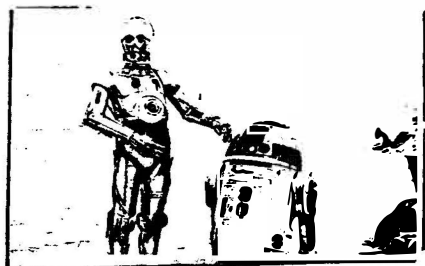


ELECTRIC BRAIN

ISSUE 19 - Recommended Price £1 - Bloody good value for money, I'd say!!

C.E.S. Report

What's to come from state side?



Mega Games Reviews

MD Shoot'em Up's - Thunderforce III Beater?

Gaias vs Gynoug

Aero Blasters

Bubble Bobble III - Will it live up the others?

Parasol Stars

Two CD-Rom Detective Adventures, can you solve the cases?

J.B. Harold Murder Club

are in the World is Carmen

Sandiego?

Plus more.....



EPSTER Megadrive



JACKIE CHAN - THE MAN

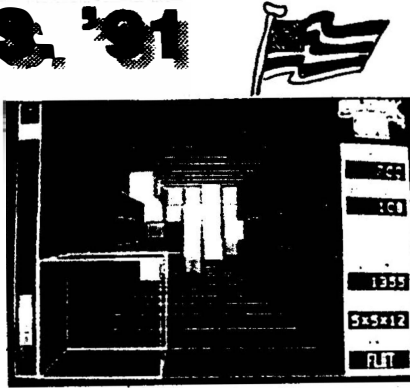
JACKIE IS HOLDING "ELECTRIC BRAIN" THE JAP VERSION? ?



U.S. WINTER C.E.S. '91

This winter's US C.E.S. was a day out for Genesis owners as the Americans displayed a huge amount for the machine. These included: Sonic the Hedgehog from Sega - which is supposed to make Mario look like Miner 2049'er - I have to say Sonic does look good; Spider Man (Sega) - hope-

werboat racing like Outrun; PGA Tour Golf (ECA) - Good looking golf sim.; Alien Storm (Sega) - Arcade conversion of Allens game; Pit Fighter (Tengen) - Yep! Atari's recent digi-coin-op beat'em up; Storm Lord (Razor Soft) - Hewson's arcade adventure;

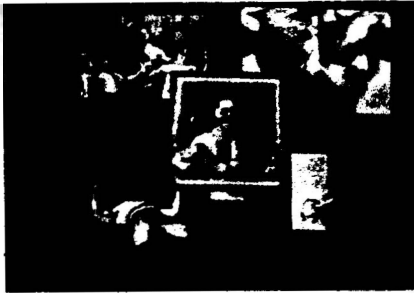


MD: Electronic Arts' Block Hole

King's Bounty (ECA) - Strategy RPG; 688 Attack Sub (Sega)- Submarine sim.; RBI Baseball III (Tengen) - Guess!!; The Berlin Wall (Kaneko) - Strange Playform game; James Pond (ECA) - Gremlin's arcade game; Abrams Battle Tank (Sega) - Tank Sim.; HardBall! (Accolade) - Baseball;

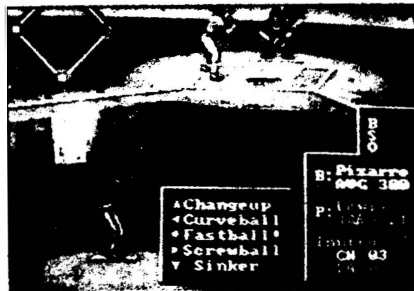
On the Engine, there were showings of 4 from Cinemaware: Battle Royale - a 5 player wrestling game, TV Sports Hockey - that's Ice hockey, TV Sports Baseball - would you believe it's baseball?, and TV

of stuff that's already available for the standard PC Engine... the Americans are rather slow. Oh yeah... European support for the machine was also announced namely Accolade with Jack Nicklaus' Turbo Golf, Psygnosis with Shadow of the Beast and Ballistix, Gremlin Graphics with Impossamole, Loriciel with Panza Kick Boxing, and Hewson with Paradroid '90. Biggest stand at the Show



MD:Tengen's Pit Fighter

fully better than the Gameboy version; Dick Tracy (Sega) - which should be available now; Fantasia (Sega) again with Mickey Mouse in another arcade adventure; Fatal Labyrinth (Sega) - a gauntlet/RPG game similar to Dungeon Explorer on the Engine, Raiden (Micronet/Bignet) - 2 player vertical shoot'em up; Bimini Run (Nuvision) - Po-



MD: Accolade's HardBall!

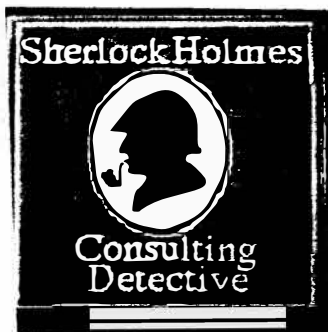
Might & Magic II (ECA) - RPG/Adventure; Dark Castle (ECA) - Another PC/Amiga conversion; Taskforce Harrier EX (Teco) - Another vertical shoot'em up; Star Control (Accolade) - great 2-player strategy shoot'em up; Block Out (ECA) - Difficult 3D Tetris and Road Rash (ECA) - Super Hang On sort of 3D racing game.

Sports Basketball - errmm.. Basketball. Icom Simulations showed off Sherlock Holmes. Consulting Detective on CD-Rom featuring some good digitised pics; Camp California - again on CD-Rom

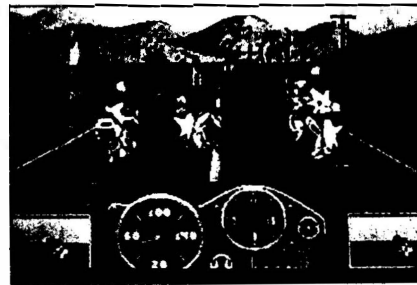


Engine CD-Rom: Camp California

was Nintendo's but as the US is not as up to date with the US... eg. release of the Super Famicom, we won't go in to that! Although it's very likely that the Nintendo Super Famicom should hit the US in the Spring or Summer, especially as US companies' games are being converted to the SF, namely Sim City, Dungeon Master, and various others. There was being at the Nintendo stand that had the force with him, that of Darth Vader who was there to promote the Lucasfilm/JVC game of the hit movie Star Wars.



ENGINE CD-ROM-SHERLOCK HOLMES



MD: Electronic Arts' Road Rash

and feature brilliant cartoon pics, and surprisingly - The Simpsons!! Radiance showed off Talespin - a wierd arcade adventure, and then there was Discis Knowledge Research Inc. who showed off Scary Poems for Rotten Kids - a CD-Rom of exactly what the title suggests featuring some nice graphics. And there was ofcourse lots



DARTH VADER AT CES PROMOTING STAR WARS GAME



The Simpsons!

Hiya Console fans,
 As you can see, the 'zine has a name change. This is because, several people said it was a silly, too obvious, basic name. Well, as I couldn't think of anything else, "Electric Brain" seems to be a good enough name for it - I chose it 'cos translated in chinese, it means computer, or computer related items, namely consoles.

However, more bad luck have struck E.B. Towers, as my Atari ST has decided to go on the blink... first the drive went, so I bought a new one, but I've now I've figured out that the power supply is bugged up too - as it's internal it's difficult to replacel So, this issue is very partly produced on the Atari ST (before it died), and on the Amiga using the very temperamental PageStream V1.8. Hopefully, I can get hold of ProPage V2 before I complete this issue and if I have enough dosh in my wallet as it's mega expensive! Hopefully, my Amiga will hold out, or I'll have to do the next 'zine on the PC Engine!

Incidentally, if anyone has any suggestions about what else we can put in the 'zine, please let me know. eg. Would you like to see a comix strip, related console news but not directly on consoles ie. Music CDs, Coin-ops, Comics, etc...

Onn (ed.)

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 Famicom, New Computer
 Express, etc.....

And You!

SEGA'S NEW COIN-OP

After the brilliant G-LOC, and their ace R-360 machine, what will Sega come up with next? Well, Air Bike Cop (A.B.Cop) is their next big block buster, and it looks mega brilliant as you zoom into the screen on your 'Air Bike' and pump some laser bolts at some rather nasty creatures and mechanical beasts. As you'd expect from Sega, the 3D action should be amazingly good. We hope it makes it to the UK soon.



SEGA'S COIN-OP AIR BIKE COP - SUPER DUPER 3D ACTION..!!

S - U - P - E - R FAMILICOM NEWS

Not a lot of news for the super machine this month. Konami's next release after Gradius III will be an arcade adventure, but atlas I don't know the name off, however, it has appeared on the 8-bit Famicom before. The game will be dual play and feature the usual

colourful cute graphics as with most of this type. Looks good... no release dates as yet.

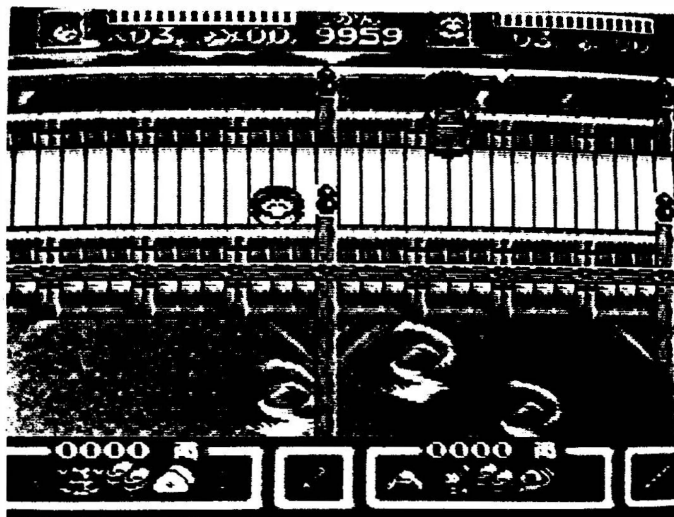
Taito's Darius Twin should hit the streets on 29th March on another 8meg cart. Aswell as the different Bosses in the game, it also features different weapons with curved beams and 4 directional plasma bolts!!

Although Hole in One is now available, the Golf game that we're all waiting for is T&E Soft's New 3D Golf Simulation featuring the 3D Polysys system

well you can look all round the course with ease, and takes the Leaderboard approach instead on top down. The game should be out on April the 5th, again 8meg.

April the 6th is the day for release of Ultra Man, a battle between you (Ultra Man - the giant 100ft robot) against all those wierd japanese movie monsters, ie. Godzilla and others. The game is basically a one on one beat'em up, where you can puch, kick, jump, duck, roll, backflip, grab and throw opponent, and so forth, and also use your special powers like lasers and shields. Of-course the monsters also have some mean arsenal.. breath fire or ice, use their long tails as a whip, lasers from eyes, etc.. 4meg from Bandai.

From Epic/CBS comes Jerry Boy, a really wierd game, where you take on a blue blob in an arcade adventure game to get through several stages of hazards and nasties out to it. More on this game next time. Dungeon Master should be out in August, & Sim City out late April.



Konami's next game, dual player arcade adventure

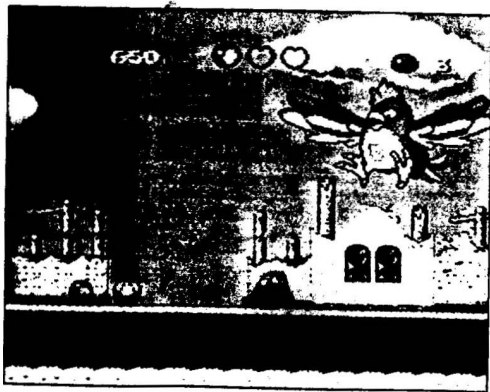
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SF: JERRY BEAN...YOU'RE AT THE BOTTOM - THAT BIRD'S GOT AN EYE FOR YOU THOUGH!

have to try hard to beat Avenue's effort on the Engine Release date Unknown.

DataEast's Vapor Trall, the dual player shoot'em up should be out in May on 4meg Cart. Current screen shots of the game doesn't look too bad, but certainly not perfect. When it comes to shoot'em ups, one company shines out amongst the rest - what with arcade titles like Hellfire, Flying Shark, Twin Hawk, Tatsujin, and so on under their belt - Toa Plan is to dish out

Seal - I found it rather difficult, so hopefully Wolf Team's effort is a bit, or a whole lot better.

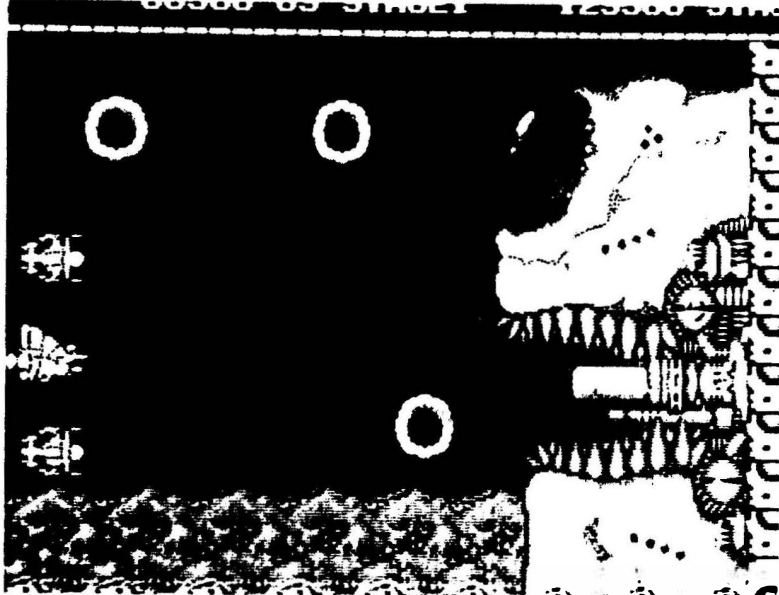
Apart from that, not a great deal else. Kageki, Warder Special, Verytex, and Valls III out for March, Advanced War Game from Sega on 8meg (plus Backup) for end of May, a couple of Mah Jong games, and a few RPGs.

PC Engine News

Well, it seems every year, at least a couple of baseball games appear, and Namco's the first for '91 to release another (their third for the engine) on 21st March on 2meg Card.

Nec Avenue have announced another license, that of Sega's coin-op game Bonanza Bros., with the engine version coming out on CD-Rom. The game features wacky graphics of blocks with 'fade-out' colours, which looks great... and best of all dual play, with split screen. It's very much like Spy Vs Spy but each are robbers and have a time limit to tea-leaf a high security building. Looks brilliant, but you know Avenue, they sure take their time about releasing stuff, but it's nice to see them continuing supporting the CD-Rom.

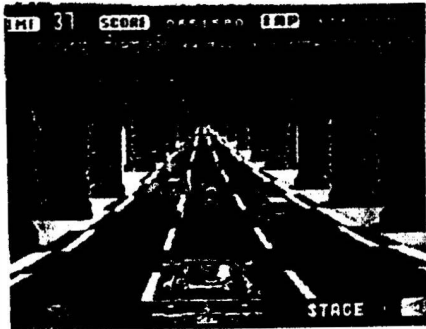
Infact, just when you think that there's sod all on CD format, and you'd be better off selling it, several companies are to release stuff on it! Hopefully more stuff will appear on CD as games like Darius, and Murder Club really shows what's



MEGADRIVE ZERO WING FROM TOA-PLAN. I THINK YOU SHOULD SHOOT IT IN THE GOB!

Megadrive news

Not a lot of news for the Megadrive, it seems it's the MD's time to fade out for a month before rebounding back with hundreds of ace titles. But one surprise game from Sega is the game everyone thought should have been released when the Megadrive came out - OUTFRAN. Yep! At long last, someone in the Sega labs have decided to convert this classic race game - but is it all too late? Surely, people would rather have an up to date racing game with a bit more action? Anyway, the game will be on 8meg Cartridge, so you can expect a good conversion - Sega don't



COIN-OP OUTFRAN - MD AVAILABLE SOON

another. This time it's another conversion of their games - Zero Wing, a horizontal scrolling blaster. As with other TP games, it has some brilliant colourful graphics, and there's the usual weapon systems of red, blue and green lasers. Planned for an April release, and shouldn't be missed judging by their previous games.

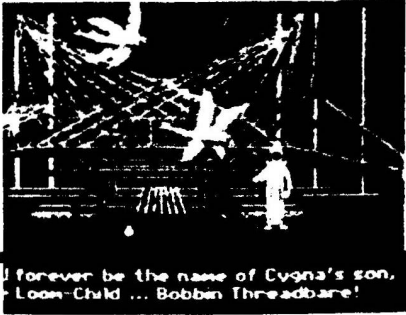
Wolf Team's next game apart from Dino Land the Pinball game, will be Arcus Odyssey, coming out in April on 8meg cart., and it's an arcade RPG adventure, and also dual play. Infact, it's very similar to Data East's coin-op RPG Dark Seal, as you get to pick one of four characters with different attributes, in a 3D isometric adventure. I can't say I was a fan of Dark



BONANZA BROS : SPY VS SPY ACTION. PLAYER ONE IS HEADING FOR THE EXIT, BUT PLAYER TWO HIDES FROM GUARD.

capable.

Naxat have two shoot'em ups in the pipeline (apart from 1943 Special out for 22nd March). Both to be released on CD-Rom. The first will be a conversion of Toa Plan's Zer Wing which Toa Plan are converting themselves for the MD, and looks well wicked, while the other is a vertical job, and looks just as good will



Forever be the name of Cyona's son, Loom-Child ... Bobbin Threadbare!

LOOM FROM LUCASFILM, COMING SOON FOR THE ENGINE ON CD.

brilliant graphics.

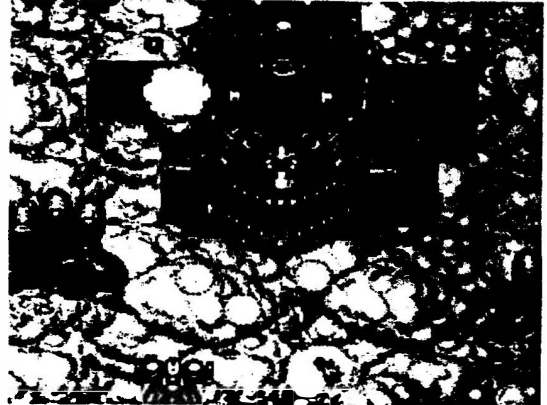
Another CD-Rom game comes from Victor/Lucasfilm Games who are to convert their strange graphic adventure game Loom. I've played the game on the Amiga for a couple of hours, and I have to say it's quite good, although I didn't get very far. Should be better on CD format.

Even more CD will be Road Spirits from Pack-In-Video and should be out on 22nd March. The game is very much like Outrun as you race from city to city within an allotted

time limit. And for added flavour, you get a choice of cars from a red Ferrari F40, to a Renault 5 and a beaten up Volkswagon!!! Like outrun, you get a music select (which should be ace as it's on CD) too.

Other CDs includes Hudson's follow up to Ys I+II - Ys III (22nd March), Two Arcade RPG from Telenet (15th/29th March), Download 2 (Out any time now), Astrilius - a RPG from IGS (15th March), La Valeur - another RPG from Kogado Studio (22nd March), L-Dis - a crazy horizontal shoot'em up from NCS (Out any time now), Hellfire from NEC (coming very soon), The Manhole (Should already be available), A Japanese quiz/ educational game from NEC (29th March), Ultra Box 4 - CD magazine (April), Let's be Friends - Educational program to teach the Japanese

english.... worth getting if you have very young children!! (should already be out), Sherlock Holmes - Who dunnit adventure (May), plus other RPGs and Wargames. There are also a few more from NEC Avenue ofcourse, mentioned in previous 'zines.



NAXAT'S MEGA VERTICAL SHOOT'EM UP - WOULD THEY TAKE THE TITLE FROM HUDSON?!

SPIN PAIR

Engine by Media Rings Corps.
Supplied by Megacorn

Oh No! Not another Tetris clone?! But remarkably, Media Rings have produced one of the better clones, and not only does it play well in a normal game, but in two player mode, is even better - it also works on the GT through comlink.

Spin Pair has 4 game modes, normal, Story, Battle (2 player) and GT vs. In normal, your objective is to try to survive as long as possible like the original Tetris. Before you start, you get to pick from 3 tunes (or none), all of which are jolly and catchy. Next, you can choose a handicap - this is like 'High' on Gameboy Tetris by having lots of shapes piled up from the start.

When the game actually starts, pairs of coloured shapes drop down the screen. Using the joystick, you can move the shapes left and right, and pull them down. Each shape is half filled, and tapping one of the buttons rotates the shape 90 degrees. While the other button switches the two shapes around. To get rid of the shapes, you must drop another shape that's the same on to it, but with the filled area reversed, so to make a complete filled shape, thus disappearing. Also, any shape that's horizontally in line with it that's the same will also go too.

The shapes drop down at a rather slow rate, but match a set number, and it'll speed up, until you match a few more, where it'll revert

back to the original speed - but an extra shape will be added! And that's basically it.

Story Mode is basically the same, but you have to match a selected number of shapes per stage. Battle Mode is again similar to normal, but with two columns for two player game. Again, like Tetris, if player one gets rid of three or more shapes at once, those shapes will drop into player two's column and vice versa.

Overall, Spin Pair is an ace game, not as good as Tetris, but better than other variants of the game. Graphics are rather naff, but fit the game - if they were more detailed it would be difficult to distinguish the shapes, and the audio is great - like Gameboy Tetris, if you get near the top, a rather fast tune plays, building up the pressure. Spin Pair is a must for puzzle freaks as it's very addictive, but like most puzzle games, price is steep, so if you can get it cheap or hire it out - go for it!! A real must!!

Graphics - 70% Sound - 85%
Playability - 95% V. F. M. - 85%
Overall - 85%

Onn Lee

S.C.I.

PC Engine by Taito
Supplied by Console Concepts

S.C.I. is the follow up to the very successful Chase HQ, so it's quite

obvious that, as Taito converted both, this latest game will be very much the same as the original, and you'd be right.

Basically, S.C.I. IS Chase HQ with a few extra bits bolted on. Your objective is again to first catch up with a criminal vehicle that's heading to the city limits, then stop it by ramming it, or shooting it, in the set time. Because you have the ability to shoot the baddies, meaning an extra button is required, there's no gear box... it's all automatic now. It also makes things easier.

Other features includes rain (which is terribly done.. two frames of animation!), lorries that drive the other way, cliff faces where you can fall off, rocks on the road which if you hit sends you flying, buses that drive across the road, and so on... plus a helicopter that comes occasionally to drop you a bazooka.

Overall, S.C.I. is quite a good game, but it's nothing special, infact, I prefer the original. Graphics are adequate and speed is same as HQ. Sound is not bad, but the speech is awful.. like Nancy is gagged and locked in a phone box. Unless you're a fan of the coin-op, I don't recommend S.C.I. especially if you have HQ.

Graphics - 85% Sound - 70%
Playability - 80% V.F.M. - 75%
Overall - 80%

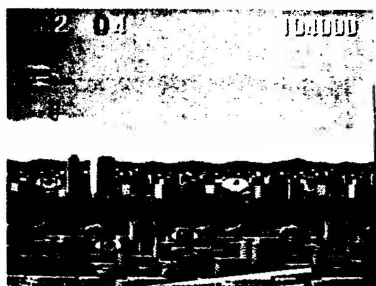
Onn Lee

Dead Moon

PC Engine by T.S.S.
Supplied by Console Concepts

Dead Moon is the first game from T.S.S. and if they continue to produce games of this quality, we can expect some great things for the future. Dead Moon is a horizontal shoot'em up but has great graphics, sound and very playable.

When you turn on the machine, you get the biggest title scroll ever devised... the characters are so big, each letter is bigger than the screen. The story goes that a comet has hit a dead moon, and by close observation by satellite, a large army was building up on it... very likely to attack earth. So you get into your fighter and set off to destroy it.



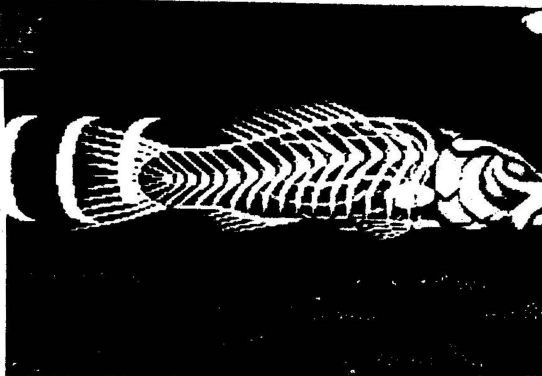
DEADMOON STAGE ONE -
BIT LIKE AIR BUSTERS.

You start on Earth over a multi-parallax city, and looks rather like Air Busters... but graphics are bigger and more detailed. Your ship is first armed with dual fire guns and 3 bombs, and quite effective against the first batch of enemy crafts that attack you. These come in formation of red spheres that show off their sine wave moves and various ships that fire bullets and lasers. As your ship is quite big, dodging the flak is quite difficult. To make things a little easier for you, yellow pods occasionally float in and shooting them reveal weapon icons. There are two types of these - coloured orbs which gives you either multi-way fire, red rings, blue lasers, or green wave, and secondary weapons, wither homing missiles or protection balls. Each weapon you collect first starts off fairly weak, but collect more of them and they soon power up. As well as these, there are also flashing orbs that acts as a smart bomb when you collect them.

Each level has a mid Boss and an end of level one. The first boss you meet are two UFOs that fire bullets and lunge for you. Killing these blighters are quite easy... but the end of level bosses are more tougher, and come in the form of skeletal creatures with an active heart. Level one is a flapping bird

that fire streams of bullets and head towards you. Shoot it in the weak spot several hundred times to dispose of the skelebob. As the bosses move left and right, your craft always faces it, so if you move to the right of it, your ship will flip around and face left.

Stage 2 is out in Space, where you are attacked by square tube structures, rotating orbs, space crafts that fire long lasers, and big asteroids to avoid... with the end boss - a rocket propelled turtle that bounces around the screen and throws out fireballs. 3 is on the moon itself with the best parallax moon scape I've seen, and here you're attacked by even more nasty enemies with multiple homing missiles, ships coming from all directions, and volcanic explosions, and at the end, a missile launching, bullet firing, jumping dinosaur!! Stage 5 is set in the caverns with a brilliantly animated skele-bird, 6 in the water with a mega giant sized skele-fish which is extremely difficult to dodge and more difficult to kill, and lastly stage 7 the Core... which is mega

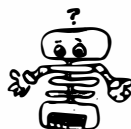


DEAD MOON : ONE MEGA SKELE-FISH BOSS

tough... I haven't managed to get far into with ending in death.

Graphically, Deadmoon is brilliant with colourful backdrops and sprites, super parallax scrolling, big sprites that flicker very little, and sound is put to good use. Each level is accompanied by some sold music which adds to the atmosphere although there are a few naff tunes. Playability wise, it's great.... starting off fairly easy and getting well 'ard. It's not quite Thunderforce III or Gaijars, or it's nearest rival on the engine Darius, but well worth a bash. The only fault apart from infinite continues, is that the levels are a bit short, so getting to the last couple of stages isn't too difficult.

Graphics	- 95%	Sound	- 85%
Playability	- 90%	V.F.M.	- 85%
Overall	- 88%		



Onn Lee

Hole In One

Super Famicom by Hat Lab, Inc.
Supplied by Megacom

Hole in one is the first of two golf games to appear for the SF, and should not be confused with the better T&E's version that's available for other Japanese computers (FM Towns, X68000, NEC PC, etc...) using the 3D Polysys technique.

Hole in one certainly doesn't show off what the SF can do in terms of actual gameplay. When you start the game, you are shown a very impressive intro of a ball that flies onto the green and drops into the hole in brilliant 3D.... if only the game was like this!! The option screen has a large amount of game options from a normal game for 1 to 4 players, match play, tournament, and so on, plus a password... all these are in Japanese by the way.

Once you've picked your game, you must enter your name and then pick your set of clubs. Hole in One has only one golf course which is rather disappointing.

The game itself. Before you actually get going, you are shown the first hole in "Actraiser" style 3D, as you zoom down and rotate, and then move down and back up the course. This is quite impressive, but as it's only 2 dimensional with only the fairway, bunker, water hazards and greens shown in patches, it's not amazing.. Show it in true 3D fractuals, then I would be really impressed!!

Once the fancy bit is over, you're shown part zoomed plan view of the first hole, and this is where all the action takes place - NO 3D views here, and you don't even get a golfer. A full view plan is shown on the left together with info on wind direction and speed, plus distance from flag. To make a shot, you first move a pointer to determine the direction which you wish to send the ball. Then pick your club, stance, and then the power and shot. Like Naxat Open and others, to hit the ball, you have a circular arc - hit button to start, and a pointer will quickly move up the arc, hit button again (the higher the pointer, the harder you'll hit the ball), where the pointer will drop quickly, and you'll have to hit the button again when it gets to a small blue block. Getting the point dead in the middle will send the ball flying straight, while off slightly will send the ball either way. However, all the above power/shot must be down within a second or two so it's quite difficult to get it right until you've had quite a number of goes. The main problem is when you want to hit the ball only a few yards, as you have to preform these moves in a split second and get it all right - a few times I've landed on the green,

only to take about 10 shots to get it in the hole! A very nice touch is when you just miss the hole, where you are shown a zoomed view of the hole in 3D and the ball runs in - this is certainly the best thing in the game.

Other options include Advice which is not much help unless you can read Japanese, and a 3D isometric view of the course. This is quite nice, and shows hills and ditches, etc... but once you've seen the effect a few times, you'll never want to see it ever again.

Overall, Hole in One is an average Golf game and not a patch on Access' classic Leaderboard which still reigns as my top golf game (although I haven't seen the follow up Links as I don't have access to a PC). I would say, avoid this game, HAL should forget golf and stick to Pinball (Gator is Mega on the Gameboy), and wait for T&E's New 3D Golf Simulation, which should be megall! Only buy Hole in One if you wish to collect all SF games, have more money than sense, or extremely desperate for a golf game.

Graphics - 75% Sound - 70%
 Playability - 70% V.F.M. - 60%
 Overall - 70%

Onn Lee

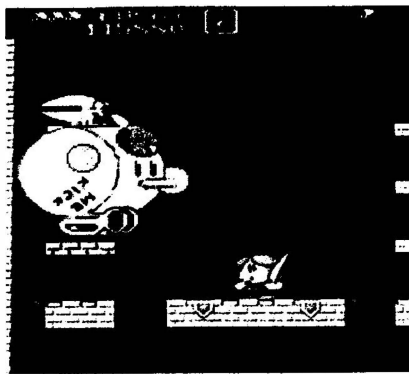
Parasol Stars

PC Engine by Talk
 Supplied by Console Concepts

Parasol Stars is the third Bubble Bobble game, and it follows the cute and highly playable action as its previous games... In fact, it's really a mish-mash of Bubble Bobble, Rainbow Islands and Don Doko Don all rolled into one. As Bub or Bob in human form as in Rainbow Islands, your objective is to clear each of the Stars (worlds) of cute but nasties that inhabit them. To do our heroes are armed with multi-coloured parasols.

Level one is set on Music Star, with colourful musical characters including castanets, accordions, trumpets, giant pink pianos and triangles. Like Bubble Bobble, you have a series of platforms where the instruments are, and you must get rid of all of them within a set time limit (or Death will appear to get you). There are several ways to do this. Smaller instruments can be knocked out by hitting them with your parasol, where they turn blue - like Don Doko Don. You can then pick them up and throw 'em where they die and leave a fruit, veg or whatever, for points. You can also lob stunned instruments at other instruments to stun or kill them. As well as the nasties, most levels have water dripping from ledges, and you can collect droplets and lob them at the instru-

ments too. By putting up your parasol, you can collect a number of droplets for added fire power, or go the full hog and collect 6 droplets for a massive droplet, which once thrown will release a stream of water that rush downwards taking out anything (including yourself!) with it (like BB). Bigger instruments like the



BUB FACES THE FIRST BOSS... TIME TO USE THAT PARASOL AND KICK ASS.

piano releases castanets, and must be stunned by throwing something at it several times first. Most instruments just wander around aimlessly which you must avoid, as touch any means death. Trumpets however, fire musical notes and if hit it'll stun you for a few secs, but you can try to shield yourself with your parasol. A nice touch is that, you can stick your parasol out, and walk backwards!

As with previous games, there are lots of extras to collect which appear during the game. These include boots to speed you up, crosses + bombs to kill everything on the screen, book to stun all the nasties, lighting orbs that sends lighting flying around the screen killing off nasties, plus others, including dark shades that makes the backdrop dark!! There's also an icon that ends the level and fills it with stars which you can collect for mega points. Also hidden are tons of tons of bonus items - throw items along that line, and they all appear, including fruit, veggie, cakes, money bags, (all for pts), and coins... the later when collected adds an extra credit (continue).

As with Rainbow Islands, special icons also appear - squares with rain drops, flames, lighting and star icons on them. Collect 3 of them for an extra life. However, a little hint - you require to collect three Star icons to get a gold key to access the last hidden level... something I didn't achieve.

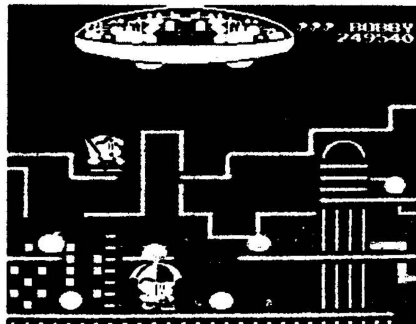


Each Star contains 10 levels with the last, it's you versus the Boss. The first is a bird like creature made up of instruments - bass drum,

trumpets, harmonica, etc.. The Boss moves all around the screen, and you must first collect the bottle of power, where by putting up your parasol brings up a number of lighting drops which you can throw at it. You must dodge the Boss and hit it several times, where it disappears, and leave a load of bonus items plus a giant one behind for you to collect. Then it's onto the Star.

Other stars include Forest where you have giant trees, pigs, bats that fire lighting, flying unicorns, and sprites; Gambling - with Slot machines, dice, coins, and Cards; Mechanical - with Tractors, bulldozers that fire missile, jet planes, Water - with Giant shells that release turtles, Seahorses, seals, and big whales, and then it's back to Rainbow Island where you have.. well, some of the characters from R.I., Bats that turn into Dracular, plus the end boss of Arkanoid that chucks out tiles.

Graphically, Parasol Stars is extremely cute and colourful, and very much like Rainbow Islands, and the scrolling is smooth (some levels are 2-3 screen long), and with so much sprites about, there is no sign of a flicker. On Sound, each Star has a jolly piece of music that accom-



BUB + BOB IN GAMBLING STAR... THAT U.F.O. WILL DROP DOWN NASTIES.

panies it, and after several goes, you'll be singing along with it... but best of all is when you're up against the boss, where a similar tune to 'Lambada' is played... well ace!! Sound FX is used effectively too. As with their previous game, Parasol's success lies in its playability, which is ever so addictive. The simple and easy game play makes it so enjoyable, and when you have a second player it's even more fun, as you can knock the other player, or even pick him up and throw him!!

Overall, I can't really fault Parasol Stars, if you want a well ace fun game in the traditional sense, Parasol Stars is a Must... don't miss it!

Graphics - 95% Sound - 95%
 Playability - 95% V.F.M. - 90%
 Overall - 95%

Onn Lee

Parasol Stars

PC Engine by Talto
Rented from Megaware

In an undeniable quest to be the cutest heroes in cuteworld Bub and Bob have changed their names (presumably by deedy Poley) to Bubby and Bobby.

All together now... Arrhhh. Having tried to defeat evil von Bubba in Bubble Bobble with bubbles and in Rainbow Islands with rainbows, I bet you can't work out what the cuddly rascals have acquired this time. Yep! sun brollies or parasols to be correct - no more nasty sunburn for these guys, looking youthful is where it's at and sun tans are for classies.

Actually in this third installment of the successful Talto coin op series, Parasols have little to do with protecting Bubby and Bobby's delicate skin from the harmful effects of the sun. In fact, their use is rather more violent and entails catching baddies over your head and flinging them at the wall. The parasol acts as a protective shield for the direction in which it is held. Catching meanies with your broolly stuns them and turns them blue. Like this, they are poor injured critters but you only have so long to fling them before they turn red and deadly!

As with the previous two games, bonuses spring up everywhere. Cleaning a single screen can yield more fruit and cakes than a Tesco hypermarket and there are additional weapons in the form of water bubbles that can be collected on top of your broolly to make a big bubble that pops and drowns all your foes beneath it. Lighting bolts are collected in the same way.

When starting the game, you leave the green and now peaceful world of rainbow islands and travel across space to one of the seven worlds that need to be conquered. Each one has a different theme ranging from musical instruments to mechanical and casino themes. All the graphics in the game are superbly done - large and very colourful. I haven't seen the coin-op anywhere but I wouldn't be quite surprised if it was identical. Tunes are good with a typical wobbly number played throughout and an excellent Lambda rendition when on a boss stage.

There are some great touches in the game like being able to pick up your pal and use him as a weapon and also being able to jump on top of each other's parasols to get to higher levels on the screen. Later levels in the game use wider scrolling platforms although I haven't encountered any vertical Rainbow Islands type levels ('cos there aren't any...edl).

One annoying hidden feature is the inclusion of a bonus 99 credits

on the first world. I've discovered it a couple of times and for me it took away a lot of the challenge of the game just knowing it was there. Also when I tried to see as much as possible with this feature I encountered a bug which stopped everything but yourself from moving and eventually stranded me on a level with no way of completing it (you shouldn't cheat, should you... ed).

If I was to make a comparison with Rainbow Islands I am reluctant to say that Parasol Stars is as good. Islands was a game that at first seemed boring and simplistic but after learning the clever use of rainbows it became very challenging and addictive (Hurry up with the CD version NEC Avenue!). Parasol Stars is still great fun but the game play isn't quite so unique. It's closer to Bubble Bobble than islands and that for me is a step back, although I appreciate how popular the first game still is.

If you're a fan of Bubble Bobble + Don Doko Don and can resist using 99 credits if they appear, then go for it and I don't think you'll be disappointed. I'll just wait for the cartoon and soft toys to appear in the meantime (hopefully on grey import - oh goody!)

Graphics - 90% Sound - 85%
Playability - 90% Lastability - 88%
Overall - 87%

Jason Brookes



J.B. Harold Murder Club

PC Engine by Hudson Soft
(CD-ROM)

Supplied by Console Concepts

As with Carmen, this is a detective adventure and features Japanese & English options, but this is where the comparisons end. Murder Club comes in a double CD case, although you only get one CD, plus a little black book detailing the murder, suspects and note pages for you to fill in - if you dare!

Unlike Carmen, there's only one case to solve, but this is one mighty big case. Bill Robbins is found stabbed in the back by a sharp instrument, and you must track down the murderer. But this is no easy task, as there are quite a number of suspects... around 25 in fact.

Before you actually get going, you get the loading intro (which is rather long) and presented like an American TV detective series with a lengthy jazz piece and moving digitised stills and simple animation and introducing the main characters... very neat.

You start at your office at the police station, where you get two windows. The top portion shows digitised pics

of the surrounding area plus any one present, and the bottom fraction displays all text. Pressing a button will put up a command box where you can select your options. This box is where you can select Japanese/English (note it's in Japanese first!) narration on/off (speech), save/load and restart.

When in the cop shop, you can visit different departments like Interrogation room, crime records library, etc... but none of these are any good unless you have a suspect, evidence, witness, etc... so it's time to hit the road and ask a few questions. You will then see a large map with red squares, where you can go. Click on these, and you'll be whisked there, where you can look around or go in - and find someone to talk to. You can ask a string of questions - Name, age, blood type, hobbies, alibi, if they know certain people, and so forth. I have to say, with all these suspects and questions you can ask, you really do need a pen and paper - Columbo would be hard pressed to solve this!

Once you've got some useful clues, you should be able to get some evidence, which could lead to getting a search warrant. With one of these, you can go round pinching stuff!! "Ahh, a nice solid gold candle piece, that'll do nicely".

To tell you the truth, after playing the game a couple of hours, I'm more baffled now than when I started - Murder Club is darn right complicated, and certainly require a



MURDER CLUB: IN JAPANESE - ANOTHER SUSPECT.



lot of brain and digging to solve.

Graphically, the game's ace with everything digitised, although not very detailed, but suits the game well. The control method is ok, a bit of a pain when there are sub-menus, but not bad. Sound, well... really fabbo stuff - jazz isn't my thing, but as it's set in that period and place, suits the game well, and the speech is wonderful with each person having their own personality and accent - most very American. One annoying feature however, is that there's a tune that continuously plays throughout the game which you can't turn off and gets on your wits! If anyone does solve this, please let us know! Murder Club is a must for all budding detectives.

Graphics - 90% Sound - 95%
Playability - 85% V.F.M. - 90%
Overall - 90%

Onn Lee

Jackie Chan

PC Engine by Hudson Soft
Supplied by PC Engine Supplies

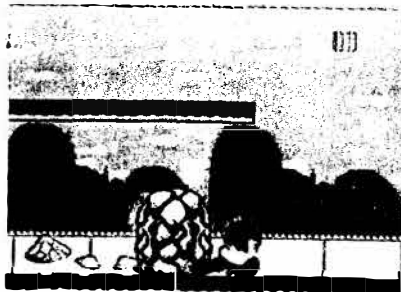
When it comes to high quality original games, Hudson Soft must be ranked near the top of the scale and their latest is no exception. Jackie Chan, as everyone knows is the most famous martial arts star since Bruce Lee, and Hudson have produced an arcade adventure beat'em up with a lot of fun thrown in, in the Chan & Chan/PC Kid theme. When you start, you get the intro - You (as Jackie) are walking with your girlfriend when this evil, nasty magician floats



Jackie Chan meets a nasty leaping Tiger

in on the act and zaps you with his magic. He then whisk up a cloud and kidnaps you love, so you set off to take revenge on the blighter. The first thing you notice when you play the game is the graphics which are really brilliant, especially Chan himself who gives different expressions when he preforms a different move. Chan can walk left/right, jump, drop down fast, duck, punch, kick and leg sweep, plus when you start, five fireballs like in Street Fighter and activated like the R-Type beam. Chan has only one life and a limited energy bar, so is quite a tough game especially if you're being battered by a baddie. As you move forward, small men in black, armed with knives rush for you... time for some action - a timed punch or kick easily takes the suckers out. Aswell as these men, butterflies and other in-

sects appear, they are not much of a threat though. Taking nasties out will leave objects behind, pick these up for extra points. More help is at hand from frogs that appear quite frequently along your travels. When hit, they croak out an icon - either a bowl of soup which increases your energy, or a sphere with an arrow in. There are four types of these, each one giving you a different special move (9 times only). There's a jumping round-house, spinning leg sweep, and powerful Up and high Kicks. If you don't want what the frog spits out, you can leave it, and the frog will gulp it up, letting you hit it again. Just when you think these nasties are easy peasy, you soon hear a growling sound, and then meet face to face with a giant tiger, who suddenly leaps for you, and zaps your energy. To slay the beast, several hits are required where it bursts out in points objects. Other nasties come in the form of bouncing men with long pony-tails that try to whip you with 'em, russian men armed with spears - they sometimes throw them too, and muscle men with large clubs. Level one is huge... and comprises of several stages, going through rocky landscape, waterways, hall of pillars, room of obstacles, platforms and finally the temple where the



Jackie Chan in Bonus Stage - Kick rock to crush the mushrooms

boss is. The Boss is a giant Buddha, where the evil wizard appears and makes it come to life. It's weak point is it's head which is out of reach unless you have the two power ups. The other

method is to jump on Bud's moving hands, where you can then kick his head in! It's only offense is a single flame that heads towards you making destroying the boss rather easy. From stage 2, things get a lot tougher. You have to negotiate alava cavern with flying fire birds, long flaming dragons, bald fire throwing men, jump up rocks to escape the rising lava, drift down a river on a raft, attacked by ninja mutant turtles, hairy snowmen, a highly skilled martial arts girl, and a big boss with a nasty ball on chain! Jackie Chan is a brilliant game, graphics are amazing, not only are the scenery and sprites which scrolls smoothly in parallax in all directions and animate well, but there are some brilliant touches thrown in. eg. Move behind a pillar and you get a shadow, when attacked by falcons in the river of fishes - sometimes the falcons will swipe a fish and fly off, and an ace touch when you fall off in the cloud level - a gi-normous pink foot kicks you back up!! Sound is used effectively too with some ace oriental and funky tunes, and neat sound effects... plus the usual Kung Fu screams, and when you fall in a pit of spikes he screams "Aahhh Sooo" and freak out! The gameplay is top notch and extremely playable, and unlike most beat'em ups, is very varied, each level has something new to contend with. There are also bonus stages by finding hidden bells to gain energy, fireballs and credits. These are awarded by jumping on clouds, kicking flying fish, moving a large rock by other means, etc. All in all, Jackie Chan is a must and should not be missed!

- Graphics - 97%
- Sound - 90%
- Playability - 95%
- Lastability - 95%
- Overall - 95%

WELL
AND

Onn Lee



Spartan X

Gameboy - by Irem
Supplied by Megacore

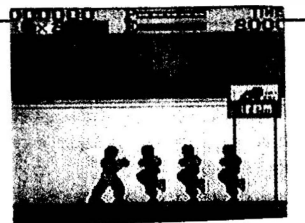
Mention Irem and you instantly say "R-Type" or their following games X-Multiply, R-Type II, Dragon Breed... but Irem have also done some pretty good beat'em ups, namely the classic Kung Fu Master (remember that?) and Vigilante, and Spartan X is similar. You control a martial arts dude in a side-on scrolling beat'em up. You start in the ruins of down town, with thugs coming from both sides... taking them out is quite easy assuming you play in EASY mode... in Hard mode it's a lot tougher. You can punch and kick, duck, jump, leg sweep, and back flip. Should the thugs get you, they'll cling on and drain your energy. Soon, the thugs start jumping out from behind walls and there's some guys with whips that require several hits to lay 'em out. Killing the latter usually leave an icon behind, usually energy units, or heart (fill up energy), bombs (gives you a bomb to use) and medals (bonus points). Reach the end of the stage and you'll meet the Boss. Stage one has a fat sod with a chainsaw and is very difficult to kill - in fact, out of all of the bosses, it's certainly one of the toughest. Later stages, you have rolling barrels to dodge or hit, climb over crates, jump over gaps, jump onto moving platforms, avoid spikes and steam, attacked by dwarves, fight your way on top of a moving train, and leaping ninjas that throw shruikans. The Bosses are real mean too.. with a fat bloke that throw barrels, a guy armed with a grenade launcher, leaping ninjas and dancers, and the last boss who has a devastating flying flick. Graphics are not the best seen but very good, and with parallax scrolling although rather blur... especially good is the train stage. Sound is fairly good



too, with nice beaty tune and ditties, and great sound FX, like a buzzing noise when you get hit by the chainsaw, and good explosive noises when bombs are used. Overall, Spartan X is a great game. In Easy mode, I did complete it in half an hour after getting it (although I did use a couple of continues) but in Hard mode, I didn't even manage to get pass stage 1 !!! The guy with the chainsaw is a mean sod - one hit and it nearly zaps all your energy! Spartan X is definitely worth fgetting, not quite as good as Double Dragon mainly because the stages are rather short, but very neat. Check it out if you have a Gameboy.

- Graphics - 85%
- Sound - 80%
- Playability - 90%
- Lastability - 85%
- Overall - 85%

Onn Lee



Spartan X: Attacked by 3 baddies on stage 1

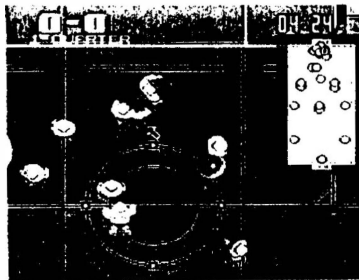
WRESTLEBALL

Megadrive by Namcot
Supplied by Megaware

Wrestleball is an obvious attempt to produce a 'Speedball' type game on the MD. The action is based around a future sport scenario where today's games have gone and are replaced by a mega violent form of entertainment where the players wear suits of



armour and can literally get away with anything in order to win the match! The game starts with a very nice intro (together with some great music) which shows various little Japanese style cartoon antics of the players etc. It was at this point I thought Wrestleball might well be a brilliant game....



Wrestleball - Naff graphics, more like a pool game!

Various play modes can be set up: 1 player WB league, 1 player training, 2 player versus, 1 player battle royal, 2 player battle royal and options. The options consist of Quarter Time, Attack (Near or Direction), Volley Shoot (Auto or Manual). Battle Royal is basically where you (and either the MD or another player) are placed in a small room and must kill all your opponents players by charging into them, punching, kicking etc. This may sound like fun (and it should have been) but the whole thing descends into a mass of players moving about the screen, none of which know what the hell is going on! The proper game involves two teams (again, either You vs MD or You vs Another player) trying to score points by either scoring a conventional goal (ie throwing or kicking the ball between two posts and getting it past a goalkeeper) or scoring a 'touchdown' style point by walking the ball into a certain area. All three buttons are used- one for passing, one for tackling and one for selecting players (ie pressing 'C' gives you control of the player nearest to the ball).

Various teams can be selected, all with different methods of combat and different strengths and weaknesses. For instance, the 'USA Heavy Boxers' are slow but good head to head fighters, the 'Japan Karate Thrashers' are generally good in all areas etc, etc. Graphics are uninspired; all the players look roughly the same (fat little robots!), the pitch has a tacky appearance (bas-relief graphics gone wrong?) and the scrolling is o.k but fairly sluggish and not as smooth as it should have been. The music is at times very well done, at other times very poor. Sound fx are quite good with some nice cheers from the audience but some

dodgy 'speech' type effects also find their way in.

The gameplay is the real problem with Wrestleball - it is VERY seriously flawed! For a start the whole pace of the game is painfully slow to a point of being boring. Secondly, there seems no way of getting a proper 'interactive' game going - it is so confusing that the action just drops into "What is going on? Let's just hit A,B and C and see what happens"!!! You really do end up mindlessly tapping buttons with no idea of what they do. The potential of this game is absolutely enormous but the programmers have really wasted all of it. Anyone who expects this to be a top notch future sports game should think again - this is one of the most boring and pointless games I have played on the MD to date.

To see this type of game done properly, check out Speedball II on the Amiga and then play Wrestleball on the MD- believe me Speedball II absolutely blows Wrestleball out of the water. Let's hope the Bitmap Brothers convert Speedball II to the MD - that would really be something! In the meantime, don't



waste your time and money on this drivel; if you want a sports game, buy John Maddens Football.

- Graphics - 65%
- Sound - 70%
- Playability - 40%
- V.F.M - 45%
- Overall - 52%



Marc Good

Game Gear News

Skweek, the game that was banned by W.H.Smiths because it contained a swear word in is to be converted to the Game Gear by Loricel/Victor. Skweek is a furry creature and must run over titles to turn them into a certain colour while chased by ghosts and other nasties. The game features lots of additional features like Teleports, slippery tiles, smart bombs, one way and crumbling tiles, and so on. Should be available in May. Super Golf will be available for the GG in April, and some of the courses are rather crazy with roads, bridges, and bunkers everywhere. What's a machine without breakout? So, Sega have come up with Woody Pop for the GG, and should be out by the time you read this. The game's more like arkanoid, as hitting certain tiles gives you extra items. Another game that should be available will be Taito's Chase HQ, but one of my favorite games on the Master System - Fantasy Zone, which will make it's way to the GG in May, and quite good it looks too. Micronet will also be converting Junction for the machine.

NINTENDO POWER?!

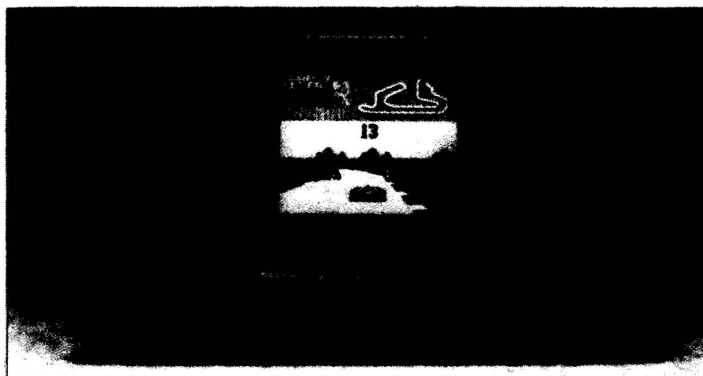
One of the success of Nintendo is that, other companies writing games for their system, namely the NES, can not be converted to other systems because of Nintendo's agreement of exclusivity. However, this may soon change as many third party software developers are trying to make a deal with Nintendo to loosen their grip, so you may soon see conversion of games for computers and other consoles in the not too distant future. As the NES (or Famicom in Japan) is not as popular now as it was in Japan

and the US, it's makes sense that third party producers want to convert games to other machines. So we may see games from bigger and more popular companies namely Konami, Capcom, Enix, DataEast, Irem, Rare, Tecmo, SNK, etc. with games like Ninja Gaiden, Dragons Quest, Megaman, Nemesis, etc.. Although it's unlikely that any Nintendo games will be covered, so you won't see Super Mario Bros., or Donkey Kong!?



Game Gear in Gear

With the price cut of the Atari Lynx down to £130, or £99 without California Games, it's expected that Sega's Game Gear will be officially released in the UK very soon, and at a cut price of around £99 - (why is it that official machines always cost so much compared to their Japanese counterpart?). This is a wise move, as releasing the machine, say in autumn, as expected, will have very still competition from the



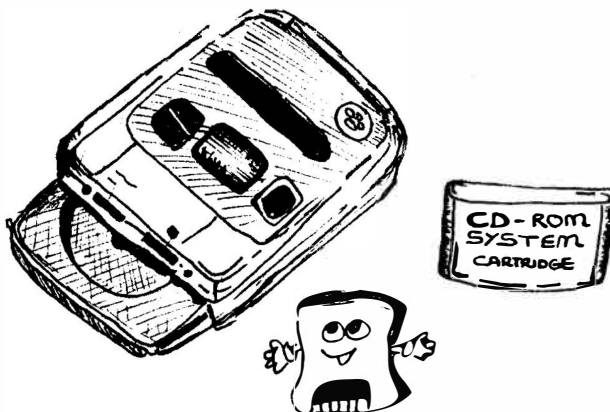
Lynx which is bound to drop in price even more due to the arrival of the newer compact Lynx available in the states. The Game Gear as you know is no match against the Lynx in terms of hardware, but if the software can be sold at the same price as in Japan, it should do exceptionally well, but highly unlikely.

SONY + NINTENDO = CD-ROM STANDARD?

Sony and Nintendo are to join forces to come up with a CD-based audio-visual device for the Super Famicom.. eg. CD-Rom Unit. It is expected that they will try to produced a new standard for this format, and it's to be known as the Sony Nintendo format... very original!?

This is not a shock surprise as CD-Rom seem to be the 'in' thing for consoles, what with the popular CD-Rom available for the Engine and one coming soon for the Megadrive. And the Sony link up? Considering the Super Famicom's Sound chips are supposedly developed by Sony, it's seems a likely partner to choose.

If Sony/Nintendo succeed in producing their device to become an international standard for CD-Rom (which there isn't one as yet), this could lead to more CD-Rom products, as people can stick to one major standard..... why produce videos on Betamax, when 99.9% of videos are VHS?!



Possible Super Famicom CD-Rom Drive with help from Sony

Sega Master System

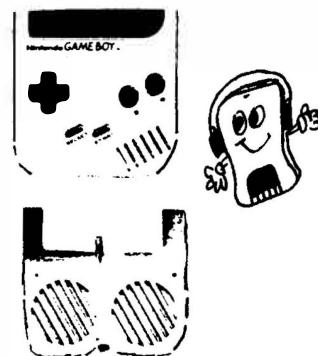
With the release of the new Sega Master System II which I think look awful, the following new games have been released for the age old machine, which isn't as popular in the US as the NES, but might be of interest to all you Master System owners or those with MDs with an adaptor. There's Alex Kidd in Shinobi World, Gain Ground (as the MD version), Battle Outrun (Out-run cross with Chase HQ), Dynamite Dux, Aerial Assault (Ripp of P*47), Galaxy Force, and R.C. Grand Prix, and it also looks like a version of Ghouls 'n' Ghosts will be converted too!!

GG in the White

For all you hip and trendy people out there, Sega are to release 'WHITE' versions of the Game Gear, with green buttons, and a matching TV Tuner to compliment it!! It's very likely that there will be limited numbers of these once they are released... maybe they have seen the new designer Atari Lynx's?!

More Gameboy Gadgets

You've got the Light Boy, Carrying Case, Magnifier... but hot on the heels of all these gadgets for the GB costs the Game Boy Amplifier. This dual speaker unit slots at the bottom of the Gameboy through the Ear socket to give better Stereo Sound. Watch Out for it soon!!

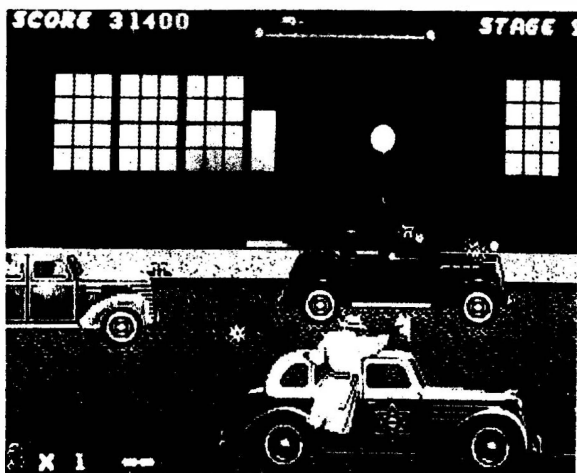


Gameboy Amplifier - use to really drive other people crazy!!

DICK TRACY

Megadrive by Sega
Supplied by Megacorn

Wonders will never cease! Sega USA have actually designed a game of their very own! And, unusually enough for an American game, it's not too bad either.



DICKTRACY : JUST LIKE THE FILM... YOU GO ROUND SHOOTING CARS !?

The game is a strange sort of cross between Shinobi and Cabal, with a few original elements (such as the car scenes.) thrown in for good measure, and while American game designers are pretty good at producing stupid ideas (particularly Atari - whoever had the idea of using digitized graphics in Pit-fighter should either be burnt at the stake or forced to play the game for a couple of hours - I'm not sure which is worse!) this one actually works rather well.

Graphically, this game is great. The sprites are large and very well animated and drawn. (There are some nice touches, such as the baddies who walk around and stick their hands in their pockets, looking rather bored!) The backdrops are also fairly good, but nothing overly exciting.



THE IN-BETWEEN STAGES - STILLS - NO ANIMATION

Gameplay is also rather good, strangely enough for an American game, (Obviously these guys have learnt from Atari's mistakes) and running around shooting the shinola out of hundreds of enemy guys is rather enjoyable. The game is also rather large, six levels of three stages each, with some

BRIEFS

fairly tricky stages later on.

Sound is pretty much as you would expect from an American game. ie. Good Sound effects, piss awful music (for some reason, the name Atari springs to mind again).

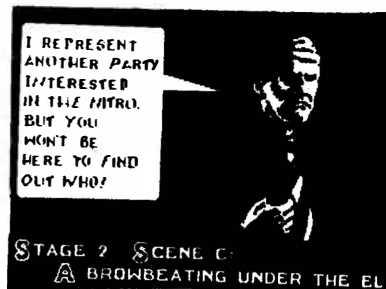
Overall Dick Tracy is a fairly good game, and although it's not exactly bed-wettingly exciting, it's worth checking out.

- Graphics - 90%
 - Sound - 50%
 - Playability - 80%
 - V.F.M. - 85%
 - Overall - 84%
- Dan 'the Atari'... Man

Dangerous Seed

Megadrive by Namco
Supplied by Console Concepts

Vertically scrolling shoot'em ups on the MD are generally of a pretty high standard. It comes as a surprise, therefore, that Namcot have bothered to release this rather poor effort. Almost everything about this release is sub-standard: The graphics are dull, with bland backdrops, horribly jerky parallax, (something the japs are beginning to make a habit of!) small uninteresting sprites and just a general lack of anything interesting (except for the last four levels, which includes some fabalous backdrops - but unfortunately this doesn't make up for the extreme crapness of the first eight levels) The attack patterns of the aliens are also dull and repetitive in the extreme. The bosses, whilst being



very nicely drawn, are also very boring, with very unimaginative attacks. (and some bosses crop up several times - Yawn!) Infact, the only positive aspect of this game is the music - It's fab! (The music to this game sounds particularly good through headphones, as it incor-

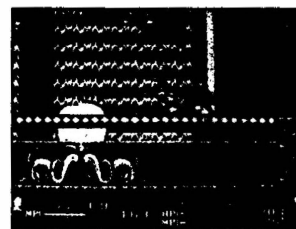
porates some very nice channel switching.) The thing that really shoots this game in the testicles, though, is the difficulty level - pathetically easy isn't the word, and most people should be able to complete the game within four or five attempts. A void Dangerous Seed, the only dangerous aspect of it, is the risk of dying from boredom whilst playing!

- Graphics - 70%
 - Sound - 92%
 - Playability - 65%
 - V.F.M. - 50%
 - Overall - 60%
- Dan... 'the Dangerous'.. Man

Cadash

PC Engine by Taito
Supplied by Console Concepts

Cadash appeared in the arcades over 6 months ago and was one of the first real arcade Role Play games, in that, you went a round killing monsters, negotiate obstacles, pick up money, buy items, get information from other beings and so on. Unfortunately, I have to admit I wasn't a fan of the coin-op, although it was quite popular judging by the amount of people who played it. However, Taito's conversion of the game for the engine is quite a good one, but atleast ofcourse, being an RPG all the text is in Japanese, (strange-



CADASH : 'TAKE TAKE YOU OCTOPUSSY'

ly, the intro story text is in english?!), so it's quite difficult to know what the hell you're suppose to do should you not have played the game before.

Like the coin-op, you can play the game single handed or with a friend, where you can pick from 4 warriors (including a wee lass) - and as always each of them having their own strengths and weaknesses. Once you've picked your hero, and stuck in your japanese name, the king gives you the low down about his kidnapped daughter and how you must rescue her. So off you go.

The game is played side on, where you can move left, right, jump, use your weapon, talk to people, and climb up and down ropes, and so on. Your hero has a Health bar and a Magic Bar, and once you enter the cave, monsters start to go for you. Get hit by them and your health decreases, so use your weapon. Killing the creatures-

will leave bags of gold behind, pick up for later use'. The enemy comes in the form of green blobs that fall from the ceiling, flying bats that are difficult to hit, big fat boars with clubs, skeletons with swords and shields, and spiders that spin webbing on you. To get through the first part, you must take out these nasties, make your way through the caverns, and reach the rope bridge where a nasty blob is - and yep! You've got to kill the sucker, who is rather deadly and require several hundred shots. Magic can be used (if you have any) by holding down the fire button, where you can fire fireballs, lighting, ring of fire, and so on depending on the character you pick, and the level of your magic. On the way, you can also pick up energy and magic power points. But more handy are the Shops and Inns that lets you buy items like increase health and magic power, weapons, armour, and so forth... as long as you have enough shinny objects of course.

Graphics are very similar to the coin-op, only lacking in detail, and are well done, even though animation is not too hot, but that's the same as the coin-op. Sound is also the same with the usual RPG subtle

and eerie tunes.

Overall, I have to say, Cadash is not a bad game, but certainly not a brill one. One of the problems is - that, it's very difficult, gameplay is slow, and to cap it all, all the text is in Japanese so making the game more difficult. So there you have it... if you like the coin-op, then Cadash is worth getting, but I would avoid it.

Graphics - 75% Sound - 80%
 Playability - 75% V.F.M. - 75%
 Overall - 75%

Om Lee

HARD DRIVIN'

Megadrive by Tengen

What's small, comes in a black case and is made by Sega? An Amiga of course! Well, that's what Tengen seem to think as Hard Drivin is an Amiga game emulator to top them all!!

The coin-op with it's fast, smooth 3-D and innovative controls was a great hit and I was expecting the MD version to look really good (ie nice filled vectors, running at a decent speed). So the conversion came as a shock! The game itself is a very simple one - take one of two routes; the race route (get to the finish in time) or the stunt route (get to

the end in time and successfully complete various stunts).

Controls are simple enough - forward to speed up, down to slow down. On the stunt route, you must learn how to make jumps etc by practice. Although the speed is an improvement over the Amiga (about 10% faster), the graphics are EXACTLY the same!!! The mountains in the background still look terrible and the filled vectors are still 'hatch' shaded which looks absolutely horrible.

The control of the car is pretty good (if annoying at times) but the gameplay is far too easy (I got the finish of the speed track on my first go and then lost interest!). Sound is, well, minimalist to say the least! The engine sound is rubbish and the title music must be torturing the MD's sound chip (it certainly sounds as if it's in pain!). I cannot honestly see even fans of the coin-op liking this, it really is a very poor conversion (port over?). Only die hard fans on the arcade game should consider this, but even then check it out first as there are a whole load of great games on the MD at the moment which warrant purchase.

Graphics - 60% Sound - 35%
 Playability - 70% V.F.M. - 45%
 Overall - 55%

Marc Foord

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GAIARES

MEGADRIVE BY RENO
8 MEGTHANKS TO MEGAWARE FOR THE
LOAN OF THE CART!

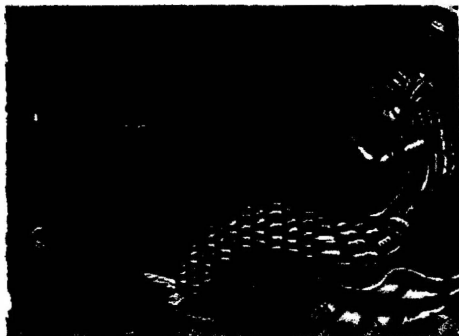
The first shoot 'em up on an 8 meg cart arrives, but does that extra space mean an extra great game?

I think we'll skip the background - no point really as this is a horizontal shoot 'em up pure and simple. All the key elements are here - loads of power ups, stacks of enemy attacks, pounding soundtracks, fast scrolling, big end of level guardians.

The game starts with a nice piece of music and if left an intro (in the usual Japanese cartoon style) plays through. Options are accessed by pressing A,B,C and Start (C+VG will use that as a tip in the next issue I suspect!!!!) and, by the way, if you change the bottom option then exit and come back into the options again, everything's in English!

Options are skill level (normal, very hard), Music test, Sound FX test.

The actual intro to the game itself is stunning - your spaceship whizzes out of a tunnel (all in mega fast parallax) and you enter the first level.



GAIARES: NOW!! A MERMAID BUT UNFORTUNATELY NOT FRIENDLY!

Here the backdrop looks like one of those wibbly Amiga demos and a multi-colour parallax starfield is the order of the day! The ship has three speed settings (the fastest is a good ideal) and a 'multiple' type thingy which is used to collect power ups (steal them from enemy ships) and also to hit attackers. However, you cannot shoot at the same time, so time is of the essence.

The graphics are of absolutely top quality from level one, and they just get better as you go along. Scrolling speeds go hyper from time to time and when I say hyper, I mean MEGA fast!!!

The end of level guardians are superbly drawn, large and move around smoothly without slowing the game down. The variety of gameplay is nice too. The scrolling goes diagonally at times, you have to navigate ice tunnels etc.

The music is good but not excellent, however it does its job (keeping the atmosphere right) well. Sound effects are nothing out of the ordinary - lasers, explosions etc.

One point which might put people off this game is its difficulty - this is one mean shoot 'em up! However, progress can be made after quite a few practice runs, although I must admit I did find Gaiares frustrating fairly early on.

To sum up, Gaiares is a graphically stunning shoot 'em up which hardened fans of the genre will love; there is definitely a long term challenge here. However, the more mortal among us might find this game too hard and frustrating to play to get any long term rewards.

Being one of the latter prevents me from giving this game 90% +, but most shoot 'em up fans will find this an essential purchase.

Graphics - 94% Sound - 85%
Playability - 84% V.F.M - 88%
Overall - 89%

Marc Foord

This is Reno's first game for the MD, and it sure beats the crud out of their crappy engine games! The first thing that strikes you about the game - Graphics, Music, Sound effects, Weapons, Weapon Selections (Weapons are nabbed from your enemies by firing a strange multiple-like device at them.) is really strange - but very good. The graphics, in particular, are fab - The freaky psychedelic backdrop of level three and the brilliant parallax on level five both have to be seen to be believed. Gameplay hasn't been ignored either, and Gaiares is enormously enjoyable to play, with some really interesting sections. (The traps on level three are particularly good.)

Gaiares is one hell of a shoot'em up, not as good as Thunderforce III, but it certainly craps all over Hellfire!

Graphics - 92% Sound - 91%
Playability - 92% V.F.M. - 91%
Overall - 92%

Dan...the Man

GYNOUNG

Megadrive by NCS
SUPPLIED BY MEGAWARE

NCS' second shoot 'em up (Hellfire being their first) is actually written by the people who coded Shiten Myooh (yuk!) and Hellfire itself.

Hellfire was a good game which never quite came close enough to Tforce III to make it brilliant. So can Gynoung make up for the faults of its predecessor?

The game starts with a rather nice intro (parallax starfield which rotates on screen) and a poor title screen then appears. The usual options are available - game level, number of lives, button definition and music test. All three buttons are used. 'A' selects magic, 'B' is normal shot and 'C' fires magic. You can hold three magics at a time and 'A' cycles through with 'C' activating the magic currently shown in the window. The control works well although I think it would have been easier just to cycle through weapons and not have to actually activate them.

Immediately the game fails to impress - the main sprite (a winged person) is ridiculously small on screen and the backgrounds look poorly defined and chunky.

Straight away enemies come whizzing onto the screen and power ups are left behind if you either manage to shoot certain ones or a complete wave. Basic power ups include speed ups, extra lives and actual weapon power ups. Various capsules give larger power ups and scrolls with letters give magic weapons, none of which are particularly impressive.

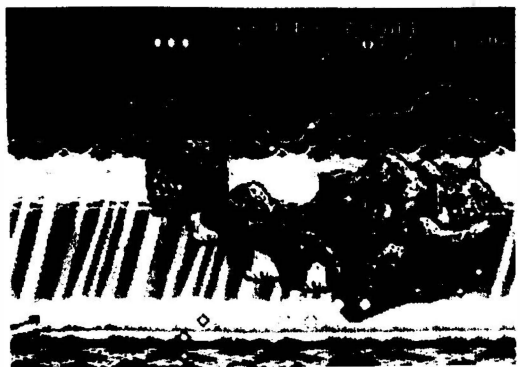
There are two large enemies to defeat on each level (one half way through and one at the end of the level) and these are well drawn, but nothing to touch those of, say, Gaiares. However some fairly nice effects are used (the parallax river, bubbles float up the screen etc).

The music is unfortunately nothing to write home about either. Average



ditties without any nice instrument sounds or tunes to save the day. Sound effects are bog standard blaster noises. Even in the nicer parts of the game (ie the screen see-sawing) there is a glitch on the left hand side of the screen which allows you to see the screen being drawn!!!! The overall effect of the game is one of it being knocked up in a few hours or ported from an ST!

The difficulty level is also set fairly high and the gameplay in general doesn't seem to have the care and



GYNUG: ONE BIG ROCK MUTHA TO DEAL WITH

attention taken over it that we are used to on the MD.

Considering the quality of recent MD shoot 'em ups (Gaiates, Darius II, Elemental Master) I think the stage has come when owners of this machine EXPECT top quality blasts not sub-average rubbish like Gynoug. Avoid this!

Graphics	- 65%	Sound	- 68%
Playability	- 68%	V.F.M.	- 65%
Overall	- 60%		

Marc Foord

AERO BLASTERS

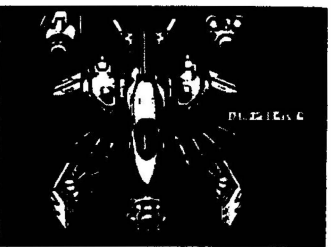
Megadrive by Kaneko
Supplied by Megaware

Kaneko's first game since DJ Boy is yet another attempt to better Thunderforce III in the horizontal shoot 'em up stakes.

The game starts with a basic looking title screen with the choice of 1 player, 2 player or Twin set up. The standard array of options exists (difficulty level, number of lives, number of credits etc).

The 2 player game is the usual player one, then player two idea whereas the twin setup enables two players to take part simultaneously (a very welcome addition since MD games rarely have such an option available).

The action starts with either 1 or 2



AIR BUSTER: WEAPON SYSTEMS

spaceships taking off from a launch pad and from then on it's blast or be blasted! The speed of the player's ship is just about right (not too fast but not slow as to be boring) and all 3 buttons are used. 'A' activates a smart bomb of sorts, 'B' fires and 'C' unleashes another type of smart bomb (although the use 'A' and 'C' seems unclear).

The idea is (of course) to make it to the end of the level and beat the mean (?) end of level guardian to therefore complete the stage.

6 Levels are shown in the booklet (each with a name such as 'Out of Gravity' or 'Death Circus!') and I have not found it too much problem on the easy level to get to level 6 (using continues naturally!). Who knows how many levels there are after level 6, but the game does get VERY

hard at this point, so maybe the end is near.

Graphics are tidy at worst, good at best. However, the thing which makes Aero Blasters interesting are the number of neat ideas that have been thrown in. I particularly liked the tunnels on level 2 which twist and turn at speed (and the power up which stops you from hitting the sides is excellent!). Later on space debris, lack of gravity and some extremely fast 8 way parallax scrolling all make an appearance, which holds interest a little longer than if these touches were missing.

Music is good throughout although sound fx are very cliched as seems to be the par for this type of game.

When it comes down to it though, Aero Blasters is really "just another shoot 'em up" with some nice touches but little else. If you are an avid fan of the genre, check this out, although those of us (like me) who enjoy a shoot 'em up but don't live for them may find Aero Blasters a tad too standard for their liking.

Graphics	- 80%	Sound	- 80%
Playability	- 81%	V.F.M.	- 78%
Overall	- 80%		

Marc Foord

Although many people might disagree, I personally thought that the Air Buster coin-op was pretty good. (Though not brilliant).

Now at last the conversion hits the MD, and the guys at Kaneko have made a damn fine job of it - near perfect, in fact. Everything about the game - Graphics, Sound, Gameplay, Difficulty Level (Bugger!) is near enough identical to the coin-op. Even the two player option

is there!

Air Busters sure is a great game, (Especially on two players) and completing it on one credit proves to be something of a challenge. Even when you have finished it, it's still worthy of a quick bash now and again, and for that reason alone is a worthwhile purchase.

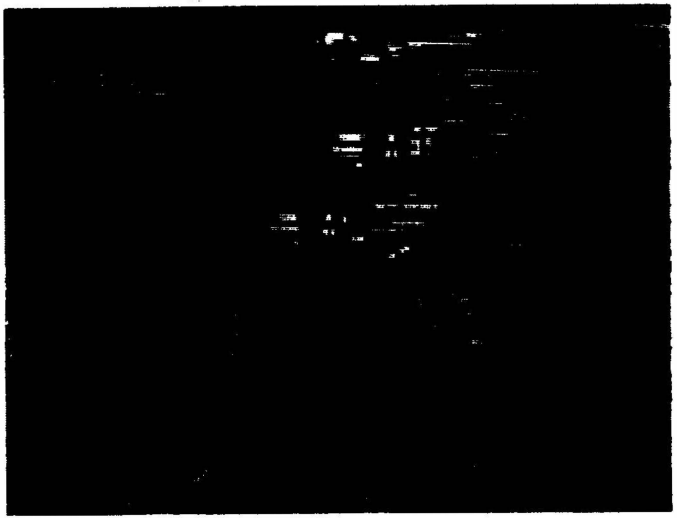
Fans of the coin-op, and of shoot em ups in general, check this one out!

Graphics	- 89%	Sound	- 91%
Playability	- 91%	V.F.M.	- 93%
Overall	- 90%		

Dan... the Man

ENGINE VERSION

The PC Engine version, is as good as the Megadrive version - infact, I would say better because Hudson (who converted it) added a few extras into the



AIR BUSTER: FACING THE FIRST BOSS

game. Basically, it's the same as the coin-op. Graphics, sound, dual player option, same levels, etc... However, there are a few differences. For example, on stage 2, Hudson stuck in a little but deadly scramble-type maze section which really surprised me having played the coin-op. The two player option also have an extra weapon. When both players use the 'Buster' at the same time - you get lighting between the two ships which will zap anything it touches. This is quite useful especially when both players are at opposite sides of the screen, but it's also a disadvantage when you actually want to use the buster!!! Air Busters isn't a brilliant coin-op, but it's still a very good one, and the conversion to the engine is ace, and certainly one of the best horizontal scrolling games for the machine - especially a two player one. I do recommend it well worth checking out!

Graphics	- 85%	Sound	- 85%
Playability	- 85%	V.F.M.	- 85%
Overall	- 85%		

Onn Lee

TAPE OFFER

Jason Brookes has compiled a Music Tape like the one I offered some time ago. The tape contains different tracks from that Tape and features music from :-

- Golden Axe (reworked version of all tunes)
- Wonderboy III
- Side Arms
- Ys I + II
- Carmen Sandiego (brill International Themes)
- Red Alert
- J.B. Harold's Murder Club (Amazing Jazz Tracks)

If you would like a copy, send a blank C90 and £1 to
 J. Brookes
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 Kay Lane, Lymm
 Cheshire
 WA13 0TN

Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego?

PC Engine by Pack-in-Video (CD-ROM)
 Supplied by Megaware

I have to say I was a great fan of the original game when it first appeared on the C64 some years ago - it was simple to play, required a bit of thought, and catching the crook was very enjoyable! And when it then was converted to the Amiga - it was

firm a name. Information is gained by asking one to three people in each location. For example, you might get info that a suspicious character has a tattoo and interested in seeing Big Ben. From this, you know about the tattoo which can help in getting you a warrant (by entering in the police computer), and Big Ben means London, so that's where you should go next. Clues will lead to other places, until

you get a warrant and destination of the criminal leading to the arrest. Fairly easy if you know about the world (although some of the places I've never heard before!).. possibly educational too - oh yeah, you have to catch the crim in a set time too!

What makes Pack's version very less playable is the extremely slow disc access speed. When you move from location to location, it takes several seconds to load in, and you also have to wait for the animation bits and tunes, etc. If Hudson & NEC can produce fast loaders, why can't everyone else? Graphics too are rather poor, very basic and chunky, and the animation extremely jerky... Yuuukk!! Sound wise, strangely there's no speech, but there are some great tunes especially the title one. Unfortunately, the tunes of the country you're in don't play while you're actually playing the game.

Overall, Carmen's gameplay remains intact, and



CARMEN: YOU'RE AT ISTANBUL, TIME TO GET SOME CLUES AND TRACK DOWN THE CROOK.

even better.

But now, the BrOrderbund game makes it to the engine thanks to Pack-in-video - not one of my fav. engine companies! As the game is on CD-Rom, you'd expect bigger & better things.. but it's not to be.

If you haven't played the game before - here's the plot. You start out as a Rookie detective, and you must catch a number of crims to get promoted. To do this, you are given some info of the crime and suspect, and by using icons and windows, you must track down the person, and get a warrant to arrest him/her by getting enough information to con-

if you can put up with all these irritations, it's well worth checking out. But if you have an Amiga etc.. I would avoid the engine version and get the computer version instead... it should be a lot cheaper too!

- Graphics - 65%
- Sound - 80%
- Playability - 85%
- V.F.M. - 70%
- Overall - 75%

Onn Lee

Big Run

Super Famicom by Jaleco
 Supplied by Megacom

Big Run first appeared in the arcades some time ago, and was quite good as not only did it use 3 screens for good effect, but it played well too.

So, with Jaleco converting their game to the S.F., surely it should be great, but wrong again! It seems the S.F. is copying the Megadrive and the Neo Geo - first out with some brilliant games, and then going down hill... hopefully it will spring back like the MD.

The trouble with Big Run is that, it's very jerky, handles badly, hardly any competitors, bad sprite collision, not very detailed graphics, rather boring... infact, the only good thing about the game is the sound.

The game is like Hudson's Victory Run, as you race in the Paris - Dakar Rally, where you must get from one check point to another within a set time limit through some hazardous scenery.

These includes, sandy flat plains, trees; rocks; pillars in the road, sand storms, steep hills, puddles, night driving, and so on.

When you start the game, you have to pick a sponsor who will give you a certain amount of money to spend on a navigator, mechanic, support team and spare parts. These parts are necessary as during the race, you will damage parts and these must be repaired to continue. Unfortunately, repairing while in the race loses time.

Overall, I found Big Run very boring, after a few goes, I just didn't want to stick it on again. It just doesn't have that addictive quality and playability as other games. Compared to Hudson's ancient Victory Run, I prefer Victory any day, it's still one game I haven't managed to beat, and Big Run I got to one off the last course on my third go! Avoid this unless you can't live without a driving game.

- Graphics - 65%
- Sound - 80%
- Playability - 65%
- V.F.M. - 65%
- Overall - 70%

Onn Lee

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Here we are again - more Mega Tips & Cheats. If you find any others, please send them in to the usual address. Ermm...sorry about Valkyrie tips in last issue!!

Champion Wrestling - Engine

On the title screen, Left, I, Right, II, Select for the Sound Test.

The Super Pile Driver. To do this, do the pile driver as per usual but keep Select depressed when you want to do it. Timing is essential. You should practice on the 2 player mode first.

On Round 9, use the chair to bash your opponent in. Off to Round 10 where you go up against the mystery character.

Step outside the ring. Press any direction and rapidly press Run and Select alternatively. You should now be able to fight full power without having to thrash about on the direction keys. This may not always work but it's better than nothing.

Marchen Maze - Engine

On the title screen Hold Up and then press Run, to start with 10 lives.

Over Ride - Engine

On the Data East Logo, press Reset 10 times, then if you want the Sound Test, hold Select, then press Run.

If you want stage Select, press

UP + Select + Run, for stage 2.

Right + Select + Run for stage 3

Down + Select + Run for stage 4

Left + Select + Run for stage 5

Bomber Man - Engine

Enter the password RUHNGSEY
You will start off on stage 5-4 but you will have powerful bombs.

Take the multi-tap off, and just plug in one joystick and Select Battle.

To Take on the various Boss Characters, enter the following passwords:

RAWHHGPN - for stage 1

UBCZTPVL - for stage 2

UWKKOVSL - for stage 3

MKZNMNVU - for stage 4

MXECVNTV - for stage 5

MBHAILVL - for stage 6



Violent Soldier - Engine

On the title screen press Select for the Sound Test.

Thunderblade - Engine

On the title screen, press Run once. Then hold 'I' and Select and press Down-Left for stage select

Outrun - Engine

On start, keep to High gear, change to low then back up to high again, for instant accelerate. It can also be done when you crash.

Darius II - Megadrive

On the title screen, press A, B, A, C, B, C, C, B, C, A, B, A. On the screen the word 'No-Hit' should appear meaning you are invincible.

On the title screen, press C button 12 times. If you hear a sound, you've succeeded to get into a sort of special mode.

For infinite continues, on the title screen press B, B, B, C, A, A, A, B, B, C, C, C. The words FREE PLAY should appear on the title screen.

On the title screen, press A, B, C, A, B, C, A, B, C, A, B, C. This is for PLAY DATA.

Dangerous Seed - Megadrive

After the Demo, on the title screen, press Up, Down, Left, Left, Right, Right, Up, Down for a hard game. The main difference is that the enemy shots have enlarged.

Magic Hat - Megadrive

To clear the stage without having to confront the boss, first, by using a power drink, do a big jump to the spot where you break the stone statues to reveal a medicine bottle. get it and jump down and move quickly to the left to avoid the stage 2 boss and then you're safe.

Mega Panel - Megadrive

To make the character at the right hand side of the screen shut-up, press the C button.

Shadow Dancer - Megadrive

On the bonus stage, use autofire or rapidly press buttons to fire shurikens, or just move to the left straight away and fire to guarantee killing all ninjas and gain 3 extra lives.

If you complete the bonus stage without killing any ninjas, you get a free life.

Easy tip - hold buttons A, B + C and press start for stage select mode.

Rainbow Islands - Megadrive

On the title screen, press Up, B, Down, Left, C, A, A to start the game with the item 'Shoes'.

Same again, enter Up, B, Down, Left, C, A, A, B, C to start off with the items Shoes, Red Pot and Yellow Pot.

Same again, enter Up, B, Down, Left, C, A, A, B to start off with a Red Pot, and Shoes.

Gradius III - Super Famicom

Last issue I mentioned the Konami cheat, apparently it works... but use the top buttons (Left/Right) and not the pad.

To get Arcade mode, go to the Option screen and hit button A as fast as possible (16 times per second).

For tons of ships, on title screen, hold a direction (left or right) and press button A three times, and start game.

Another way to get near full power from the start is to go to the Edit mode and pick whatever you want put on the last column, select Speed Down. When you start to play the game, collect the pods, but do not activate any weapons until it reaches Speed Down and select it, and you'll get near full power.

If you can't decide what weapons to take, go to the edit mode, and press X, Y, X, Y, X, Y, and the computer will choose a set a weapons!!

Aero Blasters - Engine (Thanx to Richard Gibbs)

On the title screen, press Left, Select, Left, Select, Left Select to enter credits mode (up to 9 credits is possible).

To then enter Sound Test mode, press Select again.

To start on any stage press 'I' then Select the following number of times:

Stage 2 = 10 times

Stage 3 = 11 times

Stage 4 = 12 times

Stage 5 = 13 times

Stage 6 = 14 times or more

Then hold Right, Select, 'I', and Run.

Also, to enter easy mode or hard mode, I found that it's best to remove joystick on title screen. Then replace it, but jiggle it about. If the Aero Blasters logo turns blue the game is then in easy mode, if yellow it's in hard mode.

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PC Engine + Lynx games to swap. Gunhed, Image Fight, Side Arms. Wanted Don Doko Don, PC Kid, Vigilante. Others considered. Swap my Electrocop for Gates of Zendocon or Blue Lighting. Tel: 0253 43561.

COMPO TIME

Ok.... we haven't had a compo for some time, so it seems a good enough time as any to give you a freebie... although my pocket doesn't think so!

To stand a chance of winning a game for your machine (only for the Gameboy, Gamegear, Engine or Megadrive) just answer the following easy questions, and send the answers to the usual address. The Lucky sod will be the first correct entry out of the hat.

Here are the questions, all answers are names of famous characters:

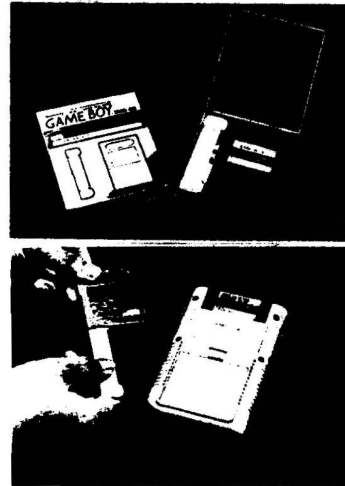
1. The most famous Italian carpenter in the world?
2. The most famous american rodent in the world?
3. Hudson's prehistoric hero who going to make a comeback?
4. Irem's famous Space Ship that's opposing Bydo?
5. Sega's ninja hero, whose rather Super on the Megadrive?
6. Taito's double act... they played with bubbles, rainbows, and parasols?
7. Namco's most famous yellow muncher, who has appeared an just about every console?
8. Sega's next hero star.. the hedgehog... or will he?!

And that's it !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

GAME BOY

Well, computers and other electronic equipment get dirty sometimes, so Nintendo have come up with the Game Boy Cleaner set. This comes in the usual Gameboy boy, and contains two items. Firstly, a cartridge that slots in as normal that cleans the edge connectors of the cartridge slot, and a cleaning strip to clean the connectors, etc. of Gameboy cartridges. An essential piece of gear for all Gameboy owners. No doubt we'll see it over here soon. The cost is just 800 yen in japan.

InfoGenius have also release 4 serious titles for the Gameboy. These includes French/English Traslator, Personal Organizer, Travel Guide, and Spell Checker. What else will they think of next?!



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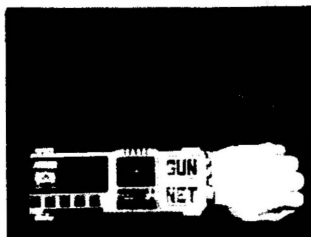
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Office Hours : Mon-Thurs (11 till 7) and Fri-Sun (11 till 5).

Techno Cop

Megadrive (4 Meg)

For those who don't know, Techno Cop is a translation of a computer game released some time ago. The game starts in your VMAX Car, object being to drive along the road pushing or shooting any other road users off the tarmac without crashing into objects on the wayside. If this happens, your Vmax is damaged (displayed by bar at the bottom of the screen).

The action is not full screen though. About half of the screen is taken up by the dash board displaying your gears, speed, etc. And also time allowed to reach the destination.



TECHNO
Cop...
RATHER
BIG SCREEN!

After travelling along the road for a while, information is given about a crime that has just occurred (real Cagney + Lacey stuff!) and a digitised picture appears in the corner of the dashboard. Should you capture or eliminate the criminal!? Once told, the car pulls over and you jump out.

Action changes to a platform, shoot the buggers affair. The dashboard becomes an arm, with communicator, radar and weapon select. Cop now run along following his indicator to find the criminal. Thugs walk about trying to bash your brains out in a rather bloody way. They can either be gunned down or caught with your tonari snare gun. The offender mentioned in the car must be found and "Busted".

Once done, it is back to the Vmax. This is what the game consists of and keeps repeating with different baddies until the D.O.A. King Pin is caught/blown to bits. Your car is sometimes upgraded with machine gun or something like hydraulic wheel rams.

To be honest, this isn't much better than the Amiga version. The graphics are crisper, as are the samples. It would have been nice to add some tunes to the action but as it is, there is only a sampled title track with speech (two words!) and a similar short looped tune on your death.

The game may sound violent and comes with a "not suggested for children under 12" message on the back - that's the American's for you, but this is because scantily clad

women sit in chairs in the background and when you shoot the thugs, they explode in a pile of blood accompanied by a sampled "AAAARRGH" and their bodies lie twitching on the floor. YUM!!

Coupled with the fact that the graphics are only adequate and the gameplay is repetitive, this game is only Okay. It could have been a lot better. "I Play to Win".

Graphics - 75% Sound - 75%
Playability - 77% V.F.M. - 75%
Overall - 75%

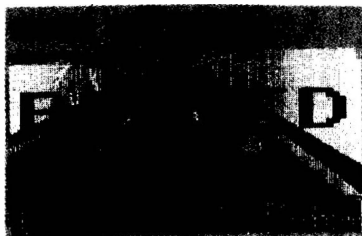
James Dobson

Road Blasters

Atari Lynx by Atari Corp.

Howdy! Welcome to another conversion of one of Atari's own coin-ops. What has this colour marvel come up with now eh?! A quite accurate version of Road Blasters actually.

The idea is to drive your car through lots (and I mean lots!) of levels to reach your goal. To do this you must shoot other vehicles off the road with your on board machine gun within a time limit. Sounds easy huh? The problem is that, you have a limited fuel supply - half way through each track is a zebra crossing (I suppose you have to run it down? ...ed.) which gives fuel when you pass over it. Globes of fuel are also dotted about, to be collected on



the way.

The courses get harder as you go on, but to help, a jet flies over head and drops a useful Extra such as Nitro or cruise missile (Awesome!).

Oil spills and reversing traffic are only some of the hazards that await your trendy decked out red sports car. The sprites are very well coloured and detailed throughout, with a parallax horizon thrown in for good luck. The achievement of speed is well impressive, especially when Nitro is kicked in.

There are no tunes while on the road, but beefy sound FX such as explosions and gunfire are present. This is all complemented by some brilliant speech and there is a lot of it in Road Blasters eg. "Collect fuel for Bonus Points" and it is very clear most of the time.

If you're after a fast racing game check it out, with the bonus of blasting

Graphics - 85% Sound - 90%
Playability - 86% V.F.M. - 82%
Overall - 87%

James Dobson

Skate or Die:

Bad 'n Rad

Gameboy by Konami
Thanx to Joe for the Loan

Strange how I only seem to review Konami games for the Gameboy - could it be they are the only decent company producing games for the mono unit? Well, Bad 'n Rad is another Konami corker, and a well difficult one too... certainly the hardest I've played.

Bad 'n Rad is a varied skate board game based on EA's Skate or Die, and comprises of 7 levels - the first 4 you can start from. Level 1 (and 3, 6, & 7) is played side on as you skate to the right... ie. scrolls horizontally. Moving your pad left and right controls your speed, while button A makes you jump and button B to duck/crouch. As you speed forward, you have to jump up steps and rolling barrels, shoot down a steep drop and jump the large gaps, duck under the spikes, jump the running/leaping dogs, and deck the knife throwing punks by jumping on top of them. As you have a limited amount of energy, bumping into things, hitting spikes, etc. will reduce this, and falling down gaps means a loss of live - you start with only 3. Should you die during a level - it's right back to the beginning tool

However, ice cream and pizza can be picked up to boost energy and if they flash, it will fully restore your life line. Cans can also be picked up for points.

Then it's into a building where there's more to dodge including bouncing balls, and finally meet the boss - a juggling clown on a skateboard, who throws the balls at you. Should the balls hit you - down goes your energy, but you can deflect them by jumping and hitting them with your board, thus hitting the clown until he dies and then it's onto the next stage.

Stage 2 (and 4) is viewed angled top down as you skate down screen and is much more difficult as not only do you control speed with the pad, but move left and right. Here, you are at the coast, and you must again jump over obstacles and avoid rolling barrels, plus a nasty bloke with a fishing line that hooks you!! You can also skate down a level on to the beach, but you'll have to watch the tide that comes in and out... really neat!

Stage 3 down the sewers with running rats, disappearing walkways,

gushing water, harpoon dudes,and so on.

Graphically, Bad 'n Rad is ace and up to the usual Konami standards with well cool detail shading and animation. and everything runs very smoothy (as a Gameboy can). Sound is mega ace too, and I ahve to say, the best on the machine with some excellent funky tunes. And playability wise, it's....well radical!! The main this is, it's fast non-stop action all the way, well, you can't really stop still on a skate board, especially as you have a nasty clock ticking away. I must also say, it's radically difficult! Usually, I would expect to complete level one within a few goes (including table top console games) but this took me quite a number of goes to do it, and I haven't managed to complete any of the other levels yet!!! Overall, Bad 'n Rad is just that - Bad and 'Rad, and should not be missed... as the title suggests - Skate or Die!!

Graphics - 90% Sound - 95%
 Playability - 95% V.F.M. - 90%
 Overall - 93%

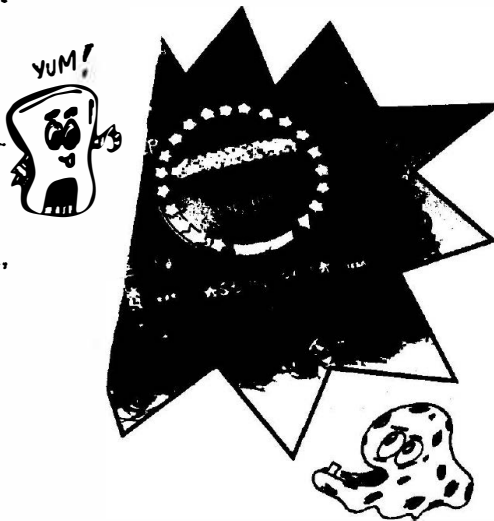
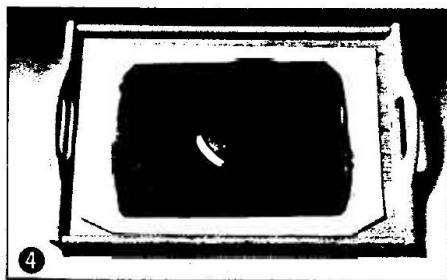
Onn Lee

MISC
Easter Time!

Ok... as it's Easter time, in the last issue of japanese magazine Beep! Megadrive, there was a neat bit on how to make a Chocolate Megadrive, and to the right you can see how it's done! Yep! The usual technique - get a bar of chocs, cut it up to little bits, and melt them in a bowl in saucepan of hot water. Next, pour it in a Megadrive mould, and let to cool, and hey presto - a choc megadrive. Ofcourse, a bit of detco improves things!

Now....., getting an official megadrive mould is going to be hard, but I don't see why you just can't use the top cover of your megadrive.... and when it's set just touch it up a bit, and it should look real cool..... I bet even John of 'Blue Peter' could handle it!

Now... where can I get a Mega-drive?!... Ahhh! "Hey, Dan.... can I borrow your megadrive for a couple of hours? or you Marc?!"



NEXT MONTH:

This issue was to contain a few other things, but as my Atari ST bugged up, containing some files that I had already typed in and not retrieveable, namely the Megadrive software companies profile, that wasn't included in this issue. Maybe, it will be included in some future issue. Also, the Super Mario World Tips, again, I didn't have room or time to stick in. Hopefully for the next issue. New games for next issue: Hopefully, Darius Twin for the Super Famicom, new PC Engine tennis game from Human - will it be better than World Court?, Shining and the Darkness from Sega for the MD - that Dungeon Master like RPG - will it be playable in japanese?, MD Verytex - vertical shoot'em up to beat'em all?, Engine DownLoad 2 & MotoRoader 2 - Better sequels? Ys III - even better? More info on the PC Drive :Tera, plus the usual mega news, tips & cheats, info., and more.... stay tuned!!

With the official release of the megadrive in eurooe and involvement of other companies producing games for other machines apart from japan, we sent our spies to see what other software are in the pipeline from outside the land of the rising sun. Most, have seen the serious side of consoles.

Top secret plans are afoot of a game emerging from the White House in the US of A. It is believed George Bush is getting on the act and writing a game - believed to be called 'Where in the World is Saddam Hussein'. However, the CIA denies all.

Back home, a football manager game is nearing completion from Kevin 'I've got my ugly bearded face on the cover' Toms, called 'Kenny Daghish's Football Manager '91'. Here, you have to get to the top of the league in your few matches, and then surprise everyone that you'll resign. The more cunning the surprise the better your score will be!

To get more money, the conservative party are to release a program on CD-Rom called '10 billion alternatives to the Poll Tax that's very similar, but nothing connected at all with the Poll Tax... honest'.

As the Neo Geo's software is so expensive, SNK UK were to release a cartridge containing names and addresses of all owners of the machine to help users find friends to swap cartridges, hints, etc.... unfortunately, they had to scrap this as there wasn't a small enough size chip to store it on.

From Aussie Land, there's 'Teach yourself to sing' from Kylie Minogue on CD-Rom and comes with free ear plugs, 'Fine Art of Wine Tasteing' from George Best, from the AA - '20 Million idea to occupy your time on the M25', and there's a controversial porno game featuring digitised nudes for the Gameboy from Playboy - however, it may never see the light of day, as Mary Whitehouse have expressed thatthat graphics are too realistic!!

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