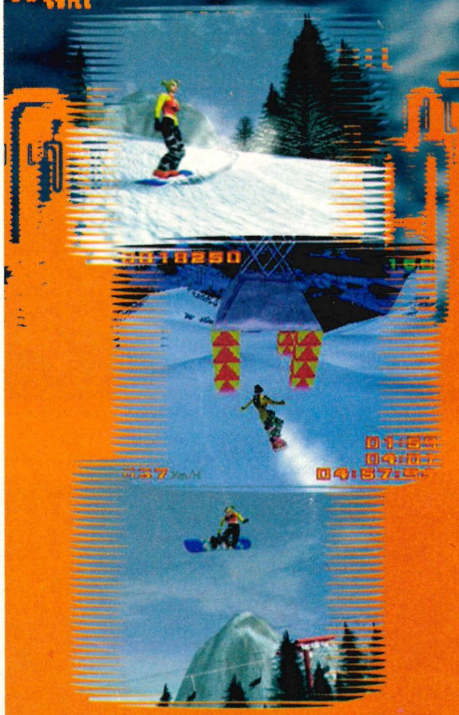
Explore 5 tracks on 5 mountains from beginner to expert.

Work your way up to hidden bonus runs.

Practice and perfect dozens of tricks including jumps, grabs, spins, McTwists, fakies, bonks, rail slides and rail spins.

Race the clock in time trials mode.

Multiplayer options include 2 player cable link mode and 2 player split screen mode.





EIDOS INTERACTIVE

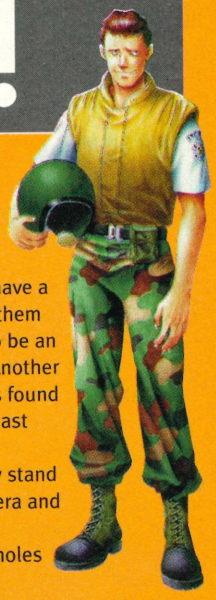
PlayStation

Silicon Dreams

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EVIL SECRETS UNCOVERED!

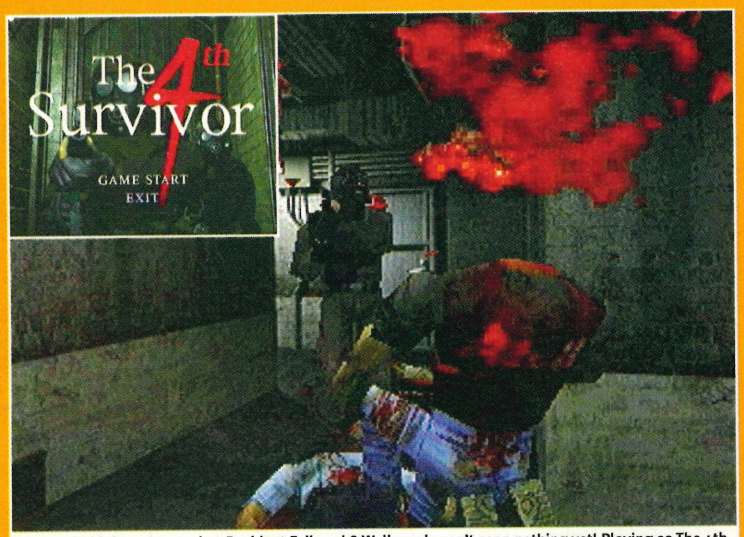


PLAY EXPOSES HIDDEN CHARACTERS & TRICKS

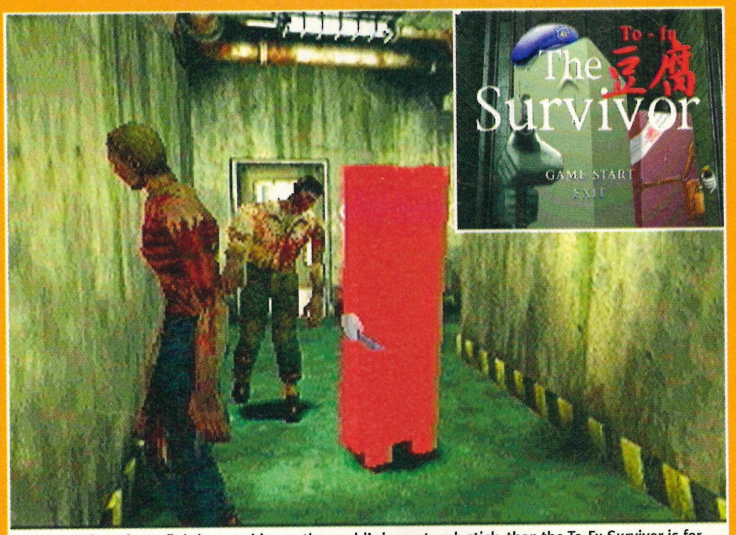
THERE is more to *Resident Evil 2* than meets the eye... much more! PLAY reveals some exciting new secrets and hidden characters that are only available to the most skilled players.

First of all we have figured out how to obtain the special key that allows access to the secret locker in the Dark Room. You must start a new game on the 'Normal' difficulty setting and then get to the police station without picking anything up. If you do this, the two zombies in the park outside the station will vanish, and a new zombie will appear below the steps outside. Does it look familiar? It should do because the new zombie is none other than Brad Vicars – the S.T.A.R.S pilot that air-lifted Chris and Jill to safety at the end of the first game. Now Brad has become infected with the G-virus and transformed into a 'super' zombie who takes about 20 hits to kill. Don't kill him straight away, go into the station and collect more ammo (you'll need it!). When Brad is dead, search his body and you'll find the Special Key. Take this to the locker and inside will be two new sets of clothes for Leon, and a new cossie and a Colt pistol for Claire.

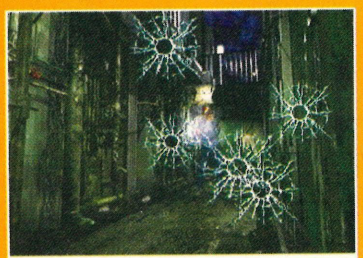
Also in the game are two hidden characters called Hunk and To-fu. These are survivors that have their own special mission to take the G-virus from the basement up to the roof of the police station. Hunk has weapons to assist him, and To-Fu only has a knife. Each room is filled with monsters, so evasive action is often the best method. Obtaining these characters is tricky to say the least, and only the most skilled players will ever have a chance of seeing them (clue: you need to be an A-class player!). Another interesting trick is found with Leon at the east exit out of the basement. Simply stand and face the camera and let rip with your shotgun to blast holes in the screen!



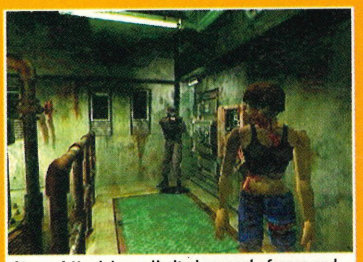
[ABOVE] **Think you're good at *Resident Evil 2*, eh? Well you haven't seen nothing yet! Playing as The 4th Survivor, Hunk, is a real test of your skills as you must fight room upon room of evils with limited guns!**



[ABOVE] **If you fancy fighting zombies as the world's largest crab stick, then the To-Fu Survivor is for you. Armed with only a knife and a high-pitched voice, To-Fu must battle his way to the top!**



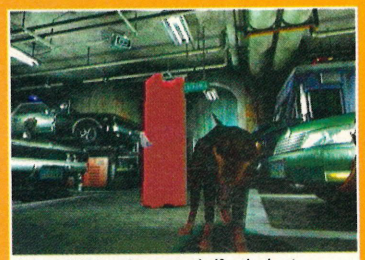
[ABOVE] **Stand in this exact place with the shotgun and shoot at the screen for bullet holes!**



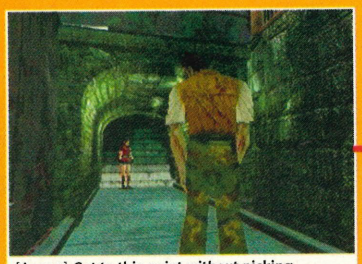
[ABOVE] **Hunk has a limited arsenal of guns and herbs, so the don't use them all too early.**



[ABOVE] **Hunk's best weapon is the Desert Eagle Magnum, use it for the big baddies.**



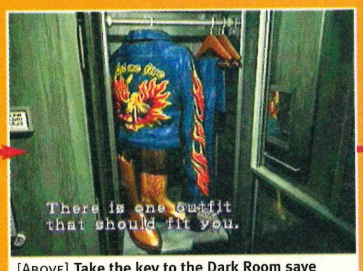
[ABOVE] **With only a poxy knife, the best strategy for To-Fu is to just run, run, RUN!**



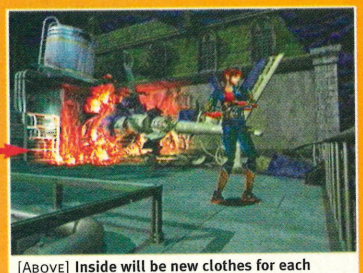
[ABOVE] **Get to this point without picking anything up and then meet a zombiefied Brad!**



[ABOVE] **Get ammo from the police station, kill him and then pick-up the Special Key.**



[ABOVE] **Take the key to the Dark Room save room and open the locker in the corner.**



[ABOVE] **Inside will be new clothes for each character and a Colt pistol for Claire.**

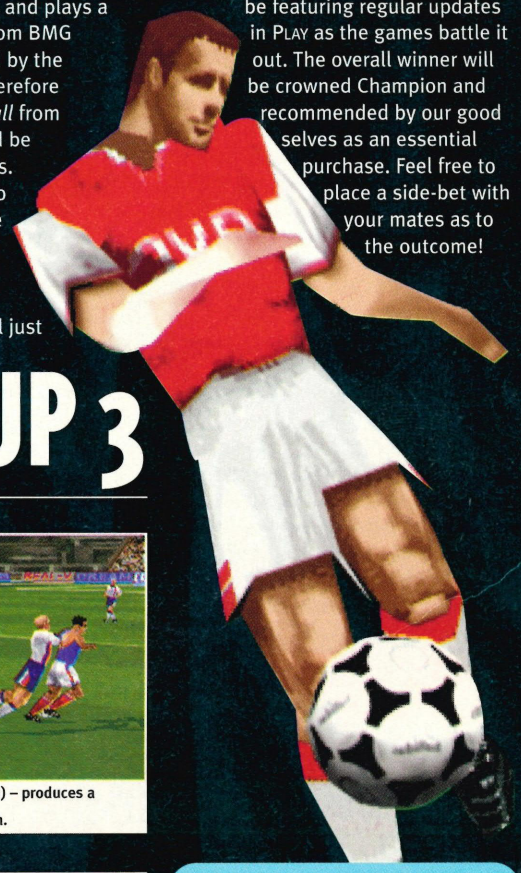
NO TIME FOR LOSERS!

PLAY INTRODUCES ITS OWN WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

FRANCE '98 starts here as the competition is hotting up for the definitive football game to tie-in with the greatest event ever!

Every software company is after the spoils that such hysteria the World Cup generates – and what higher accolade is there than switching on your PlayStation at half-time in an England match for a spot of one-on-one? This is why we at PLAY have decided to have a bit of fun and compile our very own play-off groups for the vast ensemble of games that will be junking up a shop near you come summer.

We have taken the three games that we think are the most promising and seeded them into three groups. From here, the games will battle it out amongst themselves for a place in the knock-out stages. Obviously, the placements don't quite add-up for the latter stages at the moment, but there will be more coming soon to comprise the fourth group (*Match Day 3* from Acclaim, *UEFA Soccer* from Ocean). The seeds that we have chosen are *World League Soccer* from Eidos because it looks and plays a blinder, *Three Lions* from BMG because it is endorsed by the England squad and therefore rocks, and *Viva Football* from Virgin because it could be one of the surprise hits. This is no disrespect to the other games in the groups as there are a lot of promising football prospects amongst them, but it'll just make things a bit more exciting. We'll be featuring regular updates in PLAY as the games battle it out. The overall winner will be crowned Champion and recommended by our good selves as an essential purchase. Feel free to place a side-bet with your mates as to the outcome!



GROUP 1



[ABOVE] ***World League Soccer*** **(Eidos) – has all the traits of a champ. Odds-on favourite.**



[ABOVE] ***ISS Pro '98*** **(Konami) – popular with the fans, with plenty to live up to.**

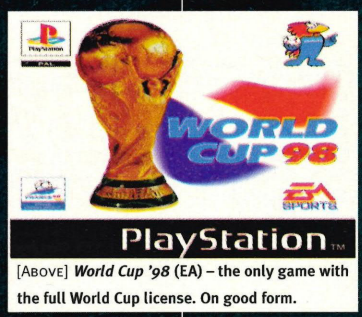


[ABOVE] ***Untitled*** **(Sony) – We are specualting here, but rumours are rife of a Sony footbal game.**

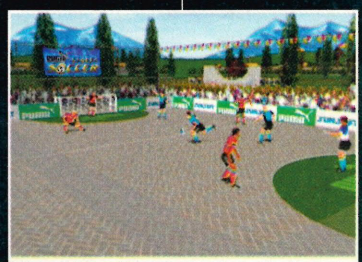
GROUP 2



[ABOVE] ***Three Lions*** **(BMG) – Fully endorsed by the England squad, looks in good form.**

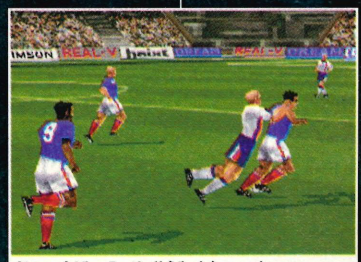


[ABOVE] ***World Cup '98*** **(EA) – the only game with the full World Cup license. On good form.**



[ABOVE] ***Puma Street Soccer*** **(Sunsoft) – the rank outsider of the group. But it could surprise.**

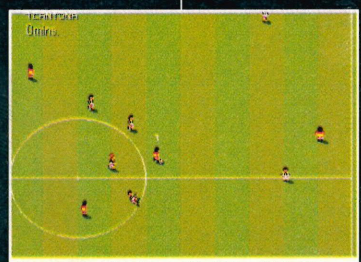
GROUP 3



[ABOVE] ***Viva Football*** **(Virgin) – produces a dazzling display on the pitch.**



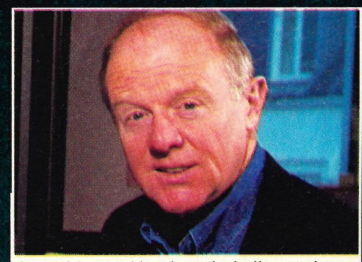
[ABOVE] ***Kick Off '98*** **(Ubi Soft) – Expectations are high, but can it live up to the name?**



[ABOVE] ***Sensible Soccer World Cup*** **(GT) – the old faithful makes its debut on the big stage.**

GUBBINS!

THERE'S no disputing the fact that the commentary in *ISS Pro* was utter rubbish. So now Konami is hoping to rectify this matter by commissioning the verbal talents of BBC sports waffler, Tony Gubba, for *ISS Pro '98* which is due for release in May.



[ABOVE] **Tony Gubba tries to look all mysterious and interesting for the cameras.**

MARVEL(LOUS)!

X-MEN VS STREET FIGHTER EX

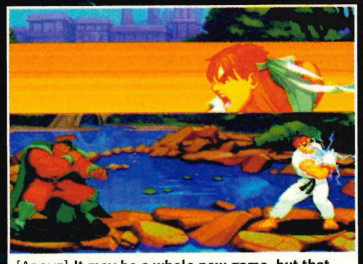


© Marvel Comics Inc.

CAPCOM of Japan this month unleashed perhaps the greatest 2-D beat-'em-up ever onto the PlayStation in *X-Men Vs Street Fighter Ex*. Like the hugely successful Saturn version, this conversion will be a direct port over from the arcade version – although it still isn't known exactly what will have to give in order for the transition to be a smooth one. If you recall, the Saturn version came complete with a 4Mb RAM expansion cart to enable the home version to be coin-op perfect with hardly any loading times, however, the PlayStation can't accommodate such a cart, and so it looks as though certain frames of animation will have to be omitted.

X-Men Vs Street Fighter Ex is very in fitting with the style of Capcom's previous fighting games. It features a plethora of well-known characters from games gone by, including Ryu, Ken, Chun-Li, Cammy, Dhalsim, Charlie, M. Bison, Zangief and Akuma from the Street Fighter series, and Gambit, Cyclops, Wolverine, Juggernaut, Magneto, Rogue, Sabretooth, and Storm from the Marvel X-Men comics. The battles are fought in a tag-team style, with the player able to choose two different combatants to slug it out against the picturesque, colourful backdrops. These two characters can be alternated between at any point during the bouts by tapping a simple button combination. Another radical change is the updates of all of the old special moves. For example, Ken's Dragon Punch is now three-times as high as the screen, and Ryu's Fireball is now as big as he is!

It has been reported that if this game emerged on the Saturn a year earlier, then it could have prevented the downward spiral of the console, so perhaps this can be taken as some kind of indication as to how good the PlayStation conversion is going to be. A release date in Europe hasn't been announced as yet, but the game is currently available to buy on Japanese import and should be out in American within a couple of months. At the time of going to press, and after hefty research that unfortunately came up a blank, we were unable to find out what the 'EX' tag out the end of the title signified, but we will have all the answers next month along with the full review. X-citing stuff, eh?



[ABOVE] **It may be a whole new game, but that won't stop the two old rivals meeting once more.**



[ABOVE] **Gambit narrowly avoids the dangers of Dhalsim's early-morning gag-breath.**



[ABOVE] **X-rated! Old boy, Akuma, has a nasty shock as Wolverine gets frisky with the blades.**



[ABOVE] **OK, so so isn't as rounded as the Tekken lassie posse, but Chun-Li has still got the moves and the reflexes to whip the hairy-ass of the yeti. Did you get that on camera one?**

TOP THING

THE BEST THING SINCE HOT BUNS THIS MONTH IS...



UPON a chance lunchtime visit to Sega World, we stumbled across this revolutionary endurance tester. It is simple to use – insert your quid, sit down, grip the metal handles and get frazzled to within an inch of your life! Seriously, you must grip the rods as hard, and for as long as you can without letting go. You'll come away feeling like Christopher Walken in *The Dead Zone*, operating on a higher astral plain to everyone else. Try it!

THOSE RELEASE DATES IN FULL

All these games **should be out on the shelves** during this issue.

MARCH/APRIL

Gex 3-D: Enter the Gecko (BMG)
Deathtrap Dungeon (Eidos)
Chill (Eidos)
Rascal (Psygnosis)
Pitfall: Beyond the Jungle (Activision)
Need For Speed 3 (EA)
Diablo (EA)

CLASSIC

NBA Pro '98 (konami)
Poy Poy (Konami)
Jet Rider 2 (SCEE)
Snow Racer (Ocean)
Spawn: The Eternal (SCEE)
Beast Wars (Hasbro)
Circuit Breakers (Mindscape)
Klonoa: Door to Phantomile (SCEE)

AND THE SLIPPERS...

GAME (PUBLISHER)	WAS	NOW
Populous: The Third Coming (EA)	March	September
Alien Resurrection (Fox)	May	September

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- THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN GUN
- THUNDERBALL
- DR NO

...AND MANY, MANY MORE!
AND... A COPY OF *GEX 3-D: ENTER THE GECKO*!

RUNNERS UP
FIVE RUNNERS UP IN THIS COMPETITION WILL EACH WIN THEMSELVES A COPY OF *GEX 3-D* BY CRYSTAL DYNAMICS.

THE RULES: The editor's decision is final. No correspondence may be entered into. Employees of Paragon Publishing or it's sponsors BMG may not enter. Your entry should reach us no later than 20 May 1998. All winners will be available in writing from Paragon Publishing. The sponsors reserve the right to supply a prize of equivalent value rather than those illustrated. No cash alternatives.

WHO WOULD have believed that a wise-cracking lizard with a keen interest in dressing-up would become the cream of PlayStation platform games? *Gex 3-D: Enter the Gecko* by Crystal Dynamics certainly caused a stir at PLAY Towers with its engrossing gameplay and fantastic graphics, all capped with a larger than life central character who oozes personality as he quips and ad-libs throughout 30 levels of mayhem to bring the ultimate couch-potato, Rez to justice! To celebrate the imminent release of *Gex 3-D*, PLAY has teamed up with BMG for this great competition.

So how do you go about winning? Well, it is simple, yet highly cunning. *Gex 3-D: Enter the Gecko* is all themed around well-known films and television programmes. What we want you to do is think of a classic film or programme that hasn't been parodied in the game and tell us your ideas for a new level. This will have to include a goal, and any enemies, weapons, power-ups that you may encounter in this fictional new level. So there you have it, only the most original, funny and imaginative idea will win the goodies, so get thinking, scribble down some ideas and send them off to: *The Gex Lounge Lizard Competition, Play Magazine, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 2JS.* The closing date is May 20 1998.

All this worth over £1000!




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SOVIET STRIKE
SOUL BLADE*

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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!

GEX 3-D: ENTER THE GECKO



20 Ok, so the first game was pretty forgettable, but Crystal Dynamics has redeemed itself with this superb sequel. A loving homage to every TV show, movie and cartoon we love, this is the best platformer on the PlayStation, bar none, and we present the exclusive review with everything you need to know.



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!

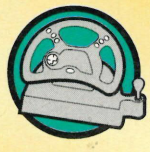
PLAY PUTRID

PLAY ICONS

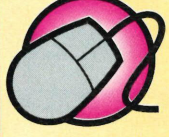
These symbols are designed to give you vital information about the maximum number of players and whether or not you can use a specific device with the game. PSX steering wheel or the Negcon joypad come under steering/analogue.


One player only
eg Resident Evil 2


Multiple Players
eg Gran Turismo


Steering/Analogue
eg NeGcon


Multi-Tap compatible


Mouse compatible
eg C&C Red Alert


Uses a Memory Card (for save games)


Split Screen
eg Bust-A-Move 2


Link Cable compatible
eg Formula 1


Light gun compatible
eg Time Crisis


Dual Analogue

ES

REVIEWS ▸ WORKSTATIONS ▸ WIRED UPS

The GAMES THAT Time Forgot

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

PLAY REVIEWS

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

GEX 3-D: ENTER THE GECKO 20
NEED FOR SPEED 3 32
DEATHTRAP DUNGEON 34
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REBOOT 64
BOMBERMAN WORLD 66







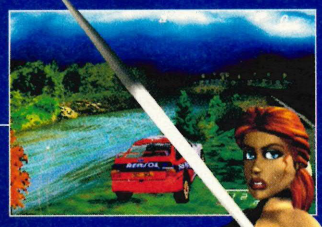




WORKSTATIONS

You want in-depth features on the latest software? You got it! The biggest games exposed.

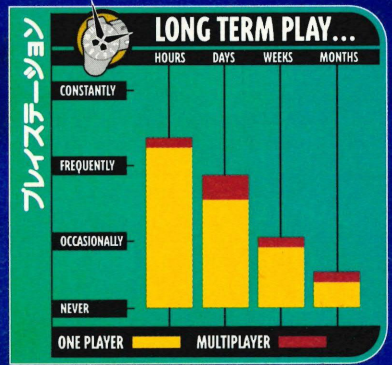
TOMMI MÄKINEN RALLY 26
V-Rally's crown to be stolen?
VIGILANTE 8 30
Extraordinary two player combat





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.



WIRED UP

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

KULA WORLD 80
MOTORHEAD 81
TEKKEN 3 82
XENOCRACY 84



GEX 3D

ENTER THE GECKO

THE BIG GAME

Written By Mark Wynne

In the company of such hard-hitting sequels as *Resident Evil 2* and *Tekken 3*, *Gex 3-D: Enter The Gecko* is by far the most curious brand name to be re-introduced to the public. Two factors distinguish Crystal Dynamic's title from its best-seller-to-be peers (and almost every other sequel of recent memory). First, *Gex 3-D* boasts a radically new game engine from it's prequel, and second, Gex himself isn't even a successful brand name in the first place, the sequel denied its most obvious commercial benefit: instant public recognition of a favourite game character.

The original *Gex*, itself a port from the 1995 3DO platformer, looked distinctly old hat on the PlayStation; despite some decent visuals and a fun lead character in Gex himself – the wise cracking Gecko with a penchant for junk TV. The very average, side scrolling action had little hope of enticing the new wave of Sony jockeys looking for cutting edge, next generation software. The ironic, post

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: BMG
Customer support: 0171 384 7789
Price: £44.99
Release date: April '98



THE GREEN GECKO NOBODY REMEMBERS IS BACK IN THE SEQUEL CRYSTAL DYNAMICS IS DETERMINED YOU WON'T SWITCH CHANNELS ON. TURN OFF YOUR SOAPS AND MADE-FOR-TV TRUE-LIFE DOCUDRAMAS AND TUNE INTO GEX, BECAUSE ALL TV LIFE IS HERE.



[Above] Standing atop a rainbow ladder encircling a waterfall, Gex admires the scenery. With platforms to ride, mushrooms to bounce on and meanies to bop, it's all rather familiar... it's still rather excellent though.

modern razzmatazz of *Gex* was lost on its audience, and this abject failure explains the complete transformation of game style for the sequel, which plunders happily from *Mario 64*, *Tomb Raider* and every platform game ever, to forge a true 3-D path which is as fun as it is derivative.

That Crystal Dynamics has retained the unloved hero of its first 32-bit game might be considered sheer obstinacy were it not so immediately apparent that the whole game has been written around the Gex character and his nemesis, Rez. Less a sequel, *Gex 3-D* is more a drastic rewrite of the original game, with familiar ideas and motifs re-worked into that essential third dimension. The comic and dramatic potential of exploring TV and movie genres within a videogame, the real crux of the original *Gex*, has been wrung dry in this sequel, which is, to all intents and purposes, the same game Crystal has been working on for over five years...

PLAY CLASSIC



[Above] That's a lightsabre going for your head, then. The big baddies in *Gex* are excellent and persistent.



[Above] The final battle with Gex's nemesis features one of the greatest end-boss encounters we've seen



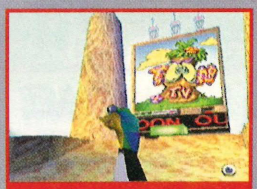
[Above] Axe dropping kights guard entry to am upper dungeon in the haunted house.

"Freed from 2-D scrolling oblivion, Gex is a much happier beast..."

Everything Must Go

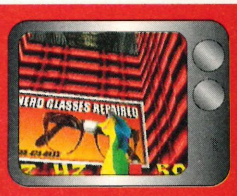
Freed from 2-D screen scrolling oblivion, Gex is instantly a much happier beast, as he springs on his tail and karate kicks through his TV show world looking for remotes to zap him from channel to channel in the hunt for the ultimate media junkie, Rez. Gex himself is a real piece of work, superbly detailed and well animated, any unfortunate similarity with the successful green beast that is Croc, obliterated by superior animation, locations, level design and fine details.

Whilst Croc wandered his primary coloured world of simple building blocks with dumb wonder, Gex scales walls and lurks around corners bathed in cool lighting effects closer in realisation to the 64-bit monster *Mario 64* than the garish photocopy that was *Croc*. Wait animations are excellent, themed to whatever world Gex is exploring, so in the disco section the flared lizard will strike the dance floor pose favoured by John Travolta, whilst the sci-fi world will see him



[Above] As you complete TV 'stations', new ones pop up in the 'Media Dimesion' level select.

TUNE IN TO SHORT CIRCUIT



This Tron inspired mainframe complex sees some of the more impressive visual design in the game, and the first introduction of 'timed' progress. Green power-up points render Gex 'active', and all luminous green blocks, trampolines and bridges will move, bounce and extend in the short window of time Gex is charged-up. This leads to some frantic back-tracking to power-points, and urgent running an jumping action to complete each section.

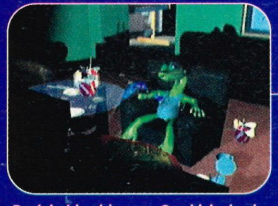
A pure platforming level, there's little real exploring to be done, rather, it's a case of following a variety of fairly linear routes to each mission objective, from successfully riding electronic highways to conquering mammoth electronic towers in search of those elusive remotes.



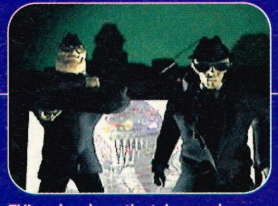
[Above] Like coins in *Mario*, each level of *Gex* offers hundreds of themed goodies to collect. Get 50 for an extra life.

WHERE TV IS MORE THAN REALITY...

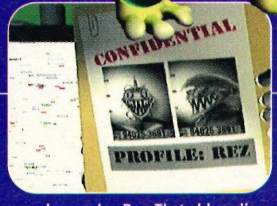
Gex 3-D rips of its own prequel's intro here, with the ultimate couch potato abducted from his flat and employed by men-in-black to locate the media lord Rez. Why are the developers so obsessed with crap TV and B-movies? Are they making some pointed statement about our increasingly fractured society where TV provides the only true shared social experience, or do they just love lying around watching rubbish on the box with takeaways and beer?



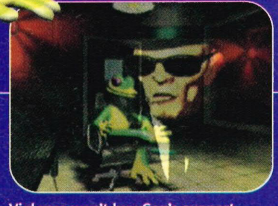
Back in his old ways, Gex kicks back with the TV, until the visitors return...



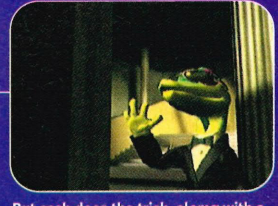
TV's going down the tubes again, every channels dominated by, well...



...we know who. Rez. That old media baron of poor taste and cheap thrills...



Violence won't buy Gex's support. he's a gecko of high principles...



But cash does the trick, alomg with a natty dinner suit. Look out, Rez...

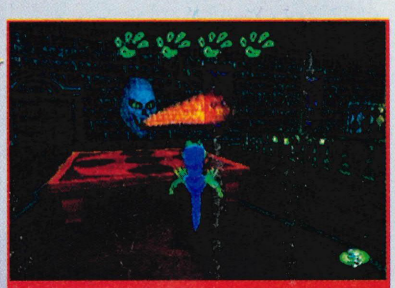
TUNE IN TO LOST IN SPACE



PROBABLY THE BEST OF THE BUNCH, THE NECESSITY TO FILL UP ON AIR REGULARLY AND THE SHEER COMPLEXITY OF THE PLATFORM STRUCTURES THEMSELVES STRAGGLING ACROSS SPACE, ENSURES THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST EXCITING STATIONS. IT'S SOURCE MATERIAL OBVIOUSLY INSPIRED THE PROGRAMMERS TOO, WHO'VE INVESTED LAVISH ATTENTION TO EVERY DETAIL, RIGHT DOWN TO THE VARIETY OF SOUNDTRACKS, FROM STAR WARS, CHEST BEATING POMP TO MAJESTIC CLASSICISM OF THE PLANETS.

BADDIES ARE MORE COMMON AND WELL DONE TOO. APART FROM AN ABUNDANCE OF LIGHT SABRE SWIPING MUTANT FATHERS, THERE'S SOME HUGE MYNOCKS, GREEDY SPACE SLUGS AND CRANKING ROBOTS. FOR A SHEER STAR WARS BUZZ, THIS IS BETTER THAN *MASTERS OF TERAS KASI* – GEX IS NEVER COOLER THAN WHEN TUGGING ON HIS HELMET AND COMPLAINING THAT HE'S A LITTLE SHORT TO BE A STORMTROOPER!

THE TRULY GIGANTIC LEVELS AND CUNNING DESIGN MAKE THIS ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL TRUE 3-D PLATFORM SECTIONS TOO. NOT ONLY DOES IT LOOK BETTER THAN, SAY, CRYSTAL'S OWN *PANDEMONIUM 2*, IT ALSO REQUIRES REAL THOUGHT AS YOU DECIDE WHICH DIRECTION TO MOVE IN, AND NERVOUSLY EYE LABYRINTH, HOVERING PLATFORMS THAT SEEM TO STRETCH LITERALLY INTO THE NEXT GALAXY. FRUSTRATION AND COMPULSION ARE PERFECTLY FUSED TO MAKE THIS EXCELLENT FUN.



[ABOVE] Fire breathing skulls provide continual (if unintelligent) opposition in the haunted house.

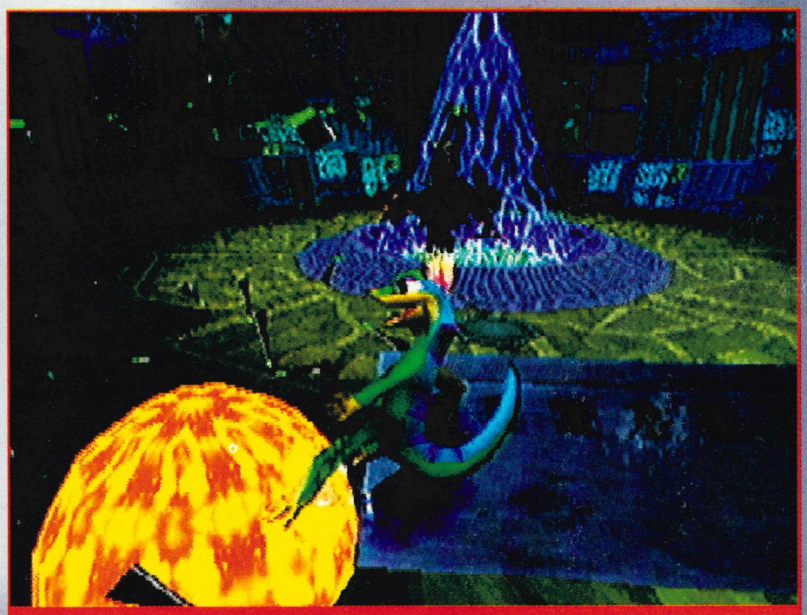
brandishing a light sabre when left idle for more than a couple of seconds. It's impossible not to laugh out loud at his contagious exhibitionism and enthusiasm.

He moves fast too. Despite complex level designs and often vast, detailed environments, Gex moves like he's just fixed up, making Lara in *TRII* look like she's nailed to the floor. It's a testament to just how long and hard Crystal Dynamics has been fine tuning its graphics engine, which it's justifiably proud of. The intelligent camera pulls back so you can spy on as much of the surroundings as possible, the game rarely dropping below 30 frames per second, and fading translucent polygons render the background in smooth graduations, so that pop-up is all but eliminated.



[ABOVE] The Aztec level is a fun but all too brief bonus round. Indiana Jones meets *Tomb Raider*.

The efforts made to polish the game engine are here to see, and recent peers such as *Deathtrap Dungeon*, *Jersey Devil* and Crystal's own *Pandemonium 2* look dingy and crude in comparison. And the enviable visual panache that has invariably been the sole province of Nintendo until now in the platforming genre has been matched by several 'channels' of Gex, which refresh old fashioned 'twitch' game styles and combine them with adventuring strands with occasionally inspired results.



[ABOVE] Dodging missiles fired by Rez, Gex is show to his best advantage. The hi-res detailing of the main sprite is truly excellent, with superb light sourcing making this the best looking platformer yet seen on PlayStation.

"Recent peers... such as *Jersey Devil* look dingy and crude in comparison..."

ROBBED BLIND

The charms of *Gex* aren't immediately persuasive, however. Early levels may approach the technical excellence of *Mario 64*, but then they also approach pure plagiarism. The early cartoon world is so

WHAT'S THE ROMAN NUMERAL FOR THREE?

OKAY, YOU'RE GOING TO SPEND THE NEXT FEW MONTHS SOAKING UP ALL THE SIGHT-GAGS AND LEWD PUNS PACKED INTO GEX 3-D, BUT WE'VE ALREADY COMPLIED OUR TOP THREE WISH LIST FOR GEX III: 3-D: HE'S BACK (AGAIN!): THE END OF THE THIRD CYCLE! CRYSTAL DYNAMICS? ORIGINAL IDEAS ARE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND CAN BE COPYRIGHTED, SO GET IN TOUCH WITH THE CHEQUES. OK?

1) GEX DOES DALLAS

THE IMPRESSIVELY HUNG GECKO MATES WITH A WHOLE HOST OF LETHARGIC LIZARD BEAUTIES, WHILST SCOURING THE PYRAMIDS FOR RE-BORN MUMMYS IN PORNO/HORROR/STARGATE SPOOF.
KEY ONE LINER: "IF YOU THINK MY TONGUE'S LONG, DARLING, CHECK UNDER THE KHAKIS, DEAR..."

2) GEX DOES THE MERSEY

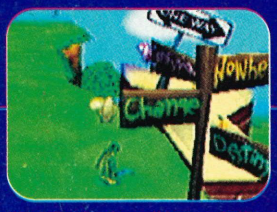
GREENBACK FIGHTS CRACK ADDICTION BY GETTING ADOPTED BY FATSO WINDOW CLEANER SINBAD DOWN BROOKIE CLOSE, WHO STORES HIS NEW PET IN GRANNY-MURDERING MICK JOHNSON'S SUNBED. GEX REALISES THAT BY A QUIRK OF FATE, HIS LONG LOST SISTER, SIS, IS ON THE MENU AT BAR BROOKIE AS AN EXOTIC RARE DELICACY, UNTIL SOME ROBBING SCALLY CAN AFFORD TO PAY FOR HER PLEASURES, AND DRIVEN MAD WITH GRIEF, GEX RESCUES HIS WELL PROPORTIONED SISTER WITH THE AID OF SCALLY-GONE-WRONG-TURNED-GOOD TINHEAD, WHO COMMITS SUICIDE WHEN HE'S REJECTED FROM THE ARMY FOR BEING DEAF AGAIN. PLAGUED BY A MYSTERIOUS LIVERPUDLIAN COMPULSION, GEX ROBS HIS NEIGHBOURS BLIND AND MAKES LOVE TO HIS SIBLING.
KEY ONE-LINER: "THIS INSUFFERABLY DEPRESSING SOCIO-ECONOMIC CLIMATE IS WILTING MY PERM."

3) MATERIAL GEX

GEX FALLS IN LOVE WITH AGEING POP ICON, BUT IS TORN APART WITH GRIEF THAT HIS LOVE CANNOT STOP RELEASING CRAP CONFESSIONAL/AUTO-EROTIC SINGLES AND TAKING HER CLOTHES OFF IN BAD MOVIES. HE PROFESSES HIS LOVE TO DEPRESSED, MAVERICK CATHOLIC SLAPPER, WHO EXPLAINS THAT SHE CAN'T STOP RELEASING CRAP SINGLES OR TAKING HER CLOTHES OFF, EVEN THOUGH THE STRETCH MARKS FROM HER LATEST STUD FARM OFFSPRING ARE PLAINLY VISIBLE TO EVEN HER LOYALIST FANS. DETERMINED TO DELIVER THE POP ICON/FEMINIST ROLE MODEL FROM HERSELF, GEX FIGHTS FANS, BURLY BOUNCERS AND GAY DANCERS IN COMBAT FEST TO PROVE LOVE FOR CROONING POPSTRESS.
KEY ONE-LINER: "CAN YOU REALLY REMEMBER WHAT IT WAS LIKE TO BE A VIRGIN MY DEAR?"

IN TUNE WITH A CARTOON

THIS SEQUENCE SHOWS JUST HOW AUTHENTIC GEX'S ADVENTURES CAN BE IN...



Naturally, the signs all keep switching places, so no luck there...



Climb around the mountain, dodging rock slides to reach the castle view...



Ignore the lights and kick your way through the dominoes...



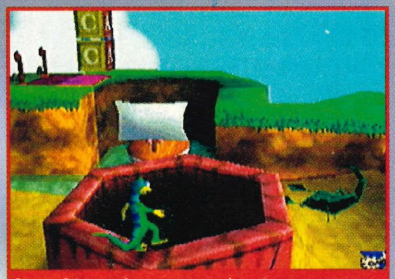
Jump the vanishing building blocks to get to the switch on the other side...



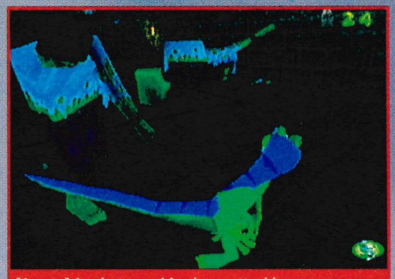
This will open the gates to the moored boat...



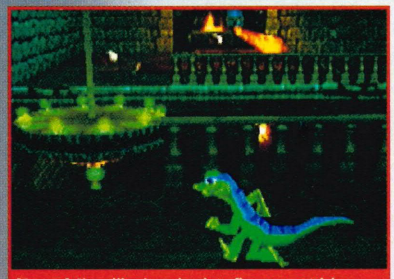
[Above] A robot protects the exit in Circuit world.



[Above] A tunnel ro escape or doom?



[Above] Armless zombies keep attacking you.



[Above] Chandiler hopping into fire proves tricky.

familiar at first, you almost expect Gex to pull on a Mario costume instead of his Bugs Bunny outfit. The channel aspires to be a Warner Bros homage, with motifs from Elma Fudd and Road Runner cartoons, but the mushrooms, rock formations and colour schemes are pure *Mario 64*.

Game structure is equally familiar, with one main hallway, The Media Dimension, providing access to each themed world as they become available, and each world has several different missions, from hunting a boss to collecting a remote or scaling a huge building. Level structure remains essentially the same also, with different routes becoming available for each objective, and this open-ended plan allows the gamer to wander from channel to channel as he sees fit. There are six principle worlds, and a plethora of bonus rounds and mini-missions that plunder an extensive range of entertainment genres.

Along with Toon Village, the other immediately available channel is a haunted mansion, which forms one of the largest parts of the game. A homage to Hammer, Child's Play, and *Resident Evil* (and Mario of course!) these ghoulish sections boast plenty of nice details, such as knocking the individual limbs from zombies, stunning special effects and plenty of excellent mood sensitive music and spot FX, but action is subdued, with a lack of meanies to distract you from simple quests.

As you delve deeper into the game, however, better kept secrets are discovered. Circuit Central miniaturises and zaps Gex into the heart of a computer system, and the *Tron*-inspired environment provides the games first glimpse of visual originality. Scampering across silicon chips, navigating phosphorous data streams and battling archaic electronic badies, Gex comes into its own. And by now, you'll have noticed just how innovative the game design is in its own right, mixing frenetic, *Pandemonium* style platform-hopping with *TRII* style problem solving and world navigation. This, and many later levels, really get the mix just right on speed, visual allure and compelling action. The game constantly pushes Gex into stunning set pieces, which demand a wide range of gameplay skills, and just when you've sussed a pattern, Gex is swallowed, pushed, yanked and zapped to new totally different dimension.

Good Tongue Action

The best examples of Gex's hybrid mentality and effortless of genre styles (both structurally and thematically) come early and late in the game. One of the first TV channels you'll win access to is the Kung Fu Theatre, where the karate-clothed Gex ambles



[Above] The Gexzilla bonus round is a real treat, as you cavort around a city dodging helicopters, tanks, and of course, this monster, who jumps atop tall buildings to shoot you with his laser eyes.



[Above] Tiny touches, like the rippling water and floating rafts that dip with your weight impress.

TUNE IN TO TRASH MEDIA



Featuring some of the most amusing black comedy of Crystal Dynamics, this freakish homeland to Rez himself is an imaginative melding of commerce and horror. The environment looks like the interior of a biomechanical, haemorrhaging brain, blood and bone fused with electronics and monitors, with great oceans of static flickering TVs providing some of the most mesmerising and original visual design of the game. Advertising billboards and poster gone wrong are strew all over the place; watch MTV and rock 'till you drop... dead'; beautifully posed skeletons promote the latest designer colognes, truly, this is the psychotic, surreal of Rez, pop imagery and horror amalgamated into a surreal vision of hell.

Gameplay wise, the emphasis is on navigating mazes and looking out for 'crawl walls', which offer the sticky footed Gecko opportunities for cunning escapes.

This station also sees Gex's brief transformation to Saturday Night Fever struttster, in an entertaining discotheque mini-game, which happens to boast a wall length mirror which Gex just loves...

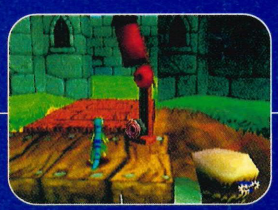


[Above] At last, Gex meets someone who has a higher opinion of himself. Wow.





Sail into the castle moat, where the drawbidge will open...



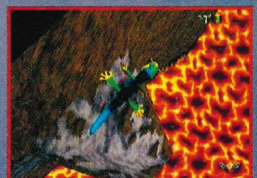
Use your tail-spin to thwack the rocket at the castle gates...



Jump onto the fuse and hold on for dear life as the countdown starts...



You'll be flown up to the remote you need and the end level TV!



[Above] The Pre-History level offers plenty of opportunity for Gex to get horizontal.

TUNE IN TO I SMELL WABBIT



ALTHOUGH EARLY STAGES SEEM SPARSE, THINGS SOON IMPROVE IMMEASURABLY, AND THESE LEVELS FEATURE SOME OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL VISUAL DETAILS, FROM WATER SPLASHING AROUND GEX'S LEGS, TO GORGEOUS RAINBOW PLATFORMS ENCIRCLING A WATERFALL. DUMBBELLS CRASHING FROM THE SKY AND HAMMER WIELDING FLOWERS, ALONG WITH ELMA FUDD INSPIRED HUNTERS, ENHANCE A REALLY IMPRESSIVE SECTION.

THE WARNER BROS INFLUENCE ALSO SHINES IN LATER LEVELS, WHERE THE GAME SUCCESSFULLY IMITATES AN INTERACTIVE CARTOON. AFTER PLENTY OF PLATFORM HOPPING AND EXPLORING, ACCESS TO A BOAT SEES GEX SET SAIL INTO THE PREVIOUSLY IMPENETRABLE CASTLE, AND ACCESS TO THE LAST REMOTE IS GAINED BY GEX LIGHTING A MASSIVE TOY ROCKET AND HOPPING ON BOARD, WHICH IS A FANTASTIC PAY OFF TO ONE OF THE MOST ENJOYABLE SINGLE STATIONS.

TUNE IN TO HAMMER TIME

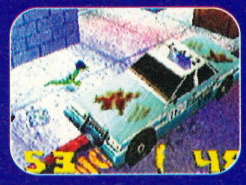


DESPITE SOME IMPRESSIVE LIGHTING EFFECTS AND HIGH QUALITY VISUAL DESIGN, THE ABUNDANCE OF HAUNTED HOUSE STATIONS SUFFER FROM A REAL LACK OF MEANIES. THE LURCHING ZOMBIES MAY COME TWO AT A TIME, BUT THEY'RE DUMB, AND THE MAJORITY OF ENEMIES ARE STATIC DAMAGE SPITTERS (FIRE, ICE) WHICH MAKES THE EXPLORATION OF THE HOUSE RATHER MORE SOLITARY THAN PERHAPS IT SHOULD.

THAT SAID, SOME OF THE CHALLENGES ARE GOOD FUN, FROM FINDING AND SMASHING BLOOD BANKS TO NAVIGATING VAST EXPANSES OF WOBBLING CHANDELIERS. THERE'S PLENTY OF NICE DETOURS TOO, WITH A MORGUE PROVIDING A BLACKLY AMUSING PLATFORM SECTION.

"YOU KNOW HOW THEY MAKE TV SHOWS, CALLED PILOTS?"

DESPITE THE BRILLIANCE CONTAINED IN GEX, SOME OF THE SHORTER BONUS ROUNDS AND SECRET STAGES FEATURE SOME EQUALLY COOL GRAPHICS AND IDEAS, ARE SADLY ALL TOO BRIEF. THE COP LAND BONUS STAGE FEATURES A BRILLIANT LA RIOTS STYLE STREET, WITH VANDALISED CARS AND GHETTO SLUMS WHICH YOUR UNIFORMED GECKO PATROLS



WITH GREAT BLUSTER.

THE AZTEC BONUS ROUND ALSO FEATURES ONE OF GEX'S GREATEST COSTUMES, FEDORA AND LEATHER JACKET COMPLEMENTING THE SMALL TREASURE COLLECTING STAGE.

IF CRYSTAL COULD HAVE JUST THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF *RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK*, THEY'D HAVE HAD A WINNING MINI-GAME, WITH POISONED DARTS, SPIDERS AND BOULDERS, BUT AS IT IS, THIS ROUND'S



POTENTIAL IS SADLY UNFULFILLED.

EQUALLY BIZARRE IS THE TINY BONUS BOND LEVEL,

THE SPY WHO LOVED HIMSELF. MAYBE CRYSTAL FELT THAT THIS WAS THE MOST RISKY LICENSE TO INFRINGE UPON, BUT AGAIN, THE POTENTIAL FOR ALL SORTS OF OVERBLOWN, INNUENDO HEAVY ACTION IS MASSIVE, AND OF ALL THE CHARACTERS GEX ASPIRES TO, THE IRONIC, POST-MODERN (AND SEXIST) BOND IS PROBABLY THE CLOSEST TO THE REAL GEX AS ANY MEDIA HERO.



around the streets, kung-fu kicking star-chucking Ninjas with appropriate glee. Seeing action through the window of a shop, he smashes the glass with his tail to gain entry to the buildings themselves which are packed with sword wielding samurais. Climbing up through the shops and outside onto the roofs, Gex can fight and explore the upper secrets, taking control of cannons to blast open doors and secret rooms, on his way to solving one of several quests. Throughout, fast loading keeps the action brisk and in-game cut-aways (like *TRII's*) show the consequences of buttons pushed and secret unlocked.

Through all the blistering action of running, jumping, kicking and thinking, Gex himself proves a constantly exhilarating companion. "Where's Short Round when you need him?" he bemoans as three ninjas charge him and he arches his back to coil into a flying high kick. It really does play like all your favourite games rolled into one, and the cunning (and ambitious) hook of scavenging every hackney movie and TV cliché for each level ensures that if you're ever bored, there's always another TV show coming up. The multitude of witty touches and varying level designs ensure you're constantly surprised, and lift Gex above its more obvious peers.

"The multitude of witty touches ensure you're constantly surprised..."

The sci fi-world offers the second obvious example of this imagination and variety. With Gex clad in Stormtrooper armour, the frighteningly complex eruption of movie props strung through space provide some of the toughest and fastest action around. A heavy-breathing, light sabre-wielding meanie wanders around an asteroid, questioning his parentage. Giant space slugs jump open-mouthed from craters looking to bite Gex's arse. Space stations spin to The Blue Danube from 2001. Malfunctioning robots dart through space and hobble around gargantuan Death Star towers that reach hundreds of meters into space... there's a sight gag around every corner.

And forcing you to glimpse the jokes rather than stand in studied appreciation, Gex has a limited air supply to his suit, so he must navigate sections at breakneck speed to get to the next supply of air. You want to stop and explore and catch the sights, but you simply haven't time. What might seem a cheap trick, conceptually, of forcing you to move in haste, only heightens the excitement and adrenaline rush. The pixel-perfect fine tuning required to complete each obstacle guaranteeing you play and re-play like you used to play any videogame classic of yesteryear, where gameplay was everything and it could fry your brain you wanted to beat the damned thing so badly. Playing the sci-fi level, the frantic air bubble bouncing, vertigo inducing action reminded us vividly of Rare's Spectrum classic, *Underworld*, but it also reminded us of 20 other games, movies and TV shows. Standing at the centre of it all though, flicking his tongue for space flies and waving his light sabre is Gex, who ringmasters the carnival atmosphere like the old pro he is.



[ABOVE] Carrot collecting to bolster energy and lives.



[ABOVE] You've just stocked up with air in the blue light column, so you've time to check out TV ads.



[ABOVE] A sword-swiping Ninja foolishly guards a treasure pot full of goodies for Gex.



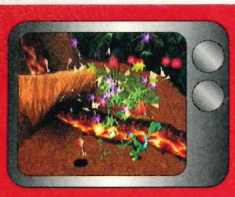
[ABOVE] Wobbly platforms make Gex's bouncing upward progress tricky in the haunted house.

TWENTY FOUR HOUR SHOW

With so much to see and do, joining Gex on his junk culture battle is an addictive bad habit of its own. Sure, there are gripes to be made – the cop show level is unforgivably brief, some of the bonus games are bigger on jokes than action, and the promising Gexzilla stages are a disappointment – but the gems far outweigh the rough stones. A particular crowd

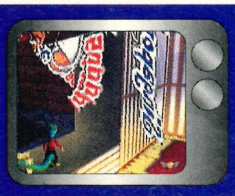


TUNE IN TO ROCK 'N' ROLL

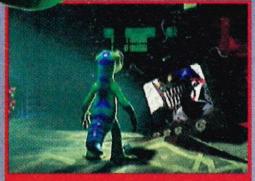


DESPITE THE CHEEK WELCOME – "WELCOME TO JURASSIC PARK!" – THE PRE-HISTORY STATIONS ARE WOEFULLY SHORT ON MAMMOTH DINOSAURS, MOST LEVELS BASED AROUND CIRCUMNAVIGATING AND MOUNTING A HUGE LAVA BLEEDING VOLCANO. REGARDLESS, GEX HIMSELF LOOKS THE PART, WITH A BONE PUSHED THROUGH HIS NOSTRILS, AND THE GAMEPLAY ITSELF IS SOME OF THE BEST JUDGED IN THE GAME, WITH PLENTY OF FIRE HOPPING AND WALL SCALING. ANOTHER AFFECTIONATE STEAL FROM *MARIO 64*, GEX BECOMES ACCELERATED AND UNWIELDY WHEN SINGED, LEADING TO SOME AMUSINGLY PROTRACTED LOSS OF LIVES, AND THIS STATION CERTAINLY FEATURES SOME OF THE TRICKIEST PLATFORMING.

TUNE IN TO TAKEAWAY



WITH SOME OF THE TRICKIEST BADDIES AND REAL PLATFORM PROBLEMS, THIS LEVEL IS HUGE FUN, WITH SEVERAL INDIVIDUAL MISSIONS TO SOLVE TO CLOSE THE CHANNEL DOWN FOREVER. HUNTING THE CHINESE DRAGON IS THE HARDEST, ALTHOUGH NEGOTIATING THE WAVERING, HUNDRED-FOOT TALL UPTURNED PYRAMIDS REQUIRES SOME ZEN-LIKE PATIENCE TOO!



[ABOVE] Gex confronts his arch-enemy, except he's on TV. Is this Videodrome or what?



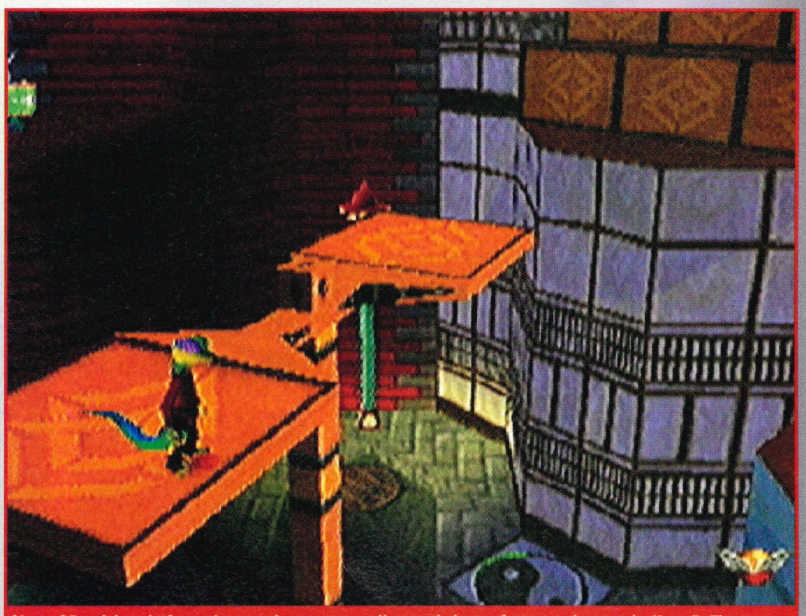
[ABOVE] Throughout the game, impressive light sourcing an shading enhance the atmosphere.



[ABOVE] A killer bee attacks. Kung Fu tail attack?



[ABOVE] saturday Night Gex admires his reflection in the great mini disco game. Watch the mirror for clues.



[ABOVE] Revolving platforms, bouncy yin-yang trampolines and plenty of gongs to bang make Kung Fu Theatre hugely enjoyable. Gex is rather too close to the edge here, but his tongue will pull him up if he falls off.



[ABOVE] Wabbit clad Gex gets a shotgun blast in the chest as he hunts the hunter.



[ABOVE] Psychedelic tunnels of light in the Circuit level are linked with floating platform.

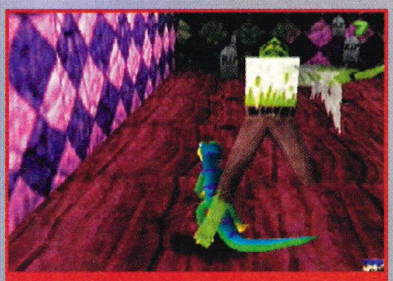
stopper is the final battle with Rez himself, where the view cuts to Rez's electric head-up-display, missiles locking onto Gex's green rump as he runs and skedadals like a lunatic. Stunning stuff.

Ironically, the one fly in the ointment of *Gex* is the voice-over by West End luvvie, Leslie Phillips. The script's okay, with double entendres and media savvy one-liners fitting the bill fine, but the ageing thesp's detached delivery doesn't really gel with Gex's personality as delivered through his on-screen presence. It's better to imagine your couch potato anti-hero's identity than be harangued by some old duffer's looped musings. The original game's narration by a younger American comedian was no great shakes anyway, and it seems curiously faddish for Crystal to retain and sabotage this strand of its past. Similarly, the much lauded voice-synching, whilst technically impressive, doesn't add anything to the game.

This misdirected cue aside, Crystal Dynamics has delivered an audacious double whammy. The sequel to an unsuccessful game that doesn't bother refreshing its own game engine, preferring to rob everyone else's, poaching from every bad taste movie to deliver a title oozing class. And the character that no-one remembers could prove to be one of the most successful brands in the Sony stable this year.

Sure, Gex is lacking two features possessed by the PlayStation's favourite girl power icon, but hell, it's not hard to picture him suiting up in hiking boots, short pants and sporting a bob-tail third time around. What do you say, Crystal Dynamics? A transvestite spoof for *Gex 3*? We can just imagine the one-liners. "Mmmm, I'd rather stay home and play with these two beauties all day, to be honest..."





[ABOVE] Tail-swiping zombies is great fun, mainly because they keep coming back for more.

PLAY

LOOKS	9
SOUNDS	8
GAMEPLAY	9
VALUE	9
SCALES	9

PLAYED 92%

Compulsive & classy – the best plaformer around

ALTERNATIVELY:
CRASH BANDICOOT 2 (86%)
CROC (78%)

TOMMI MÄK

THE TITLE OF BEST RALLY GAME IS STILL UP FOR GRABS EVEN AFTER *RALLY CROSS* AND *V-RALLY* HAVE BEEN RELEASED. IS THIS THE ONE?



Written By Graeme Nicholson

Double World Rally

Champion Tommi Mäkinen wouldn't put his name to just anything, would he? If he's the best driver, surely he'd pick the most realistic and enjoyable rally game to endorse? We hope so, but then that doesn't make it very clear where *Colin MacRae Rally* stands, the promising-looking little number from Codemasters which is endorsed by the world's number two.

Tommi Mäkinen Rally, due this May, has set the ambitious goal for itself of carrying on where *V-Rally* left off. The hope is to include a total freeform track editor to let you construct and save courses that are entirely your own creation – exactly like the one originally promised for *V-Rally* that was later scrapped. Now, we are told, that particular editor will appear in *V-Rally '98*, but will you be willing to buy that if you've already got *Tommi Mäkinen Rally* at home?

Blueprint

Publisher: Europress
Developer: Strange Productions
% Complete: 65%
Exp. Release Date: May '98
Origin: UK
No. of Players: 1-2

SOFTOGRAPHY

This is Strange Production's first PlayStation game

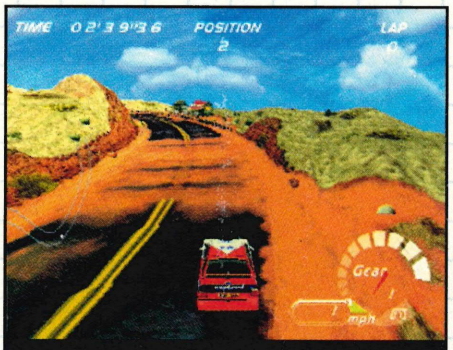
NICE FINNISH

It's not even as though developer Strange Productions was looking for the easy way out by supplying the game with three tracks and leaving you to come up with the rest yourself. In fact, there will be an enormous 60 tracks from around the world in place, which should keep you

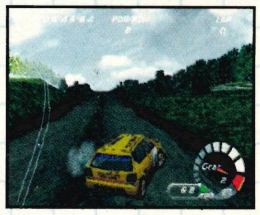
INEN RALLY

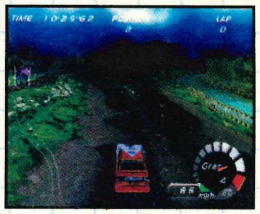


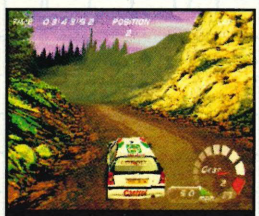
[Above] It's probably better to stick to the road rather than risk being rushed downstream in the river – sort your cornering out!



[Above] The Australian stages are hard to prepare the car for, as sand from the outback covers the tarmac in patches here and there.







[Above] Out here alone with all the rocks and gravel, don't be alarmed if a Jawa hops out and blasts the fender.

occupied more than long enough until you're ready to take the plunge into 3-D design and create your dream course. That's probably just as well – we can only guess how many memory cards you'd start filling with favourite designs!

A boosted screen resolution over *Rally Cross*, *V-Rally* and *Total Drivin'* should make it compare favourably in the visual stakes too, along with natural lighting and more realistic weather. Conditions can change while you rev and powerslide your way to the next checkpoint, sometimes for the better but usually for the worse. Driving rain and overcast skies or even heavy snowfall will hamper your progress and the visibility at midnight doesn't help you any either.

"Captures the true atmosphere of the race..." Tommi Mäkinen



"The only way to beat the realism of this PlayStation game is to jump into a car and do the real thing," exclaimed Finnish endorsee Mäkinen. "There are other motorsport games around but none captures the true atmosphere of the race quite like this."



FINN CHANCE

Yes, he may be paid to say that, but the level of realism is really quite impressive – the most detailed in a game of this sort yet. If you choose Championship Season



[Above] The Ford team is seconds away from getting the top time in the beautiful Switzerland course. Don't make a wrong turn now!



[Above] Looks a bit stormy out. Maybe you could just pull in to that Strange Pub for a warm evening of booze and merriment.



[Above] As you can see, the draw distance on *Mäkinen Rally* isn't bad at all, letting you plan your turns like a real driver.



[Above] Very reminiscent of the pink sanded rain forest courses in *V-Rally*, the Brazilian track is perfect for the grippy Subaru.

THERE CAN BE ONLY ONE

The two drivers who fought each other every step of the way during the World Rally Championship are now set to battle it out again, this time to win that coveted spot in your games collection. Mitsubishi driver Tommi Mäkinen beat Subaru man Colin MacRae in the 1997 championship, but it was a close thing. Which one do you prefer?



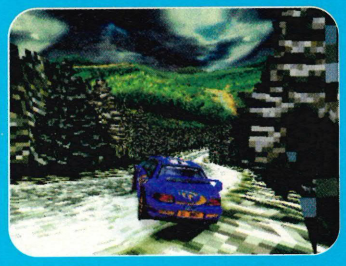
Tommi Mäkinen Rally



Colin MacRae World Rally



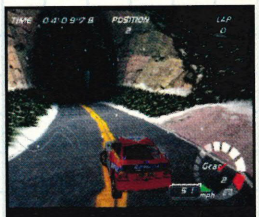
Tommi Mäkinen Rally



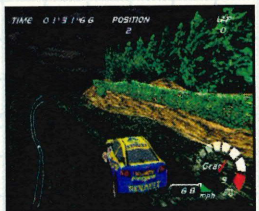
Colin MacRae World Rally



[Above] The courses in the US are spacious and generally more easy going than the tough English forests.



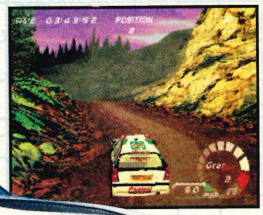
[Above] You've got to compensate for the freezing conditions in the mountains of America's final frontier – Alaska.



[Above] Segment times will suffer if you haven't allowed for this muddy track surface at the car set-up stage.

The nine main manufacturers are included, so you can drive Mäkinen's Mitsubishi, MacRae's Subaru and Carlos Sainz's Repsol Ford across the 15 international stages (each with their own sub-stages) standing between you and glory.

Publisher Europress has never released a PlayStation game before, but it is responsible for two great PC rally simulations, *Network Q RAC Rally Championship* and *International Rally Championship*. The company clearly has its roots in this kind of game, making *Tommi Mäkinen Rally* look even more promising...





[Above] All the cliff edge action of the real thing is here, but can you smash through the barrier?

instead of the hassle-free Arcade Mode, it opens up a world very like the hugely competitive atmosphere that the real drivers endure. All aspects of car tuning are high on the agenda, so as you learn of the conditions facing you in the next rally stage such as track surface, weather and time of day, you alter the car's set-up accordingly. Adjust steering to cope with the sheer turns of the forest or the long sweeping bends of the mountain side. Choose different tyres and tweak the suspension height for moving between rocky gravel and sloppy mud, whatever has to be done. If you've ever watched any rally on the TV, you'll be aware how large a part the race for the perfect set-up, usually through the night, affects each leg of the event.



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VIGILANTE 8

DID YOU LIKE *TWISTED METAL 2*? WE DID! AND NOW WE'RE ABOUT TO GET ALL THAT GAMEPLAY DRESSED UP IN FABULOUS VISUALS IN *VIGILANTE 8*!

UNDER CONSTRUCTION



[Above] In the heat of battle, it's all too easy to lose control of your vehicle and have a nasty accident. Luckily, these old Broncos can take quite a beating before they disintegrate.



[Above] Special effects? *Vigilante 8* is positively brimming with them! Light reflections, movie quality explosions, the lot.

Written By Graeme Nicholson

Like a cult movie, *Twisted Metal 2* became a bit of a classic around these parts. Even today, more than a year after its release, the appeal of the split screen mode is strong enough to pull us in for the odd battle or co-operative tournament. The outdated graphics are enough to put some people off but otherwise it seemed to prove that cars and guns definitely mix. We could've told you that a long time ago!

When *Interstate 76* appeared then, it looked like the perfect car war game. Basically it was *Twisted Metal 2* but with good looks, bigger weapons and beefed-up special effects, it looked like the ideal progression from the *Twisted Metal 2* style. Just one hitch – it only came out for the PC! Curses! The whole thing was forgotten about until recently, when Activision turned up with its new vehicle battle title *Vigilante 8*. Hey – it's *Interstate 76* for the PlayStation!

Blueprint

Publisher: Activision
Developer: Luxoflux
% Complete: 75%
Exp. Release Date: 29 May '98
Origin: USA
No. of Players: 1-2

SOFTOGRAPHY

This is the first game Luxoflux has produced for PlayStation

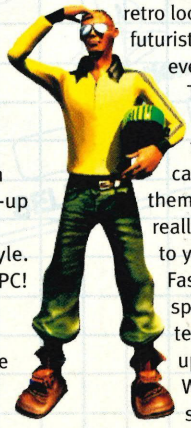
THUNDERDOME

Using all sorts of Seventies imagery in the form of bushy-haired, grimy characters with shirt lapels you could use to replace the wings on Concorde, along with some dusty old American V8 cars, *Vigilante 8* has a quirky way of introducing you to the next generation of driving combat. The tacky retro look makes a change from the usual futuristic idea which has been done to death in every kind of game.

There are 12 badly-dressed Bee Gees wannabes, male and female, to choose from. Each one comes with their own car and a special weapon that's unique to them, so different characters really will make a difference to your performance. Fast but weak little sports cars, all terrain Bronco pick-ups, even big ol' Winnebago campers and school buses are included –



[Above] Even the smallest vehicles can get almost anywhere across the rough terrain of these big 3-D levels.



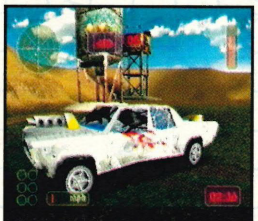




[Above] The perfect example of going a little bit mad in the bolt-on guns department. But hey, if you don't get them someone else will!



[Above] Beware the heat-seeking missiles! Scarper!



[Above] Now wouldn't be the best time to go for the MOT.

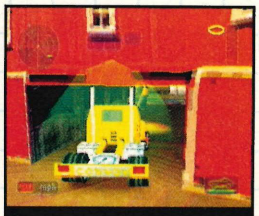
something for everyone indeed.

As a single player you take a bare car into the first of eight generously large arenas located in the desolate Southwest, and immediately begin the search for extra weaponry. You get a machine gun as standard, but that won't do much good against four or five speeding maniacs who want nothing more than to reduce your chassis to ashes.

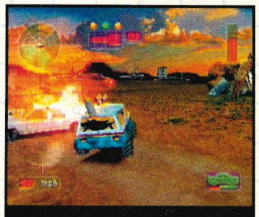
To compete with the big boys, you need vehicle-tracking cannons, mortar launchers and other irresistible toys of terror. On collecting the add-ons, they actually affix visibly to the body of your car; making you look meaner by the minute as you bolt on weapon after weapon. This way you can tell what firepower the other characters have at a glance and weigh up your chances accordingly. This will be even more crucial in the head-to-head two player deathmatches!



[Above] The physics are fun, but not realistic, so you can reach great heights just by driving up the edge of a cliff!



[Above] The scenery plays a bigger part in the game than you'd think. Remember to check everywhere for that bigger gun!



[Above] Your weapons system has targeted the other guy, so if you shoot that mortar launcher you'll probably hit him. Fire!

CHRISTINE

Early on in the game's development, it has to be said that attention to detail is astonishing. We have seen real time damage affecting the cars in a variety of realistic ways, from buckled panels to bullet holes and smashed windscreens. On one car the exhaust detached and started scraping along the ground, and on the camper van the back door shook lose after a solid battering and proceeded to flap around on its hinges.

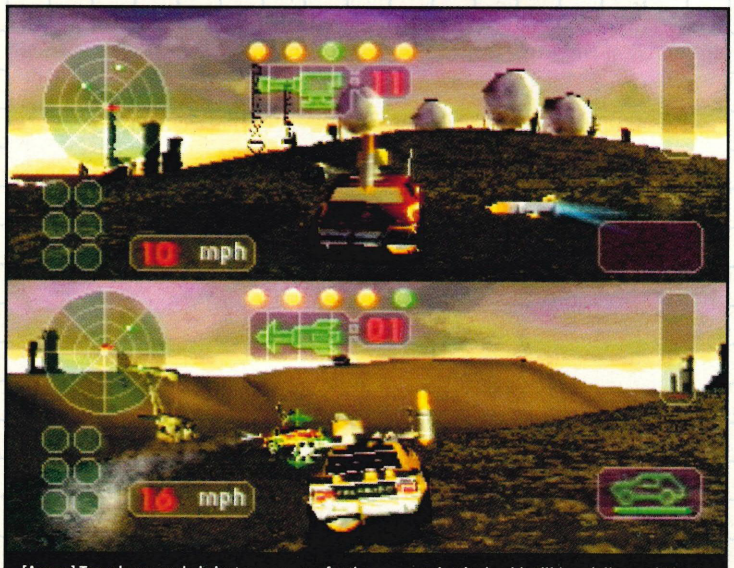
"It has to be said that attention to detail in Vigilante 8 is astonishing!"

The scenery is equally destructible. Everything besides the actual hills and roads can be damaged and destroyed on each level. The elaborate structure of the chemical works will crumble piece by piece from repeated hits and you can even knock out bits of scenery like propane tanks or stacked logs to let them roll into your enemy's path.

Naturally, with gameplay elements like these, our hopes are very high for *Vigilante 8*. All that seems to be missing is a co-operative two player mode played against the computer – any chance, Activision?



[Above] If you simply cannot muster the firepower, there are ways to use the scenery to maim the opponents. Look around.



[Above] Two player mode is just one-on-one for the moment, but it should still be a jolly good blast. The gas containers on top of the hill can be shot from their position to roll onto your pal's car!



[Above] Phwoar! If only we could've sent this raging driver into Iraq with his heavily tooled-up motorcar! We would've won the thing in a couple of days!

NEED FOR SPEED 3
HOT PURSUIT

MORE LICENSED SUPERCARS? IT CAN ONLY MEAN ONE THING – THE NEED FOR SPEED IS BACK! BUT AFTER *NFS 2*, DO YOU STILL FEEL THE NEED?

Written By Graeme Nicholson



[ABOVE] Running from the law, you'll try anything to get away, no matter how dangerous. Even if it does involve smashing into pesky police state trooper cars to get them the hell out of your way!

If there was one thing *Need For Speed* had to do to win back its original fans, it was to return to its roots. Luckily for those who crave all things racing simulation, that is exactly what the aim has been of the team behind *Need For Speed 3*.

They've tried to stick everything back in that made the first game so good, and they have managed to make some very worthwhile enhancements. The police cars, nowhere to be seen in *NFS 2*, are back and vastly improved with all sorts of impressive new law enforcement techniques. Long tracks are also back (sometimes over four minutes for a single lap) and there's no denying that the design of these courses is much more interesting and realistic than before. All nine circuits have an unbeatable freedom of movement too – unless there's a metal barrier or a sheer rock face in the way, you can drive well off the side of the road. Whether you slide down into an aqueduct, soar above the track on an embankment or smash through some barriers onto a shortcut, this is a feature that has been well improved.

"Pushes your driving skills to the limit!"



PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Customer support: 01753 549 442
Price: £44.99
Release date: 3 April '98

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

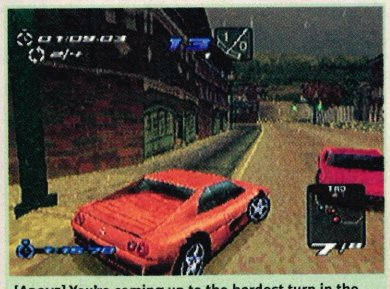


SPORTY CAR

For more variation, there is a plethora of options to navigate. Would you like to race any track in reversed or mirrored versions? How about a variety of real weather effects including some totally incredible thunder and lightning? Maybe you'd like to drive the tracks at night where you get glowing headlights to illuminate your surroundings, which you can even switch between full and dipped beam?

Then there are all the car options – what colour? ABS? And tuning choices, from tyre type and aerodynamics to suspension and steering speed. Another good configurable element is the volume of civilian traffic, from minimum (the occasional Sunday driver) to maximum (many clusters of civilian cars).

The coppers don't have to be part of the game, but flip to "Hot Pursuit" mode and the roads are suddenly heavily patrolled. Their cars differ depending on what part of the world you're racing in, ranging from lumbering rectangular squad cars to specially prepared Corvettes. And they're the meanest bunch of cops you'll find



[ABOVE] You're coming up to the hardest turn in the game, so hit the foot brakes hard!



[ABOVE] How does an old flimsy sports car go up against these heavy brutes? Not very well.

WHAT DOES PRACTICE MAKE? PERFECT

THOUGHTFUL AS THE BOYS AT ELECTRONIC ARTS ARE, THEY'VE INCLUDED A NEW PRACTICE MODE TO GUIDE YOU THROUGH THESE EXTRAORDINARILY LONG COURSES. YOU GET A RACING LINE, ICONS DESCRIBING COMING BENDS AND A BLOKE SAYING "EASY RIGHT, HARD LEFT" AND ALL THAT RALLY STUFF. PLUS YOU GET THE GHOST CAR OF YOUR LAST LAP TO RACE AGAINST AND IMPROVE. A USEFUL FEATURE FOR LEARNERS.

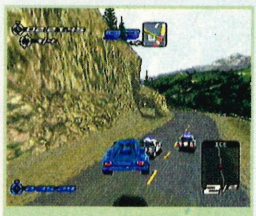




[Above] Even for the simplest traffic offense, the cops go crazy and relentlessly try to make you crash in a horrible fashion.

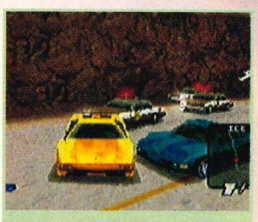


[Above] You'll get loads of long term playability from the fast split screen mode, with or without catch-up.



[Above] A roadside slope in the Rocky Pass course launches you dangerously high into the air above the track.





[Above] Watch it – you only get a few warnings and fines before the police lose all patience and arrest you, so you can't finish!



[Above] The headlights work like the real thing, lighting your way through the hills. Very nice.



[Above] It's starting to rain – again! How will the tyres cope?

outside of America's deep south. While yelling at you via their megaphones, they repeatedly ram you, box you in with multiple cars, set up road blocks and even lay spikes across the road to burst your tyres! Being constantly hounded by the boys and girls in blue really pushes your driving skills to the limit and gets your pulse racing, but at least you can rest assured that they'll also go after the other drivers – even if it's one of your friends in the shockingly good split screen mode.



[Above] Full replays are again included so you can force those close to you to watch how well you did in the race. Nice to see that the swirling smoke doesn't cause any slowdown.



[Above] In the quick-thinking confusion of a police pursuit, civilian auto accidents are an unavoidable side-effect. Tell that to the guy in the Landcruiser who's about to land in the forest!



[Above] The Countach won the vote for coolest engine sound hands down against the others.



[Above] Post-arrest procedure, the police still like to play rough and give you the odd nudge.

POSH CAR

So, all these new things are welcomed in *Need For Speed 3*. But some facets of the game have been meddled with that should have been left alone, in particular the perfectly accurate crash physics of the original which have now been almost completely lost. Too many times you find yourself tumbling through the air only to land square on your wheels, miraculously facing in the right direction. And what's happened to the beautifully photographed cockpits? They're gone!

Despite these omissions, the lengthy tracks, improved scenery and truly thrilling police chases make *Need For Speed 3* amazing fun to drive. If you're wondering what place *NFS 3* has now that *Gran Turismo* exists, the latter pulls ahead as a hardcore simulation but cannot compete with those awesome two player races. They're faster, smoother and more enjoyable whether you're weaving through traffic together or playing in a pack of four drivers on the open road. With this, EA has at least partly re-established the *Need For Speed* brand. Maybe it's time you reconsidered?



PLAY

LOOKS	8
SOUNDS	8
GAMEPLAY	9
VALUE	8
SHORTCUTS	8

PLAYED 87%

Blindingly fast but without some of the magic.

ALTERNATIVELY:
GRAN TURISMO (97%)
NEED FOR SPEED (94%)

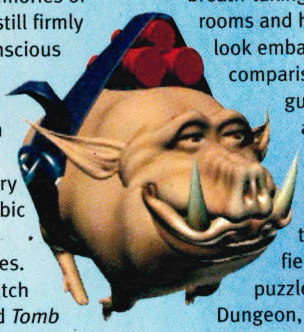
DEATHTRAP DU

THE GRISTLY FIGHTING FANTASY BOOKS MADE IAN LIVINGSTONE A RICH MAN. CAN EIDOS REPLICATE THAT SUCCESS WITH ITS HUGELY ATMOSPHERIC CONSOLE EPIC?

Written By Tom Sargent

Who would have thought that Ian Livingstone's furtive imagination could invoke such feelings of gut-wrenching fear in the pits of kids' stomachs all those years ago? It wasn't just the fact that the Fighting Fantasy books were well-written pieces of imaginative literature either. What made them doubly exciting was the moment when the reader was forced to make a decision to turn left down a winding path into the dense forest, or continue north to the clearing at the top of the hill just up ahead. Of course you'd tell your mates that you finished the whole adventure at the first attempt, but the fact is you blatantly shat your pants as a band of marauding skeletons ambushed you in that very clearing, when you should have ventured into the woods instead.

It's with these fond memories of playing a 'fearless' hero still firmly embedded in the sub-conscious that the day of reckoning finally arrived. Has Eidos (in close association with Livingstone himself) managed to retain the very essence and claustrophobic feel of the books? The answer is a resounding yes. The graphics may not match those of the much lauded *Tomb Raider II*, but that aside they are more than compensated with outstanding use of real-time lighting and the amazing attention to detail.





[Above] There's nothing to match the decapitation sequences and then watching the gore splash everywhere.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Eidos
Customer support: 0181 6363000
Price: £44.99
Release date: 20 March '98

ONE PLAYER — MEMORY CARD

MONSTER MASH

USE YOUR CUNNING (AND THESE BLOCKS) TO LURE THE SNAKE BITCHES TO THEIR DOOM.



RUN AROUND TO THE EDGE OF A CRUSHING PILLAR.



USE YOUR GUARD TO DEFLECT ANY BLOWS INFLICTED.



SPLAT! WHATCH THE GORE.



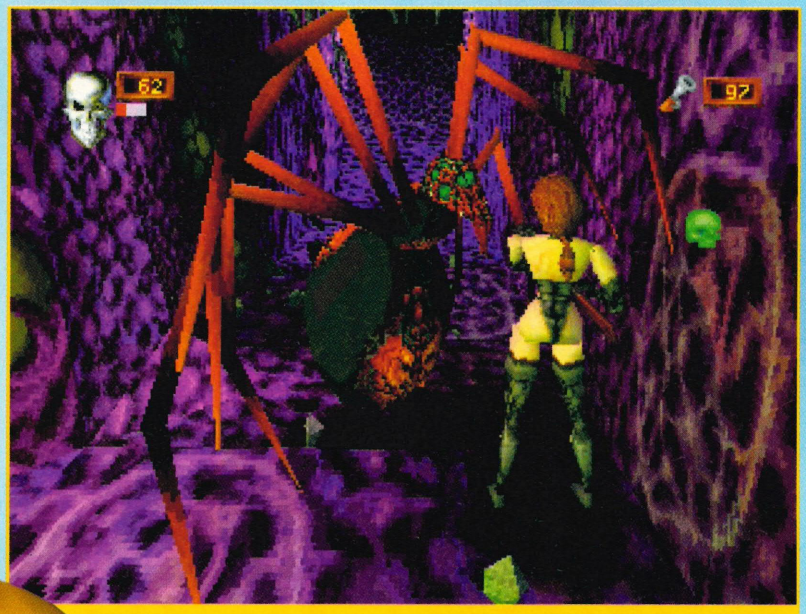
[Above] Go get 'em Gal! Red Lotus is quick with a blade, so getting the better of these Orcs shouldn't be too taxing with a quick combo attack.

DANK

The sheer scale of the 38 levels is quite breath-taking and makes most of the rooms and hallways in *Quake* (on PC) look embarrassingly small by comparison. As if you hadn't already guessed, *Deathtrap Dungeon* is a third (and occasionally first) person adventure quest where you are required to run, climb and hack your way through some of the most fiendishly-devised traps and puzzles ever devised. The Dungeon, a massive labyrinth of subterranean locations filled with hideous monsters, was constructed by the crazy Baron Sukumvit to bring notoriety to his home town of Fang. The lure of riches beyond imagination ensured a steady flow of would-be millionaires who entered and (predictably) never returned.

Unfazed by the ever-so-slightly dubious odds of survival, the player can choose the preposterously-proportioned heroine, Red Lotus or the lantern-jawed (and equally disproportional) savage warrior, Chaindog. Your quest is to destroy a huge (are there any other?) red dragon called

UNGEON



[Above] The big spiders are, er, huge. When you kill one the death throws are superlative too. Just watch them quiver and curl up afterwards!

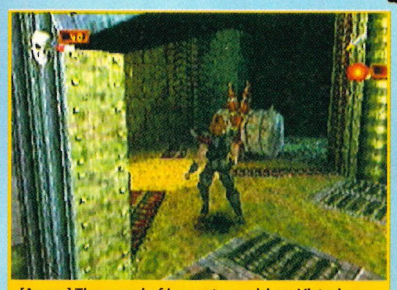
"The sheer scale of the many levels is absolutely breath-taking..."

Melkor and get out of the dungeon alive. As you progress into the murky depths of the Dungeon, the idea is to collect as many weapons and magic as possible. This way you might be a match for some of the sickeningly-powerful bosses.

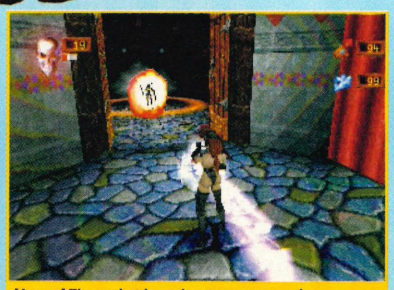
Gloom

To lure you into a false sense of security, the first level is more of an initiation ceremony without enemies, which gives you a feel for the new environment (a few switches to press, a couple of levers to pull) before the game proper begins.

Since the preview version, *DD* has been improved upon considerably – the graphics engine is much smoother, with a longer horizon, solid detailed scenery, and a superb cinematic camera. Sometimes when your back's against a wall, the camera won't allow 360° of vision, but this doesn't impair your enjoyment of the game too much, it just means



[Above] The sound of huge steam-driven Victorian machinery coupled with spiky steam rollers is classic Livingstone.



[Above] The rocket launcher-type weapon is absolutely lethal. Use it sparingly though.

CHARMED, I'M SURE

Throughout the quest, you'll find enough spells, charms and weapons to take on anything that the Dungeon denizens can throw at you. Here's a sample of the delights that lie within.

The Blunderbuss A Dwarf invention which fires clouds of nails and shot at the enemy.

Magic Warhammer Of Dwarfish origin, it's the only weapon that can harm the Rockmen.

Red Sword Several of these lie about, and are excellent for killing Dragons and Demons.

Silver Sword This Elfin creation is superb against Undead, but loses power with prolonged use.

Black Spiritsword A devastating weapon, but for every wound dealt to an enemy, the wielder suffers equally.

War Pigs of Doom A spell which summons suicidal pigs which home in on opponents and explode.

Arc of Power A spell that calls on the power of the Storm god to strike up to three enemies.

Anti Magic Charm Absorbs the baneful effects of hostile magic. Once used up you can't re-use it.

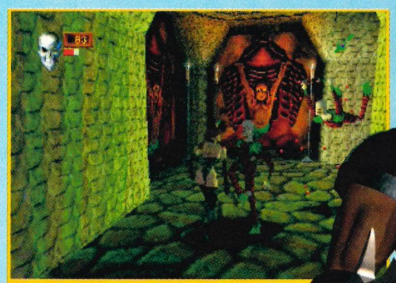
Ankh of Life A spell to shower the user with a surge of health. It adds 100 hit points.

Treasure The amount collected effects your score at the end of each level. Also used to buy credits at Save points.

Bomb Powerful thrown weapons with a fuse. The longer you hold the button the further it goes.

Chalk Marks the ground you are standing on with a white arrow. Use it to negotiate the mazes within the Dungeon.

Antidote Cancels the effects of poisoning, especially when your fighting the disgusting venom-spitting spiders.



[Above] Bizarre are what, Red Lotus has to face off with a couple of clowns. Where's that custard pie spell gone?



[Above] Hidden areas reveal bonus pick ups such as this Strength spell.

SCARY MONSTERS & SUPERFIENDS

There are over 50 types of creature skulking in the darkness just waiting to pounce when the opportunity arises. Here are some of the nastiest.

Bloods Beast A classic Livingstone creation that craves your blood. Nice.



Orcs Usually hunt in groups to make up for their lack of intelligence.



Ratman Carries a deadly Grenadier's Companion – a canny opponent.



Imps Annoying little blighters who throw knives and forks at you.



Red Dragon The ultimate beast, requiring your full arsenal to defeat.



Pit Fiend Looks more like a T-Rex to us. Deadly, huge and hungry.



Priestess Beware of these deadly sword-wielding, scantily-clad vixens. They mean business.

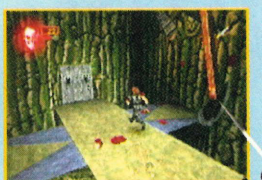




[Above] The flame thrower is a sadist's dream as the unfortunate snake woman finds to her peril. Ancient *Aliens* anyone?

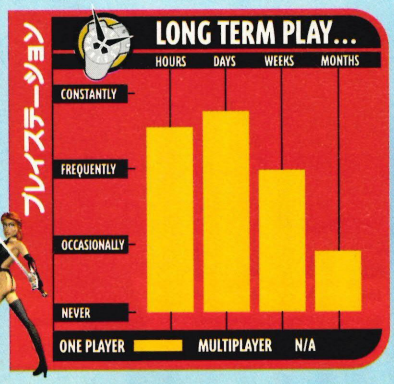


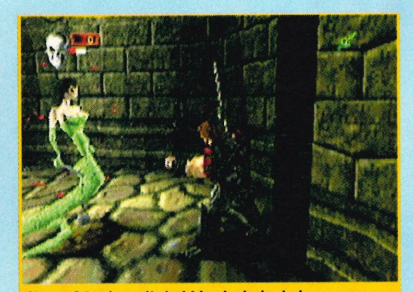
[Above] Ivy adorns the walls and floors of this location. It's just an example of the richly-textured environments in the game.



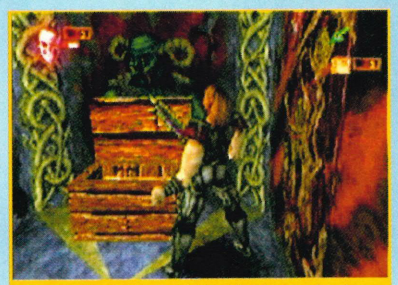
[Above] Looks out for the swingy things (or pendulum scythes as they are better known) looking to cleave you in two.

you have to re-adjust your position. Controlling your characters is pretty simple. There are no complicated button-bashing episodes to worry about, timing and precision work effectively enough. For example, there are two attack buttons – one for a quick combination attacks and another overhead chop that inflicts severe damage, but takes longer to pull off.





[Above] Snake gal's hobbies include: being green, having a long rattling tail and attacking people with a chain mace.



[Above] After dealing with the inhabitants of a given location there's usually a treasure chest or three to loot.



[Above] Deadly flame traps can deplete energy in an instant. Look for give-away markings on the wall and of course, corpses!



[Above] Looking down from a high platform can give you vertigo. Falling from one can put you in a coma. Get the message?

Magic plays an integral part in the game too, and once one of the 32 spells or charms has been picked up, preparing it for action couldn't be easier. Weaponry is particularly important, and you soon realise that specific armaments only work with certain creatures, although there's more than one way to skin a cat.

MURK

An example of this is the Venom Sword which is the only weapon that can kill the Serpent Girls, but alternatively, you can dispose of them by luring their scaly behinds under the stamping stone pillars. There's always more than one way to get passed the 53 species of enemy, which means that the game offers excellent replay value besides an extensive bestiary. As mentioned earlier, the attention to detail is stunning. Carving up enemies is great fun, and watching their entrails splatter and drip off walls as the decapitated head bounces comically around a chamber, even more so. Be prepared to negotiate falling floors, pendulum scythes, magical snares, spear traps, hidden spikes, crushing blocks to name but a few. As in the books, you never quite know what's around the next corner.

Deathtrap Dungeon is very much a game of trial and error, but to be fair, there's usually a visible or audible clue to warn the adventurer. Some of the animations could have been better, and the graphics crisper, but thanks to the input of Mr Livingstone, it's everything we could have hoped for.

"Attention to detail is stunning!"





[Above] Beware the leather-clad acrobats wielding a sword in each hand. They're deadly and will chop you into sushi.

PLAY

Looks	●●●●●●●●○○
Sounds	●●●●●●●●○○
Gameplay	●●●●●●●●○○
Value	●●●●●●●●●○
Fiends	●●●●●●●●○○

PLAYED 86%

Absorbing and feindish dungeon romp

ALTERNATIVELY:
TOMB RAIDER II (95%)
EXCALIBUR 2555 AD (86%)

BLAZE

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Powerstation Magazine

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PSYGNOSIS GOES BACK TO THE FUTURE IN A TIME-TRAVELLING 3-D PLATFORMER THAT LOOKS GORGEOUS, BUT AIMS TO TARGET A SERIOUSLY YOUNG AUDIENCE.

RASCAL

Written By Tom Sargent

Psygnosis must be going soft in its old age. To say that *Rascal* is a slight departure for the Liverpool-based coders is a huge understatement. Gone are the gut-ripping weapons and high speed chases in favour of a cutesy 3-D platform romp.

For starters, it's geared towards entertaining the youngest possible age group (8-12 year-olds to be precise), and because of this, it's bound to alienate a lot of seasoned gamers who'd no doubt complete it within a couple of days. This is not to say that older gamers won't enjoy the well defined graphics and intuitive control system. *Rascal* is, however, pretty easy to get through. Unless you're wearing a bib, mastering the basics of running, jumping and dodging will ensure that each level should be negotiated without too much trouble and this is a shame because games these days need more challenge, not less.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Psygnosis
Customer support: 0151 282 3000
Price: £39.99
Release date: 27 March '98



REPROBATE

You play the part of the titular Rascal, who must travel through time trying to rescue your father, Professor Casper Clockwise (scientific adviser to N.A.T.O) from the vile clutches of the Chronon, who has stolen his plans for a time-travelling vessel. This has naturally given Psygnosis real artistic licence to create diverse and colourful worlds, and has you tramping around castle dungeons one minute and swimming around the depths of Atlantis the other. In true *Crystal Maze* fashion, there are six different zones in total to get through: Castle, Aztec, Western, Galleon, Atlantis and the Lab where you begin the



[ABOVE] All of the locations are stunningly rendered, with rich colour schemes and brilliant lighting effects.

TIME BANDITS

On his travels Rascal confronts some pretty weird and wonderful individuals. We've rounded a few of them up to give them the once-over.


The Raptor can be found on the Western level.


Seek the Dragon on the Castle level.


This varmint strolls up on the Western level.


The Blacksmith is found on the Castle zone (past)


The Pirate is on the Galleon (present) level.


The Atlantean Guard patrols the great halls.


Watch out for this fishy foe on Atlantis (present).


[Above] This wonderful sight is the fully flowing waterfall at the beginning of the Atlantis level (past).


[Above] Rampaging raptors stalk the streets in the Western zone. Keep well away – they're deadly.


[Above] Every room seems to have a redeeming feature. This suit of armour gleams beautifully with stunning real time lighting effects.


[Above] At set points in the game you can save the game. You just walk into a spinning memory card.



adventure. By jumping through time gates Rascal can visit each of these locations in either the past, present or future (all of them different, thus creating 18 totally unique worlds in total). To complete each one you must collect the four special segments necessary to activate the warp to another level, only then can you get on with the ultimate goal of rescuing the professor and saving the fabric of time.

Scamp

Rascal himself looks superb and the screen resolution is pretty high considering the game engine sprints along at 50 frames-per-second. You play from a third person perspective although the intelligent camera allows players to manipulate the view through 360°. This works well initially, but the camera often struggles to encompass a full view of things, especially when you're in a corner or up against a wall. All of the inhabitants encountered throughout your travels lose none of their sharpness, even up close which is amazing.

"Younger readers will enjoy the simplistic approach to gameplay..."

Special mention should go to Jim Henson's creature Workshop, which designed Rascal and many other of the characters – they're beautifully animated and compliment the environments in which they roam perfectly. Not only this, but as characters move around, the lighting is altered in real time according to their environment; adding stunning levels of depth.


[Above] Even up close to the characters, there is no loss of detail. Like wow.


[Above] Guards rush menacingly towards you. If you're accurate you can take them out from afar and encase them in a bubble using your innovative gun.

THREE TIME

There are six locations in the Rascal universe, each one split into three time zones (past present and future). As you can see from the screenshots, Atlantis wasn't always buried beneath the waves.


In the past it was an island paradise, replete with gorgeous scenery and gushing waterfalls.


In the present, it's a sunken world inhabited with mermaids and mermen.


The future of Atlantis is somewhere in the depths of deep space. Spooky.




The Mermaid can also be found on the Atlantis level.


The Aztec God surveys his realm on the Aztec level.


As do many of his minions, the Aztec Guards.


Don't expect to get fed by the pin-wielding Cook.

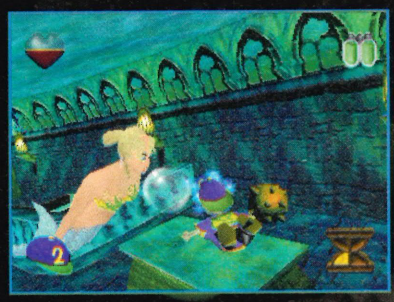

The Parrot. Not John, but the feathered kind.


Knights patrol the deeper dungeons of the castle level.


Watch out for these Lumber Men and their saws.



[Above] Shoot enemies to encase them in a bubble. But beware, the more you capture the greater the challenge when you face them again later.







[Above] Atlantis in the present time zone. Look out for mermaids and mermen sporting pointy sticks. they tend to hurt.



[Above] This Atlantean guard may have a ridiculous fin on his head, but he isn't part of the welcoming committee.

"Characters are beautifully animated and compliment their environments..."



[Above] Visit the west in the past and the streets are patrolled by gun slingers and cronies.

The creatures in *Rascal's* world come in many shapes and sizes, from insignificant pests such as moths and parrots to enormous flame-belching dragons and sea serpents.

Scallywag

No matter where you are, small creatures and human characters appear from nowhere and get under your feet; sapping that vital energy. In fact, it's quite a good strategy to leg it as fast as you can avoiding any contact with them at all if you can, because when a level ends you have to confront all the creatures you've encapsulated with your bubble-gun.

Due to its simplistic nature, *Rascal* can become very samey after prolonged play. For the greater part of the game you just run around collecting ammo for your bubble-gun and colour-coded keys for special exits, with the odd lever to pull here and there. At certain points, the action changes completely, usually in the form of a roller-coaster-type section which has you hurtling down a huge incline. But other than this brief respite, there's not an awful lot of gameplay variety.

From a technical point of view *Rascal* scores highly, and younger readers will enjoy its simplistic appeal, but if you're a veteran platform gamer think long and hard before parting with the folding stuff. One thing is certain, if Psygnosis can utilise this engine for an older audience, it'll be onto a sure fire winner.





PLAY

Looks	●●●●●●●●○○
Sounds	●●●●●●○○○○
Gameplay	●●●●●●●○○○
Value	●●●●●●●○○○
Time Zones	●●●●●●●○○○

PLAYED 77%

Accomplished, but simplistic adventure

Alternatively:
Gex 3D: Enter The Gecko (April)
Croc: Legend Of The Gobbos (78%)



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POY POY

IT ALMOST NEVER MADE IT TO THESE SHORES, BUT KONAMI HAS MADE THE RIGHT DECISION TO BRING YOU THIS COOL NEW GROUP GAME.

Written By Graeme Nicholson

Plugging the gap

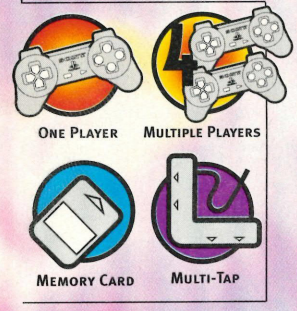
between the original and best *Bomberman* on the Super NES and the first ever version of *Bomberman* due for the PlayStation, *Poy Poy* is about to throw itself firmly into your free time!

Nothing is better for disproving that nonsense about video games being antisocial than a greatly playable party game, and that's exactly what *Poy Poy* is. A room full of friends all jostling round a large glowing television screen, joypads in hand, laughing and yelling at each other is the environment games like *Poy Poy* are designed to create. It certainly beats being holed up in a stuffy bedroom, playing AN/L Flight Sim 3 by yourself with the curtains closed.

PLAY Information



Publisher: Konami
Customer support: 0171 258 3791
Price: £49.99
Release date: April '98



Gauntlet Lobber

To be a truly respected party game (see *Worms*, *Smash Court Tennis* and *Micro Machines v3* for reference) there has to be a four player option. The idea must also be simple but never boring, and there has to be a comedic effect when somebody in the group fails. For example, when your *Worms* team captain is sent somersaulting into the water with a lovely "plop," someone catches a tennis ball in the family jewels and doubles over, or you get flattened by an enormous wooden mallet in *Micro Machines v3*. Reassuringly, *Poy Poy* meets the necessary criteria on every count.

Anywhere from one to four players can join in and the idea behind the battle is simple enough so that newcomers can pick it up rapidly, but pros can use more advanced tactics they've learned along the way. The four selectable characters inhabit a small 3-D arena, and the objective of each one is to knock the other three unconscious by chucking rockets, boulders and whatever else looks liftable (including knocked-out or fully conscious other players) at them. You just walk up to an object, press the X button to hoist it above your head, and press it again to lob it in the direction you're facing. That's enough to get anyone started. Fantastic.

Up Chuck

As you learn, you might want to try the Forward Slam move, which throws the held object with much greater force at the ground directly in front of you, or the sneaky Suplex that tosses your recently collected article back over your head. That usually gives the person chasing you a nice surprise, especially if they're holding a rocket which drops at their feet! The last attack move is the most important, the Lethal Throw. This special move differs depending on what gloves you equipped your character with before the match from a list of 14 different types, with names like "Hop", "Bomb" and "Thunder". Some give heat-seeking ability to your heaved



[Above] Remember to throw other characters at their intended target quickly, before they wriggle lose.



[Above] Breaking treasure chests on the ground can get you some goodies, but they are also notorious for housing the dreaded Black Exploding Sphere.



[Above] When the two others are out and there's only two of you left, that's when it gets really scary. Peek at the other guy's energy level.

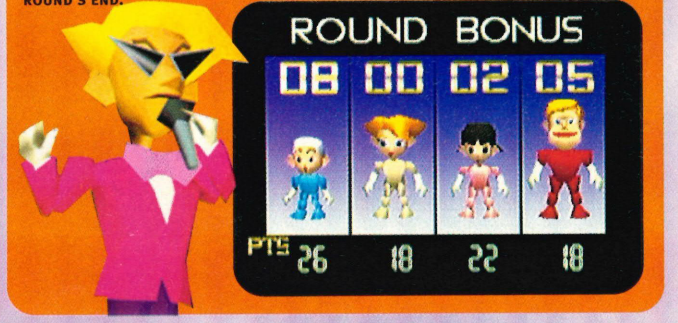


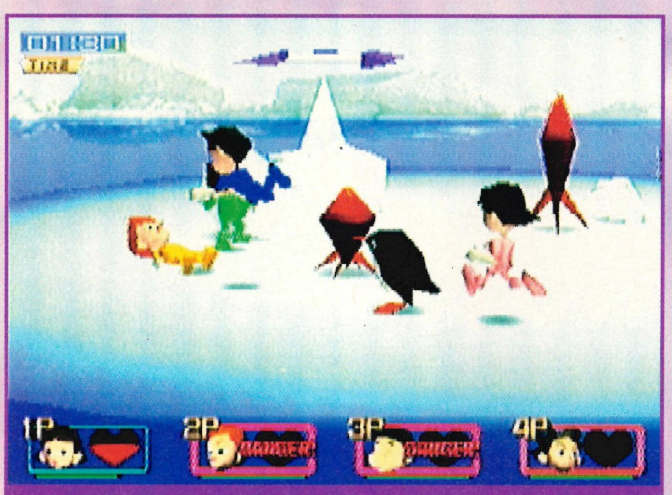
[Above] With that enormous head, you'd think one smash from a heavy log would break their tiny necks straight away.

WHAT DO POINTS MAKE? PRIZES!

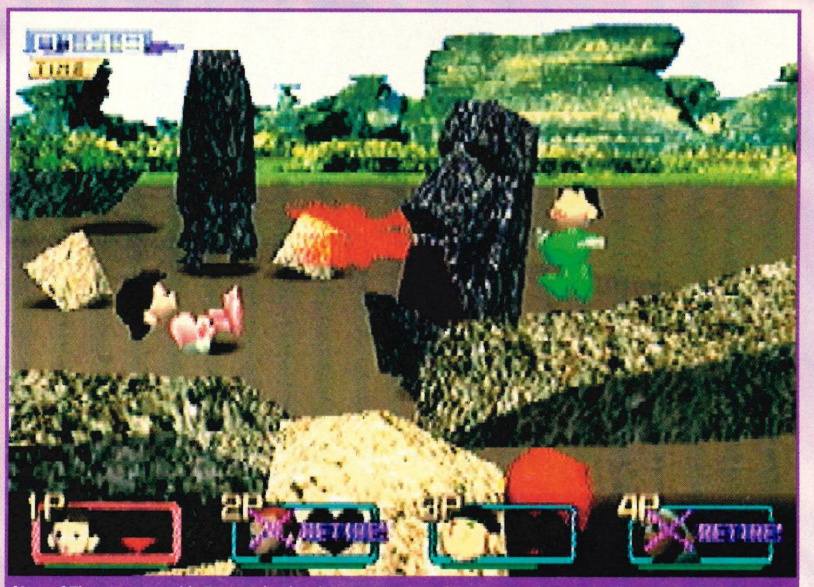
Points are awarded at the end of a match in three main areas and then added up to give everybody a total. In the one player game, it's exactly the same but you get money instead of points.

- **Direct Hits: Awarded for hitting opponents directly with objects**
- **Luck Bonus: For collecting white bonus hearts found in boxes**
- **Round Points: Given according to longevity and health remaining at the round's end.**





[Above] Yet another hazard, the cute little penguins waddle up and peck you sharply in the stomach! Little beggars!



[Above] The statues on this Easter Island style arena get up and move around, spouting time bombs from their mouths! Stop them by picking them up and throwing them at your mates.



[Above] The dorky celebratory dances of the match winner are almost unbearably cute. Parappa watch out for the *Poy Poy* posse!



[Above] Fear not, a little floating robot shifts around the battlefield, replacing all the rocks and rockets you use up.



[Above] The poor guy in the green pajama suit is already dead, but the desert tornado has whipped him into the air!



[Above] It takes longer to heave larger objects into the throwing position. Bear that in mind when someone's creeping up behind you.



[Above] With just the right timing, the Hop special throw will smack red Arnold here and then causes the log to repeatedly bounce on his head.

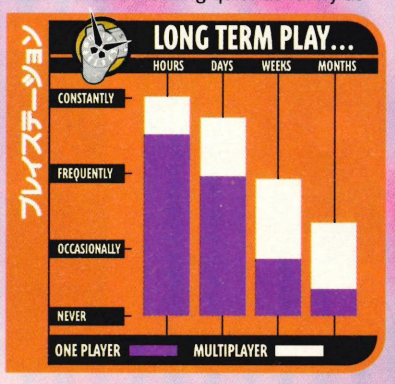


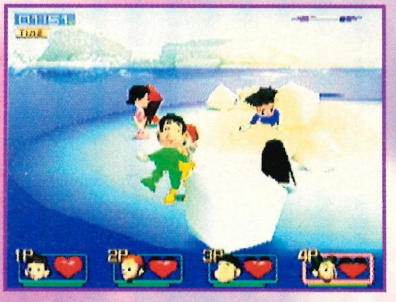
[Above] When the picturesque woods level first starts you can hoist whole piles of logs above your head and chuck them. Get those big hits in early!

"Up there with the very best party games..."

projectiles, some can make a rock fly up out of the screen to come speeding back down elsewhere, some can make them weave around in unpredictable circles like a tornado – it all depends on the gloves. Separate from your character's energy, glove power decreases with each use of the Lethal Throw but regenerates over time.

Addiction sets in after only a couple of games and the humour factor is definitely there – there's nothing quite as funny as grabbing a non-consenting other player and flinging them high in the air towards another opponent. A fault in the gameplay that occurs is an over tendency for everyone to use their special move, because glove power doesn't go down enough to prevent a fairly constant barrage of Lethal Throws from all four characters, but otherwise *Poy Poy* really is up there with the best of the party games.





PLAY

LOOKS	5
SOUNDS	5
GAMEPLAY	8
VALUE	7
BIG HEADS	8

PLAYED **84%**

Original and engrossing multiplayer shenanigans!

ALTERNATIVELY:
MICRO MACHINES V3 (92%)
BOMBERMAN WORLD (SEPT '98)

PITFALL 3-D
BEYOND THE JUNGLE



[Above] This is where it all begins. The first level is a short introduction to get you familiar with the controls. The lead character, Harry, is a rather nimble chap (see boxout) who makes the move to 3-D well.

PITFALL HARRY, PLATFORM HERO OF A BYGONE ERA STICKS HIS CHEST OUT FOR A 3-D SHAKEDOWN, BUT IT'S A BIT OF A LET-DOWN.

Written By Tom Sargent

Anybody remeber

the halcyon days of the Atari 2600? For the uninitiated, it was the first home console to introduce the Indiana Jones- inspired character, Pitfall Harry way, way back in 1982.

Pitfall was an addictive platform game, where you had to guide Harry through about a hundred perilous (and pretty similar!) levels to collect treasure, whilst avoiding scorpions and crocodiles. Some of the best parts of the game included swinging across deadly pits on a rope, and thankfully Activision has reprised this, the most enjoyable element of the original *Pitfall*, for Harry's adventure into the third dimension.

Whether it's been worth the inordinately-long wait is questionable, though. *Pitfall 3-D* is certainly a fun game to play – much more so than the preview led us to believe, but considering the strong branding of the license, we were expecting something far more special. *Tomb Raider II* this ain't, but what *Pitfall 3-D* does offer is solid gameplay, with a few good ideas thrown in to mix up the action.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Activision
Customer support: 01895 456700
Price: £39.99
Release date: April '98

ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD

WHEN I WERE A LAD

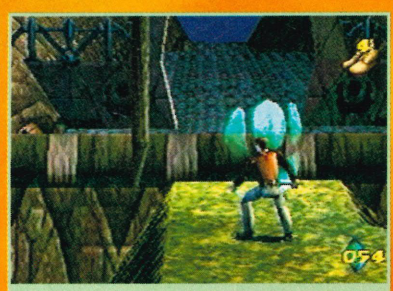
WAS IT REALLY THAT LONG AGO (1982) THAT THE PHENOMENON THAT WAS *PITFALL* FIRST EMERGED? AS YOU CAN SEE THE GRAPHICS WERE LAUGHABLY UNCOMPLICATED, BUT IT SPAWNED COUNTLESS IMITATIONS AND CREATED A NEW GENRE.







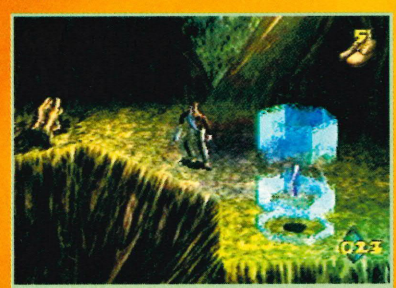
[Above] Level three, where you must set off some light bridges and swing on strange coat-hangers.Not Raiders Of The Lost Ark then, but still pretty good fun.



[Above] This blue Cavern Rift is your one way ticket to the next level.



[Above] Breaking barrels and other pieces of scenery often reveals a useful power-up.

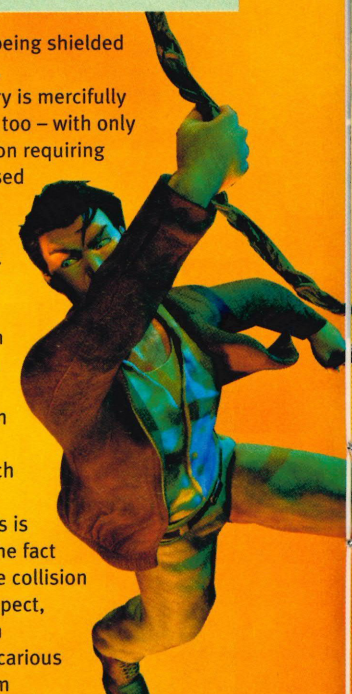


[Above] This glowing blue haven acts like a shower of energy restoring you back to full health.

IT'S DEAD, BABY!

Pitfall 3-D's essentially a forced-perspective platform game, where the player has new-found freedom to roam in and out of the screen collecting crystals, power-ups and treasure at his own leisure. The dynamic camera has a mind all of its own; zooming-in and around Harry depending upon what's happening on-screen. This works surprisingly well, as you never feel that important areas of the screen are being shielded at crucial times.

Control of Harry is mercifully uncomplicated, too – with only one attack button requiring timing as opposed to frantic and repetitious button-bashing. It's a pity that a Dual Analogue option has been omitted though – as it stands, you can only run in out and diagonally, which incurs obvious restrictions. This is not helped by the fact that some of the collision detection is suspect, especially when negotiating precarious floating platform sections. Each level consists of primary and secondary goals. For example, on level two you need to collect four hidden orb keys which open the way to the next level,



LET'S GO

THE INTRO SEQUENCE SETS THE SCENE PERFECTLY FOR THE ACTION TO COME...



One day in the jungle... swinging on a vine... Harry finds a jewel... That opens a gate... Where this fiend lives.. Wielding evil magic... So in Harry dives...

INDIANA ACTION

HARRY'S MOVES ARE LIMITED, BUT EFFECTIVE FOR THIS KIND OF GAME.



[ABOVE] WHAT WOULD *PITFALL 3-D* BE WITHOUT OUR HERO EMULATING TARZAN.



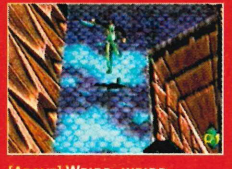
[ABOVE] HE LEAPS LIKE A SALMON, SOMETIMES HE CAN USE SPRING-BOARDS TOO.



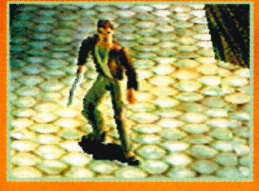
[ABOVE] A FISTICUFFS WITH SCORPIONS, HUGE APES AND BOSSES IS NEVER FAR AWAY.



[ABOVE] LEARN TO DODGE AROUND THESE HUGE PADDLES TO GAIN BONUS CRYSTALS.



[ABOVE] WEIRD, WEIRD, WEIRD. FLOAT OVER THIS GLOWING STUFF FOR EVEN BETTER BONUSES.





[ABOVE] If you can't stand the heat...yowch! That steam burns!



[ABOVE] Floating platforms make up a big part of the game. Learn to wait and time your jumps.

and on the third level, you must activate a number of light bridges to open the gate. The secondary goal is as simple as Dougal from *Father Ted* – collect as many power-ups (proximity mines, grenades etc.), free lives and treasure as possible.

THIS IS THE PITS!

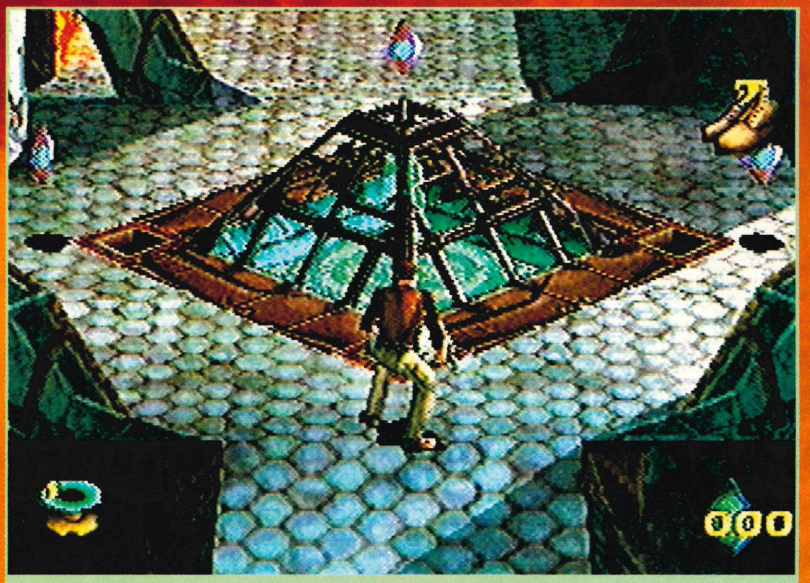
Graphically, *Pitfall 3-D* is disappointing, consisting of uninspired backdrops and adequately animated enemies. You can



[ABOVE] Restart points are plentiful and crucial to reach the end of each stage.



[ABOVE] These giant ape-like creatures are a real nuisance, deal with them with your trusty pick axe.

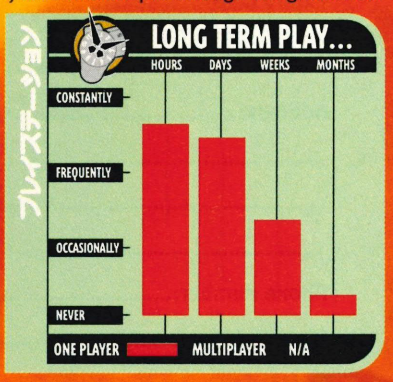


[ABOVE] On level two you must discover the whereabouts of four Orb Keys, which when discovered will open up the gate to the next level.



interact with certain background features with your trusty pick axe, but hacking away at the scenery is limited to revealing crystals and the odd power-ups only. One inspirational feature is the two-way rope-swings, where you can swing from side to side and in and out of the screen ensuring true 3-D gameplay. The learning curve is just about right, slowly introducing new aspects to the game to the player all the time (ducking, spring-board jumping and watching for the shadows of falling rocks to name but a few), but come level four your skills are put through the grinder as platforms begin to crumble and enemies become more vicious.

Although Activision hasn't managed to do justice to the *Pitfall* name, it's still produced a challenging and occasionally novel platformer that purists of the genre will warm to. Stand it alongside *TR II* though and the weaknesses are apparent for all to see.



"Solid gameplay, with good ideas thrown in to mix up the action..."

PLAY

LOOKS	8
SOUNDS	8
GAMEPLAY	8
VALUE	8
SNAKES	8

PLAYED **70%**

Above average 3-D platform romp

ALTERNATIVELY:
TOMB RAIDER II (95%)
ONE (86%)

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IZNOGOUD

BE AWARE, THE BEST GAME IN THE WORLD COULD PROBABLY GET AWAY WITH A TITLE LIKE THIS, A BAD GAME COULDN'T, AND DOESN'T!

At first, this game sounds like a lyric from the old Shamen song ("Eezer good"), but however annoying that turned out to be, it could never compare with this exceedingly lame platform affair.

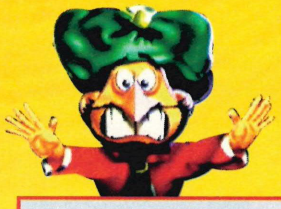
PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Microids
Customer support: LDA Distribution 01525 852900
Price: £39.99
Release date: Out now

ONE PLAYER

Let us just say that this game is aimed primarily at youngsters, but this claim is hampered somewhat by the daft plot in which Iznogoud declares "I want to be Sultan instead of *the Sultan!*" whatever that means. What *Iznogoud* consists of is the most dated-looking platform action imaginable. It looks laughable alongside the modern-day platform cream, such as *Gex 3-D*. You play the comical lead role who must stride through colourful 2-D levels collecting bonus items and weapons to hurl at the rampaging onslaught of Arabs, animals and just about anything else that sprung to the programmer's mind when they churned out this drivel.

"Tantamount to commercial suicide."





[ABOVE] *Iznogoud* – even Sinclair Spectrum games are better than this sad effort.

(NO) EASTERN PROMISE

The task is to get from 'A' to 'B' within the time allocated, but this isn't as straightforward as it sounds because doors must be opened using concealed switches and at the end of each level there is a slightly bigger foe to dispose of.

Graphically, *Iznogoud* closely resembles *Asterix* on the Super NES which is bad because that looked tired and dated back in 1993! To release a game that looks this atrocious in this day and age seems tantamount to commercial suicide.

The fact that it is aimed at kids makes it worse. We at PLAY have never agreed with the principle of releasing rubbish games and saying that they're aimed at kids – it was tried in the 16-bit days with turds like *Beethoven* and *Home Alone*. Kids want to play *Tekken 2*, *Gran Turismo* and any other 'grown up' game, they don't want to be patronised with this low grade offal; the very mention of which would probably cause them to get a severe thrashing in the playground!



[ABOVE] Your gold is counted at the end of each level, if you haven't got enough, you get clouted!

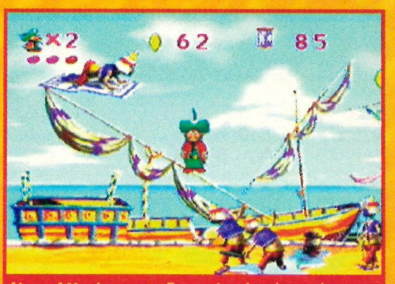


[ABOVE] The third level takes place under the ocean with perhaps the worst control method ever utilised in such a scene. Your progress is hampered by numerous hostile fish.





[ABOVE] Can Iznogoud hold his breath long enough to defeat the dastardly mer-man? Who cares!



[ABOVE] Magic carpets fly overhead and swordsmen scamper by below. It's a hectic life being a Sultan.

As a game, *Iznogoud* contains more clichés than a Carla Lane comedy. It has the old obligatory underwater levels, the bouncy canopies and the bottom-bounce to kill things, although this is no way near as effective as the tossing of coins to pick them off from a safe distance. The only aspect even remotely tolerable is the sound – which is a full-on clatter of zany effects, although the techno garbage in the background is best forgotten!

Durge like this should have died with the dinosaurs and there is certainly no place for it on PlayStation. We can think of no reason why anyone should have to endure the same misery that we went through reviewing it, so stay well clear. *Iznogoud*? Perhaps it's meant to be ironic, but the clue is in the title!

PLAY

LOOKS	●●●○○○○○○○
SOUNDS	●●●●○○○○○○
GAMEPLAY	●●○○○○○○○○
VALUE	●●●○○○○○○○
SULTANS	●●●●●○○○○○

PLAYED 34%

An exceptionally bad platformer

ALTERNATIVELY:
SKULL MONKEYS (83%)
CRASH BANDICOOT 2 (86%)

Written By Ryan Butt

CHILL

THE SPORT OF THE HOUR IS INSPIRING CODERS LIKE THERE'S NO TOMORROW, BUT THERE CAN BE ONLY ONE, AS THEY SAY!



[Above] Who needs a car in this day and age! Trix does a spot of shopping in town.

Written By Ryan Butt

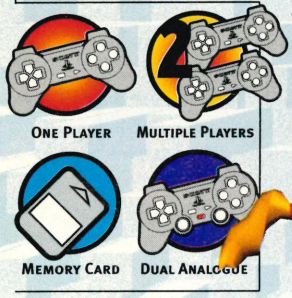
Hark! Another snowboarding game that hopes to capitalise on the trendy sport and send pulses racing. But is this worthy enough to snort the same line of snow as *Cool Boarders 2*, or will it be vanquished to the sludge in the gutter?

First impressions of *Chill* were not good. It didn't have the speed or smoothness of *Cool Boarders 2* – its main competitor, and a game we've been playing rather a lot of late. However, prolonged play reveals some nice touches that would have been tremendous if the game engine was better implemented. These touches included jumping onto chalet roofs from a great height and then propelling yourself back off, and the way you can rail slide along stationary logs. To cap it all, you can even perform a kamikaze leap from one mountain, and then you release a parachute and glide down to target landing zones like *Pilot Wings*! There are four characters to choose from – two blokes and two lasses, although the differences aren't significantly apparent, other than the tone of the 'yelp' which they emit when colliding with the vast array of hazards that litter these treacherous alpine slopes.

"Just a passing shower of sleet!"

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Eidos
Customer support: 0181 636 3000
Price: £44.99
Release date: April '98





ROUTE ONE

Perhaps the best aspect of *Chill*, and the way it differs mostly from *Cool Boarders 2*, is the multiple routes down the mountains. Although this isn't dramatic enough to enable you to go anywhere you want, the slopes do split occasionally to allow players the choice of which path to take. Of course, there is a time limit to comply with, and the main aim is to find the quickest route down the piste and shatter the previous records.

Like *Cool Boarders 2*, there are a multitude of crowd-pleasing stunts to master, but stringing them together for extra points is harder in this game and not half as satisfying. The two player split screen game is a worthwhile addition and helps to bump-up the life-span somewhat, but again this isn't as good as the opposition. *Chill* would be a descent game if it wasn't let down badly by the jerkiness of each descent. The graphics are remarkable by any means, but the small sprites would be forgiven if the whole thing moved at a fair pace and was smooth.

Sadly, *Chill* is neither fast nor smooth, and apart from the atmospheric clubby soundtrack, there is little else good about.

If you're after a snowboarding game that fully captures the true thrills and chilly rushes of the sport, then this doesn't deliver. Unfortunately for *Chill*, *Cool Boarders 2* steals all the thunder, leaving this little more than a passing shower of sleet.

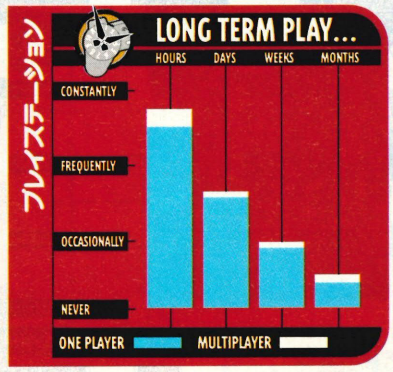


[Above] After speeding off a mountain top, you switch to free-fall mode to try and land safely.

COOL BOARDERS

EACH OF THE FOUR CHARACTERS FAVOUR THEIR OWN FASHION IDEAS, AS WE CAN SEE HERE...





PLAY

LOOKS	6
SOUNDS	7
GAMEPLAY	5
VALUE	5
SLOPES	6

PLAYED 56%

Taking the cool from the boarders!

ALTERNATIVELY:
COOL BOARDERS 2 (81%)
NAGANO WINTER OLYMPICS (83%)

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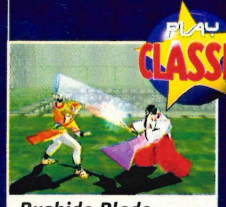


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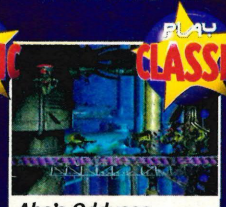
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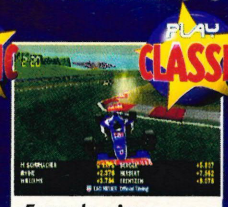
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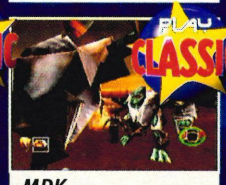
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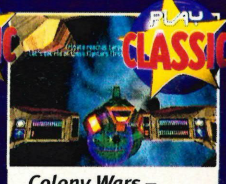
MDK – rated 90% in PLAY!



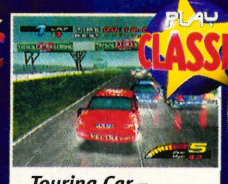
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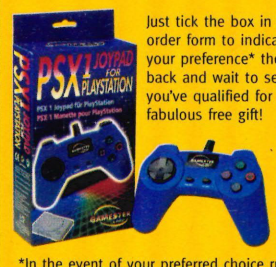
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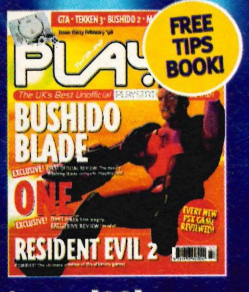
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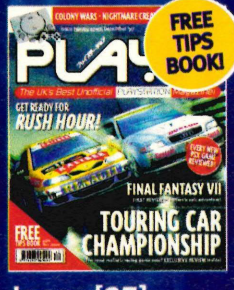
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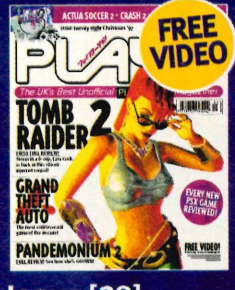
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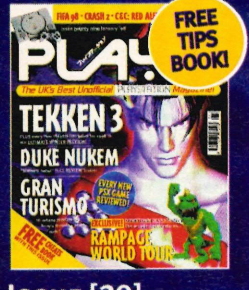
ISSUE [30]
Exclusive first review of *Bushido Blade*, plus *Resident Evil 2*, *Foraken*, *Rascal*, *One*, and *GTA!*



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



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



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

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X-MEN

CHILDREN OF THE ATOM

CAPCOM 2-D BEAT-'EM-UPS MATURE WITH AGE. THIS ONE'S AN OLDIE, BUT IS IT A GOLDIE?

Written By Tom Sargent

Fact: Capcom

is the master of the 2-D beat-em-up. For almost a decade it has fine-tuned and tweaked the same game engine to perfection. A couple of months ago the PLAY team were lucky enough to play the superb *Marvel Super Heroes* (a later evolution of the model), but *X-Men: Children Of The Atom* (*COTA*), although much older is still a pretty good game regardless.

In a typically apocalyptic scenario, Earth is in danger of falling to the despotic super mutant Magneto and his band of cronies known as the Acolytes. At the end of the day, the storyline matters not a jot, because you can play as either one of the X-Men or the Acolytes. What *does* matter is the one or two player 2-D action, which looks almost identical to any of the *Street Fighter* games on PlayStation. Each of the ten mutants are identical to their comic-book counterparts and move smoothly throughout, but when some of the super-moves are executed, the screen does slow down somewhat.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Acclaim
Customer support: 0171 344 5000
Price: £39.99
Release date: Out Now

ONE PLAYER | MULTIPLE PLAYERS | MEMORY CARD





[ABOVE] The use of colour is exquisite throughout, and some of the characters, such as Sentinel are pretty huge.

ATOMIC

Graphically, *COTA* is arcade perfect, which isn't that amazing as the coin-chomping version is getting on for three years old. There are four modes of play: One Player, where each stage has three rounds. Versus, where player can either battle against each other or can play with the same fighter. Survival mode (randomly chosen opponents are thrown at you in a set of one round win-or-lose scraps). And Group Battle mode where each player selects from one of five fighters for elimination matches. There are hundreds of offensive moves, special attacks and energy sapping X-Moves as well as full auto-blocking, interactive backgrounds, and digitised voice-overs by actors from the animated series. Each character also has a three level power meter that builds up as more hits are dished out.

COTA is still fun to play and looks crisp, but is by no means the best in Capcom's extensive repertoire.

"Graphically, *X-Men* is arcade perfect..."

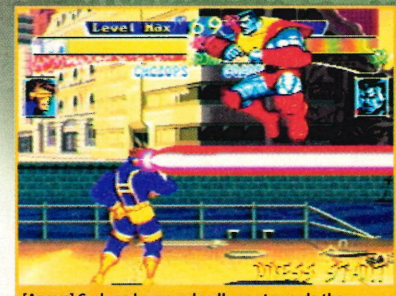


[ABOVE] Iceman can hurl huge lumps of ice at his opponents. Here's one he made earlier.





[ABOVE] Colossus may not be the quickest mutant on the block, but he sure packs a punch.



[ABOVE] Cyclops burns a deadly ray towards the retreating Colossus. He's one of the best all-rounders.

PLAY

LOOKS	7
SOUNDS	7
GAMEPLAY	8
VALUE	7
COMBOS	8

PLAYED 78%

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MARVEL SUPER HEROES (87%)
STREET FIGHTER ALPHA (93%)

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NEWMAN HAAS

IN THE GAP BETWEEN FORMULA ONE SEASONS, OUR ATTENTIONS TURN TO THE MOTORSPORTS OF THEM FOREIGNERS. INDYCAR SEEMS LIKE THE NEXT BEST THING!

Written By Graeme Nicholson

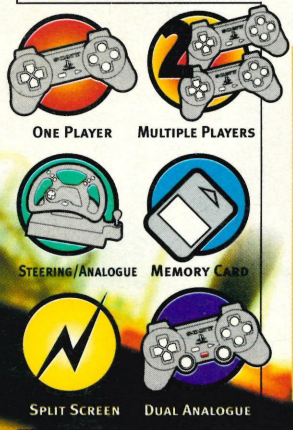
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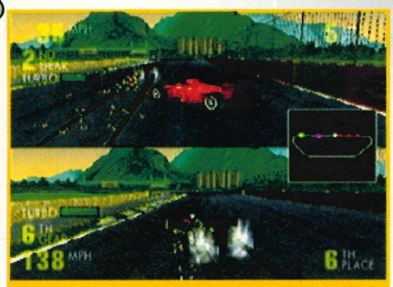
about Indycar, you know. Thanks to the famous Indy 500 race where cars reach speeds of 230 miles per hour but do little else, the sport has a reputation for being unbearably dull. Why would anyone want to spend hours on end speeding around an oval, gradually overtaking other cars, let alone pay £45 to simulate it on their PlayStation? But of the 14 tracks to be found in *Newman Haas Racing*, only two could be described as ovals, and the rest are no more basic than most F1 tracks.

As you may well be able to tell from the screenshots, *Newman Haas* is not constructed entirely from new parts, and bears a striking resemblance to both Psygnosis' *Formula One* games. That's because Studio 33 – developer of *Newman Haas* – is also working with Psygnosis and was given access to the *Formula One* software engine to start its project off.

PLAY INFORMATION

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





[ABOVE] There are only six cars on the track in split screen, but that doesn't make ramming your damaged mate any less enjoyable!



[ABOVE] The flip-back view is easy to do during a race, and most of the cars look smart from this angle. You can even read the advertising graphics.



PACE CAR

There have been numerous changes made to this engine to make *Newman Haas* a game of its own though, but on the face of it the result is something that looks very like *Formula One*, but plays quite differently. Like *F1*, car detail is high, so you can instantly recognise the teams once you learn who's who in a championship. But control of your vehicle is completely different. No matter which of the 16 cars you choose to drive, *Newman Haas* is fiercely responsive. Just tap the pad to the left and the car will immediately lurch off to the side as if an irate member of the audience has lobbed a brick through your visor!

Even with the Dual Analogue Pad, after calibration and re-calibration, it's just too responsive. Using graduated steering you should be able to hold the exact angle of a shallow curve, but it is impossible to do without heading for the grass.

RACING



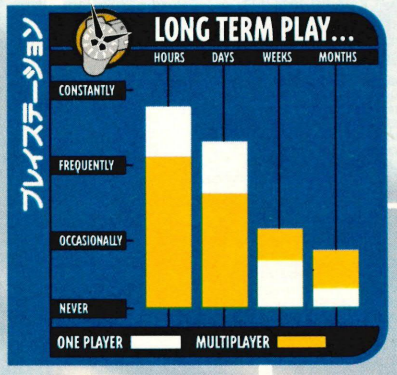
[Above] Something many more racing games could do with is a working pit team. There's no chance of running these guys over though.



[Above] The street track in Houston, Texas is the Monaco of *Newman Haas* – heavily built up and full of tight corners. Expect many wrong turns at first.



[Above] Psygnosis has somehow managed to work its own team in there, complete with the owl art and company logo. Don't remember this from TV...



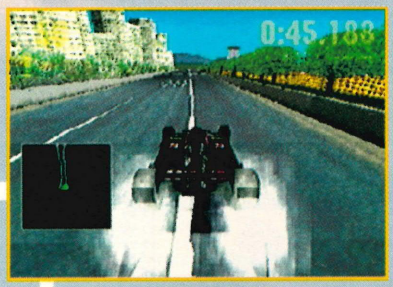
"When you lose because of the dodgy controls, you'll break something!"



Newman Haas lets itself down on a number of points like this. Again and again you will find good ideas spoiled by niggling problems. For example, there are five views – but no nosecone camera. Car parts break off and spark – but the camera abruptly zooms out with the tiniest amount of contact. There is even a cockpit view – but it's the ugliest you've seen.



[Above] Indycars are built differently. Instead of just the front wing, you can usually snap off the whole nose cone!



There are wing mirrors – but they don't reflect the track, scenery or sky. And although it's Dual Analogue compatible, you can't configure the buttons, so you're forced to let go of the right thumbstick (accelerate/brake) to toggle the turbo on or off with the Triangle button, when assigning this to R3 (from depressing the right thumbstick) would make competitive driving much easier.

BLACK FLAG

Newman Haas does have some good features which are left unspoiled, like a pit crew that you can watch remove and replace your tyres, and a menu which allows you to radio ahead your demands to them, from fuel load to tyre pressure. Accept that you're not going to have perfect steering control over the car and you will even start to have some fun. After all, the tracks are fast, you can tune everything on the cars, and the split screen mode is OK. But sooner or later, you're going to want to try a championship and when you lose because of the dodgy controls again, you'll break something.

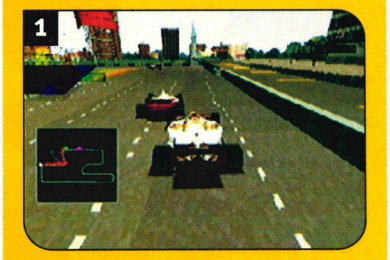


REALITY BITES

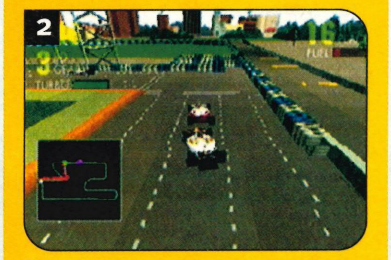
There are four tracks invented specially for *Newman Haas*, as well as ten real-life Indycar circuits. By far the most fun is the Portland, Ohio course which has just the right blend of fast straights and long scary bends!

LOOKS CAN KILL

If you even just touch another car, *Newman Haas* has the annoying habit of zooming the camera a hundred feet in the air while you try to regain control. The sudden change makes it much harder to drive straight, and there's no way to override this or even use the look behind feature while it happens.



Oops, you've just scratched the car in front. No matter, everything's under...



Aieee! You're heading for a sharp corner but the camera's 'wooshed' into the sky!



Attempting to take a right-angled turn in this view, you've careered into the boards.

PLAY

Looks	8
Sounds	7
Gameplay	5
Value	3
Gasoline	8

PLAYED 74%

Why buy this when *F1 '97* is better?

Alternatively:
Formula 1 '97 (90%)
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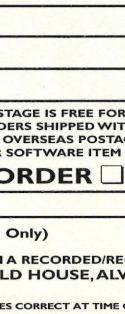
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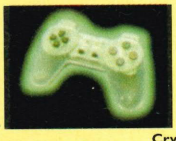


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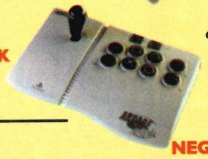


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WARHAMMER DARK OMEN

IF YOU'RE A FIRST TIME STRATEGIST WITH A THIRST FOR MEDIEVAL SLAUGHTER ON AN EPIC SCALE, DARK OMEN DELIVERS THE GOODS...

Written By Tom Sargent

As everybody knows, the PlayStation is proving its worth (and then some) in every gaming genre, and none more so than in the recent spate of pseudo 3-D real-time action/strategy games. The two *Command and Conquer* titles, *Warcraft II* and even the first *Warhammer* game are prime examples of how popular PC conversions have become on the PlayStation.

Warhammer: Dark Omen is part of the best-selling Fantasy Battle system developed by the now legendary Games Workshop, and is a vast improvement on the first one. In a nutshell, you play Commander of a mercenary army facing a sinister plot to overthrow the Empire a swarm of Undead soldiers and Goblins engulfs your homelands. At your disposal are Cavalry, Archers, Cannons and Infantry, but as you win battles and increase your stash of gold, there's ample opportunity to commission outside help from powerful allies. Gameplay has remained largely untouched, but thankfully the general accessibility of the game is considerably improved. For example, the user interface has been dramatically simplified. To control units, simply click on one of your banners and move it to a new location or onto one of the enemies. Simple, but effective, and now units that aren't even on screen can be moved too.

PLAY INFORMATION



Publisher: Electronic Arts
Customer support: 01753 549442
Price: £44.99
Release date: April '98


ONE PLAYER


MEMORY CARD


MOUSE




[ABOVE] Your units (banners outlined in green) swarm upon the legions of the Undead (outlined in red).


[ABOVE] As the Henry VIII look-alike makes a speech, the opposing armies face-off for a scrap.

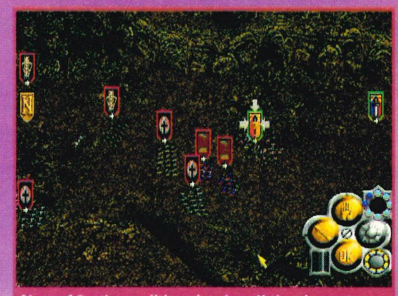
SLAUGHTER

Another, more visual treat is the silky-smooth forced perspective 3-D map, with undulating hills, waterfalls and buildings scattered around to be put to strategic use. It's a shame that these can't be used for more practical purposes other than short-term cover for your units, but they certainly enhance the look of the landscape.

Dark Omen is great fun to play, but it's also pretty difficult. To survive the goblin/Undead onslaught of later levels, keeping all of your units alive is absolutely crucial, because there's never quite enough gold to replace them all. Although the units themselves don't look particularly good, incursions with the enemy hoards are dramatically done – men scream, swords clash and bodies fly everywhere under the hooves of your cavalry charges.

The difficulty level is spot on and before long conflicts reach epic proportions. As different strategies are required to defeat Goblin and Undead grunts, you should be hacking away well into the early hours. Great fun for novices and hard-core strategists alike.




[ABOVE] Battle conditions involve all the elements plus quite a few night time incursions.


[ABOVE] The odds are heavily against your brave warriors. Just look at all those enemy banners on the left. Run for the hills!


[ABOVE] Reaching high ground can be crucial if you want to gain the upper hand for Archers.

"*Dark Omen* is a vast improvement over the first game..."

PLAY

LOOKS	8
SOUNDS	9
GAMEPLAY	9
VALUE	8
CORPSES	9

PLAYED 85%

Polished action/strategy simulation

ALTERNATIVELY:
WARHAMMER: SOTHR (82%)
WARCRAFT 2: THE DARK SAGA (86%)

THE LAST REPORT

RAZOR-EDGE SUSPENSE, RELENTLESS INTRIGUE AND MERCILESS ACTION IS WHAT WE'RE PROMISED IN THIS FRENCH RPG, BUT WHAT WE GET IS ANOTHER THING ALTOGETHER!

This reviewer can't quite remember the last game that has physically sent him to the brink of a glorious snooze, but *The Last Report*, if nothing else, takes this accolade!

This is supposedly a classic crime story where you play a Channel Z hack by the name of Daniel Singer. Dan's ex winds up on a mortuary slab and the reporter is drawn into a corrupt and treacherous underworld in a desperate bid to bring her killers to justice.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Microids
Customer support: LDA Distribution 01525 852900
Price: £39.99
Release date: Out now

ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD

"A worthless, shoddy pile of pizzle – it's just awful!"

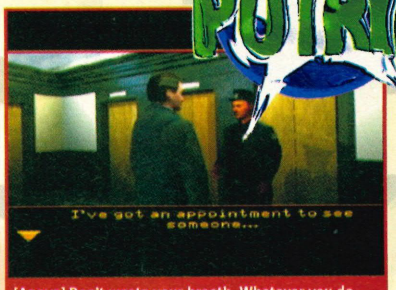
LOOPS OF FURY

So begins an extremely dull point and click adventure which plods along at a snail's pace and is so repetitive you'll be forced to the verge of snapping the CD in half!

Last Report has all of the usual adventure elements – items to pick-up, numerous pre-set answers to reply to the stupid questions being fired at you, and locations to visit. The main problem with this game though is the fact that is has no recollection of what you've done or where you've been. This was highlighted within five minutes of playing. After trying to gain access to the dead girl's apartment, you're frog-marched down to the station for some mundane interrogation. Upon returning to your home, you hear a message on your answer phone that tells you to go down to the station immediately, so you do. When you get there, you're greeted with the same scenario and dumb questions as before. In fact, the whole game plays on a continuous loop until, by chance, you finally figure out something new to do.



[ABOVE] In your quest to find the killer, you end up having lunch with Edmund Blackadder!



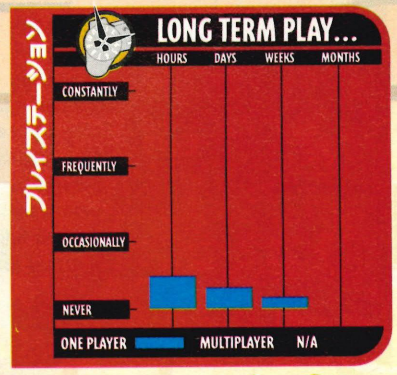
[ABOVE] Don't waste your breath. Whatever you do, this cop will cart you off to the slammer.

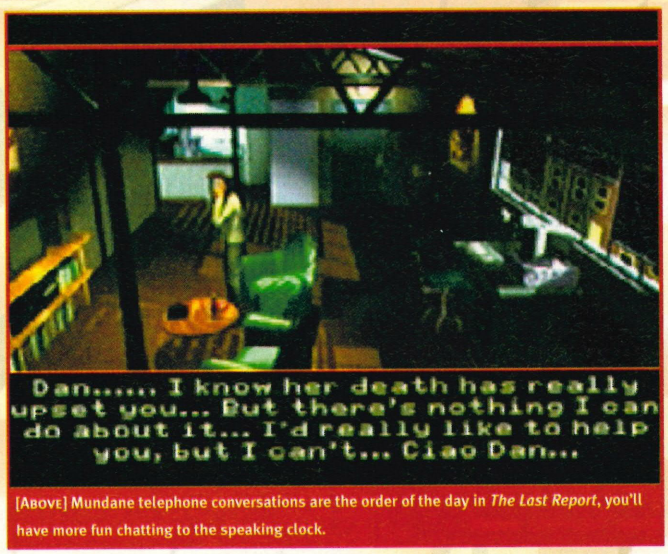
On the box we're promised "superb graphics and brilliant sound" – where exactly? Everything on show here is utter crap. The whole game is played in half the screen for some reason, the locations are basic, badly drawn and dull, as are all of the wooden characters who sound like scratched records. As for the music, well we're talking Seventies porno here!

There is nobody on Earth who deserves such a cruel fate of being stuck in front of this worthless, shoddy pile of pizzle – it's just awful!

Who could it be aimed at? Children? Ha! with limited attention spans at the best of times, you'd be mad to think that they'd happily play through this. Adults? No way, anybody with an ounce of sense would never favour this over tried and tested successes such as *Resident Evil*, *FFVII* and *Broken Sword II*. Homicidal maniacs? Yes, only the criminally insane would torture themselves in this quite appalling manner, and even that's pushing it!

We at PLAY have never had such high contempt of any game. At the end of the day, there is usually some kind of redeeming element that drags it out of the 'Putrid' pile, but with *The Last Report*, there is absolutely nothing at all. This is an all-time low for point and click adventures. *The Last Report*? This should be the Last Resort mate!





[ABOVE] Mundane telephone conversations are the order of the day in *The Last Report*, you'll have more fun chatting to the speaking clock.



[ABOVE] For an update on the goings-on, you can tune in to Undead News on Channel Z presented by Mr Ill!

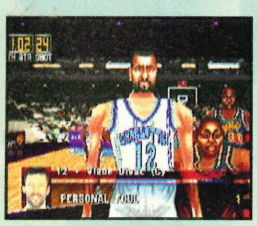
PLAY

LOOKS	●●●○○○○○○○
SOUNDS	●●●○○○○○○○
GAMEPLAY	●●○○○○○○○○
VALUE	●●○○○○○○○○
EXCITEMENT	○○○○○○○○○○

PLAYED 27%

Really, truly bloody awful!

ALTERNATIVELY:
BROKEN SWORD II (90%)
CLOCK TOWER (83%)



NBA PRO '98

NOW YOU CAN SLAM-DUNK, TIP OFF AND SCORE THREE POINTERS WITH THE BEST OF THEM... AGAIN.

Well, another year another basketball game. This time it's the sequel to Konami's *NBA In The Zone*. *NBA Pro '98* has all the usual features: a variety of 'jammin' ways to score, player subs, rapid formation changes and an inspired 'special' button enabling the player under your control to spin and contort like Michael Jordan and avoid the opposition. A special mention must also go to the player graphics, which while only average, manage to look less scary-in-the-face than in other sports games. Gameplay is also solid, with the controls sensibly laid out for both attack and defence alike.

Where the game really shines however, is in the defensive play. Unlike the competition (*Total NBA '97* et al), where the opponents scoring often seems like a forgone conclusion once they're in possession, in *NBA Pro '98* it's nice and easy to steal and block the ball. This results in a really fluid game with players rushing from end to end and any points scored being crucial, especially against human opposition.

Other nice touches include the now standard reflections on the court and some attractive replays, angled just right in a '*Gran Turismo*' sort of way, to make the best of some fairly average graphics.

Give And Take

It's not all good news however. Sometimes the ball can get lost in the excitement on court, resulting in a fast break by the computer that can often result in points scored against you. This combined with some poor character animations, with players floating up to the net, and victory celebrations that look more like a continental 'shrug-of-the-shoulders' gesture and *NBA Pro's* mahogany veneer begins to crack, revealing only chip-board underneath!

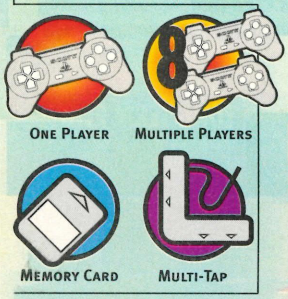
Don't get us wrong, we quite like *NBA Pro '98*, it's just that with all the other basketball games knocking about, it's really hard to get excited with a fairly run-of-the-mill title.

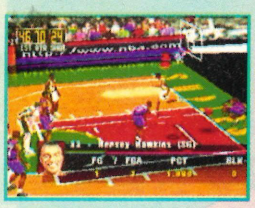
To be fair, Konami has tried to contribute to the genre, adding the ability to just coach your team, subbing players when needed, and altering your formation, but WHAT'S THE POINT?! If this option had been explored enough to give the player more say in the day-to-day running of the team then it would have been good, but it wasn't, and it isn't.

With a few amendments to the game engine, nicer (and more) player animations and a better crowd than the blocky four-frame one used at present, Konami could really be on to a winner here. As it is however, we could only recommend the game to fans of the series (and we believe such beasts do exist) and players who favour a more defensive game. Others are best advised to stick with the seminal *Total NBA '97*.

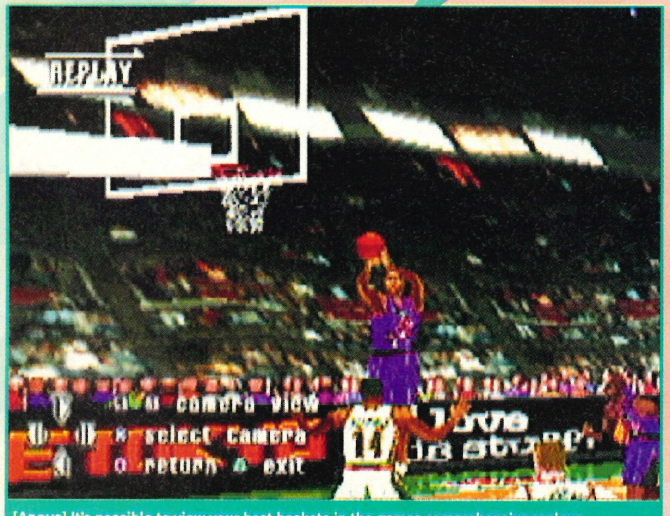
PLAY Information

Publisher: Konami
Customer support: 01895 853000
Price: £44.99
Release date: Out now!





"NBA Pro '98's veneer cracks, revealing chipboard beneath!"



[Above] It's possible to view your best baskets in the games comprehensive replays.

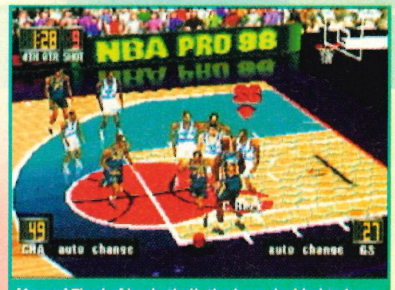


[Above] Those risky three pointers will usually go in if you time it right. And use the right bloke.





[Above] By holding down R2 you can easily alter your formation while you play.



[Above] Tired of basketball, the boys decided to have a game of footy instead.

PLAY

Looks	7
Sounds	7
Gameplay	8
Value	5
Slam Dunks	7

PLAYED 78%

Doesn't stand up to the already fierce competition

Alternatively:
Total NBA '97 (92%)
NBA Live '97 (89%)

Written By Alasdair Evans

100% PlayStation 0% Fair

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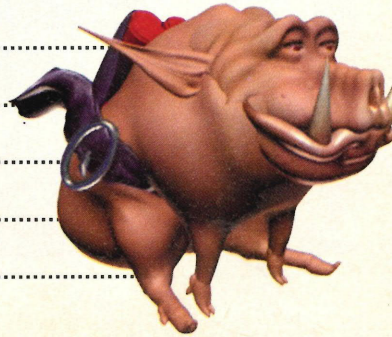
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REBOOT



COUNTDOWN TO CHAOS

CHEAP CARTOON CASH-IN OR SUPERLATIVE SURFING SHOOTER? DECIDE WITH THIS DRAMATIC DISCOURSE!

Written By Alasdair Evans

This is the latest game to come snorting from EA's stable and sees you take control of the inspiringly named 'Bob', hero of the computer-animated series that was screened on Children's ITV.

The game, like the series, sees lantern-jawed huge-chested evil doer Megabyte seeking to control the futuristic city – Mainframe. To do this, the spiky-headed git releases 'tears' into the city, which will let viruses into the system and kick serious ass. These aren't any old viruses though. You see (and this is the clever part) *Reboot* is set entirely inside a computer. Wow!

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Customer support: (01753) 549442
Price: £39.99
Release date: April '98

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No Need For Tears

The game starts off in Baudway and you soon discover that your character has got nice intuitive controls as he hovers a foot above the ground on his groovy zipboard. What is soon obvious is that this 'toddlers plaything' is actually extremely responsive, with controls of a similar quality to *Doom*. You are able to strafe left and right, jump, scoot up ramps, reverse and shoot, all with suprising ease.

The game, a 3-D platform shooter, revolves around finding tears and mending them with your glitch, a small sidearm also able to fire grenades, boomerangs and other projectiles. The game consists of geographical puzzles – your character racing against the clock to get to the tears over all manner of ramps, jumps and slopes. The learning curve is just right and you'll lose lives in a trial-and-error experience that is actually great fun. This is helped by the game engine, which reveals a good deal of the surrounding scenery, whilst shifting the high-res action about at a frenetic pace.

Reboot is also extremely varied, each stage offering something new and really adding to the sense of progress. The only problem is that it's too easy. Things don't really get much harder despite the 21 levels and eight bosses that are flung at you. Your enemy for the most part is woefully in-equipped to deal with you. As the tubby fellas close-in, you can't help but feel sorry for them, before despatching them with an automatic flurry of bullets!

There are also annoying moments when the camera zooms in too far making fiddly jumps very tricky, but these niggles are thankfully quite rare thanks to the game's cavernous arenas.

In the short term at least, *Reboot* is great fun. You really feel in control of Bob, and the slick presentation adds to the experience. It's just far too easy and the most varied game in the world holds little after you finish it several times in a week! This is a pity, as *Reboot* was so nearly a golden egg, but ended up tasting of turkey.



[Above] Using the right analogue stick it's possible to view your surroundings from a better angle.



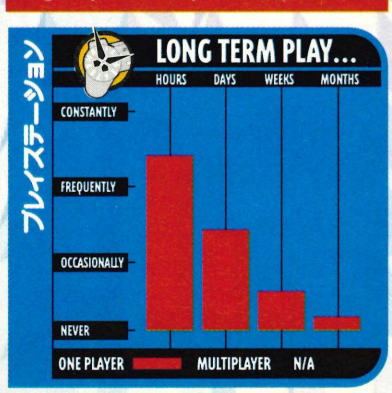
"This toddlers plaything is extremely responsive..."



[Above] By holding down the jump button you can charge the power of the zipboard to leap further.



[Above] It's possible to get up quite high on your zipboard for real airborne action. Here, Bob surveys Baudway from the rooftops.



PLAY

LOOKS	8
SOUNDS	6
GAMEPLAY	7
VALUE	4
ZIPBOARDS	7

PLAYED 68%

Great fun, but only in the short term

ALTERNATIVELY:
JUMPING FLASH 2 (86%)
GHOST IN THE SHELL (MARCH '98)

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BOMBERMAN

THE LITTLE MEN WITH THE BIG BOMBS ARE BACK, THIS TIME ON PLAYSTATION! GET IN ON THE EXPLOSIVE ACTION.

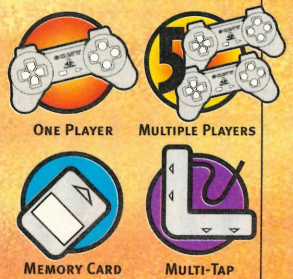
Written By Graeme Nicholson

Can it really be true? *Bomberman*. The most justifiably addictive multiplayer craze to sweep the console world has made it to your favourite system at last – hooray! The little Lego misfit himself has been dropping shiny black cartoon bombs for 13 years but must have been extremely cautious not to appear on today's biggest console until now. The far less successful Nintendo 64 even got its version before us, but luckily we're not the types to bear grudges!

What we ended up with is a colourful update that, owing to its two-dimensional graphics, plays far more like the much-loved Super NES game than *Bomberman 64* ever could. Everything looks instantly familiar so you can get started with the blasting right away. Instead of pretty but confusing 3-D, the battle arenas are viewed in the traditional top-down format, only rotated a few degrees to give you a slight isometric perspective.

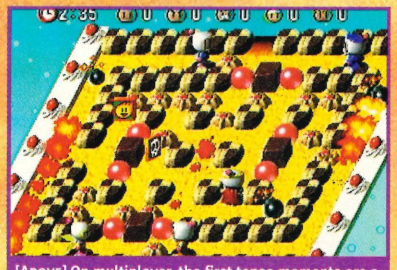
PLAY INFORMATION

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

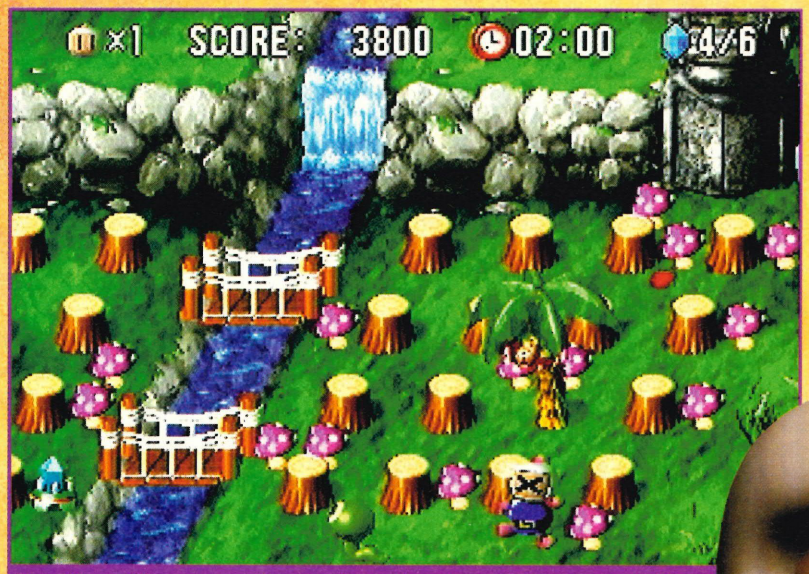


"It'll blow you away!"





[ABOVE] On multiplayer, the first tense moments are a race to pick up the good power-ups before the battle.



[ABOVE] The waddling green caterpillar can swallow bombs, so they regularly catch you out until you get the hang of toasting them.

BLOWN AWAY

The most important element of *Bomberman* on any machine, the reason for its success, is the fast-paced competitive group gameplay. So it is extremely pleasing to find that with a joypad in one port and a Multitap in the other you can have not three, not four, but five players indulging in classic pyromania at one time! Weekends will never be the same again!

Everyone's character starts with the ability to drop a single bomb, which makes a weedy explosion when the fuse burns down. Through laying them next to destructible blocks in the arena (there are always metal blocks that cannot be destroyed) you clear a path for yourself and obtain essential power-ups. Power-ups let you drop multiple bombs, increase blast radius or let you push bombs out of your way to catch out other players or just to keep from being hemmed in and blown to bits.

The frantic battle of nerve, strategy and reflexes is as good as ever in *Bomberman World*, as long as you remember to disable the multiplayer power-ups that give you preposterous capabilities, such as walking through walls and, of all things, a shield. These were never part of the Bomberman we knew and loved, and they damage the gameplay beyond recognition if used. However, sticking to just the old set-up, *Bomberman World* is the most fun you could have in a room with four other men without dramatically changing your lifestyle!

POWDER BURN

If you're considering *Bomberman World* for the single player mode, don't. It's not terrible to play, but



[ABOVE] They're ugly, they're mean, and they're trying to take over the whole of Bomberman World!



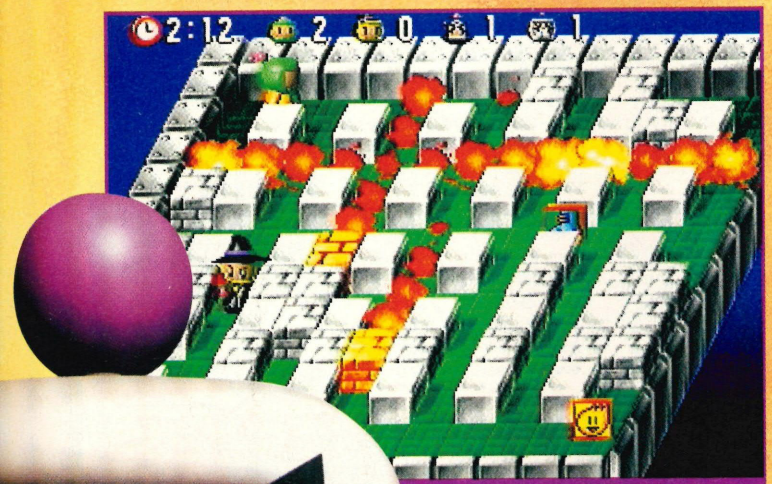
[ABOVE] It's all too easy to make daft mistakes when the time is getting low. Take it easy!

BOMBING TIME

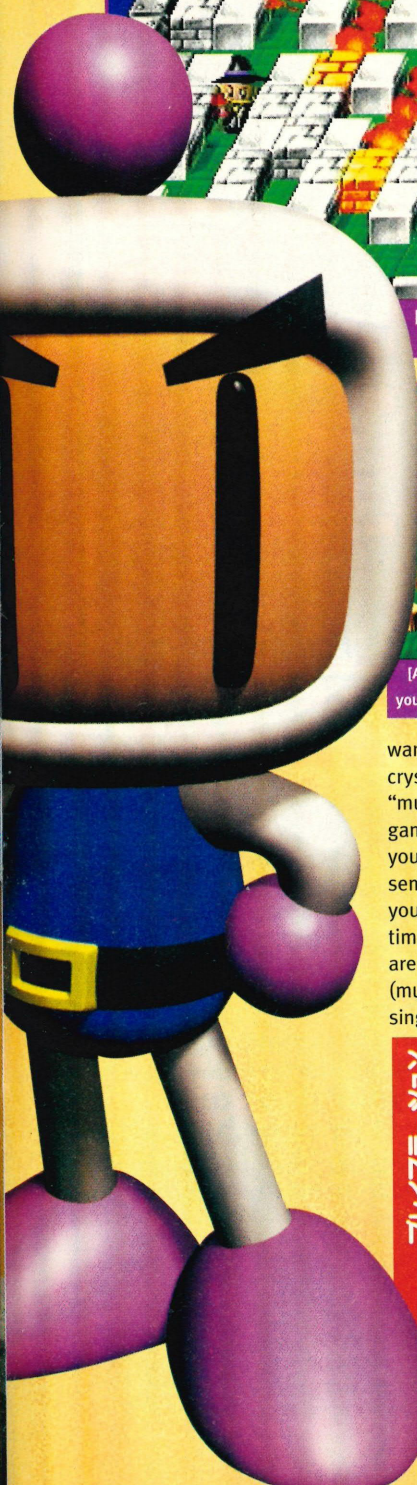
13 YEARS AND EIGHT COMPUTER SYSTEMS LATER, *Bomberman* IS STILL GOING STRONG. WHICH ONES DID YOU HAVE IN YOUR COLLECTION?

1985
Bomberman (NES)
1987
Bomber King (NES)
1990
Bomberman (PC ENGINE)
Bomberboy (GAMEBOY)
1991
Bomberman 2 (NES)
Bomber King 2 (GAMEBOY)
1992
Bomberman '93 (PC ENGINE)
Star Parodier (PC ENGINE)
1993
Battle Lode Runner (PC ENGINE)
Bomberman '94 (PC ENGINE)
Super Bomberman (SNES)
1994
Bomberman GB (GAMEBOY)
Panic Bomber (PC ENGINE)
Super Bomberman 2 (SNES)
1995
Bomberman GB 2 (GAMEBOY)
Panic Bomber (VIRTUALBOY)
Panic Bomber World (SNES)
Super Bomberman 3 (SNES)
1996
Bomberman GB 3 (GAMEBOY)
Bomberman Collection (GAMEBOY)
Bomberman SS (SATURN)
Bomberman B-Daman (SNES)
Same Game (SNES)
Super Bomberman 4 (SNES)
Bomberman SS (SATURN)
Nikobonpikki '96 (SATURN)
1997
Super Bomberman 5 (SNES)
Atomic Bomberman (WIN95)
Saturn Bomberman (SATURN)
Bomberman 64 (N64)
Saturn Bomberman Fight (SATURN)
1998
Bomberman World (PSX)
Bomberman Hero: Queen Milian's Rescue (N64)

WORLD



[Above] Find a safe place behind some blocks before setting off a big chain reaction.





[Above] Ahhh. Isn't it a pwetty picture. Navigate your way towards the evil planet boss with the lovely map, but take plenty of ability enhancements along the way.



[Above] Yes! You've cleared the level and made it to the exit with only seconds to spare.



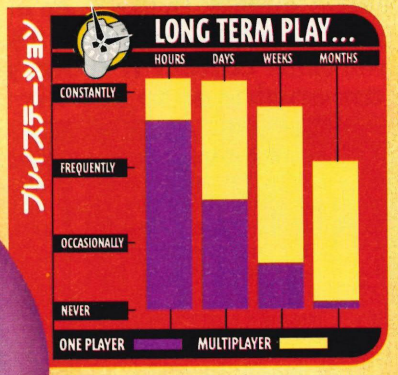
[Above] Destroying this world boss is much easier if you have a load of power-ups from earlier levels.



[Above] A badly placed bomb while trying to catch this enemy could obliterate the power-up there.

wandering around on your own collecting crystals just doesn't compare well to the "must survive" rush of four or five player games. On a quest to save a solar system, you visit five planets each with their own semi-robotic boss. Defeat the boss and you free that planet, but to get to him each time you have to play through three or four arenas that are a few screens wide (multiplayer is always held in a static, single screen arena). As the clock counts down from four minutes, cute bug-eyed creatures mill around the levels – lethal to the touch – lazily guarding the crystals you need to open the door to the next stage. Arrive at the boss, repeatedly box him in with bombs until he gets caught in the flames, then do it all again on the next planet. You're left with a replay value of almost nil, next to potentially endless 'friendlies' between you and your mates.

The one thing missing that would have qualified the substantial cash sum being asked for *Bomberman World* would have been a classic *Bomberman* mode, an exact copy of one of the games from the 16-bit series. Ah well, maybe next time, but it's guaranteed you'll be hooked on the flaming annihilation of these group games until that time comes.



YES & NO

To really appreciate *Bomberman World* in its purest form, there are guidelines to follow when using the included power-up selection screen.

APPROVED

The bomb Each time you pick up one of these, you increase the number of bombs you can drop at once.

Firepower From the beginning, these have boosted the distance your bombs' can reach with their flames. Essential.

Boot Kick bombs, whether they're yours or your enemy's, and make your surroundings safe.

Blue Gloves Not a traditional power-up, but we like them. Grab other players and chuck them across then screen!

DISAPPROVED

Wall Thingy Use this to... walk through solid walls? Get out of here! It's an insult to real *Bomberman* fans.

Heart What, like, for health? That's for girls. Never had it before, don't want it now!

PLAY

Looks	●●●●●●○○○○
Sounds	●●●○○○○○○○
Gameplay	●●●●●●●●○○
Value	●●●●●●●●○○
Fuses	●●●●●●●●○○

PLAYED **85%**

Bomberman will blow you away!

ALTERNATIVELY:
Poy Poy (84%)
Blast Chamber (82%)

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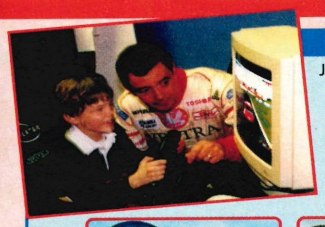
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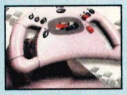
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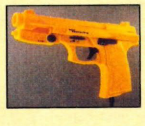
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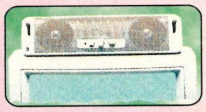
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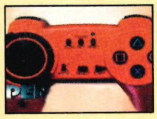


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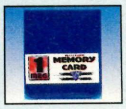
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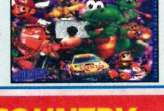


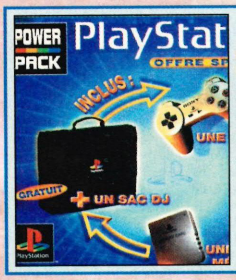
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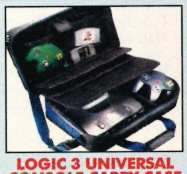
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To assist in choosing the right game for you, we have included review scores from both Play and Playstation Plus, two of the country's leading PSX magazines. We have also tried to categorise the games for you (although some are difficult to categorise!) If you would like advice or more information on a game prior to purchasing, please do not hesitate to ring our sales team who will give a fair and unbiased opinion of the game. Remember, if you don't like it you don't have to keep it so they will always tell you the truth!

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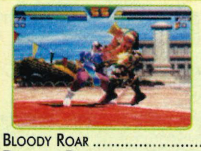

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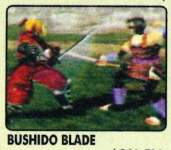


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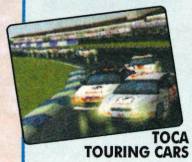
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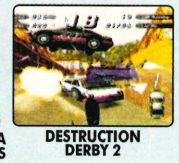

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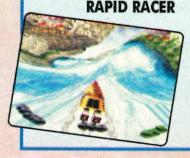

TOCA TOURING CARS


DESTRUCTION DERBY 2

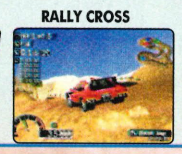

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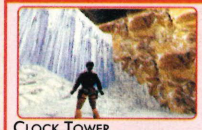
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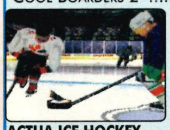
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SPORT



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The best commentary on any sports game ever, coupled with real player names and likeness. It's got to be the football fan's only choice, Brilliant!

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ACTUA ICE HOCKEY


COOL BOARDERS 2


FIFA '98 TRWC

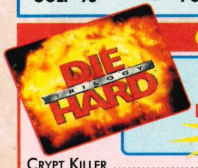
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Tunnel B1	87% PY, 89% PP	£19.99
Wing Commander 4	67% PY, 50% PP	£22.99

PLATFORM

Agent Armstrong	75% PP	£31.99
Bubsy Bobcat 3D	82% PY, 30% PP	£24.99
Casper	65% PY, 62% PP	£25.99
Castlevania - Symphony of the Night	**89% PP**	**£26.99**
Crash Bandicoot	84% PY, 86% PP	£36.99
Crash Bandicoot 2	86% PY, 87% PP	£34.99

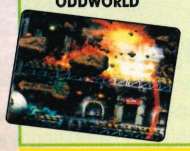

FROGGER


CRASH BANDICOOT 2

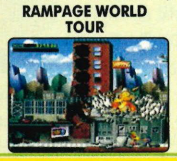

HERCULES

Croc	78% PY, 84% PP	**£30.99**
Earthworm Jim 2	69% PY, 79% PP	£23.99
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Frogger	69% PY, 88% PP	£31.99
Gex 3D	**Due March**	**£33.99**
Hercules	63% PY, 81% PP	£34.99
Iznogoud	N/A	£33.99
Jersey Devil	90% PP	£33.99
Lost Vikings 2	72% PY, 63% PP	£24.99
Lost World: Jurassic Park 2	**79% PY, 81% PP**	**£25.99**
Megaman 8	Due 27th March	£26.99
Megaman X3	82% PY, 81% PP	£24.99
Oddworld: Abe's Oddysey	**90% PY, 91% PP**	**£29.99**
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Swagman	82% PY, 85% PP	£34.99
Trash It	55% PY, 57% PP	£34.99

ODDWORLD



RAMPAGE WORLD TOUR



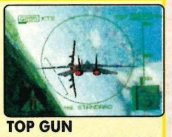
CROC



FLYING


ACE COMBAT 2


NUCLEAR STRIKE


TOP GUN

Ace Combat 2	84% PY, 85% PP	£29.99
Air Combat	81% PY, 65% PP	£17.99
Air Race	68% PY, 76%PP	£29.99
Apache Longbow	Due April	£35.99
Nuclear Strike	**88% PY, 91% PP**	**£26.99**
Soviet Strike	**83% PY, 92% PP**	**£18.99**
Thunderhawk 2	85% PY, 82% PP	£18.99
Top Gun	76% PY, 66% PP	£19.99
Wing Over	50% PY, 40% PP	£35.99

HINT BOOKS

A-Z of PSX Secrets & Solutions	£10.99
Big Playstation Book	£11.99
Final Fantasy 7 Official Guide	**£14.99**
Nuclear Strike Official Guide	£10.99
Oddworld Official Strategy Guide	£10.99
Secrets Strat's & Sol's Vol 2	£15.99
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Tomb Raider 2 Official Guide Book	£10.99

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Atari Greatest Hits	81% PY, 75% PP	£26.99
Atari Greatest Hits 2 (Midway)	Due mid March	£28.99
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-includes Pacman, Pole Position, Galaga, Rally X, New Rally X, Toypop and Bosconian		£36.99
Namco Museum Volume 2	70% PY, 63% PP	
Includes Super Pacman and Xevious		£34.99
Namco Museum Volume 3	73% PY, 71% PP	
-includes MS Pacman, Galaxian & Pole Position 2		£29.99
Namco Museum Volume 4	79% PY, 67% PP	£29.99
Namco Museum Vol 5	75% PP	£29.99
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Spice World (Spice Girls)	N/A	£19.99

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Gameplay has recently started stocking pre-owned games in addition to our new games and we intend to ensure that these are of the highest quality that you will find anywhere.

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- ✔ Extremely competitive prices for buying and selling.

This is how you can sell us a game:

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PL2(4)

PLAY Q&A

STATION

Drop us a line if you're stuck in the smelly stuff and we'll do our darndest to help y'awl. Queries to: *Q&A, Play Magazine, Paragon Publishing Ltd, Paragon House, St. Peter's Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 2JS.*

Dear PLAY,
In the promo video given away in the December issue, there's a dolphin swimming towards some ruins. What game is this from, and also can you tell me what the purpose of the PlayStation's parallel port is? Many thanks.
Kirk Hilton (via E-mail)

The game in question is in fact *Depth*, or at least it was. Sony has retitled it *Fluid* and it is a musical package. The parallel port doesn't really have a use at present, apart from Action Replay cards.

Dear Station Master,
Have you got any codes for *C&C: Red Alert*, 'cos I got it for Christmas and think it's brill.
Andrew Kerby, Dorset

There's a handy cheat mode, Andrew. Click on the 'Teams' button menu with ● (or whichever button is currently configured as 'Cancel'). Next, move the pointer over the following icons on the tool bar and press ● ('Cancel') on each. For an Instant victory press ● when the pointer is over ×, ■, ■, ●, ▲, and ●. For more money press ● when the pointer is over ■, ■, ●, ×, ▲, and ●.

Dear PLAY,
I would like to know if there is a cheat to get all of the keys and gems and be able to get onto any level with invincibility for *Crash Bandicoot*?
Ryan Philips, Scotland

Enter the following sequence at the password screen for access to all 32 levels, all gems, and both keys. After entering the first line, two more lines will appear: ▲, ▲, ▲, ▲, ×, ■, ▲, ▲, ▲, ▲, ■, ×, ▲, ●, ▲, ▲, ▲, l, ■, ▲, ×, ×, ×, ×

HERE IS ANOTHER SELECTION OF MINI CHEATS AND TRICKS. DON'T FORGET TO KEEP SENDING YOUR OWN MATERIAL TO THE USUAL ADDRESS: *STATION MASTER, PLAY MAGAZINE, PARAGON PUBLISHING LTD, PARAGON HOUSE, ST. PETER'S ROAD, BOURNEMOUTH, DORSET BH1 2JS. OR E-MAIL: PLAY@PARAGON.CO.UK*

AUTO DESTRUCT

Press pause during play, then activate the cheat menu. The rest of the cheats will appear on the cheat menu when activated.

New York time trial available
L1, ⇨, ⇩, ⇦, ⇧, R1.

Tokyo time trial available
L1, ⇦, ⇨, R1, ⇦, ⇨, L1.

Subway time trial available
L1, ⇦, L1, R1, ⇨, R1.

Debug menu
⇧, ⇨, ⇦, ⇩, ●, L1, R1. R1, L1, ●, ⇩, ⇦, ⇨, ⇧.

Choose mission
⇧, ⇩, ●, L1, R1, L1, ●, ⇩, ⇧.

Next mission
■, ●, R1, L1, ●, ⇩, L1, ⇧.

Extra nitros
L1, ●, ⇩, L1, ⇧, ■, ●, R1.

All money
L1, R1, ⇧, ●, ⇩, ■, ⇨, R1, L1.

Extra time
Down, L1, L1, ●, ●, R1, ⇧, ■, L1.

Invulnerability
L1, L1, L1, L1, ⇦, ●, ●, ■, L1.

Infinite fuel
L1, ●, ⇦, L1, ●, R1, L1, ⇧, R1, ⇩.

All time trials
R1, L1, ●, ⇦, ●, ●, ⇦, L1, ●.

Car tuneup menu
L1, R1, L1, ⇧, ⇩, ●, ⇩, c, ⇦, ■, R1.

JET MOTO 2

Trophy features
Win a trophy using the indicated racer to enable the corresponding game feature.

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

Hint: Stay at turbo speeds



TOTAL DRIVIN'

All tracks
This game uses an unusual code system in which R1 must be tapped to the rhythm of a particular song at the main options screen. The sound of an engine is heard to confirm correct code entry. Tap the rhythm at different speeds until the code is accepted by the game.

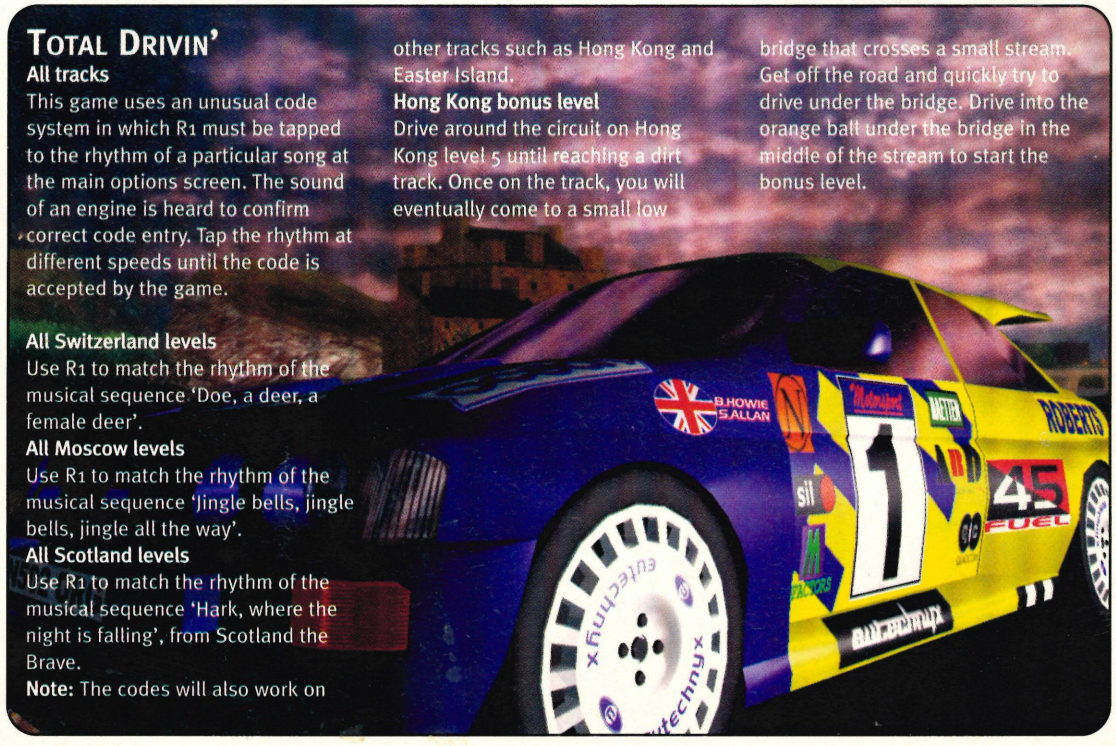
All Switzerland levels
Use R1 to match the rhythm of the musical sequence 'Doe, a deer, a female deer'.

All Moscow levels
Use R1 to match the rhythm of the musical sequence 'Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way'.

All Scotland levels
Use R1 to match the rhythm of the musical sequence 'Hark, where the night is falling', from Scotland the Brave.

Note: The codes will also work on other tracks such as Hong Kong and Easter Island.

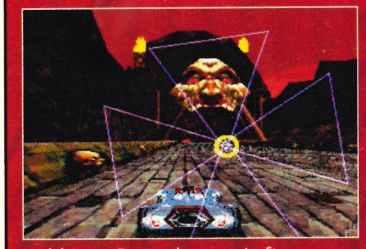
Hong Kong bonus level
Drive around the circuit on Hong Kong level 5 until reaching a dirt track. Once on the track, you will eventually come to a small low bridge that crosses a small stream. Get off the road and quickly try to drive under the bridge. Drive into the orange ball under the bridge in the middle of the stream to start the bonus level.



MASTER

Red Asphalt

Unlimited money



Hold L2 + R2 and press Left (twice), Right (twice), ■ (twice), ● (twice) at the main menu cube. A sound will confirm correct code entry. Note: The ending sequence will be disabled after this code is activated.

Invincibility

Pause game play, then hold R1 + R2 and press ⇧, ⇦, ⇨, ⇩, ▲, ■, ●, ×. A sound will confirm correct code entry. The ending sequence will be disabled after this code is activated.



Keep Triangle held after running out of turbos to keep the speed over 100 mph.

Critical Depth

Play as Abbadon

Complete the game as Agent 326 under the hard difficulty level.

Lay a mine

Hold R2 and press ⇨, ⇦, ⇩. Ensure the controller is in the default configuration.

Play as Mr. Phatt

Complete the game under the medium difficulty level.

Play as Agent 326

Complete the game as Mr. Phatt under the hard difficulty level.

Surface mine

Hold R2 and press Left, Right, Down. Ensure the controller is in default config.

Steel Reign

Invincibility

Press L2, L1, R2, l, n, l (twice), L1, L2, L1 at the main menu.

All tanks

Press L1, L2, L1, ●, ■, ● (twice), L2, L1, R2 at the main menu. All tanks, including a super tank with unlimited weapons, will be selectable.

Bonus level

Press L1, L2, L1, L2, R2, R1, ■, ●, ■ (twice) at the main menu.

Street Fighter Collection

Fight as Special Sakura

Highlight Sakura on the character selection screen and press Start (five times).

Fight as Shin Gouki

Highlight Akuma on the character selection screen and press Start (five times).

Castlevania

Control opening screen

Use the D-pad to alter the opening screen when 'Now Loading' appears.

Bonus music track

Play track two of the game disc in an audio CD player.

Warcraft 2

View FMV sequences:

Enter one of the following passwords from the main menu before game play begins to view the corresponding FMV sequence.

Sequence	Password
Intro sequence	CLMX
Tides Of Darkness introduction	TDPNNG
Tides Of Darkness Human part	2HKHZMD
Tides Of Darkness Human part	3NRTHLN
Tides Of Darkness Human part	4RTNTZR
Tides Of Darkness Human victory	HTDVCT
Tides Of Darkness Orc part	2RCKHZM
Tides Of Darkness Orc part	3QLTHLS
Tides Of Darkness Orc part	4TDSFDR
Tides Of Darkness Orc victory	RCTDVC
Beyond The Dark Portal introduction	DPPNNG
Beyond The Dark Portal Human part	2DRNRTH
Beyond The Dark Portal Human part	3HWRNTH
Beyond The Dark Portal Human part	4HMSRFV
Beyond The Dark Portal Orc part	2BRNNGF
Beyond The Dark Portal Orc part	3RCGRTS
Beyond The Dark Portal Orc part	4PRLDTN
Beyond The Dark Portal Orc victory	RCDPVC



Dear PLAY,
I am stuck in the Glease gallery on *Broken sword 2*. What do you have to do after the critic smashes your pot? Please can you help me.
Simon Wagstaffe, Shrewsbury

After Glease comes over, left click on him. After a short exchange of words, he mentions Oubier, and the pots. Right click on the newspaper clipping and you'll find a bank statement. Scroll left towards the packing cases and left click on the only one showing a target cursor and examine the torn label on it.

Dear PLAY,
In Tomb Raider II (Opera House level), what do you do after putting the circuit board in the panel and hit the right switch?
Joe O'Hara, Co Cork

Flick the switch to raise the curtain at the back of the stage the stage. Make your way down to the stage and shoot the gangster. Go through the revealed doorway and shoot the gangster and dog – best retreat to the pool.

Dear Q&A,
I am stuck on the Living Quarters in *Tomb Raider II*. I have found the theatre key, but I can't find the door that opens it. Please could you help.
Steven Wilson, Lancs.

After picking up the key, climb back up and shoot another guard before going upstairs. Head right down the passage and shoot the guard, then use the key to open the windows.

Dear PLAY,
I'm desperately stuck in *FFVII* in the Temple of the Ancients. I can't get any further and I can't get out. I fear I'm in big trouble.
Costa Smith, Lymington

In the room with the giant clock, you will see 12 rooms along the outer edges. Each one is different, but make sure you go to room VI last as it contains a maze. Here you must catch the bouncing old man by attempting to go into the passage that he plans to come out of. The huge double doors at the top will open, where the Red Dragon must be killed. You should now be able to access the room at the top in the clock room and the Demon's Gate boss. Kill him and you should be on your way.

GRAND THEFT AUTO

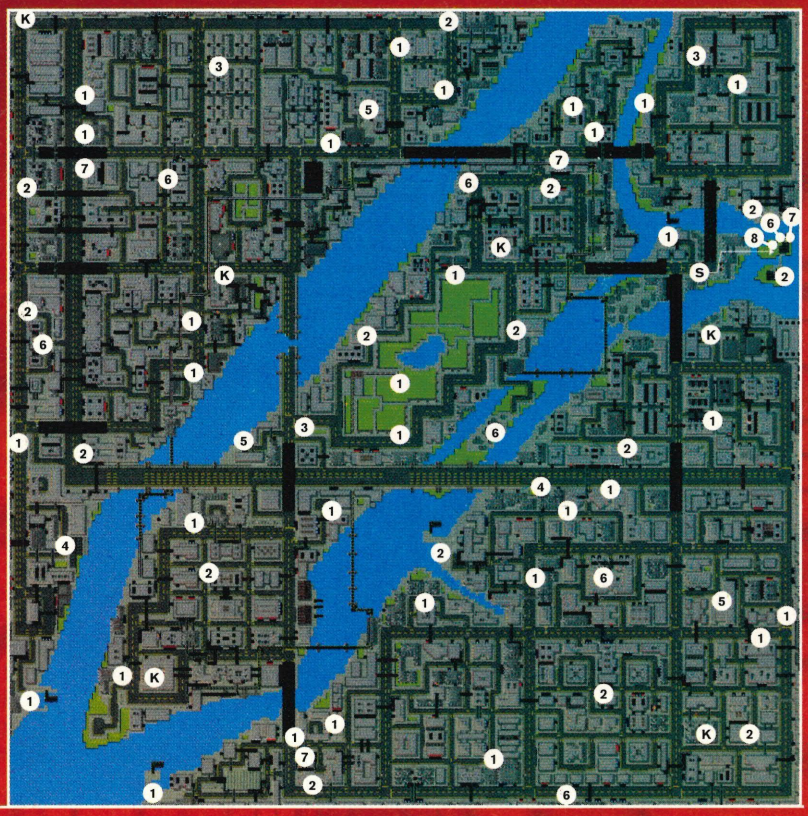
SOLVED

WE FOUGHT THE LAW AND WE WON! WE PRESENT PART ONE OF OUR DEFINITIVE SOLUTION TO BMG'S LEGENDARY CRIM-SIM FOR OUR LAW BREAKING READERS.

LIBERTY CITY: GANGSTA BANG

POWER-UPS & KILL FRENZY POSITIONS

The accompanying map shows the positions of the various power-ups and kill frenzies to be found at the start of the Gangsta Bang level. A limited number of other power-ups are produced after completion of the various tasks in a random manner.



POWER-UPS

1: Pistol
2: Machine Gun
3: Armour
4: Gain Speed
5: Reset Crimes
6: Get out of jail free
7: Extra life
8: Score multiplier up

KILL FRENZIES

K: All Kill Frenzies

SECRETS

S: Pick up motorcycle from here and use it to jump across to the small lands. You will find a number of power-ups here and another motorcycle just in case you trashed the first one.



LIBERTY CITY: HEIST ALMIGHTY

POWER-UPS & KILL FRENZY POSITIONS

The accompanying map shows the positions of the various power-ups and kill frenzies to be found at the start of the Heist Almighty level. A limited number of other power-ups are produced after completion of the various tasks in a random manner.

POWER-UPS

1: Pistol
2: Machine Gun
3: Armour
4: Gain Speed
5: Reset Crimes
6: Get out of jail free
7: Extra life
8: Score multiplier up
9: Rocket Launcher

KILL FRENZIES

K: All Kill Frenzies

SECRETS

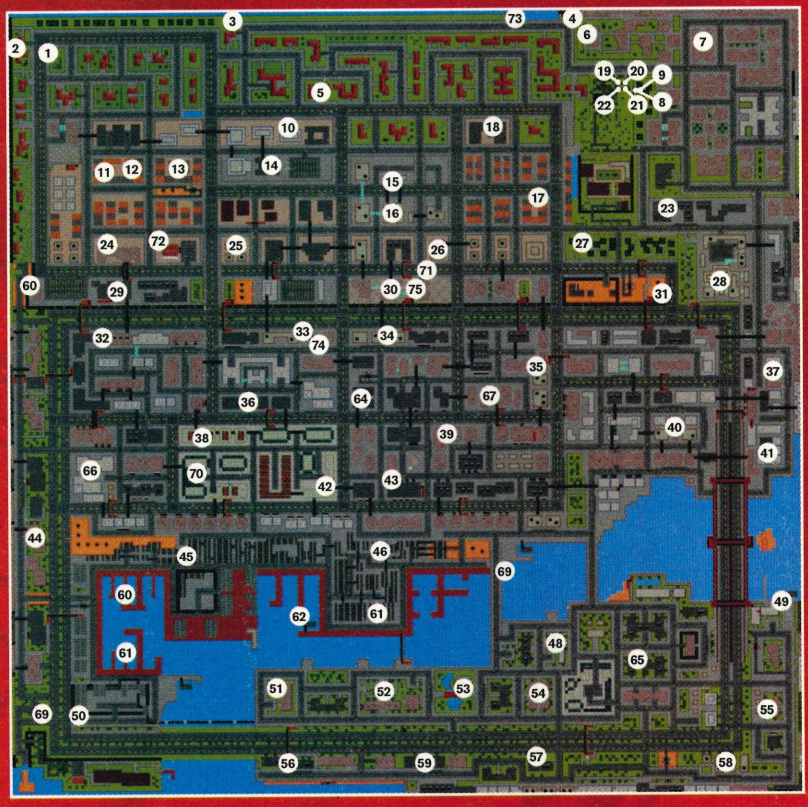
S: Steal the Superbike from here and use it to jump across to the small islands. Careful with the bike as it is very fast and you only get one chance. On the islands you will find a few power-ups including the only rocket launcher in this chapter.

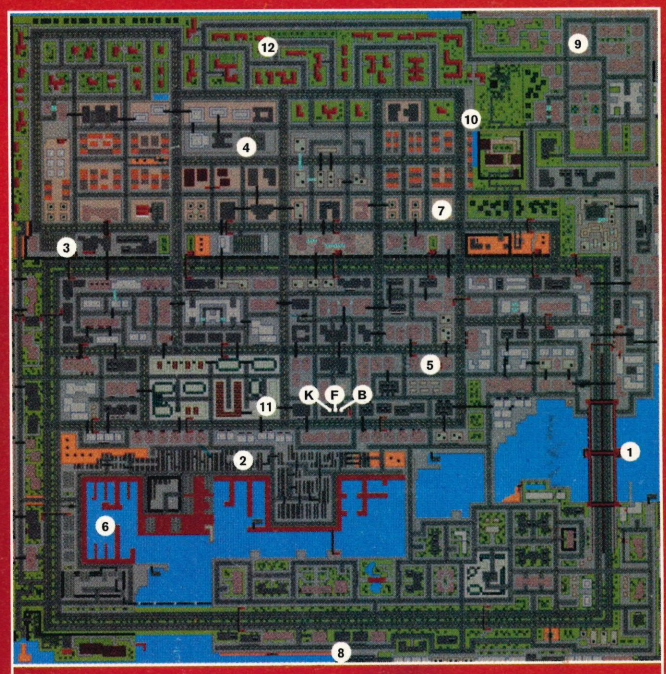


San Andreas: Manderin Mayhem

Power-Ups

There are two sets of payphones in the Mandarin Mayhem level. The first set of power-ups are triggered by the player answering the first set of 'phones. The second load of power-up crates appear when you make it on to the second bank of 'phones and so on. It's a breeze!





Kill Frenzy Power-Ups

1: Tank Kill Frenzy, 2 Minutes To Get $5,000
2: Tank Kill Frenzy, 2 Minutes To Get $10,000
3: Model Cars Kill Frenzy, 2 Minutes To Get $5,000
4: Model Cars Kill Frenzy, 2 Minutes To Get $10,000
5: Flame Thrower Kill Frenzy, 2 Minutes To Get $5,000
6: Flame Thrower Kill Frenzy, 2 Minutes To Get $10,000
7: Flame Thrower Kill Frenzy, 2 Minutes To Get $15,000
8: Rocket Launcher Kill Frenzy, 2 Minutes To Get $5,000
9: Rocket Launcher Kill Frenzy, 2 Minutes To Get $10,000
10- Rocket Launcher Kill Frenzy, 2 Minutes To Get $150,000
11: Jesus Bus Kill Frenzy, 2 Minutes To Get $10,000
12: Monster Truck Kill Frenzy, 2 Minutes To Get $15,000
KFB: This is the bonus for passing all Kill Frenzies

First Multiphones Power-Ups

1: Machine Gun
2: Get Out Of Jail Free
3: Multiplier
4: Machine Gun
5: Armour
6: Machine Gun
7: Get Out Of Jail Free
8: Multiplier
9: Machine Gun
10: Flame Thrower
11: Armour
12: Zero Crime
13: Machine Gun
14: Get Out Of Jail Free
15: Machine Gun
16: Rocket Launcher
17: Machine Gun
18: Machine Gun
19: Armour
20: Zero Crime
21: Machine Gun
22: Machine Gun
23: Multiplier
24: Machine Gun
25: Machine Gun
26: Machine Gun
27: Armour
28: Machine Gun
29: Zero Crime
30: Get Out Of Jail Free
31: Armour
32: Machine Gun
33: Zero Crime
34: Machine Gun
35: Rocket Launcher
36: Machine Gun
37: Multiplier
38: Machine Gun
39: Machine Gun
40: Zero Crime
41: Get Out Of Jail Free
42: Armour
43: Machine Gun
44: Get Out Of Jail Free
45: Zero Crime
46: Machine Gun
47: Flame Thrower
48: Armour
49: Machine Gun
50: Multiplier
51: Machine Gun
52: Zero Crime
53: Rocket Launcher
54: Zero Crime
55: Machine Gun
56: Armour
57: Machine Gun
58: Multiplier
59: Get Out Of Jail Free
60: Machine Gun
61: Flame Thrower
62: Machine Gun
63: Multiplier
64: Machine Gun
65: Zero Crime
66: Machine Gun
67: Get Out Of Jail Free
68: Machine Gun
69: Rocket Launcher
70: Machine Gun
71: Machine Gun
72: Machine Gun
73: Machine Gun
74: Machine Gun
75: Armour

Second Multiphones Power-Ups

1: Rocket Launcher
2: Multiplier
3: Machine Gun
4: Armour
5: Machine Gun
6: Get Out Of Jail Free
7: Multiplier
8: Machine Gun
9: Flame Thrower
10: Armour
11: Zero Crime
12: Machine Gun
13: Armour
14: Machine Gun
15: Rocket Launcher
16: Machine Gun
17: Machine Gun
18: Armour
19: Zero Crime
20: Machine Gun
21: Machine Gun
22: Multiplier
23: Machine Gun
24: Machine Gun
25: Multiplier
26: Armour
27: Machine Gun
28: Flame Thrower
29: Armour
30: Get Out Of Jail Free
31: Armour
32: Get Out Of Jail Free
33: Machine Gun
34: Rocket Launcher
35: Machine Gun
36: Multiplier
37: Machine Gun
38: Machine Gun
39: Zero Crime
40: Zero Crime
41: Armour
42: Machine Gun
43: Flame Thrower
44: Get Out Of Jail Free
45: Zero Crime
46: Machine Gun
47: Rocket Launcher
48: Armour
49: Machine Gun
50: Multiplier
51: Machine Gun
52: Zero Crime
53: Flame Thrower
54: Zero Crime
55: Machine Gun
56: Armour
57: Machine Gun
58: Multiplier
59: Zero Crime
60: Machine Gun
61: Rocket Launcher
62: Machine Gun
63: Multiplier
64: Machine Gun
65: Get Out Of Jail Free
66: Machine Gun
67: Get Out Of Jail Free
68: Machine Gun
69: Armour
70: Get Out Of Jail Free
71: Flame Thrower

Cheat Modes

Enter the following player names to enable various cheat effects.

BSTARD
All weapons, unlimited ammo, level select, 99 lives, armour, get out of jail, coordinate display, maximum wanted level, 5x bonus.

THESHIT
All weapons, unlimited ammo, level select, 99 lives, armour, get out of jail, 5x bonus.

MADEMAN
All weapons, ammo, level select, armour, get out of jail.

GROOVY
All weapons, unlimited ammo, armour, get out of jail.

Maximum Wanted Level
Enter **EATTHIS** as a player name to set the wanted level to four.

Display Coordinates
Enter **BLOWME** as a player name. Don't ask why!

No Police
Enter **CHUFF** as a player name.

All Cities
Enter **TURF** as a player name.

All Cities (1 & 2)
Enter **CAPRICE** as a player name.

City Skip
Enter **WEYHEY** as a player name to instantly collect 9,999,990 points.

Liberty City Level (1 & 2)
Enter **FECK** as a player name.

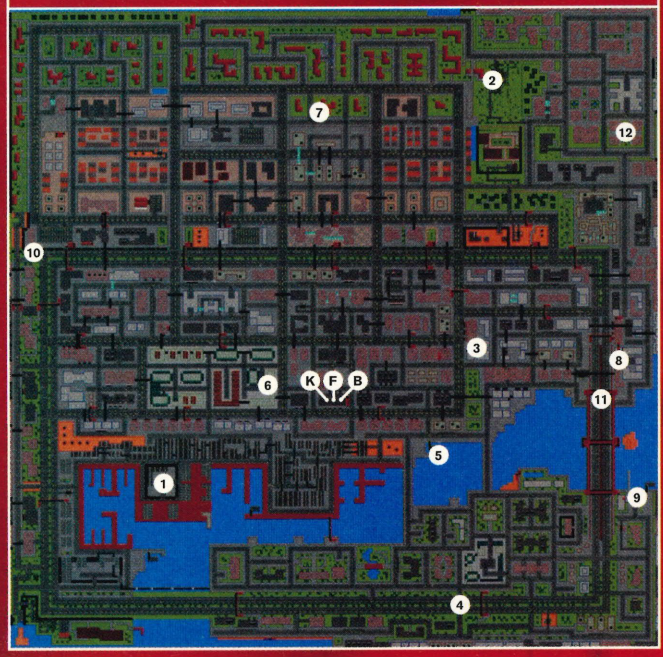
Liberty City (1 & 2) & San Andreas Levels
Enter **TVTAN** as a player name.

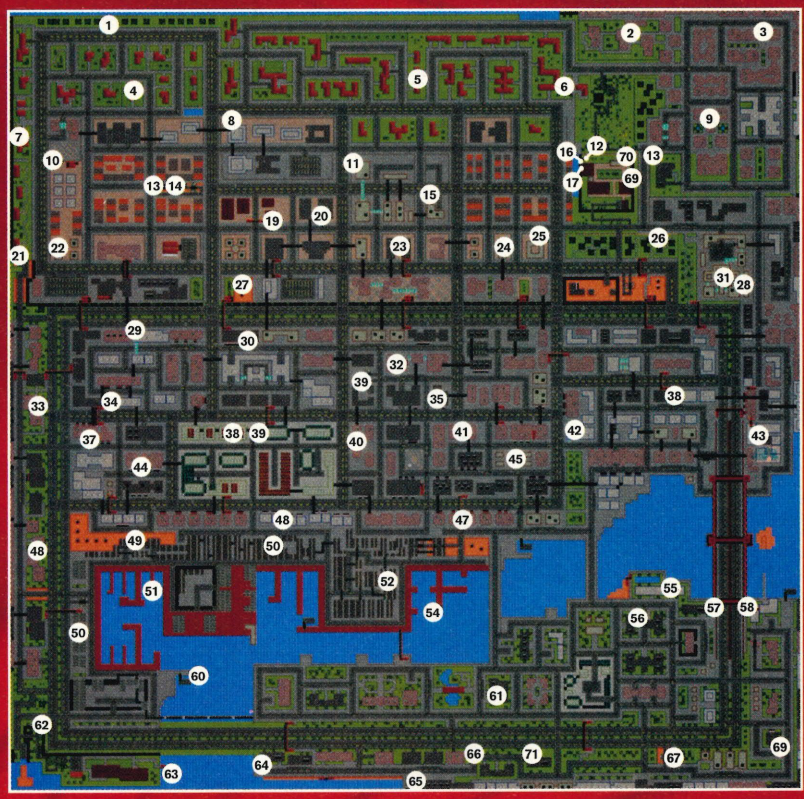
Unknown
Entering **URGE** as a player name appears to be a valid code, but has an unknown effect on the game. If you know what it does, please write in and tell us.

San Andreas: Tequila Slammer

Kill Frenzy Power-Ups

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2: Tank Kill Frenzy, 2 minutes to get $10,000
3: Model Cars Kill Frenzy, 2 minutes to get $5,000
4: Model Cars Kill Frenzy, 2 minutes to get $10,000
5: Flame Thrower Kill Frenzy, 2 minutes to get $5,000
6: Flame Thrower Kill Frenzy, 2 minutes to get $10,000
7: Flame Thrower Kill Frenzy, 2 minutes to get $15,000
8: Rocket Launcher Kill Frenzy, 2 minutes to get $5,000
9: Rocket Launcher Kill Frenzy, 2 minutes to get $10,000
10: Rocket Launcher Kill Frenzy, 2 minutes to get $15,000
11: Jesus Bus Kill Frenzy, 2 minutes to get $10,000
12: Monster Truck Kill Frenzy, 2 minutes to get $15,000
KFB: This is the bonus for passing all Kill Frenzies





Power-Ups

There are two sets of pay phones in this level of San Andreas. Different power-ups appear, depending on the set of phones the player chooses to answer, so take your pick and get stuck in!

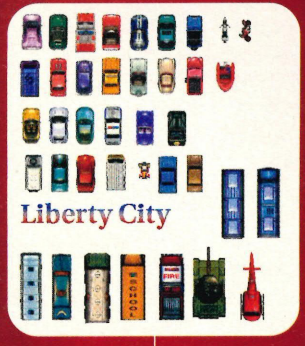
First Multiphones Power-Ups

1: Rocket Launcher
2: Multiplier
3: Machine Gun
4: Armour
5: Machine Gun
6: Get Out Of Jail Free
7: Multiplier
8: Machine Gun
9: Flame Thrower
10: Armour
11: Zero Crime
12: Machine Gun
13: Armour
14: Machine Gun
15: Rocket Launcher
16: Machine Gun
17: Machine Gun
18: Armour
19: Zero Crime
20: Machine Gun
21: Machine Gun
22: Multiplier
23: Machine Gun
24: Machine Gun
25: Multiplier
26: Armour
27: Machine Gun
28: Flame Thrower
29: Armour
30: Get Out Of Jail Free
31: Armour
32: Get Out Of Jail
33: Machine Gun
34: Rocket Launcher
35: Machine Gun
36: Multiplier
37: Machine Gun
38: Machine Gun
39: Zero Crime
40: Zero Crime
41: Armour
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66: Machine Gun
67: Get Out Of Jail Free
68: Machine Gun
69: Armour
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Second Multiphones Power-Ups

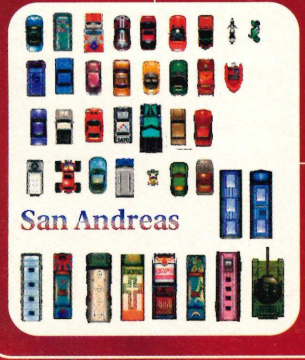
1: Machine Gun
2: Get Out Of Jail Free
3: Multiplier
4: Machine Gun
5: Armour
6: Machine Gun
7: Get Out Of Jail Free
8: Multiplier
9: Machine Gun
10: Flame Thrower
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12: Zero Crime
13: Machine Gun
14: Get Out Of Jail Free
15: Machine Gun
16: Rocket Launcher
17: Machine Gun
18: Machine Gun
19: Armour
20: Zero Crime
21: Machine Gun
22: Machine Gun
23: Multiplier
24: Machine Gun
25: Machine Gun
26: Machine Gun
27: Armour
28: Machine Gun
29: Zero Crime
30: Get Out Of Jail Free
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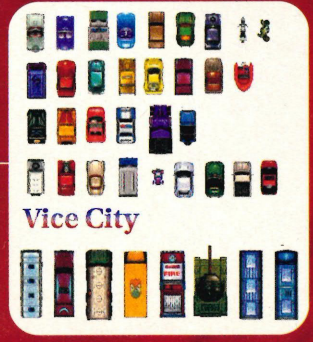
concluded next month...



The Cars

There are a multitude of different vehicles you can steal in each city, including buses, trucks, tanks, boats, and even a helicopter! Each vehicle has it's good and bad points. For example, the "Beast GTS" has fantastic speed, but poor handling, whereas the "Mundeo" is just outright slow. So try out the various cars, buses, etc. and find the 'joy' ride for you.







MDK

AFTER, AHEM, A SLIGHT DELAY (STATION MASTER HAS BEEN SEVERELY REPRIMANDED) WE FINALLY PRESENT THE FINAL PART OF THE MDK WALKTHROUGH.

WORLD 6

ARENA 1

Wait for the Dummy Decoy to land in this arena, then collect it. Next, wait for the Guard to roll through the Glass Wall and then run up the long sloping walkway until you reach a room with a Guard Generator and a Homing Mortar pick-up. Collect the pick-up and destroy the Generator with your chain gun. When it explodes it will leave a hole in the floor. Drop down the hole to exit the arena.

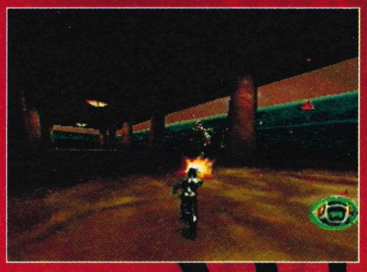


ARENA 2

After landing in this arena, turn until you can see Gunta and his pack of Alien Dogs. Enter Sniper Mode and use the Homing Mortars to pick off the pack. Exit Sniper Mode and use your chain gun to finish off any that have survived.

When all the Alien Dogs have been killed, run up behind Gunta and chase him around the arena while firing your chain gun. After enough shots, Gunta will run into the centre of the arena and jump through the floor, leaving a hole. Drop down the hole to continue to the next arena.



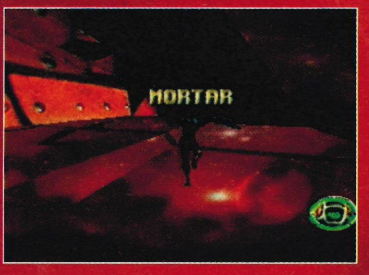


ARENA 3

Run down the length of the room and jump onto the lowest of the wall platforms. Climb the platforms until you reach the Super Chain G... and collect it.

Next, turn to the left and jump across to the ledge, then along the wall and collect the Homing Mortar. Run down the ledge to the other end of the room and then jump across to the nearest floating platform. Turn to face the entrance wall and jump up on the spot to reveal the next platform. When you have found this platform, jump over to it and the follow the rest around until you're standing across from the stone tower. Destroy the floating Gun Pod on top of the tower, then jump over to it and drop down to reach the next arena.



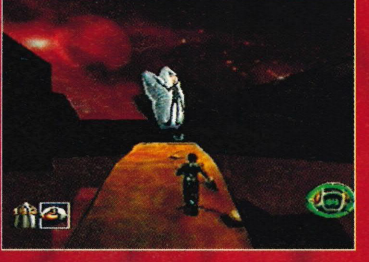


ARENA 4

Run into this arena and collect as many of the power-ups and pick-ups that drop down. When you collect a Dummy Decoy or Twister, throw it into the centre of the arena to distract the guards, then sniper Gunta on top of his tower. Shoot him and he will fall off and hit the floor, causing the tall stone tower to fall over.

Run back to the start and use the sloping platform to jump across to the fallen tower. Run up to Gunta's platform and drop down the hole to the final battle.





ARENA 5

Float down into the arena and steer yourself over to the third room, with a Gunta Snack Dispenser. Jump onto the button next to the dispenser and a Gunta Snack will drop out of the machine. Collect this and throw it out into the main section of the arena. Gunta will chase after the snack, allowing you to collect the World's Smallest Nuclear Bomb from where he was standing. Once you have this, run over to the active air-vent and jump into the air current. When you're level with the platform, drop down onto it and use the Nuke to destroy the Atomic Lock.





Repeat this process for the remaining locks and Bones will be freed. After the animation has played, showing Bones jumping into the Snack Dispenser, run over and collect the Bones/Snack hybrid which drops out of the machine. Throw this at Gunta and he will run over and eat it hungrily.

IT'S ALL OVER

Sit back and watch as Gunta's greed gets the better of him.

COOL BOARDERS 2

GRAB SOME SERIOUS AIR AND PULL OFF THE ULTIMATE TRICKS AND MOVES IN SONY'S EXCELLENT SNOWBOARDING SIM THANKS TO THE POWERSTATION POWDER SURFERS.

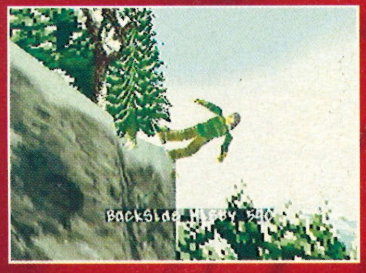
SOLVED

THE MOVES

SPINNING MANOEUVRES

To rotate your character whilst they are in the air and get a load of points into the bargain, you have to keep the ✕ button held down along with the direction in which you wish to rotate. The longer you hold down the direction and the jump button, the faster you will rotate when you are in the air. You can also hold then button to increase your rotational speed further, giving you more points. By simply holding down the ✕ button and a directional arrow from the start of the stunt ramp until you finally jump, you can usually get a score of over 500 each time, which usually places you third or fourth in the rankings. The type of spin you attempt affects the amount of points you get:

Left spin: ⇦ + ✕
Right spin: ⇨ +✕
Forward roll: ⇧ +✕
Backward roll: ⇩ +✕
Misty: (⇗ or ⇖)+ ✕
Reverse misty: (⇘ or ⇗)+ ✕



HALFPIPE VARIATIONS

The spins change type when you attempt them on the halfpipe:
Towards Edge: (⇨ or ⇦)+✕ (Turn towards side of ramp)
Towards Centre Spin: (⇨ or ⇦)+✕ (Turn towards centre of the ramp)
Johan Flip: ⇧ +✕
Back Flip: ⇩ +✕
Johan Twist: (⇗ or ⇖)+✕
McTwist: ⇘ +✕
Crippler: ⇗+✕
When performing any of the last three moves, you can hold n and the direction to perform an alley-oop trick.

GRABBING TECHNIQUES

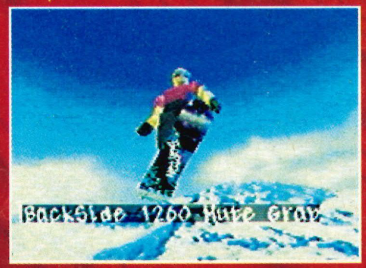
When you hit the air, you can grab your board to impress the crowd with some sublime stunts. More points will be awarded for the length of time you hold the technique and if you do more than one in a row.

The moves are listed in ascending points order.

Shifty: L1
Lien Air: ⇩, R1
Method: ⇩, L2
Stalefish: ⇩, R2
Mute Grab: ⇧, R1
Indy Grab: ⇧, R2
Shuffle: L1, L2
Tail Grab: ⇩, ⇩, R2
Nose Grab: ⇧, ⇧, R1
Stiffie: ⇧, R1, L2
Melancholy: ⇩, R1, L2
Indy Nosebone: ⇧, R2, L2
Tweak: ⇩, R1, L1

COMBINATION TRICKS

The performance of combination tricks is essential if you want to get right to the top of the table and get a good start in the race. You can mix and match various moves to produce totally monster combos. To give yourself more height, release the jump button as close to the take-off point as possible, but don't leave it too late. Also, remember to release the D-pad and buttons before doing the second part of the combo.



BIG AIR

There are three 'big air' ramps that are used to give you a time advantage in Competition mode. There are different ways to take each ramp to get the most points you can out of your leap.

STADIUM KICKER

LENGTH: 100 METRES
MAX SLOPE: 20 DEGREES

A straightforward ramp, the Stadium Kicker provides a short run-up to the jump point so you have to have your wits about you if you want to pull off a combo move. Only try backflips or misties if you have selected a stunt-oriented character or a highly manoeuvrable board – even these can be tricky to get right so you are better off sticking with a basic spin.

ICE FANG

LENGTH: 200 METRES
MAX SLOPE: 37 DEGREES

The left side of the Ice Fang is steeper than the right, so if you are planning a decent aerial trick you should skid your board to that side of the ramp. You have longer to build up speed on this ramp as it is twice the length of the Stadium Kicker, giving you more height to bring home a few excellent rolls.

TITANS TOE

LENGTH: 150 METRES

HIDDEN EXTRAS

- TO PLAY AS A GREY (ALIEN) YOU HAVE TO SCORE MORE THAN 40 ON THE HALFPIPE.
- TO ADD THE SNOWMAN TO YOUR LIST OF CHARACTERS, YOU HAVE TO DO ALL 100 MOVES IN MASTER MODE SUCCESSFULLY.
- TO PLAY AS THE HARDCORE BOSS, YOU HAVE TO COME FIRST IN A CHAMPIONSHIP IN MIRROR MODE. HE WILL THEN BE SELECTABLE IN FREESTYLE MODE.
- TO PLAY THE TRACKS MIRRORED YOU HAVE TO COME FIRST IN COMPETITION MODE.
- TO GET THE TENTH COURSE, DIVE INTO THE CAVE, YOU HAVE TO COMPLETE ALL 100 TRICKS IN BIG AIR OR MASTER MODE.
- COMPLETE FREESTYLE MODE IN FIRST PLACE FOR THE TRICK CATEGORY ON AT LEAST FIVE COURSES.

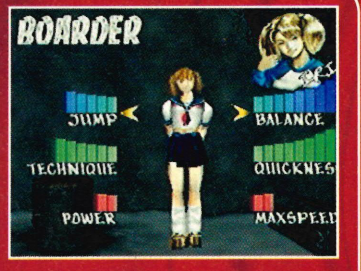
NOTE: THE BOARD IS AVAILABLE IN ALL MODES EXCEPT COMPETITION.

- COMPLETE FREESTYLE MODE IN FIRST PLACE FOR THE TOTAL CATEGORY ON AT LEAST FIVE COURSES.

NOTE: THE BOARD IS NOT AVAILABLE IN COMPETITION AND HALFPIPE MODES.

- COMPLETE FREESTYLE MODE IN FIRST PLACE FOR THE TIME CATEGORY ON AT LEAST FIVE COURSES.

NOTE: THE BOARD IS NOT AVAILABLE IN COMPETITION AND HALFPIPE MODES.





- COME FIRST IN THE MIRROR MODE CHAMPIONSHIP TO MAKE THE WHOLE GAME TOUGHER.
- HIGHLIGHT THE BIG AIR OPTION ON THE MAIN MENU AND PRESS ⇩, R1, ⇧, R1, ⇩, R2, ⇧, R2, ⇧, ⇧, R1, ⇩, ⇩, R2. CINDY WILL NOW WEAR A SKIMPY LEATHER OUTFIT (!) WHILE IRIN DONS A SCHOOL UNIFORM (APART FROM IN COMPETITION MODE). YOU CAN ALTER THE OUTFITS BY PRESSING ✕ AND MOVING ⇦ OR ⇨.

Max Slope: 48 degrees

Let's rock! The Titans Toe has a major incline waiting for you at the bottom, so it is essential that you get your speed up before you hit it. At the start of the ramp, turn your board slightly to the right so that you are lined up directly facing the apex of the ramp: this will enable you to get the maximum air possible to perform all the tricks you need.

BOARDER RUNS

The main test of your boarding skills comes when you race against the other boarders in Competition mode. Each run is a combination of tortuous bends and massive jumps that you will have to navigate at the highest possible speed while avoiding your fellow snowboarders – easier said than done!

1: White Resort

Length: 2,660 metres
Maximum Slope: 28.4 degrees
Average Slope: 16.8 degrees
Points Required To Qualify: 1



The white resort run is a speedy downhill course with little to trouble even the most unskilled racer. Choose an Alpine board for this track and you'll leave the other racers standing.

2: Sunset Downhill

Length: 2,959 metres
Maximum Slope: 32.2 degrees
Average Slope: 23.1 degrees
Points Required To Qualify: 3



This course is quite fast but it has the additional hazard of having quite a few deadly chicanes. The length of the course means that the opposition will be spread out, so you shouldn't have many collisions to contend with.

3: Bear In The Forest

Length: 3,120 meters
Maximum Slope: 49.6 degrees
Average Slope: 29.4 degrees
Points Required To Qualify: 6

To get through the trees intact you'll need to sacrifice speed for manoeuvrability. Keep your board under control and stay tight.



4: Rail Road

Length: 2,770 metres
Maximum Slope: 34 degrees
Average Slope: 23.5 degrees
Points Required To Qualify: 11



Choose a fast board and get ready to kick some. By far the swiftest track in the game, the Rail Road has few difficult corners to negotiate, so you can keep your speed up all the way through.

5: Take It Easy

Length: 1,674 metres
Maximum Slope: 34.9 degrees
Average Slope: 22.6 degrees
Points Required To Pass: 16



This course is so short, you won't have enough time to catch any other boarders, so be sure to get a good lead on the ramp. The track is fast but a freestlye board is definitely needed to slow you down and give you tighter turns.

6: Pipeline Canyon

Length: 3,841 metres
Maximum Slope: 41.3 degrees
Average Slope: 30.8
Points Required To Pass: 23

The Pipeline Canyon is one of the toughest courses in the race and you'll need lightning reactions to get anywhere near first place. Keep your cool and don't be no fool!



7: Freezing Point

Length: 3,674 metres
Maximum Slope: 49.8 degrees
Average Slope: 40.1 degrees
Points Required To Qualify: 30



Lots of ice, 90° bends, and perilous cliffs to negotiate here. Choosing a slow manoeuvrable board is the only way to stay on the track.

8: Winding River

Length: 2,950 metres
Maximum Slope: 34.7 degrees
Average Slope: 29.6 degrees
Points Required To Qualify: 40



Deadly jumps to the left and deadly jumps to the right make this one monster track. Equip yourself with a medium fast board so that you get some good air of the jumps and can handle the corners with equal skill.

9: Snow Ruins

Length: 2,663 metres
Maximum Slope: 62.7 degrees
Average Slope: 46.2 degrees
Points Required To Qualify: 48



A mass of chicanes await you on this ancient snowboarding course. Choose a freestlye board so that you get some decent turning ability and don't go too fast.

10: Dive Into The Cave

Length: 1,295 metres
Maximum Slope: 34.7 degrees
Average Slope: 29.6 degrees
Points Required To Qualify: Secret course



You only get access to this track when you complete all 100 tricks in Big Air/Master mode. This is one mother of a course. The cave is so dark you can barely see the track in front of you, and jagged rocks lie in wait round every corner. The course is short and fast but even that cannot counter the sheer brutality of deadly rock bridges or the fact that 90° corners can appear from nowhere.

HIDDEN DUDES

The Boss



This guy is certainly the boss when it comes to snowboarding. His outstanding level of skill makes him one tough cookie to beat, but when you finally get to play as him you can shame the other players with your new-found skill. You can't play as the boss in a championship but you can break all your records in Freestyle mode.

Grey



Snowboarding skills from beyond the stars are the order of the day with this dome-headed geek. Go for maximum stunt points on big air mode with the Grey and watch your points soar. As racing goes, you can see his poor top speed for yourself, but if you equip him with an Alpine board it gives him a bit of a boost.

Snowman



Brought to life through the magic of your PlayStation, the Snowman is the most turbocharged pile of snow on the ice. Save the snowman for high-speed racing on fast courses. If you decide to try any stunts with him, expect disaster.

BOUNCY

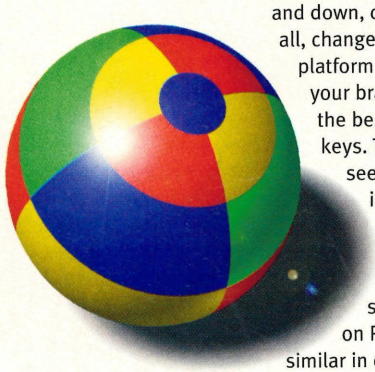
KULA WORLD

Summer must have come early this year because the latest puzzle sensation to arrive in the office involves trundling around suspended platforms as a giant beachball. At first glance, *Kula World* is unbelievably easy to pick up and play. You simply guide said sphere around the mass of scaffolding which makes up each level, collecting bonus pick-ups and keys which grant you access to the exit portal.

Sounds a doddle doesn't it? And for a few rounds it is. To begin with the early levels usher the player through the ingenious subtleties of the game, such as the bizarre way you can look up and down, cling to all surfaces, and strangest of all, change from one surface of each rectangular platform to another. By roughly the 15th level your brain is straining to work out which is the best way to get to the all-important keys. The fiendish thing is, you can always see where they are, but getting to them is often mind-bending to the extreme. Credit must go to Swedish outfit, 'Game Design Sweden' who has come up trumps in the originality stakes. There really is nothing like it on PlayStation, although it is quite similar in concept to an ancient Commodore 64 puzzler, *Bounder* and the follow-up *ReBounder* (but mainly due to the ball-heavy content!).

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Kula World
Publisher: Sony
% Complete: 90%
Release date: May '98



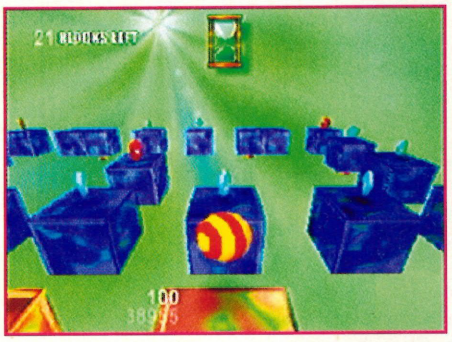
Big Bouncing Balls

Kula World is played from a third person (or should that be beachball?) perspective and consists of over 200 levels, all presented in glorious high resolution-o-vision. Each one presents the player with a unique test of mental agility, where obstacles, traps, and hazards must be overcome. These include: spikes which pop your ball, ice patches which send you skating off the edge, and fire which will ultimately roast you. The novelty value of *Kula World* lies in the way you can totally manipulate your 3-D platform through 360°. It's a strange and disorientating feeling, especially when you're desperately trying to reach the exit key with a strict time limit to adhere to. Extra points can be earned through pick-ups coming in the shape of fruit, coins and lethargy-inducing pills.

Kula World looks exquisite; combining platform action with lateral puzzle solving. We'll give you the low-down in the review next month.



[Above] Try to roll over the hour glasses to earn a little bit of extra time, but watch your step.

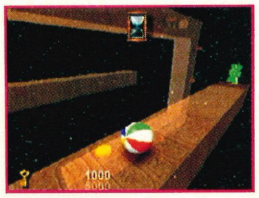




[Above] Watch out for spikes – either jump over them or wait for them to retract into the platform.



[Above] Collect fruit and coins to boost your score, but watch out for the hallucinogenic pills which

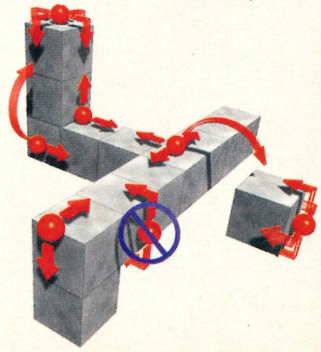




[Above] These dodgy brightly coloured pills make your view go all bendy and blurry.



[Above] The 3-D world can be rotated through 360° which is handy for working out which way to go.

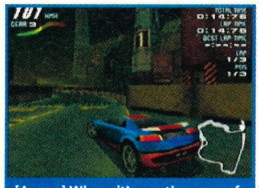


LEMMY

MOTORHEAD

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Motorhead
Publisher: Gremlin
% Complete: 75%
Release date: 24 April



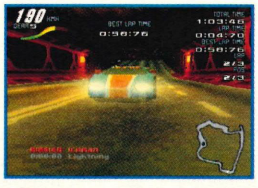
[Above] Whoa, it's another one of those tight handbrake corners! *Motorhead* is extremely unforgiving at some points.





[Above] The new Formula One-style track is actually one of the best, but if you get barged off you can end up a fair old distance from the road.

Although it seems kind of odd to release a game about speed and nothing else – no giant power-ups, no rockets, no tuning – *Motorhead* has generated quite a bit of interest nevertheless. Just a simple arcade racing game without dreams of challenging something like *Gran Turismo*, *Motorhead's* most outstanding feature is that it goes like the clappers!





Since we went off to see how the code was progressing in its foetal stages last month, many a shaded polygon has been added to the cars and the options on the clean front end have grown too . A Quick Race doesn't waste time with any variables, choosing instead to automatically select the last car and track you picked and start the race. The League sets you against three other cars across each of the six main tracks and now there's also a smooth split screen mode for taking on a mate and, at the moment at least, no other computer cars.

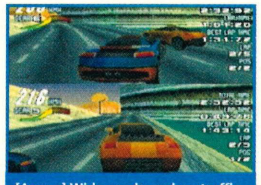


[Above] The computer controlled cars will knock into you given the chance, calling for some quick thinking and reverse steering.

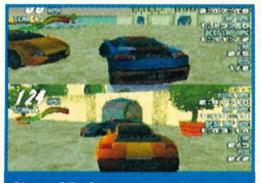
RETURN TO HAZZARD

A couple of new tracks are in there too, including one which takes a break from the dark skies and tall buildings of the others with beaming sun light and open grassy spaces on a kind of Formula One track, complete with striped rumble strips. Well, the sunlight doesn't exactly 'beam' yet, as one of the graphical effects which has to be finalised is the lens flare! The other is tyre smoke, but both should definitely be in the finished game, and that super quick frame rate could certainly handle a few of the PlayStation's trademark tricks.

With wide embankments to carry you round some corners, huge leaps through the air and courses that encourage hand brake turning, the lure of *Motorhead's* Transatlantic Speed League is strong. But is there room for another racer in your collection? We will endeavour to answer that very question for you when we review *Motorhead* in the next issue of PLAY!



[Above] Wide roads and no traffic jams? Only in the wonderful world of video games folks!



[Above] Trying to squeeze two cars through a small archway at speed is bound to cause accidents in the two player game!

Issue 33 1998

RUMBLE

TEKKEN 3

First the good news, *Tekken 3* is scheduled for a Japanese release in March (a week after you read this in fact) and as these exclusive new screenshots show, it is looking incredible. The bad news is Sony isn't releasing it in Europe until September – dammit!

PERFECTIONISTS

The finishing touches have now been applied by the development team and the aim is simple – a complete conversion of the arcade original, with added attractions. *Tekken 3*, as reported last month, will include exactly the same options as *Tekken 2* – Arcade Mode, Vs Mode, Team Battle and the rest. Then there is the bonus character, Gon, whose entrance into the Tekken arena has been hyped to the hilt.

All of the characters from the arcade original will also be in the home version, including Gargoyle and Mokujin – the wooden dummy bloke.

Everyone at Namco is excited about this project, not least Jesse Taylor, who is the Director of Research and Development at Namco Hometek: "The consumers want an awesome translation of the arcade version, and we plan on giving it to them. They won't be disappointed!"

When plans of *Tekken 3* were first announced, many in the industry speculated that a PlayStation conversion would require an add-on device because of the high polygon count and

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Tekken 3
Publisher: Namco
% Complete: 90%
Release date: March (Japan)

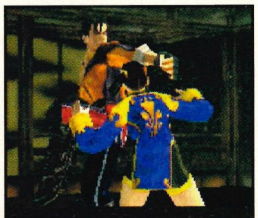




[Above] New fighter, the strangely-named Xiaoyu, lays into Jin Kazuya – the offspring of the Devil. Note the attractive new backgrounds and light-sourcing effects.



[Above] Eddy topples Nina off-balance with a nifty leg-sweeping manoeuvre.



[Above] Jin prepares to savagely re-arrange Xiaoyu's pretty features.



[Above] Girl Power! Nina slaps one across the face of Jin in the name of women's rights!



[Above] What's happened to Paul's neck?



[Above] Aging cop, Lei contemplates retirement after a hefty knock to the chops by new fighter, Hwoarang.



[Above] Eddy aims a swift, sharp, shot to the chops, but is it enough to topple the mighty Jin?



[Above] Jin Kazuya fights like his late father, dirty! Here we see how he inherits the same lightning kick moves!



[Above] We return to the familiar dwelling in the forest for Yoshimitsu's fights. Here Law tries to dodge his blade!



[Above] The girl's got talent! The fearless Xiaoyu decks King with a devastating blow!

frame rate of the coin-op that utilised System 12 hardware. This is not the case though, and *Tekken 3* will showcase exactly what the PlayStation is capable of, albeit with a mark-down in the amount of polygons and a lower frame rate.

Toshin's Den

Tekken 3 is based around the events leading up to the third King of the Iron Fist Tournament. After the second tournament, Heihachi Mishima tossed his son's lifeless body into a volcano and seized back the reigns of the Mishima Conglomerate. Various fates befell the other fighters, but all is hunky-dory until the powerful force of Toshin (roughly translated to mean "Fighting God") emerges from an archaeological site in Central America.

Toshin is thought to prey on the spirits of the fighting greats, so 19 years on from the last tournament, a new battle is staged to lure Toshin out of the shadows and vanquish him from existence. Hence the re-emergence of old faces and the fresh, raw power of new blood to embark on the ultimate showdown of good against evil.

Book your ringside seat now because it's going to be a belter!

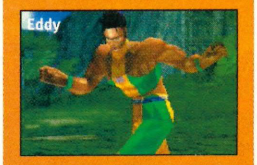
With *Tekken 2* shifting more than three million units across the world since its release in August 1996 (and remaining in the top 25 best-selling games chart ever since), Namco has got every right to expect a hit of similar or mightier proportions. *Tekken 3* will be reviewed in all its entirety next month, and we're getting giddy at the thought!



Everyone's a Winner!

Tekken 3 will feature all-new winning poses for the vast ensemble of gladiators from around the globe. Here are just a few of the victory moves struck by the toughest of the tough. Do these guys know how to celebrate?

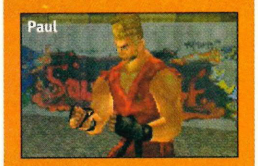

Jin


Eddy


Hwoarang


Law


Nina


Paul


Yoshimitsu


King


Lei

ORGANIC XENOCRACY

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Xenocracy
Publisher: Grolier Interactive
% Complete: 75%
Release date: April '98

It was bound

to happen sooner or later. *Babylon 5* is perfect fodder for a console game, and although *Xenocracy* is not an official license by any means, the influence on the game's appearance is plain to see.

You play Wing Toucher, a leading light for a peacekeeping force called the UPN and it's your job to maintain the political and economic stability of the solar system. Four planetary superpowers from Earth, Mars, Venus and Mercury wage perpetual skirmishes against each other in a bid to mine a special power-giving mineral called lycosite and set up colonies. Your mission is to defend the colonies against attacks, limit inter-planetary raids, and undertake special assignments on behalf of their representatives.

As long as each superpower is kept economically stable, planetary order is assured. But allow anyof them to take too much of a hiding and all-out war ensues – game over in other words. If you strip away the plot, *Xenocracy* is effectively a 3-D space combat simulator and although primarily a bastion of peace, you spend most of time blowing away bizarre and colourful craft.



[Above] These dodgy brightly coloured pills make your view go all bendy and blurry.



[Above] *Xenocracy* is chock-full of real-time lighting effects and enormous explosions. Check out the gorgeous lens flare too.







[Above] After the disppointment of *Colony Wars*, *Xenocracy* could be just what we want.



[Above] Ship hulls burst open in spectacular fashion. It's still a bit jerky at this stage though.

Elite

There are two modes of play: arcade and simulation. The former will throw you straight into the thick of it with a fully armed ship, and the latter allows the player to influence the political and economic balance of the warring parties by selecting whichever mission you deem the best. In addition to all these political wranglings you can choose to manage a research and development facility, whereby up to 36 new weapon and ship enhancements can be added.

Besides fighting in deep space, missions occur in asteroid belts and on one of the 59 moons themselves, so there should be no shortage of variety. Although there's still a bit of slowdown in evidence, the multitude of organically-influenced ships look impressive, and instead of exploding after a couple of shots, they gradually disintegrate before exploding into a ball of fire. *Xenocracy* may be a hybrid of *Elite*, *Colony Wars* and *Babylon 5*, but certainly has promise. Let's hope that the graphics are tidied up in time for the full review.



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arena

views · questions · criticisms · ideas

VIEWS · QUESTIONS · CRITICISMS · IDEAS

MORE *FFVII* AND *ACTUA SOCCER 2* ARGUMENTS THIS MONTH, COME ON READERS, LET'S WIND THIS THING UP ONCE AND FOR ALL AND GET SOME NEW BALLS ROLLING! ARENA IS SPONSORED BY GAMEPLAY – BRITAIN'S LARGEST MAIL ORDER SUPPLIER OF PLAYSTATION GAMES AND IT IS AWARDING A FREE GAME TO THE LETTER OF THE MONTH. SO GET SCRIBBLING WITH YOUR OWN VIEWS 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. COME AND HAVE A GO!

GAMEplay

TEKKEN TRILOGY?

Dear PLAY,

What with *Tekken 3* on the way, I was wondering if Namco or Sony had considered releasing a *Tekken Trilogy* pack? I missed out on the original *Tekken* because *Tekken 2* came along, and then I didn't buy that because I heard about *Tekken 3*. So for all my PlayStation playing life I have been distinctly *Tekken*-less!

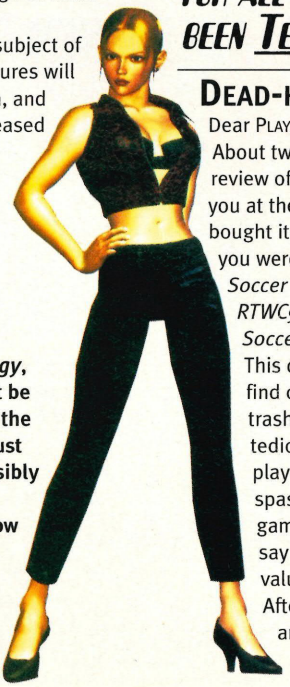
Offering a pack such as this would allow me to catch up on what I've missed in one foul swoop, not to mention representing great value for money!

While we're on the subject of *Tekken*, what new features will the third game contain, and why is it not being released in Britain until September when the Japanese version will be on sale in the next month or so?

Kevin Sutton, Exeter

There are no plans to release a *Tekken Trilogy*, but we think you must be mad to have snubbed the previous two games just because a newer, possibly better one is on the horizon. You don't know what you've been missing. Fortunately, both *Tekken* and *Tekken 2* are available to buy on the Platinum range for £19.99, so at least get down to the shops and buy *Tekken 2* because it is still probably the best beat-'em-up on PlayStation.

We mentioned the new features last month, but they mainly consist of new characters and moves.



"I MISSED OUT ON THE ORIGINAL TEKKEN BECAUSE TEKKEN 2 CAME ALONG, AND THEN I DIDN'T BUY THAT BECAUSE I HEARD ABOUT TEKKEN 3, SO FOR ALL MY PLAYSTATION PLAYING LIFE I'VE BEEN TEKKEN-LESS!" KEVIN SUTTON



DEAD-HEAD

Dear PLAY,

About two months ago I saw your review of *Actua Soccer 2*. I trusted you at the time, so I saved up and bought it. But then a month later you were saying how crap *Actua Soccer 2* was and praising *FIFA: RTWC98*, so I traded in *Actua Soccer 2* for this good game. This cost me money, only to find out that *FIFA* was absolute trash. The commentary is tedious as hell, and the players run around like spastic snails! It had no gameplay and it is rubbish to say that it has more replay value than *Actua Soccer 2*. After two weeks, I traded it in and bought *Actua Soccer 2* again, and I would be happy if I hadn't had to waste so much money.

Jim Walker, Norwich

Just because one a good football game comes in, and then another month a better game comes in, all we can do is offer our expert opinions, and if you don't agree, fine, that's your prerogative. At no point did we say that *Actua Soccer 2* was "crap", we merely, as clearly as possible, pointed out the ways we thought *FIFA: RTWC98* was better.

MISUNDERSTOOD

Dear PLAY,

We read your mag every month and think it is clearly the best. Back in issue 27 of PLAY you offered a £200 reward for new *F1 '97* cheats. We have found one new cheat and it is as follows. Enter the following in place of the drivers name: **TOO EASY** – This makes every single track, including bonus tracks, easy!

So we have 'PASSED GO' and are ready to collect our £200 reward. Please!

Robert Kelf and Stephen Habgood, East Devon

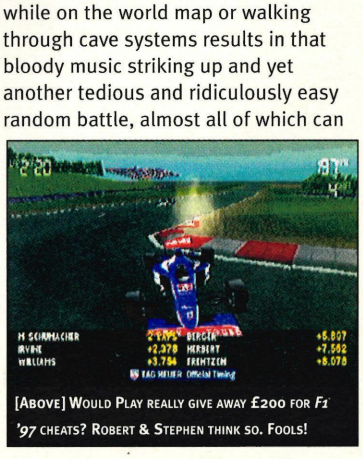
It seems you misunderstood the wording. We didn't actually offer a £200 reward, it was merely Station Master trying to be witty. So you don't actually get anything, and we get your cheat. Everybody's happy!

FFVII? BOBBINS MORE LIKE!

Dear PLAY

How's this for controversial? Far from being the greatest computer game ever, as I am sure some would have us believe, *Final Fantasy VII* can get very, very boring. Before I am shot down in flames let me take its 'plus-points' and state my case.

• It takes anything from 50 to 120 hours to complete. Well of course it does if every couple of steps taken while on the world map or walking through cave systems results in that bloody music striking up and yet another tedious and ridiculously easy random battle, almost all of which can



[ABOVE] WOULD PLAY REALLY GIVE AWAY £200 FOR *F1 '97* CHEATS? ROBERT & STEPHEN THINK SO. FOOLS!

be won by simply and repeatedly pressing the attack button. Fewer and more involving battles would not have slowed the action so much.

• If *FFVII* is supposed to be so ground-breaking why couldn't the combat system have been made more strategic? Imagine for instance, if the runaway train sequence had been more like the similar section in the excellent *Vandal Hearts*. Even the battles in *Suikoden* took more thought. Of course this may have involved extra coding but I would have gladly foregone such delights as breeding hormonal chickens in exchange for a better combat system.

• This game has more padding than a department store Santa! I know I probably haven't visited every location, found every secret, or interacted with every character, but there's no way I'm ever going to go through it all again to do so. It's off to the computer shop to trade in for something else. How's that for longevity?

• Involving gameplay. Really? I felt as if I had been led by the nose from the opening sequence, more of an observer than a participant. What should have been critical points in the games development lose all significance when it became obvious that sections such as the quests for Huge Materia need not be completed successfully, or indeed at all, because the players progress would not be hindered by failure. It is also very difficult to get involved when great wodges of the game involve the player in nothing more than pressing the action button to close text boxes while the characters waffle through reams of obscure, and I presume badly translated dialogue. There are two such sections on disc 2 that take over 30 minutes each to wade through.

• The graphics. The biggest selling point, and I will concede that the background artwork is beautifully done and there are some very nice animations, although there are some other games with similar breath-taking FMV sequences. It is a shame that the characters look like wooden-jointed marionettes and stand out like a sore thumb when the much vaunted interaction with the environment takes place. It's the very lusciousness of their surroundings that shows up the understandable restrictions in detail that the machine imposes on animated characters.

• The bonus games. We're on a quest to save the planet which is under threat from an evil corporation, a supernatural megalomaniac and there's a bloody great meteor heading our way. Let's go to a theme-park. I know a three-year-old who enjoys the odd Chocobo race but that's about it.

Let me ask those few (thousand, million?) people who are even now sharpening their knives or building gallows, was there any one point in the game where you felt challenged? Or where you felt you had any influence on the outcome? Or even lost a battle?

I'm not saying it's a bad game. There are a hell of a lot worse out there. It's just not the second coming the computer press would have us believe.

Alan Stillwell, Middlesex



[Above] *Final Fantasy VII* – a splendid game we all agree, but not *that* splendid says Alan Stillwell.

"Final Fantasy VII has more padding that a department store Santa... and I would gladly have forgone such delights as breeding hormonal chickens in exchange for a better combat system." Alan Stillwell



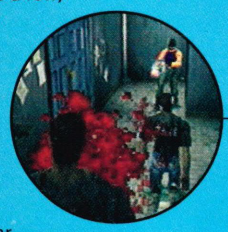
GAMEplay

GAME WINNER! SUMMER SCUM

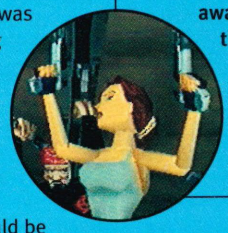
Dear Play,

Cheers for an excellent magazine. Due to the great Christmas releases such as *Tomb Raider II*, *FIFA: RTWC98*, *FFVII*, *Tekken 3*, *Crash 2* and *F1 '97* to name a few, I was in two minds what to get. I am not complaining about the excellent games on the shelves, but I wish they would be spread throughout the year instead of in one bunch. The summer of 1997 was really crap, with no games even worth looking at. I am sure that it would of been better for two of these titles to have been released then. If we look at this year, we have great games like *Metal Gear Solid* (May), *Resident Evil 2* (May or June), *Gran Turismo* (April or May). By the time I have got one of these games and finished with it, the other two would be older and then even older when it comes down to my last choice. It would be so much better if there was a little gap in between. It is going to be a real headache for myself and other skint PlayStation owners when the time comes to choose one of the above games. I am sure other readers feel the same way and it would be interesting to hear what they have to say.

Ryan Copping, Worthing







We understand what you're saying Ryan. Unfortunately, the summer slump is a traditional occurrence that reflects the trend of the market. At Christmas, more people buy games, either for themselves or as presents. The opposite happens in the summer months as more people spend more money getting away, or don't play games as much because they're lapping up the good ol' English weather. It is annoying when so many quality games are released at the same time, but surly this is when the rental scheme proves its true worth.

[Above] Ryan Copping's moaning that there are too many good games at once. Moaning b******, we say.

Gasp! Horror! At last, a person that can see through the hype and isn't afraid to point out some flaws in what is arguably one of the machine's finest moments. *FFVII* certainly wasn't the all-round masterpiece that other magazines claimed it was, but still, are Alan's points justified, or is he merely talking gobblers. Get your opinions flowing.

...And then some!

Dear Play,

I am a relative newcomer to the UK and its PlayStation culture, and have been intrigued by the two debates concerning *FFVII* and your review of it. Firstly, is it better than *Tomb Raider II*, and secondly should it have scored 93%?

The first debate seems a little pedantic. The two games are of different genres, and were marked on a very subjective percentile scale by the two different reviewers, who themselves have their own preferences. Perhaps therefore a difference of 2% is fairly meaningless.

The second debate also seems a bit ponderous as people argue whether *FFVII* is "awesomely, mind-blowingly superb" or merely "superb."

Personally, I would like to see debate focused on games' strengths and weaknesses so that developers can get a clearer idea of what we want and improve their games accordingly. Here are some of my own criticisms of *FFVII*.

• The fights were too easy (mostly). I didn't see the 'Game Over' screen at all until I tried to take on the green and red weapon monsters a few times each (at which time the aforementioned screen became quite familiar).

• The summon spells, while impressive the first five times, are monotonous by the 10th. Maybe there should have been a way to shorten the sequence.

• Why did the female characters all need rescuing at some point? The way I had the Materias distributed, they would be unlikely to say "Help me, Cloud!" – a more likely comment would have been "Don't worry, I'll handle it. I'll just quickly whip up one of those raging dragon-god thingys to vapourise the bad guys!"

I would love to hear responses to these criticisms, or any other comments readers may make on the content of the game.

David Pollard, London

PS Am I alone in thinking that the ending sequence of *Tomb Raider II* was actually quite good?

It appears that Alan Stillwell has a soul-mate! Come on then Play readers, what do you think of Alan and David's *FFVII* gripes? Are his criticisms justified or is he just being too picky? Let us know.

Vendetta

Dear Play,

Thanks for producing a great magazine. As a student, I rely on your reviews to make wise choices, as I can't afford to buy any old lump of rubbish.

Anyway, the last game I bought was *Colony Wars* and I thought I'd write to you as all your letters seemed to be about *Final Fantasy VII* (Which, incidentally, I can't

believe should have got 120% – but then who would believe someone who spent 20 hours playing a game. Get a life Mr Skinner!).The graphics and overall presentation of *Colony Wars* are excellent, although the lack of variety in the missions should have perhaps brought the score down slightly further. Here are a few thoughts for changes to include in *Colony Wars 2*. How about some type of two-player game (link-up or split-screen) for dog fights against each other and for missions working together? Bombing missions against space-stations (or even planets?). This, coupled with awesome graphics, would help to make *Colony Wars* an even greater hit than dare I say it, *Final Fantasy VII*?

I would also be grateful if you could consider a few alterations to your Playlist. Would it be possible to include the games reviewed in a particular issue in the same issue's Playlist so that we can see how you think they compare to the other games in that genre, without having to wait for the next issue? Also, how about reducing all your review scores by 20%, so for example, *Final Fantasy VII's* score would be reduced to 73%? This would enable you to show more clearly the differences between the new top games that come out, instead of only being able to differ their scores by a couple of percent. Because, at the moment, you can only give a new game at max a score that's 5% more than *Tomb Raider 2*, however much better the new game is.

One last point that I don't know if you or your other readers know, but the high capacity memory cards don't work with *Sim City 2000*. This is because they use data compression to fit all the data needed onto the memory card. *Sim City 2000* already compresses the data before it is saved and so these memory cards don't work, as the data can't be compressed twice. I don't know if this is true for any other games.

Malcolm McMillan, Suffolk

If you read the 'Nosin' Around' section in last month's news, you will know that *Colony Wars: Vendetta* is already in production. However, Psygnosis would be well-advised to heed your ideas Malcom, because we feel that a link-up option would be a superb addition to an already great game.

As for your Playlist ideas, we are toying with a feasible method of reducing the older scores to accurately gauge them against the current games, but we have no plans to include the games that run in the same issue.

Cheers for pointing us towards the problems with compression memory cards, we will be running a group test soon to root out the duffers from the real master minds!

Waste of space

Dear Play,

I would like to start this letter by saying what a great magazine Play is. However, after reading the last issue (*Gran Turismo* edition), I am not really sure that I would mean it if I did.

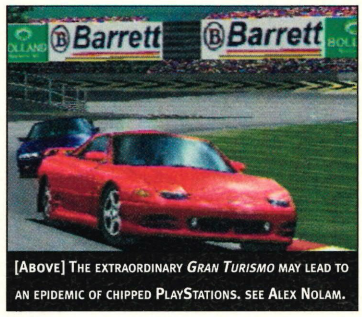
Amongst other things, it told us that the majority of your readers own standard PlayStations, and are therefore completely disinterested in import games. Why then were nine of your fourteen reviews on such games? I'm sure that we're all very happy for you that you're able to play games however many months ahead of the rest of us, but something a bit closer to our interests would be nice. Especially since your reviews of these games complained about the amount of Japanese text. Sorry? Unless I am very wrong, these games were programmed for Japanese gamers, weren't they? Or didn't you tell your reviewers this before hand? May I suggest that you are wasting both your employees' and readers' time reviewing Japanese role playing games? One game was even slated and given a poor mark for having no clear plot! Of course it didn't!

Secondly, when are you going to stop going on and on about link-up? Once again your survey told you that the majority of your readership have never even tried it (meaning that even less use it regularly). It seems that the most of us realise that hauling a PlayStation and TV round to a friend's house, after forking out £45 each on the same game, isn't worth it for a two player game that's interesting for maybe two hours.

Finally, thanks very much for providing that cheat for *Grand Theft Auto*. After saving it to my memory card, I discovered that not only does it make the game crash horribly after ten, or if you're lucky 15 minutes, but there is no apparent way of disabling it. No I'll have to go back to square one.

Andrew Merson.

In the future, we will be radically slicing the amount of import reviews that are published in Play – choosing only big games that will be granted an official release over here and



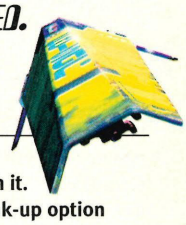
[Above] The extraordinary *Gran Turismo* may lead to an epidemic of chipped PlayStations. See Alex Nolam.

games that are of a general high interest to the public. We would never review a Japanese game and slate it for containing reams of Japanese text – in the case of *Tomba!* last issue, we mentioned that many of the RPG aspects were lost on a western audience, but slagged it for being dull and dated – for which you don't need a degree in Japanese to work out. If this would deter a British gamer from buying it then it would have been worth it.

We champion the link-up option because we feel it is a worthwhile way to get the most out of games – if you've ever tried it Andrew, which we seriously doubt, then you'll understand that, like PC networking, competing against a human opponent in a full screen environment is highly enjoyable – more so than for two hours!

***GTA* corruption – don't shoot the messenger!**

"I agree with you that the link-up option should be more widely supported and appreciated. Split screen games can never match a link-up option..." J. Currie



Import(ant)

Dear Play

Great magazine, especially the review of *Gran Turismo*. A few questions for you:

1. Is it worth chipping my PlayStation?
2. Is it possible to still play PAL games on a chipped PlayStation?
3. If so, will I need to change back from a scart cable to an AV cable?
4. Is it worth buying copied games, both import and British?

Alex Nolam, Chesterfield

1. Sure, if you have a keen interest in playing import games. However, Sony doesn't agree with this process and it will invalidate your warranty.
2. Yes.
3. No.
4. Don't touch them. The are often early, bugged copies and are not worth bothering with, besides which they are HIGHLY illegal..

Strange moments in video games #6

This month... *Total Drivin'*

***Total Drivin'* gets plenty of credit for being the only game in recent memory to have both split screen and link up options, which can even be used simultaneously for four player fun. But sometimes, just sometimes mind, the whole thing goes bonkers. The time synchronisation being fed down the link cable gets messed up somehow, and the result is that the PlayStations get the car positions mixed up. You can see your mate's motor stuck at the roadside, ramming the edge, while on his TV he's still racing along happily! Your car may look the same to him and so on. Reset and start again. Thanks a bunch!**



How to get your letter printed in Play

If you've sent letters into Play before and never had them published there is probably a damn good reason why. Simply follow these guidelines and you're bound to get a result, eventually!

1. Make sure that the point you are making is valid, topical, and logical – we don't mind you disagreeing with our views, just make sure you can back-up your opinions.
2. Try being humourous in your approach – serious droning is boring and has no place in our magazine!
3. Don't be unduly sarky in your approach and slag things off unnecessarily. Be constructive, not aggressive.
4. Get your views tight and to the point, endless waffle will only be edited – that is if it is printed at all.
5. Finally, write letters that we can read. You'd be surprised how many scrawled, dog-eared letters we get that are written on bog-roll and go straight to the file marked 'bin'.

We reserve the right to edit your letters and regret we cannot reply 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. Tekken 2	**95%**
2. Bushido Blade	94%
3. Soul Blade	96%
4. SF EX Plus	91%
5. Tobal 2	92%
6. SF Zero 2	94%
7. Marvel Super Heroes	87%
8. Teras Kasi	74%
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	ISSUE REVIEWED	SCORE	WE SAY...
4-4-2	1-2	26	57% Dated and disappointing sunDay league stuff.
2Xtreme	1-2	19	52% Tedious multi sports effort – fading fast.
3D Lemmings	1	01	69% Famous puzzle game, now in 3D! Average.
Abe's Oddysee	1	26	**90%** The most addictive platform game on the PSX!
Ace Combat*	1-2	01	81% Slightly repetitive flight sim.
Ace Combat 2*	1	23	84% Far better graphically and playability wise.
A-Train*	1	09	62% Complex resource management with trains.
Actua Golf	1-4	10	88% Best golf game on PSX so far (until *Golf2*).
Actua Golf 2	1-4	23	80% Not as good graphically, but still great fun.
Actua Ice Hockey	1-4	32	70% A worthwhile stab at the sport, but not without faults.
Actua Soccer	1-2	04	79% Slick looking footy sim, now dated.
Actua Soccer: Club Edition	1-2	22	62% Cynical re-badged version of above.
Actua Soccer 2	1-4	28	**90%** The best football game on the PlayStation!
Adidas Power Soccer	1-4	06	74% Great then, now failing against the competition.
Adidas Power Soccer '97	1-4	19	52% Same game, but with UK teams. Poor.
Agile Warrior:F111X	1	03	79% Simple brainless shoot-'em-up from Virgin.
Air Race	1-2	27	68% Humdrum racer offering short-term appeal.
Alien Trilogy	1	06	**91%** Deeply scary space shoot-'em-up. Great fun.
Allied General	1-2	19	51% Hexagonal strategy for bores and generals.
All-Star Soccer	1-8	24	80% Superb comic commentary, not bad footy !
Alone in the Dark 2	1	04	77% Intruiging French 3-D adventure based on PC.
Andretti Racing '97	1-2	11	74% Average split screen American racer.
Aquanaut's Holiday	1-2	10	58% Impenetrable and dull underwater guff.
Area 51	1-2	21	68% Rough coin-op conversion using light gun.
Assault Rigs	1-2	03	81% *Tron*-like tank blasting game. Good link-up.
Atari Collection, The	1	21	81% Many classics. Best: *Missile Command, Asteroids.*
Auto Destruct	1	29	84% Ultra-violent Armageddon on wheels!
Ayrton Senna's Kart Duel	1-2	14	71% Ropey racing engine, jerky action.
Ballblazer Champions*	1-2	22	69% Dull as dishwater futuristic sports.
Batman Forever	1-2	15	41% Bloody awful film licence – avoid!
Battle Stations	1-2	25	51% Flat and unconvincing naval strategy...
Beast Wars Transformers*	1	30	65% Transforming fun that's far from easy.
Bedlam	1	25	78% Muggy and complicated *Syndicate* wannabe.
Big Hurt Baseball*	1-2	09	81% Moderately successful sports conversion.
Black Dawn	1	15	76% Average helicopter shoot-'em-up.
BLAM! Machinehead	1	12	79% Graphical masterpiece, but no depth at all.
Blast Chamber	1-4	15	82% Clever puzzles with rotating rooms.
Blood Omen: LOK	1	18	81% Be a vampire – top bloody fun.
Brahma Force	1	31	85% Stompingly good mech-warrior action.
Broken Helix*	1	24	75% Absorbing 3-D adventure, but bad graphically.
Broken Sword	1	14	84% Slick point 'n' click adventure.
Broken Sword 2	1	28	**90%** Beautifully intuitive point 'n' clicker.
Bubble Bobble	1-2	11	85% Arcade fun from the early Eighties.
Bubsy 3D	1-4	15	82% Passable 3-D cartoon romp.
Burning Road	1-2	12	76% Turbo nutter action with big trucks.
Bushido Blade*	1-2	20	**94%** Stylish and brutal sword-fighting.
Bust-a-Move 2	1-2	08	88% Simple, yet totally addictive puzzler.
Bust-a-Move 3DX*	1-2	30	88% Once you pop, you can't stop!
Buster Bros Collection*	1-2	22	86% *Pang* gets the 32-bit treatment.
Carnage Heart	1	23	57% Dull robot strategy adventure on the moon.
Casper	1	12	65% Plain and unimaginative film game.
Cheesy	1	15	50% It certainly is...
Chessmaster 3D	1-2	08	68% Chess. On PlayStation. Hmm...

GAME		ISSUE REVIEWED	SCORE	WE SAY...
Choro Q*	1	11	70%	Quirky but rough cartoon racer.
Choro Q 2*	1-2	22	85%	More cars, big miniature fun.
Chronicles of the Sword	1	18	43%	Tedious adventure – avoid!
City of Lost Children	1	18	78%	Slow moving French 3-D adventure.
Clock Tower	1	27	83%	Stylish, and utterly chilling murder mystery!
Colony Wars	1	27	**92%**	Gorgeous, totally playable space blasting.
Command & Conquer	1	16	79%	PSX version slow and sorely lacking.
C&C: Red Alert*	1-2	29	**90%**	The last word in real-time wargames.
Contra: Legacy of War	1-2	16	62%	Scappy arcade shoot-'em-up from Konami.
Coolboarders	1	16	82%	High speed stunts on a snowboard.
Coolboarders 2*	1-2	26	81%	The definitive snowboarding game.
Courier Crisis	1	30	54%	Bring back the old Paperboy!
Crash Bandicoot	1	13	84%	Technically brilliant platformer.
Crash Bandicoot 2	1	29	86%	Crash returns in style!
Critical Depth	1-2	32	72%	Above average underwater blaster.
Criticom	1-2	04	87%	Early average beat-'em-up. Now forgotten.
Croc: Legend of the Gobbos	1	26	78%	It's intellectual theft, but fun nonetheless!
Crow: City of Angels	1	21	21%	Absolute shite!
Crusader: No Remorse	1	18	80%	Decent shoot-'em-up from the PC.
Crypt Killer	1-2	18	38%	Blocky, dreary, shoddy shooter.
Cyberia	1	04	67%	'On rails' FMV shoot-'em-up. Ugh!
Cybersled	1-2	01	55%	Vivid colours, but ultimately dull.
CyberSpeed	1	02	65%	Putrid futuristic *Hi-Octane*-style racer
D	1	06	69%	Mediocre 3-D adventure – Slow.
Dark Forces	1	17	75%	Appalling *Star Wars* conversion.
Darklight Conflict	1	22	79%	Fantastic looking, but sadly boring.
Darkstalkers*	1-2	10	88%	Very playable beat-'em-up from a coin-op.
Defcon 5	1	03	88%	Run-of-the-mill space adventure. Slow.
Descent	1-2	06	85%	Was good, now utter cack!
Descent 2	1-2	24	63%	Almost the same game. Not that fun to play.
Destruction Derby	1-2	01	86%	PSX showpiece and good two player.
Destruction Derby 2	1	14	82%	Better, but lacks link-up – bah!
Devil's Deception	1-2	32	68%	Intriguing and challenging, but looks a bit dogy.
Die Hard Trilogy	1	11	**92%**	Utterly brilliant three film games in one.
Discworld	1	01	74%	Unfunny cartoon adventure.
Discworld II	1	28	80%	Humourous off-the-wall adventuring...
Disruptor	1	14	87%	Impressive 3-D *Doom* clone.
Doom	1-2	03	**93%**	Top link-up, but now looking dated.
Dracula X*	1	21	84%	Japanese vampire platformer.
Dragon Ball Z GT: Final Bout*	1-2	29	39%	Dismal beat-'em-up.
Duke Nukem	1	29	**90%**	Fantastically playable shoot-'em-up.
Dynasty Warriors*	1-2	25	71%	Restrictive and bizarre beat-'em-up, but pretty.
Earthworm Jim 2	1	12	69%	16-bit fun, but joke is wearing thin.
Einhander*	1	31	**90%**	Another genre swen-up by Square. Breath-taking!
Epidemic*	1	19	71%	Slow and boring disease adventure.
ESPN Extreme Games	1-2	02	73%	Tiresome sports, no fun at all!
Excalibur 2555 AD	1	19	86%	Imaginative and lush RPG.
Exhumed	1	25	84%	Compelling Egyptian 3-D shoot-'em-up.
Explosive Racing	1	25	82%	Quick and playable racing, but not all new.
Extreme Pinball	1-2	07	54%	Miserable pinball sim with bad physics.
Fade To Black	1	09	**90%**	Gripping sci-fi alien adventure!
Fantastic Four	1-4	26	69%	Hardly fantastic, but playable.
FIFA '96	1-4	03	81%	Unexceptional footy flannel.
FIFA '97	1-4	15	70%	Graphically better, but plays worse
FIFA: Road to World Cup 98	1-4	29	**91%**	Best all-round football game yet!
Fighter's Impact*	1-2	23	76%	Dated and blocky 3-D beat-'em-up. Buy *Tekken2*.
Fighting Force	1-4	27	89%	Brutally destructive two-player action.
Final Doom	1-2	13	82%	New levels, but otherwise the same.
Final Fantasty VII	1	27	**93%**	The final word in adventure!
Final Fantasty Tactics	1	32	**90%**	Epic and engrossing strategy/RPG challenge.
Firemen, The*	1	05	78%	16-bit looking fire-fighting action game.
Firestorm: Thunderhawk2	1	03	85%	Playable helicopter blast-'em-up from Core.
Firo & Klawd	1-2	15	64%	Garish cartoon cop adventure. Dodgy.
Formation Soccer*	1-2	24	58%	Expensive and dated-looking footy guff!
Formula 1	1-2	11	84%	Exhilerating and glorious F1 sim!
Formula 1 '97	1-2	26	**90%**	Well upgraded and stuffed with excitement!
Formula Karts: SE	1-2	28	75%	Too simplistic for mass appeal.
Frogger	1-4	27	69%	Genuinely disappointing frog-'em-up.
G-Police	1	27	84%	Atmospheric, pulse-raising 3-D arcade thrills!
Galaxian 3*	1-4	10	69%	Repetitive and confusing shooter.
Gex	1	06	76%	Wretched 3DO platformer with dumb lizard.

playback

ARCADE-STYLE SHOOT-'EM-UPS



1. Time Crisis	**90%**
2. Colony Wars	92%
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%

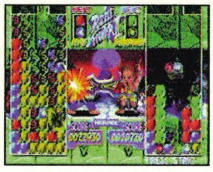
STRATEGY & ADVENTURE



1. Resident Evil 2	**96%**
2. Final Fantasy VII	95%
3. Tomb Raider II	95%
4. Resident Evil	95%
5. Tomb Raider	94%
6. Final Fantasy Tactics	90%
7. Broken Sword II	90%
8. Nightmare Creatures	90%
9. Warcraft 2	86%
10. C&C Red Alert	90%

playback

Puzzle & Party Games



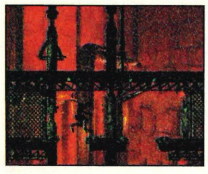
1. Puzzle Fighter 90%
2. Puyo Puyo Sun 87%
3. Bust-A-Move 3DX 88%
4. Micro Machines V3 92%
5. PaRappa the Rapper 82%
6. Bust-A-Move 2 88%
7. Kurushi 88%
8. Worms 92%
9. Bubble Bobble 85%
10. Rampage World Tour 77%

Racing Games



1. Gran Turismo 97%
2. TOCA Touring Car 94%
3. Rage Racer 94%
4. Rally Cross 89%
5. Total Drivin' 84%
6. Rapid Racer 87%
7. V-Rally 87%
8. Formula 1 '97 90%
9. Wipeout 2097 93%
10. Need for Speed 2 90%

Platformers



1. Abe's Oddysee 90%
2. Crash Bandicoot 2 86%
3. Klonoa 83%
4. SkullMonkeys 83%
5. Pandemonium 2 72%
6. Dracula X 84%
7. Mega Man 8 82%
8. Rayman 87%
9. Jumping Flash 2 86%
10. The Lost World 79%

GAME									ISSUE REVIEWED	SCORE	WE SAY...
Goal Storm*	1-2	●							01	69%	Disappointingly slow, fails to score...
Gran Turismo*	1-2	●			●		●	●	31	97%	The best racing game ever made!
Grand Theft Auto	1	●							30	88%	Criminally addictive road rage!
Grid Run	1-2	●	●		●				15	53%	Banal maze game with few rewards.
Gun Bullet*	1-2	●						●	26	85%	A real blast for one or two players...
Gunship	1	●							08	68%	Has not stood the test of time...
Hard Boiled	1	●							25	29%	A disasterously wasted licence...
Hardcore 4X4	1-2	●		●			●		15	81%	Hellish and repetitive off-road action.
Hebereke's Popitto	1-2	●							02	43%	Why bother with this when *Puzzle Fighter* exists?
Herc's Adventures*	1-2	●							25	70%	Cute-looking run-of-the-mill adventure.
Hercules*	1	●							24	63%	Sweet and innocent, but simple and dull.
Hermie Hopperhead*	1	●							02	53%	Worthless cartoon platform banality.
Hexen	1	●							21	35%	One of the PSX's worst ever games!
Hi-Octane	1-2	●			●				03	80%	Reasonable Bullfrog racer.
Horned Owl*	1-2	●						●	05	73%	Poor excuse for a light gun game.
Hyper Tennis	1-4	●	●						11	78%	Utterly pointless tennis sim. There are better.
Impact Racing	1-2	●		●					05	87%	Good then, now utter tripe!
Incredible Hulk, The	1	●							17	45%	Nothing 'incredible' about it. Poor.
Independence Day*	1-2	●		●	●				21	47%	Wretched film-inspired nonsence!
International Moto X*	1-2	●		●					21	77%	Moderate motorbike racer.
Int Superstar Soccer Deluxe	1-4	●	●						17	83%	16-bit footy conversion, no frills.
Int Superstar Soccer Pro	1-2	●							22	84%	One of the best football games on PSX!
Int Track & Field	1-4	●	●						09	85%	Superb multi-player sports special!
In The Hunt*	1-2	●							04	69%	Miserable sub shoot-'em-up. Tosh!
Iron & Blood	1-2	●							17	75%	Passable medieval beat-'em-up.
Iron Man & Manowar	1-2								16	47%	As much fun as genital surgery!
Jersey Devil	1	●						●	30	83%	Devilish gameplay, well worth a look!
Jet Rider	1-2	●							18	85%	Super-fast jetbikes, poor graphics.
Jet Rider 2*	1-2	●			●			●	31	78%	Fun, but essentially more of the same.
Johnny Bazookatone	1	●							04	85%	He's supposed to be cool. He's not.
Jonah Lomu Rugby	1-2	●	●						20	86%	Accurate and enjoyable rugby sim.
Judge Dredd	1-2	●						●	28	62%	Fantastic license, disappointing game.
Jumping Flash	1	●							01	87%	Highly imaginative first person platformer.
Jumping Flash 2*	1	●							08	86%	Psychedelic sequel to above (only better).
Kick Off '97	1-2	●							25	68%	Doesn't do the name justice!
Kileak The Blood	1	●							01	57%	Sparse *Doom* clone that lacks any kind of thrill.
Kileak The Blood 2	1	●							05	65%	The same only with a '2' at the end.
Killing Zone*	1-2								08	57%	Contemptible beat-'em-up. Avoid.
King Bowling	1-4	●							02	37%	Uninspiring cartoon bowling sim. Duff.
King's Field	1	●							06	61%	Long lasting RPG, looks crap though.
King Of Fighters '95*	1-2	●							11	62%	Utterly pointless 2-D beat-'em-up!
King Of Fighters '96*	1-2	●							24	59%	Rips off every fighting game. Still crap though.
Klonoa: Door to Phantomile*	1	●							30	83%	Fast and loveable Japanese platformer.
Konami Antiques Vol. 1	1-2	●							31	58%	Vaired, but dogged with too much rubbish!
Krazy Ivan	1	●							04	**90%**	Sumptuous visuals hide a real stinker!
Kurushi	1	●							27	88%	Ultra high quality puzzler.
Lifeforce Tenka	1	●							20	86%	Grisly polygonal *Doom* clone – flashy.
Little Big Adventure	1	●							19	83%	Outstanding graphical adventure!
Loaded	1-2	●							01	85%	Gutsy and mindless, but repetitive.
Lomax in Lemmingland	1								14	70%	Dull as dishwater platform game.
Lone Soldier	1	●							02	43%	Overrated Rambo rubbish!
Lost Vikings 2, The	1-2								23	72%	Playable platform strategy. Looks old though.
Lost World, The	1	●							25	79%	Stunning-looking platformer, but shallow.
MDK	1	●							27	**90%**	Brilliantly conceived 3-D shooter.
Machine Hunter	1-2				●				22	72%	Decent *Paradroid*-inspired shooter.
Madden '97	1-4	●	●						12	81%	Solid and playable US football sim.
Madden '98	1-8	●	●						29	82%	A fine, albeit rough-looking Gridiron game.
Marvel Super Heroes*	1-2	●							30	87%	A highly playable beat-'em-up.
Magic Carpet	1	●							06	**80%**	Magnificent magic carpet ride!
Mass Destruction*	1	●							30	80%	Enjoyable, destructive tank romp...
Maximum Force	1-2							●	32	37%	Pales into insignificance beside *Time Crisis!*
Mechwarrior 2	1	●							19	**91%**	Top class big robot shoot-'em-up!
Mega Man 8*	1	●							21	82%	Playable and colourful, but ultimately shallow.
Metal Slug*	1-2	●							26	74%	Top maiming action, but not enough of it.
Mickey's Wild Adventure	1	●							12	79%	Standard cartoon platformer. Yawn!
Micro Machines V3	1-8	●	●						19	**92%**	Blistering racing game. Fantastic!
Midnight Run	1	●							31	**60%**	Hum-drum racer with short-term appeal.
Monopoly	1-4	●	●			●			28	75%	A fun and faithful conversion of the original.
Monster Trucks	1	●							18	74%	Competent, but dull off-roader.
Mortal Kombat 3	1-2	●							01	**93%**	Don't buy this, get *MK Trilogy* instead.
Mortal Kombat Mythologies	1	●							29	71%	Blood-soaked, but mundane platformer.

GAME		ISSUE REVIEWED	SCORE	WE SAY...
Mortal Kombat Trilogy	1-2	14	92%	Gory orgy of 16-bit gameplay. Not bad.
Moto Racer	1-2	26	86%	A seat-of-the-pants roller coaster ride.
Motor Toon GP 2*	1-2	10	79%	Highly playable cartoon racer.
Myst	1	07	68%	Humdrum static screen adventure. Sad.
Nagano Winter Olympics*	1-4	31	83%	Excellent multi-player winter challenge
Namco Encore*	1	29	79%	Catching up fast – best: *Rolling Thunder*
Namco Museum 1*	1-2	04	70%	Retro collection – best: *Pacman* and *Galaga*.
Namco Museum 2*	1-2	06	70%	Worse than Vol 1 – best: *Xevious*.
Namco Museum 3*	1-2	13	73%	Decent retro fix – best: *Pole Position II*.
Namco Museum 4	1-2	23	79%	Some cool games – best: *Pacland*.
Nanotek Warrior*	1	22	76%	Tired shoot-'em-up set at molecular level.
Nascar Racing '96	1	15	80%	Comprehensive racing simulation – a bit jerky.
Nascar '98	1-2	28	82%	The complete Nascar package.
NBA Hang Time	1-4	31	60%	Slightly dated arcade basketball...
NBA In The Zone	1-2	05	79%	Solid sports sim, not as good as *Total NBA*.
NBA Jam Extreme	1-2	15	79%	Over exaggerated arcade port-over. Numb.
NBA Jam:TE	1-4	01	77%	Two-on-two multi-player mayhem. Good fun.
NBA Live '96	1-2	07	82%	Stale and lifeless basketball sim. Not much cop.
NBA Live '97	1-2	16	89%	All the latest stats and players – better engine.
Need For Speed, The	1-2	06	84%	Classic supercar OTT racing. Superb link-up!
Need For Speed 2, The	1-2	21	**90%**	Rough looking, but actually more fun – long term.
NFL Game Day	1-2	04	73%	American football – who cares?
NHL '97	1-8	15	86%	Intense ice hockey action – smooth and fast.
NHL '98	1-8	27	71%	Cool graphics, slushy gameplay.
NHL Face Off	1-2	04	78%	Admirable attempt, but a bit cumbersome.
NHL Face Off '98	1-8	32	80%	The best ice hockey game on the PlayStation.
NHL Open Ice	1-4	32	40%	Outdated and obselete hockey for £40!
Nightmare Creatures	1	27	**90%**	A fantastic, full-on splatter flick!
Note, The	1	28	72%	Above average first person adventure.
Novastorm	1	01	38%	Contemptable FMV-spooled shoot-'em-up arse!
Nuclear Strike	1	26	88%	Better looking and bigger than *Soviet Strike*.
Off World Interceptor	1-2	02	77%	Jerky 3-D buggy battling disgrace. Avoid.
Olympic Games	1-8	09	89%	Utterly fantastic multi-player event.
Olympic Soccer	1-2	09	84%	Highly playable footy game, basic graphics.
One	1	30	86%	The most destructive game ever!
Onside Soccer	1-2	12	76%	Uninspiring footy with management aspects.
Overblood	1	22	86%	Atmospheric, innovative 3-D space adventure.
Overboard	1-5	27	75%	Fun, repetitive and simple boat-'em-up.
Pandemonium	1	15	**90%**	Enjoyable platform game, but too restrictive.
Pandemonium 2	1	28	72%	Linear, but lovely-looking platformer.
Panzer General	1-2	05	73%	Strategy war game for dedicated anoraks.
PaRappa the Rapper	1	24	82%	Tap the buttons, sing the rhyme. Brilliant!
Peak Performance*	1-2	21	85%	Blistering 28-car joyriding – a great laugh!
Perfect Weapon	1	19	65%	Slothful 3-D adventure, lacking visual flair.
PGA Tour '96	1-8	02	86%	Well, it's golf innit. Buy the updated version.
PGA Tour '97	1-4	13	81%	Extremely able golfing sim. It's got the lot.
PGA Tour '98	1-4	28	63%	Best-looking golf, yet hampered gameplay.
Philosoma	1	02	85%	Great looking shoot-'em-up, but badly dated.
Pitball	1-4	15	66%	Rough and confusing futuristic sports.
Player Manager	1-2	14	74%	Banal management game. No frills and slow.
PO'ed	1	07	87%	Scrappy *Doom* clone, meant to be humerous.
Porsche Challenge	1-2	20	82%	Superb looking, technically brilliant. Too slow.
Power Instinct 2*	1-2	03	52%	Cheap and nasty beat-'em-up – stay well clear.
Powermove Pro Wrestling	1-2	16	51%	Men, in tights, absolutely awful game.
Powerplay Hockey '97	1-4	08	82%	Yet another hockey game, actually quite good.
Power Soccer 2	1-4	29	63%	Basically, not much fun at all!
Primal Rage	1-2	04	85%	Claymation-based beat-'em-up. Piss poor now.
Prime Goal EX*	1-2	02	62%	Very average sprite based footy. Worse than *FIFA*.
Pro Pinball: The Web	1-2	10	**90%**	Definitely the best pinball game on the PSX!
Project Overkill	1	13	89%	Violent, bloody, but repetitive and no two player!
Psychic Detective	1	06	75%	Wholly FMV erotic fantasy. Utter tosh.
Psychic Force	1-2	21	73%	Unusual floating beat-'em-up. Nothing special.
Puyo Puyo Sun*	1-2	31	87%	Hugely addictive party fun!
Quarterback Club '96	1-8	04	80%	Yet again, who cares?
Raiden Project, The	1-2	01	68%	Dazzling, but ultimately weak shoot-'em-up.
Rage Racer	1	16	**94%**	Super fast, varied, playable racer. Get it now!
Raging Skies	1-2	12	73%	Adequate flight shoot-'em-up, but linkable!
Rally Cross*	1-4	19	89%	First class off-road antics. Two and four player!
Rampage World Tour	1-3	29	77%	Flawed in places, but enjoyable.
Rapid Racer	1-2	26	87%	Powerful and glossy, but repetitive...
Rapid Reload	1	01	71%	Cutesy side-on cartoon shoot-'em-up. Dated.

playback

PLATINUM RANGE GAMES



1. Die Hard Trilogy 92%

2. Wipeout 2097 93%
3. Resident Evil 95%
4. Micro Machines V3 92%
5. Soul Blade 96%
6. Crash Bandicoot 84%
7. Destruction Derby 2 82%
8. Tekken 95%
9. Ridge Racer Rev 90%
10. Soviet Strike 83%

LONG TERM TEST

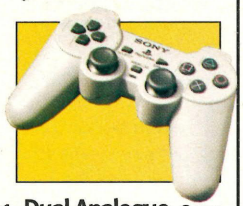


NAME: JONAH LOMU RUGBY
LENGTH OF TEST: 9 MONTHS
REPLAY VALUE: ★★★★★

BY OUR OWN ADMISSION, WE AREN'T RUGBY FANS HERE AT PLAY, NOT BY ANY MEANS. BUT THAT'S NOT TO SAY WE DON'T APPLAUD A DECENT GAME WHEN WE SEE ONE – AND CODEMASTERS GOT IT JUST RIGHT WHEN IT UNLEASHED THE MIGHTY *JONAH LOMU RUGBY!* DUE THE THE RECENT FIVE NATIONS TOURNAMENT AND BATH WINNING THE EUROPEAN CUP, WE DECIDED TO GIVE THIS ANOTHER GO, AND IT PROVIDED JUST THE RIGHT MIX OF INSIGHT AND THRILLS TO MAKE IT A WORTHWHILE AND ENJOYABLE EVENT FOR A THRONG OF EAR-CHEWING, AND SLIGHTLY SOZZLED MATES. YOU DON'T HAVE BE KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT THE SPORT TO HAVE FUN PLAYING THIS, AND YOU'LL BE AMAZED HOW MUCH YOU PICK UP!

playback

Joypads



1. Dual Analogue — Sony
2. PSX 1 — LMP
3. Station Master — Logic3
4. Cyclone — Phase9
5. Program Pad — Interact

Light Guns



1. G-Con 45 — Sony
2. Erazer — Fire
3. Predator — Logic3
4. PXS Light Gun — LMP
5. Protector — Logic3

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										ISSUE REVIEWED	SCORE	WE SAY...
Rayman	1	●								01	87%	Colourful platform game, now looking tired.
Ray Storm*	1-2									19	75%	Overwhelming two player space shoot-'em-up.
Ray Tracers	1	●								23	74%	Super fast *Chase HQ*-style racer. A bit basic.
Re-Loaded	1-2	●								17	61%	Actually worse than the original. Sloppy.
Rebel Assault 2*	1	●								18	60%	*Star Wars* shoot-'em-up. Boring and reptitive.
Resident Evil	1	●								08	**95%**	Gothic horror adventure – recommended!
Resident Evil: Director's Cut*	1	●								27	83%	Marginally better than RE, but dated.
Resident Evil 2*	1	●								32	**96%**	A truly spectacular sequel and utterly terrifying!
Return Fire	1-2	●			●					07	84%	Average 3DO split screen army romp.
Revolution X	1-2							●		08	40%	Dire Aerosmith mouse shoot-'em-up. Bad.
Ridge Racer	1	●					●			01	**93%**	Launch game, now looking very sad indeed.
Ridge Racer Revolution	1-2	●		●			●			04	**90%**	A better game, with link-up and nicer cars.
Riot	1-2	●								18	72%	Moribund futuristic sports – like *Rollerball*.
Rise 2: Resurection	1-2	●								05	88%	Hideous robot beat-'em-up. A bad date.
Risk	1-4	●	●		●					29	35%	Boardgame – there's no contest.
Road Rage	1-2	●					●			17	24%	Detestable and trashy shoebox sim. Ugh!
Road Rash	1-2	●								05	75%	Dodgy visuals, but fast and fun. Now cheap.
Robopit	1-2	●			●					12	55%	Abominable robot beat-'em-up.
Robotron X	1-2	●								15	85%	Classic gameplay, very fast, we prefer original.
Rock & Roll Racing 2	1-2	●					●			31	55%	Banal blaster with some two-player appeal.
Rockman Battle & Chase*	1-2	●			●					21	41%	Basic and unrewarding cartoon racer.
Rockman Dash*	1	●								31	80%	Enjoyable 3-D adventure. For smash get Dash!
Rosco McQueen	1	●							●	26	88%	You play with fire, you get this sizzling game!
Runabout*	1	●								20	77%	Highly playable racer, but way too short.
Salamander Deluxe Pack	1-2									25	74%	Aged, but enjoyable Eighties shoot-'em-up.
Sampras Extreme	1-4	●	●							09	**90%**	One of the best tennis games on PSX. Slick.
Samurai Showdown*	1-2	●								13	62%	Should be called *Samurai Slowdown!*
Sentient	1	●								19	84%	Absorbing and intelligent adventure. Bizarre.
Shadow Master	1	●							●	29	79%	Nice try, but lacks variety...
Shellshock	1	●								06	85%	Passable tank game, now looks basic.

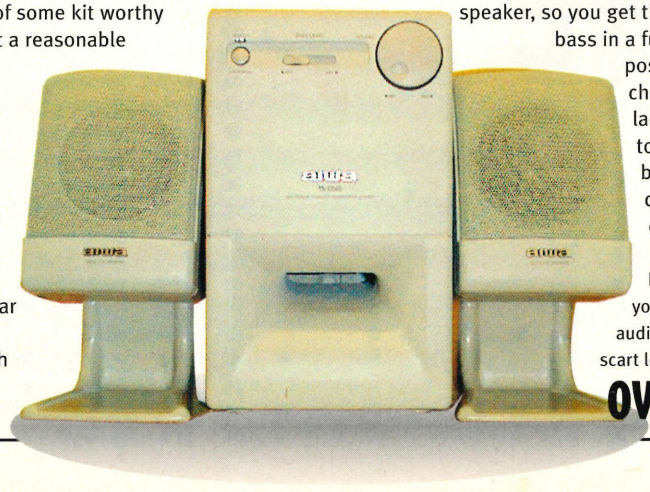
GROOVY GADGETS

UNFORTUNATELY, WE HAVE HAD TO POSTPONE OUR GROUP MEMORY CARD TEST FOR ANOTHER MONTH DUE TO TIME RESTRICTIONS AND INCONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE – THERE ARE SO MANY TO TRY WITH SO MANY GAMES THAT THERE WASN'T TIME TO ACCUMULATE ALL THE RESULTS. HOWEVER, LET US NOW LOOK AT, AND EVALUATE SOME OF THE LATEST GADGETS TO HIT THE SHELVES.

Aiwa TS-CD20 Speakers

Supplied by: Aiwa Price: £119 99

With sound as top-notch as that of the PlayStation, it is damn important to get hold of some kit worthy enough to belt it out at a reasonable quality. This speaker system from Aiwa comes at a reasonable price and is very attractive at look at, with colour co-ordination that almost matches that of your console. The sound itself is remarkably clear and the three-piece system can handle high volumes without distorting. This is perhaps possible thanks to the T-Bass system that this set utilises. This method allows the compact bass bucket to reproduce a similar sound to that of a considerably larger speaker, so you get the distinctive hum of rich, crisp bass in a fully portable set that can be positioned wherever the hell you choose. The only downside is the lack of raw power when compared to proper high-end sound systems, but seeing as this is primarily designed for PC use, it can certainly hold its own in the home cinema stakes.



Note: To connect your PlayStation, you'll either need standard red/white audio leads (if it's an old PlayStation) or a scart lead with audio connectors (if it's new).

OVERALL: ★★★★★

GAME										ISSUE REVIEWED	SCORE	WE SAY...
ShockWave Assault	1	●								03	87%	Limited surface-based shoot-'em-up. Dull.
Side by Side Special*	1	●					●			30	63%	Uninspiring, run-of-the-mill racer.
Sim City 2000	1	●				●				12	75%	A fantastic game. Not suited to the PSX.
Skeleton Warriors*	1									10	56%	Grotesque import beat-'em-up.
SkullMonkeys	1	●								31	83%	Pleasurable plasticine playability.
Smash Court Tennis	1-4	●	●							16	86%	Supremely playable, addictive cartoon tennis.
Soccer '97	1-4	●	●							20	82%	UK teams version of *Olympic* – very playable!
Soul Blade*	1-2	●								17	**96%**	The best weapons-based beat-'em-up on PSX!
Soviet Strike	1	●								14	83%	Decent helicopter shoot-'em-up, rough looking.
Space Hulk	1	●								10	84%	Claustrophobic and intense 3DO strategy game.
Space Jam	1-6		●							21	39%	Pants cartoon basketball game, based on film.
Speedster	1-2	●			●		●			20	80%	Overhead racer with okay handling, but slow.
Spider*	1	●								20	75%	'On rails' arachnid platformer. Can get boring.
Spot Goes to Hollywood*	1	●								20	72%	Uninspiring cartoon platform game. Yawn.
Stahlfeder*	1	●								06	65%	Old-style vertical shoot-'em-up – too easy.
Star Gladiator	1-2	●								16	88%	Competent beat-'em-up from Capcom.
Starblade Alpha	1	●								02	68%	Lots of blasting action, no control at all...
Starfighter 3000	1									08	85%	A decent stab at a sci-fi shooter/strategy.
Star Wars: Masters of Teras Kasi*	1-2	●								30	74%	A great license, but somewhat wasted.
Starwinder	1	●								13	77%	Linear space-based racer. Lacks excitment.
Steel Harbinger	1	●								13	80%	Controlling a violent nympho isn't much fun.
Steel Reign	1-2	●			●				●	30	58%	One to rent, not to buy!
Street Fighter Alpha	1-2	●								07	**93%**	Classic 2-D beat-'em-up, now been replaced.
Street Fighter Collection	1-2	●								29	67%	Some stones are best left unturned!
Street Fighter Ex Plus	1-2	●								25	**91%**	It's absolutely EXcellent!
Street Fighter: The Movie	1-2	●								01	35%	The original PLAY score was a misprint! Crap!
Street Fighter Zero 2*	1-2	●								12	**94%**	Simple, colourful graphics – total gameplay!
Street Racer	1-8	●	●		●					14	84%	Childish *Mario Kart* wannabe, good multi-player.
Strikepoint*	1-2	●			●					14	54%	Shoddy and unconvincing helicopter sim.
Striker '96	1-4	●	●							01	73%	Extremely playable, but now extremely dated.

LONG TERM TEST



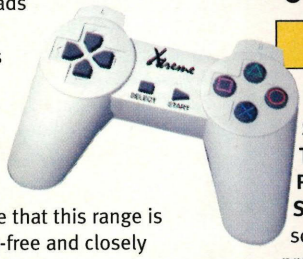
NAME: ROSCO MCQUEEN
LENGTH OF TEST: 4 MONTHS
REPLAY VALUE: ★★★★★

THERE WAS CERTAINLY NO DENYING THE ORIGINALITY OF THIS FIRE-FIGHTING ADVENTURE STARRING PERHAPS THE MOST CAMP VIDEO GAME CHARACTER EVER TO PRANCE ON TO THE PLAYSTATION SCENE. HOWEVER, THESE DAYS THE GAME ITSELF COMES ACROSS AS BEING VERY REPETITIVE ON RE-PLAY. ADMITTEDLY, THE FIRST FEW GAMES WERE A JOY TO BEHOLD AS YOU GRAPPLED WITH THE VARIOUS TRAITS OF THE HERO AND EXPLORED THE COLOSSAL OFFICE BLOCK EXTINGUISHING FIRES AND COLLECTING BONUSES AND POWER-UPS. BUT AFTER A WHILE YOU LOSE THE INITIAL SPARK AND ENTHUSIASM TO PERSEVERE, AND THE WHOLE THING BECOMES A MONOTONOUS CHORE – PROGRESS, BUST ROBOTS, PUT OUT FIRE, OVER AND OVER AGAIN. IT'S STILL A QUALITY GAME THAT LOOKS GREAT, EXPLORES THE CAPABILITIES OF THE HARDWARE AND IS GOOD FOR DISTRACTING THE KIDS. BUT ADULTS SEEKING INTRIGUE, ADVENTURE AND EXCITEMENT WOULD BE BETTER OFF CHOOSING SOMETHING A BIT MORE ENGROSSING AND REWARDING IN THE LONG RUN LIKE *TOMB RAIDER II*, *FINAL FANTASY VII* OR THE FORTHCOMING *RESIDENT EVIL 2*. SORRY ROSCO!

POWER PADS

Supplied by: X-Treme
Price: £7.99

This attractive new set of joypads come in numerous colour variations in both solid and see-through formats. Whereas most third-party joypads use gimmicky features such as auto-fire and slow-motion mode to sell them, it is almost refreshing to see that this range is completely frills-free and closely resembles the official Sony pads – very closely in fact. They are very solid in construction and have successfully withstood some of the more vigorous forms of extreme violence we have inflicted upon them. Little more than a colourful alternative to the originals, these perform well on the job, and we can't ask much more than that.

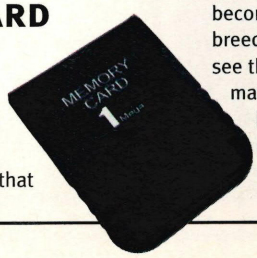


OVERALL: ★★★★★

MEMORY CARD

Supplied by: X-Treme
Price: £8.99

Complimenting the new batch of joypads is this rainbow-coloured range of memory cards that also come in solid and transparent variations. There isn't a lot else to say really other than they look much like the official cards and save your data just as well. So, erm, yeah!

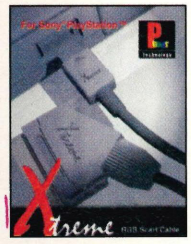


OVERALL: ★★★★★

ALSO AVAILABLE

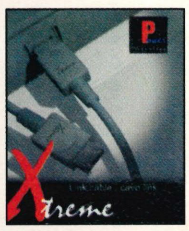
RGB SCART CABLE

Supplied by: X-Treme
Price: £7.99
Summary: A six-foot scart lead that produces a crystal-clear picture for the more serious gamers amongst you. Does the job well, no arguments here!



LINK CABLE

Supplied by: X-Treme
Price: £6.99
Summary: The link-up games may be becoming a dying breed, but it's good to see that third-party manufacturers still have faith. This is a reasonable enough alternative to the Sony original.



WIN!

A GAMESTER LMP STEERING WHEEL AND A COPY OF FORMULA KARTS!

To celebrate the fact that Gamester LMP has redesigned and repackaged its best-selling PSX Steering Wheel for the highly reasonable price of £59.99, it has offered PLAY five of these remarkable units to give away, as well as five copies of *Formula Karts: Special Edition* by Telstar Electronic Studios. All you have to do to be in with a shot at winning one of these much-sought after sets is answer the following question and send it, along with your name and address and to: **Driving Me Bonkers Competition, PLAY Magazine, Paragon House, St Peter's Rd, Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 2JS.** All entries much arrive by 20 May.

Question: Who is the current Formula One world champion?



NO REALLY, WE WILL BE DOING A ROUND-UP OF EVERY MEMORY CARD NEXT MONTH!

LONG TERM TEST



NAME: ALIEN TRILOGY
LENGTH OF TEST: 24 MONTHS
REPLAY VALUE: ★★★★★

WHO KNOWS WHY WE SUDDENLY PICKED THIS UP AND VENTURED FORTH TO LV426 FOR MORE ALIEN-SPLATTERING, BUT WE DID. THIS PARTICULAR TEST WAS CONDUCTED BY SOMEONE WHO DIDN'T REALLY PLAY *ALIEN TRILOGY* WHEN IT FIRST EMERGED, BUT *HAD* PLAYED THE RECENT MAIMING-FEST THAT WAS *DUKE NUKEM*. SO, HOW DOES THE OLD COMPARE WITH THE NEW? IF THE TRUTH BE TOLD, THEN THE ENGINE USED IN FIRST-PERSON SHOOTERS SUCH AS THIS HAS HARDLY PROGRESSED AN INCH SINCE ACCLAIM'S FABULOUSLY ATMOSPHERIC BUG-HUNT, AND THIS IS WHY THE LOOK OF *ALIEN TRILOGY* IS STILL QUITE SHARP WHEN UP AGAINST THE HEAVILY PIXELATED, YET DEVILISHLY PLAYABLE *DUKE*. ADMITTEDLY, THE ACTUAL ALIENS IN THE GAME WERE ALWAYS LACKING THAT KILLER PRESENCE TO MAKE YOUR STOMACH SINK ON SIGHT – INSTEAD THEY RESEMBLE OVER-SIZED INSECTS THAT JITTER LIKE AN EPILEPTIC UNDER STROBE LIGHTS! IN THE FILMS THEY MOVE LIKE SMOOTH, CALCULATED PREDATORS, IN THE GAME THEY MOVE LIKE INVALIDS. SIMPLE AS THAT. DESPITE THE, AT TIMES, UNCONVINCING VISUALS, THE THING THAT DRAWS YOU TO THIS GAME IS THE ATMOSPHERE AND THE LICENSE ITSELF. THERE'S NOTHING BETTER THAN WATCHING ONE OF THE FILMS, SHOVING THIS INTO YOUR 'STATION, PICKING UP A PULSE RIFLE AND WATCHING THOSE ACID-FOR-BLOOD SCUM-BUCKETS EXPLODE UNDER HEAVY FIRE. UNLESS *ALIEN RESURRECTION* DELIVERS, THIS WILL REMAIN THE DEFINITIVE ALIENS GAME.

GAME											ISSUE REVIEWED	SCORE	WE SAY...
Suikoden	1	●									16	80%	Endearing and lasting Manga RPG.
Super Puzzle Fighter 2*	1-2	●									18	**90%**	Fan-bloody-tastic Japanese puzzler!
Supersonic Racers	1-8	●	●								11	**91%**	Chaotic Wacky Races-style multi-player romp.
Swagman	1	●									21	82%	Proficient cutesy overhead cartoon adventure.
Syndicate Wars	1-4	●	●			●					22	85%	I love the smell of napalm in the morning!
Tail Of The Sun*	1	●									22	84%	Innovative caveman adventure. Badly presented.
Tekken	1-2	●									01	84%	Was the ultimate 3-D beat-'em-up, still decent.
Tekken 2*	1-2	●									07	**95%**	Ultimate 3-D beat-'em-up – essential purchase!
Tempest X3	1-2	●									16	86%	Ancient coin-op brought up-to-date. Good fun.
Tennis Arena	1-4	●	●								28	84%	Slick, addictive and playable...
Ten Pin Ally	1-6										18	60%	Dismal and utterly pointless bowling sim.
Test Drive Off-Road	1-2	●			●						24	35%	A turkey! Tarnishes the Test Drive name.
Test Drive 4	1-2	●		●			●				28	86%	Enough to blow your gasket!
Tetris Plus	1-2	●									30	81%	Addictive, but antiquated puzzler.
Theme Hospital	1	●									32	88%	More fun than a hospital could ever be!
Theme Park	1	●									01	86%	Build your own Alton Towers – very in-depth.
Tiger Shark	1										23	62%	Decent water and aerial shoot-'em-up. Rough.
Time Commando	1										11	78%	Restrictive, but graphically impressive adventure.
Time Crisis*	1	●							●		24	**90%**	Stupendous light gun shooting action. Top.
Tobal No. 1*	1-2	●									12	**94%**	Cracking high res beat-'em-up with quest mode.
Tobal 2*	1-2	●					●			●	22	**92%**	Highly advanced sequel. More of everything!
Tokyo Highway Battle	1	●									20	73%	Great concept, let down by low overall speed.
Tomba	1	●									31	56%	Unrewarding, dated platformer/RPG.
Tomb Raider	1	●									14	**94%**	Superb Indiana Jones-style 3-D adventure.
Tomb Raider 2	1	●								●	28	**95%**	A fine sequel that easily surpasses the first.
Top Gun: Fire at Will	1	●									09	76%	Lack-lustre combat flight sim based on film.
Toshinden	1-2	●									01	76%	First *Tekken* rival, graphically fantastic. Dated.
Toshinden 2*	1-2	●									05	74%	Far worse than the original. Avoid like plague.
Toshinden 3	1-2	●									25	78%	An average beat-'em-up. Nothing more.
Total Drivin'	1-4	●		●	●		●			●	26	84%	Thrilling racing with excellent variation.
Total Eclipse Turbo	1	●									02	69%	Poor third person shoot-'em-up. From 3DO.
Total NBA '96	1-8	●	●								05	**94%**	The best basketball game on PSX, until...
Total NBA '97	1-8	●	●								20	**92%**	The most advanced basketball game ever!
Touring Car Championship	1-2	●			●		●			●	27	**92%**	Really fast, really fun, really racing!
Transport Tycoon	1	●				●					24	78%	Absorbing strategy about transport networks.
Trash It	1-4	●	●								24	55%	Average hammer-based puzzle game.
Treasures of the Deep*	1	●								●	27	83%	Atmospheric underwater adventure.
True Pinball	1										05	65%	Highly overrated pinball tosh. No save game!
Tunnel B1	1-2	●									10	87%	Glitzy graphical showpiece. Short lived.
Twinbee Deluxe Pack*	1-2	●									02	65%	Vivid Japanese cartoon shoot-'em-up. Naff.
Twisted Metal	1-2	●			●						02	78%	Visually scrappy, but paved the path for...
Twisted Metal 2 (World Tour)*	1-2				●						16	88%	Remarkably compelling two player blast-a-thon!
Vandal-Hearts*	1	●									22	81%	Very Japanese fantasy strategy RPG. Bloody.
Victory Boxing	1-2	●									13	**90%**	Fast and smooth rendition of the 'sport.'
Viewpoint	1	●									02	74%	Glossy isometric shoot-'em-up. Bad slowdown.
Virtual Golf	1-4	●									09	61%	Drab golf sim, *Actua Golf 2* is much better.
Virtual Pool	1-2	●				●					17	68%	Great PC game, awkward and slow on PSX.
V-Rally	1-4	●			●		●				23	87%	Fast and accurate rally sim with great split screen.
VR Baseball '97	1-2	●									23	80%	Excellent and comprehensive sim of the sport.
V-Tennis	1-2	●									21	75%	Bland tennis game. Get *Sampras* or *Smash Court*.
Warcraft 2: The Dark Saga	1	●									24	86%	Utterly compelling medieval strategy fest!
Warhammer: SOTHR	1	●									14	82%	Unbelivably complex, but rewarding war game.
Warhawk	1	●									03	68%	Distinctly adverage helicopter shoot-'em-up.
WCW Vs The World	1-2	●									24	79%	Best wrestling game on PSX, until the next one.
Wild Arms*	1	●									24	85%	Hugely enjoyable RPG with serious challenge.
Williams' Arcade's Greatest	1-2	●									08	84%	Decent retro pack. Best: *Robotron*, *Defender*.
Wing Commander III	1	●									06	82%	Expensive space opera, involving plot.
Wing Commander IV	1	●									22	67%	Even more costly, but minus originality.
Wing Over	1-2	●		●			●				27	50%	Dated airborne shoot-'em-up.
Wipeout	1-2	●		●							01	89%	A state-of-the-art pop culture racer. Now weary.
Wipeout 2097	1-2	●		●			●				13	**93%**	Far better than *Wipeout* – a stunning game.
World Cup Golf	1-8	●									05	71%	Wholly rendered golf sim. Better than average.
Worms	1-4	●									01	**92%**	Crap looking, but oh-so playable in multi-player.
Wrestlemania	1-4	●	●								01	74%	Wrestling – not a real sport. Game sucks.
X2	1-2										15	77%	Amazing looking shoot-'em-up, but too hard!
X-Com: Enemy Unknown	1	●				●					06	82%	Compelling turn based strategy adventure.
X-Com: Terror from the Deep	1	●				●					15	88%	Deeply involving underwater strategy game.
Xevious 3D/G*	1-2	●									23	72%	Collection of every *Xevious* game. Not bad.
Yusha	1-2	●									30	60%	Nice-looking, but dated in gameplay.
Z	1-2	●		●		●					29	85%	Hard as hell, but intensely rewarding.
Zeitgeist*	1	●									01	51%	Incredibly slow shoot-'em-up. Worthless.

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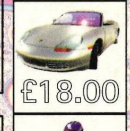

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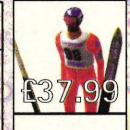

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FULL REVIEW

The fighting game of the year comes crashing in on the import scene. PLAY will be in first with the all-important, knuckle-grinding first review!

WORLD CUP 98

FULL REVIEW

The official game for France '98 arrives in all its splendour. But how will it compare to the other hopefuls that are already making a dash for the turnstiles?

X-MEN VS STREET FIGHTER EX

Cartoon capers as the best of both worlds get together for the ultimate dice and slice fist fight! Has this saga still got what it takes to be a winner, or will it fold and crumble next to the 3-D elite. All will be revealed next month!

NINJA

The masked marvel drops in uninvited, armed with a sack-full of throwing stars and a heart full of honour. We check out how this mysterious game is shaping up for combat!

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Printed by Duncan Web Offset, Passmore Plant, Tovil, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6XA.

Distributed by Seymour Ltd Distributors, Windsor House, 1270 London Road, Norbury, London, SW16 4DH. Tel: (0181) 6791899

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PLAY MAGAZINE: ISSN 1358-9474

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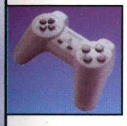
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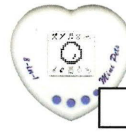
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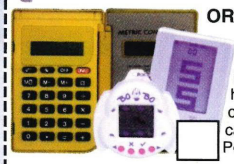
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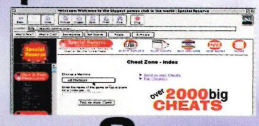
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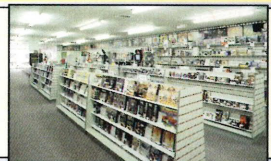


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