SENSATIONAL BUMPER CHRISTMAS ISSUE!

SUPER GAMER

JAN '95 #10 £2.95

SUPER GAMER JANUARY '95

SUPER PUNCH-OUT! • BIKER MICE FROM MARS • FINAL FANTASY III • PRIMAL RAGE • STARGATE

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ANIMANIACS
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EXCLUSIVE!

BIKER MICE FROM MARS

FULL REVIEW INSIDE!





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You've never seen anything like this before. Donkey Kong Country is the world's first fully-rendered video game. To produce it took 22 years work on 6 SGI work stations and one XL Super Computer. The graphics are 3-D. The playing arena is 32 megabit. The levels number 111. (No, that's not a misprint - one hundred and eleven). But the most amazing aspect of Donkey

For more information about this game, call or write to Nintendo UK Entertainment,

IT'S TAKEN

22 man years,

32 MEGS,

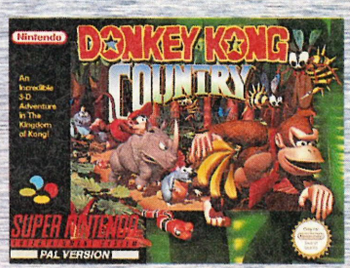
32,768 COLOURS

and 1 super computer

TO MAKE HIM LOOK THIS

GRUESOME.

Kong Country is that you don't need a 32 bit machine or a CD-ROM system to play it. Because Donkey Kong Country is only on the Super NES. So go and grab one now. You'll go absolutely ape.



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SUPER GAMER
ISSUE 10
JANUARY 1995

WHAT DO *WE* WANT FOR CHRISTMAS?

EDITOR DAMIAN BUTT
DESIGNER ANDY McDERMOTT
SENIOR STAFF WRITER RYAN BUTT
STAFF WRITER KEITH PULLIN

PRE PRESS ALAN RUSSELL
SCANNING SUZANNE RYAN
SUBS/MAIL ORDER KAREN SHARROCK
ACCOUNTS MELANIE KRALJ
RECEPTIONIST PAULA WOOD

ADVERTISING FAX: (0202) 555011
AD MANAGER IAN KENYON
SENIOR AD SALES DIANA MONTEIRO
AD SALES ALAN WALTON

ADVERTISING PRODUCTION
AD DESIGNERS CHRISTA FAIRCHILD
ALEX TILBURY
ASSISTANT CLARE LOGGEY

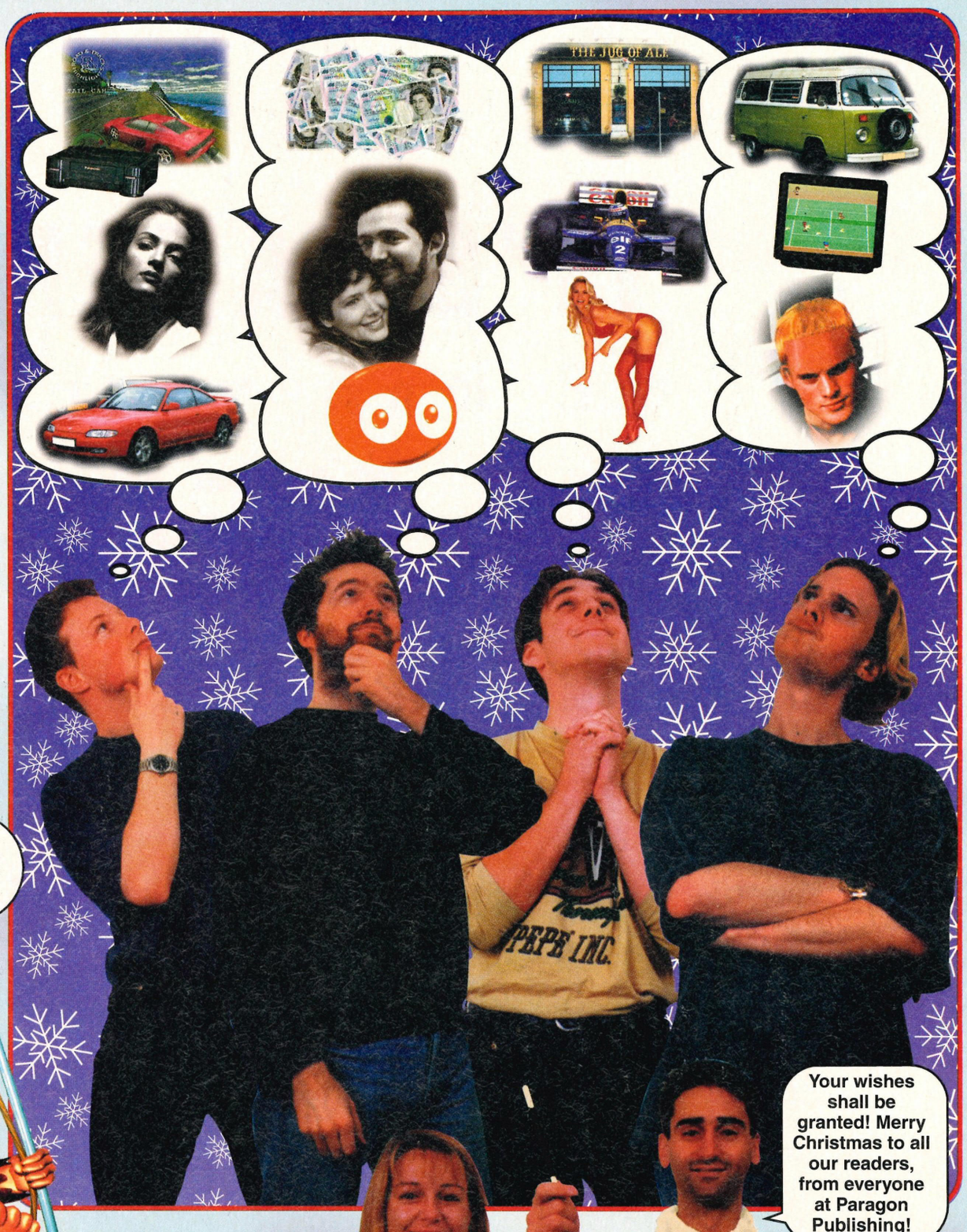
PRODUCTION MANAGER JANE HAWKINS
PRODUCTION DIRECTOR DI TAVENER
PUBLISHER JASON SPILLER
THE BIG BOSS RICHARD MONTEIRO

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FAX: (0202) 299955

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Win me on page 20!

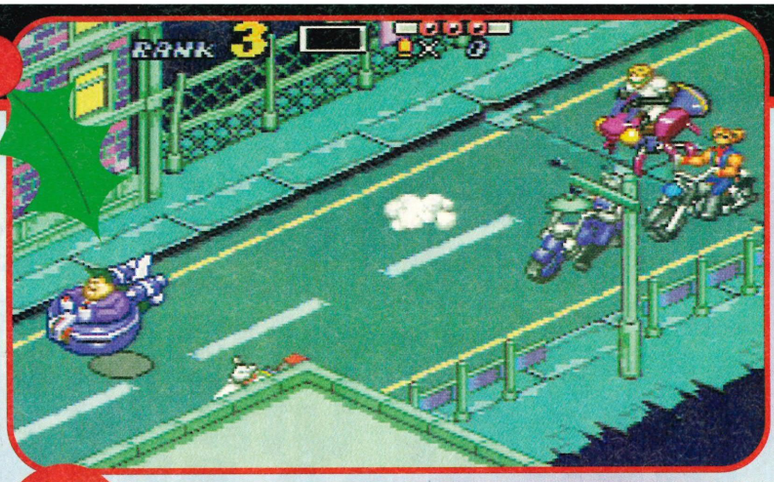


PREVIEWS
CRAZY CHASE 16
SEAQUEST DSV 18
ZERO THE KAMIKAZE SQUIRREL 19



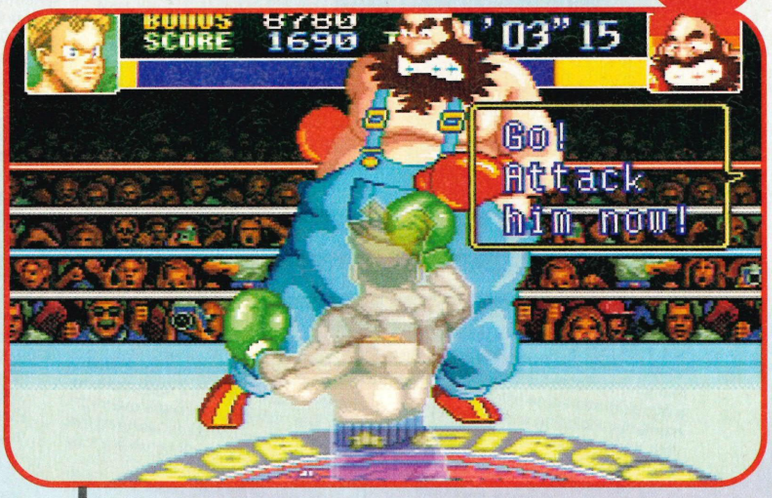
REVIEWS

BIKER MICE FROM MARS	32
SUPER PUNCH-OUT!	34
SPACE INVADERS (GB)	38
WOLVERINE	40
SEAQUEST DSV (GB)	42
DEMON'S BLAZON	43
BLACKHAWK	44
ANIMANIACS	46
NOSFERATU	48
ARDY LIGHTFOOT	49
JORDAN ADVENTURE	50
MICRO MACHINES	52
ACTRAISER 2	54
SHAQ-FU	56
C2: JUDGEMENT CLAY	58
FINAL FANTASY III	60
STAR TREK: STARFLEET ACADEMY	64
WWF RAW	68
GAME BOY GALLERY	70
REN & STIMPY: TIME WARP	72
MR NUTZ (GB)	74



P32 BIKER MICE FROM MARS

SUPER PUNCH-OUT! P34



P22



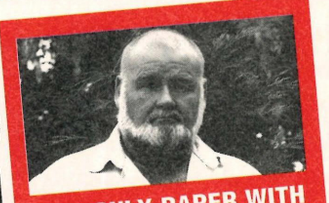
PRIMAL RAGE

FEATURES

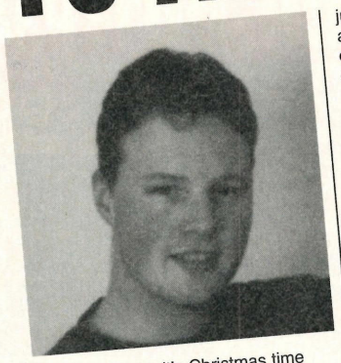
THE NINDEPENDENT	6
CENTRAL NINTELLIGENCE	8
12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS	11
ELSPA CHARTS	12
MINI PREVIEWS	14
DONKEY KONG COMPO	20
PRIMAL RAGE	22
STARGATE WIP	24
REVIEW OF THE YEAR	26
BIKER MICE COMPO	30
SUPER SAVERS	55
BACK ISSUES	66
DONKEY KONG COUNTRY SOLUTION	78
SYNDICATE PLAYER'S GUIDE	80
LION KING SOLUTION	82
EARTHWORM JIM SOLUTION	84
MONSTER MAX SOLUTION	88
THE WRITE STUFF	92
GALLERY	96
DATEL CODES	97
NEXT MONTH	98

The Nindependent

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL SG READERS!



THE ONLY PAPER WITH BIG RON POWER!



Yes that's right, it's Christmas time again and SUPER GAMER celebrates in true style with tons of reviews, more features than you can possibly cram into your sister's stockings (and she's a big girl!) and some truly classic SG moments, including our review of the year and fave games. It's all waiting for you over the page, but first...

All car thieves must die! Now this is not a new topic to grace the forum known as the SUPER GAMER rant-a-thon, but it was sparked by some 16 year-old toe-rag breaking into, stealing, thrashing and consequently abandoning my car with £500 damage and £450 worth of valuables stolen. Suffice to say I was not thrilled.

Now, I'm able to forgive and forget like the next man, as long as it was the next man who got his motor trashed and not me. And now I've become a crime statistic I'm left with nothing but costly bills and a sense of deep injustice. Yes, he was arrested, but as a minor he will get off time and time again, and I'll probably end up paying for his next set of trainers through my taxes. I've since been told that he has already commited this crime five times in the past.

To violate somebody's private conveyance, or to put it as Quentin Tarrintino did "You don't f**ck with another man's automobile, it just ain't right", is surely an act comparable with burning down an orphanage or pushing a disabled granny into the path of a DAF truck, but is it treated with the same attention? Absolutely not. You just get a "happens all the time, sir" and "he'll probably get away with a caution." Surely vigilantism is justified, officer?

Now, not only do I have to get taxis everywhere (no-one should have to suffer public transport), but I lose time off work tracking him down and breaking all his fingers, and I have to pay for the lot out of my own pocket.

Surely fines are pointless for these people because they are invariably too young or on the dole anyway. And locking them up only overcrowds the prison service (and probably makes them worse criminals anyway). What can be done?

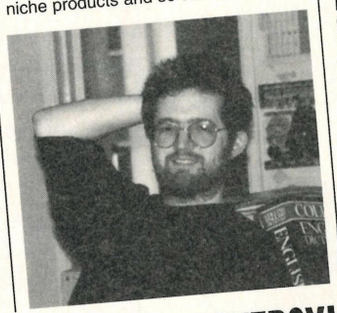
Call me extremist if you will, but I reckon only a tattoo on the face, or amputation of the left hand (so they can't change gear) is the only immediate solution.

No court proceedings, just instant hand-chopping time for repeat offenders. Car crime would cease overnight and the nation could rest assured that their vehicle would still be where they left it at the end of the day.

No-one accidently nicks a car, so there won't be any mistaken punishments. Vote for me.

Ratings. Surely people don't only buy 90% games, do they? Virgin say that unless their games get 90% or over, it's not a good game and therefore they don't want the review.

You take the rough with the smooth and 85% is not a crap mark. Console owners will still buy these games regardless, because many of them are niche products and so are unlikely to have the mass appeal of *Lion King* or *DKC*.



A fishing sim is not going to set a reviewer on fire, but that's not to say a fisherman will not love it and buy it no matter what. Not every game can get over 90% – it's impossible, and if a mag gave all its games this high rating, no-one would buy it because you know they're lying.

Why don't all the software companies club together and start their own mag that praises everything highly and never has a word of criticism. Let's see how long that lasts.

The moral of this tale, boys and girls, is don't write crap games and you won't get crap marks. Never expect too much and don't sulk when you don't get your way. Like all bastions of journalism, SUPER GAMER is an independent magazine and therefore entitled to its opinion. Give us a good game and we'll rave, furnish us with a turkey and we'll condemn it to hell. Ever heard of the phrase "all publicity is good publicity?"

Christmas is here once again and you should be reading this issue just as the festive season is in full swing. This issue of SUPER GAMER is simply bursting with Xmas goodies, not least the huge 68-page tips book on the cover of this issue.

Inside we have features on *Stargate* (the game of the hit Sci-Fi film) and *Primal Rage*, as well as the traditional review of the year, hosted by yours truly.

On the review front, well not as many as last issue's Crimbo compactor, but still a bumper crop of games designed to tingle your Super NES and Game Boy's taste buds. *Super Punch-Out!* arrived early, *Wolverine* slashes onto the page, *Nosferatu* shows the Japanese still love Hammer Horror movies, and we go *Final Fantasy III* mad (or at least Keith does).

I've expanded the tips section this month so that all the top games of last issue can be included in the bustin' business. We begin our mammoth full guide to *Donkey Kong Country* (80% and climbing), *Syndicate* gets a players' guide, and so does *Lion King*, *Earthworm Jim* and *Monster Max* on the Game Boy (one day I'll complete this game).

With the Super NES entering its third full year what fate awaits it in '95? Nintendo sources claim that a large quantity of software will be released in the new year, including *Uniracers* and *Tinstar*, and rumours are rife that there will be one more huge game arriving sometime next summer, possibly with *Zelda*, but we already know that there is a *Zelda* game planned on Ultra 64, so that may be a smokescreen.

Also, the third party licencees are still going to surprise us with plenty of new product, most of it arriving in the first quarter. But the good news is that no-one plans to kill off the Super NES yet.



Me, I'll wait with bated breath for the Ultra 64, but I haven't seen anything on it – no pictures of the machine, games or what chips will be used. All we know is that Nintendo are shipping Silicon Graphics Onyxs out to developers, so maybe we'll just print the stats for the SGI machine?

Also don't forget that the much-talked about VR-32 is set up for an April release, with plenty of separate games ready to be released for that platform alone.

One thing's for sure, the Nintendo scene is still as strong as ever, and SUPER GAMER'll be here to support it. Have a merry Christmas from all the SG team, see you in the new year. Ciao!

Damian Butt

SHOCK SCOUSE COMPLAINT CONTROVERSY!

Apparently some people from the land of Liverpool were a might offended at our piece in the *Super Return of the Jedi* review stating that Jabba the Hutt had "all the manners of a scouse skinhead." This was NOT intended to be a slur on the entire scouse population (it could quite easily have been brummies), but was intended to be a reflection of the group of scouse skinheads who constantly hassle us in the park and beg for money.

We know you are collecting two giros, so stop drinking Special Brew and go home! Anyway, apologies to Ron and Jon from Business Machine Services in Liverpool. Any future references to scouse skinheads should be regarded as applying solely to those living in the parks of Bournemouth.

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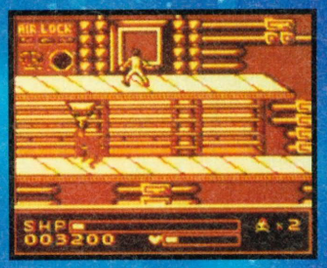
It's true! Now that Future and Europress have been sold, Paragon Publishing is the only independent computer magazine publisher in the UK! But, how do they *do* that? Well, it all begins when you release one mag – it's a success, then you add a couple more, and guess what, they're all successes. The years roll by and the directors get bigger and bigger cars until you reach Paragon proportions. Apart from SUPER GAMER, this fine institution produces SEGAPRO, SEGA XS, MEGA POWER, INTERNET & COMMS TODAY, PC POWER, CD-32 GAMER, CD-ROM USER and GAMES WORLD. Blimey cripes!

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NEWS AT LAST ON VR-32!



Looks like it isn't a joke then. Nintendo have been incredibly tight-lipped about this little number; however, like many, we've managed to secure some artists impressions of the VR-32 and we've heard some pretty amazing things about this portable 32-bit system.

As you can see from the picture, the headset is connected to a controller which also takes the carts in the top and is battery powered. The screen will be projected in front of the player in 3-D and this appears to be where the 32-bit technology comes in.

Remember the Game Boy? You do? Well, an insider source at Nintendo recently told us that the VR-32 will feature a duotone display consisting of just red and black! Surely the 32-bit will be totally wasted unless we can have full colour games?

Also, the first few games to arrive for the system (no names yet) will be made solely by Nintendo and are set to be a racing *Daytona*-type game and a *Doom* perspective shoot-'em-up.

American magazines are currently circulating the rumour that the 32-bit system will be Super NES compatible and will plug into the empty port at the back of the console, but why? What would be the point of connecting up the headset to the Super NES?

Surely to be of any use, the VR-32 will be Super NES compatible in the fact that the carts will plug into the controller, but will that mean all your lovely 16-bit games will be in black and red-o-vision? Too many unanswered questions and as usual Nintendo UK have no comment.

One interesting idea is that the maybe the display for the portable unit will be semi-transparent; allowing you to see the outside world and not get completely immersed. Does this mean you could be sat on the bus playing Virtua *Schindler's List* (looking like a right dill with your headset on) and when you emerge from your game, it's night, the bus is 20 miles from home, and you're locked up in the depot?

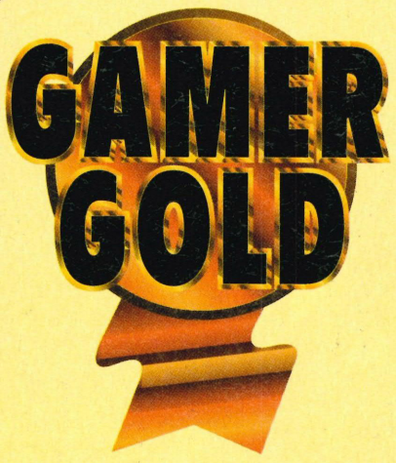
Is it the beginning of total immersion video games, or just a sad spin-off to make use of a feature they found while developing Ultra 64? Super Gamer is on the case and we'll reveal all next issue.

DIRTY FX



Called *Dirt Trax FX* in the States, this new Super FX bike game will be with us in the new year. 25 different tracks and 256 colours!

GAMER GOLD OOPS!



In the 27 game rush we forgot to include the Gamer Gold medal in last issue's review of *Lion King*, so here it is! All you have to do is cut it out and apply it to the review pages using an approved glue or piece of adhesive tape. Will anyone actually do this? I doubt it. Let's face it you'd have to be really sad to cut up one mag in order to deface another. Wibble!

IS IT A BIRD? IS IT A PLANE? NO, IT'S SA-1 – SUPER CHIP!



We've just heard that Nintendo plan to unveil a new version of the Super FX chip later in '95. During a developer's conference recently (which was remarkably empty apparently) the chip was announced and went down a storm.

Nintendo are reputedly very unhappy with the existing Super FX chip, as it does enable decent enough polygon tricks, but takes up so much space that the games all have to be 4Mbit. Even the most basic game these days is 8Mbit, and it has taken some clever programming by Argonaut to exploit such tight memory restrictions.

Rumours abound that *Starwing*, although a classic game, is still littering warehouses all the country due to over-stocking. And because of the extremely high cost of carts containing Super FX, Nintendo simply cannot afford to scrap them.

In a bid to revitalise the Super FX market and keep the Super NES alive for the next year, Nintendo said the new chip, codenamed SA-1 Super Accelerator, will quadruple the speed of the Super NES and it will only add $2 to the cost of a normal cart, as opposed to the Super FX which increases the price by $15! Imagine that, *Starwing* or *Vortex* at four times the speed. Nintendo seem to be on a winner for sure.

If this is true, the SA-1 will be inside Nintendo games by the summer and there will be no more excuse to charge higher prices for games with the new chip. This of course begs the question, will *Starwing 2* be SA-1 powered? Hmm, no details yet, but seeing as Argonaut are producing the game, surely they will want to use their own chip?

COP THIS!



Unfortunately, the *Timecop* material arrived too late for us to do a proper feature, so here's the basic outline of the Super NES game coming soon from JVC.

Based on the forthcoming Jean-Claude Van Damme film set in 2004, you play Max Walker, a Timecop dedicated to bringing down the new breed of criminals who exploit time travel to change history and reap financial gains.

In addition to going back through various periods of time Max must also confront the temptation to prevent his own wife's murder and change the fabric of time itself. A perfect idea for a game, you think, and you'd be right because JVC say it will here as early as January.

The film is directed by Peter Hyams (*Outlands*, *2010*, *Presido*, *Narrow Margin* and *Capricorn One*) and written by Mike Richardson and Mark Verheiden who wrote the original *Aliens* comics for Dark Horse.

The film and the game confront the age old question – if you could go back in time and change something, what would it be?

The number of levels for the Super NES is unclear, but it does include Nazi Germany, a nuclear test site in 1952, Los Angeles 2144, prehistoric times and Twenties America. It is also programmed using digitised sprites for added realism.

You play Jean-Claude, but curiously the blurb for the film mentions that the muscles from Brussels has successfully tackled a wide range of character types. Has he?

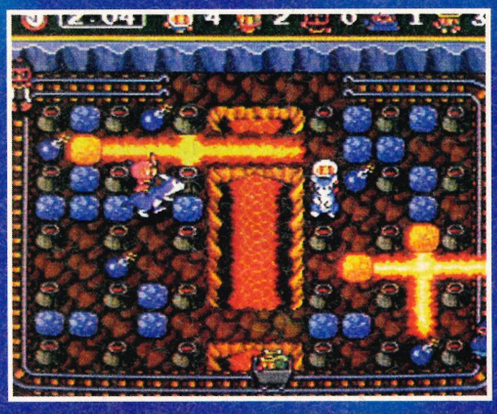
Well, for instance there's *Cyborg* where he played a kickboxer. *Kickboxer*, where he played, er, a kickboxer. *Double Impact*, where, blow me, he was a kickboxer by trade. And finally, *Death Warrant* in which Jean-Claude took the role of a particle scientist. Really? No I was lying, he played a kickboxer.

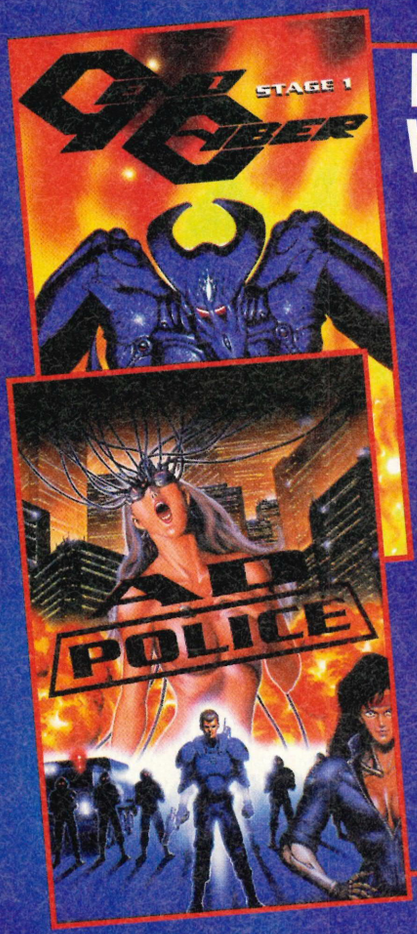
So you can be sure that whatever time paradoxes occur in *Timecop*, Jean-Claude will do plenty of slow motion kickboxing and bombard us with loads of that curiously French dialogue. The game hits us next issue, so get prepared.

BOMBERMAN 3 IS ON THE WAY!

Straight from Japan is news that *Super Bomberman 3* exists and should be out in April of 1995. At 12Mbit, it's much bigger than the previous two and has a secret recipe – kangaroos! Yes, you can ride on cute kangaroos as well as partaking of the usual bombing action.

The game contains all-new levels including the one shown, and there are a host of new bonuses and tricks to master (although hopefully they've corrected the glove problem). SG will have the game soon, so look out for our assessment.





HAVE A MERRY XMAS WITH MANGA!

Two hot videos this month, just perfect as presents for that Manga-obssessed individual in your life.

First up is *Genocyber: A New Lifeform*. Based on the comic strip by *AD Police*'s Tony Takezaki, *Genocyber* is set in Hong Kong (Aren't they all?) and concerns the attempts by a group of scientists to create the ultimate human being.

Disaster and mayhem ensue, intercut with some psychic experiences and it all ends in violence. What more can I say? *Genocyber* is yours at £9.99 for 45 minutes of prime Manga, but you'll have to be over 18 to buy it 'cos it's *that* 'ard.

Finally from those festive Manga people is *AD Police 1: Voomer Madness*. This is a three part story about the future, where robots known as Voomers have been created to do all the rubbish jobs, but now they are rebelling and killing people by the skip-load!

The Advanced Police are called in, including rookie Leon and his (no doubt tubby) partner. This is classic animated film and one that Manga fans should not miss. It's yours now for a tiny £6.99 for 26 minutes.



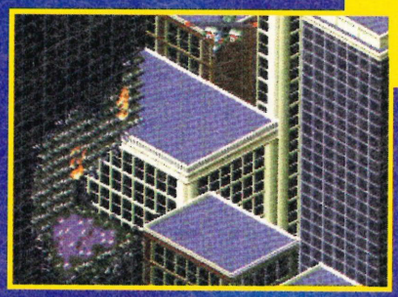
USG UNDERPOWERED?



The conversion of the hit coin-op rally game *PowerDrive* is well overdue in our opinion, but apparently there seems to be a fault in US Gold's mailing system. When we said "Can you send us a copy for review?", they obviously misheard and thought we said "We never want to see your game, do not under any circumstances send it to us."

So, if you're wandering where our *PowerDrive* review is, now you know, but rest assured with US Gold's help we'll have the game in time for next issue. Hope so 'cos we're all looking forward to playing it...

THQ STRIKE BACK!



American company THQ have secured an impressive line-up of games for the new year. The biggest title must be *Urban Strike* for the Super NES, the conversion of EA's Mega Drive hit.

Urban Strike is the third game in the 'Strike' series, preceded by *Desert* and *Jungle Strike* (being developed for the Super NES by Gremlin). This time not only do you get to blast everything the metropolis has to offer (including skyscrapers), but they've included some on-foot sections where you must infiltrate key installations

The whole series is viewed isometrically and the trademark detailed graphics are faithfully recreated, with enhanced sound, very much like *Desert Strike* on the Super NES.

The plot is this. The grand criminal Malone is threatening the world's leaders with a vast laser super weapon, and your mission as the daring chopper pilot is to destroy his bases one by one and then take out the laser.

The game is set over ten levels including San Francisco, Alcatraz, Mexico, Hawaii and an enemy oil rig. There's even a section in the besieged Las Vegas where you can hit the right slot machine and Elvis appears!

Urban Strike will be out on your Super NES sometime in 1995 (sorry we can't be any more specific). Also coming from THQ is *SeaQuest DSV* of course (which looks hot), *PGA European Tour*, *PGA Tour 3* and *Akira*, as well as *PGA Tour 3*, *Michael Jordan Aventure*, *Shaq-Fu* and *Urban Strike* on the Game Boy.

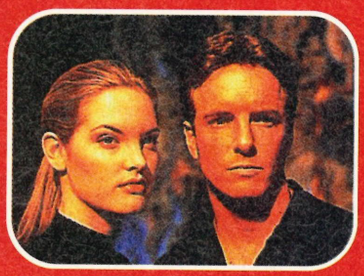


MORTAL MOVIE IS GREEN!

Sad news I'm afraid. The *MK* movie *is* still going ahead (groan). The story involves the entire *Mortal Kombat* cast, and it includes Christopher Lambert (*Highlander*, *Subway*) as Rayden, Bridgette Wilson (the horny daughter in *Last Action Hero*) as Sonya Blade, CH Tagawa (*Licence to Kill*, *Star Trek: TNG*) as Shang Tsung, Linden Ashby (*Wyatt Earp*) as Johnny Cage, Robin Shou (who?) as Liu Kang, Trevor Goddard (who??) as Kano, and Talisa Soto as Kitana.

Once again a mix of knowns and unknowns, but producer Larry Kasanoff says that the special effects will be amazing (aren't they always?). The plot follows the game closely and centers on Goro who has won the tournament for nine generations in a row. A tenth win and the portal of darkness will be opened and all hell breaks loose!

It's up to Johnny Cage, Liu Kang and Sony Blade to stop Goro in his tracks, and inadvertently they are also setting up Kitana to take her rightful place on the throne. Confused? We are, but what's the point of making the film of the game if you can't pep it up a bit? More news as we get it.





12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS COMPETITIONS!

Ho, ho, ho – Merry Christmas! To celebrate the end of another great console year and a triumph for SUPER GAMER, we phoned round the top software companies and begged for some prizes so that you don't just get a couple of compos in this Xmas special, but 14! Yowzer!
Usual compo rules apply, and all must arrive by 10 Jan at the latest. Please send your answers on the back of a postcard only, 'cos we can't be bothered to open any letters. (Address them according to the relevant day.) Enjoy and good luck!

ON THE FIRST DAY...

Nickelodeon's infamously grotesque duo, Ren & Stimpy are about to star in their second Super NES adventure, *Time Warp*. To celebrate the fact, THQ are giving away ten R&S baseball caps. You want more? Okay, just to broadcast the fact that *Taz-Mania* is riding back up the charts on budget release, we'll also chuck in ten Taz T-shirts. To win one of each, simply tell us the full title of Ren & Stimpy's first Super NES game?

ON THE SECOND DAY...

Acclaim get it together and are offering 12 lucky SUPER GAMER readers the chance to win 12 bitchin' *Mortal Kombat II* T-shirts. These unusual garments are black, with the *MKII* logo and lightning behind and are essential wear for any self-respecting *MKII* fan. To win one, answer this question correctly. What is the name of the hidden babe wearing green in *MKII*?

ON THE THIRD DAY...

To celebrate nothing other than the fact that Konami is still THE force to be reckoned with in the software stakes, those highly generous chaps who're responsible for releasing such greats as *The Adventures of Batman & Robin*, and *Biker Mice From Mars* are giving away ten utterly sponditious Konami T-shirts. All you have to do is answer this: which trio of Warner misfits will be appearing on the Super NES this Christmas?

ON THE FOURTH DAY...

As we enter the turkey-maiming season again, it's a case of out with the old and in with the new, and Interplay (whose corking games *C2*, *Blackhawk*, and *Star Trek* all scored well in this issue) are having somewhat of a clear out. The result of which is 20 *Lost Vikings* T-shirts which are now littering our offices! To take them off of our hands, answer the following teaser: Which Lost Viking pops up in *Rock 'N Roll Racing*?

ON THE FIFTH DAY...

No Christmas would be complete without a hearty helping of animated violence to help the turkey and sherry slide down. We've got a tasty treat in store courtesy of Manga Entertainment. They're offering us five copies of each of their new volumes, *GenoCyber* and *AD Police* (see news), to give away to our readers. All you have to do is correctly define what "Manga" means in Japanese.

ON THE SIXTH DAY...

The beautiful and jolly Janine Johnson at Activision has kindly donated ten Christmas goodie bags stuffed full of *Pitfall – The Mayan Adventure* merchandise, including a limited edition *Pitfall* watch, a ribbed cotton *Pitfall* T-shirt, a highly deadly boomerang, and a loveable inflatable snake that can suffocate any other cuddly animals you might have. To win the lot, simply tell us what legendary console *Pitfall* was originally released on?

ON THE SEVENTH DAY...

Racing up the charts as one of the best racing games of 1994 is UBI Soft's fabulous *Street Racer*. Diving into the Xmas spirit, UBI Soft's Vera Shah flipped over backwards to give us a copy of the game, some mugs and T-shirts for our readers. Answer this, if you dare. What colour is Biff's car in *Street Racer*?

ON THE EIGHTH DAY...

Accessory master Gamester were so impressed with SUPER GAMER, that they instantly pledged five Super NES regular joypads, five turbo pads, and five multi-tap adaptors to the five lucky geezers who can correctly name the entire SUPER GAMER team (ooh that's a toughy), including some daft middle names. The funniest will win.

ON THE NINTH DAY...

Good old Titus, they'll always help you out in a scrape and more importantly, they always buy the beer, Chinese food and then the taxi home. For our faithful readers, Titus have donated five T-shirts, five Titus rucksacks and five badges. To win this fabulous booty, just tell us which band the SG team and Titus impersonated at a hotel in Bournemouth this month? Was it – Bad Boys Inc, Blur or Queen?

ON THE TENTH DAY...

Ocean arrived and filled our modest and very tidy office with FREE gear. To win a copy of *Mr Nutz* on the Game Boy, *Jordan Adventure*, *Shaq-Fu*, *NBA Live '95* and *Madden '95* on the Super NES, and five T-shirts for the runners-up, answer this question. What sport does Michael Jordan play?

ON THE ELEVENTH DAY...

Marubeni signed up the man of steel and consequently *Superman* appeared on the Super NES (er, it hasn't yet – Ed). For our 12 days of Christmas compos, Marubeni have very kindly sent 20 bottles of Superman bubble bath – the ideal post-Xmas gift! To stand a chance of owing one of these rare items, tell us what substance paralyses Superman?

AND ON THE TWELFTH DAY...

Virgin decided to send us two *Earthworm Jim* T-shirts and some extremely rare *Super Bomberman* Sellotape. We didn't ask for it, but what the hell? To win these limited edition prizes, simply tell us which company produced Earthworm Jim?

ELSPA CHARTS

Special thanks to Dorien Block.

They say the oldies are the best and here we have concrete proof. *Super Maro World*, one of the Super NES's first games is back at the top of the chart after over a year, mainly due to some favourable pricing from the big N. This just goes to prove that lower prices really do shift games in substantial qualities. And backing Mario up is of course the ace driving game *Stunt Race FX*, and then *FIFA* and *MKII* try valiantly to topple the moustachioed plumber. Shock news is that *Mario is Missing!* and *Bubsy* the annoying bobcat are back in the charts, holding *Mickey Mania* at number 12 and even beating *SFII: Turbo*, *Zelda III* and the new arrival of three player beat-'em-up, *Dragon*, from Virgin.

On the Game Boy, *Super Mario Land* is back at the top (what is it with these Mario Bros?) and newcomer *Tetris 2* is hacked back down to number two after only one month at the top. Both *Warioland* and *Donkey Kong '94* hold fast at number three and four respectively, but *MKII* begins its slow trudge to the top slot, and it's good to see *F1 Race* with the adaptor making an appearance.

EUROPEAN LEISURE SOFTWARE PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION LTD
ELSPA

COMPILED BY
GALLUP

THIS MONTH'S CHARTS

▲: Hot ▼: Not
NE: New Entry –: Same

SUPER NES

1	▲	Super Mario World	Nintendo
2	▼	Stunt Race FX	Nintendo
3	▲	FIFA Soccer	Ocean
4	▲	Mortal Kombat II	Acclaim
5	▼	Starwing	Nintendo
6	▲	Mortal Kombat	Acclaim
7	▲	Cool Spot	Virgin
8	▲	Aladdin	Capcom
9	▲	Super Mario Kart	Nintendo
10	NE	Mario is Missing!	Mindscape
11	NE	Bubsy the Bobcat	Accolade
12	NE	Mickey Mania	Sony
13	–	Street Fighter II: Turbo	Capcom
14	▲	Super Strike Gunner	Activision
15	▲	Jungle Book	Virgin
16	NE	Jurassic Park	Ocean
17	NE	Zelda III	Nintendo
18	NE	Dragon	Virgin
19	NE	Super Metroid	Nintendo
20	NE	Power Rangers	Bandai

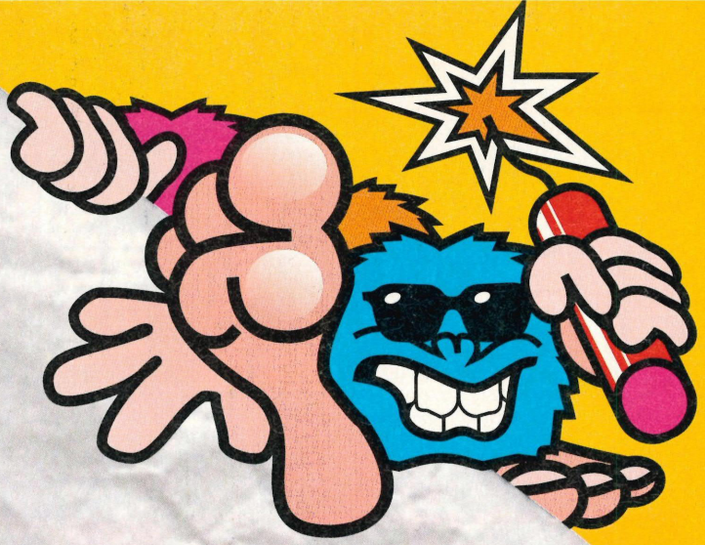
GAME BOY

1	▲	Super Mario Land	Nintendo
2	–	Tetris 2	Nintendo
3	–	Warioland	Nintendo
4	–	Donkey Kong '94	Nintendo
5	▲	Kirby's Pinball Land	Nintendo
6	▲	Mortal Kombat II	Acclaim
7	NE	Out to Lunch	Mindscape
8	▼	Road Rash	Ocean
9	NE	Kirby's Dreamland	Nintendo
10	NE	F1 Race+ 4 player adaptor	Nintendo

NES

1	▲	Pac-Man	Nintendo
2	NE	Super Mario Bros 3	Nintendo
3	NE	Battletoads & Double Dragon	Nintendo
4	NE	Solstice	Nintendo
5	▲	Swordmaster	Activision
6	NE	Probotector 2	Konami
7	▲	Tetris 2	Nintendo
8	NE	Battleship	Mindscape
9	NE	Parodius	Konami
10	NE	World Wrestling	Nintendo

Get them...
Before they get you!



THE BRAINIES

"Treat your brain
to a complete workout"

"Brainies offers an awesome challenge and gameplay so addictive you'll have to check into the Betty Ford clinic to straighten out. A MUST for puzzle freaks." **Super Gamer**

"Brainies is like a breath of fresh air in the stale market of platformers and shoot 'em ups.

Brainies offers originality, style and challenging gameplay. Top stuff. it'll keep you enthralled for aeons."

92%

Super Action

"...It's more addictive than Tetris."
Electric Gaming Monthly

TITUS

telstar
fun & games

Original Nintendo Seal of Quality

Available on Super Nintendo

MINI PREVIEWS

AERO THE ACRO-BAT 2



The super-supple circus bat swoops back onto the Super NES in the sequel to last year's smash hit. Packed with even more levels, bonus stages and animations, Aero certainly looks set to hang around for a while yet. Sunsoft: TBA.

BEAVIS & BUTTHEAD



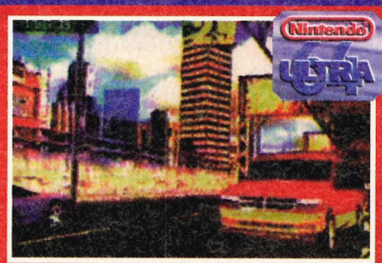
MTV's most spaced-out duo get up to all kinds of immature pranks as they run riot in their very own game. Yob around at the local mall, cause havoc at the school, and then indulge in a spot of couch fishing! Viacom: TBA

SUPER BOMBERMAN 3



The second instalment was a disappointment, but *Bomberman 3* looks set to be the best version yet. A conversion of *Bomberman '94* on the PC Engine and featuring more levels, more pick-ups, and best of all, creatures to ride around on! Hudsonsoft: TBA.

CRUISIN' USA



One of two pioneering new titles for the Ultra 64, this high-paced racing sim looks set to wipe the floor with the likes of *Daytona*, and *Ridge Racer*. It features fully rendered graphics and loads of hi-tech vehicles to thrash.

DARKSTALKERS



Capcom return to *Street Fighter II* territory with this novel beat-'em-up featuring a whole host of savage creatures as opposed to human combatants. Expect to see the usual quota of fancy moves and plenty of combos, but no originality. Capcom: TBA.

DONKEY KONG LAND



Kong and kin return fresh from their epic Super NES adventure by starring in one of 1995's most eagerly awaited Game Boy releases. The game will be a platform adventure in a similar vein to *Mario Land*, with oodles of fancy visual effects. Nintendo: TBA.

FRONT MISSION



Ever dreamed of rampaging through cities in a state-of-the-art tank? No, well this impressive looking Japanese import probably won't appeal to you then. The graphics are top-notch and the perspective is similar to *Desert Strike*. JAP IMPORT ONLY

FX FIGHTER



We were the first magazine in the world to see this last month, and so we couldn't resist printing another screen shot. The game is a 3-D FX beat-'em-up which looks like *Virtua Fighter*, but with better characters and more moves. GTE: TBA.

HURRICANES



Dodgy platform caper alert! Oops, we can't say that because this is only a mini preview, but even so! This follows in a similar vein to *Soccer Kid* as you prance around as some Roy of the Rovers wannabe kicking a ball around. US Gold: December.

MICKEY'S GREAT CIRCUS ADV



This is the sequel to the classic *Magical Quest*. Once again Mickey and all his chums embark on a hair-raising adventure to rid the world of his arch enemy, Pete. Loads of cross-dressing for Mickey and fantastic graphical locations. Capcom: TBA.

RISE OF THE ROBOTS



Mirage's impressive looking beat-'em-up has been the subject of much controversy over the last couple of months, mainly because they don't want anyone to review it. Thankfully, Acclaim are on the case to distribute it. Acclaim: December.

SUPER TETRIS 3



Can it be true? Can the Super NES possibly have room for yet another *Tetris* game? Apparently so because it's coming soon. Although the exact features are unconfirmed, rest assured it will offer a few upgrades to the genre.

SCOOBY DOO



Developed by Argonaut (the same people behind *Starwing*, *FX Fighter* etc), this cartoon platform adventure features the classic animated hound at his comical best. The game includes Scooby's gang, plus loads of bonus stages. Sunsoft: TBA.

ULTIMATE PARODIUS



The first was brilliant, and this can only improve on the original formula. More tongue-in-cheek shoot-'em-up action is on the cards with stunning graphics and cuter than cute sound. You should be able to pick it up on import fairly soon. Konami: TBA.

URBAN STRIKE



We haven't even seen the official release of *Jungle Strike* yet and the sequel is already in the pipeline – what's going on? Pretty much the same as the previous two games, this offers more vehicles and walking around shooting sections. THQ: 1995

KICK OFF 3

EUROPEAN *Challenge*

CVG GOLD

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Multitude of team styles and tactics - no two sides play the same way.

Practice and perfect overhead kicks, flick ups, diving headers and volleys for the crucial matches.

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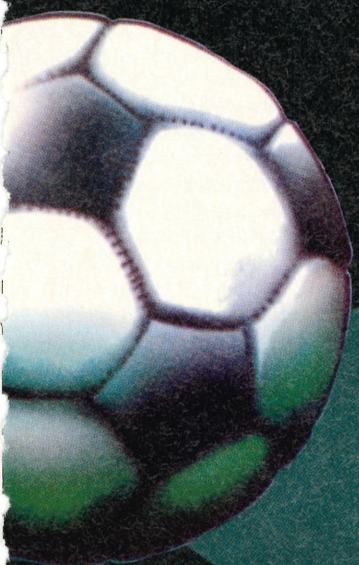
Three levels of speed, skill, and ball control to suit amateur and the professional.

Stereo soccer sound effects for the big match atmosphere.

KICK OFF 3 SHOWS THE RED CARD TO ALL OTHER SOCCER GAMES

MEGA DRIVE

SUPER NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM





YES YOU CAN

IT'S OUT NOW!

ANCO

Published by Vic Tokai Europe Ltd. Tokai House, 9 Duncan Close, Moulton Park, Northampton NN3 6WL Tel: 0604 671415 Fax: 0604 670864

Screen Shots are illustrative of gameplay and may vary from format to format

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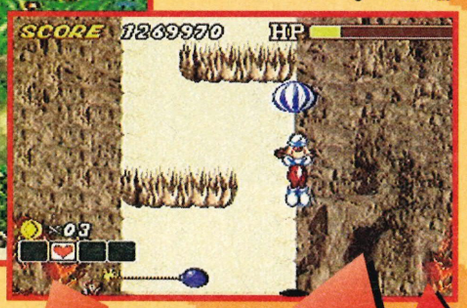
VIC TOKAI

CRAZY CHASE



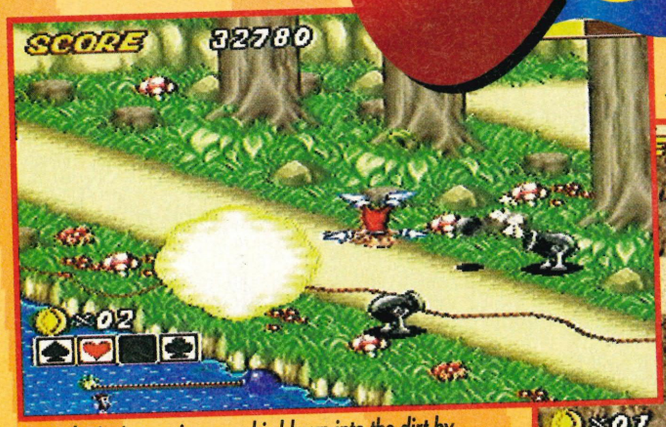


△ Kid squeezes out of a coke can as a punk gets busted.



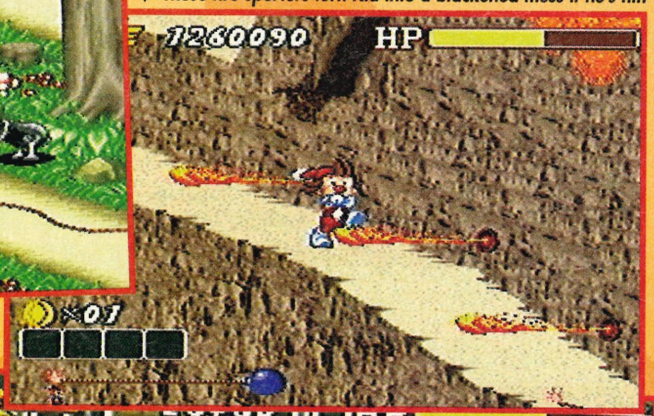






△ Kid mis-times a jump and is blown into the dirt by a cannon ball.

▽ These fire spurters turn Kid into a blackened mess if he's hit!





▷ Flaming walls, rolling boulders, when will it ever end? Life is one big sprint for poor Kid.



PRODUCER
NINTENDO
(0703) 651010
PRICE
£TBA
RELEASE DATE
FEBRUARY '95

Honey, the daughter of King Klown, has been kidnapped by Blackjack the evil space pirate, and only Kid Klown can rescue her! The problem is that Blackjack has a nasty obsession with bombs and has left a trail of them in his wake, primed to blow. Kid Klown has to collect three symbols to defuse the bombs.

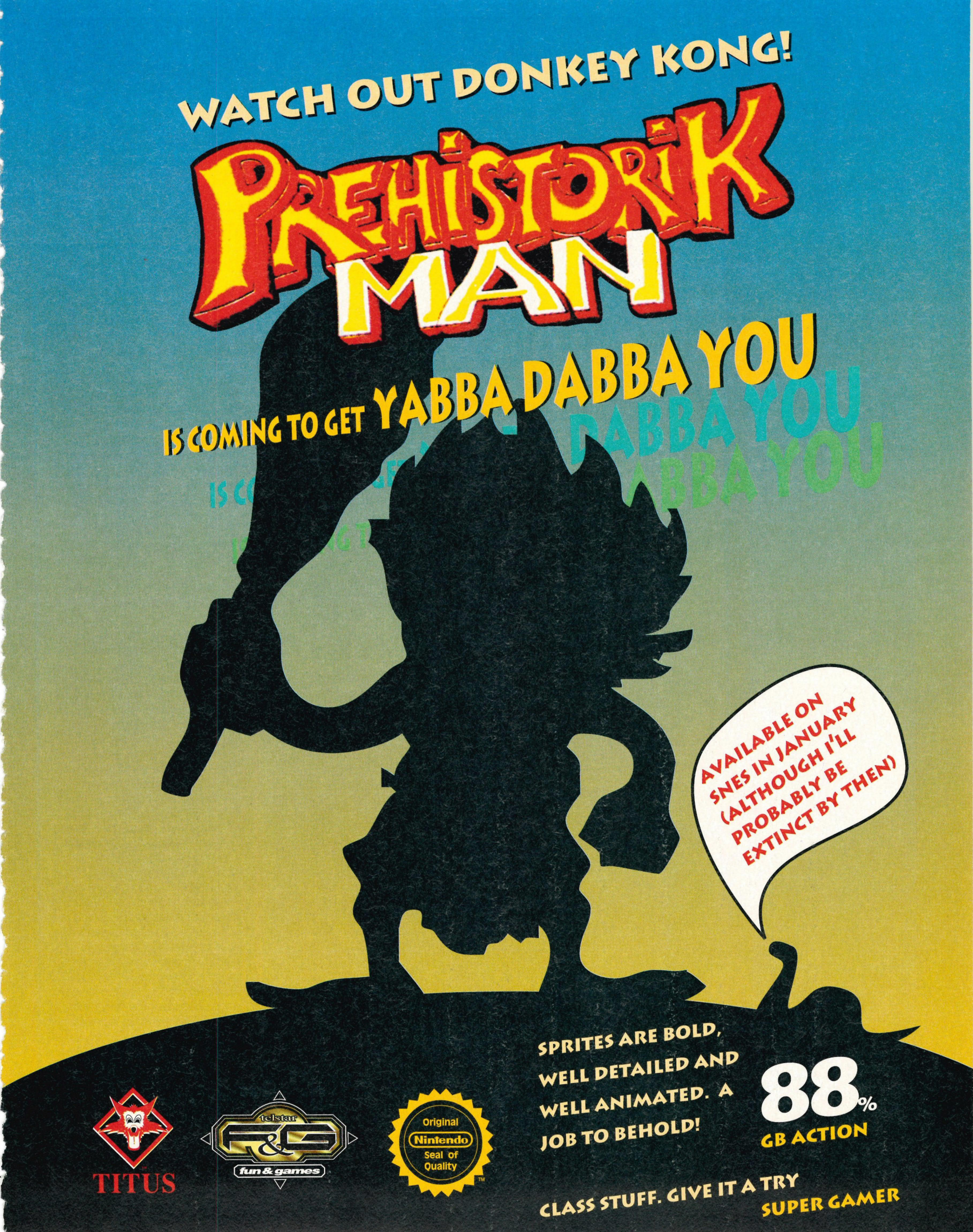
This frantic isometric chase game takes place over a series of fiendish levels filled with cannons, flame-throwers, muggers, rolling boulders and plenty more obstacles and traps that Kid must avoid to reach the bomb in time.

The main showpiece of the game is the amazing animation that accompanies Kid's every move. The way he constantly glances over his shoulder as he careers, arms flailing, down the slope is just one of the subtle ways the programmers have used the graphics to enhance the overall feeling of panic you get from playing it.

There are also loads of set-piece animations for when kid collides with objects or falls into traps and this makes Kid Klown the most lifelike character since Donkey Kong and Bubsy. The sound effects also enhance the atmosphere with some brilliant cartoon noises and samples.

Luckily, to ease your worry as you hurtle around the crazy clown world, there are a stack-load of secret levels that can be found everywhere from coke cans to puddles. There's even an air hockey game for you to have a go at, if you can complete the right level.

Nintendo have certainly picked up an interesting licence here, it seems as though *Crazy Chase* could actually be a highly original arcade game – a real rarity nowadays. Unless there's any last minute clowning around from Nintendo, look out for the review very soon!


WATCH OUT DONKEY KONG!
PREHISTORIK MAN
IS COMING TO GET YABBA DABBA YOU
AVAILABLE ON SNES IN JANUARY (ALTHOUGH I'LL PROBABLY BE EXTINCT BY THEN)
SPRITES ARE BOLD, WELL DETAILED AND WELL ANIMATED. A JOB TO BEHOLD!
88% GB ACTION
CLASS STUFF. GIVE IT A TRY
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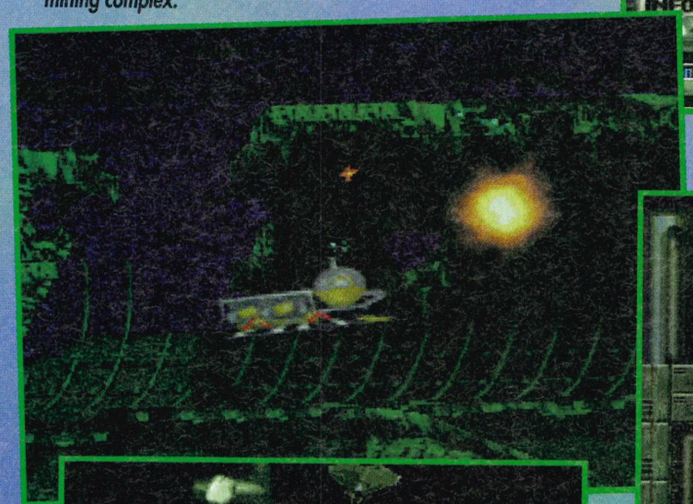
seaQuest DSV

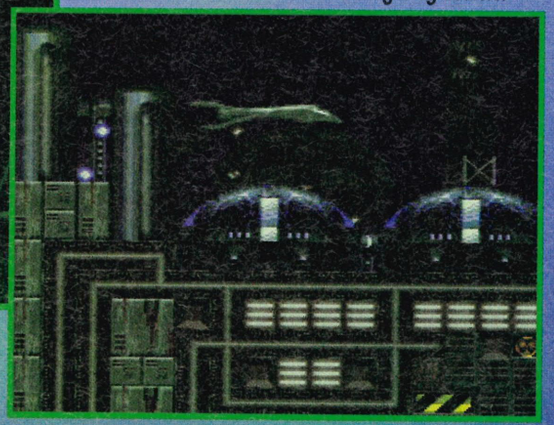
PRODUCER
MALIBU
(071) 935 8954
PRICE
£49.99
RELEASE DATE
JANUARY '95

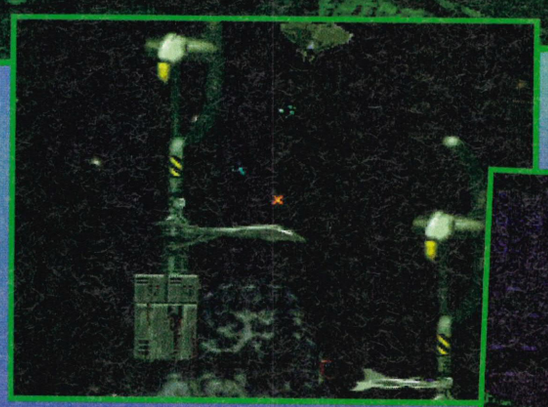


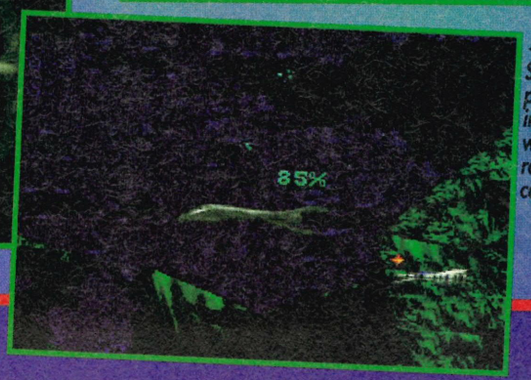
△ SeaQuest DSV patrols the underwater mining complex.

▽ One swift promotion and you're out of the simulation and into the heart of the action tackling drug dealers.









◁ One of SeaQuest's probes ventures into dangerous waters to recover toxic canisters.

Remember our fabbo Work in Progress report in issue three? Well aqua fans, the time has come to start getting very excited indeed because THQ's monster from the deep is about to be launched in the UK!

Programmed by Sculptured Software, *SeaQuest DSV* is a visually stunning piece of software which lets you take command of the most advanced submarine ever devised – sort of!

The game begins as a simulation, with you playing the bright-eyed young graduate who has to negotiate the SeaQuest through a series of taxing missions involving salvaging, rescuing, and repairs.

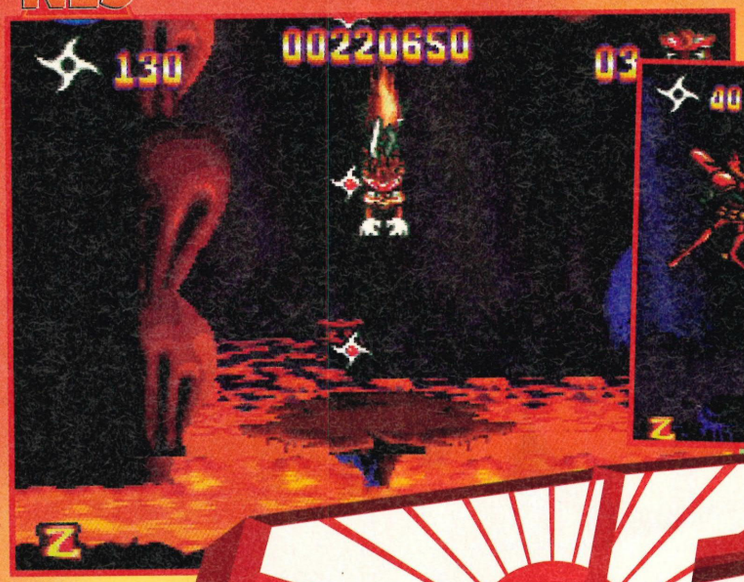
You must first manoeuvre the 1,0007 ft ship around the sea bed; taking out enemy vessels, and awaiting you mission objectives. Once you've had your orders, it's off to the bay to launch an appropriate probe and carry out the mission. There are six probes to choose from: Crab, Stinger, Sea Speeder, and of course Darwin the dolphin.

The main bulk of the game is viewed in a similar perspective to *Desert Strike* (ie isometric), although the SeaQuest can interact with its surroundings. The best example being when it rises and sinks to go over and under things on the sea bed.

When you've been ordered to carry out a mission, then the action switches to a horizontally scrolling section in which the desired probe battles against enemy vehicles to complete the tasks, usually against the clock.

The initial aim of the game is to successfully work your way up to the rank of Petty Officer via the simulation, because you'll then be handed the keys to the real DSV and be given far more dangerous missions, with the added responsibility of not writing-off the UEO's greatest asset!

Join us next month when it's all hands on deck for the full exclusive review.





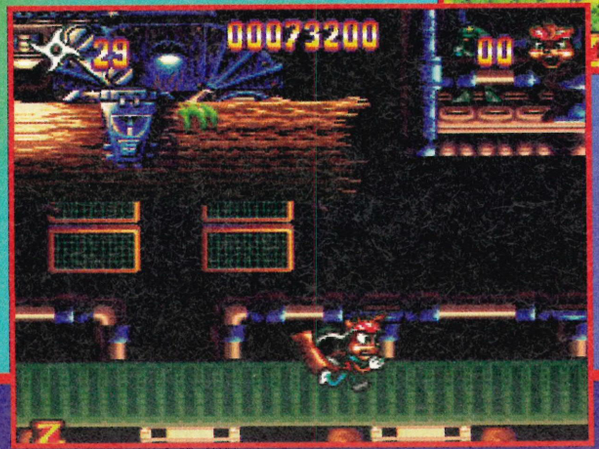
▽ 'Ere, wasn't that droid in BOB?

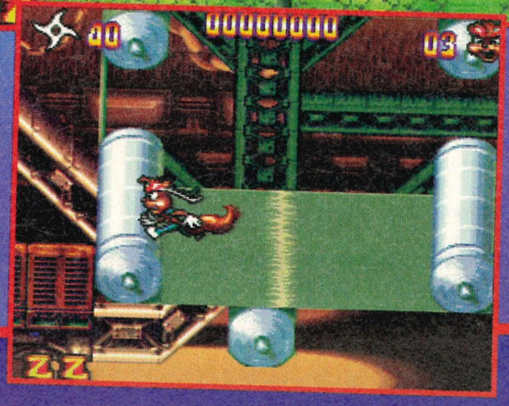
ZERO THE KAMIKAZE SQUIRREL





△ Well-timed jumps are the order of the day if Zero is to successfully destroy the mining vehicle.





PRODUCER
MARUBENI
(071) 826 8816

PRICE
£TBA

RELEASE DATE
SPRING 1995

After pushing poor old Aero the Acro-Bat close to the depths of despair in last year's circus-related platformer, the crazy squirrel with attitude is about to star in his very own adventure – and Aero is nowhere to be seen.

Seeing the error of his wicked ways, Zero sets out to redeem himself by saving his forest homeland from impending doom at the hands of Jacques LeSheets, a money-loving lumberjack.

Jacques' axe is sharpened and poised ready to hack away at a vast proportion of Zero's happy habitat in order to produce enough paper to launch a massive counterfeit boom.

Zero must face a plethora of different terrain before he can do battle with Jacques himself; gallivanting around sandy beaches, scaling perilous cliffs, and manoeuvring a jetski down furious white-water rapids are just a few of the seemingly impossible chores that our interpid squirrel must negotiate during his fantastic plight for the good of all creatures great and small. It's nothing like *Mr Nutz* at all.

No platform hero in their rightful mind would accept the burden of such a suicidal mission without first being impressively skilled in some kind of self defence, and Zero is no exception. Armed with a limited supply of throwing stars, a spiny jump and an awesome nose-dive, Zero is worthy enough in the superhero stakes to give any axe-wielding maniac a run for his money – even if they are French!

Packed with colourful levels, crack-pot bosses, a hefty challenge and enough bonuses to fill a solar system, could Zero be the next cutesy platform hero? Or is he destined to be stashing his nuts in that great oak in the sky? Only you can find out next month.

KONG'S KRIMBO KOMPO!



Unless you have been living on Pluto you cannot fail to have noticed that a game called *Donkey Kong Country* has recently arrived for the Super NES. With graphics so silky smooth you could make sheets out of them, sound that makes you think a CD player has been crudely Sellotaped to the back of the console, and gameplay so addictive you'll have to visit a special clinic to dry out after a single hour's play!

Yes folks for just £59.99 you can have a fully functioning Rare programmed fully rendered Saturn embarrasser plugged into your machine, that completely shows up all new generation consoles and proves that Nintendo are leagues ahead of Sega.

What I'm trying to say is that *DKC* is the best platform game since *Super Mario World* and that to celebrate the coming of age of the Super NES, Nintendo are offering SUPER GAMER readers the chance to win a Super NES pack with *DKC*, plus goody bags containing a T-shirt, CD, video and a special DK notepad that is not available to just anyone. A further ten lucky runners-up will win themselves a goody bag each – generous or what!

To be in with a chance of winning, simply answer the question on the right and send it along with your name and dwelling to the following address: *Kong's Krimbo Compo, SUPER GAMER, Paragon Publishing, 124 Old Christchurch Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 1NF.*

All entries must arrive by 10 January and Diddy Dee's decision is final.

THE QUESTION

What's the name of Clint Eastwood's orang-utan in "*Any Which Way but Loose*"?

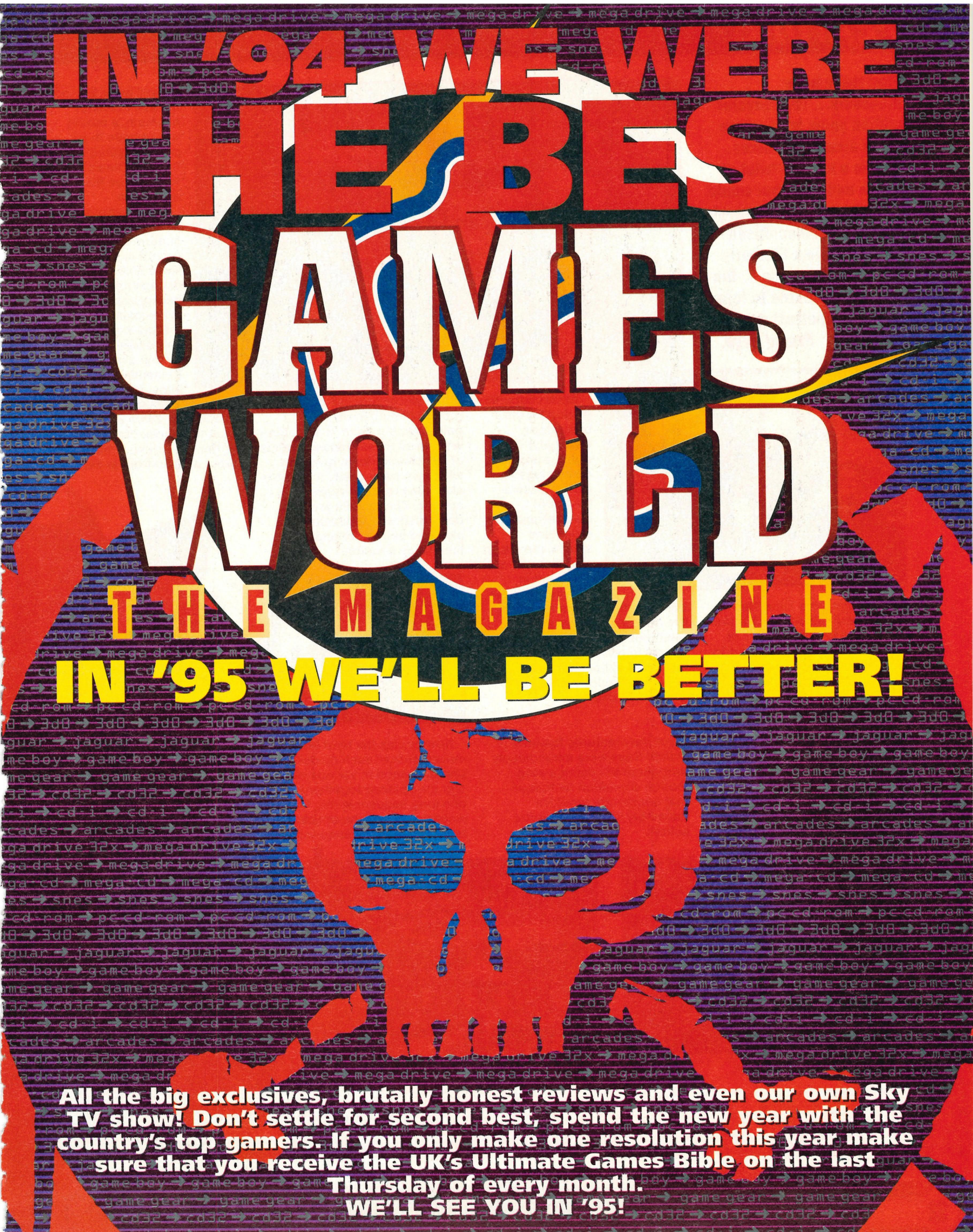
A. Trevor
B. Syd
C. Clyde

IN '94 WE WERE THE BEST

GAMES WORLD

THE MAGAZINE

IN '95 WE'LL BE BETTER!



All the big exclusives, brutally honest reviews and even our own Sky TV show! Don't settle for second best, spend the new year with the country's top gamers. If you only make one resolution this year make sure that you receive the UK's Ultimate Games Bible on the last Thursday of every month.

WE'LL SEE YOU IN '95!

RAGE AGAINST

First there were dinosaurs... then several million years later, there came arcade machines. Now in a warped twist of space and time that would make Dickie Attenborough warble insane confused mutterings in a blatantly false Scottish accent, the two forces collide to form one of the hottest coin-ops of the year, *Primal Rage*.





Primal Rage from Time Warner is a fiendish blast from the past which, due to the wanders of modern technology, is about to emerge in arcades all over the world before roaming onto the Super NES next September.

The game is a one-on-one beat-'em-up featuring dinosaurs instead of human combatants. Included in the seven strong line-up of BC beasts are a huge yeti, a serpent, triceratops, 'raptor (of course, but whoever heard of them before *JP*?), and the bad boy of the lot, a T-Rex.

Each character (including the triceratops strangely) stomps around on two legs and can unleash a torrent of conventional and gruesome special moves. In a similar vein to *MKII*, and in keeping with the theme of the savage nature of the beasts, there are also a multitude of sickening finishing moves to render the other creatures extinct and leaving the ultimate victor ruling over the planet 'Urth'.

HOW DO THEY *DO* THAT?

All of the creatures featured in *Primal Rage* were miraculously brought to life using a stop-motion animation technique that apparently provides incredibly life-like character action.

The whole process of stop-motion filming is very painstaking indeed. It all begins with small metal-framed models of the characters in question who each have easily moveable skeletons to allow realistic actions. The models are then decorated with a flexible latex skin and painted to appear as life-like as possible.



Now comes the hard bit. The movements of each model are photographed in various poses and then pieced together into one long sequence, this means when you press the attack button, one of the sequences is played back. For one special move for example, a model would have to be photographed several hundred times in order to give true fluid animation.

Once every single pose has been captured, the film is run off in sequence like a flick book and set against the lavish backgrounds featured in the game.

Stop-motion animation is by no means a new thing. Remember the Sinbad films, and while we're on the subject of dinosaurs, *One Million Years BC*? How do you think those dinos ended up on the big screen without the aid of a million-dollar Silicon

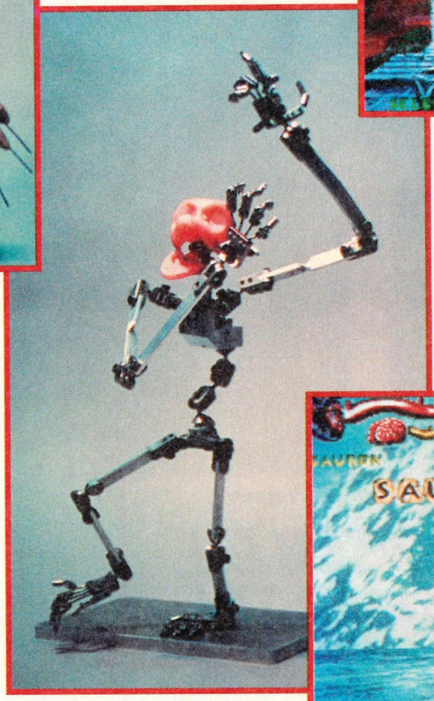








For starters there's the 'Total Immersion Audio' system which adds a new dimension of sound to the coin-op market; giving an ultra-realistic sensation that



features shorter rounds, more damaging hits and completely rock 'ard opponents the second time around.

But what are we leading up to? Well, as stated earlier *Primal Rage* WILL be hitting the Super NES next year; the estimated release date is



September. Now that may seem a while away, but as the coin-op hits the streets soon, it is a good excuse to get down to the arcades and start practising.

If you're sick of *Street Fighter II*, a tad peeved by *MKII*, or have come to the conclusion that *Virtual Fighter* IS complete tosh, then wander down to your nearest arcade now and experience real savagery! SUPER GAMER will keep you informed of all developments.

Graphics workstation as favoured by Mr Spielberg!

The upshot of all this photo-trickery is that instead of entirely computer generated images as used in *Rise of the Robots*, the dinosaurs are actually real, except about a hundreth of the size. This means a more realisic look, and I think you'll agree that *Primal Rage* is if nothing else, distinctive.

Primal Rage was developed by a 30 strong team of dedicated artists, animators, and cameramen in America. The project first came to light two years ago as an idea by the game's producer, Dennis Harper. At first it was just two battling T-Rexs, but according to Jason Leong (lead animator), his idea was to work in many different dinosaurs and use the stop-motion techniques for added reality.

Apart from out-of-this-world graphics, *Primal Rage* also has several other tricks up its sleeve with which to launch its full scale attack on the existing beat-'em-up market.



makes you think the dinosaurs are actually in the room with you!

Also, unlike most existing beat-'em-ups where you battle through everyone, beat a boss and that's it, *Primal Rage* offers the ultimate challenge for anyone worthy enough to have beaten the first wave of computer controlled opponents. Known as the 'Primal Challenge' this special addition





THE MACHINE

Gateway to the Stars



△ *Kurt Russell and James Spader look in awe at the Stargate discovery.*

WE FLIP THE LATCH ON ACCLAIM'S STARGATE!

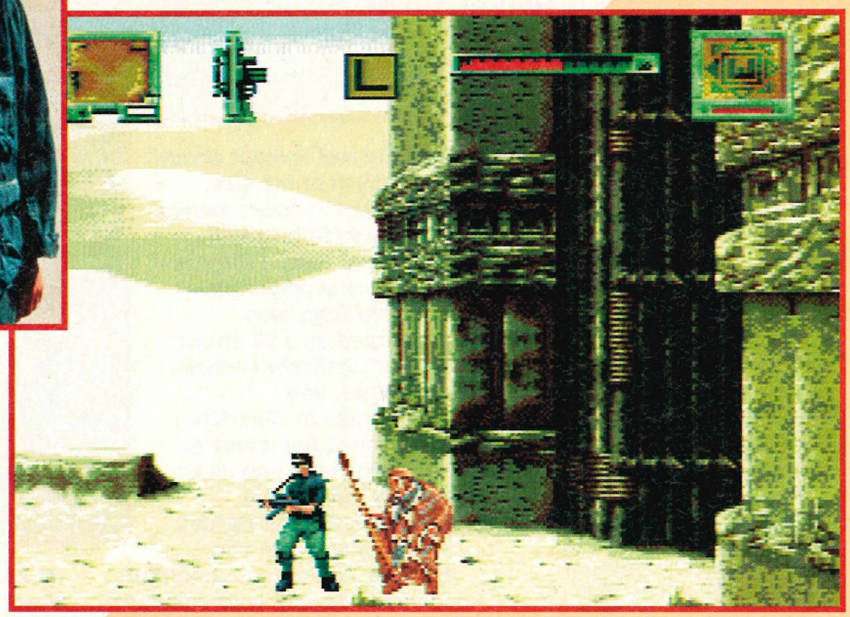
The year is 1928 and a major archaeological discovery has occurred near the Great Pyramid. A series of ancient tablets have been unearthed, inscribed with complicated hieroglyphics pre-dating anything else currently on record. Ooh-wah.

For decades the world's best scientists try to decode the ancient language, but to no avail... and so the great secret hidden behind the tablets remains undiscovered until today.

In desperation and after years of frustration and secrecy, the government turns to Daniel Jackson, an academic intellectual whose alternative theories on how the ancient pyramids came to be where they are, have resulted in him being unfairly labelled the "Pyramidiot."

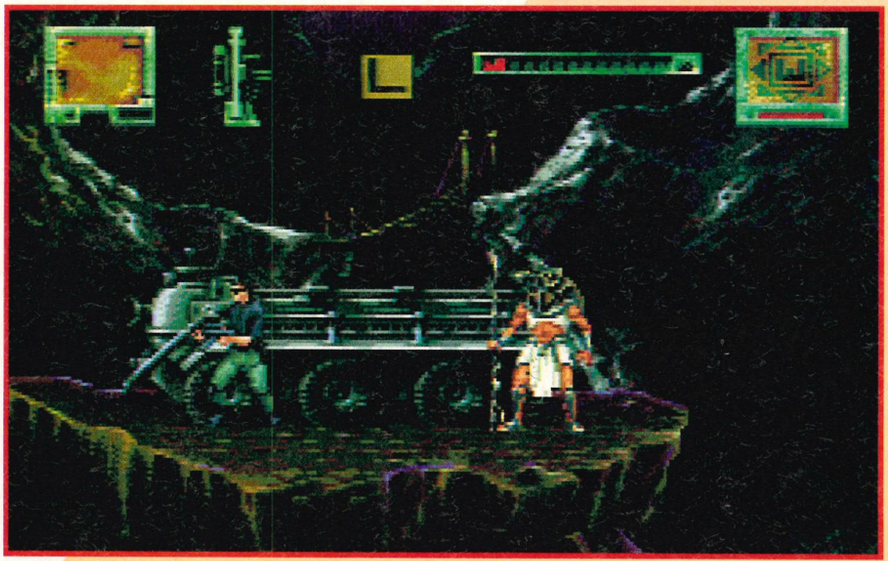
It's egg on the face all round however when Daniel cracks the code in an instant and the true secret behind the tablets is finally uncovered. However, what lurks behind the huge slabs is not Egyptian by any means and certainly not of this world...

Unbeknown to Jackson (played by James Spader in the film), the wondrous artefact uncovered is in fact a portal to

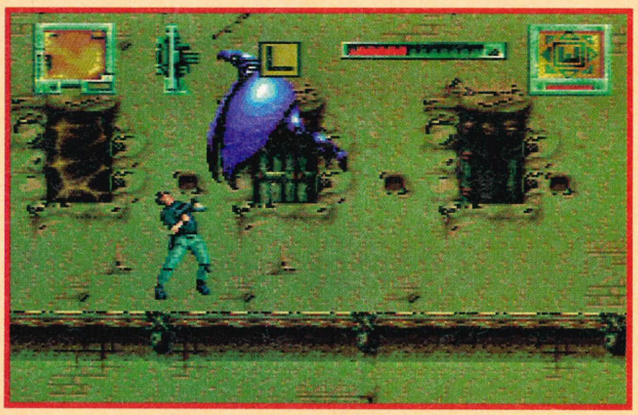


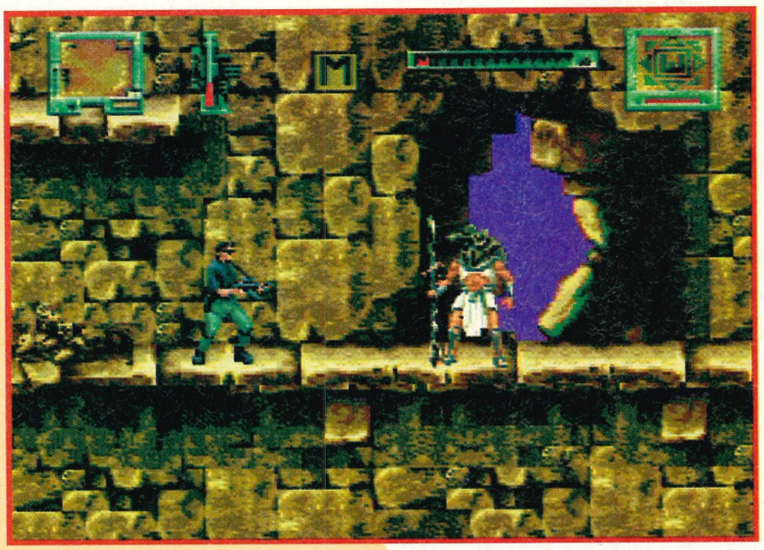
Acclaim appear to be on a bit of a hot streak. Not only have they obliterated all previous sales records with *MKII*, and produced an impressive line-up of quality software (if you disregard *WWF Raw*), they've also got a couple of top-notch film licences in the can.

You already know about *True Lies* courtesy of our exclusive Work In Progress a couple of issues ago, but what of their next ambitious project? Ryan Butt solves the riddle of the Sphinx.



△ *The underground catacombs boast impressive use of parallax.*





other worlds; formed out of a ring of quartz 20 meters in diameter. Provided you have the access code (hidden in the hieroglyphics) you can travel to anywhere in the universe and beyond.

The action really begins when Jackson and Colonel O'Neil (Kurt Russell), the leader of a military group brought in to supervise the project, and a small group of marines travel through the Stargate and find themselves in a hostile world ruled by Pharaoh King Ra – a morphing humanoid/alien who uses the Stargate as a means to gather slaves and mine quartz for his masters.

The film topped the American films charts in November and looks set to be a huge hit over here too. With fantastic special effects and an entire pseudo Egyptian culture created in the desert, *Stargate* will be a great family film this Christmas, and hopefully an even greater Super NES game in the new year.

Acclaim's adaptation of the blockbuster film is a 16Mbit side scrolling shoot-'em-up programmed by Probe software (*Alien 3*, *Mortal Kombat*). You play Colonel Jack O'Neil, and the game is made up of many different missions within the alien world, beginning in Ra's pyramid.

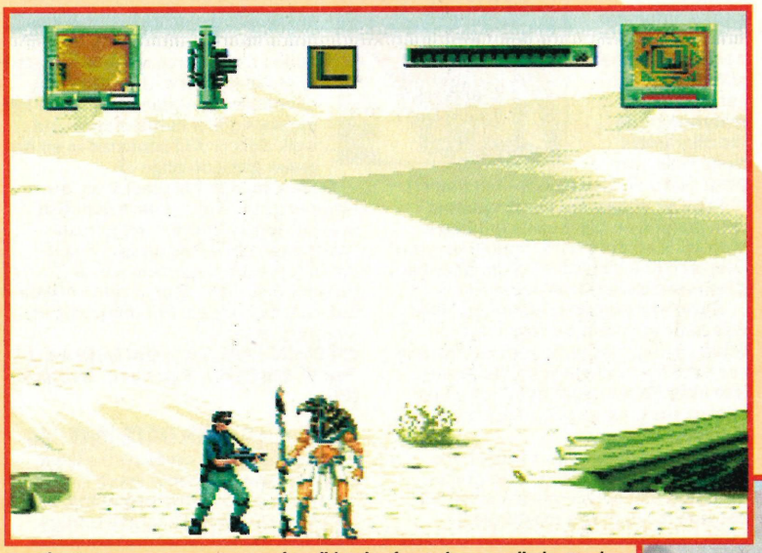
The main objective is to recover the seven pieces of the Stargate code which can then be used to get back to Earth, then you can toast Ra's scaly hide with a nuclear bomb. Nothing about preserving the world's most precious archeological find or anything. I dunno, these Americans...

The game will feature highly atmospheric visual locations lifted straight from the film, and digitized characters. From the 40% complete cart we've tested, the game is coming along, but it will be yet another scrolling platform game in the same vein as *JPII*. Surely someone can come up with something more innovative for a film licence?

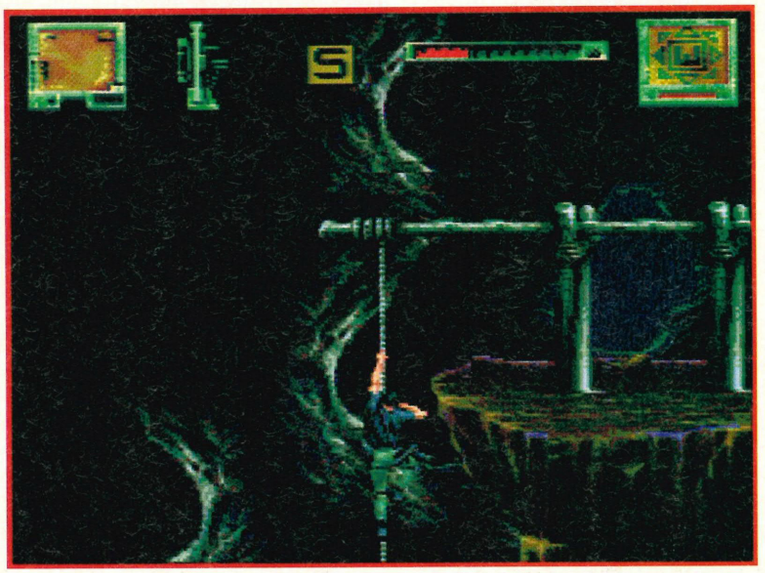
One new feature of the game is that all of the 12 levels are linked by different exits, and so you can dart all over the place exploring new areas, instead of being constricted to linear progression. At least Probe have got away from the 'fight through a level and then face a big boss' monotony. Also included in *Stargate* are a wide variety of sub-games featuring various Mode 7 trickery and puzzle bits to break down the platform action.

The game also features loads of Egyptian Gods such as Anubis (the dog-headed one) and various other aliens who constantly attack you. A swift burst of machine gun fire is what's needed, and there are plenty of bonuses to find in the wastelands, plus many secret temples and caves to hide out in. Remember, you are the hunted in this dimension.

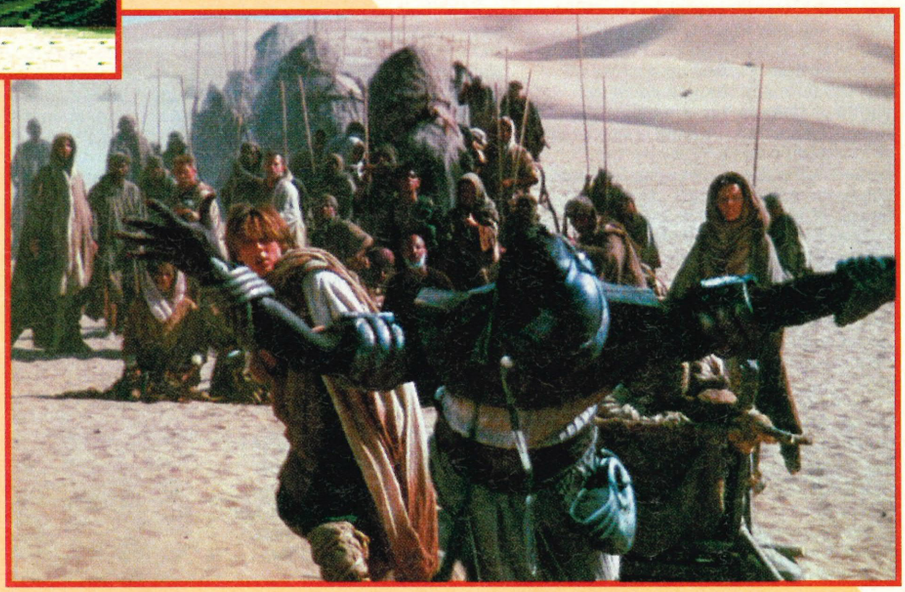
Although there is no official release date for *Stargate* as yet, it is expected to follow hot on the heels of the $70 million movie that will be hitting our cinemas this Christmas. Our guess would be some time in the Spring, but we'll keep you posted. Expect a full preview in SUPER GAMER soon.



△ *The Stargate acts as a means for all kinds of weirdos to stalk the Earth.*



△ *O'Neil has several animations, including this very fluid climbing action.*



review of the year

In the beginning there was nothing. 1994 began SUPER GAMER-less and Nintendo owners nationwide could only turn to one of two types of magazines for their consoles. The 'Nintendo are great and can never do anything wrong' brigade, or the 'imports are everything, but you'll never be able to buy or play any of the games we review' squad. Things looked bleak.

The possibility of a new type of older-reader orientated Nintendo magazine, featuring more humour and tight review style had been discussed for many months, and although SUPERPRO was doing the business for Paragon Publishing already, many felt that it was simply not reaching a large number of potential owners. Citizen Monteiro wanted a new approach for the new year and so the SUPERPRO team was disbanded and editor Wynne was locked in a small room with a Jaguar and 3DO.

I was appointed the editor of the X project, but I had no idea who would produce the magazine, or who could give it the fresh look I was thinking of. Andy McDermott, the obvious choice for designer, had already excelled on SUPER and SEGA XS and was pretty damn keen to get to grips with a monthly review cycle. It also gave him the chance (provided I agreed) to write some reviews and become the spokesman for manic depressive, pessimistic cynics all over the country.

Unfortunately, we had to cut our Christmas and new year festivities short due to some production problems with the last Butt edition of SEGA XS, and we were told by the ever-cheerful Richard Monteiro that the mag had to be finished by mid February. Just six weeks away! And I didn't even have a team yet!

Ryan was the second addition. A logical progression really as he had been the Nintendo expert on SUPERPRO for the last year and a harder worker you would be hard pressed to find.

The Buttster packed up his Mac on the fifth floor and trudged down two flights of stairs to our infamous third floor corner office, uttering only a grunt of recognition as he took over the commanding desk and began unloading his remarkable collection of industry freebies (bribes) and bits of tat.

I had decided that with the first few issues of the new mag (we had no title yet), we would try to cover as many games as possible, with a heavy bias towards official products. Import titles would be reviewed, but only if they were of particular interest to the mainly official buying public.

As Andy and I finally finished SEGA XS, we began looking at the style sheets for the new mag and what we wanted to see inside. The brief I drew up was this: Colourful logos and clean bright design that doesn't render the text unreadable (If ever you can't read something in SUPER GAMER, it is invariably the printer's fault and not ours!).

Also, well written text which should be humorous, concise and knowledgeable. A more mature outlook on the video games market, with no childish language or dippy design. And finally, have fun doing it. If we didn't enjoy writing the mag, you sure as hell wouldn't enjoy reading it.

Unfortunately, we still didn't have the name, and had been foiled in plans to call it Nintendo something, because the big N don't allow their name on unofficial products, unlike Sega. Therefore the mag name had to be relevant, but I was determined not to have the mag referred to as a piece of hip language like "Zappo" or "Crunch!" In the end it was decided like this.

RM: So, what are you going to call this mag then?

DB: Dunno, what about something appealing to gamers and people with Super NESs, maybe SUPER GAMER?

RM: Perfect. You've got one month.

"Super" because it had to be Nintendo relevant, and "Gamer" because that's who we want to read it – console owners who are as serious about their gamesplaying as we are.

So, we had Ryan busy beavering away at *Skyblazer* from Sony (one of the first games to arrive, thanks Caroline), Andy tinkering with ideas for the cover logo, and I was phoning around frantically trying to convince software companies that SUPER GAMER was imminent – but there was still someone missing.

We needed someone who already knew Nintendos inside and out, so that ruled out any green-gilled trainee staff writers (of which I get many letters every month – sorry, I can't hire you all). However, there was a guy at the Nintendo hotline in Eastleigh who had expressed his desire to leave and work on a magazine a couple of months previously: Keith Pullin.

Keith had played every Nintendo game, written many solution manuals, and almost strangled many kids who phoned the hotline – he was perfect, and when I phoned him, he accepted the job before I had even reached the first syllable. The famous SG team was assembled and issue one was finally under way.

ISSUE #1: COVER DATE APRIL '94

Work began in early January, with Ryan writing as many reviews as possible and re-establishing contacts with software companies after SUPERPRO. The first issue flatplan was a mass of pen and crossed out plans, but eventually it formed into distinct sections. News, previews, reviews, tips, A-Z.

Keith arrived and tried his hand at writing the A-Z which would be the reference guide every issue, but we all had to drop everything when *NBA Jam* on the Super NES arrived and simply had to be played for weeks.



Other highlights included the *Lethal Enforcers* review, which necessitated the obligatory photo sessions featuring us as the characters from *Reservoir Dogs* (we'd all just seen it – ten times!).

Page 52 shows us prancing about with painted on black suits daubed in blood (it's all done with Photoshop you see), and this sick sense of humour has dominated SUPER GAMER ever since.

Reservoir Dogs also prompted what was to be a regular feature in SUPER GAMER, but it was never planned. Having seen the film and stuck up the poster free from Select, I thought it would be cool to stick our heads on the bodies for the contents page.

Then Andy took it one further and designed the entire page as a poster, including film style credits – a blatant homage to Quentin's masterpiece. Everyone agreed, it was flippin' top and it is a constant challenge to try and come up with better and better pictures every month.

Also, as the issue was shaping up (with 21 reviews), Andy and I got to meet one of our all-time heroes, Jon Ritman, the man who programmed *Head Over Heels* and *Batman* on the Spectrum. Jon had just finished *Monster Max* for Titus and we spent a nostalgic day at Jon's house and down the pub where we conducted most of the interview.

Programmer interviews and in-depth behind-the-scenes features have always been an integral part of SUPER GAMER. After all, who wants to hear about the graphics or story from some press release when you can have a chat with the guy who wrote the game in the first place? Jon Ritman was the first of many.

With the team running on turbo-charged high octane, the reviews were flooding in and Andy was churning out some genuinely stunning designs. SUPER GAMER was bright and cheerful, but at the same time concise and accurate. You had all the info, unparalleled writing, and some stonking good looks to go with it. It seemed like a winner, and I, for once, was pleased.

That is until the first cock-up, which technically wasn't our fault, but became known as the *Soccer Kid* affair.

I don't need to go into details... but I will. *Soccer Kid* from Ocean was, to say the least, not as good as expected, and as the mag was going to print, Ocean wanted it pulled as they had something better to put in its place. Unfortunately, after it was all agreed, someone left the wrong film in the drawer and... well, *Soccer Kid* appeared in all its green glory on page 72.

Ocean, the UK's biggest third party licencee, was livid and threatened to drop all support for the mag. Hasty negotiations followed and we made it up, but for a brief moment we all thought that SUPER GAMER was finished before it had begun. But there was no stopping us now.

HOT GAMES – *NBA Jam, Lethal Enforcers, R-Type III, ClayFighter, Bugs Bunny, Warioland (GB).*

ISSUE #2: COVER DATE MAY '94

We all patted each other on the back after the fabulous debut issue – most mags look awful at the beginning, but SG was nearly perfect, and the Dogs motif had earned us a cool reputation within the industry, as well as a recognisable trademark.

Only Virgin were annoyed at the Spring ECTS when they appeared with the same transplanted heads on their stand; claiming that they thought of it first. I don't think so, and the proof was in 40,000 homes.

With issue one containing some 21 games, the pressure was on to fill issue #2 and it wasn't easy because the games were rapidly drying up for the summer.

Choplifter III from Sony was received with warm enthusiasm, but has only just been released now due to distribution problems. Virgin also scored with a Gamer Gold for *Jungle Book* on the NES (one of only a handful of NES games we have ever

TOP TEN ECONOMICAL PR TRUTHS

1. "I never give exclusives."
2. "We've got loads of great artwork for the cover."
3. "Of course we'll do a free Marvel comic on the front of the next issue."
4. "It's in the post, I sent it yesterday."
5. "I know you're really gonna love this game."
6. "You're entitled to your opinion, we understand you have to be objective."
7. "I'm not just saying that, I really think it's a 90% game."
8. "All the other mags have given it over 90%."
9. "No, no, it's only 50% complete."
10. "I never said you could review it."

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO...

1. Turbo Toons (first covered issue #1).
2. Rise of the Robots (first covered issue #5).
3. Jungle Strike (first covered issue #4).
4. Powerslide (first covered issue #1).
5. Empire Soccer (first covered issue #1).
6. Kirby's T-Shot (first covered issue #5).
7. Addams Family Values (first covered issue #3).
8. Cool Spot 2 diaries (first covered issue #3).
9. Super Elite (first covered issue #4).
10. Akira (first covered issue #3).



reviewed), and they promised that the Super NES version would be even better.

Other highlights included a decent enough version of *Dungeon Master*, the official release of *Chaos Engine*, and the completely dire *Winter Olympics* from US Gold, which proved that the days of the Birmingham based company producing the best Olympic sims were over.

The cover went to Sony for *Choplifter III*, not because it was the highest scoring game, but because the superb Bob Wakelin had drawn the art and it looked fantastic.

The explosive impact of an Apache gunship in yer face was just what SUPER GAMER needed to herald its vibrant content, and with 132 pages, we were still the biggest Nintendo mag on the shelves.

Features on *Time Trax* from Malibu, Loricel's *Val D'Isere* and Argonaut's *Vortex* swelled the issue, but both Andy and I agreed that from this issue on, all the technical features were more suited to plain white backgrounds.

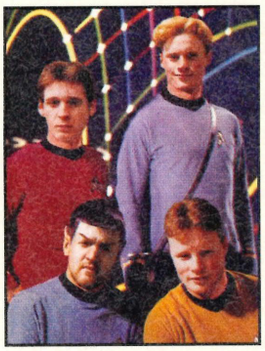
HOT GAMES – *Choplifter III, Jungle Book* (NES).

ISSUE #3: COVER DATE JUNE '94

Say what you like, I think this was a damn fine issue. It met every requirement. It had a striking cover (although almost everyone else hated Mr Blobby Blue Head), the games were good, and it was still a beefy 132 pages for only £2.50.



For almost the entire month, all four of us constantly played all the latest football games in an effort to crown an outright winner. In the end, *FIFA Soccer* by EA won the Gamer Gold, but it was surprising how many games (about 12) were all competing for the relatively small armchair footy market.



This was also the issue that featured the moody *SeaQuest DSV* article that everyone raved about, the beginning of the *Cool Spot 2* diaries (whatever happened to them?), and also the issue which mildly ribbed console mascots and a certain 'character' who decided to take offence – four months later!

Now that SG was fully established, software companies were only too willing to fill our pages with their games. We got our hands on *Monster Max* on the GB and duly bestowed the honour of the Gamer Gold medal. At 96% it was the highest we'd ever given a Game Boy game, but curiously, sales have been slow since its release.

Also under our scrutinising glare were *Trolls* from Gametek, an unassumingly cute platform caper, *Magic Boy* from JVC (ditto), as well as the clutch of footy games: *WC Striker*, *Ryan Giggs' Soccer*, *Kick Off 3* and *FIFA*. All fashioned in a one-off green border celebrating the World Cup. Don't say we never get excited. Nintendo also began fully supporting us with *Stunt Race FX* and *Super Metroid* (their biggest titles this year until *DKC*) brought in for preview and a feeling from them that other magazines hadn't been giving them the coverage that they wanted.

Finally, issue #3 was sealed with a superb contents page featuring us as the crew from Star Trek: Scotty, Bones, Spock and Kirk. As with all these examples of blatant picture doctoring, it was done late at night and at the last minute.

In this case, Keith was originally Uhura, but Andy spent hours replacing her fine bust with a more manly chest so that young master Pullin would agree to be her, er him.

I did my best Roger Moore school of acting eyebrow raise and Andy added the final touch with a set of pointy ears and the haircut from hell, although many would say he had that already.

A certain Mr Spiller also appeared during this issue, but the less said about that the better...

HOT GAMES – *Monster Max* (GB), *FIFA Soccer, Kick Off 3, World Cup Striker.*

ISSUE #4: COVER DATE JULY '94

A shroud of gloom hung over this issue as we realised that due to a World Cup poster promotion, the cover HAD to be *The Incredible Hulk*, which everyone knew was not that good.

This was also a promotion special issue, with three, count 'em, three FREE gifts – and they really were free. Not only did you get a World Cup wall planner (for those cold winter evenings), but also a totally exclusive *Monster Max* badge, and a massive, absolutely huge (compared to a microbe) *Jungle Book* poster.

Now the software slump was really hurting us, and the games literally dried up. Luckily, Nintendo hit us with salvo of early games – *Super Metroid* (95%), *Mega Man III* (GB), *Tetris 2* (GB) and *Pac-Attack*.



This month was also another chance for Andy and I to visit an industry icon in the form of Archer Maclean, creator of *Dropzone*, and supervisor on the Super NES game, *Super Dropzone* by Psygnosis (who would give us trouble later on).

Archer not only gave us a brutally frank interview and a tour of his palatial mansion, but also a nut-crackingly good blast in two of his seven sports cars – an RS 200, and, joy of joys – a Ferrari GTO (Andy didn't get a go in the Ferrari and has never let it lie). To celebrate we gave away a cut-out-&-keep scale model of the car in the feature itself.

Plus we had an official Nintendo drawing competition, news on Nintendo's rumoured VR 32-bit system (and we still haven't seen that one yet), and a review of the first three player beat-'em-up game since *International Karate+*; *Dragon*, from Virgin, complete with the "Who's afraid of Bruce Lee" pant-o-meter.

HOT GAMES – *Super Metroid, Jungle Book, Super Puyo Puyo, Dragon, SOS.*

ISSUE #5 COVER DATE AUGUST '94

Vortex. Revealed: Sony's stunning new Super FX game! That was the headline for this month's biggest game and it did not disappoint. We also commissioned the MBS artwork from little known artist Adam Rudkin and decided to use it against a white background. Far more striking and dramatic.

This was an experiment more than anything else, prompted by the theory that light covers sell more magazines. It works too, as our sales took us to within sight of the top three Nintendo magazines.

I have to say that this issue was a lot of fun to produce, and despite the late nights at the end (having the production schedule reduced at the last minute was not fun) we all enjoyed bringing SG #5 to the shelves. It was just a shame that the quality of software was dire and for once we had no Gamer Golds to rave about.



The contents page this month was a tribute to the posters for Fifties horror movies, featuring a Super NES with Super Game Boy (we got it first!) as the malevolent monster (and us below cowering in terror) to the accompaniment of "It will turn your blood to ice!" and "The scream that shocks the screen with 300,000 volts of horror!" Whatever that means?

After five issues, we were swiftly becoming the most talked about Nintendo magazine, not because we were particularly controversial, but because all the other mags had become so complacent that a breath of fresh was welcomed by everyone. Certainly, all the other mags began audacious promotional campaigns in an effort to win back readers.

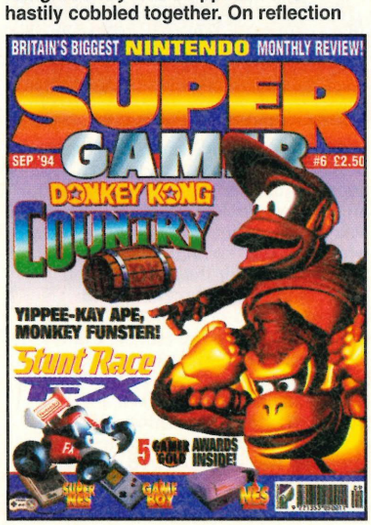
HOT GAMES – *Muscle Bomber* (sadly).

ISSUE #6: COVER DATE SEPTEMBER '94

Honestly, you get a brilliant cover image and what happens? Some other bugger of a mag nicks it at the last minute and you have to take some Valium.

Yep, this issue was going to be a glorious *Stunt Race FX* picture, taken from the official artwork, but unfortunately another mag (who shall remain nameless) did it first, except theirs was dark and blurred and.. well, crap.

So at the last minute, and I might add, very late at night, a picture of *Donkey Kong Country* was shipped in and hastily cobbled together. On reflection



this was actually a quite good cover, but that wasn't what we thought at the time.

Issue #6 was bursting with a full report from the CES in Chicago. Unfortunately the powers that be decided (God knows why?) to send someone from another magazine to collect any Nintendo gear and, not surprisingly, he came back with loads for himself and sweet FA for us.

We couldn't believe that one of the biggest computer shows in the world had nothing for the Super NES, but apparently so. However, we soon realised that there was in fact loads of exclusive material which we should have got, but was withheld until after the deadline. Office harmony – you can't beat it.

But once we had chased up all the companies when they got back to the UK we managed to fill quite a decent feature, and our man Spiller wrote the general report and it included a picture of him shaking Hulk Hogan's hand – which of course we doctored.

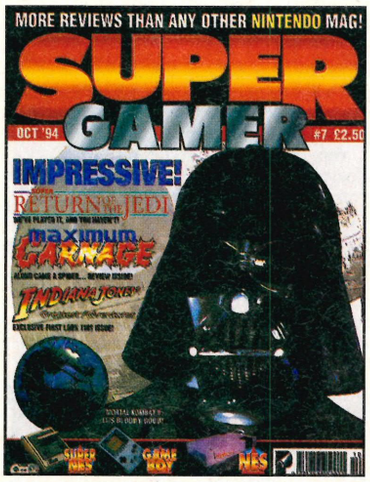
We also got into trouble with our over-exuberant *MKII* preview, which, according to Acclaim was "exactly NOT how we wanted to portray the game."

Sorry, but I think the blood 'n guts was exactly what you DID want kids to tune into, and we were simply showing the game in all its gory detail. The game went on to be the biggest selling title in the history of video games and we heard no more about it. Ha!

HOT GAMES – *Stunt Race FX, DK '94* (GB), *Super Street Fighter II, Populous II.*

ISSUE #7: COVER DATE OCTOBER '94

This was the *MKII* crazy issue. We all played it, got addicted, and wouldn't leave it alone until we had perfected every death move. Yep, Acclaim's wundergame appeared at the beginning of the month and so that was the schedule down the proverbial toilet.



Also getting our juices tingling was *Super Return of the Jedi*, which necessitated a trip to JVC in London for an exclusive look at the game everyone was talking about. The four page feature which resulted so impressed JVC that they wanted it for their stand at the ECTS in the following month. We obliged, and no-one doubted that SG was now a force to be reckoned with.

Ah, yes, how could I forget. October's issue was the *Spider-Man* comic fiasco. All through the month Acclaim promised to do a promotion, and then suddenly, right on the deadline, when the paper had been ordered, the deal with Marvel agreed and the costs outlined, they got cold feet and in their reliable way, dropped the deal and buggered off.

Suffice to say we weren't pleased, but tightening our journalistic belts of non-bias, we still gave *MKII* 94% and *Maximum Carnage* 89%. Although we nearly didn't...

PLEASE GOD NO!

Five games that should NEVER be made into films.

1. *Soccer Kid* starring Ryan Giggs and Bruce Grobbelaar.
2. *Brainies* starring Danny DeVito.
3. *Jelly Boy* starring Mr Blobby.
4. *Bubsy the Bobcat* starring Jim Carey.
5. *SFII, MKII* and *Double Dragon* starring loads of nobodies.

Swearing under our breath we *did* manage to get a massive *Dragon* poster from good old Virgin, and this issue has proved to be one of the best sellers ever.

The cover, alas was another last minute job (and it shows) because the *Maximum Carnage* image complete with comic never arrived and we had nothing else.

Fortunately, the JVC exclusive gave us the perfect opportunity to use a huge picture of Darth Vader on the cover. In the midst of it all, no-one noticed we'd printed "bloody" on the cover, even if it was in the right context.

HOT GAMES – *Maximum Carnage, MKII, MKII* (GB), *Lemmings 2, Sensible Soccer.*

ISSUE #8: COVER DATE NOVEMBER '94

We think this is the finest issue since the first, and it came complete with a 16-page supplement about *Earthworm Jim*, which we rightly awarded 96%.

Morale was high as we entered the Xmas funny season and suddenly every software company in the world wanted to talk to us all for at least five hours a day. Games streamed in at an uncontrollable rate, with 19 filling this issue and even more planned for the next.

Keith had been chatting to Darrel at Bandai for ages about *Power Rangers* and we were all curious about the game of the crap TV show. When it arrived, it was even worse than expected and as a kind of joke, we substituted their heads with our over-expanded mugs and also took the p*** out of the show in the review (Puffin!). Well, it had to be done.



This issue also saw Keith and Ryan go up to Acclaim for the exclusive info on *True Lies*: the game. With them they took Mark Hill from SegaPro (not known for his lively conversation) and together they robbed Simon Smith-Wright of all his exclusives. "We've got everything!" exclaimed Ryan as he drove back down to Bournemouth.

However, on their return they realised that just one thing was missing. The box with all the leads for the computer and all the *True Lies* material – doh! In the end, one of the guys at Acclaim had to throw the gear out of a moving express train as it passed through Southampton. Ah, the dangerous lives of magazine writers.

Finally, another disappointment from a software company right at the last minute. The tie-in *Return of the Jedi* competition (video, copies of the film etc) was inexplicably dropped by JVC. "Why?" I asked. "Because you didn't give the game 90% like NMS did."

"But it doesn't deserve 90%. Surely you don't want to deprive our readers of a video, especially after we've given you the cover?" But deprive they did. "Stuff your compo, then!" we said and gave the free page to Ocean who rightfully lapped it up with a *Jordan* compo.

Later on I received a fax from JVC saying how they thought our comments on the game were justified and many thanks for the Darth Vader we had on page three of the issue, featuring the now famous "Buy this mag or I'll crush your larynx!" quote. We stand by our guns, *Jedi* is NOT a 90% game.

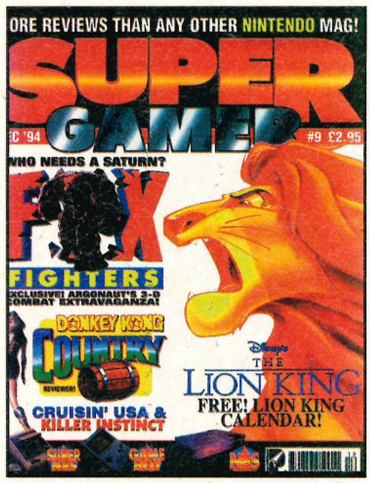
HOT GAMES – *Earthworm Jim, Secret of Mana, Jedi, Batman & Robin*

ISSUE #9: COVER DATE DECEMBER '94

And so to the December issue. Hopes were high, but due to production difficulties we were already late.

With 27 games cramming this issue, many non-essential items such as the Datel page and Q&A had to be dropped just to have the room.

In terms of games, this was by far the most exciting issue, as we had seven Gamer Gold awards, not least for *Donkey Kong Country*, which had to be hurriedly inserted at the last minute because Nintendo brought forward the release date.



Ruban from D&O obliged and legged it down to Bournemouth on the last day to show us the completed version of the game, and we all had to review it as quick as lightning so that we weren't left behind. Not easy when we had all just worked overnight!

On reflection this was the worst cover we've ever had (*Lion King* was forced on us due to the free calendar our Mr Spiller had arranged) and the *FX Fighter* exclusive, although well written, didn't have the best artwork in the world.

Finally, to cap it all, we were told that the book which I had been working on through my holiday would go on the next issue of SG, and that we had to design the calendar ourselves, AND get it approved by Disney, who sent it back – twice. Arrgghhhh!

So there you have it, a year (almost) of Super Gamer behind-the-scenes. We've certainly enjoyed producing the magazine for you to read, and of course playing all the games, but what does 1995 have in store for Nintendo? Only you can find out by staying with Super Gamer.

HOT GAMES – *DKC, Street Racer, Lion King, Illusion of Gaia, Super Dropzone, Vortex, Pitfall.*

PLEASE GOD NO, NO!

Five films that should never be made into games.

1. Basic Instinct.
2. Schindler's List.
3. Kramer Vs Kramer.
4. Derek Jarman's Blue.
5. The Flintstones (ho, ho).



MERRY CHRISTMAS!

review of the year 1994

After my monumental whinge, otherwise known as the review of the year, it was only fair the bunch of idle wasters... whoops, hard working and dedicated professionals, got to voice their opinion on the best and worst games of 1994. We've even given you a little picture to cut out and keep. Collect three Ryans and you could win a packet of Frosties! Whether you agree or disagree we don't care, but send your own nominations to Write Stuff at the usual address.



THE BEST
MORTAL KOMBAT II
Definitely the most impressive beat-'em-up this year and more of an improvement than *SSFII*. Love the blood and death moves. A top game.

DONKEY KONG COUNTRY
A recent addition to the office and the best platform game this year! I've completed it with 78% so far and I'm still searching for those rooms.

MONSTER MAX
Without doubt the cremé de la cremé of Game Boy games this year. Superb isometric platform action, slickly programmed and devious.

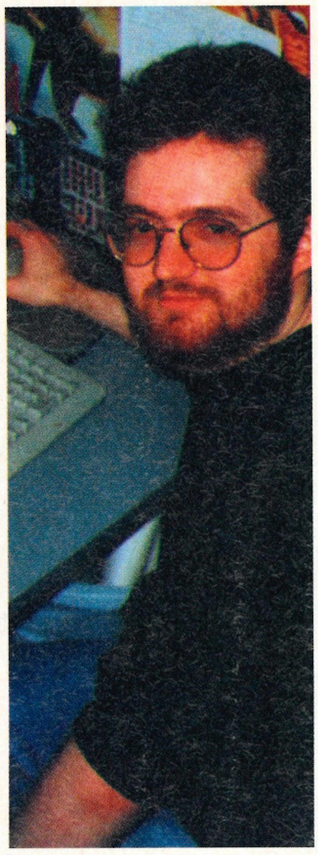
STUNT RACE FX
Test your wacky driving with this excellent speed freak game. The usual glossy Nintendo presentation coupled with a brill racing game which uses Super FX to the limit.

EARTHWORM JIM
Had to include this one just for the wicked humour and some of the best graphics on the Super NES. The best debut since Orson Welles with *Citizen Kane*.

THE WORST
SPEED RACER
Awful driving sections suitably matched with dire platform stick-men adventure. Do not buy, or even play, ever.

FULL THROTTLE RACING
I thought *Spectre* was a bit iffy, but this busts the 'iff-o-meter' right off the scale!

POWER RANGERS
They are NOT cool, the game SUCKS, and Bandai should really know better. Balls!



THE BEST
SUPER PUYO PUYO
Only available on import, damn Nintendo's oily hide! This wurflegum-packed puzzler is excellent for one player, and unbeatable for two!

EARTHWORM JIM
Graphically stunning, surprise-packed and positively brimming with playability. The best platform game on the Super NES!

DONKEY KONG COUNTRY
Graphically stunning, surprise-packed and positively brimming with playability. The best platform (wait a minute – Ed).

MORTAL KOMBAT II
Gallons of blood, piles of corpses, stacks of severed limbs and more playable than the ultra-disappointing *Super Street Fighter*. Top!

VORTEX
"Durr, 'ello, I'm a fick clod in a baseball 'at an' big free 'undred quid trainers an' dis game's too 'ard for me." Get lost, fool. It's ace.

THE WORST
SPEED RACER
Oh dear. There aren't enough invectives in the dictionary to describe how bad this game is. Take it away before I vomit.

BUBSY 2
And here's another cracker from Accolade. Tiny, stupid, unfunny and egotistical, Bubsy could probably make a living on childrens' TV.

POWER RANGERS
I think Keith must have got the numbers the wrong way round when he gave this excrescence 71%. It's as hard as Andi Peters' pet blancmange.



THE BEST
DONKEY KONG COUNTRY
What can I say, this game single-handedly changed the way I view Super NES platformers forever.

MORTAL KOMBAT II
A stunning conversion that managed to arrive fully intact. Loads of moves and hidden characters make this an instant classic.

LION KING
The best movie licence to date that manages to retain every ounce of atmosphere from the big screen. Stunning graphics and a fabulous soundtrack.

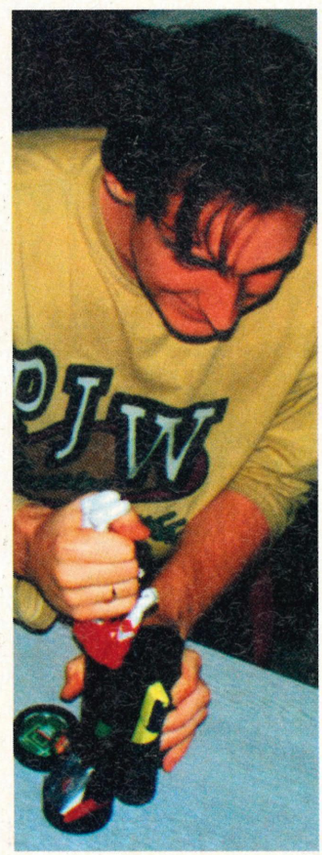
SUPER STREET FIGHTER II
The whole concept may be flagging a bit these days, but this was still a top notch conversion and offered much much more than Turbo.

STUNT RACE FX
This is our very own Super NES Virtua Racing. The FX chip works miracles once again to produce the prettiest and most downright enjoyable racing games of the year.

THE WORST
FULL THROTTLE RACING
Phew! Has someone trodden in dog's muck?

PUGGSEY
You'll lose more brain cells playing this than you would going 12 rounds with Mike Tyson, armed only with a feather duster. Utterly boring and completely cack to boot.

WINTER OLYMPICS
I think I'm going to be sick...



THE BEST
FINAL FANTASY III
Amazing graphics, incredible soundtrack, a massive improvement over the previous *Final Fantasy* games, this is the epic RPG of 1994.

ILLUSION OF GAIA
The best action RPG of 1994, not quite as big as *FF3* but still beautiful and utterly compulsive.

DONKEY KONG COUNTRY
A game which I'm still recovering from. Nothing can compare to this for complete graphical AND gameplay satisfaction.

SUPER STREET FIGHTER II
The beat-'em-up that blows every other one sky high. It has got so many moves and it's sooo playable. The best two player game ever!

STREET RACER
This is the only four player racing game around, and with gameplay as near to *Super Mario Kart* as you're going to get, it has to be the driving game of the year.

THE WORST
SPEED RACER
Even writing about this game brings on flashbacks of pain and torture that will scar me for life.

SPECTRE
If you're not bored within 30 seconds of turning this game on, you must have super-human powers of persistence. Talk about lack of variety!

WWF RAW
I could smash my head against a large spike and it would be nothing compared to the pain and mess of a game that calls itself *WWF Raw*.

KONAMI'S RADICAL RODENT GIVEAWAY!



The coolest, hippest, trendiest, toughest, and fastest mice are here; starring in their very own console game. Yes siree, Throttle, Modo, and Vinnie have beamed down from another dimension in style to take the second of this month's prestigious Gamer Gold awards with their unique blend of humour and frantic racing action. To celebrate the launch of *Biker Mice From Mars*, software giants Konami have put their hand in their pocket and come up with some fabulous prizes to give away exclusively to the readers of the ultra-fine publication known as SUPER GAMER.

Not only can you experience the feeling of wind rushing through your whiskers by winning a copy of the game, but you can also catch up on the exploits of the trio of cheese chompin' easy riders by bagging yourself a video.

What's the matter? Still not SATISFIED? Well now you can be because Konami are also chucking in a crate containing approximately 150 Snickers bars!

The winner of this competition will walk away with a cart, a vid and the full stash of chocolate, and a further nine runners-up will each receive a copy of the game and a video each!

To enter, all you have to do is write the answer to the question on a postcard and send it in to the following address: *Konami's Radical Rodent Giveaway, SUPER GAMER, Durham House, 124 Old Christchurch Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 1NF.*

Q: Snickers is a daft name, but this chocolate bar was not always blessed with it. What was the name of a Snickers bar in good old Blighty before they changed it?

All entries must arrive by 10 January, and the editor's decision is final, unequivocal, and non-negotiable.

REVIEW INTRO

The main reviewer. The final ratings are awarded by him, although other reviewers may have different opinions. The main review tells you what the game is about, how it is played, and whether it has any special features that help it stand out above other games of its type.

Despite the fact that SUPER GAMER's review system is the most accurate, comprehensive and accessible in the world (not that we like to hype ourselves up or anything), some odd-bods have still written to us complaining that they can't understand it. So that no more people will waste valuable stamps telling us they don't know who wrote the main review (hint: it's the guy whose head is at the start of the text), here is the complete guide to our reviews!

The other reviewers get to offer their opinions in these comment boxes. They may agree with the main reviewer, or violently disagree! It's up to you to decide which reviewer's opinion you most agree with – after all, it's you who buys the games!

We use lots of pictures to help you get a look at the game. Remember, though, graphics are only a small part of any game – the important thing is always how well it plays, and to find that out you'll have to read the review!



Tells you who produces the game, and their phone number. If the game is an import, we also tell you who supplied it to us.

Pretty obvious, really. In the case of import games prices may vary, so shop around!

When will the game be on sale? Find out here! (NB release dates are always subject to change.)

A quick summary of, well the type of game.

The memory size of the game in megabits (8 megabits equals 1 megabyte)

Does the game have any special features, such as a battery save or Multi-tap compatibility?

The game's controls!

Do the game's visuals knock your eyes into your head, or are they as inspiring as a bowl of cold porridge?

Heavenly symphonies – or karaoke classics? Music and sound effects get the once-over.

First of the two most important ratings. Does the game grab you from the start? Is the main character easy to control? Do you die unfairly, or far too frequently?

The second of the 'biggies'. Once you've played the game, is there enough there to keep you coming back for more, or will you complete it in a day? Is it really worth £50?

The final rating! Not an average of the others, as a game can have terrible graphics but amazing playability, this is a game's ultimate rating. Games scoring 90%+ get the coveted Gamer Gold award; these are a must!

THE OVERALL RATING

0-29%	30-49%	50-69%	70-89%	90%+
Can any game stoop so low? Yes, they certainly can. You'd be surprised just how many examples there are. Any game scoring this low should be burnt and have its ashes mixed with salt.	Ugh. This band is the wasteland for mis-conceived, ill-executed or just plain rubbish games. If you get one of these as a present, strike the giver from your Christmas card list immediately.	The average zone. Games lurking in here might be well-executed, but totally lacking in originality or vitality, or may have playability defects that render them too flawed to be enjoyable.	This is more like it! Unlike other mags, who award 75% to an 'average' game, SUPER GAMER scores in this range mean a game worth investigating, especially if you're a fan of the genre.	Gamer Gold territory! Any game that we award a gong is one which by all rights belongs in your Nintendo's cart slot. Only the best get this award, so you're sure of a great game.

THE CHRISTMAS CRACKERS!

DAMIAN



In the true Xmas spirit our ed has been spending the month 'hum-bugging' around the office, drinking Simon from Titus under the table (again), pretending to be in Blur, and searching for the guy who nicked his car with a 12lb lump hammer.

ANDY



Christmas? Chah, humbug! Andy's Xmas shopping doesn't start until December 24, or occasionally a few days after that. Aside from *Final Fantasy III*, no games stood out for the bearded one this month, so he's waiting for Jaguar *Doom*. Dream on!

RYAN



The Buttster has been on self-destruct mode this month. He hasn't learnt that deadlines and all-night partying don't mix, and as a result the poor chap's been a bit ill lately. With christmas looming though, he had better get back into shape in time for the office party. Ho ho!

KEITH



After realising his life-long ambition of seeing Pink Floyd, Keith returned to battle evil in *Final Fantasy III* and has been engrossed ever since. *DKC* has warranted brief attention, and *Biker Mice* took up a few lunches too!

SUPER NES **EXCLUSIVE REVIEW!**

BIKER MICE FROM MARS

Snicker-boka-glory!

RYAN



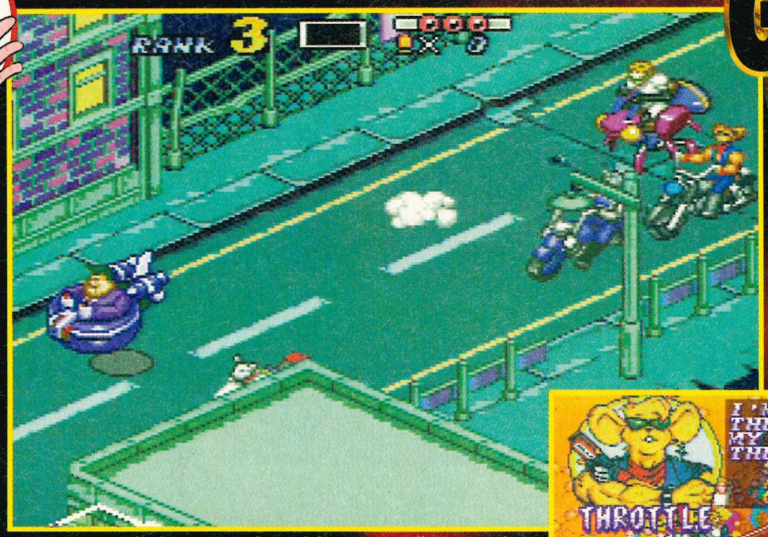
I've never had the pleasure of experiencing the incredibly strange cartoon on which this game is based, so being my usual sceptical self I naturally assumed that it would be pap – boy was I wrong. *Biker Mice from Mars* is cooler than a freezer full of Fonzies!

As the title would suggest, this game has a lot to do with rodents and bikes, and a lot more besides. Set in the same mould as *Rock 'n Roll Racing*, *Biker Mice From Mars* is a two player racing game featuring a wide variety of courses and more firepower than a Stallone and Arnie film put together.

There are three modes of play: Main Race, Battle, and Practice. Main race allows you to race of a series of five rounds, each featuring five different courses set in city streets, desert islands, dingy sewers, and futuristic bases.

You choose your rider from a choice of six characters including the three mice, Throttle, Modo, and Vinnie, and three of their arch enemies, Limburger, Grease Pit, and Dr Karbunkle.

Each character has a different type of vehicle and their own unique weapon to cause havoc on the tracks. After each race, you'll be allowed to enter a shop and go on a spending spree to buy more weapons and upgrade your bike, although you have to win the cash first – which isn't all that easy.



△ *We're into the home straight and things are still pretty tight.*

Battle mode is a similar type of thing, although you only get one life to complete the race as opposed to the infinite amount in standard mode. You also begin each race with the maximum amount of firepower.

The game can be played with one or two players in a split screen arrangement which adds a new element of competition. After a while you forget about the races and concentrate solely on blasting your fellow racers – great fun.

Anyway, enough of the boring content which you can read from the instruction booklet – what is it really like? Well apart from lacking a totally amazing soundtrack, this game is far better than *R'NRR*. There's just so much more to it. Weapons, wheelies, braking, dashes, hunger attacks... screeeeech! Hang on a minute – hunger attacks? Cheesy city!

In perhaps the worst tie-in licence deal since that Frosties and *Gladiators* thing, *Biker Mice* is sponsored by Snickers. And you're not allowed to forget it for one second.



◁ *The split screen two player game is a must. Use your weapons to take out your human rival!*



GAMER GOLD

ANDY



I hate peanuts, and I hate Snickers bars – if I wanted to find little bits of wood in my chocolate, I'd leave a Time Out bar next to an orbital sander. But that's enough criticism. *Biker Mice From Mars* might bear an uncanny resemblance to *Rock 'n' Roll Racing*, but that's not necessarily a bad thing. Like Interplay's game, *BMFM* is at its best with two players, and the office soon echoed with shouts of triumph (from me) and mumbles of despair (from Ryan) as the racing rodents rammed, shot and generally blasted each other off the track. It's not up to the level of *Mario Kart*, but *BMFM* is certainly good fun, especially (the old clichéd disclaimer) for fans of the cartoon. Just a shame about the marathon (oh-ho!) product placement...

DAMIAN



Yep, there's no doubt about it, *Biker Mice* is very good. A highly playable *Rock 'n Roll Racing* clone with decent enough graphics and a fun two player mode. I liked the way all the characters remain faithful to the cartoon, and Limburger is excellent as the greasy fat fiend with a laser and a dirty Sid James laugh. I was however annoyed to be so restricted in the weapons department, as only three shots per lap is hardly enough, and most of the fun is the short duels that both players fight. Also, the game is not as fast as it could have been, but when you are concentrating so hard on burning your fellow riders – you never notice. A top notch game from Konami, only marred by the excessive Snickers advertising which does the game no favours.



△ The Mice take their positions on the starting grid.





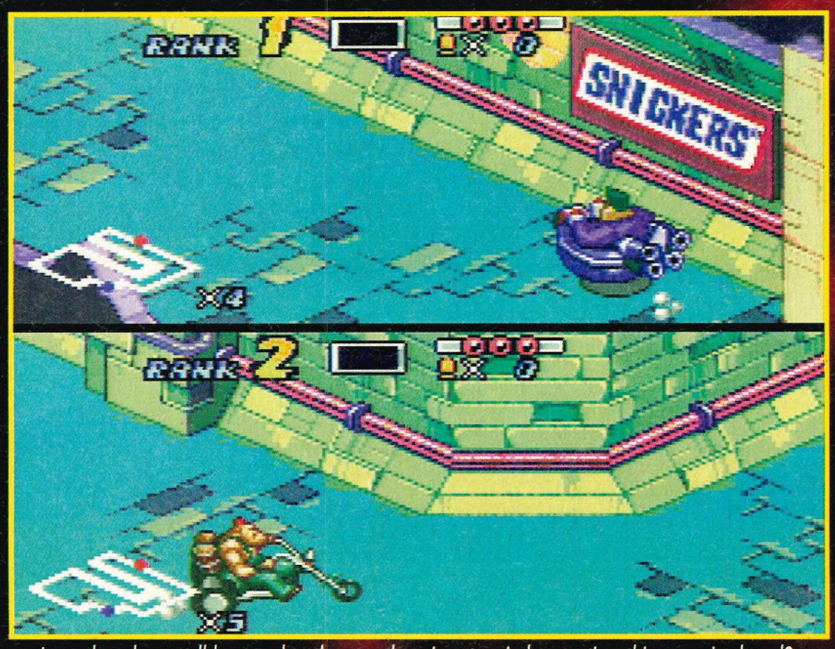
△ Blatant advertising alert! There's just no getting away from it, Snickers, Snickers, SNICKERS!

You cruise past trackside billboards featuring... Snickers. You surge into a momentary invincible speed burst by... eating Snickers. And – god, no, can it be true? – after each race, the winner will pop-up eating... a Snickers bar, and uttering some tacky drivel like "Even winners need something to satisfy their hunger!" – bleuugh!

As a racing sim, *Biker Mice* is great fun to play and the action is perfectly complimented by superb graphics. The character sprites are big, bold and colourful, and the tracks are perfectly laid out, with obstacles popping up all over the place in the form of spikes, water, jumps, bollards, and buildings.

Animaniacs may have been dodgy, but *Biker Mice* is a top product from the Konami we all know and love.

For addictive two player action with its tongue firmly in its cheek, *Biker Mice* is just the SATISFACTION you need!



△ I wonder why a well-known chocolate snack springs to mind every time this game is played?

I SAW A MOUSE...

















PRODUCER
KONAMI
(0895) 853000

PRICE
£49.99

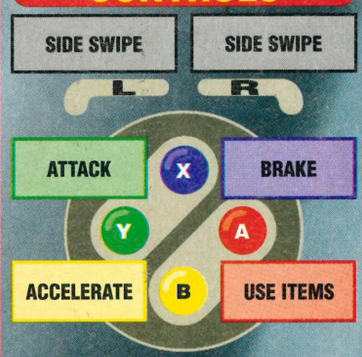
RELEASED
JANUARY '95

GAME TYPE
RACING

CART SIZE
8MBit

FEATURES
PASSWORDS

CONTROLS



RATINGS

GRAPHICS	88
SOUND	86
GAMEPLAY	91
LONGEVITY	89

OVERALL

90

SUPER PUNCH-OUT!

Biff, biff, biff, biff, biff, punch, thud!

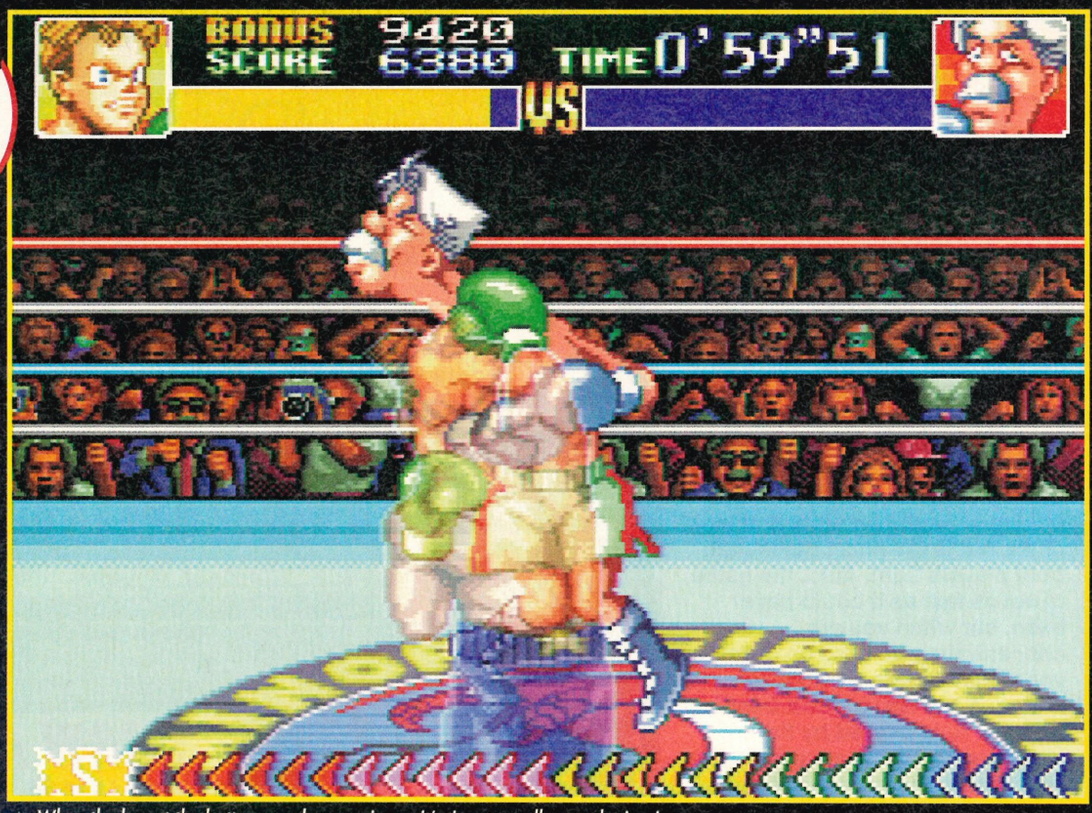


KEITH

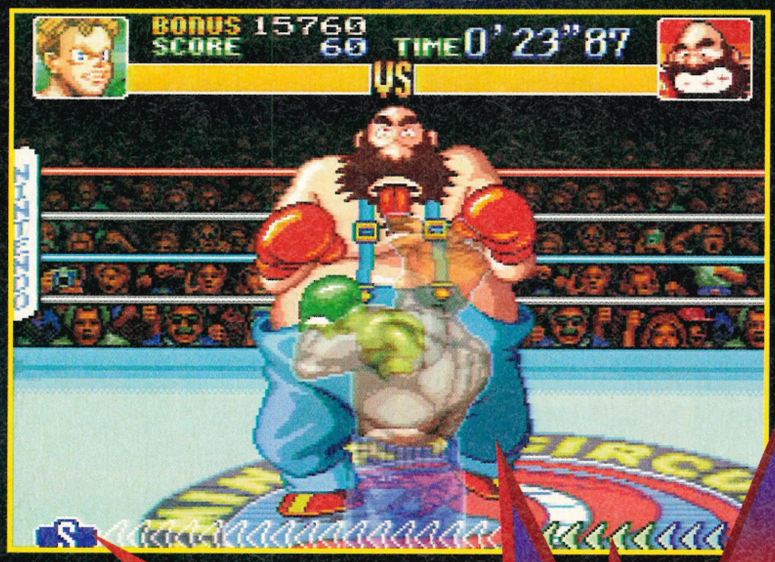
Some games have had full lives, this is one of them. Originally known back in 1988 as *Mike Tyson's Punch-Out!* on the NES, the name was changed after Tyson was jailed for rape in 1991.

Unsurprisingly, Nintendo weren't too keen to have the name of a convicted sex offender splashed all over the box and so it was cut down to *Punch-Out!*. It was one of the biggest selling and most popular NES games every made, second only to *Zelda* and *Mario*. A 16-bit conversion was eagerly awaited in this office.

Like *Metroid* and *Super Mario Bros* before it, *Punch-Out!* has been given the same Super NES overhaul treatment, with 16Mbits of spanking new graphics, sampled speech and 12 boxers to pummel. Some of the swarthy mutants have been retained from the original, but most are all-new.



△ *When the bar at the bottom reaches maximum it's time to really start laying into your opponenet.*



The format is pretty much the same. It's a one player game with three boxing circuits: Minor, Major and World, consisting of four boxers in each. The battery back-up means that once you've completed a circuit you can skip to that one next time you play, and you can also store all your fastest knock-out times in a comprehensive records and high score table.

Super Punch-Out! retains the superb playability of the original and adds huge well coloured and gruesomely detailed opponent sprites. This game is also one of the few that really enhances the personalities of the boxers – the guys you love to hate.

Bear Hugger for example takes up most of the screen, and the thud he makes when he spins up into the air and crashes down onto the canvas after a particularly nice left/right combination is more than satisfying.

Several kinds of punches can be thrown and there's also a hyper punch feature that enables you to let fly with a devastatingly rapid volley, but that only works after you've

connected a few times in succession and the 'S' at the bottom of the screen begins to flash.

This 'mad' mode is also effective when you are being beaten to a pulp because you then fly into a wild rage; punching recklessly at the enemy no matter what range.

It's times like this that "Eye of the Tiger" rings in your ears as the hunted becomes the hunter and you get back into the rhythm of the fight. Some blood would have been nice though, but the worst you get is the gum shield flying out of your mouth. C'mon Nintendo, drop that nancy attitude!

Even though you have some powerful punches, all your opponents



△ *Body punches can take just as much out of your opponent as an uppercut to the jaw. Just look at the pain on his face!*



△ *Bob's legs start to buckle as you unload an awesome left hook that gets his dreads shaking more than a Reggae concert!*

seem to have a well stocked arsenal of killer special moves instantly at their disposal. Dragon Chan from Hong Kong has been trained in martial arts and so uses his feet more often than his hands, and then there's the fighter from Mexico who epitomises the word cheat, by charging at you with a lethal head butt, followed by a mouthful of phelgm that causes temporary blindness.

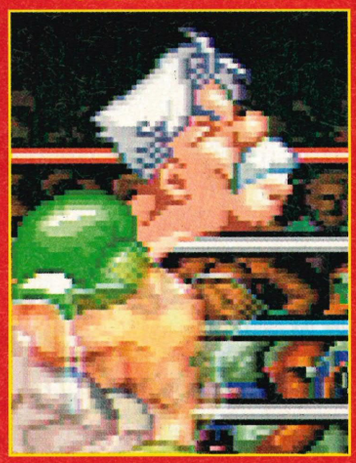
Luckily, every special move can be avoided with careful timing, and Bald Bull in particular can be decked with one punch if his bull charge is countered at precisely the right moment. Even so, *Super Punch-Out!* definitely doesn't go



BOXING CLEVER

As you begin your ascent to the dizzy heights of boxing stardom and the title of World Champion, your opponents will possess few punches, but as you get nearer the crown they will start thwarting you with the most devasting array of special moves ever.

GABBY JAY



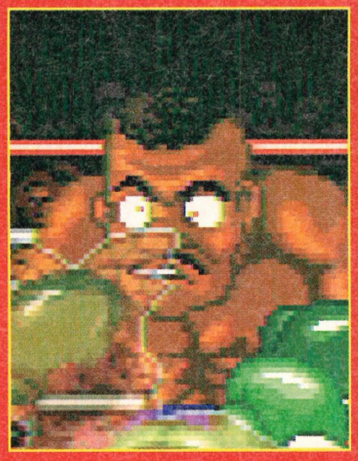
This French weakling has only ever won once. It's not even down to the French cuisine, he's literally a bag of bones.

BEAR HUGGER



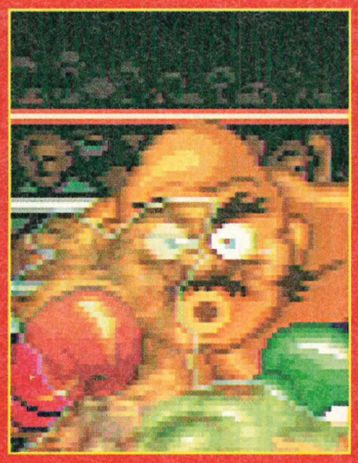
Wait a minute, doesn't he fight Popeye? Oh well, watch out for his double slam. The only way to avoid it is to duck.

PISTON HURRICANE



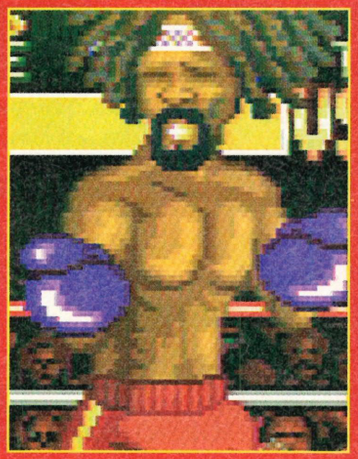
An unremarkable fighter who plods on relentlessly, but will not last long if you keep the pressure on him.

BALD BULL



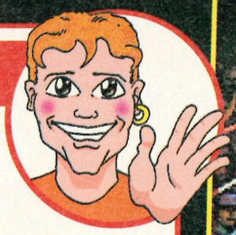
He may think he's hard, but his bull charge can be countered with a well-timed body blow right at the last moment.

BOB CHARLEY



The only rastafarian on the circuit, but he's not strong and can be felled with a few quick combinations to the head.

RYAN



"Oh great" I cried as this game entered the office. Having heard so many good things about it, I was eagerly anticipating a right rivetting boxing experience, only to have my hopes dashed in the opening round. It starts off okay with a wide variety of fighters each with their own style of boxing. But as you bash your way up through the ranks, things start to get harder, then even harder still until you don't stand a chance of throwing a punch let alone landing one. The fact that all the fights are only one round long is ridiculous, and losing automatically if you don't flaw your opponent within the confines of the time limit is a joke. Far too irritating to be enjoyable.



△ One hit too many and Bob lies sprawled on the canvas, dribbling uncontrollablly .



△ Enter Sandman! Built like a juggernaut, the champion of the major league is a seriously tough cookie.

by the book, and it's none more apparent than when you reach your time limit of three minutes...

At this point you expect the next round to begin and some recharging of energy. Nope, not in this game. Instead, the words "Time up" appear and the other boxer automatically wins, no matter how many times he was knocked down.

Now this is unbelievably annoying considering the later boxers are so slippery it takes ages to figure out their attack patterns; longer to actually catch them with any kind of decent punch.

The worse thing however is when they suddenly recharge all their energy after being smashed to the ground, as if! Even if you avoid being hit and you manage to knock someone down twice in a round you still won't win.

Come on Nintendo, that's utterly stupid! What's wrong with allowing the player a chance by having maybe three or four rounds? How can you build any kind of fighting strategy?

Eventually you will win a fight and a page of statistics appears showing you how many punches were landed



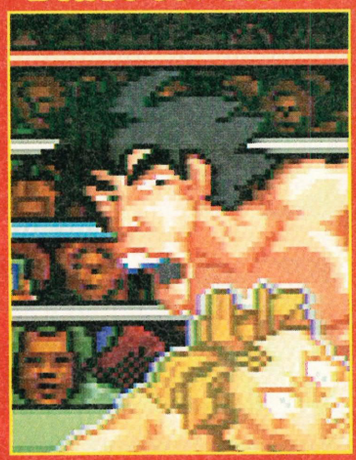
△ If you get caught by this lethal move, an obligatory count is called for and you're one step closer to defeat. Duck at all costs!

DAMIAN



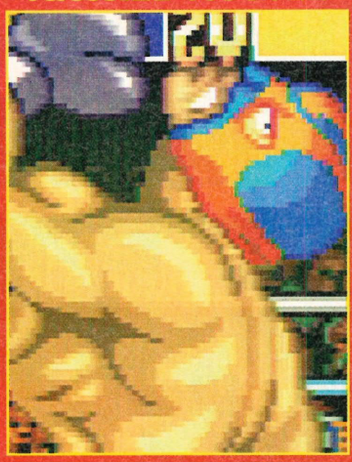
I saw *Super Punch-Out!* at one of the shows (I forget which) and it looked great, so I looked forward to this moment. However, despite looking and sounding great, the boxing hasn't much changed from NES *Punch-Out!*, well it has, it's got worse. First of all, why only one round? This makes no sense as you can't slowly batter down your opponent using strategy, and it means both of you simply trade punches like Buster Keaton! The super move idea for the enemy is not a new one (*Frank's Bruno's Boxing* was doing it years ago), but here it is totally unfair. Who wants your already beefed-up opponent to constantly use high kicks on your ass? And then, once you've managed to take everything he's thrown at you and are ready to finish him off, he simply recharges his energy. Arrrghhhh! Sorry Nintendo, either put more rounds into this game for its release or suffer our constant abuse. You goofed.

DRAGON CHAN



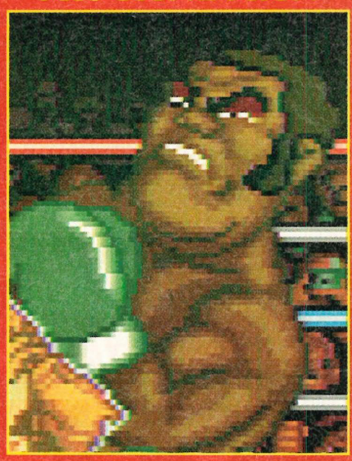
One of the biggest cheats in the game, it seems as though nobody's told him that he can't use his feet. Beware!

MASKED MUSCLE



This disgusting character spits a load of gunk in your eyes, blinding you, and then takes advantage.

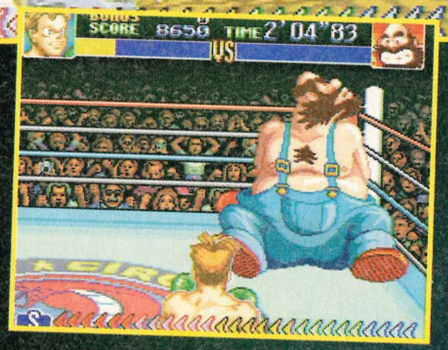
MR SANDMAN



Doesn't have a wide selection of punches, but sheer power takes him through. Watch for his pattern and counter punch.



△ *"I decked the sheriff, but I swear it was in self defence!"*



plus a few other irrelevant pieces of information such as bonus points for knock-downs, and maybe even an extra life if you fought with noticeable style.

At the bottom of the page you will be given an overall score for your fight against that boxer, and all the scores for the circuit are added together giving a total circuit score which is also saved to the records table.

The individuality of the boxers is obviously a good aspect to the game, but you can normally always defeat them in the same way, and that is the counter punch method. Simply wait until they throw a punch, dodge to the side and then hit them with a couple of jabs to the face and eventually lay into them with the hyper punch.

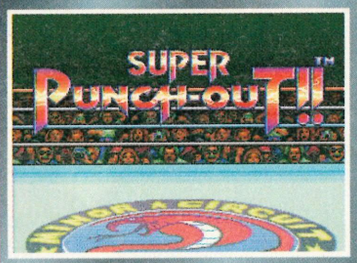
I liked *Super Punch-Out!* immensely and there's no denying that it's a fun and challenging game to play, but there's so much frustration and cursing during the learning process that you may be put off before you get far into the game.

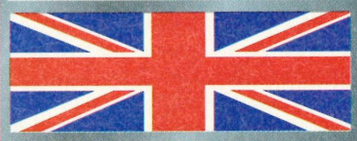
The one round idea is totally unforgivable and this was NOT in the NES version, which still has the better playability factor in my opinion. Hey, you're talking to a Nintendo veteran here.

If there's one thing you can say about *Super Punch-Out!* is that it has longevity, so if you want a challenging boxing game then look no further. But you may feel, as I did, that this is just an excuse to tart up the looks of the game, rather than improving on it.

▽ *Your vision goes and the next thing you know you're face down on the canvas and all the crowd have turned into squares.*







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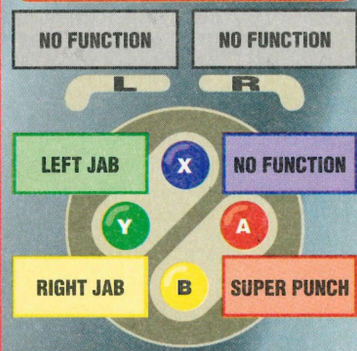
RELEASED
JANUARY '95

GAME TYPE
BEAT-'EM-UP

CART SIZE
16MBit

FEATURES
BATTERY SAVE

CONTROLS



RATINGS

GRAPHICS	83
SOUND	84
GAMEPLAY	78
LONGEVITY	84

OVERALL

82

SPACE INVADERS

Back where it all began...



ANDY

People have been wittering on for ages that the "next generation" machines – PlayStation, Saturn, Ultra 64 and their unavailable ilk – are the only way you'll be able to get perfect conversions of arcade games. Chah to them! Now you can get an absolutely pixel-perfect arcade conversion on the Super NES!

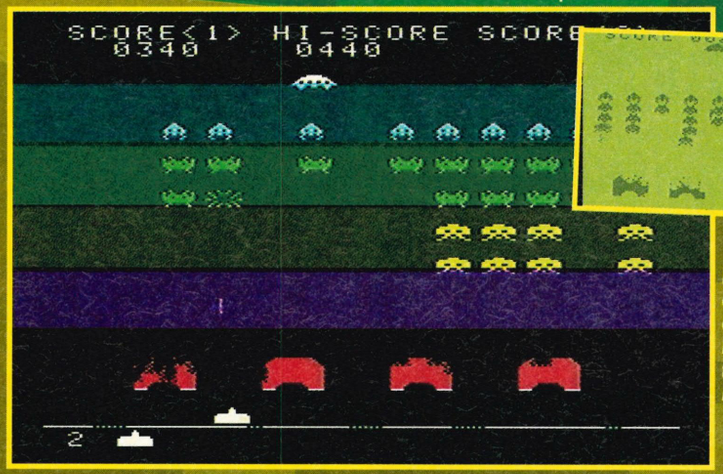
Unfortunately, it's *Space Invaders*.

"Wassat, dad?" cry our younger readers. "Izzat like *Daytona*?" Not really. In marvellous monochrome, rows of aliens trudge back and forth across the screen, getting lower with each pass. If they reach the ground, you die. To defer this undesirable demise, you have to blow the bomb-dropping invaders away with your laser base. And that, as they say, is that.

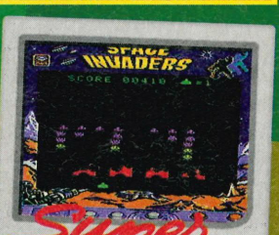
The arcade perfect version isn't the Game Boy game itself, although this does a pretty good job of reproducing the original. Even on the tiny Game Boy screen, the action is perfectly clear and surprisingly blur-free. The real 'treat' is for Super Game Boy owners.



△ "Back then, we had one screen and were proud of it," muttered Cranky Kong.



◁ It's just like being in a pub about a decade ago. Pint of bitter for 68p? Lovely!



Super GAME BOY

Very clear and easy to play, but with the Super NES version on offer, who's going to use this one? Nice borders, though.

As well as the usual SGB options, coded into the cart is the complete Super NES version, previously only available in Japan. Select this, and the game is downloaded into your Super NES's memory, giving you no fewer than four (ooh) choices of game, all identical save for the colours.

The Super NES game really is 100% accurate, right down to the momentarily cute gags on the attract mode and the wonky cellophane strips on the pub table-top version of the game. The problem is... it's *Space Invaders*! *Defender* I could understand, or *Galaxians* at a pinch, but *Space Invaders*? Why?

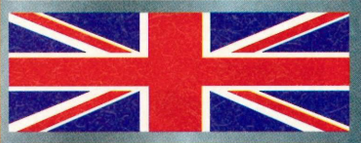
I'd give this a very cautious recommendation, purely for the technical accuracy of the bonus Super NES version, but if you haven't played *Space Invaders* before, don't expect to be blown away.

DAMIAN



I disagree. *Space Invaders* is a classic. Not because of the graphics or sound, obviously, but this is a prime example of gameplay wins all. There were plenty of early coin-ops but few captivated the world as much as this game. The simplistic point-scoring action is all you need to unwind and regress to the time when the Clash were in the charts and Blondie was driving us Brits wild. This revised version is definitive. You get every type of game from the stand alone cabinet to the pub table, plus the fantastic Super NES version which actually loads into the RAM of the console! A classic game and a personal fave. Just don't expect *DKC*!





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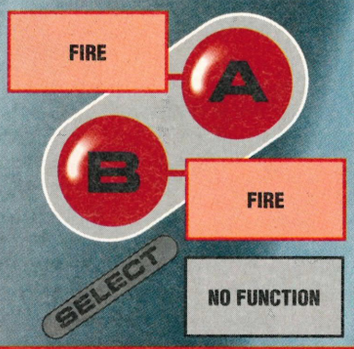
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GAME TYPE
SHOOT-'EM-UP

CART SIZE
4MBit

FEATURES
SUPER NES GAME!

CONTROLS



RATINGS

GRAPHICS	50
SOUND	50
GAMEPLAY	68
LONGEVITY	50

OVERALL

70



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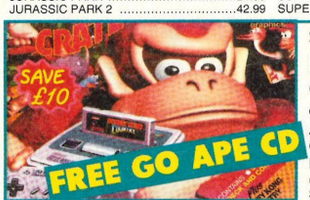
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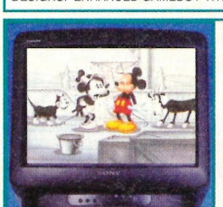
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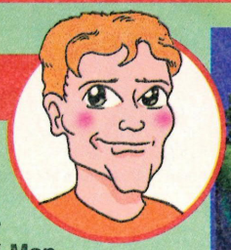
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RYAN

Groan! Another platform game featuring a renowned super hero enters our midst, and this time X-Man extraordinaire Wolverine is the unfortunate candidate.

Out of all the mutants that comprise the X-Men, Wolverine is by far the baddest. Not bad in a sad crappy way you understand, more of a Michael Jackson kind of bad... you know, well 'ard!

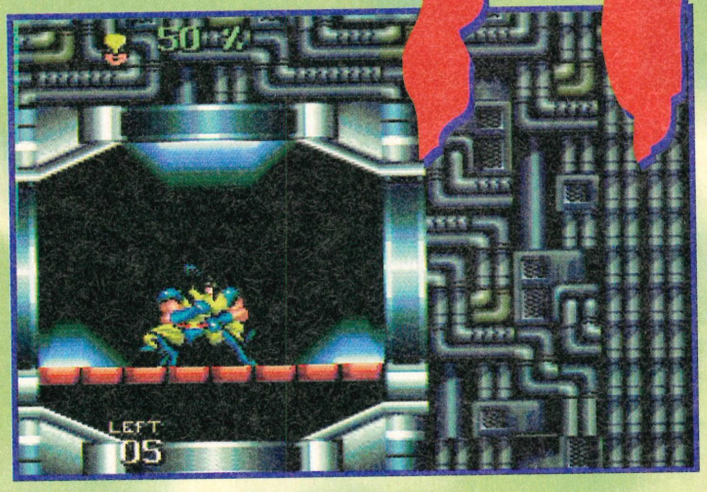
Wolverine is to cartoon characters what Mad Max is to films, a temperamental time bomb who looks set to explode at any moment. A mass of conflicting emotions that could snap at any moment and turn savage like the creatures he resembles – an ideal subject for a game methinks! But have Acclaim done Marvel comics proud?

The game is a six level platform beat-'em-up that pits Wolfy against a whole host of baddies from the successful comic book series. Each level represents a different part of a story that gradually unfolds as you progress.

Wolverine: Adamantium Rage begins when a mysterious message on Wolverine's answer-phone sends the clawed outcast to a futuristic factory where he must take out a certain number of robot guards and gun turrets before moving on.



△ *Looks more like a fancy dress parade than an action game!*



WOLVERINE

A wolf in sheeps clothing!

It sounds really crap I know, in fact for a while I couldn't generate enough interest to get past the opening levels. But persevere and things get better as you begin to come face to face with old adversaries and the scenarios switch to more imaginative locations.

Wolverine himself is an awesome sprite – big, bold and smoothly animated. Most of his moves involve his mighty claws, such as swipes and parries, but he also has a complement of more human fighting moves.

Like Acclaim's last Marvel licence (*Maximum Carnage*), *Wolverine* has a high-paced rockin' soundtrack featuring everything from garage-type rave scores to moody oriental ditties.

I also thought the sound effects for Wolverine cutting the air with his claws and climbing walls were also exceptional.

Unfortunately, the repetitive nature of the game gives it a very limited appeal. Every mission I attempted involved taking out a certain number of foes before tackling a mighty boss. Occasionally you get to trash computers and suchlike, but it's

STAND AND DISMEMBER!

Adamantium claws aren't Wolverine's only weapons, but they're certainly the most enjoyable. Here's his arsenal in full...



FLYING KICK
Strong, long range attack.



GROUND CLAW
Used to uncover secret rooms.



KICK
Standard, no frills stuff.



LUNGING PUNCH
A punch of awesome power.

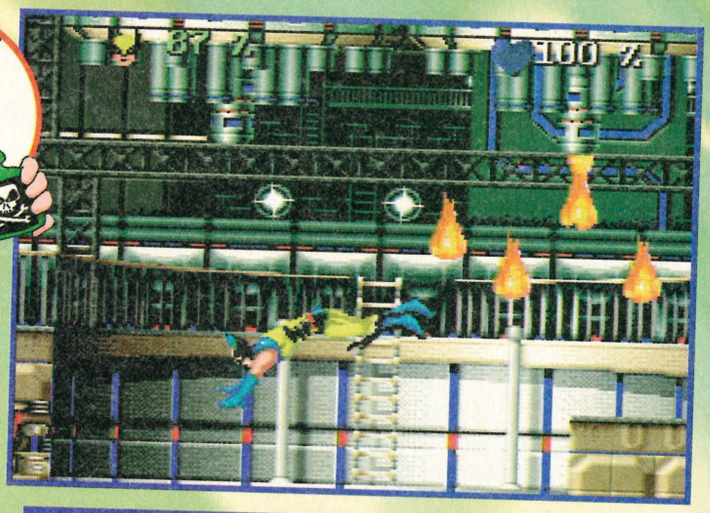


PARRY
Inflicts a vast number of blows.

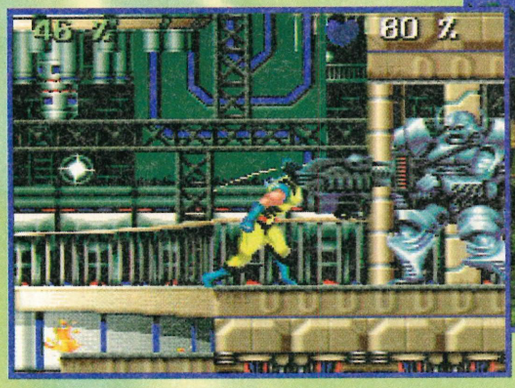
ANDY



Super heroes suck! With their appalling dialogue, bland identikit artwork, ludicrous plot contrivances and habits of breaking into speeches the length of the Gettysburg Address in the middle of a fist fight, they're an affront to civilized society! As are most of the games based on them. *Wolverine* plays almost identically to *Hulk*, which I loathed, so understandably I didn't dance a little jig of delight at the prospect of leaping from platform to platform while dodging fireballs and hitting robots. Konami's *Batman & Robin* is an example of a good game based on a super hero – *Wolverine*, however, is at the other end of the scale.







△ *Wolverine encounters a sinister ice guardian.*

hardly a game that will test your grey matter. Even a fan will be disappointed.

You only have one solitary life to complete the game – one poxy life! And this makes it unfeasonably hard to complete or enjoy. Luckily, Bits (the programmers) have been reading up on Frank Miller and Chris Claremont's comic series and remembered to include Wolverine's enhanced healing ability which gradually replenishes your energy. The only problem with this is that it takes the sting out the great man's machismo when he has to go and lie down for a bit every time he gets his paws singed!

Not a bad Marvel adaptation by any means, with good graphics and sound, at least they've gone someway to creating that Wolverine experience. Perhaps it would have been better if they went more into his Samurai spirit and included the berserker mode that turns Wolverine into such a unpredictable and exciting character. Perhaps that's too deep for a Super NES game?

The *Adventures of Batman & Robin* is still the best comic conversion so far in my opinion, but this is worth a look.



PUNCH
Fast and effective, but no power.



SINGLE SWIPE
A rippingly effective move.



UPPERCUT
Certain to bring a tear to the eye!

KEITH



I can't believe it, a comic book licence that's been turned into a platform game! And not a very good one at that. The levels are absolutely massive, too big in fact, which makes it almost impossible to get anywhere on the one life that you have. The gameplay is just a bit too repetitive to make it an essential play, although the brilliant sound effects are worth hearing especially the metallic sound of his swiping claws. But like *The Hulk*, *Wolverine* is not exciting enough to be a classic, unlike *The Adventures of Batman and Robin*, which is a good example of how to make a comic book adaptation playable, Acclaim could learn from that and fill their licences with a bit of imagination in the future. Let's hope they do.





PRODUCER
ACCLAIM
(071) 344 5000

PRICE
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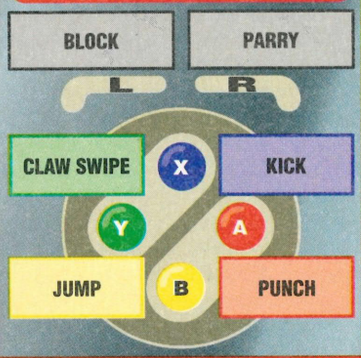
RELEASED
DECEMBER '94

GAME TYPE
PLATFORM

CART SIZE
16MBit

FEATURES
PASSWORDS

CONTROLS



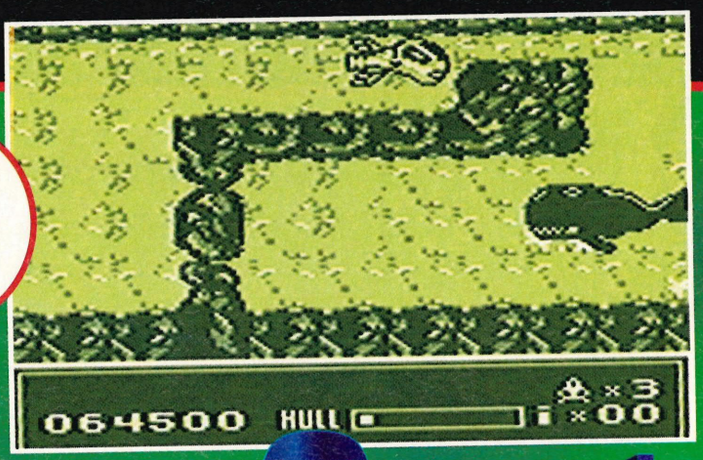
RATINGS

GRAPHICS	83
SOUND	82
GAMEPLAY	70
LONGEVITY	71

OVERALL

74

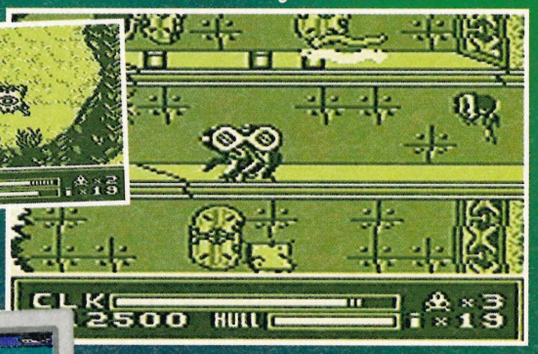
GAME BOY REVIEW



seaQuest DSV

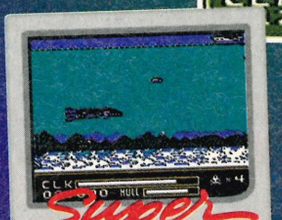
Dive! Dive! Dive!

▽ *The crew venture through a ship-wreck disguised as a well known sweet!*





△ *More underwater frolics ahoy!*



Glub! Glub! Wowee, the Super Game Boy gives the game a good underwater feel, but there's no special border.

RYAN



Zzzzzz... yawn! Oops, excuse me. I had just started to play *SeaQuest DSV* when all of a sudden my eyes began to feel heavy, my breathing relaxed and suddenly I was in REM state! The next thing I knew I was sat at the helm of the most advanced underwater explorational vehicle ever devised; navigating it through dangerous encounters with enemy subs and carrying out a series of fantastically varied missions for the good of the UEO (United Earth and Oceans confederation).

But then I woke up only to discover that I was in fact staring at an exceedingly lame side-scrolling shoot-'em-up which is totally devoid of anything even remotely resembling excitement.

The graphics are simplistic in the extreme, with the main craft looking more like a decaying log than a state-of-the-art submarine. And the enemy vessels that constantly attack you seem to be rejects from *Button Moon*!

You *do* get to embark on plenty of missions (seven in all), although they hardly get the adrenaline pumping as the most exciting thing you do is paddle around in a liquorice all-sort, collecting canisters and blowing up sharks.

Anyone who has had the misfortune to play *Hunt For Red October* on the Game Boy can perhaps imagine the kind of sorry, unadventurous, tedious and utterly repetitive gameplay this cart contains.

When you consider the scope of the TV series, so much more could have been done with this game to make it more appealing to the scores of fans. However, what we have here is a rushed licenced game – a fate worse than death.

Granted, some bits do hover dangerously close to playable, like the Darwin level and the mission five meltdown section where the action switches to *Space Invaders* territory.

But the prospect of endlessly collecting canisters and moving at a snail's pace around very basic underwater caverns soon gives you the impulsive urge to switch off and go to sleep.



△ *Dispatch your diver from the sub in order to pick up the canisters – ingenious!*

ANDY



What are you on about, Ryan? It was a great game! But that's enough about *The Hunt For Red October*, now onto *SeaQuest DSV*. The TV show is a sad aquatic *Star Trek* rip-off, which in itself warrants instant death, but the game managed to hold my interest... for a while. Before long, though, the slow and limited nature of the sub-games began to give me the bends. The 2-D *Tempest* section of the reactor isn't bad, but the diver sub-game leaves you gasping for a blast of pure oxygen to wake yourself up! It's all a bit dull and mediocre... just like the TV show, really.

seaQuest DSV

PRODUCER
THQ
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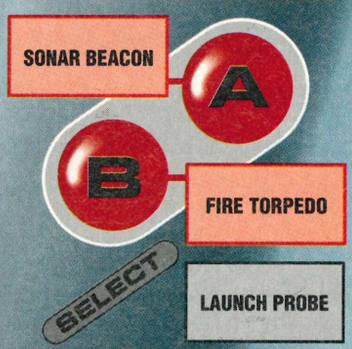
RELEASED
OUT NOW

GAME TYPE
SHOOT-'EM-UP

CART SIZE
2MBit

FEATURES
NONE

CONTROLS

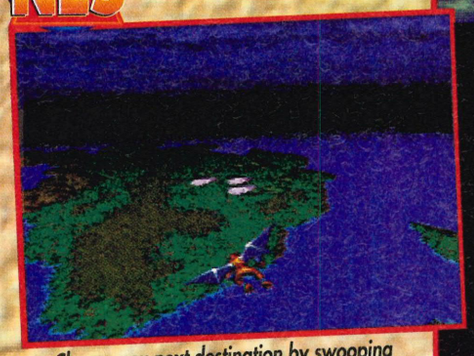


RATINGS

GRAPHICS	52
SOUND	53
GAMEPLAY	51
LONGEVITY	54

OVERALL

53



△ Choose you next destination by swooping from the skies.



△ Tsk! Have you not been warned about farting on a dusty cliff?

DEMON'S BLAZON

Knights in white Satan!



RYAN

Anyone who remembers *Gargoyle's Quest* on the Game Boy should be looking forward to this obscure Japanese game with joyful glee, as it is basically the 16-bit super-improved, turbo-charged, sugar-coated version.

Although at first glance it's easy to deduce the formula behind the game (ie mix *Ghouls 'n Ghosts* and *Skyblazer* in a large bowl, add generous portions of special sound and glittery graphics, then simmer at room temperature), *Demon's Blazon* is actually quite a gripping saga, and dare I say, enjoyable to play.

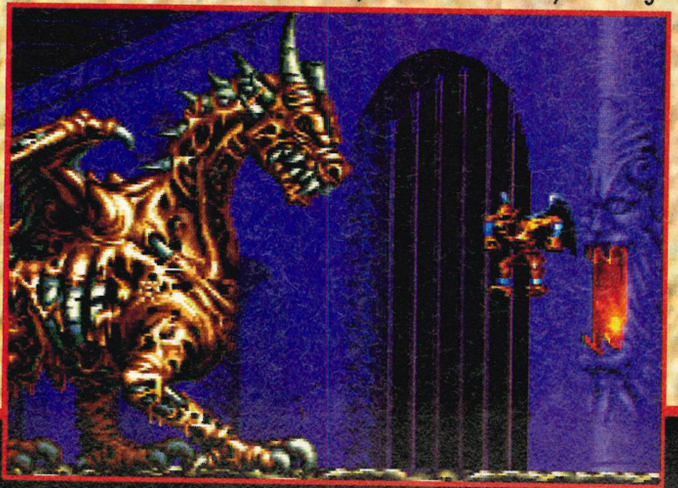
You flutter around the same old clichéd landscapes as a winged beast masterful in both fireball-lobbing and magic; battling with jolly zombies and other expendable monsters, and occasionally encountering big dragons and other airborne beasts who know their stuff better than you.

Granted it doesn't sound too exciting, and to start with it isn't, but the further you get and burning the midnight oil reaps dividends as things really start to shape up.

However, *Demon's Blazon* does contain more than its fair share of character interaction as you happily gossip away to savage creatures before engaging in hot tennis balls at dawn. You can also wander into intriguing emporiums and purchase new magic from cackling crones.

With this being a Japanese cart brimming with hieroglyphics from the land of the rising sun, offering your replies to such verbal exchanges is like Russian roulette. Many times I was kicked out of the shops for accidentally insulting the owner's wife!

▽ Quick, broaden your shoulders to make you look big!



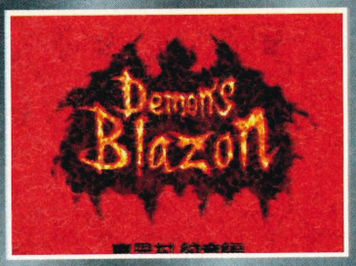


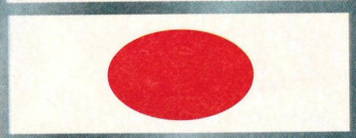
KEITH

I was hoping that this would stay faithful to the old Game Boy game, *Gargoyle's Quest*. In a way it does, with all the magic and special abilities from the classic still there, but like *Actraiser 2* the RPG/adventure element has been overlooked and more action takes its place. Luckily, it's been well executed and I especially liked the way you're faced with a boss as soon as you start the game – it sets the scene well. Overall a great action game that would do well if it was translated and released in the UK as soon as possible. Fans of *Gargoyle's Quest* will love it!

The high quantities of explorational adventure and shoot-'em-up action, coupled with gorgeous visuals and atmospheric organ-grinding make this an encapsulating game to play, albeit a tad on the repetitive seen-it-all before side.

The Jap text is an obvious disadvantage, but you can play the game without it. Personally, though I'd stick to the American game as it's unlikely to be converted to PAL.





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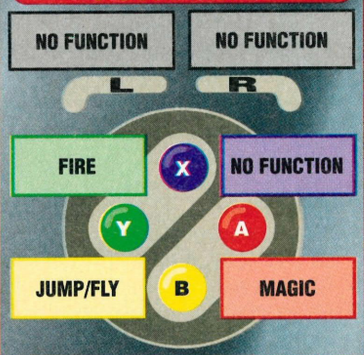
RELEASED
JAP IMPORT

GAME TYPE
PLATFORM SHOOT-'EM-UP

CART SIZE
16MBit

FEATURES
PASSWORD

CONTROLS



RATINGS

GRAPHICS	81
SOUND	80
GAMEPLAY	83
LONGEVITY	74

OVERALL

79

BLACKHAWK

Nothing to crow about!



KEITH

Without so much as a "Bye son, nice knowing you," the King transports Blackhawk to Earth for a 20 year holiday, so that Sarlac (isn't he in *Jedi*?) can't get hold of the magic Lightstone. Then one day, our hero is suddenly catapulted back to Tuul (the home planet) for the final battle. Clichéd? It is, but aren't they all nowadays?

In many ways *Blackhawk* has come about two years too late. The graphics, as you can see, are circa 1992, and don't even bother to test the Super NES' limits. *Flashback*, which this is based on, looks far better and it is much older. Now *Blackhawk* must deal with *EWJ*, *DKC* and *Lion King* and to be frank, it's not in their class.

The whole game is played side-on, and you must interact with various characters such as prisoners and agents, and blow away the mean old guards who all seem to be lizards dressed in costumes from *The Gladiators*.

First impressions are slightly iffy, as the central character moves just like Lester Chaykin in *Another World* and *Flashback*, but his animation is not as smooth as the rotoscoping of the Delphine games. There are also some awkward pauses, such as when he draws his gun or hides in the shadows.

The big question for me is, if they went to all the trouble of getting the animation right on the sprite, why did they leave the background graphics looking so dowdy?



▽ *Who shot Nice Guy Eddie?*



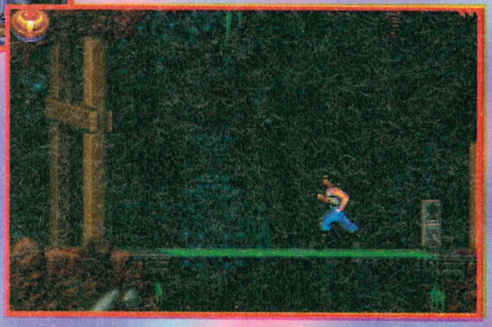
They really are appalling, and the only graphics worthy of special mention are the ones on the chained prisoners, who convincingly jerk off their moorings and flop to the ground as you syringe their ears with a sawn-off shotgun!

Whilst interacting with the other characters is an integral part of the game, you can also use prisoners as human shields during battles with laser-wielding goblins, whip-cracking orcs, and deranged robots. There's nothing quite as selfish or sadistic as ducking into the shadows and watching a captive prisoner crumple to the floor in front of you.

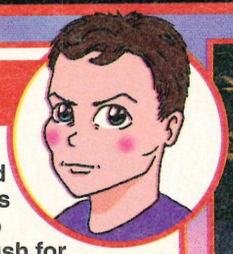
But that's what *Blackhawk* is all about – quick reflexes and immaculate timing, and at first it is very hard to get used to. There will be many points in the game where a slightly mis-timed jump or duck means instant death.



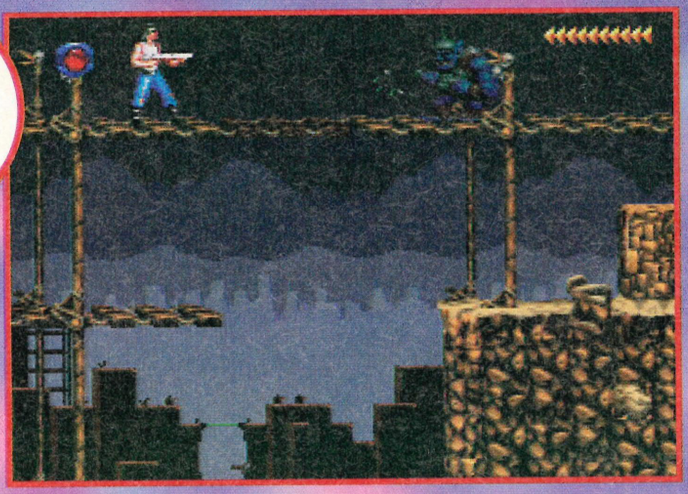
▽ *"Firstly, I ain't ya brother, and secondly, I intend to take that potion before blowing your brains out!"*



DAMIAN



This is a poor man's *Flashback* and I don't really think it's worth the money (no beating about the bush for me). The graphics are pretty terrible, though some of the animation is impressive. I hated the irritating pauses when Blackhawk draws his gun – you just get blown away every time. Having played this game for a fair while I found it got very repetitive near the end, and the graphics never seemed to get any better or the playability any fresher. What this needs is a spark of originality, or just something that will make it leap off the shelf. *Blackhawk* is far worse than *Flashback* and a step in the wrong direction. Maybe a couple of years ago...





Luckily, frustration is kept to a minimum by including infinite continues and passwords for each of the levels, but even that defeats the object of the game, making it very easy to complete.

Although a fairly playable platform romp, with a decent enough 'feel', *Blackhawk* suffers from lack of variety, because most of the puzzles simply require you to blow open doors with bombs, find keys, and use remote detonations to destroy generators. In *Flashback*, the variety and complexity of the missions and locations made you forget the repetitive action. *Blackhawk's* gameplay reminds you with 50ft neon letters.

And just to add to the tedium factor, the whole game is played at three quarter speed, so that even the simplest of tasks, like climbing a ladder, becomes an epic trudge through a sea of marmalade. It also takes an age to draw your shotgun and point it at the enemy, who are patiently standing there with lasers already drawn, ready to blast you to atoms in a micro-second.

I'm sorry Sony, but you are going to have to do better than this if you want to take on the established software companies. *Blackhawk* has nothing like the gameplay or tense Sci-Fi atmosphere of *Flashback* and you can now get that for much less than £45.



△ *Blackhawk faces another potentially deadly adversary.*



RYAN



I only ever intended to play *Blackhawk* for an hour or so to write this comment, but one hour merged into half the night as it promptly accompanied me home. To say I was engrossed would be a huge understatement. There's nothing here that hasn't been done before and better with games like *Flashback* and *Prince of Persia*, but to its merit, I found *Blackhawk* to be more accessible to begin with. From square one you're thrown into the action, blasting pig guards and sadistically smooth-talking prisoners before blowing their brains out – great fun. The graphics are very appealing with ultra smooth animation, although the locations could have been more varied. If you want a game to get lost in – hey presto!



PRODUCER
INTERPLAY
(0235) 821666

PRICE
£44.99

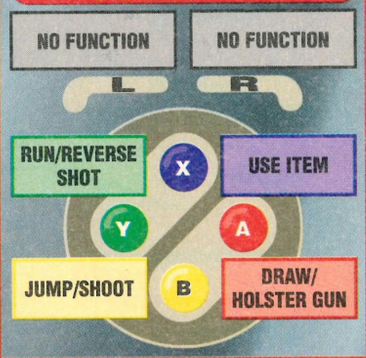
RELEASED
NOVEMBER '94

GAME TYPE
PLATFORM ADVENTURE

CART SIZE
8MBit

FEATURES
PASSWORDS

CONTROLS



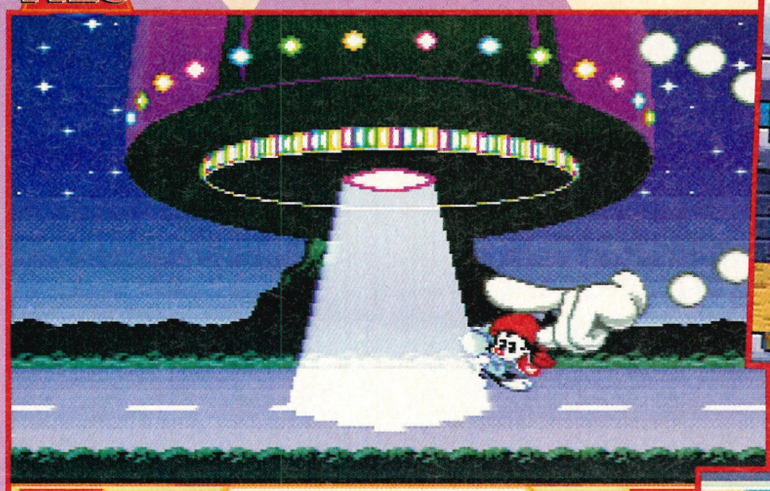
RATINGS

GRAPHICS	80
SOUND	75
GAMEPLAY	74
LONGEVITY	76

OVERALL

78

ANIMANIACS





△ Pirates tend to wear bandanas, I wonder why that is? Still, collect the coins to stand a chance of winning some goodies on the slot machine.





KEITH

Believe it or not after making their television debut in September, *Animaniacs* is second only to *Power Rangers* (?!) in the American Monday to Friday kids' TV chart.

Following up the success of the television show, which by all accounts is actually quite good, Konami have released the Super NES version just in time for Christmas (what timing). The game stars those cheeky stars of the show: Yakka, Wakka and Dot, and you could say their arrival on the Super NES has raised a few eyebrows.

In this over-the-top injection of glorified platform cutemania, the three friends must find the script for Acme's next film that the cunning and power-hungry rats – Brains and Pinky – have stolen. There are 24 pages to the script and they have been distributed throughout the various stages of the Warner Bros lot, including fantasy, Sci-Fi, aquatic and adventure.



△ The set of the next King Kong film? Wherever it is, Dot's about to die.

The best level has to be the science fiction set which features a dustbin impersonating R2-D2, 2001-type monoliths hovering in the background, and a multitude of face huggers popping out of alien eggs! It's good to see this type of humour, but it's a shame you'll find it nowhere else in the game.

The other levels all seem a bit bland in comparison and mainly consist of lots of running around, jumping and dodging with no real rhythm, pattern or enjoyment emerging from the gameplay.

You dirty rats!







△ All the action takes place here. The studios are the big warehouses.

ANDY



The only time I've seen *Animaniacs* the cartooon, I was semi-comatose on a friend's living room floor, so I can't comment on the accuracy of the conversion. What I can comment on is way the game plays, which can be summed up in one word – frustrating! Imagine how frustrated you'd feel if you locked yourself in your flat on the night of a date with the supermodel of your choice, with only a video of Songs of Praise for company. Now double that, and you'll have an inkling of how infuriating *Animaniacs* can be! Instant death awaits on every screen, the forced perspective seems to have been programmed by M C Escher, and the music is as welcome in your head as a dentist's drill. Spotting all the film references is fun, but it doesn't make up for the foot-through-the-telly gameplay. The normally excellent Konami have laid a real egg with *Animaniacs*.



△ *Follow the rabbit exactly, or you'll end up plastered on the side of a tree!*

It would help if technical aspects like the collision detection and perspective worked, but half the time you end up walking off a ledge or jumping in a river because you can't work out exactly where the platform is. It also doesn't help that the other two characters (you can select between them incidentally) constantly swirl around you obscuring your vision.

The graphics are excellent though, perfectly recreating the cartoons, but then good visuals have always been a Konami trademark. My only quibble is that the actual characters in the game have all been crammed in without really getting them to interact with the storyline. Ralph the security guard, for example, is hardly used at all. It would have been better if he chased you through the levels and you had to lose him for a while in order to carry on the mission.

One of the few original features of *Animaniacs* is the way you collect medals to play a fruit machine which gives you the chance to win extra lives, continues and other goodies. The downside is that you also stand a chance of losing all your medals in one go.

▽ *This giant Death Star bowling ball needs precision timing to leap clear of its rumbling bulk!*





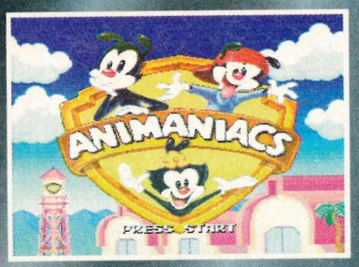


DAMIAN



I'm sure this started out as a good idea in the boardroom at Konami, but it just hasn't translated that well to the screen. Yes, the Animaniacs are frisky and mischievous, but the slanted perspective that many of the stages use is very hard to get used to and consequently annoying to play. The film parodies such as *Alien* and *Star Wars* are excellent, and this is what the entire game should have revolved around. Instead, what we have is a confused collection of very hard sub-games, none of which particularly stand out or enthrall. And what the hell is that strange bum dance the Animaniacs do when you leave the pad? Overall I would say this is suited to young kids only. Adults stay well clear.

Kids below ten will probably lap *Animaniacs* up, especially with the abundance of characters, but it might prove a bit tedious for older players. Not bad, but nowhere near Konami's best, and definitely not as good as *Sparkster*.





PRODUCER
KONAMI
(0895) 853000

PRICE
£49.99

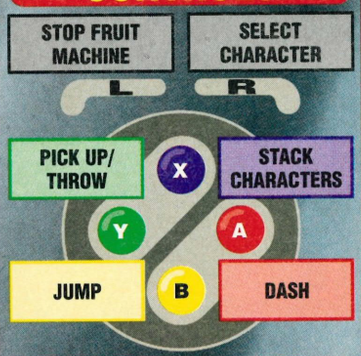
RELEASED
DECEMBER '94

GAME TYPE
PLATFORM

CART SIZE
8MBit

FEATURES
PASSWORDS

CONTROLS



RATINGS

GRAPHICS	89
SOUND	79
GAMEPLAY	70
LONGEVITY	81

OVERALL

80



△ Remind you of Prince of Persia at all? Na!

Nosferatu

Creatures of the night!

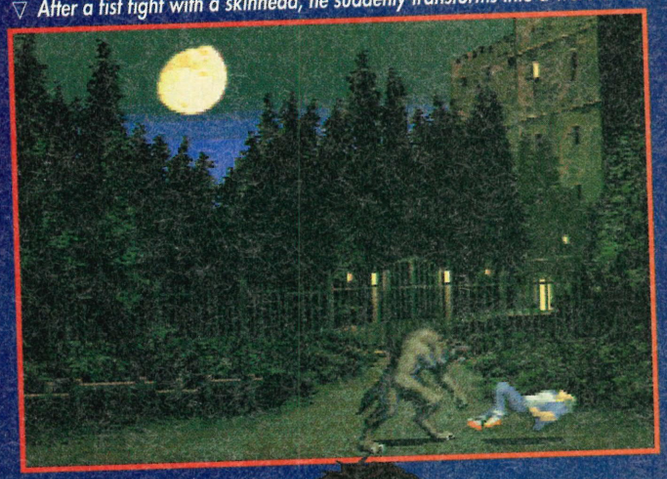
DAMIAN



"I vant to drink your blood." *Nosferatu* (taken from a Romanian word meaning 'undead') is the evil count who lives in that dark castle on the top of the hill deep in darkest Transylvania.

As always in these heroic tales of good versus evil, you play the handsome wood cutter whose girlfriend is surreptitiously whisked away to the count's coffin during the night. As any bloke deprived of his crumpet would, our hero gallops to the castle for a stake well done.

▽ After a fist fight with a skinhead, he suddenly transforms into a werewolf!



The sounds in this game really do chill the blood. Your girl's ear-piercing scream is just one of the quality samples on offer, and the heavy breathing during the platform sections, as well as the wolf howls on level two, are extremely well done.

But to the game itself. The graphics are very *Castlevania* (only even more gothic) and the whole game plays similarly to *Prince of Persia* with a touch of *SOS*. As you explore the platform orientated bowels of the castle and beyond you are forced to leap across pits of spikes and all manner of devilish contraptions. This brings into play the ever-so-handy finger-grappling move to hang on and climb up.

The only problem initially I found was that, even on a Jap machine, *Nosferatu* moves very slowly, and this drags the whole game down to a snail's pace. With the whole thing set against a time limit, and you having to go back to the beginning of the level every time you die, it does make progress a bit of a chore.

Other than that *Nosferatu* is a well programmed and enjoyable gothic nightmare. The traps are devious (I like the falling bodies and dismembered arms) and the levels fairly large, but well laid out and approached in bite-sized chunks.

The controls are a little fiddy, and the collisions with some of the platforms can be awry to say the least, especially when dealing with Frankenstein's monster, but you do get the hang of it.

Not better than *Castlevania IV*, but an above average monster mash which just about hits the spot.



ANDY



As Keanu Reeves said in *Dracula*, "Woah! Vampires! Most excellent, dude!" Well, not really, but it's hard to go wrong when you use history's greatest monsters as the basis for a game. Despite the more-than-superficial similarities to *Prince of Persia* (lots of clinging by your fingertips spike-avoiding action), *Nosferatu* grips you tightly with its decomposing fingers, thanks to a fine sense of atmosphere and some tricky puzzles. The only real fault was its funereal pace; the denim-clad hero seems to be running on Valium! (Maybe that's why he's not scared of anything...) Aside from that – fang-tastic! (Sorry.)



PRODUCER
SETA
SUPPLIED BY: VIDEO GAMES CENTRE (0202) 527314

PRICE
£79.99

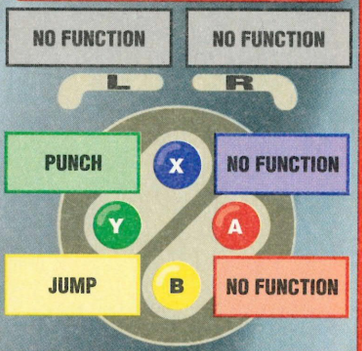
RELEASED
JAP IMPORT

GAME TYPE
PLATFORM

CART SIZE
16MBit

FEATURES
NONE

CONTROLS

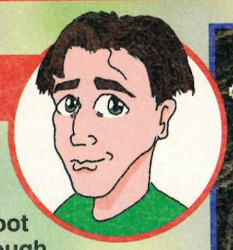


RATINGS

GRAPHICS	85
SOUND	87
GAMEPLAY	79
LONGEVITY	80

OVERALL

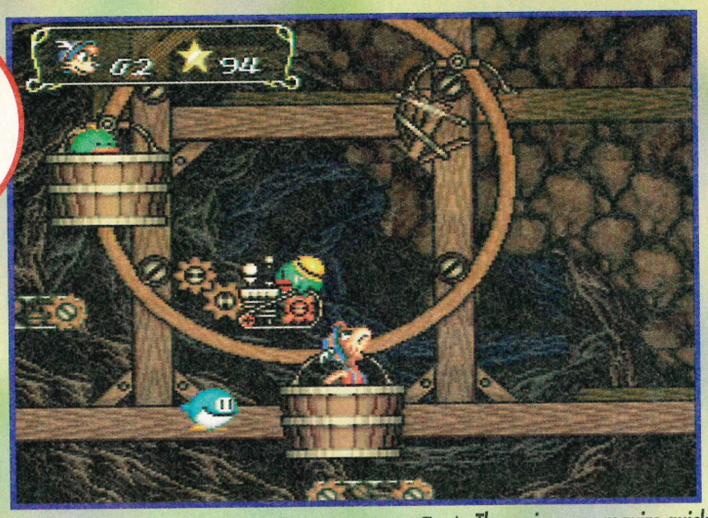
78



KEITH

It's the invasion of the possums! What with Sparkster and now this Ardy Lightfoot chap, it seems as though platformers and possums go together like David Mellor and the Sun.

What we have here is a pretty standard platform game with an abundance of animated cartoon presentation and a curiously out of place *Actraiser*-like soundtrack! The idea is to search the world for the seven gems that contain the colours of the rainbow, thus freeing Princess Neena from the evil clutches of Visconty.



Lightweight lunacy! △ *The eerie caves require quick thinking and skillful timed jumps.*

ARDY LIGHTFOOT

RYAN



I think *Ardy Lightfoot* is great, super, smashing, and other assorted adjectives that Jim Bowen would swear by! Although the origins are Japanese, Titus have given Ardy just enough character to become an overnight success on these shores. The action is platform pure and simple, nothing else, just everything good platform stands for. And it is one hell of an addictive game to play. The graphics are crystal clear, exceedingly well defined and just seem to get better and better as you go along. I found it hard to get into at first, but once the controls have been mastered you'll soon become engulfed in this highly enjoyable and challenging game.

You only have to fumble around with the controls for a few seconds before you notice Ardy's very dodgy looking pogo jump. Ingeniously, Ardy manages to use his tail to spring to great heights, unfortunately it looks as though he's having an enema performed with a large tube!

All the normal platform game obstacles are laid out in front of you – conveyor belts, rotating platforms, and there's even a badly scrolling mine car section that suddenly crashes into a rock, catapulting you straight into the boss's lair – a good touch.

▽ *Pec doing his bloated fish impression.*

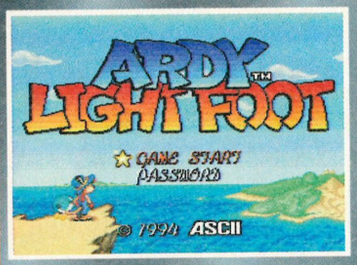


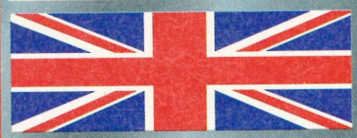
As you play through, you will also come across boxes that can be smashed in order to find lives, bonuses and little round creatures called Pec, who help you out. Like Yoshi in *SMW*, Pec can eat other enemies and inflate himself to ferry you across lethal spiked pits – unfortunately you lose him if you get hit, but there's always another box further on in the level so you are never without him for long.

With the whole game rolling into one big animated adventure spread over dozens of levels, the aspect that stands out the most is the way each scene flows smoothly into the next. You'll hardly notice that you have entered another level unless you fight a big boss (and most are highly original and tough to bear!).

Ultimately, *Ardy Lightfoot* is an enjoyable cartoon adventure that neither excels nor excites. Nothing is particularly bad, but then again it never really grabs you by the throat either. If you fancy a decent enough Japanesey platform adventure, you could do a lot worse.







PRODUCER
TITUS
(071) 700 2119

PRICE
£39.99!

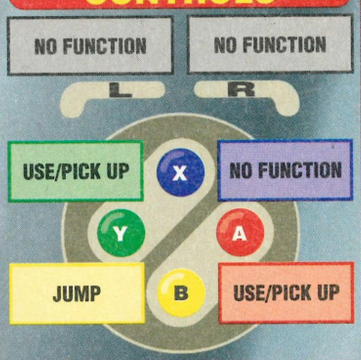
RELEASED
JANUARY '95

GAME TYPE
PLATFORM

CART SIZE
8MBit

FEATURES
PASSWORDS

CONTROLS



RATINGS

GRAPHICS	84
SOUND	72
GAMEPLAY	76
LONGEVITY	71

OVERALL

74

MICHAEL JORDAN
CHAOS IN THE WINDY CITY

▽ The Jordster stumbles across a sinister-looking electric eel. Be sure to keep those expensive trainers out of the water.





△ Mike tortures a ghoul into submission by rapping!

More like Cliché in the Windy City!

RYAN



"It's show time!" wails the seven foot legend as you prepare to embark on the most outrageous platform adventure to ever have the nerve to stand up and be counted.

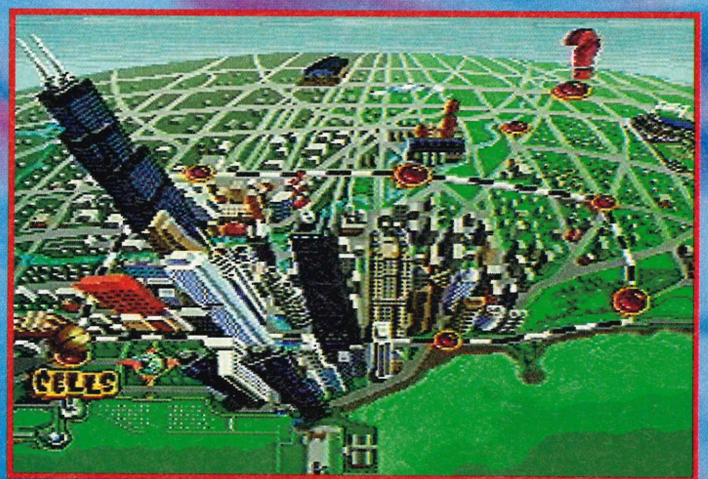
Michael Jordan, he of the phenomenal trainer deal, the Michael Jackson video, and of course the basketball court, steps out of the dazzling limelight surrounding the sport and into his very own console game.

For *Chaos in the Windy City*, the Jordster has swapped his size 20 Nikes for a magnifying glass and deer-stalker hat because he takes on the role of an action detective type geezer who's tracking down a team of missing basketball players.

Chicago is the setting for this cross-city cat 'n mouse game, but I have to say the first level set in an underground prison-type maze is uninspiring and boring to play through. The Super NES can handle loads of colours on-screen, so why constrain it to grey and black?

Michael's weapons in this adventure are – you guessed it – basketballs. You have an unlimited supply, and they can be dunked into convenient hoops for extra bonuses, as well as for smacking enemies unconscious and hitting switches from afar. I still can't work out how a pig-skin ball can uncover secret passages, though?

Yep this is one heck of a strange game, but basically the action is just running around various rooms and opening doors with keys which are usually to be found on the other side of the level. The object is to rescue your team mates,



ANDY



First there was *Shaq-Fu*, a game featuring a basketball player in which no basketball was actually played. Now comes *Michael Jordan: Chaos in etc etc*, a game featuring a basketball player in which – hey! – no basketball is actually played! What next? *Ryan Giggs' Snooker*? *Damon Hill's Hopscotch Adventure*? Come on! Just as *Shaq-Fu* was a mediocre beat-'em-up, *Michael Jordan* is a mediocre platformer with as much grip on reality as the mad old bag-lady who shouts at streetlamps outside our office. It probably sounded a great idea at the board meeting, but in the cold light of day it's boring, clichéd and just plain silly. Basketball players should stick to what they're best at (ie basketball), and leave the surreal stuff to fictional characters.

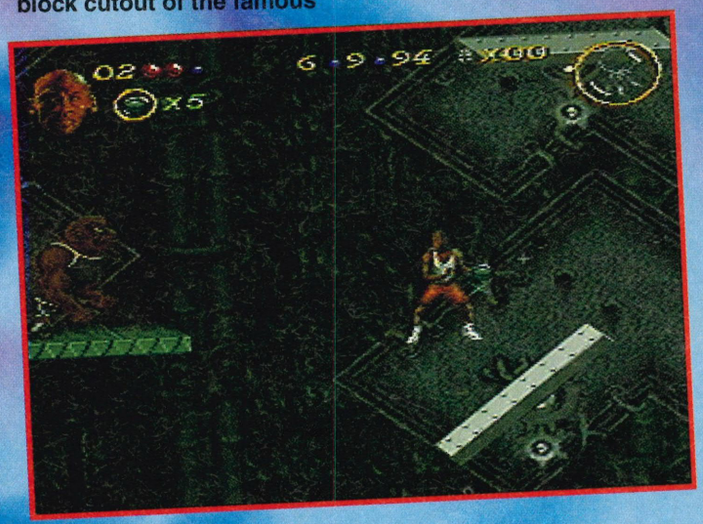
but what do they do as soon as they taste freedom? Bugger off and leave you to it. Charming.

Although the gameplay is limited, fun can be found by collecting the various power-ups which turn your conventional Spalding into fireballs, iceballs, bombs, homing missiles, and even boomerangs, although you only get a certain amount of each before it's back to normal.

Jordan himself is very well animated and has a vast array of trademark dunks to kill things and blag points. Although I have to admit that the unflattering portrait next to your energy bar looks more like GMTV's Mr Motivator than the great man himself. I also liked the way the levels end with a block cutout of the famous



△ *Why doesn't Jord's team-mate have the same kit as him?*



Jordan "Air" pose zooming towards you Batman-style.

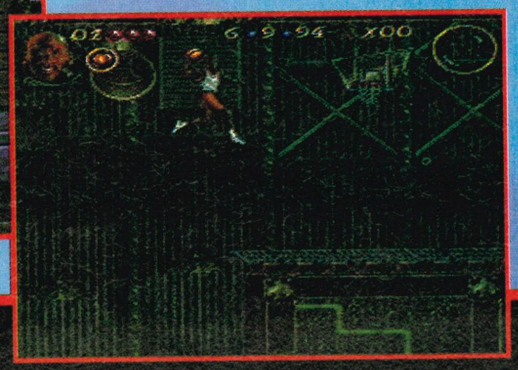
Let's face facts here. There are much better platforms games on the market at the moment and all offer something a little bit different. *EWJ's* zany humour, *Lion King's* Disney charm and animation, and *DKC's*... well, that's just brilliant in every respect.

The graphics in *Jordan* are functional, but too drab, the tunes are mundane and create no atmosphere, speech is muffled, and the gameplay is repetitive and lacking in overall excitement.

I like platform games. From Mario to Donkey Kong, I've played and enjoyed them all, but *Jordan* is simply not that good because someone obviously secured the licence before thinking about the gameplay. Michael should stick to what he knows best.

Christmas this year is a console battle ground, but this game has been left behind and is lying in the trench with a gammy leg and no ammunition. SG





DAMIAN



No-one will buy this game. I cannot think of a single console owner, even if they're besotted with basketball and worship the court that Michael Jordan squeaks on, who will fork out £50 for *Chaos in the Windy City*. The graphics are boring and repetitive, I didn't notice any sound (because I was swearing so much at the screen, probably), and it is just so mind-numbingly boring to play. After ten minutes of tediously jumping bats and using my ball to hit switches I was reaching for the bread knife and presenting my wrists for immediate evisceration. The controls are so woolly that even the mighty Jordan has trouble dunking a beach ball into a mile wide basket. Dire.





PRODUCER
OCEAN
(061) 832 6633

PRICE
£49.99

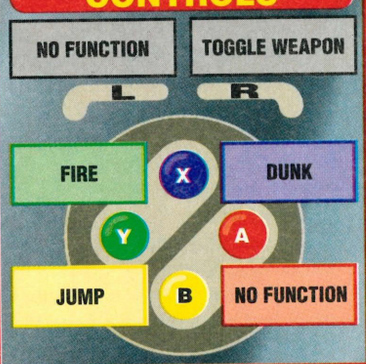
RELEASED
DECEMBER '94

GAME TYPE
PLATFORM

CART SIZE
12MBit

FEATURES
PASSWORD SYSTEM

CONTROLS

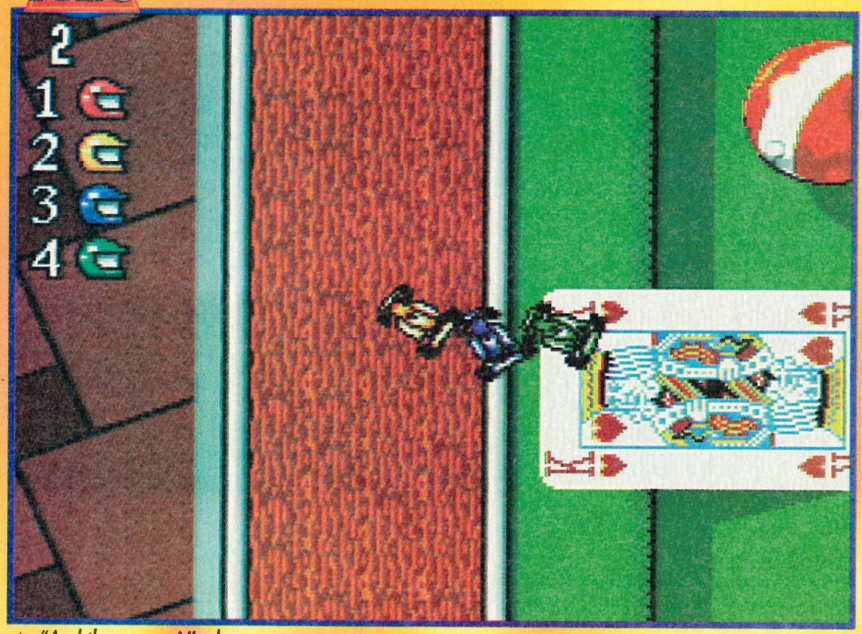


RATINGS

GRAPHICS	82
SOUND	74
GAMEPLAY	68
LONGEVITY	71

OVERALL

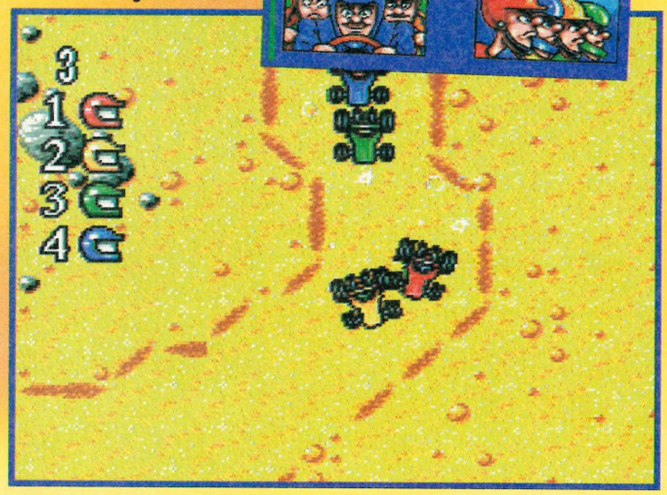
70



△ "And there goes Nigel Mansell ahead of..."



▽ The sand courses are especially slippery. Watch out for buried grandads!



Size does matter!

MICRO MACHINES



DAMIAN

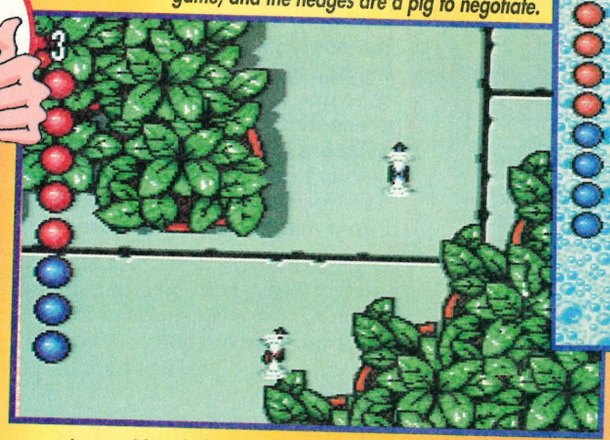
Mega Drive owners have long since revelled in the amazingly addictive *Micro Machines* from Codemasters, and now they even get a beefed up sequel which mags are currently raving over. My question is this. Why has it taken so long to convert this simplistic game to the Super NES? And why now, after over two years, do we get the first game and not the superior *Micro Machines 2*?

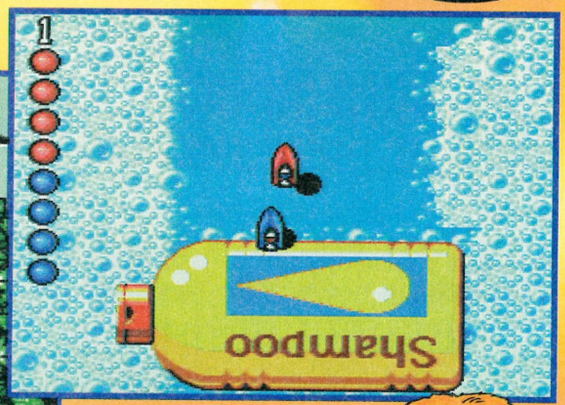
I have to admit *MM* on the Super NES was eagerly awaited in the Butt household, but the game, intially at least, was a disappointment.

For a start it's a good deal slower. This makes all the tracks, bar two, less exciting to play. The choppers, tanks and buggies in particular are more of an ordeal than a joy.

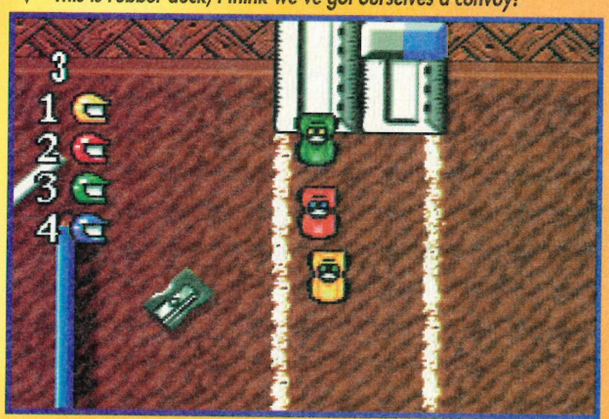
The graphics are as colourful and childish as ever, but that works both ways. On the one hand it retains the charm of the original, but on the other, nothing has been done in the translation to improve or make use of the Super NES's more powerful chips. This stinks of the programmers (Merit Software) being too scared to tinker

▽ The chopper section is definitely the weakest in the game, and the hedges are a pig to negotiate.





▽ "This is rubber duck, I think we've got ourselves a convoy!"





RYAN

I used to think that this game was flippin' marvellous on the NES, in fact I played it so much that my fingers developed cysts the size of beach balls and my eyes melted into a gooey substance resembling squashed jelly babies! The point is that after playing this game for so long it totally lost its appeal. So with the Super NES conversion being an exact replica of the NES game, it had very little going for it in my book. The graphics and sound are as basic as ever, but if you've never played it before then it is a very addictive racing game. For £50 though, this is a total con, especially as it is only a 4Mbit cart.



with the original for fear of a reprisal from Codemasters.

In parts this game is too good for itself. I'll explain. The sports and Formula 1 are the best cars and tracks in the whole game because they test each driver to the limit. In both you get chasms to jump and avoid, thin bridges to cross at break-neck speeds and loads of obstacles. Others, such as Oatmeal in Overdrive, Handyman's Curve and especially the powerboats are so... tame by comparison.

Fortunately, *MM* is still a brilliant concept and it is this that ultimately saves the game. You hit the B button to accelerate, rarely use the brake, and tap the D-pad to slide around the various miniature courses, including a bathtub, school desk, workbench and garden.



△ *The pools of oil make high speed skids a reality. Excellent!*



There are no complicated controls, everything is straightforward with few surprises, and this is the key to its success. Everyone from Aunt Gertie with her arthritic hip, to little Johnny the console whiz can pick up and play this game as if they were a master. Without doubt the ultimate family game.

The only truly original feature of *MM* on the Super NES is the three and four player modes. This lets you link up four pads or simply use two pads with players sharing the buttons. The latter is completely unworkable I'm afraid, as the cars accelerate regardless of pad input and you just have to steer. More fun maybe, but for all the wrong reasons.

In multi-player mode, you all fight to stay ahead; any lagging players are instantly eliminated until there is only two left who have to fight it out to win points. This is good fun, unless you choose a humbug like Ryan as one of your co-drivers.

MM on the Super NES is a wasted chance to catch up with the Mega Drive, but despite remaining in its original primitive state, it is devilishly fun to play, and a real hoot in four player mode.

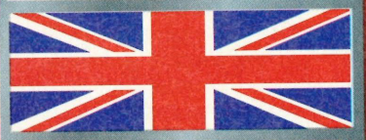
The winning playability still shines through, but I'm dubious as to whether a game designed to be good value at £2.99, still rings true at £50. Have a go and you decide. Me, I'm still happy with *Stunt Race FX* and *Test Drive II*.

KEITH



I've never understood why so many people like this game, with its tiny sprites coupled with scrappy and disjointed action that's constantly stopping and starting. The only skill you need to play it is a lot of patience to cope with the continual agony of sliding off every corner on a table. In fact, you spend more time falling than you do actually driving! I'll never get into this even in the multi-player mode, which basically means that you spend at least twice as much time waiting for somebody to be placed back on the track. It's a complete waste of time as far as I'm concerned. Sorry Sony, just not my cup of tea!





PRODUCER
SONY
(071) 911 8700

PRICE
£49.99

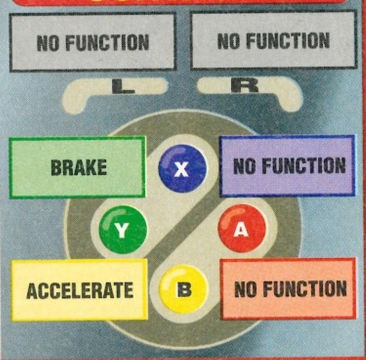
RELEASED
OUT NOW

GAME TYPE
RACING

CART SIZE
4MBit

FEATURES
FOUR PLAYER MODE

CONTROLS



RATINGS

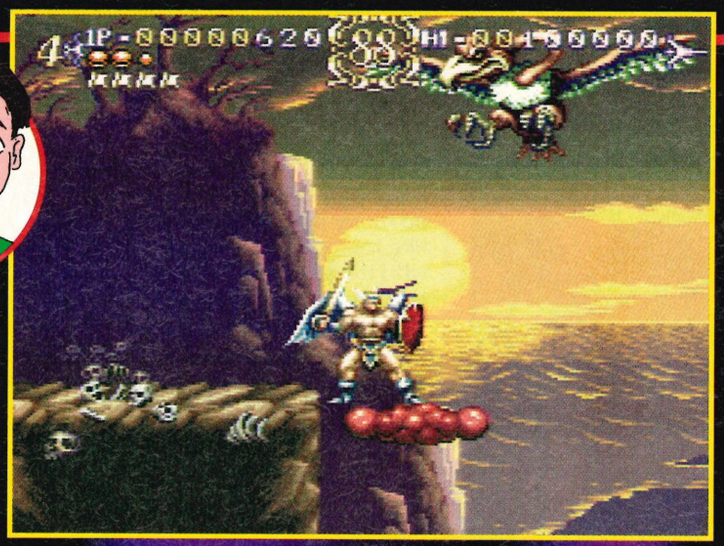
GRAPHICS	75
SOUND	50
GAMEPLAY	90
LONGEVITY	84

OVERALL

80

ACTRAISER 2

Raising the dead!



△ Bird alert!

KEITH



After the spectacular demise of Tanzra, the world lived peacefully for several thousand years. That was, until the chosen 13 demons from the original game used their combined powers to resurrect their fallen leader. With his power growing, the evil Tanzra vowed revenge on you; the god that defeated him in *Actraiser*.

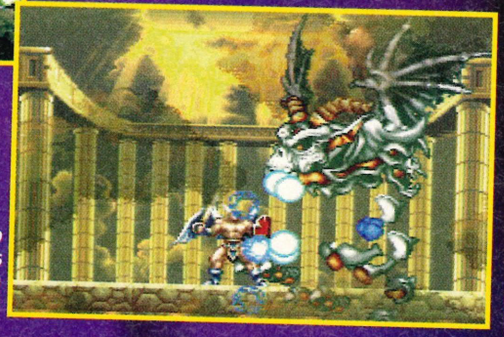


Actraiser 2 can be played in two ways: Action or Sky Palace. Action speaks for itself and consists of seven back-to-back multi-directional levels packed full of ghosts, exploding demons, flaming pits, enormous fire-belching bosses and other assorted traps and monsters who can be destroyed with a swipe of your holy sword or a blast from one of your seven different spells.

As well as run and jump, your godly hero can fly and swoop with awesome and deadly grace. Falling down an enemy infested mountain slope is not a problem. If you press down and attack while in mid-air, you launch into a flaming torpedo that spears everything in your path. You can even achieve a similar effect on horizontal sections, but not for quite as long.

The Sky Palace mode is nothing like the superb *Sim City*-type strategy of the first game. Instead it merely lets you fly around the world in a dodgy flying saucer, giving you the option to choose which level you want to go to first, with a bit of storyline thrown into each stage for good measure.

△ Nothing like a red hot flaming sword to aid your battle.



▷ Too many bones for this dog to chew on!

I expected a lot more really and was disappointed with the lack of strategy, but it seems as though Enix were more intent on producing an action game rather than the wonderful blend of game styles that ensured the original appealed to two different types of gamesplayers.

However, as far as platform blasters go there is nothing wrong with *Actraiser 2*. It's beautiful to look at and listen to, well programmed, slick and playable, with a challenge setting that is perfect. If you like fast-paced action games in the mould of *Skyblazer*, you'll love this, but it doesn't stand out as much as the original game.

RYAN



I first saw this ages ago on import. Since then it has aged like a Hollywood bimbo who has had so much silicon pumped inside you'd hardly notice that despite her sexy appearance, she was in fact a 50 year old hag! The lavish exterior of *Actraiser 2* is a fabulous picture of stunning sprites coupled with lavish amounts of colour. In fact it looks so good you scarcely notice how old it plays. Why do our software houses always wait so long to release the decent import titles? A year ago this would have been excellent. But now it is merely good!





PRODUCER
UBI SOFT
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PRICE
£49.99

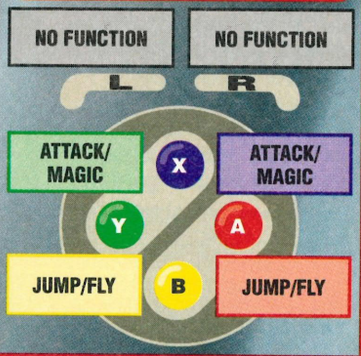
RELEASED
OUT NOW

GAME TYPE
PLATFORM HACK-'EM-UP

CART SIZE
12MBit

FEATURES
PASSWORDS

CONTROLS



RATINGS

GRAPHICS	91
SOUND	88
GAMEPLAY	85
LONGEVITY	77

OVERALL

82



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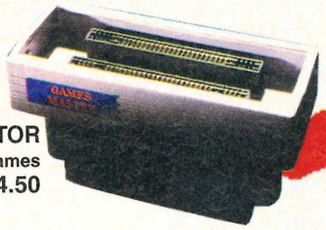


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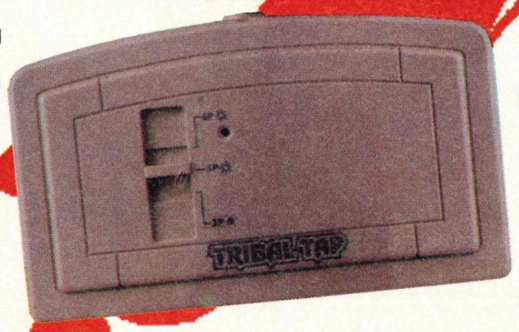
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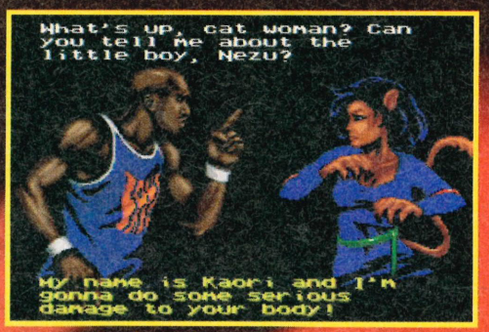
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SHAQ-FU



△ Coo, what devastating repartee! Sticks and stones may bwwwwweak my bones!

Attack the Shaq!



RYAN

When I first heard about this game I thought it was an April fool joke. Trouble is, it wasn't April and nobody was laughing. But it wasn't until I ventured up to Ocean's Mancunian offices and saw the game up and running that the harsh reality dawned on me.

Alas it is true (cringe). Some suit discovered that basketball's newest and biggest superstar is a black belt in the martial arts. Before you could say "Wait, that's a crap idea!" the seven-foot baldy was digitised and kicking-ass in his very own beat-'em-up.

Shaq-Fu, featuring Shaquille O' Neal, is a basic, unremarkable, bog-standard beat-'em-up. In fact from the moment you turn it on and are overwhelmed by a sad Bruce Lee-style "Hoyaaaaa" sample, you know you're in for a ropey experience.

The game features three different modes. Duel, is a basic two player game. Story is the full game, and Tournament pits two players each using four characters against each other, a bit like the *MKII* group battle cheat.

Getting back to the story mode, this is almost worth buying the game for on its own – not! Whilst dossing around downtown Tokyo before the big charity game (I do a lot of work for chaaarity, mate), Shaq stumbles upon an old Kung-Fu dojo and decides to go inside – big mistake.

Inside Shaq meets a venerable old master (senile old git) who mistakes him for a great warrior from the stars and promptly bundles the Shaqmeister through a mysterious time portal. Here, in the second dimension, Shaq must battle his way past six deadly adversaries and rescue a young boy named Nezu before it's too late. What will happen to Nezu is unclear, but it's obviously pretty nasty.

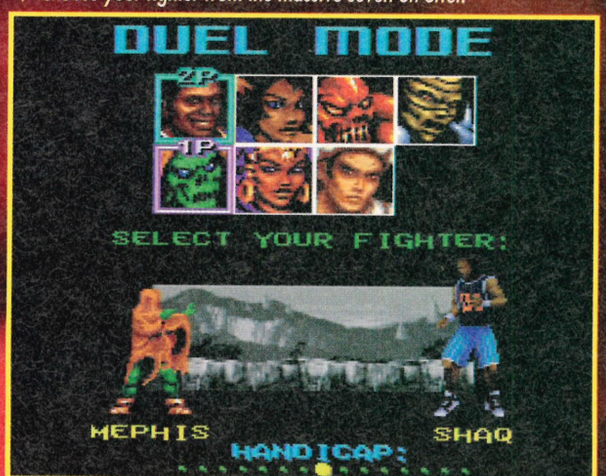
You have the freedom to wander around the landscape and choose the order of the battles, although several have to be cleared before you can go on to fight the next lot.

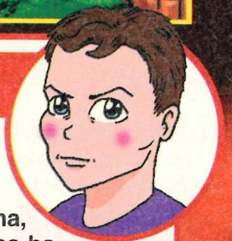






▽ Choose your fighter from the massive seven on offer.





DAMIAN

Ha-ha, ha-ha, ha-ha,

ANDY



In the manner of a High Court judge, I asked "Who is Shaq?" I was duly informed that he is a 17-foot tall Pepsi-swilling American gentleman with a head that closely resembles the basketballs he throws around for a living. So what better game to showcase his talents than a... beat-'em-up? In which our Shaqquers takes on a load of magical mutants in a parallel dimension? Reality check, guys – stop putting those aspirins in your cola! It's a pretty mediocre beat-'em-up into the bargain; I reached the final boss on my first go by doing a load of flying kicks and hammering the buttons at random. *MKII* this isn't. Though nicely animated, the sprites are incredibly small, and the Shaq you guide around a map between levels looks as if he's escaped from *Lemmings*! Stick to basketball, Shaq – *Shaq-Fu* definitely fails the Pepsi challenge.



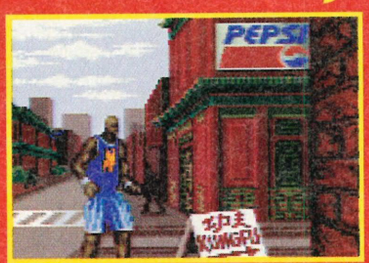
▷ *She's dying for a slash.*

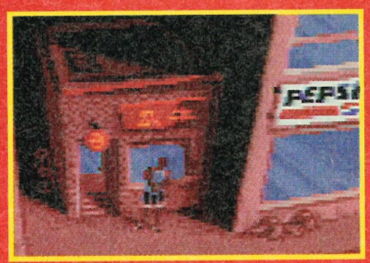


△ *Shaq's head is magically transformed into a pawnbroker's sign.*

THIRSTY, MICHAEL?

Shaq is well-known for his connections with a certain soft drink manufacturer. Can you spot the almost subliminal advertising?







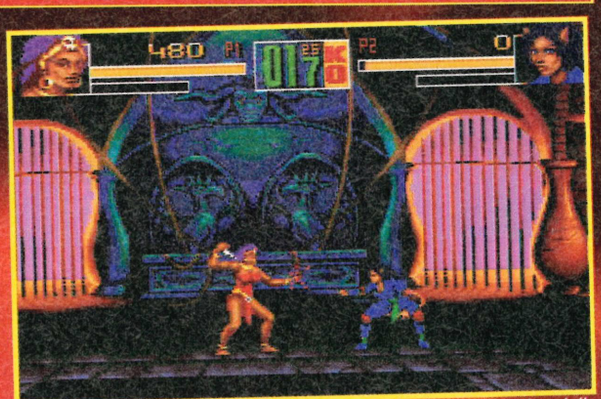
Shaq-Fu certainly looks the part, with detailed sprites that move smoothly and loads of convincing moves. However, the crappy cartoon style story screens between each match are a total waste of time, and the dialogue that accompanies them is almost as wooden as the Kinder Surprise adverts!

Shaq-Fu would probably be a decent enough game if it wasn't for the fact that the controls are so slow and unresponsive. This makes stringing effective combos together – surely the most important aspect of any beat-'em-up – impossible!

Jumping is a particular problem as well. If someone shoots off a projectile attack the chances of jumping out of the way in time are a big fat zero. Meaning that you can be pinned to the wall by an over-enthusiastic opponent without any chance of escaping.

It's not all bad though. Each character moves quickly and has loads of hidden moves, and I liked the way you can land two blows with flying kicks while you are still in the air. This is a feature that should have been in *SSFII*.

However, with only a poxy seven fighters,

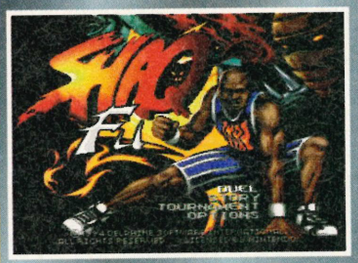


△ *In a moment of desperation, the jungle lass pulls out a voodoo doll.*

Shaq-Fu doesn't stand a hope in hell of competing with the likes of *MKII* and *SSFII* in the longevity stakes.

It took me about 20 minutes to complete the one player mode and the slow controls totally dogged my enjoyment in the other game modes.

Unless he's dunking winners for the Orlando Magic in *NBA Live '95* I don't ever want to see Shaq on the Super NES again!



PRODUCER
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PRICE
£54.99

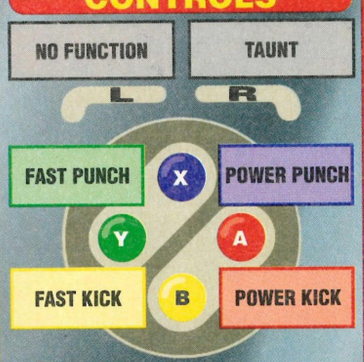
RELEASED
NOVEMBER '94

GAME TYPE
BEAT-'EM-UP

CART SIZE
16MBit

FEATURES
NONE

CONTROLS



RATINGS

GRAPHICS	79
SOUND	76
GAMEPLAY	63
LONGEVITY	50

OVERALL

57

C2 JUDGEMENT CLAY

Go ahead – bake my clay!

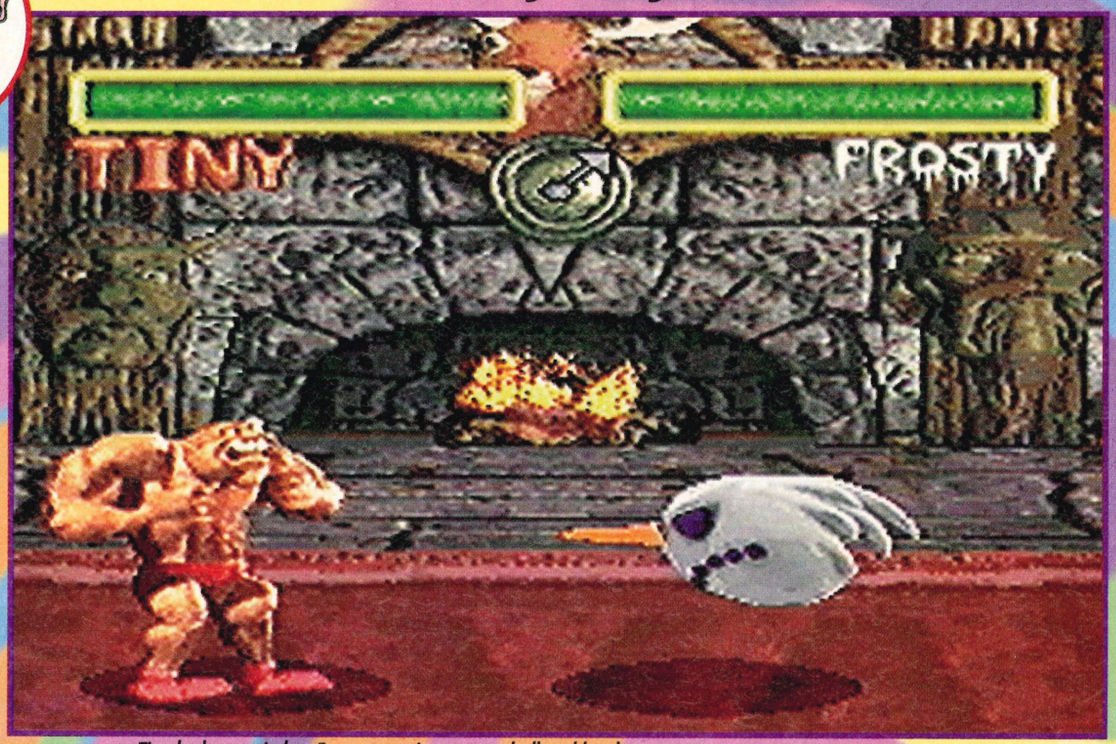


KEITH

After a successful import release followed by the official PAL version this year, the incredibly strange *Clayfighter* managed to gain quite a following; impressing journalists and consumers alike with its flowing 'claymation' animation techniques and brilliant sampled effects. Now the sequel is here with more of the same, so what can be made from this clay?

Out of the eight characters on offer, three will seem very familiar. For some reason the programmers have decided to reinstate probably the most unpopular of all the characters: Frosty, Blob and Tiny. Everyone knows that Blue Suede Goo was the best.

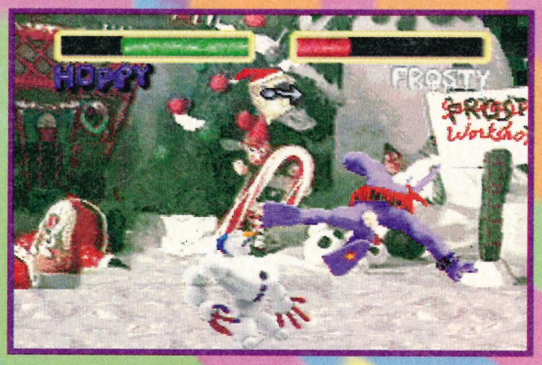
The five new faces: Nana, Octo, Goo Goo, Hoppy and Kangoo follow the *Clayfighter* tradition of having strong personalities that vary enough from character to character to create a fine blend of fighting styles.



△ *Tiny looks worried as Frosty turns into a snowball and hurtles at high speed towards him.*



△ *Talk about having a gap in your teeth!*



If ripping popular entertainment media apart was the basis of a good beat-'em-up then *C2* would undoubtedly have two barrels pointing at the heads of Ken, Ryu, Raiden and of all people, Arnie himself. There are plenty of in-jokes and copious Mickey-taking of traditional film styles and effects, not least in the intro sequence!

Luckily the more capable beat-'em-ups such as *SSF II* and *Mortal Kombat II* need not worry, as *C2's* gameplay is not in the same class.

The animation, which seemed so

GOO GOO GADGET!



BLOB
Blob can change into a lot of shapes. Hammers, boots and saws are all used.



FROSTY
This icy chap changes himself into a snowball to cool off his opponents.



GOOGOO
Baby vomit and rattles can sort out anyone that doesn't like you sucking your thumb!



HOPPY
This psycho bunny hurls carrots like grenades. His flying kicks are powerful also.



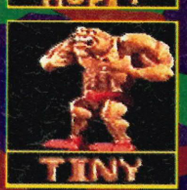
KANGOO
Likes nothing better than punching his enemy's lights out. True fists of fury!



NANA
One of the best. Throws bananas that could take the head off an elephant.



OCTO
Attack from all angles with this guy, and his star spin is a great finishing off move.



TINY
Boo, get him off! This guy lumbers around like a lost sumo and he has no decent specials.



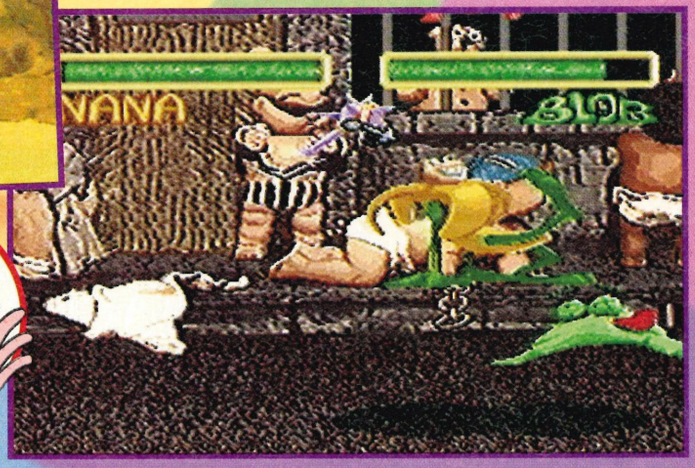
△ *Goo Goo tries a long range attack by throwing up over Blob.*



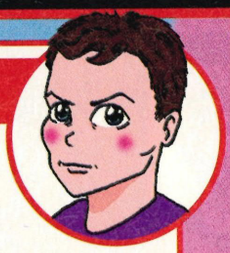
◁ *It's no use hiding behind that flower, baby will track you down.*

▽ *The sands of time are running out for Frosty. Melt, you freak, melt!*





DAMIAN



Clayfighter was really a one shot fluke, and *C2* proves it. There is now no originality and the 'claymation' techniques are old hat. True the graphics look good, but they are awkwardly animated and none of the new characters are as interesting as the first bunch. What we have here is a sad collection of multi-limbed, brightly coloured combatants who lack the spark of Blue Suede Goo or Bonker. Also, most of the speech is now muffled and unrecognisable, and the backgrounds seem to have been thrown in at the last minute because they are drab and boring to look at. *ClayFighter* will be remembered as the Super NES' most bizarre beat-'em-up. *C2*, I'd rather forget.

special in the original now appears to lack frames, resulting in jerky movements and a loss of realism. Special moves such as Nana's rising kick and Octo's roll are easy to pull off, but look clumsy, and they don't have the crushing force of something like Ken's Dragon Punch or Liu Kang's flying bicycle kick. At least there are more moves to master than in the first game and this adds to the longevity.

It's the sound, surprisingly, that keeps the whole game together. Sampled speech is thrown at you from all directions. From the front end through to the cries of "Wow" and "Stunning" as you pull off spectacular specials and combinations. The only thing missing is a rocking soundtrack to accompany the action.

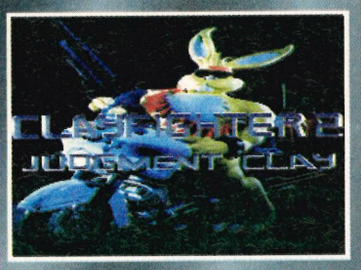
Flashy gimmicks like the sound increase the overall feel of *C2*, but you've got to have longevity and challenge as well. A factor that is missing here because I completed the game with consummate ease in just one afternoon. However, do remember that the two player and tournament options offer hours of play and even the mighty *SFII* suffered from the same complaint.

In the final analysis *C2* doesn't have the long term draw of *SSFII* or *MK II*, and certainly doesn't ask much of you when it comes to tactics and strategy. It's an amusing beat-'em-up, a well programmed game, but not top class. Worth a look if you are tuned into the zany humour of the original.

RYAN



The original *Clayfighter* didn't really stretch the beat-'em-up format to any great lengths. You played it, laughed a little, and then tossed it aside in favour of *SSFII* or *MKII*. But it has returned in stunning fashion with a sequel that is chock-a-block with amusing new characters and a fresh new challenge. I was a bit miffed to discover that the side-splitting Elvis impersonator has been omitted in favour of past bores such as Tiny, and that the general attack patterns still consist of little more than hacking away at the buttons in a random fashion. If you liked the original then get this, but otherwise it's best to stick with what you know.





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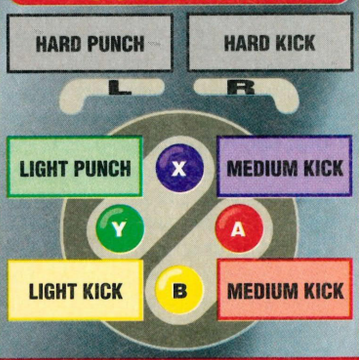
RELEASED
JANUARY '95

GAME TYPE
BEAT-'EM-UP

CART SIZE
24MBit

FEATURES
NONE

CONTROLS



RATINGS

GRAPHICS	79
SOUND	90
GAMEPLAY	82
LONGEVITY	80

OVERALL

79



△ *The ghosts spell out the deadly situation that confronts the party as they head towards the land of the dead – on the hell express!*

FINAL F

GAMER GOLD

Fanatical fantasy fireworks!



KEITH

Depending on what side of the globe your Super NES is sat on, this will be known as *Final Fantasy III* or *Final Fantasy VI*. The Japanese you see, have this obsession with RPGs featuring awkward battle sequences followed by hours of mindless maze exploration, so they've churned out six of them.

The Americans however seem to be a bit more restrained when it comes to sending a *Final Fantasy* product out into the shops, and so the sixth in Japan is only the third in the States. But take my word for it, this is an enormous improvement. No wonder it has earned a release in the good old US of A.

Gone are the tiny, featureless sprites and boring blocky overhead backgrounds that made the previous games such a misery to play. Instead we are treated to highly detailed characters, bubbling with personality and expressions, on a quest packed with breath-taking landscapes along the lines of *Illusion of Gaia*. And a plot so complex and involving it could be made into a ten part Hollywood mini-series.

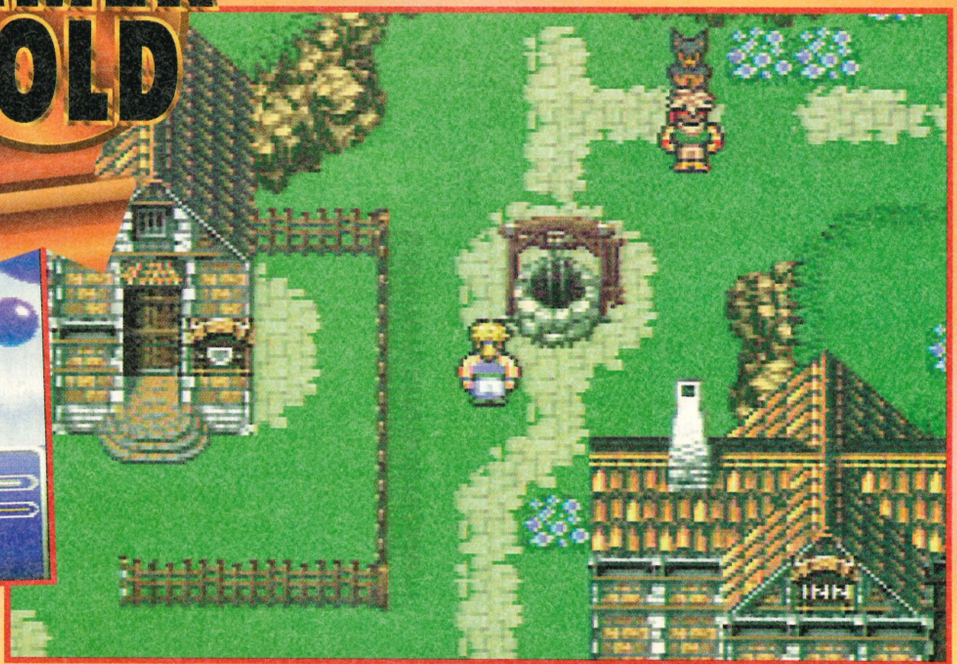
The story centres on a young woman who has somehow been blessed with the power of magic. This you may think is no big deal considering the amount of fireballs being thrown around in most RPGs. However, this is a world that uses machines and gunpowder for war, and where magic is extinct.

The Empire (bad guys), after hearing of this awesome ability, decide to capture the woman and use

▽ *Most of the attacks and spells are a lot more spectacular than in previous games, as you can see.*



▷ *Most RPGs have village scenes such as this one, but not many have graphics this detailed. And what on earth is down that well?*

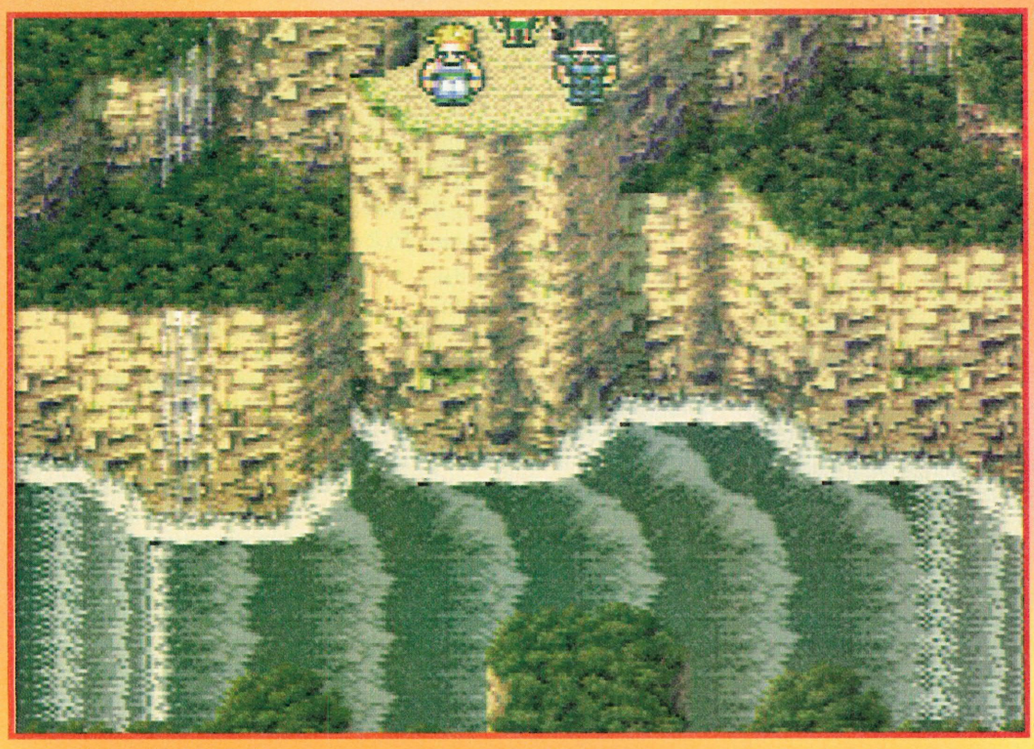


▽ *Your party can explore the massive world in smooth Mode 7 sections.*

▷ *You can guarantee there will be strange looking monsters to fight, how about these!*



FANTASY III



her powers to destroy what they can and rule the world. She of course has other ideas, and flees...

The thing about *Final Fantasy III* though, is the way your exploits aren't confined to the just one woman. The whole game wanders in and out of the lives of about 20 characters strewn around the world, as they play their part in striving to bring down the Empire.

For example, at one point while battling against some rapids on a small raft, one of the characters is thrown overboard; giving you the option to either stay with the raft or switch to the unlucky victim and discover what fate has befallen him.

It's aspects such as this, and the almost platform-like ghost train section which involves you in a desperate attempt to stop the train before it reaches 'the other side', that gives *Final Fantasy III* its instant appeal and originality.

Even exploring the world map on a Chocobo bird (a strange chicken that runs fast) is an experience in itself as the Mode

◁ *To jump or not? That's the question. The rapids have already caused some problems, so is it worth risking again?*



▷ *All the statistics, weapons, items etc should keep devout RPG fans happy.*

△ *If you want a quick ride across the world then find a Chocobo stable.*

ANDY



RPGs on the Super NES just keep getting better and better, and fans of the genre are now becoming spolit for choice. Joining the ever-growing list is *Final Fantasy III*, which goes against the grain by not having the word "of" in the middle of its title, but more than makes up for this gross oversight by going completely overboard on plot depth as you switch between the various characters whose actions affect the story. The only real flaw is a common failing of Squaresoft's games, namely the combat system, which still uses an old-fashioned rounds system rather than the real-time action of *Zelda* and *Mana*. If you can put up with this, you'll be in for a lot of late nights – it's a genuine epic!

7 world zooms by. There's also an underwater Mode 7 section that sees you steering through narrow trenches on the ocean floor. The options are endless.

At long last you're not stuck with the standard overhead view, plodding through dozens of identical caves searching for that elusive elixir stashed in the corner of nowhereland, while monsters mysteriously appear from thin air.

There are still caves in the game of course, but what the programmers have done in these maze-like sections is make them smaller and reduce the amount of puzzles so that you can get onto the next part of the story as quickly as possible.

A perfect alteration to make if you want more action, but admittedly a change that original fans of the series might look at somewhat scornfully. I welcomed it, though. This is an adventure to test the very foundations of *Zelda III*.

But there's one thing about the *Final Fantasy* series of games that has always bored me to tears and that's the fight scenes. The way you choose Attack, Defend, Spell, and all the other options is fiddly and always seems a bit detatched. Charging into battle is a bit like looking out of a window at the action, but not really taking part at all.

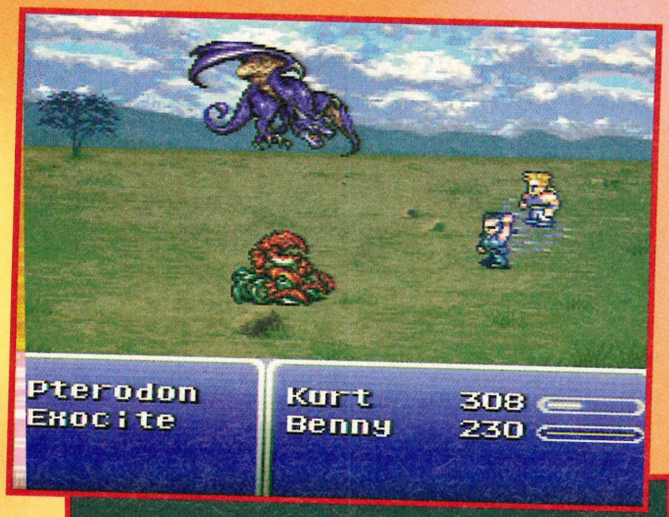


△ *Isn't that Meryl Streep in The River Wild? No, Meryl Streep's hair isn't green!*



The format hasn't changed much here, except the addition of a few new options like surrounding your enemies, plus a couple more speech bubbles of rage from your opponents. My advice here is prepare yourself for some long fights and a huge amount of menu flicking to get the right results. Definitely NOT the most friendly of interfaces.

The sheer size of *Final Fantasy III* will astound you. The instruction manual gleefully boasts over 50 hours of gameplay and to be honest that's minimum. But its size also throws up some problems. Later on in the game I found the save points are so far apart it can take up to an hour of playing before you reach the next safe haven. Let's hope you don't have a power cut.



RYAN



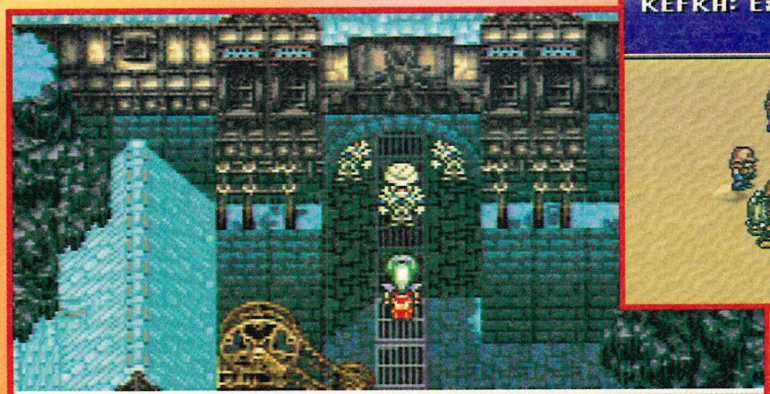
Okay so I was wrong, I admit I was wrong and I'm sooooo sorry! I initially thought that this game was a bag o' sh***, mainly because I like RPG's where you can roam around and fight creatures WITHOUT having to switch to some crappy combat screen and take it in turns to biff each other. But hey... just wait one minute, further play revealed this game to be a total work of art. Why? Because it is so damn big, the fact that the story is absolutely exquisite, and also because it combines so many different gaming styles. Any game that can get me down off my high horse and openly admit that I was wrong to prejudge it is worthy of a look! Just wait until you get to grips with those ultra combat moves, then you'll really see what gold is!



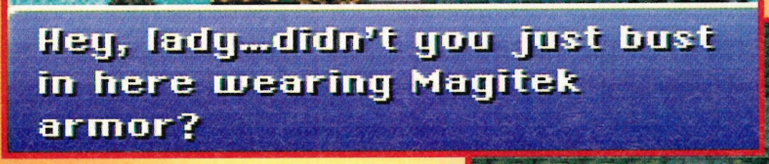
◁ *No magic in sight here, just all-out* Battletech-type killing machines off to slaughter some innocent bystanders.

▽ *One of the Empire's leading generals barks out the orders as he goes on the rampage.*





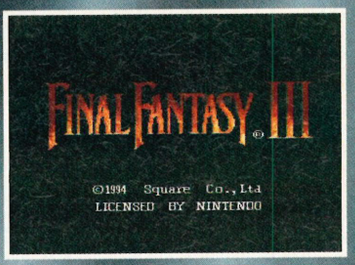
▽ *Climb aboard the ship for a quick passage across the ocean to meet with your friends.*





However, any minor drawbacks cannot alter the fact that this break from tradition for the *Final Fantasy* series and Squaresoft have produced the best game so far. *Final Fantasy III* is an absolutely epic adventure and anybody who begins this game must be aware that they are undertaking an enormous task – days will literally disappear.

This is my favourite RPG of the year and I recommend it to anyone who wants a taste of real adventure. Totally mind-blowing!





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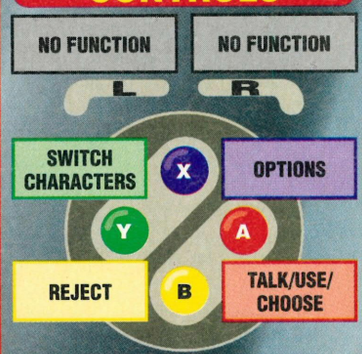
RELEASED
US IMPORT

GAME TYPE
RPG

CART SIZE
24MBit

FEATURES
BATTERY SAVE

CONTROLS



RATINGS

GRAPHICS	92
SOUND	93
GAMEPLAY	94
LONGEVITY	95

OVERALL

93



ANDY

Space: the final frontier. These are the voyages of... um... some simulated ships full of kids you've never heard of. Sad but true – in *ST:SA*, Kirk and his cronies take a back seat, and you get to fill the velour jerseys of such luminaries as Darryl Comstock and Lisa Moroney (what heroic names!) as they work through the many trials of Starfleet Academy.

Taking a different approach from other recent *Star Trek* games like *Future's Past*, *ST:SA* drops the adventuring side of things in favour of pure action. In short, it's a shoot-'em-up. Eat phaser, Klingon filth!



△ *Well, it can be said in all honesty that there are Klingons on the starboard bow! (I can't believe I really wrote that...)*

STAR TREK
STARFLEET ACADEMY

Beam me up... Comstock?!?



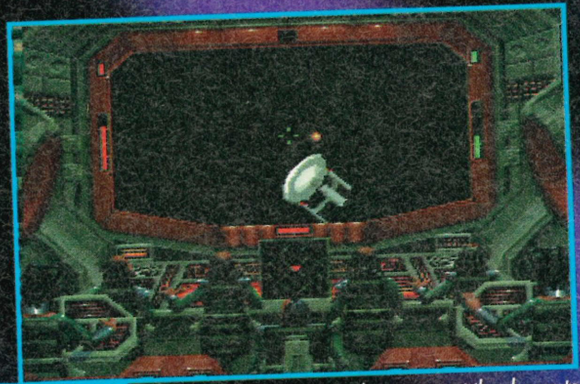
The game breaks down into three parts. Firstly, there is the Academy game itself, where you create a cadet (well, you pick 'n' mix from a few names) and guide them through a rather meagre 21 simulated missions towards graduation.

The Combat Simulator lets you take part in several battles from the TV series and films, and finally, there is the two player Battle mode where you choose from a variety of ships (Federation, Klingon and Romulan) and take on a friend in head-to-head combat.

The first thing you notice once in the bridge of your ship of the day is an unnerving similarity to *Elite*. The scanner works in a similar way, the stars whip past in the same unscientific manner,

▽ *The final battle from Star Trek VI. The vague grey splodge at the top of the screen is a cloaked Bird of Prey.*





△ *In the combat simulator, you get the chance to play the bad guys. Burn those Federation do-gooders!*

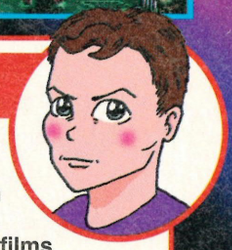
▷ *Regular Star Trek fat moustachioed git Harry Mudd runs into trouble with a made-up alien race.*



and all the ships loop and twirl through the void like spaceborne Spitfires.

Still, they look like their TV and movie counterparts, and considering the lack of an FX chip, the filled and light-sourced polygon graphics manage to move at quite a clip.

The missions generally follow the same format: go to star system X, approach planet Y, get attacked by ship from race Z and blow it to F. Occasionally, combat can be avoided through use of simplistic multiple-



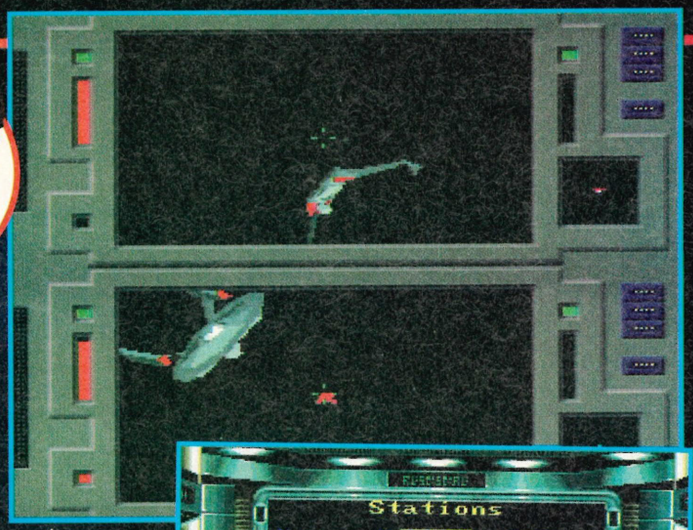
DAMIAN

Once again a *Star Trek* game proves to be nothing more than spoon-fed adventure, loosely based on the films and TV show. Why can't a software company produce a *Star Trek* game that is fundamentally like *Elite*? Where you can go anywhere at any time, set your own agenda (within the central mission) and face hundreds of different missions in any order. The graphics in *ST: SA* are good, with special praise going to the shaded polygon ships, but they do move fairly slowly and the rest of the in-game visuals are only average. The whole concept of *Star Trek* is to explore new worlds, but this game is far too restricted and mollycoddling. The best yet, but still poor.

KEITH



Of all the *Star Trek* games I've come across, this is the one that gets closest to the real feel of the series and films. Virtually every race, spaceship and civilisation from the show can be found in the game somewhere, along with some well known action sequences from the films. *Starfleet Academy* is also surprisingly fast considering there's no FX chip in sight, and so this makes the space battles a memorable experience. Quite a commendable programming feat. The two player mode however is a different story. The standard accelerate, decelerate and shoot tactics are just too basic to enjoy. As a one player game though, it's the best for *Star Trek* fans so far.

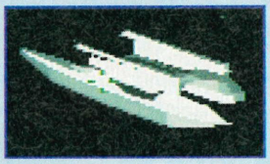


△ *The two player mode finally lets you get behind the wheel of a Bird of Prey!*



▷ *The engines cannae take it! Och! Wibble!*

SHIP SHAPE



OBERTH CLASS

Your basic ship. First seen in *Star Trek III*, where it got blown up. Since then, it has appeared a lot in *TNG*, where it usually gets blown up.

MIRANDA CLASS



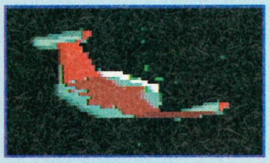
First appeared in *Star Trek II*, where it – hey! – got blown up. Many appearances in *TNG*, often accompanied by a fireball and "boom!" sound.



CONSTITUTION CLASS

Come on, I don't need to tell you what this is. There are lost tribes in the depths of the Amazon basin who can recognise this ship.

ROMULAN BIRD OF PREY



You can always tell when a ship's a bit rubbish – the owners paint a large bird on it. A bit like a space-age Trans Am, really.



KLINGON BIRD OF PREY

This is more like it – one of the most seriously cool ships ever to appear in *Star Trek*. Comes with cloaking device and CD multiplayer.

K'T'INGA CLASS



The cry uttered by one of Lenny Henry's characters in TISWAS, and also the backbone of the Klingon fleet.

choice diplomacy (Option A: Let's talk peacefully about this. Option B: Die, alien scum!), but usually it's an "us-or-them" situation.

Unfortunately, once you know the proper sequence of bridge commands – ie red alert, power to shields, hail enemy ship, scan area, poise thumb over fire button – it invariably ends up as an "us" situation!

This is my main complaint about *ST:SA*; it suffers from the usual Super NES problem of being too easy. If I hadn't kept taking time out to play *Alien vs Predator* on the Jag, I could have completed all 21 missions, including the infamous Kobayashi Maru final challenge, in a single day.

The Combat Simulator scenarios don't last too long either, even though they're a lot tougher than the Academy scenarios. Two player mode is fun, but won't keep dragging you back for more.

Like the other *Star Trek* games, *Starfleet Academy* is too limited in scope. It has got the atmosphere right, but not the challenge. I'm still waiting for a *Star Trek* game that does the show justice. Maybe Ultra 64 will boldly go where no machine has gone before?



△ *Uh-oh. If you've seen Star Trek II, you'll know this is bad news.*



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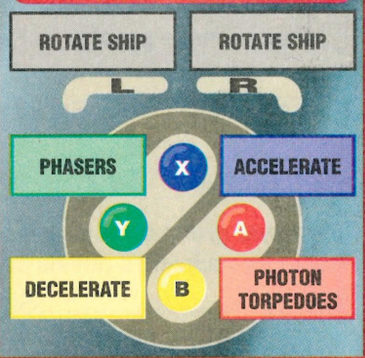
RELEASED
JANUARY '95

GAME TYPE
SHOOT-'EM-UP

CART SIZE
8MBit

FEATURES
PASSWORDS

CONTROLS



RATINGS

GRAPHICS	78
SOUND	69
GAMEPLAY	80
LONGEVITY	62

OVERALL

78

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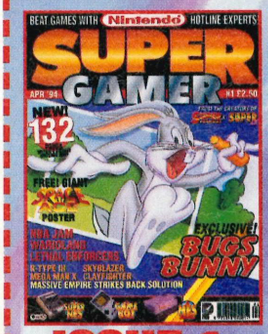
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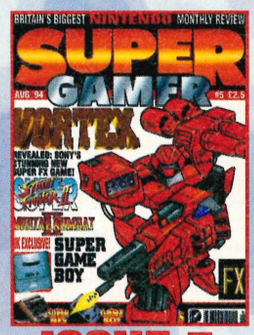
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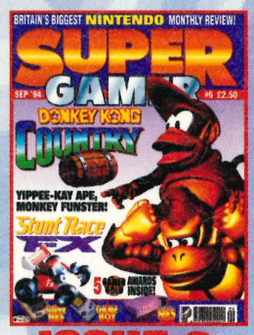
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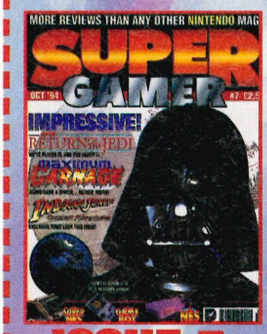
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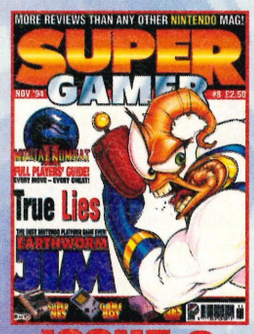
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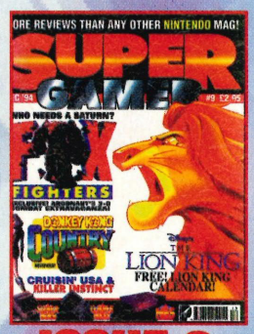
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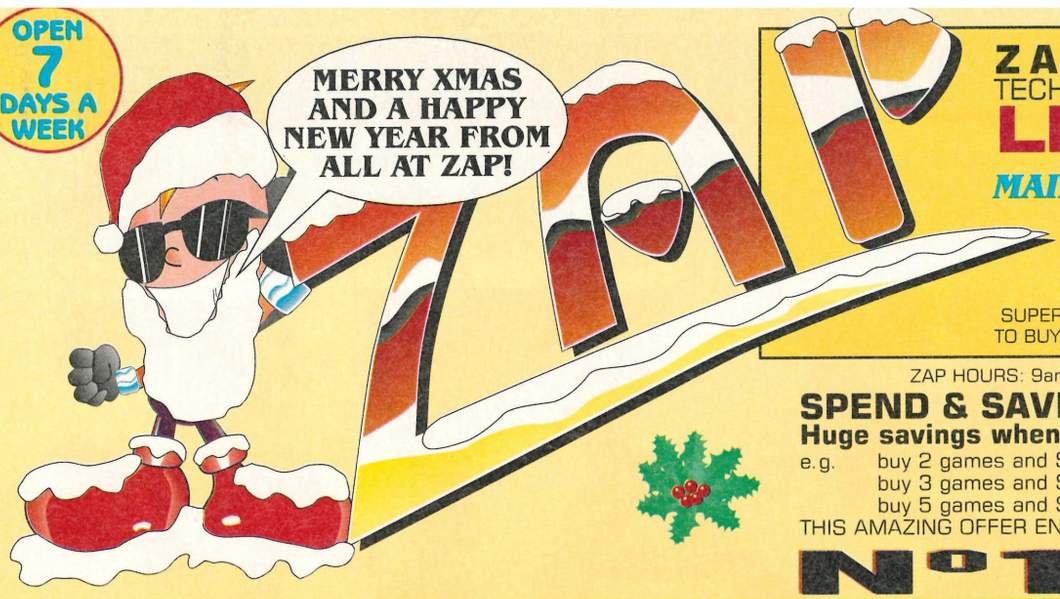


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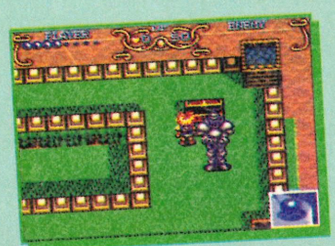
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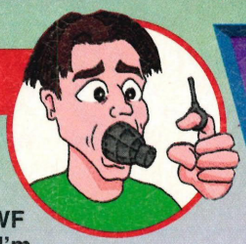
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WWF RAW

KEITH

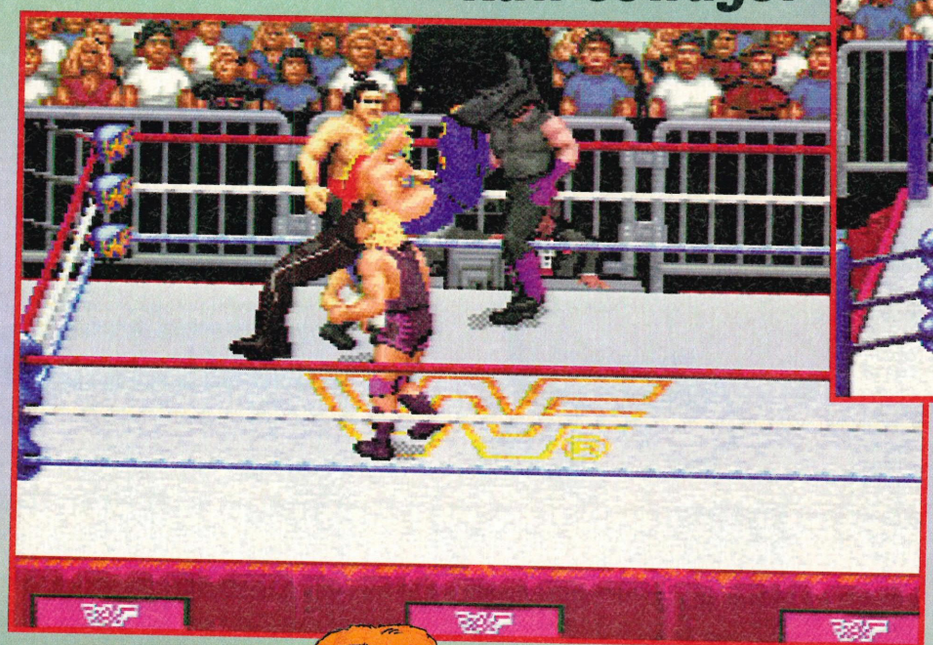


The torture continues. The sooner somebody decommissions WWF the better as far as I'm concerned. Maybe then these dire games will stop being released.

I realise there are a lot of poor disillusioned people out there who actually like the 'sport', but to enjoy *WWF Raw* will take someone of unrivalled sadness.

There is nothing mildly interesting about this game. Oh sure you get 12 different wrestlers and six fight options, but if you think this means variety in the gameplay you'd be horribly mistaken.

Raw sewage!





△ *The ref has a tough time deciding the winner of the Twister competition!*

The One-on-One is basically what it says, a head-to-head battle with a friend or the computer. Tag team is more of the same but with two against two, and the other options all seem to be based around getting as many fighters as possible in the ring (up to four can participate using a multi-tap); poncing around, grunting a lot and pretending to hurt each other.

At one point, I started thinking *WWF RAW* might actually be quite a good laugh, especially in multi-player mode, but how wrong could I be? In order to perform a move you must grab an opponent and then simply hammer the button as fast as you can. Not much skill called for there, and not really what I'd call enjoyment. I've come to the conclusion that the only people able to play *WWF Raw* will be those with strong wrists. Ahem.

With ten skills levels, the challenge is assured, but many people will simply stick it on the easiest and beat the sorry selection of ham actors straight away. I have to say though, I was more intimidated by the thought of the game on level ten, than I was by

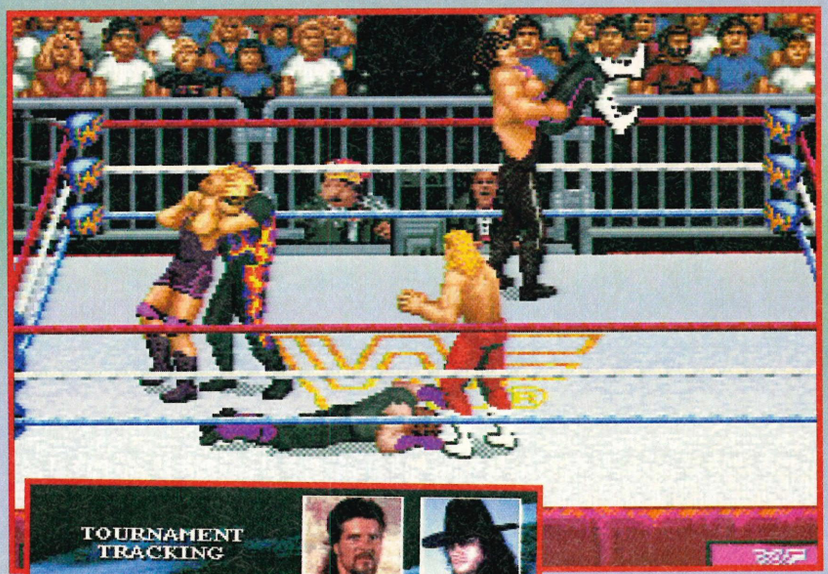
△ *Please, somebody give him a hand taking his boots off.*

RYAN

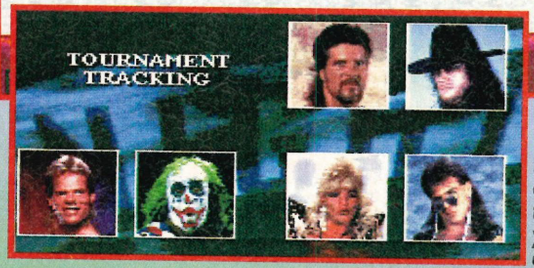


This game isn't THAT bad. In fact, as wrestling games go I think it conveys the sport quite well. Although granted it is a totally pointless sport in the first place! *WWF Raw* features a whole host of characters from the world of WWF, including Luna Vachon who was apparently banned from appearing at Wembly because the council didn't savour the thought of a woman competing with the big boys! Getting back to the game, *WWF Raw* lacks the highly exaggerated feel of *Muscle Bomber*, and relys purely on standard wrestling moves which are about as interesting as China Black! Not bad, but too much like the others to be a must buy.





◁ *Could you lick my boots for me while I make sure my hair's OK?*



◁ *Enter the tournament and try not to laugh at your opponents.*

the pathetic clown character who looks like he's been chucked out of the circus for child molesting.

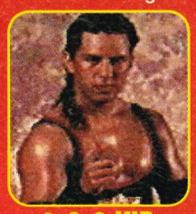
Looking at *WWF Raw* objectively, it will no doubt tickle the fancy of wrestling fans, but anyone else should steer clear. Unlike *NBA Jam* which converts even non-basketball fans with its winning playability, you'd better have a good excuse to be caught playing WWF *Raw*.

Yes, the options are plentiful, with you being able to set the falls, submissions and brawls, as well as a good tournament mode, but the real problem is that each wrestler is essentially the same. The only thing that is vastly different about each combatant are the special moves such as the Tombstone (Undertaker), Banzai Drop (Yokozuna) and the Luna Eclipse (Luna Vachon). These are both flamboyant and hilarious to watch, but that is no reason to buy the game. You can have more fun watching Donkey Kong and Diddy fighting at the end of *DKC*!

Acclaim have gone too far with this one and I can't see how anyone can find any lasting enjoyment in *WWF Raw*.

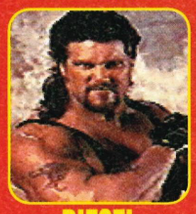
BIG GIRLS' BLOUSES

Now showing in a theatre near you, WWF presents Cinderella starring Luna Vachon, with the ugly sisters being played by those talented actors the Hart brothers and featuring Yokozuna as Prince Charming.


1-2-3 KID


BAM BAM BIGELOW

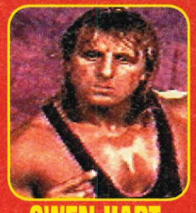

BRET HART


DIESEL


DOINK


LEX LUGER

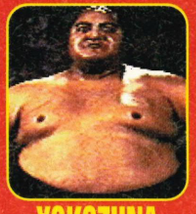

LUNA VACHON

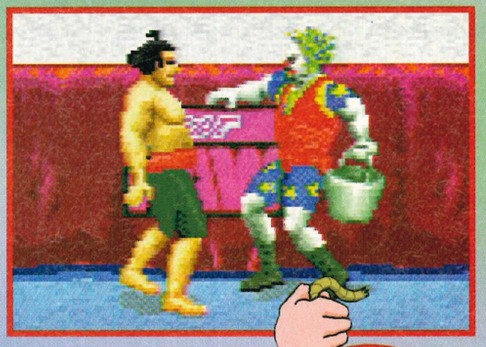

OWEN HART


RAZOR RAMON


SHAWN MICHAELS


THE UNDERTAKER

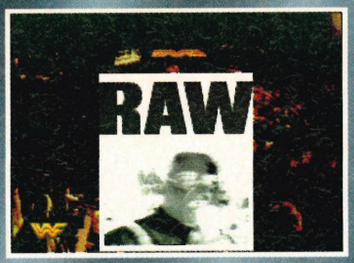

YOKOZUNA



DAMIAN



I've never liked wrestling. Who wants to watch a bunch of fat nancys wobbling around the ring and shouting stupid slogans and pretending to be hurt when they're not? This game is a mindless button bashing fiasco with little or no player participation and zero playability, even in multi-player mode. True you can perform many different moves, but none of the characters behave differently, and all the flamboyance of the 'sport' is lost with some drab graphics, badly defined and fuzzy sprites, and imprecise gameplay. After a few goes your hands ache and you don't feel as if you've accomplished anything. A dog.





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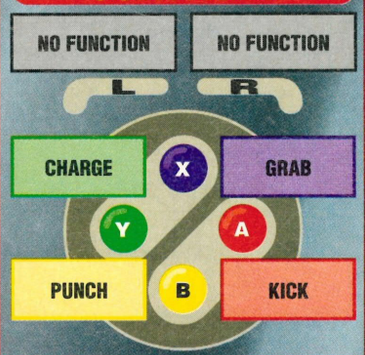
RELEASED
JANUARY '95

GAME TYPE
SPORT (?)

CART SIZE
24MBit

FEATURES
MULTI-TAP COMPATIBLE

CONTROLS



RATINGS

GRAPHICS	52
SOUND	43
GAMEPLAY	33
LONGEVITY	41

OVERALL

36

GAME BOY GALLERY

Too simple for words!



DAMIAN

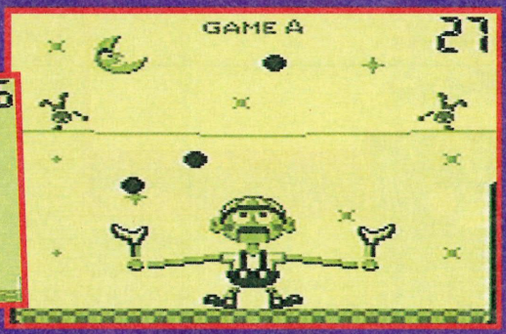
It looks crap, it sounds crap, it is crap – or is it? You see that's the deceiving thing about *GB Gallery*. Everything says "don't buy it", but once you've played it, you never want to put it down. Well, that's what I think.

This is the Game Boy equivalent of noughts and crosses. It's very simple. There are five sub-games on offer here, all have been mercilessly hacked from those annoying calculator watches from the early Eighties that all the posh kids had and made really annoying bleeping noises.



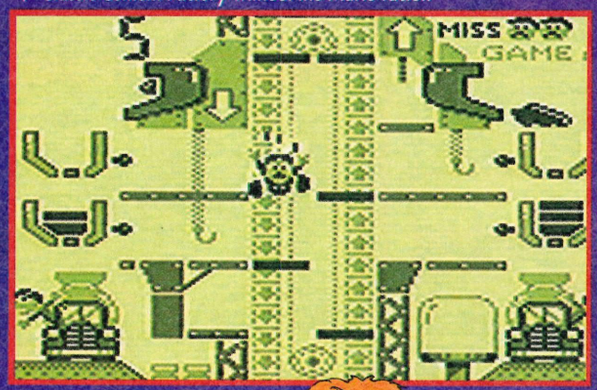
△ You see the flag, you press the pad.

▷ Learn to juggle on your Game Boy!



There's *Ball*, where you have to, er, juggle three balls and get points for every one kept in the air. But for the more intellectually challenged you can tackle *Vermin*, which sees a gawky looking man with mallets for arms, whacking small voles who threaten to eat his turnips. *Flagman* is a simple *Simon Says* type semaphore sim; requiring the player to remember complex series of flags pointed in different directions. A point for every sequence memorised.

▽ Classic Cement Factory without the Mario factor.



Finally, Nintendo have included *Manhole*, where you bridge four gaps in platforms so that the girlies above don't fall into the raw sewage, and last of all is the classic *Cement Factory*, featuring a set of cement hoppers which much be emptied into the trucks before they overload.

The latter is definitely the best of the lot, as it combines strategy and reactions perfectly. No wonder it was the highest selling Game & Watch ever made.

I have to admit that, poor though the game appears, *GB Gallery* is perfect fodder for the hand-held. When you're on the move you don't want complex RPGs or platform games where you can't see the bonuses, you need something insultingly easy that will quickly test your reactions and earn you points, but you don't mind turning off when you reach your destination.

The only real kick in the teeth is that despite the childishly simple concept, Nintendo have forgotten to add a battery save for the high scores.

GB Gallery is perfect for a few minutes diversion on the bus, and with five games all testing different parts of your brain, what more could you ask?

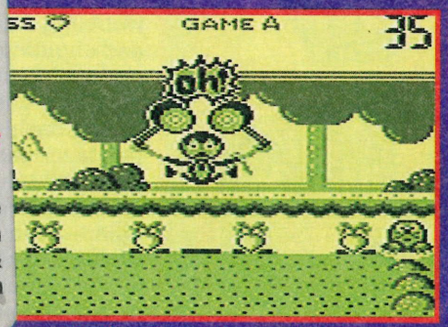


RYAN

I object strongly to this pointless compilation of worthless drivel from the past. What's the point? Do they really expect people to fork out money for this? I was starting to think that the Game Boy was actually starting to go places, but if games like this are released then what hope has it got? The graphics are naff, the sound dire, and the gameplay – ha! Pitiful at best! Speaking for myself, games should offer a lot more depth than just accumulating high scores. I mean, you play it a few times, notch up an impressive sequence of digits and then what? Game & Watches had their brief moment in time, then died, and I for one danced on their grave!

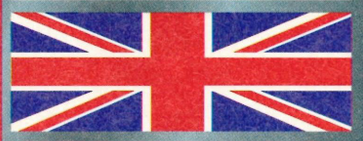


The only difference in SGB mode is an authentic Game & Watch casing in various colours.



△ Miss the vermin and you get kicked in the...





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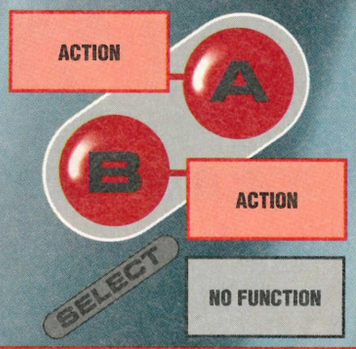
RELEASED
JANUARY '95

GAME TYPE
PUZZLE

CART SIZE
2MBit

FEATURES
NONE

CONTROLS



RATINGS

GRAPHICS	10
SOUND	25
GAMEPLAY	90
LONGEVITY	85

OVERALL

85

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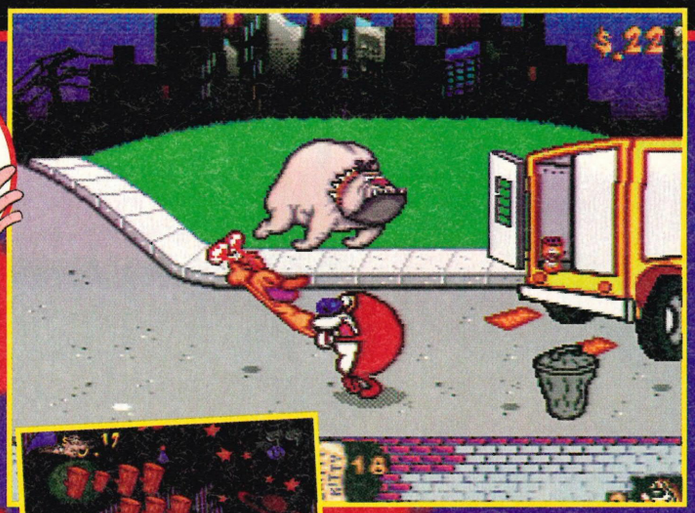
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RYAN



You are now entering the fractal zone. A world where everything normal is abnormal, and "serious" is a word that can only be found in the Oxford Dictionary of bizarre loony sayings! So, leave your sanity by the door and fasten your seat belt because we're going on a one way trip to potty land to meet two chums who're proud to be completely hat-stand!

"Happy, happy, joy, joy! You filthy swine! Hey Man! Buurrrp!" Ring any bells? Yes folks it's time once again for televisions' most grotesque dog and cat coupling to grab the gaming market by the gonads and hit us with another wacky adventure.



△ Ren gets a close-up view of Masher the bulldog!



◁ The Log Invaders sub-game is good for a laugh!

REN & STIMPY TIME WARP

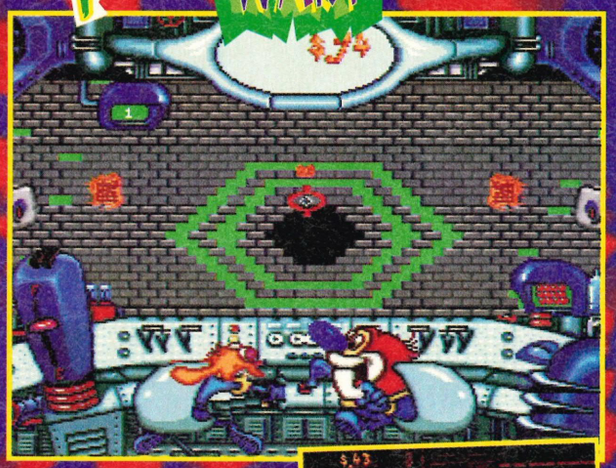
Happy happy, joy joy!

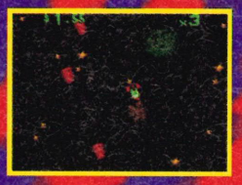
Following on from *Veediots*, *Time Warp* is basically a scrolling platform shoot/beat-'em-up affair in which Ren & Stimpy go out and about collecting Gritty Kitty tokens, 47 million of which are needed to claim a free time machine (presented by Danny Baker no doubt).

You can play as either the manic-depressed chihuahua, Ren, or the lard-assed pussycat, Stimpy. Or if you can find a suitable friend who isn't easily offended, then you can pair up as a team.

Both characters have their own moves. Ren uses his paws to biff enemies, whereas Stimpy opts for the vomit-inducing method of spewing fur balls to pick off his foes from a distance – gah!

The best thing about *Time Warp* is the way the action is constantly changing. The first few levels involve plodding around hazardous streets looking for tokens, then when you've bagged the lot (easier than it sounds!) it's off for a spin in your flashy new fuel-injected top-of-the-range time machine for some *Lawnmower Man*-type Mode 7 trickery.









As a game, *Time Warp* appears a complete mish-mash of styles randomly bunged together and tied-up with a licence. But there's more to it than that – much more.

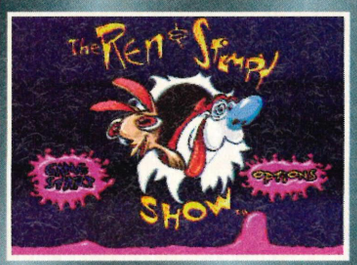
The graphics are carbon copies of the cartoon, right down to the hilarious mannerisms and animations. The sound is also faithful, with excellent samples and tunes, although I could only handle so many screams and gut-wrenching effects before the volume knob was ripped off.

If you like the cartoon then *Time Warp* is a must. It's booming with style, humour and addictiveness, but if you don't regularly tune in to their zany exploits, then this will prove to be ultimately annoying.

DAMIAN



Not a fan of the cartoons (give me *The Simpsons* and *Beavis & Butthead* any time), I came to *Ren & Stimpy* wandering what the hell the "You filthy swine" sample was all about. It made me want to throw the cart out of the window after ten minutes. The graphics in this game are really good, but there is definitely something wrong with the controls, because the angle of the screen makes it hard to judge where you are in relation to enemies. This means fighting the bosses is very tough indeed. Not bad, but not good.





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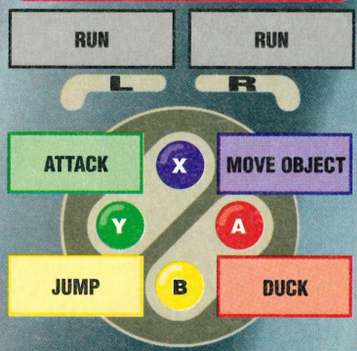
RELEASED
NOVEMBER '94

GAME TYPE
PLATFORM

CART SIZE
12MBit

FEATURES
PASSWORDS

CONTROLS



RATINGS

GRAPHICS	86
SOUND	84
GAMEPLAY	78
LONGEVITY	77

OVERALL

80

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Mr Nutz

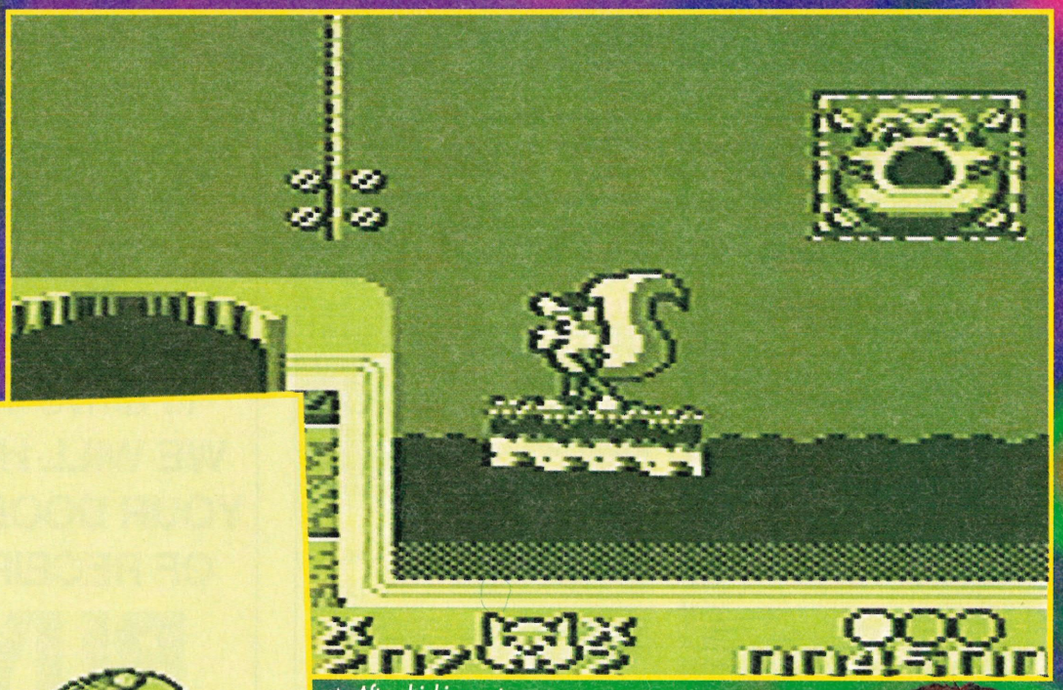
You'd be Nutz to miss it!

RYAN



Nutz is back! The clumpy trainer-clad, baseball-capped, goofy-toothed furball springs his way onto the Game Boy for a fantastic scaled-down version of last year's super duper Super NES adventure – or is it?

I have to admit that playing through the game to some extent, everything from the 16-bit version looks intact, including all of the huge landscapes and mega bosses.

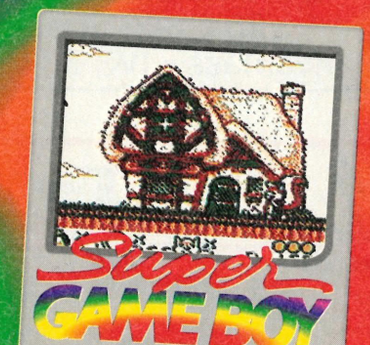


△ After drinking a strange potion, Nutz shrinks to the size of a germ and scurries down the plug-hole.



△ "Hello Mr Spider, will you be my friend?". "Heh, heh, Okay!"





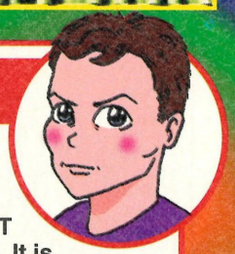
When played on the big screen, Mr Nutz is better defined and easier to play. There's no border or specific colour scheme though, which is a bummer!

Mr Nutz's mission is to save us all from an eternal winter at the hands of the evil Yeti who threatens to freeze the world over. As we all know, squirrels are supposed to hibernate in the frosty season (except for the Bournemouth, ones that is!), so although the prospect of an everlasting slumber may seem inviting to us hard working bods, for Nutz it spells the end.

Kicking off in his woodland habitat and stretching through theme parks, giant houses, and volcanoes before entering Yeti country, Nutz's journey is perilously long and will test the skills and reflexes of even the most self-proclaimed platform boffins, myself included.

Matters aren't helped by the fact that you only have three energy blobs, three lives, and three continues to reach your goal, so the essence of success rests solely on cautious and well-timed manoeuvres, as opposed to the mindless rampaging you might find in *Mega Man*, for example.

DAMIAN

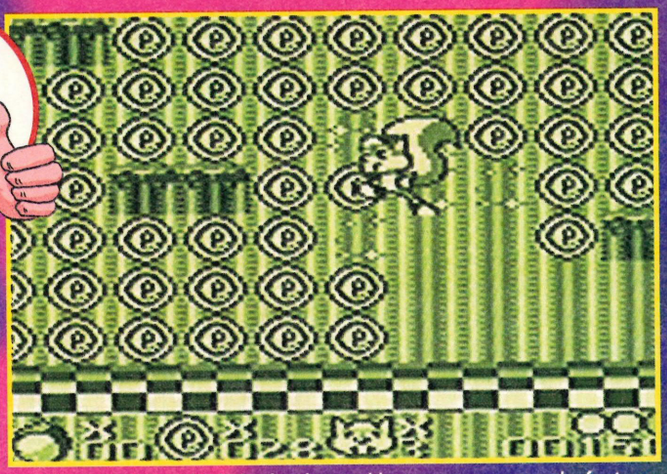


What's the fuss all about? I've said it before and I'll say it again, *Mr Nutz* is NOT an astounding game. It is simply a platform adventure with some fairly decent graphics, but NO originality and a few poxy guardians at the end of the levels. There is no Sonic sorcery, no Mario magic – just a vain attempt to claw some sales from a character who looks a bit cute and a few pretty screen shots for the back of the box. The Game Boy version is more of the same unfortunately, and I was completely bored by the end of the first level. Lacklustre graphics, a butchery of the original Super NES tunes and a central sprite who bounds around the screen as if he's on the moon. The inertia and platform collision detection is awful, often sending the poor squirrel crashing into an enemy out of control. I wouldn't recommend *Mr Nutz* to anyone.

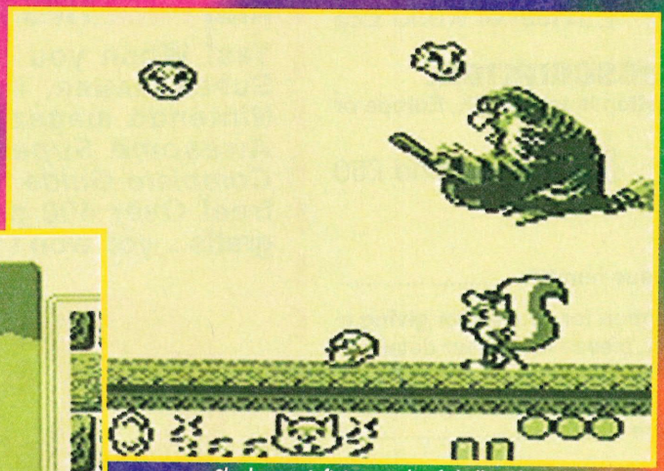
ANDY



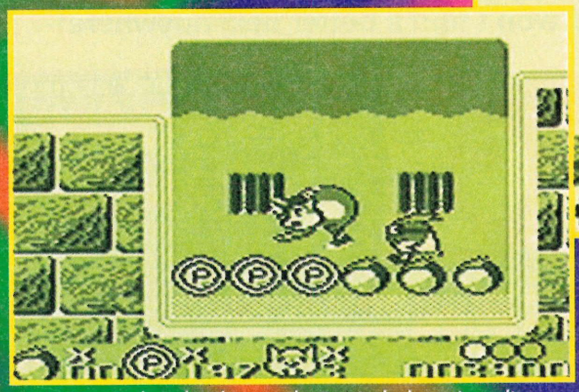
They took their time about it, but Ocean have given Game Boy owners a really smart conversion of *Mr Nutz*. It might have lost a few dozen colours and the odd background here and there, but this new version is about as close to the bushy-tailed one's Super NES outing as you could get. Even the music is the same! (Well, the *tunes* are, at least...) The playability is also retained, but so are some of the annoying little quirks, such as Nutz's habit of skidding off narrow platforms and the infuriating "back to the start you go, me laddo" continue system. That said, *Mr Nutz* is one of the better Game Boy platformers, and should keep you happy through your winter hibernation.



△ *Nutz can't believe his luck when he stumbles across a secret stash of coins.*

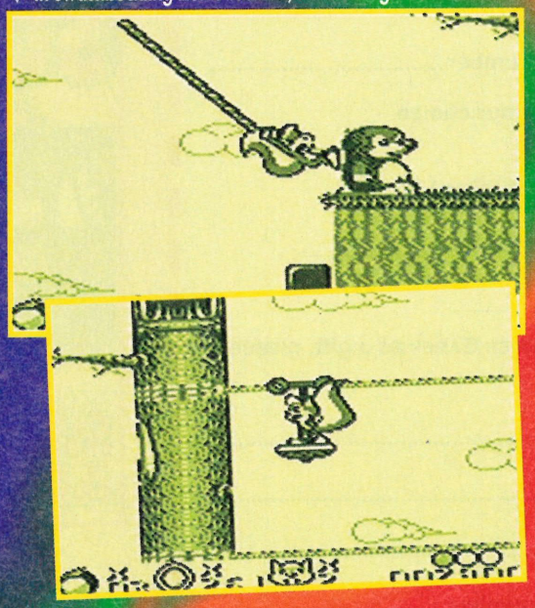


△ *She has an infinite supply of skulls to keep her ahead!*



△ *Mr Nutz is chased underwater by Fonzie the bacteria pod!*

▽ *In swashbuckling Zorro fashion, Nutz swings into action.*



An added incentive to take your time and study every crevice are gold coins. Each level contains a vast hoard and you get a percentage at the end to gauge how many you retrieved. Get 100% for an extra continue.

But first you'll have to pulverise the sinister guardians which include terrifying tarantulas, not-so-jolly giants, and kamikaze witches – you have been warned!

What with the Game Boy being portable and all that, I was glad to see a password facility, as it is more of a necessity than a bonus in this game because of its sheer size.

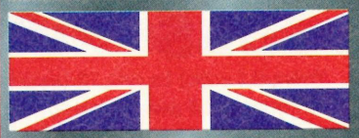
Each section can take hours to fully explore and master and the thought of starting over every time you switch on would be a major turn off. The way you have to begin a section of the game from scratch is very annoying though, especially if you've collected all the coins and got to the boss.

On a lighter note, the graphics are brilliant. The Nutz sprite in particular is exceedingly well animated as are his dastardly insect foes. The wide range of levels also boast a visual treat and a fresh new challenge to boot. Credit also to the top-notch music which includes simplified renditions of the bouncy Super NES ditties. Top.

Mr Nutz's Game Boy breakthrough is most triumphant. This game's got everything a good platformer should: the looks, sounds, gameplay, and challenge. But make no mistake, this is one tough mutha, and should only be attempted when you've quite a few hours to spare.

I think this is the best Game Boy platform game since Mario; brimming with winter wonder. It's certainly chalked up on my Christmas list (hint, hint!).





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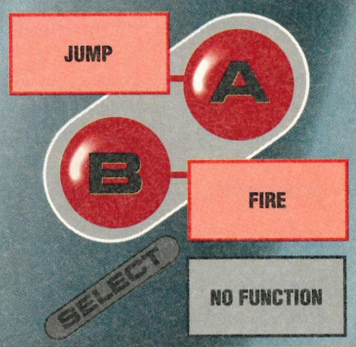
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DECEMBER '94

GAME TYPE
PLATFORM

CART SIZE
2MBit

FEATURES
PASSWORDS

CONTROLS



RATINGS

GRAPHICS	90
SOUND	88
GAMEPLAY	87
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OVERALL

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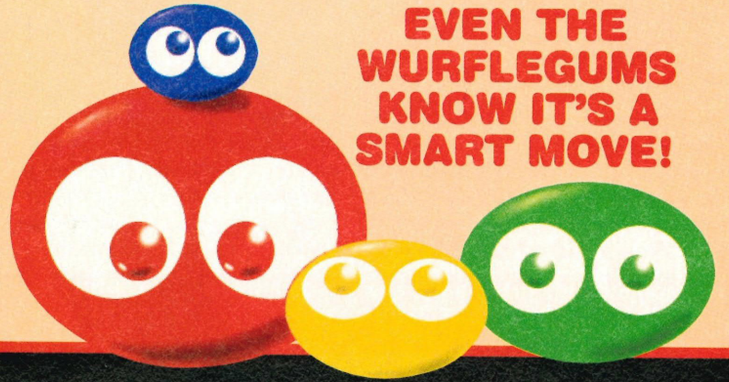
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TIPS



MONSTER MAX

Part 4 of the complete solution to the Game Boy classic!

P88

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P78

Starting this month, the complete players' guide to Nintendo's latest and greatest!

EARTHWORM JIM

The second part of our fully mapped solution!

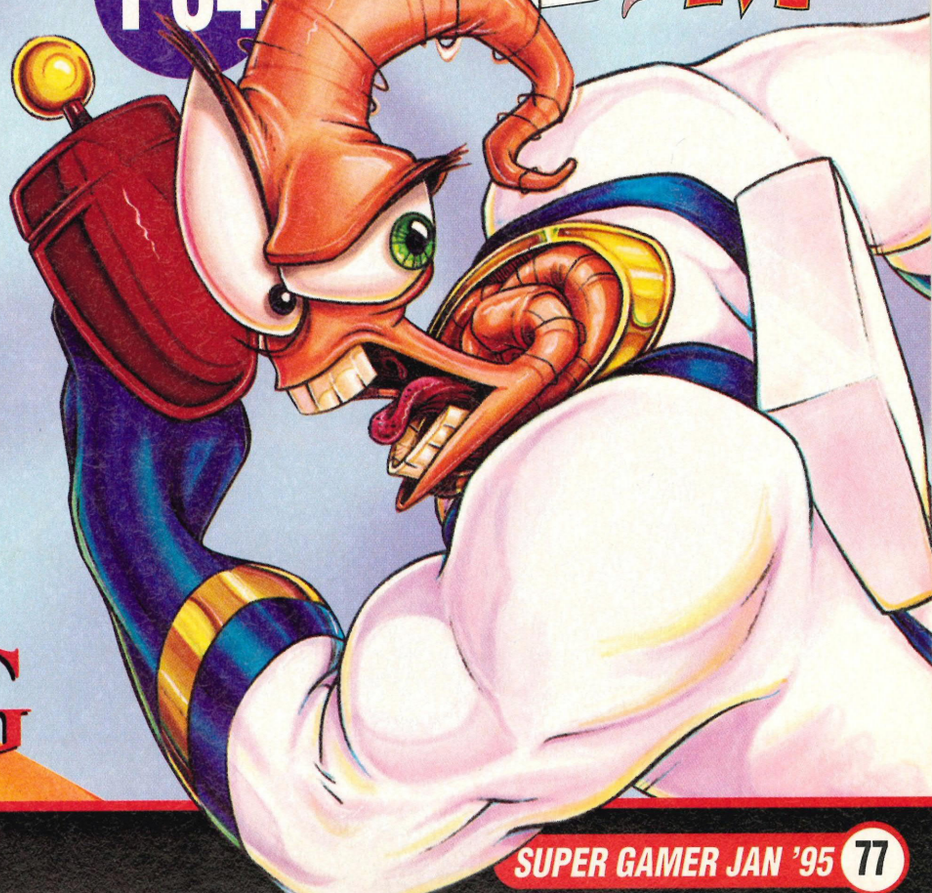
P84

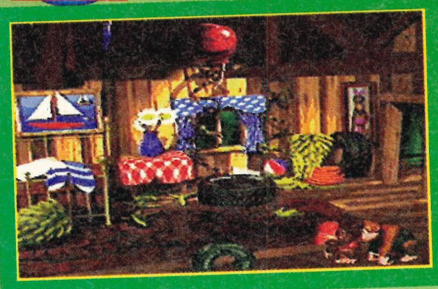


The full solution to Virgin's leonine platform classic begins here!

P82

Disney's THE LION KING



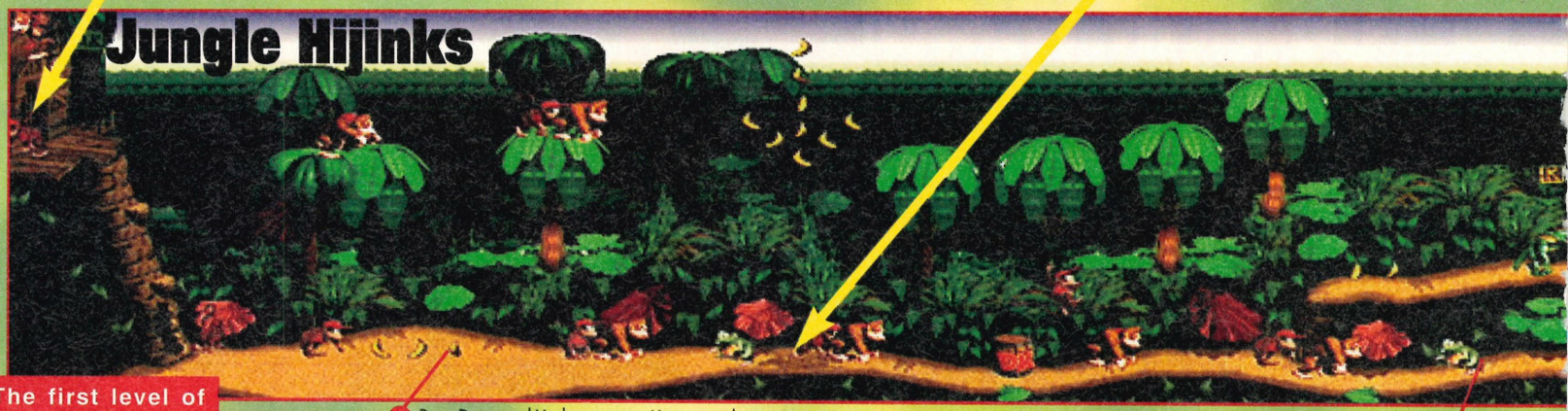


At the start of the level, always jump up into your house to find the extra life. Once you've completed it for the first time, re-enter the level, press Start then Select to exit, then go in again and repeat until you have loads!

Jump through the bananas in the shape of an arrow to land on a target which will spew forth a barrel. Throw it to the left to kill all the enemies and reveal a couple of bunches of bananas, then jump aboard and ride it to the right.



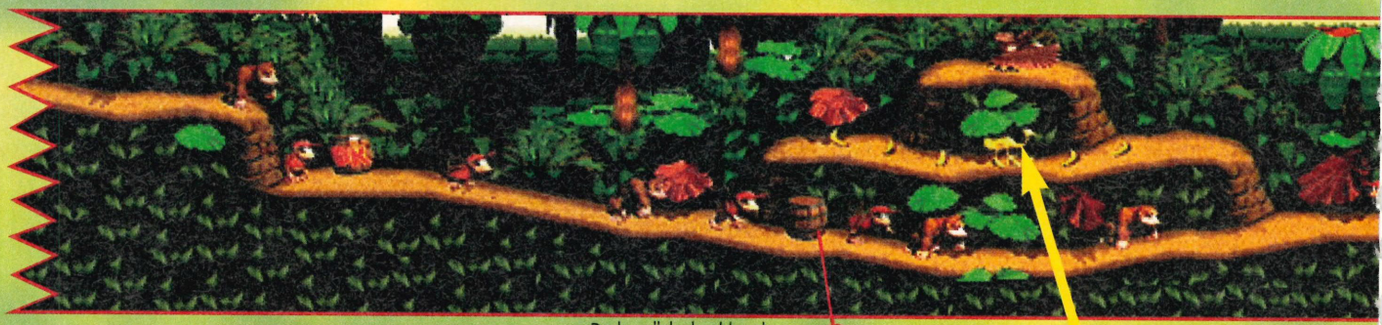
Jungle Hijinks



The first level of the game is excellent for stocking up on lives. The tree-tops have a couple, and collecting three ostrich charms guarantees at least three more!

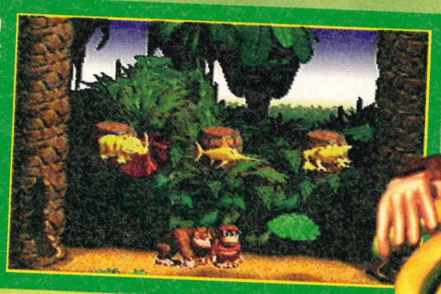
Press Down and Y when you are Kong to make some hidden bunches of bananas appear. Never forget this move, it's very revealing.

Throwing the barrel along this stretch of the level will kill the reptiles allowing you to wander along completely untouched.



Dodge all the boulders that are being thrown by the vulture, then use Kong to pick up the barrel,. Keep it in your hands by holding the Y button, then leap up and throw it at him so you can collect the charm.

As soon as you come out of the first secret room, drop down and ram the right wall to enter a "match the symbol" game. If you match them up, you will receive the relevant charm.







Jump down onto the target to reveal a barrel. Throw it to the right to kill the enemies, or alternatively throw it at the wall below as another way to have a go at the symbol game.



Run very fast using the Y button, then leap onto the green reptile and bounce up to the tree-top where a 1-Up balloon will be waiting. Once you have done this leap right off the top of the tree...

...with luck you should leap straight onto another green reptile, enabling you to bounce off this up to the next tree-top where another 1-Up will be waiting. If you wait too long, it will float out of reach.





Bunches like this will give you ten extra bananas. Some can be hidden in the ground and some will be on tree-tops.

More bananas to collect here. Remember that one hundred of the long yellow fruits equals one extra life.

Diddy Kong is not quite as strong as Kong, so press the Y button to roll. This will dispose of the reptiles nicely.



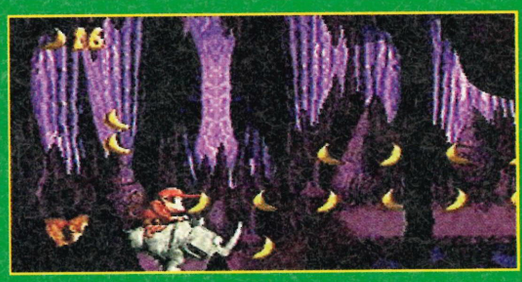
Jump straight onto the top of the box to make Rambi appear. This hefty beast can run straight into anything and kill them immediately, he's also very useful for ram-

Collect the ostrich charm three times to enter a bonus room packed full of little charms. You have 99 seconds to collect as many as possible, 400 is a good target and that means four extra lives!

INFINITE LIVES

If you're on a level which has already been completed press Start and then Select to exit it and restart. This creates endless 1-up loop possibilities.

After smashing through the wall here with Rambi, you will blast through to a secret room containing not only 40 bananas, but an extra life as well. A good start, and there's more...





As you leap over this gap, collecting the bunch of bananas as you go, you will land near the arrow. This means the end of the level is close.

Use the slope above the exit to jump onto the tree and then jump back left across the tree tops to find two hidden bunches of bananas.



DONKEY KONG COUNTRY

Syndicate

Fresh from the Harrison Ford school of dangerous haircuts and small scars on chin, Damian Butt tackles last month's pseudo intellectual Sci-Fi classic, *Syndicate*. Out now from Bullfrog and a damn fine game for all strategists who enjoyed *ShadowRun*. If you like mowing down innocent civilians in crowded shopping malls, then *Syndicate* is for you, and what better than this tips guide to help you complete the game? Just call me Dekkard.

GENERAL TIPS

Syndicate is all about restraint. It's so tempting to go crazy with an Uzi in a park full of mothers and babies, but you have to watch out for your legitimate targets and anybody who needs to be persuaded. You'd be surprised how uncooperative a suspect is when he's got a bullet lodged in his skull.

- Agents. Don't always take all four agents into the field. I've found that, especially on the later levels, one cyborg is more than enough. Remember, the more guys on your team, the more baby-sitting you have to do.

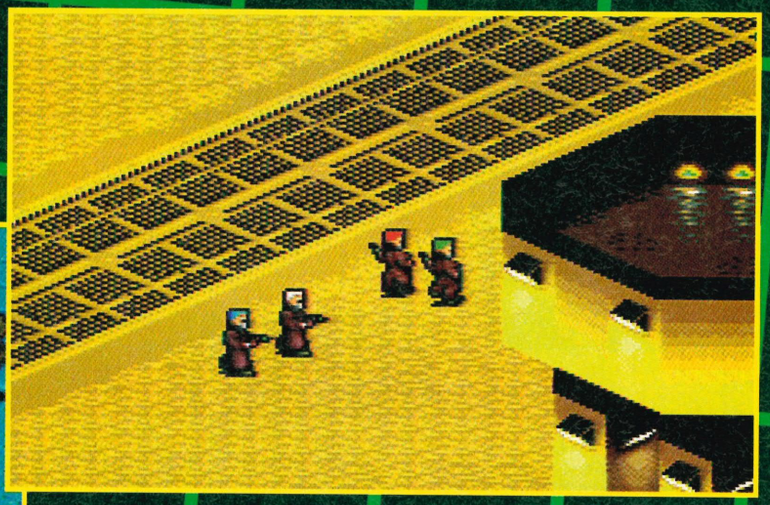
The worst levels for group participation are the ones with loads of gangplanks and tight corners such as the Northwest territories and many countries in Africa. When you're running from a man with a laser, you don't want to have to go back and get Mr Red who's decided to wander off because he couldn't cope with steps.

Also, one person means you can keep all the objects for yourself and there's no time wasted on swapping the Persuadatron with the relevant character.

- Roads. Okay, so this is the future and all the bubble cars have ABS, but I was shocked to discover that in the Rockies, all the cars plough into your men with wild abandon. One hit and they're dead! This is a stupid waste of agents and it can happen anywhere, so keep your guys on the pavement. In case you're interested, the Chiller is the best weapon for trashing cars, and placing a Time Bomb in one will cause the biggest explosion in the game.
- Weapon research. I've found the best way to build up money for this is to liberate all the European and Russian countries (as they're quite simple) and use the time to develop first Automatics, then Mini-Guns, and definitely the Miscellaneous, because you get Time Bombs, but more importantly, Energy Shields.



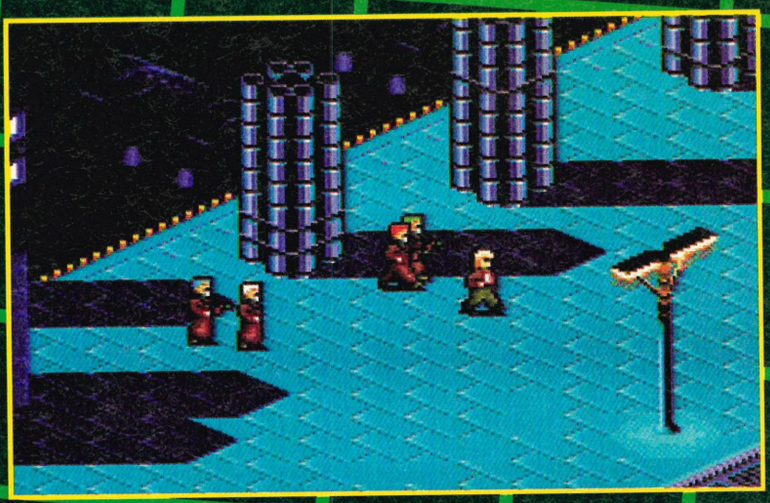
These devices are vital for the later missions. Once you have them, simply walk around the danger zone with them in the active window and as soon as the music changes to indicate the enemy (or you hear the whine of an incoming Gauss





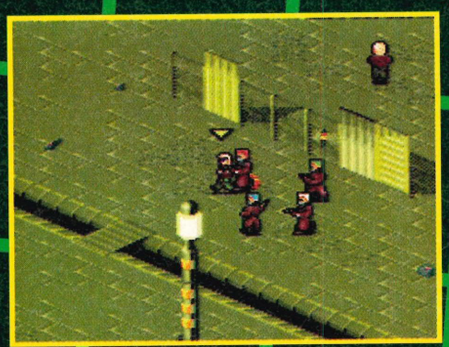
Passwords

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CBWYT7F—-T9TØDCCGRB	5GNBQB7-TKHB
J9TYDBFVNGTPB	NCHBJBR-SXB
J9KNBQBS—22MB	DZB3B7199BB



rocket), tap the button to turn on the field.

While the energy is on (there is a bar underneath to show how much is left) you will not be harmed and you can kill off everyone who attacks. If the shield gets low, turn it off and find somewhere to hide until it recharges.



● Persuading people. Only activate the Persuadatron in the immediate vicinity of the victim or you could end up with half the town following you around and slowing the screen down. Also, once you've zapped the person, protect them from harm.

If you finish a mission and it doesn't let you leave, the most common problem is that you've left the victim behind, so go back and get them. Sometimes for example, they are trapped in a building.

One way I protect the persuaded person is to take the guy with the Persuadatron and lure the person back to a car or someplace safe. Then I finish the mission with only one agent. It's the only way to be sure.

● Guns. Learn to recognise the sounds of the weapons. It's no good approaching an enemy agent that you think has a pistol, and then suddenly finding yourself sucking atoms as he fires a particle laser point blank. The most notorious weapon is the Gauss Gun. Get hit by one of these and it can take out the whole group in one go.

● Taxes. Put them all at about 35-40%, but on Western and Eastern Europe, put them up to about 80%. These two territories are terribly easy to complete, so why not risk rebellion for more cash?

In the West you simply have to kill two agents, and the East has a night club where you must persuade one man and then slaughter as many ravers as possible. Personally, I go back here for fun, not profit.

● Gun Control. When you arm your agents, make sure you put the guns in the same order so that when you select them together, they are all shooting with the same gun. Also, if you need to get to the Gauss Gun or Persuadatron fast, you always know which order your weapons come in. This can save precious seconds in the battle.

Finally here are some words of warning about particular zones.

INDONESIA

Kill as many agents as possible using your energy shield as back-up, but make sure you get into the buildings as quickly as possible because otherwise the enemy start killing the shopkeepers. This is a great place to persuade new agents.

SIBERIA

This is fine until you have to get the second target at the bottom of the zone. Right next to the building are some stone arches, each one has an enemy agent with a Mini-Gun and Time Bombs. Head down the bottom of the screen or zap them one at a time from a distance.

MOZAMBIQUE

A tough one this because you must inject your agents with drugs and run to every house, killing all agents instantly and trying to get to the targets before they are executed. This is very tough, but once you have them, you have to guide them through a gate house to the landing strip. Timing is very important and I lost count of the number of times I failed.

CHINA

Right at the start of this level a car bomb explodes, and just after you will be attacked by eight enemy agents carrying Uzis. You must have an energy shield here or you and the team will be instantly wiped out. If you hear some shooting all through the level, it will be the enemy waiting for you at the evac point, so watch out.

MID WEST

This seems such an easy mission, but after you've killed the police chief and you get to the evac point, you are attacked by four droids with Chillers. Instant death unless you manage to get the shield up.

SOUTH AFRICA

Again, you must kill as many agents as possible in the quickest time or they start taking their vengeance out on the public.

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Loads of tight gangplanks to get caught in the crossfire, and plenty of enemy agents with lasers. One hit and you're dead, so take those shields.

NORTHERN TERRITORIES

A simple extermination job, but with loads of enemy agents doing the exterminating. The problem with this level comes when you've finished everyone off. The last few are hidden underground and you need to enter the top building and follow the map underneath to the secret bunkers. Tricky.



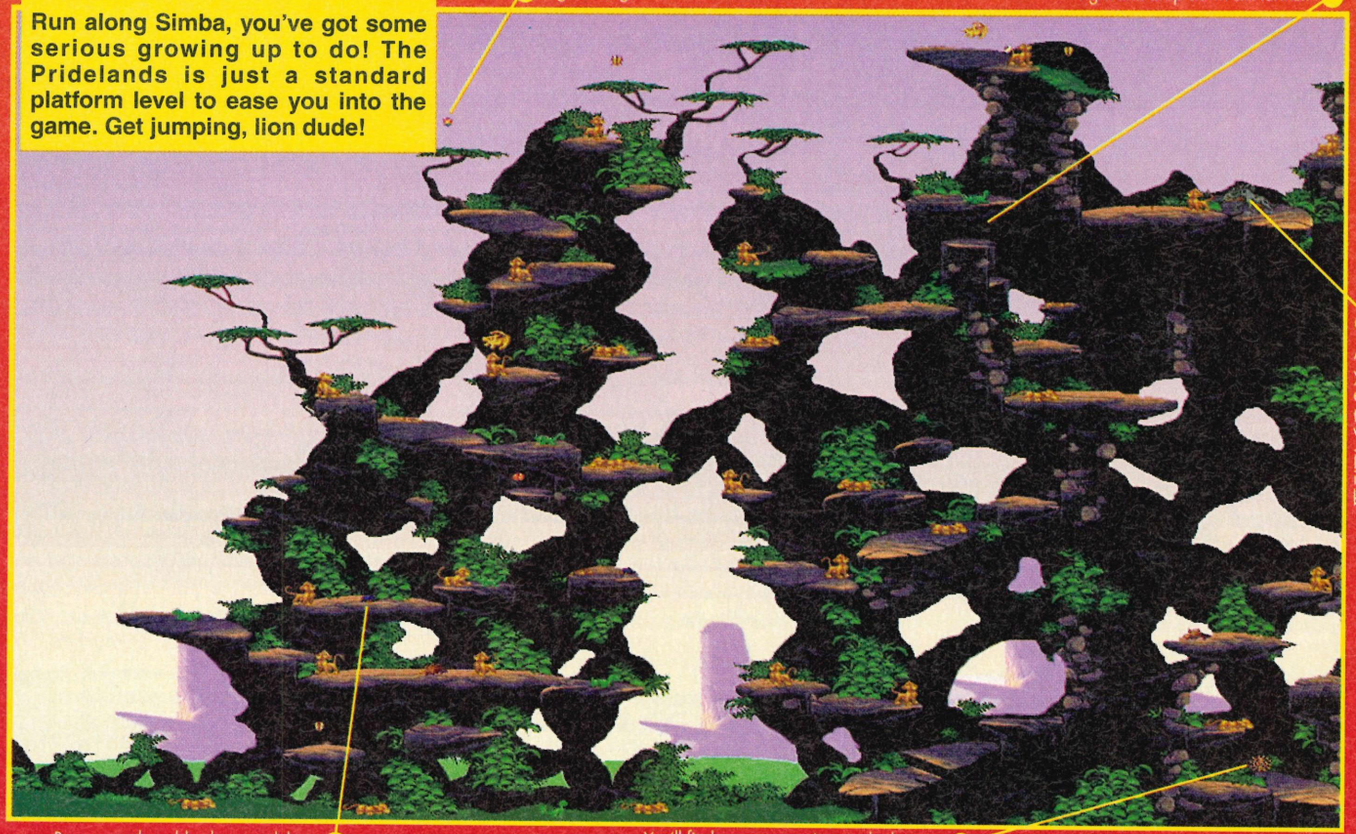


ATLANTIC ACCELERATOR

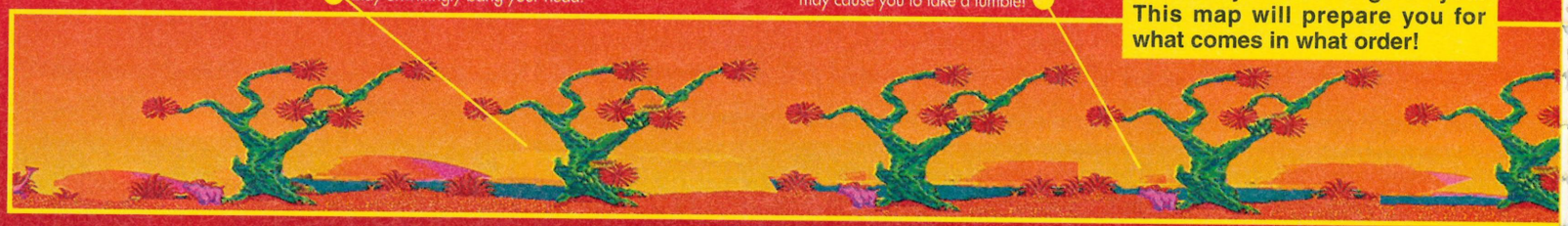
Extremely tough, so just take one man equipped with an energy shield and loads of Uzis and Gauss Guns for the close range shrapnel effect. You must rely entirely on the map for this mission, so take no notice what goes on-screen and shot those dots before they get you.

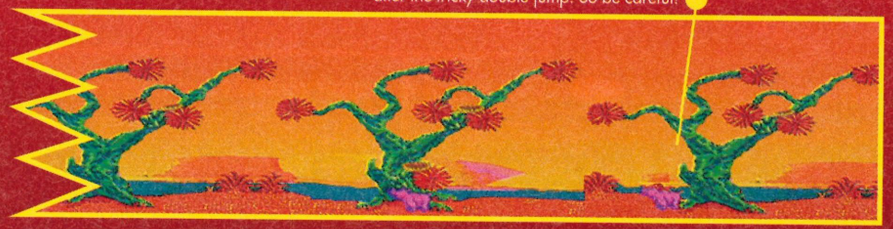
The Pridelands

Run along Simba, you've got some serious growing up to do! The Pridelands is just a standard platform level to ease you into the game. Get jumping, lion dude!



This second ostrich section is like the first, only this time it is much longer – oh and there aren't any arrows to guide you! This map will prepare you for what comes in what order!



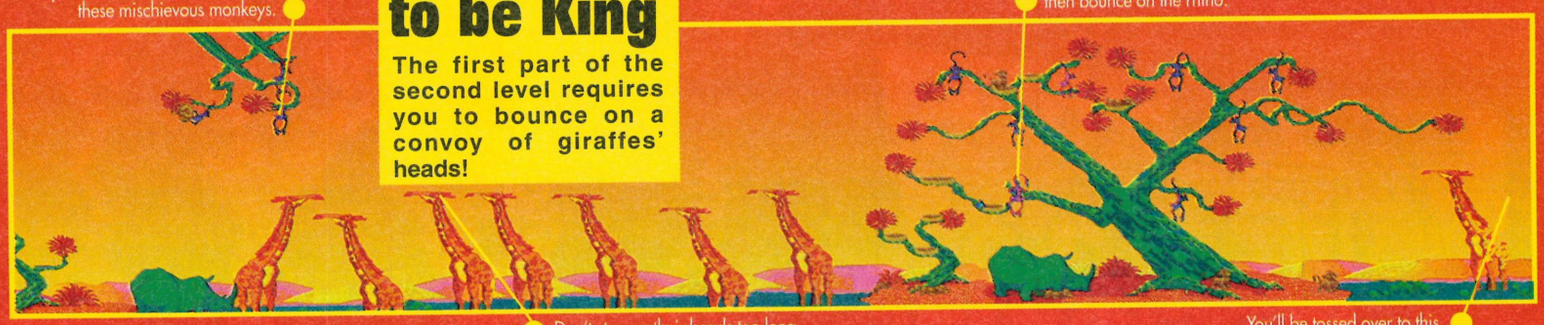


Disney's THE LION KING



Can't Wait to be King

The first part of the second level requires you to bounce on a convoy of giraffes' heads!



Bounce on the rhino and then allow yourself to be tossed around by these mischievous monkeys.

Roar at each of the pink monkeys to alter their direction, then bounce on the rhino.

Don't stay on their heads too long, otherwise you'll be toppled into the drink.

You'll be tossed over to this giraffe and then roll onto the back of an awaiting ostrich.



Most of the obstacles require you to either jump or duck underneath.

When there are two arrows, you must jump once over the pig, then again in mid-air to clear the nest. Tricky, but easily mastered.

The next section of the level is a frantic chase atop a sprinting ostrich. Follow the guiding arrows for instructions on how to avoid the obstacles.



Swing on the hippo tails to get across the water. Be sure to grab the extra life and continue as you go.

This game gets weirder! Swing on the hippo tails and bounce on their bums to get to the next chase sequence.

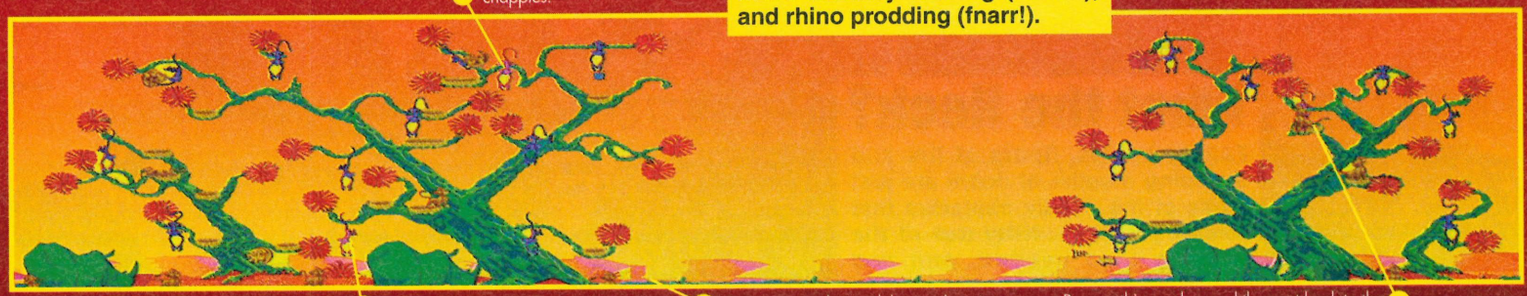


Remember, jump once to clear the pig, then again to lift young Simba over the high nest.

Duck under the nest to avoid a sore head.

You can often be tricked by two of the same obstacle appearing in quick succession. Don't be fooled!

The final part of this level will drive you to the depths of despair if you don't follow these quick easy steps. It involves more monkey tossing (oo-er!), and rhino prodding (fnarr!).



This monkey needs to be roared at twice in order to get past this maze of cheeky chappies.

Roar at this monkey and alter its direction. Then bounce off of the first rhino.

Once you've changed the monkeys in the second section, get back to the first via these handy floating logs.

Roar at this monkey and then get back to the first section. Roar at the lowest monkey once again and then bounce on the first rhino to complete the level.

EARTHWORM JIM

PART 2

Climb up the left side of the level and then jump up onto the rope to swing to the right and collect the bonus energy.

As the crystals move up the gap, jump from one to the other to avoid the jets of flame that shoot out from the rock.

Whip the accountant and then shoot him. After that walk to the left and stand on the crystal to be warped to frosty the Snowman.

Frosty the Snowman



Keep moving around and whenever he pops out of the ground, whip him before he breathes flames at you. Ten shots should dispose of him and you will be warped back to finish the rest of the level.

After you've defeated the snowman, jump up, catch the hook with your whip, and swing to the right to collect an extra life and some ammo.

When Evil appears here, it's your cue to run like hell to the left, away from the masses of falling spikes that follow you for about 30 seconds.

START

Whenever you see these black mouths, open fire with your blaster as soon as possible before they home in and bite large chunks out of you!



What the Heck?

Falling spikes, floors of fire and snapping mouths of doom are just some of the deadly obstacles that hinder you here. Nifty use of the whip is also needed, and two bosses will do their very best to stop you dead in your tracks.

Edge through this section slowly blasting the mouths and collecting the energy by hanging onto the edge of the platforms.

Hop aboard this crystal to reach the dreaded Evil the Cat!

Swing across on these hooks to reach the top of the level.

Don't forget to get this continue. You must hang off the edge to avoid the spikes.

Stand below and to the right of this cog and jump up and whip it to raise the portcullis on the right. Whip it several times to get through.

Whip the cog to get through the portcullis.

Evil the Cat



After Evil steals your suit, he will blast you with his cannon. Jump over the flames until the rock on the right has melted.



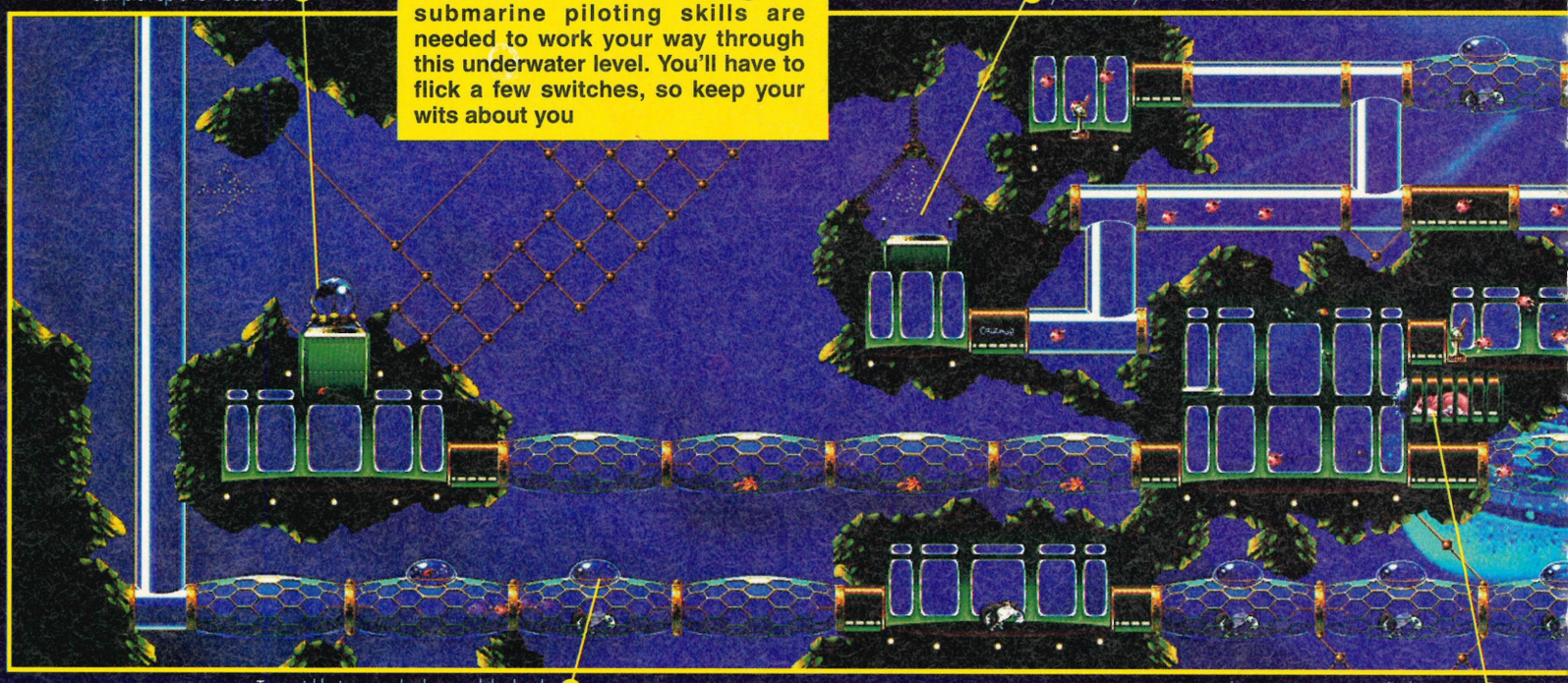
When Evil the Cat appears, blast him with your gun and then jump over the flames which come from either side of the screen. Nine times will be enough to exhaust his supply of lives.

Run in the opposite way the gem is spinning to stay on and then let yourself be carried all the way to the top. If you leap to the left halfway up you can get the extra life in the rocks.

Flames will be following close behind at this point, so jump as soon as you reach the bottom of this mammoth slide.

Down the Tubes

A nice blend of hamster riding and submarine piloting skills are needed to work your way through this underwater level. You'll have to flick a few switches, so keep your wits about you



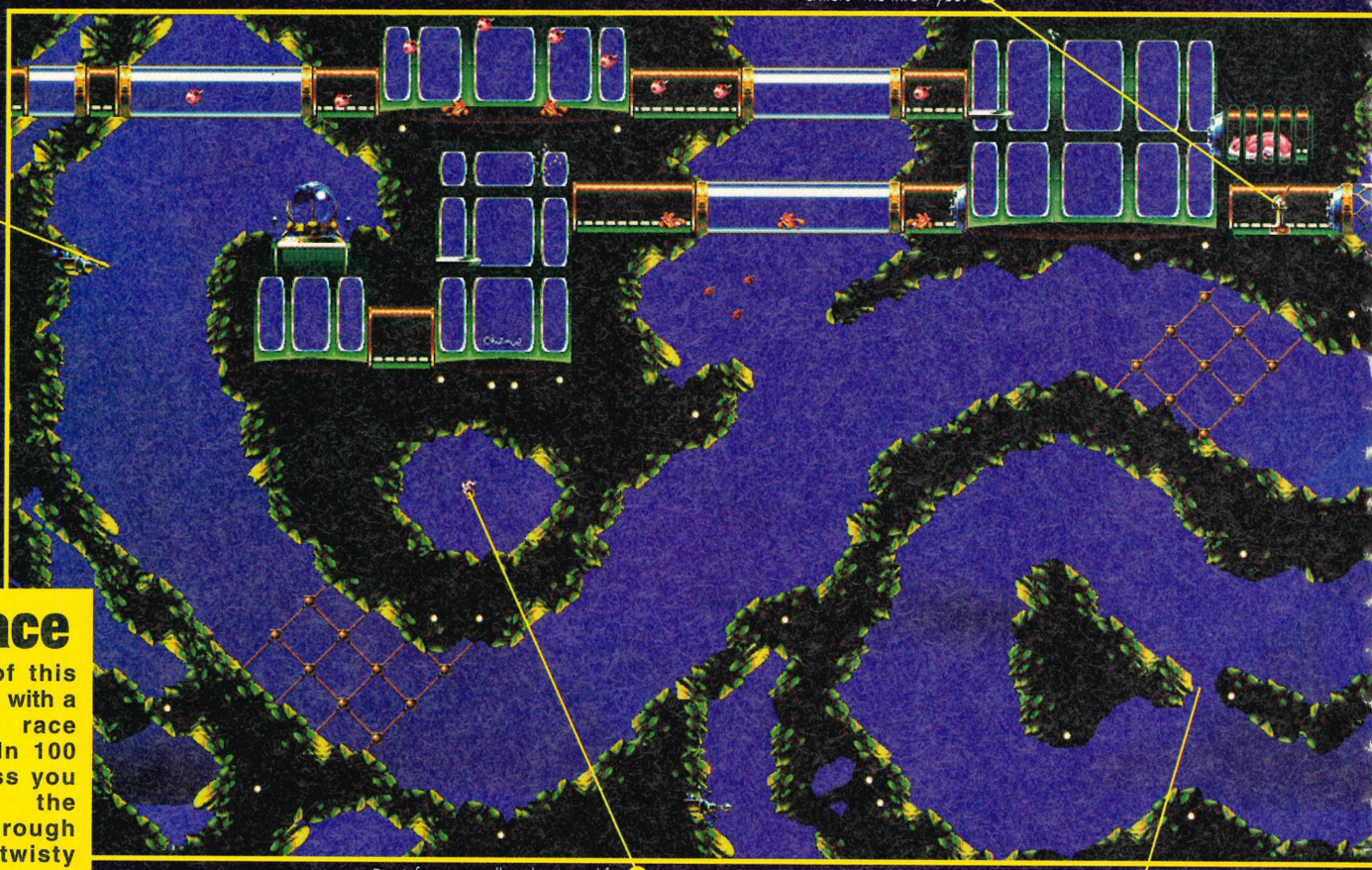
This, the first of your submarine adventures is only a short trip, so see if you can pick up a few bonuses.

Head towards this landing point here after you've explored the area in your underwater vehicle. Remember, though you can only hit the rocks a few times.

To avoid being punched around the level, grab hold of the bars in these alcoves above you and press up. When they have passed, jump down and continue right.

When you come across the hamster, run back right, go up the tube and then walk left to pull the switch. You can now jump on the hamster and eat the enemies to the left.

Pull the switch and the hamster will once again be free. Keep pressing Y as you run to snap away at the little critters who throw you.



When you first get in the sub you only have 30 seconds. However, plugging into this will give you 100 seconds to do the level in.

Tube Race

The majority of this level is taken up with a rather hectic race against time. In 100 seconds or less you must pilot the submarine through some very twisty caverns and then dock in order to face Bob the Goldfish.

Don't forget to collect this extra life through the wall. While you're at it, why not try and get to the secret power point below and extend your time?

Do not try and go through this small gap here because you won't make it and you'll end up damaging the sub and wasting time in the process.

An excellent blasting section this bit. Just run to the right and keep firing. When you reach the end of the corridor, go up, pull the switch, and then enter the sub.

This run in the sub is not so easy. Try and stay calm. If you don't hit the sides you can make it through by linking up to the extra time units.

No sign of a boss yet. Surely there must be some kind of vicious aqua monster at the end of the level? Hop onto your rocket and prepare yourself for more...

Hooking up to these power points will give you some extra time, so whenever you see one make the most of it and you should make it to the end.

If you want an easy extra life, run to this point here and then jump up to get the extra life in the tube above you.

If you can reach this point with about 15 seconds left then you're laughing. The main thing after that is to not hit the walls.

Once you have left the vehicle, run to the right, shooting as you go and then watch Bob fall onto the floor and smashing his bowl. What a clutz!

Bob

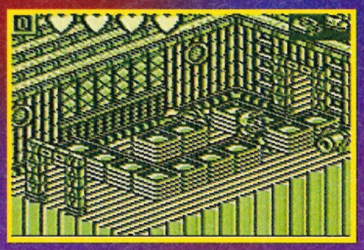


The only boss ever to fall off a table, killing himself before you can do it!

MONSTER MAX

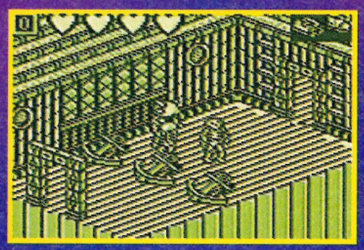
PART 4

LEVEL 5
DOOR 1

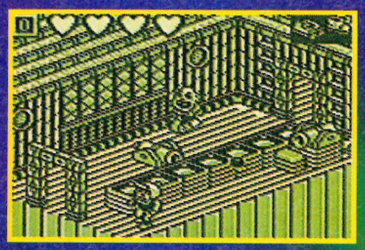


ROOM 1
All aboard for the pirate ship and some of the toughest missions so far. For this one you must get yer grubby mitts on the ship's log. There are two cannons in this room, so walk up the first channel and when the cannon fires, either jump the ball, or run back down and get out of the way.

The second cannon will fire as soon as you enter the second path, so repeat the process and then head around the electric blocks to the door. If you have any bombs left over from a previous level, you can use them to blast through the blocks and walk straight on through.

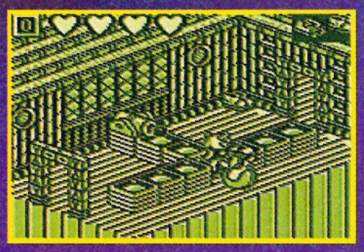


ROOM 2
All you have to do here is run between the anchors (use the lines on the ground to find the safest route), then wait for the first skeleton to go past. Walk in his path, and then walk left until the second skeleton heads back to the right. Now you must run past before the first skeleton returns to hux you.

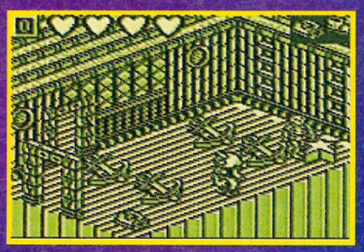


ROOM 3
If you head straight for the gold then you'll either be hit by the cannonball, or the alien who follows you in. First of all, push the cannon at the top left of the screen right up to the left wall. This will stop the alien on the beach ball coming down the screen.

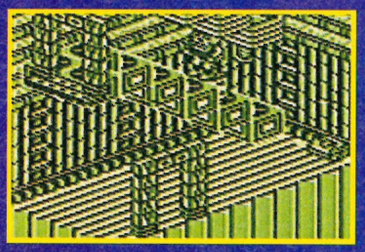
Now run up to the gold, but wait for the cannonball to fire before running back down to avoid it. Now quickly run back up, get the gold, and exit through the door at the top.



ROOM 4
The way to get past the alien on the beach ball is to follow it up to the niche by the cannon, stick your nose in and wait for the cannon to fire, then leg it back down before the alien gets you. Now run back up and stand in the gap as the alien goes past before running to the top of the screen. The cannon only fires once as long as you only stay there for the smallest time possible.



ROOM 5
Old bony in this room mirrors your movements exactly, so use this to jam him between two of the anchors in order to get the invincibility star in the top right. Now use the same blocking moves to stop him reaching you before you get to the door.

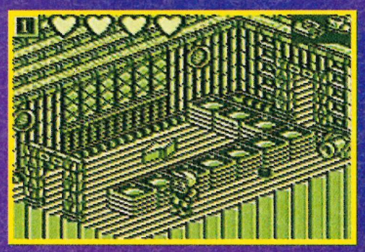


ROOM 6
This puzzle had me stumped for a while. Instead of using the invincibility star to get past the electric blocks as hinted in the last room, you must pick up the block in the corner, then jump onto the first step and drop the block underneath you.

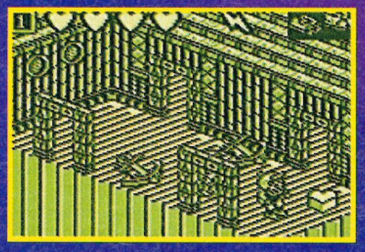
Now walk onto the next step, but before you are totally off the block, pick it up and again and you should now be on the step above. Repeat this to get to the top of the steps, but don't press jump by mistake or you'll die.

PASSWORD FOR LEVEL 5

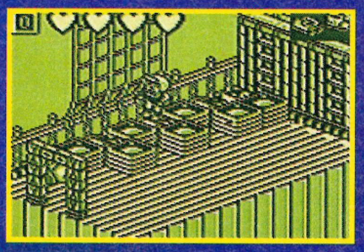
GRD59K#–



ROOM 7
Simple. All you have to do is jump off the cannon and frantically run down the corridor as the cannonball is fired. At the last minute, jump the ball and get the speed-up lightning for the next few rooms.

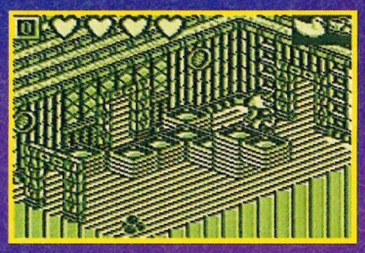


ROOM 8
There are four exits from this room, but you must take the top right one first which is on the same wall as the door you entered through. Get the life heart and use the speed-up to evade the skeleton. Basically, stand in the bottom corner until the skeleton is almost touching you, then run off in the opposite direction and through the exit. You are faster than the skeleton so he will never be able to catch you.

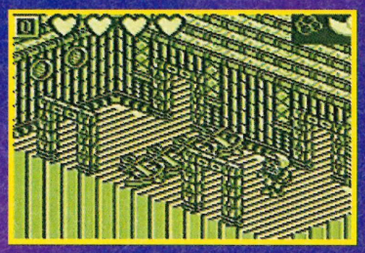


ROOM 9
This room has a line of normal blocks, with every other one being an electric killer block. At the end is a duck which is vital. Wait until the speed-up runs out (it makes jumping more difficult because you constantly over-shoot) and then jump on the first block. Now, keep jumping over the electric blocks, being careful not to hit them, then swap your bag for the duck, before leaping all the way back.

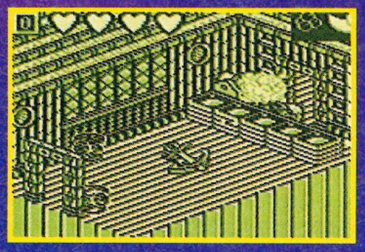
Exit into room 8 and take the bottom left door.



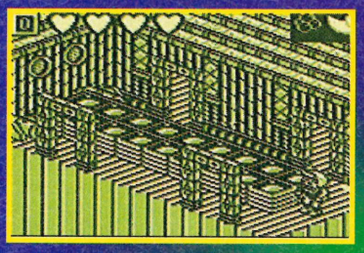
ROOM 10
This is why you needed the duck, so use it to get under the electric blocks and swap your boots for the hyper-useful bombs. You can bombs your way through the rest of the level.



ROOM 11
This is a connecting room, head straight through.



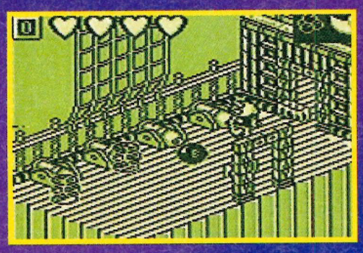
ROOM 12
Immediately you are faced with a wall and a cannon. Use the duck and wait for the cannon to fire, then place a bomb right next to it and get as far away as possible. The bomb will take out the cannon and the wall, but you must now plant another bomb to take out the entities buzzing around the room. Alternatively you can run past them, but they are very fast...



ROOM 13
The two routes join up here, but it is much easier to take the lower one as you have just done, because there is far more danger above. As soon as you enter this room, run down to the bottom of the screen to avoid the cannonball from the top cannon.

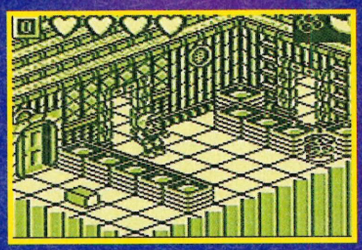
Now you must take the top left door because the bottom one just takes you out in room 15, but you can't get through without using bombs, and they will kill you as well. If however you still have the invincibility star, you can plant a bomb in room 15, and then jump onto the electric blocks and into the room before it explodes. Worth a try?





ROOM 14

A horrible room and one that should give you nightmares for the rest of your natural. The best way to get through is to wait until the first portcullis is above your head before walking into the room, then plant bombs to take out everything in sight. You can even destroy the portcullis on the bottom door and this is advisable because it is very hard to time it correctly.



ROOM 15

This is the last room and it contains a single entity and some electric blocks fencing you in. Simply use the bombs to destroy everything except the ship's log. Collect this to open the door and escape.

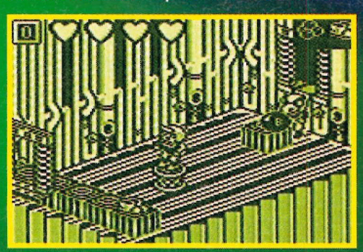
DOOR 2



ROOM 1

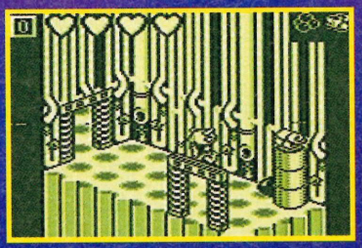
If you are playing this door straight after the last then you will still have the bombs, in which case it is pointless solving the puzzle because the prize is some bombs. Wow. If you don't have the explosives, walk over to the pile of white bricks and lure out the droid. Now leap on all the blocks to destroy them and use the joystick underneath to make the robot on the ledge push off one of the blocks.

Pick up the brick with the bag (you did get it, didn't you?) and then force the robot off the ledge. Jump off the joystick onto the robot's head and drop the brick. You should be able to reach the ledge, so pile on the next two bricks to reach the second ledge and the bombs. Drop down to the exit.



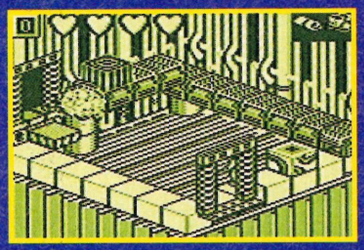
ROOM 2

Arrghhhh! The Napoleon parrot has got me! Or has it? Walk off onto the now familiar chequered block and push off to the block in front of the parrot. Drop the bomb on the platform and then scoot off on the chequered block to safety. The parrot will be executed, so move into the space and jump off through the door.



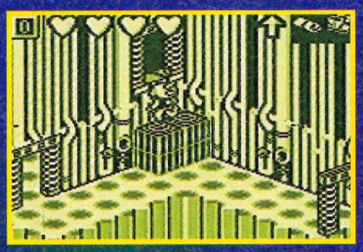
ROOM 3

Place a bomb next to the pillar here and then swap them for the scroll when it explodes.



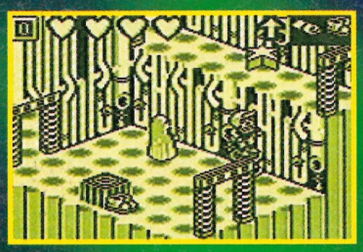
ROOM 4

This is a weird room because there is a conveyor belt, but it doesn't seem to do anything. The way to get the spring is to stand directly opposite (two blocks from the end) and fire your first lethal shot from the scroll at the block with the spring on it. This should destroy the block and leave the spring within your grasp. Exit through the door.



ROOM 5

Now that you have the spring you can leap up to the top of the black blocks and use the short cut, otherwise exit through the door.



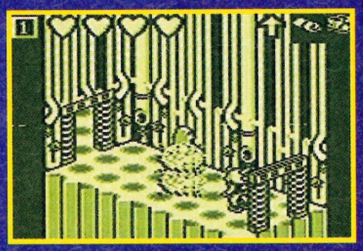
ROOM 6

If you use the short cut, you are already on the top level of this room and can get the invincibility star, if not then leap on the chequered block and use the black block to get off. Shoot the ghost with the scroll and exit through the door.



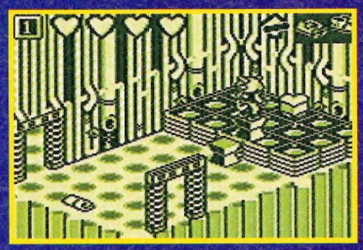
ROOM 7

Again, if you at the top already, just exit through the door. If not, you must get the bag and carefully pile all three blocks against the wall to climb up. Very tricky.



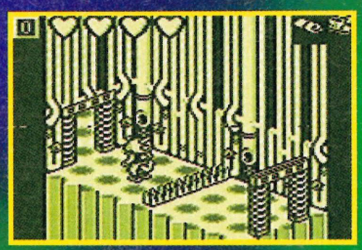
ROOM 8

You are faced by two ghosts. Don't dodge them, blast them with the scroll.



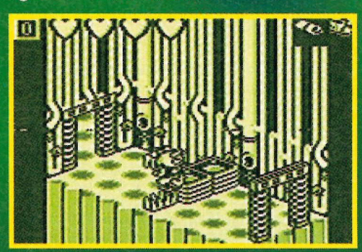
ROOM 9

Can you get that tantalising life heart? The answer is yes. Get the bag and put the first brick in front of the heart on the floor. Now drop the second brick on top of the first and push it onto the electric blocks. Finally, use your improved leaping power to jump off the second brick, get the life heart, and then jump back. If you're lucky, you won't get hit, but even if you do, the invincibility star should protect you.



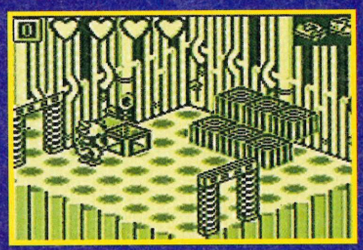
ROOM 10

A straightforward jumpy jumpy room. Clear the spikes to get through. Jump right at the last second.



ROOM 11

Again, another jumpy room, but more complicated because you have to leap between two spikes. The only advice I can give is stand close to the bottom set and wait until the top ones are at the very top. Get the bag if you don't have one already.

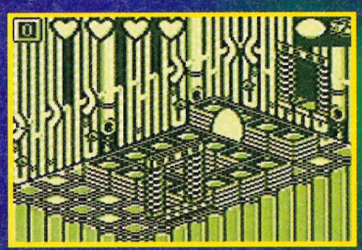


ROOM 12

Whoever says Jon Ritman is not a mad genius has not seen this room. Pick up the brick on the black platforms with the bag. Drop it against the left wall, directly in front of the bottom glass block. Push the glass block against the brick and then slide it up to the black platforms. The glass is frictionless and so it will keep going until it hits something. Now push the glass into the gap underneath the black platforms.

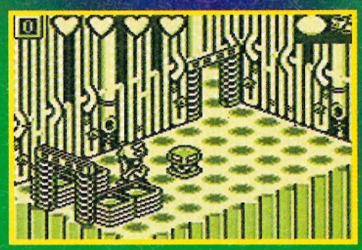
Repeat the process for the second glass block (don't forget to move the brick, or you won't have enough room to push the block underneath the black platforms.

Finally, shove the brick under the platforms and a force-field will be pushed out the other side of the platforms. You can now swap this for the bag and exit.



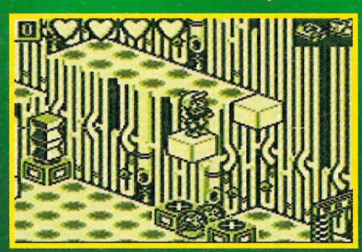
ROOM 13

Use the force-field in this room when the electricity gets turned on. Make your way around the maze and exit.



ROOM 14

Immediately walk forward and run left or right as soon as you're clear of the blocks to avoid the droid who attacks you.



ROOM 15

This is the final room and not a nice one.

The two brains in jars (well that's what they look like to me) will incessantly home in on you the moment you get in range. You must lure them both into the small enclosure at the start of the room.

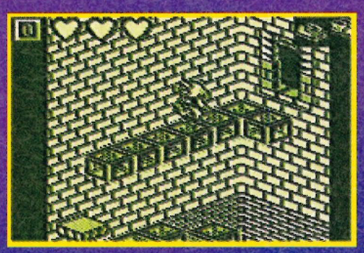
First of all, stand on the first block and walk off down the side of the room. As soon as the first brain attacks, leap back on the block and to get him inside the pen, begin to leap off the edge of the block, then swing back. The brain will be fooled and will head in the direction you jumped.

Once the brain is stuck behind the first block, leap to the next one and lure the second brain over and into the pen in the same way. This is very tricky because you can easily be hit if you do not make it back to the block in time.

Once you have them both stuck between the two blocks, run over to the top brick, pick it up with the bag and put it on top of the block in the top corner. Now go around the outside of the room and get the second brick and do the same. Climb up the two bricks and stand on the white block at the top which is a lift.

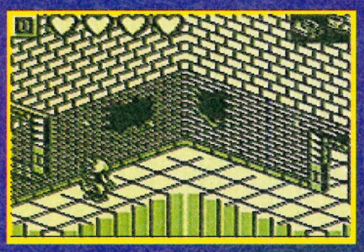
This will take you over to the second lift block (above the brains), so leap over to it and then wait for it to take you to the final lift which will go over to the door in the bottom left corner. Make the jump, get the Crystal of Nitre and exit. Phew!

DOOR 3



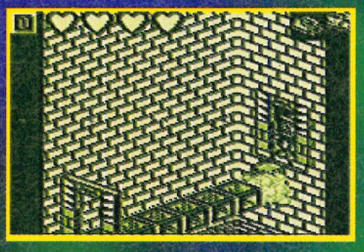
ROOM 1

There is a deadly cauldron underneath the second block here, so keep jumping as it inevitably disintegrates, then catch the lift to reach the top layer.



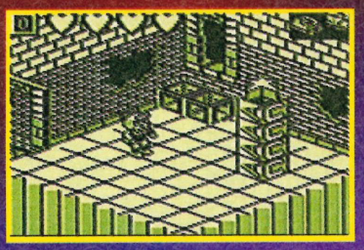
ROOM 2

An interconnecting room.



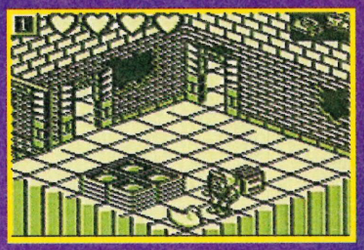
ROOM 3

The droid is obviously mad, so leap clean over his head and head through the door. The last floor tile dissolves, so watch it.



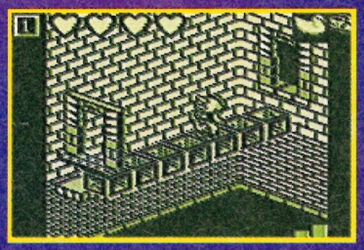
ROOM 4

On top of the ABC blocks there is an invincibility star, so leap up and knock the blocks down to get the star. Exit over the glass blocks.



ROOM 5

This room looks tougher than it is because of the multitude of electric blocks. However, if you pick up both bricks with the bag and then shove one on top of the other, then slide the top one over the electric blocks – they disappear! That's amazing! Repeat this to clear a path to the duck and swap the duck for the bag. The door on the left contains a bag, if you don't already have one.



ROOM 6

To continue the adventure, head straight across the glass blocks and through the door. The lift is to take players up who fell down the pit in room 3 (see pitfall).

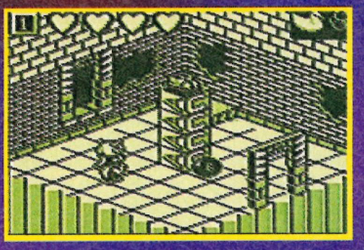


ROOM 7

To get through this deadly staircase, substitute your boots for the bombs at the bottom and walk up to first electric block. Use the duck to get past and then drop the bomb next to the second electric block on the top landing. Exit through the door when the dust settles.

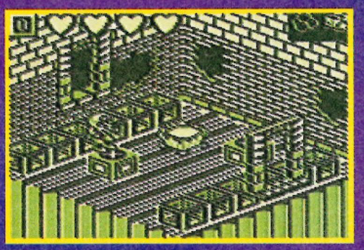
ROOM 8

An interconnecting room with naff all in it.



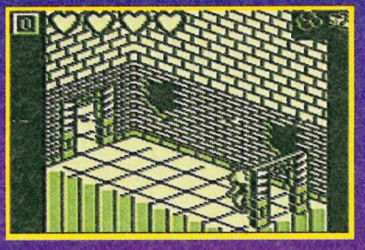
ROOM 9

At the moment you are bootless, so use a bomb to take out the first three ABC blocks, then push the last one into the top corner of the room; up against the raised floor tile. Now walk up on the tile and this gives you the height to reach the boots. Swap the duck for the boots and exit.



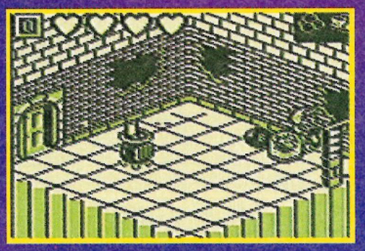
ROOM 10

Okay, to get through this electrified room, you must stand on the second from bottom block. Not wait until the first moving block comes down and quickly leap onto it and then immediately over to the next block and straight to the other side. Both moving blocks disappear on contact so you have to move it – no second chances.



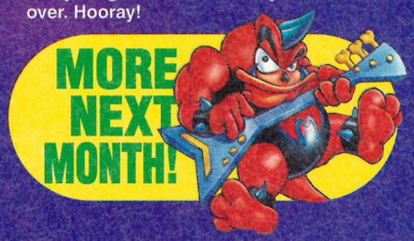
ROOM 11

Nowt in `ere.



ROOM 12

The stove, which you must destroy, is guarded by a brain. Walk around the outer top edge of the room and plant the bomb behind the stoke. Now leg it and everything should be destroyed. Mission over. Hooray!



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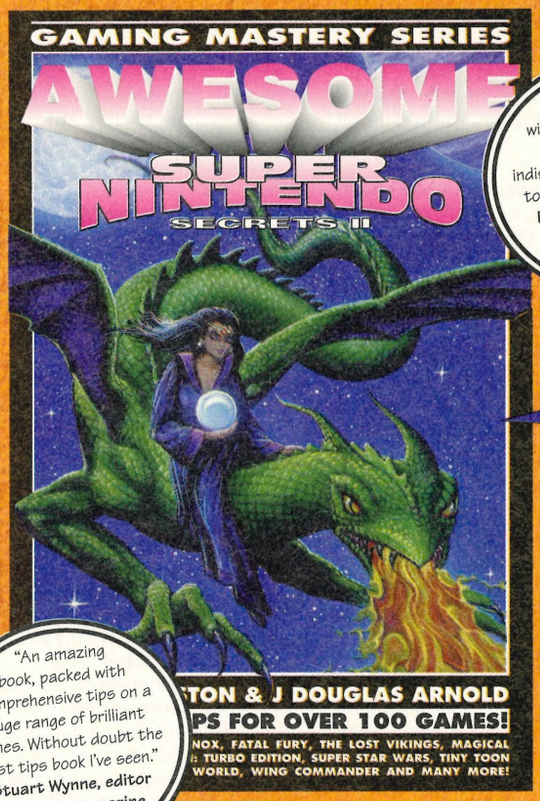
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the write stuff

Plenty of learned discourse this month as the most controversial topics in the Nintendo world are laid on the slab and dissected with our very own editor heading the team of surgeons.

I want to hear more about your comments on the mag, what you think of *DKC* as soon as you buy it (does it live up to the hype and more importantly our review score?), and also any other matters you think are important (except piracy please).

Write Stuff is your chance to talk directly to the makers of SUPER GAMER, so why waste the chance to tell us exactly what you think? Also, unlike some other magazines we could mention in the world, we don't hide letters which criticise us, because they are often the most provocative and interesting. Please get your letters in to us now, simply write to *Write Stuff, Super Gamer magazine, Durham House, 124 Old Christchurch Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 1NF.*

If you don't write in, these pages won't get filled and you could miss out on a FREE SUPER GAMER T-Shirt as modelled on *Baywatch* and *Gladiators*. Wow! On with the show.

Dear SUPER GAMER,
I am a 29 year old female Super NES addict who doesn't have much spare cash, and with the average price of a game being £50, I would ordinarily only be able to buy one game a year (but I'm addicted and I want more).

So, to ensure I get more I do the following. If I'm looking for a new game, I re-read my SUPER GAMER magazines so that I have a good idea what to buy (don't want to be mis-lead by shop hype and buy a duff game).

Secondly, I visit every shop that I know sells the game I want, and buy from the cheapest. I've bought *Super Mario World* and *Bubsy* this year, both for £18. Shop prices varied from £18-44. I also got *Super Ghouls 'n Ghosts* for £20, again one shop had it selling for £40! This year, instead of one game for £50, I've gotten three for £56!

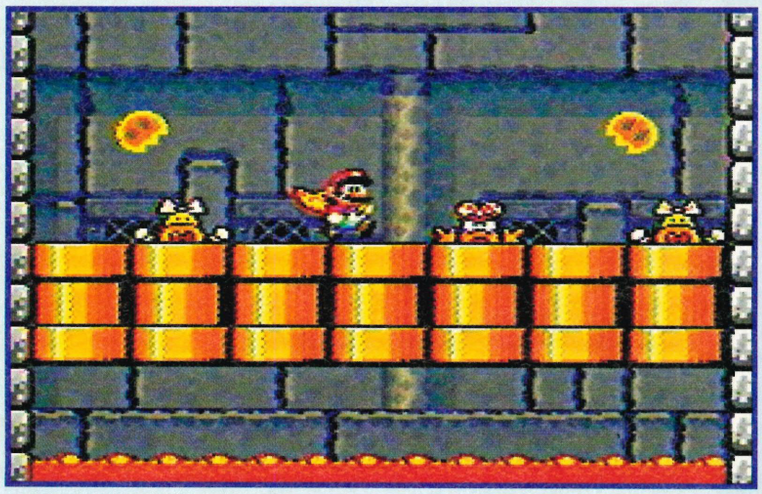
To other SG readers, shop around, and if unsure that a game really is a bargain, refer to SUPER GAMER magazine. A duff game isn't going to be any better just because it's cheap.
Wendy MacPherson (Mrs)
PS I think SUPER GAMER is excellent all-round. Especially the hints and cheats.

A thoroughly sensible approach Mrs MacPherson, and it works. It is certainly the way I buy games. Now that the Super NES is getting on a bit, more and more choice cuts of gaming pie become available at bargain prices.

You may remember our "Play more, pay less" feature in issue #5, where we reviewed all the old games that Nintendo had released at £19.99. We make it our policy at SUPER GAMER to provide the best possible service to our readers and a main part of that is informing you where to get the best deals.

At the moment, places like GAME and Future Zone are best because they are slashing the prices of new games, but many smaller shops now offer swapping services for between £2-5 and these are invaluable if you want to off-load a pile of old cack. Try looking in the Yellow Pages for local stores and play them off against each other to get the lowest prices.

Of course, as you say, checking in SUPER GAMER is the only way to see if the game of your dreams is really a large black, feathery creature going "Gobble."



Dear Damian/SUPER GAMER,
I am an occasional purchaser of your magazine. A recent correspondent of yours felt himself quite a senior reader and he was only in his 20s! I'm in my mid 30s and am delighted that you avoid the use of irritating 'hip' language. Channel 4's Digitiser is almost unreadable sometimes (but it's free isn't it).

I own a Super NES and Game Boy. The main reason I bought Nintendos rather than Sega is that Nintendo's range of game types seems much greater. I have no interest at all in platformers and beat-'em-ups.

If I owned a Mega Drive, that wouldn't leave me much, apart from sports simulations. I have already played a wide variety from *Starwing* to *Sim City*.

I find your A-Z reviews extremely useful in providing me with guidance on what is good and what is rubbish, and, more importantly, what is likely to appeal to me.

However, the scores you give are presumably based on your original main reviews which are fundamentally flawed. Who cares what the game sounds like? FX are useful, but if any game gives me the option to turn it off, I take it.

The graphics are important, but only if they are so irritating that they spoil the game. The main emphasis in your reviews should be on gameplay and longevity.

To illustrate my point I would remind you of the quality of some of the old Spectrum games. I know I am not alone in thinking this as I have seen many nostalgic reviews of games such as *Skool Daze* (which I never heard of before). The graphical technology of *Knightlore* has been resurrected ten years later in *Equinox*.

Finally, I would like to compare my two favourite games: *Dragontorc* and *Zelda III*.

You rate *Zelda III* 95% Gamer Gold and I couldn't agree with you more. It has puzzles I wasn't able to complete without phoning the Nintendo hotline. It was compulsive, massive and had a good mix of arcade action, exploration and problem solving.

However, all this could be said of the Spectrum game, *Dragontorc* which costs me £10 instead of £40. Apart from being much more expensive, the Super NES game is massively more powerful, but for what?

The sound is better, but irritating, and the graphics are improved; if a little twee. Ultimately though, the enjoyability is the same.

I would like to comment to Nintendo and Sega et al that they are wasting their time developing the new range of super consoles. I for one am not interested.

Careful combing of your A-Z reviews shows me that there are 16 Super NES and three Game Boy games already out that I want to play. Assuming reasonable longevity, that lot should keep me going for a long time to come.

I commented earlier that the longevity of the games was important, especially as they cost so much. Can anyone explain to me the point of the Action Replay and other cheats? Half the joy of the games is working out the solution and if you give up too easily you are cheating yourselves out of the cost of the game.

In summary I will continue to enjoy my Super NES and occasionally purchase your magazine. Games companies, please put your money into the gameplay and don't keep spending large sums and committing large areas of memory to minor graphical improvements. Also, don't throw money away on licences!
Mark Taylor, Cornwall.

Some interesting points, Mark, but you tend to sound like a four hundred year old high court judge when you say "Delighted that you avoid the use of irritating 'hip' language." What next? "And who is this Take That?" "A rhythmic band m'lud, popular at the moment with young people."

You are quite right about the A-Z scores, but do you know how many games we've crammed in there? Who's going to seasonally adjust every single rating every month? Not me matey!

Fortunately, our reviewers are just about spot-on every time and practically all our reviews over the

STAR LETTER

Dear all at SUPER GAMER,
Why, oh why, oh why are all these console game makers being so stupid? I may not be the most up-to-date guy in the world, but I have noticed that those people making Jaguar, CDI and 3DO games have been taking a "graphics before gameplay" approach.

Call me old fashioned but I thought the point of graphics and sound was to gloss up a game, but what's the point if there isn't a game to gloss up?

You can't make a game out of graphics and sound alone. I'm not saying it's bad to have them. *Starwing* has brilliant graphics, but it also has the all-important gameplay.

Now, is it that modern games makers are deliberately victimising the 'Darrens' that Derek Richardson spoke of (SG#6), or do they have absolutely no idea of what they're doing? Please give your opinion.
Robert Willington, Edinburgh.

I will, Robert. You're quite right that many of the preliminary games for the next generation of machines are, not to put too fine a point on it, crap. But all things come to those who wait.

Let's go through the round window and look at the Jag. First game, *Cybermorph*. Looked great, but underneath it was a simple fly around and shoot things game which soon got boring and hardly tested the machine.

But now you've got *AvP* which, so Andy tells me, is brilliant because it evokes the atmos of the films and even plays well. The Jag still has a way to go, but slowly things are improving.

It's the same with the 3DO. First game I saw was *Crash & Burn*, verdict? Complete tosh. Now, its got *Road Rash*, *FIFA*, *Total Eclipse* and *The Need for Speed* (the best racing game ever). With more titles on the way, including *Wing Commander III* which is said to be as good as the PC.

The next generation of consoles, or 'multi media platforms' as they like to call themselves are going through the first stage of software evolution. First comes the rubbish games which are just Super NES titles with better intros. Then comes better and better games which slowly exploit the new technology. Imagine being given a PlayStation to program. Would you create a masterpiece straight away? Of course not.

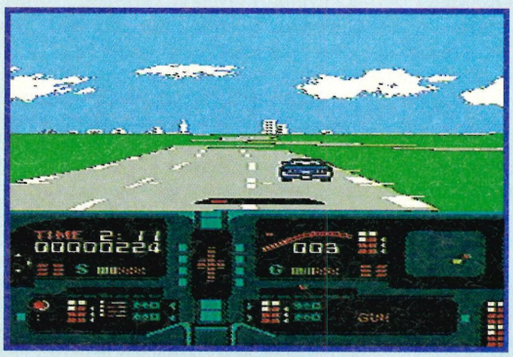
Consider the Super NES, Robert. What were the first games? *Super Soccer*, *Super Tennis*, *Pilot Wings* and *Super Mario World*. A couple are good, but they hardly push the console to its limits. We are only just seeing classics like *DKC* and *Earthworm Jim* and it's been over two years!

As always, my advice is the same. Keep your Super NES, buy as many games now as possible and enjoy them. Provided nothing blows up, you can have years of gamesplaying before you need to worry about a PlayStation, 3DO, Saturn (yeuch) or Ultra 64. When the games appear, upgrade, but until then, stay Nintendo and keep reading SUPER GAMER.

A T-shirt for your trouble, dear boy.

past year are still just as relevant today. You can be sure that if you pick a Gamer Gold game it will be one of the best on the Super NES.

As for Action Replay, well we use it almost exclusively for the built in adapter because we use both official and Japanese Super NESs in the production of the magazine. There are also times when, if we need to get to a later level quickly (for grabbing purposes usually), we can find a code and do it instantly.



Many games are too hard for some gamesplayers and so rather than just languishing on the dusty shelf, the Action Replay breathes new life into the game. Also, the device allows you to enhance normal games by making them faster, longer, tougher, easier and even bloodier! There is no limit to what you can do.

On the subject of licences, why don't SG readers send us their top five worst game adaptations? Whether it's *Knight Rider* on the Spectrum or *Last Action Hero* for the Super NES, I want to see your nominations. There will be a prize for the best (or should that be worst) five, so get them in now.

Dear SUPER GAMER,
Thank you for printing my letter, it really made my day. Now there are two things from Bury that are famous... black pudding and me (almost!).

"Hark..." Oh no that was the last letter. Anyway, why do publishing houses insist on releasing dire film licenced games? Except for a few games, maybe a handful, which are stunning, they are all bad/ crap/ dust collectors (delete as appropriate). By comparison, who wants the 12" single of Saturday Night, by Witless or Whigfield (or something) remixed by DJ Stubby Toes? Nobody.

If the film is good and does the business at the box office and then a game is written, somebody must have the final say as to whether or not it is released.

It is simple. A good game makes money; a duffer doesn't. Strewth, it's enough to make Clive Sinclair's hair grow back!

Your ideas for more freebies on the cover of your mag were great, especially the one for the demo cart. Now that really is try before you buy! There is nothing more infuriating than testing a game at Dixons and having some pushy salesman called Matthew or Gerald breathing down your neck and saying "Can I help you at all or are you just browsing?", or "It's better on the Mega Drive!"

Finally, here are a few ideas of my own for your magazine. How about printing the monthly sales figures or including an information box in the review; stating an approximate age range as a guide to prospective buyers? I'm not sure if this one is to your taste, a logo. "To be this good takes pages!"

Yoga Flames to you all my friends.
Andy "DJ Dhalsim" Milnes, Bury.

The licenced game, or to give it the latin name 'licentitus to printus moneyius' is an easy option in a world where only good games sell. Many companies simply cannot produce a Gamer Gold title every time (or at all even) and so inevitably the duffers lose them money.

Apart from using hype in the way Acclaim did with *MKII* (would it have sold as well without the ads?), and getting good reviews scores, the licenced game is a way of fooling the public into buying a product which they believe will be as good as the TV show, film or coin-op.

And that's the key word when talking about licences, "Fool." Take, hmm let's see there are so many to choose from. Ah I know, *Knight Rider* on the Spectrum. As soon as David Don't Hasslemehoff started strutting his stuff on ITV along with his gay-sounding car, the ratings soured and Ocean decided that it was a guaranteed hit game. After all, it could be a driving sim, and we all know how easy they are to program – not.

Adverts for *Knight Rider* began appearing in mags two years before the end result – a tawdry, tenth rate, badly flickering action game – hit the shelves. But every month people would be assaulting WH Smiths for the release date.

Those who did not see the 20% review scores were fooled (there's that word again) into buying a game they knew nothing about except that it was loosely 'based' on the TV show.

And it's the same with *Jurassic Park*, *Cliffhanger*, *Batman*, *Wayne's World*, *Power Rangers*, *Hulk*, *Superman*, *Last Action Hero*, *Home Alone* – the list is endless because people will never learn and companies looking for a fast buck will still get the sales they don't deserve.

Admittedly, some licenced games are good... can't think of any right now. Oh yes, *Lion King* was alright and so was *Jungle Book*. But when you've got superb graphics to follow, and a platform routine designed by one of the best programmers in the industry, what do you expect?



THE WRITE STUFF

Put simply, Andy, the licenced game will be around as long as there are suckers who will buy them, and there are appropriate films or characters to convert.

The solution is to wait for a review you can trust to appear (although you'd be surprised at the number of bribes for licenced games that reviewers are offered) and then decide.

Never, never buy a game, any game, without first either playing it yourself, or talking to someone who has. If you don't, then you deserve all you get quite frankly.

Concerning your other points, Andy, well the demo cart idea is definitely out unless it's Nintendo themselves doing the promotion because the cost is so high. Personally I envy the free disks or CDs for PCs because you can actually test the games in your own home, as opposed to being exposed to some obnoxious adolescent who's just read some rag mag and now thinks he knows it all.

Hmm, an interesting idea about the sales, but unfortunately unless a game is doing exceptionally well, why would software companies want these figures published?

Also, in our reviews we do indicate the age range that the game is aimed at, but we like to encourage people to actually read our text, rather than just scanning the mark.

Yes, yes, very subtle Mr Milnes, but if you want more in SUPER GAMER, buy more copies and persuade software companies to send games to us on time. Now there's a challenge.

Dear SUPER G,
I am writing you a short letter to say that your magazine isn't very good. Well that's what I think anyway.

I'm not intending this to be a mean letter, but I think you are losing a lot of readers at the moment. It's all very well for people with Super NESs, but what about the people with Game Boys and NESs?

For example in your November edition you had three reviews on Game Boy and on the NES – absolutely NONE! It's as if you worship the Super NES.

Okay, I agree Super NESs are pretty new, but it still doesn't mean you should fill about 74 pages full of previews and reviews for the Super NES alone.

You might be thinking this kid doesn't know what he's talking about, but if you put more previews and reviews in SUPER GAMER I think you will get a lot more readers and certainly a lot more money coming in.
Daniel Watts, Loughborough.

Oh god, here we go again! Why can't you get it into your malformed skull that we don't make NES games magically appear in the review drawer. They get... wait for it, written by software companies. Or rather, they don't anymore.

Almost everyone (even Nintendo) have stopped writing games for the NES because the Super NES has now fully taken over. What is the point of releasing software for an outdated and obsolete machine? Face it mate, you better get with the program or you'll never experience the joys of *Mario Kart* or *DKC*.



SUPER GAMER reviews ALL the games it receives. If companies don't bother to send their games to us (US Gold), then they will not get a rating – good or bad. No NES games have arrived for us to review since *Jungle Book* in issue #2. That's not our fault and you shouldn't blame us for the fall of the NES.

Nintendo always say they support their consoles for five years and the NES has had a much longer life – be thankful, but say "TTFN" and buy a Super NES. And no, we're not losing readers, but gaining them, because those who had an NES are upgrading to 16-bit, and guess who covers that – us. Stay SUPER GAMER and stay ahead. Proj on!

Dear SG,
I am now a subscriber and the issues keep getting better. I am really fed up with the number of platform and beat-'em-up games on the market. Sure, a couple of them are quite good (*Tiny Toons*, *EWJ*, *SFII: Turbo*, *MKII*), but these are rare exceptions.

Take for instance *An American Tail* – who would buy that?! It is so unoriginal. The programmers made no attempt to change the basic platform format. If companies are going to release games like this, they should do so at budget prices. And the really sad thing is that the mags (not SG) give the usual over-the-top ratings. It's ridiculous!

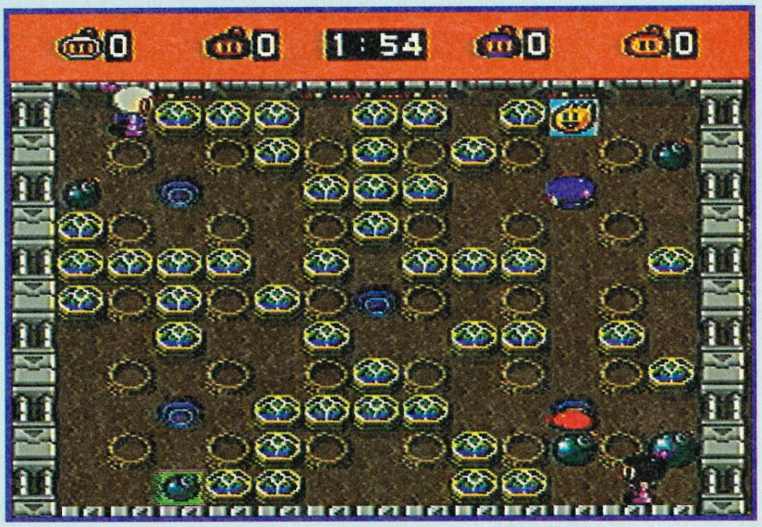
I recently swapped *Rainbow Bell Adventures* (which I bought for £11!) for *Cool Spot*. What a waste of a fiver! I played it once and had no desire to play it again. The graphics are great, but the gameplay is so damn unoriginal. I have recently swapped it for *Sensible Soccer* (a great game) and while I was doing so I noticed many other copies of *Cool Spot* piling up on the shelf.

Beat-'em-ups are the same – if not worse. *Fatal Fury*, *Fighter's History*, *Art of Fighting* – they are all the same. And they all cost over £50. What a rip-off!

When companies bring out an original game (*Super Bomberman*) it is an instant success. Why can't companies take a hint – ORIGINALITY.
Hugh Robertson, Glasgow.

Absolutely. Unfortunately the people who decide what games are produced and whether or not to release them are all-too often gin-swilling suits who wouldn't know a decent game if it slapped their Gordan Gecko braces, nicked their company Jag and ram-raided Tescos!

Companies can't take the hint, Hugh, because producing a top notch original game like



Bomberman takes effort and talent – none of which are in their vocab. Maybe if they listened to us for a change...

Dear SUPER GAMER,
I have enjoyed reading your letters section over the last few months and truly appreciate its sensible content. So, I'm confident that you will endeavour to give me an intelligent reply to my following enquiry.

Are you aware of any plans to produce the word game *Scrabble* for the Super NES (I can almost hear the heated cries of "Boring old git!" and "What a waste of space." from your readers).

I'm a devotee of *Scrabble* and enjoyed playing the antique Commodore 64 version of some years ago, although admittedly, it was somewhat limited in its vocabulary, being only an 8-bit machine.

I feel the Super NES with its advanced technology could do the game proud.
R Newman, Ashton-under-Lyne.

Rob! Aw, man I love your stuff: Jarvis, the mood painting, History Today, People of Restricted Seriousness – how's David Baddiel by the way? What do you mean, who?

Mr Newman, do you seriously expect me to reply intelligently to a question about *Scrabble* on the Super NES? Come on, who on earth, other than you, would want to play that?

What's wrong with finding a friend to sit and play the real thing – are you *that* sad? I think the chances of a software company in this bleak economic climate producing a game, which, to be fair, would be a niche of a niche, of a small ledge with an albatross nest perched on it game are about... zero.

Sorry, but there are no plans for such a game.

However, you can take solace in the fact that I now know that Ashton-under-Lyne must be the most boring place on earth, to make sane people want to play *Scrabble* instead of *DKC*.

My advice; get a Dictionary; meet a friend and play good old cardboard and plastic *Scrabble* 'till your heart's content. That sensible and intelligent enough for you?

Dear SG,
Pirates sod off! Especially Mr Fanatical reader from Wibble Land (learning the code my arse). When will goits like him admit that Wildcards are a big pile of crap?

My mate bought one and he asked me around for a bash. After one hour's play the Super NES and Wildcard were so hot and the games loaded so slowly that he had to turn it off. Believe me, they are a complete waste of money.

His cost £280, that's the equivalent of seven £40 carts, all of which will load instantly. I have 14 games in all, and I am very proud of them all, and when I stick one in the slot I wish to play it for more than one hour thankyouverymuch.

Yes, you naughty people *do* get games sooner, but they tend to be incomplete versions of b***** fighting games where the boss says everything twice, or a fast ball game which has lines of code flashing where the basket should be.

I know I am lining the fat cat's pockets (although 50% of my carts are second hand), but they do actually have overheads to pay, and sometimes, if the game oozes quality, I don't mind paying top money for it (*MKII*, yes, yes, yes!).

After all, what I get for my money is a fancy box, a permanent cart full of ROM chips, and even a book. Pirates get a couple of semi permanent worthless 3.5" high density disks full of dodgy incomplete code.

Personally I don't give a monkey's chuff what you do with your disks, but as a cart user I am more selective in my purchases and therefore feel I get more enjoyment from my games.

As pirates I presume that you all copy any old crap so therefore your games collection must be made up mostly of games that were condemned to software hell. Enjoy them all.

John Parkin, Barnsley.

PS Your *MKII* review was cock on!

Many thanks for your strong views, John. Couldn't agree with you more. By the way, what the hell does "cock on" mean?

Dear SUPER GAMER,

I don't want to be a complainer, but I think the magazine is sinking a little lower. For £2.50 per month, I think that this is not the best you can do. Okay, you are doing extremely well (I think), but these are my ideas for your mag.

1. Pages. Where are all the pages? On the first two issues you announced that there was over 130 pages, but now you are wearing slightly thin.

To fill the pages I would recommend readers' ads. One with swaps, for sale, wanted etc. I actually read these for good value bargains.

Also, what happened to the tips? After all you are SUPER XS and well known for your solutions. Why don't you also issue a free T-shirt for the best tips? That always gets me writing.

2. Subscriptions. Instead of an old tips book that came out five years ago, introduce a SUPER GAMER binder. One with the SG logo on it. This could be on sale (roughly £7).

3. Free gifts. The *Earthworm Jim* supplement was okay, but it wasn't what I wanted to read through cover to cover. I would prefer tips books or Action Replay books, posters, badges etc... mostly every month.

Now, after my moaning could you answer my questions?

1. I heard rumours that a *SSFIIX* is appearing in a straight conversion. Is this true?

2. Apparently, *SSFII* is being released in UK, PAL, next spring at £80. If this is a 32Mbit cart and Sega's *SSFII* is £40 for a 40Mbit cart. Why is this?

3. Are you going to replace the NES in SUPER GAMER for the Ultra 64 (stupid name). The NES is extinct. Why not replace it?

After all my complaining, you mag is still brill.

Yew-Ming Loo, South Harrow.

At last someone has the balls to comment, good or bad, on the state of SUPER GAMER. Please can I have more input on the magazine, including your opinions on the features (are they in-depth enough, do you like the interviews, who would you like us to approach?), the review structure (do you always agree with us?) and the general look of the magazine.

First of all, Yew-Ming, the 132 pages in the first three issues was a reader offer and one that meant we could cover all the games that had appeared since the end of SUPERPRO and the inception of SUPER GAMER.

Personally, I would much prefer to have that many pages every month because I enjoy giving games more coverage and filling SG with interesting features and articles.

Unfortunately, the nature of the video games market means that costs are prohibitive and time is a factor. Remember, unlike some hugely over-staffed magazines, we produce our fine tome with just four people, and that includes an editor, designer and just two staff writers.



If every SUPER GAMER reader buys two copies, I guarantee we will add more pages and gifts!

Also, Yew-Ming, all the other magazines in the sector have the same number of pages, but because they are printed on a cheaper and more absorbent paper, they appear thicker. Quality counts.

I like the readers' ads idea, but I haven't a clue how many readers will be interested. Okay, here's the deal. Next issue I will give you one page to fill with your ads. This will include swaps, anything for sale (games, hardware) and items wanted. It will be FREE to advertise, so just send your items along with your telephone number to *Super Gamer Free Ads, Durham House, 124 Old Christchurch Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 1NF.* Remember, if you don't fill the page every month, it won't go in, so get those ads to me now.



Hope you enjoy the tips book on the cover of this issue, Yew-ming, and the new and improved tips section this issue. Like you, I was concerned that the tips were getting forgotten because of the number of new and exciting reviews, but that's over now.

From now on in SUPER GAMER we will be serialising solutions for all the top Super NES and Game Boy games, including *DKC*, *EWJ*, *Syndicate* and *Monster Max*. If you have any ideas for games you want busted, give us a call.

Subscriptions. Hmm, there are plans for an SG binder but at the moment it's all tied up in the management stage (ie nothing is being done). I'll keep you informed. Meanwhile if you want an SG T-shirt, send £6.99 to... well I almost got that plug in.

How could you not like the *EWJ* supplement? We slaved over that for weeks, well days, well hours! Seriously though, this booklet was just like an extension of the magazine, and it meant that issue you got 16 FREE pages, including exclusive interviews with the programmers. Who else bothered to do this?

In the future we have some stonking promotions lined up (but we're not going to tell you or someone will nick 'em) and this should keep you moaning gits quiet for a while.

In answer to your questions.

1. Not on the Super NES, but possibly Ultra 64 (although *SFIII* should be out by then). *SSFIIX* is on the 3DO at the moment and what a pile of tosh it is too. Having just played the game I found it to be totally inferior to the Super NES games, with crap graphics, awful sound and one tenth of the playability of the coin-op. It's even worse than the Mega Drive version!

2. *SSFII* WILL be released early next year (probably January), but the price is unconfirmed. I find it hard to believe that Nintendo would charge £80 for it, but I have it on good authority that they are only releasing it for die-hard fans. As such only a few thousand will be on sale because they do not expect anything like the kind of interest generated by the first game. Let's face it, who needs another *SF* game?

3. Yes we will replace the NES with Ultra 64 (or even VR32), but that's when we have some definite pictures of the machine. Our sister mag, SEGAPRO, added the Saturn to their cover strap many months ago because Sega have at least had the decency to print stats and pics. Expect to see some changes soon, Yew-Ming.

That's it for another month. Remember, if you want to write to SUPER GAMER for any reason, send your letters to *Write Stuff, Super Gamer, Durham House, 124 Old Christchurch Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 1NF.* Also, if you want any readers' ads printed for swaps, wanted etc, send them to the same address but mark them "Free Ads." Keep those letters coming in and don't forget to tell us exactly what you think. A magazine is only as good as its readers make it.



Christmas, Schmistmas!

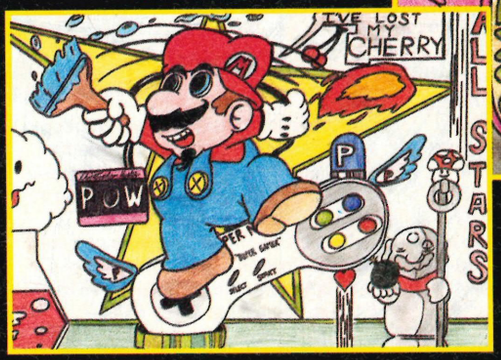
I know this is the January issue, but it'll be on sale at Christmas, such is the wacky world of magazine publishing. Anyway, a festive "bah, humbug!" to you all from me (Andy), and I hope that not too many of you die from overeating.

In the meantime, feast your mince pies over this month's assortment of aspiring artists. Things are starting to get a bit good, although my lack of faith in human nature has been restored now that people have started copying stuff again. The Bin of Shame is back!

Send your art to *Gallery, Super Gamer, 124 Old Christchurch Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 1NF.* Put your name and address on the back of the picture, and no, we can't return any, so don't bother to write in whingeing.



▷ ▽ *He finally makes it! Christopher Hughes of Wormley gets the T-shirt at last, by the simple expedient of making sure that six new pictures arrive on my desk every single day. He also incorporated the crucial Star Trek motif, guaranteed to make me give a picture a second look. The secret's out!*

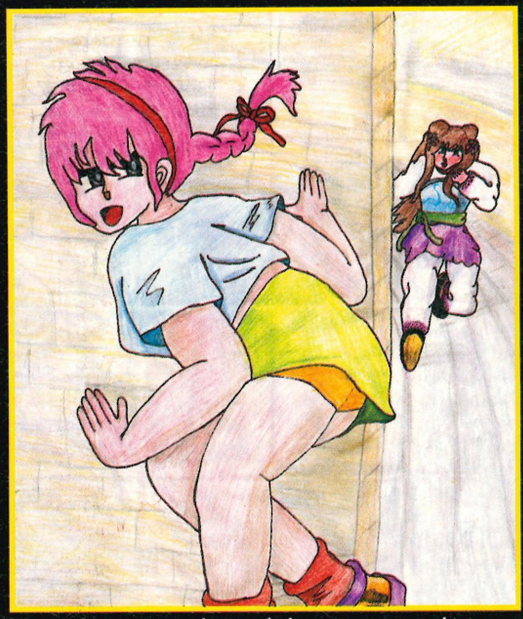




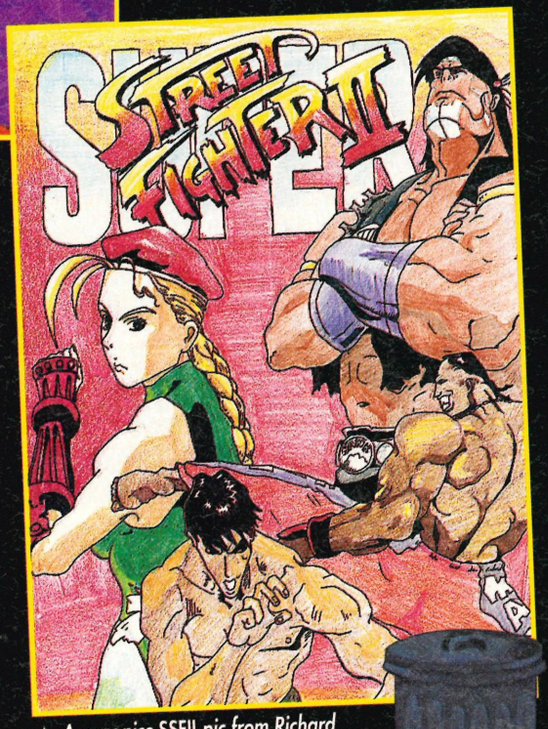
△ *The Mortal Kombat II "posse" "strut" their "stuff", with the help of the felt-tips of Ilford's own Marc Spender. Pretty good, although, as an artist myself, can I offer a tip? Practice really does make perfect – especially when applied to the process of drawing legs.*



▷ *Introducing our special "Low Quality Corner", even though the vagaries of page layout mean it's not actually in a corner. This month's pitiful specimen is from David Richards of Tredegar. It's traced. It's tiny. It's tripe.*



△ *It's Shampoo! Viva la megababes! Cameras watching when we go shopping! Flute player, play your flute! Oh, sorry, that's Gloria Estefan. And this is Michael Morrison, he of many appearances. Michael likes big-thighed girls in short skirts, which brings us, and quite neatly I thought, to...*

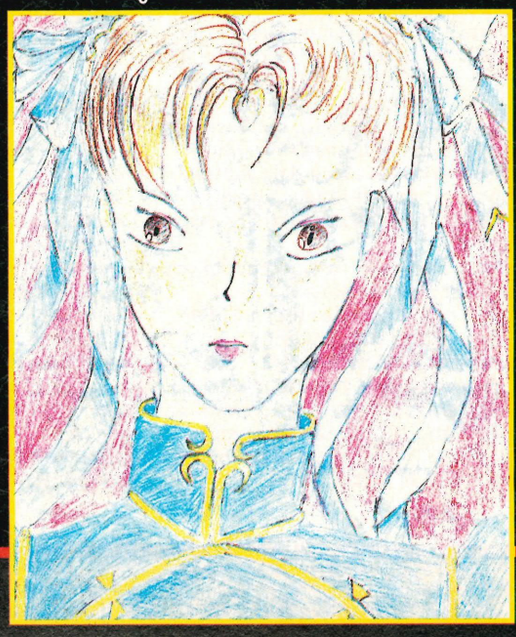


△ *A very nice SSFII pic from Richard Paget of Ormesby. But then it would be nice, being copied from the back of issue 5.*



◁ *Hey, that's an original picture of Earthworm Jim! Original in the sense that it was drawn specially for us by Shiny's Doug TenNapel for issue 8's Earthworm Jim special. Is that the clanging of an approaching metal refuse receptacle I hear?*

▽ *...Chun Li! See, I do plan these pages out. I don't just slap them together at random, oh no. Anyway, this Adobe Photoshop-enhanced pic of Chunners comes from Yvonne Tsang from Colwyn Bay, who was critical of Michael Morrison's artistic abilities (above), and also wibbled on about us mis-spelling one word in issue 6 before spelling "address" wrong in her letter. Hubris in action!*





ALL THE LATEST CODES STRAIGHT FROM DATEL!

THE FLINTSTONES

7E1CDA15: Infinite clams
7E1CFA63: 99 big stars
7E1D0002: 9 small stars
7E1CDAFF: 100 clams
7EB166A0: Infinite fly meter

GEORGE FOREMAN KO

7E01ED00: Listings of the game
7E067601: Super punch all the time
7E06900X: Round select
7E069A0X: Enemy select

MAXIMUM CARNAGE

7E0B7A30: Infinite energy
7E098E03: Infinite lives

MICKEY MANIA

7E060E03: Infinite lives

MORTAL KOMBAT II

Action Replay 2 only!
8087 0CA1: Enter this code before using any of the following
7E2EFAA1: Infinite energy for player one
7E30A8A1: Infinite energy for player two
7E2EE405: Special two player combat mode
7E022E08: Unlimited time
7E3286XX: Number of wins for player one
7E32820X: Level select (X is 0-E)
83A7448 0: Unlimited finishing time
7E30B001: Player two always goes to the fatality screen
85D75300: Stops the screen updating the energy
85D78600: Fight on a black screen (no background)
85E31B00: All characters are black shadows

7E2EF60X: Character select for player one. Replace X as follows...
7E30A40X: Character select for player two. Replace X as follows...
0 – Kung Lao
1 – Liu Kang
2 – Cage
3 – Baraka
4 – Kitana
5 – Mileena
6 – Shang Tsung
7 – Rayden
8 – Sub-zero
9 – Reptile
A – Scorpion
B – Jax
C – Kintaro
D – Shao Kahn
E – Smoke
F – Noob Saibot

7E326E0X: Background select. Replace X as as follows...
0 – Deadpool
1 – Kombat Tomb
2 – Waste land
3 – The tower
4 – Living forest
5 – The armory
6 – The pit II
7 – The portal
8 – Kahn's arena

JUNGLE BOOK

7E015E99: Gives you 99 red gems
7E015D99: Gives you 99 green gems
7E1D9B99: gives you 99 coconuts
7E0140XX: Level select
7E1DAD50: Float through levels

MECHWARRIOR

7EDC0B31: Infinite SRMH
7EDC0B27: Infinite MRMH
7EDC0B13: Infinite LRMH
7EDC0B62: Infinite machine gun
The above codes will only work one at a time. They will also work on Ragnorak Mech from the start of level two (after the defeat of the first member of the Dark Wing Lance).

SUPER PUNCH-OUT!

7E089F50: Infinite energy

SUPER STREET FIGHTER II

7E000CXX: DJ Edd rave remixes
7E00F014: Turbo speed equivalent to ten stars
7E053C0X: Can hit the enemy all the time
7E1D230C: Makes the game harder
7E05EDXX: XX alters player one colour
7E0636B0: Use with codes below for infinite energy
7E0531B0: Use with above and below code
7E0530B0: Use with code above
7E192999: Freezes the timer
7E053706: Ken throws fire on every special move

Is it real...



...or is it Mimicom?

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