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Cover: As the home systems get more powerful, the software gets more realistic. Proof of that is the smooth animation of U. S. Gold's *Flashback—The Quest for Identity*, which will appear on the Genesis soon, and is reviewed by Mike Davila on page 38.

Cover Art: David Dees.

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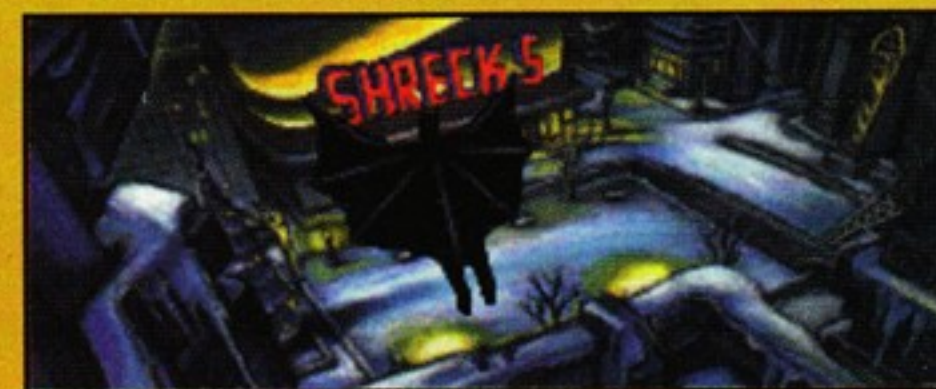
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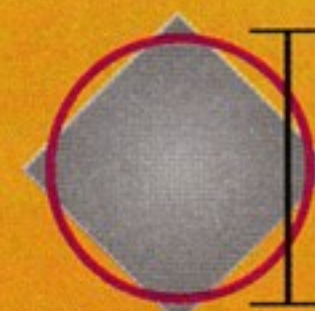
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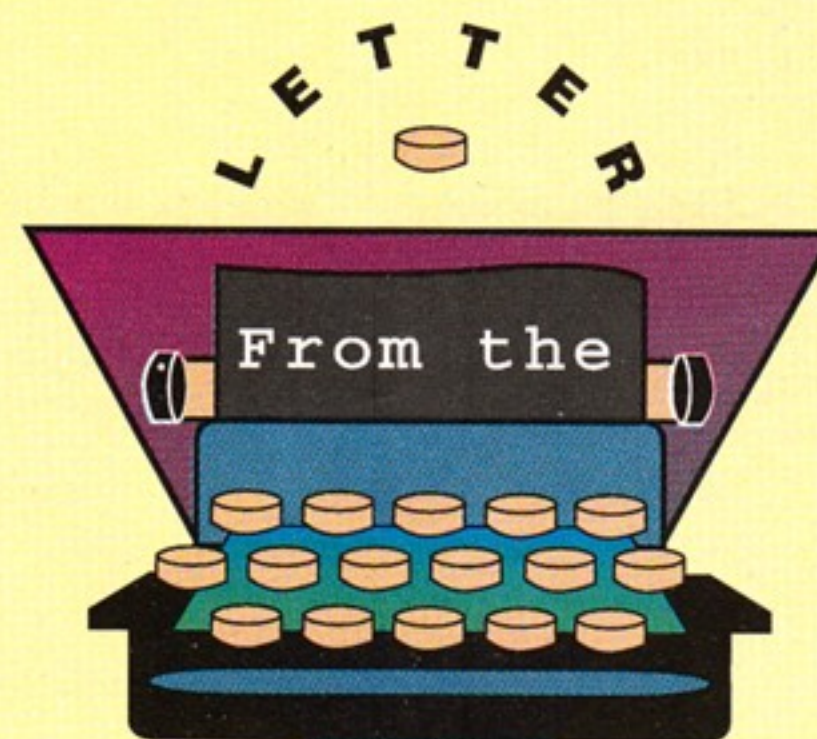
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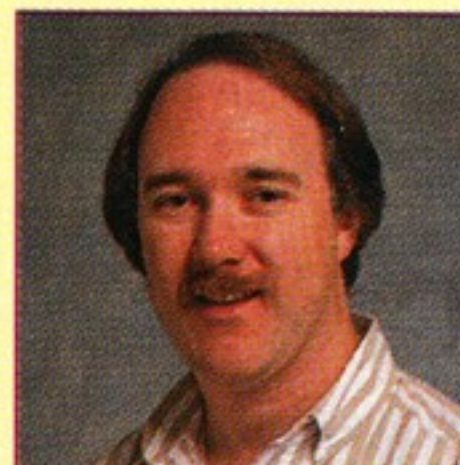


W HAT DO EDITOR

Dustin Hoffman, Jack Nicholson and Robin Williams have in common? If you answered that they are big-name movie stars, you're right—but that's not the answer I'm looking for. No, they were also big bombers in 1992.

Sure, Hoffman is one of the best actors working these days, but I don't think he'll be putting *Hero* on his résumé. Everyone remembers Nicholson's eerie portrayal of the Joker in the 1989 *Batman*, but how about his recent dud, *Man Trouble*? And Williams can be hysterically funny, but did anyone really enjoy sitting through the slow-moving *Toys*?

What's my point? It's an issue I've brought up in this spot before, but it primarily has to do with a rereading of last month's VG&CE awards. On that list are established game stars like Sonic and Mario, as well as hot "properties" (to use a movie label) like *Ultima* and *Wizardry*. However, there were also lots of new faces like Mick and Mack of Virgin's *Global Gladiators* (though they aren't necessarily "new," they didn't have as much room to shine on the NES) and vehicles like Sega's *Night Trap* and Id Software's *Wolfenstein 3-D*. These software stars of 1992 didn't rely on hot licenses (again, Mick and Mack have McDonalds on their side, yet that isn't the reason the game was so hot), but on honest-to-goodness hard work in the design, programming and music departments.



Conversely, there are a ton of games released each month that carry big-name licenses, which makes them great attention-getters at the store shelves. Yet many of these games are downright flops as *games*. If they aren't any fun—as the previously named movies can attest to—the license is there to hook in the buyer.

I have no doubt that this editorial may make me unpopular to some in the industry—I'll leave names out of

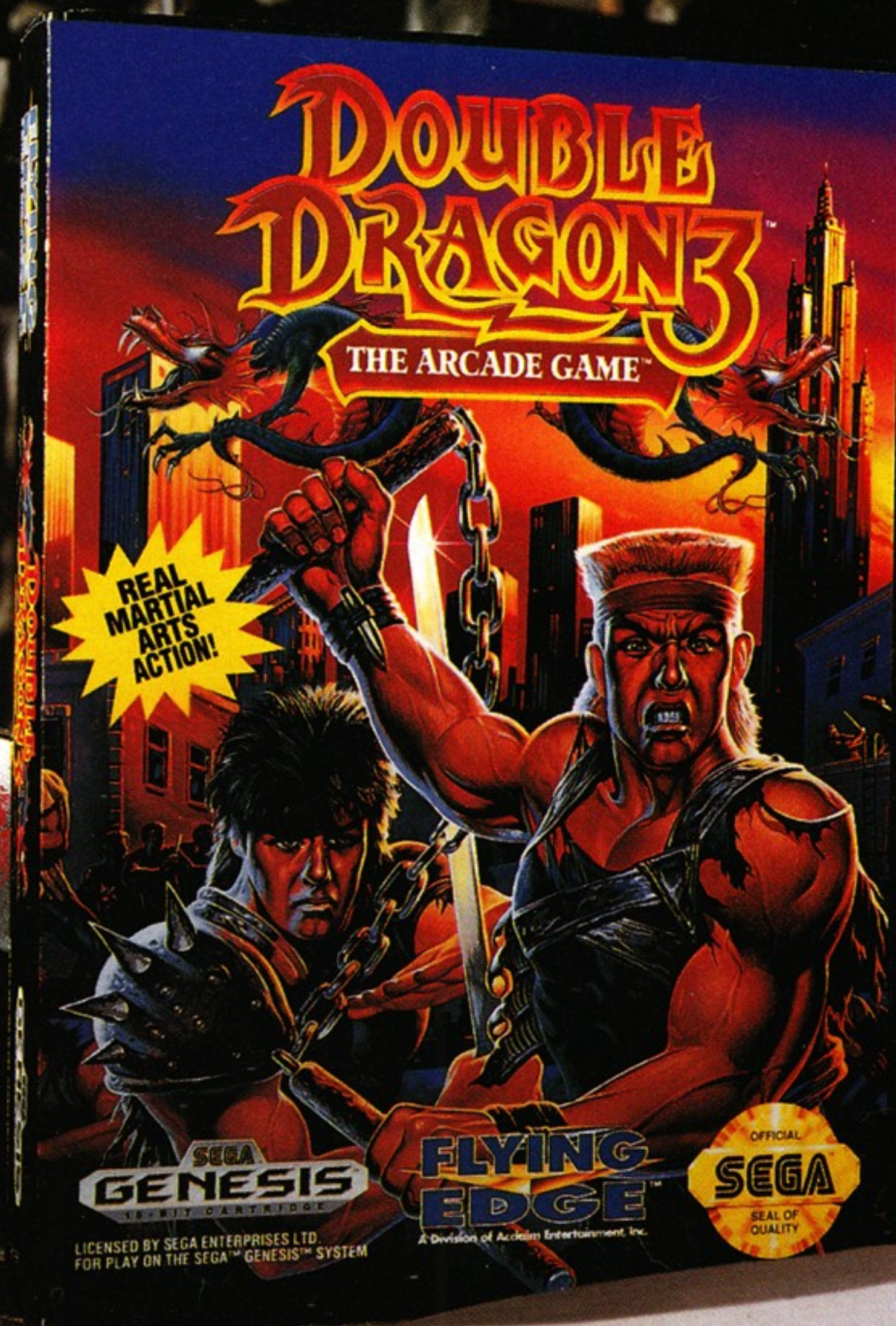
this so as to avoid saying that certain companies *only* release bad games, though careful buyers will no doubt have some companies come to mind. A key to this essay is two words

in the last sentence: *careful buyers*. If you don't go into a store with "stars" in your eyes, you'll be better off both financially and in the richness of your game library. Don't get caught by movie or TV-show titles or by box art that features celebs and big-name characters. It's not to say that there may not be a good game inside; it's just that using bright colors and superstars won't guarantee a good game. Hard work on behalf of the developers will.

Of course, the reviews we offer in VG&CE can also help you separate the wheat from the chaff. As always, we don't ask you to see our words as the gospel, but as another friendly voice to help *guide* you to becoming a careful buyer.

Thanks again for reading VG&CE.

—Andy Eddy, Executive Editor



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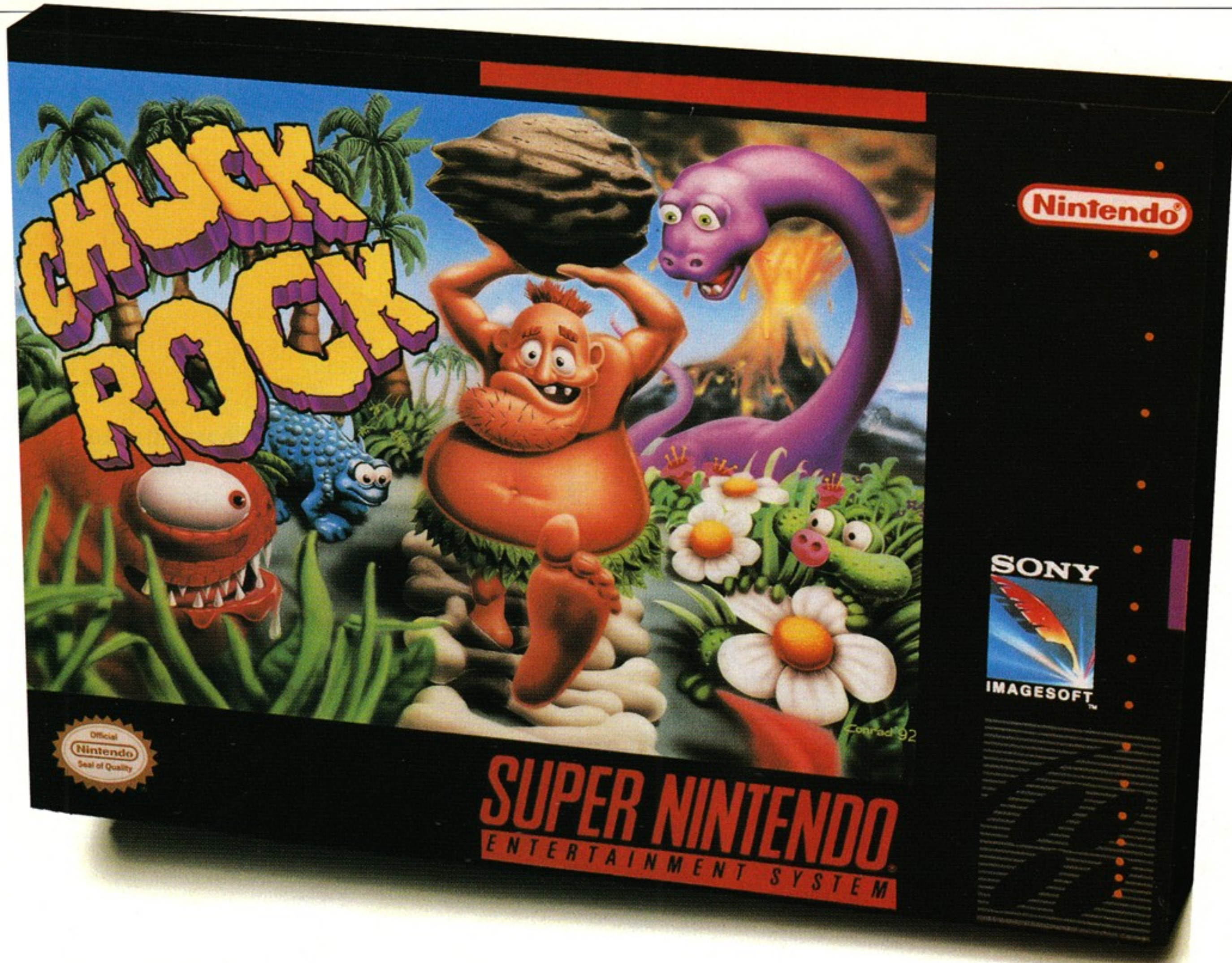


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AN ORIGINAL LETTER

I have noticed of late that there are fewer and fewer truly original games. Not only is originality forbidden in video games, it's also missing from several computer games.

I feel that I'm fairly qualified to discuss this. I am fifteen years old and I have been playing electronic games for roughly five years. Starting with my trusty NES, I worked my way into the 16-bit market with a TurboGrafx-16 CD-ROM, an SNES and Lynx. I thoroughly enjoy all of my systems, and I realize that each has its good points and bad points.

I'm not going to devote my letter to a useless hardware war propaganda piece, because I don't have a particular preference for one system over another. I've also owned a Genesis, but I sold it in order to buy my Super Nintendo, not because the Genesis was "technically inferior," but because I figured that the Super Nintendo had more variety of games. That is right. I judged a system by the quality of its games, not its processor speed or any other technical aspect. I just felt that the Genesis had less of a selection of games for me to enjoy.

Please note that this is my opinion and says nothing about what others think of the Genesis. I just didn't like the games for one reason: lack of originality. Let's face it, after you've played shooters, the only difference is the background colors and the shape of your ship.

My point is this. I remember older games. Games like *Zelda I* and *II*. Games like *Blaster Master*. Games that had a definite plot, a definite story line that was just as engrossing as the gameplay itself. *Bionic Commando* is still one of my favorite games, because of the origi-

nality. If you remember, your player could not jump. He had to use a grappling hook in a variety of different situations in order to advance the game. In addition to this, the story was interesting to the point that you wanted to beat the game in order to discover the ending and learn how all the pieces fit together. I remember how my pulse raced when I defeated *Zelda II*, because, at the time it was an original idea, a new experience *and* offered a good story.

Now, three years later, I hardly get excited about a game, much less care about the plot—often there isn't one to care about. Games and their respective story lines have become so old hat that anyone with enough experience could deduce the plot and probable outcome just by hearing the title, which makes the whole point of playing a video game kinda moot. Game makers had better wise up. Sooner or later they'll have to realize that gamers want new ideas and new puzzles to solve.

Even my SNES has become trapped in this endless cycle of recycling old, dead, uncreative ideas of what a game should be like. For instance, take all the top-selling NES games. Of those, get half and add "Super" to the title. Wham! You've got a *new* game for the SNES.

Okay, not really, but that scenario has happened. If you don't believe me, look at your local retailer's shelves. Count the games and see how many seem familiar, with slightly changed titles. I'm not wrong and I know many who agree

with me. What game producers have done is spiced up the graphics and added punch to the sound in hopes that consumers will buy the "new and improved" product. While it may be improved, the game is nowhere near being new, or even well-aged. These ideas are ancient. These old platforms that games are built on deserve to be torn down and burned so that designers will have to start over. Some (like shooters) are almost cliché. This is not the fault of the game companies. It is my fault and your fault, and every other consumer's fault.

We as consumers control the game industry. We don't have to buy these old games in a new package. If games fail miserably, maybe the powers that be will realize that they are beating a dead horse. We show preference with our dollars. If we continue to buy the same type of game, they will continue to make the same type of game. It's a sure investment. After all, it's all about money. If we let a few old games bomb—I mean *bomb* big time—manufacturers will get the point; they'll realize that *Mario* clones and *Contra* copies are not a safe way to make money.

The sad truth is that game companies don't care about end-user enjoyment; i.e., they couldn't care less if we hate the game. As long as we buy it, they couldn't care less if we enjoy it. Once you have put yourself into this perspective, it's easy to see why we must find out if we like the game or not *and* ensure they

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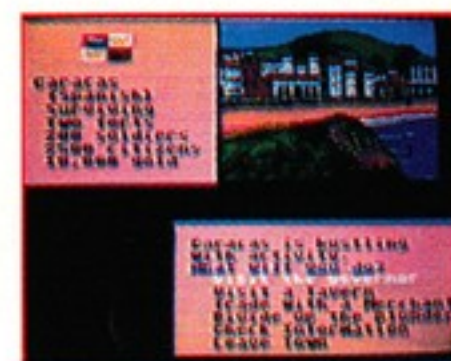
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CIRCLE #105 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

deserve it. That's right. Those companies should and will have to earn their pay for their games.

Make sure that the game you are getting is what you want. Pick up a copy at the local rental outlet. Read reviews and listen to the reviewers that match your tastes. It is, after all, their job!

Doing things this way will allow us to weed out the losers and grab the winners in the large field of games that exists today. Support originality. Don't buy a game if it is too much of a rerun. Some are obvious: *Super Mario Saves Another Princess in Yet Another Dreamland*, for example. On the other hand, some aren't so obvious, and those are the ones we must look out for.

I am one person who could do without *Super Contra III* and *Ultima XVIII*. If we, the consumers, are careful of what we buy, we will see a change in types of games that are made. For a change, pick up *Lemmings* instead of *Gradius III*. Maybe a change of pace is just what you need.

In closing I would like to leave you with one important thought. Given the capabilities of the newer systems, don't you think that game creators could come up with newer games ideas that make use of the newer systems' capabilities? After all, most of the games for the new systems were made before scaling and rotation were available. Wouldn't it be neat if they could make a game that utilized these capabilities at the concept level, rather than having a rotating map or scaled landing sequence added on as an afterthought? As cool as these reruns seem, a game made to use these features would be even better looking, and more fun as well. But remember: As long as we buy old games that have been given new leases on life, we won't see very many innovative games like *Pilotwings* or *F-Zero*.

—Andrew Atwood
Charleston, West Virginia

That's an insightful analysis of the situation, Andrew, and one that, for the most part, we subscribe to.

Maybe some game makers will see this and respond. However, if "rehash" games sell well, the game makers get the message that we're happy with them. In a way it's a Catch-22: Sometimes the innovative is too foreign for mass-market acceptance, so it doesn't sell well. That drives the game makers in the other direction, usually back to the "same old, same old" in a new box.

You are correct, though, in saying that most of the burden falls on the consumer. Let's cross our fingers for change.

SHELLING THE GENESIS

I've been wondering why Sega of America hasn't made a *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* game yet. I got the Genesis in September and like it very much, but it disappoints me also because Sega hasn't made anything in that area.

—John Harrison
Lancaster, California

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: The Hyperstone Heist should already be out, though it's being released for the Genesis by Konami, not Sega. Though we didn't get a chance to review it—unfortunately, we can't cover all the games we get due to space constraints—it's a very good game.

WAITING AT HOME FOR KOMBAT AND FIGHTING

I was wondering if Midway is going to release games for Sega CD, and if *Mortal Kombat* is coming out for any system. Could you give me Midway's phone number and address?

Also, do you know if Capcom is ever going to release *SFII* for Genesis or Sega CD? Thanks for your time and keep up the good work!

—Jon Bowen-Leopold
Braintree, Massachusetts

Acclaim has first dibs on any game that comes out of the

Williams/Bally/Midway stable. As you read this, Acclaim is working on versions of Mortal Kombat for Sega CD, Genesis cart and SNES cart, as well as Game Boy and Game Gear. These games are being worked on now with releases planned for fall and winter 1993.

While Williams/Bally/Midway has no plans that we are aware of to release home games, you can send mail to the company at 3401 N. California Ave., Chicago, IL 60618.

No firm word yet on a Genesis Street Fighter II. We'll tell you when it gets closer to reality.

CORRECTIONS

• We inadvertently put the wrong ratings on Zach Meston's *Superman* feature review in our January 1993 issue. The ratings that Zach intended for his review are Sound/Music: 8, Graphics: 8, Playability: 8 and Overall: 8. We apologize for any confusion.

• In the December 1992 story on NovaLogic, "Nina" was credited as designing the color-cycling process used in its *Mario* game. Color cycling was actually developed by Cesar DeCastro.

MODEM OWNERS!

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CIRCLE #107 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

I'm having too much trouble fighting Tyrone "Madman" Mosely in the one-player "Title Belt" game of *George Foreman's KO Boxing* for the Super NES. Is there any way you could give me some advice on how to beat him?

—Rob Corcoran
Carmel, California

Developed by Beam Software for Acclaim, *George Foreman's KO Boxing* is an incredibly tough game for boxing fans. But don't believe Mosely's profile when it tells you that he is "capable of doing anything at any time." All of the fighters in *KO Boxing* follow very predictable patterns, and beating them is simply a matter of learning the patterns and figuring out how to get "Superpunches"—and knowing when to use the Superpunches for maximum damage.

First, here's the pattern of punches thrown by Madman. He'll start off with two right uppercuts, a left cross and four right jabs. Next, he serves up two left uppercuts, then pauses for two seconds before repeating the cycle over again.

To earn a Superpunch, dodge the two right uppercuts and the left cross. When he delivers the four right jabs, you must punch him once after each jab. It's easy to block his jabs, then hit him back, but you'll have a better chance at winning if you can dodge most of his punches.

When you hit him the fourth time (after his fourth right jab) you'll get the Superpunch, and Madman will back away from you for a moment. When he comes back at you, he'll throw a right uppercut, left uppercut and a Superpunch of his own. For maximum damage, you must deliver your Superpunch just before he throws his; that is, wait for the right and left uppercuts, then wait just an instant before pressing B. Be prepared to dodge his Superpunch immediately after you throw yours, or you're sure take a huge amount of damage.

Continue to repeat this pattern, and you'll be on the road to an easy victory. The only variation in Madman's pattern occurs when you hit him with eight straight punches. If this happens, you'll hear him growl and he'll try to surprise you with a quick right jab/left uppercut combination. Avoid or block these blows, then wait for Madman to return to his original pattern.



Help! I'm stuck in *Sonic the Hedgehog 2* (Sega for the Genesis). Can you give me any tips or techniques on how to kill the giant Robotnik robot? I keep dying after he flies in the air, then lands and throws his mechanical arms at me. Thank you very much!

—Jon Jacobsen
Bellevue, Washington

The "big boss" of VG&CE's 1992 "Video Game of the Year" is a memorable one, to be sure. To defeat him, you must hit him by jumping as high as possible and bouncing off his chest without touching the spikes on his fists. You'll have one clear shot at his chest when he first rises from the floor, but after that it's best to stick with the following pattern:

Wait in front of Robotnik as he takes four lumbering steps forward. After the fourth step, he'll pause, then back up a half-step. When he backs up, his fists will be held evenly at his sides, so jump up and hit him in the chest once before he flies into the air. While he's off-screen, move to the right corner of the room, and you'll see his targeting cursor tracking you. Face left and squat down to prepare for a spin-dash; when a smaller circle appears inside the targeting cursor, spin-dash across the room to the left. You may not see him by the time you reach the left wall, but Robotnik will have landed at the spot where the cursor was flashing.

Wait against the left corner, and you'll see Robotnik's spiked fists lash out in your direction, one at a time. If you've followed the pattern correctly, the spikes won't reach you in the corner. Robotnik will fly again after both fists have retracted, so move to the right corner and spin-dash to the left again when the cursor reappears as previously described.

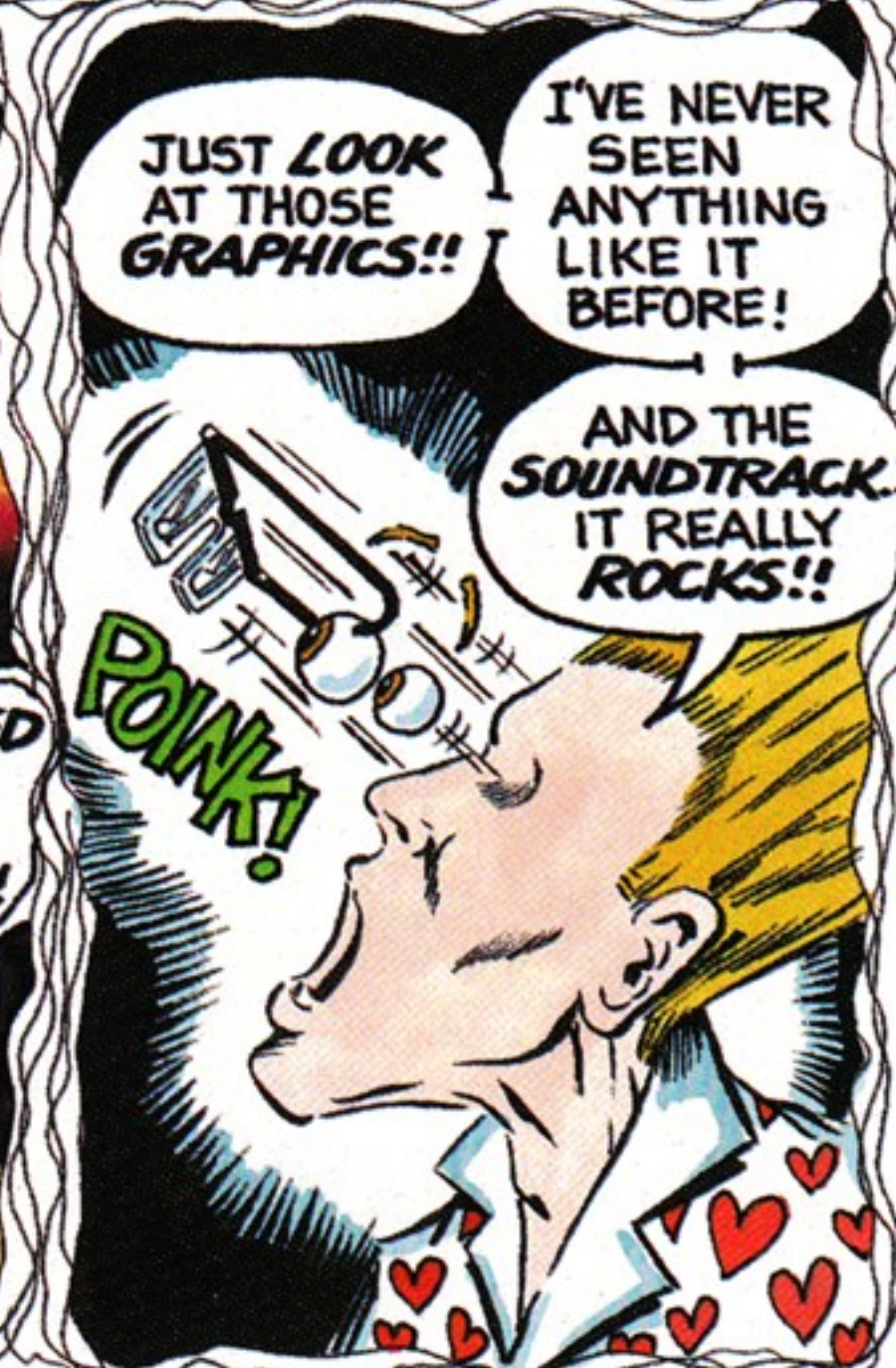
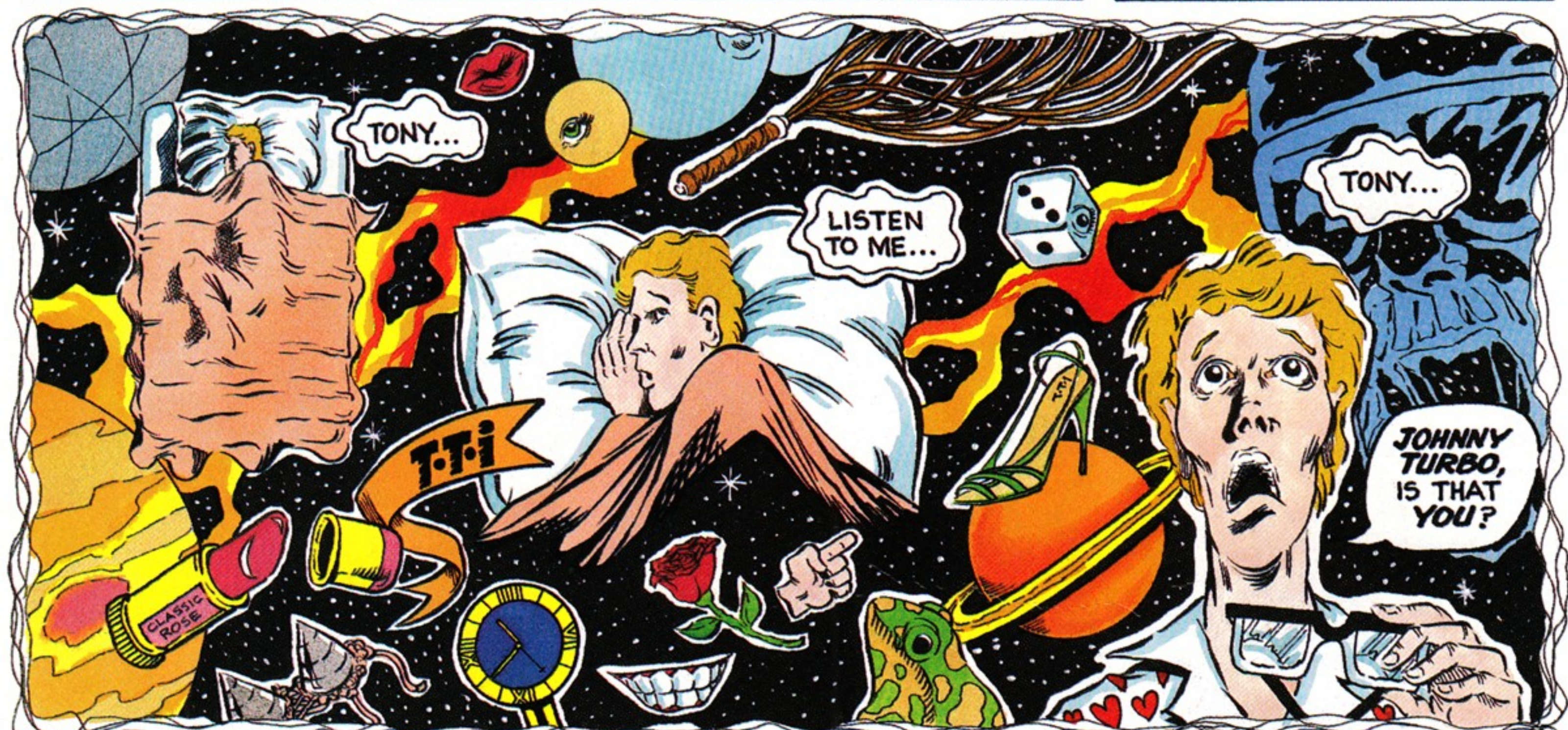
When Robotnik comes down the second time, he won't be sending his fists after you, so move back to the right and watch him repeat the four-steps-forward-half-step-back routine again. Hit him again before he can fly away, and repeat this pattern over and over—you'll knock his arms and legs off with the 12th hit.

If you're confident in your jumping skills, it's possible to hit Robotnik in the middle of each step while he's walking, but why risk it? The method we've described may be time-consuming, but it's extremely reliable. Hope you were able to gather all of the Chaos Emeralds! 📌

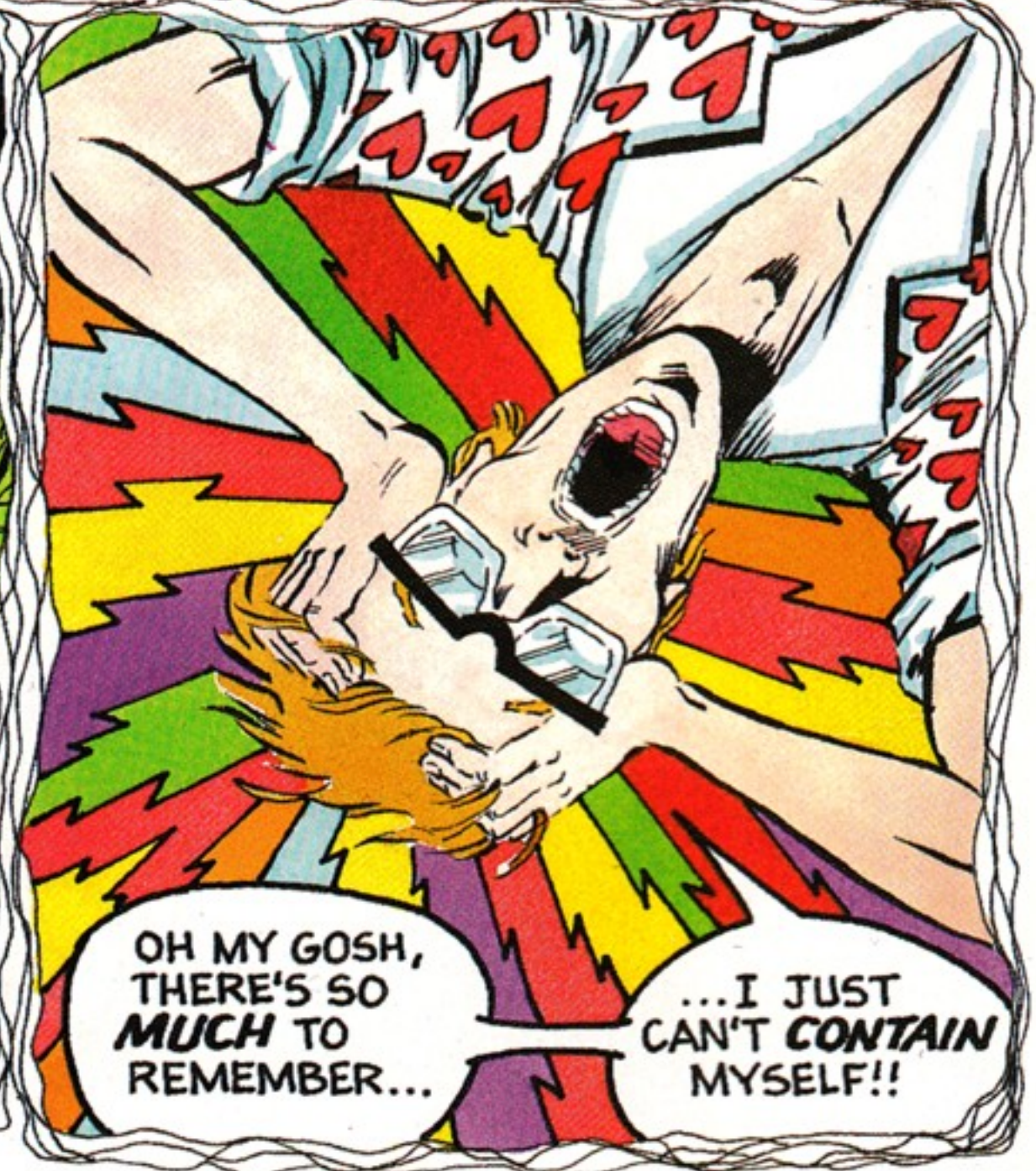
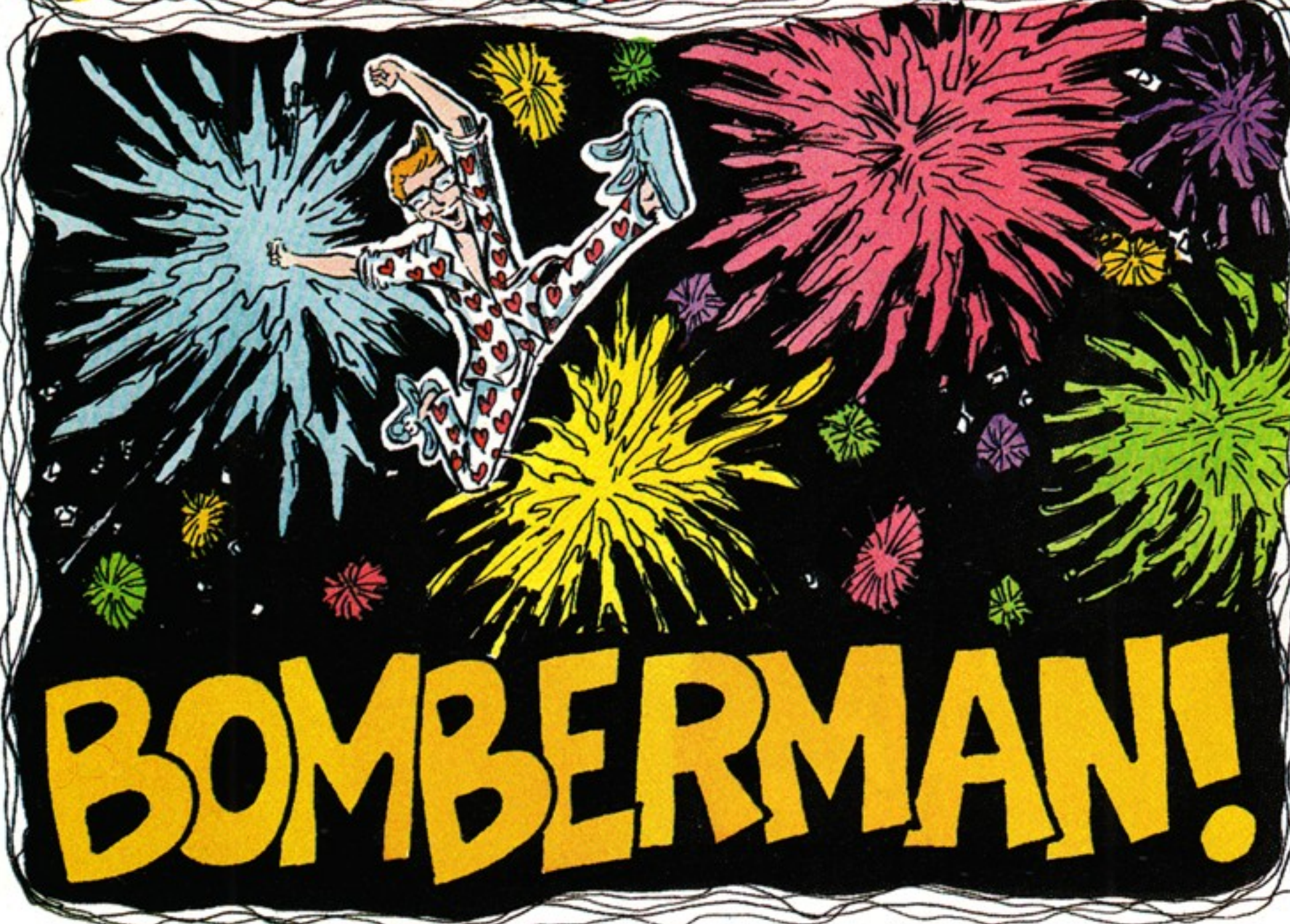
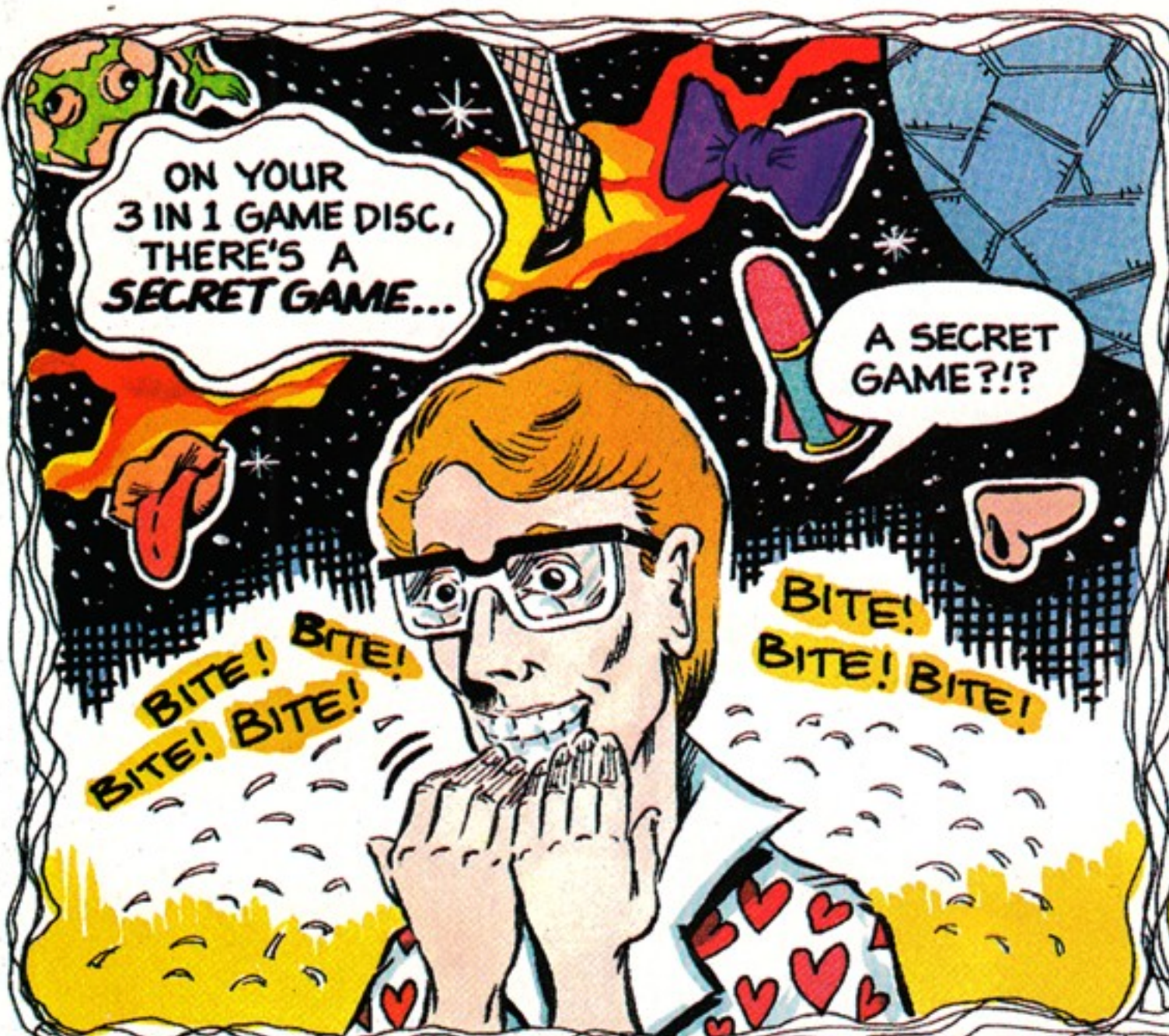


JOHNNY TURBO









GATE OF THUNDER

The winner of E.G.M. Editors' Choice: Gold Award.



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EXCLUSIVE EXPERIENCE ONLY ON THE NEW TURBO DUO MULTIMEDIA
VIDEO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM
AND THE TG-CD WITH SUPER CD SYSTEM CARD.



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TM

Top Coin-Ops for December 1992

Figures are courtesy of *RePlay* magazine, based on an earnings-opinion poll of arcade operators.

Best Upright Videos

1. *Lethal Enforcer* by Konami
2. *Mortal Kombat* by Williams
3. *Street Fighter II: Champion Edition* by Capcom
4. *Terminator 2* by Midway
5. *Golden Axe II* by Sega
6. *Super High Impact* by Midway
7. *Space Lords* by Atari
8. *Turbo Out Run* by Sega
9. *Sunset Riders* by Konami
10. *Space Gun* by Taito

Best Deluxe Videos

1. *Suzuka 8 Hours* by Namco
2. *Virtua Racing* by Sega
3. *Race Drivin'* by Atari
4. *Final Lap 2* by Namco
5. *Grand Prix Star* by Jaleco
6. *Steel Talons* by Atari
7. *Mad Dog II* by ALG
8. *Moto Frenzy* by Atari
9. *X-Men* by Konami
10. *Final Lap* by Atari

Best Video Software

1. *World Heroes* by SNK
2. *Art of Fighting* by SNK
3. *Bucky O'Hare* by Konami
4. *Street Fighter II* by Capcom
5. *Neck N' Neck* by Bundra
6. *Aero Fighters* by McO'River
7. *Irem Skins* by Irem
8. *Heated Barrel* by Fabtek
9. *Raiden* by Fabtek
10. *S.S. Addams Family* by Ocean

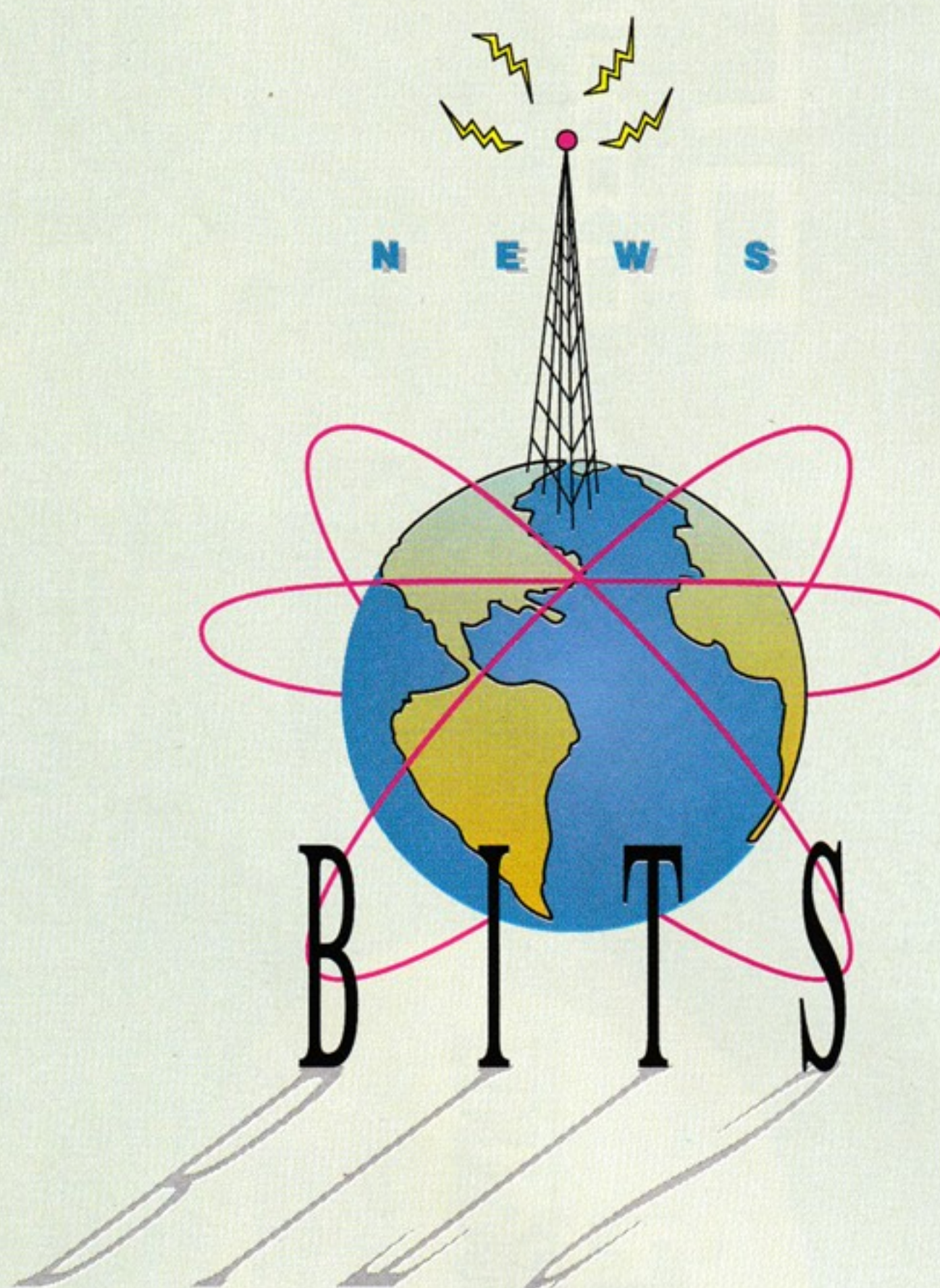
Top Video Games for December 1992

The lists of top-selling video-game software are provided courtesy of Babage's.

Super NES

1. *Street Fighter II* by Capcom
2. *Bulls vs. Blazers* by Electronic Arts
3. *John Madden Football '93* by Electronic Arts
4. *Super Mario Kart* by Nintendo
5. *Mario Paint* by Nintendo
6. *NHLPA Hockey '93* by Electronic Arts
7. *Death Valley Rally* by Sunsoft
8. *The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past* by Nintendo
9. *The Magical Quest Starring Mickey Mouse* by Capcom
10. *NCAA Basketball* by Nintendo

COMPILED BY DAVID S. MOSKOWITZ



Pirate BBS Settles out of Court

Eight separate plaintiffs, including Lotus Development Corporation, WordPerfect Corporation and Nintendo of America have reached an out-of-court settlement in their joint lawsuit against APL BBS, K&S Computing Group and over two dozen individuals, including the bulletin board's operator.

APL BBS had been operating as a clearinghouse for pirated software. Subscribers would have access to programs ranging from MS-DOS to the entire NES and SNES catalog, including *Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past*, in exchange for cash or software contributions.

In the final settlement, the owner of APL surrendered \$25,000 of equipment used to pirate the \$250,000 worth of software. All defendants are also permanently enjoined from not only violating copyrights but from operating any BBS where subscribers might have access to copyrighted software. The settlement also involved a cash forfeiture on the part of the defendants, but, like the BBS owner's name, the amount is confidential.

Meston Moves to Sandwich Islands Publishing

VG&CE writer Zach Meston has ended his relationship with Prima Publishing and

will now be working with J. Douglas Arnold writing Gaming Mastery books for Sandwich Islands Publishing. Meston, 20, began writing with Arnold in 1989 with their *Amiga Games Guide*.

The first books planned by the Meston/Arnold team will be *Awesome Genesis Secrets 3* and *Awesome Super Nintendo Secrets 2*.

Electronic Arts Debuts EA Sports

Following the settlement of its dispute with ESPN over the use of EASN on Electronic Arts sports games, Electronic Arts has changed the line name to EA Sports. This new logo will appear on all new sports games, beginning with new versions of *Madden '93*, *NHLPA Hockey '93* and *Bulls vs. Blazers*. Electronic Arts will also release special editions of EA Sports games that will be numbered and carry a special seal, as well as a collectible, inside.

The first "1st Round" product will be *NHLPA Hockey '93* for the Sega Genesis, which will include an offer card for a free 24" x 36" *NHLPA Hockey* banner.

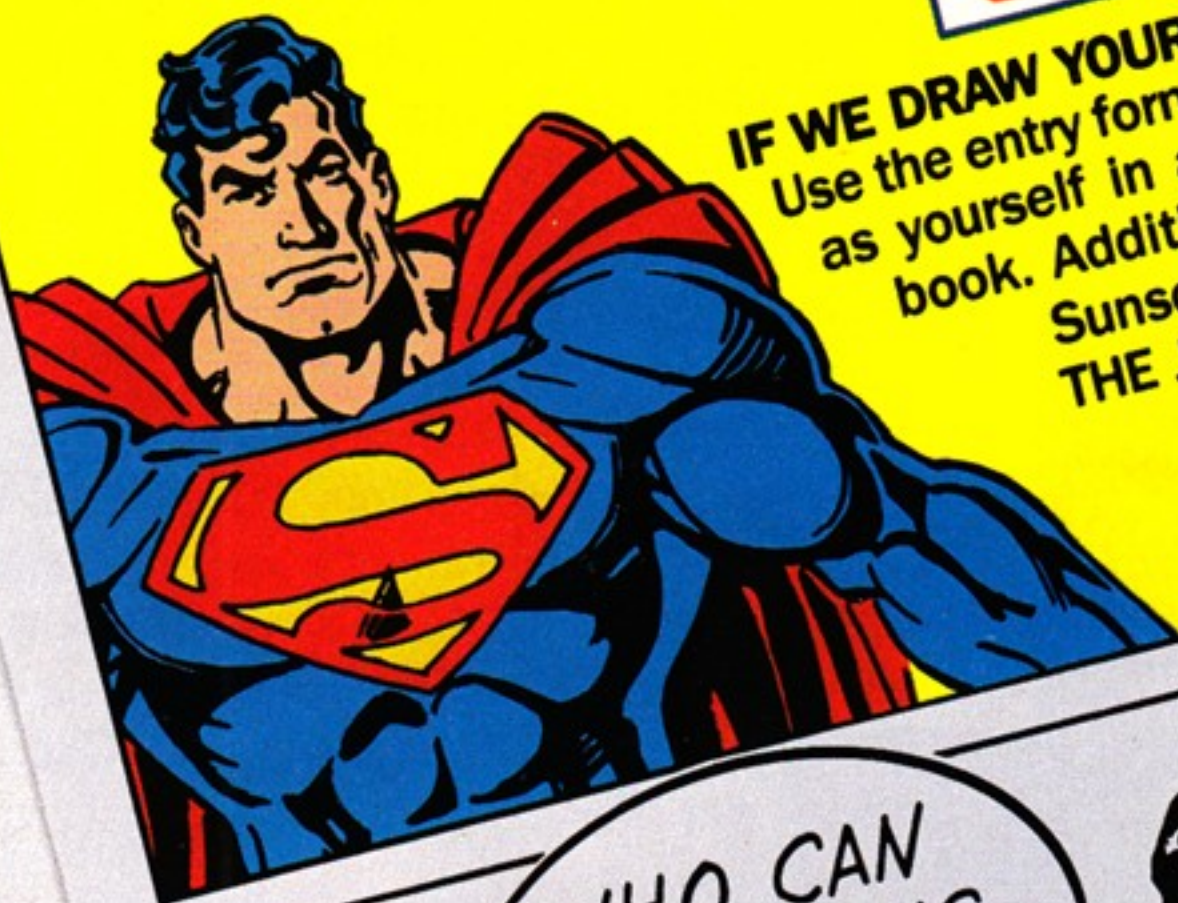


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CITY _____ AGE _____
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OFFICIAL RULES AND CONDITIONS

1. NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. No purchase or payment of money or any other thing of value is necessary to enter this contest. You may enter this contest by mailing either a completed official contest form or a 3" x 5" card with your full name, address, daytime telephone number and the words "Sun Corporation of America, America Comic Book Sweepstakes" printed on it to Sun Corporation of America, 11165 Knott Avenue, Cypress, CA 90630, Attn: Sweepstakes Contest.
2. You may submit as many entries as you like, however, each entry must be mailed separately. Sponsors disclaim all liability, and are not responsible, for lost, mutilated, late or misdirected entries, or for typographical errors on the official contest entry forms or the official rules and conditions of this contest. Entries must be postmarked no later than April 30, 1993. Entries will not be returned. This contest runs from October 1, 1992 through April 30, 1993. All entries are the sole and exclusive property of Sun Corporation of America.

3. GRAND PRIZE. One (1) grand prize will be awarded. The grand prize winner will have his or her name and likeness used as a character which will appear in one future edition of a DC Comics Inc. comic book. The grand prize has a retail value of less than \$50.00 as valued by the Sponsors. No other prizes will be awarded. All entrants hereby agree that if they are selected to receive the grand prize they consent to, and by acceptance of the grand prize the participant selected agrees to sign a waiver and release in which he or she consents in writing to the right of Sun Corporation of America, DC Comics Inc. and their respective affiliates and agents to use his or her name and likeness for advertising and publicity purposes and as a character in one DC Comics Inc. comic book without additional compensation of any kind whatsoever. Failure to sign the waiver and release will result in forfeiture of the grand prize. Unless the participant selected forfeits the grand prize, whether intentionally or unintentionally, the grand prize will be awarded.
4. PRIZE DRAWING. The random drawing to select the grand prize winner will be conducted by Sponsors on or after May 10, 1993. The grand prize winner will be notified by mail by May 31, 1993. Odds of winning will be determined based upon the total number of entries received by Sponsors.

5. The grand prize is not transferable, assignable or redeemable for cash. Sponsors reserve the right to substitute the grand prize with a prize or prizes of comparable value. The grand prize winner and/or parent or legal guardian is solely responsible for any and all applicable federal, state and local taxes.
6. ELIGIBILITY. This contest is open to residents of the United States, except where prohibited by law, and with the exception of employees and families of employees of Sun Corporation of America, DC Comics Inc., Warner Bros., Warner Bros. Consumer Products, Sun Electronics Corporation and any and all advertising agencies and publishers involved in any way with marketing and publicizing of this contest.

7. For the name of the grand prize winner, send a stamped, self addressed envelope to Sun Corporation of America, 11165 Knott Avenue, Cypress, CA 90630, Attn: Sweepstakes Contest Winner. Residents of Washington and Vermont need not enclose a stamped envelope.

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CIRCLE #113 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

Sega Genesis

1. *Sonic the Hedgehog 2* by Sega
2. *John Madden Football '93* by Electronic Arts
3. *NHLPA Hockey '93* by Electronic Arts
4. *NFL Sports Talk Football* by Sega
5. *Streets of Rage 2* by Sega
6. *Bulls vs. Lakers* by Electronic Arts
7. *Taz-mania* by Sega
8. *WWF Super Wrestlemania Challenge* by Flying Edge
9. *Captain America and the Avengers* by Data East
10. *Terminator 2: The Arcade Game* by Arena

NES

1. *Tecmo Super Bowl* by Tecmo
2. *Tecmo NBA Basketball* by Tecmo
3. *Super Mario Bros. 3* by Nintendo
4. *Dragon Warrior IV* by Enix
5. *Mega Man 5* by Capcom
6. *Tetris* by Nintendo
7. *Super Mario Bros. 2* by Nintendo
8. *Monopoly* by Parker Bros.
9. *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: The Manhattan Project* by Konami
10. *Home Alone 2* by T-HQ

TurboGrafx-16/Turbo Duo

1. *Air Zonk* by TTI
2. *Hit the Ice* by TTI
3. *Chase HQ* by TTI
4. *Order of the Griffin* by TTI
5. *Cosmic Fantasy II* by Working Designs
6. *Shape Shifter* by TTI
7. *Ys III—Wanderers From Ys* by NEC
8. *Splatterhouse* by NEC
9. *Falcon* by TTI
10. *Exile* by Working Designs

Nintendo Game Boy

1. *Super Mario Land 2: 6 Golden Coins* by Nintendo
2. *Super Mario Land* by Nintendo
3. *Kirby's Dream Land* by Nintendo
4. *Yoshi* by Nintendo
5. *The Ren & Stimpy Show* by T-HQ
6. *Home Alone II* by T-HQ
7. *Metroid* by Nintendo
8. *Mega Man 3* by Capcom
9. *Play Action Football* by Nintendo
10. *NBA All Star Challenge 2* by LJN

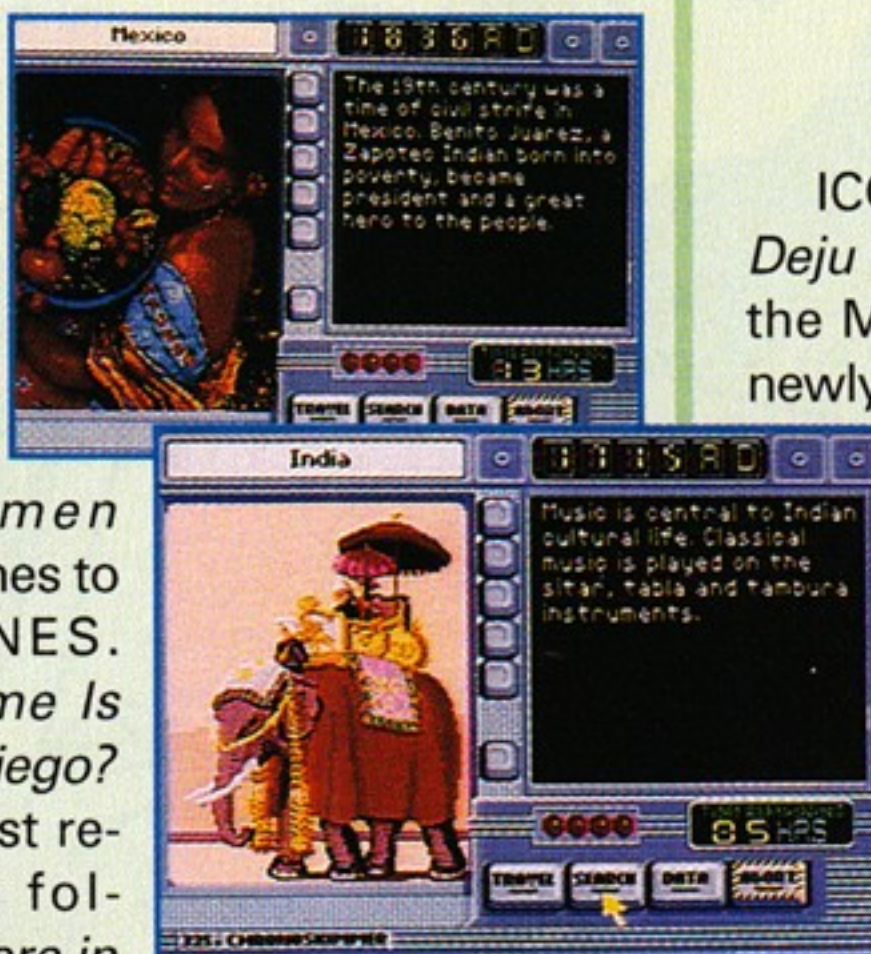
Sanctuary Woods Joins as EA Affiliate

Electronic Arts has signed an agreement with Sanctuary Woods Multimedia Corp. to distribute Woods' CD-ROM based product line.

Sanctuary Woods' titles include *The Awesome Adventures of Victor Vector & Yondo*, Shelly Duvall's *It's a Bird's Life* and the upcoming *Hawaii High*, which will feature artwork and stories from Trina Robbins.

Carmen Sandiego Found at Hi Tech

Hi Tech Expressions has acquired the rights to begin converting Brøderbund's multimillion-selling *Carmen Sandiego* games to the Super NES. *Where in Time Is Carmen Sandiego?* will be the first release, soon followed by *Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego?*



SPA Offers Disk-Based Piracy Warning

The Software Publishers Association has created an animated message stressing the illegality of software piracy and made it available to all software publishers. The program features a graphic image of a pirate behind bars, and may be easily customized by publishers who wish to add their own message or graphic.

Interested parties may download a copy of the message from America Online and CompuServe.

U2's Edge Gets War Fever

The recently aired Zoo TV U2 television special featured a two-minute segment with The Edge playing Absolute Entertainment's *Super Battle-tank*. The guitarist for the politically pacifistic band revels in the de-



struction of Iraqi tanks and SCUD launchers, and deliriously recalls his first kill.

Midway Makes Mortal Kombat T-Shirts

Midway Manufacturing has released *Mortal Kombat* T-shirts featuring the dragon-emblazoned logo on a black shirt. Available in sizes small, medium, large, extra-large and double extra-large (for \$2 more), the shirts cost \$9.95 plus \$2.50 for postage and handling (Illinois residents add 6% sales tax), and may be ordered from: Mortal Kombat, 1340 W. Irving Park Road, Suite 414, Chicago, IL 60613.

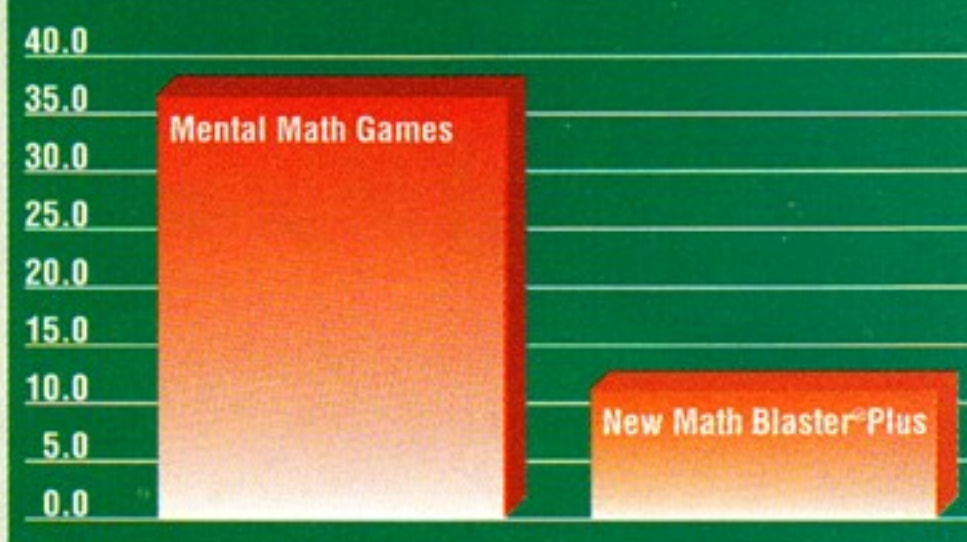
ICOM to Rerelease Classic Adventures

ICOM Simulations Inc. is rereleasing *Deju Vu I* and *II* as well as *Shadowgate* for the Macintosh. ICOM is also releasing a newly colorized version of *Shadowgate* for Microsoft Windows on IBM PC compatibles.

Davidson, Waterford Institute Resolve Dispute

The Waterford Institute has modified the packaging of its *Mental Math Games* following the threat of legal action by Davidson & Associates. The packaging originally had a comparison of the relative number of problems users

Mental Math Games vs. New Math Blaster®Plus
Math problems solved per minute



could solve within a given time using both *Mental Math Games* and Davidson's *New Math Blaster Plus*. Davidson charged that the data showing a significantly higher rate for *Mental Math Games* was false and misleading. Waterford maintains the information is true, but has dropped the comparison rather than face litigation.

Waite Falcon Guide Released

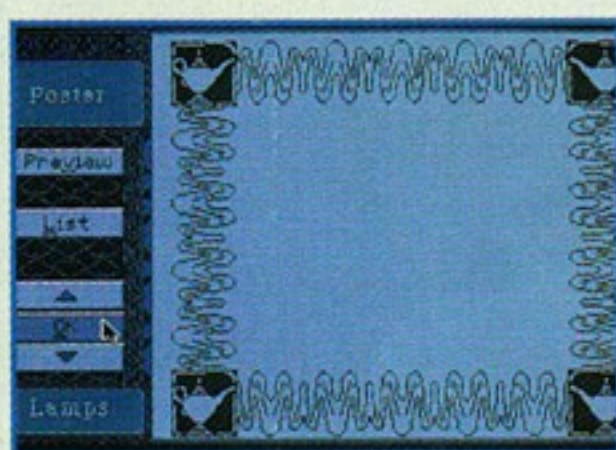
Waite Group Press has released Joe Powell and Tom Bashom's *Falcon 3: The Complete Handbook*. The guide covers *Falcon* versions 3.0D, 3.0E and *Operation Fighting Tiger*. Also included is a disk containing a demo, utilities and over 40 Red Flag Missions.

Smart Choice Releases CD Package

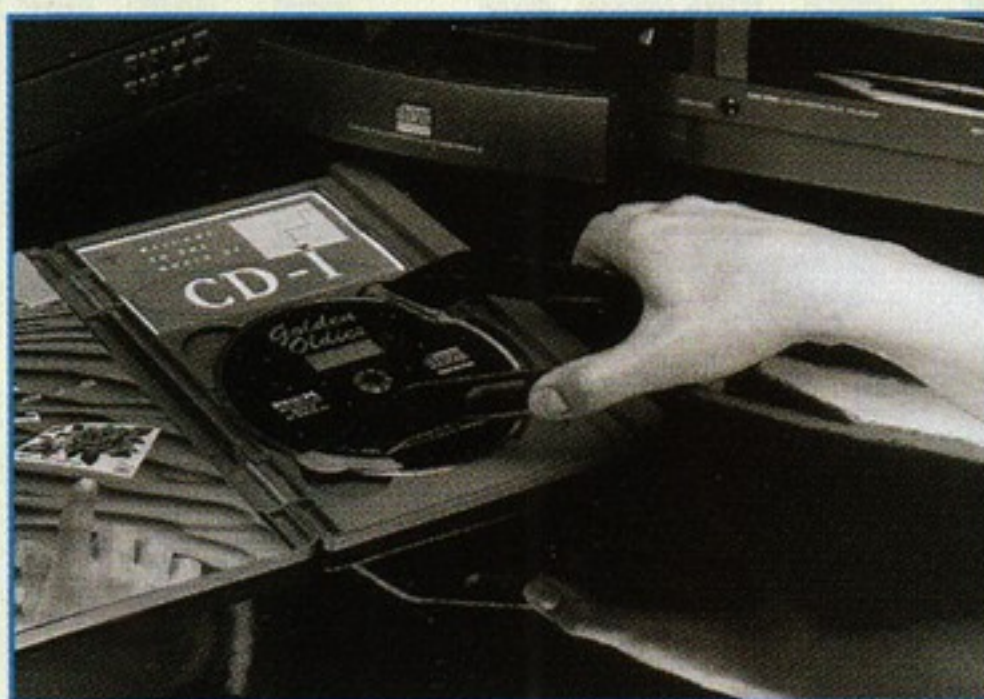


Smart Choice has released CD Revolution multimedia upgrade kit. The hardware includes a CM-205 CD-ROM drive, a Sound Blaster Pro 2 stereo sound card, two small speakers, a pair of headsets and a microphone. Also included are the CD-ROM software titles *Loom*, *Wing Commander*, *Ultima VI*, *Toolworks Multimedia Encyclopedia* and *The Animals*, which was produced by the San Diego Zoo. For more information, call (800) 477-6278.

Disney Releases Aladdin Print Kit



Walt Disney Software has released *Disney's Aladdin Print Kit*, which features all of the major characters from the film *Aladdin*. The fourth in Disney's series of print kits, *Aladdin* supports both color and black-and-white printers, and provides music throughout the program.



Audio File Releases Disklift

Audio File has released the Disklift, a set of cushioned pincers designed to make compact-disc handling hands-free by grasping the discs around the outer or inner circumference. A list of retailers can be obtained by calling (800) 662-0224.

SPA Spring Symposium to Be Held in San Diego

The Software Publishers Association has selected the Marriott Hotel and Marina in San Diego, California, as the site for its Spring Symposium to be held March 3-6.

More than 1,200 industry leaders are expected to attend the conference, which features clinics, "boot camps," crosstalk sessions and an award ceremony hosted by comedienne Paula Poundstone.

For registration information, call (202) 452-1600. 📞

Sega Game Gear

1. *Sonic the Hedgehog 2* by Sega
2. *The Majors: Pro Baseball* by Sega
3. *Batman Returns* by Sega
4. *Streets of Rage* by Sega
5. *Taz-mania* by Sega
6. *Columns* by Sega
7. *Shinobi 2* by Sega
8. *Lemmings* by Sega
9. *Prince of Persia* by Domark
10. *Wimbledon Tennis* by Sega

Atari Lynx

(All games this month produced by Atari.)

1. *Dirty Larry Renegade Cop*
2. *Dracula*
3. *Hard Drivin'*
4. *Batman Returns*
5. *Baseball Heroes*
6. *NFL Football*
7. *Shadow of the Beast*
8. *Rampart*
9. *Gauntlet*
10. *Hockey*

Top IBM PC Games for October 1992

The list of top-selling computer software was compiled by PC Research of Washington, D.C., based on sales data received from Babbage's, Electronics Boutique, Software Etc. and Waldensoftware.

Top 10 IBM PC Games

1. *King's Quest VI* by Sierra On-Line
2. *Wizardry: Crusaders of the Dark Savant* by Sir-Tech
3. *Might & Magic: Clouds of Xeen* by New World Computing
4. *Quest for Glory III* by Sierra On-Line
5. *Great Naval Battles* by SSI
6. *Hardball III* by Accolade
7. *LINKS 386 Pro* by Access
8. *Wing Commander* by Origin
9. *Aces of the Pacific* by Sierra On-Line
10. *Civilization* by MicroProse

Top 10 IBM PC Education Games

1. *Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego?* by Brøderbund
2. *Where in the U.S.A. Is Carmen Sandiego?* by Brøderbund
3. *Your Personal Trainer for the S.A.T.* by Davidson
4. *Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing* by Software Toolworks
5. *New Math Blaster Plus* by Davidson
6. *Algebra Plus* by Davidson
7. *Playroom* by Brøderbund
8. *Reader Rabbit 1* by The Learning Company
9. *Mario Teaches Typing* by Interplay
10. *Reader Rabbit 2* by The Learning Company 📞

VG&CE REPLAY

MARCH 1990: THE MOVIES—In *The Wizard* (November 1989), Fred Savage's little brother travels across the country to play in a national Nintendo gaming contest, as Nintendo products are prominently featured throughout the journey. **THE REAL WORLD**—The Nintendo World Championship as it tours the country. Dallas, Texas, is the first city for the NWC. The big news, though, is how the Triathlon game pak has a fluke allowing contestants to rack up high scores that are "legal" within the competition's vague rules, as reported in VG&CE. When the NWC visits other cities, a rule forbidding "editors of video-game magazines" from competing is appended. Overheard on the

floor of the NWC: (Preen boy to friend) "This is just like the movie!"

MARCH 1982: The Federal Court of Chicago rules in favor of Atari Inc. in a suit against Magnavox Home Entertainment, regarding Magnavox's *K.C. Munchkin* game for its Odyssey² system. The suit stated what for many was obvious: That *K.C.* was "inspired" by *Pac-Man*. Later in the month, Atari's release of *Pac-Man* for its Video Computer System game unit sets off a nationwide frenzy. A copy of the cartridge ranges from \$30 to a whopping \$45. All retail outlets sell out, with one distributor moving out 11,000 *Pac-Man* cartridges in two days.

MARCH 1983: *E.T., the Extra-Terrestrial* for the Atari VCS bombs.

WHAT HAPPENED THEN IN ELECTRONIC GAMING

Since its release, *E.T.* underperformed in sales, and about 1.5 million copies of the unwanted game sit in warehouses. Blame is placed on the game being too complex for younger children and the public's tiring of the overall *E.T.* merchandising blitz. Atari still plans a version of *E.T.* for its home computers and the arcades. Later in the year, the Atari computer *E.T.* bombs too. The coin-op is then canceled.

MARCH 1985: IBM drops its PCjr 17 months after its debut. Lessons learned: 1) Don't design a computer that features a push-button keyboard; and 2) Don't give it a stupid nickname like "Peanut."

—Howard Wen

IF IT'S ON THE TOUR, IT'S IN THE GAME.

It's tee time. And your chance to join the world's most exclusive tour. The greatest golfers, the toughest tournaments, the biggest prize money. Everything you'd expect from the PGA TOUR®.

It's all here in PGA TOUR Golf II. The brand new version of the greatest golf game anywhere.

You go head to head with 60 of the best pros ever to stalk eagles.

Like Couples, Lietzke, Stadler, Sindelar, Azinger, O'Meara. All the big money players.

PGA TOUR II delivers a much bigger course in golf. Six unique TPC courses and a fantasy course. Including these new ones: the TPC at Eagle Trace, TPC of Scottsdale, and TPC at Southwind. And five actual PGA TOUR tournaments. Plus the ultimate big money shootout: A new skins challenge on any course.

Every hole's designed from the original course blueprints. Right down to each hazard, bunker, green, fairway, and rough.

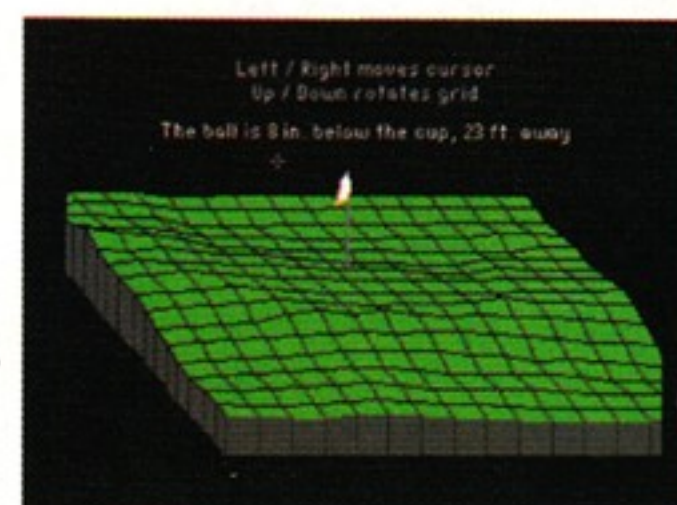


PGA TOUR II now has a fade and draw meter for hitting letter-perfect tee shots.

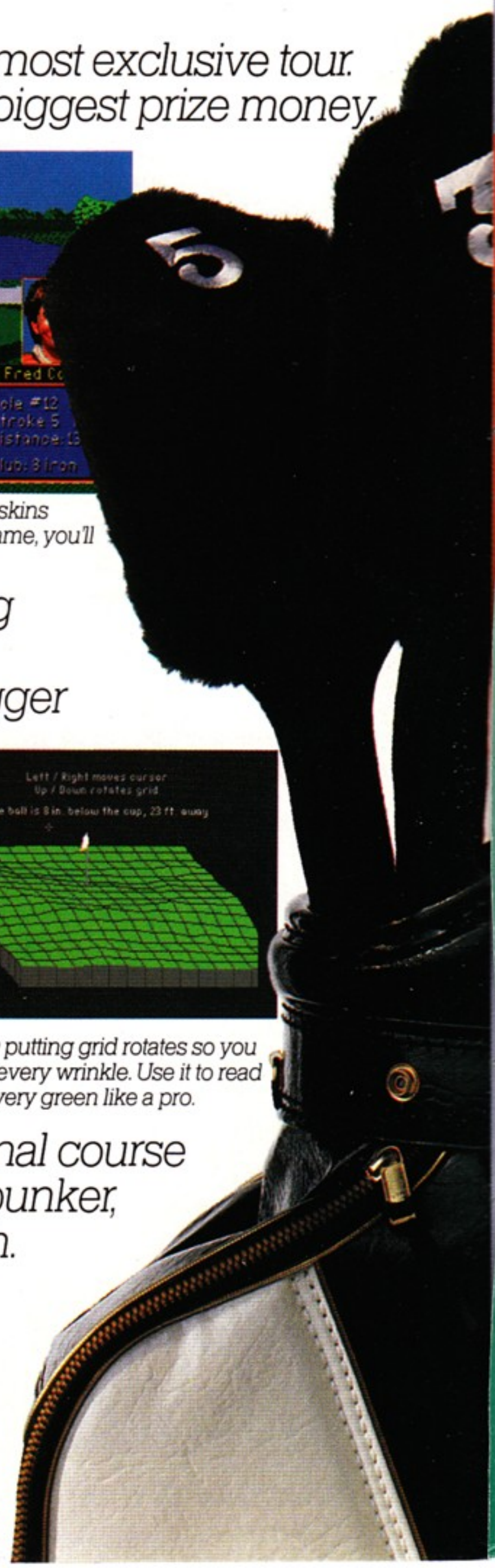
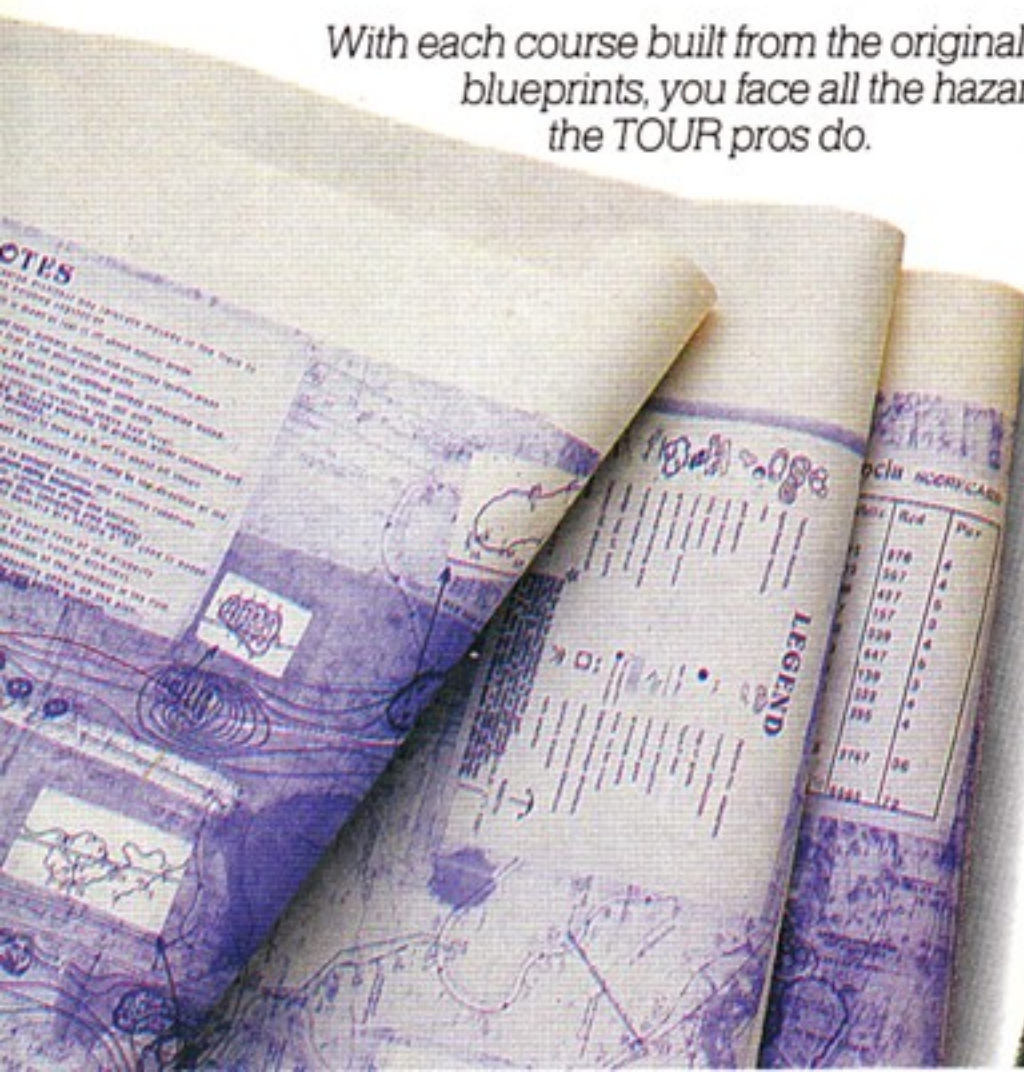
With each course built from the original blueprints, you face all the hazards the TOUR pros do.



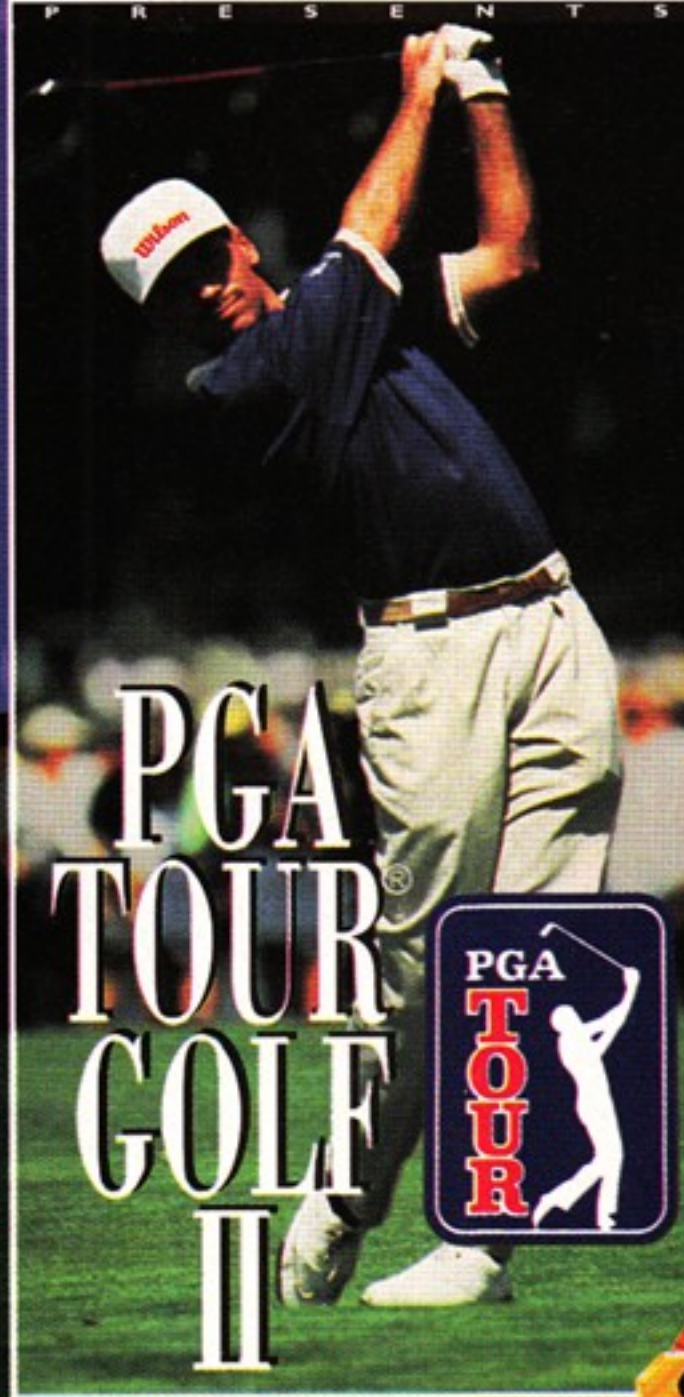
Take your best shot at the new skins challenge. If you're on top of your game, you'll hit the big payoff.



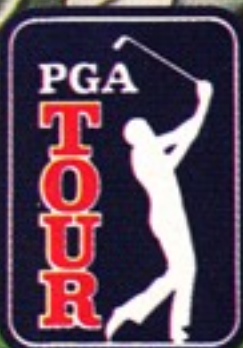
The 3-D putting grid rotates so you can see every wrinkle. Use it to read every green like a pro.



EA SPORTS
ELECTRONIC ARTS



PGA TOUR GOLF II



Licensed by Sega Enterprises Ltd.
for play on the SEGA GENESIS SYSTEM

7 COURSES
5 TOURNAMENTS
AND A
SKINS
CHALLENGE

BY
POLYGAMES

So now you go a lot farther on the PGA TOUR. With awesome new graphics. A fade and draw meter for improved shot control. More stats than ever. Like average hole scores vs. par, number of holes in one, your winnings in the skins challenge. And new digitized sounds. Including sports-caster Ron Barr as the tournament announcer.

You better be on the ball if you want to win any prize money. The roughs are a

jungle, the sand traps, a desert. Wind conditions and 10 ball lies can drop you from the leaderboard faster than you can say bogey.

Luckily, 10 TOUR pros give you a course on how to play each hole.

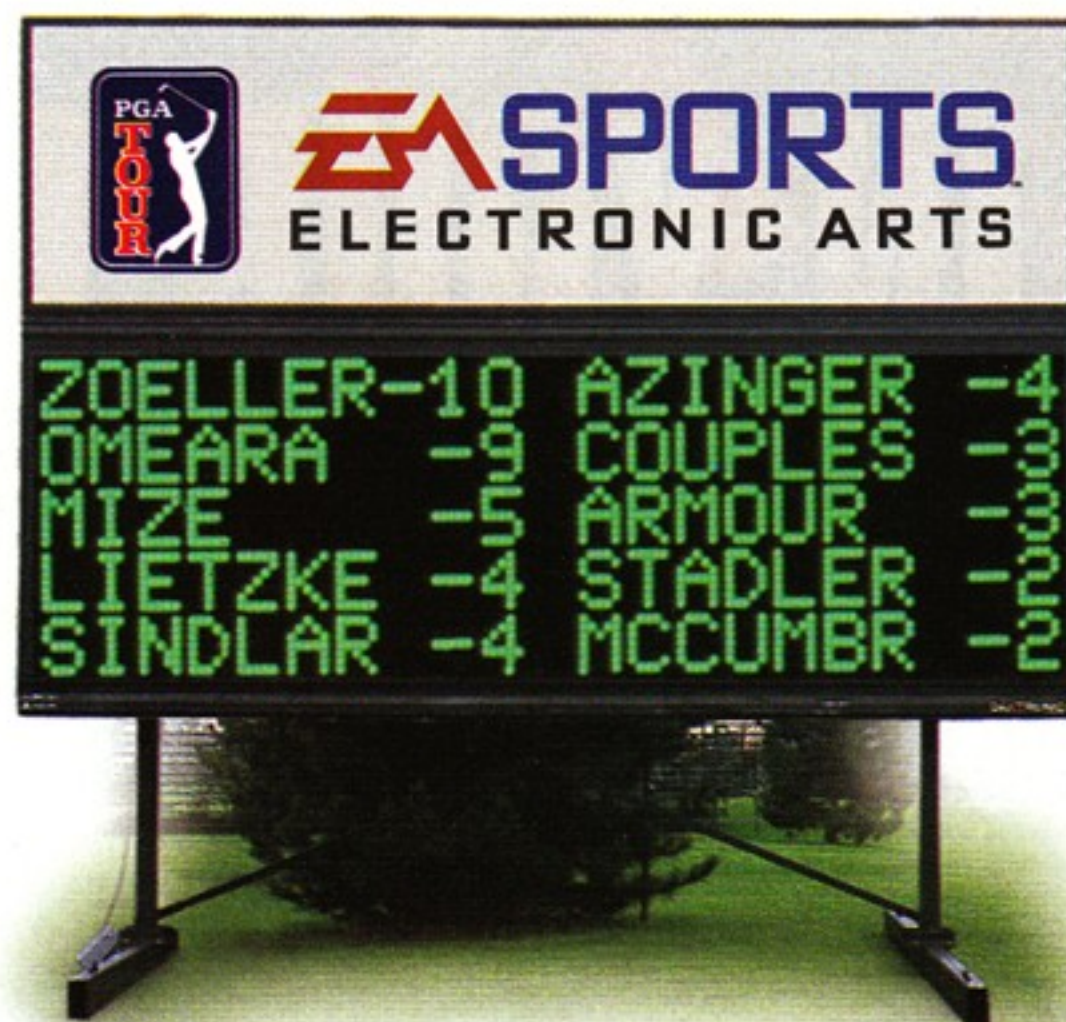
They'll even play right alongside you. And rotating 3-D putting grids give you a map on how to attack the greens.

EA SPORTS™ coverage follows every bounce of the ball. With multiple camera angles. Instant replay. A new Hole Browser™ that lets you be the camera-man. Plus battery back-up saves it all: tournaments, players, prize money, and stats.

Score this game of golf. Call (800) 245-4525 anytime. Or see your local Electronic Arts dealer. And go the distance on the PGA TOUR.

EA SPORTS
ELECTRONIC ARTS

If it's in the game, it's in the game.



If you're on top of your game in tournament play, you'll make a name for yourself on the leaderboard.



A seven course meal for golfers. Six TPC courses. Plus a fantasy course.

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HINT: 1-900-288-4468-HINT

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CIRCLE #103 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

Tips are graded on a scale of one to five joysticks. The more joysticks that are colored in, the more valuable the hint is.

Blow the dust off those old games, and try out some of our new hints! If you have some great hints and tips for us, just put them on a piece of paper and send them to: VG&CE, Attn: Easter Egg Hunt, 9171 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 300, Beverly Hills, CA 90210. The author of each new tip we use will receive \$10. Write neatly, and be sure to include your name and complete address!



BY
CHRIS BIENI

Once again, VG&CE's Easter Egg Hunt delivers the goods with out...



Go to the "Options" screen. Controller 2: C, Up, Right, Down. Properly. Once that code is entered at any time, then press the columns of green dots on the platform.

GAME GENIE CODES

Street Fighter II

(CAPCOM FOR THE SUPER NES)



For use with Galoob's Super NES-compatible Game Genie Video Game Enhancer

893E-04DF—Most punches and kicks do no damage

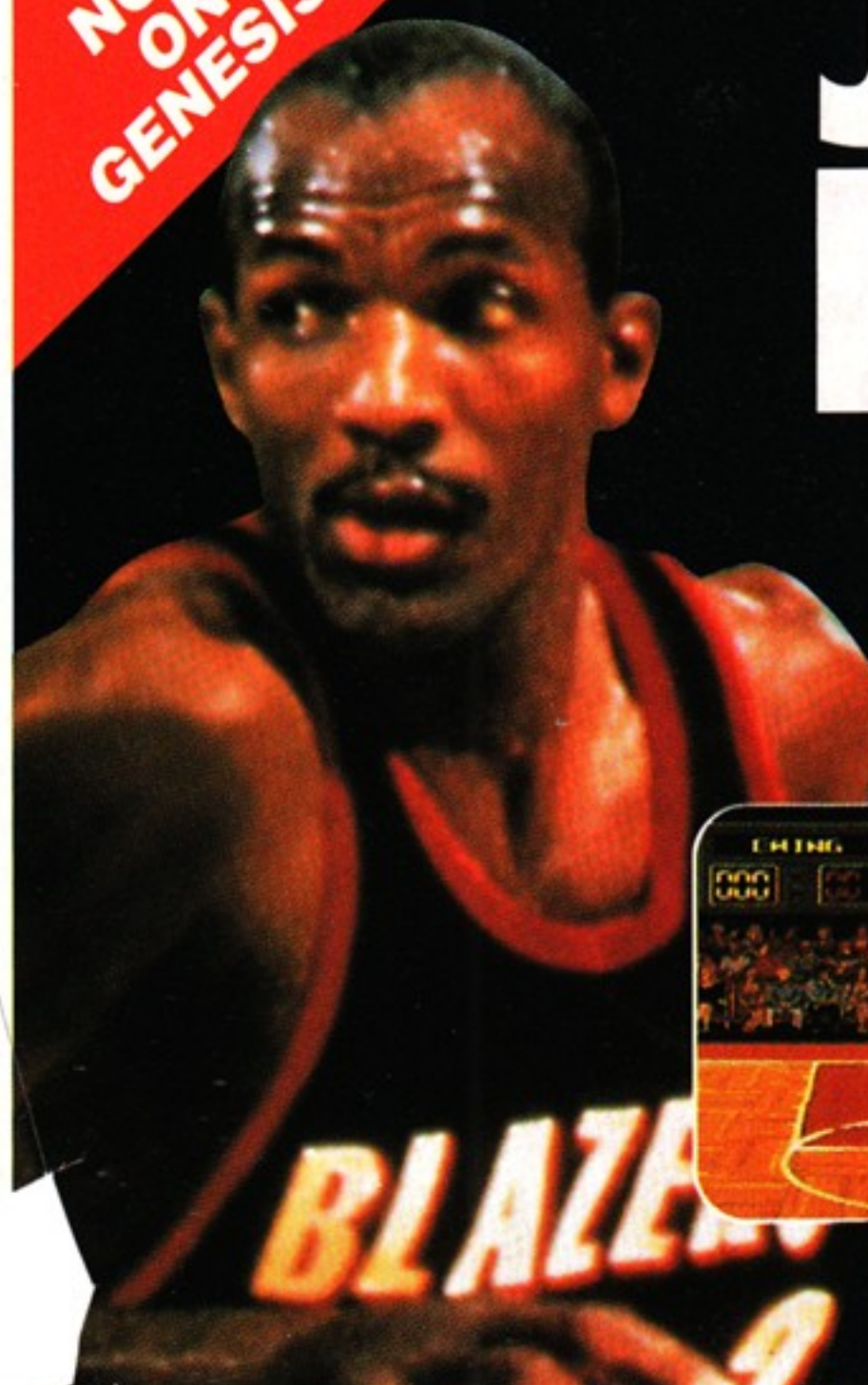
DD61-6DA9—Do special moves in mid-air

1C65-DF00—Players move faster

DF81-A704—One draw ends fight in "Vs." battle



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THE
PLAY WITH
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continued on page 31



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PROTECT JOHN CONNOR
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PREVENT JUDGMENT DAY



WEAPONS - SELECT
>> RAPID FIRE MACHINE GUN
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continued from page 29

Art of Fighting

(SNK FOR THE NEO•GEO)



Here it is—the top-secret “hidden move” that gamers all over the country have been looking for! Only Ryo and Robert can perform this incredible attack, which reduces your opponent’s life meter by more than one half.



Assuming that your character is facing to the right, here’s how to do it: Roll the joystick from Down to Right, then hold the C button and press A. The command is almost exactly like the basic “Ryu Geki Ken” or “Koh Oh Ken” fireball attacks, but you need to press and hold C before you hit the A button. Obviously, if you’re facing left, you must curl the joystick to the left instead of to the right as described.

Your character will grimace as if he’s about to deliver the “Super Death Blow,” but he quickly snaps out of it to leap across the screen and unleash an incredibly fierce hyper-speed barrage of punches and kicks that’s sure to drop plenty of jaws at your local arcade.

Sounds easy, right? It is, but the trick will only work under certain conditions. Specifically, your spirit meter must be at

least 75% full and your strength meter must be less than 25% full. If you meet these criteria, be prepared to snap, crackle and pop your opponent’s skull!

Cobra Command

(SEGA FOR THE GENESIS WITH SEGA CD)



To play any stage of this first-person shooter, press **START** at the title screen. When you see the words “Game Start” and “Config Mode,” press Up, Down, Left, Right, Right, Up. You should hear an explosion sound the first time you hit Right in this sequence—this signifies the availability of the “Training Mode” as explained last issue. You’ll hear another explosion when you finish the sequence, which tells you that the stage-select mode is in place.



Nobody knows what this last trick is good for, but here it is: with the stage-select code in place, pressing A, B and C at the same time will give you a screenful of hexadecimal code that overlays the action.



When you reach the screen that says “New York—Stage 1,” you should be able to press Right and Left on the control pad to change your starting level. Once the action starts, you can skip to the end of the current stage simply by pressing **START**. Press **START** in the final stage, and you’ll skip to the ending credits.



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PLAY WITH THE PROS!

continued on page 33

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This is what your enemies
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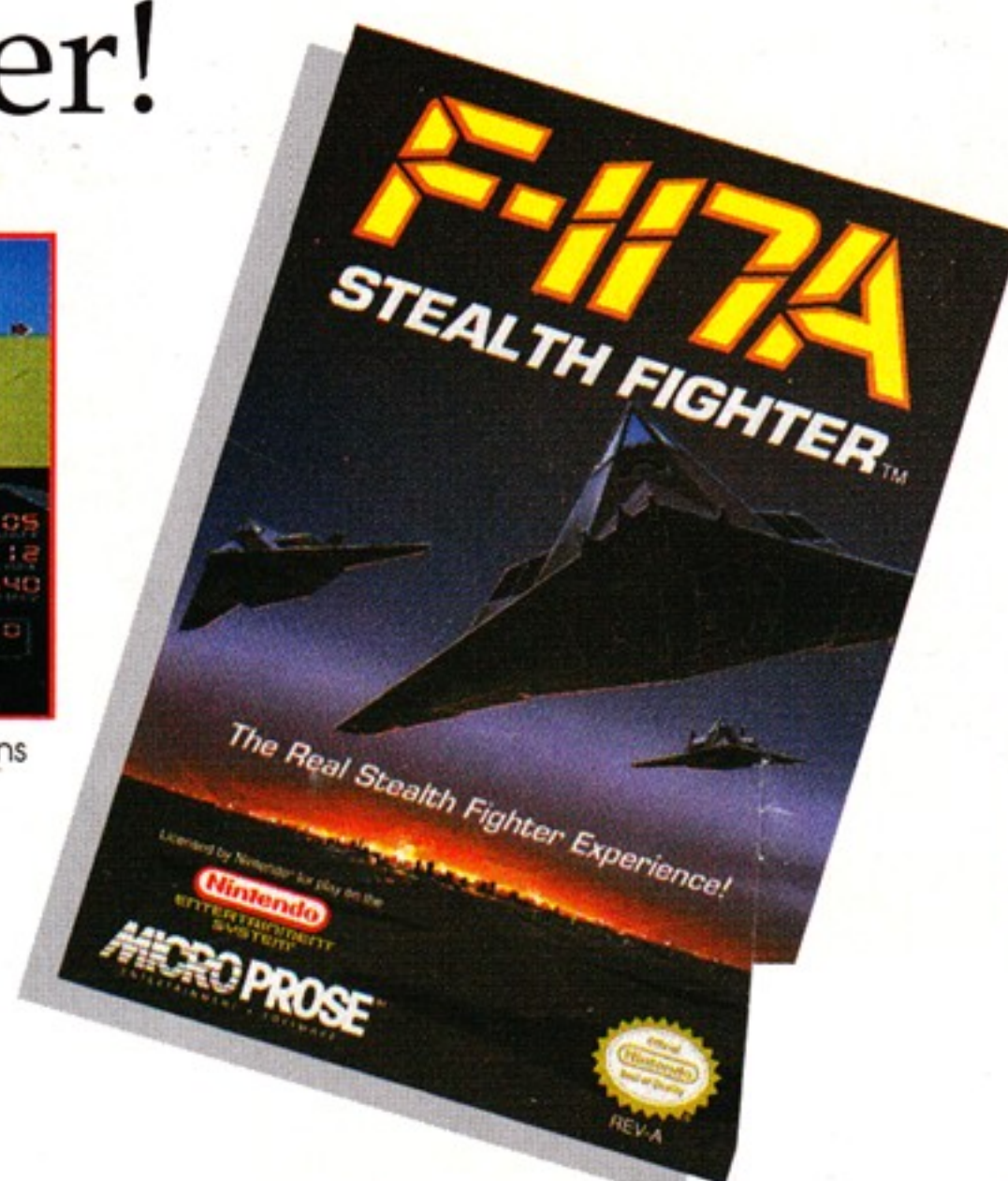
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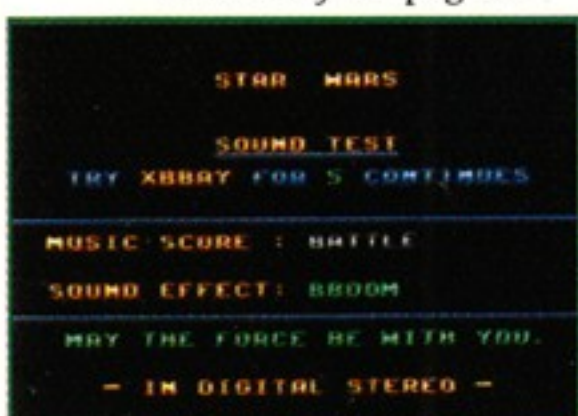
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continued from page 33



Super Star Wars

(JVC/LUCASARTS FOR THE SUPER NES)



Our contacts have discovered lots of great cheats for this incredible Super NES game. First, you can call up a "Sound Test" menu at any time during the game by holding down A, B, X and Y while pressing **START**. If you exit the sound test and return to it several times, you'll find that the screen starts to give you clues for cheats that you can use at the title screen.

Here's how they work: At the title screen, move the round cursor to "OPTION MENU" and press Y, Y, X, X, A, B, X, A; you'll hear a Jawa shout. This code makes the light saber weapon available to you from the start of the game. Try the code X, B, B, A, Y and you'll start the game with five continues; unfortunately, you can't use both of these tricks in the same game. Also, the codes will only work when the machine is first turned on. Thanks to reader Jack Thomas from Bloomington, Indiana, for sending us this Easter Egg.

If that's not enough, try this great cheat, which was submitted by C.F. through the CompuServe on-line network. Turn the machine on, then move the cursor to "OPTION MENU" and press A, A, A, A, X, B, B, B, B, Y, X, X, X, X, A, Y, Y, Y, Y, B. If you get all that in before the demo begins, you'll hear the Jawa; otherwise, turn the machine off and try again.

With the code successfully executed, you should get a "Select Hero" menu at the start of the game that allows you to choose your character. During the action, simultaneously pressing the L and R buttons on top of Controller 2 will bring up a "Game Debug Menu" that allows you to choose a starting stage, increase your lives and health and change your character and/or weapon!

Forgotten Worlds

(TTI FOR THE TURBOGRAFX-16/ TURBO DUO)



Though it's not quite as useful as the original game's two-player cooperative mode, the Super CD version of this Capcom shoot-'em-up does have a hidden "mix play" mode. If you hold down the I and II buttons and press **RUN** when the title screen reads "Push Run Button," you'll be able to choose this option. In the "mix play" mode, Player 1 controls the main character and Player 2 controls the "satellite" weapon. Use the I and II buttons to rotate the satellite, and press any direction on the control pad to fire.



It Came From the Desert

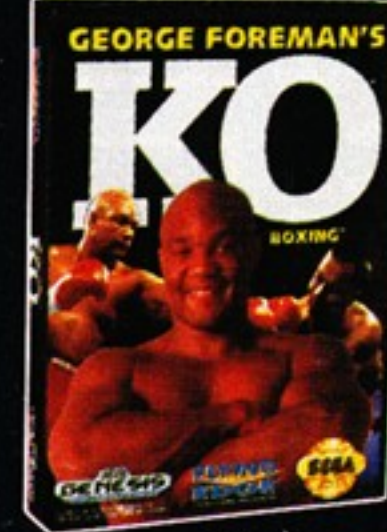
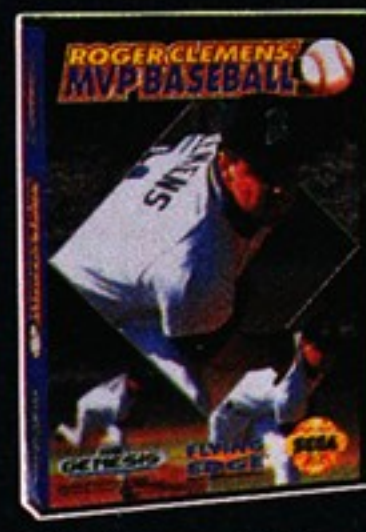
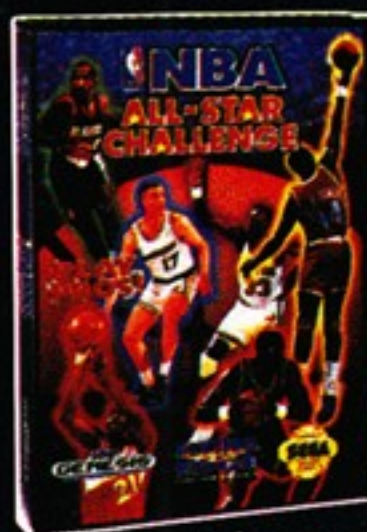
(NEC FOR THE TURBOGRAFX-16/TURBO DUO)



The giant ants aren't the only bugs in this CD-ROM adventure! Reader Zack Tippet of Raleigh, North Carolina wrote in to tell us how to take advantage of a strange quirk in the "Tunnel Combat" scenes. When Buzz is threatened by a giant ant or an Antdroid, press the II button to make him jump over his enemy and press the **RUN** button to pause the game when he's in the middle of the jump. While he's suspended in mid-leap, press the **RUN** button repeatedly and Buzz will slowly float through the air, passing over all the enemy creatures all the way to the end of the tunnel! When you reach a doorway and you're ready to come down, just press I or II and the game will continue normally.



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CIRCLE #103 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

VIDEO

GAME

PREVIEWS FIRST LOOK

BY CHRIS BIENIEK

Bram Stoker's Dracula

SONY IMAGESOFT
For the Sega Genesis
with Sega CD

AVAILABLE: SPRING

We promised to keep you up-to-date with new information about *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, so here's the latest: The VG&CE editors were recently shown exclusive footage of this Sega CD, which is being co-developed by Sony and Psygnosis Ltd. The main body of the game concerns itself with Jonathan Harker, who walks through dungeons, forests and Dracula's castle in a side-scrolling adventure that's unlike any previous incarnation of the classic horror novel.

The eye-popping background graphics were computer-animated by the same type of development system that is used to create the dizzying effects seen in dozens of TV commercials and in such films as Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* (remember the ballroom dancing scene?) After the Silicon Graphics computer had drawn the scrolling scenery based on the designers' object and room data, the images were digitized for the Genesis to be played back in real time from the CD. The Harker character's animation was digitized from a real actor, and the CD intermissions come directly from the Francis Ford Coppola film. Look for a late spring/early summer release for this one.



Shadowrun

DATA EAST
For the Super NES

AVAILABLE: SPRING

Based on the popular role-playing game from FASA Corporation, this off-the-wall mystery is part role-playing game and part adventure. Shown in an angled perspective that's vaguely reminiscent of Sony's *Solstice* and *Equinox* adventures, *Shadowrun* requires exploration, problem-solving and even a bit of control-pad dexterity for the game's frequent action sequences.

At the start of the game, your character is being toe-tagged and shoved into a drawer in a morgue. Moments later, you emerge from your temporary tomb and climb out, scaring the heck out of the morgue attendants as you start to explore your surroundings and try to learn who you are and how you came to be there.



Mechwarrior

ACTIVISION
For the Super NES

AVAILABLE: SPRING

Like *Shadowrun*, Activision's *Mechwarrior* is another FASA license that has been turned into a video-game adventure. This one is strictly an action game, though; it's essentially a home version of the theme park-style Battletech Center that FASA had built to recreate the feel of operating a giant mechanical warrior on a post-nuclear battlefield.

Using the Super NES' Mode 7 to scale and rotate the scenery as you look out from your Battle-Mech in a first-person perspective, *Mechwarrior* is faithful to the universe and technical specifications of the original RPG's rule books and combat. Look for dents and plenty of rocking explosions as you and your opponents test out the dozens of different 'Mechs and weapon types.



Fatal Fury

TAKARA

For the Genesis and Super NES

AVAILABLE: MARCH

Two new 16-bit versions of this SNK beat-'em-up will appear next month, courtesy of Takara. Both will feature Terry Bogard, his brother Andy and Joe Higashi, heroes of the original Neo-Geo game. Though neither one includes the two-against-one combat of the original—and only the Genesis version is expected to feature fighting action in two different planes as in the coin-op—the games have otherwise been translated with surprising accuracy.

All of the enemy characters are present, from the deceptively frail-looking Tung Fu Rue to the towering hulk named Raiden. The "arm-wrestling" bonus rounds have been replaced by more traditional *Street Fighter*-style timing contests, but all of the special attacks and digitized grunts and groans are intact. Both the Genesis and Super NES versions of *Fatal Fury* are expected to hit the shelves at approximately the same time.

Genesis version of *Fatal Fury*.



Super NES version of *Fatal Fury*.



Mutant League Football

ELECTRONIC ARTS

For the Sega Genesis

AVAILABLE: MARCH

This gruesome sports title is the first in a planned series of *Mutant* games from Electronic Arts. Taking place in an otherworldly league where the players have tails, scales and overgrown nails, *Mutant League Football* plays like a cross between *John Madden Football* and *Xenophobe*. There are plenty of "real" plays for sports fans, but nestled in with the sweeps, reverses and fake punts are plays like "Kill Referee" or "Slay-Action Pass."

Developed by several of the game folks who worked on the ghoulish *Crüe Ball* pin-ball simulator, *Mutant League Football* brings bloody animation and a great tongue-in-cheek sense of humor to the EA Sports line up.



Flashback—The Quest for Identity

U.S. GOLD

For the Sega Genesis (\$64.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

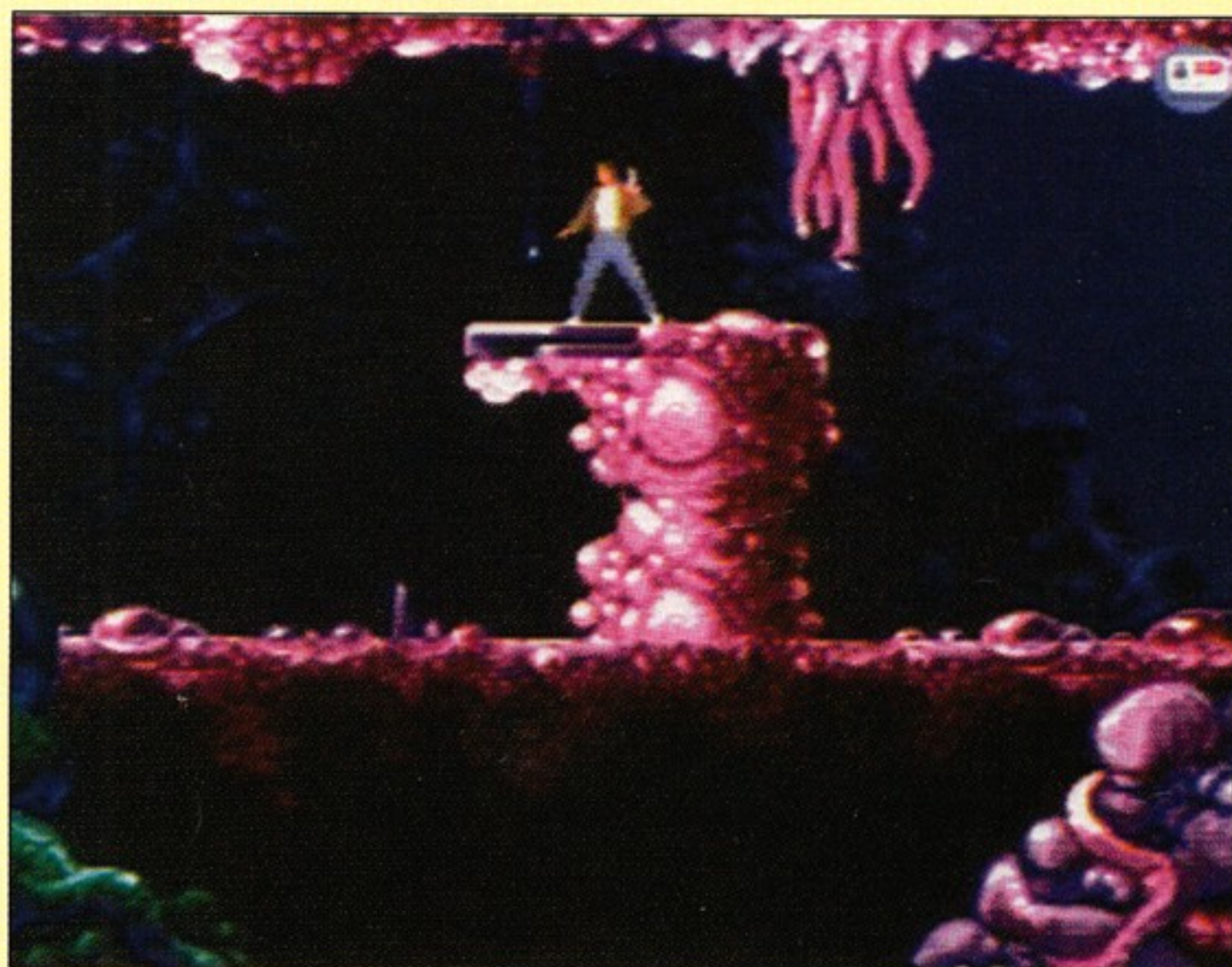
I must admit, when I first found out that Delphine Software was behind the development of *Flashback*, I expected the game to be a rehash of its SNES and PC game *Out of This World*. *Flashback* does have many of the cinematic polygon graphic elements found in *Out of This World*, including a new rotoscoping (remember that new buzzword) technique that allows up to 24 images per second. Also, just like *Out of This World*, *Flashback* tells an unfolding story.

One of *Flashback's* greatest appeals is that its action/adventure story line is a hybrid of a little of all of the best sci-fi movies to come out over the past ten years or so. It's part *Aliens*, part *Total Recall*, part *They Live*, part *Running Man*, part *T2*, etc. (Coincidentally, they just happen to be almost all Schwarzenegger movies.) Even some of the game's obstacles are taken right out of movies. Does anybody remember the silver flying ball from *Phantasm*?

Well, it's back, though not as crudely efficient as in the movie.

When the game begins, you find yourself marooned in the artificial jungle on Saturn's moon Titan, after having been kidnapped and having your memory completely erased. The only clue as to who and what you are is a vague holocube message made by you to yourself.

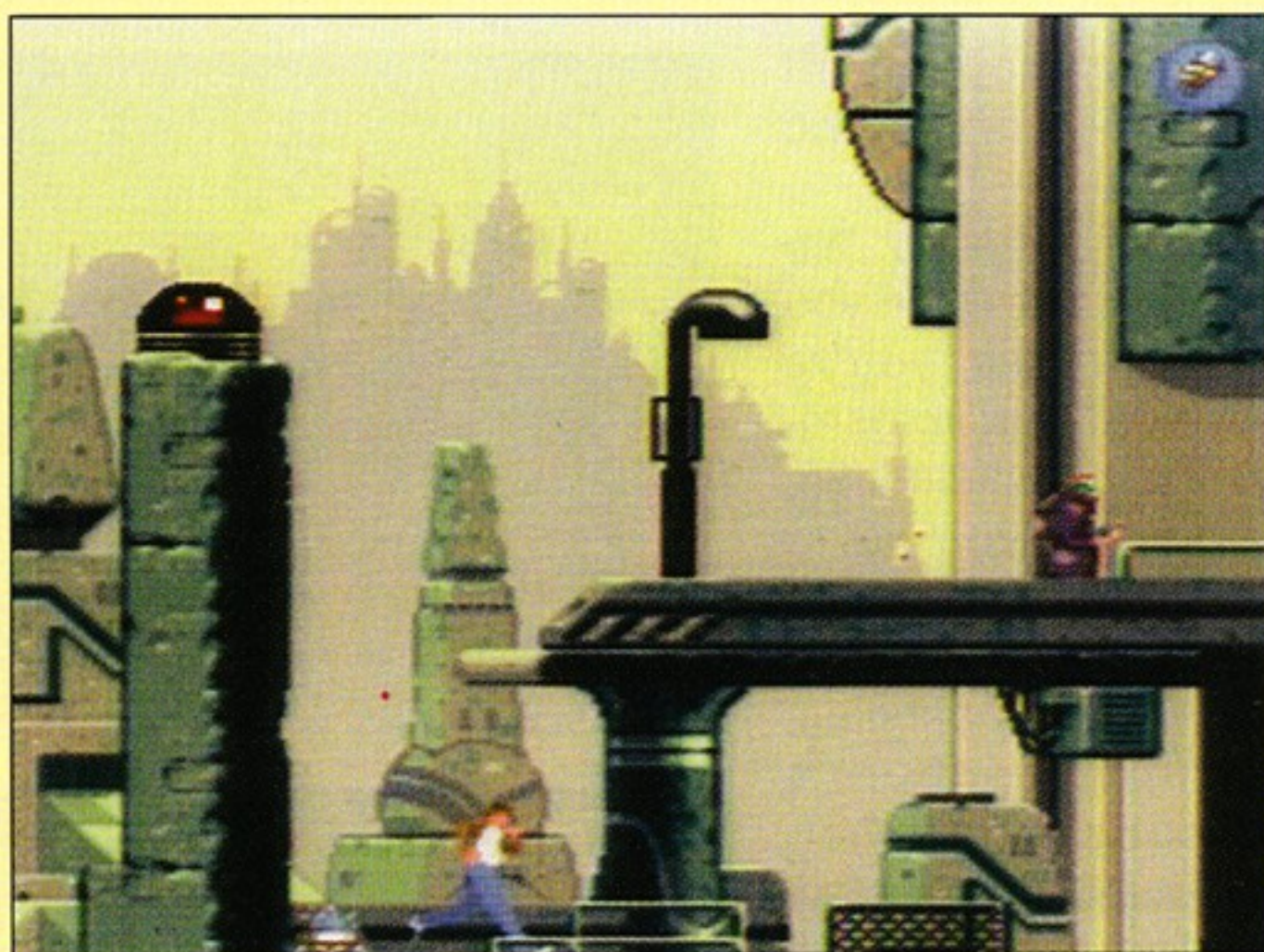
A couple of levels later, after a little interaction with one of the game's characters, you find out that your name is Conrad Hart. You're a young agent-in-training in the Galaxias Bureau of Investigation who's been working on a project involving molecular density analyzer glasses, and you've discovered that a portion of the population has a nonhuman molecular makeup. The assumption, therefore, is



that aliens are trying to infiltrate Earth's society. Your mission is to stop them before they completely dominate the planet.

From a graphics standpoint, *Flashback* is exquisitely striking. From the

cinematic polygon sequences to the realistically animated motions of the main character, the level of realism created by the rotoscoped sampled images really shines. A couple of times I found myself letting Conrad get a bullet in the back just so I could see him painfully blown across a room. You can almost feel his back-breaking agony as he's sent hurling.



If you are at all familiar with any version of *Prince of Persia* (and, if you're not, then you're in trouble), you shouldn't have any problem figuring out how to manipulate your character. Conrad Hart moves with the same wiry, lanky movement as our friend in the turban. Unlike *Prince of Persia*, you're not required to perform the many timing-critical, run-and-jump moves. It'll take you awhile to get used to the different types of moves, including the old Captain James T. Kirk-style shoulder roll, which you'll consistently use throughout the game.

Flashback is a sizable game—12 megabits. There are six levels in all, and each of the levels varies in size. Level 2 is probably the most complex, with six different missions which, in themselves, could almost stand alone as independent levels. After each level, you're given a new password, but, most importantly, there are several save stations scattered throughout each of the levels. At any time during the course of the level that you're currently playing, you can return and save what progress you've made. Unfortunately, if you shut off the machine or wait past the ten-sec-

ond time limit, you have to restart play from the beginning of the same level that you were playing—that is, if you remember to write down the password for it.

After finishing the last level in *Flashback*, I walked away from the game feeling that I had actually truly enjoyed it. The sheer sense of utter frustration that I had originally encountered with *Out of This World* was never present.

Flashback without a doubt proves that you don't have to drop nearly 300 bucks on a CD-ROM game peripheral to enter the "Next Level" of video gaming.

—Mike Davila

U.S. Gold
631 Howard St.
San Francisco, CA 94105
(415) 281-8690



EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Though it may be too short (Dave) and too linear (Andy), U.S. Gold has a winner in *Flashback*. Chris summed up by saying it's strong, solid and innovative.

Congo's Caper

DATA EAST

For the Super NES (\$49.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

All you have to do is stick your hand into a pile of video games (in your dreams!) and chances are you'll grab something with a prehistoric jungle setting: *Chuck Rock*, both *Bonk* games, *Toki*, the *Adventure Island* series and *Dino City*, for instance. *Congo's Caper* is very much more of the same, a kind of lightweight *Mario*.

Congo, the lead character, is your basic missing link. He spends a lot of his time as a club-wielding caveboy, but one good zetz from an enemy and he reverts back to his little chimp self. If Congo collects enough rubies, he turns into Super Congo (read that as Super Mario) and can jump higher, hover and withstand more abuse than he can as Congo or as a chimp.

The game's divided into six areas (playable in a variety of orders), each with four or five sublevels. Each area has a different overall theme (such as water, technology or speed), but they all kinda blend together after awhile. Some of the sublevels are very short, only a couple of screens long with a boss at the end. Others seem to go on forever—but they don't, they're just very frustrating.

There are bosses all over the place, scattered seemingly at random throughout the game, and some are extremely easy. In fact, I found getting *through* most levels far tougher than dealing with the bosses. As with most games

of this sort, you can quickly conquer a boss by learning its movement and firing patterns, figuring out where the safest place to stand is, etc.

There are a lot of ways to get from point A to point B, often involving finding secret entrances to hidden levels. There are also bonus screens you can get to by hitching rides on pterodactyls, but, once you're finished collecting bonuses, you're dropped off right where you started—there are no (legit) warp zones.

Another word about difficulty: No unlimited continues here. But when you quit or run out of continues, you're given a simple password that remembers which levels you've completed. So, once it's been conquered, you never have to replay a level. This is a nice feature, but, at the same time, it makes the game shorter still. I'm not complaining,

though—there's not a whole helluva lot of satisfaction in replaying old levels every time you start the game, except to look for shorter routes or secret locations.

The puzzles, obstacles, enemies, etc. are all fairly close to those you'd find in *Super Mario World*, yet the game is shorter by far than *SMW*. Unlike *SMW*, though, the game makes frequent use of the SNES's advanced graphics capabilities: large portions of the screen tumble, sink, spin, quake and so on. Although there's little detail in the Bonk-like cartoonish characters and backgrounds, multilevel scrolling is used in a lot of places...with no perceivable slow-



down. Sound effects and music, on the other hand, are strictly run-of-the-mill quality—Mario-style and nondescript.

Congo's Caper earns low marks for originality, sound and game length, but good marks for graphics, challenge and fun.

—Josh Mandel

Data East USA
1850 Little Orchard St.
San Jose, CA 95125
(408) 286-7080

EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Mike noted it was nice to see a game skewed toward the young gamer. While Chris liked *Congo's Caper's* steel-drum sound, he didn't think it was too exciting.

Lords of Thunder

TTI

For the TurboGrafx-CD (Super System Card required)/
Turbo Duo (\$49.99)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

There are tons of shoot-'em-ups out there, but it's unlikely you've ever seen anything like this one. In *Lords of Thunder*, TTI's new shooter for Super-CD, the screen literally explodes with action as you battle some of the most awesome creatures ever to appear in a video game. If you like your action games hot, fast and brutal, you simply cannot pass this one by.

Yep, the game is brutal, but thanks to the game's configuration menu, before you sally forth to clean up the Lands of Mistral, you can set the difficulty to one of three settings: normal,



hard or super. But a word of warning: This game is tough enough on the normal setting. Only battlemasters supreme will venture far on the higher settings.

When the game begins, you choose one of the six stages you must complete to win the game. Your choices are Dezant, Auzal, Lllamarada, Bosque, Helado and Cielom; but whichever you take on, you can expect an immediate confrontation with hordes of nightmarish creatures, all intent on keeping you from reaching the end of the stage. And, in these alien lands, you'll face not only intelligent obstacles, but also dangers of an environmental nature, like deserts, volcanoes, ice and dense forests. Your quest won't be easy, that's for sure.

After choosing the starting stage, you can yank on a suit of armor. Four types are available—Water, Fire, Wind or Earth—each of which provides its own shooting and bombing weapons and is appropriate for different stages. Only experience will teach you when which armor is best.

Finally, you visit the shop, where you can buy power-up items to help you on your quest. These items include life orbs, which, depending upon their type, increase your life meter from two bars up to the maximum; shields, which block a specific number of enemy hits; elixirs, which restore lives; time slips, which provide extra continues; and more.

Having stocked up on much-needed power-ups, it's time to leap into battle, flying through the horizontally and vertically scrolling areas, blasting everything that moves—and possibly even some things that don't. Each enemy you defeat leaves behind treasure tidbits, which can be anything from crystals used for money to power-ups that restore your life line. Some creatures explode into a spray of crystals, leaving the screen littered with not only the crystals themselves, but also enemies' shots and falling debris. Often, just keeping an eye on your targets is as hard as blasting them from the screen.

The graphics in every stage are state-of-the-art, truly showing off the TurboGrafx's capabilities. Some boss creatures are huge and drawn in meticulous detail. But despite the size and the detail of the enemies, the action never bogs down. *Lords of Thunder* keeps screaming along at a frantic,



almost exhausting pace. The music, too, matches the game's unrelenting force. If you're into metal rock, you'll love these crankin' tunes, which sound a lot like they were recorded by guitar maestro Joe Satriani. Cookin', for sure.

Straight shoot-'em-ups don't get a heck of a lot better than this. *Lords of Thunder* is the perfect game for players with fast reflexes and strong controller hands. In fact, if your hand isn't numb by the time you get to the end of *Lords of Thunder*, you're unstoppable.

—Clayton Walnum

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EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Dave said that it could almost get him to like shooters, and Chris felt it was a bit too crowded, though very enjoyable. Andy said it was hard—the music, that is.

Zen Intergalactic Ninja

KONAMI

For the Nintendo Entertainment System (NA)

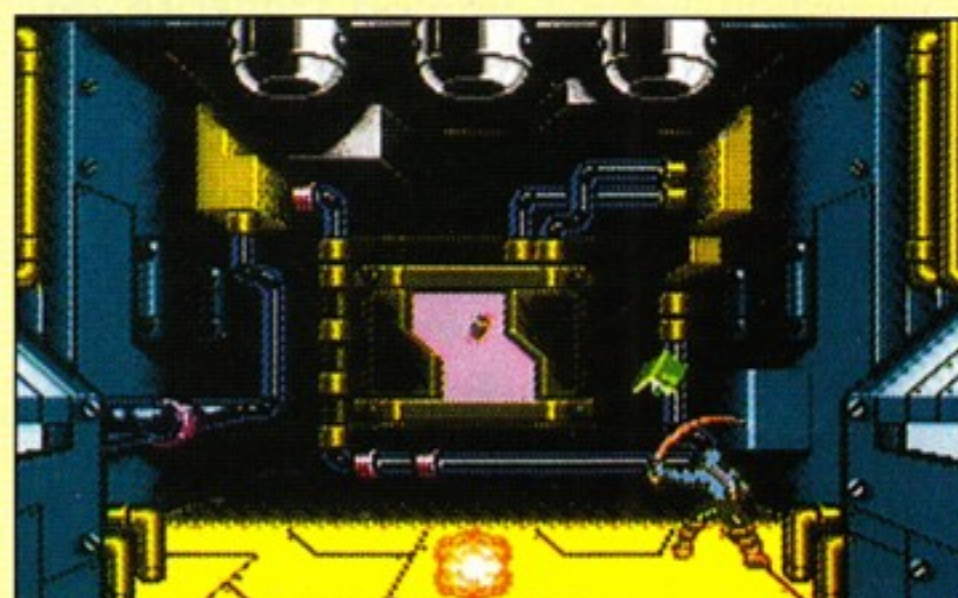
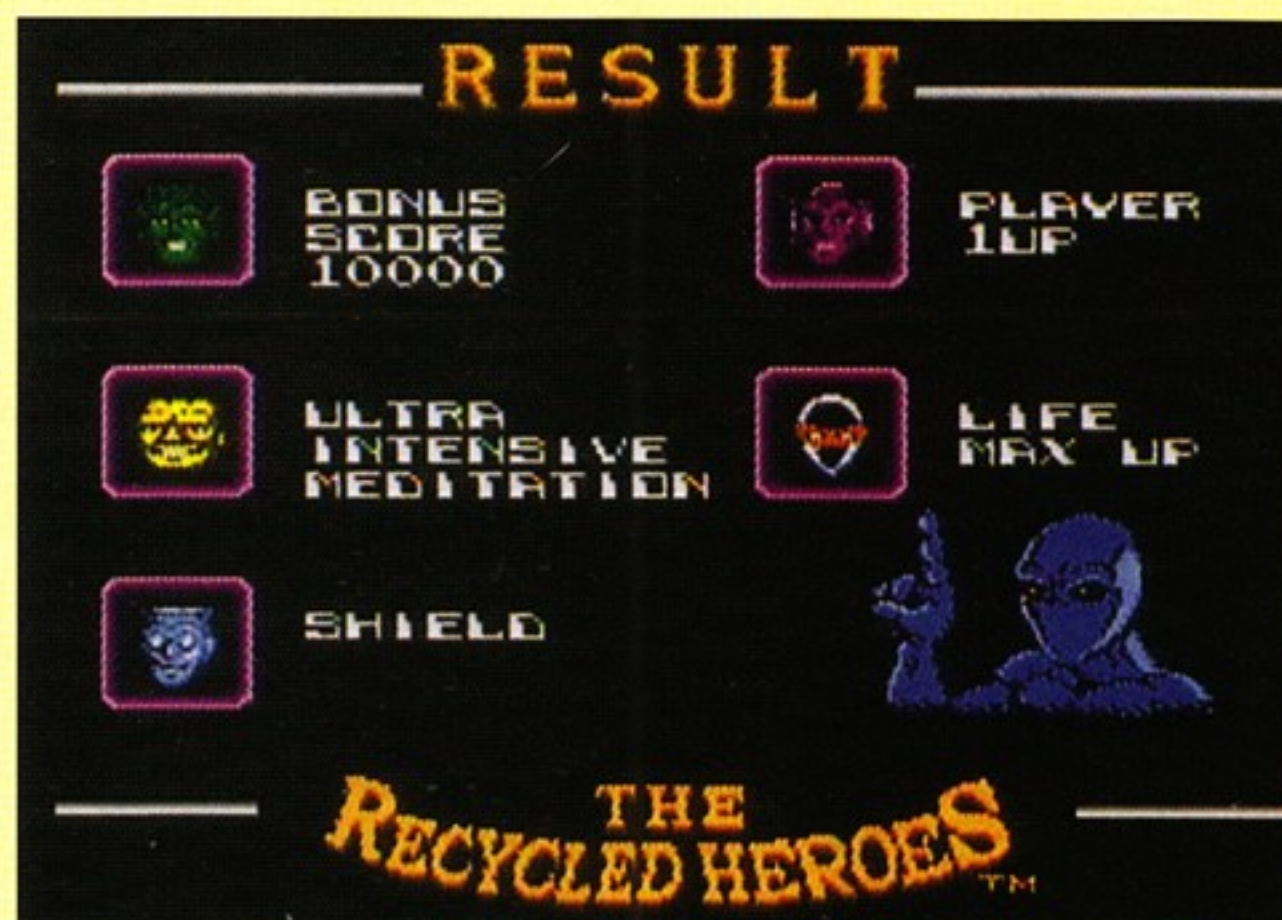
SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

In these days of ecological awareness, it was only a matter of time before video games switched tracks from having us rescue kidnapped princesses to having us save a planet's environment. Of course, the hero in this hot-action arcade contest is not a scientist looking for the ultimate clean fuel, nor a politician trying to pass new environmental laws. Nope, he's Zen, space-age ninja and environmental enforcer. His task: Travel to a strange planet named Earth, where the fiend Lord Contaminous and his followers are doing their utmost to turn the planet into a giant garbage dump. Only Zen can find Jeremy and the mystical Geocrystal and so gain the power to thwart Contaminous' plans.

In this new jump-and-shoot arcade challenge from Konami, you control the hero Zen as he battles past Lord Contaminous' cronies, cleaning up trash, destroying Earth's enemies and searching for the Geocrystal. Before your quest is complete, you'll travel through many horrible locales and fight a garbage-truckload of filthy fiends. Different viewpoints—both side-view and diagonal-view—add variety to a continuous-action quest that's sure to give you a good case of "Nintendo hand."

When the game begins, a visit to the options screen allows you to set the number of continues and the skill level. On the options screen, you can also sample the game's music and sound effects. Then, after this dabbling, you choose your starting stage and jump into action.

Each area has its own set of dangers, enemies and goals. In the Acid Rain Forest, for example, your task is to tap each flower with your photon stick and so revive it from the acid rains. In addition, bouncy patches of grass, tree branches and floating platforms provide a route upward to the highest platform, where you'll find the area's boss, Sulfura.



In another area, you can hop aboard a runaway railway car and blast through a tricky maze of tracks filled with

Contaminous' followers. As the railway car rockets through the maze, you'll have to turn switches, jump over broken tracks, dodge obstacles and fight enemies. As if that isn't enough, at the end of the maze, you get to tangle with Garbageman, the area's boss.

Before you reach the end of the game, you'll also visit such places as the Slixxon Oil Rig, Biggs Toxic Factory, Cavern of Crud, the Cesspool and Lord Contaminous' Shrine. Some areas, once complete, usher you into a bonus round, where you can earn additional points, lives and useful power-ups. To gain the rewards, you must use your photon stick to knock garbage into the huge Recyclotron. Recyclable items include leaves, pulp, bottles, cans and batteries. Every six identical items recycled gets you one new power-up or bonus.

Even on the easy skill level, *Zen Intergalactic Ninja* is a tough challenge, proving, I guess, that cleaning up a planet is no easy chore. If you're in the mood for a jump-and-shoot game with some interesting twists, one that'll keep your control-pad hand smoking, this one ain't exactly trash.

—Clayton Walnum

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EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Chris really liked this one, but said that it almost pushes the NES too far. Mike called the action uninspired, and Dave referred to it as "cluttered."

Fatal Fury 2

SNK

For the Neo•Geo (\$239.99)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Here's a first for SNK...not! Well, it is the first *Street Fighter* clone to appear for the Neo•Geo during 1993, but I suspect that it's not the last. Surely we can expect a sequel to *World Heroes*, the game that knocked the seemingly unapproachable *Street Fighter II* out of the top spot in *RePlay* magazine's "Top Ten Coin-Op Software" list. And what about that mind-blowing cliffhanger at the end of *Art of Fighting*—did Robert, Ryo and Yuri live happily ever after, or what?

All kidding aside, *Fatal Fury 2* continues the saga of the Bogard brothers and the martial arts expert Joe Higashi by eliminating one of the original game's most innovative features and expanding on the other. The two-player cooperative mode has been axed, an unfortunate decision that may have resulted from the ease with which two players could whip a computer-controlled opponent in the first game. *Fatal Fury*'s other cool feature was the ability to fight on two different "planes," one near the screen and one closer to the background scenery. In *Fatal Fury 2*, pushing the A and B buttons simultaneously makes your character jump away from the "camera" into the background, where he or she can move freely if your opponent is still in the foreground.

There's some nice character animation as the characters turn to face each other from different planes, and pressing any action button while the combatants are separated this way activates a flying kick from one plane to the other. It would have



been great if the fighters could deliver all of their punches, kicks and special moves in the direction of the other plane, but this would have taken a tremendous amount of memory, with enough frames of animation to show each attack from three different perspectives. Even without such extravagance, this is still the largest Neo•Geo game to date in terms of memory. The second in SNK's "100Mega Shock" series, *Fatal Fury 2* weighs in at 106 megabits, four megabits larger than *Art of Fighting* (a 102-meg game that had been mistakenly identified as a 106-megger in our December 1992 issue).

Anyone who criticized *Fatal Fury* for offering only three fighters to choose from should have no complaints here; the sequel offers a full range of eight warriors, each with his or her own special moves and "home" territory. It even appears that each fighter has a hidden move that can only be executed while he or she is fighting on home turf. In an interesting twist, the one-player mode allows players to choose their opponent at the start of the game.

Most of the characters aren't quite as large as those in *Art of Fighting*'s close-up mode, but the overinflated Big Bear certainly comes close. And, if *Street Fighter II*'s Chun Li turns you on, you're bound to be titillated by the sight of Mai Shiranui, who jiggles through each battle wearing next-to-nothing from the waist down. Neo•Geo owners who thrive on controversy will find plenty of fodder here: There are some truly unbelievable things happening in *Fatal Fury 2*'s background animations, much more outrageous than the guy in the overcoat whose arm was repositioned for the SNES version of *Street Fighter II*.

Even if *Fatal Fury 2* isn't different or outstanding enough to be considered the ultimate one-on-one fighting game, it's nice to see SNK asserting itself enough to believe that it is. Cer-



tain stages appear to be paying homage to fighting games of the past, including backgrounds that resemble those in SNK's own *King of the Monsters 2* and the appearance of Mount Rushmore, one of the most memorable scenes in Capcom's original *Street Fighter* game. But I can't help wondering how much more can be done with this paper-thin game genre—or how much has been saved for the inevitable *Fatal Fury 3*.

—Chris Bieniek

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Torrance, CA 90503
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EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

"Slow and awkward" is how Dave billed *Fatal Fury 2*, but said the two-level fighting saves it. Andy said SNK should show diversity—and fewer fighting games.

Tyrants

VIRGIN

For the Sega Genesis (\$59.99)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

It's interesting to note the sociological differences among the "god games." *Populous* carried strong religious undertones, while *SimCity* explored the infrastructure of urban societies. The destructive nature of *Tyrants* might seem cynical to some, but that appears to be its point: It's a microcosm of the arms race among countries. This British import's object is similar to *Populous* in that you conquer a computer opponent's forces. A *SimCity*-like engine has the gamer invent weapons, gather resources needed to build them and set up factories for their manufacture.

You select from four gods to play as. The remaining characters are your opponents. *Tyrants* is divided into 26 different stages, each called an Epoch, and every Epoch has three islands that the player must conquer. Each island is made up of sectors—sectors may consist of up to 16 sectors in a 4 x 4 format.

Island sectors have separate "technology levels." This determines the weapons that can be designed. At technology level 1945 A.D., jet fighters and bazookas may be built. In 1980 A.D., the weapons of attack are nuclear missiles. Ironically, the defensive weapons are nuclear "deterrents," missiles that automatically launch to destroy an enemy sector should that sector launch its nuclear capability.

Despite being loaded with tons of terminology for the player to decipher, *Tyrants* is quite simple to play once you get its natural progression of steps down. When you play an island, humans should be assigned to a tower to defend your sector. More people are then enlisted to "invent" weapons from a list of possible designs. Next, elements will be listed that need to be mined in order to make the weapons, which will be produced in factories.

From there, you pound your opponents with your shiny new war toys and take over his or her sector. Sounds simple enough. Of course, your enemies are setting about doing the same to you, going through the above same steps. And attacks to you can happen at any moment. The higher the technology level of the sectors you control—and the more sectors you have—the better off you'll be at attacking others or defending yourself.



Hopefully, the original British aspects of *Tyrants* will stay once it's released for American vid-gamers. Epochs are given bizarre names like Cilla and Bazooka. Among the elements listed are Yeridium, Paladium and Tedium. Your female "secretary" keeps you updated, speaking in a

Cockney accent, while another, male voice talks with a particularly stuffy Queen's English.

From the fourth Epoch on, *Tyrants* becomes exceedingly difficult. This is when forming alliances with opponents is necessary. Up till then, it's pretty much a free ride, where you'll gain a feeling of satisfaction when you successfully send out your armies to conquer and destroy.

After that, *Tyrants* is less about naked aggression and more about defending your land and waiting for your opponents to weaken themselves so that you can strike. In essence, like the way it works in the real world.

—Howard Wen

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EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Broad differences in opinion here: Chris said *Tyrants* "was not appealing in the slightest," while Dave called it "a nice translation" from the PC version.

Bomberman II

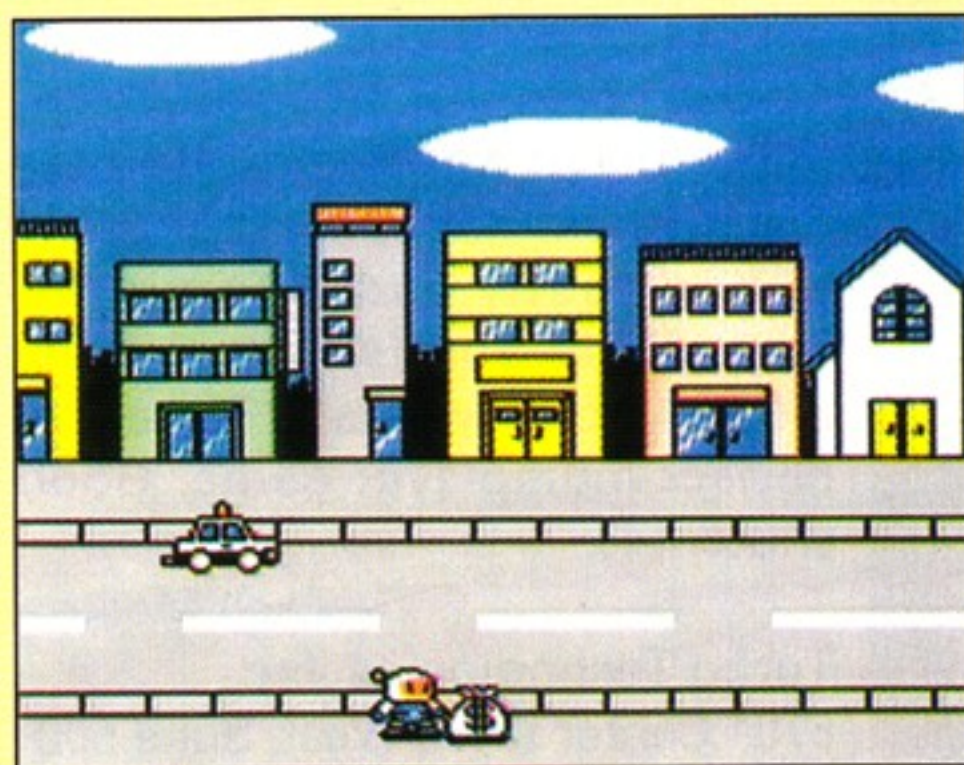
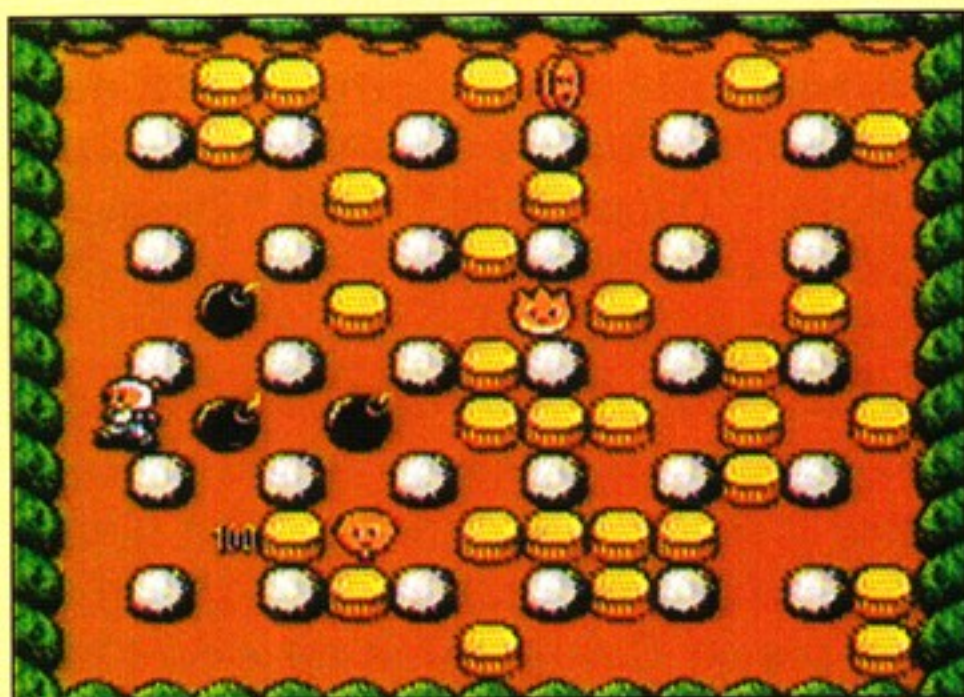
HUDSON SOFT

For the Nintendo Entertainment System (\$39.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Boy, I'd forgotten how great it feels to blow things up *real* good! It's been years since the first *Bomberman* was released for various systems (NES, Game Boy, TG-16), and it's strange that the B-man hasn't been spun off into a sequel before now. But there's no comprehending the corporate consciousness of video-game publishers. Anyway, *Bomberman II* is finally here, and it's just like the original...in fact, it may be a little *too* similar in some ways.

There's a semblance of plot: A couple of bad guys steal some loot and apparently hide it among the 48-plus



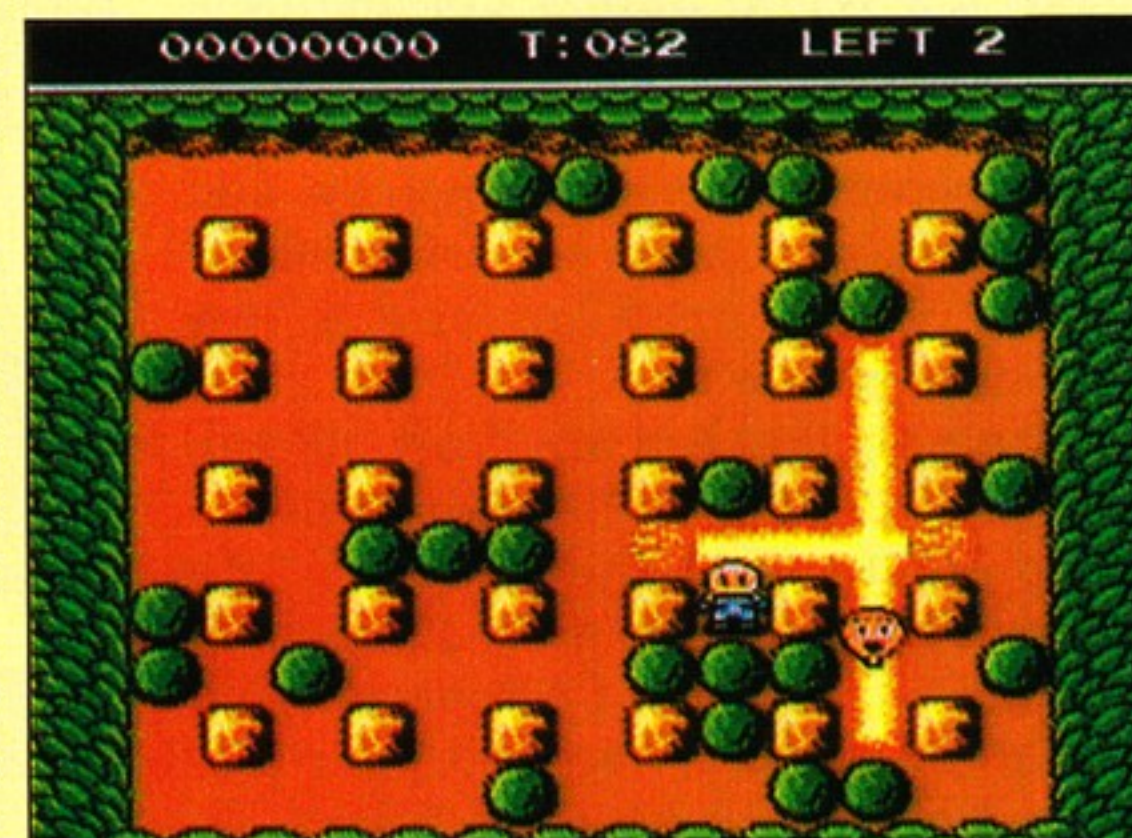
screens of forests, caves and whatever. Your job: Uncover the loot by blowing up everything that *can* be blown up, while eliminating every single enemy from every screen, finding the exits and fortifying yourself with extra abilities and items.

There are six levels in the one-player game, each with eight separate areas—and each level has a “hidden” bonus level that you can only reach by finding a Bomberman token underneath one of the objects you blow up. Despite the enormous number of levels, I was able to complete the game in just a few hours. One reason: unlimited continues. Another reason: an easy, eight-character password, so that, even if you shut off the machine, you don't have to start from scratch. With a game like this, that's an advantage; there's little reason to want to start over unless you're trying to get *all* the loot and *all* the extras—a maddening prospect!

So far, there's little difference between the original and this sequel. The methods and strategies are almost identical; the items and enemies are just slightly altered. Moreover, there's less variety in the playfields than in the first game: They're either a single screen or horizontally scrolling, as opposed to the first, in which the playfields scrolled vertically as well.

The “plot” screens are definitely cheap. There's almost no animation at all; most of the screens are still. The “big ending” is about ten seconds of very ordinary animation, without so much as a “congratulations!” I felt a little cheated.

However, it's in the two- and three-player games that *Bomberman II* really struts its stuff. The items and abilities are different, there are different hazards and playing against human opponents is far more interesting and challenging than playing against the rather dumb and predictable computer enemies—that is, depending on who your friends are. Note that in the multiplayer games



there are no enemies; it's just you and your buds trying to blow each other to smithereens. (You'll need the Four Score adapter for the three-player-simultaneous game.)

The graphics are blah, but they're clear, crisp and basically as good as the TG-16 version—with very little flickering, but with some slowdowns on the higher levels, especially when certain enemies blow themselves up. The sound effects and music are good enough so that you won't leap up to turn off the sound, but they're pretty generic and simple.

All told, this is a good day's entertainment in one-player mode, but if you're into two- or three-player games, *Bomberman II* is tremendous fun and worth the bucks.

—Josh Mandel

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EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

A wish for “newness” is what Andy hoped for, but didn't get; however, he got a smaller password (compared to the previous version) and hot multiplayer action.

World Sports Competition

TTI
For the TurboGrafx-16/
Turbo Duo (\$49.99)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

It's track! It's field! It's track and field! It's *World Sports Competition*, TTI's entry into the ever-popular genre of bash-the-buttons-as-though-your-life-depended-on-it sports games, and it's a heck of a lot of fun, especially if you have a TurboTap and a few friends to play with.

Created by Hudson Soft, *World Sports Competition* has 18 events in six different categories. Archery is a single event, and the most strategic in the game. You must calculate wind direction, wind speed and your distance from the target for each shot.

Field has six events: broad jump (a/k/a long jump), high jump, triple jump, discus throw, hammer throw and javelin throw. The winning technique for most of these events is to bash the buttons to build up speed and press the control pad to set the angle of your throw or jump.

Rowing is a single event and the least enjoyable in the game, because it feels unnecessarily long. It's a button-basher event, but your bashing has to be paced or your rower will quickly fatigue.

Shooting has two events: rapid-fire pistol and clay pigeon shooting. In the pistol event, you move a set of cross hairs across five targets and shoot them all in a very short period of time (four, six or eight seconds). In the pigeon-shooting event, you take aim at a total of 40 skeet and blast away with your shotgun.



Swimming has five events, with different strokes but the same technique for winning: controlled button-bashing, as in the rowing event. For that reason, the swimming events aren't all that exciting.

Track has three events: 100-meter dash, 110-meter hurdles and 400-meter dash. They're all button-bashers, plain and simple.

World Sports Competition has two modes of play: Olympic and Training. The Olympic mode presents six groups, or "days," of three events. You need a certain score in all three events to advance to the next day of competition. You also receive a password after each day, so you can return to the action later. The Training mode lets you practice any of the events before actual competition.

The background graphics are plain, but they do the job. The athletes, on the other hand, are nicely drawn and well-animated, with the exception of the high jump: I've yet to see a real-life high jump where the athlete jumps straight up, then zooms horizontally over the bar. The music is sparse, but pleasant; the sound effects are also nice, except for the annoying guy who shouts, "Qualified!" and "Disqualified!"—not after every event, but after every attempt in every event.

World Sports Competition shines if you have a TurboTap; I've yet to have a multiplayer experience on the Genesis or SNES comparable to the five-player Competition session I had with some friends over the course of a weekend. I haven't heard so much shouting and laughing in ages—and neither has my next-door neighbor.

You really can't go wrong with *World Sports Competition*. It's easy to play, lots of fun and a perfect multiplayer game. Good show, TTI.

—Zach Meston

Turbo Technologies, Inc.
6701 Center Drive West, Suite 500
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(310) 641-4622

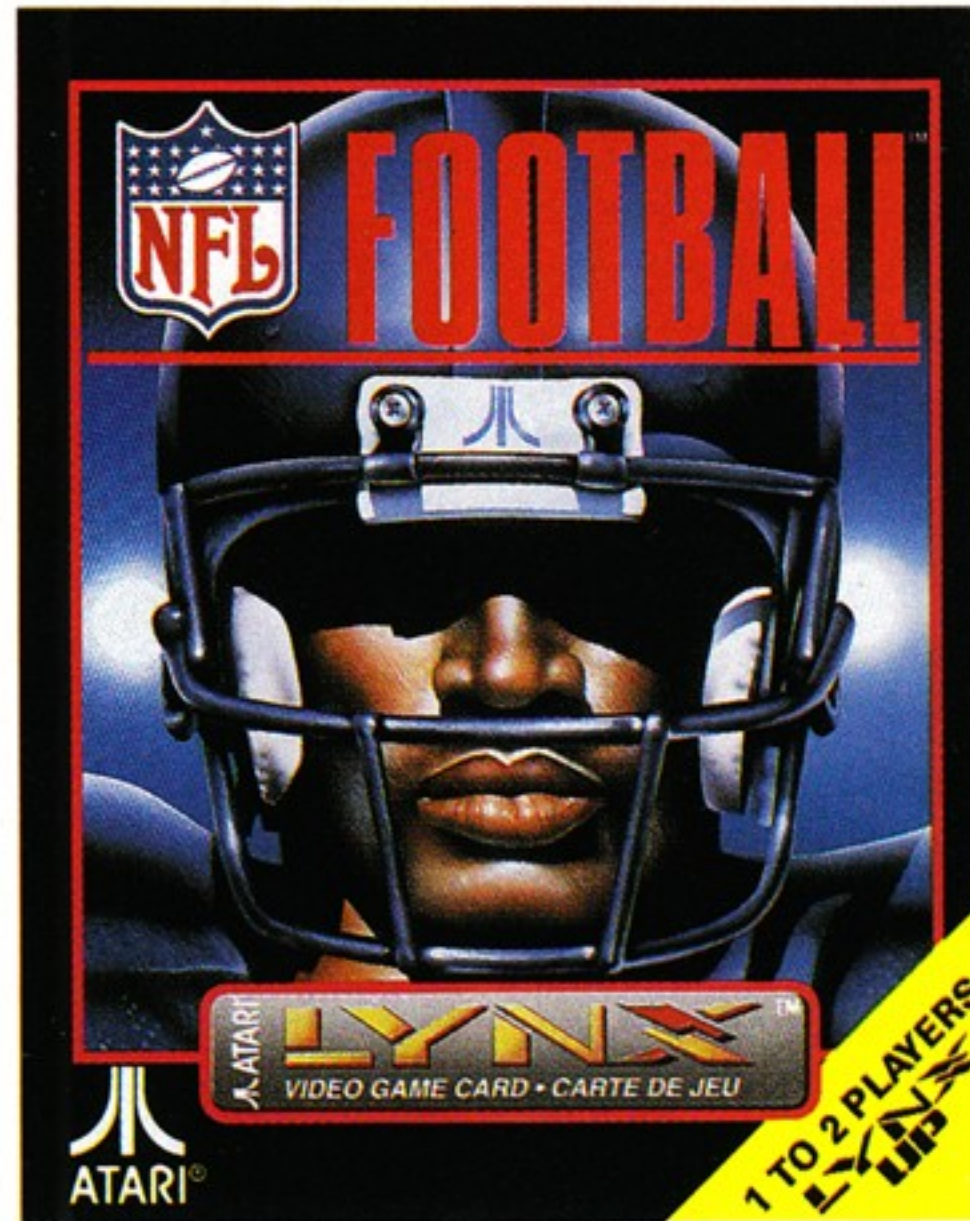
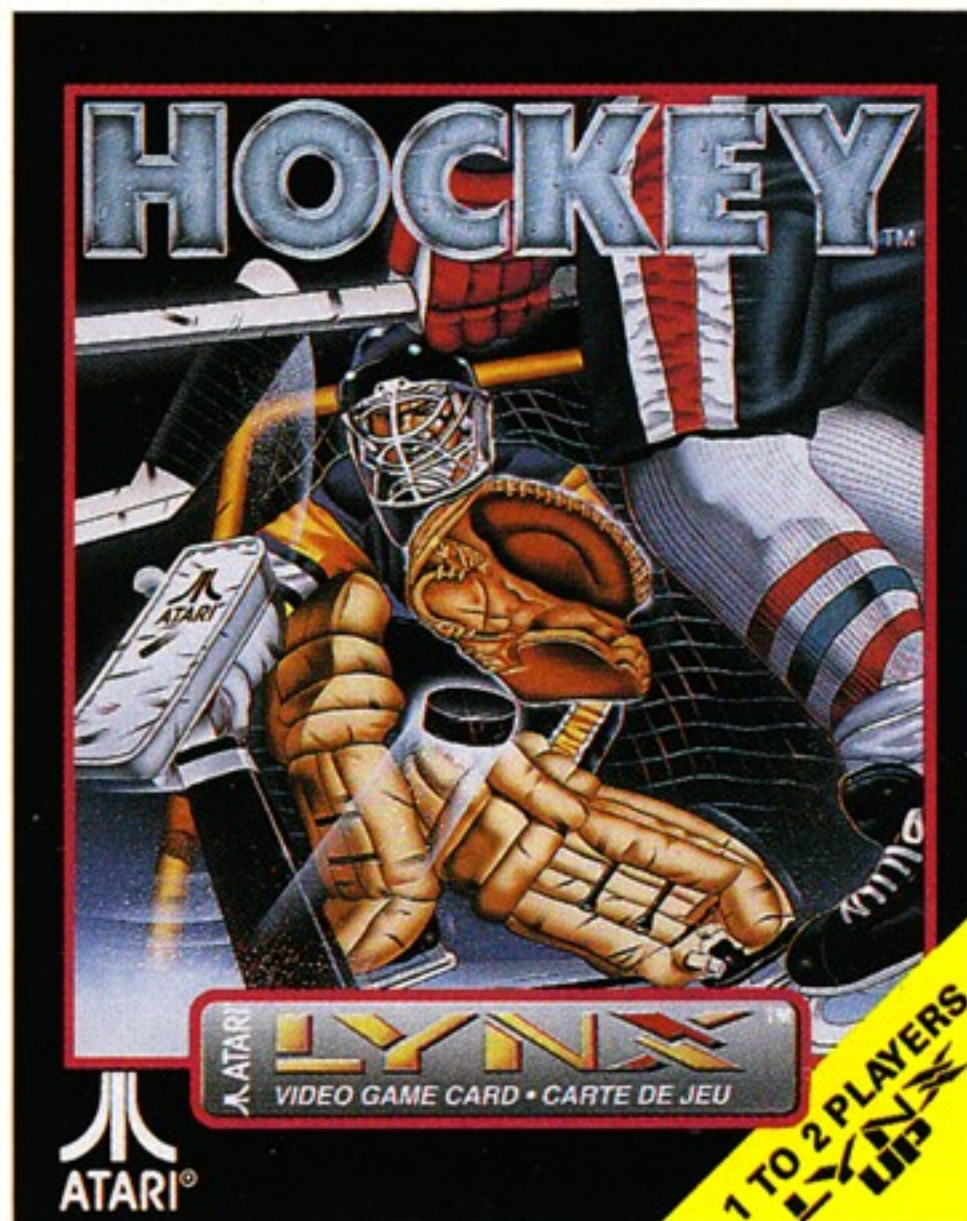


EDITORS' CORNER

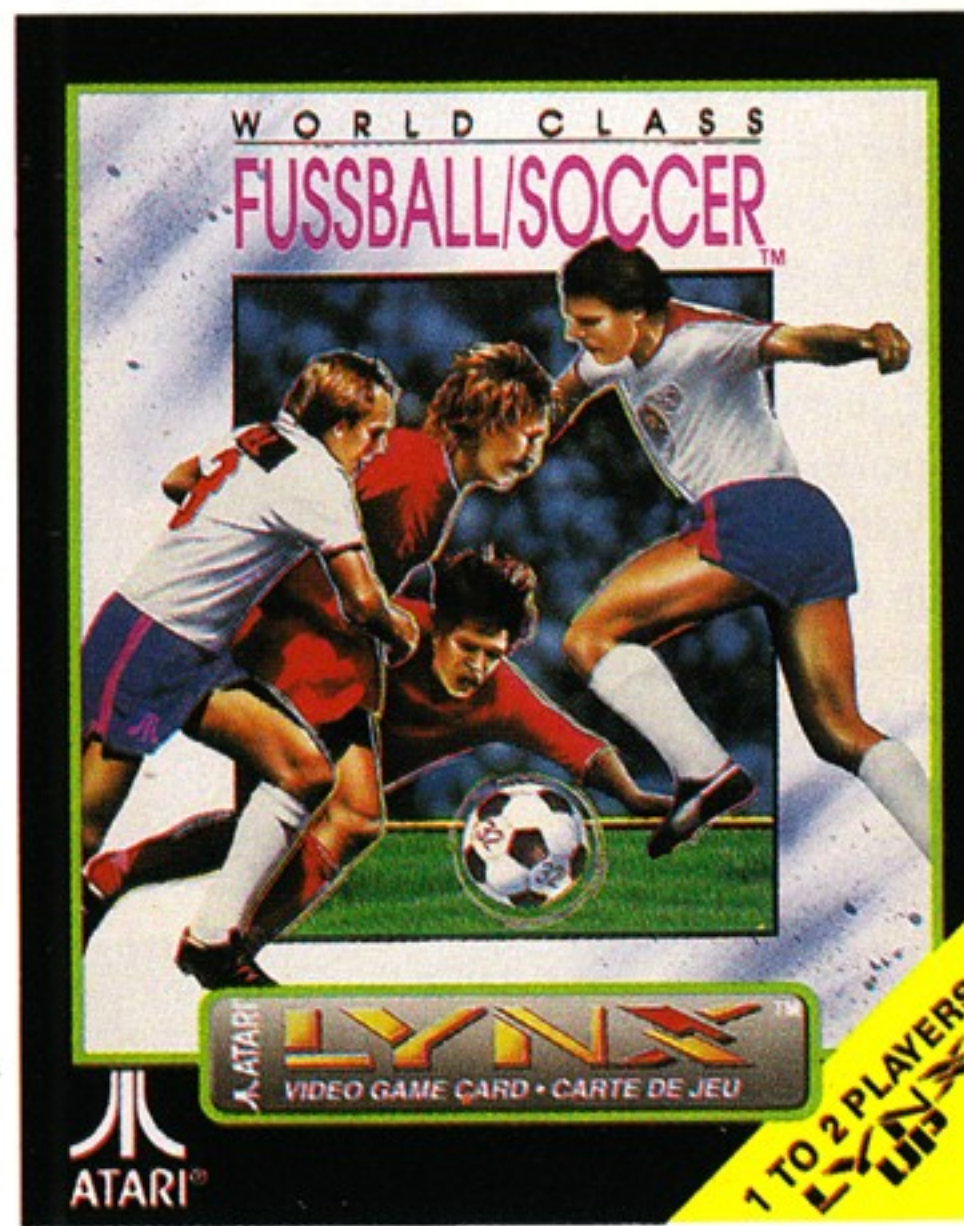
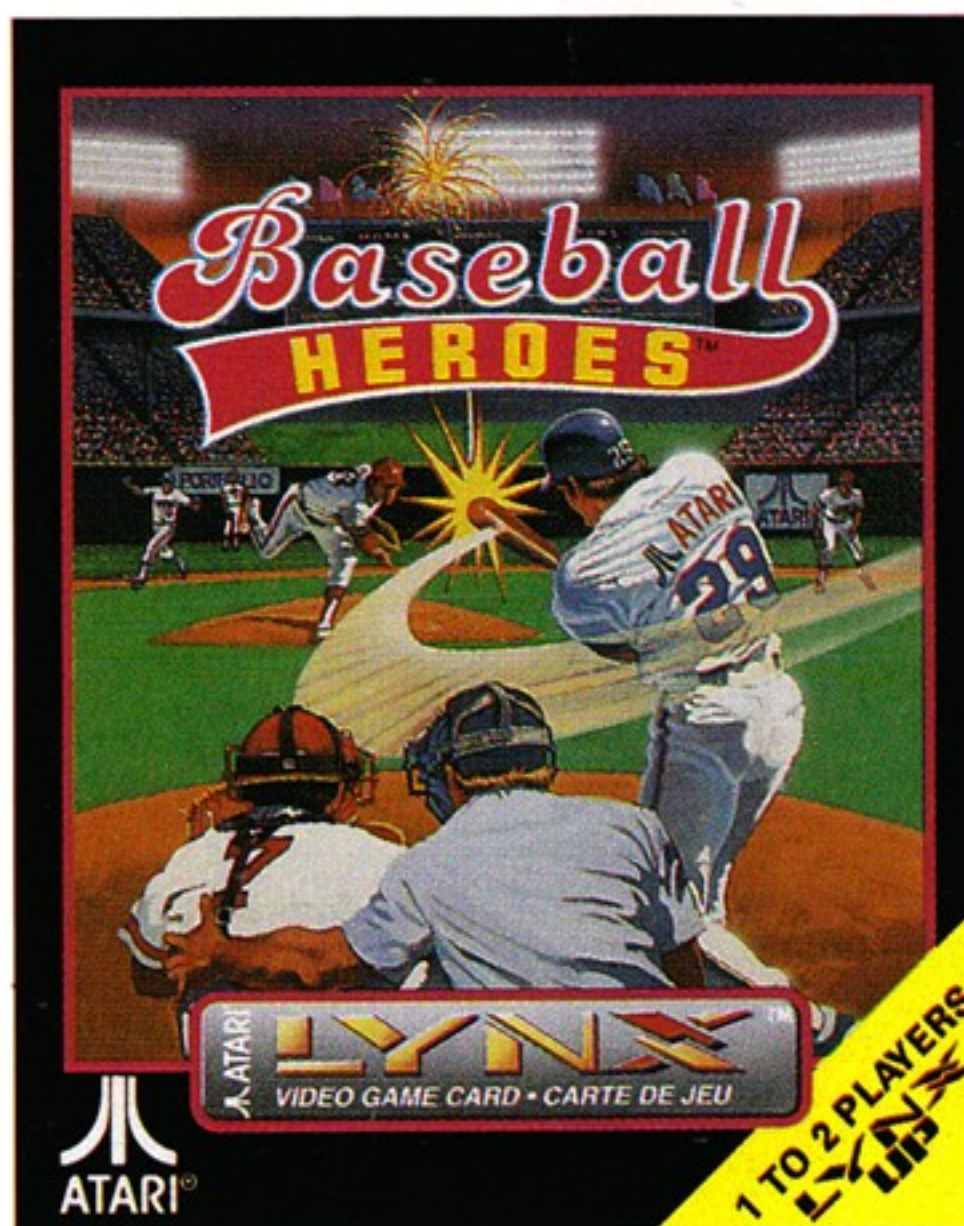
AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

An extremely likable sports game with great five-player action, was Chris' opinion. Mike said it should have been released during the Olympics.

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CIRCLE #123 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

Street Combat

IREM

For the Super NES (\$59.95)

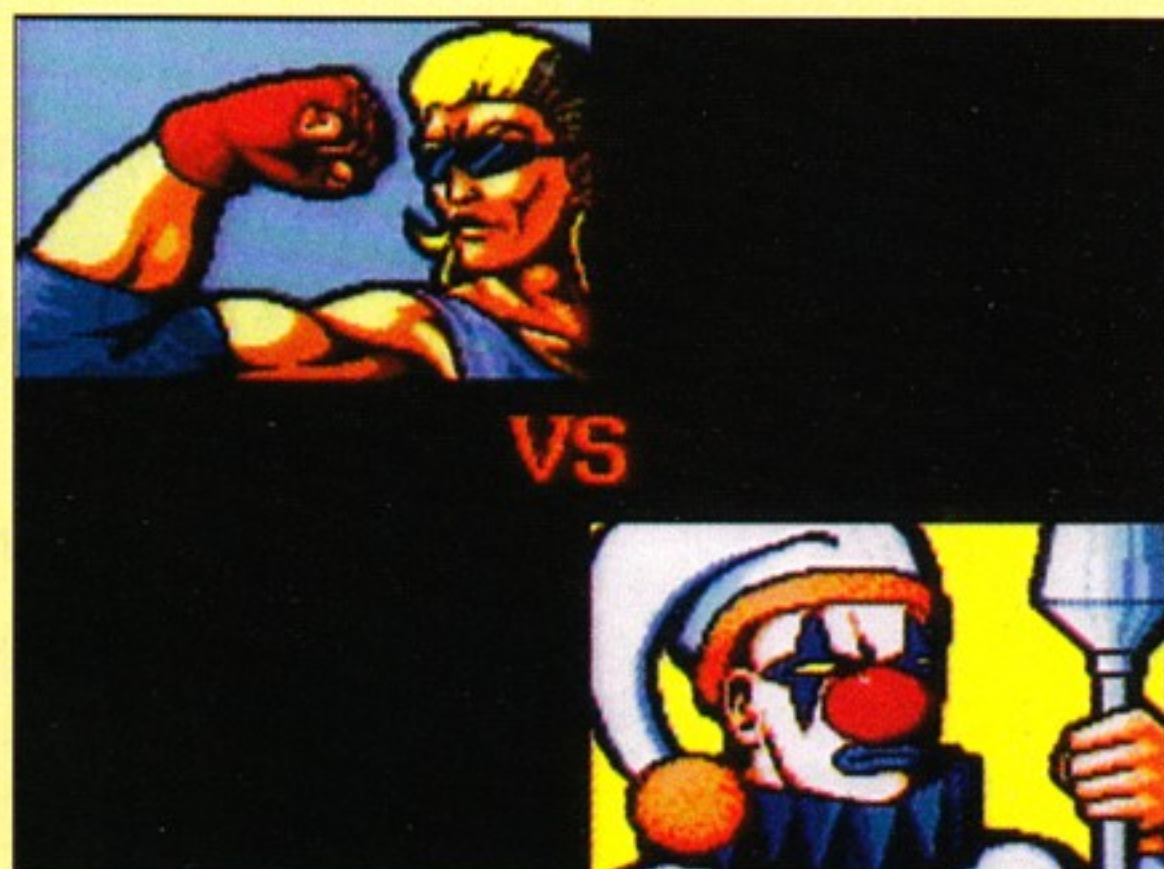
SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

That choking sound you hear is me, drowning in the wave of feeble *Street Fighter II* clones engulfing the Super NES. In fact, the only half-decent SNES beat-'em-up I've played lately is *Ranma 1/2*, a Japanese import with bizarre graphics and a great sense of humor. So what does *Street Combat*, you ask? *Street Combat* is *Ranma 1/2* with new graphics, new sound and its sense of humor completely removed.

Street Combat's storyline thrusts you into the role of Steven, who (according to the instruction booklet) is "a genius scientist" and "the only person to attain a perfect score of 900 on the I.Q. test." Not just any I.Q. test, mind you, but *the* I.Q. test. Anyway, Steve-o is recruited by a group of secret agents, trained in martial arts and entered into the Street Combat tournament to defeat six evil villains.

Street Combat has two modes of play. "Vs. CPU" is the one-player mode, with you controlling Steven against six increasingly tough opponents. There are actually two Stevens to choose from: Steven #1 fights in an armored suit, while Steven #2 fights in stylish gloves and blue jeans. "2 Players" is the two-player mode, where you can choose any of the eight characters in the game, including both Stevens. Both players can't fight with the same character, although the two Stevens are practically equal (the armored Steven does a bit more damage).

Whichever mode you choose, the awful game play remains the same. *Street Combat*'s biggest flaw is that it's virtually impossible to execute combinations of moves; one or two hits and your opponent is flat on his back. This gives the game an annoying "stop and go" feel very unlike the smooth action of a quality beat-'em-up such as—oh, for example—*Street Fighter II*.



Street Combat's second-biggest flaw is the lack of difficulty in the one-player mode. Even at the higher difficulty settings, you can blow through your computer opponents simply by using well-timed jump kicks. And once you whip the one-player mode, you'll end up in the two-player mode, which brings us to flaw number three: both players can't use the same character. Why the heck not? How hard would this be program into the game? Five, maybe ten minutes? (Actually, I have a feeling you *can* use the same character, but need to enter some kind of secret code first.)

The graphics are generally below average, particularly the backgrounds, which in some cases aren't even animated. One background is a rather uptight crowd of people that doesn't cheer, clap or even move. The music is also sub-standard, sounding mostly like the demo song of a cheap synthesizer keyboard.

Irem's biggest mistake was to tamper with *Ranma 1/2* in the first place. It should have simply released the game as is, altering only what ever-conservative Nintendo of America would have required. Instead, *Ranma 1/2* was changed almost beyond recognition and robbed of the goofy sense of humor that made it worth playing.

—Zach Meston

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Redmond, WA 98052
(206) 882-1093

EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

"Animation like Halloween decorations" was Mike's description of *Street Combat*. Chris agreed, but added "weak music" and "sub-par graphics" tags.



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CIRCLE #124 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

NBA All-Star Challenge

FLYING EDGE

For the Sega Genesis (\$49.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

There are several different basketball cartridges out there, most featuring the traditional five-on-five contest with a tournament option. *NBA All-Star Challenge* takes a different slant, providing five different one-on-one games you can play against the machine or a friend. Let's take a look at the different events.

One-on-One: Two-player, half-court basketball. The option screen lets you select either a timed game or playing to a specified point level. You can also select "Winner's Outs," which means the player who scores retains possession of the ball.

One-on-One Tournament: You select four players to enter the tournament as well as the four players who will play against them. You then play four one-on-one games, with the winners advancing to the semifinals and then the championship game. Only one human player can compete in the tournament mode.

Free Throws: Select between five, ten, 20 or 30 attempts, and then sink as many as you can. You must try to center a cross hair with a mind of its own over the basket to make your shot.

Three-Point Shoot-out: Shoot five shots each from five different locations around the three-point line. The first four shots at each spot are worth one point, the fifth is worth two. In practice mode you can take as much time as you want, but in "Contest" mode, you only have 60 seconds to attempt all 25 shots.

Horse: The classic schoolyard game. Take a shot from anywhere on the court, and if you make it, your opponent must duplicate the shot or

receive a letter. If you miss a shot then your opponent selects the next shot. The first to spell *horse* loses.

There are 27 NBA stars to choose from, one from each team. A nice digitized picture and important statistical information are displayed for each player. You can use the stats to decide which players are better suited to certain events. For example, Larry Bird has a 93% free throw average, while Rony Seikaly makes only 73% of his attempts.

While the graphics and player response are quite good, *NBA All-Star Challenge* began to bore me rather quickly. The free throw and three-point shoot-out games are nothing more than timing exercises, and Horse grows tedious against computer opponents who rarely miss. The one-on-one games are the best of the bunch,



offering more variety and faster game play than the other contests, but controlling a single player simply doesn't generate much excitement.

I was also disappointed by the fact that none of the stars have any "signature" moves. I

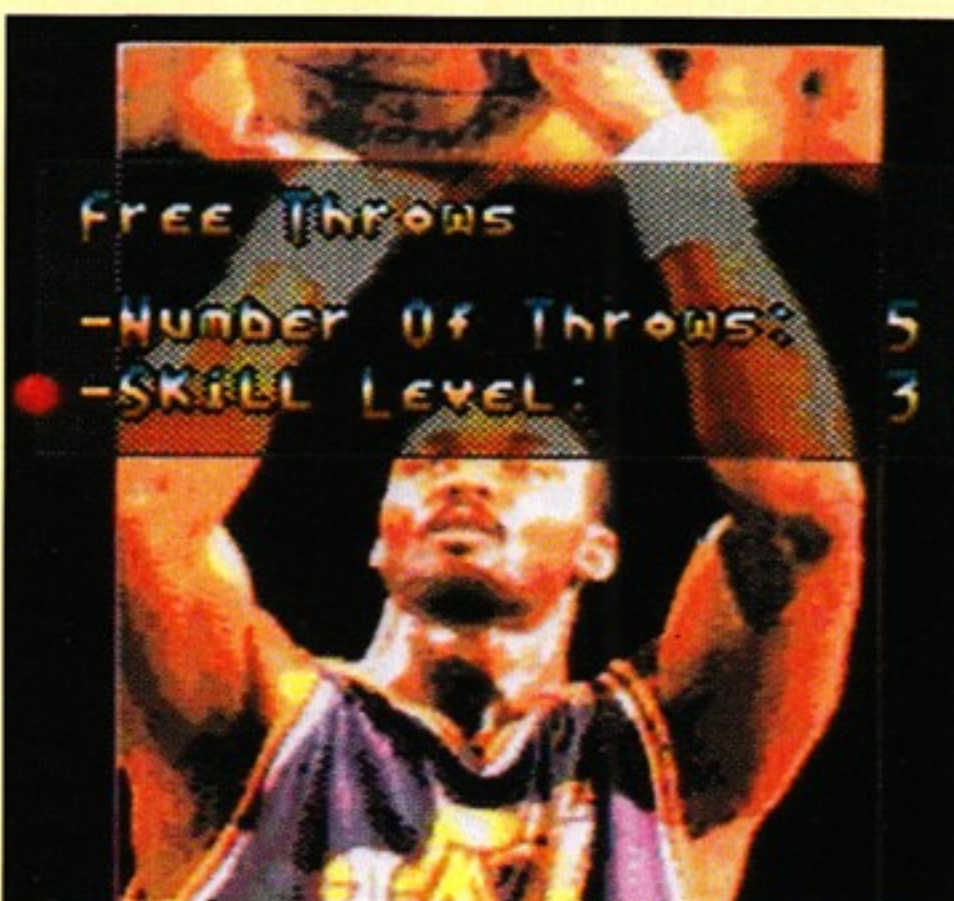
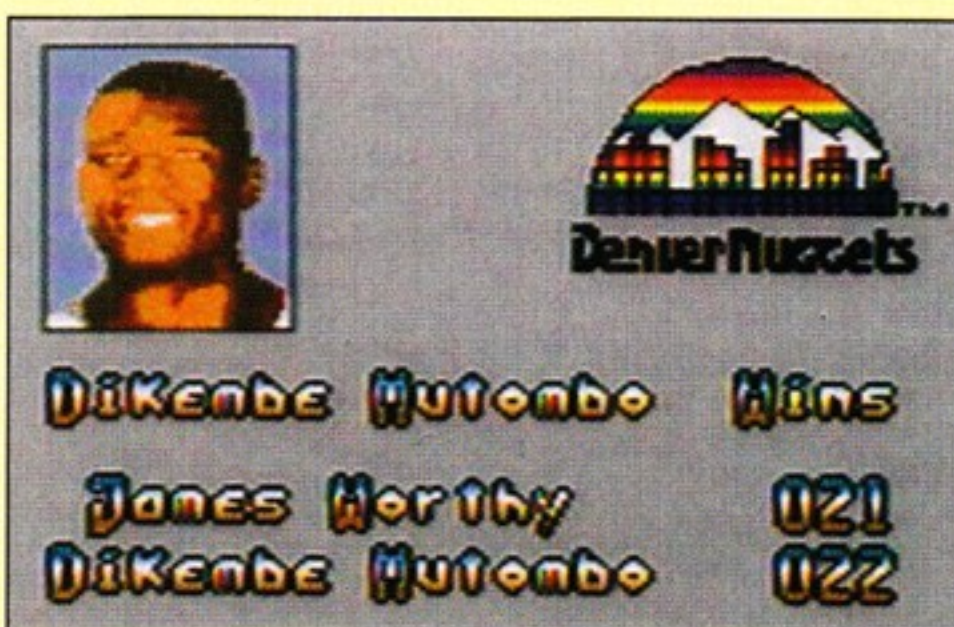
expected Michael Jordan to perform some amazing aerial acrobatics when he went up for a dunk, but he looked just like any other player going for a slam (actually, it looks a lot more like a lay-up than a dunk). This is surprising from a game whose entire foundation is based on the marquee value of its stars.

The sounds are typical of most 16-bit sports games: The digitized voice of the referee is clear, the crowd cheers at the appropriate moments, and the sound effects of the ball and buzzer are quite realistic.

When you look at the game's sound, graphics and mechanics as individual components, *NBA All-Star Challenge* should be a great game. It's unfortunate that the events lack the depth and intensity to match.

—Jeffrey Tschiltsch

Flying Edge
71 Audrey Ave.
Oyster Bay, NY 11771
(516) 624-8888



EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Andy and Mike both felt the player animations were a strong point—Andy also added, "nice floor"—but liked little else. Dave said it was competent.

ELECTRIFYING

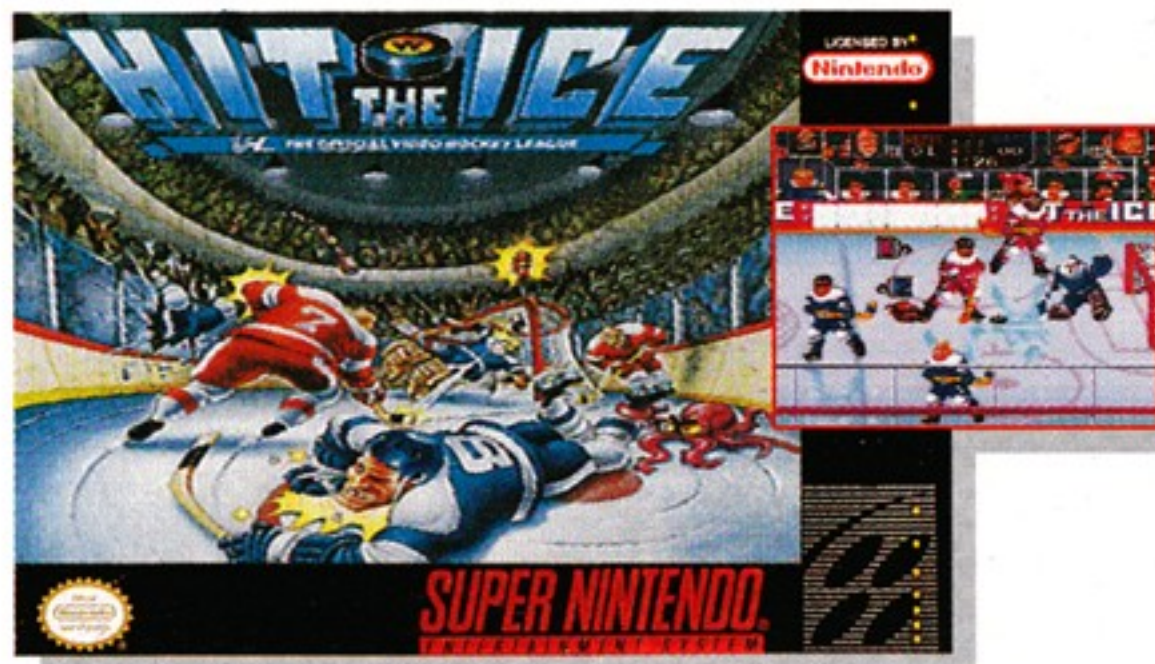
SUPERCHARGED GAMES



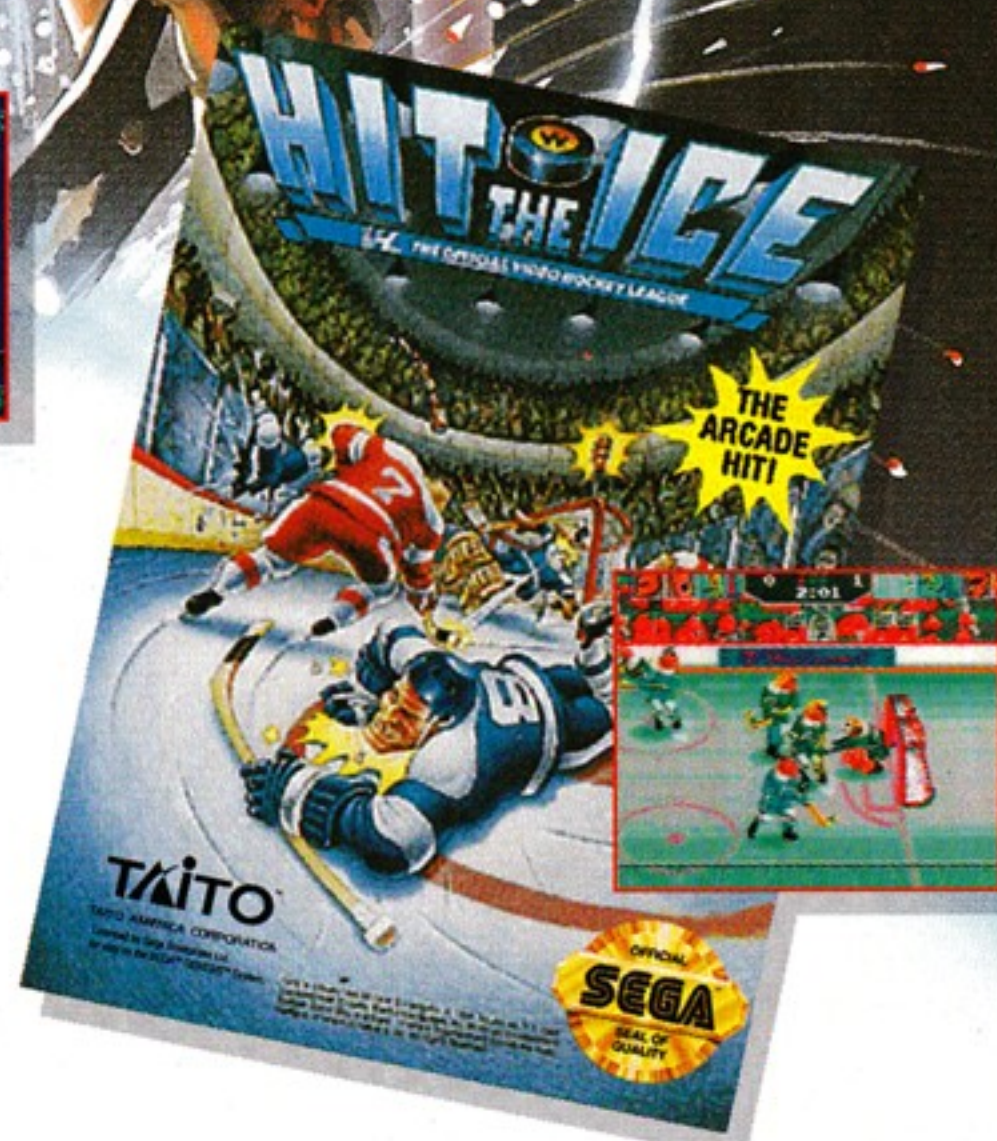
The smash arcade hit has been given a few new dents. Lead-footed criminals will grind your gears, not only on the highway, but the jungles and snow choked mountains as well.



You'll need to unleash your fatal fists on some bad dudes and crazy creatures. Punch-in and get to work because this job will take a real super hero!



This head bangin' hard checkin' free-for-all will rattle your bones and send you flyin' into the next county. So, lace 'em up and CHECK it out!



There's bone crunching action for Sega Genesis too. Unless you want some free dental work you had better stick in the mouthpiece, strap on the pads and CHECK it out!

TAITO
THE ONLY GAME IN TOWN.

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CIRCLE #125 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

Welcome back to VG&CE's portable playland, your best source for solid information about the latest handheld video games. We'll tell you what's good, what's bad and what's just plain ugly on the Game Boy, Game Gear and Lynx, and (hopefully) keep you entertained along the way.

Get those batteries charged up, 'cause here we go....

Milon's Secret Castle

HUDSON SOFT

For the Nintendo Game Boy
(\$29.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

This one was a bit of a shocker. I had no idea that Hudson was working on a Game Boy version of one of the most enjoyable NES titles ever, a personal favorite that kept me entertained for many weeks during the pre-Game Genie, pre-16-bit days of 1989. Honestly, I had always felt that *Milon's Secret Castle* had more going for it than the other two games that Hudson released around the same time, *Bomberman* and *Hudson's Adventure Island*.

It just goes to prove that you can't always pick 'em the way the rest of the world picks 'em. The *Bomberman* series and the popular *Adventure Island* saga have each had a signifi-

cant impact on the gaming industry—appearing on multiple systems in a string of new installments—while *Milon* has wallowed in obscurity these past three years. In a near-perfect clone job, the Game Boy version of this cartoony adventure blends *Mario*-style run-and-jump action with exploration and puzzle-solving elements worthy of any *Legend of Zelda* epic.

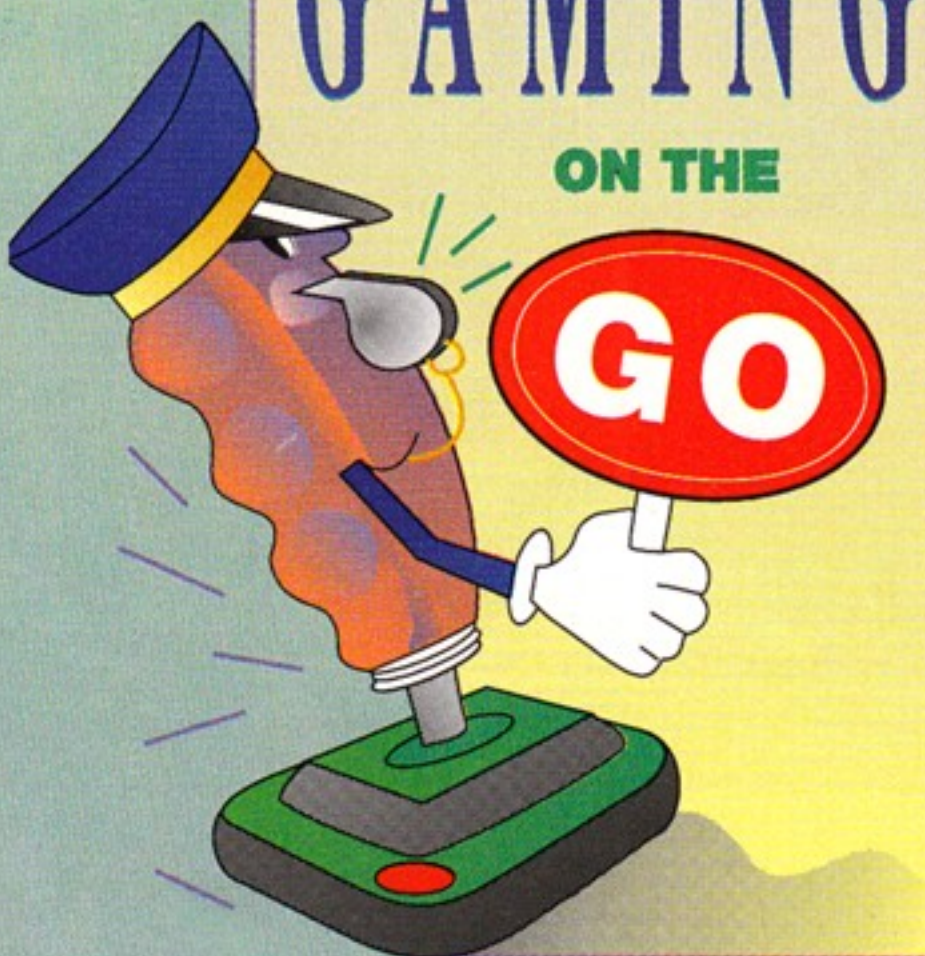
Bearing more than a passing resemblance to Electronic Arts' *James Pond II—Codename: Robocod*, *Milon's Secret Castle* spins a predictable yarn that revolves around a wicked warlord who has kidnapped the beautiful Queen Eliza. (In an era of video-game villains who specialize in princess abductions, it's nice to see a boss character who's not afraid to aim a little higher on the royal family tree.) Moving in and out of the castle's rooms, our hero must discover treasures, search for hidden doors and unlock the secrets of the castle.

Musical "bonus" rooms are everywhere, as are the shops that sell you tools and information. The careful programming of the enemy characters' movements puts them right on the edge between challenge and frustration—it's a game that'll have you thinking "strategy" even though the scenario screams "action."

Clean graphics (just like the original) and charming stereo tunes are in evidence, and the

GAMING

ON THE



BY
CHRIS BIENIEK

game even includes a password feature, which the original *Milon's Secret Castle* did not have. I was sold on this one before I even turned on the Game Boy, and after playing it I found it to be just as addicting and entertaining as I remembered.

Hudson Soft USA Inc.

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(415) 871-8895

Power Factor

ATARI

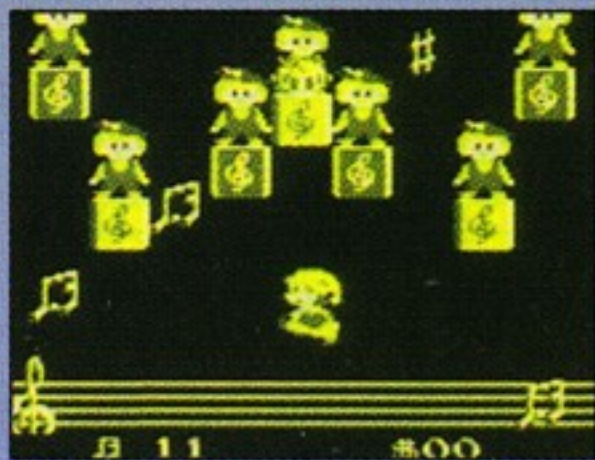
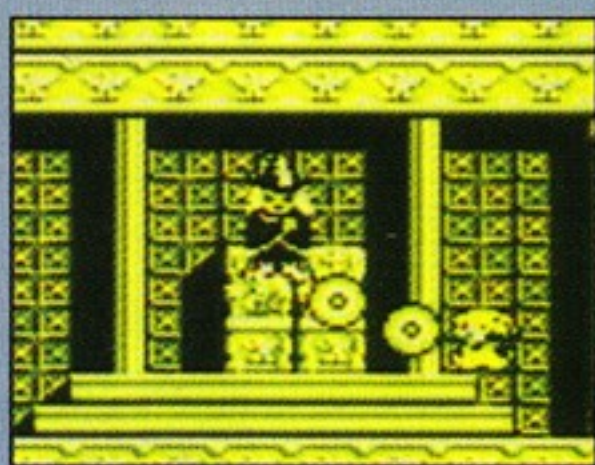
For the Atari Lynx (\$39.99)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

An action game from Hand Made Software (developers of *Awesome Golf* and *Dracula—The Undead*

for the Lynx), *Power Factor* carries you through the dynamic adventures of one Redd Ace, a square-jawed, gun-wielding hero who runs and flies—literally—in the face of danger. Fighting through the evil Sinlendo Techmods that have overrun his dimension, Redd must find six hidden components to build a bomb and destroy the Techmod stronghold at the heart of the Ceegarian Power Station.

Despite the burden of an unoriginal scenario and awkward character names, *Power Factor* delivers solid shooting action. Redd runs like a refugee from one of Konami's *Contra* games, and he can also use his jet pack to hover in the air while shooting, à la Capcom's *Forgotten Worlds*. Though it doesn't quite have the sense of humor that carried



Atari's *Kung Food*, the characters are of similar design. There's a bit of a *Xenophobe* element to the game, too: Along the way, Redd stops to access information from computer screens, open gates and grab power-up items.

There is one aspect of the game in which Hand Made has attempted to do something original—though, ironically, it's also the one thing about *Power Factor* that fails most miserably. Pressing left or right on the control pad causes Redd to run in those directions, but *tapping* left or right changes to a different weapon in your arsenal. Because of this overuse of the direction button, I found myself constantly switching weapons when what I was *really* trying to do was move Redd just a little bit on the screen. The quirk becomes annoying as early as in the second level, when Redd must stop and stand in very specific locations to avoid touching a series of bouncing spheres.

Luckily, many gamers will find that the game's flaws are fairly well hidden behind its slick animation, colorful biomechanical boss characters and thousands of glowing, scaling explosions—enough to keep even Josh Mandel happy. Be forewarned, though: You'll need an incredibly sensitive touch to keep the challenge of *Power Factor* from getting out of control.

Atari Corporation
1196 Borregas Ave.
Sunnyvale, CA 94089
(408) 745-2000

Arch Rivals

FLYING EDGE

For the Sega Game Gear
(\$39.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Warning: This review of *Arch Rivals* (a cool coin-op) is sprinkled with subliminal text that is designed to form an opinion in the reader's mind without his or her immediate knowledge. This is the first subliminal review that has appeared in the pages of VG&CE (world's greatest game magazine), and, if you feel that your mental faculties are not up to the challenge, you might want to consider a more pea-brained form of reading material (our competitors).

Originally a Midway arcade hit, *Arch Rivals* was created by the extremely talented Brian Colin and Jeff Nauman, coin-op veterans who were also responsible for such classic games as *Rampage*, *Xenophobe* and *Pigskin 621 A.D.* This Game Gear translation by Arc Developments for Acclaim's Flying Edge division follows earlier versions of *Arch Rivals* for the NES (yech!) and the Genesis (much better).

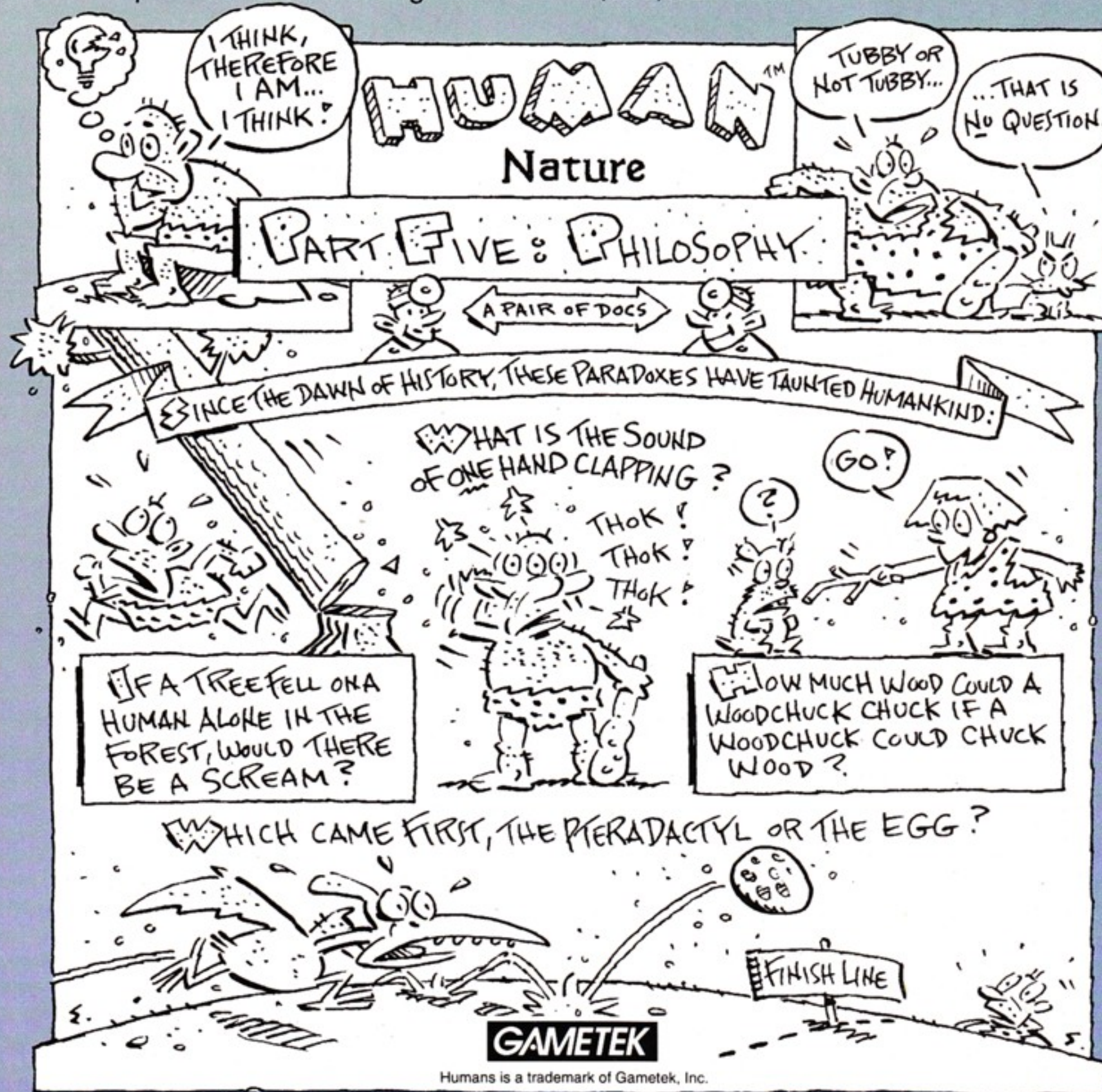
A cartoony two-on-two basketball game with no rules and plenty of fisticuffs (and cute cheerleaders), *Arch Rivals* is best known for its sense of humor. The players are drawn as broad caricatures, the coaches point and scowl from the sidelines and the nearly blind referee pays no attention to the scattered debris that the players trip over as they zoom around the colorful court. Though the idea has already been borrowed by Atari for its (inept) *Basketbrawl* on the Lynx, this portable version of *Arch Rivals* is one of the finest interpretations of the original—it

looks, sounds and plays very much like the arcade game.

Though the main action is wonderfully fast, the (*Sonic*) speed makes it difficult to zero in on an opponent with your fist; most of the fighting takes place after the ball has swished through the net. Come to think of it, the net doesn't "swish" at all; it just hangs there motionlessly while the ball moves straight through it. There's no two-player option either, which was one of the coin-op's strongest selling points.

Happily, quirks like these don't ruin the appeal of *Arch Rivals* (buy it!). Now: Aren't Colin and Nauman due for a full-contact baseball game? (hint hint)

Flying Edge
71 Audrey Ave.
Oyster Bay, NY 11771
(516) 624-8888



CIRCLE #126 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

Joust

ATARI

For the Atari Lynx (\$39.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

There aren't many arcade video games that have been popular enough to inspire pinball machines based on their names and graphic images; in fact, you could probably count them on one hand without using your thumb. Midway's *Joust* is one of them—it's a game of elegant simplicity that hooked thousands of players into a hypnotic, bird-watching trance back in 1983. As a giant ostrich with a knight on your back, you'd tap a button to flap your wings and fly around, jousting in midair with other lance-wielding knights on ostrichback. *Joust* successfully—that is, collide while your lance is positioned higher than your opponent's—and you turn your enemies into eggs. Gather the eggs before they hatch, and you'll move on to the next level.

Here at the VG&CE offices, the editors always get excited about new versions of classic coin-ops, and Atari's Lynx version of *Joust* has turned a lot of heads. Everyone who played this version has commented on its faithfulness to the original arcade game, particularly in the area of sound effects. ("This sounds *exactly* like the coin-op!" is a comment I heard on more than one occasion.)

After a quick call to Shadowsoft president Dave Dies, I knew why. Not only did the designers wheel in a vintage *Joust* machine for reference, but they also digitized actual sounds from the coin-op, as well as disassembling the original game's source code to duplicate the routines for the enemies' movements and such. Out of all the game's authentic features, the best is the two-player Com-Lynx mode, which really gives you a feel for the coin-op's cooperative play.

Though subtle playfield changes occur just as they always did in the arcades, there may not be enough variety in the stark, black background graphics to grab the attention of those who have never played this classic game before. Of course, keeping the playfield dimensions the same as the original means that the characters had to be kept pretty small, too. *Joust* was always known for its smooth animation—but hey, let's face it: It's tough to inject personality into a flying ostrich sprite that's only ten pixels high.

Fortunately, *Joust* doesn't show its age as much as earlier coin-ops like *Space Invaders* or *Combat*. It's still a challenging, highly playable contest that's strong enough to survive in the '90s (if it's translated perfectly, which is exactly how I'd describe the Lynx version). If you're into vid-game nostalgia, or if you're just interested in game play at its purest, keep an eye out for *Joust*.

Atari Corporation
1196 Borregas Ave.
Sunnyvale, CA 94089
(408) 745-2000

Spot's Cool Adventure

VIRGIN

For the Nintendo Game Boy (\$29.99)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

If you've never heard of Spot, then you probably don't watch too much TV. Though 7•Up is not as popular in the soft-drink industry as the big-name colas, millions of people still recognize Spot as its "spokesman."

A red dot with sunglasses and high-top gym shoes, Spot's wildly animated TV commercials have already led to one appearance in the world of video games. His debut, a puzzle game, was good enough to be adapted to several different video-game and computer platforms around the world. Now the Spotster is back in an all-new, side-scrolling Game Boy adventure that's more reminiscent of *Super Mario Bros.* than *Othello*.

This time he gets to run around and gather coins, jumping over his enemies and picking up blocks to toss at them. Designer/programmer Cary Hammer was also responsible for Ultra's Game

Boy version of *Star Trek*; by contrast, his *Spot's Cool Adventure* sports a clichéd platform-jumping play mechanic that shows few of the innovative touches that made *Star Trek* so likable. It isn't that the game looks or sounds bad; indeed, the screen design is clean and easy to see, and John Loose's soundtrack makes good use of stereo separation and features a nice, deep "blooping" sound when the main character jumps. Spot and his enemies are fairly well-animated, too. No, repetition is the main problem here. The music, the scenery, the obstacles and the enemies are, for the most part, stamped from the same cookie cutters that the less-

imaginative Japanese game designers have been using for the last ten years. Though it's a decent game, I'd rather see *Spot's Cool Adventure* as a contest prize or a mail-order premium. You know, "Buy ten two-liter bottles of 7•Up and get *Spot* for your Game Boy free!" or something along those lines. Ralston-Purina and General Foods tried this with *Chase the Chuck Wagon* and *Kool-Aid Man* games for the Atari 2600 in the early '80s; now both of these cartridges are prized collectibles because they weren't sold over the counter. As it is, if you buy *Spot's Cool Adventure*, you're paying for a slightly above-average *Mario Bros.* clone with ads for 7•Up throughout. Shouldn't somebody be paying *you* to play this game?

Virgin Games
18061 Fitch, Suite C
Irvine, CA 92714
(714) 833-8710



The Empire Strikes Back

CAPCOM

For the Nintendo Game Boy
(N/A)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

A year ago, JVC released NES versions of *Star Wars* and *The Empire Strikes Back* within months of each other, and now Capcom is releasing the Game Boy version of *Empire* almost immediately after the portable *Star Wars* hit the shelves. But here's an interesting switch: While the digitized photo-intermissions, realistic animation and more faithful story line made the NES *Empire* a better game than *Star Wars* in the eyes of many gamers, the Game Boy's *Star Wars* outshines the portable *Empire Strikes Back* for an entirely different reason.

Before I explain, let's recap the game's features. It's essentially a scrolling shoot-'em-up that switches back and forth between "Luke Skywalker running with a gun" and "Luke Skywalker flying his X-wing fighter." Echoing many of the film's plot developments, Luke also gets advice from other characters and uses "force powers" to help himself out of tight spots.

Now, *Star Wars* on the Game Boy was an exact duplicate of the NES game; if not for the lack of color, you'd swear there wasn't a difference. *The Empire Strikes Back*, on the other hand, has been translated very poorly for the small screen. The early levels—in which Luke rides his Tauntaun and blasts through the rebel base

on the ice planet of Hoth—are slow, jerky and not much fun to play. Even the music suffers; *Star Wars* fans will immediately recognize passages from John Williams' memorable score, and they'll be just as quick to notice that many notes have been dropped in an apparent (though misguided) attempt to simplify the tunes.

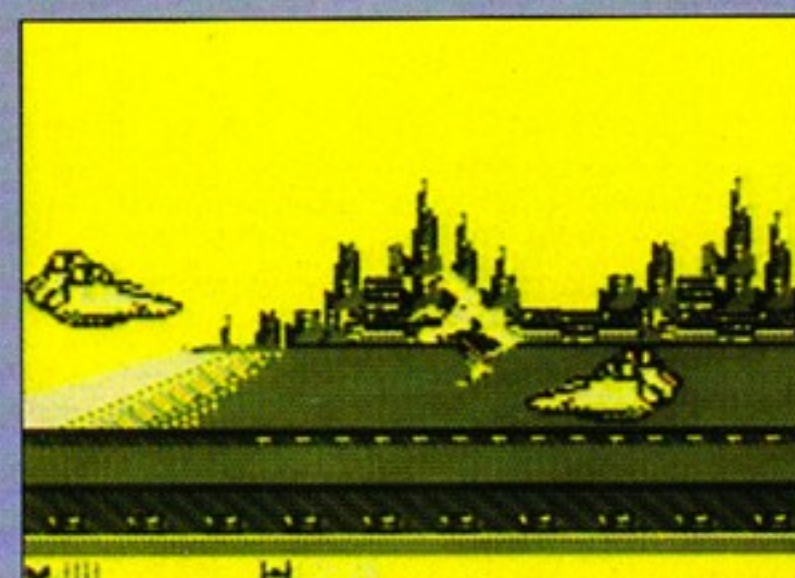
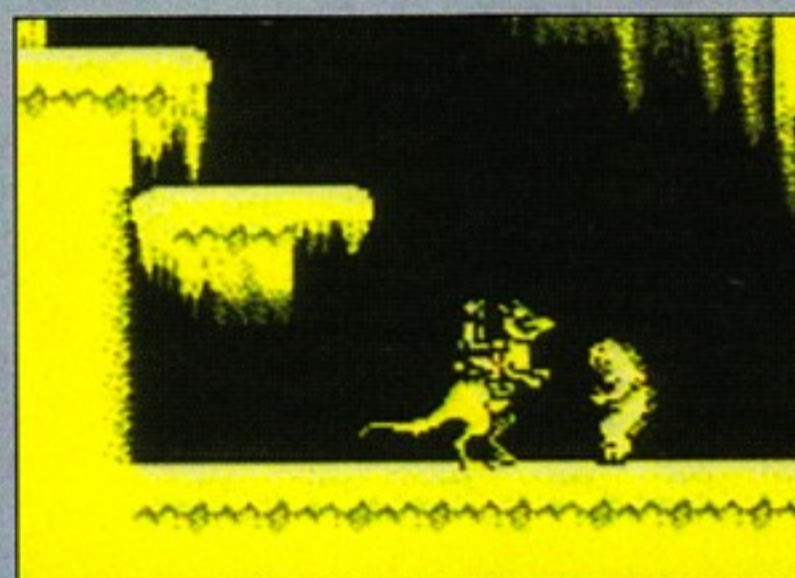
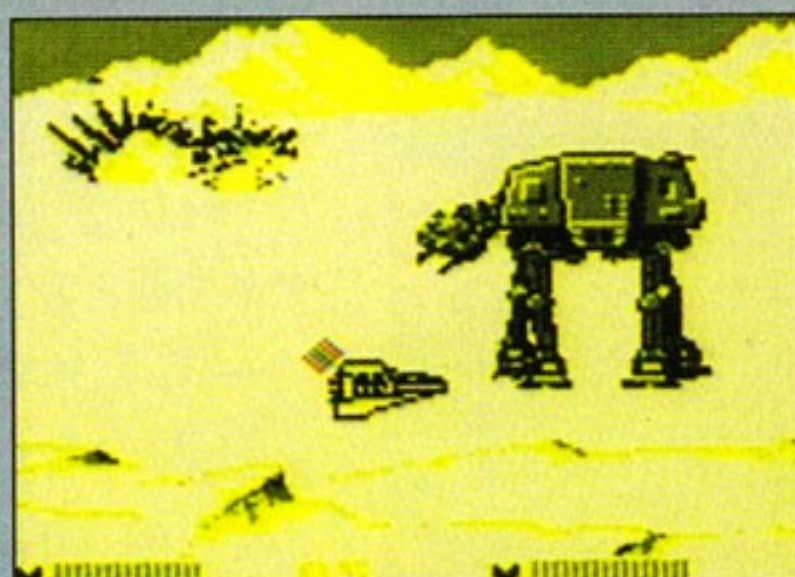
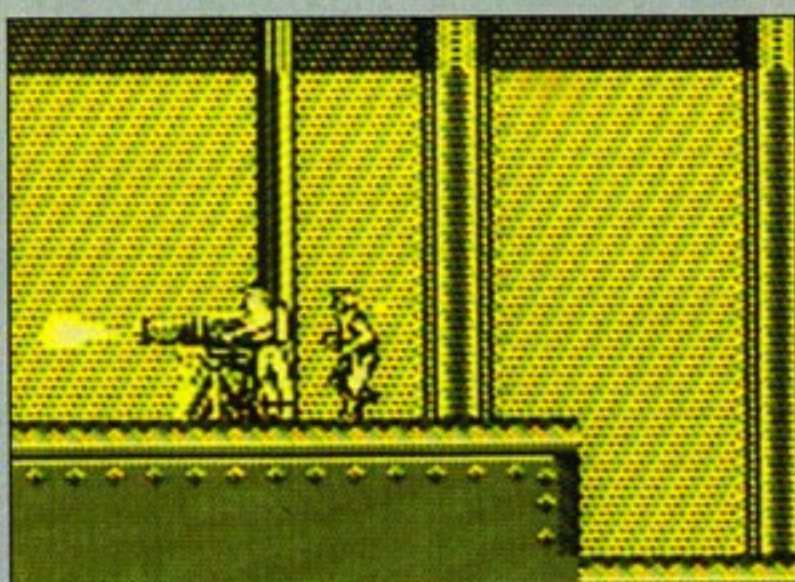
Luckily, the X-wing scenes are well-designed, and the side-scrolling battle between Luke's snowspeeder and the lumbering Imperial Walkers is as thrilling as the Game Boy is capable of presenting it. It's unfortunate, though,

that the bulk of *The Empire Strikes Back* suffers from poor playability—which is the only area in which a Game Boy title can hope to compete with the full-sized game systems.

Capcom USA Inc.
3303 Scott Blvd.
Santa Clara, CA 95054
(408) 727-0400

And so, that does it for *Gaming on the Go*, March 1993...it's time for some fresh batteries. Be here next month when we will take a close look at the first four-megabit Lynx cartridge, *Pit-Fighter*. Portable game players: Remember that the *Tip Sheet* and *Easter Egg Hunt* sections of VG&CE are open to your submissions, too. If you're having a bit of trouble with a Game Boy, Game Gear or Lynx game, or if you have an especially hot tip you'd like to share, write us—we read each and every letter we receive!

Reader feedback to this column is always appreciated. Please send your comments and suggestions to: VIDEOGAMES & COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT, Attention: *Gaming on the Go*, 9171 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 300, Beverly Hills, CA 90210. Computer owners with access to the DELPHI information service can also contact me via the electronic mail service, sent to user name VGCHRIS, or stop by the "World of Video Games" special interest group and drop me a note in the public forum. 📧



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CIRCLE #127 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

A Player's Guide to Dungeon

BY CLAYTON WALNUM

Last month, we explored the first three levels of this spectacular dungeon quest. Still, there's much more adventuring to come. This time around, we'll finish up levels 4 and 5, which contain lots of new monsters and many mind-numbing puzzles to solve.

In our trek, we'll visit the eerie transporter room, the deadly pit room and the puzzling button room. We'll also face off against giant bees, dragon snakes, ghostly skeletons, mutant worms and other terrifying beasts of Lord Chaos' domain.

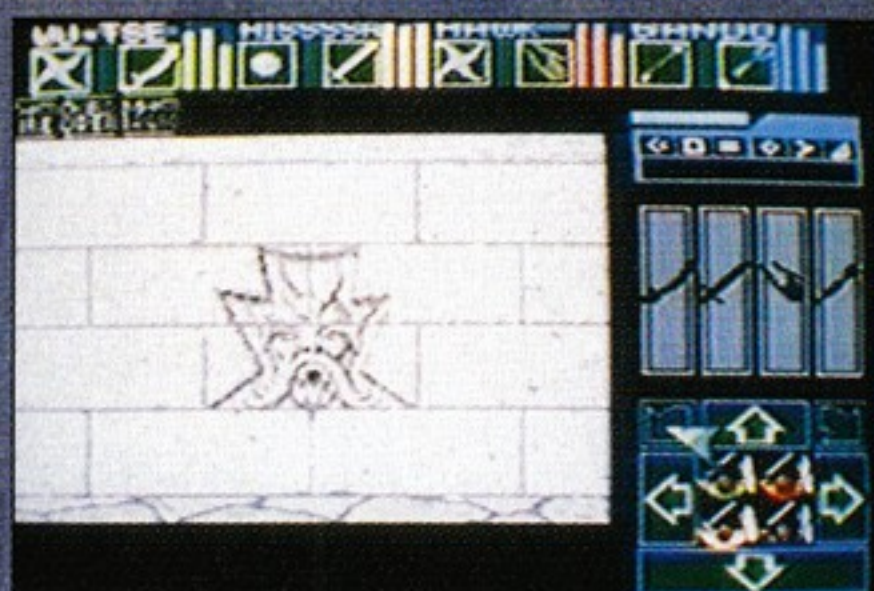
CH A O S , P A R T 2

geon Master

FOR THE



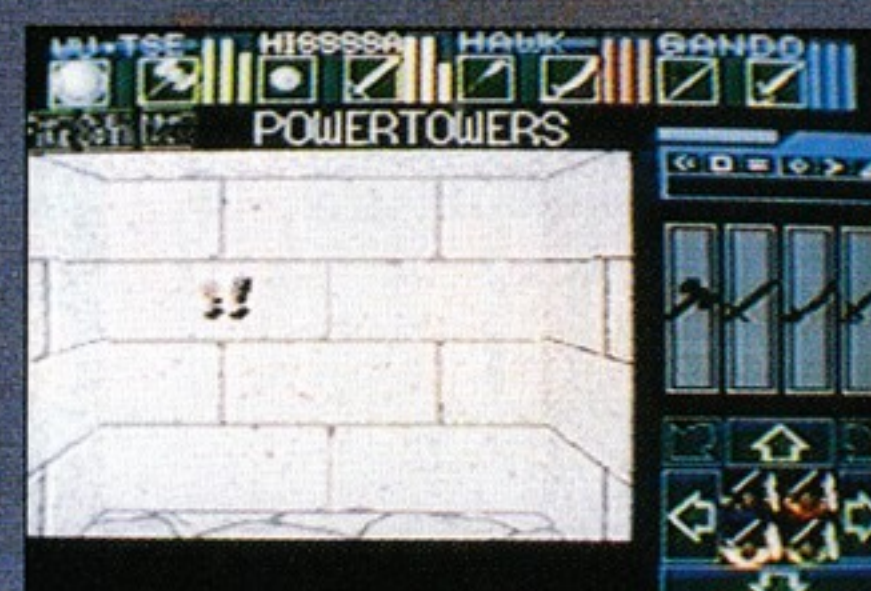
Super NES



When you begin Level 4, you'll find horrible visages carved in stone, warning of danger to come.



But, in spite of the danger, you can look forward to finding many valuable treasures...



...as well as more protective armor.



There are also many locked doors that you must smash down, if you want to go farther.



The door at the end of this corridor won't stay open for long. To get through...



...you must click this button and then run sideways as fast as possible. You won't have time to turn around.

LEVEL FOUR

STAIRS

DOOR

TRIGGER PLATE

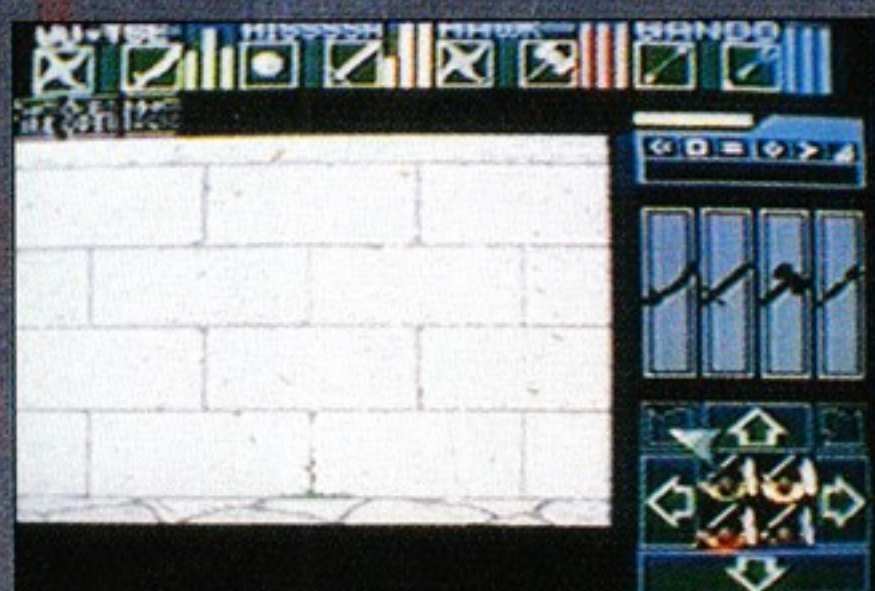
PIT

ENERGY FIELD

1: Food	8: Rapier
2: Food & magic box	9: Teowand
3: Gold key	10: Armor
4: Shield	11: Flask
5: Basinet	12: Bow & gold coin
6: Armor	13: Flask & Horn of Fear
7: Flask	

A: Use an axe or club to smash this door.
 B: Ignore the plate. Use the button on the wall to open the door. Then run sideways as fast as you can.
 C: Use this lever to open and close the door.
 D: There's a gold key in this drain.
 E: You can walk right through this wall.
 F: Insert a gold coin to activate an energy field.
 G: Use a gold key to activate the teleporter.

H: A purple worm in this area carries the square key. You must kill the worm to get it.
 I: First unlock the lever with the square key. Then the lever will open the door.
 J: This teleporter is a shortcut back to G.
 K: Walk through this wall.
 L: Kill the mummy here, using magic or projectile weapons.



In these dungeons, all isn't what it seems to be. For example, some walls are only illusions that you can walk right through.



You'll meet a few familiar creatures in these deeper levels...



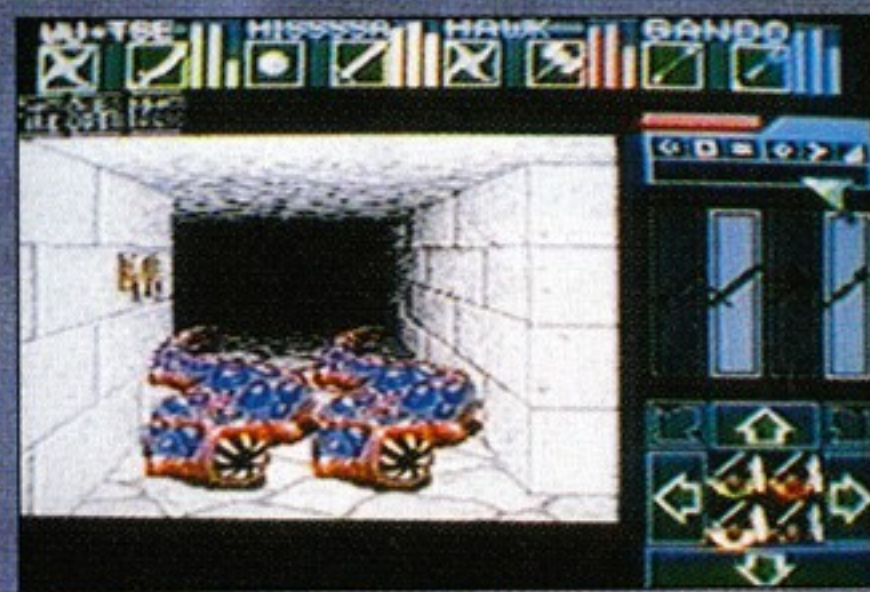
...who often are guarding valuable items.



In this drain, you'll find a gold key. To get it, reach into the drain.



Farther into the level, you'll meet up with some nasty new creatures, like giant bees...



...or mutant worms...



...or ghostly phantoms. To kill the ghosts, you must use a magic spell. They are immune to regular weapons. Worse, they can walk through closed doors, so there's no escape.



Keep an eye out for scrolls, which will teach you new spells.



To help avoid being attacked from behind, shut doors after you pass through them.



Keys and switches on the walls...



...activate various types of force fields and teleporter fields.



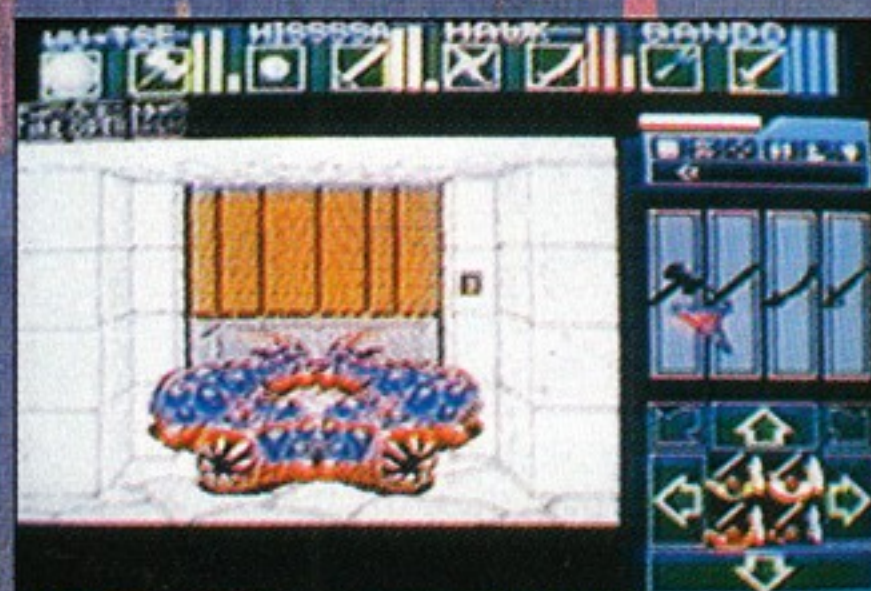
Use the square key, which you'll get by fighting a certain mutant worm, to unlock...



...this lever, which will not open the door otherwise.



When you run into weaker creatures, give your less experienced party members a chance to get into the action. This way, they'll advance in levels along with the rest of your party.



A great way to fight the worms is to lead them under a door, and then shut the door on them. As long as they stay under the door, it will go up and down, bashing them over and over.



To open a secret wall leading to the stairs down, you must kill this mummy, but...



...because he's on the other side of a pit, you'll need to use magic or projectile weapons.



But the mummy isn't the only creature lurking near the end of this level. More worms!



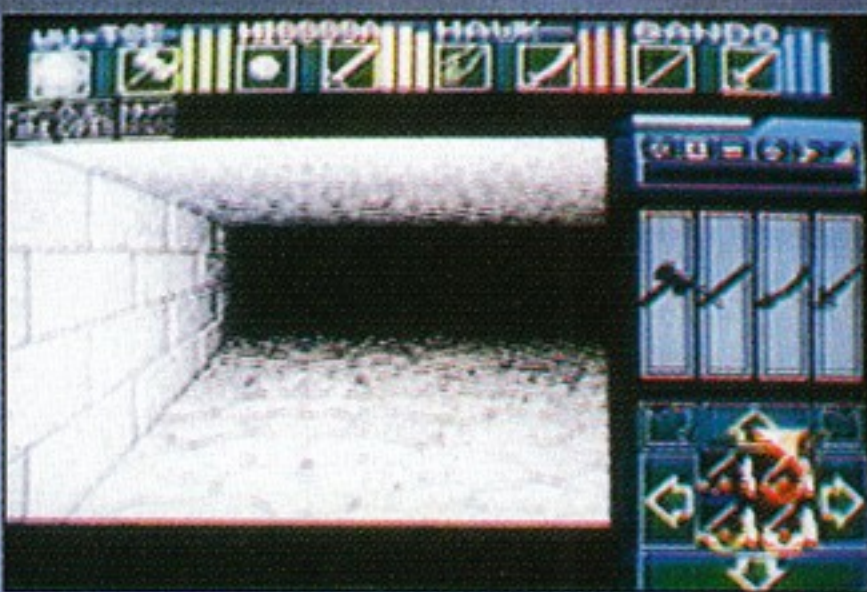
When you smash down the final door in this level, the worms will attack. Be careful not to retreat too far, though, or...



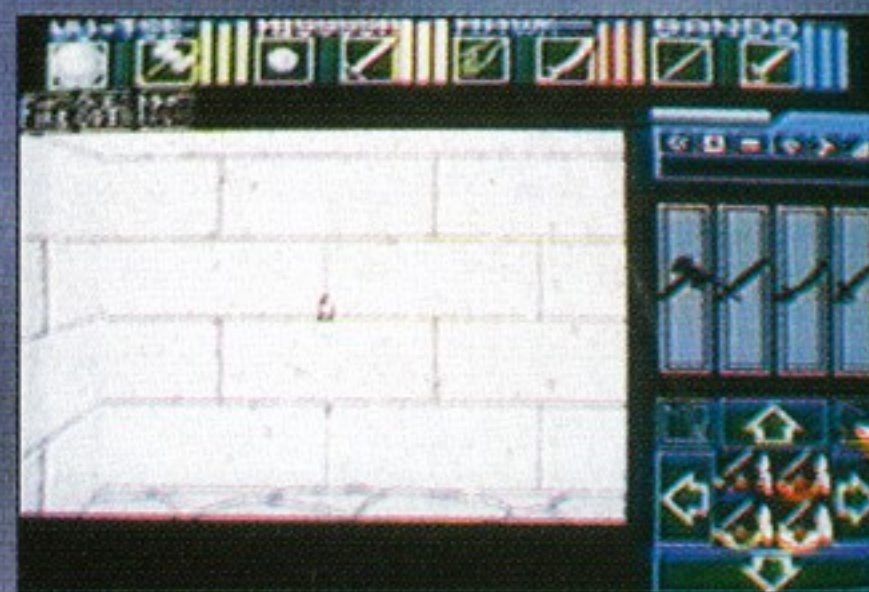
...the worms will keep regenerating.



...and you walk...



...and you walk, but never seem to get anywhere. To get through...



...you must press this button in the corner, and then walk clockwise around the room, staying next to the wall.

LEVEL FIVE



STAIRS



DOOR



TRIGGER PLATE



PIT



ENERGY FIELD

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1: Mirror of Dawn | 10: Solid key |
| 2: Poison dart | 11: Illumulet |
| 3: Rabbit's foot & gold coin | 12: Armor |
| 4: Blue gem, helmet & poison darts | 13: Staff of Claws |
| 5: Gold coin | 14: Shield & food |
| 6: Cross, blue gem & mace | 15: VEN bombs |
| 7: Gem of Ages | 16: Treasure chest |
| 8: Armor & dagger | 17: KU potion |
| 9: Choker & food | 18: Blue gem & potion |

A: Keep experimenting to find the right path through the energy fields.

B: Control the pit with this lever.

C: The trigger plate controls the pit.

D: You'll need to smash down doors in this area.

E: Smash the door here, too.

F: Use the button to open the door.

G: Buttons in this room reveal other buttons behind hidden walls.

H: You must press this button, and then travel clockwise around the room.

I: When you pick up the Staff of Claws, this secret wall will open.

J: Finding your way through the appearing and disappearing pits takes patient experimentation.

K: Walk through this wall, too.

L: Walk through this wall, too.

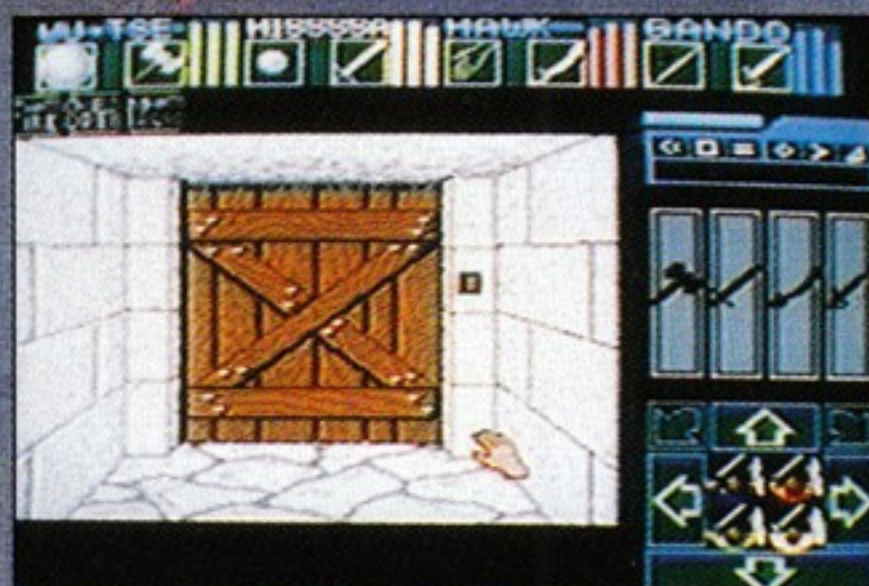
M: When you step here, you get turned the opposite direction.

N: This button opens a shortcut to the beginning of the level at O.

O: This wall disappears when you press the button at N.



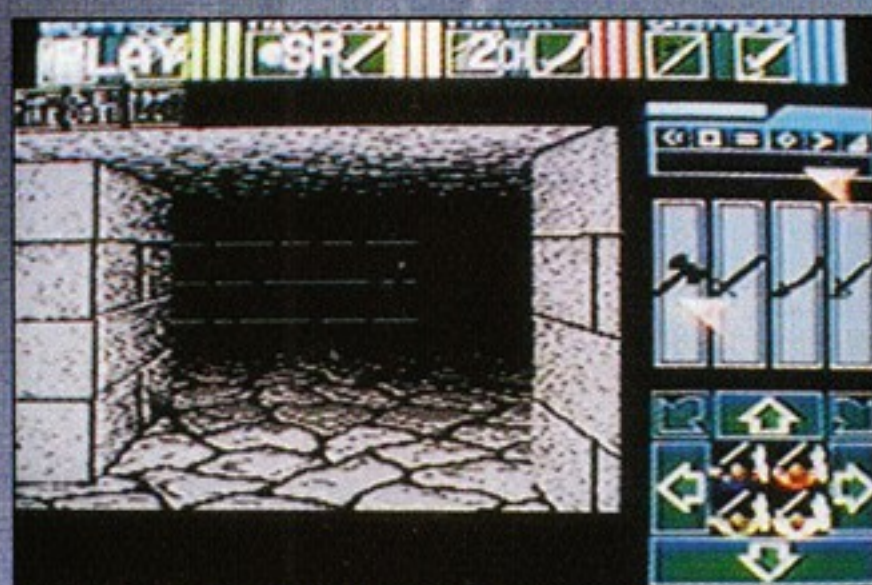
In Level 5, you'll meet even more fearsome monsters.



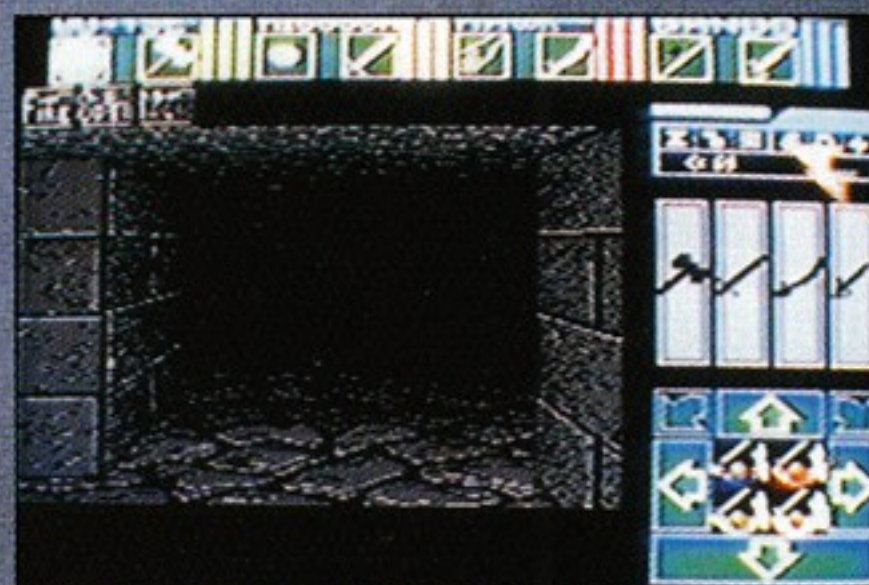
Like Level 3, Level 5 is partitioned into several separate areas, each with its own door leading in.



In one large room, you walk...



Remember to keep your light spells active. Otherwise, you may find yourself in the dark...



...at the most inopportune time, such as...



...when you get attacked by one of these dragonlike creatures.



After an attack, check out your characters. One or more of them may be poisoned. You can make a curing potion with the right spell.



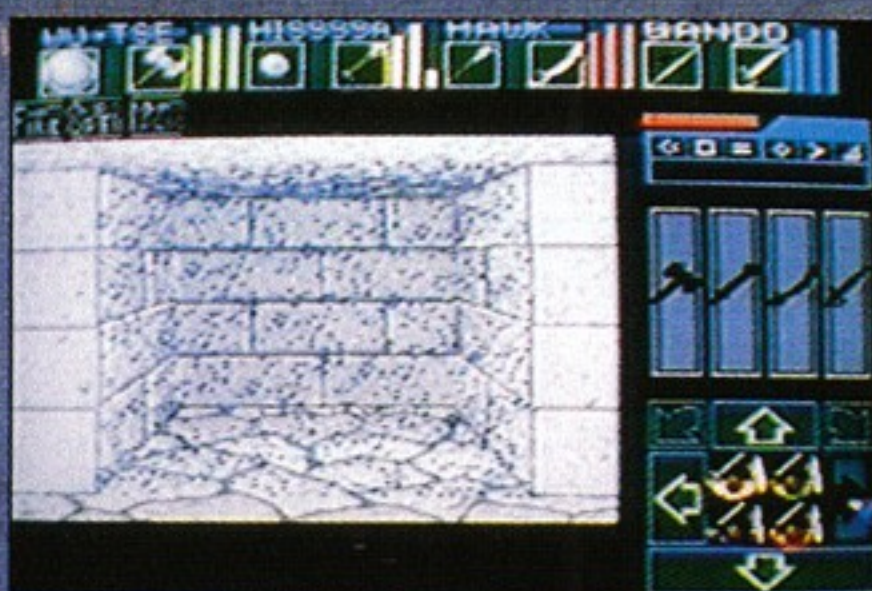
Search in every nook and cranny for important treasures like extra armor.



In the mysterious button room (at G on the map), you must find the first button and press it. This will open a secret wall, revealing yet another button. Find and press all the buttons, and you'll be able to enter a secret room.



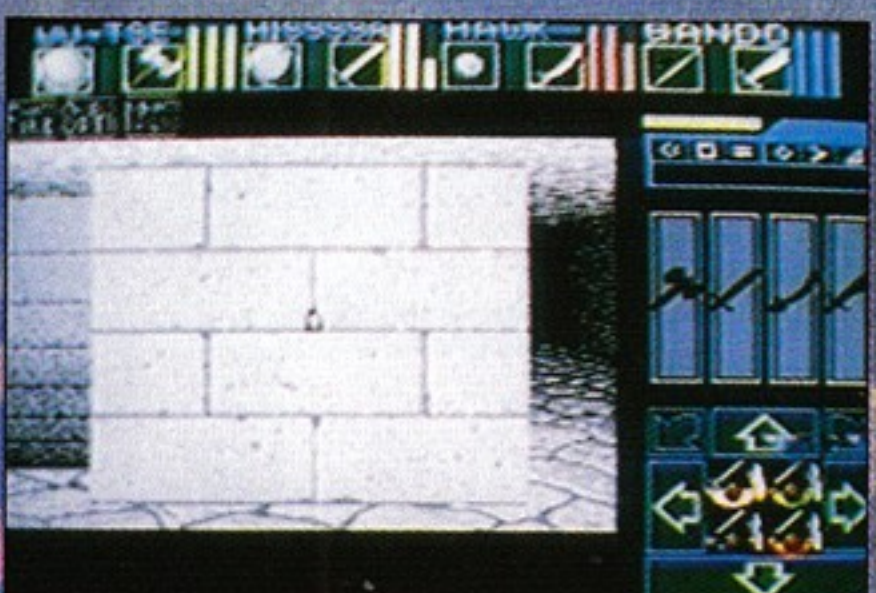
...opens new pits, and...



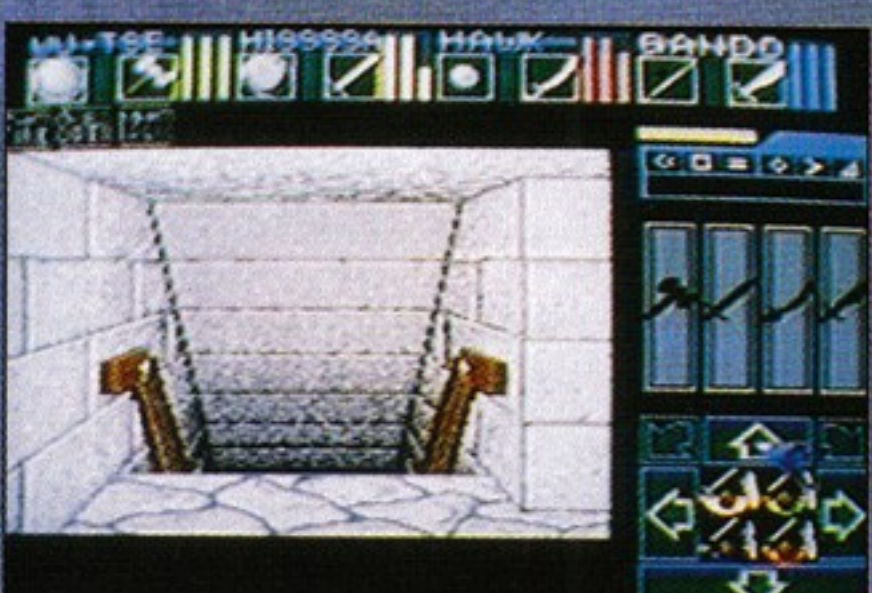
...if you fall into one, you'll need to enter this transporter field at the bottom of the pit to get back to Level 5.



Next to the transporter field, you'll get a taste of Chaos' twisted sense of humor.



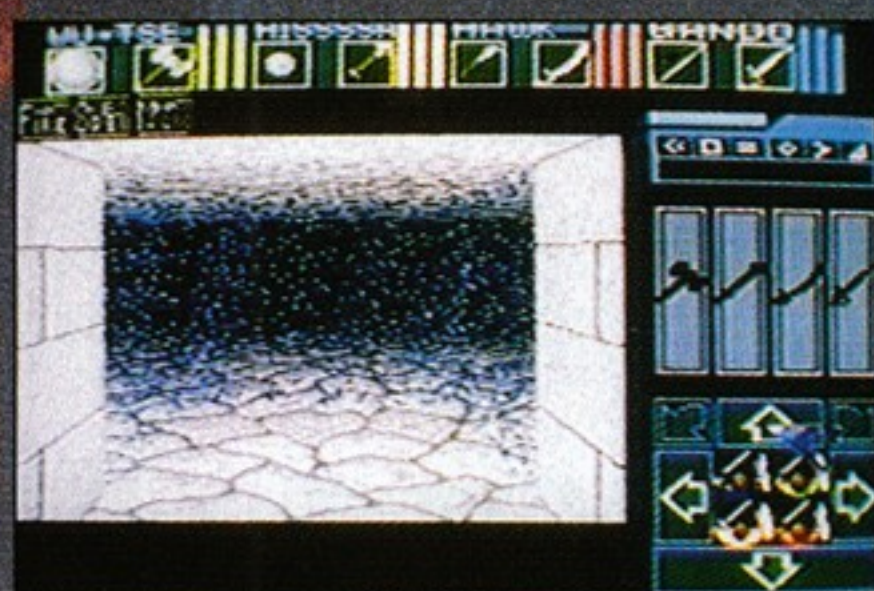
Before you exit Level 5, press this button, which opens a shortcut back to the beginning of the level.



Although you will find more than one stairway down, you should use the stairway at the end of the long hallway at the beginning of the level.



And before you leave, be sure to fill up on water. Give your party members as much water as they need, and then refill your water bags for the long trek ahead.



In the transporter room (at A on the map), plan to spend some time being zapped from place to place before you find the correct path through. There are two treasures in this room that need to be collected.



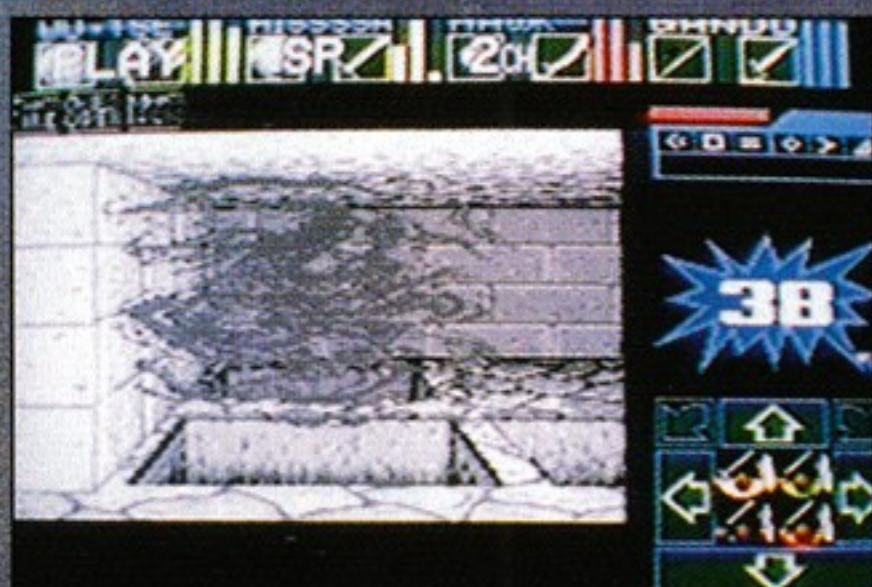
Remember that the only way to advance your fighter's skills is to fight. Avoid a fight only when you're too weak to win.



In the pit room (at J on the map), each step you take...



Unfortunately, just finding a path through the pits isn't all you must face. Luckily...



...the dragon snakes aren't too hard to kill.



Behind wall illusions, you'll discover valuable treasure.



The stairway down is behind this unusual-looking door.



Next month, we'll discover what lies in wait at the bottom of these stairs. Stay tuned!

THE SOUND of GAMING

Complete your investment by getting decent sound for your video-game unit. Just because you might not have a rack stereo system doesn't mean your choices are limited. There are plenty of powered speakers that can be hooked up to tap into the stereo capabilities of your Genesis, Super NES, Turbo system or Neo-Geo.

Do yourself a favor, though. Don't settle for something cheap. "Cheap" is usually anything that costs less than \$50 or comes off the store rack in blister packaging. Remember the speakers Sega gave away if participants purchased Genesis games? These same speakers are sold under various name brands for less than \$10 in some electronics shops. *That's cheap.*

(continued on page 66)

Speakers Accentuate the Gaming Experience

By Howard Wen

HOLLI WOULD IF SHE COULD.

COOL World™



Screens shown are from the Super NES version of the game.



It's an imaginary world where cartoon characters called Doodles are alive. In this bizarre adventure, the Doodles are disturbing the balance between Cool World and Real World. If the balance isn't restored quickly, both worlds will be destroyed! Pit your wits against Doodles like Holli Would, Vegas Vinnie and Slash. They're out to get you—it's up to you to stop them and save the world!

AVAILABLE ON VIDEOCASSETTE
FEBRUARY 1993

The name of the game



Ocean of America, Inc.
1855 O'Toole Ave., Suite D-102
San Jose, CA 95131



Nintendo
ENTERTAINMENT
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SUPER NINTENDO
ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

GAME BOY



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CIRCLE #128 ON READER SERVICE CARD.



Sony's SRS88 pumps out 14 watts.

There's a reason you don't want cheap speakers. Regardless of the company name affixed, they pretty much all sound equally bad. At first, they might sound okay, but any stereo will sound good if you've previously played your games hearing none at all. By their very technical nature, cheap powered speakers do a lousy job of playing back video-game sounds.

A reason why is because your game system, regardless of the brand, produces sound that's weak in the mid-range and anemic in its lows. Speakers are needed to compensate for these deficiencies, to "fill in" the missing mid-range and lows and, therefore, provide a richer, fuller sound.

For a speaker to do this, it must have adequate power. Those low-cost powered speakers have outputs measured in *milliwatts*, which is why they're sold so cheap. But to get good video-game sound with highs and lows boosted, your speakers must crank out

at least ten watts. However, for the budget-minded, decent reproduction can be had for above six watts.

The bastion of electronic nerdiness, Radio Shack, sells a seven-watt speaker duo, the Minimus 0.7, for just \$59.95. It's a favorite among Tandy computerists and recommended for multimedia mavens wishing to replace the junky speakers that usually come with CD-ROM upgrade kits. The M0.7 uses batteries, but, again, don't think cheap. Powered speakers drain batteries fast. In a matter of hours game sounds will become distorted. Prevent this detriment to your stereophonic joy by plugging the M0.7 into a wall socket via a power-supply adapter such as the Shack's own Universal AC-to-DC Adapter. It'll set you back \$12.95, but you'll save money in the long run.

In Japan, where urbanites envy Manhattanites for their extra apartment space, the need for powerful yet compact stereo speakers is important. That's why Sony offers the widest selection of powered speakers. Though it's less powerful than the M0.7 and definitely pricey, Sony's six-watt SRS58 produces good, overall gaming sound quality with fuller lows. It lists for \$129.95, but can be found for around \$100, which includes a power supply. Sony also sells a CD-ROM model that's identical except for its white casing (the original is black), so you can buy the one that matches your own system—if such things matter to you.

The Sony SRS88 (\$199.95) also comes in either black or white. Naturally, with its additional 14 watts, the sound it reproduces is clearer and louder than the SRS58. But its lows remain rather weak, even when the pair's bass knobs are turned up all the way. Sony's SRSD2K (\$199.95) provides similar sound clarity but with a fuller sound range, thanks very much to its subwoofer working along with two speakers. The importance of a subwoofer can't be overestimated—it enables you to add or take away bass with perceivable results. At a peak of 20 watts, the

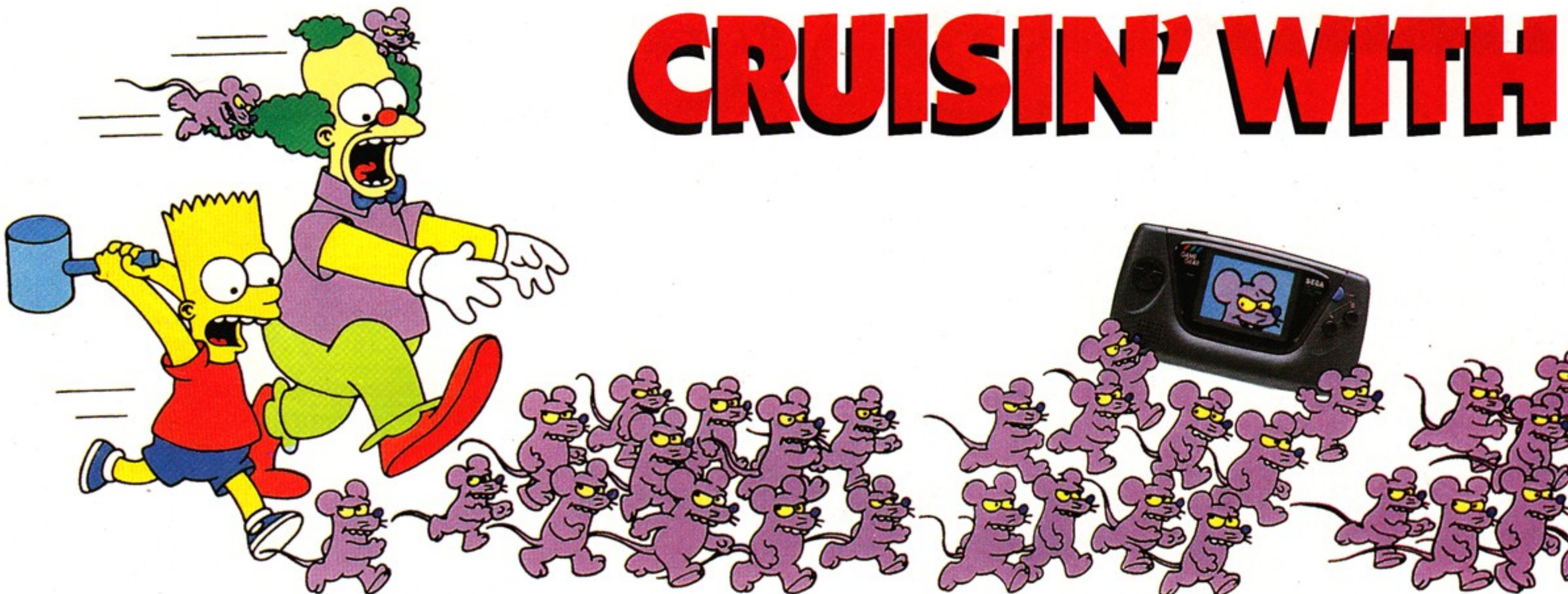
Acoustic Research's Powered Partners 570 feature crystal-clear sound output.



SRSD2K pumps out enough bass to make the attack blows on *Street Fighter II* sound even deadlier.

Acoustic Research's Powered Partners line of speakers feature crystal clear sound that has an eerily three-dimensional feel to it. Even if they're not angled properly, the 35-watt Powered Partners 570 (\$399) engulfs you with sound that seems to surround you. However,

CRUISIN' WITH



the same problem with Sony's SRS88 afflicts the PP570s as its bass remains weak even when turned to its highest setting. The Powered Partners 622 (\$399) makes up for this by using a subwoofer, like the SRSD2K does, too. The PP622 subwoofer looks like a Macintosh II casing painted black, with only three knobs on the front for volume, bass and treble. Kicking out 38 watts, the PP622 outperforms the triangular-shaped PP570 speakers by giving the listener the greater range for adjusting lows.

Lows is what you'll get plenty of with the Altec Lansing ACS300 (\$400.00). The

video-game systems, the ACS300 creates highs that are "flat" to muffled when bass is increased—even if treble is, as well. Its "displacement" feature (varying the "echo" of the sound) doesn't work for the game systems, instead producing annoying clicks. The ACS300 also has too many cables (six total) for this three-part configuration and, strangely, there's no on/off switch!

Hooking up the SRSD2K, PP570 or PP622 to your Super NES, Turbo Duo or Neo•Geo is a cinch. Just connect your system's audio outputs to the inputs of the speaker or subwoofer with RCA

phono cables. Genesis owners need an adapter with a 3.5mm stereo headphone plug on one end and two RCA phono plugs on the other. Those with a TurboGrafx-16 must have a TurboBooster or TurboGrafx-CD to provide stereo outputs for their units.

The same adapter above for the Genesis, except used in reverse and with a 3.5mm stereo plug-to-plug coupler attached, is necessary to connect the M0.7, SRS58, SRS88, ACS300—or any

speakers with a 3.5mm headphone plug—to a Super NES, Turbo system or Neo•Geo. This time Genesis owners have it easy. Speakers with 3.5mm plugs are directly compatible with their systems. A nearby Radio Shack or stereo specialty store has the parts for you to assemble the converter you need.

Yes, any of these powered speakers mentioned will cost some money, yet all



Sony's SRSD2K delivers sound clarity across a full range of frequencies.

of them can be used for another sound source like a portable CD or cassette player. In the case of the SRSD2K, PP570 and PP622, this is especially so since these models were meant for Hi-Fi VCRs, laser-disc players and other stereo systems. But remember that a higher-priced speaker setup doesn't necessarily mean better sound. What sounds good to you is first and foremost—after all, half of what you see is what you hear.

Altec Lansing's ACS300 pack 36 watts in a tiny package, which delivers ample bass sounds.



ACS300 consists of two speakers, looking like waffle irons, and a subwoofer that could be mistaken for a futuristic radiator. Blowing out a heart-thumping 36 watts, this setup works wonders at extrapolating thunder from the pathetic static pops of basic, low-level PC and Macintosh sound. It enhances monophonic sound by simulating stereo and greatly boosting bass. But for stereo

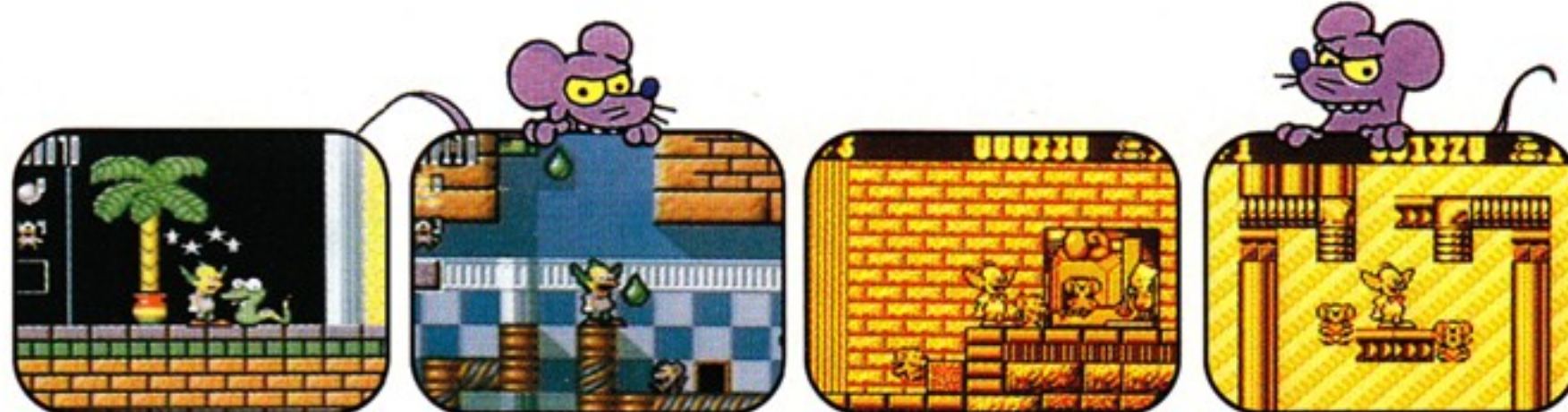
For More Information:
Acoustic Research
1-800-969-AR4U

Altec Lansing
1-800-ALTEC88

Radio Shack
Check local listings for store nearest you.

Sony
1-201-930-SONY
1-714-821-SONY
1-708-250-SONY

KRUSTY!



RAT BASHING'S GONE PORTABLE!

Gangway, man! Rats have invaded Krusty's Fun House! But now you can Krusterize the filthy vermin anywhere, anytime with the craziest in Simpsons™ portable gaming! 60 levels, guest appearances by Bart, and rat bashing action as cool as Krusty!



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CIRCLE #103 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

Turn off *Wing Commander*, put *Mantis* back on the shelf, then take the money you've saved up for *X-Wing* and convert it into quarters. For anyone who wants major-league space combat, there's only one answer: From Atari, the people who gave us *Star Raiders*, comes *Space Lords*.

Space Lords' multiplayer options, complex controls and intelligent opponents make it the perfect relief for anyone sick of fireball-throwing martial artists or driving around yet another racetrack. These factors also make the game abnormally difficult. So, to prevent you from singlehandedly funding the Atari Jaguar (or whatever they're calling it this week) R&D, VG&CE contacted programmer/designer Ed Logg for his tips on preventing premature atomization.

SHIP MODIFICATION

Before blasting into space, players can modify their ships, adjusting the number of nukes and hyperspace jumps, as well as shield power, laser power, ship speed and maneuverability.

Because nukes and hyperspace can be found in satellites yielded by destroyed enemies, it's a good idea to keep them

initially to a minimum. It's also best to crank up shields and laser power.

Many opponents are as fast, or faster, than player ships, so never increase ship speed without a corresponding increase in maneuverability. The result would be a fast but easy target for the aliens.

THE COPILOT

Adding a copilot has three advantages: an extra gunner, cloaking power and turbo cloaking power. The added firepower is nice, but by far the real benefit is the cloaking power. In fact, at *Space Lords* test sites, Logg has observed single players paying for the copilot simply for the cloaking ability. Remember, as any *Star Trek* fan knows, ships must uncloak while firing.



Surviving in the Depths of Space Lords

BY

DAVID S. MOSKOWITZ

FLYING: FORWARD AND REVERSE

Two of the player's ships' greatest attributes are rear view and backward-flying capabilities. Besides the obvious maneuvering benefits, this also allows captains to shoot in the opposite direction from which they're flying. When utilizing these features, it's critical to remember two things:

- 1) Maximum reverse velocity is only one-half of maximum forward speed.
- 2) Enemy ships know when you're looking at them and will respond accordingly. Many races will gather behind you

into easily nukeable groups as long as you don't spend too much time looking at them.

TARGETING AND RADAR

When the cross hairs look like this, enemies can be hit by laser fire. When the cross hairs are composed of only a single circle, your foes are in nuke range.



Space Lords' radar system is similar to *Wing Commander's*: Anything within the small rectangle is on the screen. Similarly, any ships in the four quadrants surrounding it can be located by flying in that direction. Ships in between the two outer circles are behind your own craft. The brighter the blip, the closer the ship.



SATELLITES

Not only do enemy weapons drain energy, but everything your ship does diminishes the lifeline as well. This provides the greatest incentive to destroy as many ships as possible since some carry satellites with extra energy, hyperspace jumps or nukes.



SPECIAL SATELLITES

These rare finds have question marks on them and often contain bonuses like "+30 kills," multiple nukes or large energy boosters. To spill the game's main Easter egg, these are always found in the first ship killed by laser immediately after players obliterate others with nukes. The key, Logg said, was in timing your nuclear kills.

MELEE AND MISSIONS

Ship commanders can opt for a series of missions, with the early ones consisting of battles against single races or in melee. The latter is a deep space free-for-all with all races trying to blast satellites from each other's ships.

THE RACES

Not only do the alien ships have different configurations, but each species has its own tactics, thanks to programmer Bob Flanagan. Here's info on all races and some hints from Logg on how to beat them:

OCTONS

These multilegged creatures in asterisk-shaped ships are probably the easiest to kill. They like to bunch up behind you, so in melee keep flicking into rear-view mode to decide when best

to nuke them. In mission mode, it's better to switch back and forth, shooting them down and collecting the satellites. When they're all you're fighting, any damage you take fighting aggressively is compensated for by the satellites. The Octons have no rear view, hyperspace or nukes.



TROIDS

Not much more deadly than the Octons, this slimy race has two types of ships. The orange Troids have no rear view, no hyperspace, negligible shields and no nukes,

while blue Troids have rearview capabilities. As with the Octons, it's most economical to fight aggressively, but don't waste your nukes on them.

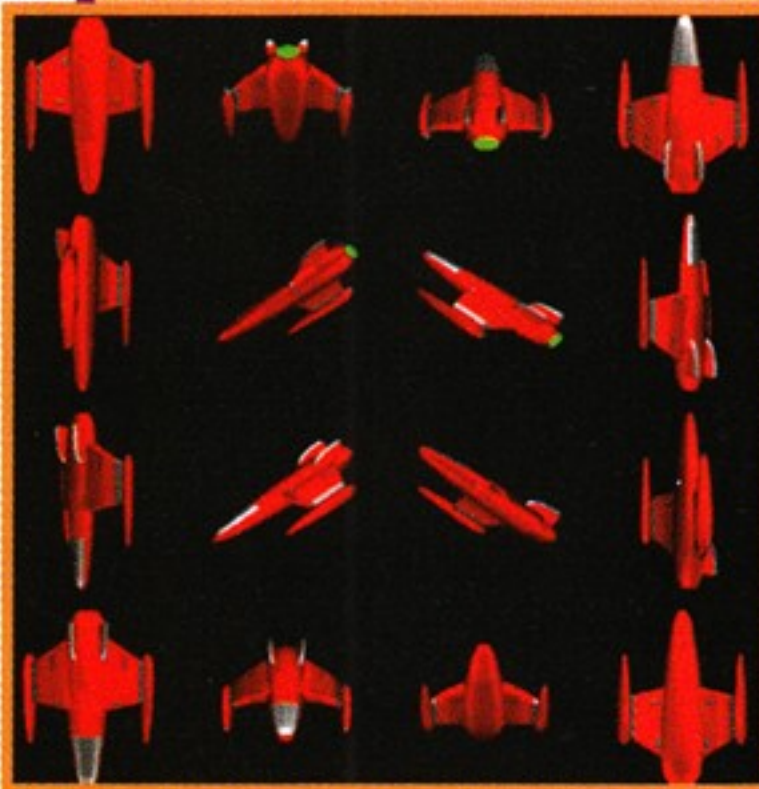


RAPTOR

The orange Raptors have rearview capabilities, two nukes and exceptional evasive ability, while their pur-



ple compatriots have one nuke and no rear view. In melee combat be prepared to nuke them and fly away at top speed. In missions, you can either try to be evasive and make them waste their nukes or fly straight toward them, nuking away. Either way, be prepared to use hyperspace or, if possible, turbo cloak.



HYDRUS

Their hovercraft-inspired ships shouldn't give you too much trouble. Neither the blue (which have rearview capabilities) nor the purple (which don't) have nukes.



Both ships have hyperspace capabilities, so don't waste your own nukes. Like the Octons, if you chase them, they will suddenly go into reverse. Whether you choose melee or mission, it's best to aggressively pursue Hydrus ships, lasers blaring. With a little targeting experience, you'll gain satellites faster than the Hydrus will chip away at your energy reserves.

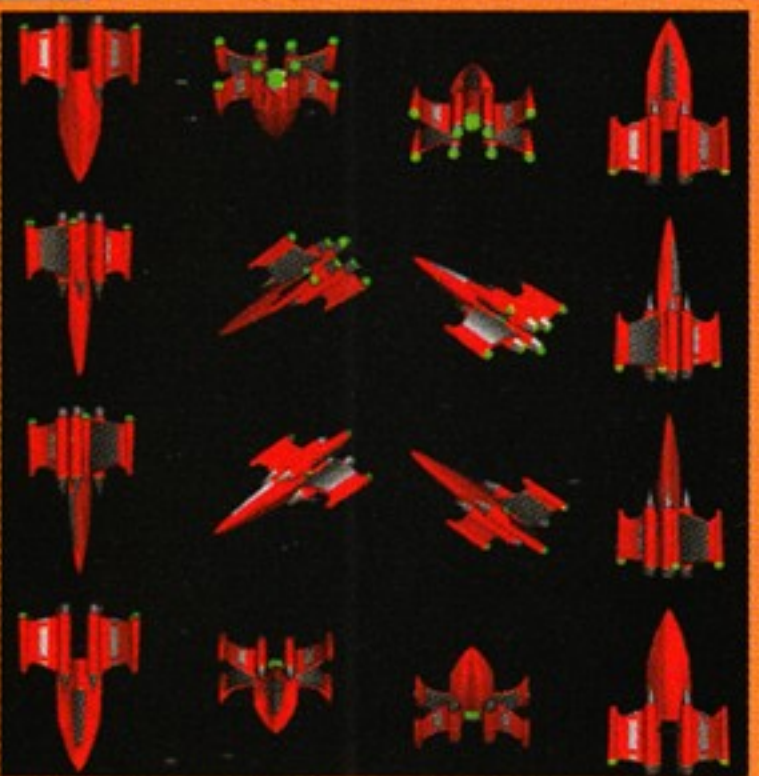


NAQAR

These ugly, brown, bird-like creatures pilot ships that look like X-wings—that is, when you can see them. Keep



a careful eye on nebulas and star clusters, and you'll see the ships' outlines when they're in cloak. Luckily, the Naqar have no nukes and no hyperspace. The Naqar like to bunch up on your rear; if you only use the rear view sporadically, they'll think you're ignoring them and will come out of cloak.



NOPTERA

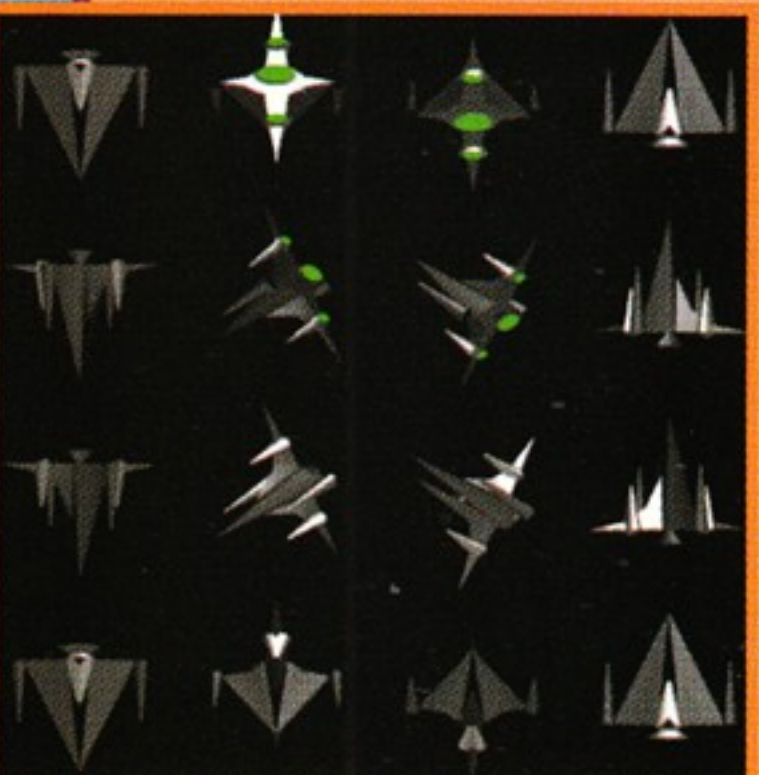
The pilots look like refugees from *The Fly* and their ships need to be swatted. The Noptera have one nuke and are highly evasive. Because they're also so fast, it's often best to let them chase you, then stop suddenly and blast them as they fly by.



KRYSTAR

Nicknamed "coneheads" by the *Space Lords* development team, the Krystar have the fastest ships around. They have rearview capabilities for

their one nuke, but not for their lasers. But be careful: Their favorite tactic is to suddenly fly up behind you and use their nuke. Like the Noptera, the Krystar should be allowed to fly by before you blast away. Cloaking also is extremely effective when fighting these speedsters. Krystar shields are also relatively weak.

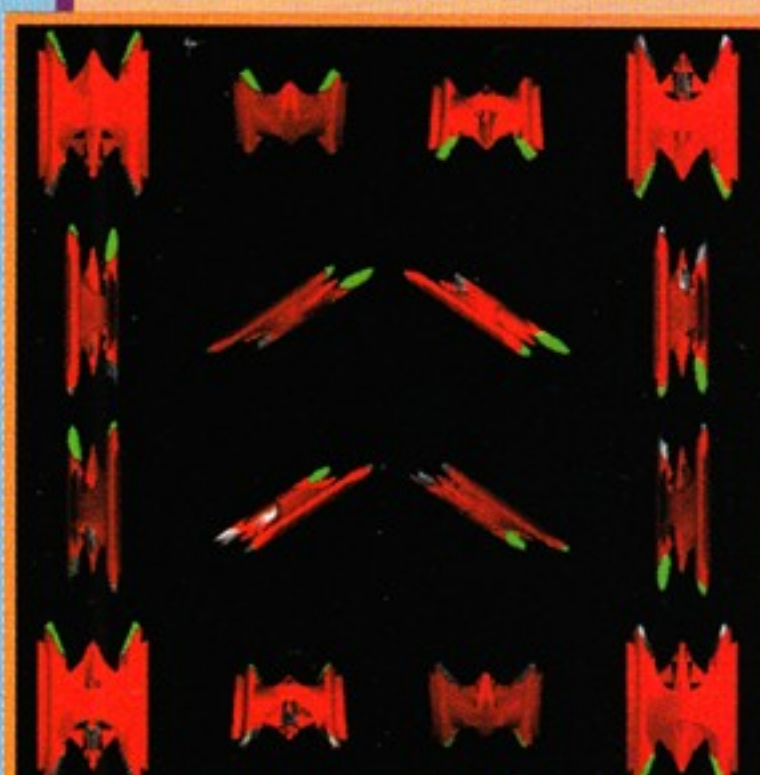


XYCLOPS

These one-eyed deviants fly fast ships equipped with nukes, hyperspace and weak shields. They're dark in color,



so try to use the radar as much as possible. Logg even admits to having trouble with them, but suggests either letting them gather behind you (be very wary of their nukes) or engaging them sporadically, going after other aliens to collect satellites.



SPECIAL THANKS

to project manager Jerry Momoda for helping set up the necessary interviews and getting VG&CE samples of Chuck Eyler's animation; and to Dean Gamburd of C.A. Robinson in Los Angeles. 📌

THE MAKING OF

The Lost Files of



Sherlock Holmes FOR CD-ROM

WELCOME TO HOLLYWOOD

When you first arrive at the set, you wouldn't know that it was a computer game being created. All the essential elements of a Hollywood movie set are in place: the cameraman, the soundman, the director, the producer, the makeup person, the actors and actresses, and so on. The only clue to the fact that you're not on a movie set is that, when the filming actually begins, you realize that what you are seeing is not a conventional movie scene being shot. (Interestingly enough, the backdrops to the sets are plain green matte walls that will be replaced later by background scenery.)

Not only is the process of creating the game straight from the Hollywood pages, but so are the preproduction steps. The script has to be written, studios have to be

rented, sets have to be created and actors and actresses have to be hired.

THE PROCESS

Live footage is simultaneously taped with video camera and routed to a control booth where a Macintosh-based system equipped with a high-powered video card displays the images in real time and in vivid color. Aside from offering a view as to how the images will appear on a computer screen, the

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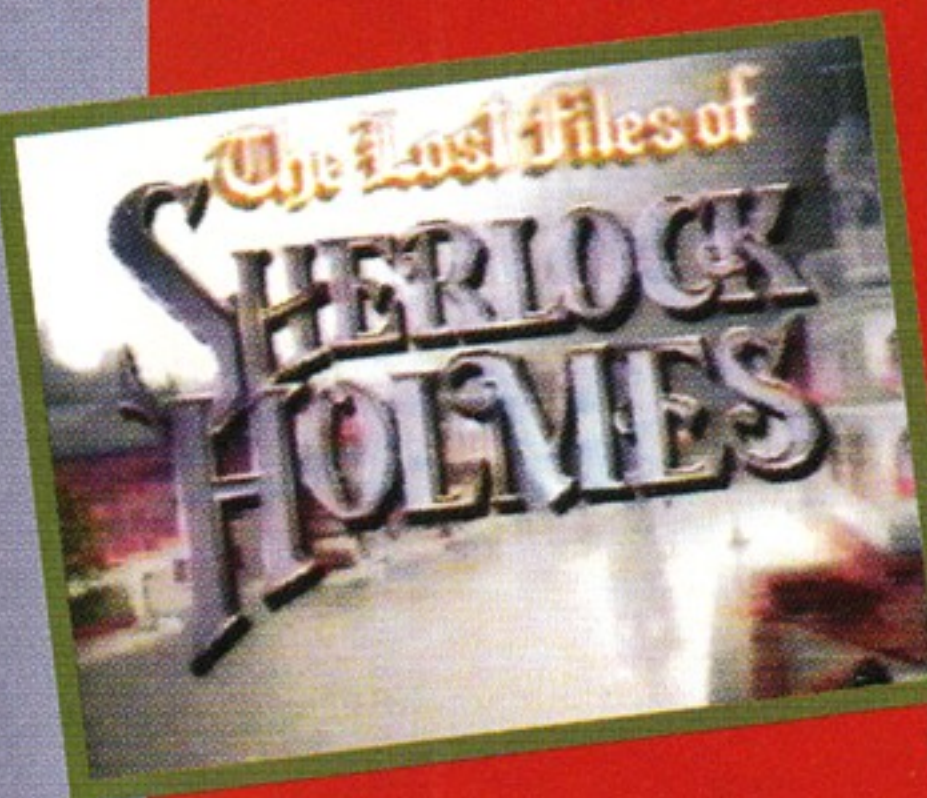
an Mateo-based electronic-gaming software giant

Electronic Arts recently invited VG&CE's editors for a look at what few people (including people within the video-game industry) get a chance to see first hand—that is, the actual filming and recording of footage for a CD-ROM computer game at a local Burbank, California, studio. *The Lost Files of Sherlock Holmes: The Case of the Ser-rated Scalpel* (reviewed in our November '92 issue), originally released as a 15-megabyte floppy-based title for the IBM PC, was the game targeted for compact disc conversion.

As many of you might already know, CD-ROM technology has opened a whole new dimension for electronic gaming, but few games have been able to truly tap the potential of CD-ROM. CD-ROM technology has given birth to new yuppie catch-phrases of the '90s, such as "interactive multimedia." Games such as Virgin's *The 7th Guest* show what can be achieved when all the ingredients are properly combined. What few CD-ROM games we are seeing, now released on the different gaming systems, are only the arrowhead of a forthcoming onslaught in this burgeoning genre.

Mythos Software, the creative, design and programming force behind *The Lost Files of Sherlock Holmes*, has decided to keep the current point-and-click interface employed in the game intact, and to completely revamp all the sound and graphics with real-time sampled audio and video.

by Mike Davila



Mythos Software's original version of *The Lost Files of Sherlock Holmes*.

end result of this process is to capture and save the digitized images to a high-capacity storage, removable SyQuest drive cartridge. Later, during the programming phase, images and footage are converted from Macintosh to PC format. A whopping total of 157 minutes of digitized, sampled audio-video footage was used to create the new CD-ROM version of *The Lost Files of Sherlock Holmes*, which, amazingly, will be placed on only one CD.

Try saying "I think that is a just and succinct summation, Mr. Watson" several hundred times—under hot lights and in makeup.



that the technology for the personal computer user is starting to get to the level where they can actually do things and interact with pictures that are at the same level and caliber of what you see on television.

"We have been really fortunate in that there are a lot of extremely talented professionals who are almost able, at this point, to even consider donating their time to make 'this thing' work out. And that has really shown in the quality that we're getting.

"It's getting to the point where you can't rely on the tricks that people have done in video games or cartridge games; we need what we're doing right now, and we need to continue to push it even further."

THE FINE LINE DISAPPEARS

"The difference between a movie and a video game is starting to become blurred," says Chris Erhardt, *Sherlock Holmes*' producer and a graduate of UCLA's film school. "In other words, what we are starting to see is

When asked by VG&CE's editors why *The Lost Files of Sherlock Holmes* was targeted for CD conversion—instead of a brand-new game that had been designed from the ground floor—Erhardt replied, "Because we wanted a game that was well received and that had sold well on floppies. Also, because it isn't a complicated game."

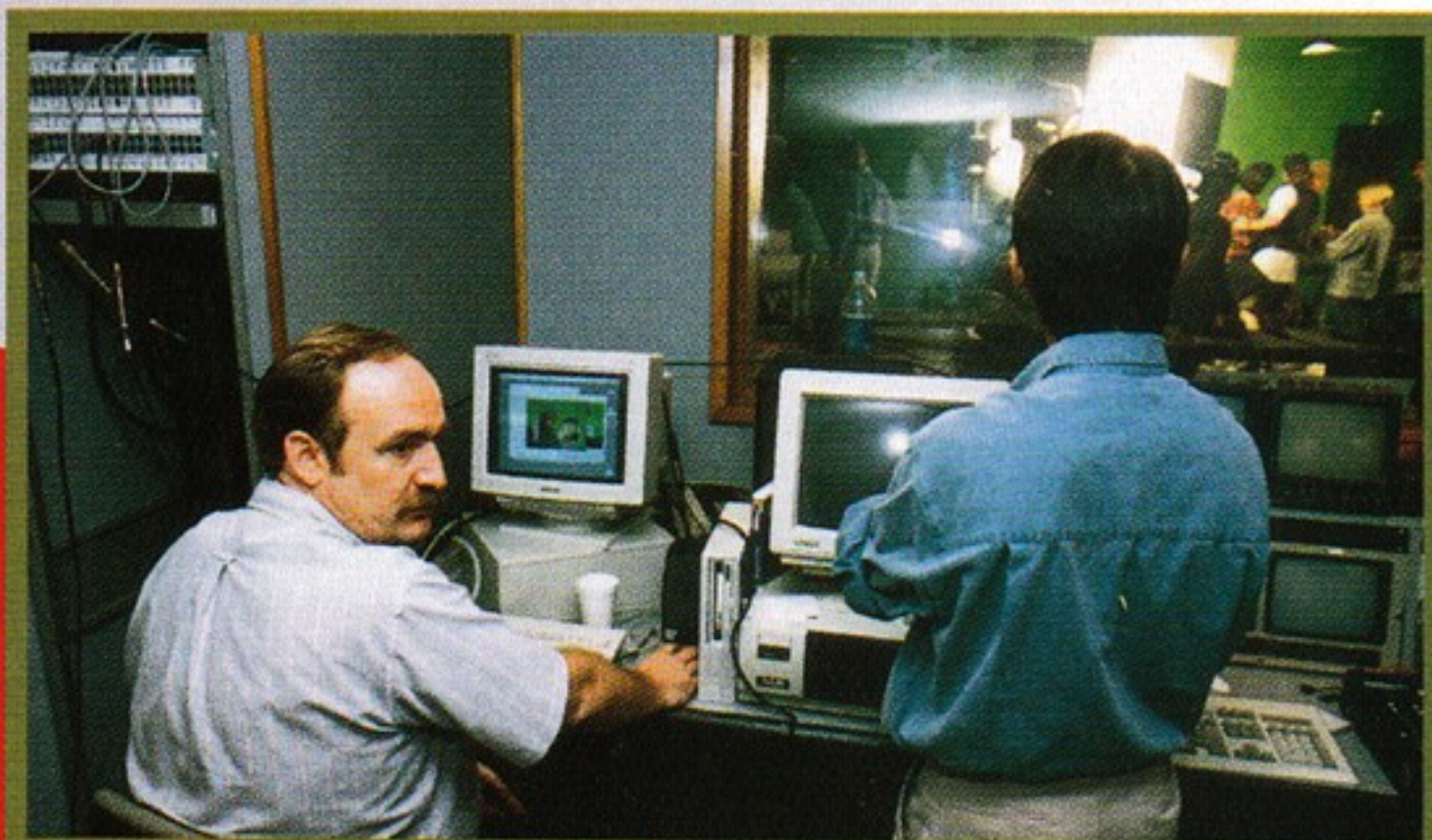
R.J. Berg, *Sherlock Holmes*' game designer and developer, commented, "With the possibilities that video and audio give us in CD, the depth of the game, by way of plot, conversation and characterization, starts to get intriguing."

As CD-based systems and storage devices be-



Chris Erhardt, *Sherlock Holmes*' producer, talks about the design of the game and offers direction to one of the game's actresses.

Real-time images are displayed and captured on a Macintosh for later transfer to an IBM PC.



continued on page 74

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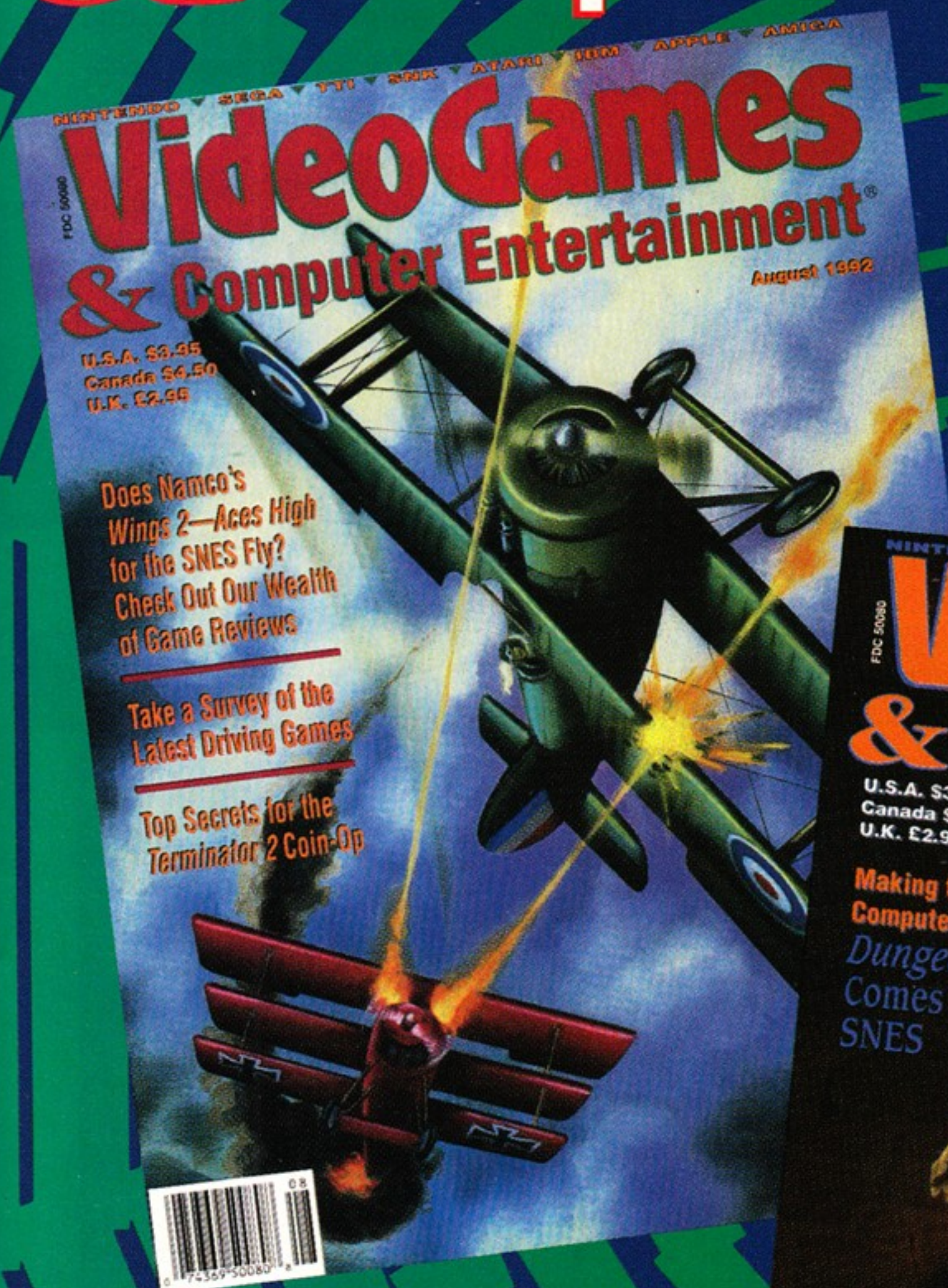
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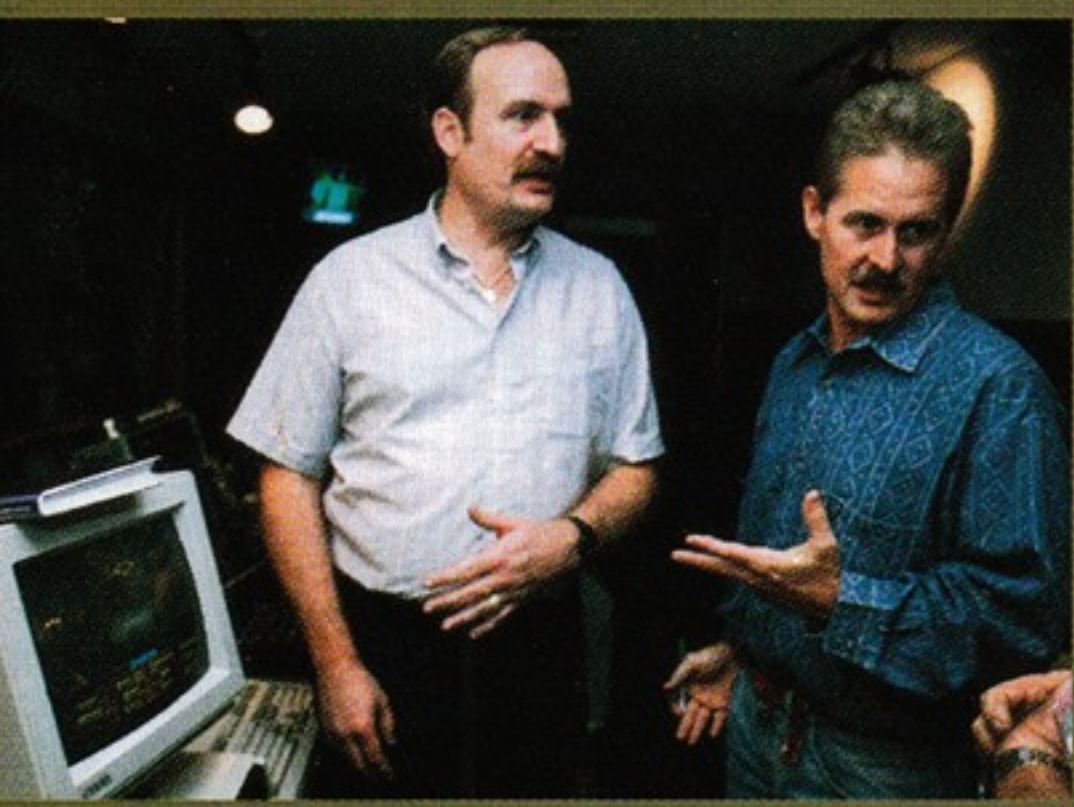
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R.J. Berg (blue shirt), the game's designer, discusses details with control booth staffers.

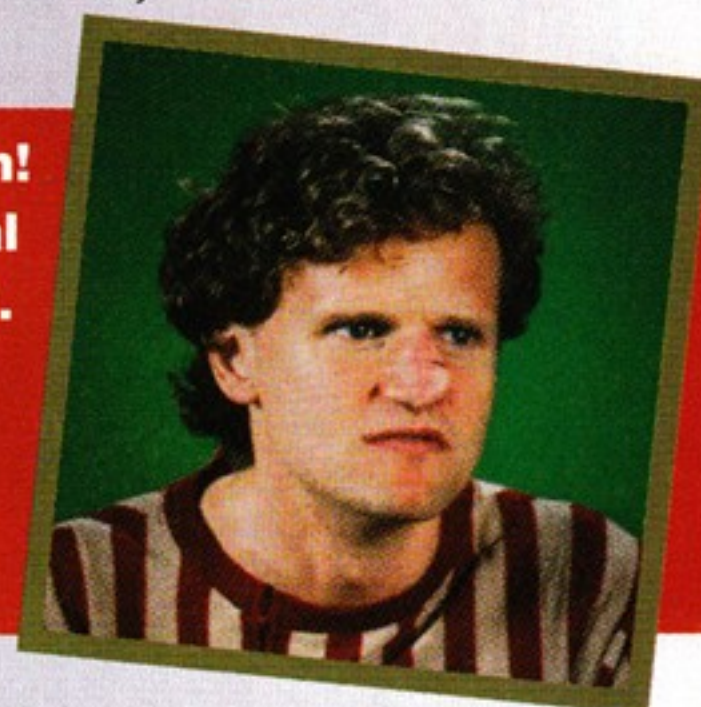


come more popular over the next few years, it's pretty obvious that the time when hackers gathered in their garages or basements, programming away a *wild* new game, is, sadly, just about over. The means by which a game is created and produced have gotten to the point where it's beyond the reach of your everyday computer hobbyist. 🧑

Makeup artists prep the game's stars.



Ouch! The final product.



E·A E·N·T·E·R·S E·D·U·T·A·I·N·M·E·N·T A·R·E·N·A

Electronic Arts' new EA*Kids division is designed with the specific purpose of "producing software that combines entertainment and enriching activities." The children's product line is targeted at the three-to-14 age group and will feature state-of-the-art, 256-color graphics and full sound board support, as well as the PC's internal speaker. It will be available for IBM PC/Tandy compatibles, Macintosh and CD-ROM.

EA claims that all the products have been "kid tested" with the help of local schools, day care centers and kids' computer camps. EA has also hired consultants and has formed an advisory board consisting of leaders in the fields of education and child development psychology, children's magazine writers and hardware specialists from Apple and IBM.

Ping and Kooky's Cuckoo Zoo, a learning adventure for kids ages three to six, lets the child drive through a zany zoo, meeting animals who reinforce different learning skills. The intuitive interface is specifically designed for the child's "ease of control," and no negative feedback is used, so the child isn't discouraged from learning.



Scooter's Magic Castle, designed for children ages five through eight, is a multiple-game contest where the child goes on a romp through a castle with an energetic pal named Scooter. As the child visits each of the castle's rooms, a new learning game challenge is presented in each of the three levels' 15 rooms. *Scooter's Magic Castle* also provides a banner-creation utility and a face-maker game that is reminiscent of a computerized Mr. Potato Head.

Peter Pan: A Story Painting Adventure is the first title in the forthcoming *Story Painting Adventure* series that will utilize other classic children's public domain adventures. A totally new concept, the game is a hybrid of interactive cartoon and graphic adventure in which the children actually control the events in the story they're reading. Using a set of animated painting tools, gamers can paint a bridge to escape a villain, or they can pick any other way to help get their character to its destination.

Jake and Jennifer Eagle in Eagle Eye Mysteries is targeted toward game sleuths ages eight to 12.



ing a case. Each case takes about 15 to 20 minutes to solve and is designed to improve the child's deductive reasoning and reading skills.

Kid Vid—Music Painting lets children ages six and up create, edit and play computer animations with music. A sophisticated graphics engine lets users create a large number of special effects and animations that can be saved to disk afterward. Included with the program is a player utility that lets kids play back creations on other computers without the *Kid Vid* program being installed.

Currently, *Scooter's Magic Castle*, *Eagle Eye Mysteries* and *Ping & Kooky's Cuckoo Zoo* are scheduled for release in March of '93, with *Peter Pan: A Story Painting Adventure* and one other title due out by the following summer. 🧑



DECLARE WAR.



Super Conflict is war enough for anybody whether you're a video gamer, a board game fan, or a soldier. You call the shots for your ground, naval, and air forces in a Middle East theater of operations that can get very intense. Whether you deploy your infantry against the enemy's best commandos, scramble an F-15C fighter against a Mig-29 Fulcrum, or guide your sub's torpedoes against an approaching cruiser, **Super Conflict** delivers not only realistic military challenge, but also explosive action sequences.

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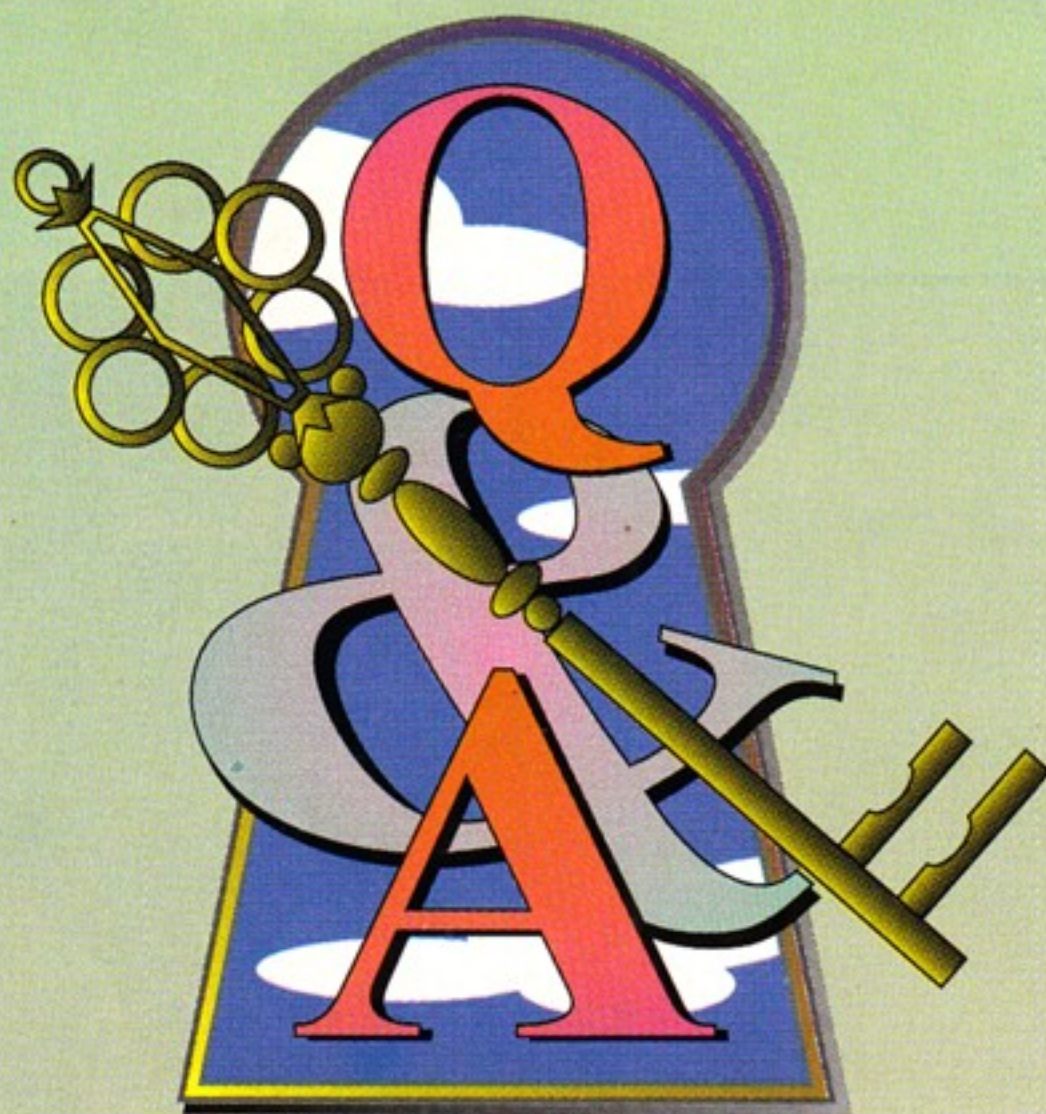
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CIRCLE #131 ON READER SERVICE CARD.



Welcome to this month's Q & A. We've got questions covering everything from Atari 800 maintenance to software plans of some of the most up-and-coming developers in the industry.

Q & A prides itself on accuracy, but we aren't afraid to admit mistakes. In the October 1992 issue of VG&CE, Sega was credited with *Herzog Zwei*'s development, while, in fact, Technosoft designed that strategy game.



I am an owner of a Sega Genesis that I just bought two weeks ago. I played *Sonic the Hedgehog* for two days and I finally defeated Dr. Robotnik. I'm anxious to play a new game, but I'm an amateur Genesis player and was wondering if you could recommend a game for an amateur. I've seen some advertisements in your magazine for the game *Side Pocket*, by Data East, but no reviews. Is this a good game for the amateur?

I also would like to know a little bit about the CD-ROM for the Genesis—like what it can do and how much it costs. Please tell me how much the Game Gear costs and the price of the television adapter. Thank you!

—Cainen Macalik
Garland, Texas



Anyone who can finish *Sonic* in two days really can't be considered an "amateur" Genesis player, no matter how little time you've owned the system, but a staff pool generated a few games for recent Genesis buyers: *Alex Kidd in the Enchanted Castle* (Sega), *Castle of Illusion Starring Mickey Mouse* (Sega), *ToeJam & Earl* (Sega), *QuackShot Starring*

Donald Duck (Sega) and *James Pond II—Codename: Robocod* (Electronic Arts).

As for *Side Pocket*, Bob Strauss reviewed the game in our September 1992 issue. He said that the graphics and sound were spectacular (both rating a 9), but that the game did not play much like real pool (playability: 6). A possibility for the novice.

The Game Gear retails for \$129.95; its television tuner adapter costs \$99.99, and the Sega CD is priced at \$299.



I have in my possession an Atari 800 computer and a 1050 disk drive that goes with it. My problem is that the disk drive has long since deteriorated because of the elements and many years of usage. Also, my power supplies and my switch box have gone as well. Can you direct me to a company that still deals in the ancient Atari relics? I have at least 100 games for the Atari and I can't play any of them. I would very much appreciate your help.

—Chris Parker
Nashville, Arkansas



We contacted Atari, which gave us the following two stores that service older Atari systems like yours:

B & C Computervision
2730 Scott Blvd.
Santa Clara, CA 95050
(408) 986-9960

San Jose Computers
1278 Alma Court
San Jose, CA 95112
(408) 995-5080

B & C, in fact, has *new* games in stock. They were programmed in what was the Eastern Bloc, where the older, cheaper systems are still quite popular.

Another good source of Atari hardware and software (but no service) is:

American Techno-Vision
15338 Inverness St.
San Leandro, CA 94579
(800) 551-9995



About a year and a half ago, I bought a Genesis and became hooked on it. I now have 11 carts and am adding one new one per month.

Three months ago, I bought a Packard Bell computer that I use primarily for gaming. My system is a 486SX, 20 MHz, with two megabytes of RAM, 107 megabyte hard disk drive, 8K RAM cache memory and 1024 x 786 VGA graphics. It came with MS DOS 5.0, Microsoft *Windows 3.1*, and *Lotusworks* for *Windows* installed.


I have purchased six games so far and initially had a problem with the games freezing up. I contacted Packard Bell technical support and was advised to exit *Windows* before attempting to play the games. This seems to have solved my problem.

One month ago, I bought *Red Baron* and really enjoyed it. Later, however, when I went to buy *Aces of the Pacific* (having read your review in the July issue) the clerk said that several customers had returned the game saying it wouldn't play properly on their systems. He said


my system may be "borderline" [compatible], and advised I get something else.

Have you heard of any problems with this game?


—Bill Insley
Santa Clarita, California


 Many Packard Bells come with an onboard video card, and reports of problems are starting to spread. Because you didn't mention which model number your computer was, Sierra wasn't able to give us a specific answer as to possible incompatibility.

You should call Sierra On-Line at (209) 683-4468, and have as much information about your system available as you can.

 I have the game *Twilight 2000*, by MicroProse, and have heard about an upcoming sequel, *Twilight 2001*. When is it coming out, and is it like the original?


—Mark Herman
Englewood, New Jersey

 In spite of the relative commercial and critical success that the post-holocaust-themed *Twilight 2000* enjoyed, plans for *Twilight 2001* have been scrapped. Take heart though; at least there'll be a *MegaTraveller 3*.

 Do you know if there are any games like *Evander Holyfield's "Real Deal" Boxing* (Sega) for the IBM PC?

Also, are there any controllers that go with the IBM PC that are like those for the Genesis or the Nintendo systems, etc.?


—Andy Sherwood
Rogersville, Missouri

 While the IBM doesn't have anything as nicely drawn as *Evander Holyfield's "Real Deal" Boxing*, it does have the polygon-based *4-D Boxing* (Electronic Arts). As both an accurate boxing simulator and a game, *4-D* is


probably the best pugilistic software available.

Advanced Gravis has recently produced an IBM PC joystick that looks and feels similar to any of the video-game system controllers. For more information, contact:


Advanced Gravis Computer
Technology
7400 MacPherson Ave., Unit 111
Burnaby, BC
CANADA V5J 5B6
(604) 431-5155

 I was over at a friend's house playing a game called *Warhead* on his Amiga. Later, while reading your October 1992 issue, I came across *Mantis* in the "Paragon's Progress" article on pages 94 and 95. Are *Mantis* and *Warhead* the same game?

—Carl Hurst
Tallahassee, Florida

 While *Mantis* is based on *Warhead* conceptually (i.e., bugs invading Earth and a space war to rid the planet of them), the final version of *Mantis* bears little resemblance.


If you're interested in *Mantis*, check out our review in the December 1992 issue.

 Friends at VG&CE, after reading the October 1992 "Collector's Edition," I have some questions to ask.

1. Which CD-ROM system is better, the Turbo Duo or the Sega CD? Which has better sound and graphics?

2. In the Sega CD lineup there is a game called *Final Fight*. Is this the same game Capcom makes for the SNES? And, if so, does this mean that there could be a Sega CD *Street Fighter II*?


—Pedro Damián
Victoria, Tamaulipas
Mexico

 Which CD-ROM system is better? The answer is purely subjective, and one you'll have to develop based on the available software. Now that the


Turbo Duo has the Super System chip built in, games like *Shape-shifter*, *Loom* and *Gate of Thunder* are taking advantage of the expanded sound and graphics potential. Even the older, non-Super System games like *Sherlock Holmes: Consulting Detective* and *It Came From the Desert* show the cinematic capabilities of the CD.

Sega, meanwhile, has packaged an identical version of *Sherlock* with the Sega CD. Sega owners wanting more cinematics should check out *Sewer Shark* and *Night Trap*, the latter starring *Different Strokes'* Dana Plato.

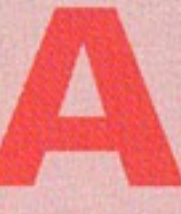
The Sega CD version of *Final Fight* is based on the Capcom game of the same name. No word yet on a Sega Genesis *SFII*, but, rest assured, if you read about it in VG&CE, it will be a fact, not a rumor.

 I am interested in designing and programming video and computer games. Are there any technical or professional journals for game designers and programmers?

—Phil Girton
Winooski, Vermont

 The best technical journal we know of is Chris Crawford's *Journal of Computer Game Design*. This bimonthly publication features occasional articles on cartridge games as well as computer software, and it covers both technical and business issues.

For a one-year subscription, send \$36 (\$50 outside of North America) to:
Journal of Computer Game Design
5251 Sierra Road
San Jose, CA 95132

 As always, Q & A is eager to answer your questions, be they about software, hardware or the game manufacturers themselves. 🙋

Please send your questions, comments and corrections to:

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GAME

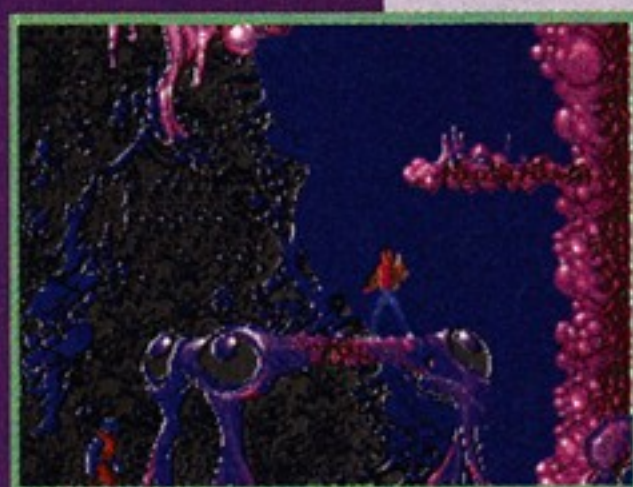
PREVIEWS FIRST LOOK

Flashback

SSI

Version Previewed: IBM PC

Extensive use of rotoscoped animation made Delphine's *Out of This World* an industry smash, but luckily the French developer didn't take the gratuitous awards too seriously and still tried to avoid *World's* flaws in its latest game, *Flashback*. The story of a scientist whose inventions are wanted by evil aliens, *Flashback* follows Conrad B. Hart's six-level journey to save humanity as well as repair his alien-damaged memory. The game features more detailed backgrounds than *World*, longer game play and fewer of the almost impossibly unfair encounters found in *World*. *Flashback* is already appearing on the Genesis (see the review on page 38), but will soon be out for the IBM PC. The computer version will feature 256-color art, longer cinematics and a special zoom feature that will add extra excitement to the violence against the multi-colored slime, disguising itself as human beings.



Alone in the Dark

INTERPLAY

Version Previewed: IBM PC

In computer gaming, "supernatural" almost always means sword and sorcery rather than horror; but not in the I-Motion's *Alone in the Dark*. Here, "supernatural" means the death cult worshippers and eldritch gods of writers like H.P. Lovecraft. In *Alone*, the player assumes the role of Edward Carnby or Emily Hartwood, who investigate Derecto, the secluded mansion owned by the late Jeremy Hartwood. Carnby's a private detective and Emily is Hartwood's niece, but they're initially after the same thing: the contents of a piano hidden in the loft.

Why Hartwood killed himself and the origin of the deadly creatures roaming the building are the mysteries characters eventually must solve while preventing their own premature sacrifice.

It might be difficult, however, to concentrate on the story, considering the haunting music and incredible 3-D animation throughout the game. What makes *Alone in the Dark's* graphics truly outstanding is that most rooms have several "cameras," each activated to give players the most useful and dramatic view of the action. This changing perspective, combined with detailed backgrounds, threatens to make games like *Out of This World* primitive by comparison.



Trump Castle 3

CAPSTONE

Version Previewed: IBM PC

The marriage is over, the empire's in debt and the man still can't work out a peaceable arrangement with Marla Maples, but Donald Trump can now boast of Super VGA graphics in Capstone's *Trump Castle 3*. The latest in its Trump-licensed casino series, *Trump Castle 3* contains the following games: blackjack, roulette, baccarat, 36 slot machines, keno, craps, video poker, five-card draw, five-card stud, seven-card stud and Texas hold'em. *Trump Castle 3* also allows multiplayer network and modem games.



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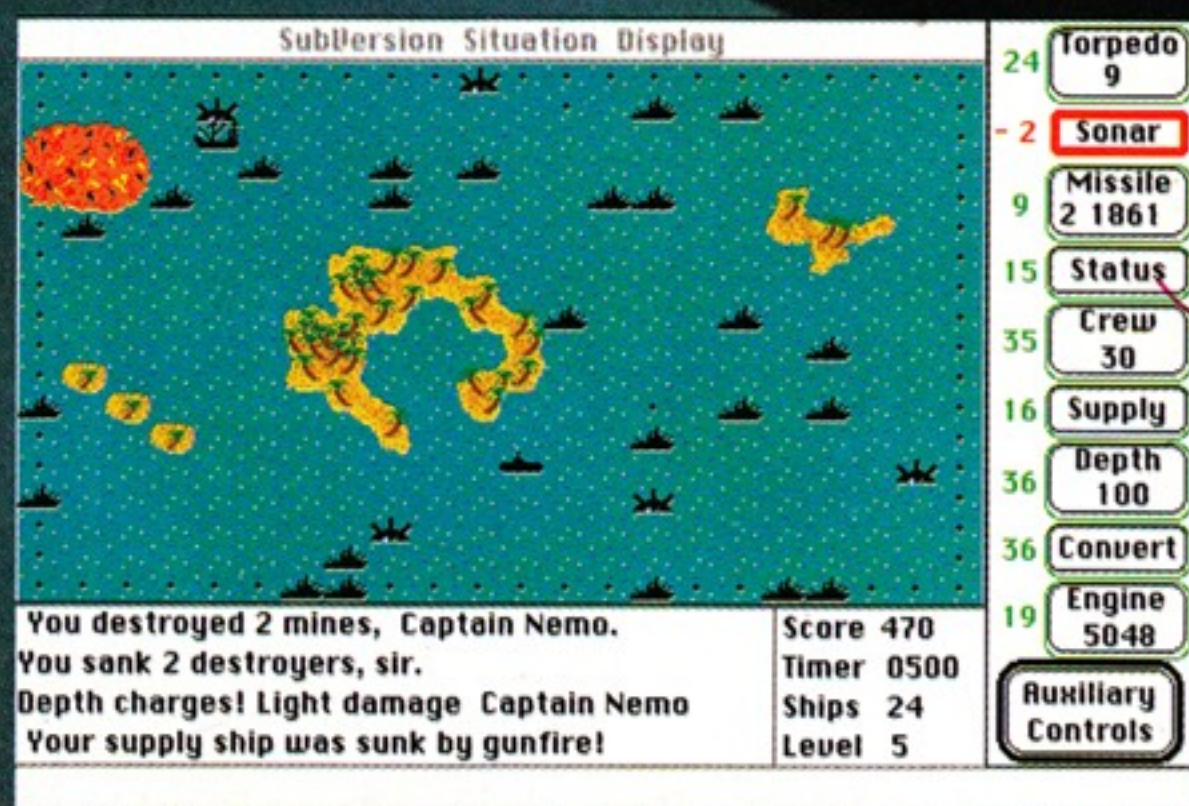
Available for Macintosh and compatible machines. Coming soon for IBM PCs and other computer systems.

See your local retailer or call:

Game Created by: Captain Byte's Bit Shop
Box Artwork by: Josh Stigers
Computer Artwork by: Steve Laveirge

Point Of View Computing, Inc.
5050 Edison, Suite 221
Colorado Springs, CO 80915
719 591 5320

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Macintosh 16 color screen shown

Might and Magic: Dark Side of Xeen

NEW WORLD COMPUTING
Version Previewed: IBM PC

Might and Magic: Clouds of Xeen was everything *Isles of Terra* veterans could hope for and more. What if more isn't enough? To satisfy those who have even more space on their hard drive than they do free time, New World Computing will release *Might and Magic: Dark Side of Xeen*. *Clouds* veterans continue their fight against the Horned One's minions as well as hundreds of other creatures begging to be slaughtered. Players with both games installed will also be able to travel freely in between the two realms. In addition, the pair of *Xeen* games also combine for a third scenario.



V for Victory: Market Garden 1944

THREE-SIXTY
Version Previewed: IBM PC

V for Victory's clean mouse-driven interface and variety of player control coupled with all of the historical detail war-game fans demand made it an easy choice for VG&CE's Best Strategy Computer Game award for 1992. Now Three-Sixty will release the latest *Victory* scenario, *V for Victory: Market Garden 1944*. Set in Holland during 1944, *Market Garden* challenges allied players to secure four crucial bridges on the Rhine river. As history buffs and anyone who's seen *A Bridge Too Far* knows, the allies lost this battle, so *Market Garden's* seven scenarios are of increasing difficulty to help players in their effort to change history. *V for Victory* veterans will also be treated to features including new terrain types, historical variants such as allied air support, elite German troops with Panzer brigades and ferry boats, and the ability to play either side against the computer or another player.



OLAF'S OUT-AL-HERE.



NAME: Olaf the Stout™

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WEIGHT: 255 lbs.

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and an amazing affection for Swedish meatballs.

LAST SEEN: Dodging dinosaurs in lush Prehistoria.

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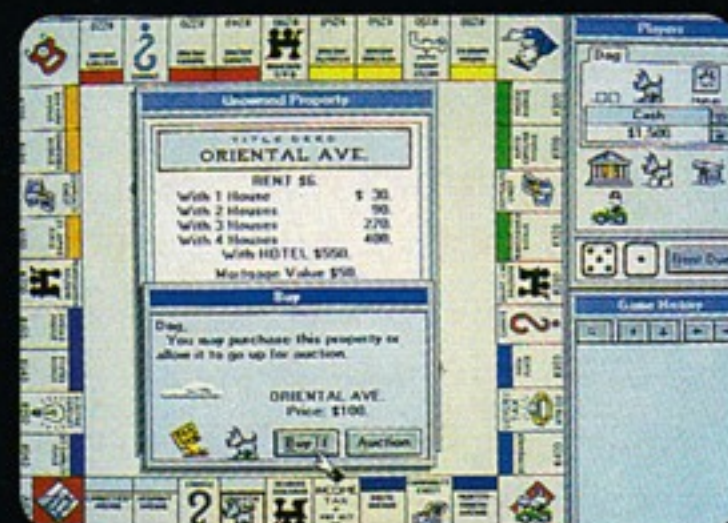
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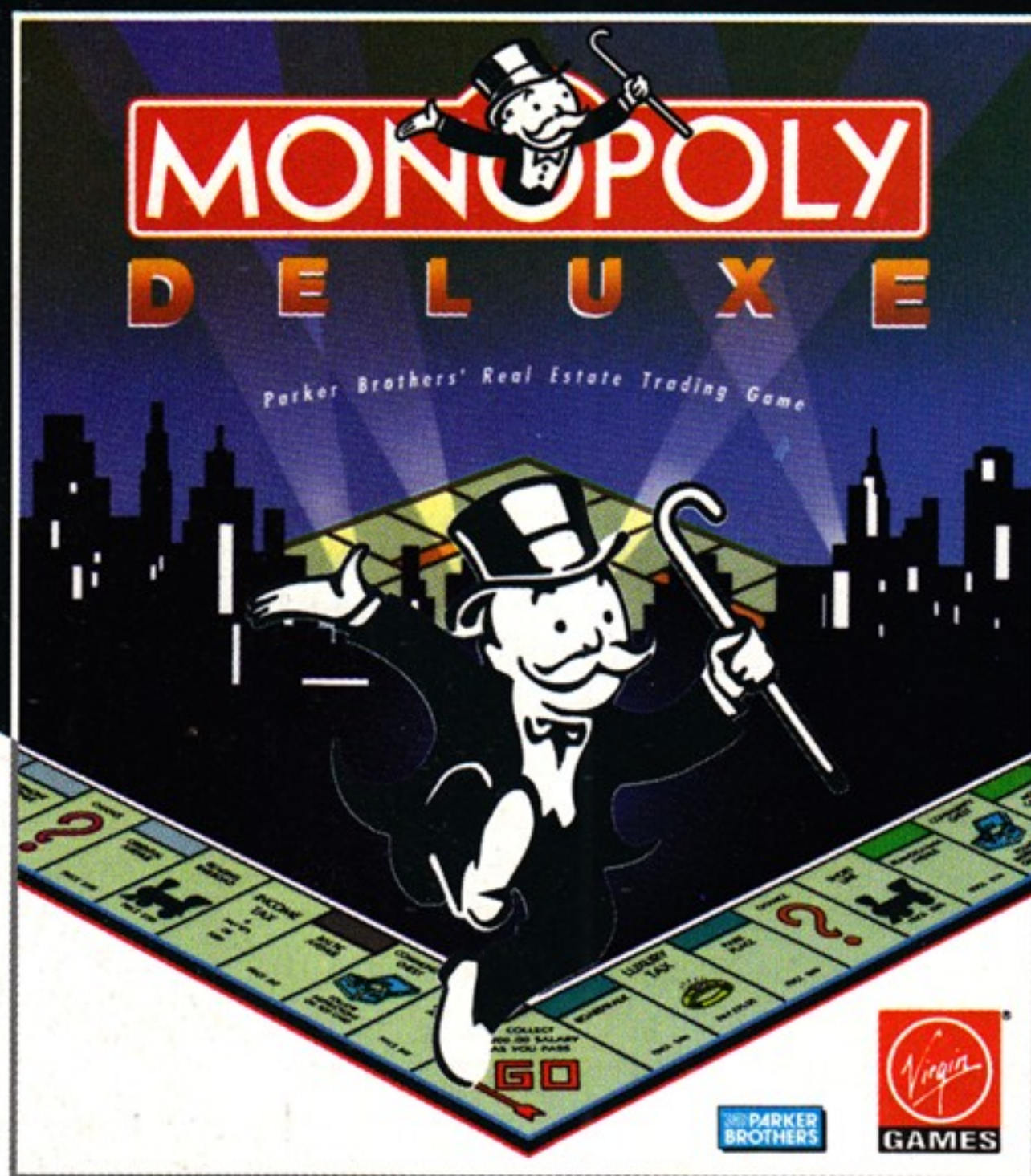
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IBM PC version



IBM PC version



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COMPUTER GAME REVIEWS

Batman Returns

PARK PLACE PRODUCTIONS

Version: IBM PC (\$69.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

The movie *Batman Returns* was an exercise in frustration. It had a far superior cast to the first movie (hey, I know Michael Keaton looks like a dweeb, but I felt his "distracted-to-the-point-of-ridicule" Bruce Wayne was great), the same wonderfully visual director, and more money than its predecessor. Unfortunately, nothing was capitalized on, let alone properly utilized.

Most of the *Batman Returns* cartridges have had the same problem. The computer game has a novel approach, a greater appreciation and use of all of Batman's skills, and a ton of money and disk space pumped into animations and sound. Nevertheless, the driver's potent approach and skillful execution are paired with a shallow, quick, and mostly unsatisfying adventure.

Add "directorial action" to the list

of terms like "interactive fiction," used to describe games stretching for a wider audience. The assumption here is that Batman can outthink and outfight any puny gamer who would dare move the mouse. This is fine—remember, the set-up is not the problem. An essential part of the Batman mystique is his overwhelming competence at everything except relationships and sanity.

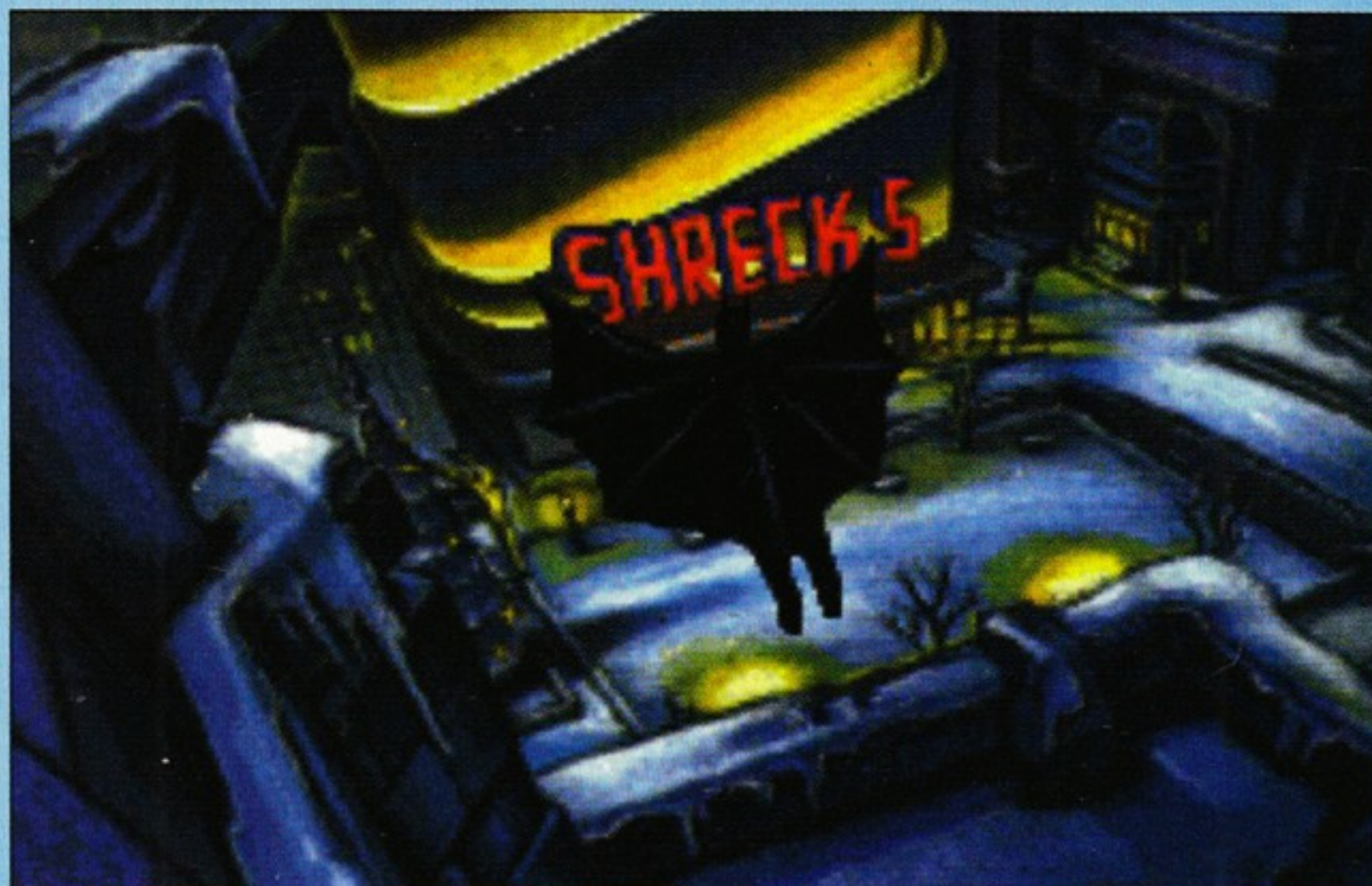
Players use a point-and-click system to control the Batman's movements, evidence processing, utility belt equipment, and the intensity of his fighting style.

Batman Returns covers a span of nine days in which Batman must foil the Penguin's plans, save Gotham's millions, at risk by white collar criminals, and at least put a dent in the crime wave. Batman begins each 12-hour night at six p.m. in the Batcave. The evening news or recent evidence will generally suggest a destination for him.

Batman should then select utility belt items (such as sonic batarangs, knock-out gas, scanners and lock-picks) and possibly grab some fresh combat armor (players begin the game with three suits, which sustain damage instead of the hero).

It's then off to the Batmobile, which has a map showing possible destinations in red. Everything's on auto-pilot so a single mouse-click is all that's needed.

Batman will hit the streets to find plenty of costumed foes ready to take on the Dark Knight. Players try to ascertain the level of intensity (easy,





normal, fierce) needed to beat their opponents with a minimum of fatigue and damage.

Alternatively, they can select utility belt toys and the animated Batman will use them once in proper range. Because fighting is essentially a spectator event, Park Place tried to make the animated battles as interesting and "real" as possible. The coordination of offensive and defensive moves shows more research and careful planning than goes into most *Street Fighter II* clones.

Victory and successful interrogation will yield information or physical clues. Nocturnal visits to locked apartments and offices will also yield clues—often new ones on a nightly basis. But be careful stealing anything that might be missed, or else the information well will soon dry up.

It's in the processing of information that *Batman Returns* shines the most and satisfies the least. Games and movies notoriously ignore Batman's criminology and scientific skills, but at least Park Place remembered that Batman premiered in *Detective Comics*.

All real detective work takes place on the "main" computer (guano-heads at Warner are so afraid of the old TV series that "Bat" prefixed nouns must be kept to the minimum). Clues get pumped into the "evidence" analyzer, which gives a full description of the item, as well as extrapolated explanations, depending on what else that Batman has discovered. The Bat-computer (hah!) also is equipped with a video player/transmitter and a biographical database with background information on city

officials, business leaders and major criminals.

Blame lies mostly with Warner and their licensing department, but *Batman Returns* seems uncomfortably bound to the movie. Almost

all of the character biographies serve solely as data base filler, and at most are mentioned once, then forgotten. The game has a golden opportunity to do all of the sub-plots, side stories, and interesting play not found in the two hour movie. If it means that the game needed to last longer than nine days, so what? The Penguin plots could have been time-dependent and simply spread a few days apart. Batman could've been given a chance to go rough up "Zinger" Kernan's or Jim "Big Bat" Masterson's goons in search of information. Perhaps he could foil a few crimes along the way to the cinematic finish.

If the game had tried to branch out, everything about it would have been improved exponentially: the city map would have enough destinations so the driving sequences wouldn't seem pointless; additional crooks would mean added importance to maintaining strength and fatigue; and the plot-advancing vignettes wouldn't seem like lazy programming (or an attempt to satisfy Warner's overbearing restrictions on plot advancement). Keeping with the "directorial action" nature of the game, the main computer could still do all of the thinking—oops—extrapolating, and the de-



ductive experience would still rival that of any mystery game.

Ideally, if consumer response is sufficient, Konami should try to renegotiate the license with Warner—providing the publisher considers letting its licensees produce quality products—and create a series of fleshed out sequels, or better yet, a basic module and several low-priced scenario packs. It could be the biggest gold mine since SSI's AD&D gold box series. As is, we've only seen the cave entrance.

—David S. Moskowitz

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EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Andy said that *Batman* was hurt by too little player interactivity, and Mike felt that there were technical problems. Chris liked the sound and graphics.

WorldCircuit: The Grand Prix Race Simulation

MICROPROSE

Version: IBM PC (\$59.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Racing a Formula One automobile on the Grand Prix circuit of 26 of the world's most challenging racetracks is an endeavor that requires tremendous skill, in both building a reliable team and driving the car itself. It also requires a huge amount of money. But for those "Sunday drivers" who would love to get a feel for what it is like to drive the world's fastest cars, *WorldCircuit* does an admirable job as a simulation.

WorldCircuit gives you the option of practicing or racing on any of the 26 tracks available, or playing an entire "season" of the Grand Prix, racing the tracks in succession and saving the game as you go. The tracks vary considerably in the skill and techniques necessary to even have a chance of doing well. Thus, the practice runs can include free practice (no other cars on the road), prerace practice (other cars on the road) and qualifying runs. These qualifying runs are used (just like in the real world) to determine at what position you will start in the pack of competitors. Do very well and you can have the coveted "pole position" (the first car).

You can customize practically anything about this game. For quick

and you can choose to be any driver or be part of any driving team (actual teams are used as well). You have the option to change the drivers' names and team names. Prior to starting a race, you can even customize your car

by choosing the tire types, brake balance, wing angles, gear ratios, etc. This is crucial since different settings work better on different tracks. It is up to you to find out what works best, although the excellent manual gives you plenty of clues.



What really makes this game so playable, however, is the fact that you can turn on various "driving aids." These range from suggested gearing and "best route" lines to letting the game control virtually everything except the steering. At this level, even the novice can do relatively well, and, as you get better, you can turn off these aids one by one. The driving aids are what turns

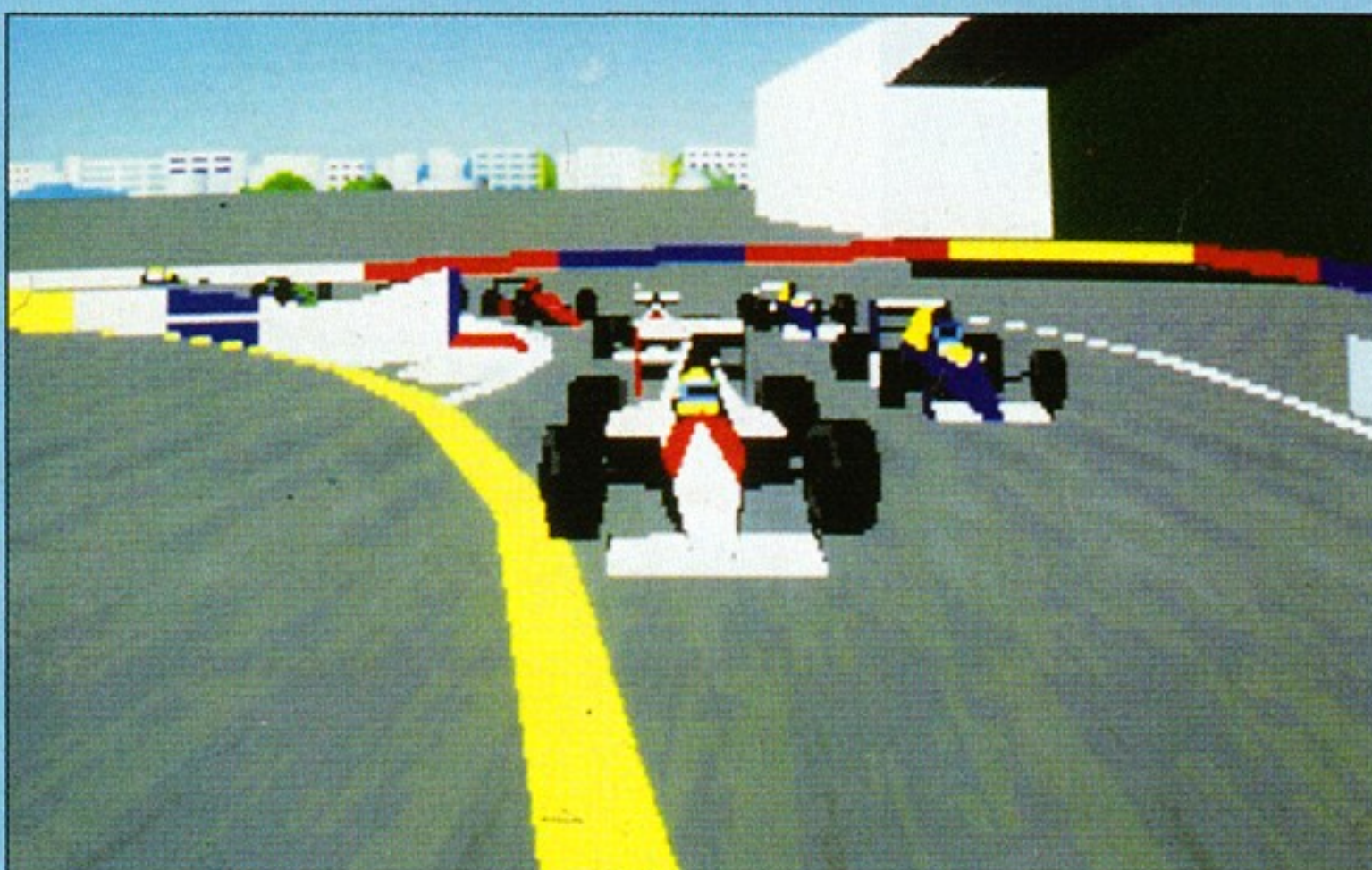


what could be an impossibly difficult game into an enjoyable simulation.

WorldCircuit's graphics are quite good at the most detailed level, employing filled polygons that scroll and scale smoothly. The animations of crashes and track marshals are also good. There is a musical soundtrack during the intro, and the sound is well done—although the squealing of the tires has an unrealistic screaming screech. Control is excellent, especially when using the suggested joystick. If you are interested in what it's like to drive one of these powerful machines, check out *WorldCircuit: The Grand Prix Race Simulation*.

—David Plotkin

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EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Everyone raved about this one, comparing it to *Hard Drivin'* and *Virtua Racing*; Chris called it "red-hot." Mike liked the ease of play and clean graphics.

Stunt Island

DISNEY SOFTWARE

Version: IBM PC (\$59.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Rarely does a software title achieve the symmetry of vision and craftsmanship of Disney's *Stunt Island*, a near-perfect blend of flight simulation and cinematography.

The action unfolds on a large Pacific island owned and operated by a consortium of Hollywood film studios. Nestled among the mountains, lakes, forests and deserts are recreations of recognizable landmarks: the Golden Gate Bridge, the United Nations building, Los Angeles International Airport, Alcatraz and Stonehenge, among others. It's the world's largest movie back lot.

Upon arrival at the island, visitors may roam at will or enter the Stunt Pilot of the Year contest, competing against dozens of the industry's top pilots in a series of 32 hair-raising stunts. Try intricate landings atop a moving train or in heavy traffic on the Golden Gate Bridge. Engage enemy fighters in dogfights and chase scenes around natural or man-made obstacles. Attempt daring rescues, get-aways and staged crashes. Soar through a canyon or dodge skyscrapers at 1,000 miles per hour. Each stunt tests your ability to follow directions and hit your marks with perfect timing. Exceed the maximum number of takes and you're fired.

The key to your career as stunt pilot, of course, is mastery of your tools. Visit the airfield to practice fly-

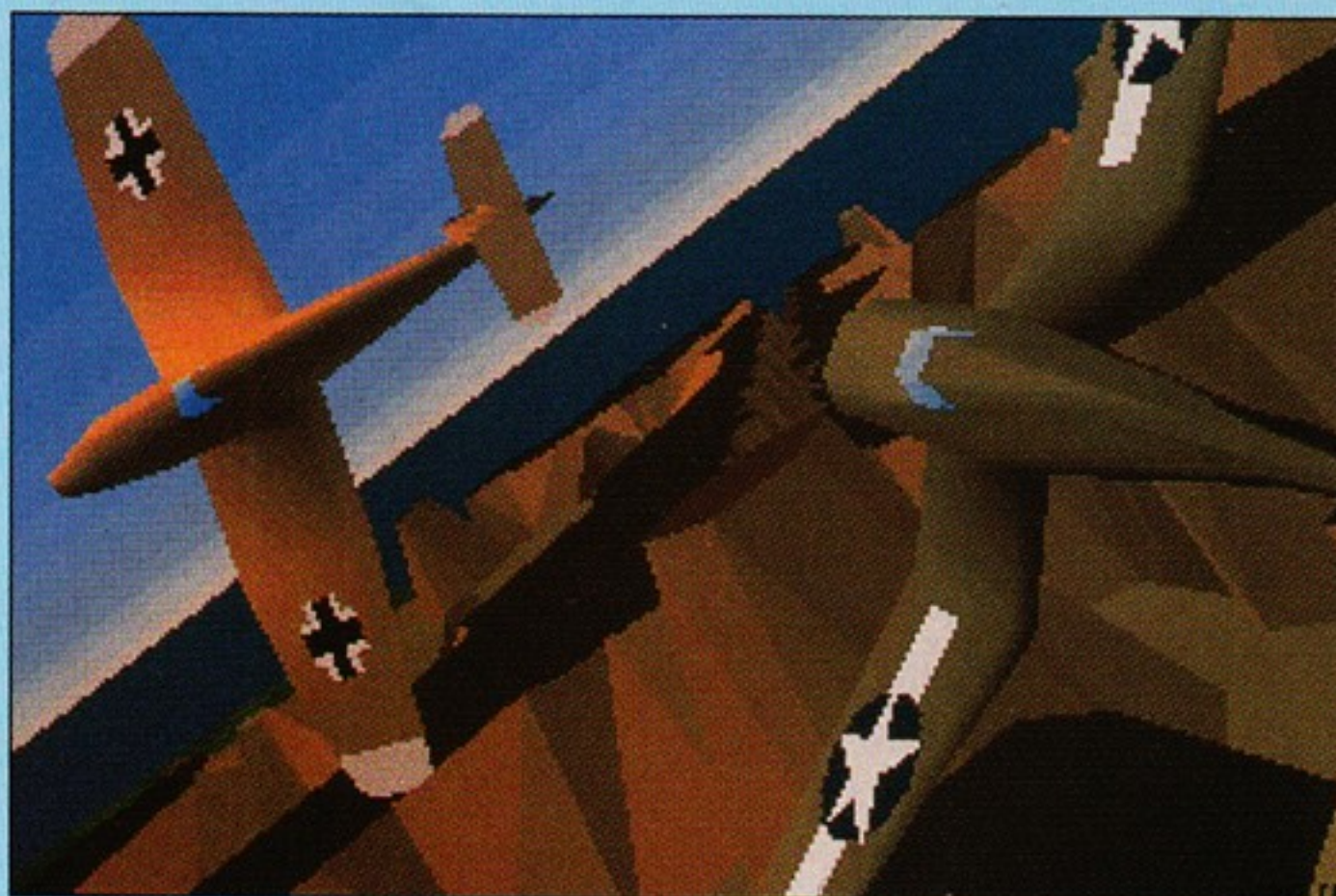
ing one of 45 realistically modeled aircraft—the most impressive collection ever assembled in a single flight simulator. The list is mind-boggling, ranging from World War I to modern-era military and commercial aviation. You can even fly the space shuttle.

Inspired by the pre-packaged stunts? Hop in a small plane or helicopter to scout locations with a nose-mounted camera. You can also view locations directly from the set-creation screen using a free-floating camera to scan the entire island and its offshore facilities. A large wall map helps pinpoint landmarks by their exact coordinates. Zoom, tilt and turn the camera to view the location from every angle.

Set design is the most challenging and rewarding aspect of the program. The island contains 34 prebuilt sets, representing almost every type of location imaginable: cities and suburbs, farms and airports, prisons and sports stadiums. The library also contains more than 800 unique props, ranging in size from a beach towel to an aircraft carrier. Among the values assigned to each prop are position, heading, movement and speed. Up to eight fixed or mobile cameras can be set to catch the action from any angle.

Once all props are in place, users script the stunt through "If...Then" programming format. Pop-up requesters and pull-down menus make the procedure remarkably user-friendly. Here you can also add music, digitized voices and sound effects from the vast audio vaults, or even imported Sound Blaster ".VOC" files.

Dress your stock footage with titles, credits, fades, music and sound samples, synchronized with the action for maximum impact. Finished films are limited to 20 min-



utes in length and one megabyte in size. Disney allows users to create freely distributable stand-alone films that can be viewed on any comparable computer, without owning the original program.

Graphics are crisp, 256-color, solid-fill polygons, enhanced by a choice of Gouraud or dithered shading. In addition to supporting all major sound cards, serious users should also consider adding Disney's Sound Source for the best quality digitized speech. Finally, kudos to manual scripter Zina Powers.

—Scott A. May

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EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Chris felt the complicated nature of *Stunt Island* was all that held back a "super game." Dave called it "delightful," and Andy was agog at the animation quality.



Oxyd

DONGLEWARE

Versions: Amiga (\$39.00), Atari ST (\$39.00), IBM PC (\$39.00), Macintosh (\$39.00), NeXT (\$39.00)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

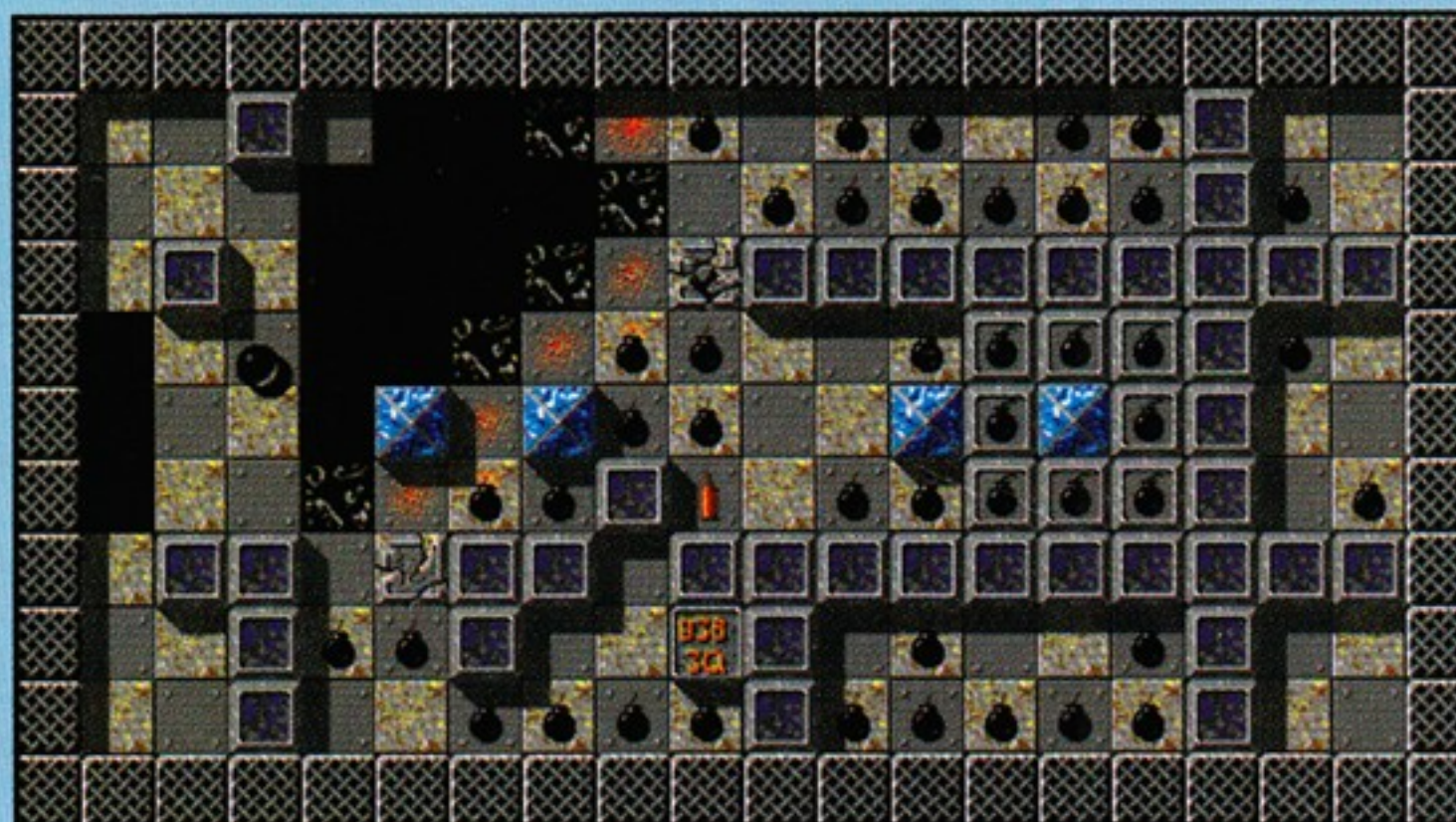
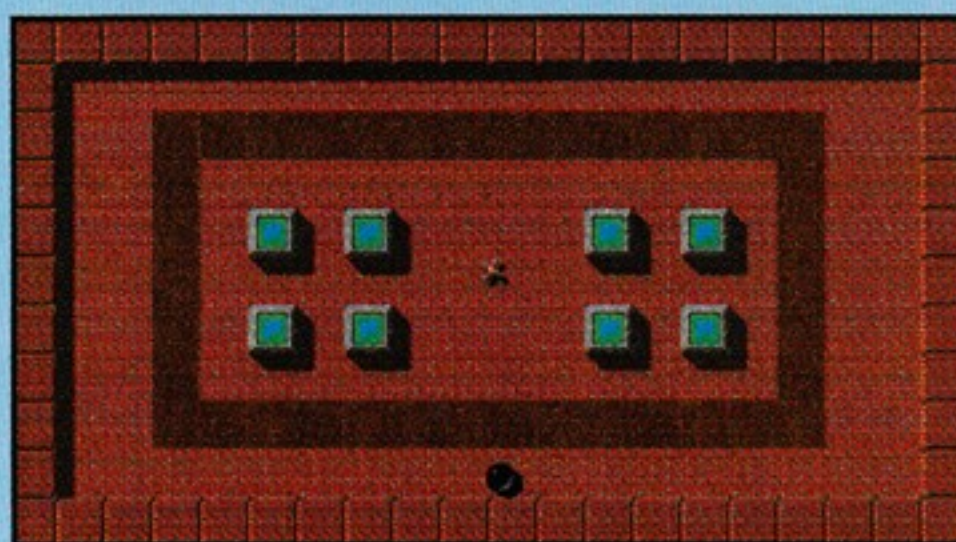
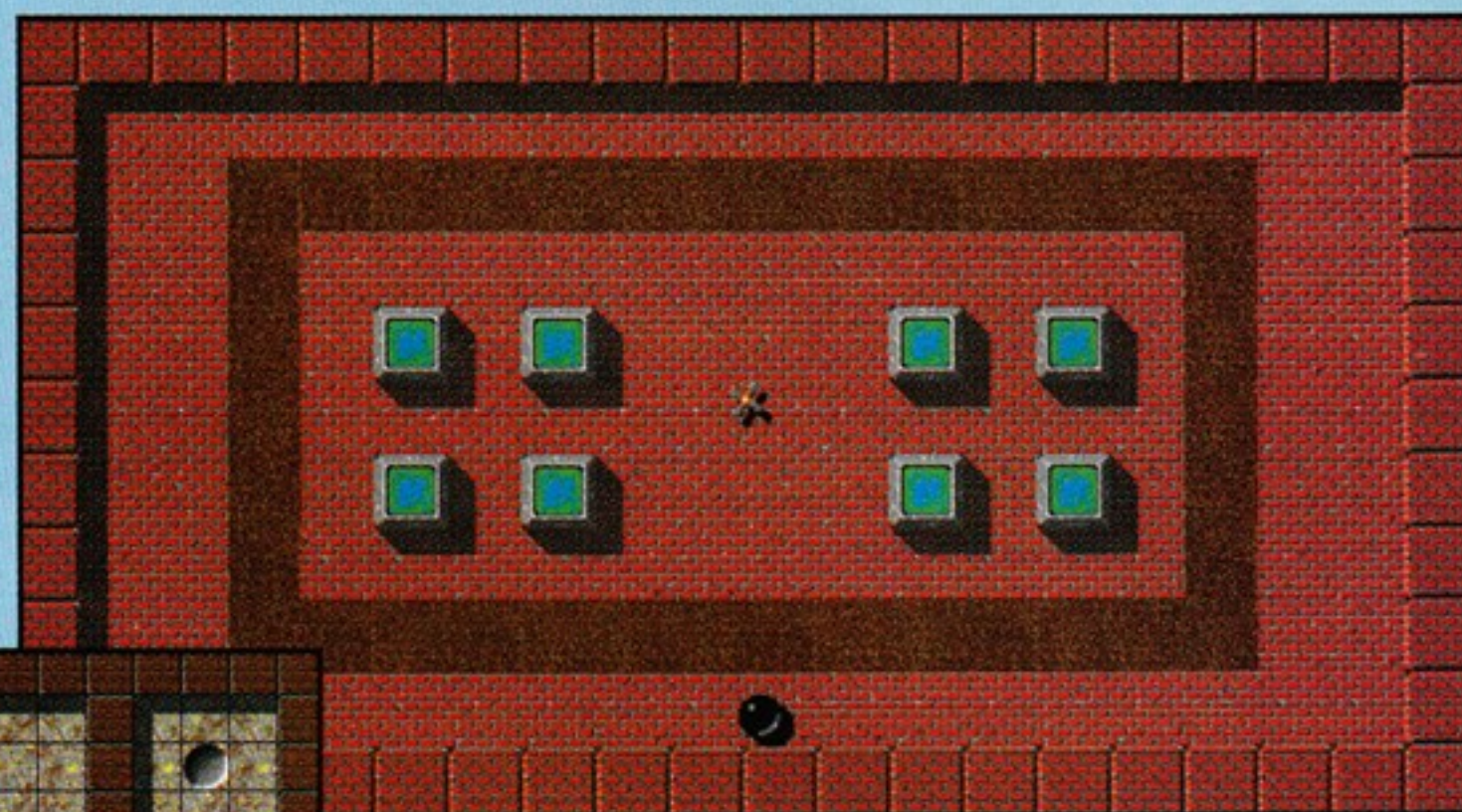
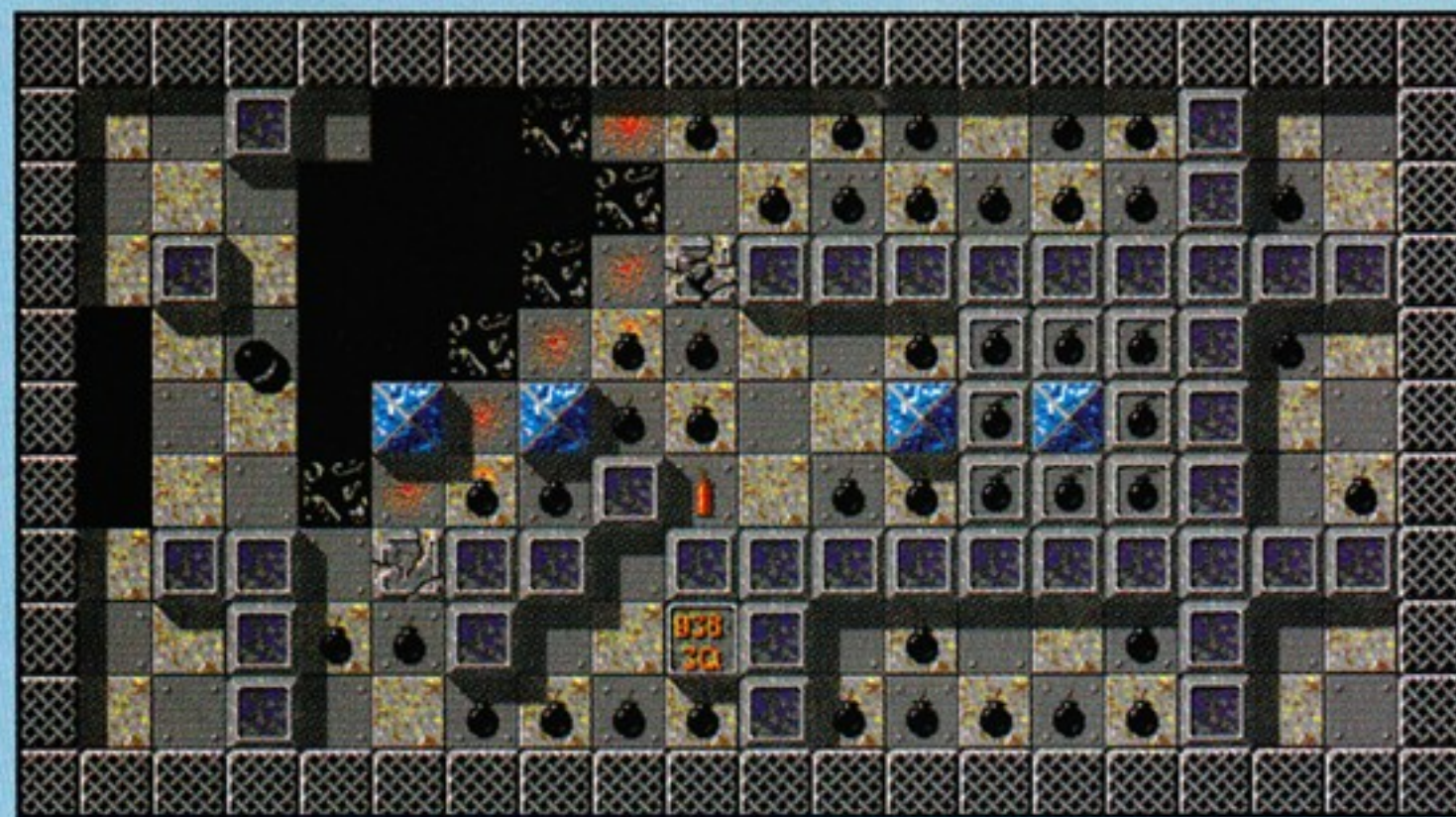
Games like *Oxyd* drive me crazy. I start playing in all innocence, and the next thing I know, it's dawn and I've been playing all night. My eyes are horribly bloodshot and people are starting to point and talk.

Oxyd is the best thing since *Marble Madness*. There have been other games that have tried to duplicate the success of that early Electronic Arts classic, but none have succeeded until now. *Oxyd* takes the same basic principle of rolling a marble through mazes and around obstacles with your mouse, but brings the concept up to date and expands it with gadgets, tools, doodads and fiendishly clever puzzles. The graphics are crisp, the sound effects exceptional and the animation skillfully done.

On each screen, there are pairs of objects that open to reveal a flashing light when you roll the marble into them. Each light has a match somewhere, and it's your task to find it. Lighting the matching pairs deactivates them, and, once you've matched all of the pairs on a screen, you move to the next level. Sound simple? Well, it's not as easy as it looks. There are all sorts of impediments, including black space that your marble will drop into and objects that will destroy the marble. There are also screens where gravity is upside down or sideways, which require a mind-crunching shift in perception and play. The major part of the game, though, is figuring out how to get from point A to point B and hit the lights in the proper order.

The *Oxyd* software is available everywhere, from on-line services and public domain collections or directly from the publisher. Designed and coded in Germany, the

game switches among English, German and French versions with the touch of a function key. The first ten screens are freely playable, but a thick code book is required for the hundreds of levels beyond. The code book has a few pages of instructions and hints, which could have been considerably better done; as it is, you'll probably waste an hour or so figuring out what's what, though, fortunately, that's relatively easy to do. There is also a simultaneous two-player mode that can be played over a modem (or MIDI cables, in the Atari version).



There are a few things that do keep *Oxyd* from being the perfect game: Given the distribution method, the code book is a necessary evil, I suppose, but I get thoroughly annoyed with having to stop what I'm doing and thumb through the pages; some of the puzzles are a little too devious and rely too much on camouflaged objects; and, finally, the nature of the game doesn't invite replaying it—once you've solved a screen, there's no reason to go back and do it again. (Though I imagine there will be new editions with new screens to come.)

I never thought I would see another game as compelling as *Marble Madness*, and I'm delighted to have found *Oxyd*. I like it every bit as much.

—Tom Malcom

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EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Though most editors were slow to warm up to *Oxyd*, they finally came around. Mike thought it was too slow, but Dave and Andy praised its originality.

Legends of Valour

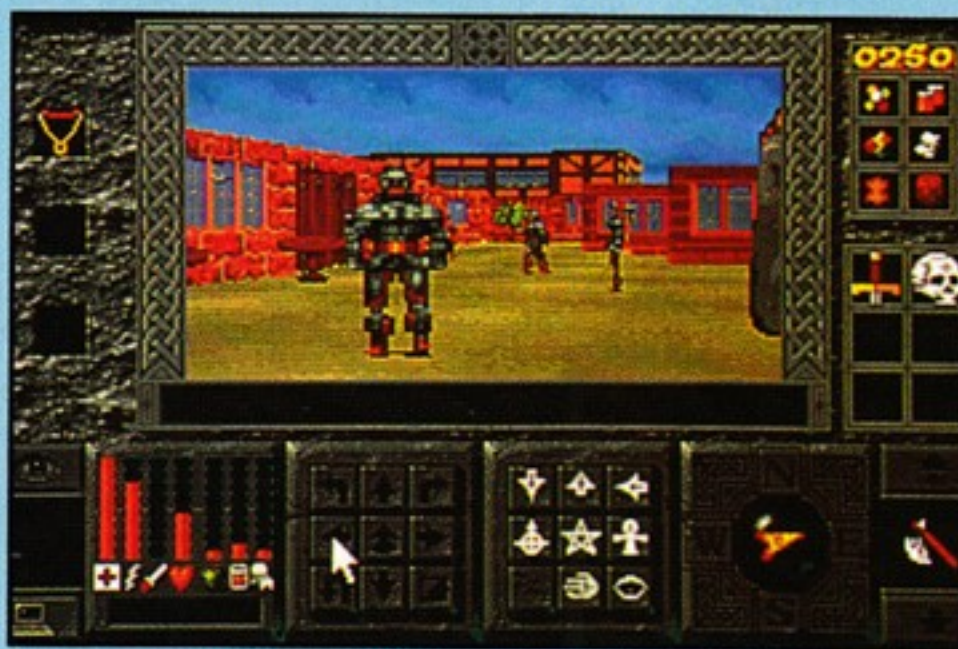
SSI

Version: IBM PC (\$59.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Cousin Sven has left the simple life of hard work and labor and has sought the riches and glories of the great city of Mittledorf. But, unlike the proverbial story of the prodigal son's return to his father, Sven decides Mittledorf is just too good to leave, and even sends word for you to join him in a life of fast money, fast women and good old rural sightseeing. Oh well...so much for the repentant prodigal son.

Mittledorf, as well as the large network of caverns beneath, serves as the setting for *Legends of Valour*. The use of a first-person, free-moving perspective takes *Legends of Valour* out of the traditional first-person RPG of incremental, cardinal movement into a new genre made popular by games such as *Ultima Underworld* and *Wolfenstein 3-D*. Graphically, then, *Legends of Valour* succeeds on a realistic level, but the sounds that so often complement a



game's graphics (indeed, the game play experience) are sorely missing. Too bad; Mittledorf could have been one fascinating city to just sit and listen to. Instead, your sound board, which often comes alive with music and sound effects, falls deathly silent throughout the majority of the game.

Securing a job in Mittledorf should be a high priority for any aspiring adventurer, and the many shops and taverns of Mittledorf provide notice boards for divulging to the player any jobs that are currently available. These menial tasks involve the running of a certain item from one location to another for a measly sum of groats (Mittledorf's unit of currency), which, in turn, will help in feeding that hungry stomach and resting those tired limbs.

But *Legends of Valour* goes out of its way to make these jobs not only less than lucrative, but also obsolete within a certain period of time—usually right when you're halfway to getting to the desired drop-off location. And—you guessed it—no, you don't get paid if you're late. This monotony of trying to raise cash, running back and forth, then not even getting paid for your efforts half the time due to a time lapse really drops the fun factor and will probably leave many gamers frustrated.

Conversing with the many inhabitants of Mittledorf, who busily make their way about town, is conducted by a simple "Hey!" command (yes, quite rude if you ask me). A series of questions is presented under two submenus: "What" and "Where is," and, as information is obtained from different parts of the city, the database of questions you may ask is slowly built. There's even an "Insult" command, which I haven't been able to ascertain a use for, other than to elicit less-than-witty comments such as: "Your face is like a half-wit bog elf" and "I'd rather talk to a squashed tomato." Then again, I get a kick out of Wayne and Garth, so go figure.

The game's biggest fault is its lack of player cues—cues that would help players understand their role in this game, and how to go about fulfilling it. Plagued with senseless running here and there (trying to earn money that should be more readily available) and other annoying nuances (themselves able to fill two more reviews of this size), *Legends of Valour* is an ambitious attempt that couldn't get itself out of the starting gate. Maybe Sven should have just come home like he was supposed to.

—Danny Han

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EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Legends of Valour was called "excellent" by Chris, noting that "the *Ultima Underworld*/*Wolfenstein 3-D* clones are getting better." Andy said it was worth playing.

The Tinies

KALISTO

Versions: IBM PC (\$59.95),
Macintosh (\$59.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Like last year's *Lemmings*, the Tinies are some of the most brainless video characters you'll ever meet. Consisting of round, hairy bodies and big, bare feet, about all the Tinies are capable of is bashing themselves into walls and ceaselessly taunting the game player by pulling their mouths open and sticking their tongues out—or by making *tiny* rude gestures. Although they wouldn't be much of a threat, the Tinies nevertheless are on their way to invade the planet Earth, and your job is to stop them. How? By completely vaporizing them? Nope. By stomping on their little round bodies and making them into unattractive throw rugs? Nah. Your task, throughout 100 levels, is to lead them to their little beds and put them to sleep.

Each of the 100 levels is a maze, which contains the Tinies, their beds and a variety of obstacles. Tinies come in four colors: blue, yellow, pink and green. For the first 20 levels, leading them to their color-coded beds before the timer runs out and they all explode seems an almost ridiculously easy task. You select a Tiny and start it waddling forward. Tinies can only stop or turn once they hit an obstruction—a wall, another Tiny or, as the game progresses, a variety of amusingly animated obstacles. Tinies bash into walls with a loud crash, stop and rub their eyes and then glare upward resentfully at their controller.

After Level 20, game play becomes increasingly complex as more obstacles are added, and you realize that those easy levels were put there to allow you to learn the basics of maneuvering the Tinies. Color-coded transporters are placed around the maze; any blue Tiny wandering into a blue transporter will be sucked up, struggling desperately, and spit out in

another part of the game. Arrow chutes complicate your pathways around the maze. Beginning about Level 40, color-coded switches must be turned on to make the Tinies' beds operational. Game play becomes a struggle against the clock, and it isn't made any easier by the fact that, when you pause the game, you are taken out of the game screen and, thus, not given an opportunity to study the

maze at your leisure. You have to figure out the puzzle as the seconds are ticking away.

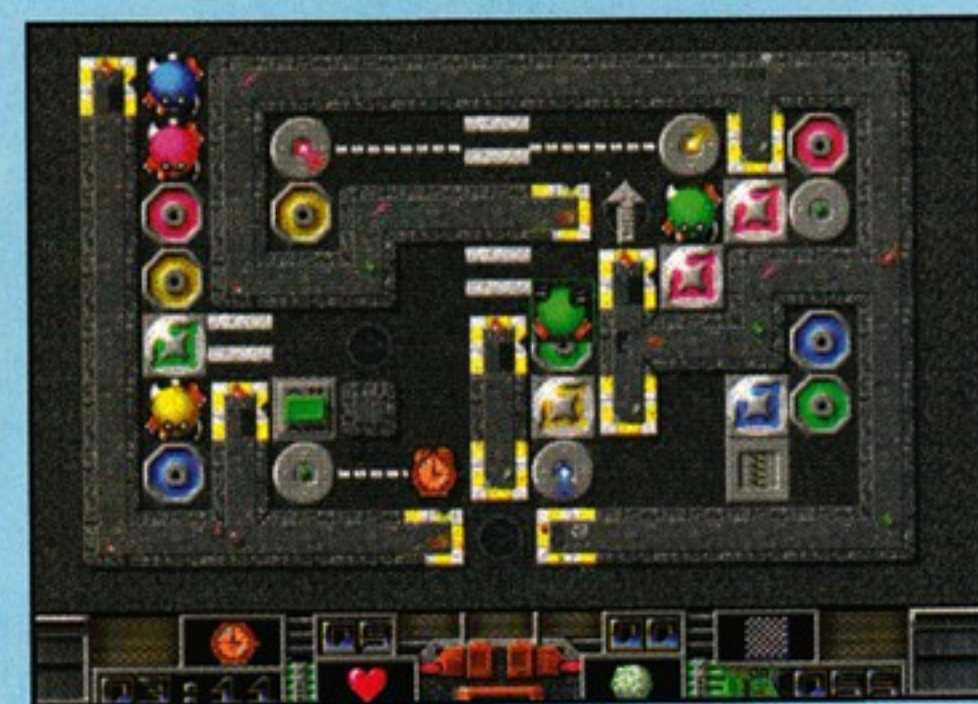
Bonus time is gained by directing your Tinies to run over little watches. Passing over heart symbols gives you an extra turn. Obstacles at the higher levels include: giant tongues hidden behind trapdoors that bonk the Tinies on the head and send them rolling in the opposite direction; color-coded shields over squares that block all progress until a Tiny of the right hue comes along to remove it; and color-coded bundles of dynamite. Tinies can survive a dynamite blast only if one of the Tinies in the maze has picked up a resurrection egg.

The Tinies becomes a truly challenging and addictive puzzle game about halfway through its 100 levels. And, as a bonus

along the way, there are many visual oddities (ninja turtles popping out of sewer grates; human faces floating in water-filled obstacles) that aren't directly related to game play but make it more interesting. Although not as challenging or as varied as *Lemmings*, *The Tinies* is worth a try for avid puzzle fans.

—Randolph Heard

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EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Though Mike felt the mouse control was a hindrance, both Mike and Andy called it "interesting." Dave said it proved that puzzlers don't have to be complicated.

Trolls

CAPSTONE

Version: IBM PC (\$44.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

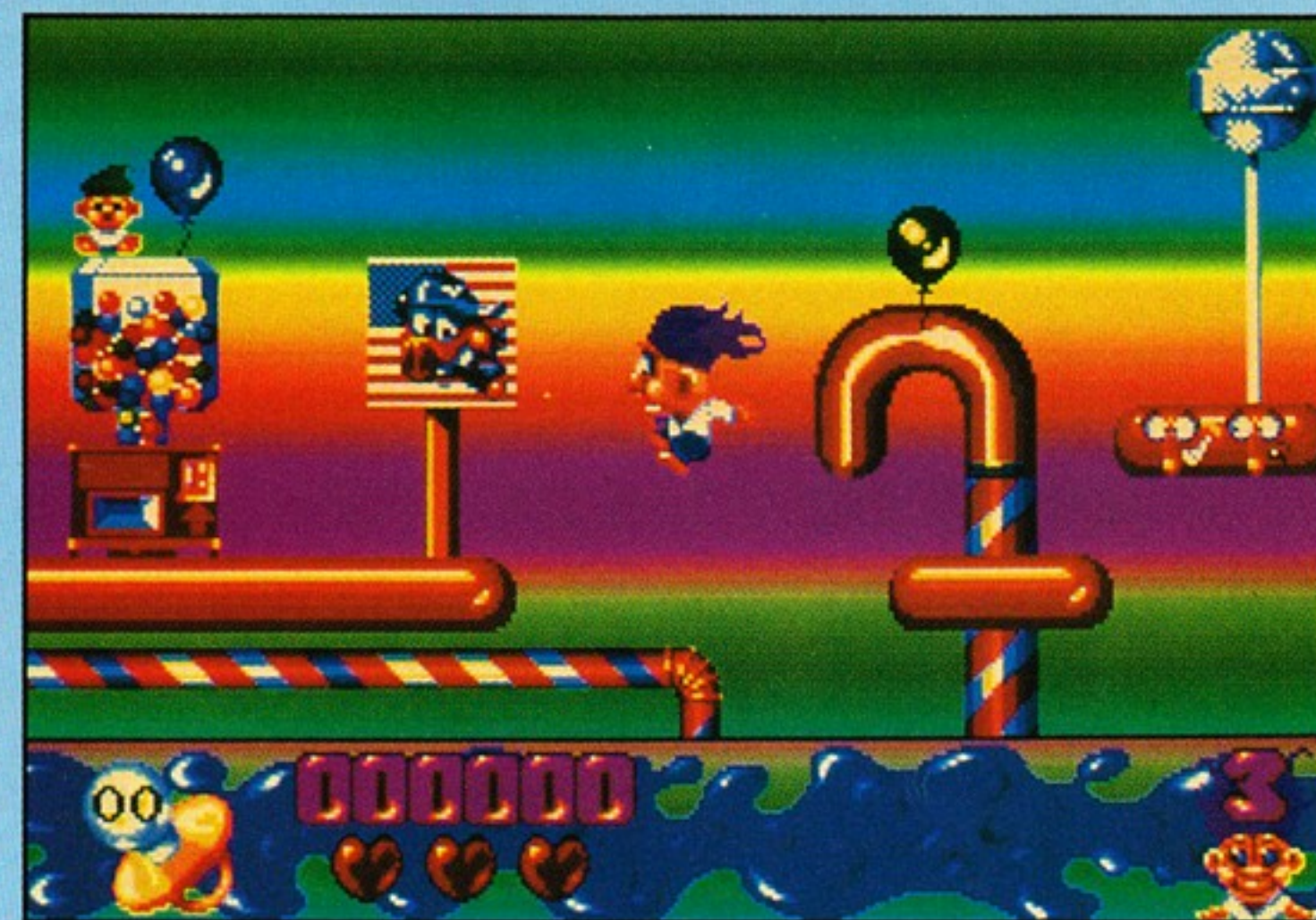
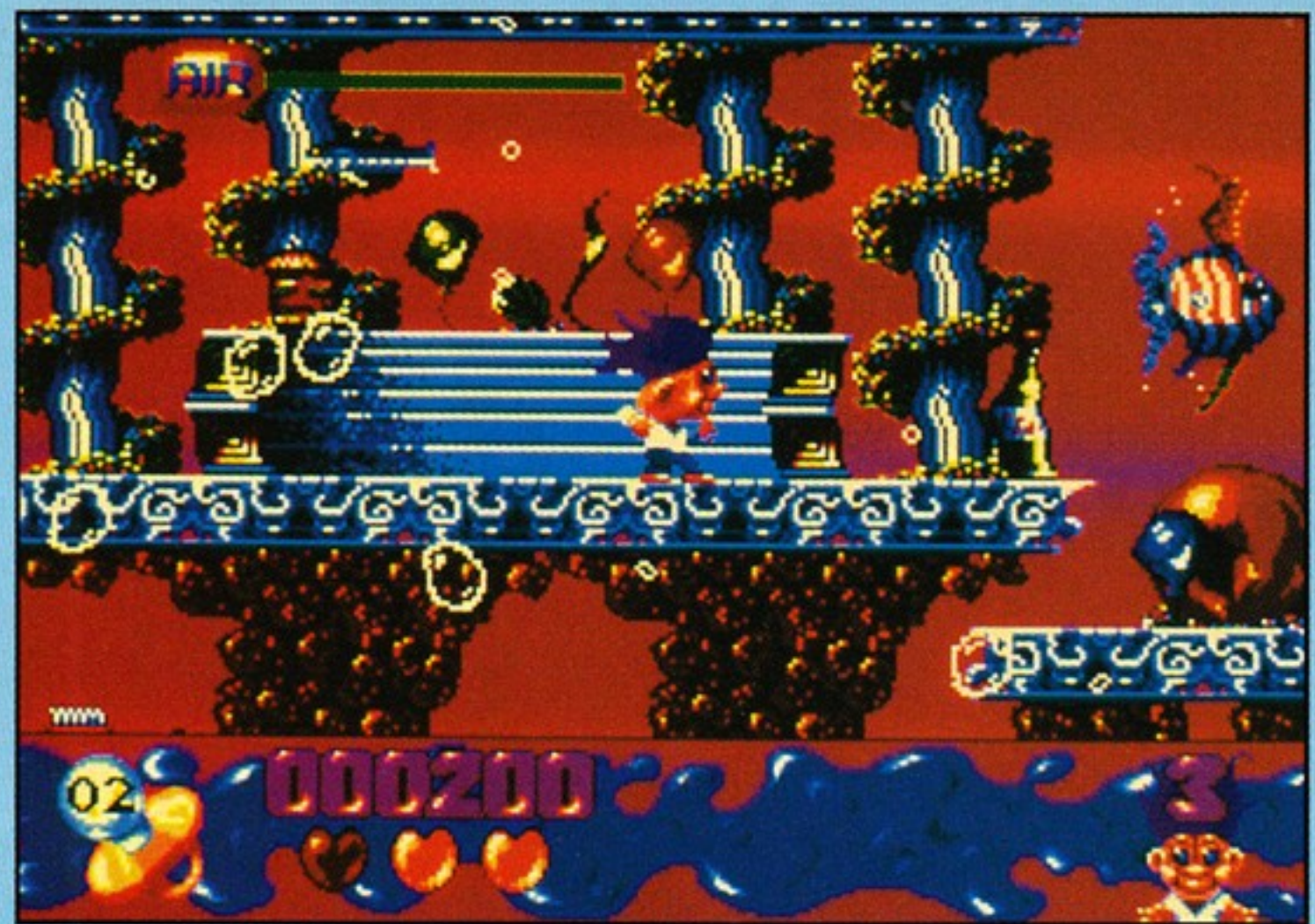
Animated arcade games on the IBM PC are about as rare as honest politicians, and, when one comes along, it's worth noting. I don't know about an honest politician, but I have seen an animated arcade game on the PC, and I'm highly pleased about it. *Trolls* won't win any awards for originality, but it is certainly one of the better technical achievements I've seen among PC games.

Trolls is essentially *Sonic the Hedgehog* transmuted and brought to the PC. The game is the usual mix of platforms, jumping, object-collection and nasty-avoidance that can be found in thousands of other arcade games. What sets off *Trolls*, though, is how well it's done. Usually, animation on the PC is jerky, flickery and frequently painful to watch. The animation in *Trolls* is uncharacteristically fluid. What struck me most when I first saw it was how Amiga-like the animation is; the frame rate is high enough that there's no jerkiness and the objects don't flicker as they move across the screen. Besides the main troll character, there is plenty of other animation going on at the same time, including not only other characters and objects, but also smoothly scrolling backgrounds that are among the best I've seen. The details in the backgrounds are lavish and frequently funny; I wish more games would pay as much attention to the details as *Trolls* does.

The game's joystick or keyboard-controlled mechanics are easy enough that smaller kids can play, yet it provides enough challenge that all but the most seasoned arcade gamers will find it enjoyable. On a scale of one to ten, I would give it a difficulty level of about three,

but that is not to say it isn't fun; there's something to be said for mindless joystick jerking with a low frustration index. Something else I like very much is the designers' thoughtful approach to the game's different levels. There are ten of them, and they can be played in virtually any order you want; however, solving a level will open a doorway into another level that can't be entered otherwise. If you've ever been stuck in one level in an arcade game, you know how irritating it is to have to play that one level over and over. At least with *Trolls* you can go on to a different area and try your luck.

Trolls is something of a departure for Capstone, a company that usually publishes movie and TV licenses (like *Home Alone 2* and *L.A. Law*, among many others). This game,



however, is a European import it decided to release here in the States. The main flaws in *Trolls* are its lack of originality and its sometimes overbearing cuteness. The cuteness I can overlook, since the troll fad itself is more than a little overbearing. The lack of originality will probably sell more games, but I hope the designers and programmers will apply their considerable skills to better material in the future. I expect to see good things from them.

—Tom Malcom

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EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Everyone commented on the wild use of color (some positively, some negatively), but Chris and Mike both noted it's weird to see a cartridge-type game for the PC.

Star Legions

MINDCRAFT

Versions: IBM PC (\$59.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

In Mindcraft's new *Star Legions*, players are asked to champion the cause of the Krellan Empire in their war with the hated United Galactic Alliance (UGA). Whereas most war games allow gamers to try their hand at commanding either one side or the other in the conflict, in *Star Legions* you command only one: the bad guys. The Krellans are out to conquer the galaxy, and they need your help—persons with the propensity to be moral or merciful need not apply.

The game begins with the player assuming the role of an aggressive, newly commissioned Krellan starship commander. Your mission is straightforward: Seek out and destroy new life forms, conquer their home worlds and expand the Krellan sphere of influence throughout the galaxy. At first, your fleet consists of your command battle-cruiser, a troopship, a supply ship, and

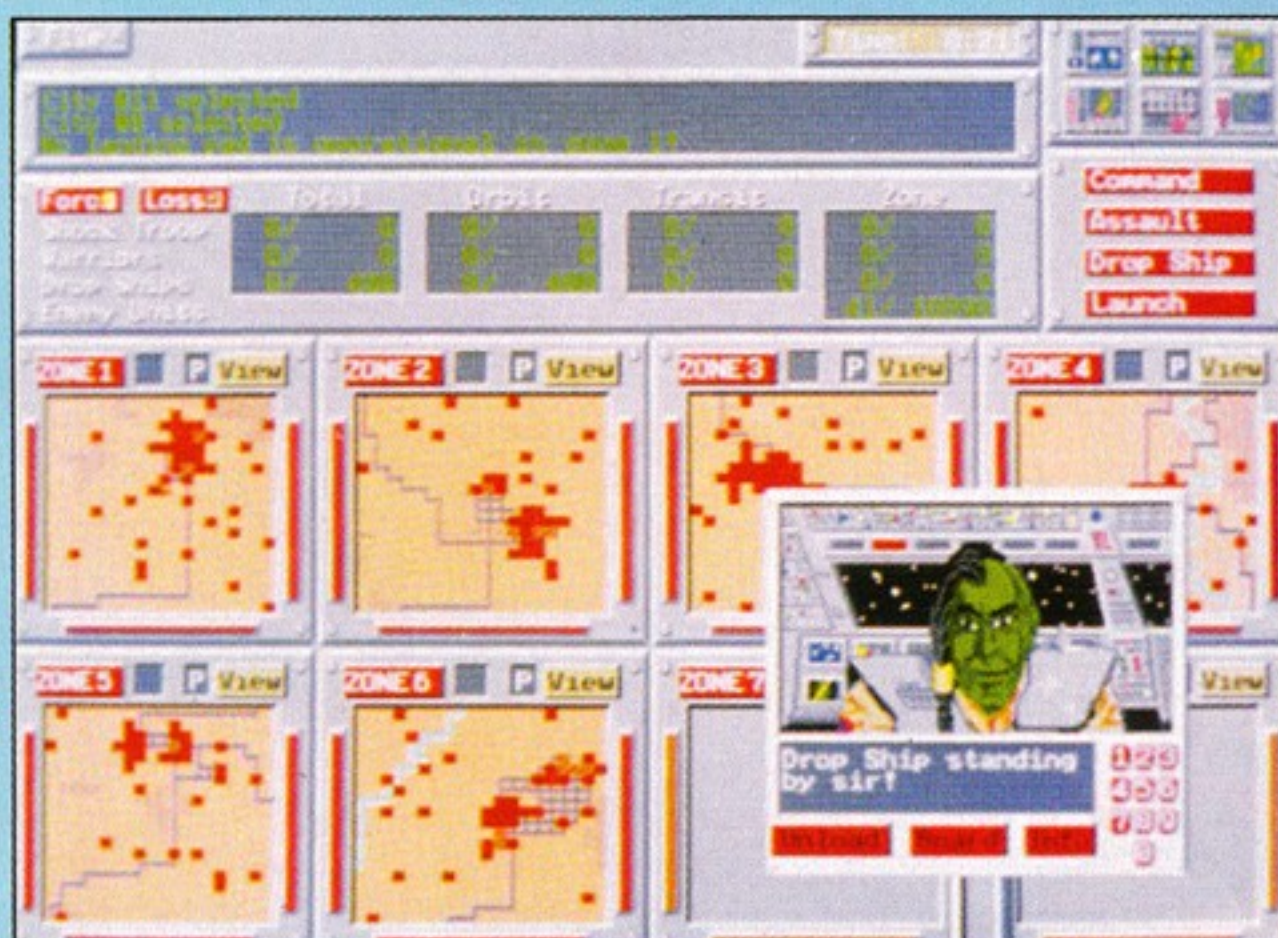
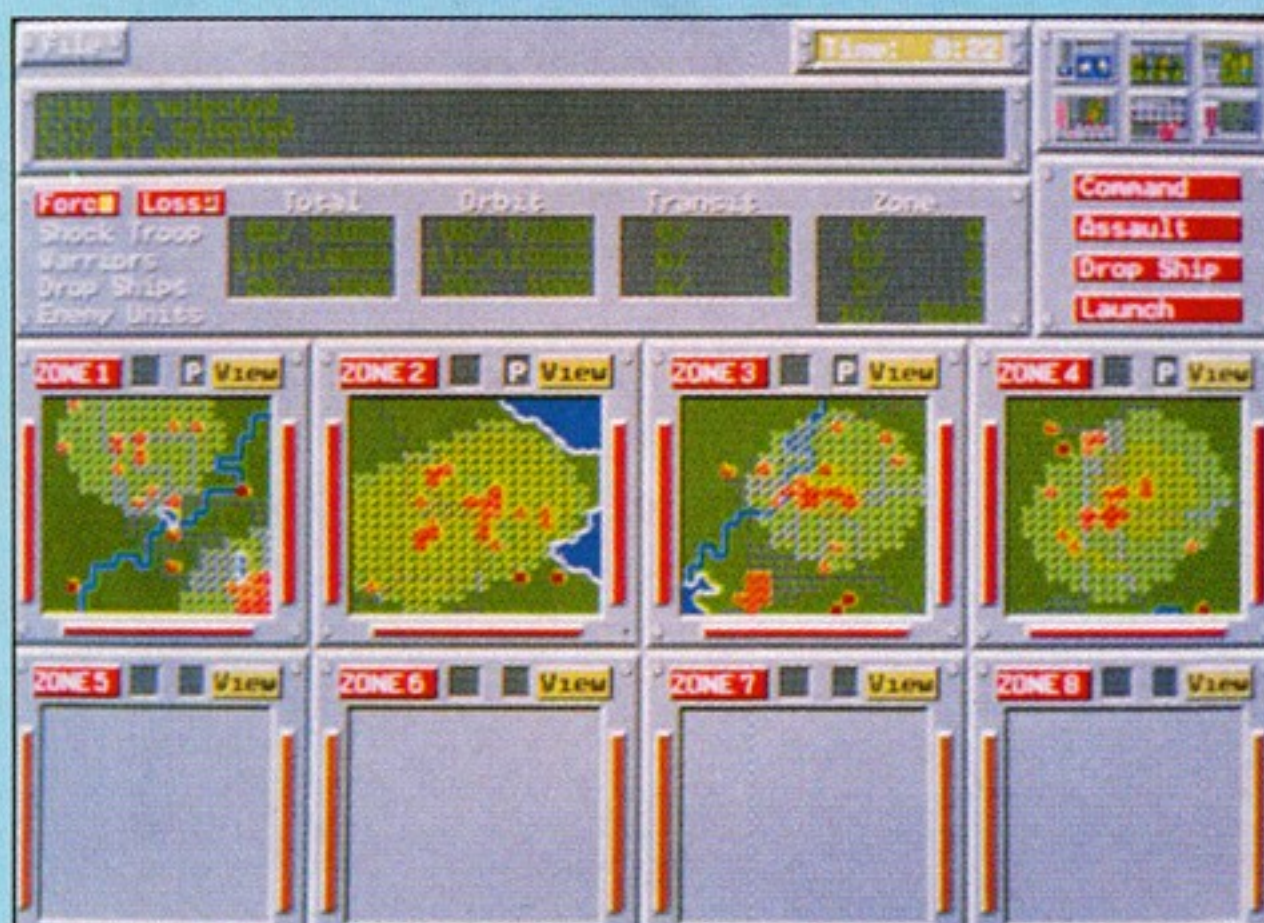
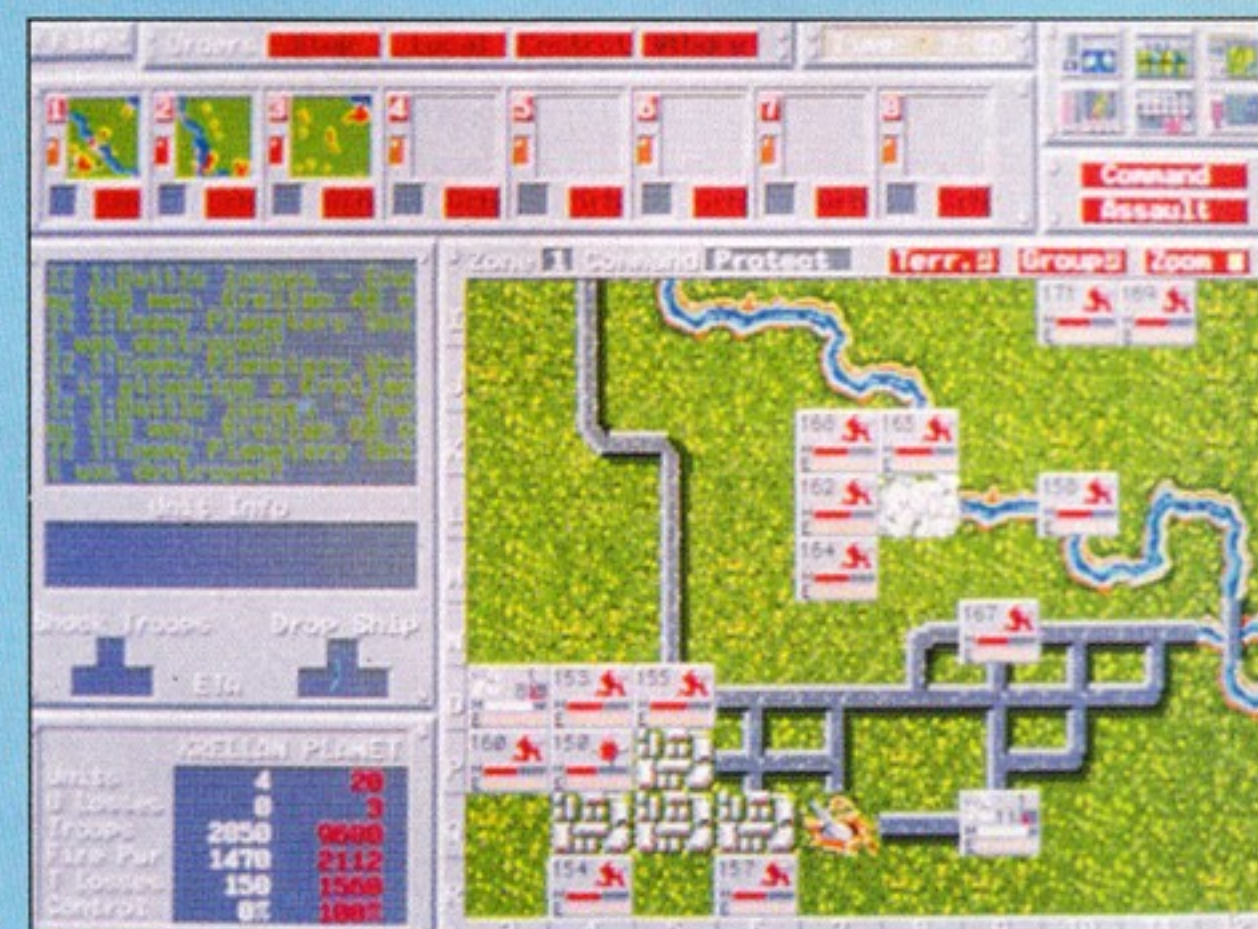
a smattering of other ships. As your career with the Krellan military develops, you'll command larger and larger fleets, tackling more difficult planets.

Gameplay usually involves assuming orbit around a target planet, destroying the planetary shield (if present) and beaming down your lightly armed shock troops, which then proceed to build landing pads for your dropships. Dropships are required for transporting your heavily-armed warrior units to the surface, which are essential for victory against more powerful planets.

Your foes range from semi-intelligent bands of humanoids to technologically advanced societies with capabilities as great as yours. You direct the assault of the planet from aboard your flagship in orbit around the planet. A command console—divided into six control panels—allows you to quickly access all of the relevant game commands, from loading troopers into dropships to assaulting enemy cities.

In terms of graphics and sound, *Star Legions* doesn't break any new ground. While most graphics are well-drawn, a few of the images look rather amateurish; indeed, most of the Krellan troops pictured in the game look like a cross between a Klingon warrior and a green-skinned lackey of Ming the Merciless. Sound is acceptable, and Sound Blaster owners with at least one megabyte of extended memory will be treated to actual digitized speech from their Krellan legions, relaying battle reports and such. Admittedly, most of the samples sound as if the programmers rounded up the office staff and forced them to act like malevolent, conquering space aliens.

The game eventually falls victim to repetitiveness; after the first dozen or so worlds, you've basically seen all of what *Star Legions* has to offer. Your units can gain experience, you can gain fame, awards and promotions, but it all seems rather pointless after a point. It would be ideal if the player could see how his efforts were con-



tributing to the larger campaign to crush the UGA, perhaps with a star map which displays the planets remaining to be conquered.

If you can overlook the aforementioned deficiencies, *Star Legions* does have play value. If you've had a tough day at the office, nothing is more relaxing than rampaging through a computer-simulated universe, conquering thousands of populated worlds and leaving a swath of destruction in your wake. It might not be politically correct, but *Star Legions* serves admirably as a computer-based stress reliever.

—Jeff James

Electronic Arts
1450 Fashion Island Blvd.
San Mateo, CA 94404
(415) 571-7171

EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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While Andy tagged *Star Legions* an "intricate game of planetary conflict," Chris felt that Mindcraft blew it by ignoring the need for a user-friendly interface.

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Spaceward Ho!

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GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Probably best known for the *Might and Magic* adventure-game series, New World Computing has taken a different direction with *Spaceward Ho!* In this space exploration and conquest game, the player is pitted against up to 19 computer or human opponents for control of the planets in endless galaxies. Battles between human players are conducted over a network, though conspicuously absent is support for modem play, which would make a welcome addition.

In the struggle for universal domination, the realism factor shouldn't weigh so heavily that learning how to play is half the battle. New World Computing has gone to great lengths to create a computer-strategy game with enough realism to keep it interesting, but plenty of fun for hours of addictive play.

One of the game's most outstanding features is its Old West theme. At first the approach seems out of place, but a short explanation in the well-written manual clarifies this. Indeed, the Old West motif finds its way into the amusing sounds and graphics, and it soon becomes (almost) natural.

The easy-to-use setup options allow selection of number of players (human and computer), style and density of the galaxy and different skill levels for the computer players. When the player names are chosen, the playfield and report windows are established.

The star map shows a section of the galaxy to be explored. Players begin with their home planet and colonize the others by traveling to another planet and garnering the resources of the colonized world. To make it clear which planets are colonized and by whom, each is distinctive in appearance. The player's are Earth-like planets with light-colored hats, while opposing players' planets look like bandits, which sport bandannas and red hats. All uncolonized planets are labeled with a question mark.

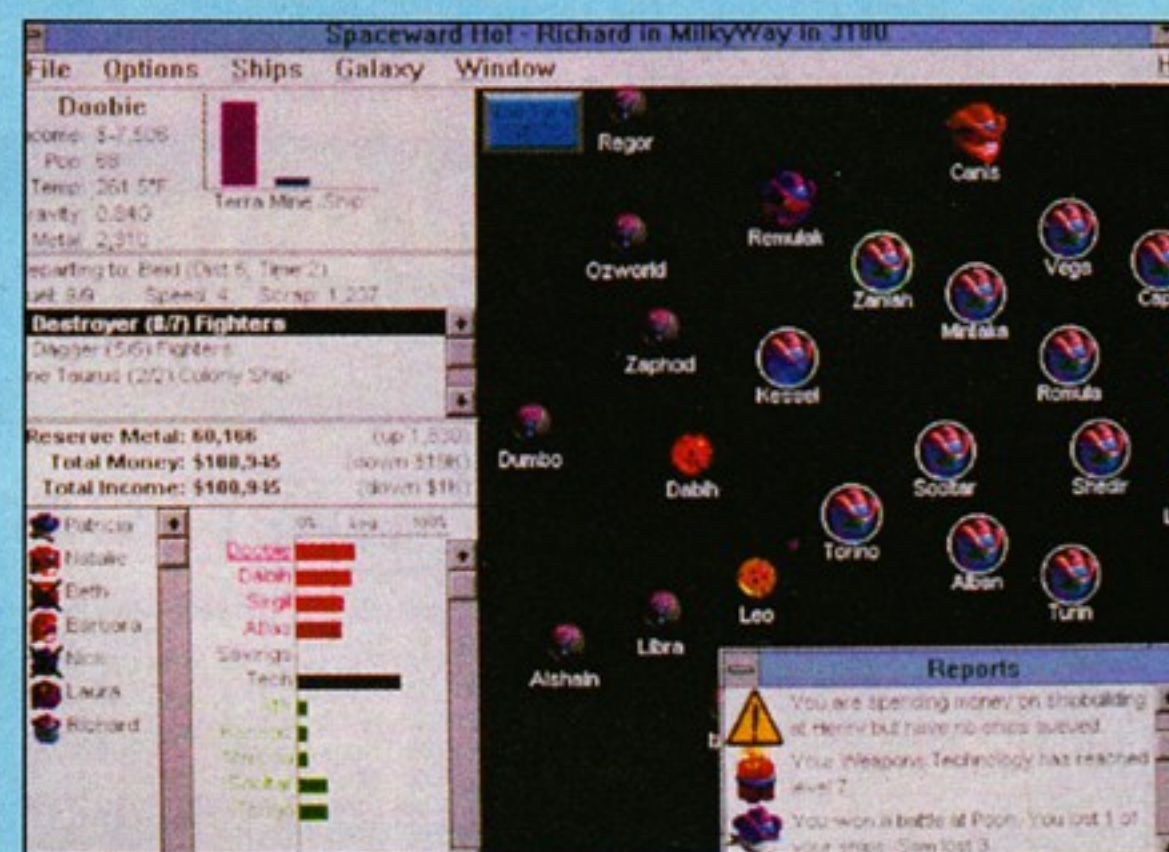
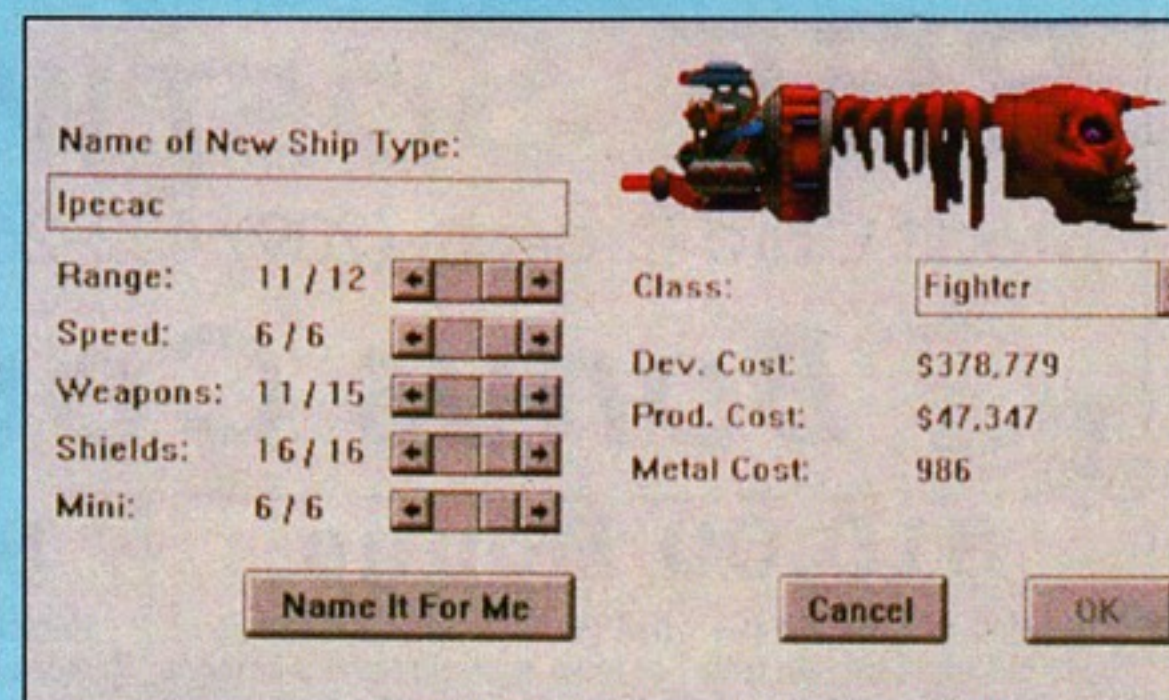
Movement between planets is a simple matter of pressing the left mouse button and dragging the pointer to the desired planet. A line connecting the planets indicates whether the move is valid. Releasing the button results in a resounding "Hyaah!" and the ship will be on its way. If travel is reconsidered mid-decision, dragging the mouse back to the original planet will sound off a "Whoah!" and the command will be canceled.

As the game progresses, attempts at colonization will result in conflicts with the enemy. These battles may be initiated by enemy attack on colonized planets or skirmishes resulting from the player's exploration. They are won or lost based on the level of technology and the relative number of forces. It is indeed possible for a much larger, though weaker, force to overcome a small, elite, stronger one.

Each successive level of technology allows players to upgrade their fleet and create custom ships for each of the four types: satellite, scout, fighter and colony ship.

Each game has different ship graphics, which become important in the battle window. The player's and enemy's ships face off in a laser fight to the finish, accompanied by all of the appropriate sound effects.

Fun is stressed overall, and *Spaceward Ho!* delivers. It's incredibly addictive, with enough appeal to attract those with little patience for a steep learning curve, yet it offers variations to challenge tactical diehards.



High-quality graphics and great sound effects (though a bit sparse) make for hours of nonstop play and contribute to what is surely the best *Windows* game released to date.

—Brian P. Doud

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Woodland Hills, CA 91364
(818) 999-0606



EDITORS' CORNER

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"Best played with a large group" is how Mike described it, and Dave concurred, adding that it was a "great simple game." It wasn't Chris' cup of tea, however.

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1. EXPERT MODE THAT FULLY UTILIZES THE HIRYU NO KEN. 2. EXCITING FIGHTING MODE THAT REQUIRES SIMPLE CONTROL. 3. COMMAND BATTLE STYLE, ANIMATION MODE FOR PLAYERS WHO WANT TO ENJOY THE STORY. 4. AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST, VS TOURNAMENT MODE WHERE EIGHT PLAYERS CAN PARTICIPATE.

THE FIGHTING GAME HAS FINALLY COME THIS FAR! THE ULTIMATES 150 TECHNIQUES!

IT HAS GOT YOUR BASIC TECHNIQUES, LIKE PUNCHING AND KICKING, ALONG WITH THROWING, FINISHING AND ALSO THE NEW FEATURE, OVERTURNING TECHNIQUE IS AVAILABLE! OUR OWN SYSTEM REPRODUCES OVER 150 DIFFERENT TECHNIQUES THAT HAS ALL ELEMENTS OF FIGHTING SKILLS! A FIGHTING GAME THAT IS NOW CLOSEST TO PERFECTION!

STORY MODE HAS A POWERFUL ENEMIES TOO!

A MYSTERIOUS ENEMY THAT HAS SUPERHUMAN SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES MOVES SUPER QUICK AND ATTACKS WITH A BIG HAMMER, GIVING FLYING WARRIORS A LOT OF TROUBLE. WHEN YOU FIND THE TUSK SOLDIERS AND THE MOONLIGHT WARRIORS AMONG THE FIGHTERS, TRANSFORM INTO THE FLYING WARRIOR AT ONCE AND FIGHT AGAINST THEM IN THE FIGHTING DIMENSION. USE MAGIC SPELLS AND OTHER ITEMS WISELY! YOU'LL HAVE A SHOWDOWN WITH DARGON AT THE END!

WIN THE TOURNAMENT! UP TO EIGHT PLAYERS CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE VS TOURNAMENT MODE!

UP TO EIGHT PLAYERS CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE VS TOURNAMENT MODE! MORE THAN 150 TECHNIQUES ARE AVAILABLE FOR YOU TO CHOOSE FROM OF COURSE. YOU CAN ENJOY THE GAME BY YOURSELF OR WITH YOUR GOOD FRIENDS. PUSH THE START BUTTON! LET'S SEE WHO IS GOING TO WIN THE TOURNAMENT!

WHAT IS THE NEW HIRYU NO KEN SYSTEM?

THIS GAME HAS FOUR DIFFERENT MODES. FIRST, YOU CAN ENJOY EXCITING ATTACKS AND ARE NOT REQUIRED TO DEFEND YOURSELF IN FIGHTING MODE. SECOND, EXPERT MODE FOR FIGHTING MANIACS. IT'S GOT JOINT TWISTING, OVERTURNING, COMBINATION TECHNIQUES AND MUCH MORE! THE FIRST VIDEO GAME THAT LETS YOU PLAY A FULL SCALE FIGHTING GAME! FOR BEGINNERS AND THOSE PEOPLE WHO ENJOY THE STORY, THERE IS COMMAND BATTLE STYLE, ANIMATION MODE, AND VS TOURNAMENT MODE THAT LETS UP TO EIGHT PEOPLE PARTICIPATE. IT'S A SUPER GAME SYSTEM!

NEW HIRYU NO KEN SYSTEM



EXPERT MODE

HIRYU NO KEN SYSTEM WAS REFINED AMAZINGLY.

WE CORRECTED THE OLD VERSION'S SHORTCOMINGS AND UPGRADED THE SYSTEM, WHICH PRODUCES THE HIGH-LEVEL MODE THAT LETS YOU ENJOY SUPERB FIGHTING ACTIONS! COMMAND OVER 150 FIGHTING TECHNIQUES THAT HAVE ALL THE ELEMENTS OF THE FIGHTING SKILLS!



FIGHTING MODE

YOU CAN ENJOY EXCITING FIGHTS WITH SIMPLE OPERATIONS.

THE STIRRING FIGHTING MATCHES THAT HAVE A LOT OF FIGHTING TECHNIQUES CAN BE PLAYED WITH SIMPLE BUTTON OPERATIONS! EVEN BEGINNERS CAN ENJOY THE FULL SCALE FIGHTING ACTIONS!



ANIMATION MODE

STORY MODE IS MUCH MORE FUN AND INTERESTING!

FOR THOSE WHO ARE NOT CRAZY ABOUT FIGHTING ACTIONS, COMMAND BATTLE STYLE, ANIMATION MODE IS AVAILABLE NOW! AND THE SUPER NES™ MAKES THE FLYING WARRIORS SO COOL! ENJOY THE ACTIONS BETWEEN THEM AND DARGON WHO'S RISEN FROM THE DEAD AS A BLACK GHOST!



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Are these really for Game Boy® !?!



2 GAMES IN 1!



IT'S LIKE 2 GAMES IN ONE CARTRIDGE! IS THIS REALLY ON THE GAME BOY?

YOU CAN PLAY VARIOUS KINDS OF CONTACT SPORTS. IN FIGHTING SIMULATOR MODE ONE OR TWO PEOPLE CAN PLAY, OR IN THE FIGHTING ACTION GAME MODE, MANY FEATURES LIKE SIDE SCROLLING ACTION, AND COSMIC SAUCERS ARE AVAILABLE.



ON DINOSTAR, MECHA COLONY, KING'S PLANET... "NINJA BOY 2"™, ANOTHER GREAT ADVENTURE BURST INTO SPACE! JACK AND RYU WENT ON A SPACE TRIP WITH THEIR PALS, WHERE THEY CAME ACROSS THE GALANDS, FIERCE PIRATES OF SPACE. WHAT THEY ARE AFTER IS CONTROL OVER THE UNIVERSE WITH THE MIGHTY POWER OF 7 TREASURES. RIGOROUS BATTLES AROUND THE TREASURES BREAK OUT WITH YOU IN PART OF THE ACTION AGAIN!!

CIRCLE #136 ON READER SERVICE CARD.



You're so intent on testing the particle accelerator you've invented that you hardly notice the crackling of a not-so-distant electrical storm.

Before you can say SNAP, CRACKLE, POP, a lightning bolt slams through you and your accelerator with deadly accuracy.

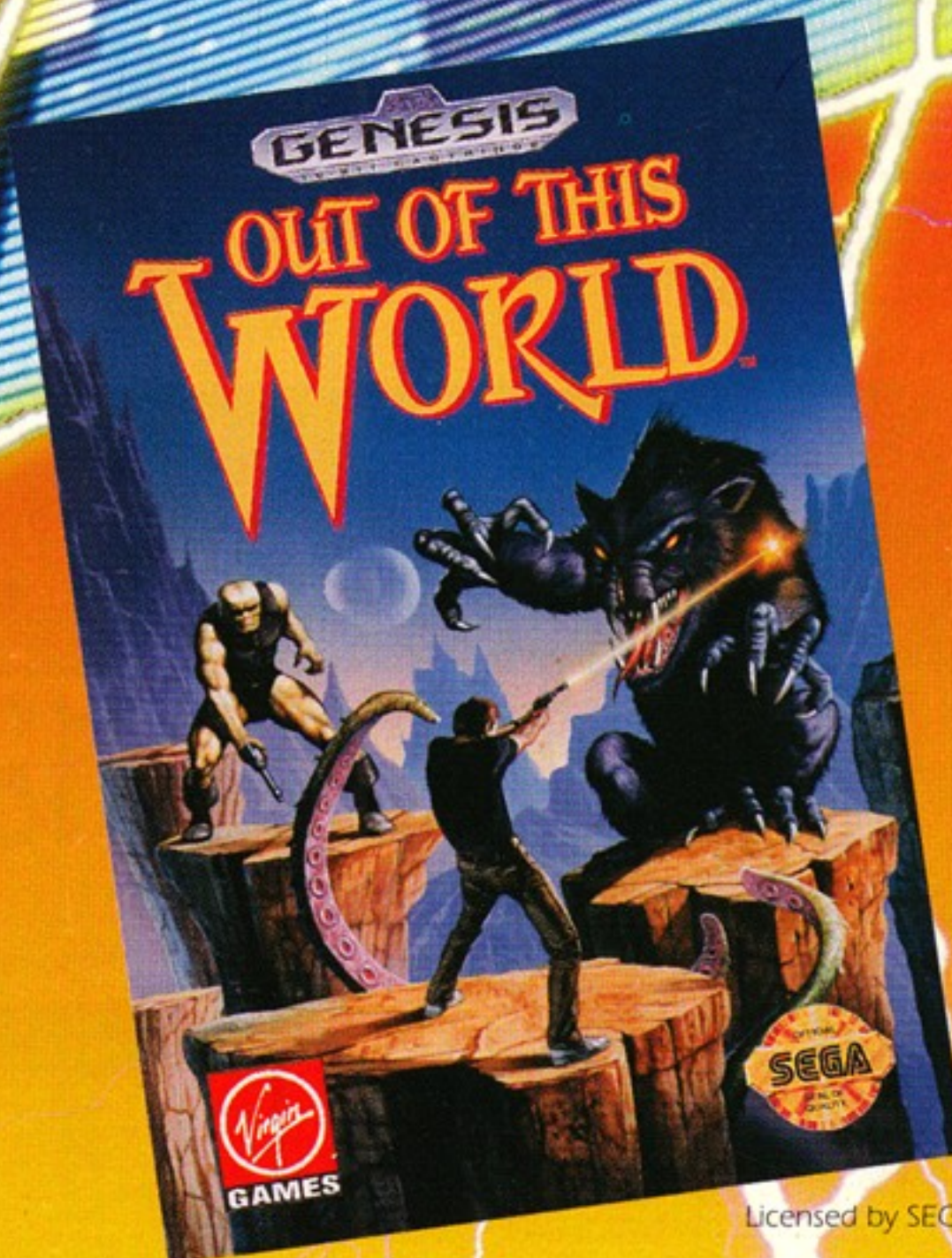
When you finally come to, you have no idea what time or place you're in, but you know you're not safe. Face it you're warped. Unless you want to start calling this place home, you'll need to dodge, outwit and overcome a host of deadly aliens, monster guards and bloodsucking leeches who think you're a delicacy. Now, that shouldn't be too hard for a Whiz Kid like you - right?

Out of This World Features

- Award-winning cinematically styled, rotoscoped animation
- State of the art real-time polygonal graphics
- Continual audio mix of digitized sound effects and musical score



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