Issue 21 June 1998

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PLAYSTATION PRO ISSUE 21

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• THREE LIONS
• GRAN TURISMO

JUNE 1998



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DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF PLAYSTATION

As the whole industry prepares itself for E3 in Atlanta (subtitled: The biggest gaming show on Earth), I thought you'd appreciate an early browse of what's going to be hitting your console before Santa tries forcing himself down your chimney once more. Therefore, within these very pages of this damn fine publication you can find a whole host of hot new PlayStation software, all begging for your loving attention.

Taking pride of place in this E3 countdown are Gex 3D creators, Crystal Dynamics. We go behind-the-scenes with the stateside pixel breezers and have secured exclusive shots on their biggies for the year ahead, so prepare yourself for voodoo master Akuji, demonic goings-on with The Unholy War and their much anticipated bloodlust sequel, Legacy Of Kain 2.

Ground-breaking titles aren't just a thing of the future though, as this month's review zone clearly testifies. Gran Turismo, Sony's fender bending behemoth, ploughed into our office at such a rate that we've had to produce a special 32 page driving supplement just to fit it all in. Everything you could ever need to know about this four-wheeled extravaganza can be found in there, along with enough racing tips and hints to keep you going until Turismo 2 rears its lavishly-rendered high-speed head later this year.

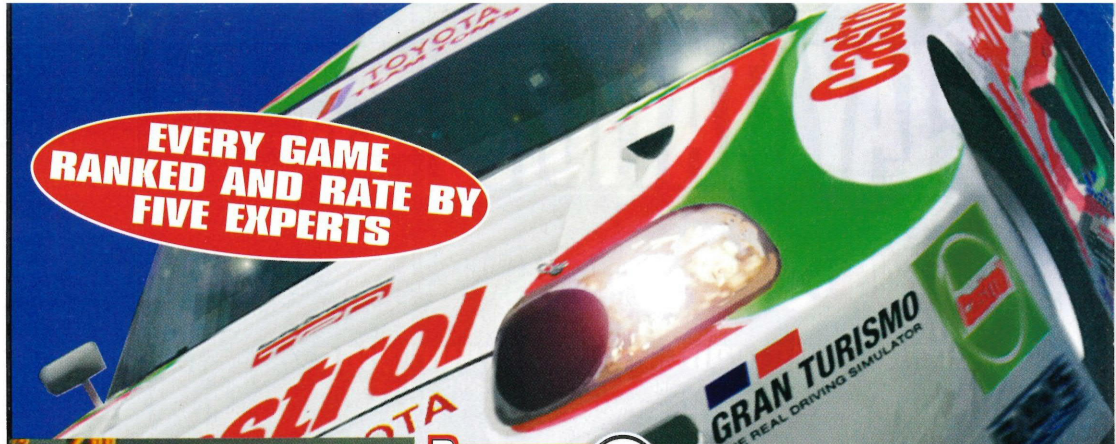
My other two big hitters this month include our cover game, Vigilante 8 (possibly the funkiest driving game you're ever gonna play) and the awesome World League Soccer (possibly the most realistic football game ever created). Both are dissected inside by our five resident experts purely for your viewing entertainment, along with another 16 releases that'll be hitting your local gaming emporium this month.

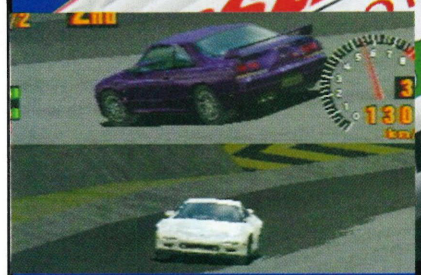
What else? Well we've taken a moonwalk down memory lane to discuss the relative merits of videogame music, we've rammed a microphone under the nose of Ash and Cubanate to see what they think of Gran Turismo and we've got the ultimate World Cup party pack to giveaway (worth over £2,000). Plus, there's even some Gex 3D and M.I.B limited edition goodies to be won too.

So once again I invite you to put down your pad, take advantage of the freak sunshine, get yourself out in the back garden with a chilled beverage of your choice and immerse yourself in the crazy, hazy and often lazy world of PlayStation Pro. I'm off to pack my case. Atlanta here I come...



Jay Sharples
Editor





REVIEWS

Gran Turismo

The definitive driving game has arrived. We put Sony's new racing spectacular under the microscope inside

Akuji

Do you do voodoo? Crystal Dynamics unveil their E3 line-up, exclusively to Pro. Turn to page 84 for all the news on Legacy Of Kain 2, The Unholy War and the fabulous Akuji

EXPOSURE





Music For The Joypad Generation

A potted history of music on the PSX awaits inside, along with an exclusive interview with hot rockers Ash and Cubanate



REVIEWS

Vigilante 8

Funk your way to victory with Activision's groovetastic full-on trigger-happy blaster

PRO EXCLUSIVE!

PLAYSTATION PRO

ISSUE 21 JUNE 1998

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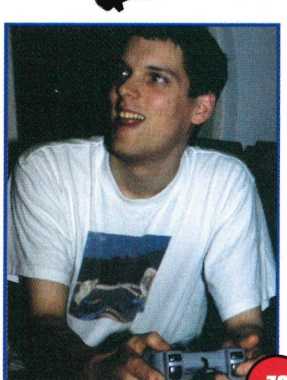
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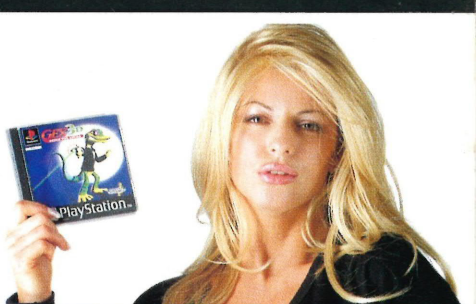




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MUSIC FOR THE JOYPAD GENERATION

We give you the complete history of the PlayStation's digital ditties, plus we put rock warriors Ash and Cubanate in a darkened room and make them play Gran Turismo until they start talking sense. Turn on, tune in and chill the hell out.



FREE!

This month's gifts...

- We giveaway £10,000 worth of prizes in our super scratch card game. Keep your fingers crossed, it could be YOU!
- Drivin' You Wild! We bring you a special 21 page supplement with loads of Gran Turismo information and interviews. As well as all that we supply you with a whole host of racing tips and cheats!


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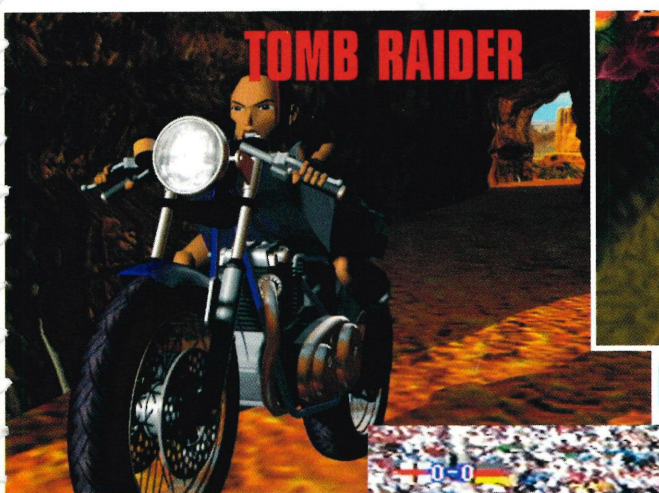
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WORTH OF PRIZES TO BE WON

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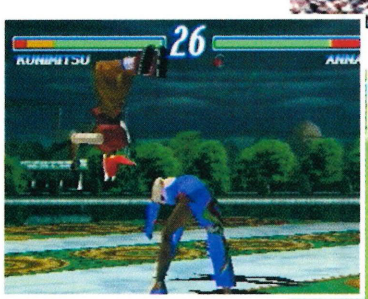


CRASH BANDICOOT



SOUL BLADE





TEKKEN 2





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The prize of the customised PlayStation will be awarded to the competitor who has answered the question correctly and who has, in the opinion of the judges, completed the tie-breaker sentence in the most apt and original way.

7. The decision of the judges will be final and binding and no correspondence can be entered into.

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9. Winners may be required to take part in any publicity accompanying or resulting from this competition

10. The promoters are IDG Media UK.



RIDGE RACER REVOLUTION

Sony's E3 Showcase

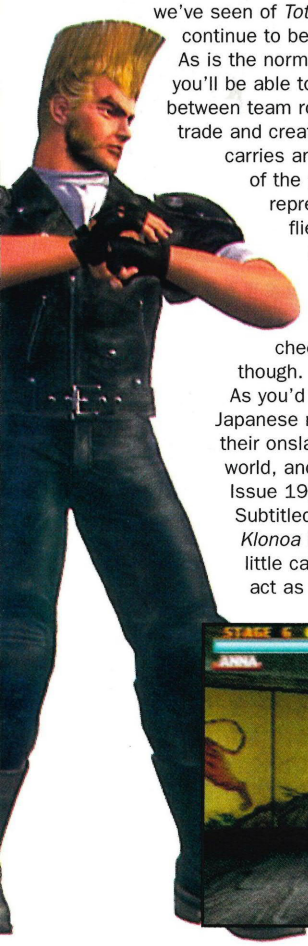


Sony have started to unveil a couple of the titles that will be included in their line up at this year's *E3* show. The *Electronic Entertainment Expo* held each summer in Atlanta, USA, is where all the industry's biggest publishers show off their top titles for the coming year, and as always we've got the scoop on what's heading your way from the creators of the PlayStation.

There'll undoubtedly be more than a few old favourites returning in brand spanking new adventures, and first up is that explosive little dude, *Bomberman,* in *Bomberman World.* The cute little terrorist is on the warpath once again, as a suspiciously evil supreme being orders four of his equally evil little helpers to cause some havoc. *Bomberman* is none too impressed and starts dishing out justice in the only way he knows how, by chucking bombs all over the place. This is the latest title in this successful series which thankfully includes the ultra playable multi-player modes too.



Also making a return to PlayStation screens is the latest in a line of basketball titles that have always impressed, and from what we've seen of *Total NBA '98*, the trend will continue to be a steady one from *Sony.* As is the norm with basketball titles you'll be able to swap and change between team rosters, edit starters and trade and create players, and as it carries an official NBA license, all of the players will be accurately represented too. The action flies by at an extreme pace and the excellent graphics and astounding motion-capture are sure to impress. It still has that cheesy American commentary though.

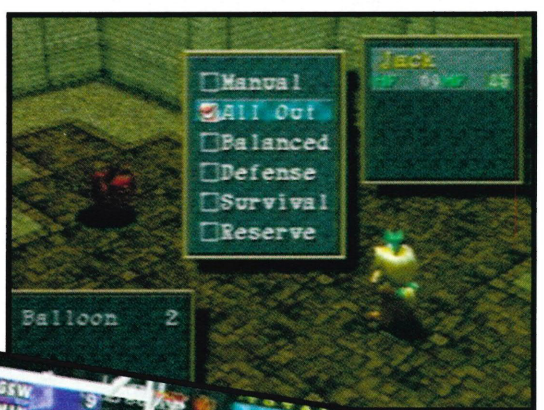


As you'd expect from *Sony,* quirky Japanese releases will form part of their onslaught on the gaming world, and *Klonoa* (previewed in Issue 19) falls under this category. Subtitled *Door To Phantomile, Klonoa* is the tale of a strange little cat whose huge furry ears act as wings, and our feline friend is on a quest to discover the mystical world of *Phantomile,* a bizarre place that's made up from parts of different people's dreams. It's a pretty standard Japanese trip to weirdsville, and we all know what those can be like. So *Tomba,* from developers *Whoopee Camp,* should be a fine compliment.



Tomba is another competitor for strangest platform game of the year with a couple of strategy elements thrown in too, but for the most part the pink-haired caveman type kid that you control will run and jump about offing naughty pigs and any other funky creatures that get in his way. We'd explain more... but we just have no idea what the hell's going on in this one!

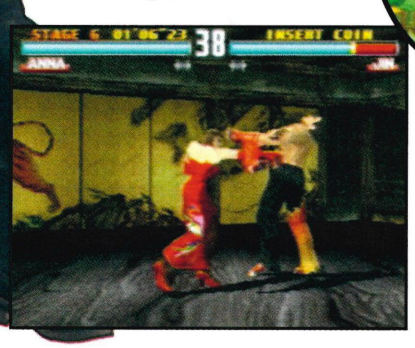
Anyone who purchased *Time Crisis* should be on the lookout for *Point Blank,* which is the conversion of the arcade game of the same name. Coming from developers *Namco,* this light-gun game will support the *G-Con* blaster that was included in the *Time Crisis* package, though don't expect *Point Blank* to be even remotely similar to *Namco's* previous shooting beauty. It's more like a series of quick fire tests down at the fair with a huge helping of humour thrown in, and it's already looking like it'll be a whole lot of fun.

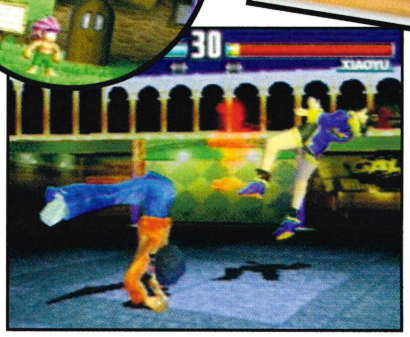


Finally we have two RPG's that are undoubtedly set to be heralded as this years answer to *Squaresoft's* awesome hit *Final Fantasy VII. Grandstream Saga* and *Wild Arms* are both presented from a top down viewpoint, and they mix both adventuring and investigation with full on battles against the enemies that you will encounter on your travels. With a typically dramatic storyline to each, *FFVII* lovers will have more than their fair share of action to keep them occupied for another year.











EIDOS' E3 EYE-FULL



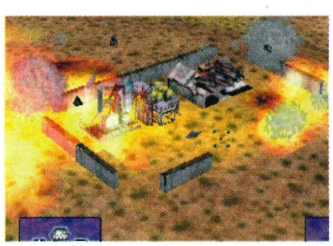
The *Electronic Entertainment Expo* (or *E3* as its known) is almost upon us. In fact by the time you read this we'll be on a plane heading for Atlanta, swimming trunks in hand, ready to grab the latest news and gossip on what's hitting your PlayStation later this year. Throughout this issue we'll be taking an early look at what the big names have to offer us in the way of entertainment, but for now, check out these two corkers from powerhouse publishers, *Eidos Interactive*...

Coming to PlayStation screens around Halloween time from developers *Pumpkin Studios* is a real time action and strategy game set on Earth in the 21st Century. *Warzone 2100* runs along the same lines as *Command and Conquer*, but involves the development of specialised command droids that learn tactics and develop their own personalities instead of the more familiar human soldiers.

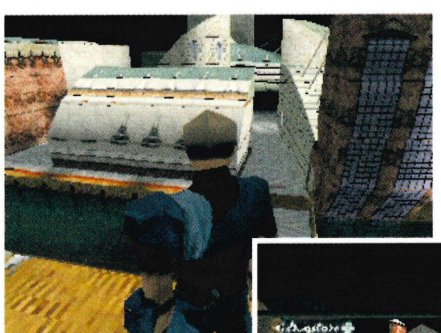
How far a command droid's intelligence progresses will depend on the capabilities it's learnt through experience. Sophisticated AI means that you can govern these droids during combat over three different campaign maps with rotatable 3D landscapes. Research various warring techniques and develop your droids accordingly to explore abandoned areas, repair damaged equipment, gather resources and destroy opposing droids.

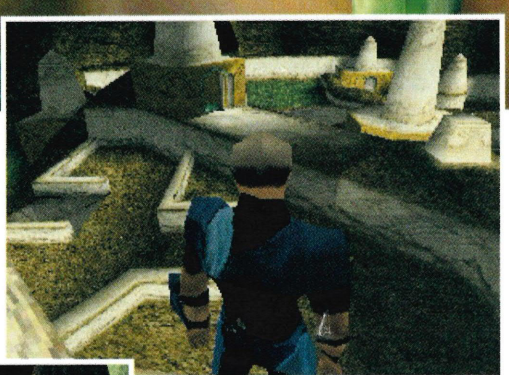
Set for an October release is a new arcade/adventure game named *Omnichrom* . *Quantic Dream* are the culprits responsible for creating what is already sounding like an excellent title where players will find their soul trapped in another body within the parallel dimension. The aim of the game is, naturally, to discover what the hell's going on, and to do that you'll have to investigate and communicate to as many people as possible in this completely 3D world.

Talking to others will, for the first time, be done using real-time facial motion capture, but don't expect everyone to take kindly to your questioning as *Quantic Dream* have also included a 3D hand-to-hand combat engine as well. It's looking like *Omnichrom* will be one of the titles to watch out for in the months leading up to Christmas and as always we'll keep you posted on any developments on these two beauties, as well as anything else *Eidos* have to offer in the coming months. Remember where you heard it first.

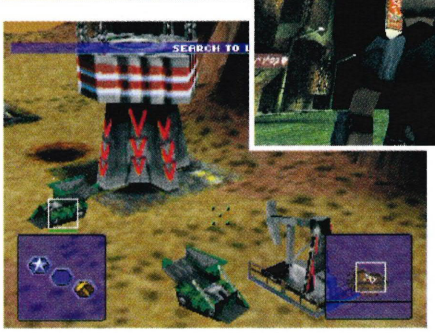


Both Warzone 2100 and the cool looking Omnichrom should be with us by Christmas











MIDSUMMER MANCUNIAN MADNESS

If you've got nowt to do on the 13th of June and you're in the vicinity of Manchester town centre, then why don't you pull on your dancing pants and head for the live music festival, *d.percussion*. The event, sponsored by Manchester-based pixel wizards *Ocean Infogrames UK*, is completely free of charge and will boast three venues offering dancefloor madness at the Arena, live music from the likes of *Beth Orton* at Dukes, plus a massive line-up of live ass-kicking choons will be 'in da house' on the main Castlefield stage serving up *Lamb, Stereolab, Coldcut, Aphex Twin, A Guy Called Gerald, The Dust Junkies, 808 State* and big bad *Roni Size*. Sounds kinda funky, don't it? Well, don't just fantasise, get your ass down there June 13th. We'll be at the bar if you need us.

McRae Rally Update



Regular readers will have seen us fawning over *Codemasters' Colin McRae Rally* last month. Well we've received a later version to look at and now we're positively creaming over that. Coming from the same stable that brought us *TOCA Touring Car Championship* was always a good sign, but this latest effort looks like surpassing even that. In the new version the graphics have been enhanced, better lighting effects implemented and the actual rally is now much more of a challenge.

The general presentation has also been tweaked. With work being carried out all the time, things are looking great for the anticipated July release of the game, and it looks like *V-Rally* could be about to wobble off the top of the rally game pile. Check out next month's issue when we'll be taking an even closer look.





Tune in next month when we'll be doing this sort of thing for real – with Colin McRae himself! How's about that then, eh?

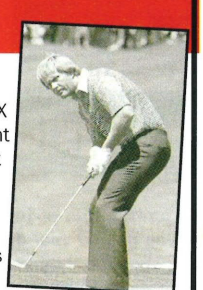
Wing Commander Movie Takes Off

That's right, we might be waiting for a Lara movie, a Doom feature film and a possible Resident Evil epic, but the first one off the mark is the *Wing Commander* flick.

According to our overseas spies, casting is complete and the principal photography has been underway since February. Based on the characters and story lines from the first four games in the ongoing series, the movie is said to feature a host of Hollywood's new faces. *Freddie Prinze Jnr* (*I Know What you Did Last Summer*), *Matthew Lillard (Scream)* and *Malcom McDowell (Hugo Pool)* are among the current definite cast members with original game's creator *Chris Roberts* hogging the director's chair. "This film will deliver all the action, visual impact and provocative characters the millions of *Wing Commander* fans worldwide have come to expect" said Roberts. "Yet the film features a brand-new storyline, so moviegoers don't need to be familiar with the game to understand and enjoy the film". The movie is provisionally pencilled in for a release this summer. We'll keep you posted.



ACTIVISION HIT THE GREEN



The guys and gals over at *Activision* aren't sitting around idle after completing this month's cover game *Vigilante 8*. Oh no, they've been out and about signing up a whole batch of tip-top titles, each one PlayStation bound.

Due to a recently signed deal with American-based *Accolade, Activision* now have the worldwide licensing and endorsement rights for the hugely popular *Jack Nicklaus* golf series. Now you PSX owners might not recollect the series, well don't worry. The five previous titles have only appeared on the PC, albeit to miraculous sales. Well now we can see what all the fuss is about when Nicklaus hits our consoles later this year.

Alien PSX Fiend

Mars Attacks! has a lot to answer for. Not only did it start a revival in shitty space movies, but it seems like it's influence has rubbed off on the crazy world of gaming too. GT Interactive are one such company currently milking the space-hype cow for all its worth as the announcement of their new title, B Movie confirms. Not a lot of information is available on the game at present, but going off the bizarre press release we recieved this month, expect huge comical spaceships, attacks on planet Earth and goggly-eyed aliens with speech impediments to be among the game's final features. B Movie is expected on the PlayStation around September, so until then watch the skies. Or alternatively, read PlayStation Pro.



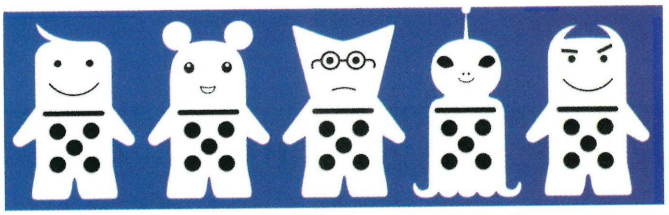
MILKY MILKY

I'd love to see the scientific proof for myself, but the chaps and chapessess down at *Lancashire Dairies* are insisting that there is conclusive proof that preferred milkshake flavours and gaming personalities are linked.

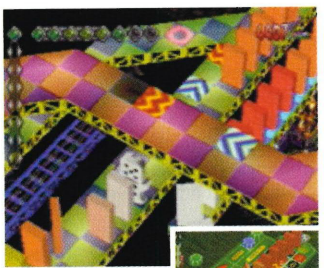
According to the pint pushers, liking strawberry milkshakes mean you laugh in the face of danger, collect every game and conquer them all. Being in love with banana flavour milkshake means you're a cool customer with a sensible personality and finally, if you have a liking to chocolate flavour milkshakes you're not only cool, but sociable with it. In fact you play games for pleasure, not accomplishment. So there.



And as coincidence would have it, *Lancashire Dairies* have just released a new range of groovy milkshakes. The flavours? Strawberry, banana and chocolate. Who'd have thought it? Whether or not they drafted in Alberto the frog from Bod as part of their survey has yet to be confirmed.



Falling Down



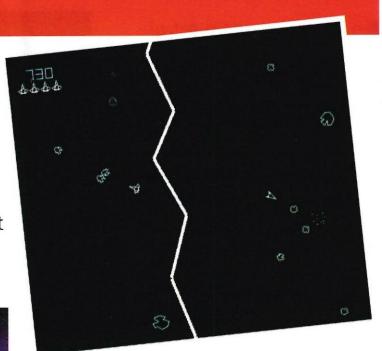
Old men play dominoes. That's a fact of life. However, that's going to change though if *JVC's* latest wacky character has anything to do with it.

Mr Domino is about to burst onto our screens in a new action/puzzle game. You play *Mr. Domino* (can you guess what he is yet?) and must lay a trail of dominoes behind you as you move through a series of levels, linking up hotspots.

After a lap of the course the dominoes will start to topple and if you've completed the link then you're off to the next level. It sounds crap doesn't it? But it isn't, it's great fun and you're all going to be playing it soon. If you like your games spaced out and frustrating then *Mr. Domino* is going to appeal to you. We'll be previewing it next month in time for its summer release, so tune in then.



HOT ROCKS



On top of their golfing scoop (reported elsewhere this issue) *Activision* have also signed an agreement with *QuickDraw* to convert the old *Atari* classic, *Asteroids,* for the PlayStation.

"*Asteroids* is one of the most legendary videogames of all time and is sure to appeal to both those who played the game on their 2600 machines and in the arcades, as well as a whole new generation of players," said *Robert Kotick, Chairman* and CEO at *Activision.*



"The remake presents us with an incredible opportunity to preserve many of the classic elements that made the original *Asteroids* a massive hit, while updating a terrific gaming premise with the features and capabilities that make a great game today."

Our spies tell us to expect the game to appear before Christmas. More news on this, and other *Activision* titles next month when we'll be fresh off the plane from *E3,* Atlanta.





IT'S GREAT WHEN YOU SKATE... YEAH

Sony are busy signing up sponsorship deals yet again with the latest being the UK's first amateur skate competition. The event is the first of its kind in England for over 10 years and as such, *Sony,* along with co-sponsors *Sidewalk Surfer Skateboard Mag* and *DNA Inline Skate Mag*, have wheeled out some rather special prizes for the lucky winners.

On offer are two return tickets to the US of A along with a grand's worth of spending money, a year-long sponsorship deal with *Sony* themselves, skateboards, T-shirts, goodie bags and of course, a PlayStation. Five regional heats are being held over the summer, with the contest open to all kinds of skaters ranging from inline to skateboarders.

Music will be provided at the last two events by *The Young Offenders, Maximum Roach, DJ Harry* and Manchester's very own *Dust Junkies*. The final will take place in London in September and the local heats are happening at the following venues...

Storm Skatepark, Derby
TEL: 01332 201768
INLINE COMP: 20th June, 2pm - 6pm
SKATEBOARD COMP: 21st June, 2pm - 6pm

Bones Skatepark, Stockport
TEL: 0161 480 7755
INLINE COMP: 4th July, 2pm - 6pm
SKATEBOARD COMP: 5th July, 2pm - 6pm

Play Station Skatepark, London
TEL: 0181 969 4669
INLINE COMP :18th July, 2pm - 6pm
SKATEBOARD COMP: 19th July, 2pm - 6pm

Rampworks, Liverpool
TEL: 0151 530 1500
INLINE COMP: 1st August, 2pm - 6pm
SKATEBOARD COMP: 2nd August, 2pm - 6pm

Mount Hawke, Truro
TEL: 01209 890 705
INLINE COMP: 8th August, 2pm - 6pm
SKATEBOARD COMP: 9th August, 2pm - 6pm

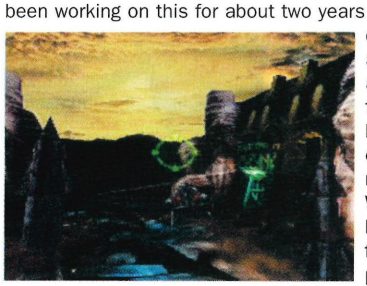
GRAND FINAL

PlayStation Skatepark, London
TEL: 0181 969 4669
INLINE FINAL: 5th Sept, 12pm - 8pm
SKATEBOARD FINAL: 6th Sept, 12pm - 8pm

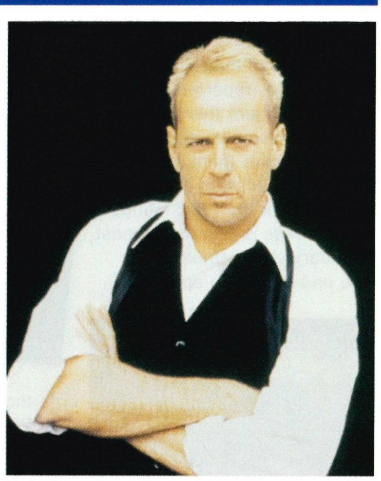
Be there early or you're gonna miss out!

The Viper Boom

Coming soon from *Infogrames* UK (who used to be *Ocean* of course) is *Viper,* which is the follow up (more or less) to the highly successful *Tunnel B1*. *Xample* (formally *Neon*) have been working on this for about two years and it's moving towards completion now. *Viper* is and out-and-out blasting action with you fly around the screen pressing the X button and basting everything in sight. What more could you ask for? We're waiting for this one here, so expect to see it first within these very pages of PSPro.



APOCALYPSE STILL ON THE CARDS



In another random act of document scribbling, *Activision* have signed an agreement with *Neversoft Entertainment* (the guys behind the PlayStation conversion of *MDK*) to develop its explosive action-shooter, *Apocalypse. Joel Jewett,* President of *Neversoft* stated the obvious: "We are thrilled to be developing *Apocalypse* for the PlayStation game console. *Apocalypse* is the perfect vehicle to showcase our commitment to creating cutting-edge games."

For those of you who had forgotten, *Apocalypse* is an action-packed third-person perspective cinematic blaster starring *Bruce Willis* as *Trey Kincade*. The game was due last year, but thanks to unforeseen setbacks it's now set for a winter release.

The game itself is set in a dark violent future where science and religion have become competing pillars of society, each offering their own version of salvation. A false prophet known only as the Reverend has swiped a load of hi-tech nanotechnology and has brought the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse into the equation.

Death, Plague, War and The Beast roam the earth in human disguise gathering evil forces and waiting the nod from the Rev before they bring a swift end to humanity. Players, with big *Bruce* as their sidekick, must obviously try and stop them at all costs and save the world, but enough for now, as we'll have more news on *Apocalypse* next month. Stay tuned.

BIZARRE PR

The part of the mag where we show what the industry get up to in the name of hype. This month...



Virgin Interactive steal the show again with yet another highly limited edition *Resident Evil 2* promotional tool. This time it's a rather smart *Zippo* lighter in a cool little presentation case. You won't find these babies in your local tobacconists. Only special people get them. Like us.

Thank God For Tamagotchi's

Ever wanted to punch the face in of the businessman sat next to you on the bus when his bloody *Tamagotchi* starts bleeping because it's done a dump? We know the feeling. Well then, you'll be glad to hear that *Bandai* are ready to unleash their sequel – The *Tamagotchi Angel.*

Let's be realistic, they're exactly the bloody same to all intents and purposes except they're little angels rather than blobs. However, there are two key differences that will make this even more of a winner. Firstly, you can turn the sound off, so if you hear one bleeping you can legitimately kill whoever owns it, because they're doing it to wind you up, and secondly there's now a pause feature which means you can stop the thing from waking you up at night.

According to *Bandai,* this new offspring from the *Tamagotchi* camp was the initial idea for the original loveable eggs, ie. it's aimed at school girls. A general unisex version was, as you know, released to the eagerly-awaiting world, closely followed by the boys' version, the *DigiMon.* And now the girls can have their very own cyberpet frenzy as this angel version finally appears over here. Priced at £10.99 they still make the ideal present for your lass and they can be found in all good toy shops. As usual though they'll sell like hot cakes so snap yours up quickly.



Girlfriend's birthday coming up soon? No probs, get her one of these and not only will she love you, but it'll keep her quiet too

WIN! WIN! WIN!

M.I.B GIVEAWAY

This is your chance to get your grubby hands on some exclusive and highly-limited edition Men In Black prizes, courtesy of our good pals at Gremlin Interactive. The first lucky beggar to be plucked from our postbag will earn themselves a copy of Men In Black, a copy of the video of the same name, plus (and this is very special) an exclusive Men In Black customised PlayStation.

Needless to say, these babies are very very rare. the next four correct entries will be rewarded with a copy of both the game and the video. Tempted? Well all you have to do to stand a chance of winning this top prize is tell us who wrote the original Men in black comics. Send your answers, on the back of a postcard, to our usual address and make sure you mark it clearly with the words "M.I.B 4 ME". Got that? Then get to it.



PERIPHERAL VISIONS

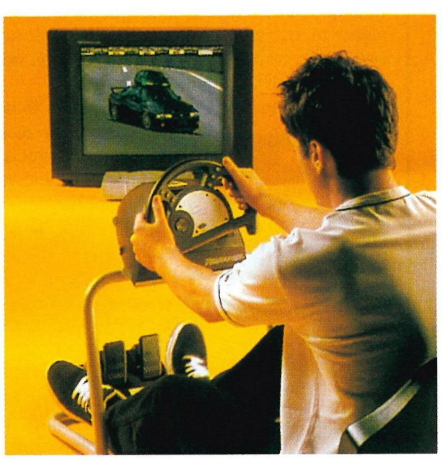
As usual the flood of PlayStation peripherals has continued this month. After we featured the *Resident Evil 2* joypad last issue, we decided to let you know about another couple of items you may be interested in.

Firstly, and obviously, we've got the *Dual-Shock Analogue* controller. Due to be released on the same day as *Gran Turismo* (because *GT* is the first game to be compatible with it) the *Dual Shock* is the same as the regular Analogue except it's heavier, has nicer sticks and shakes, rattles and er, doesn't roll. It's a top piece of gear and well worth buying as loads of games are going to use it, including *Tekken 3.* Just make sure you don't get stung for a regular one by a cheeky dealer!

On the regular pad front, *LMP* are releasing another *Gamester* product, the *PSX Clear Joypad.* It's in the same range as the other *Gamester* coloured pads, and only costs £11.99, so has to be an option if you want a cheap pad for multi-player frivolity. Also joining the *Clear pad* is the *Official England joypad* which is covered in the Three Lions shield for all you footy patriots this summer. A bargain at £11.99.

Also coming up from *LMP* is the *Rumble Force* steering wheel, which they tell us is the world's first special-fx wheel for the PlayStation. Compatible with all existing games. *LMP* reckon it will let users feel the different road surfaces of *Rage Racer,* the force of collisions in *Gran Turismo* and the impact of a spin-out smash in *TOCA.* It's due in June with the price yet to be confirmed. Watch this space next month.

Finally we thought we'd tell you about the ideal way to carry your PlayStation around for that multiplayer action. It's a nice hard case available from *The Ultimate Case Company* and it costs £39.90 and will let you lug your machine, two pads, all leads, three memory cards and seven games around. Call 0161 339 8846 for details.





Fed up of throwing your PSX into an old Tesco's carrier bag? Then buy a hard case, dumb-ass! And go and get yourself a rumbling wheel and a fancy transparent pad while you're at it



STICK TO THE ROAD

Electronic Arts are once again set to bring the smell of burning rubber and and the sound of cracking helmets to the *PSX* by way of the latest release in the *Road Rash* series.

Road Rash 3D is set in an all new world where you'll be expected to thrash out a series of wins along miles of inter-connecting freeways, city streets, alleys and bridges.

Apart from having the obvious overhauls in the graphical department, it'll also feature an innovative 3D engine that can handle multi-level detail, surround-sound so you can hear other bikes screaming up behind you, and a sophisticated AI system which gives each enemy biker gang and police squad their own distinct personality.

So get ready to deliver some pain from a choice of six different weapons when the rash hits town once more later in the year.



Flick through the pages of a book...

As always, *Titan* books have an excellent collection of new graphic novels heading the way of all who enjoy the exploits of our favourite crime-fighting heroes and blood-thirsty anarchists. Already in the shops are the latest adventures of the *Dark Knight* in *Batman: Four Of A Kind,* where old big ears takes a trip down memory lane to his early days and his first meetings with *The Riddler, Poison Ivy, Manbat* and *The Scarecrow.*

X-Files fans are treated to four all new comic strip investigations with the infamous *Mulder* and *Scully* in *The X-Files Skin Deep.* The revised tale of Supergirl, telling the tale of her creation, her arrival on Earth and how she manages to cope leading two lives will be on the shelves by June 5th and will be joined in mid-July by the lizard king *Godzilla* in the making of the £70m monster movie of 1998.

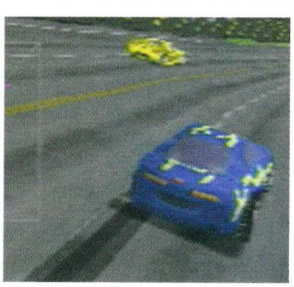
Each of the books is priced between £7.99 and £9.99. Go out and but the bloody lot of them today.



FEEL THE RUSH

San Francisco Rush, GT Interactive's fast as hell racer, that was a huge hit in the arcades and received a fair amount of acclaim when it debuted on the *N64,* will soon be finding itself on the decidedly sunnier shores of *PSX* land. If tear-arsing around on the streets of The Golden State, crashing into famous landmarks and hopping over trams and various other Americanised obstructions is your idea of joy-riding heaven, then this is probably the game for you. It'll feature six tracks and eight cars, but a wealth of hidden stuff will make the numbers a little more healthy, if you can find them. We'll be giving it the Pro treatment in our preview zone next issue. Stay tuned.





DOWN WITH ODT?

Psygnosis have been a bit quiet of late, but celebrations are in order as the Liverpudlian pixel lovers are preparing to hit *E3* this month with a big bag of software treats. The first one to hit your PlayStation will be *ODT,* which incase you didn't know, is a groovy 3D third-person perspective action adventure, not too dis-similar from *Tomb Raider.* The story behind the game involves the mysterious disappearance of the sacred, and highly magical, Green Pearl. An expedition is organised to retrieve and deliver this fabled object to its rightful owners, only mid-mission, our hero's craft bursts and the crew end up somewhere in the Forbidden Zone.

Needless to say, this ain't the place to be and so you, the player, must take control and get your craft and your crew back home safely, with the magic pearl intact. Sounds cool to us, and judging by the screens this baby should give *Lara* a run for her money when it surfaces later on this year.





SURREAL DEAL

FREE SOFTWARE

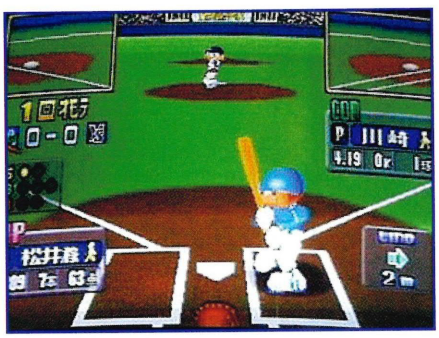
Americans find certain things entertaining that us Brits simply do not. Take *Michael Bolton* for example. Well with this in mind, each month we give you the chance to win a free game by simply telling us what you reckon this stateside advert is selling. Easy enough? You would have thought so wouldn't you. So then, what's this month's American ad puzzler?



Guesses on a postcard to the usual address please, but before we forget, thanks to all of you who bothered to enter last month's compo. The mystery game was, of course, *Psygnosis' Newman-Haas Racing.* The winner? Mr Mark Good of Whitley Bay! Well done Mark, your game is in the post.

Publishing powerhouse **Namco** are busy at the moment. As well as basking in the glow of **Tekken 3's** success, they're also working on **World Stadium 2** – an ingenious baseball game designed to take full advantage of **Namco's** own much under used **NegCon pad**.

As with most Japanese baseball games, this features '**big head**' players, but this one stands out from the crowd because the analogue nature of the pad gives precision control over both pitching and batting! Twisting the controller swings the bat and determines the trajectory of each pitch. Difficult to fully get the hang of in



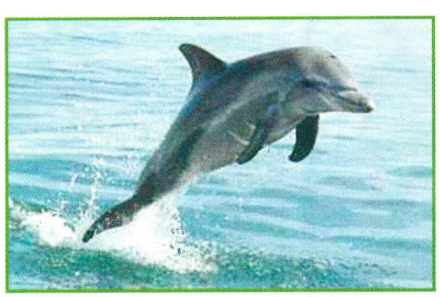
the short time we've had to play it, but it definitely has massive potential.

Unfortunately there's no release planned outside Japan. Yet. Rest assured though that their newest money spinner – **Namco Anthology 1 & 2** – will get a UK release. Volume one will feature **Wrestle Ball** (a MegaDrive sports game), **Babel** (an NES RPG), **Star Jester** (NES action game), and **King's Land** (another NES RPG). While Volume 2 offers **Pac-Attack** (MegaDrive action), **King of Kings** (NES RPG), **Gradius 2** (NES RPG), and **Valkyrie's Adventure** (yes, it's another NES RPG!).

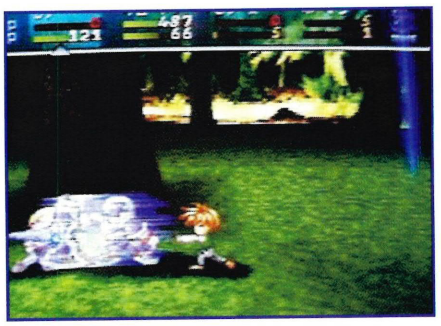
Alongside **Metal Gear Solid, Konami** are working on top secret project **Dolphin's Dream**. While there's little more than an early working version of the engine at the moment, there is enough to show that the game is going in the right direction.

It places players in control of one of several human scuba divers on a quest to uncover sunken treasure. Undersea movement is very realistic, although the engine is struggling to keep up at the moment. Players can only draw a harpoon gun so far, but many special effects are in place, such as rippling sunlight from the surface above, schools of fish and larger undersea creatures. All of which look beautiful.

Dolphin's Dream is scheduled to launch in Japan this September, and **Konami** has confirmed that a US release is planned at a later date, which of course usually means a UK version is almost a certainty.



Recent **Nintendo** defectors **Enix,** disappointed fans when it became clear that the eagerly anticipated **Dragon**



Quest VII has been delayed. They did manage to deflect some of the negative feelings by providing a playable version of **Star Ocean: the Second Story**. For the uninitiated this is the sequel to a popular SNES RPG entitled, unsurprisingly, **Star Ocean**. Again this is very early in its development, but it's already looking like it'll turn into a good game.

All of the locales are fully rendered and easily of **FFVII** standard, if not better! The game will also support the **Dual Shock** and a number of publishers are already looking to acquire the rights outside Japan. We'll keep you posted.

It looks as though **Enix's Parappa** inspired dancing game **Bust-a-Move** could be facing stiff competition from **Konami** of all places! While **Enix** have gone for button sequences and D-pad presses set to a rhythm, Konami's **Dance! Dance! Dance!** is a much less rigid affair. Two players go head-to-head in a big dance off and moves are executed in an improvised style, with the player strutting their stuff in whatever way the music takes them. The more accurately they fit the tempo of the music, the higher the score.

Perhaps the most exciting difference between the two is a story mode, in which go in search of challengers to your dancing skills! Sound bizarre? It is, but it's also great fun!

Bandai are working on a most unusual title. **Tail Concerto** is a cat versus mouse battle obviously inspired by watching too many **Tom & Jerry** cartoons. Although maybe **Itchy & Scratchy** is the more likely illegitimate parent because the violence scales tremendous comedy heights at times.

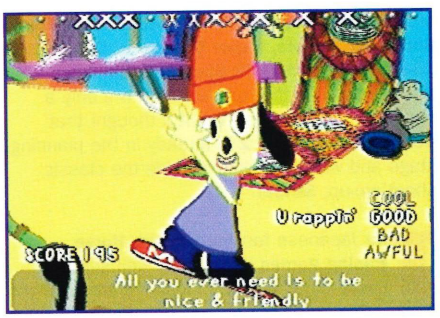
You play a mouse who's handily equipped with a hulking great robotic suit. You must roam around a very nice 3D world, interacting with a variety of characters, and basically wiping out moggies to





your heart's content! Full support of the analogue and dual-shock features of the PlayStation were already in the game, perhaps not all that surprisingly because despite hearing very little about the game, it should already have been released in Japan by the time you get to read this! No firm plans for release anywhere else yet, but it's apparently a 95% certainty.

Obviously hoping to cash in on the **Parappa** phenomenon, **Sony** are again chancing their arm with an unusual

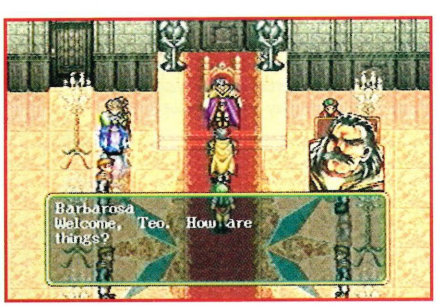


musical title. **Stolen Song** enables players to play guitar along with their favourite rock stars using a special peripheral known as the **V-Pick**.

Using the plastic pick, players strum on any hard surface in time with a bar which bobs along at the bottom of the screen. Get your timing right and you'll sound like a veritable axeman. Several songs are available to play along with, ranging from **heavy-metal** to **ballads**, and a second player can even join in, using a controller to play the drums!

At the moment, photographs of popular Japanese rock stars are displayed during gameplay, but obviously this will change for Western releases. The **V-Pick** is included in the package, but **Sony** has no plans to release the game outside the US at present.

Konami's Japanese developers recently have made a surprise progress report on **Suikoden II** – a game which, given the current climate of massive success for anything RPG-like, has high hopes pinned on it at **Konami HQ**. **Suikoden I** is best remembered in the US for being the first **PlayStation RPG** to make waves on the PlayStation (and of course for being a fantastic game in its own right). And in its own way it opened the path for others like



Alundra, Wild Arms, and of course, the massive **Final Fantasy VII**.

Currently, **Suikoden II** is 65% complete, and on schedule for a Japanese release in the Autumn of this year.

Shoot'em-ups are back in fashion it would seem judging by the number of them in development at the moment. One of the best is **Taito's G Darius**. A perfect arcade conversion, the game features panning camera

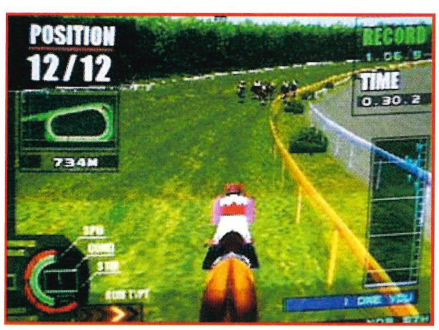
angles very similar to **Einhander** alongside a gameplay style that we've all seen a million times before.

There seems to be quite a bit of slowdown at the moment which is a bit worrying considering **Taito** were touting the version we saw as being the finished one. If that gets sorted out this will be excellent, if not it could well bring a good game down.

It's not only **Namco** who are feeling nostalgic these days. **Capcom** are beavering away on **Capcom Generations** which will feature arcade perfect renditions of **Ghosts 'n' Goblins, Ghouls 'n' Ghosts, Super Ghosts 'n' Goblins, 1942, 1943** and **1943 Special Edition**. No release date for that one yet. And it's only a rumour at the moment, but it's thought that **Generations Volume 2** is already in the planning stage and will most likely include the classic shoot'em-up, **Strider**.

The Japanese fascination with **Horse Racing games** is certainly well served these days, with the most promising effort looking like being **Tecmo's Gallop Racer 2** which is going down very well indeed with the Japanese press and looks to have a bright future ahead of it. Featuring polygonal tracks, horses, and riders, the game went down well with punters for both its graphics and realistic controls. Hopefully, this one will be released outside of Japan, but don't hold your breath!





Rumours abound that a sequel to **Enix's Dance'em-up, Bust-a-move,** is already some way along the line to completion. The **Bust A Move 2** producer **Watanabe** was asked about the sequel, but he replied that he "couldn't say anything about it at this time." When pressed for more, he replied that, "of course we are having consultations regarding the title. We've had complaints that the commands were too difficult to see, and there are many other types of characters players wish to see. Our male fans want **bouncing breasts**, so that's presently under consideration." We'll keep you posted...

Finally, a bit of actual news other than game stuff. One of the main talking points in Japan at the moment surrounds a bid by **Sony** to try and outlaw the sale of second hand software! According to the electronics giant, used software leads not only to consumer confusion but also takes away cash from publishers who would see that same consumer's cash spent on new products. Given that the used market in Japan is huge with players making full use of the cheaper software on offer, there is obvious concern amongst Japanese gamers.

In some ways you can see **Sony's** point, especially when you have the situation of games being available used at half price only a week after they are launched officially, which obviously is taking money directly out of publishers pockets. But any move to outlaw such a practise would surely be impossible to implement?

However, it is thought that **Sony** have a strong case, and if successful in Japan they will switch their focus to getting used games off the shelves in other **PlayStation** strongholds such as the UK and America. Scary stuff eh? We'll let you know as soon as there are any further developments.



PRO NEWS FROM OUR MATE IN THE STATES

How many of you have played through an RPG and said to yourself, "I wish they could've changed that!" or, "My God! That storyline's shite!" Well now you can stop your moaning and put your money where your mouth is.

Ascii has made it possible for role-playing nuts to invent their own RPG. In fact, not only will you be able to create the storyline in ***RPG Maker,*** but you'll be able to customize just about everything in the game including the hero and his enemies and their attributes and appearance). You can invent you own cutscenes, customize and write the music and sound effects, create world maps and locations. You'll even be able to adjust your lead characters walking animation!

Thankfully, you won't have to go into this game all novice-like. **Ascii** has thoughtfully included a sample game just to give you a rough idea of what you can acheive in **RPG Maker**, along with some pretty comprehensive tutorials to help you find your feet. **Ascii's RPG Maker** will be officially unveiled at this year's **E3** in Atlanta and is scheduled to come out later this year.

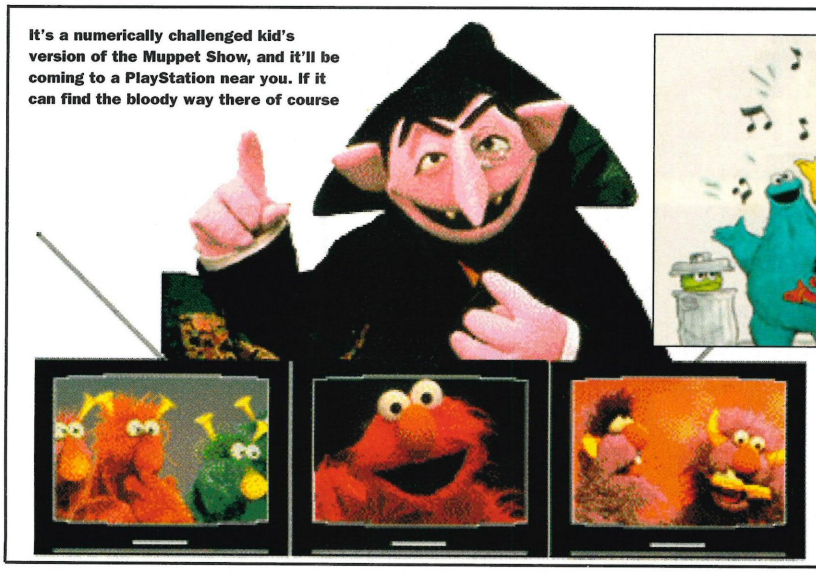
While there's been no official announcement from **Square** yet regarding **Final Fantasy VIII**, President Hironobu Sakaguchi revealed the existence of **Final Fantasy VIII** at a press conference held at **Square's** Hawaii branch almost a year ago.

Unfortunately, a year later and **Square** has been told the Japanese gaming press to "wait a little longer" for the game. While this in itself is actually quite cryptic, it's obvious that with the game currently only **8% complete**, it's probably unlikely that it will make a 1998 release in Japan, and therefore much less likely for the West.

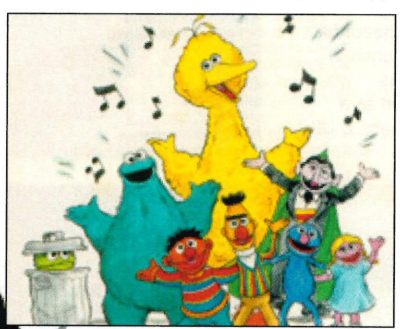
However, spies inside **Squaresoft** tell us that already there is no doubt that **FFVIII** is going to completely blow our minds and it will definitely be worth the wait – however long it turns out to take!

First signs that the PlayStation's place in every home could be cemented through parent appeasing educational software have emerged this month, with details of two **Sesame Street** licenses due to appear in October of this year. **NewKidCo LLC** and **Alpha Software Corporation** are planning on releasing **Elmo's Magical Number Tour** and **Elmo's Magical Letter Tour.**

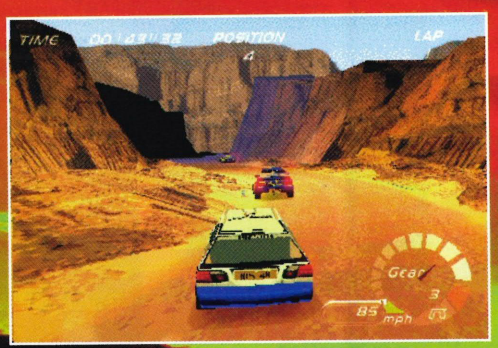
Both titles are training aids for 2-6 year olds obviously starring **Elmo,** that red muppet thing that inexplicably became last year's 'must have toy' for Christmas. You play **Elmo** who searches through polygonal worlds to find numbers and letters. And that's about it, but then these are for toddlers, so it was perhaps over ambitious to expect too much. No shooting, no killing and definitely no fighting! Sounds like fun...

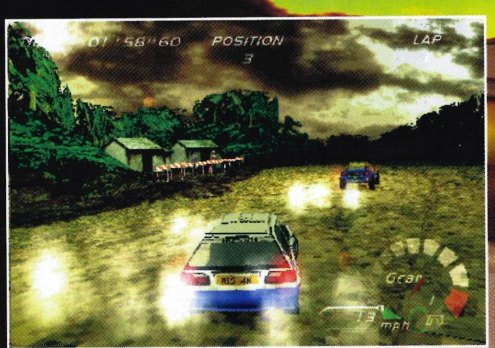


It's a numerically challenged kid's version of the Muppet Show, and it'll be coming to a PlayStation near you. If it can find the bloody way there of course



THE WORLD CHAMPION

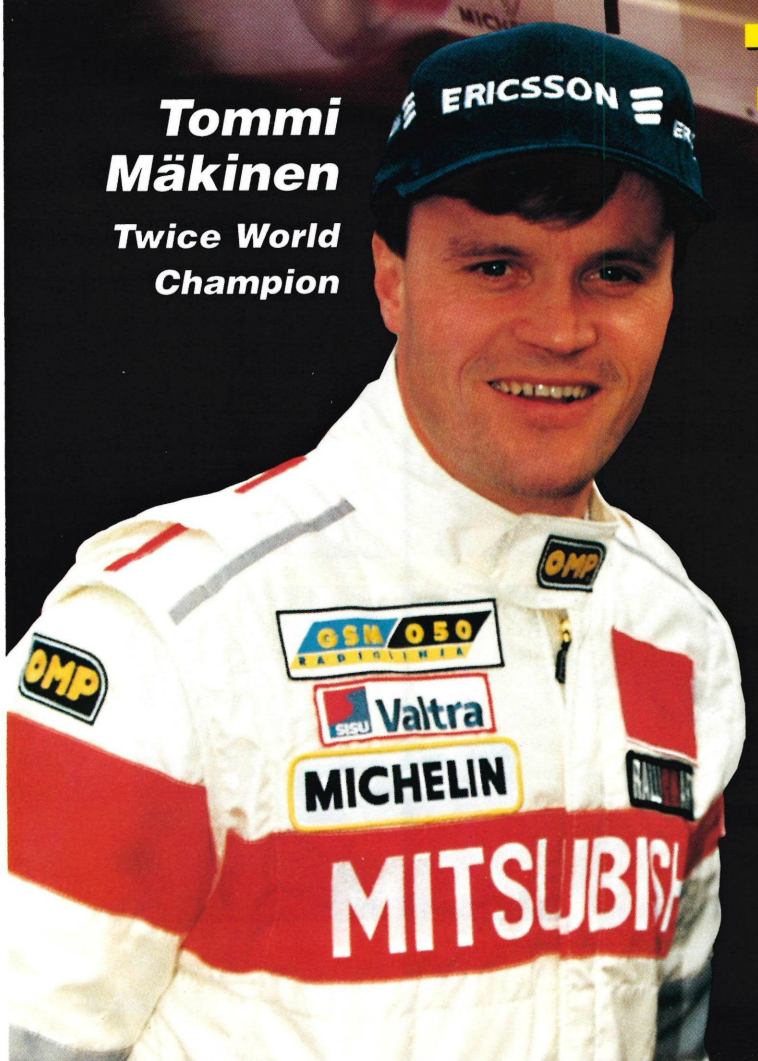




Tommi Mäkinen is the current World Rally Champion and is the only driver to win back to back world championships. When he secured his first win of the 1998 championship in his quest for a unique third successive world title, the only explanation offered for his continued success was – It's just that Tommi drives faster than anyone else.

Tommi Mäkinen Rally features:

- 130 tracks
- Enhanced for Dual Shock
- Create your own 3D tracks
- Authentic rally cars
- High resolution graphics (512x256)
- Dynamic lighting effects
- Arcade, championship and split screen challenge modes
- Exclusive to PlayStation™



Tommi Mäkinen
Twice World Champion

No-one drives FASTER

Nothing plays BETTER

tommi mäkinen
rally

PlayStation

Europress

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GEX APPEAL!



PlayStation Pro have teamed up with BMG Interactive and Bastion to bring you this exciting Gex 3D competition. Having already done the business and scoring 8.5 in last month's issue, the coolest lizard in town is now sporting a whole range of cool merchandise.

Besides these essential items we're also giving away a brand spanking new PlayStation too, so it's well worth taking the time to enter. Here's the full list of prizes.

FIRST PRIZE

A PlayStation, a copy of the Gex 3D: Enter the Gecko game, a huge, cool Gex cardboard cut-out to make anyone's bedroom look the part and a Gex 3D long-sleeved T-shirt.

RUNNER'S UP

Runners-up will win four sets of a copy of the game and a T-shirt.

All you need to do is answer the following questions and send them to us here at:
PlayStation Pro, Media House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield, SK10 4NP.
Make sure you send your entries on a postcard or the back of a stuck-down envelope or they'll be straight in the bin. Good luck.

WIN £400 WORTH OF PRIZES



Q1 *Boy George and Culture Club had a famous hit in the eighties featuring the name of a species of lizard was it:-*
A) Karma Chameleon
B) Karma Gecko
C) Karma Iguana

Q2 *What exclusive characteristic does a chameleon possess? Is it;*
A) Ability to change the size of its head
B) Ability to change the colour of its skin
C) Ability to meow like a lost kitten

Q3 *What is the name of the famous British comedian who supplies the voice for Gex?*
A) Sid James
B) Eric Sykes
C) Leslie Philips





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PRO LETTERS



Sit down, grit your teeth and try to keep calm as our very own resident evil ploughs through your letters like a man possessed. This month: Moans about tips and rants about tits. Great stuff...

Send your letters to: PRO Letters, IDG Media, FREEPOST (SK3038) Macclesfield SK10 4YE or email me at jay@idg.co.uk

Piss tank

Has anyone in your office noticed that drinking beer enhances their gameplay? I've found that after several cold ones I can complete levels of games which would normally have been beyond my capacity. Don't get me wrong, I'm not an alcoholic, and remember kids it's not big to drink until unconscious! However, to get to my point, instead of giving away free game guides with your mag, you could enclose a voucher to obtain a free four pack from my local off-license, thus encouraging me to succeed in games without expert help. If my proposal interests you I could help boost magazine sales by purchasing 20 or so copies a week.
Yours hungoverly,

G Best, no address

PRO:
You sound familiar. You don't pretend to be from Liverpool from time to time do you? Eh? Howard K? Anyway, regarding your lager inquiry, yes, certain members of the Pro squad have found that getting absolutely rat-arsed improves their game playing prowess no end, but most of them claim it improves their chances of getting off with tasty girls too. Where's the proof? That's what I say. The odd gaming miracle has been known to happen whilst under the influence (that's not to say we encourage under-age drinking kids) and giving free beer away would be a top covermount I'll have to admit, but with the growing success of the mag I fear it would turn the nation's gamers into goggle-eyed piss tanks within a matter of weeks. Nice idea though.

PlayStation2 worries

I'm very worried that my *PlayStation* is going to be out of date, because the new PlayStation2 is coming very soon. I am not sure if my games will actually work on the new *PlayStation2*, but what I want to know is would it be worth selling my PlayStation and getting a new *PlayStation2*? The only problem is I have got most of the stuff for the *PlayStation*.

Ben Scholes, Lancashire

PRO:
Now will everybody just chill out writing in worrying/complaining about the bloody *PlayStation2*! I'm sick to the back teeth with it. Firstly, it's not even been officially announced or confirmed by *Sony*. Now you'd think they'd know something about it, wouldn't you? Secondly, *Sony* have announced that they will continue to support the current *PlayStation* until the year 2000. So, in a nutshell; stop panicking, your *PlayStation* isn't out of date, nor will it be for some time. Okay? Now stop bugging me, please.

Sega Shaturn

First of all, your magazine is very funny and informative, but I have some questions and problems that I hope you can help me with...
1) Is *Masters Of The Teras Kasi* any good?
2) Are *Sega Saturns* crap or what?
3) My friend thinks the *PlayStation* is crap, please tell him where to go.
4) Are there any other major new releases on the way for the PlayStation?
5) Please could you give me some tips for *Adidas Power Soccer '97*.
6) Howard K, Liverpool – Get a life!

Tom Colley, Stockton

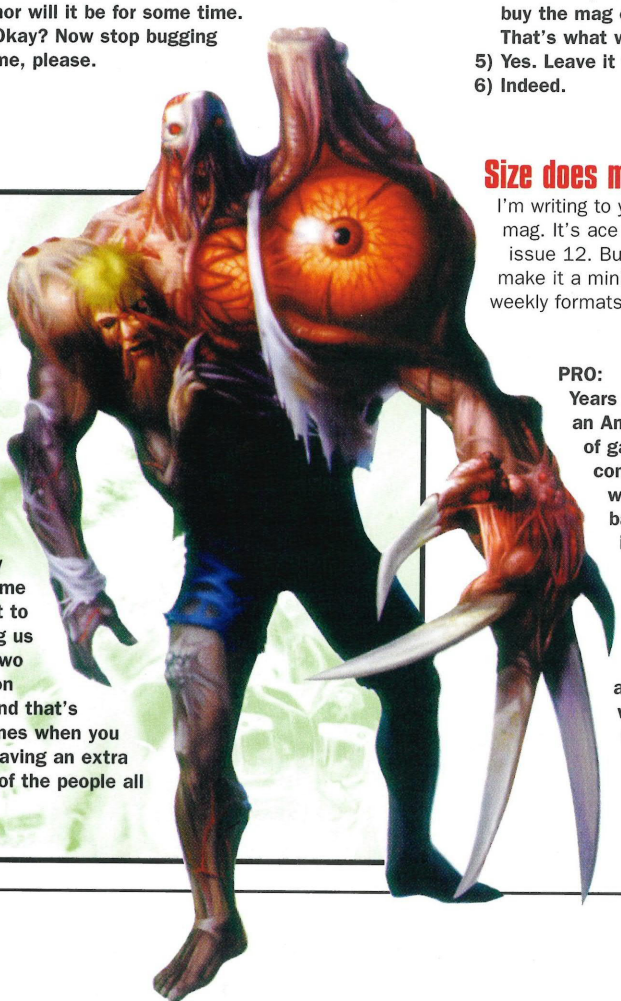
PRO:
1) Yes.
2) Yes.
3) Oi! Tom Colley's mate! Shut up, wise up and piss off.
4) Oooh no. That's it now. Nothing new on the way at all. Are you mad? Of course there's new releases on the way – *Tekken 3, Tomb Raider 3* and *Metal Gear Solid* should all be with us before Christmas, plus hundreds of others. If you want to know what's going on, buy the mag every month and you'll find out. That's what we're here for.
5) Yes. Leave it well alone.
6) Indeed.

TOO MUCH TOO SOON?

Is it possible you could tell me the reason why you have already given out the walkthrough guide to *Resident Evil 2* with your mag? The game isn't even out yet. I suggest in the future you should wait until the game has been out for a month. By the way, I love the new style mag.

MASG, Brighton

PRO:
Fair point. But tell me MASG, when did *Resident Evil 2* come out? April 29th was it? Yes it was. When did the mag come out? April 16th was it? Yes it was. Now as you know if you're reading this, this issue didn't come out until May 14th, therefore everyone who rushed out to buy *Resident Evil 2* at the end of April would be ringing us or writing in with tips queries and the like for a good two weeks. Well, we like to give our readers the information they want, when they want it, not two months later. And that's why you'll get the best player's guides to the best games when you want them, right here in PlayStation Pro. I'm sorry if having an extra free gift pissed you off MASG, but we can't please all of the people all of the time, can we?



Size does matter

I'm writing to you to say you have a brilliant mag. It's ace and I've been buying it since issue 12. But is there anyway you could make it a mini-magazine and publish it in a weekly formats?

Ollie Coulbeck, Grimsby

PRO:
Years and years and years ago, when an Amiga was considered the height of gaming technology, our old company *Europress* used to do a weekly games mag, and what a ball-ache it was. Now Ollie, it's initially a good idea, but getting it on the shelves within a week is a mammoth job – it's hard enough getting this quality publication out on time! So to answer your question, no, we won't be bringing the mag out weekly, but no doubt some losers will cash in the idea.

Platinum puzzler

I've just bought a *PlayStation* and it took me ages to decide which mag to buy. Thankfully, I chose PlayStation Pro. Anyway, the questions:
1) Could you tell my Dad what a *Platinum* game is?
2) Should I buy *Rage Racer* or *TOCA Touring Car Championship?*
3) Are second-hand games worth buying?
4) Will there ever be a *Rayman 2*?
5) Any news on *World League Soccer*?
6) Why is your mag so ace?

S. Kilmore, Scunthorpe

PRO:
I see you've made the right choice on two counts there Master Kilmore, good lad. Here's your answers...
1) A Platinum game is a title which appeared some time ago, sold millions and therefore is deemed as having Platinum status. These games are then re-released at a low low price of £19.99, thus saving you cash.
2) *TOCA.*
3) It depends on which games they are mate. If you can find some good ones (use our Directory on page 118 if you need any help) then snap them up and save money.
4) Possibly. *UBISoft* have yet to confirm a PlayStation version.
5) See page 34 for a full review.
6) Because we know what we're doing and we are the professionals. Plus we're all great too.

BREAST OBSESSED?

I enjoy reading your mag, but I take exception to this Paul character who does your Rant! page. How can he comment on Tomb Raider only selling on account of Lara's boobs when he has admitted never having played the game. He's got some nerve! Tomb Raider sells well on account of the people who buy it know it's worth every penny. The programmers got it right. They spent time and effort creating a great adventure/puzzle game which when played in the third person perspective makes it feel like they are really there. Tomb Raider 2 was even better. I see that you mention TR3 in the mag, when will this be released? Plus my sister has a game called Shivers on the PC. I wonder if it's ever likely to hit the PSX.

Margaret McHaffie, no address

PRO:
I'm glad to hear that Paul is doing exactly what he's paid for – creating a reaction. You must understand though Maggie that Paul's opinions are exactly that – his opinions, and not all the Pro staff share them. You must admit though that if Lara had been a bloke a) not as many people would have bought the game and b) not as many people would have even heard of the game. Tomb Raider's success owes a lot to its advertising and marketing, despite it being a good game. TR3, by the way, is rumoured for a Xmas release, and as far as I'm aware, there are no plans for a PSX conversion of Shivers. Sorry.



Dad shows lad

Your magazine is the best. I first heard about it when my Dad brought it home from work and ever since then I've been buying it the day it comes out. *The Nightmare Creatures* guide that came free with issue 18 was ace, and the review of *Masters Of The Teras Kasi* from issue 19 had me in stitches. Just one question though, will there be a *Nightmare Creatures 2*? Keep up the good work.

Liam Vaughan, Bexley



PRO:
I'm glad you like the mag and hats off to your Dad for being on the ball and introducing you to us. Regarding your question, well there's been no news on a sequel to the mighty *Nightmare Creatures* from the guys at *Kalisto* as yet, but with *E3* just around the corner who knows what they'll announce. Stay tuned to your favourite mag though Liam, and all will be revealed in the fullness of time.

Smut monkey

I have just bought your latest issue and on page 20 I saw the results of the *F1 '97* competition. I liked all the pictures of the beautiful girls and I was wondering if I could have them. I would really like the censored picture.

Andy Haines, Bedfordshire

PRO:
I take it you're too young to go and buy jazz mags for yourself then, eh? Anyway, you can't have them. Some pervert has had them away from my desk already.

Stalk tall

After entering the competition including *Jo Guest* in the January issue of PSPro, although I didn't win, I was wondering if you could give me her address. The reason being that I have been trying to get hold of a pen friend, and I just thought that *Jo Guest* would be a really good penfriend for me.
Many thanks,

W.Jashbourne, Huddersfield



PRO:
Mmm, yes. I can see that happening. I'm sure she'd be very interested in writing to you. You know, telling you what clothes she was or wasn't wearing, stuff like that. And you could write back to her, saying what a great guy you are, and before you know it wedding bells will chime and week-long marathons of untold kinky sex will begin. Alternatively, she'd simply refuse to write back and immediately instruct her lawyers to come and sue my ass off for printing her home address in a national magazine. Now I know you didn't really want me to print this letter did you, eh? I've changed your name, but you know who you are and this sort of thing must stop before it gets out of hand. You mucky little monkey.

Sister act

If someone has to fill *Lara's* boots for the forthcoming movie, then I want to tell you that my sister, Mel, thinks it should be her. Plus it would make her friend Vic jealous. What do you think of her chances?

Joey C, Stockport

PRO:
If your sister wants to be *Lara* then I suggest you get her to send in a photo to me and I'll pass it on to the relevant people Joey. In fact, if anyone's sister (or girlfriend come to think of it) fancies themselves as *Lara* in the forthcoming film, send in your piccys to our usual address pronto.



MEET THE PROFESSIONALS...



NAME: JAY SHARPLES
FLAVOUR OF THE MONTH: Dead or Alive
PREFERRED GENRE: Beat'em-ups
LOVES & LOATHES: Jay tore himself away from Tekken 3 to ogle the breast-wobbling antics of Sony's latest beat'em-up. But wouldn't dirty himself with the bouncy ball bollocks that also crossed his desk this issue



NAME: PAUL (CHICKEN) MCNALLY
FLAVOUR OF THE MONTH: Vigilante 8
PREFERRED GENRE: Simulations
LOVES & LOATHES: The final version of Vigilante 8 has kept Chicken at his PlayStation for most of this month, although Gran Turismo ran it close. VMX Racing, however, really got his goat



NAME: JAMES CANNON
FLAVOUR OF THE MONTH: World League Soccer
PREFERRED GENRE: Racing
LOVES & LOATHES: James reviewed all the footy games this month and ever since he's been wetting his pants at the prospect of having to review another three next month



NAME: ANDY SHARP
FLAVOUR OF THE MONTH: Resident Evil 2
PREFERRED GENRE: Sports
LOVES & LOATHES: Our resident games animal is still beavering away long into the night with an army of undead zombies. But enough about his friends, he's got work to do...



NAME: LEWIS PEK
FLAVOUR OF THE MONTH: Gran Turismo
PREFERRED GENRE: RPGs
LOVES & LOATHES: Lewis has busied himself with the first English copy of the wonderful Gran Turismo. Now he's even taking the correct racing line going to the Spar at lunchtime

Your monthly guide to what's hot and what's not starts here

What's the score?

1. ABSOLUTE SHITE. DO NOT BUY THIS GAME, NO MATTER WHAT
2. SHODDY, UNINSPIRED CRAP THAT SHOULD NEVER BE PLAYED
3. VERY POOR. NOT THE WORST THING EVER, BUT NOT FAR OFF
4. WELL BELOW PAR WITH SOME MAJOR LEAGUE FLAWS
5. AVERAGE. STRICTLY FOR THE HARDCORE FAN OF THE GENRE
6. NOT A COMPLETE DOG, BUT COULD HAVE BEEN A CONTENDER
7. CHECK IT OUT FIRST BEFORE PAYING HARD CASH FOR IT
8. A POTENTIAL CORKER THAT OOZES QUALITY IN SMALL DOSES
9. AN ESSENTIAL PURCHASE THAT'S RECOMMENDED BY ALL OF US
10. THE PERFECT GAME IN EVERY CONCEIVABLE WAY. A RARITY

Our icons explained...

RENT IT!
Entertaining for a while, but the lastability factor is highly doubtful. Fun for a night though

MUST BUY!
Simply essential. This is quality gaming and must be bought immediately. If not sooner

TRY B4 U BUY
A quality title that's a preferred taste. Not everyone's cup of tea, but well worth trying out

AVOID!
Not worth a penny of anyone's money. This is naff, bland and one to avoid at all costs

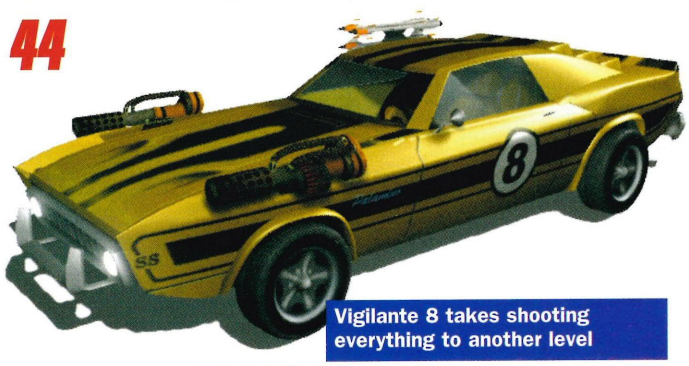


48

Three Lions, but not a trace of that bloody song

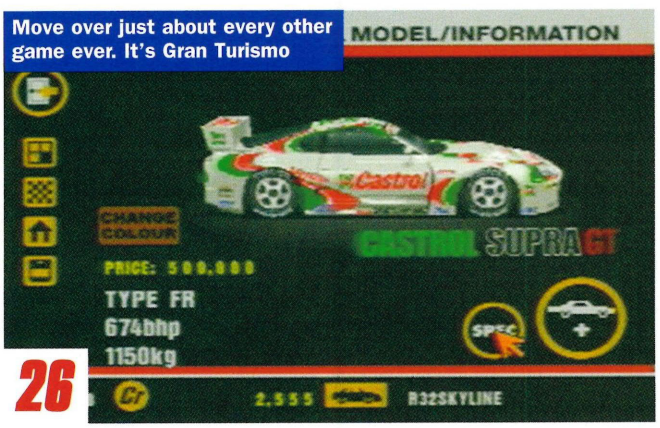

60 Kula World brings us trendy mind-taxing action


34 The best footy game this month. Eidos unveil World League Soccer to a waiting world


44 Vigilante 8 takes shooting everything to another level

26 Gran Turismo
34 World League Soccer
38 Alundra
40 WCW Nitro
44 Vigilante 8
48 Three Lions
52 Forsaken
56 Cardinal Syn
58 NBA Pro '98
59 Phat Air Snowboarding
60 Kula World
61 Armoured Core
61 Beach Volley Heroes
62 NBA Fastbreak

PRO REVIEWS

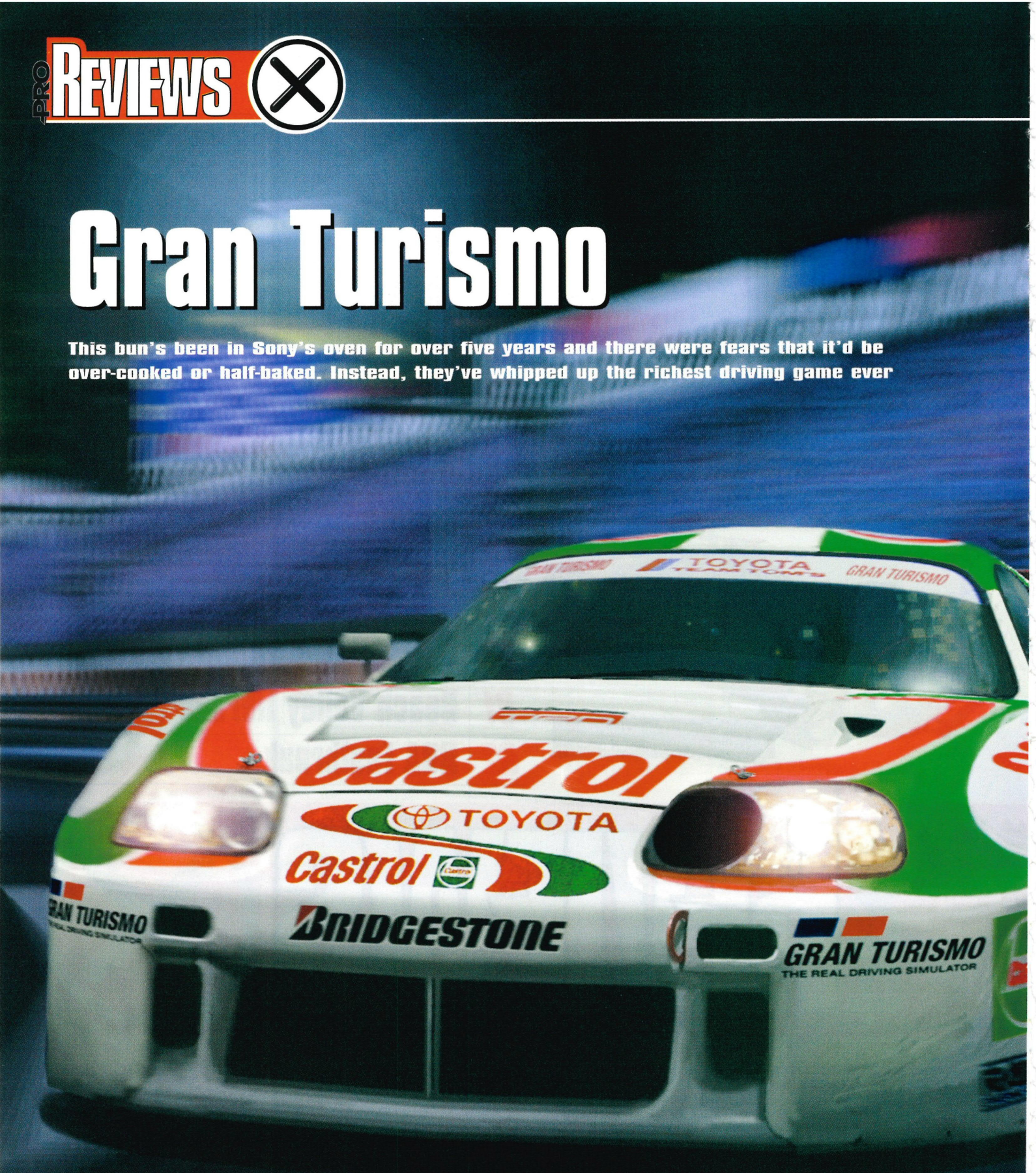


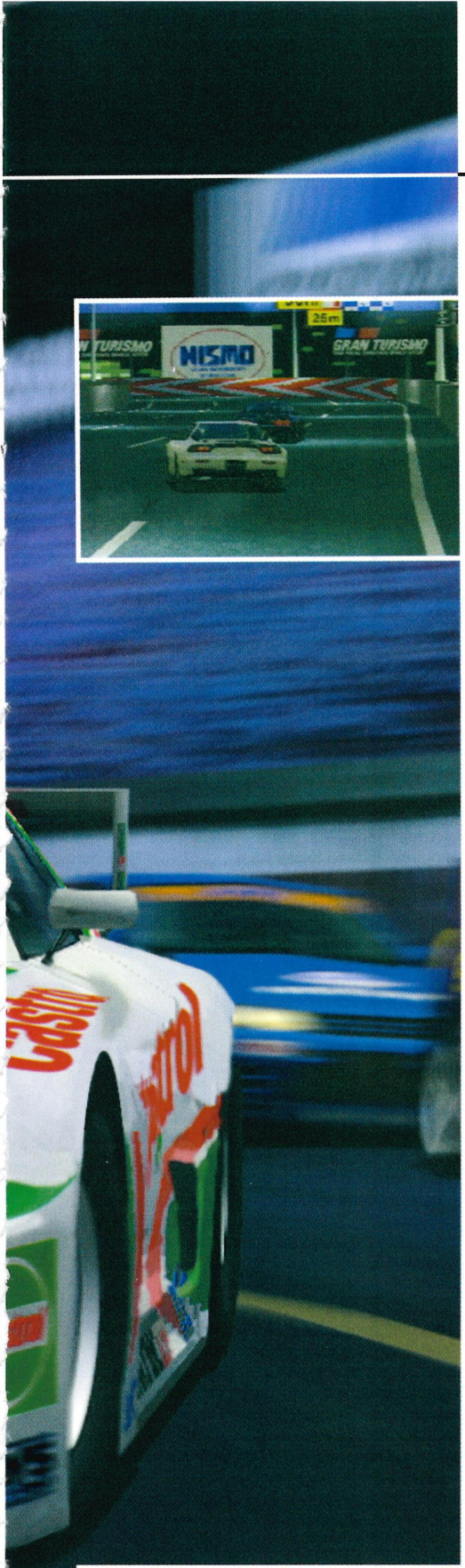
26 Move over just about every other game ever. It's Gran Turismo

63 Rascal
63 VMX Racing
64 One
65 Beast Wars
65 Riven

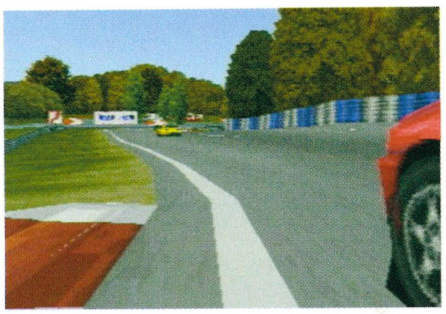
Gran Turismo

This bun's been in Sony's oven for over five years and there were fears that it'd be over-cooked or half-baked. Instead, they've whipped up the richest driving game ever









Sex, travel, good food and fast cars. That's my complete wish list, and should I win the national lottery and it isn't split between five thousand other winners, then the money would change my life in exactly that order.

Now I realise that the *PlayStation* is a fine hunk of silicone chips, but unless the new dual shock pad can be turned into an all-gripping slip-on peripheral, then I sincerely doubt its attributes in the sex department.

And whilst it portrays glorious pixel landscapes of Japanese, American and worldwide destinations, I'm not physically leaving the squalid comfort of my Mancunian bedsit. Nor will the *PlayStation* provide me with a three-course meal like the trusty 'bing' of my mother substitute microwave.

But before I abandon my wish list altogether, let's consider fast cars for one moment, because the *PlayStation* has thus far taken me hurtling around every *Formula One, TOCA* and *Destruction Derby* track in the world, leaving my Fiesta to rust outside in the pizzling rain.

But until now, if I wanted stunning photo-realistic visuals, accurate and unforgiving handling and a set of top tunes from British and American bands, then I'd have to haul my ass down to the local arcade. However, that's all about to change, because *Gran Turismo* has arrived for the *PlayStation,* and it's the greatest driving game that's ever been created.

TURNING THE TABLES

Now for a change I'd like to ask you a question - can you drive? I know that's a little bit personal and it may be a touchy subject what with court hearings and insurance claims etc, but I really do need to know your experience behind the wheel, because if you're a driver then you'll understand what I mean when I start blathering on about Gran Turismo achieving the status of a real diving simulator.

If, on the other hand, your only experience of driving has been at the virtual wheel of *Need For Speed* and *Ridge Racer,* then you're about to become woefully out of your depth.

For once, not only can the graphics, sound, backgrounds and 3D models not be faulted, but the sheer realism of the game is overwhelming. Perhaps too much so your average arcade loving racer who likes a quick adrenaline thrash. So to accommodate all road users, pedestrian or otherwise, *Sony* have split *Gran Turismo* into two completely separate games – the quick arcade and the *Gran Turismo* itself.

PENNY-SLOT RACER

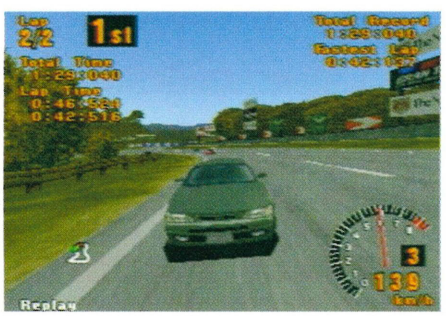
The quick arcade mode is for the non-driver and the quick spurt individual who doesn't want to mess about with parts, mechanics set-up and true car handling. And despite the fact that this is the least interesting aspect of the game, *Sony* has lavished an awful lot of care, detail and options into this section of *Gran Turismo.* And for all those anorak types out there, yes the arcade mode (not the *Gran Turismo* mode) has been noticeably speeded up from the Japanese original (by around 15-20 %), which means this is now much more like a true arcade racer than a simulator.

The race can be viewed from three different camera angles, one low to the ground, the second at the rear of the car and the final view is positioned above and behind in the traditional chase view. All these are useful and user friendly, but by far the best is the numberplate view, which communicates the speed, road noise and thrill of the race to you immediately.

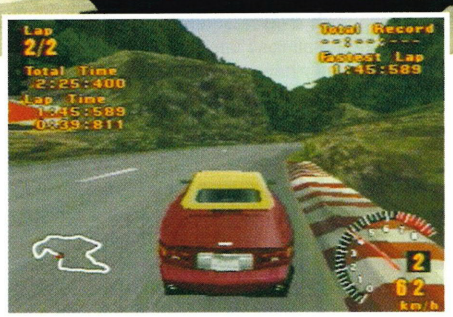
The range of cars has also been limited from the original Japanese game to only include models from *Nissan, Honda, Mazda, Mitsubishi, Aston Martin* and *Chevrolet.* But don't despair, that's still a collection of 22 cars (you'll need to take a trip to the *Gran Turismo* mode to check out the full range). Starting off with the single race, drivers have a choice of easy, normal and difficult settings and an initial choice of four ▶

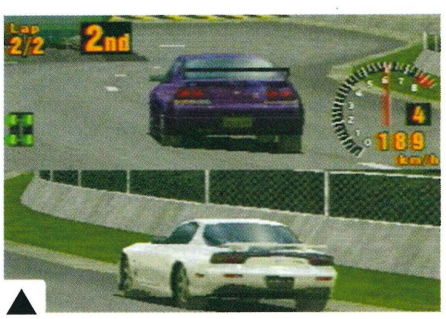




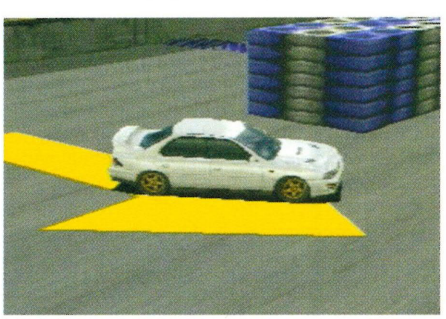








The hi-res replay mode will play back both split-screen views, with a huge choice of different viewing options for your delectation



circuits to race around.

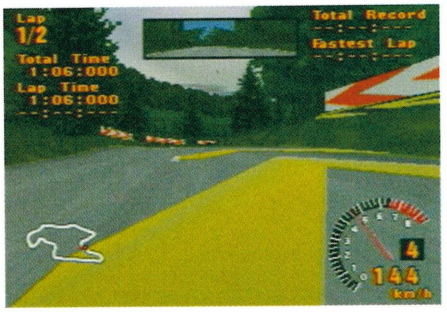
The difficulty settings lower and raise the ability of your opponent's vehicles, whilst your choice of vehicle determines the class of the opposition you'll race against. In the arcade mode there are three classes. Select an A-class car (for example a *Mitsubishi GTO*) and you're opponents will be of similar speed and handling abilities (*Mazda RX-7, Aston Martin DB7* and *Chevrolet Corvette*). Initially you can race these models on only four tracks, but compete and win both an A, B and C-class race on one of the circuits and you'll unlock a new course. Unlock all eight courses and you'll gain access to two additional options – the arcade ending movie (a credits list for the game) and most importantly a hi-res mode.

RUB HIS NOSE IN IT

The silky 60 frames per second high resolution option allows you to play one of the most realistic looking games ever devised. Okay, so there's a loss of background detail, dirt kick-up and light haze from street lamps, but you'll never miss them as you cream over the graphical prowess that is splashed across your screen. And for absolute pleasure, find an *N64* owner, place them in front of your wide screen TV and hit replay. Now watch as their face contorts in agony as the dynamic camera angles show the cars to their best possible advantage. And laugh in malicious delight as they chew the carpet in despair when you flick views from one car to another by simply pressing the D-pad.

Find an N64 owner, place them in front of the TV and hit replay. Now watch as his face contorts in agony

Of course if you want to send him home totally angst ridden and determined to smithereens, then you should sit him down to a two player battle. Here the



screen will split horizontally whereby you can pick once again from your three views. Now proceed to hammer round the track talking all the time about lack of slow down, hi-resolution and car handling. Oh and make sure to ask for comparisons between this and *N64* racing games that involve monkeys, farmyard animals and fat bastard Italians.

Then play the sound-track through you hi-fi, and listen to the stereo sounds as you beat around the track, all of which have been sampled from the real cars. Alternately you can suppress the in-game sound a little and hear instead tunes from *Ash, Garbage, Manic Street Preachers, Industry, Oxyacetylene* and many more. That should really finish him off.



Once the race is won you can then save the replay of your victory to the memory card and through the replay theatre call up your favourite moments whenever you wish. And in hi-res mode, with dynamic camera angles that chase, close-in, drive alongside, pan gracefully from high vantage points and switch frantically to roadside and on-the-track televisual views, this will be one replay option that isn't a gimmick.

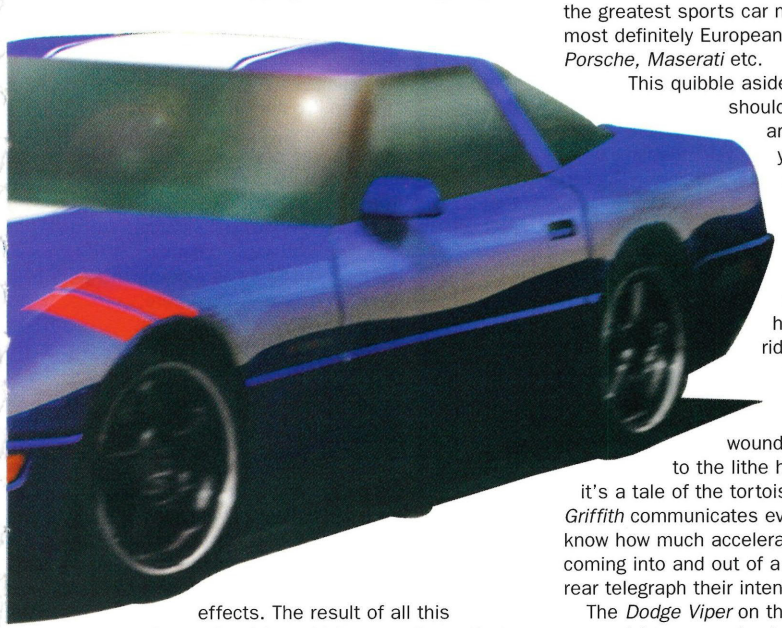
Finally, there's the time trial option, which obviously allows you to speed around each track in a race against the clock. Once the race is over you can then compete again with a ghost car tracking the route you last took around the circuit. The ghost car can then be saved to the memory card and accessed whenever you wish to play that track again. Which brings me neatly to the load and save options in the arcade mode which saves all of the tracks and times to your memory card. But beware, since a single *Gran*

The arcade is the greatest test of racing speed on the PSX, whilst the GT mode is a landmark in videogaming

Turismo save game can eat into five memory blocks and the replays and ghost cars take further chunks out of your precious space.

SHOW ME THE REAL STUFF

Whilst the arcade is perhaps the greatest test of racing speed and adrenaline that has yet graced the *PlayStation*, the *Gran Turismo* option is a land mark in videogaming against which all future games (and not just those in the racing genre) will be judged. *Gran Turismo* features over 300 cars, each with their own unique handling capabilities, all beautifully modelled with photo-realistic texture mapping and real-time lighting



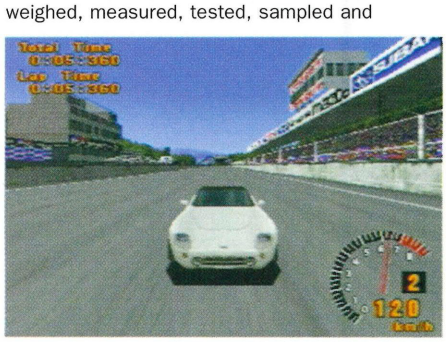
effects. The result of all this attention to detail is a driving experience that looks and plays like the real thing.

In the arcade mode the cars handle fairly realistically, with wheel-spins and body roll, true acceleration and maximum speeds. But the game is orientated around speed and immediate immersion, because that's what arcade games are all about. The *Gran Turismo*, on the other hand, is the real driving simulator section of the title. Here the cars have been modelled, weighed, measured, tested, sampled and rendered onto the *PlayStation* down to their last nut and bolt.

There are sports cars, people carriers, two-seater speedsters, family childbearers and sales exec blandsters, all predominately Japanese in flavour apart from a few notable exceptions. *Chevrolet* and *Chrysler* make up the American contingent (since there really aren't many characterful cars made in America anymore), whilst *Aston Martin* (gorgeous but overweight) and *TVR* (the ultimate British sports car) comprise of the UK and for that matter European offering. But for the most part you're going to be getting to grips with the ultra reliable makes of *Mazda, Toyota, Mitsubishi, Honda, Subaru* and *Nissan*. The promised addition of more Western models since the Japanese original *Gran Turismo* haven't materialised, which is a shame considering that the greatest sports car marques in the world are most definitely European: *Lotus, Ferrari, Porsche, Maserati* etc.

This quibble aside, the range of cars should satisfy most tastes and, just as in real-life, you'll get to love and hate the different cars on offer. Get behind the wheel of a *Mazda Demio* and it's like driving a supermarket trolley, with wholly handling, a stupidly high ride height for any race track, tremendous body roll and the acceleration of a wounded vole. Compare this to the lithe handling of a *TVR* and it's a tale of the tortoise and the hare. The *Griffith* communicates everything to you. You know how much acceleration you can apply coming into and out of a bend as the nose and rear telegraph their intention.

The *Dodge Viper* on the other hand is an overweight over-engined pig to drive. It steers like a bus, wheel-spins at the slightest touch from the accelerator, over-steers wildly on bends and is unstable on the straights. But then again, you may love it, and that's because each car ▶

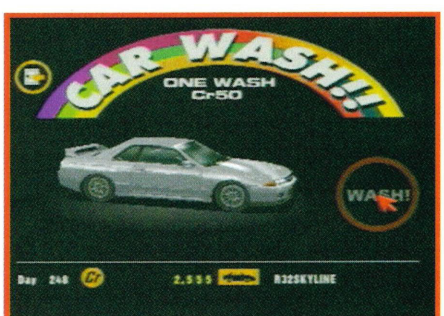






IT'S A SHOCKER

Launched at the same time as Gran Turismo, the new Dual Shock pad has all the features of the original pad, giving exceptional control of your vehicle (except the thumb sticks are now capped rather than concave), but with the added bonus of a rumble action. Engine roars and light cornering will make the pad tremble, but crash across the grass or smack an opponent's car and you start the thing vibrating wildly, further adding to the realism of the game. And at £29.99, this is an essential Gran Turismo purchase.

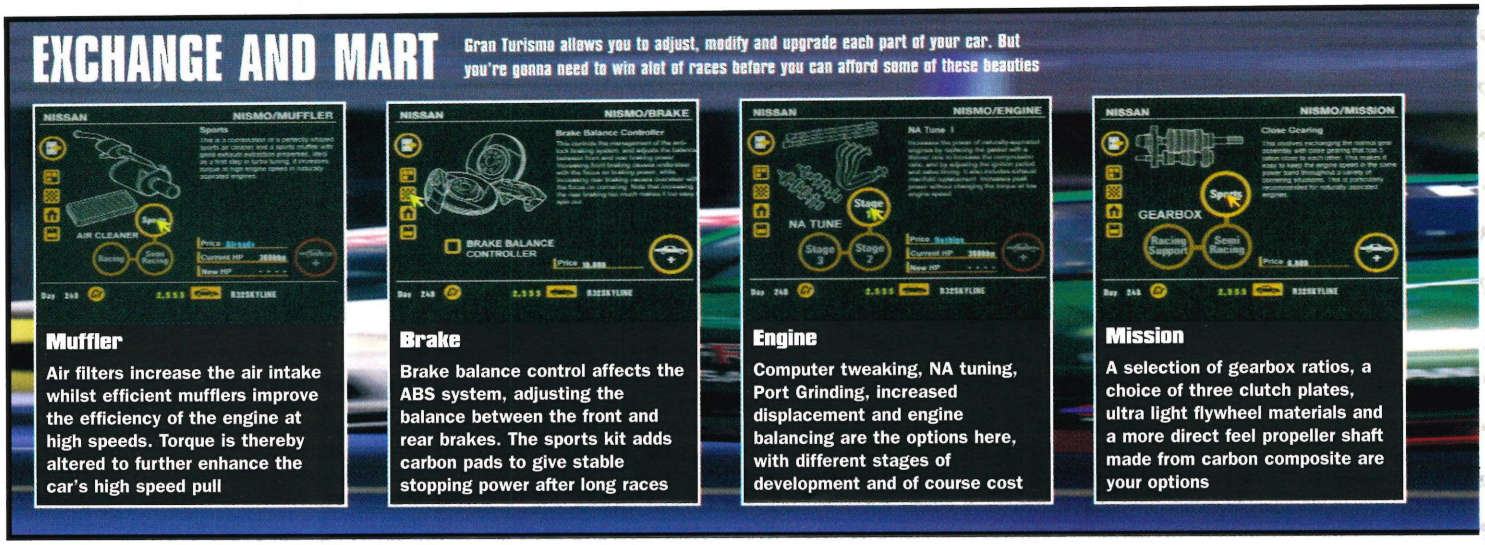


WASH AND GO

This is an absolutely useless addition in the scheme of things, but the car wash further adds to the complete driving experience that is Gran Turismo. As your car races it becomes gradually covered in a layer of filth. So, as a proud and neurotic owner, you take it to the automobile Laundromat for a little wax and buff. You sad puppy

EXCHANGE AND MART

Gran Turismo allows you to adjust, modify and upgrade each part of your car. But you're gonna need to win alot of races before you can afford some of these beauties



Muffler

Air filters increase the air intake whilst efficient mufflers improve the efficiency of the engine at high speeds. Torque is thereby altered to further enhance the car's high speed pull

Brake

Brake balance control affects the ABS system, adjusting the balance between the front and rear brakes. The sports kit adds carbon pads to give stable stopping power after long races

Engine

Computer tweaking, NA tuning, Port Grinding, increased displacement and engine balancing are the options here, with different stages of development and of course cost

Mission

A selection of gearbox ratios, a choice of three clutch plates, ultra light flywheel materials and a more direct feel propeller shaft made from carbon composite are your options

▶ is so different from the next that they are as individual as the driver. Where you could feel happy to correct under-steer, I hate it, preferring to battle with oversteer. Where you may soften your suspension to counteract irregular road conditions, I prefer to keep it stiff, increasing the responsiveness of the car. In short, a hundred drivers could use exactly the same car, but have such a different set-up that no two cars would drive the same. That's the pure driving pleasure of *Gran Turismo*.

THEORY TEST

Despite the vast array of cars on offer, there are a small number of cars that you must master in order to access all the courses and cups in the *Gran Turismo* mode. In all there are three licences – B, A and A-international. Licence B unlocks the Sunday Cup, the first competition you'll want to enter having bought yourself a car with your initial 10,000 credits (currency unknown). Winning the Sunday Cup gives you money, a dodgy *Mazda Demio* prize (which you'll no doubt sell for cash) and the bank roll to buy another car. But first you'll have to pass the eight parts of the B licence. Each element is timed with the first seven tests performed in any order. But all seven must first be completed before you can attempt the final eighth test that gives you your licence.

The tests themselves begin with simple start/stop exercises whereby you must smoke the wheels down a straight track before piling on the brakes to stop the car in a chequered zone. These increase in difficulty, adding first one corner, then a hairpin and finally an entire track, all within a strict time limit. And it's this part of the game that will have you tearing out your hair as you narrowly miss each time by hundredths of a second. But each time you'll be learning from your mistakes, and through a series of tiny adjustments you'll be through the first licence and onto the next.

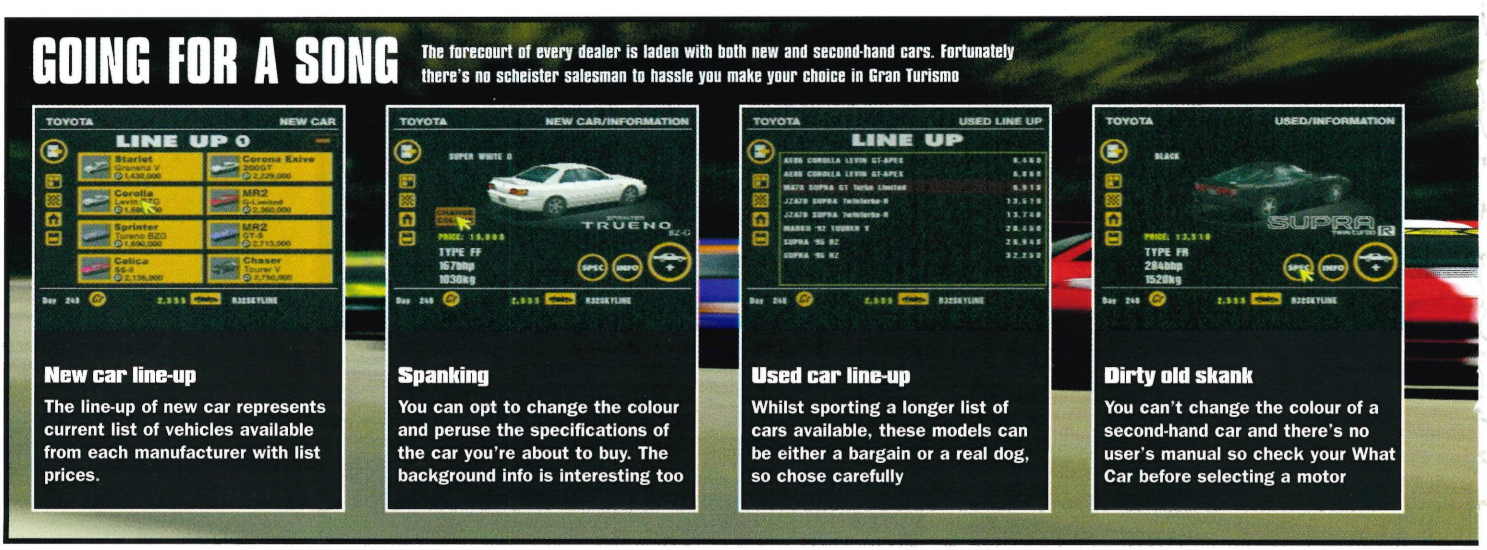
You'll tear out your hair when you miss a licence. But each time you'll learn from your mistakes

To clarify a rumour that has been spreading about this PAL version of the game, I can confirm that the licences have been made easier. However, that's easier, not easy. Since playing the Japanese version I've noticed that a second has been added to several of the times in the licence section of the game. One of my favourite tests – Licence A-7 where you must spin a *Subaru WRX* five times round a wall of tires – has suffered by this easier difficulty setting, reducing a daunting challenge to a barely tricky exercise. Elsewhere, however, these time additions are hardly noticeable and don't on the whole spoil the challenge of the tests.

The Joypad controls are the standard selection of accelerator, brake and hand-brake, with a change view option that is identical to the arcade mode. But where the arcade cars handled fairly realistically, if you set-up your *Honda NSX* badly in *Gran Turismo*, then you'll be bucking and wobbling your way round the track in last place. Slam the brakes on in arcade and you'll sway slightly. Try the same manoeuvre in

GOING FOR A SONG

The forecourt of every dealer is laden with both new and second-hand cars. Fortunately there's no scheister salesman to hassle you make your choice in Gran Turismo



New car line-up

The line-up of new car represents current list of vehicles available from each manufacturer with list prices.

Spanking

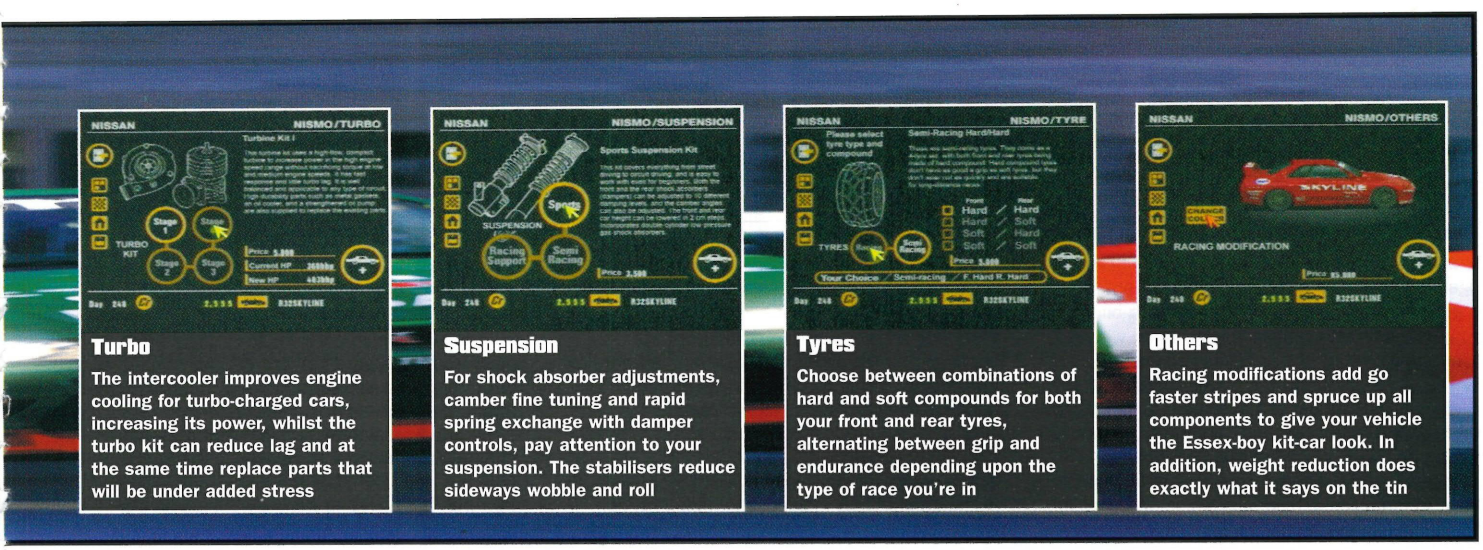
You can opt to change the colour and peruse the specifications of the car you're about to buy. The background info is interesting too

Used car line-up

Whilst sporting a longer list of cars available, these models can be either a bargain or a real dog, so chose carefully

Dirty old skank

You can't change the colour of a second-hand car and there's no user's manual so check your What Car before selecting a motor



Turbo
The intercooler improves engine cooling for turbo-charged cars, increasing its power, whilst the turbo kit can reduce lag and at the same time replace parts that will be under added stress

Suspension
For shock absorber adjustments, camber fine tuning and rapid spring exchange with damper controls, pay attention to your suspension. The stabilisers reduce sideways wobble and roll

Tyres
Choose between combinations of hard and soft compounds for both your front and rear tyres, alternating between grip and endurance depending upon the type of race you're in

Others
Racing modifications add go faster stripes and spruce up all components to give your vehicle the Essex-boy kit-car look. In addition, weight reduction does exactly what it says on the tin

Gran Turismo mode and you'll be fighting to keep control of the car. Cut a corner across the grass and it'll buck like a mule, dust flying up to obscure your view, the world spinning around like a waltzer as you watch your more cautious competitors hurtle by.

However, when you take a corner perfectly you'll experience a thrill that only racing drivers must feel. When you set-up your car so that it hugs the ground, adjust the turbo to peak performance, set the brakes to weakly oversteer (my favoured preference) and the engine note is singing sweetly to you (because each car has been sampled from the real thing, then resampled when modifications were made to sound absolutely authentic) then you know you are in automotive heaven.

Certain bends on the different tracks you'll get to view as your enemy and the sense of achievement when you send your automobile flying round a bend, maintaining grip and acceleration is a beautiful thing to behold. All the technical aspects of the game may sound very anal, but in truth, once you've mastered a car and course in *Gran Turismo* the satisfaction is exhilarating. You know that you've achieved a real victory, and were you to swap you joy-pad for a steering wheel, your *PlayStation* for a *TVR* (nice profit) you'd be as prepared as anyone could be without having driven the car themselves, because you'd learnt the theory behind it all.

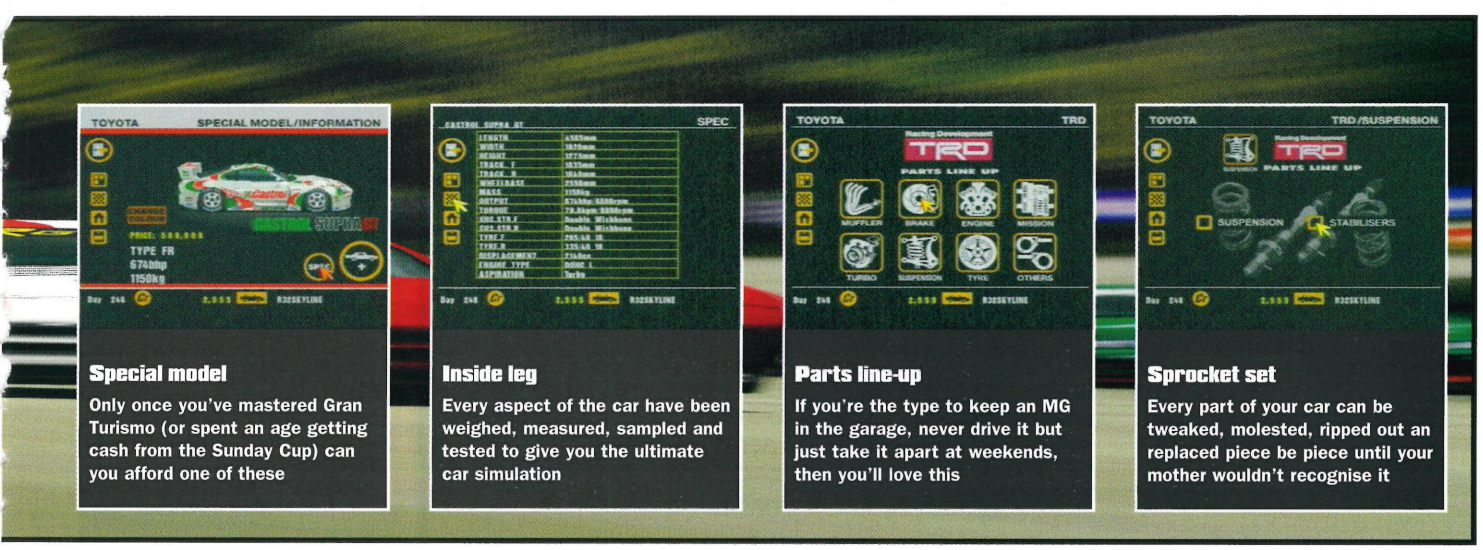
THE TEST OF TIME

Having mastered the licence tests, which is no mean feat, you'll have gained access to all 17 races. Each race has the same goal – to be the fastest car over a set number of laps, but each different race has its own entry requirements. The early cups require you to pass the driving licences to gain entry, whilst the later races pit nationalities against one another, such as US vs Japanese and US vs UK. And then there's the 4WD, FF and FR races which single out cars with different drivetrains. There's also lightweight, tuned, and mega races which demand the most formidable cars money can buy.

You gather cash from the sale of cars you wins as prizes, from achieving pole position and for race positions. The initial cups have you competing on different tracks, gathering points to accumulate enough to win the overall cup. However, a race like the Valley 300 is a single competition that is a 60 lap endurance extravaganza that will take almost two hours to complete, with many pit-stops for both you and the automobile.

To win the cups you're going to need the right set of wheels, which means you'll be making many stops to the dealer showrooms to pick-up both new and second-hand cars. Whilst the British and American dealers only offer new cars to buy, the Japanese dealers have a much more varied forecourt comprising of models dating back to the early eighties. And due to the fact that you start the game with limited funds, you'll be making a stop to the used car shop to pick up a one-female owner runabout to begin your track record.

Once you've won a few races it'll be time to trade up, tune up and take the car for a spin through the car wash. Buying and selling the cars is simple, but the process of upgrading parts and then setting your car up for each race will have you studying your own car's manual for hints and tips. There's no shame in ringing your local garage to ask what NA tuning is, because most normal folks just don't have a clue (me included). However, after solid *Gran Turismo* ▶

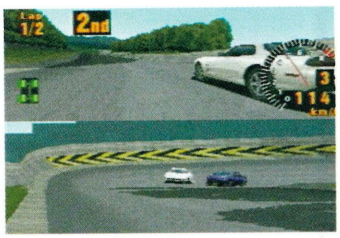
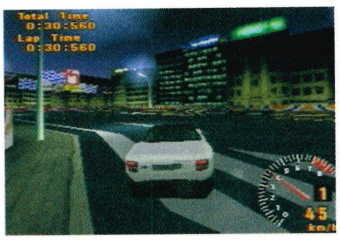


Special model
Only once you've mastered Gran Turismo (or spent an age getting cash from the Sunday Cup) can you afford one of these

Inside leg
Every aspect of the car have been weighed, measured, sampled and tested to give you the ultimate car simulation

Parts line-up
If you're the type to keep an MG in the garage, never drive it but just take it apart at weekends, then you'll love this

Sprocket set
Every part of your car can be tweaked, molested, ripped out an replaced piece be piece until your mother wouldn't recognise it



play you may rest assured that you'll never again feel out of your depth when confronted by a grease monkey mechanic who tries to blind you with automotive science, this game will let you hold your own (if that takes your fancy).

The game gives you the option to adjust the dampers, the camber of the wheels, the material composite of the tyres, the spring rate, engine tuning, air filter, brake control, suspension stabilisers and a whole lot more. You may not want to learn these things, in which case you'll find solace in the arcade mode, but if this kind of detail and specific knowledge tweaks your wingnuts then there's so much here to fiddle with that you'll be immersed in the game forever.

Once you've raced all the races and amassed a sizeable fortune you'll have enough wealth to purchase the stars of the show, the special models that each Japanese dealer shows to only their very special clients. These cars have all the go faster stripes, engine modifications and hair-raising acceleration to make car enthusiasts dribble at the groin. And once you've taken them for a few laps around the track you want to take them into the car wash to rid them of the accumulated filth that you'll have spread on their immaculate forms by driving them at one hundred miles an hour into a billboard.

BRING ME THE HEAD OF SCE

Which brings me conveniently (and as if planned) to the game's one major foible – the lack of crash damage. Almost as soon as murmurings about the game were heard in this country, *Sony* was making a disclaimer regarding the lack of crash damage in *Gran Turismo*. Take a car for a kamikaze into a wall and it'll neither flip, barrel-roll nor sustain even the slightest blemish to its paint work. It seems that the car manufacturers put their collective foot down and stopped *Sony* from recreating the design flaws of their cars.

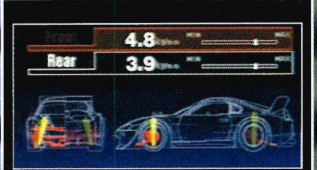
So accurate is *Gran Turismo* that it slightly shot itself in the foot by designing the cars a little too well, and after the disastrous hiccup that was the tumbling *Mercedes A-Class*, it's understandable that manufacturers are a little twitchy when it comes to 'Joe Public' learning the exactly flipping tolerance of their family runabout. Afterall, they didn't want little Johnny taking dad's *Subaru* out to test the game's authentic recreation of the car's roll-over threshold at 70mph

The motors have all the engine modifications to make a car enthusiast dribble at the groin

CONTROL FREAK

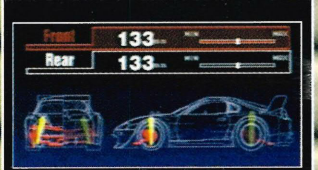
Once you've changed your parts, you'll need to adjust the set-up to control every aspect of the car's handling and power out-put. A poor set-up will lose you the race

■ = SUSPENSION ■ = ENGINE ■ = AERODYNAMICS



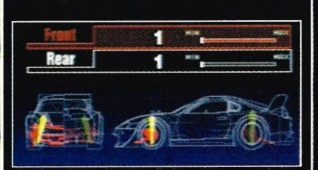
Spring rate

Adjust the hardness of the springs. Responsiveness becomes quicker the stiffer you make the springs but it is easy to disturb your position on irregular surfaces so avoid over setting the spring rate



Ride height

Adjust the height of the car. Lowering the car's centre of gravity and the car more stable. But in order to stop the car from bottoming out due to stroke reduction you must increase the spring and damper ratio



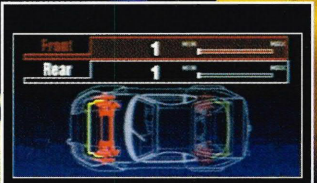
Damper

Adjust the decreasing strength of the damper. When it is too soft, you get instability in conduct and when it is too hard the car will get bumpy on exit corners. It is important to match the damper settings with the spring ratio



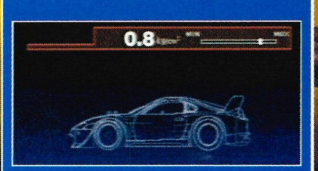
Camber

Adjust the negative camber angle. When you fix the negative camber angle you increase the stability factor when the car rolls around corners, but this lowers braking and steering efficiency. Avoid over setting this option



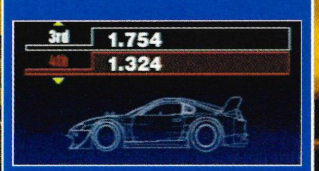
Stabilisers

Adjust the roll rigidity of the stabilisers. When rigid it stabilises the conduct of the car's turns. The maximum hardness differs depending upon the suspension settings. Especially for FF cars, it is important to adjust the front



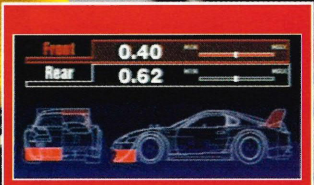
Turbo

Adjust the pressure of the turbo boost. Setting it high raises its peak performance, but the downside is that the pick-up and reaction time to acceleration will become slower. You'll need to find a middle ground you're happy with



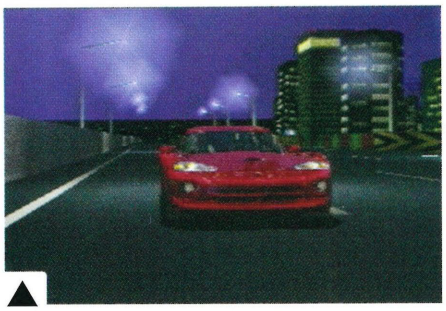
Gear ratio

Adjust the ratio for each gear. It is necessary to set this in response to the engine's characteristics. When you increase the final gear you up the acceleration performance, but it narrows the range each gear covers.



Downforce

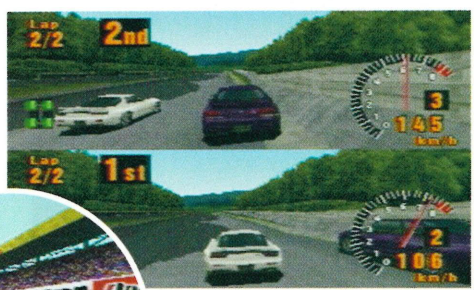
By increasing the driving force on a set of wheels you improve stability during top speed. When you increase the force on the front set you tend to over-steer and when the force is on the rear you will start to under-steer



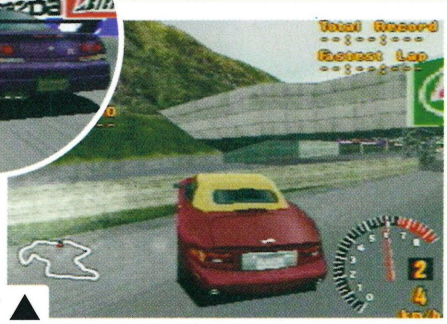
Gran Turismo's replays are simply breath-taking and no amount of static screen-shots can prepare you for this audio-visual treat











When I see an Aston Martin I always want to run a key along the side. I guess this is the next best thing. Or it could just be that I'm a bit crap

GENRE COMPARISON

GAME: FORMULA 1 '97

SOFTWARE HOUSE: Psygnosis

F1 '97 is the closest rival to Gran Turismo in terms of both realism and graphical prowess. But the sheer number of cars, quality music and different modes and options simply swamp Psygnosis's monster racer. Racing games have a new standard to match-up against in the form of Gran Turismo.



on a 35% camber (Yes I know it would be potentially fun, but the moral guardians would be down on *Sony* faster than a chevron sign could pierce his little brain).

Leaving this grumble aside, then I'd have to say that *Gran Turismo* is the perfect racing game. It has all the immediate excitement of the arcade, coupled with the kind of in-depth solid gameplay that will have you playing this for months. Combine all this together with the most stunning graphics yet seen on the console and you have one of the greatest games produced on any platform, in the home or arcade. The music, replays, two-player split-screen option (you can even save your favourite cars onto a memory card and race them at a friend's house), ghost cars, car wash and sheer number of cars available are just cherries on this enormously rich chocolate frosted gateau. I simply can't recommend this enough PRO

PRO SCORE

PRICE: £44.99

PUBLISHER: Sony

GENRE: Racing

MUST BUY

ANALOGUE · MEMORY CARD · STEERING WHEEL · SPLIT SCREEN · TWO PLAYER

Gran Turismo has been hyped to the eyeballs by Sony, and for once deservedly so. The game has achieved everything it set out to accomplish and more importantly has created a new benchmark for all PlayStation titles. Only Gran Turismo 2 can better this, and for that reason alone this doesn't get a 10 out of 10 from me, but this is very close to being the perfect racing game. If you only buy one racing game this year for your PlayStation, then make sure it's Gran Turismo.

LEWIS

WHAT'S THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	10
SOUND	10
GAMEPLAY	9
LASTABILITY	9

9½

PRO PANEL

CHICKEN Phenomenal. Non drivers may find it a bit of a struggle, but all bar the terminally stupid will realise that this is a landmark in videogame history

ANDY I can't drive to save my life, so I found the realism in Gran Turismo totally off-putting. But even if you're a shit driver, the graphics and sound-effects are too good to miss

JAMES I struggled with this at first, but imagine that you're in a real car and you'll soon get the hang of it. Once you've played GT there'll be no other game for you. Excellent

JAY Okay, it's fast and wildly in-depth, but if you (like me) can't be fussed with technical simulations then I can see you getting really frustrated with it. Take it for a test drive first

World League Soccer '98

Kick up a storm on the world stage with Eidos' latest footballing delight that's set to play a one-two with Lara Croft at the top of the charts



The new skeletal graphical system that has been used to design the players can utilise large amounts of motion-capture animation and also gives the advantage of generating higher resolution graphics

If you venture down to your local playing fields this weekend to play a game of togga, keep your ears open and listen to the sideline screams from the managers. It doesn't matter if the match is of pub league standard or just a bunch of youngsters wearing oversized shorts. Whether you live near the famous London *Hackney Marshes* or Manchester's very own *Hough End*, I'll guarantee you'll hear the coaches screaming over their Bovril, "Pass it, pass it. Football's f*$ki@g simple if you just pass it!"

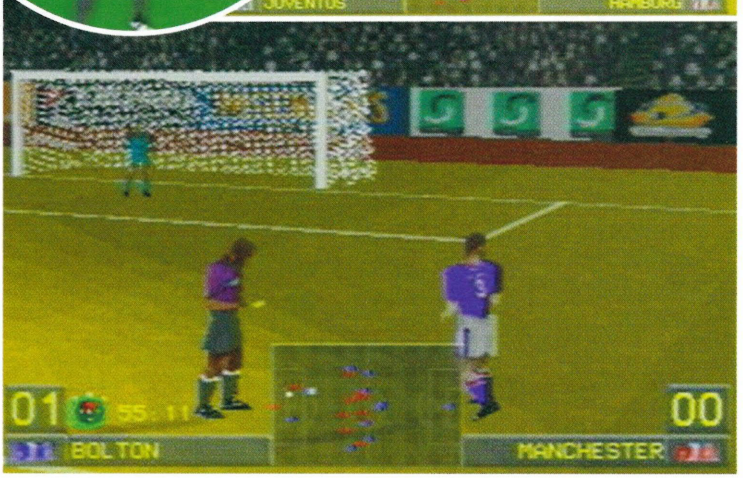
However, that's all bollocks. You see managers like to pretend that they've been there and done it all. "Yeah, you know, we were like brothers Besty and me, I taught him all he knew before I did me knee in." They'll try and kid their team that a grasp of the basics of football will give them all the skills they need to take on the world. But as you and I know, it's easier said than done. The premise behind winning a football match is quite simple, score goals and stop the other team scoring against you, but putting that into practice can be more agonising







Throw ins are controlled with the aid of this arrow, as with all set pieces, similarly to EA's FIFA '98. The difference in World League Soccer is that the players will call for the ball and even show you where to put it





Team set-up is very thorough. For instance, you can set your defence to have any number of sweepers and can move midfielders into attacking positions

plainly obvious who they're supposed to be, and the likeness of appearance is pretty accurate. But it just takes a little polish off a professional game from *Eidos*. Secondly, there's the commentary which is provided by the *Channel 4* duo from *Football Italia*; *Peter Brackley* and *Ray Wilkins*. Now while their actual dialogue keeps to the pace of the game, the problem is that quite often it's all too apparent that the actual phrases are 'cut' together with the names of the players. But if you skim over these details, what you're left with is a soccer title that will give you a lot of pleasure.

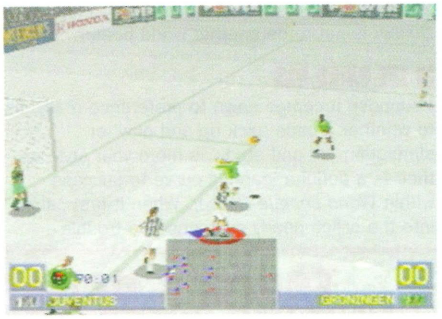
Graphically the game stands up very well against the opposition, the stadia have all been modelled on real life stages and the changing advertising boards, different pitch surfaces and varying degrees of weather provide the kind of detail that you want in a simulation style game such as this. It's further enhanced when you score a goal as the crowd rise to their feet in a euphoric wave of ecstasy.

The detail is superb. When you score a goal, the crowd rise to their feet in a wave of ecstasy

As I've already said, the players themselves are well presented with attention being paid to differing heights and physique, and the actual animation is pretty much spot-on in almost every area thanks to motion-capture courtesy of *Tottenham* and *England* Striker *Les Ferdinand*. Now while *Les* will be sweating on his *World Cup* place, *Eidos* need have no fears of being left behind come summertime, they've already done more than enough to show they have the pedigree and the skills to virtually guarantee their own chances of securing a ▶ than extracting toe nails with a pair of rusty pliers, but hey that's football! And that's something that developers *Silicon Dreams* have managed to encapsulate within their potential *World Cup '98* beater, *World League Soccer*.

Now if you're a footy traditionalist like myself, you'll be cringing at the title, which unfortunately makes this footy fiesta sound like it's come from the shores of the USA. However, I can gladly put you straight and tell you that the name was chosen because... well basically, you can choose teams from all over the world, something which is becoming a trend within the development of football games.

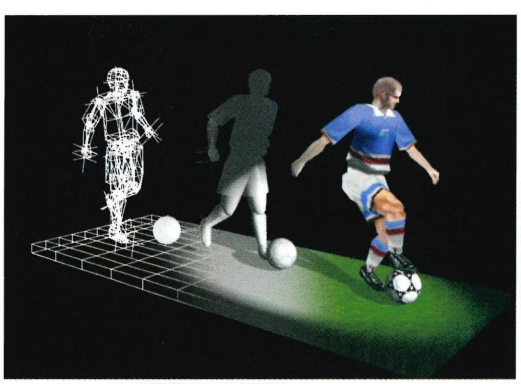
Now before I start wittering on about how good this game is, and believe me it's as playable as *FIFA '98*, I think it makes sense to dispense with the unpleasantries. First of all I have to mention that the players names aren't real, instead *Silicon Dreams* have plumped for the 'almost real but kind of changed a little in a sometimes comical way' naming system. For instance, *Ryan Giggs* is known as *Ryan Giggle*. Their names still make it







Typical Newcastle defensive play, stand about and watch while the strikers wait for the ball to land at their feet. Let's hope Given isn't asleep too





▶ place in anyone's top 10, and *World League Soccer* is set to be another world beater.

IN THE ONION BAG

I suppose it comes down to preference really, as to whether arcade 'pick up and play' or simulation 'sit and study' is more your style as their is a definite learning curve to success within *World League Soccer*. When it first came into the office nearly everyone had trouble getting to grips with the playing system (to be honest it was bloody annoying). But with grim determination I set out to conquer it and after a few hours studying the manual I'd started to make great strides. I mean these games aren't exactly cheap are they? And if you're shelling out for a title you want it to last the distance right? I'd say that's more or less guaranteed with *World League Soccer '98*.

There's definitely a learning curve with World League Soccer '98. It'll certainly last the distance

There are a wealth of moves that can be performed by way of button combinations, most notable are the three different styles of one-two passes. Hit the pass button twice and you get the standard one two, hit it once followed by shoot and the player collecting the ball will lay off a first time pass in the direction that you select with the D-pad.

Hit pass followed by tackle and you get a one-two pass but with a chipped return, perfect for setting up power headers and screaming volleys from the edge of the box.

Shooting also presents you with a wealth of different efforts to choose from. Hold the shoot button for a powerful drive, tap it for a low shot and a double tap will chip, and the same applies for headers. You can select whether to try a looping header, a power header or a deceptive pass to the feet of another attacker.

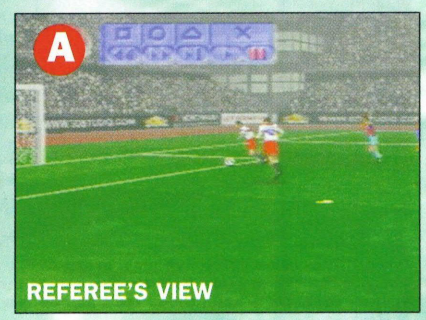


A CASE FOR THE DEFENCE

Another nice touch is the way that you can select which player you want to defend with. Instead of just changing to the defender that is nearest the ball, which usually means the guy that the attacker has just left for dust, you hold down the player select button and tap the direction from which you want the player to run from, which means you can bring a deep defender forward to meet the attacker, rather than spend your time trying to chase back in a vain rescue attempt.

PLAY IT AGAIN SAM

The replay system in World League Soccer '98 brilliantly allows you to view any incident from the viewpoint of anyone on the pitch whether they be the goalscorer, an opposition defender, one of the two linesmen, the referee or a hooligan pitch invader... Okay, so I was lying about the hooligan pitch invader

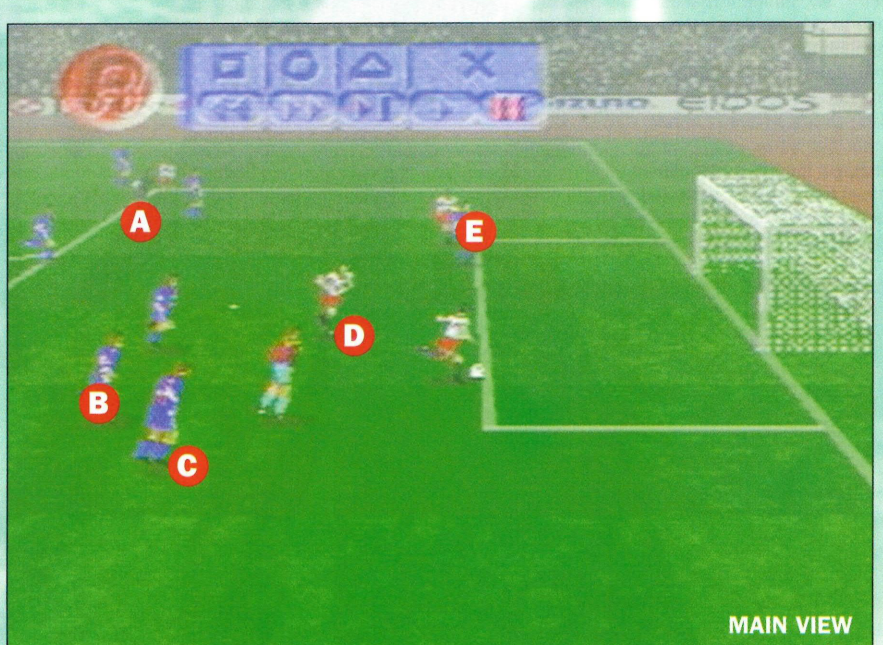










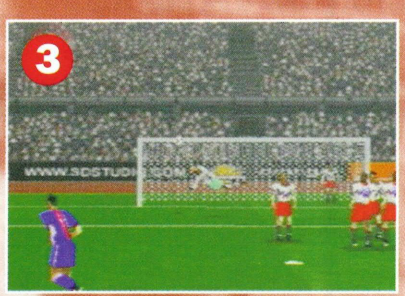


A KICK IN THE BALLS

You've got a free-kick on the edge of the box and want to curl one in the top corner. 1 First you need to set the extent of the bend. 2 Then set your target position. 3 Now whip it around the wall and past the flailing keeper







As well as these options you can give possession of the player on the ball to the computer leaving you free to move another attacker into a good position, then just hit pass and get the ball back! It really is good stuff, and the accurately scaled pitch and first rate goalkeeping means the action is always a close contest and as realistic as console football gets.

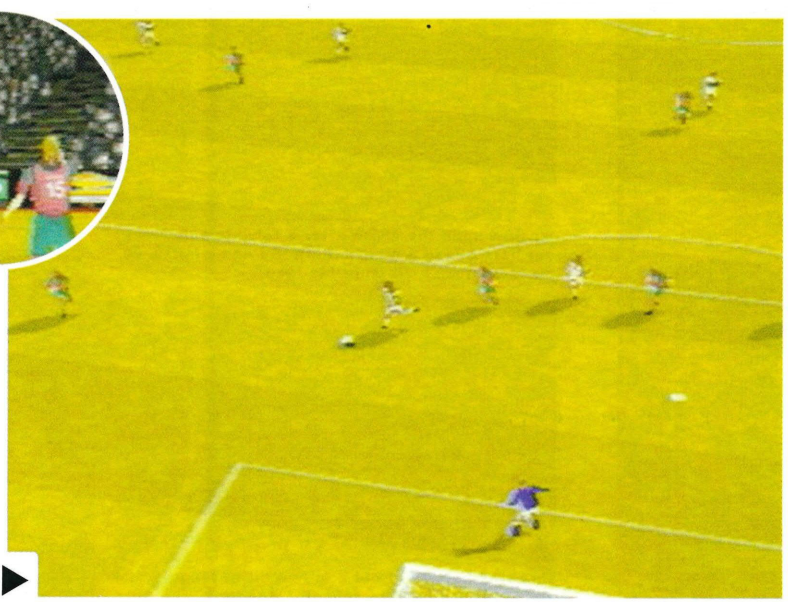
I could go on all day about the features that *Silicon Dreams* have crammed into *World League Soccer '98*, but there just isn't enough space on these pages to go into any more detail, suffice to say you can expect offside decisions to be vindicated with replays that are frozen at the crucial moment and goal replays that allow you to view each strike from the view of any player or official on the pitch. I'm sure you've got the picture by now anyway. On this evidence *World League Soccer '98* has entered the fray as a standard setter along with *FIFA '98* PRO







Unless you select a particular player viewpoint after a goal has been scored you'll be treated to a series of replays from various camera positions. This wide-angled isometric view is great for taking in the action ▶





The better teams are very difficult to beat as their defensive, midfield and attacking systems are all accurately programmed using professional tactics

PRO SCORE

PRICE: £39.99
PUBLISHER: Eidos Interactive
GENRE: Sports

MOST BUY



This is good stuff from Eidos. There are a wealth of game modes from to choose from and the actual play system gives you as much control over the ball as you could ask for. The obvious learning curve that's involved may put some people off but if you take the time to learn the moves you'll find World League Soccer has a wealth of gameplay within it and, like no other game, this eliminates the 'certain goal' shot which gives it a huge advantage over everything else in the field.

JAMES

WHAT'S THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	9
SOUND	7
GAMEPLAY	9
LASTABILITY	9

9

PRO PANEL

JAY Put simply, WLS has more moves, options and sheer playability than any other PSX footy title to date and therefore it should be the one on your reserve list for this summer. Buy it

CHICKEN WLS is a fine addition to the PlayStation's footy stable. It requires a lot more thought than most, but there is a real-long term challenge in mastering it

LEWIS The sheer volume of moves makes World League Soccer '98 initially frustrating, but once these become second-nature the freedom and variety of play makes this a treat

ANDY I can't say that I got to grips with this at all. You can't teach an old git like me new tricks, and whilst everything looks and sounds very realistic, it was just too difficult to control

Alundra

Sword and sorcery is back on everyone's agenda, but are old style RPGs the shape of things to come or has Final Fantasy VII soured the Zelda formula forever?



Jess is the weapons expert. But he only gives you a new weapons when another character croaks it. What a happy chap



The PlayStation's image took a severe pasting when *Final Fantasy VII* became such a huge hit. Here was a home console that had style by the bucket load, it was trendy, flash and would even impress the girls. Then along came one of the biggest selling games of all time, which was unfortunately an RPG.

Back flooded the images of nerdy propeller heads hunched over their joypads, with time becoming meaningless as the light from another dawn burst the blood-vessels crowded around their tiny pupils. Role Playing Games are back and there's nothing you can do about it.

The first game to surf in upon this tidal wave of RPG interest is *Alundra*. Cashing in upon a new found RPG hungry market, *Psygnosis* have delivered a more traditional adventure in the vein of 16bit slash-and-explore classics such as *Zelda* on the *SNES* and *LandStalker* on the *MegaDrive*. *Alundra* delivers sprite-based action dominated by platform jumping exploration and character-controlled sword-slashing. What this



does have in comm
monster hit is that
hours of gameplay.
set to spread osteo
repetitive strain injury
already sleep deprived *Fi*
who'll probably infect themse
this like the plague.

LET ME TAKE YOU DOWN...

The story begins a long time ago, in really stereotypical RPG style, when the Righteous King Snow banned idol worship across his kingdom. The king saw to it that those that defied his ban were burnt alive at the stake (hence the righteous title). As luck would have it, the populace soon became plagued by terrible nightmares (which isn't too lucky I'll admit, but help is at hand).

A lost soul becomes washed upon the shore after a terrible shipwreck at sea (where else) and the salvation of the village looks a certainty. This character is *Alundra*, a dreamwalker who can enter into people's



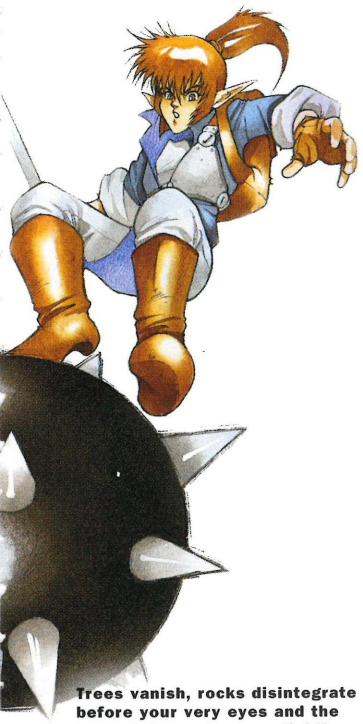


Washed upon the shore after a terrible shipwreck, our hero needs a a quick blow-dry and a bottle of moose before he'll show his face





Throwing bottles at old gits is a bit of laugh, and takes me back to school. I wonder if there a borstals in RPG land?



Trees vanish, rocks disintegrate before your very eyes and the townsfolk aren't even slightly freaked by all this weirdness

KNOCKOUT DROPS



IRON FLAIL
This is a real distance weapon that beats putting a pool ball in a sports socks



FIRE WAND
Increase your firepower by frying your enemies with this weak but useful magic weapon



ICE WAND
Give it a touch of Mr Freeze with this frosty piece of kit. Doubles as a mint lollipop too



HUNTER'S BOW
Another long distance weapon. It can fire an arrow through several enemies at once



LEGEND SWORD
Gives a bit more of a powerful poke than the puny dagger that you start your adventures carrying



dreams and change their outcome, and whose quest it is to help the good citizens of Inoa get a decent night's kip. Your first mission as *Alundra,* a Cloud lookalike whose quiff has fallen into a droopy fringe, sees you saving Wendell, an old guy caught in a repeating nightmare. And this is where things go all traditional on us.

The game is a top-down isometric platform RPG. The colours are straight out of *Trumpton* and the Americanised translation of the Japanese text gives *Alundra* a very eccentric flavour. Frustration plays a large part in *Alundra,* in which you are split equally between your determination to complete a quest and your conviction that the best thing would be to throw the bastard thing out of the window. The puzzles are never too difficult that you're going to be perplexed for days, but because of the very linear plotline, if you miss an item or forget to talk to an important character then you're going to be well and truly stuck.

New areas of the map reveal themselves after specific missions have been completed. As one character states "It's unbelievable! The tree that was blocking your route to Lurvy's shop has just vanished!" These kinds of miracles only ever seem to happen in RPGs. In this land money is lying in bushes, the streets are paved with power-ups and the towns-folk will chat repetitively with you for hours. In fact they'll even let you wander 'round and raid their homes for loot (as a kid playing RPGs I used to get brutally beaten for trying this in neighbour's homes).

The residents are so friendly they'll even let you wander 'round and raid their homes for loot

It's this standard RPG gameplay that is *Alundra's* greatest draw and at the same time biggest failing. Whilst *Final Fantasy VII* took our expectations of RPGs and stood them on their head, *Alundra* presents us with the exact same formula that was being used five years ago in *LandStalker* and *Zelda.* If *FFVII* converted you to RPGs, Alundra may just revert you back. Take away the dynamic turn-based battles in *FFVII,* rip away the stunningly rendered backdrops and what you're left with is *Alundra,* a solid slow-burn of an adventure game.

This will appeal to a much more limited audience, but will probably feast upon the expectancy that *Squaresoft's* game has created. It can be summed up as either the best value per-pence purchase you'll make since *Final Fantasy VII,* or the most useless way to spend your time that the Japanese have yet devised



You'll need the Sand Cape to get past the desert of despair. It keeps the grit out of your eyes too



Say yes and he threatens to throw you overboard. Say no and he wants to toss you into the sea

PRO SCORE

PRICE: £39.99
PUBLISHER: Psygnosis
GENRE: Adventure

TRY B4 U BUY

MEMORY CARD · ONE PLAYER

Alundra is a straight-forward no nonsense role-playing-game that's firmly tapping a formulaic vein. As the first adventure game to arrive since Final Fantasy VII it should do very well, but many RPG new-comers could be deceived into thinking that this follows the same turn-based, rendered background formula, and that's just not the case. If you're a fan of Zelda then this is the next logical 32bit step, but if you're an RPG virgin you should definitely try before you buy.

LEWIS

WHAT'S THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	6
GAMEPLAY	7
LASTABILITY	9

7½

PRO PANEL

PAUL I really enjoyed Final Fantasy VII and was expecting a lot from this. It didn't ever quite make it, but nonetheless Alundra is a definite option for those of you needing a new RPG fix

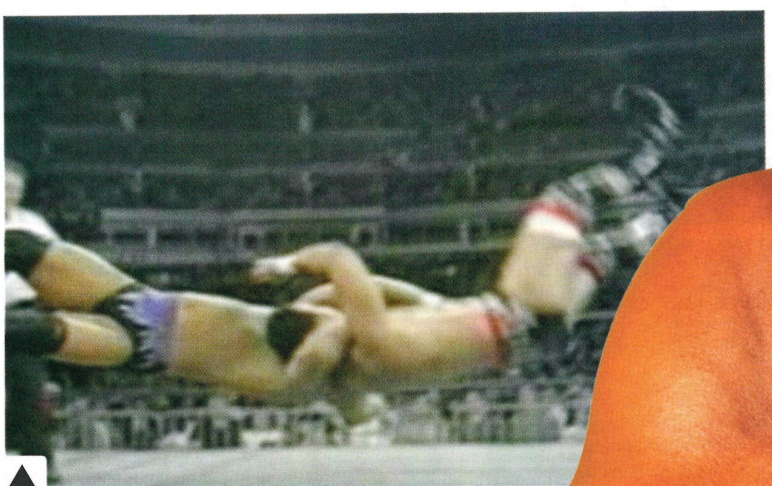
ANDY On the whole this kind of thing doesn't interest me, but Alundra is more enjoyable than most. Imagine the classic Zelda for your PlayStation and you're almost there

JAMES This all seems to be pretty standard stuff to me. RPGs fail to interest me at the best of times and Alundra didn't do anything to change that. But if you like RPGs...

JAY FFVII didn't get me excited one bit and I don't like RPGs as a rule, yet I remember spending weeks fiddling about with Zelda and this is just like it. Try before you buy though

WCW Nitro

Supreme examples of athletes who are masters of both power and agility, or steroid riddled ageing actors? You choose...



FMV makes an expected appearance with a spectacular intro and short TV-style clips of each wrestler going off on a bit of a rant

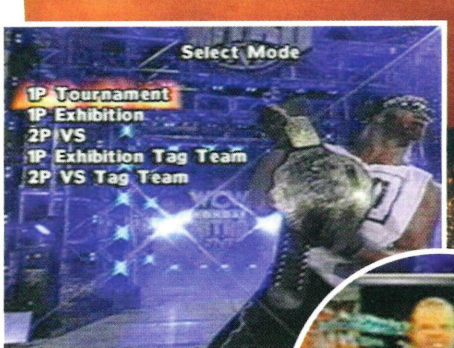
Regardless of what I say about *WCW Nitro*, the one thing that's guaranteed is that *THQ* will have a best-seller on their hands. People can't seem to get enough of a pastime that's more theatre than sport, whether in terms of actually going along and watching (some event at the Nynex Arena in Manchester a couple of months back could have sold out about four times!) or playing the latest videogame recreation.

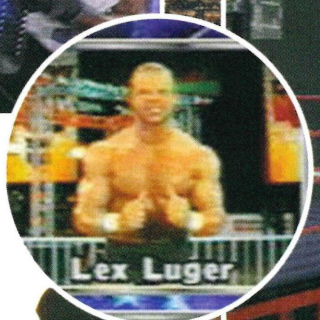
And I'd better tread carefully with what I say after someone naively questioned the merits of the sport in one of our sister magazines and still receives masses of hate mail to this day! So I'll just say 'American Wrestling? I absolutely love it me!' and leave it at that...

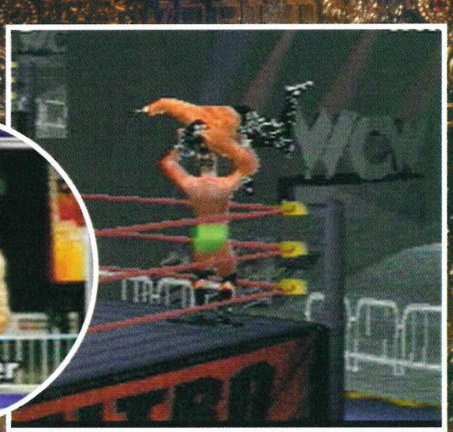
NANCY BOY MCNALLY

With such fanatical support it's good that *THQ* has actually made a decent game for a change, otherwise they could have been in real trouble! *WCW Nitro* is easily the best looking wrestling game to date, and building on the impressive game engine used so well in their last effort, *WCW vs NWO*, it mixes up nicely into a wrestling fan's dream game.

After a surprisingly short FMV introduction it's straight into the action. You can choose to be







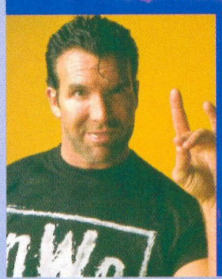
A writer once questioned the merits of wrestling as a sport. He still gets masses of hate mail to this day



LET'S GET READY TO RUMBLE!

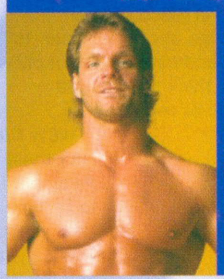
WCW Nitro has an incredible number of characters available to play with. Well over 60 in fact! Almost every single WCW and NWO star you can think of makes an appearance, although only 20 are selectable initially, with the others becoming available as you progress through the game. Look out for a full guide to the many moves that are in the game, as well as instructions as to how to access every single character in an issue of PlayStation Pro in the very near future! We're too kind, we really are...

SCOTT HALL



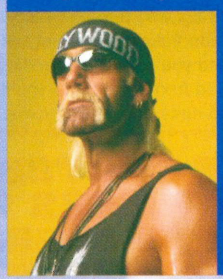
Scott, in days gone by when he was a WWF star, used to go under the much more impressive name of Razor Ramon apparently

LEX LUGER

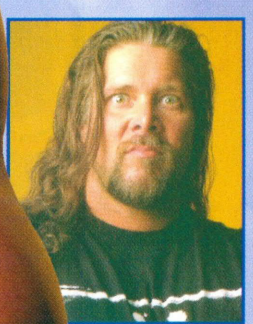


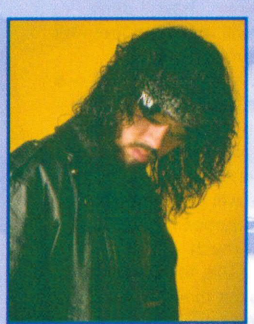
Lex Luger is one of the biggest names in WCW, even though he does have a leaning towards ludicrous pink pants

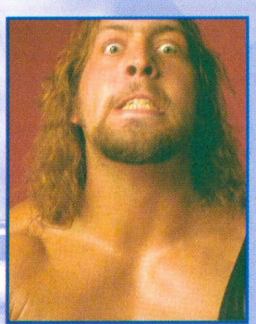
HOLLYWOOD HOGAN

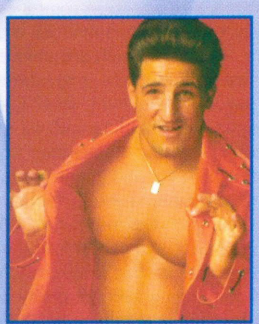


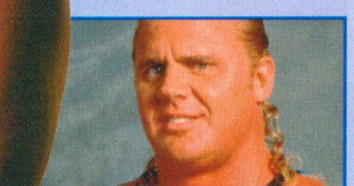
Wrestling's favourite son is still knocking around the rings, despite the fact that he must be close to drawing his pension

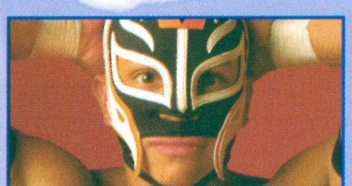


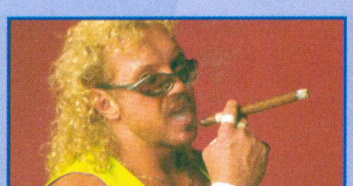








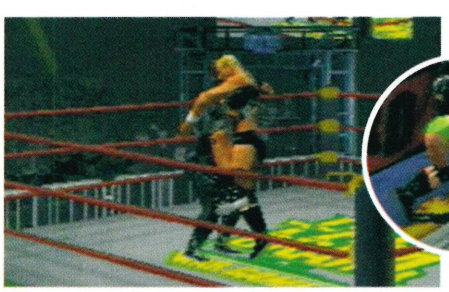


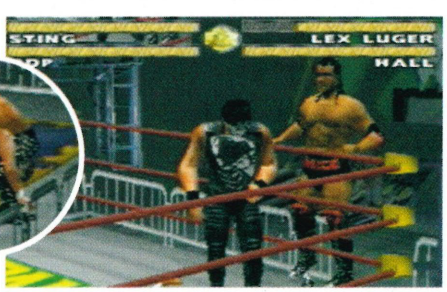




one of 20 almost photo realistic wrestling favourites – including *'Hollywood' Hulk Hogan, 'Nature Boy' Ric Flair, 'Macho Man' Randy Savage'* and *Lex Luger*. Basically, if you have a wrestling favourite chances are he'll be in here somewhere. On top of the initial 20, there are also numerous hidden characters, including the wrestler's managers and valets! All of which are uncovered either as you progress through the game, or more likely when we print the cheat codes very soon.

The whole game has a real televisual feel around it, added to by excellent commentary provided by actual WCW ring announcers who'll call each move and pass comment on how the bout is going. The camera intelligently roves around the ring providing TV style coverage of each fight, and there are also plenty of different rings to battle in – either pick your favourite and stick with it, or leave the setting on random and let the computer make the decision.





The in-fight graphics help finish off the atmosphere building process with huge, realistic looking motion-captured characters stomping around the place beating seven shades out of each other for as long as it takes.

So, we know it looks impressive and has a nice feel around it, but does it play well? I

GENRE COMPARISON

GAME: WWF WRESTLEMANIA

SOFTWARE HOUSE: Acclaim

The WWF may be losing out to the WCW organisation in popularity terms these days, but as far as games go there's very little to choose between the governing bodies. Acclaim's more cartoony approach is less realistic, so if you're after realism head for THQ's effort



hate to say it, but yes it does. For what is essentially a beat'em-up, it's surprisingly engaging. Once the initial phase of wildly hammering all the buttons in the hope of getting lucky has passed, *WCW Nitro* shows itself to be one of a rare breed of fighting game, in which players actually do benefit from knowing what they're doing.

BELLY-BUTTON BASHING

Okay, at first it's possible to progress quite nicely through the one player game by button bashing - which entails wild flurries of kicks and punches with the odd fluke move – but take a step up in class and you'll take a pounding nine times out of 10. And from here on in you'll realise you need to suss out a few moves.

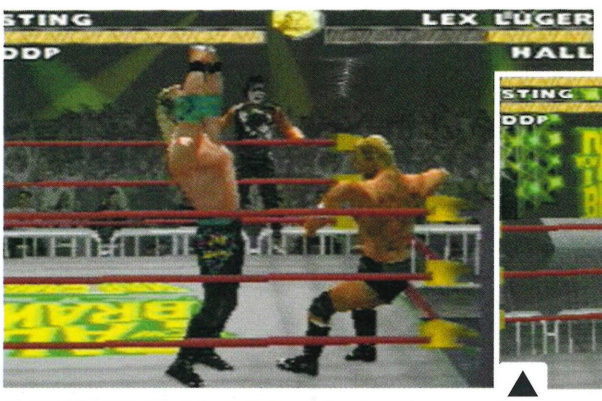
Unlike the real thing, it actually looks like all the blows are connecting with the opponents

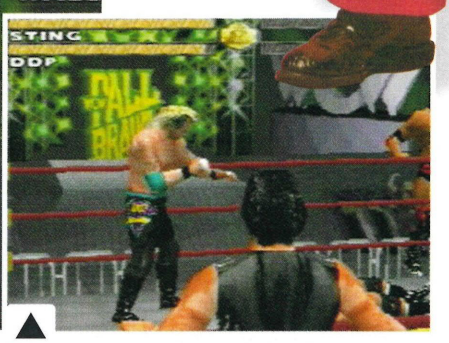
Each wrestler has over 30 moves to chose from – many of which are unique to that particular character – and learning them all will be major achievement. All of the moves are realistic wrestling fare with all manner of suplexs, throws, clotheslines and backbreakers to delight fans. And guess what, unlike the real thing it actually looks as though the blows are connecting (I've blown it now. I can hear the knives being sharpened from here!).

Even with all this bone-crunching action, I reckon things would get pretty dull if there was just the one way to play *WCW Nitro*, so thankfully *THQ* have also provided some very different play modes. These include title match – the player battles it out against number of other wrestlers in a series of one-on-one battles and must win them all to be crowned champion (this can also be played in tag team mode) – a versus battle (either one or two players) and an exhibition match in which you can challenge any other fighter to come and have a go. But only if they think they're hard enough of course.

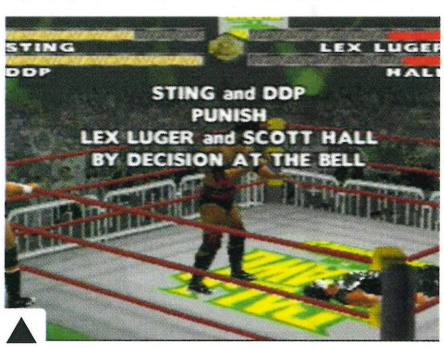
WCW Nitro isn't really my kind of thing, but I really found it to be fun. I haven't liked wrestling since I was 11 years old, and this certainly hasn't done anything that will make me feel well disposed towards it in future.

However, if someone like me — a non-wrestling, non-beat'em-up fan – can have such a good time playing it, then I can only dream about how much enjoyment someone who likes both activities will get out this game, and I suppose that means that I'm pretty much recommending this to just about anyone who likes their wrestling-style videogames PRO

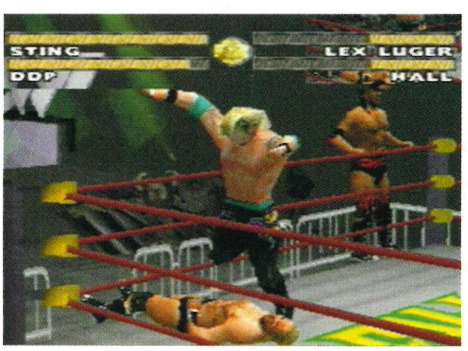




Motion capture is hyper realistic throughout. You can almost feel those bones crack as your knee drops into your opponent's chest



Tag team matches provide for some exhilarating multi player match ups, and are almost as much fun in single player mode



PRO SCORE

PRICE: £39.99
PUBLISHER: THQ
GENRE: Sports

TRY B4 U BUY

TWO PLAYER | MEMORY CARD

Wrestling fans are a funny bunch. Fiercely loyal and prepared to defend their 'sport' to the death if needs be, Heaven help those who cross them with either jibes or poor quality games. Well, THQ can sleep soundly in their beds because they've done wrestling proud with WCW Nitro. As beat'em-ups go it's great fun, and while it lacks the flash of Tekken 3, it still puts up a good fight. Impressive graphics and solid gameplay will do the business every time, and happily this has both.

STEVE

WHAT'S THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	7
GAMEPLAY	8
LASTABILITY	8

8

PRO PANEL

CHICKEN Had a fair bit of fun with this. I hate wrestling as a rule, but it makes quite a good game. Loads of enjoyable moves, despite being full of tossers. Definitely well worth a play

ANDY I've got long-hair, I love heavy rock music and do, from time to time, slip into the odd bit of spandex. So naturally, I fell in love with this face-slapping bonanza straight away!

LEWIS This surprised everyone and is a actually a decent little beat'em-up title that will take you back to the heady days of World Of Sport on a Saturday afternoon. Good stuff

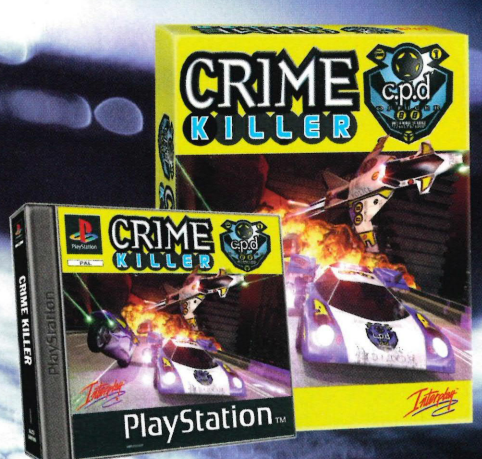
JAY This is great. Even if you don't hold a torch for the spandex-clad pantomime sport, you'll soon be grappling like it's second nature. Plus it's two player mode is an absolute treat

CRIME KILLER

c.p.d OFFICER 88

776453 676000

"DISPATCH, THE SUSPECT WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR QUESTIONING. OFFICER 88 OUT."



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Vigilante 8

Get your phat ass over here and check out a game that you're going to find hard to resist

Twisted Metal 2 by *Sony* was a fine game. Massively under-rated and indeed under-bought, but a fine game nevertheless. There were key flaws, mainly in the presentation, but it was still a damn fine game, and was duly awarded 8/10 in PlayStation Pro.

While all this was happening, Vigilante 8's producers', *Activision,* have had a massive hit on the *PC* with *Interstate '76,* which took on a 70's funk theme, combined it with a *Mad Max* scenario and employed a series of quests that involved people with seriously big afro hairdos. Now the theme may have been 70s, but the weapons included guided missiles and the like.

Activision then realised that here were two fine ideas and that a hybrid could produce one of the biggest games of the year. And

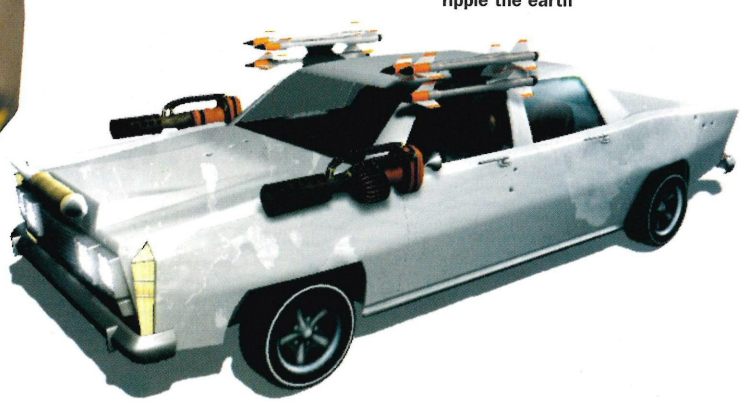






JOHN TORQUE

Our cover star. Torque is a one-time Vegas hustler, and was recruited by Convoy for the good cause. Now he's Convoy's right-hand man. His special weapon is the Bass Quake. It's the best car stereo the planet as ever seen and its bass is strong enough to ripple the earth

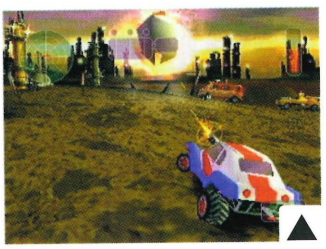




you know what? They might just be right.

Vigilante 8 is the culmination of months of development work by American-based *Luxoflux* (see last month's Exposure for full details), and it looks like it has been time well spent. We've had the privilege of seeing the game grow through its various stages and the end results are spectacular.

Load the game up and the first thing you'll notice is the funky, disco-diva soundtrack that kicks in. It's *Shaft* material all the way even down to the "Ooha, Ooha" in the background. And a great deal of thought has been put into creating a viable storyline to mix in and add

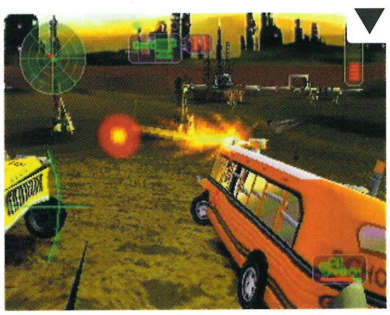


Some of the pick-ups you acquire have targeting systems that will guide the weapon directly to your enemy

Vigilante 8 combines 70s' funk, a manic Mad Max quest storyline and characters with seriously big afros

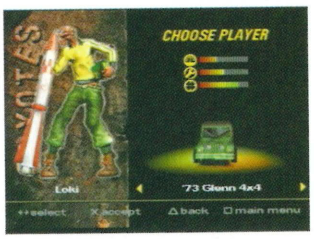
even more flavour. Apparently, gasoline shortages have brought the world to its knees and the US finds itself on the verge of economic breakdown. Strikes, riots and crime are all rampant. All law enforcement has been brought into the urban areas, leaving the outlands unprotected and lawless.

Wonderful lighting effects give V8 an edge of realism in the weaponry department. Months have been spent perfecting these techniques



BIG BAD ASS WOLF

A professional terrorist Sid Burn is brought in by a foreign syndicate destabilise the US. Sid immediately begins to organise his troops known as the *Coyotes* in the remote areas of the Southwest. These terrorists er, terrorise the local population and with nobody to turn to the locals, led by a trucker called Convoy, take the law into their own hands and form



LOKI

An ex-test pilot of secret military aircraft at Site-4. Loki is addicted to flying and his special weapon is the Scatter Missile which is a rack of three Cruise missiles, retrofitted by Loki with cluster-bomb warheads





The vehicles bounce around like they would if they were traversing real terrain. Be careful where you drive!







BEEZWAX

An enraged Arizona beekeeper. When his bees were mutated by radiation from government nuclear tests. Beezwax joined the Coyote's in revenge and his special weapon is the Gamma Swarm. If Beezwax unleashes his mutant killer bees you'd better run for the hills

CHASSEY BLUE

A beauty queen and secret government agent from DC. Chassey joined the Vigilantes as part of her undercover assignment to neutralise the Coyotes. Her special weapon is the Gridlock. Developed by the government, the Gridlock launches an ever expanding grid of red-hot flares





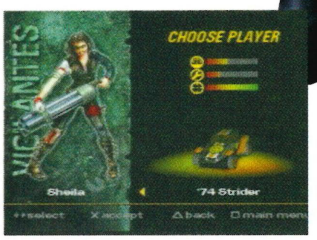
BOOGIE

Boogie is a die-hard dance fan. The winner of several disco dancing competitions. When not shaking his booty, Boogie runs dirty jobs for Sid. His special weapon is the Disco Inferno. It's Boogie's own invention. An inflatable disco-ball firing explosive flares



SHEILA

Convoy's stubborn 16 year old niece. Sheila loves all the action. Convoy is furious with her, but she won't let him send her back home. Her special weapon is the Tantrum Gun. Sheila loves massive guns and this 24mm gatling is as large as her dune buggy can carry





GENRE COMPARISON

GAME: TWISTED METAL 2

SOFTWARE HOUSE: SONY

Undoubtedly the basis of the V8 idea. Twisted Metal 2 took the same theory but didn't pull it off quite as well. Tremendous fun though and still worthy of a look even by today's increasingly high standards, although it does look a little dated







SLICK CLYDE

A show-off playboy from Texas. Clyde was on his way to an auto show in Alberquerque when Convoy confiscated his truck and forced him to help the Vigilantes. His special weapon is the White Lightning. Clyde picked up the rod thinking it was a cool looking antenna. It's electric charge can short-circuit any weapon system



There are eight different scenes to fight on. All affect what you do very differently



▶ the *Vigilantes*. That's where you come in obviously.

You can choose to play either quest or arcade mode in single player, or if you have a friend handy, indulge in a little one-on-one action. In quest mode you'll have to complete a sequence of missions in order. Success in one will take you to the next arena and you'll have to wipe out another group of the evil *Coyote* terrorists. Arcade mode is a little more forgiving, and you can choose the locations you want your battles to commence. You can also choose your enemies if you have a favourite.

GROOVY KINDA DESTRUCTION

In both modes you have a choice of riding as any of the eight *Vigilantes*. Each has their own customised vehicle and different stats like power and armament. Whoever you choose will be dumped straight into the ensuing free-for-all to fend for themselves.

Now you're into the game proper and can start to tear-arse all over the show, picking up the power-ups and (hopefully) destroying anyone who dares to come before you. The action is frenetic to say the least as you dart about the landscape firing your guns off at just about everything, and when you get a decent weapon you can begin to have some real fun.

One of the big improvement



HOUSTON 3

Houston 3 is a bionic woman created by the evil consortium. Half human, half-machine she has been sent in to aid Sid's quest for destruction and chaos. Her special weapon is the Super Fantastic Death Ray 3-AX. This blue laser ra will cut through anything. It can also knock power-ups off enemies' cars

A power-up will give you the advantage over your two closest rivals, but I'm afraid that won't last very long





It looks like a good kill from where we're standing. Should makes things easier from now on. Now, where have the others disappeared to. Better look behind you!



Most of the scenery can be destroyed by crashing into it or by shooting it. Although that isn't the cleverest thing to do

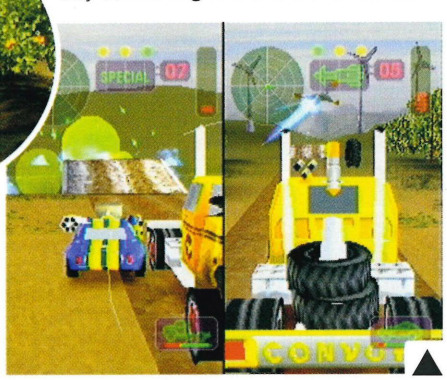
over *Twisted Metal 2* is the car physics. The vehicles handle wonderfully well and you can almost feel the impacts of the crashes or weaponry. Most of the scenery can also be damaged. You can smash through fences and walls or if you drive into a lamp-post it will bend and you'll sustain damage. The only way to repair yourself is by picking up a spanner power-up, but these are few and far between.

And that's about it for the one-player game. There are loads of secret bits in there, but we'll be revealing more about those in a later issue. It's tremendous fun, even on your own, but for extra mayhem you should play in split-screen mode (either horizontally or vertically) and chase your mates around instead.

The action is frenetic as you blast everything in sight, and when you get a power-up, then the fun really starts

It would be a crying shame if *V8* gets lost amidst all the massive names that are due for release because it provides entertainment certainly on a par with the likes of *Gran Turismo* and *Tekken 3*. *Vigilante 8* is addictive, full of fun and its slick and original presentation only serves to give it a further boost PRO





The two-player mode gives you the chance to dish out some good hidings to your closest friends and relatives

PRO SCORE

PRICE: £44.99
PUBLISHER: Activision
GENRE: Shoot'em-up

ANALOGUE | MEMORY CARD | STEERING WHEEL | SPLIT SCREEN | TWO PLAYER

I really enjoyed Vigilante 8. I'd played earlier versions over the past couple of months and it had hooked me long before the final version arrived. I'm glad to be able to say that the review copy delivered all the polish that I'd been expecting and believe that V8 is destined to become a bit of an office favourite over the coming weeks. It's fair to say not everybody will love it, but if you're a fan of fast action games with slick presentation then you should be off down to the shops this very minute.

CHICKEN

WHAT'S THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	8.5
SOUND	8.5
GAMEPLAY	9
LASTABILITY	9

9

PRO PANEL

JAMES This game has been brewing into a fine pint of best boogie for the last few months and it's turned out to be vintage stuff. I'll be getting pissed on it for the rest of the month

ANDY You can't beat this for blasting action. It's a bit shallow really but that's the way I like it. The 70s theme doesn't fit in with my thrash metal background but what the hell!

LEWIS It's all a little light on the plot and content side, but for a mindless little driving blast'em-up you should look no further. It won't keep you entertained for ages though

JAY Twisted Metal with flares and an afro – great stuff. Forget poncing around in corridors with a shotgun, get behind the wheel of these souped-up beasts and kick some serious ass



Three Lions

Pull on the famous white shirt and shout your orders across the pitch with BMG's official licence for the World Cup. Now you really can hear the lions roar



Hmm, I think the England boys have been spending too much time in the showers together. Top goal celebration though, an all out orgy, with Stuart Pearce coming-in behind. Ahem.

Hello, welcome to Football Pro, I'm your host *James Cannon*. Football came home for a short time during *Euro '96* thanks to *Terry Venables, Skinner* and *Baddiel* and the lads that wear that famous white, blue and red, but come this summer football's back off on its travels again. *World Cup '98* is looming in the land of frogs' legs and champagne, where strange men in stripy shirts wear onion necklaces. *France '98* has been creeping up on us quite slowly and the stress of the qualifiers seems light years away, yet despite the defeat by Chile I'm betting that *Glenn* and his boys will get it right come June 10th.

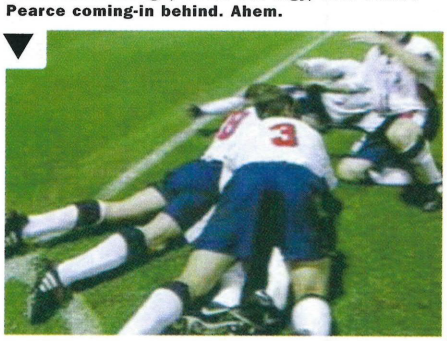
Though the anthemic song that rang around English football stadia in the summer of *'96* won't be the official terrace chant this year, *Three Lions* is returning to the home of football. *BMG's* footballing contribution carries the official stamp of the England team, so you can bet there'll be more than a couple of copies already in the bottom of captain Al's kit bag, only for use after training of course! But more to the point, should this piece of kit be on your subs bench this summer?

To answer that question we go over to our touch line correspondent, Jimmy 'the Cannon' Cannon, Jimmy...

....Er thanks James. Yes, *Three Lions* has been looking good during the *World Cup* warm-up, but competition for places is mounting.









Always shoot for the corners to make it hard for the keeper, as my school footy coach used to say. Trouble is it's easier to hit the woodwork that way



Typically the home nation have won through to the next round. Stuffy Frog eating bastards



THE PRIDE OF LIONS...



Three Lions may be lacking in the play stakes, but this introduction is absolute class. The endless footage of Shearer, Sheringham and company taking the piss and big Dave Seaman pulling off the saves will have England supporters creaming in their seats. What better way to prepare for the World Cup?

Though the stats for *Three Lions* are very favourable, with all of the players from the different teams appearing with their real names and real faces, terrific motion capture and the novel twist of doing away with commentary to make way for the player's voices, I'm afraid there's some serious doubt as to whether this particular title will be a part of everyone's final 22. I'll go into a little more detail.

BMG obviously had the words fresh, invention and realism fixed firmly in mind when *Three Lions* was being coded, and to their credit they've come up with a game that does have some very innovative features. While every other developer tries to outdo rival footie games with bigger name presentation teams, BMG have taken Three Lions in a different direction.

DO I NOT LIKE ORANGE!

Rather than try to give the game a live TV feel, BMG wanted to bring an interactive element to Three Lions, making the player's experience one of participation rather than observation. So, the developers *Z-Axis* plumped for a revolutionary style of commentary whereby you hear the players shouting for the ball themselves, giving instructions, arguing with the ref etc. But however good this may sound in theory, it doesn't really ▶

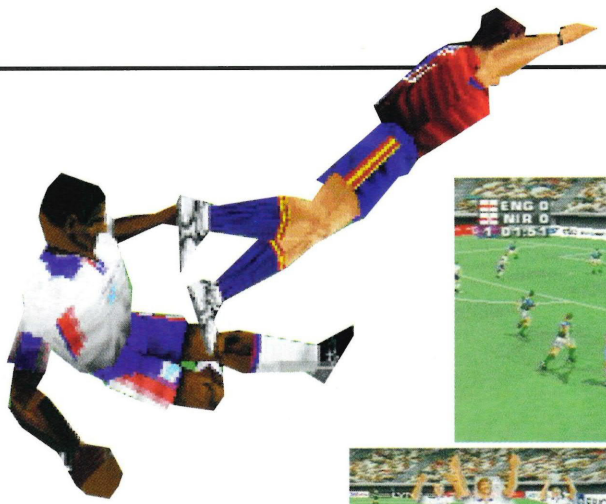
They all sound like Sunday League pub players on the piss, rather than the cream of the Premier League



In World League Soccer '98 you can swap and change your squad of 25 as much as you like with this easy to use team set-up screen

hang together very well in practice.

The English players and the referee all sound like *Sunday League* pub players after an afternoon on the piss rather than the cream of the *Carling Premier League*. It's hardly atmospheric stuff as it seems only around six lines of dialogue come out of the player's mouths, and they soon started to get on your tits. "Pass it," "Line it," "Get it in the middle," aren't really the words of wisdom you'd expect to hear from the merry men of old *Glenn*. Worse still are the accents of the foreign team players. It all sounds as if they've roped in *Paul Whitehouse* to do his Portuguese piss-take from *The Fast Show*. Again, we only distinguished a few different phrases that had been recorded, which became unbelievably monotonous after only a couple of games.







It's just kicked off between these two British nations, and Northern Ireland are already on the ropes. You want to aim away from the centre of the goal though Alan

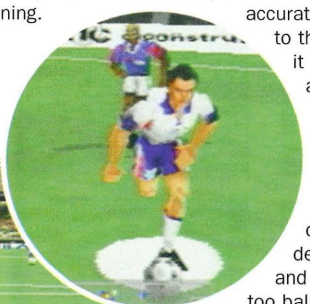
The foreign players all have Paul Whitehouse's Portuguese accent from The Fast Show

But on the good side, *Three Lions* has some excellent motion capture which is really shown off when the keepers make spectacular saves, tipping the ball over the bar or around the post for a corner. The outfield players also display some really neat touches, which puzzles me all the more as to why they appear to only have a few frames of animation when running.

NOTHING FOR TWO IN A BED

There's also been some news about the playing style *Glenn* intends to implement with the use of *Three Lions*. Apparently there's a revolutionary new targeting system which is used in conjunction with a bullseye that moves around the area of the goal posts. However it seems many of the players within the camp aren't too convinced that this new 'bullseye' system is the one for them.





It's used as you'd expect, when a player is in a shooting position, he angles for a strike on goal. For a split second as the player pulls back the hammer, the target can be moved into the position the player wants to aim at. However, as this requires the player to be stationary, and effectively a sitting duck for any defenders in the area, getting a shot in accurately can be extremely difficult. Due to the nature of the shooting system, it seems that aftertouch isn't available either, and the England players haven't warmed to these new fangled footballing techniques.

In terms of gameplay, it performs quite well when you're on the attacking side, but defending with the use of the slide and poke tackle doesn't seem to be too balanced and is slightly ineffective.

That said, the game can be quite enjoyable, but I feel *Glenn's* boys are going to need more time than is available to adapt to the new system in readiness for The *World Cup*. Back over to you James...

...Thank you Jim. So there you have it, another change of playing style from the Team boss, which is what we all expected from one of the most innovative football minds in recent years. However, *Three Lions* isn't going to find the going easy once the opposition get news of this new playing style. The competition is going to be fierce this year PRO



OCEAN COLOUR SCENE



As footie game intro's go, Three Lions can boast one of the best. Not only does it show our very own England superstars banging in the goals from all angles, it's all done to the mean sounds of "Mile High City" by Indy rockers Ocean Colour Scene. The moody Brummies have also helped record the official England song for France 98, wearing their lovely hats.

PRO SCORE

PRICE: £44.99
PUBLISHER: BMG
GENRE: Sports

TRY B4 U BUY

TWO PLAYER | MEMORY CARD

Three Lions is a bit of a disappointment, especially as it has the official license. Credit to BMG for attempting something different, however I get the feeling that they've concentrated on innovation rather than quality. This will have its share of supporters come World Cup time, but I'm betting that it'll be on an early plane home from France once the more experienced teams come into the fray in the later stages. Once more it's a case of so near, so far for England's Three Lions.

JAMES

WHATS THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	7
GAMEPLAY	6
LASTABILITY	6

7

PRO PANEL

CHICKEN Three Lions tries to do some nice things but is badly let down by a lack of polish. It's nice to see some originality but not at the expense of things we now take for granted

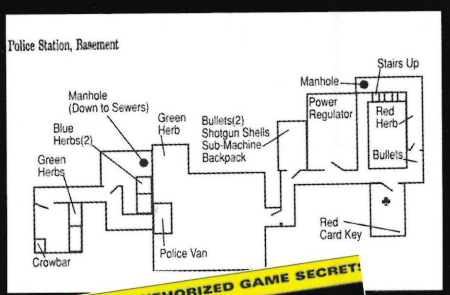
ANDY If you're easily confused like me, then the added complexities of this game will have you baffled. Sure there's plenty of depth, but I'm a bit shallow, so I'll stick to FIFA '98

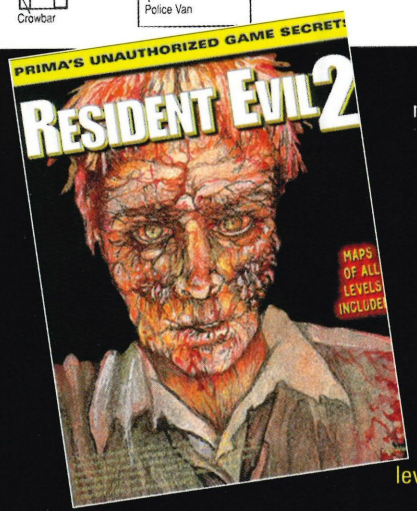
LEWIS Tricky to get to grips with at first, but perseverance pays huge dividends with masses of gameplay options and a real footballer's brain pushing the excellent graphics along

JAY It's playable enough, although you'll find it sitting on the bench when you compare it to the likes of FIFA: RTWC or WLS. This could have been a classic, but unfortunately it ain't

PRIMA'S UNAUTHORIZED GAME SECRETS

RESIDENT EVIL 2





Raccoon City is now a city of death with Zombies eating the living and turning them into the undead. Leon, the last living policeman, struggles to defend himself against a multitude of hellish creatures. He teams up with a daring young girl named Elza and the action truly begins.

Resident Evil 2: Unauthorized Game Secrets is an essential companion to the game itself. It features detailed maps of all levels, essential item locations, lethal strategies for defeating every gruesome creature plus deadly weapon secrets.

THE NIGHTMARE BEGINS AGAIN

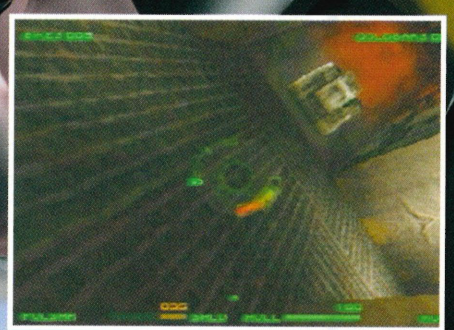
PRIMA'S SECRETS OF THE GAMES

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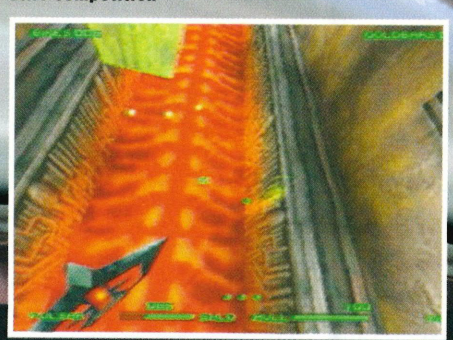
Available from Electronics Boutique, Game Ltd , HMV, Virgin Megastores.

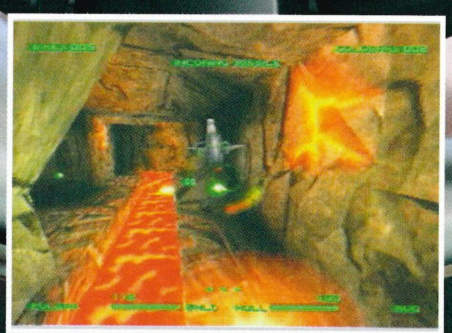
Forsaken

It's a shoot'em-up and it's been hyped to death. Surely this must be a recipe for disaster?



Lava filled caverns are some of the most impressive visual effects in the game. Although there's some pretty stiff competition





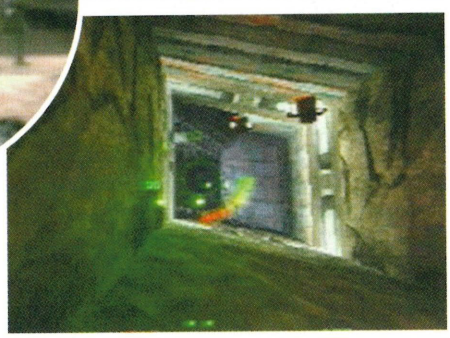






It's a shame that all of the levels are set underground. One or two open spaces wouldn't have gone amiss, and would certainly have helped to distance Forsaken from Descent







BEARD

Beard is a head-bangin', hard lad. He rides the spacelanes on his Brough Superior 119, looking for the next 'cool vibe'. Living life in line with the well worn bikers ethic, Beard is a loyal type who never forgets who his buddies are. The fact that he travels everywhere with his long dead partner 'Mad Dog McCoy' is testament to this fact. Mad Dog was involved in some hard-core police action that left him hanging out with Linda McCartney, and Beard short of a partner. Beard decided that a dead McCoy was better than no McCoy at all and promptly bundled him back in the sidecar, and they ride together forever in metal heaven.



CERBERO

Cerbero is an outworld bounty-hunter who preys on the worst scum of the universe (a bit like a hover bike riding Will Smith). The fact that he is little more than scum himself is a detail he prefers to overlook. Cerbero specialises in taking down the 'Tube-Dudes' – genetically engineered humanoids – which he finds particularly distasteful. However, in order to maintain his edge, Cerbero has been under the bio-surgeons knife several times himself, a titanium heart, toxin resistant lungs, and IR sensitive eyes being his most recent enhancements. Cerbero often severs the heads of his victims to ensure that they are no longer active. In these days of high-science you can never be too sure.

There's always a worry when a game gets hyped that everyone is being set-up for a fall. So many times games that were expected to set the world alight have served only to disappoint, and I must admit I had that exact worry about Forsaken. From what I'd seen of it in the past I was quite honestly amazed that there was as much excitement surrounding it as there actually was. How good could a *Descent* clone actually be? Well, the answer is very good indeed. Forsaken will disappoint no one with it's superb mix of reflex tests and mind-bending challenges. This is no *Descent* clone!

The Terran System, once the proud birth place of humanity, is now a ghost town (well, ghost solar system), utterly abandoned and up for grabs. Only decades before Earth had rested, smug in the knowledge that no alien force could possibly penetrate its staggering armada of defence satellites, orbital minefields, and computer controlled attack systems, all of which patrolled the spaceways vigilantly. Invasion from an alien race was, at that time, inconceivable. Ironically though, the end did not come from without, but from within. In the year 2113 humanity destroyed itself when it sought to harness the universe's most powerful and dangerous energy source.

For many years, particle physicists on Earth had been delving deeper and deeper into the mysteries of matter itself. Unravelling layer after layer of subatomica, they finally discovered the means by which they could manipulate matter at its most basic level. Tragically, their first experiment created an uncontrollable fusion reaction, which ripped apart the planet, sending an unstoppable shock wave through the entire Terran System. When it was over, the Earth was devastated. Torn from its orbital axis the fragmented planet was now a lifeless husk, devoid of atmosphere and bathed in the searing radiation of the sun. Within a few agonising days, all human life had perished.

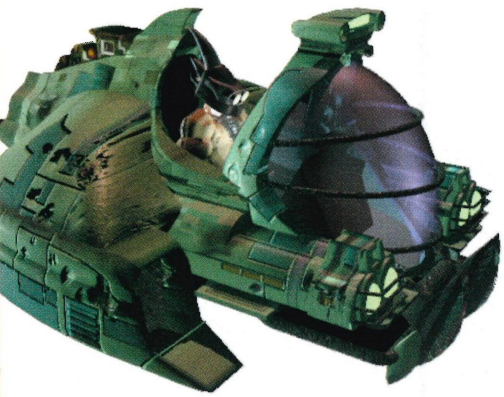


RAPE AND PILLAGE

News of its extinction spread quickly through the universe. A thorough investigation into the mind-boggling disaster began and anything considered valuable on Earth was shipped out of the system. Months later, the entire solar system was declared 'Condemned'. Now, every bounty hunter, mercenary, space pirate, and free-booting scum of the earth in the galaxy has the unwritten right to raid the system and take anything that the authorities didn't want.

The worst cut-throats known have converged on this blackened corner of the universe to engage in a desperate game of interstellar cat-and-mouse. Astride roaring anti- ▶

Forsaken will disappoint no one with its superb mix of reflex tests and mind-bending challenges





CUVEL CLARK

Cuvel Clark is your average, cunning, double-crossing, gambling, swindler... and then some. He knows where there's money to be made and how to get it. Why work for something when you can steal it? Wanted throughout most of the Imperial systems for a variety of nefarious acts, Cuvel manages to avoid the dumbass authorities with uncanny ease, leaving them choking on his exhaust fumes and cursing his ever-present sardonic smile. Cuvel has connections throughout most of the criminal underworld; there's nothing he can't get his hands on for the right amount of cash. Extremely arrogant, Cuvel considers himself far superior to the fools around him.



gravity pioncycles with deadly arsenals, they will battle to the death against each other and the ruthless robotic sentinels left behind to try and maintain some sort of order. For the one who emerges victorious, the lost glories of a dead civilisation await. For the rest, agonising death. And for once it's nice to see that a bit of thought has gone into the storyline, and this aspect sets up a nice platform from which the game can easily build up respect.

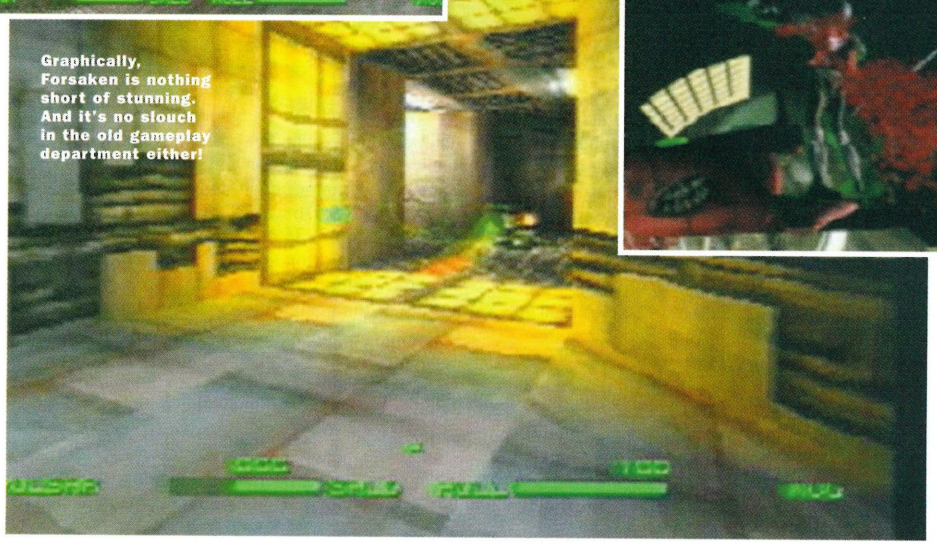
THIS'LL SHAKE YOU UP

Players must enter this forsaken world and engage in fast and furious gameplay that leads you through action-packed levels in varied settings ranging from the merciless void of space to exploring the underwater perils of a dead ocean and penetrating deep into subterranean, maze-like complexes, all the way battling a horde of bloodthirsty cut-throats all hell bent on being the last surviving scavenger. Now this could very quickly get boring, as it did in *Descent* – a game similar only really in concept – but in *Forsaken* the gameplay changes radically from level to level. One minute you'll be solving complex puzzles, the next engaging in a furious dogfight against seemingly impossible odds.

I'm no massive fan of shoot'em-ups, but this grabs you in a wholly unexpected way, and anyone who doubts that this is for them because they 'don't usually like this kind of thing' should take heart from the fact that neither do I.

In *Forsaken* you'll pit yourself against unbelievable weaponry, everything from futuristic submarines to robotic nuclear missiles. You'll face danger from all angles, ground, sea, air, and even from deepest space! While all the while your mind is racing trying to solve a puzzle or work out whether that was actually a door that you raced past when that tank was hot on your heels.





Graphically, Forsaken is nothing short of stunning. And it's no slouch in the old gameplay department either!

LET THE SHOW BEGIN

The main threat that the player will face in single player mode comes from the amassed droid units. Their sole purpose in life is to deter, and if necessary destroy intruders. They are large in both number and variety, and danger really does come from all angles. Enemies range from ground-based missile firing vehicles to airborne craft and huge robots. Plus, every second level is home to some of the meanest boss characters you'll ever come across – each requiring an entirely different strategy for beating the living crap out of them.

While it looks like *Descent* at first (okay, not just at first) with its 360-degree playing field and



Rendered intros are pretty much of a muchness these days, but Forsaken's is definitely a class above your run of the mill FMV sequence

EARL SLEEK



Cruising into town, bass drums driving home a 'P-funk' groove, Earl Sleek, the purveyor of fine gems and jewellery is back. Packin' a nine at his side, Earl is the dopeist, flyest, clubber come DJ in the area. There's nothing going down in town that Earl doesn't know about - he pulls the strings of most of the local hoods and takes a large slice of their profits. Earl has dealt himself into the freeloading mercenary business sensing an easy profit. There allegedly 'ain't a guy alive who's got the balls to take out The Earl', and this man's suit is sharper than most people's brains! Stand aside, the man's in town. Baby.

EX-COP

Ex-cop is one of the meanest beat-cops around. He threw away his exemplary record after a blood-frenzied drugs bust saw him take down not just a mob of street punks, but three of his fellow officers as well. Ex-cop put it down to a 'bad day' and his latent trigger happy mentality. Stripped of his position and thrown ignobly out of the force, ex-cop decided it was time to ditch the good-guy facade and get down to some serious shit kicking! Why lock people up when you can blow 'em away?

tight, twisting corridors, *Forsaken* does have enough distinct differences to totally distance itself from Interplay's tedious shooter. Most notably the superior graphics and better game design. There are 15 bikes to choose from, each with a different rider with his or her own attributes and each can collect up to 12 weapons along the way (usually thrown up by dying enemies), ranging from lasers and guns to mines and missiles.

Disappointingly, the game again takes place entirely underground, where man conveniently retreated in his last days, and this is perhaps the game's only bad point. In my opinion it would have been a lot better to have a few more varied scenarios, maybe with an outdoor setting here and there. But navigating through corridors full of lava, underwater caverns and through abandoned power stations and military installations is breathtaking enough to grant forgiveness on this occasion.

All in all there are 15 single-player levels to explore, and numerous death match arenas for the two player battles that will undoubtedly be popular.

Before I conclude I must say that *Forsaken* looks absolutely amazing. It's rare that I'll heap this kind of praise on what is essentially a shoot'em-up, but let me tell you, this game is breathtaking. The lighting effects are jaw dropping and the environments, while confined to corridors and underground spaces, are beautiful. Plus they're interactive, with falling rocks and doors that must be destroyed to pass. What more could you want? *Forsaken* is a must for action fans everywhere...PRO

IS THAT A TROJAX GUN IN YOUR POCKET...?

Here's an array of the most destructive weaponry ever created that's all at your fingertips in Forsaken. This list describes all the major firepower and what you can expect it to do for you. Or you'll get money back!



LASER GUN
This is a powerful, long distance double beam set of blasters



PYROLITE GUN
This is a short range flamethrower for frying some asses



TRANS PULSE GUN
This is a powerful pulsar gun – one shot wall deflection



MUGS
These are the standard rockets for your bike



SOLARIS MISSILE
Heat seeking missile that home in on your enemy's craft



GRAVGON MISSILE
Creates an orb which traps all that pass through it



SCATTER MISSILE
Homes in on enemy and scatters all their weapons



ROCKET LAUNCHER
Fires a number of missiles at an extremely fast rate



TITAN MISSILE
Powerful missile which generates deadly shrapnel on detonation



PURGE MINES
Standard mines that detonate on contact with the enemy



PINE MINE
Fires missiles at the enemy craft in the close vicinity



QUANTUM MINE This is a deadly mine that detonates with huge flashy explosion



POWER POD
Collecting Power Pods increases the power of your weapons



PULSAR GUN
All bikes are equipped with this at the start of a game



TROJAX GUN
Extremely powerful charge-up weapon for your bike



SUSS GUN
Fires a multitude of low powered shots with a large range

PRO SCORE

PRICE: £39.99
PUBLISHER: Acclaim
GENRE: Shoot'em-up

TRY B4 U BUY

ANALOGUE | MEMORY CARD | SPLIT SCREEN | TWO PLAYER | PRO

Forsaken took me by surprise, mainly because it almost lived up to the hype. This is the game that Descent should have been, but in reality it's not different enough to warrant classic status. It looks superb and plays a good game though, so if you're the type whose adrenaline starts pumping as soon as you jump into a virtual cockpit, then you won't find a game that'll give you a better thrill. A tough challenge and horde upon horde of enemies will keep you blasting away for months

STEVE

WHAT'S THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	9
SOUND	9
GAMEPLAY	8
LASTABILITY	8

9

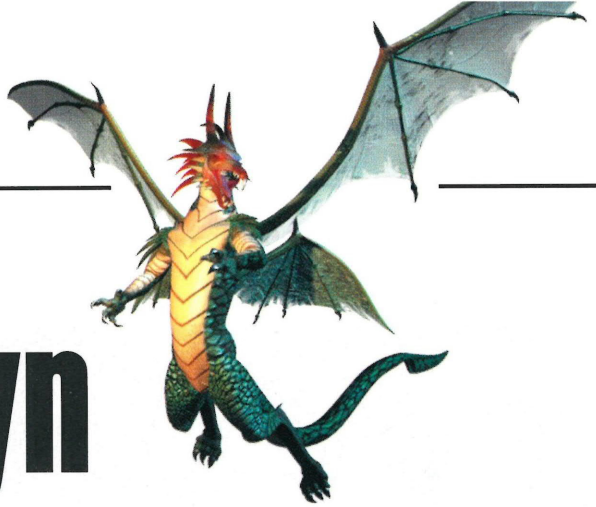
PRO PANEL

CHICKEN I personally thought Steve might have overmarked this a tad. The gameplay was a bit basic for me. It looks very nice, but after all the hype it was a bit of a letdown

JAMES Forsaken looks like a cross between Descent and Doom with high quality graphics, but doesn't have the gameplay to compete with either one. Try it out before paying out

LEWIS This just sent me completely dizzy. I hate these simple-minded blasters, and the 3D 360° environment had me lost and feeling nauseous. Nice graphics, but that's all

JAY Fast and furious. Part Decent, part wipEout2097 and with a dollop of Doom thrown in for good measure. Forsaken should be bought immediately and loved eternally



Cardinal Syn

Forget telling the vicar about your perverted public sex habits, relieve yourself with this instead, or you'll be committing the real sin

Okay, we may as well get straight to the point here. The whole world is currently waiting with baited breath for *Tekken 3*, which means that the rest of the beat'em-up fraternity may as well throw in the towel, regardless of how good they are.

I'm afraid there's just no competing with the hype that surrounds the latest episode of *Namco's Iron Fist* saga, but I'm gonna stick out my neck and say that this game from *Kronos Digital Entertainment*, should remain high on the 'maybe' list of any hardened beat'em-up fan.

The plot as always centres around some sinister type who has organised a tournament where warriors must battle it out to the death in order to gain the ultimate prize. In fact, the only original thing about the plot line is that the tournament's head honcho has breasts (now is that girl power or what?). The mysterious lady in question is known as *Syn*, hence the title, but that's enough about that, I want to tell you about the way this little gem plays.





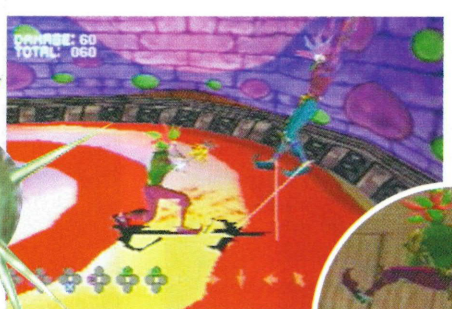
SOUL DESTROYERS

The gameplay has a lot in common with *Soul Blade* in that each of the characters has a weapon or weapons that are specific to themselves, and though graphically it isn't to the same standard, it follows the same bloodthirsty vein. Often the screen becomes a blur of swords, daggers and axes as characters lunge and slice with astonishing speed and aggression.

The real treat however is in the design of the various arenas where you take on the rest of the moody characters. Each setting allows the opponents to wander 'round their environment in a *Bushido Blade* fashion. You can fight it out in



If things are getting too edgy for your liking on the bridge, you can always run for the areas of solid land at each end and continue your bloody battle there











This is the weird and wonderful domain of Hecklar, where the floor spins and the walls rotate in a frenzy of colour. Guaranteed to make you sick





IT'S SIN THE GAME!



HECKLAR

This disturbed court jester likes to dish out the pain with the help of his puppet-like friend, using it as a club to complement his attacking style



VANGUARD

A powerful knight who wields his huge sword with amazing speed and precision. He also wears a cannon that can shoot deadly spiked projectiles



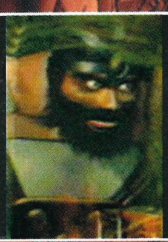
FINKSTER

This midget thief fears no-one as his size, stealth and cunning allow him to get in close and use his razor sharp daggers to their maximum effect



PLAGUE

Plague is a re-animated corpse who was pieced back together by others of his kind. As his name implies, he fights with an ominously evil intent



McKRIEG

McKrieg's weapon of choice is the war axe, and with his mining background you can bet this guy's got the power to swing it with extreme menace



ORION

A beautiful maiden who feels compelled to enter the tournament so as to wreak revenge on the others for the slaughter of her people



MONGORO

A swamp dwelling cyclops who's very nature drives him to kill with a merciless level of efficiency. Despite his bulk he can deliver deadly blows at speed



NEPHRA

An enchanting warrior from Egyptian lands who's powerful and mystical weapons are created from the spirits of noble predators

the centre of each stage or head into a little alcove where characters with shorter weapons will fare much better.

PLAYING WITH FIRE

But the stand-out feature of *Cardinal Syn* has to be the unique set of hazards which relate to each arena. The hazards vary from rolling mine carts and wall-mounted crossbows to poison bubbles and flame jets that burst into fire underfoot. And if you find that these little nuances are affecting your progression through the game, you simply de-activate them in the options menu.

Overall, the basic elements of gameplay are a little restrictive to expect this to mount a challenge against Tekken 3, since it's basically a case of producing fast combinations of three attacking options. And although Namco's masterpiece is going to kick the ass of anything that gets in its way, until Heihachi opens his Iron Fist tournament again, this should fill the gap quite nicely PRO





PRO SCORE

PRICE: £34.99
PUBLISHER: Sony
GENRE: Beat'em-up



Cardinal Syn has a great deal going for it. The freedom that you get in the arenas isn't unique, but it does provide the game with a rewarding bonus, as does the addition of the hazards and pick-ups. However, the combination gameplay isn't going to be a tasty flavour for everyone, which is where Cardinal Syn lets itself down a little. That said, there's a lot of fun to be had and it should provide more than a stiff test for anyone taking up the challenge. Well worth a look.

JAMES

WHATS THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	6
GAMEPLAY	7
LASTABILITY	8

8

PRO PANEL

LEWIS This is a poor man's Soul Blade. The gameplay and graphics are good, but apart from the large backgrounds there's nothing new here. It's little more than a quick slash

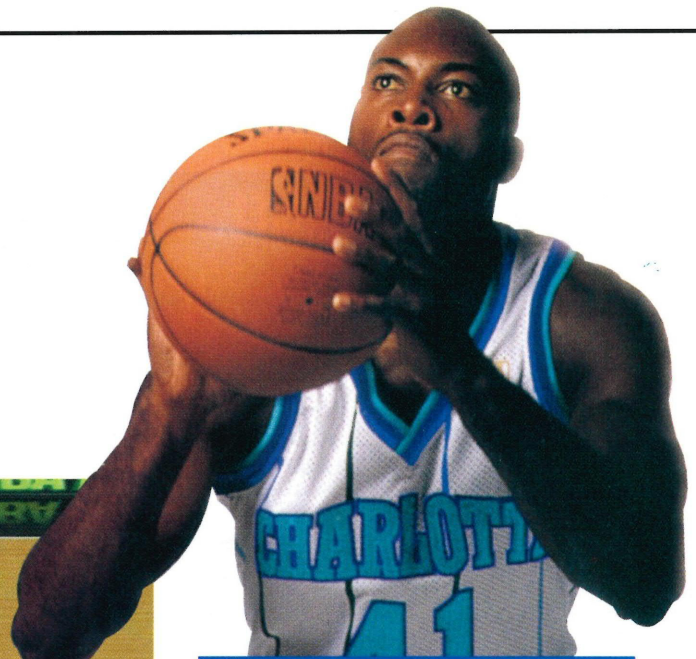
PAUL Another nice looking fighting game. Probably won't get a look in once Tekken 3 arrives, but in the meantime it'll pass a few hours comfortably thank you very much

ANDY Despite the fact that James sliced and diced me at this game, I think the characterisations and background detail are brilliant. This is yet another fine beat'em-up

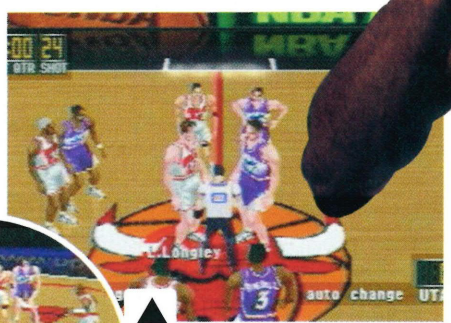
JAY As said above, this game is fun, playable and very entertaining. Unfortunately, its lifespan is limited due to the oncoming delights of both Dead Or Alive and Tekken 3

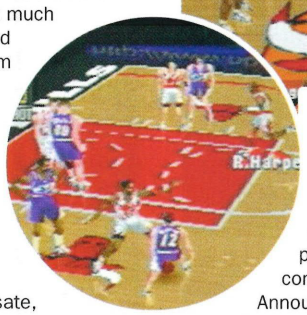
NBA Pro '98

Konami 'puts up a brick' with this latest installment in the 'In the Zone' series...



NBA In The Zone rocked (still does in fact), *In The Zone 2* rocks even harder, but I'm afraid that *Konami's* latest is certainly far from the greatest. Indeed on the scale of rock-ness it barely even registers a tremor. Why? Because. It's. Just. So. Slow. And I can't for the life of me work out how this has happened. Okay, the graphics have received a significant overhaul making it look much better than it did last time out (and even manages to relieve itself from a great height onto the head of the *N64* game of the same name!) but apart from that it's pretty much as you were from *In The Zone 2*.





"Here's the tip!" Don't buy this game, it's absolutely rubbish. How's that for advice?

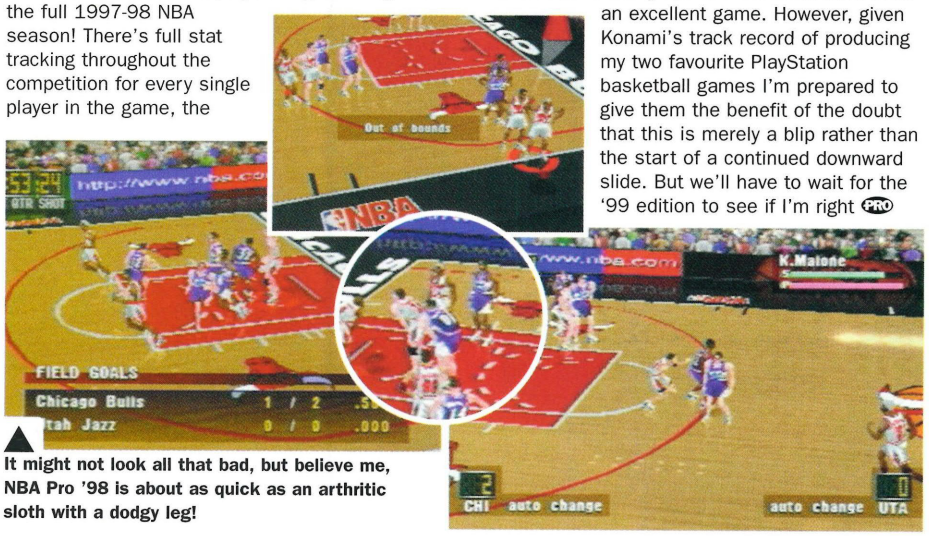
It seems even more of a shame when, after you've managed to slow down the speed at which your brain sends out signals to your fingers to compensate, *NBA Pro* shows it could quite easily have been a contender for a much coveted spot in the basketball hall of fame. You can do just about everything in the game that you can in the real thing, making the gameplay suitably realistic.

ARISE SIR CHARLES!

I suppose I'll still have to go through the motions of the rest of the review, but hopefully I've already made it clear that this is one best avoided. All 29 NBA teams – plus two all-star line-ups – are available for play, along with over 300 real NBA players including superstars the likes of *Shaq, Sir Charles, Rodman, Scotty Pippen* and *Ewing*. You can play anything from an exhibition match to the playoffs right through to the full 1997-98 NBA season! There's full stat tracking throughout the competition for every single player in the game, the option to trade or even create players and superb stadium commentary from genuine NBA Arena Announcer *Ray Clay*.

There's a host of moves to learn including cross over dribbles, pump fakes and a truckload of 'fancy jams' to impress your mates with. For the strategists among you there's also on the fly play calling allowing you to constantly tweak your tactics and strategies without ever having to spoil the flow of the game. And the animation really does have to be seen to be believed with *Konami* once again impressing in terms of their motion capturing technique. All in all, barring that one major flaw this is a top simulation.

Have I made it sound good now? Hope not, because if I have then I've given you the wrong impression. This whole speed thing is too big an issue to just brush under the carpet, and I'm not about too. It totally spoils what could have been an excellent game. However, given Konami's track record of producing my two favourite PlayStation basketball games I'm prepared to give them the benefit of the doubt that this is merely a blip rather than the start of a continued downward slide. But we'll have to wait for the '99 edition to see if I'm right PRO



It might not look all that bad, but believe me, NBA Pro '98 is about as quick as an arthritic sloth with a dodgy leg!

PRO SCORE

PRICE: £39.99
PUBLISHER: Konami
GENRE: Sports

RENT IT

MEMORY CARD · MULTI-TAP · FOUR PLAYER

NBA in the Zone – in both its incarnations – were fine examples of the correct way to do a basketball game. Now, for some inexplicable reason it seems that Konami have taken a massive step backwards and decided to show us exactly how one shouldn't be done! Far too slow to provide any real enjoyment I'm afraid, which is a shame because if it were possible to get past that one massive flaw then it's obvious that there's quite a good game lurking underneath.

STEVE

WHAT'S THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	7
GAMEPLAY	4
LASTABILITY	4

5

PRO PANEL

CHICKEN Konami have let themselves down with this. It looks the part but the speed of gameplay turns it into a bit of a turkey. We've come to expect better than this

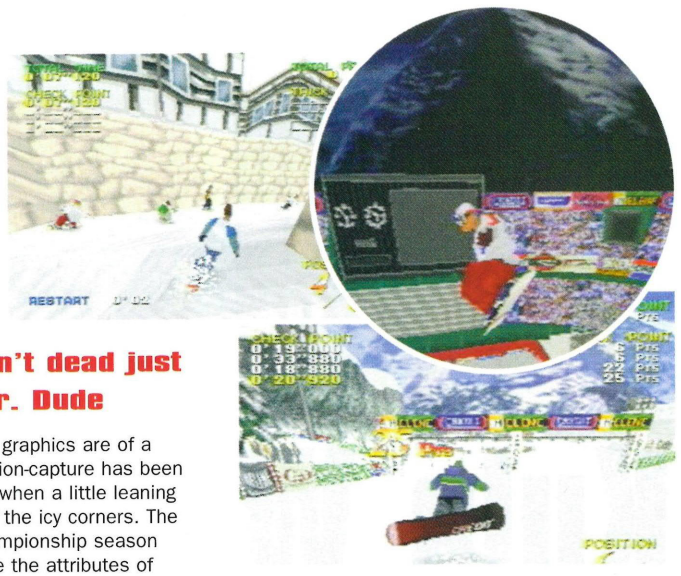
ANDY Too slow for my liking. It could have been so much better if more attention had been paid to gameplay. What are they paying playtesters for these days?

LEWIS This is very deceptive. It looks absolutely stunning, with lots of stats and realistic lighting and sound effects, but the game itself is incredibly dull. Don't bother

JAY My theory is that if you're gonna produce something sporty, at least make it playable. This suffers greatly from dodgy controls and a lack of thought. Try elsewhere if I were you

Phat Air

Extreme Snowboarding



Dig your moon boots out from the loft. Winter isn't dead just yet and there's still time to be spent catching air. Dude

Right, this is getting a little silly now. This is the June issue and here we are staring yet another snowboarding title in the face. Now I'm not averse to a little of the powder cutting myself, but surely this game has come a couple of months too late? With all of the sports hype that accompanied the events at *Nagano,* it was all too obvious that a glut of games were going to come our way, but I thought we'd seen the last of these bodacious games for another year.

THERE'S A CHILL IN THE AIR

However, developers *Pony Canyon* would have all dudes back taking another shot at the raddest *Olympic* sport yet invented with *Phat Air Extreme Snowboarding*. As games in this vein go, it's actually not that bad, the trouble is that we've most certainly seen it all before. In fact, this is virtually the same game as *Cool Boarders 2,* but with less tracks and a few more bugs.

However, there are quite a few things about this release that I like. The graphics are of a good standard and the motion-capture has been done really well, especially when a little leaning is required around some of the icy corners. The points system during a championship season which allows you to improve the attributes of your selected boarder is another nice touch, giving you something extra to play about with. But these points aside, the rest just makes for an average racer.

The limited tricks all have to be pre-programmed before you take off for a jump, which makes it all too complicated, and the limited number of courses lack imagination. Though it offers a wealth of game modes to compete in, *Phat Air* hasn't got enough chill to put a freeze on the summer, and to be bluntly honest, publishers *Funsoft* shouldn't have the cheek to expect it too.

Still, if you do have an addiction to edging through the powder, *Phat Air* may appease your aching, for a short while at least PRO

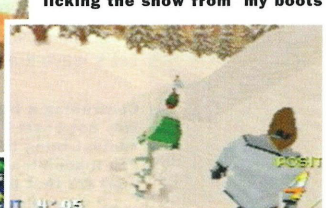




That's me in the white T-shirt after finishing a miserable fourth. This smug prick better get outta my face or he'll be licking the snow from my boots



Yeah, boarding at night time may seem cool, but it isn't as if you have headlights to make it easier. Still, if you stick to the back you can follow the other's trail





PRO SCORE

PRICE: £34.99
PUBLISHER: Funsoft
GENRE: Snowboarding

RENT IT

TWO PLAYER | MEMORY CARD | SPLIT SCREEN

Phat Air is trying to be Coolboarders 2, it but doesn't quite pull it off. So if you already own Sony's version then there's nothing new here to tempt you. I'd be surprised if anyone chooses this over any other boarding title, but taken on its own merits it's not half bad. Limit your playing of Phat Air to an evening's rental and you'll be provided with a couple of hours entertainment, which is just about the length of time it took for me to get pissed off with it. Could've been worse, but should've been better.

JAMES

WHAT'S THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	7
GAMEPLAY	5
LASTABILITY	5

6

PRO PANEL

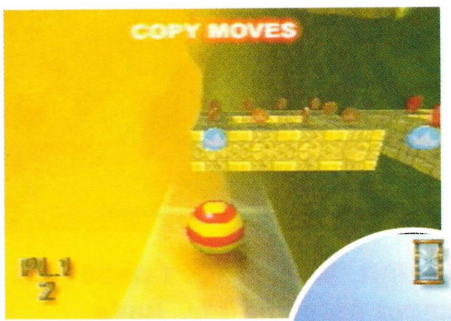
CHICKEN There are so many snowboarding games at the moment they're all beginning to blend into one another. This doesn't look much worse than Cool Boarders 2 to me though

ANDY Despite it's lame title, Phat Air is quite enjoyable for a quick slope slide, and for once I thought the graphics were decent without clipping. Check it out if you're into boarding

LEWIS I hate these bloody things, but at least Sony and Infogrames made a decent stab at it. This is very poor and offers nothing new to an incredibly bland sport. Don't even rent it!

JAY With Snow Racer '98 and CB2 out already, I can't see any reason why someone would buy this. Surely if you wanted a snowboarding game you'd have bought one by now?









Psychadelic, trippy and downright weird. That's enough about us, let's talk about Kula World. Sony's puzzle game will drive you completely round the bend

Kula World

Move aside for probably the strangest game you'll see on your PlayStation this year. Kula World. Weird World more like!

Oh my God. The basic premise of any review is to explain what the game's about and whether it's any good. Well *Kula World* is giving me a huge problem right from the off because I get that feeling that explaining this is going to be a bitch.

Right, let's get the obvious out of the way. It's a puzzle game. In fact it's a very good puzzle game that's been designed in Sweden and leans heavily towards being trippy. You control a giant beach ball, roving around the levels which consist of ledges suspended in space. Now if that all sounds confusing A) I'm very sorry and B) I can't help it, but it gets even more complicated. Why? Well your beach ball is in a full 3D environment where the ball will stick to any 3D surface it touches (for example a row of cubes). But you can also roll over the edge of an object and traverse its underside without falling off and so on.

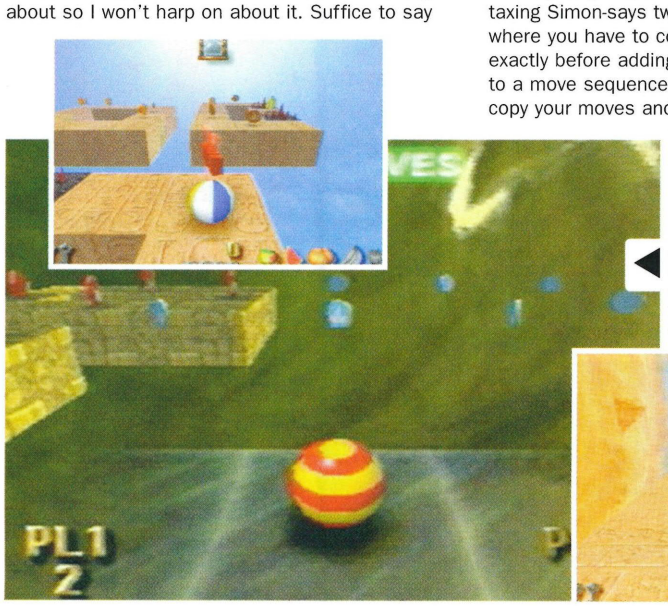
Yes I know, you have no idea what I'm talking about so I won't harp on about it. Suffice to say if you have a look at the screenshots it may help, but it's a difficult enough concept to get used to when you're playing the game, let alone if you haven't even seen it.

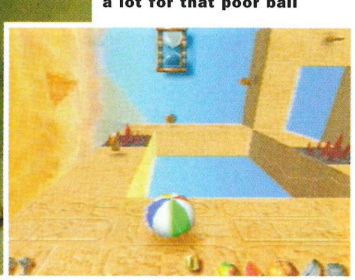
The idea of *Kula World* is simply to collect the keys on a level to open the exit to the next. Some of the keys are hidden on the underside of ledges so you'll have to work out how to get to just about every location before you can complete some of the more difficult levels.

BALL BREAKER

Novel features (besides the gameplay) include a unique scoring system that sees you collect points at the end of a level that are added to the score you've amassed on previous levels. However, if you fall off, run out of time etc. the points collected so far on the level are deducted from the total. When you run out of points all together it's game over.

I've just got space to mention the wonderfully taxing Simon-says two player copycat mode, where you have to copy your opponent's moves exactly before adding a couple more of your own to a move sequence. Your opponent then has to copy your moves and add a few more until someone makes a mistake. Suffice to say the whole affair will blow your mind. Let's leave it at that PRO





Controlling a beach ball may not seem like the coolest thing to do, but you'll soon learn to care a lot for that poor ball

PRO SCORE

PRICE: £39.99
PUBLISHER: Sony
GENRE: Puzzle

TRY B4 U BUY

TWO PLAYER | MEMORY CARD

I saw this a few months ago and knew it was weird then, but I have to say it's good weird not bad weird! Kula World is a game that will frustrate you, annoy you and in the end kill you, but you'll play it for months to come, even if it's only in short bursts. It's always really nice when you uncover something that's so original, and for this point alone Kula World deserves a great deal of success. If you like your brain taxing then I've got no hesitation in recommending this to you.

CHICKEN

WHATS THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	6
GAMEPLAY	8
LASTABILITY	8

8

PRO PANEL

JAMES This is stranger than Kurushi, and just as perplexing, so it must be recommended. An excellent puzzle game that'll have your brain working overtime, especially in two player

ANDY I can't say that I'm packing enough grey matter to play this. But it looks excellent and has enough features to keep you interested in short doses. I just wish I could play it

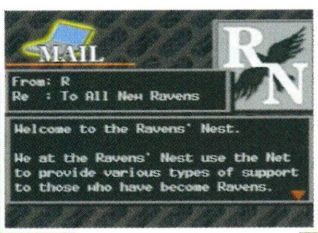
LEWIS A 3D puzzler that will have you plaiting your hair and taking up the bongos. This contains brilliant puzzle-action and the two-player copycat mode is superbly implemented

JAY This is groovy. Ambient tunes, quirky gameplay and oodles of hair-pulling puzzles, Kula World is the ideal chill-out game for when the night before becomes the morning after

Armoured Core

Mech games have been popular for an age, but to tell you the truth I've never really seen the attraction myself. *Sony* however seem keen to provide an alternative to *MechWarrior* for those that do, and while *Armoured Core* is a competent effort, it never really sets your pulse racing.

As part of the armoured mercenary core called *The Ravens,* you constantly receive messages from your headquarters, *The Raven's Nest.* From this list you can choose to accept or decline the missions offered to you. These basically range between killing this enemy and killing that enemy, for which you'll receive cash which you can spend on parts for your mech suit.



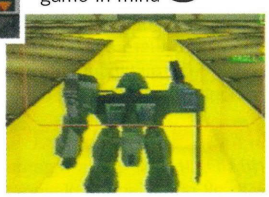


You've managed to get a lock on one of the terrorist Mechs hiding behind that truck. Now just unleash a volley of rockets and that'll be the end of him

KEEP SEARCHING

A techno soundtrack pounds somewhat out-of place in the background as you race around disused warehouses wreaking havoc. The Mech handles nicely and is easy to control, although you sometimes lose track of what you're searching to find.

I found *Armoured Core* became boring very quickly. It has a few nice touches, but falls way short of spectacular. The phrase run-of-the-mill was created with this game in mind PRO



PRO SCORE

PRICE: £39.99
PUBLISHER: Sony
GENRE: Shoot em-up

RENT IT

MEMORY CARD · SPLIT SCREEN · TWO PLAYER

WHAT'S THE SCORE?

GRAPHICS	6.5
SOUND	6
GAMEPLAY	6.5
LASTABILITY	6.5

6½

THE PRO PANEL

PAUL You'll need to be a hard-core fan of Mech games to appreciate this little blaster

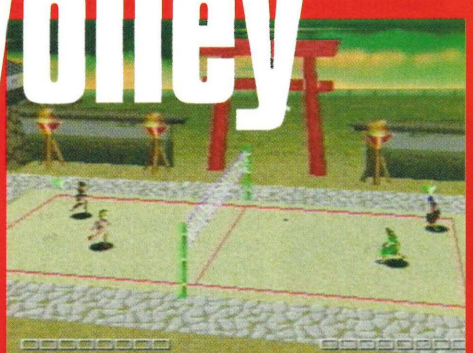
JAMES I didn't like this atall as standard graphics and tricky gameplay put me right off

ANDY Reminds me of my Maximus Prime toy collection, so I'd have to say that I liked it

JAY Nope, sorry. Don't like it. Mech Warrior was cool, but this is just a poor man's clone

LEWIS Mindless fun for an evening, but don't buy into the limited appeal of Armoured Core

Beach Volley Heroes



Right, I know what you're thinking. You're not interested in volleyball unless it's when the girls play it on *Baywatch.* And rightly so, it's another of those crap Yank sports that you play on beaches in sunny weather. We can't play it so we don't!

However, much to my surprise this starting material has actually made quite a decent game. It's kind of sport meets beat'em-up title with *StreetFighter*-esque teams of characters battling it out over the net. They've even got special moves that you can learn to pull-off.

GET YOUR MATES 'ROUND

The best thing that *Funsoft* have achieved here is simplicity. You can play volleyball by simply being good at timing. To master it though, you need to learn it. And that's the essence of a good fighting game.

While the one-player mode is entertaining for a while, the real fun is to be gained, as always from the two-player mode. Because it's easy to play this makes for entertaining match-ups with the emphasis on long rallies. You might be put off by the sport, but this is definitely worth a look PRO



All manner of special moves can be conducted to help give you the edge

PRO SCORE

PRICE: £34.99
PUBLISHER: Funsoft
GENRE: Sport

TRY B4 U BUY

MEMORY CARD · TWO PLAYER

WHAT'S THE SCORE?

GRAPHICS	6.5
SOUND	6
GAMEPLAY	7
LASTABILITY	7

7

THE PRO PANEL

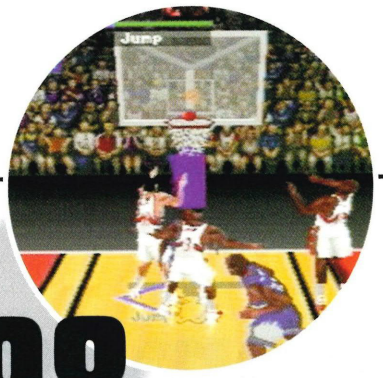
JAMES Anything original is worth a look and this has the gameplay to do quite well

ANDY This volleyball treat is a breath of fresh air and well worth a dabble. Check it out

JAY A bit short on the old semi-clad girl front, but otherwise this is quite playable, for a while

LEWIS With a bunch of mates 'round this is really good fun. But where's Pammy?

PAUL This is original, novel and is easy to play too, so plus points all round. Take a look



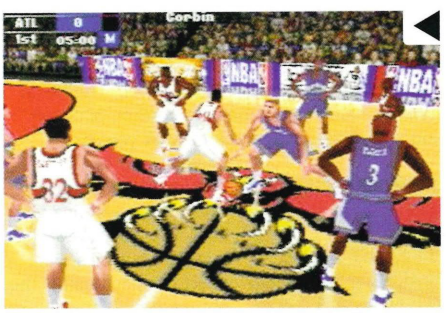
NBA Fastbreak '98

Fancy squaring up against a 16 stone, seven foot tall giant, with just an oversized bouncy ball for protection? Me neither, I'll settle for this instead. Then again..

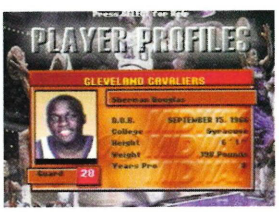
Right, I'm 5'8", I'm not American and I couldn't slam dunk a basket if I had a pogo stick rooted to the inside of my arse, so I don't really care for the sport of Basketball. I don't mind taking in the odd game now and then, but the rules still escape me. Now don't think I haven't tried to come to terms with all of that technical crap and the complications of American tactics, because I have, but it all just sails over my head. Literally.

Now, watching basketball and playing it are two different things (obviously, but there's a point to be made here). Sit me down in front of a TV with a bucket of pop-corn and a four pack and it's easy to understand the appeal; the fast pace, the constant string of scoring attacks etc. But hand me a PSX pad and a basketball game and I'm lost.

Despite all the technical accuracy, great graphics and motion capture,the game will undoubtedly be reduced to a ridiculously boring stream of up-court charges and attempted baskets, which may be all basketball fans need to grow moist with excitement, but personally this kind of monotonous gameplay leaves my inside leg quite dry and drip free. The thing about basketball games is that they're beginning to look startlingly good, and if I took a degree in the game's rules and gameplans I'd probably appreciate them a little more, but even with such a pointless qualification there'd still be little time to apply any of it during play.



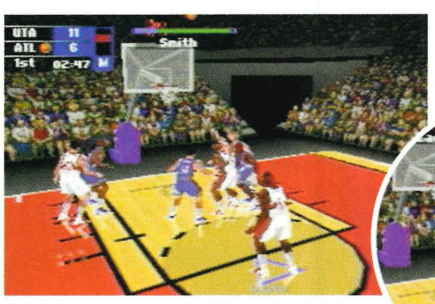
Take your partner by the hand, spin him round – you're looking grand. Kick your heels and dosey doe, then shake your booty just for show

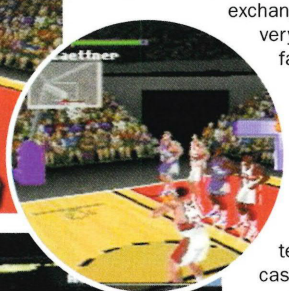


CAUGHT IN THE HOOP LOOP

NBA Fastbreak '98 is a game that looks great, with all of the actual players having their own signature moves, as well as all of the official courts and uniforms. But, sadly, it's another title that has everything you could desire in a basketball game if you wanted to go in-depth and play a real simulation of the sport, while for someone like me it all becomes rather bland. My games degenerated into a 'my turn, your turn' exchange of runs to the hoop with very little team play going on, a factor that isn't helped by the narrow court design.

In sum, *NBA Fastbreak '98* is a well presented basketball sim that I fear will only be appreciated by real enthusiasts who want to spend their time adjusting team rosters, but for the casual player it offers nothing new at all PRO

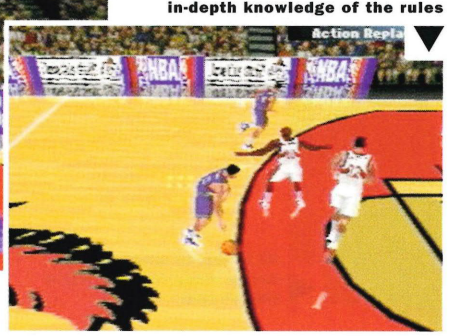






Graphically the game is spot on, but the complicated control method restricts what you can do without an in-depth knowledge of the rules

Up close and personal with this slam dunking expert. This match produced a lot of hang time for the guy with the double zero shirt. Nice boots!



PRO SCORE

PRICE: £34.99
PUBLISHER: GT Interactive
GENRE: Sports

TRY B4 U BUY

ANALOGUE | MEMORY CARD | TWO PLAYER

NBA Fastbreak '98 has so much going for it, it's hard to understand what's not to like. The graphics are generally excellent, as is the motion capture, and some of the customised shots are really impressive. But for all of its plus points, the major deciding factor has to be the gameplay, and such is the monotonous nature of basketball, that this bored me endlessly. Okay, I'll admit it, basketball isn't a favourite sport of mine, but unlike NBA Live '97 this doesn't take the genre any further.

JAMES

WHATS THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	8
GAMEPLAY	6
LASTABILITY	5

7

PRO PANEL

ANDY James has been a little too harsh. NBA Fastbreak '98 is a perfect simulation of the sport with amazing graphics and solid gameplay. This is basketball manna from heaven

PAUL If you accept what that loser Andy says then you're a bigger fool than he is. NBA Slowbreak would be a more accurate description. It's okay, but still not good enough

LEWIS In the '80s the NBA tried to infiltrate the UK with national stadiums and televised games. But failed miserably because we Brits find the game incredibly dull. Just like this

JAY I'm getting a tad bored with all these naff half-arsed basketball games coming out and taking up my valuable playing time. The funky Total NBA '97 rules as far as I'm concerned

Rascal



Think of *Rascal* as the videogame equivalent of one of the *Dolly Dealers* from *Brucie's Play Your Cards Right* and you'll start to get some idea of its all looks and no content approach. It's a 3D platform adventure, and like other attempts (*Croc* and *Jersey Devil*) it's turned out to be quite a hollow experience. There's plenty of wandering around nice looking locations, but there's little to be achieved other than to shoot a couple of enemies. Hardly stirring stuff.

Some impressive enemies inhabit the latter stages of the game, but they are much too infrequent to peak your interest level



The *Rascal* character was created in collaboration with the marvellous *Jim Henson Creature Workshop*, who takes an unauthorised spin in a prototype time machine, through six worlds in three different time zones. Each of the game's six zones includes different types of obstacles and problems, while also having a distinct past, present and future.

I know, it all sounds quite promising, but it's just so dull! And then there's the appalling camera angles. In an attempt to give the game a cinematic feel, the developers, *Travellers Tales*, have gone for a roving camera that doesn't work approach. Why? Well, if all you want is a nice view of kid's lug'ole, the camera angles are great, but they're bugger all use when you're battling the arachnid forces of doom!

It has to be said, things do liven up a bit on the later levels, but you'll have lost interest long before you get there. This is just too boring PRO



PRO SCORE

PRICE: £39.99
PUBLISHER: Psygnosis
GENRE: 3D Platform

AVOID!

ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD | MOUSE | PRO | PRO

WHAT'S THE SCORE?

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	6
GAMEPLAY	3
LASTABILITY	3

5

THE PRO PANEL

JAMES Looks fantastic, but is a bit drab in the play stakes. Spend your pennies on Gex 3D

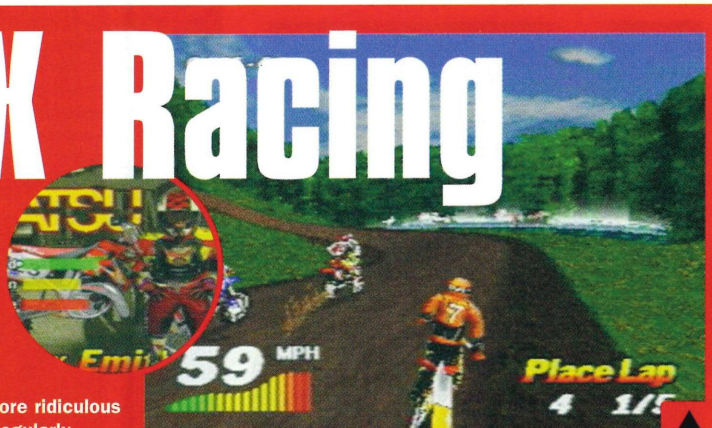
STEVE Rubbish. Pack it in, eh Psygnosis! Since when has stuff like this been good enough?

JAY It may please the young 'uns, but any self respecting gamer should stay well away

LEWIS More like a teacher's pet, Rascal is great looking but incredibly dull. Don't bother

CHICKEN Perfect for the kids but even they might begin to get a little bored quite soon

VMX Racing

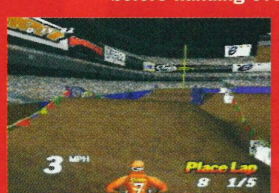


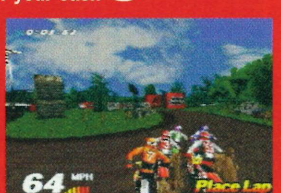
Don't be fooled. If a picture tells a 1,000 words, they would all be expletives as far as VMX is concerned

Extreme sports are becoming increasingly popular in this country after years of popularity over in the States. Motor Cross is a sport that continues to become more ridiculous every year. Blokes are regularly putting their limbs on the line with ridiculous leaps and stunts and finally PlayStation owners can hit the dirt courtesy of *Funsoft*.

Oops, did I say "hit the dirt," I meant "play this dirt." *VMX Racer* is really rather poor. Graphically the intro is nice, the bike selection is okay, even if the riders (all real racers apparently) look like deformed freaks, but the racing section really lets it down.

Let's put things into perspective. The graphics are terribly pixelated making *VMX Racing* look like an *Amiga* title. But the real bug-bear is that every time you clip the edge of the mud track you go flying off your bike head over the handlebars. Now bearing in mind you're riding a rough-terrain trial bike, you shouldn't end up on your arse for brushing a fine newly-mown lawn, which is terribly frustrating. Not surprisingly this was in the shops before we got a copy to review, so if you have bought it, please take our commiserations and remember to always look at our reviews before handing over your cash PRO





PRO SCORE

PRICE: £34.99
PUBLISHER: Funsoft
GENRE: Sport

AVOID!

ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD | MOUSE | PRO | PRO

WHAT'S THE SCORE?

GRAPHICS	3
SOUND	3
GAMEPLAY	2
LASTABILITY	2

2½

THE PRO PANEL

JAMES Dirt racing on dirt bikes makes for a dirt game. Keep well away from VMX!

ANDY This is overmarked! I've never played such an abysmal game. Don't even consider it

JAY Since when do motocross bikes crash when they hit a bit of grass? This is shite pie

LEWIS In a shit-kicking contest this would win hands down. Someone should cremate this now

CHICKEN Avoiding this shouldn't be too hard. Simply cut off your arms so you can't buy it

One

If someone had a pulse cannon strapped to their shoulder would you want to get on their bad side? No, neither would I

One what? One for the road? One of the lads? Well actually it's just *One*, and from what I can gather it either stands for one man army, one armed bandit, or one really mean bastard. You see the dude who takes on the hero's role in this game is all on his todd and somebody, for whatever reason, is really keen to see him lying at the bottom of a murky grave somewhere. So in true 'one man against all the odds' style he sets out to get them before they get him, which is no mean feat to accomplish as the bad guys seem to have enlisted the help of anyone who is capable of holding a gun, and sent them all in after the poor sod at once.

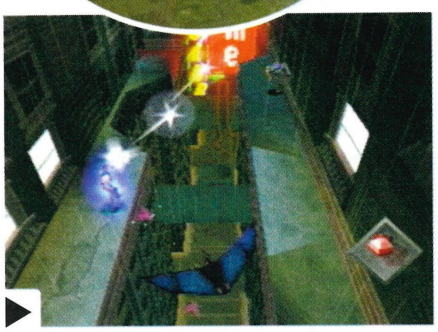
ONCE UPON A TIME...

It all begins when our bloke awakes in a haze, which is usually enough to put any self-respecting hard nut in a bad mood. But imagine discovering that some cheeky bugger's whipped off your left arm and replaced it with a huge metal device as well as implanting a strange kind of glowing orb into your chest. The hero is without a clue, as he is unable to recall anything about this bizarre transplant, but before he has time to figure out what the hell's going on, a helicopter gunship sets about blasting our hapless chap into the ground. This sets the scene for the rest of the game in the sense that it involves a) shitloads of enemies trying to exterminate you, and b) you trying to exterminate shitloads of enemies.

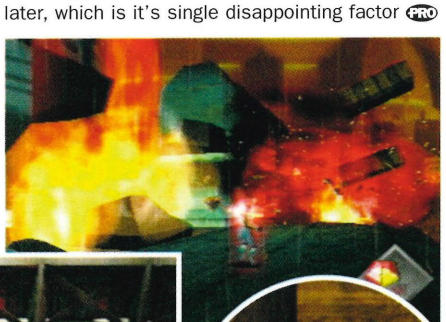
The emphasis in this game is most definitely on death and destruction as the character's new shoulder mounted cannon will quite happily spit out more powerful rounds of ammunition providing it has been charged up, which is where that little chest mounted gizmo comes in. Displayed at the bottom right of the screen the gizmo represents the one man army's anger level, and in a nice twist to the blasting genre, the power of his gun depends on how pissed off he is, which in turn depends on how much murder and destruction can be accomplished without taking a hit.

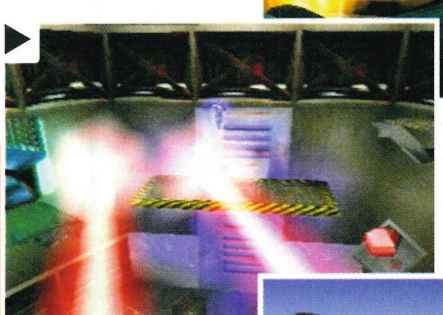
As the action unfolds across some original scenarios such as an urban skyline and the top of a futuristic blimp, the game treats us to some splendid graphics and a serious amount of unrelenting action through five different levels. But though *One* is by no means a walk in the park, you shouldn't have too many problems reaching the end of it all sooner rather than later, which is it's single disappointing factor PRO





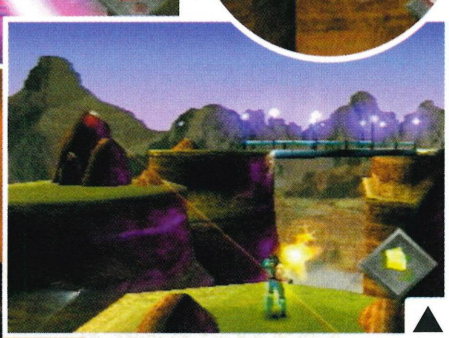
This urban roof top level takes you across buildings with the aid of fallen neon signs and water towers, always under enemy crossfire of course





See that small blue blob in the background? That's you that is, so you should be able to judge the size of the machine trying to fry your ass!





Most of the bad guys are armed with laser sighted rifles, so a red beam of light like this one spells trouble



PRO SCORE

PRICE: £34.99
PUBLISHER: BMG INT.
GENRE: ACTION

RENT IT

ANALOGUE | MEMORY CARD | ONE PLAYER

One's a lot of fun, but the trouble is there isn't a lot of game. i mean it all looks well and good, but the gameplay is a little limited and the small amount of levels doesn't do anything for its lifespan. One's worth checking out if guns and explosions are your thing, but don't expect to be troubled for too long by the simplistic levels. This is more something to waste your pocket money on rather than being an essential purchase. So don't expect much more than a lot of target practice.

JAMES CANNON

WHATS THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	8
GAMEPLAY	7
LASTABILITY	5

6½

PRO PANEL

PAUL This looks very nice indeed and you'd think you were on to a winner if you saw it. However, there is very little to the gameplay and it rapidly gets tiresome. A pity

ANDY Being a shallow type with low morals and a three second attention span, this game's visuals and hi-octane content suited me down to the ground. It's a real blasting feast

LEWIS Put a finger on the fire button and a thumb on the D-pad, switch off your brain and sing "One finger, one thumb keep moving" and you'll finish the game in no time at all

JAY A fine combination of big explosions and lots of action. Unfortunately this all gets a little stale after a while and therefore the longevity of One is somewhat arguable

Beast Wars







The graphics are basic and unconvincing and the animation is just as poor. This really is an awful piece of programming that you should avoid at all costs

When I was a kid *Transformers* were the business. Toys just didn't come any cooler than a car that turned into a robot, but have you seen *Transformers* these days? They're crap, having the same cheap and tacky resemblance that's a hallmark of those little green plastic soldiers. Regardless, this toy phenomenon rolls on, and the latest additions come in the shape of various animals from our native Earth. And in true kid exploitation fashion, they're set to spawn a craze that involves comic books, a cartoon series and, yes you guessed it, a videogame.

AUTO-ROT AND DECEPTIVE-CONS?

Beast Wars is the next level of the titanic struggle between the good guys, the *Maximals*, and the bad guys, the *Predacons*. After chasing the typically mouthy *Predacons* through a time warp, both factions find themselves crash landing on a planet much like prehistoric Earth, which luckily contains their all-important power source of Energon.

Now, here's the catch: the power of the Energon is so intense that prolonged exposure could damage their robotic structures (makes sense doesn't it?), so to survive they fuse their bodies with native animal life forms. The result being a collection of grizzly wild animals which can change into robot warriors to engage in combat. And that's about it. *Transformers*, more than meets the eye? Not in this game there isn't. What you see is what you get, and unfortunately that isn't very much PRO

PRO SCORE

PRICE: £44.99
PUBLISHER: Hasbro Interactive
GENRE: Shoot'em-up

AVOID!

ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD | ANALOGUE

WHAT'S THE SCORE?

GRAPHICS	4
SOUND	5
GAMEPLAY	4
LASTABILITY	4

4

THE PRO PANEL

JAMES This is about as exciting as a visit to Chester Zoo, only there's more of a stench

ANDY The beast in our office is Chicken, and he's far more scary than these pitiful things

JAY A very boring romp through the world of the Transformers. Fun for the under-fives only

LEWIS To avoid growing hairy palms and sweating through your tongue, steer well clear

CHICKEN A lethal combination would be a gun, your head and a copy of this game

Riven



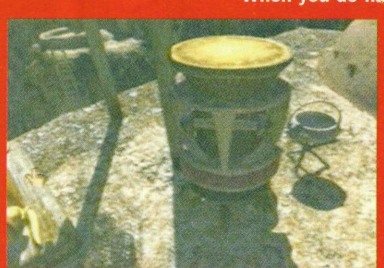
Like a good sex swap patient, Riven looks great. But you know that there's a lot of cock beneath the glad-rags

Riven is an other-worldly continuation of the love story from the 1993 hit *Myst*, *Acclaim's* mind bending PC title that went down a storm. The game comes on five discs which are swapped and changed according to your locations between the five islands that make up the world of *Riven*, which suggests that there's a huge game contained within them bursting to get out. Unfortunately, the reality is that the game is huge, but unbelievably tedious.

ABSOLUTELY RIVETTING

Graphically, *Riven* is quite excellent as everything in the game is presented in detailed hi-resolution. The problem is that your adventuring comes by way of a series of individual screens that remain, for the most part, static. This reduces what looks like an in-depth adventuring experience to what could be mistaken for somebody's holiday photo collection. And as countless sitcoms have illustrated since the dawn of time, there's nothing more boring than sitting through a slide show of someone's trip to Bulgaria.

When you do happen upon a part of *Riven* that involves animation, once again the quality cannot be faulted. The trouble is you're going to have to be in possession of the world's most powerful thinking-cap and be able to devote endless hours of your life locked away in a cupboard with a family pack of *Pot Noodles* to get anywhere PRO



PRO SCORE

PRICE: £49.99
PUBLISHER: Aclaim
GENRE: Adventure

TRY B4 U BUY

ONE PLAYER | MEMORY CARD | MOUSE

WHAT'S THE SCORE?

GRAPHICS	9
SOUND	6
GAMEPLAY	4
LASTABILITY	3

5

THE PRO PANEL

JAMES if Channel 4's Time Detectives is your idea of a good night in then Riven is for you.

ANDY I hated the puzzles and couldn't be arsed flicking through the holiday snaps. Shite

JAY Nice pictures admittedly, but the plodding gameplay ain't for me I'm afraid

LEWIS Flick chart games should be left with the PC sad gits. Avoid this pile of crap

CHICKEN Please point out to the programmers that scrolling has been invented. immediately

PRO PLATINUM

The main gripe about videogames on the whole is one of pricing. But with the introduction of the Platinum Range, old classics from the PlayStation back catalogue can now be enjoyed for under £20. So, each month we'll give you the lowdown on the latest releases around, plus a full listing of everything currently out there. Enjoy

Pandemonium

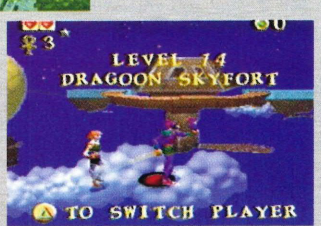






Way back in the days when female game characters didn't need massive tits in order to gain added publicity, this quirky little platformer hit the 'Station amidst *Crash Bandicoot* fever. The two games went head-to-head and unfortunately for *BMG*, most people sided with the furry arsed mammal. The game's main characters were a manic jester called *Fargus* and a young schoolgirl named *Nikki* (you may know her better as the double D ubervixen from the sequel) and although the game provided plenty of run and jump action the initial 3D visuals were, on closer inspection, merely 2D, with fancy graphics. Admittedly the playability is still strong today, although both the sequel and *Crash 1&2* are miles better. Still, it's not bad for twenty quid PRO





Psychedelic backdrops and huge dollops of platforming action may not be your bag, but Pandy can be entertaining, for a while at least

PRO SCORE

PRICE: £19.99
PUBLISHER: BMG Interactive
GENRE: Platform

MEMORY CARD | ONE PLAYER

WHAT'S THE SCORE?

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	8
GAMEPLAY	7
LASTABILITY	7

7

Adidas Power Soccer

To get that illusive upper-hand on your like-minded opponents in the crazy world of business, you often have to get your product endorsed by someone or something in order to give it some clout. *F1 '97* had *Melinda Messenger's* knockers draped all over it, *FIFA '97* had the boy *Beckham* spicing around on the cover, and way back when this game originally came out, *Power Soccer* had the *Predator* football boot. Impressive, eh?

This timely deal with sportswear gurus *Adidas* meant that the game was, and still is, chock-full of close-ups on footy boots and numerous *Adidas* hoardings all the way throughout the game. Now this in itself is no bad thing, were it not for the fact that the game was pretty standard footballing fodder.

You won't find anything new or exciting in here, and to be perfectly honest with you, I can't understand how this has managed to achieve Platinum status – especially when you consider the alternatives out there. If, by some strange reason, you don't already own a football game for your machine, choose something other than this. Despite its Platinum price, this still remains a very basic soccer title and being able to do *'Predator* power shots' which take the goalie clean off his feet and into the back of the net soon gets annoying. Believe me PRO



Even the advantage of being covered in Adidas branding couldn't save Power Soccer from being a disappointing title. Nevermind

PRO SCORE

PRICE: £19.99
PUBLISHER: Psygnosis
GENRE: Sports

MEMORY CARD | TWO PLAYER

WHAT'S THE SCORE?

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	7
GAMEPLAY	7
LASTABILITY	5

7

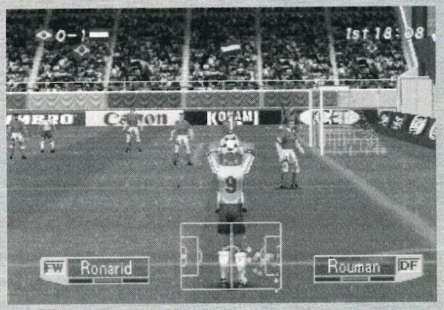
Int. Superstar Soccer Pro

As with most of *Konami's* sports titles, their concentration is aimed at the *N64* versions whilst we end up with some half-baked dodgy conversion, and unfortunately that was the case here. The *N64 ISS64* was and still is stunning. This version however, while initially being fun and quite cool, soon became frustrating and ultimately forgettable.

Now we know most of the other magazines around creamed over *ISSPro*, but I'd wager a large sum of money that after all the hype had died down and they'd actually bothered to play it over a period of months (like you would do if you'd bought it) the attraction soon faded. It's fun, it looks nice, but the lastabilty of this game is nothing compared to the likes of *FIFA: Road To World Cup* or the new *World League Soccer* for that matter. It may not be the opinion of every body out there, but we think this game sucks. So there PRO



Spend £20 and treat yourself to a so-called footballing classic from yesteryear, or alternatively save your cash and wait for World League Soccer



PRO SCORE

PRICE: £19.99
PUBLISHER: Konami
GENRE: Sports

MEMORY CARD | TWO PLAYER

WHAT'S THE SCORE?

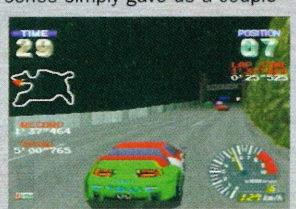
GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	7
GAMEPLAY	8
LASTABILITY	6

7

Ridge Racer Revolution

After the initial giddiness of the PlayStation's launch and everyone had finally realised that *Ridge Racer* wasn't 'the limit' as far as PSX racers went, this baby hit the market in a bid to thrill fans of the original, plus add that extra POW! into the racing genre. And it worked. Well, for a while at least. But at the end of the day, this second installment to the series simply gave us a couple more cars and a different track to bomb around on. By today's standards it's no pant soiler, but it still has that addictive quality that made it a hit way back then. It ain't *Gran Turismo* by any stretch of the imagination, but well worth £20 PRO





Red line the revs and power you way through this silky smooth racer



PRO SCORE

PRICE: £19.99
PUBLISHER: Namco
GENRE: Racing

MEMORY CARD | ONE PLAYER | STEERING WHEEL

WHAT'S THE SCORE?

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	7
GAMEPLAY	7
LASTABILITY	6

7

Out there...

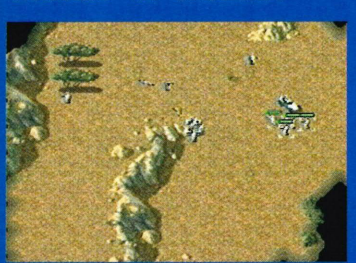
All the currently available cut-price titles are listed below, along with their Pro score.



Actua Soccer	9
Adidas Power Soccer	7
Air Combat	7
Alien Trilogy	9
Battle Arena Tohshinden	8
Bustamove 2	6
Crash Bandicoot	8.5
Destruction Derby	7
Destruction Derby 2	8
Die Hard Trilogy	9
ISS Pro	7
International Track & Field	9
Need For Speed	7
Pandemonium	7
PGA Tour Golf '97	7
Porsche Challenge	8
Rayman	9
Ridge Racer	8
Ridge Racer Revolution	7
Soul Blade	9
Tekken	9
Tekken 2	9.5
Tomb Raider	9
True Pinball	7
wipEout	7
wipEout2097	9
Worms	9

Coming soon...

Don't bother buying these at full price whatever you do, as they're all going Platinum within a matter of weeks.



Command & Conquer	Sept
Resident Evil	Sept

PLATINUM

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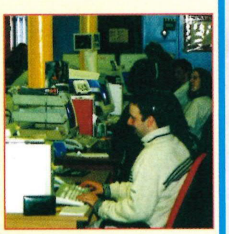
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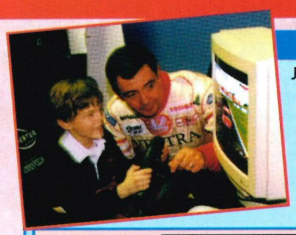
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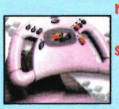
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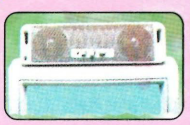
PROTECTOR LIGHT GUN
Start, Pause and special weapons buttons, 3 speeds for manual reload, light-weight design for long usage.
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The Playstation produces incredible Hi-Fi quality sound but this is only output in dull mono through your TV. To unlock its full potential you need to hook up a pair of stero speakers. This is easily done - please ring for advice on any cables you may need.



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120 Watts PMPO, Surround Sound, Loudness Bass System, Full Range Tone Control, Power Supply.
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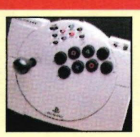
JOYPADS



SONY JOYPAD
Still the highest quality spare joypad on the market
£12.99

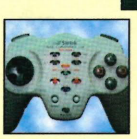


SONY ANALOGUE JOYPAD
Official Sony joypad also includes analogue thumb controllers to make movement easier, especially driving games
£22.99

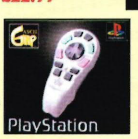


ASCII ARCADE JOYSTICK
Arcade style fighter stick with independent adjustable button speed control and auto-turbo which fires up to 36 punches per second!
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SAITEK MEGAPAD
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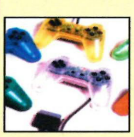


ASCII GRIP
Single-handed ergonomic joypad with programmable buttons. Most effective with cursor-controlled games
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ASCII ARCADE STICK
Arcade style stick with 360 degree movement and microswitch technology. Most effective with fighting games.
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FIRE HYPER PAD
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ASCII JOYPAD
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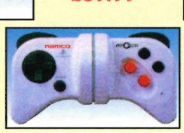


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Datel 360 Slot (24MB) Memory Card£24.99
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To assist in choosing the right game for you, we have included review scores from both Play and Playstation Plus, two of the country's leading PSX magazines. We have also tried to categorise the games for you. If you would like advice or more information on a game prior to purchasing, please do not hesitate to ring our sales team who will give a fair and unbiased opinion of the game. Remember, if you don't like it you don't have to keep it so they will always tell you the truth!

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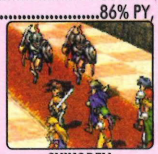
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Little Big Adventure	83% PY, 91% PP	£19.99
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Riven	N/A	£39.99
Sentient	84% PY, 71% PP	£26.99
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Vandal Hearts	81% PY, 86% PP	£21.99

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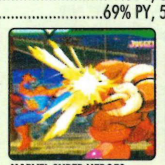
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Streetfighter in 3D! 23 characters, stunning combos and special attacks and gorgeous Hi-Res Graphics.

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Dynasty Warriors	71% PY, 68% PP	£29.99
Fantastic 4	69% PY, 59% PP	£19.99



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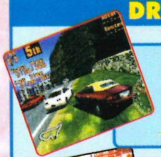
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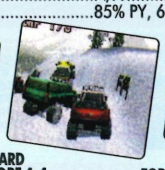


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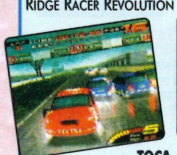


HARD CORE 4x4

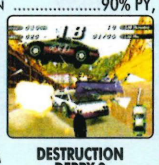


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Jetrider 2	78% PY	£29.99
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Ridge Racer	93% PY, 76% PP	£18.99
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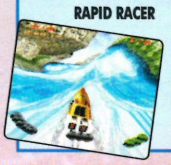


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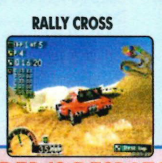


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VR Powerboat Racing	N/A	£27.99
V Rally	87% PY, 94% PP	**£24.99**
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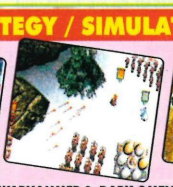
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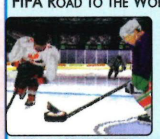
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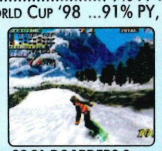
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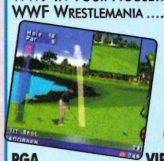
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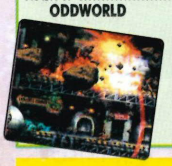
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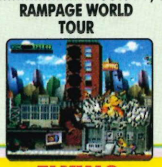

FROGGER


CRASH BANDICOOT 2


HERCULES

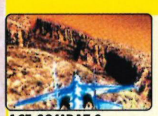
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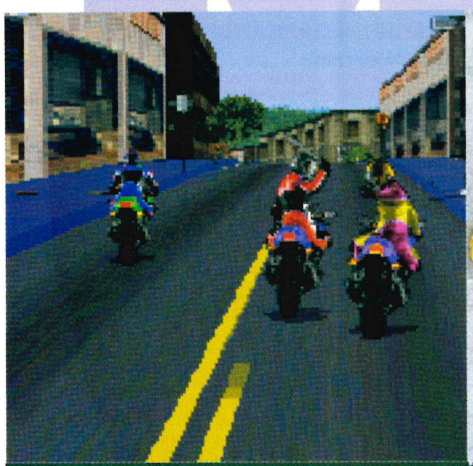
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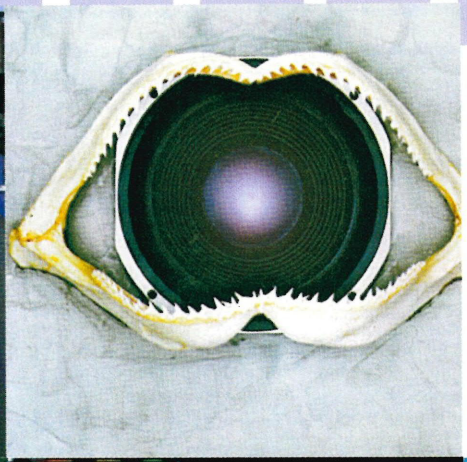
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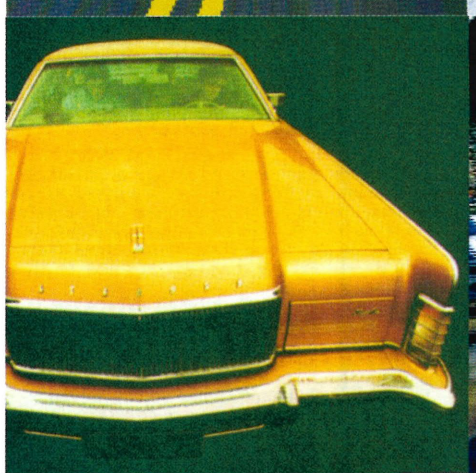
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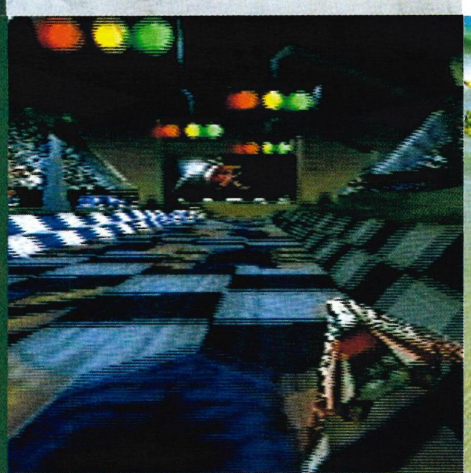
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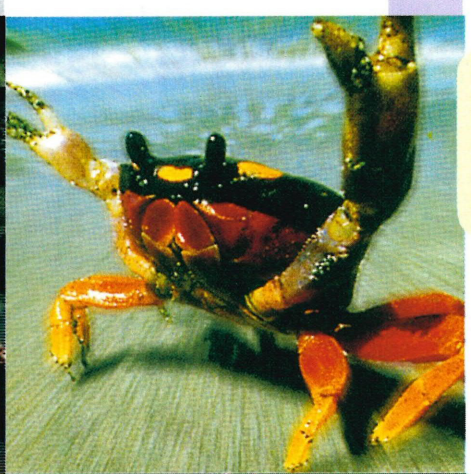
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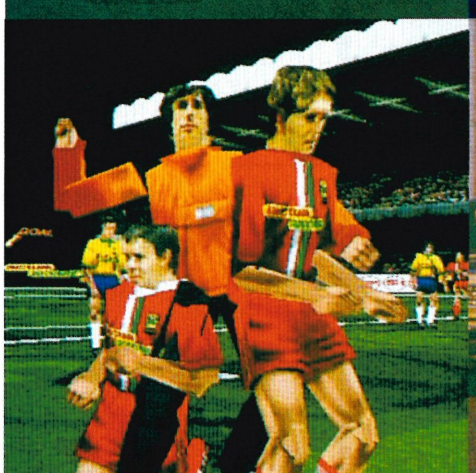




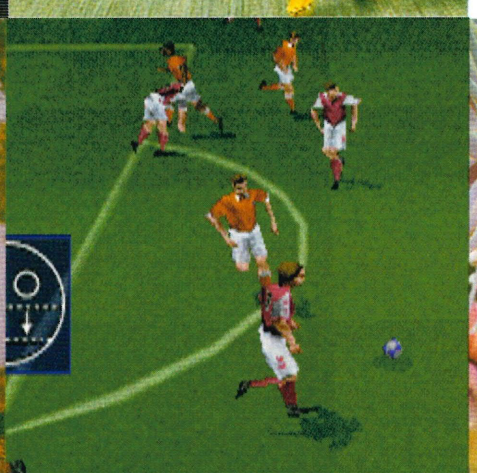


















THIS MUSIC
IS FORSAKEN



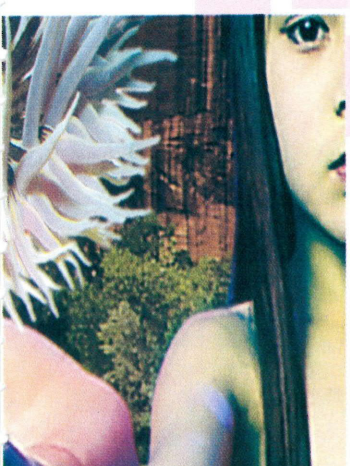


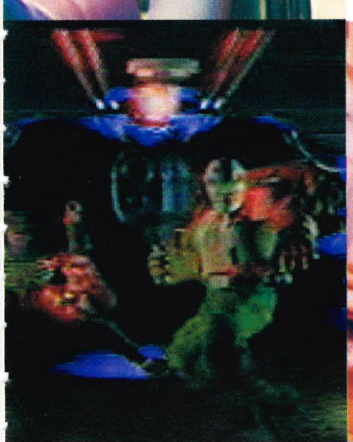




the Joypad Generation

"If music be the food of love, play on". So said top dead bloke William Shakespeare. Or rather, he didn't. What he actually said was "If music be the food of love, play games until your eyes go all weird". At least, that's what this bloke in the pub told our intrepid reporter Dan Whitehead...







Pop music. We all listen to it, and most of the time, we're convinced it's all shite. I challenge you to listen to *Radio 1* for more than 10 minutes without hearing something that makes you want to retch. You simply can't. So why is it that we tolerate the utter arse that passes for "music" in most videogames?

IT'S THE BELGIANS' FAULT

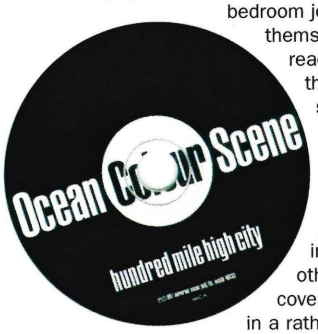
It goes back to the days when any old Johnny Ordinary could write a game. You didn't need 60 billion quids worth of kit to make a hit button-basher. And from this vaguely punky background (albeit one with anoraks and poor dental work) grew the hideous beast known as the 'demo scene.'

Silly gimps, working under hilarious pseudonyms like Doctor Scary (and they were usually from Belgium), would beaver away creating scrolling text and bouncing cubes which they would swap with their mates. This tedious, self

indulgent gubbins would be set to the worst music *ever.*

Plinky plonk sub-*Aqua* drivel or pubescent thrash metal were the usual culprits. But as long as they did it behind closed doors and there were no children involved, nobody cared. Most of them went on to dazzling careers as assistants at computer shops, but some of these people grew up and graduated to writing proper games. They were suddenly in 'our' world. The upshot of this invasion? Enough of them made it into the industry to ensure that every game would feature the same musical travesties that blighted their 'Armageddon Demo 4: Revenge Of The Ray Traced Star Trek Pictures'. Howling rawk shite or derivative 'phat' beats? Take your pick.

And so it remained until the PlayStation, God bless it's little grey plastic socks, made games hip. The hunched bedroom joystick wagglers found themselves ousted by style-mag reading, club-going bright young things. A games console was suddenly classed along with a hi-fi system, satellite TV and wide screen telly as a vital component of the ultimate home entertainment system. And with the disposable incomes came interest from other entertainment fields. We covered the film/game connection in a rather vague and puerile way last issue, so this time around it's those coke snorting, pony tail wearing music biz types who we welcome into our enclosure.



WHY? WHY? WHY?

Why bother about game music? Nobody's bothered, right? Well, quite possibly. But as I'm getting paid to discuss the matter, I'm going to proceed as if music in games was a talking point on a par with the Middle East peace process.

So, yeah, most of the time we bang a CD on and turn the game music off. And why is that? Well, because it's shit 99% of the time. But what about the games where you draw the curtains and whack the telly volume right up? Do you remember the hammering around *Wipeout 2097* with *Photek* warping the speakers or the ominous orchestral stabs that punctuate *Tomb Raider*? And who could forget the musical slap in the face that accompanies zombie dogs bursting through windows in *Resident Evil.*

In fact, think of all the truly great moments in all the truly great games and more often than not, like a good film, the reason the moment works is because of the music. Whether it's pounding techno, sweeping cinematic scores or "whoops, I've shat" fright tunes, the power of PlayStation means that you can have real music to complement your gaming. No more wheezing sound chips and synthesised electric guitars. CD quality sound demands CD quality music. And that's when you call in a proper band.

THE INEVITABLE BIT

WipEout was the first game, ever, to have a soundtrack CD (or at least one that was worth buying). Bangin' tunes from people you'd heard of? Weird. Of course the *Sony* connection meant that the music industry was never that far away from the PlayStation's playpen. *Clive Sinclair* (of *Spectrum* and *ZX81* fame), as far as we know, was never a major player in the music industry. Although he was a roadie for *Napalm Death* in the late 80s, allegedly.

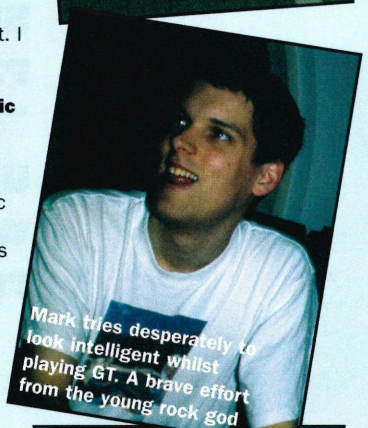
Psygnosis took advantage and, along with some natty *Designer's Republic* art stuff, created a complete multimedia experience. *WipEout*: play the game, dance to the choons and, er, admire the sleeve art. By current standards it was a tentative start. Despite the presence ▶

The Future Sound Of Gaming

They might well swank around in stretch limos and have hordes of screaming girlies running after them wherever they go, but can today's rock gods actually impress the ladies with a bit of joypad prowess? Well we caught up with Gran Turismo choon-providers Cubanate and Ash to see whether or not they can cut the console mustard and harness the power of the PlayStation. Let's rock...







PRO: So, are you guys big games players?

Phil (Cubanate): I'm a total gameshead. I am the Command & Conquer king. I'm a PC head though, rather than the PlayStation.

Mark (Ash): I'm not a huge gamer, but we do get a lot of spare time on the tour bus, and as it's kitted out with PlayStations, we tend to waste our time on it quite a bit. I like wipEout and Parappa the Rapper. That's cool.

PRO: What do you think about the videogame music scene at the moment?

Phil: Well it's certainly moved on from the blips and beeps of the old ZX Spectrum days. Incorporating music into games, I think, is going to envelop you into the game even more. And that can only be a good thing. It's an artificial environment like anything else, and music can take you there and that's good.

PRO: Videogame music is more often than not, complete and utter shite. Do you like the sort of howling rock music currently placed into today's videogames?

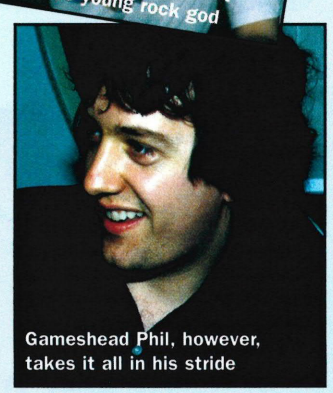
Mark: Well the tune we've put on Gran Turismo (Lose Control, fact fans) is a pretty upbeat, fast riff song that you want to drive fast to. If it suits the game, why not?

PRO: So do you play games with the sound down?

Mark: I have the volume up just enough so I can hear the sound effects, but I always put other music on.

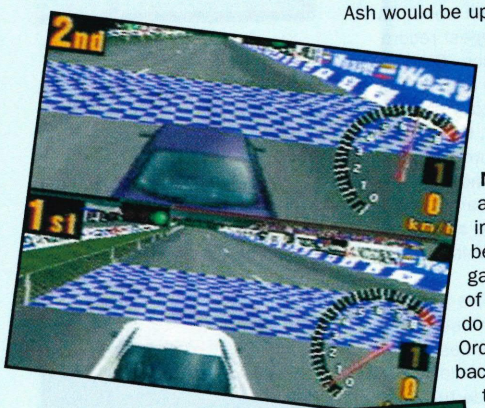
PRO: You've said you both play games, so is there a game out there that you would have liked to provide the soundtrack for?

Phil: Carmaggedon. I would have loved to have done the


Gameshead Phil, however, takes it all in his stride

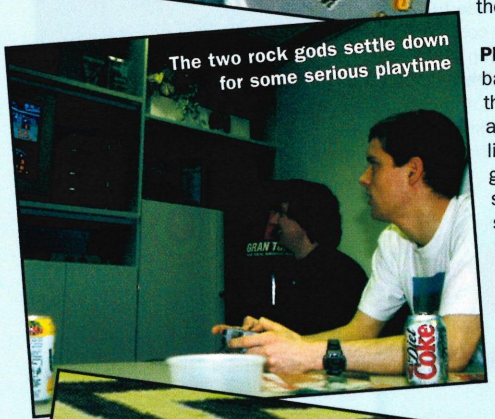
music for that. Why? Because it's a great game; loads of violence and very messy. Cubanate's music is very electronic and it kinda suits that environment. Videogame music could be our forte.

Mark: If they do a sequel to Parappa The Rapper, I reckon Ash would be up for writing a song for that.



PRO: Do you think the ongoing connection between games and real life rock music is a good thing in the long run?

Mark: Actually, we've just been offered another game soundtrack, but I can't go into any details just yet. It would be good to be involved from the start; there's the game, this is what's it's about, get the vibe of it and go and write a song for it, like you do with a film. When we did A Life Less Ordinary we got film clips and loads of background stuff to write from. That's what they should do with games.

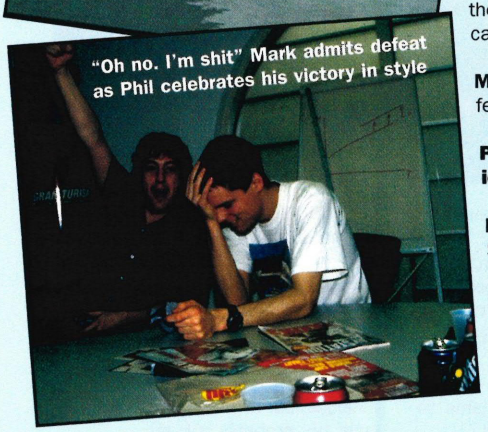

The two rock gods settle down for some serious playtime

Phil: Well the kind of stuff we do as a band is fast, techno, drum and bass music that suits videogames, which can only be a good thing. It's like a film really, games are getting so complicated they shouldn't just stick selected tracks onto a finished product, they should actually involve the artists from the beginning.



PRO: We've just had a quick play of Gran Turismo, what do you think of it from what you've seen?

Phil: It looks amazing actually. Really, really, really good. It's just the depth of it... fantastic. It's not just a racing game though is it? I can see strategy fans like myself getting into it, what with all the training stuff in there, building up your car and that.


"Oh no. I'm shit" Mark admits defeat as Phil celebrates his victory in style

Mark: It looks great. I'm hoping to swipe a few copies on the way out.

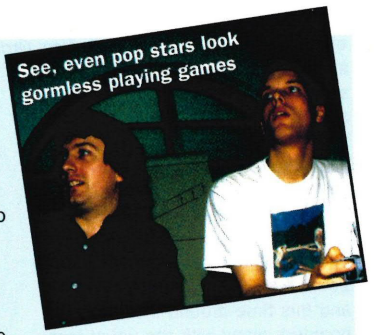
PRO: Name your ideal game with an ideal soundtrack?

Mark: A frantic shoot'em-up. Perhaps a Star Wars game based around the Millennium Falcon. A mission-based thing like Desert Strike.

Phil: A Star Trek game. Definitely. Or alternatively a very, very fast driving shoot'em-up, with lasers.

PRO: What games are you playing at the moment?

Mark: Well, we've been in studio for ages, and we have a PlayStation in there, so recording breaks are filled with lengthy ISS Pro and wipEout sessions. They're the only two we've really been playing over the last couple of months.


See, even pop stars look gormless playing games

Phil: We got a PlayStation on our bus and we've been playing G Police, the helicopter game. We enjoyed that, it's awesome.

PRO: Ash are well known as being huge Star Wars fans, but have you played the PSX Star Wars games?

Mark: No, not really. We always go on the big arcade one though. D'you know the one where one of you is the pilot and the other's the gunner? That's good.

PRO: So how exciting was it playing the Star Wars party for George Lucas?

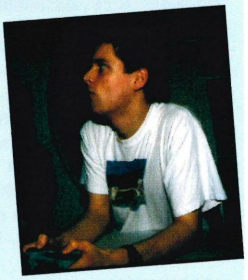
Mark: It was one of the best nights ever. We were on the set with huge videoscreens showing clips of whatever had been filmed already of the new Star Wars movies from the location shoot. It was great.

"If they do a sequel to Parappa The Rapper, I reckon Ash would be up for writing a song"

PRO: So are Ash the new Cantina band?

Mark: Not exactly, but we did actually play on the film set with George Lucas and Kenny Baker partying around.

PRO: So finally, what have you both got planned for the summer? Touring? New album perhaps?



Phil: We started touring last weekend over the states which will last until the beginning of the World Cup.

Mark: We've got four weeks left to finish off mixing the new album, a couple of festivals over the next two weeks warming up for later on in the year, and then we're off doing some promotional stuff. The album should be out at end of August, start of September with a new single out soon.





Thanks go out to Cubanate Phil, Mark from Ash, Miles at Polygram and Guy at Sony HQ. Cheers fellas.

Music for the Joypad Generation

of luminaries like The *Prodigy*, *New Order* and *Chemical Brothers*, most of the soundtrack was filled with acts that could generously be described as 'obscure'. Or maybe they were so achingly hip that I'd never heard of them. Which is more than likely.

But not content with doing it once with *wipEout*, the buggers went and did it again with *wipEout 2097*. Bigger tunes, bigger names and this time around the line up boasted, along with the usual faces (*The Chemical Brothers!* Stop it!) genuinely cool tracks from bands who were either on the cusp of greatness (the mighty *Underworld*) or stars of the future (an early sighting of comedy French monkeys *Daft Punk*). This was straight from the dancefloor and into... a computer game. The media had to face the worrying fact that gamesplayers might actually have lives all of a sudden. Bloody hell.



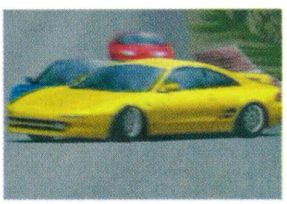
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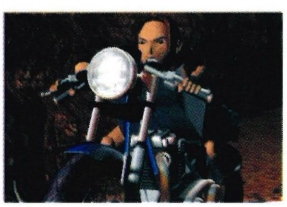
So where next for the games and music biz relationship? Will they continue to rut like stags in public places or will the music biz bite the games industry's head off and suck its guts through a special pipe?

Both are feasible. Certainly the trend's going to continue as both parties have got the scent of a big juicy money spinner. Also, don't forget that many games companies are simply different legs of a bigger media octopus. *BMG* may be known in these circles for *Grand Theft Auto*, but outside in the real world, *BMG* is one of the biggest record labels in existence. *Dickie Branson's Virgin* empire may be a fragmented parody of a madman's dream, but again games and tunes are sheltering under a common brand – even if the companies are separate entities. Oh, and I think *Sony* have also got something to do with the music scene as well, apparently.

But there may be a backlash coming. Five years ago, gamesplaying was something that babies and sexless freaks did to while away the time between cheese sandwiches. Back then the music industry wouldn't touch games with a shitty stick. Fortunately, the tide turned and the door has swung towards inter-industry cooperation. However, this hypothetical musical hatch can swing both ways, and should *David Bowie* decide that games are now the future of a music/entertainment fusion, then we may all be plunged back once more into the darkness of techno-Belgian folk-rock hell. Shudder the thought PRO

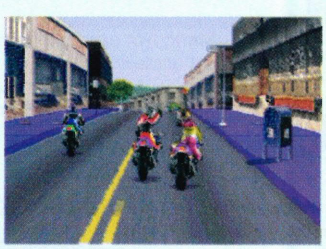






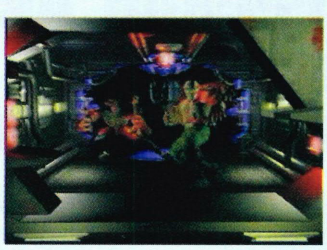
The Unusual Suspects

A glib and shallow look at the notable games, and some tragic obscurities, to have uased use 'proper' music, and the bands who risked geek ridicule to embrace the future...

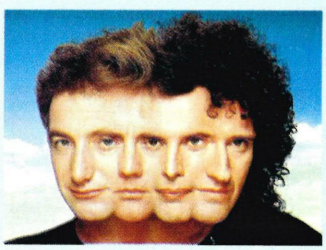


ROAD RASH: The PlayStation release of this one-time classic motorbike ruckus tagged on a grungy soundtrack to entice early-90s' youth into buying the doomed pseudo-console. It didn't work, but you could listen to the likes of *Therapy?* and *Paw* while playing. Which could well be why it failed.

FASCINATION: A little seen French soft porn adventure in which you played an air hostess who has trouble keeping her clothes on. There was some gubbins about spies and secret chips hidden in toothpaste as well. The hilarious euro-disco music? Somebody called '*Moby*' is credited. Mmmm. Ring any bells?



LOADED: Brummie techno-rock-pop hybrid, *Pop Will Eat Itself*, supplied the soundtrack to this blood spattered blaster from Gremlin. But they supplied nothing too innovative though and split up shortly afterwards, to the shock and dismay of... well, good old *Andy Sharp* probably.



THE EYE: Think of a band who are completely in tune with today's youth. Think of a band who you'd love to see get involved in making a game. Did you think of *Queen*? No. Neither did anyone else. Hence the swift disappearance of this pretentious crap from public consciousness.



FIFA '98: You must have heard it by now, surely? *Blur's Song 2* "Whoo Hoo-ing" blaring our from your telly everytime you load the bloody game may get annoying after a while, but at least it's decent tune for a change!

TOP BANANA: A platform game so scary and drug addled that everyone who saw it had their minds erased with brain-rubbers (which would explain what mysteriously happened to Andy 'ever so' Sharp) to forget it. The creators? So called 'big beat' pioneers *Cold Cut*. Just let me remind you of two names. *Lisa Stansfield*. *Yazz*. Not feeling so cool now, are you?



MOTORHEAD: not the recent driving game, but every feature on *Gremlin's* speed feast invariably mentions the fact that *Virgin* were once poised to release a game based on the identically titled wart-faced Nazi-fetishists. Planned features included grab-a-groupie sub-games. It may even have come out, but probably only for something like the *Atari ST*.

Top 5 Pop Stars Who Would Make Great Game Characters

Michael Jackson
Well, it's the only way he could become more unreal.



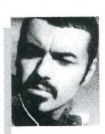
Peter Andre
Simply because you'd only need 10 polygons to recreate his box-faced charm.



Barry White
The world's first Luuuuuurve' em-up. Yes!



George Michael
It's, oh yes, "Loo Raider". Sorry.



Mick Jagger
The creaky old bastard's got to be almost entirely electronic by now anyway.

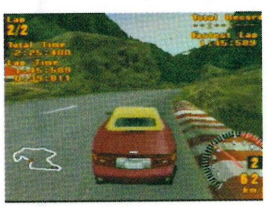


The New Wave of New Games

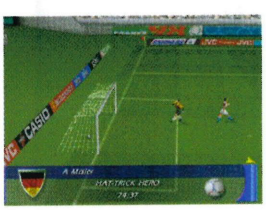
The deluge of band/game crossovers is set to become an even bigger flood as more music types use the grooviness of games consoles to make themselves look hip. And not the other way round. Oh no.



SPICE WORLD:
Is there no escaping this five-headed monster? It seems not. If only *Sony* would release the bloody thing so we can smile slightly and then forget all about it...

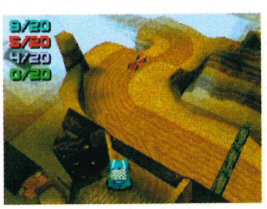


GRAN TURISMO:
It seems that by replacing Japanese bonkers pop with proper bands what we have heard of, like *Ash, Chemical Brothers* and *Garbage*, this driving game suddenly becomes a harbinger of change. Look elsewhere to see how Ash feel about the whole palaver.



THREE LIONS:
How do you distinguish your *World Cup* footy game from the three million other World Cup footy games jostling for shelf space. Simple! Invoke the God of Pop! Name your game after a bafflingly popular football song, and get *Ocean Colour Scene* to add their 'mature' musical noodlings to the soundtrack. Anyone who saw their bowl-headed bassist promoting the game through his yawns on *The Big Breakfast*, will know just how excited *The Scene* are about it. "They offered us lots of money" he quipped. Those crazy mods...eh kids?





CIRCUIT BREAKERS:
Believe it or not, the guys behind this microscopic racer's 'choons' are two blokes who used to be in Madchester baggy combo, The Inspiral Carpets. Tune in next month for the review where hopefully, there'll be a lack of organ-based foot tappers and 30" flared pants too

Doin' It For The Fans

Many musical types have not been backward in coming forward with their admiration for the joy of games. As society grows, hopefully more celebrities will come out of the closet...



THE PRODIGY: They supplied a Keith-less version of Firestarter for Psygnosis's wipEout 2097, and the band are famous for their joypad antics, but given that it takes them years to produce an album, they've got time on their talented hands.

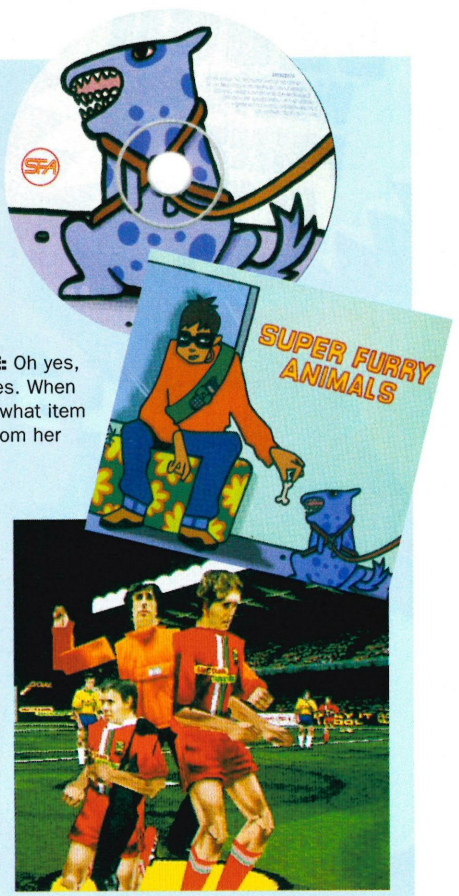
ICE T: The always amusing 'gangsta' who loves Mortal Kombat and, funnily enough, any game that involves shooting a gun at a screen. Not a 'Broken Sword' fan, I reckon...

UNDERWORLD: As befits techno-geeks from years ago, this lot have been into games 'n' gadgets since the days of ZX81s and similar legends. Which gives me the perfect excuse to reuse the "Shouting Lara, Lara, Lara" hilarious gag.

NEIL HANNON: That posh fella from The Divine Comedy. Not someone you'd automatically associate with the visceral mindgasm that is gamesplaying, but in a recent Melody Maker he made a very specific reference to his flat having "PlayStation games everywhere". Result!

SUPER FURRY ANIMALS: Welsh mushroom-maniacs who were impressed enough with Gremlin's Actua Soccer 2 to use it in their video as the lads slip into their tellies and play a game of virtual footy. Gremlin returned the favour by putting the band in the actual game as a secret team. Cosy.

MANDY DINGLE: Oh yes, she loves games. When asked recently what item she'd rescue from her house if it ever exploded (or something) she chose her games system. It's an N64. But then she does star in Emmerdale. Country folk, you see. She still thinks that the television is a magic lantern with miniature people trapped inside.



WIN THE WORLD

Right, we know you can't get tickets for the games in France because they've all been sold to French farmers, peasants and so on. And try as we might, even we can't get any for you either, so instead of taking you to the World Cup, we're going to bring the World Cup to your home. Not bad, eh?

In celebration of the launch of World League Soccer, we've teamed up with Eidos Interactive to help you enjoy the massive coverage of the tournament PlayStation Pro-style. There's only one prize though, so it's winner takes all, but it's an ideal chance to ignore the missus, get the lads round and pray that England win this time. Here's what you can win...

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- Four World League Soccer '98 T-shirts and whistles for you and your mates!
- A fine selection of traditional cuisine to scoff during the tournament. You know the sort of stuff – France: Onions, baguettes, frog's legs, garlic. England: Meat pies, crisps, Bovril, pickled eggs, pork scratchings etc.
- A copy of the fabulous World League Soccer to play when it's all over, or during those really boring games!
- A big bottle of bubbly to crack open when England win (fingers crossed)
- Plus free subscriptions to both PlayStation Pro and PlayStation Zone. What a bloody top prize!

All you have to do to stand a chance of winning is simply answer the following question and send it in on a postcard to our usual address.

THE QUESTION:
Which two England players missed their penalties in the Italia '90 World Cup semi-final against Germany?

Send your entries to:
"HE WAS YARDS OFFSIDE REF!"
PlayStation Pro, Media House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield, SK10, 4NP

All entries must be in our offices by June 1st. That way, we can get the prize to the winner just in time for the World Cup. Okay? Good luck



Home!

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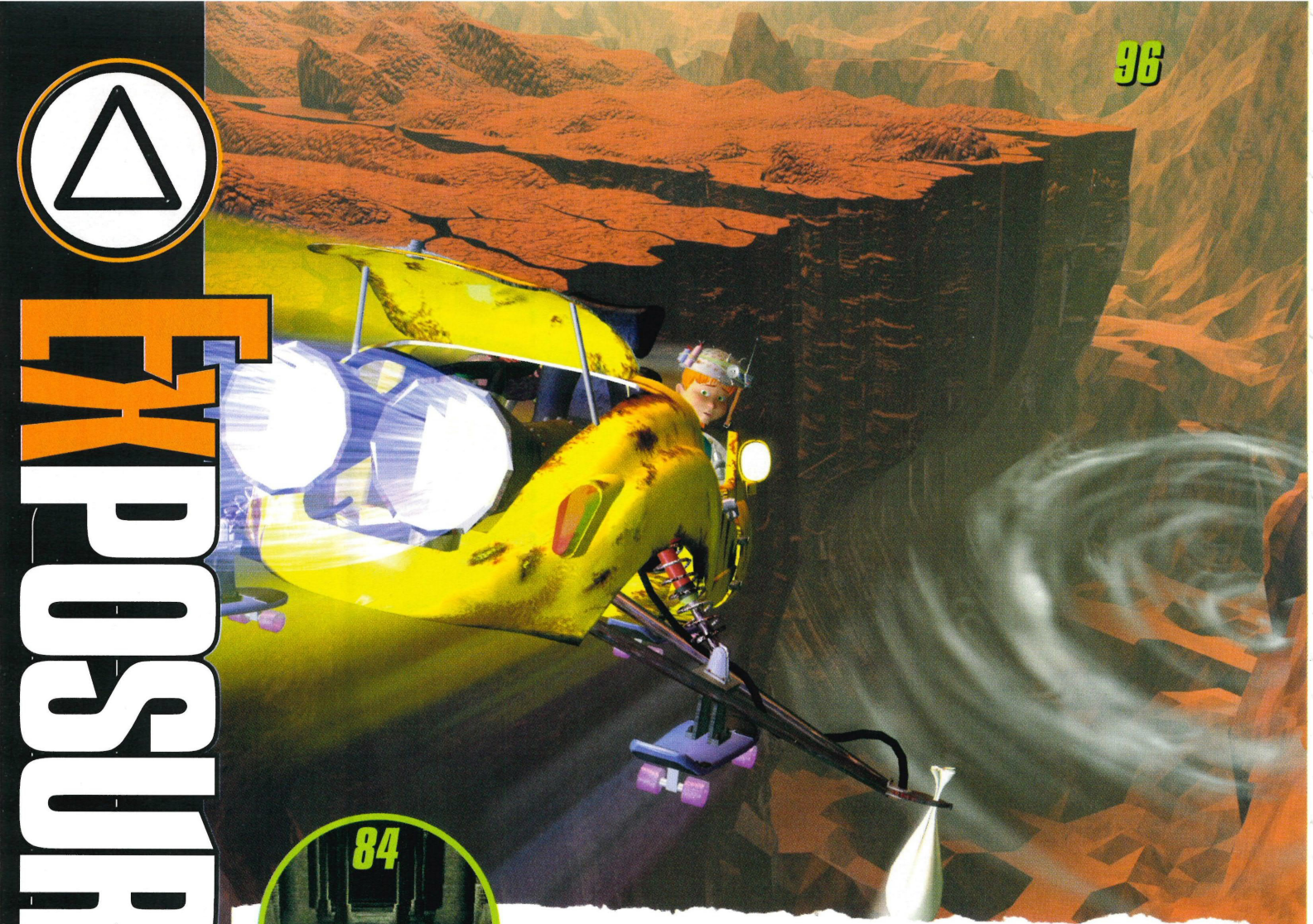
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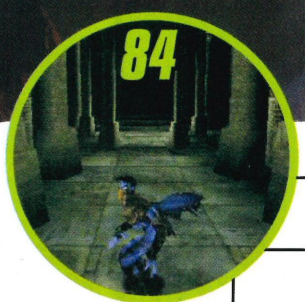
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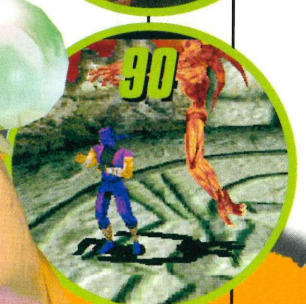
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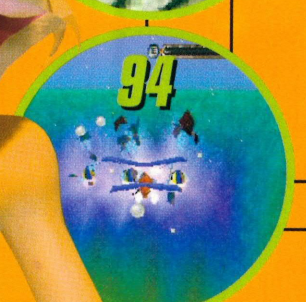
EXPOSURE





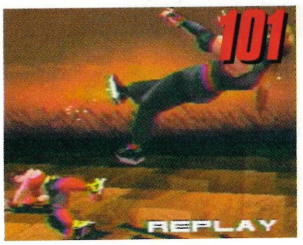


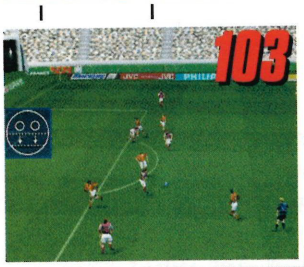


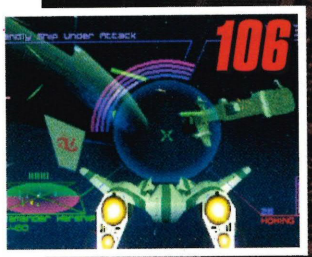


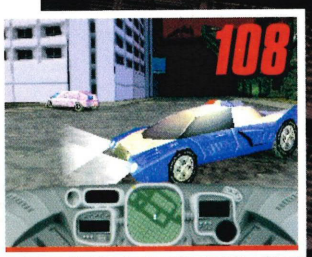
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PROSPECTS

PRO

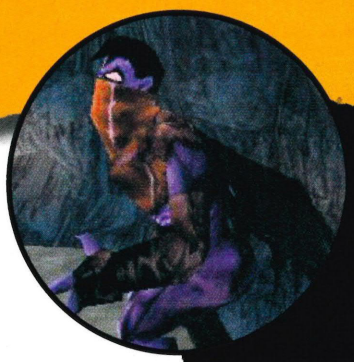
There are so many games scheduled for release over the next 12 months it's going to be damn hard work keeping track of what's looking good and what isn't. The idea of our Exposure section is to give you the lowdown on the big products months before you start to see the previews appearing. We don't just mess about with a few screenshots either, we go straight to the horses mouth and talk to the programmers and developers. We want to know what problems they've been having, what new technology they're using and basically anything else interesting that they want to tell us.

This month we've been gathering quotes from Paris to Derby, from America to Southampton. Only people with things worth saying get the space and if you see a game in our Exposure section you know it's going to be worth following.

As well as these honoured few, we also have our Prospects section bursting to the seams. These are games that are nearing completion and due for review very shortly. It's a last chance for the developers to showcase what they're offering before they're put before our panel and marked. Read it all here first PRO



Paul 'Chicken' McNally
Deputy Editor



The makers of Gex and Pandemonium series have a few surprises up their sleeves over the next few months. We had a chat with one of the head honchos to find out what they're up to...

Crystal Dynamics

In the run-up to the greatest videogame show on Earth – *E3* in Atlanta – we've decided to use this month's "Exposure" section to concentrate on giving you the very first look at some of the games we think will be attracting the most attention this year.

For the next six pages we're going to have an in-depth look at one of America's biggest console success stories and what they'll be showing to a gaggle of interested parties at the end of this month. We're talking of course about *Crystal Dynamics*, famous most recently for the impressive *Gex 3D* and before that the likes of *Gex, Pandemonium* (and its sequel) as well as the highly acclaimed *Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain*. Founded in 1992 the company's reputation for creativity and technical innovation was established in 1993 when it was the first to develop and publish a 32bit console game.

These titles are all names that any self-respecting PlayStation owner will be more than familiar with, so we thought it only fair that we give the developers a bit of stage to let the folks here in England know who they are and what they're about. We got in touch with *Scott Steinberg*, the *Vice President of Marketing* at *Crystal Dynamics* and asked him to tell us about his life, the universe and just about everything else. With three eagerly awaited titles on the horizon, there's no doubting that *Crystal Dynamics* are going to be one of the big things in the near future.

The guys at Crystal Dynamics belive that 3D environments with far better Artificial Intelligence is the way forward for videogames. To prove this they've set about working on three games that look like setting the PlayStation on fire later this year



CRYSTAL BALLS

He began by telling us a little about the company he works for: "The company was founded to develop and publish videogames. We haven't fallen victim to the on-line gaming hype and are quite cautious about PC products. Our greatest successes have been on the PlayStation and soon on the *N64*, with the arrival of *Gex 64* later in the Fall of 1998."

"If consumers screamed for a game based on dirty socks, we'd have to consider that as well"

With things currently going so well, we asked *Scott* to give us his vision of the future and where he sees *Crystal Dynamics* going up to and into the new millennium. Cagily he told us: "Talking about the future in this industry is a lot like going to a fortune-teller. The momentum shifts almost yearly. One hit game can put a company on the map. One big bomb can kill that same company. We obviously plan our business and our product line, but the key to success in this industry is flexibility. Currently we are keen on developing strong lines of character/action and adventure titles. These categories cross over national lines and seem to be liked by game players the world over. I guess if consumers across the world started to scream for games based on old dirty socks, we'd have to consider that as well"

So don't be surprised if you see Dirty Socks 3D in the very near future. Obviously, with the videogames market being in a boom period at the moment, a lot of companies are ploughing resources into expansion with possibly no regard for any future problems the industry might encounter. We asked whether *Crystal Dynamics*' success was going to affect the company in that way: " In terms of *Crystal Dynamics'* growth plans, we really are interested in sticking to around 100 people. We are not planning on expanding the company much beyond that point. It's hard to find outstanding people to fuel teams beyond that size. The games we are developing, for the most part, are somewhat human-intensive. *GEX 3D, Pandemonium* and *Kain* were team efforts that ranged from 20 to 25 people during their development cycle."

Refreshingly wise words. Next we asked him about the *"Console War"* and whether it's



been blown out of all proportion by the *PlayStation* and *Nintendo* specialist media. "I think there is a console war going on.

Crystal Dynamics plays *Switzerland* in this struggle, in that we are developing games for both systems. During the 16-bit boom, I worked at *Sega*, and believe me we fought like mad to install base leadership! With *Sony* and *Nintendo*, there's no doubt in my mind that both are in the business for the long-term and both want to be king." Try as we might we couldn't get him to come down on either side of the fence. Always the diplomat.

We mentioned before that *Crystal Dynamics* have three games currently on the horizon. Now seems like a good time to talk about them, so we asked what he thought they'd tried to achieve and what we can expect in their next batch of products: "When it comes to thinking about this industry and how it relates to the future I think that the world of videogame development and technology has migrated to 3D. *Crystal Dynamics* has had our magical 3D technology in the works for over two years.

ANOTHER DIMENSION

"We humbly submit that it's the most sophisticated piece of software technology on the *PlayStation*. *Gex 3D* was the first product to really use it. Later this year you will see both *Akuji the Heartless* and *Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver* using its core capabilities, but each taking its functionality in a different direction technically as well as from a feature standpoint.

The next great challenge is to develop ways to make our worlds more organic. A big part of our efforts in that area are related to AI and building more 'intelligence' in the indigenous populations that inhabit our worlds." PRO



Akuji The Heartless

Sam Player:	Producer
Glenn Schofield:	Director
Dave Minoque:	Lead Programmer
Josh Rose:	Lead Designer
Spencer Hale:	Lead Animator

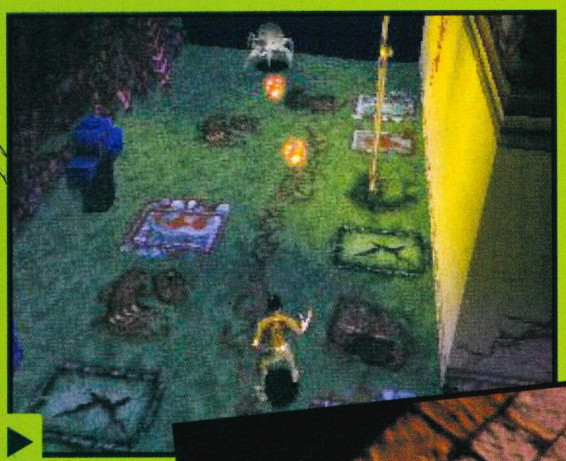
Scott Steinberg's Comments

Akuji, an action/adventure game starring a voodoo priest, has been in production for almost four months. However, the underlying technology is about 80% finished. On a day-to-day tactical level, we've been most concerned with layout and memory map allocation; everything to keep the game looking good and running quickly.

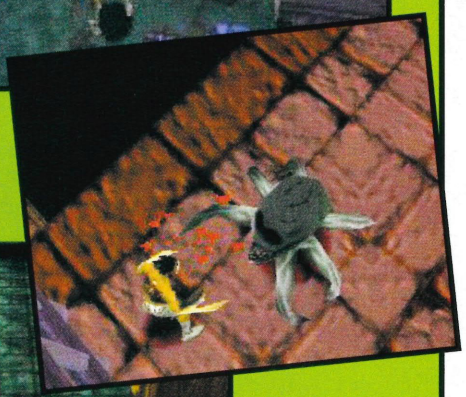
On the technology side we've taken advantage of the fall of the *Berlin Wall* and the "peace dividend" with the *Soviets*. Our AI programmer, *Dave Miles*, worked on spy satellites for the defence industry prior to his *Crystal* existence. Now he's implementing a fuzzy logic AI system with the same focus as Kain: realism, fight or fee. We're also creating a system to de-couple frame rate and the character animations to keep *Akuji* moving fluidly, even with a lot of polygons on screen.

Akuji's voodoo spells have also led to some controversy. How far can we push the voodoo edge without offending the consumers? Braining storming the special effects of the spells has been fun. Who wouldn't love deciding what a 'demon possession' attack looks like?"

Expected release date: September '98

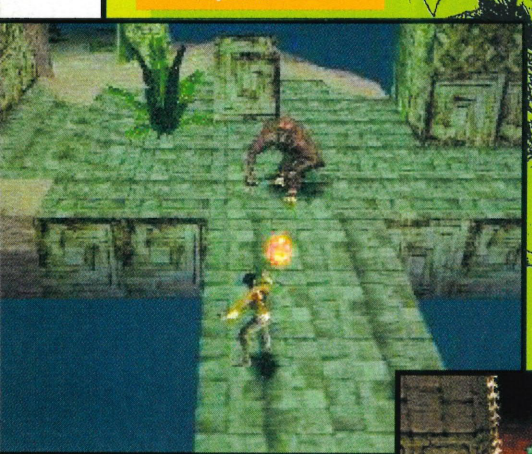


Akuji The Heartless is a game we're really looking forward to. From what we've seen this is really going to make people stand up and take notice

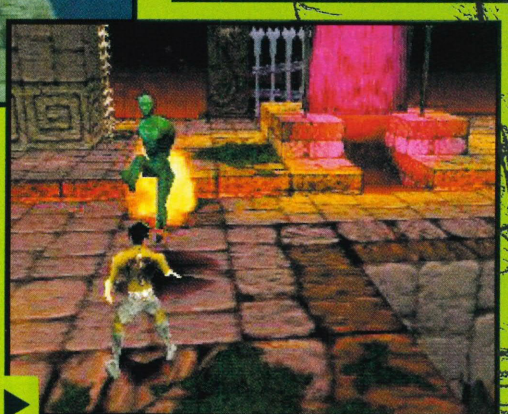




It's good to see Crystal Dynamics aren't missing out on the sexy lady front as this character in Akuji the Heartless shows well enough







It's getting mighty hot around the arse area for one of your foes. We always knew that fireball spell would come in handy at some point in the future

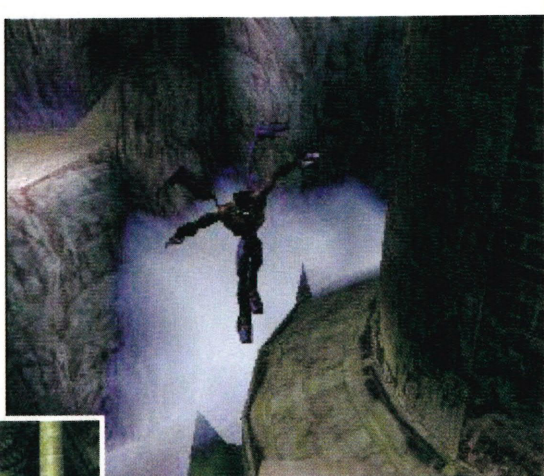






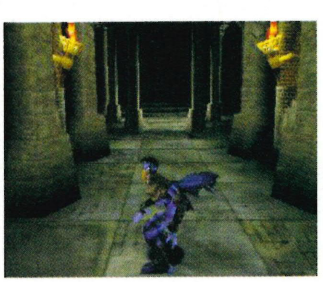


Legacy Of Kain did very well for Crystal Dynamics, but they'll still be looking to surpass its sales when they finally unleash the sequel



Again, as with their other titles, the new 3D engine has been used extensively in order to create a more realistic environment





Legacy Of Kain: Soul Reaver

Amy Hennig: Director/Producer
Seth Carus: Lead Designer
Paul Vernon: Art Director
James Guilford: Lead Animator
Carl Stika: Lead Programmer

Scott Steinberg's comments:

Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver, the sequel to the popular *Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain,* has been in full production for 18 months. The biggest challenge the team has faced is recruiting. The team has very high production standards. Indeed, the majority of the designers come from an art/architecture school background. It has helped them pick-up and run with our 3D tools. We're still in the process of hiring a couple of coders. This team is tending to be our largest ever, we have so much cool stuff planned for this title...

Gameplay mechanics in 3D space are always a tough challenge. We raised the bar for ourselves by designing *Raziel's* core mechanic to be soul feeding. Soul feeding is fairly easy to conceptualise (if you've seen enough movies). However, finalising the game's mechanic so it was 'satisfying' was tough. I think everyone will be pleased with the results.

The majority of the technology challenges have been resolved; we've solved streaming off of the CD issues (seamless loading), plane shifting (real-time terrain morphing), and building a robust animation engine. Our biggest remaining goal is AI. We've come up with a system where the baddies fight to survive. No mindless frontal attacks here. Enemies will flee from an encounter. If players pursue they may find that the enemy has fled to a location with more vampires. The vamps will then attack the player using all the cunning of a pack of feral dogs."





Working on three games at the same time cannot be easy, but Crystal Dynamics have a workforce of around 100 people to help them do it



Even at the drawing-board stage it was clear that this little beggar was going to end up on the ugly side. Turning him into a fluid 3D character in The Unholy War was a different proposition altogether though

THE UNHOLY WAR

Expected release date: September '98

Mark Wallace: Producer
Ken Ford: Programmer
Fred Ford: Programmer
Paul Reiche: Lead Designer

Scott Steinberg's Comments:

We've been working on *The Unholy War* for about 18 months. It is a strategy/action game similar to *Final Fantasy Tactics*, however the action is in real-time, not turn-based and the game can be played with two players. We're actually developing two games: *The Unholy War* for Europe and North America, and in Japan we've partnered with *Bandai* to create a completely different game. *Bandai* provided a license with Japanese *Anime* characters from the 70's and we're making the game. *Super Witch Girl* is a game that stars multiple female characters from Japan's extensive character library. The gameplay is quite similar to the American and European products, but instead of playing with mechanical killers, you play with young girls. I think I'll just leave the rest to your fertile and over active imaginations...

Back to *The Unholy War*. Balancing the characters is always a challenge in this type of game. There will always be some combinations that not quite as fun as others. We've counter balanced that by creating two different races that have inherent strengths and weaknesses.

Also, the proportion of strategy vs real-time combat has been an issue. With *The Unholy War* we wanted to have some strategy elements to give depth to the experience as well as fast two-player action found in traditional multi-player experiences."

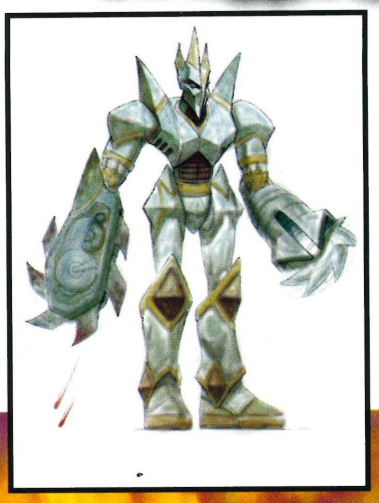


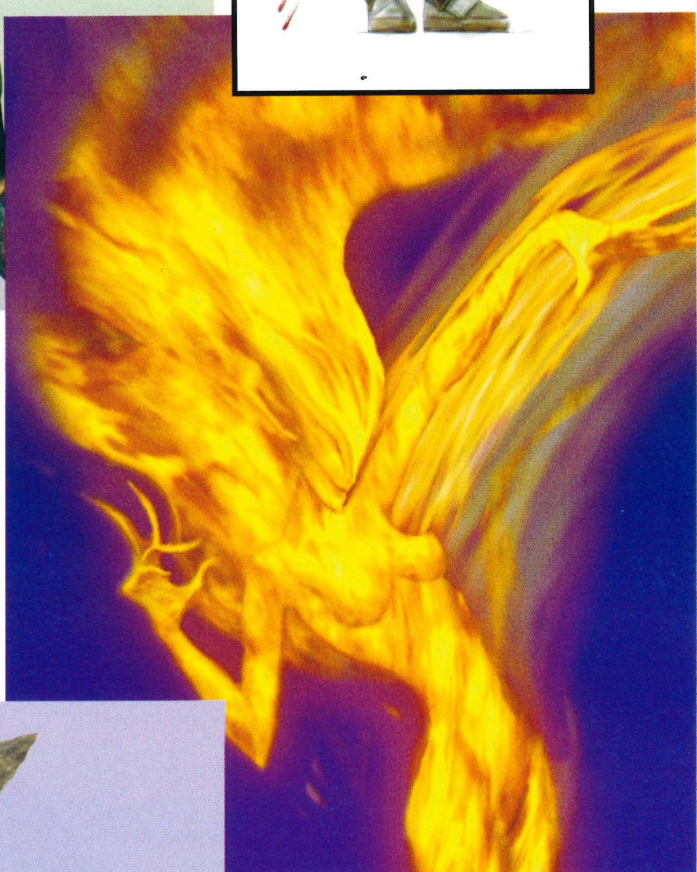




Many hours of work are put into all the characters that appear in Crystal Dynamics' games. Skilled artists first sketch, then generate everything we see











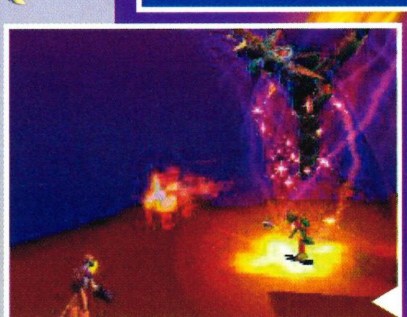
As you can see from the surrounding art the final characters are very close to their initial sketches. This is because the designers worked closely with the artists



Tune in next month when we'll be fresh back from E3, brimming with all the latest gossip on all the latest releases.

An array of special effects have been worked on to provide extra atmosphere





This month's E3 show in Atlanta will see thousands of visitors flocking to the Crystal Dynamics' stand. We'll be amongst them and we'll let you know what we find this time next month

Ninja

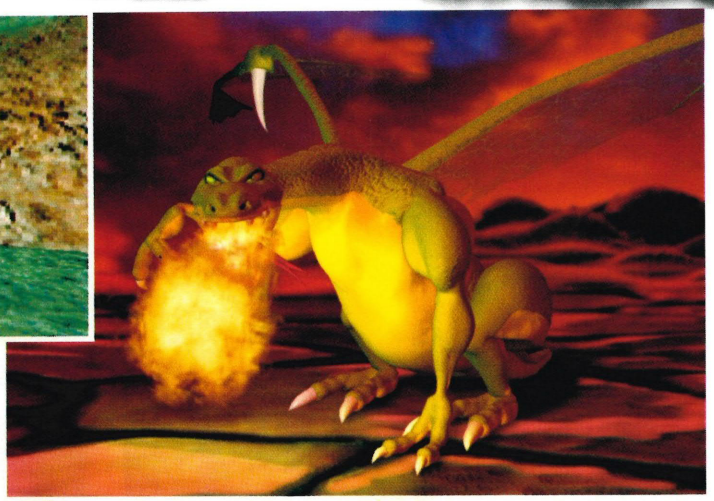


Eidos are looking to strike a chord with gamers once again with their latest adventure/action title. Their pedigree certainly suggests that we should expect Ninja to be a cut above the rest when it hits the shelves in time for Christmas











The villagers usually attack in numbers, so the hero's getting off lightly here. If he hangs about too long though, the spirits of his victims will return to haunt him

An assassin's life is never easy. For a start there aren't many promotion prospects and the years of training, study and practice in the deadly arts often leads to a secretive, solitary life. You do get to choose your own work hours, but who says you're going to get any business? It's not as if you can stick an advert in the Yellow Pages – Assassin for hire, qualified in neck breaking and lung removal, available for birthdays and weddings – special rates for group bookings.

At least in ancient Japan there was always plenty of work around, and the money was good; cash-in-hand jobs, fees paid in gold, but there was nearly always a catch, usually being that the intended target was some almost invincible mystical demon warlord with an army of bodyguards. But at least life wasn't dull, which is why those tacky dubbed Kung Fu movies are still so popular, and *Core Design* are betting that their new action/adventure arcade game, snappily titled *Ninja,* should strike a chord with the legions of old-world martial arts enthusiasts out there.

The game's story line could have been lifted straight out of such movies as the ultra violent *Shogun Assassin* and the bizarre *Mr Vampire,* and *Core* aren't afraid to admit that many of *Ninja's* design features were inspired by these movies and some of *Bruce Lee's* finer works.



Ninja tells the tale of an evil warlord named Katasaki who sold his soul to a powerful demon in order to wage war across Japan with the sole intent of becoming Emperor.

Katasaki ordered the demon to send out his hordes of goblins, trolls dragons and other evil beasts on a rampage across his enemies lands, but he was unable to control them and Japan soon became a place not unlike hell; the people became possessed and the dead walked freely with the living. Years later a young Ninja, Kurosawa, returns to his homeland and discovers the horrors caused by Katasaki and his demons and vows to save his people and rid the land of the demon legions.

ENTER THE DRAGON

For *Core* it's a very definite change of direction after their all conquering *Tomb Raider* exploits, but they felt it was necessary to move in other directions rather than just rest on their laurels, and to that end *Ninja* takes on a completely different look. The gameplay comes from an arcade angle and though it has a similar look to scrolling arcade classics such as *Double Dragon,* it actually uses a full 3D engine and modern polygon character design. There's an in-game camera that zooms in and out and spins around to ensure that the action is always kept at the best viewing angle.

All these views give *Ninja* the authentic look of a scrolling arcade beat'em-up while the game actually plays like a free roaming scrapper, though sword wielding and high kicks aren't the only tricks up this Kung Fu kid's sleeve.

You start the game unarmed, but with a little practice at kicking surly Jap villagers in the knackers you'll soon stumble across some more damaging weaponry. The weapons include

THE BARE BONES

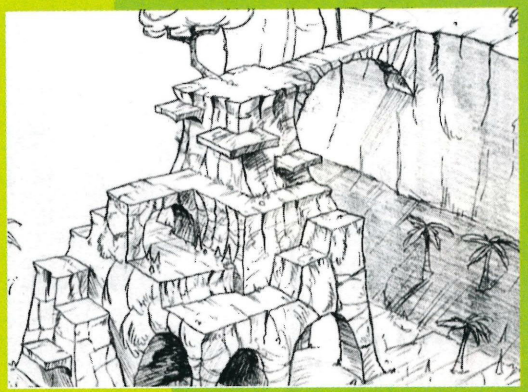


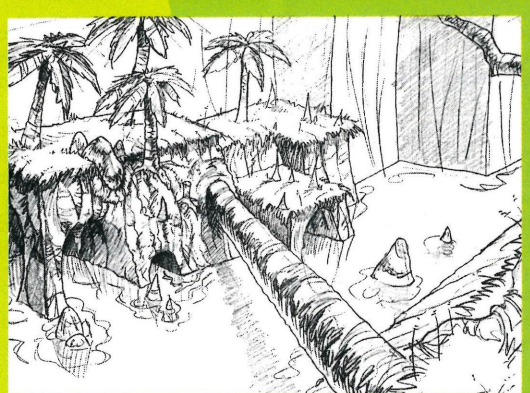
Each of the levels is slowly built-up around a skeleton framework until the final pieces of flesh and detail are added to complete the deathly atmosphere.The inspiration for each came from varying sources such as Japanese myths and legends, old Kung Fu movies and gaming classics like Rygar and Ghosts and Goblins



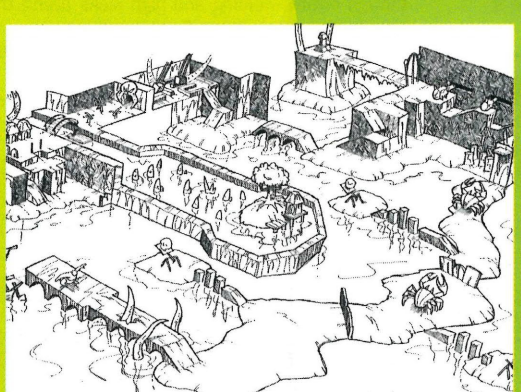
Over 50 different enemies will try to take our Ninja up the stairway to heaven, each with their own specific attack moves and combinations

MARTIAL ARTISTS







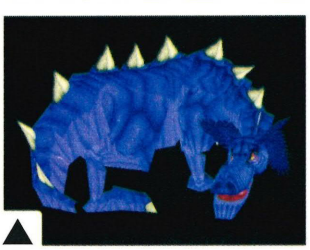


These are a few of the preliminary sketches for the design of some of the 13 full 3D levels that the finished game will include. Eidos claim that each one will be highly detailed and will feature a range of special-effects which









13 huge end of level bosses have all been designed to test the Ninja's skills to the limit, each one getting progressively harder to overcome than the last. As I said, an assassin's life is never easy!

▶ swords, staffs, scythes and throwing knives, as well as the all important magical potions that crop up every now and then just at the right time. These serve to provide some less subtle annihilations than you can muster with a sharpened steel edge, accounting for special moves and weapon power-ups. Each of the weapons has up to four different power levels, combined with special lightning style spells which obviously become more powerful as their attacking potency is increased. All in all there are 19 different attacking moves that can be thrown together into more effective combinations to dispense with those testy Oriental demons.

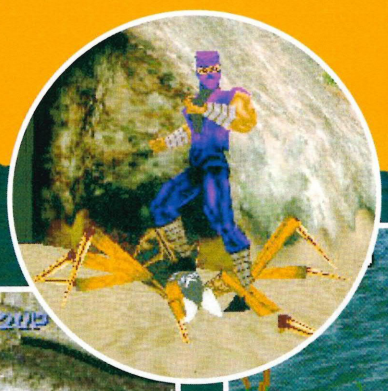
NATURE OF THE BEAST

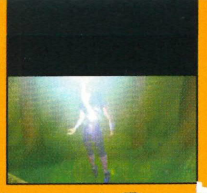
So *Ninja* doesn't have the appearance of *Core's* typical PlayStation games to date, but once you start playing all of the Tomb Raider frustrations come flooding back as you unsuspectingly walk into countless booby traps, hazards and puzzles which vary both in their design and their evil intent. Sure, the spinning blades are easy enough to spot and you don't have to be a genius to figure out what's needed to get around them, but you won't be so smug when you guide your little blue bandaged buddy right through a trip-wire triggering a rainstorm of spears (uncannily positioned to fall on top of your head).

Core have done their damnedest to make sure that *Ninja* won't be a walk in the park. Over 50 separate enemy designs have been created and *Core* have instilled some extreme aggression into all of these sneaky foes who have specific attacks depending on their disposition. And they like to come at you in numbers too, sometimes skulking out from the cover of scenery.



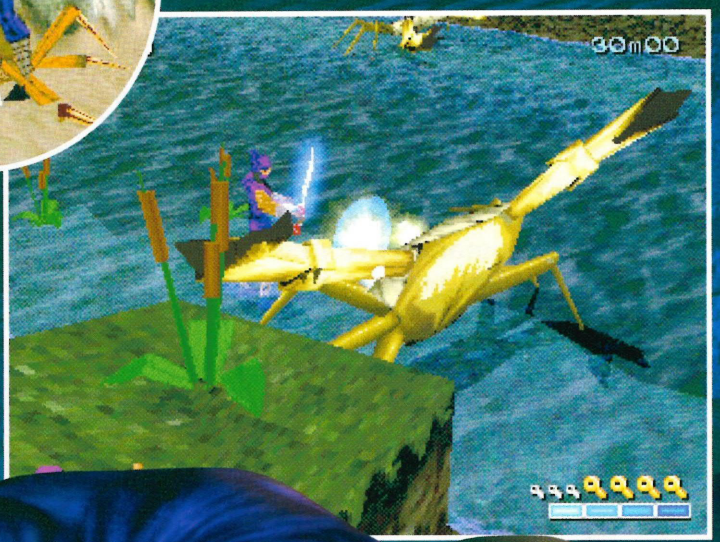






The action is viewed through a cinematic camera system where the angle changes through a series of camera positions depending on the current situation





Each kill will reward you with coins that can be used to buy new equipment and magic, though collecting the coins before the next Samurai warrior decides to stick a shruiken in your head, is easier said than done.

At the moment *Ninja* is still some way off completion. It's currently scheduled for a late summer/autumn release and signs suggest that this should take us all back to the arcade action era of such classics as *Rambo* (but of course with the added bonuses of 32bit next generation graphics and design).

Ninja is obviously not going to have the kind of appeal that is firmly pinned to the chest of *Lara Croft*, but the idea with Ninja is to get away from all of the tits and hot pants of the last two years. This game will draw upon old fashioned male aggression that resides in the bellies of even the most shaggy-haired of geeks, and what better way to do it than with the most testosterone-pumped genre of them all? It may be a while before we get this title in for preview, but you can bet that this is one silent assassin that won't be creeping up on an unsuspecting public PRO



Eidos' martial arts blast set in the land of the rising sun features over 20 cut-scenes at key points throughout the game

Southampton may have a bit of a deserved reputation for being full of seamen, but a long drive down to the South Coast of England revealed that SCI's boat may be just about to come in...

Frenzy!





Once in a while you come across a game which has become a labour of love for the development team. A game where the coders have gone above and beyond the call of duty to fine tune their product to such a degree that it becomes an all encompassing beast that takes over their lives. *Frenzy!* seems to be exactly this.

A trip to Southampton, to visit SCI's base, unearthed possibly one of the surprise hits of the year. *Frenzy!* is at face value a shoot 'em-up, but there's so much more involved in the design than just making a controllable object hammer along whilst blowing things up.

Frenzy! will be the culmination of almost two years design and coding and is a blaster set in a cartoon-style world. The plot revolves around some mad professor releasing his evil creations on a variety of worlds. You, as a shiny toothed *Roger Ramjet*-style character, have to eradicate them from the levels by destroying them in your nifty little bi-plane.

Producer John Court told us that the idea had been to create an original, fun shoot'em-up to give gamers a break from the myriad of *Doom* clones and racing games currently doing the rounds.

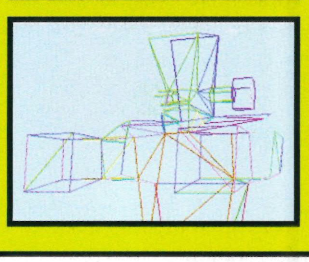
Seeing *Frenzy!* for the first time will blow your mind. It's fast, furious and almost psychedelic. The enemies and explosions are all bright and colourful and you fly along accompanied by a soundtrack that wouldn't be out of place in the old *Dastardly & Mutley* cartoon "Stop the Pigeon." In fact, the whole game will have that kind of madcap air (please excuse the terrible pun) to it. The nutty professor is called Baron Von-to-Ten and his cartoony minions certainly wouldn't look out of place in a *Hanna Barbera* studio, as they systematically attempt to blast you from the skies.

Where *Frenzy!* differs from most shoot'em-ups is in its level design and end of stage bosses, which have all been meticulously planned and are frankly, very strange indeed. Court told us that the team had settled down and designed the nine stages, squeezing in just about all their ideas into the game. It will be plain to you when you see *Frenzy!* that some of these ideas are a

FRANKY GOES TO HOLLYWOOD

This sequence of art shows the development of the Franky character from concept art, through to wireframe right up to the final render. All of the end of level bosses in Frenzy! were developed in the same manner



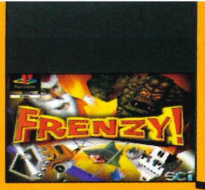








Okay, so strictly speaking an underwater bi-plane would about be as much use as a solar-powered torch. But you've got to have a little artistic licence here and there to make things interesting

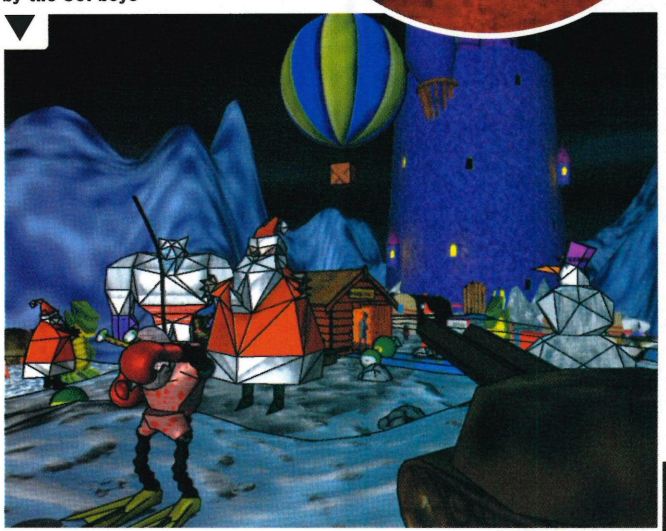




The wacky cartoon style of Frenzy! is developed throughout the game. Here we have the evil Santa Claus as he is being built and rendered by the SCI boys



The levels in Frenzy! are varied and tricky. Here we're flying through the lava section of the game







bit weird. Take the Ground to Air Ice Lollies that are launched at you in the winter stage, where incidentally the end of level boss is a demon Santa Claus who alerts you to his presence by the charming little ring of sleigh bells.

Other levels will include an underwater scuba world and the lava world, where the end of level baddie is a huge lava lamp! Told you they were a strange bunch (it's mixing with all those sailors that does it)!

FAST 'N' FURIOUS

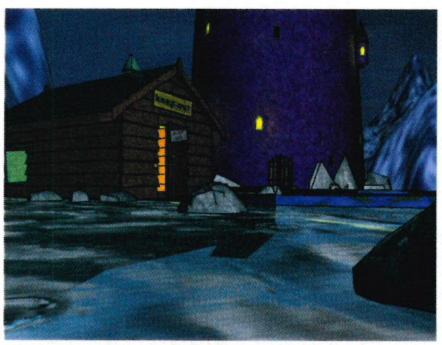
It's good to see *SCI* coming into a run of form. Their success with the PC version of *Carmageddon* (we'll be looking at the PlayStation version very soon) has obviously provided them with the kind of financial security needed to allow their in-house development teams time to let their imaginations run riot, and the result can only be beneficial to the PlayStation.

Frenzy! is scheduled for a release around July, even though it is more or less finished at the moment. *SCI* are still having dealings with publishers who are keen to snap up the rights to publish it, so when it's finally released, *Frenzy!* may well be released by a third party. Either way, we'll be looking at it fully in the near future PRO



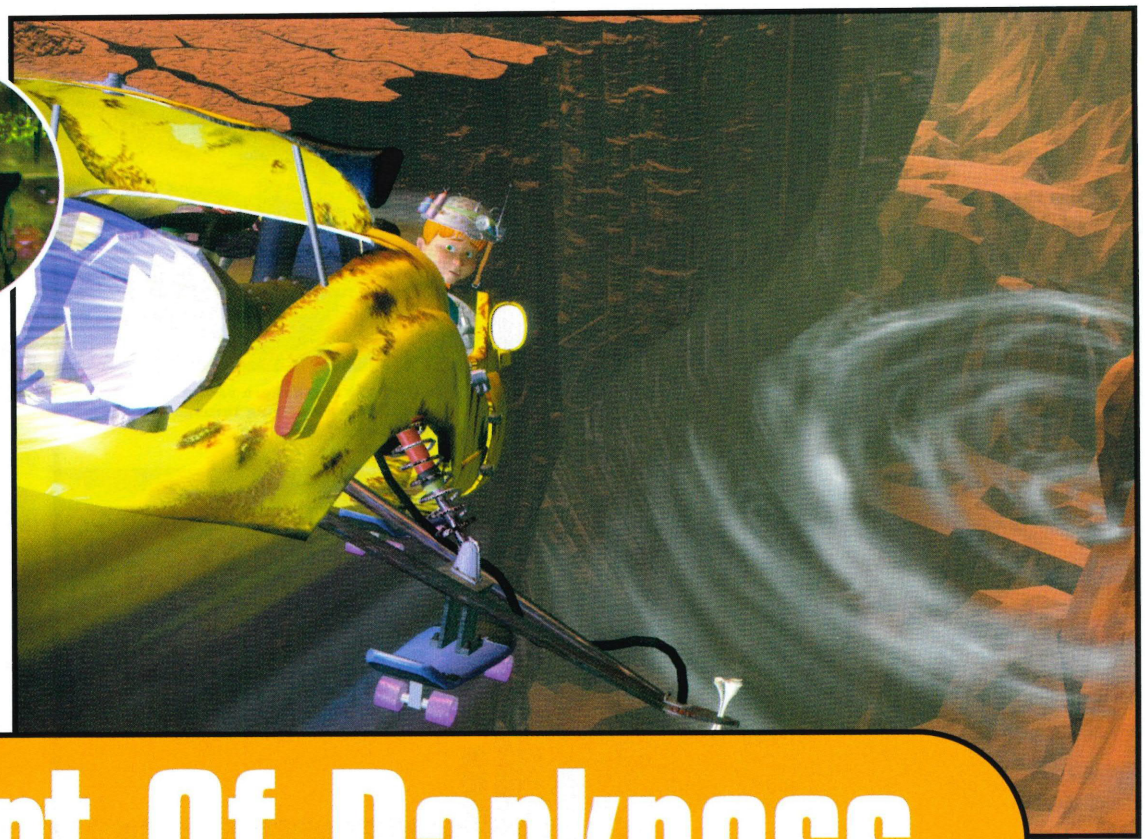
Baron Von-to-Ten is Frenzy!'s nutty professor, but you can bet that switch isn't going to lose him 12 stone











It's hard to believe that we're doing an Exposure on a game that's been coming out for three years! It's almost ready now... honest it is. No, trust us

Heart Of Darkness



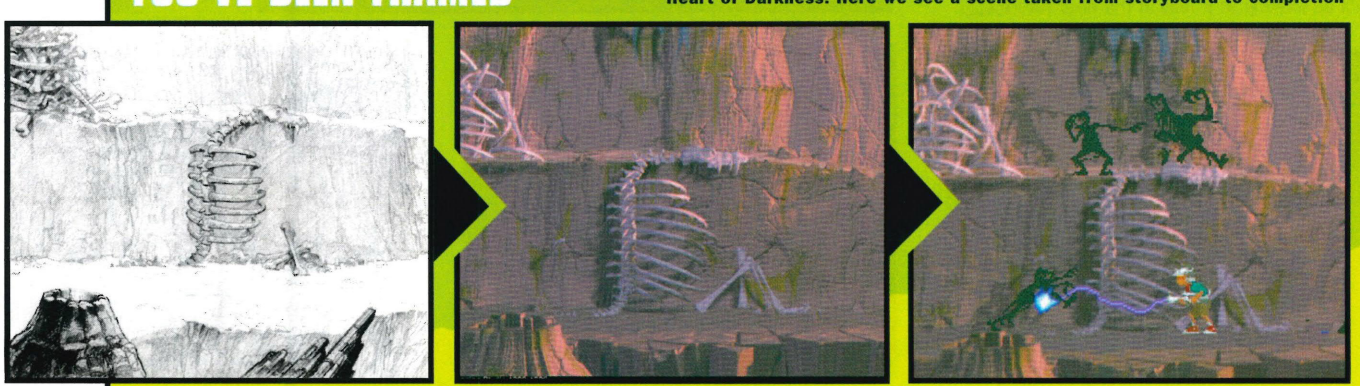
Every so often some bright spark has an idea that sounds great in theory, but when it comes to actually bringing it to completion, the technology of the time simply isn't up to the task. You could easily accuse *Amazing Studios' Heart of Darkness* of falling into this trap.

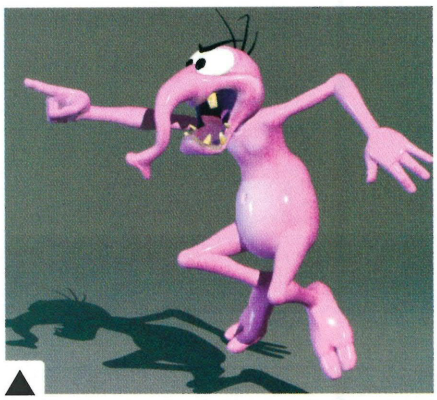
First mooted about three years ago with wonderful FMV sequences put on display to whet the world's appetite, *Heart Of Darkness* looked like it was going to be the most impressive game of all time. Plenty of videogame mags featured the superb artwork from the game proclaiming that this was the game that that would prove the 32 bit consoles had arrived. A deal was struck with *Sega* that was to see the game released exclusively on the new *Saturn* months before any other format and the rest of the gaming world was miffed. Then it all went quiet as coding problems started to set in and *Heart of Darkness* was soon forgotten as the *Command & Conquers* and *Quakes* of this world began to arrive thick and fast.

Now, after years in the wilderness, *Ocean* (or *Infogrames UK* if you prefer) has announced its intention to resurrect this gaming Holy Grail and has begun to show all the same cartoon trailers yet again. And once more we've gasped (but not quite as much because it takes more to impress us these days), because it seems as though *Heart of Darkness* is going to get released after all, albeit with no sign of a *Saturn* version.

YOU'VE BEEN FRAMED

A perfect example of how Amazing Studios have painstakingly created every scene in Heart of Darkness. Here we see a scene taken from storyboard to completion

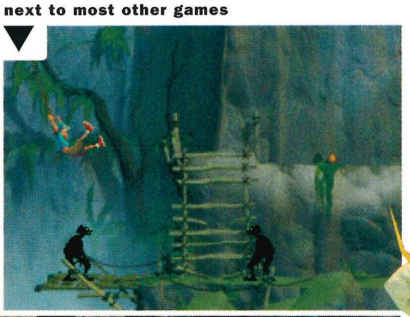


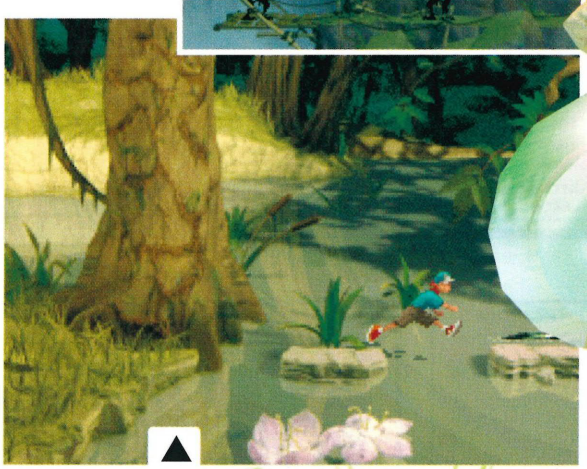


Heart of Darkness' characters have all been given their own individual personailty through a combination of clever rendering and skill



Lovely animation will help to give the game a fluid cartoon feel that looks impressive next to most other games





Heart of Darkness' lush graphics feature a degree of animation rarely seen these days. But then it has been in progress for about a million years

So has it just gained support because it has been missing in action or is there more to it? After all, surely it's just another platform game? Well, *Catherine Simon*, vice president of the *I-Heroes Studio* explained: "The best way to describe *Heart of Darkness* is that it's more like an interactive animated film than anything else. Our European test centre is unanimous: *Heart Of Darkness* is the best platform game they've ever played."

HEART ATTACK

Now that's a strong boast bearing in mind the games already out for the PSX, but we're reliably informed that the way the action mixes between the platform environment and the cartoon animated cut-scenes is nothing short of perfection.

Eric Chahi of *Amazing Studios* takes up the story: "Our goal in creating *Heart of Darkness* was to take gaming to a new level of sophistication. We didn't want our visuals to look like hi-tech 3D computer images, but more like natural backgrounds closer to a painting than hyper realistic rendering, and for characters, something closer to cartoons."

Add to these wonderful graphics an orchestral musical score composed by the renowned *Bruce Broughton* (whose film credits *Rescuers Down Under, Miracle on 34th Street, Tombstone, Baby's Day Out* and *So I Married an Axe Murderer*) and recorded by the 55 piece Sinfonia of London Orchestra and you have a package that is going to look and sounds as great as we expected it to be all those years ago.

Heart of Darkness if tentatively pencilled in for a release at some point over the summer, but then we've heard all that before. We're hoping to get our hands on a full preview version in time for next month's issue, but don't hold your breath PRO



The graphics in Heart of Darkness have been rendered using 3D Studio on the PC and rely on the traditional methods of computer animation. Each character has been meticulously designed. For example, Andy the hero has more than 2,000 frames of animation in one direction alone which allows seamless transitions between his actions. Ocean reckon it is this mixing of transitions that result in a greater and smoother level of interaction

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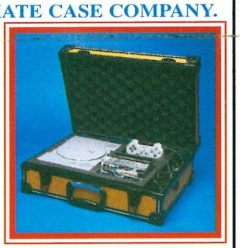
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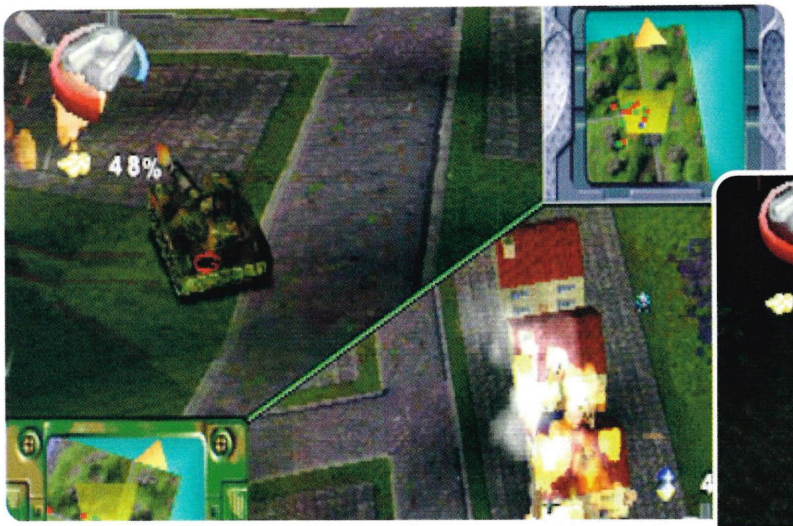
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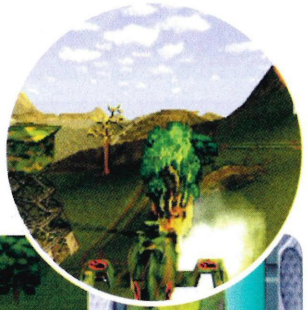
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Wargames

Do you want to play a game of global thermonuclear war?







Split-screen action is providing most of the gameplay at this stage. With enhanced graphics we're expecting great things from Wargames

What's it all about? Deep in the annals of movie history, (well in the mid-eighties at least), there was a film called *Wargames* that excited the new computer nerds that were beginning to appear. It involved hacking into a US military computer and almost kicking off global-nuclear war. Of course that isn't possible, it's just a movie (except for the recent breach of security by British and Yank hackers who claim to have hacked all the US satellite movements the other week).

Tic-Tac-Toe

Well *Wargames* is loosely linked to that. There's no *Matthew Broderick*, thank God. What we have is out-and-out military action with you controlling tanks and armies and so on. *MGM*, the movie giants responsible, have licensed the name out to its videogame arm all these years later. The game is still some way from completion, but there's to be one or two-player versions with deathmatches and the like to get involved in.

At this stage the multi-player side of things is looking like it will be the major selling point, as PlayStation owners begin to clamour for two-way action. *MGM* are spending considerable efforts in making sure that this aspect is just right.

The details of the missions are yet to be revealed, but we do know you'll be able to command squads of various sizes with numerous different kinds of troops and vehicles at your disposal. These you will be able to pit against your enemies in an arcade-style frenzy.

A lot of work still has to be carried out on the graphical side as you can probably see from the screenshots, but *EA* and *MGM* are confident that everything will be sorted out by the time of release.

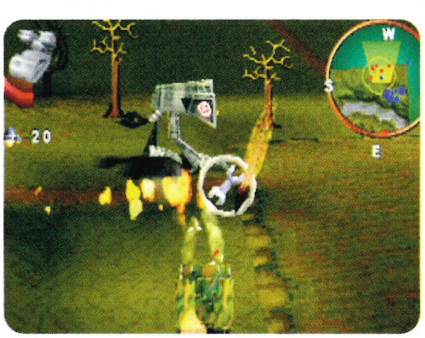




Who's responsible?
MGM/EA

When's it due?
September

MGM haven't delved into gaming that often, but they're putting serious resources into this foray into the PlayStation market



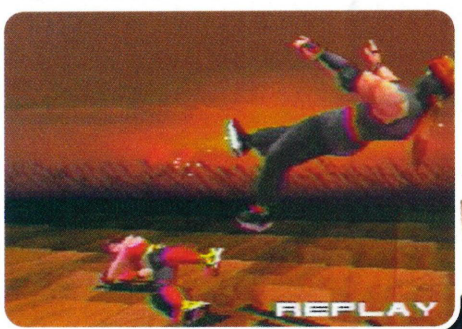
There are various terrains to fight over, all of which will affect your troops and vehicles one way or another

Dead or Alive

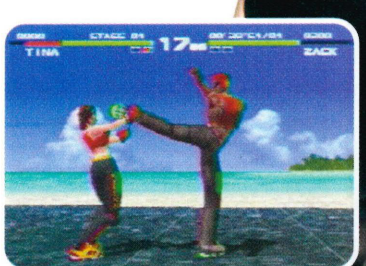
Hello boys! This is a game that's going to attract a lot of knockers alright

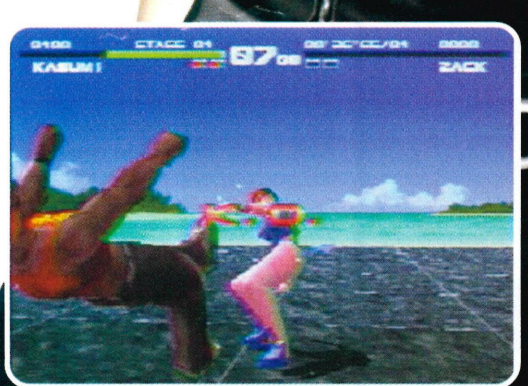


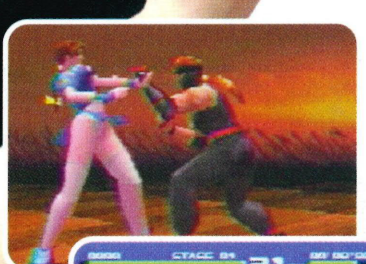
The fighting moves are very realistic. Sony have replaced the fireballs and superhuman leaps with massive quantities of silicone

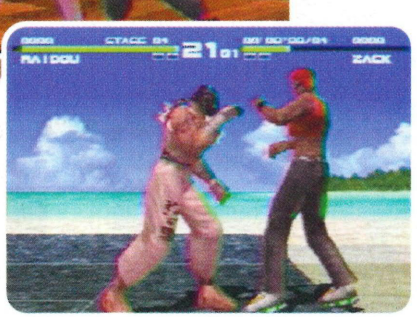


If Russ Meyers ever invented a videogame, it would probably involve lots of girls with pendulous breasts cat-fighting in a series of arenas. Much like this in fact









What's it all about? Warning: If you thought *Lara Croft* was the epitome of sexism in videogames then, dear me, you're not going to like *Dead or Alive* from *Sony*. However, if you're a hormonal timebomb and a definite fan of breasts then this is going to attract your attention, if only to put you in stitches at the comedy value alone.

Dead or Alive is like a virtual *Wonderbra* ad. It's an out-and-out beat'em-up that actually looks like putting up quite a good fight, but your attention cannot fail to be drawn by the ridiculously gratuitous way that the girl characters' knockers bounce around with the finesse of water balloons. It's almost embarrassing, but to cap it off we've got characters in suspenders and hold-ups too. Oh and there's a few male characters in there to fight with too, not that you'll pay them much attention.

Tit wobble

Dead or Alive will ultimately contain numerous fighters, but it was an extremely early version that we got hold of, with many of the features of the final version disabled. Hopefully someone will give these poor things sports bras before they do themselves permanent damage and end up with African breasts.

In many ways *Dead or Alive* plays like the classic *Virtua Fighter* with the emphasis being on actual martial arts style moves rather than producing a spear or ice ball out of nowhere which can burst your opponent's chest open.

With *Tekken 3* looming, beat'em-ups will need to polish up their act and thankfully, sexism aside (or indeed included depending on your standing) *Dead or Alive* carries a fine array of unusual moves that will please the ardent beat'em-up fan no end. We're hoping to get a review copy from *Sony* sometime during the summer, so get ready for an eyeful.

Who's responsible: Sony
When's it due: August

Victory Boxing '98

Float like a bee and sting like a butterfly, or something like that...

What's it all about? To watch quality boxing nowadays you have to pay a fortune to an old Australian businessman who'll bolt a satellite dish to your homes. There was a time when you could watch the main event on good old ITV, but no longer. Nowadays it's all five fight packages containing big name drawcards coming out of retirement to get extra cash (and probably brain damage too).

Bizarrely though, you'd think that more publishers would have attempted a videogame of the sport. There have always been an abundance of beat'em-ups, but very few people have tried to put out a boxing game. Rumours abound that *EA Sports* will be releasing one this side of Christmas, but besides that all we've had to date was *JVC's* excellent *Victory Boxing*. So it makes sense for them to have another shot at the title.

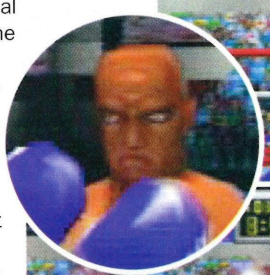
The original *VB* tried to "arcade" the sport up by having female and robot characters as well as the odd special move, but when the code for *Victory Boxing '98* arrived at *JVC's* London office they decided that it was far too arcady and sent it back with instructions to make it more like real boxing. The Euro version subsequently will not arrive until September when it will be very different from its Asian counterpart. It's a shame, but hopefully the final product will be all the better for it.

We're planning to follow this project very carefully so stay with us as we'll be finding out all the new bits that will be appearing in the UK release very shortly.

Who's responsible?
JVC

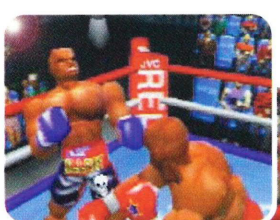
When's it due?
September

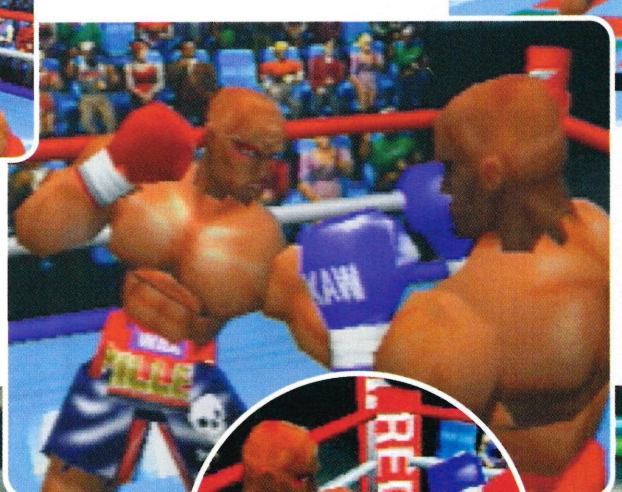






The original was billed as the thinking man's Tekken, so whether this sequel will be similarly compared with Tekken 3 is anybody's guess. JVC would certainly like to think so though





More polygons, better fighters and less arcady play should all add up to make this sequel far better than the original release

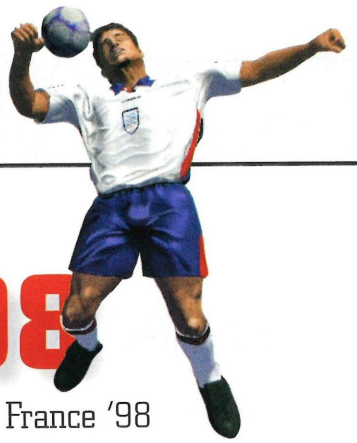






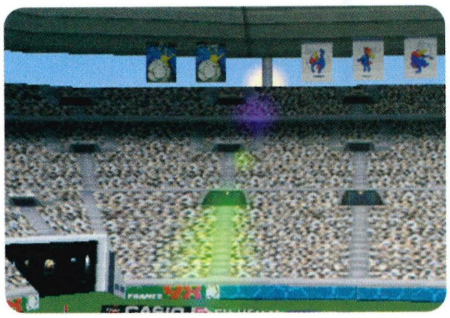


Victory Boxing '98 will be compatible with the new Dual-Shock Analogue controller, so you'll be able to feel every punch as if it was your own head. Cool eh!



World Cup '98

Kick off on the road to glory with your very own virtual France '98





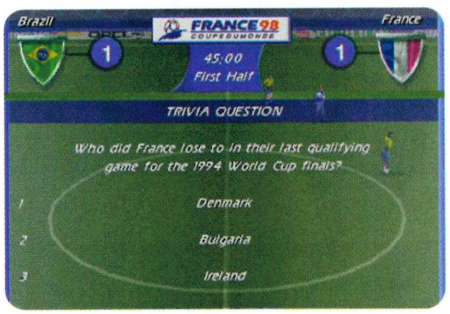
Improved gameplay, but very similar graphics could spell problems for EA's latest football game. It'll obviously still sell by the bucketload though

What's it all about? By the time you read this, expectation for our national team will be high. By the time our next issue comes out, no doubt the manager will be on the back of the tabloids with his head replaced by a comedy turnip or something equally crap.

Also around the same time, *World Cup '98* will be selling by the bucketload. *EA* are counting on this being the fastest selling PlayStation game of all time, but surely it's just a rehash of *FIFA: Road To World Cup '98?* Well yes and no. It looks the same, albeit with a new *World Cup* front end, but from the screenshots you wouldn't really be able to tell them apart.

The engine too has remained the same, but it's the new additions that will probably make it worth buying in the end. In come goalkeepers that save the ball (novel we know), more trick moves and a classics section that allows you to play finals from years gone by. Oh and *Chris Waddle* and *Gary Lineker* will be on the commentary side.

All the *World Cup* stadiums have been rendered to perfection, so you'll be able to recognise them after five weeks of having them shoved down your throat three times a day on all five telly channels. This also gave the programmers the opportunity to spend three months in France getting every detail just right (what a chore).



EA would like to think that in years to come this will be a souvenir of 1998, and well it might be, but you still will not be able to get away from the debate that's about to rage as to whether you should buy the new game when you already own *FIFA RTWC '98.* That'll be a decision based on how much money you're currently willing to splash out.

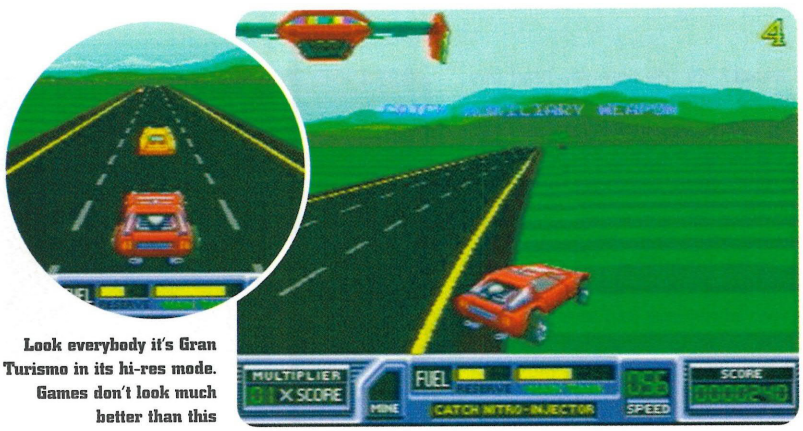
Who's responsible? EA Sports
When's it due? May



A variety of new moves have been included and all are easy to pull off after a little practice. They can make the difference in a tight game too, so they are well worth working out

Midway Atari: Greatest Hits 2

Get your old shape 10 pence pieces out and start shovelling 'em into your PlayStation



Look everybody it's Gran Turismo in its hi-res mode. Games don't look much better than this



What's it all about? Wherever you go you can't seem to get away from all this retro stuff. *Midway* and *GT Interactive* have been quick to exploit this trend, and so inevitably comes *Volume 2* of their *Greatest Hits* featuring old *Atari* titles. This selection looks rather tempting and, although it seems bizarre to be previewing a collection of games that are all over a decade old, the package isn't quite ready yet, hence its position in our preview section.

So what blasts from our pasts are on offer here then? Well we kick off with the truly superb (in its day) *Gauntlet.* This was without a doubt one of the first multiplayer arcade games to be successful. Selecting from four players you had to see how far your 10 pences could get into the dungeons, picking up health and treasure on the way.

Easily pleased

Next up is the once highly successful *Paperboy,* where you use your pedal power to cycle around the neighbourhood delivering newspapers to all your customers. A bad morning will see the newsagent losing orders and you eventually losing your job. They don't make 'em like this anymore (unless you count the mediocre *Courier Crisis* crap released by *BMG* of course).

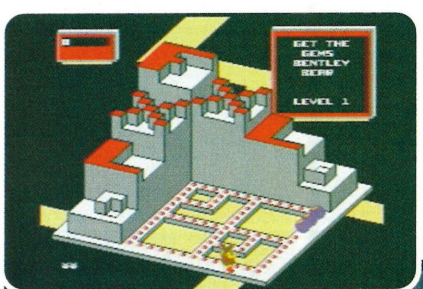
Roadblasters was the first successful attempt at combining the racing and shoot'em-up genres and in the early days this was considered quite an achievement. *Roadblasters* is one of the oldest games here, but it will still be fun to see how far things have progressed.

As for *Crystal Castles,* this is widely regarded as the pioneer of the roller-ball genre that sees you travelling across 3D landscapes, avoiding deadly enemies and hazardous obstacles. You could accuse this of being the fore-runner of *Marble Madness* which is also included in the collection. Now this was a quality arcade game of the time, with a superb soundtrack and wicked assault courses that you had to get your marble to traverse.

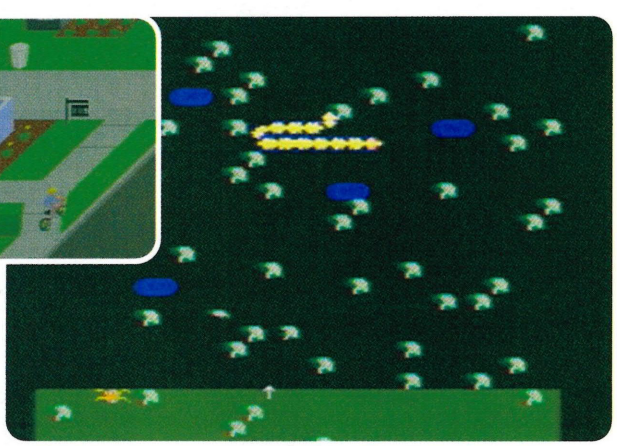
Finally, you'll be able to reminisce with the likes of *Millipede,* which is perhaps the most dated looking game here, but it'll still manage to infuriate the hell out of you.

This seems like the ideal package for retro gamers and we'll let you know how our old timers cope with it in next month's review.

Who's responsible? GT Interactive
When's it due? June







Millipede was one of the first Atari arcade games to build successfully upon the Space Invaders formula. Why anyone would play it now is beyond us

C&C: Retaliation

Set your PlayStation to defcon 5, the commies are back in town

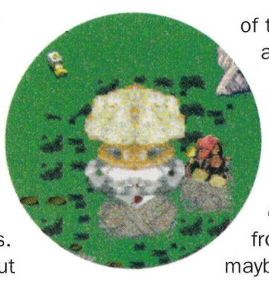






Use the latest wartime inventions at your disposal which include explosive demolition trucks, base busting M.A.D. tanks, super MiGs, the deadly Telsa tanks and electrifying Shock Troopers





What's it all about? What, another *C&C* title? Indeed it is, and aren't we all glad about it, not that we condone war and all the atrocities that go with it at PSPro, well... not unless we win. Which is more or less guaranteed for us Brits as we don't tend to let egotistical pricks control our armies. Erm... well... okay, maybe we do, but they're our pricks and we love 'em.

An accurate account of HMS Forces or not, that's the concept behind the *C&C* titles; anyone can have a go at world domination, which may explain Iraq's sudden interest in strange sheep-dip. Maybe Saddam owns a copy of the original and got a little carried away or something? Hey wait a minute, that's an idea. We should hook him up on an Internet network game, imagine the state of his inferiority complex when his war strategies come a cropper against Nigel aged 12 from Dorset? Though I dunno, maybe that'd just piss him off?

Anyway, those of you who have experienced the gut-wrenching, decision making strategy hits of the *C&C* series should already be preparing for the initial invasion of the next instalment, sub titled Retaliation. It's release is scheduled for the third quarter of '98 and is announced on the back of *C&C Red Alert's* heralding as the best Strategy game for 1997 at this year's *Codie Awards*.





As always it comes on two discs, with separate Allied and Soviet scenarios, as well as a link-up option for some friendly fire. Best keep that option restricted to Europe, since Americans don't seem to understand the concept

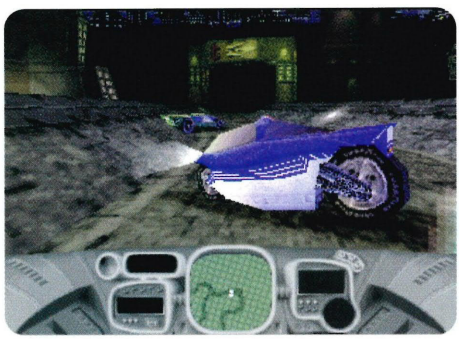
Friendly fire

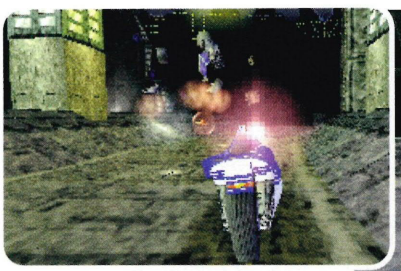
Chronologically positioned between the first two games, *Retaliation* sees the emergence of new technologies on both Allied and Soviet sides, casting doubt over the future peace of the world once more. It will feature another 34 solo missions to undertake as well as over 100 new multi-player battle maps for you to skirmish away on until the day is won, and going off past performances, you can expect this to have an explosive impact later this year.

Who's responsible? Virgin
When's it due? Q3 '98

Crime Killer

TJ Hooker goes virtual, but will his gut slow the gameplay?

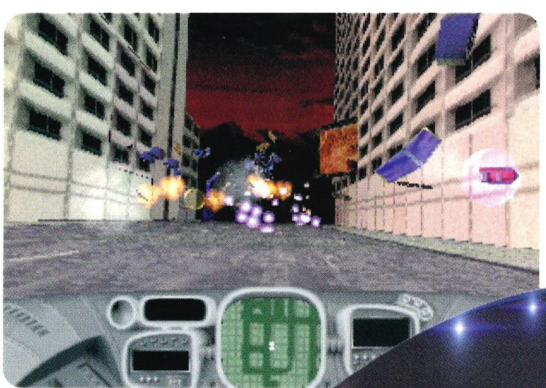






Futuristic cop chases in hi-tech vehicles. It's a boyhood dream come true. Now you can have a go at playing Robocop for real





What's it all about? They say speed kills. Well if that's the case *Crime Killer* from *Interplay* looks set to break a few necks. Being touted as the fastest racing game in the world (a claim *Motorhead* made last month which, also running at 50fps means that they're both neck and neck), *Crime Killer* is set in 2115 where you're some kind of future cop with the task of patrolling the city and controlling the gangs responsible for organised crime (where controlling, inevitably, means killing).

Crime Killer's major selling point is that it allows you to drive around a 3D environment and go wherever you like. There are no set linear paths here. You'll also be able to race around in three different vehicles: the police car, the police bike and the prototype Wing. All have different pros and cons in addition to their own unique special move, which can come in extra handy when you find yourself in a sticky spot.

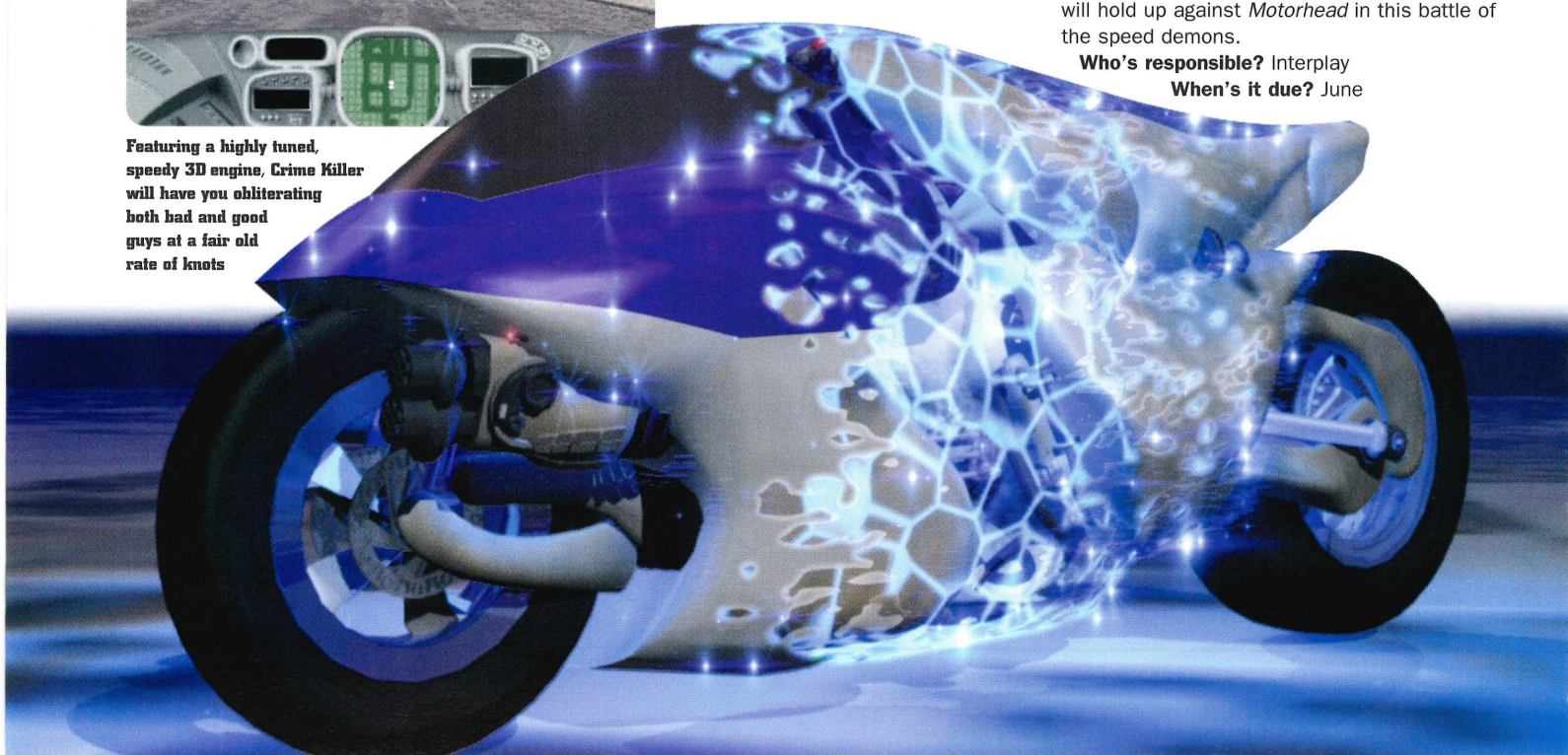
Distress flares

Crime Killer will contain 15 city districts which include nine original maps and six modified versions with new twists and turns to test even the most experienced of drivers. Other worthy mentions include the musical score by *Daren Mahomed* and *Martyn Walsh*, the latter being an ex member of the Madchester, flare-inspiring hammond-organ band, *The Inspiral Carpets*.

Crime Killer seems to have been in progress for aeons now and it's good to see *Interplay* have stuck to their guns working hard to try and get it right. There certainly looks like they'll be enough features to keep everybody happy come release time, so hopefully the gameplay will hold up against *Motorhead* in this battle of the speed demons.

Who's responsible? Interplay

When's it due? June



Featuring a highly tuned, speedy 3D engine, Crime Killer will have you obliterating both bad and good guys at a fair old rate of knots

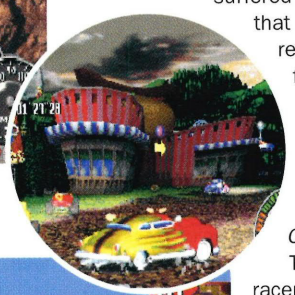
Wreckin' Crew

Take to the streets for a spot of humourous road rage



Sometimes the release date of a game slips and slips. Wreckin' Crew is one such example. We expected to be reviewing this over a year ago!

What's it all about? You probably won't be that surprised to see yet another racing game on the horizon. It's not like there's been a drought or anything recently. Having said that, *Wreckin' Crew* isn't exactly a new title either. Work started on this ooh, a million years ago but for reasons unknown it was put on hold and suffered all the other delays that a software house's release schedule is fraught with.



Now though, *Telstar* have finally managed to tie-up all the loose ends and will be releasing *Wreckin' Crew* very soon.

This is a pure arcade racer. There's nothing overly technical here, it's just intended to be fast, furious and fun. As the subject matter involves using weapons and ramming people off the track road-rage style, *Telstar* are keen to point out that *Wreckin' Crew* is not a shocking game, "The weaponry in *Wreckin' Crew* is supposed to be comical," comments *Luke Vernon*, the game's producer.

"The idea of setting a rabid rottweiller onto other drivers would be ludicrous in real life. *Wreckin' Crew* lets players have the ultimate road-rage revenge that is only joked about in local pub conversations."

Don't know about you lot, but we've never joked about any road-rage revenge in our pub conversations, but each to their own

Check out my hot-rod

A first-person perspective 3D graphics engine powers the game as you hurtle around the streets of cities like New York and Sydney in eight different Hot-Rod vehicles. It's fair to say after a first look that *Wreckin' Crew* isn't going to appeal to everybody, especially the *Gran Turismo* brigade, but if you're after a frantically mad, cartoon style track attack then hours of enjoyment may well be found here. We shall of course, let you know soon!

Who's responsible? Telstar

When's it due? June





Featuring many colourful settings, Wreckin' Crew is the big hope for Telstar this year. They reckon with the extra work that's been put in that they're on to a real winner

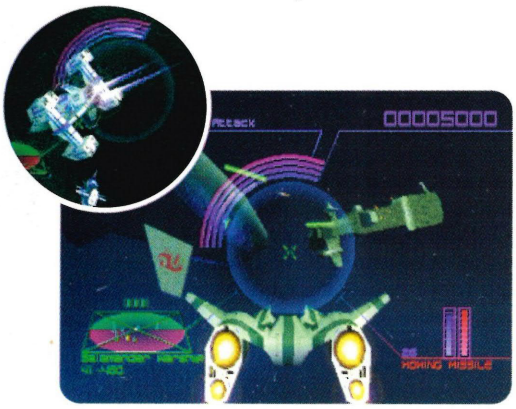






Blast Radius

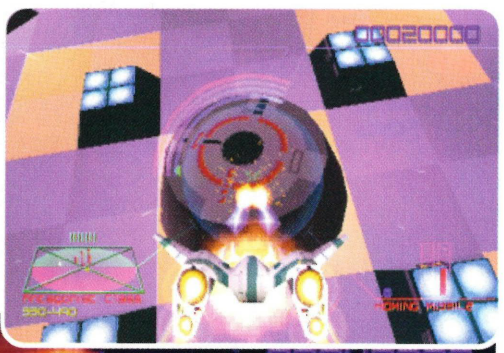
Hands up who thinks 3D space games are getting as predictable as Kevin Greening?



Visually impressive, sonically stunning and another great effort on the horizon from Psygnosis' 3D programmers. Is Blast Radius going to redefine the genre though?



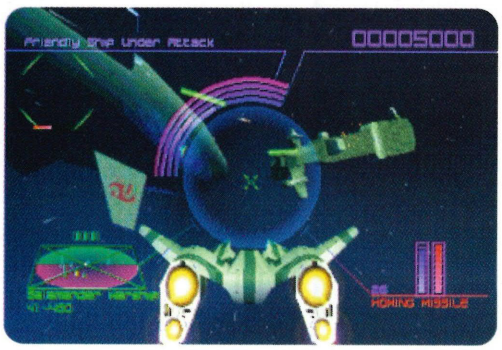








A great deal of work has gone into the explosions and other special effects to make them as realistic and spectacular as possible. But it is looking very much like the bastard son of Colony Wars



What's it all about? The more cynical among you might look at *Blast Radius* and accuse *Psygnosis* of rehashing the excellent *Colony Wars*. If this were true, it would be understandable (if not excusable) because Colony Wars was wildly impressive and much under-rated. Indeed, there were those in these very offices who pointed an accusatory finger at this latest preview package.

Even at this stage you have to admit there are similarities. The 3D engine has been polished up and it all looks very pretty, but it's only a shoot 'em-up after all so nothing ground-breaking there. *Blast Radius* is simply an out-and-out blast set to a soundtrack of "pumping, big-beat tunes" (their words, not ours although it does sound very up-to-date musically).

Psygnosis tell us that the emphasis in *Blast Radius* sways firmly towards the fun factor. They realise that it's all very well having something that looks and sounds good, but if it ends up playing as well as the England cricket team on a particularly poor day, then the PlayStation's more discerning users will simply toss it aside and go back to their Tekkens.

Trigger happy

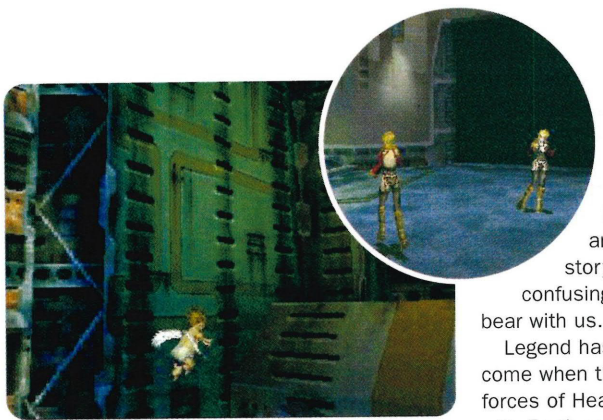
So besides being fun and sounding like a car full of ravers at 2am on a Sunday morning, what will *Blast Radius* bring us to play? Well, it's set to include 31 missions cunningly divided into 10 worlds. You'll be able to fully customise your ship with up to 17 different weapons and you'll be guided through the whole thing with quality sections of Full Motion Video. What more could you ask for?

Blast Radius will get a damn good seeing to in the next issue of PlayStation Pro, so if you're keen, get your order in because we're going to sell out again!

Who's responsible? Psygnosis
When's it due? July

Messiah

The end of the world is nigh. Save yourselves or burn in hell



Fat kids with wings may bear some kind of religious symbolism, but we've always found them more than a little scary! Now you get to control one. Woo-hoo!

What's it all about? *Interplay* have been all quiet for the last few months, but that has obviously all a front since behind the scenes they've been beavering away on *Crime Killer* and this, *Messiah*. Now the storyline behind this is a little confusing, but quite intense and dark so bear with us.

Legend has it that the end of the world will come when the seven seals that keep the forces of Heaven and Hell from direct contact with Earth are broken. Well guess what? The forces from down there have infiltrated the older bit where the seals are kept and are trying to start the Final Battle. Thankfully, though the secret agents in Heaven have been tipped off and have created a vessel for the Holy Light that will save the seals. That's you by the way, although in the game you're known as Bob. Told you it was complex.

Messiah has been creating a stir since *E3* last year and Interplay are determined that this will make the right mark when it's released. Marketing guru at the world-famous *Shiny Entertainment* is *Scott Herrington* who described the game as, "a mix between *Quake* and *Tetris*, with a bit of *Zelda* and *Asteroids* thrown in... except it's not a first-person, puzzle-solving, RPG shooter." Simple eh?

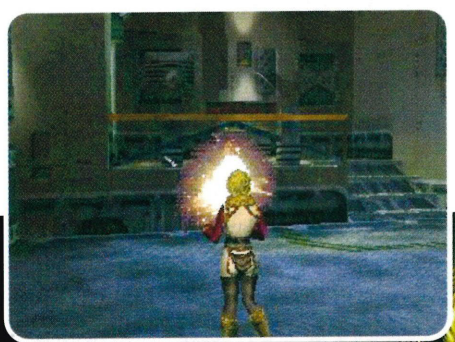
Archangel Bob

Playing as Bob the cherub you're able to assume the personalities of at least 25 different characters, take possession of other bodies and use them to aid your quest. From people who've seen *Messiah* in action it's been described as a cross between an action/adventure/puzzle game, so there's quite a cross-breeding of genres to appeal to a wide variety of people.

We'll be carrying a full review in a forthcoming issue of PlayStation Pro.

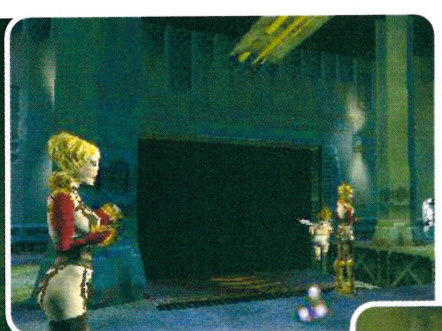
Who's responsible? Interplay

When's it due? July



Throughout Messiah you'll be able to take control of various people's bodies. Each has a different purpose that will become obvious as the game progresses





Shiny Entertainment don't have a reputation for being brilliant for nothing. This new 3D engine, employed within Messiah, is going to be one of the most advanced we've ever seen (so they tell us)





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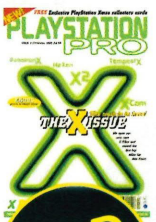
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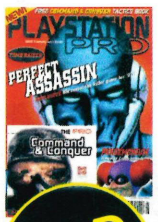
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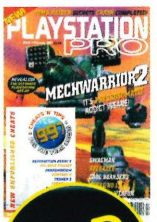
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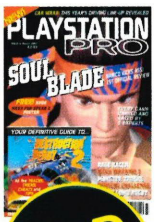
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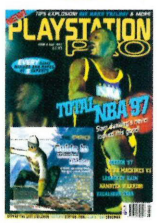








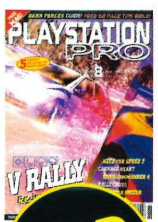




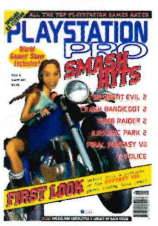
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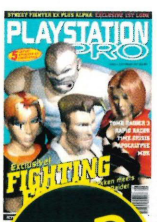
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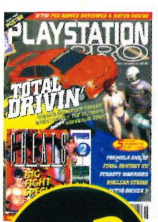




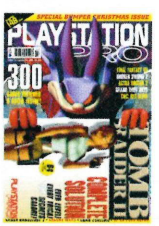
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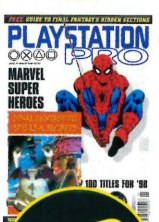








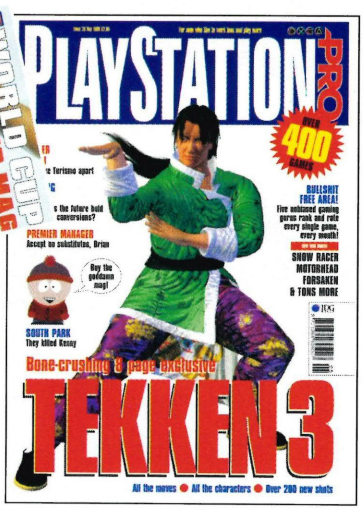
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Free Sports game cheats book, Tekken 3, Bushido Blade, Theme Hospital, Cool Boarders 2, Newman-Haas





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Our biggest ever issue featured our great new look. Exclusives on South Park and Tekken 3 as well as Vigilante 8. Comes free in a huge bag with a Resident Evil 2 Guide and a World Cup Supplement







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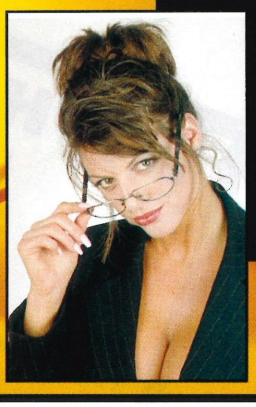
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PRO RELIEF

Hello sweethearts. There's been a massive response to my tips last month. That in itself isn't unusual, I've been helping young boys out with their joystick problems since I left the school playground about an hour ago!. Ha, seriously though, it's that time again where I give you a little gaming relief. There's nothing more frustrating that not being able to perform properly. Only yesterday I had to give Jay the Editor special lessons because he wasn't able to last long enough... in Resident Evil 2 that is...



PRO Q&A

FROGGER

Q&A Dear Miss, I'm having a lot of trouble getting very far in Frogger. I bought the game because I used to like the original version, maybe I'm getting old, but I just seem to keep dying. Any help?
Keith Kahter, Middlesborough

Q&A Well Keith, when it comes to advice on jumping things, you make sure you come to me and you've never go wrong again. Actually, as it happens I can help you, courtesy of these cheat codes that have just landed on my lap. Let me share them with you.

Pause the game to enter the following cheats:

INFINITE LIVES
➡, ■, ▲, ■, ▲, ✖.

OPEN ALL LEVELS
➡, ■, ▲, ■, ▲, **R1**, **L1**, **R1**, **L1**, ●

REBOOT

Q&A Hello! I'm hoping you can help me out. I've just been to the shop and bought Reboot for my younger brother's birthday, but he's well and truly stuck. Please give us aid!
Khalif Moham, Edinburgh.

Q&A I'm here to please Khalif, you should know that by now! Reboot, Reboot... that's the EA game isn't it? Let me see. Ah yes, I've found what I'm looking for. So many men just fumble about without ever finding the right spot. If a job's worth doing as they say...

PLAY AS ENZO
At the main menu, press ⬆, ⬅, ⬇, ⬅, ⬇, **L1**, **R1**, ➡, ⬇, ➡, then start a new game.

DIABLO

Q&A Dear Miss Bea Havin,
I've been playing Diablo for a while now but have got to a point where I'm just stuck and simply aren't hard or experienced enough to progress. Can you help?
Tony Allen, Cheshire.

Q&A Hard or experienced enough? Tony you're just trying to be smutty for the sake of it. This isn't a Carry On film you know. I don't see why I should help you at all if that's your attitude, but I do get paid to provide a service so provide it I will.

DUPLICATE ITEMS
Start a two-player game and load two characters. Now transfer all gold and any equipment to one character. Save that character and start a new game again. When you load the character all you need to do is sell stuff and build a gold and item pile. Save again then repeat as needed.

POY POY

Q&A Dear Miss, I've just managed to get hold of a copy of Poy Poy after reading your review and I love it, but was wondering if there are any cheap ways I can get one over on my mates?
Dianne Hughes, Newquay

Q&A Ooh, Newquay. That's where all those "Surf Dudes" come from isn't it? Hairy men in rubber stroking their planks of wood all night. Is that heaven? I bet you're in your element Dianne. Just to help you out here's what you need.

SUICIDE BOMB
Rapidly tap ✖, ● to fill the glove power bar until it explodes.

SECRET STAGE
To get to a secret stage, beat the master cup without ever using a continue. Then you will go on to fight the king. If you beat him, you'll get the best glove available in the game!

SPAWN: THE ETERNAL

Q&A Being a massive fan of comics I was creaming when I saw spawn in my local shop. I had to buy it, but now I have I'm stuck on it. Can you help me believe I've not wasted my money?
Roy Gardener, Guildford.

Q&A I'd have to be a miracle worker to make you think you haven't wasted your money here Roy. I have got some codes though.

Pause the game to enter the following codes:

INVISIBILITY
Hold **R1**+**L1** and press ■, ■, ●, ●, ▲, ✖

INVINCIBILITY
Hold **R1**+**L1** and press ▲, ▲, ✖, ✖, ■, ●

ALL INVENTORY
Hold **R2**+**L2** and press ✖, ■, ●, ▲, ■, ●

RESET HEALTH
Hold **R1**+**L1** and press ✖, ●, ▲, ■, ✖, ●

RESET MAGIC
Hold **R1**+**L1** and press ▲, ●, ✖, ■, ▲, ●

ALL POWER-UPS
Hold **R2**+**L2** and press ▲, ●, ■, ✖, ▲, ✖

LEVEL SKIP
Hold **L1**+**L2**+**R1**+**R2** press ▲, ✖, ■, ●, ●, ●

RESIDENT EVIL 2

For the millions of you struggling with one of the best games of the year so far, I thought I'd give you a new titbit to cheer you all up. And it's a particular favourite of mine, since I love all my outfit changes.

NEW CLOTHES
With any player start a new game. Don't pick up any items, and in the last alley there will be a STARS member, kill him and he will give you a special key that can open the locker in the 2nd save room for a choice of two outfits.









BLOODY ROAR

This beat'em-up sleeper hit has been an office favourite since its release a few months ago. It's a little classic and should have even more playtime with these tasty cheats.

To alter your character's appearance, follow the instructions below while selecting a fighter.

CHANGE COSTUME
Select your character with ●

COSTUME & BIG HEAD
Hold **L2** and select your character with ●

COSTUME & KID MODE
Hold **R2** and select your character with ●

BIG HEAD ONLY
Hold **L2** and select your character with ✖

KID MODE ONLY
Hold **R2** and select your character with ✖

BONUS OPTIONS
Beat the game on level 4 or higher to unlock more options on the Bonus menu.

CHANGE CAMERA ANGLES
Beat the game with Alice, level 4 or better. Now you can change the camera angle, but not during battle. You can only do this at the option screen.

INVISIBLE WALLS
Beat the game with Fox, level 4 or better, to play without the walls showing. The walls will still be there, it's just that they're clear.

LARGE ARENA
Beat 10 opponents in a row in the Survival Mode to increase the size of the battle field.

LIFE RECOVERY
Beat the game with Bakuryu on level 4 or above for regenerating life bars.

MEATY ARMS
Beat the game with no continues on Level 4 or above to give your characters larger arms.

NO GUAGE MODE
Beat the game with Yugo, on level 4 or better to play the no guage mode.

NO GUARD MODE
Beat the game with Gado, level 4 or better, to play your games without any defence at all!

NO LIGHTNING
Beat the game with Long, on level 4 or better, to stop the lightning effects on certain moves.

PLAY AS INDIAN
Finish the game with all the characters twice on the hardest level, then hold **R1** + **L1** and press ⬆, ⬇ on the character selection screen.

SCHOOL GIRL ALICE
Beat all opponents in Time Attack Mode in under 10 minutes to change Alice's outfit.

SMALL CHARACTERS
While on character select screen; hold **R2** and choose a character with the ● button.

UNLIMITED REPLAYS
After beating an opponent (any round), hit the ▲ button. Every time you hit the ▲ button, you will get to see another replay.

GEX 3D: ENTER THE GECKO

Take the smooth taking lizard lips for a spin in this colourful three dimensional adventure.



UNLIMITED LIVES
To get unlimited lives. Pause the game and highlight the 'Exit' option. Hold **L2** and press ⬆, ⬆, ⬇, ➡, ▲, ⬇.

INVICIBLITY
Pause the game and highlight the 'Exit' option. Hold **L2** and press ⬅, ➡, ▲, ⬇, ➡, ⬅.

LEVEL SELECT
Pause the game and highlight the 'Exit' option. Hold **L2** and press ➡, ➡, ⬅, ➡, ▲, ⬇, ➡. Now unpause the game and press Select to choose a new level.

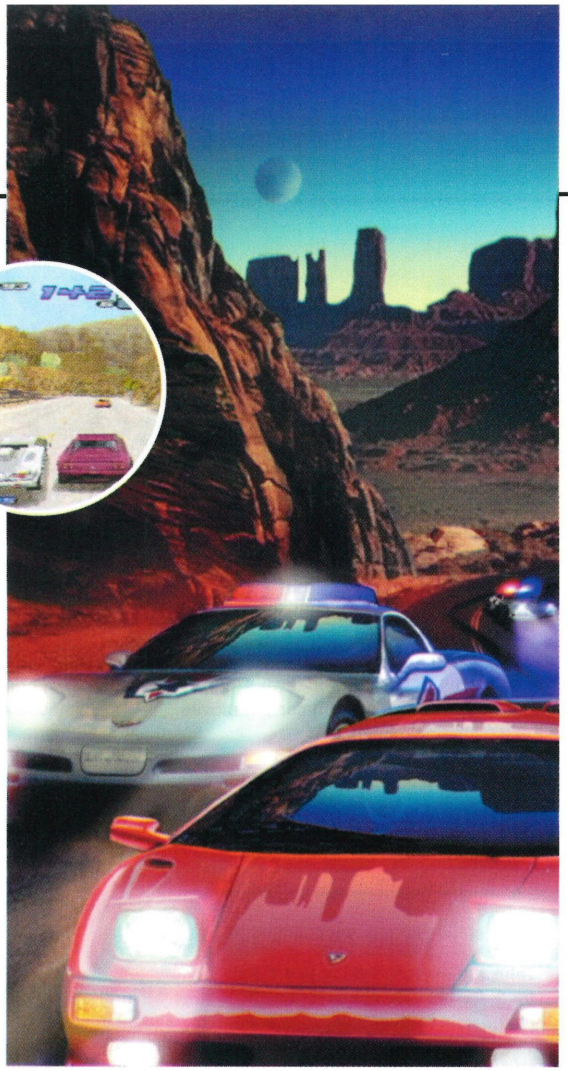
GEX QUOTES
Pause the game and highlight the 'Exit' option. Hold **L2** and press ▲, ⬅, ●, ⬆, ⬇. Now unpause the game and press Select to force Gex to make a comment.

RAMBLING GEX
Pause the game and highlight the 'Exit' option. Hold **L2** and press ⬇, ➡, Up, South, ➡, ⬅, ➡, ⬇, ⬇.

LEVEL TIMES
Pause the game and highlight the 'Exit' option. Hold **L2** and press ➡, ▲, ➡, ⬅, ▲, ✖. Now unpause the game and return to the Media Dimension. Press **SELECT** to view the level statistics or ■ for the fastest times.



PRO RELIEF



NEED FOR SPEED 3: HOT PURSUIT

If you feel the need to cheat mercilessly at this game then you've come to the right place. These cheats give you access to all the tracks and cars and enable you to fiddle with the camera views. Enjoy.

ALL REGULAR CARS AND TRACKS
Enter **SPOILT** as a name on the options screen.

ADDITIONAL CAMERA VIEWS
Enter **SEEALL** as a name on the options screen. Additional views normally only available during replays will be available under the options screen.

BONUS TRACKS
Enter one of the following names at the Options screen to race on the corresponding track.

TRACK	NAME
The Toy Room Car	PLAYTM
Caverns Underground	XCAV8
Auto Cross Canyon	XCNTRY
Space Race	MNBEAM
Scorpio-7 Underwater	GLDFSH
Empire City Bonus	MCITYZ



SKULLMONKEYS

Pause the game and enter the following cheats:

FREE HALO
Press **R2**, ●, ●, ⬇, ⬅, ●, ➡, ⬇.

MAXIMUM LIVES
Press **L1**, ▲, ⬇, ⬅, ●, **SELECT**, ■, ➡.

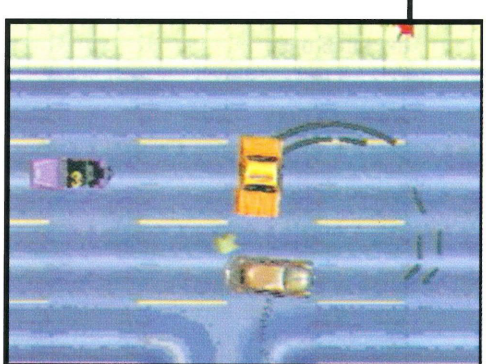
VIDEO CLIP PASSWORDS
1. ●, **L1**, ✖, ▲, ■, ✖, ✖, ✖, **L1**, **R1**
2. ●, **R1**, ■, ▲, **L1**
3. ✖, **R2**, ■, ✖
4. ■, **R1**, ■, ✖, ✖, ✖, ●, ●
5. ✖, ▲, ✖, ✖, **R1**, ■, ●, ✖, **L1**, ✖



GRAND THEFT AUTO

Want to become a made-man, have loads of cash and sell your auto-biograpghy to Martin Scorcese? Look no further than these cool cheats.

Enter your name as:
Groovy – all weapons
Weyhey – 99999990 points
Blowme – coordinates
Eatthis – wanted level max
Feck – Liberty City 1 and 2
TVTan – San Adreas and Liberty City parts 1 and 2
Caprice – All cities parts 1 and 2
Chuff – no police
Turf – all cities
Mademan – all cities and weapons
Theshit – all cities, all weapons, infinite and 99 lives
Bstard – access to all maps, lots of money and all weapons



PRO PLATINUM

PANDEMONIUM

A Platinum release has breathed new life back into this psychadelic platform romp. Take Fargus and Nicky on another retina seering journey with these handy passwords and ultra useful cheats.

PASSWORDS
EVILDEAD – Enemies come back to life (oh that's useful)
TWISTEYE – Hold **L1** and **L2** and move D-pad left or right to rotate screen. (trippy)
THETHING – hold **L2** and press ● to change shape. Press **L2** and ✖ to change back again
HARDBODY – Invincible
BODYSWAP – Press ▲ to swap characters
OTTOFIRE – Unlimited weapon
VITAMINS – 31 lives
CORONARY – Loads of extra hearts
BORNFREE – Go to any world of your choice
TOMMYBOY – Finish a level to get a free pinball game
CASHDASH – Bonus screen when finished level

RIDGE RACER REVOLUTION

This is a superb game that has undeservingly been forgotten about due to the arrival of its angry younger brother. Take this back on the track and cheat your way through this PlayStation old master.



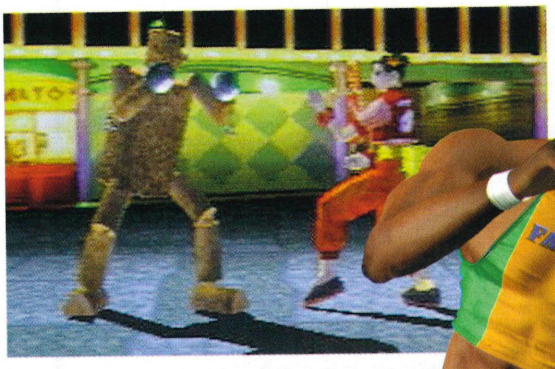
ALL THE CARS
Hold ⬇ all the buttons (■, ●, ✖, ▲, **R1**, **R2**, **L1**, **L2**, start, and select) and when the cheesy arcade game comes on, press and hold ⬇ on the direction pad. This shoots out a homing laser that destroys all the ships with no effort, which will give you access to all the cars.

REVERSE MODE
Turn around at the beginning, right before you enter the main raceway, and run through the 'wall.' You will race the track with all the turns reversed.

SECRET CARS
Finish first in each track (novice, advanced, and expeert), then return to race each track in Time Trial. After beating each track the special car (Devil, Kid Car or White Angel) for that track will be available.

TEKKEN 3

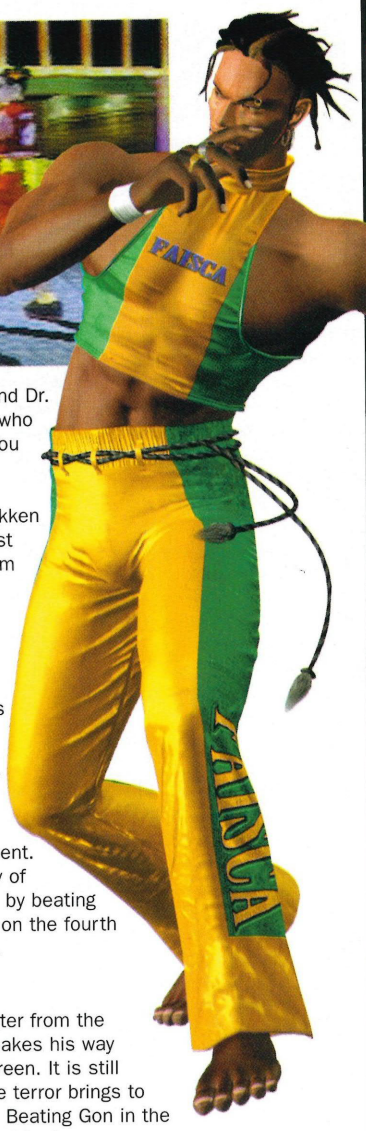
Since its release on import, we've had dozens of calls asking about the hidden characters and play modes. So here's a little help for those lucky enough to own a copy of this amazing game.



Unlocking hidden characters is less complex than it was in Tekken 2. Instead of gaining a new character when you beat the game with a specific character, in Tekken 3, every time you beat arcade mode you gain a new character. The hidden characters are unlocked in the order they were time-released in the arcade version. All of the characters featured in the arcade are included, plus two additional PlayStation-specific characters: Gon the dinosaur and Dr. Boskonovitch.

Essentially, the total number of playable characters is 21, although that number can be debated. Tekken 3 has 21 distinctive fighters, but two characters have alter egos that some would insist on calling separate characters. For example, when you select Kuma (the bear) with the kick buttons, he becomes a giant panda bear named Panda. And Eddy Gordo, when selected with the start button, is a '70s disco guy named Tiger. Tiger, however, could be considered a separate character because he has his own ending, but Panda's ending is the same as Kuma's. While we're on the subject of alter egos, it's worth pointing out that when you pushed the start button while selecting Nina Williams in the arcade version, you were given Anna Williams. In the home version of Tekken 3, Anna Williams has her own character box and ending.

The PlayStation version of Tekken 3 has all of the characters from the arcade version plus two PlayStation-only characters, Gon, the cute little yellow dinosaur from the Japanese comic books, and Dr. Boskonovitch, the doctor who saved Yoshimitsu's life. You might remember Dr. Boskonovitch from Yoshimitsu's ending in Tekken 2: He was the old scientist that Yoshimitsu saved from the helicopter.



DR. BOSKONOVITCH
Dr. Boskonovitch is the scientist responsible for all kinds of crazy stuff: As a fighter he has a little trouble standing up straight; actually, most of the time he is flat on his back, due to his injuries suffered from an experiment. His moves consist mostly of kicks and you unlock him by beating force mode three times - on the fourth you fight the good doctor.

GON
The cute dinosaur character from the Japanese comic books makes his way from the pages to the screen. It is still unclear what this pint-size terror brings to the Iron Fist Tournament. Beating Gon in the Tekken ball mode unlocks him for use.

DATEL GAME PRODUCTS

To keep you Datel owning readers quiet, we're beginining a new Datel cheat coloumn which should stop you ringing us for codes for the damn thing. This month we're featuring the game of the moment, RESIDENT EVIL 2.

CHEATS FOR LEON
(Use one code at a time and do not equip with any other character weapon).

LEON AND SIDEPACK
800CC428 0002
BANDAGED LEON
800CC428 0004
RPD CAP LEON
800CC428 0006
LEATHER JACKET LEON
800CC428 000A
HUNK
800CC428 000C
TOFU
800CC428 00D
ADA
800CC428 000E
INFINITE HEALTH
800C794A 00FF
CUSTOM SHOTGUN (L2 +▲)
D00C5F3C 0011
800CC638 FF08
CUSTOM MAGNUM (L1 +✖)
D00CDF3C 0044
800CC638 FF06
GATLING GUN (R2 +■)
D00C5F3C 0082
800CC638 FF12
FLAMETHROWER (R2 +▲)
D00C5F3C 0012
800CC638 FF10
ROCKET LAUNCHER (R2 +✖)
D00C5F3C 0042
800CC638 FF11

SCENE MENU
Get a score of 0 in Galaga '88 by allowing all 40 aliens to pass by.'Secret Bonus' will then appear. Options such as 'Normal', 'Noon', 'Evening' and 'Night' may now be selected from a 'Scene' menu.

MOVE SPOTLIGHT
Hold **L1** + **R1** and press the controller buttons to resize and move the spotlight.

TOMB RAIDER

Now that you've all rushed out and bought Lara's early exploits on Platinum, you'll be needing these handy cheats to help you out.

ALL WEAPONS
Go to the Inventory screen, press **L1**, ▲, **R2**, **L2**, **L2**, **R2**, ●, **L1**.

LEVEL SKIP
Go to the Inventory Screen, press: **L2**, **R2**, ▲, **L1**, **L1**, ●, **R2**, **L2**.

TEKKEN 2

What do you mean you haven't bought this yet. It's one fo the greatest fighting games of all time, and now that it's on Platinum it's simply a must-buy.

BIG HEADS
After enabling all characters, hold select while choosing your character. If you do it again (with the same character), their head gets bigger.

WIRE FRAME MODE
This is a first person view of the fight, which only works on one player mode. After enabling all characters, hold **L1** while you choose the character you wish to fight with.

KAZUYA'S PURPLE SUIT
Choose Kazuya and hold ⬇ Start before the Vs. screen appears. He will now be garbed in purple.

SUPER JUGGLE MODE
Select a player and hold Select and ⬆ until fight starts . You should hear a punch sound.

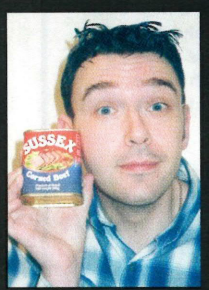
ROGER/ALEX
You have to be in one player mode. Then let the opponent of the third match beat up on you until you have a little life left (5%). Crush the opponent and the announcer will say "GREAT!" You do this two bouts in a row and the next fight should be against Roger/Alex. Beat them and play through the game. Roger/Alex should be selectable.

SWEAR DAMIT!
To make your character swear in Japanese press ➡,⬅,■, and ● at the end of the fight!



RANT

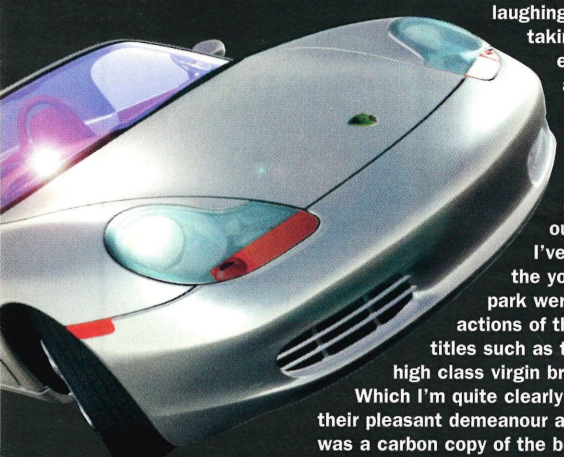
Coat Roundell in pollen and turn women into bees, and he'd still find fault with the colour of their lipstick. Nothing's right, everything's wrong, and this is the page that tells you so. He doesn't offer answers, he just has a rant, and frankly, won't be argued with. This month: Videogames as behavioural influence...



Videogames affect lives, it's as simple as that. The messages contained within the gameplay of these so-called forms of entertainment are responsible for the altered behaviour of youths and adults alike, and the pattern shows no sign of abating.

For example, I live near a park and have witnessed first hand the local youths behaving in a manner quite clearly influenced by console titles. Just the other weekend I was cleaning my car when the sound of adolescent chatter broke my reverie.

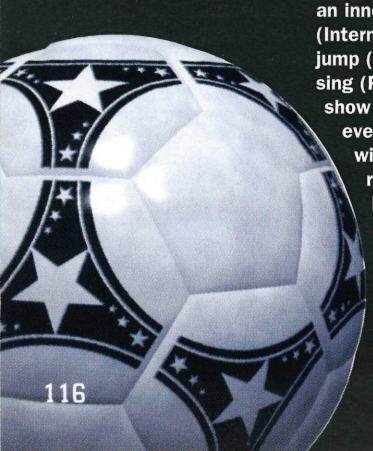
Alerted from my soapy cocoon, I found myself transfixed as a small group of teenagers emerged. Smiling at me as they passed by, this gang of game-heads continued to the communal grassy patch and, in full view of anyone who cared to look, blatantly shed their tracksuit bottoms. Needless to say the scene soon degenerated within minutes, these software-obsessed, techno-sheep, clad only in shorts, shirts and the standard accepted footwear, were kicking a football, running, laughing and generally taking all manner of exercise on what was a lovely, sunny day.



How do I know they're obsessed with video games? Well it doesn't take a genius to work it out. I've played FIFA, I've played Actua and if the youths on my local park weren't imitating the actions of the characters in titles such as these then I'm the high class virgin bride of Imran Khan.

Which I'm quite clearly not. My God – even their pleasant demeanour as they passed me by was a carbon copy of the behaviour such a gentleman footballer as Gary Lineker might have displayed in a similar situation. Is it a coincidence that he's "starred" in more than one game? It's a lot to swallow.

But that's only the beginning I'm afraid because, already, there is organisation to the worship of the stylish grey god. Within the tight confines of my very own neighbourhood I've seen children and adults alike virtually running amok in mindless imitation of what passes for an innocent pursuit. I've seen them run (International Track and Field); I've seen them jump (Crash Bandicoot); I've even heard them sing (Parappa the Rapper). On a late night TV show on a little known satellite channel, I've even seen men wear uniforms and hit a ball with a stick as a crowd of thousands roared them on like animals (VR Baseball). I'd like to say there's hope, but in my heart of hearts I know it's too late. You see readers, I'm one of them.

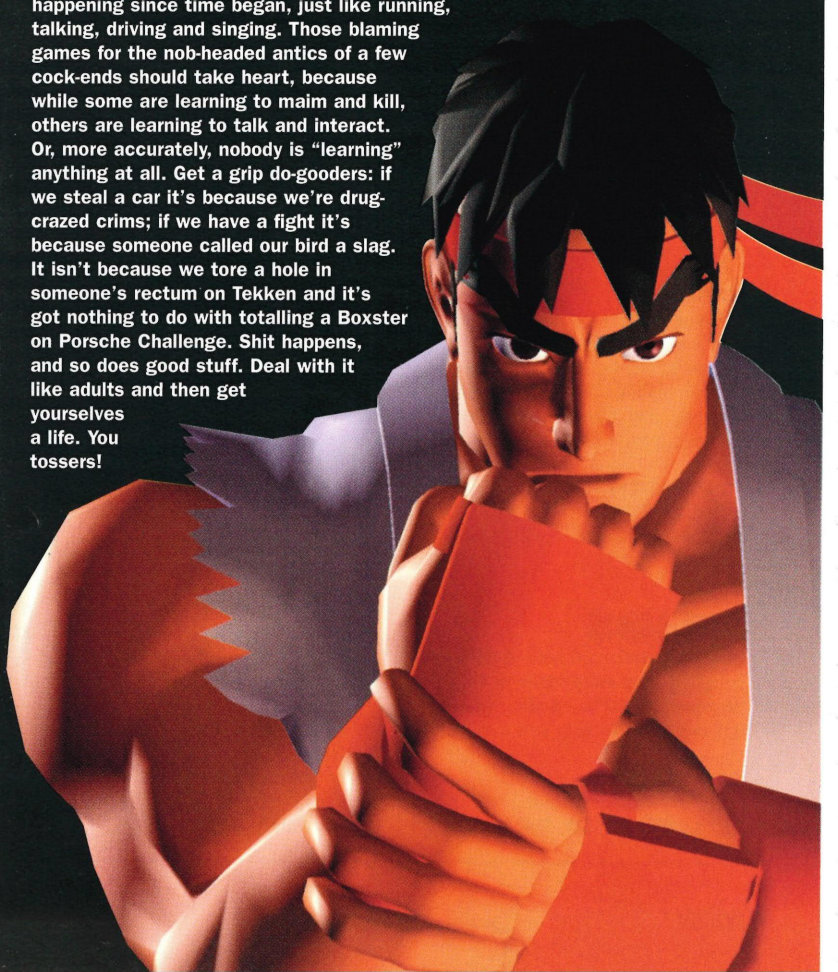


In a strange town only recently I became confused as to precisely where I was. Asking a passer-by for directions I stopped mid-sentence, stricken with horror upon realisation that I had done the same thing in Sony's Broken Sword. But it doesn't end there. On a number of occasions, I've passed vehicles which were travelling more slowly than I — a thing I've done in Ridge Racer many, many times. Computer games had taken me over and I hadn't even realised it!

Now, I'm talking shite here aren't I? But I'm not the only one. You see, two kids kick the crap out of each other and you can't move for soft-arsed ponces blaming Mortal Kombat. Someone steals a car and its the fault of Grand Theft Auto, and in the genuinely tragic (yet strangely hilarious) case of the Australian youth who stabbed his mother because she wouldn't give him money "for the machines", it was, of course, the fault of the machines. Bollocks.

Whilst some are learning to maim and kill, others are learning to talk and interact with each other

Stealing cars, having fights and stabbing people happens every day, and it's been happening since time began, just like running, talking, driving and singing. Those blaming games for the nob-headed antics of a few cock-ends should take heart, because while some are learning to maim and kill, others are learning to talk and interact. Or, more accurately, nobody is "learning" anything at all. Get a grip do-gooders: if we steal a car it's because we're drug-crazed crims; if we have a fight it's because someone called our bird a slag. It isn't because we tore a hole in someone's rectum on Tekken and it's got nothing to do with totalling a Boxster on Porsche Challenge. Shit happens, and so does good stuff. Deal with it like adults and then get yourselves a life. You tossers!



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PRO DIRECTORY

Updated each month, this section of the mag gives you all the info you need on every PSX title currently available. All the Platinum titles are highlighted for you, plus our Pro scores adorn each game too

If you're wondering how us professionals come up with the Pro scores for each game listed, the box below should explain things in more detail

1	ABSOLUTE SHITE. DO NOT BUY THIS GAME, NO MATTER WHAT
2	SHODDY, UNINSPIRED CRAP THAT SHOULD NEVER BE PLAYED
3	VERY POOR. NOT THE WORST THING EVER, BUT NOT FAR OFF
4	WELL BELOW PAR WITH SOME MAJOR LEAGUE FLAWS
5	AVERAGE. STRICTLY FOR THE HARDCORE FAN OF THE GENRE
6	NOT A COMPLETE DOG, BUT COULD HAVE BEEN A CONTENDER
7	CHECK IT OUT FIRST BEFORE PAYING HARD CASH FOR IT
8	A POTENTIAL CORKER THAT OOZES QUALITY IN SMALL DOSES
9	AN ESSENTIAL PURCHASE THAT'S RECOMMENDED BY ALL OF US
10	THE PERFECT GAME IN EVERY CONCEIVABLE WAY. A RARITY

RENT IT! Entertaining for a while, but the lastability factor is highly doubtful. Fun for a night though

MUST BUY! Simply essential. This is quality gaming and must be bought immediately. If not sooner

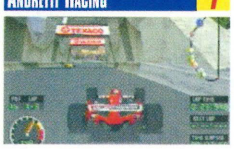
TRY B4 U BUY A quality title that's a preferred taste. Not everyone's cup of tea, but well worth trying out

AVOID! Not worth a penny of anyone's money. This is naff, bland and one to avoid at all costs

RACING

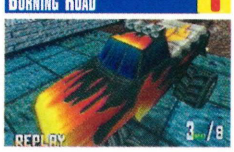
Put your foot down and avoid those corners! Yes, it's that popular genre that seems to double in size as each month goes by. Full on driving action ahoy!

Andretti Racing 7



RENT IT — 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



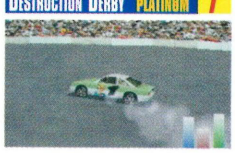
RENT IT — A fast paced racer which never performed as well as it should. Check out its improved sequel Explosive Racing

Cyber Speed 3



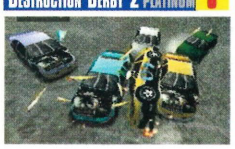
AVOID! — A dreadful racer where your craft is attached to a wire and you spend hours throwing the joypad around in disgust. Avoid!

Destruction Derby Platinum 7



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

Destruction Derby 2 Platinum 8



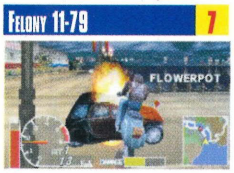
MUST BUY — This is what the original should have been - A much improved drive with fancier graphics and gameplay to boot. Buy it!

Explosive Racing 7



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

Felony 11-79 7



RENT IT — Smash everything, drive through shopping malls and cause utter mayhem. Let down by a lack of tracks

Formula One 8



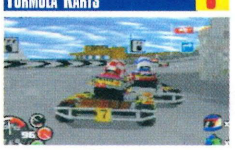
TRY B4 U BUY — Grand Prix racing as it should be, tons of action and speed a plenty. But it's now time to check out F1 '97

Formula One '97 8



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

Formula Karts 8



TRY B4 U BUY — Silghtly above average racer which differs to any other racing game. The speed and handling are as they should be

Hardcore 4X4 8



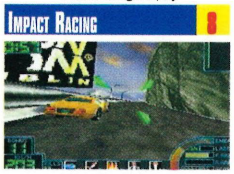
RENT IT — Ever wondered why people drive their trucks around in the dirt? Neither have we, but this title offers just that

Hi-Octane 5



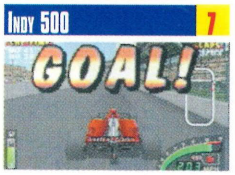
AVOID! — This could have been so good, but at the end of the day it was let down with poor graphics and even worse gameplay

Impact Racing 8



TRY B4 U BUY — More thrills and spills in yet another fast paced racer. But even speed addicts will notice the flaws. Worth a look

Indy 500 7



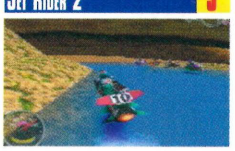
RENT IT — A distinctly average racer which features a few nice touches but it's got a lot of top competition to live up to

Jet Rider 4



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

Jet Rider 2 5



AVOID! — The original was shite and this sequel doesn't exactly break the mould. Due to dodgy controls and slack graphics

Kart Duel 4



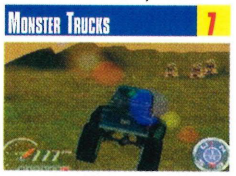
AVOID! — A fine attempt which looked the part but lacked the all important gameplay factor needed in driving games

Micro Machines v3 Platinum 8



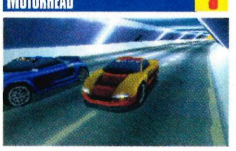
MUST BUY — Midget motor racer that everybody must own. The four player mode will have you glued to the TV for days on end

Monster Trucks 7



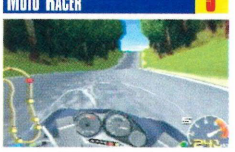
TRY B4 U BUY — Big wheels can only mean big fun in this trucking great game. You even get to crush cars in front of a big crowd too!

Motorhead 8



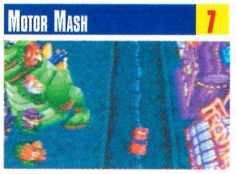
TRY B4 U BUY — The fastest PlayStation racer of all time. Gremlin will be well pleased with their first game coming out of Sweden

Moto Racer 5



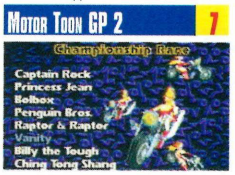
AVOID! — Full on motorcycle racing. Looks reasonable and plays well, but ends up being a little too samey to be essential

Motor Mash 7



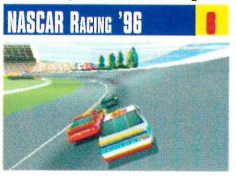
RENT IT — Playable and enjoyable Micro Machines clone. It doesn't quite have what it takes to topple the classic MM however

Motor Toon GP 2 7



TRY B4 U BUY — 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 8



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

NASCAR '98 7



TRY B4 U BUY

It's another stunning case of so near yet so far for a NASCAR game. It looks top but has a few niggling faults

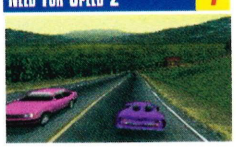
Need For Speed Platinum 8



MUST BUY

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

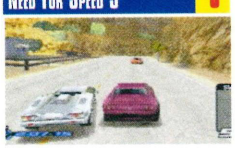
Need For Speed 2 7



RENT IT

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

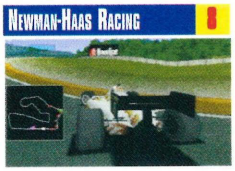
Need For Speed 3 8



TRY B4 U BUY

The series keeps getting better, but this, and the others for that matter, are far from perfect. Check it out though

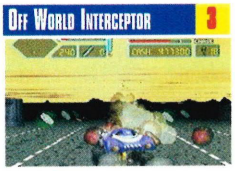
Newman-Haas Racing 8



TRY B4 U BUY

Having more speed than F1 '97 yet less depth makes this a game for those who love the frantic pace of the sport

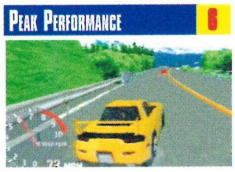
Off World Interceptor 3



AVOID!

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!

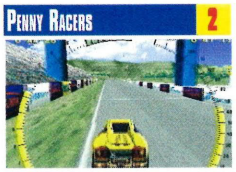
Peak Performance 8



RENT IT

Another average racing game which looks decent enough but fails to impress in the grand scheme of things

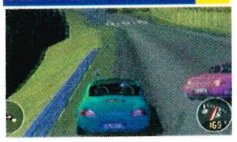
Penny Racers 2



AVOID!

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

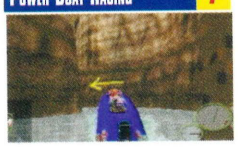
Porsche Challenge Platinum 8



MUST BUY

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

Power Boat Racing 7



TRY B4 U BUY

A bit of something different although the racing elements are as you'd expect.. Worth a look, but a bit soggy

Rage Racer 8



MUST BUY

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

Rally Cross 8



RENT IT

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

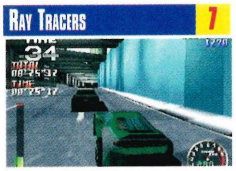
Rapid Racer 7.5



RENT IT

A powerboat racer which differs from all the other racers because now you're on water. Good fun for a short time

Ray Tracers 7



RENT IT

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

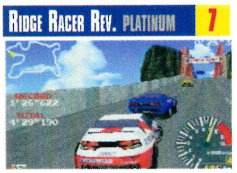
Ridge Racer Platinum 7



MUST BUY

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

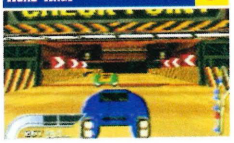
Ridge Racer Rev. Platinum 7



MUST BUY

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

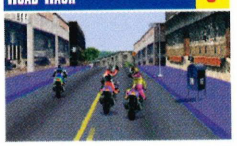
Road Rage 3



AVOID!

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

Road Rash 5



RENT IT

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

Speedster 4



AVOID!

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

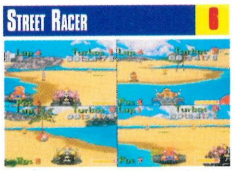
Starwinder 6



RENT IT

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

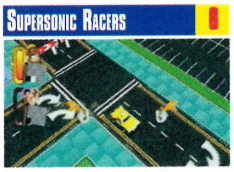
Street Racer 8



RENT IT

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

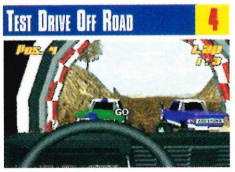
Supersonic Racers 8



RENT IT

Wacky races style romp which owed plenty to MM V3. Watch out for the sequel, Circuit Breakers, that's coming soon

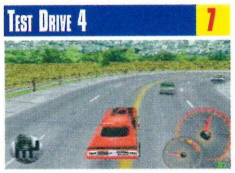
Test Drive Off Road 4



AVOID!

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

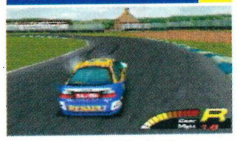
Test Drive 4 7



TRY B4 U BUY

Hindered only by a lack of a two player option which is what these games are all about at the end of the day. Shame

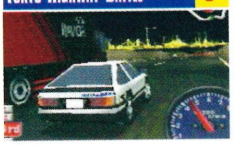
TOCA Touring Car 8



MUST BUY

A fantastic Touring Car racer which is up there with the V-Rallys and Total Drivin's of this world. An absolute corker

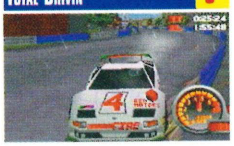
Tokyo Highway Battle 8



RENT IT

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

Total Drivin 8



MUST BUY

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

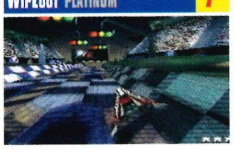
V Rally 8



MUST BUY

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

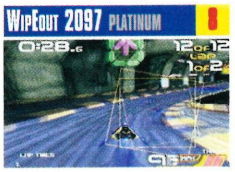
WipEout Platinum 7



MUST BUY

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

WipEout 2097 Platinum 8



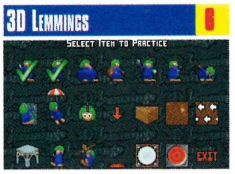
MUST BUY

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 there's something here for everyone

3D Lemmings 8



TRY B4 U BUY

An updated and special 3D addition to the on going Lemmings family. Save the suicidal green haired fops

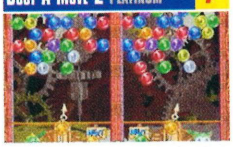
Blast Chamber 7



RENT IT

Dancing On The Ceiling is taken quite literally in this frantic explosive puzzling sport from the future. Confused?

Bust A Move 2 Platinum 7



MUST BUY

Crazy puzzler which lacks the longevity of games such as Lemmings, but it's still a playable and fun two player game

Bust A Move 3 8.5



TRY B4 U BUY

Quality puzzle game that will keep the girlfriend occupied for many a night while you're down the pub getting hammered

Grid Run 8



TRY B4 U BUY

Fast paced chases around a floating grid. Good fun in small doses, but the longevity simply isn' there I'm afraid

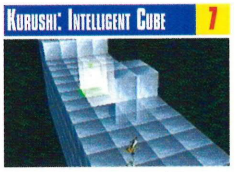
Hebereke Popoitto 3



AVOID!

Wacky Japanese puzzle game which owes plenty to Tetris and even more to the game's developers LSD intake methinks

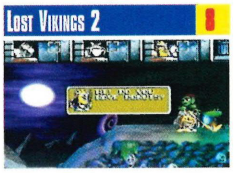
Kurushi: Intelligent Cube 7



TRY B4 U BUY

Bizarre puzzler in which you capture cubes as they roll towards you. Great fun but limited by a lack of variation

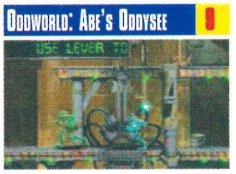
Lost Vikings 2 8



TRY B4 U BUY

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 8



MUST BUY

The ultimate puzzle game. It's quirky, it's fun and more than a little perplexing. A truly original game

Super Puzzle Fighter Turbo 8



MUST BUY

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...

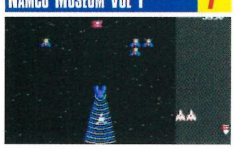
Atari Arcade's Greatest Hits 5



RENT IT

A rather dreary compilation of old 'classics' with an added backstage tour of the games' origins and creators

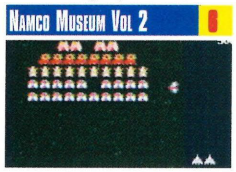
Namco Museum Vol 1 7



MUST BUY

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 8



RENT IT

Unfortunately, there's very little to recommend in this second collection of old games with dodgy graphics

Namco Museum Vol 3 4



AVOID!

The further into the catalogue you go the fewer classic games there are it seems. Why do they still churn these out?

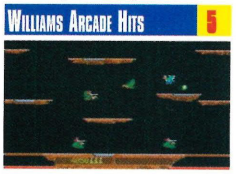
Namco Museum Vol 4 5



RENT IT

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 Hits 5



RENT IT

Yet another retro game compilation which surprisingly has the odd treat hidden away in its innards

RPG

Final Fantasy VII has put the life back into role-playing games. If you've finished that already and are hankering for more, then check out the games in this section

Diablo 8



TRY B4 U BUY

EA convert their successful PC slash 'em-up cum RPG very successfully onto the console format. Check it out

Final Fantasy VII 8



MUST BUY

The biggest game ever! A three disk bonanza which is already wreaking havoc on the feeble minded. Buy it now!

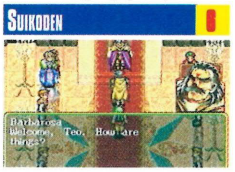
King's Field 7



TRY B4 U BUY

Standard and graphically basic role playing romp from Sony HQ. Despite it's looks though, the gameplay is impressive

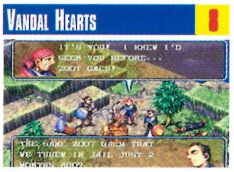
Suikoden 8



TRY B4 U BUY

The first true RPG to appear on the PlayStation is unfortunately a little drab for everyone's taste. Try it

Vandal Hearts 8



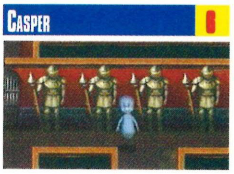
TRY B4 U BUY

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 8



TRY B4 U BUY

The friendly ghost makes his video gaming debut in this dodgy platformer aimed at the younger games player

Castlevania 8



RENT IT

Probably the only game to have never changed since its initial release back in the Dark Ages. Not taxing and not clever

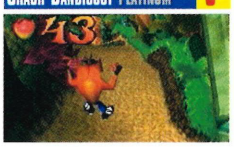
Cheesy 4



AVOID!

Semi 3D platform mayhem featuring a squeaky mouse. Crash is miles better though, believe me

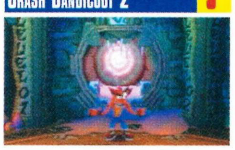
Crash Bandicoot Platinum 8



MUST BUY

A classic platformer soon to be revamped in a stunning sequel. Until then, enjoy this laugh a minute adventure

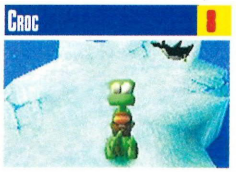
Crash Bandicoot 2 8



MUST BUY

A massive improvement on the original and offers more variation than its predecessor. Yet another winner for Sony

Croc 8



TRY B4 U BUY

A rival to Mario 64 only for the PlayStation. It's cute, cuddly and is in a league of its own. A must buy for the youngsters out there

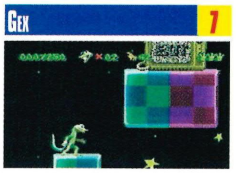
Earthworm Jim 2 5



RENT IT

An unimpressive update of a SNES platform hero. But Jim's 2D PSX outing shows its age and should have been better

Gex 7



RENT IT

One of the best early platform games available. Bags of fun all round with a wise cracking comedy American lizard

Gex 3D Enter The Gecko 8.5



TRY B4 U BUY

Another Mario attempt for the PlayuStation this time featuring the comic vocals of Brit playboy Leslie Philips. Good stuff

Hercules 8



TRY B4 U BUY

Yet another Disney release which combines gameplay with their well known cartoon style. It's a little too simple though

Jersey Devil 8



TRY B4 U BUY

A slightly twisted take on the Croc theme. Tricky to get to grips with initially. but rewarding if you persevere for a little while

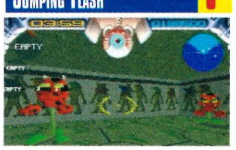
Johnny Bazookatone 3



AVOID!

Johnny searches for his band mates in this dreary 3D platformer. Another one for the younger gamer out there

Jumping Flash 8



RENT IT

An average 3D platformer which was easily completed, yet loved by all. Well worth a look though and quite fun

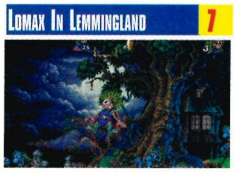
Jumping Flash 2 7



RENT IT

An improvement on its predecessor with more depth and originality. But again, this is easy to complete

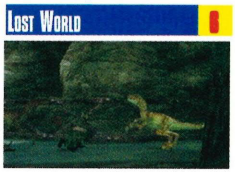
Lomax In Lemmingland 7



RENT IT

A strange platformer featuring the loveable Lemmings. All in glorious 2D too. what a rare treat, eh?

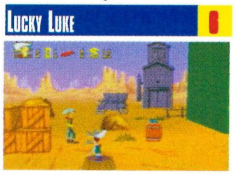
Lost World 8



TRY B4 U BUY

Jurassic Park 2 hits the PSX and gives you five varying characters to play with, including a massive T Rex

Lucky Luke 8



TRY B4 U BUY

It may be aimed at kids but that's no excuse for releasing a sub-standard platform game really is it?

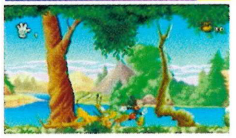
Mega Man X3 4



AVOID!

Uninteresting platformer from the age-old Japanese super hero. This would have looked out of date on the SNES. Avoid!

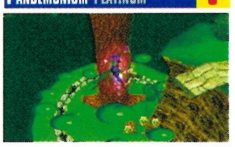
Mickey Mania 7



TRY B4 U BUY

The world's most famous mouse is uninspiring in this standard platformer, but offers good old school fun

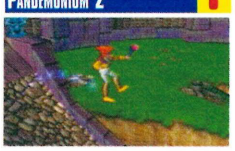
Pandemonium Platinum 8



TRY B4 U BUY

A 2D platformer made to look all 3D due to the PlayStation's graphic capabilities. Well worth a purchase

Pandemonium 2 8



RENT IT

Tests your eyes like no other game. Colour blind players may have trouble with the over the top colour schemes

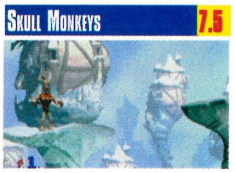
Rayman Platinum 7



MUST BUY

The first classic platformer to hit the PSX and now available for £20 thanks to the handy wallet-friendly Platinum Range

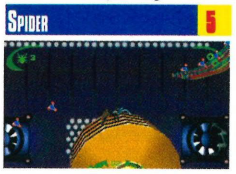
Skull Monkeys 7.5



TRY B4 U BUY

Awesome graphics but lacking in lasting appeal. It's good to see someone thinking about what they're doing

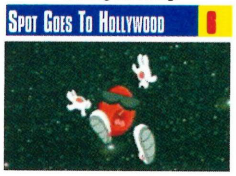
Spider 5



RENT IT

Arachnid platformer which could have and should have been so much better. Rent it before spending cash though

Spot Goes To Hollywood 8



RENT IT

Spot returns with a fine 3D platformer based on various classic movies from yesteryear. Try before you buy

Trash It 4



AVOID! 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 2



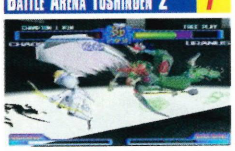
AVOID! Knuckle dusters abound in this absolutely dreadful Dark Knight scrapper. Looks and plays really really badly. Avoid!

Battle Arena Toshinden Platinum 8



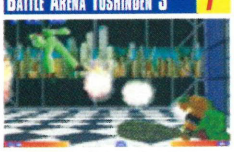
MUST BUY One of the first scrap fests to arrive on the PSX. Oddly enough it still manages to excite after all this time

Battle Arena Toshinden 2 7



RENT IT 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



RENT IT The third member of the Tohshinden family gives you everything the other two games did and lots more

Bloody Roar 8



MUST BUY A surprise hit around the office due to the morphing chrarcters who change from human to animal form throughout

Bushido Blade 8.5



TRY B4 U BUY A slash 'em up if the truth be known. The fights are short lived due to being cut short (quite literally) with one blow

Criticom 8



RENT IT 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 1



AVOID! Truly one of the worst beat 'em-ups to ever appear on any format ever. In every way a dodgy movie licence

Darkstalkers 7



RENT IT Capcom use their SF2 engine to bring these Hollywood style horror icons to life in this enjoyable 2D fighting beast

Dynasty Warriors 7.5



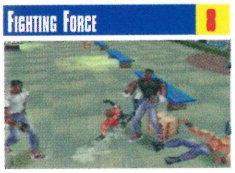
RENT IT Costume drama beat'em-up that has a little more plot than your average fighter. Not the best of its genre, nor the worst.

Fantastic Four 2



AVOID! Streets Of Rage style action with Marvel Comics' famous family of mutants. The thing is, the gameplay is really terrible

Fighting Force 8



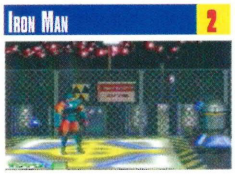
TRY B4 U BUY Better than most arcade beat 'em-ups. Varied pagga situations and more than a few shocks hold your interest

Iron & Blood 7



RENT IT A medieval style beat 'em- up giving you Orcs, Knights and freaky little wizards to slap around a standard arena

Iron Man 2



AVOID! 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 8



RENT IT Kick boxing from your armchair sounds like fun, but this brave attempt was a disappointment for all who played it

Marvel Super Heroes 8



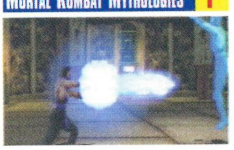
RENT IT Yet another standard beat 'em-up only this time having a link with superheroes such as Spiderman and Wolverine

Mortal Kombat 3 7



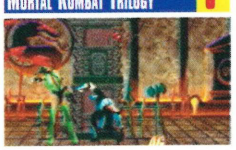
TRY B4 U BUY The 2D bloodfest which was hyped to the max when it got released over here. Not as cool as you may think

Mortal Kombat Mythologies 1



AVOID! This is a bland and poorly thought out fighting adventure. Certainly worth avoiding like crazy

Mortal Kombat Trilogy 8



RENT IT Imagine all three of the Mortal Kombat series on one CD! Well it's now a reality, but offers nothing new

Psychic Force 5



AVOID! 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 5



AVOID! An improvement on the original but still lacks that killer punch needed to take it storming into everyone's game collection

Soul Blade Platinum 9



MUST BUY This remains one of the finest moments for beat 'em- up fans worldwide. Buy this or Tekken 2 and you're laughing

Star Gladiator 8



TRY B4 U BUY Instantly playable scrap fest with lasting appeal and tongue-in-cheek Star Wars inspiration. Well worth a look

Star Wars: Teras Kasi 8.5



MUST BUY Technically Soul Blade with Stormtroopers, this offers some good solid gameplay with the favourite blokes in the universe

Street Fighter Alpha 2 7



RENT IT the all time classic beat 'em-up makes a welcome second appearance on the PlayStation. It's still a classic

Street Fighter Collection 8



TRY B4 U BUY An ideal collection for any fan of series, but don't expect anything new here, this is purely a SF collection.

Street Fighter EX Plus Alpha 9



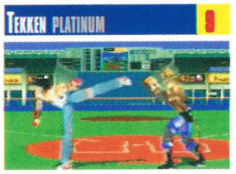
TRY B4 U BUY At last! The perfect fighting formula gets the 3D makeover it so richly deserves. Street Fighter fans will love it.

Street Fighter: The Movie 1



AVOID! 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 8



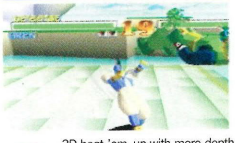
MUST BUY Kicked its way into the homes of many a true beat 'em-up nut and is now available for a mere £20. And it still rocks!

Tekken 2 Platinum 8.5



MUST BUY The far superior sequel remains an essential buy for anyone who loves 3D arcade fighting. You simply must own this

Tobal No.1 7



TRY B4 U BUY 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 5



AVOID! An American arcade fighter that looks much better than it plays. Drab, uninteresting and untimately forgettable

Yuska 4



AVOID! A weird and frantic 3D beat 'em- up from Japan which was truely disappointing in almost every department

X Men: Children Of The Atom 7



TRY B4 U BUY Standard beat 'em-up fayre from the people who brought ius Streetfighter and Mavel Super Heroes

Zero Divide 7

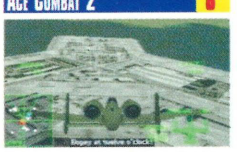


RENT IT Yet another futuristic beat 'em-up. But this one features polygon robotic thugs instead of butch blokes

FLIGHT SIMS

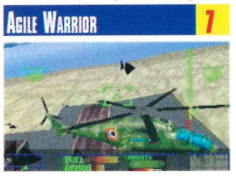
Often the butt of many a cruel gag, flight sim enthusiasts are seen as geeky nobs by their few friends. The question is, are you a geeky nob?

Ace Combat 2 8



TRY B4 U BUY Addictive and uncomplicated Top Gun shoot 'em-up from arcade masters Namco. And don't worry, it's not a flight sim.

Agile Warrior 7



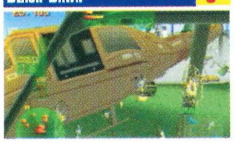
RENT IT An action packed flight simulator which has you blowing things out of the sky left, right and centre. Good fun

Air Combat Platinum 7



TRY B4 U BUY — So-so flight sim from the PlayStation's early days. Now available for £20 via Sony's popular Platinum Range

Black Dawn 8



TRY B4 U BUY — A frantic helicopter flight simulator that's also the sequel to the brilliant Agile Warrior. This offers more, obviously

Firestorm: Thunderhawk 2 8



MUST BUY — Blow the opposition away with your savage chopper in this revamped version of an old classic. Worth a blast

Gunship 7



TRY B4 U BUY — A more technical helicopter flight sim which although being less trigger happy, still does the business though

Racing Skies 5



AVOID! — The skies aren't so much raging, more mildly littered with the odd enemy. In every way average, so try before you buy

Strikepoint 8



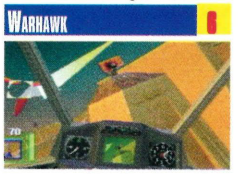
RENT IT — A fairly bog standard flight sim which offers nothing new but is quite good fun for novices and experts alike

Top Gun: Fire At Will 4



AVOID! — 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 8



TRY B4 U BUY — An early helicopter simulator which looks basic but manages to enthrall with its 'must finish' airborne missions

Wing Commander 3 8



RENT IT — Mark Hammill stars in the third of the ongoing space dog-fighting series. FMV in abundance, little gameplay

Wing Commander 4 8



RENT IT — More of the same if the truth be told, with Mr Hamill showing his face again in even more FMV based tales

Wing Over 7

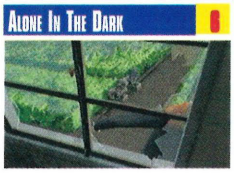


TRY B4 U BUY — Strange flight sim. Crammed with aerobatic action and more than a little variation in aircraft. Offers more than most

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



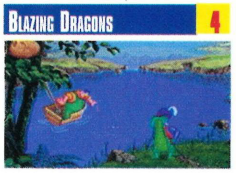
TRY B4 U BUY — Haunted house adventures which looks quite odd, but still manages to do the business on the old adventure front

Ark Of Time 4.5



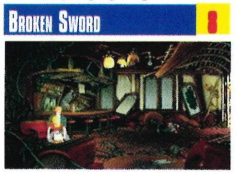
TRY B4 U BUY — Ark of Shite would have been more appropriate. Not even worth using the CD for one of those classy clocks

Blazing Dragons 4



AVOID! — Monty Python humour abound in this average adventure that's technically aimed at the younger gaming audience

Broken Sword 8



MUST BUY — The best point and click adventure on the PlayStation so far. A sequel is already here, but buy this anyway!

Broken Sword 2 8



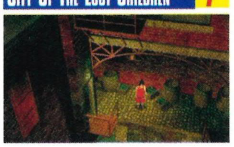
TRY B4 U BUY — Equally as impressive as its predecessor containing more puzzles and more than a hint of some fine humour

Chronicles Of The Sword 2



AVOID! — A hot contender for the worst PlayStation game ever, this King Arthur-esque adventure is simply dreadful

City Of The Lost Children 7



TRY B4 U BUY — An epic adventure based on the average French arthouse movie of the same name. Well worth a look, if only for the graphics

Cyberia 7



TRY B4 U BUY — A PC conversion which looks a dream but has limited appeal to those after some good solid adventuring fun. Novice friendly

D 3



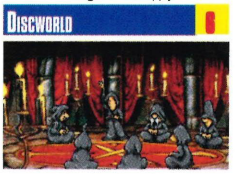
AVOID! — An interactive movie adventure which lacks longevity, gameplay, excitement and playability. In a word, Avoid!

Deathtrap Dungeon 8.5



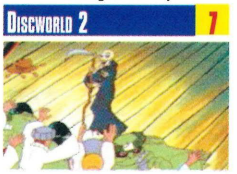
MUST BUY — Ian Livingstone's fantasy world is brought into PlayStation heaven by Eidos. Only the strongest need apply

Discworld 8



RENT IT — Terry Pratchetts finest moment transformed itself very well onto the PSX and this is simpy amazing. A must buy!

Discworld 2 7



TRY B4 U BUY — Ultra barmy sequel to the ultra barmy Discworld. It's undoubtedly one for fans of Terry Pratchett's wacky books

Excalibur 2255AD 7



TRY B4 U BUY — A 3D adventure which has the right mix of action and puzzles, but looks and plays too much like Tomb Raider

Herc's Adventures 5



AVOID! — A decidedly average game which is over all too soon. Fun for a little while but that's about it. Just misses the mark

Legacy Of Kain 8



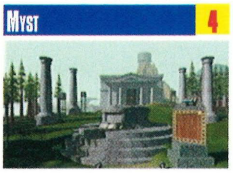
TRY B4 U BUY — Vampire strangeness in this huge and impressive blood sucking adventure. Well worth the money though

Little Big Adventure 7



TRY B4 U BUY — This quirky adventure game was lovingly converted from its PC origins and manages to entertain for a short while

Myst 4



AVOID! — Average static screen jobbie from years ago. It won't amaze by any means, but it still has strong puzzling elements

Nightmare Creatures 8



TRY B4 U BUY — This received some harsh treatment from other mags, but it's definitely one for the gore and action fans out there

Overblood 7



RENT IT — A futuristic adventure game which is over way too soon for the experts and sadly too boring for the novices

Perfect Weapon 7



RENT IT — A strange adventure game which has you punching your way to victory over a series of lush and lovely environments

Pitfall 3D: Beyond The Jungle 7.5



TRY B4 U BUY — A surprisingly good 3D rendition of one of the original console games. Activision are hitting a bit of form

Psychic Detective 3



AVOID! — An FMV adventure game which may be too strange for some and simply too bonkers for the majority

Reboot: Countdown To Chaos 7



TRY B4 U BUY — Average shooter that promised a bit more. Worth a look if you are a mad, bad blasting maniac with nothing better to do

Resident Evil 8.5



MUST BUY — The ultimate gore fest for any fan of zombie movies. Puzzles, shotguns, big snakes and blood thirsty freaks ahoy!

Resident Evil 2 8.5



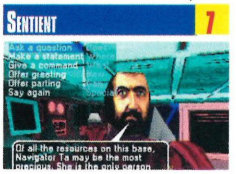
MUST BUY — With two CDs full of action, this blood soaked stormer is an essentail purchase for everyone. This is simply superb

Resident Evil: Directors Cut 8



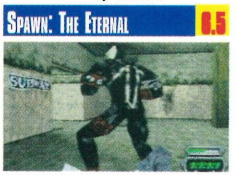
TRY B4 U BUY — A two disk spectacle which brings you three variations on the original game and a 20 minute demo of the sequel

Sentient 7



TRY B4 U BUY — An adventure game which struggles for identity among the other more stronger titles currently available

Spawn: The Eternal 8.5



TRY B4 U BUY — Interesting idea but let down by ropy gameplay. Fans of the movie and comic may be keen to take a look though

Swagman 8



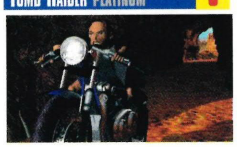
RENT IT — A spooky cartoon adventure which owes much to classic Zombies Ate My Neighbours on the SNES

Time Commando 5



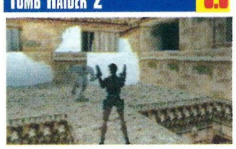
AVOID! — You travel through time in this 3D adventure although the effort really isn't worth bother. Leave this well alone

Tomb Raider PLATINUM 8



MUST BUY — The game which launched a thousand magazine covers. Still does well thanks to the recent sequel

Tomb Raider 2 8.5



MUST BUY — What more can be said about Lara Croft and her raiding of tombs? Nothing. This is what you expected and a whole lot

SHOOT 'EM UPS

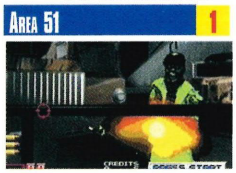
3D arcade blasters are a popular breed with PlayStation owners worldwide, and as you can see from the list below, there are plenty on offer to choose from

Alien Trilogy PLATINUM 8



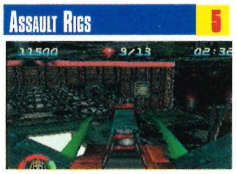
MUST BUY — You are officer Ripley taking on wave upon wave of slimy space critters in this top PSX version of the three classic movies

Area 51 1



AVOID! — 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 5



RENT IT — Amazing gameplay and a top soundtrack made this tank battler a winner in the PSX's early days. Try before you buy

Auto Destruct 7



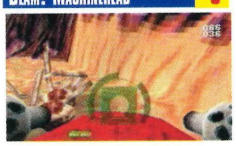
RENT IT — A mixed bag this one. The fine line between a tough challenge and impossibility has been breached. Average at best

Battle Stations 1



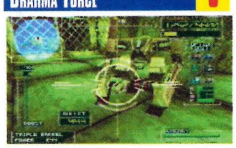
AVOID! — This is bascially Battleships for losers who can't be bothered getting the board game out of the loft. Please avoid!

Blam! Machinehead 5



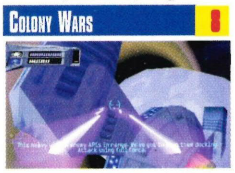
AVOID! — 3D shoot 'em- up with some nice graphical effects, but let down by over complex missions and bad handling

Brahma Force 8



TRY B4 U BUY — The third Kileak release is surprisingly absorbing stuff. Much more enjoyable than the previous two put together

Colony Wars 8



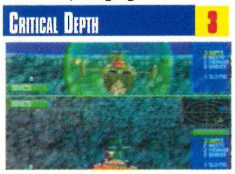
TRY B4 U BUY — A futuristic blaster which sees you following many different paths as you battle your way across the cosmos

Contra: Legacy Of War 5



RENT IT — A 96 remix for the bland horizontal scrolling shoot'em-up from yesteryear. Nothing special going on here

Critical Depth 3



AVOID! — After Tigershark failed to sink the Bismarck, this shot just wide too. The idea is great. The game's crap

Crusader: No Remorse 7



TRY B4 U BUY — Take control of a robotic assassin in this isometric viewed PC conversion. Bullets and blood aplenty

Crypt Killer 2



AVOID! — Truly awful conversion of the arcade game where you shoot badly drawn zombies and comedy mummies

Dark Forces 7



TRY B4 U BUY — Star Wars meets Doom in this classic blaster. If you want to kill Stormtroopers, then this is the game for you

Descent 7



TRY B4 U BUY — Shoot 'em- up in the Doom style only you're flying around in a spaceship head first down a massive mine shaft

Descent 2 8



RENT IT — Less than impressive sequel that offers more of the same. The thing is, we've seen it all before. Boring!

Disruptor 7



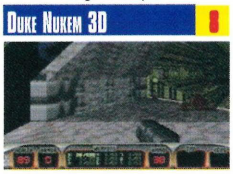
RENT IT — A pretty marvelous and varied Doom clone giving you huge weapons and a fair bit a FMV mission briefing

Doom 8



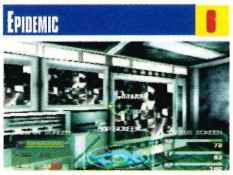
MUST BUY — The game that spawned a thousand imitators. A classic in every sense of the word. Buy this game today!

Duke Nukem 3D 8



MUST BUY — Sure it's been released ages ago on other formats but if truth be told this is still pretty darn marvellous

Epidemic 6



RENT IT — The sequel to Kileak doesn't offer anything new, but gives you more enjoyable corridor roaming fun

Exhumed 7



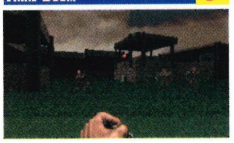
RENT IT — Slightly flawed but not too bad Doom clone set in ancient Egypt. Could have been a contender to Doom's crown

Fade To Black PLATINUM 8



MUST BUY — A 3D shoot 'em- up which impresses many with the lavish graphics and exotic locations and cut sequences

Final Doom 8



TRY B4 U BUY — The rather splendid sequel to the monster hit giving you more of the same, with added bonus bits of blood

Firo & Klawd 5



AVOID! — Rather bland cartoony shoot 'em- up affair where you control a comedy cartoon cat and ape duo. Honest!

G-Police 8



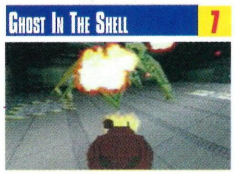
TRY B4 U BUY — Class futuristic shoot 'em-up. Flying around mega cities and blasting the bad guys has never been so much fun

Galaxian 3 4



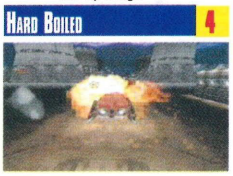
AVOID! — Dull shoot 'em- up similar to Starblade Alpha, but not as impressive. The arcade version rocks, but this sucks

Ghost In The Shell 7



TRY B4 U BUY — Another comic inspired Sony game that never quite manages to make it to the big time. A nice try though

Hard Boiled 4



AVOID! — Based on the cult comicbooks of Frank Miller, this has you driving a big tooled-up Chevy in futuristic settings

Hexen 2



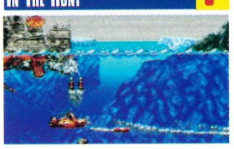
AVOID! — Eagerly awaited drivel which at the end of the day that should have been brilliant. As it stands... just avoid it

Independence Day 2



AVOID! — Maybe the worst movie license ever, even if we take the awful SF: The Movie into concideration. Absolute cack

In The Hunt 3



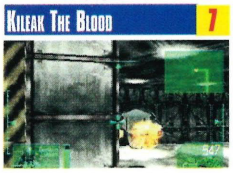
AVOID! — Underwater shoot 'em- up where you piss around in badly drawn sprite-based subs. Another one to avoid

Judge Dredd 7



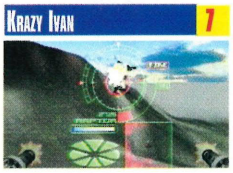
RENT IT — Stunning shoot 'em-up from Gremlin. The bullets will be flying and the adrenalin pumping almost immediately

Kileak The Blood 7



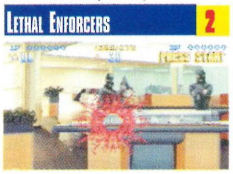
TRY B4 U BUY — By today's standards this wouldn't fare too well, but it ruled the roost in its hey day. See Epidemic, its sequel

Krazy Ivan 7



RENT IT — Slightly flawed 3D shooter giving you full control over huge Russian Mech robots. Worth a look if you fancy it

Lethal Enforcers 2



AVOID! — If filth could be transformed into a game then this is as downright stinky as you could go. A contender for worst game ever

Lifeforce: Tenka 8



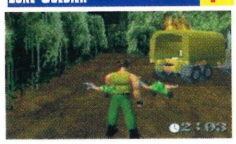
TRY B4 U BUY — Gloomy surrounds, stunning graphics and wicked gameplay make this one a winner. But maybe long in the tooth now

Loaded Platinum 8



MUST BUY — An isometric viewed shooting gore fest which isn't all that bad. And at £20 a throw you're laughing! Buy it!

Lone Soldier 1



AVOID! — 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



RENT IT — The 3D levels can be tiring in this huge game-that oozes Loaded influences. The game, not the magazine

Maximum Force 4



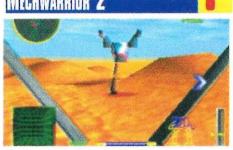
AVOID! — Yet another light gun farce which attempts to cash in on the success of Time Crisis. Do not consider buying this disgrace

MDK 8



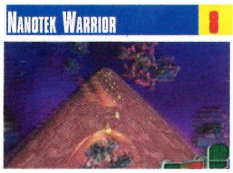
MUST BUY — Snappy name, awesome game. Drops you in the centre of a violent world where only the strongest will survive the day

Mechwarrior 2 8



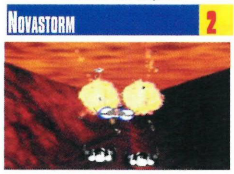
TRY B4 U BUY — Robots blow each other away big time in this fine shoot 'em-up brilliantly converted from the PC for us PSX nuts

Nanotek Warrior 8



RENT IT — A psychedelic shoot 'em- up in the same vein as the old arcade classic, Tempest. Except loads more fun and mayhem

Novastorm 2



AVOID! — 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



TRY B4 U BUY — The eagerly awaited sequel to Soviet Strike which doesn't disappoint. More thrills and spills than previously

Parodius Deluxe 8



RENT IT — A conversion of the original classic Parodius game which will surprise no one but amuse many. Check it out

Philosoma 5



AVOID! — A shoot 'em- up incorporating many different viewpoints but with very little excitement. Look elsewhere before buying

PO'ed 5



AVOID! — Smack walking backsides and the like with frying pans and big sticks in this strange slant on the Doom clones

Raiden Project 8



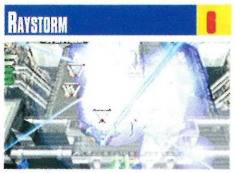
MUST BUY — One of the great shoot 'em- ups to ever appear anywhere ever. If arcade style blasters are your bag, buy this today

Rapid Reload 3



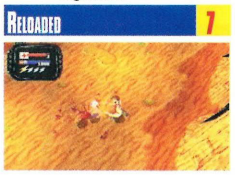
AVOID! — Shoot 'em-up in the same vein as Mega Man, only better. Another early release that should have been better

Raystorm 8



RENT IT — A fine but standard shoot 'em-up. Not sure it warrants the £40 price tag though. Try it, you might like it

Reloaded 7



RENT IT — The sequel to the gory Loaded which was nowhere near as good as it promised to be. Still enjoyable though

Revolution X 1



AVOID! — Oh my God! How bad is this? A crap arcade affair starring – wait for it – bloody Aerosmith! Avoid! Avoid!

Robotron X 8



RENT IT — A revamped 3D version of the old arcade game gives you plenty of hours of frantic thumb blistering fun guaranteed!

Shellshock 7



TRY B4 U BUY — 3D tank shoot 'em- up where combat strategy is required for you to progress with your team of tooled-up home boys

Shadow Master 8



TRY B4 U BUY — Psygnosis continue their fantastic line up of stunning games-both visually and in terms of gameplay

Shockwave 3



AVOID! — Kill the alien invaders before they take over the world in this shoot 'em- up that first appeared on the 3DO

Slamscape 3



AVOID! — Truly dreadful in every sense. Futuristic shooters are ten a penny, but this is the worst game ever invented. Avoid!

Soviet Strike Platinum 8



MUST BUY — This is your chance to mow down Russians in this mega tough, but hellishly addictive helicopter romp

Starblade Alpha 4



AVOID! — A substandard arcade conversion that should never have been released. Boring, boring, boring. Avoid!

Starfighter 3000 4



AVOID! — Another dull 3D shoot 'em- up which gives the genre nothing new, nothing interesting and nothing in the way of originality

Steel Harbinger 3



AVOID! — Never lived up to its promise. Yet another dull futuristic blaster starring some psycho yank cyber babe with big hair

Steel Reign 5



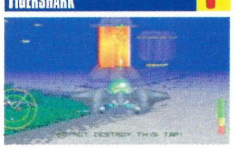
RENT IT — Disappointing tank blaster which can't hold its own against the dated but still top notch Shellshock. Shame really

Tempest X3 5



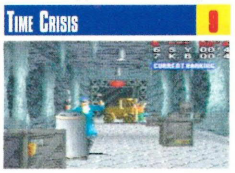
RENT IT — Three games in one still doesn't give this the edge it needed. You get the original and two new 3D versions

Tigershark 3



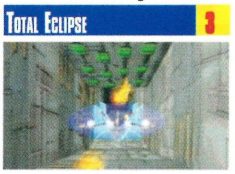
AVOID! — Truly awful nautical affair in which you hammer around blasting all and sundry. The only problem is it's terribly dull

Time Crisis 9



MUST BUY — Undoubtedly the finest light-gun game around at the moment. There's more than a little frantic shooting to be done

Total Eclipse 3



AVOID! — 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 8



AVOID! — Visually stunning Channel Tunnel simulator that moves hyper fast but is generally too complex to love

Twisted Metal 7



RENT IT — 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



TRY B4 U BUY — The much improved sequel to the carnage craving original that offers plenty of mayhem across the globe

Viewpoint 7



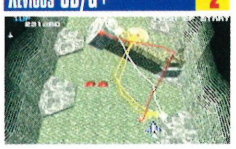
RENT IT — Colourful and visually attractive shoot 'em- up. Tricky to play however, but has that old school arcade feel to it

X2 7



RENT IT — Ultra difficult shoot 'em- up with more mayhem and weapons than most and a storming techno soundtrack too

Xevious 3D/G+ 2

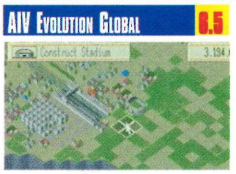


AVOID! — A pointless shoot 'em- up which is absolute dross and carries the worst name in video gaming history. It's shite

STRATEGY

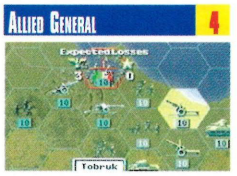
Not so much 'put on and have a quick go', more like 'play the damn thing for weeks on end whilst destroying your social life' kinda games. Top fun though

AIV Evolution Global 8.5



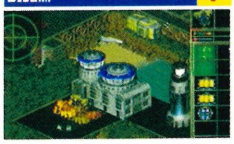
RENT IT — Sim City-esque train network builder which may be boring as hell for most, but PC owners will cream over it

Allied General 4



AVOID! — 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 4



AVOID! Syndicate Wars of sorts for beginners. Oh, and for people who don't like games as good as Syndicate Wars too

Carnage Heart 7.5



TRY B4 U BUY Bizarre robot fighting goings on for a change. Robot fans should love every second of a good title

Command & Conquer 8



RENT IT The classic war strategy game. Still causing players major headaches and still worth every second of your time

C&C: Red Alert 8



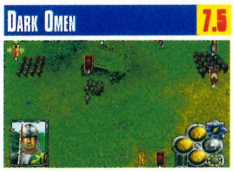
MUST BUY The second installment of C&C is a huge improvement with more action and strategy than ever before

Darklight Conflict 5



AVOID! Strategy as well as a busy trigger finger will get you through this. Stir in some patience to boot and you'll be away

Dark Omen 7.5



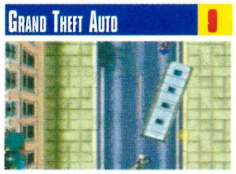
TRY B4 U BUY A high standard of wargaming is achived by EA with their goblin basher. An acquired taste mind, be warned

Defcon 5 4



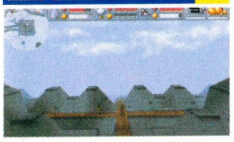
AVOID! 3D affair which lacks any kind of lasting appeal for new or experienced gamers alike. Be very careful indeed

Grand Theft Auto 8



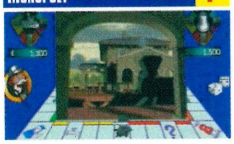
MUST BUY Controversial game which endorses bad behaviour in cars. Hurrah for all concerned. Over 18s only though

Magic Carpet 7.5



TRY B4 U BUY Mystical carpet flying. A very strange strategy/ action game. One of Bullfrog's fine early moments in gaming

Monopoly 7



RENT IT It's everyone's favourite boardgame for passing the time away on long rainy days. Only it's on the PlayStation

Panzer General 5



AVOID! More computer Risk which involves plenty of strategic planning as you might expect from this kind of thing

Return Fire 8



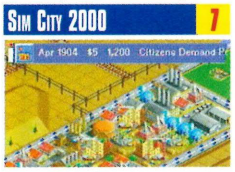
RENT IT Strategy and action are the key points to this strange game. Try before you buy just in case you hate it

Risk 7



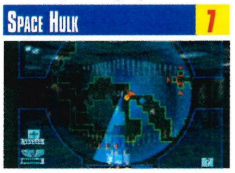
RENT IT Another board game which you either love or hate. It involves killing numerous armies. Fun if you like that sort thing

Sim City 2000 7



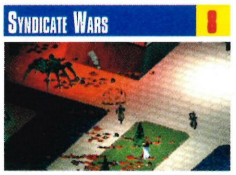
TRY B4 U BUY The ultimate in megalomania. Play is a little jerky however but if you can put up with that then you're laughing

Space Hulk 7



RENT IT 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



TRY B4 U BUY The latest strategy release everybody is craving for. Top graphics and wonderful gameplay. Just buy it

Theme Park 7.5



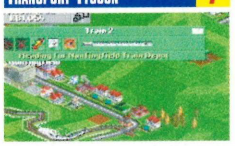
TRY B4 U BUY Sim City-esque Alton Towers development kit. Watch out for people chucking up all over the show though

Theme Hospital 8.5



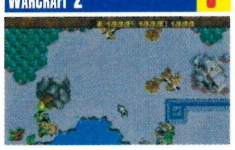
MUST BUY Those of you who loved Theme Park are gonna go crazy over this. So if you fancy it, go out and buy this today

Transport Tycoon 7



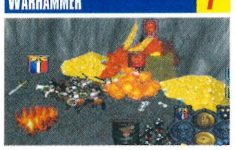
RENT IT The best ever train'em-up to hit the Playstation. Build a successful infrastructure and win a fortune

Warcraft 2 8



TRY B4 U BUY A Command & Conquer style affair. A bloody fantastic strategy game that you'll simply adore after two mins!

Warhammer 7



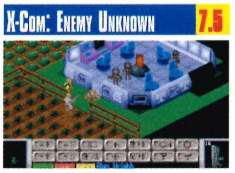
TRY B4 U BUY Strategy in abundance in this one. Go to war with your hammer and leather those goblin scum to oblivion

Worms Platinum 8



MUST BUY 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 7.5



TRY B4 U BUY 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 8



TRY B4 U BUY 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 3



AVOID! 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



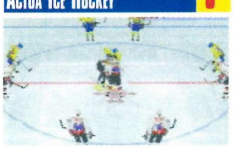
RENT IT The original golf game had a few minor faults but still did the business for the sport on the PlayStation initiall

Actua Golf 2 8.5



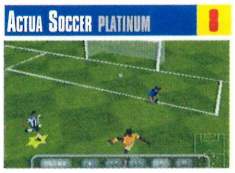
TRY B4 U BUY With the faults ironed out, the sequel is the best golf game available bar none. We challenge you to beat it!

Actua Ice Hockey 8



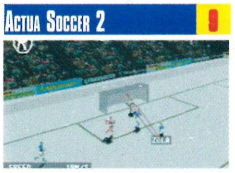
RENT IT Another Actua release which keeps the standards at a usual high. Not the best, but well worth a butcher's

Actua Soccer Platinum 8



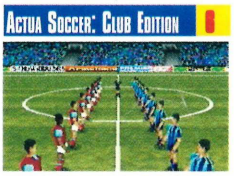
MUST BUY The first classic footy game for the PlayStation has dated a little since its arrival. Still worth a peek though

Actua Soccer 2 8



MUST BUY If you love your football, then you'll love this. If you despise football, you'll love this. It's that bloody fantastic

Actua Soccer: Club Edition 8



RENT IT Not so much a sequel as the same game with league teams included. What more do you need Wolves fans?

Adidas Power Soccer 5



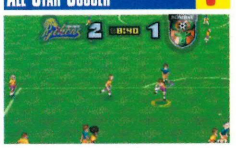
AVOID! Predator shots ahoy in this bizarre footy fest with a high profile sporty gear licence. Sporty Spice here we come

Adidas Power Soccer '97 7



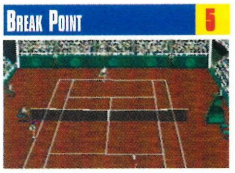
RENT IT More of the same at the end of the day. Same boots, same game, same lack of Sporty Spice. Tsk!

All Star Soccer 5



AVOID! An average footy game which doesn't take itself too seriously. But it's hated by most people who play it

Break Point 5



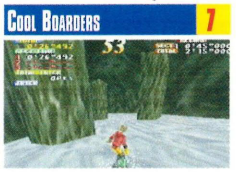
AVOID! Unimpressive tennis game. Sort of like watching a game on Wimbledon's Court 123 or something

Chill 4



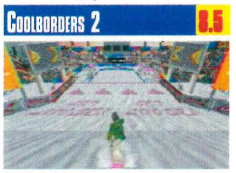
TRY B4 U BUY Awful snowboarding cash-in from Eidos. Nice graphics but where did the gameplay get to Certainly not here

Cool Boarders 7



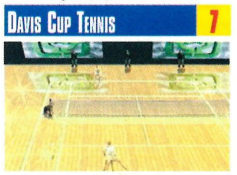
RENT IT Ultra playable and ultra short snowboarding game. It's trendy to get rad but the game never really got there

Coolborders 2 8.5



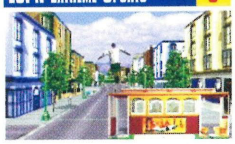
MUST BUY Improvement on the original offering more tracks, stunts and masses of adrenalin fuelled gameplay on a plank

Davis Cup Tennis 7



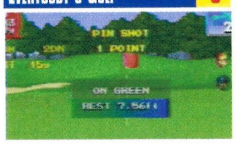
RENT IT Average attempt at the ultimate tennis experience. One day the definitive tennis game will arrive here

ESPN Extreme Sports 5



AVOID! BMX racing amongst others in a truly poor sports game. Extreme Crap would be nearer the mark we think

Everybody's Golf 8



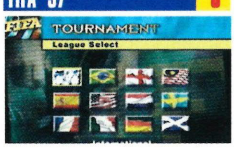
TRY B4 U BUY Wonderfully playable golf game that ditches photoOralism for playability in the Smash Court Tennis style

FIFA '96 Platinum 6



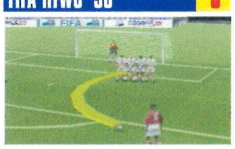
AVOID! A tiresome, sluggish football game with limited appeal. Even the name is out of date now. Good planning

FIFA '97 8



RENT IT Looking dated in camparison with RTWC. Average at just about everything. Footy fans should check the bargain bins

FIFA RTWC '98 8



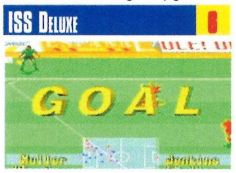
MUST BUY Leaves all other FIFA releases in the shade. Contains all Premier league teams from around the world. Awesome

Goal Storm 5



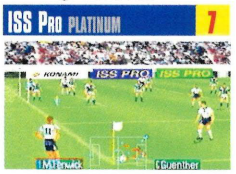
AVOID! Renamed for its official release it's an acquired taste, especially if your taste is for below average footy games

ISS Deluxe 8



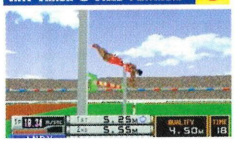
RENT IT A pretty bland footy affair which could have been better. But wasn't. So avoid this footy game at all costs

ISS Pro Platinum 7



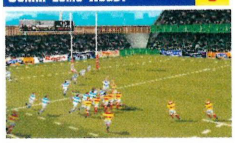
RENT IT Perhaps the most overated football game ever. Check out the N64 version for instance for how it should have been

Int. Track & Field Platinum 8



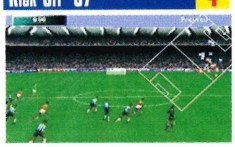
MUST BUY This remains one of the most playable and addictive games available. Still an office favourite even now

Jonah Lomu Rugby 8



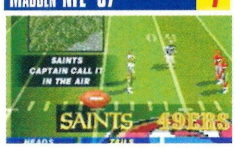
TRY B4 U BUY One of the most impressive sports games ever. Playable, great looking and downright accurate. Get it now

Kick Off '97 4



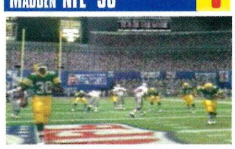
AVOID! Tries a little too hard to be something special but ends up being as dull as they come. Should be better

Madden NFL '97 7



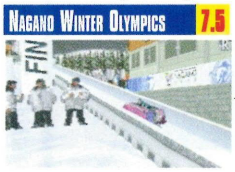
TRY B4 U BUY Looking very dated, this has been bettered in just about every department by Madden '98. Get the sequel instead

Madden NFL '98 8



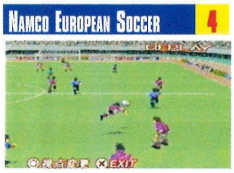
TRY B4 U BUY As fantastic a game as there has been for this sport. Yet another update which goes from strength to strength

Nagano Winter Olympics 7.5



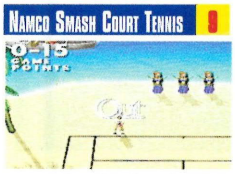
RENT IT As eagerly awaited as the Olympics themselves. At least the real Olympics really wasn't as dull as this waster

Namco European Soccer 4



AVOID! 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 8



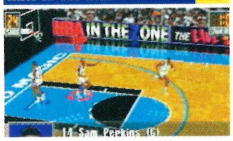
MUST BUY The ultimate in tennis games to date is right here. You like tennis? Then you'll probably like this. Probably

NBA Hangtime 7



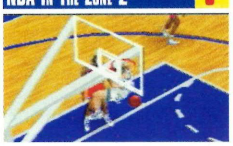
RENT IT Fine enough basketball game which is buried underneath a stack of better releases. Take a look below for the proof

NBA In The Zone 7.5



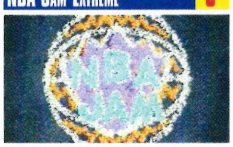
RENT IT Good old basketball games, they're the best. Go to end, shoot, score repeat as necessary until completion

NBA In The Zone 2 8



RENT IT Yet another basketball sequel which is practically identical to the original and every other game of Basketball

NBA Jam Extreme 8



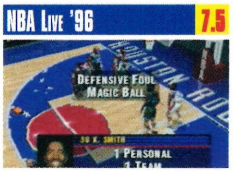
RENT IT A rather playable if uninspiring basketball sim. At least tries to different and exciting. Almost makes it too

NBA Jam TE 7



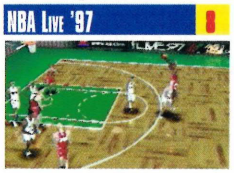
RENT IT More of the same with slight improvements. See above for basically the same blurb. It's basketball after all isn't it

NBA Live '96 7.5



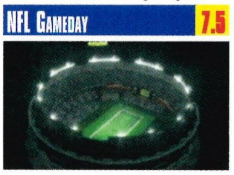
RENT IT It's difficult to distinguish one basketball game from another as we keep trying to tell you. Do you ever listen?

NBA Live '97 8



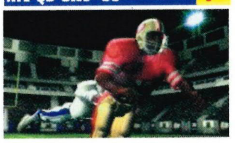
TRY B4 U BUY Slight improvement on its predecessor. Pretty wicked in an American sport type way. Where are the girls again?

NFL Gameday 7.5



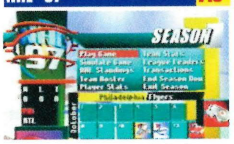
RENT IT American football game which actually rivals Madden. Doesn't beat it but rivals it which can't be bad eh?

NFL QB Club '96 7



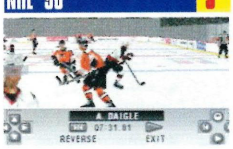
RENT IT The American Football bandwagon continues to bring average games like this along with it. Good eh?

NHL '97 7.5



RENT IT Another average ice hockey game. What is it about American sports that inspire such samey games all the time?

NHL '98 8



MUST BUY Yet another stunning release from EA Sport's stable. A contender for the best ice hockey game for your PlayStation

NHL Faceoff 8.5



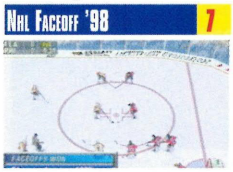
TRY B4 U BUY Fantastic ice hockey game that made a valliant effort to stand out from the crowd. Almost made it too

NHL Faceoff '97 6



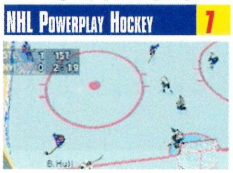
AVOID! This sequel was a real disappointment when you consider the quality of the original. Steer clear

NHL Faceoff '98 7



RENT IT The third Faceoff release is a worthy sequel but to be honest, the original still has the best gameplay and playability

NHL Powerplay Hockey 7



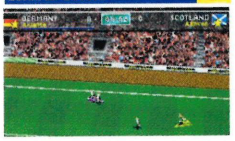
RENT IT Fine ice hockey game that never quite makes it to great heights but has a damn good try before falling flat after a fine attempt

Olympic Games 4



AVOID! Take part in your very own Olympics in this rather splendid release. Not Sydney but you can't have everything

Olympic Soccer 7



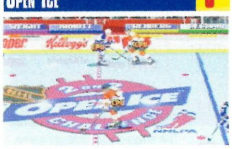
RENT IT In short this has got just about the lot except for real player names. Top footy fest, but it's a little dated now

Onside Soccer 7



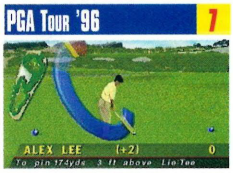
RENT IT Yet another reasonable football game that gives it a go but loses in the last minute to a dodgy ref decision!

Open Ice 6



RENT IT Yet another take on ice hockey which tries to gain all of the excitement of the sport and add some fun. It fails slightly

PGA Tour '96 7



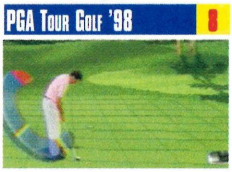
RENT IT Disappointing golf game which we'd expected a lot more of. Fun for a while but fades away quite quickly after that

PGA Tour '97 Platinum 7



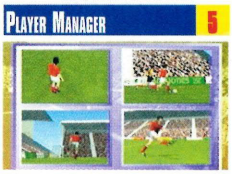
MUST BUY The updated version still lacked the killer drive that we've come to expect from the likes of EA Sports games

PGA Tour Golf '98 8



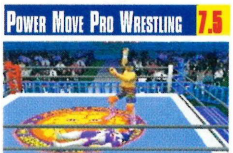
TRY B4 U BUY Releasing an update as often as Paul has cheese and beetroot butties is pushing it a little, even if it is a treat

Player Manager 5



AVOID! Unimpressive and flawed attempt at footie management. Buy Premier Manager '98 instead of this

Power Move Pro Wrestling 7.5



TRY B4 U BUY A better than average wrestling fest which isn't saying that much really is it. Ah well. Can't have it all

Power Soccer 2 — 7



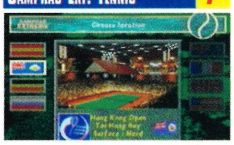
RENT IT — An improvement on Adidas from Psygnosis but with Actua Soccer 2 in the vicinity it won't fare too well unfortunately

Premier Manager '98 — 8.5



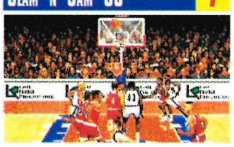
TRY B4 U BUY — The much awaited footy management sim doesn't disappoint. Destined to keep many fans happy

Sampras Ext. Tennis — 7



RENT IT — Second only to Smash Court Tennis with a big name licence to boot. Good stuff all round. You'll like it, trust us. Oh yes

Slam 'n' Jam '96 — 7



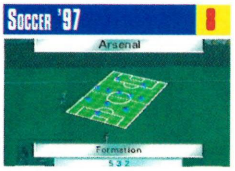
RENT IT — Another fine attempt to bring basketball onto the PlayStation. Not that different from the others though really

Snow Racer '98 — 8.5



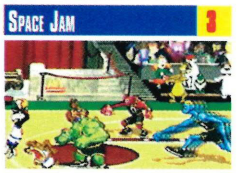
TRY B4 U BUY — The fastest mountain racer on the PlayStation. Infogrames have surprised us all with the quality of this

Soccer '97 — 8



MUST BUY — Updated version of Olympic Soccer with league teams. A fine moment for football games on the machine. Go for it

Space Jam — 3



AVOID! — Movie license shenanegins which combine basketball and cartoons. Absolute crap in every sense! Avoid, avoid

Striker '96 — 5



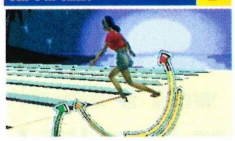
AVOID! — The first football game to impress. Dated by todays standards. A bit repetitive too. Let's be careful out there

Tennis Arena — 7.5



RENT IT — 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 — 2



AVOID! — 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 — 7.5



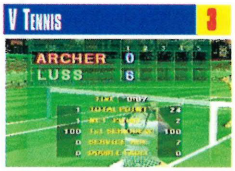
RENT IT — Perhaps basketball's finest moment until its sequel. This is now a little redundant thanks to the '97 update

Total NBA '97 — 8



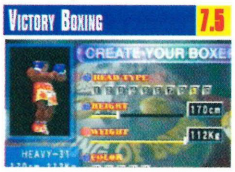
TRY B4 U BUY — Taking the original one step further. An absolute slam dunker. If that's what you like of course! Each to their own

V Tennis — 3



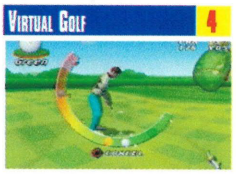
AVOID! — Be your own Agassi in this substandard tennis affair. I suppose it would be your own V Agassi as well. Hmm.

Victory Boxing — 7.5



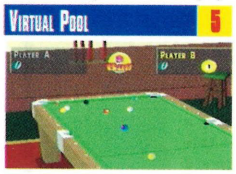
RENT IT — More than a beat 'em- up this actually requires you to build up your boxer to take on the big time pros

Virtual Golf — 4



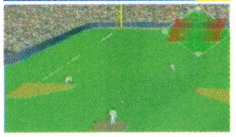
AVOID! — Slightly dreary golf sim. But then, show me a golf sim that isn't and I'll call you a big smelly liar. I'll do that anyway

Virtual Pool — 5



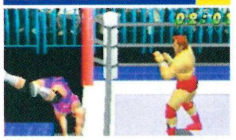
RENT IT — The only true pool simulator available. It's not much cop though but you can't have everything all the time

VR Baseball — 7.5



RENT IT — Home Run Derby and stunning graphics are the recommendation points to this bat and ball game

WCW vs the World — 7.5



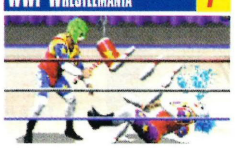
RENT IT — You know what to expect when you play these things. This is better than most but does that tell the full story?

WWF In Your House — 4



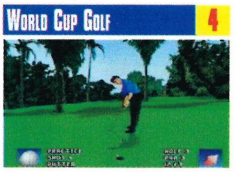
AVOID! — Or not as the case may be. If so, then Get out before I call the police you freak! Or is it the World Wildlife Fund IYH?

WWF Wrestlemania — 7



RENT IT — 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 — 4

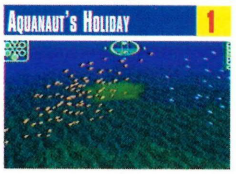


AVOID! — Totally dreadful golfing game. Went back from whence it came which stank a bit. Sort it out lads and don't do it again

MISC

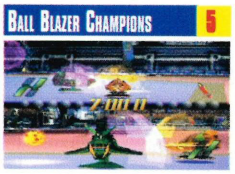
Those games that don't seem to sit in any particular genre wind up being dumped in our miscellaneous section. Why? Because they do. Okay?

Aquanaut's Holiday — 1



AVOID! — Jacques Cousteau simulator. Build reefs and speak to fish. Great if you like the worst game of all time!

Ball Blazer Champions — 5



AVOID! — 3D futuristic sports contest which isn't much cop if we're being honest with each other. And we are

Chessmaster 3D — 3



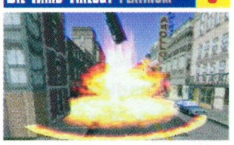
AVOID! — A shabby affair which will never compete with the real thing for grand excitement and tension (is that too sarcastic?)

Courier Crisis — 3



AVOID! — The main crisis here is that there's no interest involved. Almost the worst game ever. And that's going some

Die Hard Trilogy Platinum — 8



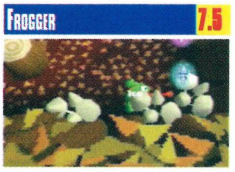
MUST BUY — Thrills and spills from start to finish in this varied movie caper. A great game well worth your axttention and cash

Extreme Pinball — 2



AVOID! — Flipping heck, this is dreadful pinball nonsense of the worst kind. Snap your disc up, or something

Frogger — 7.5



TRY B4 U BUY — The eighties hero has returned in a totally revamped release which surpassed all expectations. Cute and cuddly

Overboard — 4



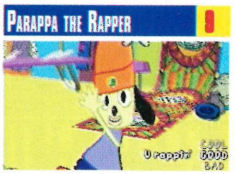
AVOID! — A bold attempt at something a little different. It just doesn't quite reach the mark. Fun in short bursts or multi-player

Pitball — 8



RENT IT — Futuristic sports game which is actually rather good in a rather futuristic sports game type way. Honest! Believe us please

Parappa the Rapper — 8



MUST BUY — The most original game on the PlayStation to date. You've never seen anything like this before – beeatch!

Poy Poy — 8



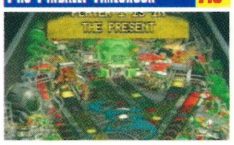
RENT IT — Bomberman influenced, this provides hilarious multi-player fun as you and your pals throw stones at each other

Pro Pinball: The Web — 8



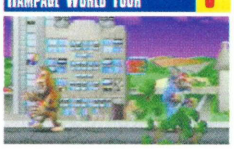
RENT IT — A fantastic pinball sim that will have your flippers flipping until the cows come home. Whenever that is these days

Pro Pinball: Timeshock — 7.5



TRY B4 U BUY — As a pinball game, it does the job, as a addition to your collection perhaps you should check it out before paying cash

Rampage World Tour — 3



AVOID! — Another hot contender for worst conversion ever. Smash buildings and then smash some more. Pretty poor

Rebel Assault 2 — 8



AVOID! — 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 — 4



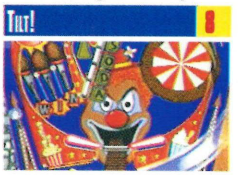
AVOID! — Drab futuristic sports game. Has no lasting appeal or even short term appeal for that matter. Avoid at all costs

Rosco McQueen — 7



RENT IT — Firefighting in the Towering Inferno whilst battling a range of robots in this enjoyable dousing fest from Sony

Tilt! — 8



TRY B4 U BUY — Surprisingly enjoyable pinball game which in itself is unusual. Good clean fun for all the family and their family too

PRO CHARTS

All the current movers and shakers in the PSX Top 40 are unveiled below, giving you a full rundown on the big games of the moment...

1	◆	Tomb Raider
2	◆	Tekken 2
3	-	Three Lions
4	▼	Crash Bandicoot
5	◆	Micro Machines V3
6	◆	FIFA '98: Road To World Cup
7	▼	Die Hard Trilogy
8	▼	Deathtrap Dungeon
9	◆	Grand Theft Auto
10	▼	Int. Superstar Soccer Pro
11	▲	V-Rally
12	◆	Destruction Derby 2
13	◆	Formula One '97
14	◆	Need For Speed 3: Hot Pursuit
15	▲	TOCA: Touring Car Championship
16	◆	Gex 3D: Enter The Gecko
17	▼	Theme Hospital
18	▲	Porsche Challenge
19	▲	wipEout2097
20	▼	Croc: Legend Of The Gobbos
21	▲	Soviet Strike
22	▲	Tomb Raider 2
23	▼	Mortal Kombat Mythologies
24	▼	Rayman
25	▲	Worms
26	▼	Theme Park
27	▼	Cool Boarders 2
28	▼	G Police
29	▲	Final Fantasy VII
30	▲	Ridge Racer Revolution
31	▼	Rascal
32	▼	International Track & Field
33	▼	Warhammer: Dark Omen
34	▲	Pandemonium
35	-	Motorhead
36	▼	Adidas Power Soccer International
37	▲	Alien Trilogy
38	▲	Bustamove 2
39	▼	Crash Banidcoot 2
40	▼	Star Wars: Teras Kasi

The official PlayStation Top 40 was brought to you by the informative fellas at...

ChartTrack

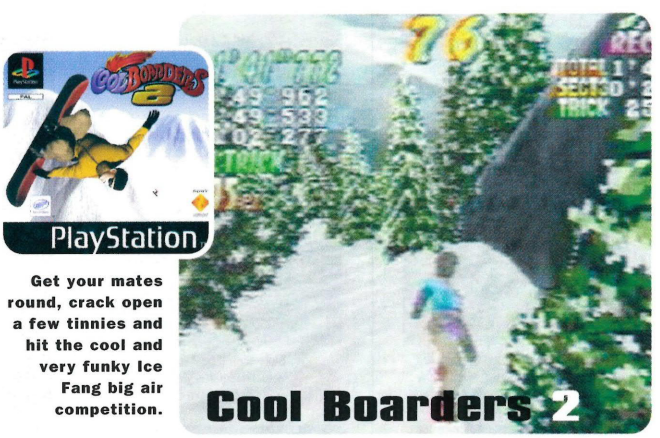
PRO Playmates

Find out what we're still playing after all this time with a brief listing of our three fave games from the past few months

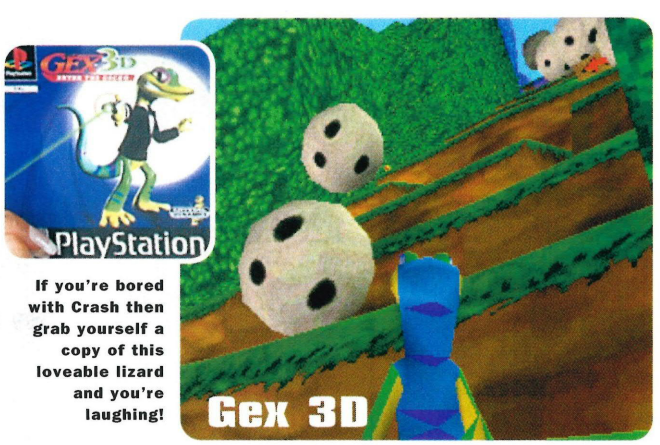
The PlayStation Pro office is swamped in software each and every month. Yet despite having an interactive banquet at our fingertips, we only continue fiddling about with a handful of games after all the hard work has been done. Below we've rounded up our three most-played office titles of the month just gone, giving you an insight into which newish releases offer something extraordinary, exciting and enjoyable, coupled with a sizeable longevity factor. Check 'em out



This new Platinum release is still a hit in our office. Re-live those action-packed movies again and again and again!



Get your mates round, crack open a few tinnies and hit the cool and very funky Ice Fang big air competition.



If you're bored with Crash then grab yourself a copy of this loveable lizard and you're laughing!

Directory Enquiries

All your essential phone numbers, addresses and website details for everyone who's anyone in the wonderful world of the PlayStation can be found right here. Wondering about a release date or availability? Don't ring us, call these guys...

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Moreau House, 112 - 120 Bromston Road, Knightsbridge, London, SW3 1JJ
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Website: www.acclaim.com

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Website: www.core-design.com

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Website: www.datel.co.uk

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Website: www.ea.com

EIDOS INTERACTIVE
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Website: www.eidos.com

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Website: www.interplay.com

JVC MUSICAL INDUSTRIES
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Tel: 0171 240 3121
Website: Not applicable

KONAMI
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Website: www.konami.com

MINDSCAPE
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Tel: 01444 246333
Website: www.mindscapeuk.com

NAMCO
2nd Floor 43 - 44 Great Windmill Street, London, W1V 7PA
Tel: 0171 734 7737
Website: www.namco.com



Please will you all stop hassling Namco about Everybody's Golf. There's a little confusion about who is actually going to publish it over here, but Sony inform us they'll have a firm release date by next month's mag. Okay? In the meantime, why not buy Forsaken and twiddle with that instead. Not stricly a golf game we know, but fun nevertheless

OCEAN SOFTWARE
Merchants Warehouse, 21 Castle Street, Castlefield, Manchester, M3 4SW
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Website: www.ocean.co.uk

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Next Month...



Command & Conquer: Retaliation

We gave you the exclusive first look at Red Alert and now we've got the next instalment ready and waiting for an in-depth and highly exclusive first play.

TEKKEN 3

Part one of our collectable player's guide starts next issue, giving you all the information you need in order to become King of the Iron Fist tournament.

Colin McRae Rally

We test drive the latest version of this off-road beast, plus we'll be seeing just how realistic it is when we take to the road for real!

Point Blank

Does Namco's new GCon45 game hit the target? Find out as we go trigger-happy in a month's time.

PLUS:

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