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ISSUE 14 DECEMBER 1997 £2.95

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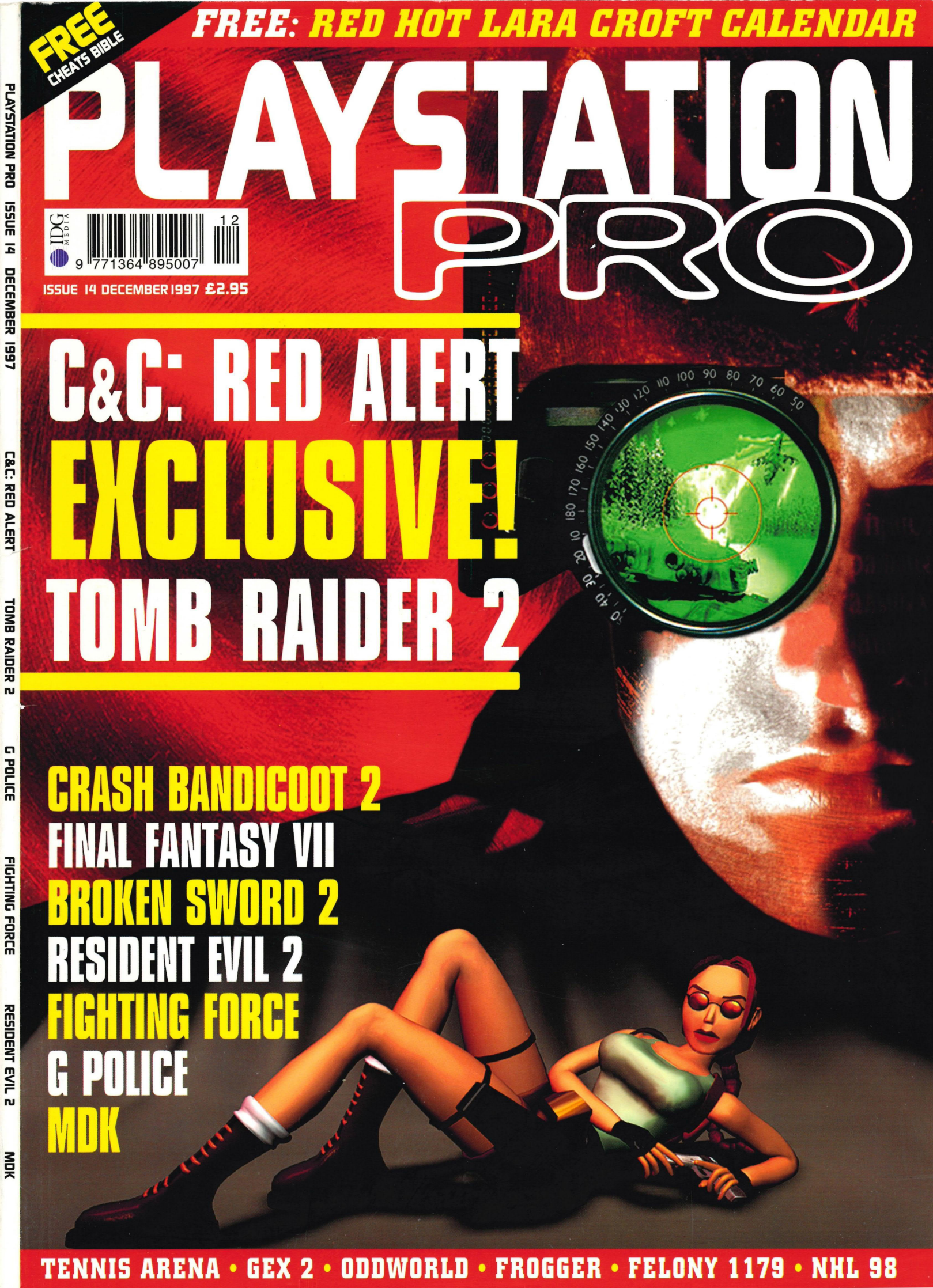
TOMB RAIDER 2



CRASH BANDICOOT 2
FINAL FANTASY VII
BROKEN SWORD 2
RESIDENT EVIL 2
FIGHTING FORCE
G POLICE
MDK

TENNIS ARENA • GEX 2 • ODDWORLD • FROGGER • FELONY 1179 • NHL 98

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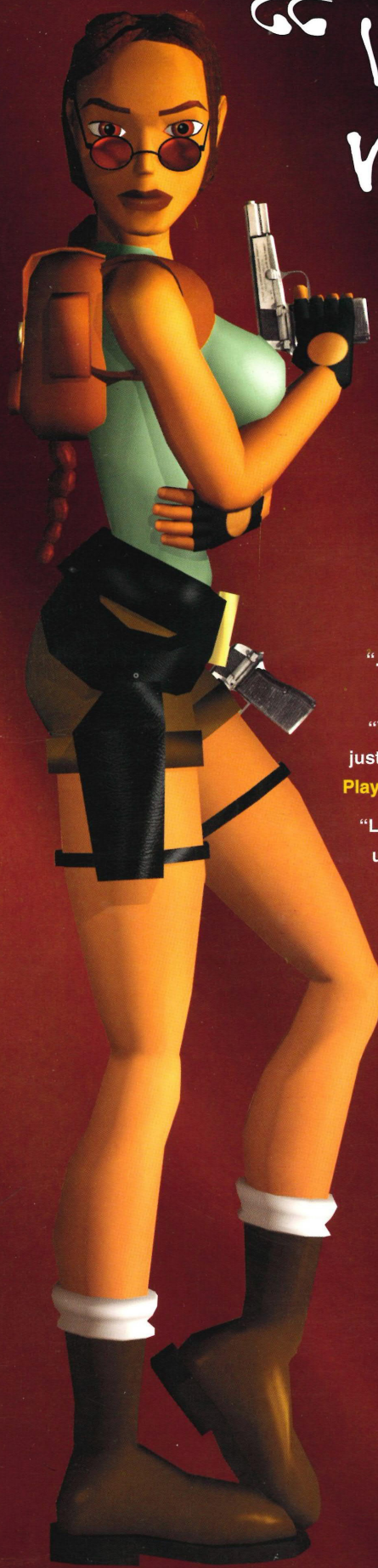


"What are you waiting for?"

TOMB RAIDER II™

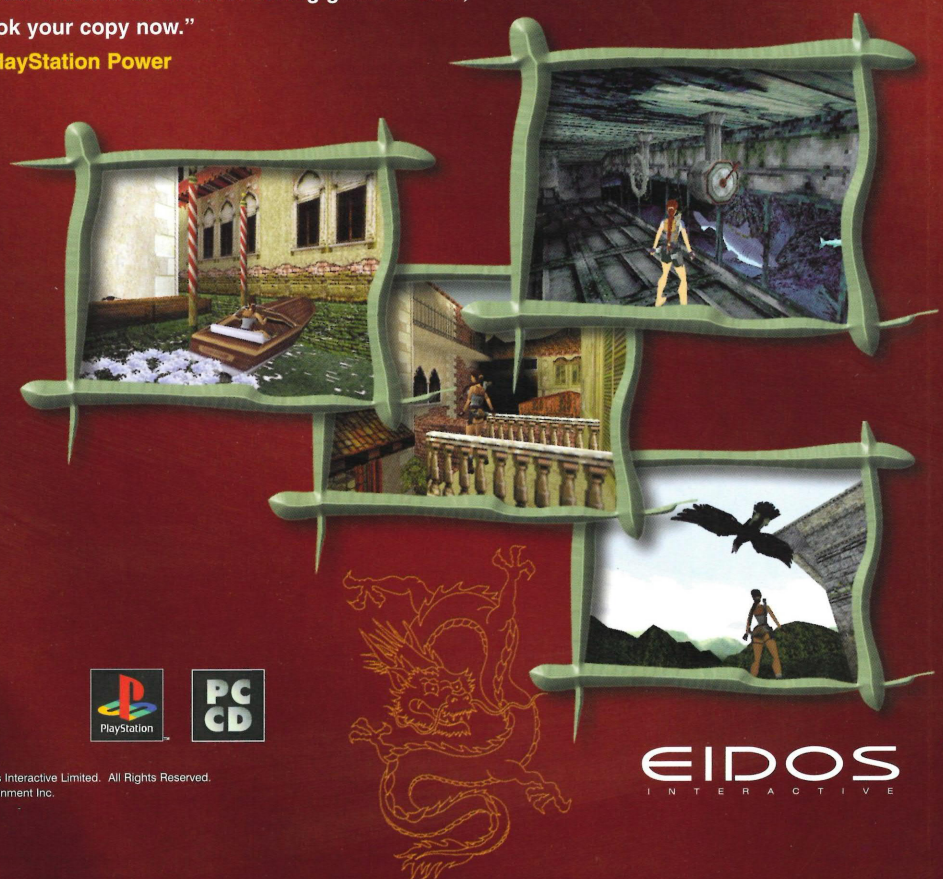
STARRING LARA CROFT

"...Tomb Raider II renders everything else prosaic and dull."
Official PlayStation Magazine

"We know what game you are really waiting for. We know the others are just filling time until its arrival."
Play

"Lara Croft exploded onto the PC late last year... now reigns supreme as the undisputed queen of action gaming. More than two million sales later and countless awards, she's back..."
PC Gamer

"The most highly anticipated sequel of the year. It's all just too good to be true. This will be the best-selling game of 1997, book your copy now."
PlayStation Power



PlayStation

PC CD

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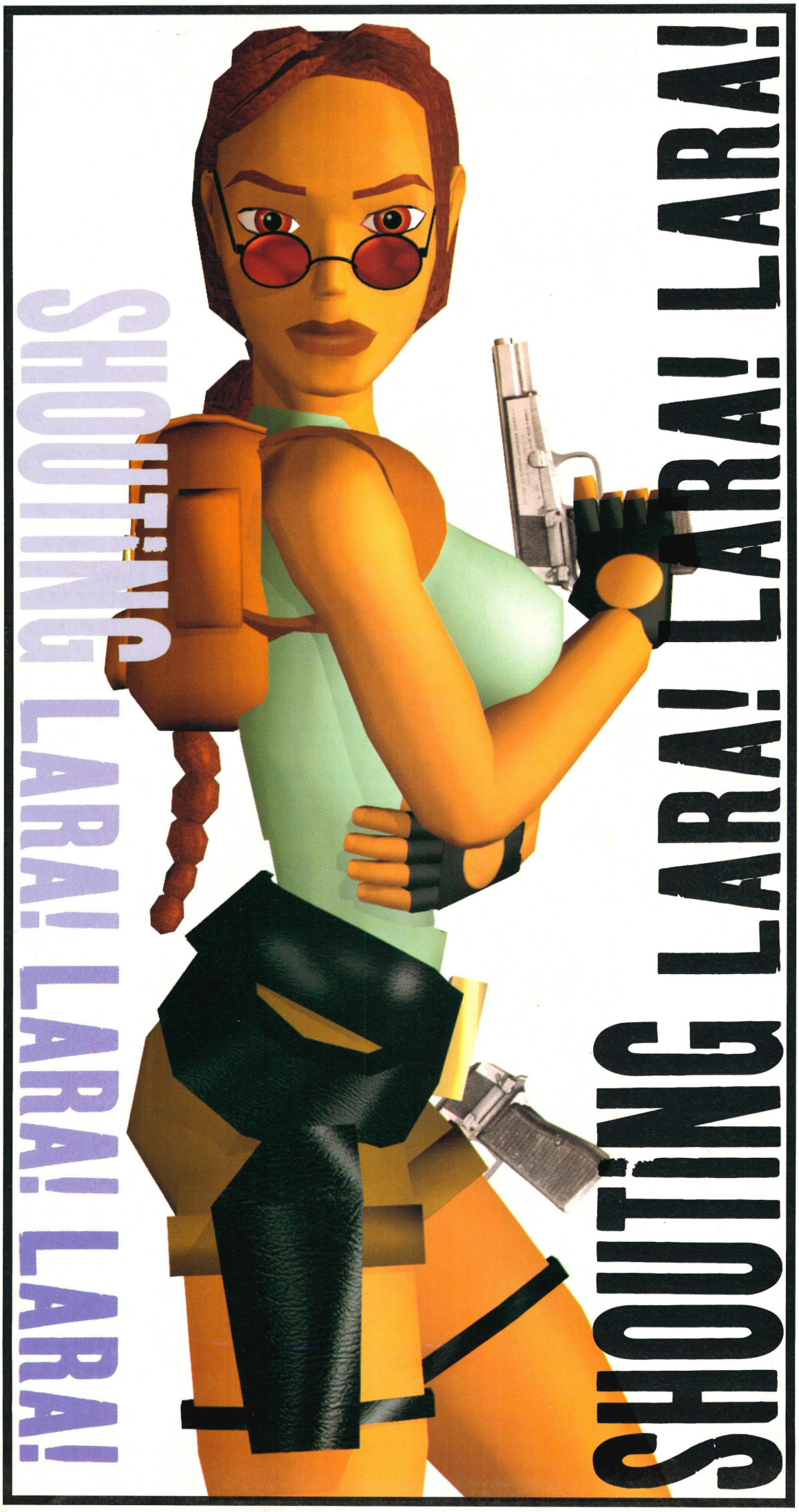

Oh yes, it was bound to happen wasn't it? The countdown to Christmas begins, the inevitable onslaught of software starts beating a path to our door and the entire planet goes completely bonkers for Lara Croft once again. Well we anticipated this Lara revival months back, and as you can see from the free calendar this month, we've gone a bit overboard on her. But I'm sure you can easily handle all that, and the stunning six page feature that awaits you inside.

Besides Lara though, this month we've been flooded with software in the run-up to Christmas. Now it may sound like a dream to you, but wading knee-deep through stacks of hot new PlayStation releases every morning can be a bit of a mission, and trying to fit everything into this issue was a royal pain in the arse too. Unfortunately, quite a sizeable amount of titles arrived too late to make this issue – we even extended the mag in a vain attempt to get everything in, but alas, several games simply didn't get past the bouncers at the PSPro Penthouse. The late comers will be showcased in all their glory next month, but for now sit back as we take you on a rollercoaster journey through all the best-dressed videogames you will be playing this Christmas.

The exclusive preview on Command & Conquer: Red Alert awaits you inside. Crash Bandicoot 2 is in the house, along with Broken Sword 2, Judge Dredd, Fighting Force, Duke Nukem, Pandemonium 2, Rapid Racer, Felony 11-79, NHL '98, Tennis Arena, Dynasty Warriors, Frogger, Formula Karts, Gex 2 and a whopping work-in-progress feature on our favourite calendar girl, Lara Croft (and something about some game she's in called Tomb Raider 2). Could it get any better? Maybe not. But there's always next month...

Jay

PLAYSTATION PRO

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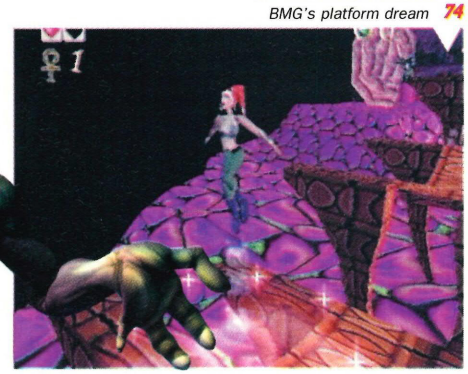

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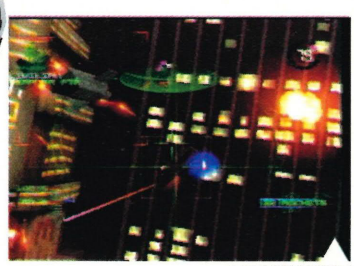

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Cover Story:
COMMAND & CONQUER: RED ALERT
Virgin get all military on us once again as the eagerly awaited prequel to C&C finally arrives in our office. Get ready for an exclusive first look and plenty of red hot screenshots of this double disc delight never seen before in our stunning Work In PROgress feature!

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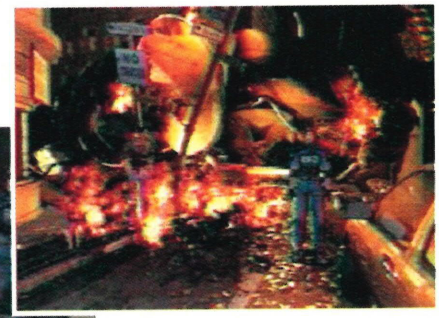
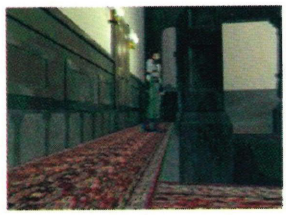
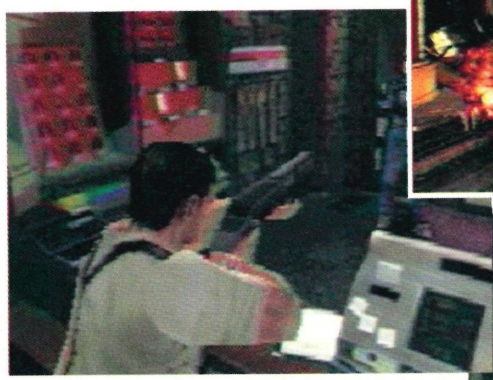
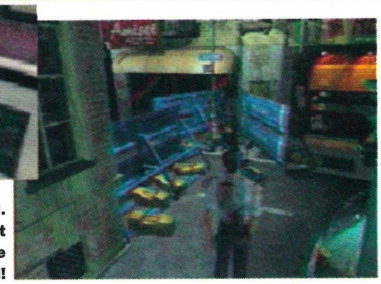
Back To Cause Mayhem!









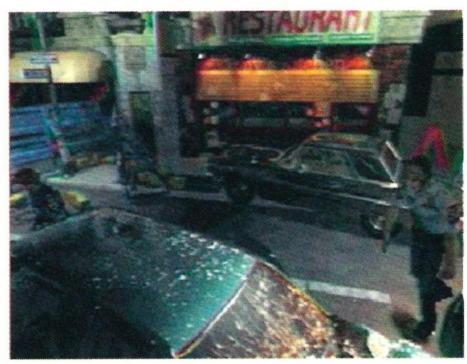
The enemies will come thick and fast in this much wanted sequel. This means there shouldn't be too many whingers harping on about the lack of gore and action which some people thought lacking in the original. And that's just for starters. Prepare to be shocked!

The original Resident Evil took the world by storm upon its release at the tail end of 1996. It became a smash hit and the ultimate as far as PlayStation games went. It was inevitable that a sequel would be appearing at some stage. Resident Evil 2 has been getting bigger and better to provide fans of the original with an equally absorbing release, whilst at the same time the action has become far more intense.

While the sequel is well on the way to completion, Virgin will be releasing the Directors Cut of the original which although for the most part is the same, it does include some tougher zombies and some new and improved camera angles. Most importantly for Res Evil fans however, there's a 20 minute playable demo of Res Evil 2.

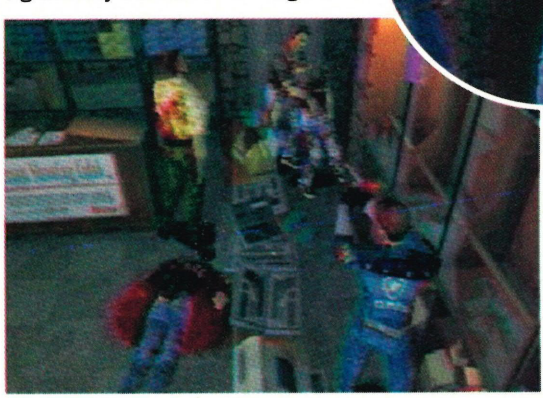
Obvious cash-in it is, but it's still just as awesome as you'd expect. The original remains one of the essential purchases which any PlayStation owner should have. It still offers more in terms of gameplay hours and the dark rooms and creepy corridors are truly eerie to say the least. This was one of the reasons that made Res Evil such a hit. Not to mention the sudden shocks which add to your fear of what's up ahead or around the corner. Resident Evil 2 takes over from where the original left off. Quite literally.

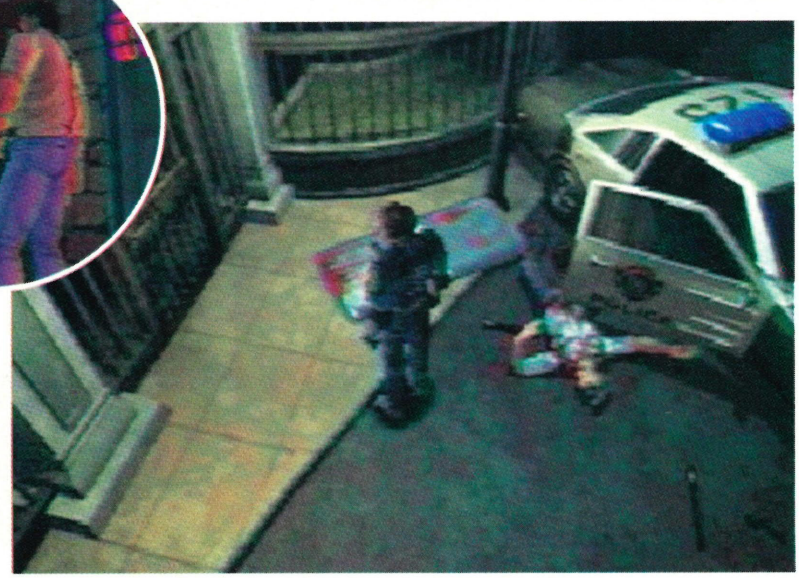
You begin from the police station in Raccoon City which soon becomes inhabited by many more flesh-eating zombies and the whole rollercoaster begins over again. This time around you can choose between two new characters, Elza Walker and Leon Scott Kennedy for the task ahead. Capcom have added plenty of new features and also made the rooms more interactive as well as many other new features to make it significantly different to the original



while still keeping with the surprises and terror from the original.

A particularly impressive feature is the energy bar which when getting lower makes your character hunch over and stumble around rather than run unaffected although close to death. The Director's Cut will be appearing in time for Xmas while Res Evil 2 should, and should is said in the loosest terms be available early next year. The flesh will be torn again in the near future and we'll bring you all the info you'll need to know as and when we get it.

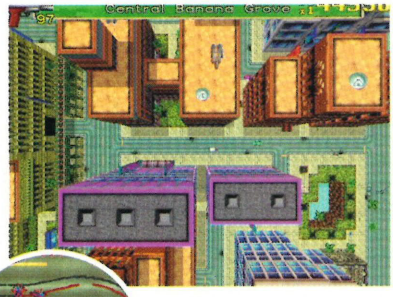


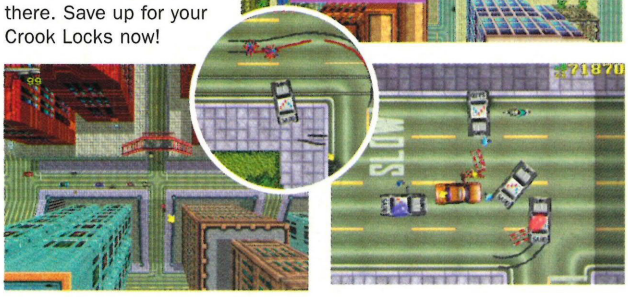


Those bloody kids...

You know the feeling, you get up in the morning and some little sod has had your car radio away, or at worst your entire dream machine sits abandoned, burning merrily on some wasteland. Good old car thieves eh? Well BMG seem to think that basing their latest game around the thrills of car crime and general wrongness will be a bit of a wheeze, and they're already catching a bit of flack in the tabloid press for daring to brush with the touchy subject of joyriding.

The game, Grand Theft Auto, sees you driving any of over two dozen types of car around the included cities, starting off as a young punk car thief, before graduating to drug running and drive-by shootings. There's no doubt it's going to be one of the most tasteless games of all times and the MPs are about to have something to crusade about (so that they can take attention away from their own filthy sexual deviancy no doubt) but here at PlayStation Pro we think it's going to sell by the bucketload. It's been developed by DMA Design (more famous for Lemmings) and we'll hopefully be reviewing it before Christmas. So there. Save up for your Crook Locks now!

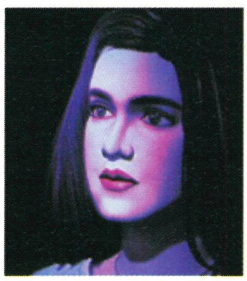




Power To The People

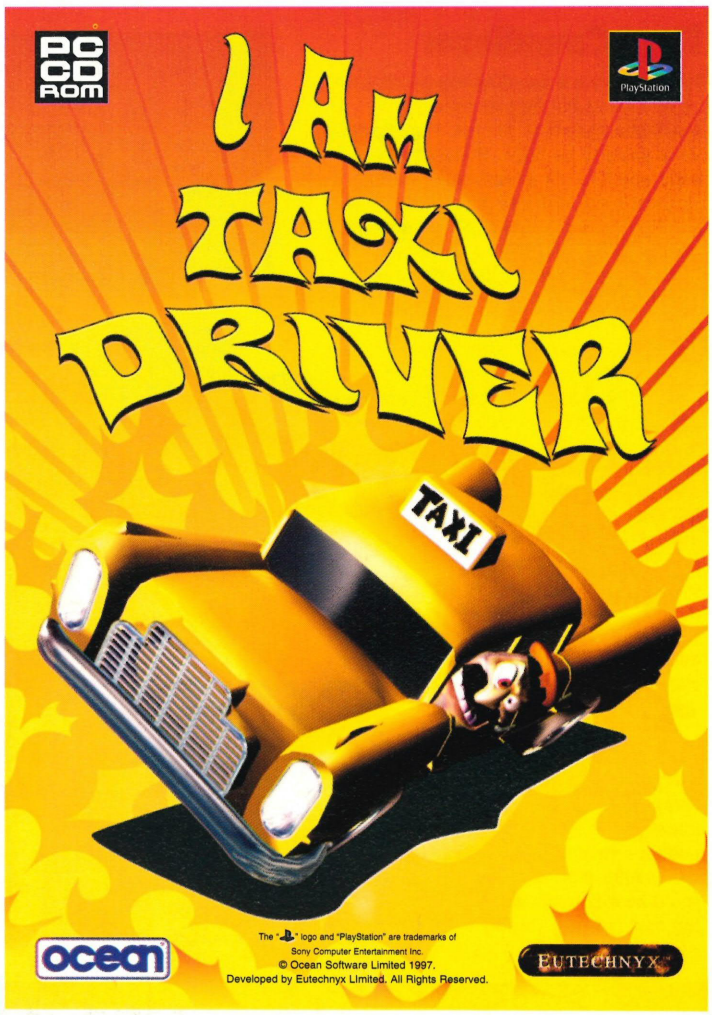
December 5th is the date that has been pencilled in for the release of Power Soccer 2. There's sure to be a lot of interest in the new sequel from the Power Soccer range, and the guys down at Psygnosis have been busy beavering away to ensure that the latest instalment of Predator-powered shooting is a completely playable piece of football fun. The game will be well stocked with optional game modes, ranging from friendlys and tournaments to a full season. And there are plenty of preferences for you to mess around with, so that the game is right for you. Choose whether to play with the golden goal rule, select what time of day the match is played at and which season of the year it is. You can even select the personality of the game's referee; a blind ref will let virtually everything go whereas a severe ref will wave yellow cards about like they're going out of fashion. There's also a handy control preview section where rendered players show you how to pull off all the moves and which buttons to press, and there are a few to choose from. With commentary provided by none other than Brian Moore, it all sounds as if Power Soccer 2 could be a bit of a barnstormer. Watch out for a full preview in next month's mag.

Tick Tock you don't stop...

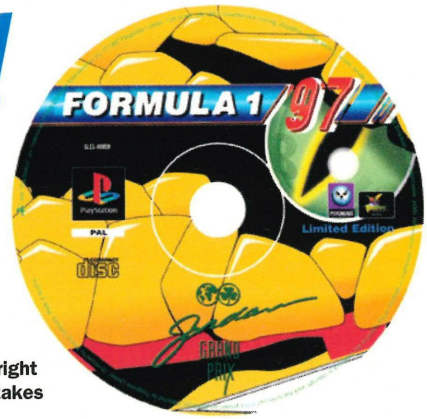


Having got off to what looks like a cracking start with the ace Felony 1179, previewed in this issue, ASCII Entertainment Europe is set to follow it up with the spooky horror game Clock Tower. Clocks are always used in sinister films and this is no exception as you struggle to unveil the mystery of the evil ghostly murderer, the Scissorman (let's face it, if you call your kid that you're asking for trouble!).

The Scissorman likes to wander around the gloomy mansion cutting his victims in half with a ginormous pair of scissors, God knows where he bought them. Anyway, we should be previewing this in the next issue. It should have been in this month's but it's been put back to a February release so don't blame us. Watch this space as usual, and don't forget to check under your bed before you go to sleep tonight.



Record Breaker!



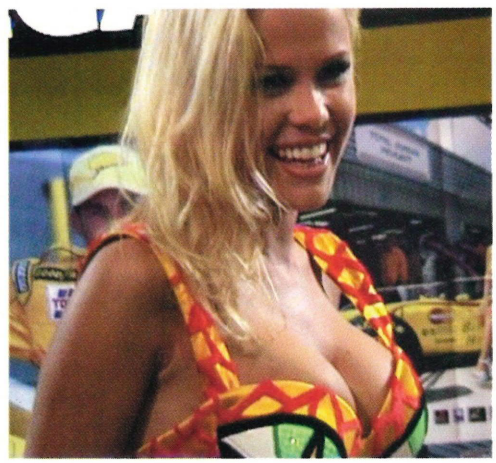
Psygnosis have been like the cat who got the cream lately. Funnily enough this bout of extreme happiness has coincided with the news that their recent release – Formula 1 '97 – racked up an astonished 40,000 sales on its first day of release. This makes it the biggest ever UK games release to date and will probably remain so for some time – well at least until Final Fantasy VII get released later this year. The first day's sales at a retail value of £2m firmly put it in line with recent blockbuster releases in other sectors of the entertainment industry. For example, the Men in Black movie achieved just under £2m on its first day of release.

Ray Maguire, MD of Sony Computer Entertainment said "F1 '97, whilst setting records in its own right has significantly increased the sales of PlayStation on the first day of release. PlayStation currently takes 71% of the next generation console market and 82% of the console game market." One for all you fact fans out there.

Our congratulations go to Psygnosis, not only for their sales figures, but for getting the lovely Melinda Messenger down for the launch day at London's Virgin Megastore. The blonde bombshell spent a few hours signing autographs and giving away free stuff, including the smart limited edition Jordan F1 '97 PlayStations (pictured below). These yellow boxes of delight are strictly limited in numbers (there's only 50 of them in existence) and have been produced for promotional purposes only, as have a certain number of the F1 '97 game itself – special copies will have limited fold-out packaging featuring Miss Messenger. So everything's looking rosey for old Psygnosis, eh?

Well they were until they found themselves in a licensing dispute with Formula One Administration Limited, who are the sport's global governing body. It seems as if there has been some confusion over what rights Psygnosis were given by the FOA, especially over the use of the official FIA logo. At the time of going to press this story is in its infancy, but it looks like Psygnosis will have to repackage any new stock of the game to keep the FOA happy. Any other changes, developments or legal wrangles to do with the game will be revealed in full next issue, plus any news on how rare your original copy of the game is if everything has to change. Stay tuned!

Why if it isn't the lovely Melinda, wowing the crowd with her charming smile and erm... huge breasts



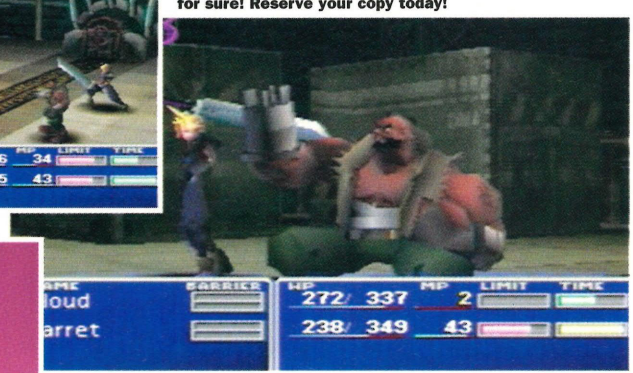
Final Countdown

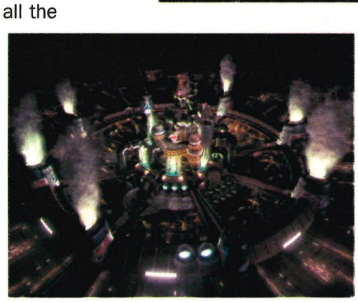
The clocks are counting down to the UK release of the biggest selling PlayStation game of all time. Final Fantasy VII is going to be huge. There's no two ways about it. It's already shattered records in the USA and Japan where our gaming cousins simply can't get enough of what's being described in some quarters, as the most important video game since the birth of the console. British gamers have been snapping up American import copies for the past couple of weeks now (clever bilingual gamers have been playing the Japanese version for several months).

Sony tell us that they've shifted five million copies to date in Japan and lots more in the States, although there is no official figure at the time of going to press. We're going to be embarking on our quest very shortly as we've got one of the first UK versions nestling in the office and even at this stage we can confirm all the circulating rumours that it's absolutely fantastic.

Next month's Christmas edition of PlayStation Pro is going to contain a huge review of the UK version so if you're remotely interested in Final Fantasy VII, and let's face it, if you're not then you're a bit of a moron, you'd best put your order in for the next issue at your newsagent.

Start saving right now as this role playing baby is gonna jump off the shelves before Christmas – that's for sure! Reserve your copy today!





Bag Of Tricks!

Christmas may seem a fair way off yet, but software houses have been locked away for a while now, busy dreaming up new ways in which to get you all to part with the cash Father Christmas is going to leave in your plump stockings.

There are sure to be plenty of games arriving on the shelves around the time of the festive season, and the boys at GT Interactive want their piece of the action. How are they gonna ensure that you spend, spend, spend? Well, they've got a healthy looking array of new titles to entice that green stuff from your pockets.

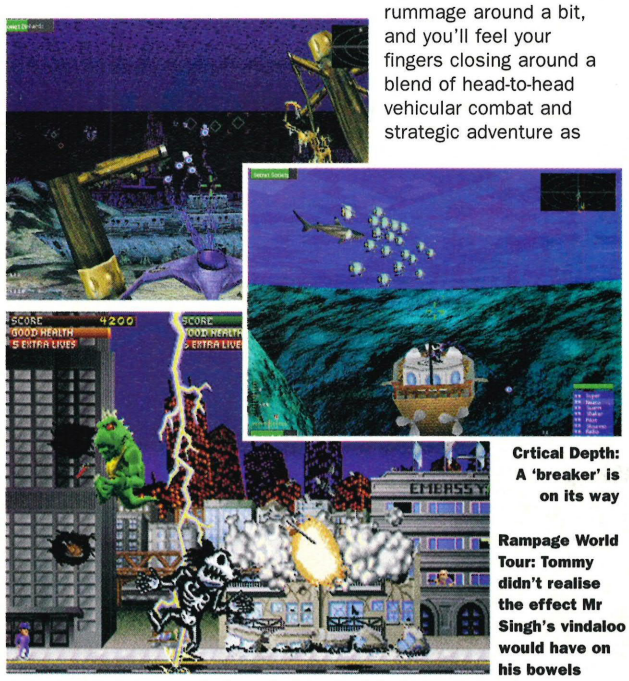
Rampage World Tour is the first one out of Santa's sack. Those that enjoy inflicting pain and damage on others, but have had enough of the constant string of samey beat'em-ups may want to keep an eye out for this one. Rampage World Tour is more of a smash'em-up as players take on the guise of colossal beasts and then stomp through some of the world's most popular cities causing big holes in the re-building budget. Someone's going to be picking private Benjamin from their teeth methinks!

Bugriders: Insect squashing race action

Next out of the bag comes Maximum Force, an Area 51-style shooting fest that makes use of the latest in light-gun technology and will feature more stuff to shoot at than you've ever seen before. Your task will be to fill the fungi-free size nines of an 'enforcer,' and sent out to destroy the evil terrorists who are planning nuclear mass destruction in a bid to take over the world. There'll be loads of power-ups to collect and hidden rooms to explore as you dodge the high-res snipers out to pop a cap in your turkey-stuffed ass.

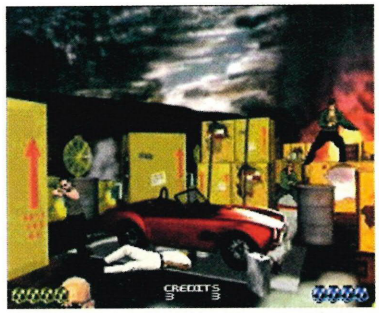
Due to the fact that there hasn't been a Mortal Kombat title released for about a month, GT sensed a hole in their collective aura. Hence, MK Mythologies will soon be rearing it's head on your favourite console. A prequel to the events from the first three MK games, MK Mythologies features Sub Zero, ice ninja and veteran of previous MK titles, as the unlikely hero in this role-playing, side-scrolling adventure beat'em-up. There are hundreds of treacherous locations to explore with a vast array of objects to collect to help our little ninja friend on his way. MK fans, this one is definitely for you.

Now delve deeper into that bottomless bag of treats and rummage around a bit, and you'll feel your fingers closing around a blend of head-to-head vehicular combat and strategic adventure as you race to capture alien pods which could hold the key to huge wealth and global domination. Critical Depth sees you in control of one of 12 unique underwater vehicles in 10 expansive 3D environments, battling against bizarre enemies whilst collecting power-ups and hidden secrets. A cinematic soundtrack and multiple independent light-sourcing have been incorporated to give the game a true underwater feel, and with single and multi-player options including combat, hide and seek, tag and capture the flag. It sounds as if this could finally be a totally playable sub-aqua game.



Crtical Depth: A 'breaker' is on its way

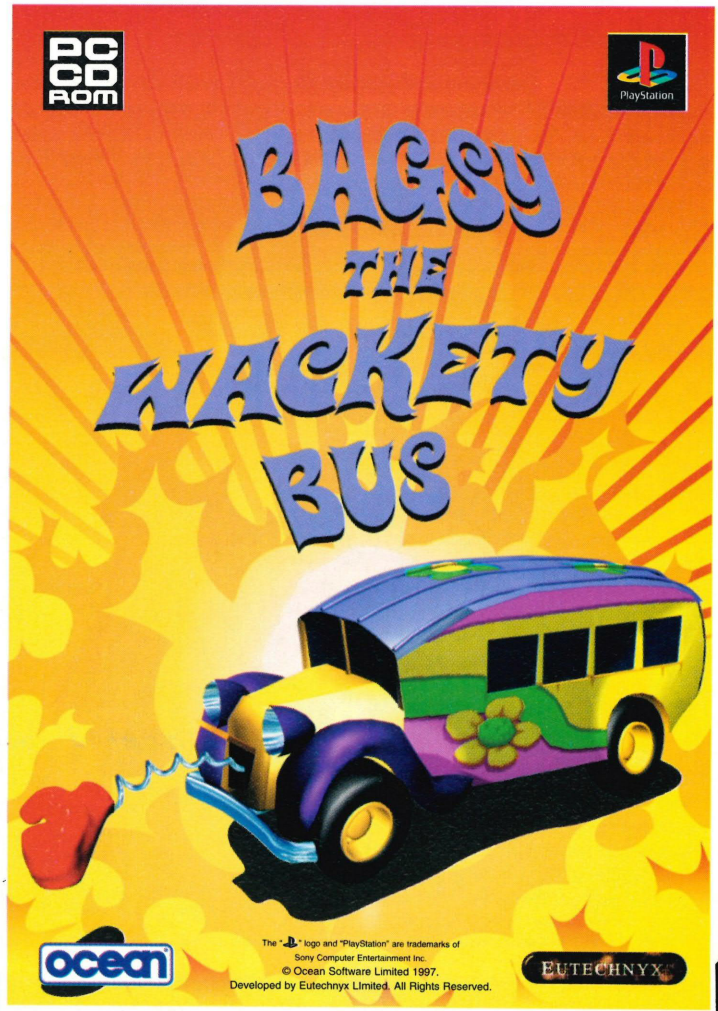
Rampage World Tour: Tommy didn't realise the effect Mr Singh's vindaloo would have on his bowels



Maximum Force: Just what the doctor ordered

Finally we have Bugriders. It's a racing game, but the added element of riding on insects means that you can pass opponents from all sides. Each of the eight riders has his own trusty mount with it's own freakish characteristics, racing on 16 tracks complete with moving obstacles and booby-traps, and the deathmatch option allows players to score by killing their opponents rather than just by completing the race. Nice touch!

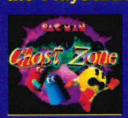
MK Mythologies: The ice man wants a word, in this role playing beat'em-up



STOP PRESS

Prepare yourself for some hardcore platform action next issue as the likes of Crash Bandicoot 2, Gex 2: Return Of The Gecko, Pandemonium 2, Jersey Devil and Earthworm Jim 3D all return to battle for the Christmas platform king's crown.

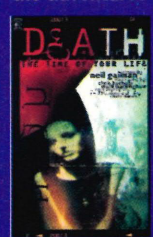
Namco are putting the final lick of polish on Time Crisis as we speak and there's plans afoot to bring the old pill-gobbling sphere to the PlayStation too. Yes, he's back, he's round and those bloody ghosts are still on his back. A 3D slant has been added to this new and improved Pac Man: Ghost Zone and his latest incarnation has him plodding around 3D enivironments packed with tricks, puzzles and cunning traps. Sounds a bit bonkers, doesn't it?



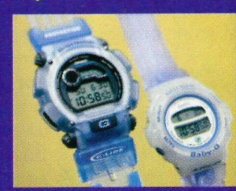
Tecmo, who've been a bit quiet of late, are due to pounce back early next year with their 3D action adventure, Devil's Deception. The game involves you ridding the local mansion of all things dodgy (sound familiar?) but by means of devilish booby traps instead of the usual shotguns and chainsaws. The game is pencilled in for a January release over here, but you can get it on import today if you can't be bothered waiting.

Now we've all spent time pissing around building microscopic cities in Sim City and we've all taken over new barren landscapes from an overhead viewpoint, but now, thanks to GAPS Inc, you'll soon be creating your very own chain of fast food eateries. Believe it or not, Burger Burger is the name of the game where you must create new and mouth-watering burgers in an attempt to erm, tempt new customers into your diner. The designing of all things related to your burgers is also your responsibility, as is hiring staff, choosing uniforms and generally being the boss. The game tends to shy away from the usual bills/wages/water rates side of the genre and goes for a more fun and an oddball creative slant. Mad, or wot?

Titan Books are getting ready for a busy yuletide and our monthly portion of graphic novels is evidence of the fact. The acid-oozing Aliens are back for more, this time with two new books entitled Rogue and Stronghold. Both available in the shops now, priced £11.99. Next up we have Death, the new cheerful tale from spookmeister Neil Gaiman (he of The Sandman fame) priced £7.99. Continuing on from the Sandman books, Death follows the adventures of Morpheus' sister, Death as she battles to gain friendship, love, power and mortality in the face of death itself. Sounds a bit deep, I know, but it's truely marvellous. And finally we have, in my opinion, one of the best looking graphic novels ever: Kingdom Come by Mark Waid and Alex Ross. The story gets complex (way too complex for a media friendly soundbite) but let me say that the artwork in here is mind blowing. Each frame looks like it must have taken months to produce, and every page is bursting with detailed pics of all your favourite DC Comics super heroes. It's £9.99, it's out now and it should be on your bookshelf. For more information, give Titan Books a call on 0171 620 0200.

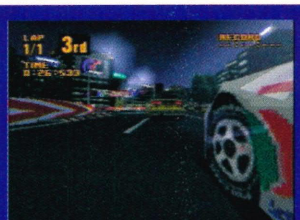


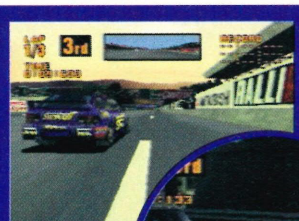
Psygnosis want you to watch the skies! Or technically, the TV. Why? Because on C4 on November 7th at 12:15am the first advert for their space blaster Colony Wars will hit the airwaves, and what a treat it is too. We won't give too much away, but we're sure you'll be impressed with the finished article.

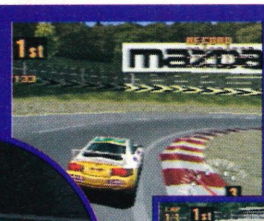


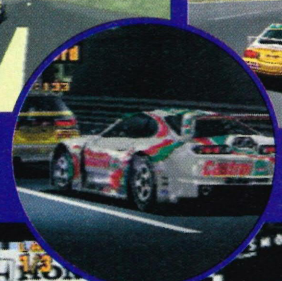
Speaking of Psygnosis, not only have they managed to get Casio to do a strictly limted edition run (only 330 in existance fact fans) of their popular G Shock watch for the game G Police (reviewed this month!) but they've just signed a deal with top fashion stylists Diesel clothing which means the smart-clobber-creating supremoes will have numerous advertising placed within the final version of the game. As you can see from the piccies, huge billboards and several cyber-displays are now clearly evident throughout the G Police domain. Nice. Any chance of some free clothes then lads?

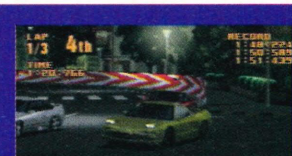
Europress Software are about to venture into the PlayStation world with their debut jaunt, XLR8. Depsite sounding like a Thunderbirds spare motor, XLR8 is is apparently a "state-of-the-art-all-action speedfest which delivers the deadliest adrenalin rush in the history of computer games". Whether or not it is, has yet to be wintessed by us Pros, but Europress insist that their hellish bike riding delight will kick the ass of all that come before it when the game finally gets released sometime in April. We can but wait...







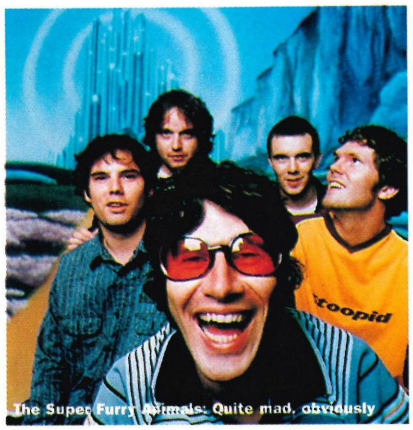




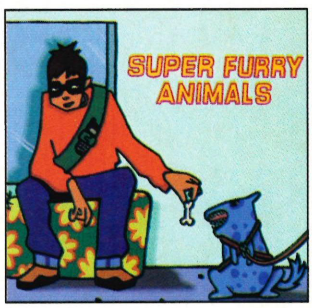
Big exclsuive news this month was the unveiling of Sony Computer Entertainment's new in-house production: Gran Turismo. Despite the bizarre monicker, the game is a true-to-life racing simulation offering gamers the chance to burn around in over 130 different cars ranging form Dodge Vipers to Aston Martins to the new Nissan Skyline GT. The game is said to "look and feel like you're driving the real thing" and is set for a release early next year. Hot gossip on the title is that Sony are currently in discussions to develop a techno remix soundtrack of hit tunes from the likes the Manic Street Preachers, Feeder, Garbage, Dubstar and Ash. More news on this and a load more pictures guaranteed next month!

Virtual Furry Animals

Gremlin Interactive have teamed up with record label Creation to produce a stunning new video for the Super Furry Animals' new single, 'Play It Cool.' The video sees lead singer Gruff Rhys falling asleep in the back of a car, dreaming of playing on Actua Soccer 2. As the video continues, he gets sucked through the TV screen and thrown into the action, lining up for the Welsh national team who find themselves 3-0 down against world champions Brazil. The rest of the band play alongside Gruff, but whereas they don the full Welsh kit, Gruff remains in his trademark cagoule and jeans that he fell asleep in. It all ends with Gruff inflating the match ball and banging in a late winner as Wales triumph 4-3 – truly the stuff dreams are made of. The Super Furries were motion-captured for the vid in the same way Alan Shearer was for Actua Soccer 2, and they all appear as freaky life-like computer-generated characters. In fact the band will actually feature as a playable Super Furry Animals eleven in the game when it hits the shops in late October. For an in depth look at Actua Soccer 2, check out next month's issue, but for now here's a chance to win yourself some exclusive freebies from our pals at Gremlin... The top prize is a signed copy of the Super Furry Animals' new LP 'Radiator' and a copy of Actua Soccer 2, plus we'll throw in a PlayStation as well, 'cause that's the type of guys we are. Five lucky runners-up will also receive a copy of the LP and the game, but alas, no PlayStation. To stand a chance of winning you'll need to know the name of The Super Furry Animals debut LP, and you'll need to tell us about it. Entries to "I'm a Super Furry Animal" at the usual PSPro address.

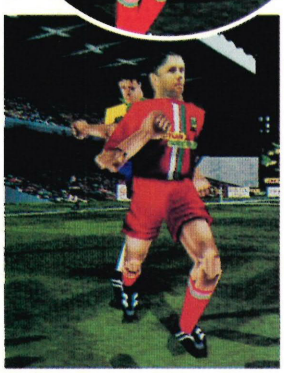


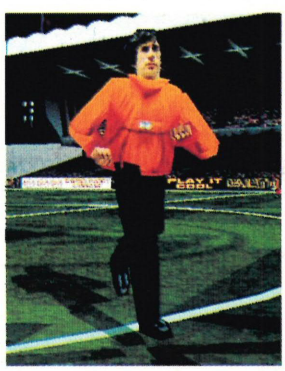
The Super Furry Animals: Quite mad, obviously

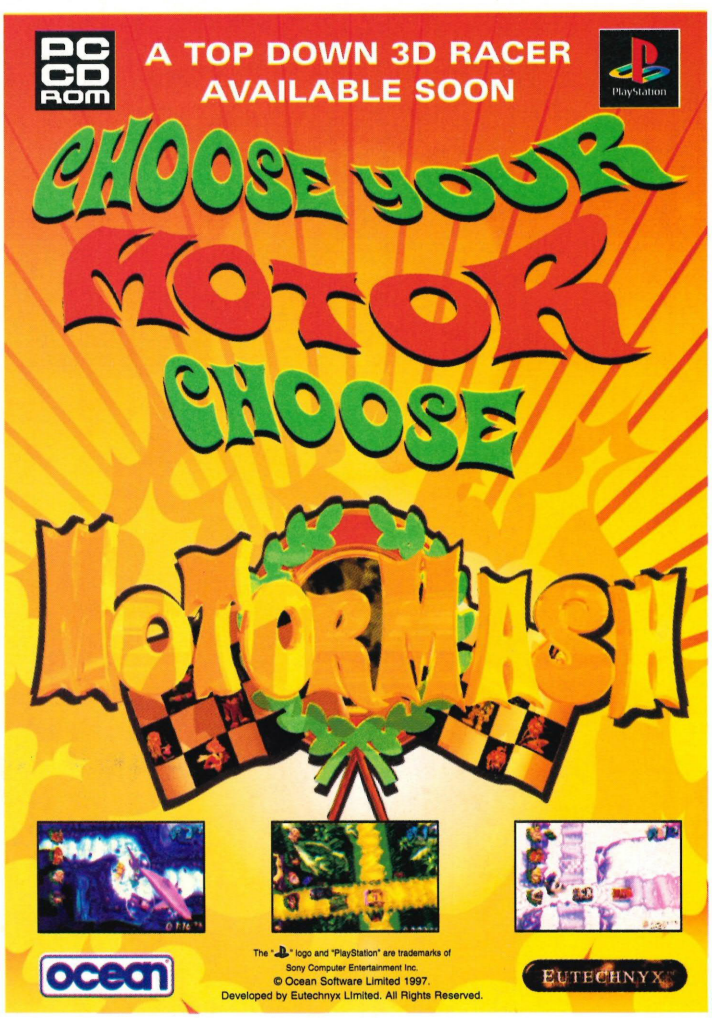


Win a copy of Actua Soccer 2, a PlayStation plus signed copies of the new SFA album, Radiator. How's about that then?

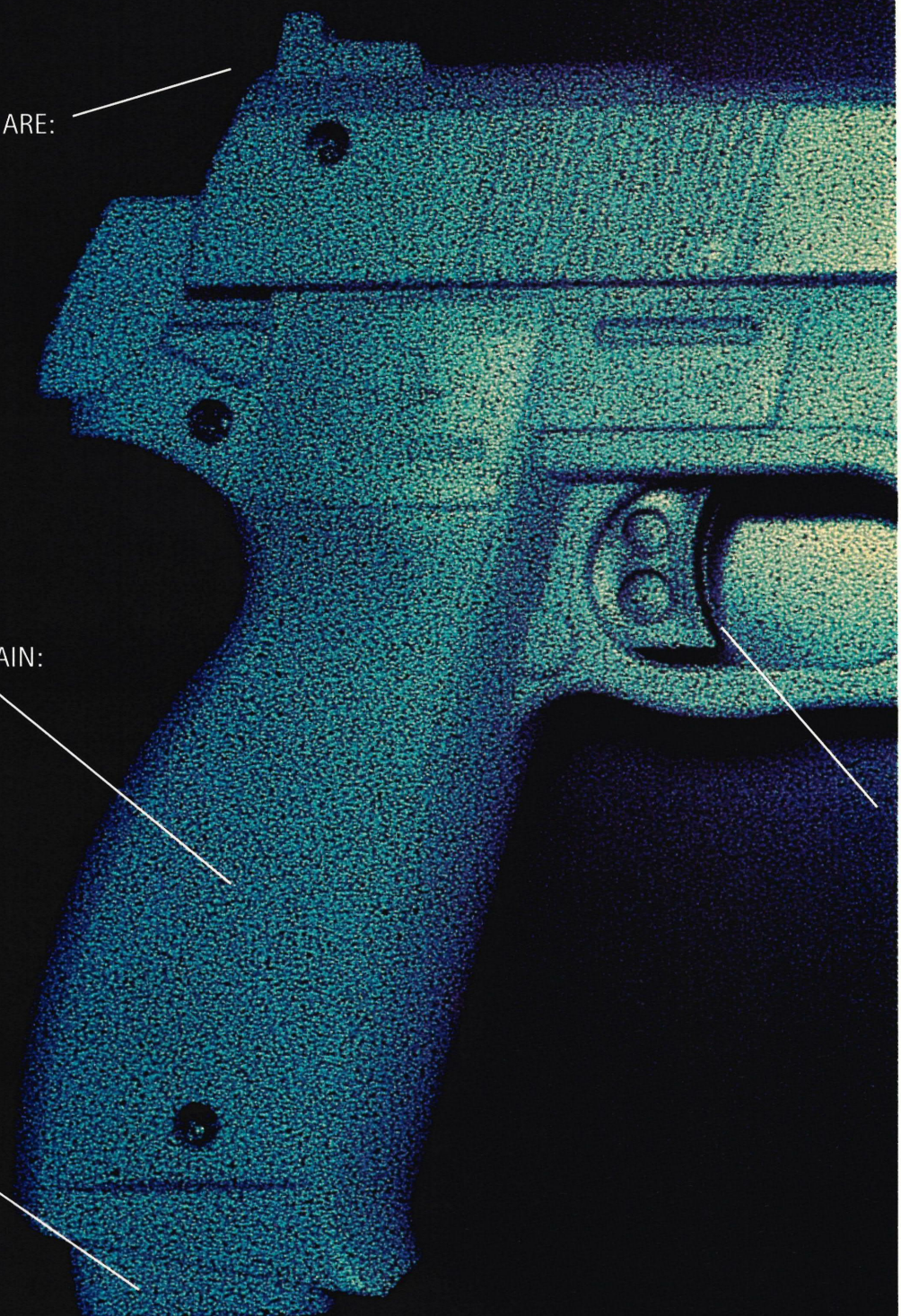
The Super Furries as they appear in their new Actua Soccer 2-inspired video for their latest single, Play It Cool







GUN OF THE MONTH: THE G-CON 45



The G-CON 45™ is the professionals ch

G-CON 45™ is also compatible with "Point Blank

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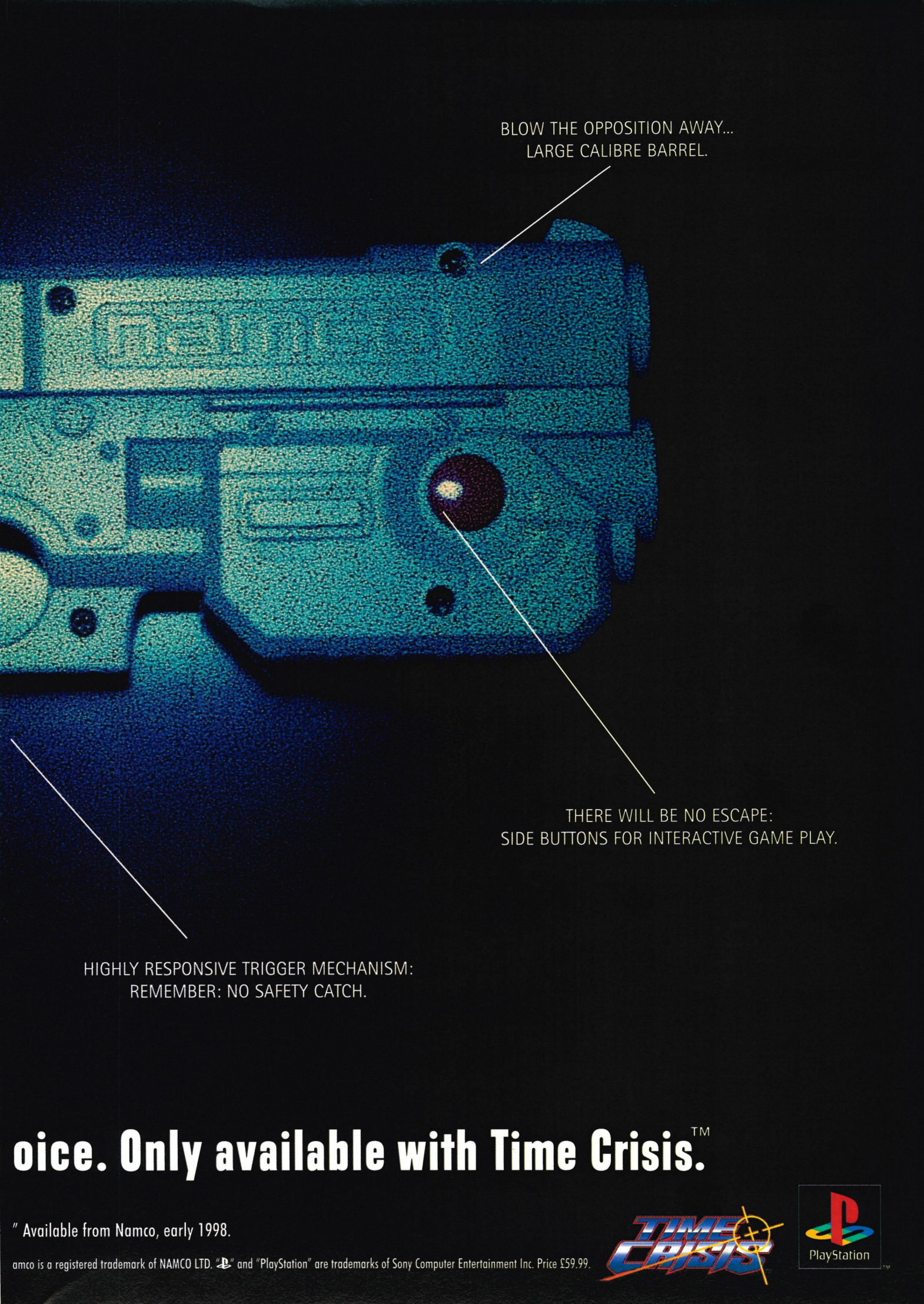

oice. Only available with Time Crisis.™

" Available from Namco, early 1998.

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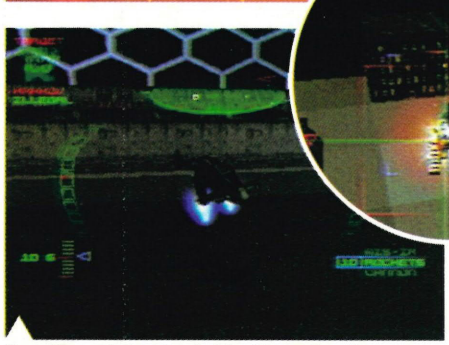
TIME CRISIS

PlayStation

G-Police

Greed, corruption, murder and revenge. Another day in the PlayStation Pro office? No, they're simply the essential ingredients in Psygnosis' new shoot'em-up...



Your Havoc jetcopter is ideal to police the interplanetary Moss Side's of the future – it's better than a Metro panda car anyway...

I hate to think of the amount of innocent civilians who die in G-Police. My advice is don't buy a penthouse suite on Kalisto

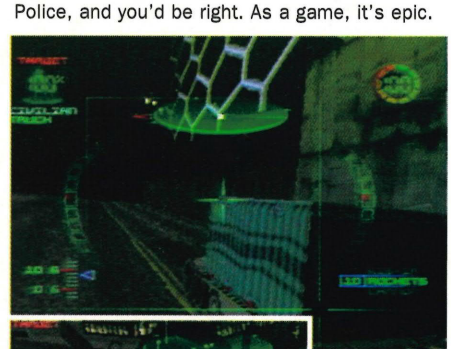
Back in 1979, Ridley Scott's BladeRunner radically altered the way we envisage the future. Until then, the general consensus was that in the future we'd all live in bright, well-lit houses, have shiny robots to do the housework and we'd eat space pills instead of Sunday roasts. The planes and rockets shooting about outside the window would all be sleek and red with a silver stripe down the side. Everybody would be called Troy, Hal or Bud and would sport a quiff (straight out of the Jetsons) that could have somebody's eye out.

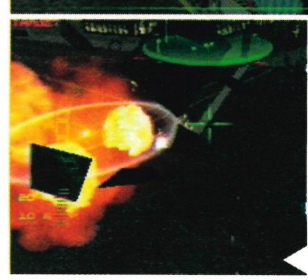
Then along came Ridley – he took the plastic perfect future, smeared mud all over it and populated it with bikers, prostitutes and low-life gangsters. And that's the way it has been portrayed ever since – a nightmare world where it's always raining and the streets are awash with futuristic designer drugs.

This is the vision G-Police inhabits. Set a century in the future when, as a result of a devastating war, the various governments have lost their power to huge corporations. The game sees you playing the part of Jack Slater, an ex-marine with combat experience on Mars.

Slater has joined the G-Police, a police force set up by earth's coalition government and the various corporations to keep order in the new colonies. His motivation is nothing to do with wanting a job with responsibilities and a nice uniform – his secret agenda is to establish what happened to his sister. Her death in a shuttle accident on Callisto was supposedly suicide, but he disagrees and sets off on a crusade to uncover a huge corporate conspiracy.

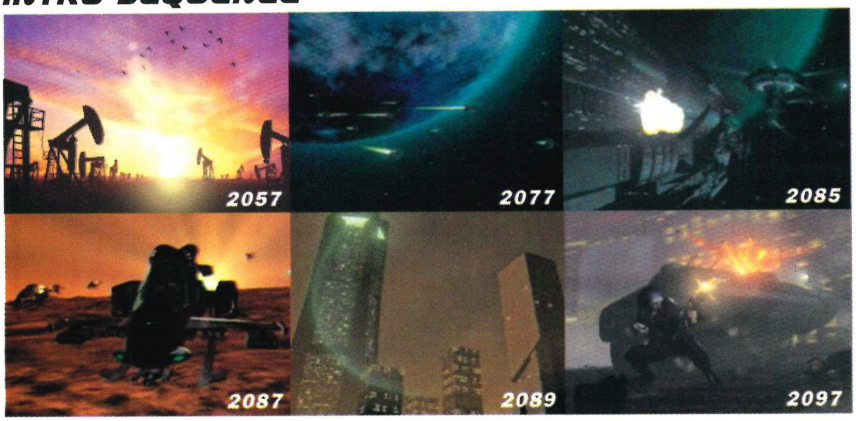
From my rambling intro you might get the impression that I've got a little hooked on G-Police, and you'd be right. As a game, it's epic.





G-Police is full of tasty looking explosions. Blow up something big and a pressure wave will fly out

INTRO SEQUENCE



***2057**•The last drop of oil is squeezed out of Earth and petrol prices go up a wee bit **2077**•Desperate for new resources, all the countries on Earth start exploring and laying claim to resources in outer space **2085**•The inevitable happens – war breaks out as ships from opposing nations and federations trade fire over a mucky piece of space rock **2087**•A devastating war in space and on Earth results in a new world order. Everybody is understandably naffed off with the politicians and decide that McDs and M&S should look out for their interests **2089**•The G (Government) Police are formed to police all Earth colonies. Nobody respects the law any more and you can't leave your door unlocked, so they bring in jet-powered gunships. That's where you come in **2097**•You're job's far from easy though, you're out-gunned, out-manned and out-classed by just about everyone*

From the cinemagraphic opening sequence (that really gives you a taste for the game) to the nature of the gameplay itself and the intricate plot hidden within, it all oozes quality.

The game itself is like some weird and extremely well presented cocktail of BladeRunner, Blue Thunder (that cheesy helicopter cop film with Roy Schneider), Assault on Precinct 13 and Descent, with possibly a little garnish of Judge Dredd.

The game takes place amid the 51 linked and domed cities on Jupiter's moon, Callisto, and it is up to you to fight the organised criminal elements that are wreaking havoc in the cities. They are better armed than you, much greater in number and don't have to concern themselves with friendly-fire incidents or accidentally blowing up the innocent peace-lovingly civilians.

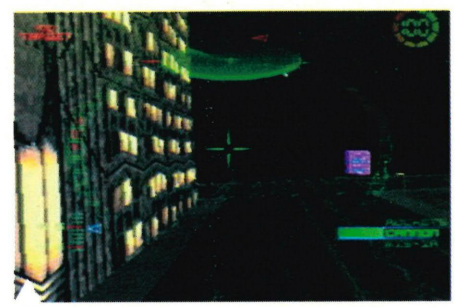
Although you've quite an array of firepower at your disposal, it's not just a shoot'em-up – there are many different objectives to accomplish. There are many reconnaissance missions, such as checking out the Mitsana Dome for illegal arms shipments, as well as several armed escort missions. Just about the only police duty you don't have to undertake in this game is teaching road safety to school kids.

G-Police has a welcome element of strategy built into the game. Much of the time you are flying air support for a police ground unit, so if you're going to waste the enemy and protect your colleagues on the ground you'll need to divide your attention between the two. Missions such as the perilous Robot Rampage mission require (in my case, anyway) loads of attempts to work out the best way of blowing up the enemy, while hiding so as to avoid enemy fire and conserving some weaponry for later foes. Because the enemy hardware is so noticeably better than yours (although none of them are as manoeuvrable), you'll need to draw on your ingenuity to defeat them.

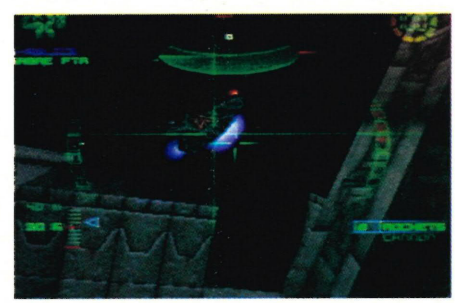
The play environment is, thankfully, totally free-roaming. Although all the cities are built inside domes, there's still quite a huge area to fly about. Because the cities are dominated by huge skyscrapers, tenement blocks and elevated roads, the game has the same demented, slightly uncomfortably claustrophobic feel that you get with games like Descent.

Despite G-Police being restricted to single-player gameplay, teamwork is essential to your progress in G-Police. You can send off wing men to investigate and deal with other threats, and you'll get loads of game hints just from listening to the radio chatter during missions. Although this is nothing new (this, and the fact that the game follows some sort of storyline) it helps immerse you in the game world.

Psygnosis is justifiably proud of the ▶



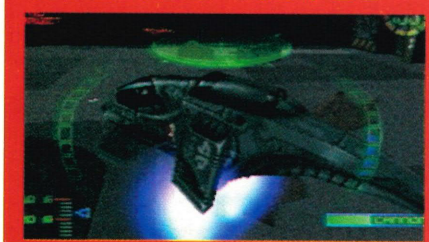
Although you're in a hi-tech flying machine most of the action takes place 10 ft from the ground

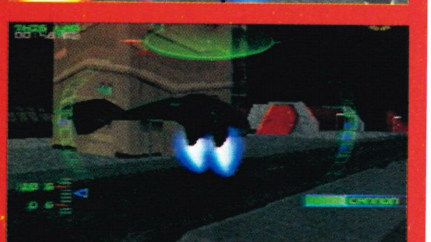


Psygnosis have really gone to town on the Ridley Scott theme. Look at this decidedly grim looking motel – no tea/coffee making facilities here I think

Your scary commanding officer has half his head made of metal after getting injured in the war

Wreakin' Havoc





To help you keep law and order in this part of the solar system, you've got an AG60 Havoc gunship at your disposal. Although it looks like an immense silver stickle-back with rockets each side, the Havoc is still mean

G-Police

▶ advanced AI that it has included in the playing environment. The bustling traffic that drives and flies about the city has its own rudimentary artificial intelligence which enables it to move about in a convincing way. Cars will avoid hazards and even attempt to obey traffic laws. Enemy vehicle AI is much more advanced – chase a gang vehicle and it will figure out the quickest route through the buildings in its path.

In addition to this impressive AI, the level of detail in the game is also something to behold. Because much of your time is spent a few meters off the ground, you can really appreciate the various cars, ships and Akira-style motorbikes that drive about the city.

One thing worth mentioning is the fact that G-Police really would benefit from being played using an analogue pad. The Havoc is a pretty complicated machine to fly and just using the regular joypad can take a while to master. I found that during missions I would use the manoeuvres that were the simplest, choosing to shoot around like I was in a jet, rather than a helicopter – you simply don't have enough fingers to select weapons, accelerate and blast yourself upwards quickly and easily. Simply just using a joystick would enable you far more manoeuvrability and choice of tactics.

There are a few things that could be singled out for criticism in G-Police, although I am being a little picky here. Because all the action takes

place in a crowded city environment, loads of memory is used to map out the skyscrapers, traffic and elevated road. To manage al this the G-Police engine uses something called a recursive tiled landscape. This is just what it sounds like – when flying about the city you are aware of tiles, which can tend to make some parts of the game look slightly less polished.

Again, because of memory requirements, much of the play environment is shrouded in darkness. Luckily the game can get away with it because the environment is gloomy anyway, but this can detract a little from the game. Mind you, decent machine though the PlayStation is, it still has a few graphical limitations, so this is probably the price you pay for having such a detailed and vast playing environment.

Although it's a damn tough game to play, G-Police is ultimately very rewarding. You get sucked into the storyline and immersed in the

The spaceport dockyards are a cool venue for a chase

GENRE COMPARISON

Game **Descent**
Software House **Interplay**

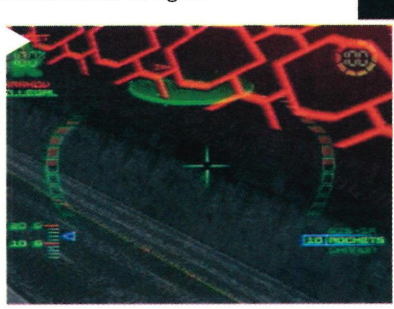
Finding a genre comparison for G-Police is a little tricky, but the game that comes closest is Descent. As in G-Police, Descent gave you ample opportunity to get lost in the fully navigable play environment and made you feel dizzy as hell at the same time!

murderous urban playing environment. Once you've mastered the art of flying your Havoc gunship, you can have a fantastic time playing hide-and-seek with enemy vehicles and doing raids on the spaceports scattered around the domes.

G-Police is also helped along by the fact that you are the underdog – the forces against you are massive and seemingly unstoppable and you'll be head-butting the monitor on quite a few occasions out of sheer frustration. But the game never gets so difficult you'll just give up – it treads the fine line between frustratingly hard and rewardingly challenging. Mark my words, after spending a stupid (and sackable) amount of time on G-Police in the PlayStation office, I am convinced that it'll keep anybody who buys the game entertained for ages.

Chasing the bad guys through the skyscrapers of Kalisto is a good laugh

The domed cities are connected by these giant tunnels



Luckily the city dome is able to survive a jolly good pummelling

PRO SCORE

GAME **G-Police**
GENRE **Flight Sim/Shoot'em-up**
SOFTWARE HOUSE **Psygnosis**
CONTACT **0151 282 5000**
RELEASE DATE **November**
PRICE **£44.99**

PLAYSTATION APPROVED **Psygnosis has come up with a winner here. The way in which the storyline and the missions are interwoven really sucks you into the game and adds a welcome element of depth to the gameplay. Another welcome addition is the fact that the Havoc gunship that you fly in G-Police is unlike anything you might have flown in previous games - it takes a while to get used to and means that G-Police doesn't just feel like just another arcade chopper sim. G-Police also wins my praise because, although it nicks ideas from loads of other genres, films and games, it still remains refreshingly original. In terms of gameplay, detail and presentation, G-Police is excellent. Buy it now.**

GRAPHICS **8**
SOUND **8**
GAMEPLAY **8**
LASTABILITY **9**

8½

JAMES **G-Police will have you creaming at the graphics, astounded by the level of playability and perplexed at the level of difficulty. It's a fantastic game that will take you an age to complete. Recommended**

JAY **This is either gonna ruin your social life or your eyesight. Or both. G-Police will entice you into its cyber environment with some solid gameplay and stunning good looks. Plus it'll take you yonks to finish too**

PAUL **Looked a bit like Colony Wars at first to me. It's obvious the programmers have spent a lot of time on their polished graphic interface, but at least they've got a fairly good game in there too. Try it out first mind**

ANDY **While there are games of such a high quality still being released it can only mean the PlayStation continues to trounce the opposition. This is top notch stuff all round and this is highly recommended**

MDK

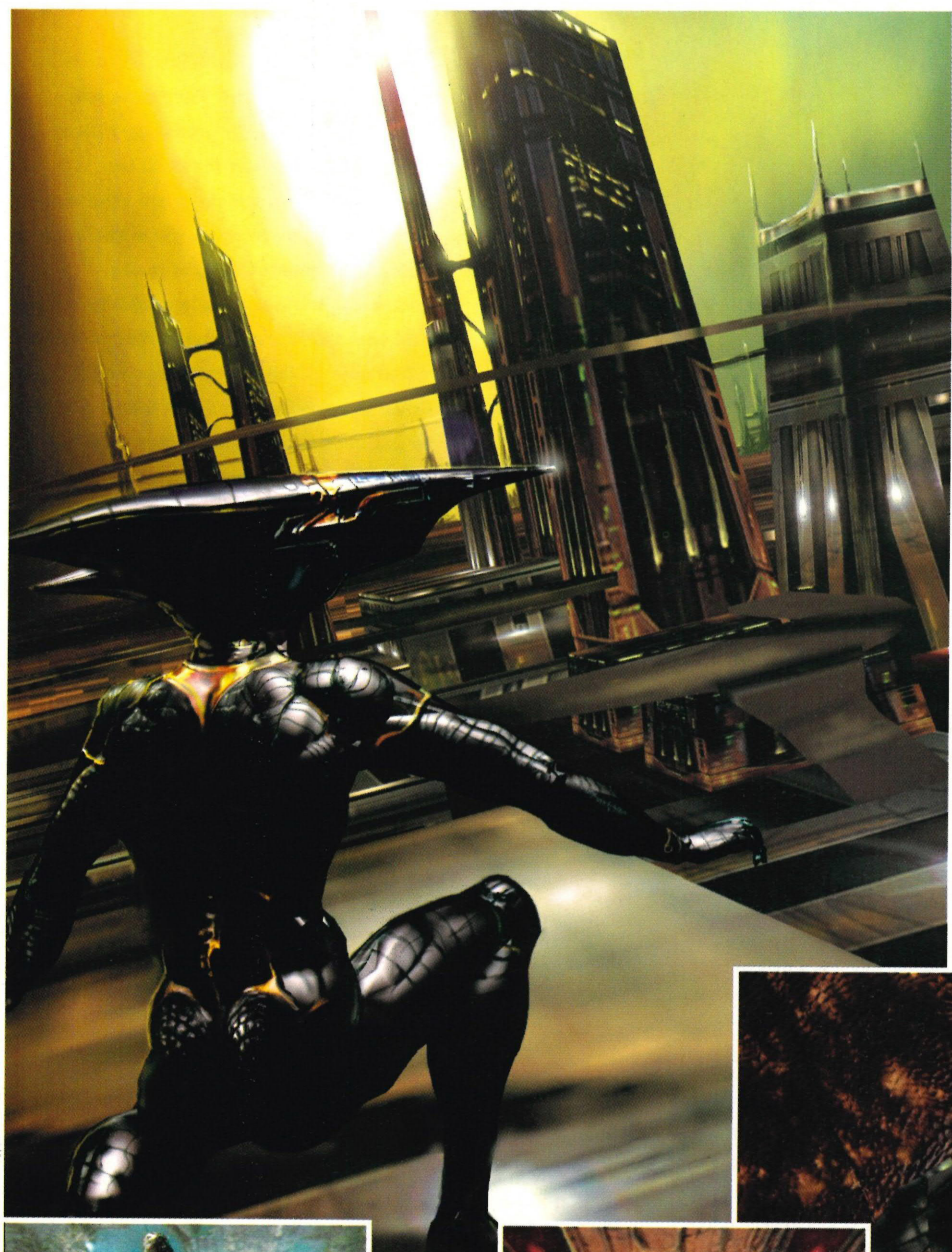
Shiny Entertainment (more famous for their Earthworm Jim) are back with a vengeance with their latest PC conversion, and the lads from Los Angeles are rather happy with the results...

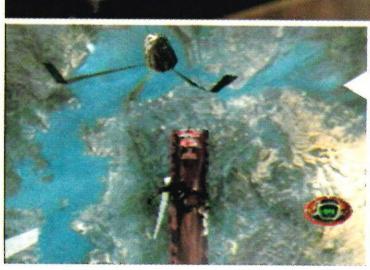
The name Dave Perry could well strike one of two chords with you if you've been into video games for a while. Firstly, it could strike one of terror, because if you used to watch GamesMaster on Channel 4, as everybody knows that little annoying southern bloke with the bandanna on was the self-styled 'games animal' – Dave Perry himself.

On the other hand, you might know the name Dave Perry as being the designing genius behind such massive hits as Earthworm Jim and MDK on the PC. This Mr Perry is a former member of America's Most Eligible Bachelors (steady girls, he's married now) mainly because he's built up his own company – Shiny Entertainment – from the ground up and turned it into one of the biggest and most respected developers in the world. Thus making the guy stinking rich to boot. Put it this way, a lottery win would be small change to our Dave, but for once, here is a guy that's deserved every single penny.

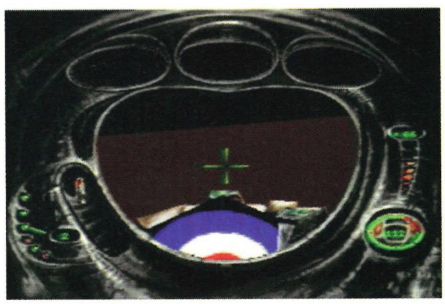
It's pretty rare to find a designer who's main interest is constantly pushing the machine to its limits, but that's what Perry and his games designers at Shiny consistently do.

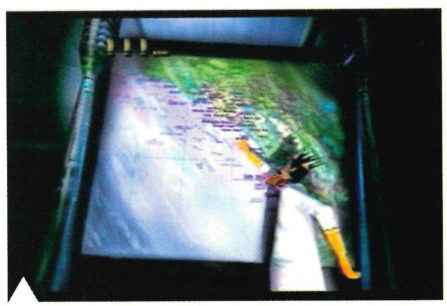
There was initially a train of thought that suggested MDK simply wasn't possible on the





As you spiral downwards the idea is to avoid radar detection from the ground forces





MDK goes through several graphical changes as you progress through the levels but the standard stays high

PlayStation, but Shiny once again have proved, that with the right people on board, just about anything can be done.

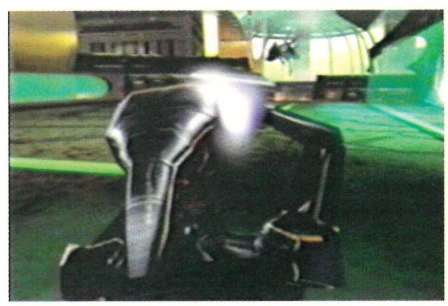
In fact if anything, MDK in it's latest incarnation is probably better than it was on the PC. Many of the little quirks and inconsistencies have been ironed out and with the addition of the PlayStation's wonderful little controller and it's shoulder buttons, we end up with an infinitely more enjoyable experience than could be gained using a keyboard.

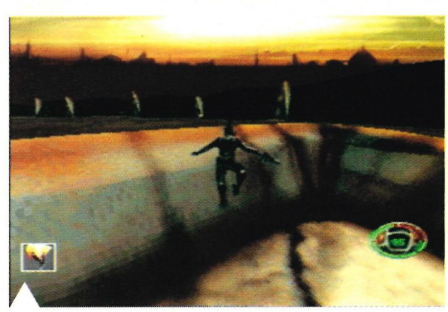
So, MDK the game then. What is it? Well you'll need to know a little about the plot first. Your enemy are the mysterious Stream Riders who surf the universe looking for planets to pillage and unfortunately for Earth, the most evil Stream Rider of all, Gunter Glut, is interested in our little planet. It's your job as the armed to the eyeballs Kurt Hectic to save the Earth from its imminent destruction. Being a bit of a psychopath, he has only three things on his twisted mind: Murder, Death and Kill. Hence the name – MDK.

As far as the action goes, it's fast and furious all the way. You start off by controlling your character as he drops into the enemy stronghold. The key to this section is to avoid the radar sweeps, so that you can drop in unannounced and along the way pick up your trusty ribbon parachute that you'll be needing on the later stages. Once you've landed, you're straight into the first stage and this is where MDK really begins to hot up.

Now's probably a good time to concentrate on those design ideas that lift Perry's games above the norm. For the PC version, Shiny had to completely rethink the way they went about things in order to operate the targeting system that Kurt uses throughout the game. On your basic run-of-the-mill videogame, say Doom, each of the bad guys are surrounded by an invisible box that marks the target area. Fire a bullet anywhere in this predetermined area and the enemy dies. That's how they work.

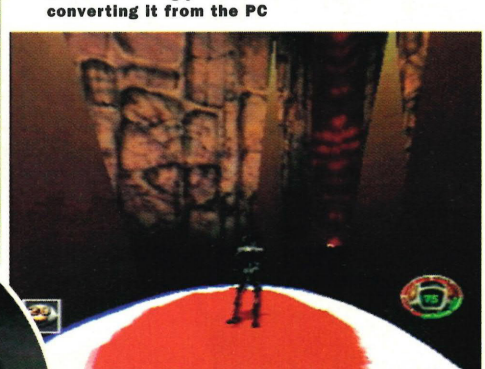
For MDK they had to rewrite the rule book, because a large part of the game is the sniping mode. In this mode you can zoom right into an enemy and pick him off. So basically, Shiny needed a system where you could zoom right in and shoot a guy's hand off if you wanted,

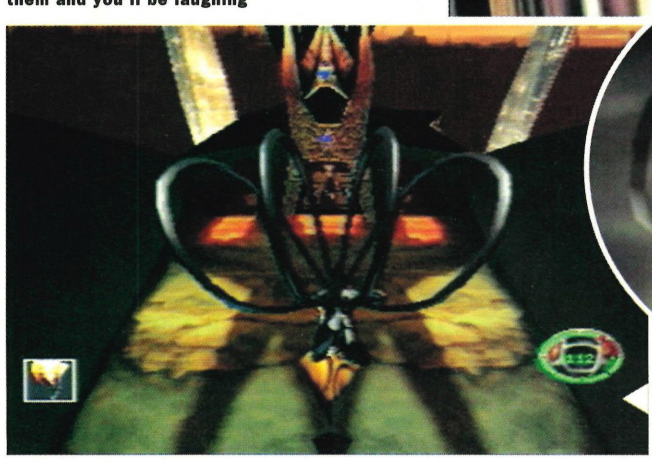




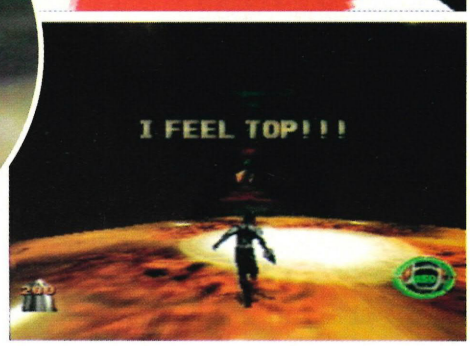
The speed of MDK is quite uncanny and an amazing job has been done converting it from the PC

Tips appear every now and then to guide you in the right direction. Follow them and you'll be laughing





Your trusty ribbon-parachute aids you on your way and lets you float into targets with the minimum of fuss



MDK

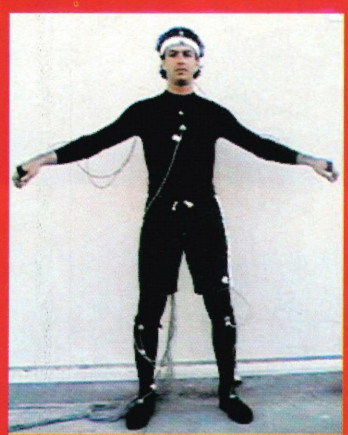
▶somthing which the old surrounding box method wasn't up to. They couldn't find one, so they invented one and the end result is marvellous. There's nothing quite like sniping at someone using the zoom to accurately put their eye out. Far more satisfying than just rattling off round after round in the bad guys general vicinity is the killing precision offered by MDK.

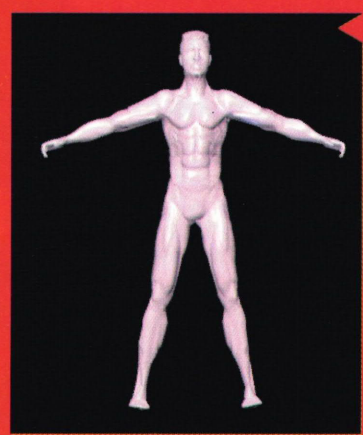
The game also features several bonus levels that weren't in the original PC version. Perry explained this was so that the player could get to use some of the more obscure weapons in the game that a lot of PC owners missed.

It's perhaps a little surprising that the PlayStation version is as good as it obviously is, when you consider the technical detail involved which could have gone very wrong. Instead, Interplay have a cracking game on their hands that is both innovative and fun to play.

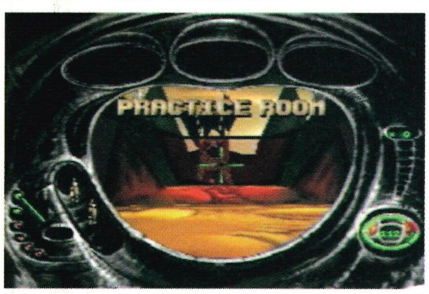
It is quite complex in places and not everybody is going to be able to suss out what to do immediately, but with a little time and effort, MDK is a very rewarding experience for a shoot'em-up. It's dark humour, stunning graphical tricks and brooding atmosphere, just add to the whole palaver. As if that wasn't enough, there's even an MDK movie in the pipeline, so expect to be seeing a lot more of our mate Kurt Hectic in the very near future.

How do they do that?

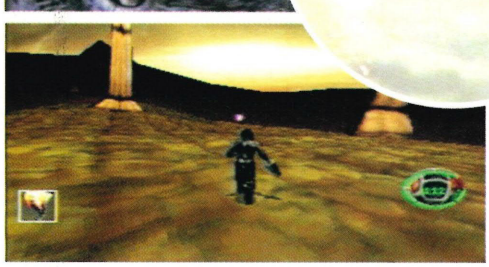


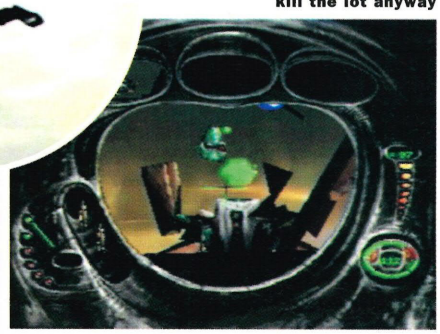


The character in MDK has been motion-captured using the latest technology at Shiny. The balls stuck to the chap record his movement into a computer and from there the information is converted into data that can be used to model the final rendered character image. It's all bland tekkie stuff, but I thought you might just be interested!



Along the way you'll bump into many weird and wonderful characters. Don't worry, just kill the lot anyway





PRO SCORE

GAME MDK
GENRE Shoot'em-up
SOFTWARE HOUSE Interplay
CONTACT 01628 423666
RELEASE DATE November
PRICE £44.95

I was apprehensive to say the least about MDK. having seen the PC version I just didn't know how some of the things were ever going to work on the PlayStation, but work they have and in many cases, far better too. For a start, the controller is better suited to the game with it's shoulder buttons being used for sidestepping, which is extremely important and Shiny and their developers have managed to keep the original speed up, despite initially having a few problems. The whole thing is tricky to get to grips with at first, but infinitely playable and that's why it will undoubtedly end up in many machines over the forthcoming winter period. Cold nights in have rarely looked this appealing.

GRAPHICS 8
SOUND 7
GAMEPLAY 8.5
LASTABILITY 8.5

8½

JAMES Step into the deranged world that is MDK and you'll want to declare citizenship. It's a masochistic missile straight from hell and you'll play it 'till your fingers bleed. Stock up on elastoplast in readiness

JAY MDK takes the Doom genre firmly by the hand, administers a large dose of acid and drags it outdoors to witness the crazy apocalyptic world of the future. Top gameplay and something for your Xmas list, methinks

HUGH A fair few games in the shoot'em-up genre just seem to be a mish-mash of elements plundered from previous games and films. Not MDK – floating cities, sniper helmets and stringy parachutes. It's top class

ANDY If you're into strange goings on and more than your fair share of death and destruction, then this is your wet dream. It's a fantastic achievement and offers more madness than Suggs

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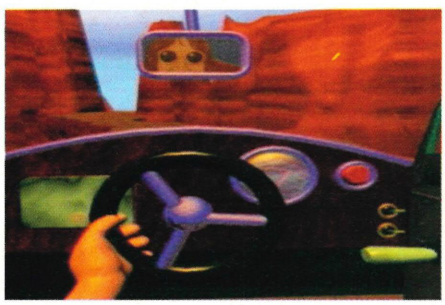
Motor Mash

Dick Dastardly and Muttley take note as this comedy car bonanza offers a course on how to cheat hard and win unfairly. Maybe now they'll be able to stop that darn pigeon...



Godzilla's off for a pint with some dragon he picked up earlier. Time to burn rubber before he comes back sloshed

Ocean's latest foray into the game jungle sees them rooting around within the dense undergrowth that is home to the greater spotted driving game. Though a social animal in a varied society, it is a creature of habit and tradition, preferring to cultivate its offspring in the traditional ways. Change is openly discouraged. However, recent developments down at Eutechnyx have led to the unearthing of something quite unusual.

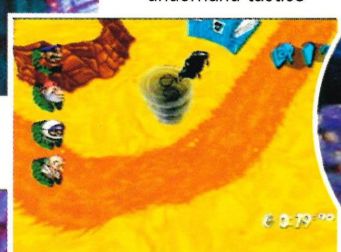
Originality in the racing genre has been quite scarce in the past, with rivals churning out improved versions of the tried and tested Ridge Racer style left, right and centre. So it's always refreshing when something new comes along.

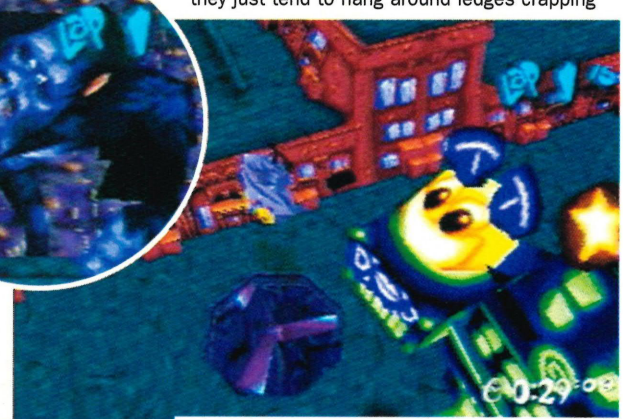
Motor Mash can't claim complete originality for its formula, as it bears more than a striking resemblance to Micro Machines V3, however this isn't necessarily a bad thing. Micro Machines was something of a revelation in racing, a new slant on a genre littered with clones, with gameplay based more on cunning and underhand tactics than the ability to drive around a circuit really fast. Everybody likes to come first, but winning whilst cheating, and seeing your mates squirm with annoyance is the pinnacle of success. And this notion that Motor Mash builds on.

The game is a 3D, top down racer, presented in cartoon style, emphasis being more on fun than serious competition, and it's well suited to the action. Thrown in are 12 eccentric drivers ranging from nutty professor types to mafia hit men, each with their own personalised modes of transport. However, it makes no difference who you choose to race as, the performance of all the vehicles is identical.

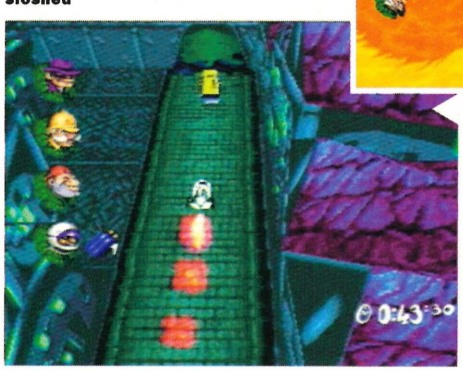
I understand that the reasons for this are to keep the challenge competitive, ensuring that no-one has an advantage, but you'd think that the Diva's sub would fare better than the Adventura's jeep on the underwater Atlantis levels. The use of comedic cartoon racers and unusual race environments means Motor Mash takes on a Wacky Racers feel.

Unfortunately there aren't any pigeons, but they just tend to hang around ledges crapping

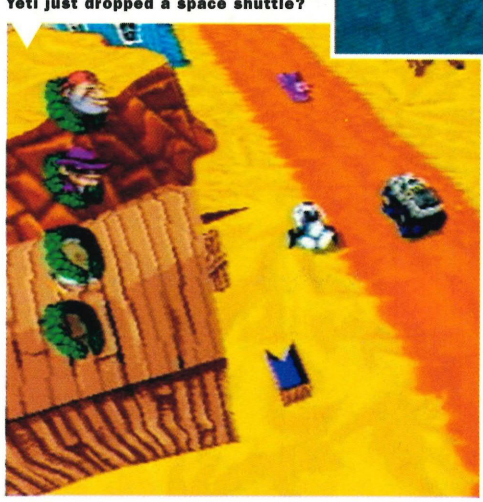




Turbo boosts are best kept for the straights, unless you like crashing into scenery in wild death defying arcs?



Do my eyes deceive me or has that Yeti just dropped a space shuttle?



They're under starter's orders, it's all go on the next light, if you can just keep your grip on the ice, you'll be out in front in no time

everywhere anyway. I can't say I'm a great lover of pigeons. Anyway, what of the game?

Motor Mash isn't a bad game, nor is it a great one, but its release is warranted if only to encourage software developers toward new directions. Which isn't to say that it has nothing else to offer. For a start, the graphics aren't half bad, although nothing is going to make your eyes pop out. Also, certain areas on the tracks become obstructed by background elements which means you're racing blind for a while, and is not the best way to finish in first place.

In the main the graphics are cutesy, colourful and cartoon orientated by design. There are 40 tracks to compete on, including Wild West, Nightmare, City, Arctic, Atlantis and Jungle. A feature which at first glance is a blessing as a lack of courses has been the downfall of many a racer in the past.

Not so pleasing is the fact that they're not all readily available at the start of the game, still this should add to it's longevity. The tracks that are available aren't necessarily the easiest of the bunch, more a cross section of difficulty levels. There are the stock features of a console race course i.e. bridges, water, sand, as well as some entirely new hazards too. Try negotiating your way around Godzilla, abominable snowmen, giant tarantulas, tornados or King Kong for a change and see how you get on there.

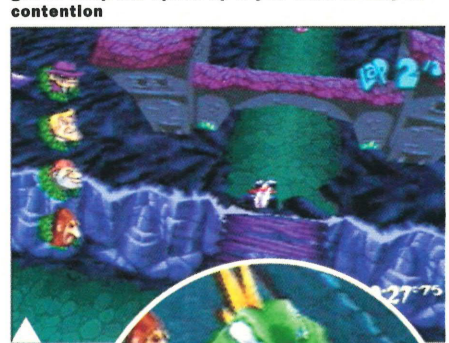
The biggest flaw is that the tracks simply aren't big enough. Sure you can alter the number of circuits during the time trial option, but the whole point of a game like this is to utilise the multi-play options.

That said, the game plays well, although it is often guilty of 'the computer cars are faster than mine' syndrome. This is where the weapons come in, and there are some amusing weapons to make the most of. Check out the skull on nightmare courses, accompanied by its 'B' movie atmospheric sound effects. The miniaturising Ray Gun is a return to good old Mario Kart cupcake bombs and works in much the same way, whereas the Smoke Cloud weapon is an absolute pain in the arse. Run into a puff of smoke and you'll find all controls reversed, sending you tearing into walls, bottomless pits and all manner of annoying little places where left is right and right is left.

Ultimately Motor Mash concentrates on anarchic road damage, which results in humour, frustration and vows of revenge. Three reasons why you shouldn't overlook this title. If realism is your thing then Ocean's other new release, Total Drivin,' is where you should train your eye. Those that preferred the malicious scheming of Mario Kart will find Motor Mash worthy of a look. However, if you already possess Micro Machines V3, keep quiet and just act smug.

Free Willy 3, the whale strikes back and this time he's pissed. But where's the scene of the sickeningly cute kid being chewed in half?

Cornering can be tricky at full pelt, but you've got to keep the speed up if you want to stay in contention



Over the bridge and under the tunnel. Simple eh? Try it again with a missile on your tail

PRO SCORE

GAME Motor Mash
GENRE Racing
SOFTWARE HOUSE Ocean
CONTACT 0161 827 8000
RELEASE DATE Out Now
PRICE £44.99

If you think that this looks and sounds like an effort to reproduce Micro Machines V3, you wouldn't be too far off the mark. It isn't an identical replica and there is an obvious attempt to differentiate the two by way of looks. I've tried hard not to directly compare the two but found myself repeatedly being reminded of MMV3's overall superiority. This isn't to say Motor Mash isn't any good, it's just not as good, but it still has a lot to offer. With a variety of gameplay options, courses and weapons, there's plenty to keep you occupied. Comparisons aside, Motor Mash offers players the chance to vex up to three human opponents; it'll have you and your mates screaming obscenities amidst vows of revenge, which isn't a bad thing when you think about it.

GRAPHICS 7
SOUND 7
GAMEPLAY 8
LASTABILITY 7

7½

ANDY **While this is a worthy release it was always going to be up against Micro Machines and stood next to that, it's a little inferior. On its own merits however, this is a playable and fun game for up to four players**

PAUL **Certainly stands up well to others of the same ilk, but I've never really enjoyed this sort of thing anyway. The score seems about spot on for me, a lot of you will go for this in a big way. Just not my type. Sorry!**

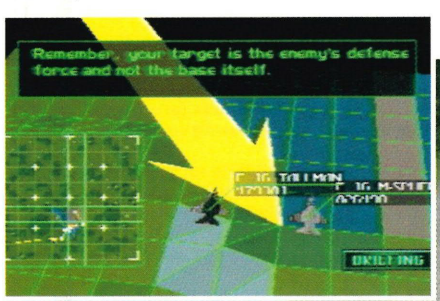
JAY **Chaotic car craziness that yes, does look a little like MM V3. But that ain't no bad thing as the top notch gameplay, colourful environments and comedy elements make this a worthy addition to anyone's collection**

HUGH **Although Motor Mash is a fun little four-player affair with enough tracks, weapons and options to keep you occupied for a fair while, I'm a shallow bastard and I prefer my games a little better looking!**

Ace Combat 2

Can you make a flight sim that's not just for the anorak brigade? Namco seem to think so. Check out their latest non-spoddy airplane shoot'em-up...

The HUD tells you everything you need to know. Mine says 'you're buggered'



You don't really know the definition of dull until you've played a flight sim. A real flight sim, like that God awful Microsoft effort entails switching on, flipping and clicking 20 levers and buttons before you can even taxi onto the runway. Even then you're stuck in some boring, crappy aeroplane that can be outrun by a heavily pregnant seagull.

Thankfully, the PlayStation has never really been big on 'authentic' flight sims for two reasons. Firstly, and most importantly, PlayStation owners in general seem to have a life, and secondly, there simply aren't enough buttons on the keypad to do such unimportant functions as turning on the high altitude fog lamp wipers (or whatever).

Where aeroplane-based games really have come into their own is in more arcade-based offerings. Games such as Raging Skies, Air Combat and ThunderHawk 2, have proven that you can make a flight sim/arcade shoot'em-up hybrid and make it damn playable.

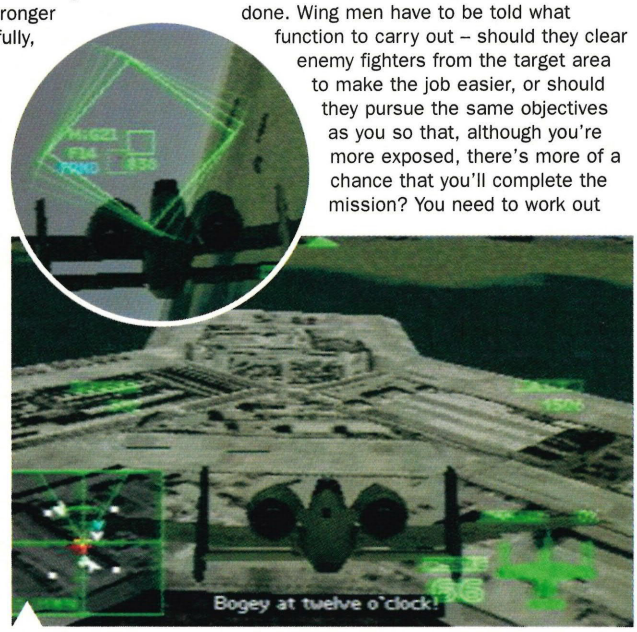
Namco's Ace Combat 2 is the latest addition to the genre. Based on Namco's enduringly popular Air Combat, Ace Combat 2 builds on the strengths of the original game and rectifies some of the weaknesses. In addition to featuring a host of new planes, Ace Combat 2 now boasts over twice the combat missions available in the first game.

As in the original game, you are given the opportunity to fly a variety of different fighters and bombers against a much stronger and better equipped foe. Thankfully, unlike far too many flight sims, Ace Combat is spared the historical/theoretical combat scenarios. You won't be flying any missions against the Russians, Chinese, Iraqis or Koreans – the combat environment here is entirely non-specific. All you know is that a coup in a friendly country has plunged it into civil war and you are drafted in to help defeat the rebel forces.

To do this you must complete a gruelling series of missions, from simple bomber intercepts to complicated capture operations where friendly targets are intermingled with enemies so densely packed that a friendly-fire incident seems inevitable. For each successful mission completed, you will be awarded more credits. The more credits that are collected the better (and more suitable) planes can be purchased. In the first couple of missions you've got a couple of rickety old jet fighters to choose from, but as the game ploughs on you'll be able to buy devastating planes such as the A10 tank killer and the Russian Su-35 (which looks like a spaceship). Each plane has it's own individual strengths and weaknesses. Choose a plane carefully for each mission and your chances of coming back will be significantly improved.

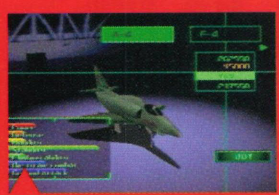
Although the first few missions are quite unchallenging and may well have you thinking that your playing a pretty looking Afterburner copy, once you start having to deal with ground targets, ships and power stations hidden within deep gullies, you will be challenged.

The mix between arcade and tactic based simulation is perfect. During the missions you will have to use your cunning to get the job done. Wing men have to be told what function to carry out – should they clear enemy fighters from the target area to make the job easier, or should they pursue the same objectives as you so that, although you're more exposed, there's more of a chance that you'll complete the mission? You need to work out



The later missions will require you to fly ground attack missions against heavily defended targets - friendly targets will be mixed in amongst enemies so you'll have to be careful to avoid friendly fire

Plane and simple



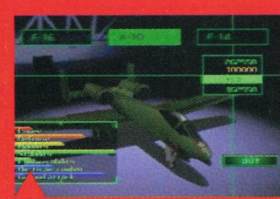
A4 Skyhawk: The Fiesta of the jet fighter world. Small, cheap but effective

F4 Phantom: It's fast, heavy and difficult to kill but about as manouverable as a bus

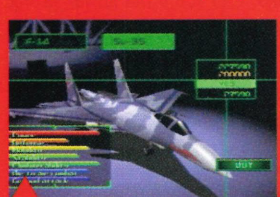
KF-C7: Nothing to do with Kentucky Fried Chicken - rather a mean plane actually

F14 Tomcat: Fast and mean looking - flown by big-nosed dwarf Mavericks in Top Gun

F16: It's fast but small - so one missile up the jackzie could end your day

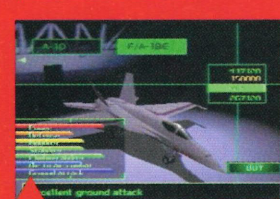


A10 Thunderbolt: It may look ugly but this is the hardest plane money can buy



Su-35: This beastie can actually do Mach 1 vertically Buy this and your invincible

YF23-A: It may look like some sort of flattened moth, but this plane is radar invisible



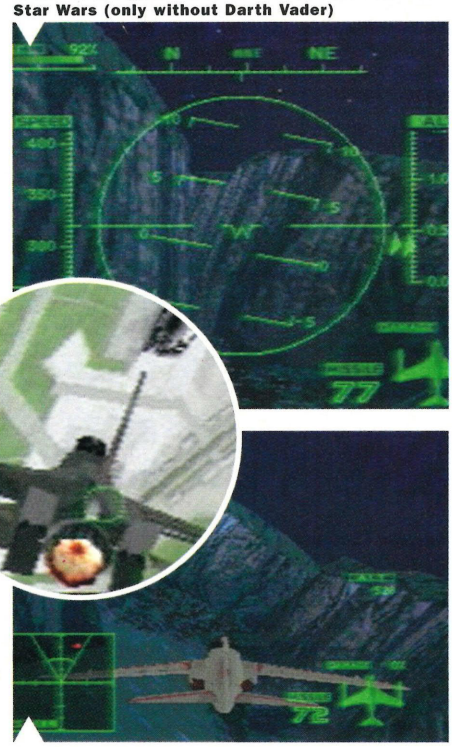
F/A18 Hornet: This is the sort of plane that Will Smith kills alien dudes with

what to attack, what not to attack and what to attack in – your choice of plane will effect your choice of tactics. If your flying a slow plane, it's a good idea to stay at treetop level and avoid most of the fire, if you're in a speedy beast then dash in, strike, and dash out again.

Whilst most sections entail flying around a certain area and achieving primary and secondary objectives, there are a few missions placed about the game where the focus is more oriented on arcade gameplay. One section for example requires you to fly down a deep gully and bomb an enemy powerstation at the end. Because you are effectively unable to leave the gully (you will get swatted down by missiles if you try) the mission becomes an exercise in quick thinking – one wrong move and you will be smeared all over the rocks. It's tricky but makes no demands on your brain, just your reflexes.

Although Ace Combat 2 is great fun to play and thankfully not 'up its own arse' like quite a few flight sims, there is one word of warning. Buy a joystick or analogue pad if your interested in playing this game. As with most other flying games on the PlayStation, it is decidedly tricky using the individual direction keys to fly the plane (even in the sluggish 'beginner's control option). Using an analogue double joystick that PlayStation Pro had blagged from Sony, the game was great fun to play. One stick was configured as the throttle, the other the control stick. Although I must have looked like a prize tit using it, it added loads of playability to the game. Try it for yourself.

The Canyon level is one of the most challenging in the entire game. Like the Death Star scene in Star Wars (only without Darth Vader)



Because you've got so many planes at your disposal, you can pick the right one for the job. This jet looks naff but it's good at ground attack

PRO SCORE

GAME Ace Combat 2
GENRE Flight Sim
SOFTWARE HOUSE Namco
CONTACT 0171 911 5000
RELEASE DATE Out Now
PRICE £44.95

If you're in the mood for a challenging, but ultimately brainless aerial shoot'em-up, this will be right up your street. The missions are suitably fast and furious, but there's still a fair few tactics and strategies to get the hang of if you're going to be downing Migs left, right and centre. However, despite the many different missions and planes, the action can sometimes get a little samey. The bulk of the missions are concerned with knocking out enemy bases and there is a limit to how many times you can fire missiles at buildings and find it interesting. All in all though, Ace Combat 2 is a fast paced and mentally undemanding shoot'em-up, but it will satisfy those who fancy playing at jet jockey for a few hours.

GRAPHICS 8
SOUND 7
GAMEPLAY 8
LASTABILITY 7

8

PAUL **You really need one of those analogue things to get the most out of any PlayStation flight sim. If you're lucky enough to have one then AC2 can be a little treat if you're into this sort of thing. Be careful though**

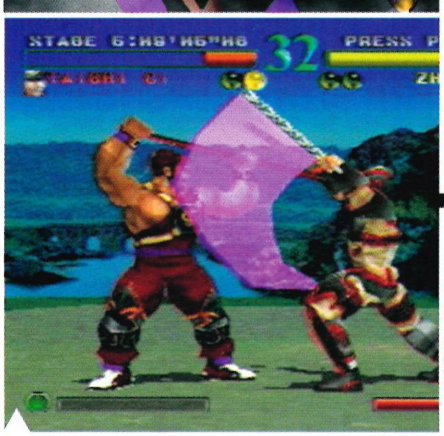
JAY **I didn't really like the original to be honest, and flight sims as a whole don't exactly get my juices flowing. This sequel however, is vastly superior and judging by the crowd around the office TV, it's the business**

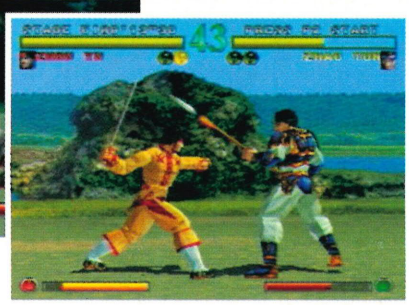
ANDY **Far better than most flight sims, but the feeling of travelling at several hundred miles an hour is lacking. Graphically it's well impressive, but it's one of those games which is always going to be for die-hard fans only**

JAMES **Hugh's been hooked on this for a while now and it looks to be pretty impressive all round. A good choice of aircraft gives this an advantage over other flight sims. Give it a try**

Dynasty Warriors

If you missed the Dynasty wars of 220 AD first time round, now's your chance to catch up, as long dead Chinese geezers battle it out for the right to rule





Good old spear in the face moves, every game needs them. Defence is as important as attack in Dynasty Warriors, all out attack won't win

Welcome to the beat'em-up master class. Today we're going to learn how to make our very own version of a full-on fighting extravaganza that'll blitz everything that has gone before it. First of all, take a number of characters; a mix of martial arts experts and street-fighters is best.

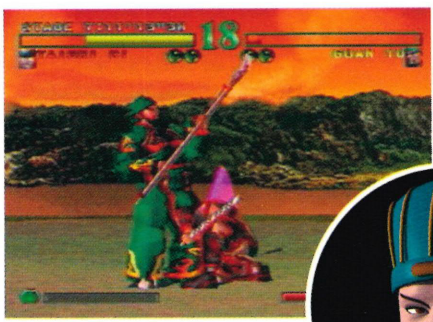
The next step is to give them all personalities and backgrounds. You may find it hard to do this convincingly, but that's alright, just rely on a little mysticism, childhood depravity and an obvious excuse for revenge, and you'll not go far wrong. In step three, we'll assign the characters with individual skills and special moves. Remember, the bigger and more ridiculous the moves the better, so use your imagination. Finally, dream up some preposterous excuse for a hand-to-hand, no-holds-barred combat tournament and prepare the competitors for battle. There, all done. Simple wasn't it?

Okay, okay, so maybe I'm being a bit cynical. But you can't really blame me can you? I mean, what do you expect? Writing 1,000 words about yet another beat'em-up isn't a task that I'm really relishing at the moment, not that it matters because it's got to be done anyway. So with real enthusiasm, let's take a look at good old Dynasty Warriors then.

In case you failed to see the reason for the 'Delia Smith' fighting recipe intro, it's to illustrate the point that there are now a vast number of fighting games available, that all rely on virtually exactly the same formula. Fair enough, there aren't too many ways that you can dress up what is essentially an excuse to inflict pain on others, but something a little different wouldn't go amiss. I sense that this is what developers KOEI have tried to accomplish with Dynasty Warriors.

The game's objectives are true to the

Building up the Chi energy bar at the bottom of the screen is essential if you want to use special attacks. Looks like Zhou Yu is gonna get some when his mirrored adversary gets up



Little bloke wants a go at big bloke, then finds out big bloke has big axe. Nuff said really

Lu Bu is one of the bosses you'll meet in the game. Be warned, he's very quick and very tough. Oh, and he's got a ruddy great spear as well

beat'em-up style, but it's the background behind the characters and their reasons for fighting that differentiates Dynasty Warriors from conventional hack-and-slash games. For the first time, as far as I'm aware, you'll be able to take control of figures from history, recreating battles from ancient China. Most of Dynasty Warriors appeal lies here. Think about it, these guys actually went at each other centuries ago, entering the battle field with the sole intention of killing their enemies and conquering new lands. Now that's a little more interesting than your average 'boy sees parents killed by evil dude, boy grows into man, man enters tournament to get revenge on evil dude' scenario.

The storyline centres around a struggle for power in ancient China, between three mighty kingdoms in the early part of the third century, after the fall of the Han Dynasty. The Wei kingdom, the Shu kingdom and the Wu kingdom, were the major players in a battle royal for supremacy over China.

The leaders of these different kingdoms had a habit of changing their names and appointing themselves into positions of authority that they would inevitably abuse, causing all sorts of fuss. Needless to say there was lots of changing of leaders and a few assassinations to boot. Dynasty Warriors throws you into the heart of all of this upheaval, as you take control of a number of the most significant and influential characters from these times. The characters in Dynasty Warriors actually existed and helped mould the history of China.

There are ten characters to choose from, as well as four bosses and a couple of secret characters that can be made available should you successfully kick some ancient ass. Each one is armed with their own preference of weapon, which can range from swords and spears to something called a Mortal Thorns, an immensely big club covered in spikes.

How closely these represent the warriors from the past is unclear, after all, how much do you know about the Han Dynasty? However, KOEI assure us that the clothing, weapons and overall appearance of the characters is an accurate reflection of real-life warriors from the same time. All this attention to detail almost fools you into thinking Dynasty Warriors is different from the other fighting games out there, but of course it isn't.

As far as looks are concerned, Dynasty Warriors hasn't got too much to worry about. The characters are well drawn and the

Contender Ready!

Dynasty Warriors

costumes do look the part. Over 600 textured polygons make up each character and the animation is fluid and lifelike, which means the combination moves can look pretty impressive. Equally stunning are the mighty clashes of weapons with sparks flying out all over the place. All this action is punctuated by sound effects taken straight from a Manga film.

The game is however, let down a little by the backgrounds. They're all beautifully drawn recreations of the settings where the original battles took place all those years ago. The 'Red Wall' backdrop for example, refers to a battle on the Yangtze river when the Wu and Shu kingdoms set fire to the naval fleet of Cao Cao.

Whilst this shows that the developers were committed to giving the game some historic authenticity, the fact that they are historic scenes is about as interesting as they get. Alright, so backgrounds aren't all that important in a beat'em-up game, but there isn't a great deal of rotation involved in Dynasty Warriors. This means that it's not unusual to find yourself fighting in front of an unmoving backdrop. This static viewpoint detracts from the overall 3D perspective, giving it a rather dull 2D feel.

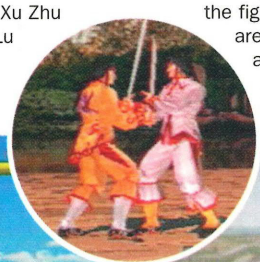
There are 10 main playable characters in Dynasty Warriors, three from each of the battling kingdoms and a chick called Diao Chan who (despite reading the vast history of the various blood baths three bloody times), doesn't appear to be connected to any of the kingdoms. Zhao Yun, Guan Yu and Zhang Fei represent Shu kingdom, Xiahou Dun, Dian Wei and Xu Zhu fight for Wei kingdom and Zhou Yu, Lu Xun and Taishi Ci make up the numbers for Wu kingdom.

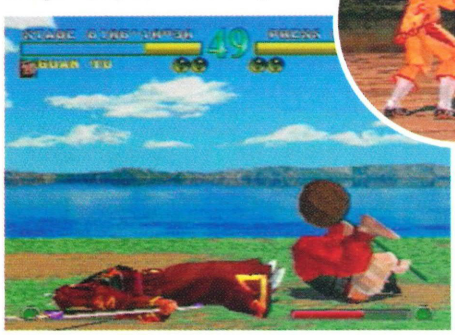
The gameplay isn't something that you'll get used to straight away, it requires a certain amount of practice and a different approach to combat than with other games of this ilk. With two buttons performing defensive functions, emphasis is on strategy and timing rather than blazing in hell-for-leather.

There are buttons to slash and thrust, one to parry and one that will re-direct your opponent. This last move reacts against your opponents thrust, using their momentum to get behind them. Used effectively, this move can change a defensive move into a devastating attack. Of course, this also means that there are less attacking options, however, there are a good selection of moves available by using the thrust and slash buttons. You'll find that they're relatively simple to perform, but can be very effective, whilst linking moves together is encouraged to perform skull-crushing combos.

But what fighting game would be complete without some special moves? Well there are a few of those thrown in to Dynasty Warriors, for good measure, only you'll have to build up energy in your Chi meter first. Repeated attacks on your opponent builds up the Chi meter, allowing your character to unleash spectacular attacks on unsuspecting opponents.

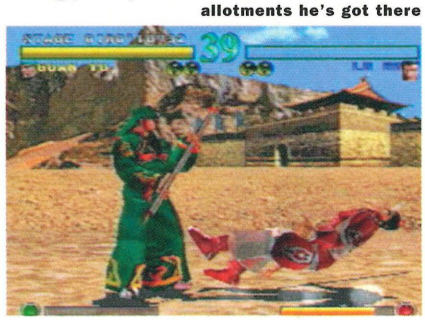
Dynasty Warriors is a new slant on what is becoming a bit of a tired genre. As a game on its own, it is definitely worth a look, as the gameplay is fast and pleasing to the eye and the moves are relatively simple to execute. However, I just don't see the point in entering the fighting game arena if the offerings aren't better than the current champs, and although Dynasty Warriors is an interesting idea, it fails to knock the best from their perch.





Each character has their own rendered ending which tells their individual stories. Here Guan Yu stands on a cliff high above his kingdom, looking proudly over his land. Nice collection of allotments he's got there

I'm tellin' you, flares are back in man! Flares and spears, that's what. 'Ere, get rid of that sword and get yourself one of these mate



PRO SCORE

GAME Dynasty Warriors
GENRE Beat'em-up
SOFTWARE HOUSE Ocean
CONTACT 0161 827 8000
RELEASE DATE Out November
PRICE £44.99

A lot of effort has been put in to ensure that the characters in Dynasty Warriors are authentic representations of ancient warlords. This is quite a novel idea and it's refreshing to see someone trying to lend a little depth to the beat'em-up genre. Unfortunately, it's gameplay that counts and while Dynasty Warriors brings new strategic elements into play, it's a little restrictive to those looking for an encyclopedia of death – which is what we all want from a beat'em-up when it comes down to it. There's still a fair amount of bone-crunching moves thrown in to whet the appetite of the gore fans among you, but Soul Blade this isn't. If you're thinking of investing in a battler, you could do a lot worse than this buy Dynasty Warriors.

GRAPHICS 8
SOUND 8
GAMEPLAY 7
LASTABILITY 6

7½

PAUL Everybody knows my opinion on the majority of PlayStation beat'em-ups out at the moment. There are far too many and, while having some nice touches, at the end of the day, this is another one

JAY This'll make a nice addition to your beat'em-up collection, especially if you're waiting for Tekken 3 to arrive. It's not exactly ground-breaking, but some nice touches and cool special moves make this worth a look

HUGH If you're a beat'em-up freak and you're on the look out for a decent looking, smoothly playable arcade fighter, it might be worth shelling out for this. Don't expect anything stunningly different though

ANDY I'm still far from impressed by beat'em-ups. As far as this is concerned, it's not got anything which grabbed my interest, although it both looks and plays well. As always scrapping fans will love it. I don't

TOTAL DRIVIN

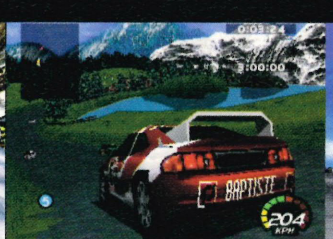
PlayStation

THE LIFE HE ONCE KNEW FLASHED BEFORE HIS EYES

ALL BETS ARE OFF

TOTAL DRIVIN

ALL OR NOTHING



ocean

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Judge Dredd

He's big, he's mean, he's the judge, jury and executioner all rolled into one. Calm down, it's not an Italian riot cop, it's Mega City One's big chinned copper

Contrary to popular belief, Judge Dredd's habitual expression is a result of chronic constipation

Before reading this review, please purge yourself of any memories regarding the absolutely abysmal Stallone film. Sly's badly mumbled 'I am the luuuur' lines, the pointless story etc., forget everything. At the same time if you could please rid your brain of any memories of Acclaim's shite scrolling Judge Dredd movie tie-in beat'em-up then I'll begin...

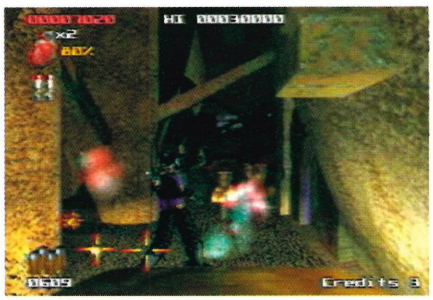
Featuring everybody's favourite psychotic, mean chinned copper, Gremlin's latest light gun shoot'em-up has nothing whatsoever to do with the cacky film, or even cackier game that attempted to muddy the Dredd image. You see Gremlin's excursion into the Dredd world is a direct license from the comics so it's actually not a bunch of arse.

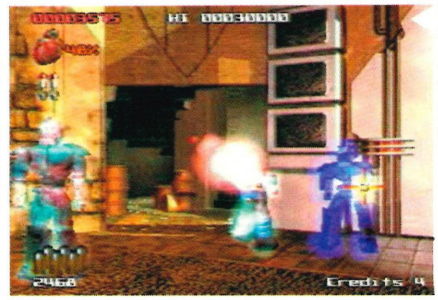
For those of you who have been living under a rock for the better part of the last two decades, Judge Dredd is a totalitarian lawman of the future and a member of an elite organisation called The Judges. It's The Judge's job to try and curb the massive crime problem of Mega City One, a hi-tech citadel home to 200 million citizens driven within its domed walls by the poisoned land outside. The crime problem is so intense that the city authorities can no longer afford to run a full legal system – instead the capture, arrest, and in some cases execution of felons is undertaken by these elite agents.

As if things weren't bad enough already, an

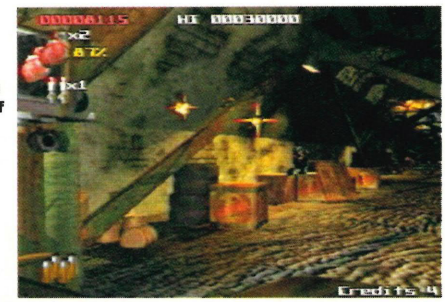
If the gun battles get a little tiring, try watching 'Can't Cook, Won't Cook 2255' on one of the huge video walls

Dredd's pitch battles take place almost anywhere, including a hi-tech garage of the future. That'll be £400 for labour sir!





Thanks to precision shooting, the guy in the middle consists of just one leg!



ex-Judge by the name of Bean has escaped from the prison planet of Titan and he's desperate to exact his revenge against the man who put him away – Judge Dredd. With his army of androids and hi-tech attack vehicles, Bean has seized the Mayor of Mega City One, so as to lure Dredd into a confrontation.

And that's where you come in. As Dredd, it's your job to storm through 15 sectors of Mega City One in a valiant attempt to free the Mayor and waste as many of Bean's mercenaries and androids as possible using your trusty 'Lawmaker' assault pistol. What better set up could you ask for in an ultra violent and action-packed light-gun shoot'em-up?

The first thing you notice about Judge Dredd is the fact that it looks fantastic. The quality of the graphics are absolutely stunning – you can't see any chunky polygons here, everything is beautifully texture-mapped and looks almost cinematic in quality. The bustling and overcrowded Mega City One looks just as it does in the comics and the film (although the Sly film was undeniably crap, the sets and props for the film cost millions and, it has to be said, looked just right).

As you progress you see more and more of the city – the earlier stages see you wandering through the dark, dirty, subterranean sections of the city battling it out with Bean's cyborgs, whereas later levels see you ascending in elevators, past monorail tracks and office blocks, with spaceships taking off from a spaceport in the distance.

Particularly welcome is the fact that so much attention is paid to detail. Unlike other light-gun shoot'em-ups, power-ups and additional weapons aren't just left in any available big green or brown crate, they are dotted all over the place and the only way you'll find them is to be wildly indiscriminate with your fire. You'll see great big video walls showing some sort of future TV show – blast the crap out of it, and, in addition to sending shards of glass all over the place, you'll find some decent power-ups. You'll find 'em everywhere, hub caps of battle tanks, the doors of monorails – give 'em a blasting and pick up the points.

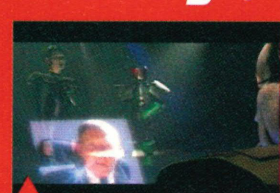
Obviously though, it's not just a case of wandering around admiring the view and picking up bonus points. Oh no, there are a few hundred very angry and determined cyborgs here to potentially ruin your day. Although in earlier sections just plugging them any old way will work a treat, as the game progresses, they will become difficult to shoot. Different types will have different weaknesses, and the quicker you learn 'em, the quicker you'll kill 'em.

One thing though – apparently these ▶

Oh no! It's the attack of the long armed, short leg mercenary dwarfs. Shitting myself, I am!

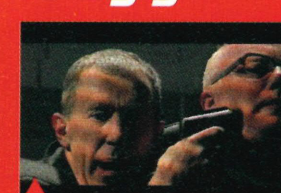
To make it even harder to get a clean shot, Dredd's enemies use their special combat break-dancing

The Judge, the Bad and the Ugly



Judge Bean makes his demands to the cops. 'Give me loads of dosh or the mayor gets it' he shouts...

Obviously, there is only one man with shoulder pads big enough for the job. His name is Dredd, and he is funky



Oblivious to the Dredd threat, Bean starts to get cocky. 'Come and 'ave a go if y'think you're hard enough' he chants

But blasting through the streets of Mega City One comes the Dreddster on his oversized Raleigh Chopper

'Right Beany, me old mate, the game's up' he shouts triumphantly. However, as the dust settles, he realises...

'Bollocks, wrong room!'

Judge Dredd

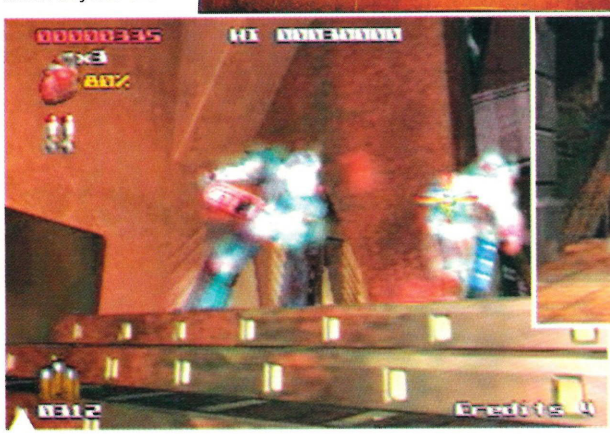
characters are all animated using motion-capture technology which, theoretically, should make them move realistically. Which doesn't explain why half of them come wandering onto the screen dragging their knuckles behind them? Did they put the motion-capture spots on a gorilla by accident? And this isn't just some unfortunate side effect of being a murderous cyborg either – whenever an innocent bystander stumbles upon the action, he doesn't duck for cover or run for it like the innocents in Die Hard, he does a sort of 'Madchester shoe shuffle' dance like he's either gagging to get shot or he's just too stoned to care.

Still having said that, your opponents are still quite deadly considering the fact that they can't move very well. In earlier levels you'll just get picked on by the bog standard 'hard blokes with guns' type enemy. However, as you progress you'll have to come to terms with having you head roundhouse kicked by insanely suicidal bad guys, a machine gun assault by very heavy weaponry including a vertical take-off assault plane and a variety of gun toting robots and battle tanks. It'll take practice and a sure aim to get much beyond the first five sections of the game.

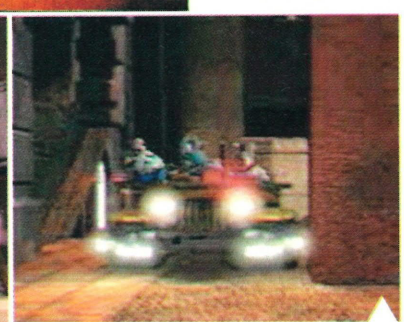
Although, as you might expect, the amount of problem solving and brainwork involved in playing Judge Dredd isn't huge, there are still a fair few bonus sections knocking about which will help you up your totals and collect a few power-ups. If you see a door, give anywhere hopeful a good blasting and wait and see what your handiwork reveals.

All in all, in terms of graphics and gameplay, Gremlin have a pretty decent light-gun shoot'em-up here. There's lashings of wanton destruction, violence and non-stop action, and it's all rendered beautifully. The only thing that I can't shake off is the feeling that, despite being a thoroughly decent game in it's own right, it just isn't as good as the shooting section in Fox's Die Hard Trilogy. In Die Hard there was a palpable tension that had you gripping the light-gun so hard you'd snap it. Instead of being under constant attack, the action would come in waves. The calm periods between the gun fights seem almost to create a feeling of impending doom. Sadly, this just doesn't seem to be present in Judge Dredd.

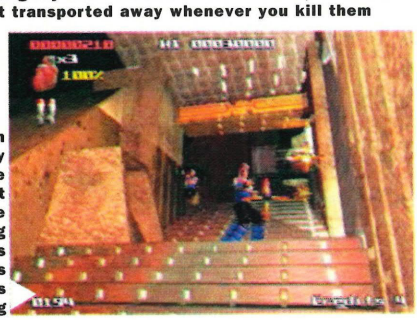
Having said that, Dredd is still a fantastic addition to the shoot'em-up genre, and a light-gun game that's well worth shelling out for.



To avoid unsightly and difficult to shift stains, Bean's evil cyborgs get transported away whenever you kill them



A Jeep load of evil cyborg warriors get bored with trying to shoot you and attempt to make you roadkill instead



A fashion accessory of the distant future are rubber leg warmers like this fella's wearing

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PRO SCORE

GAME Judge Dredd
GENRE Shoot'em-up
SOFTWARE HOUSE Gremlin Interactive
CONTACT 0114 275 3423
RELEASE DATE Out Now
PRICE £44.99

PLAYSTATION APPROVED **Gremlin have come up with a fantastic looking, challenging, and undeniably action-packed shoot'em-up here. Each level is chock full of devastatingly difficult opponents, authentically Dreddy looking vehicles and buildings, and enough bonuses to prevent you from croaking it. However, there a few minor flaws – the bad guys move about in a pretty unrealistic way and constantly look like they're about to start break-dancing, and in the early parts of the game at least, the stages are so short that the stats screens which follow take longer that the actual shooting action! However, despite these minor niggles Judge Dredd is still an ass-kicking, perp-slaying treat of a game.**

GRAPHICS 9
SOUND 8
GAMEPLAY 9
LASTABILITY 8

8½

PAUL I was pleasantly impressed with old JD. He might be the law and all, but he's got quite a good game to boot too. The light-gun works well and the graphics are impressive. Gremlin continue their current run of form

JAY No-one's going to breeze through this baby without untold trigger finger damage, as Dredd offers a large portion of cyber violence at a frantic pace. It's a required taste though, so ahem... judge for yourself. Arf arf

JAMES Judge Dredd is as cool and hard as law enforcement comes. So I was privately delirious with excitement at the prospect of filling his perp-busting hob nails. If shooting creeps is your thing, Dredd is waiting for you

ANDY Although this sort of game isn't exactly my cuppa, it had me blasting the enemies like there was no tomorrow. I'm not sure about its lasting appeal, but it looks fantastic and is much better than expected

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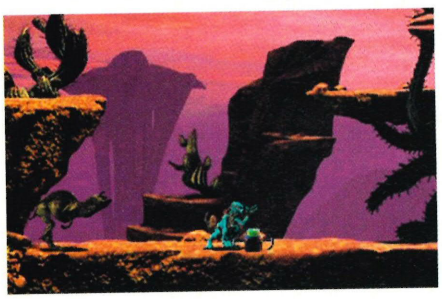
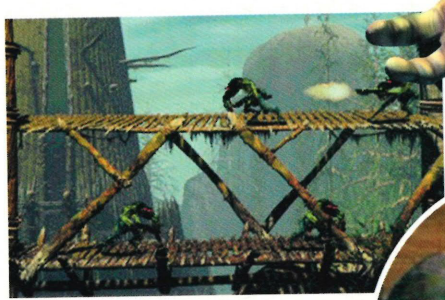
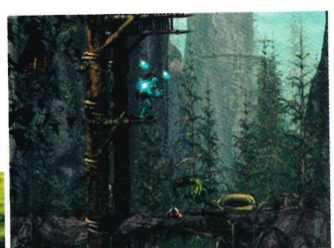
Oddworld:
Abe's Oddysee

Possibly one of the most aptly titled games ever. You are about to enter one of the most bizarre places you could ever imagine





Leap into these holes to get yourself out of tricky situations. The only problem being that you sometimes have to activate them first. Downer!



Many people are put off by the words 'puzzle' and 'game' when used in sequence, but more fool them, especially when we're now being confronted with one of the most punishing and rewarding releases yet. Last month, Kurushi rumbled onto the stage and whilst it was undoubtedly an original concept, the samey environment let it down somewhat. The same can't be said for Oddworld. This game has got more originality than anybody could hope for.

Landing somewhere between Prince of Persia and Lemmings, it's got some of the most mind bending puzzles we haven't seen since the days of the aforementioned. The game revolves around Abe, a slave in Rupture Farms, which has the worst safety record this side of the Mir space station. It doesn't really matter to the Magog Cartel who own the factory, as they rule with an iron fist and coin all the profits.

Abe is a Mudokon who has been a slave all his life. One day whilst going about his business, he stumbles across a high profile meeting in which the latest meat line is unveiled. See box out below. The task is made much more difficult when you don't have anything except one of the most powerful minds in the universe to make good your escape.

The Oddworld is played in the past tense, with Abe narrating the FMV sequences. As you make your progress you'll be clued in to the story as it unfolds before you. Your destiny lies along many paths as you go through level after level of mind boggling puzzles. Initially, they may only comprise of switch pulling, but as you progress, more and more weird and wonderful puzzles will need to be solved.

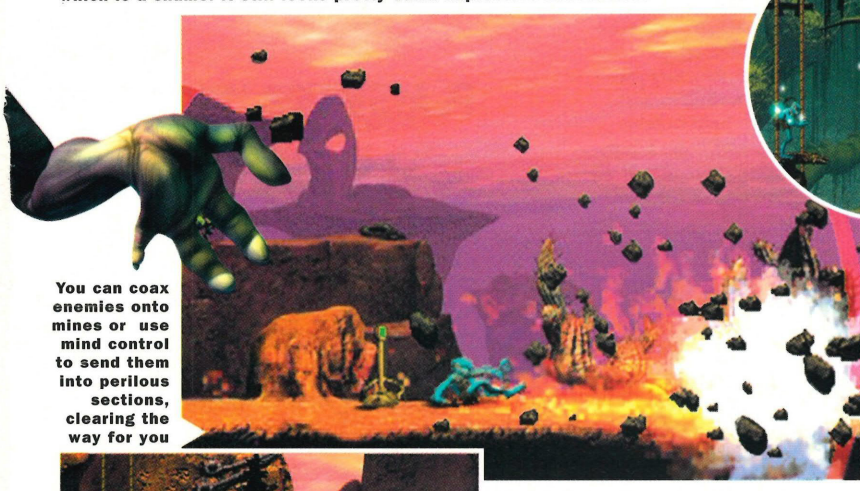
Abe himself has a vocabulary which you control. With this he can converse with other Mudokons to both save them and gain their assistance. You do need to be careful when you open your mouth, as the Sligs (the guards), are

Abe's Story

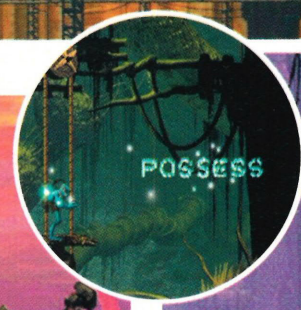
Rupture Farms produces many different meat products to satisfy a hungry universe. Abe is a slave where these products are made. Due to extinction, many

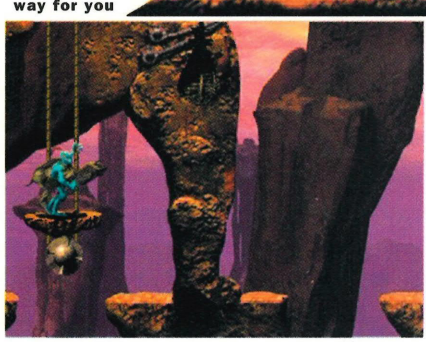
product lines have ended and an exciting new range is under development. Abe and his fellow Mudokons are in big trouble. They must escape or become pie

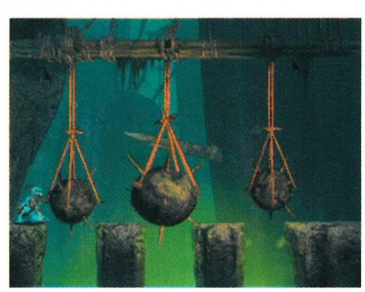
As you can see not all screens are directly related to the previous one, which is a shame. It still looks pretty damn impressive nonetheless



You can coax enemies onto mines or use mind control to send them into perilous sections, clearing the way for you







The Scrabs must be avoided at all costs. You can't control their minds and they're pretty damn fast. Leg it

sensitive souls and will either wake up or turn and pump you full of bullets.

The guards themselves are pretty dim, weak-minded fools, so there's nobody worse to be toting a weapon. Thankfully, you will find that your chanting plays a kind of 'Jedi mind trick' on these creatures, allowing you to take control of their bodies. While they're captured in your trance, you have complete control over their actions and can make them clear the way of other guards and traps.

Unfortunately for you however, not everybody is as foggy minded as the Sligs and don't fall for such trickery. There are floating pods in some rooms which fire a bolt of lightning to halt your yodelling. These areas require a little more skill and thought. How will you guide Abe safely through these perilous areas?

Rescuing the other Mudokons is one of your priorities. The points at which you can save them from their slavery are dotted throughout the stages in the form of a circle of birds. Chant away and they will form a door for the others to run through to safety. Other circles will contain teleporters which you can leap into to enter new areas. There are many hidden features which you probably won't see on your first few attempts. The more you play, the more little secrets will be revealed, which hold all new areas to explore. It's that type of game. It's not a clear cut case of explore the area available and get out, there's much, much more to do.

The controls soon become manageable and in no time you'll find yourself speaking, whistling and leaping with the greatest of ease. Once these intricacies have been learnt, the game enters a whole new dimension. Where you avoided speaking to fellow Mudokons and got on your merry way earlier, now you'll converse with them and assist them in their escape.

You progress through the levels screen by screen and can wander back and forth at will. Some switches will need to be located in the far reaches of a level, so there's no avoiding the drudge of going back on yourself.

Your imagination certainly has to work overdrive to get through the later stages. At times however, you'll be greeted with a little assistance from the natives. The fireflies will form words as you chant and wherever there's a switch, you'll be able to activate it to see maps or gain useful codes or passwords. Many of ▶

Oddworld

▶ these codes involve you "possessing" items (by chanting) such as bells to chime the correct tune or you may need to whistle to pass certain obstacles blocking your path.

There's so much to think about whilst playing that there's rarely a dull moment. Where most puzzle games are obsessed by their own self importance, Oddworld indulges and engages the player with its own sense of humour, albeit slightly twisted. This also adds to the enjoyment as you wait to see what'll happen next.

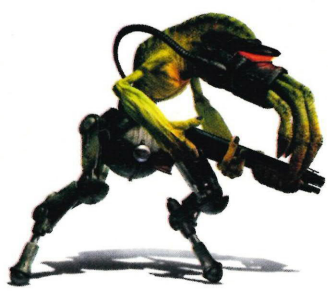
The visuals are very impressive with some stages involving some night exploration, while others look like a creepy Endor (minus Ewoks) world where you'll meet vicious tribes of Mudokons. All of the levels do look impressive and you aren't restricted to just playing in the foreground. At different stages the FMV follows the scenery until it delivers you into another part of Oddworld. In short, there's a depth in this game that we seldom seen in most releases nowadays.

As with any game however, there are a couple of points which do irritate. The constant moving between screens is all well and good, but it really shouldn't have a FMV sequence between two separate in-game locations. You end up watching the landscape you've just been impressed with in reverse. And then you see it again and again.

If however, you skip over this annoyance then you're going to be chanting, leaping, chatting and doing a whole host of other wacky actions for a long, long time. It's no understatement that Oddworld is one of the greatest surprises of the year. If not *the* surprise. It's a real beauty.

Meet the cast

ELUM – take this friendly creature for a ride to make some of the larger leaps



SLIG – thick as two short-planks, but armed with some extremely accurate weapons

SCRAB – extremely quick and vicious creature which must be avoided at all costs

PARAMITE – a very scary creature which features quite heavily in the game

SLOG – this slobbery beast is the guard dog of nightmares. Vicious, quick and ugly

MOLOCK – the extremely rich and dangerous owner of Rupture Farms. He'll stop at nothing if there's a profit to be made

Not all switches are as harmless as they seem. Look out for traps and use them to your advantage at all times

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PRO SCORE

GAME Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee
GENRE Puzzle
SOFTWARE HOUSE GT Interactive
CONTACT 0171 285 3791
RELEASE DATE Out Now
PRICE £44.99

PLAYSTATION APPROVED **I had no idea what to expect from Oddworld, but it soon became apparent that it was something special. It's unique blend of humour and gameplay is seldom seen on the PlayStation and I was soon hooked. Anybody with an eye for quality will be equally enthralled. From the graphics, down to the fine points of gameplay, it's evident that attention-to-detail has been as important as making the game as playable as possible. It's big, it's weird and more than a little addictive. You aren't restricted by a set number of lives so you can attempt the areas as many times as you like. This is a crucial part of this stunning game as it would be pretty close to impossible otherwise. This is simply brilliant!**

GRAPHICS 9
SOUND 9
GAMEPLAY 9
LASTABILITY 9

9

HUGH **Simply put, Oddworld is one of the most original and endearing platformers I've seen on the PlayStation. Its unique style, involving gameplay and undeniably addictive qualities make it well worth a look**

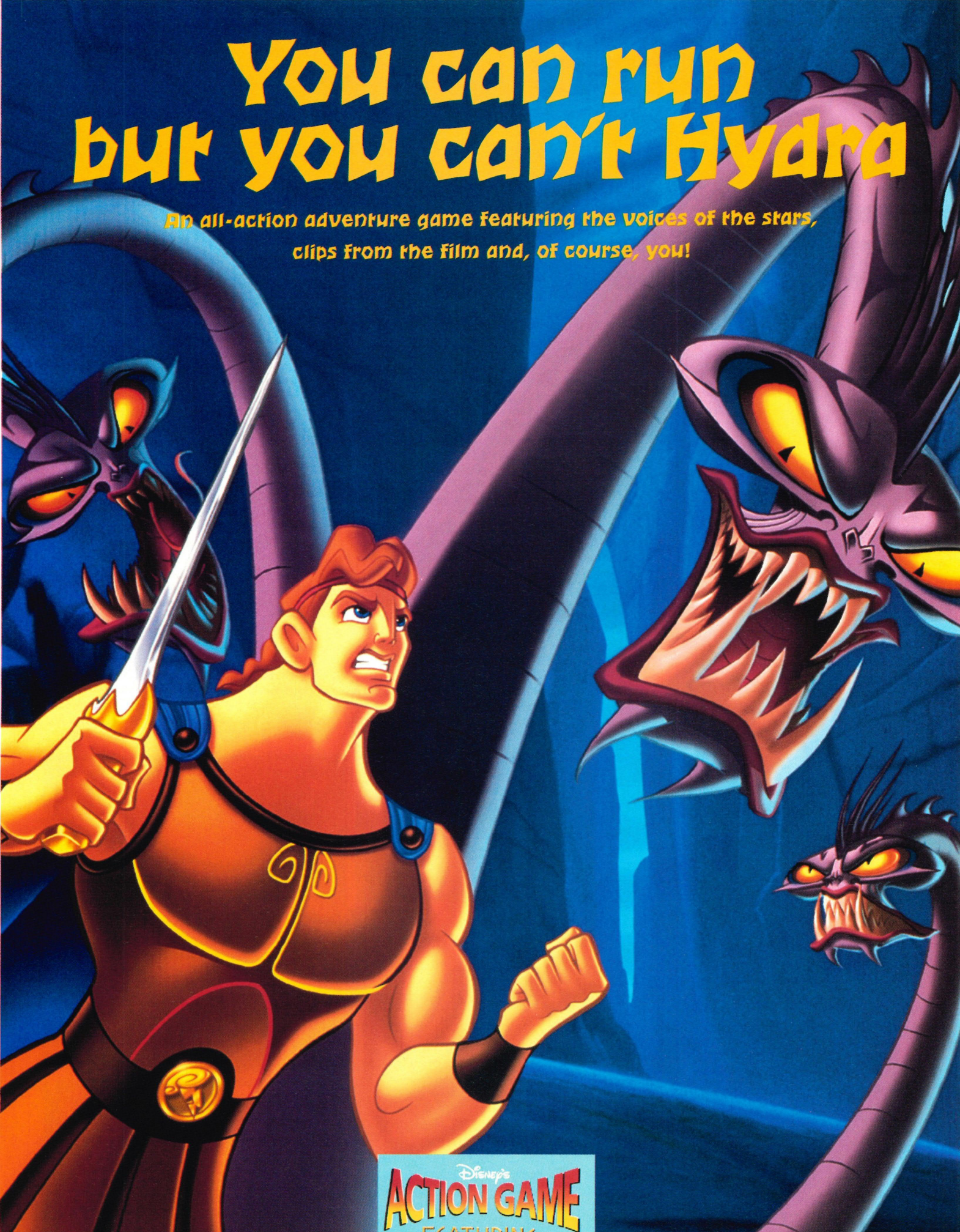
JAY **Oddworld is one of the most original titles of the year and its bizarre mix of brain-straining puzzles, crazy platform action and endless comic touches will surely kick start a whole new genre of videogaming. Buy it!**

JAMES **This is a stunning piece of work and must come highly recommended. It's funny, involving and just gets more playable as the game goes on. Oddworld is an addictive treat that can't fail to amuse, it's the dog's pods**

PAUL **Odd is the word here. At first it looks like a flip-screen platformer then after a few minutes your hooked on one of the most original games of the year. GT have finally come good on the PlayStation**

You can run but you can't Hydra

An all-action adventure game featuring the voices of the stars, clips from the film and, of course, you!



Disney's ACTION GAME FEATURING HERCULES UK

PlayStation

Disney INTERACTIVE

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Rosco McQueen

John Alford, Fireman Sam, Barney and McGrew – the fire service has never had a decent action hero. But that's about to change. Meet the PlayStation's new fire-fighting hero

Life must have been a right bummer for Hugh, Pugh, Barney and McGrew. They joined the fire service for the pure adrenaline rush of confronting a raging fire and driving a huge great fire engine through packed streets at stupid speeds (and for the girls of course).

But where do they get stationed? Bloody Camberwick Green that's where. Home of stupid bids who get their cat stuck up the tree, week after week, after week.

Life's a little more exciting for Rosco McQueen (tagline – 'he's the first on the scene'). He's the ace fire-fighting hero of Sony's new soak'em up – a square-jawed hero who tackles blazes that would have lesser mortals wetting their pants in terror. In this case a huge, hi-tech towerblock that's been set alight by it's mad owner. Sylvester Square, proprietor of the Tower X building. Sylvester has locked himself into his penthouse suite and directed all the droids in the building to set fire to anything remotely flammable – including the occupants.

Unfortunately for Rosco, the only way to stop Tower X going up in smoke, is to wrestle control of each and every level from the robots controlling it. In addition, he must fight the fires and rescue the unfortunate inhabitants as he goes. Once all 15 floors have been made safe, it's time to square-up against the mad, bad Sylvester himself.

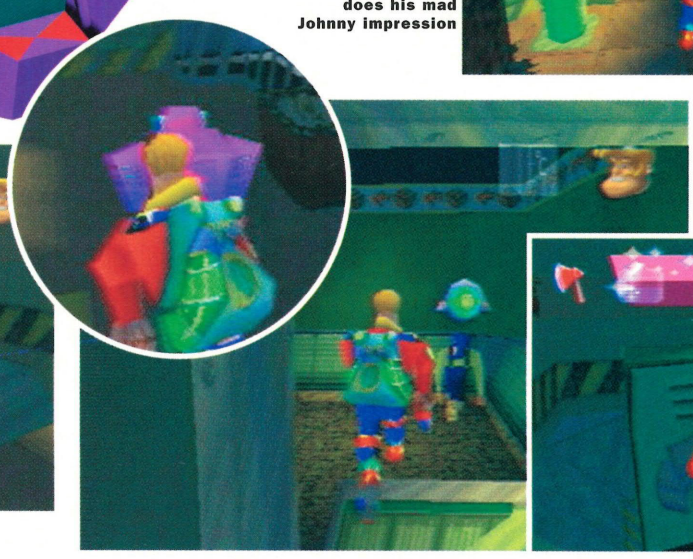
For your first task, you must tackle the laundry rooms. This is a labyrinthine maze full of hissing pipes, jumping washing machines and unfortunate (but very polite) Chinese fellas. Although a fairly straight forward level (so as to ease you into the action), it's still something of a challenge. Just wait until you get to the garage or the cinema – these are nightmare levels packed full of baseball bat wielding robots and unquenchable fires.

Of course you don't have to fight your way through all this alone. Oh no, you've got your cutesy flying robot 'Digit' to tell you when things are getting to hot. It also tells you when running you're out of water and even gives kind words of encouragement. Not particularly useful, but a nice touch, nonetheless.

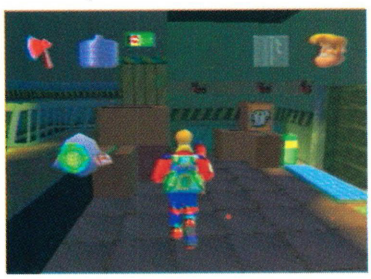
Although the premise is simple, don't be fooled into thinking the game will be. Only a few doors can be opened simply by pummelling

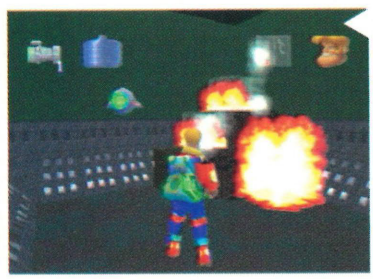
Heeeereeee's Rosco! Our hero does his mad Johnny impression

Digit the robot has a special transporter beam that snatches captives away to safety



Rosco has an irrational fear of lockers after being savaged by one as a kiddy





According to Acclaim, the fire actually grows and spreads in a realistic fashion

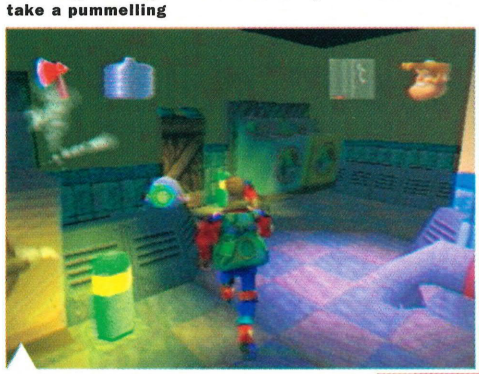
Your helpful floaty robot Digit will keep you informed about new fires and approaching robots

them with an axe – the rest will require you to destroy circuit boxes to release their locking mechanisms – and as you might guess, many of these locks aren't in the most accessible places. To confuse things still further there are loads of trapped towerblock inhabitants to rescue (although all you really have to do is point them out to Digit who will teleport them out of the building).

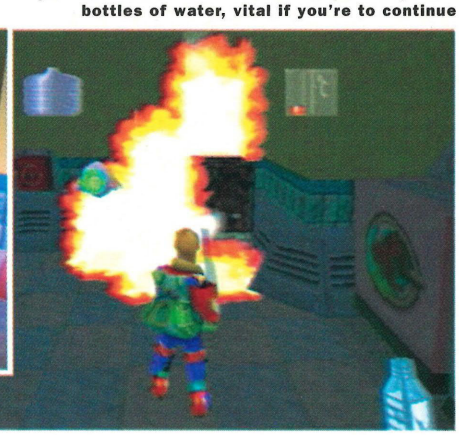
Sony have created a dynamic and genuinely engaging character in Rosco McQueen, who we will no doubt be seeing more of in the future. The game itself is more colourful than the Muppets on acid, is extremely playable, funny, and is accompanied by some excellent music (the garage level has a funky tune that sounds like a cross between 'Disco Inferno' and 'Carwash,' blaring away in the background). Full marks to Sony for producing an original 3D perspective game. Personally I'm getting a little bored of arsing around some deserted dungeon, slaying beasties and shooting guns – dousing fires and short circuiting rebellious robots makes a welcome change.

They may look like harmless spin dryers, but beware! Get caught in a gush of steam and your health will take a pummelling

By smashing the various lockers on each level you will be able to access health power-ups and bottles of water, vital if you're to continue



In a particularly gross touch, Rosco's head icon will dissolve bit by bit until your entire skull is visible. Mmm, nice



PRO SCORE

GAME Rosco McQueen
GENRE Soak'em-up?
SOFTWARE HOUSE Sony
CONTACT 0171 344 5000
RELEASE DATE Out Now
PRICE £44.99

Although the basic premise of Rosco McQueen isn't really that ground-breaking (the 'run around, find power-ups, release people' set-up has been about since the days of Wolfenstein), Sony have created a genuinely original, colourful, funky and endearing little platform puzzler. The gameplay is challenging and entertaining, the graphics brash and toy-like and the whole thing is buoyed up by a cute and stupid-arsed sense of humour. Each level is huge and contains enough nasties to keep you occupied for a good few hours – so the full complement of 15 floors should really light your fire for some time to come. Sony have come up with a winner – go out buy it today.

GRAPHICS 7
SOUND 8
GAMEPLAY 8
LASTABILITY 8

8

PAUL **I quite liked the look of Rosco when we had it in for preview a while back and I'm glad to say it doesn't disappoint. It's novel, it's fun and it'll keep you going for ages. What more could you possibly want?**

JAY **Think of it as a cartoony kinda Tomb Raider-type affair where younger gamers blast water at their foes instead of removing half of their faces with an Uzi. Good wholesome family fun, with added quirkiness**

JAMES **What? You've got to extinguish fires, save buildings and rescue people? But I want to destroy. Destroy! Not really seen too much of Rosco and I can't say that it sounds deeply involving, but it could be pretty funny**

ANDY **It's a bit different from your average game and it's full of neat little touches. Just as many people will hate this, as love it. It's fun in short burst and you'll return to its pleasures time and time again**

Moto Racer

It's time to "deck the pegs", "drop a cog" and "neck a bottle of dog" – brush up on your idiotic biker speak and don your shiny helmet 'cos EA's Moto Racer is on its way

I'm sure everybody knows at least one person who is a true, die hard biker. While most of your friends probably drive Ford Fiestas and Vauxhall Corsas, there's usually at least one who owns a fibreglass and aluminium sliver of a racing bike which, when it's not laid up in the garage or being patched up after its last encounter with a brick wall, spends most of its time doing more than a ton along fast country roads.

Strange then, that there aren't a huge amount of motorbike racing games knocking about. EA's latest, Moto Racer, hopes to fill this large hole in the PlayStation market.

Moto Racer's premise is a simple one. Lacking the 'Cannon Ball Run' style story presentation of games such as the classic Road Rash, Moto Racer's onus is on speed, pure and simple. On either scrambler bikes or high speed race bikes, it's up to you to race eight other bikers on a series of circuits (either in single races or as part of a championship).

The two different types of race have their own distinctive feel. The road races take place on fast country lanes with smooth bends and corners that can be taken at excessive speeds. There are also a few narrow sections or hazardous bends to test your mettle. Here the graphics really come into their own with the speed and fluidity of the action making the in-bike views look like cockpit shots from the TT races.

Although the roads have comparatively gentle bends, the main difficulty here is the fact that the steering is very sensitive at 150 mph plus. Your concentration is really tested as you take each bend fast enough to keep up a decent race speed and not concede any points, but slow enough not to go wide. On the straights you can use your turbos to give yourself a boost, but you will pull a wheelie and lose some control over the steering.

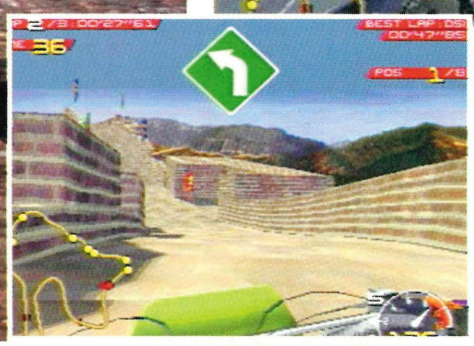
The scrambler sections are, to be totally honest, much more fun. Although the bikes don't go anywhere near as fast, you get the opportunity to slide around corners sideways, jump great humps in the road and generally just play dirty – knocking people off their bikes as you go past is a laugh.

The graphics are excellent. In the road race sections you'll see the rider lean into the corners with the bike or in the scrambler races your rider will kick his leg out to stabilise the bike. If you're into bikes this really will be your cup of tea.

If your not, you might want to invest in a copy of Total Drivin' or something similar. Often gameplay and simplicity can go hand in hand,

The in-bike camera views are excellent and give a real impression of speed and imminent injury

One problem with MotoRacer is the fact that even when you're in the middle of the pack, you rarely see any of 'em!



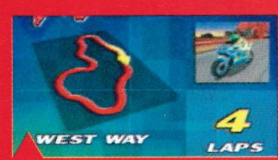
Track Attack

SPEED BAY
Speed Bay is a San Francisco style track. There are a fair few straights where you can hit top speed, and only a few treacherous curves to throw you

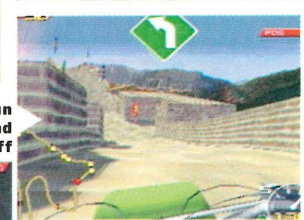
DIRT ARENA
The name is quite descriptive. The secret to winning on this track is to corner effectively and cut inside all the other riders

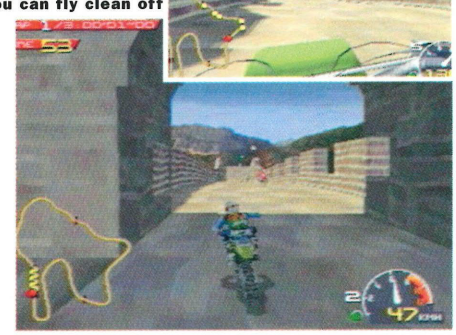
ROCK FOREST
Rock Forest is another road race track. Set in green and luscious scenery, it's quite a killer with loads of bridges and narrow sections of road to make life difficult

GREAT WALL
Genius! The best track on Moto Racer sees you flying about the Great Wall of China on a scrambler bike. Get too much air off a hump and you'll fly clean off the other side



WEST WAY
A sort of Death Valley circuit set in Arizona, West Way is the most dramatic track. The impression of speed is fantastic as walls flash past and you get buzzed by a UFO!





The Great Wall is great fun - get air off a hump and you can fly clean off

with Moto Racer this is not the case. The premise is simple – too simple. All you can do is race. The best racing games aren't the ones where all the vehicles are going in the same direction. In Road Rash you had to run the gauntlet of overtaking people on blind bends with a fair possibility of being squished onto the bonnet of an oncoming car. Not so in Moto Racer – the roads are pretty wide and you have to cock up big time to be knocked off your bike.

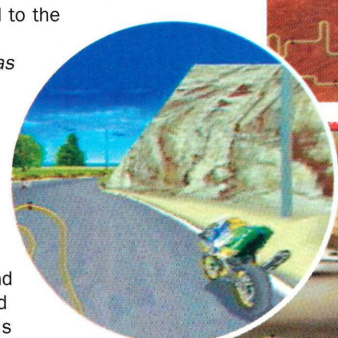
The sound effects also let the game down. Admittedly, bike engines don't make the most interesting of sounds (usually a high pitched 'wasp on steroids' type noise), all you have to listen to during the race is the vaguely annoying whine of the bike engine. In addition there's some dull and decidedly cheesy (presumably American) pub rock guitar musak with interjections from the brain dead commentator –"Go like a rocketttt!"

Playing Moto Racer is a pleasant but ultimately dissatisfying experience. I felt as though I'd just played the demo version and was really looking forward to the full release, but unfortunately, this *was* the full release.

As far as it goes, Moto Racer is a good laugh. On the faster circuits you will hold your breath as you try and steer your bike through a narrow section of road at stupid speeds, and the feeling of speed is something extra than you'll get from many games.

But, for all its good points nothing can alter the fact that Moto Racer is a game you will play for 10 minutes at a time, but you will never be able to immerse yourself in it fully and become addicted.

Although much slower, the motocross racers are a great deal more fun to play



PRO SCORE

GAME Moto Racer
GENRE Racing
SOFTWARE HOUSE EA
CONTACT 01753 549442
RELEASE DATE Out Now
PRICE £44.99

Despite the fact that Moto Racer does look graphically superb and goes faster than a greased-up ferret, I can't help but think that it is, ultimately, a missed opportunity. With the simple addition of a few cars coming in the opposite direction, racers who are just as likely to beat your skull in as overtake you and perhaps a few ramps, Moto Racer could have been a much better game. The races are fast and furious but, to put it bluntly, nothing happens - even the crashes are uneventful. It's a laugh to play for 10 or 20 minutes, but you'll be pushed to get an awful lot more out of it. Worth a try if your a bike nut - otherwise look for something with a touch more long-term appeal.

GRAPHICS 8
SOUND 7
GAMEPLAY 7
LASTABILITY 6

7

PAUL **Yet another racing game and yet another one that doesn't really come up to scratch. It looked quite promising a couple of months ago, but MR hasn't come on at all. There are far better driving games about**

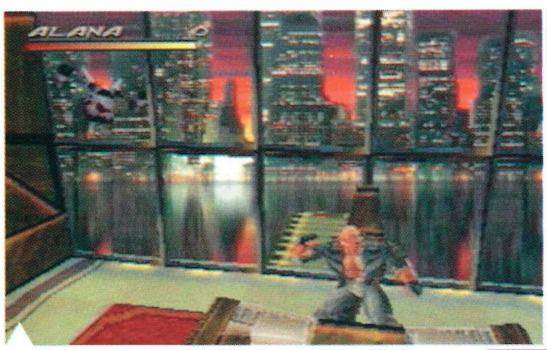
JAY **Although Moto Racer looks and plays like your bog standard racer, it is well presented. It could have done with more tracks and bikes though. And some violence wouldn't have gone amiss**

ANDY **If Jay had anything to do with it this game would be Road Rash! Although it looks the part, it does soon become terribly dull as there is nothing which will hold your interest. Maybe a sequel is what's needed this time**

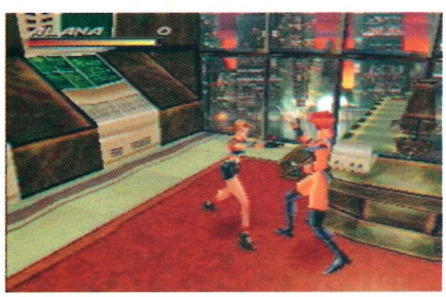
JAMES **Wasn't too impressed with this one, nice to see something a little different but at the end of the day, it's still just another average race game. Worth a look if you prefer two wheels to four**

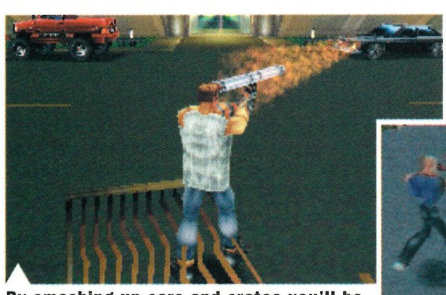
Fighting Force

A beat'em-up that doesn't include contestants dressed up in stupid costumes, hurling unconvincing fireballs at one another in a lame looking arena? You'd better believe it...

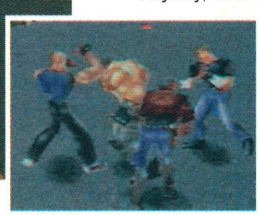


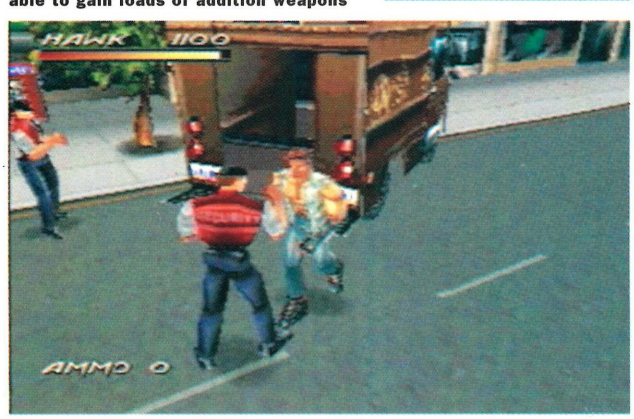
The first section of Fighting Force ends with the evil Dr Dex fleeing from his office. He leaves you to deal with his bondage-attired temps





By smashing up cars and crates you'll be able to gain loads of addition weapons





It's a fair bet that anybody under the age of 25 will fondly remember the A-Team. The car chases, the crashes that the baddies walked away from unscathed (apart from a small cut on the forehead) and the way Mr T was always given drugged milk whenever the team wanted to fly somewhere. Why did he never twig that a sip of the white stuff would invariably result in him sleeping for 24 hours and waking up on another continent?

Anyway, this same generation is now buying console games by the truckload so it would seem to be a fair bet that any game taking the old 'disparate band of principled desperadoes tackling international criminals' theme and mixes it with elements of classic beat'em-ups like Streets of Rage and Double Dragon, will no doubt make a mint.

Which is fortunate, because this is exactly the approach taken by Eidos with their latest beat'em-up, Fighting Force. The plot is simplicity itself. Dr Zeng, a disgraced ex-government agent, has convinced himself and the thousands of militia men under his command that the world will end in the year 2000. When the apocalypse fails to materialise at the turn of the century, Zeng concludes that he must fix the problem by becoming the agent of the apocalypse.

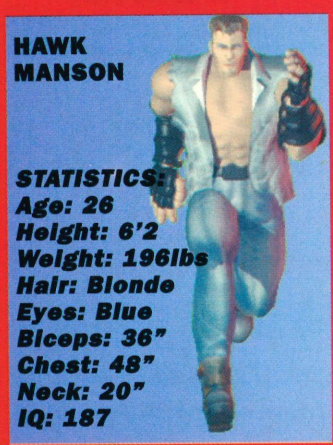
The 'powers that be' decide that, rather than the quite obvious choice of using the army, navy, airforce or even police to halt the evil megalomaniac's plans, they'll use a team made up of bare-knuckle fighters and spice girl look-alikes. Why? I have no idea, but then no one said 'powers that be' are all that bright.

Either alone, or with a friend, it's your job to bring Dr Zeng to justice by fighting your way through 25 levels, six main bosses, and finally, defeat Zeng himself. Along the way, you beat the enemy senseless using a massive variety of moves – each character can punch, spin punch, roundhouse kick, slide tackle and use a special move that is unique to that particular character. In addition to these attacks, when you've actually got the enemy held by the lapels your moves increase to include head butts, kneeing and gut-churning leg squeezes.

In total, each character is capable of using between 40 and 50 special moves – comfortably more than any beat'em-up ever made in the history of video games. You don't have to fight fair though. Weapons can also be utilised whenever you find them lying about. Most levels have boxes full of grenades, dynamite, pump-action shotguns and pistols that you can use. However, if none of these tickle your fancy, engage in a touch of vandalism against a nearby car and you'll be able to swing bits of exhaust about like a berserk QuickFit employee.

The action starts off in a multi-story car park. Dozens of 'Reservoir Dogs' style heavies require a good pummelling and it's up to you to give it to them. Work your way through this and you'll find yourself in a plush office block,

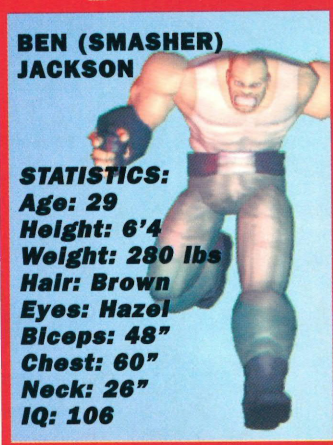
Mad, bad and dangerous to know



HAWK MANSON

STATISTICS:
Age: 26
Height: 6'2
Weight: 196lbs
Hair: Blonde
Eyes: Blue
Biceps: 36"
Chest: 48"
Neck: 20"
IQ: 187

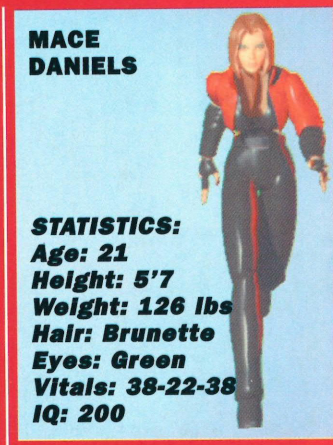
Amongst Hawk's special moves is his 360 degree spin kick that's guaranteed to drop the bad guys



BEN (SMASHER) JACKSON

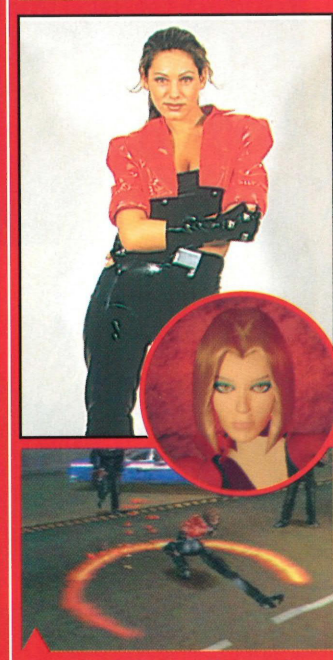
STATISTICS:
Age: 29
Height: 6'4
Weight: 280 lbs
Hair: Brown
Eyes: Hazel
Biceps: 48"
Chest: 60"
Neck: 26"
IQ: 106

Fat bloke Smasher is not worth winding up – do and you'll feel the fury of his shockwave move

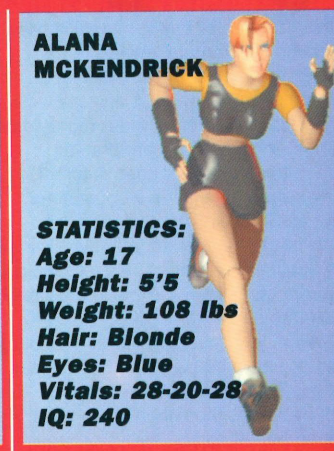


MACE DANIELS

STATISTICS:
Age: 21
Height: 5'7
Weight: 126 lbs
Hair: Brunette
Eyes: Green
Vitals: 38-22-38
IQ: 200

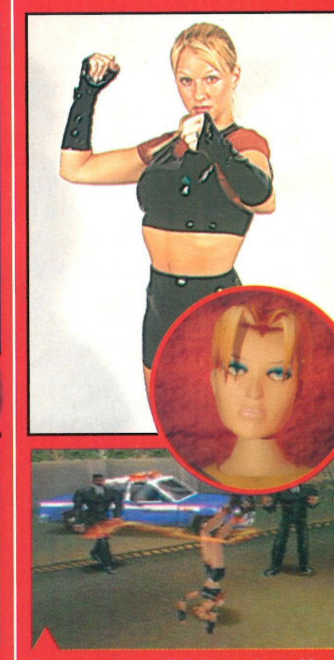


It may look like a naff cossack dance, but Mace's 360 leg sweep keeps the bad guys at bay



ALANA MCKENDRICK

STATISTICS:
Age: 17
Height: 5'5
Weight: 108 lbs
Hair: Blonde
Eyes: Blue
Vitals: 28-20-28
IQ: 240



Busy as she is fighting crime, Alana doesn't realise breakdance isn't in fashion any more. Good move though

pursuing the elusive Zeng. In later levels the Bronx, Central Park, the New York subway (complete with graffiti on the tube trains), air bases, hovercraft, lifts and finally Zeng's inner sanctum itself, will act as venues for gigantic bare-knuckle battles.

The first thing you notice, even after only a few minutes of playing Fighting Force, is the sheer freedom of the playing environment. Unlike almost every other beat'em-up you care to mention, the action doesn't take place in a room or a courtyard - you can run down streets, explore shopping malls and fight your way through tube trains. Any item lying about can be used and even items as seemingly incongruous as a Coke vending machine, can be smashed to a pulp so it spits out coke cans that serve as health power-ups.

Another novel feature is that you can actually decide which route to progress through the

And you thought the most irritating thing on tube trains were people with Walkmans and BO. Imagine if some leather babe started throwing chairs about!

Fighting Force

▶ game. Taking a different route will allow you access to alternate levels.

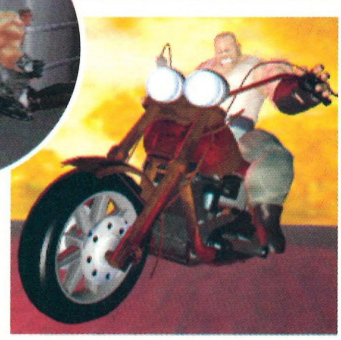
The fighting action in Fighting Force comes thick and fast, so at any one time, you could be taking on at least four baddies. And un-PC though it may be, it's still immense fun using your huge stock of fighting moves against your opponents. Playing as Smasher (the bulkiest and hardest of the four combatants) you can pick up an opponent and throw him into his pals.

If you're completely lacking in imagination and use the same two moves to tackle every villan, you could get bored of beating up bad guy after bad guy. However, if you make good use of even half of the 40 moves available, the action rarely gets boring or monotonous.

As a beat'em-up, Fighting Force is immense fun and in two player co-operative it's like watching a mad-arsed Jackie Chan film, with your two characters roundhouse kicking like maniacs. Of course, being a beat'em-up, it's completely brainless – their won't be any need to engage anything past the eyeballs in this game – but lets face it, if you're buying a game entitled Fighting Force, what did you expect?

Pick a fight with your mates if you want – a deathmatch mode lets you slug it out

The earlier levels feature hundreds of these Reservoir Dogs-type black-suited blokes



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PRO SCORE

GAME Fighting Force
GENRE Beat'em-up
SOFTWARE HOUSE Eidos
CONTACT 0181 700 2222
RELEASE DATE Out Now
PRICE £44.99

PLAYSTATION APPROVED

To me the term 'beat'em-up' and the words 'addictive', 'original' and 'excellent,' have never really sat together in the same sentence very comfortably. Until now that is. Unlike a huge amount of arcade fighters currently available, Fighting Force offers an unprecedented level of freedom, both in term of your playing environment and your control over the game character. Because of this great freedom and the impressive level of detail in the game (what other game can you down cans of coke in?), you really get drawn into the action. With Fighting Force, Eidos haven't just brought out a superior beat'em-up, they've gone and tarted up the entire game genre.

GRAPHICS 9
SOUND 8
GAMEPLAY 9
LASTABILITY 8

9

PAUL **This is the kind of game I usually have grave doubts about, but it's actually turned into a really nice game. It has enough variation to stop me slating it for being a beat'em-up too. Can't be bad!**

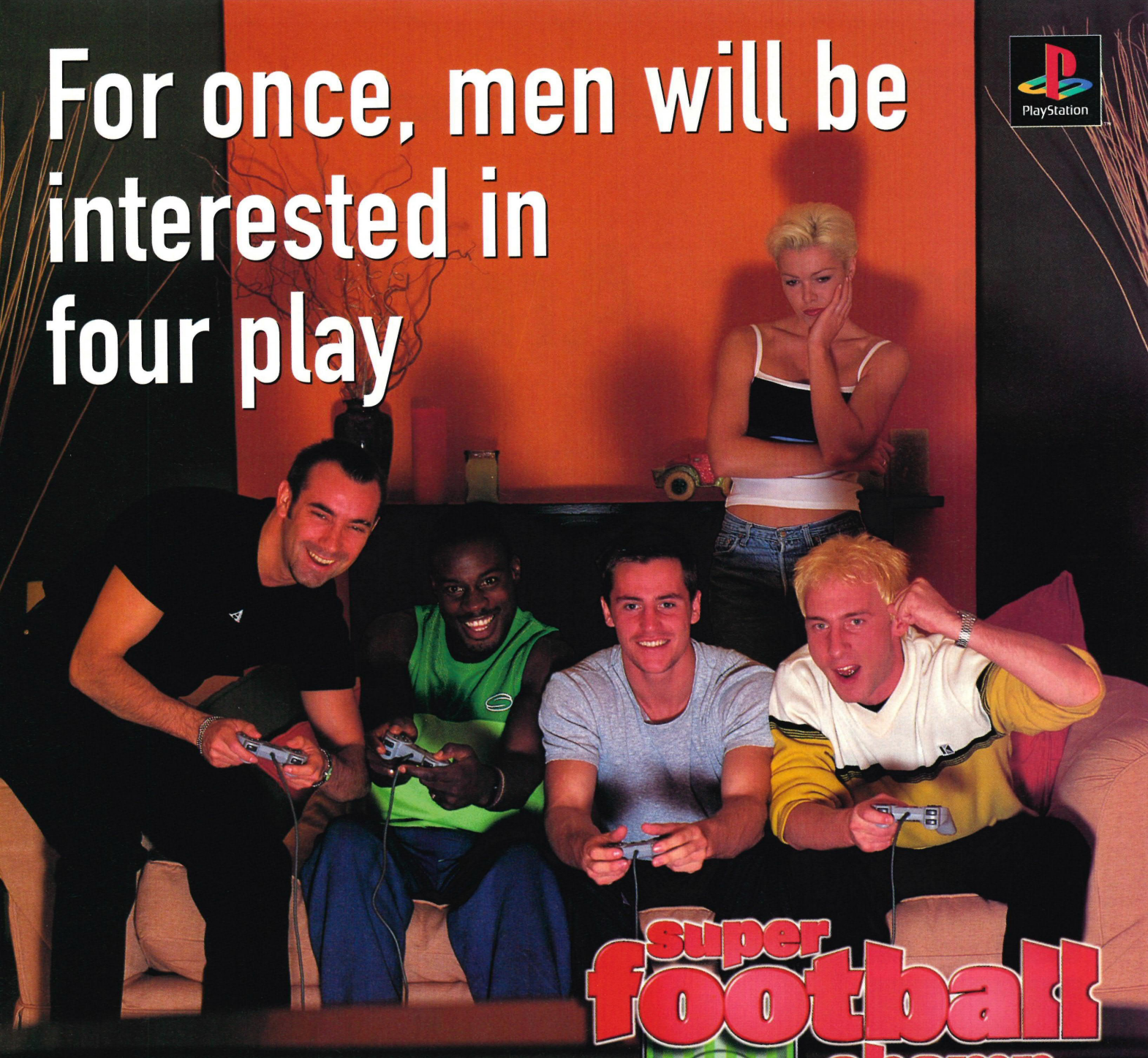
JAY **Where else can you pummel several shades of polygon-poo out of besuited bad boys over a vast gameplaying area? Nowhere, that's where. This is addictive, adrenaline-soaked mayhem. Buy it today**

ANDY **Thank the lord this isn't just a standard beat'em-up! The varying levels and neat touches take this one step further than the average 'best of three round' beat'em-ups. Enjoyable stuff from start to finish**

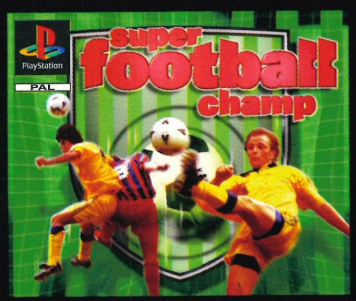
JAMES **It's a return to the good old days of Streets of Rage and Double Dragon. At last there's a two-player with something more to it. This is a polished game that's completely playable throughout. Violence fans will love it**

For once, men will be interested in four play

PlayStation



Super football champ



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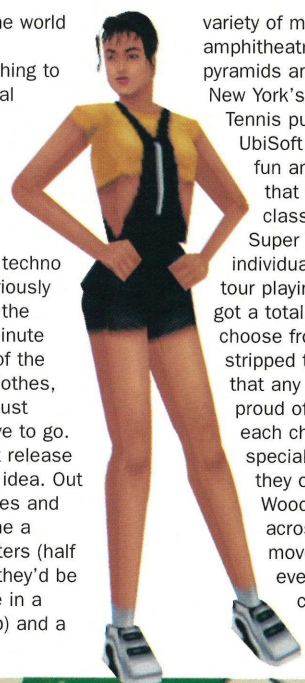
Tennis Arena

Despite the advent of 32 bit, motion capture and all that hi-tech malarkey, can anyone produce a tennis game quite as playable as Namco's Smash Court Tennis? Well...

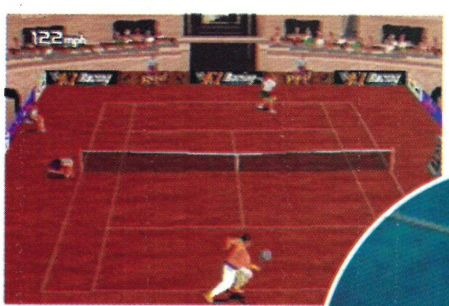
As you can see, the competitors all look like they've been dragged off Daytona beach. Should have been called 'fashion victim' Tennis

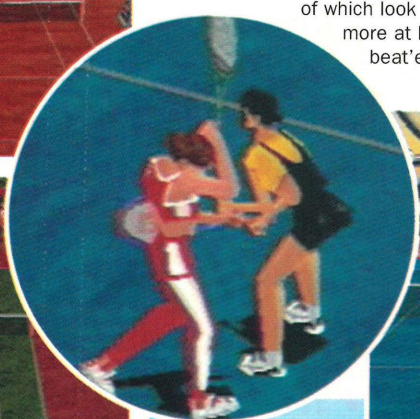
I've often thought that the world of sport could do with something of a face lift – something to give it just a little bit of additional pizzazz. Imagine it, football with cheer leaders (obviously broken up into four quarters so you can fit in more advert breaks), rugby could be played with a flashing neon orange ball and snooker could be played to fast techno music whilst the competitors furiously spin their cues round in time to the beat. We're living in the three minute attention span MTV generation of the 90s and all these bland white clothes, small yellow balls and hours of just standing about, are going to have to go.

Tennis Arena, UbiSoft's latest release for the PlayStation has the right idea. Out go the dull looking Summer whites and unremarkable courts and in come a plethora of weird looking characters (half of which look like they'd be more at home in a beat'em-up) and a variety of mad looking courts set in amphitheatres, on ocean liners, between pyramids and even slap-bang in the middle of New York's Central Park.



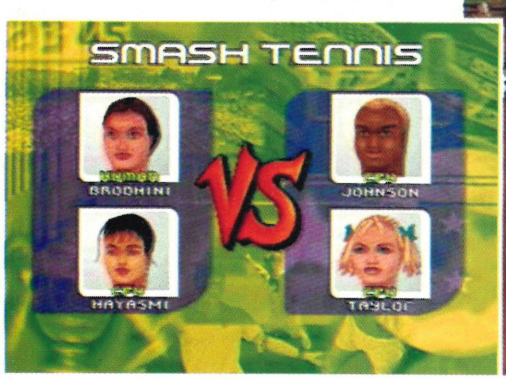
Tennis purists are going to hate it, but what UbiSoft have come up with is a colourful, fun and pleasingly simple tennis game that harks back to the cute 16 bit classics such as Smash Tennis and Super Tennis. You can choose to play individual games or go through the full world tour playing either singles or doubles. You've got a total of eight mad-arsed characters to choose from, including William Lee Chan, a stripped to the waste Chinaman with a belly that any self-respecting Sumo would be proud of. As in your average beat'em-up each character has there own unique special move that relates to the country they originate from. Englishman David Woodward for example, plasters balls across the court using his Super Cricket move (because as we all know, everybody in England just loves cricket). Likewise, Chan performs his Super Ninja Shot when he feels





UbiSoft seem to be plugging the dour and crap Macclesfield band Marion for some reason. Bad move

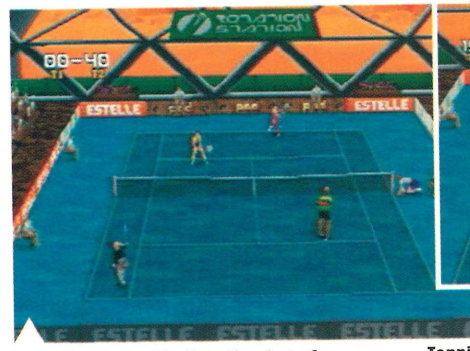
Unlike most tennis games you can't play on grass – only astro-turf, clay and of course wood



the need to wipe the floor with the opposition.

The gameplay is simplicity itself (unless you're an utter retard, you will already know that the aim of this particular game is to knock a ball about a court in such a way that your opponent will find it almost impossible to return it). You've got a total of four basic shots to choose from: ground stroke, top spin, back spin and lob, in addition to your particular character's powerful special move.

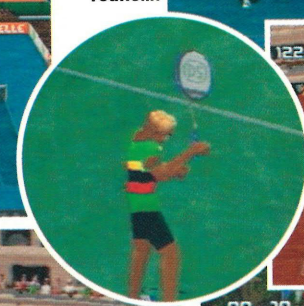
Although making full use of all these moves is pretty easy and the game control feels pleasantly intuitive, there are a few flaws that detract from the gameplay. The most obvious of these is the fact that if you're caught short and you need to dive to return a shot, it can be quite a hit-and-miss affair. Instead of diving to one side to make the shot, your character will run along, pause momentarily and then make for the floor. It looks more like they've just tripped on their shoe lace and are struggling to balance themselves. Having said this though, once you've got the hang of the game and mastered all the subtleties of directing the ball by using the shoulder buttons to provide after touch, you can

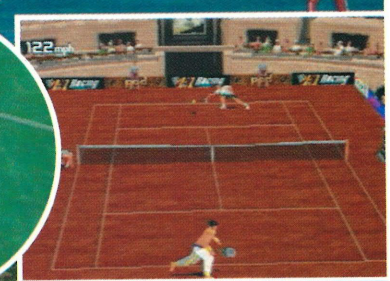


Pyramid City is the Egyptian leg of the Tennis Arena tournament

In a fit of invention I decide to play tennis on all fours. I'm going to call it 'dog Tennis' I think

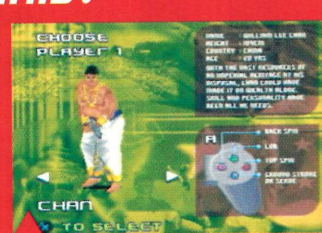
Tennis Arena's characters even sweat – now that's realism!





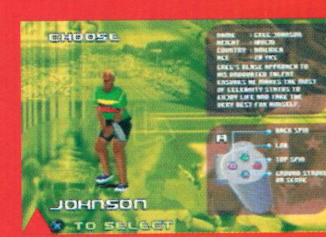
Anyone for tennis?

Brodhini's main strength lies in her agility. She prefers playing mid-court for the best results

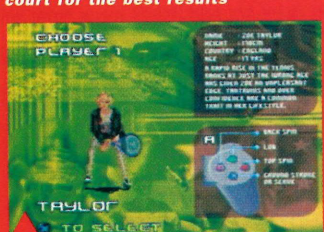


Although Chan looks like a fat knacker, his strength and accuracy make him a dangerous opponent

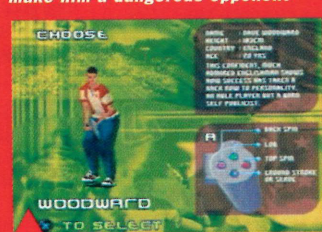
Despite lacking in power and accuracy, Yoko Hayasmi is one of the fastest players



Johnson hails from the good ol' USA and uses his Super Baseball Strike to wipe out the opposition

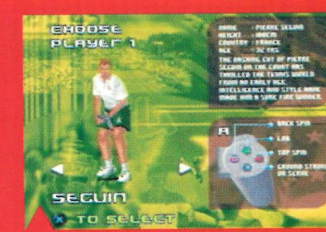


She may look like a Courtney Love wannabe, but Zoe Taylor is one of the best all-round players



Dave Woodward hails from the UK and particularly likes to play close to the net to get the best results

Apparently although Zadawi boasts accuracy and power but she isn't very agile – I blame the sarong



Although his clothes are a tad boring, French fella Pierre Seguin is a natural all-round player

Tennis Arena

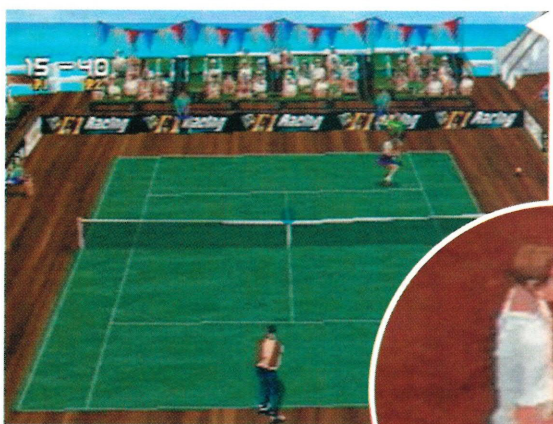
▶start having some real fun. If you manage to return six shots consecutively your player will be able smash a 120 mph shot into the opponent's side of the court. Although it's not impossible to return killer shots like this, position the shot properly and you'll be holding the winner's cup in no time.

Graphically, Tennis Arena looks like something The Big Breakfast's designers would come up with if they were asked to give Wimbledon an image overhaul – primary colours are the order of the day and half the time you're in grave danger of looking at the freaky courts rather than concentrating on your game.

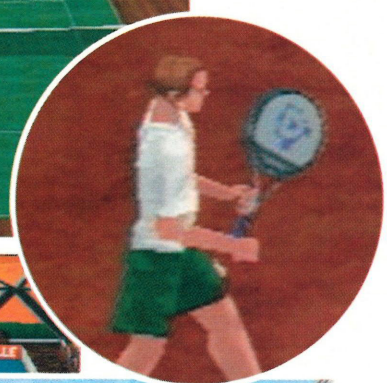
The characters are animated brilliantly – after a long rally your exhausted player will lift his right arm up and mop his brow. If a shot is fluffed or missed they'll throw their racket down in disgust. Although there is quite a number of views to choose from, they are all essentially very similar. When playing singles you can opt to view the action either from behind the server or behind your player and when playing doubles can select a camera viewpoint high behind, high far behind or close in low. Although all the views are only a little different from one another, this isn't too much of a let down.

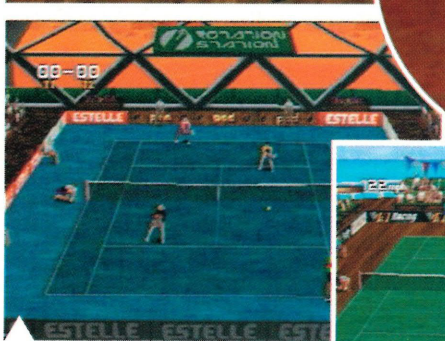
I remember a previous PlayStation tennis game from a few months back called V-Tennis which boasted nine radically different viewpoints – the trouble being you could only actually play the game using two of them.

I get the impression with Tennis Arena that what UbiSoft were attempting here was a daring endeavour at making a sports game that would appeal to a much wider audience than the usually tennis fanatics. The fun, but completely unrealistic locations for each match, the distinctive look of each character, the special moves and even the name of the game (try substituting the word Tennis for Battle) give Tennis Arena a little bit of an arcade fighter flavour. And to a degree they've succeeded – what Tennis Arena lacks in realism it makes up for in terms of on-court action.

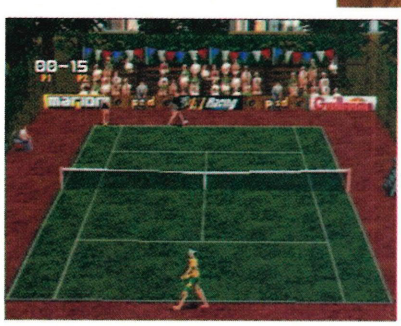


If you've got a strong constitution try playing tennis on a rolling and pitching ocean liner. Playing the game isn't any harder, but you do tend to feel a little seasick





The doubles contests are a good laugh – don't hog the ball though



For some reason, although you're meant to be the best player in the world there's only ever a handful of people spectating

PRO SCORE

GAME Tennis Arena
GENRE Sports sim
SOFTWARE HOUSE UbiSoft
CONTACT 0181 941 4004
RELEASE DATE Out Now
PRICE £44.95

Tennis Arena's fresh and colourful look, combined with simple and uncomplicated gameplay, makes for an interesting, enjoyable and slightly odd take on a tennis simulation. Although tennis purists will not take too kindly to the beat'em-up style, lightning special moves or the weird courts and characters, it definitely makes the game much more playable. The videogame market hasn't seen an awful lot of decent tennis games since the glory days of 16bit with titles such as Smash Court and Super Tennis, with most PlayStation tennis games proving to be something of a let down. Tennis Arena on the other hand, looks the dog's bollocks and despite the occasional control difficulty, plays fairly well to boot.

GRAPHICS 8
SOUND 7
GAMEPLAY 7
LASTABILITY 8

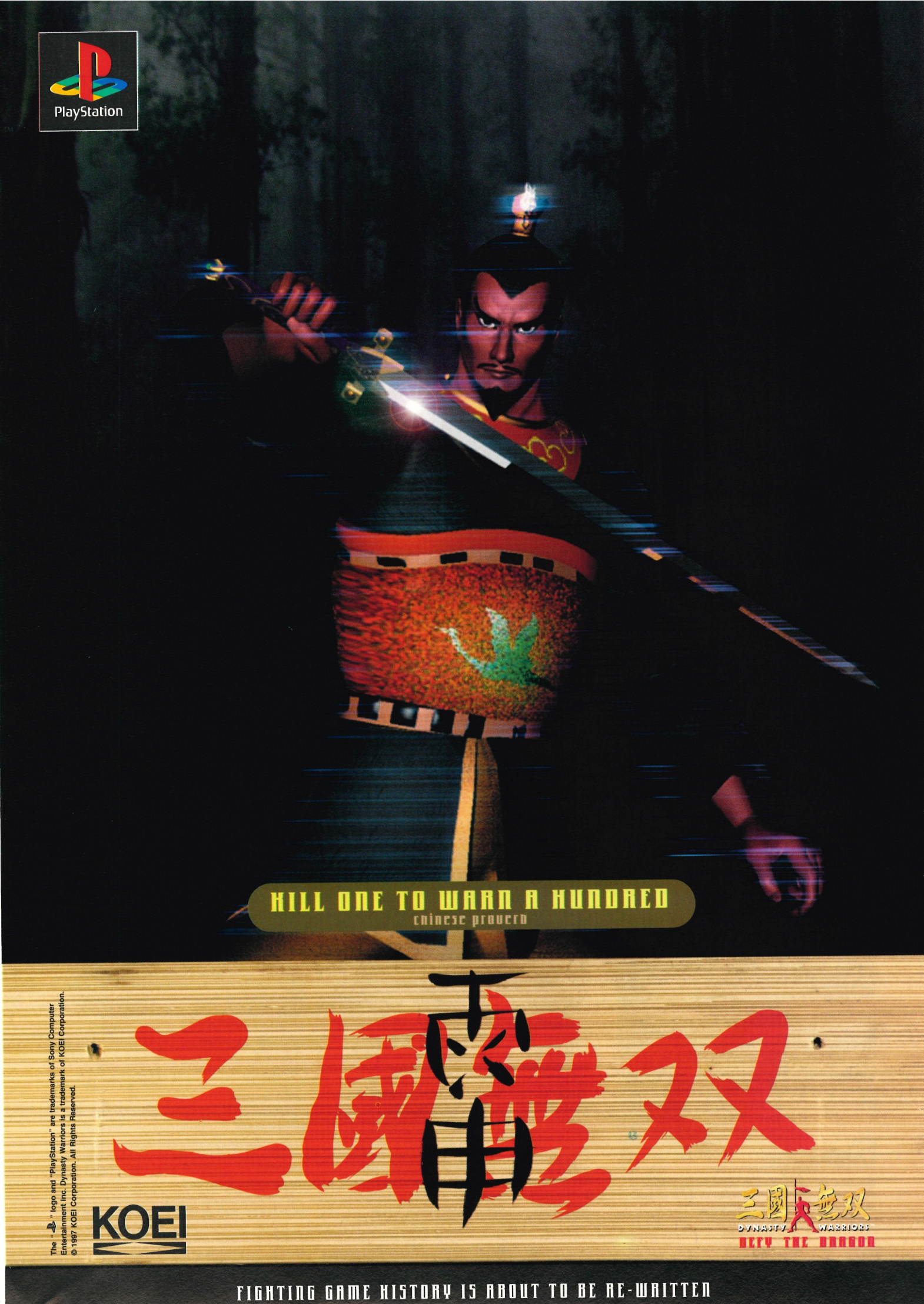
8

JAMES I thought this was okay, but nothing special. The quirky characters and special moves add a little something extra, but at the end of the day it's a tennis game, and that makes it a loser from the off

PAUL Never managed to get into a tennis game yet. They all seem the same, although TA does at least try and break away from the norm. Personally, I probably wouldn't have scored it as high as Hugh but each to his own

ANDY How could anyone with any sense of right and wrong give this an eight? This is nowhere near as good as some of the worst tennis games we've seen and that's saying something! Stick with Namco Tennis

JAY Ignore the idiots above, this is cool. Admittedly, the gameplay could have been tweaked slightly, but the graphics are astounding, the pace of the game is frantic and it's a nice change from Smash Court



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Rapid Racer

Formula One is for big girl's blouses, it's official. Try a racing game where you have no brakes, the steering is a bit dubious and the track's constantly moving...

Believe it or not this is one of the easier courses. Hit either bank and your speed boat will be spun around or flipped over

The race action is thick, fast and competitive. Get towards the top of the race order and they will try anything to slow you down

Say the word 'boat' and memories of chugging along in some rickety old disgrace that you hired out for an hour on Lake Windermere, springs rapidly to mind. Or perhaps your childhood was spent leisurely cruising down the Thames on an overcrowded tourist boat? Needless to say, whatever you came up with, it can't have been that interesting.

Sony's latest attempt to bring a little originality to the hideously over-subscribed racing genre looks set to challenge a few of your boat prejudices. The simple, but effective premise of Rapid Racer, is to race a powerboat as fast as you can down one of a selection of narrow and treacherous rapids and harbour courses. But it's not as easy as it sounds.

As anybody who's ever been in a boat can tell you, there are a few subtle differences between a boat and a car. The most obvious perhaps being that a boat has no brakes and takes just a little more coaxing to get around a corner. They're inclined to skid, overturn or beach themselves if you do anything wrong. And that's on a flat surface – Rapid Racer's courses are anything but flat, they're much more treacherous than even the hardest motor racing course.

Before I talk about Rapid Racer, let me just get one thing out of the way. This game could have been done badly and ended up being very bland. There isn't even a huge wealth of experience to draw from when it comes to producing powerboat games. Other than Rapid Racer and Interplay's new PowerBoat, the last boat game I remember seeing was on some doorstop of a Commodore years ago when I was just a nipper.

Not so with Rapid Racer – for once this is a game that not only looks good, it's also great fun to play. It's been called WipEout on water and not without good reason. Although there's absolutely no plagiarism here, there's a similar appeal to Rapid Racer.

As in wipEout, a huge part of the fun is derived from the fact that the while the vehicles

Each boat has its own unique handling abilities. Catamarans for example turn better than monohulls

Monohulls, like this one are much better on the straights. The key to winning is to pick the right boat for the each individual course

The tunnel sections are especially challenging – the wakes of the passing boats create treacherous ridges on the water

aren't too difficult to control (in a fashion), truly mastering them so as to win races is a real long-term gameplaying challenge.

The dynamics of the boat are, apparently, pretty accurate and it will take you a while to get used to them. The closest comparison I can think of is the cars in a rally game. Changing direction isn't just a case of steering to the left or right as you desire, you actually have to turn before a bend and skid into it. Likewise the race surface is massively uneven so you constantly have to correct your boat as it's buffeted about in the rapids.

Because it's so unusual to race on such a surface, different tactics need consideration. Overtaking has to be done quickly and decisively at strategic locations – get caught in the wash of the boat ahead or hit by an eddy and you'll be out of the picture.

The graphics are, it has to be said, stunning. If this was just a racing game and the rivers were just a strip of tarmac it would still look nice. But, in addition to the overhanging rock walls, ice tunnels and huge forested valleys, the water is textured; with fast straights in white flecked blue and the turbulent eddies a bubbling white. The boats jump, buck and chop their way with a realistic motion that, when viewed from some perspectives, can have you feeling a bit ropey.

Once you've mastered the art of driving your power boat along at excessive speeds and overtaking other boats, you can try to pick up some of the power ups and bonuses along the way. It's pretty much essential to pick a few extra time bonus as you go because, even if raced perfectly, there will only be a few seconds between completing a race and falling foul of the rather miserly race clock.

Although even the easiest races are pretty challenging, there are plenty more to choose ▶

Rapid Racer

from. Set in the wilds of Alaska, the bowels of the Grand Canyon and the tropical seas off Hawaii, the races range in difficulty from hard to absolutely impossible.

In addition to being allowed to race new courses, another privilege of the successful is being able to pick more boats. Initially only three boast are available (two monohull and one catamaran). Once you've exhausted the possibilities of this trio, another selection becomes available. These boats are monsters. All deriving from military design, they kick major ass and have hard names such as 'Black Widow' and 'Akula' (Russian for 'Shark' apparently).

And (thankfully), unlike a huge amount of other racing games that I could mention, Rapid Racer doesn't have any God awful cheese rock band providing the soundtrack. The music here is supplied by those purveyors of fine dance tunes, Apollo 440. Each track they've written for the game is tailored to suit the watery course that it accompanies and they're all pretty good.

That's not to say there aren't some unfortunate features that detract from the game, the most glaring being that the courses are all quite similar. The best racing games (such as Total Drivin') will allow you to experience different types of track. Rapid Racer could have benefited from having more and different courses (maybe some set on a wild rolling sea track) and more varied boats (air boats or hovercraft perhaps). No matter how good a racing game, if it lacks variety, half the appeal has gone already. Another let down is the fact that there is still one of those interminable American commentators that seem to be cloned just for video games. I'm sure Casey Casem is responsible, but I have no evidence.

Having said this, despite a few missed opportunities, Rapid Racer is still a very enjoyable game to play. It's fast, fun and will attract a few gamers simply on novelty value.

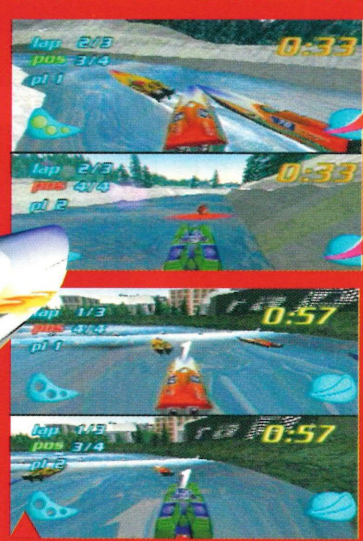
GENRE COMPARISON

Game **WipEout**
Software House **Psygnosis**

Despite the fact that WipEout had absolutely nothing to do with boats in any shape or form, there are quite a few similarities. Both use slightly unconventional control methods (which take ages to master) and both go faster than the proverbial sh*t off a shovel.

The more open stretches of water provide an opportunity to really put your foot down

Double Trouble



The multi-player option is an absolute treat to play. All the conventional views are available in this mode, so it'll look as good as it plays

The in-boat view is most probably the one that's gonna make you puke. But it looks good

PRO SCORE

GAME **Rapid Racer**
GENRE **Racing**
SOFTWARE HOUSE **Sony**
CONTACT **0171 447 1600**
RELEASE DATE **Out Now**
PRICE **£44.99**

Featuring decent tunes, fine graphics and, above all, challenging and addictive gameplay – Rapid Racer is an accomplished attempt at something a little different. Powering down narrow gullies in a high performance speed boat over huge eddies and waves is immense fun and something totally new. Viewed from the most difficult in-boat cockpit view, the racing action will have you concentrating on the screen hard enough to develop eyestrain within hours. Although perhaps let down by a lack of variety within the game, Rapid Racer is still interesting, engaging and good fun to play. Give it a look if your after something a little different.

GRAPHICS 8
SOUND 8
GAMEPLAY 7
LASTABILITY 7

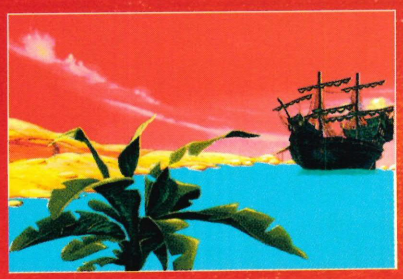
7

PAUL **If you thought speedy watersports were the private domain of the N64 then think again. Rapid Racer is a classy racing game with top quality graphics and oodles of playability. Definitely worth a look**

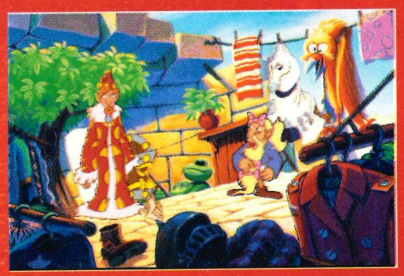
JAY **Sony's splashabout tries its best to be wipEout2097 on a canal, and just about manages it. It's not as fast and hectic mind, but Rapid Racer provides good wholesome racing fun nevertheless. Give it a go**

JAMES **Sun, surf and plenty of speed, what more can a guy ask for? It plays well and looks the part too. This is a well made release that has a touch of originality on its side. Well worth taking a look at**

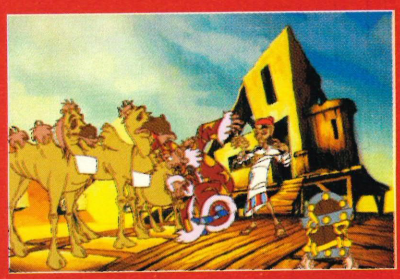
ANDY **Powerboats are something which appeal to rich playboys and the Miami Vice cast if you ask me. If however you fancy a racing game which is a little different, if lacking in variation, then take a closer look**



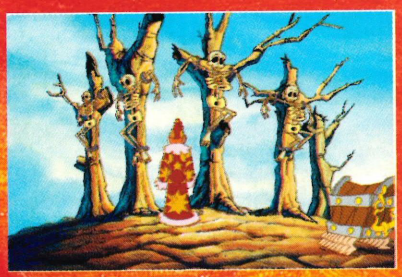
THE TROUBLE WITH A VACATION IS...



LOCAL MARKETS CAN BE CONFUSING.

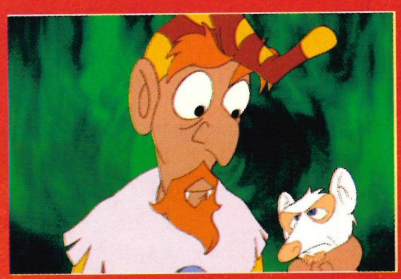


PUBLIC TRANSPORT PRIMITIVE.

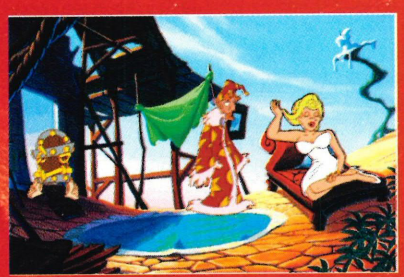


AND THE NATIVES HANG OUT IN THE WEIRDEST PLACES.

WHERE THE COCKTAILS ARE LETHAL.



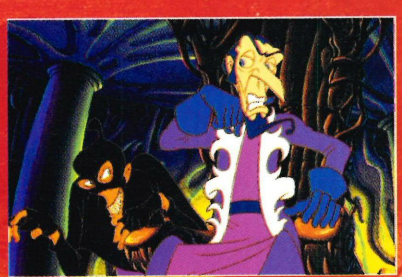
AND THE FOOD SUCKS.



THEN YOU MEET A GORGEOUS BABE.

WHO FALLS UNDER YOUR SPELL.

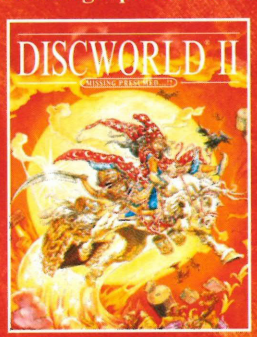
AND THINGS ARE LOOKING GOOD.



UNTIL HER FATHER TURNS UP.

WITH AN OLD FRIEND!

The adult graphic adventure,



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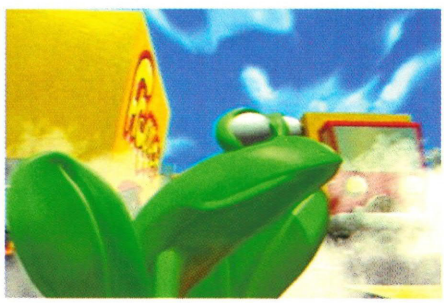
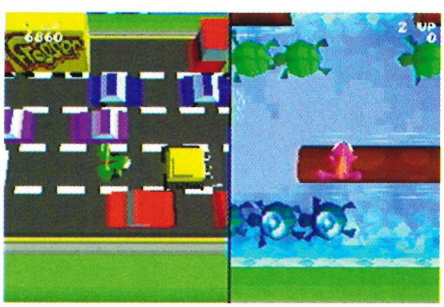
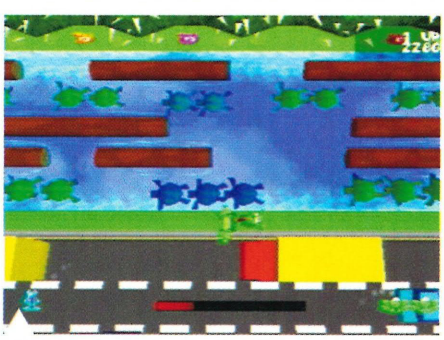
Frogger

Hop to it with the eighties' classic that's back to show the nineties' kids what addictive gameplay is all about. But will anyone be interested a second time round?







After navigating the busy roads you then need to hop your way across the water to greet your fellow frogs

Frogger took the gaming world by storm in the early eighties with its unique style, gameplay and addictive qualities. Hasbro now thinks it's about time PlayStation owners who misspent their youth on this eighties arcade and console classic, as well as a whole new generation of games players, will eagerly lap up this hopping classic in 3D.

The thinking is that they will catch new and old players alike to ensure Frogger takes its place with a wider range of games players. And in some respects they may well be right. It's lost none of its original appeal and sure enough, the simple gameplay continues to be enjoyable.

Where it does slip up a little, is that due to its nature it soon becomes a little tiresome. That's not to say it's no fun at all, as it's a damn sight more impressive and enjoyable than many of today's big-selling titles. The problem lies in its lack of new features.

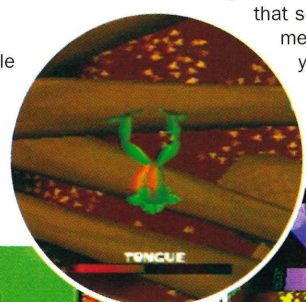
To counter this you begin playing the retro stages which involves navigating safely across a road, onto the backs of tortoises and hopping onto floating logs before reaching your buddies on the opposite bank. In all, you need to elude danger five times to successfully complete the stage and move on to the next.

As you'd expect the stages get progressively tougher with very little time to reach your goal. Once the retro stages are completed you're thankfully offered a whole range of new stages in a fully 3D environment where you'll come across tons of variation and many surprises.

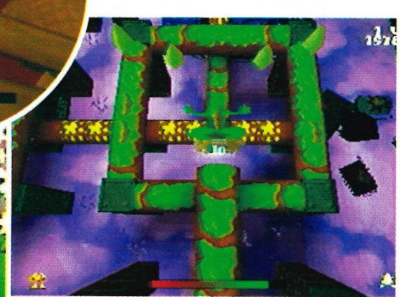
This brings the game well and truly up-to-date which is no bad thing as just hopping across the road soon becomes terribly dull. In these new stages the environments are separated into many levels and can be high in the trees or on lofty platforms which you'll need to suss out carefully, if you're to successfully reach your fellow frogs. This adds a whole new angle on the Frogger legacy which thankfully, isn't just a rehash of an old gaming ledgend.

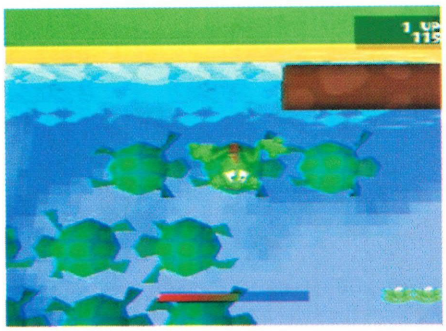
Controlling the frog across the stages is as simple as it comes with each leap being made by pressing in the direction you want to hop. On top of this there are some new features such as croaking which lights the way in darkened levels and a big leap for some more serious jumping. The frog's tongue can also be extended to snatch flies from the sky containing bonuses such as extra time and faster leaps (especially useful when avoiding swarms of bees). While these are pretty handy, sometimes you just don't have the time to grab them as the clock counts down continuously as each frog must be reached in a time limit. The fact that some flies take time off the clock, means that you have to be quick on your feet and know exactly where you're heading at all times.

Another little problem with this updated Frogger, is that the time limit is extremely strict. If



The lawnmowers have made a mess of your frog, but at least the grass now looks lovely





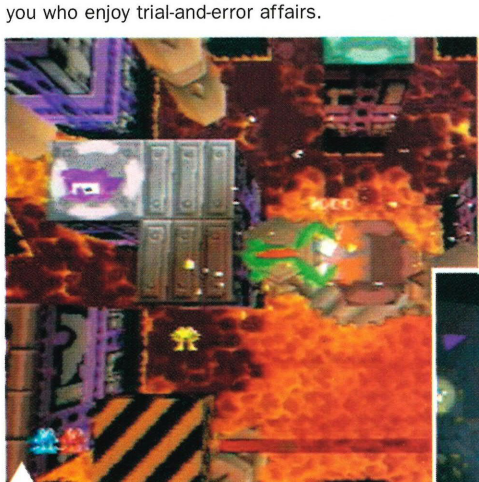
you don't know where you're heading then there's little chance of reaching the goal before the time runs out. This means that progress is generally made by trial and error and with only three lives at your disposal, there's little margin for experimentation.

In keeping with the old release, the colours are still bright and friendly with the characters all looking as cute as can be. The level designs look impressive too and take you through bee-infested stages, mechanical zones, forests and a host of others. Some stages will involve you activating or deactivating switches and platforms to form new routes to reach your counterparts.

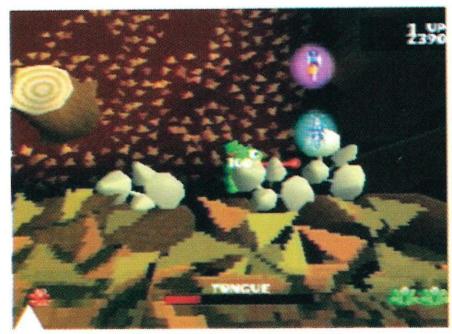
Each of the different levels have several stages which you need to complete if you're to progress further. All of this means that you need to be pretty spectacular to reach the later stages and have lots of spare time. This is not one of those PlayStation games that you'll be completing in a single afternoon.

If all of that isn't enough for you, there's also a split-screen section where you must race a friend across the pond and steal three flags before your opponent does the same. Although it works quite well, sometimes you just can't see what's coming next due to the restricted view offered by the split-screen.

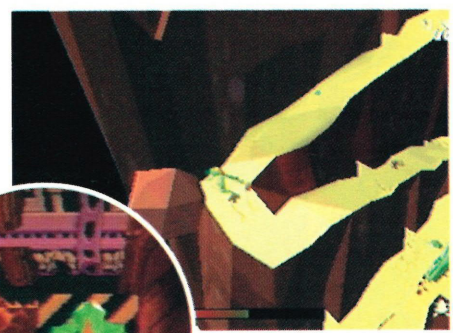
Frogger doesn't fail to impress although at times, it does all become a little too simplistic. With only three lives on offer this adds more to the challenge, but it can be terribly frustrating. Fun for a while, but Frogger is only for those of you who enjoy trial-and-error affairs.

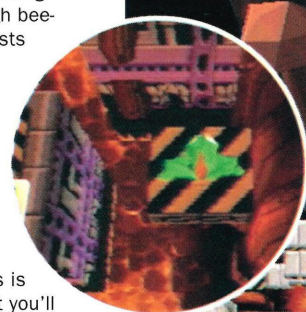


The Industrial World involves you using the cogs, switches and platforms to your advantage. Think ahead to survive

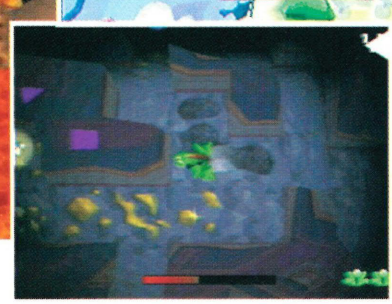


The glowing fly in the bottom right will speed up your hops. Very handy in this level as the bees are after you





This is where things can become terribly confusing. Making your way through this stage is a vast task fraught with danger



To light up the area you can croak or use the fireflies to light your way. Either way, this is one tough time for our froggie friend

PRO SCORE

GAME Frogger
GENRE Hopping
SOFTWARE HOUSE Hasbro
CONTACT 0171 490 1323
RELEASE DATE November
PRICE £44.99

Frogger has always been one of those games which you look back on with nostalgia in much the same way you believe that Space Invaders was the ultimate as far as arcade entertainment went. And for its time, it was outstanding. This updated version does offer plenty more than your average retro game and is enjoyable for short periods of time. It's colourful, fun and most importantly playable, but there are a few niggling faults. The main problem lies in the fact that as with most retro-style games it's the trial-and-error element which spoils the enjoyment. It is entertaining though and if you're looking for some good harmless fun then this will be up your street. Not a classic, but still enjoyable.

GRAPHICS 8
SOUND 7
GAMEPLAY 8
LASTABILITY 8

7½

PAUL **Frustrating and difficult but ultimately fun, for a while at least. Frogger will amuse most people that come across it. And any game that has a button that makes your character say "ribbet" is alright by me**

JAY **Call me crazy, but if I can finish a game in under an hour, it's officially 'shite'. Fortunately, this '97 remix of the avoid'em-up classic is not, and it'll have you pulling out hair in frustration for months. Buy it. Buy two**

HUGH **It might not look like the best game on the PlayStation, but Frogger's combination of challenging gameplay and road-kill action should have platform fans captivated for most of the Winter**

JAMES **The original Frogger was hard as hell and this update isn't a simple affair either. The 3D environments provide greater opportunities for some perplexing gameplay, that's sure to keep fans content for a while**

NHL 98

Ice Hockey games are getting as popular as racing games these days, but it's still a rare treat when you come across a fine example of the genre...

Are you afraid of the man in the mask?

The NHL 98 intro sequence is one of the best PlayStation intros we've ever seen

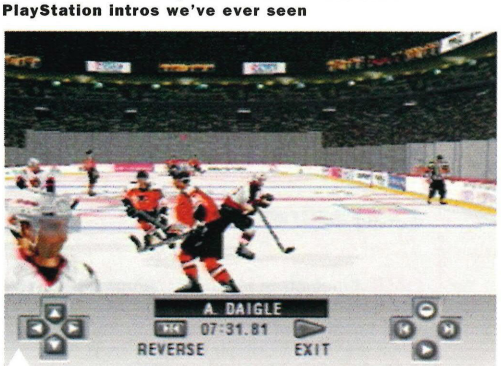
I was working on PC magazines when the last incarnation of this game – NHL 97 (surprisingly) – came through and blew our heads off. Needless to say I had first dibs on the '98 version as soon as it arrived on the desk. While those around me were lumbered with the likes of Tigershark and so on, I sat back with a smirk on my face, fully expecting a rare treat.

Now this all may sound like I'm building up to a massive disappointment, but that's where you'd be wrong. NHL 98 is, I reckon, one of the best sport sims on the PlayStation to date, and that's no idle boast.

NHL 98 passes the first big test of a sports game - do you actually have to like Ice Hockey to enjoy NHL 98? Thankfully, the answer is a resounding no. For some reason, software houses seem to be able to trot off good ice hockey games willy nilly,but give them the task of producing a half-decent football game and they go all slack-jawed and present us with just about any old pile of crap.

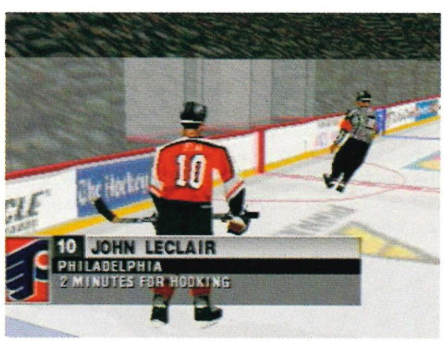
NHL 98 seems to have everything you'd expect in an accurate representation of the world's fastest contact sport, and more besides. This extra comes in the form of Electronic Arts' own unique brand of polish.

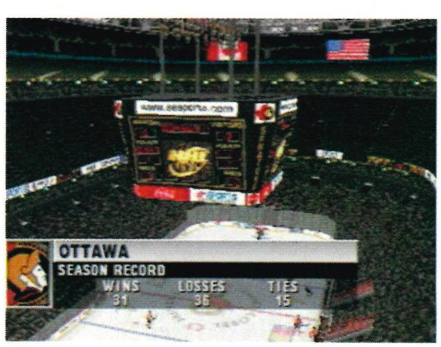
For a start, it's obviously got the latest team rosters from all the teams participating in the



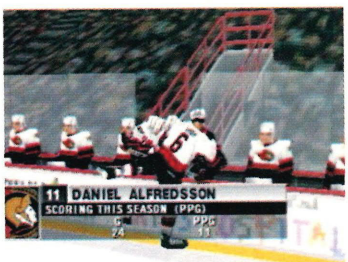
The action replay facility is handy if you need to see those big hits in super slow-motion again

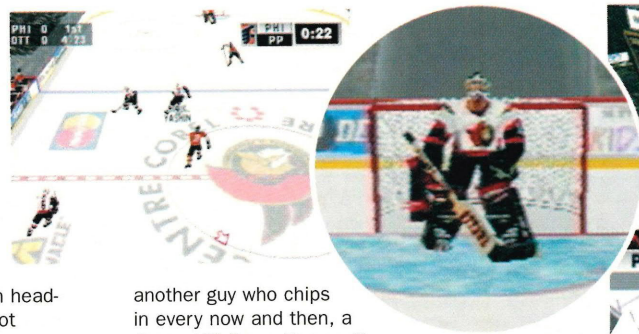
There's a Power-play on here, that means your opponent has a man in the sin-bin for two minutes





Throughout the season the game pops up the latest stats for both teams, keeping you abreast of things





The teams of Ottowa and Philadelphia prepare to square-up against each other for the Stanley Cup

NHL. It has a smart intro, complete with head-banging, thrash-metal soundtrack. It's got absolutely wonderful motion-capture at a super fast pace and, most importantly, it's got oodles of playability. Even your baby sister could pick this up in no time at all.

Fact fans may be keen to know that NHL 97 picked up a couple of awards in its time including 'Best Game' in the amusingly titled 'Nordic Game Awards.' Operating on a premise of "if it isn't broken, don't fix it," EA has tried to concentrate on adding features rather than making wholesale changes.

Having said that, there is a totally new game engine under the bonnet which makes the gameplay much faster and smoother than it was the last time around.

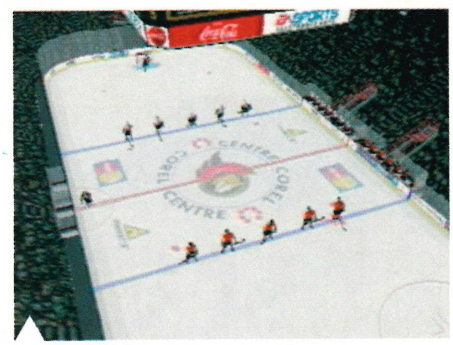
You also have the opportunity to control your own goalie should you wish. This opens up the possibility of scorelines reaching into the millions, rather than the more realistic 1-1. You can turn this option off if you prefer to leave it to your PlayStation to do the hard stuff.

Commentary-wise, EA has employed a load of the real guys from American TV, but we've never heard of them. Suffice to say, it's excellent and comes across as thoroughly professional. As well as the play-by-play chat going on, there's another guy who chips in every now and then, a Jimmy Hill figure if you will, with pearls of wisdom about various players. This is all virtually seamless and immensely impressive to boot.

If you've ever seen Ice Hockey on telly, or if you've been to the real thing as it's so popular over here now, you'll know that a key aspect of the game is giving your opponents a right good hiding. The game features such sly stuff as the bury your elbow into their face and send them crashing into the surrounding boards move. We're talking out and out brawling.

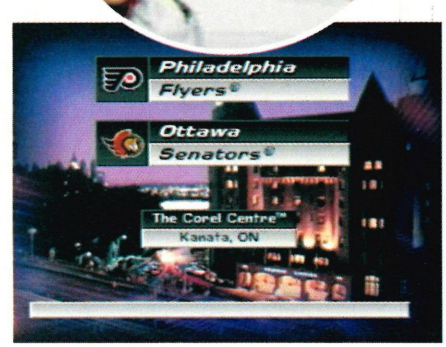
This feature was popular back in the original Mega Drive versions about five years ago and returns for NHL 98. Basically, if you wind up a player enough the camera will zoom in while the two of them down gloves and slug it out beat'em-up style until only one is left standing. Call me a coward, but if I was in there fighting I'd be swinging that big stick at him, make no bones about it and I'd show you who'd drop first. Oh yes.

It's difficult to imagine everybody getting excited about all the nice little touches in NHL 98 unless they're actually a Yank. You have to wonder how interested us Brits, with our stiff ▶



The camera pans around showing the virtual stadium in all its glory. You can change the camera at any time

It's a goal alright! Now there's a real reason to celebrate. All the score details are flashed on the screen and announced at the rink too for that extra-realism

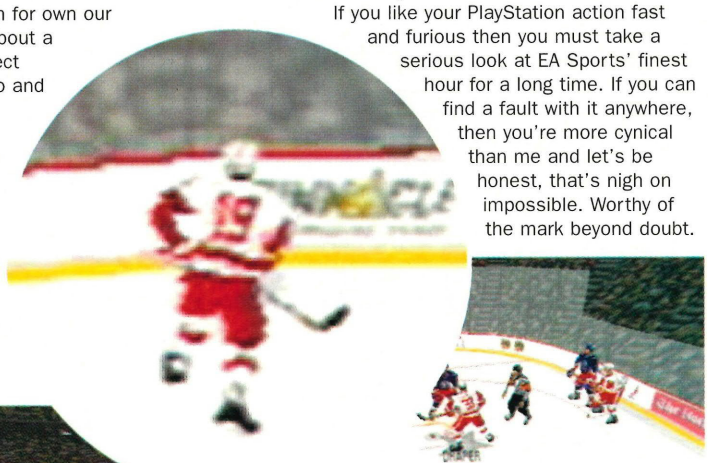


NHL 98

▶upper lips and passion for own our sports games, can be about a game including the correct goalie mask for Colorado and so on. Imagine the equivalent detail being put into a football game and the entire populace would be going back to church.

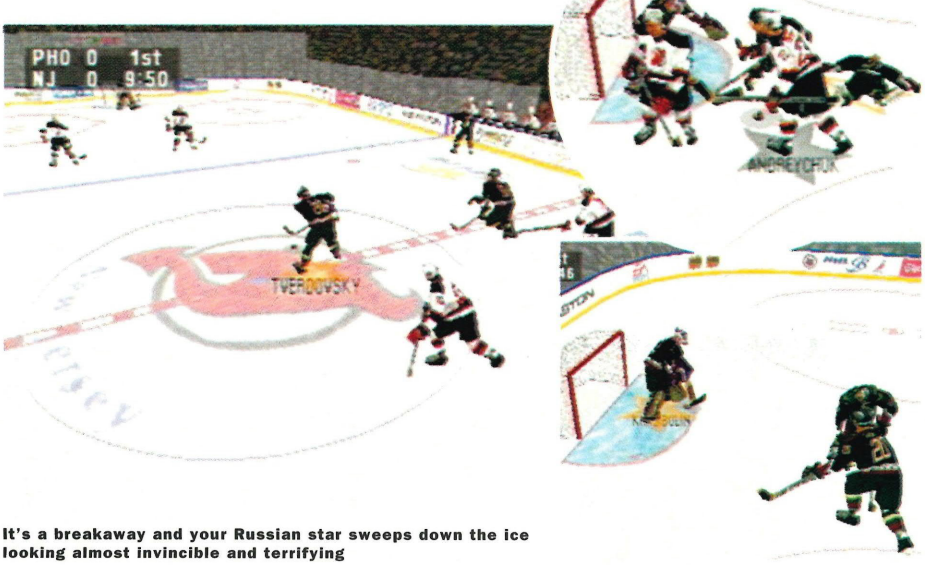
NHL 98 is a fine game, but if I had to find a fault with it, I'd complain that it is based on a minority American sport. But to make me admit that, you'd have to hold a gun to my head and threaten to make me smear butter all over you!

If you like your PlayStation action fast and furious then you must take a serious look at EA Sports' finest hour for a long time. If you can find a fault with it anywhere, then you're more cynical than me and let's be honest, that's nigh on impossible. Worthy of the mark beyond doubt.



Those face-off things have always looked a bit intimidating. You'd have to be pretty brave to stand there

For the land of the free and all that. Your players line up for the National Anthem of the United States



It's a breakaway and your Russian star sweeps down the ice looking almost invincible and terrifying

PRO SCORE

GAME NHL 98
GENRE Sports
SOFTWARE HOUSE EA Sports
CONTACT 01753 549442
RELEASE DATE Out Now
PRICE £44.99

This is a fantastically good sports game that continues the trend of quality ice hockey games from EA Sports. NHL 98 is fast, realistic and fun. It's easy to pick up and get good into, yet the machine still supplies a stiff challenge over the course of a hockey season. Of course, the real fun comes when you batter your friends against the boards and hear them swear they'll seek their revenge. The game is reaching a stage where it's difficult to see any further improvements and that may render the inevitable NHL 99 more of an iffy proposition. As it stands though, NHL 98 is definitely worth adding to your well stocked shelves. If you're in the market for a game that never loses pace, then look no further than EA's NHL 98.

GRAPHICS 8
SOUND 8
GAMEPLAY 9
LASTABILITY 9

9

ANDY If you're after fast action, mindless violence and addictive gameplay, then you should look no further. Whether you like ice hockey or not, there's no substitute for a fine sports game. A winner

JAY Good old hockey. Pissing around on a frozen pond, slapping an over-cooked Eccles cake about with a big stick does nothing for me, so this revamped version of the sport of dorks doesn't appeal to me in the slightest

HUGH Being a lazy bastard, sports games on the PlayStation offer little appeal to me. NHL however, looks like a fast, fun and suitably violent way to pass a few hours. Makes a change from racing games anyway

JAMES This game looks the business and plays really well too. If, like me, you want speed, power and playability mixed with a couple of brawls and blood on the ice, then this should be high on your shopping list

universal interactive studios

NAUGHTY DOG

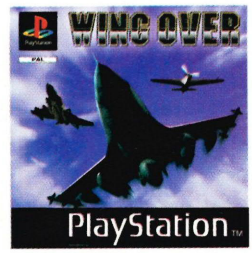
PLEASE FASTEN YOUR SAFETY BELT.

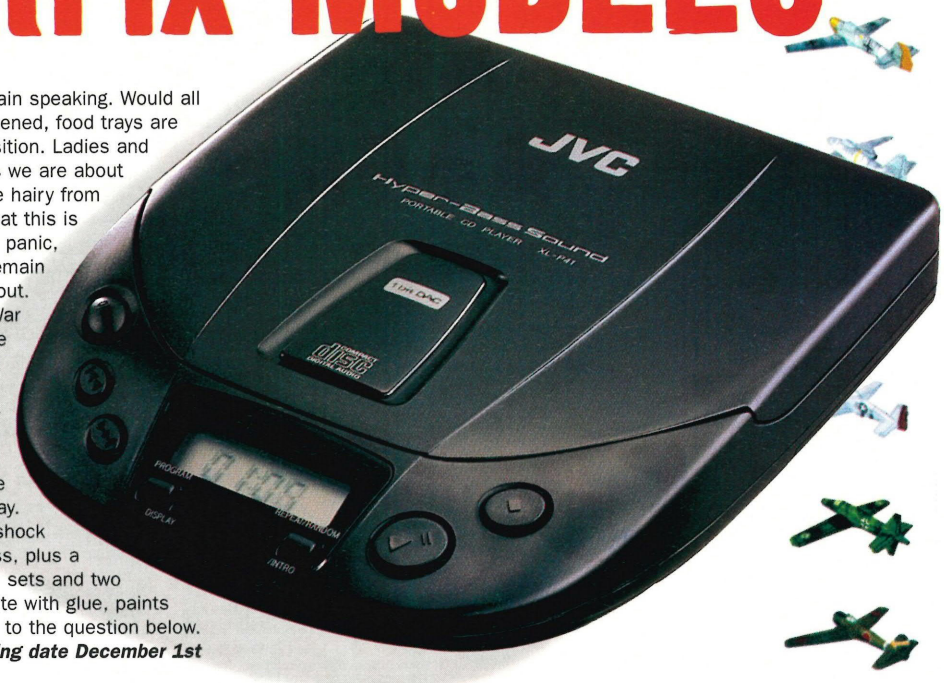
YOU ARE ABOUT TO CRASH.

PlayStation™

Crash Bandicoot 2: Cortex Strikes Back™ & ©1997 Universal Interactive Studios, Inc. All rights reserved. Source Code © 1996, 1997 Naughty Dog, Inc. All rights reserved. Price £39.99.

PLANES, TUNES AND AIRFIX MODELS





CHARLIE FOX-TROT ALPHA TANGO, this is your Captain speaking. Would all passengers please ensure that seat belts are fastened, food trays are folded away and chairs are in their upright position. Ladies and gentlemen, brace yourselves for a little turbulence as we are about to experience Wing Over. The journey may be a little hairy from here on in as we take evasive action. I assure you that this is normal procedure and there is absolutely no need to panic, stores will be well stocked with this title. Try to remain calm and enjoy the ride, Captain out.

Oh yes, dig out grandad's Snoopy-style World War One, flying hat and goggles and prepare to do battle against some of the most famous planes to hit the great blue yonder. From Spitfires to Stealth fighters, they're all present in Wing Over, leaving pseudo Red-Baron types with a choice of 30 different aircraft to take to the skies in pip-pip and tally-ho frenzy.

To coincide with the release of this impressive flight sim from JVC, we've some fly stuff to give away. There are two JVC personal CD players with triple shock protection, dynamic suspension system and hyper-bass, plus a copy of the game!. Two WWII historic aircraft model sets and two larger Tornado/Stealth bomber type kits – all complete with glue, paints and brushes. Want one? Then tell us the answer to the question below.

Closing date December 1st

QUESTION?

At what speed is the sound barrier broken?

Answer: _____

Name _____

Address _____

_____

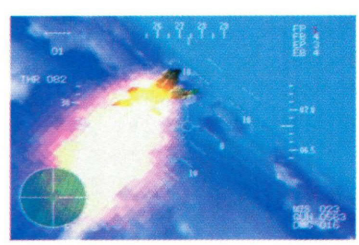
_____

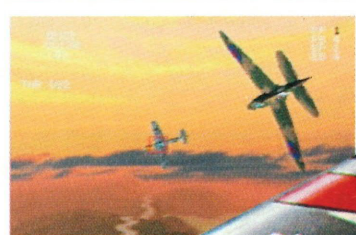
_____

Postcode _____

Tel: _____

Send Entries to:
Wing Over Competition
IDG Media, Adlington Park Industrial Estate,
Macclesfield, SK10 4NP





universal interactive studios

NAUGHTY DOG

CRASH BANDICOOT 2 CORTEX STRIKES BACK

HE'S BACK

AND THIS TIME HE'S MAD FOR IT.

Buckle up, you're in for the most insane trip of your life. Crash has learnt to swing, belly-flop, crawl, skid and even fly with a jet pack since his last adventure. Are you mad enough for it?

PlayStation

Crash Bandicoot 2: Cortex Strikes Back™ & ©1997 Universal Interactive Studios, Inc. All rights reserved. Source Code © 1996, 1997 Naughty Dog, Inc. All rights reserved. Price £39.99.

Red Alert continues where the immensley popular Command & Conquer left off. Westwood Studios are serving up yet another treat that PlayStation owners will doubtless lap up by the bucketful. Just feast your eyes on this little lot!

Ever since Command & Conquer was released on the PC a few years back, it has steadily risen to become one of the classic games of recent years. In fact, to be totally fair to it, it's spawned its own genre of game, inspiring a whole host of clones, more often than not substandard ones too.

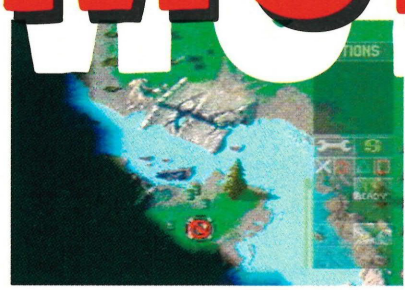
Las Vegas based Westwood Studios take all the credit for C&C and you could hardly blame them for rushing out another instalment, C&C: Red Alert, which still isn't actually C&C 2. Confused? Don't worry, it gets easier, honest!

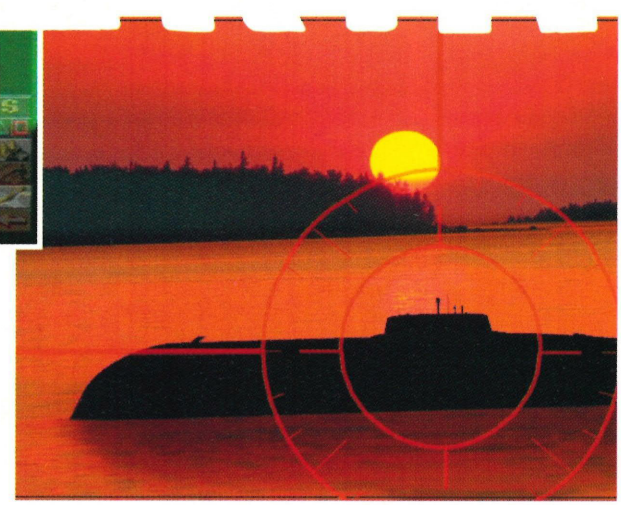
Based in the period before Command & Conquer and its futuristic armies, Red Alert changes history as we know it. Adolf Hitler never rose to power and threatened the whole of Europe. Oh no! Instead the Soviets, led by Joseph Stalin, are rampaging through Europe crushing all before them.

If you've played the original you may be wondering about all this talk of Soviets? Where are the GDI and the Brotherhood of Nod then? Well, Red Alert being a prequel and all, the GDI have not yet been formed and the old Nodders are still hiding in the shadows. As Red Alert wends its path it will show how these two powers come up against each other. Perhaps most importantly, the Tiberium mineral that mysteriously started appearing on Earth and sparked the conflict in C&C hasn't yet appeared,

COMMAND & CONQUER RED ALERT

MONGERING





so the wars and technology surrounding the substance are not yet around.

So, as in Command & Conquer, you have the option of playing either of the two sides involved in this conflict, as the rampaging Soviets or as the defending Allies. Each side comes on its own CD once again and you play both independently from the other. All the action is interspersed by Westwood's wonderful habit of including absolutely fantastic cut-scenes that set the tone perfectly between missions and also give you some idea as to what exactly you're supposed to be doing.

Anybody familiar with C&C on the PlayStation will be glad to hear that Westwood have kept the basic controls the same. Some thought it took a fair bit of getting used to initially, but after a while it all became second nature, so it's obviously good that things are to stay the same in Red Alert. Control of the units still involves dragging a box around them which is obviously more suited to a mouse, but you don't exactly need to be a rocket scientist to work it out, so stop moaning! Having said that, the grouping of units will be slightly different and you will now get the opportunity to set waypoints for your little guys to toddle off to. Up to 10 waypoints can be set for each group and they'll start wandering off the second you set the first one. The whole thing tries to be a little more intuitive so you don't have to hold their hand through absolutely everything and can concentrate on other more pressing matters at hand.

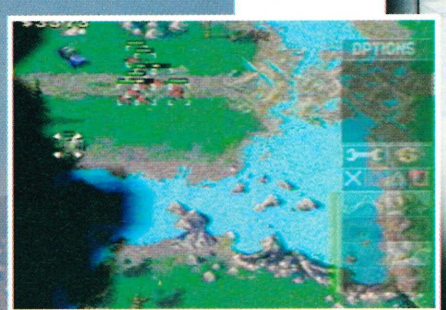
Westwood have also put considerable work into creating new buildings and units, so there'll be plenty of fresh stuff to get used too as well. Units such as Badger Bombers, Mine Layers and the Chronosphere can all be developed to help you win the war, yet Red Alert will also see the return of a few old Command & Conquer favourites such as the Mammoth Tank, Barracks and Ground Artillery Units.

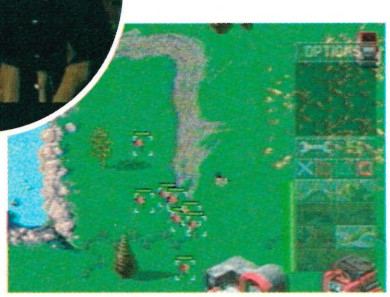
A completely new concept to appear in RA will be the addition of naval units which will allow you to wage war out at sea, as well as on the regular landscape. Every unit has its own strengths and weaknesses and learning what does what, is the overall key to success.

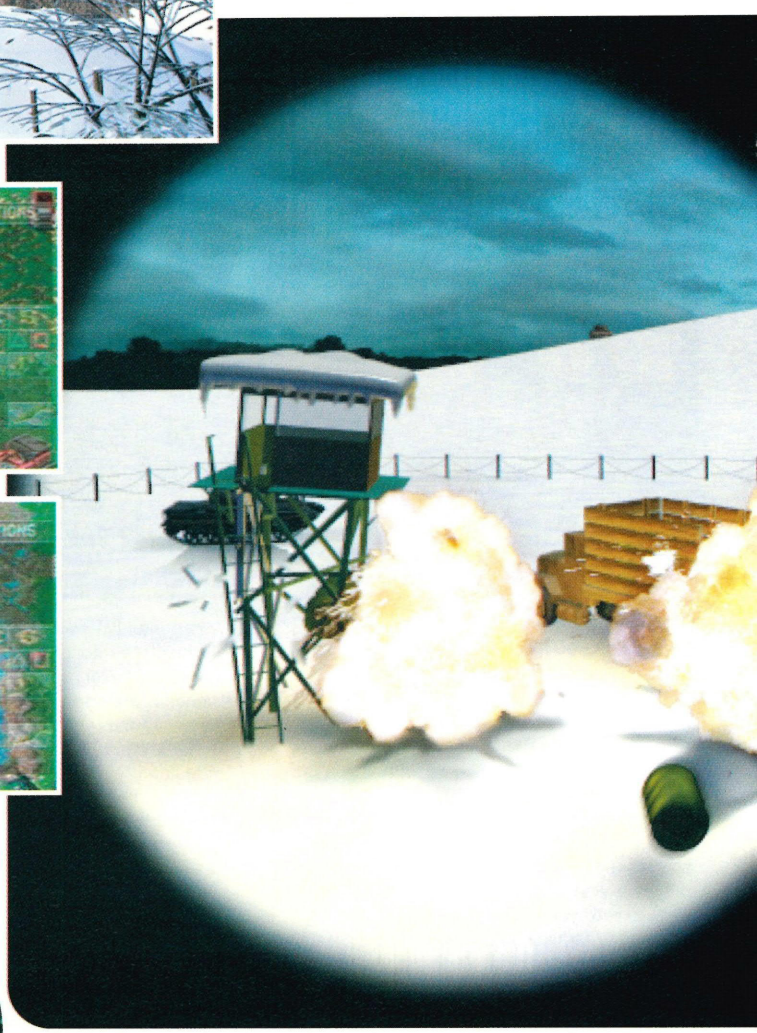
The variety of missions will also be much greater than in Command & Conquer. You may well find yourself under orders to assassinate some high-ranking member of the ▶

The battle rages between the Soviets and the Allies as each side struggles for European supremacy. There are plenty of new units and buildings to construct as you try to become top dog on the war front

The scenario this time begins across the icy Siberian wastes, so there's plenty of snow around to make snowmen with. Or not as the case may be







WAR MONGERING

▶ enemy hierarchy or even protect one of your own. There are also sabotage, search and rescue and the run-of-the-mill kill everything in sight-style missions to complete.

Westwood have also added timed missions which, not surprisingly, sets you a strict time limit on achieving certain objectives. Throw in numerous multiple mission goals and we think C&C: Red Alert will present you with a rather long-term challenge.

Extensive work has also been put into the computer's AI. In fact, this was just about the only area that the original Command & Conquer

was extensively criticised for, as it didn't take long to work out fighting patterns that would more-or-less, guarantee victory nine times out of ten. So it's obviously good news that Westwood reckon that your tried-and-tested C&C tactics will be completely useless against the new hyper-intelligent computer opposition.

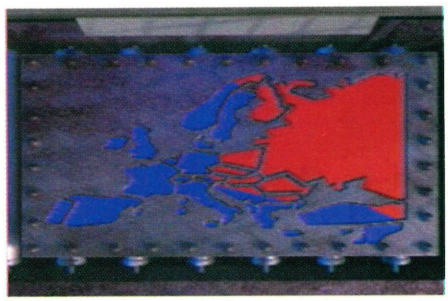
The PC version also had three difficulty levels included which will probably be in here too, so girls and weak boys should be able to get more out of it this time, rather than being reduced to tears in a fit of inept frustration.

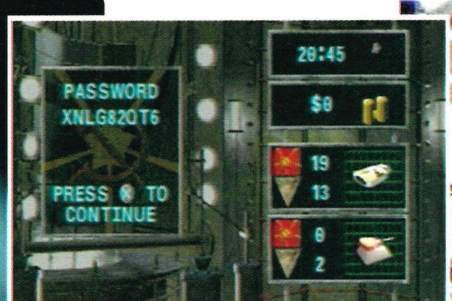
Red Alert is set to bring many new cool features to the PlayStation. Units such as the Allied Spy look like being great fun. The Spy will appear to the Soviets as one of their own troops, he can break into enemy camps and get valuable information about enemy positions, but if he runs into an attack dog it will kill him.

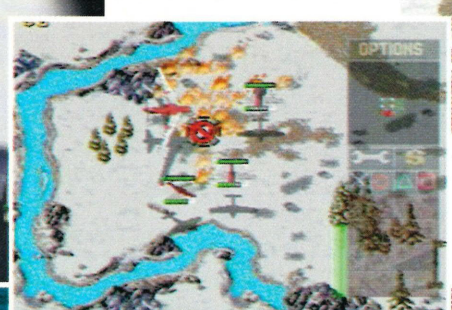
The whole thing is obviously going to take the PlayStation world by storm, just as the original Command & Conquer did. Everybody who's anybody is going to be playing it and we'll be one of the first when we bring you our full review next month's issue of PlayStation Pro.

Just before we go though, we should mention that Virgin have asked us to point out that the control panel on the right hand side of all the screenshots is only a work-in-progress feature and will change considerably in the final version of the game, so take no notice of that when you're looking at all the lovely pictures!

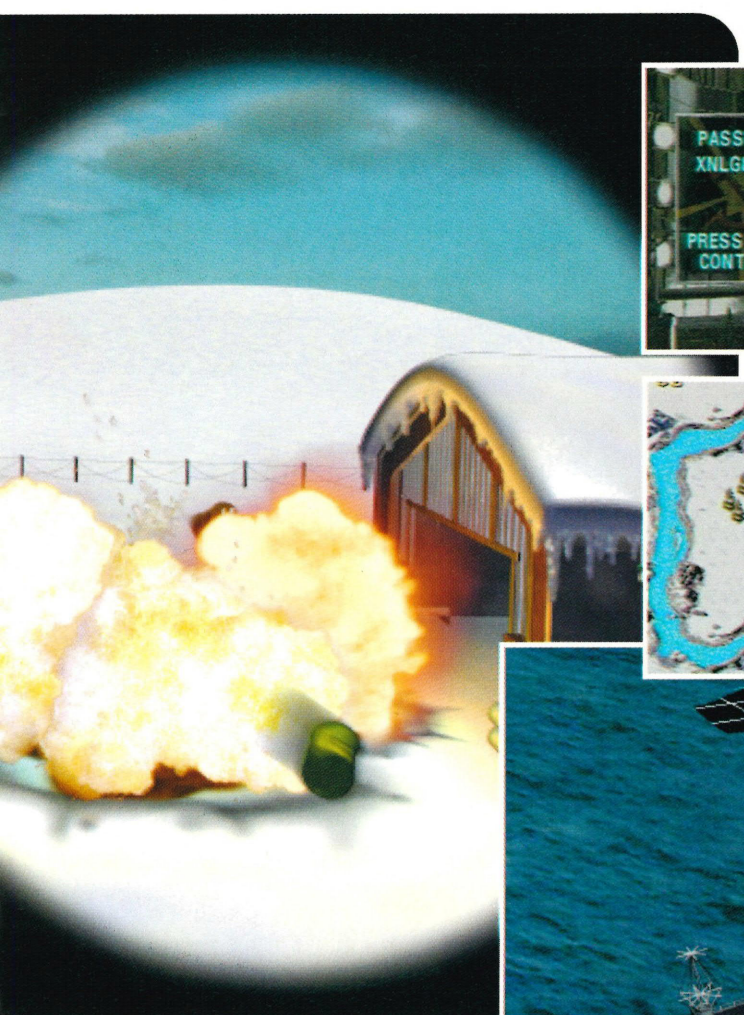
Release Date: December

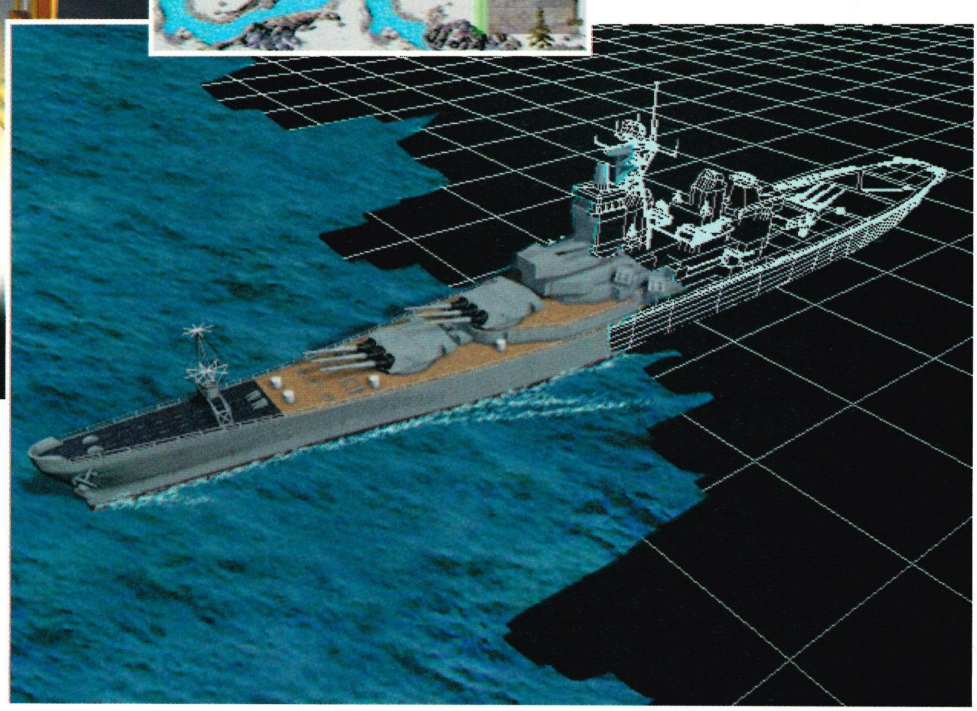






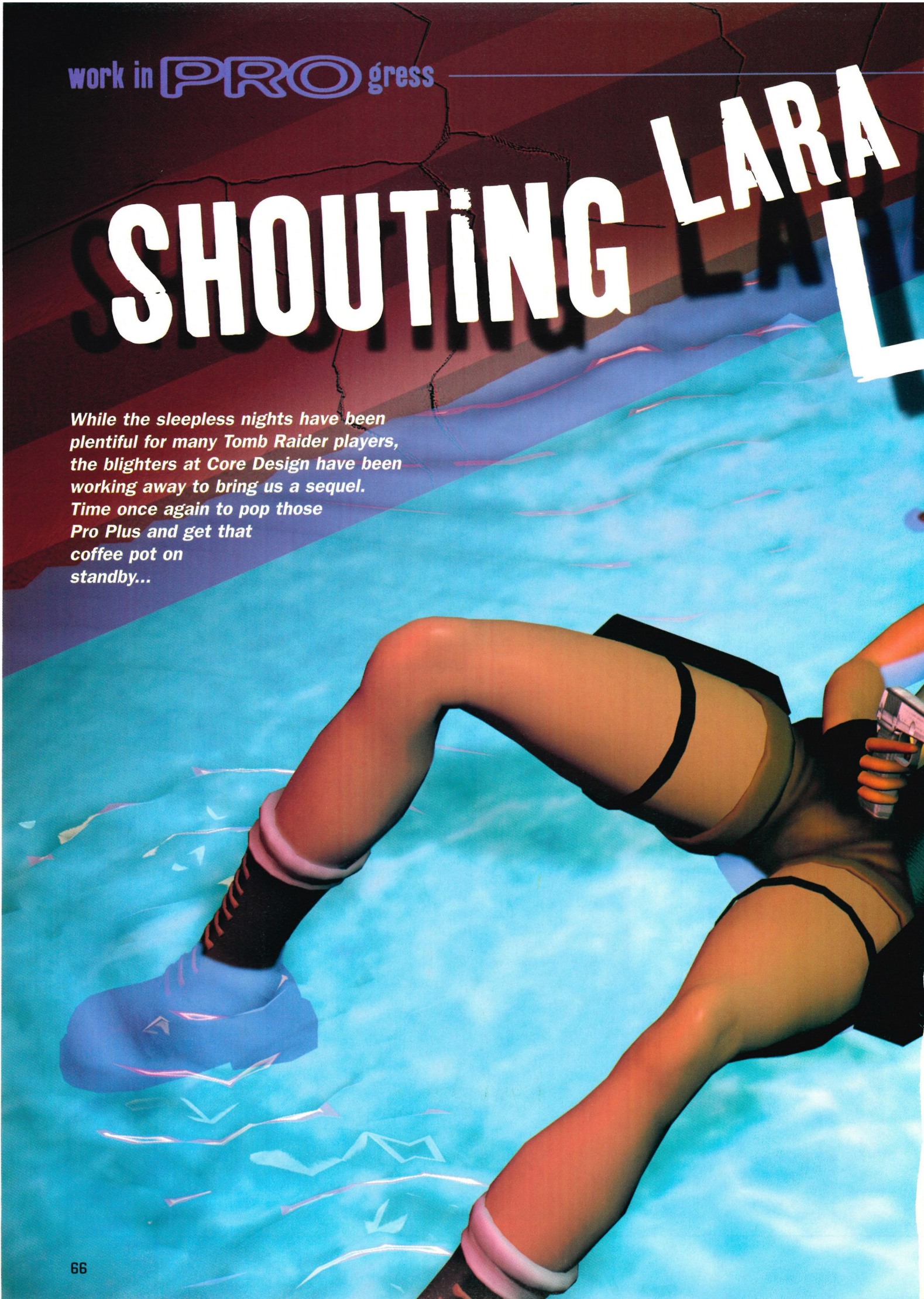
Red Alert is a wonderful combination of Hollywood-style cut-scenes and the action game we know and love from Command & Conquer. Playing as either side gives you a whole new set of missions and scenes





SHOUTING LARA L

While the sleepless nights have been plentiful for many Tomb Raider players, the blighters at Core Design have been working away to bring us a sequel. Time once again to pop those Pro Plus and get that coffee pot on standby...



ARA LARA

The latest offering from Eidos and Core Design is a curious one. It's called Tomb Raider 2 which gives nothing away in its title and certainly doesn't sound like it's up to much. And the lead character is a female Indiana Jones wannabe. How can it succeed? How indeed?

In all seriousness, as we all know too well by now, Tomb Raider is the ultimate in 3D adventuring as far as the PlayStation is concerned. Riding high in the charts after all this time, many people are still struggling to obtain the pieces of the mysterious Scion to complete the original.

Those people are going to be horrified to learn that there are now even more levels in Tomb Raider 2 and what's more, they're bigger and trickier than before. It's not going to be one for the pansies out there.

As in the original there are many puzzles to solve along the way which will determine your fate. A wrong move could spell the end of Lara's mission. Oh yes, falling floors, arrow pipes and a host of new terrors are around to help you stumble in your quest.

The story involves Lara searching for the Dagger of Xian which was supposedly used by a tyrannical emperor before it was pinched by some thieving Tibetan warrior monks. These monks have placed it back in its resting place deep within the Great Wall of China. Your mission is to reach the dagger before a fanatical cult known as the Fiama Nera take it for themselves and unleash its mythical powers.

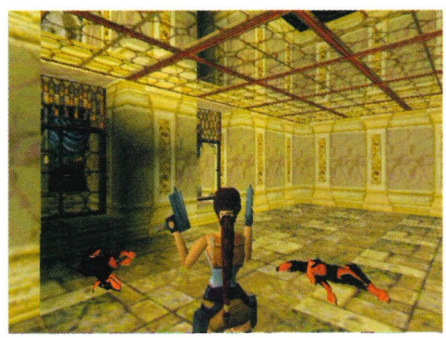
The game begins with Lara being dropped ▶

The flares are a new addition and will be used to light the way in dark areas. The lighting effects make these look pretty spectacular

▶ off at the Great Wall where she must negotiate the vast labyrinths within the mountains. There you will the find the emperor's palace where the dagger is kept. Unfortunately, the Fiama Nera are already there and Lara discovers that to open the doors of the palace she must head to Venice to find the magician Gianni Bartoli's residence for clues of how to access the lock.

This is only the beginning as far as you're concerned as no sooner have you found the magician's home you have to negotiate your way beyond all of the Fiama Nera guards and onto the static seaplane where you will hear clues about 'Bartoli's Grave.' While attempting to eavesdrop, Lara is knocked unconscious and regains consciousness several hours later in the terrible dilemma of being locked in a storage room on a floating rig. Inside this rig is another prisoner - a warrior monk who has been slapped around somewhat by Bartoli's son, Marco.

As it transpires, Bartoli was a passenger on a ship many years ago which was sunk to prevent people discovering the secret of the dagger. Now the Fiama Nera are searching the wreck for the

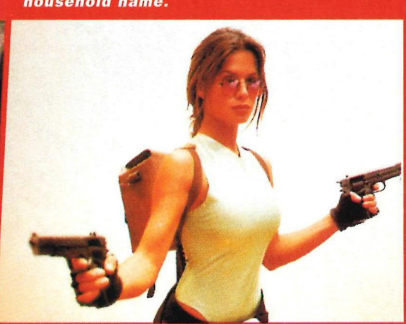


Lara Lara Hype

Eidos used an extensive combination of press and cinema advertisements to spread the awareness of Lara Croft and the original Tomb Raider when it first appeared to an unsuspecting world towards the end of 1996 and at the beginning of 1997. The impact it had was phenomenal as Tomb Raider is still riding high in the PlayStation charts.

An estimated 2.1 million people saw the cinema advert for the original game and spread the word to the masses. Combined with the extensive press coverage and advertising this has meant that Tomb Raider is, along with Resident Evil the best known release to date. And who can possibly beat that?

As the overwhelming success has continued, the mainstream press have picked up on Lara's attractions and she's appeared on the cover of The Face, as well as featuring in The Sunday Times magazine and FHM. Interest in Lara and Tomb Raider hasn't wavered and Lara Croft is now a household name.



It doesn't stop there however, as Eidos have also unveiled a real-life Lara who plays the role for PR and promotional purposes. The actress, Rona Mitra, plays the part like a true professional as any readers of PlayStation Pro will have already seen. The foundations for Lara to take over the world have clearly been laid when a CD single is released in November.

Even pop gurus (oooh and they are) U2 have picked up on the Lara cult and used an image of the character on their video screen for their Pop Mart world tour. Is there no end to the popularity of this game character. Even Mario can't hold up a light to Lara Croft. Why? Because he's a bloke and a plumber and Lara Croft is a woman and would give Indiana Jones a run for his money. Oh and one thing more, Tomb Raider is better than anything Mario has ever been thrown into.

device which will unlock the catacombs of his Tibetan monastery where a sacred object has been stored for centuries. This is what the Fiama Nera believe is the code key for opening the palace doors to reveal the dagger.

As you can tell from this storyline the globe trotting antics of Lara are now more established and this means that the levels vary considerably compared with the original.

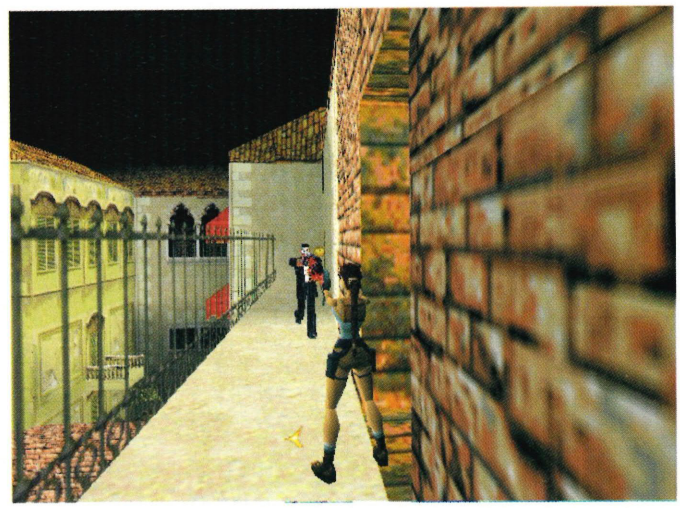
In total there are now 16 new and extensive levels you must negotiate successfully to see all of what Tomb Raider 2 has to offer. The puzzle elements are now trickier and the levels themselves have increased in size greatly.

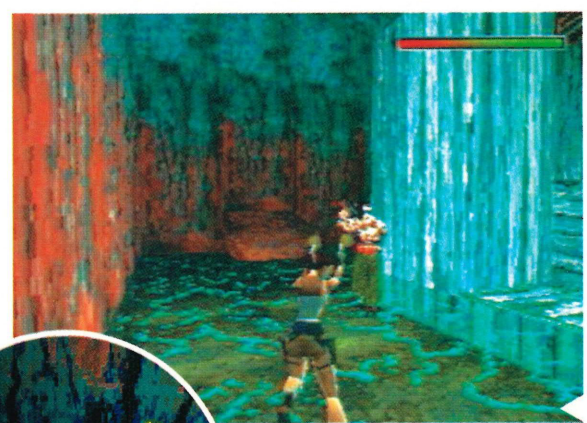
Graphics have also been improved with Lara now being able to do a whole new climb and to add to this there are now many more environments to struggle through, so it means that the developers haven't merely created new maps and textures.

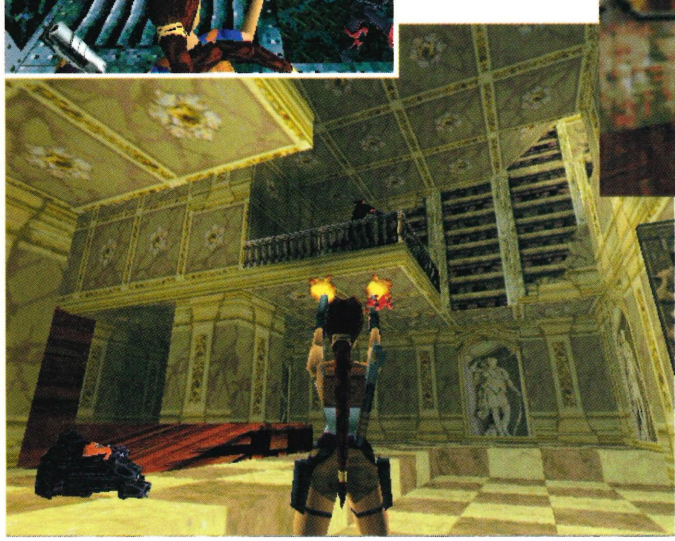
There are several new items which you can collect as you progress such as flares to light the way in particularly dark areas. This means that side-stepping is slightly different as you now need to hold the R2 button and then tap the ▶

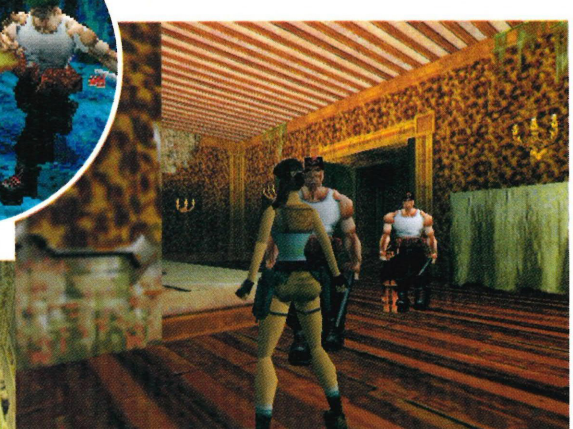
TOMB RAIDER I **TOMB RAIDER II**

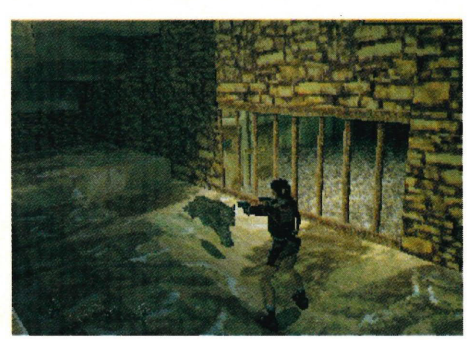
The animals have been fully revamped and look more realistic than previously as you can see from this comparison. The tiger is only one of the new beasts you'll encounter in this eagerly awaited sequel



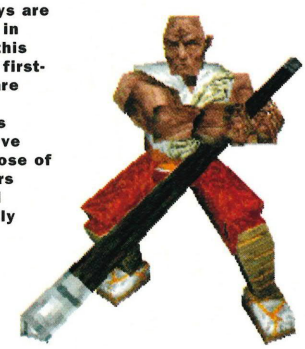


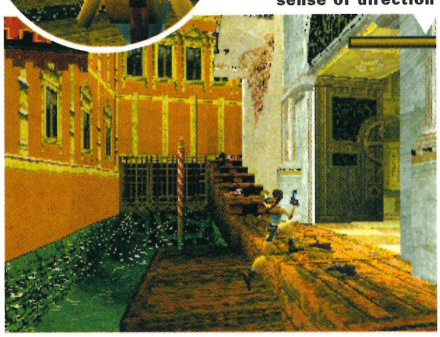






The bad guys are far greater in number in this sequel and first-aid packs are much more scarce. This means you've got to dispose of the blighters quickly and economically





The sprawling Venice stages are some of the toughest challenges you'll encounter. There are so many nooks and crannys to explore you'll need a keen sense of direction

▶direction you require, as the L2 button lights a flare. Apart from this small change the control system remains the same as before.

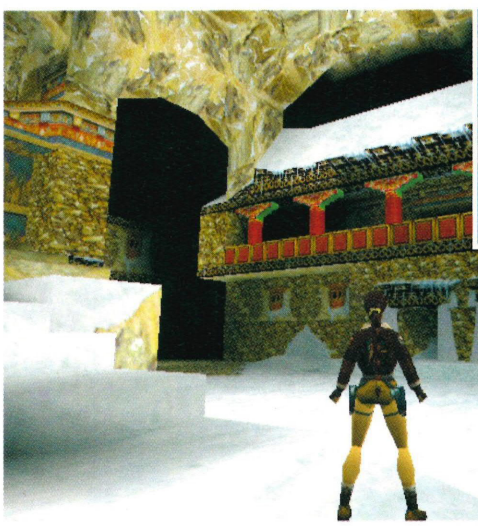
A sequel wouldn't be half as interesting without a range of new and fearsome features which give you that heart-in-your-mouth shock. A stunning moment from the original was the T-Rex which thundered towards you with the purpose of frightening the pants off you by making Lara his latest meal.

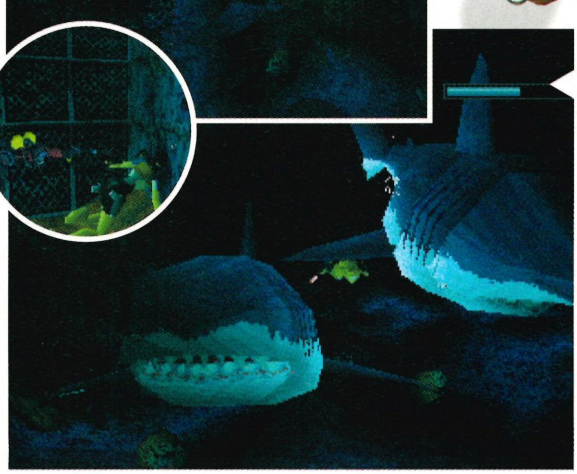
In the sequel you will meet some new animals which range from swooping birds to Great White sharks. All will do their utmost to prevent you from completing your quest. Add to this the greater numbers of henchmen, then you will get some idea of what's in store if you are to succeed in Tomb Raider 2.

Perhaps the greatest change is in Lara herself who undergoes three costume changes during the course of the game from her standard hot-pants and rucksack combination. In Tomb Raider 2 she'll wow you in a wetsuit when searching the seabed for clues and when things get a bit chilly later on, she'll throw on a flying jacket to keep out the cold.

Where the original impressed, this sequel aims to take you one step further. There's no stone left unturned in the quest to make the already classic Tomb Raider that little bit better. Value-for-money has never been this assured, if the levels we've seen are anything to go by.

The new level editor which has been developed for Tomb Raider 2 has meant that now wall colourings, lighting effects and positioning have now been made much simpler for the development team, so that more time has been spent toning up the gameplay to make what is already a playable game, even more so. 'If it ain't broken don't fix it' is a phrase which





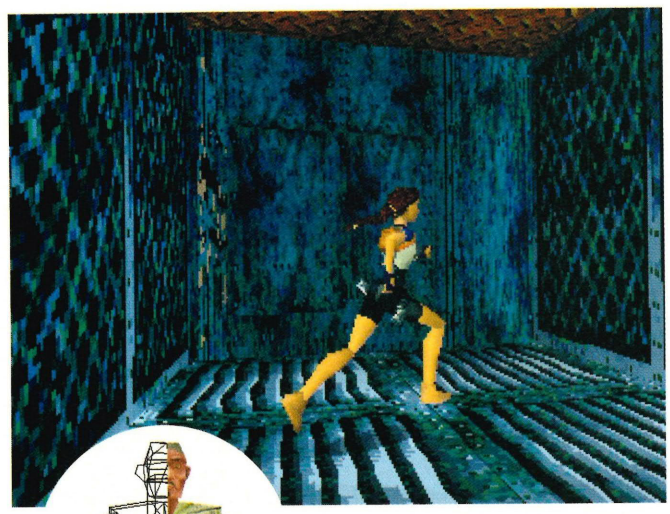
The sharks have absolutely no idea who Lara is and see her as a mere snack between meals. Remember this and try to steer well clear of the ugly beasts or you may just be trapped in those huge jaws

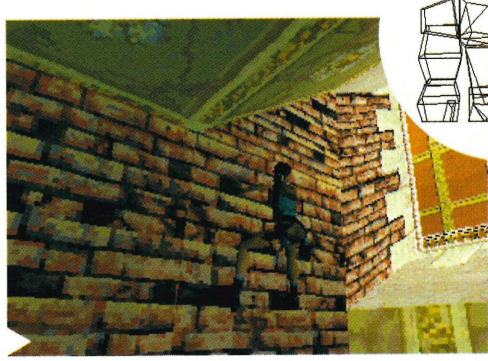
has been roughly translated to 'it's amazingly successful, now make it better.' And that's what's happened. Lara is now far more responsive to the controls and as a result her new adventures play like a dream.

The action takes place in a host of new areas including many stages set outdoors. The claustrophobic atmosphere of the original has now gone, but thankfully none of the enjoyment is lost as a result.

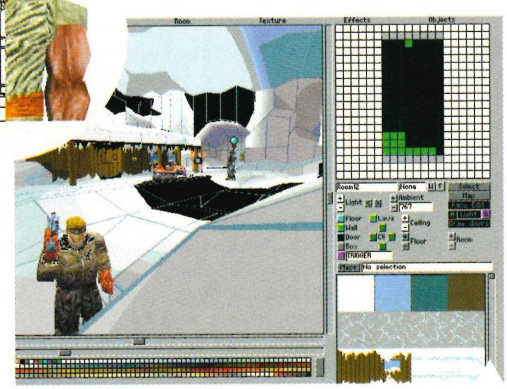
On top of all this, the lighting effects have been improved also to make things more and more realistic and the game actually plays in real-time so, when Lara finds herself outdoors, the skies darken as night creeps upon her.

Most people will already know plenty about Tomb Raider 2 and the hype is only just beginning to reach fever pitch as the release date gets nearer. A full review should follow next month, so get yourselves a nice comfy chair for the occasion.

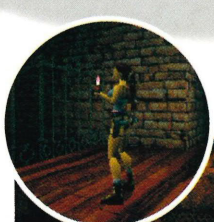


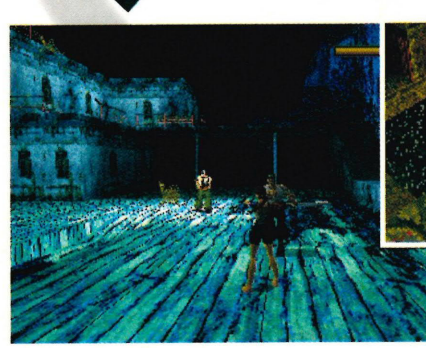


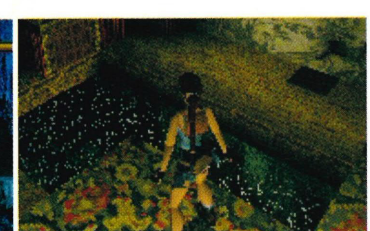
A new climbing move means that Lara is now much more versatile and can climb a greater number of obstacles. She can also pull off some spectacular leaps from bizarre locations. This can help avoid some very tricky situations



The level design has also been improved so that new stages could be designed and walked through in next to no time. The wire frame shows how both the characters and the levels have been put together







The winner takes it all

As well as taking the press and buying public by storm Eidos and Core Design have been scooping up many awards for their Tomb related antics. On top of the press accolades they have also impressed this year's ECTS awards. At these awards they received no less than 11 nominations and scooped Game Of The Year, Publisher Of The Year, Developer Of The Year and many more. They won eight of the categories in total leaving a few lesser awards to the grateful few who were obviously delighted that Tomb Raider didn't pinch the lot. Quite what they've done with these awards is a mystery. Surely there aren't that many doors in their offices to be kept open?

Basket Case

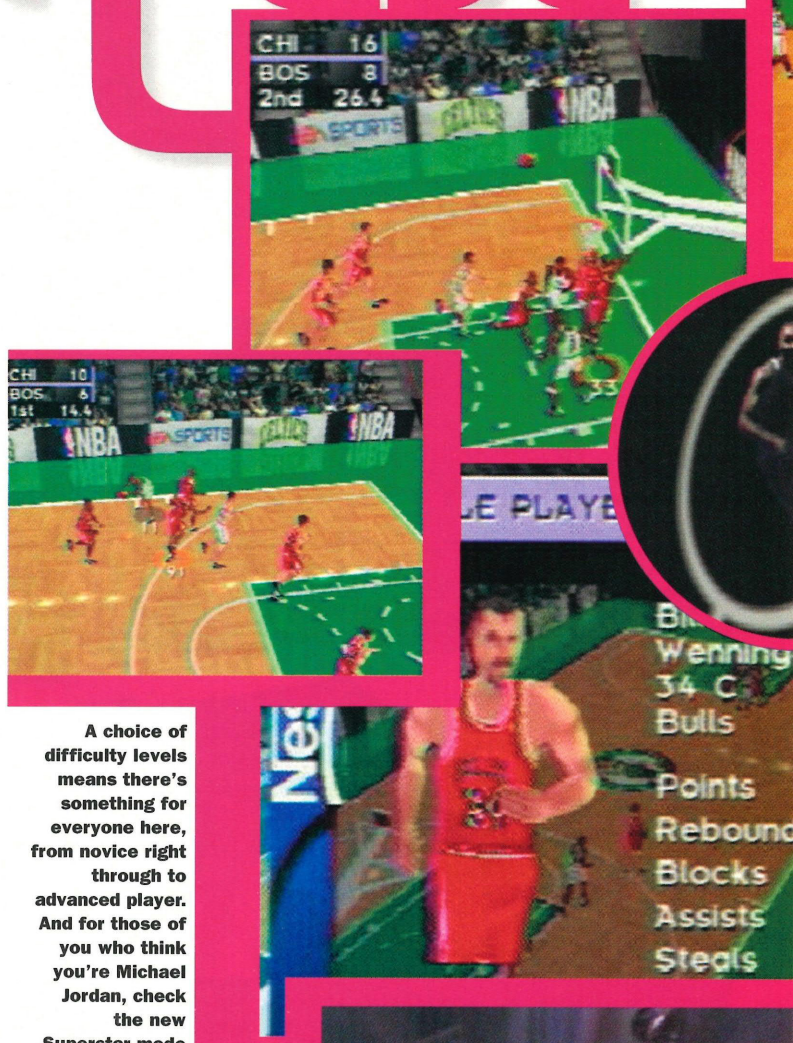
Software House Electronic Arts is cock-a-hoop over their latest NBA offering as they lay up another slamdunking fest

THERE ARE THOSE WHO ADORE the pace, energy and showbiz of basketball, and there are those who find the game yet another of those American institutions that are seemingly obsessed with statistics. Constant tactical changes and line management systems tend to alienate the 'lay' spectator, detracting from what is essentially a high octane sport. It doesn't take a genius to realise the basic rules; two teams of five players trying to get the ball in the opposition's hoop, different shooting areas account for different point scores etc... The stumbling block for newcomers is the amount of tactical play involved in this sport, when all you want to do is score baskets.

There are a phenomenal amount of elements for teams to consider both in pre-match and during. If you're a basketball enthusiast you'll be pleased to know that most of them seem to be present here, on the other hand if you fall in the 'what's all this Yankee crap' bracket then you'll be more interested in gameplay rather than completed pass ratios or whatever. Which means that this could be the definitive basketball game when it arrives later this year, as everything else that is an essential ingredient for hoop shooting pleasure is also present.

The version that we've been treated to looks and plays as you'd expect an EA title to. The graphics and animation are all of a high standard, with motion capture employed for that extra element of realism. The general trend with follow-up games is to build on the previous releases, so it's no surprise that NBA Live 98 comes equipped with a host of additional features present. This time around players have their own 'dunk packages' that are based as closely as possible on their real-life counterparts' abilities. There's also an all new General Manager Mode which includes player drafts, salary caps, trading and injuries. Although there are more than a few control functions to master they're relatively easy to get to grips with and novices will be smashing the back-boards Michael Jordan style in no time.

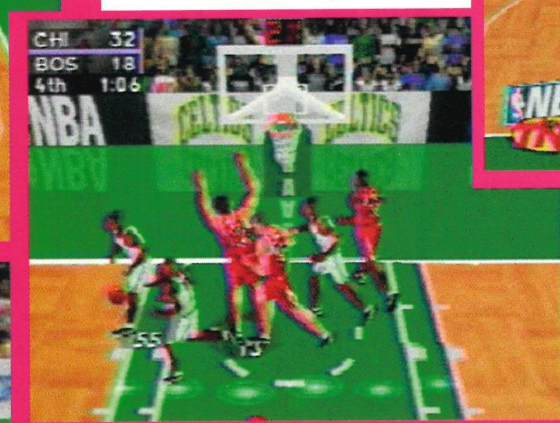
With a choice of game modes, team and tactical options, and a variety of additional features to back up the pacey gameplay, there's more than enough here to justify NBA Live 98's addition to the NBA series.



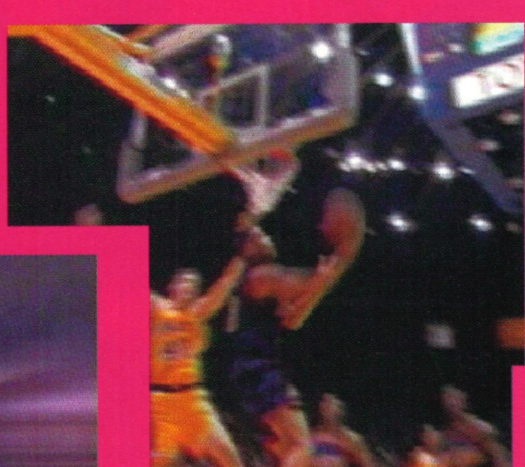
A choice of difficulty levels means there's something for everyone here, from novice right through to advanced player. And for those of you who think you're Michael Jordan, check the new Superstar mode

The replays are seen from the hoop – closer to the action than when playing the game – which shows off the attention to detail. The characters' faces all look like the players they are based on – check out Dennis Rodman's hair for example

There are options galore in this basketing delight. Create custom teams and players and incorporate them into your own teams and leagues. Then sit back and run rings around big Shaq. After all, he's not been in a film with Bugs Bunny



Personalised dunks with motion captured approach to the hoop add to the enjoyment of scoring. As do the in-game commentary and crowd sound effects. There are nice touches all round – watch the players stretch and keep warm as you dither at free throws



All the ream moves of the NBA are here for you to feast your eyes on, master behind-the-track and mid-air passing before executing a vicious dunk. Sound flash? It is, but there's more than one way to put a ball in a net, be warned – defensive practice is also advised

Game Title

NBA Live 98

Software House

Electronic Arts

Release Date

November

'Andy Pandy

Prepare to goon-smash your way along with Fargus and Nikki. The Jester is back, and so's Sid

WHEN PANDEMONIUM FIRST CAME ONTO the scene back in issue 3, it was met with a somewhat cynical response, "What d'ya mean this game's gonna compete with Crash Bandicoot, you fool." Well more fool everyone who doubted the ability of Pandy. It competed with Crash every step of the way, even if at times it was a few paces behind. Needless to say it became a blessed member of the elite, one of the chosen few who aspire to the dizzy heights of greatness. There are few games on the PlayStation that are guaranteed to be successful, however, a sequel to a hit game is seldom anything less than a sure thing where sales are concerned. Now this doesn't necessarily mean that Pandemonium 2 will instantly be catapulted to the stars where it's predecessor now resides, it just means that you're all going to buy it by the truck load. Games firm BMG are confident that Pandy 2 will inevitably walk up that stairway to heaven, and they've been busy kitting it out for the ride.

The game will once again be an affair that requires the skills and talents of both its main characters in their quest to capture 'The Comet of Infinite Possibilities,' which sounds a doddle, right? The basic idea of a sequel is to improve upon the original, and BMG have attempted to do just that. The game promises to be as much, if not more of a visual treat than the first. It is a feature with its new dynamic 'freestyle' 3D camera that auto adjusts to the position of the player. This system delivers stunning visuals and views of the textured 3D worlds. Real-time lighting effects, terrain morphing animations and multi-layered transparencies are just some of the effects incorporated in the environments, so you can expect it to look the part. The gameplay has had a few tweaks as well. Nikki and Fargus now find themselves able to negotiate new perils by climbing and swinging from rope to rope, they can also hang from the edge of levels, not dissimilar from a certain Lara Croft.

What, still not satisfied? Alright then, how about some new attack moves? Nikki brings back the double-jump as well as a new crop of magic projectile weapons. Fargus has been improved too and has become the envy of ventriloquists everywhere when he lobs his Sid-on-a-stick type friend at the bad guys. BMG hopes to see this one jostling for the title of best PSX platform game, and it seems Pandemonium packs enough of a punch this time around to see it gets there.

There are 14 totally new levels to tackle, with fully rendered 3D multi-path environments, so steps have been taken to achieve a less linear feel to the game. You can be sure that it won't be any easier than the original. The end of level bosses that you encounter won't be pushovers either, even with Nikki's improved shooting abilities

The new mechanised robot level promises to add a completely new arcade gameplay experience, though that remains to be seen. However, there will be the usual abundance of secrets and hidden bonus areas for wandering adventurers to unearth and it's all framed with a double-heavy drumcentric jungle techno soundtrack. Booyacka!

Pandemonium was let loose on the PlayStation before Xmas. During their time away from the limelight, Nikki and Fargus have undergone a few changes. Well so much can happen in a year. Nikki has gone all curvy, burnt her training bra and grown up into a sexy spell-slinging sorceress. Whereas Fargus has gone a little bit mental and is much more aggressive as a result. Must be the beef

BMG are geared up to push Pandemonium 2 as the best platformer yet seen on the PlayStation. These claims may well ring true, but with the likes of Crash Bandicoot 2 heading our way around Christmas time, the competition will be tough. Other competitors for the crown will be Croc and another Crystal Dynamics release Gex: Enter The Gecko, which you can read more about on page 82

Game Title

Pandemonium 2

Software House

BMG

Release Date

November '97

Gex Appeal

He's back! The funkiest reptile in town returns for a second installment of anarchy and cold-blooded mayhem

IF FEEL YOU SIMPLY CAN'T live without another dose of the wise-cracking Gecko (who first appeared back at the dawn of the PlayStation in the original Gex), then you're well and truly in luck. Gex: Enter the Gecko is rapidly approaching release date courtesy of the hard work put in by Crystal Dynamics and publishers BMG Interactive.

American comic genius Dana somebody (do you really care?), is back as the voice of Gex, providing a witty array of comic impressions and rib-tickling one liners throughout the TV-addicted lizard's latest adventures.

In Enter the Gecko, Gex is reluctantly recruited by secret government agents to keep his arch-enemy - Rez, from taking over the country's television broadcasts.

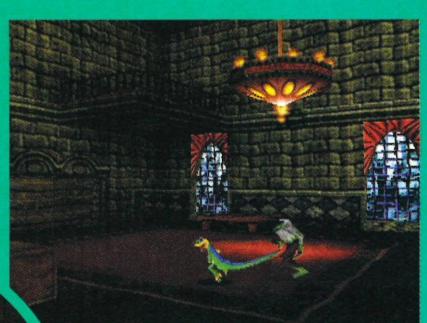
To do this, Gex must enter the Media Dimension and proceed to make his way through multiple levels where each is a parody of popular movies. As you can imagine, this is where the scope for most of the comedy impressions comes from, with loads of tongue-in-cheek action and humourous movie stars a plenty.

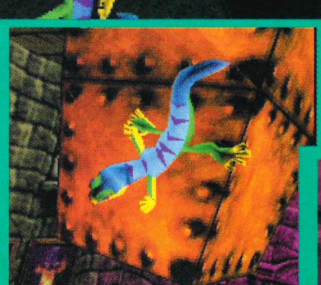
There's no doubt that Gex obtained a cult status when the original came out. BMG will now be hoping that this can be repeated and even improved upon. To help matters they've given us an all-new 360 degree, free-roaming gameplay engine which will allow Gex to explore vast, detailed levels. Well, that's the idea at any rate.

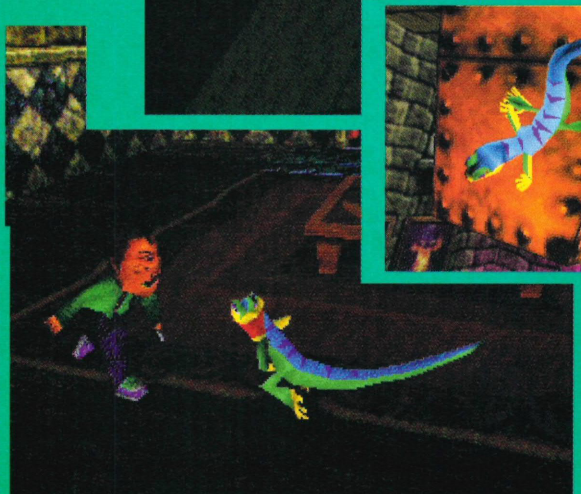
Enter the Gecko is certainly going to be a game that will appeal to an awful lot of PlayStation owners when it gets released. BMG could well have a nice little earner tied up with this one and we're hoping we'll be able to get our hands on a reviewable disc in time for next month's Christmas issue (Can anyone really believe it's that time of the year already!)

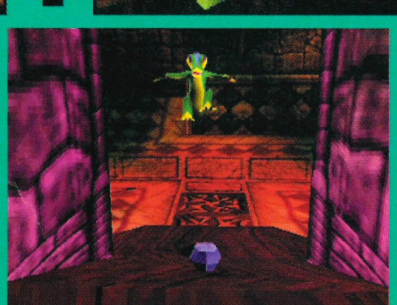
Gex: Enter the Gecko will contain over 500 celebrity impressions and funny one-liners that we are told will take swipes at pop culture, television and Hollywood. Should be good for a little light entertainment

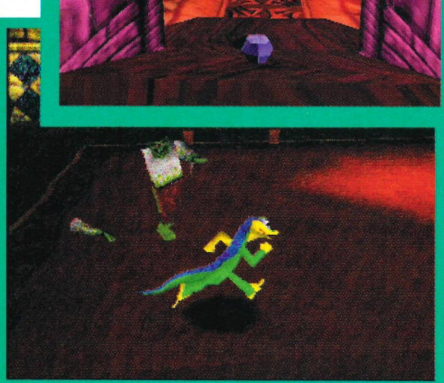
Enter the Gecko has been produced with over 3,400 frames of fluid character animation that includes in-game lip-syncing. For extra comic effect you have to see this in the Kung-Fu section of the game, where the lip-syncing makes the game look like a dubbed Bruce Lee film. Classic!











As you can see from the quality of the screenshots, Gex has improved tenfold graphically since the first game. Crystal Dynamics have spent a lot of time on the game engine and worked exceedingly hard on the 3D techniques used within the levels

As far as TV addicted, tail-cracking lizards go, Gex can claim to be the only one. So if it's an original, yet still cute PlayStation hero you're looking for, then check out old Gexy baby when he eventually turns up

In this sequel Gex is a master of disguise. Throughout the levels we'll be seeing our Gecko chum don a Kung Fu outfit, a spacesuit and other secret agent disguises that will remain a secret until a later date!

Game Title

Gex: Enter the Gecko

Software House

BMG Interactive

Release Date

January '98

Put your dukes up

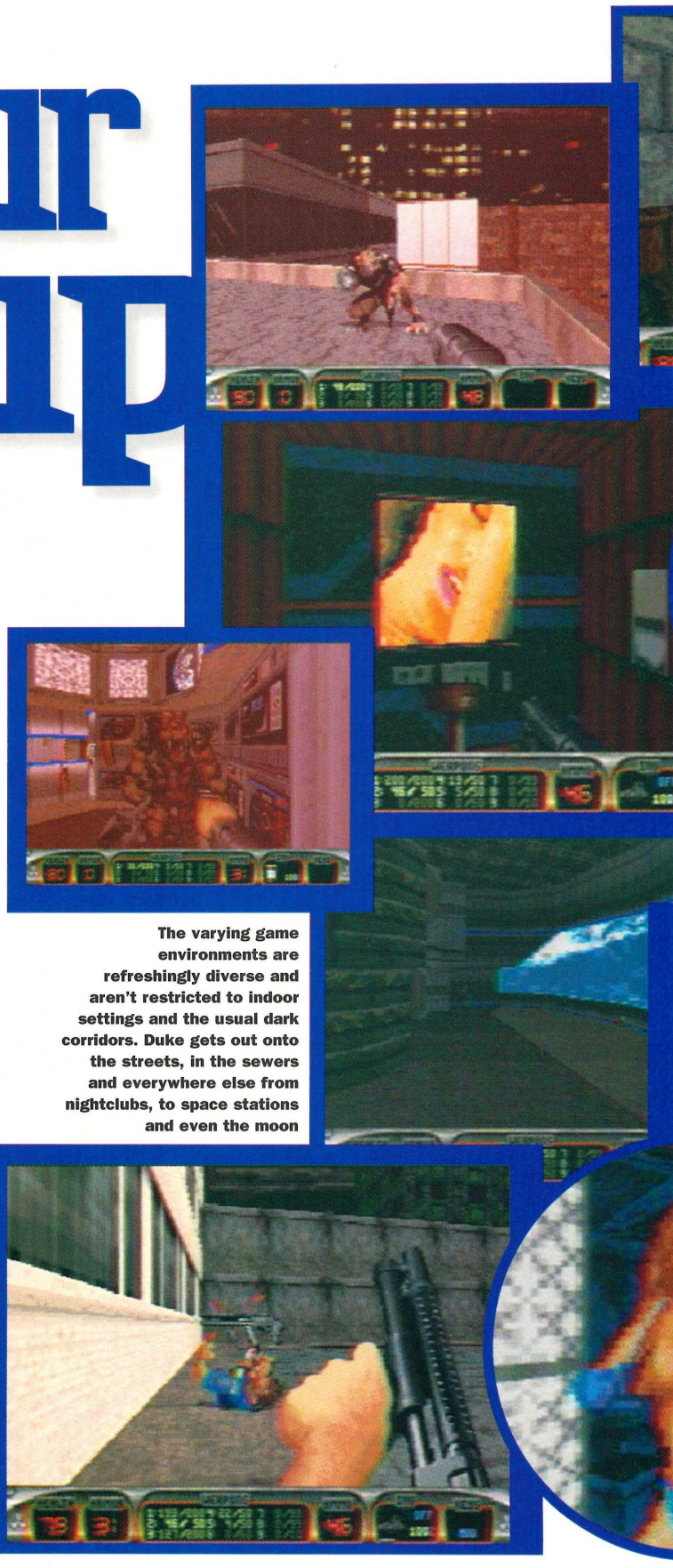
Aliens are kidnapping all the babes on earth. What are you gonna do? It's time to kick ass and chew gum!

PICTURE IT, YOU'RE DUKE NUKEM, a chisel chinned, blonde haired, shade wearing, totty magnet and all round hard-as-nails bloke. Your normally productive routine of being hard and copping off with birds has been interrupted by some rather thoughtless aliens. Apparently these guys fancy a bit of earthling love, only they missed the agony hour on Rich and Jude's 'This Morning' and thus have failed to benefit from the unrivalled seduction skills of said Rich. Finding themselves completely void of chat-up techniques their score rate reads zero, prompting plan B. So off they set, stomping around, knocking off the competition and nicking all the females. Now, being a love god, Duke isn't too impressed with these aliens muscling in on his patch and hitting on all his chicks, and so the rumble begins.

There have been a fair few first-person shoot'em-ups appearing on the PlayStation since Doom first showed the world how it was done. The dark, gloomy and harrowing atmosphere created feelings of dread and apprehension that set it apart from other games, and inspired a host of titles that struggled to obtain the same intensity, good attempts though they were. And so up sprouted a new genre that would spawn offspring at a healthy rate. Duke Nukem 3D is the latest addition to this family. It was a hit on the PC due to it's tongue in cheek approach and all round playability, and you'll be glad to hear that nothing has been sacrificed in its conversion onto PlayStation.

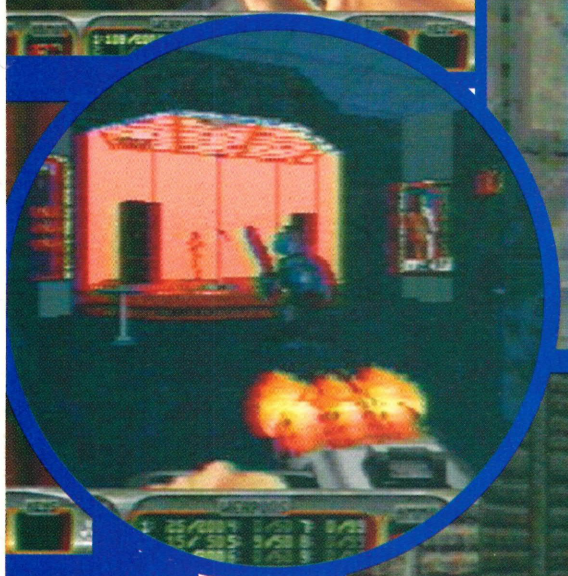
Although it lacks the malevolent atmosphere of a Doom or Acclaim's Alien Trilogy, Duke more than makes up for this with a rich vein of humour. It's the touches here and there that are so often the reason for a game emerging from the shadows of its competitors and obtaining cult status, and Duke is stuffed to the brim. For instance if you enter the seedy porn cinema on level one and make it up to the projector room, Duke can flick a switch to get the projector rolling. Watch as the lights dim and images of a pixelated beauty flash alluringly across the screen.

The levels are big and there's stuff hidden everywhere, and with Duke being able to crawl, jump and look up and down, swim and use his jet pack, there's few stones that should be left unturned among the 30 levels that have survived from the PC original, as well as a few extra ones that PC owners had to pay more for, suckers.

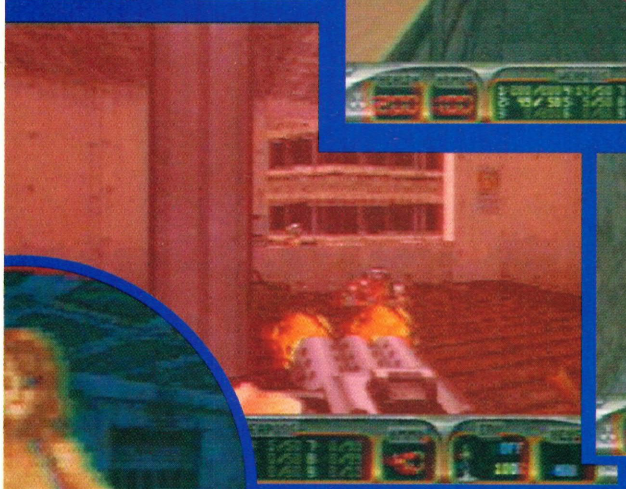


The varying game environments are refreshingly diverse and aren't restricted to indoor settings and the usual dark corridors. Duke gets out onto the streets, in the sewers and everywhere else from nightclubs, to space stations and even the moon

There's a healthy amount of weapons and pick ups for you to make use of, packing plenty of power for those bone-crunching close range hits. The twisted sicko's among you will be delighted to hear that the shrink ray allows you to reduce the size of your foes to that of an action man, after which Duke can crush them under foot, leaving a trail of bloody footprints behind him thereafter



The Holo-Duke is a device that projects an image of Duke for a given time. Set it up in an alien populated area as a distraction and then pick off the bad guys at your pleasure, or use the pipe-bomb and lay a grenade, detonating it from a safe distance which rips the little buggers apart



The game is strong on adult humour with the porn cinema and adult entertainment store on level one, as well as a host of scantily clad ladies who are only too happy to show you their pixels, if you're that way inclined. What other game lets you kick open a toilet door to find an alien sat on the bowl, and then lets you take aim and blow him away mid-dump?

You'll need to search everywhere to find some essentials for advancement through the game, with aqua lungs, night vision goggles and jet-packs just some of the tools at your disposal. Progress can only be made if Duke finds access cards to open certain doors, these are hidden about the levels and are usually well guarded so a little strategy is required to be successful

Game Title

Duke Nukem 3D

Software House

GT Interactive

Release Date

November '97

Winning Formula

At last, a racing game that isn't a Ridge Racer clone. Karting is about to hit the PlayStation in a big way...

AFTER LAST MONTH'S RIDICULOUS AMOUNT of racing games it's good to see one of the first things to arrive for a preview in this issue was another vehicular treat. At least this time it isn't a Ridge Racer/Rage Racer/V Rally/Total Drivin' clone! What Telstar has lined up for us is a sexy little karting treat.

Those of you who've been karting will know what a laugh it can be (well, until you spin off into a wall of tyres and jar your neck and damage it permanently). For those of you who haven't, you should go immediately (just pretend you missed the little scare story and you'll be sure to have a great time. Honest!).

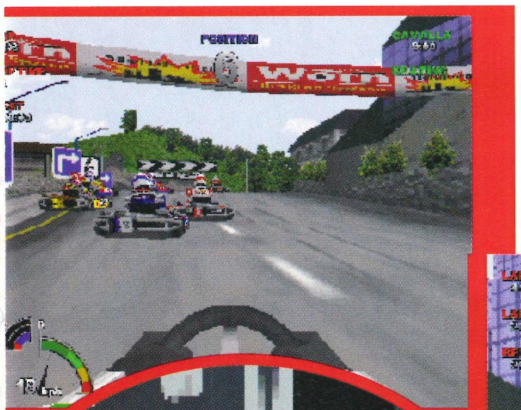
Anyway, should you find yourself under-age or under-funded to try out such speedy delights you can always go for the next best thing – Formula Karts. Well that's the idea anyway, and from what we've seen it looks as though Telstar have produced the goods.

Telstar promises that Formula Karts will be a full 3-D racing game featuring polygon tracks, polygon karts with motion-sampled animated drivers, realistic kart handling and eight stunning tracks to test even the most experienced of drivers. But then it would claim that!

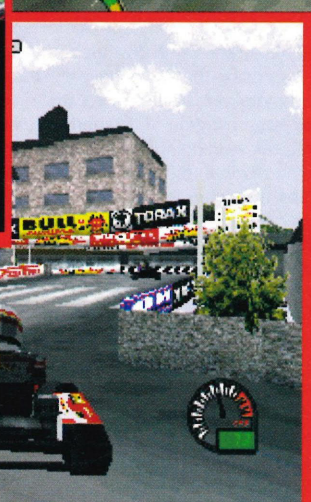
Seriously though, Formula Karts looks as though it's faster than Jay's sister on a Saturday night down the local Ritzy (and that's pretty damn fast!). The graphics are slick and as for the game in general, well it's coming on nicely and certainly looks excellent. We're promised a review in time for next month's instalment of PSP so if Karting's your game, get ready for this.

By the time the game hits the shelves there will be eight different teams, all with their own karts and designs for you to choose from. Extensive work has gone into the graphics as you can see, and the detail level is extremely high throughout

Featuring Championship, Single Race and Arcade modes of play, Telstar hopes that Formula Karts will feature something for everyone, especially those who are getting tired of the horde of racing clones that have sprung up of late. You know who you are



Formula Karts features a two-player split screen mode so you can have the ultimate karting battle with the friend of your choice. We all know multi-player games are more fun, and at least you don't need two PlayStations to enjoy some interaction with this one



As anyone who's done it knows, outdoor karting is the real business and, true to this, Formula Karts will feature a wide variety of road surfaces each with different characteristics that will affect your racing style accordingly

Telstar tells us that Formula Karts' specially designed advanced AI means that computer controlled drivers learn your style and adapt accordingly. This makes for a more strategic race and if you annoy somebody at one stage, they'll be keen to get even at a later date

Game Title

Formula Karts

Software House

Telstar

Release Date

November

Bold as a Coot

To date, Crash Bandicoot has shifted 1.5 million units – can Crash 2 repeat the trick?

NEXT TIME YOU SEE A HAS-BEEN videogame character hunched up against a wall, bottle of meths by his feet, puke stuck to his old stained donkey jacket – dig deep and spare him some change. You see, life as a game character isn't easy. A new cheeky platformer chappie comes along every month and there are only a few who make it to the big time. Horace for example is no longer skiing, he now lives in a hostel in Liverpool, Ecco the Dolphin is battling a drink problem and Agent Armstrong has taken work as a part-time doorman at the Beez Neez nightclub, Stockport.

But for those who do make it, the rewards are immense. Mario, the inexplicably popular lard-arsed Brooklyn plumber has been raking the cash in for years and Sonic the Hedgehog has so much dosh he's wasted the last few years frittering his money away in high-class casino's in the South of France. The most recent addition to the platform character's elite club of high fliers is Crash, a mad marsupial fella from Down Under. Last year he assured himself a place at the top after his first game made sales of a staggering 1.5 million units (do the sums for yourself – at £45 a throw he's raked in a hell of a lot of money for Sony and the laughing-all-the-way-to-the bank developers, Naughty Dog).

So it's hardly surprising that Sony have pestered Naughty Dog into squeezing even more sales out of the Crash franchise via a sequel. As you may have noticed, in this respect, videogames differ radically from films, as sequels in the videogaming world are often better than the original rather than being lame, unfunny affairs that even Steve Guttenburg bails out of.

Crash 2 doesn't disappoint. Despite the fact that a lot of people loved the first Crash in an unhealthy, almost carnal way (in a consumer test in the US, five out of eight gamesplayers expressed a preference for Crash over Mario64), the developers have still seen fit to tweak some of the bits they weren't satisfied with. Some luckless whingers accused the first Crash of being a little too restrictive in terms of play environments. Well they can bugger-off this time because the action in this adventure is much more free roaming. Although Crash 2 still follows a path, the game allows the player more freedom to move left and right and includes loads of game branching. The camera now has more movement than ever before, expanding the player's viewpoint. As well as the familiar third-person behind view of Crash, the levels have also expanded, allowing much greater freedom of movement. In addition, players can now interact to a much greater degree with the scenery (such as hanging off things, jumping and sliding, this time you get the opportunity to ride mad things like a jet-pak and a baby polar bear.

Another innovation is the 'warp room' layout. Using this you can enter any one of eight rooms per level, so if you're stuck on one room, quit out and have a go at another for a while. As if this, and the fact that the game is twice the size of its predecessor, isn't enough for you, the game's graphics engine has been souped-up so that the action is about as realistic as anything involving marsupials being chased by giant penguins can be.

Still, you don't want to take my word for it, look at the screen shots and see for yourself...

One of the highlights of Crash 2 is the jet-pack level. Rather than just navigate Crash left or right, now you've got to worry about flying under and over bombs, red hot pipes, murderous robots and lasers. And just in case your fretting because Crash might have lost some of it's old charm, hold you're horses, because Crash's creators have been careful to retain the flavour of the original. Favourite features such as the retro side scrolling bonus levels are still knocking about in Crash 2.

Crash's brand spanking new graphics engine allows for a huge increase in the number of polygons used to make up the play environment and allows much more realistic lighting effects to be used. As the screenshots show, Crash 2 boasts features such as realistic water effects, a gizmo that allows light and shadow to fall on the characters as they pass under light sources and much improved texture mapping. This time around Crash has got over ten times as many animation frames as in the previous game.

Game Title
Crash Bandicoot 2

Software House
Sony

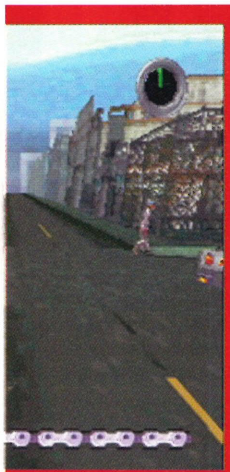
Release Date
December '97

Courier Crisis will feature unique 3D technology that will "create a true virtual city to ride around." As you do though you'd better start learning those short cuts if you want to get the package to its delivery point on time. So how's your memory?

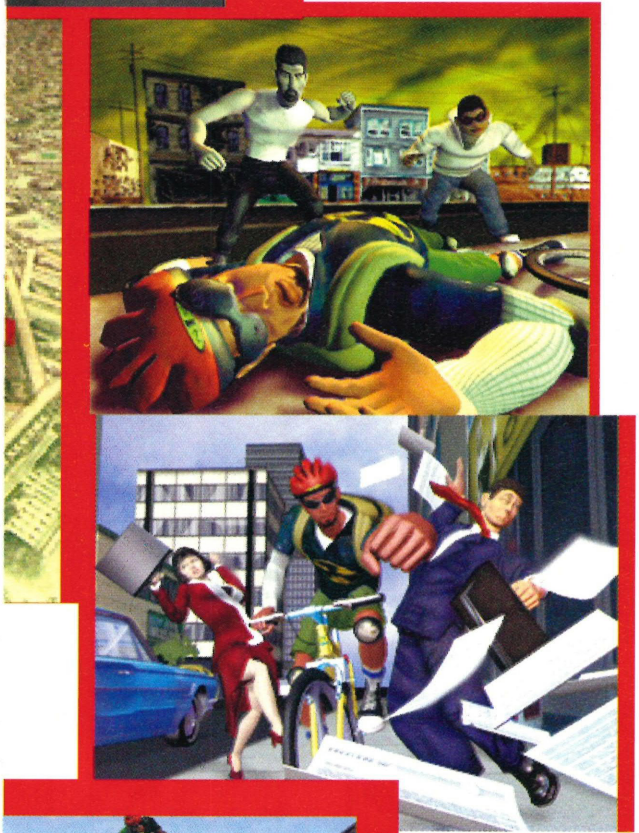
The faster you get the stuff to its destination, the more cash you get. The more cash you get the better the bike and accessories you can buy and as we all know, if you're a "rad" kid from the streets then you've got to keep up with the Joneses

BMG are promising a cool urban CD soundtrack to accompany your parcel delivering exploits. We've no idea what it will be at this stage but it's not like BMG aren't one of the biggest music companies in the world is it?

BMX boys have a lot of fun...



In the final version of Courier Crisis there will be 30 different levels and 15 different bikes you can obtain, each one better than the last. This amount of variation should add the extra gameplay that CC will need to become a serious contender in this year's cut-throat festive market



12 months later and still waiting for that urgent package? We've all slated couriers, but now the shoe's on the other foot

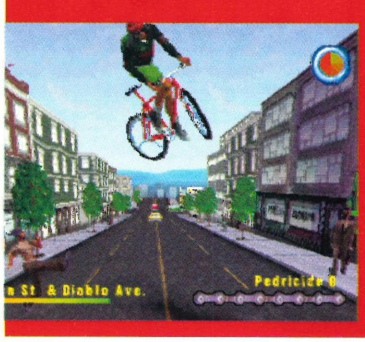
WHEN YOU HEAR THOSE FATEFUL words, "It'll be delivered before 9:30am mate" you know you haven't got a cat in hell's chance of getting your package this side of next week. That's couriers for you. Well, maybe it's just the ones we use here at PlayStation Pro, who knows? Anyway, courtesy of BMG we're now going to get the chance to play the delivery guy, rather than the irate customer for a change.

Yes, that's right folks, it's Paperboy for 1997. The old 8 bit game idea gets a fresh burst of life and returns as Courier Crisis. There's a crisis alright, and you're the courier who's going to deliver the goods.

You've landed yourself a job in the big city delivering people's parcels and your bosses just don't care how they get there. You can use fair means or foul, just as long as your deadlines are met and the punter gets their package.

By the time the game is finished there will be five distinct areas of the city through which you'll have to make deliveries. These are Skid Row, the Waterfront, the Civic Centre, the Industrial Zone and Chinatown. As you play on you'll need to learn the roads and where they go. A good shortcut will save time and earn you more money for getting the goods to their destination early.

Courier Crisis looks like it's going to drag one of the classic original video gaming ideas kicking and screaming onto 32bit technology. Paperboy was always good for a laugh and it's just possible that this may become equally as popular. Time will tell if it still holds up, but at this stage of the proceedings it's looking quite spectacular, especially if you're a bit of a BMX bandit.



Unlike Paperboy, in CC you can actually leather the pedestrians as you go along. There's little to no advantage in doing so other than relieving tension, but it's a nice sideline business. Having said that, if you do it too often you'll get the police on your tail and that could just be the start of your problems

Game Title
Courier Crisis

Software House
BMG Interactive

Release Date
November '97

Dodgy Dagger

Yes, it's time to wander about exotic locations picking up seemingly useless items again – Broken Sword is back

WHAT ARE THE TRADITIONAL STRENGTHS of the PSX? Its ability to render even the most complicated and detailed graphics in the blink of an eye and the sheer speed of the games, right? So why then has point'n'click – the old staple of slower and less powerful machines – proved so successful on the console?

When Broken Sword was released a few years ago, it proved to be enduringly popular on all formats. Based around the exploits of a clean cut young American, George Stobbart, the game immersed the player in a world of conspiracy and danger. With its distinctive style of compelling, cerebral gameplay and colourful cartoon-like animation, Broken Sword carved out a lucrative little niche for itself in a PlayStation games market dominated by arcade racers and beat'em-ups.

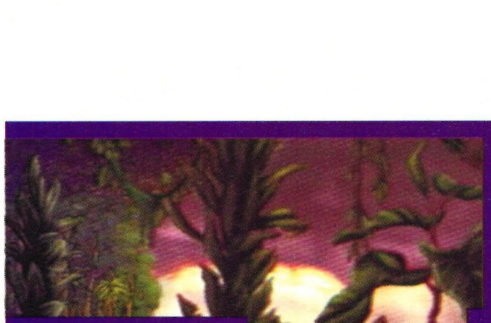
After the initial success of the original, it comes as no surprise that developers Revolution are bringing out a sequel. Although remaining faithful to the original game, Broken Sword 2: The Smoking Mirror, boasts a number of improvements over its predecessor. The gameplay has been tweaked and tuned to make it a little more challenging and accessible. More puzzles, a faster pace of gameplay and a refined user interface help to make the game easier to get into, whilst the improved graphics add a further element of realism to the proceedings.

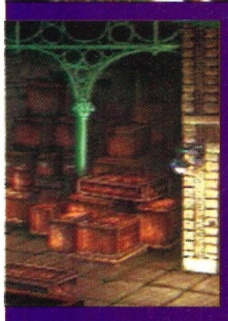
Fresh from defeating the Knights Templar, Broken Sword 2 sees the intrepid Stobbart and his girlfriend Nico, embarking on a desperate quest to save the world from an international crime syndicate and an ancient Mayan Cult.

Although the problem solving in Broken Sword still requires the analytical ability of Sherlock Holmes, the puzzles are designed to be a good deal more logical than in first game. In order to succeed you are going to have to sit down, chill out, experiment, observe everything and use your imagination. For somebody who can't even complete the Sun's Quick Crossword (like me), Broken Sword is tougher than Grant Mitchell on PCPs, but persevere you'll find solving the trickier problems immensely rewarding.

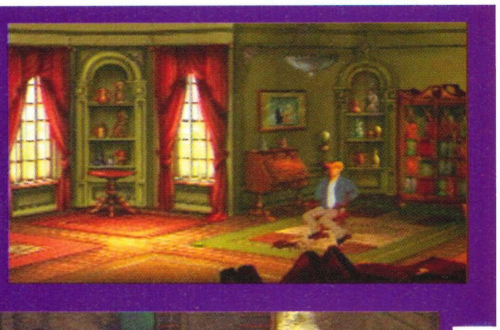
With music by Barrington Phelong (who's previous work has included writing the theme and incidental music for Inspector Morse) and locations ranging from deserted warehouses to ancient Mayan ruins in the Mexican jungle, the gameplay absorbs the player just as much as more 'dynamic' looking puzzlers such as Tomb Raider.

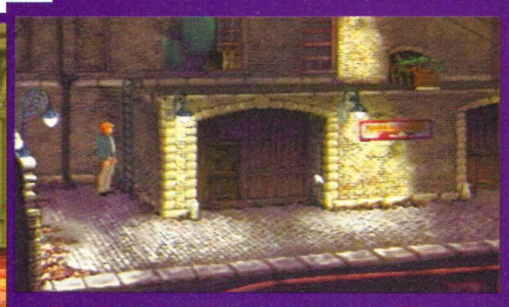
Apparently, after the age of 19 you loose 10,000 brain cells a day (twice as many if you get pissed a lot), so you might as well use'em before you loose'em. If you're in the market for a stylish and involving adventure game that exercises the brain as well as the trigger finger, Broken Sword 2: The Smoking Mirror should be in the stores before Xmas.

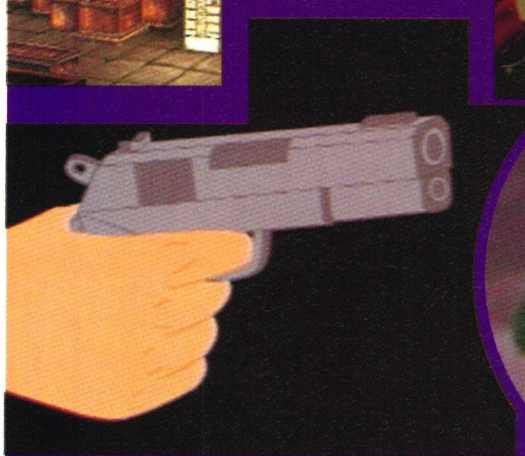


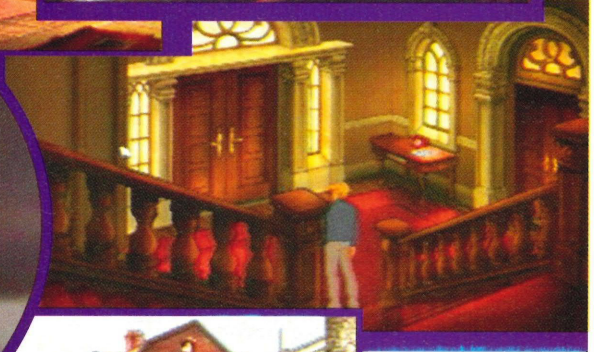


Although Revolution have retained the hand-drawn style of the original game, a number of graphic improvements have been made. There are apparently 16 levels of translucency and shadow, so that depending on the thickness of the smoke or the amount of light available, your character is obscured to a greater or lesser degree. Broken Sword 2 also uses a favourite trick learnt from countless scrolling shoot'em-ups - Parallax layers. By adding layers to the background and foreground you can add a real element of depth to the scenery

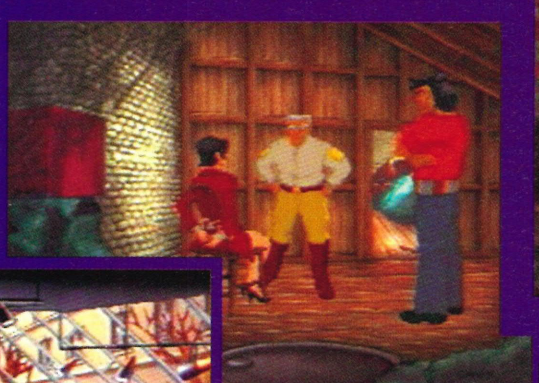


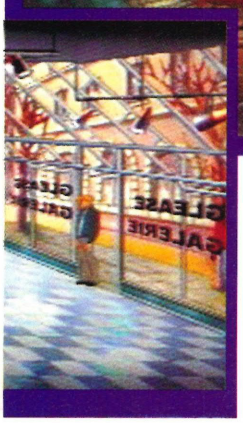




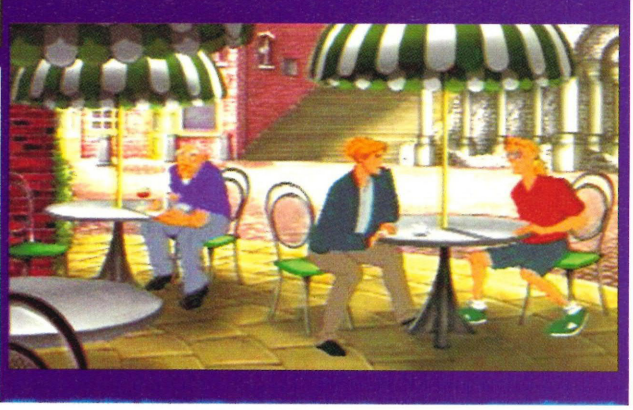


Although your character, George Stobbart initially comes across as the epitome of tact and diplomacy, make sure you check out his mile wide suicidal streak in the later stages of the game. In one level you can get him to tell a brutal assassin to "come out here so I can give you a kicking," but make sure you save the game first





Although your quest to save the world from the evil designs of Mayan cults and international crime syndicates, is deadly serious, there are a many humorous touches in Broken Sword 2 and some tops quotes. What other game features a psychotic hitman who insists that he hates pizza because olives are "the devil's butt nuggets?"



Game Title

Broken Sword 2: The Smoking Mirror

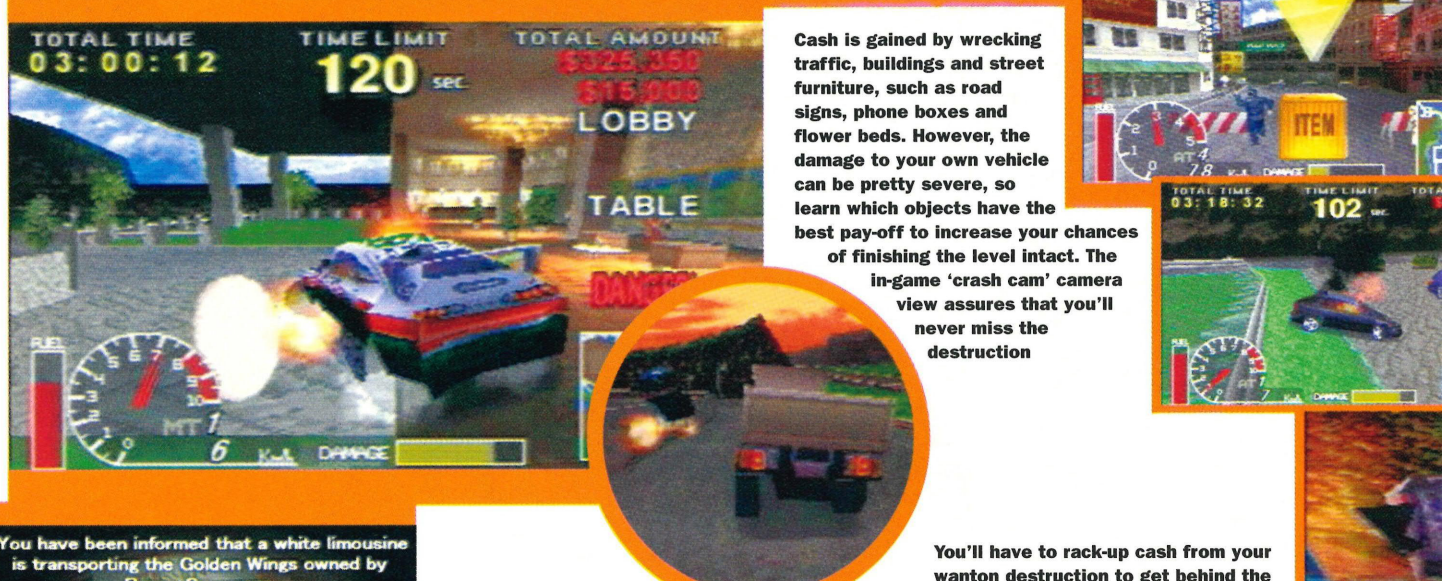
Software House

Sony

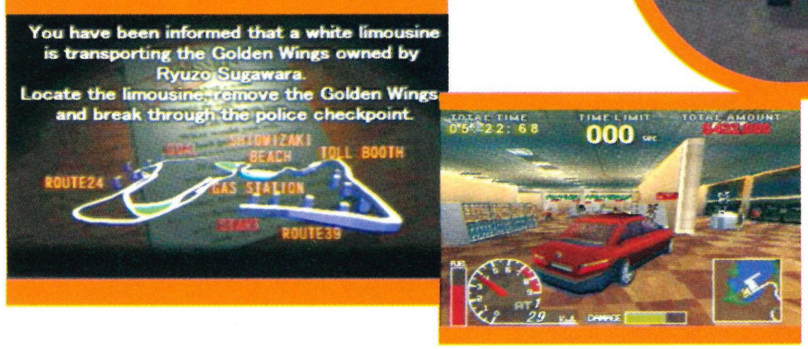
Release Date

December '97

Visually the game is of a high standard, and the playability level is up there too. Combine these features with hundreds of screaming pedestrians, desperately trying to scramble out of the way of an oncoming Greyhound coach, and you've got a game that's as enjoyable to watch as it is to play



Cash is gained by wrecking traffic, buildings and street furniture, such as road signs, phone boxes and flower beds. However, the damage to your own vehicle can be pretty severe, so learn which objects have the best pay-off to increase your chances of finishing the level intact. The in-game 'crash cam' camera view assures that you'll never miss the destruction



You'll have to rack-up cash from your wanton destruction to get behind the wheel of the more impressive cars, as well as keeping your own damage at low levels. Completing the missions in a good time will help too, and it's worth persisting to get at the more interesting methods of transport. Check out the damaging capabilities of the dump truck through a down town area. You can't beat ploughing through the entire fleet of the local constabulary in an unstoppable artick'

Hit and RUN

The quickest way from A to B is always a straight line. Trust some bloody idiot to build a shopping arcade in the way!

EVER FANCIED GETTING BEHIND THE wheel of a Mini Cooper and smashing through the ram-raid shutters at your local 8 'till late, helping yourself to the lovely delights behind the beer and tobacco counter, before hitting the road with scant regard for human life or home insurance policies? Of course you have, this is probably your idea of a trip to the local Viccy Wine on a Saturday to stock up for Match Of the Day. For those of you that let moral values get the better of your conscience, help is at hand to relieve you of those pent-up joyriding urges with the forthcoming release of Ascii's Felony 11-79.

It's not everybody's idea of political correctness to release a game where the principal elements involve stealing ancient artefacts, and then burning to the drop-off point whilst aggravating the filth and causing as much damage to public property as possible. But then, political correctness and the content of videogames have never exactly gone hand-in-hand have they?

In case you're wondering, the 11-79 part of the game's title refers to American police jargon for a hit-and-run felony, and there's no shortage of reasons for the cops to be called in as you tear around looking for a series of antiques. Destruction is very much the order of the day as cash is awarded for the amount of damage that you inflict upon the streets. Oh yes, practically everything on screen, from police cars to double-decker buses, is money waiting to be made. It's not just an excuse to wreak havoc though, as your own vehicle can only sustain a certain amount of damage, so some selective road-rage is required if you're going to reach the goal before the police haul your ass over to the kerb and add more than a few points to your licence.

With settings from LA's Chinatown to Paris at night and rush-hour in Japan, it's time to buckle up, shift into gear and drive straight through some of Paris' finest cafes and restaurants. Looks like this could be a lot of fun.

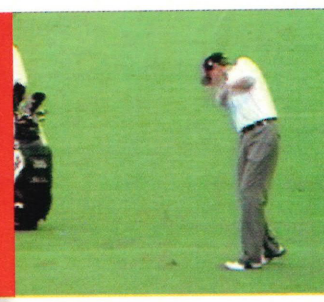
The background music has been provided by the Surf Coasters, which I'm sure all of you will have heard of (not). It's actually quite cheerful listening to the happy, upbeat guitar twangs of some drugged-up surf hippies whilst careering through the entrance to the Hilton. Just like a Sunday drive through the country

Game Title
Felony 11-79

Software House
Ascii Entertainment

Release Date
November '97

Down to a tee



We thought it was about time we went clubbing with a quality date. So we went out with this little temptress...

GOLF. YOU EITHER LOVE IT or hate it. It's one of those sports that some people can watch for hours, whilst others would rather watch UK Gold. However, it seems that everybody loves PlayStation golf games. We don't understand why. EA don't care and... their PGA series continues to sell by the truckload.

EA Sports is now looking to further its domination over the sports game world with this year's version of its classic PGA Tour licence. It must be really easy working at EA, all they seem to do is add spit and polish to their successful older games and everyone goes out and faithfully buys the next annual installment.

PGA Tour '98 will doubtless have fans of the other games in the series wetting themselves in anticipation, but EA will also be hoping to catch a few of the newer PlayStation owners at the same time.

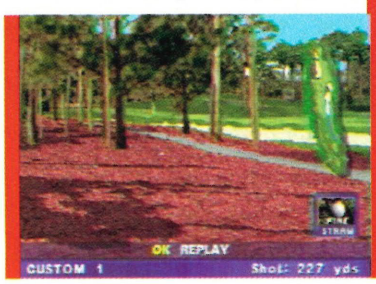
What we have here are some improved courses, better graphics and seemingly quicker loading, plus a dollop of the usual high standard of gloss that Electronic Arts supplies free of charge with all its games.

Control of your golfer seems to be pretty much the same as ever – button clicks are used to judge the amount of power and direction of the shot. There's not too much that could be changed here really as the system was pretty much perfect as it was.

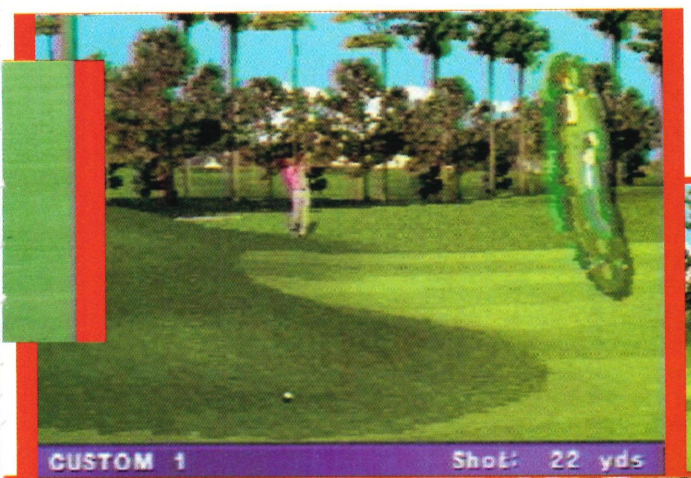
Included in this edition is a nice all-American commentator for your enjoyment. In the final version he'll talk you through the hole before you tee off and give loads of helpful advice when you finally get onto a green by letting you know which way the ball will run.

It's going to be interesting to see if there are enough changes included to make it worthwhile for existing owners, but we'll be addressing that, and all the other points, when we eventually get our hands on some reviewable code as soon as it arrives at the PSP offices.

Golf might not be everybody's cup of tea but if you're a fan of the video game versions of the sport, then at some point you will have come across the PGA series. The game is virtually at its apex anyway, so all we can expect are minor improvements on what is already a very good game

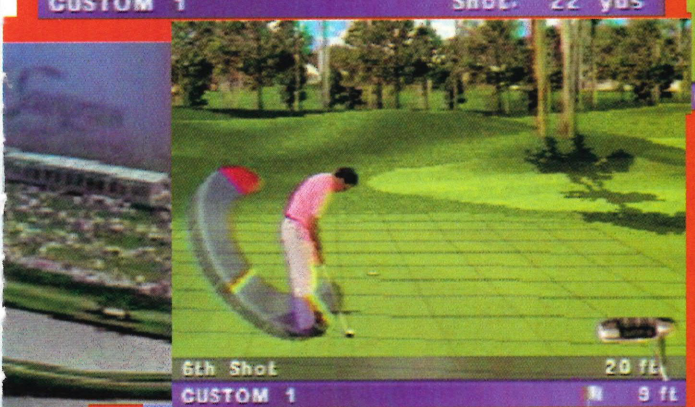


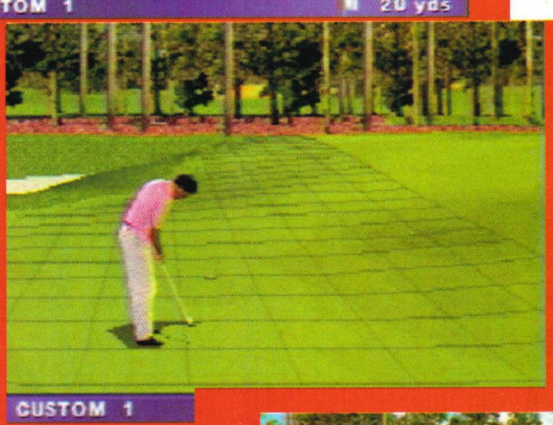
The game can be set on varying levels of forgiveness. If you set it right to the top difficulty, anything short of a perfect shot is going to cause real problems. This really does up the ante and pile the pressure on if you want to win anything

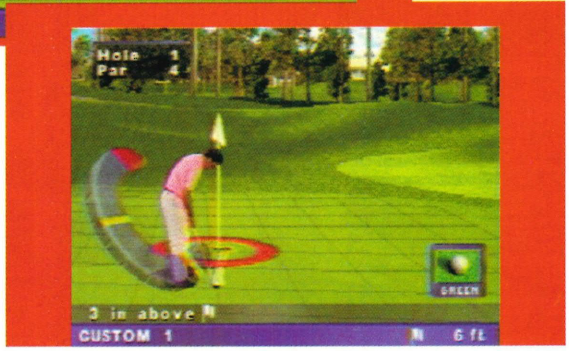


You are given the option of choosing from a number of real golfers who have been digitised in action. You can also play against them if you fancy a mean game as you try to build your own golfer up into a contender from oblivion

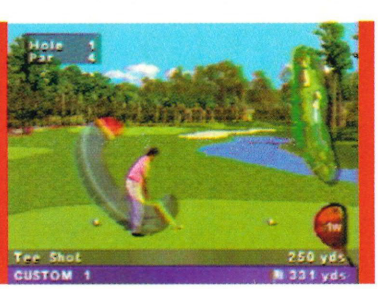
The PGA Tour is where golf's money is, and you have a chance to compete with the best in the world to get your grubby paws on a share of it. It's a tough, mentally intense competition with little margin for error, but if you can hang on in there fame is just around the corner







Each hole will be preceded with a fly-by and running commentary about the best way to approach it. This is extremely handy initially as you get to learn all about the hazards before you actually leather your ball into them



Game Title
PGA Tour '98

Software House
EA Sports

Release Date
December '97

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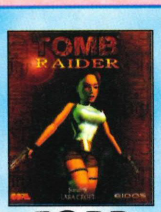

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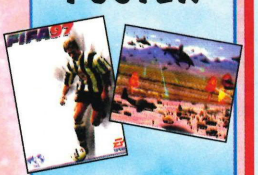

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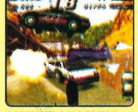

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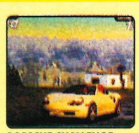

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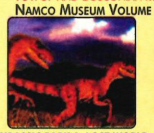

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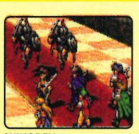

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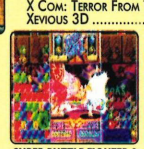

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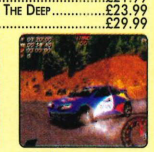
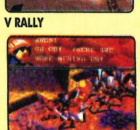


V RALLY

WARCRAFT 2



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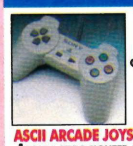

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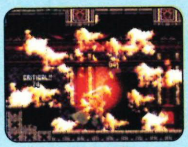
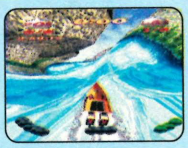


CASTLEVANIA DUE OCTOBER



RAPID RACER DUE NOVEMBER

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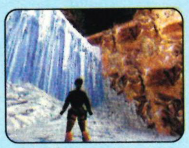
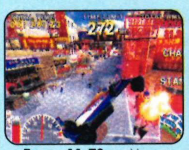


TOMB RAIDER 2 DUE NOVEMBER



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WAR GODS DUE OCTOBER

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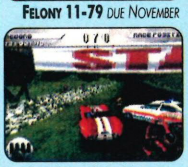

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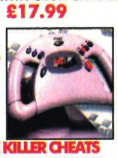

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ACTUA TENNIS.....OCTOBER
APACHE LONGBOW.....DECEMBER
CASTLEVANIA.....OCTOBER
CLAYFIGHTER EXTREME.....DECEMBER
CRASH BANDICOOT 2.....DECEMBER
DISCWORLD 2.....NOVEMBER
FANTASTIC 4.....5TH AUGUST
FIGHTING FORCE.....30TH OCTOBER
G POLICE.....END OCTOBER
HERC'S ADVENTURE.....OCTOBER
KILLING TIME.....NOVEMBER
KURUSHI.....OCTOBER
LETHAL ENFORCERS 1 & 2.....OCT/NOV
MAGIC THE GATHERING.....NOVEMBER
MOTO RACER.....24TH OCTOBER
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NUCLEAR STRIKE.....3RD OCTOBER
PREMIER MANAGER '98.....OCTOBER
SCREAMER 2.....END NOVEMBER
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WAR GODS.....OCTOBER
WING OVER.....MID OCTOBER

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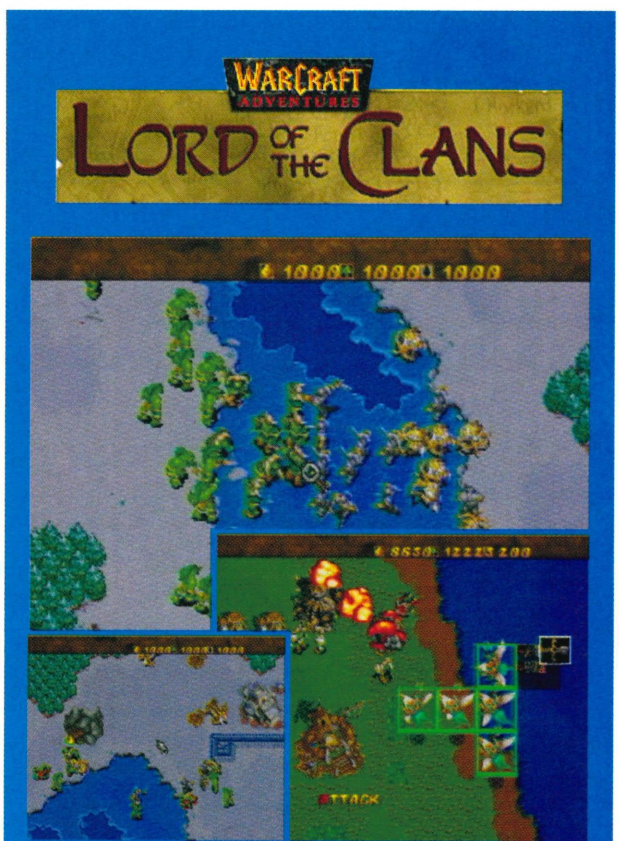
Cheat, Drink and Be Merry

Why spend hour upon hour hammering away for little or no reward? If you're a dishonest no-good cheat, you're in for a treat. If on the other hand, you're not the unscrupulous type, skip past the next few pages as there are so many handy cheats and tips, that if you were to use them, you'd let yourself down terribly. However, for the low-life cheats out there, here are some mean hints so you can spend less time playing and more time down the pub!



WARCRAFT II

Incredibly involving take on Command and Conquer set in days of old. If you're having trouble with this mind twister then here are some tips to help you along

glttrng ..... more gold, wood, oil
mkts ..... quick build
nscrn ..... show map
tsgddytd ..... invisible
vrylttl ..... magic upgrade
dckmt ..... upgrade human/orcs and buildings
vldz ..... quick oil load

TOSHINDEN 3

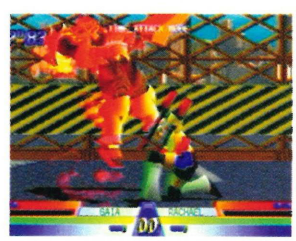
Although the third in the series was a little disappointing, it still has many fans despite the arrivals of Soul Blade and the imminent release of Tekken 3. Here are a few handy hints for players who just can't avoid those flying fists and mammoth kicks.

HINTS
Here's a few tips that make this game even better:

PARRY ATTACK
Press ⬅ and ▲ or ● at the same time. Each character has one or more attacks that cause them to flash white, deflect any incoming attack, and launch a powerful counter-attack. Kayin doesn't have a ▲ version, just press ● ⬅ You still take damage if you're hit by an incoming attack, but you just don't suffer any other effects from it.

JUGGLE BREAK
Hammer ● after you've been bounced up into the air from an attack. This will often let you 'bounce' out of the juggle, flashing white.

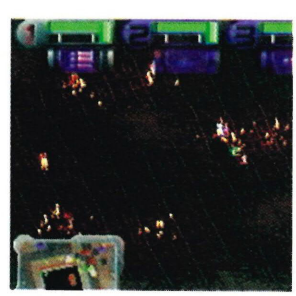
RICHOCHET
▲ or ● as hitting wall: When you are thrown horizontally



into a wall, hitting ▲ will let you shoot back in a horizontal path while attacking. ● lets you land safely without the attack.

TURNAROUND
Hold back and press ● and ▲. Do this whilst in throwing range and your character will grab their opponent and pull them while turning around. Your character winds up facing the back of their opponent, handy for combos...

SYNDICATE WARS



A massively popular game which offers many hours of strategic fun for people who like to use a little brain in their brawls. If you're struggling to pick up a winning strategy. then this should do much to help cause.

THE LONG-RANGE RIFLE - FIRST ENCOUNTERS
One of the most powerful weapons that you can acquire is the long-range rifle.
Thankfully it's also one of the most powerful, although it takes quite some time to reload. Ideally, after the bank robbery stage, you should put all of your money into more research for it. Take the weapon with you on the next level although it isn't fully researched, but if you use it there's a 25% chance that it could drain all of your energy
Use the other agents to protect the one with the long-range rifle (LRs) and take the enemies out from afar. Just be wary that there is a chance of it all going pear-shaped. You have been warned!

THE LONG-RANGE RIFLE - RESEARCH COMPLETE
Once research has been completly outfitted all of your agents they should now have a long-range rifle, minigun, persuadatrons, and if possible, be carrying medikits. When you see enemy agents coming toward you get all of your agents to bring out their long-range rifles. Fire a round from each agent. Use the minguns to take out any other enemies. The long-range rifle takes about 10 seconds to reload, so any stragglers can be taken out with a second shot. Before a battle, put all drugs right into the red. The best time to use the long-range rifle is when you're being charged by enemy agents as they rarely miss.
If the agents are grouped 'in the red,' then the controlling agent does not fire unless you force him to. Choose a different controlling agent if some are in the red and let the first one fire. Keep rotating the controlling agent while the others reload.

THE MINIGUN
Whenever you use the miniguns, make sure you tell the agents where to fire. Don't let the drugs do the work.The minigun is more powerful than you'd imagine. During close combat against lots of enemy agents, the miniguns are better than pulse lasers.

AIRBORNE APCS
These fellas can sometimes be annoying, especially in the earlier stages. They follow a set route while patrolling and if they don't spot you, then you're quids in and you can fire long-range rifles at them a few times before they wake up.
As soon as you see a flying APC, get your rifles ready and pump up the drugs to the red. Fire the first load of shots at it. If it doesn't charge towards you, wait there for it to come around again and blast it once more. When the vehicle does charge toward you, use the miniguns and continuously fire untill the LRs are reloaded. Fire another barrage of LRs. Then back to miniguns.
As it begins falling from the sky get out of the way quick. Falling debris or the APC itself landing on you is not a good idea. If it is safe to do so, lower the drug supply in the agents who are wounded back to normal; their health will return faster with no drugs.

ANOTHER TIP
If you see an APC flying towards you, go undercover of a building or under a set of stairs, as it can't attack you there. Send a lone agent out and while the APC attacks him send the other agents out to attack it from behind.
Remember to get out of the way before it crashes into the ground.

HUGE SPIDERS
These are massive things but they're relatively simple to kill.When you hear them coming (they make a very mechanical sound), get yourself prepared for the battle. When it comes into sight use your long-range rifles to take them out of the equation. Pump them with four shots and either retreat or whip out your miniguns for use while the rifle reloads.
Then change back to the Rifles and hit it with another four shots. Only then will it be an ex-spider. A shoot-out with lasers on level ground will get at least some of your guys killed every time, but a height advantage allows you to beat them easily. Just retreat to the back corner of the barracks and position yourself to get a clear shot at the spiders as they approach. Remember to charge up your lasers before you shoot.

RECRUITING AN ARMY
Some missions are just too damn difficult and will require you to have a far greater number of allies to do your stuff.
On these missions you will need to recruit the civilians to assist you and your cause. It's a waste of time attempting to persuade an enemy to join you as you more often than not end up toasted. The best thing to do is go around persuading other citizens to join you.
Try to recruit around 40 before attacking the enemies. They do make great shields and you should also try to persuade the police to join you. The great thing about civilians, although they initially carry no weapons, they make great body shields. Also, persuading cops and getting the citizens to pick up fallen guns will help you no end.
Be aware that your army of citizens can be massacred easily by a lone explosive left by a dead agent.

EPIDERMIS 1: This can be found in Eurocorp mission 3 (Matochkin Star) in the upper-left corner of the Church's base. It can also be found in Church mission 7 (Rome) in a building located in the northern Eurocorp headquarters.

EPIDERMIS 2: This can be found in Eurocorp mission 7 (Beijing) in a building located in the middle of the map. It can also be found in Church mission 9 (Cairo) in a square building with four doors.

EPIDERMIS 3: This can be found in Eurocorp mission 10 (Buenos Aires) in a building located in the upper-middle section of the base in the north-east corner of the map. It can also be found in Church mission 18 (Bankok) in the weapon warehouse.

EPIDERMIS 4: This can be found in Eurocorp mission 15 (Honolulu) on a Church agent next to the tanks near the second crossroads. It can also be found in Church mission 21 (Cape Town) in the alleyway between two churches.

NEED MORE AGENTS
You might find after a while that you're agents are dwindling in number so you do need some more. To persuade an agent you will need to have many civilians and set up a trap. Find somewhere where there is only one way in and set yourself up so that the enemy agent has to turn a corner to fire at you. Stand around that corner with around 40 citizens behind you, and whip out your persuadatron.
Make sure that you yourself aren't walking into a trap and send out one agent to entice the enemy agents into your little trap.
As the enemy makes his way towards you to shoot you, go around the corner and the agent will be in range of your persuadatron before he can shoot. The fool then joins you and your cause.

GETTING MORE MONEY
There are three ways you can go about this:

THE PROPER WAY
Banks are signified by a large three on the doors. You are going to rob this for more cash. Once you find one, blow the place up. The police will be on your tail in no time, so be prepared for a battle. If possible, take the police out of the equation before you enter the bank. In fact, if there's a police station on the level, make sure this is levelled first.
Once the bank is blown up, there will be a loads of briefcases on the ground, collect them all.

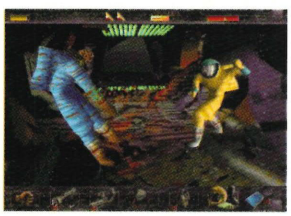
THE IMPROPER WAY
You can actually replay mission 3 forever, provided that you never finish the mission. That mission is where you have to persuade a bunch of scientists. And, in a city called Geneva, there's an executive with two police escorts carrying $200,000. Persuade the scientist in that stage, then the money-man will appear to the north-east of the scientists. After you have the money, pause the game and quit..
You'll now have the money and the scientists! When you return to city to gain another $200,000 and two scientists. Don't worry about not completing the mission as the subsequent missions will ensue. You can leave mission 3 there and

go back anytime you want. Also, mission 3 Matochkin Star City has an epidermis level 1 in it also. Near the north-east corner are two temples. One contains a briefcase.

The third way to get money is to follow these steps:
1 Buy the most expensive weapon for only one agent.
2 Click on the weapon to bring up the sell option.
3 Select the all agents button. The weapon that only one agent has will disappear from the agent's inventory list.The sell button is still there.
4 Click on the sell button. This will give you money as though all the agents had had the weapon. It's a little long winded but does work.

TIME COMMANDO

ALL LEVEL CODES



Enter the following codes under the **"Start Code"** menu option

EASY
Level 1:
Level 2: DMAKDJMF
Level 3: HMPSTWIF
Level 4: JQMSZZI-IV
Level 5: LPUJJMLW
Level 6: FGAZTPKP
Level 7: JGPHKDNS
Level 8: RIWUSFNM
REGULAR
Level 1: MI,DLZGGE
Level 2: BCJAKKFY
Level 3: FCYIAYBZ
Level 4: HLVIGBBQ
Level 5: JKDAQNEQ
Level 6: DBJPARDJ
Level 7: HBYXQTJEAK
Level 8: PDFLZC,GG
HARD:
Level 1: SOI:)OLGNK
Level 2: TFJSVJMC
Level 3: XFYAMXIE
Level 4: ZOVASAIV
Level 5: BODSGWLW
Level 6: VEJHMQKO
Level 7: ZEYPCEHQ
Level 8: HMFDLGNN

LIFEFORCE TENKA

ALL WEAPONS
Pause the game and hold **L1** and press:
▲ **R1** ▲ ■ **R1** ● ■ ■
Then release **L1**.

RETURN FIRE

A strangely enjoyable game which deserved a little more attention. To make progress you can tap in these combinations to skip levels.

One-player mode codes
2: Umbrella, Bird, Butterfly, Flower.
3: Smiley, Cup, Rabbit, Umbrella.
4: Rabbit, Umbrella, Bird, Bird.
5: Flower, Umbrella, Rabbit, Cup.

Two-player mode codes
2: Butterfly, Umbrella, Bear, Heart.
3: Bear, Rabbit, Flower, Shamrock.
4: Umbrella, Heart, Shamrock, Flower.
5: Umbrella, Bear, Rabbit, Heart.
6: Cup, Bird, Butterfly, Flower.
7: Heart, Flower, Shamrock, Rabbit.
8: Heart, Bear, Rabbit, Heart.
9: Bear, Rabbit, Shamrock, Flower.
10: Butterfly, Smiley, Umbrella, Shamrock.
11: Bear, Flower, Smiley, Flower.
12: Cup, Bear, Flower, Umbrella.
13: Heart, Bird, Flower, Shamrock.
14: Smiley, Bird, Shamrock, Cup.
15: Cup, Bird, Shamrock, Bear.
16: Umbrella, Cup, Bird, Flower.
17: Smiley, Bear, Rabbit, Flower.
18: Shamrock, Shamrock, Shamrock, Shamrock.

LOST VIKINGS 2

An extensive range of cheats for one of the more enjoyable puzzle games
Infinite energy cheat
Input this code on the password screen and select 'Load Game': **CH3T**
Start a new game or enter a level password to play with maximum energy

LEVEL CODES
01 – **NTRO**
02 – **1STS**
03 – **2NDS**
04 – **TRSH**
05 – **SW1M**
06 – **W0LF**
07 – **BR4T**
08 – **K4RN**
09 – **B0MB**
10 – **WZRD**
11 – **BLKS**
12 – **TLPT**
13 – **GYSR**
14 – **B3SV**
15 – **R3T0**
16 – **DRNK**
17 – **Y0VR**
18 – **0V4L**
19 – **T1N3**
20 – **D4RK**
21 – **H4RD**
22 – **HRDR**
23 – **L0ST**
24 – **0B0Y**
25 – **H0M3**
26 – **SHCK**
27 – **TNNL**
28 – **H3LL**
29 – **4RGH**
30 – **B4DD**
31 – **D4DY**

BLOOD OMEN: LEGACY OF KAIN

More scary cheats for this blood curdling nightmare

During the game, input the following codes for a bundle of goodies!

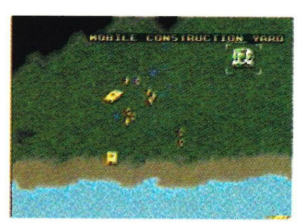
BLOOD REFILL
⬆ ➡ ■ ● ⬆ ⬇ ➡ ⬅

FULL MAGIC
➡ ➡ ■ ● ⬆ ⬇ ➡ ⬅

ALL FMV
⬅ ➡ ■ ● ⬆ ⬇ ➡ ⬅

COMMAND & CONQUER

Instead of having masses of codes for this classic, we now have the pleasure of giving you some proper cheats, courtesy of one of our readers. Don't ask us which, as he never left his name. These codes have a different effect for both Nod and GDI disks, so try them out for both parties



To recharge ion cannon tap in
➡ ⬇ ⬅ ⬅ ⬇ ➡ ➡ ⬇ ⬅ X ■ ▲

For an instant airstrike input the following:
➡ ⬇ ⬅ ⬅ ⬇ ➡ ➡ ⬇ ⬅ X ■ ●

For 5000 credits put this code in: ➡ ⬇ ⬇ ⬅ L1 ⬅ ➡ ⬇ ⬅

To reveal map instantly:
● ● ● ⬆ ● ⬆ ● ■ R1 ● ● ●

I THINK I LOVE YOU!

TO CELEBRATE THE LAUNCH OF the new range of custom painted joypads by Wild Things, we've got together to offer you all a great chance of getting your hands on one of the coolest peripherals this Christmas.

You can see for yourselves that these swanky controllers are just what you need to set your PlayStation off nicely. There are six designs in the range, including metallic gold, silver, red and blue, as well a camouflage pad and a classy black one, and we have five sets of each design to send out as Christmas pressies to the lucky winners (look, that's 30 pads okay! What on earth is the education system in this country coming too!).

Normally retailing at £17.99, all you have to do to get a free one is answer the "Wild" questions below before being picked out of our postbag. Easy? You betcha! Here goes.

QUESTION 1

Which of the following precocious spoilt brats have been described as a 'wild' child in the tabloid press in the past?

A) Amanda de Cadenet
B) Kate Moss
C) Zoe Ball

QUESTION 2

If you were watching a video called 'Wet & Wild,' would you be more likely to be watching:

A) A dubious porno?
B) A BBC wildlife documentary about Penguins?
C) Underwater Gladiators?

QUESTION 3

Who had a hit with 'Wild Boys' in the mid eighties?

A) Technotronic
B) Duran Duran
C) Haircut 100

Name _____

Address _____

_____

_____

_____

Postcode _____

Tel: _____

Send Entries to:

WILD THING, PlayStation Pro, IDG Media, Freepost (SK3038), Adlington Park Industrial Estate, Macclesfield, SK10 4NP

PRO BANTER

Got a gaming problem you just can't solve or perhaps an aching desire for firm release dates? Well worry not, help is at hand and the solution's remarkably simple. Just send your gripes, moans, groans, queries and puzzling rants to:

IDG Media, FREEPOST (SK3038) Macclesfield SK10 4YE and we'll do our best to ease your mind. Maybe

Dear PlayStation Pro,
Well done Pro on your newly improved Recommended section. It's class I tell you, class! I think the world will benefit greatly from the scores being updated regularly, so that Tomb Raider gets the attention it deserves, as it is clearly stated in your mag that there's "nothing better." But how can this be when Crash Bandicoot and Tekken 2 have received higher scores? Also, I personally feel that the old way of setting out the recommended section from best to worse was better than the new alphabetical order. I respect that it's now easier for newcomers to pick out the game they are looking for, but... but... just but, okay?!! Please print my letter as surely my punctuation is better than that Brinds bloke who wrote in and this is my tenth attempt at getting a letter printed in your mag. Maybe I'm just writing to the wrong address. Surely not. But if I'm not good enough for you then I'm not good enough. Throw me on the scrap heap along with Battle Stations and Batman Forever, I know you want to. I'll just go and weep in the living room with the ones who love me.

Jamie Sutherland, Whitnash

PRO:
We're glad you like the new Pro Directory, and yes, the scores will be updated each month. Your Tomb Raider gripe is a tad confusing though Jamie. As you know, Crash and Tekken 2 received higher ratings than Tomb Raider, yet we claim "there's nothing better" than good old Lara. Common sense tells us that Crash is a platform game, Tekken 2 is a beat'em-up and Tomb Raider is an adventure – ie: each game is from a completely different gaming genre. Therefore, what we're saying is that Tomb Raider *is* the best – of its genre. You can't go comparing fighting games against platform games because there are no comparisons to make. That's why the Pro Directory is sectioned off, allowing you to select the best title from each genre. Jeez, and we thought we'd made it simpler...

Dear PlayStation Pro,
I recently bought your magazine containing the free Cheats Bible and unfortunately, when entering the 99 lives cheat for Rayman, I discovered it didn't work. Why is this? I was wondering if there had been a printing error, or the code was simply incorrect. Can you help?

Tom Williams, York

Dear PlayStation Pro,
In your last issue, the WWF In Your House tip in the Cheats Bible doesn't work. Can you explain what w r 9 means?

Blair Dillon, Ayr

PRO:
Mmm. Yes. The codes for the Cheats Bibles – as with most of the other cheats we publish – are either sent to us direct from the game's creators or from readers like yourselves. We obviously haven't got time to test every single cheat sent to us and unfortunately, some do creep through which are incorrect. We apologise for this. Regarding Rayman, well we contacted UBISoft about the codes and they've sent us the right ones to publish. And you can find them below.

The WWF cheat however, is a bit more complex. Despite the game being absolute crap, it seems as if quite a few of you do actually own it – especially since our phone has been ringing non-stop since we published the cheat. The w r 9 business was a misprint. They should have been directional arrows, but the fonts messed up and they were printed incorrectly. Not only that, but it transpires that even with the directional arrows in, the bloody thing still doesn't work. Sorry.

We contacted Acclaim Entertainment so they could give us the correct cheat and they are currently "looking into it." So we'll let you know when they let us know. Okay? We can only apologise again. Right, those Rayman codes...

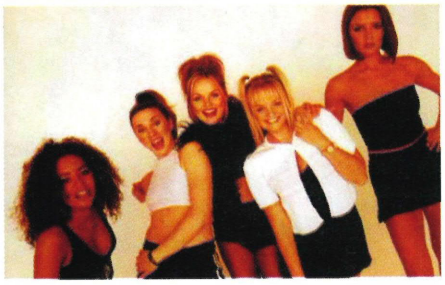
!JNPZ022HX – Pink Plant Woods
38WRPSLN9M – Anguish Lagoon
FJ57PWLW9X – Moskitos Nest
B64W236BHM – Band Land
ZRC8ZH6L9X – Hard Rock
ZRW6ZCTLSM – Picture City
Z?CJP5BNSX – Pencil Pentahalon
V8WSPH?N0M – Space Mama's Crator
VRWJP92WSM – Caves of Skops
VPW0P92NSX – Eat at Joes
78C?KCLL0M – Mr Skop's Stalactite
NW?WD15!4Q – Candy Chateau

Dear PlayStation Pro,
If you're so smart, try these out for size...
1) Will Tomb Raider and Crash Bandicoot become prisoners of the Platinum Range once their sequels are released?
2) I've heard that Crash 2 is soon to become a victim of the Saturn's Sonic Jam, even though Sonic's a load of plop. Is this true?
3) Are the rumours about a Spice Girls' game really true? I mean, why not make a Telly Tubbies

game? Hang on, STOP! Don't even think about it.
4) And finally, give us the scoop and the gossip on Tekken 3.
Well, I'm waiting!

Peter Hanson, Middle Of Nowhere

PRO:
MMMbop! Bop bop, MMMbop! Doodily bah bah, MMMbop! What? Oh, sorry I thought you were one of those annoying blonde brats. Nevermind. Thanks for your cheeky letter, but hey, if you're so smart, why are you writing in asking us for answers? Huh? Huh? Mmm, cockiness will get you everywhere young man so hold onto your hat and prepare to get fact...
1) "Prisoners?" Get a grip boy, but to answer your question: Yes. But not just yet.
2) What are you blathering on about? "Crash becoming a victim of Sonic Jam" Sonic, as you know, lives on the Saturn. Crash is Sony only. So shut up talking shite. And to answer your question, no, it's not true.
3) Yes, unfortunately the Spice Girls rumours are true. Sony are releasing some sort of interactive thing about the nation's favourite fantasy called Spice World. The CD is said to contain exclusive footage of the girls, plus interviews, 'music' and an interactive section allowing you to create your very own Spice Girls tunes from a bank of samples (that'll be tricky). No firm release date has been set, but no doubt they'll try and tie it in with the imminently shit Spice: The Movie. Oooh, we can't wait.
4) Tekken 3 is an arcade title from Namco. It's out. In the arcades. It may be coming to the PlayStation. But not yet. Namco aren't saying anything about it. Neither are Sony. Neither are we. Now leave us alone.



Dear PlayStation Pro,
I know that your magazine is very good but please, please, please could you give me more information on Resident Evil 2. And how come there's a Resident Evil: Director's Cut coming out if at the end of Resident Evil you blow the place to smithereens? And when's Tomb Raider 2 coming out?

Barry Blayney, Berkshire

PRO:
Is that your real name? Anyway Barry, you can find all the information you need on Resident Evil 2 in the news section and there's a massive six page feature on Tomb Raider 2 starting on page 66. Resident Evil: Director's Cut isn't a new game as such, so the final outcome of the first game doesn't matter. It's simply a revised edition of the game giving you more levels, characters, enemies and that sort of thing (plus a demo of Res Evil 2!). And no doubt you still blow the mansion to kingdom come at the end of it too! Happy now?

Dear PlayStation Pro,
Your mag is great. You have more interesting stuff then the other mags do, but, can you answer these questions...
1) Are there any cheats for Tomb Raider, Crash Bandicoot, Rage Racer and Need For Speed?
2) Can you list all the multi-player racing games for the PlayStation which overall score is greater than eight?
3) I am interested in the game Carmageddon. Can you tell me more about it?
4) Are there any games which scored over 9?
5) Are there any games which scored less than 2 miserable points?
6) When will there be a PlayStation version of C&C: Red Alert?
Thanks.

Oukhine Dima, Cyprus

PRO:
1) Yes.
2) No, I'm not in the mood right now to mess around listing things. Check the Pro Directory, page 106.
3) It's a PC racing game where you run people over for a laugh. And we've recently heard news that it's in the process of being converted for the PlayStation.
4) Once again, check page 106.
5) Sigh. Page 106.
6) Check the front cover, man. And page 62.

Dear PlayStation Pro,
I'm a yearly subscriber and I look forward to receiving your mag every month. The reviews are great stuff and I can honestly say that I never buy a game before consulting my copy of PlayStation Pro. Just to let you know what type of people read your mag, I'm a 27 year old mom of a two year-old girl, with a very sad husband who would rather spend hours in the garage breeding reptiles for a hobby rather than playing with my PlayStation. Should I divorce him and marry my PlayStation instead? Anyway, enough crap. I need your help. Legacy Of Kain. I have Nipraptor's head, but I can't seem to reach Malet's Bastion. I'm getting fed up of going round in circles. I've read issue 10 and I can't work it out.

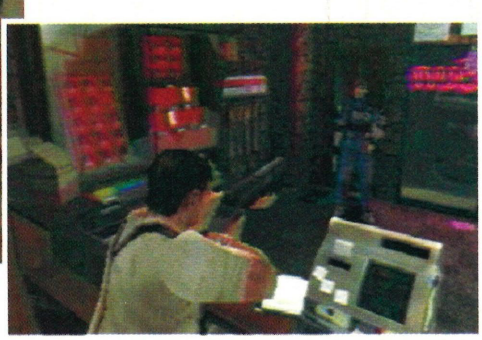
Donna Evans, Stourbridge

PRO:
Donna, if your hubby would rather waste away the hours locked in his garage stroking his lizards then that can only mean you've got the PlayStation all to yourself. What are you complaining for? Get the kid to bed, grab a load of munchies and hog the TV all night - perfect! I don't know about divorcing him and getting wed to your PlayStation, but why not try buying a copy of Croc or Gex and enticing him out of the garage for some PSXual healing? As far as Legacy Of Kain goes, well I don't like giving lengthy tips out on the letters pages so I'll do you a special favour. As you're stuck and your letter amused me, I'll send you something in the post to solve your problem. Okay? Now go and sort your bloke out.

Dear PlayStation Pro,
I think your magazine is great and to all the people who keep asking for free games I say stop begging. If you can't afford to buy new ones, buy second-hand ones. Could you answer these questions for me?
1) Is Formula One 97 worth buying if you've already got the original?
2) Which is better, Olympic Games or International Track & Field?
3) What's the best golf game on the PlayStation?
4) Will Brian Lara Cricket ever get converted for the PlayStation?
5) Actua Soccer 2 or Kick Off '97?
6) Are Motor Toon Gran Prix 2 and Street Racer like Mario Kart, or should I wait for something else to come along?

Paul Chaloner, Bristol

PRO:
Thanks for your opinions Paul. Here are your answers:
1) Yes and no really. If you're a big fan of F1, then you're going to love this new version even more. It's not massively different, but it does offer more than the original.
2) International Track & Field without a doubt.
3) Personally, I'd say Actua Golf 2.
4) No news as yet, but the Ian Botham PC game is being converted.
5) Actua Soccer 2.
6) Another yes and no answer for you Paul. They are both cartoon-style racing games in the Mario Kart mould, but neither of them can really challenge the almighty SNES version of Mario Kart, as I've said in previous issues. I'd wait for something else if I were you mate.



Capcom are certain to break the sales records once again when the almighty Resident Evil 2 hits the shelves next year

PRO BACK ISSUES

ISSUE THREE
COVER: Perfect Assassin
INSIDE: Free Command & Conquer tactics booklet Pandemonium, Cool Boarders, Star Gladiator players' guide plus a massive complete guide to Tomb Raider

ISSUE SIX
COVER: Total NBA '97
INSIDE: Free Guide to Winning Unfairly Tips book, plus reviews of Soccer '97, Micro Machines Legacy of Kain, Nanotek Warrior, Excalibur 2555, Jet Rider and Crypt Killer

ISSUE EIGHT
COVER: V-Rally
INSIDE: Free 68 page mag full of new, current and platinum range tips and guides. Plus Need For Speed 2, Carnage Heart, Wing Commander 4, Rally Cross, All Star Soccer, Tomb Raider 2 and ISSS Pro

ISSUE NINE
COVER: Fantastic Four
INSIDE: Free Game Secrets tips booklet, Rally Cross, WCW vs the World, Swagman, Syndicate Wars, Overblood, Actua Golf 2, Darklight Conflict

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COVER: Judge Dredd
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INSIDE: Formula One '97, Nuclear Strike, Croc, Final Fantasy VII, Overboard, FIFA 97 and free Beat'em-up Cheats Bible

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Soccer '97

Opinions vary, it's all part of this thing we call life. As such, one man's taste in pie is often different from the next. If you think our word is trash or scripture, let us know, and we'll tell the world that you know best

by Christopher Clarke, Leicester

Football. It's a funny old kettle of fish, and video football is no exception. I mean, there you are with your motion-captured, stats-laden game, when you suddenly realise the players are running around in glue, i.e. the game is a pile of old toss (FIFA '97 anybody?). Alternatively, at the other end of the playing field, so to speak, you've got your limited option, not-very-pretty-but-wonderfully-playable games such as Olympic Soccer. In the middle sits the strange beast called Actua, which seems to encompass a little of both camps.

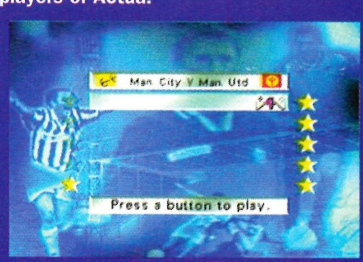
So, you may ask, where exactly on the playing field called 'virtual' does Soccer '97 sit? Glad you asked. In truth, it is a very good example of the 'looks a bit poo but plays like a dream' type of game, although, in truth, it doesn't look as pants as other attempts at football simulations I could care to mention.

The players are just about human shaped, with pretty much the correct skin/hair colour as their real counterparts, and the kits are pretty accurate. The only problem is that everything seems small and, well, rough around the edges. The gameplay is fast, furious and fluid. You can build from the back or you can pump the ball up-field 'route one' style (copyright Wimbledon FC). So, no complaints there then.

The reason the game is not headed for the central area marked 'the best of both worlds' is the options, or rather the almost total lack of them. True, you get to play as one of a number of Premiership and lower division teams, each of which are pretty up-to-date.

True, you can play an entire league, tournament or merely a one-off friendly and true, you get to set various options such as game length, weather conditions, camera angles and team formation. The trouble is, everything is so limited. The camera settings consist of setting the camera angle (from top down Sensi-style to almost on the pitch with the players), the angle of the pitch (which is limited to a side-on, end-on or isometric viewpoint), and some other option to choose whether the camera is static or has one of two floating positions (both of which seem exactly the same). There is nothing remotely like the clever camera movement so loved by players of Actua.

As limited as the camera options are however, they are a veritable plethora compared with the actual team selecting options. Although you get to choose the role of each player on the team (from man-marking to all-out attack), you don't actually get to choose the team itself.

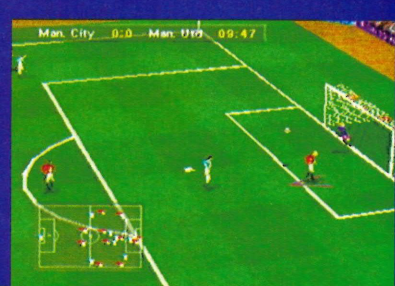


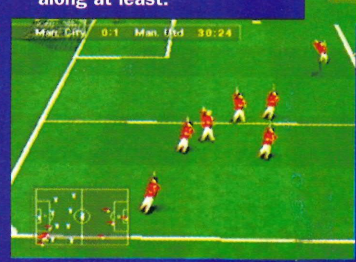
The team is basically whoever was on the pitch at the end of the previous game. Thus, if you made tactical changes in the last game, which incidentally is difficult enough in itself owing to the fact that the substitutes are chosen for you, you could end up starting the next game with strikers in defence and vice-versa. This then means that you would have to use up substitutions at the beginning of the next game to try to put your team right.

Another point to note about the game is the fact that goalkeepers are of pretty much the usual standard, but try to avoid passing back to them as they don't like it. The game controls can also be filed under 'simple and intuitive' (one button for pass, one for shoot etc.). You always control the player closest to the ball, and changes between controlled players are done automatically.

The refs in Soccer '97 have a fondness for dishing out yellow cards, and the commentary... oh yes, the commentary. This is provided by Mr Alan Green of Radio 5 Live fame, who is the voice of live Premiership football to those of us unwilling to contribute to Mr Murdoch's millions. Various reviewers have complained that his comments are annoying and out of synchronisation with the action. While it is true that he can be a bit repetitive, I have not found him to be behind the action at all (maybe it was a problem with the review copies which was sorted for the finished game), and anyway, to be told "he took the man not the ball" 50 times a game is no better or worse than constantly hearing "he was already on the next page he read that so early" or even "he couldn't have saved that with two goalkeepers".

All in all, while it's not perfect, Soccer '97 is probably the best footy game on the PlayStation at the moment. Worth buying if you don't already have a football game, or if the one you do have begins with an 'F', until Actua 2 comes along at least.





GRAPHICS: 9

SOUND: 8

GAMEPLAY: 9

OVERALL: 9

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PRO DIRECTORY

Updated each month this section now includes our recommendations as well as the most comprehensive list of releases for your PlayStation. All Platinum releases are also highlighted and updated as and when they're released. So if you can't make your buying decisions from this list of games and scores then you're beyond help.

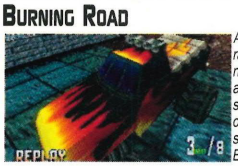
RACING

Put your foot down and avoid those corners! Yes, it's that popular genre that seems to double in size as each month goes by. Full on driving action ahoy!

Andretti Racing 7.5

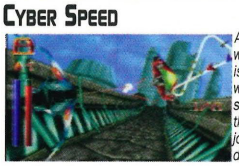
Mario gets in on the PlayStation scene, but not in the form of the fat Italian bloke. This isn't a classic but it's worth a look

Burning Road 8



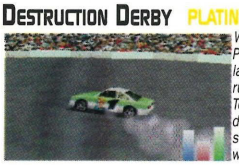
A fast paced racer which never performed as well as it should. Check out its improved sequel below, Explosive Racing

Cyber Speed 5



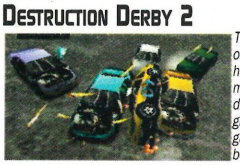
A dreadful racer where your craft is attached to a wire and you spend hours throwing the joypad around in disgust. Avoid!

Destruction Derby PLATINUM 7



When the PlayStation was launced this ruled the roost. Today it looks dated and shoddy, but it's worth £20

Destruction Derby 2 8



This is what the original should have been - A much improved drive with fancier graphics and gameplay to boot. Buy it!

Explosive Racing 8

Burning Road was cool enough, but this sequel manages to address the original's minor problems and plays better too

Formula One 9

Grand Prix racing as it should be, tons of action and speed a plenty. But it's now time to check out F1 '97

Formula One '97 9

If F1 is comparable to the Arrows team, then this year's release is a Williams. Truly awesome stuff once again

Hardcore 4X4 7

Ever wondered why people drive their trucks around in the dirt? Neither have we, but this title offers just that

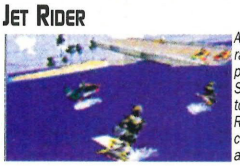
Hi-Octane 7

This could have been so good, but at the end of the day it was let down with poor graphcis and even worse gameplay

Impact Racing 8

More thrills and spills in yet another fast paced racer. But even speed addicts will notice the flaws. Worth a look

Jet Rider 5



Awful jet ski racer that promised to be Sony's answer to Wave Race64. Of course, it wasn't and we hate it

Kart Duel 6

A fine attempt which looked the part but lacked the all important gameplay factor needed in driving games

Micro Machines v3 9

Midget motor racer that everybody must own. The four player mode will have you glued to the TV for days on end

Monster Trucks 8.5

Big wheels can only mean big fun in this trucking great game. You even get to crush cars in front of a big crowd too!

Moto Racer 7

Full on motorcycle racing. Looks reasonable and plays well, but ends up being a little too samey to be essential

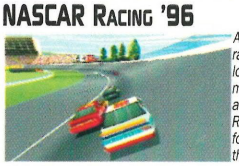
Motor Mash 7.5

Playable and enjoyable Micro Machines clone. It doesn't quite have what it takes to topple the classic MM however

Motor Toon GP 2 9

A colourful, quirky and fun Mario Kart style racer that got us all excited upon its arrival. By no means a serious game

NASCAR Racing '96 7

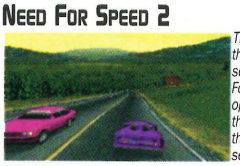


An average racer which looks and plays much the same as Andretti Racing. Rent it for the night and then decide

Need For Speed PLATINUM 8.5

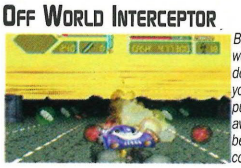
One of the essential racing games for any descerning player, although somewhat dated against todays offering

Need For Speed 2 8



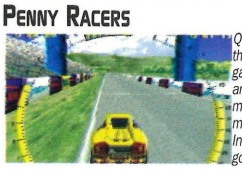
The slightly less than impressive sequel to Need For Speed. More options, but at the expense of the gameplay it seems

Off World Interceptor 5.5



Buy this and we'll hunt you down and beat you to a bloody pulp. This is awful and must be avoided at all costs!

Penny Racers 3.5



Quite possibly the worst racing game to date and one that manages to make Off World Interceptor look good. Avoid!

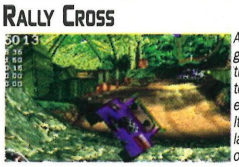
Porsche Challenge 8.5

The Boxster races for all its worth in this slick racer. Options include a cool two player mode for added enjoyment

Rage Racer 9

The third Ridge Racer game is an in-depth affair that pisses all over every driving game you care to mention

Rally Cross 8.5

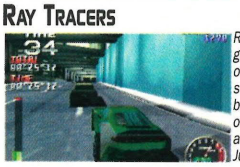


A bouncy rally game from Sony that went head to head with the excellent VRally. It's a good laugh, but VRally offers more

Rapid Racer 8

Powerboat racer which only differs from any other racers in the fact you are on water. Good fun for a short time

Ray Tracers 7

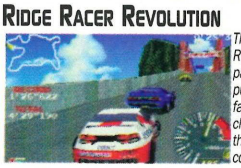


Rapid chase game which is over all too soon but brings back memories of Chase HQ and the like. Just rent it!

Ridge Racer PLATINUM 8

The original PSX racer still takes some beating and for £20, you ain't gonna get a better drivng title on your grey box

Ridge Racer Revolution 8.5



The sequel to Ridge Racer packs a mean punch, but failed to be a classic due to the limited course on offer

Road Rage 4.5

A poor mans WipEout in every sense. Why buy this when there are many bigger and better titles currently out there?

Road Rash 7

Average motor biking game from yesteryear that gives you the chance to knock your opponents off the road

Speedster 8

A racing game with a weird overhead view point. Original maybe, but it's still a required taste if driving's your game

Starwinder 7.5

A 3D racer that fixes you to a space rail and throws you all over the place. It looks like WipEout, but lacks it's edge

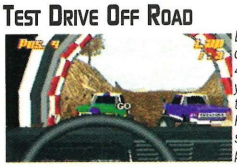
Street Racer 8

Mario Kart was an obvious influence with its development but this four player cartoon racer looks extremely dated

Supersonic Racers 6

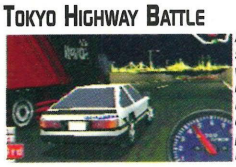
Wacky races style romp which owed plenty to MM V3. Wait for the sequel to arrive at Xmas before purchasing

Test Drive Off Road 6.5



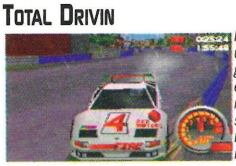
Limited but quite enjoyable 4X4 racer giving you the chance to drive Land Rovers at high speed – just like posh people!

Tokyo Highway Battle 7



A Rage Racer style game where you must build your car to improve your overall racing performance. Enjoyable

Total Drivin 9



Possibly the ultimate racing game including everything from rally cars to sand buggies. Highly recommended

V Rally 9

Truly amazing rally sim. Over 40 tracks to race on and loads of cars and options. You simply must buy this game!

WipEout Platinum 7

Amazing gameplay and a top soundtrack made this a winner in the PlayStation's infancy. Now quite sluggish

WipEout 2097 9

Just as addictive as its predecessor but with enhanced gameplay and top tunes aplenty. Buy this game today!

PUZZLE

Quirky brain teasers or bizarre Japanese head-scratching affairs – the puzzling choice on the PSX may be limited, but every one available offers for everyone

3D Lemmings 8.5

An updated and special 3D addition to the on going Lemmings family. Save the suicidal green haired fops

Blast Chamber 7

Dancing On The Ceiling is taken quite literally in this frantic explosive puzzling sport from the future. Confused?

Bust A Move 2 Platinum 6.5

Crazy puzzler which lacks the longevity of games such as Lemmings, but it's still a playable and fun two player game

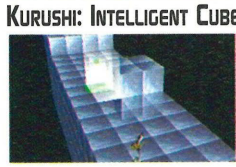
Grid Run 7.5

Fast paced chases around a floating grid. Good fun in small doses, but the longevity simply isn' there I'm afraid

Hebereke Popoitto 4.5

Wacky Japanese puzzle game which owes plenty to Tetris and even more to the game's developers LSD intake methinks

Kurushi: Intelligent Cube 7.5



Bizarre puzzler in which you capture cubes as they roll towards you. Great fun but limited by a lack of variation

Lost Vikings 2 8.5

A tricky puzzler where you control a posse of comedy norse men who are lost. It'll have you hooked in seconds too

Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee 9

The ultimate puzzle game. It's quirky, it's fun and more than a little perplexing. A truly original game

Super Puzzle Fighter Turbo 9

A bizarre Street Fighter/ Tetris combintion which will zap your social life into extinction within minutes. A must buy!

COMPILATIONS

Here we have the ancient arcade beasts brought back from the brink of extintion. Old bags of cack or classic coin-guzzlers from yesteryear? Read on to find out...

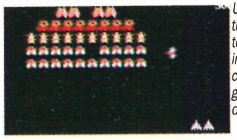
Atari Arcade's Greatest Hits 6

A rather dreary compilation of old 'classics' with an added backstage tour of the games' origins and creators

Namco Museum Vol 1 8.5

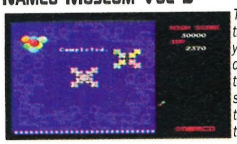
Depending on your age, you'll either love or hate these arcade classics from the guys that gave you Tekken 2

Namco Museum Vol 2 6.5



Unfortunately, there's very little to recommend in this second collection of old games with dodgy graphics

Namco Museum Vol 3 5

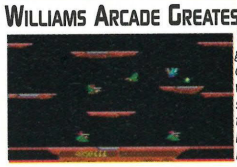


The further into the catalogue you go the fewer classic games there are it seems. Why do they still churn these out?

Namco Museum Vol 4 6

Another dire collection of arcade classics from the early 80's that don't play as good as you think they used to

Williams Arcade Greatest Hits 6



Yet another retro game compilation which surprisingly has the odd treat hidden away in its innards

RPG

While everyone waits for the excellent Final Fantasy IV, you can waste away the hours by fiddling with games from this short selection of role playing mayhem

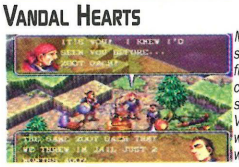
King's Field 8.5

Standard and graphically basic role playing romp from Sony HQ. Despite it's looks though, the gameplay is impressive

Suikoden 6

The first true RPG to appear on the PlayStation is unfortunately a little drab for everyone's taste. Try it

Vandal Hearts 8

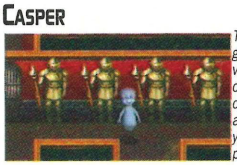


Magic, action, strategy and fighting. It's a corker that's for sure and until FF VII turns up, waste your time with this baby

PLATFORMS

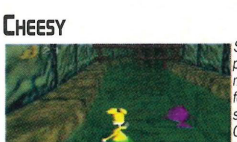
The ancient art of leaping from ledge to ledge in videogames can be perfected by using any of the following games contained in this section

Casper 7



The friendly ghost makes his video gaming debut in this dodgy platformer aimed at the younger games player

Cheesy 6



Semi 3D platform mayhem featuring a squeaky mouse. Crash is miles better though, believe me

Crash Bandicoot 9.5

A classic platformer soon to be revamped in a stunning sequel. Until then, enjoy this laugh a minute adventure

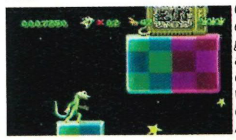
Croc 8

A rival to Mario 64 only for the PlayStation. It's cute, cuddly and is in a league of its own. Maybe Jersey Devil will compete

Earthworm Jim 2 6.5

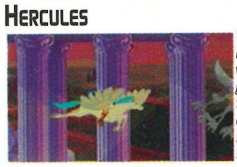
An unimpressive update of a SNES platform hero. But Jim's 2D PSX outing shows its age and should have been better

Gex 8



One of the best early platform games available. Bags of fun all round with a wise cracking comedy American lizard

Hercules 8

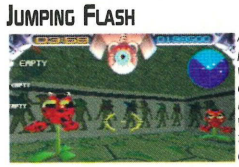


Yet another Disney release which combines gameplay with their well known cartoon style. It's a little too simple though

Johnny Bazookatone 5

Johnny searches for his band mates in this dreary 3D platformer. Another one for the younger gamer out there

Jumping Flash 7.5



An average 3D platformer which was easily completed, yet loved by all. Well worth a look though and quite fun

Jumping Flash 2 8

An improvement on its predecessor with more depth and originality. But again, this is easy to complete

Lomax In Lemmingland 7

A strange platformer featuring the loveable Lemmings. All in glorious 2D too. what a rare treat, eh?

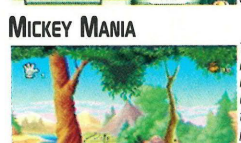
Lost World 7

Jurassic Park 2 hits the PSX and gives you five varying characters to play with, including a massive T Rex

Mega Man X3 5

Uninteresting platformer from the age-old Japanese super hero. This would have looked out of date on the SNES. Avoid!

Mickey Mania 7.5



The world's most famous mouse is uninspiring in this standard platformer, but offers good old school fun

Pandemonium! 9

A 2D platformer made to look all 3D due to the PlayStation's graphic capabilities. Well worth a purchase

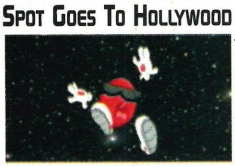
Rayman PLATINUM 9

The first classic platformer to hit the PSX and now available for £20 thanks to the handy wallet-friendly Platinum Range

Spider 6

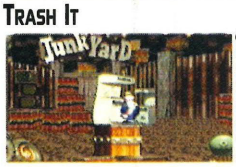
Arachnid platformer which could have and should have been so much better. Rent it before spending

Spot Goes To Hollywood 8



Spot returns with a fine 3D platformer based on various classic movies from yesteryear. Try before you buy

Trash It 6



Control a fat bloke with a big hammer and basically smash every thing in sight. Original, but quite boring and bland

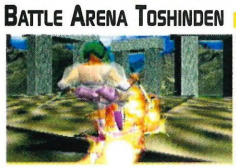
BEAT 'EM UPS

If you want to get in training for Saturday night's trip down the pub then fighting games are for you. Here's the definitive list for your PlayStation

Batman Forever 4

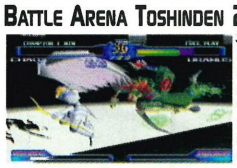
Knuckle dusters abound in this absolutely dreadful Dark Knight scrapper. Looks and plays really really badly. Avoid!

Battle Arena Toshinden PLATINUM 8



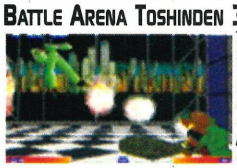
One of the first scrap fests to arrive on the PSX. Oddly enough it still manages to excite after all this time

Battle Arena Toshinden 2 7



Slightly less impressive than the original but still hits you where it hurts thanks to big swords and lots of top moves

Battle Arena Toshinden 3 7

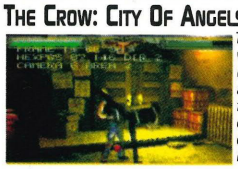


The third member of the Tohshinden family gives you everything the other two games did and lots more

Criticom 7

An average scrapping fest which fails to impress for any length of time. Another one for the rental option methinks

The Crow: City Of Angels 4.5



Truly one of the worst beat 'em-ups to ever appear on any format ever. In every way a dodgy movie licence

Darkstalkers 8

Capcom use their SF2 engine to bring these Hollywood style horror icons to life in this enjoyable 2D fighting beast

Dynasty Warriors 7.5

Yet another beat 'em-up, this time from Ocean. Not the best of its genre but quite some way from being the worst.

Fantastic Four 5

Streets Of Rage style action with Marvel Comics' famous family of mutants. The thing is, the gameplay is really terrible

Fighting Force 9

Better than most arcade beat 'em-ups. Varied pagga situations and more than a few shocks hold your interest

Heaven's Gate 5

A weird and frantic 3D beat 'em- up from Japan which was truely disappointing in almost every department

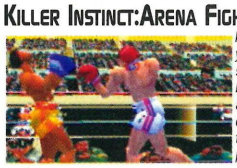
Iron & Blood 8

A medieval style beat 'em- up giving you Orcs, Knights and freaky little wizards to slap around a standard arena

Iron Man 3

Way down near the bottom of the pile, this comic book fighter should be avoided by anyone with any sense, or cash

Killer Instinct:Arena Fighters 6.5



Kick boxing from your armchair sounds like fun, but this brave attempt was a disappointment for all who played it

Mortal Kombat 3 8.5

The 2D bloodfest which was hyped to the max when it got released over here. Not as cool as you may think

Mortal Kombat Trilogy 6.5

Imagine all three of the Mortal Kombat series on one CD! Well it's now a reality, but offers nothing new

Psychic Force 7

Fair play, this offers something a little different from the norm for beat'em-up fans, but it's by no means great

Rise 2: Resurrection 7.5

An improvement on the original but still lacks that killer punch needed to take it storming into everyone's game collection

Soul Blade 9

This remains one of the finest moments for beat 'em- up fans worldwide. Buy this or Tekken 2 and you're laughing

Star Gladiator 9

Instantly playable scrap fest with lasting appeal and tongue-in-cheek Star Wars inspiration. Well worth a look

Street Fighter Alpha 2 8

The all time classic beat 'em- up makes a welcome second appearance on the PlayStation. A classic

Street Fighter: The Movie 3

The game of the movie of the game. As dire as the movie itself and should be left alone no matter what the price

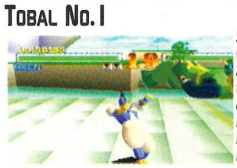
Tekken PLATINUM 9

Kicked its way into the homes of many a true beat 'em-up nut and is now available for a mere £20. And it still rocks!

Tekken 2 9.5

The far superior sequel remains an essential buy for anyone who loves 3D arcade fighting. You simply must own this

Tobal No.1 8.5



3D beat 'em- up with more depth and variation than any other on offer, but lacks the killer instinct to make it a must buy

Wargods 6.5

An American arcade fighter that looks much better than it plays. Drab, uninteresting and untimately forgettable

Zero Divide 8

Yet another futuristic beat 'em- up. But this one features polygon robotic thugs instead of butch blokes

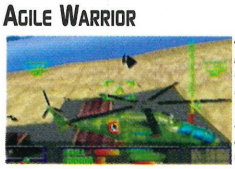
FLIGHT SIMS

Often the butt of many a cruel gag, flight sim enthusiasts are seen as geeky nobs by their few friends. The question is, are you a geeky nob?

Ace Combat 2 8

Addictive and uncomplicated Top Gun shoot 'em-up from arcade masters Namco. And don't worry, it's not a flight sim.

Agile Warrior 8



An action packed flight simulator which has you blowing things out of the sky left, right and centre. Good fun

Air Combat PLATINUM 7.5

So-so flight sim from the PlayStation's early days. Now available for £20 via Sony's popular Platinum Range

Black Dawn 8.5

A frantic helicopter flight simulator that's also the sequel to the brilliant Agile Warrior. This offers more, obviously

Firestorm: Thunderhawk 2 8.5

Blow the opposition away with your savage chopper in this revamped version of an old classic. Worth a blast

Gunship 8

A more technical helicopter flight sim which although being less trigger happy, still does the business

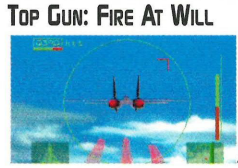
Raging Skies 6

The skies aren't so much raging, more mildly littered with the odd enemy. In every way average, so try before you buy

Strikepoint 7

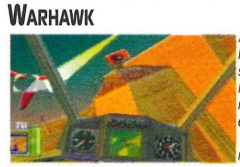
A fairly bog standard flight sim which offers nothing new but is quite good fun for novices and experts alike

Top Gun: Fire At Will 6



No surprises as to what this pretty fine game is all about, but at the end of the day there are much better games available

Warhawk 6



An early helicopter simulator which looks basic but manages to enthrall with its 'must finish' missions

Wing Commander 3 7

Mark Hammill stars in the third of the ongoing space dog-fighting series. FMV in abundance, little gameplay

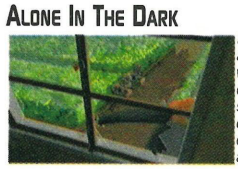
Wing Commander 4 7

More of the same if the truth be told, with Mr Hamill showing his face again in even more FMV based tales

ADVENTURE

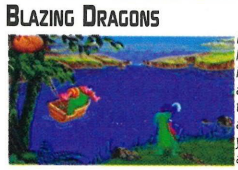
Legend has it that adventure games have been going longer than any other genre in the world of videogames. Choose carefully traveller from our list below

Alone In The Dark 8



Haunted house adventures which looks quite odd, but still manages to do the business on the old adventure front

Blazing Dragons 6



Monty Python humour abound in this average adventure that's technically aimed at the younger gaming audience

Broken Sword 8.5

The best point and click adventure on the PlayStation so far. A sequel is on the way, but buy this anyway!

Chronicles Of The Sword 3.5

A hot contender for the worst PlayStation game ever, this King Arthur-esque adventure is simply dreadful

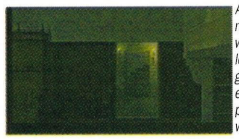
City Of The Lost Children 8.5

An epic adventure based on the average French arthouse movie of the same name. Well worth a look

Cyberia 8

A PC conversion which looks a dream but has limited appeal to those after some good solid adventuring fun. Novice friendly

D 6



An interactive movie adventure which lacks longevity, gameplay, excitement and playability. In a word, AVOID!

Discworld 7

Terry Pratchetts finest moment transformed itself very well onto the PSX and this is simpy amazing. A must buy!

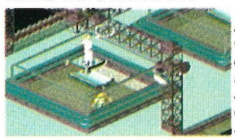
Excalibur 2255AD 8.5

A 3D adventure which has the right mix of action and puzzles, but looks and plays too much like Tomb Raider

Legacy Of Kain 9

Vampire strangeness in this huge and impressive blood sucking adventure. Well worth the money though

Little Big Adventure 7



This quirky adventure game was lovingly converted from its PC origins and manages to entertain for a short while

Myst 5

Average static screen jobbie from years ago. It won't amaze by any means, but it still has strong puzzling elements

Overblood 8

A futuristic adventure game which is over way too soon for the experts and sadly too boring for the novices

Perfect Weapon 8

A strange adventure game which has you punching your way to victory over a series of lush and lovely environments

Psychic Detective 6

An FMV adventure game which may be too strange for some and simply too bonkers for the majority

Resident Evil 9

The ultimate gore fest for any fan of zombie movies. Puzzles, shotguns, big snakes and blood thirsty freaks ahoy!

Sentient 8

An adventure game which struggles for identity among the other more stronger titles currently available

Swagman 8

A spooky cartoon adventure which owes much to classic Zombies Ate My Neighbours on the SNES

Time Commando 7

You travel through time in this 3D adventure although the effort really isn't worth bother

Tomb Raider 9

This still sells by the truckload, simply because there's nothing better on offer. The sequel's on the way too!

SHOOT 'EM UPS

3D arcade blasters are a popular breed with PlayStation owners worldwide, and as you can see from the list below, there are plenty on offer to choose from

Alien Trilogy PLATINUM 9

You are officer Ripley taking on wave upon wave of slimy space critters in this top PSX version of the three classic movies

Area 51 2

This game doesn't exist. Oh no. Unfortunately, we're joking and it does actually exist. And it's a pile of shit

Assault Rigs 6

Amazing gameplay and a top soundtrack made this tank battler a winner in the PSX's early days. Try before you buy

Battle Stations 2

This is bascially Battleships for losers who can't be bothered getting the board game out of the loft. Please avoid!

Blam! Machinehead 7

3D shoot 'em-up with some nice graphical effects, but let down by over complex missions and bad handling

Contra: Legacy Of War 6

A 96 remix for the bland horizontal scrolling shoot'em- up from yesteryear. Nothing special going on here

Crusader: No Remorse 7.5

Take control of a robotic assassin in this isometric viewed PC conversion. Bullets and blood aplenty

Crypt Killer 5

Truly awful conversion of the arcade game where you shoot badly drawn zombies and comedy mummies

Dark Forces 8.5

Star Wars meets Doom in this classic blaster. If you want to kill Stormtroopers, then this is the game for you

Descent 8

Shoot 'em- up in the Doom style only you're flying around in a spaceship head first down a massive mine shaft

Descent 2 6

Less than impressive sequel that offers more of the same. The thing is, we've seen it all before

Disruptor 8

A pretty marvelous and varied Doom clone giving you huge weapons and a fair bit a FMV mission briefing

Doom 9

The game that spawned a thousand imitators. A classic in every sense of the word. Buy this game today!

Epidemic 7

The sequel to Kileak doesn't offer anything new, but gives you more enjoyable corridor roaming fun

Exhumed 7.5

Slightly flawed but not too bad Doom clone set in ancient Egypt. Could have been a contender to Doom's crown

Fade To Black PLATINUM 8.5

A 3D shoot 'em-up which impresses many with the lavish graphics and exotic locations and cut sequences

Final Doom 8.5

The rather splendid sequel to the monster hit giving you more of the same, with added bonus bits of blood

Firo & Klawd 6

Rather bland cartoony shoot 'em- up affair where you control a comedy cartoon cat and ape duo. Honest!

G-Police 8.5

Class futuristic shoot 'em-up. Flying around mega cities and blasting the bad guys has never been so much fun

Galaxian 3 6.5

Dull shoot 'em-up similar to Starblade Alpha, but not as impressive. The arcade version rocks, but this sucks

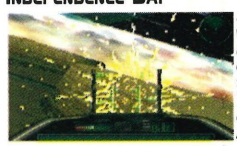
Hard Boiled 5

Based on the cult comicbooks of Frank Miller, this has you driving a big tooled-up Chevy in futuristic settings

Hexen 4

Eagerly awaited drivel which at the end of the day that should have been brilliant. As it stands... just avoid it

Independence Day 3.5



Maybe the worst movie license ever, even if we take the awful SF: The Movie into conciderations. Absolute cack

In The Hunt 5.5

Underwater shoot 'em- up where you piss around in badly drawn sprite-based subs. Another one to avoid

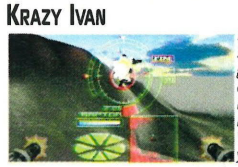
Judge Dredd 8

Stunning shoot 'em-up from Gremlin. The bullets will be flying and the adrenalin pumping almost immediately

Kileak The Blood 8

By today's standards this wouldn't fare too well, but it ruled the roost in its hey day. See Epidemic, its sequel

Krazy Ivan 8.5



Slightly flawed 3D shooter giving you full control over huge Russian Mech robots. Worth a look if you fancy it

Lifeforce: Tenka 8

Gloomy surrounds, stunning graphics and wicked gameplay make this one a winner. Buy it!

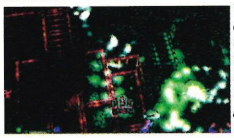
Loaded PLATINUM 8.5

An isometric viewed shooting gore fest which isn't all that bad. And at £20 a throw you're laughing! Buy it!

Lone Soldier 3

A dire 3D shoot 'em- up where you're in control of a butch soldier hellbent on saving the globe from aliens. AVOID!

Machine Hunter 7.5

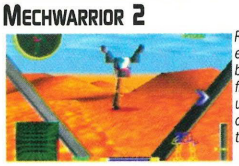


The 3D levels can be tiring in this huge game that oozes Loaded influences. The game, not the magazine

MDK 8.5

Snappy name, awesome game. Drops you in the centre of a violent world where only the strongest will survive the day

Mechwarrior 2 8.5

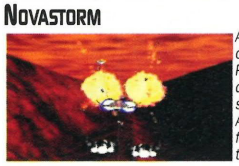


Robots blow each other away big time in this fine shoot 'em-up brilliantly converted from the PC

Nanotek Warrior 8

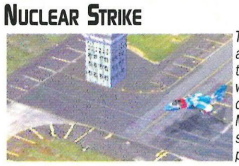
A psychedelic shoot 'em- up in the same vein as the old arcade classic, Tempest. Except loads better

Novastorm 4



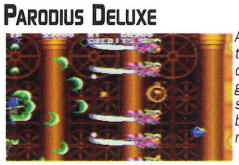
An early release on the PlayStation that could have been so much more. As it stands, it's fairly dull as things go

Nuclear Strike 8



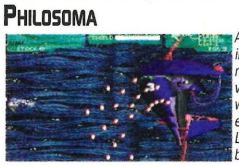
The eagerly awaited sequel to Soviet Strike which doesn't disappoint. More thrills and spills than previously

Parodius Deluxe 6.5



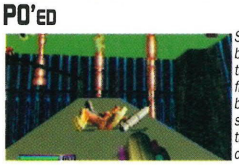
A conversion of the original classic Parodius game which will surprise no one but amuse many

Philosoma 6.5



A shoot 'em- up incorporating many different viewpoints but with very little excitement. Look elsewhere before buying

PO'ed 7



Smack walking backsides and the like with frying pans and big sticks in this strange slant on the Doom clones

Raiden Project 8

One of the great shoot 'em- ups to ever appear anywhere ever. If arcade style blasters are your bag, buy this today

Rapid Reload 5

Shoot 'em-up in the same vein as Mega Man, only better. Another early release that should have been better

Raystorm 6.5

A fine but standard shoot 'em- up. Not sure it warrants the £40 price tag though. Try it, you might like it

Reloaded 8.5

The sequel to the gory Loaded which was nowhere near as good as it promised to be. Still enjoyable though

Revolution X 3

Oh my God! How bad is this? A crap arcade affair starring – wait for it – bloody Aerosmith! Avoid! Avoid!

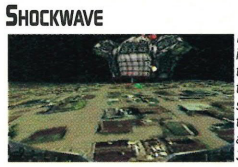
Robotron X 7.5

A revamped 3D version of the old arcade game gives you plenty of hours of frantic thumb blistering fun guaranteed!

Shellshock 9

3D tank shoot 'em- up where combat strategy is required for you to progress with your team of tooled-up home boys

Shockwave 6



Kill the alien invaders before they take over the world in this shoot 'em- up that first appeared on the 3DO

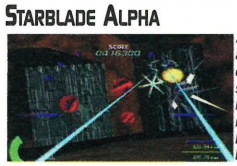
Slamscape 3

Truly dreadful in every sense. Futuristic shooters are ten a penny, but this is the worst game ever invented. Avoid!

Soviet Strike 8

This is your chance to mow down Russians in this mega tough, but hellishly addictive helicopter romp

Starblade Alpha 5



A substandard arcade conversion that should never have been released. Boring, boring, boring. Avoid!

Starfighter 3000 6

Another dull 3D shoot 'em- up which gives the genre nothing new, nothing interesting and nothing in the way of originality

Steel Harbinger 5

Never lived up to its promise. Yet another dull futuristic blaster starring some psycho yank cyber babe with big hair

Tempest X3 6

Three games in one still doesn't give this the edge it needed. You get the original and two new 3D versions

Tigershark 4

Truly awful nautical affair in which you hammer around blasting all and sundry. The only problem is it's terribly dull

Total Eclipse 4

If the word naff was a game, then this would be it. It looks bad, plays even worse and will ultimately be forgotten by all

Tunnel B1 7.5

Visually stunning Channel Tunnel simulator that moves hyper fast but is generally too complex to love

Twisted Metal 7

The original PSX road rage game was a tad disappointing for many, but certain gamers love it to bits. Try it first

Twisted Metal 2 8

The much improved sequel to the carnage craving original that offers plenty of mayhem across the globe

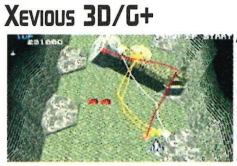
Viewpoint 8.5

Colourful and visually attractive shoot 'em- up. Tricky to play however, but has that old school arcade feel to it

X2 8

Ultra difficult shoot 'em- up with more mayhem and weapons than most and a storming techno soundtrack too

Xevious 3D/G+ 4

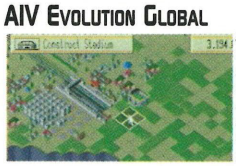


A pointless shoot 'em- up which is absolute dross and carries the worst name in video gaming history

STRATEGY

Not so much 'put on and have a quick go', more like 'play the damn thing for weeks on end whilst destroying your social life' kinda games. Top fun though

AIV Evolution Global 6.5

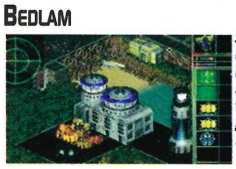


Sim City-esque train network builder which may be boring as hell for most, but PC owners will cream over it

Allied General 5

A bit like a game of computer Risk at the end of the day. Sorted if you like that kind of thing, We didn't

Bedlam 6



Syndicate Wars of sorts for beginners. Oh, and for people who don't like games as good as Syndicate Wars too

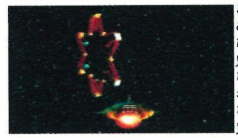
Carnage Heart 8

Bizarre robot fighting goings on for a change. Robot fans should love every second of a good title

Command & Conquer 9

The classic war strategy game. Still causing players major headaches and still worth every second of your time

Darklight Conflict 7.5



Strategy as well as a busy trigger finger will get you through this. Stir in some patience to boot and you'll be away

Defcon 5 6

3D affair which lacks any kind of lasting appeal for new or experienced gamers alike. Be very careful indeed

Magic Carpet 7.5

Mystical carpet flying. A very strange strategy/ action game. One of Bullfrog's fine early moments in gaming

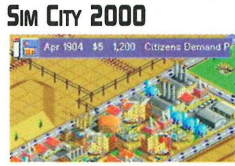
Panzer General 5

More computer Risk which involves plenty of strategic planning as you might expect from this kind of thing

Return Fire 7

Strategy and action are the key points to this strange game. Try before you buy just in case you hate it

Sim City 2000 7



The ultimate in megalomania. Play is a little jerky however but if you can put up with that then you're laughing

Space Hulk 8

Strategy fest. Takes time to suss but is worth the effort as the rewards are great in the end. Stick with it for a bit

Syndicate Wars 8.5

The latest strategy release everybody is craving for. Top graphics and wonderful gameplay. Just buy it

Theme Park 7.5

Sim City-esque Alton Towers development kit. Watch out for people chucking up all over the show though

Transport Tycoon 8

The best ever train'em-up to hit the Playstation. Build a successful infrastructure and win

Warcraft 2 — 9

A Command & Conquer style affair. A bloody fantastic startegy game that you'll simply adore after two mins!

Warhammer — 7

Strategy in abundance in this one. Go to war with your hammer and leather those goblin scum to oblivion

Worms PLATINUM — 9

The slimy blighters star in the best multi-player game available on any format in our opinion. Get your mates in

X-Com: Enemy Unknown — 8.5

The aliens have landed and need a damn good hiding in this strategy fest. Go get 'em tiger and send 'em home

X-Com: Terror From The Deep — 9

The sequel to Enemy Unknown which is, if anything an improvement. Best alien game to date

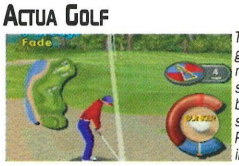
SPORTS

Almost every sport going has been converted to the PSX, offering plenty of awesome two player competitive fun. Darts has unfortunately been overlooked

2Xtreme — 4.5

Terrible, just terrible. Please don't ask me to come up with any other words or I'll be forced to say the word "shite" to you

Actua Golf — 8



The original golf game had a few minor faults but still did the business for the sport on the PlayStation initiall

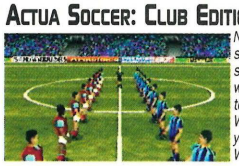
Actua Golf 2 — 8.5

With the faults ironed out, the sequel is the best golf game available bar none. We challenge you to beat it!

Actua Soccer PLATINUM — 9

The first classic footy game for the PlayStation has dated a little since its arrival. Still worth a peek though

Actua Soccer: Club Edition — 6.5



Not so much a sequel as the same game with league teams included. What more do you need Wolves fans?

Adidas Power Soccer — 7

Predator shots ahoy in this bizarre footy fest with a high profile sporty gear licence. Sporty Spice here we come

Adidas Power Soccer '97 — 7.5

More of the same at the end of the day. Same boots, same game, same lack of Sporty Spice. Tsk!

All Star Soccer — 8.5

Surprisingly enjoyable footy game which doesn't take itself too seriously. Hated by some though.

Break Point — 7

Unimpressive tennis game. Sort of like watching a game on Wimbledon's Court 123 or something

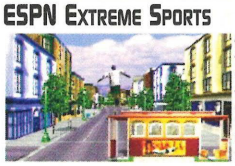
Cool Boarders — 7

Ultra playable and ultra short snowboarding game. It's trendy to get rad but the game never really got there

Davis Cup Tennis — 8

Average attempt at the ultimate tennis experience. One day the definitive tennis game will arrive here

ESPN Extreme Sports — 7.5



BMX racing amongst others in a truly poor sports game. Extreme Crap would be nearer the mark we think

FIFA '96 PLATINUM — 7.5

A tiresome, sluggish football game with limited appeal. Even the name is out of date now. Good planning

FIFA '97 — 9

Definitely the best of the FIFA bunch to date. Good everything included! Footy fans check it out today. Please

Goal Storm — 7

Renamed for its official release it's an acquired taste, especially if your taste is for below average footy games

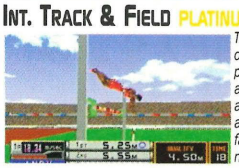
ISS Deluxe — 7.5

A pretty bland footy affair which could have been better. But wasn't. So avoid it at all costs

ISS Pro — 7.5

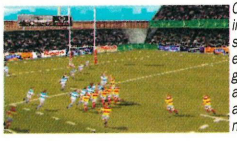
Perhaps the most overated football game ever. Check out the N64 version for instance for how it should have been

Int. Track & Field PLATINUM — 9



This remains one of the most playable and addictive games available. Still an office favourite even now

Jonah Lomu Rugby — 9

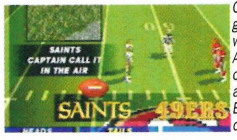


One of the most impressive sports games ever. Playable, great looking and downright accurate. Get it now

Kick Off '97 — 6

Tries a little too hard to be something special but ends up being as dull as they come. Should be better

Madden NFL '97 — 9



Cracking NFL game that whips the American butts of any other attempt so far. Buy it right now or die

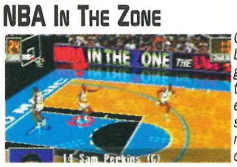
Namco European Soccer — 7

Unimpressive football sim and that's all you can say about it. Er, I've got some lines left...help me, please

Namco Smash Court Tennis — 9

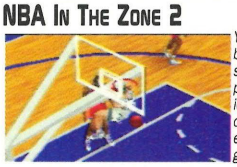
The ultimate in tennis games to date is right here. You like tennis? Then you'll probably like this. Probably.

NBA In The Zone — 8



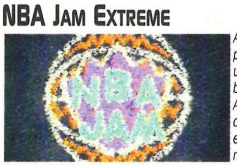
Good old basketball games, they're the best. Go to end, shoot, score repeat as necessary until completion

NBA In The Zone 2 — 8.5



Yet another basketball sequel which is practically identical to the original and every other game of BB

NBA Jam Extreme — 8.5

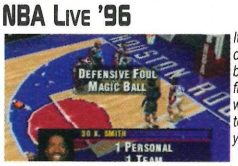


A rather playable if uninspiring basketball sim. At least tries to different and exciting. Almost makes it

NBA Jam TE — 8.5

More of the same with slight improvements. See above for basically the same blurb. It's basketball after all isn't it

NBA Live '96 — 8



It's difficult to distinguish one basketball game from another as we keep trying to tell you. Do you ever listen?

NBA Live '97 — 8.5

Slight improvement on its predecessor. Pretty wicked in an American sport type way. Where are the girls again?

NFL Gameday — 9

American football game which actually rivals Madden. Doesn't beat it but rivals it which can't be bad eh?

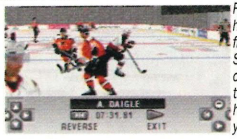
NFL QB Club '96 — 8

The American Football bandwagon continues to bring average games like this along with it. Good eh?

NHL '97 — 8

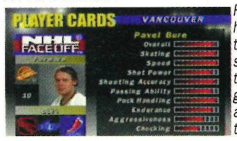
Another average ice hockey game. What is it about American sports that inspire such samey games all the time?

NHL 98 — 9



Fantastic ice hockey game from the EA Sports stabe. A contender for the best ice hockey game for your PlayStation

NHL Faceoff — 9

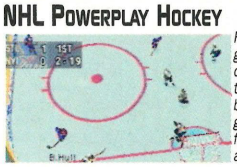


Fantastic ice hockey game that really stands out from the crowd. A great achievment in the end

NHL Faceoff '97 — 7

The not so good sequel to the best ice hockey game available. Should have been much, much better than this

NHL Powerplay Hockey — 8

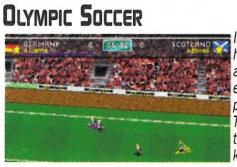


Fine ice hockey game that never quite makes it to great heights but has a damn good try before falling flat after a fine attempt

Olympic Games — 7

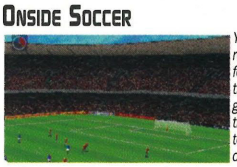
Take part in your very own Olympics in this rather splendid release. Not Sydney but you can't have everything

Olympic Soccer — 9



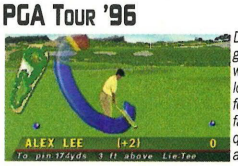
In short this has got just about the lot except for real player names. Top footy fest though. Don't knock it

Onside Soccer — 8



Yet another reasonable football game that gives it a go but loses in the last minute to a dodgy ref decision!

PGA Tour '96 — 8

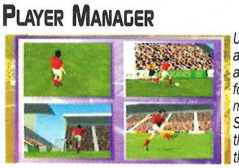


Disappointing golf game which we'd expected a lot more of. Fun for a while but fades away quite quickly after that

PGA Tour '97 PLATINUM — 7

The updated version still lacked the killer drive that we've come to expect from the likes of EA Sports games

Player Manager — 7



Unimpressive and flawed attempt at footie management. Still a rarity on the Playstation though

P M Pro Wrestling 8

A better than average wrestling fest which isn't saying that much really is it. Ah well. Can't have it all

Sampras Ext. Tennis 8

Second only to Smash Court Tennis with a big name licence to boot. Good stuff all round. You'll like it, trust us

Slam 'n' Jam '96 8

Another fine attempt to bring basketball onto the PlayStation. Not that different from the others though really

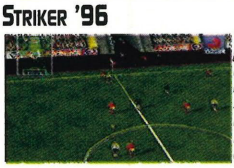
Soccer '97 9

Updated version of Olympic Soccer with league teams. A fine moment for football games on the machine. Go for it

Space Jam 6

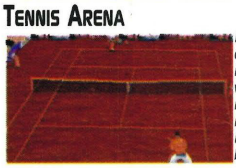
Movie license shenanegins which combine basketball and cartoons. Crap so avoid it, unless you don't listen!

Striker '96 7



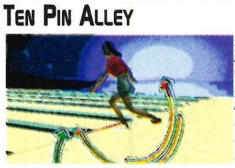
The first football game to impress. Dated by todays standards. A bit repetitive too. Let's be careful out there

Tennis Arena 8



Is it any good, or is it not? This is the argument which has been raging for weeks now. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder indeed

Ten Pin Alley 4.5

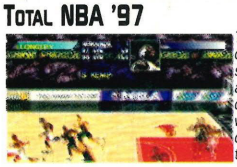


Bowling from your armchair doesn't sound like much fun. And it isn't. At all. In any way shape or form. Honestly

Total NBA '96 8

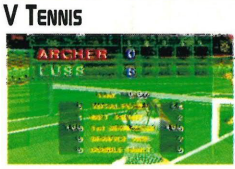
Perhaps basketball's finest moment until its inevitable sequel which is underneath here!

Total NBA '97 9



Taking the original one step further. An absolute slam dunker. If that's what you like of course! Each to their own

V Tennis 6

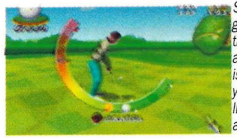


Be your own Agassi in this substandard tennis affair. I suppose it would be your own V Agassi as well. Hmm.

Victory Boxing 8.5

More than a beat 'em- up this actually requires you to build up your boxer to take on the big time pros

Virtual Golf 7.5

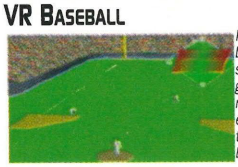


Slightly dreary golf sim. But then, show me a golf sim that isn't and I'll call you a big smelly liar. I'll do that anyway

Virtual Pool 6

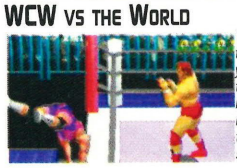
The only true pool simulator available. It's not much cop though but you can't have everything all the time

VR Baseball 8



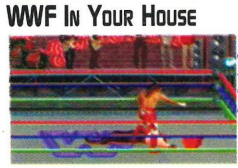
Home Run Derby and stunning graphics are the recomm-endation points to this bat and ball game

WCW vs the World 8



You know what to expect when you play these things. This is better than most but does that tell the full story?

WWF In Your House 5.5

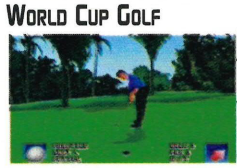


Or not as the case may be. If so, then Get out before I call the police you freak! Or is it the World Wildlife Fund IYH??

WWF Wrestlemania 8.5

More of the same only slightly better than most in a fiddly button type way. Try before you buy is the deal here

World Cup Golf 5

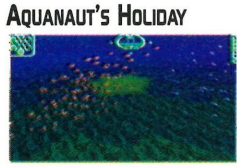


Totally dreadful golfing game. Went back from whence it came which stank a bit. Sort it out lads and don't do it again

MISC

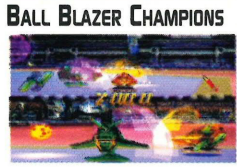
Those games that don't seem to sit in any particular genre wind up being dumped in our miscellaneous section. Why? Because they do. Okay?

Aquanaut's Holiday 2.5



Jacques Cousteau simulator. Build reefs and speak to fish. Great if you like the worst game of all time!

Ball Blazer Champions 6.5



3D futuristic sports contest which isn't much cop if we're being honest with each other. And we are

Chessmaster 3D 4.5

A shabby affair which will never compete with the real thing for grand excitement and tension (is that too sarcastic?)

Die Hard Trilogy 9

Thrills and spills from start to finish in this varied movie caper. A great game well worth your attention and cash

Extreme Pinball 3.5

Flipping heck, this is dreadful pinball nonsense of the worst kind. Snap your disc up, or something

Frogger 7.5

The eighties hero has returned in a totally revamped release which surpassed all expectations. Cute and cuddly

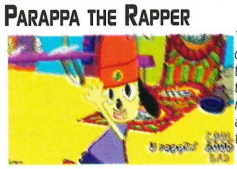
Overboard 6

A bold attempt at something a little different. It just doesn't quite reach the mark. Fun in short bursts or multi-player

Pitball 8

Futuristic sports game which is actually rather good in a rather futuristic sports game type way. Honest! Believe us please

Parappa the Rapper 9



The most original game on the PlayStation to date. You've never seen anything like this before

Pro Pinball: The Web 8

A fantastic pinball sim that will have your flippers flipping until the cows come home. Whenever that is these days

Rebel Assault 2 7.5

Looks like a dream but can be completed in the time it takes to fart. Depends how much curry you've had I guess

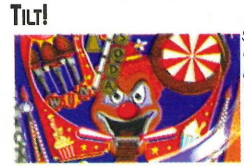
Riot 6

Drab futuristic sports game. Has no lasting appeal or even short term appeal for that matter. Avoid at all costs

Rosco McQueen 8

Firefighting in the Towering Inferno whilst battling a range of robots in this enjoyable dousing fest from Sony

Tilt! 8



Surprisingly enjoyable pinball game which in itself is unusual. Good clean fun for all the family and their family too

True Pinball PLATINUM 9

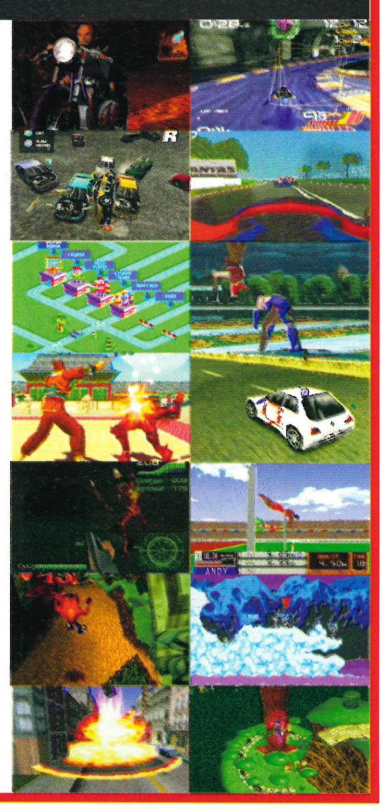
Another in the long line of pinball games. Better than most but that's not saying that much though really

PLAYSTATION PRO

Now that you can see for yourself the mountains of games released so far for the PlayStation, complete with their Pro scores, you should need little help in finding a classic addition to your collection.

However, since you're spoilt for choice we've compiled 15 games which any self respecting PlayStation owner should be flogged for if you don't own them. If these don't take your fancy then there's obviously plenty of air blowing through your skull

- Tomb Raider
- Resident Evil
- WipEout 2097
- Destruction Derby 2
- F1 '97
- Micro Machines
- Tekken 2
- Soul Blade
- V Rally
- Alien Trilogy
- International Track & Field
- Crash Bandicoot
- Worms
- Die Hard Trilogy
- Pandemonium
- Command & Conquer
- Total Drivin
- Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee
- Final Doom
- Dark Forces



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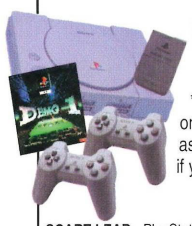

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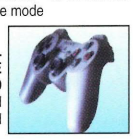

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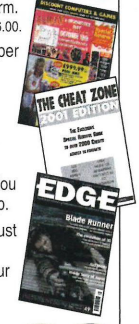

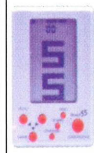

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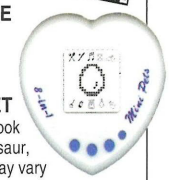

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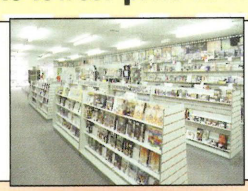

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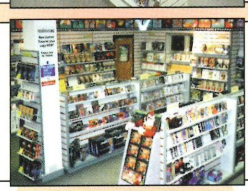

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