

DEAD OR ALIVE • TENCHU

issue thirty four

printed in the UK

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PLAY

プレイステーション

The UK's Best Unofficial PLAYSTATION Magazine!

TEKKEN 3

EXCLUSIVE!

FIRST REVIEW! The biggest beat-'em-up of the year, and we've got it first!

BUSHIDO 2

EXCLUSIVE! FIRST PREVIEW! Hack, slash, stab, gush!

GRAN TURISMO

UK UPDATE The greatest racing game ever, and it's just got better!

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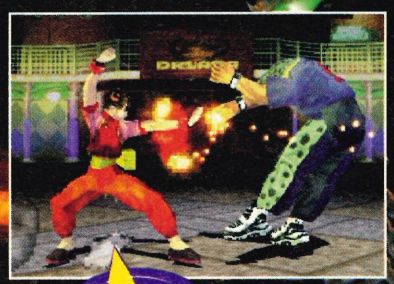
PlayStation

TEKKEN 3

THE BIG GAME

FIRST IMPORT REVIEW!





PLAY CLASSIC











20 THE MOST EAGERLY-AWAITED FIGHTING GAME OF THE YEAR HAS FINALLY ARRIVED ON IMPORT. BUT AFTER ALL THE HYPE, DOES IT REALLY DELIVER THE MOST HARD-HITTING BLOWS ON THE PLAYSTATION? WE ANSWER THIS VITAL QUESTION AND MANY MORE IN OUR EXCLUSIVE REVIEW!

5 WAYS TO CONTACT PLAY!

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Tel: (01202)299900 (5-6pm weekdays only!)

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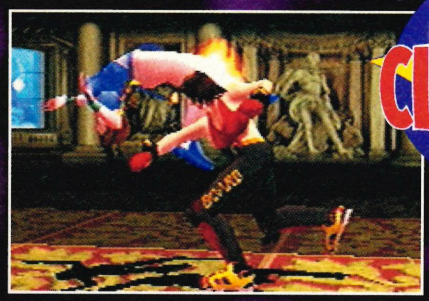
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The UK's Best Unofficial PLAYSTATION Magazine!

プレイステーション

DEAD OR ALIVE

EXCLUSIVE!

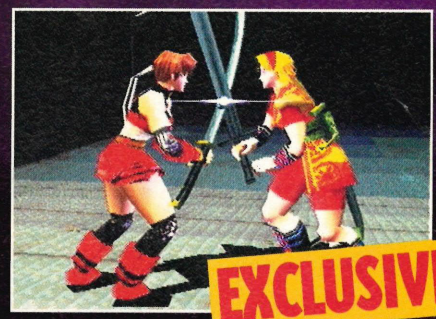
34 Wow! A 3-D fighting game in glorious, hi-res bounce-O-vision! Seeing is believing!



PLAY CLASSIC

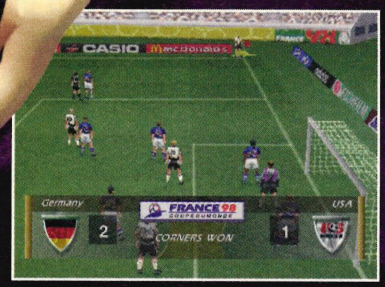
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EXCLUSIVE!

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COLIN McRAE RALLY



GRAN TURISMO



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WIRED UP PREVIEWS

Our new and improved preview section is packed with upcoming games, featuring...

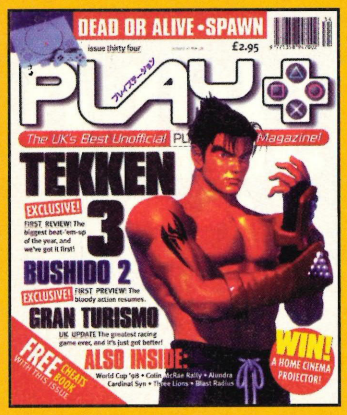
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FISTS have flown this month with the arrival of several top quality fighting games into the office. Apart from the obvious one (which I'll come to in a minute), we have seen the exceptionally good *Dead Or Alive* (which will be released officially by Sony later in the year). Then there was *Bushido Blade 2*, which didn't dazzle us it has to be said, shortly followed by *Tenchu* (see page 12). Of course, if you like *Street Fighter* then we finally got to see the long awaited PlayStation version of *X-Men Vs Street Fighter Ex*. Now, onto the biggy, *Tekken 3*. I made it my sole mission to acquire the game for this very issue, and what a pain in the arse that was!

After begging my contact at The Video Game Centre for one of his few copies (which he'd promised to someone else anyway) the Saturday before this issue went to press, I had to narrowly escape being mugged by a frenzied group of kids lurking outside. Upon arriving home safely, I then spent the next 24 hours kicking seven shades of s*** out of all comers and obtaining all the juicy secret stuff before clambering into work on the Sunday and banging out the review in my bleary-eyed state. You can read my verdict in the review on page 18 – but I must say that I don't think we're going to see a better beat-'em-up on the PlayStation, it really is *that* good.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to say a big 'thank you' to all who bought the last issue in their droves. It would appear that you liked our free monster tips book judging by the sales of the mag – of course, designer Mark argues that this is down to his *Gex 3-D* review! The sad design minion has also fiddled with the look of PLAY this month, so we hope you enjoy it!

■ Ryan Butt **Editor**

PLAYSTAT WIRE

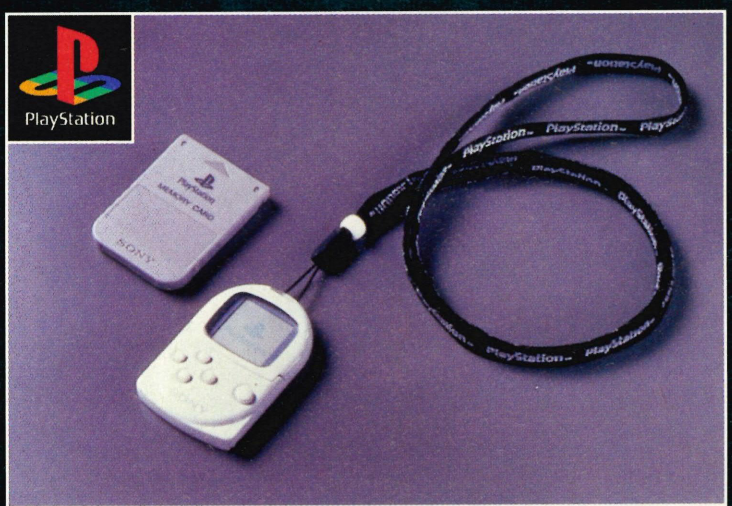
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PDA IN MY POCKET

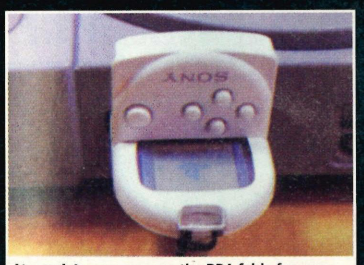
FIRST IMAGES OF SONY'S NEW ADD-ON!

Following on from last month's news about the Sony PDA, we have acquired some hot new pictures of what the actual gizmo will look like. As you can see from the main picture, the PDA (Personal Digital Assistant) is the same size as a memory card and will work in conjunction with the PlayStation in much the same way – plugging into the memory card slot on the console to download information from application discs. The PDA also has infra-red capabilities so that data can be exchanged directly with another PDA.

Although the function of the PDA is primarily a kind of microscopic personal organiser, it will also be used for gaming. Sony of Japan is remaining tight-lipped as to exactly what type of applications and software will be made available for it. The PDA (which is still only the working title for the device) will be released in Japan sometime in the winter, although no price has yet been announced. So far, the only applications available for use with the PDA is a clock, schedulers, memos, and directories, although Sony has made the specifications available to encourage software support.



[ABOVE] **A match made in heaven! The new Sony PDA stands side by side with its distant relative. Apparently, the PDA also functions as a memory card, so all in all it'll be a handy little device.**



[ABOVE] **As you can see, the PDA folds for easy insertion into the memory card slot.**



[ABOVE] **The PDA will allow a wealth of information to be at your fingertips at all times.**

a y s t a t i o n

tion d

a p p e n i n g s

INTERNATIONAL PLAY BOYS

WHO TO CONTACT AT PLAY MAGAZINE...



RYAN BUTT
Game of the month for Ryan was *Tekken 3* with its arcade-quality, plus all of the horny rendered females that really made it stand up... we mean 'out'!
play@paragon.co.uk



GRAEME NICHOLSON
Graeme's game of the month was *Pet In TV* – the new virtual pet game from Sony. Maybe this is because he has spent all month fiddling with his Digimon – oo-er!
silencio@paragon.co.uk



TOM SARGENT
Apart from liking just about everything, Tom's game of the month was *Timeshock* pinball, although any similarities with deaf, dumb and blind Tommy are purely coincidental!
tomsargent@paragon.co.uk

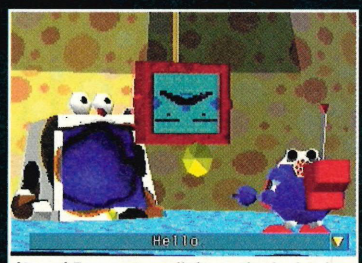
NEVER MIND THE TAMAGOTCHIS, HERE'S...

PET IN TELEVISION!

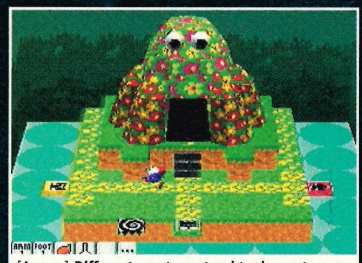
Attempting to jump on the Tamagotchi and general virtual pet band wagon, Sony has come up with the PlayStation's own little mischief maker. *Pet In TV* (doubtless another brilliant literal Japanese translation) gives you just that: a pet in your television!

Load the disk, choose from a variety of little blue robots to bring up and then guide him through the weird and wonderful world that awaits him. As the little fella wanders the brightly coloured landscape he encounters objects for the first time, like rocks, pieces of fruit, teleporters and so on. Unsure but eager to learn, he'll try things out and then ask you if he's doing the right thing. You'll even discover CDs with cheery new background music to play, as well as several new outfits – but you will have to teach him how to bring them back home properly to make use of them.

Luckily, there's a guide to help both you and your pet on little LCD screens during those difficult teething stages; offering advice at every step until you can take care of it yourself. Now that we're bored with Tamagotchi 2, this looks like a great new idea!



[ABOVE] **Transport your little creation back to its home to get some rest and a mental going-over.**



[ABOVE] **Different creatures tend to decorate their homes in different funky ways. Cool.**



[ABOVE] **Aw, you've got to love him haven't you? The best thing you can do when he looks to you for attention is select the little hand icon and stroke his cute little head. It makes him very happy.**

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.

The new animated film from Dreamworks, **Little Soldiers**, is coming to PlayStation. The film is in a similar vein to *Toy Story* and will feature lots of CGI wizardry. EA has picked up the rights, and the game will be along the same lines as **Quake**. Expect a full report next issue.

Damn it! **Sensible World Cup** has slipped back to September. And seeing as this will completely miss the World Cup, the game will be a club edition instead. Still, it's bound to be worth the wait.

Apparently, **Premier Manager '98** from Gremlin has notched up a record number of pre-orders from Electronics Boutique. Eager football manager wannabes have slung their dosh over the counter in anticipation for this hot title, and 1,400 copies have been reserved – making it second only to **TRII** in the 'must have on the day it comes out' stakes.

Calling all Platinum collectors, GT Interactive is to release **Final Doom** and **MK Trilogy** into the budget range. Any day now.

...And finally, we have just discovered a brand new hidden character in **Tekken 3** – Doctor B. This scientist is available to players that can beat the new Tekken Force Mode four times. Full details in the review on **page 18**...

USA ENTERTAINMENT

ENTERTAINMENT USA



Cat Bucannon brings you all the news on what's hot in the land of The Oscars, and pint-sized maniacs.

Skateboarding meets *Road Rash* in Shaba Games' current project. I recently learnt that Shaba Games, makers of *Pandemonium* and *Pandemonium 2*, has a new racing game on the boil – **Slipgroove**. This dumps gamers on a futuristic hoverboard and enables them to race and battle each other in fully-textured 3-D environments, including arenas called Magnetospheres and Battledomes. Not only will you be able to smash your competition to pieces, but you'll also be able to pull off special skateboard-like tricks for extra points. It's more than likely that a two player split-screen mode will make it in the final version. Expect an Autumn release.

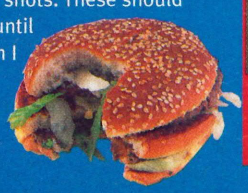


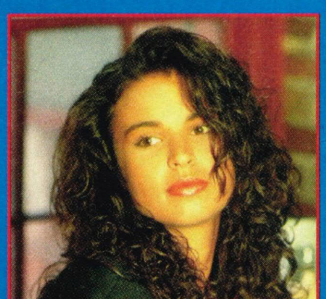


Superman is coming to the PlayStation in November! Titus, the company responsible, has generally shied away from producing PlayStation games, but all that is set to change with the November release starring the caped crusader. Thus far, only Acclaim and Sony have delved into comic book genre, but this is potentially one of the strongest licences imaginable. The game itself is going to be a polygon-based 3-D action/adventure, leaving any fears of a duff platform game firmly at rest. In addition to Titus' foray into the licencing market, it is also working on a **Blues Brothers 2000** title scheduled for a release with the film.



Metal Gear Solid the so-called hot property game of the year from Konami is nearing completion. I managed to bluff my way into its American headquarters and walk away some brand new shots. These should keep you going until next month when I will be sending PLAY a full work-in-progress report!





[ABOVE] Cat Bucannon – gave Leonardo DiCaprio the brush-off, that's why he wasn't at the Oscars!



LARA FILM COMETH!

GREEN LIGHT FOR TR MOVIE!

Film giant Paramount has finally signed a deal with Eidos to release a live action film inspired by the two smash-hit *Tomb Raider* games. We thought that this could turn out to be a sad cash-in, but having seen who's producing this potential blockbuster, the future looks bright for the industry's videogame vixen.



According to our spies, Lawrence Gordon and Lloyd Levin, producers of some spectacular big-budget movies ever, including *Die Hard, Predator* and *The Devil's Own*, have been linked with the project. No shortage of guns and violence then. Previous attempts at game-to silver screen tie-ins have been poor to say the least, but if anyone is capable of succeeding with this killer deal these industry veterans can. It isn't known who'll play Lara, but as reported a few months ago, Liz Hurley has shown a keen interest.

GTA GETS BETTER VERSION

DMA ENHANCES AMERICAN GAME

DMA design is to rectify the omissions and faults in the PlayStation version of *Grand Theft Auto* for its American release.

In an interview conducted over the internet, the Scottish coders hinted that the trains and helicopters that were present in the PC version of *GTA*, but lacking in the PlayStation version will be back in for the US game. DMA is also thought to be touching up the graphics to make the appearance crisper and more similar to the PC version. We'll have the full, unbridled transcripts of this incredible conversation, along with more revelations next month so tune in then.

CHARTS

In association with ChartTrack

Pos	Game	Developer	Publisher	Score
1.	Crash Bandicoot	Naughty Dog	Platinum	84%
2.	Die Hard Trilogy	Fox	Platinum	92%
3.	Micro Machines V3	Codemasters	Platinum	92%
4.	FIFA: RTWC 98	EA Sports	EA	91%
5.	Grand Theft Auto	DMA	BMG	88%
6.	Destruction Derby 2	Psygnosis	Platinum	82%
7.	Wipeout 2097	Psygnosis	Platinum	93%
8.	Tomb Raider II	Core Design	Eidos	95%
9.	Formula One '97	Psygnosis	Psygnosis	90%
10.	Porsche Challenge	Sony	Platinum	82%

READERS' MOST WANTED

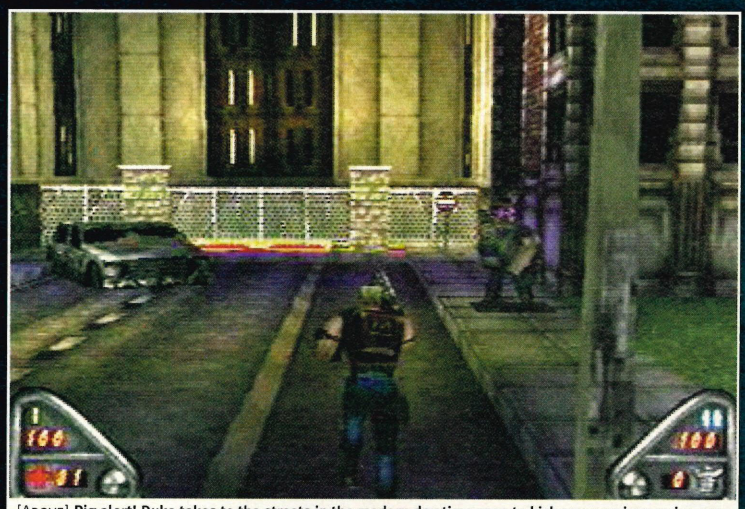
VOTED BY THE PLAY READERS BY FAX, E-MAIL OR LETTER...

Pos	Game	Developer	Publisher
1.	Tekken 3	Namco	SCEE
2.	Three Lions	Z-Axis	BMG
3.	Parasite Eve	Square	Square
4.	Dead Ball Zone	GT	GT
5.	Resident Evil 2	Capcom	Virgin

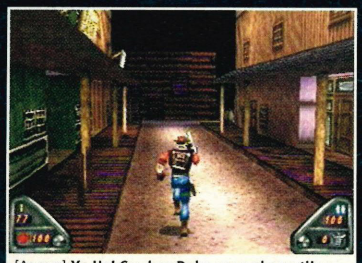
DUKE NUKEM RETURNS IN A TIME TO KILL

COME GET SOME MORE!

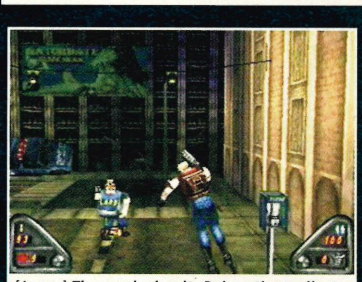
The wise-cracking, dead-pan monster slayer, Duke Nukem, is set to return in a brand new game coming to PlayStation in August. *Duke Nukem: Time To Kill* moves away from the familiar first person perspective and instead ventures into *Tomb Raider* territory as Duke travels in time via a machine created by the Pig Cops. Duke must visit four different time zones (including Modern, Roman, Medieval and Wild West) eradicating the scummy pigs before they wipe out the human race. All of the familiar Duke traits will be included – mega weapons, one-liners and, best of all, a split-screen two player deathmatch mode. We will be printing a full preview of this killer title in the next issue of PLAY, so until then, savour these hot pictures.



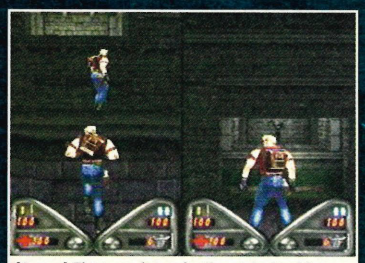
[ABOVE] **Pig alert! Duke takes to the streets in the modern day time zone to kick some serious swine ass with the aid of his token wide arsenal of crater-making weapons.**



[ABOVE] **Ye-Ha! Cowboy Duke goes pig-rustling in the Wild West. Where's the saloon?**



[ABOVE] **The new look suits Duke rather well, at least the enemies aren't flat anymore.**



[ABOVE] **The two-player deathmatch should provide plenty of fun for feuding friends.**

SAVED!

What's on the PLAY office memory card this month? Let's take a look!

Alundra
RPG reviews require mucho playing, and saving is essential!



Resident Evil 2
This slot has got all the top data – secret characters the lot!



Tekken 3
Every character, ending and game mode – we've found it all!



Tombi
Don't ask what this is still doing on the card, it was only a preview!



WLS
An office tournament was played and won by Ryan!





There you go, an interesting selection of saved game data we're sure you'll agree. Updated next month.



SCHOOL'S OUT!

RIVAL SCHOOLS FROM CAPCOM HITS THE ARCADES

Capcom has just released its brand new coin-op fighting game into arcades across the land. *Rival Schools* is a new 3-D affair in keeping with the style of *Street Fighter Ex Plus*. It features numerous high-school teenagers with different weapons and fighting styles, the aim being simply to duff the stuffing out of the opponents from the rival schools. It is heavily rumoured that this crisp-looking coin-op is getting a PlayStation conversion as we speak, and a release could be on the cards by the end of the year. Expect to see more news on this tough cookie in the forthcoming months.



[ABOVE] ***Rival Schools*** **keeps with the same ludicrous-hit combo system as the SF games.**



[ABOVE] **Each character uses a different fighting style and weapon – like this boxing girl.**



[ABOVE] **Up close and personal! She'll give you a smacker, but not from her lips.**

GOOD GAME

A trio of cockney football managers – namely Harry Rednapp from West Ham, Joe Kinnear from 'The Dons' and Dave Bassett from Forest, recently attended a press launch for Gremlin's *Premier Manager '98*. The managers played the game with their respective teams and fielded questions from journalists and TV stations. The event was a major coup for Gremlin, as the managers proved entertaining hosts with their football tales and witty banter.



[ABOVE] **Messrs Kinnear, Rednapp and Bassett – down to earth and entertaining by all accounts.**

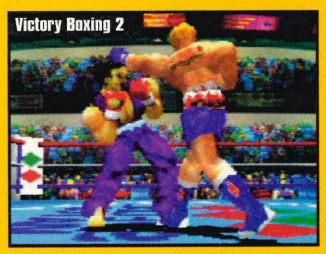
JAPS EYE

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

THQ has just announced plans to acquire the rights to release a four-player fighting game from Polygram Magic of Japan. Entitled **Shao Lin**, this promising new game utilises six schools of martial arts as up to four human players battle it out on-screen simultaneously. **Shao Lin** will also feature three modes of play including Training, Vs, and Story Mode – the latter is said to add RPG elements into the game. Of course, if you don't have any mates to compete against, you can opt to take on up to six CPU opponents at once if you're feeling particularly 'ard. **Shao Lin** should arrive over in Europe around November time.



The first screenshots have emerged of **Victory Boxing 2** – the follow up to the original smash hit. The new game is said to feature more moves, more characters, and a Tamagotchi-like scenario whereby you train and beef-up your fighter to get them into the right form and frame of mind to batter their opponents. We'll have more information on this contender next month.



Hori Electronics, based in Japan, is about to release a special joystick to tie-in with the release of **Tekken 3**. The company is famous for producing tie-in peripherals, and this limited edition stick should go down a storm with the arcade fans. Called the **Tekken 3 Real Arcade joystick**, the device will have arcade-quality components, although no shoulder buttons – making it next to useless with other PlayStation games. Only 30,000 will be made, and each comes with three character cards. Better get down to your local importer's sharpish if you fancy owning one.





Finally, Capcom has just released **Pocket Fighter** into arcades across Japan. The game is a miniaturised version of its smash hit fighting series and features characters from **Street Fighter** and **Darkstalkers** games. There are lots of cute-combos to thrash about with and some impressive special effects. The game has got 'PlayStation' written all over it, and so Capcom is sure to get cracking on a conversion pretty damn soon.



SOCCER WATCH

WITH DENNIS WHYS

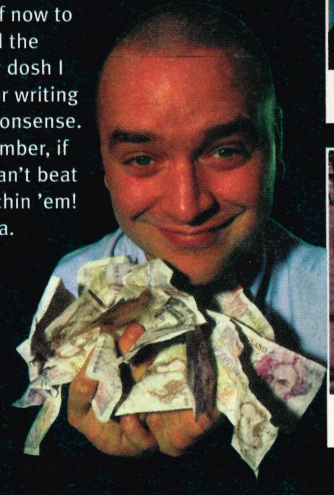
(THE FOOTIE PUNDIT WITH A CHELSEA SMILE!)

Alright football fans! Welcome to the first of my regular columns that will chart the progress of the sack-full of football games coming to PlayStation in the build-up to the World Cup. This month I've managed to 'chin' some new screenshots out of those software companies for a few of the new games to enter the competition, plus I've 'ad a good play of some of the games tipped to be leading contenders for that cup.

I recently attended a jolly good booze-up in a swish country hotel courtesy of Electronic Arts, and whilst wiping the diced carrot off me t-shirt I managed to 'av a good play on FIFA... sorry, *World Cup '98*. Pretty good it was too! It's got a whole new front end to convey the sparkle of the event (why ain't I playing Hoddle, eh?), and some new speed settings and in-game tactics – but more about that in my monster work station on page 24. I have also 'ad a go on *World League Soccer* which is also lookin' pukka – plays a bit like *Soccer '97* only with better graphics and more tricks to master.

Finally, like I said earlier, I've got some screenshots of *Match Day 3* from Acclaim and *Sensible Soccer World Cup* from GT – both are looking blindin', although I 'aven't had so much as a sniff of a play of either because the software companies 'aven't sent me any discs (what's the matter, scared eh... EH?).

Next month will be crunch time when all the top footie games get praise or abuse hurled at them from the review terraces. I'm off now to spend the lovely dosh I got for writing this nonsense. Remember, if you can't beat 'em, chin 'em! See ya.

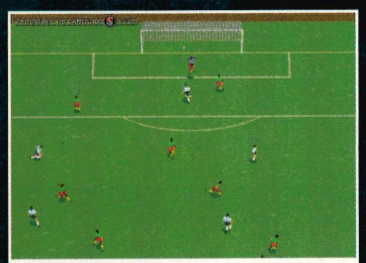




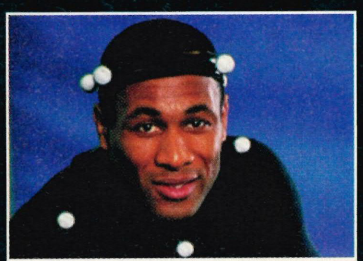
[Above] *World Cup '98* – think *FIFA '98* only with a new front end, and generally better.



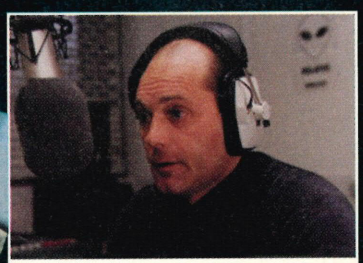
[Above] *Match Day 3* certainly looks a bit special, but we 'aven't played it yet!



[Above] Just when you thought that *Sensi Soccer* had hung up its boots for good, here's another!



[Above] Sir Les moonlightning with a spot of motion capturing – Woo, nice hat Les!



[Above] Me old mucker Ray Wilkins providing the commentary for *World League Soccer*.



PlayStation

brahma force



"Crushes the boundaries of Doom, offering a fresh twist on the established genre in a whirlwind of originality."

90%
TOTAL PlayStation

JVC JALECO

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MASKED ASSASSIN

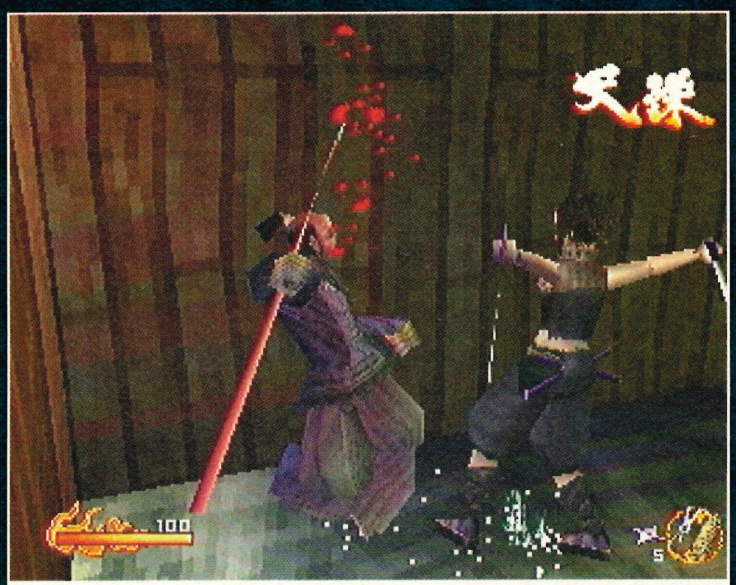
TENCHU ARRIVES IN A SPURT OF BLOOD

We have been gagging to get our hands on this game for ages, so imagine our frustration when it finally arrived, too late for review!

Tenchu is a Ninja sim by Sony Music Entertainment Japan (not Square as we originally thought) and it is fantastically playable. When you first get going, you could probably describe the action as being a cross between *Nightmare Creatures* (for the intense gore effects) and *Tomb Raider* (for the adventure aspect), but after playing it for a length of time you'll realise that to compare this game with them would be a huge injustice to *Tenchu*.

There are two modes of play – the actual adventure quest and a training mode. You pick one of two characters (a male or female Ninja) and must then visit various 3-D locations killing anything that moves (except innocent civilians of course – that just isn't a Ninja's style!) There are objectives, but seeing as this is a Japanese game at present, these are all lost on a western audience unskilled in the art of reading Japanese.

The main attraction here is the way you can creep in the shadows and attack people by surprise. To do this effectively, you can submerge yourself in water, take to the rooftops, press up against walls or attack from distance with one of your many weapons. By far the best projectile to use (other than bombs, poison and sleeping potion) are the throwing stars – to aim, the perspective switches to first person as you glide your vision around, focus on your target and then hurl your star. *Tenchu* offers you so much freedom to hunt down your victims, stealth style, and slaughter them that is immensely playable. *Tenchu* will get an official release later in the year.



[ABOVE] *Tenchu* goes straight for the jugular with sophisticated gameplay and stomach-churning gore. You can play it as a straight slice & dice game, it creep in the shadows and hunt down your prey.



[ABOVE] The archers are a real pain. When they shoot you, the arrow stays embedded for a while.

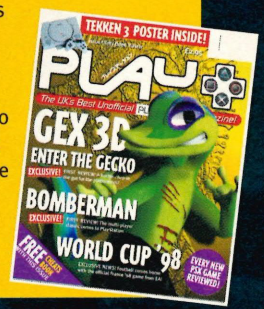
WE'VE DONE THE TON!

Nothing like a bit of self-praise when it's well deserved. Thanks to your fabulous support, we are pleased to announce that issue 33 of PLAY (the one with *Gex* and the free £10 tips book on the front) was the biggest selling issue ever!

Over 100,000 copies found their way to eager PlayStation owners over Easter – so many in fact that we had to produce an emergency print run of an extra 50,000 copies just to keep the shops happy. But even that wasn't enough.

Having to re-print a magazine is extremely rare and it that proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that PLAY is the gamers choice. Thanks for your continued support and look forward to some exciting free gifts in the near future.

Damian Butt
Managing Editor



THOSE RELEASE DATES IN FULL

All these games should be out on the shelves in the next two months.

April/May

- Three Lions (BMG)
- World Cup 98 (EA)
- Motorhead (Gremlin)
- Premier Manager '98 (Gremlin)
- Klonoa (SCEE)
- Ghost In The Shell (SCEE)
- Spawn: The Eternal (SCEE)
- Diablo (EA)
- Cardinal Syn (SCEE)
- Gran Turismo (SCEE) CLASSIC
- Snow Racer (Ocean)
- Masters of teras Kasi (Virgin)
- Lucky Luke (Ocean)
- Actua Tennis (Gremlin)
- Crime Killer (Interplay)

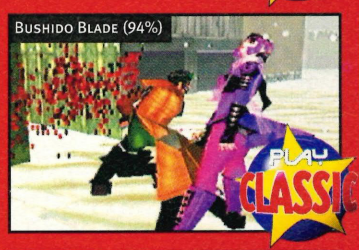
AND THE SLIPPERS...

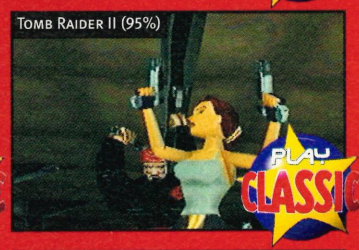
Game (publisher)	Was	Now
Sensible Soccer World Cup (GT)	May	September
Alien Vs Predator (Fox)	May	October

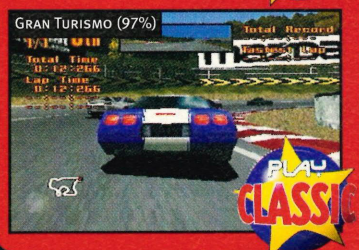
PLAY RECOMMENDS...

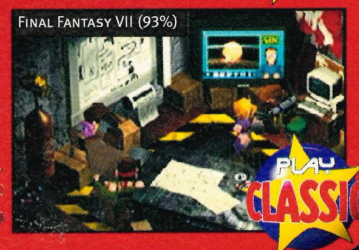


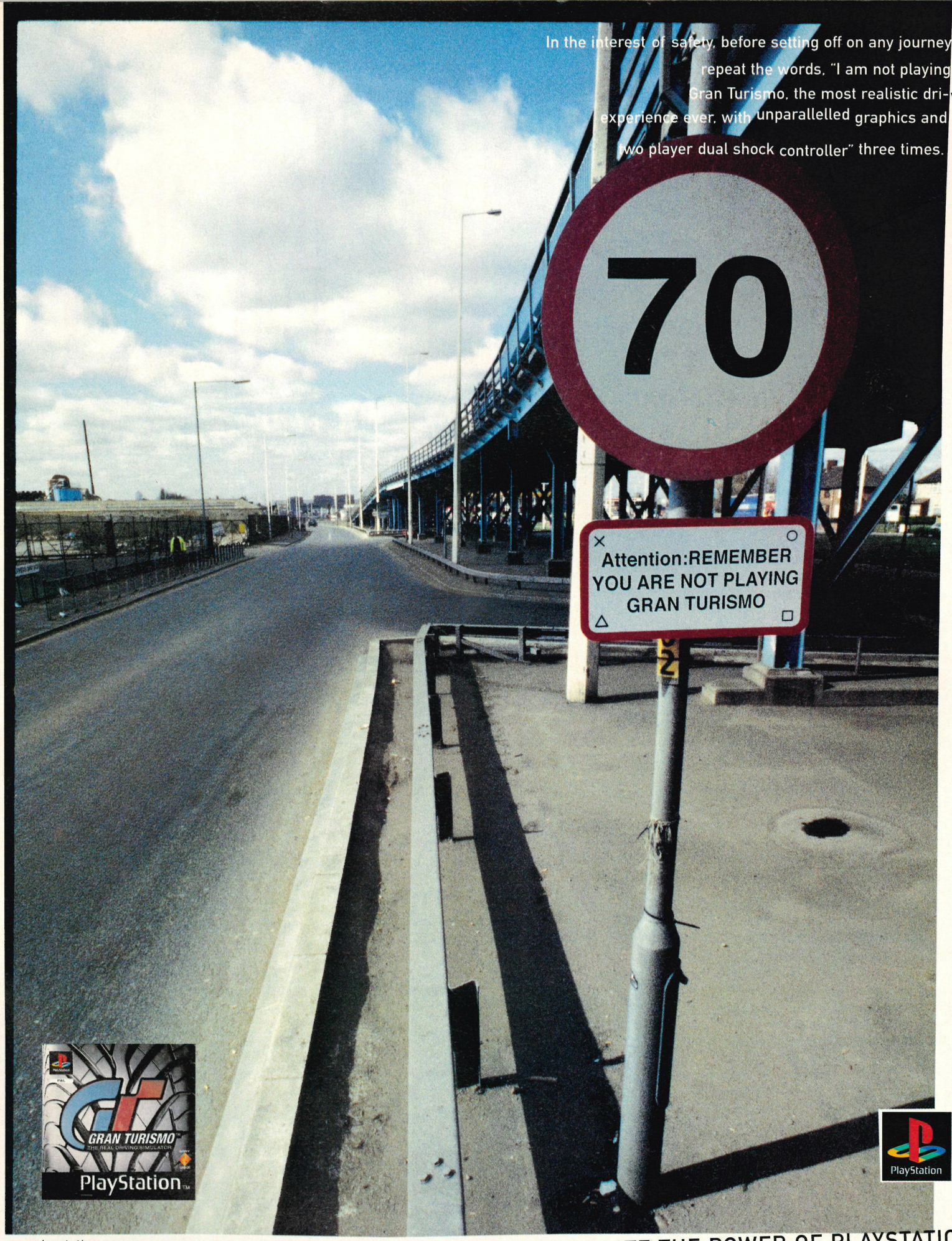










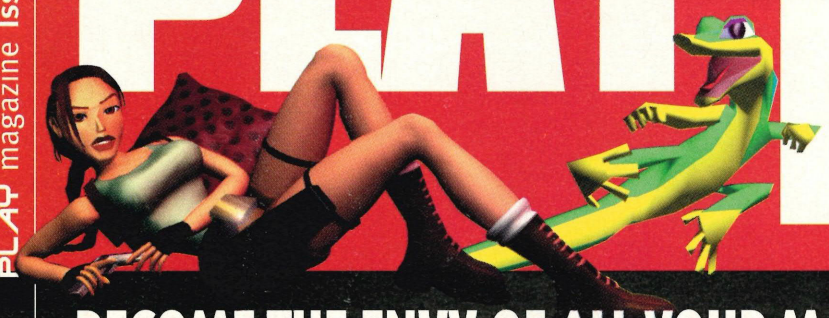


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DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF PLAYSTATION

PLAY BIG!



BECOME THE ENVY OF ALL YOUR MATES WITH THIS FANTASTIC SYSTEM TH

You may remember a while ago in PLAY we wrote about the **Sharp XV-C1E** projection unit supplied by **Roche Visual Communication**. This highly attractive compact Liquid Crystal projection system allows you to plug a PlayStation into the back and play your favourite games on a screen the size of a wall!

It doesn't just end with gamesplaying though, because you can also connect it to a video and run your favourite films and TV programmes through it as well. Just imagine watching *Brookside* or *Match of the Day* through this baby. Mmmm!

The **Sharp XV-C1E** has a wide range of features such as screen adjust, colour adjust and a multiple signal frequency – so it can handle NTSC and SECAM as well as the standard PAL systems. The whole thing is worth **£1000**, but you could win it now for nothing!

That's right, PLAY has teamed up with those highly generous people at Roche Visual Communication to give away this spectacular prize in this awesome competition. If you would like to know more about the large screen projection systems that **Roche Visual Communication** offer, then call free on **0800 378563**.

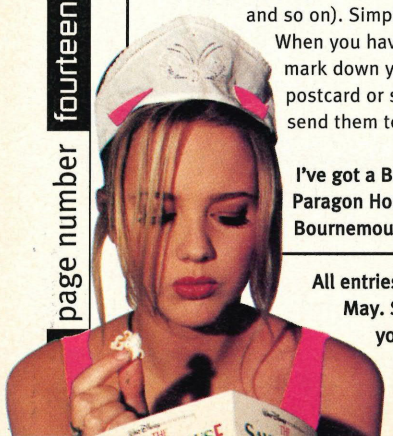
HOW TO WIN THE BUGGER

To be in with a chance of winning this great prize, simple study the following set of PlayStation screenshots and tell us which game they come from. To make things easier, we have given you a list of possibilities, so all you have to do is match the screenshot with the game name (eg 1-A, 2-D and so on). Simple!

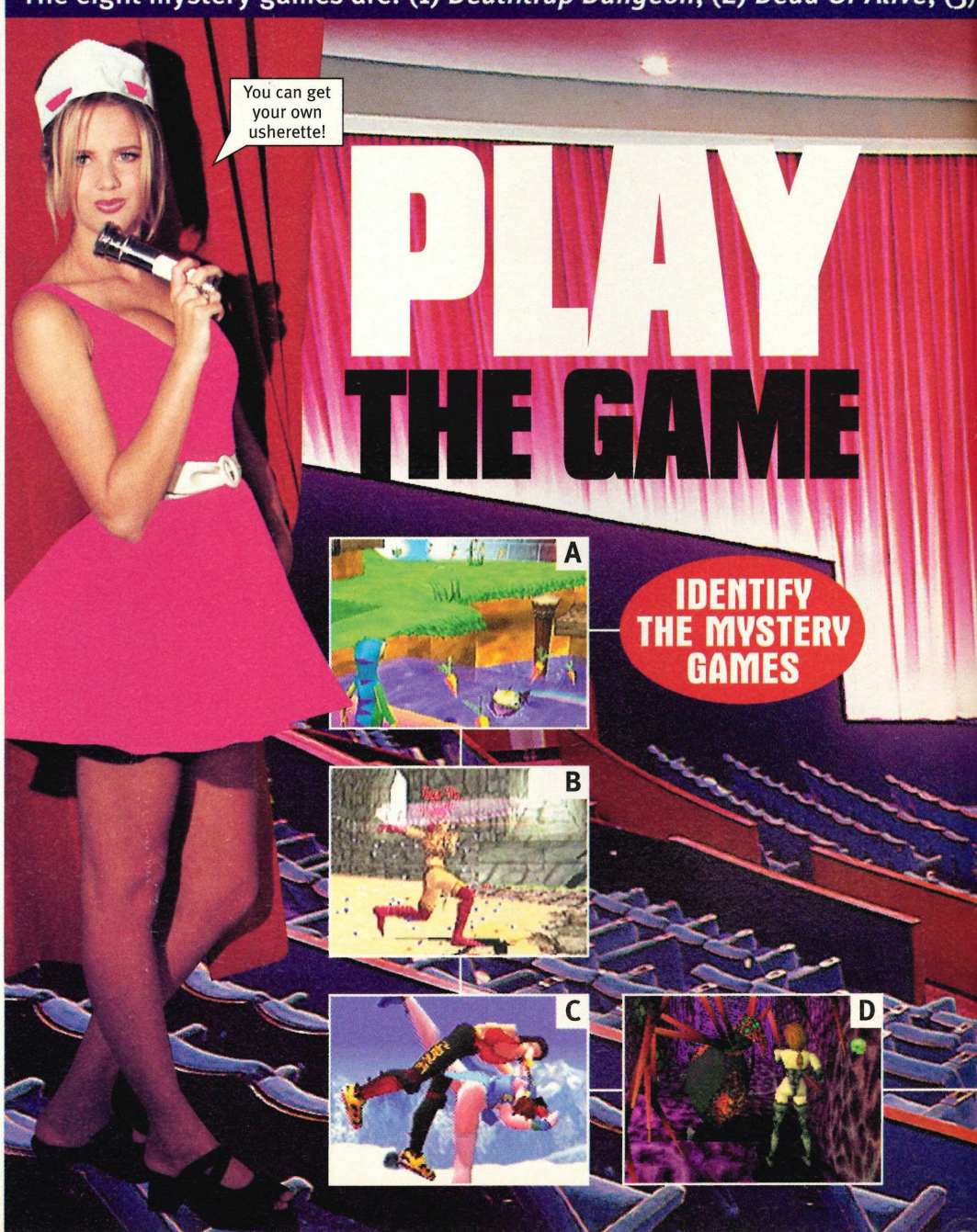
When you have figured them all out, mark down your entries on a postcard or sealed envelope and send them to:

I've got a Big One, PLAY Magazine, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth BH1 2JS.

All entries must arrive by 29 May. So make haste and get your entries off today!



The eight mystery games are: (1) *Deathtrap Dungeon*, (2) *Dead Or Alive*, (3)



WIN THIS FABULOUS CINEMA PROJECTION UNIT FROM ROCHE!



AT TRANSFORMS YOUR LIVING ROOM INTO A GAMESPLAYING MULTIPLEX!

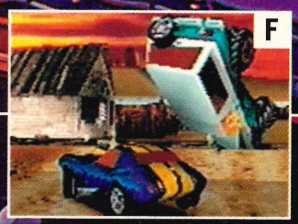
Vigilante 8, (4) *Cardinal Syn*, (5) *Gex 3D: Enter The Gecko*, (6) *Final Fantasy VII*, (7) *Tekken 3* and (8) *Resident Evil 2*.

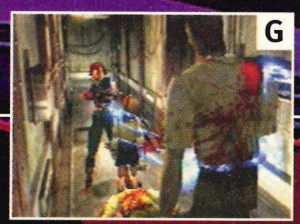
worth over £1000!



THE RULES:
The editor's decision is final. No correspondence may be entered into. Employees of Paragon Publishing or it's sponsors Roche Visual Communication may not enter. Your entry should reach us no later than 29 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.









MATCH THE LETTERS

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!

TEKKEN 3



18 At last! The follow-up to the greatest fighting game ever is in the office, and work has, to all intents and purposes, finished. Deadline? Never mind that, we've got all the secret characters to find. Check out our exclusive review now and get saving – it's awesome!



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

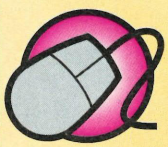
These symbols twll you about the number of players and whether or not you can use a specific device with the game. PSX steering wheel or the Negcon joypad come under steering/analogue.


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.

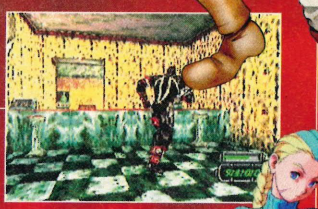
PLAY REVIEWS

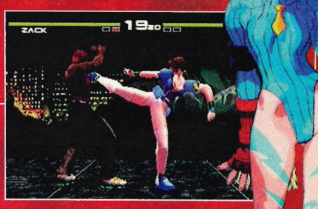
Nobody does it better. PLAY reviews are the only place you should turn if you want authoritive advice. Never buy a PlayStation game without seeing what we gave it first.

TEKKEN 3 18
MOTORHEAD 36
TIMESHOCK PINBALL 38
ALUNDRA 40
BLOODY ROAR 44
GHOST IN THE SHELL 46
EXTREME SNOW BREAK 48
X-MEN VS. STREET FIGHTER EX 54
SPAWN: THE ETERNAL 56
DIABLO 60
CARDINAL SYN 64
DEAD OR ALIVE 66











WORKSTATIONS

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

WORLD CUP '98 24
The hype starts here. Eng-er-land!

BUSHIDO BLADE 2 28
We haven't finished playing the first yet!

GRAN TURISMO 30
Update on the fabulous UK version.



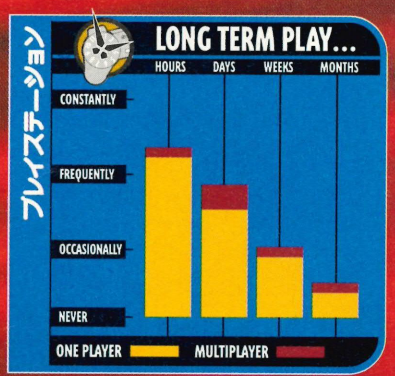
COLLIN MCRAE RALLY 32
Another challenger to *V-Rally*.





CHALLENGE BOX

This 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.



WIRED UP

Sneaky peeks at games either too big to be ignored, or a final assessment before it's reviewed.

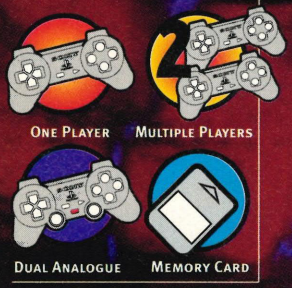
THREE LIONS 80
SENTINEL RETURNS 81
WCW NITRO 81
VS. 82
ADIDAS POWER SOCCER '98 82
MEDIEVIL 83
WLS 83
SPICE WORLD 84
BLAST RADIUS 84
POINT BLANK 85
TOMBI 85

welcome to the next generation

Written By Ryan Butt

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Namco
Supplier: The Video Game Centre on 01202 527314
Price: £69.99 or £99.99 with Dual Shock pad
Release date: Out now (import)

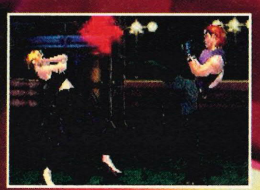




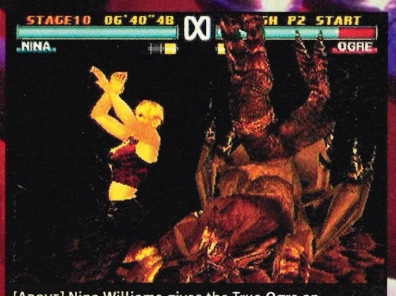




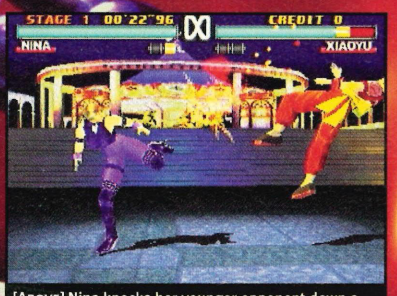




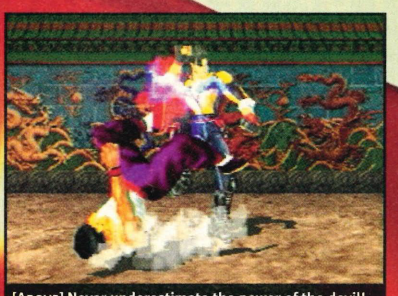
THE BIG GAME



[Above] Nina Williams gives the True Ogre an almighty chop in the wind-pipe.



[Above] Nina knocks her younger opponent down a peg with a ferocious roundhouse.



[Above] Never underestimate the power of the devil! Jin harnesses the power of his heritage.

TEKKEN 3

THEY SAID IT COULDN'T BE DONE... PAH! NAMCO RETURNS TO THE FIGHTING FRAY WITH THE SUCKER PUNCH FOR ALL WOULD-BE BEAT-'EM-UP CONTENDERS. DOES THIS GAME ROCK OR WHAT?



[Above] New bloke on the block, Hwoarang, gives his arch rival a hefty give in the teeth. The light sourcing effects to heighten the impact of the power moves is mighty impressive and lets you know when the blows hit!

PLAY CLASSIC

Whoosh!

If you don't like *Tekken* games, your dislike is going to be beaten into submission with this, the third, and best game of the series.

After all the wait, all the speculation and all the teasing little news snippets from the Namco HQ, *Tekken 3* is in the office and it's bloody brilliant! Better in fact than we could have ever deemed possible.

With trembling, sweaty palms, we carefully unloaded the disc from its pristine case (carefully in the sense that removing it too vigorously could have snapped it in twain – this has never happened to us, we hasten to add, but you can never be too cautious with a game of such high value as this!), and powered our NTSC PlayStation into life. What greeted our eager anticipation after that can only be described as a god-send to die-hard *Tekken* fanatics such as our good selves.

"Nothing short of momentous!"

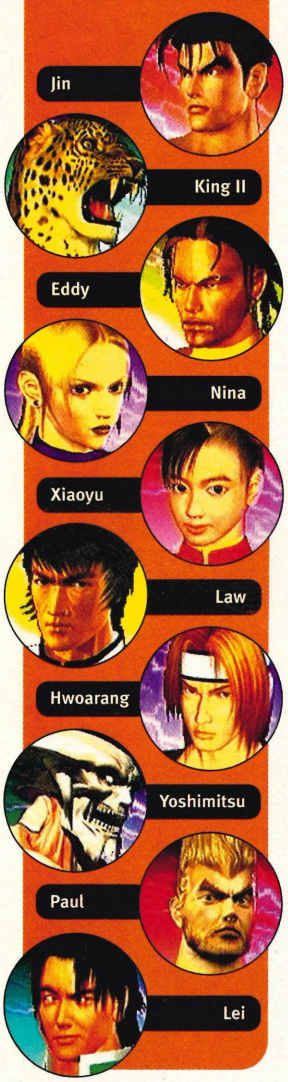
The intro – flippin' hell what an incredible intro, kicks into life and within seconds we were all reduced to quivering wrecks, not able to quite comprehend what was unfolding in front of



YOU'RE THE BOSS

Tekken 3 invites you to fight with all parties, because by doing so, you'll earn new sub-boss characters by beating the game. There are ten standard characters and ten bosses, all will be yours if you test your might in the 'King of Iron Fist Tournament'.

Normal Characters





[Above] The two main ladies of *Tekken 3* tear each other to ribbons against an altogether jollier backdrop.



[Above] Panda is basically the same as Kuma. They both share the same ending, which is hilarious.



[Above] Gun Jack swats forest-dweller Yoshimitsu like he were some annoying bug. You'd have thought that with his light sabre he'd be able to retaliate in a devastating manner, but no!

our eyes. Now, we thought that the *Toy Story*-quality rendered intro for *Resident Evil 2* was a benchmark in gaming technology and presentation, but this baby ups the tempo and shoots a lethal cocktail of pulse-rushing stimulants into the proverbial arm of FMV intros and is nothing short of monumentous.

That done with, we're into the game proper, but the sleek design before the battles doesn't just end with the PlayStation intro. If you let the machine stand for a minute or so, not only do you get the original arcade intro (which shows Kazuya Mishima swooping to seduce the virgin-innocence of Jun Kazama from *Tekken 2* and spawning the arrival of the devil's descendant, Jin Kazama!), but also a fantastic martial arts medley with numerous characters strutting their stuff to an outstanding barrage of sound. Superb.

Knuckle Grinder

Right, enough already, how does this beauty play? The answer to this question is short in coming. From the character select screen you instantly acknowledge that there is plenty to do and find (a familiar Namco trait – the gaps in the character boxes disguise a wealth of hidden combatants to seek out). But for now you go with what you know, and a speedy selection of one of the old faithful *Tekken 2* characters will suffice – hence Nina Williams gets ready to thrust her stiletto'd foot into the face of an unsavoury opponent!

The most instantly impressive aspect of *Tekken 3* are the graphics, they are just peach! The characters are large, brightly coloured and move with smooth, fluid grace amidst their wide (very wide) repertoire of offensive moves. Each and every character in *Tekken 3* ambles up to face their opponents with a trademark swagger or enthusiastic leap, then they assume their fighting stance and all hell breaks loose.

"Out-strikes the opposition like it's high on steroids!"

One of the strengths of *Tekken* through the ages was the fact that the control system was so user friendly, anybody could just pick it up, bang all the buttons and make it look as though they'd been playing it for weeks. *Tekken 3* is no exception. There are blisteringly fast combos to belt out from the off, but yet mysterious ten-hit affairs and

TEKKEN BALL MODE

By acquiring all of the sub-boss characters in the game, you'll be treated to two extra features in the main game screen. The first is this, a wacky beach ball game. You choose a character, and then one of three balls, the aim being to defeat your opponent by either blasting the ball straight at them, or causing them to miss it (you must keep the thing up in the air at all times) by attacking them. This is an enjoyable distraction that can be played with one or two players. It also enables you to get secret character, Gon!

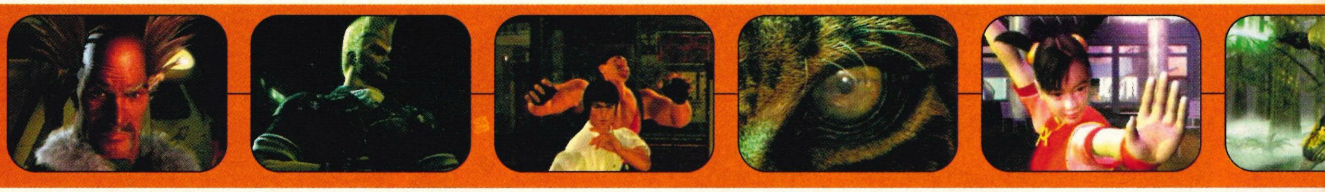




[Above] Bryan – the reanimated cop administers his own brutal brand of law enforcement.

BIG TEASER

The rendered FMV intro for *Tekken 3* is the most amazing thing we've seen in a PlayStation game. Here are some tasty images as the action unfolds.



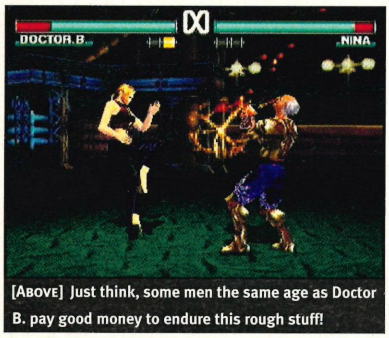


[Above] Bryan is hit for a home run by the nimble young Julia. Her moves, like many of the other ancestral characters in *Tekken 3*, are very similar to her relation's. So if you're familiar with Tekken, you'll adapt quickly.



[Above] A superb new side-step move for all characters makes the action truly three-dimensional.

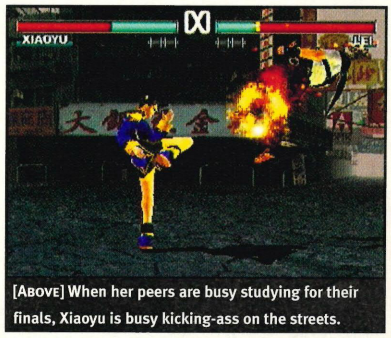




[Above] Just think, some men the same age as Doctor B. pay good money to endure this rough stuff!



[Above] Eddy attempts to send dead-cop Bryan toppling over the edge. He already has if your ask us!



[Above] When her peers are busy studying for their finals, Xiaoyu is busy kicking-ass on the streets.

bone-grinding throws and locks hidden away for the more accomplished fighters to master. Basically, this means that newcomers won't necessarily get a thumping from the hard-core elite as the matches can be, and often are, well balanced and relatively even.

Beach Balls!

There are ten standard characters to use in *Tekken 3*, but completing it with each will unlock each characters' respective sub-boss. So then there are 20. But hang on just a sec... it doesn't end there. This is the PlayStation version remember, and Namco would be doing a huge disservice if it didn't give us some Brucie Bonuses – hence two additional spaces to be filled, but by whom?

Whereas *Tekken 2* was a straight port over form the arcade with some standard new modes (Survival, Practice, Time Attack & Team Battle – all of which were straightforward fighting), *Tekken 3* offers a bit more imagination and so Namco has now bunged 'Tekken Force Mode' and 'Tekken Ball Mode' into the mix (the first you get from the start, the second you have to earn). These may not enhance the game greatly, but they do provide worthwhile distractions for a time and ensure that earning some of the secrets in the game isn't just down to cracking skulls in a 3-D arena.

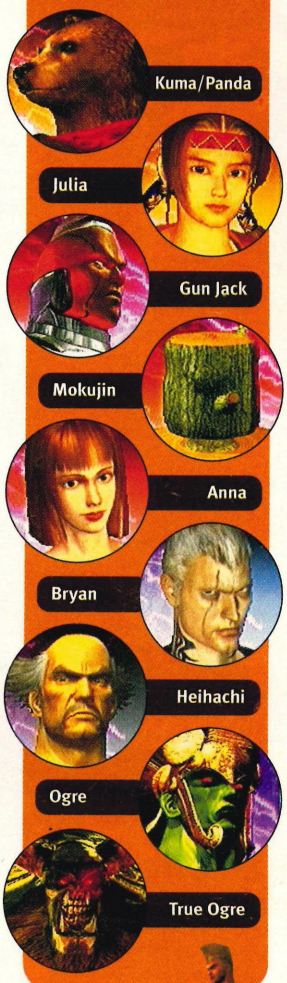


[Above] Kicking an endangered species isn't politically correct now is it?!

Which leads me onto the only downer (from a technical point of view anyway) of *Tekken 3* – the backgrounds. It was always apparent that something would have to be sacrificed if this game was to enjoy a smooth translation over to PlayStation – and it is the 3-D

You're the Boss

Boss Characters



Tekken Force Mode

One of the new features of *Tekken 3* is the new 'Tekken Force Mode'. What this entails is four levels of side-scrolling action whereby you must defeat vast hordes of Heihachi's henchmen (all named after birds strangely enough). If you take damage, there are lumps of chicken scattered around to beef you back up. At the end of each stage, you have to defeat a main boss – which will be one of the other characters in the game. This mode is played against a time limit, but when you defeat the opponents that charge at you, you'll earn extra seconds onto your time.





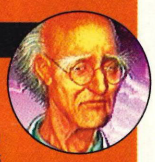
YOU'RE THE BOSS

Secret Characters (And how to get them!)



Gon

This loveable little dinosaur can be acquired by beating him in the 'Tekken Ball Mode'. He is small, yet strong, but is a bit duff as a character because his size means that he can hardly hit anyone. Mind you, it works both ways!



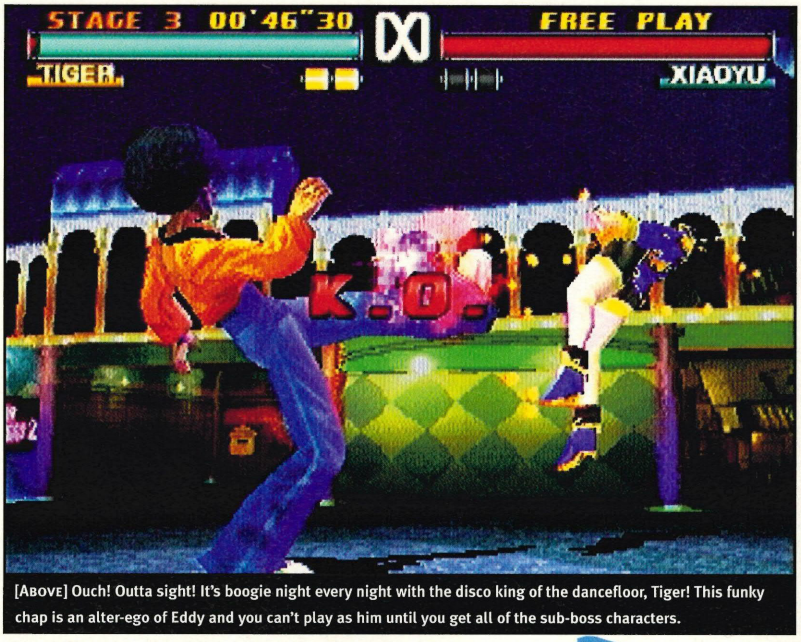
Dr. B

This is the bloke who tuned the 'Jack' series of androids into killing machines. He also gave Yoshimitsu his new robotic hand. To play as Dr. B, you must beat the 'Tekken Force Mode' four times. The first three times you'll get a key, on the fourth time you'll face him as a final boss. Win and he's yours.



Tiger

This funky dude is an alter-ego of Eddy. We're not too sure how to get him, as we did it by accident, but it might have something to do with getting all of the bosses. You'll know when you've got him because if you use the ▲ button to select Eddy, the name will change (the picture won't) to 'Tiger' and the in-game character will be wearing Seventies disco gear and sport an afro hair-style. Tiger even has his own ending (just in case you were wondering who that last space in the *Tekken* Theatre belonged to!).



[Above] Ouch! Outta sight! It's boogie night every night with the disco king of the dancefloor, Tiger! This funky chap is an alter-ego of Eddy and you can't play as him until you get all of the sub-boss characters.

backgrounds from the arcade. Suffice to say, despite lacking a bit of detail, you wouldn't really notice that these surroundings are flat (although you're bound to get some smarmy coin-op pundit having a dig – just punch them!). They aren't really impressive be any means, but they do keep your attention firmly focused on the dazzling central characters and all of the nifty lightning effects and swift camera changes that come into effect when you dig into your chosen fighter's wide arsenal of punch and kick moves.

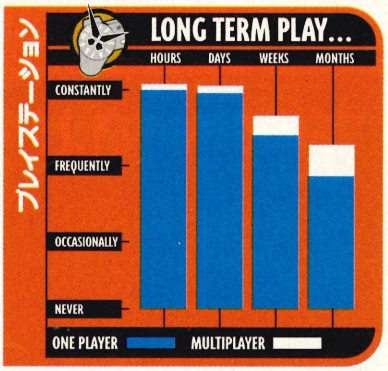
When you begin a progression through the 'King of Iron Fist Tournament' you fight a spate of standard characters in succession before tackling the decrepit Heihachi Mishima and then two forms of the horrible Ogre. But as you unlock more characters, the line-up you fight is altered to accommodate them. Win with any character and a sinister or amusing ending will be your reward – before access to a new character of course.

"The in-game graphics are just peach!"

What really shone about *Tekken 3*, in this reviewer's mind, was the sound – it is quite simply second to none, the best sound of the PlayStation. Every stage offers a pounding/grinding/stomping array of musical splendour that you'll be blown away by. In fact, we would quite happily swap The Chemical Brothers for this any day of the week!

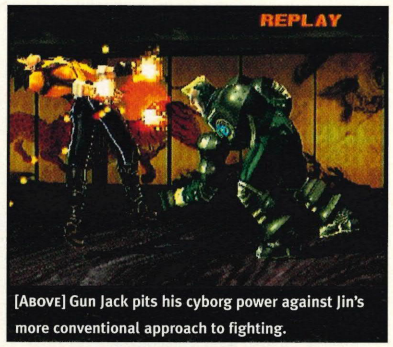
We have always billed *Tekken 3* as the game of the year from the first mumblings of its PlayStation conception, and if you're serious about your fighting games then this will rock you into a heap of rapturous euphoria – it is quite amazing to behold. The new side-step move for every character makes the action truly three-dimensional and far smoother too.

The best fighting games gallop from the Namco stable, and *Tekken 3* is a thoroughbred that out-strikes the opposition as if it were high on steroids. Put bluntly, we're not gonna get a better beat-'em-up. *Tekken 3* is a killer app that is close to perfection.





[Above] Sleazy Anna is on the ropes against the Ogre.



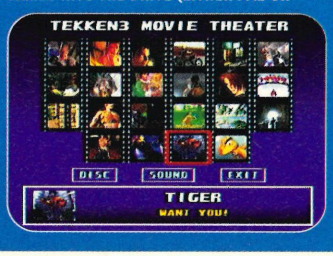
[Above] Gun Jack pits his cyborg power against Jin's more conventional approach to fighting.



[Above] Julia, daughter of Michelle, gives Forest Law, son of Marshall, a damn good kicking.

TEKKEN THEATRE

This is the second of the two bonus modes that is unlocked if you get all of the sub-bosses. This stores all of the FMV endings that you have seen and enables you to watch them at any point. Once you have earned every ending and filled all of the gaps, a couple of bonus features are unlocked into the Tekken Theatre. The first is a Sound Test that allows you to listen to every scrap of music in the game, and the second is 'Disc'. We were perplexed as to what this meant, but we later discovered that it allows you to place any of the previous *Tekken* games into the drive (either PAL or NTSC versions of the games will work!), and then it strips all of the FMV endings off of them as well – so you'll be able to watch any ending from any game with ease.





PLAY

Looks	9/10
Sounds	10/10
Gameplay	9/10
Value	9/10
Fury	10/10

PLAYED 97%

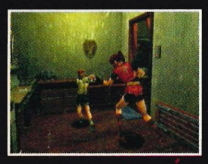
Demolishes the opposition. Simply the best

Alternatively:
Dead Or Alive (91%)
Tekken 2 (95%)

EXCLUSIVE READER OFFER EXCLUSIVE READER OFFER EXCLUSIVE READER OFFER

RESIDENT EVIL 2!

JUDGEMENT DAY HAS ARRIVED















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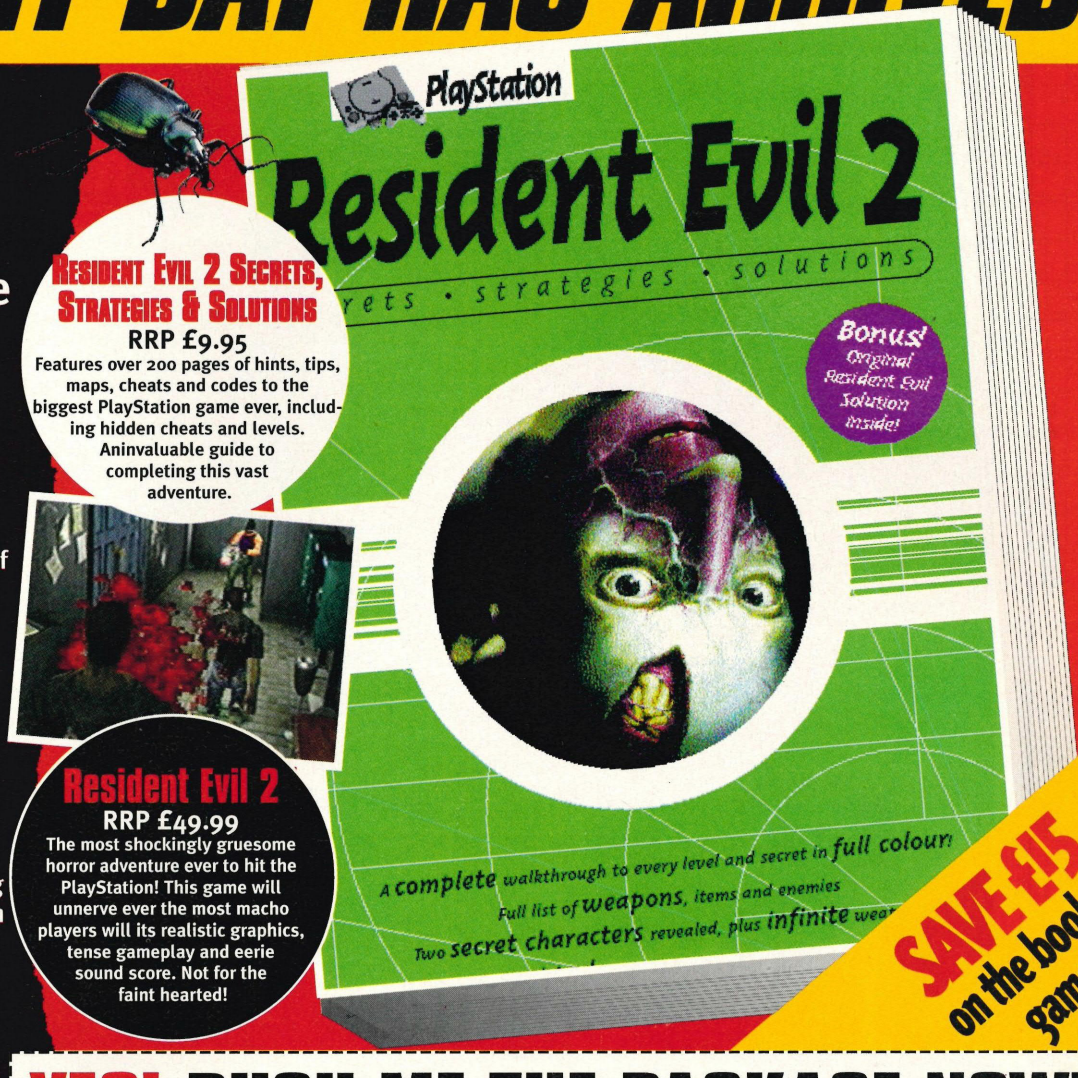
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WORLD CUP '98

THE BIGGEST WORLD CUP EVER IS JUST OVER A MONTH AWAY, AND TO CELEBRATE THE FACT, EA IS TREATING US TO TWO FIFA GAMES WITHIN THE SPACE OF A YEAR... BUT WAIT, THIS GAME HAS GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH FIFA!

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Written By Ryan Butt

The road is long, with many a winding turn... well actually, the road wasn't really that long at all, not the *Road to World Cup '98* anyway. Now, you see, *FIFA* returns, but not as we know it.

EA is keen to point out that *World Cup 98* is a completely new game in its own right, and to emphasise this, it whisked us off to some remote west country hotel to drum it into our brains once and for all – THIS IS NOT *FIFA*!

Not only is this NOT *FIFA*, it is also the only Official game to tie-in with the major event that is just around the corner. This is evident in the brand new front end that is spectacular, if the truth be told. The first thing you see is Footix, the official World Cup mascot – a kind of blue cockerel with a demented grin (we still think 'Ballix' would have been a more appropriate name!). Then the opening bars of 'Tubthumping' by rock anarchists, Chumbawumba kicks in and it's full steam ahead with a stunning FMV intro that really gees you up for the impending World Cup extravaganza.

Blueprint

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: EA Sports
% Complete: 80%
Exp. Release Date: May '98
Origin: Canada
No. of Players: 1-4

THREE LIONS ON THE SHIRT

Although the basic game engine very much resembles *FIFA: RTWC'98*, EA sports has taken it, jiggled it, fiddled it and enhanced it, and the results are immediately apparent. Take the players themselves. Bit map rendering of each individual strip ensures, not only authentic representation of each home and away kit, but also added realism in the sense that the jerseys flap in the wind, cling with sweat, and even get dirtier as the game progresses.



[Above] The England boys line-up for the National Anthem. but why are a couple of the lads scratching their nuts? Could it be Gazza larking around with the Deep Heat™ again!

98



[Above] The Italians show their flair against the Germans. Come on you blues!



[Above] The new front-end encapsulates the true feel of the event – here you can see the various stat boxes that appear, just like on the Sky Sports coverage.



"There is only one World Cup, there is only one Official France '98 game." Electronic Arts



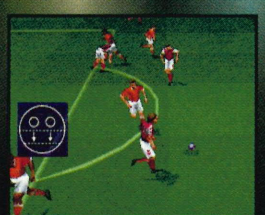
[Above] We await the ref's whistle before kick-off can commence.

GLORY DAYS

There are plenty of secrets and surprises hidden away for the players skilled enough to win the World Cup. Best of all is the 'Classic' team mode that allows you to recreate those memorable World Cup finals complete with realistic player fashions of the times (long shorts and moustaches in the Thirties, mullets, shaggy perms and up-the-bum shorts from the Seventies and Eighties). The older games are even played in black and white for true authenticity. All the great teams of years gone-by are here, including Brazil 1970, West Germany 1974, Italy 1982 and of course England 1966.

Despite *FIFA: RTWC'98* being a massive success, EA Sports realised that it wasn't to everyone's liking, and so in keeping with the basic game engine, it has built on it and changed the main areas that they, and you, weren't happy with – the main fault being the response time between when you pressed the command button, and when the on-field player pulled off the particularly move. This has now been rectified for more liquid gameplay.

The speed, although reasonable enough in the last game, has also been boosted. Now there are varying levels that will suit all players from those that like plodding through treacle and those that like to inject a bit of speed into the proceedings. In terms of actual gameplay, there are many more spectacular tricks and moves to master including over-head flicks and dummies. And, if you're still worried about those dumb as muck goalies not being able to stop a ball incoming from the halfway line, fret not because their intelligence has been enhanced to near Einstein proportions; meaning they not only stop those long range curlers (within reason), they also learn from their mistakes. So now one cock-up will not be repeated!



[Above] Player animations look smooth and convincing, especially impressive on the tricks you come to master.

...And Southgate steps up.

Another massive improvement, and one which will please any would-be Ron Atkinsons out there, is the in-game management facility. This allows you to select three different strategies from a menu before the match gets underway, and during play, you'll be able to implement any one via the press of a button without halting the proceedings. Say those pesky Germans have got you on the ropes, a quick twiddle of the shoulder buttons will push all your men forward for the off-side trap, send your wingers off on dramatic runs, and even make your star striker lose his marker and go for glory. If those balls do find the back of the net, there is now a greater range of celebrations including pile-ups, group-hugs and piggy-backs!

WHO'S THE BIRD?



Hatched on May 28 1997, Footix – the blue cockerel that has become the face of France '98 came to be as a result of a major competition organised in France by The French Organising Committee of the Football World Cup in collaboration with the French TV station, TF1. For two weeks, the entire population of France (give or take a few tramps) racked their brains thinking of a name for the little critter... the best they could come up with being 'Footix'. Still, it could have been worse, the committee could have gone with the slightly less popular runner-up names of Zimbo, Houpi, Raffy or Gallik. Thank the Lord for small mercies.

I GET KNOCKED DOWN (BUT I GET UP AGAIN)



LET'S FACE IT, 'SONG 2' FROM BLUR WAS THE VERY ESSENCE OF ALL THINGS FOOTBALL WHEN IT BELTED OUT OF THE SPEAKERS AT THE START OF *FIFA: RTWC'98* AND NOW EA HAS DONE ONE BETTER WITH ANOTHER FANTASTIC COUP. IT HAS ACQUIRED THE RIGHTS USE THE DRUNKEN ANTHEM OF THE YEAR – 'TUBTHUMPING' FROM CHUMBAWAMBA FOR USE ON THE FRONT END OF WORLD CUP 98 AND IN THE TELEVISION MARKETING CAMPAIGN. SO IF YOU'RE NOT SICK OF IT YET... YOU SOON WILL BE!

CHUMBAWAMBA ARE PRESENT-DAY ROCK MUSIC'S MOST NOTORIOUS REBELS. NOT ONLY DO THEY SING POLITICAL SONGS ABOUT THE SACKED LIVERPOOL DOCKERS (RIGHT-ON, AND RIGHTLY SO!), AND 'NEW LABOUR', BUT THEY ALSO CHUCK BUCKETS OF WATER OVER FAT MP'S IN THE WRONG PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME. NOW THAT'S WHAT WE CALL MUSIC!



[ABOVE] That bloody Footix gets everywhere. Here we see the team line-ups.



[ABOVE] The World Cup is all about making an impact, and no doubt this particular German has just upped his value.



[ABOVE] Here is one of the new tricks in action – a nifty overhead ball flick, ideal for evading sticky defenders.

OO-AH CANTONA™

To capture the euphoria of the World Cup, the programming team spent several (very hard, we're sure) weeks in France, sketching the stadiums and gathering as much insight as possible so that the ten actual stadiums (including the all-new Stade de France) that stage the matches will be fully replicated in the game. For added authenticity, the team also toured the world and went to major international games to record the crowd chants and feature them when the respective teams are playing – it's a hard life being a games programmer!

World Cup 98 has been 12 months in the making, and it is time well spent because no stone has been left unturned in terms of detail. Tedious loading times are now cushioned with the inclusion of World Cup trivia – want to know which country staged the 1986 finals? How could we forget, bloody Maradonna and his cheating podgy "hand of god." Just in case you were wondering, it was Mexico, and you can learn a vast encyclopedia of footie-related knowledge courtesy of this game. There are also awards to be dished out. Apart from the 'Man of the Match' that was seen in *FIFA: RTWC'98*, the top scorer will also win the 'Golden Boot' – as won in previous years by Sir Gary of Lineker, and the FIFA 'Fair Play' award – which you can bet the lads here at PLAY won't so much as get a sniff of with their leg-breaking, bone-crunching challenges that are hard enough to send an obese elephant tumbling to the turf!





[ABOVE] What a game Bierhoff is having, two goals in 35 minutes. Not only that but he has managed to stay out of the ref's dreaded book as well. As you can see, each pitch is adorned with high-profile companies all eager to be seen in perhaps the hottest football game ever.



[ABOVE] England press the Brazilian defence, but can they make a break and score that all-important goal?



[ABOVE] Despite Brazil being the World Cup holders, the two teams are evenly matched.

World Cup '98 has been 12 months in the making, time well spent as no stone has been left unturned in terms of detail...

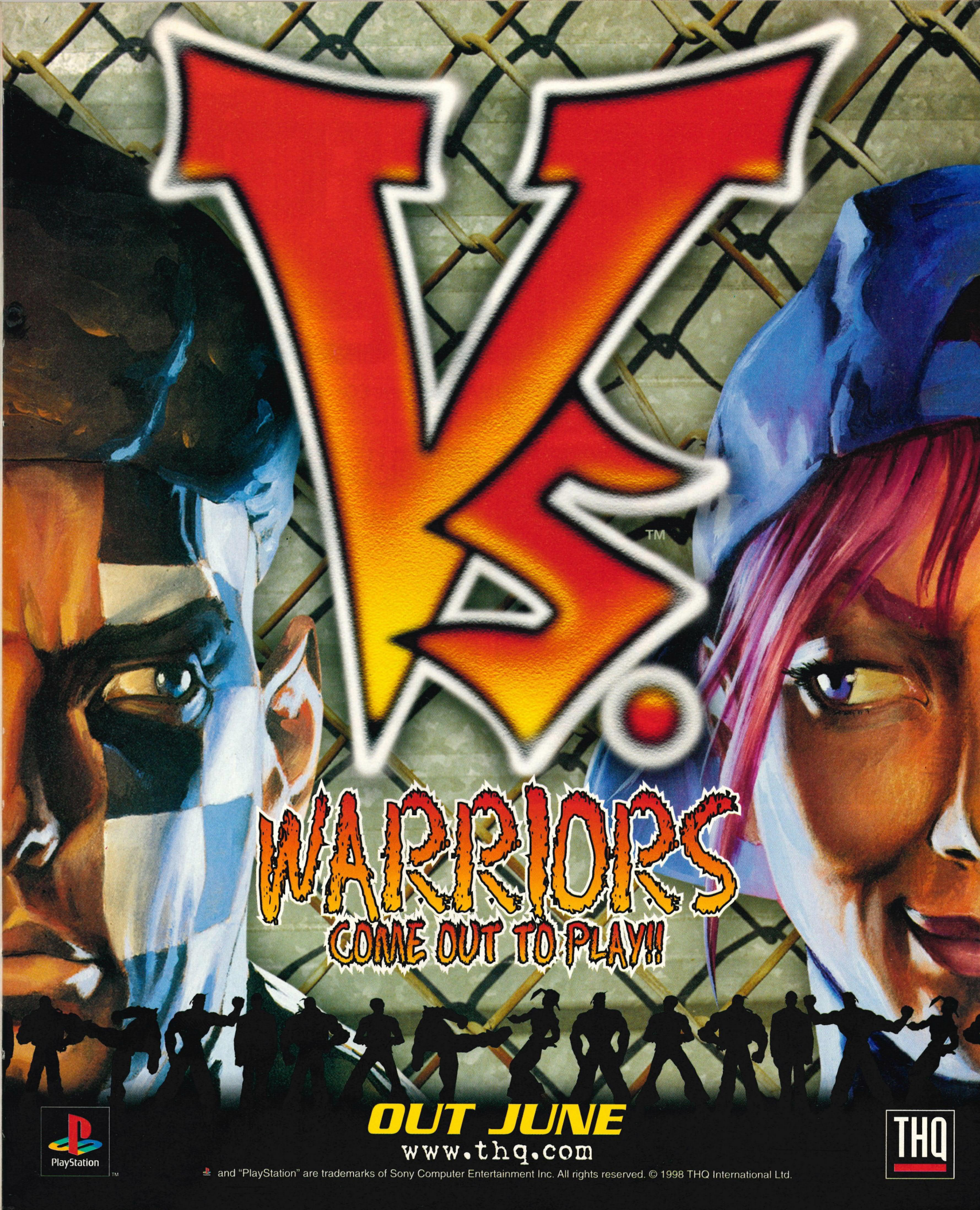
TURNIP

World Cup 98 is looking pretty damn smart in truth. It has something for everyone, and EA Sports has been careful to make enough improvements over the last game to not only keep the *FIFA* contingent happy, but pull in a few other football fans as well. As well as featuring all of the 32 qualifying teams (complete with full player line-ups, plus eight extra ones that didn't make the squad – because let's face it, Sutton should be wearing the Three Lions!), EA Sports has also bunged in eight other ones from the less fortunate countries, including Sweden (minus the fat git from Palace!), Republic of Ireland and Australia (because El Tel was good, but not good enough). In short, this is looking like the best *FIFA*... sorry, game formerly known as, or even distant cousin of, game ever. The gameplay is the most important thing though, and our pundits will be evaluating this in the next issue of PLAY.

"...AND SOME OF THE CROWD ARE ON THE PITCH!"

AH, THE DELIGHTFUL, VICTORIOUS TONES OF KENNETH WOSTENHOLME. NEVER WAS A MORE MEMORABLE LINE UTTERED IN FOOTBALL... AND GUESS WHAT – EA HAS GOT HIM!

THAT'S RIGHT, KENNETH JOINS AN ELITE PANEL OF COMMENTATORS ON *WORLD CUP 98* WHICH ALSO INCLUDES DES LYNAM (MAY HIS SILVER 'TACHE FOREVER GLISTEN!), GARY LINEKER, JOHN MOTSON AND CHRIS WADDLE (STIFFER THAN A PAIR OF STARCHED UNDERPANTS!). IN FACT, EA HAS RECRUITED PUNDITS FROM ALL AROUND THE GLOBE, WITH DAVID GINOLA (HE OF NICE HAIR) PROVIDING THE FRENCH WAFFLINGS. IT JUST WOULDN'T BE THE WORLD CUP WITHOUT THEM.



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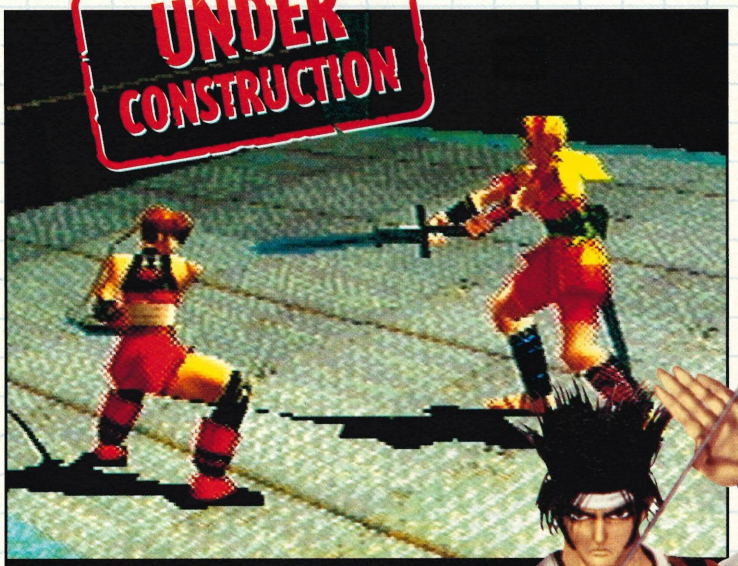
bushido blade 2

YOU MIGHT BE QUICK-FINGERED AND HAVE INHUMAN HAND-EYE CO-ORDINATION, BUT CAN YOU FIGHT WITH TRUE HONOUR?

Written By Graeme Nicholson

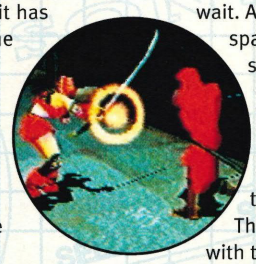


[ABOVE] After taking on four foot soldiers, you face a real character like this one who comes flying at you with her broadsword. Cue an extraordinarily tense battle of femmes.



[ABOVE] Don't let sword envy ruin your concentration! Her's may be much bigger, but it's how you use it!

At times like this you really begin to see what a rough deal we get in the PlayStation games market. The long awaited samurai simulation *Bushido Blade* has only just finally come out in the UK and the rest of Europe. Not in itself bad news, but it has now been a year since the same, fine game was released in its home ground of Japan. And the programmers at Square and Light Weight who wrote the game haven't been wandering around aimlessly squandering their royalties since then – in fact they've already conceived, produced and released *Bushido Blade 2* to a praising Japanese public! So, the sequel came out there just as the original eventually ambled out here, which is a very poor show. But what's this new game like then?



The very first impressions, it has to be said, were not as powerful as we had hoped for. Agitatedly bypassing the expensive introductory sequence which had even been contracted to a separate production company for extra polish, we grabbed a couple of random characters from the selections screen and then sat in wait. As it loads droplets of blood spatter across the black screen – nice. But as soon as the fight begins, the undeniable feeling is that it looks almost exactly the same as the first game. There's no wow-factor with the character or scenery graphics and the weapons don't appear to be any more ornate than before. Slightly disappointing, but forgivable then, as the original *Bushido Blade* already had graphics sharper than a katana sword's steel blade.

Blueprint

Publisher: Squaresoft
Developer: Square/Light Weight
% Complete: 100%
Exp. Release Date: Out Now (Import only)
Origin: Japan
No. of Players: 1-2

SOFTOGRAPHY

Tobal No.1
Tobal 2
Final Fantasy VII
Final Fantasy Tactics



[Above] Gross, disgusting morbid violence – sounds like a Play Classic in the making!



[Above] Here she is up close, Mrs. "I'm better than you because I've got a flipping great gun". Fair enough.



[Above] The code of Bushido goes right out the window when your enemy is momentarily crippled on the ground! It's impossible not to rush in and start slicing away when you have such an advantage over someone, even if it does mean you are damned to spend eternity in hell for such "dishonour".



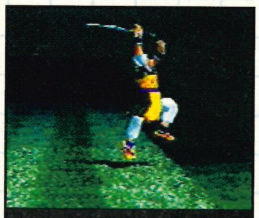
[Above] Fatally wounded characters now lose their weapons, which go spinning across the stage.

Speared Head

Control, scenario and game structure have been altered much more than the visuals though, making it clear that you are dealing with something that has had some serious thought and planning put into it. A simplified attacking system gives you only two slashing buttons plus a single button to cycle through the three stances; shifting your centre of balance to access other sets of attacks. There is no designated blocking control either – if your blade is in the right place, it will stop the blow. The single player modes again include a link-up option where it is possible to play in the third person-perspective using a green wireframe version of your character, or the up-close-and-personal first person view. A traditional Tournament mode is there of course, and here you begin to piece together the plot as best you can without subtitles on the cut scenes. As you fight your way through, the ancient warriors repeatedly come into contact with modern day features. At one stage you find yourself parrying in a parking lot, then meeting up with a guy who looks like Williams from *Enter The Dragon* with his Seventies disco gear and giant afro hair. Travel further and you come up against one lady who's packing an M16 assault rifle, and soldiers who just keep a gun handy for when you get out of sword range!

"One lady packs an M16 assault rifle and some soldiers keep a gun handy just in case you get out of range..."





[Above] Combat can still take place on many different levels as you run around, climbing steps along the way. Height helps.



[Above] The tournament takes quite a while longer than before, so you end up covered in bandages as you near the end.



[Above] No doubt about it, she'll regret the day she spilt your sake! Be gone with you, wench!

Punctured Torso

Although the new blood effect, made up of many little red balls isn't really an improvement, there are a couple of sub weapons which make up for it. Instead of chucking a brittle fan or little knife at your enemy, you can bring along a whole extra sword concealed in your clothes that can be whipped out for some dazzling two-sword chopping action. The best part comes when you have a clear shot and throw that extra weapon, which impales he who would strike you down, leaving only the handle sticking out from his front and the whole length of the blade protruding from his back!

So, you can see *Bushido Blade 2* still has plenty of promise, but only next month after we've had the chance to play it to the point of physical exhaustion will the whole truth be told of its merits. Until then, only the fortunate few *Bushido* fans who own import-capable PlayStations will know what the score is with this latest Square project.



[Above] Fair? Not really, no. But it certainly adds spice.



[Above] When this tastefully dressed guy arrives, he offers to help, letting you control him for the next big fight.



[Above] A previous wound leaves your opponent only able to fight with one arm, so he's not likely to win this bout, despite some spirited play.

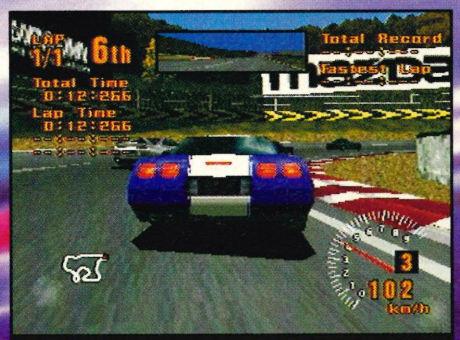
Written By Graeme Nicholson

GRAN TURISMO

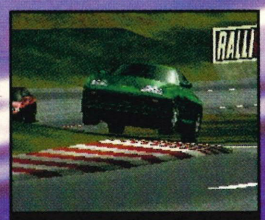
LO, IT IS NEARLY UPON US. WE MUST WAIT ONLY A SHORT TIME LONGER, FOR *GRAN TURISMO* IS COMETH TO BRITAIN.



[Above] Soon you'll believe us, it really is this nice! When you see it with your own eyes you will have no choice! Get ye to the shops in the month of May!



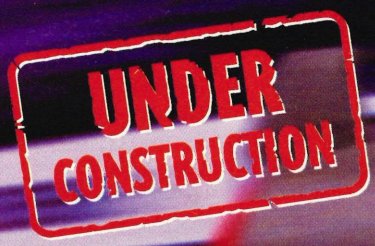
[Above] No word as yet about the new "over-the-bonnet" view, a la *TOCA Touring Car*, that may be included.



[Above] Those S-bends are a tad too tricky at first. Racing on the grass isn't really a good thing.



[Above] If this isn't real enough looking for you, it will now be a bit faster too. Cor.



So the countdown

continues! Of all the games that come out months early in Japan, *Gran Turismo* has been one of the most wanted discs by gamers across the country. If you don't have an imported PlayStation or one fiddled to load foreign games, there is little you can do but wait for this huge and beautiful racing title.

Work is continuing on the conversion from the NTSC format of *Gran Turismo* to PAL as we speak, hurtling towards the release here in May when it will almost certainly break a few records for speed and volume of sales. Previous giants *Final Fantasy VII* and *Formula 1 '97* both stand a chance of being knocked down a couple of notches in those stakes.

So far, one change that's been made to both the American and European versions of the game has been a re-organising of the cars available in the quick-access Arcade mode. To be slightly more West-friendly, a few less inspiring Japanese models have been removed to make room for manufacturers like Chevrolet, TVR and US behemoth Chrysler. You won't be missing out though, as every car is still available in the full career mode where you wander between garages looking for the deal that best suits your budget.

Blueprint

Publisher: Sony
Developer: SCEJ
% Complete: 85%
Exp. Release Date: May '98
Origin: Japan
No. of Players: 1-2

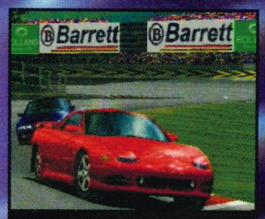


Gran Smash

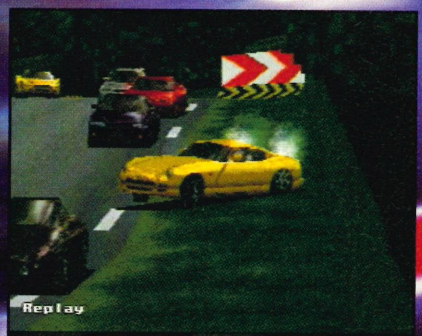
The soundtrack has been overhauled too, now featuring tunes from big name indie rock acts such as Ash, Garbage and The Manic Street Preachers. Whether you actually want a group of clinically depressed Welshmen moaning at you as you attempt to clinch the championship, instead of the original supermarket pop as intended to be heard by *GT* creator Kazunori Yamauchi is another



[Above] You still can't buy the cool Chrysler concept car though.



[Above] See that reflection on the bonnet? That's called environment mapping that is.



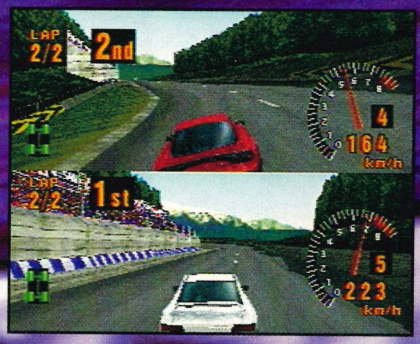
[Above] Naturally, the replays will continue to take up much of your racing time because they're so lovely.

Of all the games out earlier in Japan, Gran Turismo has been one of *the* most wanted discs



[Above] No more spending months earning 16 million credits to buy an Aston Martin – you can give it a whirl on the Arcade mode for the first time!









[Above] All the Japanese beauties can still be found, like the Subaru Impreza here.



[Above] Now you can get hold of the TVR in the Quick Arcade mode straight away! Happy day!

matter entirely.

Frame rate problems that occurred when there was to much tyre smoke on screen have been addressed, and it seems the game will indeed run a bit faster than the Japanese version, as the programmers figured out a more efficient way to have the PlayStation draw some of the graphics. All will be revealed in the review of the finished UK version next month (if we manage to stop playing and start writing!). We're just hoping all those expensive customised cars we've earned in the Japanese game will load up from the memory cards!



[Above] It's mean, greasy and extremely fuel-inefficient, the Dodge Viper GTS, and we like it!

SOFTOGRAPHY

Sony Computer Entertainment Japan have produced:

Motor Toon GP

Motor Toon GP 2

Parappa The Rappa

COLIN McRAE RA

THAT BIG BLUE SUBARU IS UNARGUABLY THE COOLEST CAR IN RALLY AT THE MOMENT – FANCY TAKING IT FOR A WORLD-WIDE SPIN?



[ABOVE] The fastest time of the day and you're nearing the finish line – a good day at the races.



[ABOVE] Control is a bit more tricky in the chase view which is furthest from the car. Mind your head when it starts a tumblin'!

UNDER CONSTRUCTION



One race that's really hotting up is to be the first and best rally game of 1998. As noted last issue, both *Tommi Mäkinen Rally* and *Colin McRae Rally* are currently in production and are facing a release only weeks apart. We've seen how Mäkinen's game is developing, so now it's time to check out how the rally game of The Flying Scotsman himself, *Colin McRae*, is shaping up. Producer of *Colin McRae Rally*, Guy Wilday took critical time out of the project to answer our questions at Codemasters' head office in Warwickshire. So, if the game isn't finished on time, it'll probably be our fault.

Blueprint

Publisher: Codemasters
Developer: Codemasters
% Complete: 65%
Exp. Release Date: June '98
Origin: UK
No. of Players: 1-2

GRID LOCK

An obvious question seemed to be about what would make people want to buy *Colin McRae Rally* if they already own Ocean's *V-Rally*, which many people bought last year? Guy believes the realism of his title is what will attract the thrill-hungry racing fans this time.

"*Colin McRae Rally* is the first real rally game that truly represents the nature of the real-life sport. *V-Rally* in comparison is an arcade-style game along the lines of *Sega Rally*. The key to the playability of *CM Rally* is the realistic handling – which uses real-life manufacturer's telemetry data to replicate the handling of the real thing. There is no comparison between *Colin McRae Rally* and any other racing game."

Playing the game in its current state, it already moves very smoothly and has a satisfying real-time damage effect where you can smash individual lights, windows and

Written By Graeme Nicholson

ALLY



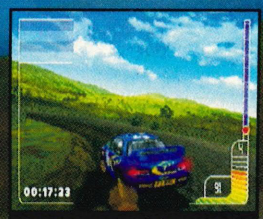
[Above] Just a little careless driving has shattered both windows along the left hand side. Lucky it's safety glass!

"Colin McRae Rally is the first real rally game that truly represents the nature of the real-life sport." Guy Wilday, Producer.



[Above] It's not just Colin McRae's Subaru you can drive. We took this Megane out for a spin around the Indonesian leg of the rally and it was just as much fun to drive. So there.

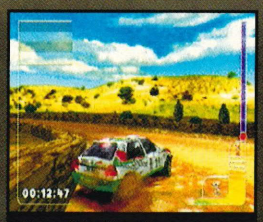




[Above] It's a case of turning well early for the harder bends and powersliding round.



[Above] Don't chuckle like that – it may be a Skoda, but they do pretty well at this world rally thing you know.



[Above] Besides, the parts are cheaper when you start smashing into the walls.

"Colin McRae Rally is based on the second generation development of the *TOCA* engine. Major enhancements include a more complex car physics model to realistically replicate rally car handling. The Rally game is running in higher resolution and is capable of shifting more polygons around."

TailGate

With such emphasis on realism and a licensed name that will certainly help sales, you have to wonder what role Colin McRae himself has played in the game's production. Was he playing early versions of the code body panels on the car. Thing is, it seems just a little too familiar as the *TOCA Touring Car Championship* game engine. The developers at Codemasters never tried to hide the fact that they were making use of *TOCA's* rather impressive technology, but what has been changed or enhanced for this title?

SOFTOGRAPHY

Micro Machines V3

TOCA Touring Car Championship



[Above] Rain, mud and tricky turns take their toll and it won't be long before you get up on two wheels or flip right over.



[Above] Corsica has some breath-taking mountainside roads to race on. Just one question: why is Corsica always yellow in games? *V-Rally* was the same sickly shade!



[Above] Here, the words "keep off the grass" are the best advice you can give.



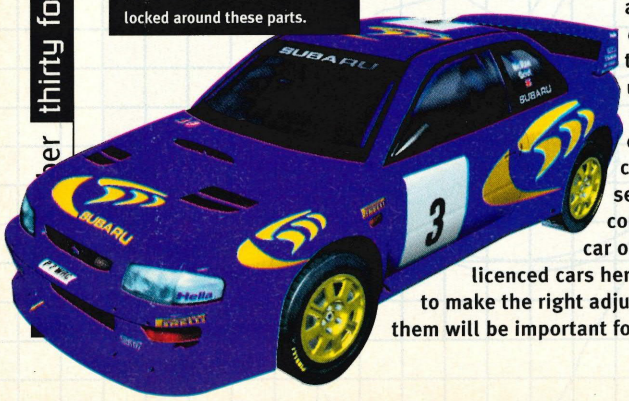
[Above] Perhaps it really is a good idea to read all that stuff about the weather before coming out in the wrong tyres.



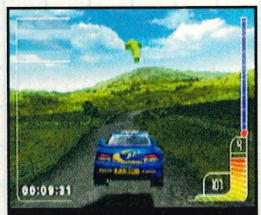
[Above] "HeadCam" is a tad shaky, but very atmospheric all the same.



[Above] Lorks. If the engine gives out, just keep the doors locked around these parts.



"Setting up your car correctly is a crucial part of the game. Each car has its own individual performance and handling characteristics which can be tweaked before you start a stage. For example selecting the correct tyres for the conditions is critical and the wrong selection could prove critical."



[Above] What's a rally game without jumps? It just wouldn't be right, would it?

Broadside

The Rally School option is disabled in the current versions of *CM Rally*. What kind of coaching will be available in there when it's all finished?

"Colin teaches everything from basic driving techniques, like power-sliding and hand-brake turns, right up to the techniques required to drive around a proper rally stage at high speeds, for example understanding co-driver instructions."

"There is no comparison between Colin McRae Rally and any other racing game."
Guy Wilday, Producer of Colin McRae Rally.

and making suggestions, or was he just a fairly removed consultant, what with having to race all over the world while CMR began to evolve? Guy is keen to assert the influence the rally star has had on the game.

"Colin McRae and his co-driver Nicky Grist have been actively involved from the beginning to the final stages. Both Colin and Nicky's recommendations have been incorporated into the game. The UK version even includes actual co-driver messages delivered by Nicky Grist."

There is a large screen of set-up options between each leg of the rally if you play in a championship. Although the tracks themselves are not direct replicas of the real stages, they are set in similar conditions, from sand to snow, with unpredictable weather. As real rally depends so much on car set-up, it's good to see such a comprehensive list of car options. There are nine licenced cars here, but learning how to make the right adjustments to each of them will be important for success.

Codemasters is always on about this meticulous laser-scanning of cars which makes the models in the final game more detailed, first with *TOCA* and now with this one. What's all that about?

"The cars are laser scanned to within 0.025 millimetres accuracy against the real model. Once this data is captured we reduce the meshes down to 450 polygons for texture mapping and inclusion in the game."

Er, ok. Finally, with the competition going on between both new rally games, we wondered what the Codies thought of *Tommi Mäkinen Rally*?

"Sorry, what game is that? Seriously, we obviously always monitor competition and you can be sure we will continue to keep a close eye on this product."

Well, they're not giving much away, but the gloves are definitely off. Tune in to PLAY again for the next round!

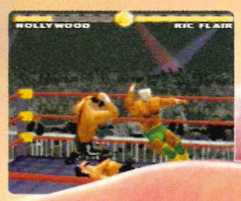


[Above] Tearing through this quarry section gives you the chance to really practice your powerslides on the loose track surface.



Any problems, ask your Agony Uncle.

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PlayStation

OUT JUNE

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MOTORHEAD

IT MIGHT NOT HAVE 'LEMMY' IN IT, BUT GREMLIN HAS PULLED A MINOR ACE FROM THE PACK WITH IT'S ULTRA-FAST RACER.

Motorhead, like the band, is noisy and fast, but not quite so ugly! It's not in the same league as *Gran Turismo*, but it does what it sets out to do by delivering high speed thrills and spills in spades.

Initial impressions remind you of how Amiga games used to look, with pastel hues and a limited palette of colours, but that's where the similarities end. The speed and smoothness of the game engine is unbelievable, but not to the extremity of being unable to control your car.

Gremlin has pulled out all the stops to create a driving experience that's faster than a bout of explosive diarrhoea! If you set the amount of rival cars to four, the action pelts along at a positively pulse-pounding 50 frames-per-second (fps), but even the 'seven opponent' option has a healthy frame rate too. Why isn't this the greatest racing game ever? Simple, other than haring around one of eight fiendishly-designed tracks (plus two bonus) and entering the Transatlantic Speed League, it's little more than a shallow joyride.

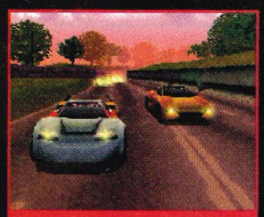
PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Gremlin
Customer support: 0114 275 3423
Price: £44.99
Release date: 24 April '98









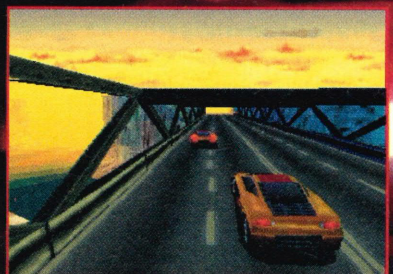
[ABOVE] During play, you can flick back for a rear view.



[ABOVE] On the Red Rock course, all four wheels leave the ground!



[ABOVE] The Split-Screen mode offers limited short-term fun, and there's no visible slow-down.



[ABOVE] There are two views to choose from. One in-car, the other above and behind.



[ABOVE] Three Pythons battle it out for the upper hand on the Neo City Level. Sadly, dramatic scambles with the rest of the racing pack are rather rare because your opponents go like greased lightning!



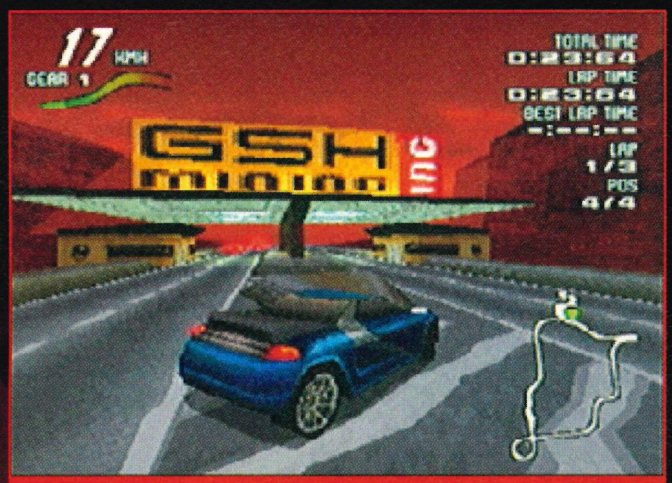
[ABOVE] Opponent cars are extremely aggressive. You really have to wrestle with the controller.

REVS

There's a welcome Ghost mode, where you can save out your best times and repeatedly try to better them as you gain access to better motors. There is also a fun Head-to-Head challenge for two players via a horizontal split-screen, but this still doesn't make up for the lack of customisation, cars and specialist cups. All ten cars have been beautifully designed and they have unique handling abilities based on three factors: acceleration, top-end speed and grip. It's a real shame that you can't damage, flip or watch them explode though, because the actual handling is excellent.

To begin with, you have a choice of just three cars, but win the two track third division and three more become available. After getting to grips with the controller (Analogue or otherwise), go for a car with really quick acceleration and a high top end speed. Don't worry about the grip, because although you have two types of brake buttons, the only way to take those corners (in our opinion) is to slam on the handbrake and powerslide around them, a bit like *Ridge Racer*.

Written By Tom Sargent



[Above] The game's futuristic look, although polished, is rather half-hearted and umambitious. Red skies and low buildings are no match for the exuberance of *Wipeout 2097*.



[Above] Cool lighting effects and filters enhance the atmosphere.

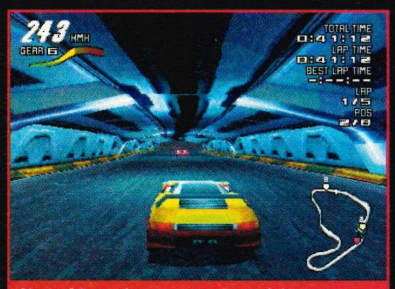




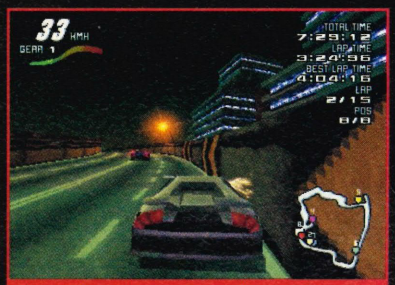
"Pop-up rears it's ugly head at all too frequent junctures."



[Above] Power-slides are good fun to pull off, with *Motorhead* offering particularly sensitive cars.



[Above] Every time you get on a straight, try to overtake as it's much less hassle.



[Above] As you brush against walls and hit kerbs, the car lurches and reacts very realistically.



[Above] You don't want to do that, do you? Dead-end, what a nightmare – your race is all but over.

THE CAR'S THE STAR



THE ADDER MK2
SPEED: POOR
ACCEL: MED/GOOD
GRIP: MED



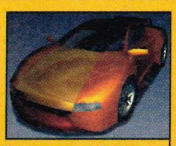
RESONIC
SPEED: VERY POOR
ACCEL: MED/GOOD
GRIP: POOR/MED



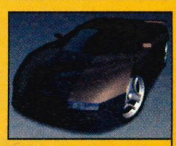
ASC
SPEED: GOOD
ACCEL: MED
GRIP: POOR



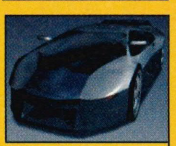
ASCII
SPEED: MED
ACCEL: MED
GRIP: MED/GOOD



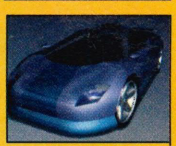
PYTHON V12
SPEED: MEDIUM
ACCEL: VERY GOOD
GRIP: POOR/MED



RBUILD 2
SPEED: MED/GOOD
ACCEL: MED/GOOD
GRIP: POOR/MED



SUPERCAR 1
SPEED: VERY GOOD
ACCEL: SUPERB
GRIP: SUPERB



SUPERCAR 2
SPEED: THE BEST
ACCEL: THE BEST
GRIP: SUPERB

PULSATING

Attention to detail is very good indeed with excellent sound effects and a thumping good soundtrack. As you enter tunnels or the car tops the brow of a hill and leaves the ground you get an echo for the former and a change in tone for the latter. As is customary these days for every game, real-time lighting does its 'thang', and what would a racing game be without lens-flare? Venues range from downtown highways to barren mining facilities and we can safely say that there's no nasty glitching effects, although the game has an ever-present 'foggy day' look about it and pop-up rears it's ugly head at all-too-frequent junctures.

Opponent AI has been well-implemented and they learn from your aggressive overtaking tactics and try to block you at the most crucial moments. Every race is different too, because other cars don't follow pre-set patterns or bunch up together either. Sometimes you can pass a couple of cars that have collided or spun-out; adding a much needed human touch to each race.

All in all then, *Motorhead* is pretty good fun (and enjoyably tough) in the short term at least, but as far as a lasting challenge is concerned, it's unlikely you'll be playing it in a couple of months time, especially with the current racing game competition offered by *Gran Turismo*.



PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●●●●●●
SOUNDS	●●●●●●●●●●
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●●●●●
VALUE	●●●●●●●●●●
VELOCITY	●●●●●●●●●●

PLAYED **79%**

Turbo-charged but short-lived racer

ALTERNATIVELY:
GRAN TURISMO (97%)
RAGE RACER (94%)

PRO PINBALL: TIMESHOCK!

"The physics of the ball is unparalleled."

PLAY CLASSIC

A PINBALL GAME IN 'ONE TABLE ONLY' SHOCKER. BUT WHO CARES FOR THE LACK OF VARIETY, THIS IS AS GOOD AS FLICKING BALLS GETS.



[ABOVE] This has to be the most gorgeous, thorough and fun pinball game ever devised. If you like *Pro Pinball: The Web*, you'll adore this. Just don't try and rest your beer on the monitor screen. We tried, and it fell off.

You don't need to be deaf, dumb or blind to appreciate how good *Pro Pinball: Timeshock!* is. Put simply, it's the definitive pinball experience and plays in the same league as the first game, *Pro Pinball: The Web*. Empire's seemingly impossible task to convince a wary public that you can have the most fun with just one table is fully justified, because it's no exaggeration to say that no other console game has come close to matching the attention to detail and disturbingly addictive qualities in this sequel. It essentially offers more of the same, but with more options and even greater realism.

Timeshock! is incredibly realistic to look at and play. There are four modes: Regular, Novice, Tournament and a new Challenge, where you must play through four different time zones each demanding subtle changes in strategy and tactics. Besides a plethora of regular features such as progressive awards, explorations (dot matrix graphical displays) and the MangoSave™ (a multi-ball storage unit), you'll discover secret modes and many hidden features too.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Empire Interactive
Customer support: 0181 343 7337
Price: £34.99
Release date: Out now



ONE PLAYER MULTIPLE PLAYERS

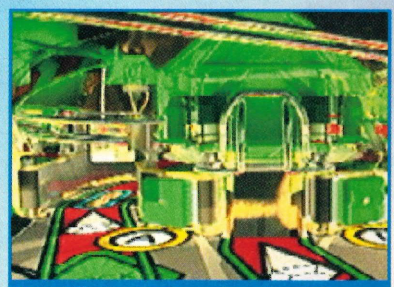


MEMORY CARD

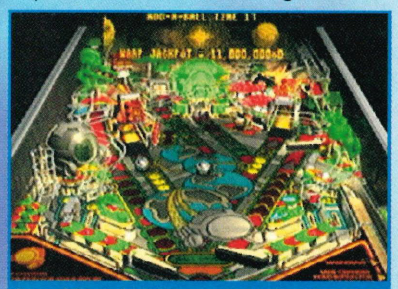
WIZARD

A full 'operators manual' has also been included which caters for budding statisticians and customisation freaks alike. *Timeshock!* is excellent for three important reasons: it was designed on Silicon Graphics Workstations (and it shows), the physics of the thing (up to ten balls on the table simultaneously) is unparalleled, and above all, it screams out to be played again and again and again.

You won't see any dodgy ball physics, compensatory movements or scrolling around the screen here. Empire has ensured that the whole table can be viewed at all times from one of four angles, and it works a treat. Sometimes it's difficult to see what's going on at the top of the table, but this is a minor quibble. The sound effects are fantastic too, consisting of literally hundreds of samples, that add immeasurably to the playing experience. You really feel as though you're playing on a proper table, the illusion is that good, and occasionally you have to pinch yourself that you're not in some seedy, back-street arcade standing next to a bloke called Tommy. If videogame pinball is your thing, you're sorted.



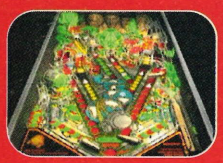
[ABOVE] Check out the impressive gallery of close up views. This table could be the blueprint for a real table (and probably is).



[ABOVE] The multi-ball is everybody's favourite. Three balls is manageable, but juggling up to ten, yes TEN is bloody impossible. There are four different table elevations to choose from – all totally playable.

BLIND BODS

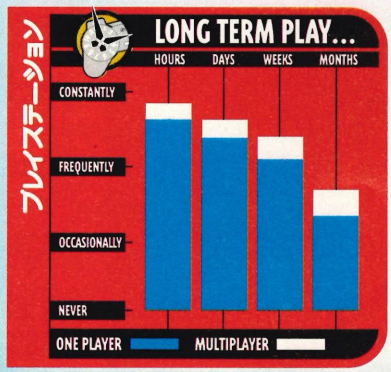
AS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW MUCH YOU CAN TOY AROUND WITH THE OPTIONS, HERE PLAYERS CAN ZOOM IN TO THE NTH DEGREE ON ANY PART OF THE TABLE. WOW.



You begin with the fully panned-out view of the table.



But can zoom this close!



PLAY

LOOKS	8
SOUNDS	9
GAMEPLAY	9
VALUE	8
LIGHTS	9

PLAYED 90%

Sure plays a mean pinball

ALTERNATIVELY:
PRO PINBALL: THE WEB (90%)
TRUE PINBALL (85%)

Written By Tom Sargent

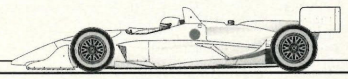


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THE ADVENTURES OF ALUNDRA



[Above] Hundreds of creatures roam the land just waiting to be chopped to pieces. This stone slab is blocking your path to this little green terror.

PREPARE FOR THE BEST *ZELDA* CLONE EVER. IT'S BIGGER, BETTER AND TRICKIER THAN YOU COULD EVER IMAGINE.

Written By Tom Sargent

PLAY INFORMATION

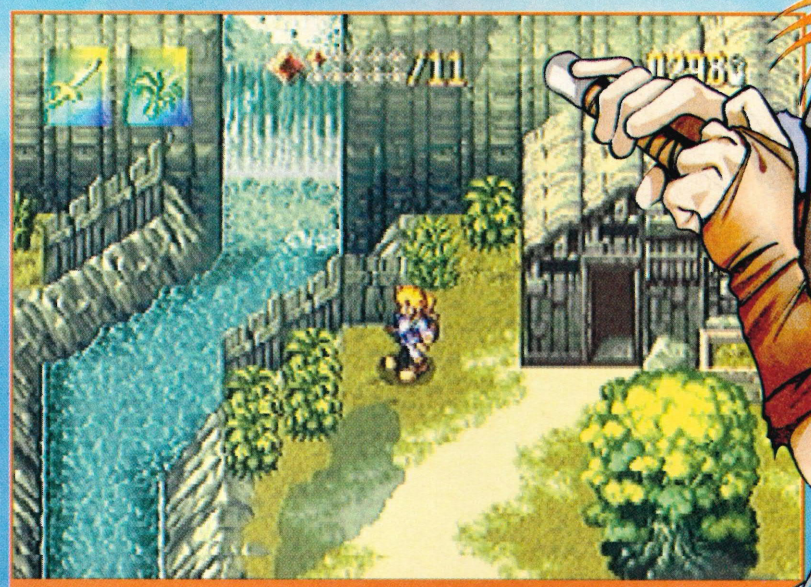
Publisher: Psygnosis
Customer support: 0151 282 3000
Price: £44.99
Release date: 24 April '98

ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD

Amidst the frenzied pursuit for graphical excellence so prevalent on nearly every Playstation game, Psygnosis, usually the front-runner in this field, has taken what will undoubtedly be seen as a bit of a side-step as far as technical innovation is concerned.

The release of this *Zelda*-inspired role-playing game (RPG), is certainly a departure for a company that traditionally leaves gamesplayers drooling involuntarily with graphical extravagance. *The Adventures of Alundra* is slicker than oil and ridiculously addictive, so it certainly looks as though the risk has been well worth it.

First things first – it's unbelievably similar to the great Nintendo Super NES adventure, *Legend of Zelda*, but this should be taken as a compliment rather than a criticism. The graphics are sickeningly-cute; consisting of stereotypical Japanese characters who wander aimlessly around the pristine villages just waiting to be milked of helpful information by your eponymous wandering hero.



[Above] The scenery (although plainly 2-D) is extremely elaborate and you can interact with just about anything and anyone. If you can see it, touch it!



[Above] Find cave entrances and access to new areas by checking out these mountain paths.



[Above] Outside the village, oozing blobs and reptiles wander around trying to hamper your progress.

MANGA

Alundra is viewed from a top-down 2-D perspective and doesn't change, even for one of the frequent skirmishes that occur throughout. You play the titular main character who has the ability to go into the dreams of people who are experiencing terrible nightmares and ridding them of the evil causing the bad dreams. Following the guidance of a wise old man that appears in one of your own dreams, you find

I AM SAILING

YOU BEGIN YOUR QUEST ON BOARD A DOOMED SHIP MAKING HASTE TO THE VILLAGE OF INOA...



All is calm on the open seas, even though your stomach may disagree.



The captain recommends a bit of kip, and takes the piss out of your 'freaky dreams'.



In your dream, a (Swedish?) Wizard named Lars warns of the perils that lie ahead.



Things go from bad to worse as the mother of all storms lashes against the ship...



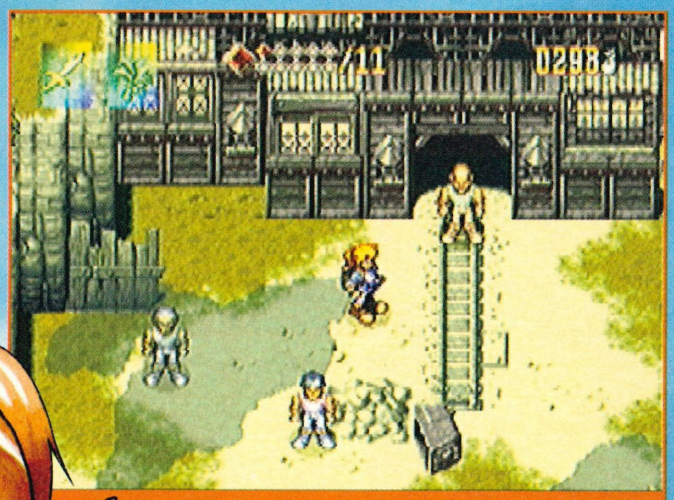
And from worse to catastrophic as it breaks in two. Titanic anyone?



As it happens, you get rescued from the beach by an old geezer named Jess.



Jess has you trapped in bed until you recover and gives you the free run of his house.

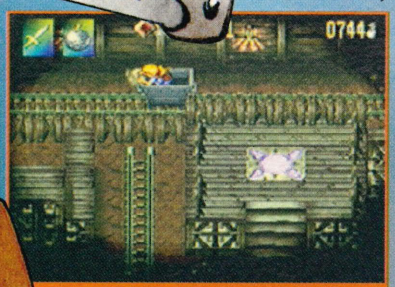


[Above] Talk to these workers to gain entry to the mine. They could help.

"Slicker than oil and ridiculously addictive!"

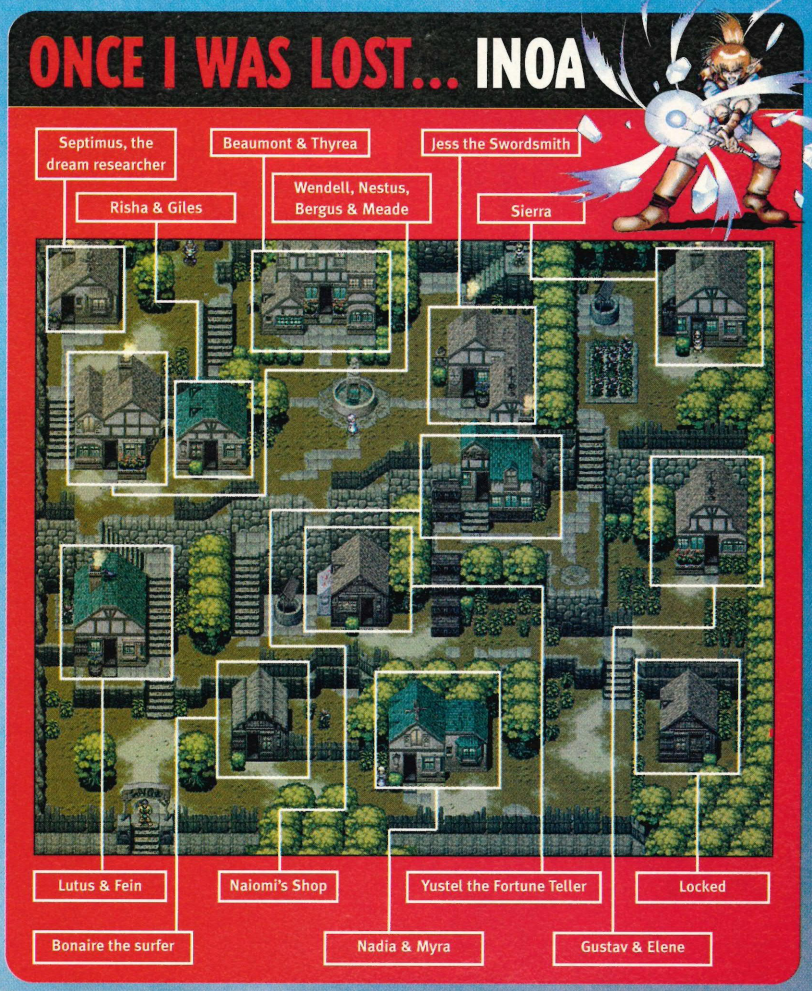
yourself in the tiny village of Inoa, where shock, horror... people are dying as a result of their nightmares. And so begins a huge quest with a plot so convoluted, it's amazing that the translators for the game didn't tie themselves in knots!

To begin with, you're totally penniless, but hacking through the abundant flora and fauna usually reveals a bob or two. It's worth noting at this point, that after hacking away in someone's garden (they're a forgiving lot), you can return later and it will have magically re-grown for you to cash-in once more. The best way to begin *Alundra* is to wander around and get to know the friendly locals, this way you can dive straight in to one of the many perilous quests that await in and around the village.



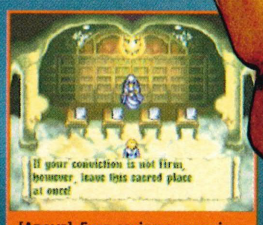
[Above] Catch a ride on a mine cart to negotiate the mine-shafts. You need a good memory and a maths degree to get out of here.

ONCE I WAS LOST... INOA

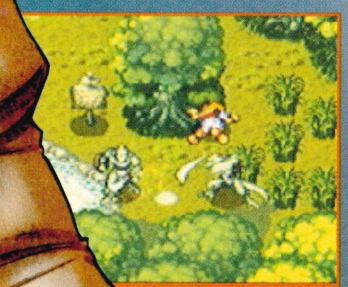


Magic

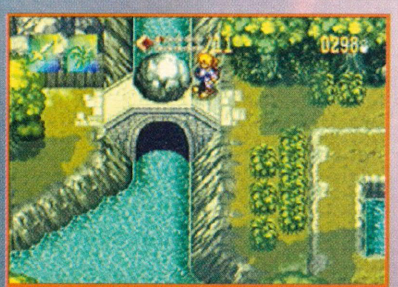
Control is simple, you have the ability to run, jump and interact with just about anything, although you can only progress to new areas at certain junctures in the game, which is good, because it reduces pointless meandering. That's the beauty of *Alundra* – like *Zelda*, you're kept pretty much on track all of the time, and although the challenge is enormous, you never feel swamped because you rarely have more than one or two objectives to achieve at any one time. Seasoned adventurers take note, it's certainly not easy. In fact, some of the puzzles are far harder than anything in *Zelda* or *Wild Arms*, there are some



[Above] Even saving a game is handled with style. Pick a book.



[Above] Dead. You must return to your last save point.



[Above] Some areas are impossible to reach until you find a special ability later on in the game.

WHO'S THE BOSS?

In time-honoured fashion, *Alundra* must face some truly fearsome bosses.

Giant Centipede
After dodging around, use bombs to kill this slippery customer.



Stone Giant
Hurls giant lumps of rock. Jump in quickly when he stops for a second.



Dragon
This multi-headed beast spews forth balls of fire. Wait for the heads to move towards you before attacking.

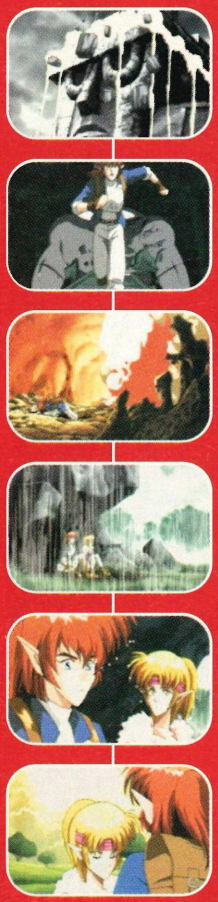


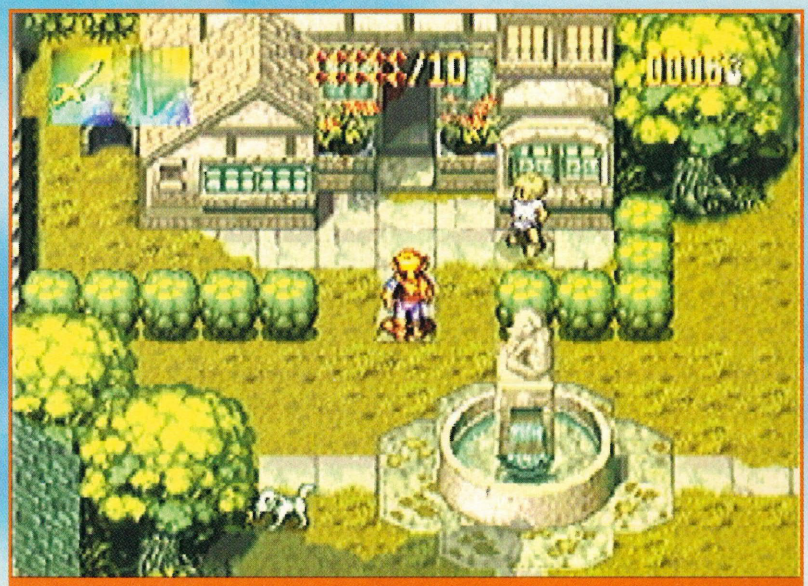
Flying Dragon
The only way to kill this overgrown wasp is to keep well away from its deadly flaming breath then nip in for the kill.



TRIPPING

THERE'S A GREAT MANGA-STYLE INTRO TO BEGIN WITH...





[ABOVE] Explore the surrounding village to find out what the inhabitants want you to do. They're pretty friendly and it won't be long before you're in the thick of it.

really nasty mazes, and some bosses that just won't curl up and die unless you hit them about a trillion times. Couple this with the teeth-grindingly annoying fact that you have to begin from the last save point each time you die and only then does the enormity of challenge begin to sink in.

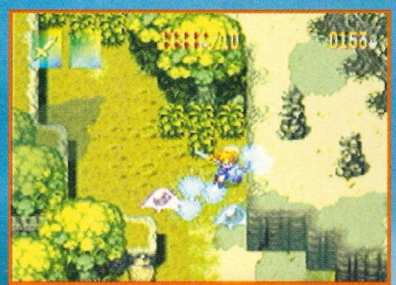
MAGES

Along the way, you come across weapons, spells and special items necessary to reach previously inaccessible areas.

This may be improved strength to shift a gigantic boulder or a net to catch a particularly illusive bird. The diversity and quantity of challenges is simply amazing and Psygnosis alleges that you'll still be burning the midnight oil for well over 50 hours. We don't doubt it. Unlike many adventure games, all of the puzzles are logical, that is, sooner or later you'll figure-out what to do, but sometimes you can get a little bit bored of listening to the constant rambling of non-essential characters.

"*Alundra* is definitely the best in its field..."

More characters to control would have been nice, but there's certainly plenty for one player to content with for the most part. The important consideration here is gameplay, which *Alundra* has in spades. It may not be turn-based (luckily) like *Final Fantasy VII*, but Psygnosis has proved that although the formula has been recycled, *Alundra* is definitely the best in its field, with better level design and more puzzles to keep RPG junkies glued to their screens for a long while.



[ABOVE] There's always something lurking around the corner trying to kill you. 'Blobs' prove easy fodder and usually reveal bonuses.



[ABOVE] Somebody has set the village of Inoa alight, and this old woman is going to pay!



[ABOVE] It's very basic, but you can prepare, store and check your current inventory at any time.



[ABOVE] Simple yet effective atmospheric effects bolster an already smart looking game.

CAST ADRIFT WHO'S WHO?

ALUNDRA IS GIFTED WITH THE ABILITY TO DREAMWALK, AND ENTER PEOPLE'S DREAMS AND NIGHTMARES.

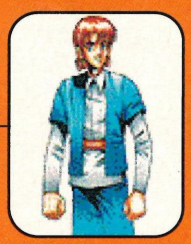


JESS, THE LOCAL SWORDSMITH IS CARING AND SEES A LOT OF HIS DEAD SON IN ALUNDRA.

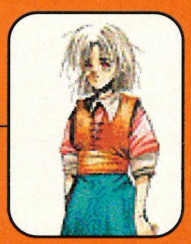




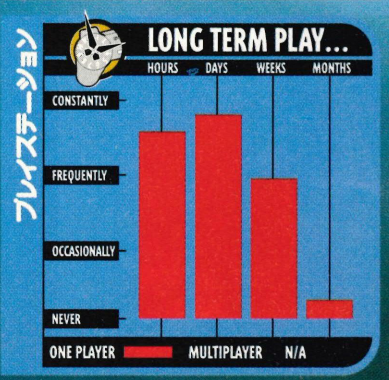
MEIA IS OF THE TRIBE OF ELNA. TRUSTS NO ONE BUT HERSELF AND HARBOURS A HEARTBREAKING SECRET.



SEPTIMUS HAS BEEN RESEARCHING DREAMS FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS AND HOPES TO SAVE THE VILLAGERS.



SYBILL HAS THE ABILITY TO DREAM WHEN SHE'S AWAKE. HER DREAMS FORESEE EVENTS WITH UNCANNY ACCURACY.



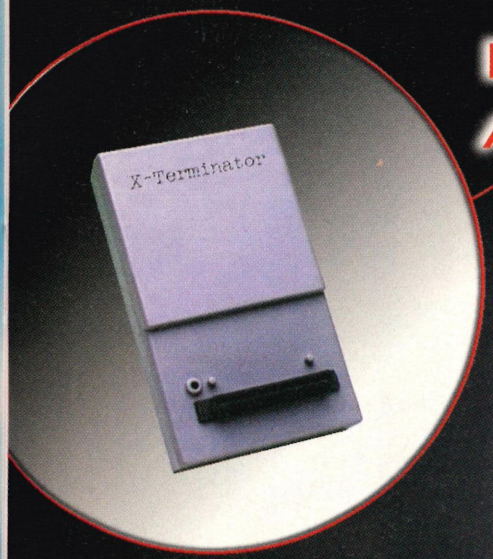
PLAY

LOOKS	9
SOUNDS	9
GAMEPLAY	10
VALUE	10
CHICKENS	9

PLAYED 86%

Engrossing and enchanting adventure

ALTERNATIVELY:
WILD ARMS (85%)
SUIKODEN (80%)



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BLOODY RO

VIRGIN'S NUTTER TAKES ALL THE CHOICEST CUTS FROM SOME OF THE BEST BEAT-'EM-UPS AROUND AND THE RESULTS ARE RATHER TASTY.

Bloody Roar may sound like the way an angry Frenchman orders a steak, but after battling through a few rounds of Virgin's lavish fighting game, it's more a case of 'well-done.' Don't be disgruntled by the dodgy FMV intro either – it doesn't do the game any justice whatsoever, because what follows is an excellent blood-soaked orgy of controlled aggression and raw power.

Bloody Roar is a port of a little known Japanese arcade game known as *Beastorizer*, and successfully pilfers many of the best characteristics from classic beat-'em-ups of old to form a highly playable hybrid. It's a smooth as anything we've seen (*Tobal 2* included) and makes use of a simple and effective moves system that worked so well in Sega's *Virtua Fighter*. Ok, so plenty of ideas have been begged, stolen and borrowed, but the hub of the gameplay is original enough in that during each bout your elected character has the ability to transform into his/her beastly alter ego and, if you'll pardon the pun, go ape.



[Above] Character animations are absolutely superb, huge and well-detailed. And it moves fast, too, essential in the heat of frenetic combat.



PLAY Information

Publisher: Virgin
We got it from: Joypad on 01202 311611
Price: £44.99
Release date: Out now



Primal Scream

You can even turbo-charge your new, hairy form by hitting the 'Rave' button – not a drug-induced, all-night party where you tell everyone you really love them, but a

MORPH 'N' MATCH

EACH CHARACTER HAS THE UNCANNY ABILITY TO CHANGE INTO A HAIRY BEAST. YOU BEGIN EACH BOUT IN HUMAN FORM, BUT BEFORE LONG THE TEMPTATION TO CHANGE IS ALMOST TOO MUCH.

ALICE: ANGEL IN COUNTERATTACK



HEIGHT: 154 CM (HUMAN)155CM (BEAST)
WEIGHT: 57KG (HUMAN) 68KG (BEAST)

BAKURYU: THE STRIKER IN DARK



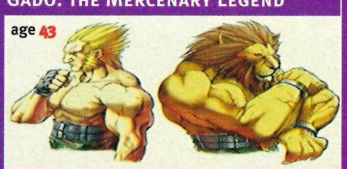
HEIGHT: 153CM (HUMAN) 147CM (BEAST)
WEIGHT: 51KG (HUMAN) 67KG (BEAST)

FOX: THE CLAW OF INSANITY



HEIGHT: 186CM (HUMAN) 190CM (BEAST)
WEIGHT: 65KG (HUMAN) 65KG (BEAST)

GADO: THE MERCENARY LEGEND



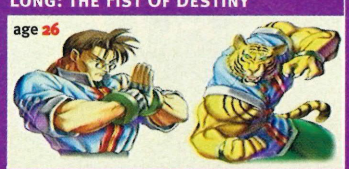
HEIGHT: 187CM (HUMAN) 188CM (BEAST)
WEIGHT: 75KG (HUMAN) 78KG (BEAST)

GREG: THE OBSESSED WANDERER



HEIGHT: 197CM (HUMAN) 203CM (BEAST)
WEIGHT: 100KG (HUMAN) 120KG (BEAST)

LONG: THE FIST OF DESTINY



HEIGHT: 179CM (HUMAN) 181CM (BEAST)
WEIGHT: 71KG (HUMAN) 74KG (BEAST)

MITSUKO: THE PASSIONATED SEARCHER



HEIGHT: 182CM (HUMAN) 183CM (BEAST)
WEIGHT: 78KG (HUMAN) 85KG (BEAST)

YUGO: THE MAD PURSUER

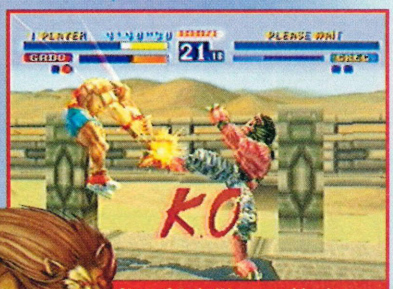


HEIGHT: 175CM (HUMAN) 177CM (BEAST)
WEIGHT: 67KG (HUMAN) 71KG (BEAST)

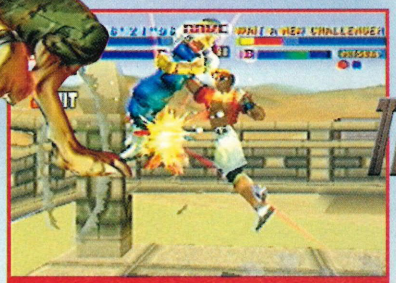
CHECK OUT POWERSTATION 21 FOR A FULL PLAY GUIDE TO *BLOODY ROAR*

Written By Tom Sargent

AR



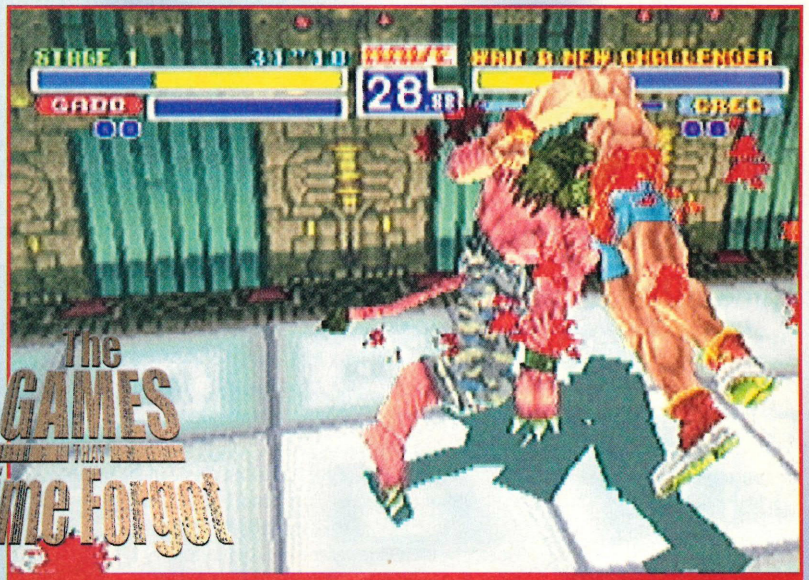
[Above] Gado KOs greg with a huge kick in the goolies. Sometimes in mid-battle characters throw-up as well!



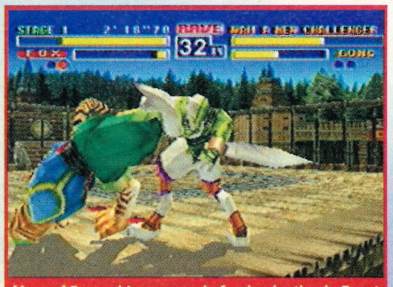
[Above] Aerial attacks are just as powerful as those on the ground. Try to keep an enemy in the air for longer combos.



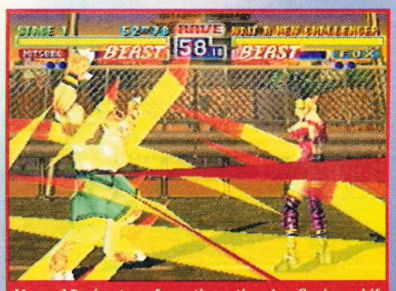
[Above] Alice is a great all-rounder – agile, yet powerful.



[Above] Gado having transformed into a lion beast clamps his jaws around Greg's throat, ripping it open. Nasty.



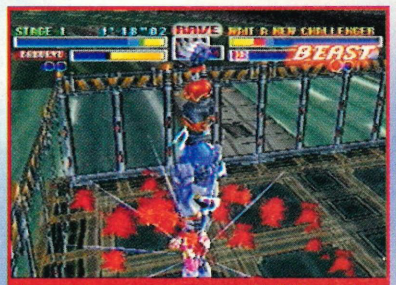
[Above] Fox and Long grapple for domination in Beast form. Who'll win, the Tiger or the fox?



[Above] During transformations, there's a flash, and if an opponent is near, they'll be flung backwards.

brief period of time where new superior combos become available, beast strength is doubled and opponents can't block your barrage of attacks.

The Rave option is a mixed blessing though. On one hand it provides you with the brute force necessary to smash rivals into a bloody pulp, but on the other it rapidly eats into the time that you can stay in Beast form. Judging when to activate the two is the most fun, because even though the Beast bar is flashing as an indication to change, you can stay in human form and let it build up even more. It works a treat and compels you to play it again on the harder levels, while gradually honing those close combat skills. There are only eight characters to choose from initially, which is a bit of a hammer blow considering how swiftly and smoothly each one moves.

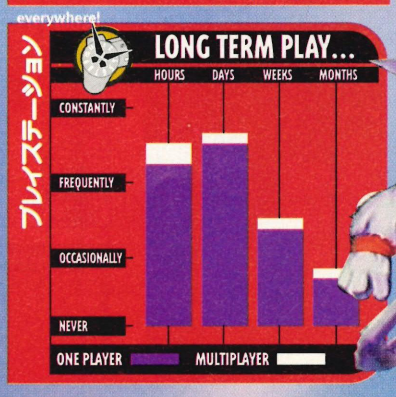


[Above]Bakuryu turns into a powerful 'drilling' mole-type creature. Looks at the blood spurting everywhere!

"A blood-soaked orgy of raw aggression..."

The Beast Within

Detail is generally excellent and every move kicks-in immediately with no slowdown; ensuring intense sweaty-palmed contests, and there are allegedly over 200 moves per character. Fighting is performed in 'true' 3-D, so it's a wise move to master the side-step technique, otherwise you'll get caught out time after time. Turning around quickly is awkward and can leave you stranded in the corner at the most inopportune moments, but generally play is well-balanced and exciting. Huge combo attacks are conspicuous by their absence and players are encouraged to create their own 'short, sharp shocks'. In other words you won't see many over ten in length, although repeatedly punching an opponent in mid-air is a personal favourite.



If you tire of fighting in 'Normal' mode, the 'Big Head' and 'Kids' alternatives are fun for a while, again lavishing the player with more juicy options. *Bloody Roar* is extremely slick, packed with variety, and stands as a nice slant on a genre desperately in need of new ideas. If you can't wait for the all-conquering *Tekken 3*, check out this roaringly bloody bruiser.

PLAY

Looks	8
Sounds	8
Gameplay	8
Value	8
Claws	8

PLAYED 85%

Pure animal magnetism from VIE

Alternatively:
Tekken 3 (September '98)
Soul Blade (96%)

Pack of Three

Getting bored of playing in Normal mode? There's no messing around with awkward codes to access some of the goodies on offer, just head straight to the Options screen and enjoy...

Normal Mode



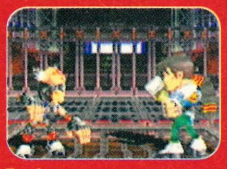
Normally-proportioned fighters.

Big Heads



Super-deformed heads with equally big egos.

Kids



The Japanese love to shrink their characters.

GHOST IN THE SHELL

SO YOU HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO PLAY WITH LITTLE ROBOTS SINCE YOUR MUM GAVE AWAY ALL YOUR TRANSFORMERS?

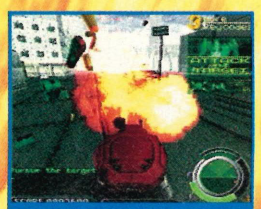
It might not be on the cutting edge anymore, but the dark action-packed *Ghost In The Shell* movie is still regarded as a classic in the field of anime. Being so successful and coming from Japan, it's a wonder that there hasn't been a videogame version before now, but here it is, officially licenced and with the blessings of the movie's team.

However, the game doesn't follow the original story all that closely. The film is about a virtual life form created to endlessly police the Internet of 2029 which becomes self aware and demands a physical body. The game is about controlling a little six-legged combat tank against a terrorist organisation that is causing a lot of trouble around the Tokyo Bay Area. Not an obvious connection really, but there are enough familiar elements mentioned in the cut scenes or mission briefings to keep the anime's fans happy.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Sony
Customer support: 0881 505505
Price: £39.99
Release date: April '98

ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD



[Above] The patrolling cyborgs look just like people, but they explode into big fireballs without a drop of blood!



[Above] The animation scenes are of high quality, but not everybody likes that sort of thing.



[Above] To take out the machines that launch rockets out of their top at you, get in right next to them where you are safe while constantly firing.



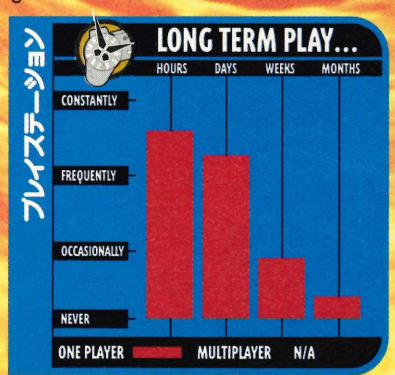
[Above] Find yourself a nice sniping position where you can get the hang of timing your missile launches on unsuspecting robots. The immediate playability and attractive graphics make the game instantly playable.

PROJECT 2501

Using a motion scanner, you have to scuttle freely around 12 stages with the aim of destroying the terrorists' latest despicable plans and ultimately making it to the leader. Large, spidery droids have been posted all over each location to slow you down, as have helicopters and many humanoid robots with powerful machine guns, but luckily your tank is extremely agile. You can jump to Six-Million-Dollar-Man-heights without any difficulty, walk on sheer vertical walls or even ceilings, and tucked away in the two front legs are double rapid-fire guns which make an excellent noise as their stream of bullets rain across the sheet metal body of your brainless enemies. You also get a couple of handy pulse grenades and infinite tracking missiles that activate – *R-Type*-style – by holding and releasing the fire button at the right time.

The tremendous feeling of agility you get from *Ghost In The Shell* and the slick weapons is where the fun comes from. But it's a tough game and playing for more scenes of new footage will not be compelling enough for a country in which anime is a cult industry and not a national fixation. With graphics that haven't moved on since the same team coded *Jumping Flash*, *GITS* (an unfortunate acronym) must be recommended to manga maniacs only.

"There's a tremendous feeling of agility..."



PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●○○○○○○
SOUNDS	●●●●●●○○○○
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●○○○○
VALUE	●●●●●●●○○○
TANKS	●●●●●●●●○○

PLAYED 73%

Nice package but strictly for mangaphiles

ALTERNATIVELY:
JUMPING FLASH 2
BRAHMA FORCE (85%)

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EXTREME SNOW BREAK

WE THOUGHT IT COULDN'T GET ANY WORSE THAN *CHILL*. WE WERE WRONG.

PLAY PUTRID



[ABOVE] Dramatic jumps and zooming camera shots hardly enhance the dismal action on the slopes.

It seems to make sense that if you produce a game with a load of snow-covered downhill courses in it that they could be used by both skiers and snowboarders. That's exactly what occurred to a bunch of French programmers, so the dual winter sports idea is the 'angle' of *Extreme Snow Break*.

Pick which character you want from the two skiers and two snowboarders and you're ready to start a number of game modes, including Championship, Time Trial, Two Player, that kind of thing. Let's start with a snowboard on a Championship. Before long we see our chosen character standing on a plank, poised and ready for action along with two other racers who you'll be competing against. Tension builds as the numbers flash up onto the screen. "Three, two, one, paused." Eh? Oh, it's a racing game and it's only just come out, but it must not like the Dual Analogue pad. Disable the analogue option on the joypad and the race starts for real.

Before reaching the first bend it becomes obvious you can only do three things: crouch, jump and turn. What's so "extreme" about *Extreme Snow Break* then you wonder? At the first drop in the course, your query is answered. It's extremely crap. Without the slightest prompt from your fingers, your man attempts a sluggish backflip that causes him to slap against the rock face where the track turns right and he collapses into a rolling heap of ski boots and puffy clothing. Not a good start to a Championship, so you quit and start again. The same thing happens at the same jump. And again. And again...

From beginning to end, *Extreme Snow Break* is just one big unsightly disappointment. On skis or board, you'll fall over and over, rolling clean through the wobbling paper thin walls of houses, through large rocks and trees, all accompanied by a single falling animation. And at the end of this, you will still win the whole Championship easily because as the computer players are all awful.

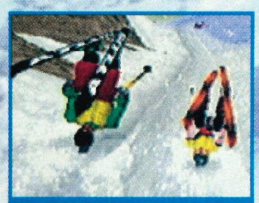
If it was impossible to buy ten copies of Celene Dion's single "My Heart Will Go On" this would be the worst thing you could get for around 40 quid. *Extreme Snow Break's* the worst game on the PlayStation.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Microids
Customer support: LDA on 01525 852900
Price: £39.99
Release date: Out now (sadly)

ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD

"Worst game on PlayStation!"



[ABOVE] Synchronised Tumbling is a small but growing sport, and may even turn up in the 2002 Winter Olympics.



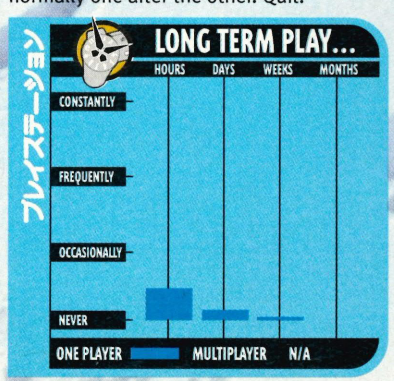
[ABOVE] Contact with the other racers, like everything else, makes you fall over and cycle through that terrible animation.



[ABOVE] Lorks! This little idiot has decided it's time for another backflip attempt, just when you thought you might win.

IZNOUGOUD...

By this point, the unstable cameras, jittery characters and shaking scenery are hurting your eyes, so you decide to try something else. Spying the two player option you give that a try, believing that most games can offer some enjoyment in split screen mode. Oh, it's not simultaneous, you just play normally one after the other. Quit.



PLAY

LOOKS	●●○○○○○○○○
SOUNDS	●●●○○○○○○○
GAMEPLAY	●○○○○○○○○○
VALUE	●○○○○○○○○○
SLUSH	●●○○○○○○○○

PLAYED **09%**

About as much fun as syphilis!

ALTERNATIVELY:
COOL BOARDERS 2 (81%)
CHILL (56%)

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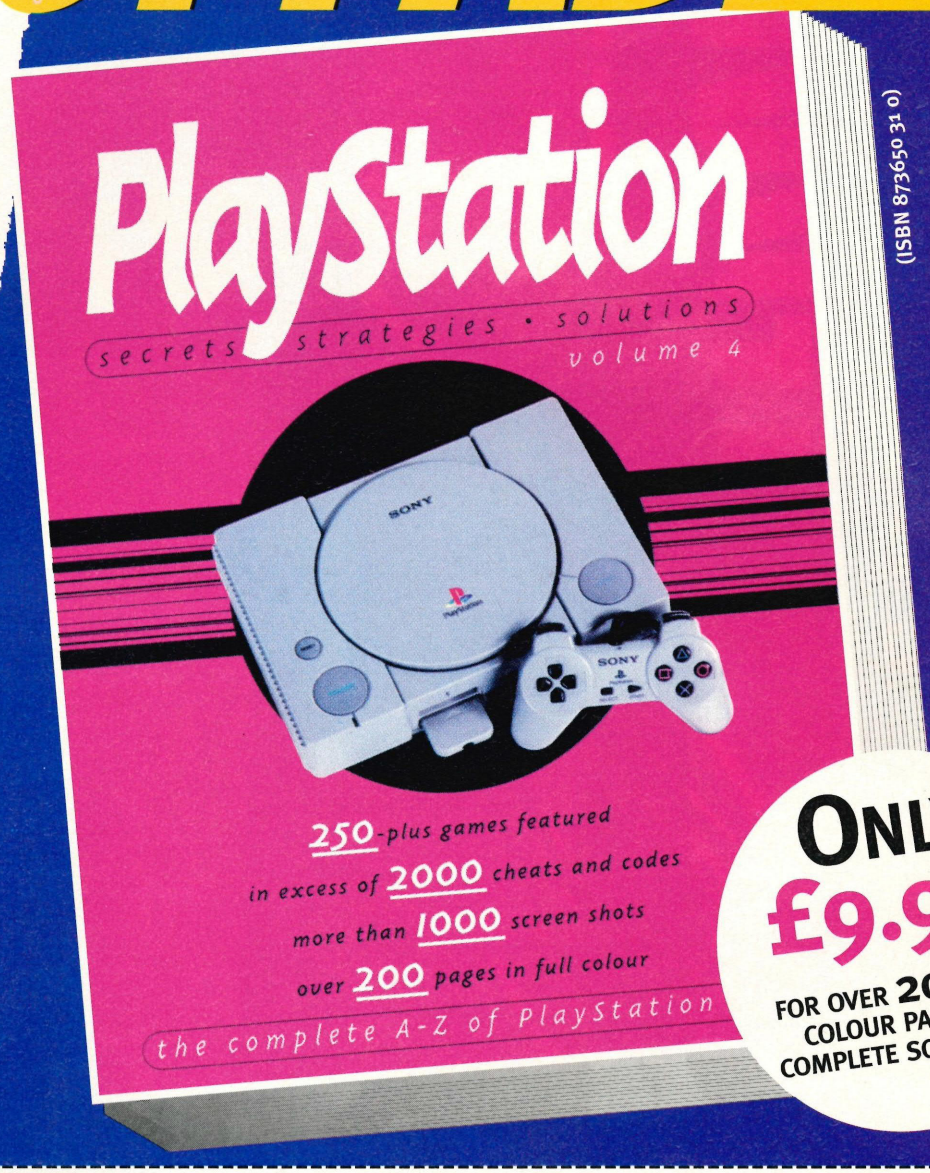
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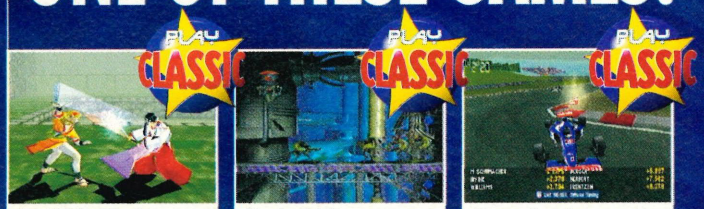
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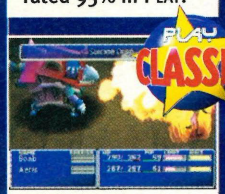
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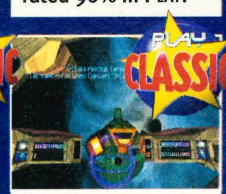
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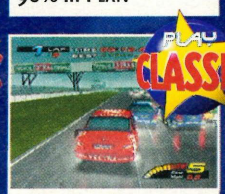
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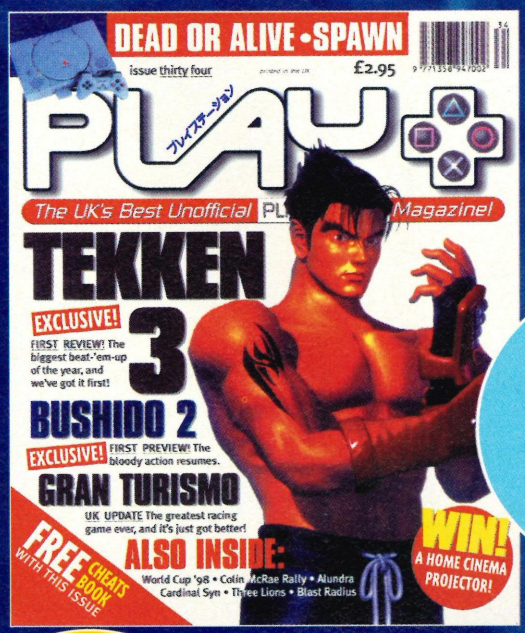
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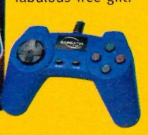
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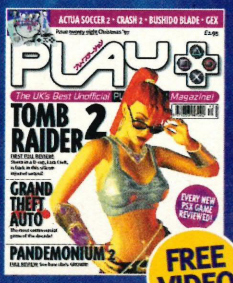
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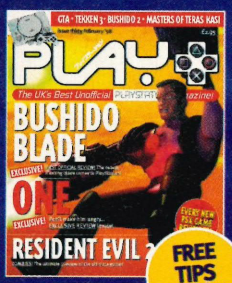
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X-MEN VS STREET FIGHTER EX

THE SATURN VERSION WAS A BLINDER, SO HAS THE PLAYSTATION GOT THE POWER TO GIVE ITS DYING RIVAL A RUN FOR ITS MONEY?



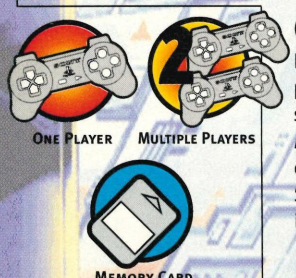
Written By Ryan Butt

At last, it all

becomes clear. It has been puzzling us for ages why the PlayStation version of *X-Men Vs Street Fighter* has '*Ex*' stamped on the end of its title, and now we know. You see, the arcade and Saturn version of this game are famed for the new 'tag-team' mode, where you choose two fighters at the start and can toggle between them during the bouts. However, without the memory expansion cartridge of the Saturn version, something had to give, and so we kiss goodbye to this tag-team element on PlayStation, hence '*Ex Edition*'.

PLAY INFORMATION

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

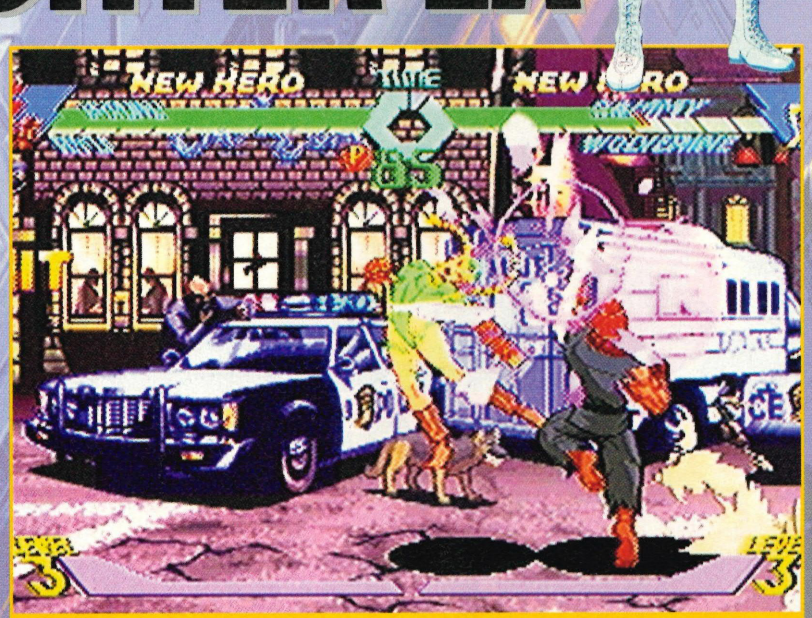


OPTIONAL 'EX'TRAS

However, the '*Ex*' addition also means that players can string together a series of super moves (as seen in *Street Fighter Ex Plus*) to create massive and original super combos to finish off their opponents. Seeing as this is unique to PlayStation, it isn't all bad.

There are 17 playable characters in *X-Men Vs SF*, bringing together the best of the Marvel comics with the cream of Capcom's *Street Fighter* back catalogue. Graphically, this game is very tidy, not to mention colourful. The whole look is a bright, vibrant plethora of colours that really stand out, and each fighter has a wide range of moves to set the screen alight.

Although we mentioned that the tag-team bit has gone, players can still benefit from choosing a secondary character by pulling off the '*Ex*' combos. This not only chucks a barrage of Technicolor power at your opponent from you main combatant, but it also invites your buddy to briefly join in and kick the almighty crap out of them as well.



[Above] The whole look of *X-Men Vs Street Fighter* is reminiscent of the Marvel comics. The fights take place against flat 2-D backgrounds and some of the moves are vastly over the top, which isn't a bad thing.

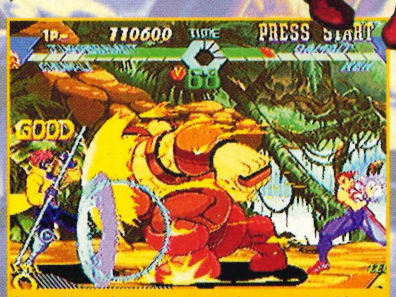


[Above] Magneto and Storm dish out some thunder for Chunners.





[Above] There are just so many quality characters to choose from.

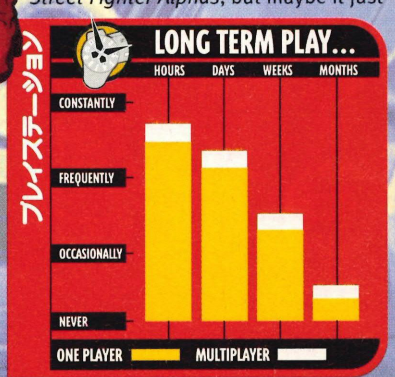


[Above] The mighty Juggernaut charges at Gambit, with Chun-Li ready to back him up. Lucky fat git!



"A barrage of Technicolour power!"

Another area where the PlayStation stands out as being an unsuitable platform for this coin-op monster is in the tediously long loading times that crop-up at every conceivable opportunity – making even a quick two player match a groan-inducing chore. As a fighting game, this is still better than the *Street Fighter Alphas*, but maybe it just arrived at the wrong time because *Tekken 3* urinates over it from a great height, and makes it look quite dated in comparison. But still, if you're serious about *Street Fighter* then this is a worthwhile additional to the set, albeit toned down from its origins.



PLAY

LOOKS	8
SOUNDS	6
GAMEPLAY	7
VALUE	7
COMBOS	9

PLAYED 82%

Flashy and vibrant, but Saturn wins this time

ALTERNATIVELY:
MARVEL SUPER HEROES (87%)
STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 2 (94%)

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SPAWN THE ETERNAL

LIKE ITS SILVER SCREEN COUSIN, SONY'S PROSAIC 3-D ADVENTURE DIVES FASTER THAN A SPITFIRE! WATCH THE SKIES...

Written By Tom Sargent n

Aaaaaggghhh!

What is it with film tie-ins? We had high hopes for *Spawn*. Okay, it died a slow, lingering death at the box office, but Todd McFarlane's comic book creation is perfect gaming fodder, and the PLAY Workstation looked promising at the time. It certainly isn't the worst film-to-game release (that accolade goes to *The Crow*), but it comes a close second.

Spawn: The Eternal is pretty average at the best of times, and utterly dismal in specific sections. You play the part of Spawn, and for reasons too dull to regurgitate you find yourself running around a *Tomb Raider*-esque third-person perspective world looking more like Gus the gorilla than an anti-hero with attitude. The ultimate goal is to defeat your arch-nemesis, Malebolgia and his sub-bosses The Violator, Vandalizer, and Vaporizor, but for the most part you control Spawn as he makes his way through one of four themed settings.

You begin the quest from Hell's Orchard (the entry point to hell) and access each of the levels (Street, Savage, Medieval and finally, the Tower of Hell) from here.

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Sony
Customer support: 0881 505505
Price: £34.99
Release date: April '98



GREAT ORBS OF FIRE

THROUGHOUT THE GAME, YOU REGULARLY COME ACROSS ORBS TO ENHANCE YOUR ABILITIES. TO FIND THEM, BREAK OPEN CRATES AND OTHER PIECES OF SCENERY.

NECROPLASMIC ORB
GLOWS GREEN, USED TO KILL ENEMIES.

CRYOMANTIC ORB
GLOWS BLUE, USED AS A SOURCE OF ENERGY.

PYROMANTIC ORB
GLOWS ORANGE AND PRODUCES FIRE.

HELL GAUNTLET
GLOWS RED, GIVES YOU EXTRA POWER IN A FIGHT.



[ABOVE] Spawn has an intelligent camera system which seems all the rage these days and it works pretty well most of the time. It always remains slightly behind the main character.



[ABOVE] Hell's Orchard, where you begin the game. There are four doorways to each 'world'.



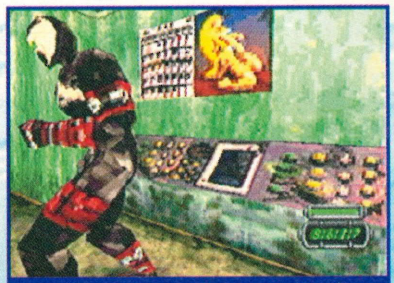
[ABOVE] On Medieval level, Spawn sports this Captain America-type outfit.



[ABOVE] Sometimes Spawn needs to smash his way through openings to reach new areas.



[ABOVE] As you jump around, an 'intelligent' camera pans quite effectively around the main character.



[ABOVE] After checking-out the nude calendar, Spawn looks for the relevant switch on the wall.

VIOLATION

Although the animation of the main character is acceptable, he doesn't exactly have an amazing repertoire of moves at his disposal. In fact in a one-off fight to the death Lara Croft would run rings around this primate!

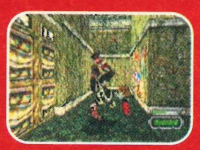
Movement is severely restricted to running and jumping, with a token punch and kick combination to smash your way through doors, crates and anything else that gets in the way. The background graphics are woeful too. Buildings are duller than Nigel from *Eastenders* and distort beyond belief. The textures are blocky and pixelate terribly up close, leaving you confused as to where the hell you are! The worst fault however, is the combat. Sony, in it's wisdom, has decided to include an entirely different engine for the fight sequences, so you only ever take on one opponent. Doh! Why they bothered is a mystery, because it's absolutely atrocious. Billed as being a '*Tekken*-like' beat-'em-up section in the WorkStation, it's anything but. *Spawn's* fighting section resemble *Tekken* about as much as Bernard Manning looks like an Armani model!

JUMP AROUND

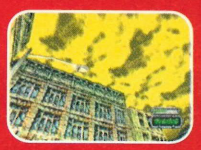
There are a few moves and views available to Spawn in his quest to reach the Tower of Hell.


Press switches to activate doors and elevators as you explore the game.


Use the jump button to reach power orbs and harder to reach areas.

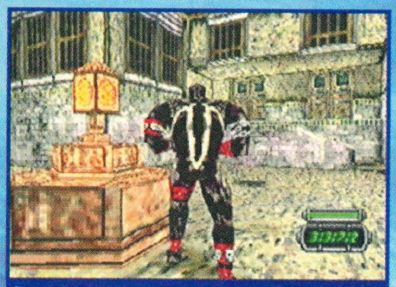

Pressing the roll button executes a perfect tumble along the ground.


By pressing all four shoulder buttons you can recharge your energy bar.


Change to the first-person view to look around (above and below).


At certain times you can go invisible. Very useful, but for a limited time.


[Above] Blood spurts as you finish-off another foe. They're very easy to kill, which doesn't help the rather lacklustre atmosphere.


[Above] On this level our hero has to negotiate a maze of trains and tunnels, while looking out for falling debris. No great shakes, really.


[Above] After defeating this baddie near the sewage waterfall, you collect a cog which enables you to escape.


[Above] Spawn's cape only comes into view when a scrap ensues, and they are strictly one-on-one affairs consisting of very limited exchanges.


[Above] after defeating the level boss, you must exit through the blue warp gate.


[Above] One of the mid-level bosses gets a bad case of flame breath.





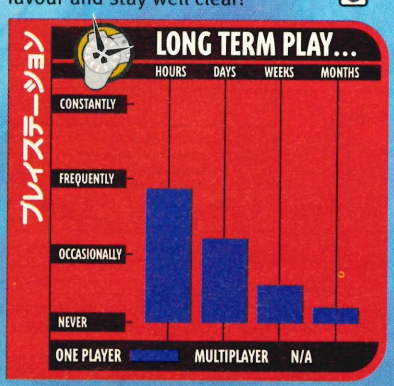
VAPOURISE

There's little to keep a seasoned adventurer (or a novice) interested and there's no automap facility either; you soon end up wandering aimlessly around each location until you eventually, and seemingly by chance, come across the next section. Apart from finding the odd key or Power Orb to beef up your fighting skills, *Spawn* soon becomes really tiresome and once you realise that there's a sure-fire way to beat virtually every 'intelligent' adversary (just side-step and kick them repeatedly – works every time!), interest really begins to wane and boredom sets in.

If you're a fan of the excellent best-selling comic, you may take some solace in the fact that all of baddies have been included and *Spawn* changes his costume for each new 'world', but for the rest of us, this just won't cut the mustard.

"The background graphics are woeful..."

Spawn is unbelievably disappointing. There are at least half-a-dozen superior games in this genre, such as *Tomb Raider II* and *Deathtrap Dungeon*, both of which make this look about as inviting as a bowl of vomit. Do yourself a favour and stay well clear!



PLAY

Looks	4
Sounds	5
Gameplay	5
Value	5
Cossies	5

PLAYED 49%

Dull and unimaginative – send it to hell!

ALTERNATIVELY:
Tomb Raider II (95%)
Deathtrap Dungeon (86%)

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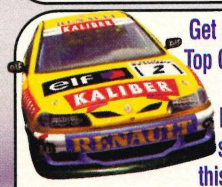
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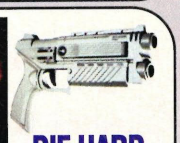
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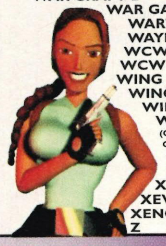












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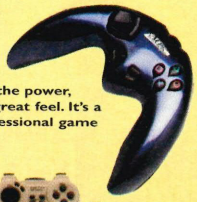


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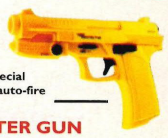
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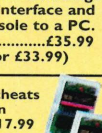


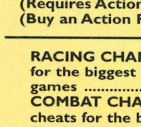
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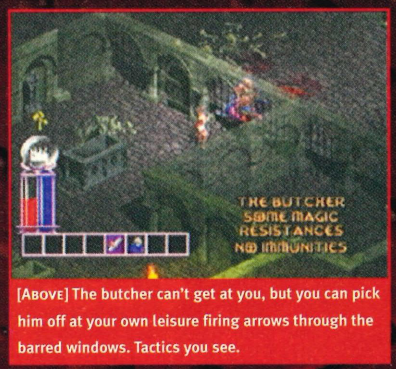
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DIABLO



[Above] The butcher can't get at you, but you can pick him off at your own leisure firing arrows through the barred windows. Tactics you see.

If you FANCY a bit of ARCADE dungeon-bashing that's EASY on the BRAIN but FUN to play, you CAN'T go far WRONG with EA's LATEST offering.

Written By Tom Sargent

We can already

hear the murmurs of disapproval, another flippin' role-playing game wends its way onto the PlayStation under the guise of entertainment. All those potions, hit points and shuffling of characters – it's enough to drive you bonkers, right?

Not so with EA's enhanced PC port, because this is dungeon-bashing for people who want to leave their stat-juggling skills at home, instead this concentrates on the subtleties of mindless slaughter instead. True, the interface and general ease-of-use is worthy of high praise, but after a few long levels you begin to wonder if *Diablo* is just a frilly *Gauntlet* clone.

The Kingdom of Khandaras is in chaos and people are running scared as a result of an unknown force, and the source of this evil emanates from the small village of Tristram. After collaborating with a few clichéd locals – the blacksmith, a healer, token gibbering drunk and a cackling old witch (all surprisingly-well acted), you happen across an ancient cathedral which houses a labyrinth replete with foul-breathed (and generally undead) brethren of Diablo himself.



[Above] All kinds of horror await the weary traveller in *Diablo*'s dungeons. The dead in this room have been skewered in sticks to cheer you up a bit.

PLAY Information



Publisher: Electronic Arts
Customer support: 01753 549 442
Price: £39.99
Release date: 4 April '98



One Player | Multiple Players



Memory Card

Fetid

All the action is portrayed from a familiar isometric vista, by which you, or another player coexisting on-screen simultaneously complete a series of quests and sub-quests using weapons and magic (or the two combined) to bring about the downfall of the hellish hoards. There are 16 levels to explore in all and they're all bloody huge, dimly-lit and full of traps and monsters. Depending on



[Above] Every-so-often you come across purification pools, where you can cleanse yourself of poison.



[Above] Before entering the labyrinth, a mortally-wounded soldier pleas with you to avenge the village.



[Above] After slaughtering the Butcher boss, Tiffany hacks her way through the Burning Dead.



A KIND OF MAGIC

Gaining good spells is a sure-fire way to success, especially against bosses.



1 Lure him out...



2 Set the target area...



3 Set it off...



4 Quickly jump back...



5 Flame on!!



[Above] Before venturing off into the depths, scout around the village talking to the locals. It's a veritable hive of information and new weaponry. Even Farnham the drunk has his uses.



[Above] Collect scrolls to empower your character with new spell-casting ability. The Scroll of Lightning sends multiple forks of energy at enemies.



[Above] The Butcher is a nasty piece of work. If you've got the fire-power, take him out with magic. This 'Wall of Flame' spell should loosen him up.



[Above] The Automap facility is only one button away and works a treat.



[Above] Beware The Butcher, level two's blood-thirsty boss. Try and get him in an area where you can pick him off with arrows, preferably through a window.



[Above] You can't see what a room contains until the door is opened. An excellent touch.



[Above] The inventory, where you prepare spells and items for use. It's ever-so easy.



[Above] The domain of the Skeleton King. Lay his bones to rest and the curse will be lifted.

DUNGEON DWELLERS

Waiting to greet you are a motley collection of repugnant beasts. Here's a few we tortured before chucking back in the pits of hell.

Black Knight Very dangerous and well-armed.



Skeleton Widespread throughout the dungeons. Dangerous in groups.





Goat Bow Deadly with a bow and arrow.



Mega Demon Run for the hills – very hard to kill.



Rhino Demon Charges at victims – avoid like the plague.



Sneak Like the Hidden but with two heads. Nastier.



Hidden Unpleasant, but easy to kill.

"Arcade dungeon-bashing that's easy on the brain and fun..."

which character class you have chosen (Warrior, Rogue or Sorcerer) new weapons and magic spells become available to counter the increasingly aggressive nature of the denizens. Everything can be readied and used in the press of a button, resulting in some hugely-satisfying multi-enemy deaths. The control and movement of your hero or heroine is generally okay, but more often then not, you get stuck at vital moments when trying to escape through a doorway. Hideously-long loading times between levels are annoying in the extreme too, but at least you can save at any time in a level – a real blessing given those sticky encounters involving bosses and group attacks.

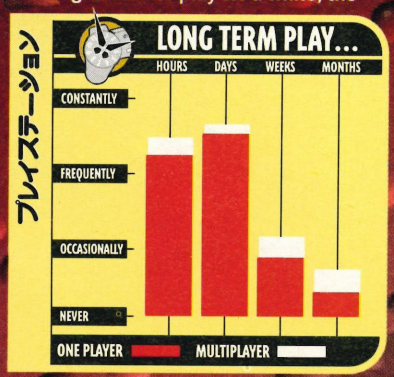


[Above] Some spells you can reuse if you find a book for it. Then it can be read and used until your Mana runs out.

Rancid

Graphically, *Diablo* is a mixed bag, many of the locations are really-well detailed with excellent use of light enveloping a smoothly-scrolling environment. In stark contrast, both the creature and player movements are limited to a few frames of animation – they're pretty titchy too. The game itself is great fun to play for a while; the way you gain experience and stockpile the rigging of the fallen is rewarding, but most satisfaction is gleaned from laying a gang of skeleton warriors to waste after they've appeared out of the ground.

In the long term nothing can disguise the limitations that *Diablo* imposes on the player, particularly the lack of development in the later levels. The spells get bigger and brasher as do the enemies, but other than pulling a few levers and finding a few secret areas there's nothing to do but hack your way through. The story unfolds nicely as you return to the village for new supplies and you can save your character to play in a different game with a friend, but as much fun as it is to play, it's doubtful whether you'll be playing it for weeks on end.



PLAY

Looks	●●●●●●●●●●
Sounds	●●●●●●●●●●
Gameplay	●●●●●●●●●●
Value	●●●●●●●●●●
Corpses	●●●●●●●●●●

PLAYED 74%

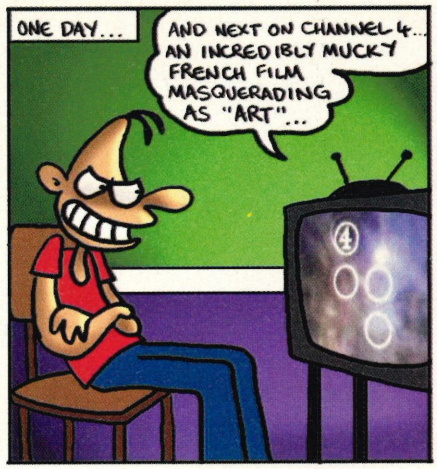
Enjoyable but repetitive RPG. Not bad.

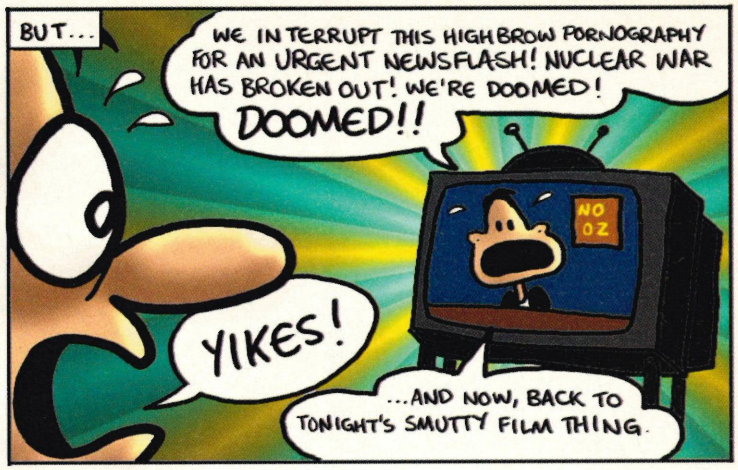
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Crusader: No Remorse (80%)

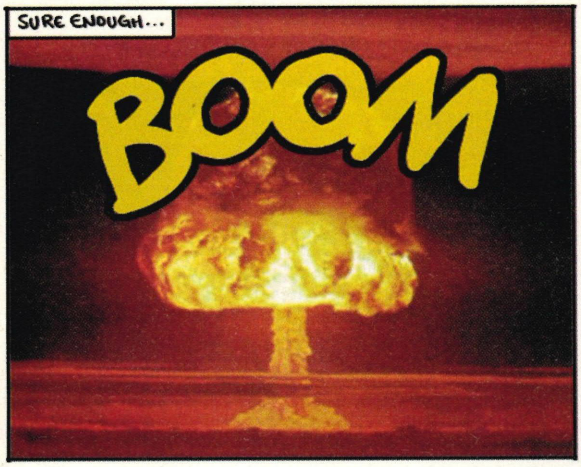
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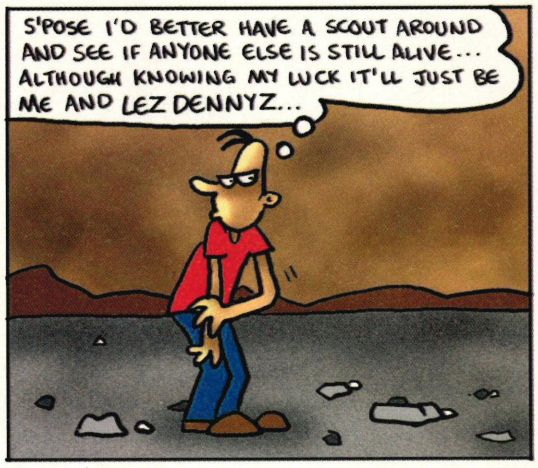
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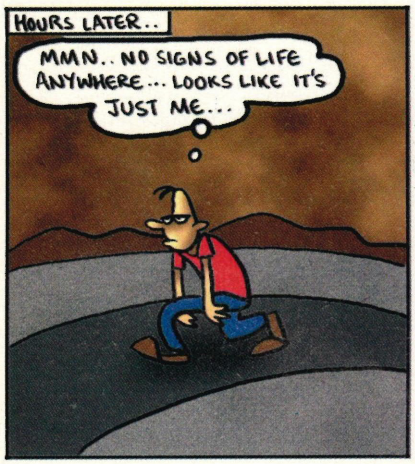




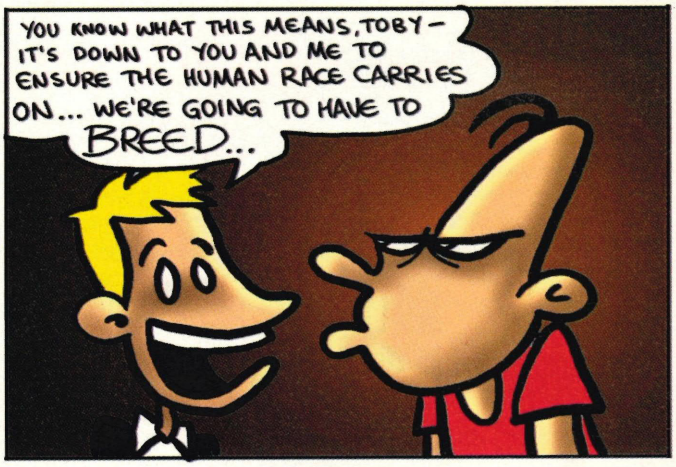


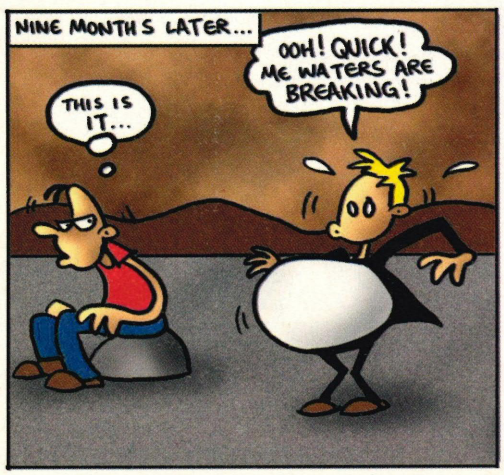




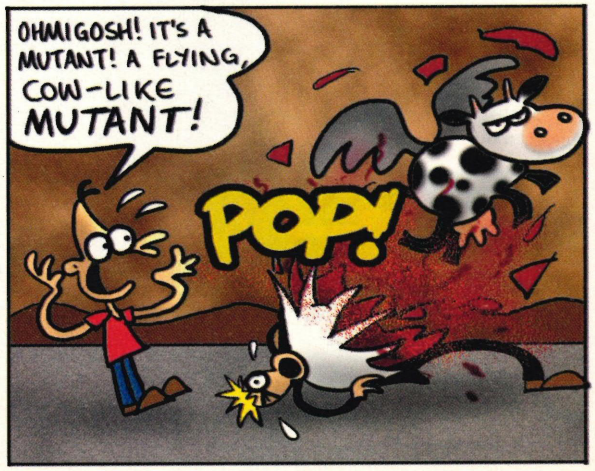














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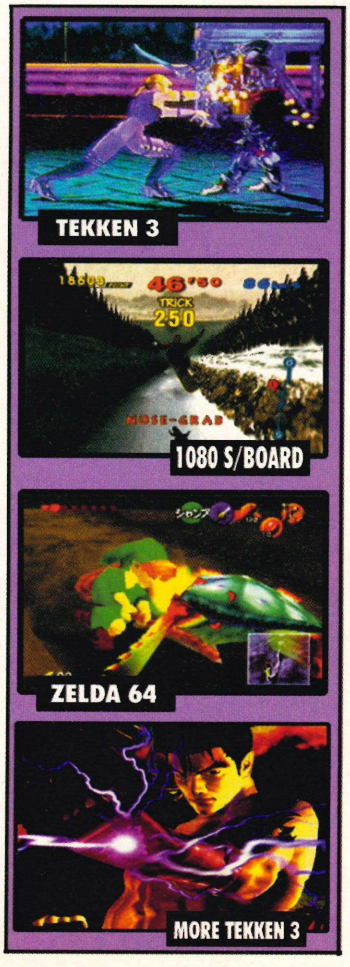
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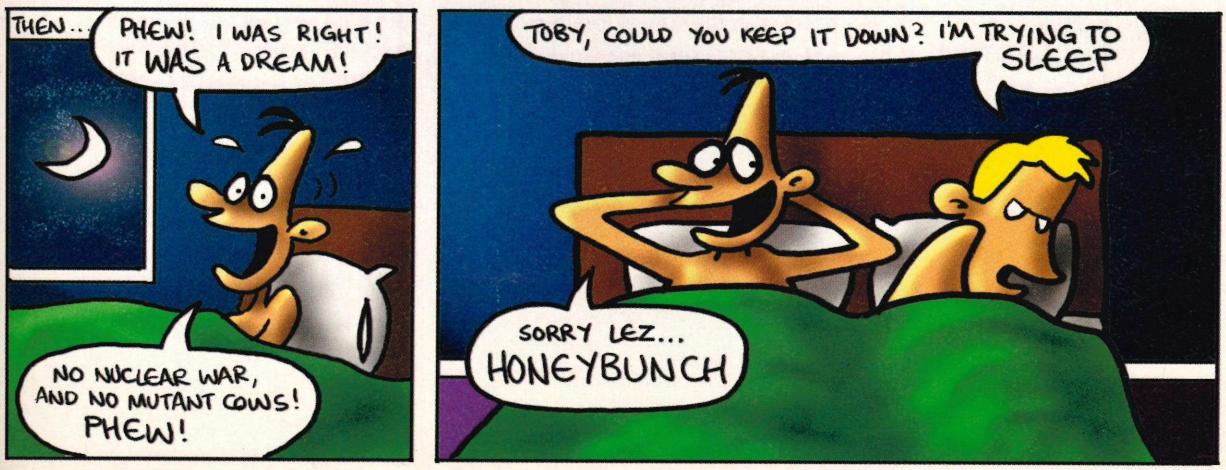
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CARDINAL SYN

ARE YOU READY TO COMMIT THE ULTIMATE SYN? HANG ON TO YOUR ENTRAILS, THIS A SPLATTER-FEST UNLIKE ANY OTHER!

Written By Tom Sargent

Bloody hell!

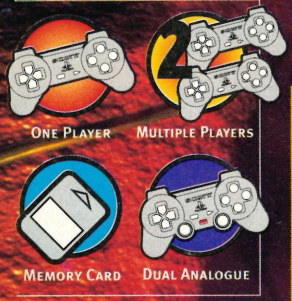
Literally. *Cardinal Syn* has to be one of, if not *the* most gory arcade-style fighting games ever devised. Set during medieval times, it pits eight warriors against each other vying for dominion of the surrounding Blood Lands.

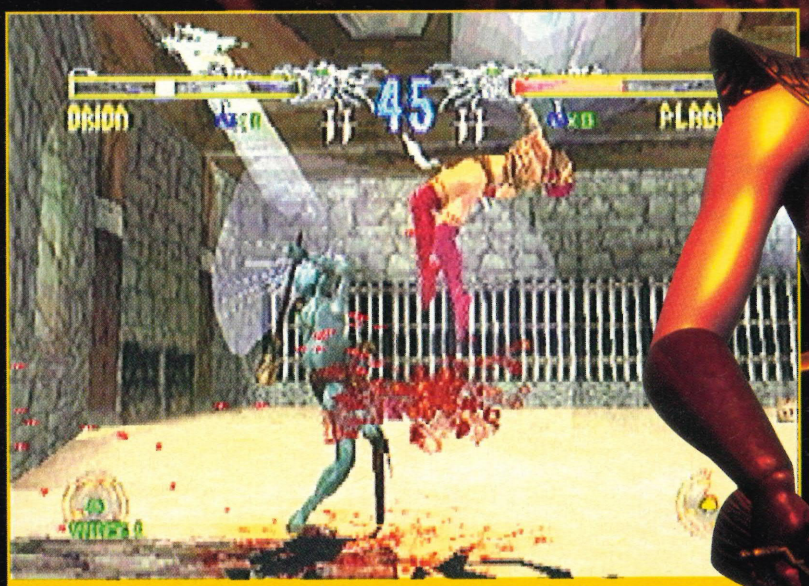
As with any game of this ilk, the story is inconsequential, suffice to say that the clans (once unified by an ancient 'wanderer') have been brought together again by a mysterious sorceress called Syn to settle their differences by way of a gladiatorial tournament. Unlike the shandy-drinking, leotard-clad pansies on ITV, these contestants have a few events of their own, including disembowelling, cauterising and crushing. There's no letting-up in the tomato sauce department either, and once you've digested the stunning full motion video (FMV) prologue it's straight down to the business of hacking chunks out of each other.

First and foremost, the graphics are quite breath-taking and each character moves wonderfully well, whether they're panting in anticipation of the next attack or performing one of their precision attacks.

PLAY Information

Publisher: Sony
Customer support: 0881 505505
Price: £34.99
Release date: May 29 '98





[Above] Plague dashes in to chop chunks out of Orion. The use of blood is absolutely superb. It doesn't just disappear either, it stays there for quite some time before vanishing.



[Above] Each character has their own special abilities, such as Mongoro's shield. Learn their patterns.

Viscera

Cardinal Syn is most notable for the liberal dosage of gore, though. It's certainly a step in the right direction as far as limb removal and realistic blood splats are concerned. If you manage to execute one of the ultimate disembowelment deathblows, players can witness the separation of arm from torso followed by the visceral delight of an opponent's sorry-looking stump spurting a fountain of blood. Truly entertaining! Not only that, during any standard exchange of blows, clouds of the red stuff explode

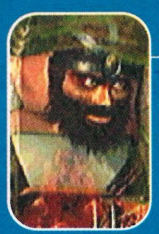
WHO'S WHO AT SYN CENTRAL?

There are 18 characters in total – eight standard (shown below), each one also has a unique alternate, plus two bosses.



Hecklar

May be the joker in the pack, but moves as fast as lightning (which is fast).



McKrieg

Separated at birth from Brian Blessed, McKrieg is a mean axe-wielder.



Plague

Staggers around, looks cumbersome but deadly close in. Reject from *RE2*.



Finkster

Like Hecklar, uses lightning-fast combos up close.



Nephra

Mistress of arcane powers, residing in a pyramid. Quite a looker.



Mongoro

Summons witchcraft to defeat foes. Has a big ass ring through his nose.



Vanguard

The brutish knight has no equal with the blade. Still, he doesn't look too happy.

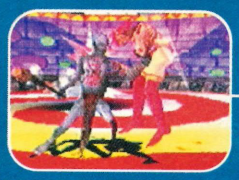


Orion

This valkyrie uses fast sword skills and magic to full effect. Stacked.

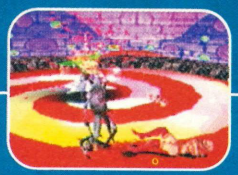
MEN AT ARMS...

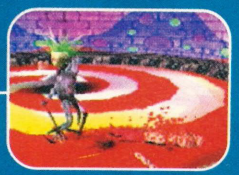
THIS IS THE LEGENDARY ULTIMATE DEATHBLOW. TRICKY BUT BRILL


GRABBED WITH ONE ARM THE MOVE BEGINS...


FLUNG AND CHOPPED IN AN INSTANT...


BLOOD SPRAYS EVERYWHERE WITH ELEGANT PATTERNS...


ORION FALLS, HER ARM NOT FAR BEHIND...


HER BLOODIED STUMP PUMPS BLOOD INTO THE AIR!



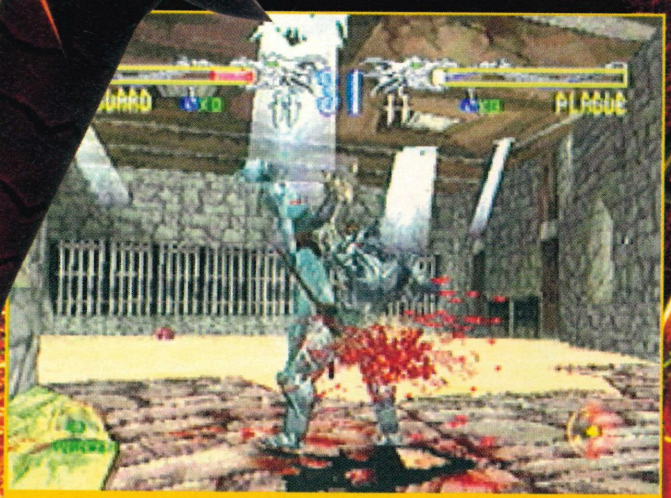
[ABOVE] Each gory bout takes place in a fully-interactive arena, which the players can run around freely in the impressively advanced game engine.

from gaping wounds and cover the floors beneath the combatants.

This is not a game for the faint-hearted. Although the moves and combos are a treat to behold, the fighting system itself remains a moot point. It's not that the game itself is really hard; more the exactitude required to pull off many of the combos. The worst part is that once an enemy knocks you over or corners you, it's sometimes impossible to recover without losing half your energy.

BLOODSHED

Where other beat-'em ups are more accessible, *Cardinal Syn* requires hours of practice to master. The artificial intelligence is excellent and you can't get away with repeatedly using the same



[ABOVE] just look at the amount of gore! It splashes everywhere and covers the entire screen. Homicidal tendencies are fully catered for in this great game.

"Most notable for the liberal dosage of gore"

move. The only way to beat the harder characters is to use the pick-ups scattered throughout each fully-interactive 3-D arena, including extra energy, weapon upgrades, and if you're unlucky, fizzing bombs. Alternatively, you can take advantage of the 'shove', which unceremoniously hurls opponents onto spiked walls or fiery pits – a nice touch bringing strategy as well as dexterity with the pad.

If you tire of the 18 level Tournament mode and have defeated all eight opponents (their alternate egos and the two bosses), there's Team Battle, Vs, Survival and Training modes too. It would have been great news to report that *Cardinal Syn* was yet another classic beat-'em-up to add to growing number already available on PlayStation, but it just misses the mark. It's certainly one of the best looking - but unfortunately the response time between activating the move and it actually happening means that at crucial times you just don't feel confident to pull them off. A damned fine game only slightly flawed by an awkward control system.



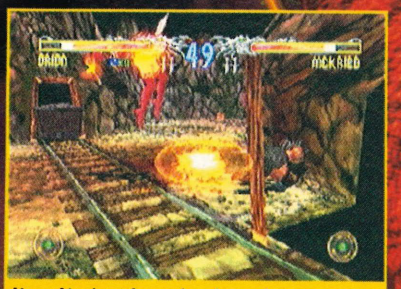
[ABOVE] After picking up a power-up, Nephra hurls magic at the helpless Vanguard for a perfect score.





[ABOVE] As Nephra moves in on Vanguard, he staggers before the motion-blur of her sword.





[ABOVE] Look out for moving pieces of scenery: you can lure your opponent to an early grave this way.

PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●●●●●○
SOUNDS	●●●●●●●●●○
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●●●○○
VALUE	●●●●●●●●○○
STUMPS	●●●●●●●●●○

PLAYED **85%**

Great gory action, flawed by control system

ALTERNATIVELY:
SOUL BLADE (96%)
BUSHIDO BLADE (82%)

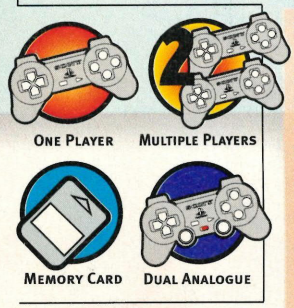
DEAD OR ALIVE

HOME 3-D HAND TO HAND COMBAT JUST REACHED THE NEXT GENERATION. HEAVENS ABOVE – IT'S DEAD OR ALIVE!

Written By Graeme Nicholson

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Tecmo
Supplied by: Joypad on 01202 311611
Price: £59.99
Release date: Out now (import)



One of the reasons many games look so much better in the arcades than they do on a home system is due to higher screen resolution which allows far greater detail in the graphics. The PlayStation has an extremely good hi-res mode, but as implementing it properly takes some wizardry, there are only a few games that take advantage of it. The only beat-'em-ups to make use of it so far was both of Square's excellent *Tobal* games, but now thankfully Tecmo has produced its astonishing *Dead Or Alive* in bright, zinging hi-res for your viewing pleasure!

The extraordinarily good quality of the graphics in *DOA* go a long way to making it so much fun to play. Nothing deserves your move-honing attention more than a lightning-fast fighter with arcade-calibre visuals, so you are compelled to spend time finding more moves, playing each mode, or battling to the end to unlock goodies like hidden characters and alternative outfits simply because it's so tasty to look at. However, the characters have more than just smooth curves – they also move in an exceptionally realistic way.



[Above] Don't worry mums – she IS wearing underwear!

KEEP ABREAST

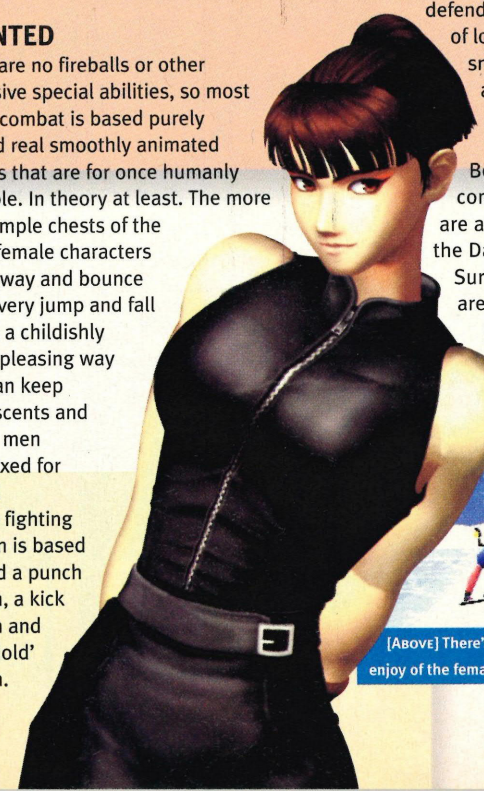
FEEL FREE TO DISABLE THE DISTURBINGLY REALISTIC FEMALE PHYSICS – BOING!



WANTED

There are no fireballs or other excessive special abilities, so most of the combat is based purely around real smoothly animated attacks that are for once humanly possible. In theory at least. The more than ample chests of the three female characters even sway and bounce with every jump and fall too, in a childishly bloke-pleasing way that can keep adolescents and lonely men transfixed for hours!

The fighting system is based around a punch button, a kick button and one 'Hold' button.





[Above] Some of the moves in *Dead Or Alive* are a bit unconventional, as demonstrated by Tina's Flying Bum special attack. But they're all the entertaining for their uniqueness!

Offensive moves are part *Street Fighter*, part *Tekken* to execute, but *Dead Or Alive's* biggest difference concerns the use of counter moves that you can easily trigger by hitting the Hold button when your opponent launches a fist or foot in your direction. At the simplest level these counters make you grab the thrusting limb and firmly push it aside. But start playing with attacking moves while you're defending in this way and all sorts of lovely bone-breaking, back-snapping, muscle-tearing antics become possible.

BAD GIRLS

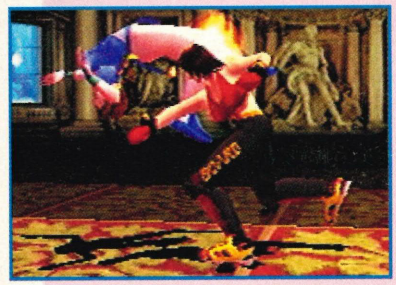
Bouts against other computer or human players are also kept interesting with the Danger Zone feature. Surrounding the main fighting area, the Danger Zone is a patch of ground you can



[Above] There's all sorts of interesting views to enjoy of the female leads. Fascinating.



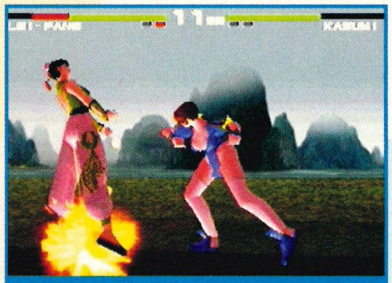
[Above] Lei-Fang may wear those big baggy MC Hammer pants, but she'll scissor kick you into oblivion rather easily. Look out!







[Above] Bayman's big, but with the right moves you can still force him out to the Danger Zone for some crucial punishment. Check out the fab cityscape.



[Above] The inhibition-free Kasumi manages to beat her enemy, Lei-Fang, out onto the Danger Zone.



[Above] Opponents will think twice about charging you with throwing moves like this in your repertoire.



[Above] The characters are big – almost the height of the screen – making *Dead Or Alive* impressive to watch.

ON A STEEL HORSE I RIDE

You know those people who pick up any beat-'em-up and keep winning from the very beginning – not by learning the ins and outs of the complex control system or studying the manual, but by hitting most of the buttons at once rapidly? Their days are numbered. See, all you need to do is learn a few simple reversals and they will be almost unable to hit you with their constant attacking moves in *Dead Or Alive*. Perfect!



"A lightening-fast fighter with arcade-calibre visuals!"



[Above] Of course the doddering old Wang Jinrey-type, Gen-Fu, is actually a rock hard fighter...

freely move onto that acts like a minefield each time you get knocked down. As you hit the deck, a large explosion goes off under your body that not only wounds you, but blasts you high into the sky. As you descend, you are defenceless against the body-juggling attacks of your enemy so this really is a position you don't want to be in! Part of the gameplay becomes trying to push, pull, throw or kick your opponent out into the Danger Zone where they can be finished off with a couple of good moves, the idea being that it's almost as satisfying as getting a ringout in *Toshinden*, but the victim has the chance to fight their way out of the situation.

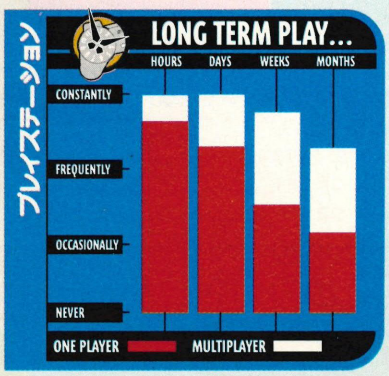
The Danger Zone and the easy-to-use reversal system combine to make the skirmishes of *Dead Or Alive* more varied than many current classics, including high flyers like *Soul Blade*. With such astonishing looks and a well tuned game engine, you can't help but wonder if this might render *Tekken 3* itself "DOA."



KICKING UP A FUSS

Meet the athletic cast of Dead Or Alive right here!





PLAY

Looks	●●●●●●●●●
Sounds	●●●●●●●○○
Gameplay	●●●●●●●○○
Value	●●●●●●●○○
Cleavage	●●●●●●●●●

PLAYED 91%

The breast beat-'em-up in ages!

Alternatively:
Tekken 2 (95%)
Tobal 2 (92%)

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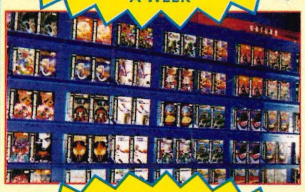


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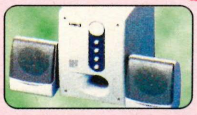
The Playstation produces incredible Hi-Fi quality sound but this is only output in dull mono through your TV. To unlock its full potential you need to hook up a pair of stero speakers. This is easily done - please ring for advice on any cables you may need.



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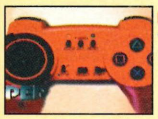


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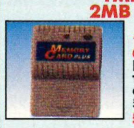
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To assist in choosing the right game for you, we have included review scores from both Play and Playstation Plus, two of the country's leading PSX magazines. We have also tried to categorise the games for you. If you would like advice or more information 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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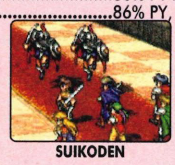
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"It's Legend of Zelda for the Playstation - compulsively addictive, deceptively simple and incredibly playable! 9/10" - Official Playstation Magazine no.31 .....£34.99

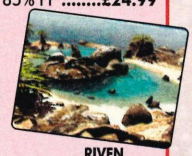
Alundra	Due end April	£34.99
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Sentient	84% PY, 71% PP	£26.99
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Streetfighter Ex Plus	91% PY, 93% PP	£30.99
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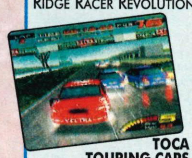


HARD CORE 4x4

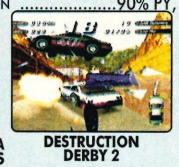


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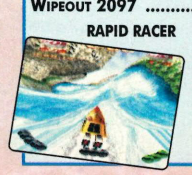


DESTRUCTION DERBY 2

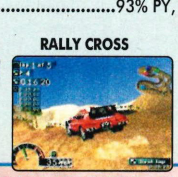


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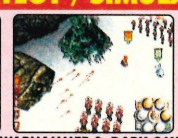
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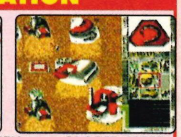
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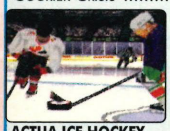
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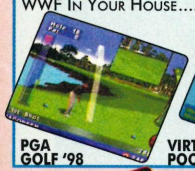
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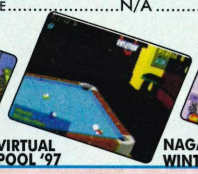

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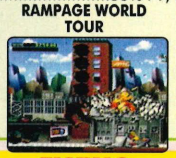

FROGGER


CRASH BANDICOOT 2


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HINT BOOKS

A-Z of PSX Secrets & Solutions	£10.99
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Nuclear Strike Official Guide	£10.99
Oddworld Official Strategy Guide	£10.99
Resident Evil 2 Unauthorised Guide	£11.99
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RETRO / COMPILATION / MISCELLANEOUS

Atari Greatest Hits	81% PY, 75% PP	£26.99
Atari Greatest Hits 2 (Midway)	Due mid March	£28.99
Namco Museum Volume 1 -includes Pacman, Pole Position, Galaga, Rally X, New Rally X, Toypop and Bosconian	70% PY, 84% PP)	£36.99
Namco Museum Volume 2 Includes Super Pacman and Xevious	70% PY, 63% PP	£34.99
Namco Museum Volume 3 -includes MS Pacman, Galaxian & Pole Position 2	73% PY, 71% PP	£29.99
Namco Museum Volume 4	79% PY, 67% PP	£29.99
Namco Museum Vol 5	75% PP	£29.99
Parappa the Rapper	82% PY, 89% PP	£24.99
Spice World (Spice Girls)	N/A	£19.99

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ADDRESS: .....

.....

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PLAY

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

Q&A

If you're hoplessly stuck, or just need advice, send queries to: *Q&A, Play Magazine, Paragon Publishing Ltd, Paragon House, St. Peter's Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 2JS.* We know everything!

Dear PLAY,
I'm stuck on the first *Tomb Raider*. Is there a level skip cheat? I have the weapons cheat, but I'm still stuck. Help! Thanks.
Rowan Griffiths, Shropshire

To activate the level skip, enter this code on the Inventory screen. L2, R2, ▲, L1, L1, ●, R2, L2. Note: This only works with the default control system (Type 1).

Dear PLAY,
I'm stuck on *Broken Sword 2*. I am in the museum on the island and have put the map & lamp on Ketch's desk. Please could you help me get past this part?
Lee Knight, Somerset

Exit the museum and head down the steps. Scroll right and click on Rio. select the treasure icon and the zombie icon. Now you'll head to Zombie Island beach.

Dear PLAY,
I've got the Japanese version of the awesome *Gran Tourismo*. Can you help me in translating the following licences: B-2 and A-1.
Jonathon Waring, Thirsk

For B-2, Accelerate in a straight line from starting point and stop completely in the goal area at 1000 meters away. Since the car is heavier and more powerful, you'll need to brake earlier. The car is a Mitsubishi GTO. Time limit is 27 seconds. For A-1, accelerate from starting point, turn the first corner, and go through the finish gate.

STATION MASTER

FINAL FANTASY VII

Jonathan Rodgers from London was so sure of himself that he sent in his memory card to prove that he was the master of *Final Fantasy*.

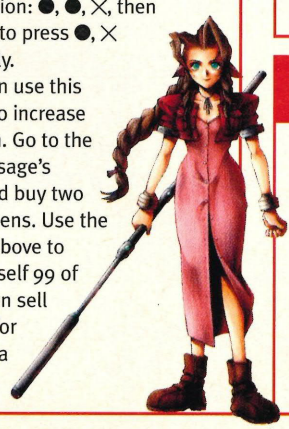
Easy Chocobo Races
Hold L1+L2+R1+R2 while racing for an easy victory.



Barret Lucky Sevens Cheat
Get Barret to level 70 and equip him with the Missing Score and Wizard Bracelet, then give him the following materia:
5 x HP plus (1 star)
Summon Phoenix (2 stars)
Time (2 stars)
Barrier (2 stars)
Full-Cure (2 stars)
Destruct (3 stars)
You may then equip Barret with as much yellow materia as you wish as this doesn't affect his hit points. Using this combination, Barret will get a HP score of 7777, which will allow him to inflict 7777 damage as a strike.

Produce 99 Items
To use this cheat you must have W-Item materia and at least two of the item you wish to produce. When you are in a battle, highlight the item you wish to produce and press the following button combination: ●, ●, ×, then continue to press ●, × repeatedly.

You can use this method to increase your cash. Go to the chocobo sage's house and buy two sylkis greens. Use the method above to give yourself 99 of them, then sell them all for 2,500 gil a piece!



SHADOW MASTER

Cheat mode
Start the game, take out the first two aliens and enter the room from which they emerged. Then, enter one of the following codes to activate the corresponding cheats.





Level select
Hold L1+ L2 + R1 + R2 + ▲, then intentionally lose. A new starting level from 1 to 16 may now be selected at the opening screen.

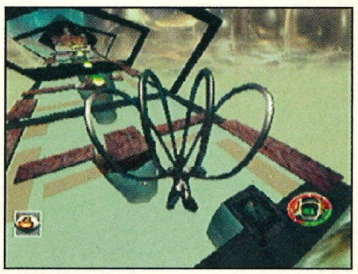
Unlimited energy
Hold L1+ L2 + R1 + R2 + ■, then intentionally lose.

All weapons with unlimited ammunition
Hold L1+ L2 + R1 + R2 + ●, then intentionally lose.

MDK

We concluded our solution to this game last issue, but here's a brill cheat...

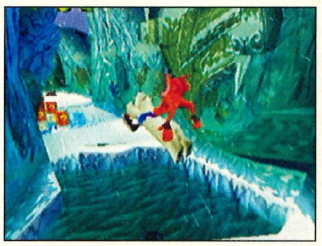
Level Select
On the main menu, hold down L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 and press ⇧, ⇨, ▲, ●, ⇨ then quickly release the buttons so that the stage select text stays on screen. Now press ■ to change level; ● to change arena.





CRASH 2

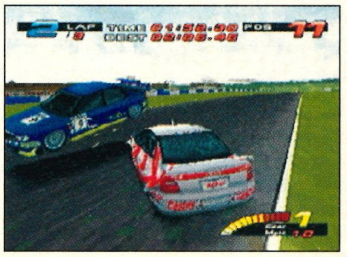
Bonus level
Wait until the second polar bear falls off the bridge in the 'Unbearable' level. Jump after the bear to enter a bonus level.



TOCA TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

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

All tracks unlocked
Enter JHAMMO as a player name.
No tracks unlocked
Enter CMLOCK as a player name.



THUNDERHAWK 2

This code let's you witness the end-game sequence
1NOK2oT5326M4MA
(Thanks to Sondre Warholme Bjørken, Norway)

NUCLEAR STRIKE

Updated Codes
Enter each one as a Password
Unlimited Lives
Enter LAZARUS
Move Faster
Enter WARPDRIVE
Unlimited Ammo
Enter GOPOSTAL

X-COM: TERROR FROM THE DEEP

Loadsamoney
On the base name screen when you start, enter AEIOU for heaps of money. Everything apart from building will cost just one dollar too!
Hard Men
On the case name screen, enter JUSTLIKEME and all the soldiers you build will be high ranking with full armour.

PLAYER MANAGER

Super team
Press ×, ×, ▲, R1, L2, ●, ■, ■, L1, ●, ×, ● at the game loading screen.
Loadsamoney
In order to sell players for wads of dosh, when you get a bid raise the price of the player to £20 million in the Administration screen and then click on the telephone. You will get a bid for around £18 million.
(Thanks to Tom Barford in Surrey for the information).

TETRIS PLUS

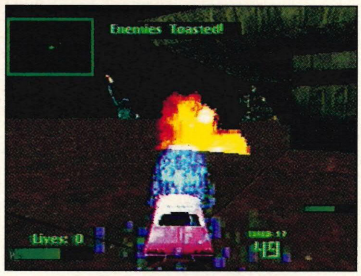
Stage select
Choose 'Puzzle Mode' and select the 'Password' option. Press [⇩, ⇩, ⇨, ⇧, ⇧, ⇨, ⇧, ⇧, ⇧, ⇨] two times, then press ×. The colour of the block should be Light Blue, Pink, Green, Light Blue, Pink, Green. A stage select option will appear when the game begins.

DESCENT

Cloaking Device
Enter this code during play (NOT while the game is paused)
▲, ■, ×, ●, ■, ×, ●, ▲, ×, ■, ×, ▲

TWISTED METAL 2

Hint: Playing as Spectre
Use your speed to get way from opponents, then come right back at them with long rang homing missiles. That way you'll take 'em by surprise and kick ass!



TEST DRIVE 4

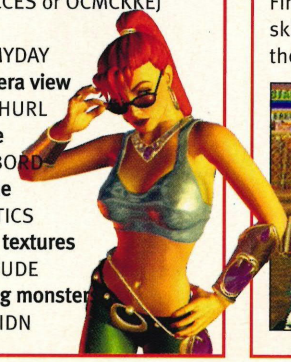
Note: The 'Traffic' and 'Timer' options must be enabled to use these codes.
Nitro boost
Set a course record and enter WHOOOOSH as a name. Use the horn during game play for a nitro boost.
Tiny RC cars
Set a course record and enter MJCIM.RC as a name.
(Thanks to Anton Horabin for these codes).





PANDEMONIUM 2

Enter the following cheats as passwords
Invincibility
Enter NEVERDIE
Full health
Enter HORMONES
Level select
Enter GETACCES or OCMCKKEJ
Weapons
Enter MAKMYDAY
Rolling camera view
Enter GONAHURL
Speed mode
Enter SKATBORD
Mutant mode
Enter GENETICS
Psychedelic textures
Enter ACIDDUDE
Regenerating monster
Enter JUSTKIDN



BLOODY ROAR



Big Ring
Kick the spit out of ten or more characters on Survival mode to get the large ring option.
Shrunken Ring
Finish the game with Greg on a skill setting of four or more to get the option to fight in a small ring.
Open Ring
Finish the game with Mitsuko on a skill setting of four or more to get the option to fight without walls
Blind-man Walls
Finish the game with Fox on a skill setting of four or more to get the option to fight in an arena with invisible walls.
Healing Mode
Finish the game with Bakuryu on a skill setting of four or more to get the option to fight with slowly returning energy.
No Health
Finish the game with Yugo on a skill setting of four or more to get the option to fight without energy bars.
Cameraman
Finish the game with Alice on a skill setting of four or more to get the option to control the camera position.
Trippy Mode
Finish the game with all the fighters on a skill setting of four or more to get the option to fight in arenas with far-out scenery.
Lightning Conductor
Finish the game with Long on a skill setting of four or more to get the option to turn lightning off.
No Blocking
Finish the game with Gado on a skill setting of four or more to get the option to prevent all blocking.



Beware that the straight is longer than previous tests, and the entrance speed to the corner is higher. The car is a Toyota Supra. Time limit is 34 seconds.

Dear PLAY,
Please could you tell me how do you access the 'Naked Lara' cheat on *Tomb Raider II*. I've tried tapping-out the tune of 'Twinkle, twinkle Little Star', but nothing happens.
Michael Patnell, Cardiff

Give it up Michael, you'll never get it to work, because it doesn't exist! t exists!

Dear PLAY,
Can you please help! I am stuck on *The Chronicles of the Sword*. I don't know what any of the objects you collect are for and I don't know where to find Merlin.
John Coyne, Glasgow

Obviously, we can't tell you in this limited space what all of the items are used for, but try ascending the stairs and carefully use the sword on the seahorse's eye. A wall will slide open, allowing you to proceed to Merlin's room.

Dear PLAY,
I have been having a few problems with *Final Fantasy VII*. How do you defeat the Ruby Weapon in the Gold Saucer area and the Emerald Weapon in the sea? Could you also tell me how to get the earth Harp, Guide Book and the Desert Rose.
Adrian, London

In order to beat the Ruby/Emerald Weapons, use Final Attack Materia (a gift gained through winning many Chocobo races) combined with Life Materia, which will bring your characters back to life when they die. For defeating the Ruby weapon, you get the Desert Rose and for defeating the Emerald Weapon you receive the Earth Harp. For the Guide Book, morph the 'Enemy Ghost ship' found on the Crashed Plain on the Sea Bed.

Dear PLAY,
I am really confused about *Actua Soccer 2*. It said that you can pick Premiership clubs, but I can't find them anywhere. Please help.
Luke Bamford, Nottingham

Gremlin intended to include them, but due to licensing arrangements, they're left out of the final version.

Complete Solution/Part 2

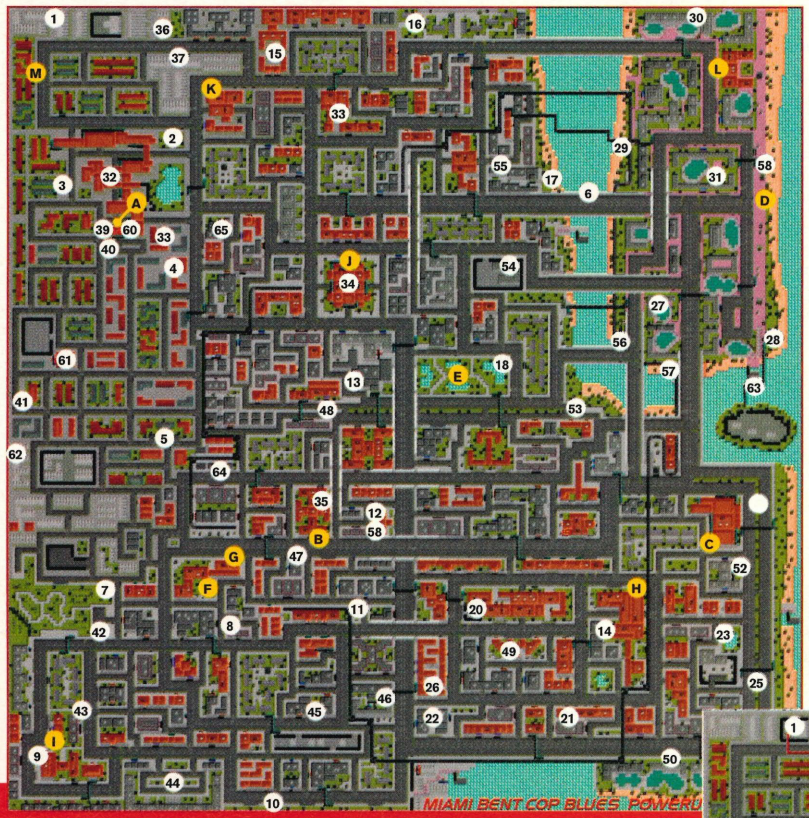
Published by BMG • £44.99

Reviewed in PLAY 30 • 88%

GRAND THEFT AUTO

We continue our guide to lawless behaviour in our conclusion of our GTA solution. The final cities are mapped out so you can murder and wreck mayhem with maximum efficiency. Buckle up and load your weapons, and prepare to wage war on everyone who gets in your way...

VICE CITY: BENT COP BLUES



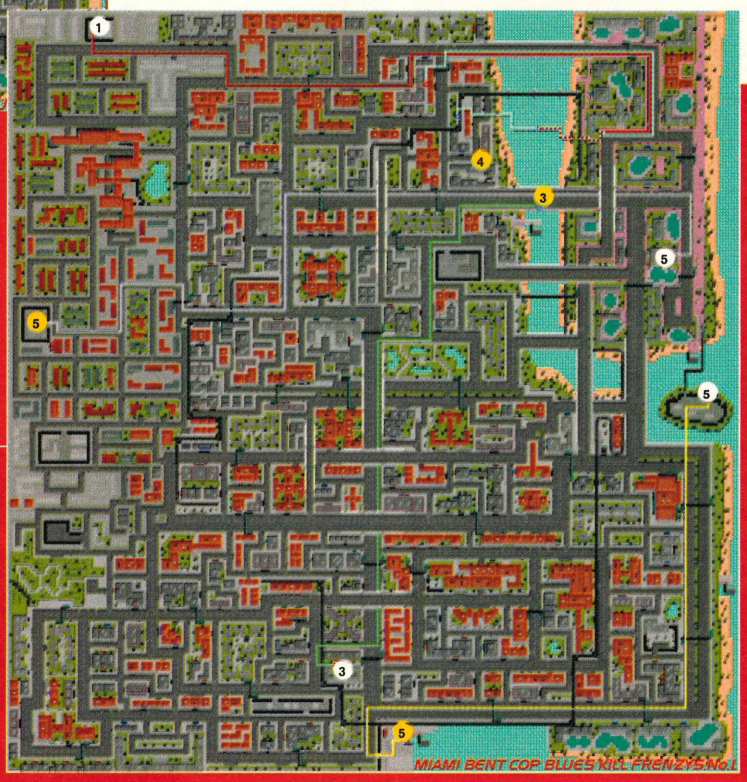
POWER-UPS

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

POWER-UPS

Reappear every 60 seconds or so.

A: Pistol
B: Pistol
C: Pistol
D: Machine Gun
E: Machine Gun
F: Machine Gun
G: Pistol
H: Pistol
I: Pistol
J: Pistol
K: Pistol
L: Pistol
M: Pistol



KILL FRENZY POWER-UPS

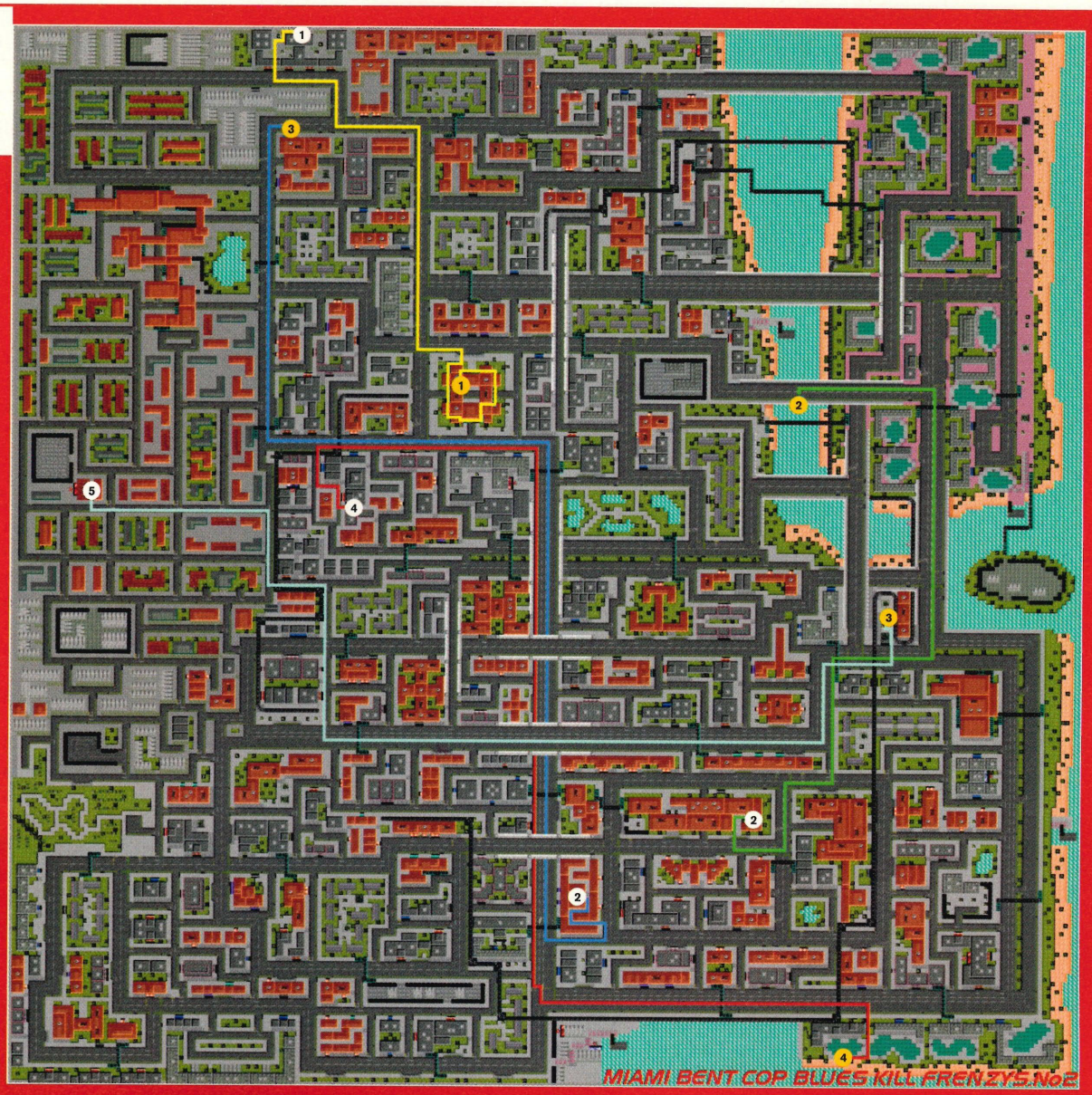
White dots on map indicate Kill Frenzy.
Yellow dots on map indicate Extra Life Bonus.

1: Tank Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $5,000
2: Tank Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $25,000
3: Model Cars Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $9,000
4: Model Cars Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $15,000
5: Model Cars Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $3,000
6: Rocket Launcher Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $5,000
7: Rocket Launcher Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $15,000
8: Rocket Launcher Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $25,000
9: Flame Thrower Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $30,000
10- Flame Thrower Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $150,000
11: Rocket Launcher Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $35,000
12: Machine Gun Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $10,000
13: Machine Gun Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $30,000
14: Machine Gun Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $50,000
15: Machine Gun Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $70,000
KFB: This is the bonus for passing all Kill Frenzies

Power-Ups

White dots on map indicate Kill Frenzy. Yellow dots on map indicate Extra Life Bonus.

1: Tank Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $5,000
2: Tank Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $25,000
3: Model Cars Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $9,000
4: Model Cars Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $15,000
5: Model Cars Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $3,000
6: Rocket Launcher Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $5,000
7: Rocket Launcher Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $15,000
8: Rocket Launcher Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $25,000
9: Flame Thrower Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $30,000
10- Flame Thrower Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $150,000
11: Rocket Launcher Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $35,000
12: Machine Gun Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $10,000
13: Machine Gun Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $30,000
14: Machine Gun Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $50,000
15: Machine Gun Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $70,000
KFB: This is the bonus for passing all Kill Frenzies



Dirty Rotten Cheats

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.

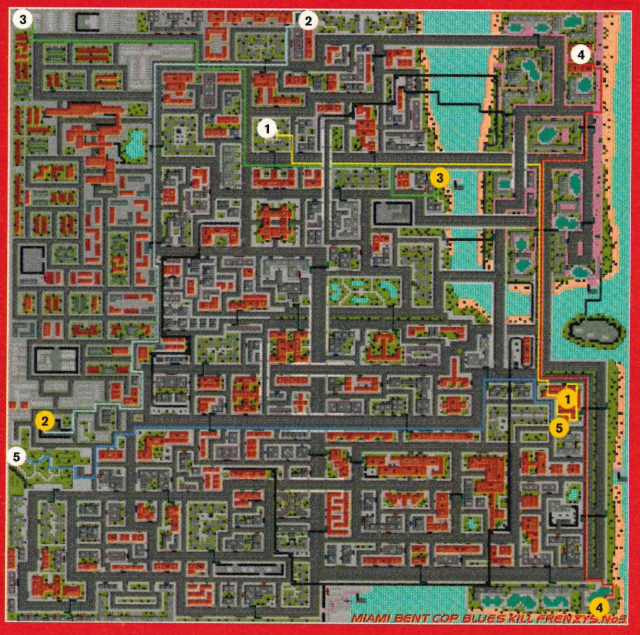
All Cities (1 & 2)
Enter **CAPRICE** as a player name.

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

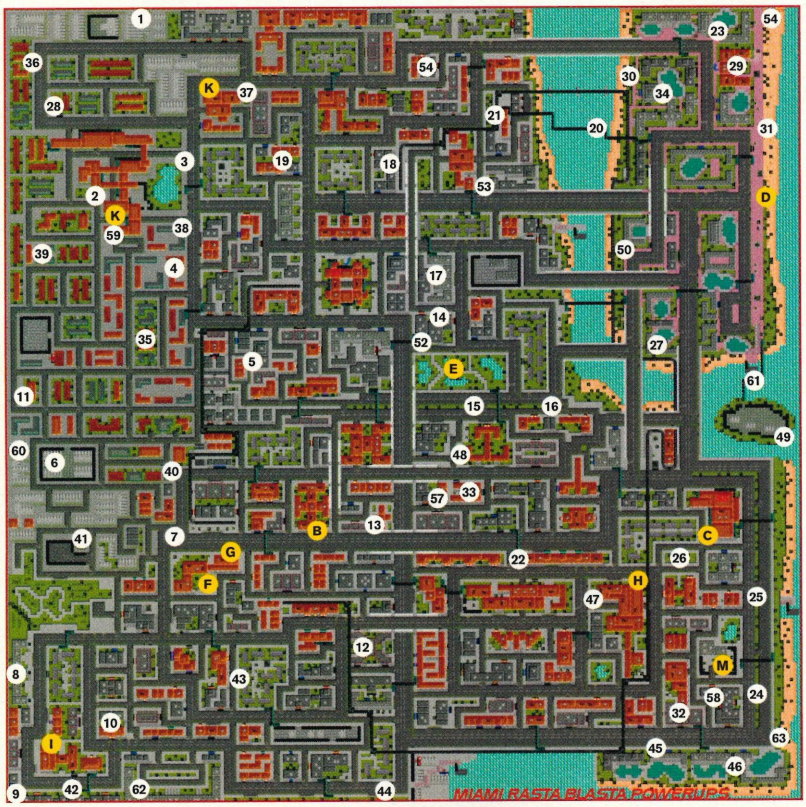
Liberty City Level (1 & 2)
Enter **FECK** as a player name.

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.



VICE CITY: RASTA BLASTA



Power-Ups

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

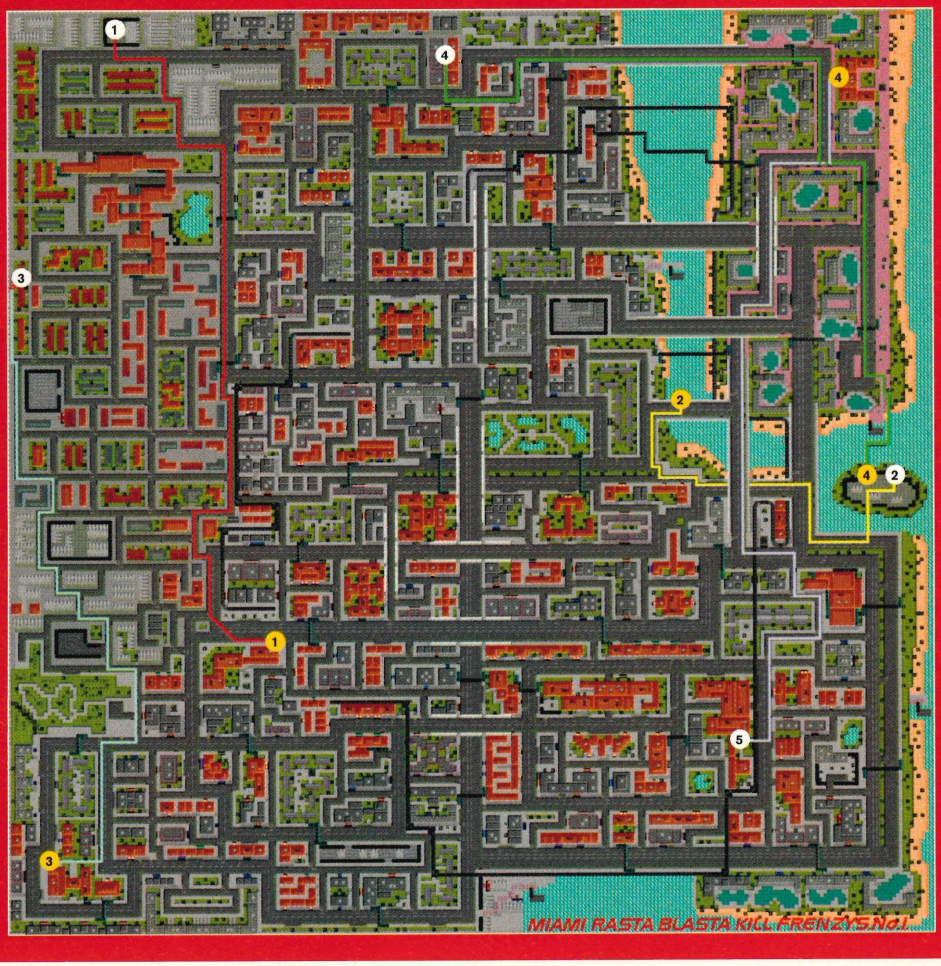
Power-Ups

Reappear every 60 seconds or so.
A: Pistol
B: Pistol
C: Pistol
D: Machine Gun
E: Machine Gun
F: Machine Gun
G: Pistol
H: Pistol
I: Pistol
J: Pistol
K: Pistol
L: Pistol
M: Pistol

Kill Frenzy Power-Ups

White dots on map indicate Kill Frenzy.
Yellow dots on map indicate Extra Life Bonus.

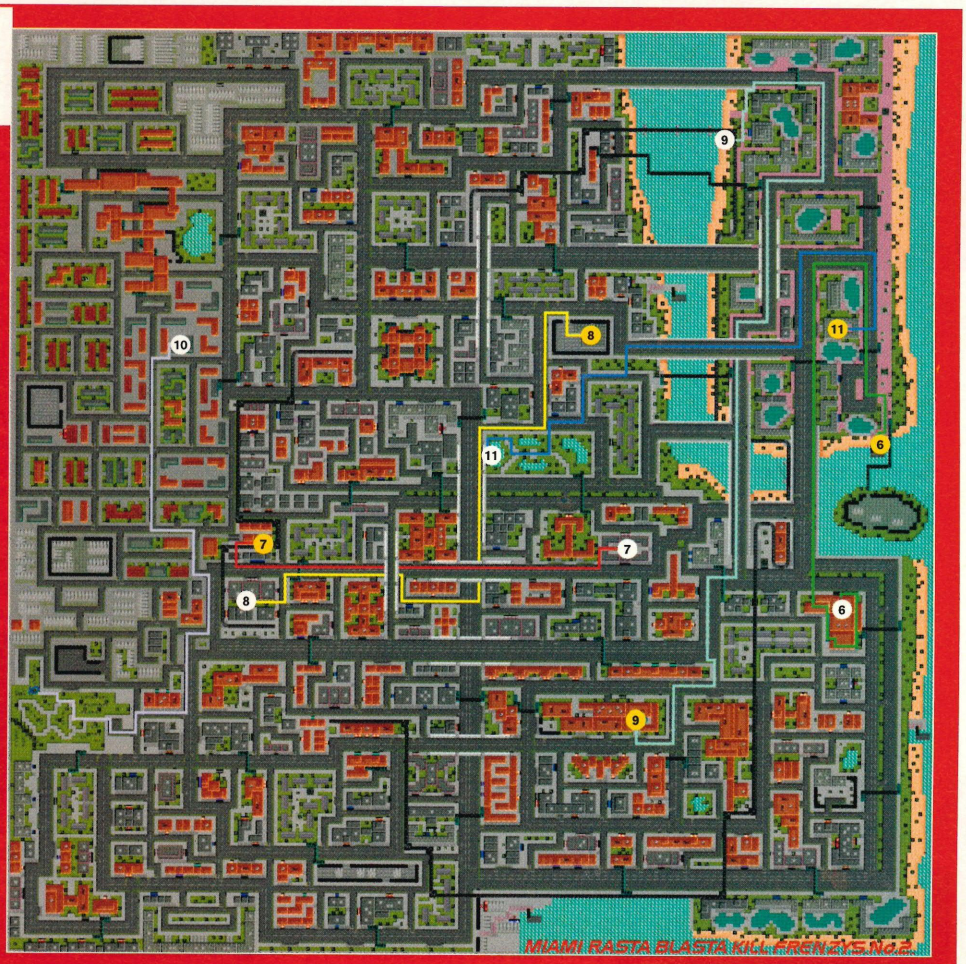
1: Tank Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $5,000
2: Tank Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $25,000
3: Model Cars Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $3,000
4: Model Cars Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $15,000
5: Model Cars Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $9,000
6: Rocket Launcher Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $5,000
7: Rocket Launcher Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $15,000
8: Rocket Launcher Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $25,000
9: Flame Thrower Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $30,000
10: Flame Thrower Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $90,000
11: Flame Thrower Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $150,000
12: Rocket Launcher Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $35,000
13: Flame Thrower Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $210,000
14: Machine Gun Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $10,000
15: Machine Gun Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $30,000
16: Machine Gun Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $50,000
17: Machine Gun Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $70,000
KFB: This is the bonus for passing all Kill Frenzies

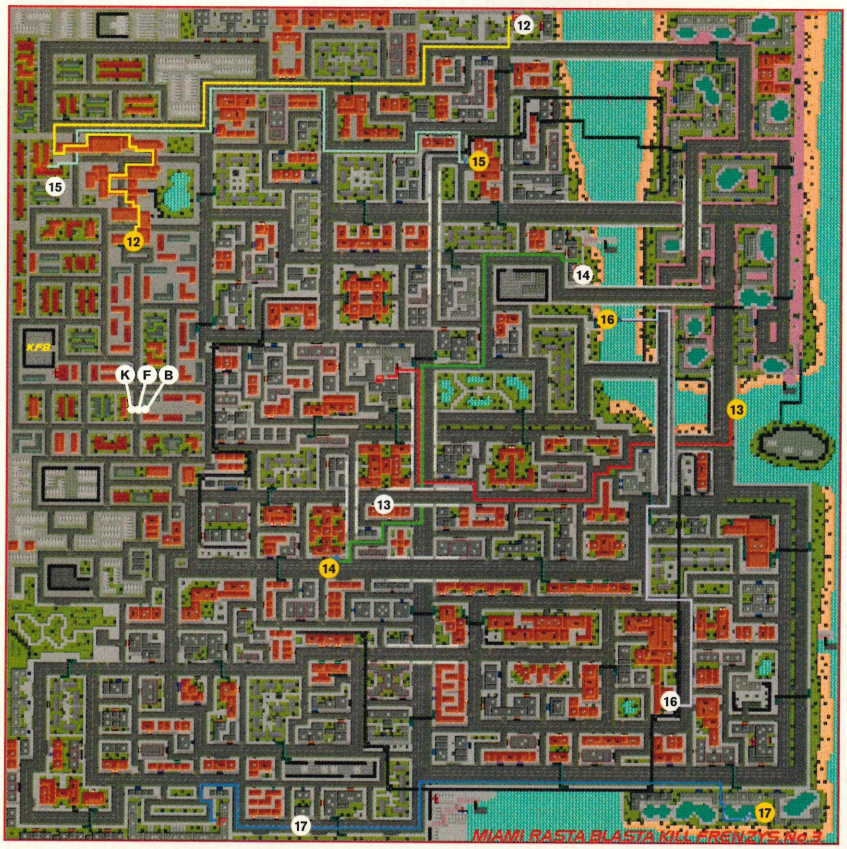


Kill Frenzy Power-Ups

White dots on map indicate Kill Frenzy.
Yellow dots on map indicate Extra Life Bonus.

1: Tank Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $5,000
2: Tank Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $25,000
3: Model Cars Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $3,000
4: Model Cars Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $15,000
5: Model Cars Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $9,000
6: Rocket Launcher Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $5,000
7: Rocket Launcher Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $15,000
8: Rocket Launcher Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $25,000
9: Flame Thrower Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $30,000
10: Flame Thrower Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $90,000
11: Flame Thrower Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $150,000
12: Rocket Launcher Kill Frenzy, 80 seconds to get $35,000
13: Flame Thrower Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $210,000
14: Machine Gun Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $10,000
15: Machine Gun Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $30,000
16: Machine Gun Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $50,000
17: Machine Gun Kill Frenzy, 100 seconds to get $70,000
KFB: This is the bonus for passing all Kill Frenzies



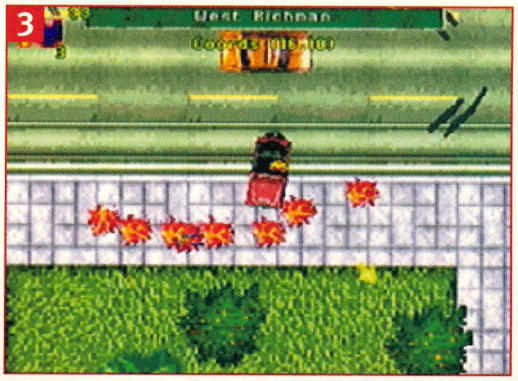


Krishna Kaserole

You round a bend on some mission, only to find a procession of Hare Krishna's shuffling along the pavement. You know if you line the car up properly you could get them all at once. Follow them until the angle is perfect – then floor the accelerator and mash them all into the concrete! The police won't be pleased, but you get bonus points and an outlet for your anger.







Cheats & Tips

Published by Sony/ £19.99 each

Reviewed in PLAY 32

PLATINUM RANGE

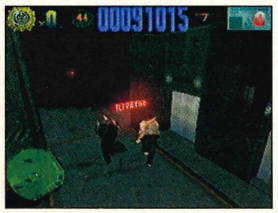
With more budget titles than you could shake a stick at, it seems timely to deliver some of the very greatest cheats and tips for some of the best value games around. Featuring brilliant farmyard animals for Wipeout 2097 and all the hilarious cheats for Die Hard Trilogy, this is the only stop you'll need to make...

To activate any of the following, pause the relevant game and hold R2 while entering the code. Pressing the final button in the sequence should automatically unpause the game, so you'll know if it's worked.

DIE HARD 1

Level Skip
⇩, ●, ⇦, ■, ⇧, ■, ⇦
Now press Start on controller 2 to access a level skip: press Right to cycle through the levels.

Fat Mode
⇨, ■, ■, ⇩
Puts pounds on Bruce and all the hostages!

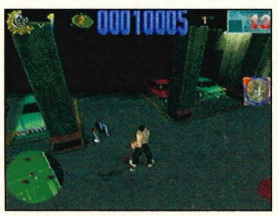


Invincible Mode
⇨, ⇧, ⇩, ■
It doesn't matter how matter times you're shot.

Unlimited Ammo
⇨, ⇧, ⇩, ⇩, ■, ⇨
When first entered, this gives you a shotgun with infinite shells. Re-enter the code to switch to the other weapons, with unlimited ammo!

50 Grenades
⇨, ■, ⇩, ●
Gives you 50 standard grenades to throw around.

Silly Mode
⇩, ●, ●, ⇩, ▲, ⇩
The baddies now bend over to fire between their legs!



Skeleton Mode
▲ x 10, ⇨ x 4
This turns all the baddies into skeletons, while the hostages appear blue.

Reverse Controls
⇨, ■, ▲, ⇨.
This reverses your controls, although why you'd want to do this is questionable.

Coordinates
⇦, ●, ⇩, ■
Puts coordinates on screen, plus strange wire-frame objects.



Speech Speed
⇩, ■, ■, ⇨
Repeat to alter speed of speech, from ultra-slow to helium high!

Screaming Plants
●, ●, ■, ■, ⇨
The plants will scream in pain when you shoot them!

Floating Dead
⇩, ■, ▲, ⇩
Dead enemies will now float to heaven.

DIE HARD 2

Maximum Specials
⇨, ■, ⇦, ●, ▲, ⇩
Gives you 99 grenades and 99 rockets to cause total devastation!



Invincible Mode
⇩, ▲, ⇨, ■
Although you still get hurt, you won't die when you lose all your lives. To turn off invincibility, re-enter the cheat.

Select Weapon/Map Editor
⇨, ⇧, ⇩, ■
Now press ▲ during play to change your current weapon. Press Start again to access the Map Editor. You can now scroll around a map of the current level with your and the baddies' movements shown by coloured lines. You can even move stuff around. Press Select to move around freely in 3D, using Up/Down to zoom in and out, and L1/R2 to look up and down.

Fergus Mode
●, ⇩, ⇩, ■, ×, ■
This makes all the people look like Probe Entertainment boss, Fergus McGovern – even the women!

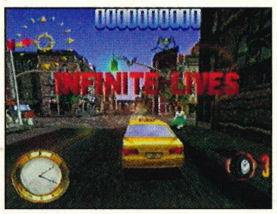
Odd-Shaped People
⇦, ▲, ⇨, ⇩
The people are now either extremely tall or short and fat!

Skeleton Mode
⇩, ■, ▲, ⇩
To return them to normal, enter the cheat again.

DIE HARD 3

No Clock/Level Skip
⇨, ⇧, ⇩, ■. Various letters and numbers should appear on screen.
On the second controller, press Start and some cheat options will appear. Press ▲ to toggle the clock off/on. Move Right on the D-pad to advance through the levels. Also while playing in this mode, pressing ● on the second controller will advance to the next bomb.

Infinite Lives
⇦, ●, ⇧, ⇩, ■, ⇨
Take as many attempts as you like to defuse the bombs.



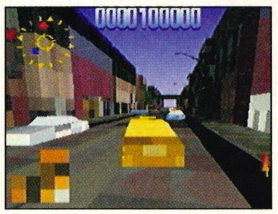
Infinite Turbos
●, ●, ■, ■, ⇩, ⇩, ×, ×
Speed around town to reach the bombs with ease.

Infinite Super-Turbos
●, ⇨, ⇩, ■, ▲, ⇦
Even better, keep jumping right over the traffic at high speed.

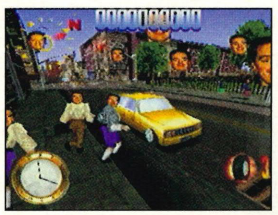
Giant Cars
⇦, ▲, ⇨, ⇩. All the cars are gigantic!

DIE HARD TRILOGY

Extra View
⇩, ●, ⇩, ●. You can now select a new Chase Car view.
Flat Shade Mode
⇩, ⇧, ⇦, ⇦, ⇩, ⇧, ⇦, ⇦, ⇩, ⇧, ⇦, ⇦
Turns off the texture-mapping for flat-shaded polygon graphics.

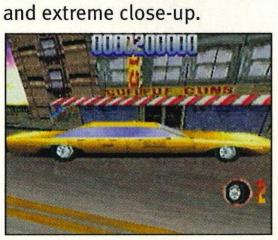


Fergus Mode
●, ⇩, ⇩, ▲, 5, ■
Not only do all the people look like the Probe boss, but hundreds of Fergus faces float around like balloons!



Slow Motion
⇦, ⇧, ⇦, ⇦, ■, ⇩
Slows the action down to a snail's pace.

Odd Mode
●, ⇩, ⇩, ■, ⇨
Repeat the code to switch between three very strange views: flattened, stretched, and extreme close-up.



Car Hanger
⇨, ●, ⇦, ⇦, ■, ⇩
A toy car hangs above the windscreen on Inside view.

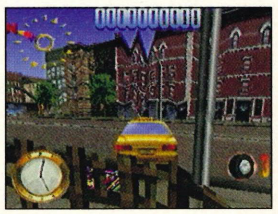
Cloudy Sky
⇩, ■, ▲, ⇩, ■, ■, ▲
The sky goes all dark and cloudy.

X-Files Mode
This cheat only works properly on the Central Park 1 level, so use Level Skip to get there. Once in Central Park, pause the game and highlight 'Quit'. Hold R2 on controller 1 and press ⇨, ■, ▲, ⇩, ×, ×, × and a 'Roswell' screen should appear.

Blue Pram
On *Die Hard 3*, you can get a new car that looks like a bright blue pram! To get it, go to level 12 (you can use the level skip if you want – see cheat above). Now pause the game, hold R2, and press ⇨, ⇧, ⇩, ■ (the first part of the level skip cheat) to bring up the letters and numbers. If you hadn't worked it out already, the red and white numbers in the middle of the screen are coordinates which go up or down depending on which direction you travel: east moves the first number up; west moves the first number down; south moves the second number up; north moves the second number down. So you know where you are.

To find the pram, go to the coordinates 45, 122. So that's first right from the start, then straight on until the next right, then straight on until the second set of numbers reaches 121 or 122 and the car park is on your right. In it, your brand-new pram should be waiting. It's worth the effort!

Weird Buildings
⇨, ■, ⇦, ▲, ×, ■, ⇩
Causes strange slumps in some of the buildings.



WIPEOUT 2097

The following three cheats are accessed on the opening options menu (the one from where you select the mode, team, and track) by keeping L1, R1 and Select held down. The rest are accessed whilst in a race.

Piranha Ship
Keeping the aforementioned buttons held down, press: ×, ×, ×, ×, ●, ▲, and ■. Now go to the team select and you'll instantly be rewarded with the inclusion of the Piranha ship – a state-of-the-art craft that is perfect in every respect.

Phantom Class
Hold down L1, R1 and Select and press ▲, ▲, ▲, ●, ●, and ●. Now go to the track select and you'll notice that the extra-hard Phantom class is now available to race on.

Track Cheat
Keep L1, R1 and Select held down and press ■, ●, ▲, ●, and ■. This cheat allows you to race on each and every track in the easy Vector class – giving you every opportunity to practise and perfect the multitude of circuits.

Machine Gun
Pause the game at any time during a race and hold L1, R1, and Select. Then press ■, ●, ×, ■, ●, ×, and ▲. When you unpause the game again, you'll see a blinding green flash to indicate that the cheat has worked. Now by pressing the fire button, you'll activate a newly installed machine gun.

Infinite Energy
You'll never have to slip into the restoration lane again by activating this essential trick. Simply pause the game at any time during a race and then hold L1, R1 and Select. Now with those buttons held, press ▲, ×, ■, ●, ▲, ×, ■, and ●. Unpause and you'll be invincible.

Farmyard Animal Mode
Switch on the PlayStation with the disc inside and hold L1, R2, Select + Start until the title screen is displayed that says 'Start'. Then take your finger off Start and press it again to go through to the main options screen with team and craft selection on it. The craft sprites will have changed into animals!



Passwords
Challenge I:
■,●,■,▲,●,▲,▲,●,■,■,■,▲,×,■.
Challenge II:
■,●,■,▲,●,▲,×,■,×,▲,▲,×,●,●.

SOUL BLADE

Play As Soul Edge
Method 1 – Simply complete the game with every character. Do this and the title screen will change from the plain blue design into a montage of all the characters. Now go to the character select screen and a new skull face representing Soul Edge will have appeared.

Play As Sophitia!
Simply complete the Edge Master Mode with Sophitia, get the eighth weapon and then the next time you return to arcade mode, she'll be there.

Play As Siegfried!
Complete the Edge Master Mode with Siegfried and obtain his eighth weapon. The next time you enter the arcade mode, Siegfried! will appear.

Play As Sophitia!!
You basically have to complete Edge Master Mode, getting all 80 weapons.

Play As Han Myong
To obtain this secret character, you must first complete the game with Hwang and Seung Mi Na and view their default endings. Then you must complete the game again and obtain their second endings. Please note that you must complete it each time with Hwang first.

Changing Voice (Jap version only)
When the main title screen is displayed and you hear a gruff voice say "Soul Edge", it is possible to change the voice by holding L1 and L2 and pushing a direction on the joypad. Here are some examples:
L1 + L2 + ⇩ – A husky voice will say "Soul Edge" very slowly.
L1 + L2 + ⇦ (or ⇧) – Seung Mi Na will say "Soul Edge" very quickly.

Snazzy Outfits
Costume #1 – ■
Costume #2 – × + ■
Costume #3 – ●
Costume #4 – ▲
Costume #5 – × + ▲

Alter Endings
When each Game Over sequence begins, there will be a point where the screen goes from being letter-boxed (ie squashed, with a black border) to full-screen. As soon as the picture becomes full-screen, frantically bash the joypad buttons and rotate the D-pad. If all goes according to plan, it will alter the ending sequence.

The only instance where this doesn't apply is during Mitsurugi's ending where you have to fight Tanegashima in a first-person perspective. To kill him, simply use ⇦ or ⇨ to dodge his arrows, then keep pushing forward whenever you get the opportunity. Finally, finish him off by using a slash button. And also, to get Voldo's second ending you must rotate the D-pad when he starts caressing the sword.

Change The Camera View
To do this, you'll need a Sony Multitap and a second controller. Plug the Multitap into any port on the PlayStation, and then plug the second controller into port two of the Multitap. Now battle away using the first controller, and then at any time during the fights, press R1 or R2 on the second controller and the camera perspective will be dramatically altered – there is even a first-person view for both characters! With some of the camera angles, you can use the directional pad to rotate the action; and by pressing ■ or × you can even zoom in and out.

Random Stage Select
To fight on random stages during the two-player versus mode, press and hold Select until each bout begins.

Coliseum Stage
If you go to the Game Option screen and set the ring size to 20M, you can fight in the secret stage.

Seung's Voice
Totally pointless, but did you know that when you boot-up the game, one out of seven times the voice that says "Namco" at the start will be Seung Mi Na's instead of the usual bloke?

Change Sophitia's Skirt Colour
Select Sophitia in Arcade mode and hold down all three attack buttons while the battle is loading in to get into her fashion.

PORSCHE CHALLENGE

All of these cheats must be entered on the main menu screen (1-Player, Options).

All Cars Jump
Now all the other cars on the track will start jumping.
⇧ + ■, ⇧ + ●, ⇧ + ■, ⇧ + ●, ⇧ + ■, ⇧ + ●, ⇧ + ■

End Of The Game
■, ●, ⇦ + Select, ⇨ + Select

Hyper Car
Select + ■, Select + ●, Select + ■ + ●

Invisible Car
■ + ●, L2 + R2, ■ + ●, L1 + R1, ■ + ●

Long Tracks
Select + ⇧, Select + e, Start, Select

Mad Race
⇧, ⇦, ⇨ + Select

Mirror Mode
⇦ + ●, ⇩ + s, ⇨ + ■

Test Driver
⇨ + ■, ⇦ + ● + Select

Tune Test Driver
How do you like your car? Well you can choose your own parameters with this handy option.
⇦ + ●, ⇨ + ■ + Select

Unlimited Retries
L1 + L2, R1 + R2 + ■

User Car Jumps
In true Dukes Of Hazard style, you too can jump, fly, zoom through the air.
■, ●, ■

MICRO MACHINES V3

Nine Lives In Single Player Mode
Enter 'CATLIVES' as a player name. A sound will confirm code entry.

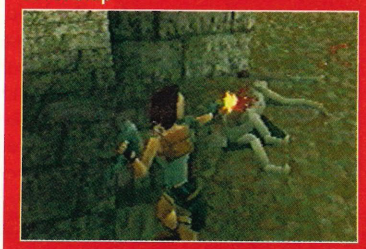
All Tracks In Multiplayer Mode
Enter 'GIMMEALL' as a player name. A sound will confirm correct code entry.

Turbo Start
Begin to accelerate just before the second beep. If timed correctly, you will begin the race with a turbo start. The phrase 'turbo start' will appear to confirm it's worked.

Racing Shadow
Go to the game options, select 1 Player Mode, pick any character, and enter his/her name as 'TANKS4ME'. Then press 'OK' twice and choose Time Trial Challenge. When it's loaded, press Start and enter the Big Bounce cheat (■, ⇨, ⇨, ⇩, ⇧, ⇩, ⇦, ⇩, ⇩). Quit the game and it will ask if you want to play another challenge. Say yes. Below your picture it will say 'cheat mode active'. When the race begins your shadow will drive away...

TOMB RAIDER

Level Skip

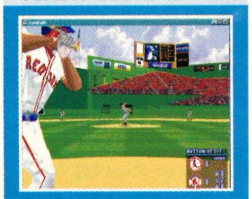


Enter this code once on the inventory screen:
L2, R2, ▲, L1, L1, ●, R2, L2
Note: This works with the default control system (Type 1). If you're using one of the others, use the relevant alternative sequence...
Type 2: L2, R2, ●, ▲, ▲, L1, R2, L2
Type 3: L2, R2, R1, ▲, ▲, L1, R2, L2

Maximum Weapons
Enter this sequence in the inventory screen.
L1, ▲, L2, R2, R2, L2, ●, L1
Now return to the action, then when you return to the inventory screen you'll see all those lovely weapons.
Note: If you have the NTSC version of the game, press R2 for L2 and vice versa. This code works with the default control system (Type 1). If you're using one of the others, use the relevant alternative sequence...
Type 2: ▲, ●, L2, R2, R2, L2, L1, ▲
Type 3: ▲, R1, L2, R2, R2, L2, L1, ▲

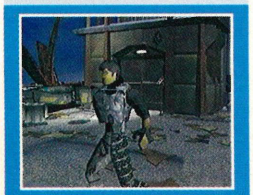
THREE LIONS 80
SENTINEL RETURNS .. 81
WCW NITRO 81
VS. 82
ADIDAS POWER SOCCER '98 82
MEDIEVIL 83
WORLD LEAGUE SOCCER .. 83
SPICE WORLD 84
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POINT BLANK 85
TOMBI 85

HARDBALL 6



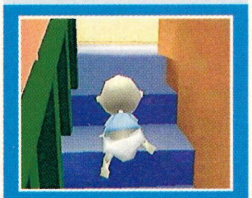
AMERICA'S TOP SPORT ATTEMPTS A HOME RUN ON UK SHORES WITH THIS NEW RELEASE FROM EA. REAL PLAYER ROSTERS, 3-D GRAPHICS AND PLENTY OF SPECTACULAR EFFECTS ENSURE THAT THIS GAME SHOULD DELIGHT FANS AND NEWCOMERS IN EQUAL MEASURES.

DEAD UNITY



SCHEDULED FOR A SEPTEMBER RELEASE IN AMERICA, THIS ACTION ADVENTURE GAME FROM THQ COMBINES EXPLORATION WITH MINDLESS VIOLENCE AS YOU STEP INTO THE WARPED MIND OF WORKS, A TETCHY HERO WITH A SECRET PAST.

RUGRATS



THE TOP KIDDIE'S CARTOON FROM NICKELODEON COMES TO PLAYSTATION IN NOVEMBER (IN THE STATES AT LEAST) COURTESY OF THQ. PLAYERS CONTROL THEIR FAVOURITE DELINQUENT TODDLERS IN THIS FREE-ROAMING ADVENTURE GAME.

WIRED UP

INCOMING GAMES ■ LATEST REPORTS ■



FORGET THE LIGHTNING SEEDS, HERE'S...

THREE LIONS

France '98 is rapidly approaching, and after Chile, Hoddle had better get the boys hungry for success in order to take on the likes of Columbia and Romania. If you think that you could do better though, *Three Lions* from BMG is the official England team game and success in the World Cup could be decided by your own silky skills.

Developed by Z-Axis, *Three Lions* is touted as being "a game created by football fans for football fans." In *Three Lions*, Z-Axis has done away with all the unessentials that bog-down so many of the other titles and concentrated purely on the gameplay. In practice, this means that it has no pretenses about containing managerial aspects, no stadiums and weather conditions to choose from, and most importantly, no commentary.



[ABOVE] So full of pride... but how long before it is all drained in the obligatory penalty shoot-out?

What we've got in *Three Lions* is a stark football experience that has a very arcade-feel about it. The onus is on stroking the ball around the pitch via the one-touch system that has been heavily implemented, and ramming it into the net using a unique targeting system that enables the player to pick their spot and test the keeper.

The disc space that has been saved with the omission of the aspects we mentioned has been filled with delicately texture-mapping the facial features of the full England squad (and indeed the likenesses of over 50 other international teams) onto the polygon characters. If you remember, this was done first in *Actua Soccer 2*, but we have to say that these chaps look more the part.

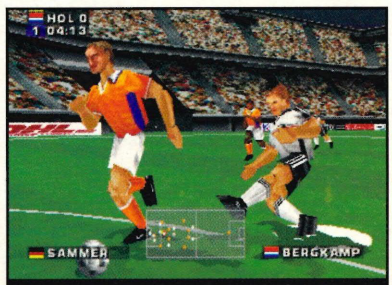


[ABOVE] True to form, the English defenders run around like headless chickens, leaving the pouncing Argentine with a clear header on goal.

THREE LIONS IS A STARK FOOTBALL EXPERIENCE THAT HAS A VERY ARCADE-FEEL ABOUT IT. THE ONUS IS ON STROKING...

Attention to detail is also very noticeable in the team strips that are bang up-to-date. The proverbial icing on the cake comes in the form of top pop combo, Ocean Colour Scene, who not only provide the opening music with their '100 Mile High City' hit, but also have their own hidden team. So who needs Skinner and Baddiel? Football is coming home regardless!

Publisher:	BMG
Genre:	Sports Sim
Players:	1-2
% Complete:	80%
Release Date:	April '98



[ABOVE] It looks like someone has taken a frying-pan to Bergkamp's face – he looks more like Jimmy Nail!



[ABOVE] Alan 'Mary Poppins' Shearer scores for England. Perhaps it won't come to penalties after all.

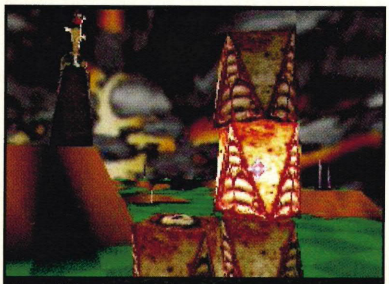


[ABOVE] The targeting system allows you to pick your spot... er, so why is the ball going to the right then?

SOMETHING THOROUGHLY ABSORBING...

SENTINEL RETURNS

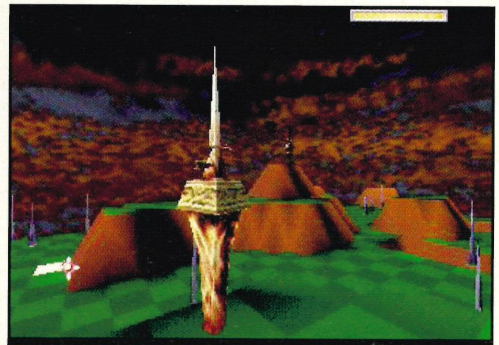
Some of the older readers out there may remember a certain game called *Sentinel* that first emerged on the BBC Micro computer and later the Commodore 64. Well prepare for a nostalgia with a capital 'N' as all those feelings of claustrophobia, paranoia and panic come hurtling back thanks to *Sentinel Returns* from Psygnosis.



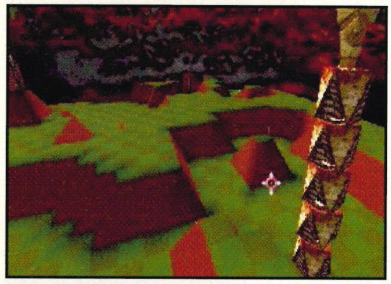
[Above] You must absorb everything around you to scale the terrain and take out the Sentinel.

Publisher:	Psygnosis
Genre:	Puzzle/strategy
Players:	1-2
% Complete:	70%
Release Date:	17 July '98

Those that missed out first time round will be totally alien to the concept that gripped a nation (for a while). The object of the game is to gain control of the playing area (which consist of a texture-mapped landscape full of mountains and trees) by absorbing all of the surrounding resources, including boulders and enemy drones (all of which have an energy value assigned to them). The goal is to get to the highest point and take over the Sentinel, before it does the same to you. The thrills here come from the sheer panic that sets in when you realise that the Sentinel has tracked you and is attempting to absorb you for its own energy gain (it constantly rotates looking for things to take over). Although the original *Sentinel*-meister, Geoff Crammond wasn't involved with this project, the game benefits from a new 3-D engine and features numerous themed worlds that stretch over 650 levels. Oh and the music is composed by John Carpenter of *Halloween* fame. Although rumours you can play as Michael Myers are completely unfounded!



[Above] *Sentinel Returns* is an atmospheric strategy adventure game for clever people... so that rules us out then!



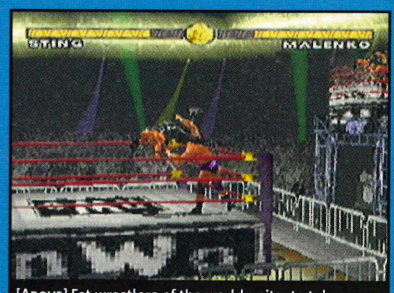
BIG SWEATY BLOKES? IT CAN ONLY BE

WCW NITRO

Publisher:	THQ
Genre:	Beat-'em-up
Players:	1-2
% Complete:	80%
Release Date:	19 June '98

In America everything is much bigger than it is anywhere else in the world, and this theory is evident in the new wrestling extravaganza from THQ. The game features over 20 famous giants from the bizarre world of WCW and NWO – the main realms of pantomime fighting in the USA.

The aim of the game is simple, grind your opponent to a pulp and then pin them down for the count. To do this there are reams of trademark moves that can be used to eradicate that energy bar and reduce your well-oiled, bad-haired adversary to a gibbering, punch-drunk no-hoper. You can also leave the ring for some no-holds barred street fighting. *WCW Nitro* offers a vast array of moves (over 30 per fighter) and plenty of hidden fighters to uncover. The in-game appearance is that of hi-res, digitised texture-mapped characters that bound around a ring that can be rotated through 360°. The best aspect though is in the character selection, if you are uncertain of who to pick for the main event, you can listen to a chosen wrestler ramble on about how they're gonna kick-ass (amongst other hilarious anecdotes). Play is broken into three different modes – Exhibition (for the first-time thrill-seekers), Title Match (that's tournament) and Vs (two-player male bonding!). If you're serious about wrestling, then *WCW Nitro* should provide enough pile-drivers to keep you locked until tea-time!

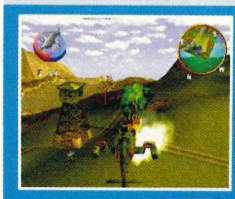


[Above] Fat wrestlers of the world unite, to take over, and kick seven shades of **** out of each other.



[Above] Dignity, class, elegance, sophistication... these traits mean nothing to fat, stupid wrestlers.

WARGAMES



The classic film in which a computer hacker almost inadvertently triggers WWIII comes to PlayStation courtesy of MGM. In this strategy/adventure you must gain world domination by controlling land, sea and air units. Nothing like the film, but still...

KLONOA

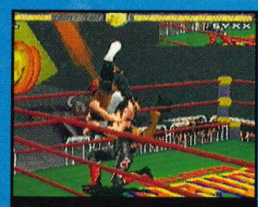


Namco ventures into platform territory for this lavish-looking 3-D action game. There is much to kill and plenty to collect, and it's all draped in RPG elements as the big-eared cat ventures forth to the land of dreams. Klonoa's out in May.

MORTAL KOMBAT 4



The world's grizzliest beat-'em-up returns to PlayStation in a direct port-over from the latest coin-op installment. Featuring new characters, new moves and full 3-D arenas, *MK4* will have fans ripping out spines in anticipation, bit is it any good? We'll let you know as soon as we get it!



[Above] Two men just shouldn't be seen doing things like this.

Buggy



A racing game with a difference! In this miniature radio controlled car sim, you belt around a series of miniature courses in an array of different cars. The mechanics of this game are top-notch with a very realistic feel to your chosen buggy. There are power-ups to collect and warp-gates to find, all of which makes for a compelling game, we hope!

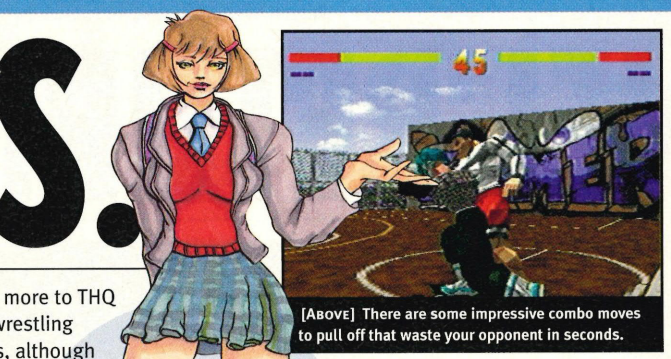
Batman & Robin



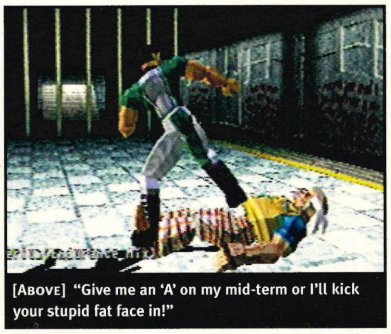
You play Gotham City's masked crime-fighter in this third-person action adventure based on the crap film. Find clues, prevent muggings and dive into the Batmobile for some high-speed pursuit. The idea is to find the dreaded Freeze, but not before ridding the streets of numerous other scum in the process. You can also opt to be Batgirl or Robin. Full review next issue.

A LESS THAN HARMONIOUS GANG-BANG!

VS.



[Above] There are some impressive combo moves to pull off that waste your opponent in seconds.

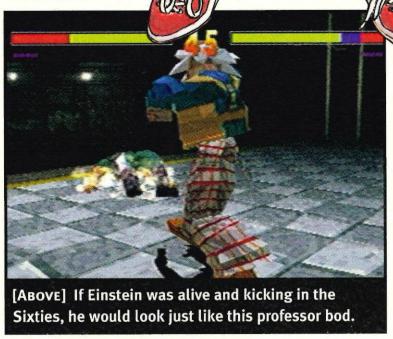


[Above] "Give me an 'A' on my mid-term or I'll kick your stupid fat face in!"

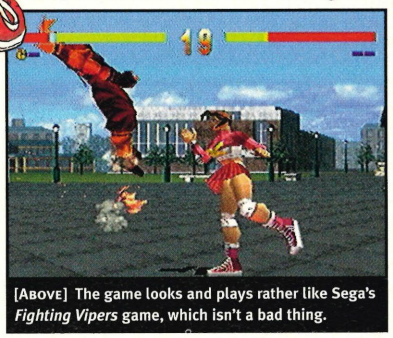
There's more to THQ than wrestling games, although it's sticking with the fighting genre for now with *Vs*. Set in the mean ghettos of LA, *Vs* pits 16 home boys (and girls) against each other purely for the sake of having a good scrap.

The onus is on violent street fighting, so there aren't any elaborate projectile attacks to speak of, just punches and kicks that vary in style. *Vs* certainly looks tidy enough, the actual characters have been motion captured for fluid movement and each hoodlum boasts their own fashion sense (and there are some lame excuses, we can tell you). Also, each fighter favours a particular style of fighting from various forms of martial arts, which makes for more intelligent block and counter bouts as opposed to the straightforward dive in with fists blazing approach. Finally, to set the scene, the soundtrack will feature the cream of LA's alternative rock music scene including Los Infernos and Pigs in Space.





[Above] If Einstein was alive and kicking in the Sixties, he would look just like this professor bod.

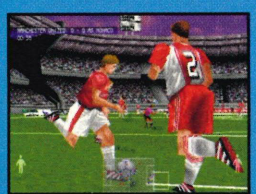


[Above] The game looks and plays rather like Sega's *Fighting Vipers* game, which isn't a bad thing.

Publisher:	THQ
Genre:	Beat-'em-up
Players:	1-2
% Complete:	90%
Release Date:	12 June '98

MORE POWER, MORE SWERVE!

ADIDAS POWER SOCCER '98



[Above] All the players seem to be wearing new Predator boots!



[Above] It looks a lot better than the last one doesn't it!

Gasp! Another football game to cash in on the impending World Cup, can the fourth game in the series rejuvenate the flagging format?

Hopes are high for this game, and why not? After all, the *Power Soccer* engine we all know and hate has been totally scrapped in favour of a totally new design,



Publisher:	Psygnosis
Genre:	Sports sim
Players:	1-2
% Complete:	70%
Release Date:	8 June '98

and this is looking crisper, sharper and just generally better than ever. *APS '98* boasts smooth motion capture, a very impressive frame rate (a constant 30fps no less) and real-time weather effects that affect the gameplay. Not to mention photo-realistic kits (and the new-look Predator boots worn by practically every player in the game!). The game is being developed by French coders, Shen, who boast *APS 2* on PlayStation and *Super Burn-Out* on the Atari Jaguar (hiss!) as previous projects. Shen is keen to hype the fact that *APS '98* will also feature a high-res mode that offers unparalleled crispness, plus a 10,000 player database. It looks good, but how will it compare to the best of the rest? We'll find out very soon!





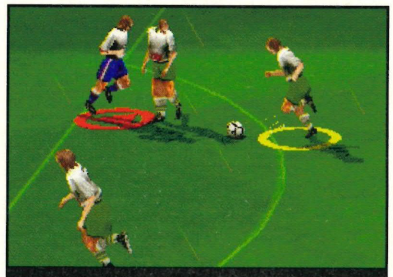
COULD IT BE IN A LEAGUE OF ITS OWN?

WORLD LEAGUE SOCCER

This is our firm favourite for top footie game, and since we got our hands on this preview copy it has grown in our estimations. You can choose from any of the top flight clubs from around the world, as well as international squads (if you want to get a World Cup scenario going).

What really sets this aside though is the amount of detail in the matches. The players themselves look brilliant and the wide repertoire of skillful tricks they can perform is vast. The player is given immense freedom to string together fantastic crowd-pleasing attacks that ultimately result in the ball being thundered home via a wide range of shots. *WLS* also now has the commentary in place, and although we don't really agree with this feature at PLAY, Ray Wilkins is as dead-pan as he normally is, so extra marks for realism there!





[ABOVE] According to Eidos, weather conditions will affect play, such as rain which will leave visible puddles after prolonged downpour.



[ABOVE] This is just one of the many viewing perspectives, which isn't very practical for playing.



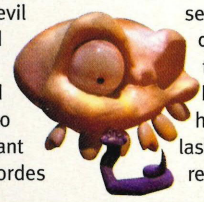
[ABOVE] If that was Collymore, don't worry goalie because the shot will go wide anyway!

Publisher:	Eidos
Genre:	Sports sim
Players:	1-2
% Complete:	80%
Release Date:	May '98

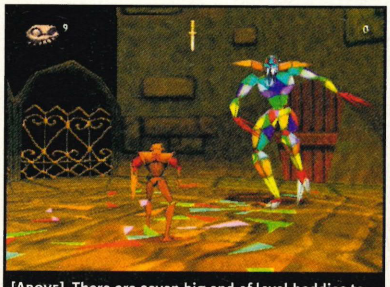
GIVE 'EM SOME STICK, BONEY!

MEDIEVIL

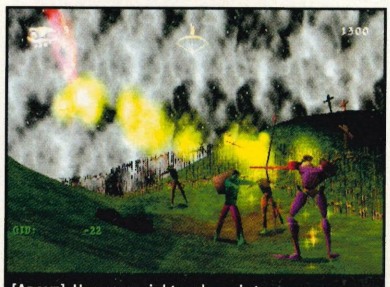
This has been in development for ages now, so hopefully Millennium has done a good job. *Medievil* is an action/adventure/platform black comedy set in a chilling 3-D world. Players will be able to free-roam in the form of Sir Daniel Fortesque, a skeletal hero who is out to defeat the evil sorcerer Zarok, and the crazed victims of his dark magic. There are weapons to find and use (14 in total), and potions to acquire, each plays an important part in defeating the enemy hordes which include 55 different enemies and seven big end of level bosses. *Medievil's* plot is helped along by some stunning FMV sequences that bring forth the hero's quirky personality when up against the savage, beasts that stand between him and Zarok. *Medievil* has progressed significantly since we last saw it, and it should be ready for review next issue.



Publisher:	SCEE
Genre:	Adventure
Players:	1
% Complete:	70%
Release Date:	June '98



[ABOVE] There are seven big end of level baddies to confront, including this scary bloke.



[ABOVE] Use your might and magic to overcome hordes of zombies the roam the graveyards.



[ABOVE] Send the raging fires from above and main a bunch of reanimated in one go.

PUMA STREET SOCCER



SUNSOFT PROVIDES US WITH A DIFFERENT ANGLE ON SOCCER WITH THIS HIP OFFERING THAT IS SET WITHIN THE CONFINES OF A VAST METROPOLIS. THIS IS RAW STREET ACTION THAT PLAYS LIKE YOUR NORMAL NO-HOLDS-BARRED SUNDAY LEAGUE GAME WITHOUT ALL THE FRILLS THAT NORMAL BOG DOWN THE MORE HIGH-PROFILE SOCCER SIMS.

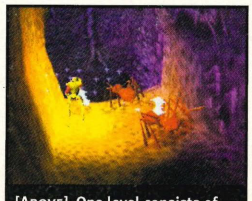
FLUID



WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THIS? WE'VE BEEN PROMISED IT FOR AGES AND NOW SONY IS DITHERING. THIS WAS ORIGINALLY CALLED *DEPTH* AND IT IS A MUSIC PACKAGE THAT ENABLES THE USER TO CONSTRUCT THEIR OWN FUNK-TASTIC DANCE TRACKS. THERE ARE LOADS OF EFFECTS TO PLAY AROUND WITH AND SONY'S AIM IS TO RELEASE A TRACK MADE FROM THIS GAME INTO THE CHARTS. APPARENTLY, ORBITAL HAVE BEEN FIDDLING AROUND WITH IT, ALTHOUGH WE'VE YET TO HEAR THE RESULTS. CONSIDER OUR BREATH BAITED.



[ABOVE] You can free-roam around some lavish landscapes.



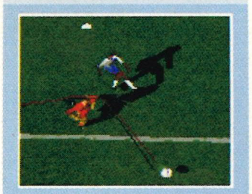
[ABOVE] One level consists of traipsing through an ant colony.

Alien Ressurection

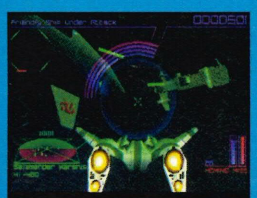


It's been delayed until September, but it should be well worth the wait. Fox has been doing the business to fully recreate the intergalactic terror of the hit film, and although we've only seen FMV footage so far, it should be a cracker. The game will be a 3-D blast-a-thon in a third-person perspective whereby you can assume the role of five different characters to bring the alien beasts down over a series of intense missions.

Premier Manager '98



Despite the wealth of arcade football titles both around and on the way, there has been a distinct lack of management games... or least there was. *Premier Manager '98* from Gremlin (out in April) provides everything possibly associated with the stressful back-room job (except tabloid scandal and back-stabbing). Buy, sell, train, discipline, and scout for any one of the 92 clubs on offer, and watch replays through an *Actua Soccer 2* engine! Expect a full review next issue.



[Above] Scour deep space in search of missions to carry out.

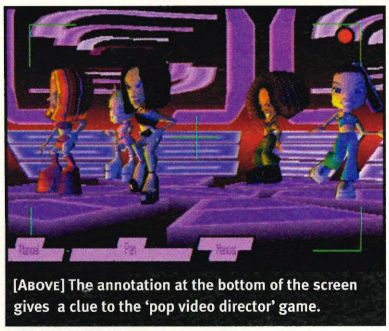
FULLY INTERACTIVE GIRL POWER!

SPICE WORLD: THE GAME

Interacting with the Spice Girls? Hmm, wouldn't every red-blooded male in the country just love to do that? Well now you can, sort of.



[Above] And you thought Scary was fierce on telly. Get a load of that devilish grin. Run for it!

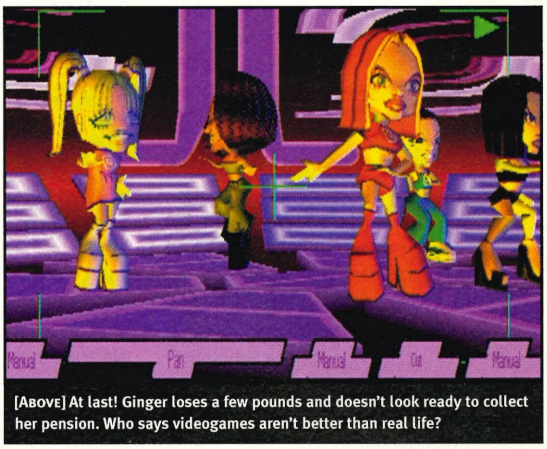


[Above] The annotation at the bottom of the screen gives a clue to the 'pop video director' game.

Spice Girls: The Game is not so much a run jump and shoot affair, more of a multimedia package that features all things Spice. Basically, you take a management stance in order to conduct interviews, edit tracks, and even choreograph the girls' dance routines in a *Parappa the Rapper* kind of way. The package is aimed at a much younger audience and has been produced with much co-operation from the starlets who have provided an in-depth insight into their fame and fortune that is totally exclusive to this game.



The best aspect is the editing suite which gives users access to brand new Spice material and a number of dazzling special effects with which to re-shape the tracks and give them a funkier, fresher beat. Although the Spice may not be Number one material any more, this should still appeal to their vast horde of junior fans. We say roll on *All Saints: The Game!* We're ready for you!



[Above] At last! Ginger loses a few pounds and doesn't look ready to collect her pension. Who says videogames aren't better than real life?

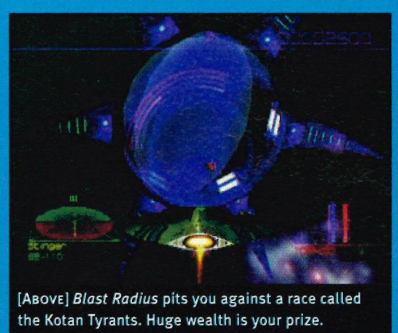
Publisher:	SCEE
Genre:	Party game
Players:	1
% Complete:	70%
Release Date:	May '98

IN SPACE, NO ONE CAN HEAR YOU SCREAM

BLAST RADIUS

After the critically acclaimed *Colony Wars* comes this new offering from Psygnosis. You step into the weighted space boots of Kayne, the sole surviving member of the legendary Wolf Squadron, a fearless group that once defended the outer rim of the galactic empire against alien incursion. Murdered after an act of imperial betrayal, the gang is no more, so Kayne turns mercenary because he just doesn't care any more.

Now you've got a big job defending the Vorn race against the Kotan Tyrants – the reward is high so don't mess it up!

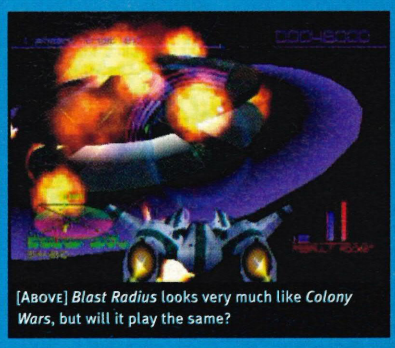


[Above] *Blast Radius* pits you against a race called the Kotan Tyrants. Huge wealth is your prize.



[Above] The attention to detail is pretty impressive, see how you home-in on this planetary dome.

Publisher:	Psygnosis
Genre:	Shoot-'em-up
Players:	1-2
% Complete:	50%
Release Date:	17 July '98



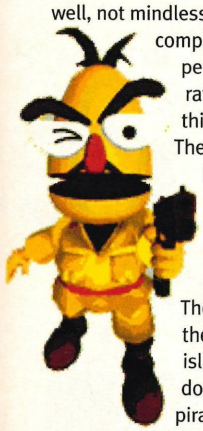
[Above] *Blast Radius* looks very much like *Colony Wars*, but will it play the same?

Blast Radius is a 3-D space shoot-'em-up in the same mould as *Colony Wars* and *Elite*. There are 31 missions to undergo against over 32 different types of highly intelligent enemy. You can choose to pilot various crafts, each with its own arsenal of intergalactic firepower, and it even comes with a two-player link-up deathmatch mode. Psygnosis – we'll hold you to that!

THEY COME IN PEACE... SHOOT TO KILL!

POINT BLANK

This game was first reviewed on import back in issue 26. It scored 85% and was a very addictive, light-hearted shooting affair. Now it is set to come out officially courtesy of Sony in May. The order of the day is mindless shooting... well, not mindless because you have to complete numerous stages performing certain tasks – or rather shooting certain things.

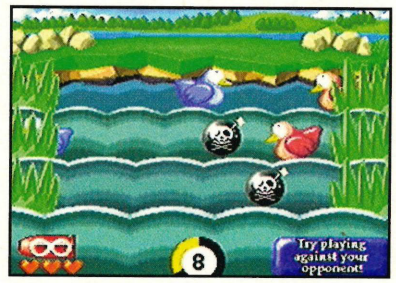


The action is compared by Dr Don and Dr Dan (who look like misfits from *Sesame Street*) who inhabit Point Blank Island where the action is set.

The main goal is to help them find the treasure of the island, whilst saving the docs from hungry vultures, piranha fish and other assorted creatures. *Point Blank* was produced originally by Namco and is compatible with its GunCon (or G-Con 45 over here) light gun... so blistering accuracy is the key. There are several game modes to try, including Arcade (which is the classic coin-op version), Special (which is like the Arcade mode only with new PlayStation levels) Party (play up to eight people in a tournament), Training (for those that can't shoot for s***!) and Quest Mode (help the docs find the mythical GunBullet magic gun). So all in all, there's something for everyone. Get your G-Cons loaded and ready for May!

Publisher:	**SCEE**
Genre:	**Shoot-'em-up**
Players:	**1-2**
% Complete:	**80%**
Release Date:	**May '98**







[Above] How sharp is your shooting? Test your accuracy on the wild and wacky shooting range!



[Above] Shoot the squids not the bombs... just one of the many zany levels on offer in this great game!

PINK-HAIRED CAVEMAN CAPERS

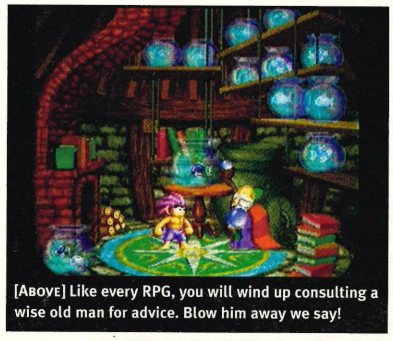
TOMBI

Here is another game that we reviewed a few issues ago getting the official treatment from Sony. *Tombi* (AKA *Tomba!*), is a platform game with RPG elements. You, as the central pink-haired caveman dude must rid your beautiful island from seven evil pigs who have invaded and transformed your once peaceful land into a pig-sty.

You must scale the numerous themed locations searching for vital information and items that will prove essential in ridding the island of these turbulent pigs. Along the way, they are plenty of sub-tasks to carry out, such as rescuing stray animals and searching for missing dwarfs – all of which carry a reward that will benefit you later on.

Tombi is geared towards younger gamers as is evident by the wacky psychedelic visuals and simple gameplay that will have you well on the way to pig-maiming success within a fairly short space of time. However, there are loads of forks in the gameplay that lead you in many of different directions, so seeing and doing everything will take ages. Who said the cutesy platform game was dead?

Publisher:	**SCEE**
Genre:	**Platform/RPG**
Players:	**1**
% Complete:	**60%**
Release Date:	**June '98**



[Above] Like every RPG, you will wind up consulting a wise old man for advice. Blow him away we say!



[Above] Scary moments include these huge plants that laugh or cry depending on fungi that you eat!



[Above] The action changes in perspective at times for a more traditional RPG approach.

BOMBERMAN WORLD



Reviewed in the last issue of Play on import, the first PlayStation outing for the bomb-lobbing Lego misfit is coming officially courtesy of Sony in June. Up to five human players can compete in the hugely addictive Battle mode, and even if you don't have any mates, you can still enjoy the pyromaniac shenanigans in the Quest mode whereby a single bomber must venture forth and collect mythical crystals... Hmm, I think we'll stick to Battle mode!

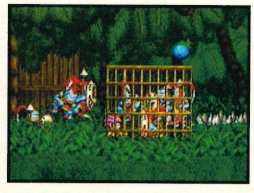
INDY 500



In the pipeline at JVC is this racing game programmed by Kid's favourite, Tomy. *Indy 500* simulates the USA's biggest racing event with 33 cars to choose from, varying weather conditions and realistic skidding and sliding. The game will also feature a split-screen two player mode and numerous hair-raising course to contend with. Full review next issue!



[Above] Hmm, fall to certain death or face a Triffid?



arena

views · questions · criticisms · ideas

VIEWS · QUESTIONS · CRITICISMS · IDEAS

HOPEFULLY, THE GREAT 'SHOULD *FFVII* HAVE BEEN AWARDED MORE' DEBATE IS LAID TO REST THIS MONTH, SO GET WRITING IN WITH SOME MORE JUICY TOPICS! 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.



SORTED FOR WHIZZ BANG

Dear PLAY,

I always read your letters and I'm always surprised how few people take the trouble to write and tell you what a banging organ you produce. Your Gex issue was the best yet, with brill previews of *Tekken 3* and *Vigilante 8*, and I'm looking forward to *Gex*, too.

I think more people should write to pat you on the back, what do you think?

Nigel Cave, Liverpool.

Cheers, scouse chap. What can we say? When you're right, you're right!

RESIDENT NUTTER

Dear PLAY,

Last month I was thinking about buying a game so I decided to look in your buyer's guide playlist when I noticed that you rated *Resident Evil: The Director's Cut* at only 83%. 83%! you gave games like *Rosco McQueen* 88% and *McQueen* is the worst game I've ever played. *REDC* should have got at least 97%.

Jonathan Hubbard, Colchester, Essex.

Yeah, but aren't you overlooking the fact that it wasn't very different from the original?

THE THING IS...

Dear PLAY,

I'm writing to ask you not to cut your coverage of NTSC games in PLAY. Your survey results indicated that most of your readers don't have a chipped 'Station, but even so it's still an excellent way to get a glimpse of what may be in store for PAL users in the coming months.

The main purpose a magazine serves is to inform, and this is purely what is happening when import stuff is reviewed. Plus it allows you to compare the PAL version and let us know if our version is any different/better.

Also, what is all this fuss about the score for *Final Fantasy VII*? The thing is that, when you think about it, there's no massive difference between 90% and 99%. By this, I mean that both games would be classed as excellent and worthy of immediate purchase. That's all any games magazine can hope to do – give decent, useful buying advise. Who gives a damn if one 90% game scored a couple of percent higher than another? Buy them both and shut the hell up! If it comes to a choice between the two due to lack of cash, it's not a hard decision just go with the genre you know you like.

I can't remember the last time I agreed exactly with a percentage score after having played a game. A review is entirely subjective, and the chances of two random people agreeing entirely are very slim. I like the 'out of 10' method because it helps to remove some of this subjectivity. What we can usually count on is that if a game gets more than, say, 80%, it's worth looking at.

Gav, cyberspace

Although we will be slightly reducing the import games we review, the hottest games from the foreign mesh will still be featured. There is a lot of trash out there, so to cover everything would be a waste of time and of no interest to the majority of our readers (hence the reason you've never seen a copy of the latest Japanese horse racing game in PLAY!).

We agree with you about *FFVII*. It is down to personal taste and indeed any 'PLAY Classic' should be bought.



[ABOVE] D Garbett reckons that our huge review of *RE2* spoiled some of the surprises. Piffle.

SPOOKY OR WHAT?

Dear PLAY,

I am writing with my views on *Tekken 3*. Namco shouldn't be pratting about making what amounts to a graphically enhanced version of *Tekken 2*. *Tekken 3* needs more, like a quest mode. I mean, how much further can the *Tekken* series be pushed without improvements to the one player side or the gameplay?

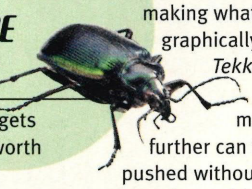
Square's *Tobal* games sorted this out with the quest mode, which enhanced the overall appeal of the game. Come on Namco, give us *Tekken* meets *Streets of Rage*, or save *Tekken 3* for the next Sony console.

Secondly, you may find this a strange complaint, but why did you go into so much detail with the *Resident*



[ABOVE] Nigel cave reckons PLAY 33 was a corking issue. We concur with this observation.

"WHY DID YOU GO INTO SO MUCH DETAIL WITH THE *RESIDENT EVIL 2* REVIEW? IT TAKES THE EDGE OFF THE GAME'S BEST FEATURES..." D GARBETT



Evil 2 review? The way you reveal the pant-filling moments probably takes the edge off of the game's best features – paranoia and fear!

I just feel that this is one of the occasions in which you told us too much – perhaps you should have printed the text upside down with a spoiler message or something.

Lastly, in the photo of the Silicon Dreams team in issue 32 (page 38), the guy in the middle looks like he has no legs. Was he super-imposed, or do they have a spooky ghostly thing going on down there?

D Garbutt, Hull

Are you psychic Mr Garbutt? No sooner had we read your letter and what does Namco announce? Why, that it is going to insert such a feature into *Tekken 3* (see review on page 20).

Our review of *Resident Evil 2* was so informative because we wanted to provide the reader with absolutely everything they needed to know about the game. Although we mentioned some of the scariest moments, we don't explain exactly which point in the game you encounter them, so it will still surprise you. And as for the Silicon Dreams bloke, he is indeed floating!

The Final Nail...

Dear Play,

I am writing in response to Charlie Skinner's letter of the month (Play 30) and his comments about *FFVII* being the best game ever. Everybody is entitled to their opinion, but whilst playing the game, I can't help but get the feeling that it is rather like watching a film as opposed to playing "the best game ever." The game has very little actual gameplay on the first CD – most of the time is spent either watching the admittedly stunning FMV sequences or getting involved in another tedious battle.

Charlie Skinner based most of his praise of the game on presentation and not what is actually there in terms of gameplay. The game should have been awarded around 85%. I am not slagging *FFVII*, as it deserves the hype that is still surrounding it, but I think that *Resident Evil* is a much better game, and the sequel will be the greatest PlayStation game of all time.

Tim Diston, Sunderland

At last a voice of reason.

Gameplay GAME WINNER! Get Off Your Arse, Lara!

Dear Play.

I have had the pleasure of tackling *Tomb Raider II*. However, after working my fingers to the bone for 15 consecutive levels, this stupendous gaming experience suddenly grinded to a halt when I found myself up against a seemingly impossible hurdle. On level 16, every time I attempted to draw my guns or use the 'look' button, the game would crash out!

So after holding the man in my local games shop at gun-point and forcing him to give me a replacement copy (Eaman Holmes may wish to bare in mind that these events took place AFTER my exposure to *GTA*!), I returned home to find that the problem was still occurring. Naturally, I started to think that my machine was at fault, but after trying it at a friend's, I soon realised that this wasn't the case. So, in a final last-ditch attempt to find the cause, I thumbed through the *TRII* instruction booklet and promptly dialled customer services. To cut a long story short, I was told that there was a bug in *Tomb Raider II*!

Apparently, after saving your position, the relevant saving screen fails to appear, hence the game shoots straight back into action, this confuses the PlayStation and cocks-up the save game. I was also informed that all was not lost though, and you can override the bug, like so...

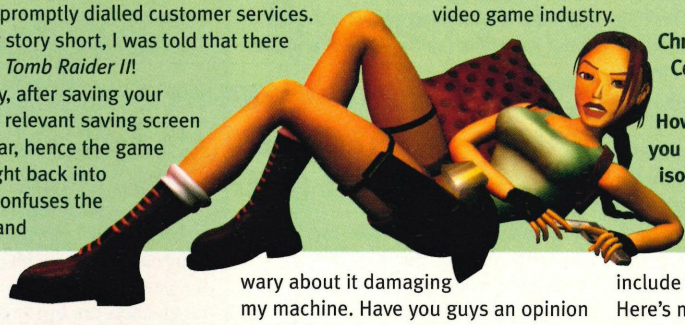
Restart the problem level from the very beginning and whenever you make an in-game save and it returns to normal, leave the controller alone for about five seconds, and then resume play. This process must be carried out every time you save from now on.

I think that this whole situation is pretty lousy. The fact that Core Design released the game, knowing that it contained bugs, just to get it onto the shelves in time for Christmas just goes to show how much they appreciate us, the customers.

Surely the games testers must have picked up on this bug, and how long would it have taken to correct it eh?

I hope that my letter has been helpful to other readers, not just to serve as a helping hand for the *TRII* bug, but also to bring light to the evident slackness within the video game industry.

Christopher Macdonald, Cornwall



How bizarre. The problem that you encountered seems like an isolated case because nobody else has reported any such bugs.

Spaz!

Dear Play,

I know something you don't! In issue 32, I read the review of *Resident Evil 2*, and in the weapons section you forgot to mention the Colt Python. I don't know how to get it but it makes the Magnum look like a water pistol!

Joe Sullivan

You wasted 26p just to tell us that? Anyway, we've found it now, and it doesn't compare to the Magnum, in fact it's a bit weedy actually (although it does fire quickly!).

Daylight Robbery

Dear Play,

I am writing to complain about *Grand Theft Auto*. I have owned a PlayStation for two happy years and am completely satisfied with the vast array of games and accessories. But on the PlayStation version of *GTA*, I have noticed that the mighty red fire engine has not been included. Why? In the PC version, the fire brigade are always there to clean up in the aftermath of explosions and fires, but in the PlayStation version the fires are left to rage.

Secondly, I have been thinking about getting my PlayStation chipped, but am wary about it damaging my machine. Have you guys an opinion on this issue?

Lastly, *Nightmare Creatures*, I think it is a good game. Your magazine gave it 90%, but what is this about a second 'improved' version being available? I bought my copy on February 16, will this be the improved copy, and have I bought a good game in your opinion?

William Wheatcroft, Hertingfordbury

We too were saddened by some of the omissions in the PlayStation version of *GTA*, not so much the fire engines, but the trains which were such a fun inclusion in the PC version.

Like we've said before, once you've bought a PlayStation, it is your property to do with what you like, so get it chipped, see if we care! We don't quite know where you got the idea that there are two versions of *Nightmare Creatures*, but it is a good game nonetheless

"The N64 is one of the worst consoles I've ever played on... I don't know why all my mates think ISS64 is so good." David Gray



The Missing Link

Dear Play,

You were quite right to scoff at Andy Brown. 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 and once gamesplayers like Andy Brown get over the notion that you have to buy two of everything, developers may be more willing to include the option.

Here's my simple guide to link-up gaming:

1. Find a friend with a PlayStation.
2. Save your coppers until you have the grand sum of £10, and buy a link cable.
3. Buy a game you like that also has a link option.
4. Insist, cajole or bully your friend into buying his own copy of the game, or demand he pays the rent-out charge for a copy from Blockbusters (seeing as *you* bought the link cable.)
5. Walk round to your friend's house (or get a taxi if you're lazy).
6. Let's assume your friend lives in the average household, which possesses two TVs, be it the grand living room 22-inch, or the pitiful portable in one of the bedrooms. Now demand your friend's parents vacate the house until further notice.
7. Muster all your intellectual resources and place one end of the link-cable in one PlayStation and the other end in the second PlayStation. Place the two TV's side by side and place one of the PlayStation aerials in one TV, as you would normally do. Place the other aerial in the other TV. Put the games in both consoles and press 'POWER'.
8. Make sure you have the 22-inch TV!

J Currie, Islington

Yes, very funny, but your letter actually clearly outlines the main problem with link-up games – all of the above! We at Play are big fans of the feature, as you know, but

actually getting all of the gear in the same place, at the same time, often proves tricky. Of course, it's easy for us in our lavish office, but to the average Joe Public, you would have to be committed to the cause to see it through, and getting committed to the cause is hard when you can't get it together in the first place. Kind of a Catch 22 situation. But our advice is try it once (at all costs) and see how you feel.

Points Of View

Dear PLAY,

Issue 30 was the first copy of your magazine that I bought, and I was amazed. The Playlist, reviews, news and cheats were fantastic. Anyway, here are a few points and questions:

1. The letter written by Claire Langley was the most pointless piece of writing I have ever seen. She thinks that most men are sexist and then goes on to say she wants a Chippendale in *Tomb Raider*. How sad is that?

2. In my opinion, *FIFA: Road to World Cup '98* is quite a lot better than *Actua Soccer 2* because of the superb graphics and gameplay. Also, I think that the indoor stadium option on *FIFA: RTWC '98* is great fun. Could I just mention Joe Bowyer who I always beat at *Actua Soccer 2!*

3. The N64 is probably one of the worst consoles I've ever played on. The difficult joystick and very sad trigger on the back of the controller are a prime example. I don't quite know why all my mates think that *ISS64* is so good. I think it is quite pathetic actually.

4. I've heard that there is a small cheat for *Cool Boarders*. If you keep to the left on the Advanced or Expert level and hear nine wolves howl you get a new board or something. Is this true?

David Gray, Bedfordshire

1. True, she didn't quite know what she wanted to say, and then looked a bit silly.

2. We think that *FIFA: RTWC '98* is a better all-rounder. But it's the opinion of the games-buying public that counts.

3. *ISS64* is a very fine game in an otherwise poor line-up. The official version wasn't as good as the Japanese one though.

4. There is a trick involving the wolves, but it is slightly different to how you explain it. You must skate to the six wolf locations (so they howl) and then start a new game and hold L1 and L2 on controller one during the 'Now Loading' screen. This will cause a trick table to be displayed. Not too exciting.

Sovver Balls

Dear PLAY,

I'd like to start by saying *Actua Soccer 2*, it could have been better. Don't get me wrong, it's a fine game and every footie fan should buy it. But there are some aspects of the game that should have been better.

Firstly, there are no club teams. I read in a magazine a while ago that *Actua Soccer 2 would* feature every team in the football league from the Premiership down to division three, but when I loaded up the game for the first time, all I found were International teams. Yes, there is an option to customise your own teams, but this is very time consuming and to be honest, how many people know the squads of every team in the football league?

One of the reasons I bought this game was because I thought I would be able to play as my favourite team, Stoke City, without having to put the details in myself. When will a decent football game be released with first division teams in? I know that there are some first division teams in *Soccer '97*, but quite frankly, this game is complete trash. The only good thing about it was the commentary, and I will never understand why it got a high score.

Other than the teams, there are the goalkeepers – they are just too good. Why do they catch almost everything? The keepers in *Actua Soccer 2* make David Seamen and Peter Schmeichel look like a couple of Sunday League amateurs. They stop a 60mph shot is easily as tying their shoe-laces!

> **"I would like to mention the lack of Star Trek games... and what about The X-Files... what sort of game will it be?" Mark Harrison**

To be honest, it is almost impossible to score inside the penalty area, long range shots are by far your best option. As for rounding the keeper, you've got more chance of pulling Posh Spice!

Other than these two points, *Actua Soccer 2* is a great game. It is the little touches that count such as the bulging nets, the grass erosion in the goal-mouths, linesmen flagging for offsides and throw-ins, and the actual stadiums that are absolutely brilliant. Let's just hope that there will be a *Actua Soccer 3* with none of the aforementioned problems.

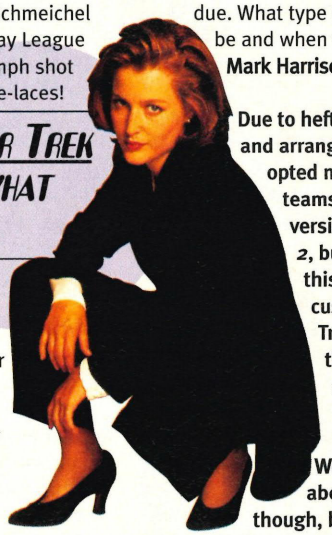
Anyway, enough about football, the other thing I would like to mention is *Star Trek* games, or rather the lack of them. These games have been popular on the PC, and I can't believe that we haven't seen a single *Star Trek* game on PlayStation. I know that two were planned, but so far we have heard nothing. So what's the score with *Star Trek: Generations* from Microprose and *Starfleet Academy* from Interplay?

Finally, I hear that an *X-Files* game is due. What type of game will this be and when will we see it?

Mark Harrison, Stoke-on-Trent



[Above] Mark harrison should be looking out for *World League Soccer* from Eidos, which looks fab.



Due to hefty licencing fees and arrangements, Gremlin opted not to include club teams in the finished version of *Actua Soccer 2*, but tried to amend this with the customise option. True, it would be time-consuming to edit-in every team, but surely worth it?

We agree with you about the goalies though, but it has always been a problem in football games and tends to swing from one extreme to the other with them being either too good or too crap – in fact *ISS64* is the only football game with accurate goalies that have skill and sense, but not too much of it.

***Soccer '97* was a great game at the time. OK so it might not have looked the biz, but it played fabulously and intelligently offering a wide range of skills and freedom to do pretty much whatever you wanted.**

So you're a Trekker eh? Well good and bad news for you. It looks as though *Star Trek Generations* has been canned as no release date has been submitted for the last year or so. But *Starfleet Academy* is still to go ahead and is now down for release in the first half of 1998.

***The X-Files* is being developed by Fox Interactive and will be released by Sony later in the year (much later in fact). Not much concrete information is known, other than it will be a interactive adventure that has been specially filmed by the cast and crew and will feature a brand new storyline that has never appeared in the series.**

Strange Moments in Video Games #7

This month... *The Last Report*

This duff adventure game is littered with strange moments, but the strangest, not to mention the stupidest is as follows...

Upon arriving back at your apartment after being questioned by the police over the death of your ex-girlfriend, you discover a message on your answer-phone from the chief of police. The message requests that you return to the police station as soon as possible. When you do this, you are greeted with exactly the same sequence of events and questioning that you had to tediously endure the last time round. You can imagine that this totally kills the flow of the game and is utterly annoying!



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 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. Write letters that we can read. You'd be surprised how many scrawled letters we get that are written on bog-roll and go straight to the 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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GEX 3D	35.99	Star Wars Teras Kasi	32.99
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PLAYLIST



UPDATED EVERY MONTH

PlayStation

COMPLETE WITH FEATURES, SCORE & COMMENT

THE ULTIMATE PLAYSTATION BUYERS' GUIDE

PLAYBACK

These are our very own top tens for each category and do not conform to the rating they were originally given. It's simply what the team feels are the best games on PlayStation.

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. MarvelSuperHeroes 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.
Bomberman World*	1-5	33	85%	A fun-fuelled party game to blow you away!
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...

GAME										ISSUE REVIEWED	SCORE	WE SAY...
Chessmaster 3D	1-2	●								08	68%	Chess. On PlayStation. Hmm...
Chill	1-2	●							●	33	56%	Uninspired and jerky snowboarding game.
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.
Dark Omen	1	●				●				33	85%	Polished action/strategy simulation.
Darkstalkers*	1-2									10	88%	Very playable beat-'em-up from a coin-op.
Deathtrap Dungeon	1	●								33	88%	A compelling high-drama dungeon adventure.
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.

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. Deathtrap Dungeon	86%
6. Final Fantasy Tactics	90%
7. Broken Sword II	90%
8. Nightmare Creatures	90%
9. Warcraft 2	86%
10. C&C Red Alert	90%

MEMORY CARD REVIEWS PAGE 94

PLAYBACK

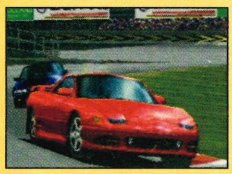
Puzzle & Party Games



1. Puzzle Fighter 90%

2. Puyo Puyo Sun 87%
3. Bomberman World 85%
4. Micro Machines V3 92%
5. Poy Poy 84%
6. Bust-A-Move 3DX 88%
7. PaRappa the Rapper 82%
8. Bust-A-Move 2 88%
9. Kurushi 88%
10. Worms 92%

Racing Games



1. Gran Turismo 97%

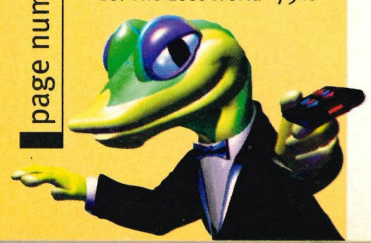
2. TOCA Touring Car 94%
3. Need For Speed 3 87%
4. Rage Racer 94%
5. Rally Cross 89%
6. Total Drivin' 84%
7. Formula 1 '97 90%
8. Newman Haas 74%
9. Wipeout 2097 93%
10. V-Rally 87%

Platformers



1. Gex 3-D 92%

2. Abe's Oddysee 90%
3. Crash Bandicoot 2 86%
4. Rascal 77%
5. Pitfall 3-D 70%
6. Klonoa 83%
7. Pandemonium 2 72%
8. Dracula X 84%
9. SkullMonkeys 83%
10. The Lost World 79%



GAME	ISSUE REVIEWED	SCORE	WE SAY...
Frogger	27	69%	Genuinely disappointing frog-'em-up.
G-Police	27	84%	Atmospheric, pulse-raising 3-D arcade thrills!
Galaxian 3*	10	69%	Repetitive and confusing shooter.
Gex	06	76%	Wretched 3DO platformer with dumb lizard.
Gex 3-D: Enter the Gecko	33	**92%**	Compulsive & classy, the best platformer around!
Goal Storm*	01	69%	Disappointingly slow, fails to score...
Gran Turismo*	31	97%	The best racing game ever made!
Grand Theft Auto	30	88%	Criminally addictive road rage!
Grid Run	15	53%	Banal maze game with few rewards.
Gun Bullet*	26	85%	A real blast for one or two players...
Gunship	08	68%	Has not stood the test of time...
Hard Boiled	25	29%	A disasterously wasted licence...
Hardcore 4X4	15	81%	Hellish and repetitive off-road action.
Hebereke's Popitto	02	43%	Why bother with this when *Puzzle Fighter* exists?
Herc's Adventures*	25	70%	Cute-looking run-of-the-mill adventure.
Hercules*	24	63%	Sweet and innocent, but simple and dull.
Hermie Hopperhead*	02	53%	Worthless cartoon platform banality.
Hexen	21	35%	One of the PSX's worst ever games!
Hi-Octane	03	80%	Reasonable Bullfrog racer.
Horned Owl*	05	73%	Poor excuse for a light gun game.
Hyper Tennis	11	78%	Utterly pointless tennis sim. There are better.
Impact Racing	05	87%	Good then, now utter tripe!
Incredible Hulk, The	17	45%	Nothing 'incredible' about it. Poor.
Independence Day*	21	47%	Wretched film-inspired nonsence!
International Moto X*	21	77%	Moderate motorbike racer.
Int Superstar Soccer Deluxe	17	83%	16-bit footy conversion, no frills.
Int Superstar Soccer Pro	22	84%	One of the best football games on PSX!
Int Track & Field	09	85%	Superb multi-player sports special!
In The Hunt*	04	69%	Miserable sub shoot-'em-up. Tosh!
Iron & Blood	17	75%	Passable medieval beat-'em-up.
Iron Man & Manowar	16	47%	As much fun as genital surgery!
Iznogoud	33	34%	An exceptionally bad platformer.
Jersey Devil	30	83%	Devilish gameplay, well worth a look!
Jet Rider	18	85%	Super-fast jetbikes, poor graphics.
Jet Rider 2*	31	78%	Fun, but essentially more of the same.
Johnny Bazookatone	04	85%	He's supposed to be cool. He's not.
Jonah Lomu Rugby	20	86%	Accurate and enjoyable rugby sim.
Judge Dredd	28	62%	Fantastic license, disappointing game.
Jumping Flash	01	87%	Highly imaginative first person platformer.
Jumping Flash 2*	08	86%	Psychedelic sequel to above (only better).
Kick Off '97	25	68%	Doesn't do the name justice!
Kileak The Blood	01	57%	Sparse *Doom* clone that lacks any kind of thrill.
Kileak The Blood 2	05	65%	The same only with a '2' at the end.
Killing Zone*	08	57%	Contemptible beat-'em-up. Avoid.
King Bowling	02	37%	Uninspiring cartoon bowling sim. Duff.
King's Field	06	61%	Long lasting RPG, looks crap though.
King Of Fighters '95*	11	62%	Utterly pointless 2-D beat-'em-up!
King Of Fighters '96*	24	59%	Rips off every fighting game. Still crap though.
Klonoa: Door to Phantomile*	30	83%	Fast and loveable Japanese platformer.
Konami Antiques Vol. 1	31	58%	Vaired, but dogged with too much rubbish!
Krazy Ivan	04	**90%**	Sumptuous visuals hide a real stinker!
Kurushi	27	88%	Ultra high quality puzzler.
Last Report, The	33	27%	An utterly awful, unrewarding point and click!
Lifeforce Tenka	20	86%	Grisly polygonal *Doom* clone – flashy.
Little Big Adventure	19	83%	Outstanding graphical adventure!
Loaded	01	85%	Gutsy and mindless, but repetitive.
Lomax in Lemmingland	14	70%	Dull as dishwater platform game.
Lone Soldier	02	43%	Overrated Rambo rubbish!
Lost Vikings 2, The	23	72%	Playable platform strategy. Looks old though.
Lost World, The	25	79%	Stunning-looking platformer, but shallow.
MDK	27	**90%**	Brilliantly conceived 3-D shooter.
Machine Hunter	22	72%	Decent *Paradroid*-inspired shooter.
Madden '97	12	81%	Solid and playable US football sim.
Madden '98	29	82%	A fine, albeit rough-looking Gridiron game.
Marvel Super Heroes*	30	87%	A highly playable beat-'em-up.
Magic Carpet	06	**80%**	Magnificent magic carpet ride!
Mass Destruction*	30	80%	Enjoyable, destructive tank romp...
Maximum Force	32	37%	Pales into insignificance beside *Time Crisis!*
Mechwarrior 2	19	**91%**	Top class big robot shoot-'em-up!
Mega Man 8*	21	82%	Playable and colourful, but ultimately shallow.
Metal Slug*	26	74%	Top maiming action, but not enough of it.

GAME											ISSUE REVIEWED	SCORE	WE SAY...
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.
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.
NBA Pro '98	1-8	●	●								33	78%	Good, but not as good as the competition.
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.
Need For Speed 3, The	1-2	●			●		●			●	33	87%	Blindingly fast, but without some of the magic.
Newman Haas Racing	1-2	●			●		●			●	33	74%	Very similar to F1'97, which is better.
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.
Pitfall: Beyond the Jungle	1	●									33	70%	An above average 3-D platform romp.
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!
Poy Poy	1-4	●	●								33	84%	Original and odd multiplayer shenanigans!
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!

PLAYBACK

Platinum Range Games



1. Tekken 2 95%
2. Tomb Raider 94%
3. Resident Evil 95%
4. Die Hard Trilogy 92%
5. Wipeout 2097 93%
6. Micro Machines V3 92%
7. Soul Blade 96%
8. Crash Bandicoot 84%
9. Destruction Derby 2 82%
10. Ridge Racer Rev 90%

LONG TERM



Bubble Bobble

Length of test: 20 Months

Replay value: ★★★★★

It's hard to explain, but there is some factor that keeps dragging us back to this game (the package also includes *Rainbow Islands* for a start!). Getting powered up to the hilt and seeing how many levels you can survive is a great test. We have been gauging this by how many treasure rooms we can access (these are rewarded by getting to level 20 without losing a life and then every 10 levels from then on). The two player game is as competitive as ever – beating your mate to the giant fruit is a great laff! It may look dated as hell, but this is a classic case of gameplay over next-generation visuals. For this, it remains a true timeless classic that we'll always hold dear.

HARDWARE

JOYPADS



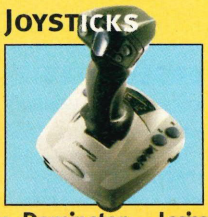
1. Dual Analogue	**Sony**
2. PSX 1	LMP
3. Station Master	Logic 3
4. Cyclone	Phase 9
5. Program Pad	Interact

LIGHT GUNS



1. G-Con 45	**Sony**
2. Erazer	Fire
3. Predator	Logic 3
4. PXS Light Gun	LMP
5. Protector	Logic 3

JOYSTICKS



1. Dominator	**Logic3**
2. Pro Arcade 2	Fire
3. EagleMax	ActLabs
4. Arcade Stick	Namco
5. PS Arcade	Interact

WHEELS



1. Top Gear	**Logic3**
2. PSX Wheel	LMP
3. NegCon	Sony
4. VRF1	Fire
5. Per4mer	import

Please note, in the Playlist a '*' means that an import copy of the game was reviewed and may vary.

GAME	ISSUE REVIEWED	SCORE	WE SAY...
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.
Rascal	1	33	77%	Accomplished platformer, good for the kids!
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.
Reboot	1	33	68%	Easy on the eye, short-term fun.
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!

GROOVY GADGETS



ALL MEMORY CARDS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE REVIEWED

PLAYLIST BEST BUY

SONY MEMORY CARD

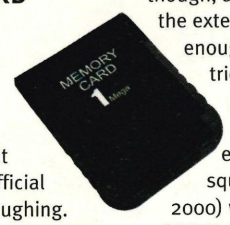


Supplied by: Sony **Price:** £14.99
Gimmicks: New colours available.

Sony recommend that you only use official products, so this works just fine in all areas. It only offers 15 save slots, so you may need a couple, but other than that this is probably the safest bet.

OVERALL: ★★★★★

1 MB MEMORY CARD



Supplied by: Xtreme
Price: £8.99 (standard grey)
Gimmicks: Different colours.

We tried this on a multitude of different games, and no problems were encountered. It looks and performs like the official cards so at this price you're laughing.

OVERALL: ★★★★★

360 MEMORY CARD

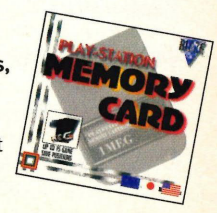


Supplied by: Datel
Price: £49.99
Gimmicks: 360 save slots, digital display.

The first 360 card we tried didn't seem to work at all, oh dear. The next one did though, and although it appeared to save the extensive amounts of data efficiently enough to begin with, we found it tricky to swap between the various pages at times, and the data compression techniques used ensure that games that already squash data (such as Sim City 2000) won't save properly.

OVERALL: ★★★★★

8 MB MEMORY CARD



Supplied by: Fire
Price: £39.99
Gimmicks: 120 slots, LED display.

More compression problems here, but that is only the tip of the

GAME	ISSUE REVIEWED	SCORE	WE SAY...
Runabout*	1	77%	Highly playable racer, but way too short.
Salamander Deluxe Pack	1-2	74%	Aged, but enjoyable Eighties shoot-'em-up.
Sampras Extreme	1-4	**90%**	One of the best tennis games on PSX. Slick.
Samurai Showdown*	1-2	62%	Should be called *Samurai Slowdown!*
Sentient	1	84%	Absorbing and intelligent adventure. Bizarre.
Shadow Master	1	79%	Nice try, but lacks variety...
Shellshock	1	85%	Passable tank game, now looks basic.
ShockWave Assault	1	87%	Limited surface-based shoot-'em-up. Dull.
Side by Side Special*	1	63%	Uninspiring, run-of-the-mill racer.
Sim City 2000	1	75%	A fantastic game. Not suited to the PSX.
Skeleton Warriors*	1	56%	Grotesque import beat-'em-up.
SkullMonkeys	1	83%	Pleasurable plasticine playability.
Smash Court Tennis	1-4	86%	Supremely playable, addictive cartoon tennis.
Soccer '97	1-4	82%	UK teams version of *Olympic* – very playable!
Soul Blade*	1-2	**96%**	The best weapons-based beat-'em-up on PSX!
Soviet Strike	1	83%	Decent helicopter shoot-'em-up, rough looking.
Space Hulk	1	84%	Claustrophobic and intense 3DO strategy game.
Space Jam	1-6	39%	Pants cartoon basketball game, based on film.
Speedster	1-2	80%	Overhead racer with okay handling, but slow.
Spider*	1	75%	'On rails' arachnid platformer. Can get boring.
Spot Goes to Hollywood*	1	72%	Uninspiring cartoon platform game. Yawn.
Stahlfeder*	1	65%	Old-style vertical shoot-'em-up – too easy.
Star Gladiator	1-2	88%	Competent beat-'em-up from Capcom.
Starblade Alpha	1	68%	Lots of blasting action, no control at all...
Starfighter 3000	1	85%	A decent stab at a sci-fi shooter/strategy.
Star Wars: Masters of Teras Kasi*	1-2	74%	A great license, but somewhat wasted.
Starwinder	1	77%	Linear space-based racer. Lacks excitment.
Steel Harbinger	1	80%	Controlling a violent nympho isn't much fun.
Steel Reign	1-2	58%	One to rent, not to buy!
Street Fighter Alpha	1-2	**93%**	Classic 2-D beat-'em-up, now been replaced.
Street Fighter Collection	1-2	67%	Some stones are best left unturned!
Street Fighter Ex Plus	1-2	**91%**	It's absolutely EXcellent!
Street Fighter: The Movie	1-2	35%	The original PLAY score was a misprint! Crap!
Street Fighter Zero 2*	1-2	**94%**	Simple, colourful graphics – total gameplay!
Street Racer	1-8	84%	Childish *Mario Kart* wannabe, good multi-player.
Strikepoint*	1-2	54%	Shoddy and unconvincing helicopter sim.
Striker '96	1-4	73%	Extremely playable, but now extremely dated.

iceberg. It is quite slow to save and access data, and is prone to crashing occasionally. Not particularly good then.

OVERALL: ★★★★★

1 MB Memory Card



Supplied by: Gamester LMP
Price: £14.99
Gimmicks: Different colours, sticky labels.
Standard size, eye-catching and effective. We encountered no problems with these when used with a vast wealth of different games. Of course, not being the official product they could be cheaper...

OVERALL: ★★★★★

4 MB Memory Card



Supplied by: Logic 3
Price: £29.99
Gimmicks: True saves, sticky labels.
This is pretty cool... a larger card that saves data in true form and not compressed. It worked fine with the assortment of games we used it with and the pages are easy to access with the minimum amount of fuss. Top of the class!

OVERALL: ★★★★★

PlayStation Memory Drive

Supplied by: Datel
Price: £79.99
Gimmicks: The thing itself.
Just think, fork out a King's ransom for this thing and you'll never have to buy a memory card ever again – only floppy disks. We searched long and hard for a fault with this thing but for the life of us couldn't, it rocks!



OVERALL: ★★★★★

PLAYLIST COMING

Multicoloured Dual Shock Joypads

Get your money ready because for a limited time, Sony is releasing coloured versions of its new Dual Shock joypads. They will come in seven colours (including the three that are already available in Japan – plain grey, white and diamond black) with the introduction of the new highly desirable smoke grey, crystal, island blue and emerald versions. These pads retail for 3300 yen in Japan (which roughly works out at £16.00 over here). More news soon.



NEXT MONTH: ALL THE LATEST GIZMOS

COIN-OPS

HERE ARE THE TOP FIVE ARCADE GAMES WE'VE BEEN CHURNING OUR HARD-EARED WAGES INTO THIS MONTH...

LA RIDER

STRADDLE A HEAVY-DUTY HARLEY DAVISON MOTORBIKE LIKE ARNIE IN *T2* AND RUN RIOT.



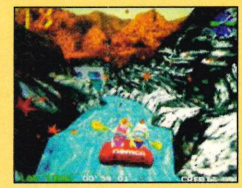
TOP SKATER

EXPERIENCE THE THRILL OF PULLING OFF HAND-PLANTS AND GRABBING SOME 'AIR' WITHOUT THE GRAZES!



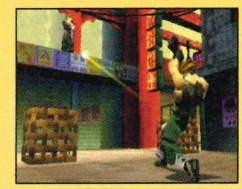
RAPID RIVER

LIVE OUT THOSE *DELIVERENCE* FANTASIES WITHOUT BEING BUGGERED BY A HILLBILLY!



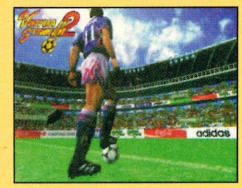
EHRGEIZ

TOP BEAT-'EM-UP ACTION FROM NAMCO AND SQUARE FEATURING *FFVII* CHARACTERS! NUFF SAID!



VIRTUA STRIKER 2

THIS MAY BE OLD NOW, BUT IT IS STILL THE BEST FOOTBALL GAME IN THE ARCADES!



LONG TERM



MASTERS OF TERAS KASI

LENGTH OF TEST: FOUR MONTHS
REPLAY VALUE: ★★★★★

HOPES WERE HIGH WHEN THIS FIRST EMERGED ON IMPORT, BUT IT DIDN'T IMPRESS US MUCH THEN, AND THE PAL VERSION DOESN'T NOW. THE MAIN PROBLEM IS THE LACK OF JUICY MOVES AND FRANTIC COMBOS WITNESSED IN SOMETHING LIKE *TEKKEN 2*. THIS GAME IS VERY STOP AND START AND NEVER REALLY FLOWS LIKE THE CLASSIC FIGHTING GAMES DO. SOME OF THE CHARACTERS ARE SUSPECT TOO. WHEN UP AGAINST THE LIKES OF *DOA* AND *TEKKEN 3*, THIS RANKS HIGHEST IN THE ALL-TIME WASTED LICENCES.



STRIKER '96

LENGTH OF TEST: 33 MONTHS
REPLAY VALUE: ★★★★★

THE FIRST FOOTBALL GAME EVER TO HIT THE PLAYSTATION (NOT COUNTING KONAMI'S *GOAL STORM* ON IMPORT), AND HOW BADLY IT HAS DATED. THIS IS GOING BACK TO THE TIMES WHEN STAN COLLYMORE WAS IN THE ENGLAND SQUAD, AND WHEN UP AGAINST THE LIKES OF *FIFA:RTWC98*, THIS LOOKS DISMAL AND PLAYS AS BASIC AS A LOBOTOMISED CHIMP. THE ONLY REDEEMINGFEATURE IS ANDY GRAY'S COMMENTARY, BUT THAT ALONE ISN'T ENOUGH TO EVEN SNIFF THIS GAME NOWADAYS. GOOD WAY BACK THEN, EXTREMELY DUFF NOW.

UPDATED EVERY MONTH

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 hapalm 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 II	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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NEWSAGENT INFORMATION PLAY MAGAZINE is published by Paragon Publishing Ltd (tel: (01202) 299900, fax: (01202) 299955, http://paragon.co.uk) and is available from your local wholesaler. PLAY MAGAZINE is distributed by Seymour (tel: 01202 200232) and is fully SOR

PLAY

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Printed by Duncan Web Offset, Passmore Plant, Tovil, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6XA.

Distributed by Seymour Ltd
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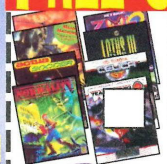
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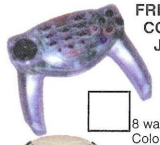
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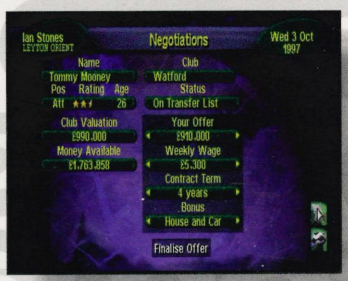
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