

MEGAZONE

MORTAL KOMBAT

ARE YOU TOUGH ENOUGH?

FINAL FIGHT

JURASSIC PARK-THE BIG LIZARDS COME TO THE SMALL SCREEN

JAPANESE ANIMATION SPECIAL

DAY OF THE TENTACLE • MIG 29

BUSBY: IS HE REALLY BETTER THAN SONIC? • POPULOUS 2

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If you were

Why is their screen only one colour? Why that colour? Some questions we just can't answer. We make Game Gear.™ A multi-colour portable video game

colourblind

system with a monitor so good you can turn it into a mini-television. All you've got to do is pop in the TV Tuner which is sold separately. But the best

and had an I.Q. less than

thing about it is the games. And by now there are 30 of them available. Like Sonic The Hedgehog 2,™ Taz-Mania,™ Streets of Rage,™ Shinobi 2,™ and

twelve

Batman™ Returns. But don't think we're going to stop there. After we take a few minutes to catch our breath, it's back to the drawing board, designing new

then you wouldn't care which

games, and making sure Game Gear remains the number one colour portable, which should be no problem considering the competition.

portable you had.

(Of course you wouldn't care if you drank from the toilet either.)



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INNOCENT (UNTIL CAUGHT)

19 This comic sci-fi graphic adventure has a revolutionary character interaction system, plus it's the only game to feature SmuttiText and Virtual Pornography.

JURASSIC PARK

20 This game looks every bit as excellent as the movie. Check out the details and the background to this ground-breaking title

OK Megaheads I have some good news and some bad news,

Firstly to the good news - you're holding one of our hottest issues ever! It contains some of the years best games - Mortal Kombat, Bubsy the Bobcat, the outrageous Day of the Tentacle, Prince of Persia 2, Shadow of the Comet and Syndicate. They are all here, reviewed in all their glory. Plus check out the great posters and the article on the rise in popularity of Japanese animation.

And now to the bad news. This is my last issue...and maybe the last issue of the mag for a little while. Now before you start getting too upset, here's the story. Megazone has been sold by our publisher, Sega Ozisoft and bought by professional publishing house, Mason Stewart. They want to change the format and this means that quite a few of us regular faces will be going. But the magazine, in some form, will be back.

I'll be sorry to leave and I'll miss your thousands of highly inquisitive letters every month....(Scyeeah Right! And monkeys might fly out of my butt!)...but who knows, you might be seeing my face (or name) again soon.

Anyway that's enough from me. Your mission, should you decide to accept it, is to read Megazone from cover to cover, starting now....

This editorial will self-destruct in ten seconds.....

Mega Ed Stuart Clarke



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ISSUE

31

MEGAZONE

LOCKED BAG 7

ROSEBERY NSW 2018



Maynard at the Megazone office

MEGAZONE WAS BROUGHT TO YOU BY...

x mega ed
Stuart Clarke

x ed's helper
Adam Waring

art director
Tara-Jane Axford

graphic designer
Catherine Au Yeung

x gr
D

60 FINAL FIGHT-

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Maynard armed and daggy



CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISMS?

To those semi-intelligent non-humanoids at Megazone. We hate you!
Just kidding. Just print this letter because we have some important information for the WHOLE WORLD to hear... there are a few little things that we are not all together happy with....list time...

1. What happened to the review on Quest for Glory III? It looked as if it had been written by some incompetent who hadn't even gotten past the unreal intro. Oh, yeah, if the reviewers don't like adventure games, why are they attempting to review adventure games?
2. I think people writing in with hints and tips are great, but....not the same ones every issue. Now listen carefully, we already know that pressing M and L and L at the same time in Wolfenstein gives you all that extra stuff....so don't tell us again, we got it the first time around!
3. If one more deranged reader writes in telling us how great Amiga's are, then please just send us their address and we can assure you they will never be heard from again. How can you even begin to compare those little insignificant calculators to the might of an IBM compatible PC? Really, just think about it for a minute (if it's not too hard).
4. It's good to see these music reviews but what happened to GET A GRIP AT THE WHEELS? Come on, how about a little respect for the very greats of rock n' roll... we expect to see a review (a bloody good one too) in a future issue.

5. TO THE READERS - Please cut out the bloody ridiculous turtle language...you're not cool, you're completely gone in the head.

Well, we've finished out slugging off session and on to slugging on.... and perhaps a question or two.

1. The Ed's a most excellent person.
2. X-Wing is the best of it's kind. We highly recommend it to all those loyal PC owners out there but you at least need a 386 DX33 and Soundblaster to get complete enrichment and pleasure....ooh.....aahh.....wow bitmap explosions....ahhhh...

3. Madame Mimi's a babe.

4. Can we have a free game for this totally excellent letter.... something like Space Quest V? come on you don't get such constructive criticism from everyone!

From the Two Guys from Here, There and Everywhere!
(aka Dave and Fraggie)

That was constructive criticism? You boys must be bored out of your tiny brains. - Ed

MAG OWNER

Dear Ed,

Congrats on your majorly excellent mag. I've been collecting it since October '92 and it's the best one I've read yet. All the other mags are that English excrement which costs ten bucks each. I think it's great that you are now going monthly and that the mag has increased to 96 pages. I own a Mega CD and a Macintosh LC II. I think that you should do reviews on Macintosh games and I also have a number of questions that I desperately need you to answer.

1. When will the Mega Drive 6 button joypad be released and for how much?

2. I am going to buy a new Mega CD game and was wondering if you knew some really good ones that are coming out.

3. I think that it is totally stupid that they are trying to ban Night Trap and I want to know if it will ever be released in Australia.

4. Do you know if Lemmings 2 will come out on the Mac?

I hope you can answer these questions. Thanks.

Yours sincerely,
Sam the "Megahead"
Canberra

PS I think that when a certain Emma Taylor Ashcroft wrote in and said that she had turned into a She-dolphin that she was stoned.

Well Sam, we reviewed a Mac game last issue and will continue to review new and exciting games for the Apple. 1. Released anytime for \$69.95 2. Final Fight, Batman Returns, Ecco 3. Hopefully soon. 4. It should do - Ed

FAWN, LICK, GROVEL, SUCK

Dear Stuart,

Hi! I'm one of those sad people, whose family own a Macintosh and can't find any decent games for it. Happily I have a Mega Drive to keep me sane. But enough of my emotional problems. Firstly I'd like to congratulate you on a job extremely well done, for your June issue. Expanding to 96 pages and going monthly were both cool ideas (fawn, lick, grovel, suck).

Secondly, it's great to see that Australia can produce at least one better thing than the UK or the United States. Namely, Megazone. Practically all of their mags are 4/5 advertising and 1/5 crap. It's my opinion, (and about 17 and a half million Australians, plus a small ferret named Ralph) that Megazone is a lot better, and a lot less expensive than 99.991% other computer-game magazines (fawn, lick, grovel, suck, loyal, loyal, loyal).

Anyway, I have a few questions that I would really, really, really like you to answer (fawn, li..... oh, I've already said that, haven't I).

1. Can I have a job at Megazone, because I'm really good at making snide, cynical remarks about pathetic games and other game mags. I also fawn, lick, suck, grovel on command.

2. Is either X-Wing or Fate of Atlantis coming out for the Macintosh, so that my soul might be cleansed of unhappiness (then again it probably won't).

3. Would it be a good idea to have a readers drawing section?

Well, I now have to say adios, sayonara, ja mata, Au Revoir, later dude and all those other words I don't know the meaning of.

Ben Wickham,
Glenhaven NSW

PS: Print this letter or you will be Mega dead, instead of Mega ed.

PPS: Please find enclosed \$50 bribe money to print this letter.

Threats don't work, but bribes certainly do. Thanks Ben! Anyway 1. No. Too much crawling turns me off. 2. Fate of Atlantis is already out on Mac, and if X-Wing is being converted it won't come out for a while. Patience! 3. Yes. Send in all quality drawing...and they have to be quality or they go straight in my bin - Ed



You got somethin' to say?? then write

THE RETURN OF CONFUCIOUS

Dear Stuart,

I would just like to say that I love you, I love how you do your job as editor, I love the way you are going to publish this letter.. For love lets the world live in harmony.

Well, I think you have guessed by now this isn't an ordinary letter..... right well, it's me again - Confucious, ready for another monthly dosage of psychology. Firstly, I took heed of your advice about the Super Nintendo and resubscribing to your mag. I bought a new Mega CD a few months ago and am currently in the process of resubscribing.

Here are this months questions, oh mighty pillar of the community:

1. Is Streetfighter 2 Champion Edition or Hyper fight coming out on CD format ?
2. Why is that thing growing out of yourwait a minute, this is a public mag isn't it. We can't have that kind of bird do-do being published can we!
3. What do you think of the song, "Detachable Penis"? I think a few readers can relate to it.
4. Can you explain what PAL means in terms of TV/audio or something like that ? I have humbled myself in relation to these questions, so please answer them Stuey. In issue 29, Michael Harvey harassed and abused me mentally, socially, politically, physically and sexually. This was about me being an old fool and he also took my girlfriend Feebie. He will be hearing from my Lawyer. Feebie, if you are reading this, I didn't leave you for the Mega-Ed. I

miss our naked romps at the swamp. Getting back to Michael Harvey, I am not an old fool, wakko and just got out of a mental institution.

Firstly, I have been reincarnated several times. Right now, I am in the body of Jarrod Trevathlan and he is sure better than my last body, which in fact was your grandmother.

Secondly, I am not a wakko. This guy, Jarrod, is pretty cool.

Lastly, so what if maybe in another lifetime I was in some kind of mental ward. It really wasn't my fault for the massage parlour massacre.

Hey, Mega-Ed, do you believe in reincarnation and all that crap?

I don't, Jesus is the way !

Yours in literature,

Confucious alias Jarrod.

PS: You see Jarrod is my alter ego. I am borrowing his body and he comes through sometimes, such as the last time. He's a true believing Christian who listens to Michael W. Smith. I'm a satanist who takes LSD and listens to Ugly Kid Joe.

Thank you Confucious. I love you to, but platonically, so don't get your hopes up. Anyway you big loony 1. No official word as yet 3. I like it, and maybe you can relate to it. I can't 4. It the name of the television system we use in Australia, compare to America's system NTSC. What it means practically is that you can't use an American Genesis on an Australian TV. And my advice to you - get a life now and you don't need to worry about reincarnation - Ed

OK Simon straight to the point 1. Go straight to a Kings Park NSW
Craft
Simon "I'm not afraid to have my real name printed"
And to Mario, stop abusing Sierra !
Gear and will it be any good ?
7. When will Mortal Kombat be released on the Game
6. Can I have a solution for Another World ?
much ?
5. When will Quest for Glory 4 be available and for how
4. If so, when and for how much ?
3. Will Sonic 3 be released on the Game Gear ?
2. When will the CD Rom drop in price to, say, \$700?
get a 386 or go the whole hog and get a 4?
1. I own a 286 IBM, and am about to upgrade. Should I
them. Now for the questions.
I'm getting one hell of a sore neck reading some of
Could you please stop printing the letters sideways,
mag 14 times over, waiting for the next one to arrive.
for the monthly, I was getting sick of reading the same
Egyptian room, and look in the middle coffin. Thanks
to leave. Now go back to the Rotunda, walk up to the
Boston" or whatever on it. Wolf will enter and tell you
gers, until you find one that does not say "Made in
into the gift shop and use the magnifier on all the dag-
read! For the Liberal Supporters in the July issue, go
and text the same colour. It was almost impossible to
issue. The review of "The Legacy" has the background
the letter, "Old Reader gets Eye Strain" in the July
annoying and totally bogus at times. I also agree with
issue, dudes, that all this snazzy surlie talk gets a tad
who wrote the letter titled "Cool Dude" in the June
Yo gnarly dudes, I strongly agree with Luke Drumm,
Dear Megamouth

SORE NECK

POOR, CRAZED SEGA HEAD

Dearest beloved, cherished Ed,

Now listen up and listen good. I am the proud owner of a Sega Mega Drive, but after scraping the bottom of the wallet to buy it, have found that I can't afford any games! You can laugh, I know it's ridiculous, but it's true and I'm really cut.

Already I have Sonic (that sexy little blue thing with all the spikes), Greendog, Quackshot and Afterburner 2, but have clocked them all 3,592 times! HELP! I want Ecco (that game looks totally rad) and Flashback. But one look at the price tag and my heart sinks.

No, I'm not sucking up to you in the hope that you'll send me a free game (but I won't knock it back if you're feeling generous).

I just want to know a few things...

1. How long will I have to wait for the price of Ecco to drop ? (I don't have \$120 just floating around !)

2. Should I wait, or if I do, will a better game come out just to jack me off ?

3. Can you tell me some names of some recommended games within my price range (\$80 or under!) I prefer RPG's or platform games.

4. And finally, a question I'm sure everyone wants answered... When short of cash, how do you persuade your parents that Sega Mega Drive games are a good investment ?

Thanx for your oh-so-precious time

Love always and forevera, a crazed Sega Head,

Mindy

I'd love to send you a free game Mindy, but I've got none to give out.

Try entering the competitions. 1. Ecco won't drop in price for a while (sorry), but look for sales at stores 2. It will be a long wait 3. Dungeons & Dragons, Decap Attack, Might & Magic, Phantasy Star II, Strider, Rambo 3 and Starflight are just some of the excellent, cheap titles 4. They're educational, give you good hand/eye co-ordination, are good for imagination, more interactive than vegging out in front of the TV, they keep you off the streets and most of all are a lot of fun! Good luck! - Ed

ORGASMIC SPAZ ATTACK

Dear Megazone,

I will not open this letter by having an orgasmic spaz attack over how good your magazine is. Instead I will say simply: "It is alright".

First of all, I would like to say that the rivalry between Sega and Nintendo has become way out of hand. I have an open mind and believe that both software houses are good and offer heaps cool games. BUT, why the hell do people like Alex Smith and lobotomised bits of meat like Jarrod Fox continue to bore our balls off by going on with this patriotic bull over how Sonic is better than Mario and other related jargon?

It is starting to look like a technology race or something and most people forget what it is really all about and that is ENTERTAINMENT. I wish someone would develop a Sega/Nintendo adaptor so we can play both their games on either system. Can you please answer a few of my questions?

1. Now that computer game censorship looms on the horizon, does this mean that we will see less blood and gore in games like Mortal Kombat (I hope not).

2. Will any of these games ever be released on the PC? X-men, Batman Returns, Castle Master, Buster Bunny, Sonic or Castlevania 1-4?

3. Silpheed looks bloody excellent. we will get it on the PC or nay?

I will now go and pipe some Iron Maiden and Metallica into my head. I like a good bit of death metal too, so I may as well listen to some of that too.

goodbye.

Dale 'el Johnson

NSW

PS: Do not think me to be a nerd, lest I come after you and rib your ribcage from your puny piece of dough you call a body.

You had a few sensible things to say but you ruined it by being an obnoxious terd at the end. Anyhow 1. There will probably be less blood and gore in general, or those games will be restricted to older players 2. Not in the near future, although there's a different version of Batman Returns available for the PC 3. Doubt it, but who knows at this stage. Now go and blow you head off with Iron Maiden - Ed

DOPED OUT CAMERA SHY ED

Dear Mega-Ed,

I found your photo in the February/March mag, and, no offence, you looked like a doped-out guy that had never seen a camera before!

Anyway, now that's out of the way let's get down to business. I got my first issue in December/January, and have bought your mag on the first week it's out. I own a PC, Mega Drive and hopefully in the near future a Mega CD. Now, if you would be kind enough (and I know you will, 'cause that's the kind of guy you are). I have some questions I would like answered.

1. Is there any chance of Nigh Trap coming out in Oz?

2. Will 7th Guest be coming out on Mega CD?

3. Which game should I get? Another World or Flashback?

4. Do you know how to get past Fire Phase 2 on the terrestrial plane of Chakan on Mega Drive?

5. Can you play Mortal Kombat and Street Fighter II with the normal three button joypad?

6. Will Rex Vector become longer in each issue?

Well, that's all for now. Keep up the good work and get Fil to think about making Rex longer.

Yours sincerely

Morgan Derera

Well thanks Morgan, I'm just glad that I'll never be in a position where I have to see a photo of your ugly mug, but seeing I'm such a nice guy here are your answers 1. Yes, there's a chance 2. No word yet, but I hope so. 3. Both. But Flashback is probably better 4. You lucky boy, I've printed a hint on that in the Hints and Tips section 5. Yes 6. No, not until we have heaps more room. Sorry. - Ed

Thanks for your kind words Mr/Ms Lover. 1. If you've got a CD-X and an import copy of any Mega CD game then you're going to have to put up with the slow-down. That's the price you pay for being naughty. 2. No, it's gone. Sucked in. 3. Yeah, Flashback, Bubsy, Jurassic Park etc - Ed

SEGA LOVER.

work!

Keep up the ass kicking good ones would you recommend? worth getting? If so, which there any cartridge games 3. Now that I have a CD, are start making it longer? excellent! Could you please 2. I reckon Console Freak is it my CD-X? miss a lot of Augs this way. Is keeps going and Augs too! I so all I see is snow but time loading, time keeps clicking by one problem. When the CD is

You got somethin' to say?? then write to MEGA MOUTH

CHAUVINISTIC SPUTUM

To a sexist bastard:

Anthony Mansour, you are a typical example of the chauvinistic sputum that is oozing out of society today. In your review of "Rolo to the Rescue" (June Megazone), you seemed to insinuate that it's pretty much only guys that twiddle Mega Drive knobs these days and that the only (shock, horror) FEMALES that do play, like the 'cutesy' games. Are you saying that we would be hopeless at anything else, or did you merely refer to the fact that many females are not so stupid as to go for the mindless violence ("BIFF-BAM-BOOM-RADICAL DUDES") that all guys supposedly love? I'm sick of having to put up with this crap that occurs so often in computer magazines. In case you didn't know, there are heaps of females that enjoy all kinds of computer games and an equal amount of guys that don't think violence is "totally tubular man". Please keep your sexist comments to yourself, and don't put me off a quality magazine.

From a Mega Drive owner who actually doesn't possess testicles, SA.

Woah! Thanks for that. Consider Anthony well and truly put in his place - Ed

I HAVE SEEN THE LIGHT!

Dear Megazone,
The first thing I would like to say is congratulations on your amazingly awesome mag! It's totally MAD! I have recently sold my Super Nintendo and bought a Mega Drive and a Mega CD! My friend Izac finally talked sense into me. So yesterday I went to church to tell the Father of my sin. Forgive me as I have now seen the light!!
Anyway, to the questions: 1. I have recently been lucky enough to score a copy of Night Trap, yes, Night Trap! This is the most brilliant game EVER!!! However, I have this

A SHOCKING ERROR CORRECTED

Oh Luminous One,
Excuse the phrase, but you don't know Dick.

The July edition's Cyberpunk article states that "The Running Man" was written by Phillip K. Dick, but it's author is actually Stephen King. A shocking error, I know, but if you publish a correction then you might just escape with your credibility intact ("What credibility?" I hear you ask. Well. No comment).

And, what's this I read, suggesting Arnie can't act? Of course he can act, but when you consider what he already gets paid, who could afford to pay him to do any real acting?

On a more serious note, I really enjoyed Paul Kidd's guide to game design, and would love to see similar articles in future issues (an interview with a publisher would be good). By the way, I was wondering if you could tell me which games Paul has designed (I promise I won't laugh).

Anyway, my PC is calling to me, so I had better go and keep it company.

Hasta la vista, baby.

Matt Moores

Yep, you're right Matt, we got it wrong. Sorry. But we're not apologising for saying Arnie can't act, because he can't...and that's just the way we like it. Paul has designed a lot of games including Lord of the Rings, Hunt For Red October, Back to the Future 2 & 3, Shadowrun (SNES), Itchy & Scratchy (Gameboy), Diskworld, Star Wars (NES) and Riders of Rohan. So are you laughing now? - Ed



DESIGN POINTERS

Dear Megazone Bitties,
Greeting with all the usual dribbly "I love ya mag" scraps shoved in for good measure. While taking a gander (as opposed to a goose) through issue 28, I made that fatal mistake of trying to read the review for Eco Quest 2. I love a trendy looking page as much as the next Megazone reader but I was planning not to need glasses before the age of 83. Any chance of making the contrast between the text and the background just a tad stronger? Anyway, now onto the usual question section:

1. Any chance of bigger and more numerous screen shots of games?
2. What's the best Cyberpunk RPG on the IBM line right at the moment? I don't mean groovy graphics or stereo sound (although it helps), just a really in depth Net with thousands of locations, characters and mini-plots.
3. Does Sierra run or plan to run any BBS networks similar to its US system with VGA graphics, etc....?
4. Why does Sonic's sidekick, Tails, have two tails? Being a Capricorn and an avid reader of the horoscopes on page 28, I'm pretty sure my life will just be wonderful until the next issue of Megazone.

Luke Drumm

OK Luke, your design pointers have already been taken on board 1. Yes, we're moving towards bigger reviews i.e 4 pages 2. Syndicate is good 3. Nup 4. Probably a marketing decision. It gets your attention, right? - Ed

STUPID

PSEUDONYMS

Dear Megazone Ed,

I am writing in to express my disgust at the appalling activities of some of your readers, who use pseudonyms at every opportunity. Well, listen up, I'm not taking any more of this utter nonsense. The next person who writes in and places a stupid name at the bottom of their letter will have their head shaved Sinead style!!! Ooooh, I bet you're quivering now!

Bruise Maccaveiny

The Great Barrier Reef, QLD

Was the reason for that pathetic excuse for a letter only to use that extremely unfunny pseudonym. Sorry Bruise, but you're a loser - Ed

MEGAZONE Locked Bag 7 Rosebery NSW 2018

MASTER SYSTEM OWNER!

Dear Ed,

When are you and your gang going to put more reviews on games for Master System, because in the June edition there were only three. I'm getting real pissed off that Mega Drive and Mega CD are taking over and also I've got some questions:-

1. When is Bubsy coming out on Master System?
2. Is Flashback coming out on Master System?
3. Is X-wing coming out on Master System?

Yours coolly

Michael Fraser WA

The reason we don't put more Master System reviews is this: 1. Not many new games are being released and 2. They're mainly crap. And if you think Bubsy, Flashback or X-Wing are going to make it to the MSII then you're a sad and deluded moron. Hint - buy a Mega Drive - Ed

MOUTH

HAVE YOU SEEN




THE LOST VIKINGS™?



Interplay™

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Irvine, CA 92714
(714) 553-6678

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SEGA IS GOING TO BE THE FIRST TO BRING VIRTUAL REALITY INTO OUR HOMES

Mega 2 Mania

The new-look Mega Drive and Mega-CD will be in the shops shortly, and Sega have announced a number of packs that make the Mega-CD (and the Mega Drive) better value than ever before.

A basic Mega Drive 2 with the *Sonic 2* cartridge will retail for \$299.95, the same price as the current Mega Drive. Special limited edition packs will also include *Columns* and *Alex Kidd*, plus a further hot title, changing by the month. Packs will include such titles as *Global Gladiators*, *Jurassic Park* and *Mortal Kombat*. These will cost a further \$100, selling for \$399.95.

The Mega-CD 2 has had its price slashed to just \$599.95 and will come with the *Road Avenger* CD game. Most attractive of all, though, is a combined Mega Drive and Mega-CD 2 package that will sell for the price of the old Mega CD alone. For \$799.95 you get both boxes of tricks, plus *Sonic 2* on cartridge and *Road Avenger* on CD. (Of course you can win this excellent pack by subscribing to Megazone).



The new machines should be available anytime now. The redesign is purely cosmetic and internally they function identically to their older relatives. All existing Mega Drive and Mega-CD software will be compatible, so no-one should worry.

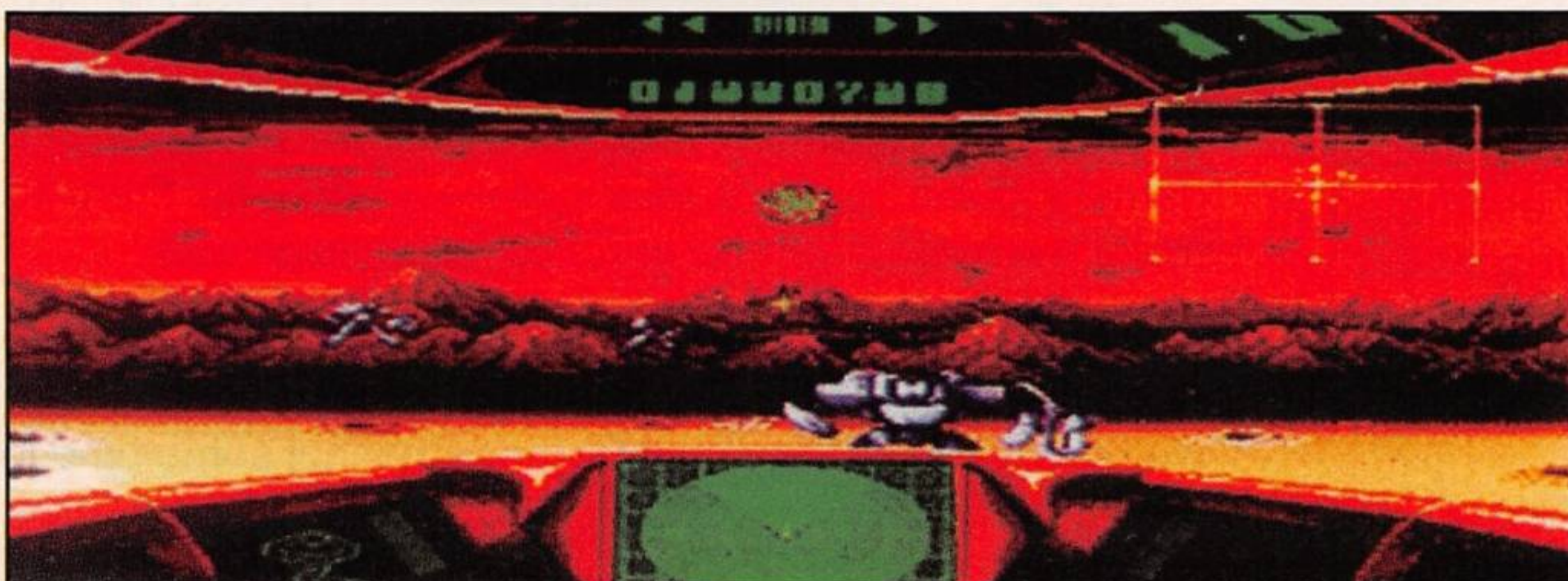
Sega VR - The 360° Gaming Experience



As we told you a couple of issues back, Sega is going to be the first to bring virtual reality into our homes. Yep, a head-mounted display will bring all the hot graphics and sound straight to your eyes and ears, while a head-tracking system delivers a 360° game world and an in-your-face first person perspective. And there's no need to even have a TV any more, as Sega VR operates directly with the Mega Drive.

One of the first 360° games will be *Iron Hammer* - a game of inter-planetary warfare. You will pilot a heavily armed Skimmer gunship on a high speed search-and-destroy mission to 30 hostile warzones. There will be all sorts of different and dangerous terrains, including water, ice, grassy plains and rocky outcrops. And your only ally in this hazardous mission - the digitized voice of your co-pilot!

As you can see, Sega VR really will take gaming into the next dimension. Sega are promising that it will be available in the US by Christmas, so Australia will be a few months behind (as usual).



The 360° view that you get with iron hammer.

Sega Saves Lives

Need a new liver? Have severe gastroenterological problems? Well maybe Sega can help you out...

Yes, a special Sega Ward recently opened in Brisbane's Royal Children's hospital, after a \$A500 000 donation from Sega in Japan. The size of the donation was amazing because corporate charitable donations to overseas institutions are not usual in Japan.

The Sega Ward will be devoted to treating children with gastroenterological/nutrition and severe general medical problems. The new ward and the Royal Children's hospital has assumed a special significance in Japan because it is the only hospital in the world now accepting Japanese children for liver transplants. Japan does not carry out transplants because there is not as yet any legislation recognising brain death.

A special part of the ward's opening ceremony was set aside for children already in the ward. They were entertained by Sega mascot, Sonic the Hedgehog, and a selection of hot Sega games. Sega Australia supported its parent company's gift by donating the games library and specially building and installing six mobile Mega Drive units for children to play the games on.

The hospital expressed its appreciation to Sega for its contribution by presenting the corporation with a special Care For Kids Award. Onya Sega Japan!



Cutting a special cake at the recent dedication ceremony of Sega Ward at Brisbane's Royal Children's Hospital... guests-of-honour 11-year old Rhonda Natera and 7-year-old Yuya Kinoshita with Sega Enterprises' Mr. Kazutoshi Miyake and Sega-Ozisoft's Mr. Kevin Burmeister.

GAME TV

Imagine having access to an entire library of Sega games available 24 hours a day. Sound like science fiction? Well, starting with a test market in Autumn 93, cable viewers in the US will be able to subscribe to The Sega Channel, a game player's dream come true.

The Sega Channel will offer subscribers a well stocked and constantly updated library of the hottest games. There's no need to even get out of your pyjamas to try out new games - they'll be downloaded directly into the Mega Drive.

Sega has teamed up with Time-Warner Entertainment Company (the world's biggest media company) and Telecommunications Inc. (the world's largest cable company) to bring avid gamers the latest in interactive technology. For a low monthly fee (currently estimated at US\$10-\$15 per month), Sega Channel subscribers will be able to choose from a wide selection of popular previews, soon-to-be-released titles, gameplay tips, news, contests and general Sega info.

Subscribers get a special tuner/decoder cartridge

that plugs into the cartridge slot and attaches to the television cable. A menu on the TV screen will allow you to select any game, preview or other program material. The selected game is available in minutes, and plays just like the cartridge version, and as long as your unit is turned on you'll have unlimited play of the game of your choice.

So how will the Sega Channel affect cart sales? Well Sega America believes it will increase them in just the same way that radio increases music sales. Just like a particular song sells more copies after receiving "radio air play", particular games will increase sales with "cable TV play". With the Sega Channel everyone benefits - Sega gets a great new forum to show off products and gamers get a taste of new games - allowing them to make the most informed purchasing decision ever.

There's no word on anything similar happening in Australia, but with Pay TV hopefully up and running soon we may have our very own Games Channel some time in the future...



Street Fighter 2 Champion Edition - We're Still Waiting!

Yeah, I know. You're all sick of waiting....waiting...waiting.... Well, you're just going to have to be patient, because there's still no confirmed news of a release date. It's out in Japan and the US, and Megazone has had the game for the last few months, but there's been contractual problems with Capcom and Sega in Europe and Australia. We will hopefully see the game next month, but don't quote me on that!

But you'll all be pleased to know that it's definitely worth waiting for. Graphics are great, playability is awesome and it's fast!



Spunky New ROADSHOW

The spunky new "street tough" Sega Roadshow is doing what it does best...going on the road. There are two high-tech and big-fun game palaces: one touring NSW and Queensland and the other taking care of Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia. They go all around the place, so watch your local papers for details and you could be in Sega heaven for an hour or two. The Roadshows will have all the very latest games, plus expert Segaheads to answer your questions. Two big boofheads, Anthony and Nick, look after the NSW/Qld leg, and the spunky Kayte and Matt are in Vic/SA/WA. Go and hassle them (and tell them the Mega Ed sent you!)

For details of locations you can call **0055 22844**. It's 70c per minute, so if you're under 18 ask for permission.

■ The mystery movie director who's working on LucasArts' latest interactive adventure, **The Dig**, is none other than **Steven Spielberg**. He'll be working with noted game designer Brian Moriarty (Loom, Beyond Zork) on the hot space exploration game. It won't arrive on Australian shores until next year, but should be worth waiting for.

■ No word on X-Wing coming to Mega CD, but the awesome **Rebel Assault** will definitely be coming on CD to Sega. We've seen a demo, and it looks absolutely incredible.

■ Bill Clinton's been US President for quite a while now, it's about time he got to star in a video game. What, he's too boring? Well, what about his cat, Socks? OK then, get ready for **Socks Rocks The House**, which sees America's First Feline out to save Washington DC from terrorists. Coming soon to the Mega Drive.

■ We've already seen one 7 Up icon get his own game with Virgin's excellent **Cool Spot**. Now the other lemonade figurehead, **Fido Dido**, is getting a spin on the Mega Drive. Due early next year.

■ **Streets of Rage 3** is going to be a 24 Meg monster, and should be out near the end of the year. Axel, Blaze and Skate will be back, but Max will be taking a well-earned leave of absence. In his place will be a new head smasher named Bass. Sega are boasting improved fighting skills, more weapons and more levels. Should be totally HUGE!

■ **Desert Demolition** is the name of the **Road Runner** and **Wile E. Coyote** game for the Mega Drive. It's going to be a fast platformer, full of traps and obstacles, and the player can control either character. Beep Beep!

■ The winners of our Mega Superman competition are all very, very lucky people. The two to walk away with the Mega Drive plus a copy of Superman are Cameron Thompson (NSW) and Martin Collins (ACT). The five winners of Virgin's Superman game are: Michael Dunphy (NSW), Chris Chappel (NSW), Mark Watkin (Qld), Nick Novak (Vic) & K. Foote (Vic). And the winners of the Superman #500 comic are: Heath Cox (Vic), Gregory Whitehead (Vic), Stephen Bradshaw (ACT), Adam Bebbington (Vic), Paul Oakes (SA), Mark C. Ayling (Vic), Zheng Yu Wang (Vic), Michelle Green (Qld), Craig Williams (Vic) & Chris Chappel (NSW).

■ The equally lucky winners of the Campo's International Rugby game are: Johnny Chi (Qld), Glenn O'Callaghan (NSW), M. Campbell (NSW), P.J. Moffat (NSW), Malcolm Hislop (Qld), Glen Goetze

(NSW), David Silverton (NSW), Christopher Wilson (NSW), Benjamin Hobden (Qld). And the first name to be drawn also won the jumper from David Campese's back, and that lucky little Vegemite is Louie Kokoris from Belmore in NSW. Congratulations!

■ And the winners of the Sneakers T-shirt thanks to Video Ezy and CIC Video are: Adam Pulling (NSW), Jon Okulicz (Qld), Giuliano Marino (NSW), R. Oosterman (WA), Jessica Cox (Vic), Heath Hutchinson (Vic), Heath Cox (Vic), Nathan Dowling (Qld), James Mitchell (Vic), Sean Murphy (Tas), Michael McGrath (Qld), Daniel Bolton (Qld), Steven Marshall (Qld), Michael Austin (NSW), C. Dellevergin (Vic), Michael Roberts (ACT), Alexandra Smith (Qld) & Danny McCloy (SA).



BITS AND PIECES

ROCKET KNIGHT ADVENTURES



SPARKSTER is a Rocket Knight. Rocket, because he has a jet pack strapped to his back and Knight, because of his enormous great sword. He's also an opossum, but

don't let that fool you into thinking he's a wimp, as he's very tough indeed. He lives in Elhorn, a pleasant-enough place, or at least it was.

Throughout Elhorn, there once flourished a great and advanced civilisation. It was ruled by seven sorcerers who invented the Pig Star, a satellite to control the planet's weather so it was always sunny.

Then one of the wizards turned nasty. He bumped off all his fellow rulers and took control of the Pig Star. Now Elhorn is a terrible, dark land where you never know what the weather's going to do next (a bit like Melbourne, really).

Sparkster decides to do something about this predicament. He has to battle the dark one's minions, who look like pigs and drive about in tanks. It's a fast-moving side-ways-scroller with cute Japanese graphics. It should be hitting the shelves around October, and from first look it could be one of the platform games of the year!

Mega Drive • Konami



ETERNAL CHAMPIONS

THE FIGHT IS ON! This awesome 24 Meg fighting game looks like giving Street Fighter 2 and Mortal Kombat a real run for their money. You choose to play one of 11 of history's greatest fighters, each with their own martial arts style. There are over 35 different moves for each style and the disciplines include: Thai and Cybernetic Kickboxing, Kenpo Karate, Monkey and Praying Mantis Kung Fu, Hapkido Cane Fighting, Ninjitsu and Green Beret Special Forces.

Like Mortal Kombat, there will be a special fatality moves (here called "over-kill blows") which will finish your opponent in spectacular fashion. There is also Dynamic Play Adjustment which alters the game difficulty for fighters of different skill levels, different speed modes and an instant slow motion replay, so you can watch that fatality again and again. The game will take on an extra real dimension when you use it with the new Sega Activator. When you stand on the Activator, infra-red beams will translate your kicks and punches to the player on the screen. Basically you become the game character! Start practicing those scissor kicks now!

Mega Drive * Sega

THE SIMPSONS: ITCHY AND SCRATCHY



THAT LOVABLE DUO, who like nothing better than to kill and disfigure each other, star in their very own game of, erm, cat and mouse.

No, we're not talking about Tom and Jerry, but the Simpsons spin off that satirises it. Itchy and Scratchy star in a game that offers hilarious cartoon capers, with a dash of outrageous graphic violence thrown in for good measure.

The game's levels are titled in a similar way to the TV show's, Mini Golf Massacre, for example. Chaos then ensues as the pair get up to all kinds of mischief. This should be gruesome fun.

Mega Drive/Game Gear • Acclaim



TOE JAM & EARL 2

THE most excellent teen-aliens of funk have teamed up again! After boogie-ing their way through the first crazy adventure, the pair are back on their home planet Funkatron. Unfortunately some Earthlings have hitched a ride

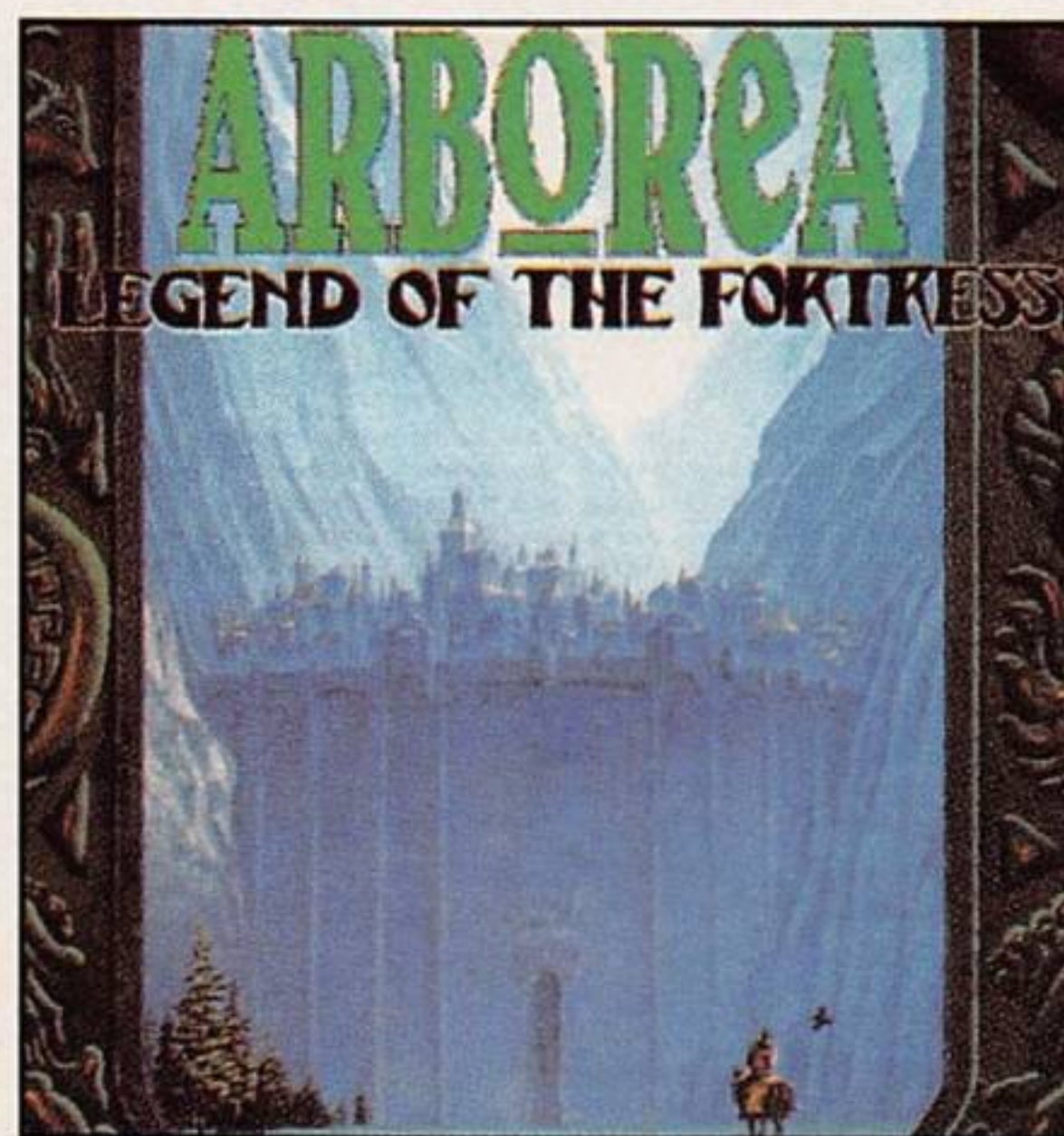
and are starting to pollute the planet (as humans do). In this way cool mission, the whacked out dudes have got to round up the human invaders and ship them back to Earth.

This time the game looks like to be a far more traditional platform romp, but with outrageous backgrounds from the fantasy planet Funkatron. The awesome sound effects and funky music will be back though in this 16 Mb cart. Should be available early next year.

Mega Drive * Sega



ARBOREA - LEGEND OF THE FORTRESS



ENTER THE LAND OF ARBOREA. Journey with your team to the fortress of Ishar to vanquish the evil Krog. Pardon? Well, that's what it says here. I think it means that you trudge around some medieval land, bumping into goblins and bashing them up.

It should be good, though, with particular emphasis put on the team under your control. There are 30 potential characters from which to build your team, giving the player mil-

lions of possible team combinations. Each character has its own unique psychology, so team members develop bonds and animosities toward one another. Oi, you two at the back, stop fighting.

PC • Psygnosis



F1

where you race against a mate; battery back-up to keep track of your progress (presumably on the Mega Drive only); digitised engine sounds and each driver has his own individual personality and competitive racing style... better watch out for Riccardo Patrese, then.

Mega Drive/Master System/Games Gear • Domark

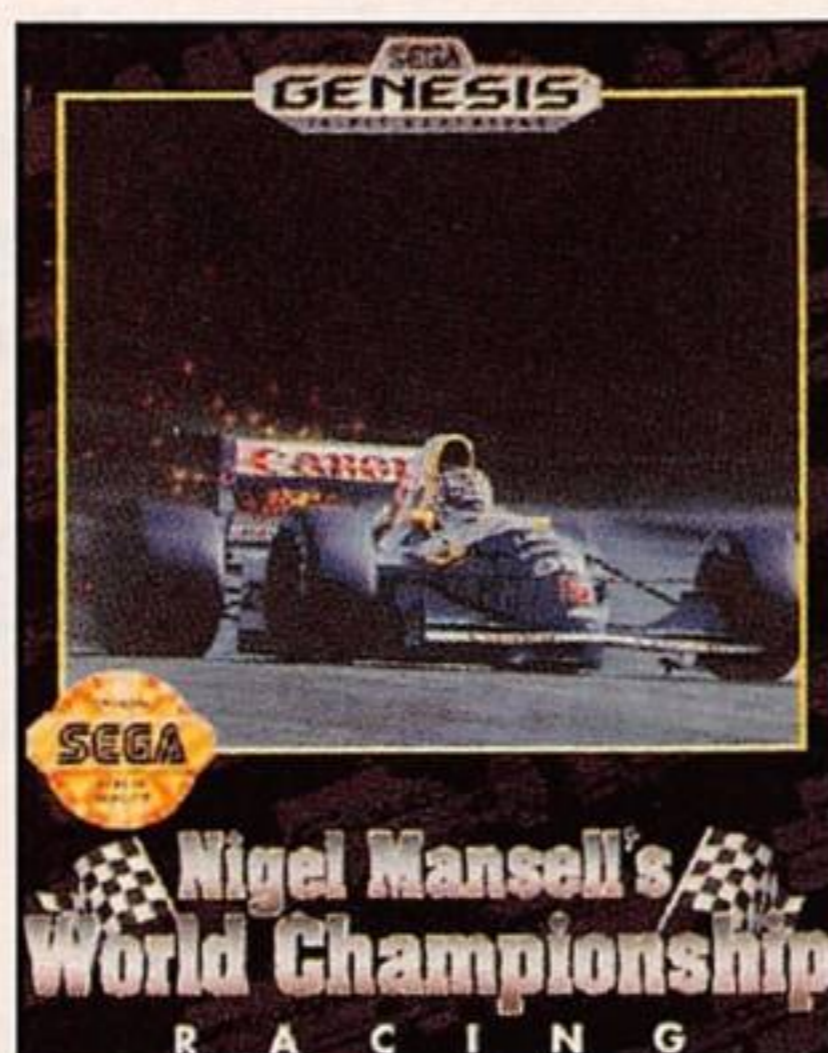
NIGEL MANSELL'S WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

OH NO, IT'S ANOTHER CAR RACING GAME!

Nigel Mansell is known as the most interesting man in motor racing. Or is it the man with a moustache the most like Saddam Hussein's? Whatever, he's pretty nifty behind the wheel of a formula one racing car (when he manages to make it all the way round the track without 'engine trouble', that is). He's put his name to a racing game for the Mega Drive. Realise your dreams - you can be Nige! Imagine the excitement of tantalising conversation! The thrill of meticulously clipping your moustache! Oh yes, you get to drive a Formula One racing car, too.

You can race round the toughest circuits of the world, in rough weather and competition that won't quit. And if that hasn't got you into a frenzy, then Nige will give his own personal advice as you practise the moves that made him a master.

Mega Drive • Gametek



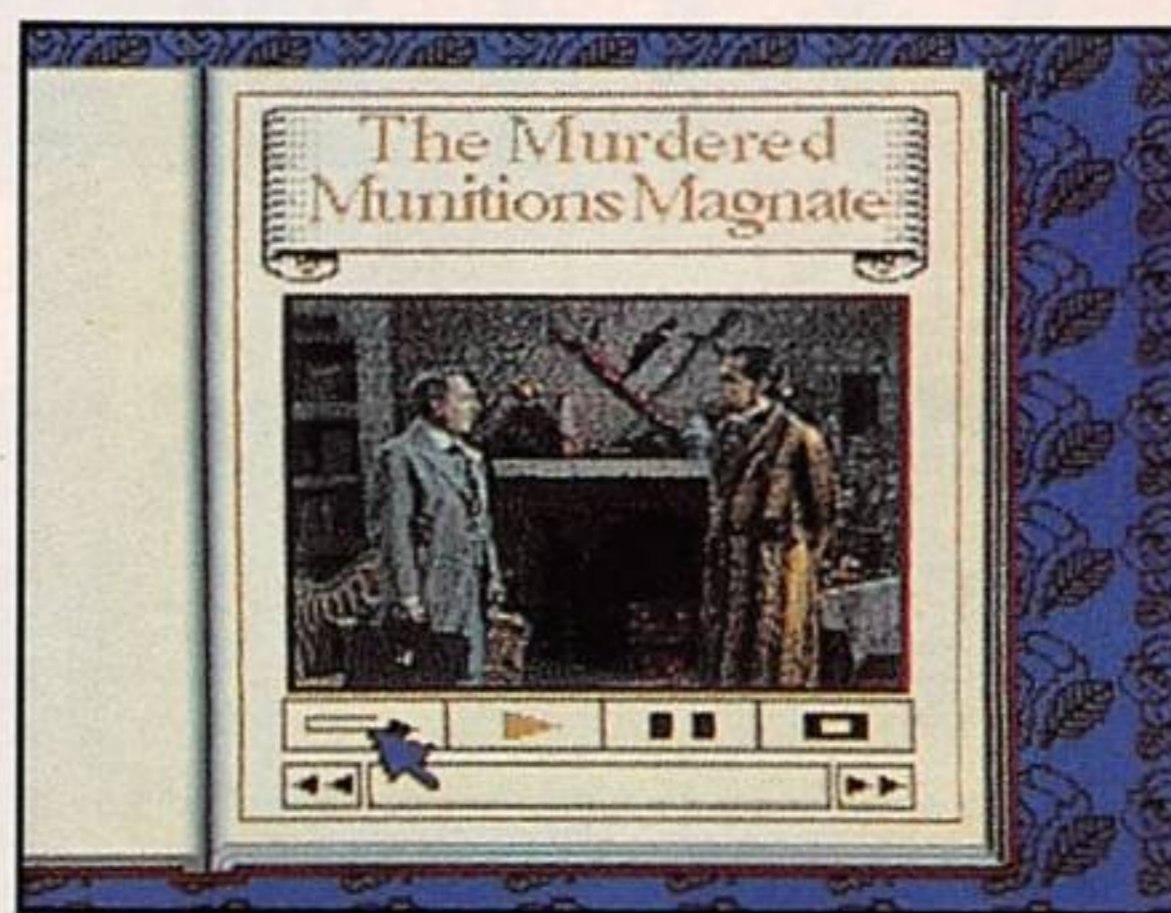
SHERLOCK HOLMES 2

THE CLEVEREST DETECTIVE to ever live is back on the case. No, not Columbo (though he is pretty good) but Sherlock Holmes, the Victorian Super Sleuth who can identify 346 different types of tobacco just from looking at the cigarette packet.

The dick has another three cases to crack. This time he's got to solve the puzzles of The Two Lions, The Pilfered Paintings and The Murdered Munitions Magnate. It wouldn't be the same without his ever-faithful sidekick Watson, pity he's such a

REV THOSE ENGINES, don those helmets and don't forget to fill up on petrol. The official Formula One racing game is making its way to all Sega formats soon.

If we're to believe the hype, then it's going to be something pretty awesome. Domark are claiming that it's going to be the fastest game you have ever seen. Hmm, we'll hold them to it. Other things to get you slaving like a dog are a two-player split-screen option,



dolt, though. There's also Holmes' chums at The Times, Scotland Yard and the pub, who impart valuable information. The London Directory holds the names and addresses of all the important people who you'll need to question.

It sounds very similar

to the first Holmes game, and if you enjoyed cracking those cases, then no doubt these will be a treat too.

Mega CD • Sega

DISCOVERIES OF THE DEEP



DISCOVERIES of the Deep takes you where no man has voyaged before...or so they would have you believe. The truth is that these days virtually every Tom, Dick and Harry has got their own personal deep diving sub, going down for a Sunday afternoon gawk at the Titanic and prowling round Loch Ness for a glimpse of the infamous Nessie monster.

Anyway, this game let's you join them. There are several different and dangerous missions. One takes you on a scientific research expedition to explore the Romanche Trench 32 000 feet below sea level, where there are new species to discover. Another has you searching for the missing black box of a downed airliner, and you must report and analyse your findings. And then there's the sunken wreck from centuries ago, full of hidden treasure! Ooh, how exciting...

PC • Capstone



SURF NINJAS

IT MUST BE a bit of a shock finding out that instead of being a surf bum living on the streets of California you're in fact the rightful heir to a small kingdom of an island in the

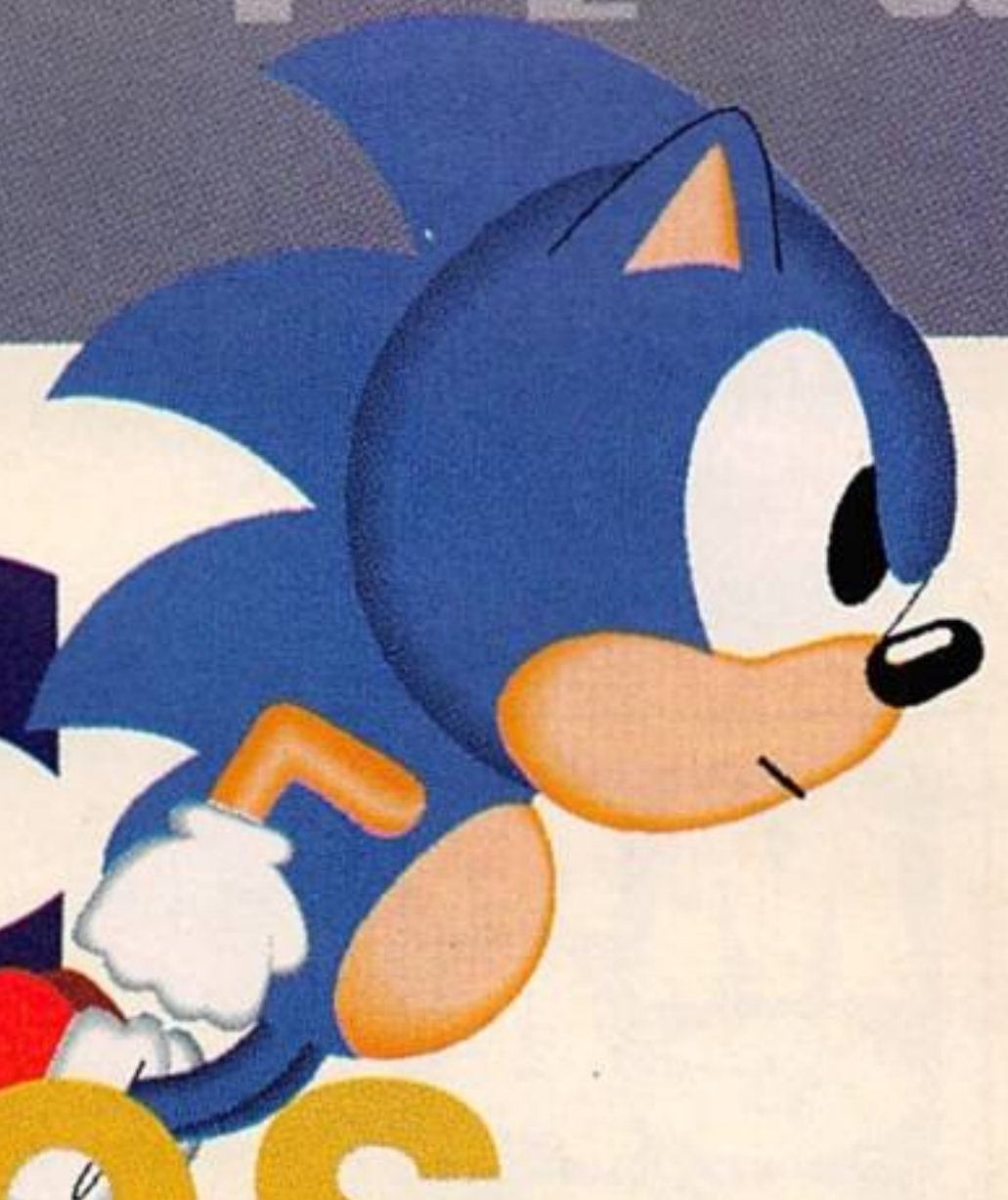
South China Sea. Unfortunately it's not so easy as packing your toothbrush and catching the next Air Polynesian flight out of town. Let's face it, it wouldn't make much of a game. Instead, you have to take on hordes on nasty ninjas to claim your place on the throne.

Luckily, you're rock hard, being a martial arts expert yourself, and have an arsenal of deadly weapons to help you reclaim your birthright. We're not sure where the surfing bit comes in though, but the forthcoming movie and game should tell us.

PC/Game Gear • Capstone/Sega



Here's a new SONIC Adventures



While the world anxiously waits for Sonic 3 and CD Sonic Time Attack, we can be more than entertained by these three new Sonic titles just announced by Sega.

Cue - Hedgehog fans go wild!

SONIC CHAOS

This looks like it's going to be a hard and fast Sonic platformer, just like we all know and love. And this one is apparently only coming on the Game Gear.



Dr. Robotnik is making trouble again (wouldn't you know it). He's already managed to snatch the Red Chaos Emerald, and if he gets his smelly, evil hands on the other five Chaos Emeralds he'll use them to make deadly nuclear weapons. Sonic will have to hit hyper speed to stop him, and even Tails is needed for this desperate double mission to protect the five remaining emeralds and retrieve the Red Emerald from Robotnik's grasp!

Sonic Chaos has some great new action features. Tails can go airborne to snag extra bonus items, while Sonic can latch onto his two-tailed friend and rocket to a major altitude in spring-assisted jumps! Sonic also has new Rocket Shoes and pogo sticks, and is ready to soar! With all these new tricks, this is going to be the fastest Sonic Game Gear adventure yet, with some mind-bending rollercoaster rides.

There are six zones and eighteen levels of dizzying high velocity conquest, including Scrap Iron Mountain, Aqua Planet, Metal Island and the Atomic Egg Zone. There are also two difficulty levels. You can play Sonic, roaring through the game with super attitude and super speed. Or maybe you'd prefer to play Tails, flying through the sky while retrieving extra bonus items?

DR. ROBOTNIK'S MEAN BEAN MACHINE

The third new Sonic-related title actually stars his nemesis, Dr Robotnik. And this time it's a Mega Drive puzzle game, along the lines of Lemmings and Krusty's Fun House.

The mad doctor's latest plot is really steamin' the folks in Mobius, Sonic's home village. He has invented a machine that turns normal, decent folk into evil robots. Village bean people are being rounded up and thrown into Robotnik's dungeons, there to await their turn in the steamer!

You've got to reunite four bean folk from the same clan so they can trick their hench-

bot jailers and escape! You'll have to watch the clock though, as you'll have to save the bean folk before Robotnik piles too many of them into the dungeon! Luckily though you're not alone against the evil Robotnik, as there's the Has-Bean, a whacked out robot who sometimes has still got enough "beanness" to help the player!



SONIC THE HEDGEHOG SPINBALL

Sonic the Hedgehog really will spin into action in this dangerously wild pinball adventure. Rotten Dr. Robotnik just can't chill out, can he? His latest foul creation is the Veg-O-Fortress, a volcanic island that has been made into a robot factory! Thousands of helpless animals are already Robotnik's prisoners, and the fortress is protected by the Pinball Defence System! So it's up to Sonic to rev up his Power Sneakers and Sonic Spin to save his friends from being "vegged"!

"Spinball" has five rounds of wild pinball action! Sonic lurches and lever-launches through glittering caverns, bounces by oozing toxic pools and flips over boiling lava pits! Added animation gives Sonic a great "cartoony" action, such as when he balls up and "squeezes" for a high altitude bounce. He'll have to deal with creatures like the Roboctopus, hedgehog-munching plants and mechanical worms if he wants to save his animal friends from Robotnik's plans.

Should be available on Mega Drive before the end of the year.

Should be available on Game Gear in early 1994.

Should be available on Mega Drive before the end of the year.

Microcosm is Psygnosis' latest CD-based treat. It's a Fantastic Journey-type affair, where you're miniaturised and have to enter the body of another human being (bleurgh!). The action doesn't take place on a cinema screen, though, but you will control the action on your PC (equipped with CD-Rom) or Mega-CD.

It all started when a VIP went into hospital to undergo a routine brain bypass operation. (It is a routine operation, as the game's set in the future.) All was going well, but when the doctor nipped out to the car park for a quick cigarette, a bad man slipped in a little brain-manipulation robot in order to take control of the patient's mind. We can't be having that now, can we? It's decided that the only thing for it is to shrink someone down to microscopic size and inject them into the person to put it right. Any volunteers?

You? Ah, well done! You won't regret it, because this is one of the hottest games since chilli-flavoured corn chips. The graphics are absolutely fantastic. The full-motion video knocks everything else you've seen previously into a brine-filled glass jar. You zip along at high speed through the human body, shooting antibodies and other things that try and kill you, eventually finding and destroying the little robot that caused all the trouble in the first place.

As I was saying, the graphics are breathtaking - just have a look at these screen shots. Or, rather, don't. Static shots simply cannot do this game justice. You have to see it moving to appreciate it properly. The footage we've seen is brilliant. Trust me.

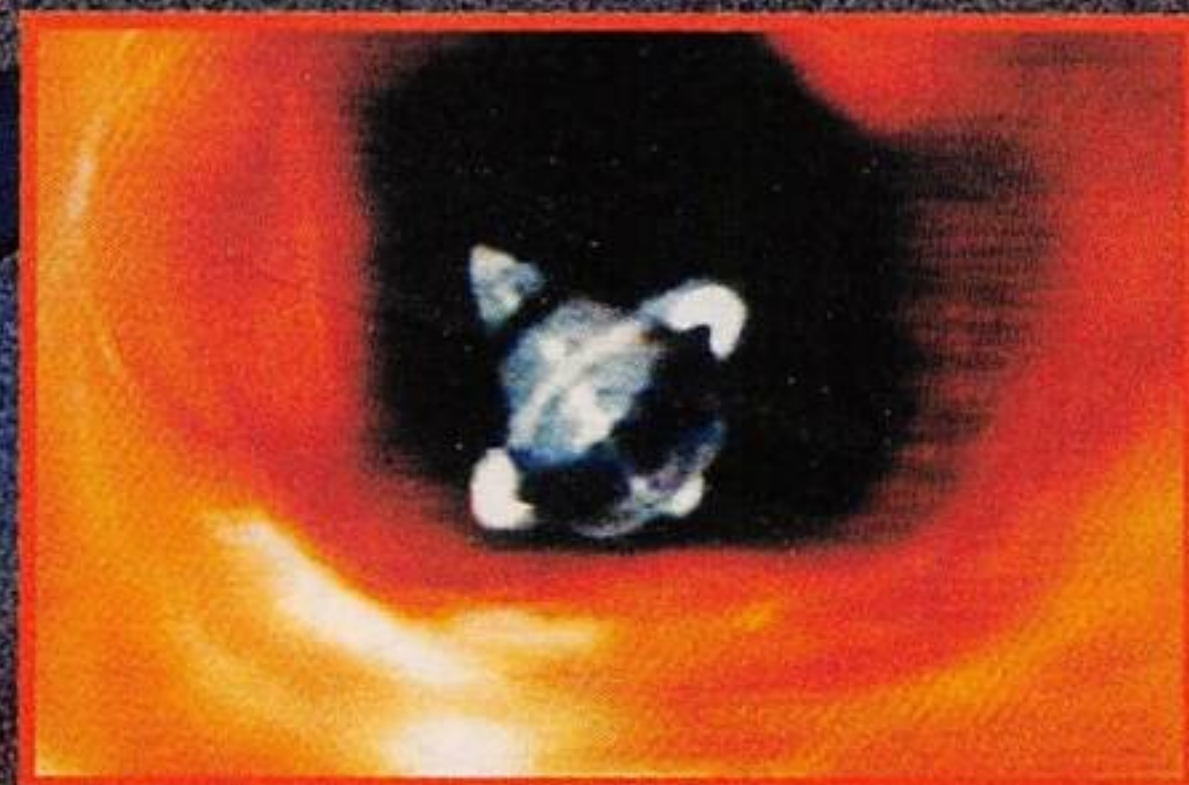
It was actually developed by Psygnosis for the high-spec FM Towns machine that's only available in Japan, but is now being converted for virtually every CD-Rom format under the sun. Development has taken over two years (and it's still waiting for the finishing touches) and a huge amount of cash. Posh and pricey graphic workstations have been used to create the complex 3D graphics for the game. Each frame of the original footage is rendered in 16 million colours and then squashed down, in the Mega Drive's case, to a measly 64. The technology is similar to that used to create virtual reality environments, in Microcosm's case a computer model of someone's internal arteries had to be created. Could someone pass me that brown paper bag...

On its most simple level, Microcosm is a shoot-'em-up. But the best goddam shoot-'em-up you've ever played, matey. It shouldn't be too much longer before it's finished and just as soon as it is, well, you know where to turn for the full review.



PC CD - ROM

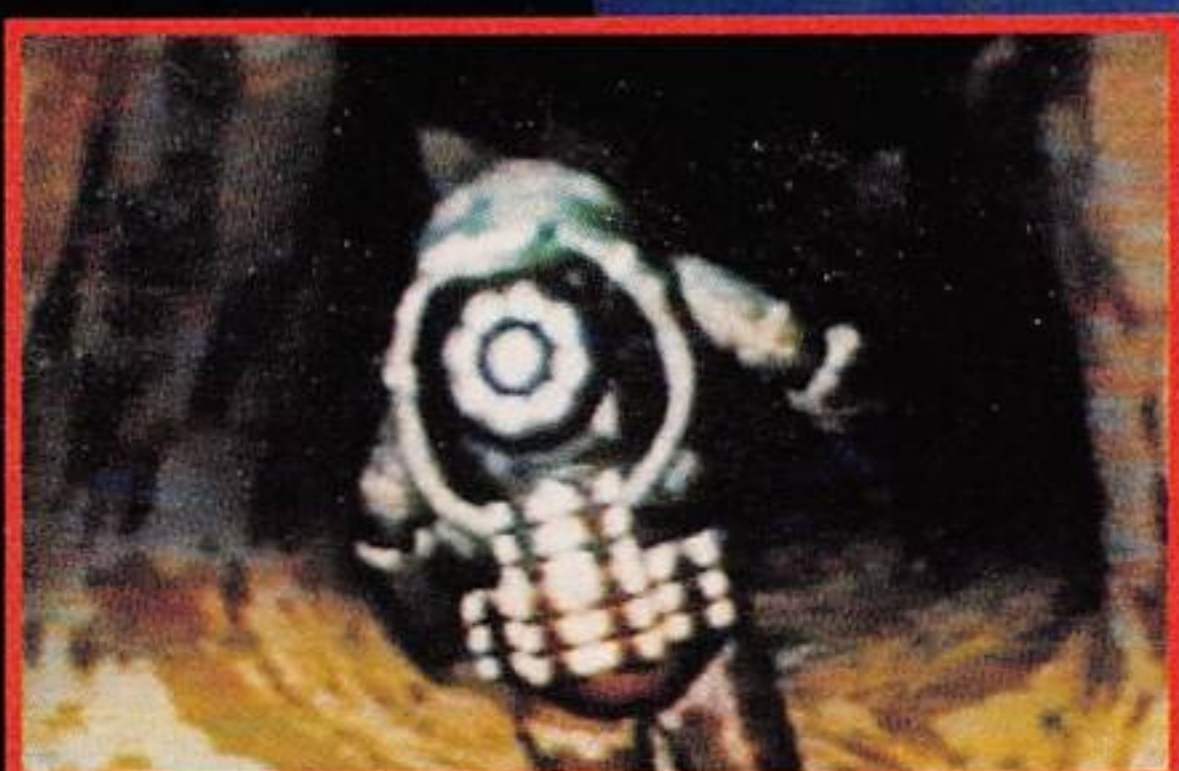
MEGA CD



Flying around someone's digestive tract isn't really my idea of fun,

MICROCOSM

but that's what the latest full-motion video game from **PSYGNOSIS** calls for.



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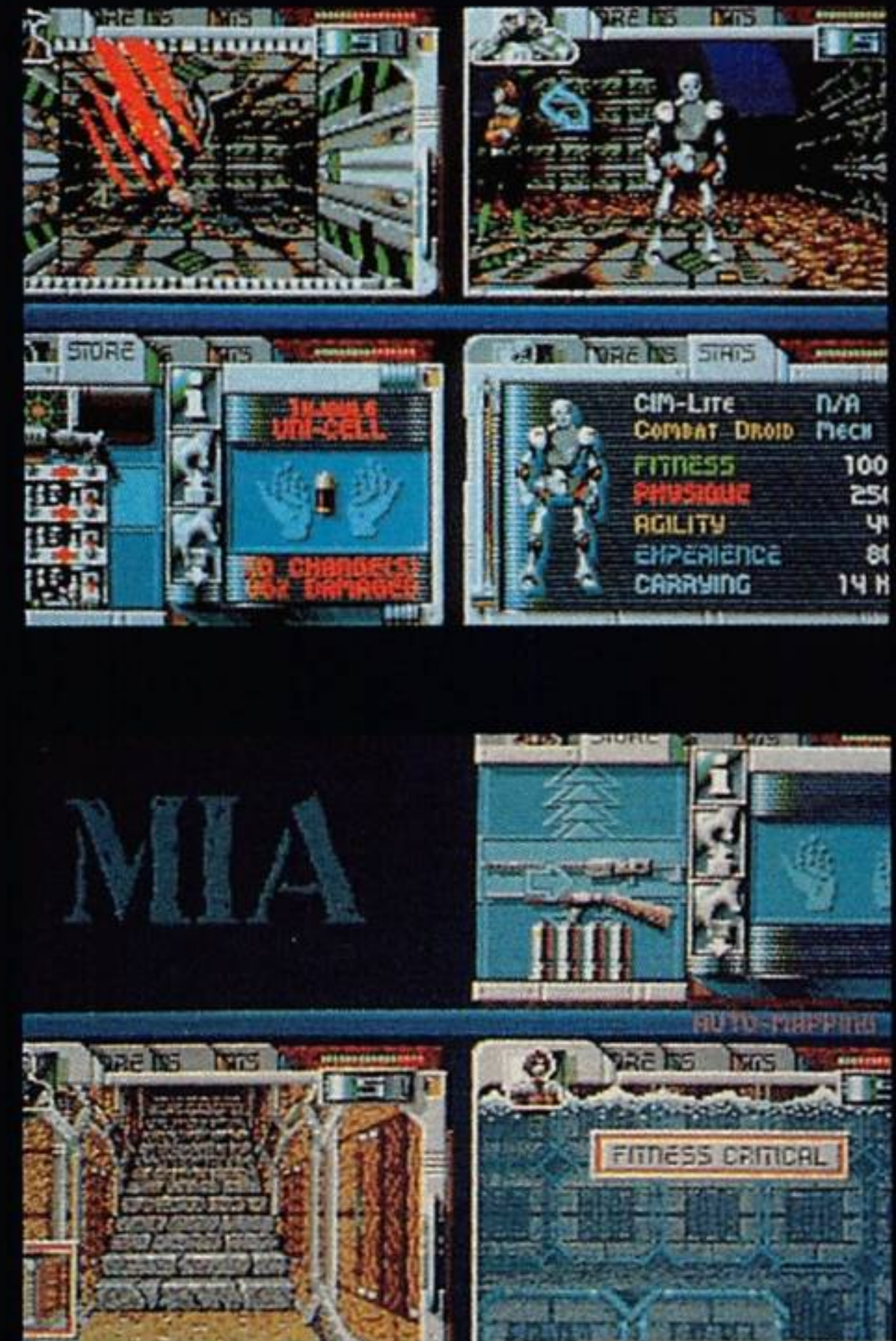
PREVIEW



THE YEAR IS 2707 AND MANKIND HAS, AT LONG LAST, LEARNT TO LIVE IN HARMONY. THE DIFFERENT RACES OF THE GALAXY LIVE AT PEACE WITH ONE ANOTHER; IT DOESN'T MATTER IF YOUR SKIN IS BLACK, WHITE, OR SCALY GREEN WITH POISONOUS PURPLE SPINES. AND GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS NO LONGER POSE A THREAT TO THE OZONE LAYER AS THE WORLD RUNS ON LOVE-POWER ALONE... **NOT!**

Pc/Amiga

HIRED



GUNS

Had you worried there for a minute, didn't I? Well, I don't worry your pretty little heads for a moment longer, though, 'cos there's enough violence in this game to satisfy even the most sick and twisted gameplayer's bloodlust. You're a mercenary and you're on a rescue mission. Graveyard planet's your destination and you're being paid to free a hostage, no doubt wasting plenty of bad guys on the way.

The big thing about Hired Guns is that it's a four-player game. The screen is simultaneously split into four first-person perspective 3D views. The players use a number of joystick, mouse and keyboard combinations to move around the game world.

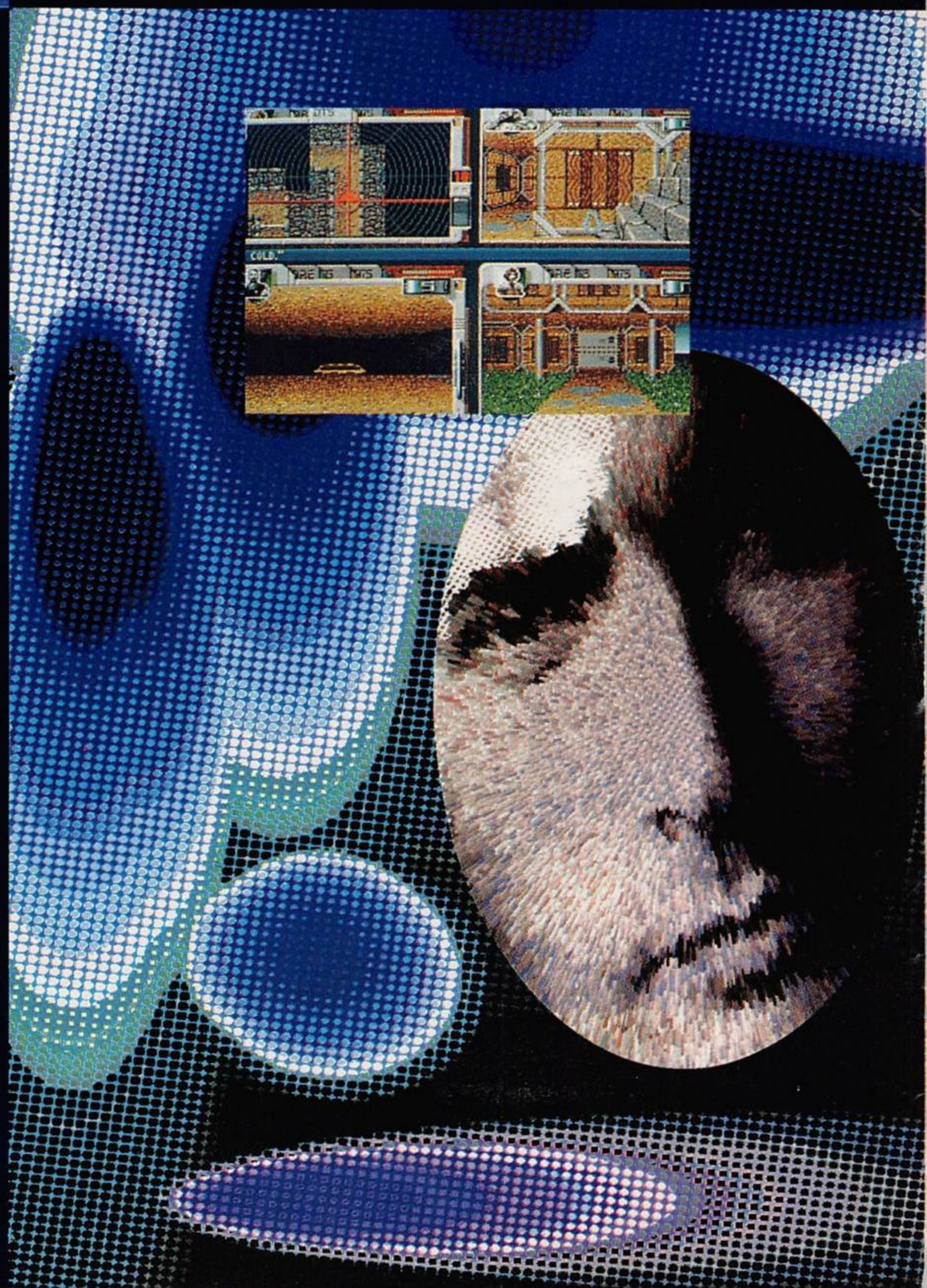
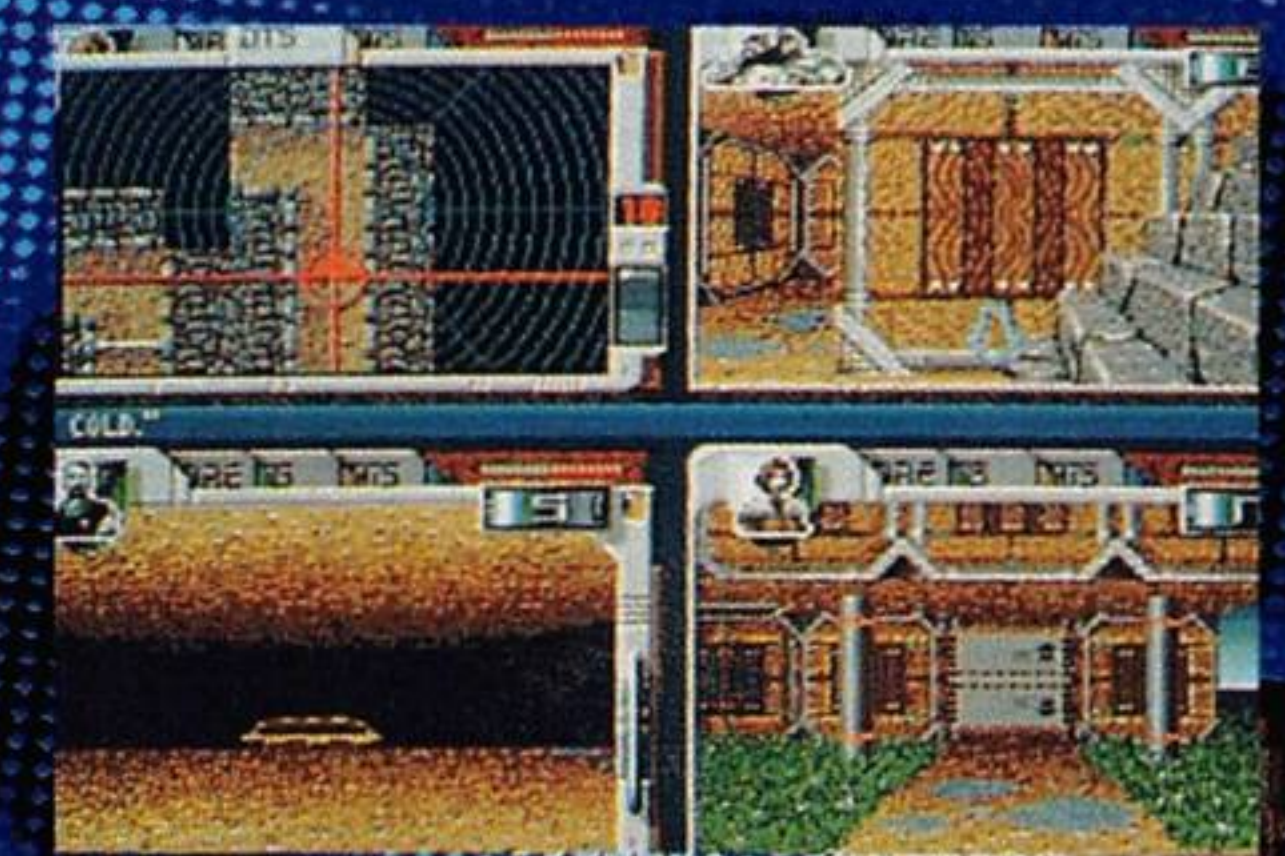
Gameplay has been designed to be as user-friendly as possible. It's a mix between an action and an adventure game and is split into a series of zones, which the players have to crack in order to get closer and closer to the hostage. There are heaps of logic puzzles to figure out on the way, with plenty of weapons and special abilities to hone your deadly skills. You can choose your player's likeness from a huge database of humans, robots or mutants. If you

have access to a digitiser, you can even slap your own mug shot onto disk for use in the game.

The game boasts a number of impressive-sounding features. There's a truly enormous 1,735,120 cubic metres of playing area to explore and get lost in; eight megabytes of data; over a megabyte of soundtracks and special effects; auto mapping; an on-line encyclopaedia of game objects, items and usage; and Guild VII Digital Terrain Processor mapped landscapes. Heaven knows what Guild VII Digital Terrain Processing is, but you have to admit it sounds pretty bloody impressive. The game can be installed to a hard disk, and so take up valuable space that you really ought to be using for real work instead.

All indications point to Hired Guns being something of a cracker, and, the big advantage is if you happen to have another three friends who are all speaking to each other, then you won't start arguing over who's turn it is to play next.

Should be available later this month.
Psygnosis



PREVIEW



TAX, EH? IT'S A REAL PAIN IN THE
BOTTOM AND NO MISTAKE. YOU
SPEND ALL YEAR WORKING YOUR
BUTT OFF, ONLY FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN TAXATION OFFICE TO
TAKE HALF OF IT BACK AGAIN. **Pc**

INNOCENT

[until

caught]

Filling out your end-of-year tax returns can be a complicated business. Oh sod it, I'm off to the pub instead. I'll stick the beer on the bill as a tax-deductible allowance — they'll never be any the wiser...

But they did find out, and now Jack T. Ladd is in deep poo, 'cos he's facing a tax bill the size of Australia's national debt. Having just \$2.65 in his pocket isn't going to be much help, so our lad Jack has to earn the money somehow. He's got 28 days to come up with the loot, or else. Exactly what "else" is, isn't specified. But I'd imagine it wouldn't be too pleasant.

Your job is to take Jack through an assortment of planets, cities and bars, and drink lots of space beer. No, that can't be right. Your task is to make Jack financially solvent again, so he can pay the bill and get the tax man off his back. Looks like you'll have to involve Jack in a bit of wheeling and dealing, a bit of this, a bit of that, maybe armed robbery would do the trick?

Innocent (Until Caught) is a graphic adventure that holds lots of promise, and is certainly a contender for this year's biggie. Though it sounds seriously

sci-fi, it's a comedy set in space. The story is humorous and the plot will keep you guessing until the end. It's claimed to be the most technically advanced graphic adventure yet, with a mega-intelligent point-and-click interface. It has a revolutionary character interaction system; there are heaps of other characters to interact with and dialogue is carried out in a Hypertext-style mode. Eight-way scrolling allows you to wander around the game world freely, plus perspective scaling of on-screen characters and objects gives the game a colourful and realistic viewpoint. Add to that a few cinematic sequences, and it sounds like we're onto a winner, don't you think?

No, not convinced yet? Well, Psygnosis proudly boast that it's the only game to feature SmuttiText and Virtual Pornography, so I think we can count on it being a tad risqué, then. Yes, I thought that might change your mind.

It should be available on the PC soon, and Psygnosis are pretty confident about it being a sure-fire hit — the team behind it has already started working on a sequel!

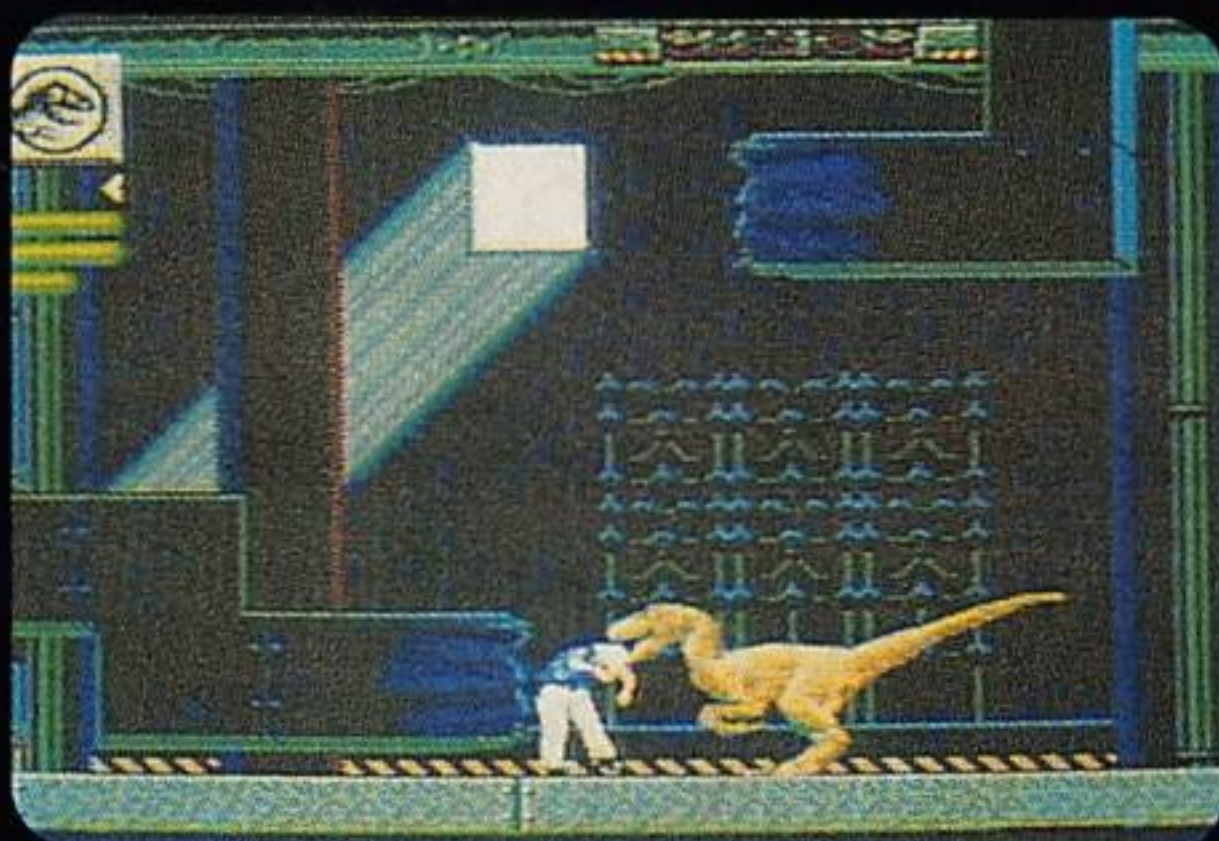
• Psygnosis



Jurassic Park



You begin the game with a jeep crash, and then things start getting REALLY dangerous



You've got to try and avoid having your head bitten off...



...And getting clawed to death by the vicious Raptors

THE DINOSAURS HAVE COME BACK! OR SO YOU WOULD PROBABLY ALREADY KNOW IF YOU'RE NOT DEAF, BLIND AND TOTALLY DUMB. WE'VE ALL BEEN LIVING WITH THE EXTRAORDINARY HYPE SURROUNDING STEVEN SPIELBERG'S LATEST EPIC FOR THE LAST FEW MONTHS NOW. HIS DINO-FLICK HAS ALREADY BECOME ONE OF THE HIGHEST-GROSSING MOVIES OF ALL TIME, AND NOW (AT LAST) IT IS OPENING IN AUSTRALIA. LAUNCHING SIMULTANEOUSLY IS JURASSIC PARK, THE GAME, WHICH NO DOUBT WILL ALSO BE ANOTHER MONSTER HIT. MEGA ED STUART CLARKE TAKES A PREVIEW TOUR OF THE SEGA VERSIONS...

With all the massive exposure, you don't need to have seen the movie to know the plot of Jurassic Park. It is set on a remote island which has been turned into a lush preserve for genetically resurrected dinosaurs. The park's billionaire owner, John Hammond, invites some guests, including his two grandchildren and Dr Alan Grant, a noted palaeontologist, to take the first tour of the prehistoric wonderland. Of course, things don't go to plan, and a combination of sabotage and a tropical hurricane sets the dinosaurs loose. With all power down from the storm, it's a tense fight for survival - human vs dinosaur.

Jurassic Park, the game, is a sideways scrolling platform adventure, with quite a few similarities to

"Flashback". You can play as either Dr. Grant - in a mission to rescue people trapped in the Visitor Centre, or as a Velociraptor dinosaur in a quest to escape Jurassic Park. Your enemies have artificial intelligence, so they respond differently with every action you make, every time you play. You don't always know when a dinosaur or guard is going to appear or what they are going to do. The Raptor that ate you for a light breakfast in the last game, may now just sniff you and move on. You hope...

PLAYING AS DR. GRANT

If you choose the human player game, you control Dr. Grant on a perilous seven-stage mission to rescue the people trapped inside the Park's Visitor Centre. Your best bet is to concentrate on getting to the Visitor Centre, not on wasting dinosaurs. In fact, you can't kill them. The items you'll find will shock, stun or put to sleep the many dinosaurs you encounter, but stick around too long and they'll wake up, and with their brain the size of a mini Chocolate Wheaten they most likely won't be too rational towards you!

The first round is the Jungle, where your jeep has just crashed. There are other some useful items to be found at various points throughout the game. These include Stun Guns, Gas Grenades, Super Darts and Flash Grenades. And you'll need them as you head further on through the park. Later rounds include the River, the Pump Station, the Canyons, the Volcano and finally the Visitor's Centre where the trapped kids are waiting.

Although there are seven main

ark

The game that has been 65 million years in the making!

types of dinosaurs in the Park, the three you have to worry about most are Tyrannosaurus Rex, Spitters and Raptors. As you might be aware, the T-Rex's are big, ugly and mean, and will have you for a snack in a split second. Spitters spew green venom with uncanny accuracy, so you'll have to be quick on your feet. Raptors are unique. They are fast, highly intelligent (for dinosaurs) and by far the most dangerous of the adversaries you will face.

PLAYING AS A RAPTOR

If you decide to play Jurassic Park as a dinosaur, your object now is not rescue, but escape. You control a Raptor; the quickest and most intelligent dinosaur in Jurassic Park. In the beginning you are trapped in a holding cage, but a bolt of lightning frees you. Now you must battle Park Guards and other obstacles as you roam through the seven-stages in the game. If you make it out you'll find a ship that will carry you to the mainland...and freedom!

When you play as the Raptor, humans are your main adversaries. Since you don't have hands, you cannot use the items humans use against you. You have to follow a whole different strategy and use the strengths of your powerful reptilian body.

So what are the advantages of being a Raptor? You can move fast, in fact, very fast. You have long, powerful legs that allow you to jump to high places, and strong claws to grasp or slash at anyone stupid enough to get in your way. You are also very mobile. And while you can't use human items, you can move blocks, boxes and

other objects to allow you access to different areas of the game.

MEGA CD & GAME GEAR VERSIONS

If you thought the Mega Drive version was too much, hold on, because Jurassic Park is also coming to the Mega CD and Game Gear. The Game Gear will be just a reduced version of the Mega Drive's game, with only Dr Grant able to be controlled. You'll have to help him escape the enraged dinosaurs and get him off the island.

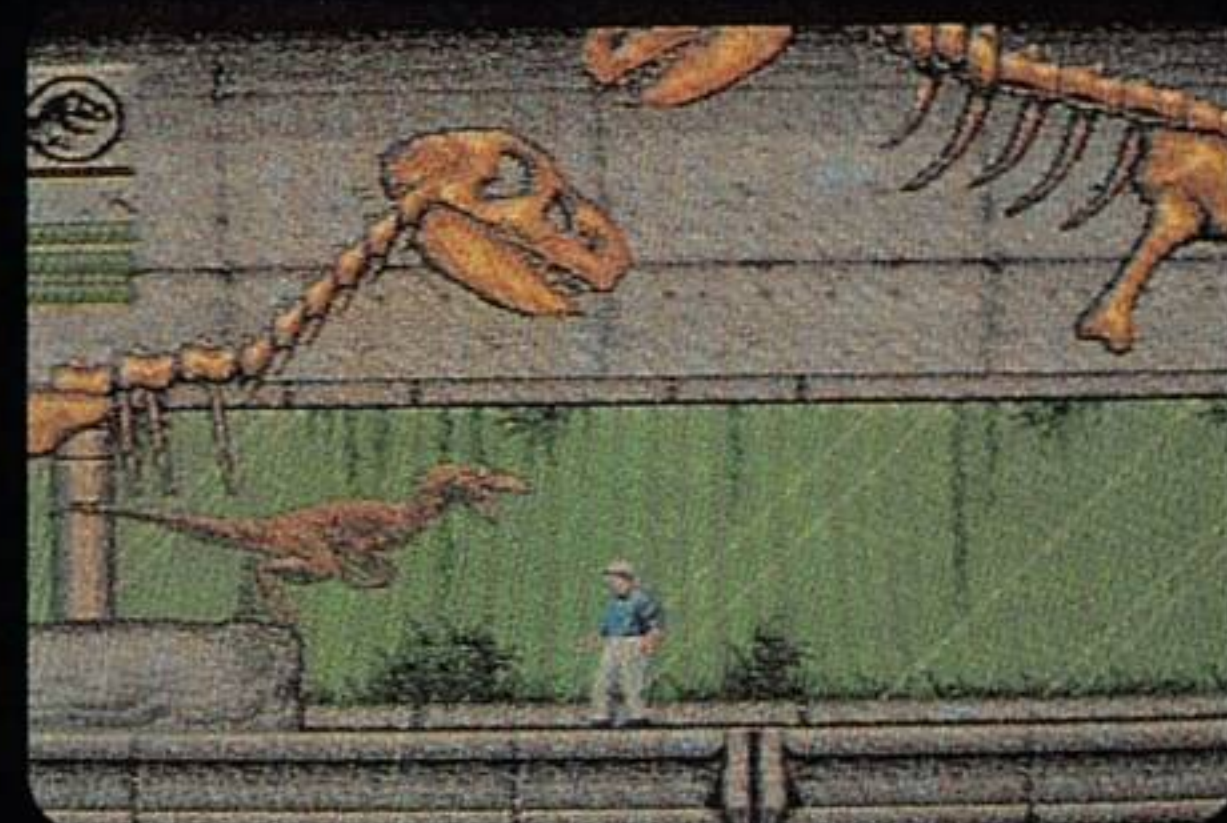
But the Mega CD version is another story all together. This time the game takes over where the movie leaves off! Following the devastation caused by the tropical storm, you must rescue a valuable cache of dinosaur eggs, while subduing and dodging the slashing claws and razor-edged jaws of the escaped beasts.

Apart from advantages of CD quality sound, you also be travelling in real-time digitised video footage down rivers, through caves, under waterfalls and along obstacle-riddled roads. This game is first person action with a 360° viewpoint, so you will have full-motion animated dinosaurs in front, beside and behind you. Luckily you have a few gadgets and weapons to help you, including tazer guns, tranquilliser guns, rocket-powered net launchers and night-vision goggles. This is not just a shoot 'em up though, as to survive, you will have to use your wits to understand the dinosaur's varying habits.

Jurassic Park on Mega CD looks like really pushing the system to its limits (about time!), and should not be missed. It should be out towards the end of the year.



Um...there's no time for white-water rafting!



This is your goal - the Visitors Centre

COMPETITION

Megazone has TWO Mega Drive 2 Jurassic Park packs to give away to TWO very lucky readers. All you have to do is send in your name, age and address on the back of an envelope, along with the answer to this extremely taxing question: Who directed Jurassic Park - the movie?

Now, only complete morons won't be able to get that, so we expect heaps of entries sent to:

Jurassic Park Comp

Megazone

Locked Bag 7

Rosebery NSW 2018



the making of Jurassic Park

the mega drive game



Mr Spielberg on the movie set



There's no way of killing the giant lizards. Your only hope is to stun them for a while



Sure some of the dinosaurs are dangerous, but others are good for hitching a lift

So how the hell do you turn a multi-million dollar movie about long dead lizards into a high quality, realistic and challenging game? Well Blue Sky Software, the developers of Jurassic Park for the Mega Drive, have spent the last fifteen months doing just that.

Jurassic Park, the game, is loaded with just as much action and thrills as the movie. Just as the movie is a technological masterpiece, creating the game was no mean feat. The game designers incorporated the latest technology to give the game a look and feel that approaches animation quality. Add to that the digitised soundtrack and sound effects, and Jurassic Park is a ground-breaking game.

GET ANIMATED

The place to start was the animation of the main characters. Because Grant is the central character, a lot of the effort went towards animating his movements. In fact Grant has over 50 separate animation sequences, with different movements for walking, running, climbing, jumping, falling and so on.

Animating Grant was fairly straightforward, and very similar to the

techniques used in "Flashback". An actor was videotaped in front of a neutral background while he made all of Grant's movements. Selected frames of the videotape were then digitised and fed into a computer, where the graphic artists could manipulate the images further, compressing the data, modifying the colours and fine tuning the movements. The result was a smooth animation sequence for each of the movements that Grant needs to make.

While it's now pretty easy to create animation sequences of a person, creating animations of creatures that have been dead for 65 million years is not so simple. The team of animators worked with the same experts used by Steven Spielberg for the movie.

Each one of the dinosaurs used in the game had to be studied in detail - eg size, shape, mass and anatomy. They made use of models similar to the ones used in the production of the movie. By using stop motion photography (where the model is moved by a tiny amount and then photographed), the team was able to create animation sequences of all the creatures used in the game.

Because the Raptors are the central dinosaurs in the game, they have the

greatest number of animation sequences, with around 20 different movements. This is more than double the number of sequences for the other dinosaurs. The velociraptors have different sequences for walking, running, sneaking, attacking, biting, hissing and so on. And they look as good as the movie.

After creating the animation sequences, the artists began cleaning up the individual images to make the animations smooth and glitch free. This process involved importing each image into a computer paint program, then using special smoothing and blending techniques to make sure that the colours and the degrees of movement were consistent. When all the animations were clean and smooth, they were ready to be placed onto the backgrounds.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

While some of the artists were working on the animation sequences, the rest of the team were busy creating backgrounds. Each level in the game has a different background, some of which extend to 20 or 30 Mega Drive screens.

Backgrounds are created with a computer paint program, and then compressed using a 'tiling' technique. Tiling is a



process which breaks an image down into a small number of tiles, which are then combined to recreate the original image. By using a smaller number of tiles over and over (and by flipping and rotating tiles), the background artists can fit bigger, more complicated backgrounds into a cartridge. At 16 megs, Jurassic Park is one of the biggest carts ever produced for the Mega Drive, but by using tiling and other compression techniques, the developers have been able to cram even more onto the cart. So it's definitely going to be big.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Meanwhile the programmers have been busy creating the environment that will serve as the basis for the game. Once the basic game engine (i.e. side scrolling, backgrounds and control system) is established, the programmers set out to define the kind of behaviour patterns available to the characters in the game. This is what is referred to as artificial intelligence, as the characters ability to exhibit lifelike behaviour, gives them depth and dimension.

Unlike the characters in most video games, the enemies in Jurassic Park do not always follow predictable patterns. For

example, under some circumstances, a Raptor may do nothing more than sniff Grant before turning around and walking away, while on other occasions, the same Raptor might pounce and attack without hesitation. The actual response depends on various factors, such as the level in the game, the player's sophistication and ability, and the type of dinosaur. Because the Raptors are the most complicated creatures in the game, they have almost a dozen factors affecting their responses. This makes them appear devious and cunning, since their behaviour is unpredictable.

All the dinosaurs in the game exhibit AI to some extent. Without AI, they would respond the same way under all circumstances, making their behaviour flat and mechanical. What AI means for the player is that here is a game that is consistently challenging for all levels of playing ability.

FINISHING IT OFF

The final step is combining all of these elements into a well-balanced and playable game. This process is a critical step and requires the combined efforts of the artists and the game designers.

The game designers are very careful with their placement of the

dinosaurs and the other game elements. Not only do they need to decide which of the dinosaurs should be placed at each critical spot, but they also have to decide which animation sequences to use.

For example, they might decide to place a raptor at an important intersection, effectively blocking Grant's path. Which of the 20 or so animation sequences they would use at that intersection depends on how Grant acts in that situation. One possible sequence might have the Raptor turning toward Grant and hissing. This might be followed by the Raptor rearing up to attack and then charging Grant at full speed. It would not be unusual to have six or more animation sequences at a critical point in the game, with each one tied to a specific action by you, the player.

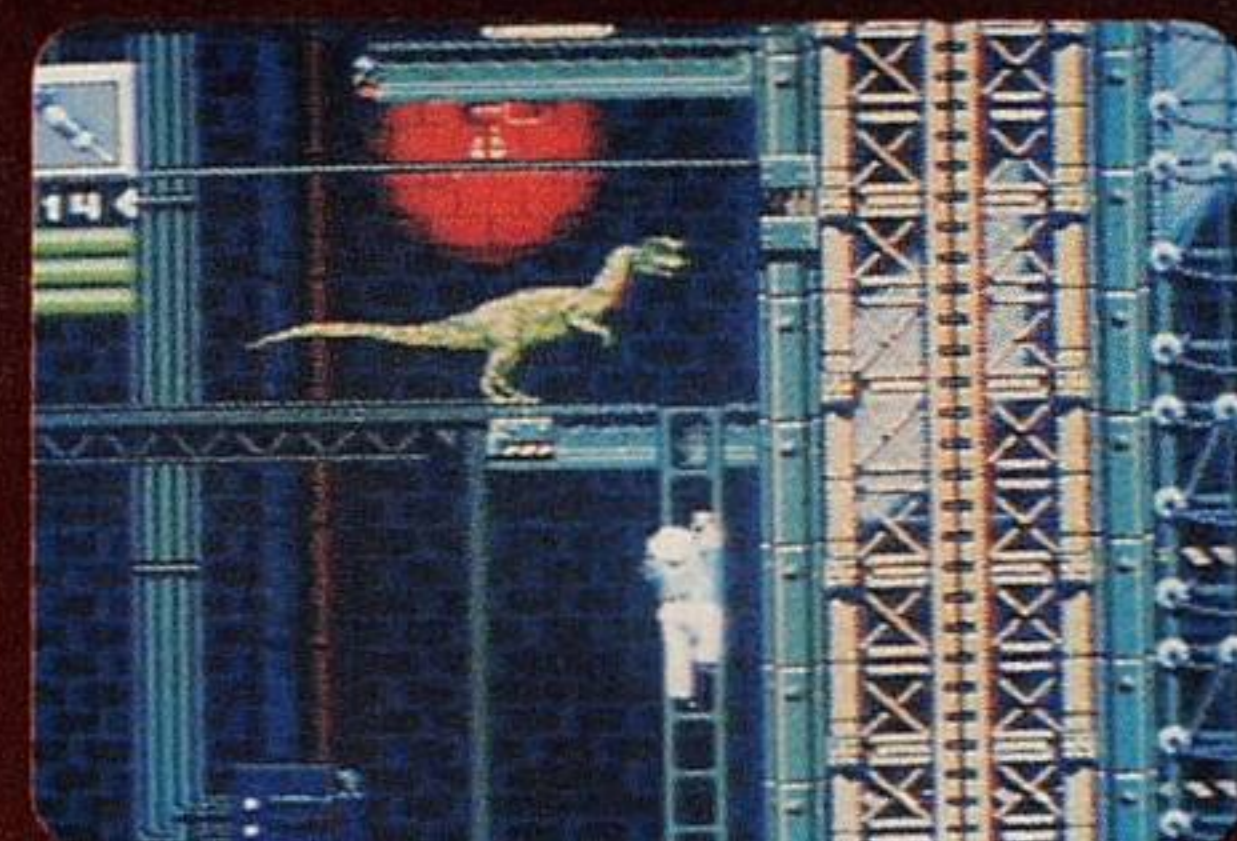
When all the placements are finished and the soundtrack is added it's almost quitting time. All there is left to do is weeks and weeks of fine tuning and bug hunting, to make sure the finished product is perfect.

Did they succeed? Well you'll be able to find out any day now, and the full review of the game will be in the next issue of Megazone.

Thanks to Sega Visions



Sam Neil (Dr Grant) and two kids go for a nice, peaceful bushwalk.....NOT!



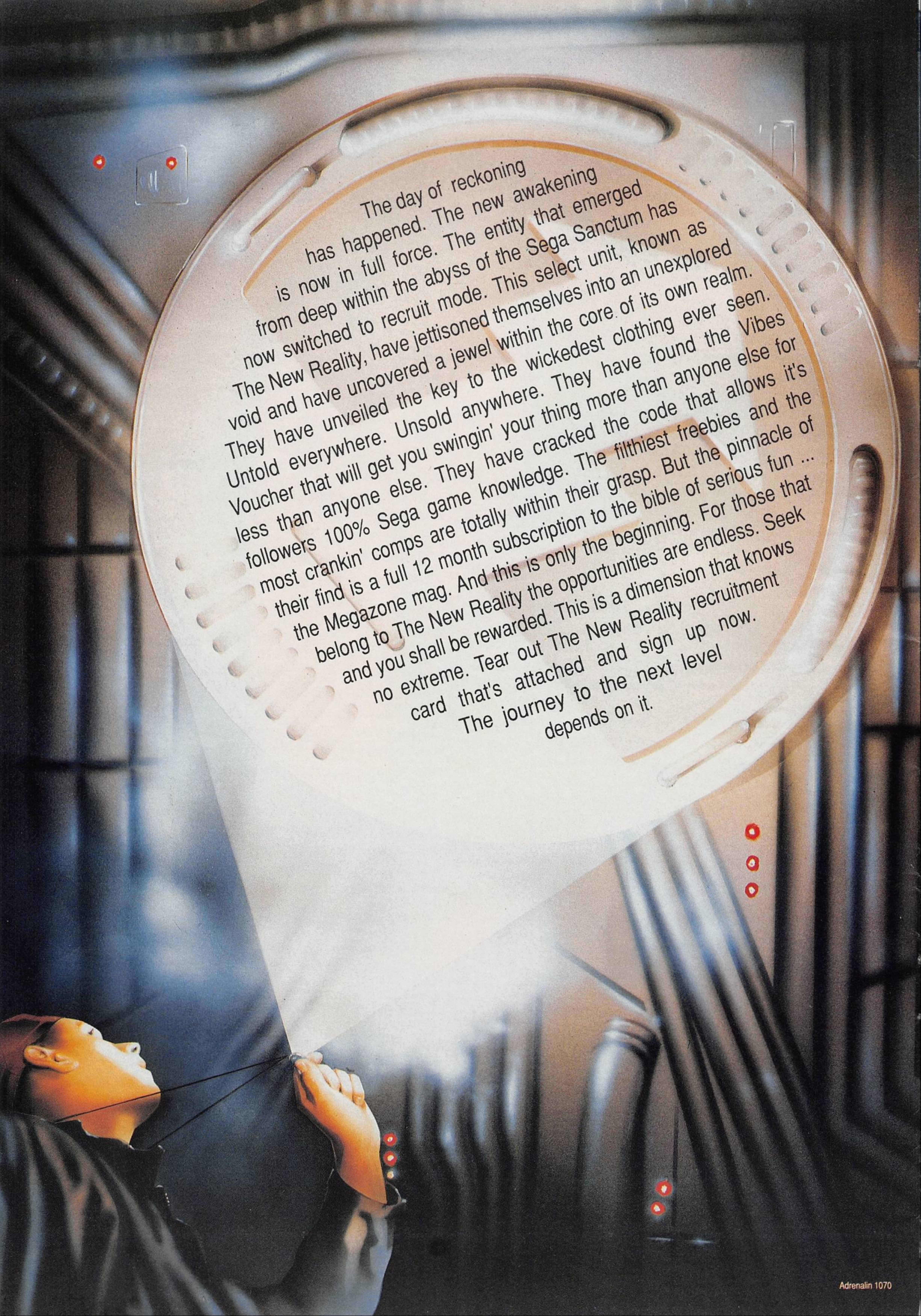
Is this dinosaur going to attack or not? That's the mystery with AI ability



Warning! This game requires quite a bit of athleticism



' This makes them appear devious and cunning, since their behaviour is unpredictable'



The day of reckoning
has happened. The new awakening
is now in full force. The entity that emerged
from deep within the abyss of the Sega Sanctum has
now switched to recruit mode. The New Reality, have jettisoned themselves into an unexplored
void and have uncovered a jewel within the core of its own realm.
They have unveiled the key to the wickedest clothing ever seen.
Untold everywhere. Unsold anywhere. They have found the Vibes
Voucher that will get you swingin' your thing more than anyone else for
less than anyone else. They have cracked the code that allows it's
followers 100% Sega game knowledge. The filthiest freebies and the
most crankin' comps are totally within their grasp. But the pinnacle of
their find is a full 12 month subscription to the bible of serious fun ...
the Megazone mag. And this is only the beginning. For those that
belong to The New Reality the opportunities are endless. Seek
and you shall be rewarded. This is a dimension that knows
no extreme. Tear out The New Reality recruitment
card that's attached and sign up now.
The journey to the next level
depends on it.

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1. The competition is open to Australian residents taking out subscriptions before the last mail 30th September 1993. Entries received after closing date will not be included.
2. South Australian residents need not take out or renew subscription to enter, but may enter once by sending a hand drawn facsimile of a coupon with their name and address to Megazone Locked Bag 7, Rosebery NSW 2018 3. The prize is not exchangeable and may not be converted to cash. 4. The judges decision is final and no correspondence shall be entered into.
5. Description of the competition and instructions on how to enter form part of the competition conditions.
6. The competition commences 1st July 1993 and closes last mail 30th September 1993. The draw will take place on the 1st October 1993 and the winner will be notified by telephone. The winner will also be published in Megazone magazine.
7. The prize is a Mega Drive2/Mega CD 2 Pack valued at \$699.95
8. The promoter is Megazone Pty Ltd, ACN 003 924 472, 200 Coward Street, Mascot NSW 2020.



HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED JUST WHERE

SOME OF THE STRANGE CHARACTERS IN JAPANESE VIDEO

GAMES ACTUALLY COME FROM? SOME OF THEM SEEM

HAUNTINGLY FAMILIAR - LOOKING LIKE ASTRO BOY ON

STERIODS OR THE AMAZING

THREE WITH SILICON IMPLANTS.

WELL, THE

Japanese

ANSWER IS SIMPLE.

THESE CHARACTERS COME FROM THE JAPANESE ANIMATED

FILM INDUSTRY. THESE ARE ALL POPULAR CHARACTERS IN

THEIR HOME COUNTRY WHOSE FILMS AND COMIC BOOKS

HAVE SERVED AS THE BASIS FOR THE COMPUTER GAMES.

GUNDAM, WANDERING KID, ROBOTECH - THESE ALL SERVE

AS THE BASIS FOR AN ENERGETIC CROSS-MEDIA INDUSTRY.

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Many computer game fans are also avid viewers of Japanese animated movies. The artwork is bright, the films are usually packed with action, and the stories are definitely not kids stuff! PAUL KIDD looks at a few of these movies, and points you in the direction of where to find the classics of modern Japanese animation.

HISTORY

Japan has a long history of sequential art (cartooning), and it is a relatively small step from writing a comic book to creating a cartoon film. Japanese cartooning effectively began with the upsurge

of propaganda films during World War Two. Japan's fledgling animation studios were given lucrative military contracts, allowing them enough funds to perfect their techniques. In the wonderful world of post-war Japan, animation took off as a major branch of the film industry. Today, animation is almost as common as live action on Japanese TV and in the theatres.

Japanese animation is not intended only for children. Indeed, they categorise it into kid's shows, family shows, boys, girls and adult material. The adult material is very adult indeed (Creamy Lemon,

THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF JAPANESE ANIMATION

an X rated series, is one of the best sellers). Family programs such as Samurai Pizza Cats have recently arrived on Australian TV.

REVIEWS

Here are a few of the Manga classics that you should check out:

AKIRA

The big-name classic, Akira combines spectacular effects with dazzling graphics. The action follows one massive chunk of urban destruction with another. The weaknesses of Japanese animation (the over-use of still shots and low-frame animation) are minimised and maximum value is gained from fast paced storytelling.

The movie is set in Neo Tokyo, during a repressive future regime. Children who develop psychic powers are beginning to appear, and one of these prodigies goes berserk, with destructive results. Neo Tokyo is razed to the ground, civilian casualties range into the millions, and a generally bloodsoaked time is had by all.

Lots of action and violence combined with some mindblowing artwork make the film into a visual spectacular. Despite all of this, I honestly felt it was a poor film (Heretic!). The action was confused, the artwork dazzled viewers into ignoring the lack of story, and I couldn't have cared less whether any of the characters lived or

died. As a statement of what a nasty world tomorrow will bring, the film is effective. As a moving and involving story, it is essentially a failure.

MY NEIGHBOUR TOTORO

Probably the best Japanese animated film ever made. It combines a childish innocence with a feeling of magic and wonder that rarely makes its way onto the modern screen. The tale is enchanting, the characters inviting, and the film is a visual feast. No one is ripped apart by demons, no space battles, no violence—just a tale of magic and adventure.

The story follows the adventures of two children who move to the country. In the backyard of the old rickety farmhouse they now live in, there looms a gigantic camphor tree. Within the heart of the camphor tree lives Totoro, a huge furry beast that only the children can see. Totoro leads the children on strange

adventures and brings the film alive with fun and magic. Totoro has much of the childish enchantment of Alice in Wonderland (especially the cheshire cat), combined with a masterful use of animated art.

OUTLANDERS

Babes in leather space bikinis fight it out with swords while giant killer starbeasts trash Tokyo. Magical powers obliterate half of the earth while starfleets atomise each other in the skies. With all these elements, Outlanders is virtually the perfect film. Once you've seen this one, you've seen everything.

Sometimes sexy, always hilarious, the action follows an alien invasion of Earth. A great and mighty star empire has traced its origins to planet Earth, only to find the place infested with humans. The aliens decide to sterilise the planet, and humanity must somehow stave off destruction. Into all of





this steps princess Kahm, the crown princess of the alien empire and star-brat extraordinaire! Having run away from her father's palace to take part in the invasion, she falls in love with a human and decides to bring the war to an end by marrying her new boyfriend. The emperor's reaction and the subsequent chaos makes for a wonderful action story. Kahm is wild, violent and irrepressible. She's also dynamite in a chainmail bikini!

WINGS OF ONEAMIS

A thoughtful film exquisitely presented and filled with the best combat action I have ever seen portrayed by animation. This film creates an "alternate earth" whose technology is somewhere equivalent to the late 1940's or early 1950s. The story is set in a nation that seems to have developed from a Polynesian culture. Clothing, utensils,

writing are all completely alien, yet logical. Oneamis follows the story of the culture's first attempt at placing a man in orbit. It is a tale of exploration, struggle and self discovery.

No effort was spared in creating the setting. Streetlights reflect in the rain puddles. Dandelion seeds drift in the breeze. The grass sways, the street litter blows along the gutters - perfect. Clunks technology has always been a favourite of mine. The mechanical computers in Oneamis are well done!

Combat sequences are incredibly well drawn. The lift and flow of tracer, the fall of damaged aircraft - all incredibly real. Memorable sequences, such as when the rocket lifts off through the middle of an aerial dogfight, will stay with you forever. The lighting, mood and aura are simply perfect.

RANMA 1/2

A TV series in which a male martial arts expert is struck by a curse that turns him into a girl whenever he is hit by water. His father turns into a panda under similar conditions. Add some aggressive girlfriends, ancient vendettas and even more bizarre magic spells, and you have Ranma 1/2.

Created by Rumiko Takahashi, Japan's leading female cartoonist, this story is hilari-

ous. Rumiko has a talent for layering tiny bits of chaos one on top of the other until the situation becomes overwhelmingly funny. Being produced for television, the art is simpler than that seen in feature films. The characters are also part of the great Japanimation clone tradition, and have the standard big eyes and loooooong hair. The story makes the trip well worth it.

GALLFORCE 1, 2 AND 3

Everyone likes bodacious babes in skintight spandex. Everyone likes guns! So what could be better than girls in skintight spandex wielding guns?

Artists and writers may have been at loggerheads over this one. The story writers intended to tell a gripping tale of women at war, examining the role of women as soldiers. The artists, however, have added certain visual attractions. For instance, the character "Rabbi" has a communication headset that looks suspiciously like the ears from a Playboy bunny-girl, and the battery pack sits on her rump like a little cotton tail.

Lots of action. The usual high-standard art. Babes with guns, babes blowing up monsters, babes in cool uniforms... Pretty much covers my entire spectra of interest! The first movie in the three-unit series is the best. Number two is a good

sequel. Number three is more depressing. All of them are worth seeing.

VAMPIRE PRINCESS MIYU

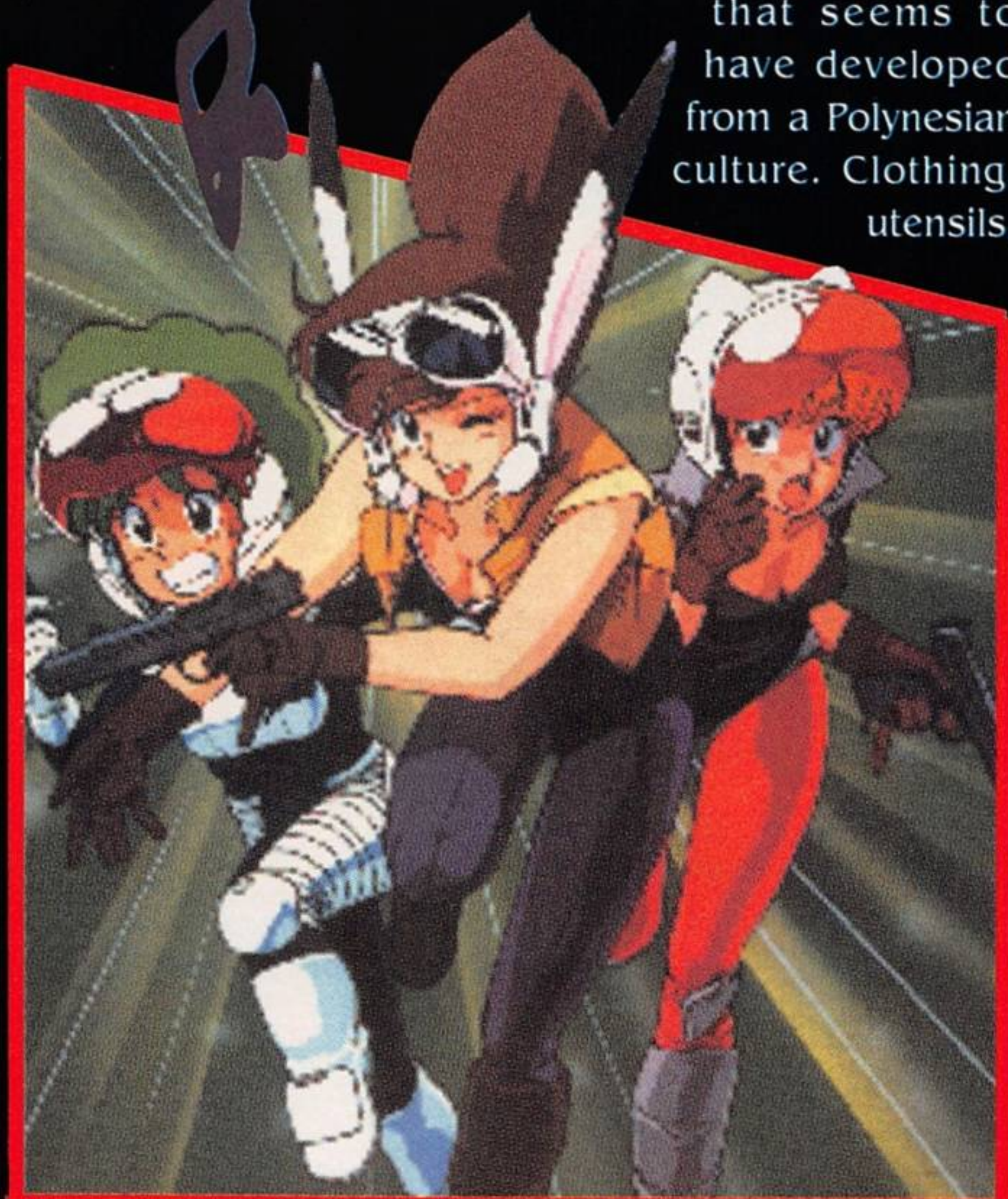
An interesting series of short stories in animated format. The artwork is impressive, and storytelling is tight. The stories are presented like works in a NOH play, often beginning with Japanese calligraphy, poetry, and hammering log-drums. This serves to establish an interesting mood for the plays.

These are horror stories with flair. Lots of spectacular magic and fascinating ideas. The stories are eerie, and may not suit everybody. One scenario revolves around a female demon who leads men to fall in love with her, whereupon they slowly turn into helpless wooden dolls. They are hung like trophies in the demon's home, where she feeds off their love until they turn into a husk. Brrr! Anyway, I thoroughly recommend the series.

SO WHERE EXACTLY DO YOU GO TO GET JAPANIMÉ MATERIAL?

Science fiction speciality stores and comic book stores will almost always have Japanese animé for sale. Minotaur Books and Alternative Worlds in Melbourne and King's Comics in Sydney are

雪舟軍



Japanime



known sources, and they will handle mail order. The Virgin record chain also often stock Japanese cartoons.

Animé clubs can be found all across Australia. Every city has one. Ask at your local SF club, SF book store or comic store. Through these clubs, you will be able to see the films, buy your own copies, and babble excitedly over the latest releases. Apart from clubs, a limited amount of materials can be found in comic stores and SF specialty bookshops. Some Asian import and hobby stores will have Japanese material. Hobby Japan make a good business selling Japanese material dubbed into Chinese.

The evil way is of course to attend a science fiction club and find copies at their swap meets. Every city in the country has an SF club, always with regular meetings and animation screenings going on. In Melbourne write to the Melbourne Science Fiction Club, PO Box 212, Melbourne VIC 3005. Why buy when you can see it on the screen for free?

English translations of the best Japanese comic books are also now on the shelves at your local comic book store. The best titles thus far are Outlanders, Ranma 1/2, Caravan Kidd, Orion, Appleseed and Alita Battle Angel. Also worth checking out are any offerings by Antarctic Press, which

include Ninja High School (a very silly comic aimed at fans of animé), and Mangazine, a news magazine for Japanese comics and cartoons. Another good one is Antarctic's Dojinshi, a hilarious magazine devoted to Japanese fanzine art. Mangazine and Dojinshi will include news on the latest releases, ordering information, as well as leads on comics, model kits, etc. Your comic store should have these magazines. If they don't, just ask them to order them in for you. Alternatively, Antarctic Press can be contacted at PO Box 290221, San Antonio Texas 78280-1621 (love those zip codes!) USA.

**Until next time
may all your
dream girls
have blue
hair and
really,
REALLY big
eyes!**



The wonderful world of Japanese animation

SOMETIMES SEXY, ALWAYS HILARIOUS,

THE ACTION FOLLOWS AN ALIEN INVASION OF

EARTH. A GREAT AND MIGHTY STAR EMPIRE

HAS TRACED ITS ORIGINS TO PLANET EARTH,

ONLY TO FIND THE PLACE INFESTED WITH

HUMANS. THE ALIENS DECIDE TO STERILISE

THE PLANET, AND HUMANITY MUST SOME-

HOW STAVE OFF DESTRUCTION.

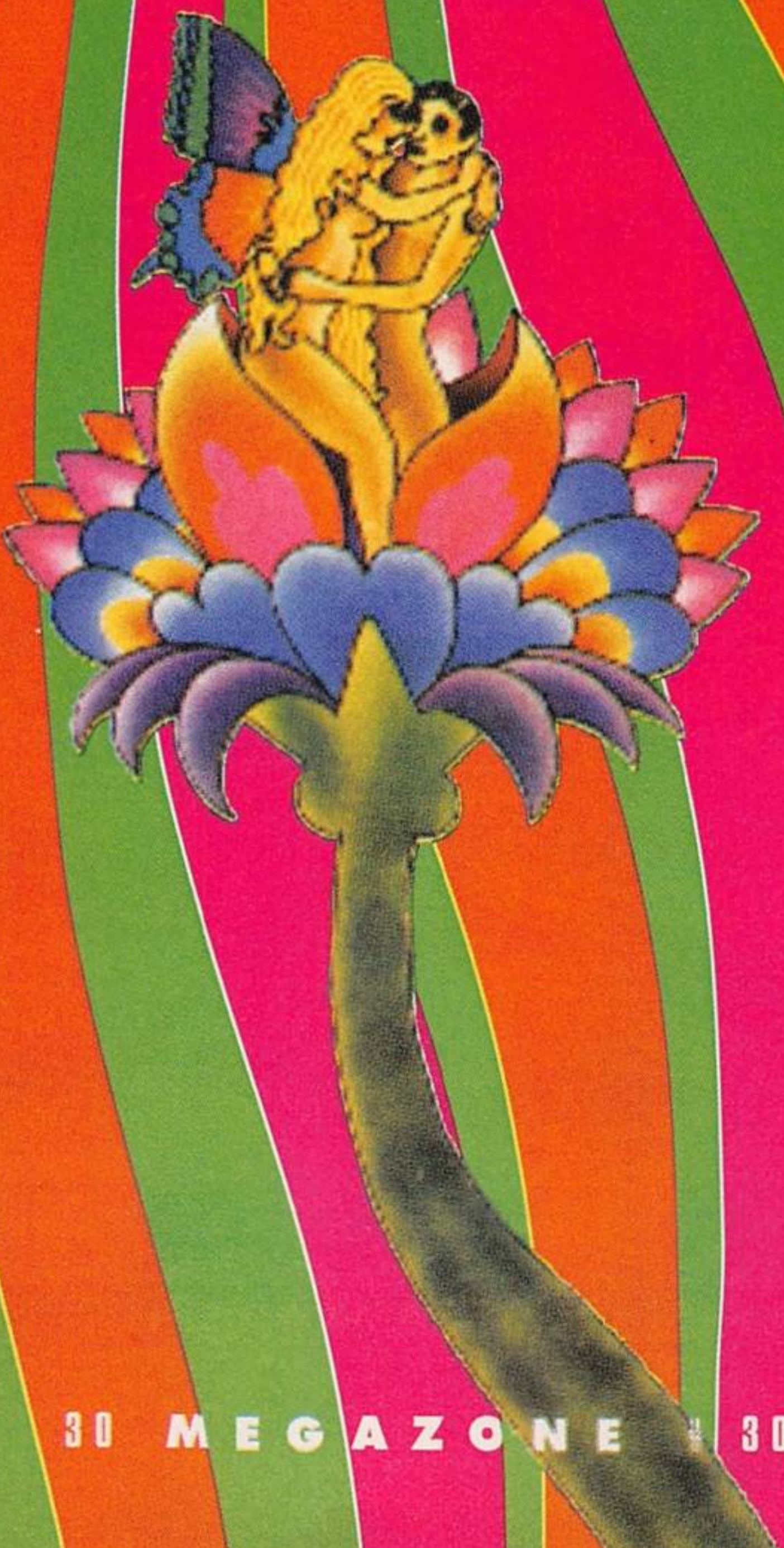
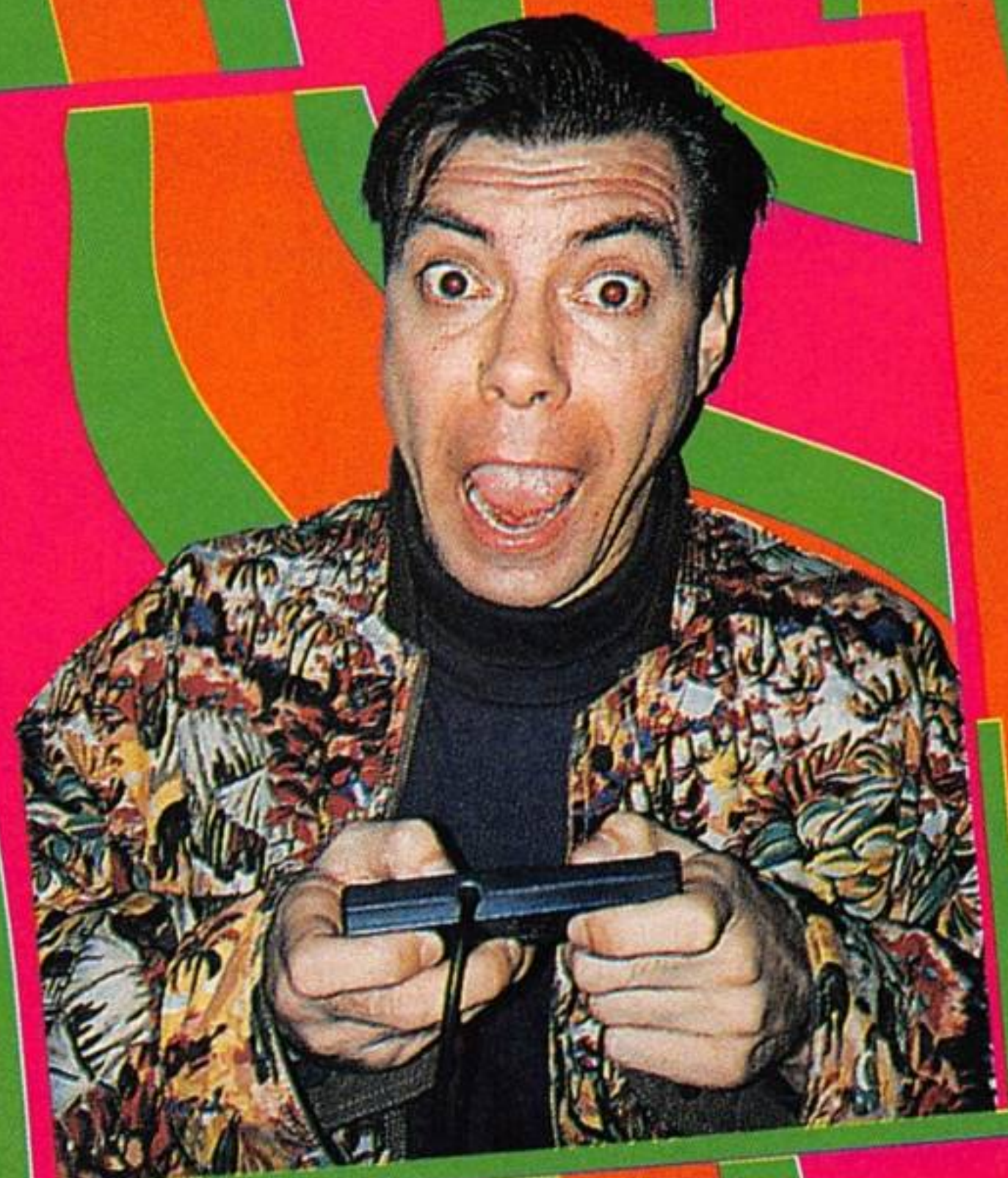
MAYNARD F# CRABBES is a DAG.



Not just your ordinary, everyday, run-of-the-mill type dag, but a professional dag. Yep, Maynard makes money out of being a nerd.

Famous for wearing ultra loud Hawaiian shirts and tipping baked beans down his bright orange Speedos, Maynard is also a bit of a multi-media star, being heard right around the country on Triple J and hosting the crazy kids TV show, *Mind Twist*. In addition to this he's also a big video games fan. What system pushes his buttons? The Sega Master System, of course!

Mega Ed STUART CLARKE gets some advice from Australia's number one loser about the dag fun and value of basic 8-bit technology...



PHOTOGRAPHY: TIM LEVY MAYNARD ILLUSTRATION: BRENDAN CRANE

Give us the Maynard F# Crabbes story in your own words.

Well, I work on radio station Triple J on Saturday morning breakfast and a show called *Sunday Afternoon Fever* between 2 and 6 on a Sunday. I've been working on radio now for about ten years, and before I was on JJJ I worked in community radio at 2SER in Sydney and 2NUR in Newcastle, which is where I grew up.

I also host a television show called *Mind Twist* which is 8 o'clock on Saturday and Sunday morning. It's a game show, not a video game show, but a game show where we do a lot of running around and jumping. In fact I'm hoping for a Maynard game to come out one day called *Loser*, *Loserville* or something like that. That will be a good name for the cartridge.

How'd you get to be such a dag?

It just happened. I was always a dag at school. If there was someone who had to be thrown off a verandah, that was me. I was thrown off verandahs, falling through things, my bike was always having flat tyres, that sort of stuff. But I was just always very unfashionable and now I'm still unfashionable, I just happen to be on radio and doing it.

So you're a dag for a living?

It's brilliant - a professional dag. Hey, why not make some money out of it.

And you've even got a book or two.

Yep. There's "Maynard's Guide to Dag", which we sold 10,000 copies of.

There's a lot of dags out there!!!

You bet. We also sold about 10,000 copies of my other book "Maynard's Dag Quiz". It's got all the little daggy questions about the 70's and 80's and stuff for all those Duran Duran fans out there.

Who are your big dag influences?

Going right back, Norman Gunston of course, from when he was first on the ABC yonks ago. I'm a big disco fan, I'm into disco in a major way and there's PeeWee Herman, a good fellow dag, Jerry Lewis... that sort of stuff.



Maynard F#Crabbies



—My Life As A Dag

How do you feel now that Disco is becoming trendy again?

It's a bit annoying that Disco is popular again, but because I've got all the records I can play them in clubs for people. I do a lot of club DJ'ing as well, and I usually DJ at least two nights a week

You're famous for the Madd Club which ran in Sydney a while ago.

It's still going actually, we do it once a month now. It's been going for six years. We're big on food fights, stupid dancing and drawing the audience into what we're doing. Rather than just DJing, we like to make a bit of a mess. Hey, it's a nightclub, not our homes, so we can make lots of mess and not have to clean it up!

The last one was a special *Love Boat* night where I dressed up as Captain Stubing and threw eggs around. We also recreated the *Poseidon Adventure* where we all lay on the floor and pretended the boat was sinking.

And what exactly happens on Sunday Afternoon Fever? It sounds really groovy.

We mainly look at news and views from the world of dag. We talk to a lot of people, we have a gossip called Lance who tells us what's going on in Hollywood. We also have Mrs Sinatra who lives in Las Vegas. She's no relation to Frank Sinatra but I keep telling her she is. We also bring on guests who are in town, like soapie stars, and the Doug Anthony All Stars are on from time to time. We've got

quizzes as well and I go out on the street and talk to people - it's a busy show. Basically though it's pretty stupid.

How did you first get into video games?

I've always gone to arcades. My first memory of a video game was the original *Space Invaders*, and I remember we used to sticky-tape a 20 cent coin to a piece of cotton and get almost unlimited credits on it, so I got very good at that game. *Tank Commander* was always a big favourite of mine, because of the really cheap green graphics.

When I started *Mind Twist*, I got a Master System 2 off Sega because I wasn't good enough to get a Mega Drive. I've just been playing it all the time and losing a lot of sleep, because I have it next to my bed. Before I go to sleep at night, I'll spend an hour playing it and something if I'm going really well I'll play a couple of different games and do a couple of levels of *Sonic*. All of a sudden it'll be five o'clock in the morning, and I have to get up at eight. In some ways it's proved better than sex.

What are your favourite games?

I like simple games because I'm a simple person. Of course I like *Sonic the Hedgehog*, because I really like the design of that game. But at the moment *Super Space Invaders* is my favourite, because it's one I remember from when I was young, and it's also really simple.

I like shooting games, like *Bomber Command*. I don't know,

it's just something about shooting. I'm probably a very sick person.

I really enjoy *Chuck Rock* too, because it's pretty stupid and I'm looking forward to *Son of Chuck*. I like the idea of that.

How good are you?

On *Super Space Invaders* I've gone right through to the end, but only on the normal game on the easy setting. On *Sonic 2* I'm up to level three, but I can't quite get the hang-glider to fly. The *Sega Hotline* have just fixed me up on that, so I should be right on that pretty soon. I'm almost through to the end on *Chuck Rock*, but I'm having some trouble with the charging antelope.

And you want to get a Pro Action Replay cart?

Yes, I'm very interested in a cheating cart because the idea of unlimited lives appeals to me greatly. I can perfect my loser style by dying over and over again.

If you're into all things dag, you can hear Maynard on Saturday mornings and Sunday afternoons on Triple J, which is broadcast all over Australia, or catch him on TV with the wacky *Mind Twist* which is on Saturday and Sunday mornings. He'll be swinging like a gate!

So what would you say to all the other Master System owners who might be looked down upon by Mega Drive owners?

Well, you're saving yourself a lot of money and they're still making new cartridges for you. I reckon say it loud, say it proud: I like basic technology. There's still a few years left in it yet, you might as well make the most of it.



This is a new page. Feel it. Now feel the page - it's nice and glossy, isn't it? This page is going to be the special Sega page and every month it will be filled with all things Sega, old and new. Want to know the best beat 'em ups around? The best sports games? Classic titles you should look at and crap games you should avoid? You do...

Then watch this space.

This issue we take a look at some of the best platformers around. For those a bit confused about what exactly a platform, game is, read on. Platform games have platforms in them. It's obvious really. The platforms go up, down, left and right and you jump on them. There's usually some bad guys to be disposed of and a boss at the end of every game. Most games produced are platformers - they're easy to program and they sell well. But most platform games are very ordinary.

But here's some titles that stand out from the crowd. They're in no particular order and there's no ratings, but all of these games have the Megazone seal of approval and are definitely worth checking out.

1. FLASHBACK

Flashback has puzzles, action and atmosphere galore, and more than a few platforms. Once you master it, the control system is absolutely superb and with its stunning graphics, rotoscoped animation and challenging, varied gameplay, it's a game you shouldn't be without.

2. TINY TOONS - BUSTER'S HIDDEN TREASURE

It's got thirty three very different levels, loads of bosses and Buster Bunny as its star. What makes it special is the sheer quality of the programming and the joy you'll get from playing it.

3. REVENGE OF SHINOBI

One of the first games available for the Mega Drive, but still one of the best. Great graphics, great sound and classic jump-and-shoot game play, it'll have you playing for a very long time. Oh, and it's big and tough too.

4. COOL SPOT

Megazone's July cover star, Cool Spot is one of the best animated characters you'll ever see. Bursting with personality and ultra-cool graphics, Cool Spot is one of Virgin's slickest creations.

5. SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

The game that started it all and everyone tries to copy. A milestone in gaming history.

6. SONIC 2

The ultimate in hi-tech platform wizardry starring everybody's favourite Hedgehog. What more needs to be said?

7. BUBSY THE BOBCAT

Still a bit of an unknown figure, but with 16megs and Mega Ed Stuart Clarke's big rubber stamp of approval, Bubsy is sure to make an impact on the platform market.

8. QUACKSHOT

Some people find this too slow, but I think it's very absorbing. It's adventure all the way as you search the world with Donald Duck for the lost treasure of the Great Duck King.

9. TAZ-MANIA

A lot of games claim to be "just like playing a cartoon" but only Taz-Mania is the real thing - he spins, he jumps, he eats everything in sight. Lots of levels, lots of variety and lots of fun make this one a winner.

10. MICKEY MOUSE - CASTLE OF ILLUSION

Before Sonic came along, there was Mickey Mouse and the Castle of Illusion. The first in a long line of Disney licences, it shows its age when compared to World of Illusion, but it's still a better game for one player. Why? The bum-bounce attack just gets better with age! A definite classic.

Andrew Humphreys

NEXT ISSUE: MEGAZONE'S TOP BEAT 'EM UPS

GAME GEAR

1. Mortal Kombat
2. Wolfchild
3. Global Gladiators
4. Superman
5. Double Dragon

HOT! TOP 10 PREDICTIONS

MEGA CD

1. Final Fight
2. Time Gal
3. Robo Aleste
4. Sewer Shark
5. Road Avenger

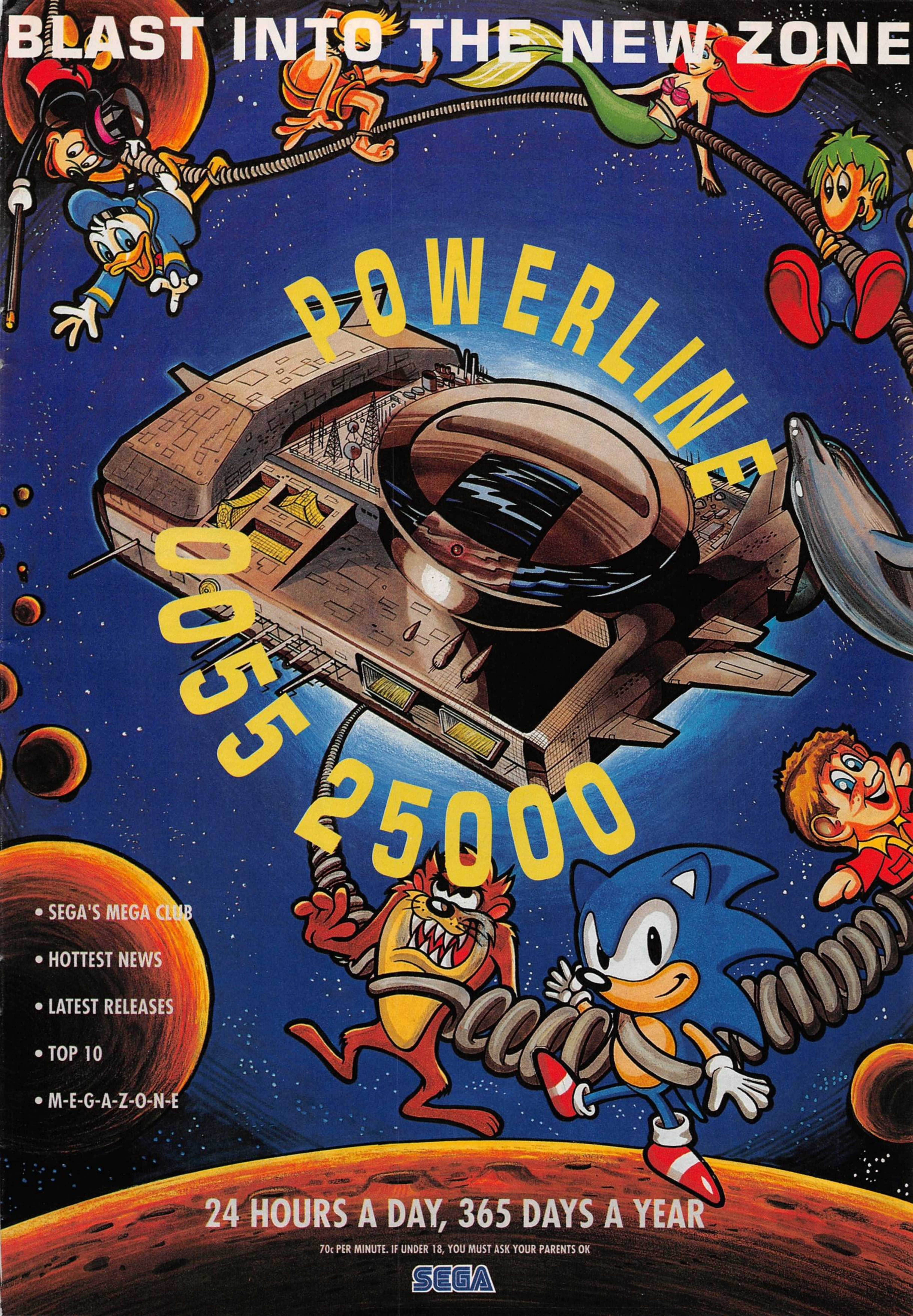
MEGA DRIVE

1. Mortal Kombat
2. Bubsy
3. Jungle Strike
4. Davis Cup World Tour
5. Jurassic Park
6. Cool Spot
7. Shining Force
8. Mig 29
9. Global Gladiators
10. X-Men

MASTER SYSTEM

1. Power Strike 2
2. Desert Strike
3. James Bond
4. California Games 2
5. Wolfchild

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SEGA



Dr. Octopus, Spidey's arch enemy, is back. His plan this time is to conquer the world and to make Spiderman a distant memory (as you can see, the plan hasn't changed much!). To help him, the Doc has enlisted the help of five of Spiderman's most evil foes. Together they are the Sinister Six!

The game is a left-to-right scrolling platform game. Each supervillain's hideout is in two sections, the first being a maze that you have to make your way through while defeating henchmen. In the maze an object has to be collected in order to progress to the confrontation with the supervillain of that level.

The first enemy that Spidey must face is Mr "Live Wire" himself, Electro. The next level takes Spidey deep beneath the city in a Toxic Waste Dump, where Spiderman must jump pipes and rabid rats to finally catch up with Sandman. Level 3 houses a high-tech fantasy world. Butterflies are missiles, feathers are bombs, and all is not as it seems in the lair of Mysterio, Master of Illusion.

The fourth level takes you through the streets and rooftops of the seediest areas of town. At the top of the highest building is the vulture who's

Spidey looks great as he jumps, somersaults and webs his way through the levels. The music is fast, with some good tunes along the way. The letdown is the sound FX. Yecch!!!

Its main playability ups are the difficulty, which is set at a good pace; the downs would be the length of the levels, and the amount of time it would take to master this game. Can you help Spidey before the Sinister Six become the sinister pest controllers?

NICK SMITH

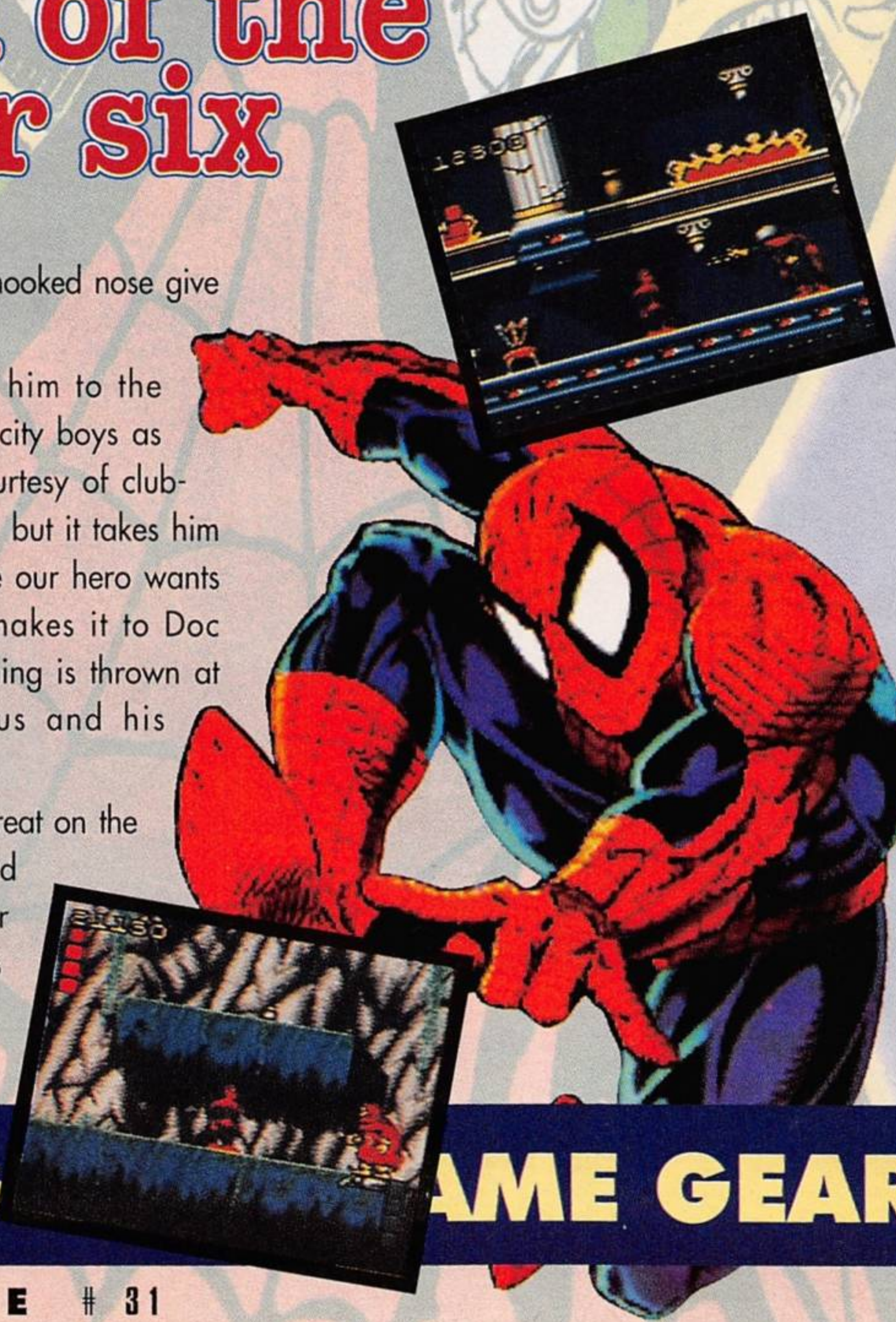
Graphics	79
Sound	62
Music	77
Playability	79
Lastability	72
Difficulty	74
Atmosphere	78
Mental	78
Overall	78

Spiderman: Return of the sinister six

looks, hunched shoulders and hooked nose give him his name.

Spidey's next lead takes him to the forest. This ain't no place for city boys as Spiderman soon finds out, courtesy of club-throwing trolls and razor bats, but it takes him to Hobgoblin and that's where our hero wants to be. Finally, Spiderman makes it to Doc Octopus' Castle where everything is thrown at him. Including Dr. Octopus and his mechanical arms.

Graphically, Spiderman is great on the Game Gear, with some marked improvements over the Master System. The scrolling is smoother and faster. And



Soccer's World Cup is coming and that can only mean one thing: we're going to be swamped with footie games, especially from the UK where the game is closer to most people's hearts than their thermal vests. Soon we'll be seeing Goal! from Virgin, Super Kick Off from US Gold and plenty of others to boot.

Ultimate Soccer marks the start of this tidal wave, so let's kick that around for a while (ho ho). It's a fairly cut-down version of its big brother available on the Mega Drive (reviewed this issue). The playing system is pretty similar when you get to the game itself, but the flexibility and number of options have been much reduced.

You can play a friendly against the computer (or a friend, provided they have a second Game Gear, cartridge and cable), in a league (made up of as many teams as you like) and in the Ultimate Cup (a straight knock-out competition).

The view is pseudo 3D, with the goals at the top and bottom of the pitch. The screen scrolls as the ball is booted around the pitch, endeavouring to keep up with its progress. Unfortunately, it doesn't do a very good job of it, and you're often left playing blind with the ball off screen and simply have to wait until the screen catches up. You still control the player nearest the ball, though, and presumably could take advantage, if only you could see what on earth was going on. The computer, of course, knows exactly what's happening, and carries on playing with the

Ultimate Soccer

Graphics	78
Sound.....	52
Music	70
Playability	43
Lastability.....	45
Difficulty	88
Mental	60
Atmosphere	62
Overall	58

ball off screen. This makes passing pretty pointless as anything but the feeblest kick will boot it out of sight.

The best strategy is to forget passing altogether, and merely have one of your players hog the ball, running from one end of the pitch to the other to shoot at goal. The scrolling has trouble keeping up with even this, and you have to frequently stop running forward to allow it to catch up with your man.

The Mega Drive version is excellent so it's such a pity that the Game Gear incarnation is a letdown. Oh dear.

ADAM WARING



Wow! Hot or What?

mate
er
GAME

ALTERED BEAST! BRRR!!!
SENDS A SHIVER UP THE SPINE,
DOESN'T IT?

WOLFCHILD

Have a moment to recover! I'm sorry, to scare you so early on in a review, but it has to be said—Wolfchild is uncannily reminiscent of Altered Beast. Still not put off? Well, read on, and learn the stunningly unoriginal story of Dr. Kal Morrow, his daughter and his youngest son, Sail—the boy who cried Wolf.

Dr. Marrow, the world's most famous biogeneticist, has been kidnapped by some psycho by the name of Draxx (did his mother really call him that?) and brainwashed into creating an array of mutant warriors for Draxx to play with. This attracts a lot of press coverage - most of it bad. So it's up to Sail to save the world! He loads up his old man's top secret, experimental "Wolfchild" program, and steps into the transmutation booth...

...emerging a very angry beefcake warrior with the ability to turn into the even angrier Wolfchild—part man, part beast, a few fleas, and nice leather boots. To free his father, Sail-or boy must fight his way through five horizontally and vertically scrolling levels, defeating all the mutants he can find, and beating the boss that awaits at the end of each level. It's a lot easier to do if you transform into the Wolfchild—just collect enough power ups, let out a howl, and away you go.

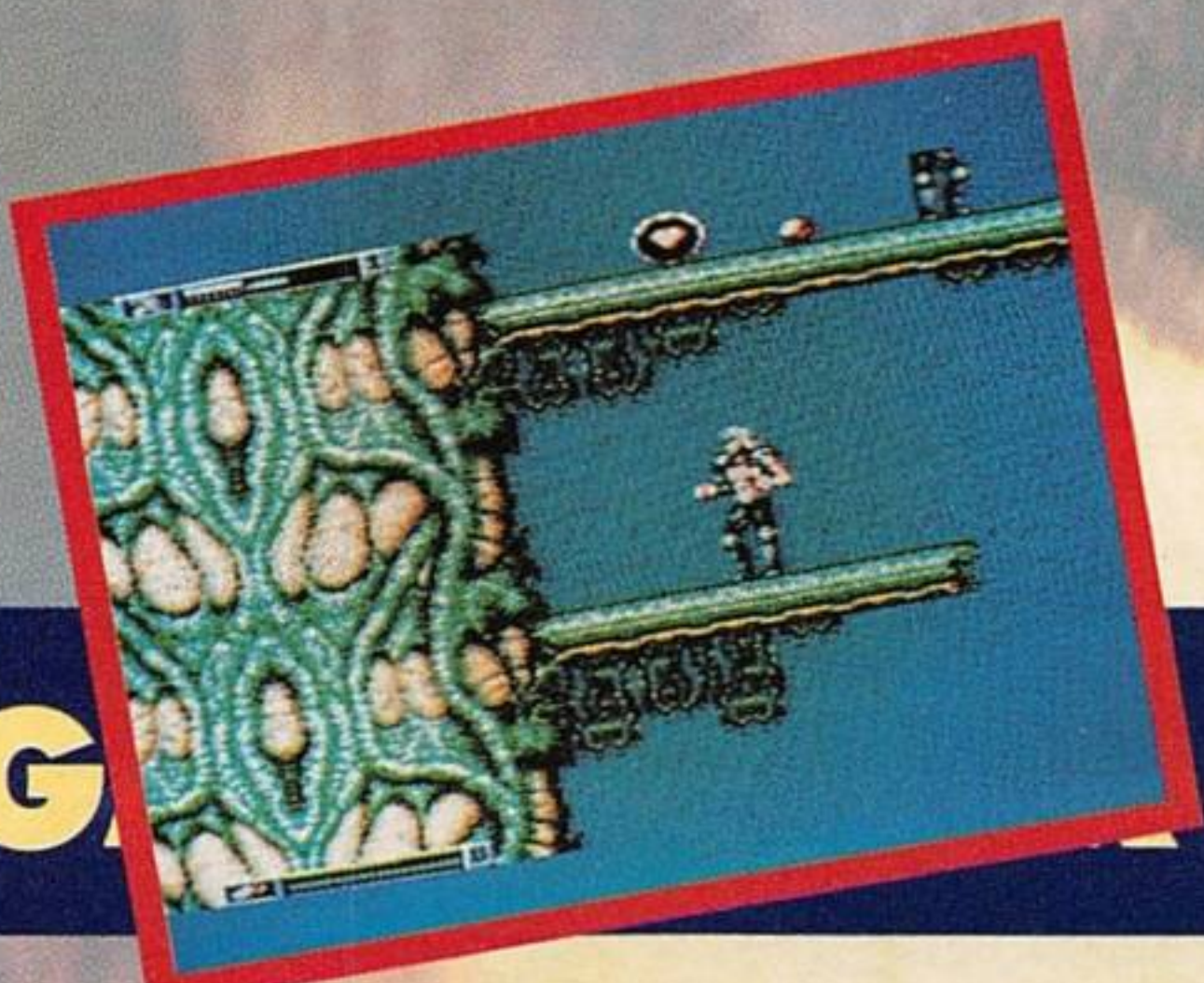
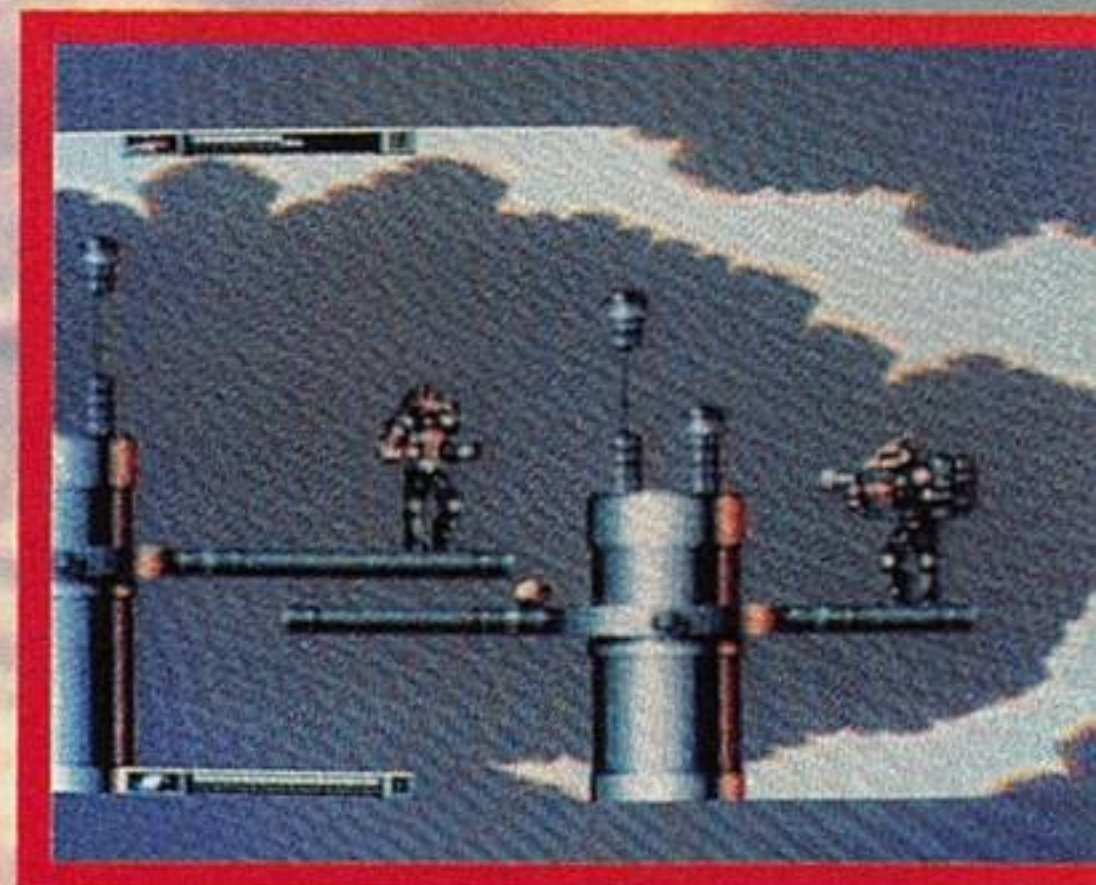
This is the best version of Wolfchild I've seen so far. Yes, it's better than the Mega CD game, but this says more about how bad the Mega CD version is than anything else. Graphically, it's a very good effort. A well animated, clearly defined

character runs around in levels packed with detail and depth. Scrolling is fast and smooth, and all of the levels look different enough to hold your attention. And the sound? Well it's your usual Game Gear stuff—a couple of annoyingly cheerful tunes to bother your ears.

Wolfchild is quite playable. Movement is a touch slow, but the controls (jump and punch) are responsive and the frustration factor is low. The five levels are large, if not huge, and finding your way to the exit requires more than just moving to the right. But once you finish this game (and it's not very hard), there's nothing in there to make you come back for more.

Put all of that together and you really do get the best version of Wolfchild you'll find. Trouble is, any version of Wolfchild is bound to be average at best. When Altered Beast is your inspiration, you're bound to come up with a fairly lame, unexciting platform game—and that's just what this is.

ANDREW HUMPHREYS



Graphics	80
Sound	75
Music	70
Playability...	76
Lastability ...	68
Difficulty	65
Mental	63
Atmosphere .	73
Overall	75

GAME GEAR

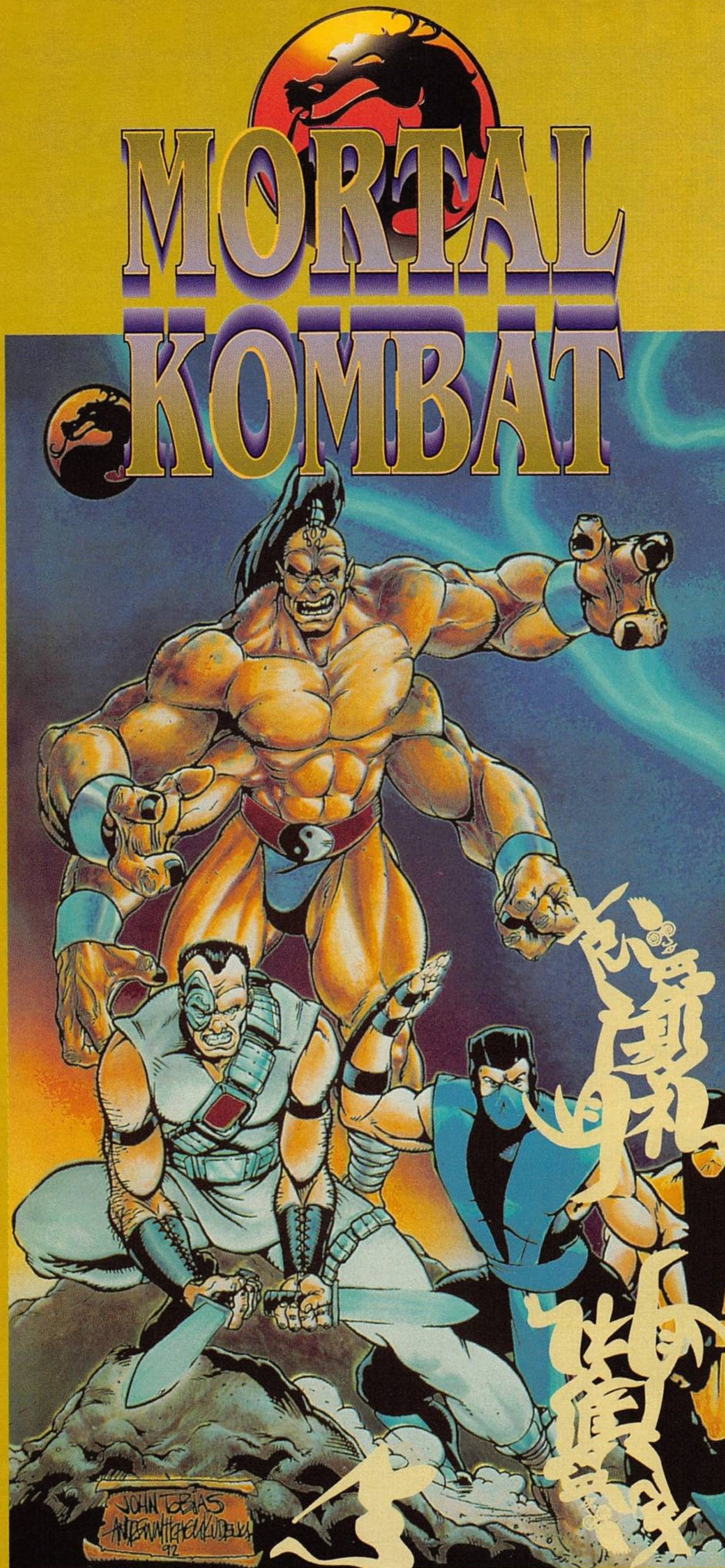
Only

the big games
get their very own
days. Sonic 2 got
November 24, 1992,
for "Sonic 2'sday".

Now, thanks to
Acclaim's hype
department, we're
all looking forward
to September 13 and
"Mortal Monday" -
the simultaneous,
world-wide, all-sys-
tems release date of
Mortal Kombat.

And no doubt
about it, this game
is very big—big
enough to convince
an entire generation
that "combat" is
spelt with a "K". It
was the only game
tough enough to
knock Streetfighter
II from the top of
the coin-op charts
and it is still one of
the hottest arcade
games around.

It's ultra-violent,
digitised, one-on-one
fighting action, and
it's coming scream-
ing into your home.



Just how close is the
Mega Drive version of
Mortal Kombat to the
arcade? Well, pretty
damn close, actually;
and let's get this
straight from the start
so there's no confu-
sion: the Mega Drive
cart packs in ALL the
characters (including
the elusive secret char-
acter, the Reptile) and
ALL the gameplay of
the arcade game.



The Shaolin Tournament

Mortal Kombat is set
at the legendary
Shaolin martial arts
tournament. The tour-
nament was once a
happy event, fought for
honour and glory.
When they weren't hit-
ting each other the
competitors would
socialise over a pot of
not-too-strong herbal
tea, exchanging recipes
and martial arts gossip.
That was before the
evil demon, Shang
Tsung, and his pupil
Goro, the four-armed,
half-man/half-dragon
(whose exceptionally
poor table manners are
as legendary as the
Shaolin), took over and
corrupted the noble
tournament. When you
lose to Shang Tsung
you lose more than just
a few pints of blood -
he will steal your very
soul.

You can enter the
tournament as any one
of seven characters,
each with their own
style of mortal combat,
their own special
moves, and an extra-
special "fatality move".

The tournament pro-
ceeds exactly as it does
in the arcades. The bat-
tle plan shows six regu-
lar matches (one



against each playable character), followed by the mirror match against your evil twin and three "endurance matches", where you face two consecutive foes with only one bar of energy. All of the bonus rounds are included. You must win every match (best of three fights) to earn the right to challenge first Goro, and then Shang Tsung, to become the grand master of the Shaolin.



Blood and Guts

OK. Most of you would have noticed that I've said that some (not all) of the fatalities have been modified from the arcade original. The infamous "Pit Scene" is also missing. The particularly blood-thirsty among us will not be very happy about this—after all, one of the things that made Mortal Kombat so appealing to gamers was its sheer brutality. Some people really like the gore. But you've got to remember—this is Mortal Kombat for the home market, and there are some things that Sega (and Nintendo) just don't want to be associated with.

What really matters is this: the fatalities are there, and every move from the arcade is there too. You still get the fatality bonus for

pulling off the finishing moves. So the basic gameplay is exactly the same as in the arcades, right down to the inclusion of the bonus rounds and the extra character, the Reptile. He even pops down every now and again before a match-up to give you hints on how to find him: look to the moon, perfection is the key. Getting to the Reptile is an extra challenge for Mortal Kombat experts.



Digitisation Galore

Aside from the gore, what draws gamers by the thousands to Mortal Kombat machines is the way the game looks. Visually, it really is stunning. All of the characters' movements (with the exception of Goro, who was created using stop motion animation) have been digitised from the movements of real actors, giving a realism to the action you just won't find elsewhere. But the arcade game was created on a 32 bit graphics processor with some custom hardware developed at Williams, and used a purpose-built monitor. Can the Mega Drive handle it?

The simple answer is, yes, it can. The Mega Drive version looks as close to the arcade game as you could possibly hope for. Mortal Kombat is only a 16 meg cart, but the foreground character sprites have been ported directly from the coin-op. The animation is smooth and very fast and a good use of shading gives all of the

characters a solid 3-D feel. The background art is less detailed than in the arcade, but the depth and the atmosphere are all there. Just check out the



screen shots to see how good it looks and, take my word for it, it moves just as well.

The sound is impressive too. The suitably mystical music is very good, and the crunching sound effects and quality speech from the arcade have been translated well. Scorpion's "Get over here" is as menacing as ever but (I know you'll notice it if I don't point it out) some of the speech from the arcade is missing. Overall, though, the sound is nice and tough.



Kicks and Punches and Other Things

So how does it play? In a word, beautifully. The six-button control pad gives you perfect control, but the game is still very playable with a standard three-button controller.

Personally, I've always felt that Mortal

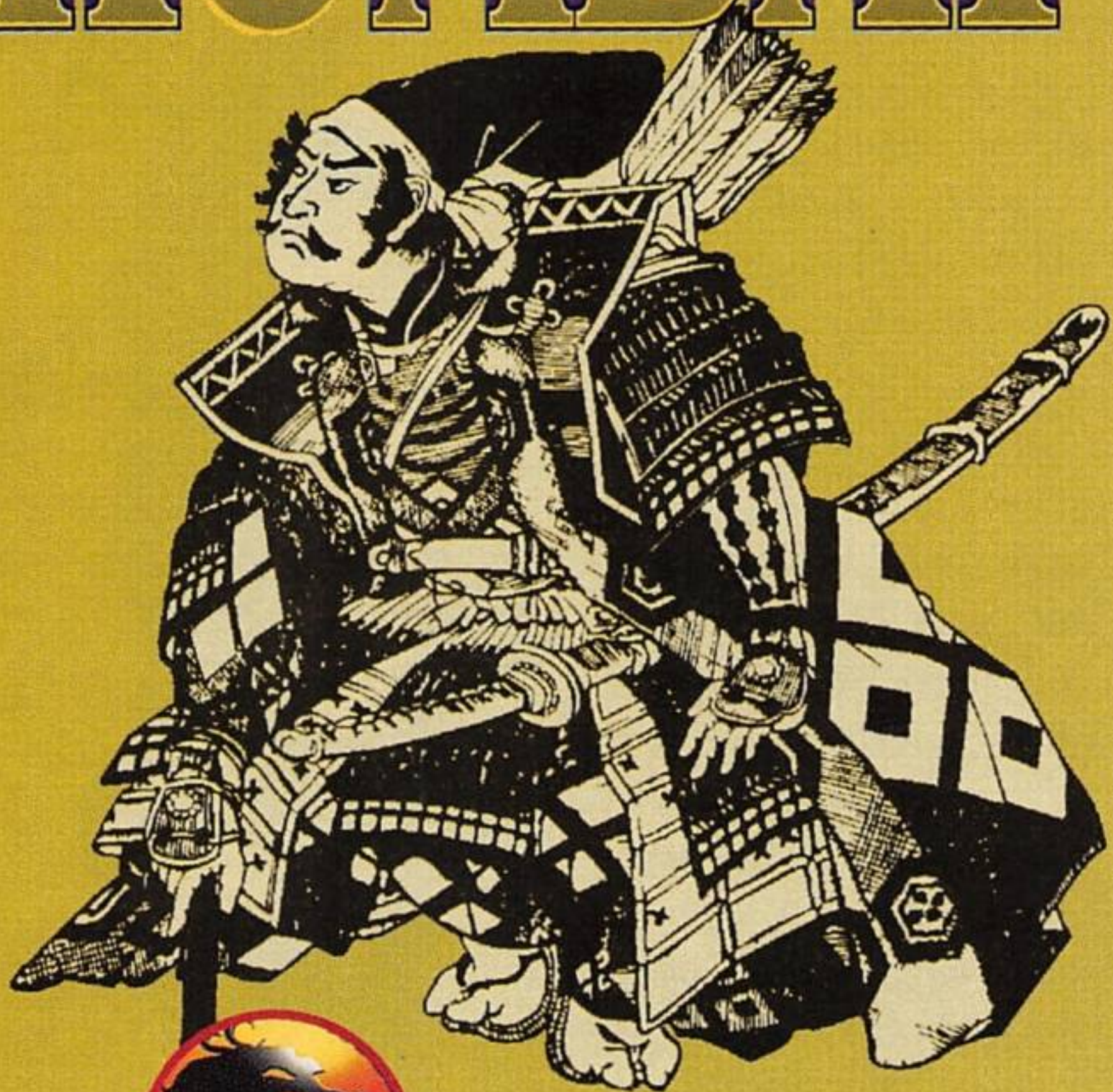
Kombat did not quite match the range of moves and depth of gameplay as Streetfighter II, but it always was a much more forgiving game. All of the special moves are easy to pull off and the basic moves—like rapid jabs, jumps and sweep kicks—quickly become instinctive. The controls are very responsive, and if you've sunk a few coins in at the arcades, combos and even fatalities will roll out smoothly.

There are five difficulty levels and variable continues. Very easy really is very easy and very hard really is very hard, so beginners and experts alike will be happy. But the real challenge and long-term lastability comes from the two-player mode. You may be able to beat the computer every time, but you never know what another player might dish up. If you don't have any friends, buy Mortal Kombat and you soon will.

Probe Software have done an excellent job of bringing Mortal Kombat to the Mega Drive. If you loved it at the arcade, you'll love it at home. If you never got around to playing it before, now's your chance. Go out and fight for a copy now.



MORTAL KOMBAT



The Cast

Who are the competitors and why are they drawn to battle? For those not familiar with the arcade game (both of you), here's a quick guide for instant playground and lounge room credibility.

Liu Kang

Mortal Kombat's good guy. A former member of the Lotus Society, he enters the tournament with the single aim of restoring

honour to the Shaolin. Liu Kang relies on his speed, his orange fireball and flying thrust kick for victory. His fatality is the scissor kick and uppercut combo—just like in the arcade.

Kano

The baddest of the bad, a cut-throat mercenary and villain. Kano is a member of the Black Dragon, a former Boy Scout and Rotarian. His special moves are the spinning attack, knife throw and head smash. His fatality has been toned down from the arcade version—now he leaves his victims' hearts where they belong.

Johnny Cage

A top martial arts actor, Cage is using

the tournament to test his skills in several new pairs of shiny bicycle shorts. His special moves are the green fireball, the shadow kick, and the (don't try this one at home, kids) splits punch. His fatality has also been toned down—it's the same uppercut, but it no longer separates heads from shoulders.

Sonya Blade

A special forces agent, Sonya was on Kano's trail when, distracted by the quality of Cage's lycra, she was ambushed and ended up in the tournament. Now she has no choice but to fight, using her force wave, flying air punch and leg grab. Her fatality, the Burning Kiss of Death, remains exactly as it was in the arcades.



Scorpion

A frightening spectre, Scorpion has entered the tournament solely to exact vengeance against Sub Zero—his assassin in mortal life. A master of the spear and cord and the teleport punch, Scorpion is a match for any competitor. He finishes them off exactly as he does in the arcades—with the Bad Breath Fire Death.

Sub Zero

Sub Zero's past is shrouded in mystery. A Lin Keui ninja of a secret clan, he reputedly enjoys horseback riding, night clubbing, and moonlit walks along sandy beaches. His deadliest move is the ice blast, which freezes enemies in their tracks, but his sliding attack is also very handy. His fatality in the arcade, which was known as the Chiropractors' Nightmare, has been replaced by a less gruesome finishing move.

Rayden

A deity Thunder God with a penchant for lamp shades, Rayden has taken mortal form to enjoy the thrills of competition. His torpedo attack, lightning bolt and teleporting ability make him a powerful opponent. His fatality, the Lightning Strike Overload, remains similar to the arcade—he still lights up the room, but with no messy after-effects.

Goro

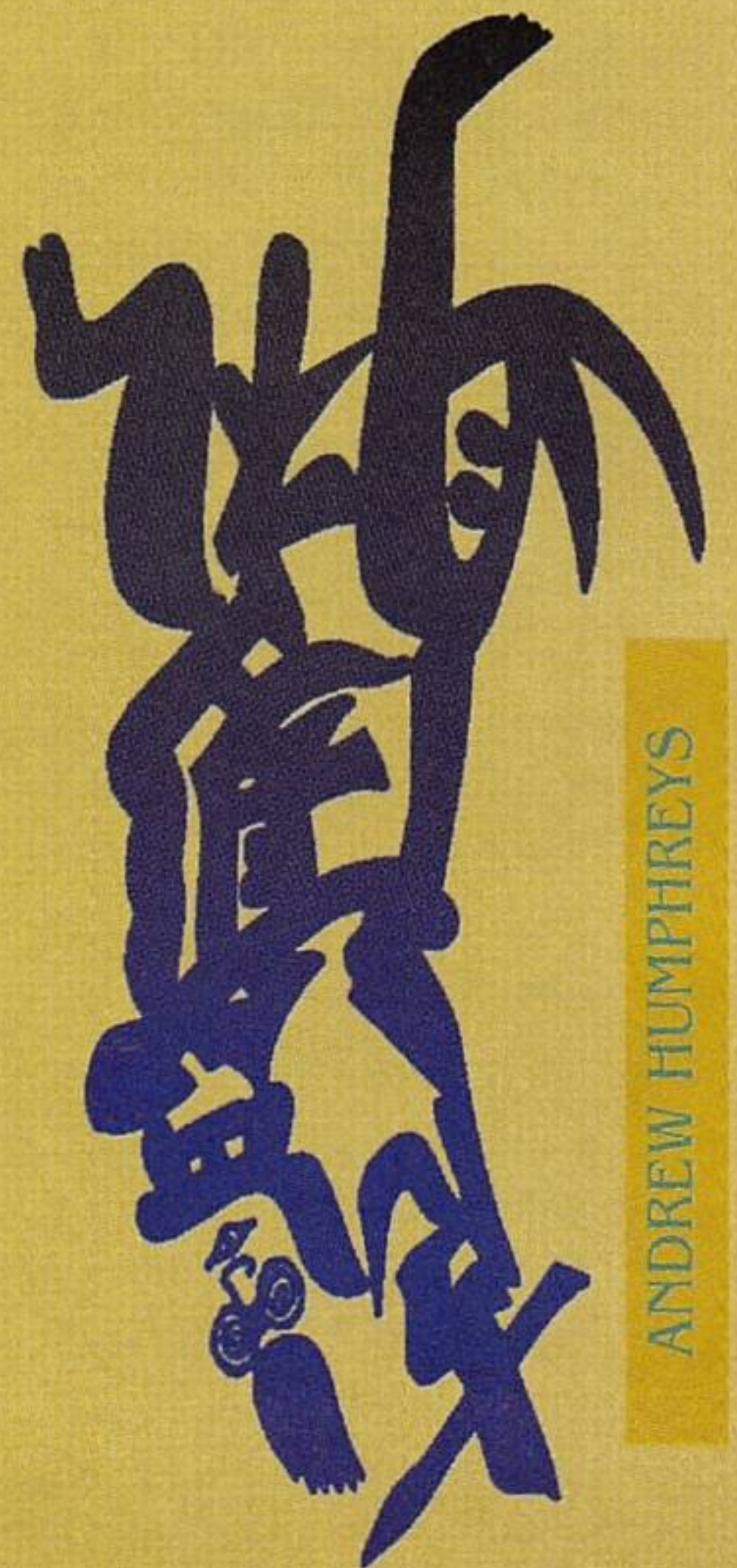
Goro uses his huge size and his four arms to crush a challenger in seconds. His attacks cause major damage. Stay away from him



and use your special moves if you want a shot at Shang Tsung.

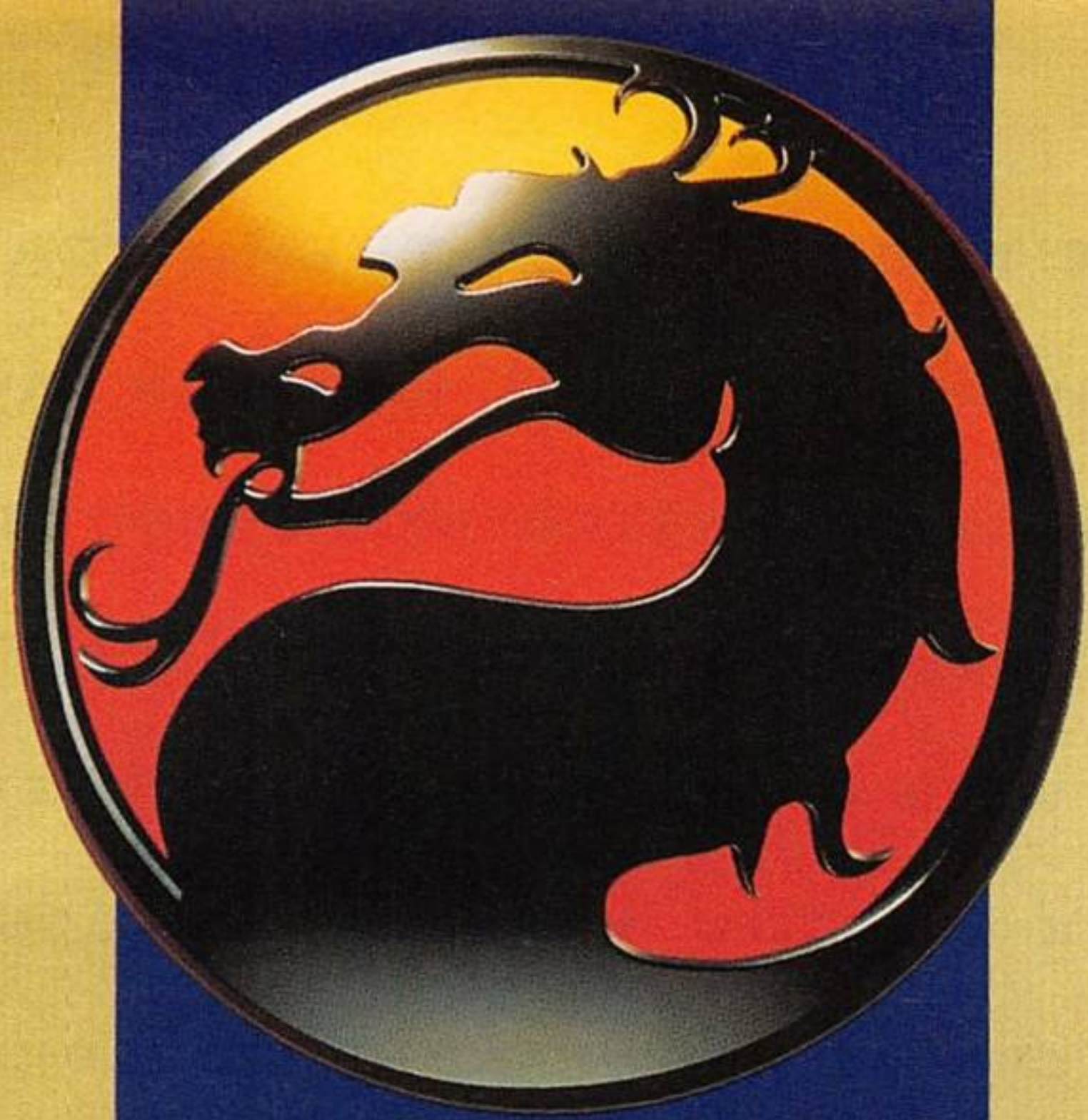
Shang Tsung

He looks like a little old man but he's tougher than a whole herd of bison. With multiple fireballs and super speed, he is also a shape shifter, with the ability to transform into any character and use all of their special moves.



ANDREW HUMPHREYS





Graphics93
 Sound90
 Music92
 Playability94
 Lastability93
 Difficulty88
 Atmosphere ...91
 Mental85
 Overall93



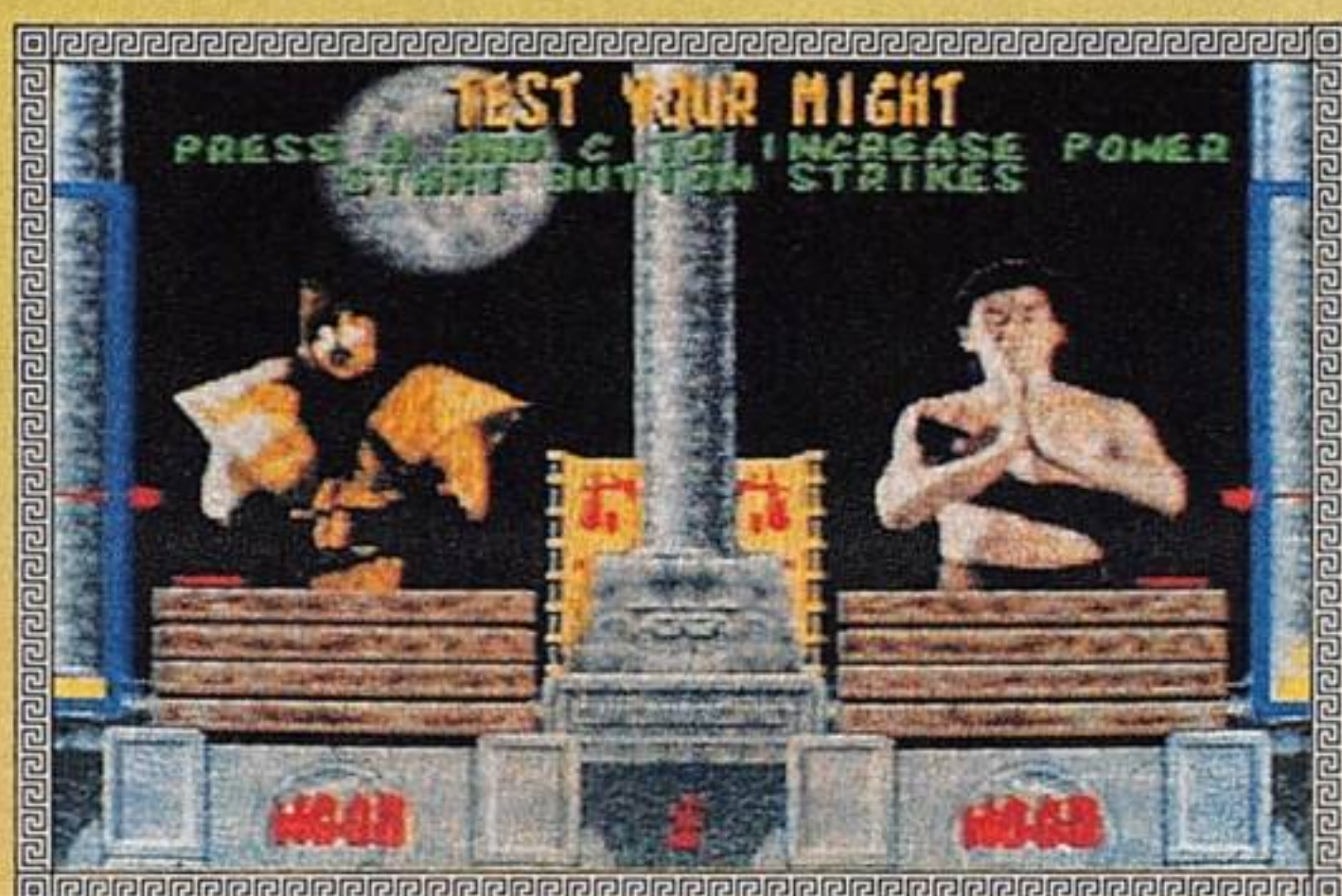
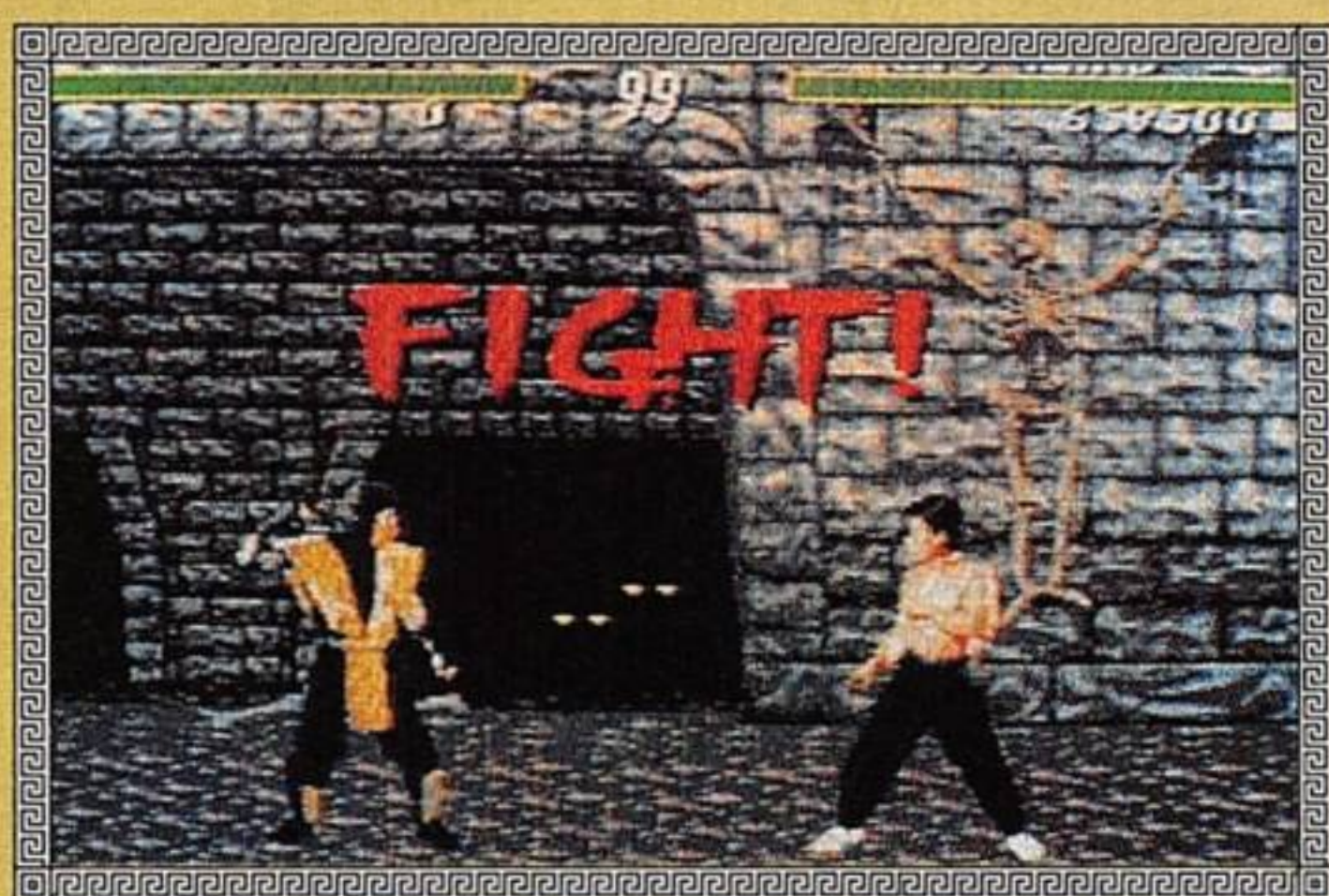
MK on Game Gear

Mortal Kombat on the Game Gear!?! You better believe it! We didn't receive a copy soon enough to give it a full review, but here are some shots from the Sega handheld version. As you can see, the characters are very large and clear, but there's not much background to speak of. But who needs a nice background when you're fighting for your soul? Not me!

The moves are also going to be limited because of the two-button restriction, but from all indications it's going to be a surprisingly good conversion. We'll give you a full review of it next issue...



Game Gear

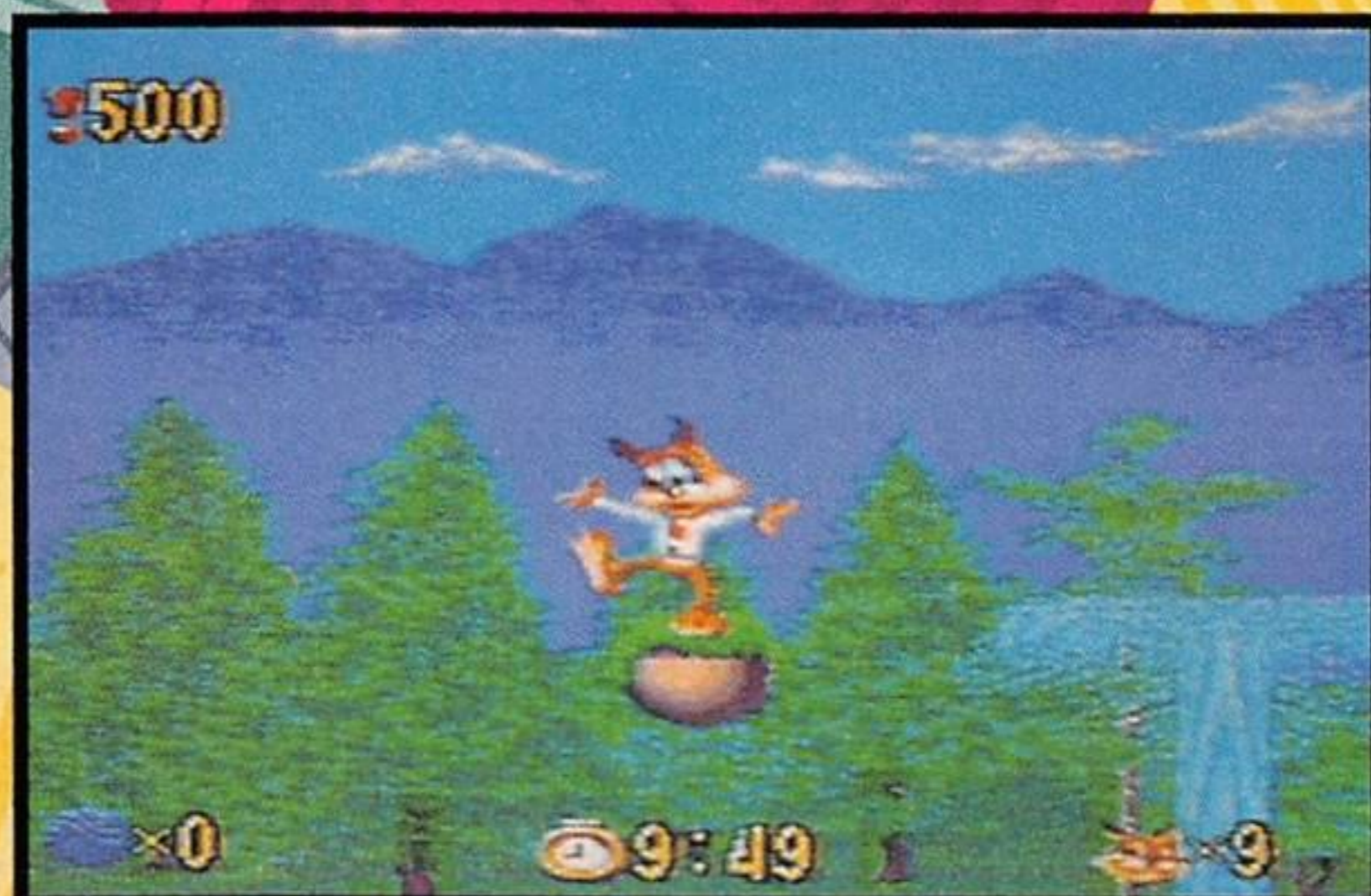


Large vertical Japanese text overlay on the right side of the page.

THERE'S BEEN AN AWFUL LOT OF HYPE ABOUT BUBSY THE BOBCAT IN RECENT MONTHS. ACCOLADE, THE GAME'S MAKER, HAS BEEN RAVING ABOUT IT SO MUCH THAT THERE'S BEEN SPECULATION ABOUT IT STEALING SONIC'S CROWN AS THE NUMBER-ONE PLATFORMER. (IT'S BEEN A NEAR THING RECENTLY, WITH GAMES LIKE COOL SPOT, TINY TOONS AND ROLO TO THE RESCUE EMERGING AS CLOSE CONTENDERS.) NOW THE TRUTH CAN BE KNOWN - THE WOULD-BE SONIC BEATER HAS ARRIVED IN THE MEGAZONE OFFICE. DOES THE NEW KID ON THE BLOCK REALLY HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO RELEGATE OUR BLUE-SPINED CHUM INTO SECOND PLACE...?

Bubsy

the bobcat in Claws



The danger with too much hype is that it often raises expectations to silly degrees and disappointment is inevitable. First impressions of *Bubsy* are slightly disappointing - for a 16 Meg game, it just doesn't seem to have what it takes to rank it with the greats. The playability feels funny and that bloody music...honestly, it takes approximately 2.54 seconds for it to become the most irritating tune ever to assault your eardrums.

But give it a second chance. Read the instructions, play around with the control system a little and select the Sound-FX Only option. It's not so bad second time round. The third time you play you even start to like it a little...and the fourth time you may even start liking it a lot...

The plot is some nonsense about aliens from the planet Rayon tripping down to Earth to steal the world's wool supply. Bubsy has to thwart the extraterrestrial textile terrorist's rather dubious scheme, and finally meet up with the alien queens, Poly and Ester. Luckily, the aliens, called Woolies, are surprisingly dumb for creatures who've mastered interplanetary travel - they've left balls of wool all over the place (though they have managed to levitate most of it and leave it hanging in mid-air) and they implode if you bounce on them.

What this translates to, in gameplay terms, is that you have to run around collecting wool and leaping onto baddies' heads to kill them. There are various special goodies to pick up on the way, such as special shirts which give you extra lives, invulnerability and so on. At the end of every three levels, a couple of end-of-stage

aliens have to be defeated. Hmm, there aren't too many departures from your basic cutesie platform mix so far, are there?

The controls are rather simplistic - left, right, jump and glide - but you soon discover the game's subtleties. Jumping at the instant you hit a springy thing makes you go that little bit higher, for example.

Gliding is very important as

encounters of the furred kind



it's possible to die from falling from too great a height. Pressing the glide button makes you glide gracefully to the ground, safe and sound. It's useful for getting over large gaps, too, as it increases the distance you cover.

Bubsy is a big 16 megabits (twice the size of *Sonic 2*'s eight megabits and absolutely dwarfing the original *Sonic*'s four megabits). Most of this memory has been used to hold graphics, animation and a fair amount of levels.

Graphics are good, but pretty much what you'd expect for a game of this type. *Bubsy* himself is well-animated. There's the usual "looking precarious" bit when dangerously near the edge of a platform, but most animation has been put into the death scenes.



There are more than 20 ways to die, each done in classic cartoon style.

He can shatter, splatter and puncture, flying around the screen like a deflating balloon.

The aliens, on the other hand, don't appear to actually do an awful lot; for the main part they stand around, appearing to blow kisses to you in a completely non-threatening manner. The most danger lies if you go too fast and inadvertently bump into them, rather than due to any overly aggressive actions on their part.

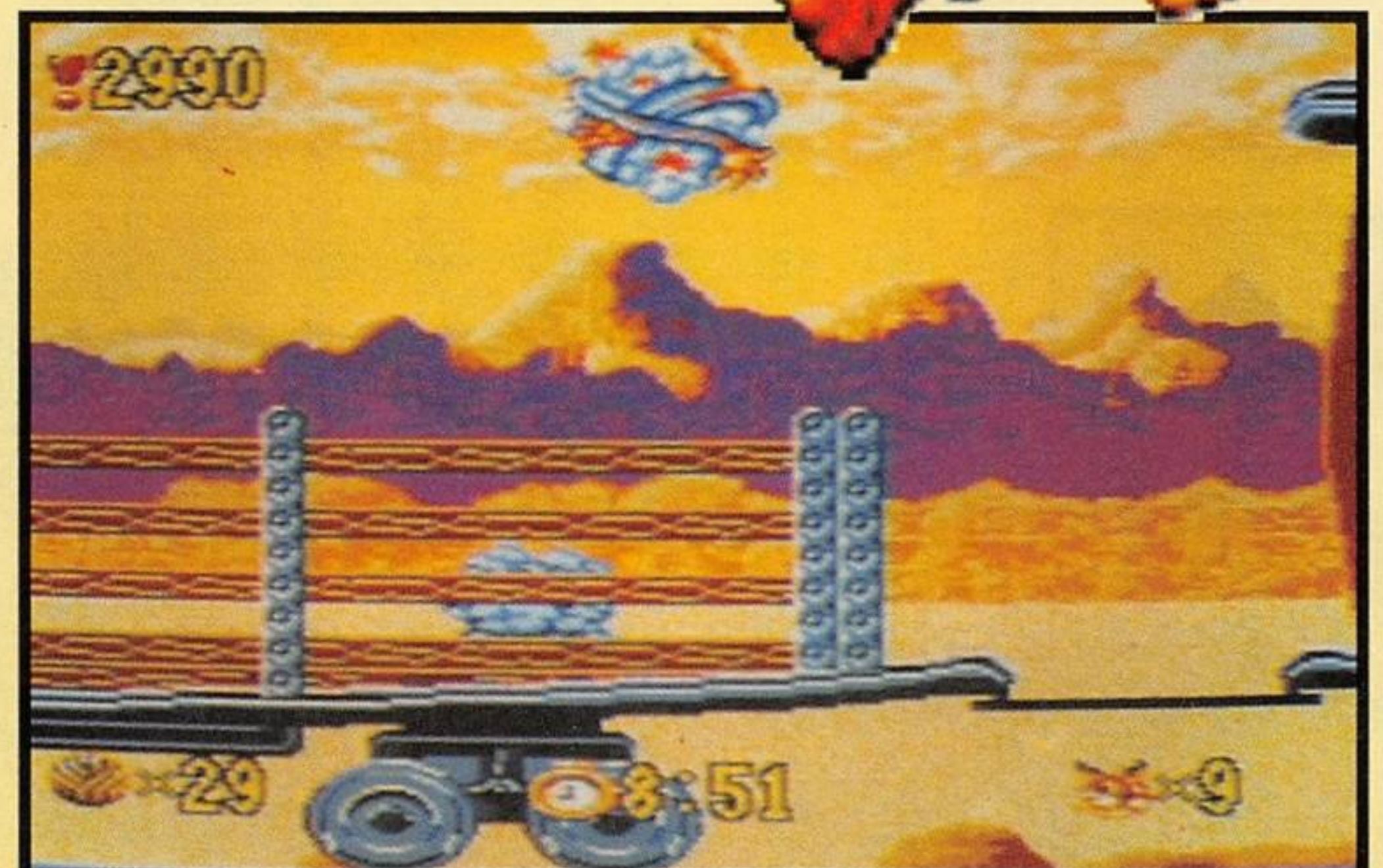
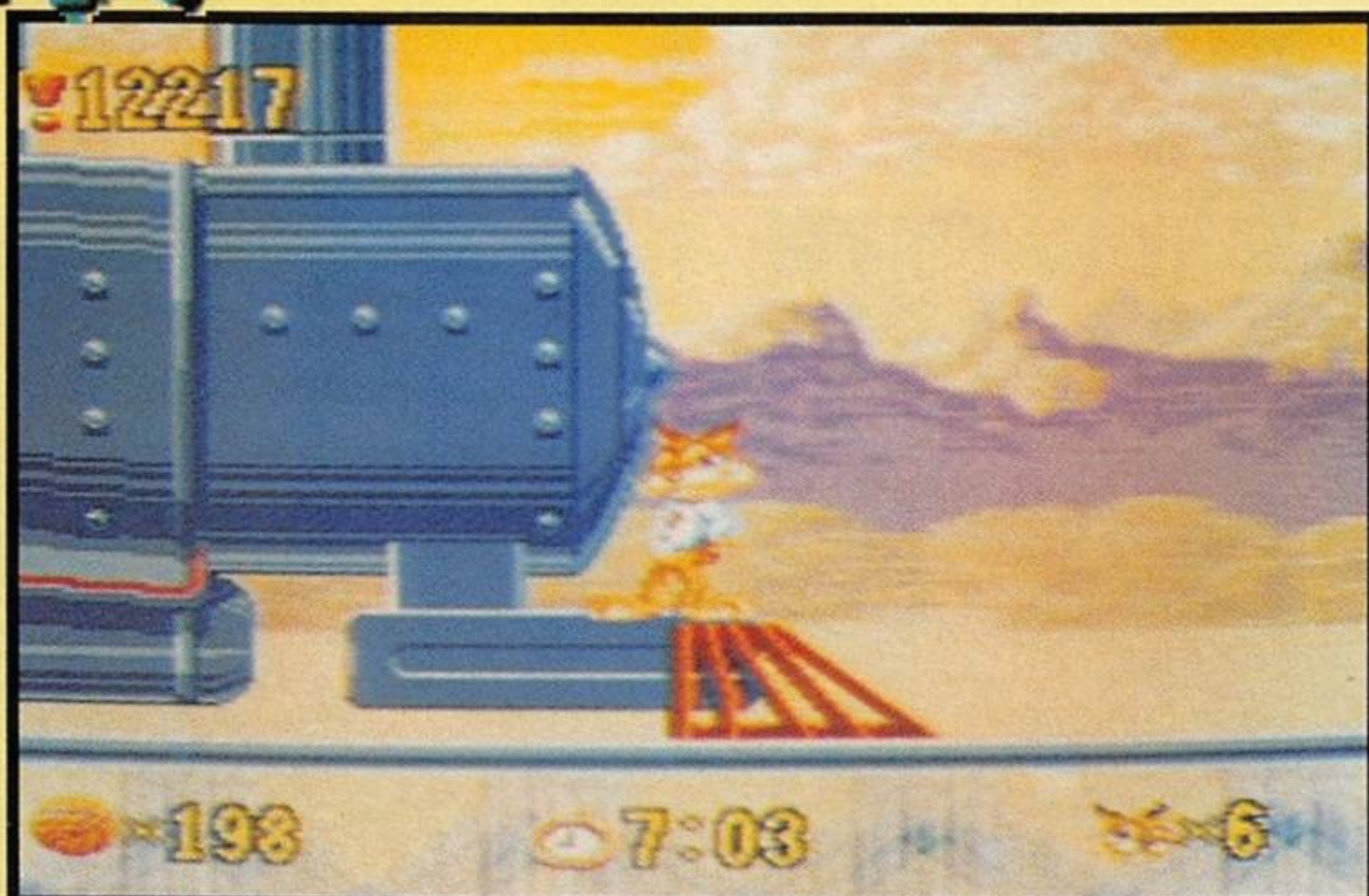
The levels are huge – and there are a lot of them. The game is split into five worlds, each consisting of three sub-levels or chapters, 16 in all. Those of you who bothered going to school and learning maths will be thinking "hang on just one minute, five worlds, three levels per world that makes, now don't rush me, 15. Where does this extra level come from, then?"

I'm glad you asked. At the very end of the game a final, super-tough, level is waiting for you. Just look at what the tourist brochure has to say about Bubsyland...

World One is standard platform fare, and consists mainly of grass, rocks and water. You're introduced gently to the action – the first world is easy, but things get rapidly tougher as you progress. There are also tons of secret rooms and hidden passages to find.

World Two has a fairground theme. There's a giant roller coaster that continues through the level, as well as many other fun-filled rides, such as the rocket that's necessary to get to some bonuses. Be careful to glide if you fall off – unless you're keen on Bubsy-flavoured pancakes.

World Three takes you back to the Old West when the USA was a big, bad, dangerous place (has anything changed?). A steam train dominates as it hurtles through the canyons of a desert and you have to jump from car to car, making your way to the front of the runaway loco where you have to apply the brakes. Every now and again you have to make a foray into the canyon. Watch out for those cacti, they're a real pain in the arse...



World Four sees Bubsy braving the rapids as he goes floating down the river on a log raft. There's heaps of bonus stuff for the taking here, the only problem is that it's underwater and unreachable. The only way to get it is... well, that's for you to figure out!

World Five is up in the air. Most of the gameplay happens in the trees as the bobcat jumps from branch to branch. Every so often there are funny ape-like critters in the middle holding up the tree like a carved totem.

The Final Level is inside the Woolie mother ship. Bubsy must make his way through it and defeat the twin Woolie queens at the end, getting shot of them once and for all and saving the world's wool supply for the manufacture of Holeproof Heroes (you know, the socks on telly that the barmy old farmer reckons to be Australia's economic salvation).

Bubsy is a fun game with lots of appeal, but as for throwing *Sonic* into the scrap heap – not quite. It tries hard, maybe a little too hard, to be the platform game to beat them all, and doesn't quite make it. Oh, there's nothing wrong with it, nothing at all - it's an excellent game and will provide hours and hours of entertainment, but *Sonic* it's not.

ADAM WARING

MEGA ED SAYS:

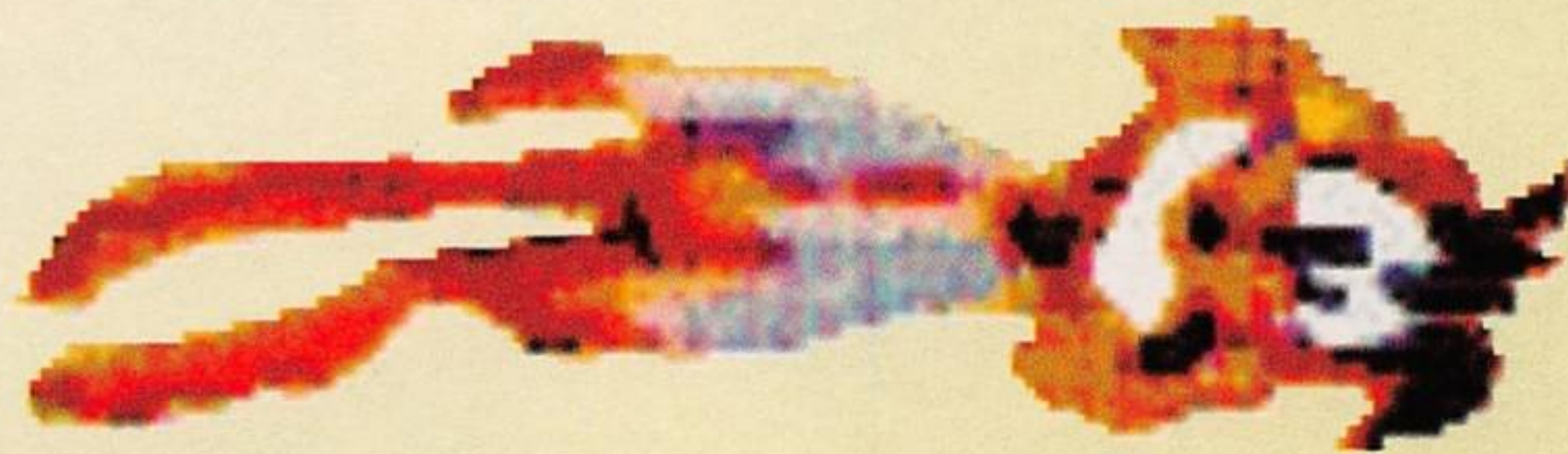
The build up to *Bubsy* has been nothing short of incredible. Accolade have pulled out all stops to make this street - tough Bobcat the next video game sensation. And while the hype might have been a bit much, a bit soon, there's no doubt that they've come up with an extremely classy product with *Claws Encounters of the Furred Kind*.

So, if you like fast, fun platformers along the lines of *Sonic*, then *Bubsy* is your next essential purchase. The game obviously draws a lot from the spiky blue rodent, and attempts to outdo it with spunky animation and extra cute bits. And they're nice enough, I suppose, but for a 16 Meg game they could have done a hell of a lot more.

Like *Sonic* though, you'll be playing this one for hours and hours on end and it will never lose its appeal. The levels are absolutely massive and you could literally spend days just exploring and finding all the hidden goodies. It's obvious that a lot of people have spent some serious time putting *Bubsy* together, and you and all your friends are bound to spend some serious time finishing it off.

My only criticism of *Bubsy* is the lack of originality. It's virtually identical to *Sonic*, *Tiny Toons* and the rest. Still if you liked those two games (and let's face it, who doesn't), then you'll love *Bubsy* and you should be on your way down to the shops to buy it now. A new game hero has most definitely arrived.

STUART CLARKE



GRAPHICS	94
SOUND	88
MUSIC	80
PLAYABILITY	90
LASTABILITY	92
DIFFICULTY	86
MENTAL	70
ATMOSPHERE	86
OVERALL	93



WELCO
METOT
HENEX
TLEVEL



Believe it or not,

*An interview with
Scott Bayless, CD developer at Sega.*

the brains behind Mega CD™

What are the technical advantages of Mega CD™?

Basically, it offers massive storage, which means we can now use real video action. A 16-bit cartridge could only hold a few seconds of motion video. But the CD holds over 500 megabytes, so you can now play for hours, interacting with real video.

don't wear pocket-

So the games will be more realistic?

Yeah, way more realistic. We have a second processor and a special graphics chip, so our zooming, scaling, and rotation is incredible. And we use a lot of real-life video you can actually interact with. Characters will speak to you and harass you.

protectors or glasses

What do you mean "interact"?

For example, there's a game called "Sherlock Holmes",™ that uses all real-life footage with real actors, and you control the action. You have to solve real true-to-life murder mysteries by visiting key suspects and informants. It's like controlling the plot and the action of a real movie, from start to finish. It's pretty wild.

held together with tape.

Do you have a personal favourite CD game?

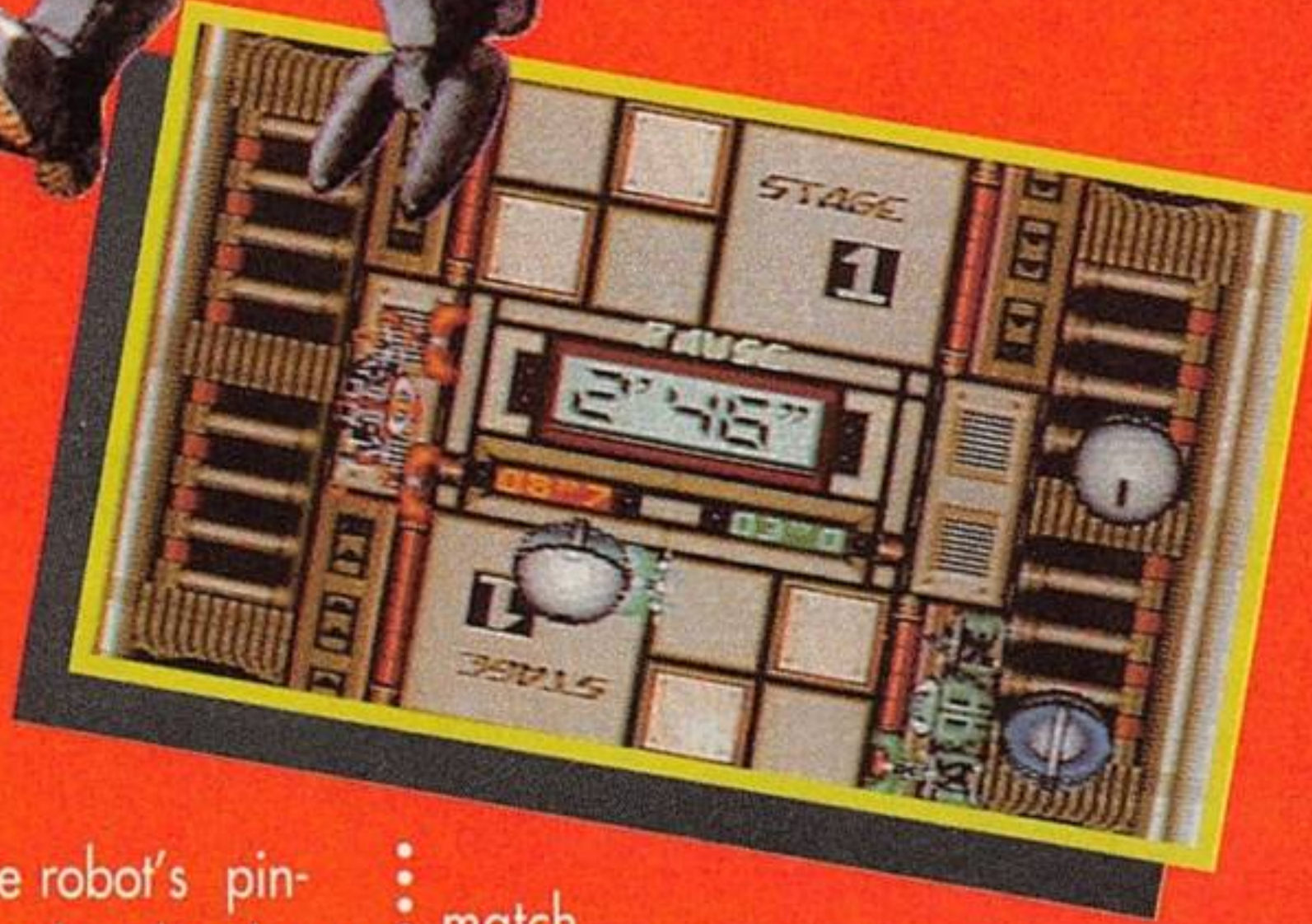
Yeah. I like the INXS music video game, where you can re-edit their videos with different special effects and graphics. The sound on all the CD's is pretty amazing; it's just as good as an audio component. Plus we're using a lot of original music. When you hook it up to your sound system, it's like playing in a whole new realm. It's really amazing. You forget where you are.

(Those guys work for our competitors.)



WORLD JACKS

MEGA DRIVE



Ok, where do you start with a game called Ball Jaks? When I first heard the name, I began wondering if this was in a new line of Mega Drive Adult titles or a new way to inflict pain on yourself. Maybe I was wrong about the first suggestion, but the game definitely causes pain.

But what exactly is Ball Jaks?

The next part must be read in the most exciting tone you can muster. Here goes:-

It is 7650 AD and the annual Ball Jaks World Championship is set to take place in the historic Grand Arena. Competitors and spectators from all over the galaxy have come to take part in, and bear witness to, this all-time sports spectacle!

You must be wondering just what does such an extravaganza promote. Basically Ball Jaks involves one or two people, more commonly known as "Jackers", in control of a technological robot masterpiece, going head to head for fame, glory and mo' money.

Sports of the future are a lot different than the present, other than the fact that this game is about getting an object and holding on to it. Kind of like Rugby or Football or Soccer. This game involves spheres that roll along conveyor belts at the ends of each Arena. A truck runs alongside the conveyor belts. On these tracks you control a robot, which is much like a

crab, and you use the robot's pincers to reach across and grab spheres from the opponent's conveyor.

Sound easy? Well, you'll be surprised on how such a basic concept can be turned into a frustrating, and always annoying competition.

The key to success is to keep your spheres on your side for the maximum time shown on screen. To help do this, you have to grab spheres and barge them into your opponent to blow him up. This gives you time to collect all the spheres while he is replaced.

There are various techniques which can be used in order to help your battle, and they begin from the basic techniques such as feint, attack, double grab. The intermediate level player could accomplish a hyper grab, time lag grab and, finally, for those sad enough to play the game and get good at it, you could even achieve the hurricane! Wow ??!!

Graphically, the game is appalling. There really isn't anything eye catching about the whole package, so interest wanes straight away. The robots, although small, are the most pleasant looking feature, and the arenas and title screen are half-hearted attempts at accepted levels of quality.

The sounds are garbled and really pathetic. The music; well, it doesn't help as such, and the only tunes that could be worse would be the 'Janken'

match tune from Alex Kidd in Miracle World. And finally to playability. Although the game is easy enough to grasp, the first thing you'll notice is how tough and unfair the computer players are.

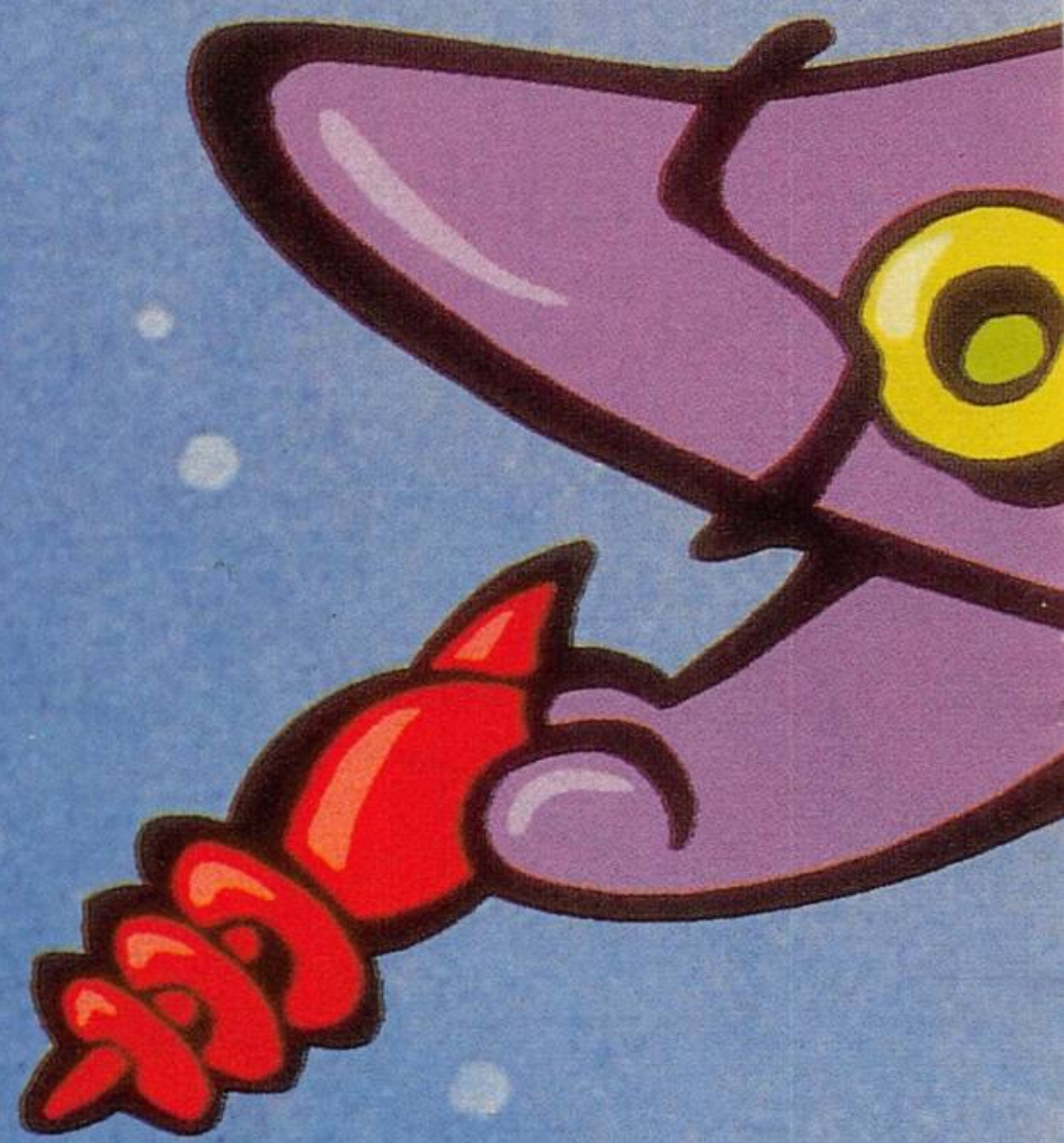
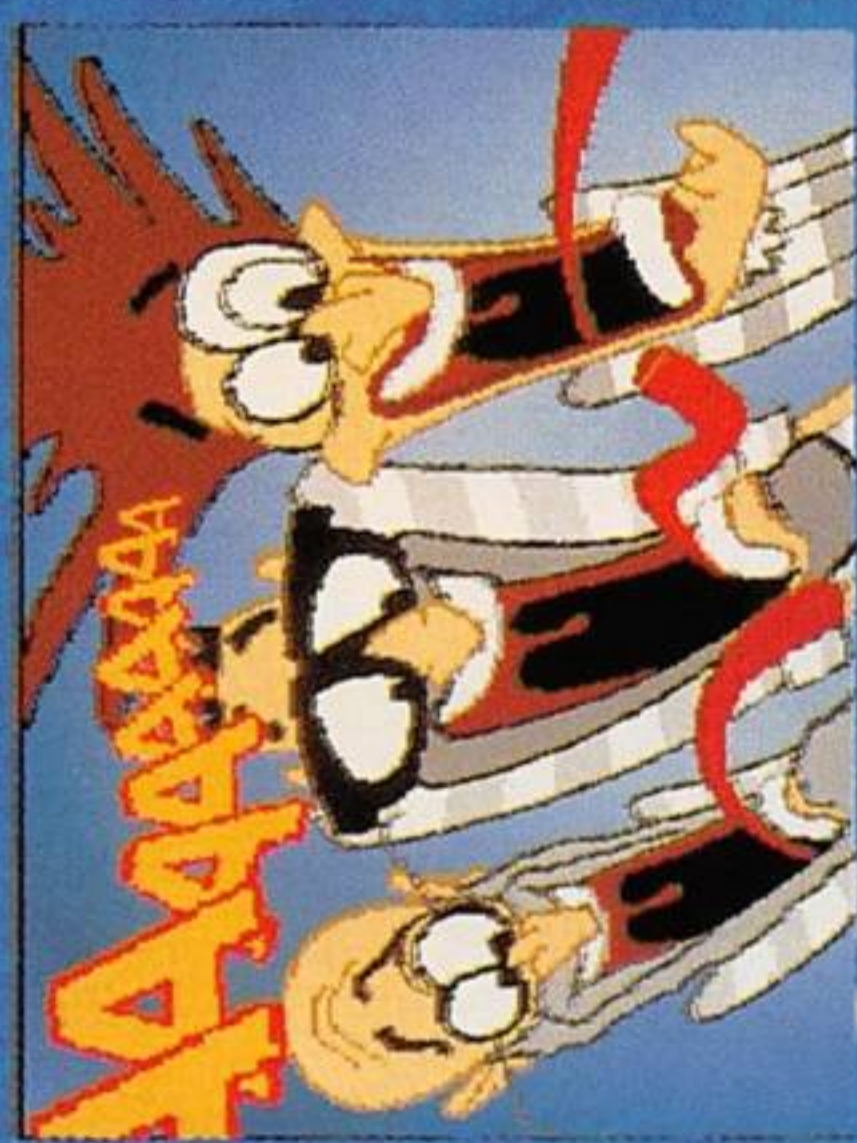
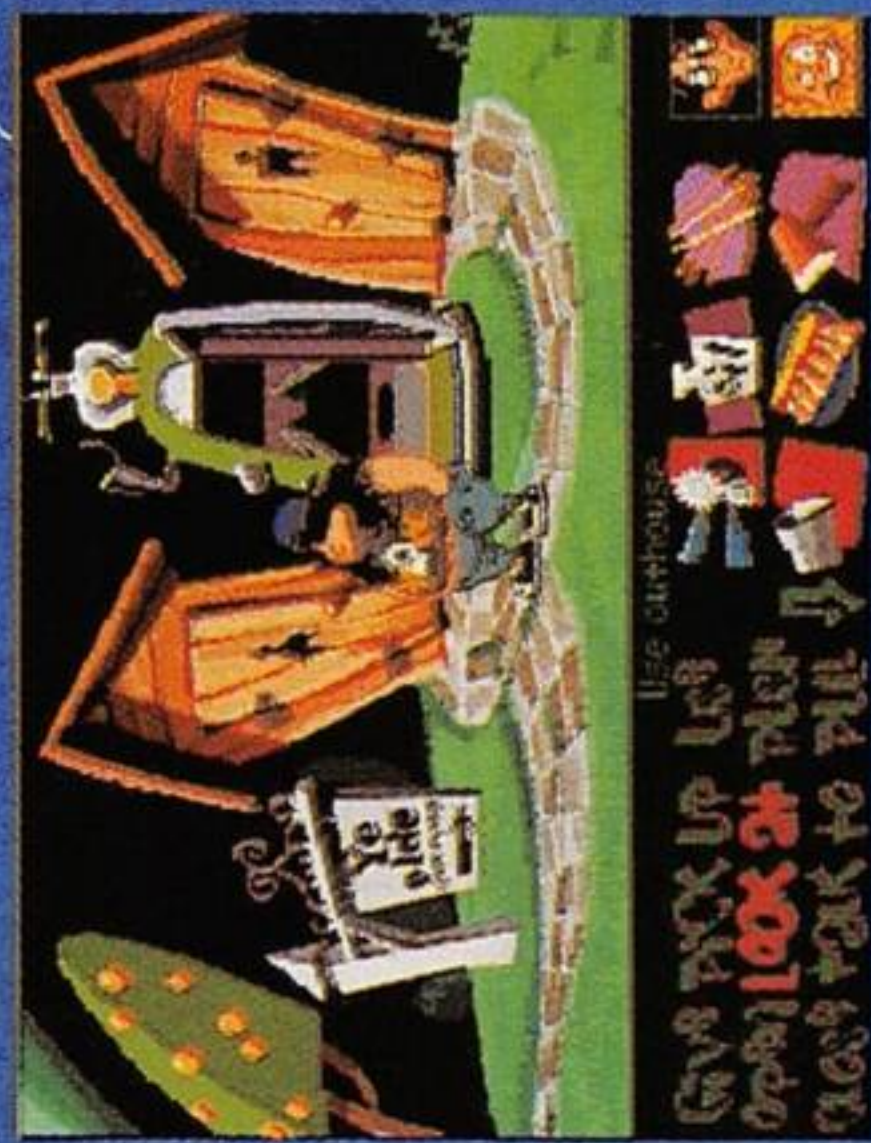
Playing against a friend is probably the most appealing aspect and this is the only thing that might add to this mind-numbingly bland game. With only 5 computer opponents to beat, plus the two-player option and practice mode, the novelty value wears thin very quickly. If you fancy yourself as a bit of a masochist, Ball Jaks is for you, otherwise invest in something more compelling.

NICK SMITH

Graphics	51
Sound	42
Music	43
Playability	62
Lastability	36
Difficulty	58
Mental.....	65
Atmosphere	32
Overall	48



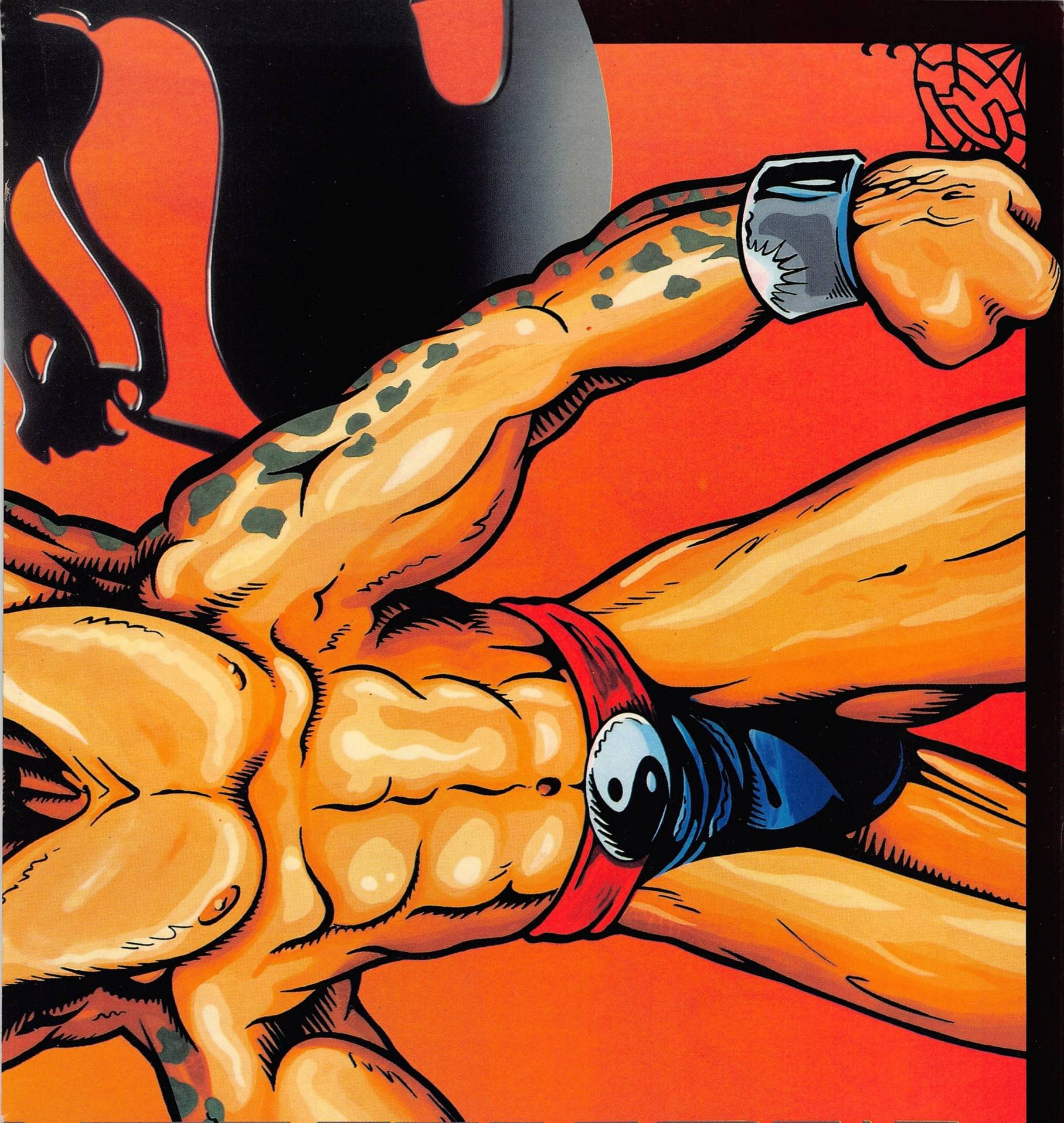
Maniac Mansion of the Mystery





TAWBOKK

®



TWILLOW



Graphics89
 Sound88
 Music.....87
 Playability87
 Lastability83
 Difficulty86
 Mental64
 Atmosphere.....77
 Overall86

There are four speeds to play at: Very Fast, Stupidly Fast, If We Don't Slow Down We're Going To Have An Accident and I've Just Cacked My Pants.



This game is based, apparently, in the 1930s. So what it's doing with space ships and intergalactic pirates is anyone's guess. Who needs plots anyway? In Power Strike II all you need to know is that there are things just asking to be killed and it's up to you to kill 'em. It's fast, furious, frantic and possibly some other words beginning with F, too.

It's not terribly original, it has to be said. There have been plenty of scrolling shooters released before. But what it does, it does very well indeed. The screen scrolls downwards and about 100 million things (approximately) whizz around it at breakneck speeds. You have to avoid crashing into them (unless they're power-ups, in which case it's rather a smart idea to do just that) and try to shoot everything that moves (and a fair few things that don't). Easy peasy lemon squeezy.

There are four speeds to play at: Very Fast, Stupidly Fast, If We Don't Slow Down We're Going To Have An Accident and I've Just Cacked My Pants.

The alien monster type things attack in waves. Some, like laser cannons, are stationary but fire loads of bullets at you. Other things move around very quickly indeed, firing loads of bullets at you. The pick-'em-ups range from beer cans (huh? - Ed) that upgrade your firing power to missiles, napalm, extra lives and super blasts, amongst others. You change the type of weapon you have by collecting the numbered pods that float down the screen. With all the baddies, their bullets, the power-ups, your fire power and you, flying across the screen in different directions, it's no wonder that things get a little con-

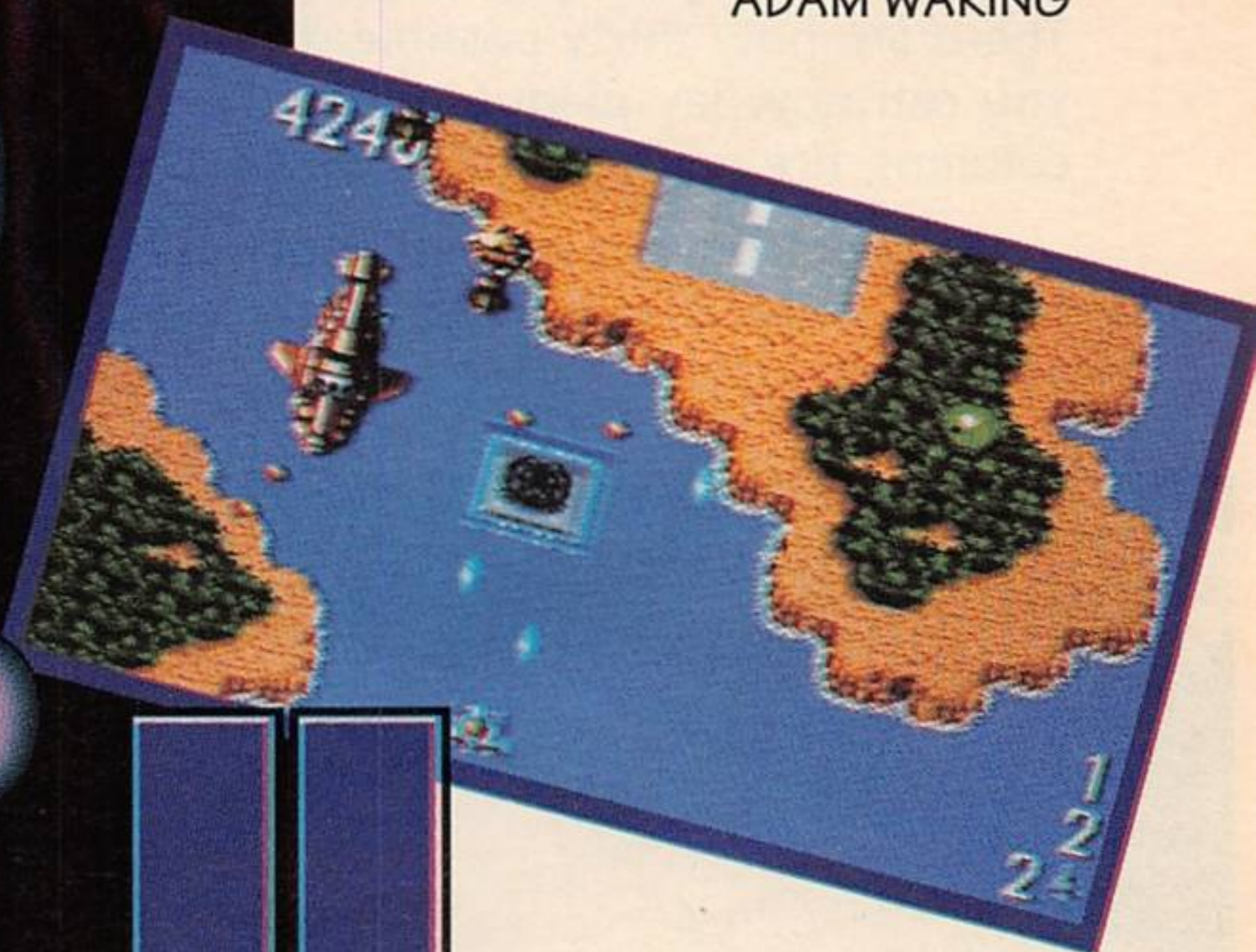
fusing at times. This can be a problem as you can lose track of which of the moving blurs you are, biting the bullet without realising it.

The graphics are excellent for a Master System game, and a huge improvement over plain old Power Strike's. The backdrops change with the levels and are very different as you progress through the game. The sprites are well-detailed and move smoothly and, as I think may have been mentioned before, at a fair rate of knots. Sound, too, is impressive with a bearable little tune accompanying the explosions as you let them have it. The amount of things on screen at once and the speed that the whole game runs at just goes to show that there's plenty that can be done with the ageing hardware in the hands of expert programmers.

Yes, it's another shoot-'em-up, and I bet you're thinking, "great, just what the world needs. Seen it, done it, bought the special edition commemorative collector's mug". But as shoot-'em-ups go, this is as good as you'll get on the Master System. It's certainly a worthy successor to the original Power Strike; as it's streets ahead on its older brother on all counts. A neat little game that should keep those with an itchy trigger finger happy for quite a while.

ADAM WARING

POWER STRIKE II



POPULOUS WAS A BREAKTHROUGH GAME. IT WAS THE FIRST EVER GOD SIM AND, WHEN IT FOUND ITS WAY ON TO THE MEGA DRIVE, IT BROUGHT A NEW DIMENSION TO CONSOLE GAMING. POPULOUS WAS ALL ABOUT POWER; CREATING AND SHAPING WORLDS, BUILDING CIVILISATIONS, CONTROLLING THE FORCES OF NATURE AND FIGHTING THE FORCES OF EVIL. YOU PLAYED THE PART OF A SUPREME BEING. PEOPLE FOLLOWED AND WORSHIPPED YOU, AND IF THEY ANNOYED YOU ALL YOU HAD TO DO WAS UNLEASH A DEVASTATING NATURAL DISASTER TO QUIET THEM DOWN. NOT SURPRISINGLY, IT WAS A HIT.

Populous II first appeared on the Amiga in late 1991 and has since become the God game of choice on all other floppy formats. Now it's coming to the Mega Drive with the all-new spunky Frankie Goes To Hollywood-ish subtitle, Two Tribes.

This time, you play the son of Zeus, leader of all the Gods. Zeus has the extremely strange habit of taking the form of an animal (usually a swan) and mating with mortal women, so you're definitely not an only child. You call for your rightful place on Mount Olympus, home of the Gods - but you must earn it by proving yourself in battle against Zeus' choice of opponents and, finally, against Zeus himself.

Two Tribes is basically an enhanced and expanded version of the original Populous, so if you're familiar with the basic gameplay of Populous you'll be able to plug in Populous II and start playing straight away - learning how to use all the new effects as you go. But for those of you who are new to delusions of power, here's a beginner's guide to playing God.

[Populous 2:

HOW TO BE A GOD

You'll need strategic thinking. All of your power comes from your followers; the more followers you have, the stronger you become. As you begin playing a world you are weak, with only the power to raise and lower land, but if you use this power wisely - creating flat land for your followers - settlements will soon begin to prosper and your powers (Manna) will steadily grow. Then you can really start to make some noise, using your power to destroy your opponent's followers with earthquakes, floods, volcanoes, and other highly destructive acts of God. When all the Evil followers are destroyed you have conquered that world. A password system keeps track of your progress.

There are two basic types of command: influence behaviour commands and divine intervention commands. Influence behaviour commands tell your followers to do certain things: to settle, to fight, or to gather for greater strength. Divine intervention commands let loose your powers. Your Manna should be increasing all the time, and is tracked by the Manna Bar. This shows all the divine intervention commands available to you on the world you are playing. It also shows whether or not you have enough power to perform a particular command. When your power peaks you can call for Armageddon - the final battle for the world between your followers and the followers of your rival God.

When your power peaks you can call for **Armageddon**

ADVANCED GOD PLAYING

Populous II gives you much greater control over your followers and a greatly expanded range of divine intervention effects. There are now thirty possible divine intervention effects. In addition to the trusty old earthquake, swamp, volcano and flood you can now lay plague, plant the spores of a deadly fungus, unleash storms, lightning bolts, whirlwinds, hurricanes, fire columns, fire rains, and tidal waves. Choose your disaster, then sit back and watch the fun.

But your powers are no longer purely destructive. You now have the God-like ability to renew damaged land, grow forests for your followers, or build them roads and protective walls. Remember, your power depends upon the number and the state of your worshippers.



- GRAPHICS.....
- SOUND.....
- MUSIC.....
- PLAYABILITY.....
- LASTABILITY
- DIFFICULTY
- ATMOSPHERE
- MENTAL.....
- OVERALL

Your people will also need strong mortal leaders. A walker turns into a leader by touching your Papal Magnet. In Populous, a leader could only be converted into a knight. Now you can convert your leader into one of six heroes from Greek legend: Perseus, Adonis, Heracles, Odysseus, Achilles and Helen of Troy. Each has special abilities and advantages as you will discover.

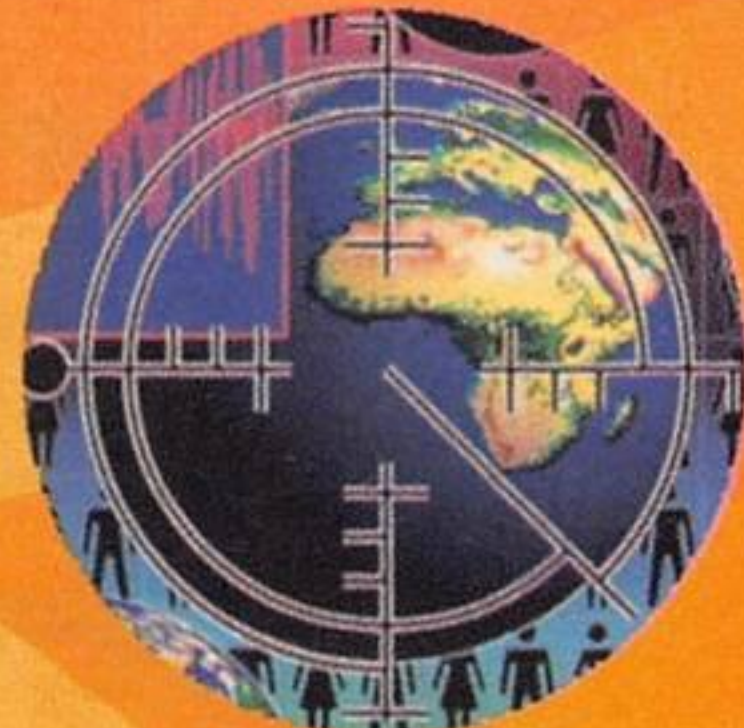
Not all of these effects are available on all worlds and the special rules that apply to each world may mean that you can't even raise or lower land. All of this means that the strategic element of Populous has been greatly increased. Gameplay is now more complex, but it is also more satisfying. More than ever, you must be a thinking God to survive and conquer.

CUSTOM GAMES AND CUSTOM GODS

Populous II has many new options. The create-your-deity feature allows you to design the face of your God and to assign experience points to particular sets of powers as you go. Your deity's face determines his (and it has to be a he) personality and how computer opponents will react. It may be cool to look all mean and butch, but the fiercer you look, the harder your opponent will wage war.

The most interesting new option is the custom game option. This gives you two ways to play: the standard Conquest Game or the Custom Game. In a custom game you are in control of almost everything. You can be Good or Bad (in a conquest game you have to be Good) and change any options available for either side. You can edit the map - adding or removing people and settlements, rocks and trees, and changing the landscape type - and you can change the Manna of you or your opponent. Playing a custom game puts you in a random world with ALL the divine intervention effects you've seen in the conquest games you've played. It's great fun, and a nice diversion from the serious business at hand in a conquest game.

2 Tribes]



THE DELUXE MODEL

Populous II is even better looking than its predecessor. The gaming screen is basically unchanged - a small world map and a larger, scrolling close-up map with two point-and-click control bars for divine commands and divine intervention effects - but a floating Colosseum (which indicates the number of followers) replaces the old Info Shield.

The graphics are now much slicker and more detailed, so watching battles and disasters is even better fun. The close-up scrolling is faster and smoother and at the end of the world you even get to see a re-enactment of your glory. Sound-wise, everything's fine too - the various effects are good, but the constant heartbeat (monitoring the health of you and your followers) is still a bit annoying.

But the most important question is how does it play? Powermonger, for example, promised much, but the Mega Drive version was rendered virtually unplayable by a highly complicated and confusing command system. There are no such problems with Populous II. All of the command icons are very accessible with the joypad and, even if you've never played Populous, the first few games of Populous II will ease you gently into the swing of things. To make the game even more playable,

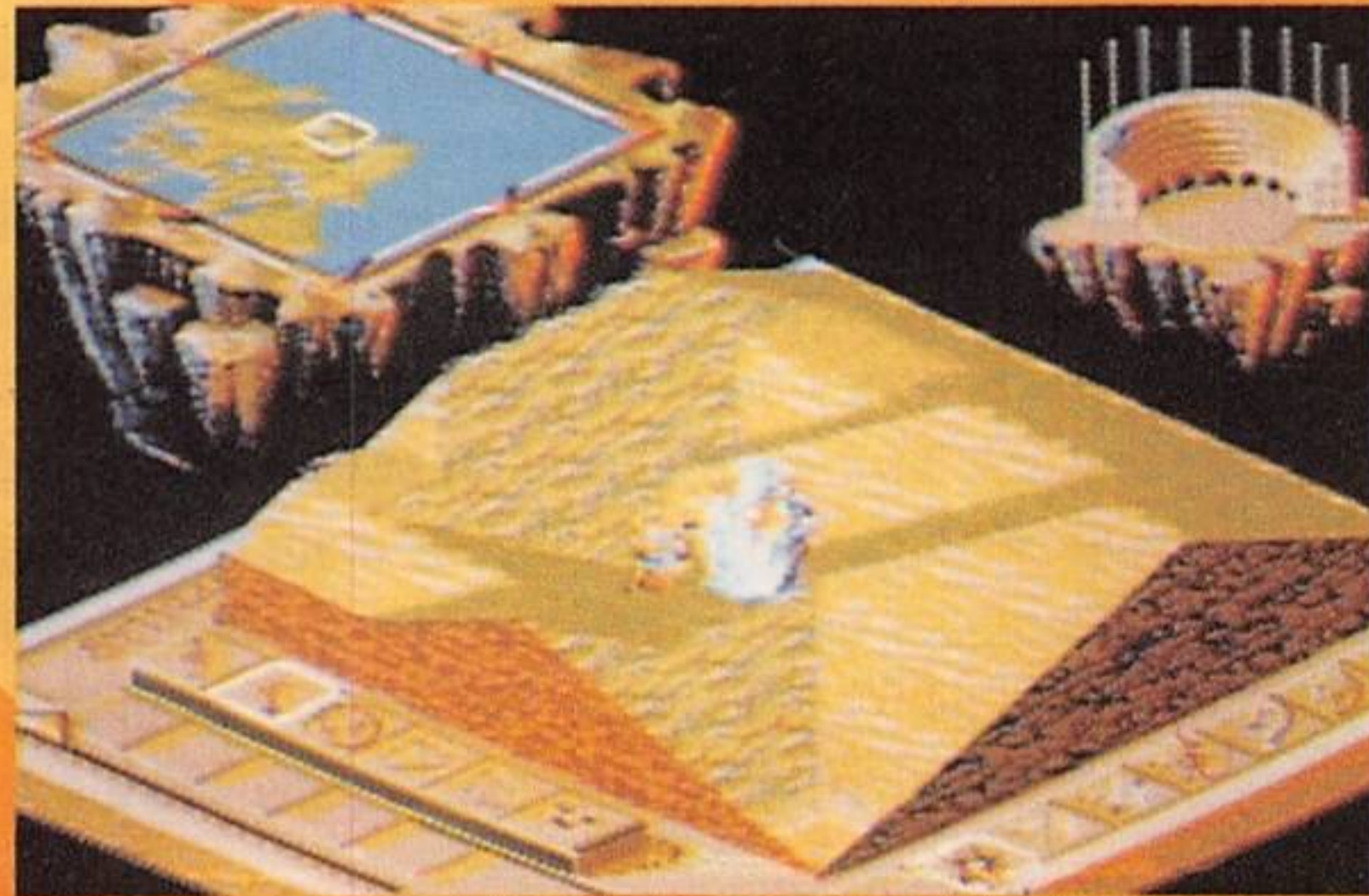
the final battle for the world between your followers and the followers of your rival God.

get your hands on Sega's new Micro Trackball controller; Populous II is the first game to be compatible with this handy mouse-like device.

Populous II is the deluxe version of one of the best God games around. Only Megalomania, for its sense of fun and immediate playability, provides any competition. If you're into strategy, power, and compelling gameplay with a hefty challenge thrown in, then Populous II is for you.

ANDREW HUMPHREYS

-83
-80
-80
-88
-93
-91
-85
-93
-90



Answer: No.



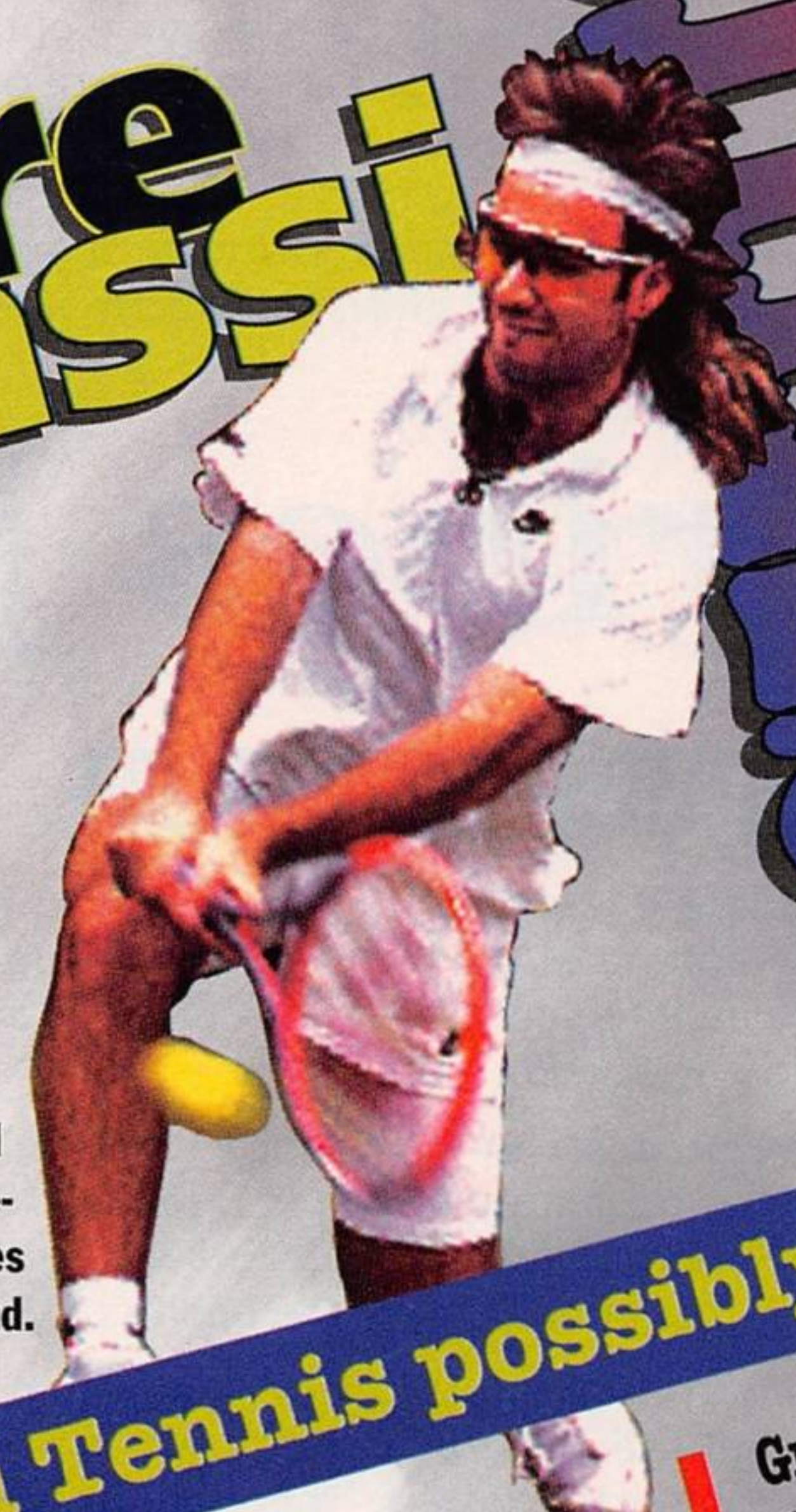
SELECT PLAYER			
ANDRE AGASSI			
PLAYER SPEED 7			
STRENGTH	7	9	
BACKHAND	7	9	
FOREHAND	7	9	
SERVE	6	8	

MASTER SYSTEM

MEGA DRIVE

Andre Agassi

Game, Set and Match!



Everybody's (well, Barbra Streisand's anyway) favourite long-haired, loud mouthed, chest waxed tennis player is featured in the latest tennis sim for the Mega Drive. It joins a growing list including *Amazing Tennis* and the recently released *Davis World Cup*, which received high praise in last month's *Megazone*, scoring a hefty 93% and easily justifying its number one seeding.

Several surfaces are available (grass, clay, hard or indoor). The only noticeable difference this makes is the colour of the ground. You can then elect whether

to play a singles or doubles game. You can play as Andre himself, or one of the other (made up) players. Each tennis player has a set of attributes for the strength and accuracy of their different kinds of shots. Choose yourself and your opponent, and you're finally into the game proper.

So how does it play? I was afraid you were going to ask that. It's incredibly frustrating. Firstly, you have to run into position. Then press button A, B or C to select the type of shot (hard, soft or lob) while simultaneously pressing the direction that you want the ball to go. It's all very fiddly and you miss a lot of shots by fumbling the joystick.

LOVE/30.

How about the graphics and sound effects? Nope, they don't fare that much better, I'm sorry to say. The court is displayed in pseudo 3D. It's quite small and remains stationary, not scrolling from side to side as *Davis* does. The players look OK and move about well enough, but the crowd at the back are a bit pathetic. Sound is all right, with a reasonable enough tune and a bit of digitised speech thrown in for good measure. Once again, though, *Davis* has the upper hand.

LOVE/40.

Question: Can Andre Agassi Tennis possibly compare?

Graphics.....	74
Sound.....	82
Music.....	73
Playability.....	60
Lastability.....	54
Difficulty.....	87
Atmosphere....	75
Overall.....	59

If you're after a tennis game, then there is only one to choose from and it's not this. Maybe it's a bit of bad luck for Agassi that *Davis Cup* has been released so recently. But even without the competition, the quirky playability goes heavily against it. Sorry Andre, but *Game, Set and Match Davis World Cup*.

The Master System rendition of *Andre Agassi Tennis* is very similar to the Mega Drive version. The graphics aren't quite up to the 16-bit standard, but they're not that far behind and considering the limitations of the machine, are better in relative terms. It still has the playability problems, though these don't seem so pronounced (probably because everything runs that little bit slower so you have more time to play those fiddly shots). There aren't as many other tennis sims available for this machine and, with less in the way of competition, it doesn't seem too bad. Try before you buy, though.

ADAM WARING

Answer: No.

The first thing that strikes you about any game is the front end menu (quite naturally as it's the first thing you see). Agassi's isn't much cop, it has to be said. Whereas *Davis* had a million and one options, this hardly has any.

The options available are either to play a single or double player game or to watch the computer play with itself (whatever turns you on). Then you can practice (where a tennis machine spits out balls at you), take part in a tournament or a skins tournament. In the tournament mode you win money according to how many matches you win. Winnings can be spent on improving your player's attributes. Slightly more interesting is the skins tournament, where you win cash for every point you win. The kitty doubles each time the ball is returned, and can rapidly build into huge sums with intense rallies.

Answer: No.

MASTER SYSTEM

MEGA DRIVE

Would you like to learn a song? You would? It's a special football

that for the next hour and a half and you're ready to go to your first soccer match.

W



Soccer is real football (at least it is if you're a pommie) and it's the theme of this latest cart from overseas. 64 international teams are represented, though Australia and New Zealand are not included, which is a big disappointment for buyers on this side of the globe. The Socceros aren't a bad team, and they're certainly doing better in the World Cup qualifying rounds than England, who've been performing appallingly and will no doubt be out on their arses by the time you read this.

Still, we'll get over it, especially as this is such a fine footie game – in my opinion, the best there is on the Mega Drive. You can play in friendlies (a one-off match between two teams), penalty shoot-outs (good for practice as penalties are quite tricky), a knockout competition (lose a game and you're out), a world league (containing as many teams as you specify) and the Ultimate Cup (they'd have called it

the World Cup if they had obtained the official rights; it's played to exactly the same format).

There are heaps of options you can set for the condition of the pitch, wind strength, duration of play and so forth, but forget them for the moment, we're here to play soccer.

The pitch is displayed in pseudo-3D, scrolling in all directions to keep track of the game. It's a dream to play. The control system allows a complex range of shots to be played, but is intuitive and reacts in a natural way to your actions. This is due to an intelligent control system; the player reacts in a different way according to the position and height of the ball. You control the player nearest the ball (you can elect to switch to the nearest player automatically or at the press of a button) and the other, computer-controlled, players follow your progress intelligently, making passing relatively easy – it doesn't half look good too.

Goals can look very spectacular, and you can savour the moment by watching the replay again and again. The players do the sort of things that players do – somersaults when they score, running all over the pitch waving their arms in the air and punching each other in the mouth.

Fouls are catered for, as are yellow and red cards for unnecessarily aggressive play. In the case of a free kick then you can plot the course of the ball with a neat system that lets you control the height and power of the shot. The goalkeeper is controlled automatically, and does a pretty good job most of the time, diving all over the place so prevent the ball from going into the back of the net.

The game supports the new six-button joystick, using the three additional buttons

Graphics.....	85
Sound.....	78
Music.....	75
Playability.....	90
Lastability.....	88
Difficulty.....	70
Mental.....	65
Atmosphere...	82
Overall.....	88

for minor game functions. It is also the first game to use the new Sega MultiTap, allowing up to eight players to take part. Unfortunately we weren't able to test the game with the MultiTap for this review, but we will bring you word of how it performs in coming issues.

Sound is OK, but seems to be lacking in certain areas; sometimes you don't even know if you've scored due to the lack of a rousing cheer from the crowd. Graphics are necessarily small, but are well-detailed enough and work well with the game system, and some of the animation is superb.

It's undoubtedly the best soccer sim available for the Mega Drive. If you hate the game, then perhaps you'd be better off steering clear, but if you are a soccer fan, then you won't go far wrong with this.

ADAM WARING



Ultimate Soccer



song that they sing in England. Reedy? After me... 'Ere we go, 'ere we go, 'ere we go. 'Ere we go, 'ere we

go, 'ere we go-oh... "That's great, you're doing fine. Keep repeating

GOLDEN AXE III

First there was Golden Axe, where a group of brave, some say foolhardy, warriors went out on a hunt to retrieve the sacred Golden Axe.



Then came Golden Axe II, which saw a group of brave, some say foolhardy, warriors on a hunt to retrieve the sacred Golden Axe.



And now in Golden Axe III, a group of brave, some say foolhardy, warriors go out on a hunt to retrieve the sacred Golden Axe.



Graphics	84
Sound	86
Music.....	83
Playability	82
Lastability	77
Difficulty	73
Mental	60
Atmosphere.....	73
Overall	79

And so the Golden Axe saga continues. Firstly, there isn't much of an improvement over Golden Axe II, which itself wasn't exactly dripping with originality when compared to the first game. It is, in effect, the same game released three times. Each time there have been improvements and fine tweaking, but the plot, and the gameplay, remain, essentially, the same.

It's a few hundred years since the whole thing started and the original characters have kicked the bucket long since. There is one survivor; the little dwarf-like chap but he's an old codger now and is in no fit state to go into battle. So, he recruits four new characters to do his dirty work for him. All have their own unique set of butt-kickin' abilities.

First off we have Chan Grinder, a mighty warrior who's flashing battle sword sends the enemy scurrying into the bushes. Then there's Proud Craggar, a giant. He's extremely strong and can inflict lots of damage, but his ungainly bulk makes him slow to move.

The Golden Axe mob are equal opportunity employers and Sara Burn is the female fighter who's lower physical strength is made up for by her lightning-fast movement. Chronos Evil Rate is half-human, half-leopard. Having razor-sharp claws does have its advantages, though, and he can leave his enemies cut wide open and looking for band aids.

The control system is actually quite subtle, and allows a variety of

moves from the joypad. When you're up close to an opponent, for example, you can throw them across the screen whereas, when you're further away, the same joypad control will make you attack them with your weapon.

It's a hack 'n' slash affair. As you make your way through the levels, foes pop up for a good bashing. There are several different types that you'll have to contend with, and some are a lot tougher than others. The trick is to bash them while keeping out of their reach when they try to do the same to you.

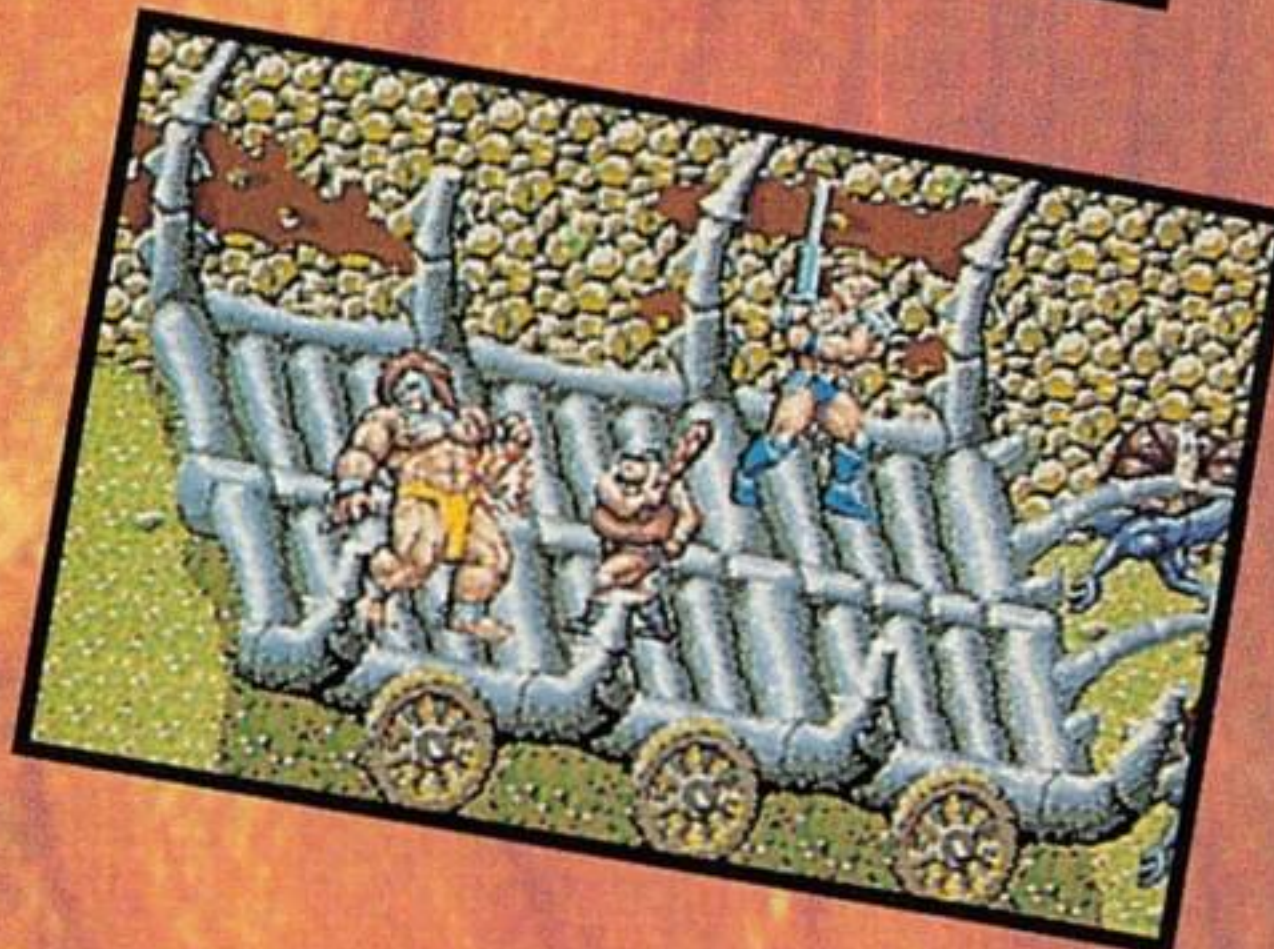
Between levels you get the chance of a good night's kip. You're rudely awoken in the morning by some mischievous little pixies who run around with sacks full of goodies. Kick the little blighters over and they drop an item that restores your strength or gives you magical powers.

Magic powers can be called into play at any time, as long as you have a couple of bottles of potions ready. These are like smart bombs and sap the strength of all your enemies. The more potions you've collected, the stronger the effect of the magic.

One or two players can take part, and with two it's especially good fun as you can batter each other as well as your opponents. In fact, there's a special one-on-one mode where there are no baddies to be seen, and all there is to do is thrash the living daylights out of one another. In this respects is a lot like a medieval Streets of Rage.

It's a fair enough game in its own right, but little improvement has been made in this over its pre-quels. If you already have one of the other Golden Axe games then leave well alone; all you'll get is a chilling sense of déjà vu. If, on the other hand, you've not seen any of the games in the series, then it's a fun beat-'em-up and this is probably the best of the three.

ADAM WARING



Flight sims have proven to be a barnstorming success on PC's over the last few years. With the use of a keyboard, you find yourself in total command of a 30 million dollar warplane. Your mission, to wreak havoc on all those who dare threaten good old Western democracy.

There have been a number of attempts to convert flight sims to the Mega Drive. These have been, to be brutally honest, about as realistic as watching *Top Gun*. You see, the PC has a myriad of options through its 40-50 button keyboard and the poor old Mega Drive has 4. Because of this rather large deficiency, previous Mega Drive flight sims have been nothing but elaborate shoot 'em ups with a 3-D cockpit perspective. All of you Mega Gamers hoping for a flight sim worthy of buying probably feel fairly despondent about now. Well, snap out of it. All those looking for a flight sim rivalling the PC rejoice. For here is Mig-29 Fighter Pilot.

Since the fall of communism, the USSR has been open to the west. This means that the fastest, deadliest and meanest bird of the Soviet Air Corps, the Mig-29 Fulcrum, has been laid bare for all to see. Of course, the thawing of the Cold War also means that for you, a proud pilot of Mother Russia, there are no evil Americans to seek out and destroy.

Well, cheer up, now your job is to hunt down anyone threatening global peace. And thankfully, a rather large band of pro-communists have been stealing weapons, killing innocent people and all the other things bad types do. So you're now thundering across the sky at Mach 2, armed to the teeth with state-of-the-art weaponry.

Before flying off into the wide blue yonder, there are a couple of things you're required to do. First you have

to attend a mission briefing (rather obvious) so you know who to destroy and where you can find them. As with the rest of the pre- and post-game action, this is presented very well with excellent graphics and digitised footage. You are also required to select your weaponry. Here you are able to load up on a wide range of goodies for all sorts of tasks.

After going through these formalities, you find yourself suited up on the runway ready to take off into glory. The first thing you notice is the cockpit. While detailed, it is not cluttered and it is easy to understand and to find things.

Eventually you're up in the air thundering along to your predetermined target. Straight away you'll be impressed by how smooth it is. There is no jerking as you move at all. The 3-D graphics are of a superb quality. Whether you're fighting off enemy bogeys or diving in to bomb an enemy target, you should be very pleased with the superb 3-D visuals.

There are a wide range of different views to select, all well presented. When you choose one of these, the scene changes quickly and cleanly. The new scenery fills the screen and has a great feeling of depth. All planes and land vehicles move in such a way that enhances this depth. The detail on the ground and general landscape

are, however, a disappointment. While being sufficient to find your way, it is rather drab and detracts from the overall game.

The sound is another quality aspect of the game. Sampled effects are put to excellent use throughout flight time and are very realistic. Unfortunately, the music is poor, when it's used at all.

Domark have put to use a unique control interface which uses pop-up menus. By pressing a button you are presented with a menu which enables you to quickly access any of the plane's systems. These menus give you control and realism which is unparalleled on console flight sims so far. In the blink of an eye you can select different weaponry, operate radar systems, access maps and mission profiles, control electronic defence systems and change to a wide variety of well presented views. It is this innovative system which makes Mig-29 a winning flight sim.

It requires a certain type of game player to take on Mig-29. This game is not aimed at kids. It's best suited to older gamers who are sick of simplistic games. It's not a simple shoot-em-up, as every move has to be thought about and you have to carefully consider strategies on each mission.

Basically it's excellent and proves beyond doubt that the Mega Drive can pull off superb flight sims.

WAYNE LAWSON

Graphics	81
Sound	88
Music.....	70
Lastability	82
Difficulty	91
Mental	90
Atmosphere.....	82
Playability	85
Overall	85

BURN BABY BURN



IT'S FAST,
IT'S DANGEROUS...
IT'S ILLEGAL!

It's the ultimate road race. It thunders through six European territories and bullets across the U.S.A. It's not just a head-to-head between happy snappin', joy riding, boy racers... this is seriously hot competition against the meanest drivers on the tarmac. Beef up your hatch-back to enhance the speed and handling, plan your route and burn off the bizzies. So fire up your engine and pump up the gas for some fearsomely dangerous road racing. BURNING RUBBER... the sweet smell of victory.



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IBM PC
& COMPATIBLES

C B M
A M I G A

A M I G A
A 1 2 0 0

ALL STAR NBA CHALLENGE

Three letters will sell just about any basketball game: NBA. Put the NBA logo on the package and it's more than likely that somebody will buy it. NBA All Star Challenge has pictures of NBA greats plastered all over the game box. It all looks very promising - until you plug it in. In ten minutes time, the only basket you'll be shooting for is the trash basket.

This is not NBA Jam. NBA Jam is good; this is bad. Basically, it's a one-on-one challenge ("the ultimate test of b-ball skill" according to the blurb) much like another very dubious "basketball" game, Jordan vs Bird.

There are five mini-games on the cart: one-on-one, free throws, a three-point shootout, H.O.R.S.E, and the one-on-one tournament. One or two players can control or challenge any of 27 NBA All Stars, one from each NBA team - stars like Ewing, Robinson, Kemp, Drexler, Barkley and Jordan, and not-quite-stars like Scott Skiles, Derek Harper, and Bernard King (?).

Every player is represented by a nice digitised picture, complete with team name, logo and a selection of stats. Unfortunately for fans of realism, these stats have absolutely no bearing on the gameplay, despite what it says about "Player

Artificial Intelligence". Every player seems to do everything identically. They all have the same jump shot and the same slam. Oh, and on the court they all look the same too.

All of the events give you a half-court view of the action or lack thereof. In the background is the crowd, sitting behind the basket, and in the foreground there's just some wooden floorboards (although it's very nicely polished wood - African maple, I think).

Graphically, the pattern of the floorboards is about the most interesting thing to watch for in NBA All Star Challenge. The players are stiffly animated and generally look pretty awkward. Basically, there's not that much to it; the backgrounds do their job and everything moves just fast enough to keep your attention. The presentation screens are quite nice, but if the only reason you play a game is to see still photos, then you really should start thinking about getting out of the house more often.

The sound effects are mediocre - a couple of noises that barely pass for the sounds of running feet and bouncing balls. Every now and again the crowd will let out a whimper or two, but you'd have to be particularly stupid to be fooled into thinking that you were anywhere near a basketball court.

And the gameplay? Well, in the excitement of getting an NBA licence, the programmers forgot to put any in. Nowhere is the lack of gameplay more obvious than in the free throw mode: a cross-hair floats around the basket and when it's above the hoop, you push button A. Wow! Excitement! But there's more "action" on offer...

ONE-ON-ONE

Just you against the computer or a friend. It's played half-court to a certain number of points or a time limit with three skill levels. Button A does

a jump shot and button C does the strangest looking slam-dunk in the history of basketball.

THREE-POINT SHOOTOUT

Five shots from five different locations around the three point rim with a one minute time limit. This time there are even less buttons to push: just hit button A twice and build up a rhythm. Highest score wins. Before you take on an opponent though, you might want to practise on the warm-up court.

H.O.R.S.E

All you do is take a shot from anywhere on the court. Make it, and your opponent has to match it. If they miss the shot, they get a letter beside their name. The first to spell HORSE loses.

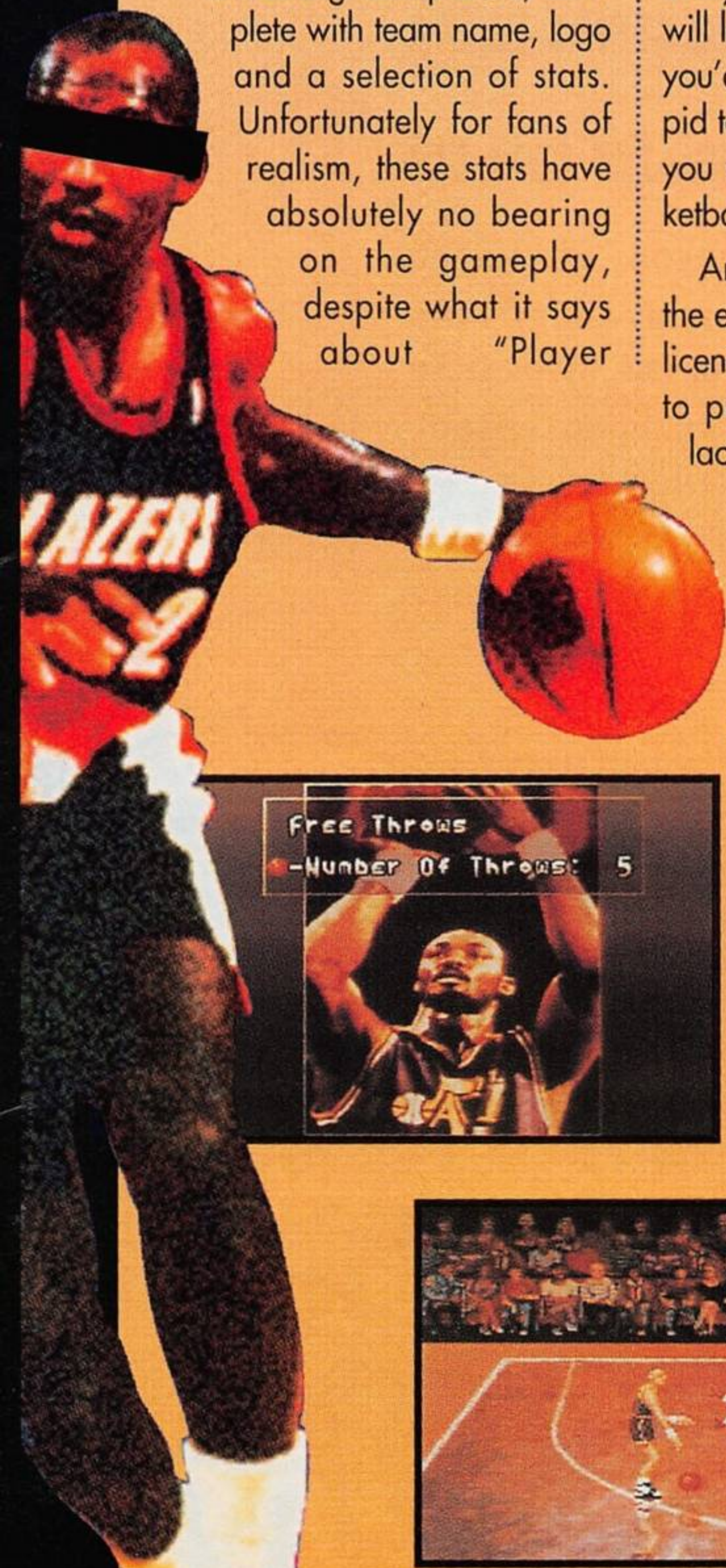
ONE-ON-ONE TOURNAMENT

Same as regular one-on-one play but it's a tournament: two rounds, then the championship round.

And that's that. To be fair though, it is slightly more fun for two players. But even then, it's only worth the effort if you win - that's all the satisfaction you're ever going to get from this game.

If you're looking for a basketball game, look elsewhere. Hang in there and you'll get NBA Jam soon. Check out Team USA Basketball while you're waiting.

ANDREW HUMPHREYS



- Graphics60
- Sound58
- Music66
- Playability48
- Lastability41
- Difficulty58
- Mental45
- Atmosphere40
- Overall48

IS IT

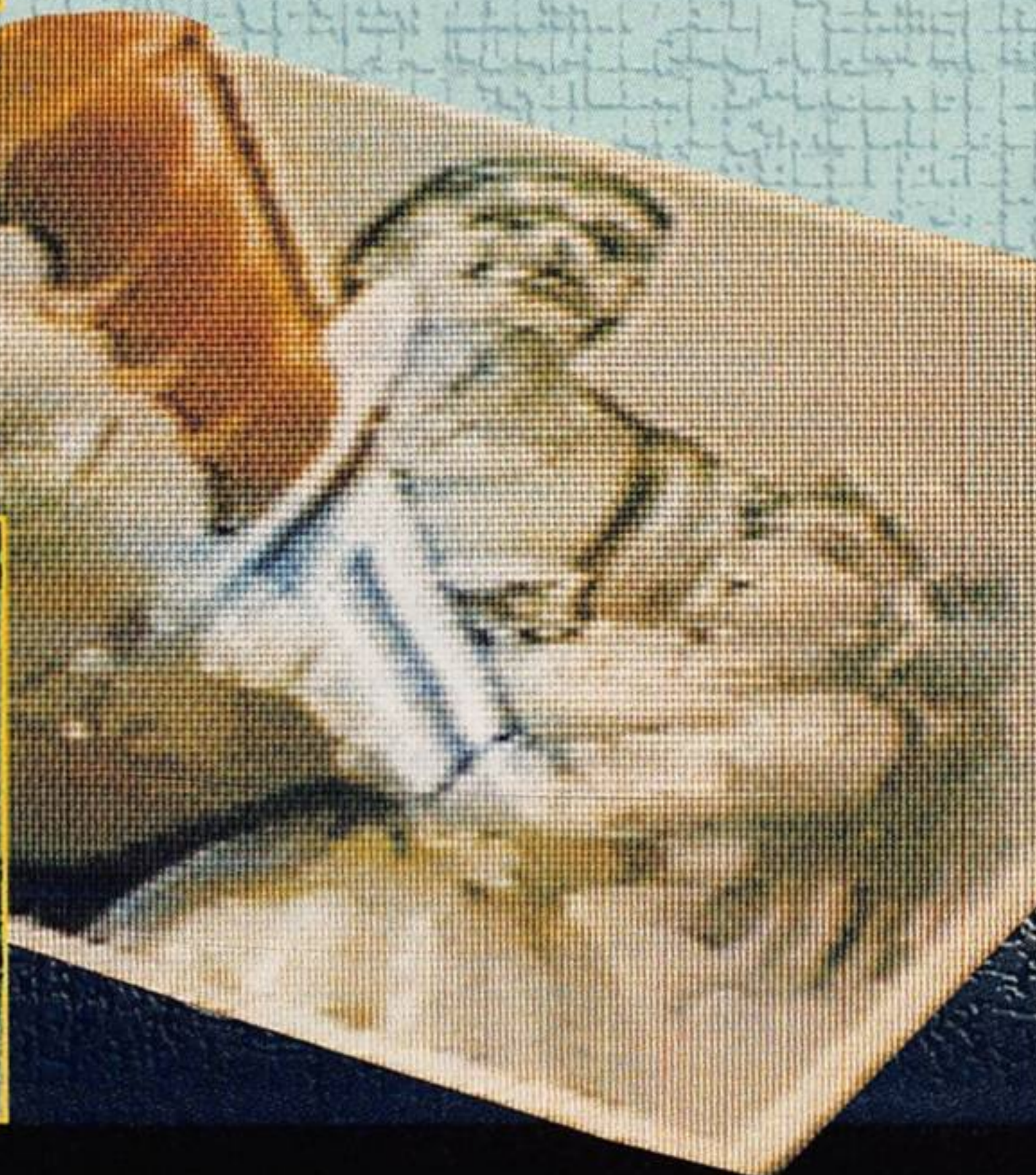


Final fight

Move over Streets of Rage 2! There's a bigger and better beat-'em-up on the block. Fans of violence, rejoice! Final Fight, the massively popular arcade game of a couple of years back, has now been converted to the Mega CD, and it's totally awesome - even better than the coin-op!



Mike Haggar is the ex-wrestler mayor of Metro city, and he's having a bit of a hard time. The criminal Mad Gear gang is trying to bribe him into letting them carry out their evil works unmolested, but being the clean-living, good guy that he is, he turns them down. Now, these criminal types don't really take rejection too well and in anger they kidnap Haggar's daughter, Jessica.



TODAY'S YOUTH ARE OBSESSED BY CONCENTRIC MOTION

TODAY'S YOUTH ARE OBSESSED BY CONCENTRIC MOTION

Haggar's had enough, and rips off his shirt and hits the streets, ostensibly to rescue his daughter, but really he's just going to have a bloody good time bashing up thugs. Helping him rescue Jessica are two streetfighting hunks - Cody and Guy, who look far too attractive to have ever been in any serious battles. But they can definitely hold their own in a rumble, and move faster than the lumbering Haggar.

One or two players can take on the seven horizontally scrolling levels, beating up the bad guys and pulverising the huge bosses of each area. If you make it through the first six levels you'll reach the Mad Gear leader, Belger, who has the lovely Jessica captive.

LEVEL 1 - THE SLUMS

The action starts off in the slums, where the evil gangland leader Damnd is to be found. This level is a fairly short and easy, and should cause most gamers no real problems.

LEVEL 2 - THE SUBWAY

The subway is not such a pleasant place, especially at night and with lots of punks and scumbags wandering around! You have to beat your way through the rabble to reach a boxing ring. Here you'll meet the wicked Sodom, who is a huge dude who carries two swords and is ready to use them to skewer you!

LEVEL 3 - WEST SIDE

The seedy West side of Metro City is run by a corrupt cop, but before you can face him, you have to beat your way through a bar room brawl and face the huge Andre and Andre Jr.!

LEVEL 4 - INDUSTRIAL AREA

Now it's time to enter the industrial heartland of Metro City, which has been taken over by the Mad Gear gang. This particular area is run by Rolento. Search the area and then take a lift up to the lair of the deadly army commando!

LEVEL 5 - BAY AREA

The Metro City park and bay area used to be a nice place until the bikies from the Mad Gear gang took over! You'll have to punch and kick your way through packs of bikers and other hoods before facing up to the extremely mean Abigail (who's a boy by the way).

LEVEL 6 - UPTOWN

The East Side of Metro City is the richer and more respectable end of the city... or it used to be. By now the Mad Gear gang have pulled out all stops to halt the progress of Haggar and the boys, and some really mean fighters are hanging around to have some mighty big punch ups. It's getting close to the end, and the action is really hotting up...

From here it's on to the showdown with Belger, and this is where Jessica's life really hangs in the balance, as does the future of Metro City. Good luck, this guy's tough!

BONUS ROUND

There is an extra special round with the Mega CD version of Final Fight. It gives one or two players the chance to practise their combat skills in an all-out stoush. The round takes place on a suspension bridge with 60 seconds on the clock. Mad Gear meanies swarm around and it's up to you to beat them to a pulp. This special round

never appeared in either the arcade or the Super NES versions of the game and is an excellent bonus for the Mega CD.

The playability for the conversion is great, with Haggar, Cody and Guy being very responsive to your controls. Cody and Guy have almost identical moves (which is a disappointment) and their special attack is a flying spinning kick that will send several opponents flying. Haggar has several moves that cause major damage, including the back-breaker, a head butt, a spinning double lariat and the piledriver, which is the most powerful move in the game. Cody is an expert with blades, both slashing and throwing, so make sure he gets to wield them. Apart from knives and swords, there are also very hefty iron pipes lying around, so watch out for them because they cause major damage.

Final Fight is definitely one of the best Mega CD titles to be released so far, and should be added to your collection as soon as it becomes available. This one really shows off the machine's powers, with huge (and I mean HUGE) sprites, fast action and excellent sound effects. The SNES version could only handle about three enemies on screen at the one time, whereas they keep pouring on in waves on the Mega CD. They are also intelligent, very smoothly animated and well detailed.

I'm not lying when I say that this is the best scrolling beat-'em-up ever to appear on a console! If you liked Streets of Rage 1 and 2, move on up to the next level with Final Fight. It's wicked!

STUART CLARKE

GRAPHICS95
SOUND93
MUSIC92
PLAYABILITY95
LASTABILITY94
DIFFICULTY92
ATMOSPHERE92
OVERALL95





FATAL encounter

Yep, Fatal Encounter is a Street Fighter 2 clone. The names of the characters in for the rumble are different, as are their special moves, but, putting these minor discrepancies aside, it's exactly the same as Street Fighter 2, only not nearly half as good.

The plot is quite remarkable. Top politicians from all over the world are getting bumped off by a renegade group of fighters. The world's govern-

ments hold a meeting, and what do they decide to do? Send a team of crack commandos equipped with the latest weapons? Scramble the stealth fighters with laser-guided cruise missiles? No.

The powers that be have decided that a street fighting competition to determine the world's best scrapper would be best, the winner then going on to challenge the evil ones to fisticuffs.

The manual is quite a laugh. Not because it's supposed to be funny, but because it's been translated from Japanese into English by someone who's not terribly good at translating from Japanese into English.

Like in Street Fighter 2, each fighter has a few special moves in addition to the standard ones they all possess. These special moves are accessed by tricky joystick combinations. The idea is that, though they're hard to master, they're worth learning because of their devastating power.

Well, that's the theory. The keyboard, it has to be said, is far from ideal for performing such dexterous moves. I must confess, I didn't fare much better using a joystick - it just didn't feel as responsive as it should, though whether this is a fault of the particular joystick I was using, or with the game itself, is hard to tell.

The problem is that merely being like Street Fighter 2 is not enough. The thing that makes the arcade smash an arcade smash is its perfect playability; endless hours were spent fine-tuning the game until it was spot-on. Sadly, the same cannot be said for this version. Take the animation, for example. The characters move very quickly across the screen; not at all gracefully, but jerkily and awkwardly. It's sometimes possible to beat a character into a corner and repeatedly let them have it, or for them to do the same to you, without a chance of recovery.

This is a blatant rip-off of Street Fighter 2, with none of its playability or charm. It's true to say that fighting games are far and few between for the PC, but this one is worth sitting out.

ADAM WARING

FATAL ENCOUNTER

REMINDS ME OF SOMETHING, BUT IT'S A BIT HARD TO PUT MY FINGER ON. LET ME SEE: THERE ARE EIGHT FIGHTERS, HAILING FROM ALL OVER THE GLOBE. THEY BATTLE IT OUT TO BECOME THE CHAMPION STREET-FIGHTER. HMMM, STREET FIGHTERS. DOES THAT RING ANY BELLS?



GRAPHICS	72
SOUND	75
MUSIC	54
PLAYABILITY	57
LASTABILITY	51
DIFFICULTY	70
MENTAL	34
ATMOSPHERE	63
OVERALL	55



TERMINATOR 2

NOW HERE'S A NOVEL IDEA. WHAT DO YOU GET IF YOU CROSS TERMINATOR 2 – A MASSIVELY VIOLENT AND HUGELY SUCCESSFUL ACTION-PACKED MOVIE, AND CHESS – WHERE THE CLOSEST YOU GET TO VIOLENCE IS WHEN ONE OF THE ELDERLY PLAYERS COUGHS, AND ACTION CONSTITUTES A FLY LANDING ON THE BOARD? AH, FORGET IT. DUMB IDEA.

Terminator 2 – Chess Wars does just this. It's played just like 'normal' chess but, instead of regular pieces, you play with terminators. All the pieces are taken from characters in the movie. The white side stars Arnie, Sarah and John Connor, plus other assorted goodies. The black side is full of bad terminators.

The music is spooky and atmospheric (in the same way that the music for Dr. Who was spooky and atmospheric) though that doesn't necessarily make it good.

It plays chess to a reasonable standard; which goes without saying, really. In fact the computer's playing ability is quite flexible; you can set time limits, level of play and whether it plays an attacking or defensive game. We'll tick the 'Plays Chess OK' box, then.

Next on our checklist is graphics. Hmm, they look a bit, erm, now what's the word I'm looking for?

Crap – that's it. Oh dear, oh dear. I wonder

whether the choice of a five-year-old graphic artist was such a good move. Oh well, maybe the animation will improve things.

Then again, maybe not. The pieces slide over the board with the gracefulness of an arthritic slug

involved in a time-lapse photography experiment. They don't even move in straight lines, especially when moving diagonally. At the end of the painfully slow and juddery move, they've strayed from the path so badly that you think you must have clicked on the wrong square. Then they jump halfway across the board to the square that they're supposed to be on.

Taking other pieces is where the animation really comes in, though. The 'action' switches to another screen where a battle takes place. Badly drawn and badly animated, it's bad with a capital B. Suffice to say that it's not a pretty sight. You have to laugh at it really, otherwise you'd cry.

As all the terminators are the same uniform shade of grey, it can get a little tricky seeing what's going on.

Unfortunately there's no way to switch to a 2D view of the board. So even if you resign yourself to ignoring the bad graphics and just playing a straight game of chess, then you can't. Not doing very well so far, are we?

What we've got here is a chess

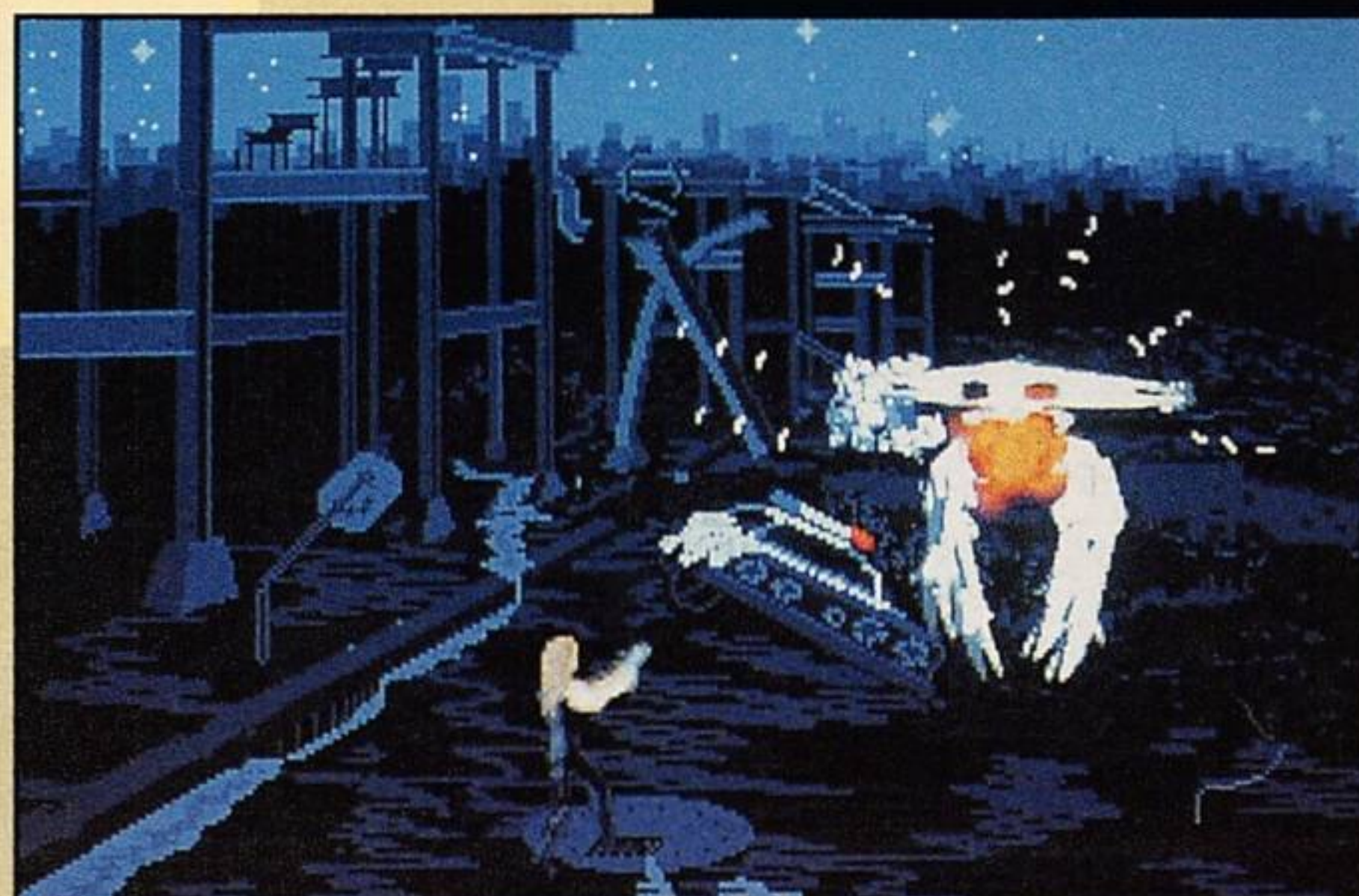
engine with some graphics hastily tacked on at the end. And tacked on very badly indeed. There are far, far better animated chess games out there. Try *Battle Chess*. Try *National Lampoon's Chess Maniac 5 Billion and 1*. Try anything, as long as it's not this.

ADAM WARING

CHESS WARS



GRAPHICS	45
SOUND	61
MUSIC	75
PLAYABILITY	45
LASTABILITY	30
DIFFICULTY	71
MENTAL	80
ATMOSPHERE	50
OVERALL	42



Reach for the skies

"I say Ginger, look out Old Man, there's bandits at three o'clock."

"That's all right then, it gives us another half an hour! Tally ho!"

Reach for the Skies is a World War II-based combat flight sim. You can play for either the goodies (England) or the baddies (Germany). It's based around the Battle of Britain, and you can fly Spitfires, Hurricanes, Stukas and other warplanes of the era.

In those days, of course, laser-guided missiles and supersonic engines hadn't been invented. The planes were armed with machine guns and powered by propellers. They didn't have autopilot either, but in order to make flying easier, it is available in this game. This takes you to your target without the hassle of navigating there yourself.

If you decide to take the side of the evil Nazi menace then you can fly in the role of either a bomber or an escort fighter. As a bomber you're given a mission objective and have to bomb a particular target. As a fighter your brief is to protect the bombers as they fly towards the target. Choose to be on England's side and you have to repel the Hun's attacks and send Adolf's boys packing (*all the while singing, "Who do you think you are kiddin', Mr Hitler..."* - Ed).

Let's assume you're on England's side (hurrah!). In a fairly average encounter, your squadron is scrambled from base and you have to fly to intercept the jackboot-wearing enemy. Flying in a straight line towards a target is, as anyone who's flown a flight sim before will know, completely and utterly boring. To overcome this, an autopilot sets the path and pressing Tab speeds up the action; it moves in jerky steps, but you get into the thick of things a lot quicker.

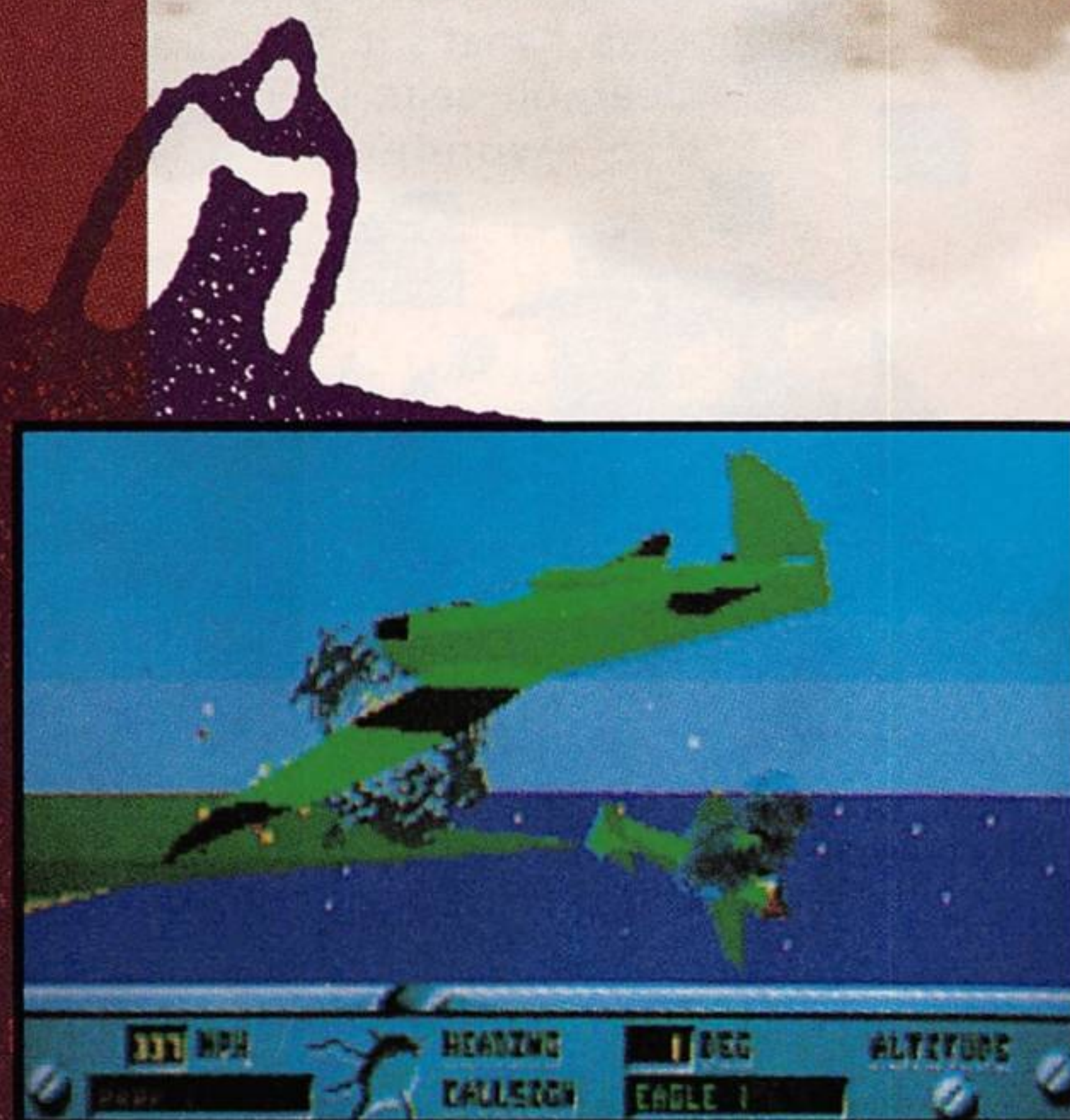
Fritz appears as a set of small dots on the horizon at first. As you fly towards these dots, they eventually get bigger until all hell's let loose. It's not possible to see where everyone is at all times. You can look out of the cockpit to try and spot the enemy, by pressing the number keys, but this isn't an easy-to-use system. An outside view of the aircraft is much better for seeing exactly what our sauerkraut-chomping chums are up to. Your plane is central to the action, and the bosch's buzz around you. You can use this screen to get them off your tail and lined up in your sights.

It's pretty hard to distinguish who's who, and in the heat of battle it's generally safer to shoot at everything that moves on the off-chance that it's Jerry you have in your sights. Actually hitting anything is quite hard; your bullets have a limited range so you have to get close-up to your target before they can be destroyed. Even then, you have to aim slightly ahead of your target to allow for the time it takes for your bullets to intercept the moving plane.

It's simpler to fly in this than in most flight sims as you don't have to worry about missiles and things like that. You just point the plane the right way and shoot. While this makes the plane easier to fly and, dare I say it, more skilful in combat, it doesn't have the excitement of unleashing missile after missile to down stubborn fighters.

There are plenty of flight sims available, and, while this is competently programmed, it doesn't have the thrills and spills of sims based on more modern military aircraft. Good for history buffs.

ADAM WARING



GRAPHICS	78
SOUND	85
MUSIC	80
PLAYABILITY	78
LASTABILITY	78
DIFFICULTY	85
MENTAL	75
ATMOSPHERE	80
OVERALL	79

air DUEL

Just what the world needs, another flight simulator! As long as there are computer games there will be flight sims. And a good thing too, there's nothing quite like this genre for absolute escapism.

One of the big problems for lounge room aces, though, is that for each plane you want to fly you have to surrender another wad of cash and around 10 megs of hard disk (as well as memorising another 101 keyboard commands!). And let's face it, most of us don't want to be bothered with the complexities most sims demand - we just want to get up there and use our dazzling fighter pilot skills to snuff out the bad guys.

And the good people at Microprose didn't let that fact escape their attention, for now we have Air Duel to satisfy our appetites. This is a product that offers much in the Important Stuff Dept. and does away with most of the annoying features that other companies use to bulk up otherwise ordinary products. Air Duel concentrates on the basics in a big way. It describes itself as an "Easy to learn fun fantasy simulation", and indeed it is that, and not a whole lot more.

There are twelve planes to fly in six scenarios. Each scenario (or era) gives you a choice of flying one of two planes which are typical of the era. For example, you can take your Sopwith Camel up against the Red Baron's Fokker Triplane in WW 1, or an F-16 against a Russian Mig-23 over Israel. And then you do it the other way around.

For your money, you can pilot the Sopwith Camel, Fokker DR1 Triplane, Spitfire, Me-109, F-86 Sabre, Mig-15, F-4 Phantom, Mig 21, Harrier Jump Jet, Mirage III, F-16 Falcon and Mig 23....That's value! Classic planes like the Mig-15 and Mirage III have never been available to sim pilots before, and having such a collection of legendary planes together in one game is a good thing indeed.

To do your thing, you have the choice of three methods of combat. You can choose your plane and go straight into dog-fighting with the computer opponent; you can fly missions as part of a mini-campaign in a particular era, or, best of all, you can link two computers together by modem or direct cable for head-to-head dog-fighting.

This last option is definitely the most fun - especially when you're linked by cable and your opponent is sitting in the same room as you. It's mad fun, and you'll invent new swear words and insults while you're at it.

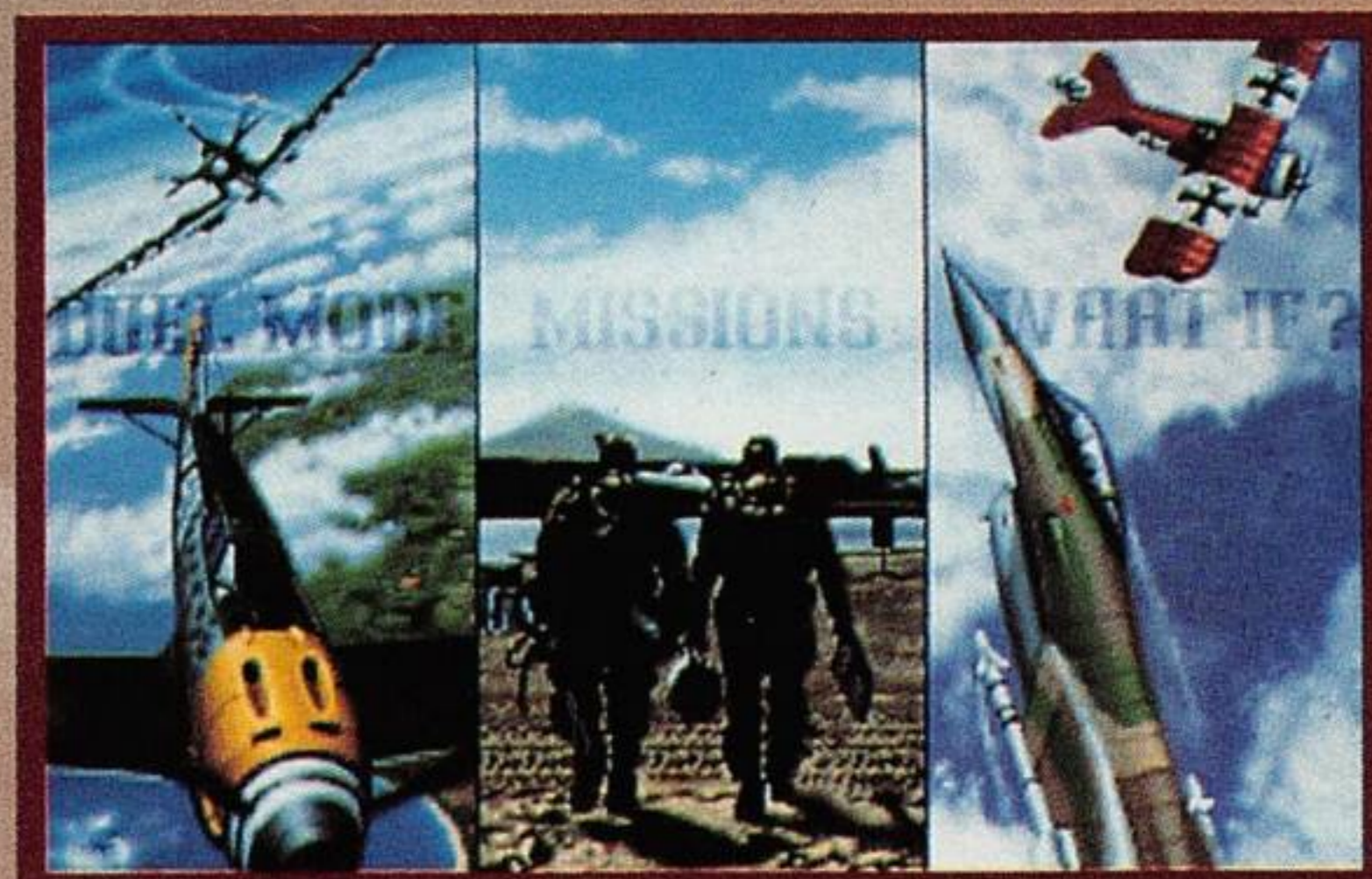
In terms of realism and technical accuracy, Air Duel is simple fare. There is little to memorise - the same keys are used for most of the planes, the avionics of the modern fighters are simplified, to the point of extreme irritation if you're used to more serious sims. But Air Duel is air combat - pure and simple. It's about out-maneuvring and out-flying your enemy, and using only your skill to do so, instead of relying on super-weapons or dazzling electronics. Except for the missions, there's no take off or landing - you start in the air and it's game over when the bad guy's burning.

The missions option presents an array of well thought out and interesting scenario's. Aside from the mandatory regulars like Spitfires and Messerschmitts in the Battle of Britain, and biplanes over France in WW I, you can fly Harriers and Mirages in the Falklands (anti-Monarchists can fly Mirages and sink Prince Andrew's ship. Great fun!), or Mig-15s and Sabres over Korea - a classic encounter that almost deserves its own sim. A strange choice though is the Mig-23 as a rival for the F-16 Falcon, in any class the F-16 is superior. The Russian Mig-29 or Su-27 would have been a more appropriate choice. It doesn't really matter, though, the flight-models are pretty simple and it turns out to be a fair fight, still...

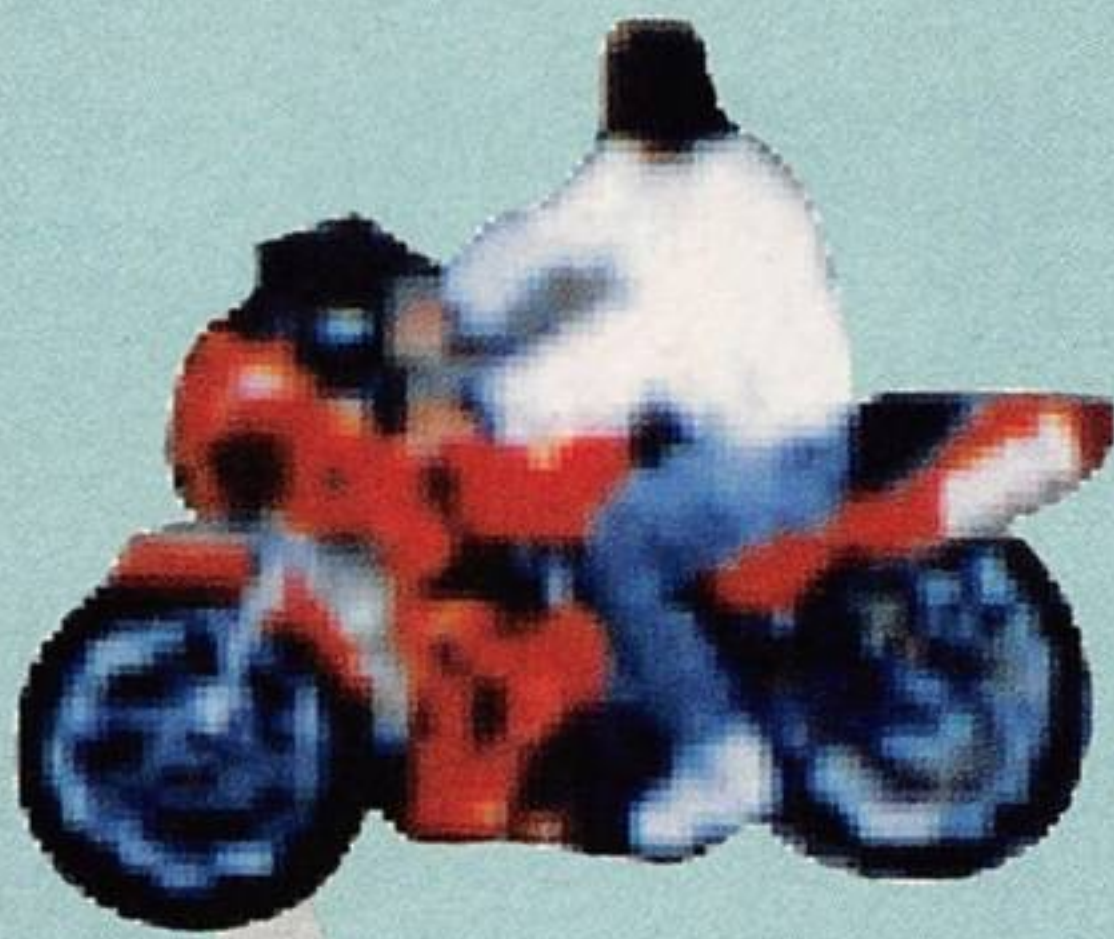
Graphically, Air Duel is somewhat lacking. The ground terrain makes Strike Eagle II (that's TWO, not THREE) look good, but for many that will be a strong point, as you won't need a supercomputer to run it - this is a dog-fighting game, not a scenic tour of clever programmer's artwork.

All in all Air Duel is worth having, if just for those times when you feel like a fly and a dogfight, but couldn't be bothered spending an hour planning the whole war to go along with it.

BEN MANSILL



GRAPHICS.....	64
SOUND	68
MUSIC	70
PLAYABILITY	85
LASTABILITY	84
DIFFICULTY	81
MENTAL	76
ATMOSPHERE	84
OVERALL	79



BLUE FORCE

THERE'S MORE TO BEING A COP THAN SHOUTING "FREEZE PUNK" AND KILLING PERPS (THOUGH THAT'S CERTAINLY AN OPTION). IN BLUE FORCE YOU'RE A NEW RECRUIT AND HAVE TO MAKE YOUR LIVING UPHOLDING THE LAW. YOUR DAD WAS A COP TOO, ONLY HE WAS MURDERED TEN YEARS AGO. IT'S A FAIR BET THAT YOU'LL END UP REOPENING THE CASE AND PURSUING THE CRIMINALS THAT KILLED YOUR FOLKS.

(ESPECIALLY AS IT SAYS THAT THIS HAPPENS ON THE BOX.)



But all that comes later. It's your first day on the beat and so your initial tasks are rather more routine. After a quick briefing (that doesn't tell you very much), you're on your motorcycle and on the road. It's not long before the radio crackles into life and you have to investigate a report of domestic violence down at the marina.

You're not really told much about what you're supposed to do. The manual covers only the mechanics of the game's interface (that and a vomit-worthy story about your parents being killed and you going to live with your

granny). It's not a complicated game, though, and after half an hour or so of experimentation, you'll have the basics sorted out.

The likeliest thing to happen is that you'll get your brains blown out. After all, this is America, not Mullumbimby, so you don't go anywhere without your gun drawn. And get some back up – always make sure that there's more of you than there are of them. After a couple of failed attempts, then, you should manage to disarm the bad guy and make your first arrest. Only to be sacked straight away because you failed to book him properly. Soon enough, though, you learn the procedures and can get on with the game.

The game is very linear. Quite often you know what you want to do, it's just getting things right in strict order before you can accomplish the task ahead. If you get stuck then you're well and truly stuck – at one point I was stuck searching a car. I couldn't get out of the vehicle, no matter what I did, until I pulled the seat back and found some guns hidden there. It doesn't let you miss anything, but it is frustrating that you have no choice in the matter.

Talking with people works in the same fashion. You have no con-

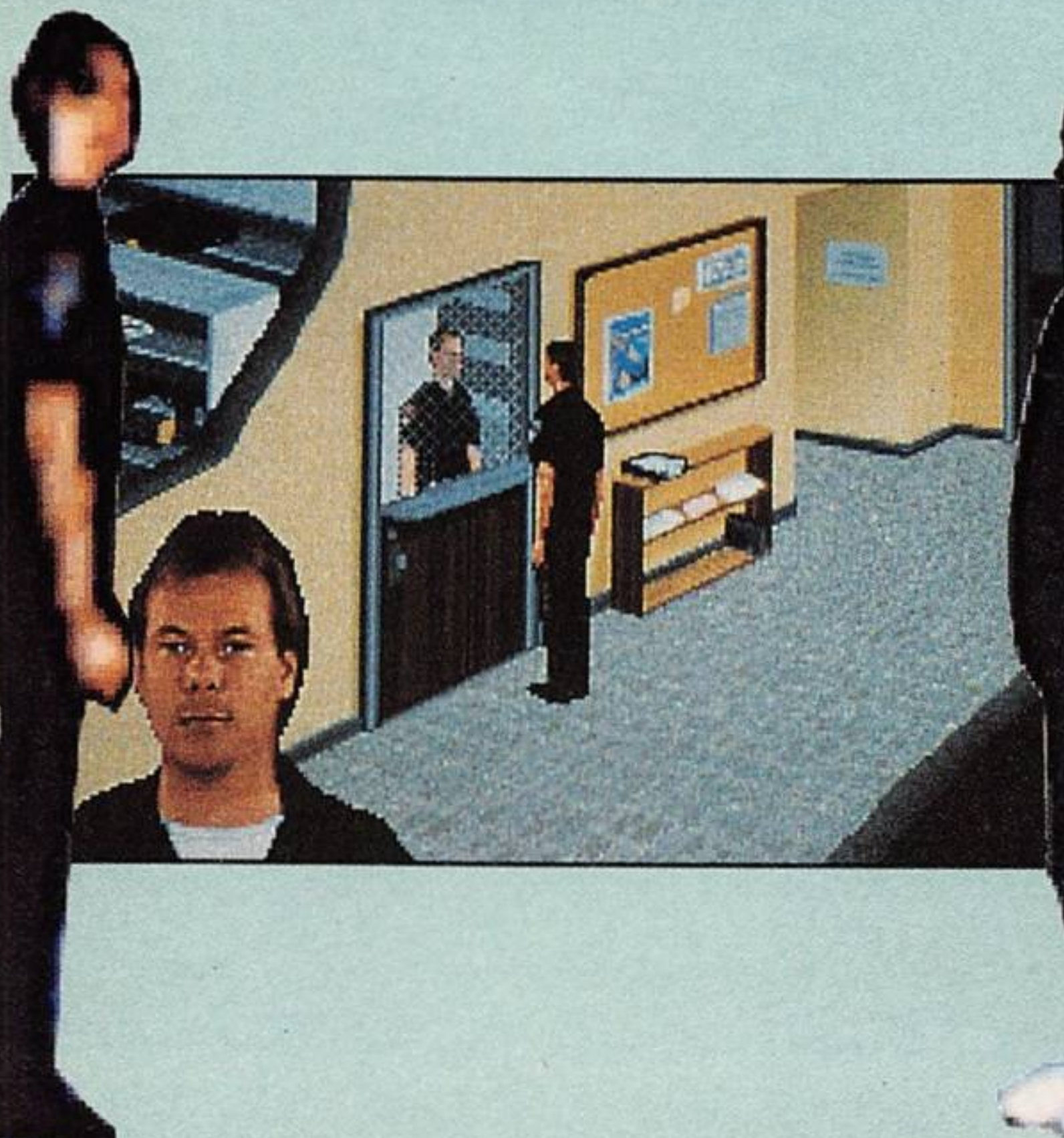
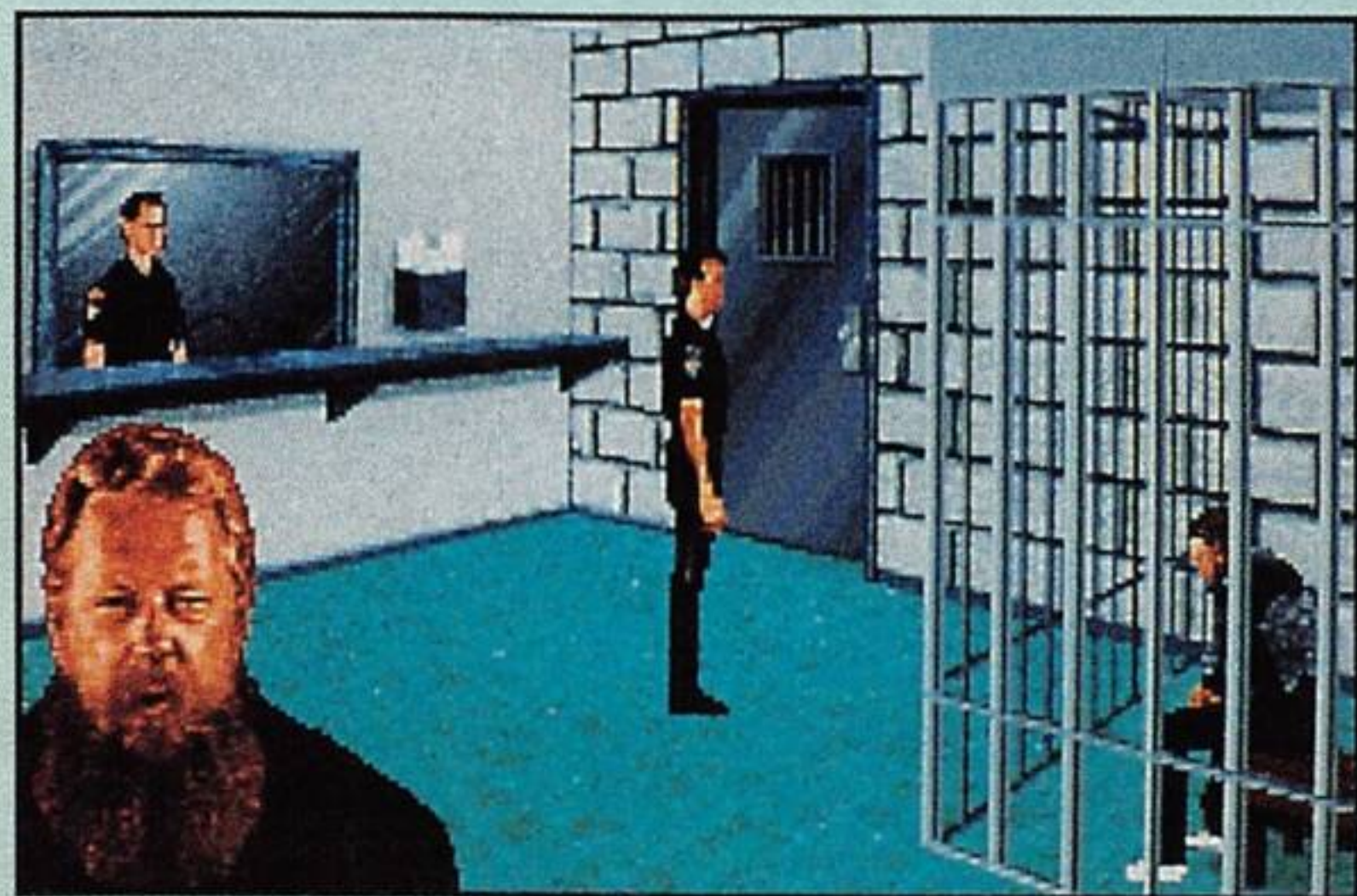
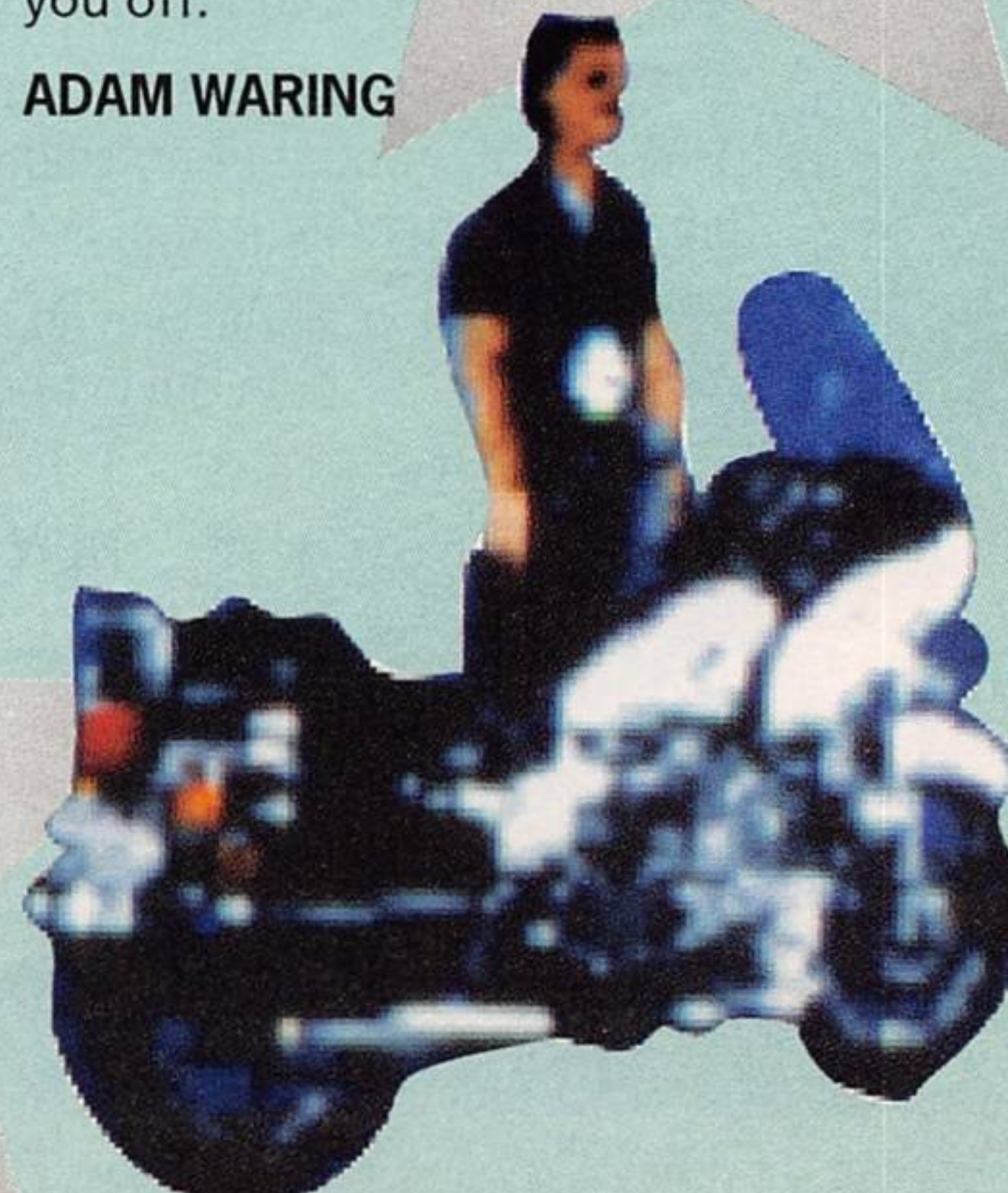
trol over the ensuing conversation; the dialogue is pre-determined and all you can do is sit back and watch as the discussion unfolds. In many cases you can't forgo the chat; it has to happen for you to get any further in the game.

After a hard day's work, arresting three people, I was looking forward to going back to Gran's house for a nice cup of tea. But no, a little boy had lost a baseball card and there'd be no rest for me until I found it. I knew where it was: in a boat I had been in earlier in the day, but the boat was locked up and I could do nothing to get it out. I tried everything I could think of, but nothing worked, and that was that. All that was left for me to do was roam the streets. There wasn't a hint of help to ease my predicament and I couldn't try getting on with anything else, because until I had sorted that particular puzzle out, then I was up the smelly creek without a paddle.

This rigidly linear gameplay is a shame as the graphics are excellent and there's a lot of potential in the game. But such one-way gameplay is sure to frustrate soon enough and rapidly puts you off.

ADAM WARING

GRAPHICS	88
SOUND	82
MUSIC	85
PLAYABILITY	73
LASTABILITY	62
DIFFICULTY	88
ATMOSPHERE	81
OVERALL	73



Prince of Persia 2

THE SHADOW AND THE FLAME

JORDAN MECHNER CREATED THE HIT GAME "PRINCE OF PERSIA" SOME 3 YEARS AGO. IT WAS HIGHLY ACCLAIMED ALL AROUND THE WORLD AS ONE OF THE MOST INNOVATIVE AND ADVANCED OF ITS TIME. IN THE INTERVENING THREE YEARS THERE HAS BEEN A DRAMATIC LEAP FORWARD IN THE PROGRAMMING TECHNIQUES OF ALL THE MAJOR GAME DESIGNERS, BUT THE ORIGINAL GAME STILL SHAPES UP VERY WELL. FINALLY WE HAVE A SEQUEL TO THIS PHENOMENALLY POPULAR GAME. THE NEW GAME, SUB-TITLED "THE SHADOW & THE FLAME", PROMISES GREAT THINGS BUT, MORE IMPORTANTLY, IT ACTUALLY DELIVERS.



"The Shadow & the Flame" is a cinematic action game set many years ago in the Middle East. After winning the hand in marriage of the Sultan's daughter and becoming the new Prince of Persia, you couldn't be blamed for believing that you could now settle down to a life of luxury. Unfortunately, it's not to be. The second game begins with the prince experiencing a strange sensation and upon entering the throne room finding that someone who bears a striking resemblance to him has taken his place. What's more, nobody recognises him, not even the princess! He soon finds himself being pursued along the rooftops by the palace guards.

One of the things which made the first game so good was the liquid movement of the sprites. They actually climbed, jumped and looked like real people. This was achieved by animating live footage of real actors. The second game has faithfully reproduced this fluid movement and even enhanced it, if this is possible!

Essentially, "The Shadow & the Flame" is a sophisticated platform game which consists of 15 levels of action. Each one is punctuated with a cinematic sequence which gives the game a satisfying plot. The levels start off being quite easy, with the prince being pursued by the Sultan's guards. You are immediately forced to familiarise yourself with the prince's moves as you fight and leap your way along the rooftops and

down to the pier. Timing is all important, as you will soon discover when you have to make the prince leap and hang onto a departing ship.

The next level takes you into a dungeon labyrinth absolutely full of traps and nasties. Watch out for pressure pads and loose floor plates. Often the most obvious way will be the wrong way, so be prepared to make the prince climb and jump to unlikely-looking exits. Not far into the third level the prince hears a mysterious voice which tells him that the princess is ill and in grave danger. After this sequence, time is of the essence, so save the game a lot and move quickly! The save game feature allows you to start the prince at the beginning of the level you have last reached.

"The Shadow & the Flame" has an excellent soundtrack and some really great effects. The clang of swords can be heard in duels and screams issue from defeated opponents or the prince, if he takes too much punishment. Potions and weapons are scattered around, often in difficult places to reach. It is worth the effort to take everything you can as you will often need them to complete the level.

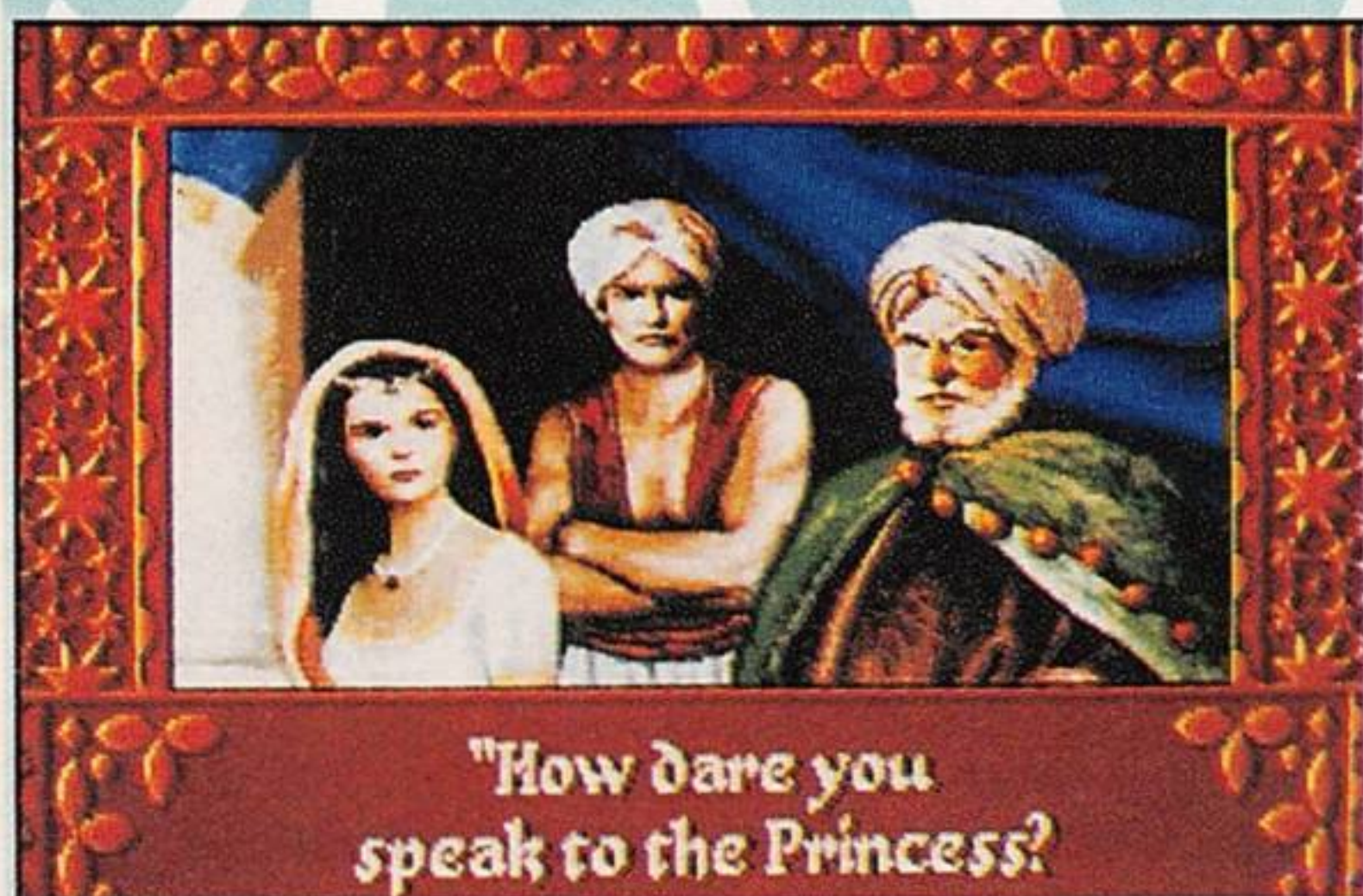
It's not too far into the game that life becomes really difficult for the prince. Warning - this game is hard, folks! Don't despair when you find yourself in an apparently impossible situation; often you can't dispose of an opponent with the sword

alone. For instance it takes a combination of timing and acrobatics to deal with the skeleton on the bridge (hint, hint). But if you thought that was hard wait until the next level where you have to deal with a disembodied head with a really bad attitude! The game is also full of puzzles, some of which are quite difficult.

In the graphics stakes "The Shadow & the Flame" has to rate as one of the best. It is easily as good as the first one and maybe a little better, and this is no small feat. It is very addictive and extremely playable once you get a handle on all the prince's moves. Prepare yourself for long hours of frustration, though, as this one should take you ages to complete.

Prince of Persia 2 is a must for fans of the first game as well as those who enjoy innovative and atmospheric action games.

JULIAN SCHOFFEL



GRAPHICS	94
SOUND	92
PLAYABILITY	90
DIFFICULTY	93
LASTABILITY	92
ATMOSPHERE	90
MENTAL	88
OVERALL	92



"AVOID RPG'S" HAS LONG BEEN A PERSONAL MOTTO I HAVE TRIED TO LIVE BY WHEN IT COMES TO PC GAMES. KNIGHTS, WIZARDS, DUNGEONS, SPELLS AND MAGIC AND THE WHOLE IMPOSSIBLE-TO-COMPLETE FANTASY THING JUST DOESN'T DO IT FOR ME, AND NEITHER DOES MANAGING ATTRIBUTES, INVENTORIES, WEAPONS ETC. AWARE THAT ACTION NEEDED TO BE TAKEN TO HAVE MINDS LIKE MINE CHANGED, BULLFROG PRODUCTIONS (RESPONSIBLE FOR POPULOUS) HAVE PRODUCED SYNDICATE.

Reviews

Syndicate proclaims itself to be a Role Playing Game, and indeed it is, but what sets it apart, to my liking, is its no-nonsense identity of purpose. There's no need to worry about repeating countless parts of the game because you missed some essential key in some secret panel at the very beginning. Syndicate is about taking over fifty very different territories with your carefully cultivated and equipped team of agents in a very platform-game style.

The easiest way to visualise the scenario of Syndicate is to think of "Blade Runner". Sometime off in the future the world has seen huge multinational corporations grow and gain power to the point where they could afford to buy entire countries. And this they did, until the surface of the Earth was no longer divided by countries but by fifty different regions of roughly equal size economically and geographically.

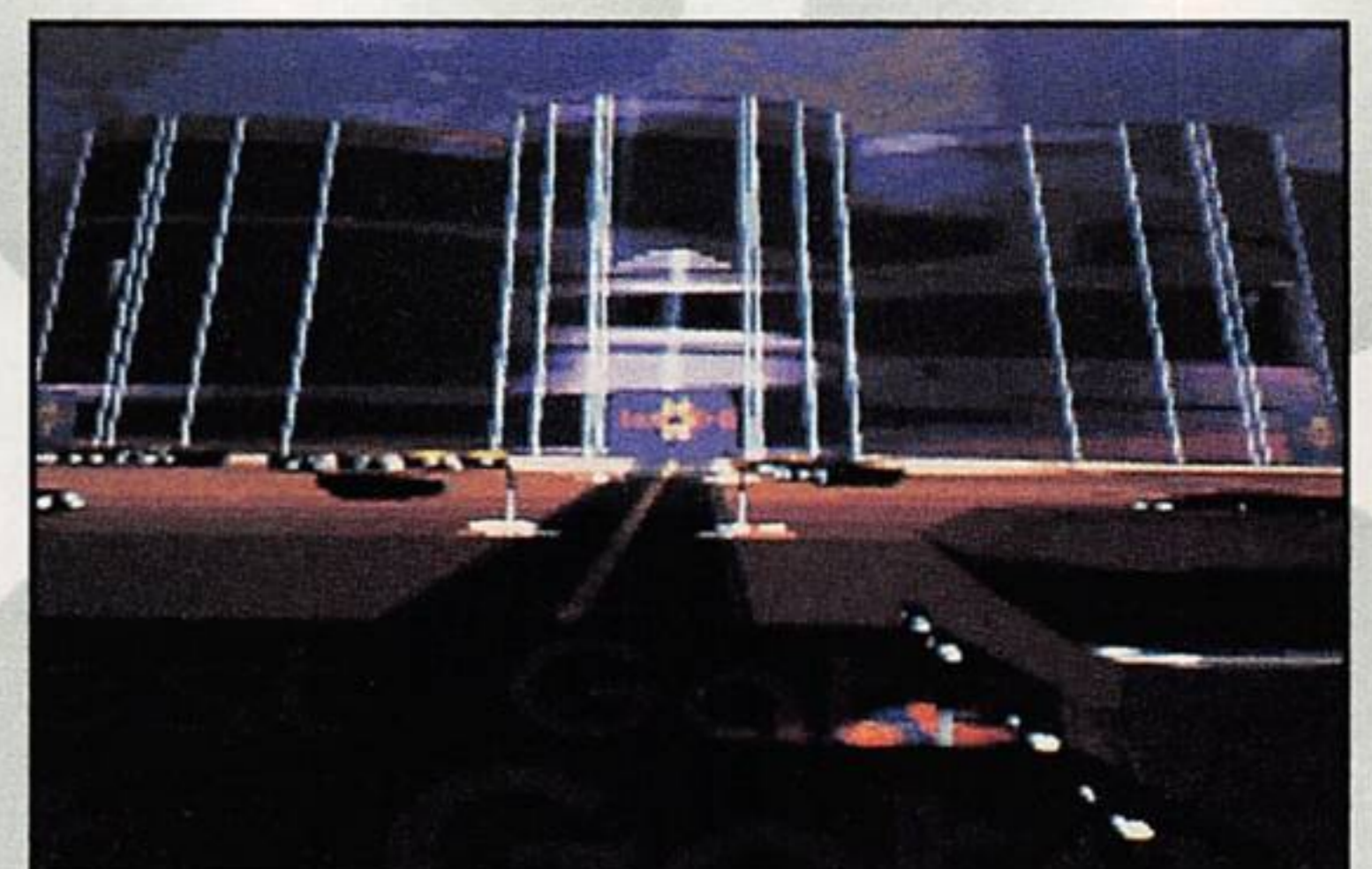
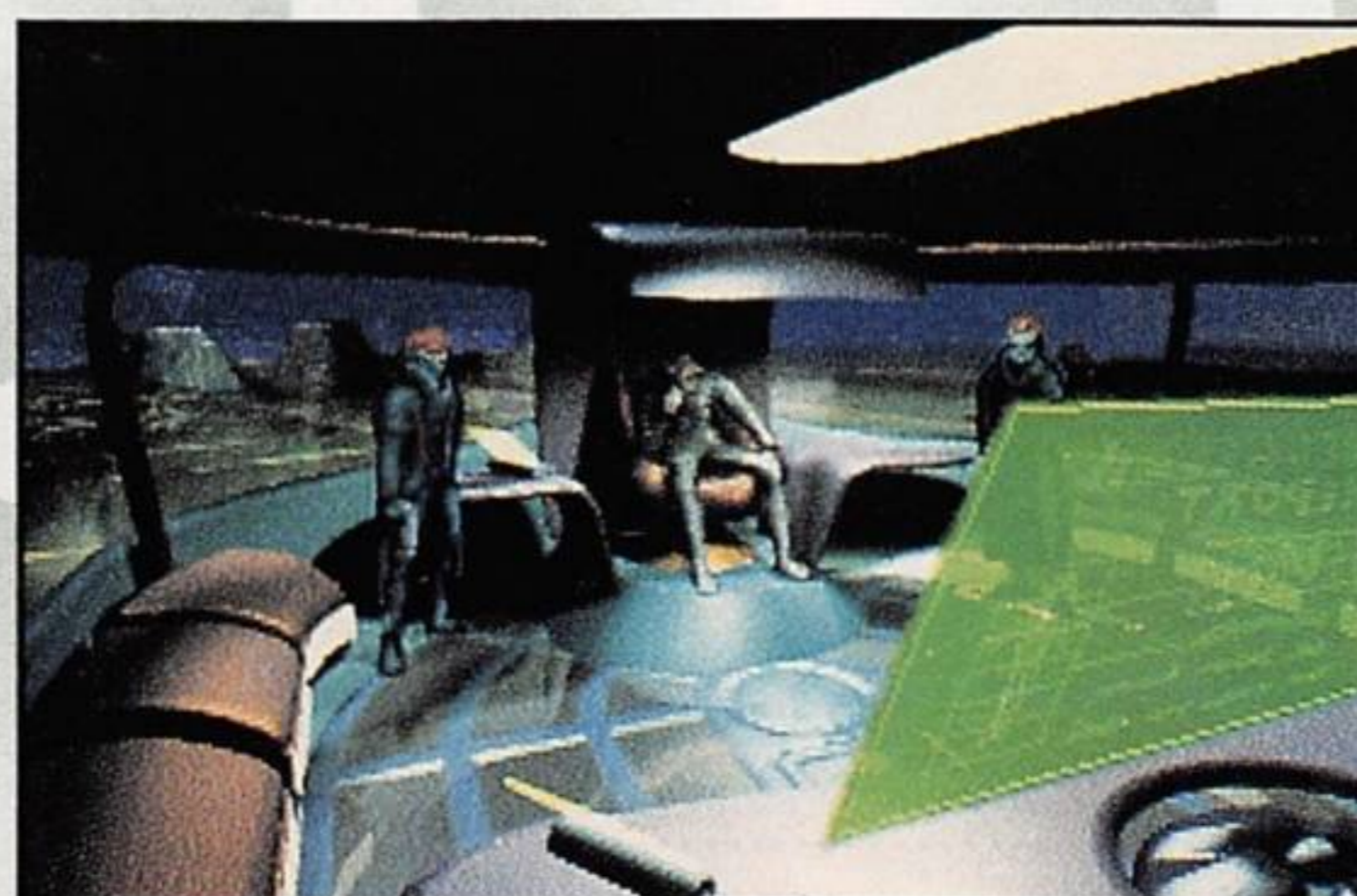
Seven Mega-Corporations are left to run the show, and that's where you come in. The idea is to gain control of the Whole Wide World before any other Mega-Corp can. You are an ambitious young executive trying to prove your worth to your company by giving it global domination as effectively and efficiently as possible.

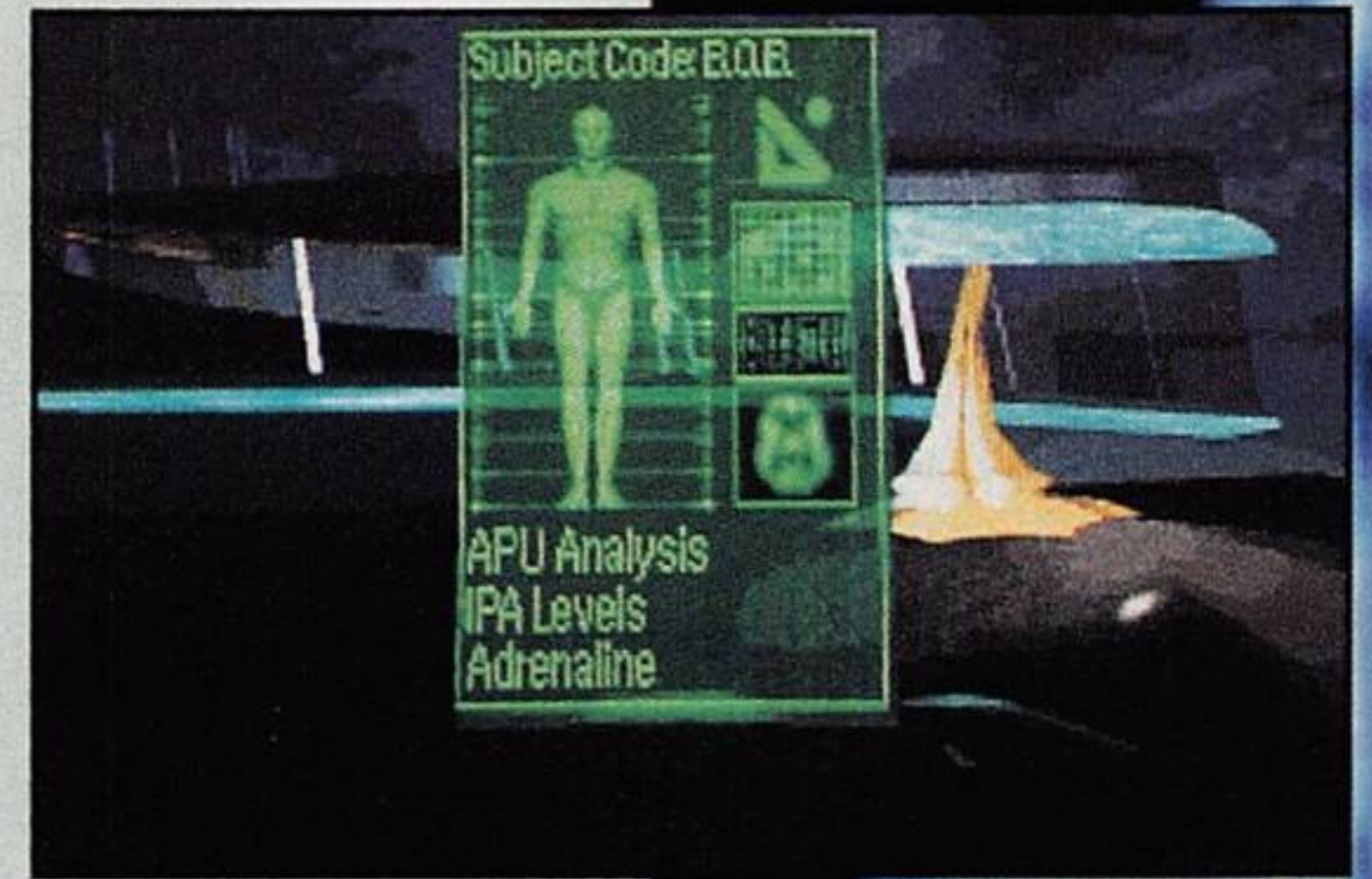
Your office is a blimp which floats over the city, and from this safe perch you control the squad of agents at your command. Each agent was once an ordinary and happy citizen before being abducted by your company, and subjected to mind replacement therapy, by having THE CHIP inserted into their brain. These beasties are at your total command, and will happily perform anything you ask of them. As your territory and income builds, you can buy them various improved bodily parts, and bigger and better weapons. If any meet an unfortunate demise, new agents are easily obtained from your stockpile of poor unsuspecting citizens.

A Research Dept. is always on hand to develop newer and meaner goodies, provided you throw enough money at it. Body improvements and armour are available in three versions, and to get to the best stuff whilst funding an intensive weapons development program takes lots of cash. Losing a fully equipped agent is the loss of a sizeable investment, so it's important you use them with cunning and caution. New weapons can be gained a little quicker by stealing weapons from dead opponents and handing them over to your boffins. Naturally enough, superior firepower is a big advantage, and you'll want plenty of it for some of the missions.

Each of the fifty regions has a problem which needs to be solved by your team. Generally, it's an array of various killing sorties which are great fun and very challenging. You could be ordered to eliminate every enemy agent in a city, kidnap enemy scientists for your own evil purposes, or even (parents look away now) assassinate the wife of an unhelpful Mayor. It's all portrayed with terrific realism and violence, and has a real arcade/platform game feel.

Here's where the game's strong point lies - the detail, design and atmosphere of each city is brilliant. The game's creators call them "Living Cities", and recommend





you just lean back and watch to appreciate how clever they are. VGA graphics, 4 megs of RAM, 12 megs of hard disk and a mouse are needed, and for smooth and fast scrolling, a 486 is useful. The architecture is very Blade Runner-ish, a sort of sharp, futuristic, neo-industrial, spacetech look. The incredibly fine detailing makes full use of VGA bitmapping, and looking down from above in your blimp, it all looks great. People go about their daily affairs, blissfully ignorant of the violence about to explode around them.

Up to four agents can be taken on any one mission, and different missions require different approaches. Some are direct, like go from point A to point B and kill everyone there. Others require fast mouse-work, clever use of resources and careful planning. Orders can be given to agents individually or as a team, so certain agents equipped a certain way can go and do a certain thing - while other agents provide back up, for example.

The main screen is your view looking 45 degrees down from the blimp. Clicking on any part of the city sends your agents on their way there. Lower left is a very useful radar screen which always tells you where your destination or target lies, and above that there is the "Agent Box". Here you select your team's current weapon or item, from the eight each agent can carry, and alter agents' behaviour by manipulating their CHIP.

Syndicate gets a big thumbs up for easy control, the view screen is moved around by pushing the sides of the screen, and it moves smoothly and easily. Moving around the buttons and icons is quick and clear, which it needs to be because your mouse is always on the go.

Agent effectiveness is influenced by two things: firstly, the level of firepower and technology they pack, and secondly and more importantly - how well you control THE CHIP in their brain. THE CHIP let's the controller adjust three broad attributes during play: Intelligence, Perception and Adrenalin. A slider increases or decreases each attribute, and different strengths and combinations produce different interesting effects. Lots of Adrenalin, some Perception and no Intelligence equals a mad suicide killing machine, where lots of Intelligence produces an agent who knows when it's time to run away, and does so with great speed and gusto. Getting your agents to where they're supposed to be can be very tricky, and networks of bridges, split levels and secret passages require a blend of Lemmings and Wolfenstein skills.

Each time a mission is successfully completed, a region converts to your alliance. Taxes and the happiness of your citizens must be balanced deftly, discontented citizens are prone to revolt and enemy infiltration, but also needed are the wads of cash essential for any well run war machine.

New regions for expansion are made available for conquest as your influence spreads, and as a strategy game Syndicate is fairly simple fare, although you can advance in pretty much any direction - spreading the glorious colours of your Company across the map until Total World Domination is achieved.

Syndicate offers an addictive mix of game styles with loads of atmosphere and satisfaction, and is definitely one to cause some very late nights.

BEN MANSILL

GRAPHICS	94
SOUND	85
MUSIC	72
PLAYABILITY	93
LASTABILITY	89
DIFFICULTY	87
ATMOSPHERE	91
MENTAL	88
OVERALL	87





A bird soars across lush green hills past the maniacal mansion of Dr. Fred, then swoops down to a filthy brown river. It gasps, coughs, splutters its last breath and falls to the ground - dead. Zoom in on the mansion where two huge pumps (part of Dr. Fred's Sludge-O-Matic machine) are pouring toxic muck into the crystal clear water. Two strange triangular-shaped tentacles, Purple and Green, jump into view and approach the deadly pumps. The purple one puckers up its "lips" and gulps down a large mouthful of muck. Suddenly, its body begins to contort, it sprouts two small arms and screams something insane about taking over the world.

Cut to a college somewhere in America where the doorbell is being rung by a hamster. The door is answered by three students, Bernard (geeky guy with glasses), Laverne (weird, skinny girl) and Hoagie (fat, headbangin' dude). The hamster gives them a note from Green Tentacle explaining what has happened and how Dr. Fred has imprisoned them and plans to put them to sleep. The heroic trio leap into their car and drive stupidly fast through the deserted night streets to the mansion, destroying several fences and a barn as they go.

Arriving at Dr. Fred's, they separate to search for the tentacles. Bernard discovers both tentacles in Dr. Fred's secret basement laboratory and frees them, allowing Purple to escape and proceed with its evil plans of world domination. Realising that the only way to stop the crazed tentacle is to prevent it from drinking the toxic muck, Dr. Fred decides to send the three students back in time using his latest (and as yet untested) invention, the Chron-O-John (basically a time-travelling Port A Loo). Once there they will be able to switch off the Sludge-O-Matic and all of mankind will be saved.

But obviously it doesn't quite turn out as simple as that. The diamond which is being used to power the

Chron-O-John disintegrates under the pressure (it was an imitation) and the kids find themselves separated in time. Bernard returns to the present, Laverne ends up two hundred years into the future and Hoagie is stranded two hundred years in the past. The latter duo must each find a way to power their time machines while Bernard needs to get hold of a new diamond (a real one this time).

That's the groovy scenario behind the hilarious sequel to Maniac Mansion, Day of the Tentacle (or DOTT as it is affectionately known). Somewhere else in this issue I reviewed "Shadow of the Comet" which a week ago I considered to be the best adventure game you could get. After experiencing (yes, experiencing, not playing) DOTT though, I would have to correct that statement. Shadow of the Comet is the best "seri-

Day

ous" adventure, while Day of the Tentacle is the best "comedy" adventure. There, that's better now.

It's no use me telling you these things, though, you'll no doubt want hard evidence to back it up (ho ho, a little computer humour there). So, the reason why DOTT is excellent is because it is clever. It just oozes cleverness. From the plot to the copy protection via the control system, everything about the game is so damn clever. I even gave it an IQ test where it scored a phenomenal 153, and that was just the quick reference card!

The first Clever Thing you'll notice is the graphics. DOTT bills itself as a cartoon adventure and, assuming this is not graded exponentially, you couldn't get closer to the truth. The architect must have been very sick indeed when he drew the plans for the buildings in DOTT. Walls slope at impossible angles, the windows and doors are not in the slightest bit rectangular and furniture

like bookcases, tables and clocks look set to topple at the most innocent of touches. If you were even sicker than the architect you may call this "wacky".

The best bit about the graphics, though, is the characters. They are huge - and hugely funny. You'll laugh as Hoagie belches then scratches his not inconsiderable belly. You'll laugh when Bernard glances around to check whether anyone is watching, then picks his nose. You'll laugh as Laverne gallops around in her makeshift tentacle costume. You'll split your sides when Bernard tries to push over Oozo the Clown. Tears will roll down your cheeks as Hoagie tries to push his well proportioned frame down the chimney. Your stomach will cramp up when Dr. Fred goes sleepwalking and keeps opening and closing his safe. It's a total hoot, and there's not many computer games

George Washington that the tree is, in fact, a cherry tree and needs to be cut down. If he succeeds, the tree in the future will disappear and Laverne can continue. The puzzles get far more intricate as the game progresses and involve much swapping of objects and altering of incidents, but thankfully they remain consistently logical throughout.

Oh, did I mention George Washington just a few sentences back? It seems that he, Thomas Jefferson and John Hancock chose Dr. Fred's mansion/motel to draw up the American Constitution in the late 1700s. One of the best history tampering scenes occurs here when, stuck for some ideas, Jefferson asks Hoagie if he has any suggestions for the Constitution. And so it becomes law that every American should have a vacuum

OF THE TENTACLE



you can say that about!

The second Clever Thing, and this one's a Really Clever Thing, is the concept of time. You see, when Hoagie and Laverne go backwards and forwards in time, they end up at the same mansion. Or, more accurately, the mansion as it was, or will be, like in that period of time. This means that something that, say, Hoagie does in the past will affect what Bernard can do in the present (or Laverne in the future).

Also, the kids can interact with each other through their Chron-O-Johns. Objects are placed inside the bowl of the Chron-O-Johns and can then be "flushed" through time to one of the other two. This creates some quite neat time paradox-type puzzles. For instance, one of the simplest and earliest of these comes when Laverne's Chron-O-John crash lands in a huge tree and she can't get down. Back in the past, Hoagie has to convince

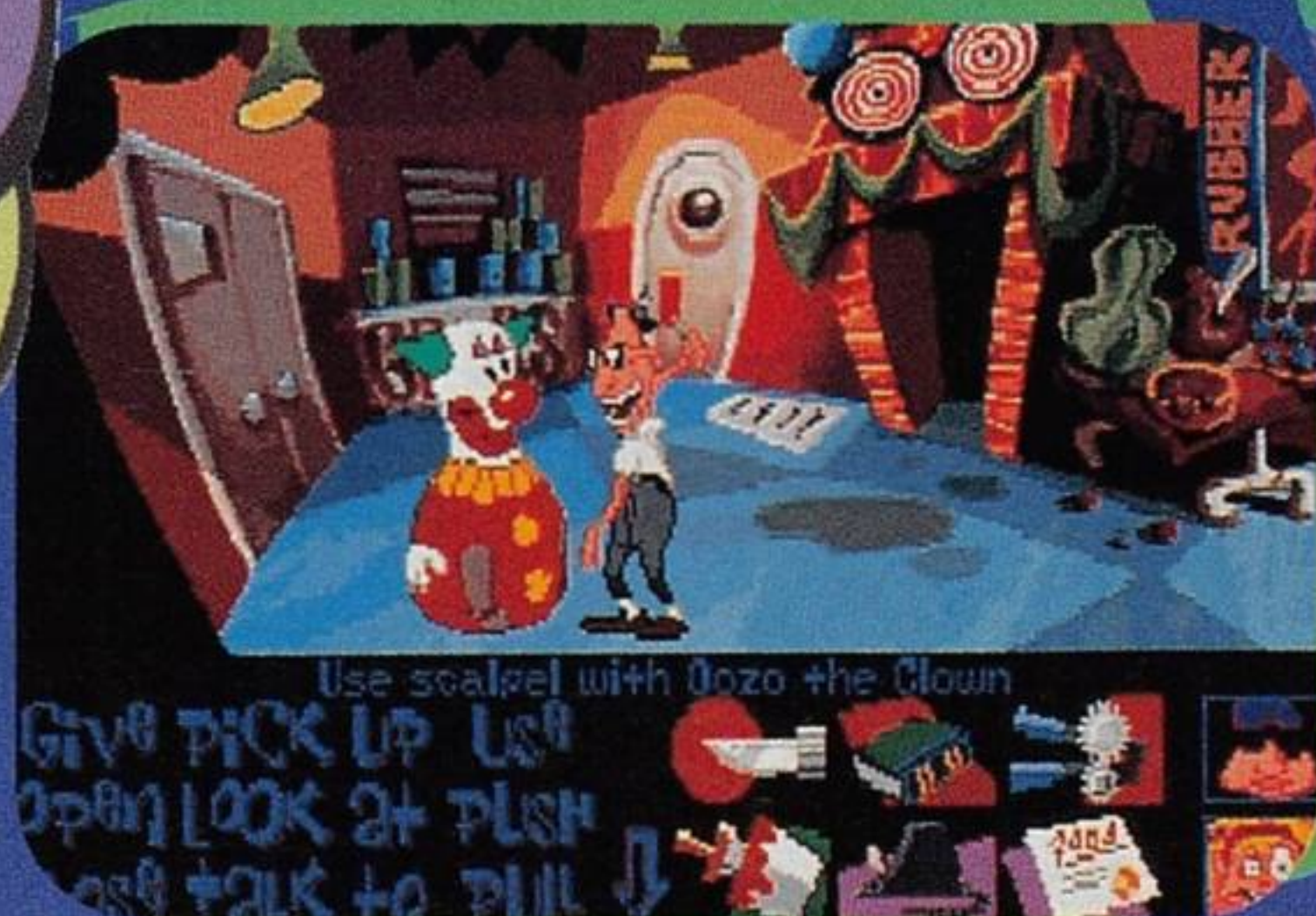
cleaner in their basement....

Anway DOTT comes in both floppy and CD format for the PC. Graphically, they're the same, but the CD version is the full "talkie", where all the dialogue is spoken by actors. And for this game they're real actors with humour and inflection in their voice, rather than some cleaner who just happened to be around when they were laying down the dialogue tracks. Hoagie especially is hysterical with his nasal drone, and with crystal clear speech and sound effects it really does feel like you are controlling your very own cartoon.

I really could go on and on about this game, but in conclusion, Day of the Tentacle is an ingeniously pieced together game, as we've come to expect from LucasArts, and acute stupidity is your only excuse not to buy it.

David Wildgoose
* LucasArts

P.C.
PC CD-ROM



Graphics.....	96
Sound.....	92
Music.....	89
Playability.....	94
Lastability.....	93
Difficulty.....	85
Atmosphere.....	90
Mental.....	92
Overall.....	94

WELCOME TO THE:

ADVENTURE ZONE

This section is for the best and finest adventurers only - arcade gamers should quickly turn the page now. Regular names dropped here are Sierra, Origin, LucasArts, Infocom, SSI and other greats.

My name is Mario Moeller (better known as Mars), and as well as bringing you Adventure Zone each month, I'm also offering you a free adventure help service, where I have an extremely high success rate of answering questions on various games. No game is too old or too new, I even know about adventures dating back to the Vic-20! I'm always interested in what you have to say, so here's how to get in touch with me:

1. Mail. Enclose a medium (or business) size self-addressed stamped envelope if you expect a personal reply:

Adventure Zone
38 Greenvale Drive
Greenvale Vic 3059

Enclose a few stamps to cover my time and photocopying costs if you're after a complete solution, but try and ask specific questions about a game first if you can so I can avoid sending a whole solution out.

2. Send me electronic mail at Alliance Bulletin Board:
(03) 462 1707 (9600 - 2400)

NEWS

LucasArts has now released **Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis** on CD-ROM for PC's. Featuring LucasArts' new "Talkie" system, it adds the voices of professional actors that will truly bring the game to life.

Police Quest 4 will be coming out

soon from Sierra, and the title I've heard was "Flicker in the Dark", which should prove very interesting indeed. Roberta Williams has apparently been working on a new game; **Phantasmagoria**.

LETTERS

Dear Mr. Moeller,

I enjoy your "Adventure Zone" section, especially tips on any adventure games. I'm a 52-year-old gaming fanatic from way back when D & D first came out, and computer RPG's are my great interest. At present I am in the throes of "Legend" by Mindscape. And, although I try never to cheat by looking at hint books, this game is a trimmer. Could you please print my name and address in your section of Megazone and if anyone can write to me or ring me on (02)516 5213 with any hints on this game, I'd be eternally grateful.

Thank you for supplying an interesting and useful service to us gamers.

Yours sincerely,
Mr. Rick Scully
50 Simmons Street
Enmore NSW 2042

Sure thing. Any legends out there that can help this poor soul out?

Mario,

I have something to say regarding the LucasArts fuzzy graphics discussion: which game was better - Monkey Island 2 or Quest for Glory III? Yes, QFG3 does have marginally better graphics, if you like stunningly realistic panoramas, but Monkey Island 2 wins on almost everything else. The graphics in most LucasArts games lean towards being cartoony, whereas Sierra games have more of an attempt at being realistic. So I think having a lower resolution doesn't

matter a lot when you take the user interface, plot, playability and everything else into consideration as well.

Alistair Flynn

Well, I must agree with you on that one, Alistair. I enjoyed Monkey Island 2 heaps more than Quest for Glory III, and it didn't have anything to do with the graphics.

FREE SOFTWARE UP FOR GRABS!!

Honestly, we can't make it easier than this. Want to win a FREE game? Simply answer the questions below, and the first most correct entry will win an amazing new PC game.

Last issues answers:

1. William Crowther wrote the very first adventure game.
2. The badge given away with The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy said "Don't Panic!".
3. Vohaul's Revenge II is better known as Space Quest XII.

This month's questions:

1. Which software company first released "Dungeon Master" on the Amiga, the pioneer of all true three dimensional role playing games?
2. What is the governor's name in the Monkey Island series?
3. Name two Dynamix adventures.

CLUES

Clues are always needed, so if you have something to share, then please write in and let us all know!

Ultima VII - To get the Cheat Screen in playing the game, just type "Serpent pass" (that is, the word "Serpent" with a space and then the word "pass"). F2 - F10 act as the cheat keys, while Alt 1-5 act as special function keys. (James Tydeman)

MARIO'S TOP 5

MEGAZONE

Snap up these games.... quickly!

1. **Ultima Underworld II (PC)**
Have fun romping around in some really cool dungeons.
2. **Space Quest V (PC)**
Proving very popular on PC, check it out.
3. **Legends of Valour (PC/Amiga)**
For those of you that liked Wolfenstein, have some more.
4. **Dungeon Master (PC/Amiga)**
Now on PC from Psygnosis, see what started it all.
5. **Waxworks (PC/Amiga)**
It's creepy, it's gory and believe me—it's fun.

REVIEWS

shadow of the COMET



You know, there's something funny about some of the games released recently (i.e Alone in the Dark, Darkseed, Elvira, Waxworks and, er, loads more), but I just can't seem to nail it down. I did try, but the hammer just kept hitting my thumb instead. Ouch.

Anyway, it wasn't until Shadow of the Comet arrived on the doorstep that everything began to make sense. All the games have dark, gloomy graphics with plenty of shadows, grotesque monsters and buckets of blood. While playing them you'll hear creaking floorboards, heavy breathing, ghostly whistles of wind, as well as the odd ghoulish scream (or eerie silence if you haven't got a sound card). The plot uses words like 'evil', 'insane', 'nightmare', 'terrifying' and, an old favourite, "Enter at your PERIL!". Hmm, do you think there could be a horror revival on at the moment?

While perhaps it's not surprising, due to Coppola's Dracula film (as well as the current 70's revival - that's really horrific!), but what is really astonishing is that most of them are actually good and some are even worth buying. And it just so happens that Shadow of the Comet fits rather snugly into the latter category - life's full of surprises, isn't it?

The graphically Sierra-style (but infinitely better) adventure is set in the small American town of Illsmouth. In 1824 a British scientist, Lord Boleskine, travelled to Illsmouth to witness the passing of Halley's comet. While there he endured some undocumented nightmarish experience and, (super)naturally, went completely bonkers. Luckily, though, Boleskine had the forethought to make some sketches of what he saw and record some of his findings in a diary.

Forward 76 years to 1910 and another British scientist, John Parker (you), curious as to what exactly happened to Boleskine on his expedition, decides to venture to Illsmouth to view the return of the comet and hopefully uncover the terrifyingly evil secret. And this is where you...er, enter at your PERIL!

Illsmouth, on the surface at least, is a nice little town with, on the whole, a

friendly bunch of people. Tobias Jugg, the town records keeper, will be keen to assist you. He knows everything about the town's history and proves to be quite a useful ally—don't get on the wrong side of him. The local chemist, Mr. Jonathan Matthews, and his daughter, Mary (possibly the 'love interest') are also willing to give you a hand. Obviously, though, there's bound to be a few shady characters. Like Mayor Arlington for instance, the Hambleton brothers or perhaps even your host, Dr. Cobble. And that Indian bloke with the face paint who was standing in a ring of stones in the dead of night, conjuring up fire balls in the palms of his hands was a bit odd too.

The great thing about Illsmouth is that the inhabitants really do inhabit the town rather than simply popping up when it's their turn to help you. You will meet nearly everyone in the town before it's necessary. Admittedly this does provide a few red herrings, but it also gives you realism. The feel of the game play reminds me of Lure of the Temptress and that is definitely a good thing.

Illsmouth is very picturesque, which belies the occult grip which is closing fast upon the town. The woods which surround the town are the best I've ever seen in a game like this—they look almost like photographs. On top of all this graphical splendour you also get to view some wonderful animated close-ups of each character when you speak to them (each one is supposed to resemble a famous film star, though I could only pick one of them—you are Dennis Quaid!). It also zooms in on the more important of your actions, such as when you open drawers or take things out of your jacket.

Now, despite being a horror game and, despite what I said above about buckets of blood and the like, Shadow of the Comet isn't really like that at all.. it relies on creating a suspenseful atmosphere and then playing tricks with your mind, so you can convince yourself that something horrible is always lurking around the corner. The horror in Shadow of the Comet is far more psychological than in other games and, therefore, much better. Let's face it, graphics of mutilated corpses are, at best, merely unpleasant to look at and not at all scary (well except, perhaps, to the grey-haired, cardigan-wearing moral minority who never had any fun in their childhood and want to ruin everyone else's).

The final verdict? Utterly brilliant.



P.C.

DAVID WILDGOOSE

Graphics	90
Sound	85
Music	86
Playability	92
Difficulty	93
Lastability	90
Atmosphere	95
Mental	91
Overall	92

Might & Magic 5

Dark Side of Xeen



The fifth in the Might and Magic series, "Dark Side of Xeen" is an absolutely **HUGE** first person perspective RPG.

The game can be installed on its own or if you have its predecessor, "Clouds of Xeen", then the installation process will combine the two to create the "World of Xeen". Confused? Well, don't be.

It's really very simple.

If you have played "Clouds of Xeen" you'll probably be wondering how you managed to finish the game without being able to enter certain areas on your map. There is also the matter of those strange pyramids scattered around the countryside which, when tampered with, always gave you the message "the moons are not aligned". Well, here is the explanation. The programmers always intended that the game would have a sequel which would allow you to travel back and forth between the two sides of Xeen. I have played "Clouds of Xeen" but unfortunately I wiped it

off my hard drive, so I wasn't able to experience the 35Mb+ "World of Xeen". Pity.

However "Dark Side of Xeen" stands quite comfortably on its own. Essentially it is very similar to "Clouds of Xeen" in all aspects, except that you have a whole new hemisphere to explore with all the associated monsters and mini-quests. The interface screen is virtually identical to the one used in "Clouds..." and is of the point-and-click variety. When you want to view a character in greater detail you just click on the character portrait and so on. Nothing new here.

One thing I particularly like about the Might & Magic series is its graphical style -

ADVENTURE ZONE

There are a number of features to "Dark Side of Xeen" which make it one of the most user-friendly games around.

the landscapes and monsters are always lavishly coloured, which gives a unique atmospheric quality to the games. The graphics of "Dark Side of Xeen" are no exception—the monsters have to be seen to be believed, they are very gaudy and very mean, but also very pretty to look at. So when you see one moving towards you in the distance, shoot first and marvel at its attractive colouring later.

Like the rest of the Might & Magic series "Dark Side of Xeen" is extremely easy to play. You can use the pre-generated characters or stop at the local inn and create your own. There is a large assortment of the usual races and character classes to choose from: Human, Elf, Half-Orc and so on. If you choose to create your own party be sure to include a good assortment of classes so you can deal with any situation.

The game begins with a very flashy intro sequence where the Dragon Pharaoh is unexpectedly thwarted by a new and mysterious foe who goes by the name of Alamar. Unlike other games, "Dark Side of Xeen" doesn't hold your hand too much in the plot department. It allows you to freely explore the gameworld, where you will soon be presented with a series of mini-quests. It's best if you first explore the town of Castlevue where you should talk to everyone you can. To do this you just move your party in front of a tent, desk or cart and push the space bar. I found that gameplay can be made quicker and easier by using a combination of mouse and keyboard. You will soon find yourself travelling through a wide variety of terrain, from open fields to forests, lakes, deserts, dungeons - even highways in the sky.

There are a number of features to "Dark Side of Xeen" which make it one of the most user-friendly games around. The first of these is the auto-map feature; having to sketch maps all the time can soon make a game eminently hateable, but this is totally absent in "Dark Side...". Just move the arrow icon to the Might & Magic logo on the top right hand corner of the screen and you can see where your party has and hasn't been. It should be noted that at least one member of your party must have the mapping skill to use this feature.

Another very agreeable feature of the game are the auto-notes. They tell you what quests are on your party's agenda and where the person who gave you the task can be found. The auto-notes will also store the exact locations of any useful fountains and temples you may come across, for

future reference. Why haven't other games employed these two simple, but pain saving features? It might have meant the difference between losing interest in a game or playing it through to the end. I can think of two such games right now - "Eye of the Beholder 3" and "Legends of Valour". They were good in a lot of ways but in the end, having to make maps and take extensive notes meant that I lost interest prematurely.

Soundwise, "Dark Side of Xeen" is excellent. When you enter a town or tower the screen zooms in on the gatekeeper who either insults you and tells you to push off if you don't have the right pass key, or begrudgingly lets you in. The monsters are also endowed with their own unique sound effects and issue a very satisfying grunt when you score a hit on them. I even found the musical score of the game to be quite catchy and surprisingly hard to get sick of, although I probably wouldn't settle back with a glass of red wine and listen to it after dinner.

As I have already said "Dark Side of Xeen" is very large indeed and requires a lot of hard disk space - about 20Mb. Perhaps the reason that so many recent releases are so big is because the game producers are preparing for the deluge of CD Rom titles, but because not everyone owns a CD Rom drive yet, they want to produce games which are of a high enough graphical and audio standard to effectively compete with the CD monsters while still being able to be installed on a hard drive. "Dark Side of Xeen" requires at least a 286 with VGA display and 2Mb of extra Ram for the sound effects.

The only negative aspect of the game is the block movement, as I would have hoped by now that more games would be using the full-scrolling movement of Ultima Underworld. That aside, "Dark Side of Xeen" is an excellent new release which should last the average gamer for ages.

JULIAN SCHOFFEL



Graphics92

Sound93

Playability94

Difficulty91

Lastability90

Atmosphere90

Mental85

Overall91



"I write highly improbable stories about people who find themselves living in a very unusual landscape: a world populated by fantastic creatures, ancient magics, and rogues and villains of all stripe."

- Raymond E. Feist



etrayal at Kronдор



Betrayal at Kronдор is a role-playing adventure game based on the work of the hugely popular fantasy novelist Raymond E. Feist. He is famous for the Riftwar Saga which included the books "Magician", "Silverthorn", "A Darkness at Sethanon" and "Prince of the Blood", as well as the "Empire" series he co-wrote with Janny Wurts. His enchanting and highly detailed world of Midkemia has become almost as famous in fantasy circles as Tolkien's Middle Earth.

The game isn't based on any particular book, but rather is set in the mythical lands he created. Dynamix (in close consultation with Feist) have taken a lot of time and energy to create a realistic picture of Midkemia after the events in "A Darkness at Sethanon". You control a party of three unlikely adventurers who have to make their way through the story. In your journeys you will inevitably encounter favourite characters from the novels, such as Prince Arutha, Jimmy and Locklear.

The game is designed to be as much like a book as possible, and is split into chapters, which much be completed in the correct order. There's also quite a lot a of text to be read, far more than most adventures. Annoyingly, it does repeat itself in given situations. The description for virtually every shop, tavern or temple is exactly the same.

The first chapter concerns the three adventurers reaching Kronдор, the capital city. You have to guide the three adventures there safely and soundly. This is easier said than done, as there are plenty of perils on the path and it will



ADVENTURE ZONE

take a few sword fights and saved games before completing this section of the game. A map screen shows the lie of the land, and referral back to it is necessary to plan your route.

The main view of the gameplay is a 3D view that shows all you can see: mountains, trees and buildings are well detailed and the scrolling, though a little jumpy, gives a convincing perspective view. A 2D plan is also available and this is usually better for navigation. You're shown the area that immediately surrounds your little party, which makes it a heck of a lot easier to make out where on Earth – sorry, Midkemia – you are. There are also quite a few digitised video scenes which are pretty impressive and give a nice cinematic aspect to the game.

On the way you'll come across people who have a desire to kill you. Who's victorious depends on many things; the power of your sword, the strength of your armour and luck are all included in the equation. Whenever you do kill someone, it's best to rifle through their belongings and purloin anything they have of value, even though you may feel a bit rude doing it.

There's a lot of depth to this game (I suppose it comes from having a whole series of books to give you a plot ideas), and there is lots to discover including magic (both of the Greater and Lesser Paths), teleports and political intrigue.

The thing I didn't like about this game though, was you get a feeling of inevitability. Whether you take the left fork or the right fork in the road, you know that the same things will happen and that there's nothing you can do to change it. The plot just happens, and doesn't really seem to involve the player; the game could run its course quite happily if you weren't there. You're just there to press the buttons. Sometimes, for example, you may decide to camp for the night. But one of the characters will say "I've got an uneasy feeling about this" and you have no choice but to

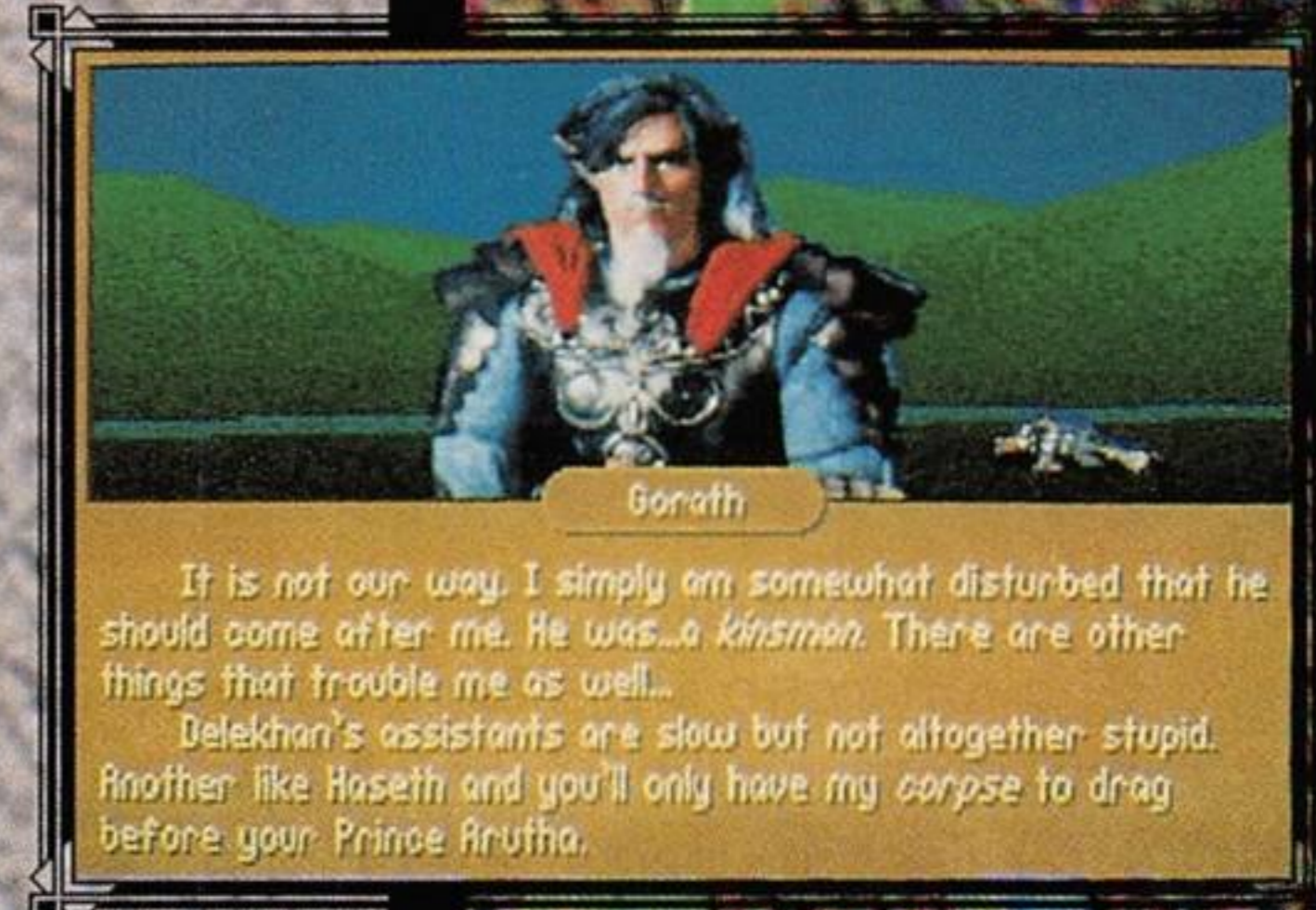
keep moving on. You know then that a fight's imminent. Lo and behold, a couple of moves later and you're in the thick of the melee. Problem solving doesn't appear to have that much of an emphasis, whereas fights occur every ten minutes.

It's nicely done, though, with great graphics and suitable music. If you're a fan of Feist's books, then you'll probably really enjoy this game, but for those who haven't heard of Midkemia, there are better RPGs around.

ADAM WARING



- Graphics88
- Sound82
- Music84
- Playability70
- Lastability74
- Difficulty85
- Atmosphere76
- Overall76



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NEWS

CHAKAN

Mega Drive

LEVEL SKIP

Select practice mode and start the game. Move Chakan onto the small platform above and to the right of the sky portal. Press start, select the passage spell and use it. You now find that you have skipped the first 12 levels and acquired all the weapons. This makes finishing the game about 100 times simpler.

POTIONS

Enter a new level and collect all the potions. Destroy yourself without finishing and re-enter the level to collect the potions again. If you're about to enter a tough level or guardian battle, you can use this tip to collect an abundance of potions. Beware, clear air only appears once.

DIFFICULT BOSSES

If you're struggling against a boss or the timer is running out rapidly, use the doorway magic. You will exit the battle and be able to restart the fight with more time and power. However, this should only be used as a last resort.

FIRE PHASE 2

Defeat the winged harpy and continue right. Stand on the thin floor that is about two blocks long and hold down. Press the jump button and you'll drop to another area. Go left, drop down the gap and you'll land on another platform. Drop left and mid-flight press RIGHT to land on a platform between the two smaller ones.

Drop right and hold right. Walk to the right of the platform and use your grappling hook to swing to the top right. Go up the corridor using the bulls skulls. At the top go to the dead end and break the block floor to drop down the gap. The exit is to the far left.

EARTH PHASE 2

Go through the Blue Glowing Orb whilst using the shield magic. Do not destroy the orb or else it will attack you, along with several other nasty surprises flying out of the holes in the wall. Continue left and jump to the ledge on the left. Jump to the ledge above you and then up to the next platform above. From this next platform walk left and drop down to the small platform below. Jump up and left up to a small

platform higher up, then jump left to the corridor.

Perform a double roll across the left gap and jump from this platform to the ledge in the gap above. Jump up and left to the small ledge, then jump up and right to the next platform up. Jump up and right to the next platform above and continue right until you reach a large gap. Perform another double roll to the far right and continue right where you must drop down the gap. Go left and down another gap, then right to fight the boss.

Use the shield and flame sword potions to defeat the boss. If you don't have these, use the spin attack repeatedly whilst he is in the far right corner of the screen.

AIR PHASE 2

Jump right from the ledge. Break down the door that's to your right with the battle axe. Advance four windows to the right and wait for the moving platform. Use it to get to the top so you can reach the upper left platform.

Wait for the moving platform and use it to go upwards. About half way jump to the tiny ledge that's to the right. Jump left to the tiny ledge and wait for the moving platform to go up. Jump across to the area above and right to get to the boss.

Use the spin attack to hit the boss and the grappling hook for longer reach. Hit him when the moving platform is nearest the top.

FLASHBACK

MEGA DRIVE

Level Codes (EASY)

Level 2	Betsy
Level 3	Pancho
Level 4	Studio
Level 5	Toho
Level 6	Akane
Level 7	Incbin
Ending	Cygnus

ANOTHER WORLD

Mega Drive

Level Codes

1	LDKD
2	HTDC

3	CLLD
4	FXLC
5	KRFK
6	KLFB
7	TBHK
8	XJRT
9	HRTB
10	HBHK
11	JCGB
12	TXHF
13	CKJL

MEGOLOMANIA

MEGA DRIVE

Epoch Codes

2nd	YABDQCYXXSL
3RD	WFBUDUCYXXSL
4TH	UKBDIYFXXSH
5TH	SPDDCUYYXSN
6TH	QUBDQYFJTAV
7TH	OZBDUYFJTAV
8TH	MECDMAMYXSQ
9TH	EKFDECSBYSU

BART VS SPACE MUTANTS

Mega Drive & Master System

Some losers are still having problems finding the last goal in the 1st level. Here's what you do. Go to the phone booth next to the tavern, hop up and use a coin. Moe will exit the tavern. His apron is purple. Just spray it with the spray can.

UNIVERSAL SOLDIER

MEGA DRIVE

Level Codes

1	CHSGM
2	MKSNS
3	SGGBY
4	SLGPH
5	SDRSD
6	PKSND
7	CWBPM
8	SFTNP
9	CMVDG
10	BYTCM



COOL SPOT

MEGA DRIVE

(Skip Levels)

Stuck in a level? Try this. Whenever you're playing the game, pause it and press the following buttons: ABC BAC ABC BAC. You will now have skipped to the next level. You big cheat!

CASTLE OF ILLUSION

MASTER SYSTEM

THE CHOCOLATE BOSS.

To defeat this vile menace, pick up the solid block and stand to the left of the screen when the blocks form the boss and his head appears. Jump up and throw the block at his face. Run to the middle while dodging the falling blocks and pick up the solid block. Then just repeat the procedure.

WONDER BOY III

MASTER SYSTEM

PASSWORDS

LIZARD MAN 2CKF7HL8GOPH2L

MOUSE MAN 6CVFPKL8UDFA70

PIRANHA MAN CL5M554B33A731

LION MAN KXGWPT4FEG3AGC

HAWK MAN 93C7YHTXN5EHVL

ULTIMA IV

MASTER SYSTEM

Here's the co-ordinates of some hard to find items.

SKULL OF MUNDAINPF:MF

SILVER HORNKN:CN

BELLNA:LA

BOOKAG:AG

CANDLEAB:BG

WHEELNH:GA

NIGHT SHADESF:LO

MANDRAKEDG:LG

WHITE STONE

BLACK STONE IF:OA (DARKEST NIGHT)

SHRINES :

HONESTYEE:OM

COMPASSIONFN:IA

VALOUROD:CD

JUSTICEAL:EK

SACRIFICECM:MN

HONOURMP:FC

SPIRITUALITYBD:KG

HUMILITYMP:OH

FAERY TALE ADVENTURE

PC

In the dungeons and cave you can go through opening doors, restore your position and you will still have all your keys. Repeat as often as you need. Find the green turtle, jump on his back and start attacking. Nothing will happen except your bravery points will keep piling up.

On the Crystal Castle Island press right mouse button while speaking with the Sorceress and luck increases to 65. ASK the Sorceress several times.

A secret entrance to the fort exists. On the left side, near even with the door.

Save a game to a back up file and patch byte 18 to a non-zero value and you know have these cheats at your disposal:

ARROW KEYS - Move very fast over any terrain

B - Summon Gold Swan

R - Rescue Princess

= - Display Coordinates

F9 - Increase time by one hour

F10 - Location in coordinates

HARD DRIVIN

PC

Attain full speed then hit N. You continue at full speed with easy steering and invincibility and unlimited time.

HUNT FOR RED OCTOBER

PC

When surrounded by enemy ships then save, restore, they are gone.

IT CAME FROM THE DESERT

PC

Before attempting to go into the ants' nest, you should first save Elmer to get more flamethrower fuel. Some time between the 8th and 10th, he will leave a note in his station saying that he is going hiking in the SW Volcanic Cone. Go to the volcano, fight the ants, and next day, visit Elmer's station. He'll thank you for saving his life and give you more flamethrower fuel.

The entrance to the ants' nest will never appear on the main map, but there are several other ways to get there:

- By taking a flight from Hilber's Field.

- By driving a tank from a battle going on at a nearby location.

- By going south when you are in a battle at the M1 mine.

The entrance to the nest doesn't stay open long enough for you to get in before the ants start invading the various locations in the town, so you'll have to wait until they do. The 11th is the best day to enter the hole since it is very hot and there are few ants around. If you try cooler days, there will probably be too many of them around for you to handle. Also, if you decide to get to the hole by plane, you can land safely on the dirt road parallel to the tracks leading to the M1 mine.

NEUROMANCER

PC

When you first begin, sell all your body parts. You can get along just fine without them for now, and it gives you enough to get a half way decent deck. You will eventually need to buy them back before you start entering cyber-space, or you will be killed easily.

NIGHTBREED

PC

Rather than ripping your hair during the encounter with Peloquin, just switch your joystick to autofire, sit back and wait for the next scene to pop up.

PIRATES

PC

HEHMTS

When fighting against unbelievable odds don't panic. Choose the long-sword. Keep using the slash-high attack to cause the most damage. You may get down to only one man left, but you can still defeat the enemy captain. After you win, select Send A Prize Crew so you will have enough people to sail your ship.

Don't attack a nation your home country is allied with, it will upset both of them.

Don't wed till you've got all your promotions, your opportunities will be much better. Make conversation with all the Governors daughters, however, they might gather important information for you from the Governors mansion.

XENON II

PC

*** What And Where To Buy ***

LEVEL 1, SHOP 1: Buy Health, Super Nashwan

LEVEL 1, SHOP 2: Sell Rear Shot, Buy Double Shot and Side Shot

LEVEL 2, SHOP 1: Buy Side Shot

LEVEL 2, SHOP 2: Sell Side Shot

LEVEL 3, SHOP 1: Buy Health and Rear Shot.

LEVEL 3, SHOP 2: Sell Rear Shot, Buy Side Shot, Laser, and Power Up

LEVEL 4, SHOP 1: Sell Rear Shot, Sell Side Shot

Try to stick with your best weapon, and end up with 2 Cannons, 2 Lasers and either Side Shot or Rear Shot.

Always spend your money in the shops as you cannot take leftover cash.

*** Halfway and End Monsters ***

SNAIL: Shoot at eye, avoid mines

ALIEN: Shoot eyes at either side at top. Scroll back and shoot centre eye

SPIDER: Destroy as much web as possible. Fly down to face spider and fire continuously.

CRAYFISH: Travels in figure eight. Stay below and fire in it's face.

SNAKE: Attacks from left of screen.

DRAGON: Shoot the side heads first, then tail, then main head.

HEAD: Shoot both eyes, avoiding laser fire and extending tongue. Shoot at head when

tongue goes in.

TANK: Use missiles

GRAND SPACESHIP: Shoot all cannons until totally destroyed.

PRO ACTION REPLAY CODES

MEGA DRIVE

ALISIA DRAGOON

FF01A3000X Where X is a level number so that you start from this level.

FF00220010 Friendly monster energy meter does not decrease.

FF00C2000A Infinite energy

ALIEN 3

FF08450099 Unlimited machine gun rounds

FF08470099 Unlimited flame

FF08490099 Unlimited mortars

FF08EB00XX The value in xx is how many lives you start the game with

FF090B0009 This parameter is for infinite lives.

FF08670050 Freeze the timer

FF0811000X X changes the amount of people you must collect before you exit try a value of 1.

FF08130002 Level select, you must start the game and lose a life before correct level is selected.

FF08670059 Infinite time.

FF08670059 Infinite missiles.

ALIEN STORM

FFCE0B0060 Enabling Action Replay will give you your full life quota back.

FFCE0C0080 Unlimited energy.

ALTERED BEAST

002C58603E Almost invulnerable.

002F6A602C Infinite lives

0037185668 First ball turns you into the beast.

BART VS

THE SPACE MUTANTS

FF01B70002 Infinite energy.

FF01B50002 Infinite energy

FF01B40004 Infinite lives.

FF01450010 Infinite money

FF01A40001 Infinite spray cans

FF022D0001

Infinite spray cans.

DESERT STRIKE

095F8C1388 Gun capacity is 5000.

0049BE0000 Helicopter consumes no fuel.

006AA44A79 Infinite lives.

00689C4A79 This parameter is for unlimited fuel.

0049D07FFF This parameter will start the game with 32767 armour.

095FCA0190 Hellfire inflicts 400 points of damage.

00D55A6002

Unlimited capacity on all weapons.

ECCO THE DOLPHIN

FFB6360003 Unlimited air

FFB6350038 Unlimited health.

FFB7FF0000 Invincible to crushing walls on last level.

FFB7C20000 Ignore water "up" currents.

WORLD OF ILLUSION

FFA0380008 Unlimited health for player 1.

FFA0B80008 Unlimited health for player 2.

FFFD530008 Infinite lives.

FFFFDB000X Level select (1-5)

FFFD530003 Mickey or donald permanently has three tries.

FFA0380005 Mickey or Donald permanently has three energy cards.

FFFD530006 Unlimited tries.

ROLLING THUNDER 2

FFF20D0002 Infinite lives

FFF2030040 Infinite bullets.

GET TIPS

FFF2050029 Infinite machine gun.
 FFF1350074 Infinite time.
 FFCD330001 Invulnerable.

ROLO TO THE RESCUE

FFC51E0004
 Infinite continues

SHINING IN THE DARKNESS

001AFE0000 Herbs are free.
 0015060000 Depoison is free.
 0015160000 Wisdom is free.
 0015960000 Healer fruit is free.
 00159E0000 Smelling salts are free.
 002D3403E7 Use with below code to start the game with 999 points.
 002D4003E7 Use with above code.
 0012CE0000 Woodstaff is free.
 0012360000 Word is free.
 00143E0000 Bronze shield is free.
 0014160000
 Bronze armour is free.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

FFFE120003 Infinite lives
 FFFFE00001 Start game at any level, press and hold button A, then press start for level select.
 FFF760000C Will give Sonic his speed boots permanently.
 FFFE120002 Infinite lives.

FFFE2D0001 Invincibility (almost). (Drowning, falling out of view or being smashed can still kill.)

FFFFE1001 Slo-mo Sonic. (To use this during game play: first press start to pause the game, then press and hold the B button for continuous slo-mo, or to get a frame by frame view press the C button once for each frame).

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 2

FFFE120009 Infinite lives
 FFFE210063 Gives you 99 rings all the time allowing special exits etc.
 FFFE090001 Allows you to modify levels by using the A and C button. Switch the Action Replay on then off fairly quickly to use this cheat, once you have changed the level press B.
 FFFFD00001 Enter this value and to start the game press start and A together for level select.
 FFFFB1000X X is the number of Chaos Gems in possession (1-7) use with code for number of rings to change into Super Sonic.
 FFFE2100XX XX is the number of rings in possession - set to 50 or more and set the Chaos Gems to 7 and you can turn into Super Sonic™ by jumping into the air.
 FFFE190001 Jump higher/Weird hair.
 FFF65F00FF White Sonic.
 FFFE12000X X is the number of lives.
 FFB01E0000 Sonic is always running.
 FFB02B0001 Shield protection.

SEGA HINTLINES:

Alex Kidd in Miracle World
 (Sega) **0055 22303**

Alex Kidd in High Tech World
 (Sega) **0055 22304**

Wonderboy in Monsterland
 (Sega) **0055 22305**

Wonderboy in Dragon's Trap
 (Sega) **0055 22306**

Sonic the Hedgehog
 (Sega) **0055 22307**

Phantasy Star
 (Sega) **0055 22308**

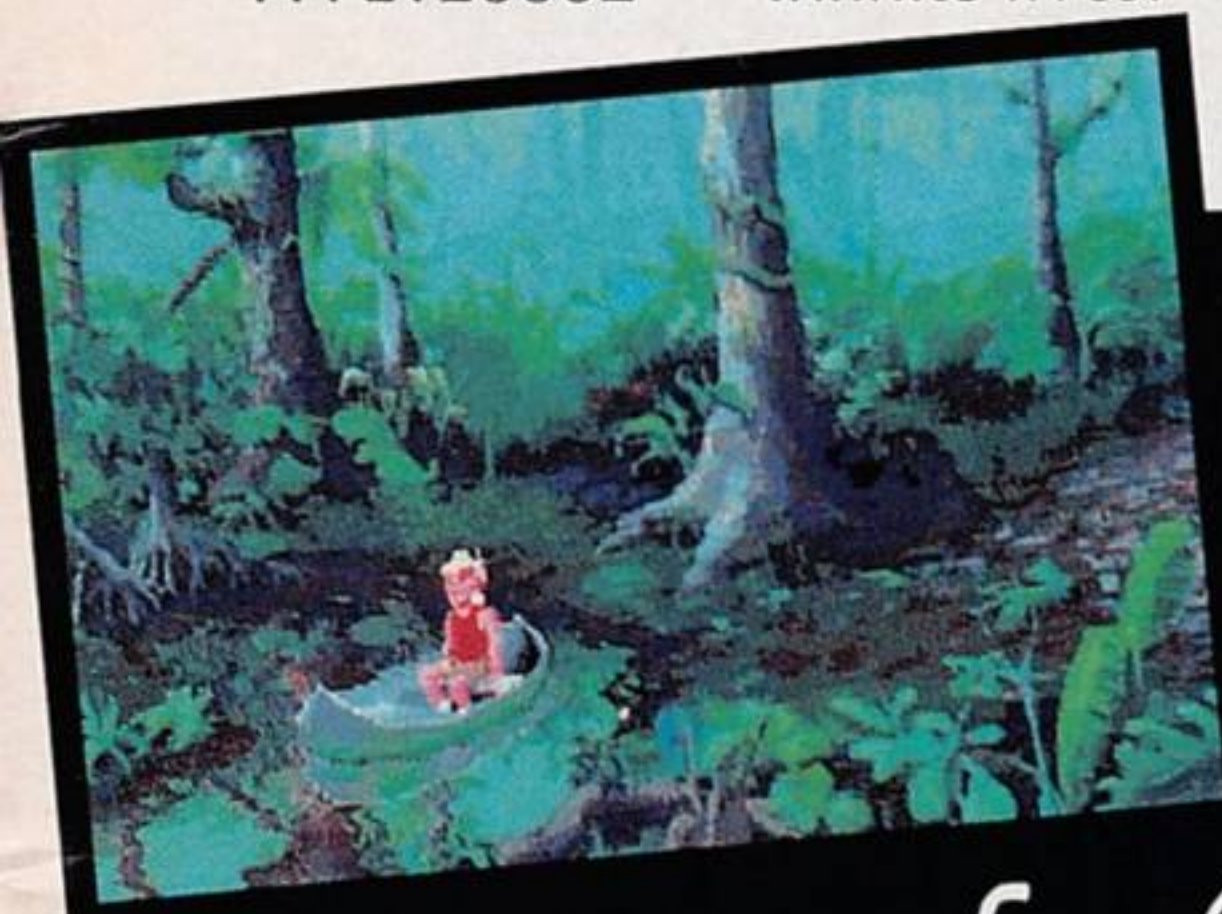
Golden Axe Warrior
 (Sega) **0055 22309**

Mickey Mouse: Castle of Illusion
 (Sega) **0055 22310**

Flashback
 (Mega) **0055 22313**

Sonic the Hedgehog 2
 (All formats) **0055 22314**

70c per minute -
 If under 18, please ask
 parents permission



SIERRA HINTLINE:

For hints on Sierra titles
 (eg: King's Quest/Space Quest/Police Quest etc)

0055 22919

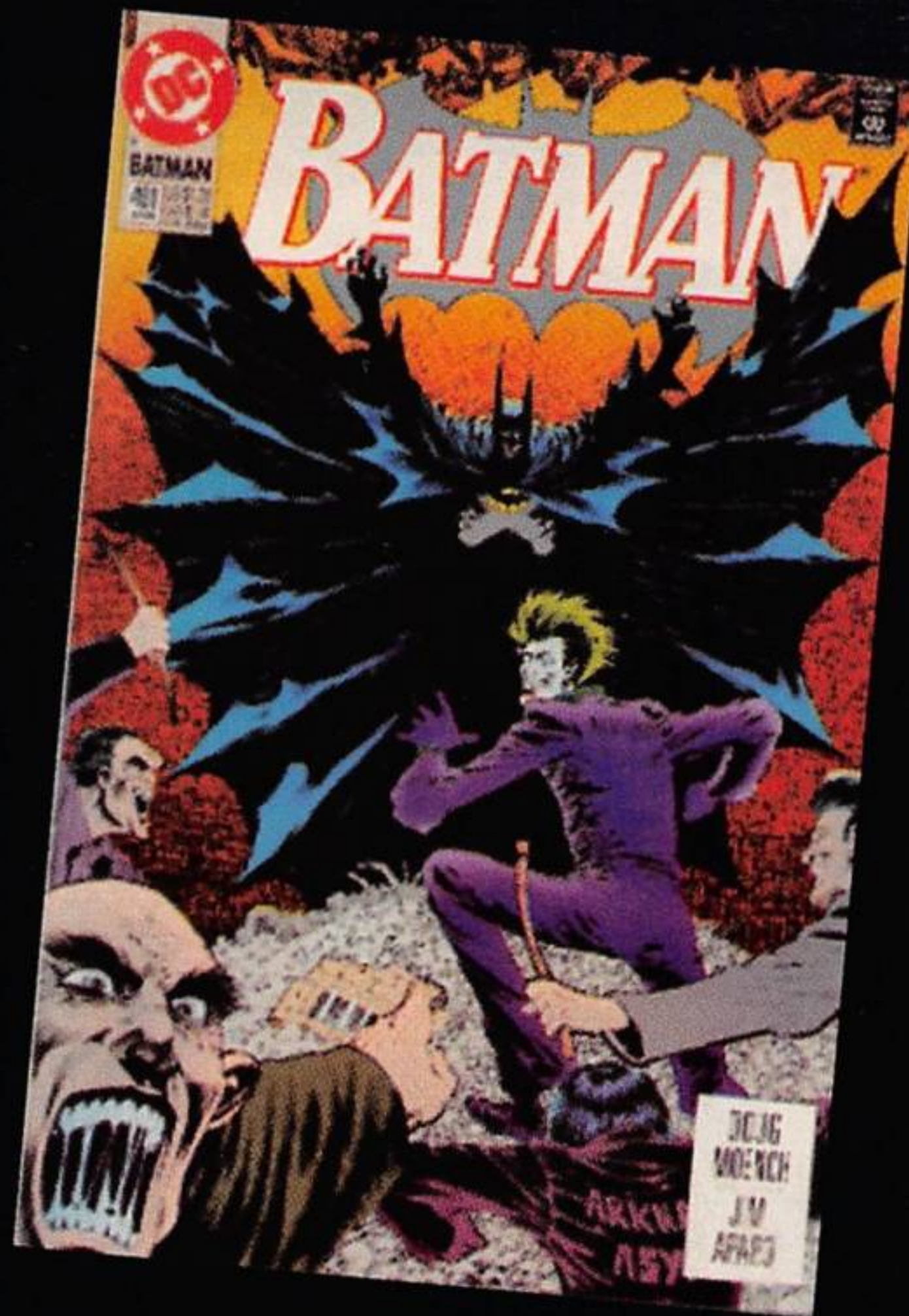
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THE COMIC FIX

HI WOW!

SALUTATIONS TO YOU ALL. WELCOME TO THE COMIC FIX. THIS MONTH WE THOUGHT WE'D TAKE A LOOK AT GAMES BASED ON COMICS. THESE COMIC BASED GAMES HAVE BEEN FAIRLY SUCCESSFUL, BUT ARE THEY ANY GOOD. ARE THE COMICS THEMSELVES ANY GOOD ? WE DECIDED TO SIT DOWN AND FIND OUT.

WOW



THE X-MEN

The Game: Only out on the Mega Drive at the moment, the game is a definite hit. Eight rather large and rather hard levels in which you can play four different X-men favourites. Outstandingly similar to the comic with remarkable character likeness. A must for all X-gamers.

The Comic: While dominating the industry since the early 80's, it has dropped in popularity due to the success of Image Comics. The X-Men were a truly great team but with the departure of Jim Lee and Chris Claremont the quality of the book has dropped considerably. For great stories check out the X-Men written by Claremont. Outside of comics, the X-Men are huge. With their popular cartoon and merchandise push they are enjoying mainstream success.

SPIDERMAN

The Game: An early mega Drive success, Spiderman has seen success on all console systems. The Mega Drive game is a definite classic with all of Spidey's great villains making an appearance. This game is a must buy if you don't happen to own it already.

The Comic: There are currently six different titles in which you can find our wall crawling friend. The best of this is Amazing

Spiderman. Just like the X-Men though, Spiderman has suffered a decline in quality. This time due to Todd McFarlane and Erik Larsen leaving Marvel to set up Image. David Michelinie has remained writer since McFarlane was on it but his writing has declined due to work overload. Check out Amazing Spiderman pre 350 for some great stories.

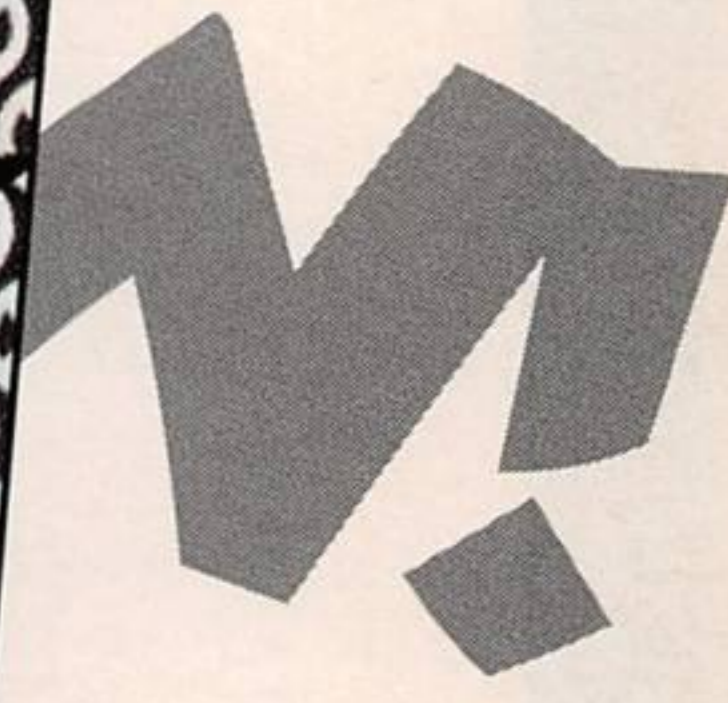
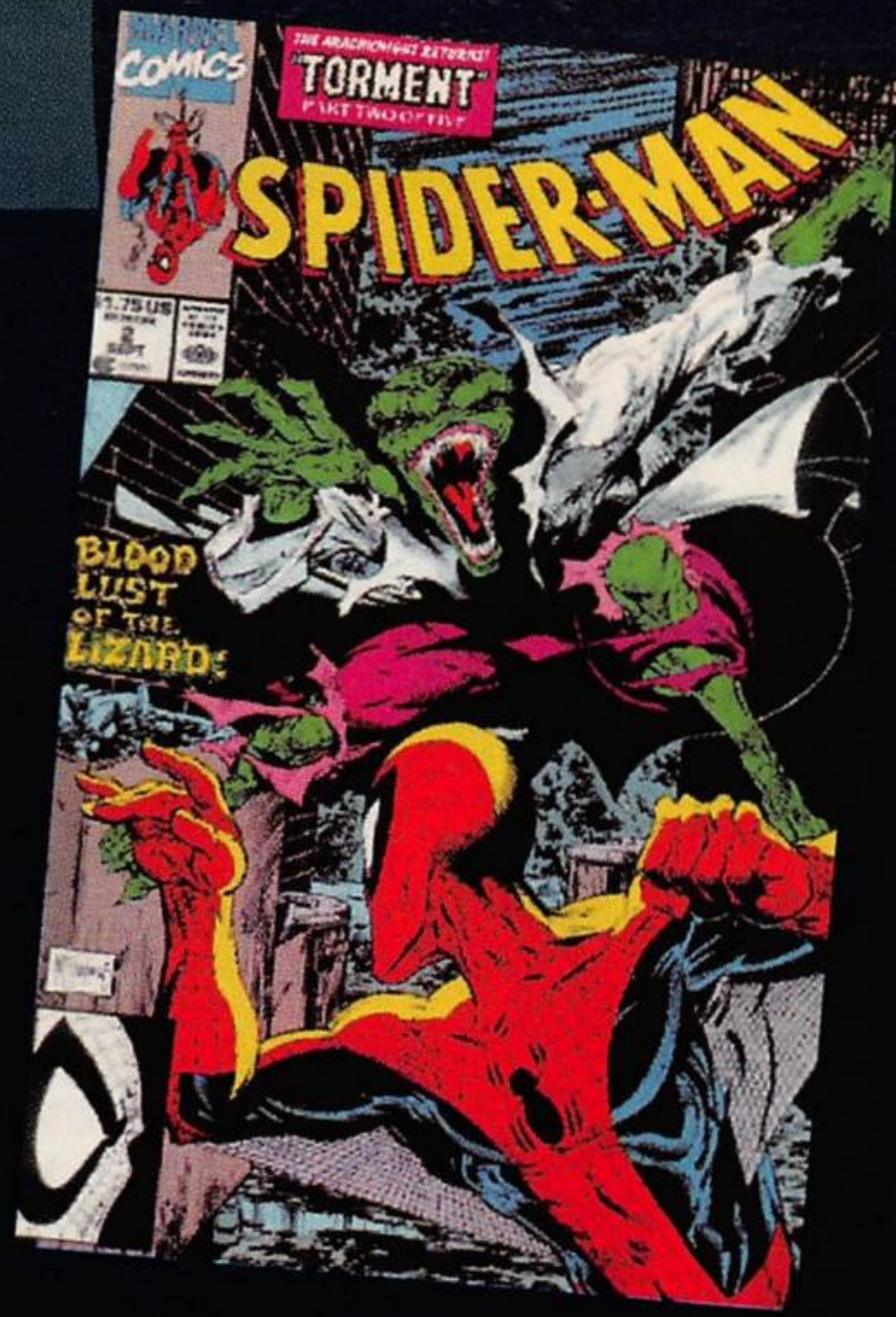
BATMAN

The Game: So far we've seen two games based on the movies Batman and Batman Returns. Both of these games weren't all that fantastic. Batman is definitely the better of the two. The Mega CD version looks great though with some excellent chase scenes.

The Comic: Has definitely picked up steam. Batman is crippled, and the new Batman is a most crazed young man with Robin finding himself locked out of the Bat Cave. The Batman comics are amongst the best written comics on the market. Definitely ones to get.

SUPERMAN

The Game: We've only seen the game on the Mega Drive at this point and it was very average. Buy it only at discount.



The Comic: As with Batman this title has been rejuvenated this past year with Superman dying and being resurrected. This title is very well written and have superb artist teams on the job. A very highly recommended title.

THE TERMINATOR

The Game: Looks good on the Mega Drive, but is very short and easy. The Master System version is definitely a much better game and well worth picking up. Very challenging. Again the Mega CD version looks like being a real winner.

The Comic: Put out by Dark Horse, The Terminator was an excellent comic. Very faithful to what had been done in the movie. These comics are well written with superb artwork. If you're a fan of the Terminator movies, these comics are well worth a look. A bit on the violent side, these are for mature readers only.

These games are the most popular of the comic based games and are definitely the best produced of the lot. We'll be back next issue to look at the rest.

But now for the long-awaited

WINNERS OF OUR COMPS:

The winner of over \$200 worth of Superman goodies (thanks to Phantom Comics) is Daniel May from Inverell. His amazing new Superhero "The Incredible Midge" is shown on this page.

We've also got a free subscription for the runner up - Scott McLennan for his excellent creation, Gerry Atric. Congratulations!

The 3 winners of the Hairbutt caption competition are:

Daniel Muir from Bendigo - "Oh, Oh. Can't reach the toilet paper. Should I use the magazine or my finger? Think Hairbutt, think!!!"

Tim Altamore from Warragul - "I thought nothing could hold more crap than the toilet!"

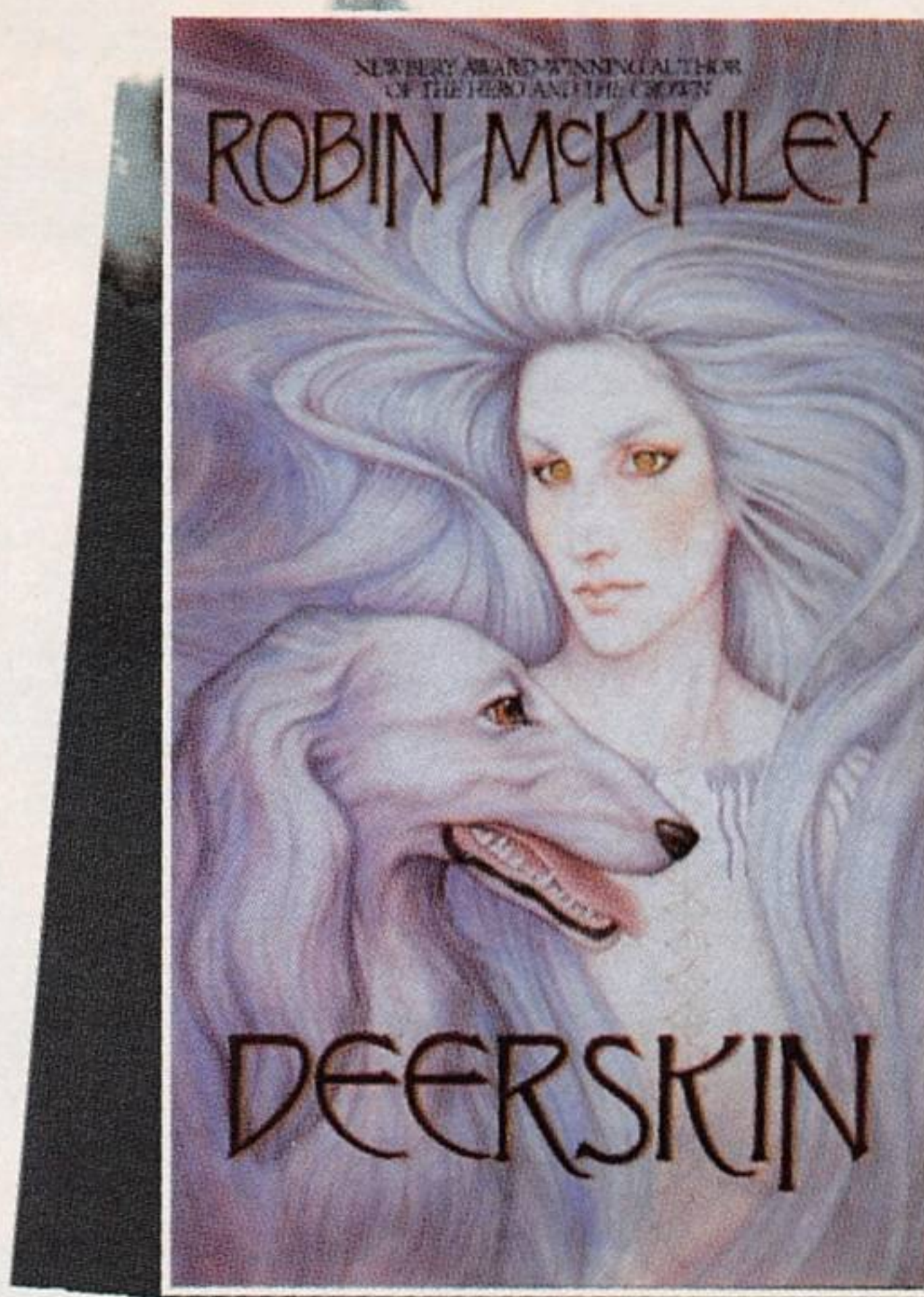
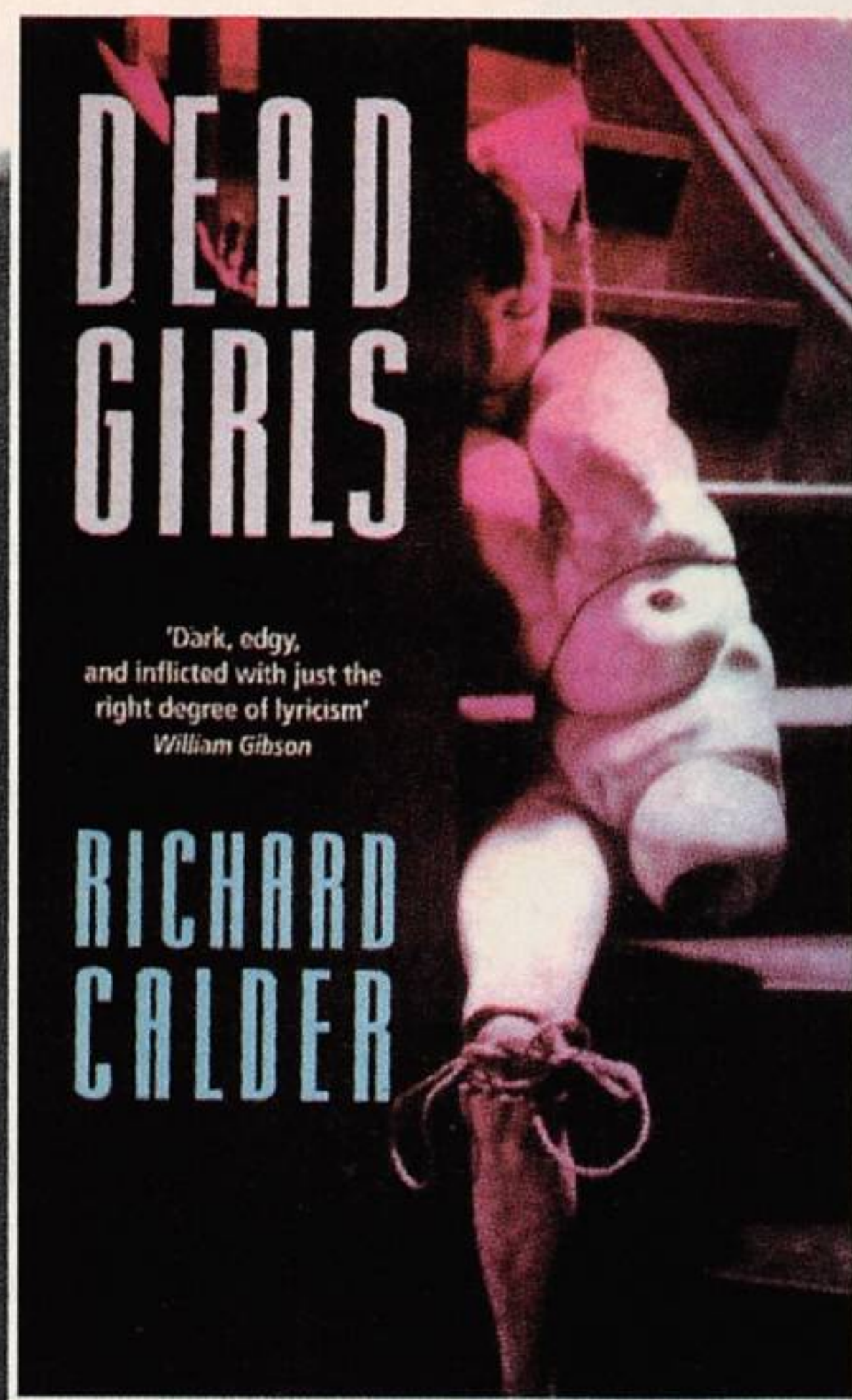
and Stephen Leatherland from Lane Cove - "Ah, Virgo. Oh no! I break wind so hard I fall. Hold on Hairbutt, it's going to be a bumpy ride!"

They've won the big Hairbutt pack but we're also going to be sending out other Hairbutt goodies to Scott Wharton from Gosnells, Alexandra Smith from Morayfield and Ryan Richards from Kippa Ring. All the other entries were too rude! Your minds are in the gutter!

WAYNE LAWSON & NICK SMITH



That's it for this month. We'd like to thank all those who sent in letters. All letters should be sent to : The Comic Fix, Megazone, Locked Bag 7, Rosebery NSW 2018. And remember don't forget to read your comics. Wayne Lawson & Nick Smith All Comics supplied by Phantom Zone, Parramatta Comics shown are all copyright of their respective publishers



Flesh and blood turns cold and hard

as DNA is recombined producing

"dead girls" - not quite dead

and definitely not quite

girls.

DEAD GIRLS Richard Calder

It's the future. Cartier make dolls so rich guys can "play". In the East, fake Cartier dolls, cheap copies, are infected with a virus. Rich guys find themselves impotent. The East cooks up their own virus and sends it to the real Cartiers. Rich infected guys who try for kids with real girls get a real surprise.

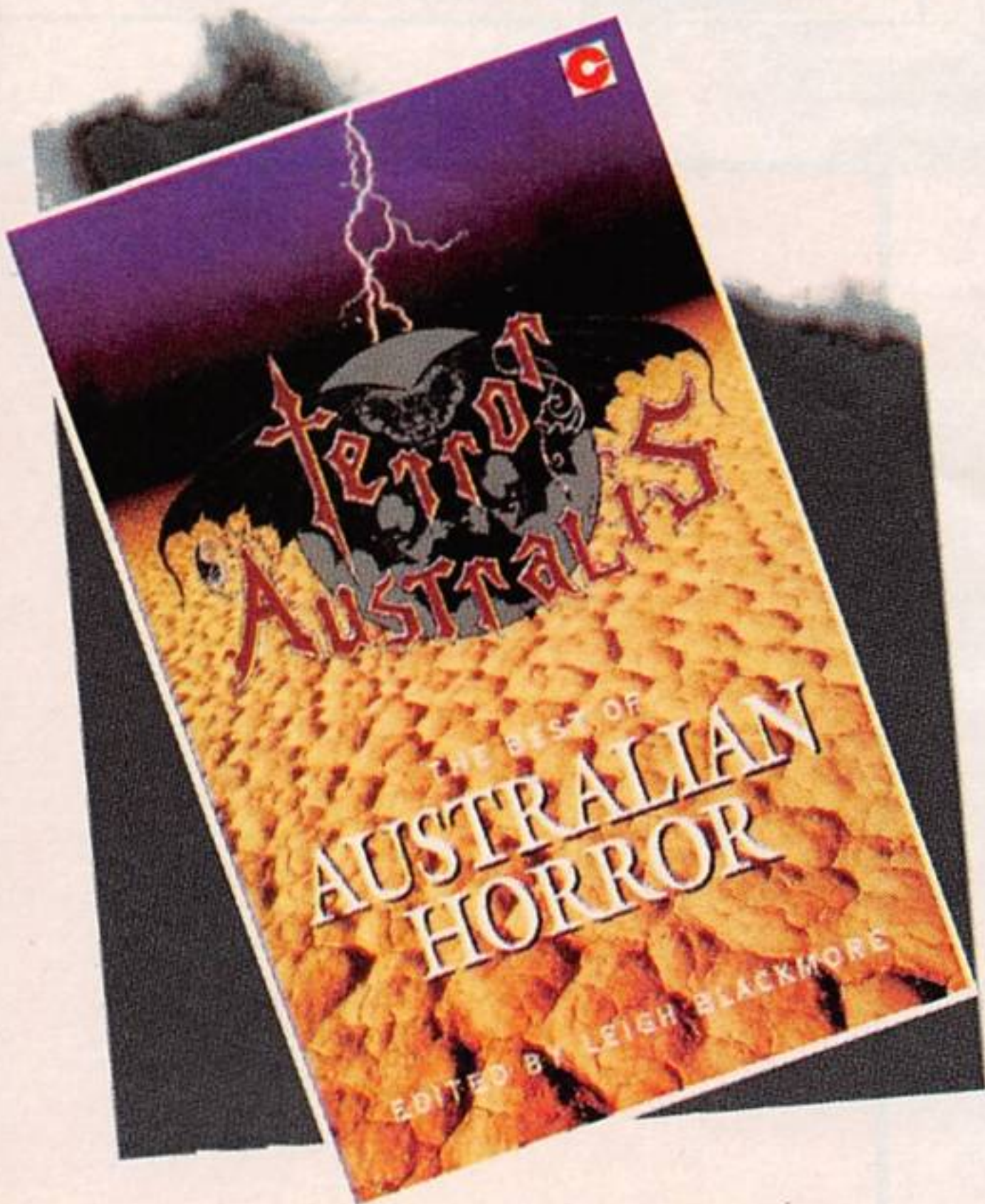
Their daughters, upon reaching puberty, start changing. Flesh and blood turns cold and hard as DNA is recombined, producing "dead girls" - not quite dead and definitely not quite girls.

The book narrator is Ignatz Zwarch whose girlfriend, Primevera, is a dead girl. They, of course, face a dangerous journey, having to avoid government agents and corporate nasties on their way to Dr. Toxicopholous - the wizard of this punky cyber-Oz. "Dead Girls" is dark, fast and fun - full of lively actions and the edgy streetwise prose of the punked up youth of a possible tomorrow. Touches that are reminiscent of Jeter and Gibson do not overwhelm the originality of "Dead Girls", which very much embraces the dark near future, although in the youthful narrative there is a perspective and feel that is genuinely fresh. Way cool.

DEERSKIN Robin McKinley

Fantasy, as a genre, is too often used as a means to make bucks by following a tried and tested formula. Something like - young plain underdog hero is swept into an ageless conflict where he eventually faces the living embodiment of evil after joining a company of bold adventurers on a quest for an ancient artefact...It would seem that the fantasy genre should have the fewest imaginative limits, but sadly it seems that the genre breeds the most monotonous stereotypes.

"Deerskin" begins very much as a fairy-tale. A kingdom from the pages of fable, gallant king, beautiful queen, dreamily happy subjects. But when tragedy strikes with the queen's sudden death, and the princess (a spitting image of her Ma) must face her father's sudden madness and desire the reality of the girl's predicament seems to strike a chord. Here begins a story that uses the fantasy arena in such a way that the tale of a girl's growth to womanhood, despite overwhelming difficulties, becomes a rich, easily read tale offering intelligent, emotional, perceptive writing. This is an eye-opening fantasy that pulls no punches and opens windows to realities too often shrouded by discreet niceties. Recommended.



don't know
exactly exactly
where i am

Fantastic Journeys

TERROR AUSTRALIS - THE BEST OF AUSTRALIAN HORROR Edited by Leigh Blackmore

You may or may not have read my ravings in Fantastic Voyages regarding Vampires. Well, this one is not a toothy tale but rather a collection of short, sharp shocks all of which were penned by Australians. No kid.

Horror fiction is big news in the 90's. The 80's made Dean R. Koontz, Clive Barker, Stephen King and Anne Rice mainstream best sellers and the authors that have followed in their large footsteps have kept horror in the public eye. But, as with book publishing itself, the genre is dominated by the British and Americans. The local product has just not been given a chance.

Edited by an aficionado of the occult, magazine editor and, all round prime moving horror person - Leigh Blackmore, this one volume has gathered thirty-odd chillers from Australia's best writers of chill stuff. Some contributors, like (multi award winning) Terry Dowling, Bill Congreve and Greg Egan are noted writers of speculative fiction here and abroad, while many others hold more than a little promise.

These stories are black, dark, eerie, surrealistic, invasive, suspenseful, terrifying... hellish. All in context, of course. Here is a great taste of real talent and effort, offering a diverse range of original home-grown horror.

WARHAMMER 40 000 - "SPACE MARINE" & "INQUISITOR" Ian Watson

Any gamer in the 90's will have heard of Warhammer and its future counterpart - 40K. These are Games Workshops' (Britain's no. 1 game company) house universe and nearly all their games are set in the fictional world. Many years ago, I became involved with role playing and tabletop gaming but it was not until I read Ian Watson's "Inquisitor" that I found my niche amongst the many, many 'worlds' that have been made to game in.

The 40K universe is a fantasy world, with mythical beasts, aliens and abhumans (ogres, elves, dwarves, etc...) as well as technology (fabulous weaponry, space travel and fancy machines...). Rather than a realistic attempt to gauge the future's possibilities, 40K seems to have taken the rich, high-fantasy stereotype and thrown it into a new Gothic, dark future with demonic evil and a human empire ruled by a tyrannical, psychic cannibal of an undead Emperor - loyalty to him is unquestionable. It's great - blackly cynical and without the romantic niceties of many American game worlds.

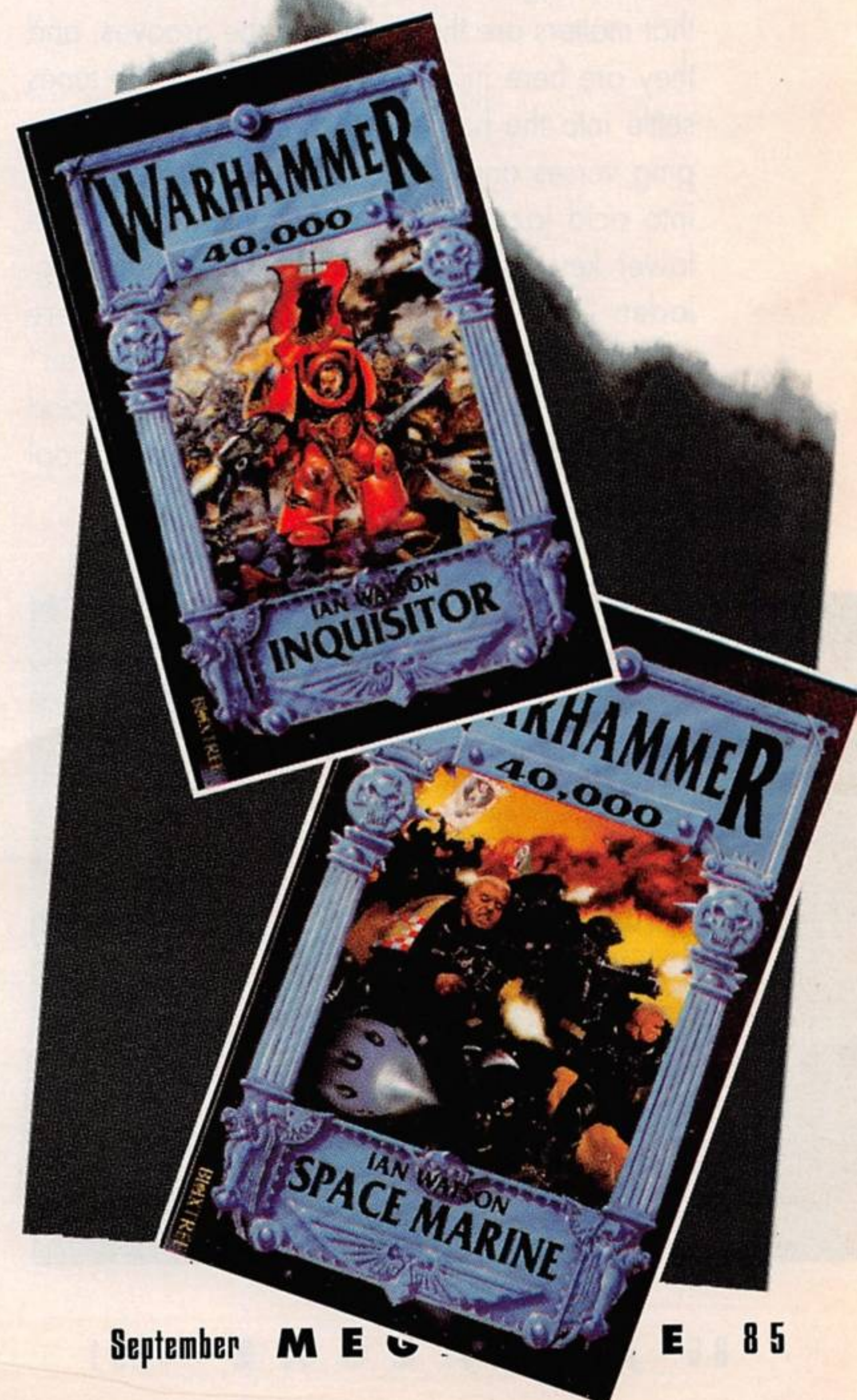
"Space Marine" delves into the process of recruitment into one of the 1000 chapters of the Emperor's elite Space Marines, while "Inquisitor" deals with the most hidden and highest order of the same institution. Ian Watson is a writer who was acclaimed well before either of these books were written. His 40K books are fast paced, exciting space adventures, full of action and illustrating a grandiose but flawed society. Perfect for anyone curious about the history of the game worlds but it's still easy to recommend to anyone

who wants a good fun read.

By the way, the new computer game "Space Hulk" is based on a board game of the same name and that is straight out of 40K (which is in fact the 41st Century). The board game is great, but I hear the electronic version is even better. Check it out!!!

REVIEWS BY BRENDAN BASTO

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THE BASELINE

AB LOGIC

AB Logic (Warner)

If 2 Unlimited don't watch out, AB Logic might just steal their crown. However, although they both have their roots in techno, there are a couple of vast differences between them. AB Logic's sound has more curves than 2 Unlimited's, which is spiky and angular. Both use pop as a way of polishing the whole, but AB Logic relies more heavily on melody and overall this CD is not as... well, how can I put this nicely? Um, it isn't quite as basic as 2 Unlimited's.

Lyrically, they don't have much to say, it's all the usual stuff about dancing all night and moving your body, but hey, who cares when you're fruggin' furiously on the dancefloor? All that matters are the beats and the grooves, and they are here in abundance. Most of the tunes settle into the house/techno formula, with rapping verses and sung choruses, but they delve into acid jazz on two occasions, creating the lower key "Attitude" and the flute and string-laden "You Promised Me the World". There are two versions of the brilliant "The Hitman" (the piano remix is hot). This is a bloody good dance record: good beats, great tunes, cool sounds.

9/10■



2 UNLIMITED

No Limits (Festival)

The undisputed king and queen of techno are back with another album – though it seems as if they never went away. No less than five hit singles were reaped from their first LP "Get Ready!", while "No Limits" has already spawned two ("Tribal Dance" and "No Limits"), and there are, no doubt, more on the way.

Walk into almost any nightclub in the land, and you'll hear at least one 2 Unlimited track during the course of the evening. They and their producers excel at creating hard, commercial techno that is as loved by the disco crowd as it is by those who like to rock. The secret to the 2 Unlimited sound lies in the songs' simplicity: check out the intro to "No Limits" – it's no two-chord wonder – hell, two notes is all these boffins need to create a catchy riff.

This is pretty much more of the same from 2 Unlimited. Ray raps, the music goes clank, buzz, boom; Anita warbles an infectious melody while the metallic sounds of the verse are replaced by swirling washy chords. Then Ray raps, the music goes clank buzz boom... you get the idea. Although they vary the tempo slightly on the techno-ska "Let The Beat Control Your Body" and the gentle "Invite Me To A Trance", there aren't really any surprises. But so what? It's hard, fast, catchy, and if you move it, you'll really dig it. 7/10■

U2

Zooropa (Polygram)

A new album from the world's biggest rock band is always an event. "Zooropa" has been no exception, with midnight launches and immediate chart success. With their last couple of records they have pushed at the boundaries of popular music, and with "Zooropa", their ninth album, they have pushed further than ever before.

It is a record that is not easy to come to grips with – it often seems discordant and aimless, but wait awhile and Bono's haunting vocals and Edge's guitar will work their way into your brain. After doing several wicked remixes of songs from "Achtung Baby" they have allowed their dance and techno influences to come to the fore with several of the songs on "Zooropa". One of the best tracks, "Daddy's Gonna Pay For Your Crashed Car" samples MC 900 Foot Jesus, and the first single, "Numb", is dance friendly, with a hugely catchy and corrosive guitar riff.

U2, like Madonna, have remained absolutely huge by constantly re-inventing themselves. "Zooropa" marks the next stage in their development, embracing technology (evident immediately with the cover artwork) and mixing dance music with traditional song-writing. But don't think that they're riding on the techno bandwagon, because, as always, U2 have made this music their own.

"Zooropa" may ultimately prove to be less commercially successful than "Achtung Baby" or "The Joshua Tree", but once again they have delivered a masterpiece. Watch out for a tour in a couple of months. 9/10■

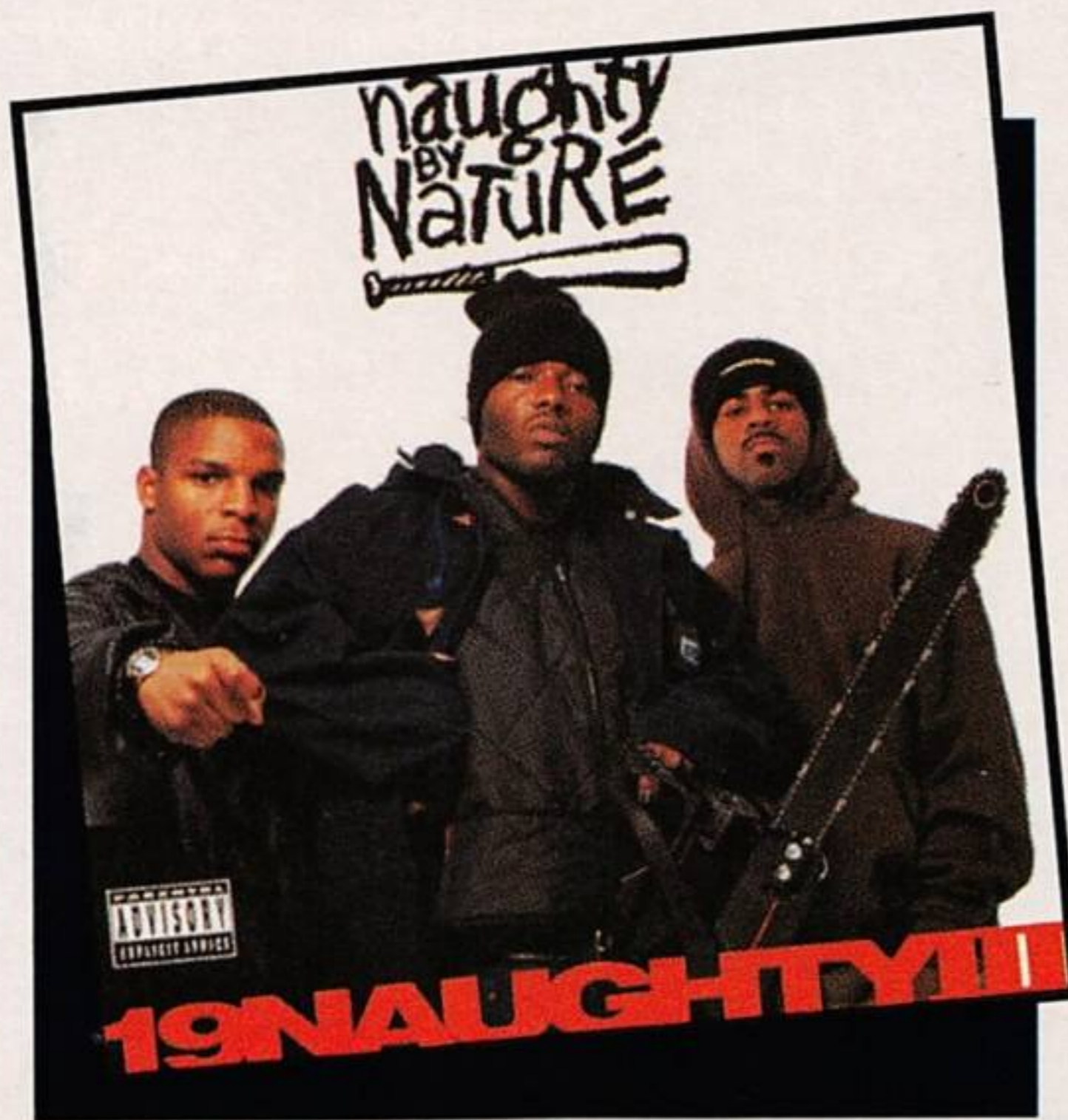


NAUGHTY BY NATURE

19 Naughty III (Festival)

Naughty By Nature are a trio of clever, talented rappers, but the title of their second long-playing CD may just be the best thing about it. Sure, the slow chant of the first single "Hip Hop Hooray" is insidious, lodging itself firmly in your brain, and elsewhere, snappy rappy tunes leap out at you, but, even though 19 Naughty III is more diverse than most dance records, it still suffers from being rather samey. This may have something to do with the fact that there are 15 tracks all up – if there were five less, it might have seemed more complete and less laboured. As it is, their basic formula is mercilessly overused. At its best, 19 Naughty III is ingenious, enjoyable and funky; at its worst, plain dull.

The vocals, which rap out street-smart rhymes like a rapport from an Uzi, are the main focus and are complemented by a subdued yet effective musical backing. Quietly confident basslines mingle with relentless background vocal, while the style varies from determined hip-hop to Jamaican dancehall. If you're not really into dance music to start with, forget it. For those who are, this LP, despite its flaws, contains some quality hip-hop. 6/10■

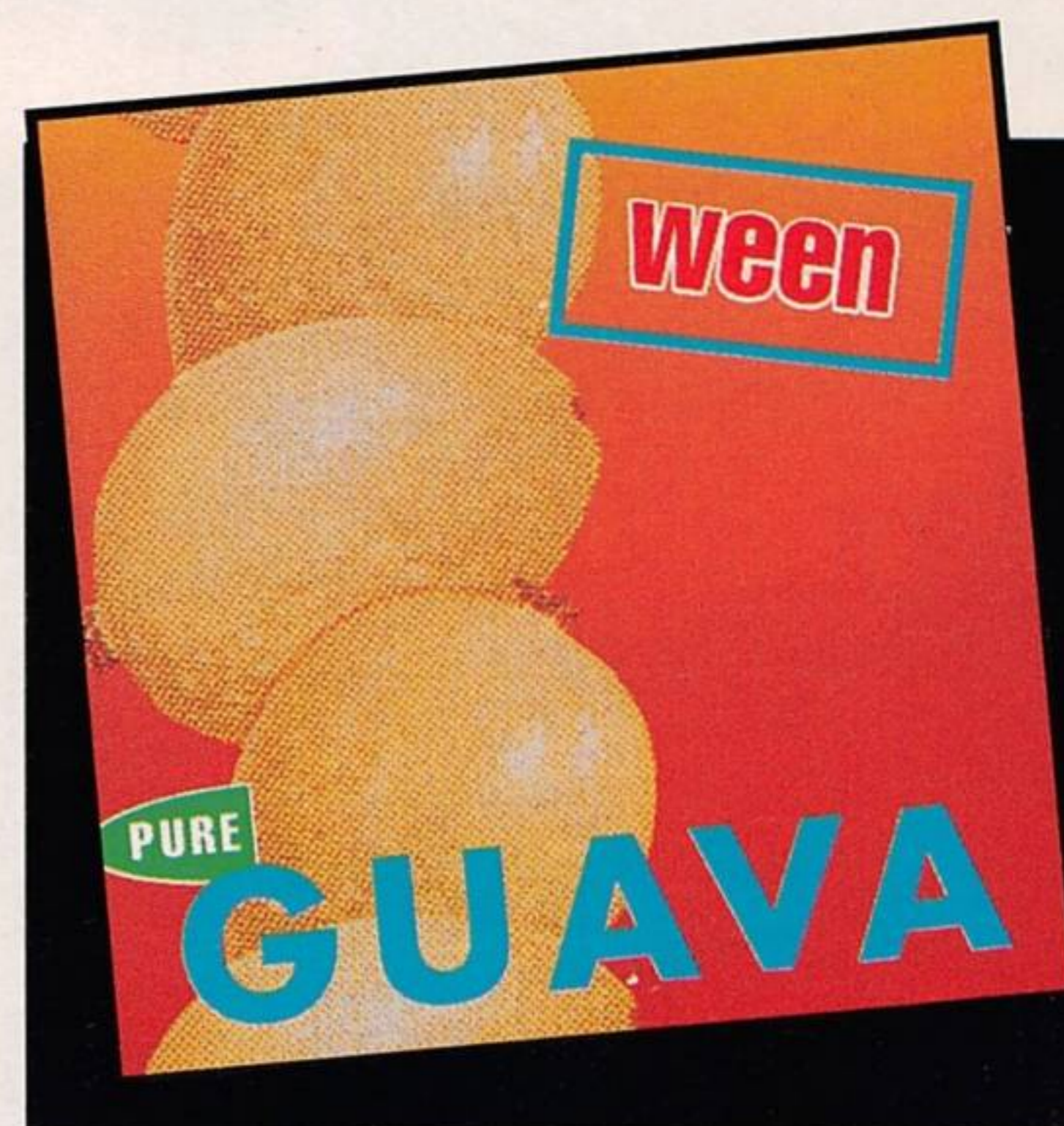


THE FALL

Infotainment (Festival)

The Fall are another bunch of wackos, though not nearly so young as Ween (who look like they should be in Year 9). Head wacko and mastermind of this group, which has been together in one form or another for over ten years, is Mark Smith, an unassuming fellow who, when he's not belting out the monotone vocals for The Fall's own peculiar brand of indie glam rock disco, likes to sit quietly in bars sipping lager whilst wearing a tweed jacket. But let's not hold that against him: Mark's nondescript demeanour is a far cry from The Fall's music.

The band have released some classics over the years, all of which feature grinding guitar riffs and repetitive lyrics that make for uncannily catchy tunes, and on "Infotainment" they deliver again. Much as I hate to use the g-word, grunge is an important aspect of The Fall's sound, as it is for all the best rockin' bands in the world. So while the group have chosen to cover the 70s disco classic (an expression which is an oxymoron in some people's minds,) "Lost In Music", they have disassembled and reconstructed it along the way. The swinging guitar riff has been toughened up while the girlie vocals have been replaced by a low growl which appears, for much of the song, to be in a completely different language. The rest of the CD is every bit as insistent and appealing, from the Gary Glitter-esque pop of Glam Racket to the unshakeable crashing fuzz of "Paranoia Man In Cheap Sh*t Room" (don't ask me what it means!). Well worth investigating. 8/10■



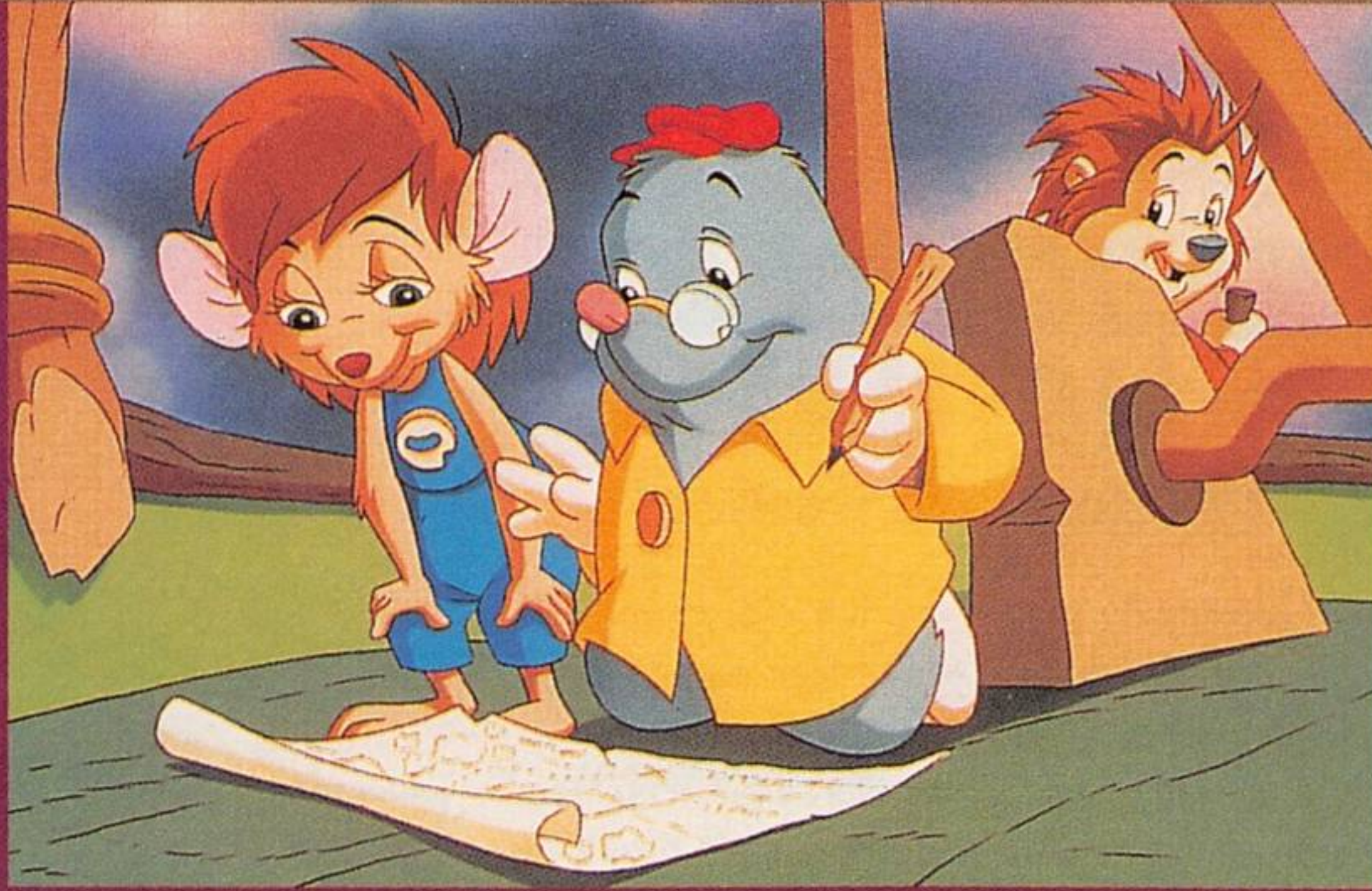
WEEN

Pure Guava (Festival)

Don't be fooled into buying the Ween album solely on the basis of the weird but irresistible "Push The Little Daisies" - this CD contains some ferocious sounds. Sure, there are whimsical numbers every bit as palatable as "Daisies", but there are also tracks laden with a mess of feedback, distortion and huge chunks of industrial sound. Techno indie rock? Maybe, for when they're not leaning towards their own peculiar brand of deranged folk that's what Ween get into.

These guys really are oddballs – it's not some angle created by a public relations exec trying to market the group as "a zany, wacky band I know you're gonna love". The CD sleeve features a little note to their fans – but while other bands might say, "To all our great fans, thank you so much for putting us in this place, we really love all ya!" (Anita, 2 Unlimited), Ween's message runs like this: "When Ween comes to your town, bring us hot meals. No more junk food, thanks." Add to that song titles like "Flies On My Dick", "Poop Ship Destroyer" and "Hey Fat Boy (Asshole)", and the fact that at least a quarter of these tunes are unlistenable, there can only be two possible conclusions: either Ween are certifiable, or there is a constantly fruitful magic mushroom grove in their neighbourhood. Yep, those willing to board the Starship Ween, now travelling at warped speed, are in for a helluva ride. Just don't forget your ear muffs.

6/10■



SLEEPLESS IN SEATTLE

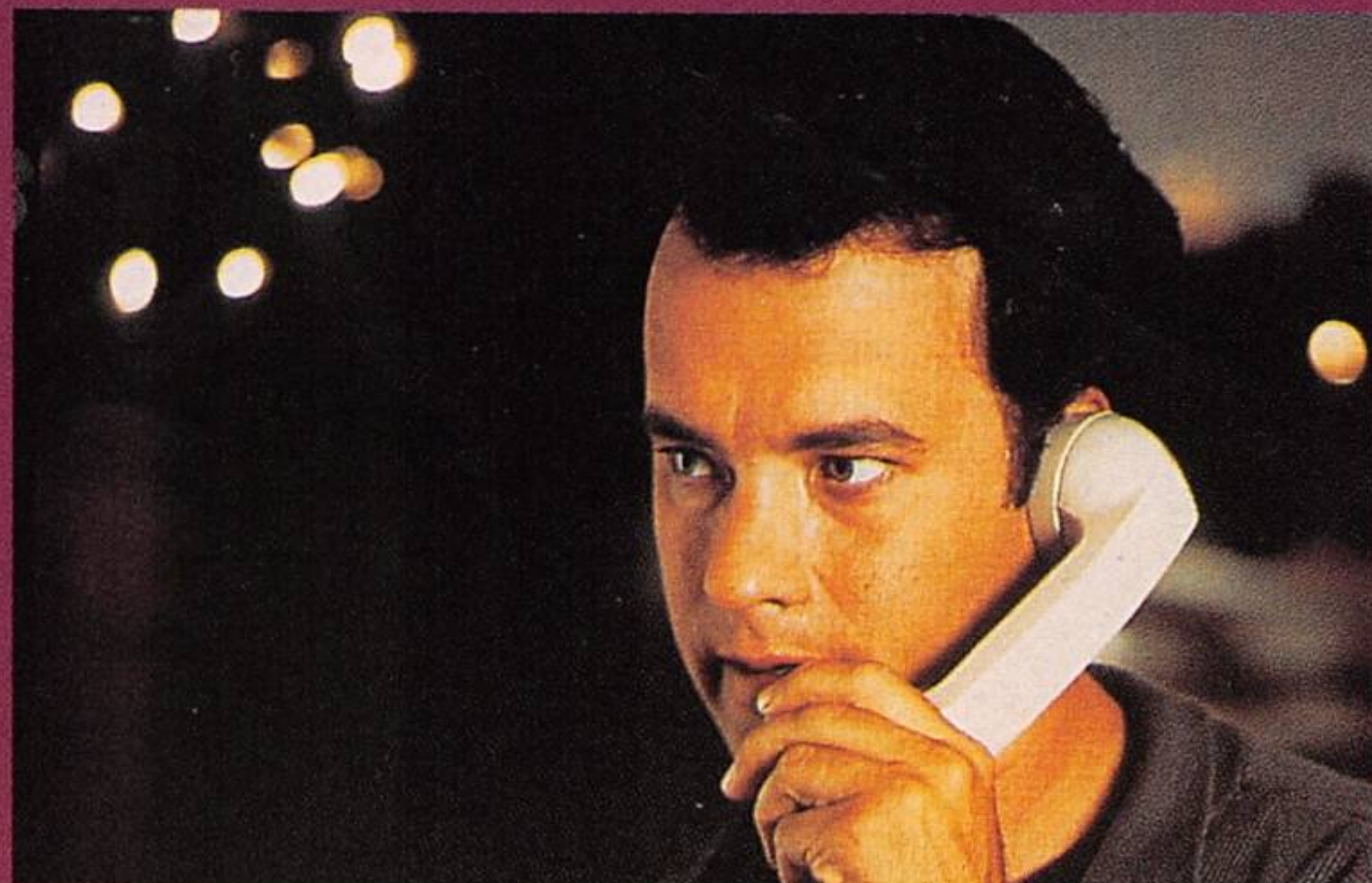
Sleepless in Seattle is a love story - a light-hearted romance in the finest traditions of simple times long since past. With dinosaurs walking the forests, Americans leaping from cliffs and fat plumbers filling the skies, a simple tale like this may be just what the world needs. Maybe!

A beautiful young woman caught in a loveless relationship tunes in one night to a radio chat show and hears a plaintive plea from a young boy for his father to find a new wife, as he has been in mourning since the death of his first. She is strangely moved and decides to sally forth, flouting distance and convention to seek her destiny, blah blah blah.

This is all supposed to be terribly touching, but it is just sappy with a capital CR. As a tragic hero, Tom Hanks is a great comedian, and as a star-crossed heroine, Meg Ryan is just dippy. In its comical moments, "Sleepless" can provoke a laugh, but its romantic content had neither the passion nor depth to wring a tear from me (and it's not that hard).

This is a startlingly nice movie, tailor made for "Robot people" - all those lovely souls who are born, attend McDonalds, marry, breed and die. I don't think Sega heads are like that, so here's what it gets....

2/5 BRENDAN CRANE



ONCE UPON A FOREST

"Once Upon A Forest", the Hanna-Barbera storybook brought to life by 90's eco-friendly animation, is set in the enchanted woods of childhood imagination. Although the backgrounds pale in comparison with recent animated blockbusters, the animals in this spirited adventure shine brightly. Younger viewers will relate to the antics of the heroes of this tale - Abigail the wood mouse, Edgar the mole, Russel the Hedgehog and Michelle the badger - mischievous 'furlings' who inhabit Dapplewood, a forest full of meadows and burrows. Their inventive mentor is a badger, Cornelius, whose voice is supplied by Michael Crawford, who is better known as Frank Spencer and also played the Phantom Of The Opera.

The action revolves around a truck accident and the subsequent destruction of the forest. The furlings must go on an impossible journey to find some herbs that will help a poisoned friend. Although the furlings have no idea where it is - or how to get there - they conquer their fears and scamper bravely off into the unknown realms. One of the highlights is a funeral procession of gospel-singing marsh birds. Led by Phineas, a soulful great grebe, the birds march through the marshes hitting land-of-the-free notes to a Dixieland beat, all the while bemoaning the fate of a member of the flock.

Word of warning: The soundtrack to "Once Upon A Forest" includes a song by Michael Crawford, so leave your mother at home!

3/5 BILL HIBBLE

MAD DOG AND GLORY

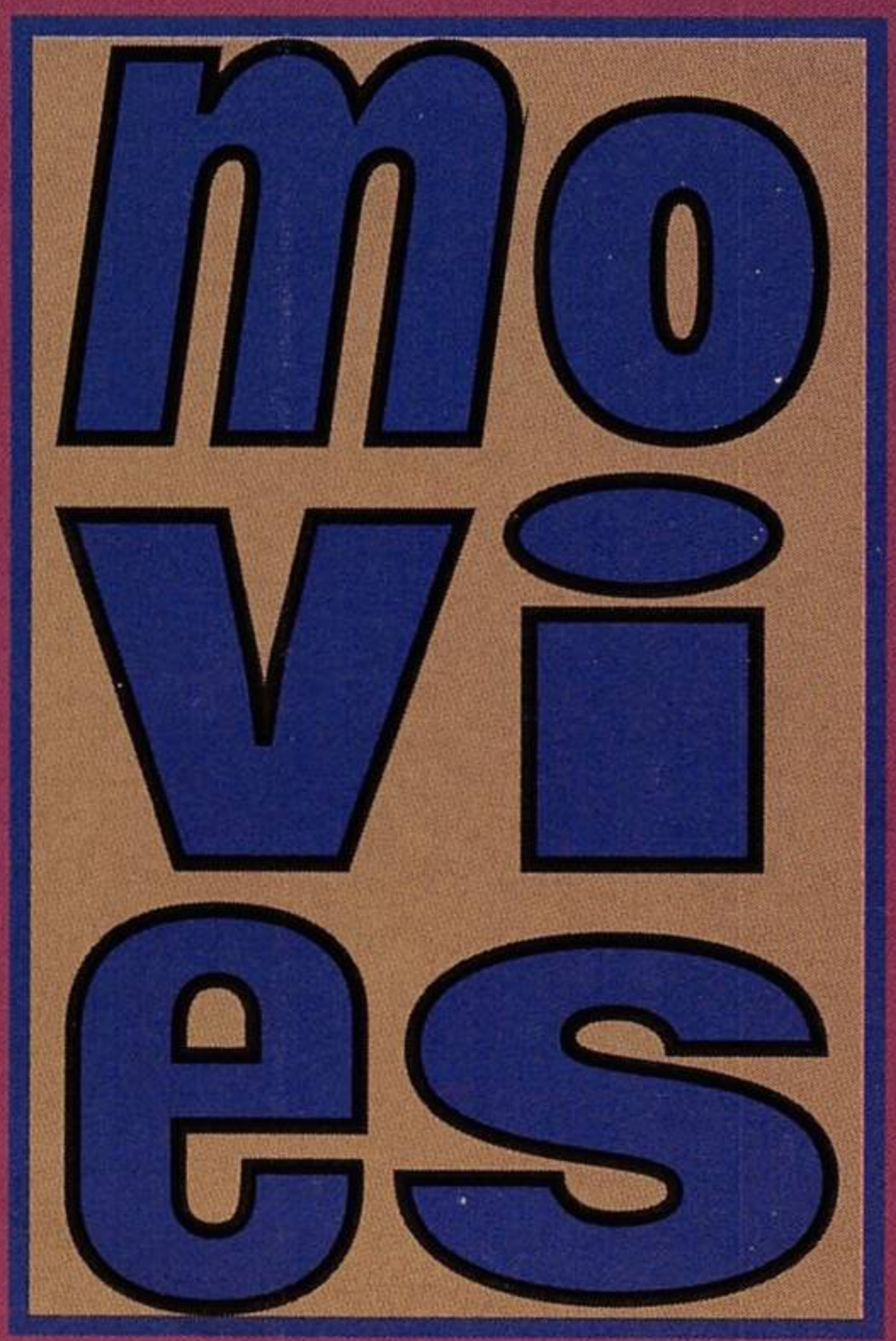
Mad Dog and Glory is the new film from the director of Henry, Portrait of a Serial Killer, John McNaughton. It's a gritty modern fable about an evidence technician with the Chicago Police Force, Wayne Dobie (Robert De Niro). Dobie, ironically nick-named "Mad Dog" by his fellow officers because of his timid nature, is investigating a crack-gang slaying when he inadvertently surprises the murderer holding up a grocery store near the scene of the crime. He convinces the murderer to flee rather than shoot him and his hostage, Frank Milo, a local gangster and stand-up comedian (Bill Murray).

In return for saving his life, Milo buys Mad Dog lots of drinks and lends him Glory (Uma Therman), a beautiful young woman who is working for Milo to pay off her brother's gambling debts. Mad Dog falls in love with Glory in the week they have together, leading to a showdown with Milo.

The film is odd in that you don't really know where it's going until it gets there, it's a hard film to play "pick the ending" with. But with De Niro as the nice guy cop, Bill Murray's dry humour, and Uma Therman pretending she's Winona Ryder, it's a good film to be surprised by.

3.5/5 JAD McADAM

REVIEWS





JURASSIC PARK

For a hundred years, Homo sapiens have been mesmerised in the knowledge that long, long ago 40 metre reptiles grazed and hunted on the same earth. What special effects guru Steven Spielberg has tried to achieve with this huge budget adventure romp is the ingenious blending of mega-movie technology with the fantasy of a billion kids (and a couple of billion others who aren't kids any more!).

Has it worked? Well, in its first week of US release, Jurassic broke the records held previously by E.T., another little Spielberg thingy. We may just be talking about the biggest movie of all time here!

In case you have been living in a cave for the past few months, the story concerns a couple of Palaeontologists (Sam Neill, Laura Dern), and a chaos theoretician (Jeff Goldblum) who have been brought to a remote equatorial island owned by a latter-day Walt Disney (Richard Attenborough). The billionaire developer has also brought his two grandchildren along for the ride.

The attractions of the planned theme park are real, living, genetically engineered dinosaurs. Unfortunately, the amusement park visionary seeks the approval of the scientists a little too late. A treacherous employee combines with a tropical storm to throw down the park's elaborate defence systems, letting dinos and humans mingle freely and that, as they say, is where the fun starts!

Science fiction has looked into our past to reveal real monsters, far more terrifying than Alien or Predator. Spielberg's mile-a-minute directing style rides perfectly on a wave of current technology, which may, all too soon, makes this fantasy a reality. He prefers to call this movie "science eventuality" rather than science fiction. Spielberg, the moralist, looks at

man becoming God in the manipulation of nature and says, "Stop, before it's too late!"

Really, though, this is basically a very glossy adventure movie, designed to make a squillion dollars, with the beautifully crafted mechanical dinosaurs being the real stars.

You don't need me to tell you to see it.

4/5 BRENDAN CRANE



THE SANDLOT

Steven King's "Stand By Me" is a film, which for a long time, lived in a genre all its own. It may not have been moved out, but it certainly has a new neighbour now in David Mickey Evans' debut, "The Sandlot".

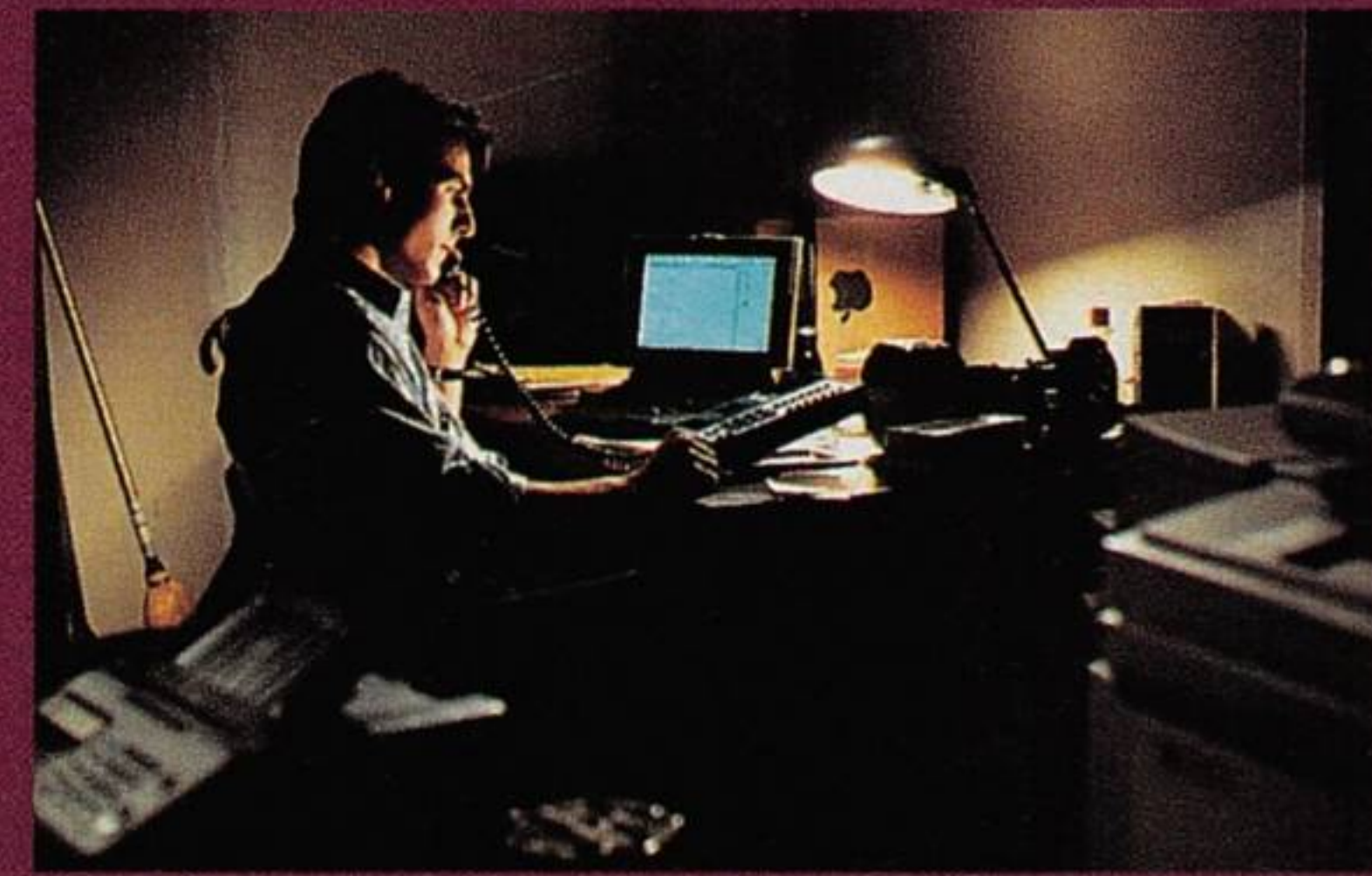
Like "Stand By Me", "The Sandlot" zooms in on a pivotal moment in the lives of a gang of boys which somehow unlocks a door to their approaching adulthood. The film's irresistible cuteness rides on the truth that when you're a kid, you believe that the most terrifying adventure might be lurking just over the back fence of your playground. Except that in this movie it is!

There's nothing over the top here. The movie's real power is simply being able to take you back to that time when the world seemed so big. With nine hilarious kids in the

lead roles and America's favourite pastime, baseball, as a backdrop, you've pretty much got a winner before the story even unfolds, but when it does it too is thoroughly engrossing.

Innocent, non-violent, but wildly enjoyable. It won't be just kids who see "The Sandlot", as retro cars, slang and music bring back some mighty vivid memories of 1962...(I would imagine!)

3.5/5 BRENDAN CRANE



THE FIRM

Tom Cruise leads a fantastic cast in this tense drama based on the novel by John Grisham. At over two and a half hours long, this film isn't for those with short attention spans, but the length shouldn't worry anyone as the director Sydney Pollack has crafted a taut film full of intrigue and surprises.

"The Firm" tells of a young, ambitious Harvard law graduate, Mitch McDeere (Cruise) who gets recruited by the wrong law firm. The lawyers in Bendini, Lambert & Locke are tax specialists, but unfortunately one of their biggest and most important clients is the Mafia. What starts out as a dream job - huge pay, beautiful house, Mercedes - becomes a nightmare when McDeere discovers the truth, and learns that several of the partners have been killed rather than allowed to leave.

Things become even more complicated when the FBI threaten to indict McDeere along with the company if he doesn't deliver them some dirt on the Mafia dealings. Add to this a brother in jail and photographic evidence of an extra-marital fling, and McDeere is not a happy chappy. The action intensifies as his marriage collapses, his FBI link is discovered and he tries to find a legal loophole out of this mess.

Cruise performs creditably and is more than ably supported by Gene Hackman, the wonderful Holly Hunter, Jeanne Tripplehorn, Hal Holbrook and Gary Busey. If you've read the book and know the ending, your enjoyment may be diminished, but if you haven't "The Firm" is an intelligent action thriller that will keep you captivated.

3.5/5 STUART CLARKE

VIDEO REVIEWS

SCENT OF A WOMAN

It's Thanksgiving weekend in New York and Lt. Colonel Frank Slade (Al Pacino) is in town for a slice of the good life: fine cuisine, beautiful women, chauffeured limousines and a suite at the Waldorf-Astoria. Young Charlie Simms is reluctantly along for the ride, getting the education of a lifetime.

Slade is one of life's true originals: a former aide to Lyndon Johnson, now blind, irascible, yet with the touch of the poet. Charlie is an earnest young prep student facing a difficult crossroad in his life. Their raucous, revealing and tragically funny adventure in New York will leave both of them changed forever.



REVIEWS COMPILED BY
STUART SLATER



COOL WORLD

Cool World is the story of Jack Deebs, an "underground" cartoonist whose life unhinges when he finds himself in the two-dimensional world he created.

Gabriel Byrne stars as Deebs and Kim Basinger is Holli Would, the voluptuous doodle who springs Venus-like from Deebs' mind and who desperately wants to be human. Brad Pitt is Detective Frank Harris, the only other human to have entered Cool World. A tortured young victim of tragedy, Harris seeks solace in this bizarre animated universe that throbs to the rhythms of an insane pulse.

A stylistically revolutionary fantasy-adventure of film that melds live action, animation and a unique approach to set design.

LORENZO'S OIL

Lorenzo's Oil is the true story of Augusto and Michaela Odone, who in a remarkable tale of faith and courage, successfully battled against time and the medical establishment to save their son's life.

It was April 1984 when the doctors told the Odone's there was no cure for 5-year-old Lorenzo's condition. Despite their lack of medical and scientific knowledge, Augusto and Michaela refused to believe it and resolved to learn all they could about this rare and mysterious ailment. Thanks to this extraordinary couple, Lorenzo and hundreds of others are alive today.

Academy Award nominees Nick Nolte and Susan Sarandon star in a real-life medical detective story that chronicles the Odone's stunning triumph over disease and disbelief.



INDECENT PROPOSAL

David and Diana Murphy are a happily married couple who were once High School sweethearts. They begin promising careers; David is an architect and Diana sells Real Estate, and their success heightens their romance, giving them a sense of invincibility. When Diana discovers a piece of land that provides the ideal site to allow David to demonstrate his architectural skill, they pursue this dream with the same confidence and passion they have known in their love for one another, only to find themselves challenged by the bad times of the recession.

The Murphy's travel to Las Vegas to see if they can multiply their last \$5,000 and soon find themselves gambling with more than just their money. They are faced with an offer that could instantly make all their dreams a reality. Their decision is based on the conviction that, no matter what happens they will always have each other. But their idyllic marriage is challenged by wealthy financier John Cage, who offers David and Diana a million dollars if Diana will agree to spend one night with him. Robert Redford, Demi Moore and Woody Harrelson star in Indecent Proposal, the controversial story about love and the things money can't buy.



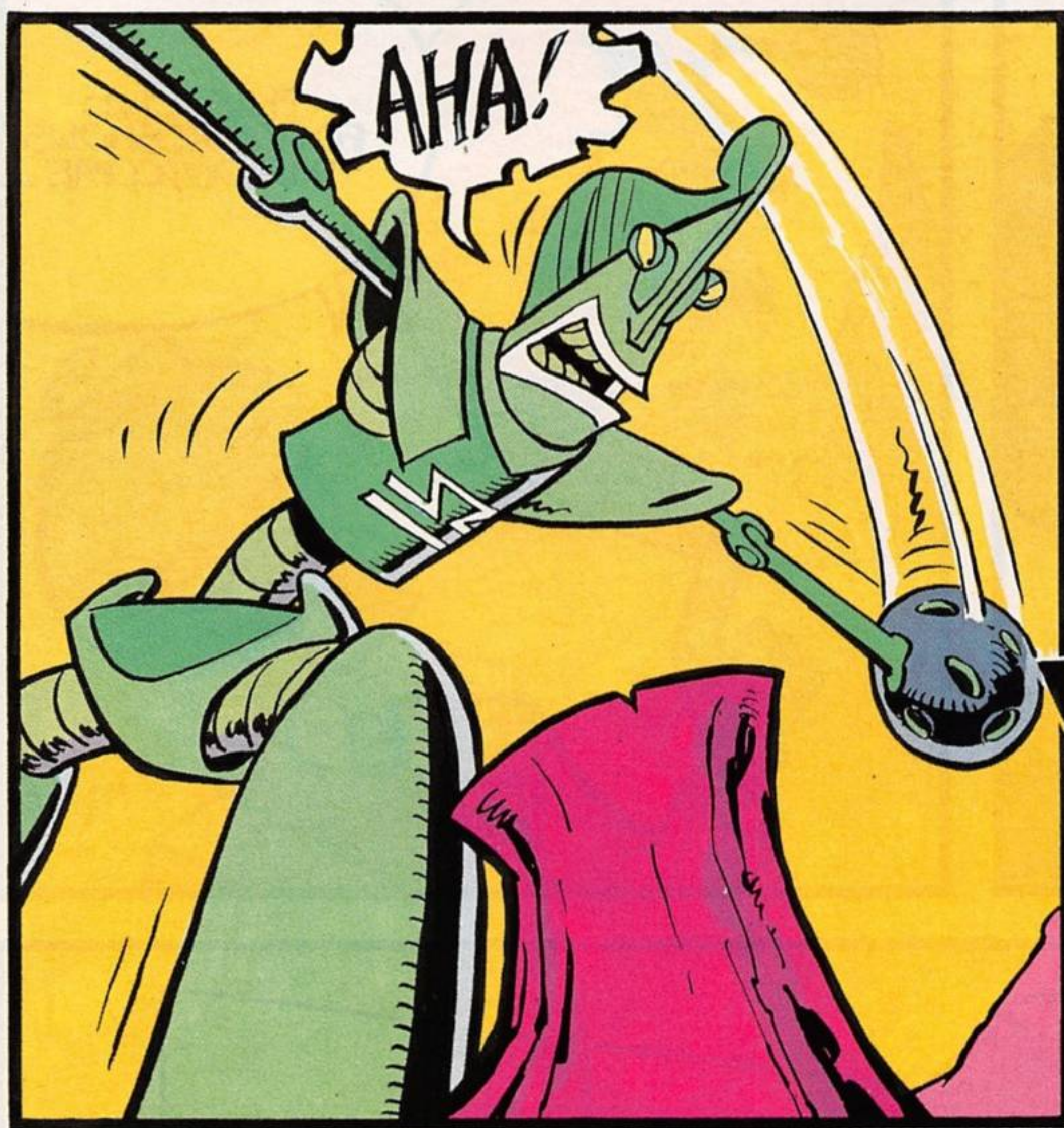
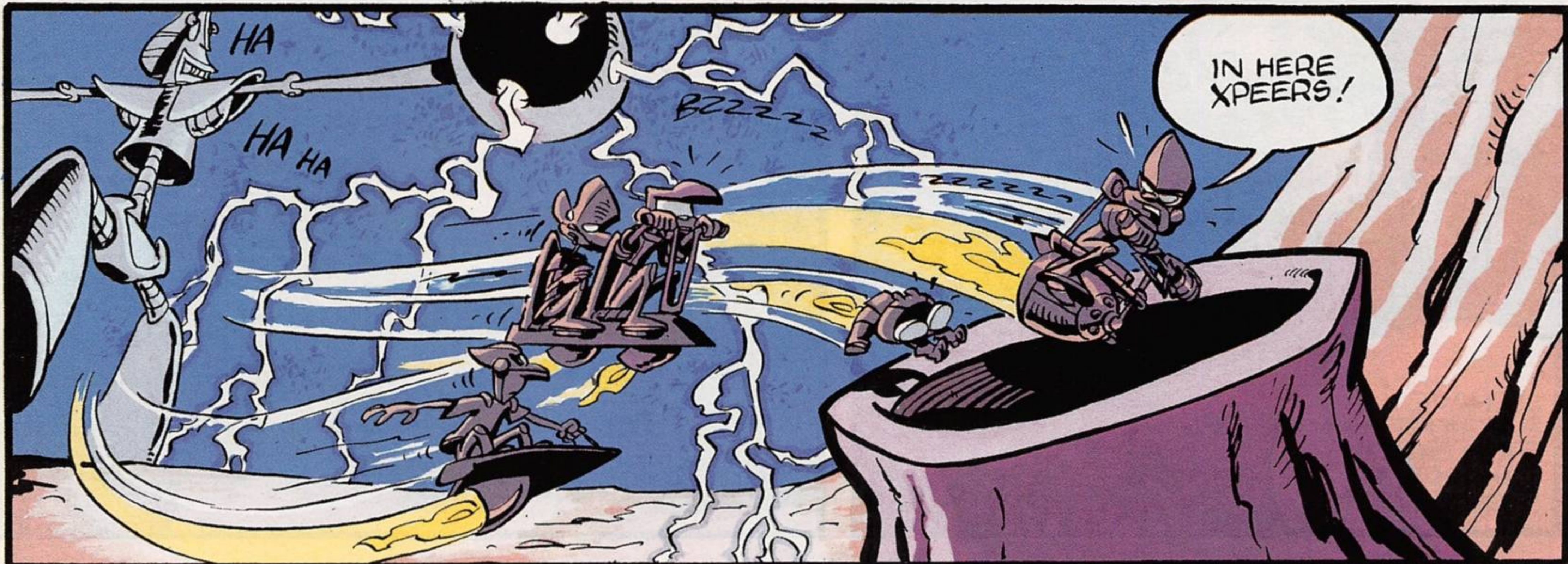
REVIEWS



REX VECTAR

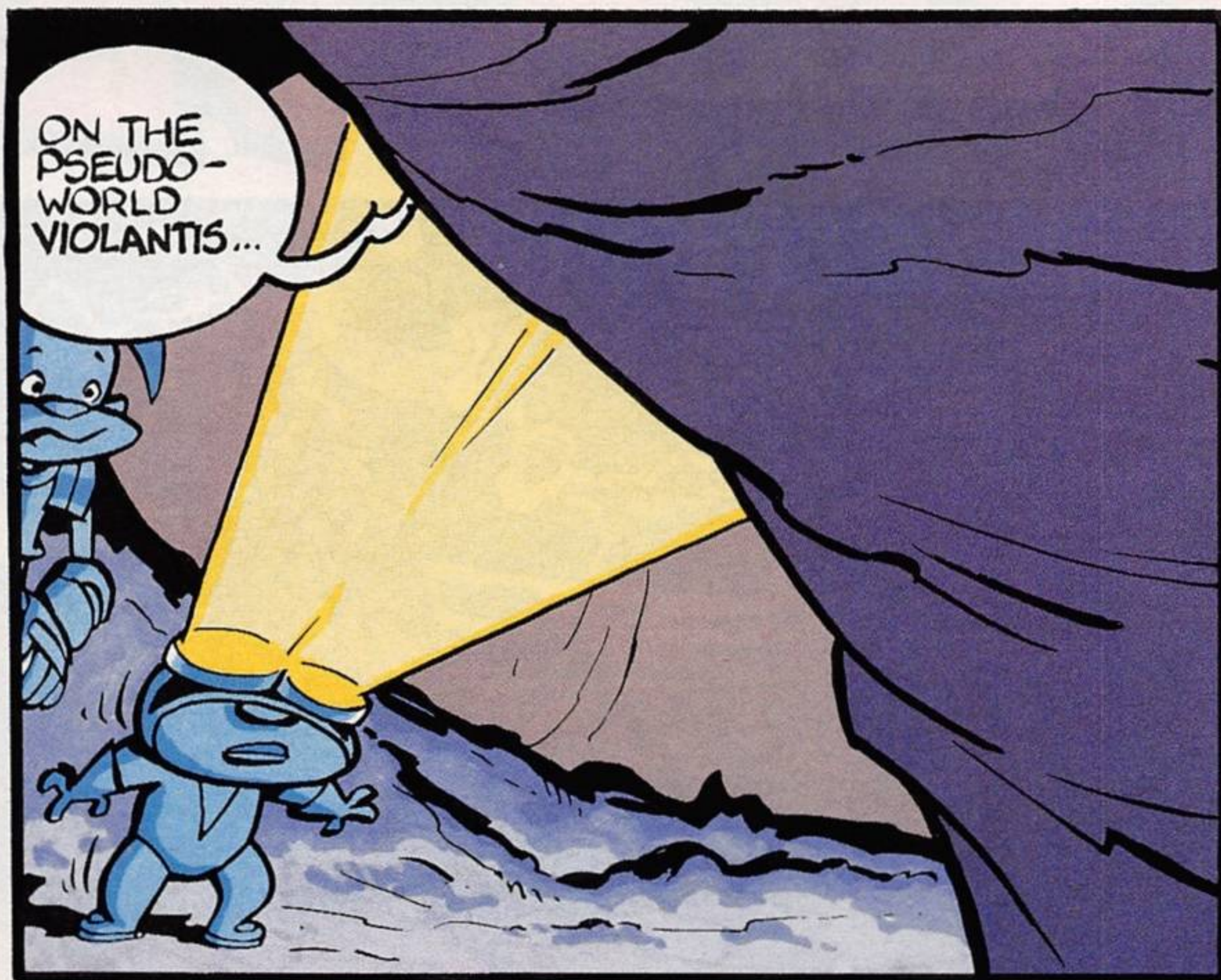
BY FIL BARLOW

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... I HAVE A REPORT FROM EARTH I THINK YOU SHOULD SEE!



ON THE PSEUDO-WORLD VIOLANTIS...

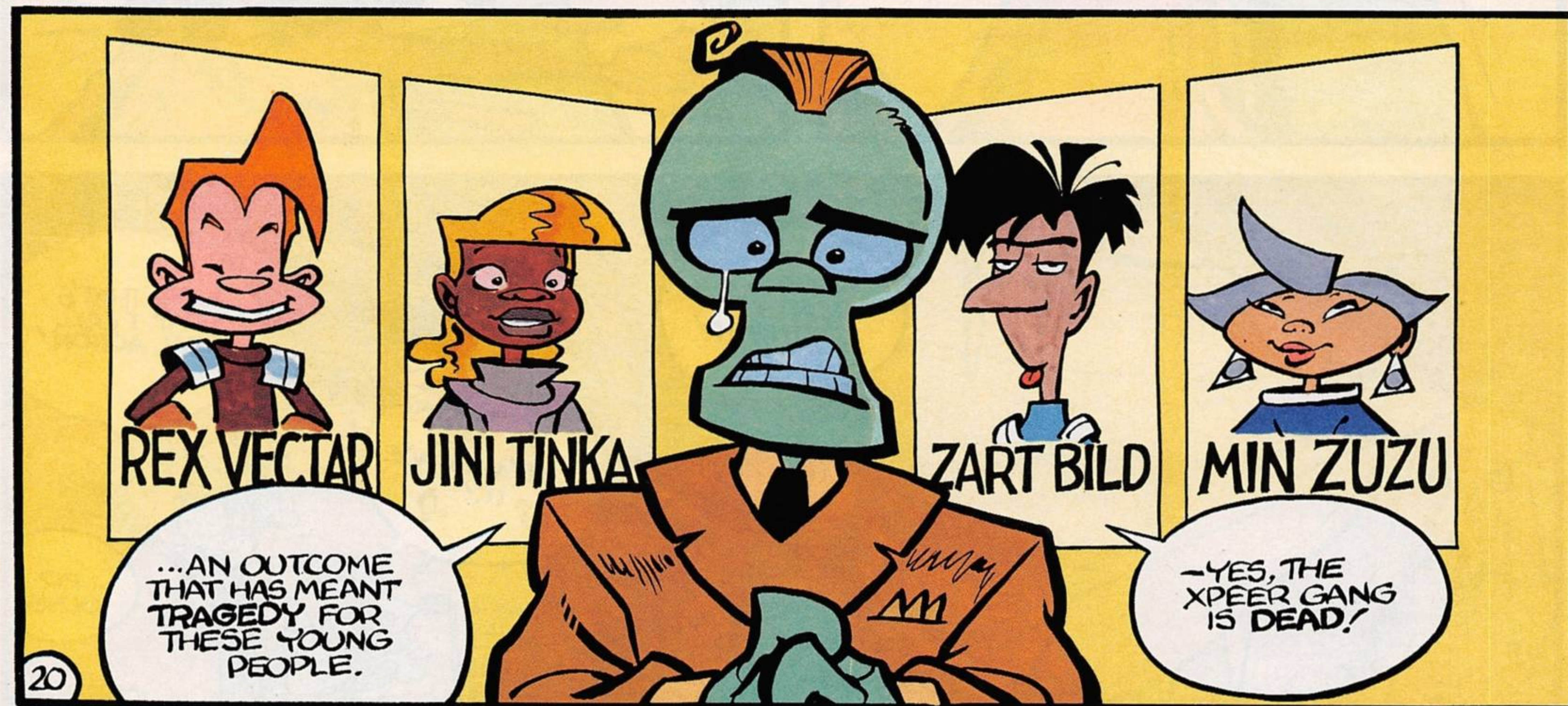


... HERE, NEAR ELECTROCITY, THE XPEER GANG MET WITH THE BATTLELORD LYBRAR...

PSEUDO-NEWS



... THIS LIVE FOOTAGE SHOWS THE OUTCOME...



REX VECTAR

JINI TINKA

ZART BILD

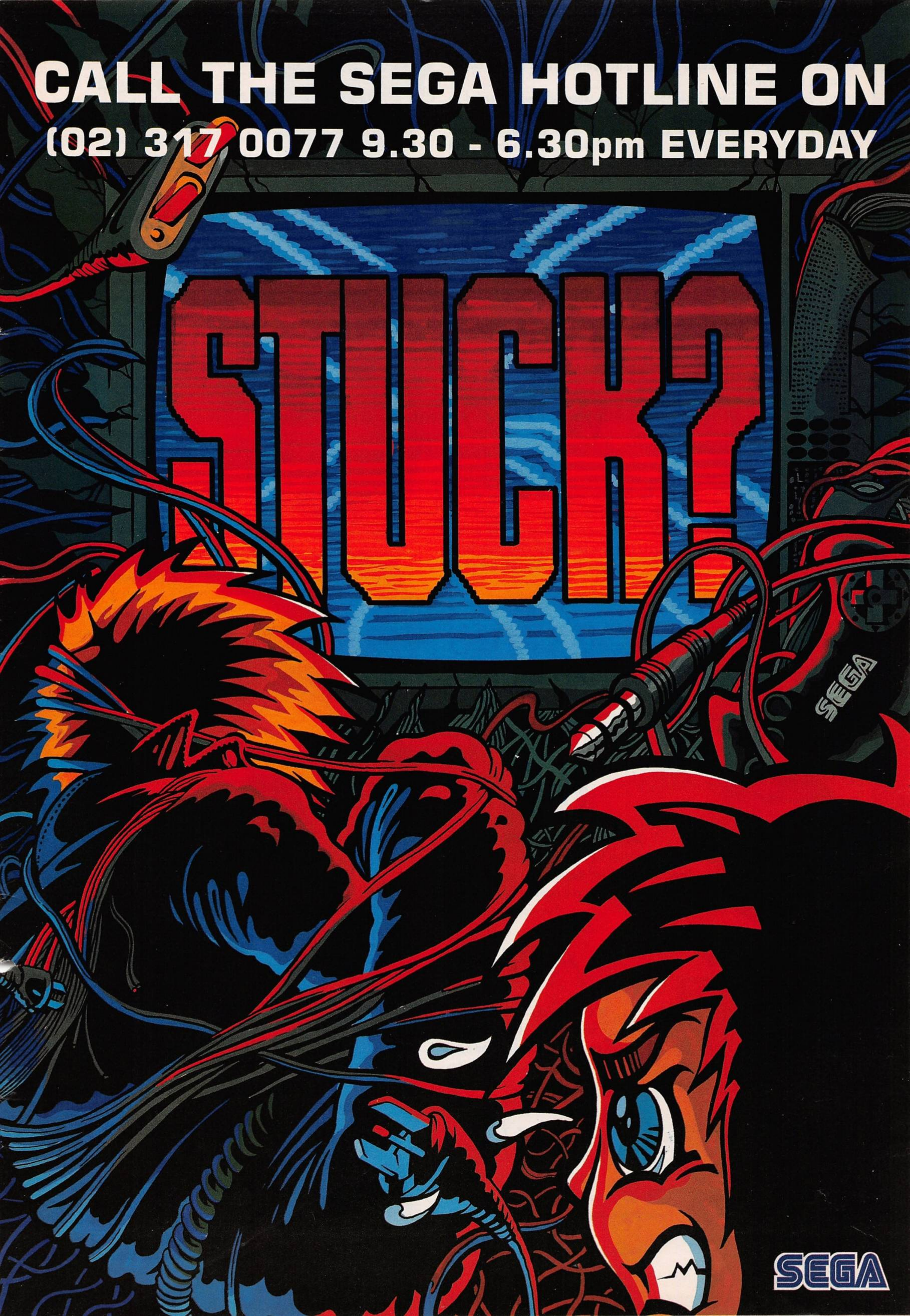
MIN ZUZU

...AN OUTCOME THAT HAS MEANT TRAGEDY FOR THESE YOUNG PEOPLE.

-YES, THE XPEER GANG IS DEAD!

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(02) 317 0077 9.30 - 6.30pm EVERYDAY**

STUCK?



SEGA

SOURY RATS (YOUR STARS) With your crystal ball gazer Madame Mimi (and that eye ball glazer, Spooky Ted).

Stardate: September 1,900, 90 and 3

Mission: To boldly gaze where no man has gazed before...(and I'm not talking about Ted's underpants...)

Report: Greetings, Earthlings! Remember last issue when Ted and I attended an Astrology convention? Well, my pretties, we liked it so much that this month we decided to beam ourselves over to a Star Trek con in Los Angeles. I bet you didn't know that we were Trekkies, did you? Believe me, there's nothing Ted likes more than me firing up the PC and grabbing his joystick for a quick game of ST.

Of course, we were the hit of the con...I went as Captain Mirk, and my faithful offside was Spooky Ted. Ted had a great time, except for that nasty incident with the experimental matter transportation beam. It all turned out alright - they found him last week in a jungle in Vietnam muttering the horror... the horror... the horrorscope. Which reminds me...

Until next we meet, my little friends, may your head always be in the stars... and may your stars always be in Uranus.

Madame Mimi xxx

* Madame Mimi filth alert: this month's column contains the words 'monghead,' 'looserlips', and 'Pope'. Sensitive readers should turn away now.

STAR SIGN OF THE MONTH



Virgo

24 August -
23 September

You have the sign of the virgin... which is appropriate, since everything you do is virgin' on the ridiculous. No-one will turn up for your pathetic party and your family will completely forget about you. Happy birthday, monghead.



AQUARIUS

21 January - 19 February

I predict great things for you this month... of course, I also predicted that John Hewson would win the last election. Bad luck, looserlips.



Pisces

20 February - 20 March

Your attraction for Flipper, Jaws and Moby Dick finally resolves itself this month when you realise why you want to do it with fish. Yes, you are pi-sexual.



Aries

21 March - 20 April

I see a bad moon rising... I see trouble on the way. I see earthquakes and lightning...I see bad times today. Don't go out tonight, it's bound to take your life. There's a bad moon on aries.



TAURUS

21 April - 21 May

Many famous Russian people have your starsign... there's Taurus Goodinov, Taurus Yeltsin and Taurus Karloff. I guess that means you're full of Bolshoi!



GEMINI

22 May-21 June

You have been feeling low lately, but this month is especially depressing when you notice that your get up and go has finally got up and gone. Suck on it, cretin-features.



CANCER

22 June - 23 July

Have I mentioned that my ex-husband, Malcolm Starperson, is a cancer? This month, all two-timing, low down scum-sucking cancers will get theirs where the sun don't shine. Bad luck, Malanoma!



Leo

24 July - 23 August

I see big things ahead for you. Your next girlfriend or boyfriend will weigh 22 stone.



LiBra

24 September -
23 October

Your starsign is an anagram of 'brail', which is what you have to learn after you finally go blind from doing that thing the Pope told you to stop doing..



SCORPIO

24 October -
22 November

You have always been a bit of a loser, but this month your luck will change. For the worse... you will become a Megaloser.



SaGittarius

23 November - 22 December

Your symbol is the centaur: half-man, half-horse. Unfortunately, you have the brain of a horse and are hung like a man.



CaPRICORN

23 December -
20 January

I thought I'd finish off this column with a bad pun, but then I decided it would be too Capricorny. Bye bye, kids!

BUBSY™

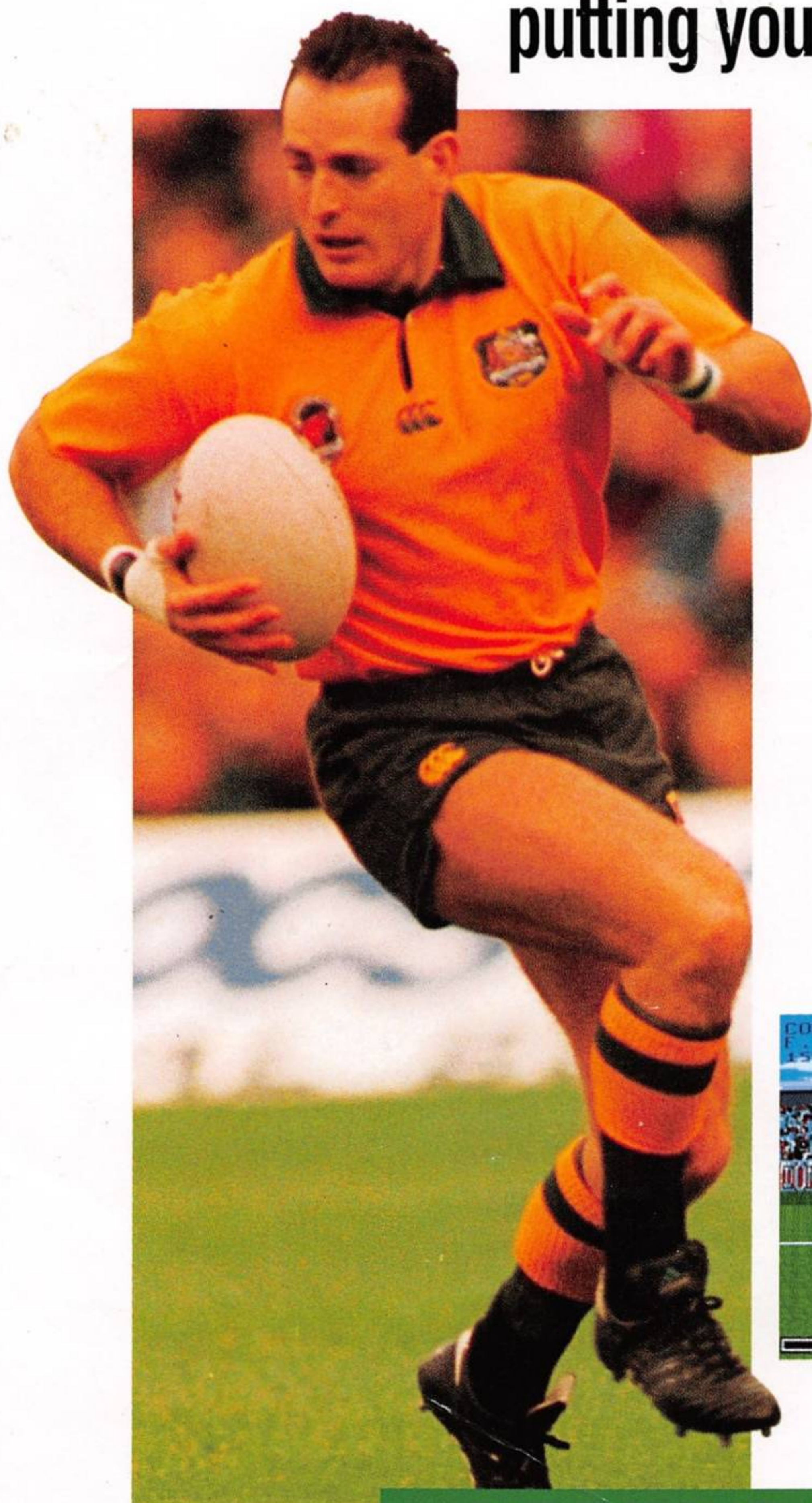
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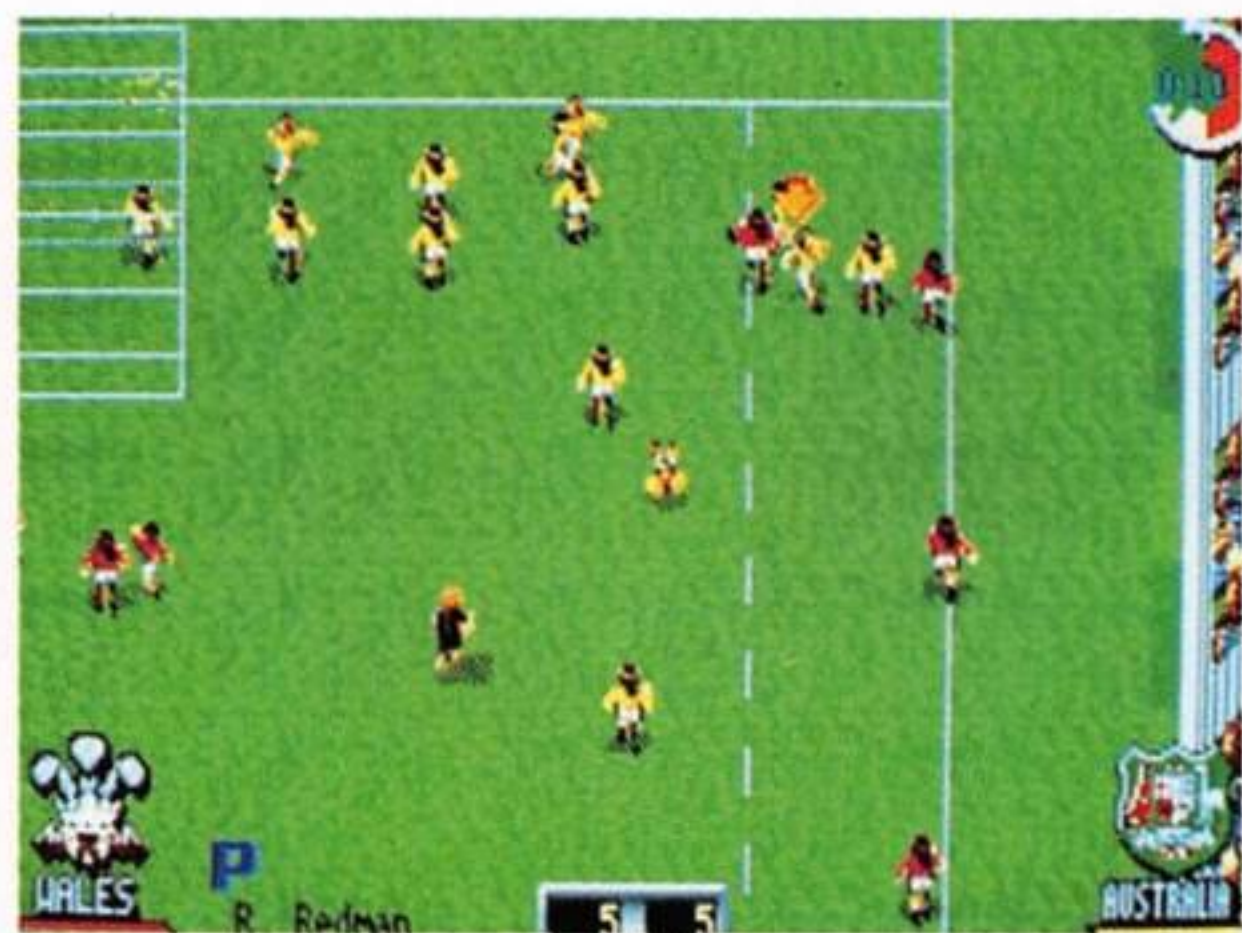
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