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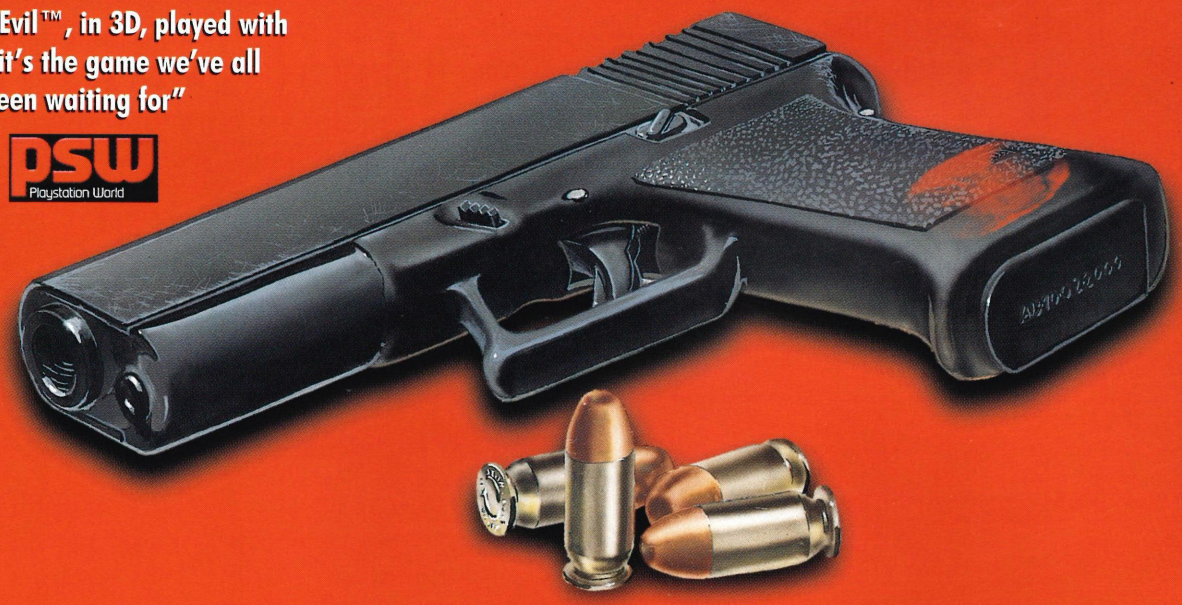
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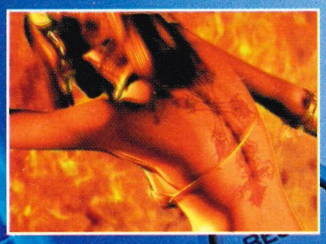
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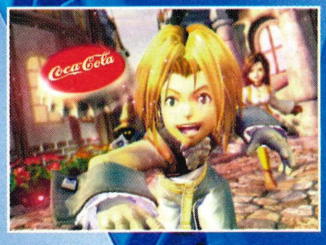
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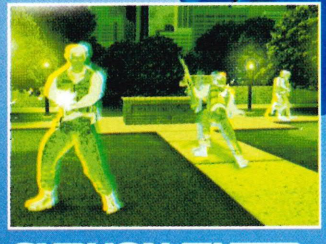
VAGRANT STORY

Like Metal Gear and Final Fantasy shaken up into a dark, tangy mix



FINAL FANTASY 9 IS FIZZING

There's so much new Final Fantasy eye candy it'll rot your eyes



SYPHON FILTER 2: IT'S A KILLER!

Cold-blooded violence has never felt so good. The stealth Daddy is back!



OUT NOW! PURE GOLD GAMES!

N-Gen, F1 2000, Syphon Filter 2, Street Fighter EX2. All get 9/10



THE ORIGINAL JUST KEEPS GETTING BETTER

THIS ISSUE OF PLAYNATION IS RAMMED WITH BLINDING STUFF COMING SOON TO PLAYSTATION 1. THE ORIGINAL'S HAVING THE YEAR OF ITS LIFE. NICE ONE

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New character revealed plus first ever shots of awesome Tekken Bowl secret game

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PREVIEWS

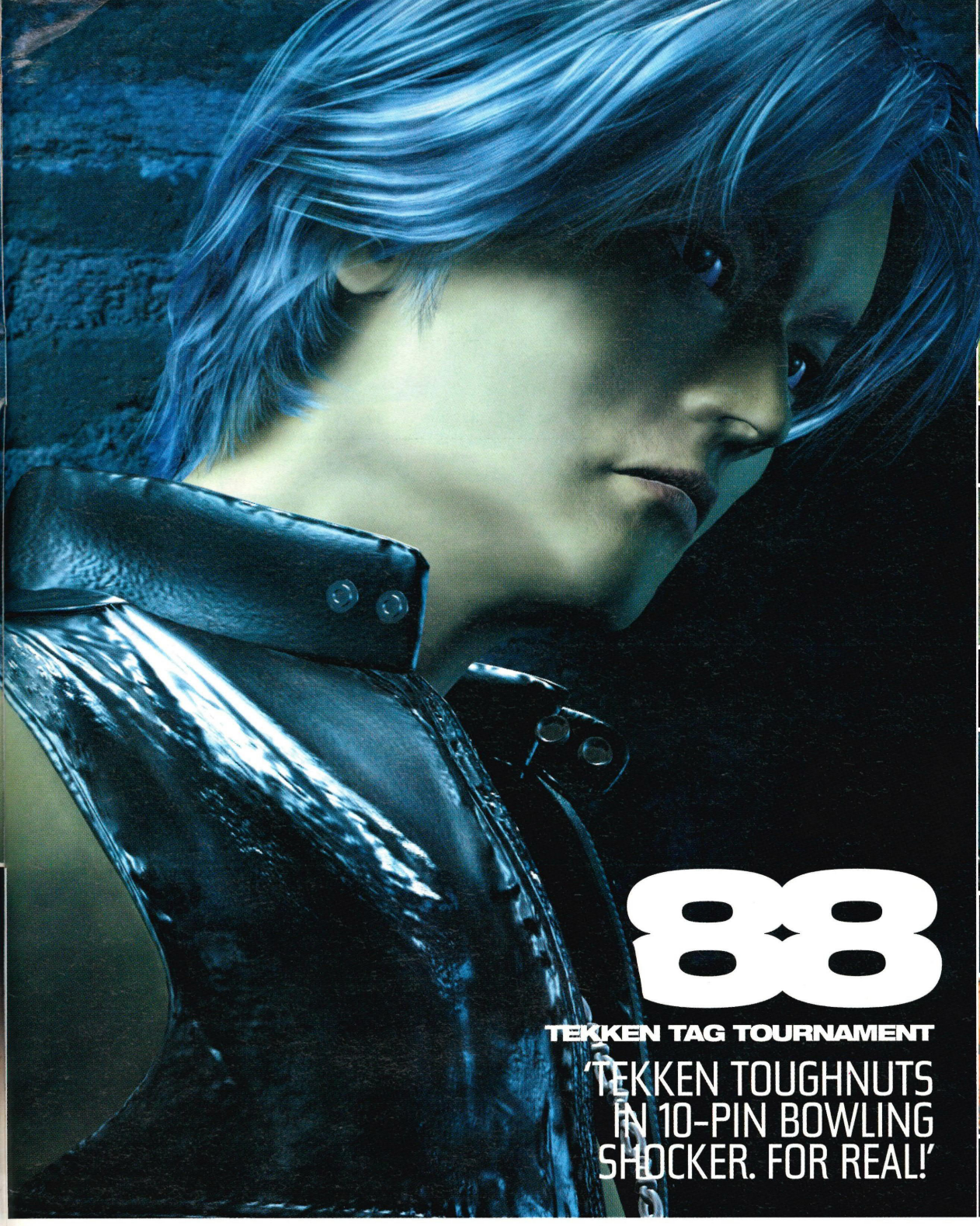
98 DEAD OR ALIVE 2
PS 2 goes wobbly in this chest-heaving fighter

99 TIME CRISIS TITAN
Dust down your lightgun 'cos this blaster's back

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PS 2 action: you'll never eat a hamburger again!

110 TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING 2
Bigger stunts, better graphics, baggier trousers

112 VAGRANT STORY
The name stinks, but this dungeon adventure's going to be one of the best games of the year



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TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT

'TEKKEN TOUGHNUTS IN 10-PIN BOWLING SHOCKER. FOR REAL!'



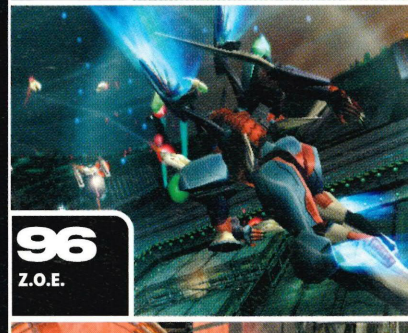
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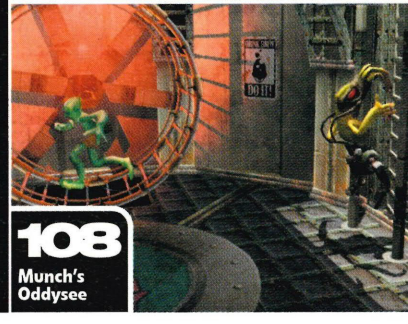
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108 Munch's Oddysee

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GUIDES & HOT TIPS

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Help Hana and her mates whup Satan's ass with this complete guide to this awesome adventure

62 TIPS & CHEATS
Learn the best moves for WWF Smackdown! in seconds, unlock secret characters and courses in South Park Rally, bounce back from beatings in Ready 2 Rumble , get all the cars and all the tracks in TOCA 2, visit any level in Mission Impossible, and solve the trickiest puzzles in Silent Hill

67 Q&A
Is a game getting you down? Tell us what you're stuck on and we'll sort you out

OTHER COOL STUFF

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Meet Razor Tooth, the armless stilt demon

78 ESSENTIAL 101
Steer clear of PlayStation turkeys with our guide to the very best PS games. Without it you could be wasting serious moolah

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Five cool things you don't know about PS 2

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Hot news on games going mega cheap

114 BACKSIDE
Spurned by Ken, Lara's love life hits the rocks

VERBAL



VERBAL, PLAYNATION, 338-346 GOSWELL ROAD, LONDON EC1V 7QP. E-MAIL STEVE.OHAGAN@ECM.EMAP.COM



● Chyna: 'fetch, boy, fetch'

WHAT ABOUT ME OLD CHYNA?

The best of your suggestions for who should play Lara in the Tomb film so far is Kelly Brook. But she ain't fit for the part. It should be WWF's Chyna. She's the sexiest woman in the world. In fact, I [illegible] often [illegible] then reach for the tissues.

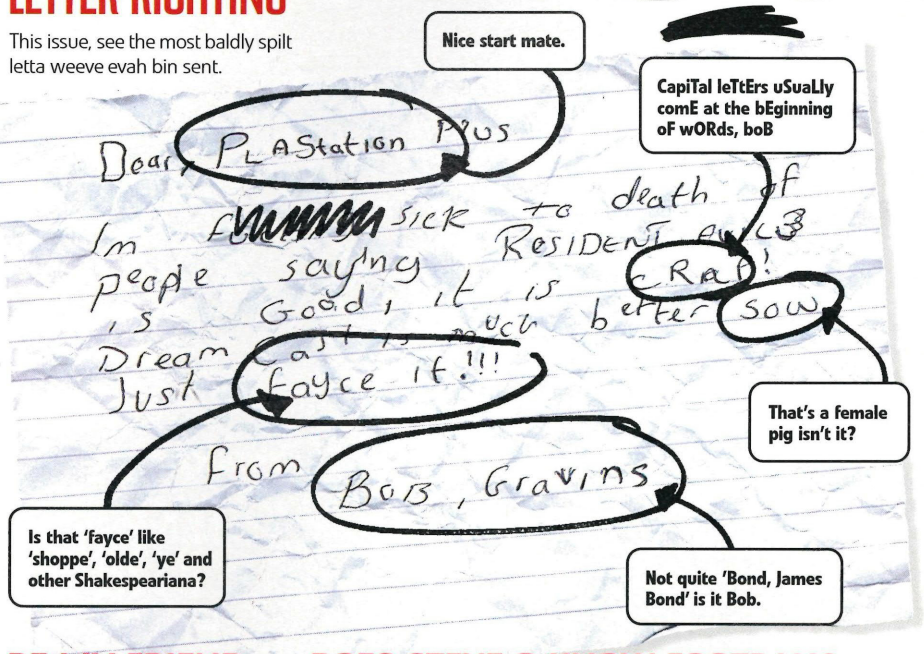
THAT'S ENOUGH!

Jumping Jack Flash, Cambridge

You gave us a little more than we wanted to know, Jack. On her website Chyna asks: 'Don't treat me like a woman....don't treat me like a man'. How should we treat you then, Chyna? Sorry, what's that? "Woof woof?"

LETTER RIGHTING

This issue, see the most baldly spilt letta weeve evah bin sent.



THE SECRET MESSAGE

Eagle eyed Daid Millar of Aberdeenshire was first to spot last month's hidden home truth about art editor Jaime and gets a copy of Xena for his troubles. This month, we've cunningly hidden away three pouches of Capri-Sun in pictures in this month's issue. First reader to spot all three and tell our AI on 020 7972 6741 wins a case of Capri-Sun.





▲ Last month's message was hidden like a fart at tea time on P97

BE MY FRIEND



To the sad person who did the review for Cool Boarders 4. Take your Cool Boarders 2, stick it between your ropey arse cheeks while in an upright position, and slam down hard on an asphalt floor. Cool Boarders 3 is the best Boarder around.
P.S. If you send me a PS2 I'll consider being your friend.

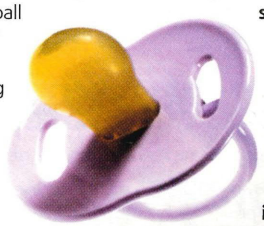
P Mac, Middlesboro

Steve says: Um, yes Mac, I'd love to be your friend too. I like the thought of whiling away summer evenings doing asphalt ass-slams together.

DOES STEVE O KNOW FOOTBALL?

Your reviewer Steve O is a complete dummy. From reading your bollocks review of UEFA Champions' League 99/00, it's obvious he supports some shite second division team who will never, ever get anywhere near the Auto Windscreen Shield final, let alone the Champions League. Does flowing football make him jealous? Does the sight of top strikers slotting the ball away on the biggest stage of them all make him cringe as he remembers the three legged mules he pays money to watch hoofing the ball into row Z of your shed of a stand? 6 out of 10 is rubbish. I'd have given it at least 8. It pisses all over ISS Pro Evolution anyway. Sort your life out and stick to reviewing Barbie games, poof.

Simon Absolom, Leyton.



Flowing football? Leyton? I'm sorry but the Orient are known for two things: hit-and-hope football and the worst pies in the league. Actually, living in London you probably support Man U anyway don't you?

THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MIKEY

We're writing to complain about our mate Mike. All he does all day is eat pies, burgers, and pasties and plays on Dreamcast. Tell him he is a sad bastard.

Robert and Danny, Salford

PlayNation's Agony Al says: 'Mike, seriously reconsider who you are hanging around with, man. Bob n' Dan here make Judas seem like a top chum to have.

WE GO WHERE THE SUN DON'T SHINE

This month, many of you had unusual ideas that involved shoving product up the tradesman's entrance. We test your anal advice to discover how feasible your suppository suggestions are.



My type of game is Thrasher Skate and Destroy and best of all is Tony Hawk's Skateboarding. If you don't agree I'll get a piece of stilton, wrap it around your PlayStation controller and shove it up your candy asses.

Sam Hullen, e-mail

Ass-fit factor: 7/10. Stilton acts as a nice lubricant. But use a normal joypad, not a Dual Shock or light gun, but definitely don't use one of those four-foot arcade joysticks.

Everyone has their own opinion but the sad twat who's buzzing over Metal Gear Solid and Res Evil 2 in your 101 views can cram them up his twisted, smelly arse.

Josh Gordon, Stockton-On-Tees

Ass-fit factor: 5/10. Although smallish, the awkward shape of the boxes could prove tricky. And don't let anyone know you've had a Solid Snake up your cocoa canal.

The bloke who said Wu-Tang vs Resident Evil would be the ultimate crossover is a geek. Aerosmith vs The Ministry of Darkness would be the best. In fact, he can take the Wu-Tang clan and blow them out his spotty ass.

Alex Hook, Kenington

Ass-fit factor: 1/10. Getting all nine of the Clan between your cheeks could take some doing. Hey, isn't Ol' Dirty Bastard just another way to describe a huge dead otter?

FRIDGE FILTH

I liked last month's fridge magnets and my favourite sentence is "PlayStation pumps filth into your head."

Tim, Kettering

Own up 'Tim', your real name is Ruth, you're a 47 year old housewife who works for *Parents as Enemies of Non-Informative Software.*

GETTING SHIRTY

What class T-shirt transfers you gave away recently. But I ironed on the NASA one only to see it actually read ANUS. Cool eh?

Andrew ,e-mail

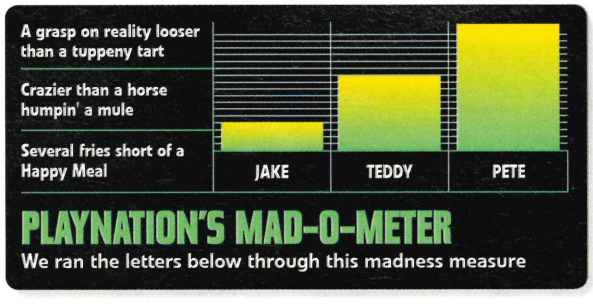
If it's a Westlife shirt, yes.

LET'S GET IT ON

I don't just like ice hockey, I play it. I am talking about that pie-eating dickhead Mike who was slagging off ice hockey games. I play goals for Dumfries under-16s. I'm 5'11", and let's just say well built. And I would like to kick that pansy's arse from one end of the ice to another. The fat bastard probably can't skate and probably has never seen a live ice hockey match. I'm after you pie eater.

Philip Divers, Dumfries.

Word of advice to Mike. Anyone who spends half his life wearing a Friday 13th psycho mask is mental. Run and hide Mike. Anyone reckon they could take on our Philip?



PLAYNATION'S MAD-O-METER

We ran the letters below through this madness measure

MAD

Anyone who complains about swearing in magazines should be hung upside down by their nob in a closet next to a poster of a naked man. Enough to drive any man insane. Plus he should have his pubic hairs pulled out one by one by another naked man.

Jake, Hartlepool

Jake, whatever you do don't tell your Dad about this vision you have. Take a long look at yourself (but with your clothes on). There are 0898 numbers that can help.

MADDER

Isn't killing fun, just getting a knife and blowing away cute little bunnies!! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!

Teddy Gunfreak, e-mail

Blow something away with a knife? Try shooting someone with a sarnie instead.

MADDEST

Women in the real world just aren't as sexy as birds in games. Take Lara for example.

Pete N, Fife

Yes Pete. Can we book a taxi back to reality now please?

YES, THIS IS A GENUINE LETTER

Thrill Kill is the best game I've played by far. So if MS (who slagged it off in last month's Verbal) has a problem with it, I will kick the shit outta him with my razor sharp teeth made out of metal, my arms amputated, and standing on stilts.

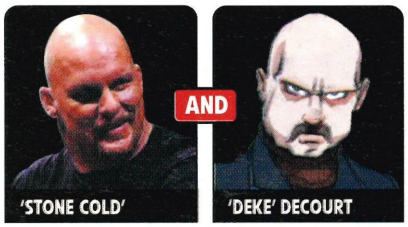
Name and address withheld for own safety

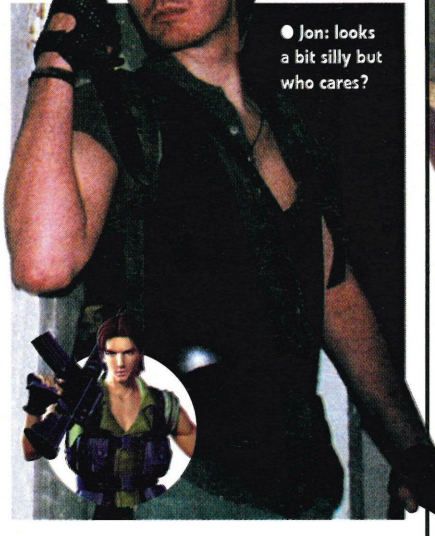
▲'I am Razor Metal Tooth, the armless stilt demon... from Shropshire'

THE LOOKEY-LIKEYS

Last month we asked for your lookey-likeys. Brian Walker from Plymouth came up with Phil Mitchell and Peter Partridge from Luton spotted one for Stone Cold. They win an Essential 101 game each.







● Jon: looks a bit silly but who cares?

SPECIAL MENTION

This is Jon from Kent who reckons he's the spit of Carlos from Res Evil 3. And he's dressed up to prove his point. Get out much, Jon?

■ ILLUSTRATION: DAVE AT MONKEY INDUSTRIES

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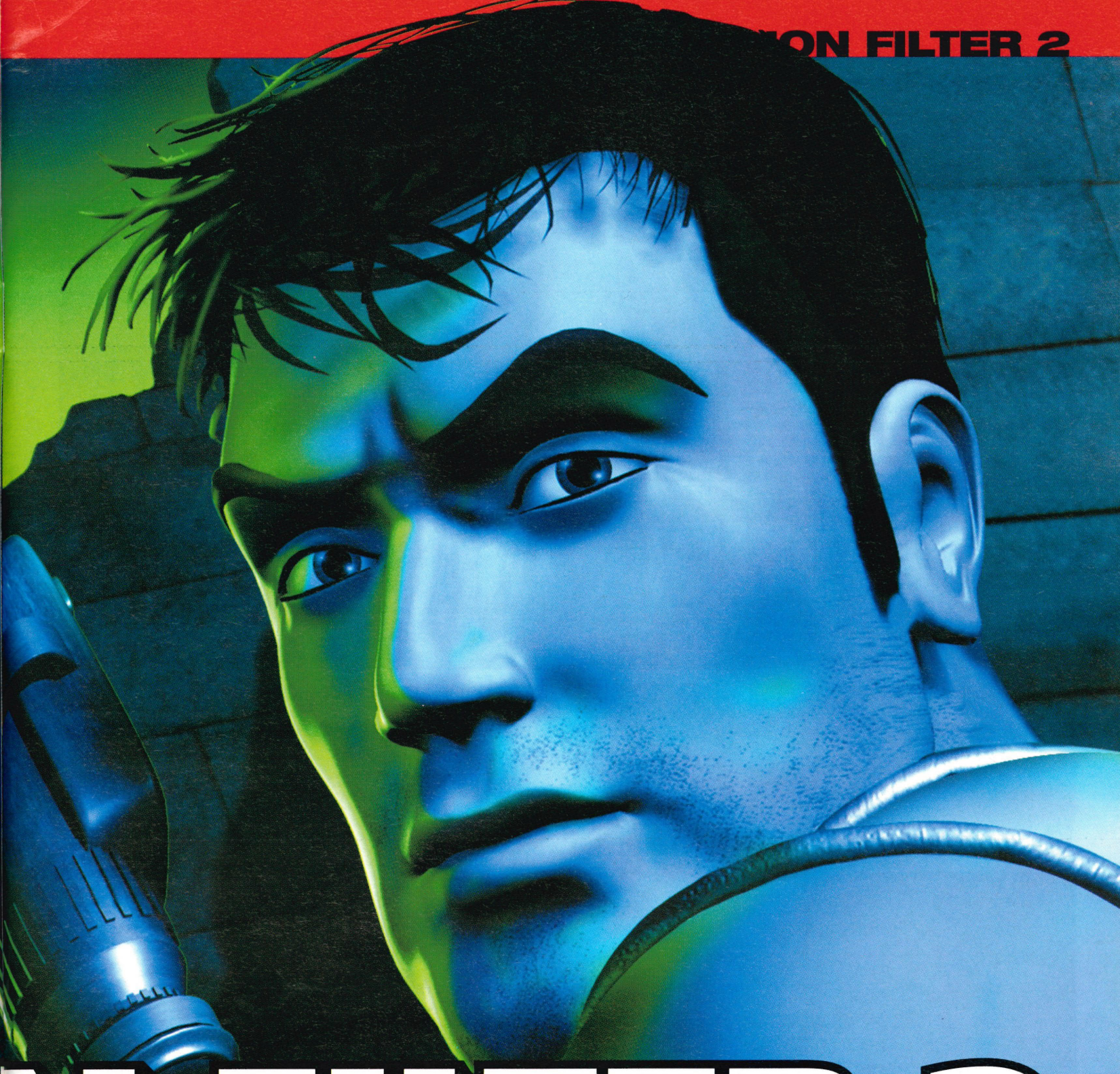
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N FILTER 2

l hunted by the Russians, it's two of you against the
ed sneak 'em up the 'Station has got to offer is back ➤

Syphon Filter is back in a blaze of hi-tech ultra-violent glory. We're talking more missions, loads more characters, and a plot that'll tie you in knots. This stealth 'em up is part cloak and dagger, part cock the hammer. Let's rock!

It's got the looks, the feel, and the same mix of stealth and shooting as its big brother but with 21 all-new missions. But where many same-game-new-missions sequels just leave you feeling conned, this makes you remember just what a top game the original was in the first place.

This time round Gabe Logan and female fellow agent Lian Xing have been framed by a shadowy US intelligence agency who want to sell the Syphon Filter chemical warfare virus to an unstable Third World power.

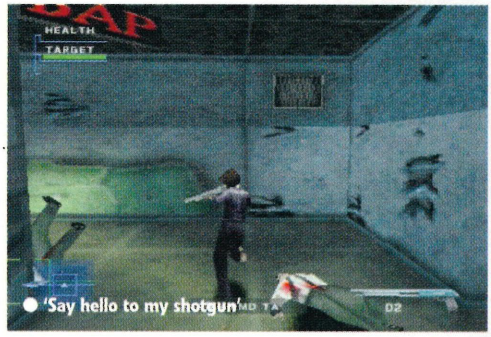
What's worse is some very shady Russian military/mafia crew is in on the set-up too. Lian has been infected with the virus and starts the game held prisoner in a secure hospital with only hours before she croaks. And considering Gabe starts out being shot down over an icy mountain range teeming with hostile special forces troops, this hot spot makes hell seem like a skiing resort.



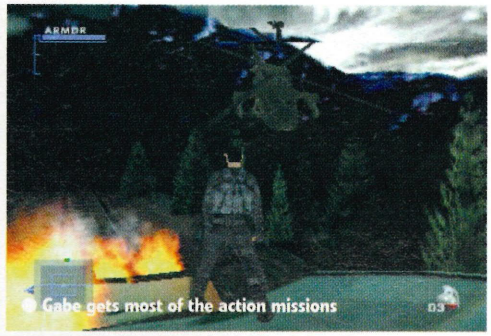
● Lian Xing sure can mix it up

IT TAKES TWO TO TANGO

You get to play as both Gabe and Lian, with Logan taking most of the straight out combat duty, and the stealthy bint getting the lion's share of the sneak 'em ups. But when push does come to shove for lovely Lian, boy has this cat got some serious claws. Check out when she has to fight her way out of a Moscow nightclub where the bouncers are built like gorillas and armed like guerillas. The body count rises like it was Rambo on fast forward. One let down is that both are exactly the same to use. Neither has any special moves or unique skills.



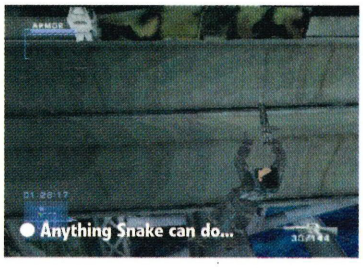
● 'Say hello to my shotgun'



● Gabe gets most of the action missions

CRUEL, BRUTAL AND MERCILESS. A

GABE IS JOINED BY FEMALE AGENT LIAN XING. AND WHEN IT COMES TO KILLING

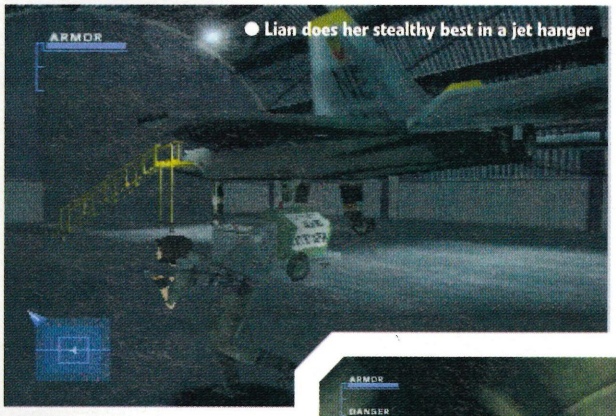


● Anything Snake can do...

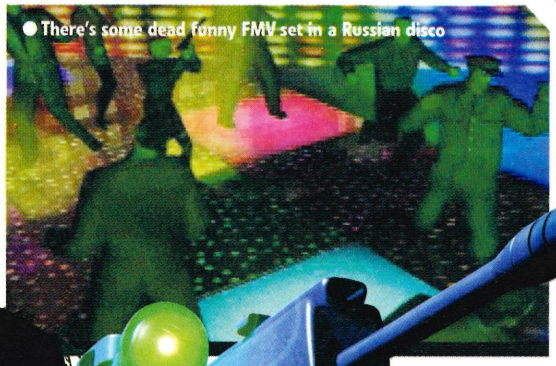
PICK YOUR TACTICS

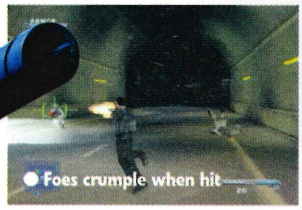
Working out how to deal with each combat situation gives a real tactical edge to the fights in Syphon Filter. It feess more as if you're taking part in carefully staged set pieces from a top action film rather than being fed a series of repetitive shootouts.

Imagine, for example, there are three snipers on the ridge just out of sight squinting through their telescopic sights trying to get a bead on you. And there's a couple of grunts taking cover behind the tree 20 yards to your left who are doing their best to open your guts with shotguns. Who do go for first? Pick off the snipers or flush the other two out with grenades?



● Lian does her stealthy best in a jet hanger


● There's some dead funny FMV set in a Russian disco


● Foes crumple when hit



● Crawl through air vents

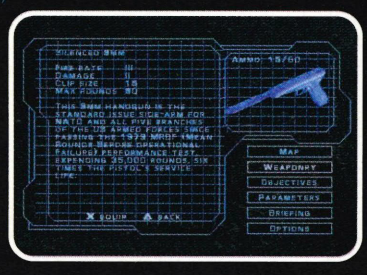


● Fry 'em



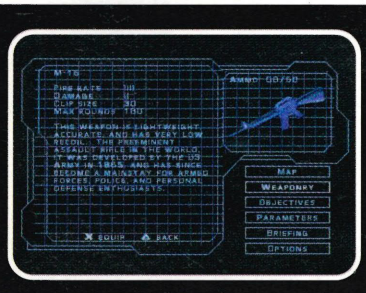
WEAPONS

You'll pick up more guns than an nternational arms dealer but make sure you use the right tool for the job. Here are your basics:



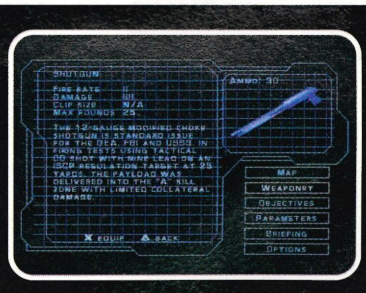
SILENCED 9MM PISTOL

To avoid the alarm being raised a silent headshot means the only bells a guard gets near are at Heaven's gate



M-16

Handy all rounder. Fast rate of fire means good in close quarters and long barrel gives good accuracy at range



SHOTGUN

If you wait until you see the whites of their eyes you could stop a charging bull elephant with one of these muthas



▲ At close quarters you're better off using auto targeting because there's no time to aim



● The infra-red mode looks the business and gives the hapless goons no chance

FULL-ON FIREFIGHTS

Like the first game, when a ruckus kicks off the action's white hot. The targeting system is still a treat, letting you switch between pin-point accuracy for head shots to wild from-the-hip blasting when you're on the move. But a gung-ho guns blazing approach seldom works and you have to choose your moves as carefully as a prizefighter. And if you like the bank raid scene in Heat or when Neo and Trinity storm the office block in The Matrix, you'll love the way the tracer spits out of the M-16s and how the shotgun kicks people across rooms like a 12-gauge mule.

ND SHE'S A LADY

MEN, NOT EVEN XENA COMES CLOSE



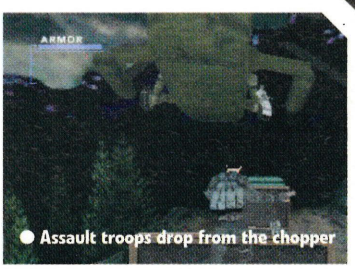
▲ Loosing off rounds with auto-targetting at long range is not a good idea because most of them will miss



● No need to knock



● The machine pistol looks class



● Assault troops drop from the chopper

WORK AS A TEAM

Some of the best moments come when you have to work together with another team member. They shout orders and scream for help in the heat of the action making you feel like it's not just you out there alone.

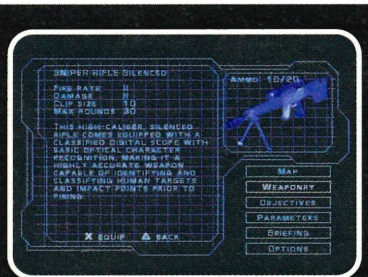
The first mission sees Gabe and a bunch of GIs shot down on a remote mountain. And together you've got to fight your way past a battalion of special forces. And later Gabe and Lian are chasing some psycho through a museum trying to disarm his bombs. Theresa does the bomb disposal while you play minder, picking off the goons as they do their best to fill her full of enough lead to build a nuclear blast shelter.



● Mission one: escape with the GIs

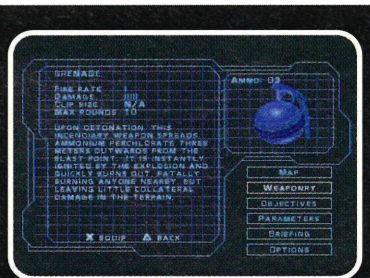


● Cover Lian's back as she disarms the bombs



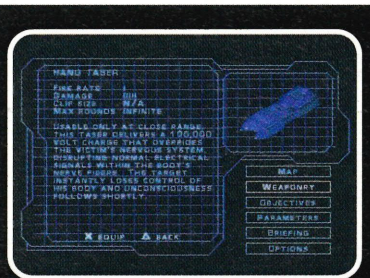
SNIPER RIFLE SILENCED

The brain surgeon's choice but not what you want in your hands when surprised by a pack of heavies as you round a corner



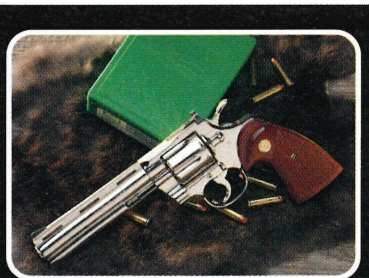
GRENADE

These are easy to aim but they take a while to chuck. You can take out trucks with one too. Make sure it doesn't rebound on you



HAND TASER

In those annoying situations where you are not allowed to kill anyone, use this to put them to sleep. Have to get close first though.



COLT PYTHON

The .44 Colt Python is sadly missing from the game. A shame 'cos otherwise you could shout Syphon the Python' *

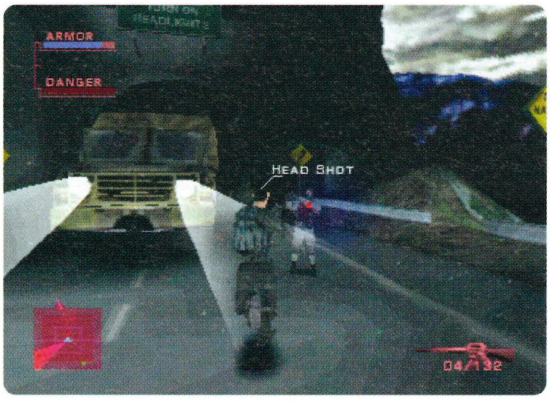
■ Steve O's pleased as punch with this joke. The rest of us think it's dog dirt.

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

Syphon Filter is a bit of a bitch to get used to. So check out some crucial advice and stay alive

1 'COVER ME!'

To survive in a hot spot, you need to learn how to use cover. Because when an enemy spots you, and opens up, he's trying to target you the same as you are him. And the danger bar on the screen goes up as his aim improves depending on range, your movement, and the cover you're in. If the bar gets reaches full, his shots are all going to hit you. Worse, if the 'head shot' comes up, his bullets are going to blow your loaf off. So you've got to use every wall, every table and every crate to make sure no sniper's going to paint the wall with your grey stuff.



▲ Caught in the open Gabe is in danger of a headshot

2 TARGET PRACTICE

Once you've sized the situation up, it's time to hit back. This is where your targeting must be as on the nail as a laser guided bomb. If you need to shoot on the move, use auto aim, but don't waste rounds like this at long range. But when you're up close, a round from the shotgun will knock someone off their feet like a Tyson uppercut. But come up against a sniper, or someone with a flak jacket, you'll need a cool head and a good aim to put a slug through their head with manual aim. And being able to swop between auto and manual aim in the heat of battle is what sorts the men from the boys.



▲ Manual aim would be better here 'cos the target is quite distant



● If you ain't sharp, you'll go down



● Sometimes you've gotta improvise



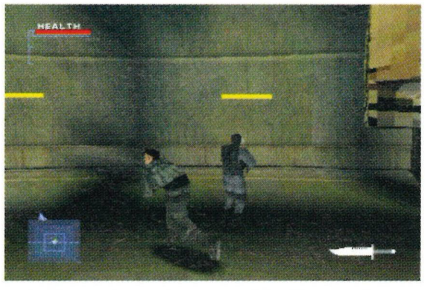
● The backdrops may be crude but they really create a top atmosphere

'NOW YOU SEE ME, NOW YOU DON'T'

The mission variety keeps the gameplay fresh. You might be creeping round a top security hospital desperate not to be spotted the one mission, and mowing down a special forces squad at an air crash site the next. And the split between stealth and combat missions is around fifty-fifty. The sections with the night vision goggles are particularly cool. Notice how when you take someone out his cooling corpse changes colour under your infra-red gaze.



▲ These guys are easy meat in the dark



▲ Get round the back for a stealth kill

UNTIL THE LAST MAN STANDING

A welcome addition since Syphon 1 is a two player deathmatch mode. You and a mate can choose from pretty much any of the characters in the game, select an arena from a list including rustic Spanish towns and New York slums and then run round picking up weapons and brutally slaying each other with them. But this is no Quake and is not worth buying the game for alone. Although a laugh for a little while, it's moves too slow and the targeting system just means whoever gets a headshot in first wins the bout. Better than nothing though.



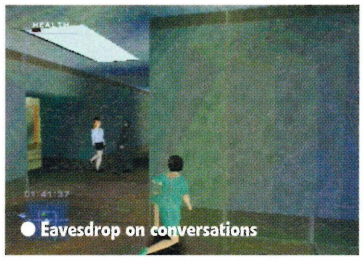
▲ You can use horizontal or vertical split



▲ The targeting system doesn't suit deathmatch

BEING A SNEAK IS WAY COOL

In most of the stealth missions, if you get seen at all, the alarm is raised and you fail the mission. This makes for some pretty nail-biting moments and you have to be sneakier than a burglar in a police station. And there's always plenty to think about with guards patrolling and searchlights doing their best to root you out. These missions can be tough and a little frustrating though, and you do sometimes find yourself completing them just so you can get to the next firefight.



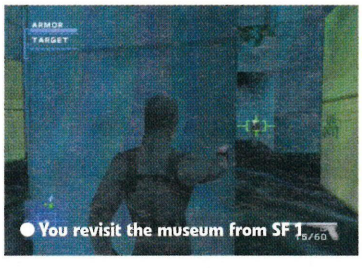
● Eavesdrop on conversations



● The taser puts 'em to sleep



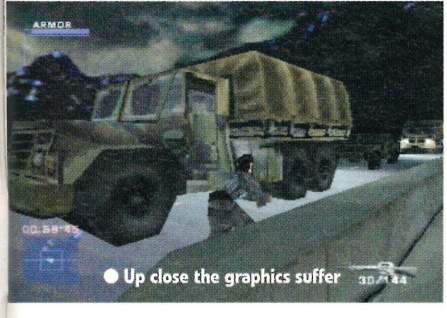
▲ Watch their patrol patterns before you try to sneak past or you'll get caught out



● You revisit the museum from SF 1



● Head shot puts 'em down in one



● Up close the graphics suffer

COULD LOOK BETTER

The graphics haven't seen much improvement from the first outing. So the animations are a bit crude and jerky and the backgrounds are a bit rough. But though Gabe doesn't exactly jump like a gazelle or run smooth as a cheetah, the feel of action is there and at least your characters look pretty mean when they're sneaking. The scenery could have had a bit more work done too but there's plenty of variety and it conjures up the right atmosphere whether you're on a windswept mountain peak or infiltrating a well guarded base.



● You'll sigh with relief everytime you hit a checkpoint

HARD BUT FAIR

Parts of SF 2 are well tricky. But the game does its best to keep playability high and frustration low. Missions are broken into chunks by frequent checkpoints that save your progress. So you avoid those annoying Tomb Raider or a Res Evil moments where you find yourself having to repeat long sequences of really tough bits over and over. And because your characters automatically jump and for the most part don't let you walk off fatal ledges, you can concentrate on what the game is all about – spying and killing!


● Gabe and Lian make a pretty mean team

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE

Metal Gear Solid - if you haven't got it already then sort your life out



Duke Nukem - for pure action try this third-person shooter for size

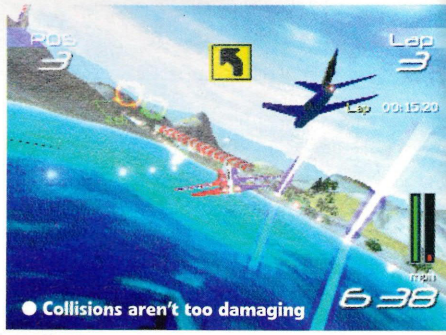


WE RECKON

Very similar to the first one but it goes to show that too much of a good thing ain't so bad after all. Part Tenchu, part Duke Nukem, it's a shoot 'em up and a stealth 'em up in equal measure. Forget the scratchy two player mode and not-quite-Metal Gear looks and you'll find the all-important gameplay factor is in full effect. **Steve O**

9
OUT OF TEN

N-GEN RACING



● Collisions aren't too damaging

Supersonic jets rip the sound barrier apart as if it was made of tissue paper in this aero-racer that tests your reactions better than a hammer to the knee

KNOW THIS



PAY NO MORE THAN:
£34.99
OUT 5 MAY

1-2 PLAYER JOYPAD, MEMORY CARD, DUAL SHOCK PAD

N-Gen straps you into a fully armed jet aircraft that can break the sound barrier as easily as a dog breaks wind. It's the Grand Prix of the future where you race present day combat jets such as British Hawks, Russian Migs, and US F16s at insane speeds.

The genius in this game is that the lower you fly the faster you go. This means that to snatch victory from the dude in front you'll need goolies the size of melons. It's fine if you're zipping over a shimmering lake but when the tree-topped shore rushes at you at 630mph, you'll soon find out how good your reactions are.

You can maintain a bit of altitude to avoid hitting any obstacles on the ground but if you need some serious speed you'll have to fly so close to the seat of your pants you'd better not be wearing your Gucci jeans 'cos they're gonna get dirty.

And it just gets better. When you graduate off trainer class jets onto fighters, you're already thinking this is a top class racer. But then you get weapons. You thought you were going faster than a speeding bullet until a burst of searing tracer tears into your fuselage.



● The guy in front disintegrates under a hail of red-hot cannon fire



● Fly low for maximum speed

STAY SHARP TO STAY ALIVE

To get good at this speedster, you'll have to have the reactions of a cat who's got caffeine for blood. Remember, you're not just going round stuff, you're going over and under it too. Not to mention having to dodge incoming tracer rounds at the same time.

We're not just talking tongue-out concentration here. No, we're talking 'screw your face up like someone's ramming an iron rod up your bottom' concentration. Yeh, it's that intense.

With the track snaking over the hills as you cling to the ground for speed while punching the afterburner, you'll want to Sellotape open your eyelids so you don't blink. Don't try to sleep after playing N-Gen or you'll dream in Fast Forward.

APPLY MAX THRUST!

The racing game conventions that apply include earning licenses, doing time trials, and upgrading your plane with cash from your winnings. You can boost your engine's thrust, strengthen your fuselage, or alter the ailerons for crisper handling.

The tracks are marked by spot lights and you can fly outside of them. But if you don't get back on course within three seconds then the autopilot slows you down and brings you back on to the circuit, which ain't good.

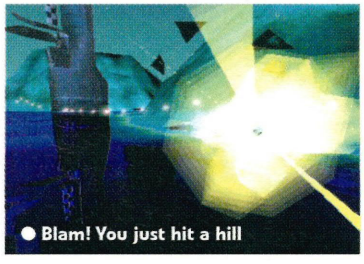
Clip buildings or take hits from other racers and you get damaged and finally crash and burn. Spectacular, but not nice.



● Try cockpit view for size

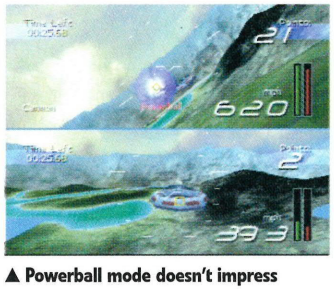


▲ Skimming the ground is a common


● Blam! You just hit a hill

DOUBLE TROUBLE

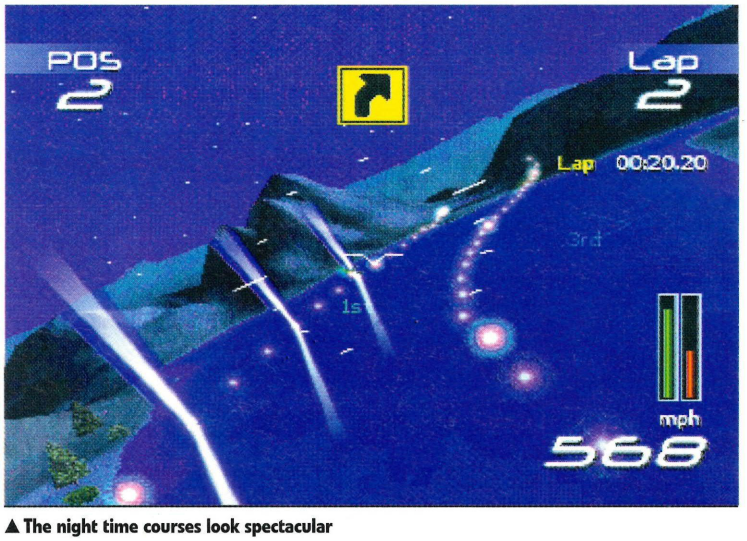
So in two player mode this is twice as good, right? Not quite. Yeh, you've got your two player racing as usual and you've also got powerball mode, where you both try and grab the 'ball' and fly it to special drones to score points. But powerball is only fun for a while and is just not very playable. And split screen, the visuals on both the multiplayer modes suffer loads. Everything's a bit blocky and you won't see a hill till it pops up right in front of your face. It looses the jaw-dropping spectacle of full-screen one player racing. Like taking a dump, this game's best on your own.


▲ Powerball mode doesn't impress


▲ Head to head racing is a good laugh



▲ Go through the red hoops to gain extra afterburner fuel



▲ The night time courses look spectacular

'IT'S LOOKING GOOD DOWN THERE'

The tracks vary from serene water courses to torturous ravines and they all move at brain-rattling speed.

If it wasn't for the supersonic deathrace to be won, you'd want to lace up your hiking boots and do some sightseeing, so impressive is the scenery.

The sky reflects perfectly off the lakes, huge bridges span the ravines and searchlights probe the sky. And night racing is superb.

The planes don't look so great though, and the replays are rough and no match for the like of Gran Turismo's playbacks.


● Canyons can be nasty



● Speed suffers at altitude

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE

Wipeout 2097 - Super-slick space racer with thumping soundtrack



Rollcage Stage 2 - Souped up buggies that cling to the walls



WE RECKON

N-Gen is a white hot sci-fi racer that wipes the floor with Wip3out. It boasts a pilot's-eye-view that's not unlike plummeting down a neon-lit mineshaft and gameplay to give a rush to any adrenaline junkie. This baby leaves you feeling as if you've just stepped off a nuclear powered rollercoaster. We love it. **Steve O**

9
OUT OF TEN

KNOW THIS

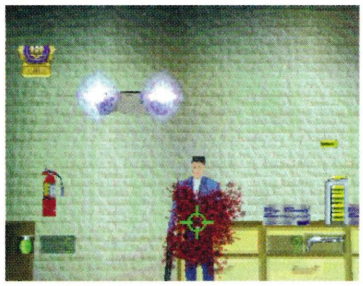


PAY NO MORE THAN:

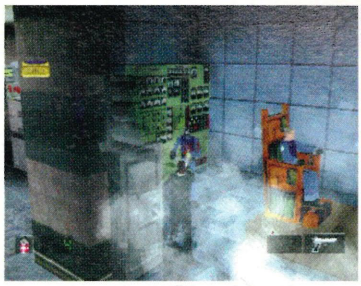
£29.99

OUT NOW

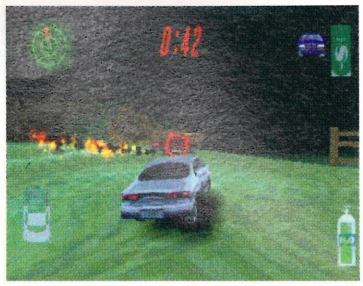
1 PLAYER JOYPAD, MEMORY CARD, DUAL SHOCK PAD, MULTI-TAP



▲ Game one: it's all shoot, shoot, shoot



▲ Game two: third-person action/adventure



▲ Game three: chase other cars to ram them

DIE HARD TRILOGY 2

When even Hollywood decides 'enough is enough' and doesn't make another sequel, you've got to think an idea is well worn out. Pity this lot didn't

Die Hard Trilogy 1 offered three totally different games on one CD. All three of those were cool and it was a top value buy.

The sequel's a trilogy too but this time there's no movie tie-in, the game styles have dated, and in the driving section they've succeeded in creating one of the most unpleasant PlayStation experiences since your first one went into meltdown.

And if you release a title with three totally different games in one, all of them have to be worth playing in their own right. So put a driving section in then it's gotta compare against your Gran Turismos and Ridge Racers or you'll never want to touch it. And the driving game here doesn't even use the same bog as Gran Turismo. So make that two games in one already. And considering the action game plays at a snail's pace and delivers all the excitement of a valium, it's a good job the shooting game's a top laugh.



▲ Grenades wreak all kinds of havoc

THE THIRD-PERSON ACTIONER

STARTS OK...

The first game is a Duke Nukem-style running, shooting and puzzle solving affair. Simply wasting people with a variety of weapons is a laugh for a while but the cracks soon appear. First off, the controls are a bit awkward. The way the Dual Shock vibrates every time you touch a wall gives the impression of a permanent earthquake underway. Besides this, the action is a little stilted as everyone takes a good few seconds to get in position, take aim or throw a grenade.



▲ This guy needs putting out of his misery and fast!



▲ Bruce gets hammered



▲ Fry the con in the chair



▲ Push a red button to open a door

...BUT THE ONLY WAY IS DOWN

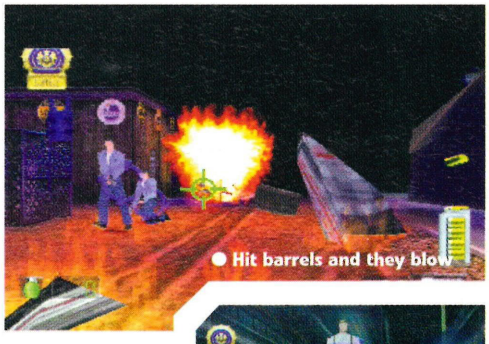
It gets worse with banal and mystifying puzzles. The logic in what you're doing isn't obvious such as when you hit a switch and have no idea what it opened. Or the exit hole to the next level is impossible to find 'cos it looks just like a pile of tiling on the floor. And with graphics that break up, showing light shining through walls and enemies visible behind doors, the end result is pretty poor.

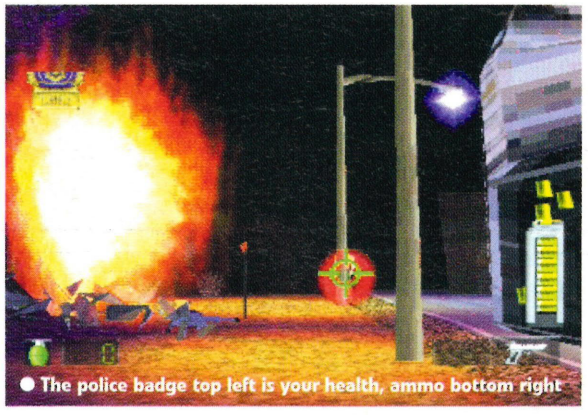
WE RECKON: You'll enjoy it at first but the fun-factor wears off quickly as the jerky look, grating puzzles and repetitive gameplay take their toll.

THE LIGHTGUN SHOOT 'EM UP

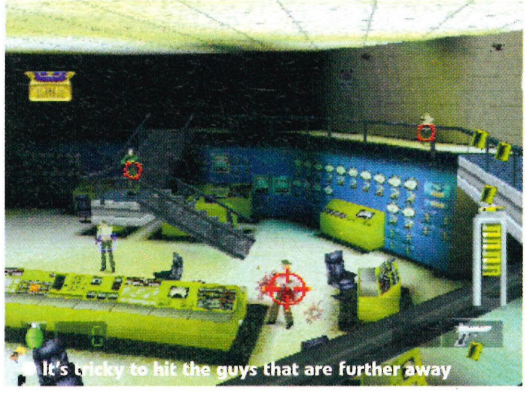
TRIGGER HAPPY

The best part of the first Die Hard was the shooting section and little has changed on this score. Brainless point-your-gun-and-fire-away action is what's on offer, but when it's this high octane, who cares? You can use a D-pad but a lightgun is much better. The graphics haven't come on much since the first one, but the trigger happy action rolls so thick and fast that hey, we can forgive this.


Hit barrels and they blow


The police badge top left is your health, ammo bottom right


Hit the red one first


It's tricky to hit the guys that are further away



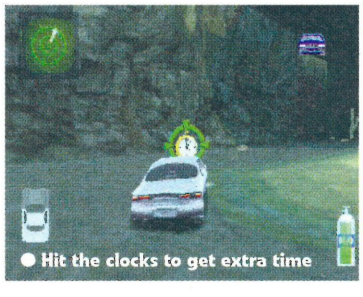
Don't cap the innocent!

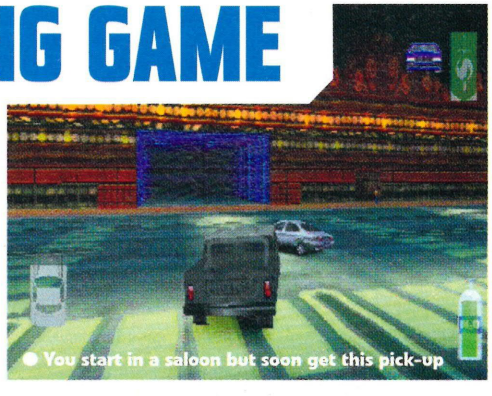
BEEN THERE, DONE THAT

Shoot goons and they die. Shoot boxes and get power-ups. Shoot too many civilians and it's game over. Shoot the boss a lot at the end. You don't need to be Gypsy Rose Lee to predict what's on offer here. But without the movie tie-in, the settings are less dramatic and not as well thought out. A little more imagination would be handy.

WE RECKON: When it's this good, it's hard to go wrong with a full-on shooter. Dull settings give the only grief.

THE DRIVING GAME


Hit the clocks to get extra time

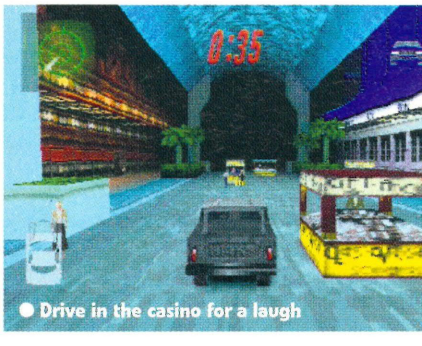

You start in a saloon but soon get this pick-up

WORST GAME EVER?

But this simple job is made irritatingly hard by the performance of your Willis-mobile. The car has the speed of a dragster but coupled with the handling of a rusty tractor. The way it corners is utterly bizarre. You'd feel as much in control of a car if you'd just left the pub after 15 pints of Strongbow before heading off across the Alps into force-nine gale.



Scratch one baddie



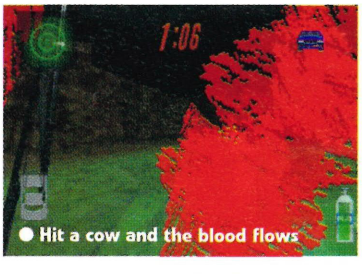
Drive in the casino for a laugh



Don't ram oil tanks

DRIVING ME CRAZY

The third part of the game is where you set off in chase of the bad guys in your motor. And this is where you wish the shooting had never finished. From the moment go it's just a pain in the arse. You get a time limit to chase down the enemy motors which can be extend by driving over time extension tokens. Ram enough bad guys and you get to move to the next level and a new arena.



Hit a cow and the blood flows

WE RECKON: If this game was a solo release it would get laughed out of the shops. It's difficult to slag off enough.

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE

Die Hard Trilogy 1- Great value and all three games are good for a laugh



Time Crisis- If it's shooting you're after, then this is about as good as it gets



WE RECKON

Three games in one is no good if the games don't bear up. The driving's truly God-awful, and the action is not a hell of a lot better. The shooting is the only saving grace but on its own, it doesn't offer enough to make this worth owning. On the Willis-o-Meter, this is less Die Hard and more Hudson Hawk. **Steve O**

5
OUT OF TEN

STREET FIGHTER EX2

KNOW THIS



PAY NO MORE THAN:

£39.99

MAY 26

1-2 PLAYERS JOYPAD, MEMORY CARD,

Ryu, Chun Li and the gang go 3D again in the best PlayStation beat 'em up you'll get your hands on this year

Imagine a jungle showdown with a ginger-haired mutant from Brazil. He shakes violently as bolts of blue electricity rip through his skin. Shrieking with laughter, he's poised to leap and take a big bite outta your face. You're cannibal fodder, sunbeam.

You've got two choices. Start blubbing and turn tail. Or channel lightning through your fists and smash the gruesome gingah back to South America.

The Street Fighters are back. And this time they're full-on 3D powerhouses with enough pace, power and special moves to make the hairs on Mike Tyson's back stand on end. If this is the last we see of the gang on the humble PlayStation then they sure chose a hell of a way to sign off. This is near enough pugilism perfection.



● Blanka the Brazilian beast. Leathered



▲ Lighting effects are cool as Ryu busts a special move on Darun



▲ But Darun lashes back and now it's Ryu going boo-boo this time



● The button layout here can give you the edge in EX3

'WARNING: THIS IS FOR THE STRICTLY HARDCORE'

The combat system here is not for the faint hearted. The mental special moves are pulled off with thumb-blistering button combos, and a Street Fighter black belt should annihilate any newcomers. It may not have the instant access-ability of Tekken 3, but in the long term it's just as rewarding. The controls are fluid, and the fighters react like lightning. The projectile attacks are the big difference over Tekken 3. But having three punch and three kick buttons doesn't feel as intuitive if you're using a joypad. If you've got a joystick - we recommend the £30-or-less arcade stylie joystick from Blaze shown here - you're at an advantage straight away.



▲ A three hit combo, a move you do by rotating the D-pad a quarter turn back and pressing kick



▲ Sagat lets rip one of his fireballs. He boasts a high and a low fireball attack



IT'S A BONUS BONANZA!

EX 2 is a brimming with bonus modes waiting to be unlocked. And they're refreshingly different from the main action. The first one you'll uncover sticks you underneath stacks of falling barrels which you have to smash to bits to rack up points. Another sub-game gets you to kick the hell out of a blue shadow in a set time limit.

You also get new options and characters by working your way through the combo training mode on expert level. Work hard and you'll be busting out 50-hit combos that almost tear your opponent's head off.



● When the barrels start flying you need to stay focused



▲ Shadow boxing takes on a new meaning as blue boy takes a kicking



▲ Dhalsim uses his stretchy limbs to smash up a satellite. Surreal

THE USUAL SUSPECTS

A CAST OF CHARACTERS LONGER THAN A MOVIE

Street Fighter's roster of characters shames all rival fighting franchises. 2D heroes Ryu and Ken still chuck fireballs with a cry of 'Hadoken!', and Chun-Li still kicks at the speed of light. Some characters make it over from Street Fighter EX1, giving you a total of 22, which isn't likely to get boring any time soon. Each has stacks of moves to master, so you're better off sticking with one fighter at first and mastering his or her skills. And yes, even the chicks in EX2 kick some serious ass.



▲ Skullo regrets that 'time of the month' dig



▲ Chun-Li does that whirlwind-kick thing



▲ Hokuto: looking good in close-up



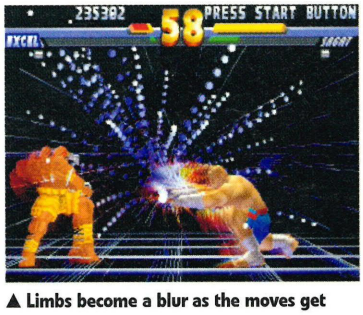
▲ Sharon shows a bit of leg after kicking ass

CHECK THE SUPERMODEL LOOKS

Visually, EX 2 is astonishing. The fighters look amazing, and smack each other around viciously at high speed. Special moves are rewarded with some extremely classy effects. Going into Excel mode fades the screen to black and limbs become a blur. And it's here that your big hits trigger some fabulous looking lighting. The backgrounds are flat, but are brilliantly detailed. Believe it or not there's really not much to call between this and EX 3 on the PlayStation 2.



▲ Excel mode looks great and really lets you cause some serious damage



▲ Limbs become a blur as the moves get special. Check the lighting effects



▲ Streetfighter EX3 on the PS2 doesn't push the new console anywhere near it's limits

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE

Tekken 3 - Nobody messes with Tekken 3. Instant satisfaction



Street Fighter Alpha 3 - Awesome 2D classic for the beat 'em up purist



WE RECKON

Street Fighter EX 2 may not have the clout to take Tekken 3 to the cleaners but it buries all other beat 'em ups in a hail of fire, fury and blood. It even stands up to EX 3 on PlayStation 2. And in true Street Fighter style, this offers enough characters, special modes and hidden extras to kill your social life for months. **Dean**

9

OUT OF TEN

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOOKER

Sink the pink, nudge the brown, and you'll agree this game is a load of balls

Snooker is one of those sports that's still crying out for a decent game to be made of it. It took a while for Brian Lara to come along and do this for cricket but PlayStation snooker is still wallowing in the as-exciting-as-maths category.

Trouble is with snooker is that it takes hours to play a decent game so a quick blast is out of the window. And pulling off a good shot loses its impact when you have to pull off dozens more to win.

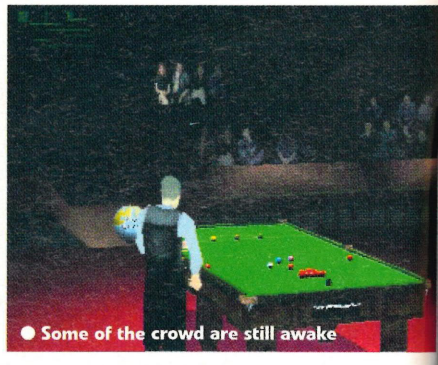
But hey, at least you get the chance to play against the sport's big names. But that means make a mistake and some well practiced pro will come on and clean up. And while this humiliation is carried out on you, you can't advance the game, you just have to sit there and watch.

In fact everything here seems to take an infinity to accomplish, from setting up shots to actually playing a whole frame that it would take someone with God-like patience to play it properly. Even snooker fans will get bored and head off to play it for real down the local hall.

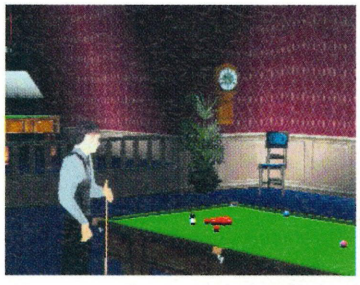
This is for those who really believe Steve Davis deserved to win Sports Personality of the Year when he did.



▲ Even setting up your break shot can take an innordinate amount of time

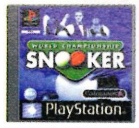


● Some of the crowd are still awake



▲ It's not exactly action-packed stuff

KNOW THIS



PAY NO MORE THAN:

£39.99

OUT NOW

1 PLAYER JOYPAD, MEMORY CARD, DUAL SHOCK PAD

WE RECKON

Even if you love the real thing this will try your patience further than the most annoying of little brothers. You may prefer to paint a wall and watch it dry. **Les**

4

OUT OF TEN

GEKIDO

An old kind of beat 'em up returns to PlayStation. The old cacky kind

This is a beat 'em up that takes it straight back to the old school. It hasn't got the fancy special moves or drawn-out combo attacks of something like Tekken. It's just basic bashing all the way.

And in true old-school style, the main game is two blokes walking down a street at night being assaulted by an assortment of thugs armed with bottles, knives and guns. Kind of like Double Dragon. Or Saturday night in Glasgow.

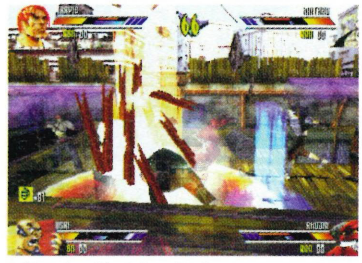
Sadly, Gekido just doesn't work. It looks incredibly messy and confused. It just gets too busy to keep up with, especially when there's several opponents on screen, which there usually are. And when a special attack goes off, forget it. You'll be lost.

It usually doesn't pay to try anything flash. Just keep using the same ol' kicks and punches and everyone goes down like ninepins. And in two-player cooperative mode half the time it looks like you're punching your mate in the ass rather than clocking the bloke next to him.

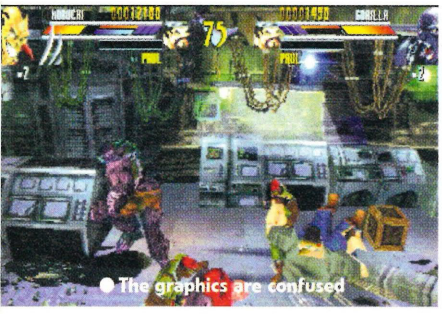
In the four-player arena mode you get an even better sense of Gekido's limitations. There aren't many moves to get to grips with, for starters. Even the specials are bog standard. And the Rage mode, where you transform into an even more blurred version of yourself, is just useless.



▲ Special moves create total confusion



▲ You should stick to basic moves



● The graphics are confused



● Pick up stuff and throw it round

KNOW THIS



PAY NO MORE THAN:

£19.99

OUT NOW

1-4 PLAYER JOYPAD, MEMORY CARD, DUAL SHOCK PAD

WE RECKON

There's precious little to praise here. This is tired, old stuff, and is way too confusing to get into. Stick to Fighting Force 2 for old-school fighting thrills. **Rob**

3

OUT OF TEN

BATTLETANX
GLOBAL ASSAULT

"I can't wait to get my girfriend's knickers off...they're killing me"

ETA: 04 2000






PlayStation 3DO

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KNOW THIS



PAY NO MORE THAN:

£29.99

OUT NOW

1-2 PLAYER JOYPAD, MEMORY CARD, DUAL SHOCK PAD, STEERING WHEEL



▲ Alesi floors it off the grid to take Button



▲ R. Schumacher does the mowing



▲ Button blows, Ralph Schuey joins him

F1 2000

Crumpled carbon-fibre and chunks of fresh Bridgestones litter the world's tracks in this bang up-to-date F1 contender that's rammed with quality gameplay

Turn on the telly. Clock this season's Formula One clashes. And then leg it out of the front door and buy F1 2000. Because this is a game that boasts the same teams that you've just been watching, sorted graphics and reams of options. And that means it's straight into our Essential 101.

This beauty is a VIP pass to everything playing out live in your living room this weekend. The low rumble of the neat-looking new Jags, the shaky opening of Brit rookie Jenson Button, and the God-like domination of Schuey. And although the season is less than six weeks old, this will give you months of fine-tuned pleasure.

F1 World Grand Prix scored a lowly 6/10 because it was F1 for trainspotters - too complex and nerdy. F1 99 got a respectable 8/10 with its crisp look but was spoilt by the two-player mode (where were the other cars?) and the fun-wrecking braking and steering feedback.

But F1 2000 trounces both. It's piled high with fuel-injected features but keeps its foot firmly on the pedal marked 'gameplay'.

The knockout blow is the amazingly low level of pop-up. So it's not a battle trying to work out which way the track is going to curve. Because unlike some other racers you can see stuff more than 100 yards out front.

Experienced junkies will also go ape for details such as when rival cars' stress-fractured engines blow right in front of you at 167mph, coating your tires with oil. Or the sight of your off-side front wheel bursting off its axle as your pit man begs you to hobble back to the garage.

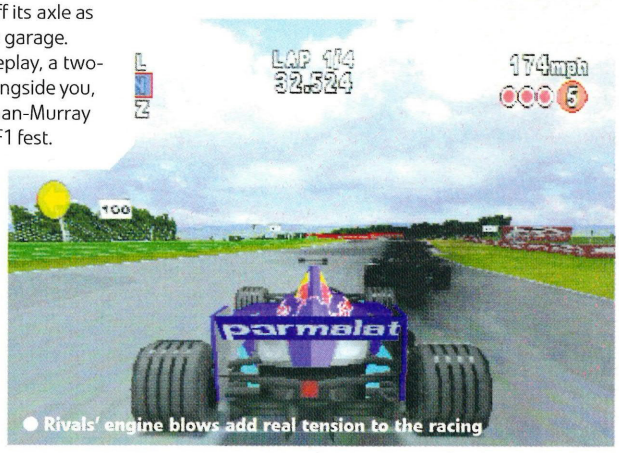
Add quick-fire tuning options, great gameplay, a two-player mode that's also got other drivers alongside you, top replays, and Jim Rosenthal's less-mad-than-Murray commentary and you've got a truly wicked F1 fest.



● Ferrari Meister Schuey watches helplessly as his front tyre decides to go missing in action in Monaco



▲ 'Your Diniz on the grass'



● Rivals' engine blows add real tension to the racing



● In-car view is not ideal for winning races

USE YOUR TUNING OPTIONS. IT PAYS

Depending on which mode you are in - Time Trial, Quick Race, Weekend, or Championship - you can tweak vital performance parameters to match your car, the track and the weather. It's easy to do but what it affects really could transform you from Dougie Dog Slow to Quentin Double-Quick.

Take Weekend or Championship modes for example. Before and during practice, you can mess around to create the ultimate set-up. Fuss-free tweaking includes ride height, front and rear downforce, gear ratios and suspension stiffness. And you'll really notice the effect the changes make on your performance. We raced Melbourne in the crying rain and upped the downforce and braking balance. Hakkinen's Merc handled brilliantly in difficult conditions. When we reset them to the opposite extremes, his car handled like a firework-powered turtle on an ice rink. But the one aspect of tuning that doesn't seem to make sense is the ride height. If you increase it and raise the car's chassis off the tarmac, the performance graphs say grip and braking are increased. But in the real world, Ferrari have actually lowered their car this season to boost grip.



▲ Clear, easy tuning options work well except ride height which gives wrong physics



▲ The suspension and brake balance set-up on Alesi's car was all to cock on this race

'PLACE YOUR BETS'

The bookies reckon Michael Schumacher will win this season with Ladbroke offering 8/13 odds. And poor old Jos Verstappen is tipped for the wooden spoon at a miserable 500/1. That's a hefty £500 return for a quid stake. New boy Brit Jenson Button weighs in at a reasonable 150/1. But though we don't condone gambling, our money's on Schuey.

To test the bookies' accuracy, we set up the first eight on the grid in Quick Race mode according to Ladbroke's odds. This is how it looked:

DRIVERS	ODDS
M SCHUMACHER	8/13
HAKKINEN	2/1
BARRICHELLO	9/1
COULTHARD	11/1
FRENTZEN	20/1
R SCHUMACHER	50/1
VILLENEUVE	50/1
TRULLI	66/1



▲ You can set up the grids to replicate a weekend's track action

We then raced the Silverstone round, due a few days after this issue hit the shelves, three times. And if our results are anything to go by (time will tell), it's gonna be Ferrari's year. Teutonic track technician Michael Schumacher swept the board in all three races with Brazilian team mate Rubens Barrichello snapping at his heels in second.

Schuey's straightline speed ramped up by Ferrari's new aerodynamics was just too much for the rest. Worryingly, when we added wee Jenson Button to the number nine slot to see how he'd do, he crashed out or retired every time. Oh dear.



▲ £500 for a quid bet if Verstappen wins

THREE TIPS TO HEAVEN

SMOOTH THOSE CORNERS!

Real-world cornering is about 'slow in, fast out' and it's a top tip here too. Entering bends cautiously gives you a smooth get away and ups your overall speed.



● Go in too fast and it's the cat litter for you

MAKE TRACKS

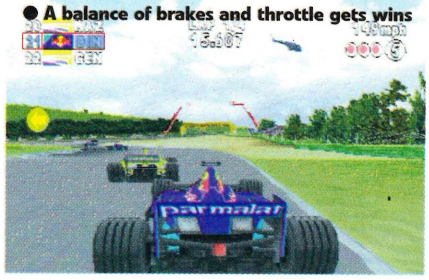
The bends of all the circuits are scored with tyre marks. They provide a handy guide for your cornering lines but follow them out of the bends as well as in to make the most of them.



● Tyre marks' vanishing point help fast exits

BRAKE LIKE BARRICHELLO

Go brake-happy as you corner. Scrubbing off velocity as you turn requires nifty joypad skills but is vital. Ease off the brakes as you exit and you'll maintain your line with a good grip.



● A balance of brakes and throttle gets wins

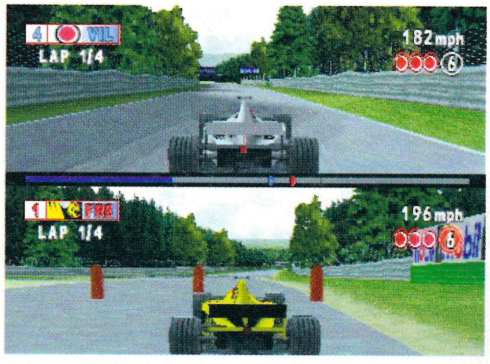
WHAT BUGGED US ABOUT F1 2000

F1 2000 has four problems but none of them should stop you splashing the cash. We raced the Indianapolis track in the States and the sky looked as if it were made from blocks of slate. We didn't see it on the other circuits.

During a two-player showdown at Francorchamps Spa, it turned out that if you cut corners at full chat using the tarmac run off, then you could nip in front of others and even win. It's not big, it's not clever, it's not the mark of a gentleman. But it works.

Next up are the grid starts which are dog slow and lifeless. It's as if all the cars are choking on each other's unburnt gasses. Bit like us lot with Rob Waugh.

And finally, even at the hardest level, you sometimes feel that your driver is given an advantage over the AI cars, with your man escaping lightly from tailgates and rams - done in the name of class gameplay we'd guess.



▲ Corner-cutting helps Frentzen to victory at Spa



▲ Indianapolis circuit was marred by horrible blocky sky

'AND THIS IS OUR BOY, FORD CUFFLINK'

Couldn't Jenson Button's parents be prosecuted for cruelty against children? What a name! In fact, his mockable moniker rivals such silly sporting titles as Liverpool's Titi Camara, Arsenal's Nwankwo Kanu and US hang-glider Dick Tricky. To be fair, anyone who thinks their son should walk the earth named after a defunct car and a item from a sewing box should seek out a good therapist.

Here are suggestions which we feel Mr and Mrs Button should have come up with:

Ford Cufflink
Aston Thimble
Venturi Thread
Morgan Needle
Proton Popper
Volvo Velcro



● Jenson's dad: 'We were gonna call him Belly'



▲ Rear-view mirror action but this view is for hardcore only



▲ Circuits are very accurate and with zero pop-up

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE

Gran Turismo 2 - F1 it ain't, but it's the best 'Station racer ever



F1 97- The best of the F1 games prior to now. On Platinum, it's a bargain



WE RECKON

F1 2000's mix of burn-rubber gameplay and racing detail is as finely balanced as the suspension on Schuey's Ferrari. Add the fact that it's alone in having all of this season's teams, cars, and drivers and you've got the only full-price F1 racer worth splashing out on right now. Go buy, go drive! **Adam**

9
OUT OF TEN

VICTORY BOXING CHALLENGER

KNOW THIS



PAY NO MORE THAN:

£39.99

OUT NOW

1-2 PLAYERS JOYPAD, MEMORY CARD, DUALSHOCK

Boxing fans, listen up! If you're a Lennox-loving loner, it's time to get frothy. If you have friends and good taste, get outta here!

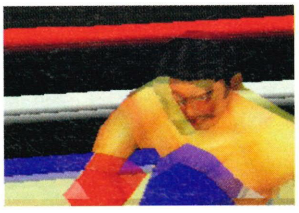
If you want to seriously smash a friend's face in on PlayStation, you play Tekken 3. If you want to stab wildly at buttons with a tired finger hoping eventually you'll pound his mush to a pulp, you play Victory Boxing Challenger. Ready 2 Rumble's blend of hilarity and hurt could have given you false hope that boxing might again be a challenger to Tekken-style full-on kung fu. But this lumpen game kills your enthusiasm.



● And then your heart falls out of your arse



▲ Ropes don't bend when hit



▲ KOs replayed in blurred slo-mo



● Ringside detail is sparse. Is there anybody out there?

LOSER TO BRUISER

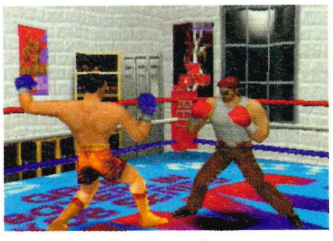
A MR PUNIVERSE CAN TACKLE A TYSON

In Career mode VBC's cool enough. You build a weakling into a Tyson-worrying killer, and work your way up through the ranks. You find yourself battling for a points win and, having learnt a few lessons, sparking the next patsy in round one. The strategy involved makes for a pretty strong single player game, and it takes ages to become World Champion. It's a shame the fighters are all fictional nobodies.

Stupidly, the Versus mode is a lot less fun. The sluggish responses of the boxers becomes irritating, and the punches don't land with the kind of vicious smash you'd like. The boxers don't gob blood and spit everywhere, and the facial bruising is more 'Ribena stain' than 'road accident'.



▲ You can follow the highs and lows of your career in the newspapers



▲ Forget Queensberry rules, your one-eyed trainer teaches you dirty tricks



▲ Weightwatchers violently disagree over the saturated fat content of Mars bars

REALITY CHECK

The graphics hint that Victory Boxing Challenger is going all-out for realism. But each boxer has a selection of 'special moves'. The cartoon classic windmill punch is in there. Then there's the clash of two fat brawlers with saggy man-breasts, a sight last seen in a Life on Earth documentary about mating hippos. Oddly, if you duck and weave it looks as if the upper half of your body is having an epileptic fit.

WE RECKON

As a single player game this is OK. As a two-player game this will stay on your 'Station about as long as it takes to grab Tekken 3 off the stack. **Dean**

5

OUT OF TEN

BISHI BASHI SPECIAL

KNOW THIS



PAY NO MORE THAN:

£19.99

OUT NOW

1-4 PLAYER JOYPAD, MEMORY CARD, DUAL SHOCK, MULTITAP



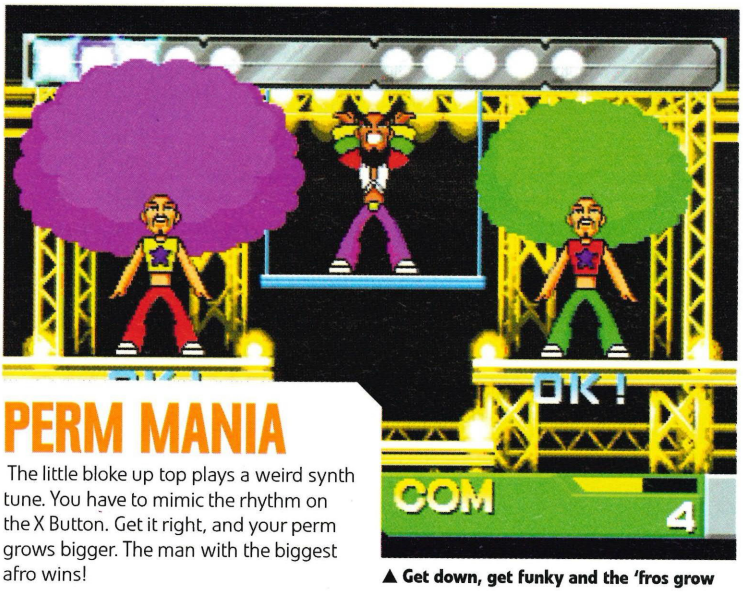
● Guide your rabbits over numbers

Pay £20 and you'll get eighty manic party games with weirdo names like Mechanical Pencil Basher. Banzai!

This is a collection of party-style games, with loads of dumbo, bright coloured challenges ranging from Pac-Man-style collect 'em ups, through basic footy games to manic Track and Field-esque button bash challenges. It's from Japan, though, so don't go expecting these games to be in any way sane.

For instance, Uncle Launcher features a Buddha carrying two plates, and you have to use a cannon to fire your uncles onto the plates. Whoever gets Buddha most loaded down with relatives wins.

Every single one of these games is so completely surreal you'll wonder exactly what eating sushi does to your mind. The good news is that they all play fast and frantic, and there's so many different challenges you'll be guaranteed to head straight for Bishi Bashi every time you and your mates are looking for a quick five-minute laugh. If you've got a problem with dumb games, give this a dodge. Otherwise, welcome to the maddest games you'll ever play. Contestants, prime your uncles! Ready! Aim! Fire!



PERM MANIA

The little bloke up top plays a weird synth tune. You have to mimic the rhythm on the X Button. Get it right, and your perm grows bigger. The man with the biggest afro wins!

▲ Get down, get funky and the 'fros grow



▲ Pass the bomb, fast!



▲ You heard the man



▲ Uncle Launcher. Odd



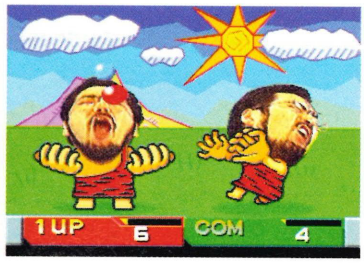
▲ Run! Eat raw fish! Do it fast!

SUSHI GULPER!

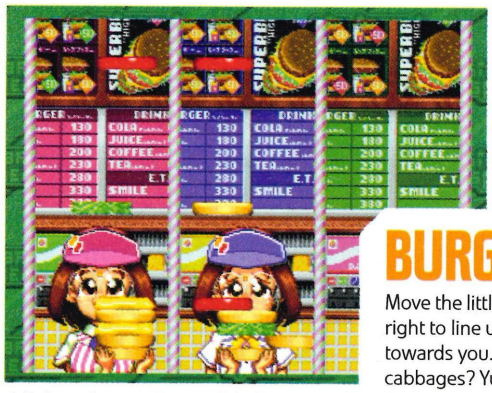
It's basically Pac Man with raw fish. You've got to run through the maze eating sushi as fast as possible, and trying to get the power-up so's you can eat your mate. Whoever eats the most fish wins!

UNCLE BEAN!

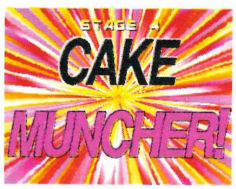
You've got to hit keys to match the colour of the beans flying towards Uncle's mouth. Do it right, and he chows 'em down. Do it wrong, and he pulls a truly horrible face. Whoever eats most wins.



▲ The Uncle on the right missed his bean



▲ Balance burgers in a straight line



▲ Insults now, huh?

BURGER GIRL

Move the little burger girl's hand left and right to line up the burger as it drops towards you. Oh and those fish, veg and cabbages? Yup, they're meant to go in there too. We don't know why.

WE RECKON

Manic, insane and so Made in Japan it hurts. Eighty games for £20? Go on son. We guarantee you'll laugh so hard you'll lose control of your bowels. **Rob**

8

OUT OF TEN

SAGA FRONTIER 2

Take up the watercolour challenge in this lo-tech, lo-spec RPG trek

RPGs are generally dull. The people who enjoy playing them often hide their secret shame for fear of being cussed-up real nice by their mates and then getting beaten shitless in full view of the neighbours.

Saga Frontier 2 does nothing to further the wizard-lover's cause. It has all of the most-hated aspects of adventuring and it has them in spades, from cheesy dialogue right through to turn-based fights which, as usual, are frustrating.

There are a few neat twists along the way for RPG fans. The story is split into two strands. One is about a young adventurer on a quest for a magical artefact (again?!), the other about an exiled heir to the throne. You can play as either character, and the action's broken down into chapters. You can choose which ones you play. There's also number-crunching galore for the hardcore player.

The problem with this old-school style of RPG is that we've all been spoilt by the Final Fantasy games. The most surprising thing about this is that it was made by the same fellas. There's nothing horribly wrong with it - even the watercolour graphics are kinda cute - it's just that epic adventures like these have been done much better before. If you've got either of the Final Fantasy games, most likely you don't need this.

KNOW THIS



PAY NO MORE THAN:

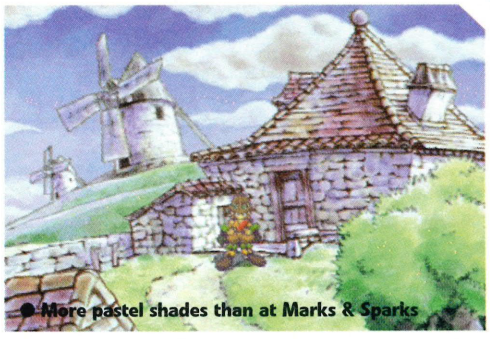
£29.99

OUT NOW

1 PLAYER JOYPAD, MEMORY CARD, DUAL SHOCK PAD



▲ Magic spells are pretty dull



● More pastel shades than at Marks & Sparks



▲ The creeping green snot is an enemy. Get ready!

WE RECKON

Don't be fooled by the cute looks. This boasts combat more complex than nuclear physics and enough dialogue to fill a phone book. One for the anoraks. **Lee**

6

OUT OF TEN

BALLISTIC

A big circle of revolving balls provides puzzle action so intense it'll tip people with dicky tickers over the edge

KNOW THIS

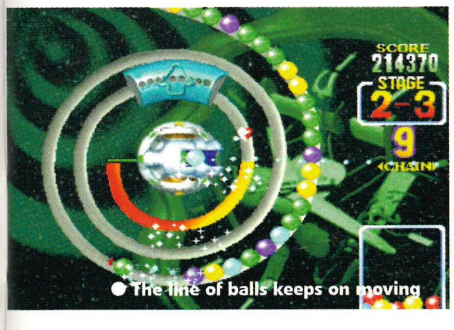


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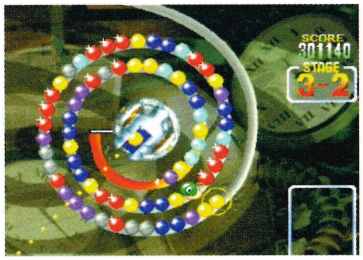
£19.99

OUT NOW

1-2 PLAYER JOYPAD, MEMORY CARD, DUAL SHOCK PAD



● The line of balls keeps on moving



▲ If the balls reach the middle, you die

When it comes to making your palms sweat, Ballistic is the business. As you might have guessed from the name, this is the most nuttily frantic puzzler you'll ever play. It makes Bust-a-Move 2 look like Snakes and Ladders. Be warned.

Believe us, you'll be screaming at the screen, hurling joypads at the wall, even assaulting your friends. It's that mad.

The aim is simple, as with most puzzlers. Simply lob coloured balls onto the creeping line of balls to make groups of three or more. Then they disappear. Do it before the ever-advancing circle of balls reaches the goal, or you die.

The balls move round and round in ever decreasing circles. That means the balls move backwards and forwards as you hook up chains of links. Half the time, the perfect shot you have lined up misses by a mile because everything is moving at such a frantic pace.

If that dumb Dispatches programme wanted to see a game that could turn someone to violence, they should have checked this one out. The one-player games are maddening as you watch your level-finishing combo evaporate because the circle moves one ball to the left just as you let off your shot. Throw this baby into two player mode and friendships will be endangered. You've been warned.



▲ Get four balls together to clear space

WE RECKON

There's no chin-stroking puzzle gameplay here. Ballistic goes all out to make your adrenalin glands burst, and it does the trick. Intense, but infuriating. **Les**

7

OUT OF TEN

GHOUL PANIC

KNOW THIS



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OUT NOW

1-2PLAYER JOYPAD, MEMORY CARD, G-CON 45

A playschool puzzle shooter for kids set in a haunted house. But this ain't no Point Blank, it just fires blanks

When you've already got Point Blank in the Essential 101 Games, any newcomer to fun-rammed gun games is going to have to be pretty sharp.

And even though Ghoul Panic is from the makers of Point Blank, it's not fit to clean its big brother's boots. This is like a kindergarten version of that premier late-night shooter.

You play a pair of pistol-toting cartoon kids in a haunted house. Game modes include Arcade, Adventure, Survival and Party. As in Point Blank, you're popping lead against the clock. Unlike Point Blank, there's little variety. Visually it's ok. The airborne ghosts, flaming ghouls, and jiving skeletons are colourful enough to keep finger-painting creche kids happy anyway.

But saving girly kittens from flaming ropes and pogoing ghosts is babyish for sure. The best bit is when you lose, you see a ghost spike your kitten through the head on its pogo stick. Weird, huh?

This tiddler lacks any of its big bro's cool. There's little variation and the latest this game'll get played is for an hour after tea. Time for bed son!



▲ Blast cartooney spooks as quick as possible



▲ The graphics are colourful enough but you soon tire of the non-stop childishness

WE RECKON

Samey, kiddy, and not much fun, this is a a shooter that's well wide of the mark. You want gun games to be Lethal Weapon, but all this needs is a lethal injection. **Adam**

4

OUT OF TEN

FISHERMAN'S BAIT 2

Pull on your wellies and land a fat one in the ultimate PlayStation armchair angler

This fishing game is totally different to the real thing. For a start it's actually fun. Plus you don't have to stand in the cold all day and you're guaranteed a bite in minutes.

Better still, you can fish on a handful of different lakes and you get to play around with more tackle than a call girl.

Gameplay is simple and pretty much identical to the first installment. You cast your line, wait for a fishy to bite then reel the sucker in. Yank too hard and the line breaks, so it's all about knackering the fish out before tugging it ashore. As well as the laugh-a-minute two-player, there's a monster challenge where you cast for fish the size of small cars.

But visually it's not great and the gameplay has its flaws. Not being able to cut the line when you've hooked a non-game fish is just stupid, and the action close-ups which constantly flick up in two-player can mean the difference between landing and losing a whopper. Ignore this and you're onto a winner.

KNOW THIS



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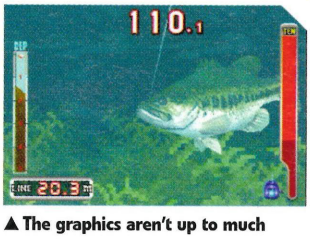
£34.99

OUT NOW

1-2 PLAYER JOYPAD, MEMORY CARD, DUAL SHOCK PAD



▲ Fish on different lakes



▲ The graphics aren't up to much



▲ That's one hell of a mighty big fish



▲ There are tons of lures to choose from

WE RECKON

This game does the impossible. It makes fishing into a top laugh. No-brainer it may be but from when you get your first bite you wont want to stop **Alex**

8

OUT OF TEN

INFOGRAMES

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RACE OF CHAMPIONS

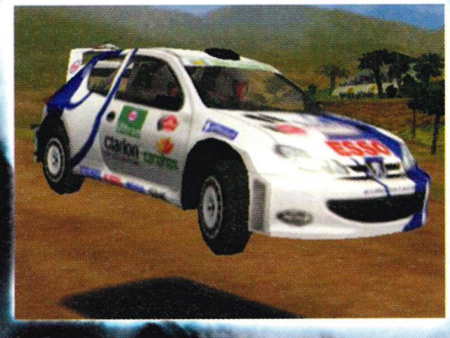
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PlayStation

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● Sir Dan lets rip with his pistol. Targetting's smooth, so getting kills is easy



● On later levels you get hardcore magical attacks like this lightning bolt

MEDIEVIL 2

This gothic adventure sequel lurches over with some cool new features and plenty of laughs. But are there enough things to do in London when you're dead?

KNOW THIS



PAY NO MORE THAN:

£39.99

OUT MARCH 31

1 PLAYER JOYPAD, MEMORY CARD, DUAL SHOCK PAD

Skeleton knight Sir Dan Fortesque is one of the skinniest characters on PlayStation, but his new starring role in MediEvil 2 might be just a little bit too lightweight. See, even though this stomps the first one in the gameplay stakes, it clocks in at around six hours in length, and that's just a little bit too slim.

While it lasts the action is pure class. This drips Addams Family-esque visual style from the off, and has got fun, quirky gameplay to match. It's a platformer, broadly speaking, and you've got to explore lush, Victorian locations looking for keys, finding items for puzzles and fighting off hordes of weird undead foes. Dock-working zombies who greet you in Yorkshire accents, top-hatted Jack the Ripper types and scampering bearded ladies are all part of the fun, and the combat's so varied you'll never get bored.

There's a huge range of weapons, from magic swords and copper shields to gatling guns, and you even take on an undead Mike Tyson-type in a first-person boxing match.

The targetting system is particularly sweet. You've got a ghostly green pointer that locks you onto enemies, so it's easy to switch from slaughtering enemies close up to popping flying foes with a blunderbuss.

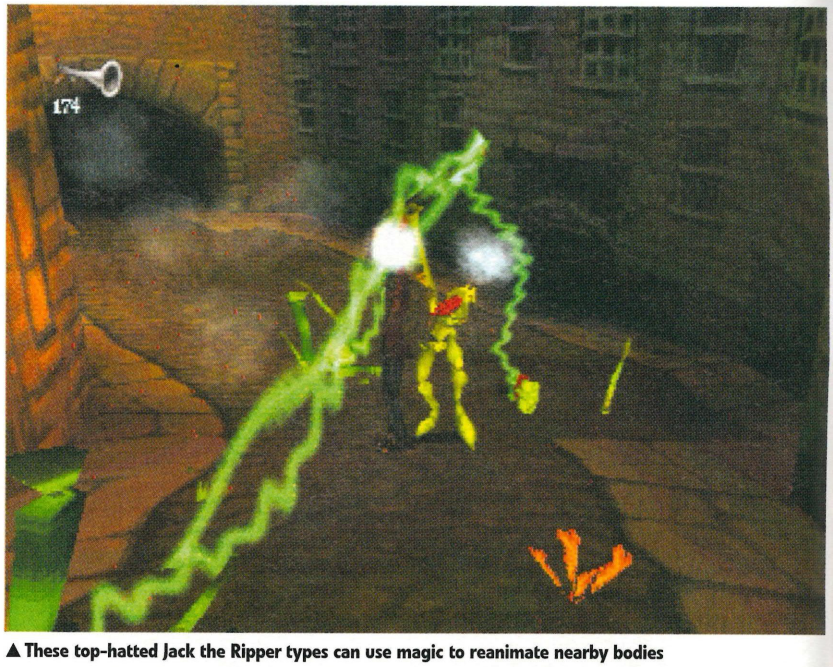
You'll find yourself playing a version of Frankenstein (Dankenstein, geddit?), a severed hand, and even a headless version of yourself. Variety-wise this game does the Hokey Cokey on the worthless carcasses of rivals like Spyro or Crash Bandicoot. It's just a pity it's doesn't last as long as Sir Dan's bones have.

'THE NAME'S JACK, BUT MY FRIENDS CALL ME RIPPER'

It's all cartoon Halloween action, with comedy zombies that hold their arms out in front of them, evil grinning pumpkin heads and big, clanking, animated suits of armour. The game never takes itself seriously. Each level, from Whitechapel docks to a Kensington graveyard, feels like it's straight out of the Addams Family. Each one has its own monsters and its own feel. You'll get mauled by skeleton dinosaurs in the Natural History museum and you'll get assaulted by upper-class ghouls on the streets of Kensington.


▲ Slaughter toffee-nosed posh ghosts


▲ Chop through zombie dockers



▲ These top-hatted Jack the Ripper types can use magic to reanimate nearby bodies

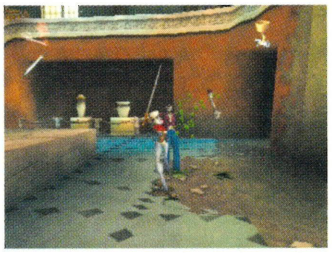
CANNON AND BALL

The puzzles here aren't going to bust your brainbox, but they're logical enough to make solving them pretty satisfying. On level one, you come up against a cannon pointed squarely at a door. There's no cannonball in the breech, though, and there's nothing to light the fuse with. Hmm, tricky.

Cue you clattering off on your skeleton feet in search of a large ball-shaped object and some kind of torch or Zippo. Like we said, you don't need to be Einstein, but the puzzles break the levels up and force you to explore, and some of them add their own atmosphere, like when Dan has to go around ringing bells to summon a ghostly train.



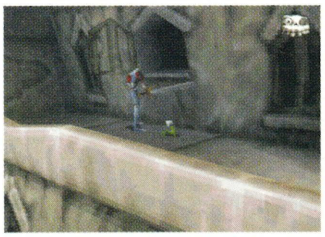
▲ Load the cannonball into the breech, then light the fuse and stand well back



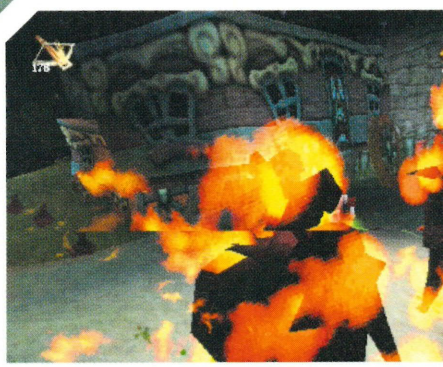
▲ The doorman won't let you in, so you need to go and change



▲ Your sword cuts through the living dead like they're made of butter



▲ Dan's hand makes its entrance



▲ Dan's pursued by a huge, flaming fat lady



● Killing the little guys is easy. But what about this big fella?

KILLING COMES EASY TO A CORPSE

Combat's pretty simple to get to grips with, and most of the enemies aren't too hard to kill. You can pick up tons of close combat weapons, some of which don't last, 'cos they'll shatter after you've twatted a few top-hatted Rippers. Each weapon's got two fire modes. You can choose a fast, weak strike, or build up to a super hit. Some of the super hits are way cool. Twat the ground with a stave and a ripple of electricity zips out to hit your enemies. Thing is, most of the levels are really open, so you'll be wandering courtyards beating people with sticks, then you'll pull out a pistol to pop the enemies further away without breaking stride. You've got a green pointer that shows you where you're aiming at in both close and ranged combat, and it locks to the nearest enemy in the direction you're facing. Switch to a ranged weapon and it zips out to lock on more distant enemies. It's easy to use, and it keeps the pace fast.



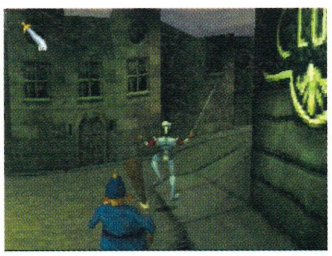
▲ Fight this huge mecha-zombie with your bare hands



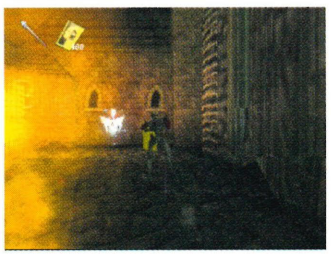
▲ Blast nearby foes with magic

'TO YOU, GUVNOR, IT'S ONLY A THRUPPENNY BIT'

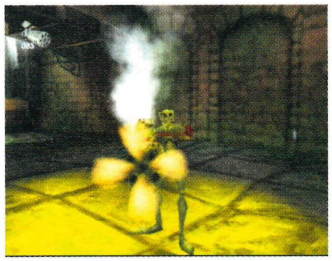
There's quite a bit of collecting to be done in MediEvil 2. You've got to pick up keys to get between different parts of the levels, although they'll never be that well hidden. You've got to collect the items you'll need to solve puzzles. And you've also got to keep an eye out for crocks of gold. Every so often, you'll meet 'The Spiv', who's a shady type who sells you new weapons, new items, and ammunition. You've got to decide whether to save up for ammo for your gatling gun, or just fill your saddlebags with cheapo pistol ammo and keep popping away. Thing is, in your average platformer, you're just collecting tokens without really knowing why. Here, the lust for gold's very real, because grabbing pots of gold is the only way you can keep your guns primed and ready for action.



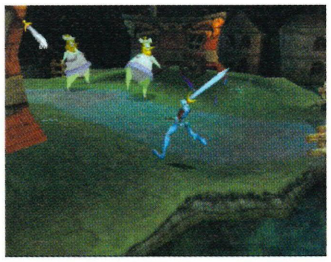
▲ Get power-ups to deal with invulnerable enemies like this devil-bobby



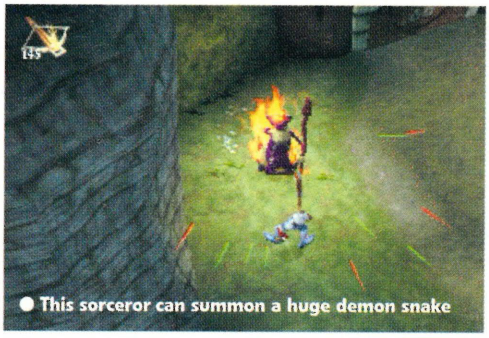
▲ Sometimes you need ranged weapons to slay your already-dead enemies

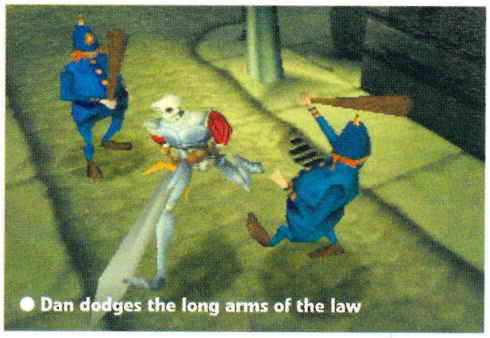


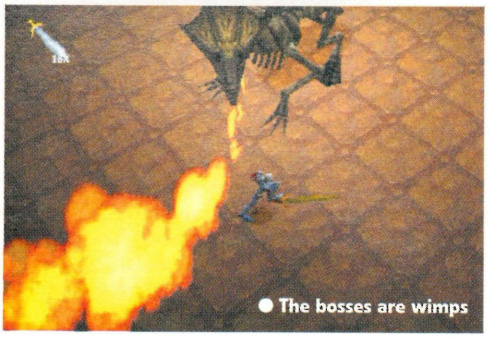
▲ Gatling gun: messy but effective



▲ Magic swords make you a lady-killer


● This sorceror can summon a huge demon snake

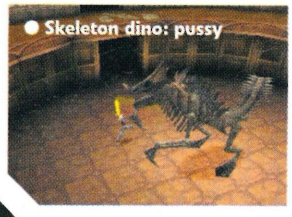

● Dan dodges the long arms of the law


● The bosses are wimps

NO RESPECT FOR THE BOSS

The bosses in MediEvil 2 drip quality. Each one's slickly-designed, fun to fight and basically a cool idea. The only problem is they're not exactly built to last. Most of them'll go down screaming and flailing the first time you take them on, and with bosses as cool as this, you want to have to fight them more than one measly time. Bosses aren't meant just to roll over and die the first time you meet them. Oh well.

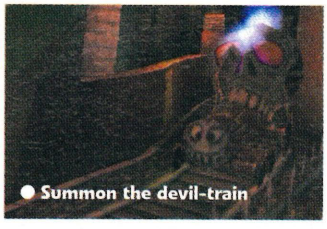

● The demon's massive, but pretty poncey


● Skeleton dino: pussy

MORE THAN JUST A RESURRECTION

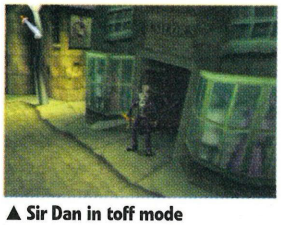
Even if you've killed the first MediEvil stone dead, you'll find loads to grab you here. The basic game's still pretty similar, and the two look pretty much exactly the same, but there's tons of cool new stuff to play around with here. There's loads of all-new tools to get to grips with, and the puzzles have been polished up, too. Check out these bits of newness:


● Dan-hand in action


● Summon the devil-train


● Awesome firepower


● Spin attack: sweet!


▲ Sir Dan in toff mode


▲ Secondary attacks: awesome!


▲ Cool new monsters like these constantly-reanimating zombies



▲ Boxing action: the Metal Slugger is an awesome opponent

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE

Spyro 2 - similar stuff to MediEvil if a little too cutesy-cutesy



MediEvil - Sir Dan's first outing is top class and it's a great price to boot



WE RECKON

This has all the in-depth gameplay of a Soul Reaver, but it's served with a smile. There's loads of stuff to get to grips with, and it's all very smooth to play. It's just a pity you're left saying 'Please Sir, can I have some more' so soon after you've turned it on. If it wasn't for this, MediEvil 2 would be a classic. **Rob**

8
OUT OF TEN

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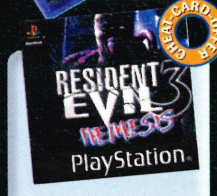
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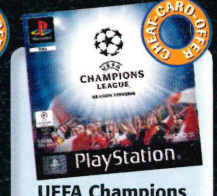
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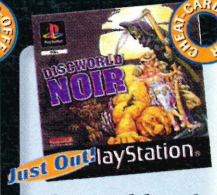


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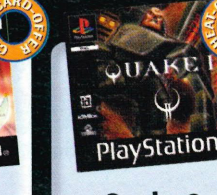


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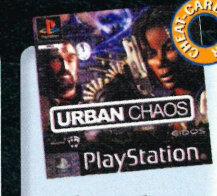
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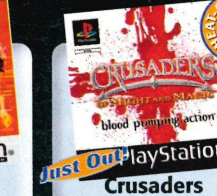
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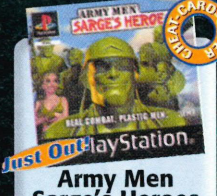


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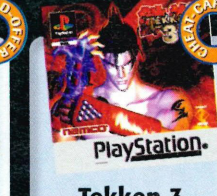


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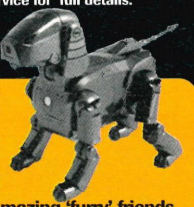
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STREET SKATER 2

This skate-stunt new boy wants to show Tony Hawk up as a grandad in Nikes. Nice try, but more skatepark practice required

KNOW THIS

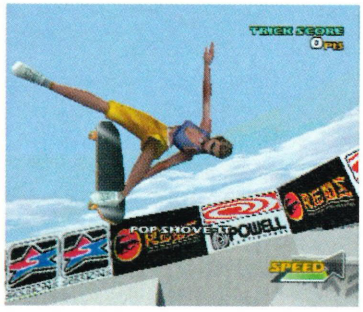


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1-2 PLAYERS JOYPAD, MEMORY CARD, DUAL SHOCK PAD



▲ Some of the tricks look very cool indeed, but doing them's too easy

You know Tony Hawk's? You remember how fast it is, how much fun it is to pull off stunts and knee scraping tricks? You know how perfect the control system is and just how much of a good game it still is? Good.

So if you're into skateboarding you'd have Tony Hawk, like you'd go for a Nissan Skyline rather than a Micra.

Street Skater 2 is slower, clunkier and less of a challenge than Tony Hawk's.

It's far too easy and nowhere near as finely-tuned or innovative.

One good trick in Street Skater 2 is the way you can tack pre-set tracks onto your favourite courses. We like that along with its brighter, more richly coloured look compared to the Hawk lad.

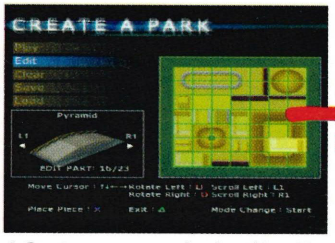
But the standard courses show little imagination and those breathless Hawk moments, where you'd say 'that looked great!' are in short supply.

● Game look is less grunge, more fun



FLASH IN THE PAN

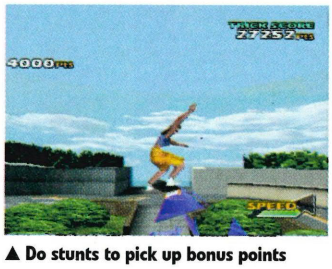
The first time you turn this on, you'll be amazed. Not by the game itself, but by the fact you can pull off loop the loops in mid-air then land doing a handstand on your board, without you making that much effort to get it right. It's far, far too easy to hit the ground rolling after you've come out of a gravity-defying spin. Scoring points just isn't a challenge. Visually, this is very cool, and the first couple of times you hit the half-pipe you'll be blown away by the sheer amount of aerial action. After that, you'll be disappointed. There's no challenge here, and our Tony can sleep easily.



▲ Create your own park using this grid



▲ Put together pre-made bits of park



▲ Do stunts to pick up bonus points



▲ Break glass to get bonuses



▲ Doing combos won't challenge you at all



▲ It's way too easy to land the board

WE RECKON

Cool looks and a big range of tricks are wasted when scoring points is so easy. It doesn't feel like there's a game here at all and it won't last you long. **Les**

6

OUT OF TEN

ROAD RASH JAILBREAK

Road Rash Jailbreak tries to be like Driver on two wheels. But no way is it good enough



It might boast huge Hogs but the game's a pig

KNOW THIS



PAY NO MORE THAN:

£39.99

OUT NOW

1-2 PLAYERS JOYPAD, MEMORY CARD, DUAL SHOCK PAD

Driver on a motorbike. That's the concept with Road Rash Jailbreak. The problem is, the game was only good when it first appeared on the Mega Drive back 1854. And the bid to upgrade it has resulted in a dismal failure.

Busting Spaz's ass out of jail and then going on the run is gripping for five minutes, tops. After that, the dated graphics impose themsevles and you have to wonder whether the makers were on a retro kick when they built it.

The gameplay has barely changed in the nine years that Road Rash has been around. There's on-bike scrapping that's about as tough as a ruck in the Huggies nappies disco.

The time trials look like an afterthought and the two-player mode is average at best. If they'd actually knocked two-wheels off Driver this might've worked but no such luck.

This game is on the hard shoulder with a flatty and no-one's going to rescue it. You were thinking about buying it? Don't. Not even for old times sake.



▲ 'Too much front brake mate!'



▲ Bikes belong to Battlestar Galactica



▲ Graphics are poor. This is 2000 y'know!

WE RECKON

The Road Rash name on PlayStation has been a disappointment. There are better bike games (Ricky Carmichael's), better urban racers (Driver) so let's forget this. **Les**

3

OUT OF TEN

VAMPIRE HUNTER D

The vampires strike back in a gothic RPG with some of the best-looking levels ever

KNOW THIS



PAY NO MORE THAN:

£39.99

OUT NOW

1 PLAYER JOYPAD, MEMORY CARD, DUAL SHOCK PAD


▲ Retina-wrenching interiors would make a decorator weep


▲ Controls and gameplay are weak despite blinding environments

Dungeon adventure Vampire Hunter D boasts genuinely chilling Dracula-style atmos as you plunge deeper and deeper into the sinister castle of a Lord of the Undead. Every room, every new cobwebbed hall that you explore is absolutely spot on. The only thing missing is Christopher Lee with a pair of plastic fangs.

Even the storyline is genuinely creepy, spoiled only by this strange creature who possesses your right hand, who is, unfortunately, a bit of a cock.

Thing is, Vampire Hunter is dripping with bloody promise from the first moment you step inside the echoing entrance hall of the vampire's castle. But it never quite delivers. The combat's fun to start off with, but it degenerates into mindless button-bashing once you've got the hang of it, and the dull magic spells don't do much to improve things.

Some puzzles are cool though, and there's a few set-piece showdowns with super-powerful undead beasts that'll have your palms sweating despite the clunky combat. Good, but not amazing.

WE RECKON

Vampire Hunter D works hard to deliver on the atmosphere, tense plots, storylines and big environments. But its stunning visuals are offset by ropey play. **Rob**

7

OUT OF TEN

NBA SHOWTIME



▲ Thrashing mates in NBA Showtime is cool but single-player mode and graphics are limp

£29.99 ● OUT NOW ● 1-4 PLAYERS JOYPAD, MEMORY CARD, DUAL SHOCK PAD

Multiplayer is king in this b'ball game but solo work only disappoints

NBA Showtime will give you hoop dreams in two-on-two arcade-style dunk fests. But it turns into a bit of a 'mare when it's only you against the 'Station.

As you prepare to head out onto the court you'll find more than 100 pukka basketball teams available for you to pair up, including big names such as the Chicago Bulls or Charlotte Hornets.

Showtime's highlights include its crazy slam-dunks. These guys can jump like a 'roo with a rocket up its butt. Kicks are guaranteed when you ping yourself into the air and smack the ball through the hoop so hard it almosts ignites.

The game boasts all the gimmicks of the older 2D basketball game NBA Jam. If you're familiar with any of the games in the Jam series, you'll get the hang of this within minutes.

For the ultimate in basketball mayhem, you can play a four-player game using the multitap and make your friends look like three-legged turtles as you turbo past them and shoot from the half way line to score a hoop for three points. You can plan your moves with team-mates, and pull off the best slam-dunks with some skilful co-operation.

However, playing solo is a different experience. Throughout the whole game you'll be taking turns to score, and your team-mate will only ever pass when you tell him to. It's difficult to see when the ball is being passed and frustration sets in when you tackle players that unloaded the ball ages ago.

Also, the visual quality of Showtime is flaky. The players look as if they're doing a tribal rain dance at the start of each game.

Overall, this latest NBA is frustrating and not a significant improvement on previous games.

6

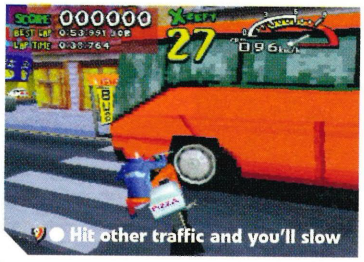


▲ 'We have lift-off': lanky Yanks-a-leaping

RADIKAL BIKERS



● 'I'll just Tuna me bike 'til it sounds Sweet-corn'



● Hit other traffic and you'll slow



● Hunt out fast routes



● Flame shows a power-up in use



● Avoid obstacles to beat rival riders

£29.99 ● OUT NOW ● 1-2 PLAYERS JOYPAD, MEMORY CARD, DUAL SHOCK PAD

Grab a slice of gonzo pizza delivery action served with a cheesy American smile

Radikal Bikers is a PlayStation version of an arcade game where you're a pizza delivery boy or gal racing riders from other firms to reach drop-off points for pizzas first.

You'd better quickly realise that if you just stick to the roads, the other bloke will have delivered his American Hot before you've cut up a single car.

The tricks to reach tubby punters on the other side of town faster than your rival is to use ramps to jump cars, collect power-ups that let you ride over the tops of lorries, and run over pedestrians to pick up time bonuses.

If you ignore the slightly bogus looks and irritating Yank voices, Radikal Bikers is fun – for a while.

But it doesn't make much effort to keep you hooked. Staying ahead of some dastardly Domino's kid is always a matter of learning two or three 'tricks' to a level such as finding the hidden shortcut behind some barrels, jumping a petrol station using a ramp and, more obviously, avoiding getting sideswiped by cars.

Riding skills don't come into it because your overheated Piaggio or Honda stays upright and keeps up a good ton no matter what you do. Weave between the cars, and you're OK. Even if you get hit by a truck you plonk straight back onto your bike. It's that easy to get into.

There are also bonus sweet touches such as creaming zombies as you ride through a graveyard.

But all up, there's thin gameplay meat on Radikal Bikers' bones. The sugar coating wears off faster, and the levels quickly appear very samey indeed.

5

FIND OUT FIRST



132-PAGES OF TOKYO LAUNCH SHOTS, INSIDE STORIES, INTERVIEWS & OPINIONS ABOUT THE PLAYSTATION 2.

AVAILABLE FROM ALL GOOD NEWSAGENTS



▲ It's got looks to kick Crash Team Racing into the barriers, but Muppet Racing plays like a dog

MUPPET RACING

£34.99 ● OUT NOW ● 1-2 PLAYER JOYPAD, MEMORY CARD, DUAL SHOCK PAD

Kermit, Miss Piggy and the rest of the gang go kart crazy in this hyper-frustrating cartoon racer

Humour in videogames rarely works. Remember the wisecracks in Apocalypse or the voiceover in Gex? Now we've got slapstick comedy from The Muppet Show.

Trying to race around an obstacle-littered track while five other Muppets chuck bombs and wet fish at you turns out to be bloody annoying. But that isn't the worst of it.

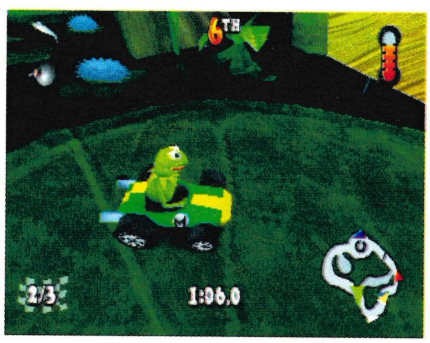
The handling of the karts is dodgy and half the time it feels as if you are bouncing or even floating around the course rather than driving. This makes tricky stuff like the stunt courses almost impossible to race on because you're falling off the ridiculously tough tracks and failing to beat the time limit.

It ain't all bad. There are some sweet ideas such as the turbo start where you tap in button combos to get a speed boost. The graphics are cool and true to the TV show, even if scenery does pop into view. But it's just no fun to play.

5



▲ Check out Gonzo's 24-carrot driving skills



▲ Frog legs it in fine racing green style

BARBIE SUPERSPORTS



£29.99 ● OUT NOW ● 1-2 PLAYER JOYPAD, MEMORY CARD, DUAL SHOCK PAD

Chuck a shrimp at this Barbie, it's all the silicon chick deserves

We're not going to dis this game because it's meant for seven-year-old nieces who smell of wee. We're going to dis it because even they deserve quality gameplay and Barbie fails on this not-exactly-hard aim.

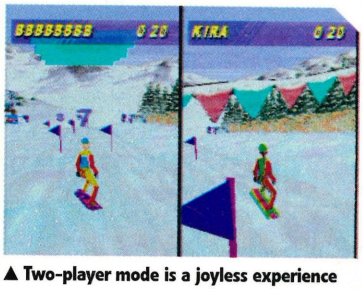
You play Barbie or one of her three plastic pals, and together you can go either snowboarding or in-line skating. There are a handful of courses to cruise around, pulling off stunts to earn points or going head-to-head with a girly chum to see whose Barbie is best.

The ingredient missing is gameplay. The emphasis is on picking snowboarding kit rather than playing for fun. This'll make PlayStation as attractive to tiddlers as a dental visit. We don't recommend this even if you're fresh out of the local primary school.

1



▲ Tony Hawk's this ain't



▲ Two-player mode is a joyless experience

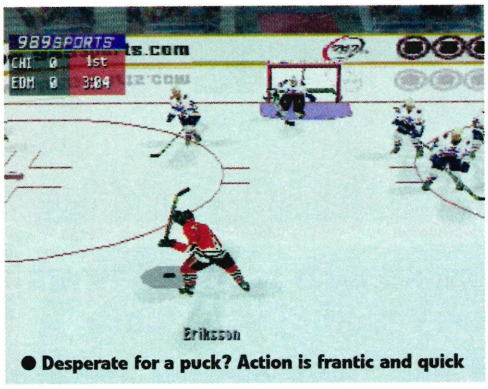


▲ Barbie's gameplay is poor

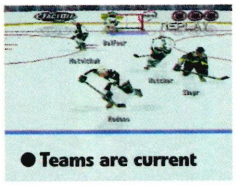
NHL FACE OFF 2000



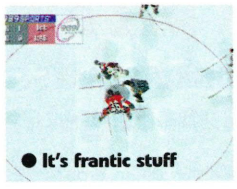
▲ We like the new bits in NHL Face Off. But loads of you will say it's identical to earlier games



● Desperate for a puck? Action is frantic and quick



● Teams are current



● It's frantic stuff

£34.99 ● OUT NOW ● 1-8 PLAYER JOYPAD, MEMORY CARD, DUAL SHOCK PAD, MULTITAP

Fans of moose-sized Canadians ploughing into acrylic barriers at 30mph queue here

To the uninitiated, ice hockey games, like most F1 games, look and play the same. But fans of the sport get their kicks from the updated teams, details and depths the game can deliver.

They won't be too disappointed with this update but we reckon it doesn't deliver enough innovations to knock NHL 2000 out of our Essential 101.

NHL Face Off 2000 looks and plays like almost every other ice hockey game on the shelves. It's easy to pass the puck around, it's pretty fast and there's plenty of stick-slapping violence to tuck into.

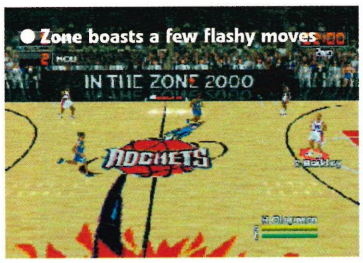
But it's also got the latest teams and player line-ups, plus you can trade players or simply create new ones. There's also an eight-player mode for those with enough pads and multitaps.

There are some neat touches such as when baseballs caps are thrown onto the ice when a goal is scored. And for once we rate the commentary too.

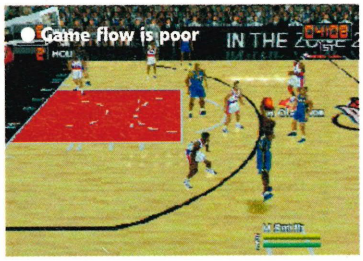
But if you own NHL 2000 then we're struggling to find the killer app to justify a further £30+ for this one.

7

NBA IN THE ZONE 2000



● Zone boasts a few flashy moves



● Game flow is poor



▲ Great sport sims have great animation. In the Zone flops like a puppet with cut strings

£34.99 ● OUT NOW ● 1-8 PLAYER JOYPAD, MEMORY CARD, DUAL SHOCK PAD, MULTITAP

Burning with desire to control seven-foot puppets badly? This has your name on it

NBA Bastketball 2000, the best of the b-ball sims on PlayStation, was a giant leap for digital dunk games. NBA In the Zone 2000 is the equivalent of Apollo 13 – 'Houston, we got a problem'.

It doesn't look up to much, the players are poorly animated and jerk around the court like puppets. And the run of play isn't smooth making it hard to build up slick plays. You never feel completely in control of your entire team either so fluidly passing the ball around is difficult, and although there are flash moves to pull off, this game lacks the flair and style of a lot of the other NBA titles.

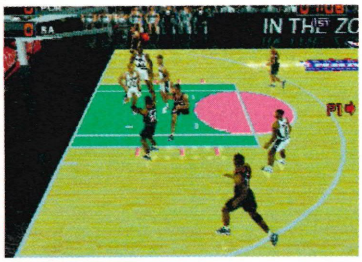
OK, it's stacked with proper NBA teams and players. But die-hard basketball fans won't find anything here which hasn't been done better in either NBA Live 99 or NBA Basketball 2000. And no-one buys NBA games apart from die-hard fans anyway, do they?

Whoever you are, this ain't the basketball game for you. Well disappointing.

5



▲ Control of play feels very remote



▲ NBA Basketball 2000 beats Zone anyday

MICRO MANIACS

KNOW THIS



PAY NO MORE THAN:

£29.99

OUT NOW

1-8 PLAYER JOYPAD, MEMORY CARD, DUAL SHOCK PAD, MULTI-TAP

There's a clutch of shrunken nutters armed with special powers running wild tonight. Time to get mates round to your place

Any wiseguy with a copy of Micro Machines V3 knows what a pocket-sized, lush, class multiplayer experience it is. It's one of the weapons-grade classics on your PlayStation and a collection without a copy is as embarassing as being caught humming Celine Dion.

Micro Maniacs is its sequel. But this time the miniature motors are gone and in comes a band of disturbing wacko super-dwarfs legging it around some very neat, well-built environments.

It's a game rammed with spanking new tracks, and Time Trial, Tournament and Challenge Modes.

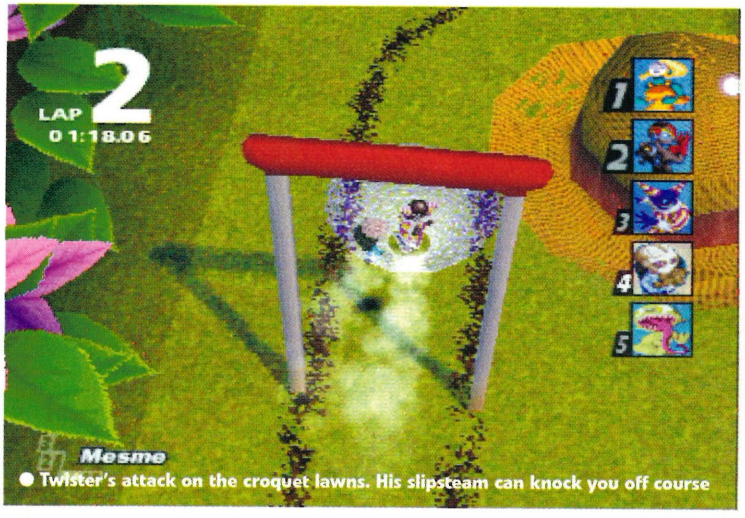
The levels are slicker and sleaker than Micro Machines, which is saying something. Your nuthouse characters race throught the hoops on a croquet pitch, a kid's bedroom, around a bath on jet skis, and over and under saws and drills in a workshop. And you still have 36 more levels to go!

Five minutes of Micro Maniacs makes it irritatingly addictive. The more bizarre of you may get your undies in a bundle over the flaming hair and bulging bust of hot-foot flame-thrower chick Pyra.

All your butt-kicking multiplayer joy is almost as hot as Micro Machines. Almost, but not quite.



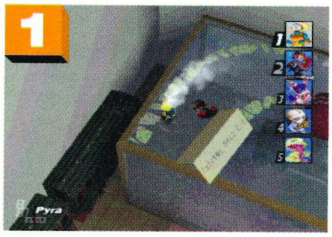
▲ Intro sequence explains Maniacs' powers



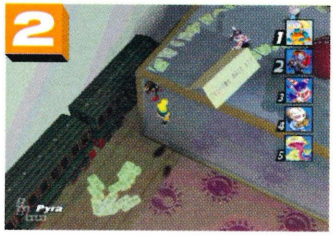
● Twister's attack on the croquet lawns. His slipsteam can knock you off course

HE'S CORNERED!

It is the cars' handling in the original that keeps us coming back for more. Sliding around corners at high speed and pipping your opponents to the post gives the multiplayer experience the edge over other racers. Micro Maniacs is no different, and the courses here will really stretch your skills to the limits. Get it right and victory is yours. Get it wrong and you're sent squealing off the edge and outta the round.



▲ Think you're smart at steering, right?



▲ Still looking good for the money



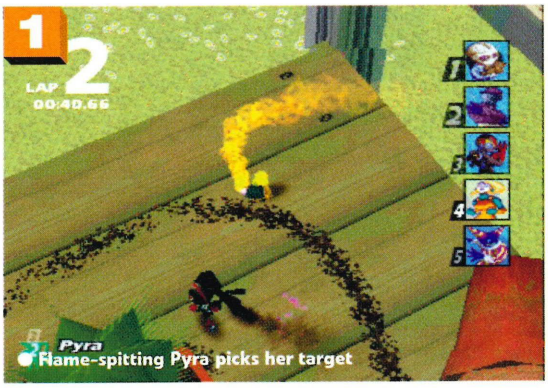
▲ You're not singing anymore



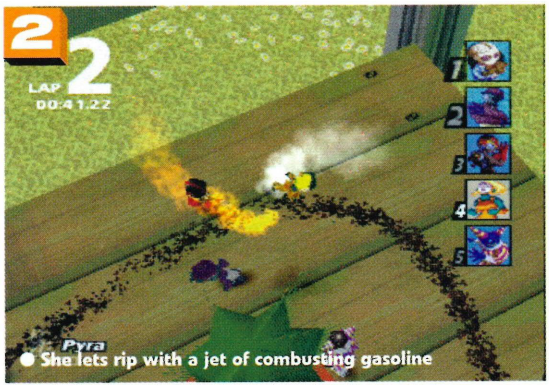
▲ You were too cocky. Eat carpet

CHARGRILLED MIDGETS

The makers have added a slew of weapons to the mix, including Pyra's flamethrower, Mesme's bomb attack and Twister's mini tornados. Some weapons fire forwards, some backwards. But this is a weak link - you feel that this was chucked in for the sake of it. But we loved Pyra's flame-thrower assaults which will make you grin like a roast dog.



● Flame-spitting Pyra picks her target



● She lets rip with a jet of combusting gasoline



● 'How does Madam like her rivals – medium or rare?'



● Tracks are as good as Micro Machines but not always better



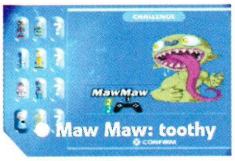
▲ Twister: twirly

CHARACTER ASSASSINATION

There are eight characters to race with at the start of the game, with four more becoming available as you conquer the tiny raceways. Quirky is the polite term to describe these terrors. Completely mental is more accurate. Unfortunately, the characters are poorly done with all the detail of a kids' drawing.



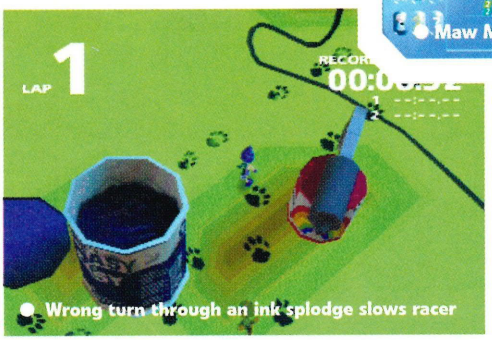
● Vortex: a feisty chick with wind



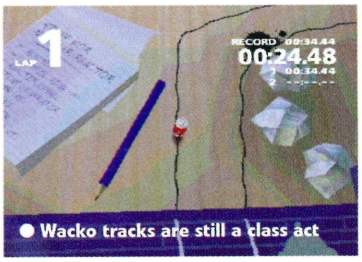
● Maw Maw: toothy



● Mesme: brainiac



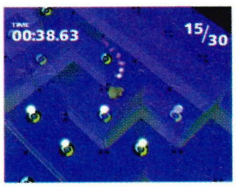
● Wrong turn through an ink splodge slows racer



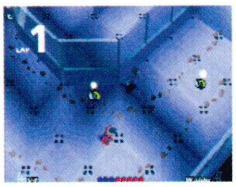
● Wacko tracks are still a class act

MULTIPLAYER SHENANIGANS

There's more emphasis on racing on your own against the console's characters. But it's still a great laugh with a few of your mates. Beat them to the edge of the screen and knock them out of the race. Get more points than they do over the level then laugh in their faces.



▲ Multiplayer still rocks



▲ Cornering is the top skill



▲ See this screen enough and your home

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE

Micro Machines V3 - tiny cars hoof it around blistering environments



Rollcage - a multiplaying and hard sci-fi racer that needs loads of oversteer



WE RECKON

Micro Maniacs tries to capture and then boost the brilliance of the Essential 101 classic Micro Machines V3. We expected to hand out a 9 or a 10. But the characters, the power-ups and the limited weapons don't match V3. We'll still buy it for some top multiplayer action and the blinding tracks but it's only a bit mad, not certifiable. **Pat**

8
OUT OF TEN

KNOW THIS

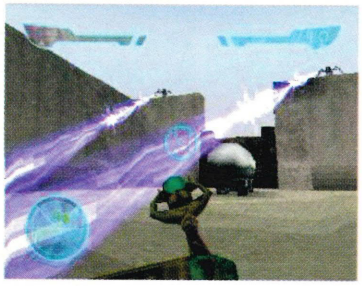


PAY NO MORE THAN:

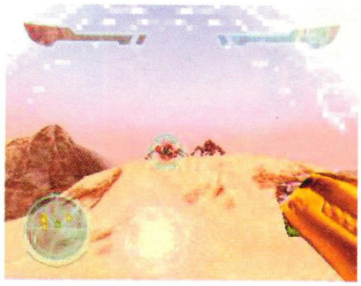
£34.99

OUT NOW

1-2 PLAYER JOYPAD, MEMORY CARD, DUAL SHOCK PAD



▲ Armorines is a sub-Starship Trooper game



▲ It boasts a good contrast of environments



▲ But ultimately the action's low-fi and rot

ARMORINES

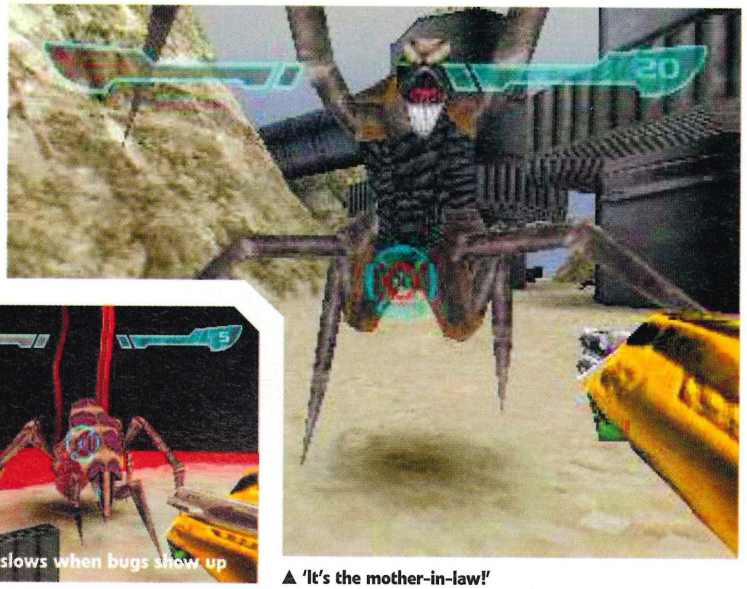
Cross Starship Troopers with bug dung and you get this monstrous game

If you've got an infestation of bugs that are eight feet tall and gob fire you need a pretty well trained exterminator. Your local DynoRod man just ain't going to cut it. You'd need an Armorine. And you is the man!

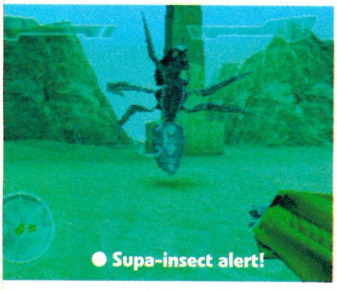
Finding a class first-person shooter on PlayStation is harder than finding one of us at a Westlife gig. Armorines is off to a bad start by being based on a ropey N64 game. It never recovers.

Your selectable characters number a massive two: a hard bloke who moves at the speed of chess and a less hard laydee who moves faster. You don't feel like keeping either alive.

The game's looks are about as sharp as processed cheese and just as bland. The ooh-scary bugs jerk along as if they were Halloween spiders on elastic and the game's speed really slows down when the bug action heats up.



▲ 'It's the mother-in-law!'



● Supa-insect alert!



● You're set for a bug's breakfast

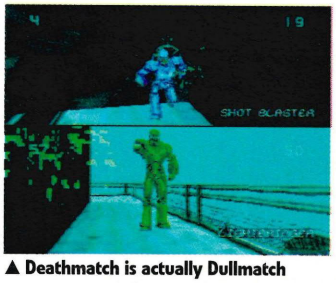


● Action slows when bugs show up

BUDDY UP BUT DON'T DEATHMATCH

Armorines features a two player deathmatch mode and a co-operative mode for its multiplayer kicks.

Deathmatch is no more exciting than the tedious main game. A little better is co-operative mode that lets you play the game in split screen with a mate helping out. You get further through levels than when it's just you against the game. It works well but the slowdown is doubled.



▲ Deathmatch is actually Dullmatch



▲ Co-operative mode is loads more fun

DON'T LET THE BIG BUGS BITE

The aim in Armorines is to finish missions on each level while capping the giant insects. But the game makes it hard because of a control system that's cack. It's hard to track the action across the screen. And it's frustrating to have to use the right-hand shoulder buttons to move back and forward. You never quite get to grips with it.

Bugs can appear from nowhere and you can't see them if they get too close. You also get lost easily in the larger levels and struggle to know what to do next.

Any bugs killed vanish instantly which means you can't see where you've been. And lots of the areas are so dark that you can't actually see where you're going. Luckily you've got night vision for that. Unluckily, you can't actually move whilst using it which makes you a sitting duck.

If you're the sort of person who bothers to get beyond the first few of Armorine's twenty missions without wanting to skin the soles of your feet with a potato peeler, then we'd recommend a seven-week shock therapy course.

WE RECKON

If you want to be entertained by giant bugs chowing down on fresh meathead humans, rent Starship Troopers. If a strait-jacket suits you, buy Armorines. **Deano**

4

OUT OF TEN

PlayNation

Play it!

32 PAGES

OF FAST, EASY-TO-USE GUIDES, TIPS, CHEATS AND CASH-SAVING VOUCHERS

PAGE 44

'CHOCKA WITH TENSION, PUZZLES AND STRANGENESS, THIS IS CLASS'

17-PAGE FEAR EFFECT SUPER-GUIDE

PAGE 62

WWF SMACKDOWN, ECW HARDCORE, RIDGE 4, ACE COMBAT 3, TOCA 2

SEVEN PAGES OF TIPS & CHEATS

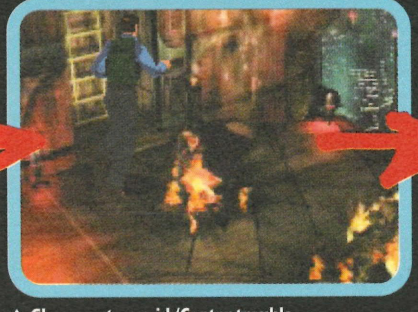
PAGE 73

A FIVER OFF TOMB 4, DRIVER, SOUL BLADE, POINT BLANK 2

10 BIG MONEY-OFF VOUCHERS



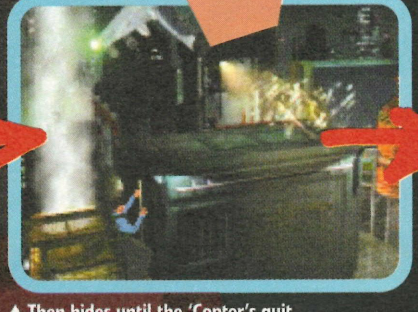
NEXT PAGE FEAR EFFECT GUIDE



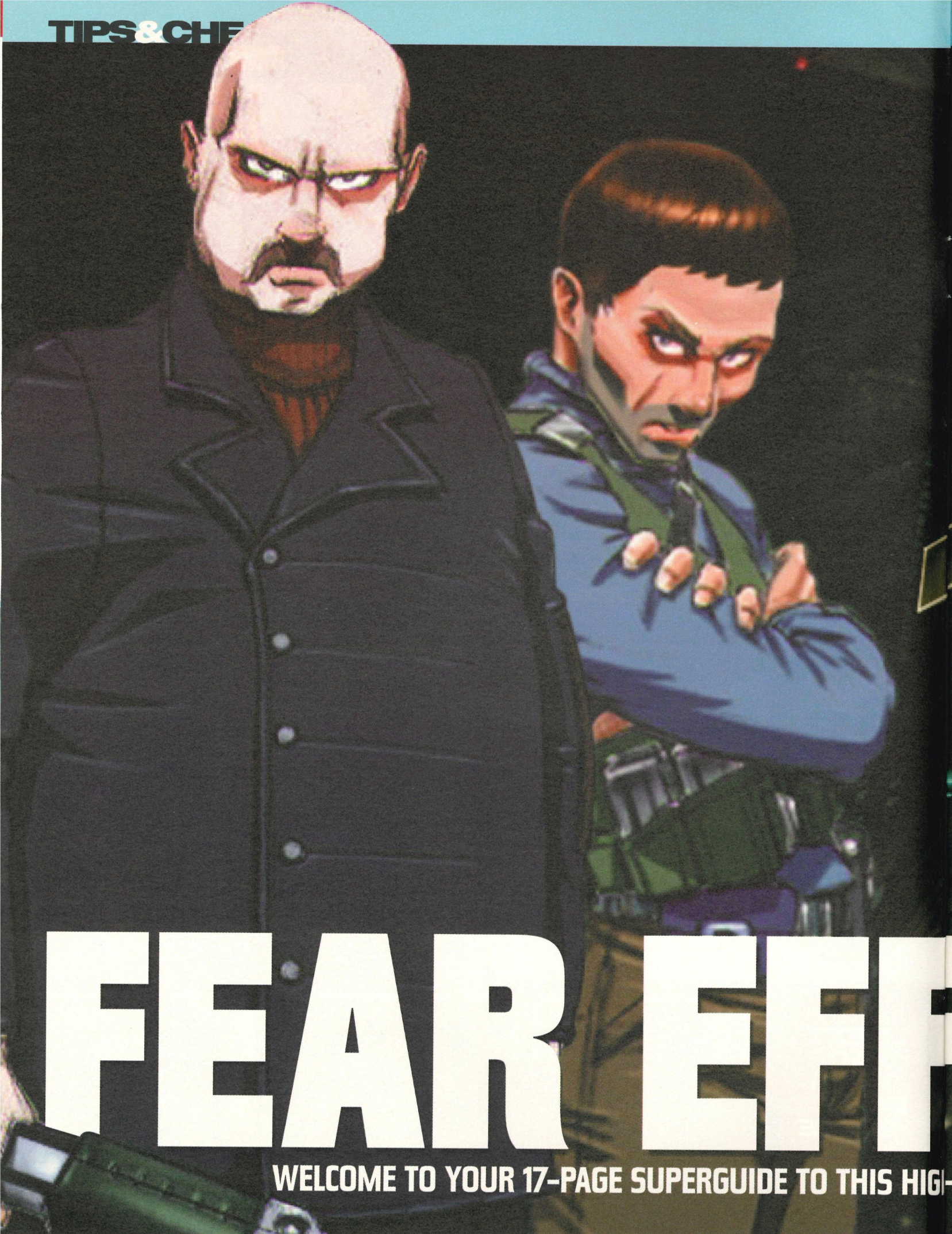
▲ Glas runs to avoid 'Copter trouble



▲ He starts firing to bring out guards

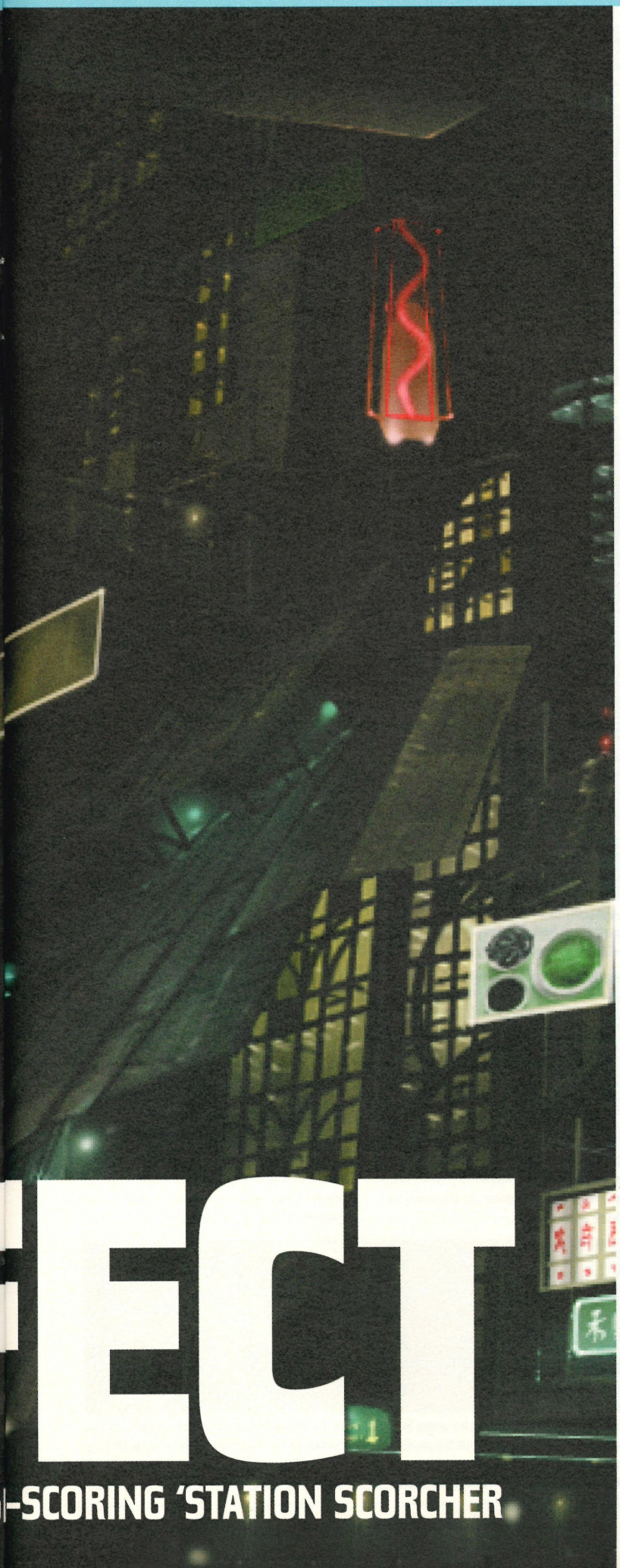


▲ Then hides until the 'Copter's quit



FEAR EFF

WELCOME TO YOUR 17-PAGE SUPERGUIDE TO THIS HIGH-



ECT

-SCORING 'STATION SCORCHER

Contents

FEAR EFFECT IS THE MOST ORIGINAL GAME SEEN FOR A LONG TIME. ITS ACTION, PUZZLES AND BRILLIANT STORYLINE SAW A PERFECT SCORE. NOW HERE'S THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO HELP YOU TAKE HANA, GLAS AND DEKE THROUGH THIS GRIPPING MIND BENDER



46 THE LAM BUILDING
Three pages of capping guards, defusing bombs and lead-spitting 'copters

49 RIVER SETTLEMENT
Complex puzzles plus villagers who wouldn't look out of place in the Fens

51 MADAM CHEN
Sneaky moves through the plush home of the mystery-soaked Lady Chen

56 HELL
Where the Fear Effect takes hold and your world goes tits-up

Why this game rocks



REVIEWED:

Fear Effect was reviewed in the March 2000 issue of PlayStation Plus

SCORED:

A perfect 10 out of 10

WE SAID:

'Fear Effect boasts supermodel looks and more action tha n a Hollywood blockbuster, held together by a clever storyline which will genuinely shock and surprise you. It's pretty short, considering the fact it comes on four CD's, but for the twelve or so hours it lasts, games don't come more intense than this.' Alex Simmons

Disc 1: Inside the Lam Building

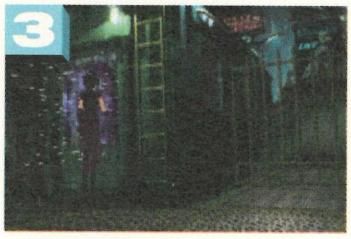
GLAS AND HANA START THE GAME THINKING THIS'LL BE AN EASY JOB – A PLANNED RENDEZVOUS WITH JIN WHO'LL SUPPLY THEM WITH THE INFORMATION THEY NEED TO GET WEE MING. IF ONLY EVERYTHING IN LIFE WAS THAT SIMPLE AS THAT EH?



▲ Once you have control of Hana run around the helicopter and up to the flashing red light by the wall. Press △ to activate the lift



▲ Pull out your knife and use the crouch to crawl up to the two suits and stab them with the knife. This doesn't attract the attention of any of the other guards



▲ Look through the window and Hana will automatically draw her gun. Shoot a couple of rounds into the window to smash it and climb through



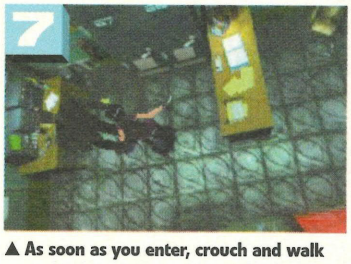
▲ Walk up to the switch and pull it to activate the wheel above this room. Now pick up the fuse from the cabinet and jump back through window



▲ Climb up the ladder and turn the valve wheel you've just activated. A plume of gas will kill a guard who drops a key. Use it on the gate nearby



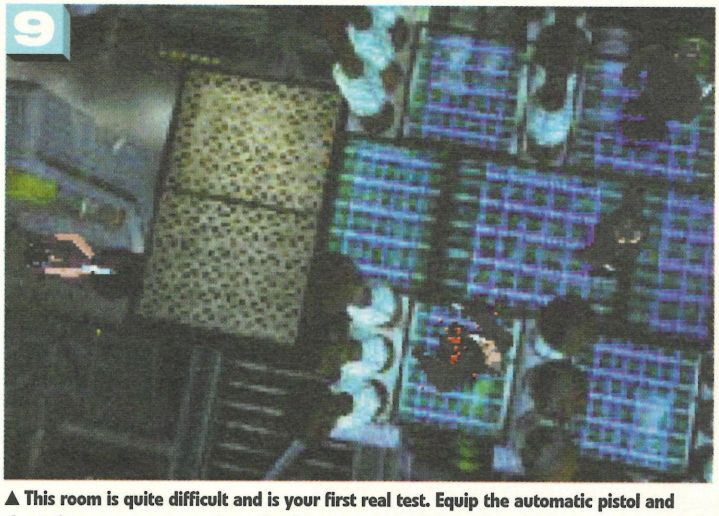
▲ Again, there are two more guards here, so use the knife and crouch combination to pick them both off without causing any sort of a scene. Pick up the Red Keycard the ones of them drops and use it on the panel next to the door just ahead of you



▲ As soon as you enter, crouch and walk up to the guard who will be facing away from you. Stab him. The monitors show Jin being slapped so go through the door



▲ The first guard is easy but the second takes three swipes with your knife. Use the crouch to get right behind him and pick up the new gun once he's dead



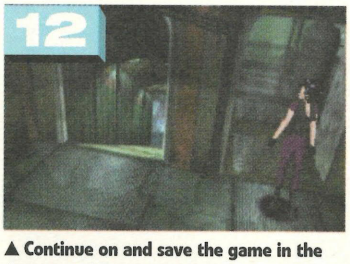
▲ This room is quite difficult and is your first real test. Equip the automatic pistol and shoot the guy nearest you from the doorway you start in



▲ Move forward to here and you can pick off the next two guards. Two more come running in at this point, so you need to be very quick here



▲ At this point you can now take out the remaining guards. Try not to miss too much, because you only have a small amount of ammo for this gun



▲ Continue on and save the game in the doorway. Walk directly into the camera and pick up the locker key at the back of the room. Head back to security room



▲ Go to the locker in this room and use the locker key to get yourself another pistol and a blue keycard. Now go back and head down the ramp you ignored

Inside the Lam Building



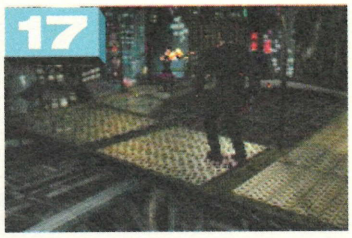
▲ Equip the double pistols and run down the ramp shooting at the two guards. It'll aim on them automatically so you don't need to worry too much



▲ Walk up to the fuse boxed shown in this picture and use the fuse you picked up at the start here. You'll get an excellent cut scene with two guys getting electrocuted!



▲ Head to the now live power grid and kill the guard on the way. When you get there, watch the panels switch on and off and you'll see your route through



▲ Crouch past the lift you need to go down and shoot the guy at the end of the path. Go down the lift and head to the left. Walk up to the wall and take the wirecutters



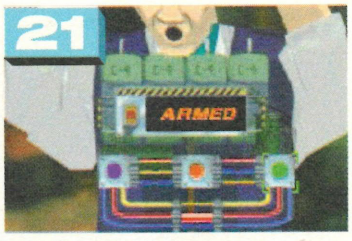
▲ Continue on but ignore the first door and continue. Just around the next corner is this bad guy, so creep round and unload a couple of rounds into him



▲ Again keep creeping around the corner and shoot another guard. Once dead, save at the end and use the blue keycard. Equip the double pistols and you'll see a cutscene



▲ Wait by the door and kill the first two guards. If they crouch, you'll have to crouch too to pick them off. Kill them and the third guard, without shooting Jin



▲ Highlight the orange spot and cut the red, then yellow wire. Move to the purple spot and cut the blue then red. Finally, pick the green spot and cut the yellow and blue



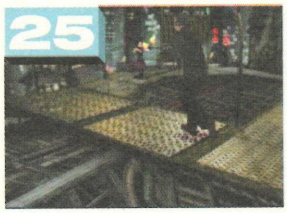
▲ Jin gets blasted and when you get control of Hana, run back around to your right and go up to the door you ignored the first time around



▲ Now place the explosives you've kept from Jin onto the door and run away so you don't get caught in the blast. Now start to run through the burning corridor you've just opened



▲ Run up the ramp and take out the guard at the top. Save and continue. Go through the dead power grid and creep up to the two henchmen in the next to kill them quietly and effectively



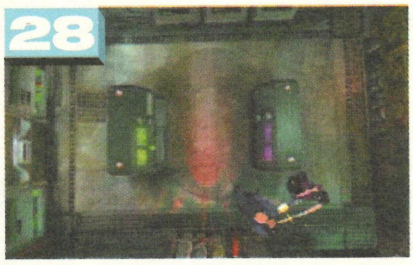
▲ Equip the pistols and pick off the guard. Now run back around the walkway and down the trapdoor that was shut before



▲ Save here, and use the crouch to sneak up to the two guards on the gangway and knife them. Now you must face a boss



▲ Wait by the edge of one of the terminals until the bald guys shouts 'Die!' As he's shooting, run behind the terminal to where he's standing



▲ Now unload two rounds into him at close range. Depending on where you are on screen, hit up or down to roll away from him and behind the panel



▲ Once he's dead, pick up the key and the gun and use the sign key at the far left of the room. Match each of the symbols to this picture



▲ Take the disc. Hana is captured and you get control of Glas. As you activate the lift, a chopper appears and tries to blow Glas away



▲ As soon as you regain control of Glas, run around the small fire in front of you and head for the ladder. You have to be quick to avoid dying



▲ Walk to this point and start shooting to uncover two guards. Keep running around the walkway until you reach the ladder and holster your gun

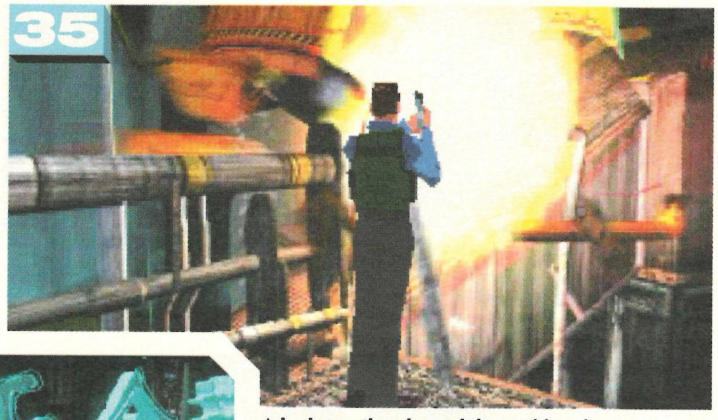
Inside the Lam Building



▲ Climb a little way up the ladder. Wait here until the chopper sprays the roof full of lead and run across. Climb down the ladder on the other side before it shoots



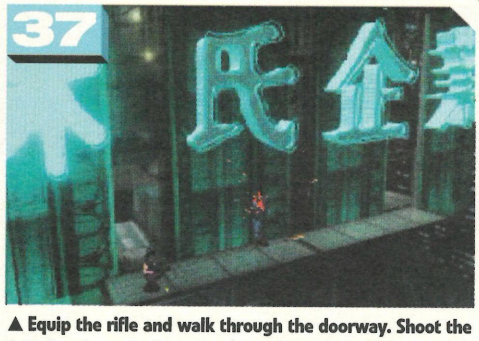
▲ Once the small office has blown up, save the game and look behind you to find a pipe on the floor. Use the pipe on the tank and then shoot it with your pistol



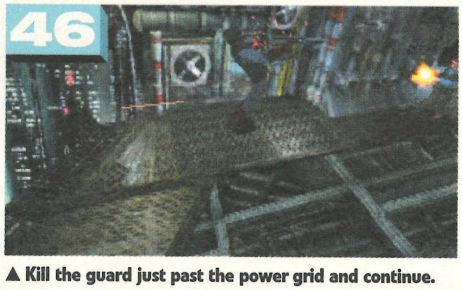
▲ Look over the edge and the partition gives way. Hana's with a guard when Glas hits the deck. She escapes



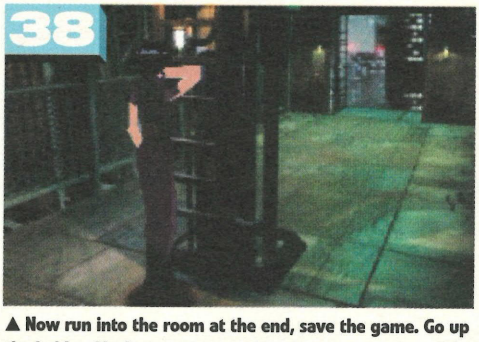
▲ Pick up the knife which is in the centre of the room, stab the guard and take his gun. Keep the knife equipped and sneak through the doorway to kill another guard



▲ Equip the rifle and walk through the doorway. Shoot the guard and use the doorway to provide cover before shooting the other guard



▲ Kill the guard just past the power grid and continue. Two more guards appear so gun them both down quickly



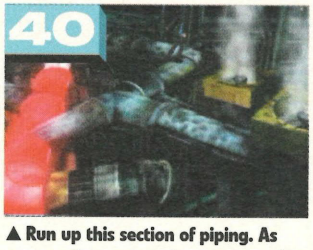
▲ Now run into the room at the end, save the game. Go up the ladder. Mr. Lam appears and captures you again and his goons give you a bit of a beating too



▲ You're back with Glas again. Watch the pipes heat and cool and run to here when you can. Use the valve at the end of the walkway and run back



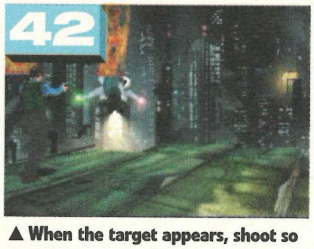
▲ Continue around and go down the trapdoor. Hana is below with Lam, but Glas appears and guns them down



▲ Run up this section of piping. As soon as the camera changes stop. The pipe to the right is a useful save point



▲ As soon as you have control run to the far left and onto the next screen. Wait here and you'll not get hit



▲ When the target appears, shoot so the banners get sucked into the engine. Repeat on the right screen



▲ You don't have to move far from your starting spot at all. Turn to face the helicopter and start shooting



▲ Go through the door next to the window, save and sneak into the next screen. Unload into both of the guards



▲ Walk along the corridor, sneak past the door Hana blew up it and kill the two guards. Pick up the assault rifle



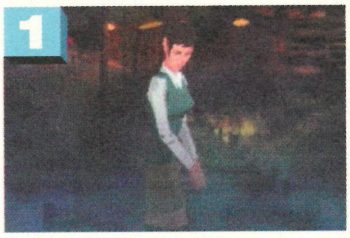
▲ Go through the burning door. Kill all of the guards and run up the ramp. Kill the two guys and save here too



▲ Roll away to dodge the bullets. Once Hana jumps into the chopper, quickly run Glas to the end of the walkway

Disc 2: River Settlement

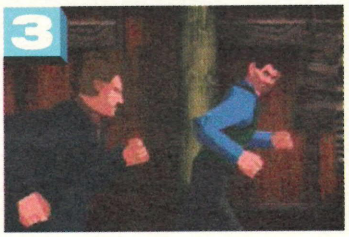
DEKE MEETS UP WITH GLAS AND HANA AND TOGETHER THEY DECODE THE DISC THAT JIN LEFT FOR THEM. IT TELLS THEM TO FIND A WOMAN CALLED MADAME CHEN WHO CAN BE MET AT A RIVER SETTLEMENT



▲ After a cutscene Wee Ming appears on the jetty but starts to run off. Deke and Glas run off after her, leaving Hana to secure the boat and get dressed



▲ Kill the mad villagers and continue on. Watch the cutscene and kill a couple more villagers. Run to the right side of the screen and kill the guy that looked dead



▲ Now the action cuts to Glas and Deke. Once you have control, just keep following Glas. You'll get a small scene with Deke stopping for air



▲ After another scene three crazed villagers come storming in so you just have blast away until they're dead because otherwise they quickly surround you



▲ The action switches again, this time to Glas who is still in pursuit of Wee Ming. The burning village is his enemy as a flaming tree cuts off his path



▲ As you walk along the wooden pathway, look out for the fire sections that appear through the planks. It's simple to pass: just watch for the gaps and walk on



▲ After two fire puzzles we're back with Hana again and the zombie villagers are closing in. Shoot them before they have a chance to get close



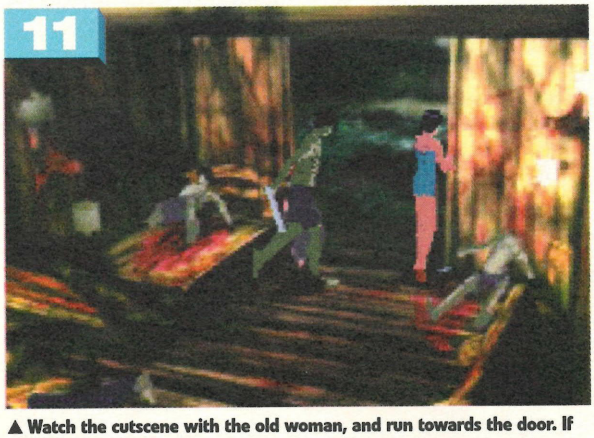
▲ When you get to this fork in the path take the path on Hana's left and kill two more villagers. Now leg it to the hut at the end of this path



▲ You need to kill the two villagers in here because one of them is holding a key which he drops once dead. Head back to the split in the path and run down the walkway opposite you



▲ Take out the villager by this big door so he doesn't attack you as you try and use the key you've just obtained. Save your progress once you've the other side of the door



▲ Watch the cutscene with the old woman, and run towards the door. If you're quick, you can pick up the pistols next to the door without the villager attacking and you having to unecessarily wasting ammo



▲ Equip the double pistols and kill the two guards. Continue creeping up the screen, equip the knife and move towards the two guards who you will see walking away from you



▲ Turn to the left guard first who has now stopped and stab him. Then stab the second. Equip your pistols and shoot the remaining guard who is waiting in the screen above

At the River Settlement



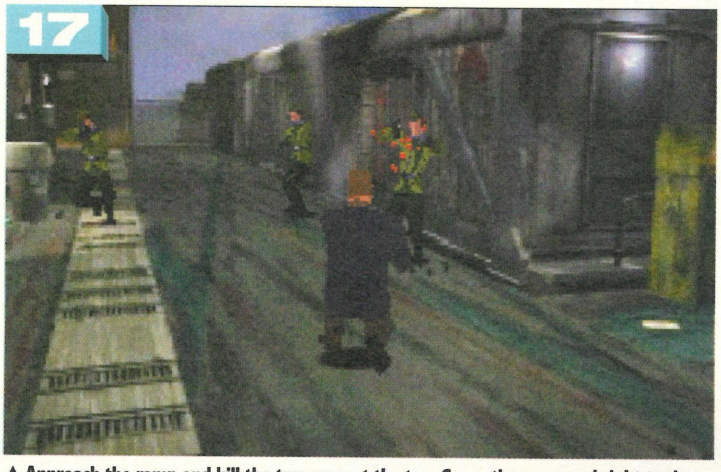
▲ Hana is ambushed by a guard and she drops her guns. Select the wet towel she drops it giving the guard a proper eyeful. Deke appears and breaks his neck



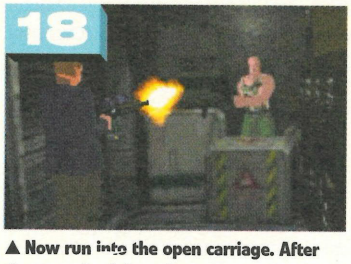
▲ You'll then get control of Deke inside the factory, so arm the brass knuckle and get ready. Sneak up behind the guard, deck him and equip your twin pistols



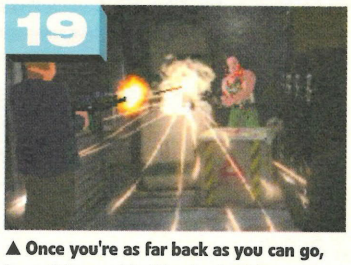
▲ Stroll around the corner and let the two guards have it. Walk to the top left of the screen and kill the guard lurking around the corner. Get the rifle and save



▲ Approach the ramp and kill the two guys at the top. Go up the ramp and right to the top of the screen. Now go right and you'll be next to the train. Kill the three guards



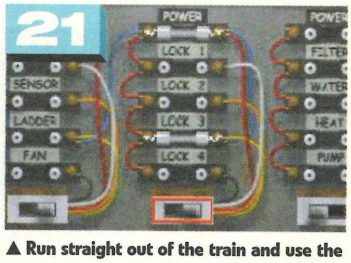
▲ Now run into the open carriage. After the scene back into the corner and start firing. You'll probably take a hit here but that won't cause too much damage



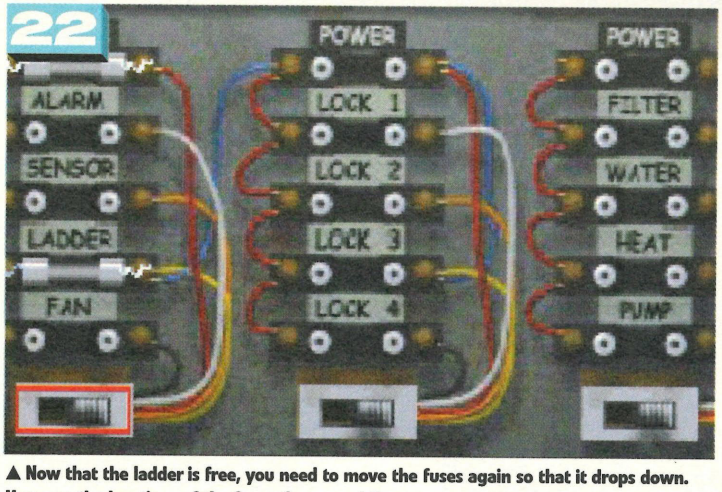
▲ Once you're as far back as you can go, keep firing and holding back. This way you'll be able to shoot the guy as he nips around the corner, before he shoots you



▲ Pick up the gun that he drops and walk towards the door that has been shot open. Start shooting when you get here and the guards will come running in. So shoot 'em!



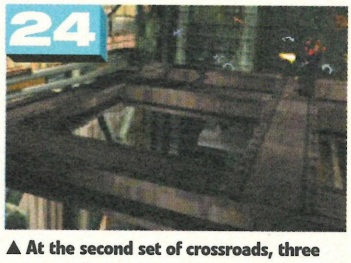
▲ Run straight out of the train and use the key on the fuse box. Turn the power off by moving the switches at the bottom. Now move the fuses here and turn the power on



▲ Now that the ladder is free, you need to move the fuses again so that it drops down. Here are the locations of the fuses the second time



▲ Now climb up the ladder and save at the top. Walk left and you'll get a small scene involving some new enemies. Gun then all down quickly and scoop up the ammo



▲ At the second set of crossroads, three more masked madmen drop down. Kill them all and run to Deke's right, towards the camera. Then run to Deke's right again



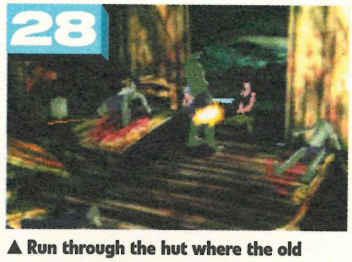
▲ Another three masked guys appear that need killing. Deke shoots the final guy and he bursts into flames. Now we're with Glas



▲ Kill the villagers Wee Ming summons and run into the hut. Pick off any strays and shoot these stragglers outside



▲ It's Hana's go now. Creep to the right and stab the guard. Shoot the other two, run back to the train and kill more guards

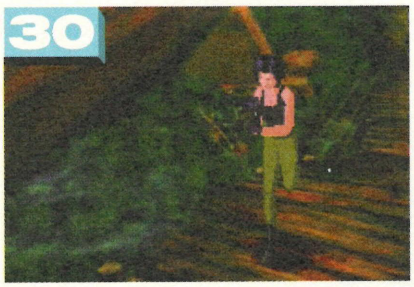


▲ Run through the hut where the old woman was. Run down the path past two more madmen. Go straight on at the split

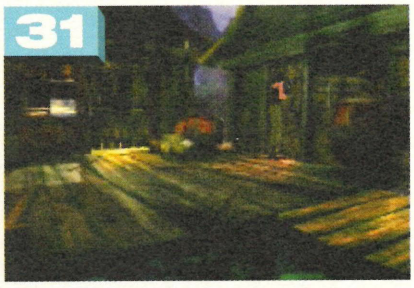
At the River Settlement



▲ Run all the way to the hut at the end of the path. Kill the villager and the strange masked madman waiting inside and pick up the key one of them drops



▲ Now run back to the section where you first took control of Hana. Save and move to the bottom of the screen. Kill the villager and the guard



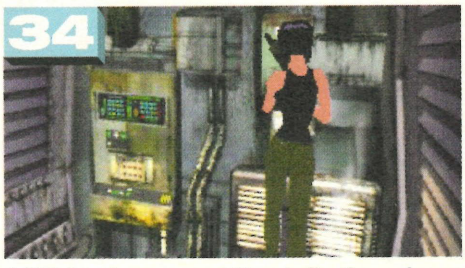
▲ Leave and re-enter the screen and kill the guard. Go back into this section. Take the right hut first, using the Xi Mon Key on the door to get in



▲ Once inside the room, kill all of the enemies. Now go outside and do the same. Be sure to pick up the train key



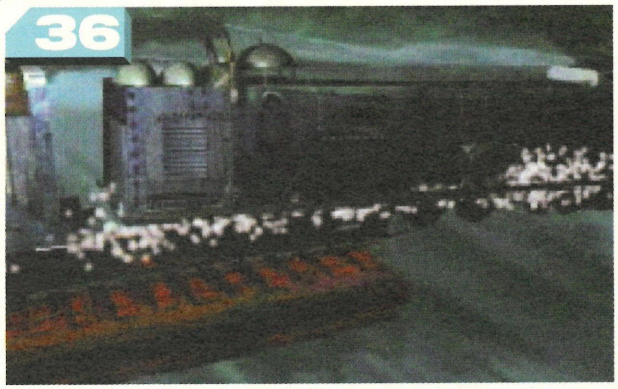
▲ Now return to where you gained control of Hana and save. Enter the train by using the train key



▲ Walk into the screen read this note. Use the number on the note on the panel on the left to get the train moving



▲ Deke arrives and some soldiers start firing at you. Once on the roof, equip the MKV Rifle and down the guards



▲ Glas spots the danger as the train plummets from the bridge get ready, because you'll get control of Deke and have no time to spare at all



▲ RUN! Run like the wind towards the camera, otherwise Deke will end up in the drink with the train. If you hesitate at any point here, he'll die



▲ Glas checks out the wreckage so save and wait here. Pick off the any of the guards that walk to here and then draw the assault rifle



▲ Run into the next screen and wait at the top. One guard will run up to you, and you can pick him off. You can also pick off the others from here you're lucky



▲ If any of the three guards are left, start climbing up the ladder but wait when you're a couple of steps up. When the guard runs away, climb up and waste him



▲ Run along the tracks and into the area with the truck. Three guards are waiting here. Once you start shooting, another six appear so just spend some rounds



▲ Among the ammo that they all drop, you should find a truck key so pick that up and use it on the door of the truck next to you. It's Wee Ming!

Disc 3: Deep Inside Madame Chen's

THE GANG ARRIVE AT MADAME CHEN'S BUT HANA IS CAGEY ABOUT HOW SHE KNOWS CHEN. GLAS DECIDES THAT HE AND WEE MING ARE GOING TO SEE HER AND THE OTHER TWO SHOULD WAIT OUTSIDE AND KEEP AN EYE ON THINGS



▲ As Wee Ming enters the building, she spots Chen across the room. Glas is captured and thrown into a makeshift cell. This is where you take control



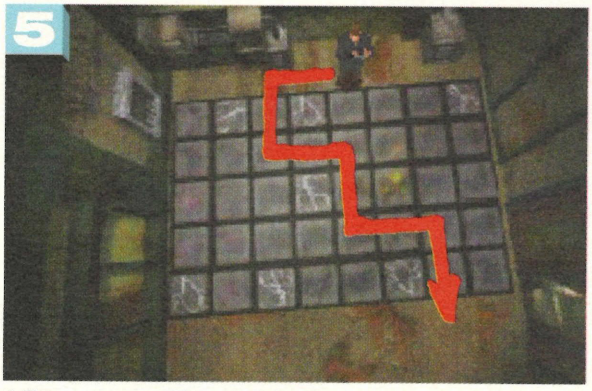
▲ Save the game and look behind you. On the shelf is some cooking oil which you need to take and a vase. Use the vase and Glas will pick it up and smash it



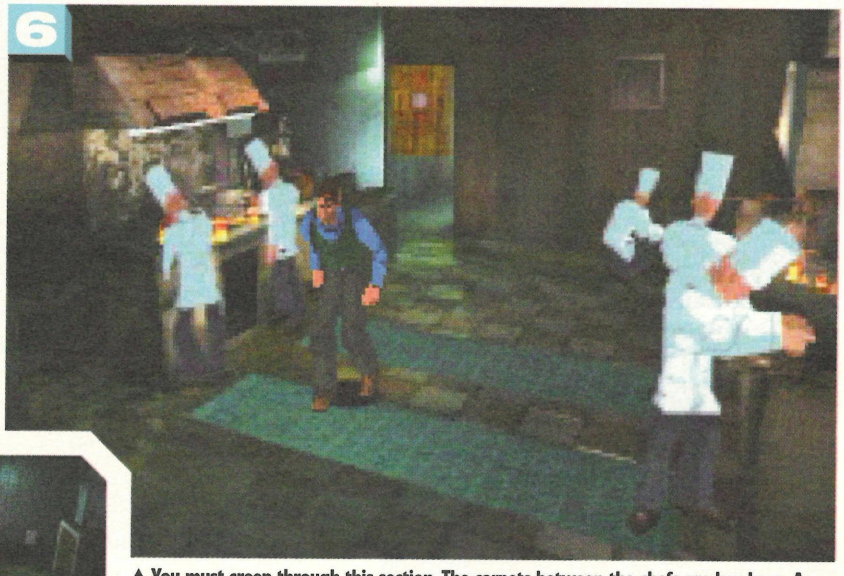
▲ You have to be quick here. Walk to the spot marked on the screen and use the oil on the floor. Lure the guard onto the oil and he'll slip on it and give Glas a gun back



▲ As you go through the door, the camera pans out revealing a guard so pop him in the back with your newly acquired gun. You then see Wee Ming being lead away



▲ The scene cuts and Hana and Deke go to investigate. Deke is faced with a glass roof so follow this route to get across. Save and enter the door



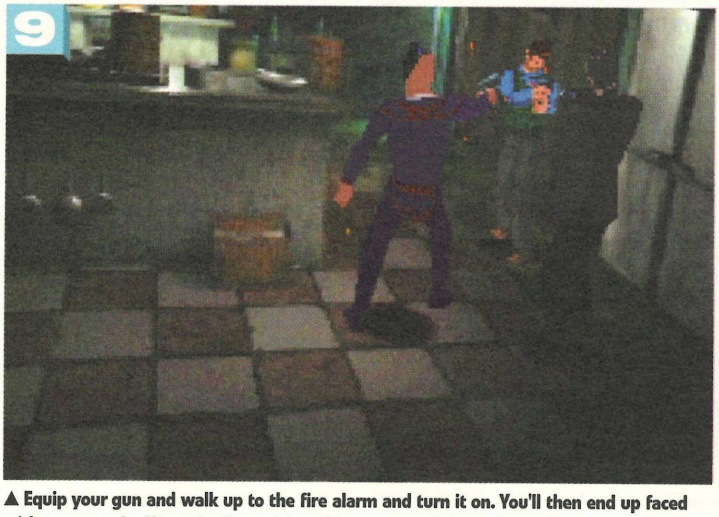
▲ You must creep through this section. The carpets between the chefs are key here. As soon as you step on them, the Chefs can spot you. Watch their movements and move when they have their back turned to you. You have to creep though. NO RUNNING!



▲ This chef turns around twice to stamp on some cockroaches. The second time, he lingers before returning to his broth so watch out before you go



▲ The second chef will gob onto the floor twice, and the first will empty stuff into a bin. Once he's chucked his second batch of food into the bin, sneak past



▲ Equip your gun and walk up to the fire alarm and turn it on. You'll then end up faced with two guards. Shoot the first, pick up his ammo and shoot the second



▲ As you walk into the screen shoot the guard that is waiting and you'll spill fat on him. Pick up the shotgun and save through the door on the left



▲ Go back through the door and into the main room. Wait until the two guards have walked out of shot before creeping into the open and firing



▲ The guards will come running into the screen, giving you valuable time to pump away with the shotgun. They'll only take a couple of hits



▲ Run up the stairs and shoot another guard. Watch the scene and when you get control of Hana, walk back into the main hall and shoot three more guards

Deep inside Madame Chen's



▲ Go back into the kitchen and through the door to Hana's right. Inside this room save the game again and go up the partition. Hana now has a saucy change of outfit



▲ Holster your weapon and exit this room. You can walk past the guards now without them shooting because they think you're 'one of the girls'



▲ Walk up to this door and the burly guy will let you access the second floor. Run up the stairs watch the scene and run towards the screen



▲ Follow the corridors all the way around until you get to this doorway, just before a couple of guards. Enter it and you'll meet Deke inside



▲ After a brief chat, a guard will burst into the room and order Hana to leave. You then get control of Deke so equip one of his rifles and leave the room



▲ Outside the room, kill the two guards to Deke's right, and go back along the corridor. Keep running and you'll come to two more guards, who need dumping



▲ Now check back a couple of screens and go into the red door to Deke's right. Save in the bedroom. Exit and run back to Deke's right. Creep through the corridors



▲ Immediately start firing on these guards and they won't return fire. Pick up the shotgun and go into the red door. Pick up the coin inside and return to the bedroom



▲ Walk to the machine at the back of the room and use the coin on it. Press the bottom right, middle left, top right, middle right and bottom left buttons



▲ This opens a secret door which you should go through. Walk forward to this point and the use icon will flash up at the bottom. Go through this door



▲ Walk through the door, crouch with your shotgun armed and start shooting. The guards will come into the screen and you can pick them off with ease



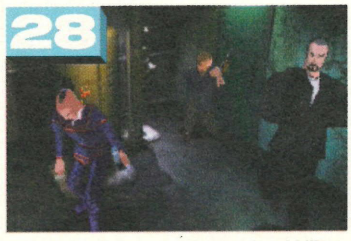
▲ Walk forward and go into this door. As you enter the door, crouch and blast the guy next to you. Pick up the elevator key



▲ Now head down the corridor and fire a round into the back of the goon. Use the elevator key on the lift and get in



▲ Walk into the camera and into the room in front of you. Pick up the wrench shown and go out again. Go down the stairs



▲ Go into the room at then end and kill the two enemies. Use the wrench to turn off the steam. Pick up the key and leave

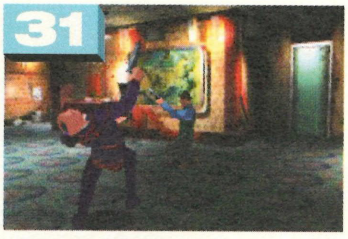
Deep inside Madame Chen's



▲ Once you get back into this corridor, creep up to the main room and shoot the guard you can see patrolling in front of you. Switch guns to an automatic rifle



▲ Walk into the hall and start blasting. Shoot the guy nearest you first, then one behind you. Use the Madam Room key on the double red doors and you'll see a scene



▲ As soon as you get control of Glas, equip the first gun you can and start firing. Three guys are chasing you and you have to get rid of them, quick



▲ Now head back towards the kitchen and go through this door. Shoot the guard behind you once you've entered and go up the stairs with the shotgun armed



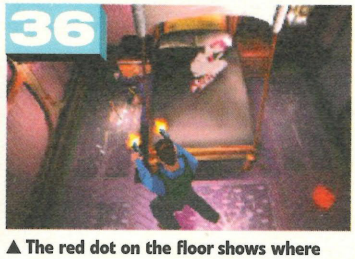
▲ Go left when you emerge in the corridor and go all the way to the end. Kill the guard at the end of the room, pick up the key and save at the point you just passed



▲ The first door you walk back past is the one you need to use the lounge key on. Shoot the two guys you're faced with and go through the door on your left



▲ Basically, this boss can be simple once you've learnt the patterns with which he shoots. As a loose rule, he'll usually shoot from top left to bottom right and vice versa



▲ The red dot on the floor shows where he's going to fire next. When the enemy rolls out from underneath the bed, run over and shoot him. He takes four shots to kill



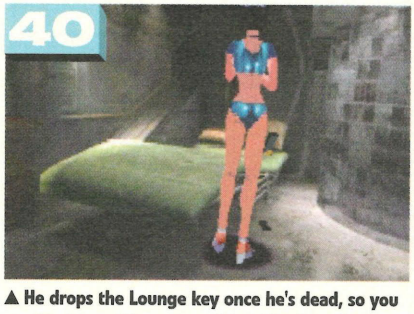
▲ Once dead, Glas walks around the corner, only to find Mr. Lam waiting for him. With one swipe of his sword, he'll chop Glas' arm clean off!



▲ As soon as you regain control of Hana, go into the door to her right and kill the guard inside. Now pick up the white vase from the table and leave



▲ Creep towards the camera and kill the guard. Now continue back through the corridor until you reach this door. Go inside and kill the guard



▲ He drops the Lounge key once he's dead, so you need to leave this room and head back to the lounge where you should use your key on the door



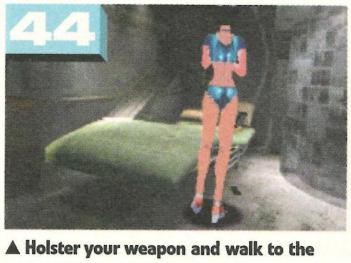
▲ Walk to the very back of this room and the scene will close in on two doors. Holster your weapon and go through the double doors in front of you first



▲ Keep walking along until you reach this section. Pick up a flower from the fountain to Hana's right



▲ There are three guards around this corner that you should shoot. Pick up the key one of them drops



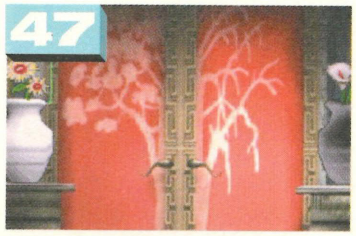
▲ Holster your weapon and walk to the end of the corridor. Go through the doors. Use the office key on the single door



▲ Walk straight and go into the elevator. At the top, go into the main room and into the double doors. Pick up the black vase



▲ Walk up to the other double red doors and you'll see a guard blocking your way. Whip out a gun and let him have what for



▲ Use a vase on the door. Put the white vase on the left, black on the right, wilted lily in the black and sunflower in the white

Deep inside Madame Chen's



▲ Go through the door and you'll see a scene with Madame Chen and a now-dead Deke. Run back along this corridor and have a hefty weapon equipped



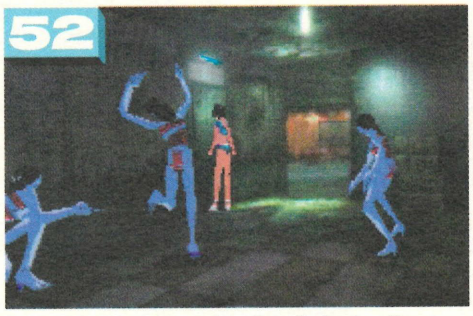
▲ Kill the Demon Ladies and take the elevator at the end of hallway. Equip an automatic gun if you have the ammo and kill the demons at the bottom



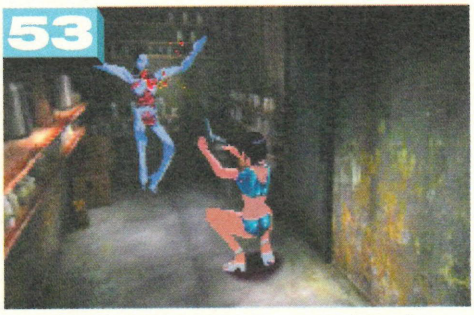
▲ Run through the door at the end of the room and continue through the lounge. When the demon hookers burst through, ignore them and make dash for these doors



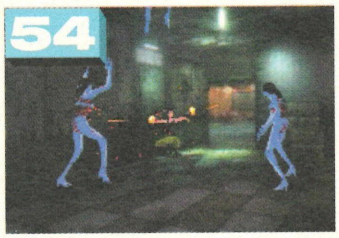
▲ As you go to run down the stairs, you get a long cutscene with Glas and Wee Ming, with Glas hanging from a meat hook. Once this is done, you get control of Hana



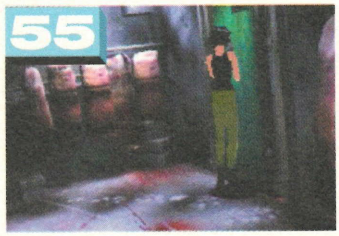
▲ Run down the stairs and go through the door. Turn to Hana's left and go through the doorway next to you. Now go through this door to the changing room



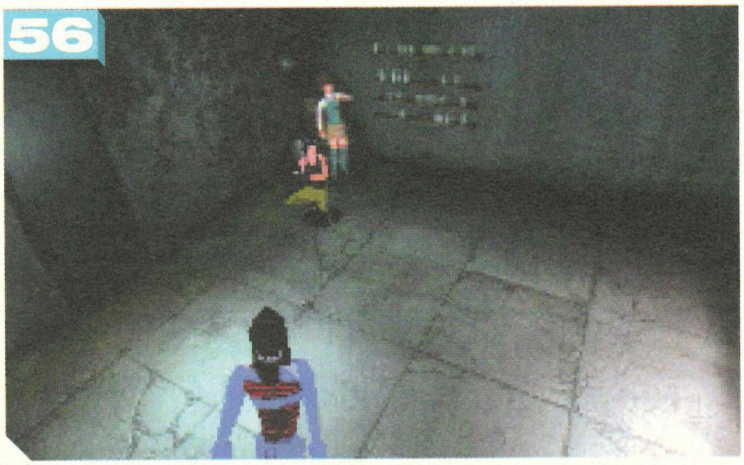
▲ Another Demon appears next to you so kill it and save the game inside here. Walk into the camera and pick up the key, at which point Hana changes back her clothes



▲ Leave the room and kill the three Demon Hookers that are waiting outside. Walk into the camera and use the key on the meat locker



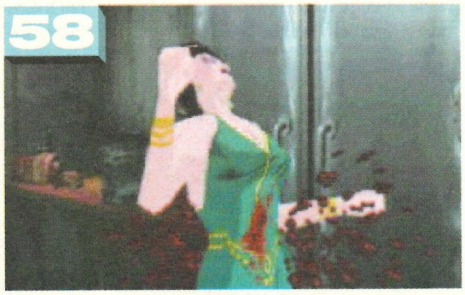
▲ Hana finds Glas hanging in the back of the meat locker. Pick up and arm the shotgun and walk to the top left of the screen. Go through this door to face Chen



▲ This is actually one of the easiest bosses in the game. After the cutscene, shoot the Demon Woman that appears and run towards the screen



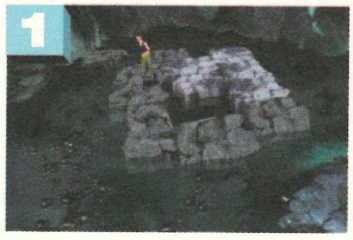
▲ Every demon that you kill will drop a paper Madame Chen. Pick this up and run to Chen and her fire ring. Use the paper Chen on the flames and the flames will die down for a short while and you'll be able to fire a shot off



▲ Three shotgun rounds later and Madame Chen falls all too easily. You then see her disappear through the ground and you follow. That's the end of the third disc and there's still so many unanswered questions

Disc 4: In Hell

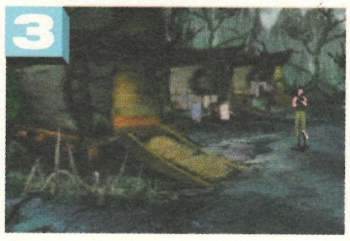
IT'S THE FINAL DISC AND THE END IS NEAR. THE FINAL TWISTS TO THE STORY ARRIVE AS YOU UNCOVER WHAT HAPPENED TO DEKE AND GLAS AND LEARN THE TRUTH ABOUT WEE MING AND MR. LAM. IT'S BUILDING TOWARDS A DRAMATIC FINALE



▲ Save the game. Learn the movements of the stones before you walk. Once you're on the second block, wait until the third goes and reappears before moving onto it



▲ Continue through about three screens until you get to here. Now equip a weapon, creep around the corner and shoot the Demon Monks



▲ Here's a little tip for you. The ammo you pick up here is paper ammo and can't be used directly with the guns. You have to burn it first, but we'll explain more later



▲ Turn around and run to the top of the screen. You should come to two huts (pictured), the second one of which has a save point in it



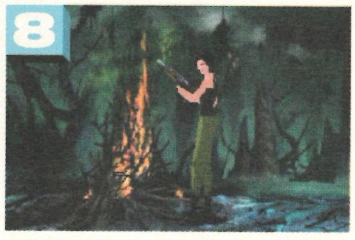
▲ Leave the hut and walk to Hana's left. Go through a couple of screens and kill the monk. Go down the steps and walk to the top (Hana's right) with the shotgun armed



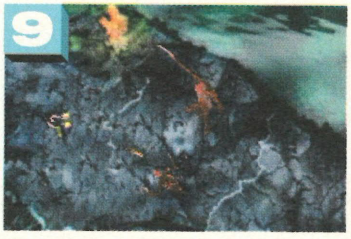
▲ Walk through the next screen and three demon monks appear. Kill them and pick up a Paper Gate that one of them drops. Run back past the huts



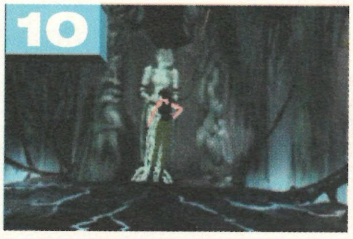
▲ As you get into this screen, a bolt of lightning will strike this pyre and ignite it. Run up to and use the Paper Gate on the flame to burn a gate elsewhere in the level



▲ You'll notice that the ammo you pick up in Hell is made of paper. To make the ammo useful you need to burn it first. The same applies to paper weapons



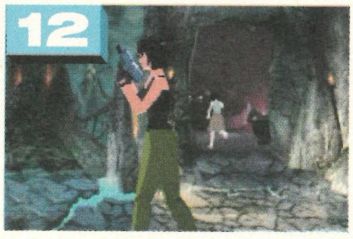
▲ Burn paper ammo, head towards the steps and kill demons. Go down steps, kill demons. Enter gate and get paper Rifle



▲ Reach this room. Speak to the demon Madame Chen at the back. She'll give you a doll and tell you to find her daughter



▲ Backtrack now. Reach the bottom of the stone steps, continue running towards the camera and take out the demons



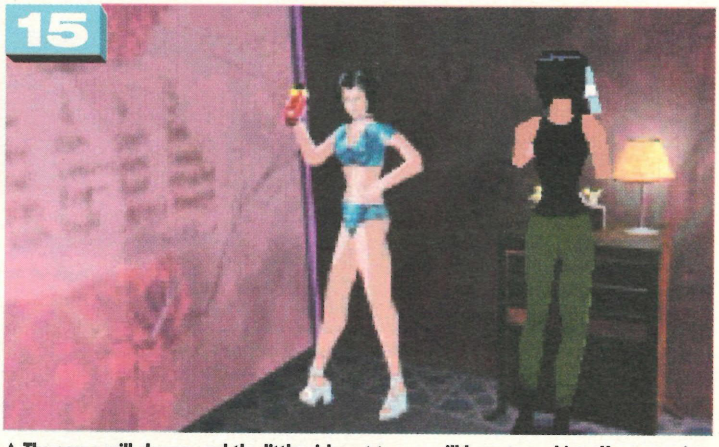
▲ Continue through the screens and you'll see a little girl run inside a stone hut. Follow her, saving your progress as you go



▲ Use the doll on the little girl who is a younger version of Hana. Watch the scene between the two because you have to solve a puzzle



▲ Use left and right to move dial in the centre of the clock. Line up the five hash marks with number 5 and press ⊗. Move the single hash below 5 and press ⊗



▲ The scene will change and the little girl next to you will have turned into Hana wearing the skimpy outfit she had on at Madame Chen's building



▲ Use the clock again. This time line up the hash marks under the 18 in this order: two, five, five. The view will switch and this time there's an older looking Hana

In Hell



▲ To the clock once more. This time you need to line up the hash marks above the number 35 in this order: one, five. This will reveal an old lady



▲ For the final time use the clock. Line up the hash marks above 88 this time. The order is: four, four, three, two. This makes the old lady wilt and die



▲ Pick up the Stone Scroll and leave, saving again. Run back to Demon Chen. A scene shows her giving you a tree branch before disappearing. Kill monks and leave



▲ Three more monks wait outside. On your way back to the huts stop off at the flame and burn any paper ammo you have. Save in this hut, leave and run to Hana's right



▲ Run towards this pyre, killing any enemies you meet on the way. Burn any rounds of paper ammo you have and then use the branch on the fire



▲ Now you have to light three torches with the branch. The first is just past the pyre you're using. Use the branch on it to set it alight



▲ Now you need to run all the way back to the huts. Walk just past the second hut and you'll see another unlit torch. Go up to it and use the branch



▲ The final torch is at the bottom of the stone stairs. Once you've lit the three, a small scene will appear showing you a door catching fire



▲ Run up the stairs and you'll see a doorway has opened. Go inside and you'll get a Stone Tree Half and Paper Gate. Leave temple and go to the pyre



▲ Use Paper Gate on the flames. A key appears in a hut. Get it and save. Go back to where you met young Hana. Pass hut, kill demons and use key



▲ Get control of Glas, save and continue. Once you get to this screen, remember it as a good reference point. Run to the top of the screen



▲ Go through door and shoot two Demon Monks. Run to the door at the end. Use Paper Ammo on the flame and then go through. Kill bloodhound



▲ Run through the next door and pick up the moon key from the ledge. Run towards the left corner and a paper Pistol appears. Pick it up



▲ Leave this room and run all the way back to the ice floor room. You emerge from the top of the screen. Run straight on to the bottom



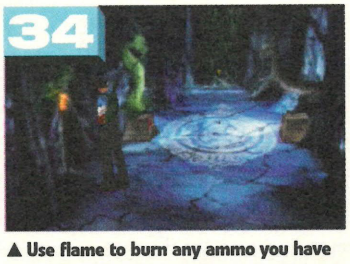
▲ Use the moon key on the door at the end. Follow Deke's ghost. Run to the pulsating light in the corner. Kill the three monks chasing you



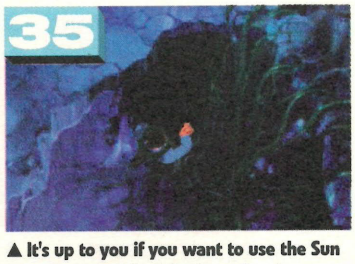
▲ Run round the corner where two monks wait. Run to the flame in the corner, by the hole and the vines. Save and climb down



▲ See Deke's ghost at the bottom but don't follow it. Instead, wait with a decent gun armed and kill the two bloodhounds



▲ Use flame to burn any ammo you have and collect the Sun Key floating between the two dragon statues



▲ It's up to you if you want to use the Sun Key. If you do, climb back up the vines you've just come down

In Hell



▲ Now run back a few screens until you get to this room. Run towards the door shown, equip a decent weapon and use the Sun Key on it



▲ Inside are two monks and a paper Assault Rifle. The two monks drop Assault Rifle ammo too. Now run back to the room where you picked up the Sun Key



▲ Burn the paper items and continue. Climb the vines at the end of this room and Deke's ghost will watch you



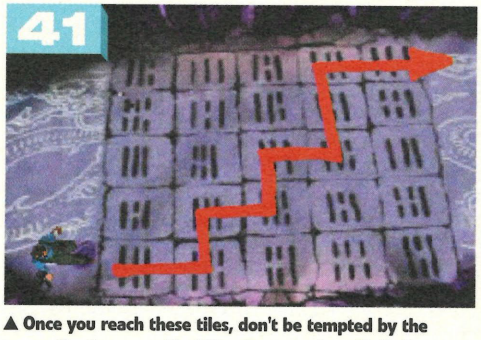
▲ When you reach this room, step onto the dodgy looking platforms about here. The scene will change and you'll face loads of monks



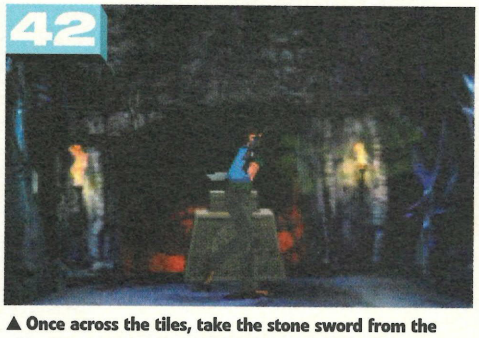
▲ Kill until a gap appears. Run to the right hand side of the screen. Ignore monks behind you and run to the end of the room. Save progress before climbing down the vines



▲ Shoot Deke as many times as you can before he disappears into the gooey swamp surrounding the floor



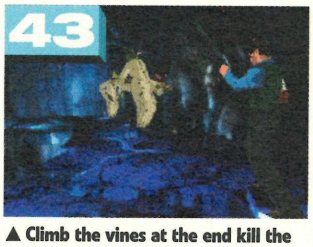
▲ Once you reach these tiles, don't be tempted by the ammo floating on a tile. It'll collapse and you'll die if you try and get it. This is the safe path across



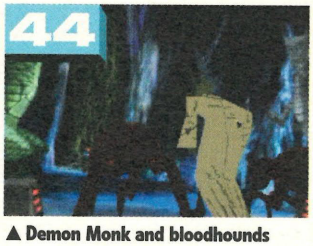
▲ Once across the tiles, take the stone sword from the pillar. Then walk back and blast the demons while you're at it. Now get back across the tiles



▲ Stand on the middle block first, then bottom. Stay on the bottom for the third attack, then middle and bottom



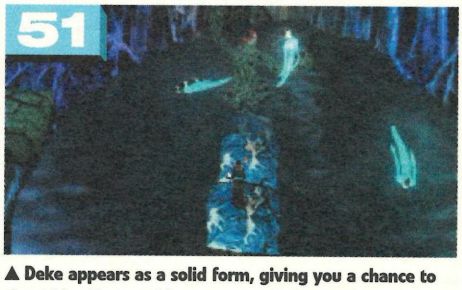
▲ Climb the vines at the end kill the monks. Run back along the cracked floor and down the vines



▲ Demon Monk and bloodhounds wait for you at the bottom. Start shooting and they'll run towards you



▲ Go through Sun Key room and climb the vines. Save and backtrack until you get here. Go through doors



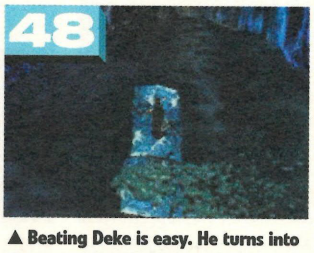
▲ Deke appears as a solid form, giving you a chance to shoot him. Repeat this pattern until demons leave him



▲ Through the next door you get another sighting of Deke. Follow him and run into the ice floor room



▲ Run at the dragon. Use the stone sword and the wall will crumble exposing a new passage. Save inside



▲ Beating Deke is easy. He turns into liquid and absorbs the blocks you stand on, but in a continuous pattern



▲ Next attack gets a new block pattern. Wait in this order: middle, bottom, bottom, left and left. Shoot Deke

In Hell



▲ As soon as you've hurt him a second time and the demons appear run to the bottom block because all of the others will disappear



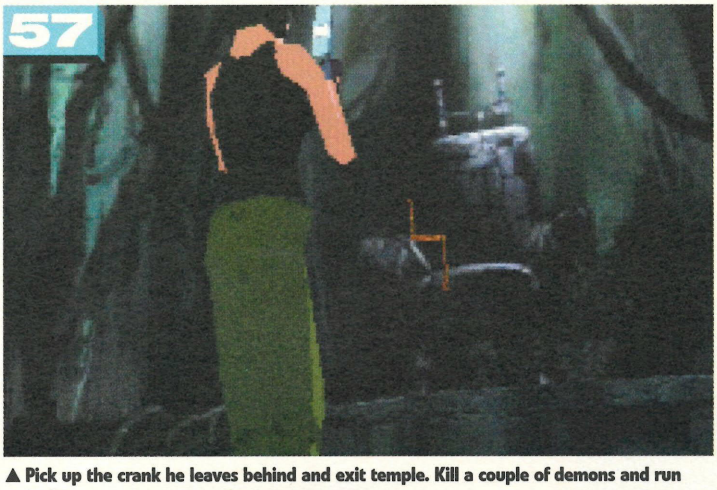
▲ His final set of attacks won't hurt you as long as you stand in these positions: top, top and middle. After the third attack you'll be able to shoot him



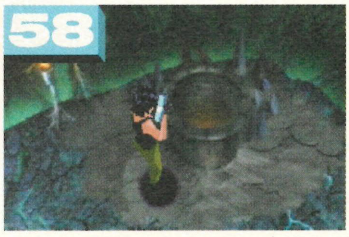
▲ Once you've killed him, Deke sinks into the goo and he's gone. Glas picks up an item from him and vows to get revenge for his death. The action cuts back to Hana



▲ Save the game, walk forward and kill the demons. Walk into the temple and the brother of the weird guy gives you the other half of the Stone Tree



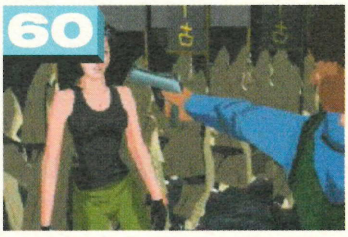
▲ Pick up the crank he leaves behind and exit temple. Kill a couple of demons and run past the stone house you met little Hana in. Save in the hut and burn any paper ammo



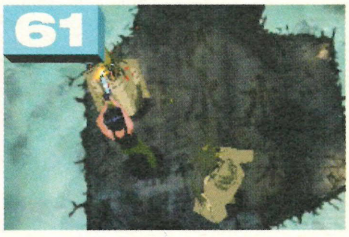
▲ Run past the other huts and to the right hand side of the screen. Use the crank on the well and Hana will winch up a stone eye. Walk away and Royce climbs out



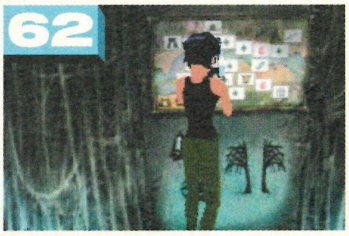
▲ Run into the screen once you have control of Hana and this will trigger a major cutscene involving Wee Ming and the parade you see in the intro



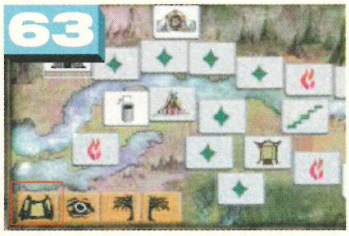
▲ Hana runs off to get Wee Ming and Glas is left on his own again. For once, let the monks attack because you can't kill them all so it's a waste of your efforts



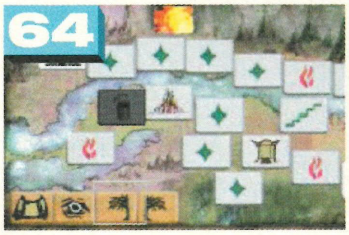
▲ Now you'll get control of Hana. Equip a weapon and run forwards a couple of screens. Two monks are waiting for you here, so kill them



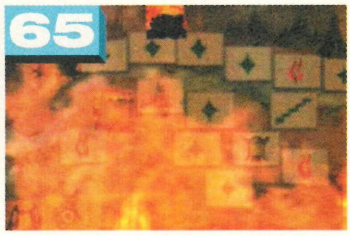
▲ Now run all the way to the end of the walkway, across a little bridge and you'll come to this new puzzle which involves matching tiles



▲ You have to match up the four symbols at the bottom with their corresponding tile. Hit ⊗ to select the Stone Scroll and move it over the icon at the very top



▲ Second icon at the bottom of the screen, represents the Stone Eye and must be matched with the dark icon shown above



▲ The left half of the tree matches the farthest left icon. The right half matches the bottom right icon. Then it catches fire



▲ The bridge on which Hana ran up to the tile puzzle collapses and the backgrounds starts to morph



▲ Hana is in a room filled with symbols and wooden machines. Walk to her right to a furnace. Past it is a valuable save point

In Hell



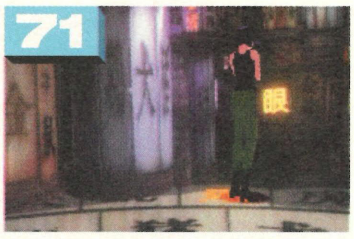
▲ Use the paper doll in your inventory on the furnace. It lights, revealing symbols above you. Find these in the room



▲ But before you can, dispose of enemies. Quickly arm a weapon and shoot the six demons that appear



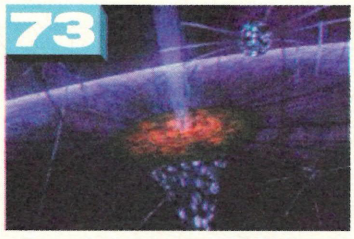
▲ Here's the first symbol to find. Stand on it and pick Stone Willow from inventory. Drop it on the symbol. It'll flash



▲ Now run just to the left of the furnace and you'll find this symbol in the wall. Use the stone eye on it and Hana will plop it in



▲ The final symbol is here, on the floor in the main section of the wall. Drop the stone scroll and Hana will be whisked away



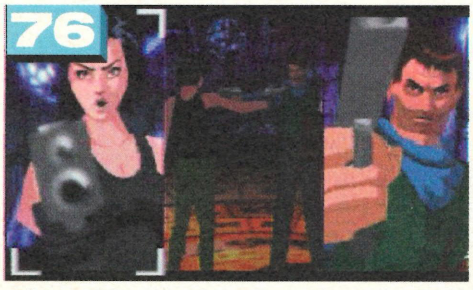
▲ Jin reveals he's the King of Hell! Hana and Yim Lau Wong have a scene together where unanswered questions are solved



▲ Wong tells Mr. Lam he has failed him and slaps him. His blood hits the face of Wee Ming. Lam turns into a demon beast



▲ Glas gets Lam's gun but Hana believes Wee Ming. Glas doesn't and wants to kill her. It's your call



▲ If you pick Hana, she shoots Glas and has to face off against the freshly mutated Demon Lam. And this is one hell of a tough boss to kill

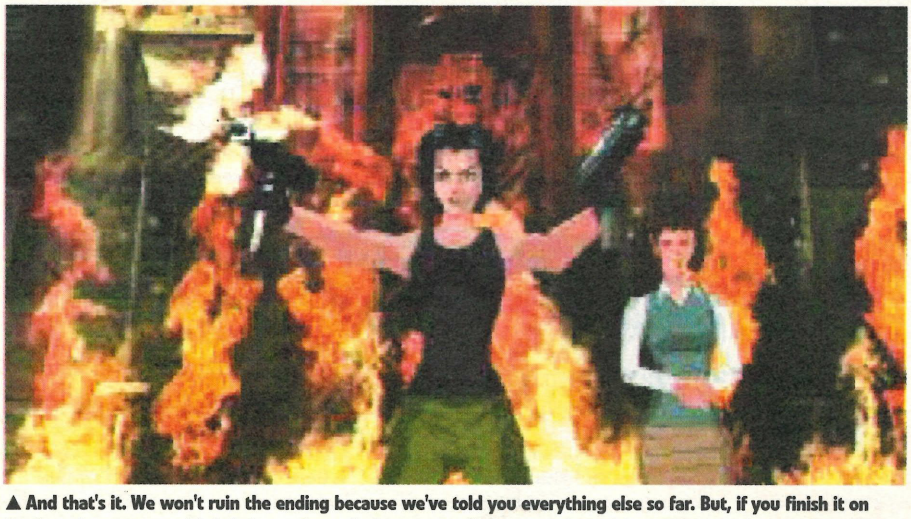


▲ From the back of the room, Lam spits an electric like torrent across the screen. You first have to dodge those will keeping an eye out for the flying imps



▲ Every so often, the imps you kill will drop Paper Money on the floor. All you have to do is pick it up and burn it on the flames at the back. Repeat this process to kill him

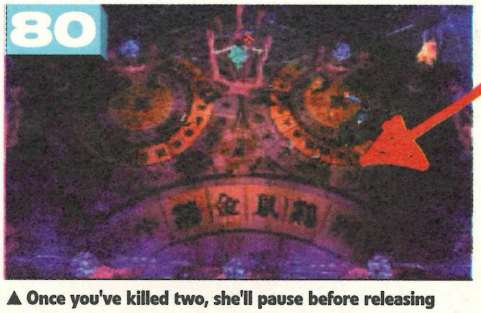
Is that really the end?



▲ And that's it. We won't ruin the ending because we've told you everything else so far. But, if you finish it on Hard mode, you get a third choice at the end of game too. Now you understand why we scored it a perfect 10!



▲ Glas is faced with Demon Wee Ming once he's put a bullet through Hana's head. The trick here is to kill the freaks she throws at him as quick as possible



▲ Once you've killed two, she'll pause before releasing more. Now's your chance to do damage. Pick up the paper ammo and use it on the flames to restock if you have to

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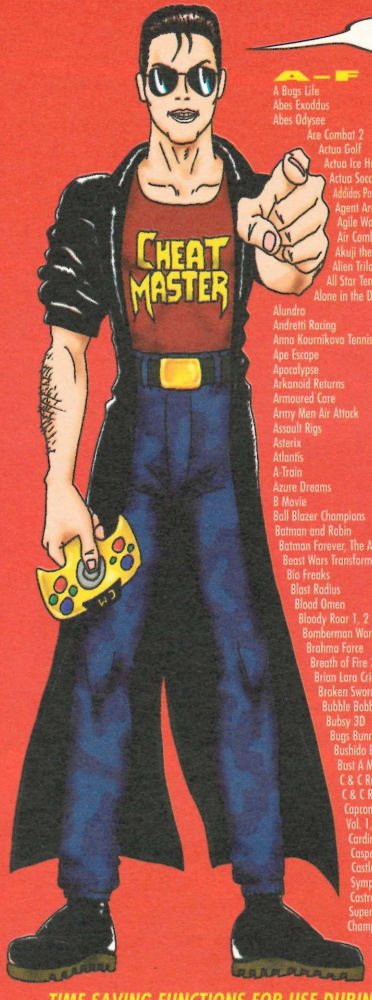
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Q - U

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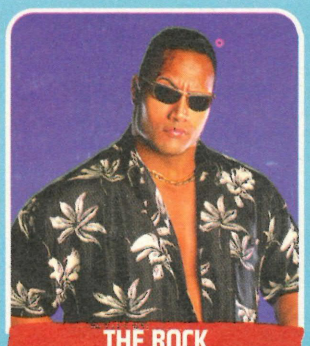
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WWF Smackdown

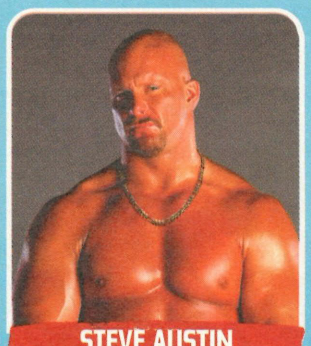
LEARN THE BEST MOVES FAST!

DON'T BOTHER WITH EXPENSIVE GUIDES: LEARN ALL THE MOVES THE EASY WAY

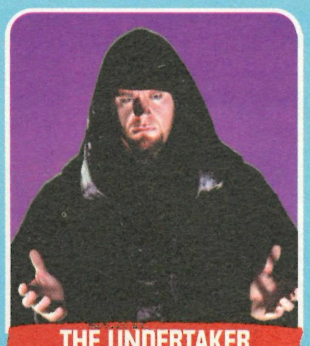
To learn the moves for each wrestler, go to the Create a Wrestler mode and enter the Moves section. You can choose moves from each wrestler in the main game, and it shows you all the keys you have to press. This is a handy way to learn all the moves for each wrestler. Make sure you swot up on your attacks before heading out to the ring to lay the Smackdown!



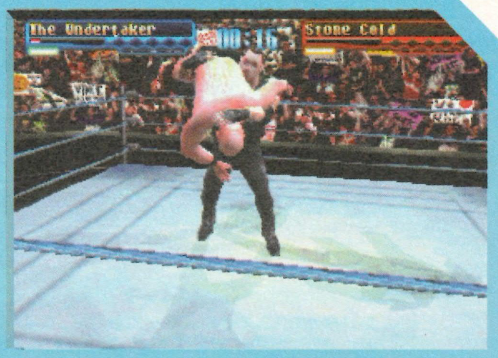
▲ The Rock Bottom ◁ + ◉ in front of stunned opponent



▲ Stone Cold Stunner: use this on a stunned opponent L1



▲ Tombstone Piledriver: kill your opponent stone dead with L1



▲ The Undertaker lets Stone Cold 'Rest in Peace!'



▲ Stone Cold stuns 'em with his awesome flip

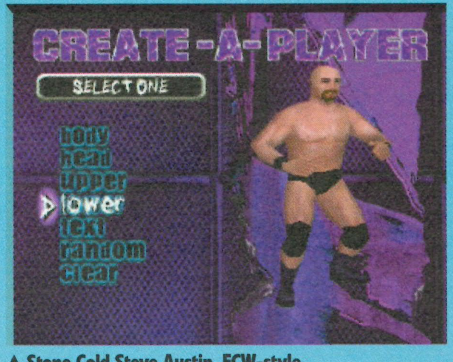
ECW Hardcore Revolution

MISSING STONE COLD? NO PROBLEM!

Here's how to make your very own DIY Stone Cold Steve Austin in ECW Hardcore Revolution, for those moments when you get tired of playing with nobodies like Tommy Dreamer and the Sheikh. Just go to Create-a-Wrestler mode and enter the following combination. Here's one we made earlier.

STONE COLD STEVE AUSTIN

BODY:	M. AVERAGE
SKIN TONE:	PLAIN
SKIN COLOUR: ONE	1(6, 50, 50)
EYES:	ANGRY(53, 70, 28)
NOSE:	AVERAGE 2
MOUTH:	FROWN 1(100, 43, 56)
HAIR:	NONE
BEARD:	GOAT-TEE 5(15, 53, 24)
VOICE:	BIG SAL(54, 0, 0)++[OPTIONAL]++
WAISTBAND:	LEATHER(10, 30, 0)
PANTS:	(SHORTS):PLAIN(27, 0, 2)
BOOTS:	ANGELIC(52, 50, 50)
KNEE PAD:	GENERIC HIGH(17, 50, 0)
MOVE 1:	(READY):ACE CRUSHER(STONE COLD STUNNER)
MOVE 2:	(RUNNING ATTACKER):VERTICAL BODY PRESS



▲ Stone Cold Steve Austin, ECW-style



Spyro 2

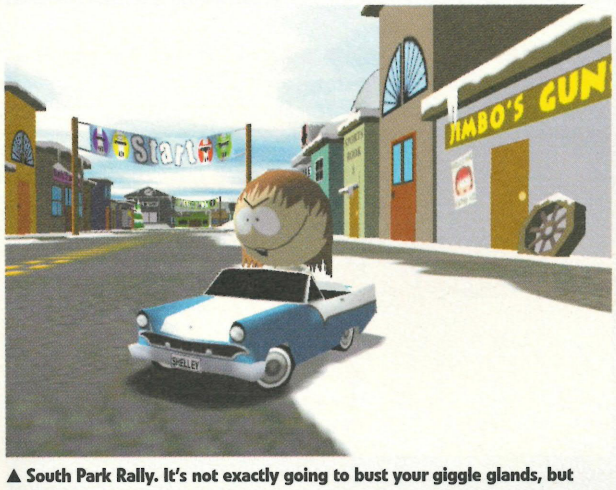
GET A CRASH TEAM RACING DEMO

To unlock a secret demo of Crash Team Racing, go to the main menu, hold L1 and R2 and press the ● button. You'll enter a secret mode where you can test-drive CTR.

South Park Rally

UNLOCK COOL SECRET CHARACTERS AND RACES

South Park Rally was unfunny for a good 80 percent of the game. Here's some tricks to try to ramp up the laugh factor. To unlock the Valentine's Day Race and Big Gay Al's course in Arcade mode just win Cow Days in Championship mode. To unlock the Spring Cleaning course and the Sewer course, win the Valentine's Day race in Championship Mode. You'll also get Stan's sister Shelly as a secret character.



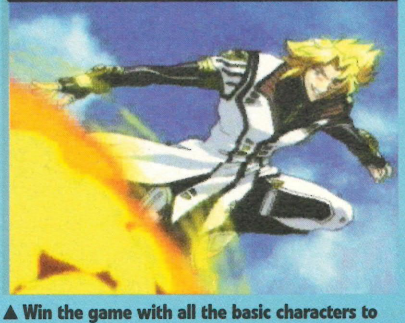
▲ South Park Rally. It's not exactly going to bust your giggle glands, but there's a few larfs to be had

Psychic Force 2012

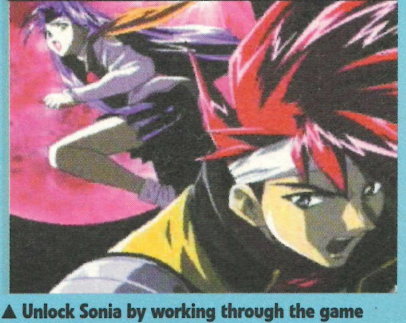
UNLOCK THE SECRET CHARACTERS

This aerial beat 'em up attracts the hardcore. Here's some tips to join them. To power up your character, go to Psy-Expand mode and win a couple of rounds. Characters who you've defeated will give you some of their moves. You can save up to two moves to your Psy-Expand slots and then use them against your mate in VS mode.

UNLOCKING CHARACTERS	CODE
BURN	COMPLETE ARCADE MODE WITH EVERY CHARACTER, 3 ROUND MATCH ,MINIMUM
KEITH	COMPLETE STORY MODE WITH EVERY CHARACTER , 1 ROUND MATCH MINIMUM
WONG	COMPLETE STORY MODE WITH KEITH AND BURN, 1 ROUND MATCH MINIMUM
SONIA	COMPLETE STORY MODE WITH KEITH, BURN AND WONG, 1 ROUND MATCH MINIMUM
BRAD	COMPLETE ARCADE MODE WITH KEITH, BURN AND WONG, 3 ROUND MATCH MINIMUM
GENMA	COMPLETE SURVIVAL MODE ONCE



▲ Win the game with all the basic characters to unlock Burn



▲ Unlock Sonia by working through the game with Wong, Keith and Burn

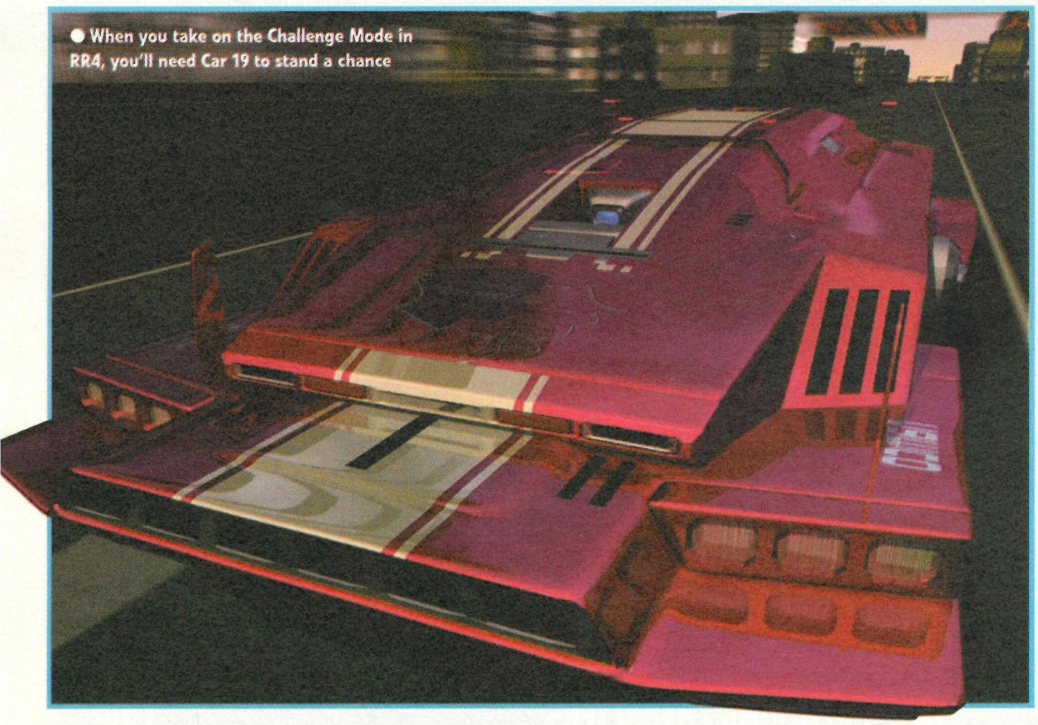
Ridge Racer Type 4

ALL 320 CARS & UNLOCK THE PACMAN CAR

You'll have to complete Grand Prix Mode several times with each manufacturer to get all the cars available. You'll have to deliberately come in 2nd or 3rd place on some races, and some you'll have to win. Once you've completed this for every manufacturer, you'll unlock the ultra-fast Pac Man car. Here's the combinations of race results you'll have to get if you want the best cars to use in the one-on-one challenge mode:

HOW TO UNLOCK EVERY MOTOR FOR EVERY TEAM

	HELTER SKELTER	WONDERHILL	EDGE OF THE EARTH	OUT OF THE BLUE	CARS GAINED
RACE POSITION	3RD	3RD	2ND	2ND	1, 2, 6, 13
RACE POSITION	3RD	3RD	1ST	2ND	1, 2, 7, 14
RACE POSITION	3RD	3RD	2ND	1ST	1, 2, 8, 15
RACE POSITION	3RD	3RD	1ST	1ST	1, 2, 9, 16
RACE POSITION	2ND	2ND	1ST	1ST	1, 3, 10, 17
RACE POSITION	2ND	1ST	1ST	1ST	1, 4, 11, 18
RACE POSITION	1ST	1ST	1ST	1ST	1, 5, 12, 19



● When you take on the Challenge Mode in RR4, you'll need Car 19 to stand a chance

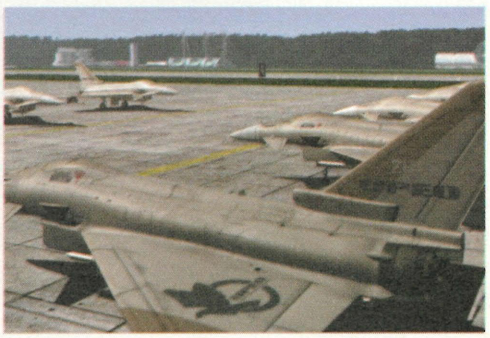


▲ Croc 2's cheat menu gives you tons of choices

Croc 2

UNLOCK THE CHEAT MENU

Hold L1 and press △ ◁ ◁ ▷ ○ △ △ ◁ ○ at the title screen. Then while playing a game, press L2 and R2 to display a cheat menu.



▲ Take on any mission with the plane of your choice

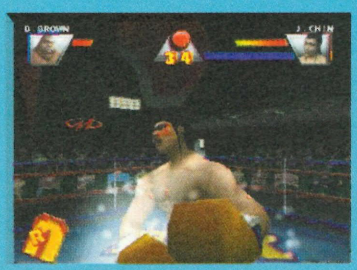
Ace Combat 3

UNLOCK THE MISSION SIMULATOR

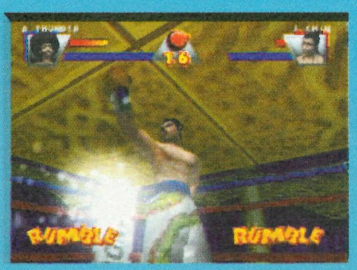
To be able to play a Mission Simulator that lets you take on any mission with any pilot in any plane, complete all 52 levels and unlock the game's five endings.

Ready 2 Rumble Boxing

UNLOCK SECRET FIGHTERS & BOUNCE BACK FROM BEATINGS



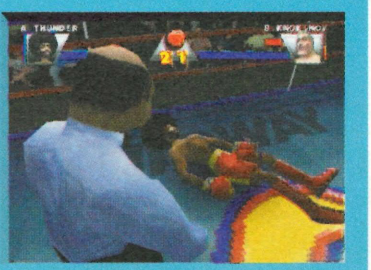
▲ Enter Championship mode and use Gold as a gym name. You'll unlock all the Gold class fighters, plus you'll get the secret character Nap Daddy in Arcade mode



▲ Enter Championship mode and use Champ as a gym name. You'll unlock all the Championship class fighters and you get the tough Damian Black in Arcade mode.



▲ To unlock each character's secret costume, just press ■ and ○ together while you're choosing them on the Character Select screen



▲ As soon as you get knocked down, repeatedly press all four controller buttons at the same time to boost the energy of your fighter

Syphon Filter

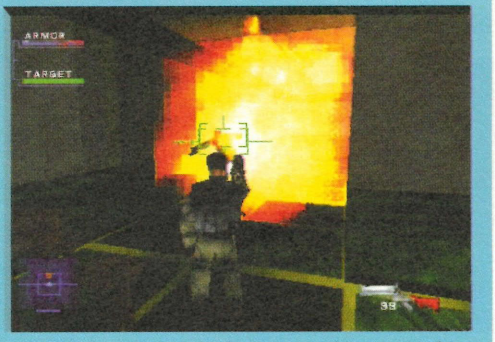
ALL WEAPONS, INFINITE AMMO, MISSION SELECT



▲ If you're set on fire, press START to pause the game, then quickly unpause. You'll still take damage from the flames, but you should survive



▲ To unlock the Mission Select mode, pause the game and go to the Mission option and press L1 L2 R1 R2 ● ● ✕



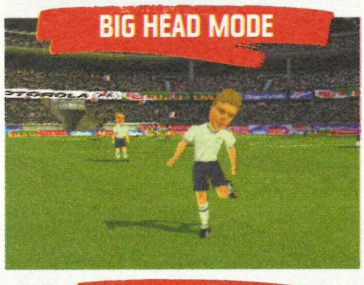
▲ To get all weapons and infinute ammunition, pause the game and go to the Weapon option. Press SEL L1 L2 R2 and ● ✕

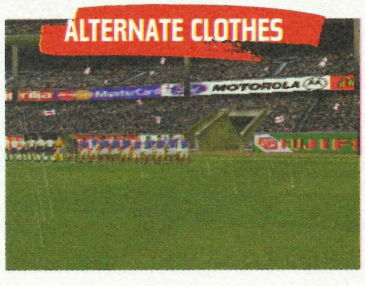
This is Football

FOOTY WITH A CHOPPED HEAD

You can only use one of these at any time. Enter them on the main menu. Sorry, there are no useful cheats, but a couple of these are a bit of a laugh.

CHEAT	CODE
SMALL PLAYERS	● R2 ⇨ L2 L1
BIG HEAD MODE	△ △ L2 L1 L1
PLAYER'S HEAD AS THE BALL	⇦ L1 L1 L1 R2
LET'S YOU PLAY IN 70S GEAR WITH KEEGAN-STYLE AFROS	L1 R2 L2 ● R1
TOPLESS	⇩ R2 R2 R2 △
ALTERNATE CLOTHES	● L2 ⇦ R2 △
BLACK & WHITE MODE	⇧ R1 L2 R1 R2





CALL THE MAKERS

ACCLAIM	09068 303330
ACTIVISION	01895 456700
TAKE 2	01429 855046
CODEMASTERS	01926 816044
ELECTRONIC ARTS	0906 753253
EIDOS	0121 3560831
GT INTERACTIVE	0891 669910
INFOGRAMES	0161 827 8060
INTERPLAY	0839 662666
JVC	0171 240 3121
KONAMI	09014 747484
MICROPROSE	01454 893900
NAMCO	09064 765765
PSYGNOSIS	0151 282 3333
SONY	09064 765765
TELSTAR	01932 232299
THQ	07071 223388
UBI SOFT	0181 944 9000

R-Type Delta

UP YOUR ARSENAL!

Enter these codes by pausing the game, holding L2 and punching in these codes. They won't work unless you've got a Force Pod, though.

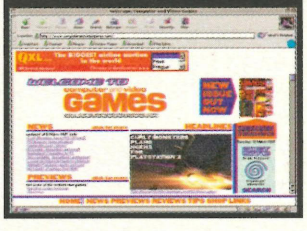
CHEAT	CODE
100% FORCE POWER	⇦ ⇨ ⇧ ⇩ ⇨ ⇦ ⇧ ⇩ + △
RED POWER	⇦ ⇨ ⇧ ⇩ ⇨ ⇦ ⇧ ⇩ + ●
BLUE POWER	⇦ ⇨ ⇧ ⇩ ⇨ ⇦ ⇧ ⇩ + ✕
YELLOW POWER	⇦ ⇨ ⇧ ⇩ ⇨ ⇦ ⇧ ⇩ + ●





TIPS SITES WE LIKE

▼ COMPUTER & VIDEO GAMES ONLINE
http://www.computerandvideogames.com



■ GAMEFAQS
http://gamefaqs.com

■ CHEATMASTERS ONLINE
http://www.cheatmasters.ndirect.co.uk/cheats.html

▼ PSX GAMER
http://www.psxgamer.co.uk/home.htm



■ PSX NATION
http://www.psxnation.com/

■ GAMES MANIA
http://www.gamesmania.com/cgibin/english/news/default.htm

■ THE PLAYSTATION GALLERIA
http://www.vidgames.com

■ GAME SAGES
http://www.segasages.com

MADCATZ ACCESSORIES FOR PLAYSTATION, N64, PC AND DREAMCAST

TOCA Touring Car Championship 2

A REAL DRIVER'S GAME MADE MORE FUN

Enter all of these as names in Championship mode. Once you've entered a cheat, the name screen clears again so you can enter more.

CHEAT	CODE
ALL CARS	MECHANIC
ALL TRACKS	BIGLEY
MICRO MACHINES MODE	MINICARS
LOW GRAVITY	LUNAR
40 LAP RACE	LONGLONG
TURBO MODE	FASTBOY
ELEVATED TRACKS	ELASTIC
BOUNCY COLLISIONS	BCASTLE



▲ Grab yourself some nifty motors



▲ Unlock the Loch Rannoch course



▲ Micro Machines mode in action



▲ Low gravity mode: very bouncy

Test Drive 5

UNLOCK SECRET CARS AND SECRET MODES

CHEAT	CODE
ALL CARS	SET A COURSE RECORD AND ENTER NOLIFE AS YOUR NAME
ALL MODES	SET A COURSE RECORD AND ENTER VRSIX AS YOUR NAME TO OPEN UP ALL THE MODES
ALL TRACKS	SET A COURSE RECORD AND ENTER NUTS AS YOUR NAME
BONUS FMV SEQUENCE	SET A COURSE RECORD AND ENTER NAME: AUXYRAY, SELECT FEAR FACTORY VID OPTION AT MAIN MENU
BONUS CARS	SET A RECORD AND ENTER SPUNK AS YOUR NAME. GET THE PITBULL SPECIAL, MIGHTY MAUI AND CHRIS'S BEAST
CLASSIC SILVERSTONE TRACK	SET A COURSE RECORD AND ENTER QUALITY AS YOUR NAME
COP CHASE MODE	ENTER YOUR NAME AS VRSIX TO ENABLE THE COP CHASE PLAY MODE. YOU CAN USE TIME TRIALS OR CUP RACE
QUARTER-MILE DRAG RACE	SET A COURSE RECORD AND ENTER FIESTA AS YOUR NAME
SUPER ARCADE MODE	ENTER SPURT AS YOUR NAME IN THE TIME TRIAL MODE

+The Masters



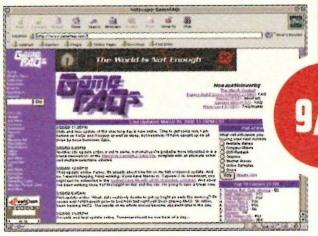
GOT RIPPED OFF OR GIVEN THE BRUSH OFF FROM TIPS LINES OR OTHER MAGS WHEN YOU NEED HELP?

NOT AT PLAYNATION. SAY HELLO TO THE MASTERS, A ELITE TEAM OF TIPS WARRIORS YOU CAN CALL FOR THE SAME PRICE AS CALLING A MATE IN LONDON. NO PREMIUM LINES OR BEING LEFT WAITING.

THE MASTERS WILL ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS AND PROVIDE HINTS, TIPS AND WALKTHROUGHS FOR YOUR FAVOURITE PLAYSTATION GAMES.

THEIR KNOWLEDGE IS UP-TO-DATE AND ACCURATE, GUARANTEED! CALL PLAYNATION DIRECTLY ON 0207 972 6744 AND ASK FOR THE MASTERS.

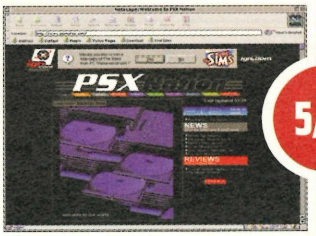
CHEAT SITES REVIEWED



9/10

http://www.gamefaqs.com

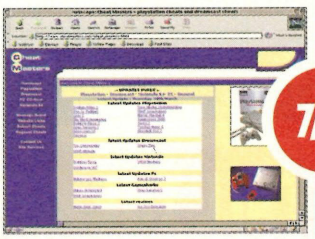
Cool site with walkthroughs for just about every PlayStation game. They always pinpoint all the hidden extras and stuff in any new release within a couple of days, and they've usually nailed it on import, so they're a good first port of call if you're stuck on a tricky bit. No cheats, though.



5/10

http://www.psxnation.com

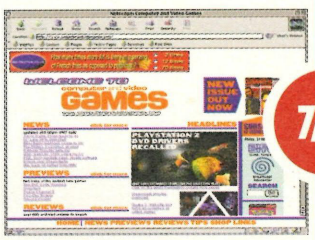
Not-exactly-brilliant archive of PlayStation tips. Better for older games, but there's a lot of games which they don't cover. Most of the cheats seem to work, though, and there's no annoying tips for Japanese games which won't work over here.



7/10

http://www.cheatmasters.com

Patchy but pretty trustworthy cheats site, with up-to-the-minute coverage. Most of the cheats are pukka, and the tips are fairly useful. There's no walkthrough-type tips on here, though.



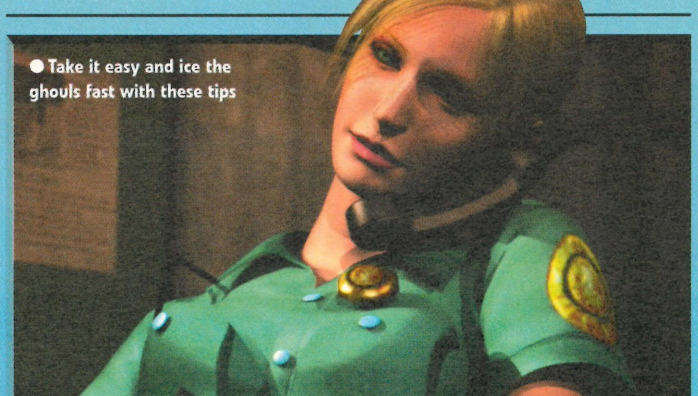
7/10

http://www.computerandvideogames.com

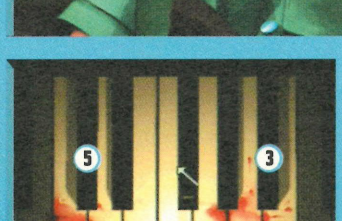
The site caters for every console, so the PlayStation coverage isn't complete, but all the codes work, and it's an ideal one-stop-shop if you've got other consoles. It's got cheats for PC, N64, Dreamcast, PlayStation and Gameboy.

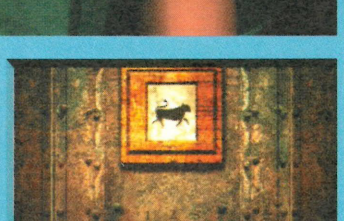
Silent Hill

THE TRICKIEST PUZZLES SOLVED



● Take it easy and ice the ghouls fast with these tips





1: THE PIANO PUZZLE

The poem refers to black birds and white birds, which represent keys. Just hit the keys in the sequence shown above, and you'll get the silver medallion

2: THE ZODIAC PUZZLE

The numbers refer to the number of limbs on the Zodiac signs above. Sagittarius is six: four legs, two arms. Pisces is zero. Punch in the correct number on the keypads.

3: THE PAINTING PUZZLE

in the room which says 'Light illuminating the darkness', each picture has a pattern hidden behind it. You need to press the buttons on the keypad below the picture to make a matching pattern. Use your camera flash in front of the pictures to expose the patterns.

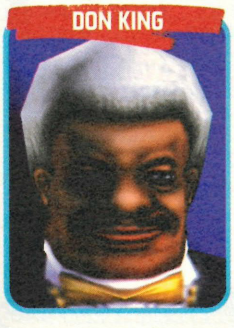
4: THE AGES PUZZLE

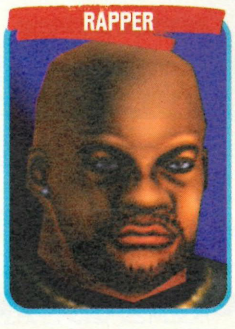
The poem in hall (in the Alternate Hospital) refers to the list of names next to the door. If you take the first letter of each name and arrange them in order of the age they died at – the 'Grim Reaper's List' – you get the word ALERT. Punch that into the keypad to get through the door

Victory Boxing 3

SECRET CHARACTERS UNLOCKED

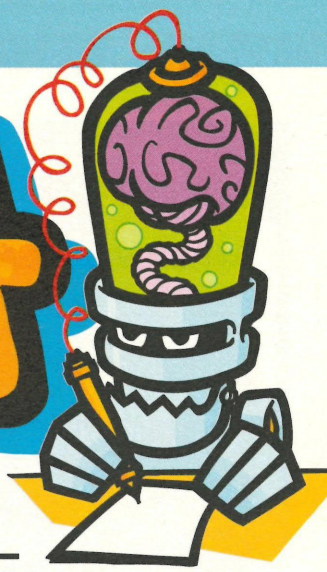
The game's not that brilliant, granted, but there's some cool secret characters in there. Unlock them by battling your way through the championship mode.







Q+A



Got a PlayStation problem? We'll sort it!

POCKETSTATION

When will the PocketStation be released, and when is WWF Smackdown coming out?

Amir Iqbal, Cardiff

The PocketStation is never coming out over here, because the Japanese one was bugged so the batteries only lasted a few hours. There might be a new one for PlayStation 2 though. As for Smackdown, it'll be on sale by the time this mag hits the shelves. Check it out, it's a corker.

BROKEN SWORD

I'm stuck on the bit with the goat in Ireland in the first Broken Sword. I just can't get past it, no matter what I do. Please help, it's driving me crazy.

Alan Cockburn, Dundee

You've got to wait till the goat lunges at you, then click on the plough next to it. Quickly click on the goat, and you'll tether it to the plough. Walk round the other side of it, and it isn't able to reach you with its horns of death. You can then enter the cellar.

OVERBOARD

I have been playing Overboard for ages now but I'm stuck. I had a hell of a job killing the lobster in level four, but I managed it. But I can't progress any further in level five. Have you got any passwords? ***Mr G Patterson, Goole***

You want passwords, you got it. With this lot in your arsenal you're able to reach every level

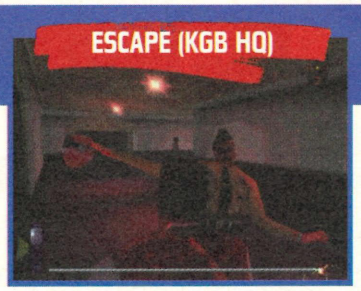
LEVEL	PASSWORD
1-2	Ship, Skull, Fish, Anchor, Ship, Anchor
1-3	Ship, Anchor, Skull, Ship, Anchor, Fish
1-4	Skull, Ship, Fish, Anchor, Anchor, Ship
2-1	Fish, Fish, Anchor, Ship, Skull, Anchor
2-2	Skull, Anchor, Anchor, Fish, Anchor, Ship
2-3	Fish, Anchor, Ship, Ship, Ship, Skull
2-4	Anchor, Fish, Ship,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

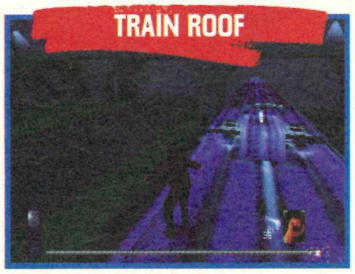


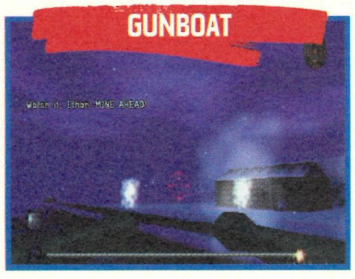
▲ Overboard's old but well cool



▲ Open up the last level with this code







MISSION IMPOSSIBLE

Are there any cheats for Mission: Impossible? ***Darran Kavanagh, Merseyside***

We haven't got cheats, but how about passwords for every level? Thought you'd be interested. Just go to the load game option and enter the passwords here.

LEVEL	PASSWORD
SUBPEN	HILKJTKUMLBF
EMBASSY FUNCTION	PMCQEQPJQQDQ
WAREHOUSE	KNDPFTPLQYDO
KGB HQ	LDEESUVPRWGB
SECURITY HALLWAY	LFERHGVRXJGP
SEWEGE CONTROL	LBEHSFVNRTGG
ESCAPE (HALLWAY)	LPEKSMVQXOGC
ESCAPE(KGB HQ)	NIQNKRQUSLHF
FIRE ALARM	NQQQKLRHSNHJ
INTERROGATION ROOM	AMRQMQSJNQPQ
INTERROGATION HALLWAY	BBMENISNNTKG
INTERROGATION INFIRMARY	CENHOQGWIVLD
CIA ROOFTOP	CINKPTGUILLF
TERMINAL ROOM	BQMMTUGHUNKJ
ROOFTOP ESCAPE	BOMNOGGVURKL
STATION	MEPHFQTWVVJD
TRAIN CAR #1 (CANDICE)	MIPKGTTUVLJF
TRAIN CAR #2 (MAX)	FLNNEPTITPIK
TRAIN ROOF	MGNQFHTKTSIM
SUBPEN	DHIJLSIRKJFP
TUNNEL	DKILMIUMKXFH
MAINLAND	OMGSKPIIJPNK
GUNBOAT	DNGOLHIKJSNM

GTA LONDON

Have you got any cheats for GTA London? I can't find any!
Joel Hinsley, Bristol

Have we got cheats? We've got bloody loads of 'em! Try these for size. Oh, and enter the passwords as your name.

PASSWORD	EFFECT
SIDEBURN	5X MULTIPLYER
MCVICAR	99 LIVES
BIGBEN	BIG POINTS
OLD BILL	MAX. WANTED
GRASS	NO POLICE
DONTMESS	ALL WEAPONS
GET CARTER	ALL THE ABOVE!



▲ **Get yourself a bleedin' pile of points with the BIGBEN cheat, sunshine!**

DOOM

I'm playing Doom for the first time, believe it or not. And it's a totally cool game. I've done most of the game on the hardest setting, but as much as I try, the level that I can't get past is the 'Suburbs' level. Is there a special way to do it, or is it just really, really hard?
Wayne Jennings, London

It's a tough old level, but there's a certain way to tackle it.

Ignore the imp-covered pillar in the toxic waste to begin with, 'cos as soon as you pick up the key on top of it, everything really kicks off.

First, go round and take out the Revenants and Mancubuses (Mancubi?) on the little buildings round the edge. Grease any stray beasts that are wandering around the level, then grab the Biosuit and nip over to the imp pillar.

As soon as you've grabbed the blue key, run hell for leather over to the cave with the Invincibility Globe in it, grab it and head out to the open area. Huge numbers of Mancubuses, imps, Revenants and those floating tomato things have teleported in, so just let rip with the rocket launcher. Whichever way you fire, you'll hit something. Once the Invincibility wears off, retreat to a safe distance and pick off the survivors.

TOMB RAIDER 4

In Tomb Raider 4, at the Sun Talisman section, you're supposed to use the talisman on the small obelisk. Problem is I have the Sun Goddess but no talisman. Where do you find it?
David Ferguson, Scotland

You don't actually pick up the Sun Talisman, you make it. On level 10, you get the Sun Disk after the three lasers zap the glass tower. Move onto the Sacred Lake and combine the Sun Goddess with the Sun Disk to make the Talisman.



METAL GEAR SOLID

I can't get past the bit where you need to call Meryl. It says the number's on the CD case, but you can't see it, even if you examine it in the menu. Am I doing something wrong?
Metin Koruth, Manchester

The CD bit's a stickler, no question. See, the number is on the actual CD case of the game. It's in one of the screen grabs on the back. If you can't be bothered to look, though, the number you need to call on the Codec is 140.15. Once you've contacted her once, you don't need the number.

Ask The Masters

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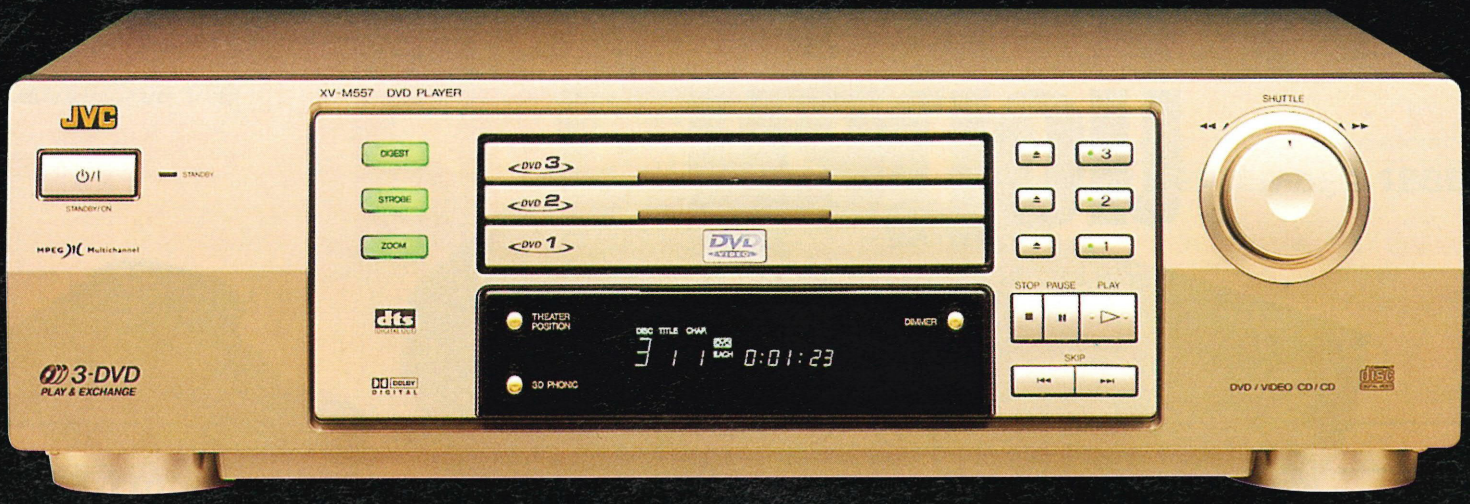
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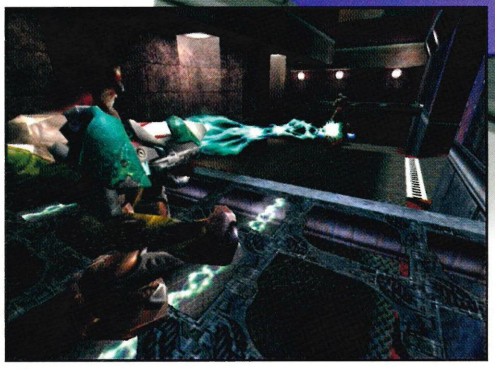
THE LAUNCH OF PLAYSTATION 2

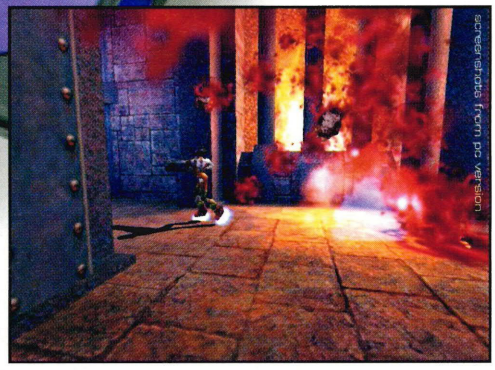
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ABE'S ODDYSEE

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 9

A great alien platform adventure game, with puzzles that get harder as you go through the game. Loads of laughs, farts, and character voices.



ABE'S EXODDUS

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 9

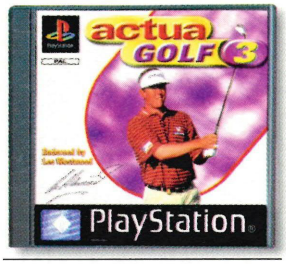
Better puzzles than Oddysee and hours of laughs, especially when you get the poor old slaves to start slapping each other. Excellent stuff.



ACE COMBAT 3

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 8

The best flight sim around, hands down. Moves like a tracer round and has the missions to keep you coming back. Controls are a bit tricky though.



ACTUA GOLF 3

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-8 | 9

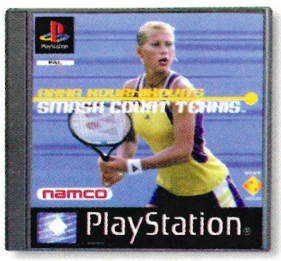
The best golf game with an innovative Dual Shock pad control system. All the real golfers are here. A class multiplayer game too.



ALIEN TRILOGY

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 7

Doom-style first-person blast 'em up. Boasts big-ass weapons to collect and tons of acid-spitting aliens to blow to shreds. Graphics look blocky.



ANNA KOURNIKOVA'S SMASH COURT TENNIS

PRICE £34.99 | PLAYERS 1-4 | 9

The greatest tennis game to hit PlayStation. It's playable in one-player, but it's best with three mates. Cute cartoony graphics are the icing on the cake.



APE ESCAPE

PRICE £34.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 9

Only compatible with the Dual Shock pad, but if you've got one and you're into cutesy platform games, this has got fun and challenge by the bucketload.



APOCALYPSE

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 8

Amazingly, Bruce Willis saves the world again in this wise-cracking, great-playing blaster. A bit on the samey side but loads more fun with the Dual Shock.



BLOODY ROAR 2

PRICE £34.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 8

Tekken 3 with teeth. Transform yourself into a slavering beast and smash mates to a bloody pulp. Rammed with great graphics and cool combos.



BRIAN LARA CRICKET

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 9

Get the hang of its tricky control system and you'll be playing the best cricket game on your PlayStation. It's great in two-player, too.



BROKEN SWORD

PRICE £19:99 | PLAYERS 1 | 8

A point-and-click adventure with rock-solid puzzles and neat graphics. Superb fun, but it can be frustrating as hell unless you're dead patient.



BROKEN SWORD 2

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 9

Compared to the original, this has touched-up graphics, a new plot and new environments. But it's still got the toughest puzzles in any 'Station point-and-click adventure.



BUST-A-GROOVE

PRICE £34.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 8

Dancing game where you get to choose your dancer, hit the floor and pull off some slick moves in the ultimate boogie battle. A great two-player blast.



BUST-A-MOVE 2

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 9

A hideously addictive game that doesn't look much but it's impossible to put down. Shoot the coloured bubbles to win.



CHAMPIONSHIP MOTOCROSS

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 8

Cane huge, snorting dirt blasters around the globe in the most realistic motorbike racer on the PlayStation, fact.



CIVILISATION 2

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 8

An awesome God game like Sim City. You start in the Stone Age and progress through the years, building up your civilisation.



'THIS OLD TIMER STILL CUTS IT ON THE DIRT TRACK, NO QUESTION.'

COLIN MCRAE RALLY

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 9

As Colin McRae is gears up the release for his second 'Station racing game, you can enjoy this class off-roader for a bargain £20. It's looks mighty tasty and there's a sweet two-player to tuck into, but awesome gameplay is what this game is really about. A lot of fun.



COMMAND AND CONQUER: RED ALERT

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 9

Lovingly build up your army and then unleash it on your foe in a frenzy of real-time strategy. Great two-player link-up lifts it above the competition.



COLONY WARS RED SUN

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 9

Star Wars-style space blaster with tons of missions in space and on planet surfaces. Looks great and the plot keeps you guessing. Dead cheap too.



COOL BOARDERS 2

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 8

An easy-to-use trick system makes this the snowboard game to own. The graphics could be smoother but it plays a treat one- or two-player.



CRASH BANDICOOT 2

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 9

A damn good platformer that looks very cool. Boasts loads of variety and tons of secrets and hidden extras. Addictive platform action for only £20.



CRASH BANDICOOT 3

PRICE £34.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 8

Better graphics and greater variation than Crash 2, this looks nice and is great fun to play. Shame it's so short – you'll finish it in a day or two.

'BRAIN-BUSTING PUZZLE GAME THAT'S *SOOO* ADDICTIVE'



DEVIL DICE

PRICE £34.99 | PLAYERS 1-4 | 8

Puzzle action where you play a demon who walks around a chess-board covered in dice turning them over with his feet. Once you've got sets of numbers showing on top of the dice (four fours, six sixes etc), they vanish. Cool in one-player, cooler with three mates.



CRASH TEAM RACING

PRICE £34.99 | PLAYERS 1-4 | 8

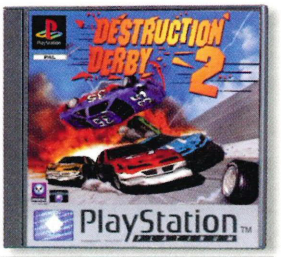
Classic kart action from Crash and the gang. Blast your mates off the tracks as up to four players skid, jump and powerslide round the courses.



DEAD OR ALIVE

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 8

A very fast beat 'em up with sharp graphics, gut-punching action and sweet combos. Better still, all the girls have enormous hooters. This game's seductive.



DESTRUCTION DERBY 2

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 8

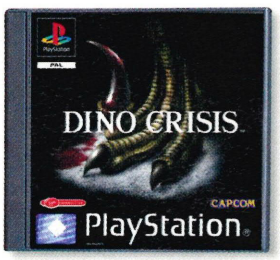
The crash 'n' dash driving game gets a graphics refit. It's a great laugh mashing your motor in one-player, and the two-player's fun as well.



DIE HARD TRILOGY

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 9

Bruce Willis is back for action in this great 'three games for the price of one' deal. The second bit is best played with a lightgun, but not the G-Con45.



DINO CRISIS

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 9

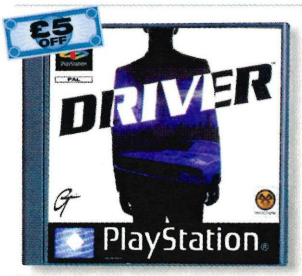
Resident Evil meets Jurassic Park in this puzzle-packed suspense adventure. Visually it rocks, but it's the T-Rex battles that'll really make your sphincter loosen.



DOOM

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 9

The game that made you love shotguns, this is the original shoot 'em up in blood-streaked corridors. This really excels with a two-player link-up.



DRIVER

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 9

Imagine Grand Theft Auto crossed with Gran Turismo, with funky 70s music. This car chase thriller is awesome.



DUKE NUKEM: TIME TO KILL

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 8

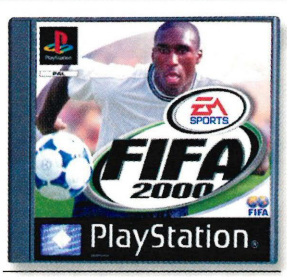
Tomb Raider meets Doom in a violent corridor shoot 'em up boasting fast action and tons of bad guys to target practice on.



FEAR EFFECT

PRICE £34.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 10

Plays like a vicious horror film directed by John Woo. Loads of action and some blinding puzzles are guaranteed.



FIFA 2000

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-8 | 7

Latest version with the teams, leagues and players from the current season. It's fast, but too jerky and too easy to score.



FINAL FANTASY 7

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 9

A huge game with great characters and battles. Put aside six months to play it, so at £20 it's serious value for money.



'AN EPIC ROLE-PLAYING MASTER-PIECE, WITH INCREDIBLE GRAPHICS, GRIPPING PLOT AND CLASS BATTLES'

FINAL FANTASY 8

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 9

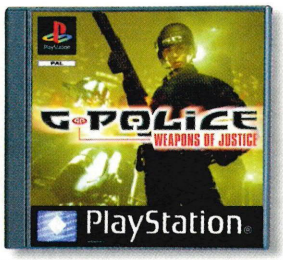
Sprawling role-playing blockbuster that plods at first, but give it time and you'll be hooked for months. Spread across four CDs, it boasts an awesome storyline, some of the most extravagant battles ever, and the overall presentation is blinding. One of the 'Station's best.



FORMULA 1 97

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 9

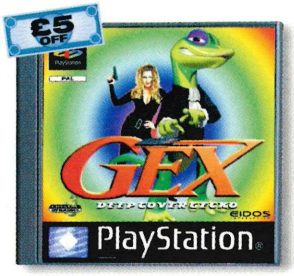
All the genuine drivers, teams and motors from the 97 season. Hot graphics and slick play are a plus. The big let down is the dunky two-player mode, though.



G- POLICE 2

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 8

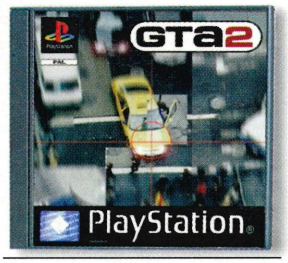
Pilot kick-ass vehicles in this futuristic cop game. Controls take some getting used to, but stick with it and much crim fragging action will ensue.



GEX: DEEP COVER GECKO

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 8

Great graphics set this apart from most other platformers. The levels are varied, but it takes time to get used to the controls and the camera isn't perfect.



GRAND THEFT AUTO 2

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 8

Rammed with better looks, crime and immorality, GTA2 supersedes the original with a vengeance. Marred only by repetitive missions.



GRAN TURISMO

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 9

The daddy of all driving games. It's hyper-real, it's brimming with motors, has a cool rock soundtrack and is absolutely crammed with tuning options.



GRAN TURISMO 2

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 10

You'll probably never see a better racing game on your PlayStation. Enormous range of cars, great handling, class visuals. A total treat.



INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD 2

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-4 | 9

Classic no-brainer finger tapping madness. The formula hasn't changed since Daley Thompson got his gold medal but it's still classic multiplayer fun.



ISS PRO EVOLUTION

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-4 | 10

The best football game ever, because it looks, plays and feels more like the real thing than any other. There are loads of moves, set-pieces and tricks to master.



KULA WORLD

PRICE £34.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 8

Bizarre puzzle game where you guide a beachball round loads of psychedelic levels. Simple but very addictive.



LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 9

Skewer zombies and slay vampires in this monster Tomb Raider-style adventure that looks superb and plays brilliantly.

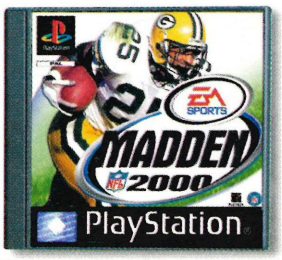
LMA MANAGER

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 9

The best football management game on the PlayStation, with a slick interface that allows you to glide easily between options. Footy games are rarely this great or absorbing.

'THE MOST INTUITIVE, EASY TO PLAY FOOTY MANAGEMENT GAME ON PLAYSTATION'





MADDEN NFL 2000

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-4 | 8

The smartest American football game around that's simple to pick up and play, but boasts enough moves to keep you coming back.



MEDIEVIL

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 8

Nightmare Before Xmas-style cartoon adventure stacked with neat puzzles, camp characters, and cranium-fizzing graphics. A surprising hit and great at £20.

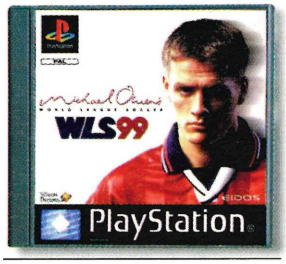
METAL GEAR SOLID

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 9

An abolute goolie-busting classic which no Essential Collection can be without. It's a glacially cool James Bond-style spy adventure with incredible graphics, a movie plot and spectacular action sequences. Shame it's over too soon.



'THIS LOOKS MORE LIKE A BLOCKBUSTER MOVIE THAN A GAME. OSCARS ALL ROUND!



MICHAEL OWEN'S WLS 99

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 8

Though a bit of a bitch to master, WLS does have probably the most moves to pull off in any 'Station footy game. Boasts all the proper league teams and players too.



MICRO MACHINES V3

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1-4 | 9

Race mini motors across table tops in one of the most addictive games around. Get three mates and a multitap, and you're guaranteed a top night in.



MOTORHEAD

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 8

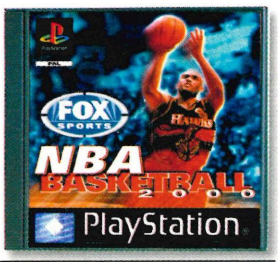
Ridge Racer-style handling and mind-blowing speeds make this sci fi sportscar racer a blast in one or two player. The graphics are kind of basic though.



MUSIC 2000

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-4 | 9

Updated version of last year's dance music game. There are 3,500 samples to mix into your own tunes, and you can even sample from your own CDs.



NBA BASKETBALL 2000

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-8 | 7

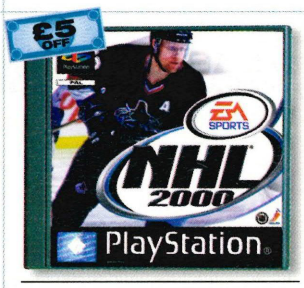
Slick hoop action with all the new teams and players. It's crammed with TV-Style camera angles and commentary and up to eight people can join in.



NEED FOR SPEED 3

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 8

This arcade racer's mix of top motors and winding tracks is a blast. It feels as fast as any other racer on PlayStation's but not quite as sharp as Ridge Racer 4.



NHL 2000

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 8

The NHL series is the original and best when it comes to ice hockey. This has all the players, superb looks, and awesomely smooth gameplay.



NIGHTMARE CREATURES

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 8

Gothic horror adventure where demons run riot on the streets of Victorian London. Tomb Raider-ish action with a little more hack and slash.



NUCLEAR STRIKE

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 8

Supremely hardcore helicopter shoot 'em up. Complete objectives by eliminating the terrorist threat and saving the world from a potential nuclear meltdown.



OMEGA BOOST

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 8

Take on an series of boss robots, with enough weaponry to vapourise entire galaxies. Leave your brain at the door.



POINT BLANK

PRICE £34.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 9

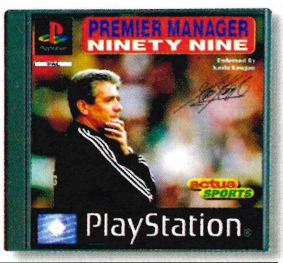
Get a lightgun for this cartoon-style shooting gallery game. Looks childish but tons of fun. Best with a mate to battle with.



POINT BLANK 2

PRICE £34.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 9

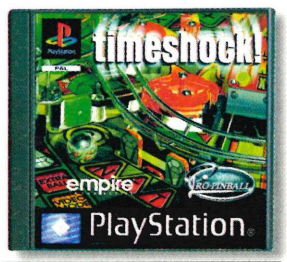
More variety than the first so your lightgun sharp-shooting skills are pushed to the limit. Multi player options make for a post-pub blast.



PREMIER MANAGER 99

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 8

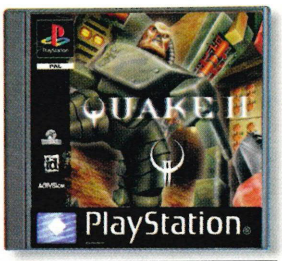
May not be as up-to-date as LMA Manager, but still a playable and easy to use footy management game.



PRO PINBALL: TIMESHOCK

PRICE £29.99 | PLAYERS 1-4 | 8

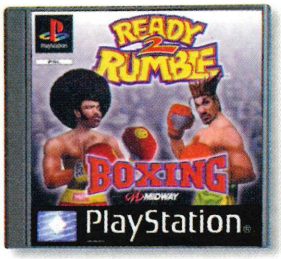
The only pinball game you should own. Realistic ball movement makes this a cracker despite featuring only one table.



QUAKE 2

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-4 | 9

The definitive first person corridor shooter. It boasts ultra-violent action, brooding atmos, and an army of sci-fi psychos to frag. Brilliant multiplayer mode.



READY TO RUMBLE

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 9

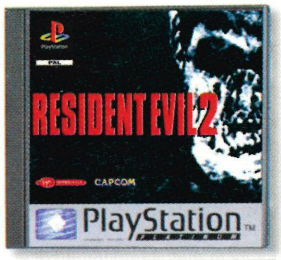
Arcadey boxing effort which injects a much-needed bit of fun into the punch-ups. Full of combos and super-attacks plus certifiable characters.



RESIDENT EVIL

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 10

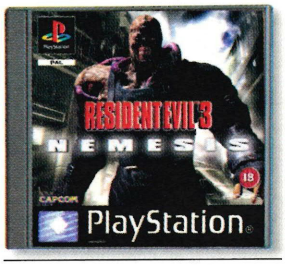
Gore-soaked adventure with zombies, giant mutants and a lot of head-popping. An essential buy and the game PlayStation was built for.



RESIDENT EVIL 2

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 10

Although not as tough to finish as the first, Res 2 has bigger weapons, nastier baddies and four ways to complete it.Res nuttahs go barking for it.



RESIDENT EVIL 3

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 10

The scariest of the three, thanks to the constant attentions of the Nemesis, a huge dead dude who won't stop till he's ripped your head off. Good replay value.



RETURN FIRE

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 8

Fast-paced arcade army game where you control a load of different tanks and generally shoot the crap out of the enemy. The two-player is fast and fun.



RIDGE RACER 4

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 10

Gran Turismo 2's only real competition. This looks absolutely amazing, handles nicely, and has got cars coming out of its ears. One of the best.

'LIKE ROCKETING DOWN A MILE-WIDE CENTER PARCS WATER SLIDE AT 240MPH. WITH A GUN'



ROLLCAGE STAGE 2

PRICE £34.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 8

This super-fast racer is guaranteed to churn your guts as you speed along sweet-looking tracks, riding up walls and along the ceiling in a desperate battle for first place. As well as the eye-popping one- and two-player race modes, you can frag it out in one of many deathmatch arenas and also go for goal in Rollcage football.



SILENT HILL

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 8

Sinister adventure with classy horror flick atmos and loads of gore. Evil cutscenes and general creepiness are big on the menu. Combat's a let down though.



SLED STORM

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-4 | 9

Annoy your mates by nipping in and out of hidden shortcuts as you cane 400 horsepower snow-mobiles over mountain courses. A lot of fun and a minor classic.



SOUL BLADE

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 8

Use swords, knives and bloody great clubs to batter each other stupid in a fast-moving beat 'em up. Some great bizarre characters but plays a bit basic though.



SPYRO THE DRAGON

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 8

Nauseatingly cute but this platformer plays smoothly, looks super sharp and has tons of levels. Surprisingly large amount of fun not just for little sister.



STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 9

The biggest and best 2D version of the Street Fighter ever released. Ryu and the gang slug it out in classic style.



STREET FIGHTER EX PLUS ALPHA

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 9

Cool looking 3D beat 'em up with slick, lightning fast animation. Many consider this the ultimate to master.



SUPER PUZZLE FIGHTER 2 TURBO

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 10

Cutesy versions of the Street Fighter mob fight by dropping gems at each other. Definitely the best puzzle game around.



SYPHON FILTER

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 9

This spy thriller isn't that great to look at, but has fine-tuned gameplay, heavy-duty weapons and tip-top firefights to boot.



TEKKEN 2

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 9

Plays fast and sweet. This hasn't got the looks of Tekken 3 but it's still a rocking beat 'em up that delivers plenty of clout.



TEKKEN 3

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 10

Nobody messes with Tekken 3. Unbeatable at Platinum price, this is packed with hardmen and hot graphical touches, and boasts 1,500 wicked moves.



TENCHU: STEALTH ASSASSINS

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 8

Ninja slash 'em up where you slip into Japanese houses and slit people's throats. There's plenty of sneaking around and sword fights, too. Class.



TIME CRISIS

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 9

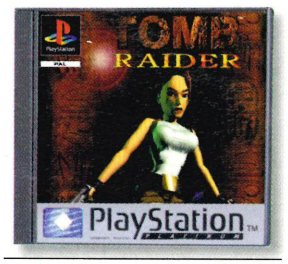
Platinum lightgun shooter where you must single-handedly wipe out a terrorist threat using just a pistol. It is almost identical to the arcade original.



TOCA TOURING CARS 2

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 9

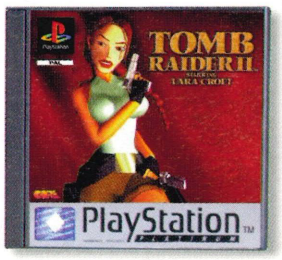
Twitchy handling and slippery courses make this one hell of a challenge. But master it and it plays sweetly and looks great. Tons of tracks and cars too.



TOMB RAIDER

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 10

The original perfect mix of action and puzzles. Egyptian atmosphere and blinding gameplay make this a real treat and the best of the first three.



TOMB RAIDER 2

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 9

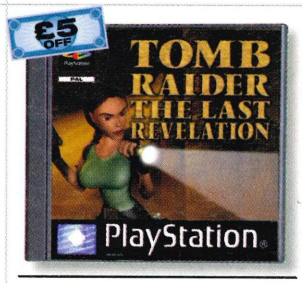
Rock-solid sequel which favours non-stop gunfights over difficult puzzles. Sprawling locations and tough puzzles make it harder to finish than 1.



TOMB RAIDER 3

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 9

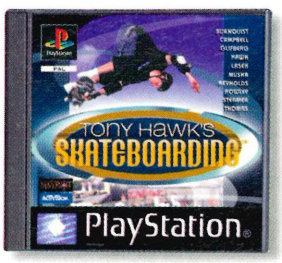
The worst Tomb Raider, but a class act still. More variety over 1 and 2 but little else. Some of the puzzles just frustrate but still a fine game.



TOMB RAIDER 4

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 10

Return to the brain-teasing puzzle-filled Egyptian tombs of the original classic. Better ingredients and top graphics up the already tense atmos.



TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 9

A rocking stunt laden treat that looks cool and is a cinch to get into though tough to put down. No racing, just pure trickstyle and two player caps it off nicely.



TWISTED METAL WORLD TOUR

PRICE £19.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 7

Charge around battle arenas in tooled motors blasting other cars. It looks a bit old these days but the gameplay's still fresh and that keeps us frothy.

URBAN CHAOS

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1 | 8

Despite the blocky graphics, Urban Chaos is still a cracking violence-fuelled romp set in a city infested by crime. As two hard-ass cops, you scour the streets, busting perps, bagging thugs and trying to prevent junkies from leaping off buildings. Nice. And if you get bored of that, nick a car and take it for a spin. You are the law, you can get away with anything.





UM JAMMER LAMMY

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 8

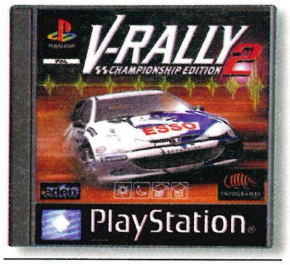
Parrapa sequel where the raps of the original are replaced by guitar licks. The tap-in-time-with-music bit stays the same, but now there's a neat two-player jam.



VIGILANTE 8

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 9

Cars with huge guns fight it out in bizarre battle arenas. Blast away in the best driving shooter around that offers many laughs in two player deathmatch mode.



V-RALLY 2

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 9

A dirt-drenched, mud-spattered off-road racer with stacks of tracks, cars and gameplay. Top night in with mates guaranteed.



WARZONE 2100

PRICE £39.99 | PLAYERS 1-2 | 9

A real-time war strategy game with lots of levels and plenty of challenge. Build up your army and developing tanks, then attack.



WIPEOUT 2097

● PRICE £19.99 ● PLAYERS 1-2 9

Super-fast anti-gravity racer that streaks through sci-fi cities to a kick-ass soundtrack. Sweet neon lit graphics and link-up mode makes it a top late-nighter.



WIP3OUT

● PRICE £39.99 ● PLAYERS 1-2 9

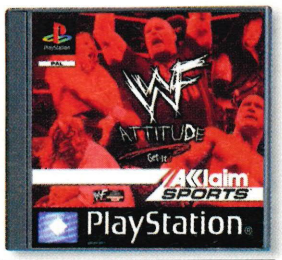
Very similar to its predecessor, although the tracks are better and it's slightly faster than before. The graphics are great, and the soundtrack is wicked.



WORMS

● PRICE £19.99 ● PLAYERS 1-2 8

A gutter-class embarrassment in one-player but a world-class crack with four of you post-club unleashing ridiculous weapons such as combusting sheep.

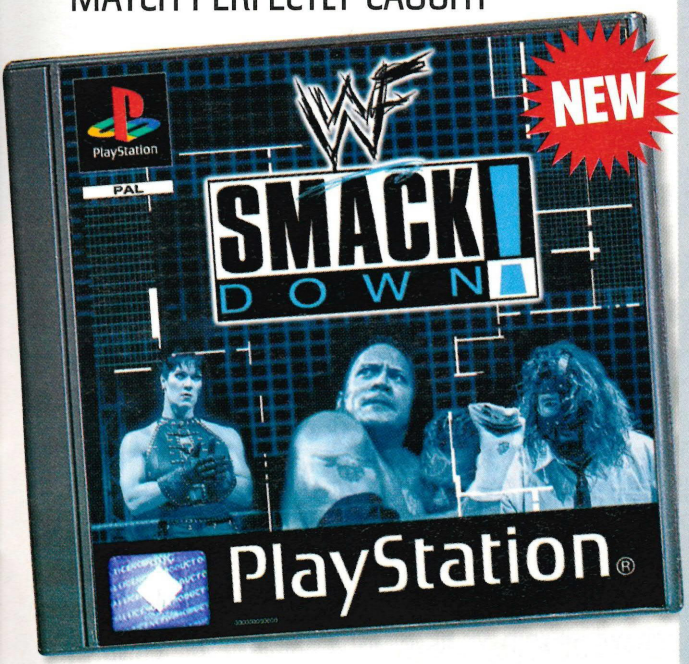


WWF ATTITUDE

● PRICE £39.99 ● PLAYERS 1-2 9

Overtaken by Smackdown but still with loads of fans. All the wrestlers and moves you need to launch the perfect grapple-fest but it's a bit outdated now.

'THE MAD CIRCUS ATMOS OF A WWF MATCH PERFECTLY CAUGHT'



WWF SMACKDOWN

● PRICE £39.99 ● PLAYERS 1-4 9

The ultimate grappling game is fast to play, looks sharp and the killer combos are easy to pull off. It's bursting with game modes, from cage battles, bouts where the last man standing wins, and even tag tournaments where up to four-players slug it out. Cool!

DROP OUTS

IT'S FAREWELL TO THESE THREE GAMES WHICH BUCKLED UNDER THE WHITE HEAT OF INTENSE ESSENTIAL 101 COMPETITION. THEY'RE NOT POO-POO BUT THEY DON'T DO-DO IT ANYMORE TO HOLD THEIR OWN

ROLLCAGE

Rollcage's still a cool game but it's weedy compared to the sequel which barged headlong into the Essential 101. In contrast, this baby doesn't look so hot with twitchy controls and dull game modes.



▲ Bashed out by its big brother

R TYPE DELTA

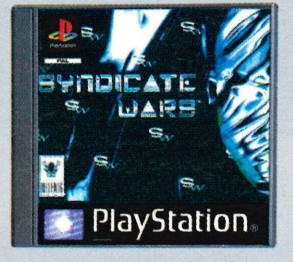
Retro gaming paid a flying visit to the Essential 101 in the form of R Type Delta. It's adored by the hardcore with its good gameplay but the graphics belong in the 80s and better games have landed recently.



▲ Retro had no place to go

SYNDICATE WARS

This neat real-time strategy game where you control four die-hard cyborgs tooled to the titanium teeth simply doesn't cut it any more thanks to its well-ropey looks. Sorry Syndicate Wars, you're outta it!



▲ Cyborgs looked cardboard

YOUR 20 SECOND GUIDE TO UTTER PANTS

EVER HAD RISING BILE IN YOUR THROAT WHEN YOU LOAD UP THAT NEW GAME YOU BOUGHT AND SUDDENLY ARE HIT BY THE THOUGHT: 'I'VE MADE A TERRIBLE, £40 MISTAKE!'. AVOID IT NOW

VANDAL HEARTS 2

Unless the mention of 'wizard', 'character class' or 'Level 3 spell' thrill your pods off, avoid this like a warty moose. This is the Devil's own RPG. It's all massive lists of numbers, brain-tumour-inducingly slow combat, and dialogue that's duller than the Queen's Speech. Avoid!



▲ Played by New Labour ministers, it's that good

SPECIAL OPS

Like the special forces it features, this game was sneaked out undercover of night in the hope we wouldn't notice. Too bad it's been caught in the Floodlight of Flaws which reveals its graphics as bugged to hell and the gameplay a one-way train to solitary confinement.



▲ A game occupied by Special Farces



ESSENTIAL

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WE'VE TURNED THE EXCHANGE CENTRAL SERVICE INTO ESSENTIAL 101 SWOPS TO IMPROVE THE ONLY SWOPS SERVICE THAT'S FAST, FREE AND GUARANTEES YOU QUALITY GAMES

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THIS IS A NORMAL RATE PHONE LINE, NOT A RIP-OFF PREMIUM LINE!



PHOTOGRAHPY: RICHARD LEWISOHN

101 SWOPS

IMPORTANT CHECKLIST

- ☑ The game you send us must be in this issue's Essential 101.
- ☑ It must be a fully working game in its original box and with the instruction manual. We check every game.
- ☑ If we have been offered too many of a particular Essential 101 game, then we may tell you that we cannot accept any more. But don't worry, you might have another one you can swop instead.
- ☑ If we don't get the game you promised to send us within five days, then we'll have to cancel your swop.
- ☑ The PlayNation number you call is a normal rate phone line, not a premium rate line like other magazines use. It'll cost the you the same as calling a mate in London.

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ONCE WE'VE ARRANGED A SWOP, YOU MUST SEND THIS FORM TO US WITH YOUR GAME - MAKE SURE IT'S ALL FILLED IN

Name: ..... Age: .....

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SEND THIS WITH YOUR GAME(S) TO: ESSENTIAL 101 SWOPS, PLAYNATION, 338-346 GOSWELL ROAD, LONDON, EC1V 7QP

SPECIAL TOKYO GAME SHOW 2000 REPORT



● Tekken Tag plays pretty much the same as Tekken 3, but it looks loads better



● You can fight on the same level but at different times in the day. Here it's dusk

KNOW YOUR ENEMY

TEKKEN TAG'S MYSTERIOUS HIDDEN FIGHTER AND SECRET 10-PIN BOWLING MODE REVEALED FOR THE FIRST TIME

> TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT

OUT SEP

This bare-fist fighter will knock you out with its super-sharp graphics and exclusive PS 2 extras

We've caned Tekken Tag Tournament and can reveal details of a new character plus an all-new game exlusive to PS 2. Arcade fans will recognise the new face, simply called Unknown, because she appeared in the Tekken Tag coin-op, but it's the first time she's appeared on PlayStation.

The scantily-clad cutey fights with this weird wolf thing which floats behind her as she fights. But unlike the other characters in the game, who can tag with other fighters during a bout, this lady takes you on single-handed.

She can adopt the moves of any of the 38 fighters in the game too, so one minute it feels like you're fighting Jin, and the next she's pulling off Law's Dragon Kick. Old characters from Tekkens 1 and 2 have been tidied up too, so they look and move better than ever before.

The other big secret is TTT's hidden game mode, which is a cool bowling game. It sounds tacky but it's actually so slick you'll find yourself playing it again and again, unlike the ever-so-slightly naff Tekken Ball mode in Tekken 3.

Visually it's to die for: the animation is the smoothest we've seen in any fighting game and the characters are unbelievably detailed. Every bit of Paul Phoenix's wiry stubble stands out of his face. The backgrounds are incredible too, with loads of things going on in the distance as you slug it out. Check out the shots for yourself.



● Special moves are still easy to do



● The carousel reflects in the tiles



● Each fighter has loads of different outfits



▲ 'Eat knee, lady!'



▲ Jin's nut cracker in full effect



▲ This fatty's got one giant ass



▲ Law's one-inch punch is cool





'TWAT YOUR OPPONENT WITH ONE FIGHTER, TAG AND FINISH THEM OFF WITH THE OTHER'

● Xiaoyu's a great character for 'juggling' enemies in the air using awesome kick combos



▲ A lot of the moves are old



▲ You'll have seen almost all the fighters



▲ Throws are the same

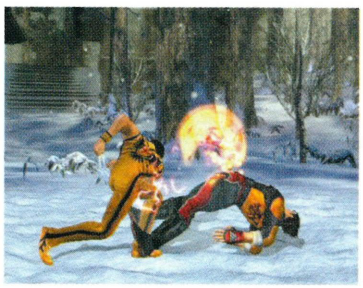


▲ But it looks blinding

TEKKEN 3 AND A HALF

At the end of the day, Tekken Tag isn't an all-new fighting experience. It looks loads better than any of the PlayStation Tekken games, but to play it's very similar to Tekken 3, with most of the same moves.

There are few new attacks to master though, like Xiaoyu's hook kick. The fighters are familiar too, including almost all the bruisers from the first three games. If you've only played one or two of the Tekkens, there'll be new characters and new moves to learn. And if you've played all three, you'll be pleased to see the return of classic characters like Roger the Kangaroo and Kazuya, all with sharp new looks.



▲ Tekken Tag's replay mode makes some of the special moves look incredible



▲ Each time you beat the game with one of the initial 20 fighters, you unlock one of the many hidden characters

ACTION TO RIVAL THE MATRIX

When Tekken Tag loads up it's easy to think you're watching a movie. The intro sequence is glacially cool, rivalling The Matrix for awesome effects. When Lei crashes through the streets in a bust up motor it's like watching a car chase in a cop movie, and Bryan mows down countless soliders with a machinegun in a scene straight out of The Terminator. Check these pics out...



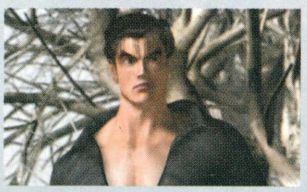
▲ Kazuya with Matrix-style trench coat



▲ This is from the intro. Honest



▲ Bryan dishes out machinegun death



▲ The detail on the faces is unbelievable



▲ It's kinda scary too, with devil bits

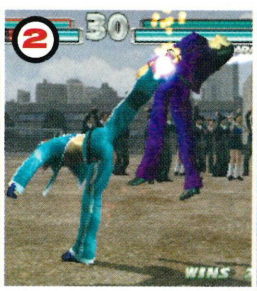
FOUR FISTS ARE BETTER THAN TWO

Tekken Tag's biggest improvement over number three is the double-teaming WWF-style Tag action. You pick your dynamic duo from the fighters on offer, then kick off on against another team of two battle-scarred scrappers. You fight as normal but when your energy bar gets low, switch to your other character and continue fighting. Keep your eye on your health level though, because if you die before you manage to switch to your other geezer, you've lost the round. You can even have four players battling it out, each controlling one half of a tag team.

What's best about tagging is the two-player combos: the first guy starts the move by knocking the opponent in the air, then your mate takes over and lays in another right-hander before they hit the ground. If you're really good you can make the switch two or three times before the other fighter can react.



▲ Hwoarang starts off with a low swipe to the leg



▲ Then follows it up with a jaw-breaking kick



▲ As Kazuya spirals through the air, Hwoarang rolls out



▲ Devil Kazuya rips through Xiaoyu. You can save screenshots to memory card



▲ 'Just... put... it in... your...' As far as Paul is concerned, his lips are tightly sealed



● Kazuya looks a bit of a knob in his tux. He's still dead hard though

DARE YOU FACE TEKKEN BOWL?

Finish the game with around a dozen fighters and you unlock the all-new Tekken Bowl mode. This is the coolest sub-game ever, and plays better than most proper 10-pin bowling games. You choose from any of the characters, then head out to the alley.

You aim and gauge the power by tapping the button at the right time – get it wrong and the ball flies off into the crowd. Hit a strike and your geezers dance in celebration. And if you notch up a mega score, there's another sweet secret just waiting to be unlocked.



▲ The bowling mode is way cool. The little Heihachi skittles are neat, and check out Doctor B on the left



▲ Aim using the gauge



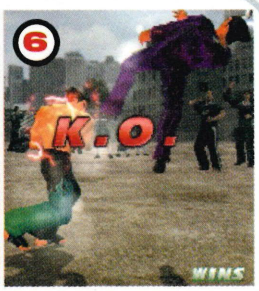
▲ Get strikes to unlock new secret stuff



▲ Jin takes over, just as Kazuya falls back to earth



▲ But before he hits the deck, Jin's thrown a punch



▲ And he's out! Be warned: these combos are NOT easy

FREESTYLE AT 5,000 FEET

> SKY SURFER

OUT DEC

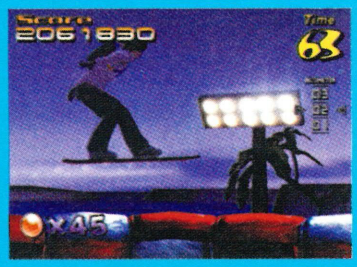
You're 3,000 feet in the air, pulling off 360s and death-defying loops with a snowboard strapped to your shoes. It's a one-way trip from the clouds, and you've got about a minute of 100mph freefall to show off acrobatic aerial stunts that'd put Tony Hawk to shame.

Don't get too carried away though, because you've got to open your chute if you don't want to turn into a ten-foot-wide meat pancake. Leave it to the last minute to rack up big points, and make sure you pick a sweet landing spot.

Sky Surfer looks nice enough thanks to sharp PS2 graphics, but at the moment it's not particularly great to play. The stunts are simple, and it all gets a bit repetitive after a few goes. Things could get a lot better when it's released at Christmas – we'll let you know.



▲ There are loads of stunts to pull off



▲ Open your chute before it's too late

MINI MOTORS, MUCHO FUN

> R/C GO!

OUT SEP

The tiny cars in this sharp-looking remote-control racer handle like a dream, sliding gently round corners and sticking to the tarmac when you burn it up a straight. There are loads of them to choose from, and like kit cars in real life you can build your own motor before taking it out onto the track.

There's sixteen teeny-weeny tracks to choose from, and every one of them looks peachy. The only thing that's missing here is multiplayer action, but for a one-player racer this really is a touch of class.



▲ Loads of tiny tracks to choose from



▲ The handling of the cars is spot on

EAT PHOTON DEATH!

> RAY CRISIS

OUT OCT

Ray Crisis is the toughest shooter you've ever seen. It's a space blaster with enemies that fire so fast it looks like it's snowing bullets on screen. Take on one of the bosses, and it turns from a normal game into a festival of lunacy: the sheer amount of gunfire will blow you away. Literally.

This is the sequel to the crusty 'Station sci fi blaster Ray Storm, and it's a riot. There are stacks of power-ups to grab, so you won't be stuck with your pussy-assed laser cannon for long. It looks sweet too, with class 3D graphics which don't slow down even when the screen is crawling with loads of enemies. And although it looks 3D, it plays 2D, so it's simple to get into. With six levels of non-stop fragging to chew on, this hardcore shoot 'em up will send you kill-crazy for weeks.



▲ Super-tough shooty stuff, guaranteed



● New boy Zidane runs after the lid, hoping for a taste of the ultimate refreshment

FIZZY FANTASY

CATCH A SNEAK PREVIEW OF THE CHARACTERS OUT OF FINAL FANTASY 9 THANKS TO A COKE ADVERT FROM JAP TV

> FINAL FANTASY 9-11

OUT 2001

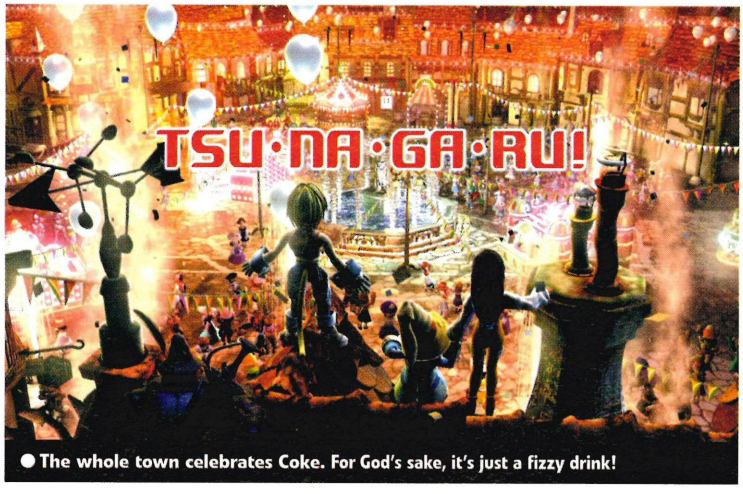
Coca-Cola and the guys behind Final Fantasy have teamed up for an advert which offers a sneak preview of the characters out of Final Fantasy 9. The ad's on telly in Japan now. It shows new Final Fantasy hero Zidane racing after a Coke bottle top as it spins across a town square, which is one of the new locations in the game.

The ad is total cheese, but it does drop a bit of a bombshell: Final Fantasy 9's going back to the kiddy cartoon style of Final Fantasy 7, rather than keeping the cool realistic looks of Final Fantasy 8.

Meanwhile, we've got the first details of Final Fantasies 9 and 11 (yup, you did read that right). Unfortunately number 10 is being kept behind locked doors for now.

Two screenshots of FF9 reveal little about the actual game apart from the fact it looks cute, with the main heroes looking wide-eyed and bouffant haired. The makers say it will be the last Final Fantasy game in this style, and subsequent Final Fantasies will cut back on the cute factor.

We've also seen early stuff on Final Fantasy 11, up for launch in December 2001. It's going to be a whole online world which you can explore. You start off wandering through the game on your own, but your mates are free to join your team, from the comfort of their own



● The whole town celebrates Coke. For God's sake, it's just a fizzy drink!

home. They can join up just by connecting their PlayStation 2 to the internet and getting stuck in.

From the stuff we've seen, the gorgeous backgrounds from previous Final Fantasy games are still in there, although they're a lot sharper. The characters look loads better too. They're massively detailed and even their clothes billow in the wind as they slug it out with enormous monsters.

You can communicate with other people in the online world just by tapping in whatever you want to say, and a speech bubble will appear onscreen. Anyone nearby is able to read what you said.

But because the game isn't due for release for at least 18 months, things are bound to change. We're not entirely sure yet how the combat will work. Chances are you'll lead your character into battle along with the other guys in your group and fight at the same time. Whether FF8-style time limits will restrict the number of attacks you can do remains to be seen.



▲ Hell, these guys are so desperate for a drink they even chase it across a roof!



▲ Still in hot pursuit of the bouncing bottle top, Zidane follows it along a wall



● The Coke top tears around the town square, spreading its magic



● Everyone wants a taste of Coke's tooth-rotting sweetness



● Even up close, the cars look absolutely amazing

PS2'S CLEAN-CUT DIRT RACER

> WILD WILD RACING

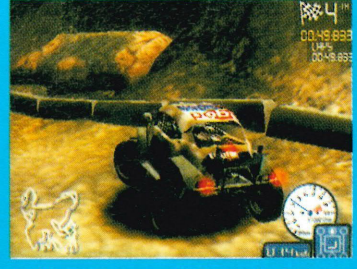
OUT NOV

PS 2's super-sharp buggy game proves off-roading doesn't always have to be messy

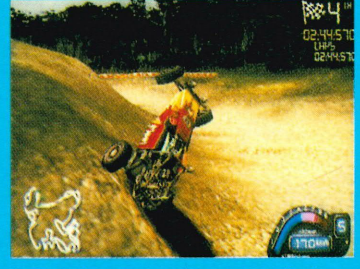
When you slam the buggies in Wild Wild Racing round a muddy hairpin at 60mph, it really feels like your tyres are desperately trying to grip the surface. And when you crash to the ground after jumping 30-foot in air, you'll wince as the chassis of your motor takes a beating from the gravel underneath.

There are loads of cars too, each with bigged-up suspension which strains when you slide round every corner. It's early days though, and a lot of flaws must be ironed out before this baby gets a PlayNation thumbs up. Sure it's detailed, but any scenery in the distance pops into view. One minute the way ahead is clear, the next an entire forest has jumped up in front of you.

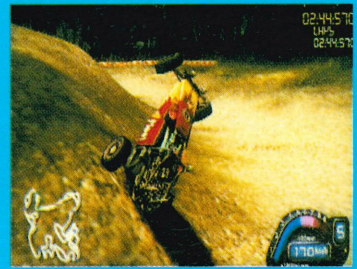
Considering the ball-busting graphics power of PS2, stuff like that shouldn't be happening. We've been guaranteed all the problems will be sorted for its release. We'll keep you updated.



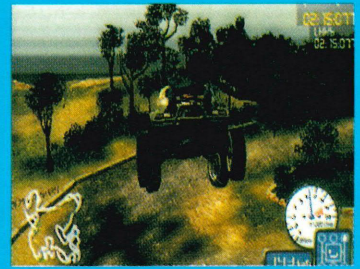
▲ This Beetle buggy looks great when you're burning mud



▲ These buggies are fast so cornering's tough unless you ease off the gas



▲ Keep a hold of these twitchy beasts



▲ Let's hope the suspension's working

SILK CUTS

Direct you own action sequences in this cutting room game where Parappa meets Steven Spielberg

> TVDJ

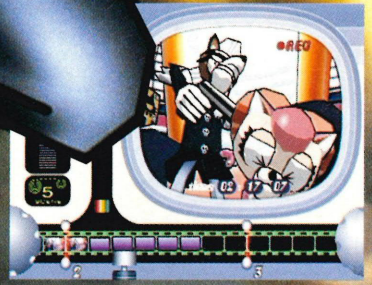
OUT DEC

If you thought tap-along music games like Parappa were weird, get a load of this PS2 effort. TVDJ's a mix game with a difference – rather than slinging rhymes together, you're a music vid director and you've got to chop camera angles, direct takes and cut up beats to stay ahead of the competition.

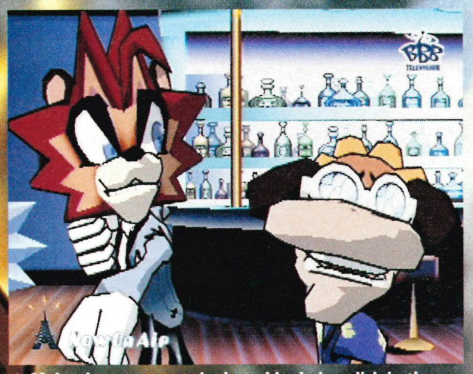
It's a dead simple game to play, and you're free to play around with the sequence any way you want. The vids you've got to cut up are action flicks based on the adventures of a rubber-haired lion. First off, you're chopping breaks over a stylish cartoon car chase, then the lion must win the affection of a kidnapped girly by killing off the bad guy.

While this is going off, you're moving from shot to shot, tapping in button combos in time with the music. When the action hots up, the music tempo increases so you get more points for switching quickly between shots. When things start to slow, calm down on the camera-work and keep it smooth to watch your score skyrocket.

With four action sequences to pick from, this has stacks of stuff to keep you cutting up clips for months to come. We'll give you more news as we get it.



▲ When the action hots up, quickly switch between camera angles



▲ Make the mane man look cool by being slick in the edit suite. You have to be fast with the cuts though

DUAL SHOCK DIRECTING

TVDJ plays like this. All the action happens in the background, while a time bar ticks over at the bottom of the screen. Each 'take' – a tiny bit of movie which lasts a few seconds – is divided into eight slots and the camera cuts must fit these slots exactly. Pressing different buttons gives you different lengths of camera cut, from one to four beats, but you've got to get them exactly in time or your score starts plummeting.

You can fill an eight-beat take using two four beat cuts or, if you're daring, two three beat shots, finishing off with a two beat cut. It sounds hard but it's actually dead easy. Providing you think fast, chopping between shots soon becomes second nature. The tricky thing is tying your sequence in to the video. Choose a couple of slow cuts when the action speeds up, and you'll soon be kicked from the director's chair.



■ **TRIANGLE BUTTON**
■ **Beats: One**
Repeatedly hit this button to change quickly between shots. Use this one when the on-screen action hots up to keep the visuals jumping



■ **CIRCLE BUTTON**
■ **BEATS: THREE**
The hardest to use because the odd number of beats doesn't fit nicely into each take. You'll notch up mega points with it though



■ **SQUARE BUTTON**
■ **Beats: Two**
Dead easy to use because it fits perfectly into the eight-beat takes, but you don't score many points. Use threes with 'em to score big



■ **X BUTTON**
■ **Beats: Four**
Two taps of this will fill the eight beat take, no bother. But it's easy-peasy to keep this kind of schoolboy camera-work going, so you score zilch



● It looks kinda similar to the first Time Crisis, but that's no bad thing



● Duck behind cover to reload, then pop up to unload your pistol

100% PURE ADRENALIN

Finally! The sequel to the PlayStation's best lightgun actioner shows up, and it's looking pretty damn peachy

> TIME CRISIS PROJECT TITAN

OUT DEC

We've seen an early version of Time Crisis Project Titan, the sequel to the awesome lightgun blaster that lit up PlayStations two years ago. It's totally different from Time Crisis 2 in the arcades, with all-new levels and loads more bad guys to bag.

The gameplay's still very much present and correct, though: it's a question of sharp-shooting your way through hordes of goons in suits, ducking every so often to pump more ammo into your Glock and stay out of the way of hostile machine-gun fire. There's no clever-clever puzzles to solve, no big levels to explore, just full-on action from start to finish.

You'll face huge, armoured bosses, grenade-chucking mentallists and goons manning deadly bits of machinery. Staying alive's always down to having reactions fast enough so's you can plug people in the head before they can train their artillery on you.

The action never lets up, and even from level one it's so intense it makes the first Time Crisis look like a senior citizen. We'll keep you updated with all the news and pics for this little scorcher.



● You can grab the enemy robots with your plasma lasso and throw them into buildings



● The arenas you fight in are full 3D, so you can fly anywhere you want

THE BEST-LOOKING PS2 GAME YET!

METAL GEAR GURUS JOIN FORCES ON PS2 ROBOT WAR EPIC

> Z.O.E

OUT 2001

Although Metal Gear Solid 2 is in development for PS2, the two geniuses behind the first MGS are working on another game for PlayStation 2, titled Z.O.E. Don't go expecting stealth though, because Z.O.E's all about sizzling sci-fi battles, and Solid Snake's out on his ear as war bots the size of houses slug it out over lush 3D arenas.

Hideo Kojima, the guy who thought up Metal Gear, is making sure the game is the first to really push PS2 to the limit, while all the robots have been designed by the same artist who created the Metal Gear characters. The result is the best looking PlayStation 2 game we've seen.

You're strapped inside one of these tooled-up battlebots, flying around the hyper-detailed landscape, dodging flak and at the same time unleashing photon death. The action is served fast and furious, with little time to flick between weapons, let alone plan your next move.

Z.O.E isn't a no-brainer shoot 'em up though. The explosive battle action's just part of a massive adventure where you've got to meet people, solve puzzles and stop a massive, destructive solar war. The story follows the ongoing brawl between the Earthlings and the Enders, outcast humans who have chosen to live on the outskirts of the solar system. Your mission is simple: to restore peace to the galaxy.

This is looking peachy, but sadly we've got a long time to wait before this baby blasts into action. The combat sections are running smoothly, but the adventure element of Z.O.E still hasn't even been started yet, so it's unlikely to hit the UK until early next year. Plenty of time to start saving up for it then.



● Some of the special effects when the robots start to kick off are really cool



● Speed boost around this robot monster to avoid its laser barrage

GIRLS IN PANTS!

> PRIMAL IMAGE

OUT DEC

Bikini-clad babes strip off for the camera, and you're the lucky fella taking the snaps

Your mission, and you'll probably accept it, is to take snaps of PlayStation 2's hottest digital honeys. You're a virtual photographer whose job is to take pictures of drool-worthy young ladies in provocative poses. And... errr.... that's it. In fact this isn't a game at all, just an excuse to ogle the curves of a handful of gorgeous girls.

You just choose your model, then snap away and save the results to your memory card. Will you go for Yuki's cute schoolgirl looks? Perhaps Anna's devil outfit tests the button on your boxers? Whoever you go for, you can choose which outfit they wear, from skimpy bikinis to sexy cowgirl gear, and then the location in which to shoot them. The girls go crazy for the camera, but make sure you keep it steady so their tight bodies stay in focus.

One word of warning. If you're a red-blooded male ready for digital dirt, steer clear of Nobu. As you can probably guess from his name, this model has a surprise down his trousers you DON'T want to uncover.





▲ Will you marry me?



▲ Pervy up-the-skirt action shots. Cool



▲ Gen Fu hurls Hayabusa off the waterfall, then jumps after him



● Every splash into the water sounds and looks totally real



▲ Kasumi counters Zack's punch and chucks him to the ground



▲ Kasumi's bra size goes off the end of the alphabet



HERE COMES A N

NEW FIGHTER DEAD OR ALIVE 2 GIVES JIN AND

> DEAD OR ALIVE 2

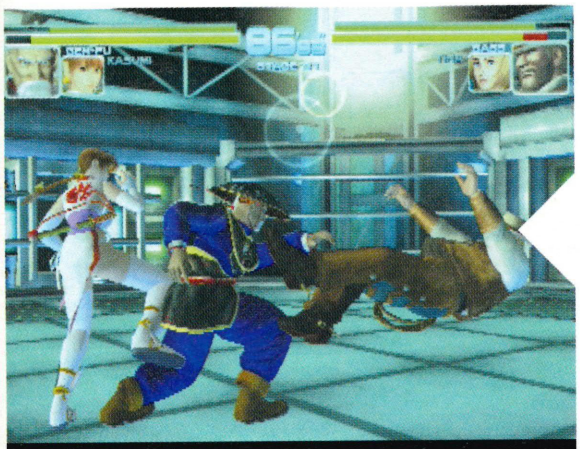
OUT 2001

Tekken Tag looks smooth as a baby's ass, but it's just a facelift of a game you've already played to death. Tag-team fighter Dead or Alive 2's spilling over with fresh ideas, new characters, new, different arenas and hardcore fighting modes. The way moves feed into countermoves is unlike anything you've ever seen before. Believe us, this is the wake-up call the Tekken boys have been dreading.

Characters smash through windows, roll off roofs and even splash through roaring rivers as each round builds up into a frenzied tit-for-tat, with moves linking into countermoves. The control system's simple, so doing the big damage here's all about split-second responses to your opponent's attack, turning your enemy's force against himself. Lash out at Zack and he can block your kick with his foot, then crunch your knee with a devastating Jeet Kune Do counter-attack.

You might think the number of counters and turnarounds would make the movement jerky, but it's as smooth as butter. Each move links into the next without any nasty cuts, and there's no moments when the character flicks back into a rest position before launching their next attack. When a character takes a kick in the arm, he'll jerk back like he's been burnt and flex the damaged limb before fighting again.

Every move, every tiny little reflex action has been motion-captured off real martial artists, and the effort really shines out of every bout. The characters may look cartoony, but they move like real fighters, even when you've hit the Tag button to do a lightning character switch. Hell, even their clothes billow just right as they slug it out in the wintry White Storm level. Once you've mastered the controls enough to turn each round into a mad back-and-forth flurry of moves and counters, you'll know this game is kung fu perfection.



● Here, Gen Fu leaps in to finish a combo Kasumi started

TAG! YOU'RE DEAD!

Like in Tekken Tag Tournament, you can fight in teams of two here. You call in the other fighter if you're taking a pounding, or summon them to create blistering combination attacks.

If you're playing four-player, you'll only have two fighters on-screen at once, but if both members of a tag team work together, you can pull off mad double-team attacks that really paste the other guy's health bar. One character even has a deadly tag combo which sends his opponent flying into the waiting arms of his tag team buddy. This is awesome stuff.



● Bass and Tina blast Zack with a flurry of double-team blows

SCENERY BITES BACK!

Unlike Tekken, where the scenery's just a background which you can't reach, here it's all too real. You can get tossed off buildings, over cliffs or, as you see on the right, out of windows. You can even be injured by bits of scenery. Get chucked into an electric coil and your powerbar empties as you eat voltage.

Some levels are littered with pillars or walls which you can get smacked against. Each level's got its own flavour, too and you'll find yourself fighting in snow drifts with your breath misting, or even battling waist-deep in water. Fighting has never been so cool.



▲ Kasumi primes for a kick



▲ Gen Fu flies backwards



▲ Right out the window!



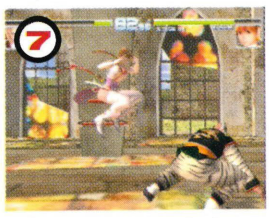
▲ Look out below!



▲ Kasumi leaps down after him



▲ She lands, he's stunned



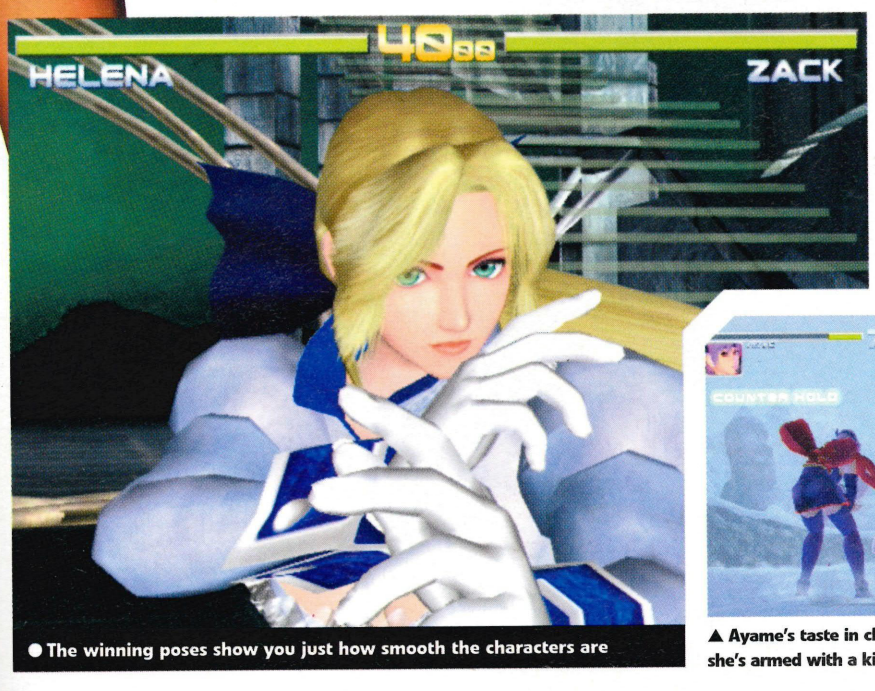
▲ Before he's got up, she leaps



▲ And knocks him back over

EW CHALLENGER!

THE TEKKEN GANG SOMETHING TO SWEAT ABOUT



● The winning poses show you just how smooth the characters are

FACE THE BOSOMS OF DOOM!

The controls are pretty simple, with each character having only four buttons: block, kick, punch and counter. Mixing the attacks up with the D-pad to produce the right move is instinctive: hold forward and hit punch for a lunging jab, or pull back to pull off a rabbit punch.

Up close you can throw your opponent, WWF-style, or even headbutts them. But each move will leave you open to a bone-crunching counter from the other guy. And with tons of different fighting styles to get to grips with, you've got to be on your toes to stay alive. Here's some of the deadly minxes and killer kung fuists you'll be playing as.



▲ Ayame's taste in clothes may be suspect, but she's armed with a killer scissor kick



▲ Tina demonstrates the classic knee in the face attack. Clumsy, but hey, it works

5 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT PS 2

1 YOU CAN GO ONLINE WITH YOUR MOBILE

PS 2 owners can get onto the net straight away, simply by plugging a mobile phone into the back of their console. Sony's own super high speed connection will follow later in the year. Whatever happens, you'll be able to go online as soon as you buy your PS 2, and that's a hell of a lot better than Dreamcast.

2 YOU CAN USE OLD PLAYSTATION PADS!

All the launch games are compatible with old PlayStation 1 pads, which is great news if you're planning a four-player bashing session on Street Fighter EX 3: you can use your old PlayStation Dual Shocks or joypads, so you won't have to fork out for four pricey Dual Shock 2s.

3 YOU'LL GET BETTER GAMES IN THE UK!

By the time firework-fest Fantavision makes it to the UK, there'll be a two-player mode which wasn't in the Jap version. Expect to see improvements made to other PS2 games before they come out here. Some have been rushed out for the Jap market, and four more months will give the developers time to fine-tune them.

4 YOU CAN TAPE FILMS THREE MONTHS EARLY

If you've got a first-batch Japanese PS2, you can record Jap or American DVDs onto a British video player, by connecting your VHS to the PlayStation 2's output. It's highly illegal, though!

5 IT'S 50 BILLION TIMES BETTER THAN SUPERMAN

Why? Simple. Playstation 2 is capable of more than 50 billion decisions a second, whereas Superman, in his New Adventures, took more than two whole series to decide that he wanted to knob Lois after all.



MIRACULOUS PIGEON! AMAZING HEN! WONDER SWAN!

Wonderswan: the Game Boy-style hand-held that'll bring out the best in your PlayStation 2.

Wonderswan is a black-and-white portable console that's well popular over in Japan. In fact, it's done so damn well over there that the makers, Jap toy giants Bandai, are now thinking about bringing it over to us big-nosed Western types. That's good news, because Wonderswan is able to connect up to PlayStation 2 to download cool portable versions of PS2 games. You can download and upload bits from games, then play Game Boy-style games to train your characters or unlock secret modes. So far, they've planned a robot battle game, Gundam, and a dark, violent version of Pokemon called DigiMon where you breed little horned demons then use them to rip each other to shreds. Both games are looking smart, and the Wonderswan's well worth a look anyhow because there's an awesome Final Fantasy game on it that really is a must-play. More power to your pocket, we say.

5 PS 2 MYTHS BLOWN APART

1

■ ***Myth: 'There's a lot of PlayStation 1 games you can't play on it'***

■ Fact: Some PlayStation games don't work, but only a few old Japanese titles have failed the PS 2 test so far. Any British PlayStation game from the last three years will work fine, and some look loads better on PS 2, like Metal Gear.

FILMS YOU CAN PLAY

We nipped out to a game development studio the other day to talk to eggheads working with PS 2. Get this: they say developers will be making photo-realistic games (games which look just like films or TV) for PlayStation 2 within ONE YEAR! That's a gobsmacking statement, but if you think about the graphical quality of something like Armoured Core 2 or Tekken Tag, it suddenly seems more likely. A version of The Matrix where you play out the action scenes? We'll have one of those, thanks very much!

2

■ ***Myth: 'The DVD drive is total rubbish!'***

■ Fact: The DVD drive isn't as sharp as a dedicated player but it works fine and the picture's massively better than what you'll get off cruddy VHS playback.

3

■ ***Myth: 'All the games on PS 2 are just boring sequels of PlayStation games'***

■ Fact: Just wait for games like Legend, a King Arthur game where you control history, or Dark Cloud, where you create worlds. Primal Image has you playing a 'glamour' photographer, and have you ever seen that in a game before? Just a bit lower, love.

4

■ ***Myth: 'If you stand it on its end, the disc will fall out'***

■ Fact; There's little plastic bits in the disc drive that hold your CDs and DVDs in place, no matter which way up you keep your PS2. Any which way you like it!

5

■ ***Myth: 'The British one won't be coming out until 2001!'***

■ Fact: Sony are going all out to get British PlayStation 2s ready for autumn this year. September 29th is one target, but we think it'll be November. If they get their act together, this should be one of the best Christmases on record then!

IT'S TUESDAY, TIME FOR FINAL FANTASY!

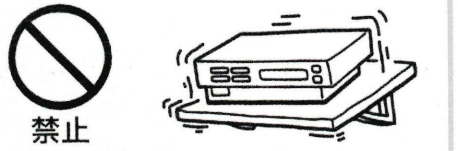
At the USA Games Developers Conference people were talking about a whole new way of looking at games.

In 2001 you'll be able to download games off Sony's website, paid for with your credit card. You'll never have to go to a shop again. And that got people thinking.

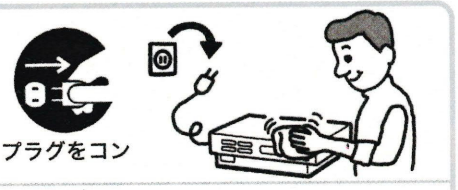
If you don't have to leave your house to get a new game why not make games that come in installments? Just like following a soap opera, you'd complete one bit, then you'd wait until next week to see what happened next. Expect to see the first piece of serialised software late on in 2001. Then you'll really be able to savour your games rather than just caning them as fast as you can.

LITTLE BOX OF HORRORS!

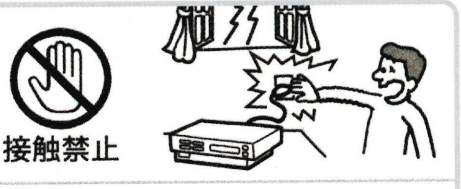
The PlayStation 2 manual has warning lists of what the machine can do in the wrong hands. The icons hint at an unearthly death machine. Until we see an English language manual we recommend you be afraid, very afraid.



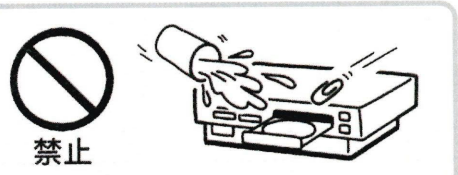
● **'Warning: independent movement. At night, PS 2 may roam house, eating untethered pets'**



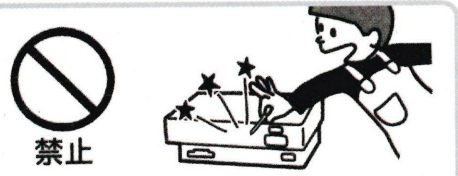
● **'Take care: over-eager rubbing by men with towels over arm may stimulate PS 2 to meltdown'**



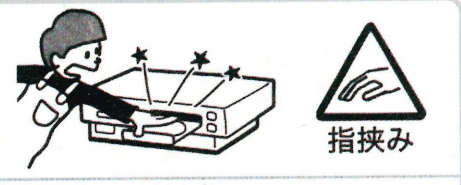
● **'Stop! PS 2 will prevent disconnection by using freak weather to shock men with poor haircuts'**



● **'Watch out! Objects within a three-foot radius may be chewed by PS 2 in order for it to survive'**



● **'Danger: PS 2 will ignore only Playmobil characters practising magic tricks'**



● **'Caution: PS 2 will wait until magic is underway before eating children whole'**

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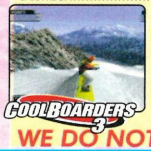


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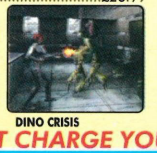


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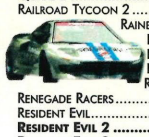


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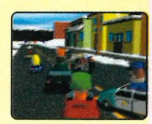


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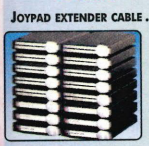


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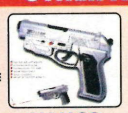
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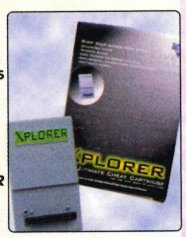


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● Droids go saber-crazy in the forest

'I SEE YOU HAVE A JEDI'S WEAPON'

OUT MAY

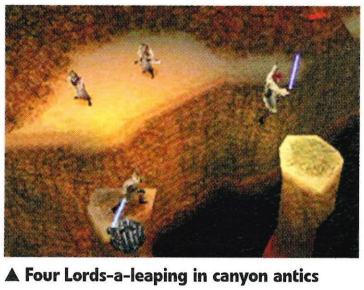
> JEDI POWER BATTLES

Grim-faced Jedis scythe through aliens and gimpy droids in a frenzied lightsaber fighter that's looking cool

The game of the Phantom Menace was the biggest disappointment we've had since we first saw Teri Hatcher without a top on. Lots of promise, no delivery. But Jedi Power Battles is looking to set the record straight. It's a Phantom Menace game that boils it down to the best bits of the film – some blinding high-speed lightsaber duels in which Jedis pull off martial arts moves as they duel Sith lords for death or glory.

This is pure arcade action, no fuss, no mess. You choose your Jedi, then head out with your fizzing blade to swordfight and swashbuckle your way through 12 spot-on environments out of the film, ranging from the mean streets of Theed to the howling, droid-infested deserts of Tattooine. There's no puzzles, no hammy, boring speeches, it's just fighting. And you can team up with a mate to fight in a pair, just like Qui Gonn and Obi Wan do in the film.

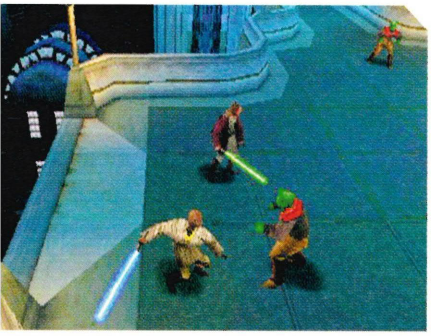
Chopping through droids and face-painted Siths earns you points, and getting points unlocks new special moves and Force powers. You can even earn power-ups like restraining bolts and Thermite bombs. But the more tricks you learn, the tougher the enemies get. The last bloke you've got to face is the man with the world's worst dentistry, Darth Maul. Believe us, he's a beast of an opponent.



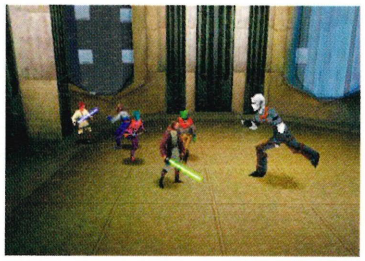
▲ Four Lords-a-leaping in canyon antics



▲ Looks better than the Phantom Menace



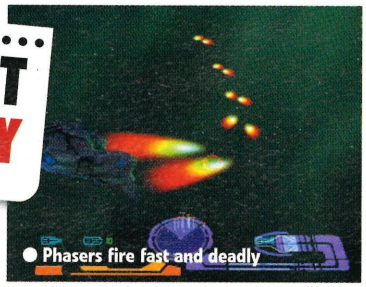
▲ There are penthouse duels against newts



▲ Bib Fortuna steams in



▲ Lock photon torpedos then sit back and watch the Klingons turn into space debris



● Phasers fire fast and deadly



● A Warbird explodes out into space

KLINGONS ON THE STARBOA

OUT JUN

> STAR TREK: INVASION

Get busy with phasers and photon torpedos in the first Trek game on PlayStation. Make it so!

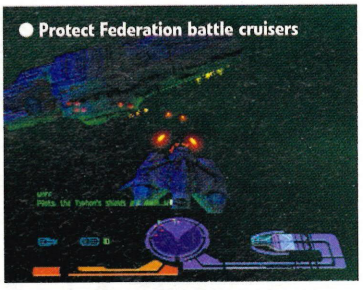
If you're a fan of Next Generation, Star Trek: Invasion's going to be a treat. Intergalactic baldie Picard and Klingon tough nut Worf beam in for voice duties, Romulan Birds of Prey and Borg cubes provide the deep space lightshows and loads of neat, jumpsuited young men meet their deaths at the hands of alien entities and dimensional rifts in the Beta Quadrant. It's business as usual in the 23rd Century.

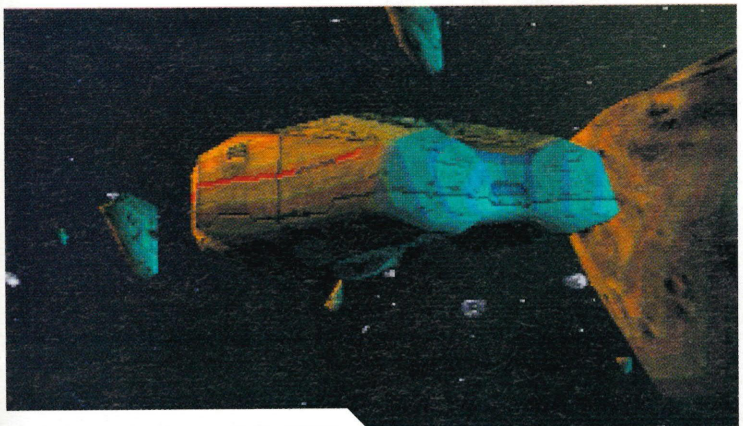
The good news is the space battles are far, far more savage than your average plodding Trek shootout. Invasion's set in a time of total war, and the missions here are like the fast-paced epic battles at the end of Star Wars or Star Trek: First Contact. Think of First Contact where Worf growls 'Perhaps today is a good day to die!' as he hurls his fighter into the side of a Borg cube, and you've got the flavour of the action here.

The missions are down to small fighters dogfighting round battle lines of huge, deadly space destroyers. There's amazing enemy intelligence, so ships work in squadrons to deliver concentrated barrages of phaser fire.

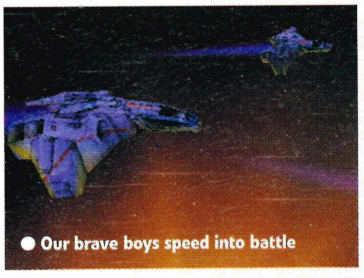
You're in a team of one-man Federation fighters, and you'll have to stay glued to your radio earpiece to stay in formation with your mates. You'll need to use Romulan cloaking devices, evade locks from photon torpedos, and pursue targets through the hell of battle. Expect duels with renegade Klingon Warbirds, dogfights in the centres of nebulae, encounters with strange floating 'intelligences' and suicidal last stands against the planet-eating Borg. There's no levels with Plasticine wanker Data's quest for a sense of humour. So that's one up on the series then.


● You pilot a one-man fighter

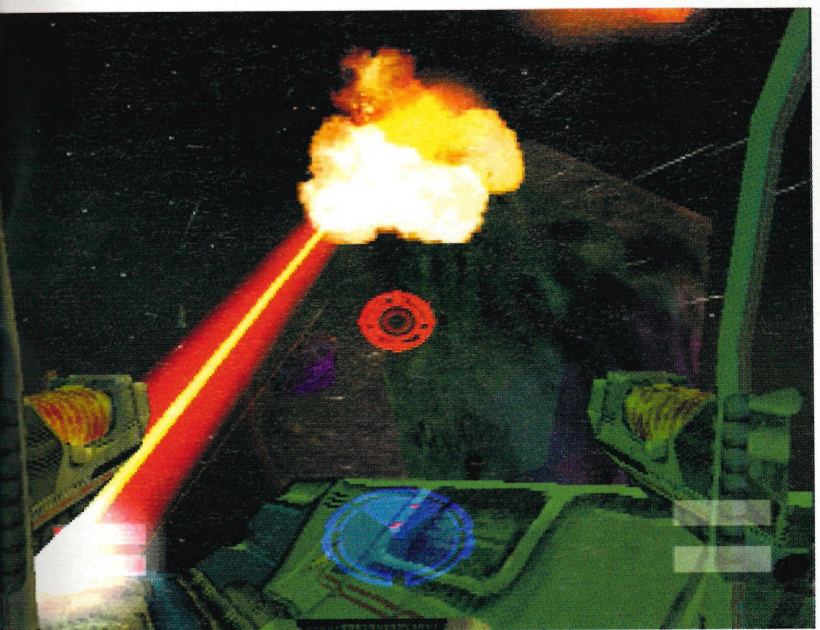

● Protect Federation battle cruisers


● Fight in nebulae and asteroid belts


● 'From Hell's heart I stab at thee...'

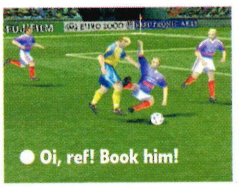

● Our brave boys speed into battle

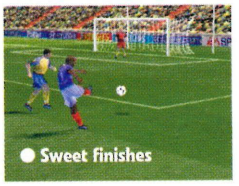
...RD BOW

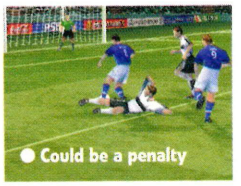

▲ You'll face giant space battleships like this cloaked Gorn dreadnought

KEEGAN'S HEROES

OUT MAY


● Oi, ref! Book him!


● Sweet finishes


● Could be a penalty

> EURO 2000

Reckon you could lead England to Euro glory and show our Continental chums a thing or two? Roll on May 5

The game of Euro 2000 is a racy, FIFA-flavoured number. It's got fast-moving matches and full-on management action side-by-side, and it boasts an assortment of sweet finishes and tricks that'll really make you feel you're in the studded boots of highly-trained international players. It launches on May 5, the same day the tournament itself, so you can take on the challenge of the Hun at the same time as Captain Keegan and the troops.

Euro 2000 aims to capture the pain and glory of the struggle for European domination from start to finish. It's got all 51 sides, with proper kits and spot-on player faces, and you've got to deal with every part of the tournament from training and squad selection up to the nail-biting finish. Just pray it doesn't get down to penalties again.

There is a range of duties. You should oversee squad training in a cool hands-on training mode where you learn new trick shots and slick bits of footwork. The team, including its reserves, must learn how to handle the formations and playing styles of its opponents. And you've got to deal with suspensions and injuries as the tournament unfolds. If Beckham decides to throw a World Cup-style wobbler early on, you'll be in the shit.

This has got all the sharp looks and smooth, flowing gameplay that you'd expect from the folks who brough you the FIFA series, but it's fine-tuned for a full tournament's worth of play.

The game plays fast and brutal, with impressive scorelines guaranteed every time. But you must ensure your strikers don't get carded, and stick some effort into the coaching so that the team structure is well balanced.

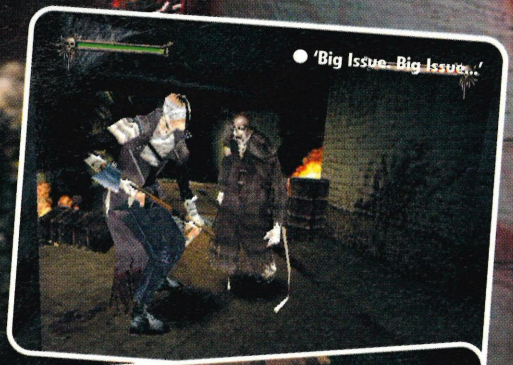
Make no mistake, this is the ideal way to act out your version of Shearer's last crack at the big time. Just don't blouse it, OK?

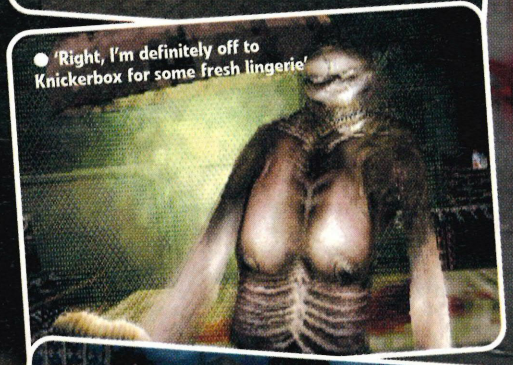

● This has all the teams and stadiums

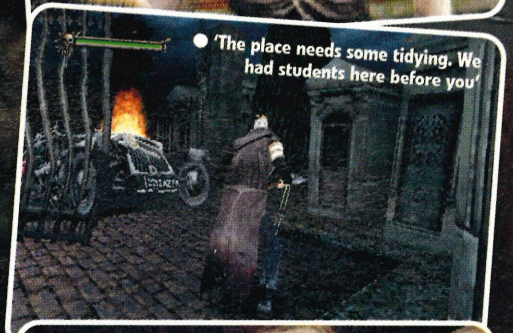


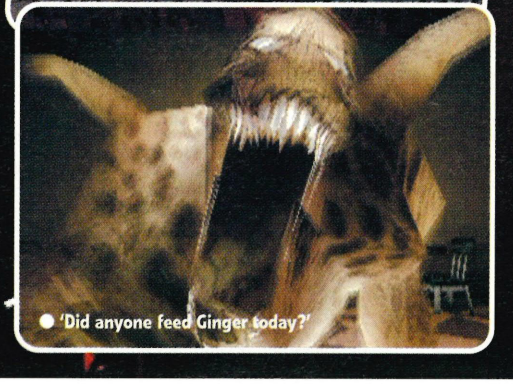
▲ It looks sharp enough for you to read the names on the backs of the shirts. Go Baggio!

ZOMBIE SLAVES OF SATAN









> NIGHTMARE CREATURES 2

Snatch up a woodman's axe and prepare for 30 levels of crude amputation in Nightmare Creatures 2, due on your PlayStation in late May

Nightmare Creatures 2 is Res Evil 3 with its brain removed. You play a weird crippled half-zombie armed with a giant two-handed axe. Close up, it's a 3D beat 'em up set in gloomy Victorian mansions.

But you'll spend most of your time bringing your axe back over your head like you're chopping firewood, then bringing it down through some zombie's rotten, pulpy torso. We ain't complaining.

You face skin-stripped demons, surgically-created zomboid monstrosities and mentally-subnormal gimps. You can gather power-ups, then use a blunderbuss, bombs, swarms of flies and earthquakes to reduce undead foes to juddering mounds of strawberry jam.

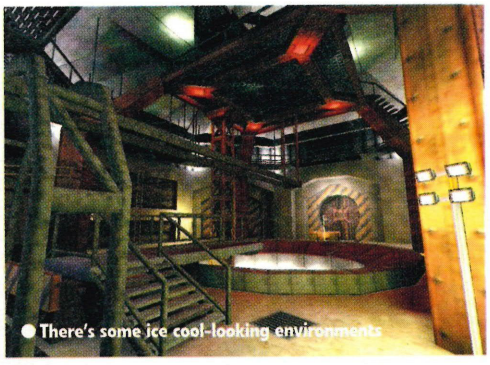
This game isn't going to stretch your brain but it'll keep your adrenalin glands pumping out thrill juice like it's the last day on earth. A full no-bull review of this monster mash in next month's issue.

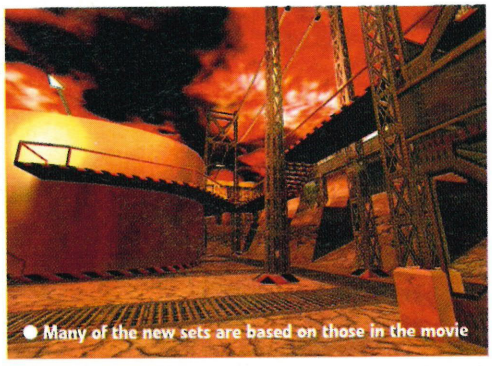
MONDO CHEAPO

By the time you read this, Sony's new pricing policy will have hit your High Street. The most you'll pay for a game will be around £30, even for hot newies such as Syphon Filter 2 and the mighty WWF Smackdown.

Some are going to have low, low prices. Check out awesome space stormer Colony Wars: Red Sun for only 20 notes! You'll get older games such as Driver for £10, and there's plans to make classics like Die Hard Trilogy available for £7.99.




There's some ice cool-looking environments


Many of the new sets are based on those in the movie

BOND'S NOT IN NOW

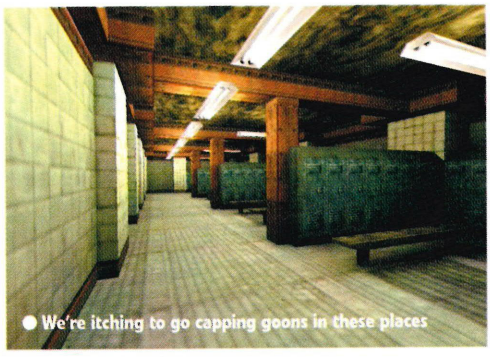
No Bond but early shots of The World is not Enough belong in the World of Interiors

> THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH

No-one could accuse these shots of being too action-packed. There's no sign of the terrorist foes you'll be greasing in the final game, no sign of the sharp targetting system you'll use to take down Renard's evil stooges. But at least the visuals should let you get an idea of how sweet this Bond epic's going to look.

The World is not Enough is going to be a Quake 2-style first-person shooter, and it's up for a simultaneous release on PlayStation and PlayStation 2 later this year.

It's going to feature loads of environments plucked straight out of the film, all packed with that volatile mixture of up-close violence and hardcore spycraft that makes the Bond films such a treat. Expect deadly showdowns with all the villains out of the film, plus a few extra terrorist vermin thrown in just for good measure. And once you've dealt with Renard's nuclear threat, you'll be able to turn the game's deadly arsenal on your mates in a cool multiplayer deathmatch mode.


We're itching to go capping goons in these places

JJB SPORTS



MATCH



PUMA STREET SOCCER

SERVE YOUR COUNTRY. PLAY HARD

YOUR TEAM COULD BE LIFTING THE WORLD CUP!

It returns football skills and fun to the streets in the fastest form of football on the planet, and what's more, Puma Street Soccer is watched by International Puma soccer stars, including World Cup Winning captain Didier Dechamps, Jaap Stam, Paul Ince, Martin Keown, David Batty, Kevin Campbell, John Hartson, Shaka Hislop and many more.

Boys and girls teams of 6 in the U16's and U14's age groups will compete to represent the UK at the **Puma Street Soccer World Finals in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.** At least 1 player will be offered **1 weeks trial at a Premiership Club.**

Regional qualifiers will be held all over the UK before a **National Final at The Millennium Dome on the 12th August** to decide which teams, plus 2 guardians, will collect their full Puma kit and **fly for free to play in this year's Puma Street Soccer World Finals on the 25th August.**
It's only £49.99 for a squad of six players to enter - just £8.00 per player!

EVERY regional player receives:
- **At least 45 minutes of match play per team**
- **Guaranteed attendance of 2 or more soccer stars at the event.**
- **Discounted Family Travel package to the Millennium Dome**

Teams reaching the UK final receive:
- **FREE Puma kit,**
- **FREE entry to the Dome**
- **Discounted travel and accommodation in London.**

TO ENROL YOUR TEAM, representatives can complete the entry form below, or for telephone bookings and further information, call the Puma Street Soccer Hotline number: 0870 8457862.
On Entry each team will receive a players' pack including venue details, format for the day, rules and player's badges.

NB: Players must be aged within their competition group up to 25/08/00.

PHONE 0870 8457862

Fill in this form and send it with a cheque or postal order made payable to:
Spirit Event Management Ltd., No. 10 The Town Hall, Towcester Northamptonshire NN12 6BS

Team Name

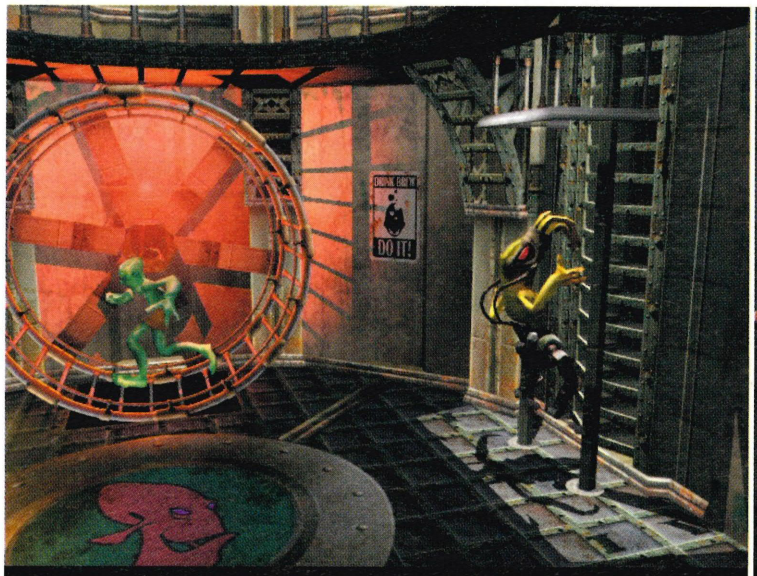
Guardian Name

Home tel.no

Email address

Address

Post code:



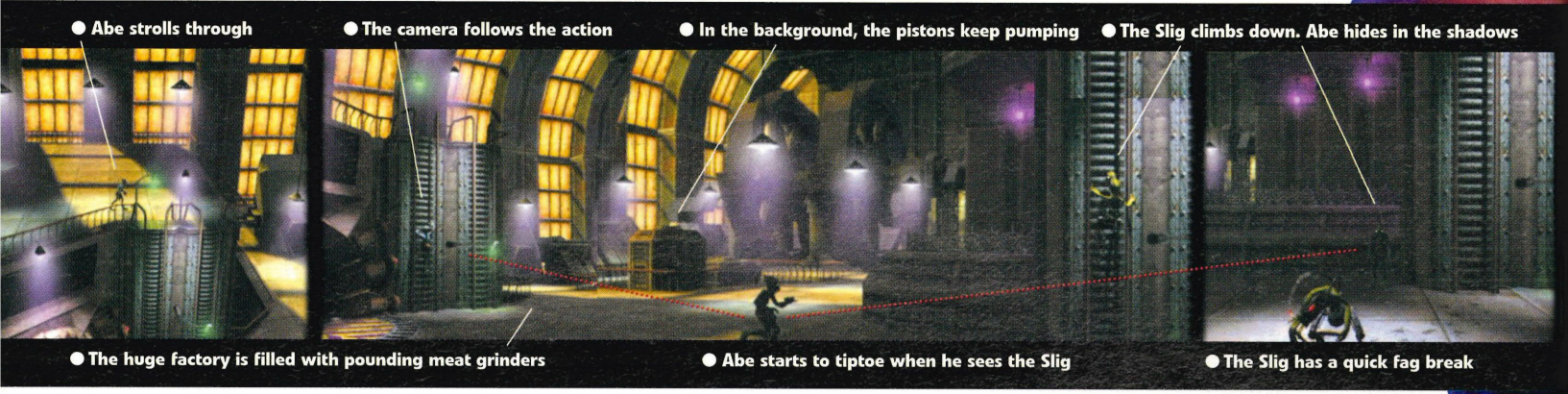
● A Mudokon slave provides a handy source of electricity for this Slig



● Each species moves in a different way and the animation is smo-o-o-th

DEATH FACTORY

MUNCH'S ODDYSEE ON PS 2 IS A DOG-EAT-MUDOKON WORLD. IT'LL MAKE YOU INSPECT YOUR SAUSAGE SARNIE WITH CARE



● Abe strolls through

● The camera follows the action

● In the background, the pistons keep pumping

● The Slig climbs down. Abe hides in the shadows

● The huge factory is filled with pounding meat grinders

● Abe starts to tiptoe when he sees the Slig

● The Slig has a quick fag break



● In this vid, a security camera watches a huge factory full of toiling Mudokons

> MUNCH'S ODDYSEE

OUT SEP

Here are some new clips of the awesome PlayStation 2 Oddworld blockbuster, Munch's Oddysee. And it's looking like an absolute meat feast of a game.

The game spans a world of burger factories, sweeping open plains and war-ravaged wastelands.

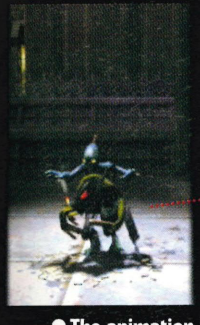
Every character in it goes about their own lives, regardless of whether you see it on screen. And that usually means eating each other.

Munch's is likely to be the first so-called World Simulator you'll play, but it's a crash course in being at the business end of the food chain, a sort of McCannibals. The clip above shows Abe grabbing a Slig who's having a crafty fag, then chucking him into a meat grinder that processes him into meat patties. In another, a security camera's roving eye watches a sprawling factory where Mudokon slaves toil among roaring house-sized mincers in the business of processing Mudo-Meatpops.

Others show the game's management features, where you befriend Mudos and Gabbits and enlist them to farm land for you. The nastier of you could even befriend folks before sneakily selling them to the Sligs as a source of meat. Not a game for vegans then.

'THIS PS 2 EPIC'S A CRASH COURSE IN BEING AT THE BUSINESS END OF THE FOOD CHAIN'

● Abe grabs him and hikes him across the factory

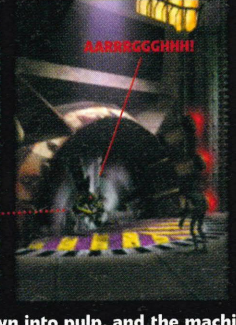




● The animation is cool as the Slig moves like an insect!

Abe chucks the helpless Slig into the grinder

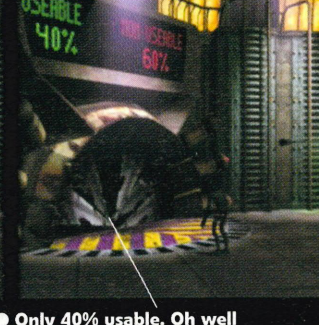




● The Slig gets ground down into pulp, and the machine assesses his body

● The computer calculates how much of the Slig is usable





● Only 40% usable. Oh well



FRIES WITH THAT MUDOKON, SIR?

You play as both Abe and Munch. Munch is a weird little creature called a Gabbit, who's escaped from an animal-testing lab where twisted Vykker scientists have been putting electrodes in his head and shampooing his eyes.

You've been so horribly mutilated that escaping is a struggle. It's up to Oddworld bigwig Abe to push you around in a wheelchair until he gets a medic to fix you up.

But it's then that the game really kicks in. Abe and Munch don't share the same goals. Munch wants to free lab animals from the cruel Vykkers, Abe wants to free Mudokons from the Sligs. And the gamespeak from the previous games, 'Hello! Follow me!', is back in force.

The all-analogue Dual Shock 2 should allow subtle conversations and real emotion to be key to its gameplay.

One of the clips shows the water drying out of a Mudokon farm, and the plants dying. You've got to keep talking to your mates to get them to do the watering or your farm will go tits up.

Munch's Oddysee is crammed with pupil-roasting environments that has us lot gasping. We've never seen such complex, lush and atmos-soaked landscapes and cities in a game.

And in this big, bad, sometimes beautiful world you gossip, explore, raid, love, hate. Do you want to rule or be ruled, eat or be eaten? It's up to you.



▲ You can really kick up some height off the jumps



▲ Collisions are a pretty common occurance

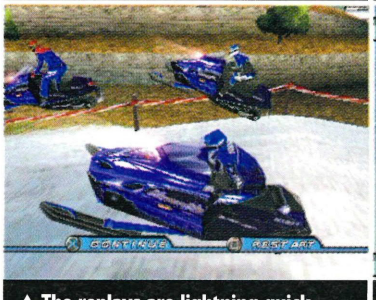
SLED OR DEAD!



▲ Hold your line or you'll be off



▲ Choose which view you prefer



▲ The replays are lightning quick



▲ Everything looks pretty mean



▲ Four very, very brave men get ready

> SNO CROSS CHAMPIONSHIP

OUT JUN

Sno Cross is like snowboarding with the Fast Forward button held down. Take a deep breath...

Sno Cats are huge, roaring metal beasts with enough juice under the bonnet to blast straight up a downhill snowboard track. When two of these 400hp monsters smash into each other on track, the riders are hurled 50 feet, rolling along the ground like rag dolls. If you've played Sled Storm, you'll know Sno Cats make for awesome racing game material, and Sno Cross Championship isn't breaking the mould.

Sno Cross Championship lets you test these awesome machines on some of the world's most hair-raising tracks. Uphill Challenge has you tanking your Cat straight up a winding, tree-lined snowboard slope. Or choose a straight-up high-speed race mode where you blitz it round purpose-made tracks, smacking into Alpine lodges, catching air off massive jumps, even sliding helplessly over frozen lakes.

The handling's fine-tuned to make it easy to get into, but it's hellish-fast and the tracks have teeth. They are about eight lanes wide, so stick to your racing line like superglue. And there are tons of secret routes. You'll have to fishtail into bends to zip down a tiny second-saving shortcut. Get it the angle slightly wrong and you'll crunch straight into a wall.

You'll end up weaving through trees, splashing down off jumps into a forest of fence posts, even rocketing straight over houses. Every lap shows off the kind of crashes that'd have a real life driver in Intensive Care. This makes snowboarding look like the ladyboy's choice. Check this snow-blowing speed fest out when it hits the shops in May.



● Tony Hawk: Spends a lot of his time flying

STALEFISH? YES, PLEASE!

> TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING 2

OUT SEP

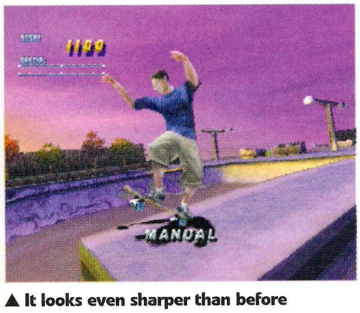
Make your own skatepark, make your own skater, then hit the deck big time!

Fancy doing a berserk spinning dive off the top of a multistorey carpark with only a slender plank to protect you from your 100mph impact with the concrete pavement below? No problem, dude. You can do it in Tony Hawk's Skateboarding 2, the only skating game where you can string ramps, half-pipes and giant jumps together to make your own giant skatepark of extreme-sports death.

If you've played the first Tony Hawk's, you'll know that the World Skateboarding Champion only brings you games that are the last word in skating quality. This one looks even sharper than the first one, and the slick, easy-going trick system's been extended to include even madder aerial acrobatics in the style of California's arch-dude of skating.

What's cool here is you can decide how real you want the action to be. You can test your trucks in real-world skate parks ranging from New York to Rio, or you can go nuts designing skate parks then take your 'boarder through a series of jumps and drops that'd make Jackie Chan gulp and ask for a stunt double.

This has the same one-touch control system that made the first Tony Hawk so sweet to get into, and there's so many more tricks you'll have to relearn your combos from the bottom up if you want to rack up the big points. This month's disappointing Street Skater 2 hammers home the point that there's only one man to turn to for top-notch skating action: Tony Hawk. The first game was an absolute blinder, and we've got high hopes this one's going to be even better. So pad up 'cos you're gonna love this.



▲ It looks even sharper than before



▲ The trick system is going to

ARE YOU A WINNER?!!

Here they are: ten of the luckiest people in the land who each won a PS 2 in our biggest compo ever. We're all jealous too

VIRGIN MOBILE WINNERS

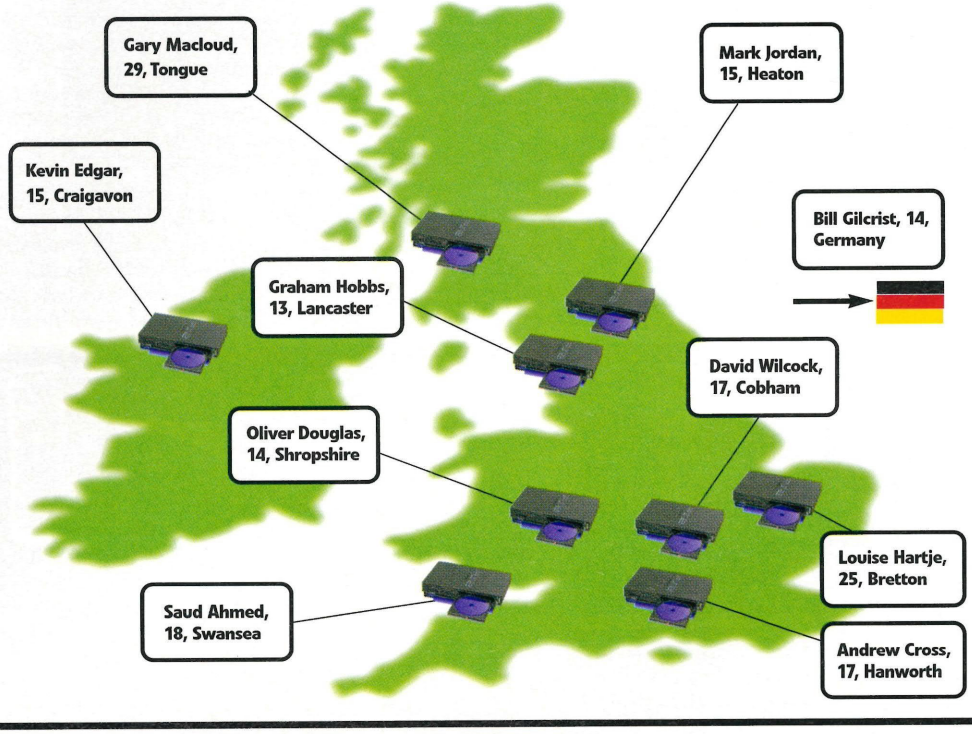
Did you score a £150 mobile phone kit?

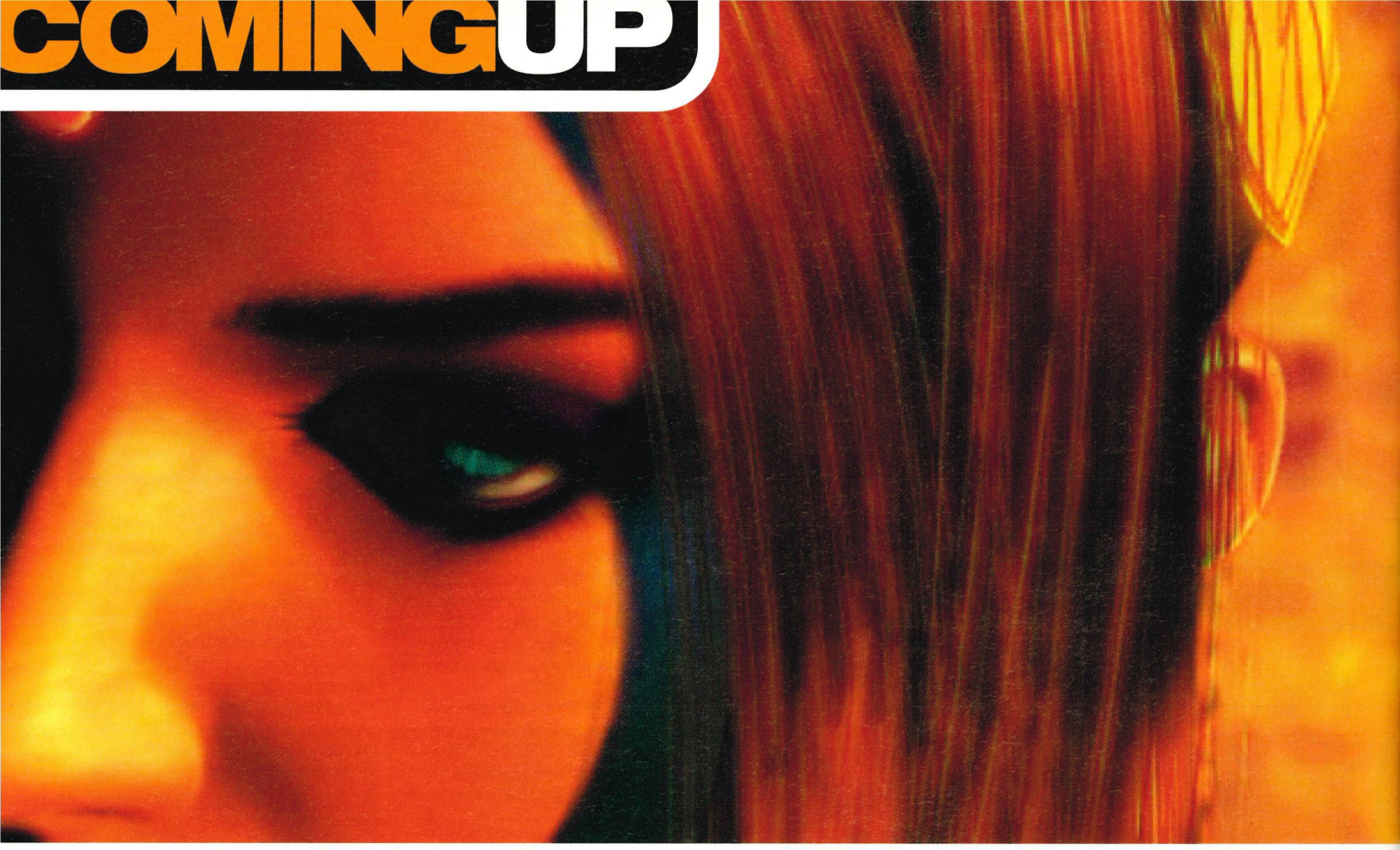
David Doran, Loughborough; Craig Chisnall, Wigan; Mark Rickaby, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne; David Money, East Devon; S Saunders, Coventry; Graeme Jamieson, Ayrshire; David Welch, Hants; Steven Shotliff, Guisborough; Steven Haddock, Barrow-on-Humber; Giles Exton, Portershead.

ISS PRO EVOLUTION WINNERS

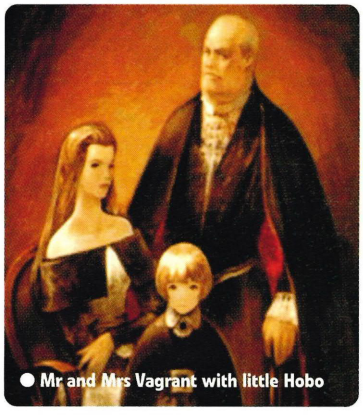
Sorry, we didn't have room for these last issue

Jack Lakey, Glos; Paul Rowland, Retford Notts; Conor Coulhlan, Co Waterford; Scott Clelland, Airdrie; Shaun Edwards, Tyne and Wear; Simeon Dight, Gwent; Robert Russel, Reading; Shay Joyce, Burnham-on-Crouch; Chriss Brooks, Leeds; Adam Robinson, Sutton; William Redburn, Hull; Alex Boden, Audley; Christian Blyth, Southhampton;Paul Docherty, Stirling; Warrick Martin, Exeter; Andy Cripps, Hants; J.P Fisher, Herts; Steve Lindsey, Essex; Scott Butler, Notts;S.H Macnally, Ross-shire; Darren Thompson, Cardiff; Jason Arnold, Hants;Gary Fitzgerald, Liverpool; Marc Brown, Powys; Wayne Watts, Sailsburry; Paul Rudd, Portsmouth; Garry Tucker, Kent; Michael S Buchan, Edinburgh; Bobby Haines, Swindon; Christopher Perrett, Burnham-on-Sea; Kevin Hughson, Caithness; Andrew Rose, Dorset; Andrew Black, Carlisle; Daniel Motchman, Surrey; Richard Dennis, Derby; Ben cairns, Aberdinshire; Simon Cossutta, Surbitton; Simon Miller, Ranes; Derek J Mackenzie, Iverness;Nyon Gordon Francis, Preston; David Savage, Doncaster;Peter Scrace, Ashford; Christopher Read, Walshall; Euan Robertson, Aberdeen; Nathaniel Pamah, Croydon; Les Peek, Devon; Paul Banner, Cheshire; Michael Bloomfield, Edgeware; Cormac McCoy, Waterford;Tim Brunton, Exmouth.





IT'S METAL GEAR S



● Mr and Mrs Vagrant with little Hobo

> VAGRANT STORY

OUT JUN

This sword and sorcery thriller looks the freshest most exciting game this year

It may have the worst name in PlayStation's history, but Vagrant Story is a stone cold killer game. Every so often, a game shows up with fresh ideas and gameplay that really lights a bonfire under the PlayStation melting pot: think Final Fantasy VII, Metal Gear Solid or Tomb Raider. Vagrant Story is another one: it's an RPG, but the combat's totally full-on and there isn't a poncey elf in sight. It's more Conan the Barbarian than Dungeons and Dragons.

This is by the Final Fantasy people so there's an a massive range of magic potions, weapons and equipment to get to grips with as you wander round grim underground dungeons. But it doesn't play like Final Fantasy. You won't find yourself doing maths in your head to figure out which attack to do next. It's far too hands-on for that.

See, all the all the action happens in real time. You've got to be fast on your feet to survive the demon-infested tunnels beneath Lea Monde castle. You're a young soldier who's lost his wife and child, and you're following two thieves into a castle. The further you get in, the more obvious it is that you're dealing with dark magic and pacts with demons. All the characters are hard-bitten, superstitious Medieval types, and there's just enough black magic to keep the whole thing hellishly spooky. It all happens deep underground, and you've got to deal with fiendish dungeon traps and deadly puzzles, and there's enough variety in here to make you require a different thinking cap every time you step through a doorway. Make no mistake, this kicks ass.

ALSO COMINGUP

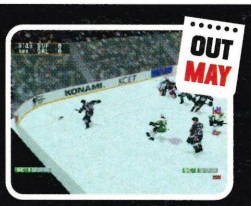
Check out these reviews and previews in Plus soon



OUT JUN

SPIN JAM

More bubble-bursting puzzle action from Japan. This time, a bizarre cat fires bubbles at revolving cogs. Get a chain of three, they burst. Weird.



OUT MAY

NHL: BLADES OF STEEL

Big, chunky players and fast-moving action make this hockey sim a blast to play. Not up to the standards of NHL 2000, but still cool.



OUT JUN

MARTIAN GOTHIC UNIFICATION

It's Resident Evil in space as a research station on Mars gets infested by alien viruses and spooky spiritual beings.



OUT JUL

HYDRO THUNDER

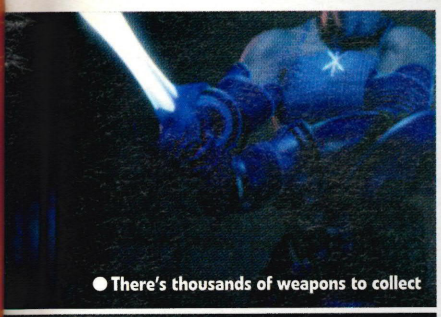
Race giant speedboats through stunt-laden waterways in this high-octane racer. Fast, mental and filled with gigantic jumps.

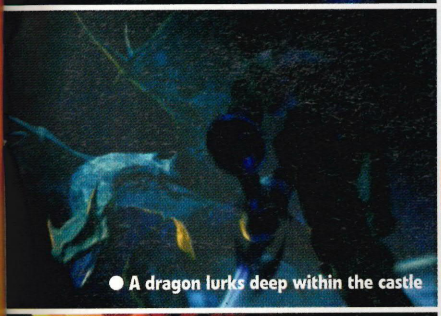
FACE THE SLAYER!

What makes Vagrant Story 2 so damn alive and sparky is the combat system. It's all real-time stuff, with you dodging blasts of magical flame and ducking behind pillars to slash at bull-headed demons. But when you hit the 'target' button to aim a slash or a magical bolt of death at some horned nasty, the game freezes up and you see a grid over the action. Choose what to do, hit the button and watch the attack hit home. Then the game unfreezes, and you've got to dodge fast or you'll get hit back.

When you're in the targetting system, you can choose what weapon or spell to use, and where you want your blow to land. Hitting them on an armoured breastplate's not going to do the business, but slash them in their sword arm and their next attack won't hit you so hard.

Of course, it works the other way round. Get hit in the legs too many times and you'll be limping like a cripple. Then there's the magical effects to deal with. When you take on one of the later bad boys, you'll both have that much magic up your sleeves that the two of you will be staggering around blinded, electrocuted, poisoned or hallucinating. All the weapons and spells are just one button push away. But you know as soon as you click out of the combat menu you're going to have to run like a hare to get into cover, or you're mincemeat.


There's thousands of weapons to collect


A dragon lurks deep within the castle


Mix up hilts and blades to make DIY magic swords


The medieval Britney Spears plays a big part in the opening FMV


Demons. Now with wings


The dragon. Don[illegible] with this beast



Face the evil denizens of the underworld

OLID IN CHAINMAIL



Time your attacks just right to score super hits



There's a massive range of magic to get to grips with


Xxxxx xxxx xxxxxxxx


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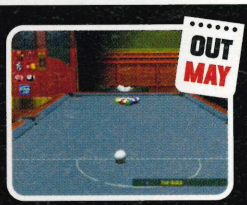
CHAMPIONSHIP BASS

Fishing game where you hook giant bass out of American lakes. Lacks the weirdo edge of ace bait 'em up Fisherman's Bait 2, reviewed this ish.



ALUNDRA 2

A little pointy-eared bloke enters people's dreams in this massive RPG epic. Loooks cool and it's loads more playable than stuff like Vandal Hearts 2.



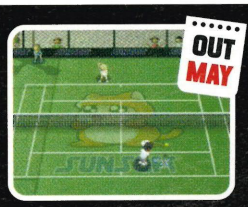
JIMMY WHITE'S CUE BALL

Ball-potting action with the bad boy of snooker. You can do both snooker and pool, but both games are absolutely abysmal. Bad call, Jimmy!



4X4 WORLD TROPHY

Yank trucks race through outdoor locations with jumps and high-speed crashes in plenty. Annoyingly, the game looks as rough as the tracks.



YEHYEH TENNIS

Cute, tennis effort where tiny big-eyed teenage types play an easy-going arcadey game in the sunshine. A rival to Anna K's Smash Court? Maybe.



SUIKODEN 2

This could be the PlayStation's ultimate RPG. It doesn't make much effort to be likable, and it's pretty clunky, but its epic scale should please RPG fans.

PlayNation

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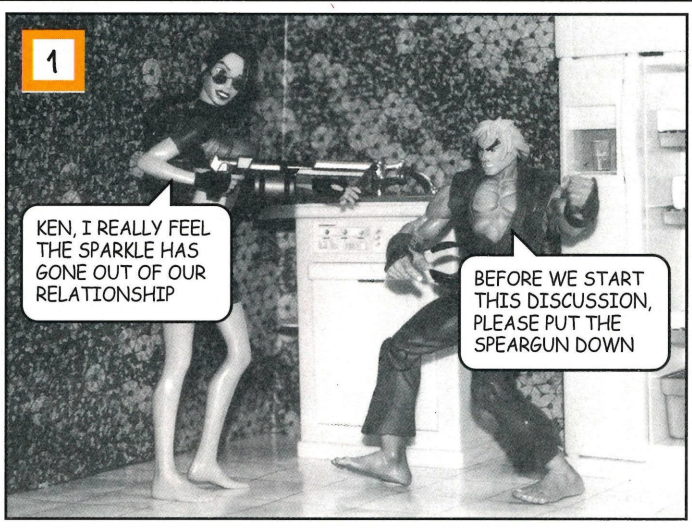
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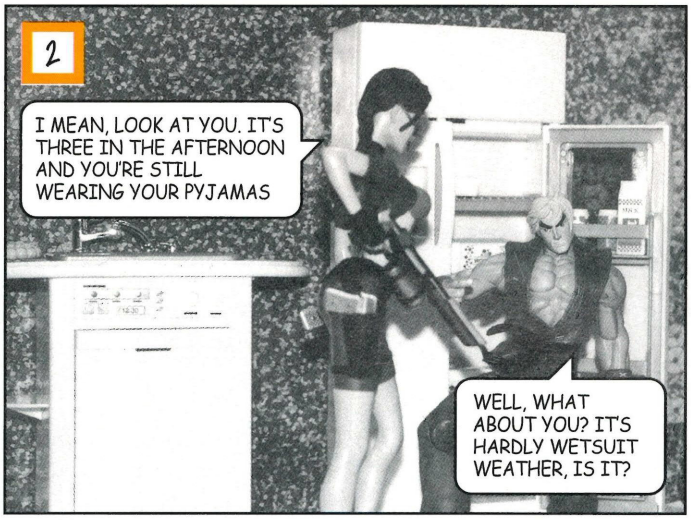
THE SECRET MESSAGE
If you're reading this panel looking for a secret message, outta luck. There's no secrets to be found this month. Well, except for the Capri Suns, of course. Oh, you missed 'em?

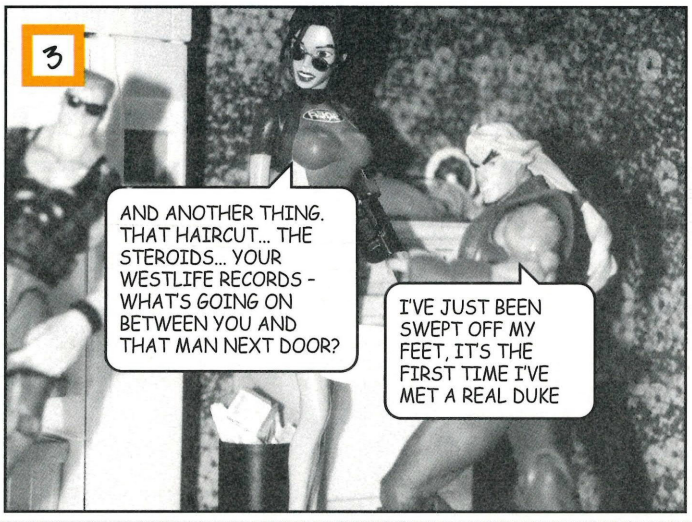
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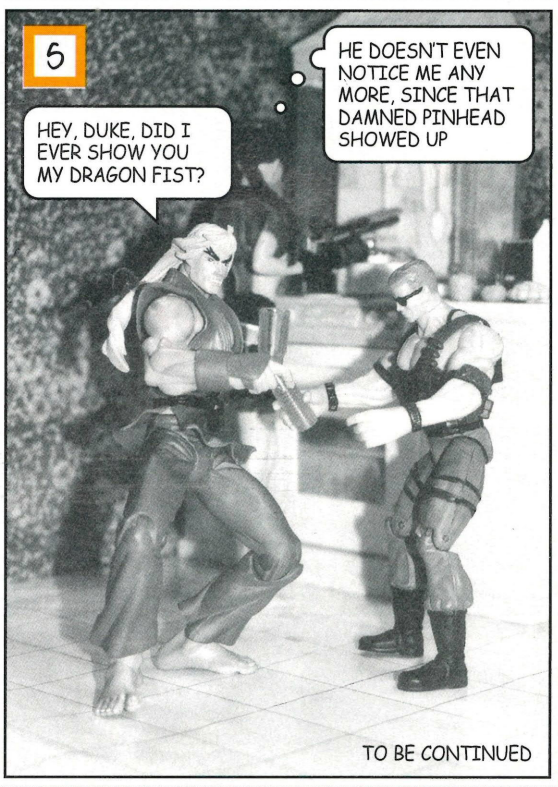
DREARY PHOTO CASEBOOK. LARA'S LOVE DILEMMA – MONTH ONE...



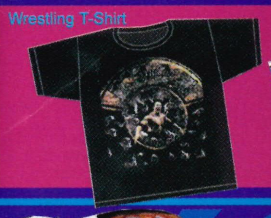








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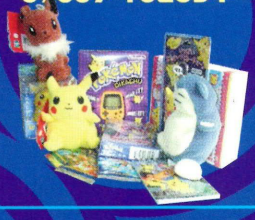
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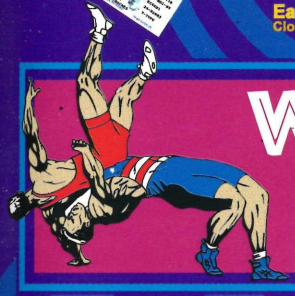
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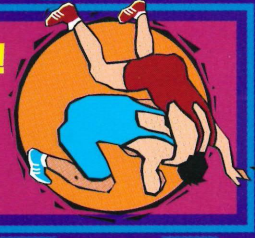


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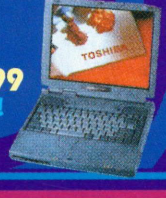
"Pay as you talk".

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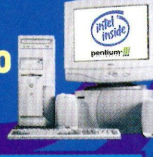
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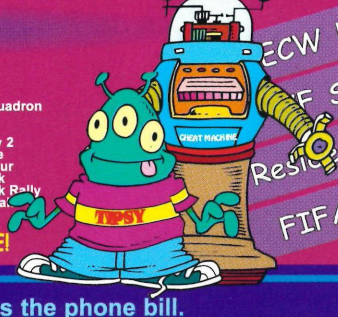
Cheats and Tips

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Gran Turismo 2
Pokemon Snap
Pokemon Stadium
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Actua Soccer 3	Colin Mcrae Rally	Formula 1	Lego Racers	Phantom Menace	Soul Blade
Age of Empires 2	Colony Wars	Future Cop	Mario Golf	Plasma Sword	Soul Calibur
Alien Trilogy	Coolboarders 2	Get Bass	Mario Kart	Quake 2 / Quake 64	South Park
All Star Baseball 99	Crash Bandicoot 1,2&3	Gex / Gex 3D	Medal of Honour	Rage Racer	South Park Rally
Apocalypse	Crash Team Racing	Goldeneye	Metal Gear Solid	Rally Cross 2	Speed Freak
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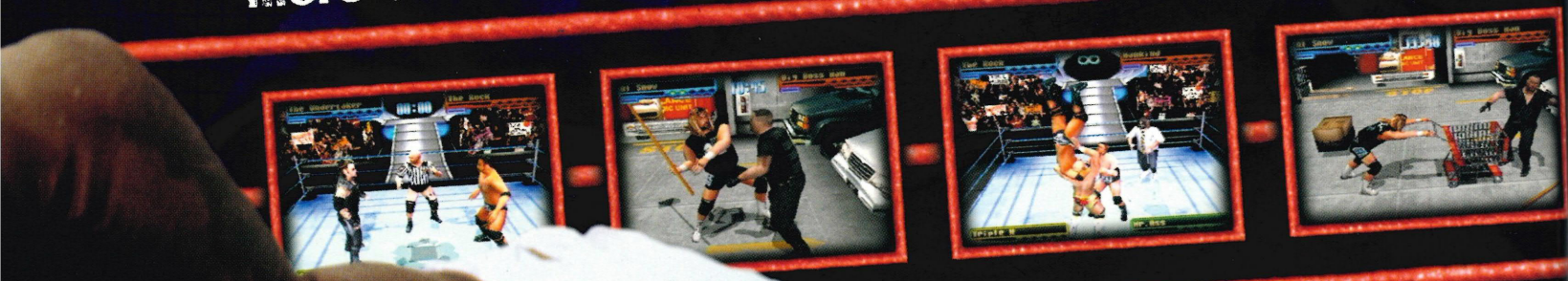
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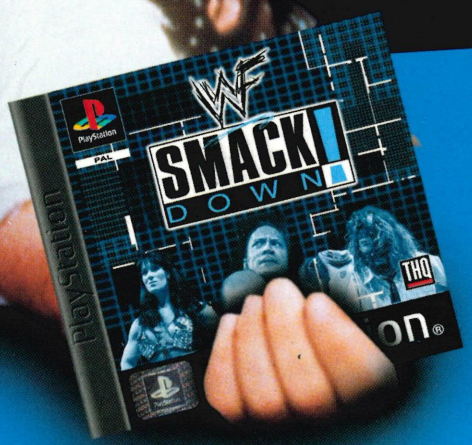
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