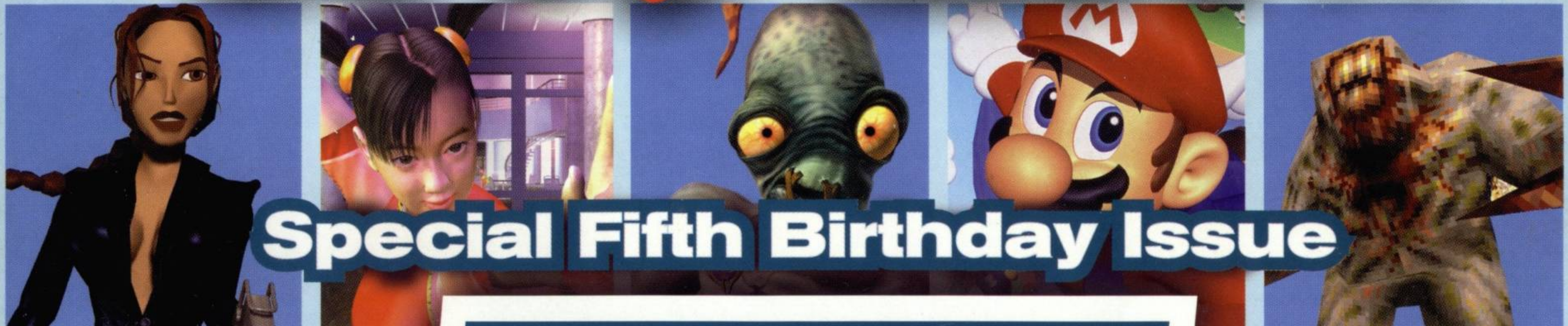


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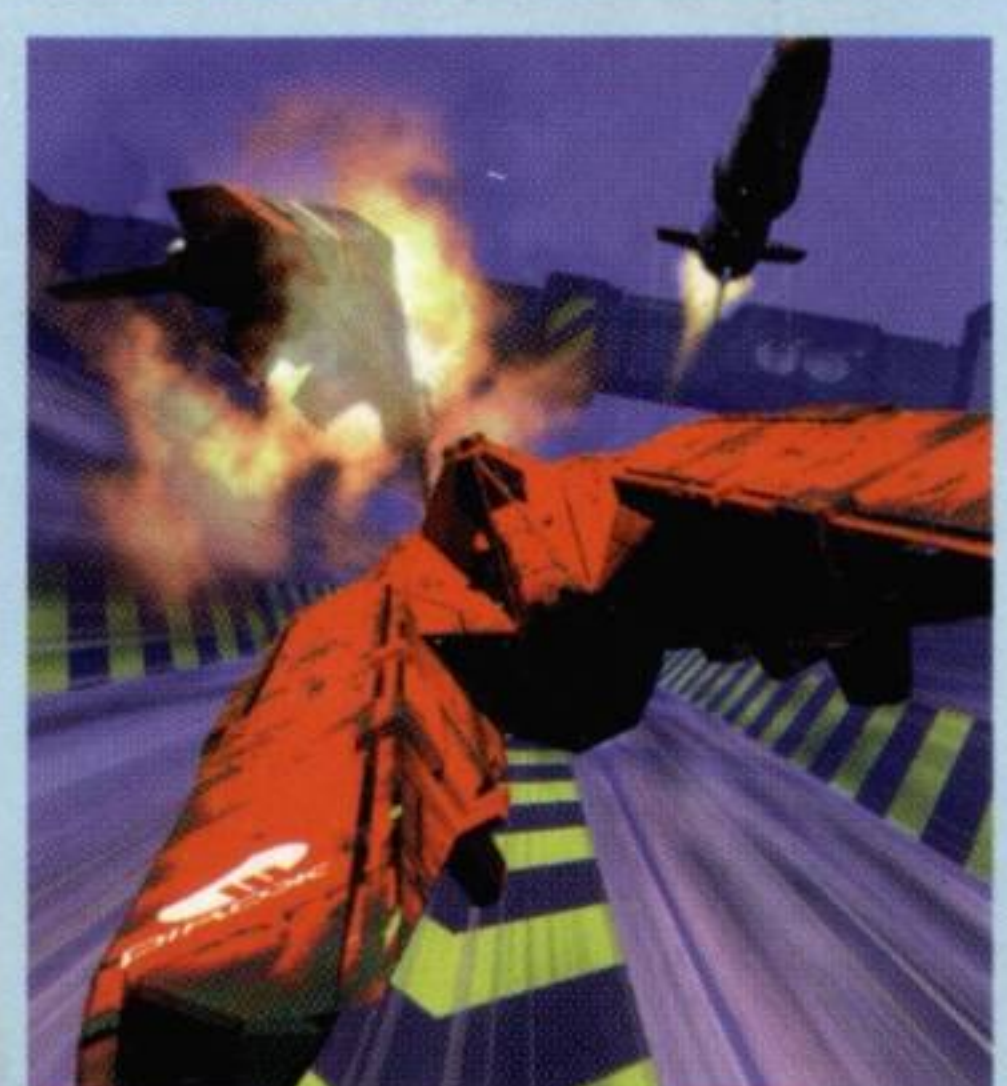
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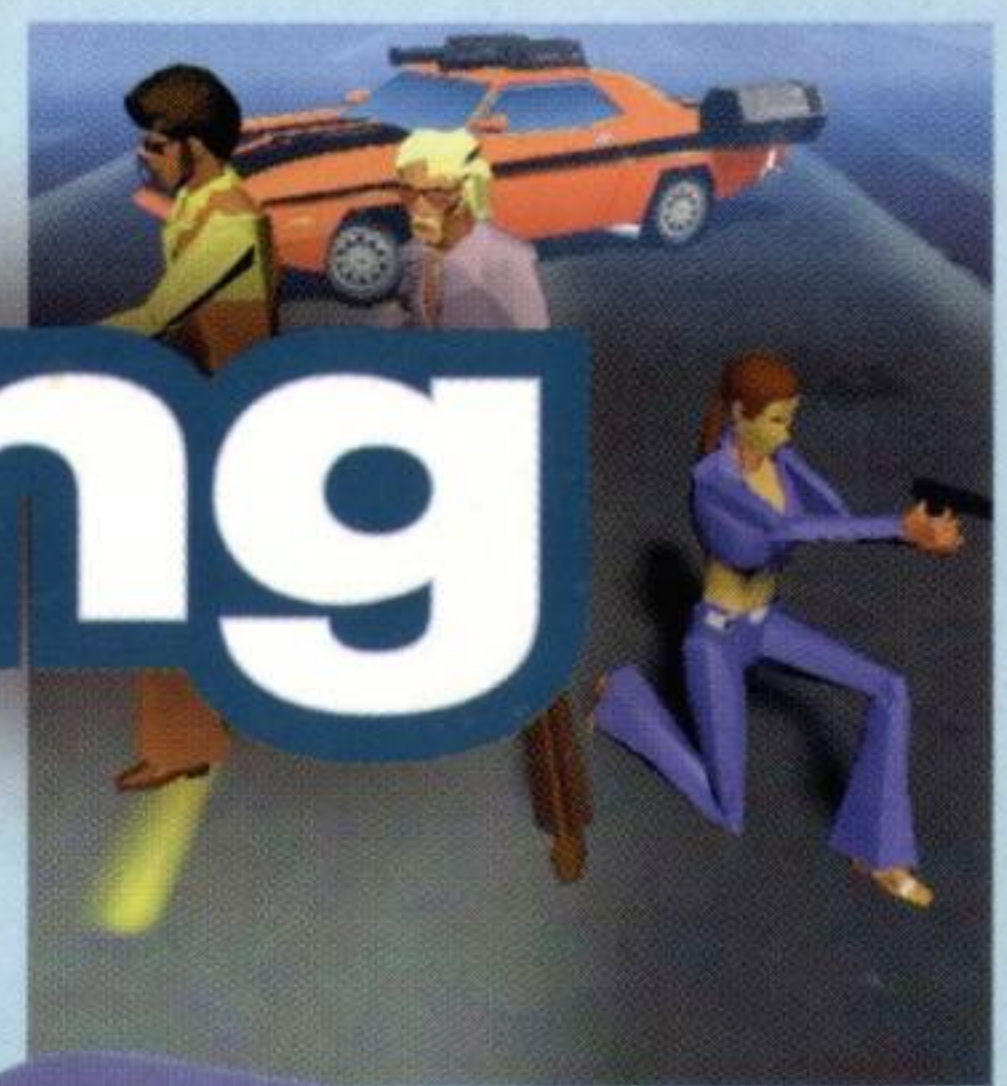
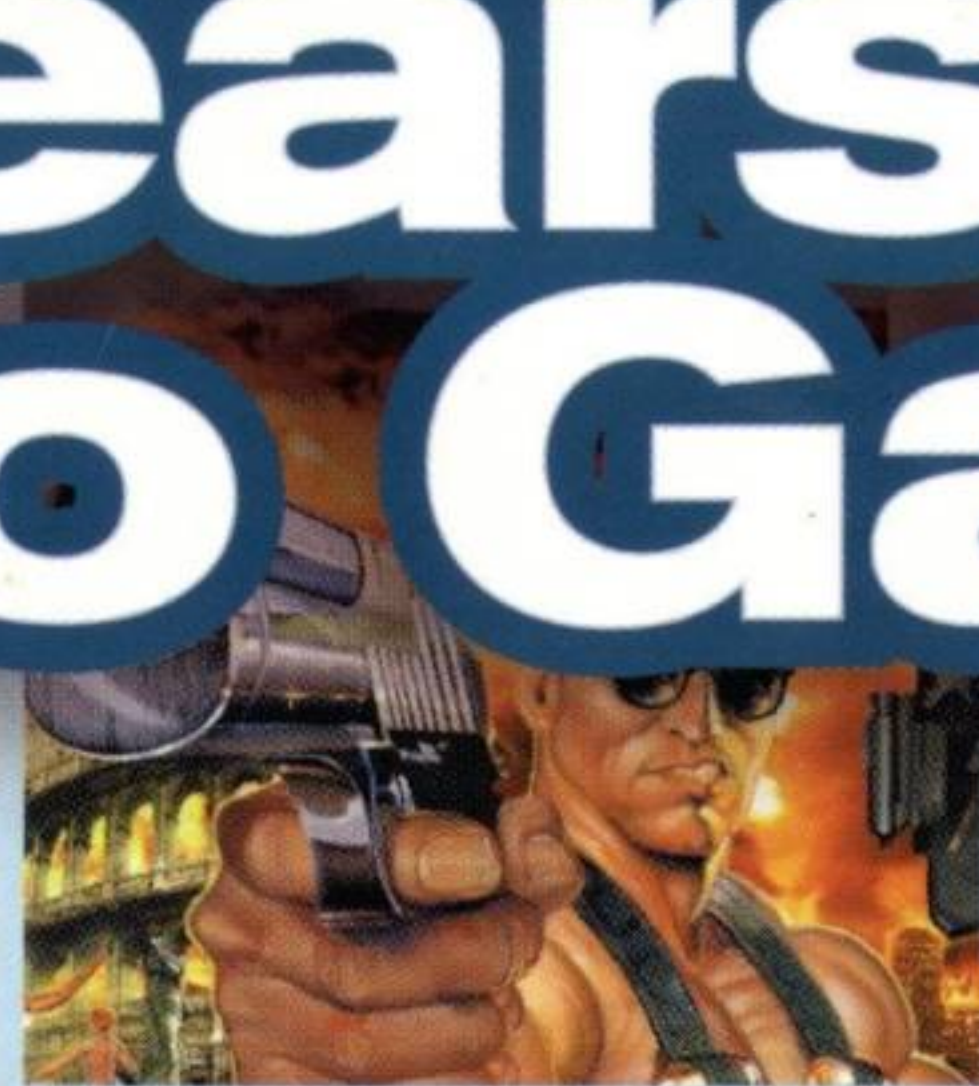
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# **5**



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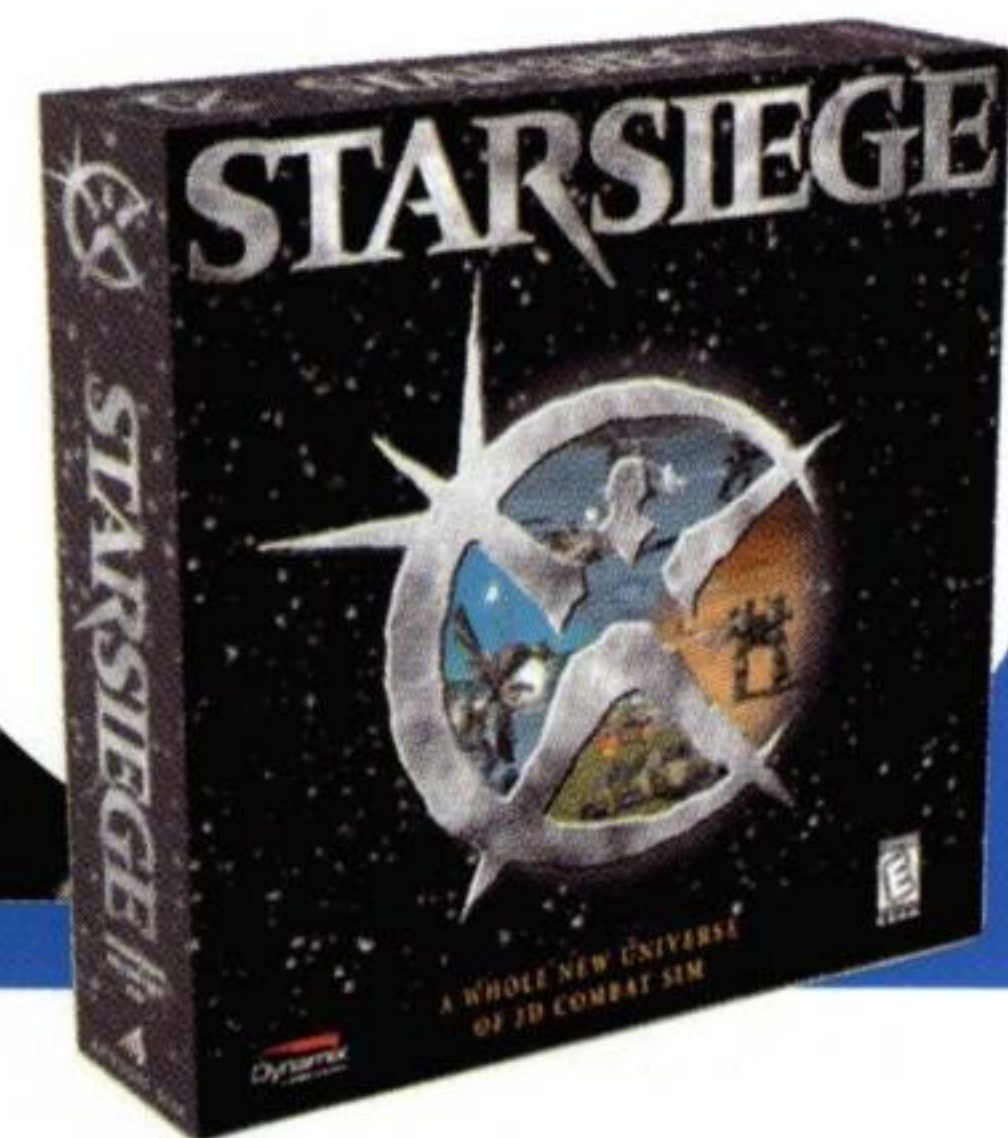
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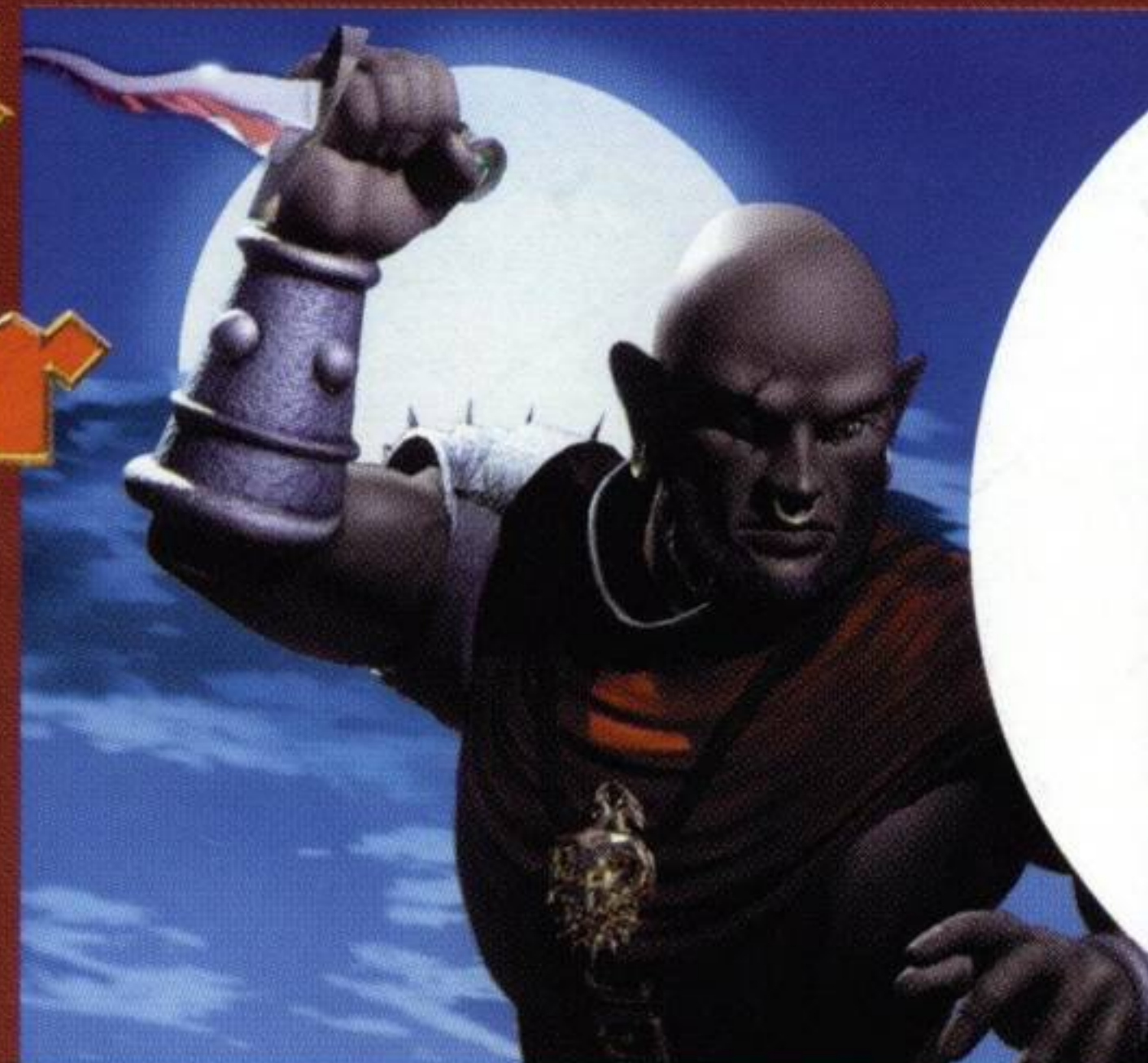
*The Earth is  
My Mother*



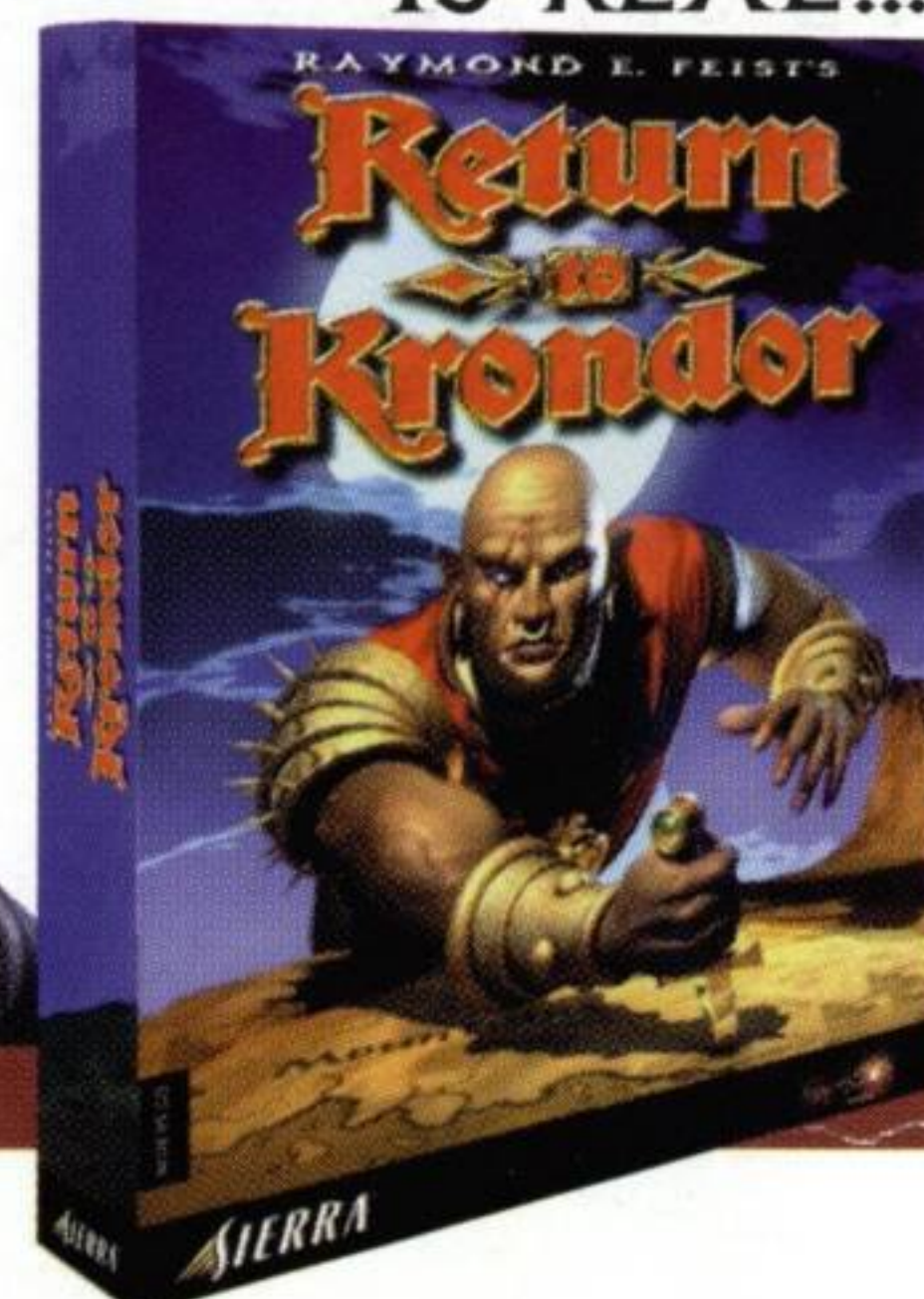
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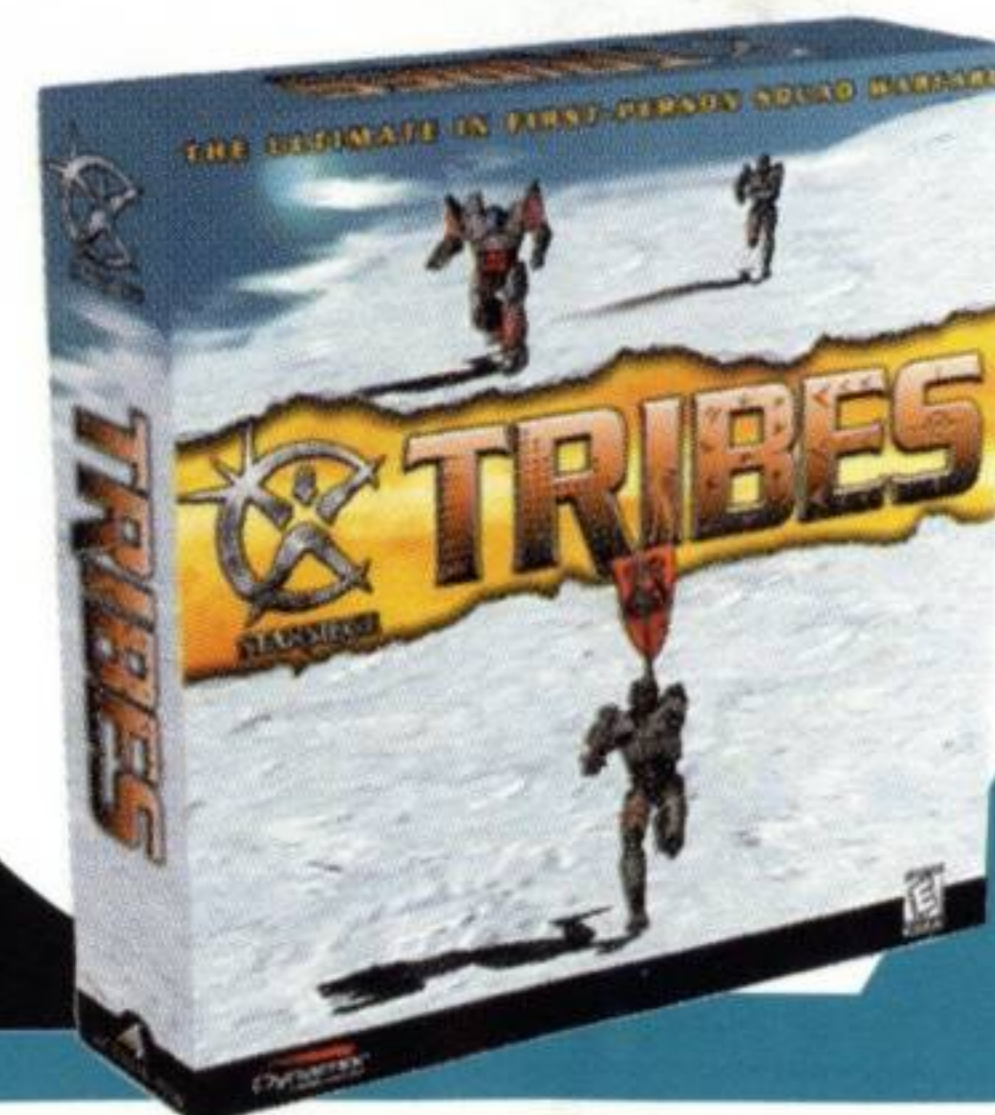
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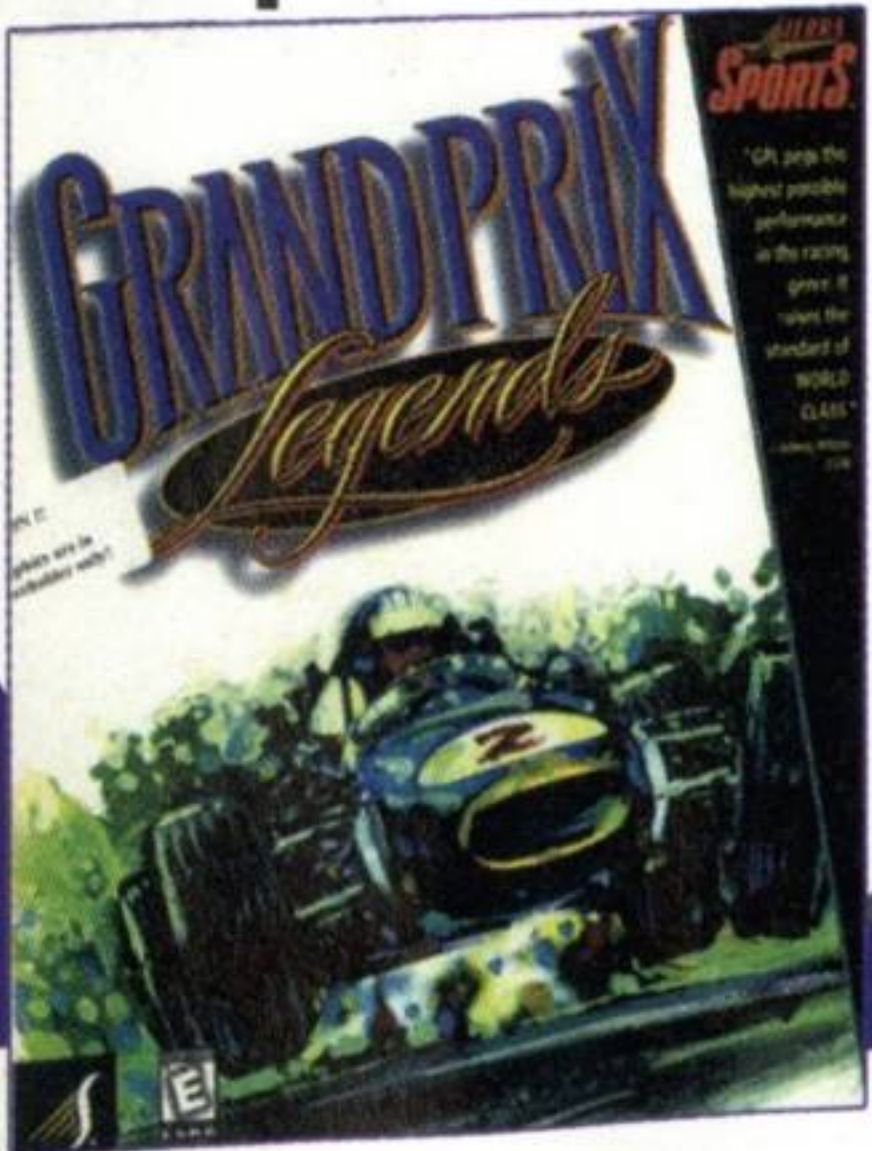


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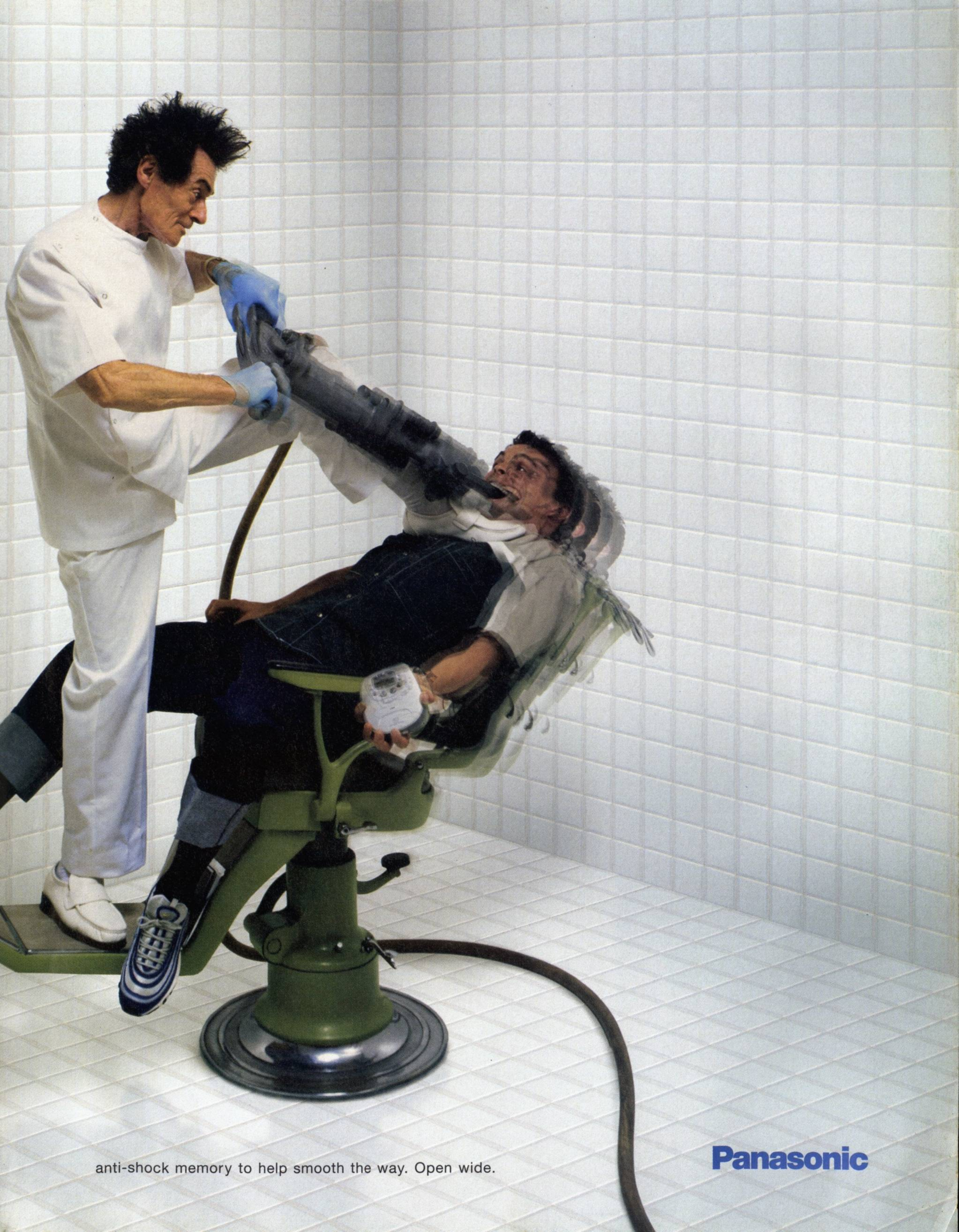
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## EDITORIAL

Five years ago, who could have imagined just how far gaming would come by 1998. Not so much gameplay ideas, but just raw visual power. Not only has gaming grown, but so has



Hyper. We took a look back at the issues from yesteryear, and we're really quite proud of how the magazine has developed.

There have been so many systems over the past five years that it is scary. Sega's Megadrive, Mega-CD, 32X, and the Saturn... Nintendo's NES, SNES, and the Nintendo 64... Sony's powerful entry into the gaming scene with the PlayStation... and then there's the one off flops like the Jaguar and the 3DO. PC gamers who have kept current with the latest hardware have also upgraded at least three times over the past five years... much to their bank account's dismay.

We've seen online gaming become the new direction for PC gaming. We almost saw console gaming go online too, with the Saturn Netlink (which never made it out here), and will probably see it next year with the Dreamcast. Speaking of which, it's very close to the Japanese launch of the Dreamcast now, which we'll start doing some major reports on once we get our own machine in November.

Seeing all these things happen makes me thankful that my chosen hobby is an ever changing and dynamic one. It's hard to get bored of playing video games when something new and amazing is coming out every month.

I'd like to thank the contributors of Hyper for their devotion to getting the job done, and ensuring I can sleep at least a few nights a week! Also many thanks to the various companies in the video games industry who have helped us keep you all in the know about what's going on in Australian video gaming.

Finally, I'd like to thank you all for supporting us, whether over the past five years, or even just over the past couple of months. Your letters, support, and enthusiasm mean a lot to us.

Here's hoping the next five years are just as good... if not better!

**DAN**

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Win all this STUFF! pg 16

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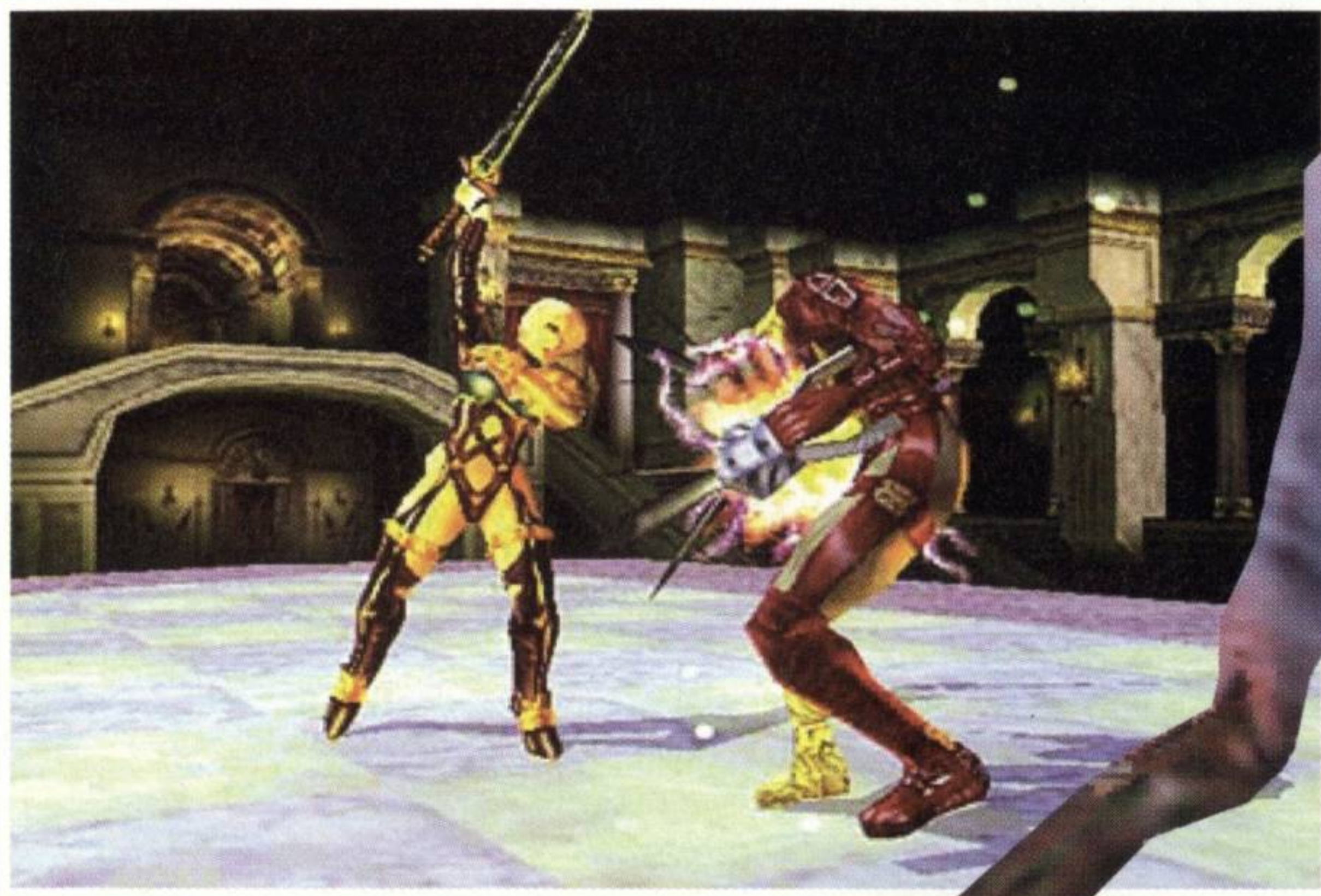
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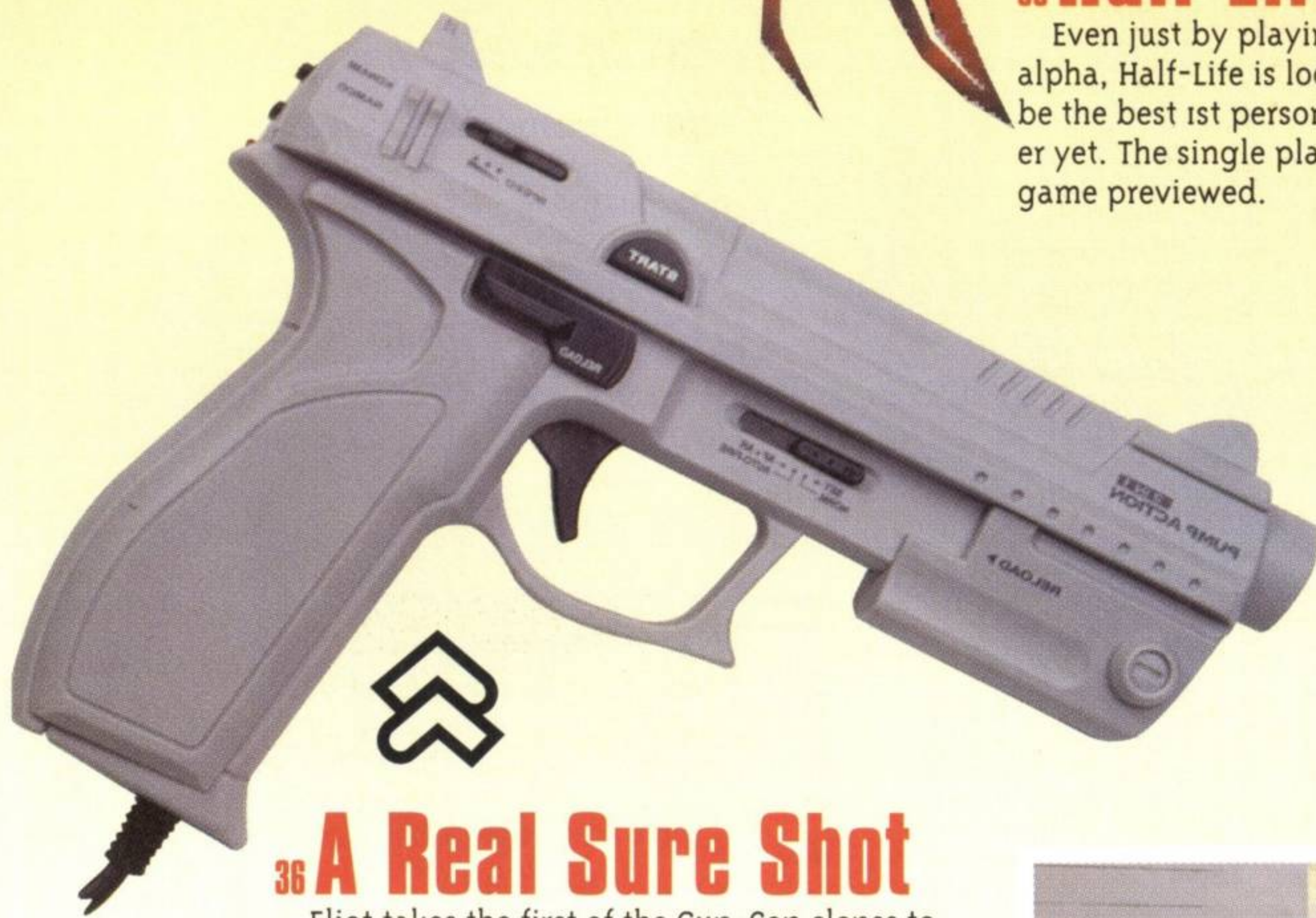
110 **Soul Calibur**

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Even just by playing the alpha, Half-Life is looking to be the best 1st person shooter yet. The single player game previewed.



36 **A Real Sure Shot**

Eliot takes the first of the Gun-Con clones to the firing range, and gives the thumbs up



40 **Pixels to Polygons**

We celebrate our fifth birthday by taking a look at where gaming has been since Hyper's birth, where it's going, and just what the current Hyper crew happen to look like... Eep!



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# Sonic Adventure Unveiled!

Rapidly becoming the most anticipated Sega Dreamcast launch title, Sonic Adventure was recently unveiled by Sega Japan so gamers could get a better look at what exactly the game is all about. Audiences at the launch were stunned with what they saw - gorgeous, high-res characters and photo-realistic background textures, all moving fluidly at 60 frames per second at 640 X 480 resolution. Visually, the game is churning out graphics comparable with what is capable on current arcade machines, or high-end Pentium 2 PCs with a 3D card.

Sonic Adventure is definitely the 3D Sonic game gamers everywhere have fantasised about, delivering fast arcade-style action with a few RPG elements (hence the title). Zooming around collecting golden rings is still Sonic's primary goal, but there's so much more to the game than just that. Six characters will be

playable in the game, and different plots will be revealed depending on which one you choose. The characters included are Sonic, Tails, Knuckles, Amy Rose (another hedgehog), Big the Cat and Eioz Ganma. Each character has their own unique voice, and chatter during the gameplay. Dr. Eggman is the big bad boss, and he's out to create Eggman land which it is your job to prevent happening. Special emeralds must be found before Dr. Eggman can get his hands on them, and the game features a special feature which will hint when you are close to where an emerald is hidden. The levels will be divided between RPG-style adventuring sections and fast, action packed "classic" Sonic style sections.

It looks like a number of sub-games will be featured throughout Sonic Adventure too (much like Cloud snowboards, rides chocobos and



plays games in Final Fantasy VII), including a 3D shoot 'em up stage in a biplane, helicopter rides and a snowboarding section (hey it's compulsory these days!). Lucky Japanese gamers will be playing Sonic Adventure by the end of the year, but possibly they will be waiting eagerly for the western release of the Dreamcast... why? Because rumour has it that Sonic Adventure has some sort of multiplayer mode which will make use of the Dreamcast's inbuilt modem. This could mean multiplayer Sonic Adventure games with Dreamcast owners worldwide! We'll have to wait and see on that one, but it's confirmed that Sonic Adventure definitely utilises the Dreamcast's VMS, not only as a memory storage device, but for some tamagotchi-style downloads off the main disc. It looks like Sonic will be making one crazy comeback.





# MORTAL 4 KOMBAT

- Gruesome 3D combat
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- Real time 3D cut scenes
- Awesome weapons & combo's

Darkness  
is calling.



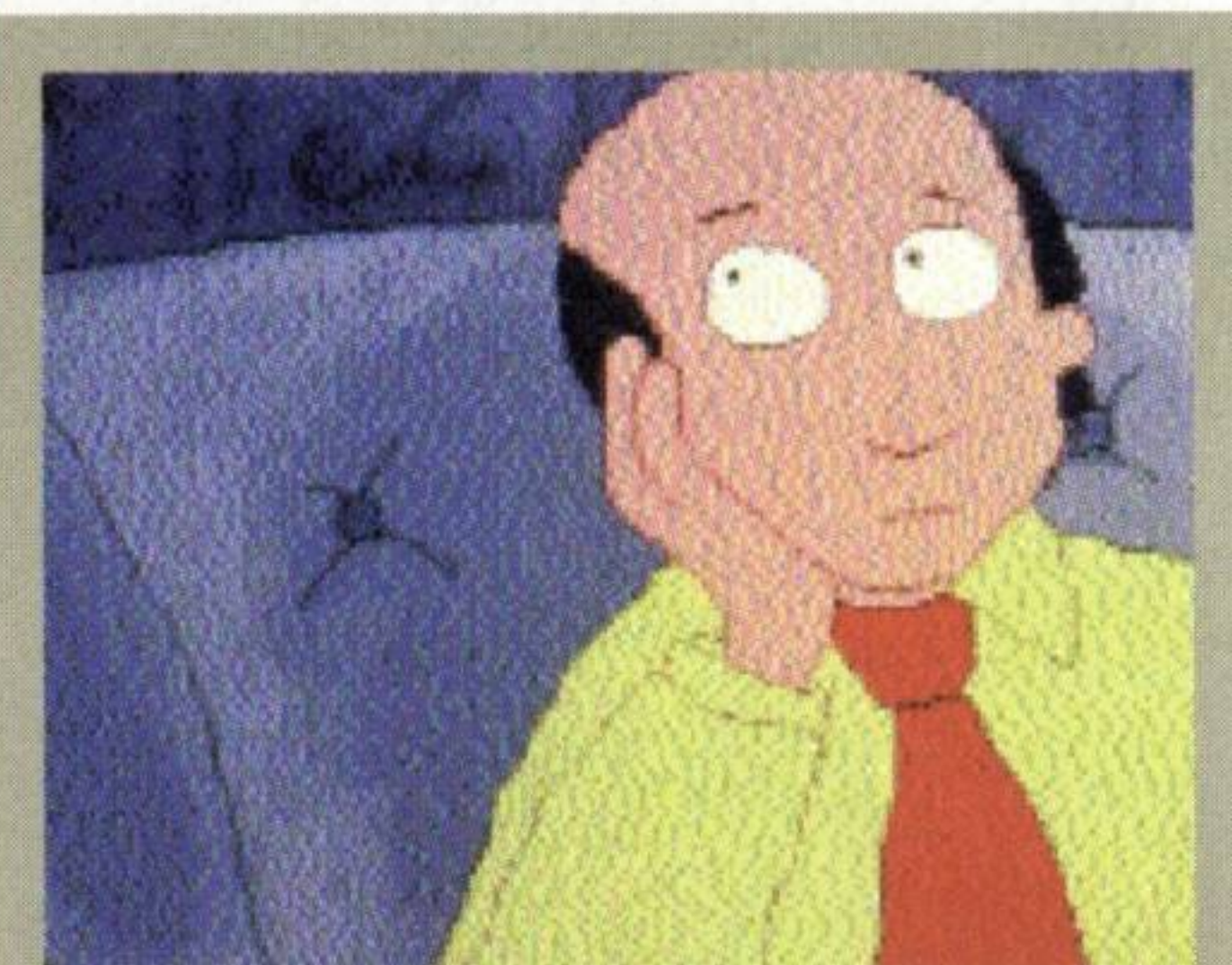
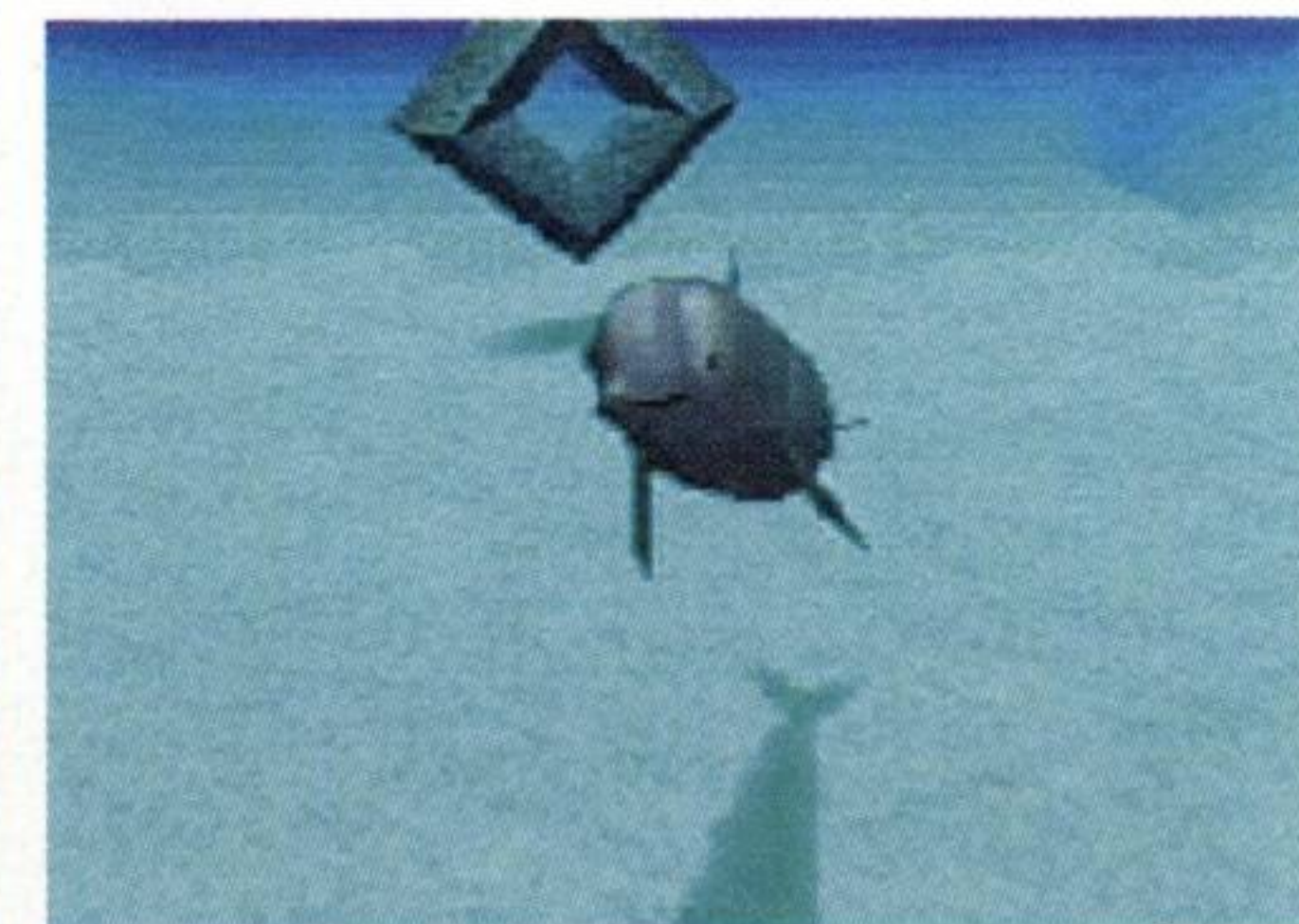
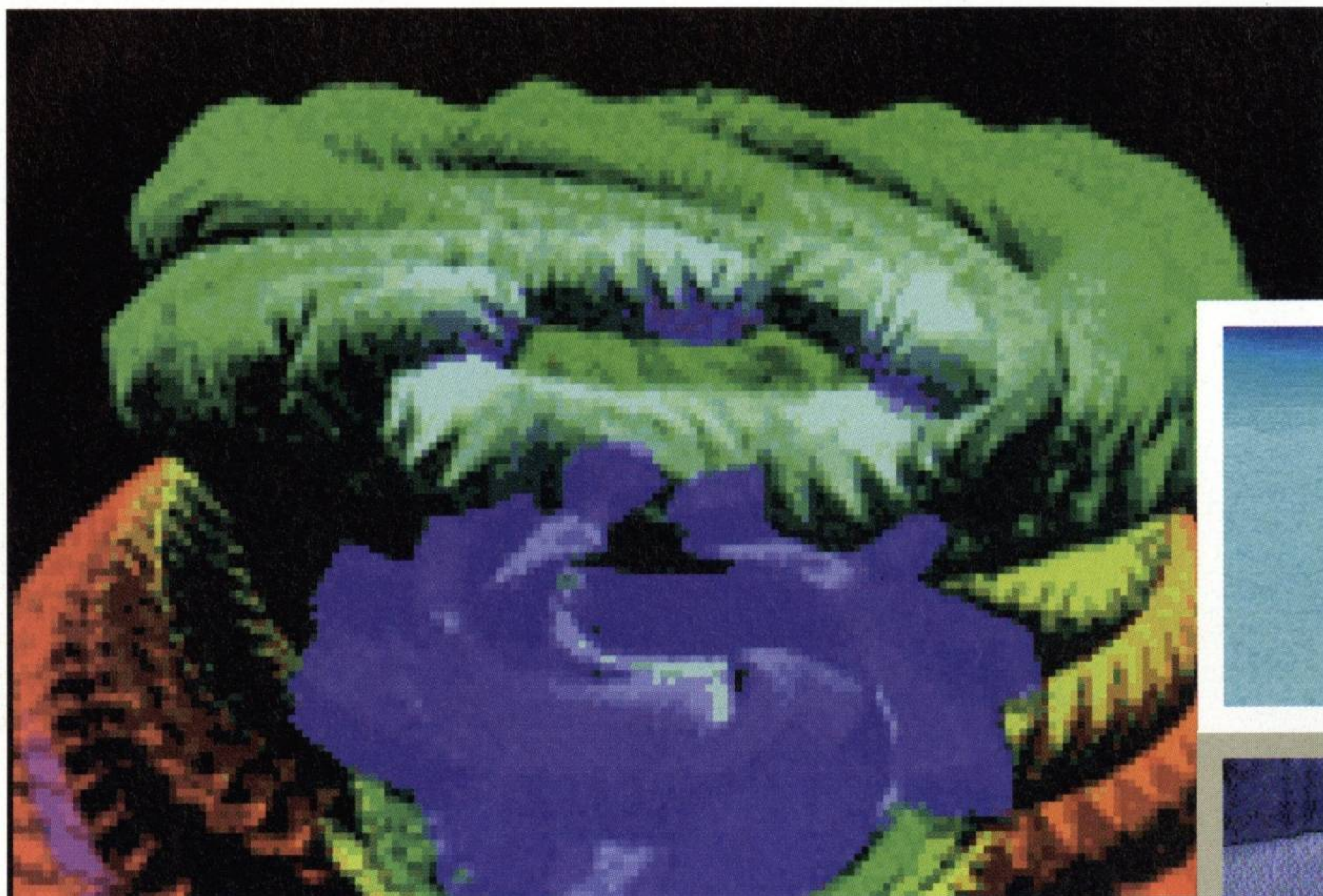
# PSX Gets It's Groove Back

Tired of the same old games? Then why not try something different... Sony have two new titles for your PlayStation which really don't fit into any current genre - Baby Universe and Fluid. What are they exactly? Well... part-game, part-novelty, part-new-age meditation device, part-trippy-music-thingy, part-we-don't-really-have-any-idea-exactly-what-it-is-but-it's-cool-thingy.

song is enough to send anyone to the loony bin, yet it's strangely compelling! Baby Universe looks like a cool thing to have on in the background when you're just relaxing with your favourite CD, or to put on when you have a party just for some funky thing in the background to attract attention. The best idea is to have a stereo TV, or hook your TV up to the stereo so

and create all sorts techno - the result is up to you - however this is more of a sequencer in the sense that the samples you choose just get looped. Once you've made your music, you can then take the dolphin for a swim. However, where you swim actually can have an effect on the music you're hearing. Swimming in one direction may fade the bass in or out, and you can achieve some pretty amazing results. Though Fluid may seem a little basic to practising composers who have a bit of home equipment, it's perfect for the aspiring DJ and a great tool for experimentation.

Both Fluid and Baby Universe are retailing for \$59.95.



Baby Universe features a 3D Kaleidoscope which reacts to the music disc you choose to play whilst mucking around with the trippy visuals. There are a number of different modes to choose from, which are basically a collection of different shapes and elements which react differently. For instance, one looks just like a classic kaleidoscope and another is like an electrograph which falls and rises according to the frequencies in the music. The controller buttons can make the image rotate in any direction, enlarge and reduce the polygons and generally force the image to display in odd and disturbing ways. Staring at this thing for a full

that you get the full effect. Oh, turn off the lights too.

New PlayStations in Japan are actually being manufactured with a Baby Universe function built into the unit, which would make more sense than actually having to pay for it. Still, if you're looking for something unique - this is it!

Fluid, on the other hand, is more of a functional tool/game in the form of a music editor. The disc comes with over 600 samples for all styles of music, which you retrieve using a dolphin in a fully 3D underwater environment. Once you have a handful of samples, you can edit them together using a virtual mixing desk,

## Sorry Doctor...

Humble apologies to Warner Vision who supplied us with the Dr Katz videos in last months comps. Kudos to them for offering the Hyper readers some freebies!

### Competition Winners

Disturbingly, a lot of you are forgetting to put your name and address on the back of your entries. All we can say is... DOH!

#### SOUTH PARK

James Sullivan, ACT  
Brendan Konig, WA  
Sharon Simmons, Vic  
Vicky Wood, NSW  
Craig Johns, Vic

#### MORTAL KOMBAT 4

Ben Monaghan, WA  
Leon Law, Qld  
James Sprules, SA  
Tou Xiong, Qld  
Jamie Haigh, Vic

#### OUTWARS

Marco Brunato, NSW  
K. Giglia, WA  
Simon Adler, NSW  
William Hoyle, NSW  
Ben Carmody, NSW  
TRBJ White, WA  
Greg Petchkovsky, NSW

Gabriel Priori, Vic  
Troy Wovodich, WA  
J. Ling, WA

#### MONSTER TRUCK MADNESS 2

Barton, WA  
Jason Sargent, NSW

Edward Allen, NSW  
Christopher McCoy, NSW  
Calum Winning, WA  
Jason Pamment, Vic  
Luke Arnold, NSW  
Bradley Newhill, WA  
Harry Hayes, NSW  
Michael Knight, Vic

# NINJA

SHADOW OF DARKNESS

...and so begins his quest  
to rid the land of the demon legions



## FEATURES

- Fast paced arcade-style action
- Inspiration taken from the classic games such as Double Dragon, Rygar and Goblins
- 13 Full stages in 3-d
- Cinematic camera system: camera positions change according to the ninja's surrounding and environments
- Combat techniques include hand to hand fighting, weapon and magic attacks. All attacks can be powered up to four different levels
- Interactive environments feature traps, puzzles, moving platforms, hidden areas, doors, environmental hazards and more...



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Over in the United States, Midway have debuted a revolutionary new feature in their Blitz '99 arcade machine - a Nintendo 64 Memory Pak slot! Gamers can create up to nine of their own custom plays at home on their NFL Blitz '99 cartridge, save it to the memory pak and then take it into the arcades and "upload" it into the



# Blitz The Arcades!

Blitz '99 arcade machine! This cross-platform compatibility could very well become a new gaming trend... imagine the possibilities! Fighting games could allow you to unlock hidden characters on your home console and then take them to the arcades on a memory card

or pak to use on the arcade machine, or maybe even just your own personal high scores and records. We haven't heard yet whether this will be possible on Australian Blitz '99 machines, but it is highly likely. **EF**

## Charts

Charts kindly supplied by Hitech World

### N64

1. Goldeneye 007
2. Mario Kart 64
3. Banjo Kazooie
4. Mario 64
5. 1080 Snowboarding
6. All Star Baseball '99
7. Bomberman 64
8. Wwf Warzone
9. Snowboard Kids
10. Diddy Kong Racing

### PC

1. X-Files the Game
2. Might & Magic VI
3. Final Fantasy VII
4. AFL '985.
5. Commandos:  
Behind Enemy Lines
6. Age Of Empires
7. Starcraft
8. Total Annihilation:  
Core Contingency
9. Wargames
10. Comanche Gold

### PLAYSTATION

1. Tekken 3
2. Point Blank
3. Gran Turismo
4. Colin Mcrae Rally
5. Oddworld: Abe's Odyssey
6. Die Hard Trilogy
7. Tekken 2 Platinum
8. Need For Speed 3
9. Dead Or Alive
10. Diablo



## DREAMCAST PSX COMPATIBLE?!

There are some awesome rumours going around the internet which are sure to make Sony turn demonic with rage... We all know that the Sega Dreamcast is running a version of Microsoft's Windows CE as it's operating system, which has spurred some to question whether the current PC PlayStation emulator available on the internet (though highly illegal) would be easily ported for use on the Dreamcast. That would make every PlayStation game playable on your Dreamcast console! How would this work? Well, the Dreamcast has inbuilt internet features, making it possible to play multiplayer games through a special Dreamcast "channel". This means you could also log onto the internet, and say, download a PSX emulator designed to run on the Dreamcast. Another possibility would be for the emulator to be available on cartridge, so you could just plug it into the Dreamcast's expansion slot... and voila, you're playing your PlayStation games!

Though this is all great in theory, the reality is that Sony would never allow this to happen. The whole concept of Sega being able to capitalise on the entire PlayStation range of games is probably Sony's worst nightmare - so chances are they will ensure that it is legally impossible for Sega to ever allow this to happen. We can dream... **EF**

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# X-Wing Alliance

After their experiment in multiplayer gaming with X-Wing Vs TIE Fighter, LucasArts are returning to the brilliant single-player gameplay of the original X-Wing in a whole new game for the series - X-Wing Alliance. Currently scheduled for release early in 1999, X-Wing Alliance will actually allow you to fly the Millennium Falcon in an assault on the second Death Star over the planet of Endor. The game will feature two different storylines - one continuing on after the battle of Hoth and another concerning a trade alliance. Here at Hyper we're excited about the prospect of being

able to man the Millennium Falcon's guns (like Han and Luke did in Star Wars: A New Hope), whilst a friend flies the craft through battle - a possible multiplayer option in the 5 multiplayer campaigns. The single-player game features 50 missions, and a whole fleet of new craft to try out, including secret experimental Imperial craft!

The new 3D accelerated engine will ensure smooth space flight, virtual cockpits, and some missions which will require you to hyperspace to other locations in the galaxy to complete them successfully. We'll even get to "use the force"...force feedback that is. **EF**

## overflow

The dreaded N64 DD (Disk Drive) has been pushed back in Japan to mid-1999! After Howard Lincoln of Nintendo America announcing that the add-on may very well not be released outside of Japan (which means it won't), and now the delay in Japan to mid next year, the chances of it surfacing at all, ever, are looking thinner than ever...

Both Sony and Nintendo have yet again dropped the price of their respective consoles over in the United State of America. Could this mean a similar price drop here in Australia for Christmas. We think it could be highly possible...

Just a brief note that Zelda 64 has finally been locked into a release date over in Japan - November 14th. The game will be released the world over in a spunky-looking gold-coloured cartridge. We should be playing Zelda here in Australia around the first week of December - just in time for Christmas, eh Nintendo?

Makers of the Resident Evil movie, are hoping to have the film finished by the time Resident Evil 3 hits consoles. The writer and director for the film, George Romero, has had plenty of experience with zombies, blood and guns having made the Night of the Living Dead and other zombie-packed flicks...

Have any of you noticed that Yoshimitsu from the Tekken series is a hidden playable character in Namco's new Soul Calibur arcade sequel to Soul Blade? He's sporting a very different look, but there's no doubt it's Yoshi all right...

Psygnosis are planning on releasing another Lemmings title for the PlayStation very soon, but it's not going to be Lemmings 3D 2 or any variation. In fact, the disc will contain the two classic Lemmings PC games that virtually started the Lemmings craze - Lemmings and Oh No More Lemmings!

Several games are being launched as DVD titles - Starfleect Academy, Lander, Riven and the Journeyman Project 3 just to name a few. It'll be interesting to see if a hardware manufacturer actually invests in DVD as a future games platform. There has always been rumour that the PlayStation 2 will be DVD format...

# Behind The Magic

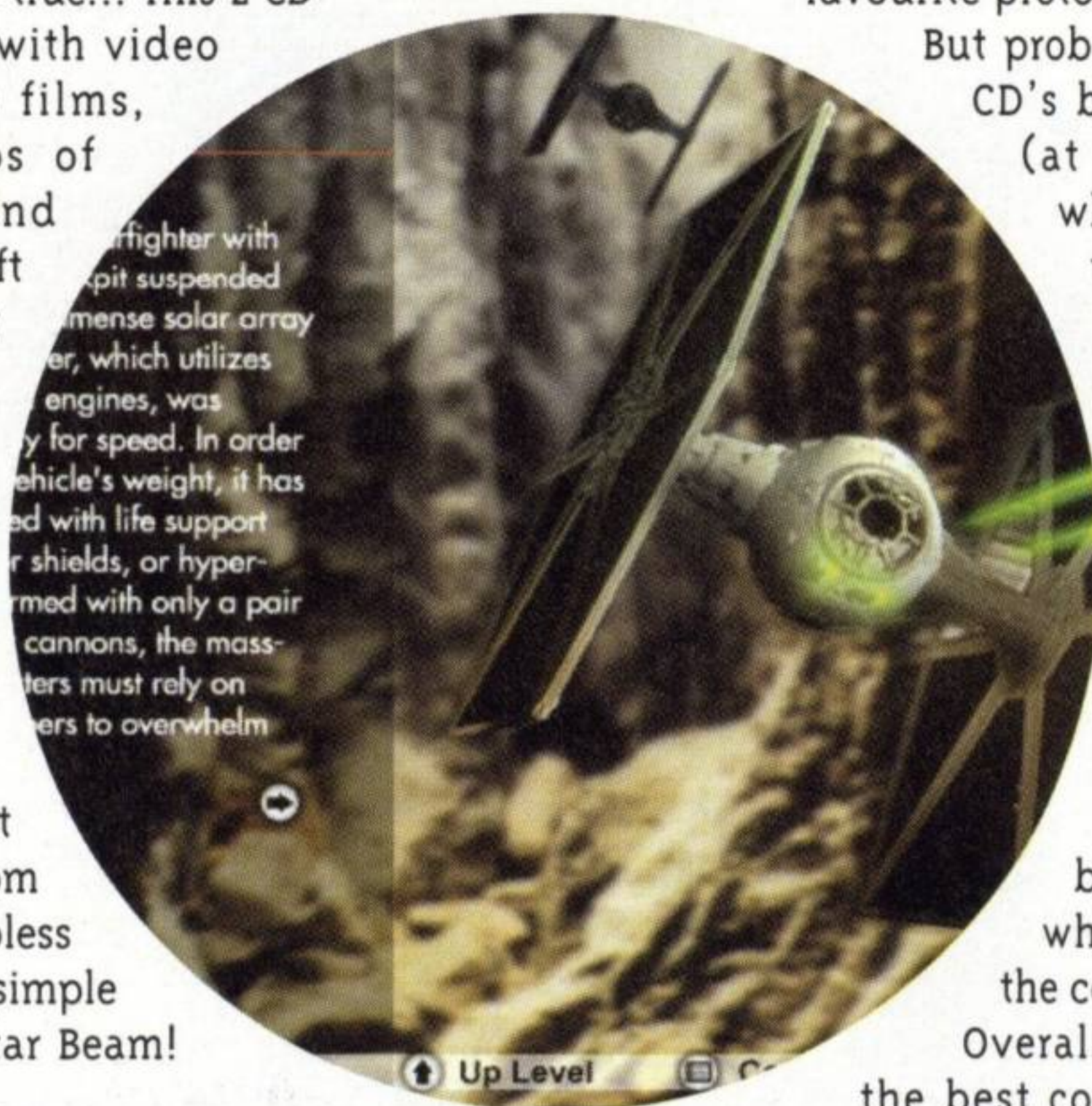
The team at LucasArts have finally put together the ultimate Star Wars CD-ROM. Essentially a Star Wars Encyclopedia, Behind The Magic is a Star Wars fan's dream come true... This 2 CD package is bursting with video clips from all three films, contains audio clips of dialogue and sound effects of the space craft and is literally the most extensive collection of Star Wars specs, data, pics and info you've ever seen in one place. Certainly, one of the funniest things you'll ever see is the weapons testing bay, where you can try out an array of weapons from the films on a poor hapless Stormtrooper - from a simple blaster to the Death Star Beam! Hilarious.

The CD also contains an incredible amount of never-before-seen Star Wars stuff, from pics of lost scenes cut from the original films, to behind-the-scenes pics of spacecraft

models, casting auditions and creature designs, and there's even a fully 3D walkthrough of the Millennium Falcon, hosted by everyone's favourite protocol droid, C3-PO.

But probably what will be this CD's biggest selling point (at least initially), is a whole section devoted to Star Wars: Episode One which will hit theatres around the world next year. Yep, a new Star Wars film - 16 years after the last one! The prequel information contained on the disc gives you a peek behind the making of what should be one of the coolest movies of 1999.

Overall, this disc is simply the best collection of Star Wars multimedia any fan can get their hands on, and it's all been wrapped up in one excellent package - it was guaranteed to pull a crowd in the Hyper office. A must buy. **EF**





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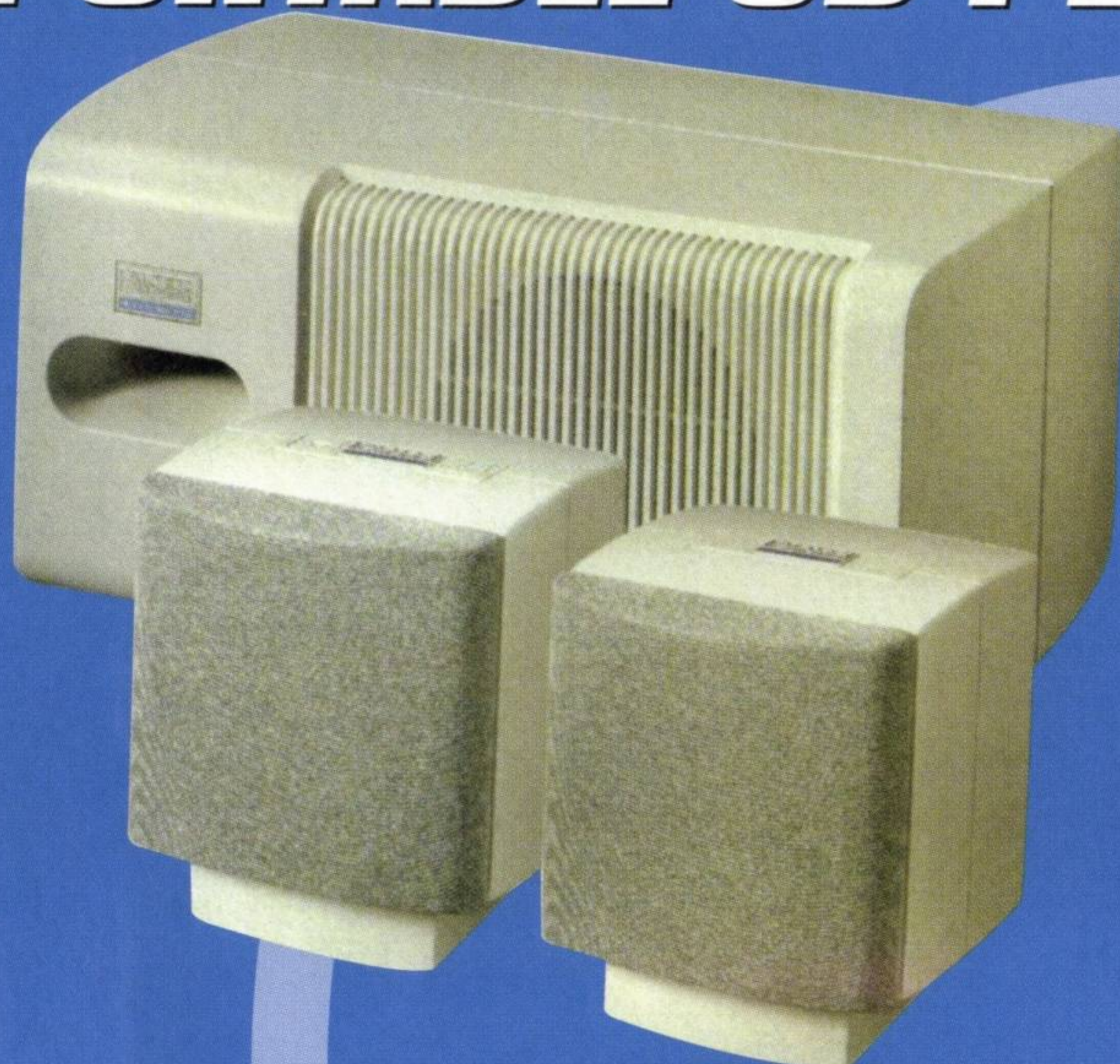


[www.playstation.com.au/spyro](http://www.playstation.com.au/spyro)

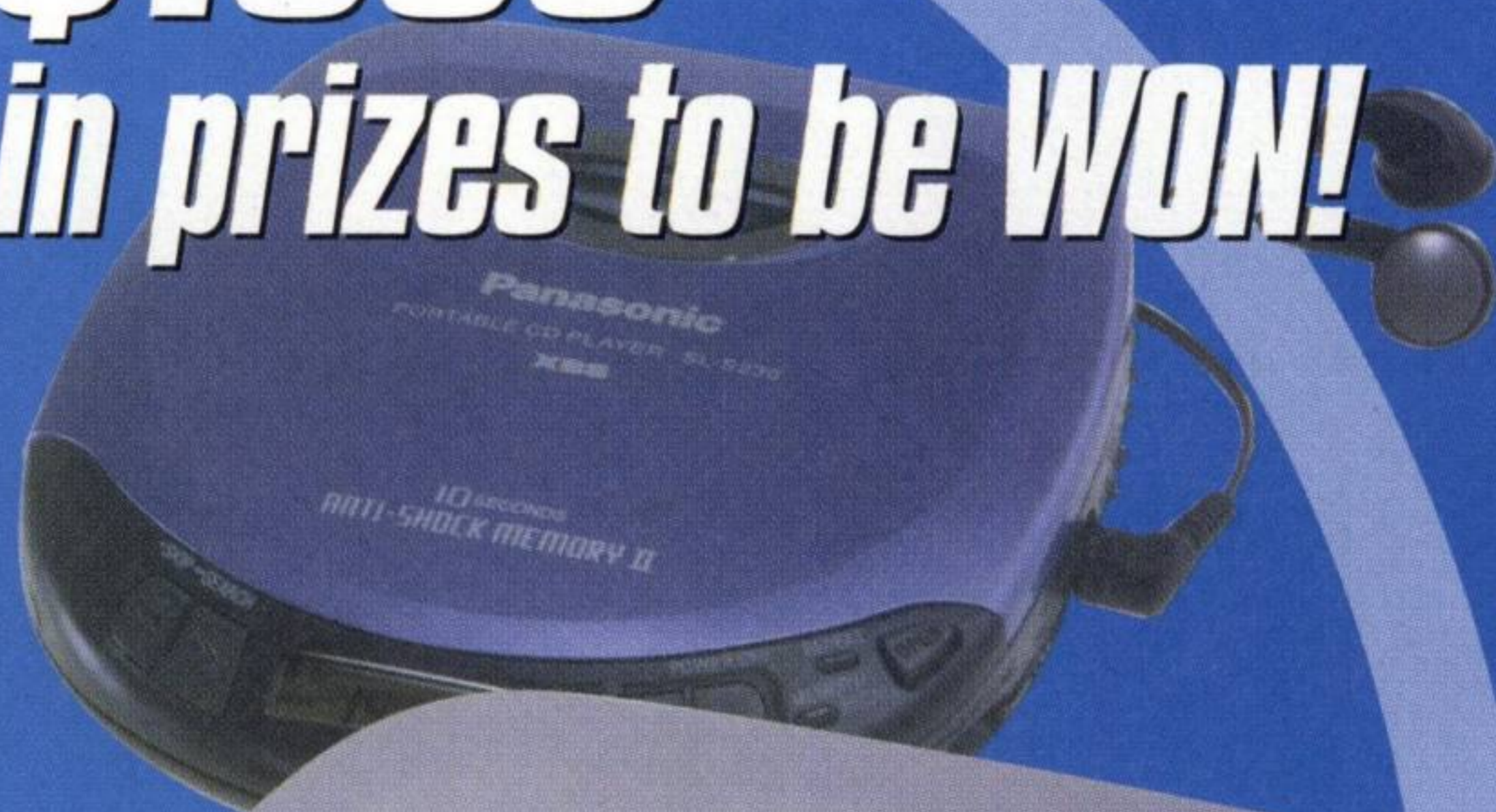
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ALL ENTRIES CLOSE NOVEMBER 11TH 1998

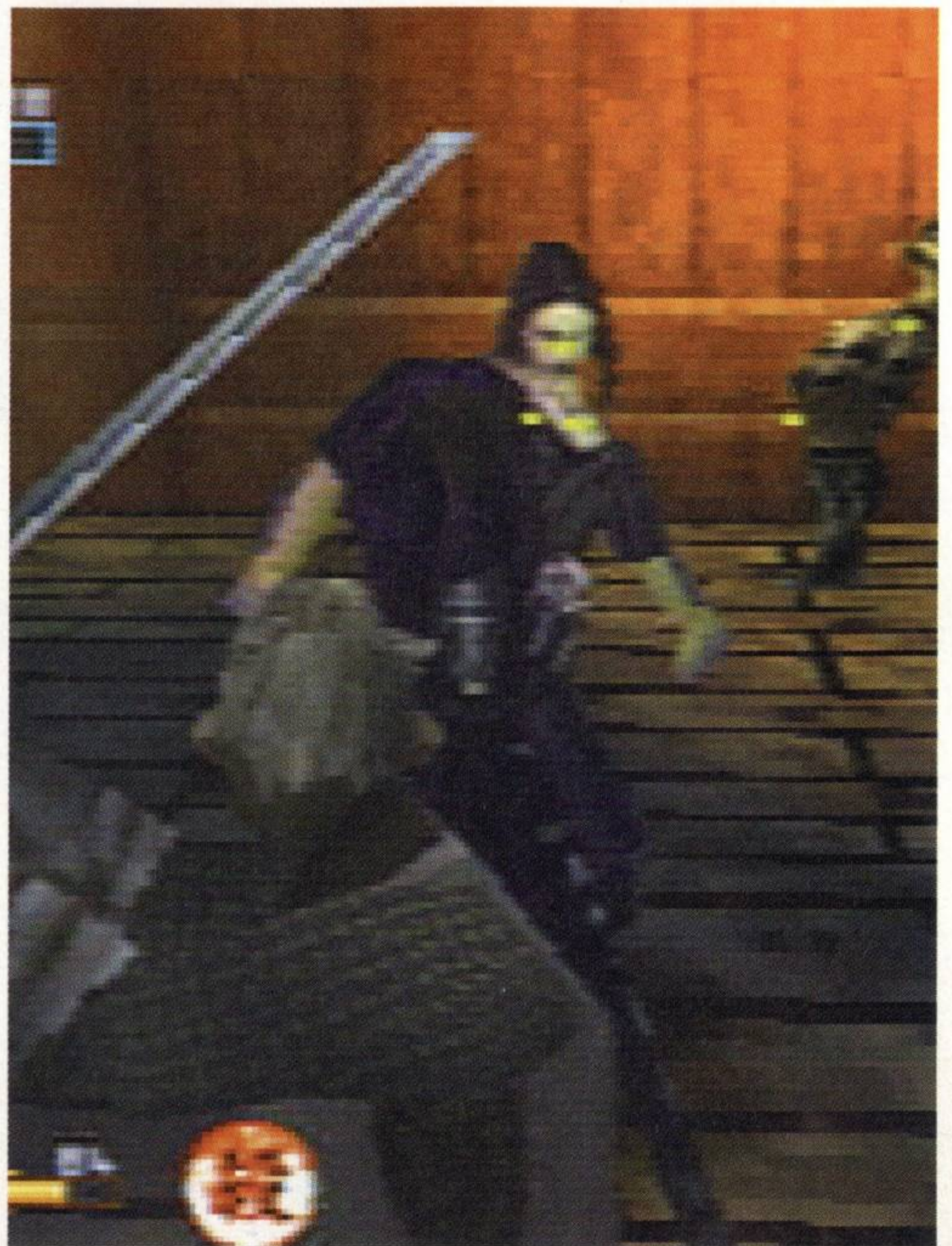


# TENCHU

Hey, I know it sounds like someone sneezing, but Tenchu is actually a bloody awesome PlayStation game. Effectively a Ninja sim, it's one of those games you'll not only play straight through to the end, but you'll be absorbed in every second! Activision have been kind enough to give us five copies to give away, so to be in it to win it, answer us this question...

**A Ninja comes from which country?**

Put your answer on the back of an envelope and send it to... **Tenchu!**, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016. Bless you!

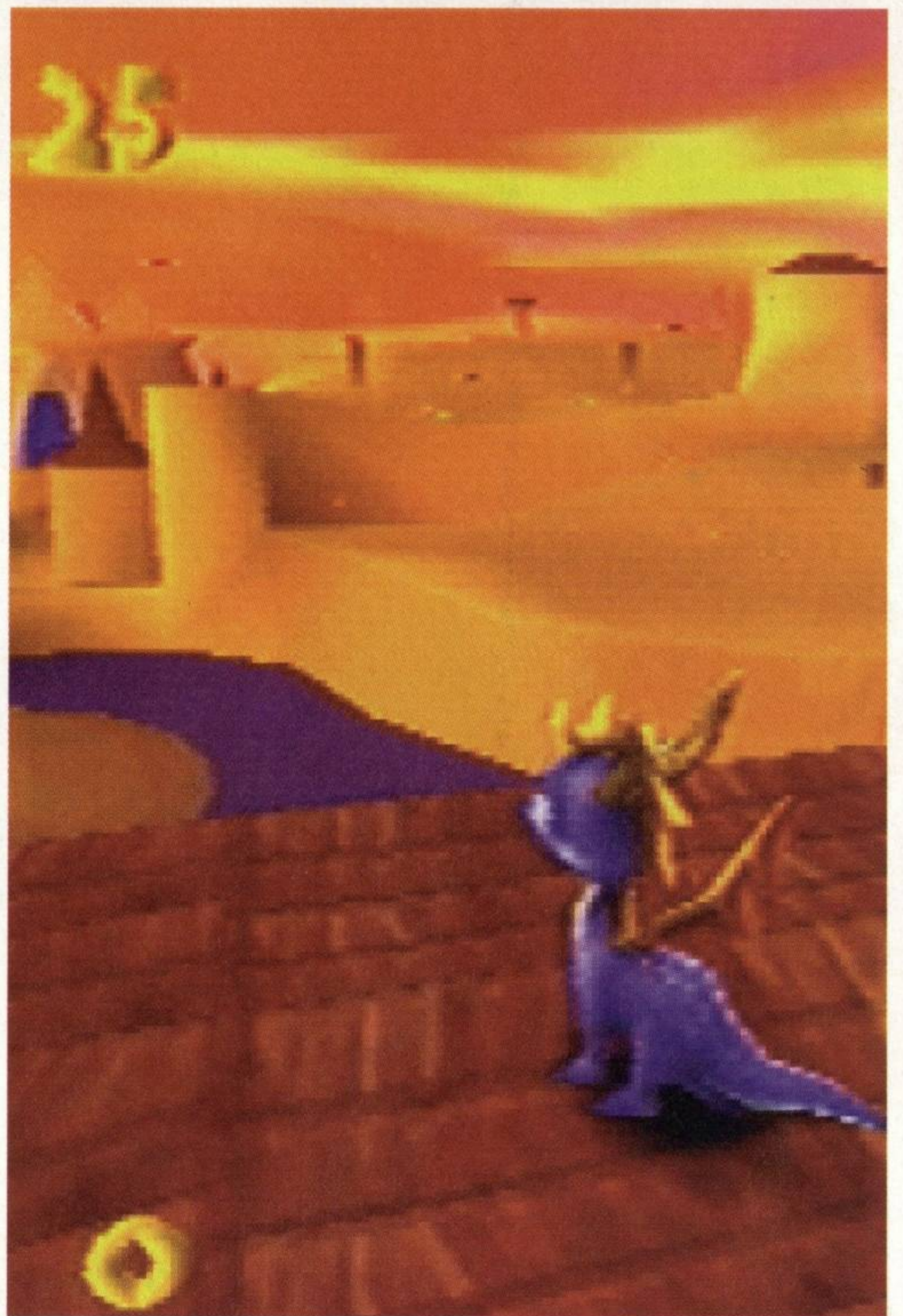


# WIN Spyro and Dual-Shock!

He's small, purple, blows fire and kicks butt - he's Spyro the Dragon and he proves that the PlayStation is capable of producing gorgeous 3D graphics as good as anything the N64 can dish up. It's also a really fun game too, so that helps! Thanks to Sony Australia, we can proudly announce we have five copies of Spyro to give away to the lucky readers who can correctly answer this probing question... but wait, there's more! The first prize winner will also score a brand new Dual-Shock Controller!! Here goes...

**Name another magic dragon.**

Put your answer on the back of an envelope and send it to... **Puff Daddy**, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016. How's that for a clue!





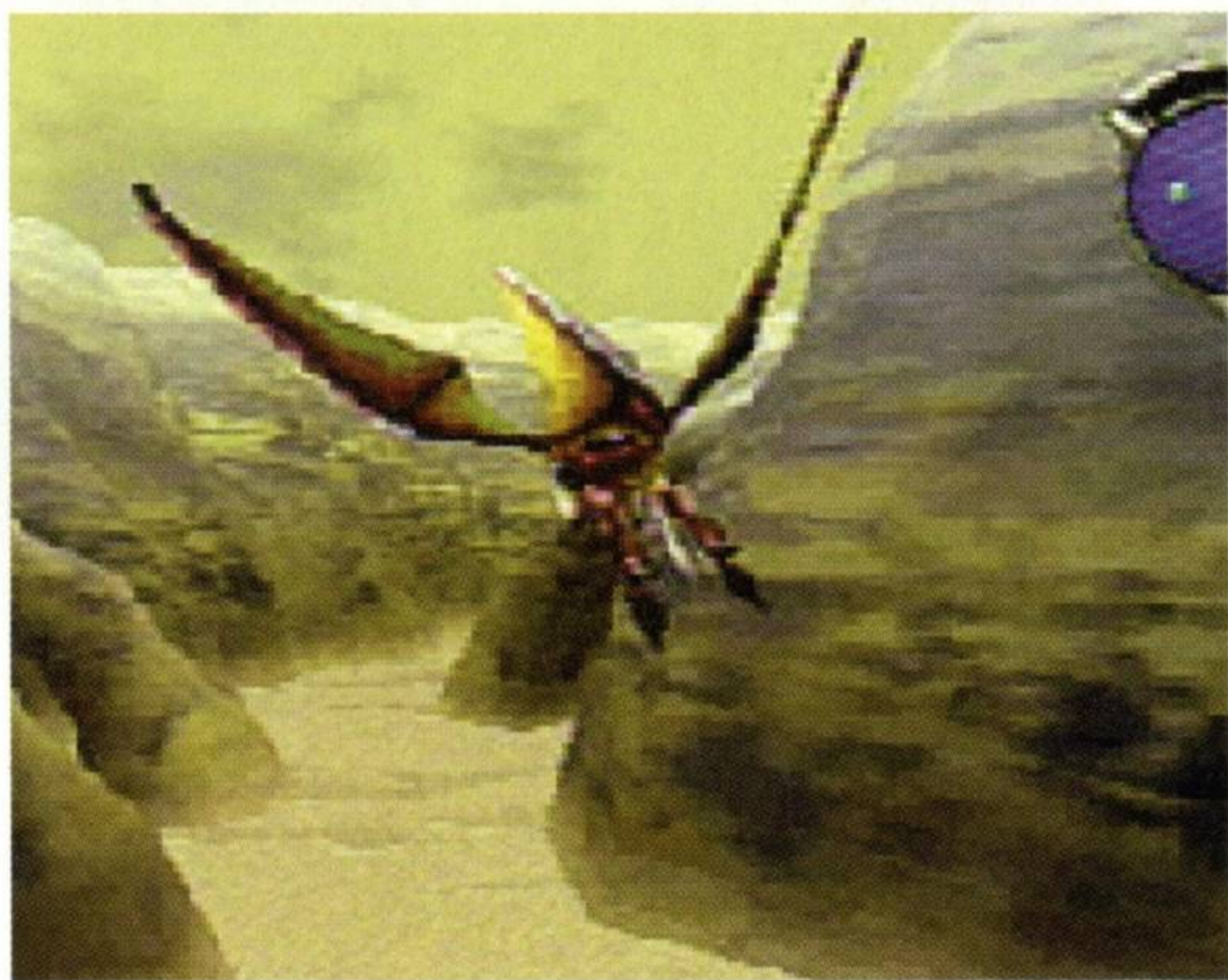
# Quake 2

## GROUND ZERO

Well, another Quake 2 mission pack is on the scene, and it's a killer. New weapons, new beasts and new deathmatch maps make this any PC gamer's dream package. Activision know that Quake players don't get out much, let alone work or find time to eat or sleep, so they thought we should donate some copies of Ground Zero to give away so you gamers don't have to leave the house! To win one of five copies, answer this question...

**Name one of the new weapons in Ground Zero.**

Put your answer on the back of an envelope, and send it to **Gettin' Gibby Wid it, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.**



# Ozisoft games!

We have a bunch of cool Ozisoft games in this issue - Panzer Dragon Saga for Saturn, Ninja for PlayStation and Enemy Infestation for PC. The cool people over at Ozisoft have been kind enough to offer up a bunch of these games to give away to some of you lucky, loyal Hyper readers. With your entry, just tell us which game you would like (you can only pick one) and it'll be in the next postie van on it's way to your house! To be in with a chance, answer us this...

**What's the name of the next Sega console?**

Put your answer on the back of an envelope and send it to...  
**C'mon Ozi C'mon, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.**  
 Oh yeah.

Issue 1...

"The Life and Times  
of One Loopy Space  
Janitor"



Introducing

## Ed

The Space  
Shaker



Cute hey?!

But don't be misled by  
his unassuming charms.

This guy's a  
Kompletely Krazy KLUTZ!!

While  
floating around in his  
dinky spaceship, Ed  
clumsily spills some  
strange tonic all  
over the earth.  
Result...

Psychadelic  
Soup



And Ed is left  
to clean up  
the mess.

So avoiding  
violent Veges,

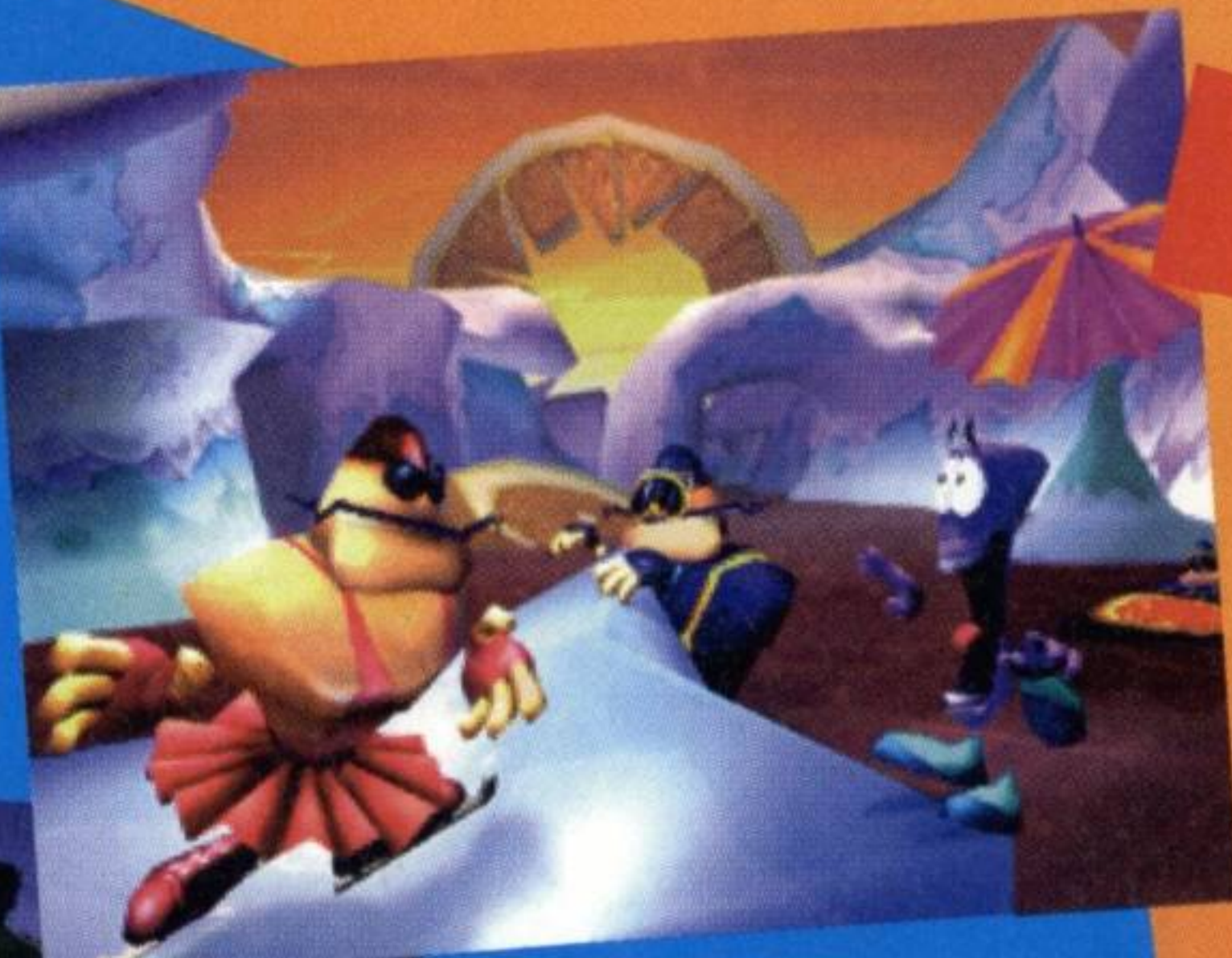
Warning:  
This Chronicle  
may offend  
vegetarians

## Oh No!!!!

(that's Suzy,  
she's the babe)



Entering Warped Worlds,



Slipping down Sangria Glaciers.



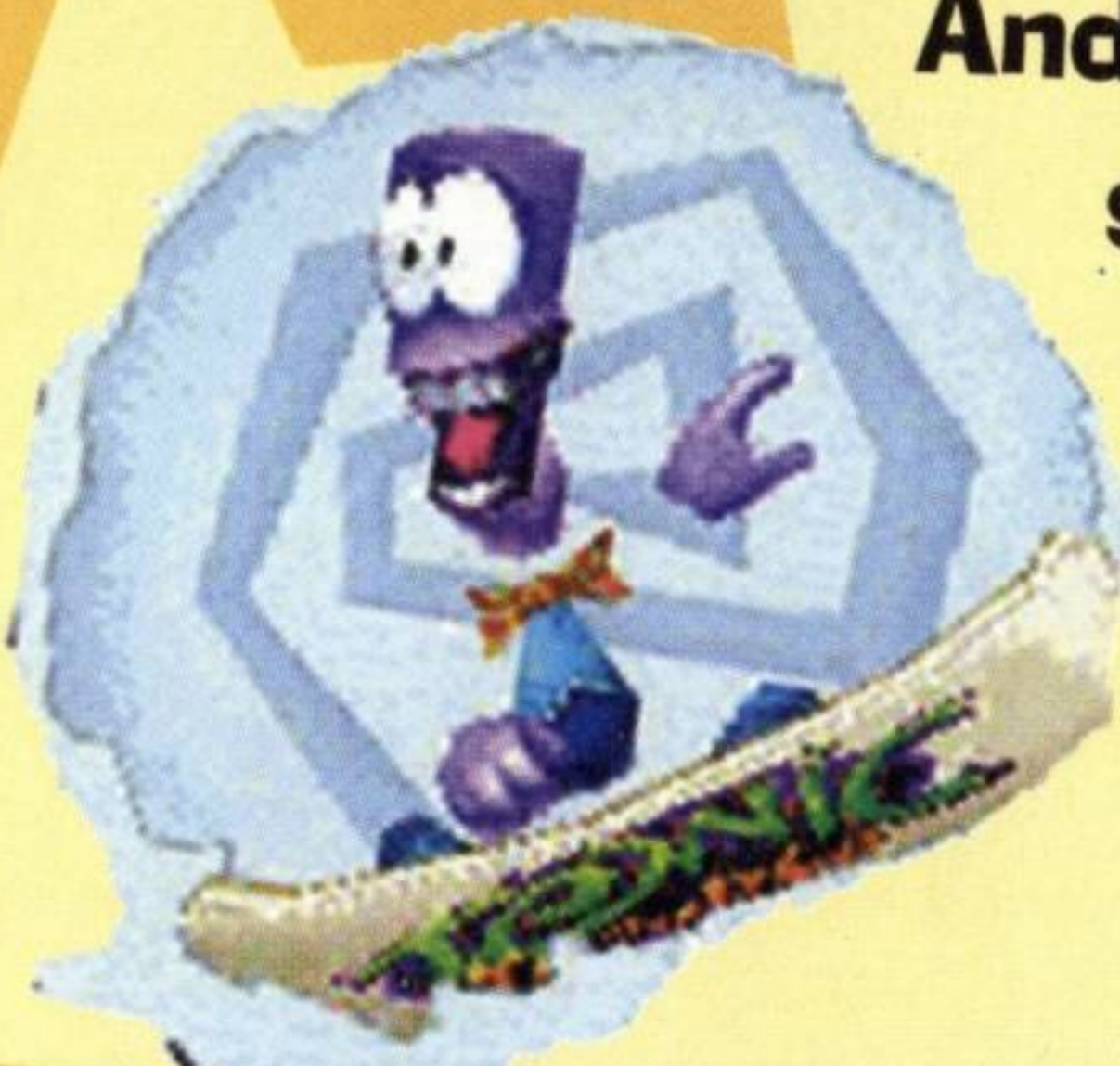
Ed Swims,



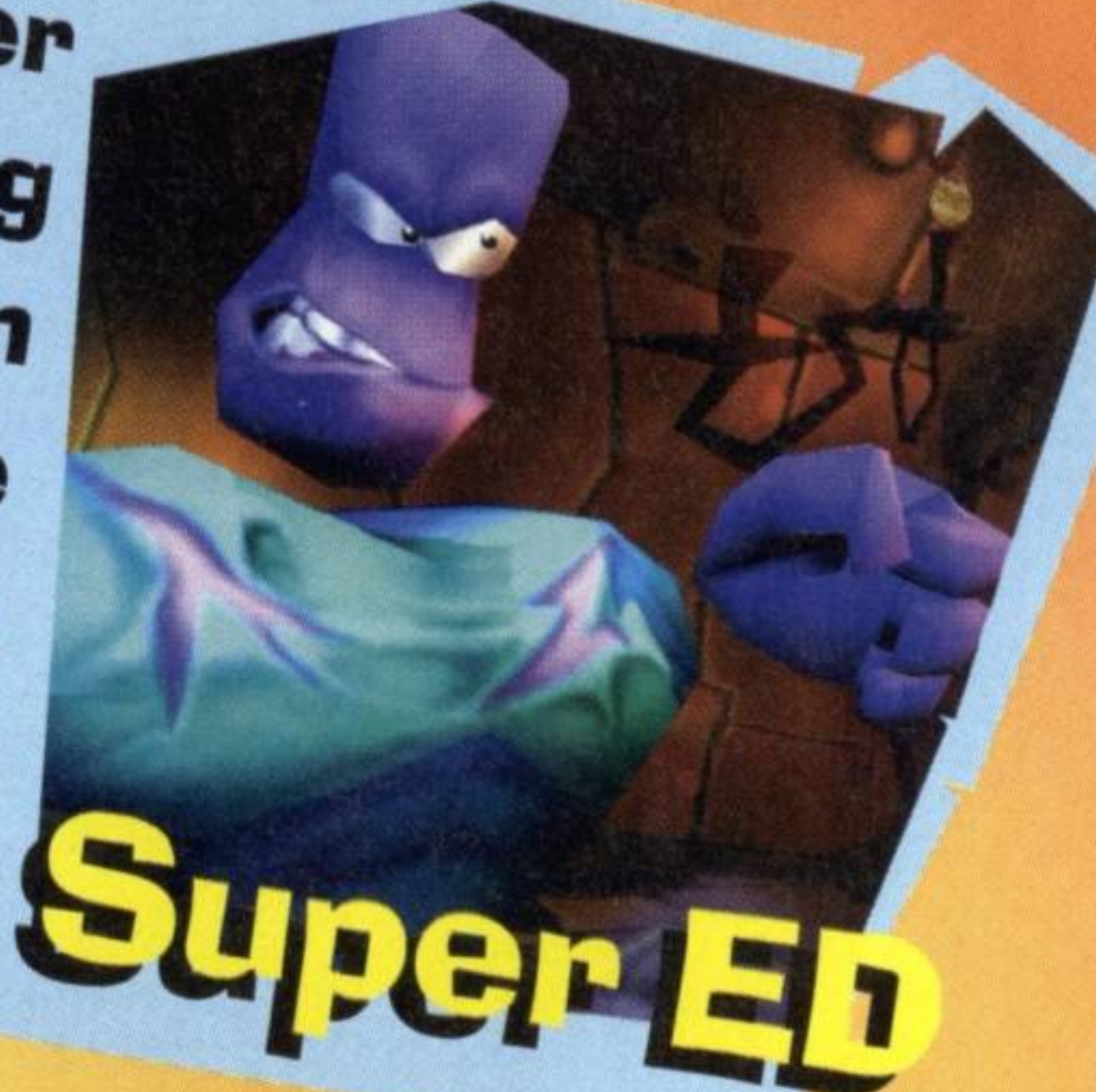
He flies,



And carves the slopes like only one madkat alien can...



And after seeking comfort in his favourite chocolate bar, he turns into...



**Super ED**

Can our would-be hero fight for goodness and retrieve the Tonic from the Evil..



**Grogh the Hellish!!**

Will he ever work out how to start his Space ship?



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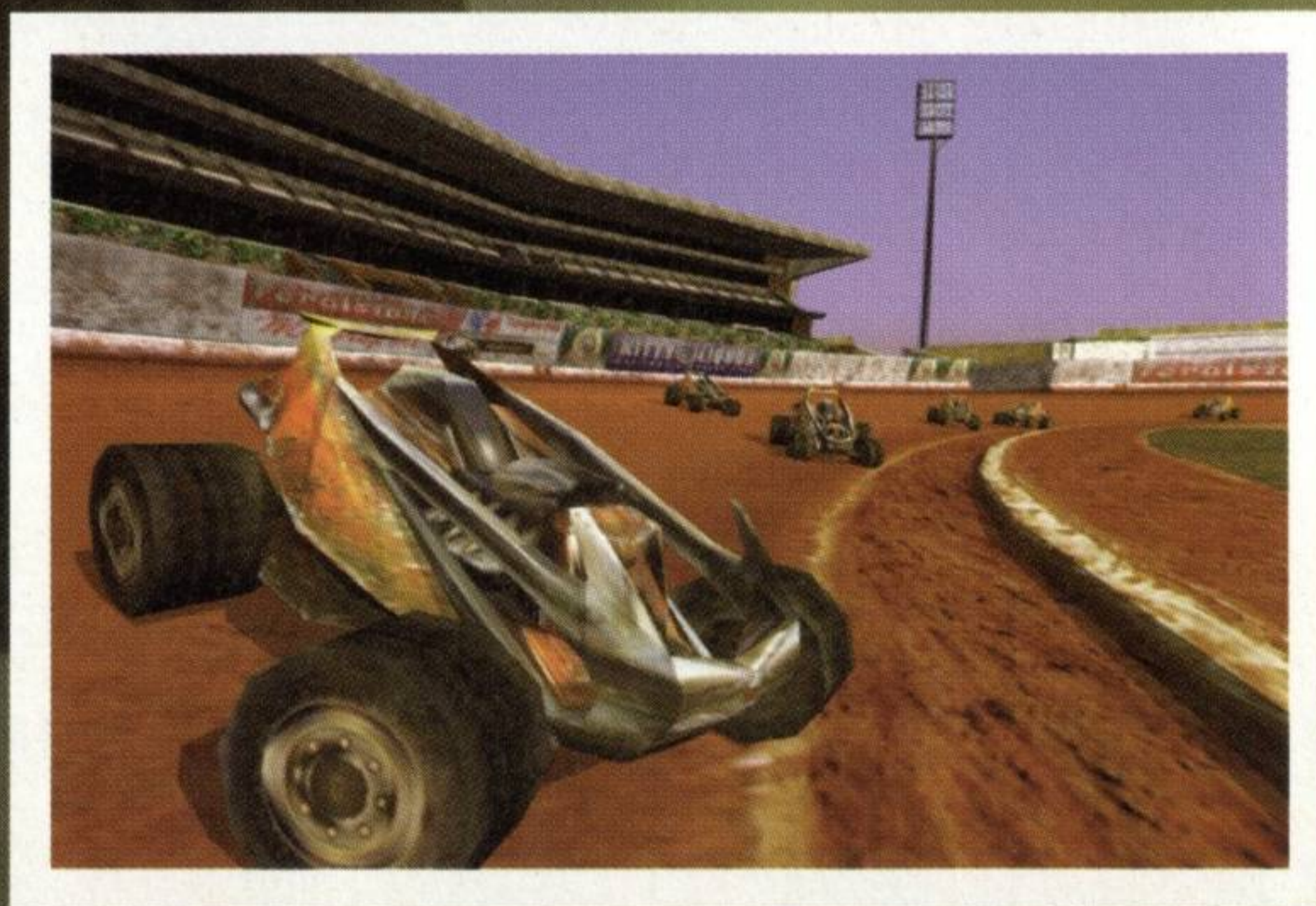
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## Powerslide

PC

**AVAILABLE: NOVEMBER**  
**CATEGORY: RACING**  
**PLAYERS: 1-MULTI**  
**PUBLISHER: GT INTERACTIVE**



Making a whopping great impression on everyone who saw it running at E3, Powerslide by Aussie developer Emergent Software is going to be one the hottest games this year. Not only is this one pretty-looking racer, but the game engine (coined The Difference Engine) can churn out everything at a consistent 60 frames of animation per second. The gameplay is so smooth, that 3Dfx themselves were using Powerslide to showcase their hardware. Whilst superior graphics are all well and good, what is really getting the saliva glands pumping is the reportedly awesome car handling in Powerslide. Here's a racing game which is arcadey enough for casual gamers, but realistic enough in terms of physics for the hardcore racing game fanatic - all wrapped up in some of the sexiest racing game graphics ever.

Racing on some of the tracks in Powerslide can be a hair-raising experience... the circuits are designed so your car can go up the sides of walls, over barricades, drop-offs, huge jumps and in general do insane stuff

with your car to stay ahead of the pack. You can even get your car onto two wheels and then roll yourself if you're unlucky - this is very much Rally-style racing. Churn through mud, sand, gravel, ice and a variety of other surfaces in all sorts of weather conditions - even a sandstorm - whilst fighting off the intelligent computer AI (which is out to win at all costs!).

Set in the future, the world is recovering from an ecological disaster which has laid the planet to waste. The population on the surface consists of ferals and freaks in desolate cities and murky swamps, whilst below the planet's surface exists modern complexes run by the rich. The tracks in Powerslide will showcase all the environments in this bleak prediction of the future - from underground tunnels to toxic valleys of sludge. We can't wait! **EF**



# Starshot

NINTENDO 64/PC

AVAILABLE: NOVEMBER  
 CATEGORY: PLATFORMER  
 PLAYERS: 1  
 PUBLISHER: OCEAN

wow-o-meter



Previously known as Space Circus, we previewed this 3D platforming game for you absolutely yonks ago... But the new name change to Starshot heralds more than a tweak in game design, so we thought we'd better take a closer look at this title which is now coming in November.

You play the role of a character named Starshot, the only expendable member of a robotic crew, who is sent down to the surface of an alien planet. Very much in the vein of Super Mario 64, this is a 3D platforming game which could even be compared with the PlayStation game, Blasto. Your character can jump, shoot and communicate to achieve his mission goals, which is basically to run around collecting the appropriate objects. The preview copy we bashed around with here at Hyper HQ showcased a pretty graphics engine, but suffered from stiff controls and camera angles that seemed to drift away from where you wanted them to be. As long as these flaws are improved, Starshot is looking like a



pretty promising 3D platforming experience. Certainly the character design is excellent, and the game is oozing with colour and humour, which is a good start. Should be fun.

You've played the Game.... Now see the video!

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## Libero Grande

PLAYSTATION

AVAILABLE: NOVEMBER  
 CATEGORY: SPORTS  
 PLAYERS: 1-??  
 PUBLISHER: NAMCO

wow-o-meter



Here's an interesting concept... a soccer game in the third-person - that is, you play as only one of the players and see the entire game from over their shoulder. "Surely this wouldn't work!?" you're thinking... well actually, it works pretty darn well! The major problem of not being able to see where all your team mates are is solved with a few simple commands your player can "order" much like you would order your wingmen to perform certain functions in a space shooter. As you're running down the field, in support of a fellow team mate who has possession, you can order him to pass it to you if you feel that you're open. Likewise, you can order them to tackle if you see a good opportunity that they're not aware of. Then simply, it's up to you when you get the ball to avoid the opposition with fancy footwork or to pass it to a team mate if you're looking a little overwhelmed.

It's all very arcade-like, and in fact plays just like a soccer game you'd expect to play in the arcades. The graphics are solid, smooth and even damn pretty at times too. This is an interesting concept that may just revolutionise the soccer computer game. **EF**



more life-like all the time! The upcoming release of NBA Live '99 (number five in the series) promises to be the best EA basketball game yet (or so they promise). Everything a basketball freak could want will be on the cart - from player customisation and true-to-life player skills to full season play and management features. Graphics are always a priority too of course, and NBA Live '99 should have some of the latest greatest visuals

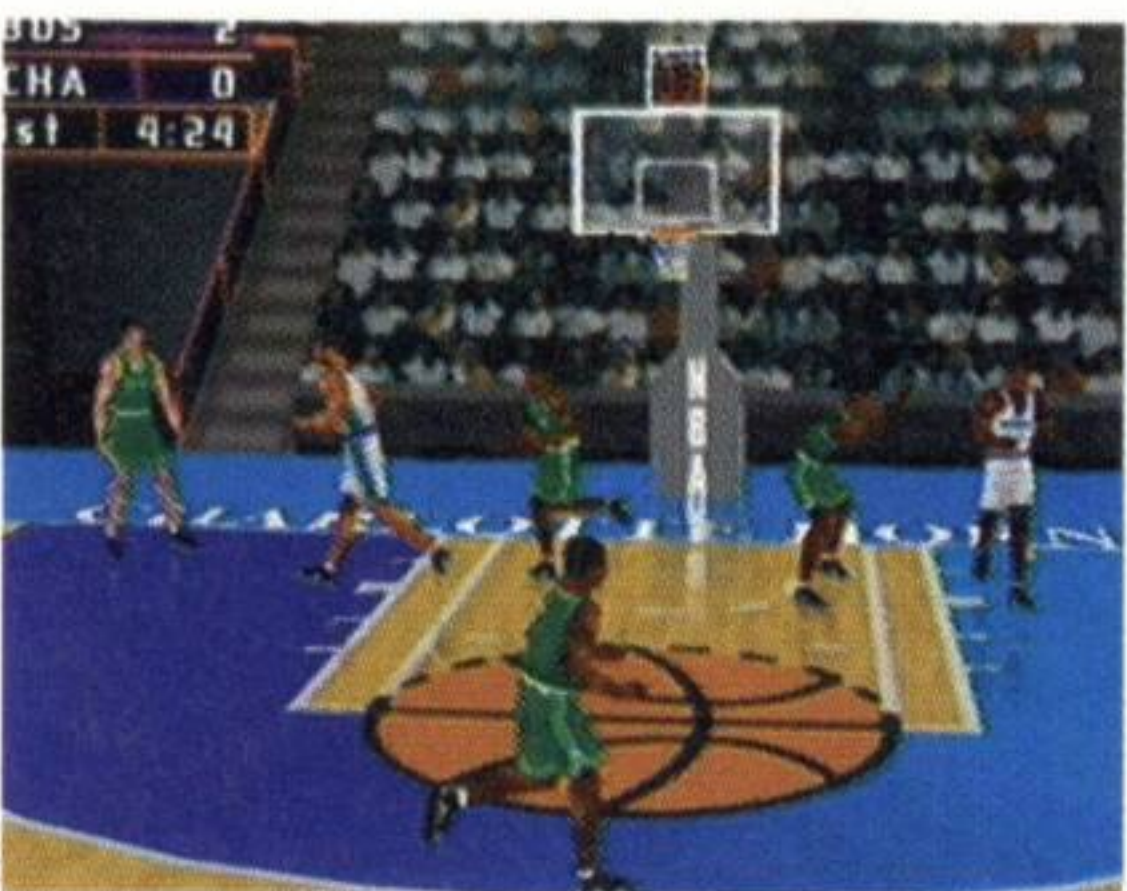


## NBA Live '99

NINTENDO 64

AVAILABLE: NOVEMBER  
 CATEGORY: SPORTS  
 PLAYERS: 1-4  
 PUBLISHER: EA SPORTS

wow-o-meter



Basketball games - a simulation of being very bloody tall. Not only that, but you get to express some major athleticism on the court and pull off stoupid dunks you could only dream about in real life. Thanks to EA Sports, though, console basketball sims are getting

that the N64 is capable of producing - smooth motion-captured animation and excellent detail (350 NBA players had their faces captured and modelled onto the polygons), culminating in the possibly the best N64 basketball sim ever! But if a hard-core sim doesn't appeal to you, then you'll be pleased to hear that a funky Arcade option has been included, which will play a much more entertaining "exaggerated" version of the sport for beginners or gamers just after a quick thrill. There's even a split-screen shoot-out mode! Cool. **EF**



# LET THEM EAT LEAD!

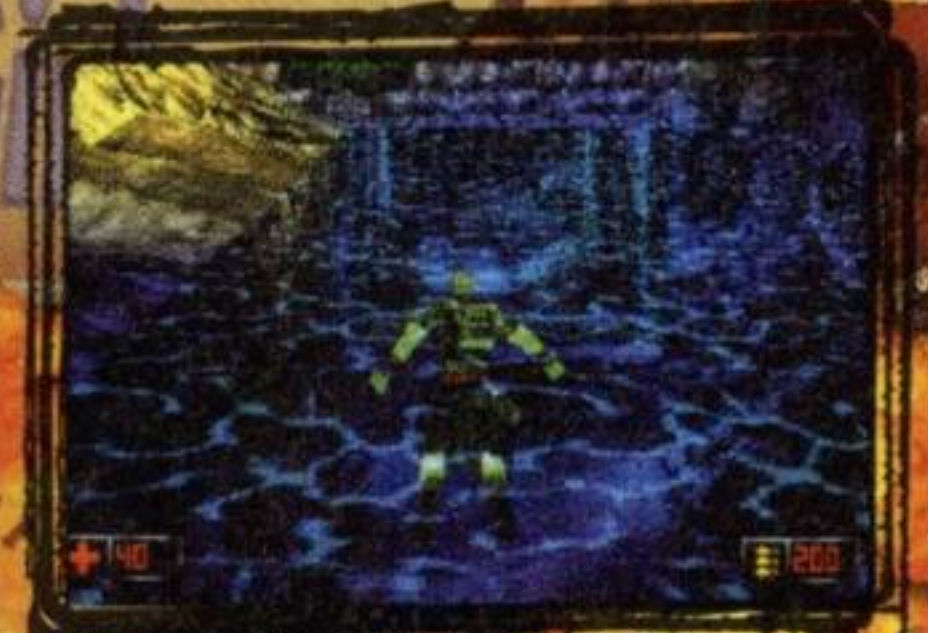


## DUKE NUKEM TIME TO KILL

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## Shogo: M.A.D.

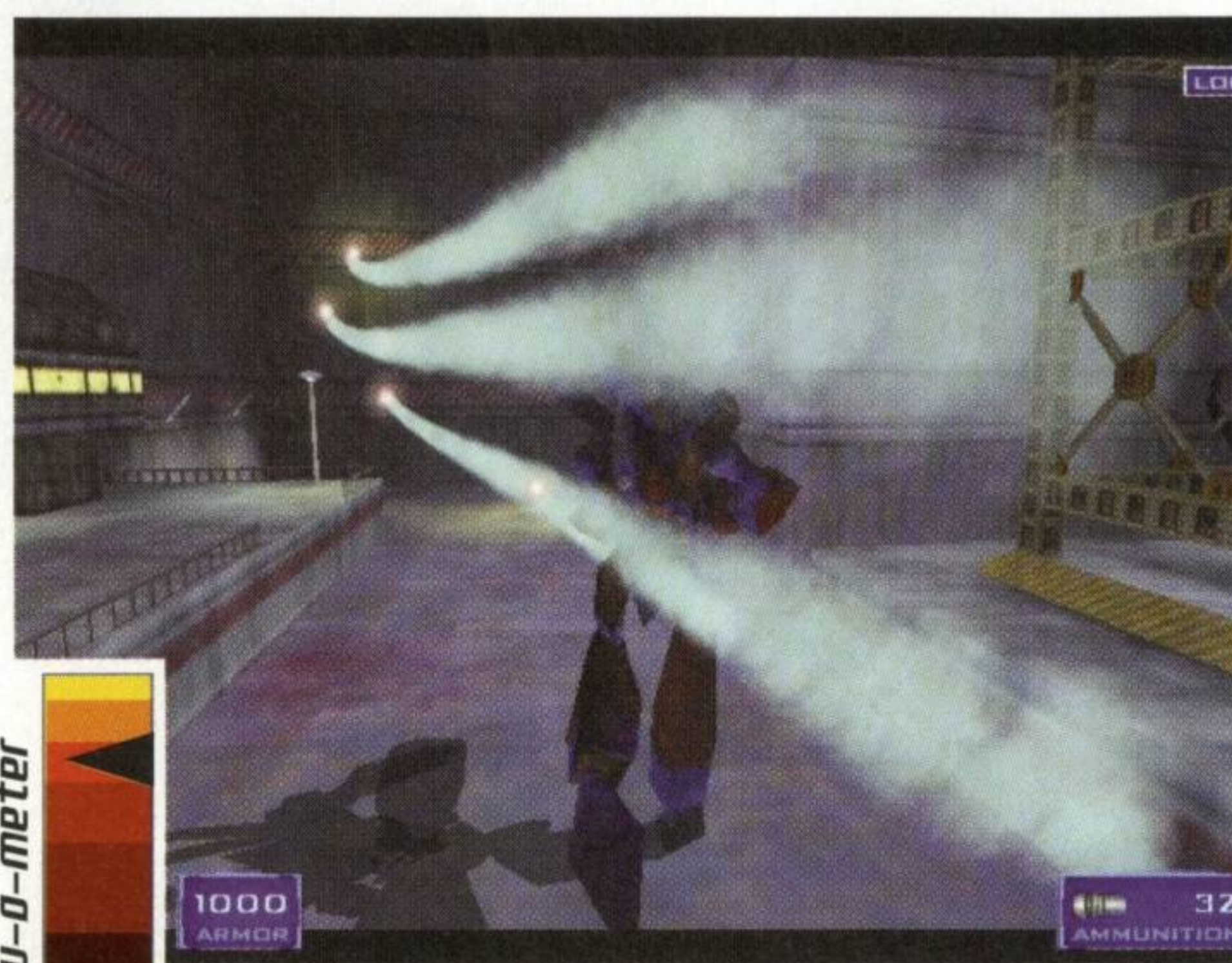
PC

**AVAILABLE: NOVEMBER**  
**CATEGORY: FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER**  
**PLAYERS: 1-MULTI**  
**PUBLISHER: MONOLITH SOFTWARE**

Ever wanted to play a game which feels like you're taking part in a true Anime? Shogo: Mobile Armour Division is the closest thing yet. One minute you're on the surface of a planet in your "mobile armour suit" (essentially a more mobile Mech which can also transform into other forms, like a vehicle) and the next you're wandering the corridors of a spaceship listen-

ing to conversations and discovering the storyline. Supposedly, the storyline is so intertwined with the action that the game will not play out the same way twice. You play the role of Sanjuro, a soldier in the United Corporate Authority, and you're out to redeem yourself after a failed mission in which your teammates and girlfriend are lost and presumed killed.

Shogo utilises a unique game engine called Littech (as opposed to the Quake engine or Unreal engine) and thus will have features unseen in other shooters. Certainly the graphics are smooth, and the weapons effects awesome, though there is a heavily Anime-



wow-o-meter

inspired cartoon style pervading the overall design which prevents the game from ever feeling "realistic". This isn't a terrible thing though, as the whole Anime style of the characters you interact with, the story and the action is unique to the first-person shooter genre and instantly makes Shogo that much more appealing than the other "Quake clones" on the market. **EF**



## Shane Warne Cricket '98

PLAYSTATION/PC

**AVAILABLE:**  
**CATEGORY: SPORTS**  
**PLAYERS: 1-4**  
**PUBLISHER: CODEMASTERS**

Finally we had a chance to play an early version of the upcoming Shane Warne Cricket '98 from Codemasters, and it's shaping up to be a summer smash.

The first thing which strikes you like a bouncer straight between the eyes, is the amazingly realistic motion capture which makes Shane Warne Cricket '98 the most realistic looking cricket game yet - just like the real thing! Players stretch, batsmen look around the field and you even see them run out onto the ground at the beginning of a match - with accurate commentary from some of the best in the business, this is the closest a videogame has ever come to making you feel like you're watching it on the TV, and yet directing the action.

The gameplay is brilliantly simple - to bowl, you sim-



wow-o-meter

ply select where you want the ball to pitch and then decide between roughly three different deliveries, with the d-pad affecting speed or swing. For batting, you can see where the bowler will pitch, so you simply select your shot from either a normal shot or hard slog with the d-pad determining the style of shot. With three different difficulty levels, you can configure the game to be as demanding as you'd like in terms of accuracy. All the official players are here, as well as all types of game modes from World Cup to Test cricket and even practice modes in the nets. We look forward to seeing how well the final game turns out. Go Warnie! **EF**

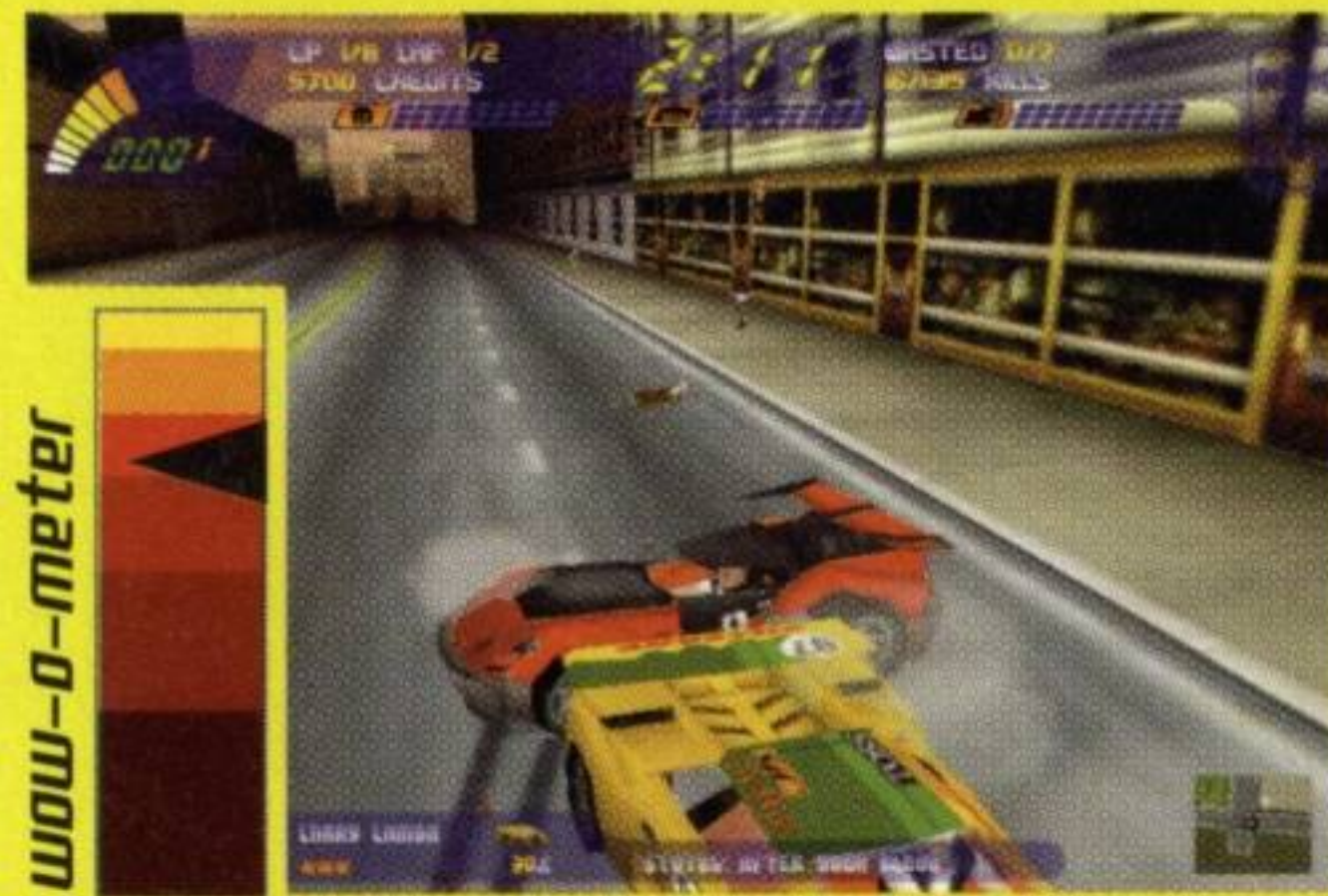
# Carmageddon 2

PC/NINTENDO 64/PLAYSTATION/MAC

AVAILABLE: NOVEMBER  
 CATEGORY: DRIVING/KILLING  
 PLAYERS: 1-8 (PC)  
 PUBLISHER: SCI

Had a bad day at school/work? Carmageddon 2 will be the game people the world over will be using to vent their unhappiness and frustration! Poor, innocent polygon pedestrians will be splattered beyond recognition just to make a bunch of us feel better - and in Carmageddon 2, you can be even more creative with how you go about splatting those poor suckers! With the PC demo recently being posted online, we thought we should elaborate on our E3 sneak peek, and fill you in on what you can expect this November.

Supporting a brand-spanking new 3D accelerated engine, Carmageddon 2: Carpcocalypse Now takes the virtual roadkill to a whole new level! The good old racing concept is still there, however this time you can expect to cause more havoc and destruction than ever before. The Carmageddon engine is polygon based now, so just about everything you see can be smashed to a pulp by your car. Being true 3D objects, everything will appear more solid



and pedestrians more squishable, innocent traffic can get in the way (they actually follow the road rules, stop at lights etc.) but your car is just as vulnerable as everything else in the game. Expect to lose bumper bars, wheels, doors, windows, your engine or maybe your life as you crash through the huge glass windows of city buildings or joy ride through the nearest shopping mall! Nintendo 64 owners will get an experience a little closer to home too, with full support for rumble paks!

The single player game will be mission based, though your objectives won't detract from the "go anywhere" racing concept we all loved about the original Carmageddon. Various powerups lying around the map for your car to pick up help to make the carnage more creative than ever, including bizarre weapons like repulsion which throws your opponent's car halfway downtown with a coil-like beam.

In Carpcocalypse Now, nothing is sacred. It'll be interesting to see how this one goes with the censors, though some releases of the game will feature aliens instead of human pedestrians to help tone things down a bit. Yeah, right! ■





## Jest

NINTENDO 64

AVAILABLE: NOV/DEC  
 CATEGORY: ADVENTURE/PLATFOMER  
 PLAYERS: 1  
 PUBLISHER: OCEAN

Ocean, now owned by Infogrames, have been churning out a slew of Nintendo 64 carts of late - Mission Impossible, Wetrix, Fighter's Destiny and now here comes an unexpectedly original title, Jest. Placing you in the shiny shoes of an aspiring jester, Jax, this is an otherworldly platforming adventure from British development team Curved Logic.

After training as a Joker, Jax is finally given the opportunity to enter the Humorous (yes, it's a place)



wow-o-meter

and battle it out against the Council of Seven (or more accurately, their magical counterparts) and the wild magics within to attain the distinguished position of Jester. The Humorous is divided up into a number of different lands with different themes, like any good platformer! There's the ice-world, haunted castles, gangster land and even Hell for Jax to explore in full 3D. Whilst Jax doesn't exactly go around cracking jokes, there's certainly a great deal of visual humour going on here to keep you smiling whilst you play. Though Jest looks like another Super Mario clone, the gameplay is quite different. Jax must track down creatures in a certain order and "tag" them, though making a mistake will split the creature in two, and if time runs out the dreaded Tarot will come after you. Truly original.



## Extreme-G 2

NINTENDO 64

AVAILABLE: NOVEMBER  
 CATEGORY: RACING  
 PLAYERS: 1-4  
 PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM

Previously thought to be using a new Nintendo 64 memory cartridge upgrade, Extreme-G 2 is almost upon us and it's a stand alone cart, though it may still yet support a high-res mode if Nintendo ever

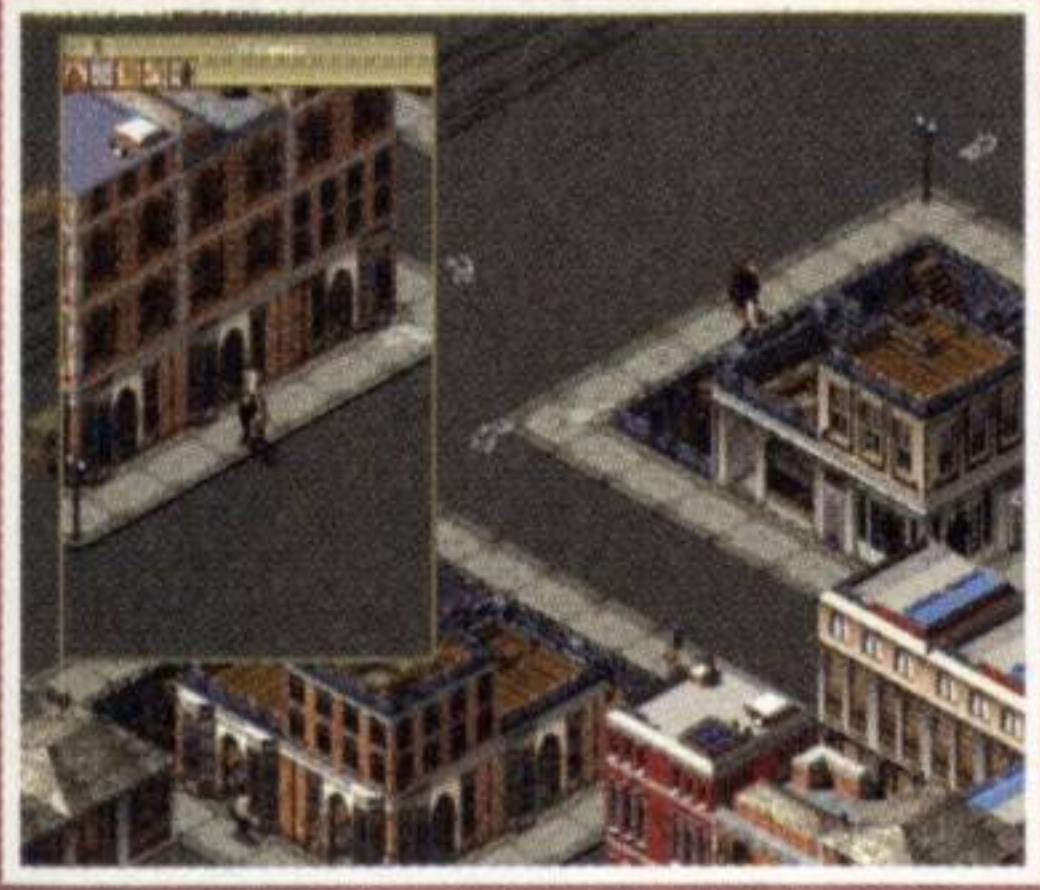
wow-o-meter

release the RAM upgrade. The game itself, however, has gone through some major changes and improvements. Now we have a 90% finished version of the game here at Hyper HQ, we've been taking a closer look at how this sequel to Extreme-G is turning out.

The first obvious improvements have been made to the graphics, with Extreme-G 2 playing faster, smoother and with more detail than it's predecessor. The tracks

are wider, easier to navigate and the controls have been tweaked to provide the gamer with a better handle on the intensely fast action. The weaponry has been changed to make it a bit easier to understand in the thick of it, and some of the effects look fantastic - the lighting in Extreme-G 2 is colourful and flashy. The fogging that spoiled the racing experience in Extreme-G has been all but removed for Extreme-G 2... it is still there, but it's been disguised so well, you'll never be distracted from where the track is actually going. Huge jumps, tunnels, multiple paths on each circuit and hidden sections of the track help to make Extreme-G 2 look like a racing game to look out for.

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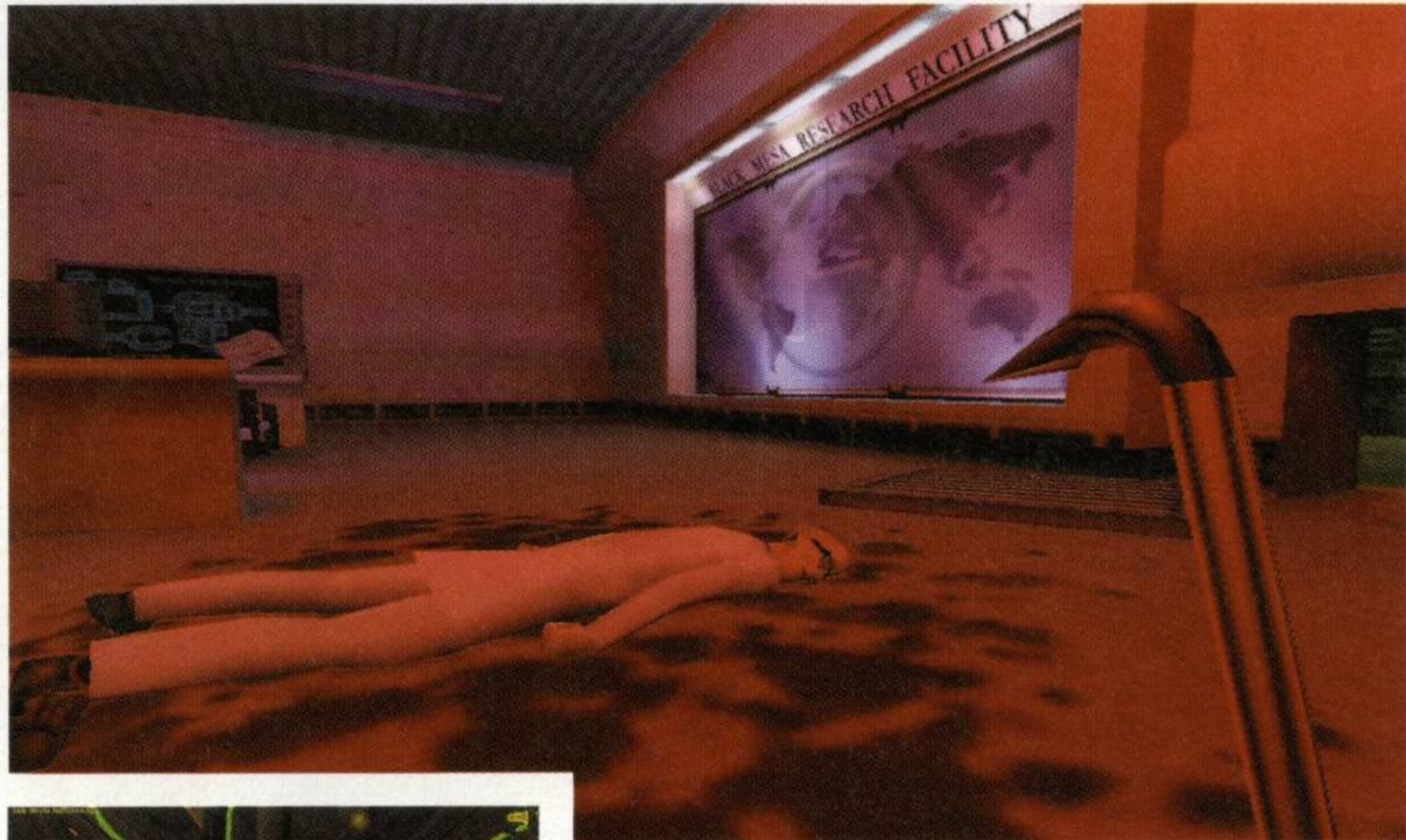
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## Half Life

PC

**AVAILABLE: NOVEMBER**  
**CATEGORY: 1ST PERSON SHOOTER**  
**PLAYERS: 1-32**  
**PUBLISHER: SIERRA**



We've previewed Half Life twice before, but we've now seen more of the game, and it looks like a likely contender for PC game of the year at this rate.

Half Life has an unparalleled sense of you being a person in a real life environment, mostly due to the other inhabitants, and fantastic level design which actually looks like a very plausible location. The game starts with you making your way to work. You are Gordon Freeman, a scientist at a high security research facility. To ensure there's actually a game to play, the experiment you were participating in goes horribly wrong (this is all in game... Not a rendered intro), and you seem to make some sort of gateway or connection to an alien race or another dimension. From here, the research facility becomes a hellish nightmare, which you need to escape from.

Besides dealing with some very cool alien nasties, there are government forces that are now out to get you, and this is where the AI shines. Grunts call out to each other and work as a team. None of this "Oh I'll just run into the room and jump around like Rambo taking out these three

g u y s " nonsense. Try that, and you'll get killed.

These guys chase you, use grenades when it's advantageous, and basically don't miss!

Not only is the enemy AI cool, but there are security guards and scientists who will help, and even follow you around. Security guards fight along side you, and scientists offer medical assistance, and unlock doors they know the codes for.

There are nifty texturing effects, like variable texture detail levels for different surfaces. For example, a scientist may have low texture detail in his lab coat, but his face will be very detailed. This way, you get high detail where it's needed, slowing down the game as little as possible. You also leave marks on the walls if you hit them, and if you shoot a creature that is standing in front of a wall... you paint the wall red (or green, depending on what it was!). Even cooler, you can spray stuff on the walls, which is going to be gobs of fun in deathmatch.

We were unable to deathmatch the version we saw, but there's talk of levels opening up extra areas as more people join the game, and closing them off as people leave, which would be a huge step forward for balanced deathmatch games. This feature may only be included with Team Fortress 2 though (which does come exclusively with Half Life), but we'll have to see. If that wasn't enough, the game also comes with Worldcraft Pro (2.0), so you can make your own Half Life maps (and Quake 1 & 2, Hexen 2).

This is one of those games I could go on forever about, so I'll leave the rest for when we see the final build of the game, which will hopefully be next issue... Please, no more delays!

BT



**YOU CAN BRING IT DOWN  
WITH THE NOD OF YOUR HEAD.**

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**RADICA:**



# UPCOMING RELEASES

The complete guide to what's coming out over the next couple of months here in Australia

★ Hot stuff on the way...

## PC

### NOVEMBER

- Abe's Exoddus ★
- AFL '99
- Blackstone Chronicles
- Carmageddon 2
- Dark Vengeance
- Dawn of War
- Dead Ball Zone
- Delta Force
- European Air War ★
- Expendable
- FIFA '99
- Falcon 4.0 ★
- Fallout 2 ★
- Fighting Steel
- Future Cop: LAPD
- Heavy Gear 2 ★
- Kings Quest 8
- Luftwaffe Commander
- Moto Racer 2
- NHL Hockey
- Powerslide ★
- Pro 18 World Golf
- Prof. Sports Car Racing
- Rayman 2
- Real Feel Golf
- Rivals Ultimate Racing
- Ruud Gullit Striker
- Saga Rage of the Vikings
- Settlers 3
- Star Trek: Birth of the Federation
- SU-27 Flanker V2
- Superbikes
- The Creed
- Tiberian Sun

- Tomb Raider 3 ★
- Top Gun 2
- Viva Football
- VR Football
- Warhammer: Chaos Gate
- WCW Nitro
- Wired
- Wormageddon

### DECEMBER

- Alien Intelligence
- Asteroids
- Baldur's Gate
- Beavis & Butthead
- Civ 2: Test of Time
- Dead Unity
- Earthworm Jim 3
- Fighter Squadron
- Heretic 2
- Mordor 2
- Rally Racing Simulation
- Star Trek: Starfleet Command
- Wild Metal Country

## PlayStation

### NOVEMBER

- Abe's Exoddus ★
- AFL '99
- Blasto
- Brunswick Bowling
- Bust A Groove
- Carmageddon 2
- Castrol Honda Superbikes
- Clock Tower 2
- Colony Wars Vengeance ★
- Coolboarders 3
- Expendable
- FIFA '99



Abe's Exoddus

- Global Domination
- Knockout Kings
- Lemmings
- Libero Grande
- NBA Live '99
- NHL Hockey
- Psybadek
- Rogue Trip
- Ruud Gullit Striker
- Sensible Soccer 2000
- Streak
- The Contract

- Tiger Woods '99
- Tiny Tank
- Tomb Raider 3 ★
- Viva Football
- Wing Over 2
- Wired

### DECEMBER

- Apocalypse
- Crash Bandicoot 3 ★
- Dead Unity

- Invasion From Beyond
- Pro 18 World Golf
- Prof. Sports Car Racing
- Quake 2 ★
- WCW Nitro 2

## N64

### NOVEMBER

- Body Harvest ★
- Carmageddon 2
- Holy Magic Century
- NBA Live '99
- Rayman 2
- Top Gear Overdrive
- WCW Revenge
- Wipeout 64 ★
- Zelda: Ocarina of Time ★

### DECEMBER

- Egypte
- Fighting Force 64
- Gold Nugget Gaming
- Star Wars: Rogue Squadron



Powerslide



Fallout 2



# nuclear war

good was the news!



insane units! Lo-tech mastodons and giant scorpions. series 9 seeders and weed killers. hi-tech anaconda tanks and enforcers.



51 non-linear missions. a complete mission editor. full-on unit editor. And up to 8 maniacs can battle over 20 multiplayer maps.



gorgeously rendered graphics mean that units look like units, terrain looks like terrain and war looks like war!



True fog of war lets you set up ambushes and hide from the enemy. FAMOUS facial motion capture brings mission briefings to life.

## KKND2 KROSSFIRE

**WHAT IS K.I.?** K.I. IS KILLER INTELLIGENCE. K.I. IS TO A.I. WHAT GIANT MUTANT SCORPION BATTALIONS ARE TO DEER. K.I. IS A COMPUTER OPPONENT THAT ACTS EXACTLY LIKE THE POST APOCALYPSE MUTANT WARMONGER IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE. IT UNDERSTANDS TOPOLOGY - WHERE TO PLACE GUARD TOWERS, HOW MANY UNITS TO HOLD BACK FOR DEFENSE. IT WILL ENTER YOUR BASE THROUGH THE LEAST DEFENDED SECTION. AND DO AS MUCH DAMAGE AS POSSIBLE. IT SENDS SCOUTS TO SEE WHAT YOU'RE PLANNING. IT RETREATS. IT WANTS TO **KRAUSH** YOUR ARMIES, **KILL** YOU 'N' **DESTROY** YOUR DIGNITY. MUTANTS DO IT WITH **K.I.**... WHO ARE YOU TO ARGUE?



[www.melbournehouse.com/kknd2](http://www.melbournehouse.com/kknd2)

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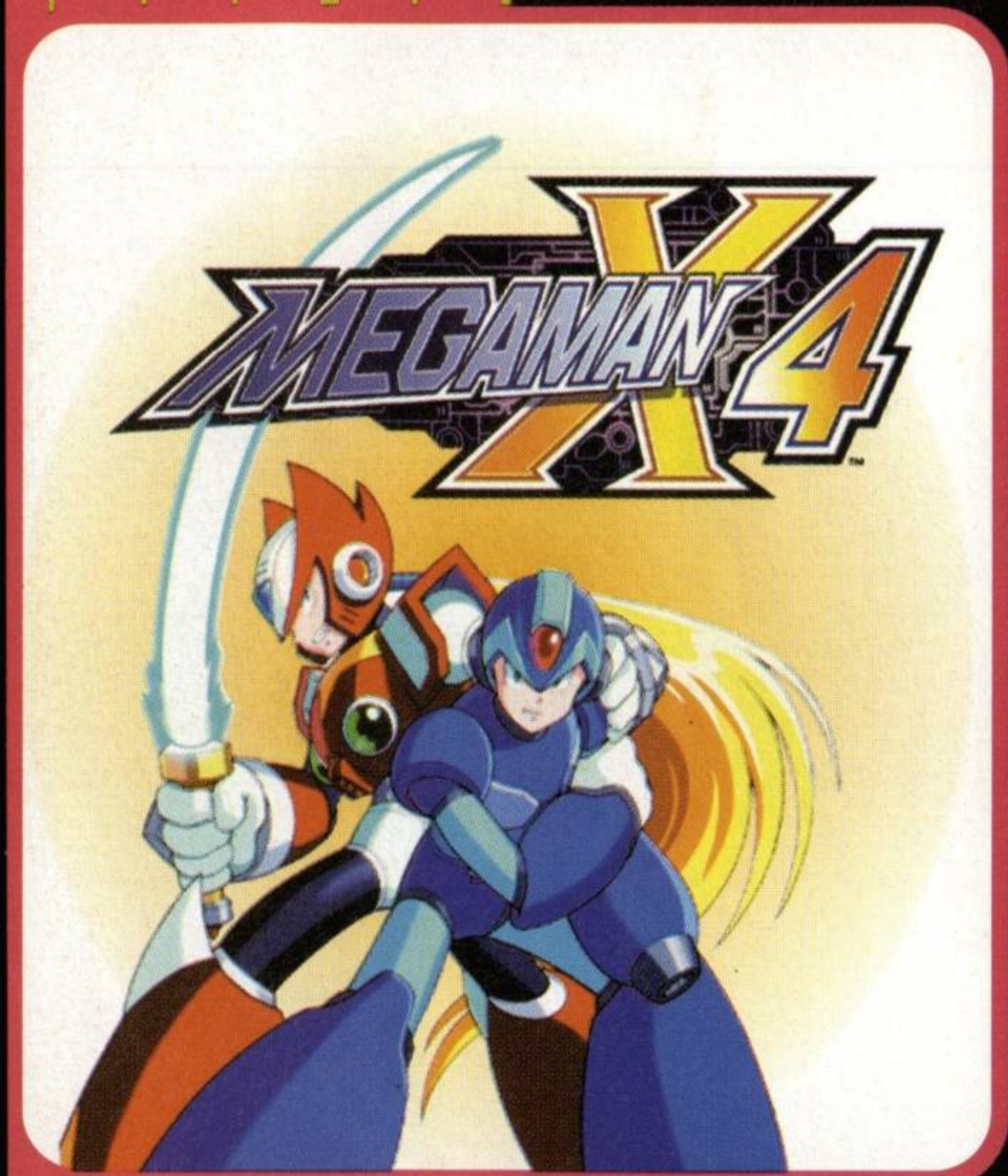
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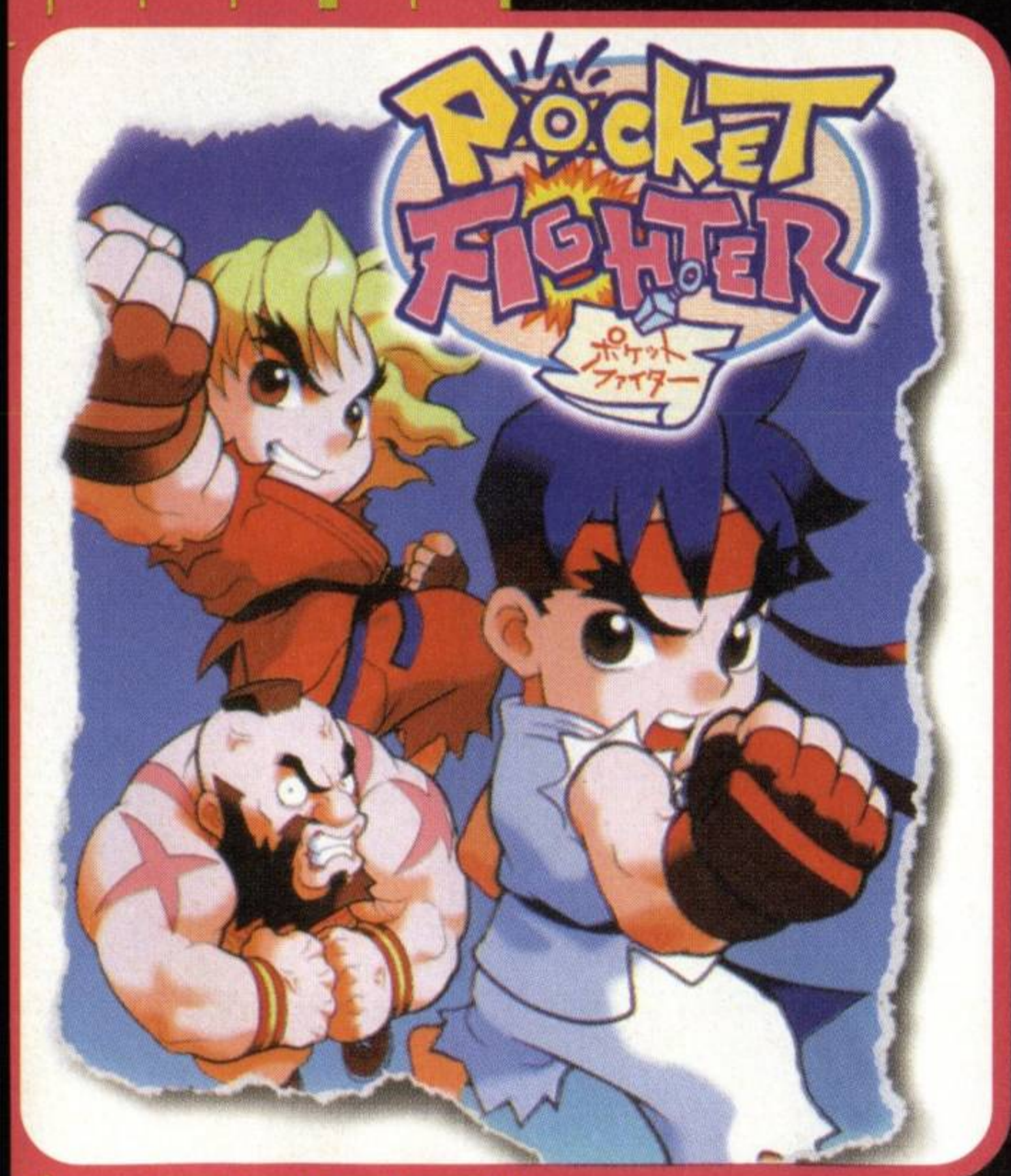
## THE BLUE BOMBER BLASTS INTO A WHOLE NEW DIMENSION

- Join an all new Mega Man on his Ultimate Quest in 3-D!
- Awesome weapons...An Epic Story...Non-Stop Action...  
Legendary Gameplay
- Explore huge 3-D environments for clues, secret pathways, power-ups, weapons and other surprises.



## X-PLOSIVE GAMEPLAY! X-TREME GRAPHICS! MEGA MAN X4

- Play as Mega Man X or Zero in two separate adventures
- 8 new X-hunter levels with vivid colour, brilliant detail and insane bosses
- Anime style cinemas introduce the compelling story lines
- Master new attacks: the air hover and Z-saber tactics



## INNOCENT BUT DEADLY... PINT SIZED CHAMPIONS PACK A PUNCH

- Features 12 pint-sized Capcom characters from the Street Fighters and Darkstalkers fighting game series
- Simple gameplay controls, outrageous combat and hilarious supercombos
- Edit fighter mode allows you to customise Pocket Fighter sub-characters
- 5 modes of gameplay include arcade battle, free battle, running battle, training and edit fighter

# MEGAMAN LEGENDS



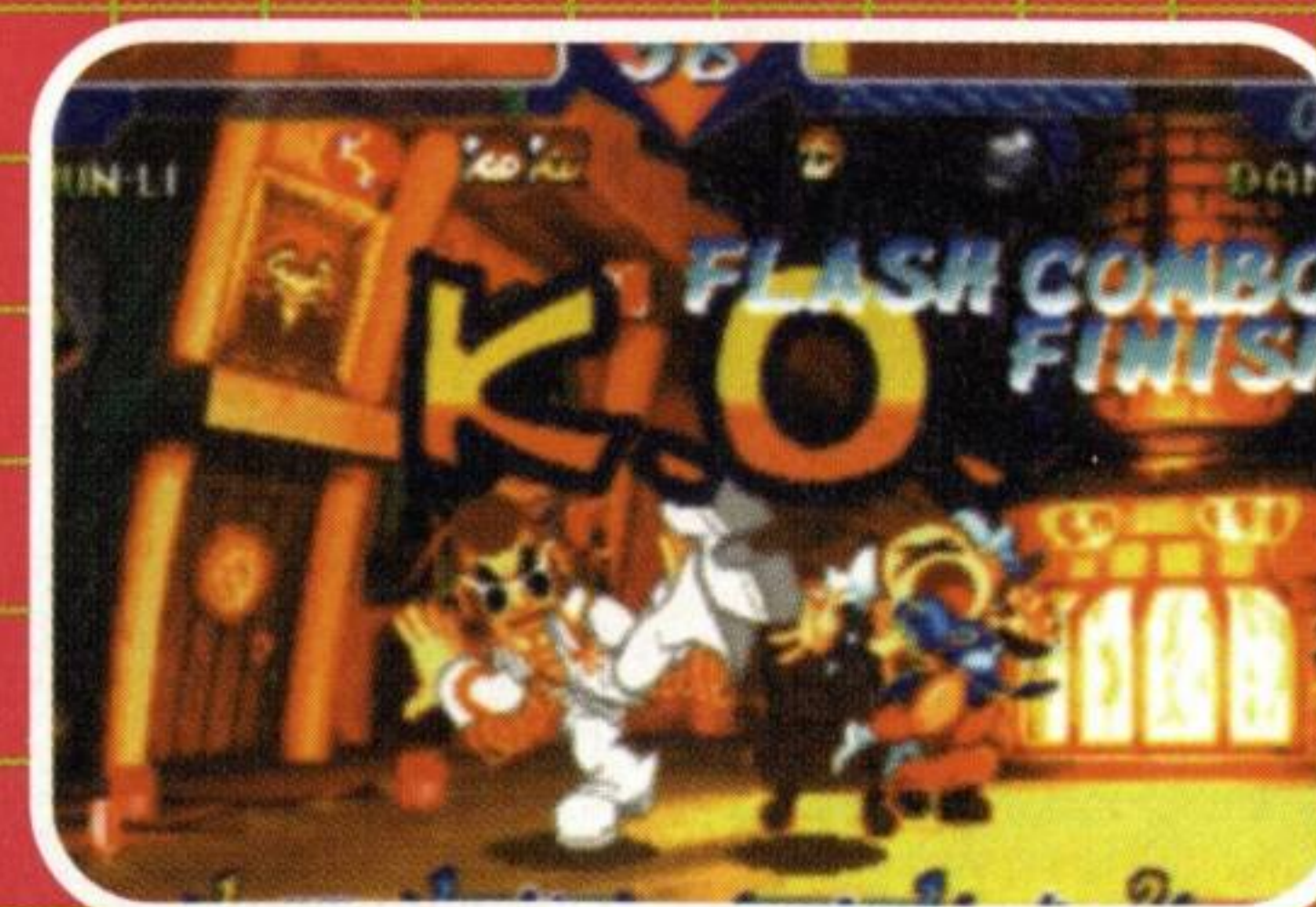
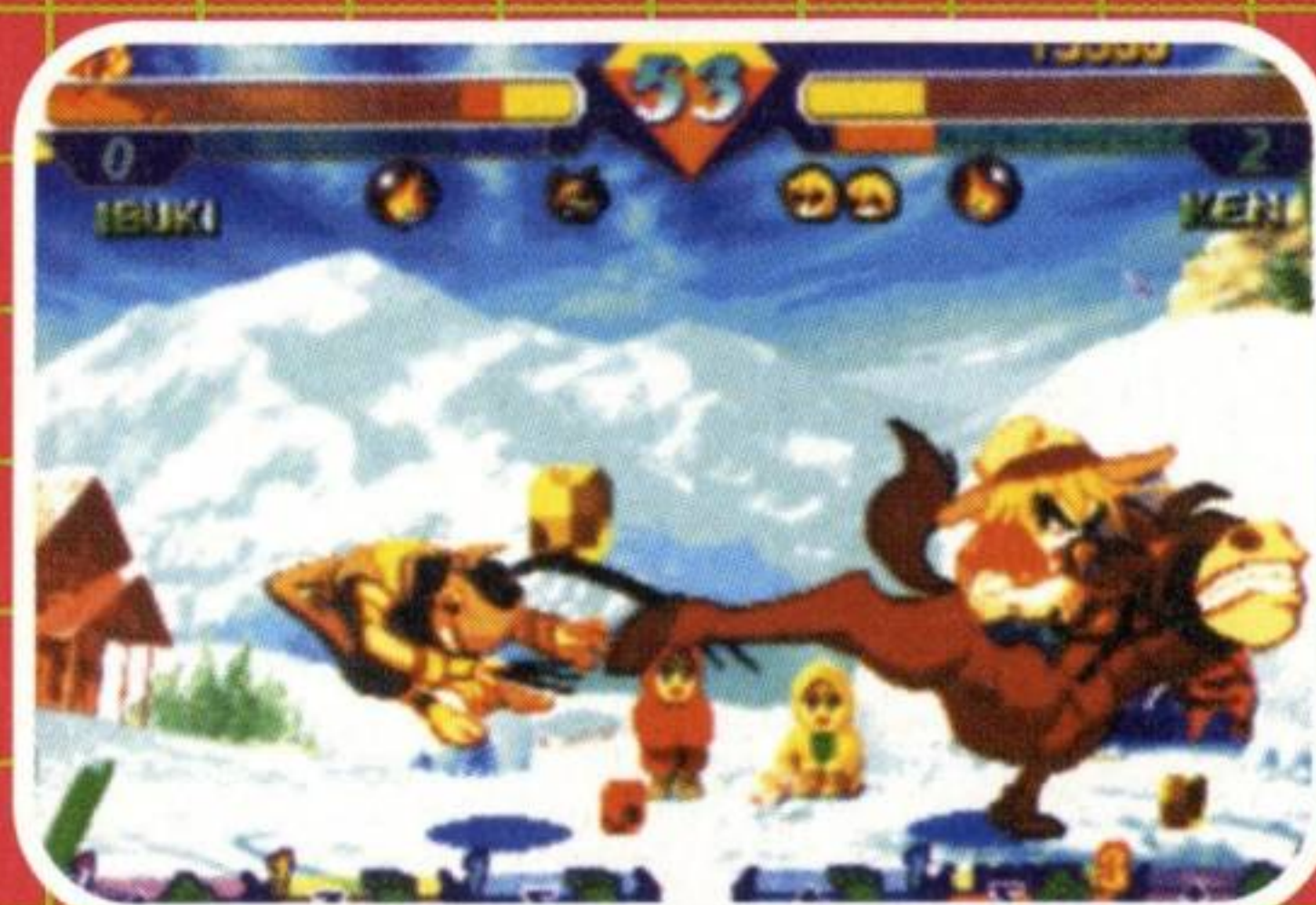
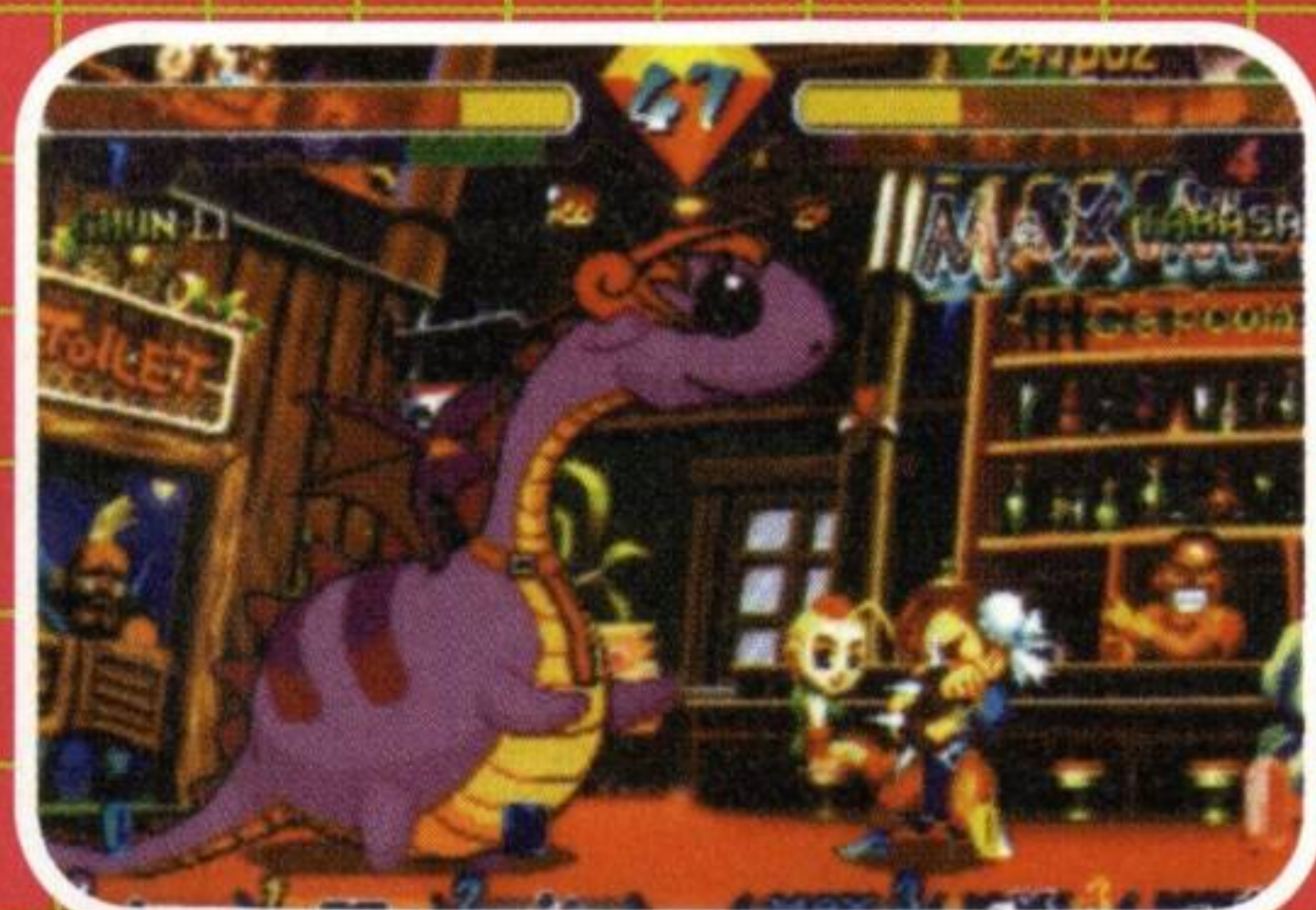
# MEGAMAN LEGENDS

# MEGAMAN X4



# MEGAMAN X4

# POCKET FIGHTER



# POCKET FIGHTER



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# Freestyle Pro

**PC**

**Type:** Gamepad  
**R.R.P.:** \$129  
**Distributor:** Microsoft

Let us introduce you to Microsoft's new gamepad - the Freestyle Pro. At first glance it may just look like a new take on the Sidewinder Pro, but actually the Freestyle has a whole new feature which could revolutionise the way you control games on your PC! Besides having the standard 6 buttons, 2 shoulder buttons, a "shift" button (to give other buttons secondary instructions), D-pad and cool new throttle wheel, the Freestyle Pro's big attraction is its infrared directional control. What this means, is that you can tilt the gamepad in any direction, and your spaceship or car will respond accordingly! Essentially, this means your gaming will be more immersive than ever, as a



sudden reflex in your hands will correspond with your actions on screen. This is most funky with flight sims and space combat shooters, where you really need that fluid movement - the Freestyle Pro really helping to make you feel like you're "there".

Unlike Force Feedback controllers, you don't need the game you're playing to support the gamepad's features - the Freestyle Pro's drivers

take care of everything so that you can get gaming immediately. The concept of using the Freestyle Pro like a joystick in games like Quake 2 is quite interesting, with you controlling your "looking" with how you tilt the gamepad. Of course, racing games work really well too, with your car turning left and right with wheel-like motions with the gamepad. The Freestyle's movement is

also proportional to how much your on-screen character or craft turns, so subtle movements will reflect appropriately in-game.

Installation is a breeze, and although we were skeptical at first as to whether the Freestyle would function accurately, we were pleasantly surprised at how well the gamepad responds. All up, the Freestyle is a great new way to play games on your PC, and it's definitely worth checking out.

EF

# Gamester PSX Rumble Force Steering Wheel

**PLAYSTATION**

**Type:** Steering Wheel  
**Distributor:** Livewire  
**R.R.P.:** \$169.95

As Sony introduce new features like the rumble effect with the dual shock, it was only a matter of time before someone decided to capitalise and add these features into other peripherals for the same system. LMP have created a new vibrating steering wheel to add to their Gamester lineup, and it's pretty darn good.

Most importantly, the wheel is one of the hardest to turn, which is contrary to what many may think, a very good thing. Loose, floppy steering wheels lead to oversteering and a huge lack of accuracy. It's far easy to gradually increase your turning rate when using a wheel that has some spring to it, and the Gamester PSX RF Wheel has it right. The only downside to the stiffness is that there's a certain amount of force required to move the wheel at all, and the first few degrees of turning the wheel have no visible effect, so making that minor adjustment will take a little getting used to.

The rumble effect that is built into the wheel appears

to be driven by sound levels, rather than a compatibility to the dual shock games. There's a knob for sensitivity, and one for strength. So the realism of the effect is determined by both how well you set these levels to the game in question, and also how much sound the game generates for a collision, since you want the big rumbles to happen when you hit something obviously. We tested it with Gran Turismo, and the rumble didn't really match the actions in the game, but the wheel still felt great, and considering no extra batteries are required to enable the rumble, it still turned out

to be a great wheel.

All the other basics are covered, such as a complete assortment of buttons and a F1 style gear stick mounted on the wheel. At this stage, this is marginally the best steering wheel for the PlayStation, although simply making it rumble on dual shock signals rather than sound would easily improve it.

DT



Microsoft



# MOTOCROSS MADNESS

...THE CONTROLLER HARD RIGHT AND YOUR BIKE MOVES HARD RIGHT TO AVOID A PILE-UP

...THE CONTROLLER HARD LEFT AND USE MUSCLES YOU NEVER KNEW YOU HAD AS YOU DIVE INTO A LOOP-TO-LOOP

...THE CONTROLLER HARDLY AT ALL AND COMMAND THE GAME WITH EVER SO SUBTLE MOVEMENTS THAT'LL LEAVE YOUR OPPONENT IN TEARS

Welcome to the Microsoft® SideWinder™ Freestyle Pro joystick. Now you can throw yourself into the action. Literally. Every on-screen movement is controlled with your own movement. It's called motion-sensing technology. Accurate and highly responsive, not to mention works with your favourite games. It's programmable buttons and super slick design fits your hand like a glove. Which is handy when you're throwing yourself from one side of the room to the other.



Freestyle Pro

MICROSOFT  
**SIDEWINDER**

Want more? Visit [microsoft.com/SideWinder](http://microsoft.com/SideWinder)

**Microsoft Motocross Madness™ comes free with the Freestyle Pro.**

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# Pump Action Gun

**PLAYSTATION/SATURN**

**Type:** Light Gun  
**Distributor:** UbiSoft  
**RRP:** \$79.95

The appeal of a pump-action light gun is an obvious one to any gamer. Not having to point away from the screen to re-load being the most obvious reason, though the whole feeling of coolness you get from pretending you're some bad-ass with an itchy trigger finger is also hard to ignore. With the Namco GunCon being the obvious light-gun of choice for PlayStation owners at least, it's interesting to see how the Pump Action Gun stands a comparison test. Well, after a few rounds on Time Crisis, the Pump Action Gun comes up trumps. The re-load button positioned on the handle, is perfect for resting your thumb on and using without causing any movement to



your gun hand, which worked beautifully with Time Crisis. Unfortunately, the pump-action re-load device at the nose of the gun - which is essentially what you're paying for - is more a novelty than anything else, because the movement needed to pump it affects your aim and tires your arm. The gun's accuracy, though, is excellent - at least as good as the GunCon. Every button and the

trigger give a nice audible click when used too, meaning the Pump Action Gun should also stand the test of time. As far as Saturn owners go, this is the best Light Gun you can buy. PlayStation owners should be wary of the price, but comforted knowing this is an excellent light gun. **EF**

# Maxi Gamer Phoenix

**PC**  
**Type:** Video Card  
**Distributor:** UbiSoft  
**R.R.P:** \$299

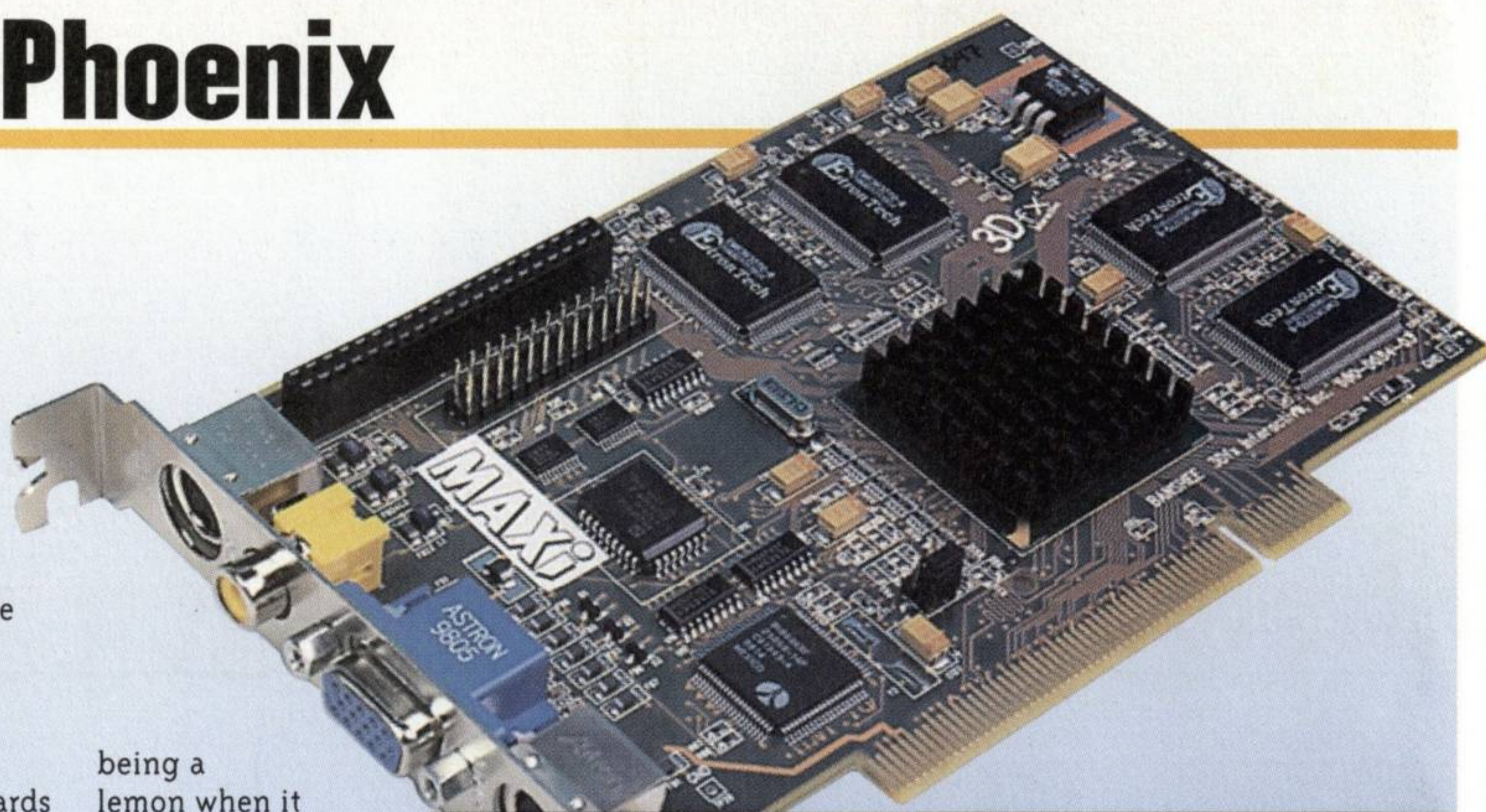
There's been several 2D/3D cards pop up, even since our feature on buying a PC, and the 128 bit 100 MHz Voodoo Banshee cards have been amongst the most anticipated.

Essentially you get an ultra powerful 2D card, with all the visual effect that you'd get with a Voodoo2 card, and 3D performance that is the top of the heap of 2D/3D cards available, but not quite up to using a stand alone Voodoo2 card. Considering the price though, it's certainly much cheaper to buy a card like this rather than buy two Voodoo2 cards to be able to play a game in 1024 x 768 resolution.

The Maxi Gamer Phoenix can support resolutions of up to 1920 x 1440 in 32 bit colour (for 2D applications). The card installs easily and is available in both AGP and PCI. If you're after pure 3D grunt, and money isn't an object, a cheaper 2D/3D card and two voodoo2 cards still offers the best results, although the price jump is huge.

If you use the desktop/windows much, then the 2D power of the card comes to the fore and is totally worth it... And it's far from

being a lemon when it comes to 3D. This is my pick for those with a lower end PC (P2-200 or lower) that don't intend to upgrade soon. Those with top end PCs will get better frame rates out of the Riva TNT cards (due to the differences in fill rates for both cards). **DT**



## Maxi Gamer performance

Card	Quake II	Incoming	Forsaken
<b>Maxi Gamer Phoenix</b>			
(640x480x16)	57.9	59.97	178.96
(800x600x16)	44.9	60.40	97.84
(1024x768x16)	29.5	45.86	78.92

Tested on a PC with:  
 Intel Pentium II 300, Abit BH6 Motherboard, 64MB SDRAM (PC100)

# Buyers Guide

The guide to purchasing the best value games hardware around!

Item	RRP	Notes	
<b>PSX</b>			
Memory Card	Memory Card 2MEG	\$29.95	It costs the same as the Sony card, but stores twice as much.
	Nyko Memory Card x 8	\$49.95	A better buy for those that don't think 120 save game slots is enough at any one time.
Digital Controller	Std Sony Controller	\$29.95	It's certainly not the cheapest, but it has the best feel and reliability.
Analogue Controller	PSX Twin Shock	\$49.95	Pretty much identical to the Sony Dual Shock... but cheaper.
Arcade Stick	Namco Arcade Stick	\$49.95	Solid as all hell, really authentic sensitive arcade button, and a stick that's perfect for whipping out fireballs. Hado-Ken!
Steering Wheel	Gamester Rumble Force	\$169.95	One of the more expensive wheels, but is solid and has a vibration effect.
<b>Pc</b>			
3D Accelerator	Maxi Gamer Pheonix	\$299	Better performance than Voodoo 1 cards. The best cheap option to get 3D.
	Orchid Righteous 3D II	\$585	The top end of the "affordable" 3D accelerators. Best results require a Pentium2, but P1 users will still benefit.
Sound Card	Professional Sound	\$89.95	It's PCI does SB support, 3D Direct sound, and is dirt cheap!
Video Card	ET6100	\$99.95	The best value buy for those who own, or who plan to own a dedicated 3D accelerator
	Maxi Gamer Pheonix	\$299	A 2D/3D card in one. The best value card for those who want some 3D acceleration, and don't have a PII-300 or better. Great 2D performance.
Flightstick	Thrustmaster X-Fighter	\$150	Sure, there's no throttle, but this stick feels great, and will last you for yonks.
	Microsoft Force Feedback-Pro	\$269.95	Not the best in terms of ease of control, but the force feedback adds a whole new dimension.
Gamepad	Microsoft Sidewinder Gamepad	\$79.95	Love em or hate em, Microsoft make great peripherals, and this is no exception
Mouse	Microsoft Wheel Mouse	\$59.95	Works as a three button mouse, and the middle button allows window scrolling.
<b>N64</b>			
Memory Pak	Nyko Hyper Pak	\$59.95	Four times the normal memory storage AND variable Rumble settings. The all in one "Pak"
	Memory 64 DLX	\$29.95	Not only does it have four times the standard memory, but it's only \$5 more expensive than the standard Pak!
Rumble Pak	Gamester Tremor Pak	\$29.95	Not the cheapest Rumble Pak, but it DOESN'T need batteries, making it excellent value.
	Tremor Pack Performance	\$19.95	Two rumble modes, with the strongest being REAL strong. Great for those wanting to put it into a wheel.
Gampad	Mako Pad 64	\$59.95	Expensive, but its design allows you to hold the controller and press every button without moving your hands.
	Docs Controller	\$39.95	\$10 cheaper than the Nintendo standard. Feels better, and comes with auto-fire and slow as well.
Racing Wheel	V3 Racing Wheel 64	\$149.95	Gears on the wheel, really sturdy, great feel, and configurable buttons. Also all allows for Rumble Pak.
	Mad Catz	\$129.95	Cheapest of the actual wheel controllers, includes a gear stick, and built in Rumble Pak. Not amazingly sturdy though.



PIXELS to

POLYGONS

Five years ago Hyper magazine was born. Besides casting a mould for Australian video gaming magazines, Hyper can be looked at as a guide to the history of the gaming boom era we are in today. We get a little retrospective to appreciate just how far video gaming has come in the last 5 years...





# 1994

**H**yper was launched way back in late, late 1993 to a wave of mass hysteria that swept across the nation. Well, across Redfern and a small section of Surry Hills anyway. Or, at the very least, it made us happy. We chose a good time to foist ourselves upon the world, for it was the heyday of 16-bit gaming. The Sega Mega Drive and Super Nintendo were both at the height of their success, both in terms of sales and the quality of games. As far as the latter was concerned, the likes of Streetfighter 2 Turbo, Aladdin and Donkey Kong Country were doing amazing things that stretched both consoles to their absolute limit.

But it couldn't last, of course. 1994 will be remembered as a time of uncertainty. Throughout the year the contenders for the 16-bit crown had been positioning themselves to grab the vacant throne when Sega and Nintendo's reign came to an end. The 3DO was the first to grab our attention. It was hyped as some kind of hybrid family entertainment system, enabling you to play games and watch movies using the one machine, and had tech specs vastly superior to anything the SNES or MD could manage. While it may have sounded great at the time, a combination of confused marketing (statements from EA like "it is much more like watching television than playing a video game" certainly didn't help) and expensive launch price meant the 3DO never really got off the ground. Following a similar path was the Atari Jaguar, this time a 64-bit console as opposed to the 32-bit 3DO. Sadly, Atari's notoriously poor marketing ability, the lack of



game developer support and the single worst control pad in video game history, all meant that the Jaguar was doomed from the start. When we eventually got our hands on one toward the end of the year, we were thoroughly underwhelmed. Despite the modest charms of Cybermorph and Raiden, the Jag never really had a good game made for it.

Sega made a late move to inject some life into the declining Mega Drive with first the Mega CD and then the 32X. Remember them? No, we didn't think so. With the Mega CD, pioneering developers realised they could use loads of FMV footage, but were then faced with the massive problem of turning it all into a game. Useless non-games such as Night Trap and Ground Zero Texas were the sad result. All the while, though, they had been secretly planning their own 32-bit console - the Sega Saturn. But after the Mega CD and 32X debacles, everyone was hoping that Sega hadn't lost it altogether.

Perhaps the most significant event of the year occurred on a system that had been around for longer than any of the consoles. Almost without anyone noticing, the humble PC finally came of age during 1994 and for two radically different reasons. One, Doom - it did the unthinkable and made PC games cool. Two, Myst - it did the even more unthinkable and made PC games a mainstream, best-selling concern. Whatever you may think of Myst's "gameplay", you have to marvel at how easily it captured the minds of a non-gaming public.

1994 In One Word: **Confusion**

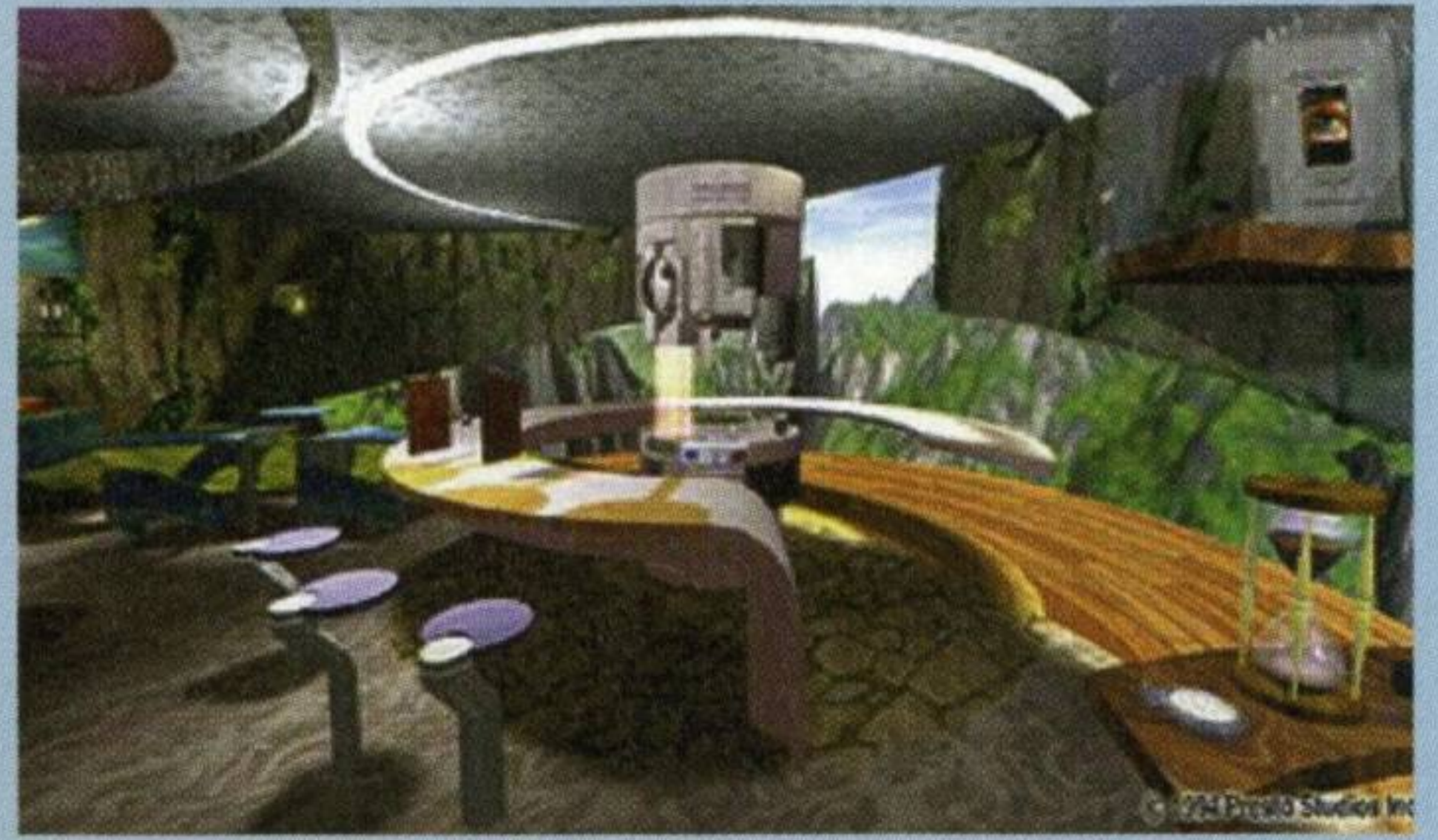
Reasons why we played Video Games in 1994:  
**Michael Jackson released an album**

## Highest Rating Games

**96%** **Streetfighter 2 Turbo** (SNES/Mega Drive)  
**Doom 1** (PC)  
**Myst** (PC/Mac)  
**Sim City 2000** (PC)  
**Doom 2** (PC)

**95%** **NBA Jam** (SNES/Mega Drive)  
**TIE-Fighter** (PC)  
**System Shock** (PC)  
**94%** **Aladdin** (Mega Drive)  
**Thunderhawk** (Mega CD)  
**FIFA International Soccer** (Mega Drive)

**Super Metroid** (SNES)  
**Donkey Kong Country** (SNES)  
**Mortal Kombat 2** (SNES)  
Lowest Rating Game  
**9%** **Last Action Hero** (SNES/Mega Drive)



# 1995

Reasons why we played Video Games in 1995: Street Fighter the movie

**C**onfirming what everyone already knew was our review of Seal Of The Pharaoh (5% in Hyper#20) - the 3DO was dead. Our attention was instead directed due north where the first rumblings of the Sega Saturn and Sony Playstation were being felt. Both machines launched successfully in Japan, with Sega relying on conversions of some of their classic arcade games and Sony boasting the talents of Namco and plenty of third-party developers. It wasn't long before the first round of imported games hit our shores and, although Sega may have just shaded it with Virtua Fighter and Daytona edging out the PSX challenge of Toshinden and Ridge Racer, it was clear that both these machines would be around for some time to come. 32-Bit gaming had genuinely arrived.

What was Nintendo up to? Dunno really. They still trundled out the occasional big title for the SNES (Killer Instinct and Yoshi's Island, to name but two) and then confounded everyone with the utterly absurd Virtual Boy - just what the hell was that all about? Notable mainly for their absence throughout '95, we can only assume Nintendo were busy beavering away at some as-yet-unknown gaming project to rival the PSX and Saturn. No prizes for guessing what that might have been...

And while we're in the mood for asking what the hell's going on, how about Heart Of Darkness? In our August '95 issue there's a great two-page preview of this game boasting loads of fabulous screenshots depicting levels that look 100% identical to those found in the final game. Which we reviewed in September '98. Again, what was that all about?!

One of the biggest issues of the year (and one that still remains relevant today) was that of game classification and censorship. While no one wants to see Molester: The Game or Genocide Quake or whatever, we

strongly believe that the game classification system should be roughly equivalent to that of films and videos. And that means introducing the capacity for the OFLC to award, when necessary, an R rating for games. Hopefully it will also mean an end to the sort of ignorant outrage that greeted the likes of Phantasmagoria (for an alleged rape scene of the sort you see on Melrose Place every week) and Harvester (rotting corpses and naked girls - what a combo!).

But, silly us, we keep forgetting that video games are only for kids - the fact that everyone who works here is over 21 (and loves games) must be beside the point.

Come the end of the year, however, and the only thing anyone was excited about was the impending local release of the next generation consoles. The warning signs were already there for Sega. Comparisons of the initial reception of the Saturn and Playstation indicate that Sony had the advantage on all counts. Console sales are dictated by the games available and, while the Playstation launched with plenty of games and loads more around the corner, the Saturn just didn't have



enough to offer prospective buyers.

Looking at the year's review scores, it's interesting to see three PC games scooping the highest marks. A premonition of things to come?

1995 In A Word: **Nintendo?**

Highest Rating Games

**96%** **Dark Forces** (PC)  
**Crusader No Remorse** (PC)  
**FIFA 96** (PC)

**94%** **Wing Commander 3** (PC)  
**Killer Instinct** (SNES)  
**Micro Machines 96** (Mega Drive)

Lowest Rating Game

**5%** **Seal Of The Pharaoh** (3DO)  
**Kingdom: The Far Reaches** (PC)

**95%** **FIFA International Soccer** (3DO)  
**Buried In Time** (PC/Mac)

I

n a delightful moment of synchronicity, the last ever SNES game to garner a 90%-plus score in Hyper (Diddy's Kong Quest, 93% in Hyper#27) appeared in the exact same issue as our first ever proper look at the Nintendo 64, or Ultra 64 as it was still called

back then. Quite rightly for the time, we gushed forth ecstatically over the technical abilities of Nintendo's new baby and drooled over the promise of some of the dozen or so games announced at the time (Mario 64, Wave Race, Mario Kart 64, etc). But now, it's cause for some thought, when you consider that several of those games have to this day not been released. Zelda, Kirby Bowl 64, where are you guys?

# 1996

In the wake of Nintendo's announcement, Sega and Sony began furiously cutting the price of their respective systems in an effort to, not only outdo each other, but capitalise on the headstart they had over Nintendo. In retrospect, the launch price of \$700 sported by both machines seems ludicrously expensive and the fact that no one would even contemplate that as a starting price now illustrates how far the



gaming market has gone mainstream. Bet you the Dreamcast won't cost anything like as much. Leading up to Christmas, retail prices were reduced to half of what they were originally and everyone was happy. Save for those early-adopters now cursing their misfortune and relatively lighter wallets. Never mind, guys, for your eagerness and bold attitude, we salute you!

Equally deserving of congratulations are the countless PC game developers out there who made 1996 without peer as the best twelve consecutive months for gaming in history. From Hexen in January through Grand Prix 2, Civilization 2, Terminator Future Shock, Descent 2, and Duke Nukem 3D during the middle months to Quake right before Christmas, it was one long glorious year. In terms of quantity of quality, if you know what we mean, things have never been better. The pinnacle was Quake,

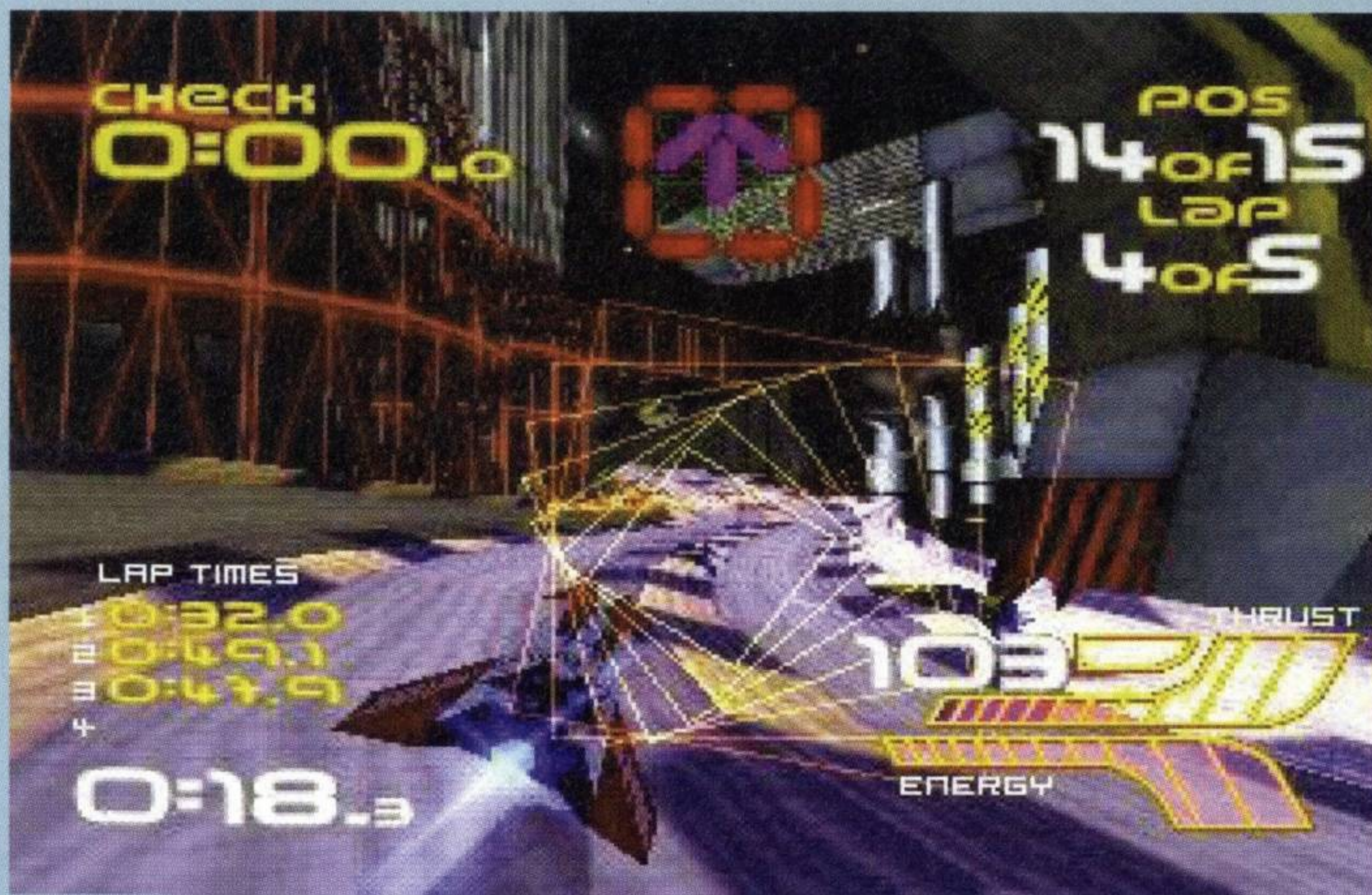
of course, as ids servers melted down trying to cope with demand for the shareware release in August. The beauty of Quake is that it will never die; it's an organic entity that will continue to grow and thrive so long as fans keep creating patches, conversions and add-ons.

At the huge E3 show in the States, the world had its first real look at the Nintendo 64. Initial impressions were very good - Mario 64 on its own would have been enough to impress anyone. But that was the problem, it was pretty much on its own. E3 confirmed what everyone was thinking. The sheer number and variety of Playstation games placed it in a commanding market position. Sure, there was plenty of crap amongst the outstanding titles like Tekken 2, Wipeout and F1, but through weight of numbers alone you could be guaranteed of finding something for everyone on the Playstation.

1996 ended with Sony reinforcing its early dominance, Nintendo with a lot of ground to make up and PC gamers sitting back smugly and enjoying the view.

Reasons why we played Video Games in 1996:  
Fluro Orange & lime green clothing

1996 In A Word: **PC**



### Highest Rating Games

96% **Civilization 2** (PC)  
**Quake** (PC)

95% **Sensible World Of Soccer** (PC)  
**Wing Commander 4** (PC)  
**Duke Nukem 3D** (PC)

94%

**Tekken 2** (PSX)  
**Wipeout 2097** (PSX)  
**Hexen** (PC)  
**Virtua Fighter 2** (Saturn)  
**Terminator Future Shock** (PC)  
**Descent 2** (PC)

**Jumping Flash 2** (PC)  
**Formula One** (PSX)

### Lowest Rating Game

10% **Braindead** (PC)  
**Mega Man 2** (Gameboy)



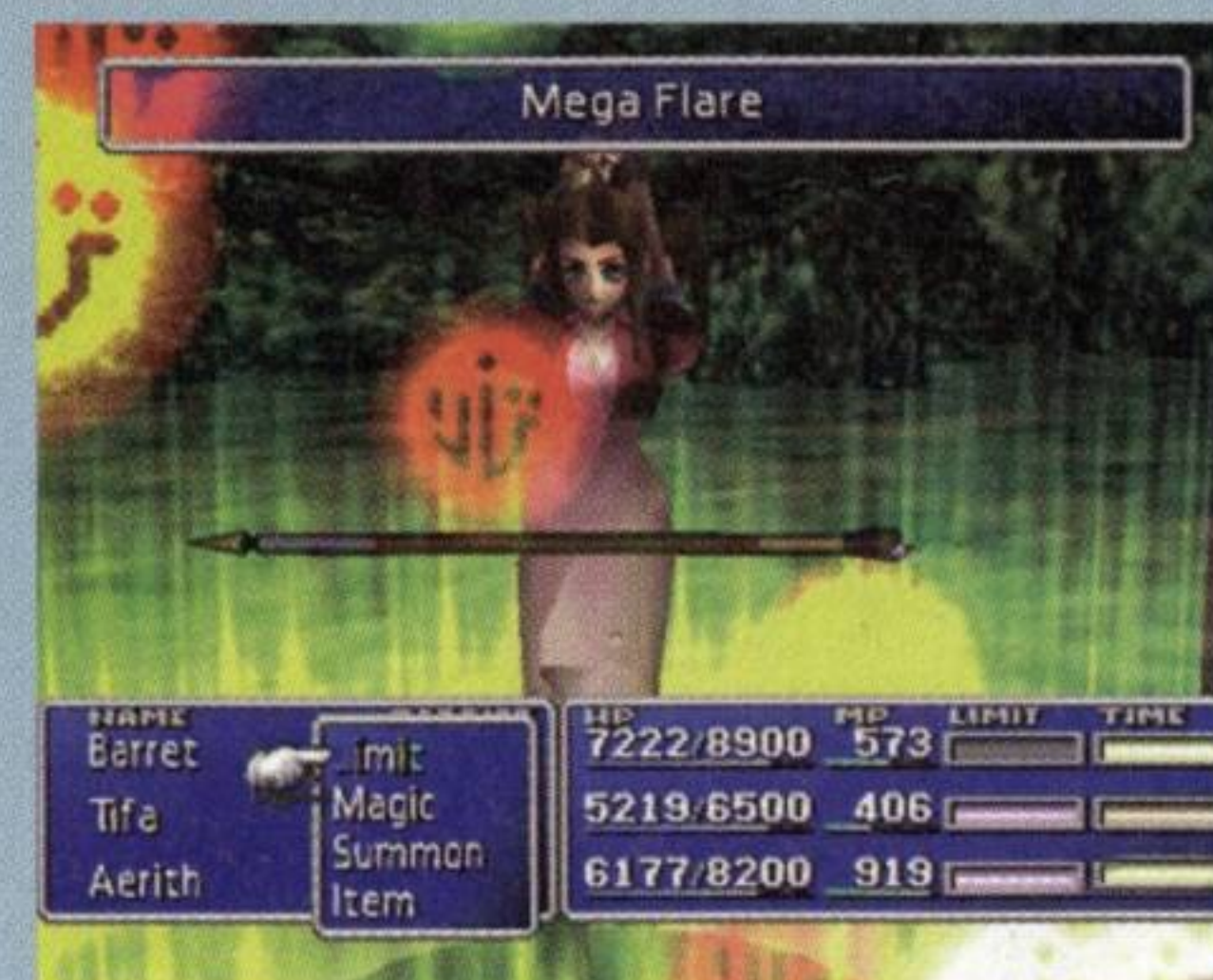
# 1997

require one. Yet it wasn't just these two genres that benefitted. Such was the power of these cards that soon more complex strategy, adventure and role-playing games were deemed viable and devel-

opment began on 3D titles that would have seemed impossible beforehand. We're thinking here of games like Battlezone, Myth and the forthcoming Gabriel Knight 3 and Wheel Of Time.

The wait was finally over for Nintendo freaks in March, as the N64 was released in Australia. Hyper#41 carried huge reviews of the first three titles - Super Mario 64, Pilotwings and Wave Race. And what a trio they were! Each one a classic in their respective fields and all displayed the amazing graphical potential of the machine. Without hesitation we can say that Nintendo got the initial release right, but unfortunately what followed wasn't quite so good. Nintendo have always argued that although they have fewer titles, they can offer those of a more consistent quality. Relatively slow sales in Japan would tend to indicate a lack

**T**owering above all else in 1997, standing astride the games industry like a remarkably tanned and shapely archway, and posing provocatively on the cover of every gaming mag (and several non-gaming mags, too) in the world was one person. Her name, natch, was Lara Croft. Thanks to Core Design, she kickstarted the year with the definitive 3D action adventure of Tomb Raider and then did it all again with a sequel by the year's end. What probably began as a cynical ploy to titillate the hormonal teenage boys who constitute a



Reasons why we played Video Games in 1997: The Macarena

large portion of the gaming population, had instead become so much more and, in many cases, actually turned girls into gamers. Oh, the irony! Lara was the Playstation's first gaming icon and we all love her dearly.

Incidentally, the original Tomb Raider was one of the first and best examples of the most revolutionary happening for the PC in '97. 3D accelerator cards, they were called, and they performed that very self-same function, accelerating the 3D-ness of your games. Gone were the days of shimmering polygons, chunky textures and chugging framerates. Replacing such deficiencies were all manner of gorgeous filtering, tricky translucency, coloured lighting effects and a marked improvement in speed and smoothness. By the end of the year, no self-respecting action or driving game would be released without supporting some kind of 3D card - in fact, many would

of enthusiasm for this argument, but against that the N64 has done very well in the US and Australia (if to a lesser extent). We expect the reason for this has quite a fair bit to do with the differing tastes of each market. While the West has a general preference for straightforward action games and sports titles, the Japanese love their RPGs and fighting games. The Saturn has proved a moderate success (more so than the N64) in Japan, and continued to serve a tiny niche market in the West, by catering strongly to both these genres.

Nintendo rallied toward the end of the year (think Goldeneye, Lylat Wars and International Superstar Soccer), while Sony also had plenty to cheer about (Final Fantasy 7, Abe's Oddysee, Tomb Raider 2). All of which meant that gamers everywhere were the big winners.

1997 In A Word: **Lara**

Highest Rating Games

- 96% **Dark Reign** (PC)
- 95% **Tomb Raider** (PSX/Saturn/PC)
- Worldwide Soccer** (Saturn)
- FIFA 97** (PSX/Saturn)
- Super Mario 64** (N64)
- Mario Kart 64** (N64)

- Final Fantasy 7** (PSX)
- Total Annihilation** (PC)
- Goldeneye** (N64)
- 94% **International Superstar Soccer** (N64)
- Lylat Wars** (N64)

Lowest Rating Game

- 20% **Destiny** (PC)
- Break Point** (Saturn)

**I**

t's tough to venture a comprehensive round-up of 1998 at this stage. And that's not only

because the year hasn't even finished yet! Hindsight is an extremely valuable thing, you know, and can save you from all sorts of embarrassing situations. This time, though we'll just have to do without it. It's like tightrope walking with no net.

As far as this year's games are concerned, both the Playstation and Nintendo 64 seem to have reached a plateau. With no startlingly original



# 1998

fraught with problems - lag, hacking, and pkillers being the major hindrances. Origin are dedicated to

getting it all working properly, though, with regular patches and even a re-launch later this year. Time will tell, we expect, whether it proves to be the future of gaming or an over-ambitious failure.

With the Saturn now all but dead - there's still a pulse there, but precious few other signs of life - Sega have diverted their attention toward a new console. After going through more name changes than a Hyper reviewer, they finally decided upon the Sega Dreamcast. We all prefer the previous name of Katana here, but then just about anything would

be better than what they ended up choosing! Still, judging by the tech specs, it looks like a pretty awesome machine, and the promise of Virtua Fighter 3 and Daytona 2 at release sounds almost too good to be true. Perhaps the most telling feature is the built-in modem, allowing for easy access to both the Internet and multi-player gaming. The stack of third-party developers who have signed up should ensure that a lack of software problem isn't going to be repeated either.

But - hey - we'll leave the rest of that story to the next five years of Hyper!

1998 In A Word: **Online**

titles being released, we've had to mostly settle for inspired reworkings and enhanced sequels - Tekken 3 and Banjo-Kazooie being the most noteworthy recent examples. Sure, there have been more than enough good games produced, but nothing truly ground-breaking has emerged to set a new standard. Hopefully this should start happening as we hit the peak Christmas period and the likes of Metal Gear Solid, Spyro the Dragon, Perfect Dark, Tomorrow Never Dies, etc, begin to appear.

On the PC it's a slightly different story. Two games have discovered a new echelon for PC gaming this year. First it was Quake 2, sending Dan into heaven and surpassing all that had gone before it as a multi-player phenomenon. Then it was Unreal's turn to redefine the single-player experience for 1st-person shooters, prompting Eliot to reward it with the highest ever mark given by Hyper - 97%. Certainly one of the most fascinating games, and potentially the most important, released this year has been Ultima Online. The first real attempt at a large-scale, continuous multi-player game, it sounds like a wonderfully exciting idea in theory. But, in practice, since its release it has been



Reasons why we played Video Games in 1998:  
**Ginger Spice Quit the fab five...**

### Highest Rating Games

- 97% **Unreal** (PC)
- 96% **Quake 2** (PC)
- Banjo Kazooie** (N64)

- 95% **Diddy Kong Racing** (N64)
- Tobal No.2** (PSX - Japan only)
- 94% **Grandia** (Saturn - Japan only)

### Lowest Rating Game

- 45% **Mortal Kombat Mythologies** (N64)

# THE BIRTHDAY PARTY

Over the past five years the lineup at Hyper has changed a few times. Here's the current bunch of regulars and their most memorable moment in gaming over the past five years...



Dan "Armand" Toose **Editor**

Back in '96 I was living with a guy who owned an Internet Service Provider, and as a result I had an ISDN link to my bedroom... which rocked very hard! After being wowed by the alpha version of Quake, I bought a new PC, and just in time to review the release version of Quake. The ultimate however was a few weeks later when a decent number of people started to show up on the deathmatch servers, and online action gaming was truly borne! Just playing your friends or at the local arcade limits the competition, but online, the best of the best show up, so there's always an intense game to be had. The biggest influence in online gaming today.

Top 5 games **Doom 2, Quake, Quake 2, Wipeout 2097, Virtua Fighter 2**

Eliot "Seafood" Fish **Deputy Editor**

Having been here since issue number nine, there have been many memorable moments, but possibly the one that seems to stick in my head the most was when I got Super Empire Strikes Back for my Super Nintendo. After reading the review by Steve Polak in issue two, I was dribbling with excitement, the shiny 92% beckoning me to empty my wallet. I was not disappointed. One of the greatest SNES experiences ever. Platforming heaven, 3D (Mode 7 no less) style X-Wing shooting bits, a 3D snow speeder level and a side-scrolling lightsaber duel with Darth Vader. It was what the 16-bit consoles were all about - pure gameplay!

5 favourite games from the past 5 years

**Quake, Doom 2, Dark Forces, Legend of Zelda, Wipeout 2097**



Steve "Mr. Shiny" Scott **Art Director**

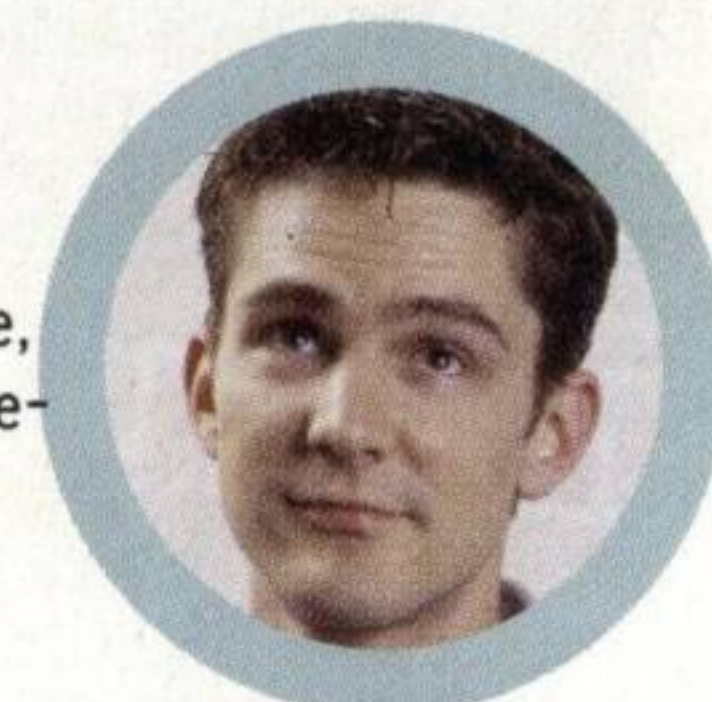
Getting my hands on Wolfenstein and watching the shocked look on my fellow co-workers as I took out Nazis and large dogs with loud noises and large guns, consuming a lot of alcohol and being introduced to Doom for the first and completely FREAKING out at how good it was, taking a day off work to play Gauntlet non stop all day with a friend, staying back at work until 10pm to play network Quake the first week it came to Mac, playing and grooving to Wipeout until my eyes bled, playing SuperMario to a booming dub soundtrack one sunny afternoon and marveling at the surreal beauty, or something like that!

Top 5 games: **Quake, Wipeout 2097, SuperMario, Doom II, Sega Rally**

David "The Goose" Willgoose **Contributor**

My most memorable gaming moment in the last five years, happened over one week back in mid-1997. Having been given this new game to review that I hadn't ever heard of before, I wasn't expecting much. Sometime during the first night of play I was suddenly struck by the realisation that this game was something entirely new, something utterly revolutionary! Never had I felt so immersed inside a game, never had I felt so close to the characters that inhabited its world. I was gripped, I was seduced, I shed a tear when it ended. I was absolutely mesmerised by the new possibilities for the future that this game was suggesting. Even today I'm still stunned at how close to genius is The Last Express - the greatest game ever made.

Most played games: **Ultima Underworld, Mario Kart, Little Big Adventure, Grand Prix 2, Micro Machines V3**



Kevin "Capcom" Cheung **Contributor**

When asked to name the most significant thing to happen in videogaming in the last 5 years, my first reaction was Street Fighter 2. It then dawned upon me that this was more than 5 years ago. Worse still, it means that I'm getting old. My answer now has to be Square. And it's not for FF7. Over the last 5 years, Square has introduced creative new elements to every genre of gaming on an innovative scale unmatched by any other company. This is exemplified by games like Bushido Blade, Tobal 2, and Final Fantasy Tactics. While they do not always produce quality games, Square can always be relied upon to break away from accepted moulds of gameplay that would otherwise get cloned to death.

Top 5 games: **Castlevania: Symphony of the Night, Tobal 2, Crusader: No Remorse, Warcraft 2, Puzzle Bobble 2**

Cam "Phat Pants" Shea **Contributor**

Hell, I can't decide on my funkiest moment - games provide too many incomparable experiences. Some gaming moments are sacred, such as the first time I booted up Mario 64 and Bushido Blade. Other gaming moments are flippant, like the first of many vodka fueled "LC Posse" 4 player Goldeneye evenings. Yet another was kinda surreal - running riot in a multistorey arcade game parlour in Tokyo (my host family knew the guy that ran it). And yet another was a cool realisation - the "International Language of Streeties". Such is the impact of the Street Fighter series, that in my recent travels with an intrepid band of friends, we found that learning the language didn't matter when it comes to kids, as staging mock SF battles were language enough.

Top 5 games **Doom, Motocross Madness, Street Fighter Alpha 2, Wipeout series, Tekken series**



March "Bilbo Baggins" Stepnik **Contributor**

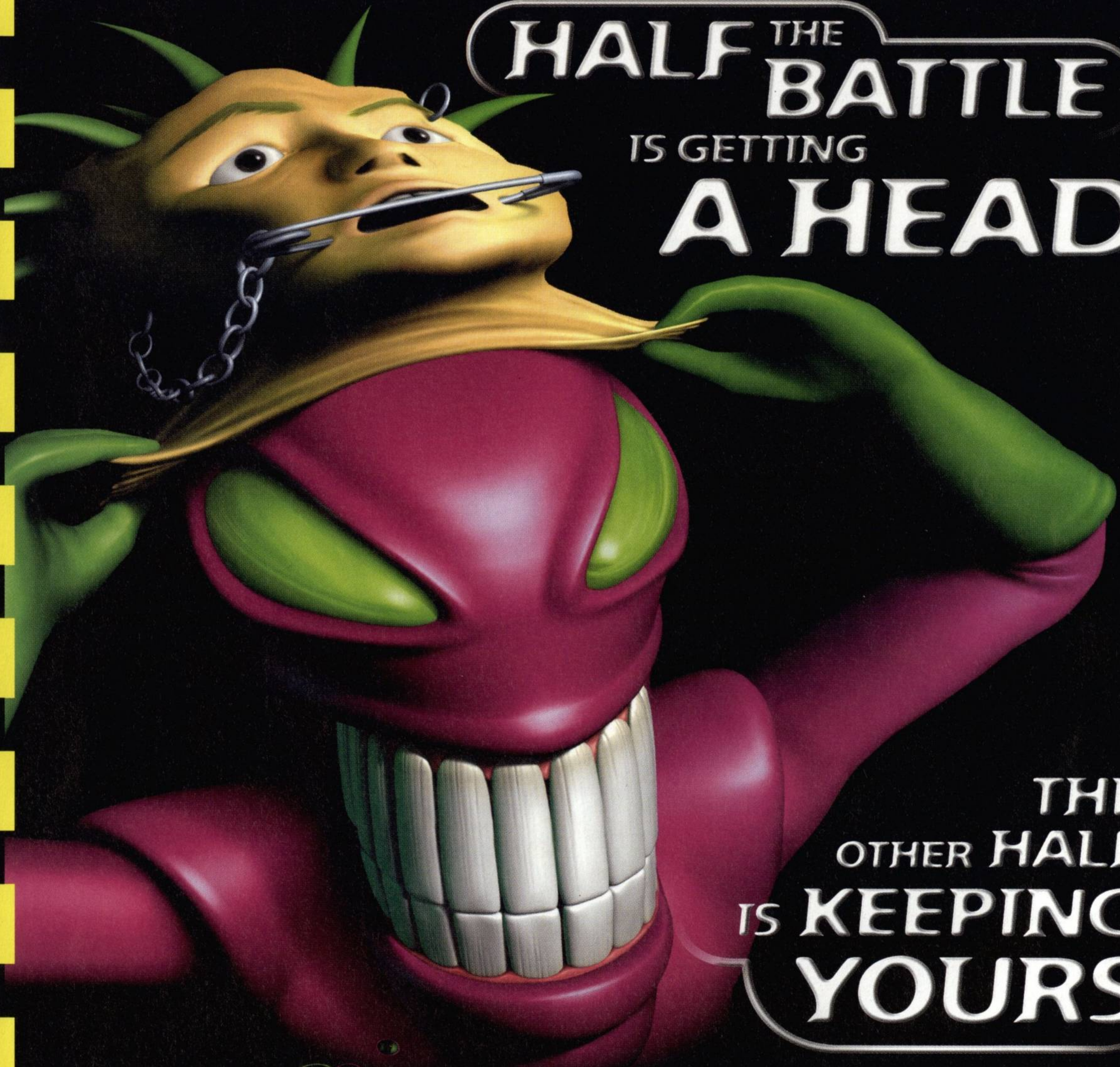
Without a doubt, it was the work of art called System Shock. Released back in 1994, this was the first game that forced me to withdraw completely from society for a couple of absorbing weeks. Playing a hacker on an almost deserted corporate space station under the control of a self-aware security artificial intelligence named SHODAN, SS remains to this day a great example of what a brilliant story and gobs of atmosphere can do for a game. It was also the first time I discovered the true meaning of FEAR. I lost a girlfriend, went a few shades paler, but I beat SHODAN. See? It was all worthwhile.

Top 5 games (in no particular order)

**Ultima series, Abe's Oddysee, Banjo Kazooie, System Shock, Civilisation II**



HALF THE BATTLE  
IS GETTING  
A HEAD

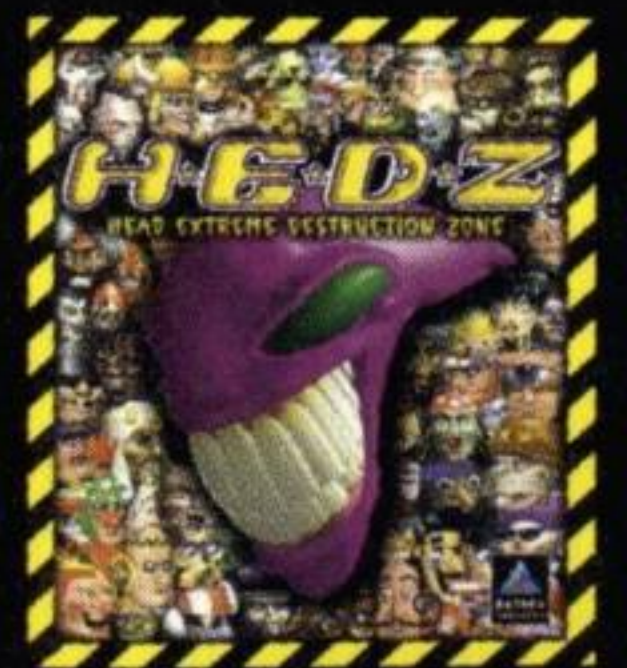


THE OTHER HALF  
IS KEEPING  
YOURS



**HEDZ**  
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# THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE OF GAMING

The editor's call on the state of gaming: Then, now, and tomorrow.

## THE PAST

(1993 - 1998) - The golden years of gaming?

As an individual that has been gaming for so many years (nineteen come to think of it), the idea of the "Last five years in gaming" seemed to me, at first, a rather insignificant drop in the ocean compared to the overall history of my favourite past time. Then I thought about it a little further. In 1993, I recall seeing Doom for the first time, and thinking, "Oh my God!". I looked at my Amiga, which had served me so well, but I knew I NEEDED a PC to satisfy my gaming needs from that point on.

What was it about this game Doom? Some would say the violence... bah, I'd already killed a zillion video game nasties. Some guessed the demonology and satanic references... morons who were looking to use video gaming as a scapegoat. What actually freaked me out, and I'm sure freaked out countless other gamers was the sense that you had a "real" 3D environment to explore, and it actually looked kind of... well, real.

Now Doom was far from a photo-realistic representation of hell, but it looked damn good for its time, and it inspired a lot of people to expect more visually from video games. Since then, the rate at which video game visuals have improved has gone through the roof. How so? Compare the visuals on the Atari 2600 and the Intellivision from the early 80's to the SNES. Sure, the SNES was a lot better, but it was really just a case of being a bit more colourful, and having better looking sprites. Now compare the 1993 SNES games with today's top end like Tekken 3, Banjo Kazooie and to really ram the point home, Unreal on PC.

So what's really happened over the last five years? As mentioned, visual improvements have gone berko, but that's just like mobile phones getting smaller... something that's expected in this day and age. The real difference is that gaming has gone mainstream. The 8 bit consoles were the tip of the iceberg, but the SNES and Megadrive II set the scene for today's current console boom. Sony sent us a sales figure recently, that stated 40,000,000 PlayStations had been shipped world wide. In Australia over 700,000 units have been sold, and Sony estimate they'll have close to 1,000,000 units out by the end of this year. Now, if you meet someone and you find out they own a PlayStation or a Nintendo 64, it's not really that much of a surprise.

PC gaming hasn't become mainstream, but Doom did make PC gaming "cool", and the fact that the PC has remained the best performing platform for 1st person shooters, and of course strategy titles, the one system that had been around for years finally blossomed as a gaming platform. PC gaming has now become the cutting edge, basically due to the nature of PCs, which allow hardware upgrades and flexible peripheral add ons. If you don't agree, just take a look at the latest 3D accelerators, or at how online gaming has progressed.

## THE PRESENT

(1998) The rise and fall of empires

One thing that has always really puzzled me is the loyalty that many gamers have for their chosen system, and the publishing companies

behind them. I'm probably going to upset a few suits here, but it just seems weird to offer a company loyalty. The CEOs of Sony, Sega and Nintendo certainly don't make games because they're concerned about our happiness... they make them to make money. Sure, the geeky guy we all love who actually develops the game really wants you to love what they made, but very few developers get to do what they really want anymore. The amount of money required to publish and launch a game is now that high that it is a priority for any publisher to ensure their game has a high chance of getting big sales figures, and market research will have an effect here.

Notice how we got a whole heap of crappy Doom clones about a year after Doom made it big? Same goes for real time strategy games after Red Alert, large breasted heroines after Tomb Raider, or cute platform games after Super Mario 64. It's all got to do with making games to a successful formula.

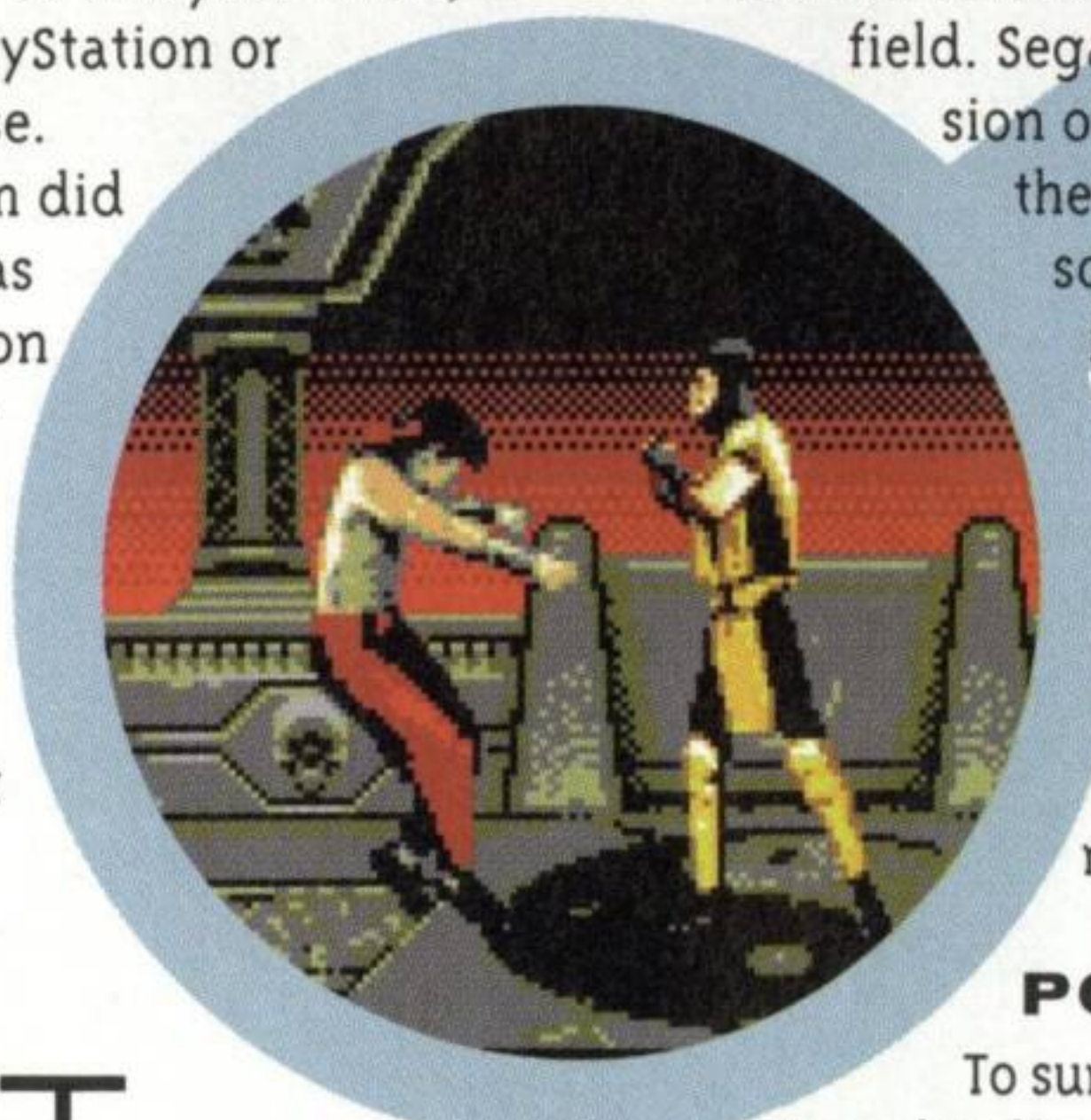
Why this rant on companies? Because the video gaming industry is now big business, and we've seen the Sega and Nintendo empires fall under the shadow of the Sony marketing machine. Nowadays it's more about money than it ever has been.

### The consoles

Hats off to Sony for walking into an industry they had never tapped into, and proving that they had the smarts to succeed as a new player in this field. Sega learned the very hard way with a succession of unsuccessful add-ons to the Megadrive 2, and then the Saturn, which never really got the marketing and software support that it needed to succeed (although it did in Japan). Nintendo seem to be in a position halfway between Sega and Sony. The Nintendo 64 is only suffering from one of two of the Saturn's downfalls... the lack of software. The marketing has been quite strong though, and Nintendo do make a healthy profit margin on all of their titles, but the lack of financial incentive for 3rd party developers (and thus number of titles) is really killing the overall potential of the machine.

### PC

To sum up PC gaming today, you only need to think two things... 3D and Online. The popularity of 3D accelerators is no surprise considering just how much better it makes games look compared to normal PC games, and console games for that matter. When tech support came down into our office, saw Unreal running and said, "Stop this pre-rendered intro shit and





show me the game!", and we replied, "This IS the game.", it became clear 3D gaming has come a long way.

Online gaming has become the ultimate outlet for those that really want to take competitive gaming to the limit. Beating your mates on a console game is one thing, but to reach out in search of better and more varied opponents is kind of like hanging out at a video arcade where the best players in the country all hang out together for some serious gaming.

Combine the two and you get Quake, which was the first game that really got players enthused enough to travel great distances, hook up their computers, meet new people, and game hard on a large scale... it's a beautiful thing!

## THE FUTURE

An educated mainstream

There have been a few tell tale signs as to what trends are going to emerge with video gaming going mainstream. Once the PlayStation started to develop such a huge install base, the flood of

PlayStation titles began, and for a while, all was good and well. It has become evident however that what this leads

to is a few games making BIG money, and a whole heap of games making no more, and quite often, running at a loss. Basically, the market got flooded by too many titles.

Let us now also consider that a lot of games have succeeded because the newcomers to gaming (the mainstream), are far less critical of gameplay issues than old school gamers. This has already started to change. In a way, it kind of makes sense that the mainstream gamers do eventually become the most critical of all gamers, simply because these people aren't obsessed with gaming enough to buy another game unless they have reason to believe that it's really good. An old RPG head like myself will love a game like Might and Magic VI, but hand that to an "occasional" gamer, and they'll find it too ugly and intimidating to want to bother with. I could be wrong, but expect less titles as time goes on, but expect more quality.

### PC

With the current popularity in multiplayer gaming, and the fact that the percentage of the population with a decent PC and internet access is slowly on the increase all the time, it is safe to say this is where the future of PC gaming will lie. Cable Internet Access is here today, but the costs simply don't make it an option for a gaming hobby, unless your dad buys and sells African nations over lunch with Bill Gates. The next big thing that is just being tested overseas now is DSL (digital subscriber line), which probably won't even have its own true set of standards till next year some time. The difference in speed from what we're getting today with 56k modems to standards like DSL and Cable are huge to the point where one day, online gaming with people overseas, without any lag will be a reality. LAN parties may die as a result, because let's face it, why haul your computer interstate for some mammoth gaming session when the performance isn't going to be any better than at home?

Other than that, don't expect the trend of the last 20 years to be any

different. This rule will always apply... One week after you buy a PC, a faster CPU and better video card will come out, at the same price as what you just paid for yours. In a couple of years 1 Gigahertz CPUs will be the standard sort of processor you'll be expecting to buy with your new PC.

PCs may also become a popular way to watch digital TV, as getting a digital TV signal converter for your PC will be so much cheaper than buying a digital TV (they'll cost thousands of dollars).

### Sega

The future of this company is really about to be decided within the next 12 months. On November 20th, the Dreamcast will launch in Japan, and will no doubt succeed in this country. Based on raw tech specs, this machine is far superior to any console currently available, and considering we're expecting to see arcade perfect versions of Virtua Fighter 3 and Sega Rally 2 at launch, it would seem that it will be hard to be disappointed by the next console to grace this planet. Playing devil's advocate, the only real downfall Sega may stumble over here is that the Dreamcast looks to be the top of the range of today's standards, like polygon graphics. If someone else manages to release a new console within a year of the Dreamcast, that uses advanced voxel graphics or tessellation techniques, maybe the Dreamcast will be thought of as the best looking of the last generation of consoles, rather than part of the new generation.

The use of the Windows CE operating system should ensure easy conversions of PC titles, and the in built modem could well create a new dimension in console gaming. Let's just hope the marketing and software lineup is as good as the machine looks to be itself.

### Nintendo

With no sign of a 64DD in the western nations, and with the Dreamcast about to bump the Nintendo 64 from the title of "latest machine", Nintendo really need a new draw card, and soon. Since its release, the N64 has had a huge list of upcoming titles, but so many of them have dropped away as 3rd party developers have pulled out. Because of the costs of obtaining the license to do a N64 game, this forces the prices up on all non-Nintendo published N64 games (in case you wondered why a great game like 1080 snowboarding costs less than a terrible game like War Gods).

Nintendo's loyal supporters will surely provide a profit for Nintendo throughout the life of this system, but with a very sparse future release list, the future of this system is shaky.

My prediction is that with the recent re-establishment of discussions with Silicon Graphics, that Nintendo will already be looking to announce (not release) a new system, sometime next year. The N64 has done poorly in Japan relative to the competition, and being a Japanese company, that's where they really want to succeed. I'd guess we'll see a CD, or disk based system that like the Dreamcast, will offer a lot more incentive to other developers and publishers to make games for the system.

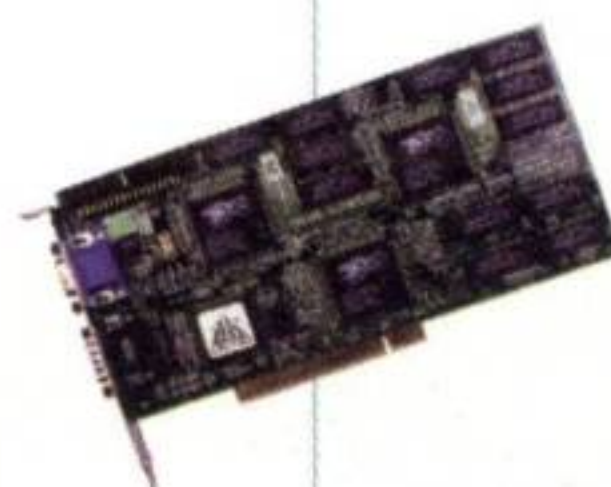
### Sony

The company that LEAST needs to do anything at this stage. However, while the PlayStation has mainstream dominance, it would seem that software sales don't match the install base, and that many new gamers aren't really getting hooked on their new hobby for long.

Reasons for Sony to release a new console? The fact that Sega have a promising machine on the way that looks to have as much development potential that the PSX had, may encourage Sony to announce a new machine not long after the release of the Dreamcast, in an effort to put an element of indecision into the minds of potential Dreamcast buyers.

Sony have already expressed a strong desire to get away from conventional polygon graphics, and this could be something that may set their new machine apart from the others visually (if they pull it off). There is also word that Sony have plans to include backward compatibility in their next machine, which means there'd still be reason to buy new PlayStation releases up until the launch of their next machine.

Who knows at this stage?





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# REVIEWS



What a killer month to be a video gamer. PlayStation owners got an absolute plethora of top notch titles to choose from this month, and with games like Abe's Exodus just missing our deadline, there's certainly more to look forward to before Christmas. We also started playing the Japanese version of Metal Gear Solid, and it's totally lived up to expectations, so there's even something to look forward to AFTER Christmas.

Despite the lack of Nintendo 64 titles available for review this issue, there is some great stuff just around the corner, with Wipeout 64, Zelda, and more all about to go on sale in November. Biggest disappointment for us was Bomberman Hero... a non-Multiplayer Bomberman... blasphemy!

Those of you out there that have patiently been waiting for Panzer Dragoon Saga can rest assured that it has been worth the wait. Although that is probably one of the very last titles we're likely to see released on the Saturn in Australia.

The onslaught of 1st person perspective shooters continues with Klingon Honour Guard, Quake 2:Ground Zero, and Rainbow 6 all arriving at once. With Half-Life and Sin almost definitely coming next issue, it's clear which is the most popular genre of PC game nowadays.

Good stuff now, and even more to come...

Dan



## GAME OF THE MONTH **TENCHU**

reviewed on page 74



## NINTENDO 64 GAME OF THE MONTH **BUCK BUMBLE** Reviewed on page 54

## PC GAME OF THE MONTH **GRAND PRIX LEGENDS** Reviewed on page 86





64



82



94



72



56

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# THE HYPER REVIEW SYSTEM

<b>Available:</b>	When the game is expected to be on sale. Release dates are subject to change without notice for a variety of reasons, so this may not always be correct. Ask your retailer if things don't show up.
<b>Category:</b>	What type of game it is
<b>Players:</b>	The number of players a game allows to play it at once.
<b>Publisher:</b>	Simply the company that publishes the game.
<b>Price:</b>	The recommended retail price. This is subject to change without notice.
<b>Rating:</b>	The OFLC's verdict on the suitable ages for the game.
<b>Required:</b>	The hardware required to play the game on your PC.
<b>Desired:</b>	The hardware we think you need to get decent performance out of the game.

<b>Supports:</b>	Which peripherals and hardware you can use with the game.
<b>Plus:</b>	Notable good points about the game.
<b>Minus:</b>	Notable problems with the game.
<b>Visuals:</b>	An indication as to the overall quality and impact of the graphics in the game.
<b>Sound:</b>	A rating that includes not only sound effects, but music as well.
<b>Gameplay:</b>	A measure of the depth, features and fun that you come across when playing the game.
<b>Overall:</b>	The verdict, in a number.

# Buck Bumble

What's the buzz? **March Stepnik** checks out Ubisoft's bizarre new insectoid shooter.



Press those lips firmly together and shake that head. Another N64 title that spells "Too Cutey Pie", and no matter how much you'd like to argue this - there's only so much dessert you can stomach at one time. What we need here is a well-balanced diet.

Which puts Buck Bumble, strangely enough, somewhere between mains and the after-dinner mint. Buck Bumble looks like one of those trademark titles that seem to sprout from Nintendo's never ending cutesy-game well, but it's not your standard grimace-inducing fare. A 3rd person shoot-em-up, Buck Bumble is essentially about indiscriminately blowing things away, with a twist.

The best way to think of Buck Bumble is Maya The Bee meets Star Fox with a subtle hint of Mario 64. You play the role of Buck Bumble, a damn funky cybernetically enhanced bumble bee with a stack of super-cool weapons at his disposal (a total of 10 well designed ones, FYI). And why is Buck kitted out in the latest offensive fashion wear? Well, years after a poisonous chemical spill has polluted to the local water supply and soil, a bunch of evil mutated insects have emerged under the evil Queen to begin the assault to take over the entire insect kingdom. Your job, naturally, is to stop them.

## A BEE'S-EYE VIEW

The first thing you notice about BB is that it's played from the perspective of a insect. So over the course of the game, as you fly through the 3D environments,



you'll notice stacks of cues to remind you of your size. Huge pot plants, mammoth pitch forks, monster water taps add plenty of atmosphere to this title, and just as much charm. The other thing you notice about BB is it's lack of saturated colour, which is characteristic of many Nintendo games of this style. While colourful and bright, BB tones it all down to a more manageable and visually pleasing level. You can dump those shades for this one.

The missions themselves, are plain addictive. Although totally linear, you'll find mission objectives changing mid-sortie, and taking on a totally new direction. For example, the third level calls for the defence of your hive from an attack, and as you drive off the attackers, you find a nuclear bomb atop your hive which needs to be taken as far away from the area as possible.



HOW UNLUCKY YOU BE BORN WITH A TARGET PAINTED ON YOUR BUTT

### BEE BALANCED...

The other thing to Argonaut's credit is game balance. There are never too many health flowers or ammo stacks to make use of, and just enough to see you through the level. The only way to conserve these is if you plan a cunning path through the mission. This makes the frequent attempts at finishing a mission more challenging than frustrating.

Control is pretty straightforward, with an accelerate

and a brake button. Frustratingly, Buck can't ascend sharply nor quickly (it has to be gentle), so you'll often find that you over shoot your mark. A big slap on the back goes to Argonaut for including a training option.

The welcome change brought with Buck Bumble is that it wasn't designed as a straight out button mashing shooter. Unlike Star Fox (and even Lylat Wars), Buck Bumble requires a careful and steady approach to meet mission objectives. If you fly in and start to blast everything in sight, you WILL fry. This said, there's still plenty of mid air bee-fighting action to be had, and it's all a heck of a lot of fun.

All in all, Buck Bumble is one of those titles that ever-steadily grows on you. It does lack the pace and glitz of other action-orientated shooters, and initially you may find Buck Bumble rather tedious. In a short space of time though, BB really starts to shine.



### BEE-ING COMMUNAL

Argonaut have thrown in two multiplayer games to ensure this cart doesn't wear thin in a hurry. The first is your straight-up, deathmatch game. With the lack of a radar and pretty chunky fog hanging about (to keep the frame rate decent), gameplay is cautious.

The other multiplayer game is Buzz Soccer. Using a life size soccer ball (twenty times your size), the aim of this is to headbutt or blast the ball into your opponents goal for a point. The trick with this though is that the ball's physics have been slowed all the way down to a snails pace. The result is like playing a real game of soccer after one too many amber-coloured drinks. While fun, this multiplayer game requires stacks of skill, which can be hard to find in a casual player.

AVAILABLE: November
CATEGORY: 3D Shoot Em Up
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: Ubi Soft/Argonaut
PRICE: TBA
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: Memory Pak, Rumble Pak

### PLUS

A subtly frantic shoot em up. Plenty of gorgeous explosions. Insects!

### MINUS

Tricky control, resulting in plenty of bumps and crashes. Music becomes monotonous quickly.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
84	77	90

### OVERALL

# 82

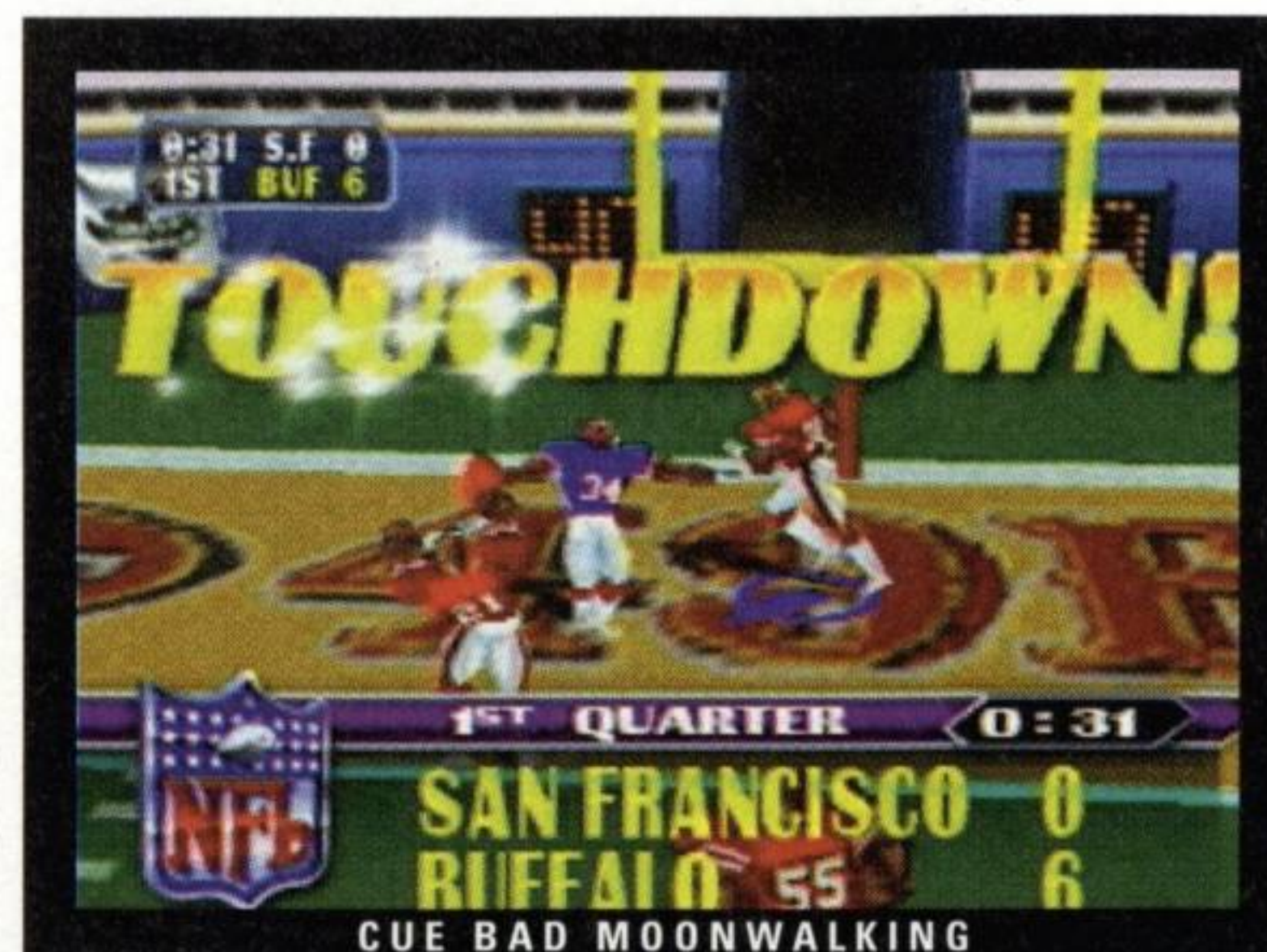
An addictive alternative to Lylat Wars, and just as much fun.

# NFL Blitz

Kevin Cheung, Hyper's resident NFL nut, gathers everyone in a huddle and makes the call.



THAT'S CALLED THE "WHEELBARROW", RIGHT?



<b>AVAILABLE:</b> Now
<b>CATEGORY:</b> Sports
<b>PLAYERS:</b> 1-2
<b>PUBLISHER:</b> Midway
<b>PRICE:</b> TBA
<b>RATING:</b> G
<b>SUPPORTS:</b> Rumble Pak, Memory Pak

**PLUS**  
Very easy to get into. The free-form play constructions and play editor are huge pluses that Madden et al can learn from.

**MINUS**  
Not enough plays, and some of the defensive AI is really bodgy.

<b>VISUALS</b>	<b>SOUND</b>	<b>GAMEPLAY</b>
<b>88</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>80</b>

**OVERALL**  
**83**

Does for NFL what Jam did for the NBA. Way cool.

A few years ago, Midway caused a tremor in the videogame industry with NBA Jam. It's magic: it simplified the otherwise complex game of basketball. It doesn't take a genius to figure out that the same thing can be done to gridiron. That's where NFL Blitz comes in.

### THROW OUT THE RULE BOOK

The rules of the game have been changed. Firstly, you've got 4 downs to make 30 yards, and it's 7 players a side. All penalties are switched off, so you can hold, trip, face-mask, rough the passer, and pass-interfere as much as you want without fear of Mr. Zebra blowing the whistle. In fact, anything that remotely resembles unnecessary roughness draws a huge cheer from the crowd, so that's a clear sign that you can be as unsportsmanlike as you want.

In terms of total execution, Blitz is fast paced yet surprisingly complex. You get 18 plays in total, with another 9 that you can make in the play editor. Defence only gets 9 plays, but it allows most of the basic zone and man plays with enough openings for a blitz. Set the game in motion, and you get all 14 burly men pulling, juking, and goose-stepping through the field in a dis-

play of some of the best graphics and animations to be in this type of game. There is no fog, the stadium is pristine, the camera angles are perfect for passing; and the only complaint that's worth mentioning is the slow-down that occurs in the really crowded plays.

The sounds do an immaculate job of conveying the totally brutal nature of the game. High quality samples of grunts, screams, crash-tackles, and taunts are all over the place. The commentator never seems to shut up, and you'll laugh yourself silly at the comments that some of the players make - such as a QB exclaiming that he can take on Mr. 300lb Lineman any day.

### THROWING OUT THE STRATEGY AS WELL?

Strategy is where you either love or hate Blitz. You see, every play is a pass play. Runs are only fudged by lateralling the ball in the backfield, which interestingly leaves open an option for a flea-flicker or a reverse. Wide-outs can be set in motion before the snap, and you can even get them to block if you wanted to. This basically means that you can construct your plays on the fly, which is more flexible than any of the audible systems that Madden or QB Club have. This equates to real depth. On the defensive side, you have the uncanny ability to tackle a player from amazing distances. Unfortunately, your players don't seem to give a damn about whether or not they can stop the ball carrier from getting a first down. If when they tackle he just happens to land over the marker, it's bad luck. It's worse if it's a touchdown.

The bottom line is that Blitz is the most offensively oriented football game around, with enough punishment that guarantees pleasure for the masses. Even though it has nowhere near the depth, control, or strategy of Madden or QB Club, it is the most satisfying quick-thrill game I can imagine. Where else can I slam pretty-boy Troy Aikman into the dirt over and over again? NFL fans: get this now.





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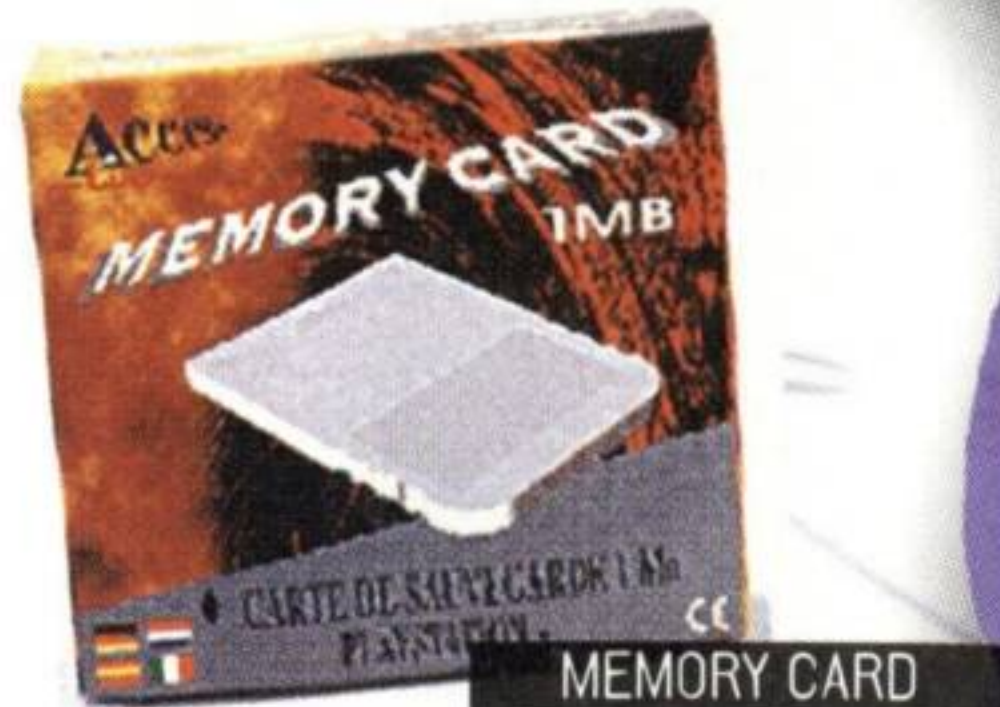


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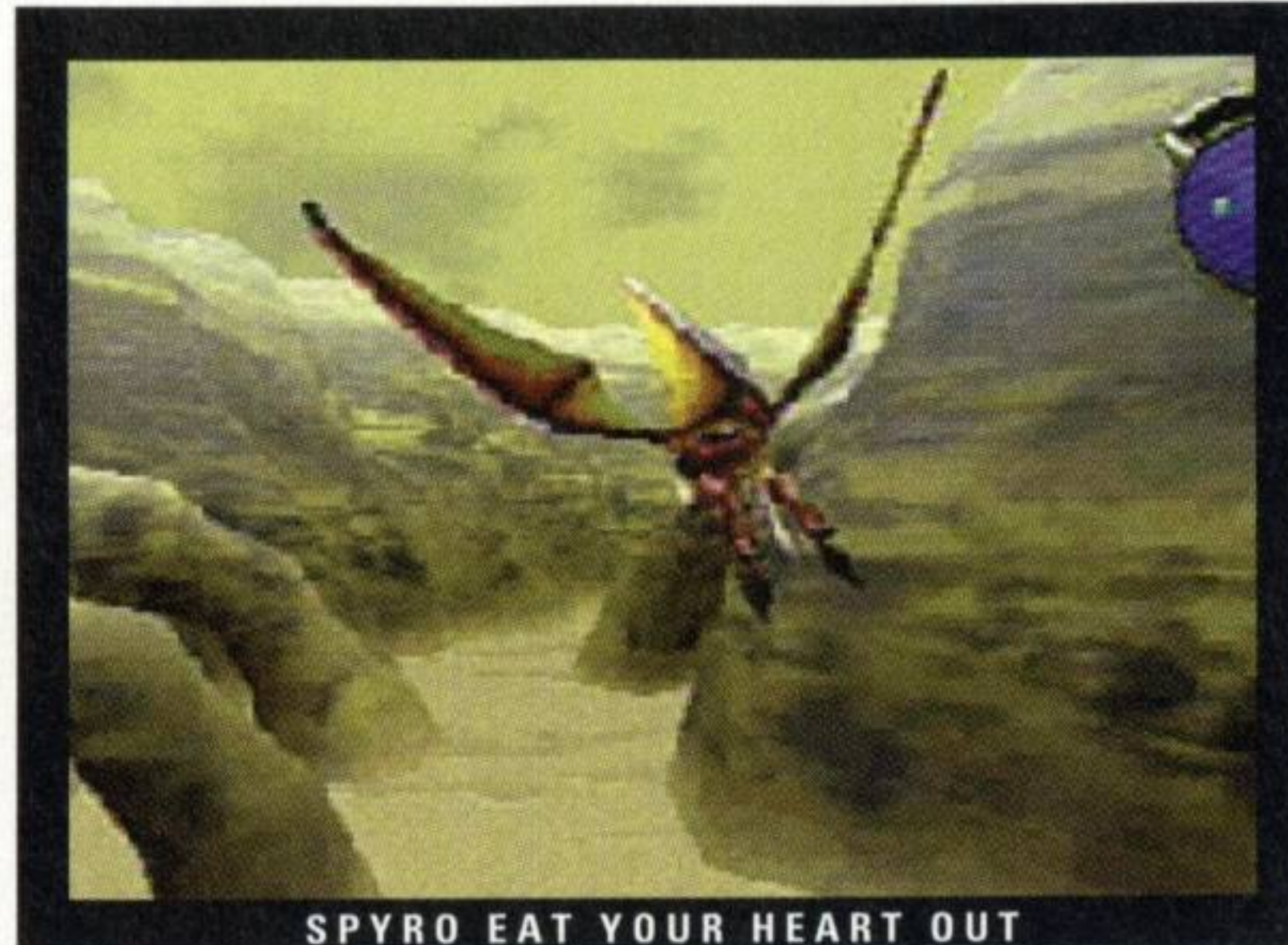
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# Panzer Dragoon Saga

Witches have broomsticks, Cloud has the Highwind, but Kevin Cheung will always prefer dragons.



SPYRO EAT YOUR HEART OUT

been spoilt by games that have only graphics to offer. Combined with the majestic accompanying score and complex storyline, however, PDS does a great job overall in conveying a realistic other-world.

In fact, it is this very approach that makes PDS such a likeable game. It's not an emotional roller-coaster story with fireworks and loud drums. Instead, it takes the form of a traditional plot-driven fantasy, allowing the characters to be defined through their actions. That way, the subtleties involved in character interactions and plot developments are open to your own interpretation, as opposed to having them jammed down your throat in an FF-style soliloquy. FfVII's fault was that it jammed too many things down your throat too quickly, forcing you to understand the game at 'their' pace, and not your own. With this in mind, PDS has a nice laid-back approach that allows you to soak up the atmosphere at your leisure.



A COOL WAY TO GET TO WORK

Hindsight is a very fickle thing, especially since Final Fantasy VII has already been deemed by many people as the greatest RPG ever made. The thing is, it's not. And I'm going to be saying more controversial things like this because there are many reasons to say that Panzer Dragoon Saga is a more enjoyable game.

### WHERE'S BONO?

PDS, the last from Team Andromeda, brings a close to the events that transpired in the first two Panzer Dragoon games. Taking place in a far off land whose dry desolation is the scar of many wars, PDS places you in control of a young guardsman named Edge whose friends were killed by a traitorous faction of the very army they served. And why? Dark magical secrets have been unearthed, which have the potential of tipping the scales of power over what little peace has already been forged. Befriended by a mysterious dragon who saves your life, PDS sends you on a journey that will question your loyalties and your beliefs in what is right until the very end.

It's obvious from the screenshots that PDS is not a graphical thriller. The in-game graphics and FMV are very low-res; and given that a very large portion of the story is told through generous servings of FMV and dialogues, it can be a little taxing for those who have



He-Rai.

### BETTER BATTLE?

The last thing worthy of mention is PDS' battle system. Equipped with the familiar lasers, homing missiles, and berserk moves, your dragon is capable of rotating around the enemy on 4 sectors of the screen, which allows you to take advantage of strategic positions. There is also a 3-tiered attack meter that allows you to execute multiple assaults and magic of greater power. All in all, this system is one of the better examples of 3D graphics being properly utilised in an RPG because it can't be accused of being a direct port of 2D gameplay. This is a merit not even FfVII can boast.

Is PDS an FfVII killer? Alas, no. FfVII was designed for the masses, and too many people will be disappointed by PDS' lack of dazzle. It's funny no-one ever complained about that back when we were playing Ultima on the Apple.

AVAILABLE: Now  
 CATEGORY: RPG  
 PLAYERS: 1  
 PUBLISHER: Sega  
 PRICE: \$69.95  
 RATING: G  
 SUPPORTS: Analogue Pad

### PLUS

Thoughtful gameplay, immersive atmosphere, and a wonderful story.

### MINUS

There are dodgy graphics and sparse environments, but the perseverance eventually pays off.

VISUALS 74    SOUND 82    GAMEPLAY 90

OVERALL  
**90**

With the style of Tolkien and the direction of Miyazaki, PDS will please all fans of the series.

# Buck Bumble



**BEE PREPARED**

**The Herd is attacking and exterminating Earth's native insects! Only Buck Bumble, the most advanced fighting bee ever and the baddest bee in hive, can save the day. Use buck's cybernetic implants and stockade of deadly weapons to unmask the power behind The Herd!**

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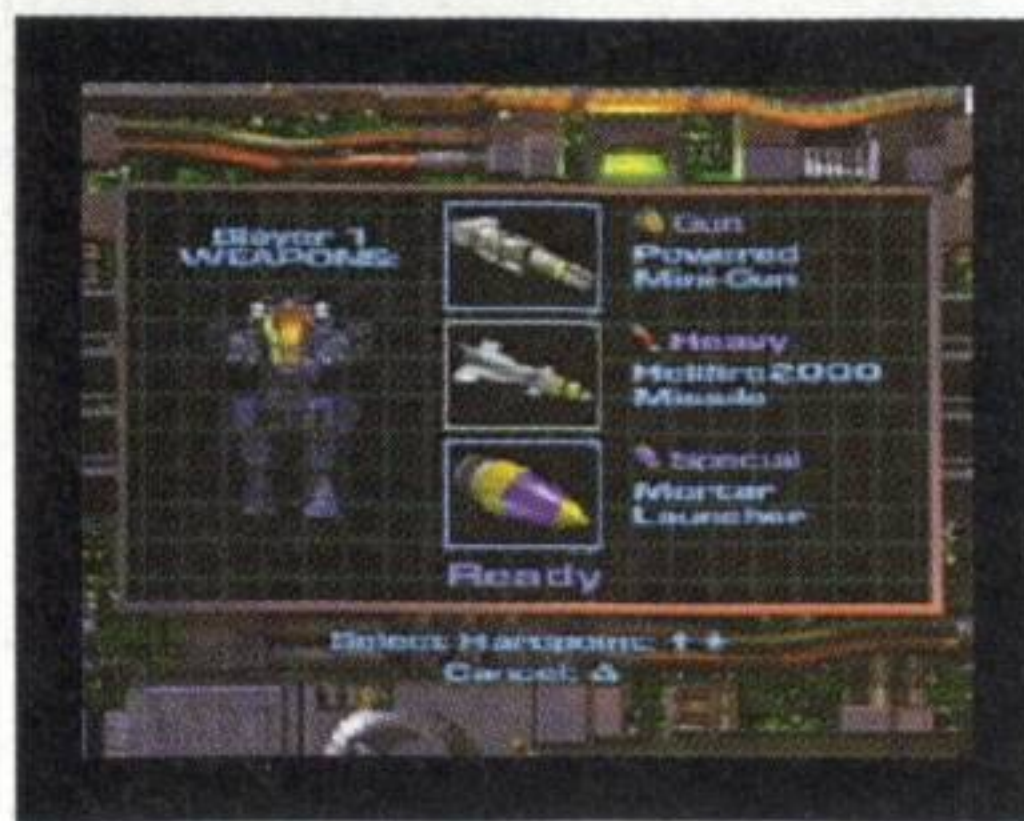
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# Future Cop LAPD

George Soropos thought this one could have been called 'Police Strike', and we don't mean a state of lawlessness.

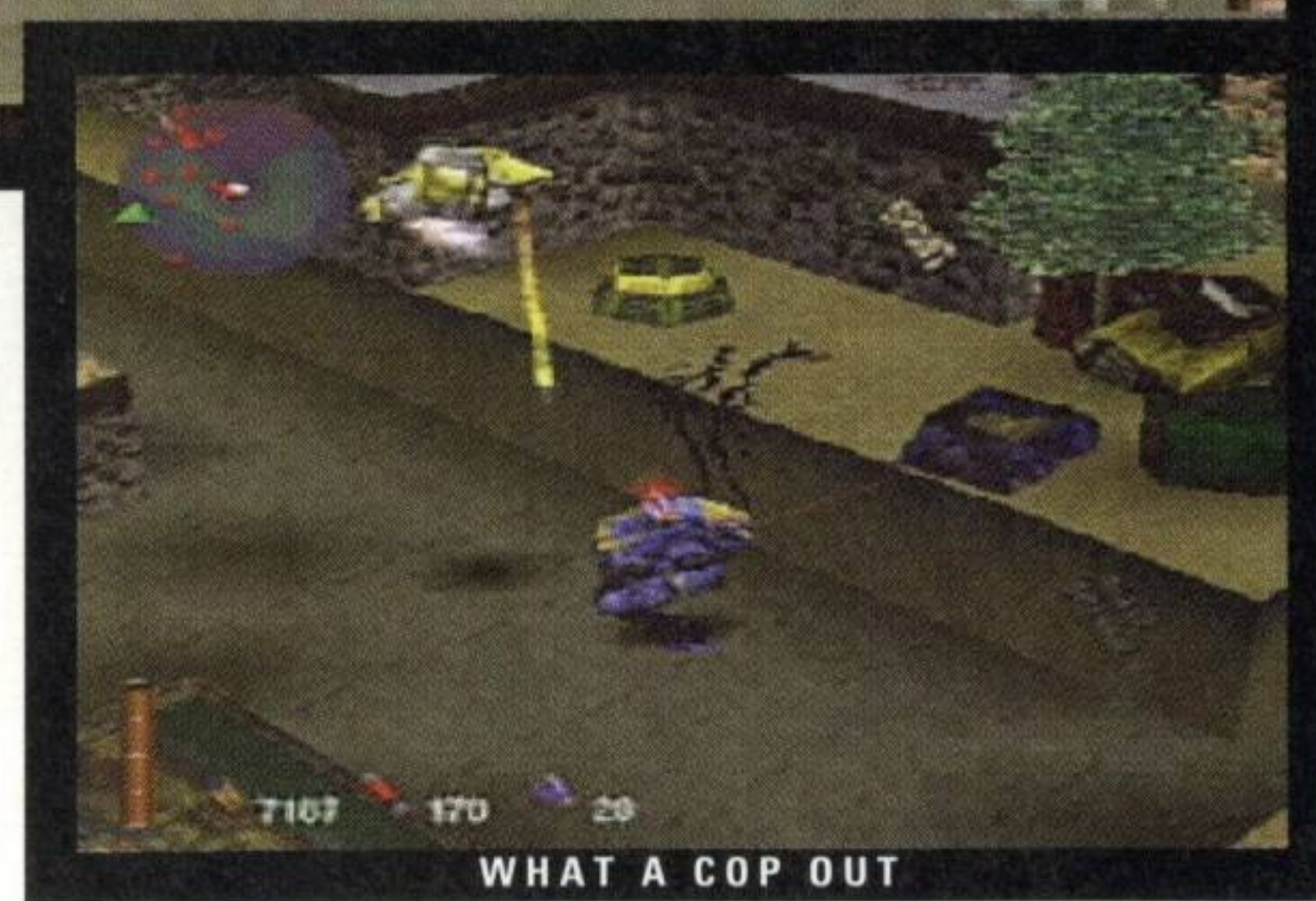


The year is 2098 and Los Angeles has long since fallen into decay and industrial anarchy. Mutants, Chem Lords and Cyborgs roam the streets, a bit like Newtown really, and crime has of course developed to monstrous levels aided by technology and desperation. Into this chaotic cityscape steps you, mighty warrior of the L.A.P.D., doer of good deeds and dedicated ironer of underpants.

Gamers into EA's 'Strike' series, and the recent Wargames Defcon:1 for that matter, will be familiar with the basic format of LAPD. The mission based game puts you in the hotseat of an AX-1 police vehicle, a mecha which is also capable of transforming into an ordinary, well ordinary for this place anyway, police car. Most interestingly though Future Cop also includes a second game 'Precinct Assault'!

## THERE'S CRIME IN L.A.?

The 'main' game consists of the usual mission based progression through the various levels with a variety of L.A.'s colourful 21st century crims as your opponents. Your main weapon is your mech, a rather more capable police vehicle than most in current service! It comes equipped with three weapon hardpoints, one for guns, one for heavy weapons and one for 'special' weapons.



At the start of the game you have a choice of four of each and it's up to you to decide on the most appropriate fitout for your mission. Your walking booze bus can also perform the handy manouvre of 'transforming' into a hovercar, a vehicle better suited to high speed pursuits and difficult terrain. It's about time Police technology took a leaf from the pages of the Saturday morning cartoons!

## AUTOMATIC FOR THE PEOPLE

Your main opponents in the actual missions are mostly made up of a wide variety of automated defence emplacements such as turrets and pill boxes. You will also have to deal with large numbers of

ground and air vehicles, in fact Future Cop gets very frantic indeed at the higher levels and becomes a real test of your concentration. There are also force fields and barriers dotted around most levels to impede your progress, these must be switched off or neutralised in some way and add a simple puzzle solving element to the game.

Arguably the most interesting aspect of Future Cop though is the 'Precinct Assault' mode. This is playable against a friend or as a solo game and, while utilising all aspects of the 'main' game, also adds some very interesting new elements. Each player begins with a base on opposite sides of the map (there are four 'Precinct Assault' maps) with the middle ground being neutral territory. The object is to invade your opponents base with your hoverships (hoverships?) which are built in factories inside your base. You can also build helicopters in a different type of facility, these are very useful as they will automatically attack any enemy hoverships approaching your base. You also have another line of defence at your disposal, automated turrets which guard the entrance to your base and attack any enemy units.

To make the game a bit more interesting there are



also a few turrets and factories scattered about in 'no man's land' between the opposing bases which can be claimed by touching them with your cop car/mech. These are very important as they can turn the tide of battle either way and must be controlled to win the



MOBILE ARMOUR DONUT PATROL

game. Precinct Assault also has one other unique feature in solo play mode - your opponent the Sky Captain. The Sky Captain is a learning AI and will pick up on your tactics, improving it's game every time you play against it!

#### THIS ONE LOOKS POLISHED

From a presentation point of view Future Cop comes close to outshining all of EA's previous PSX titles. The graphics engine manages to put masses of objects and effects on the screen without any noticeable slowdown and they look great as well, not low detailed and poorly textured blobs. The sound effects also have a lot of impact and help bring the whole thing to life quite nicely.

All in all a top little game, my only gripe is the old cliché of having to restart a mission from scratch when you die, I hate that!



THE MOBILE ARMOUR PATROL CATCHES A JAYWALKER

AVAILABLE: Now  
 CATEGORY: Action  
 PLAYERS: 1-2  
 PUBLISHER: EA  
 PRICE: \$79.95  
 RATING: M15+  
 SUPPORTS: Dual Shock

#### PLUS

Fast and furious action, great graphics and a deathmatch option!

#### MINUS

Stereotypical mission design that punishes you too heavily for mistakes

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
94	84	85

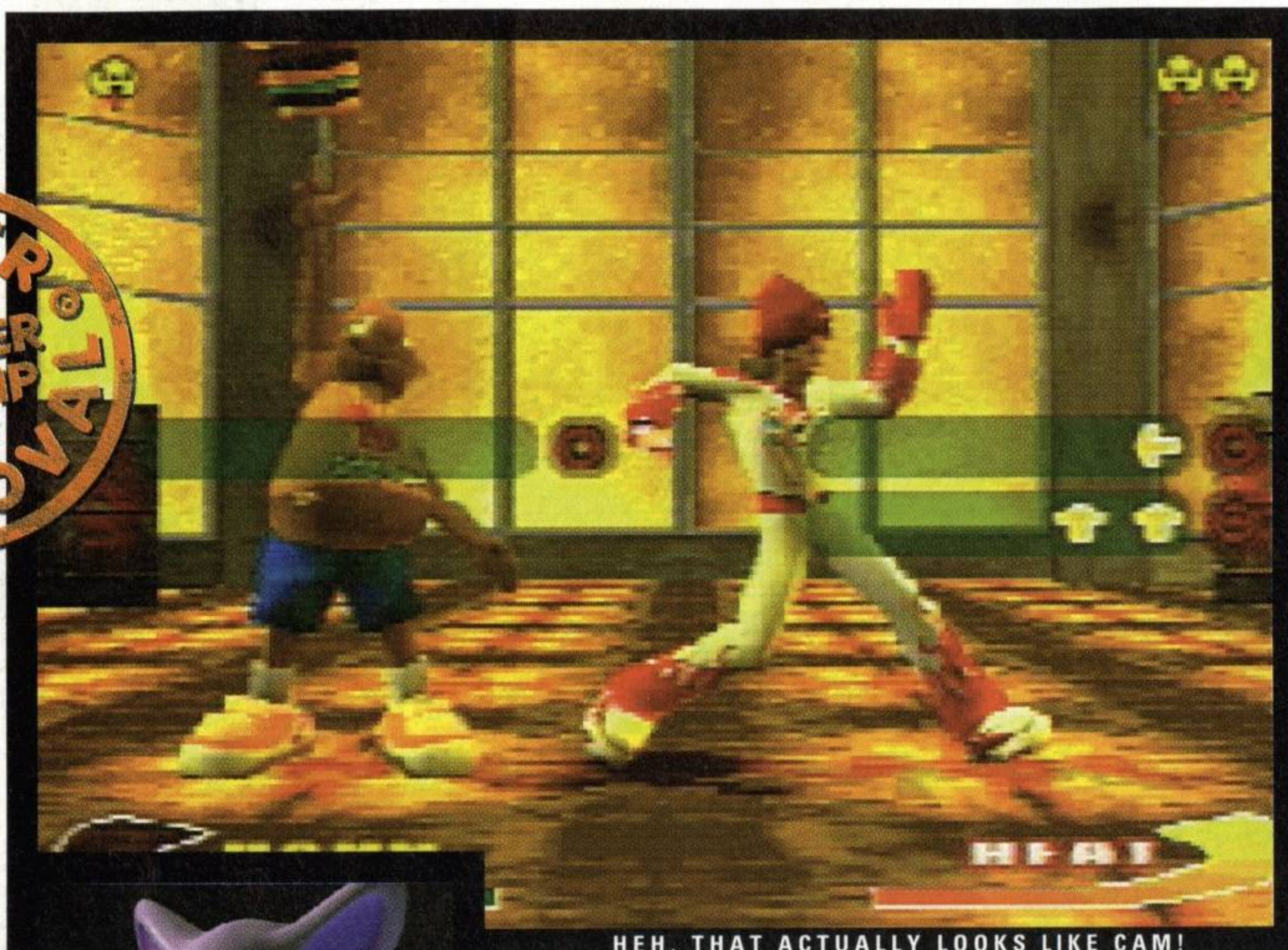
#### OVERALL

# 89

A solid action title from a long and distinguished line of such games. The perfect successor to the 'Strike' series.

# Bust A Groove: Dance and Rhythm Action

Cam Shea likes the nightlife, he likes to boogie...



HEH, THAT ACTUALLY LOOKS LIKE CAM!

Ahh, another genre defying game that will appeal to gamers and non-gamers alike. Kudos to developers like Enix who are prepared to cast the shackles of stagnant genres aside and make kooky, fun games. Right from the short but slick intro Bust A Groove really stands out.

Bust A Groove features 14 dancers, each with his/her own dance style and backing track. The one-player game feels somewhat like a funkadelic beat 'em up. Progress is through a championship of one on one bouts until you face the end boss. However, rather than beating your opponent into a bloody pulp, you simply strut funkier stuff. Cool!

### BUST THOSE MOVES UP LIKE A HIGH SCHOOL KEGGER...

Gameplay is relatively simple, but has surprising depth. The aim is to perform a fluid string of dance moves - one every bar. A move consists of simple D-pad commands in the first three bars, then X or O on the fourth beat. Each dancer has a huge array of moves, and if you're adept, half the fun lies in freestyling - com-

ing up with your own funky combos.

You can also launch a special move, or evade an opponent's special move, by pressing triangle or square respectively, on the fourth beat. The special attack puts your opponent out of action for a couple of bars. This helps give the game a more competitive flavour, as strategically launching an attack just when an opponent has a tricky combination coming up can give you the advantage.

The design in Bust A Groove simply oozes style - in a surreal, Japanese kinda way. The characters are nicely varied and very funky in design. Each has a distinct dancing style - including rave dancing, breakdancing/hip hop, Janet Jacksonesque choreography and disco. The backgrounds echo this variety. For instance, the final boss, Robo-Z, is a 6 storey mech-dancing machine. He dances in the middle of an intersection in a city (cars whizzing round his feet) whilst you dance (as small as an ant) on top of a building on the corner.

### SMOOTHER THAN A BALD BADGER'S BUTT... YEP MIGHTY SMOOTH.

Bust A Groove's graphics are superb. The gourard shading on the characters give them a dreamy smoothness and solidity, much like in Tobal 2, with no visible joins. This effect is enhanced further by the realistic movement and seamless way that moves link together. The camera is used well, as are the various lighting effects, such as coloured reflections on the dancer's clothes from the changing colours on Hiro's disco floor. Each character also has his/her own logo and CG ending. Even the pre-game screens are funky. Bust A Groove is just so polished.

All the tracks are produced by Japanese dance label Avex Trax. They've done a great job too. Whilst firmly in the 'commercial dance' category, the music has a catchy, fun vibe that generally suits the dancer. The basic musical styles the game covers are nicely summed up by the rather Namco-esque announcer: Let's get down to house, sexy hip hop, gangster groove and even old school 70's disco on a nostalgia trip. Great stuff.

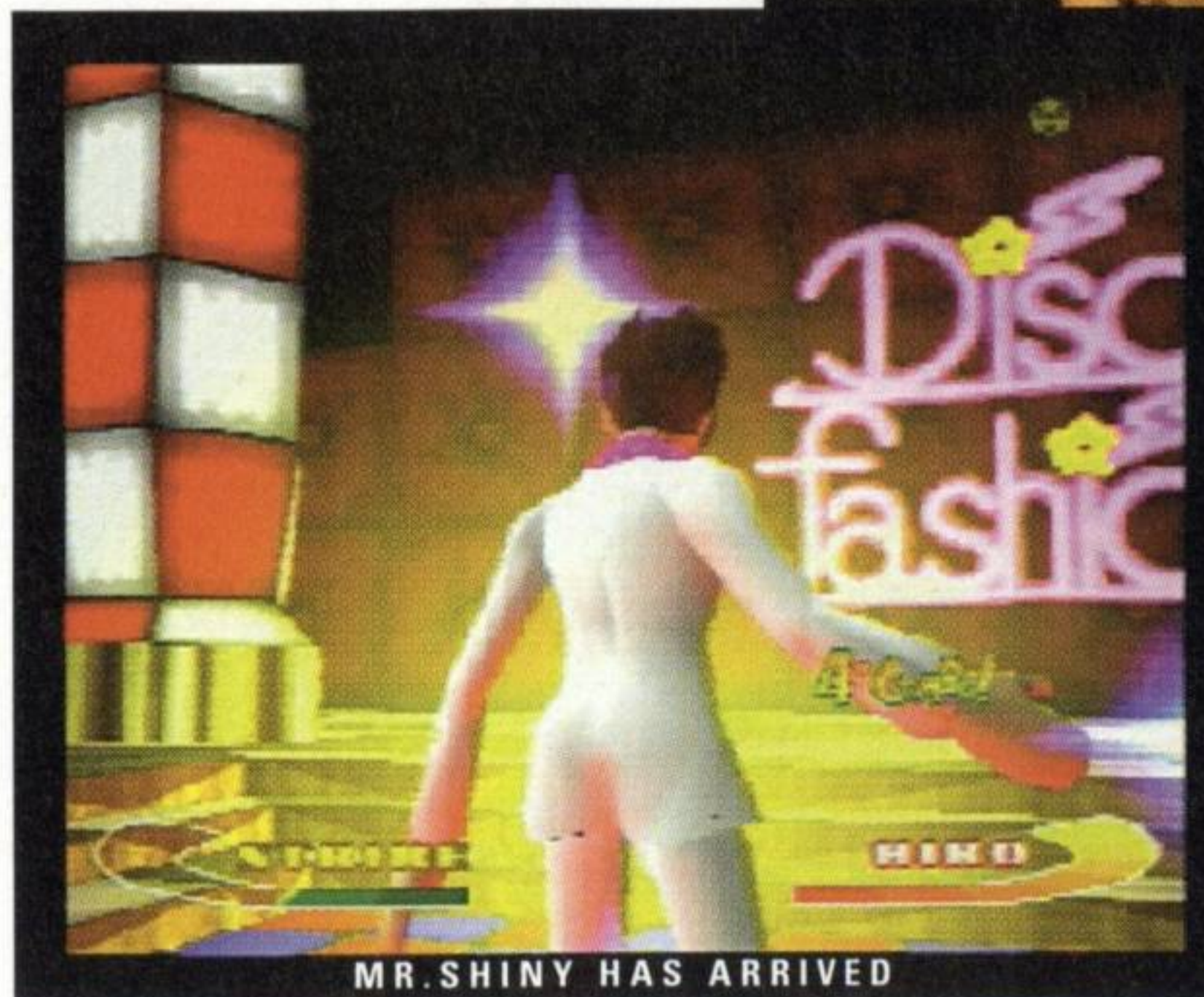
AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Dancing Sim
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: Enix
PRICE: TBA
RATING: G

**PLUS**  
A pleasure to play. Highly original and very well designed.

**MINUS**  
Like Parappa - you'll either love it or hate it.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
91	89	91

**OVERALL**  
**91**  
Bust A Groove is for those that like to get down and shake their booty.

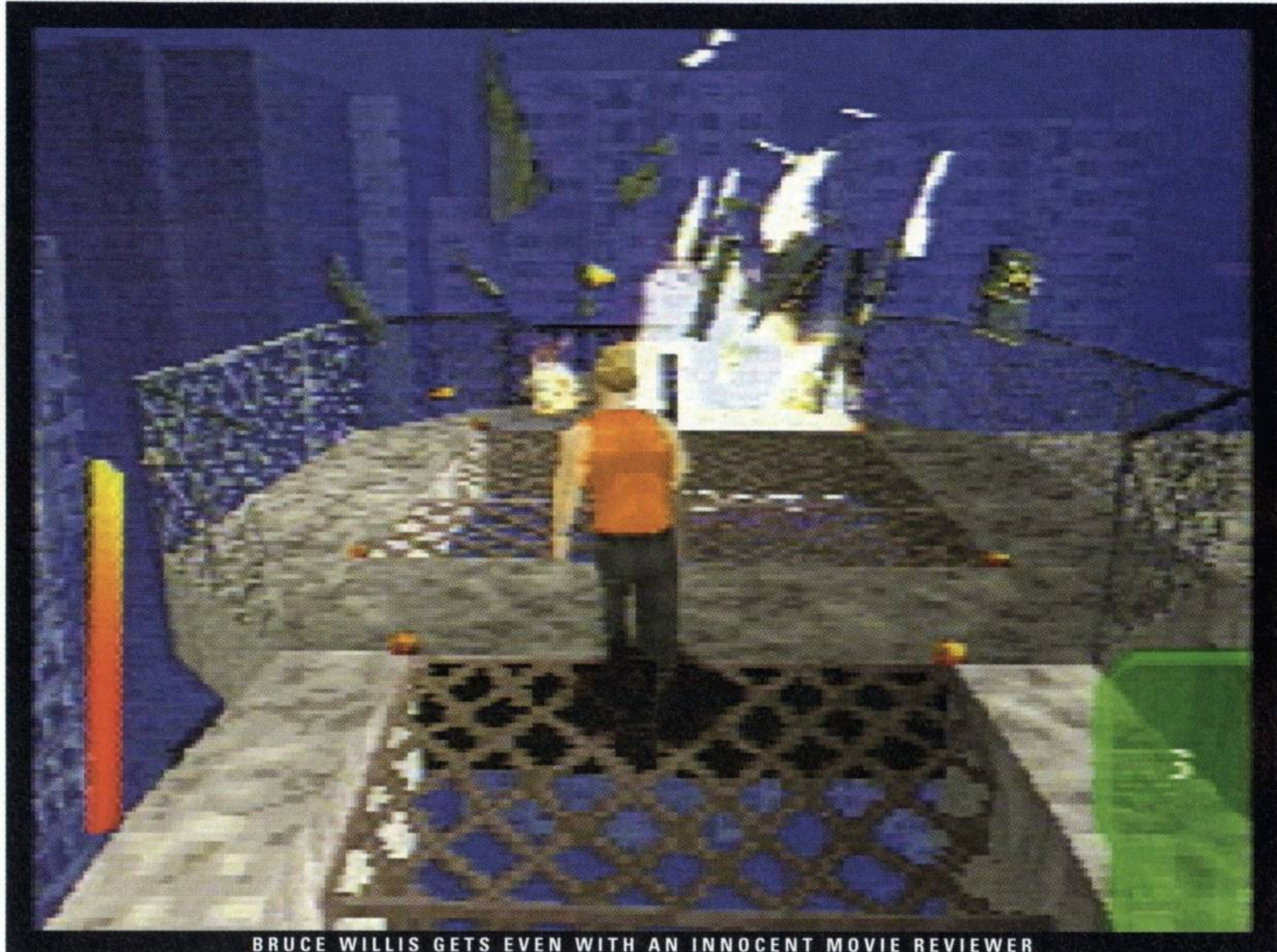


MR. SHINY HAS ARRIVED



# Fifth Element

Cam Shea treads the movie license game tightrope...



BRUCE WILLIS GETS EVEN WITH AN INNOCENT MOVIE REVIEWER

Save the world eh? Hmm... I don't know. A huge elemental force devouring us all is probably the only way to ensure there'll be no more Police Academy films. More to the point, Bruce Willis would never act again, and we'd no longer be afflicted by dodgy movie to game translations. Yay! Not that this one's all that bad, it's just that the effort of playing all the way through just to save Humankind doesn't seem reward enough. Oh well.

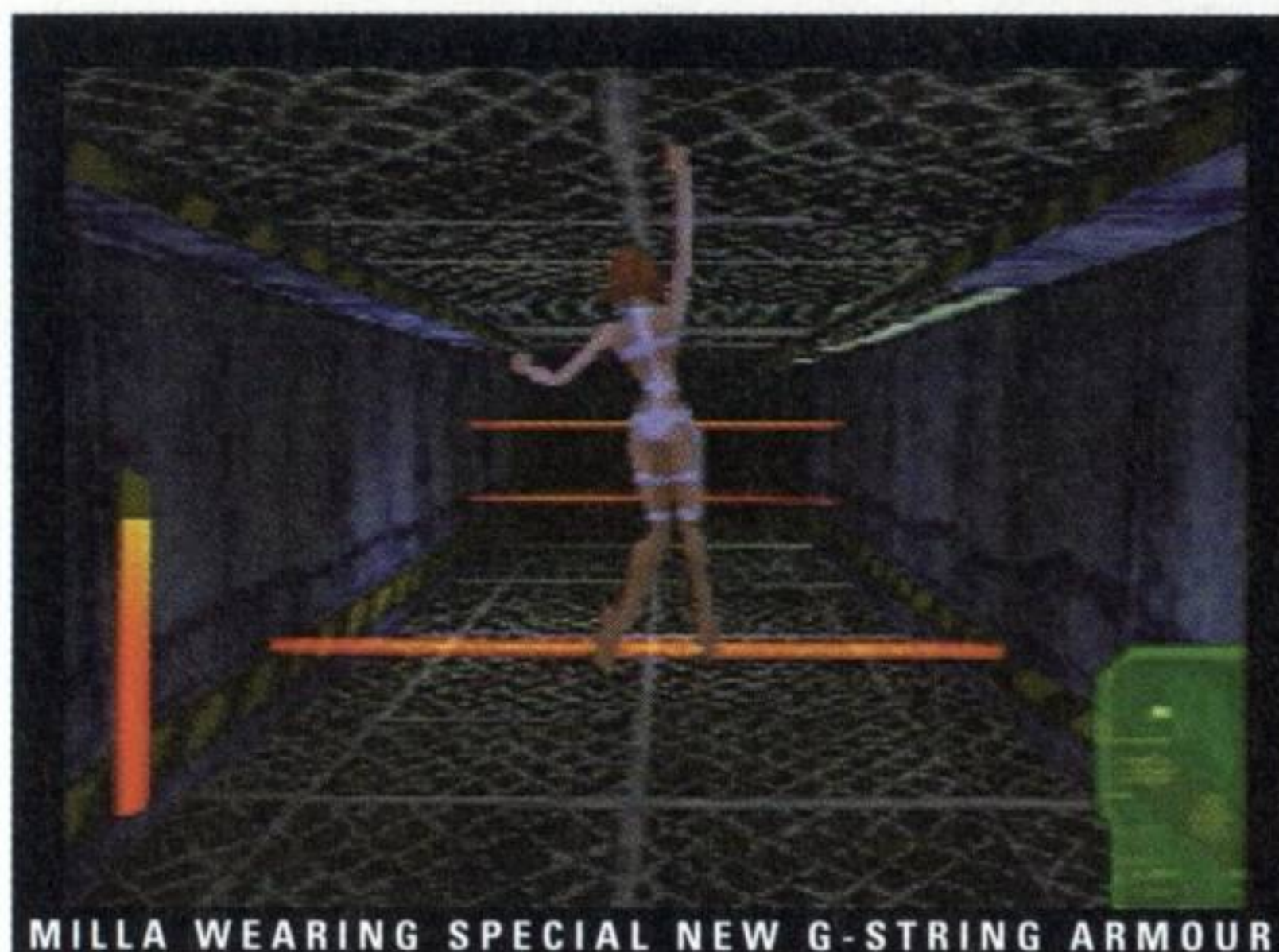
## HE'S PACKING A GAT, SHE'S PACKING A PUNCH...

You're able to play as the two main characters from the film: Korben Dallas (Bruce Willis) and Leeloo (Milla Jovovitch). Levels are structured to take advantages of their differing skills. Korben is a gun toting kinda guy. Although he can fist-fight when required, he's more adept at squeezing the trigger, and has the arsenal to prove it. On the flip side, Leeloo favours hand to hand combat with the odd hand grenade thrown in for good measure. She's more acrobatic, and encounters more platform style obstacles. She can also hang from the ceiling to avoid lasers and flames, as well as crawl. These differences do help add variety to the gameplay. Still, both characters are about on par in dress sense - Leeloo's 'wrapped in crepe bandages' outfit is just as bad as Korben's 'the future is the 80's all over again' look... shudder.

The gameplay leans more towards combat, and less towards puzzles. Fortunately, although the fighting mechanics are limited, they are actually bearable. Leeloo can use a reasonable degree of strategy - she has a flying kick attack, a low sweep attack, a block move, as well as punch and kick combos. She's also quite mobile - cartwheeling out to the side, backflips to evade attacks etc.

## LET THE INEVITABLE THIRD PERSON PERSPECTIVE CAMERA BATTLE BEGIN...

Unfortunately though, the fighting is really let down in two areas. First, the sluggishness with which the characters turn, which is incredibly frustrating when being attacked by several bad guys. Second, one of the least intuitive camera mechanics systems ever. It jumps



MILLA WEARING SPECIAL NEW G-STRING ARMOUR

all over the place, and rarely where you want it to. The frequency with which you find yourself staring at the front of your character and not the advancing enemies is ridiculous. There isn't even an option to switch to first person in order to look around. Thus, manoeuvring around in general is a pain, and fighting with any accuracy is difficult.

Graphically, Fifth Element is a bit average. Frame rates are quite sluggish, and the gameworld isn't particularly pretty to look at. Also, the inevitable fogging is very close in. Too close in. Often as Korben, you'll be shot at from beyond your viewing range. Whilst you can just point your gun in that direction and start squeezing off clips you're never really sure whether you're making contact or not. The fogging also means that unless you're in a narrow corridor, exploration is a chore. On the positive side, there are plenty of excellent FMV sequences that actually make the film look interesting, and more importantly, the gameplay is moderately entertaining.

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Action
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: Kalisto
PRICE: \$69.95
RATING: M15+
SUPPORTS: Dual Analogue

### PLUS

Cutsscenes are nice, two separate characters livens things up.

### MINUS

Major perspective problems, and graphically unimpressive.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
77	83	78

## OVERALL

# 76

The many poor areas overshadow Fifth Element's better features.

# Spyro The Dragon

Hardened by the sickly sweet Rare games, Eliot Fish was the only person brave enough to review the cute Spyro...

Sony Computer Entertainment have gone and developed the sort of glorious 3D platformer you would expect from only Nintendo's Rare team, which is exactly what the PlayStation has needed to put the final boot into the N64. However, does Spyro really have the depth of gameplay which the Nintendo 64's Rare games are famous for? Spyro has the awesome character design, colourful levels, smooth controls and funky music that's needed, but there's a certain something which is lacking. The team behind Spyro should be given a huge slap on the back for bringing us a gorgeous platformer, anyhow, so let's get down and dirty with the cute little dragon and see what he has to offer...

**I'LL HUFF AND I'LL PUFF...**

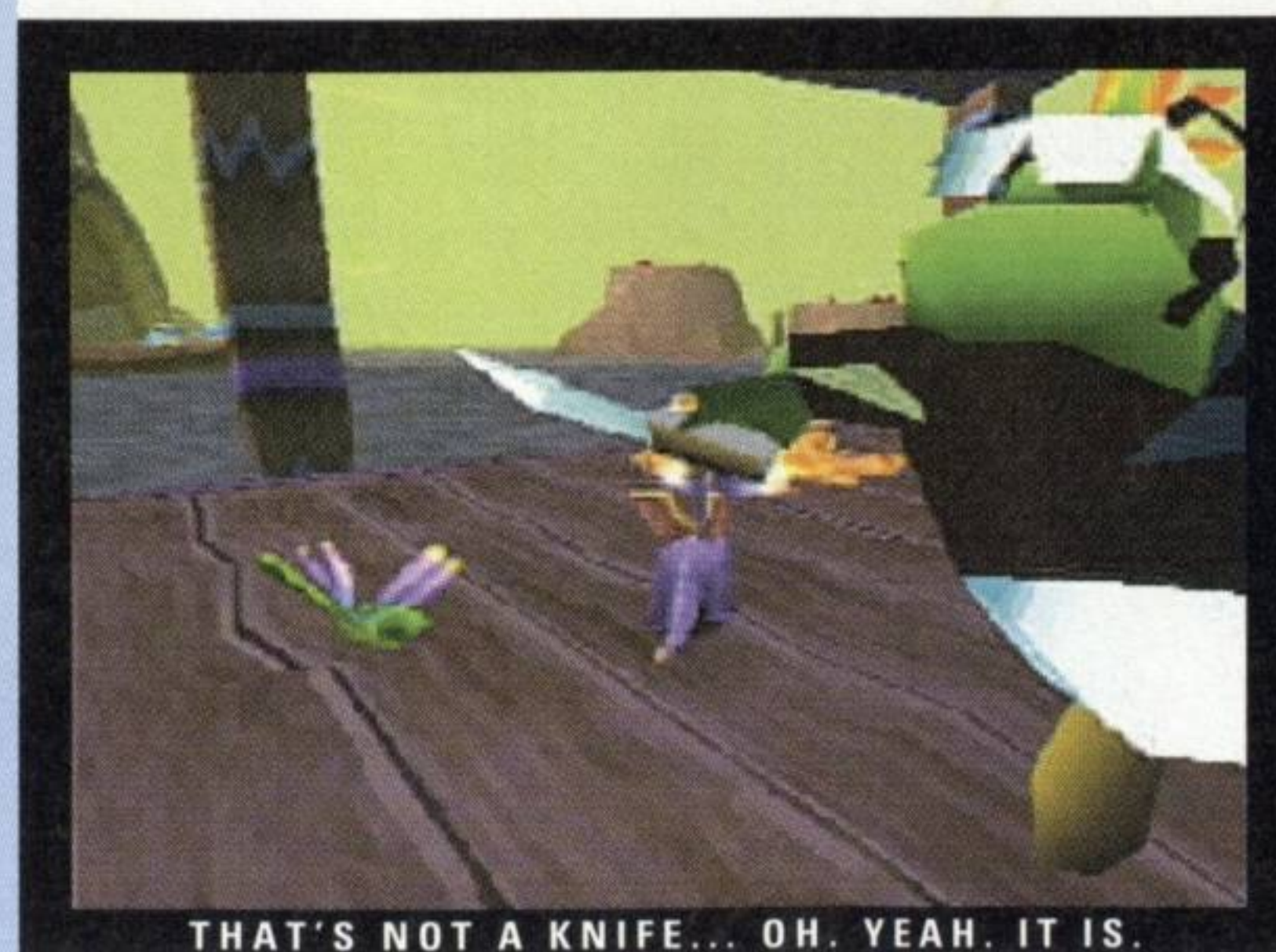
The main objective in Spyro is to release all the dragons that have been trapped in statues, and collect as many coloured gems as you can on the way.



There are other items to discover as side-objectives to the main game, such as the pink dragon eggs and the extra-life statuettes, but apart from tonking the enemies and knocking over a few bosses, there isn't much else to the game. Though most of the levels have been designed with a number of twists and turns and out-of-reach ledges to challenge only the determined,



SPYRO... HE'S A HORNY LITTLE GUY



THAT'S NOT A KNIFE... OH. YEAH. IT IS.

anally-retentive, or terminally bored, on the whole they are all a bit "samey". There is usually little much else to do but collect crystals and glide from platform to platform, with the exit out of the level exposed for the gamer to use when the going gets too tough. Unlike the fiendish puzzles at the heart of most of the Rare titles, Spyro seems to be aimed at a younger, less-demanding gamer who is looking for a quick, easy romp rather than a challenging gaming session. There is a chance Spyro may still appeal to some experienced gamers though, simply because it controls so well, looks great and the game has an addictive quality.

As far as Spyro himself is concerned, he only has a





ONE LONELY PREPUBESCENT DRAGON



handful of moves, but they can be used in a variety of ways throughout the game to never really make you feel limited. Spyro can jump, glide, strafe, snort fire and charge forward with his horns lowered, though there are some mini-levels which allow Spyro to actually fly and complete obstacle courses. His little friend dragonfly always hovers by his side as an indicator of Spyro's health level - the dragonfly changes in colour when you're injured. Thankfully, there are chickens, lizards, sheep, rabbits and other creatures scattered throughout the levels for Spyro to roast with his fire and transform into butterflies for his dragonfly buddy to eat, and thus regain health. But, because of the difficulty level, there's never really a time during the game when you'll be too concerned about dying.



SORRY SPYRO YOU'RE JUST TOO YOUNG



#### HAVE A DRAGON THIS...

Most of the enemies you encounter can either be fried with your fire, or knocked off their feet with a quick ramming from your horns - and the bosses are much the same, though there's usually a pattern of movements to observe so you can find their weak spot. Lying around the land are a variety of chests, and other devices which spew forth crystals when you break them, again a quick ramming or burst of fire is all you need to get what you want. Mastering Spyro's gliding technique is the secret to getting to most of the trickier sections of the levels and you'll find yourself fretting over how to get up to areas seemingly out of reach. Usually it's just a matter of jumping off a ledge and gliding directly at the platform you want to land on, but sometimes you'll have to get the timing just right, or even drop Spyro in an emergency dive so as to not overshoot your target area. There really is little else to do in the game, which is Spyro's main flaw, despite a few nice touches like cannons which can be fired with a quick snort of fire, super-jumps and some humorous characters to encounter, the gameplay tends to repeat itself over the course of the game. Though there is a certain amount of entertainment in exploring the great-looking levels, playing through Spyro The Dragon becomes as much a chore as it is intriguing. It always feels as though the game is leading up to something, but never gets there. The levels are all a bit too easy, with the task of collecting gems just a little too simplistic to keep you rabidly playing for hours. There are some great moments in Spyro, and visually it's one of the most impressive PlayStation games to date, but there's just not enough variety in the gameplay to really make it a killer.

**AVAILABLE:** Now  
**CATEGORY:** 3D Platformer  
**PLAYERS:** 1  
**PUBLISHER:** Sony  
**PRICE:** \$79.95  
**RATING:** G  
**SUPPORTS:** Dual Shock

**PLUS**  
 Smooth controls and fast gameplay.

**MINUS**  
 Light on puzzles, not very demanding.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
94	84	82

**OVERALL**  
**85**  
 A really well-made platformer that is easy to like, but maybe a little too basic

# Moto Racer 2

**Peter Jankulovski** is the long lost crusty demon of dirt... Okay, so he's not, but he did review **Moto Racer 2**.

It's been almost a year since Electronic Arts unleashed the original *Moto Racer* on an unsuspecting public. With little in the way of solid competition on the Playstation, and its combination of both Superbike (road racing) and Motocross (off-road) racing in the one neat package, it was sure to be a runaway hit. Little has changed since, and at first glance, *Moto Racer 2* looks and feels a little too similar to the original. But delve a little further, and you will find a slew of new options and customisation features, resulting into almost a whole different and unique game, and addressing the all important 'lack of replay value' criticism that marred the original.

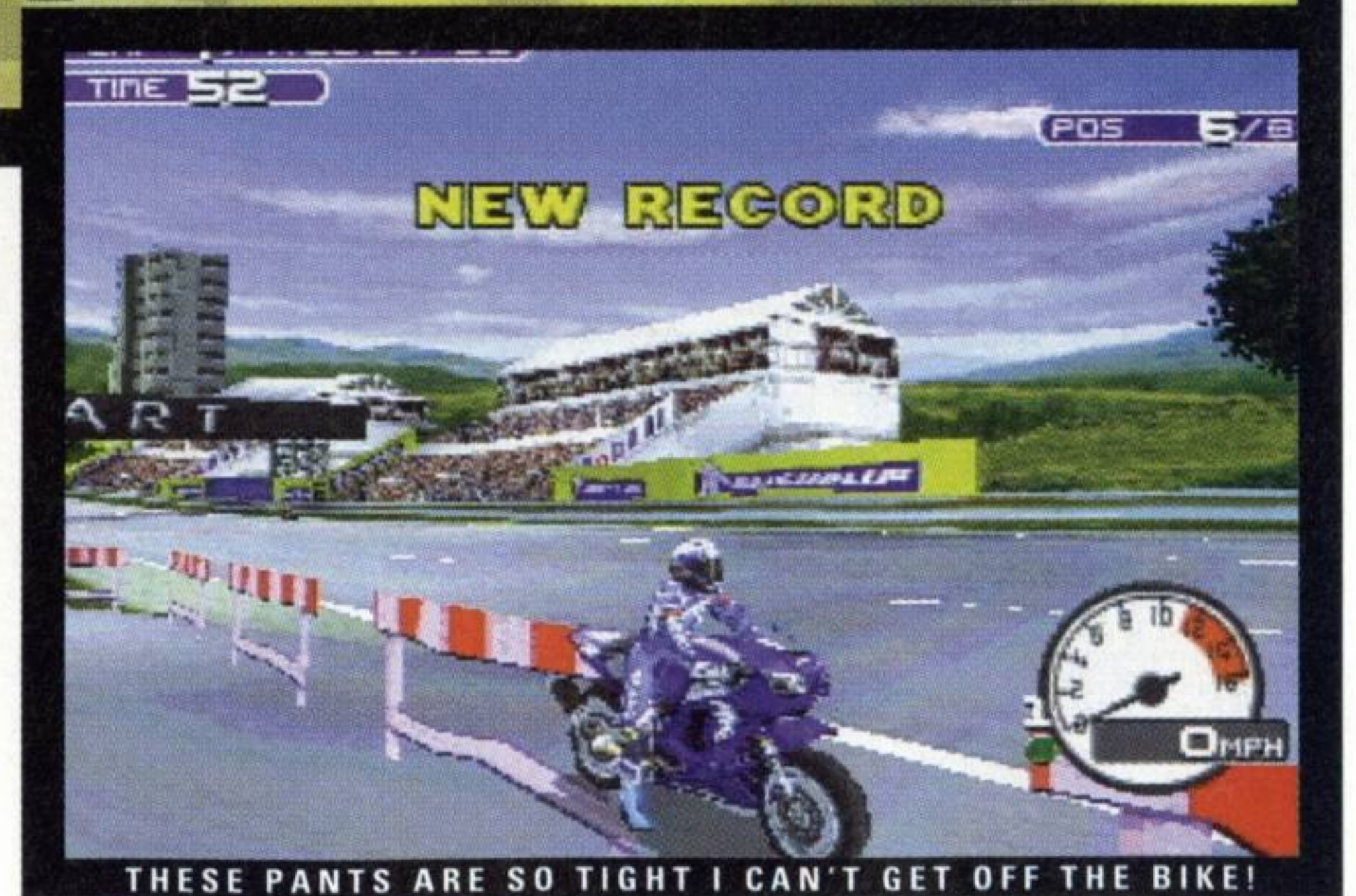
teristically implemented Arcade and Simulation options in any racer seen to date. Rather than limiting the Arcade Mode to a couple of tracks and building the core of the game around its Simulation mode, the game remains virtually identical when toggling between the two. Arcade Mode is as expected, simplifying cornering and being fairly forgiving in knocks against the wall. Flick over to Simulation, and even a soft(ish) touch of anything outside the track results in a fairly unspectacular tumble, while the handling of the bike is only effected by making it harder to turn into corners. There seems to be little change in terms of



### STACKS OF TRACKS

With no less than 32 tracks, evenly split between road and motocross racing, it would be seemingly hard to criticise *Moto Racer 2* of being too short or limiting. There are 3 modes of play, including Practice, Single Race, or Championship. With the former two being fairly self explanatory, Championship Mode offers a further 5 selections of 8 race championships. As well as Superbike, Motocross and Dual Sport Options, a custom championship can also be selected, as well as the Ultimate Championship, only available on the prior successful completion of all of the others. There are 8 bikes immediately selectable in each of the on/off-road modes, all with varying speed, acceleration and handling characteristics.

*Moto Racer 2* contains perhaps the most uncharac-



bike physics in Simulation Mode, resulting in a harder version of the Arcade Mode, rather than offering a realistic bike simulation. The lack of any bike modification options further outlines the intention of this game as a pure Arcade racer, rather than simulating realism, a fact some will find disappointing.

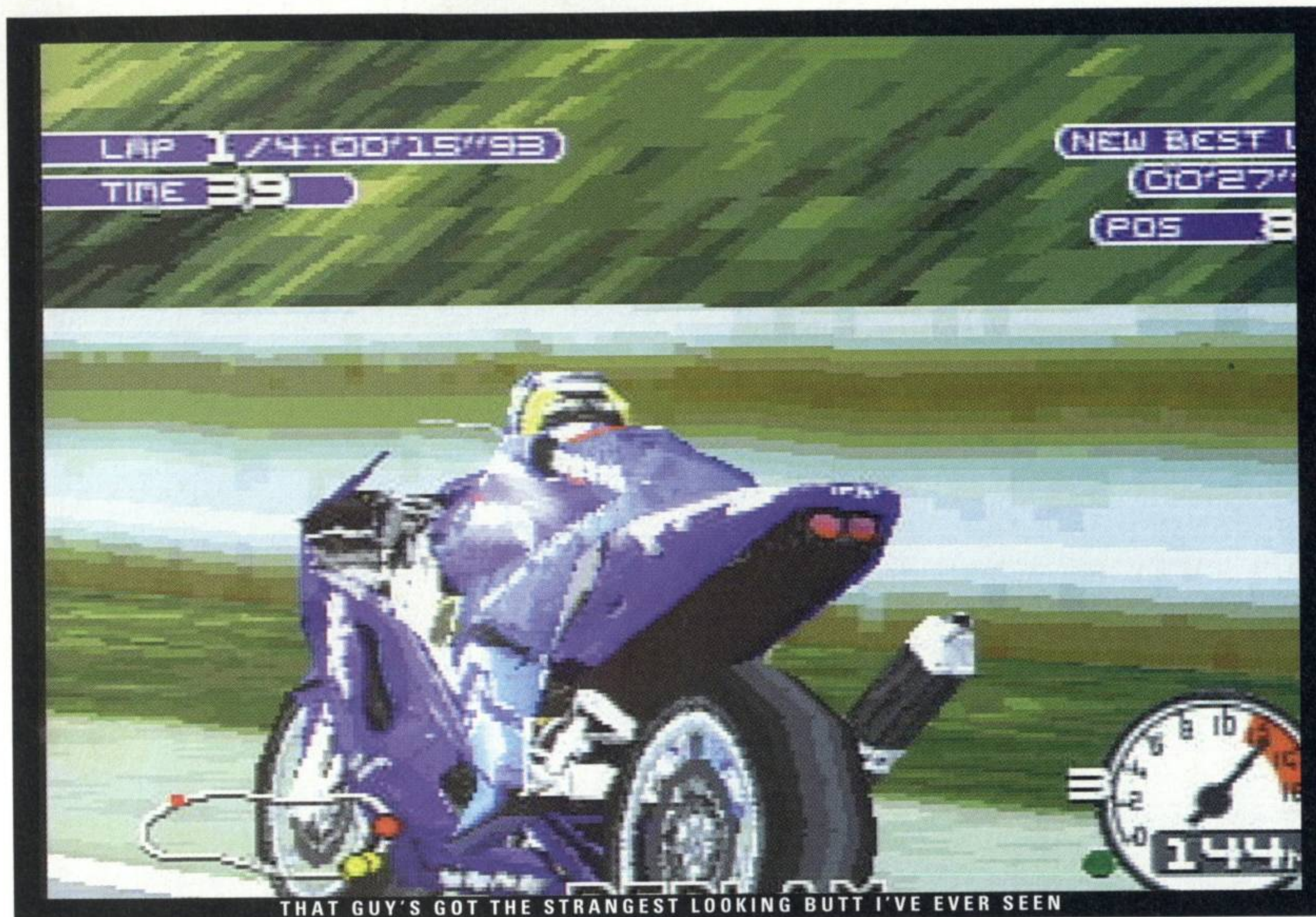
### MESS WITH NATURE... WEATHER CONTROL

Several customisable weather conditions add to the variety in tracks, as well as racing strategy and bike handling. Which is just as well, as many of the track layouts seem to be a little too similar to each other, with 5 locations for the available tracks to differentiate conditions and terrains.

In a clever ploy to add longevity to the title, EA have included a limited track editor, which allows you to modify any of the existing tracks, or create new ones, and play them individually, or as part of the Custom Championship. However, it does not allow the freedom to create anything that can be considered totally unique, presumably to keep within the design of the

quite good, to annoying.

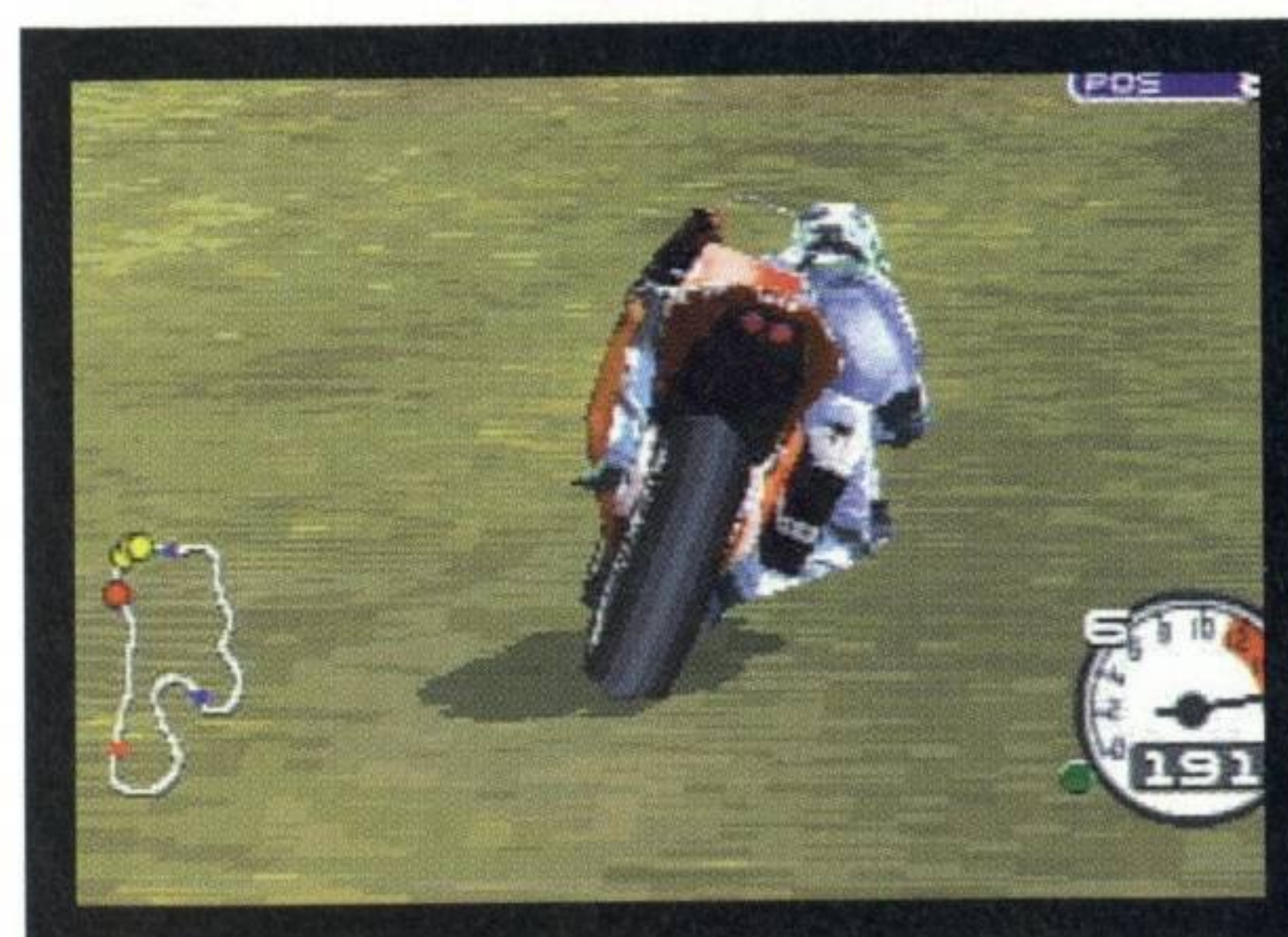
While it has its little flaws and annoyances, and could have done with a better simulation mode and a little more imaginative track designs, Moto Racer 2 has quite a bit going for it. With different Championship options, track editor and both Motocross and Superbike modes thrown in the one package, this game will appeal to a wide range of arcade racing fans after a game that lasts a little longer than 3 or 4 tracks. If you liked the original, or you're after a good, solid 2-wheel racer with a little more variety and longevity, there's no reason why you should be looking past Moto Racer 2. A little too similar in gameplay terms to the original, though.



game. Creating a new track requires you to start from a plain circular layout, and your only means of modifying it are adding mounds and control points, making it very difficult to achieve a desired layout. Indeed, in most instances, modifying the track is a matter of trial and error. You will often find that certain combinations of twists and mounds are incompatible with one of the Motocross or Superbike modes, and you must make corrections before proceeding, often resulting in a track totally different to what was intended.

### POPPY AND CHOPPY?

While the frame rate is visibly low and there is some obvious pop-up on certain tracks, the game is very fast and consistent, which almost makes these slight deficiencies irrelevant. Graphic detail is good considering the speed, if not that different to the original. The 2 player mode is again fairly solid, but there is a significant drop in frame rate and visual detail, somewhat compensated by the limited viewpoint of the split screen. There also seems to be an inconsistency between the difficulty of finishing in a certain position in Superbike Mode, as opposed to the Motocross game, although this is probably due to a personal preference a gamer may have for one type of racing over the other. The generally good motorbike samples are accompanied by the appropriate alternative/grunge soundtracks, which can vary from



AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Racing
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts
PRICE: \$79.95
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: Dual Shock

### PLUS

Variety of game modes, options and customising features to suit almost everyone.

### MINUS

No decent simulation mode, a little too similar to the original

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
77	79	85

OVERALL  
**83**

Good mix of 2-wheel arcade racing action that will keep you playing for quite a while.

# Shadow Gunner

Kevin Cheung reluctantly ejects from EVA01 and slips into the Shadow Gunner mech.



If you can make it, then you can fake it. And in the videogame business, that means clonage. More often than not, clones don't ordinarily make for great gaming experiences. Since the release of Mechwarrior and particularly Armoured Core, scores of mech games adopting the same Tomb Raider approach have surfaced. The bulk of them offer nothing new, if not less. While Australian distributors have wisely avoided all of the poor Japanese clones, it seems rather dubious that a Western clone should somehow have been rubber-stamped for release. The question is, what exactly does Shadow Gunner offer?

depressed. You therefore have the ability to perform circles of death and figure-eights with minimal effort - and the only reason you'd do it is to avoid enemy fire. In some instances, if you really wanted to, you could just shoot from a distance with the occasional side-step. That, my friends, is as far as the gameplay goes. Some pedants will whinge about how the gameplay becomes more tactical through the use of your jets and rocket launchers, especially with the larger number of enemy mechs in the later levels - but if I can whip through the whole game using only my default potato gun without breaking a sweat, then the so-called tactics count for nothing.



## THE INITIAL POLISH WILL WEAR OFF.

Be warned: a casual gamer who walks into a shop looking for some mech action would find it difficult to distinguish between Shadow Gunner and, say, a better quality game like Armoured Core. The reason is simple: in spite of the uninspiring gameplay, it is executed relatively well overall. The game appears generally solid and moves around at a nice framerate.

The catch is that a quick 5 minute spin in the shop isn't going to reveal how you'll still be doing the same boring thing after 4 hours of gameplay. It's also not going to reveal the comparatively low polygon count for the

mechs, not to mention their embarrassing designs. Lastly, a romp in a shop isn't going to reveal the sparse and dull sound effects. In the words of a great comedian, if you're thinking that there's more to it than meets the eye, believe me: there's less. Perseverance does not pay off.

By itself, Shadow Gunner is not really that bad a game. It's just that when you consider that older games have provided deeper gameplay, you've got to wonder what some of these programmers are thinking.



AVAILABLE: NOW

CATEGORY: Mech Action

PLAYERS: 1

PUBLISHER: Ubisoft

PRICE: \$79.95

RATING: G8+

### PLUS

Beginners might like the constant running and shooting.

### MINUS

Everyone else will find it shallow and simplistic.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

73 69 67

OVERALL

69

The lack of originality isn't as much a concern as its inability to copy the gameplay of its predecessors.

# Pocket Fighter

"Sakura in a swimsuit" is all Kevin Cheung needed to hear to jump into Pocket Fighter.

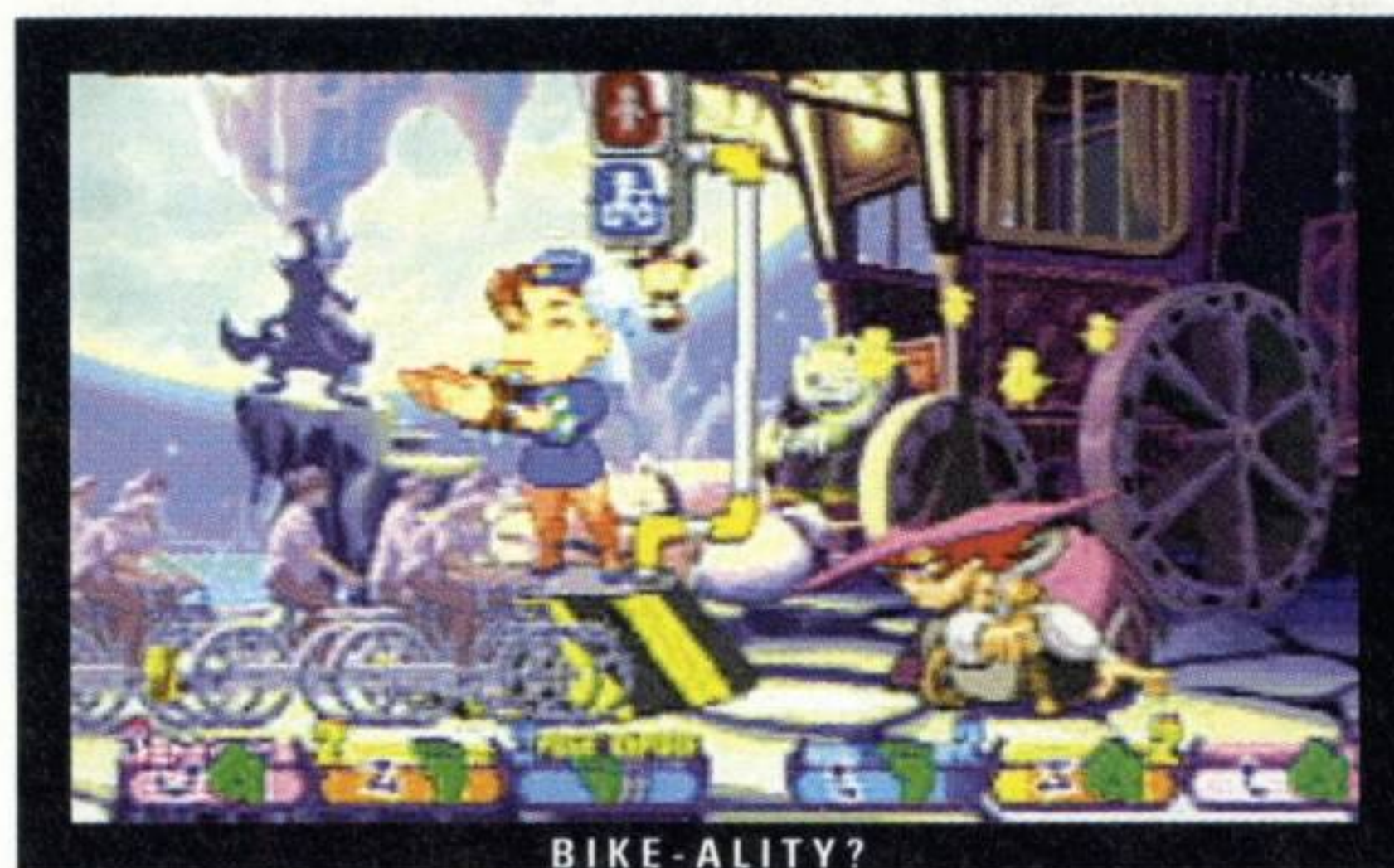
Many people are just going to look at this game and think, "what in the flaming hell is this meant to be?!", but I implore all of you to take a second look, because Pocket Fighter is a game that will touch the heart of every person who has ever played a fighting game.

Pocket Fighter is basically a game where Capcom is making fun of itself. A host of characters from its most popular titles are given the Super Deformed treatment (that's anime-speak for 'cutified') and thrown together into a fighting game where the plot being followed by each character is a satire of existing Capcom storylines.

## THE USUAL CAPCOM QUALITY

Graphically and aurally, the game bespeaks Capcom's high standards which brings PlayStation owners a near perfect arcade conversion. How close to perfect? Well, let's just say it's shy by only a few frames of animation. And the sounds are perfect. For those unfamiliar with the arcade version, the game is absolutely brimming with life in sprite and background animations. The relatively short load times are a big plus.

In terms of control, Pocket Fighter adopts a 3-button interface allowing Punch, Kick, and



Special actions. While the Punch and Kick moves allow for the combos (see the Flash Combos section), the Special button allows several types of super attacks, such as guard crushers, counters, and Super moves.

## FLASH COMBOS

Despite the 3-button interface, Pocket Fighter's gameplay isn't as shallow as one would initially expect. Thanks mostly in part to the Flash Combos and Special button attacks, the game offers a respectable depth in that each combo offers differing reach, timing, and power.

The Flash Combo system allows you to change into different costumes with each hit. Flash combos are started by pressing punch, and then you can finish off the combo with 4 more hits composed of a combination of the punch and kick buttons. Eg, PKPP, PKKP. The costumes include those of other Capcom characters. For

instance, Chun Li will actually change into a Jill Valentine (Resident Evil) outfit and start shooting with a beretta; and Felicia will change into Megaman!

## CLASSIC CAPCOM GAMEPLAY, BUT WITH HUMOUR

However, if you jump into Pocket Fighter expecting to use your tried and true hardcore fighting strategies, then you'll be wasting your money. The magic of Pocket Fighter lays not in the gameplay, but in the outrageous comic humour that is littered throughout the game. During Flash Combos, the characters switch through a variety of funny costumes and do all sorts of crazy things like 'death by karaoke', 'death by love letter', and so on. If you're already a Capcom fan, it's a delight. Non-Capcom fans will think it's insane. In either case, Pocket Fighter is the wackiest, funniest quality fighting game that Capcom has ever come up with.



AVAILABLE: Now  
 CATEGORY: 2D Fighting  
 PLAYERS: 2  
 PUBLISHER: Capcom  
 PRICE: \$79.95  
 RATING: G  
 SUPPORTS: Memory Card

## PLUS

Hilarious combos, cameos, and artwork that Capcom fans will absolutely love.

## MINUS

The gameplay is a little shallow compared to 'real' fighters.

VISUALS 86 SOUND 80 GAMEPLAY 81

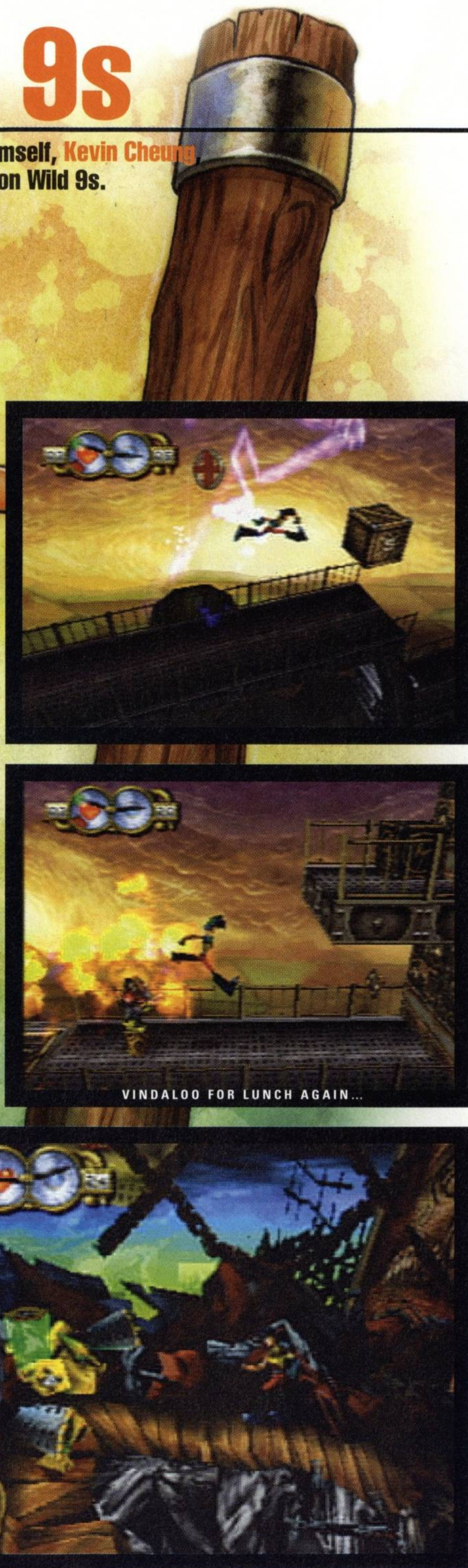
OVERALL

86

The humour is well placed and the satire is sharp. I love it!

# Wild 9s

Mr. Black Humour himself, **Kevin Cheung** gives the low-down on Wild 9s.



Earthworm Jim was the most original post-Mario mascot to have appeared in any game - and the games that this mascot appeared in were equally original (and funny) at the time. So when Shiny Entertainment announced that they were making a game called Wild 9s, it's no surprise that everyone's ears pricked up. And for good reason too.

## EGON SPENGLER GETS A NEW JOB.

Wild 9s places you in control of an intrepid adventurer called Wex, who must travel through scores of levels killing off baddies and rescuing the poor sods who've been imprisoned by an army of little green aliens. The game is a pseudo-3D platform game similar to Pandemonium and Klonoa in that the graphics are 3D, but the action is strictly 2D. Wex is equipped with an all-purpose electro-rope, similar to the cool weapons seen in Ghostbusters. With this weapon, you can capture enemies, swing them around, smash them on the floor, throw them into giant fans, and generally kill them. Feel like dropping a very large crate on top of someone's head? You can do that too.

On the graphical side of things, Wild 9s is an awesome collection of futuristic graphics with clean textures and brilliant light effects. Everything moves smoothly and some of the camera angles are pretty cool. The sounds are also of an outstanding quality. The music is composed by clearly a very talented team of artists who provide everything from smart techno to fully orchestrated pieces. This game is a pleasure just to listen to.

The only quibbles to be had about Wild 9s is in the character designs. Everyone takes the form of a fairly nondescript clump of polygons. Wex, in particular, is annoying for the way he runs around like a retarded gibbon with emphysema, making idiot-remarks such as "like... cool!".

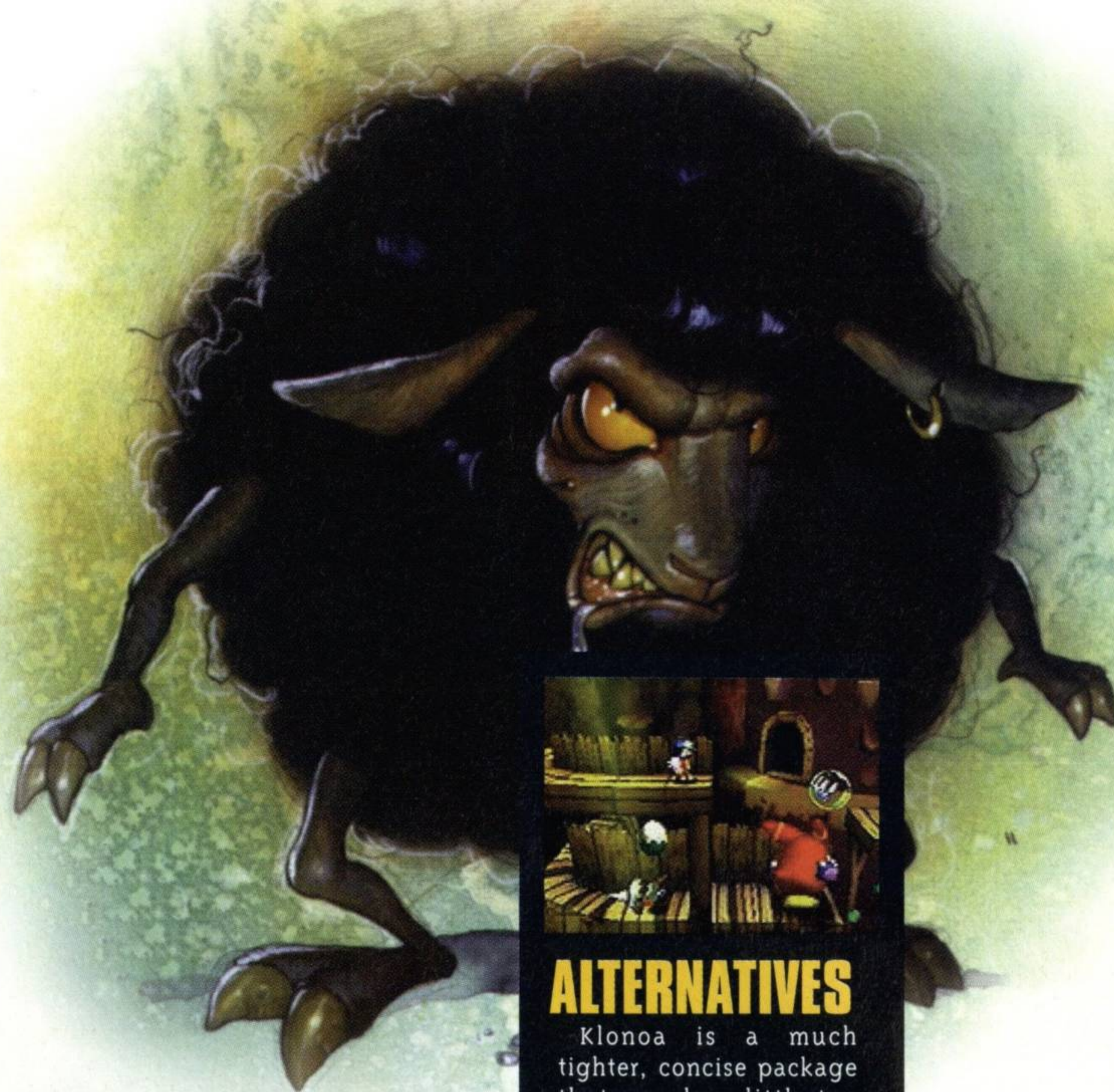
## VIOLENCE FOR THE HELL OF IT.

Part of the fun of Wild 9s is in taking advantage of the level surroundings to kill off the bad guys. This could involve electrocution, incineration, decapitation, or feeding an evil minion through a meat-grinder. And guess what? You get awarded more points for torturing them! While in some instances these actions are a necessity to get through to the next area, more often than not, they serve no purpose but to fuel one's own sick sense of humour. Bearing in mind, now, that this is more novelty than gameplay, this kind of feature is not something to be condoned. It might look cool, but it requires absolutely no brainwork, hence its value to the game is purely aesthetic. In other words, there was no need to implement an otherwise redundant feature that will only serve to inflame the passions of censor-happy moral groups, who'll eventually catch on that the only difference between red and green blood is the colour.

There is an interesting flip-side to this story, though. Over the last couple of years, it's been interesting to note the diverging approaches to platform gaming being adopted by Japanese and Western programmers. On one hand, Japanese programmers usually provide you with a finite set of moves that can be exploited in ingenious ways through the levels. Western platform games, on the other hand, have been historically

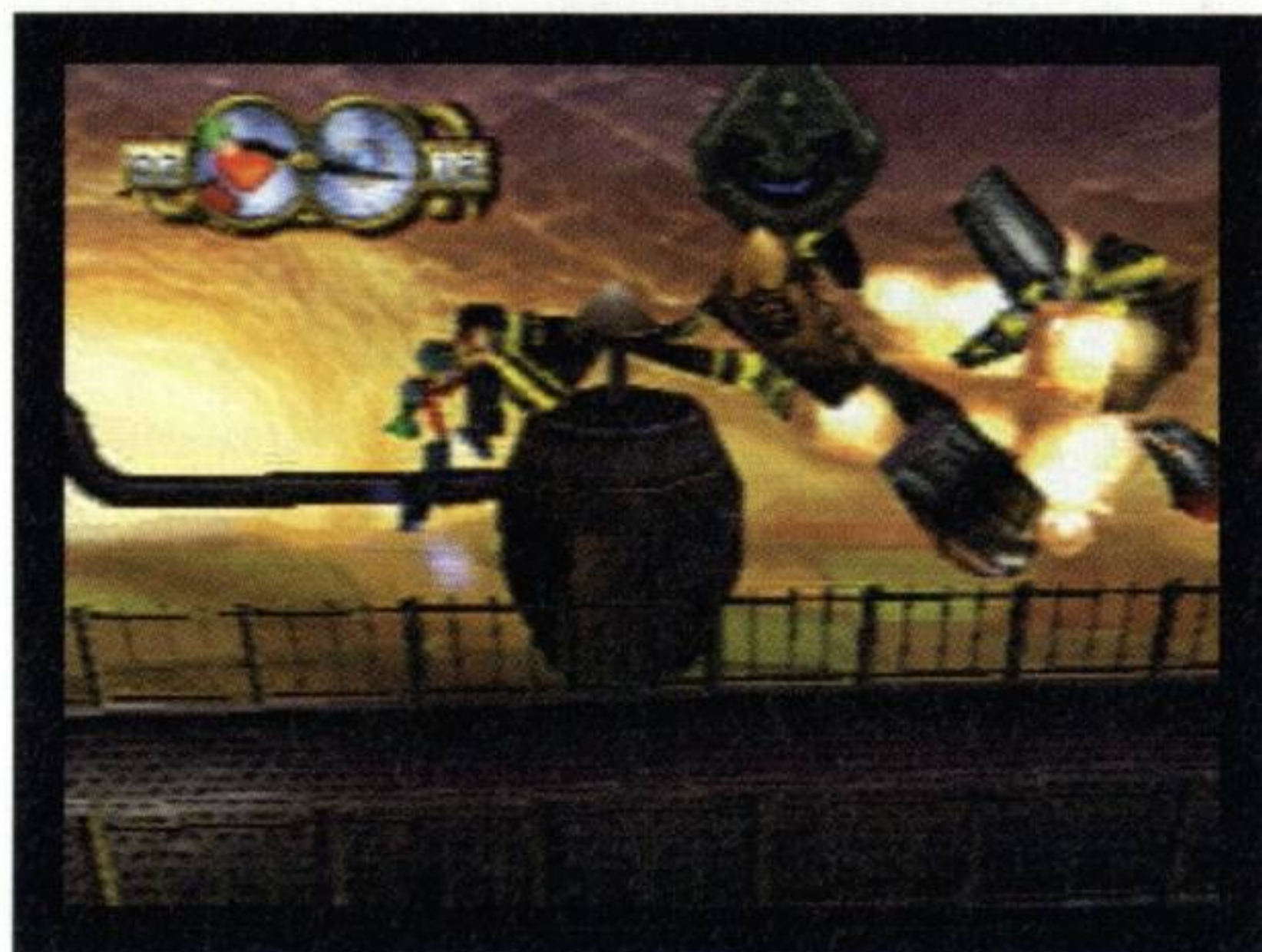
flawed by their obsession with graphics over gameplay until, as it seems, now. Like Abe and Heart of Darkness, Wild 9s offers a singular 'action' move that can perform countless functions. In this case, it's the electro-rope. Games like Mario challenge your understanding of the physical controls in exploiting the game environment. To illustrate, Mario or Klonoa will constantly test your mastery of a double-jump over obstacles of a certain height. Wild 9s, however, shifts the focus to the graphics, and challenges your mind to interpret the graphical puzzles. In one level you could be dealing with spike-filled pits, while in others you'll be at your wits' end trying to piggy-back someone around. Since the 'action' move can be used for anything, it opens up an innumerable variety to the graphical puzzles. Although an emphasis on graphics is at odds with the importance of gameplay, the meshing of the two concepts here gives the game a great abstract and free-form quality. This is definitely food for thought, considering that the Japanese style of platform gaming is struggling for new gameplay concepts.

When all the philosophising is done, there are but two very simple questions to ask: is it fun? And is it worth shelling out the money for it? The answer on both counts is a very definite yes. Wild 9s is a humungous game with a positively evil sense of humour that you can't help falling in love with.



## ALTERNATIVES

Klonoa is a much tighter, concise package that smacks a little too much of Disney sugar-coating and will be too short for many platform enthusiasts. Abe's Exodus is worth a try if you like the little devices, but mind you that Abe is extremely cerebral!



NOTHING WORSE THAN BEING CHECKED ON BY YOUR BOSS

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Platforms
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: Shiny Entertainment
PRICE: \$79.95
RATING: M
SUPPORTS: Dual Shock

### PLUS

It's Klonoa with balls.

### MINUS

The controls are a little loose and some of the platforms are sparse in design.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
90	86	88

### OVERALL

# 88

Excellent platforming fun with a style of gameplay which has great future potential.

# Rival Schools United by Fate

We all thought **Kevin Cheung** was going to spontaneously combust from excitement when he picked up this game.



## HELPFUL FRIENDS

Rival Schools provides a thoughtful team-up system that does more than add a mild sting to your supers. Depending on who it is, your back-up characters can:

(1) Revive your energy status. Characters like Tiffany and Kyoko will run to your aid and give you a kiss or massage to boost your life and super bars.

(2) Take part in a combined super that takes advantage of your back-up character's theme, eg. baseball bats, soccer balls, and Sakura's Touch of Death. The animations are awesomely executed with flashy visuals and roving camera angles, which is a real treat.

This removes the need to adopt a mindless tag-team tactic, as X-Men Vs SF is prone to; and adds a much deeper strategic element.

## HIGHSCHOOL BRAWLING, JAPANESE STYLE

In the midst of the excitement surrounding the release of Tekken 3, another company launched their own original 3D fighting title, receiving only a lukewarm response. In less than a year, it now makes its way to the PlayStation. You'd be forgiven for thinking this sounds suspiciously like the tale of Tecmo's Dead or Alive, because Capcom's Rival Schools: United by Fate is just as much an underrated game.

Rival Schools is a 3D fighting game chronicling the adventures of a group of students who have become the central focus of a series of baffling disappearances.



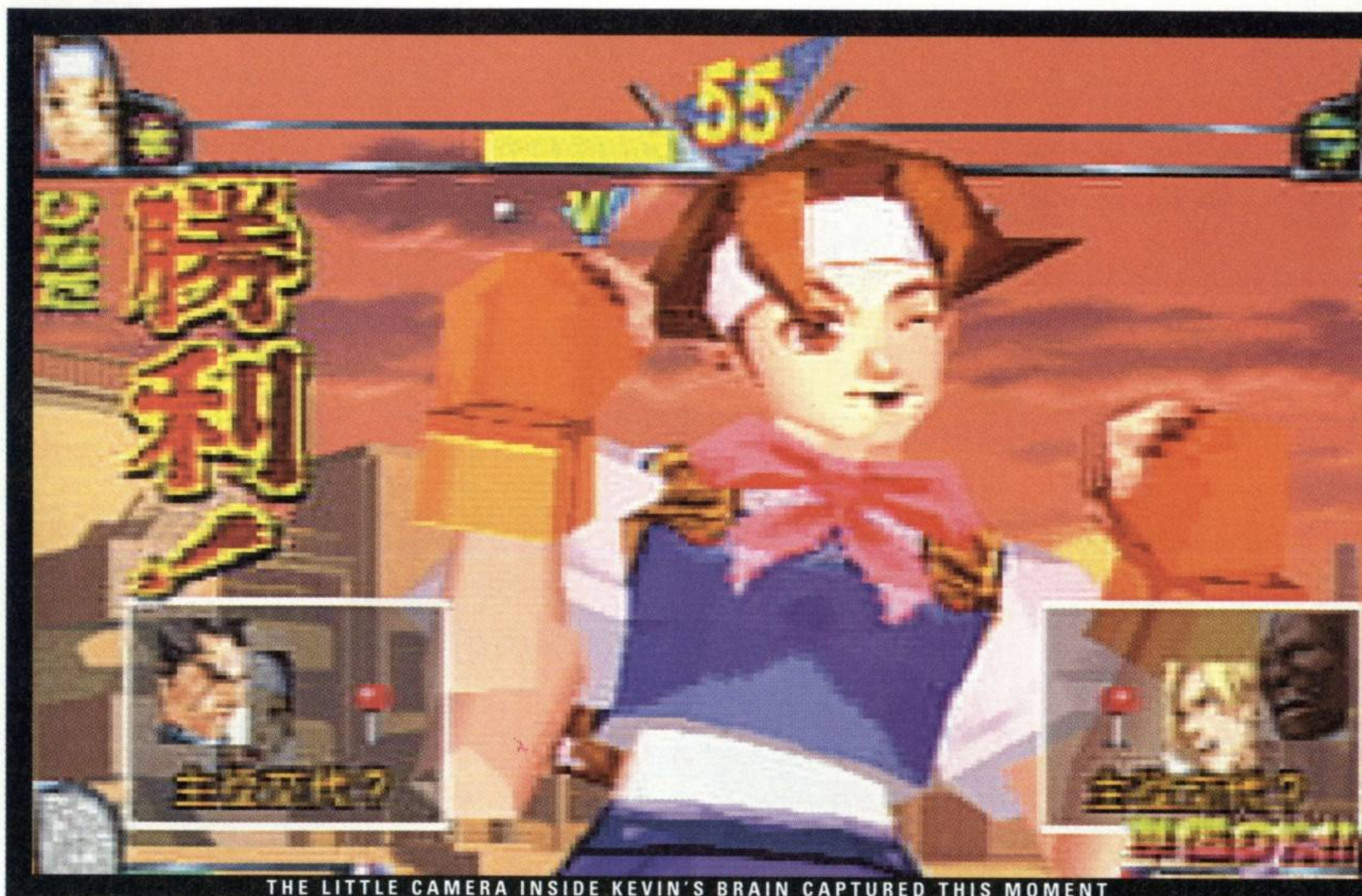
Taking control of 2 students from the local high-schools, your job is to beat up everyone who obstructs your path to the truth. The fighting skills of these students depends on which school they come from. Shoma and Natsu, for instance, have sporting skills that allow them to fight with baseball bats and volleyballs. Heck, you can even use members of the school staff if you want to!

## NEW STANDARDS OF 3D FIGHTING

Graphics is probably Rival Schools' weakest suit. During normal gameplay, the game looks perfectly fine. But once the camera zooms in for a close-up, such as a victory pose, the flaws become obvious. The character textures are very low-res, which is further blemished by some unusual clipping. However, considering that the PlayStation's dated hardware is also providing lightning paced motion at a constant 30 fps with great camera angles, wild visual effects, the animations of 2







THE LITTLE CAMERA INSIDE KEVIN'S BRAIN CAPTURED THIS MOMENT

extra characters, and Kyoko's wonderfully gouraud-shaded legs, the entire package is really very acceptable.

Anime fans will definitely take a liking to Rival Schools, as highschool-related manga and anime are amongst the most popular in Japan. Rival Schools simply takes all of those wild fantasies and puts it into a game. As if that weren't enough, Capcom loaded this game with gorgeous artwork that appears

Rival Schools' winning trait, however, is that it plays unbelievably well. The game provides unlimited recoveries, guard cancels similar to KOF 96 where you can counter at any time, mid-air combos, avoidance moves, a great customisable combo system, and team-related strategy, which all gels together in a tight, cohesive control interface. It's basically all of your favourite fighting games rolled into one. Gameplay-wise, Rival Schools is better than Tekken 3 in that the offensive moves are balanced with just as many defensive moves, which allows your skills of anticipation to actually pay off.

Rival Schools will be coming with several PlayStation-exclusive characters who never appeared in the arcades. One of them is actually just Akira without her helmet, but the others include Akira's big brother Daigo, and the school sports coach Hayato. Everyone



THE TACTICAL PART OF DEFENSE

on the loading screens, depicting the characters and their friends in their school environments. For the diehards, it provides a bigger glimpse of the Rival Schools world without actually adding to the gameplay. But it's beautiful anyway.

When it comes to sounds, Capcom is usually criticised for their lack of variety in terms of character voices. Rival Schools seems to break away from that mould, as it has a huge array of voices that grunt, groan, and scream words of support or abuse. The voices are all well acted, and Evangelion fans will like the fact that Kotono Mitsuishi (the voice of Misato) provides the vocals for Kyoko. Sound effects and music are all of Capcom's usual high standards.

else like Hyo and Sakura (God bless her creators) are selectable by default.

The bottom line is that Rival Schools is a superlative fighting game, providing levels of insane fun never before seen on the PlayStation. It is proof yet again of Capcom's status as videogame royalty. Check it out now!



#### WISH YOU WERE IN JAPAN?

In Japan, Rival Schools came with a second "Evolution Disc" which had an RPG/Adventure game on it, allowing you to create your own character and go to school and train for a year with the characters from the game. After developing individual moves and attributes, you can load up your character to play in the arcade mode. Considering the immense popularity of Soul Blade's RPG mode, it is a source of absolute bewilderment that the non-Japanese releases have conveniently omitted this second disc. Perhaps Capcom or Virgin may care to explain this?

**AVAILABLE:** Now  
**CATEGORY:** 3D Fighting  
**PLAYERS:** 1-2  
**PUBLISHER:** Capcom  
**PRICE:** \$79.95  
**RATING:** M  
**SUPPORTS:** Dual Shock

#### PLUS

Impressive visuals and sounds effects.  
 Non-offensive manoeuvres that provides anticipation, depth, and unpredictable gameplay.  
 Sakura and Kyoko. Nuff said!

#### MINUS

Too easy in single player mode.  
 Too Japanese for some.

**VISUALS** 86 **SOUND** 88 **GAMEPLAY** 95

**OVERALL**  
**90**

Excellent fighting action that every Capcom fan will have a ball with.

# Tenchu

Kevin Cheung sneaks into the Hyper office, grabs Tenchu, and disappears in a puff of smoke.



slaughter of your fellow villagers. Your path is mapped out on a series of levels, taking you through towns, wharves, temples, and mountains where you eventually track down a warrior with magical powers who is somehow responsible for the madness. The tale is told through a series of masterfully scripted dialogues between yourself and the supporting characters, where the voice acting is mature enough to drop the standard high-pitched female squeals of anime-frenzied games and allows Ayame to sound like a real woman. The



dialogues are complemented with an opening and ending FMV that's deliberately shown in black and white, giving the game a classic Hollywood feel; while the direction gives it a very stylish and surreal appearance. The aspect of these sequences that commands respect is that they are there simply to tell a story. It's not all razzle dazzle like some other rubbishy game that's got nothing else to offer: the FMV here is simple, in context, and gets the job done. The reason it leaves such an impression is because the story is so good, and more so because it is tragic.

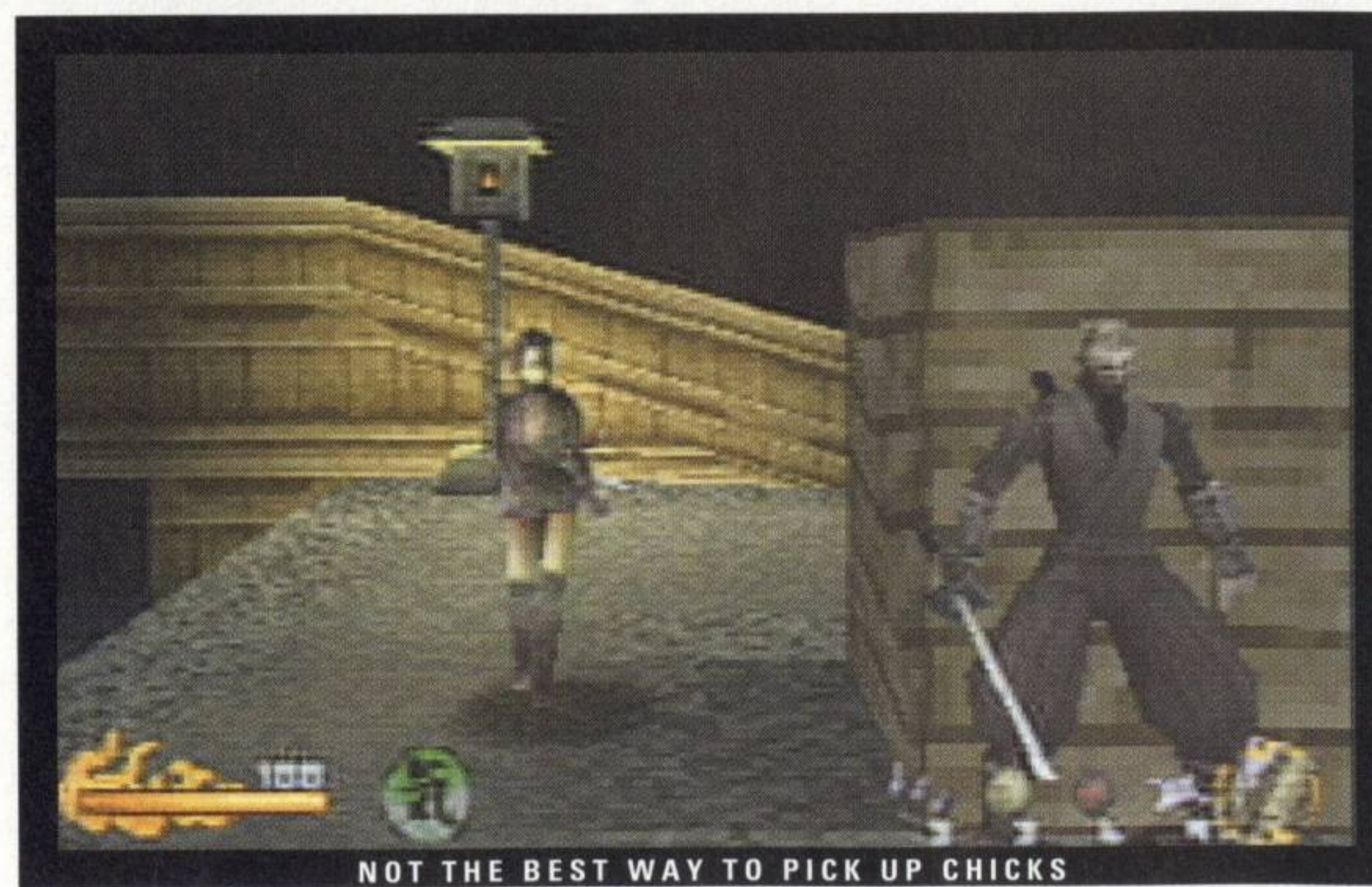
Between the dialogues is the main body of the game. Travelling by night and taking advantage of the shadows, your goal is usually to find your way to a particular location, and if need be, kill someone. The key thing you must remember is that your goal is not to run around like a crazed maniac, randomly slashing at anyone you chance upon. The path to revenge is won by stealth, speed, and efficiency. A typical example of how the game plays out runs something like this: as you run down a dark alley, your increased heartbeat alerts you to the presence of an enemy nearby.



On its initial release, the Japanese gaming public was at a slight loss for words. Tenchu, or "Punishment from Heaven", was the first game concerning the silent warriors of the shadows to properly implement stealth, exploration, and death in one package. Kinda like Tomb Raider but with a more plausible storyline. Imagine everyone's surprise when we realised it was programmed by Sony Computer Entertainment. Enter the Western release, where Activision have taken a few liberties with the general presentation of the game, but have nevertheless left it largely the same.

## DEADLY SERIOUS PLOT

As either Rikimaru (Wheel of Strength) or Ayame (Blossoming Flower), your tale is one of revenge as you seek out those responsible for the



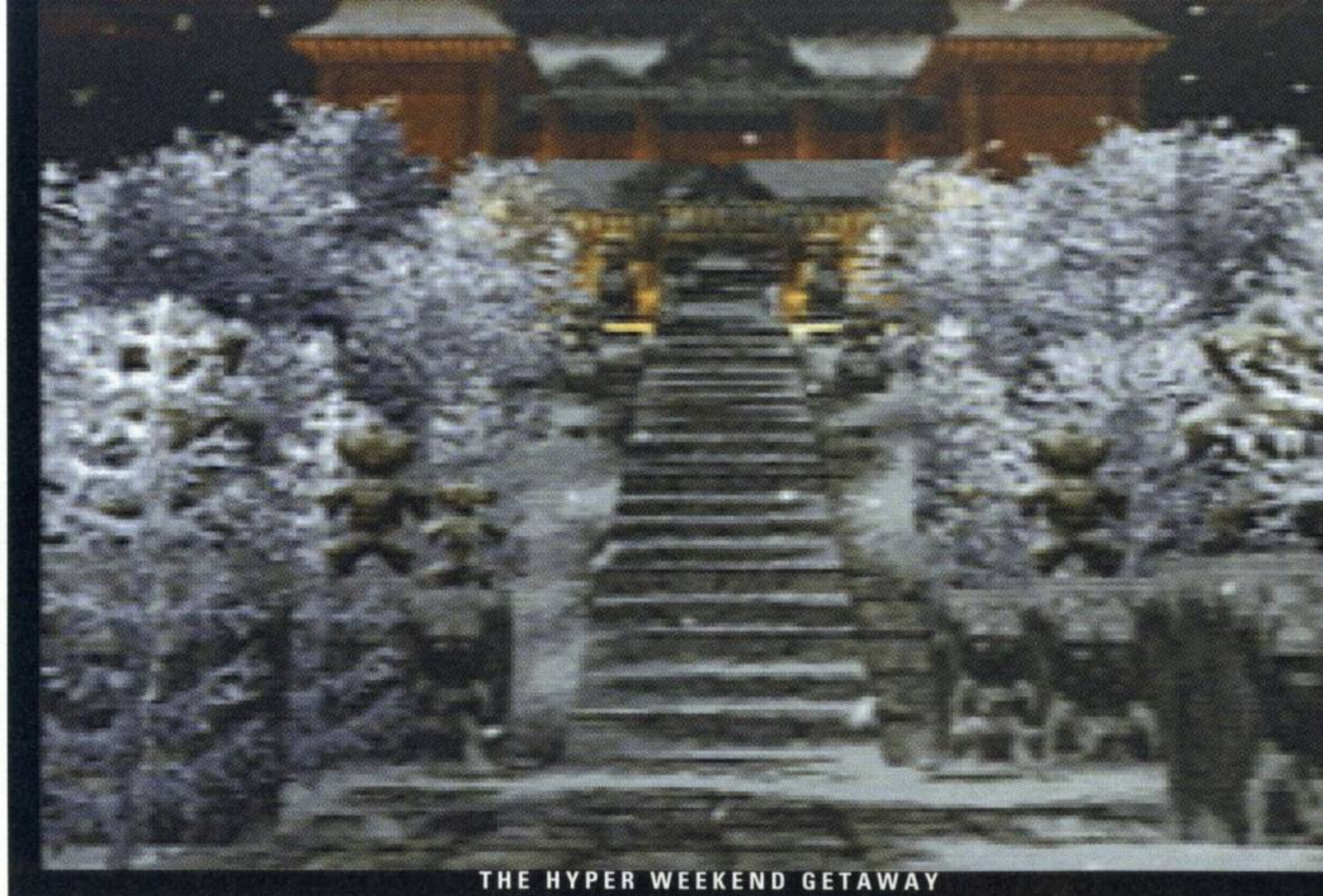
NOT THE BEST WAY TO PICK UP CHICKS

Dodging the streetlights and finding a nice hiding place near a set of wooden crates, you slowly crawl towards the main street and stop in your tracks once you see a shadow on the ground looking suspiciously like a guard. Pressing yourself up against the wall, you discreetly look around the corner to confirm that it is a patrolling guard, and not an innocent civilian. With your grappling hook, you climb to the roof and gingerly crawl like a spider to the ledge, sitting right on top of the guard. It then becomes a waiting game as you stalk out the guard's movements, noting where he usually stops and turns around and so on. When the moment is right, you soundlessly land right behind him, cut his throat, and quickly retreat to the shadows before other guards come to investigate.

That, ladies and gentlemen, is but one dimension of the entire game. When you factor in the secondary weapons like shurikens and smoke bombs, as well as the flawlessly constructed towns and costumes that are lavishly detailed in their depiction of feudal Japan, you have the most comprehensive ninja simulation game to have ever appeared anywhere.

Just as in real life, every move is measured, deliberate, and precise. Botch it up, and all hell will surely break loose.

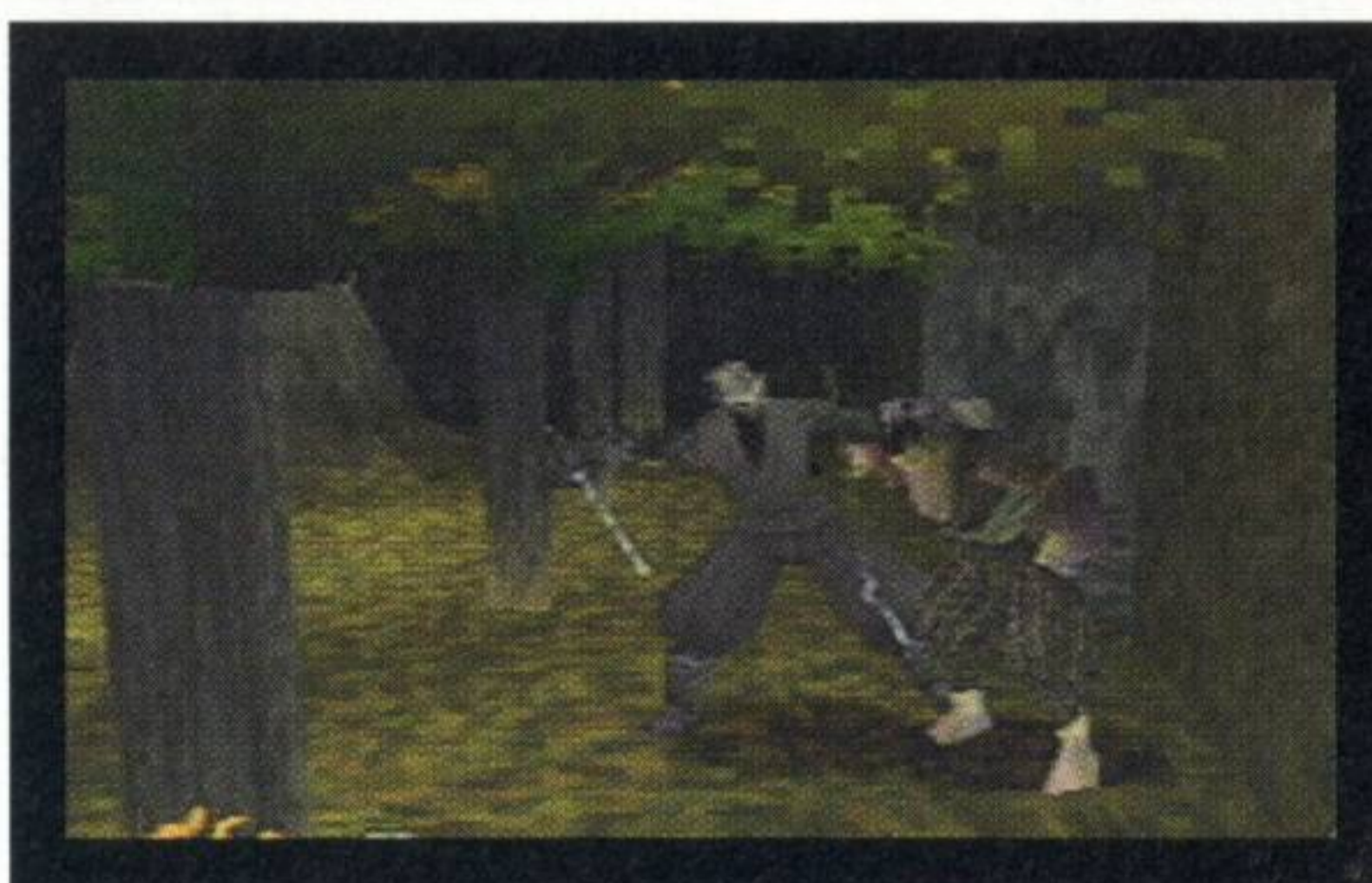
Sounds, on the other hand, is where Tenchu excels. The music is peerless with its rich fully orchestrated combination of traditional Japanese strings and percussion with modern Western instruments and vocals. In totality, the music sets the perfect atmosphere for the game. It exudes class, style, and is infinitely more tasteful than the mindless grunge/techno-fests that seem to plague every second game in the market. As an afterthought, and



THE HYPER WEEKEND GETAWAY



SOMETHING TELLS ME HE TOOK OFFENSE TO SOMETHING THE OTHER GUY SAID



#### WHAT? NO COMBOS?

While Tenchu sounds like an awesome game to play, it is not free of technical faults. The graphics can occasionally get a little pixellised, and the camera angles are sometimes very inappropriate during the all-out fight scenes. The actual fighting itself is also a little on the clumsy side owing to the two-dimensionality of the attack system, but this won't be a major problem if you play the game properly.

without appearing too much like a token comment, the sound effects are also of a very respectable standard that contains everything from great voice samples to minute atmospheric effects.

The bottom line is that Tenchu is an enriching experience of culture, class, and style, all conveniently packaged into katana-swinging action. If you're a real gamer, you'll understand that it's time to forget Tomb Raider. Tenchu is 'the' hot item for all adventurers.

**AVAILABLE:** Now  
**CATEGORY:** Adventure/Action  
**PLAYERS:** 1  
**PUBLISHER:** Activision  
**PRICE:** TBA  
**RATING:** M  
**SUPPORTS:** Dual Shock

#### PLUS

Extremely thoughtful gameplay that allows you to act out your wildest ninja-related fantasies.

#### MINUS

Clumsy fighting controls will prove frustrating for the bong-heads who just want to bash brain.

**VISUALS** 87 **SOUND** 94 **GAMEPLAY** 90

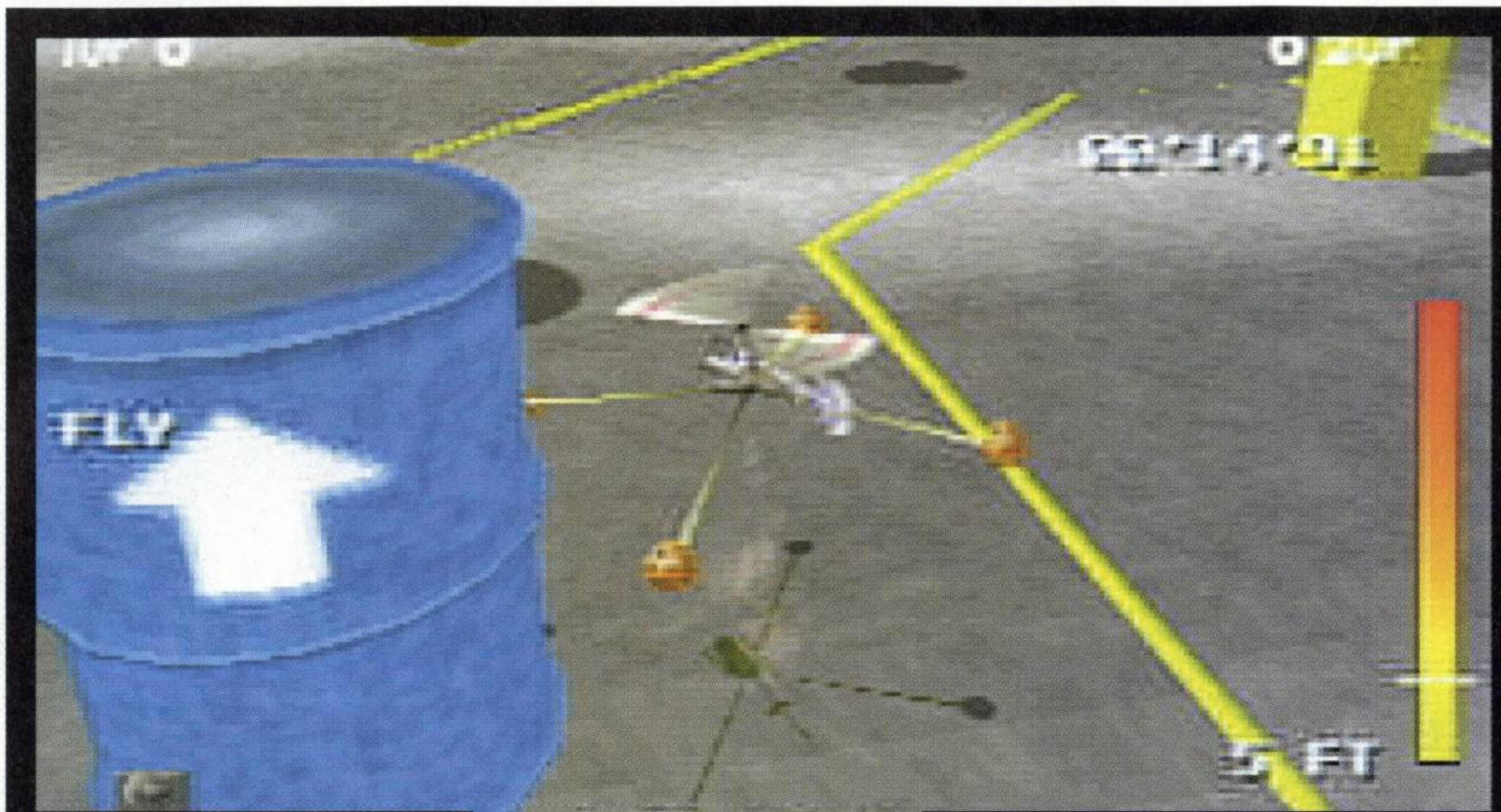
#### OVERALL

**91**

Pure gaming pleasure. It's games like this that make it all worthwhile.

# RC Stunt Copter

George Soropos has been known to pull a few stunts in his days... here's a few more.



challenge comes in the form of ten stunt courses which of varying complexity. The courses look great, as does the game as a whole but they do become a bit tedious after a while and some other gameplay elements would have added more long term appeal.

It's important to note that a Dual Shock controller is almost essential for this game. The two sticks on the



I have always associated remote control flying machines with cow paddocks and irate farmers. As a nipper I went to a few events at the local RC club which used to meet at various secret locations every weekend. These locations were always at the end of a dirt track and smack in the middle of a farm, which the club rarely had permission to be on. Consequently they spent half the time flying their machines and the other half running from red faced farmers who would charge across the fields screaming about their cows being made infertile by the noise. Of course we would sometimes comment that their infertility was more likely the result of aggressive sexual overtures from the farmer himself but this rarely went down well. For those of you none too keen on secret meetings in remote locations, spending wads of cash on your helicopter or aeroplane or the sight of that cash going up in smoke when your chosen vehicle decides to plough nose first into the ground at full speed Shiny have come up with one of the world's first hobby simulators!

controller act in exactly the same way as the two sticks on a standard RC unit. The left stick handles the collective (up or down for helo illiterates) and tail rotor (left or right spin rotation) while the right stick controls the attitude ('yo mutha) and bank angles. Very fine control is needed to complete most of the courses in the game. Your copter comes with an attachment which allows it to touch or hit the targets, balloons etc. which make up the stunt courses and you'll also have to do some tight manoeuvring through barns, hoops and other such contraptions.

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Hobby sim
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: Interplay/Shiny
PRICE: \$79.95
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: Dual Shock

**PLUS**  
High velocity crash damage much cheaper to repair on a digital chopper.

**MINUS**  
A total niche title, you'll either love it or hate it.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
80	75	70

**OVERALL**  
**75**  
A nice game if you're into RC helicopters but lacks the variety required to appeal to the average gamer.

**DAVE'S PET PROJECT**  
RC Stunt Copter was apparently borne out of Dave Perry's own obsession with RC copters and his annoyance at constantly crashing them. It is in every sense an RC copter simulator. The physics modelling of the game is uncanny and the feel of the copters is very much like the real thing. You are given the choice of two copters at the beginning of the game and your

**YOU'RE TOO SENSITIVE!**  
Unfortunately the controls are very sensitive and need a lot of practice to get right, this is in fact the main gameplay element of RC Stunt Copter! There are no guns or powerups here and gameplay basically revolves around your skill at controlling your copter through the ten courses. For this reason I have to say that Stunt Copter is really a niche market title. If you don't fancy RC copters or the thrill of five thousand microscopic controller adjustments a second this probably isn't for you.

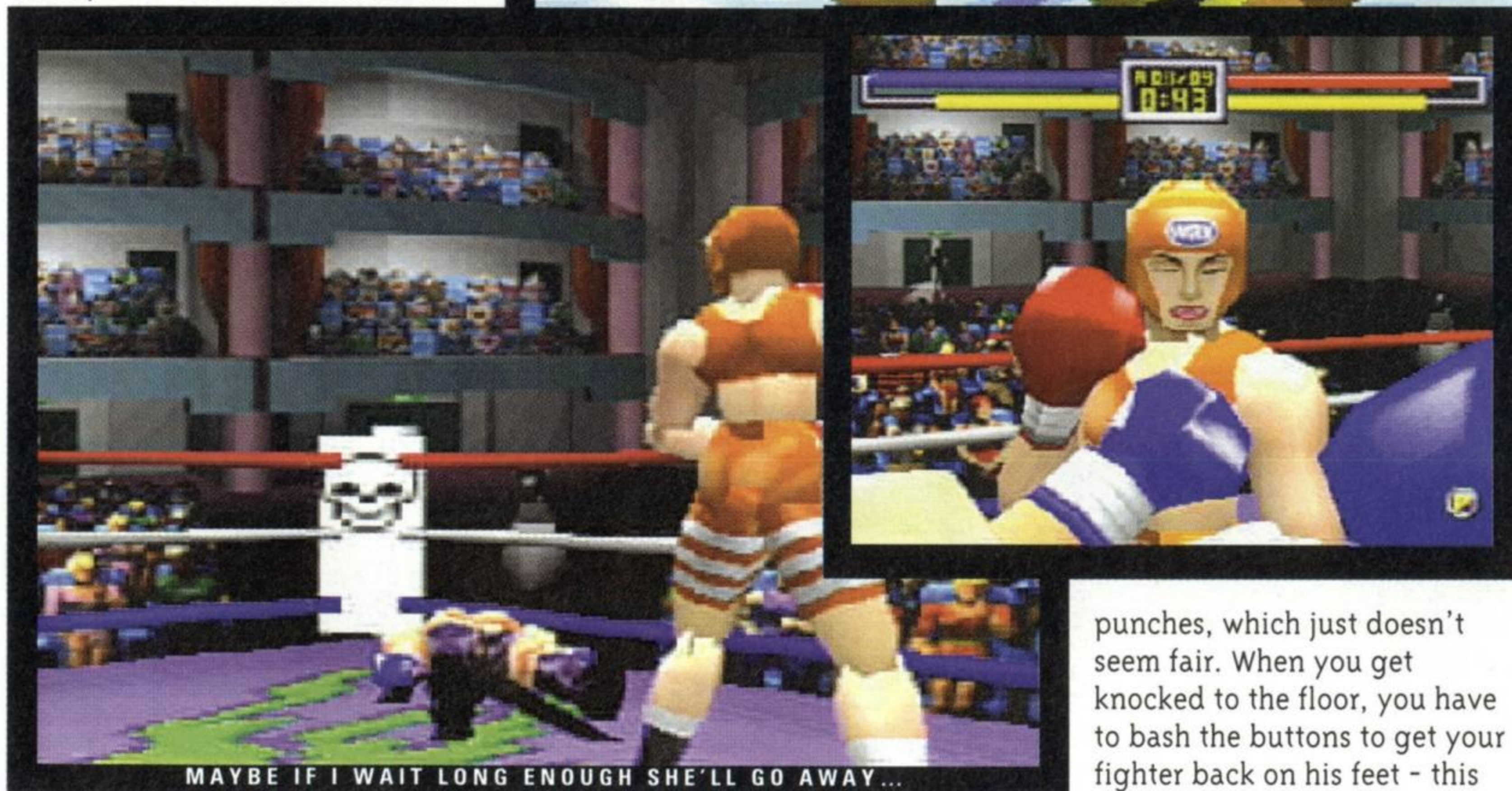
# Victory Boxing 2

Smack my fish up. Eliot Fish forgets his mouthguard...

I never thought the day would come when I didn't enjoy beating someone up in a videogame... but it's hard to enjoy Victory Boxing. There are simply too many control issues which detract from what could be a nice, tactical boxing sim. Sorry to get straight to the point, but just like a right hook between the eyes, Victory Boxing is rather painful.

## IN THE BLUE CORNER...

First up, the game allows you to play through a career mode, where you build up your fighter's stats and slowly work your way up the ladder until you can challenge some big, boofy bloke for the boxing crown. At first, your trainer will teach you a fancy move to utilise when you're out on the canvas and



as you progress, he will return to teach you new moves. Here's where the first problem arises... the moves he teaches you, seem to be less useful than just bashing the standard punch button. This is because they are slow to get out and it simply leaves you open too long. If you do connect with your special punch, the results are usually less than spectacular, and you really have to be lucky with your opponent blocking or not. Blocking your opponents punches are just as hard to predict, as they never really "telegraph" their moves - so you usually just block and punch at random and hope for the best.

## TIME TO SEE THE DENTIST

The way Victory Boxing is designed, the gameplay begs for you to be patient and wait for opportunities, however the sluggish controls just mean that you're better off throwing punches like a madman. Even though you can knock your opponent down countless times, they usually win the match with two simple

punches, which just doesn't seem fair. When you get knocked to the floor, you have to bash the buttons to get your fighter back on his feet - this has nothing to do with the fact that you've probably been beating them to a pulp for the last three rounds, and if you don't bash the button hard enough you lose the match. Stupid! The best option here, is to turn on TKOs, so that you only have to knock them down three times to win the match. Playing through the full four rounds is a bit risky otherwise, as your opponents just seem to do far more damage with the odd lucky punch compared to your constant hammering.

The character designs are good, though, and you should get a laugh from some of the animations - especially playing with the action camera on (which is like playing in a first-person mode). Besides the career mode, there's only the exhibition mode where you can play a friend, and there just aren't enough options for anyone to want to play through this game more than once. The two-player matches just reduce to a controller bashing fest. If you're patient, maybe you'll find more merit in Victory Boxing, but it just doesn't stand up to other games on the market. Super Punch Out on the SNES was better.

AVAILABLE: Now  
CATEGORY: Sports  
PLAYERS: 1-2  
PUBLISHER: JVC  
PRICE: TBA  
RATING: M

### PLUS

Encourages tactical play.

### MINUS

Stiff controls, glitchy.

VISUALS 72 SOUND 72 GAMEPLAY 65

### OVERALL

# 68

Uncomfortably hovers between sim + arcade bash-fest

# Ninja

After surviving *Fighting Force* and *Deathtrap Dungeon*, Kevin Cheung steps up to *Ninja*.



At first glance, I was fully prepared to write off this game as a cheap rip off of *Tenchu*. After playing through the first level, I realised it was nothing like *Tenchu* at all, and decided that it was just *Fighting Force* with ninja outfits. Wrong again. *Ninja* is one of those games that only blossoms when you get deep enough into it, so as you can imagine, the more I played it, the more I liked it.

*Ninja* is set in an imaginary feudal period where Japan is divided into two distinct empires by warlords who eventually decided to co-exist with one another. However, in true Hollywood fashion, a little back-stabbing occurs, a few monsters are unleashed upon the land, some families get massacred in the cross-fire, and bingo - you piss off a ninja so much that he decides to pave a trail of death to your doorstep. And he's not here for a tea party.

As the ninja, your job is to get to the end of several levels. Standing in your way are an assortment of evil characters such as ninjas, monsters, magicians; as well as locked doors for which you must find the right key. The game basically breaks down to being a case of



## CHOOSING THE RIGHT ALTERNATIVE

*Ninja*'s style of gameplay is similar to *One* and *Fighting Force* in that you run through an environment with CPU-controlled cameras, performing action-related tasks. But to be perfectly honest, *Ninja* is not really a ninja game at all. Ninjas don't run around in plain sight and casually beat up everyone in a slow, painful way. In fact, there is nothing about this game that looks remotely like the real thing, as the entire game reflects stereotypical Western myths about the Japanese culture (check out the Klingon war armour in the opening FMV). To say that *Ninja* is Japanese is as pernicious and idiotic as casting David Carradine as a kung fu master. If you want a 'real' ninja game, get *Tenchu*. *Ninja* is strictly for action buffs.



THE NINJA CLEVERLY CONFUSES HIS FOES WITH A SUDDEN MICHAEL JACKSON IMPRESSION



exploring an area, avoiding the booby traps, killing everyone in the area, getting rewarded with a key, progressing to the next area, and then repeating that process over again.

The fun part about *Ninja* is the balance that is struck between exploring and fighting. The fighting moves are, by themselves quite poor considering that all you get are punch, kick, and knife-throwing moves; and the exploration is a relatively simple matter once you figure out the symmetry of the maps. But with constant challenges being presented, the variety is enough to sustain sufficient interest in the gameplay.



THE NINJA REALISES THE AWESOME SUSHI HE COULD MAKE, AND QUICKLY ATTACKS

### NICE GUYS FINISH LAST...

It's probably worth mentioning that there are a few design quirks to Ninja. Firstly, when you are surrounded by a large cluster of bad guys, none of them will actually attack you while you are beating up one of their own. While this does away with the stuttered, inconvenient gameplay of Fighting Force where you always get interrupted mid-combo, it makes the game quite easy, not to mention unrealistic. Another thing that makes the game easy is that when you die, all of the areas that you've already cleared since the save point will remain clear. It's obvious that the programmers were trying to be thoughtful, but for all their best intentions, the game is probably too easy. The icing on the cake is weapons and power-up system. Once you figure them out and become a fully powered-up ninja armed with a katana, you'll virtually be cruising through each area, killing things with little more than 3 hits. For that reason, Ninja isn't that far above mediocrity. What it could have done with is more fighting moves, multi-level platforms to jump around on, and maybe even a second player option.

It's a shame, then, that the gameplay is so limited because most of the other aspects of the game aren't bad. The visuals are solid with some excellent light effects (check out the magic) and atmospheric touches, marred only by the usual clipping and pixelisation that you'd expect; and the sounds, which deserve a special mention. The music gives Ninja a brilliant ambient atmosphere, while the sound effects and voices are all high quality samples.

On balance, Ninja still chalks up to be a good game, as you are always presented with something new to deal with. If it's not Mario-style platform antics, it's Robotron-style shooting action with your knives. Ninja is good solid fun that's worth a try.



## NINJA MAGIC

In addition to the usual weapon power-ups like katanas, maces, and naginatas, you can also pick up smart bombs. The effect of these smart bombs change as you collect power-up scrolls, which allows you to unleash some pretty impressive magic. This can range from summoning blasts of lightning to cutting everyone down with an energy wave. Useful in tight situations, awesome to watch.

AVAILABLE: Now

CATEGORY: Action

PLAYERS: 1

PUBLISHER: Eidos

PRICE: \$89.95

RATING: M

### PLUS

Easy to get into, nice special effects, and great music.

### MINUS

Too damned easy for experienced players, and the action gets monotonous.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

80 85 75

OVERALL

77

More flash than fun, this game has a great general appeal that's worth investigating.

# Streak

**Cam Shea** has been known to sink a couple of tinnies, shed his overcoat and dash out onto the SCG. This, however, is an entirely different kind of streak...



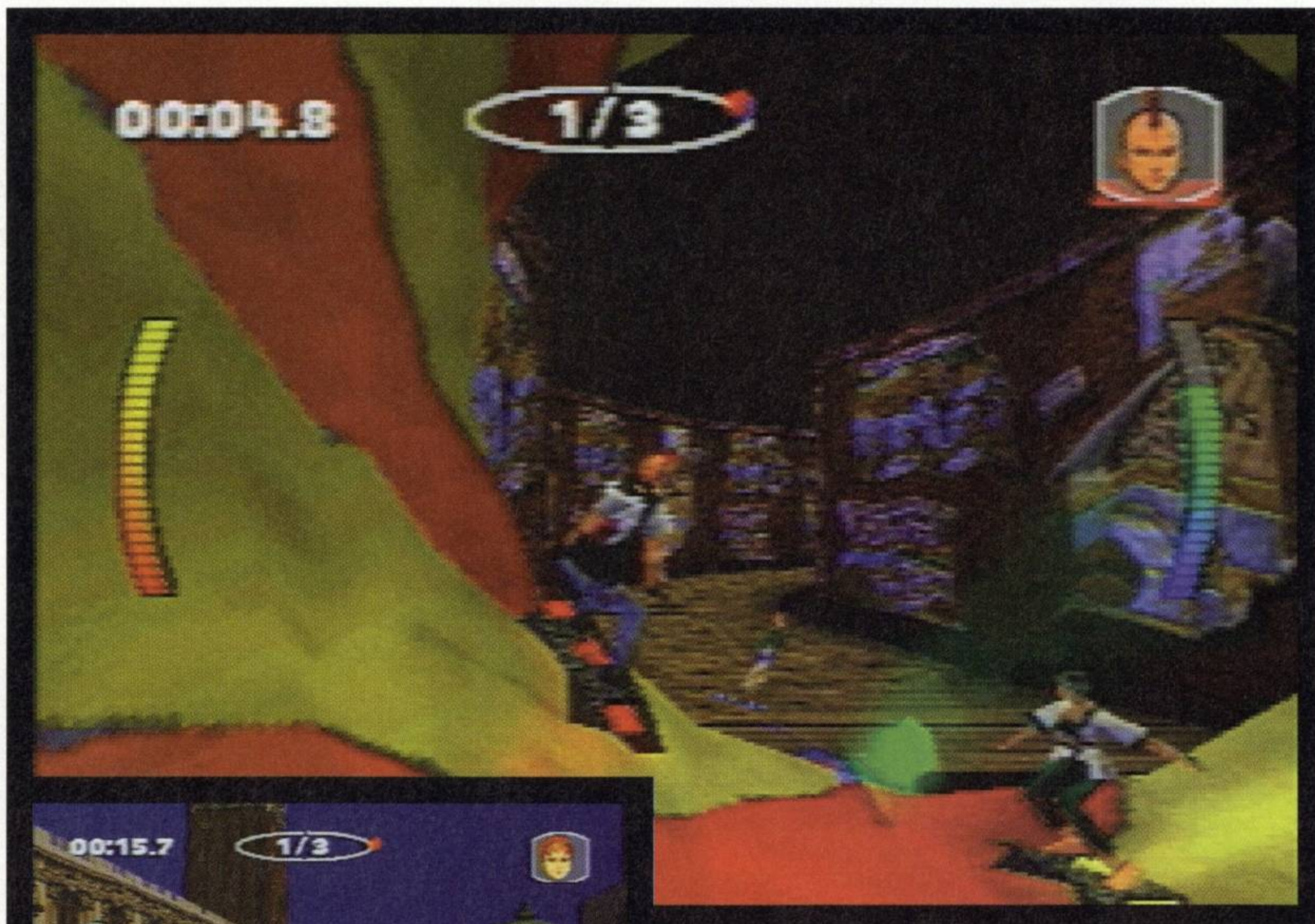
Yo radical Hyper dudes!! Like, check this way ultra gnarly game man. As you may have guessed, Streak is another sorry attempt to cash in on the whole "extreme sports" thing. No, it's not snowboarding, but Streaking - so called because of the coloured trail the hoverboard leaves in it's wake. Although this is the first hoverboarding game to appear on the Playstation it's hardly original.

### HOVERBOARDS... MMM, YUM!

Streak is set in the present day. Underground tournaments are being held using technology not available to the masses - GEMblades. The game's story revolves around the mysterious company behind the tournaments and uncovering their hidden agenda. Unfortunately, the GEMblades handle poorly - and feel worse given the track design and average graphics.

rider perched on top. Still, there are plenty of riders to choose from, each with their own abilities.

The track design often seems incompatible with the board mechanics. There are many sections of narrow, windy track that are impossible to navigate concisely due to the handling. This doesn't matter so much because you can just bump off the walls with little loss of speed. Track design attempts to be interesting, with the 12 races set in locations like graveyards, sewers and prisons. With a couple of exceptions, their design lacks cohesion. Various objects litter the tracks, but your board simply isn't responsive enough to avoid them, so it's a good thing the collision detection allows you to careen right through. One of the more entertaining aspects of Streak is the ability to catch huge air off the many jumps, as well as pulling various grabs and spins.



FROM THE G-RATED VERSION OF STREAK

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Racing
PLAYERS: 1-2 (1-4 with link)
PUBLISHER: GTI
PRICE: TBA
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: Link Cable

**PLUS**  
Link cable support and landing huge stunts can be fun.

**MINUS**  
Track design and board control need an overhaul.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
66	72	55

**OVERALL**  
**66**  
Hard to recommend considering the wealth of great racing games already available on the Playstation.

### BEWARE, DATED GRAPHICS AHEAD...

Games like Gran Turismo and Spyro are pushing the Playstation further than many thought possible, and in comparison Streak comes across as decidedly first generation. It certainly isn't pretty to look at with it's boring textures, regular pop-up and pixelisation. The camera is a little slow off the mark as well, often creating blind turns that are difficult to judge. The coloured streaks behind the board look good though, and help the opposition stand out against the dull environments.

Streak supports the oft neglected link cable, as well as standard splitscreen. Thus, four player racing action is an option. I assume though, that both parties need a copy of the game in order to link, and I'm a little sceptical that two friends would both have the same odd taste to have an urge to own this game.



# Get Medieval

The second Gauntlet clone in recent times... Dan Toose gets medieval with it.

Not long ago I was reviewing Hexplore... thrilled by the prospect of a new Gauntlet style game, only to be rather miffed at how mediocre it was. Nothing worse than waiting a long time for a follow up on a one off kind of game, only to have it disappoint. Monolith have also decided to venture into the realm of Gauntlet clones, and one look at their offering, Get Medieval, earns them a zero for originality, but a big thumbs up for stuffing some character into the game.

Those were the days...

For those of you who weren't hanging out in arcades in the 80's, Gauntlet was the first killer 4 player arcade game. You chose a character (warrior, elf, mage, or valkyrie), and made your way through a top-



MY MONEY'S ON THE SEETHING HORDE OF EVIL MONSTERS



## YOU CALL THAT A PUZZLE?

Puzzles are presented in the form of doors that require certain keys, which need to be found by exploring the maze. Scattered throughout the maze are also an assortment of powerups to improve armour and shot power, in addition to a few temporary powerups to give effects such as super speed, invulnerability, repelling monsters, etc.

The two areas where Monolith have actually done something new are the in game speech, and boss monsters. Whoever did

the speech for the warrior is one of the best Arnie impersonators around. A multiplayer game with varying characters typically results in the players laughing at the speech throughout the whole thing. The bosses are simply big monsters that can take a real beating, and dish it out as well. It actually seems easier to take out a boss single player than multiplayer.

The bottom line is that Get Medieval gets awfully dull as a single player game. You can make new maps, and there is also a random map generator, but it tends to produce very dull levels.

## HURT YOUR FRIENDS... 'TIS FUN

However, even sharing a keyboard does not detract from the novelty of sitting around a PC and trying to hack your way through the game as a team. It's one of those games where it's easy to end up hurting each other and basically screwing up, which tends to result in laughter rather than frustration. If you've got a few linkable gamepads, this game becomes a lot more comfortable.

A good buy for folks who loved Gauntlet and have some friends that want to play too, but not one for the solo gamers out there.

down perspective maze, fighting all sorts of monsters on the way. Get Medieval is so similar to Gauntlet that they may as well have called it Gauntlet '98.

For a change, the intro actually sets the atmosphere for the rest of the game. It's quite possibly the most amusing intro to a game in years. You get the standard sort of visual intro, but the voice overs completely take the piss out of the whole thing, and set a comical vibe for the rest of your experience with the game.

Monolith have basically taken the old Gauntlet format and made it higher res, and have altered the grid so it doesn't look so "square". Perhaps this was an attempt to remain true to the Gauntlet style, but trying something a little more adventuresome like Raven's Mageslayer engine would have made the game "original" enough to not be called a total clone.

Get Medieval utilises the same basic game mechanics as Gauntlet. You simply fire or move into targets to kill them. Each of the four characters to choose from has varying levels in shot power, shot speed, and movement. These differences become far more evident in a multiplayer game when the group starts getting spread out due to running speeds, and the effect is a bit imbalanced.

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Action
PLAYERS:	1-4
PUBLISHER:	Monolith
PRICE:	TBA
RATING:	G
REQUIRED:	P90, 16MB RAM, WIN95/98
DESIRED:	P150, 32MB RAM
SUPPORTS:	Gamepads, Online/LAN play

## PLUS

Great fun multiplayer, and hilarious speech features.

## MINUS

Very dull as a single player game.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
71	90	70

## OVERALL

# 72

A very funny trip down memory lane for any Gauntlet fans. Multiplayer is the only way to play.

# Klingon Honor Guard

Eliot Fish did his best not to think of William Shatner whilst reviewing this new Star Trek shooter...

Klingon Honor Guard is the first Unreal engine game to be released since the mighty Unreal soiled many gamers' underwear some months ago. We know it's a killer engine, so it's interesting to see what another development team has been able to get out of it. Though restricted by the Star Trek license, and the inherent "rules" of it's universe, Microprose have still managed to create a game which is original enough to appeal to all gamers - not just Trekkies. Basing the whole game around the Klingon race was probably a good idea to start with, seeing as they are a blood-thirsty warrior race who just love to kill and be killed - so this is action-a-plenty. Some of the weapons in the game are authentic Trek technology, and others have been made up by the development team to fit in with the first-person shooter genre. First impressions of Klingon Honor Guard, purely as a 3D action game, were mixed. Initially, it felt like I was just playing a TC or Mod made by some Trek fan for Unreal. The Unreal engine hasn't been reinvented, but simply dressed up differently, almost as if the entire set of KHG missions were created in the Unreal Editor with a bit of clever model making and texturing on the side. Honestly, at first, the game world was not a very convincing one, but the deeper you delve into Klingon Honor Guard, the more convincing the game becomes and the more addicted you become. There's a good story here, and even if you've hardly watched an episode of Star Trek, you'll still find some of the game world locations fascinating to explore and the Klingon theme very fun indeed...

## GIBS ON THE PORT SIDE, CAPTAIN!

Playing as a Klingon is cool. Every time you whip out your D'k Tahg knife, your character lets out a sly laugh, and you know exactly what he's thinking - hand-to-hand combat is a Klingon's favourite pastime, and in Klingon Honor Guard they make it so much fun. Bloodthirsty? Stabbing the opposing Klingons in the neck and splattering the walls and floor with blood is suitably messy, and your character usually offers up some sort of satisfied comment to make it even more victorious ala Duke Nukem. It seems that using the knife or Batleth can sometimes be quicker and more effective than using your pistol or the rifle, as a quick slash to the head or throwing the bladed weapon at your opponent can kill them instantly (as it would), whereas a laser bolt from your gun just chews on their armour. Whether this is intentional or not is hard to decide, but it's cool nonetheless. Of course, later in the game when you get your hands on the rocket launcher, Sith Har Blaster or Particle Dispersal Cannon you will be



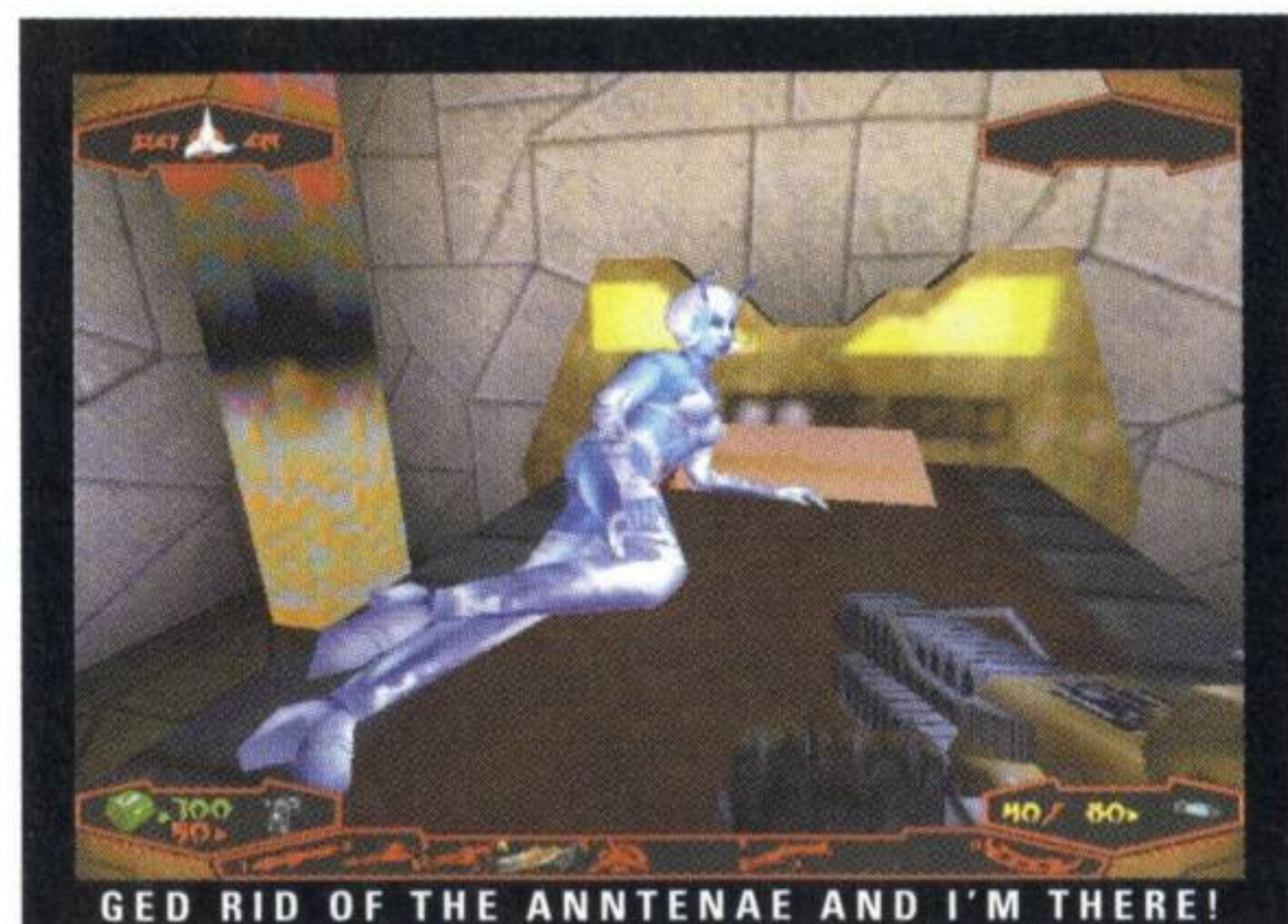
SHUTTLE OFF THIS MORTAL COIL



KLINGONS. HEH. THEY CRACK ME UP.

preferring the firepower of these babies.

Ironically, despite using the Unreal engine, Klingon Honor Guard seems to borrow heavily from LucasArts' Jedi Knight! There were many times in Klingon Honor Guard when the architecture, sound effects and even weapon functions reminded me more of Jedi Knight than anything else - plus the mission objectives at times were in a similar vein. Some could say this is down to the Sci-Fi settings, but it seems a little more obvious that the development team behind Klingon Honor Guard were not solely Trek fanatics. Star Trek fans, though, will certainly get more from KHG than casual gamers, as some of the settings and characters



GED RID OF THE ANNTENAE AND I'M THERE!

are straight from the TV shows. Stepping into transporters, exploring engineering bays and even visiting a leisure world with an alien disco, bar and brothel is classic Star Trek cheesiness. It's great!

#### THAT SHE BLOWS!

The weapons in Klingon Honor Guard are somehow more satisfying than the weapons we got to play with in Unreal. This is in part due to the beefier sound effects and apparent kickback when you fire something beefy, and also the more satisfying effects the weapons have - which is to blow the crap out of whatever you point them at. However, rarely are you faced with a challenging opponent, and you may find more satisfaction in running around the levels slicing up Andorians and Klingons with your Batleth (the crescent-shaped bladed weapon). Speaking of running about levels, Klingon Honor Guard's main flaw would be its mixed bag of level design - it goes from bad to great to bad and then to the fantastic - and unfortunately, the bad design overshadows most of the game. A lot of the levels are small, linear and look about as convincing as a bunch of bad TV shows sets. Whilst the starship levels are suitably Trek, the planet based missions are a display of poor texturing and unimaginative design. The Unreal engine helps to keep things looking pretty to a certain degree (such as the lighting effects), but KHG simply does not utilise the engine to its fullest. Probably the best moment of the game, is the level on the Klingon Bird Of Prey, where you can see stars streaking by out the windows as you descend into the bowels of engineering, past the warp drive and all. Monsters too, are few and scarce, with mostly Klingons and Andorians getting in your way for most of the game, which starts to wear thin after a little while.

Klingon Honor Guard is a truly mixed bag, which doesn't really stand up as a solid first-person shooter, but is a fun romp nonetheless. Trek fans will love it, but gamers weaned on Quake 2 and Unreal will find it bland and unchallenging.



AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: First Person Shooter
PLAYERS: 1-Multi
PUBLISHER: Microprose
PRICE: \$79.95
RATING: MA15+
REQUIRED: P166, 32MB RAM
DESIRED: P11, 64MB RAM, 3D Card
SUPPORTS: 3D cards

#### PLUS

Runs faster than Unreal on the same system.

#### MINUS

Level design is sometimes poor, not enough variety in enemies.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
90	90	84

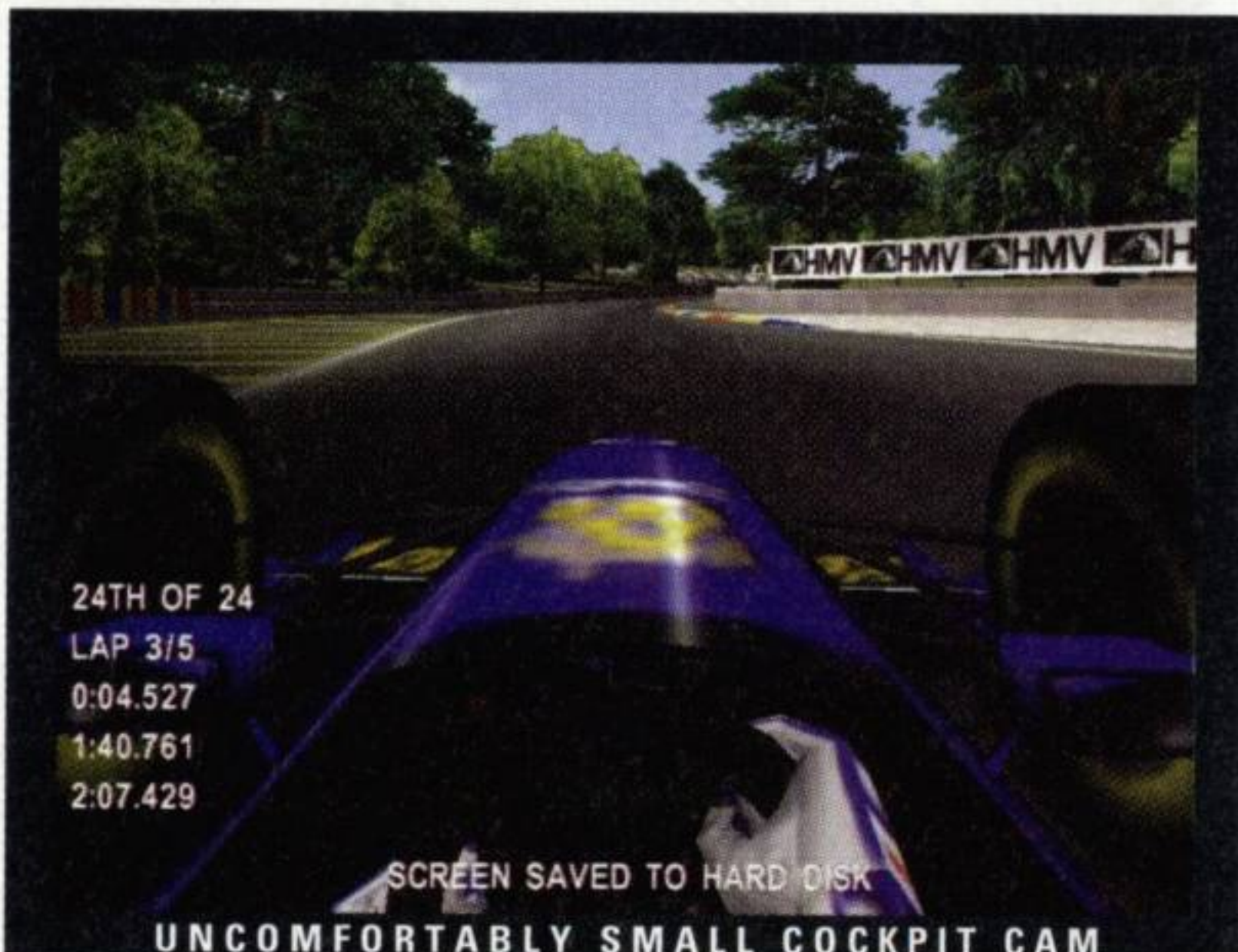
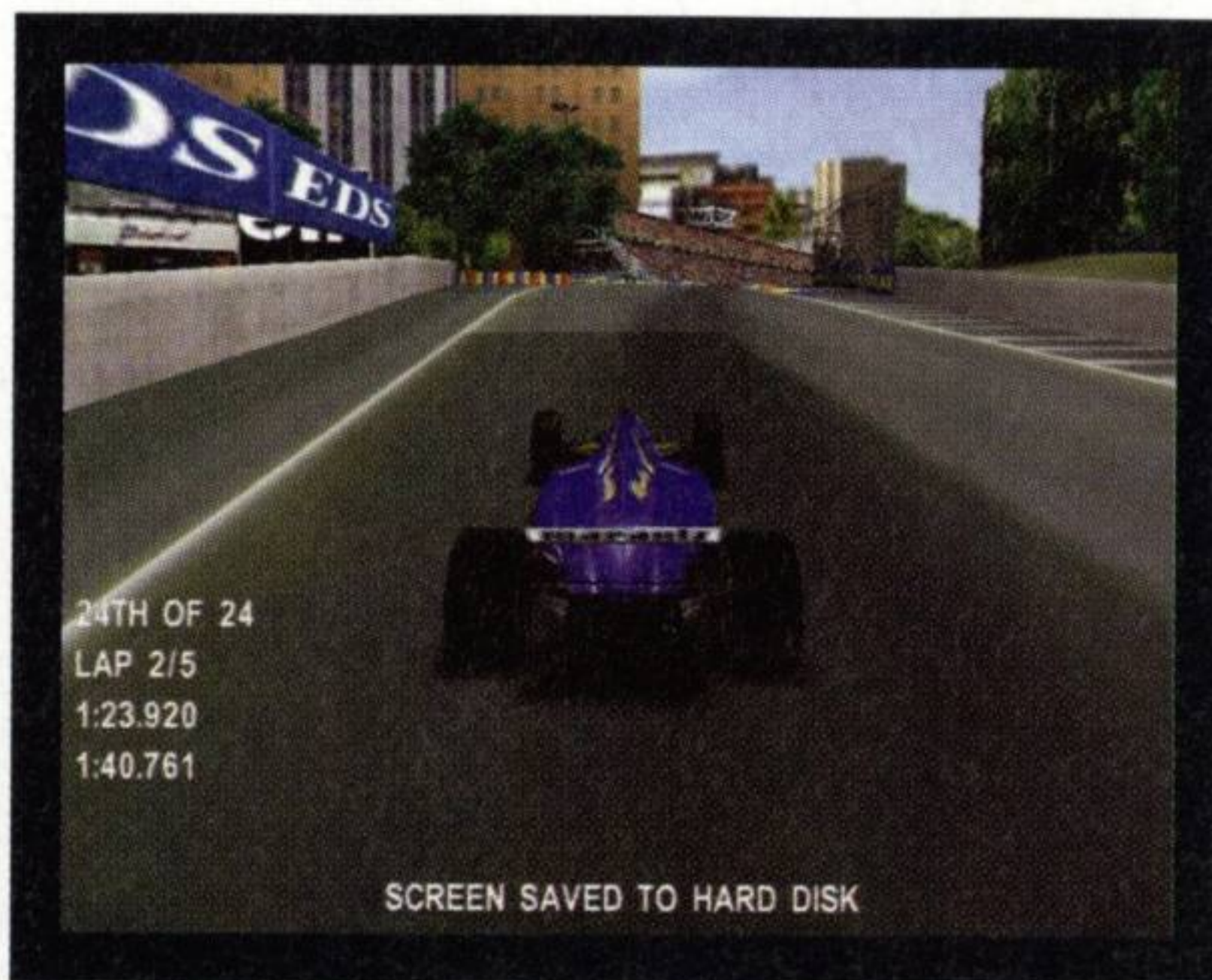
#### OVERALL

# 84

One for Trek fans, but not the consistent product we were all hoping it to be.

# Johnny Herbert's Grand Prix Championship

Only one reviewer can hack two Grand Prix games in one issue, and that's Jackson Gothe-Snape...



## 6TH ON THE GRID...

The graphics of JHGP are probably its strongest feature. Although there's no FMV intro (who needs one really?) the in game graphics are quite impressive, although still fail to compare with F1RS from Ubisoft. The cars have nice lighting reflections and the tracks are populated with buildings, trees and signs. The menu system is also nicely set out with everything easy to get to, and clearly presented. Most major 3D accelerators are supported and I highly recommend one, as this is one seriously processor intensive game. Even on my PII-266 with Voodoo2, I had it in 640x480 with medium detail to get a good framerate, although 800x800 was playable.

The sound on the other hand is not so good. Engine noises are hardly inspiring and there's little else on offer. Although in racing games you really only need sound to tell where your opponents are, Midas decided to go for atmospheric sound so you can constantly hear engines buzzing, supposedly all around the track. However this is more annoying than anything because it appears that it has no relationship with where the cars are on the track. For example, I got a bit of a fright when I heard an engine rev seemingly metres away, but when I crashed in shock no cars passed me.

## MECHANICAL PROBLEMS...

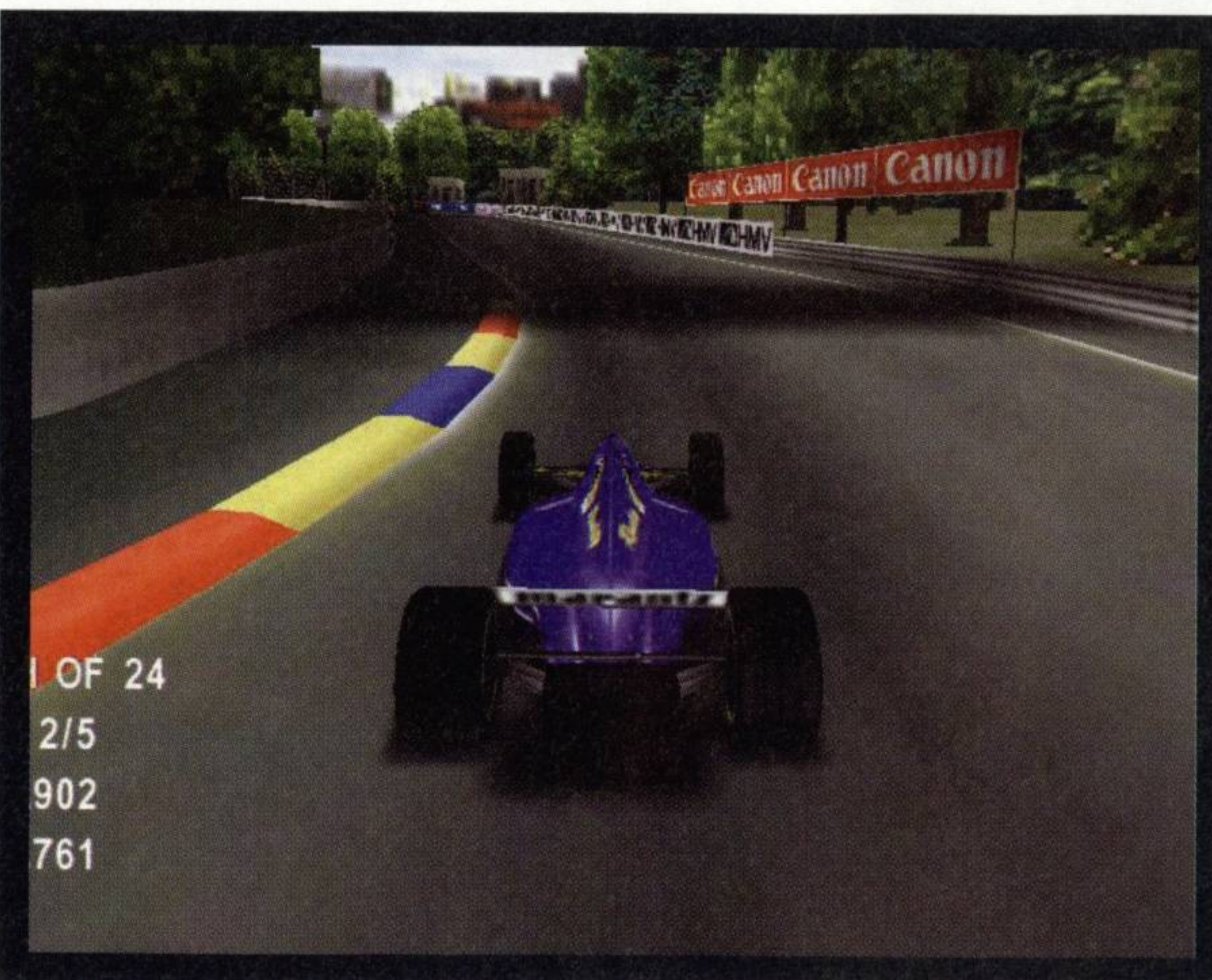
The thing that detracts most from this game is the inconsistent physics that is applied to the cars. You could be racing side by side, and nudge your opponent slightly, and suddenly you're off the track, facing backwards. Then you get some wheelspin going to get in the right direction and you fly over to the other side of the track in what seems like 2 frames.

The game comes with 15 tracks, and while most are from the current F1 season, there are a couple of disappointments, namely the lack of Melbourne (well I can't see the resemblance anyway). Also, the game has no endorsement from the FIA, so all the real cars and drivers aren't there, although you can change the drivers' names. You can also configure your car to suit your driving style. 6-player networking is also provided, as is 2 player split-screen.

The game's not all bad though. It can be a bit of a blast racing around, because it seems the driving model is more arcadey, so it's more forgiving than in other games. Thus getting into it's a breeze. The damage is also done quite well. But once you do get into it you reach a stage where the driving model begins to falter and the inconsistencies start showing up more.

JHGP might be a decent buy if you're really scared off by the really simmy games, but in my opinion, F1RS wins by about 3 laps.

Johnny Herbert, although he must be a highly skilled driver even for making the grade in Formula 1, is hardly a world-beater, and his appeal is really only limited to Britain. Such an endorsement for this game is therefore quite interesting...but we don't play games for who's on the box. We play them for how good they are. Unfortunately however, Johnny Herbert's Grand Prix Championship is not very good, and will soon get lost amongst all the other also-rans in the racing genre. Wait, it probably already has.



AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: F1 Racing
PLAYERS: 1-6
PUBLISHER: Reality
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P120, 16MB RAM
DESIRED: P11, 32MB RAM, 3D card

**PLUS**  
Nice graphics.  
Decent arcadey drive.

**MINUS**  
Frustrating driving model. No real endorsements. Uninspiring sound.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
87	59	67

**OVERALL**  
**70**

A good arcade style game for F1 fans, but those after an authentic sim won't peak.

# THE ALL TIME GREATEST RACE AGAINST TIME



  
**Not**  
RECOMMENDED  
FOR HUMAN PREY  
UNDER THE AGE OF 15


**NINTENDO<sup>64</sup>**  


  
**Gremlin**  
INTERACTIVE

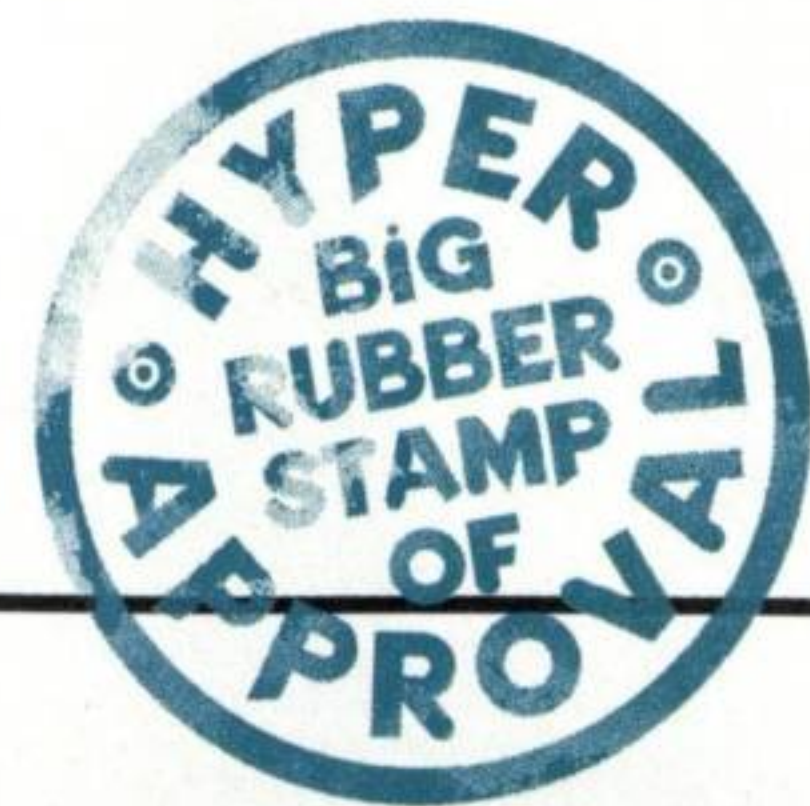
# HARDWEST

## COMING SOON!

Gremlin Interactive Australia Pty Ltd. Unit 15, 42-44 New Street, Ringwood Victoria 3134 Australia Phone: 03 9879 3588 Fax: 03 9870 9910 [www.gremlin-interactive.com.au](http://www.gremlin-interactive.com.au)

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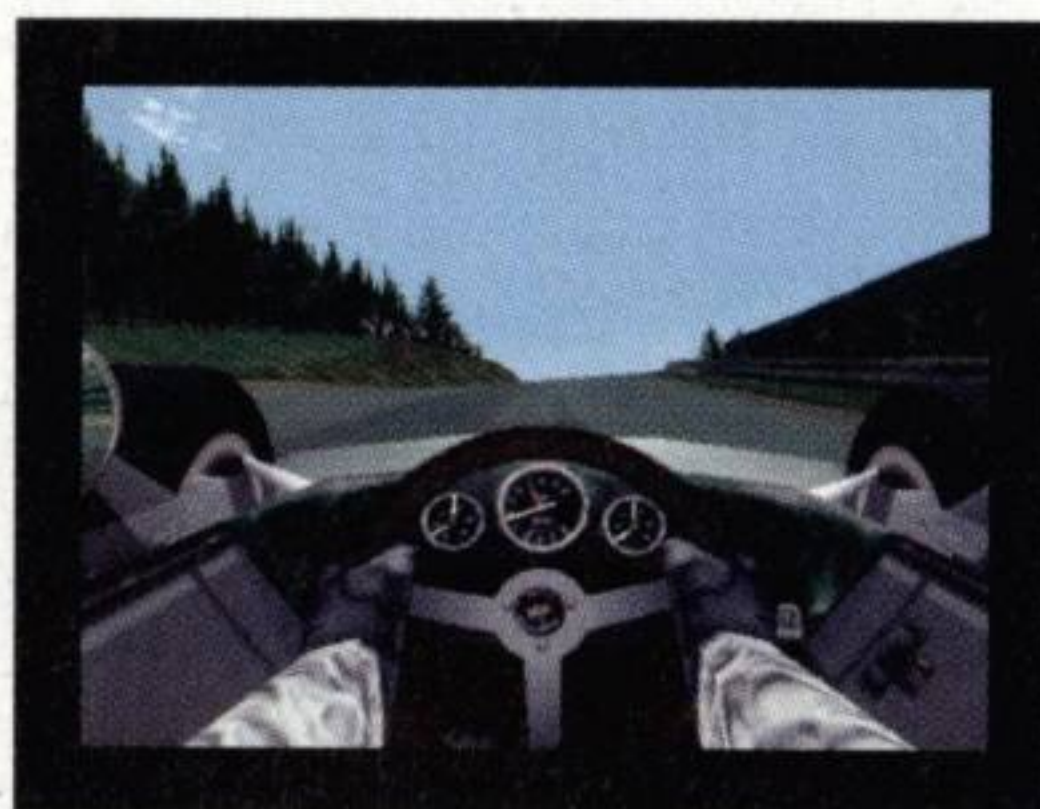
# Grand Prix Legends



Jackson Gothe-Snape gets his big chance to drive cars about twice as old as he is... 90's style, with Grand Prix Legends.



A BUNCH OF LEGENDS

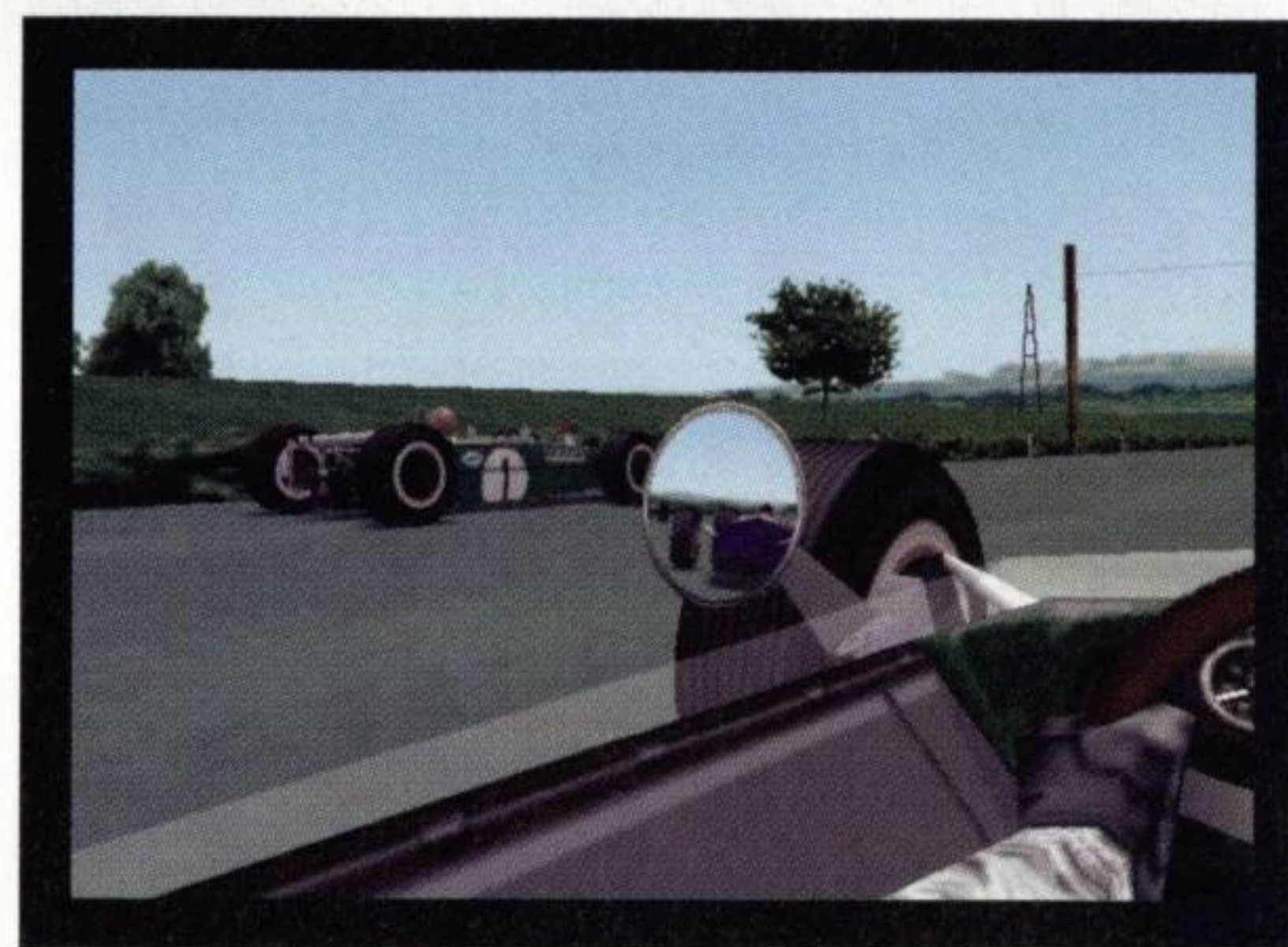


There has been huge hype surrounding this title ever since its announcement over a year ago. Papyrus boasted that it contained a revolutionary new physics engine that would set a standard in racing circles for years to come. However, as the release date slipped again and again, and the resignations at Papyrus mounted, fears grew that Grand Prix Legends wouldn't live up to expectations. Now, with the game released, thankfully I can say that GPL is one of the best racing simulations ever.

### CHARMING IN APPEARANCE....

GPL is the prettiest of racing sims. The graphics are sharp and delightfully detailed. Although the crowd and trees are simply 2D sprites, the only time you notice this is if you're watching someone else play or if you crash and join them in the stands. The intricacy of the game is amazing... You spin off at Watkins Glen, narrowly missing Jim Clark in his Lotus 49. Old Jim raises his hand in anger as he accelerates past. Your right-front tyre clips the overpass at Monza, and in the replay you see not only your tyre fly off, but also your whole suspension system going with it. It's little details like this, along with the realism of the tracks and the crispness of the cars that really make this title so visually impressive.

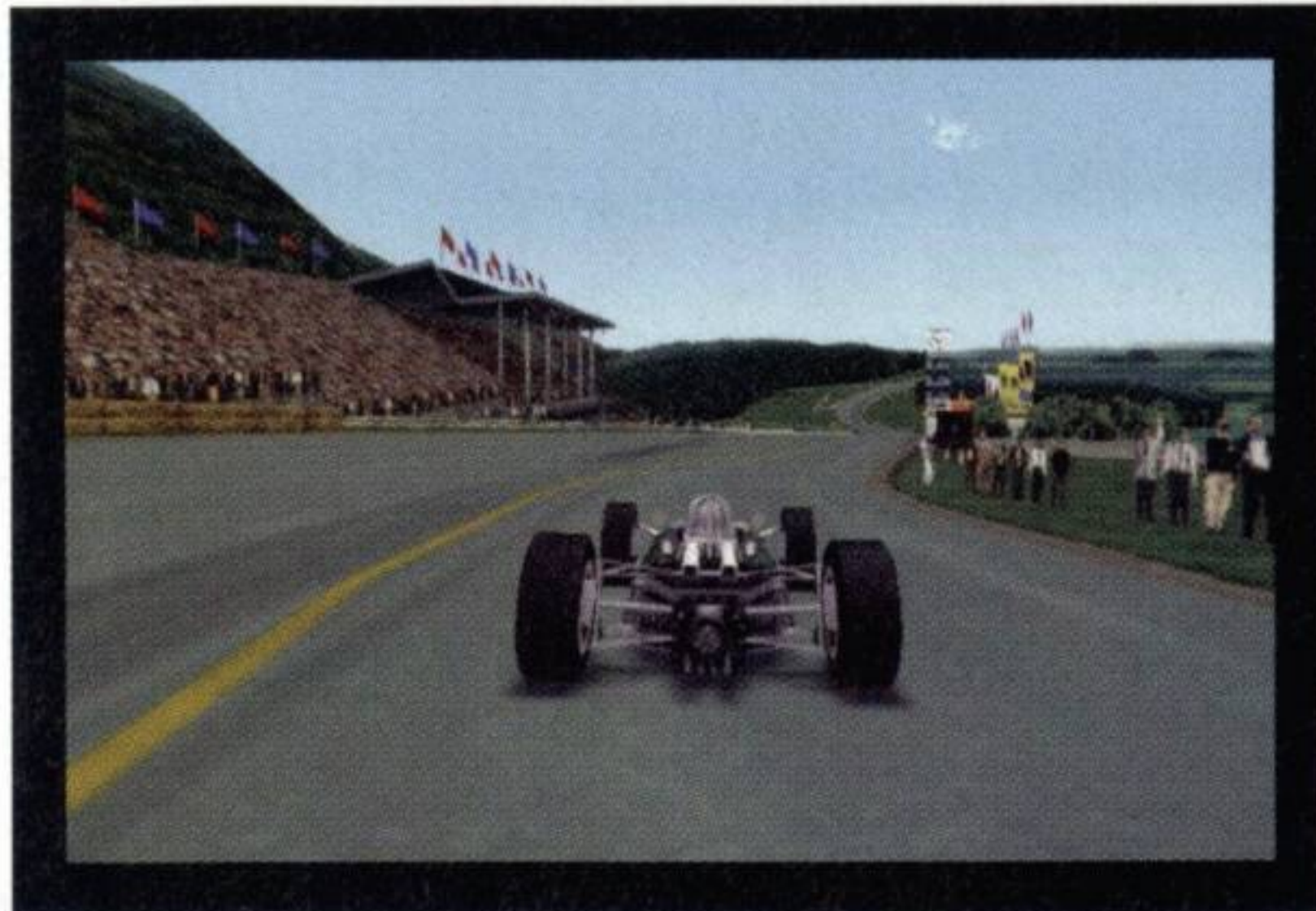
The sound is also incredible. Each car has its very own engine sound. As you fly over a hump, you can really hear the revs increase as your rear wheels leave the ground. The screeching of tyres as you fly around



Spa at 250km/h is amazing, and is also helpful in telling when they're going to lose traction. Arguably most important however, is the sound warning you of cars close by, which GPL does to perfection. All these make GPL's sound the best yet in a racing game.

### UNDER THE BONNET...

The artificial intelligence of the computer-controlled cars is also amazing. An example, the very first lap I raced, I dived inside an opponent foolishly, subsequently losing control and sliding towards the outside of the corner, forcing the opponent wider and wider. Perfectly calmly however he slowed, turned inside and rejoined the pack. They don't always manage to stay on the track however. Once, at South Africa, I came



THE OLD SUPERGLUE-ON-THE-STEERING-WHEEL TRICK

tion is how many people are willing to spend that much time to learn, despite the huge and obvious rewards. Also, a steering wheel and pedals is a definite must-have, as very precise control is hugely necessary. A joystick would suffice, but digital devices such as gamepads and the keyboard are pretty much out. You also need a good frame-rate for the precision control required. On a PII-266 with 64mb RAM and an 8mb Voodoo2, you could have all options on and it is still very smooth. On the starting grid however the rate would drop, particularly if the in-car view is chosen.

GPL contains 11 tracks, 7 cars and 19 drivers, all painstakingly modelled on the 1967 Formula 1 season. There are all the usual modes of play, consisting of Training, Single Race, Championship and Multiplayer.

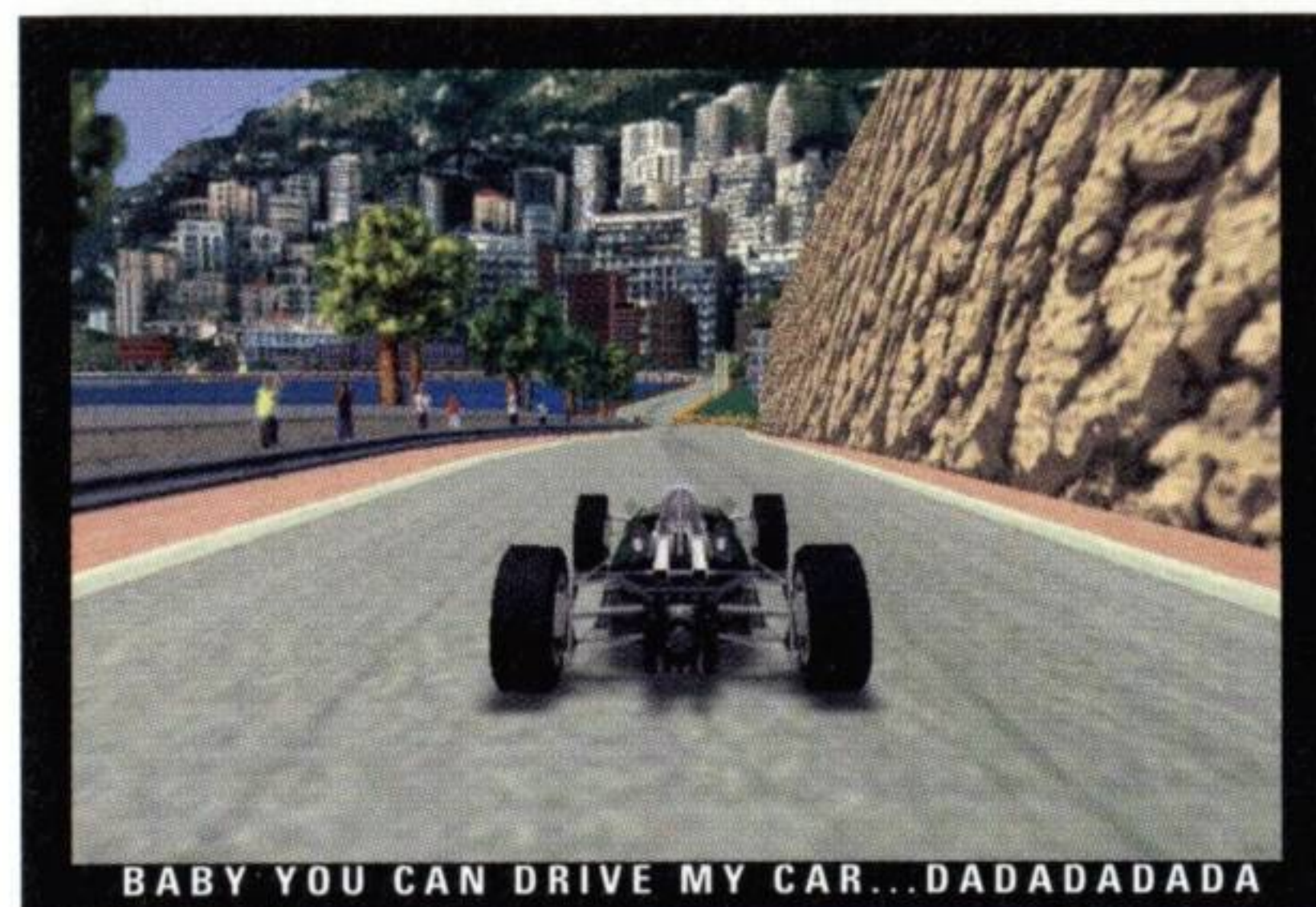
GPL is the new benchmark in racing games. Papyrus have once again outdone themselves, and on the basis of this effort, the only foreseeable competition with GPL for the racing sim crown in the coming 12 months are the new titles in their own Nascar and CART series.

across a car upside down on the side of the road. I went back and checked the replay and, sure enough, he had simply lost control and hit the embankment. Brilliant.

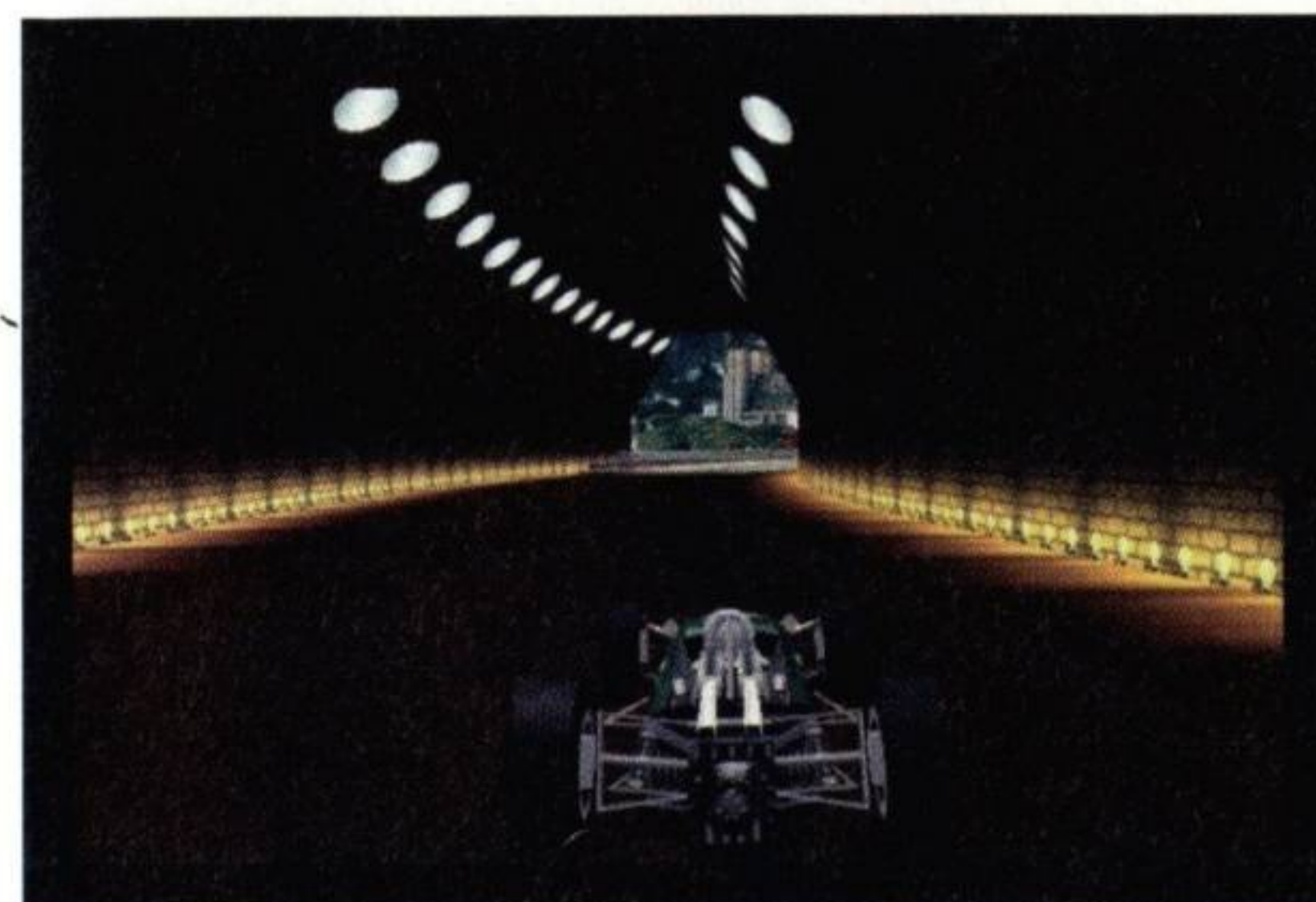
What really makes GPL stand out from the crowd is the game engine and the resulting physics and handling of the cars. Firstly, each car has suspension for each four wheels, independent from the others. Secondly, the shifting of weight around the car as you drive is modelled superbly, and has a great impact on keeping the car on the track. Thirdly, the cars behave and interact with the environment just as you'd expect in real life. These 1967 cars had huge amounts of power but little or no downforce, so they were rather hard to control. This is demonstrated superbly in the game, as the slightest overuse of the throttle sends your car into a 180-degree spin as you go around a corner. This spin however is very predictable and after only a few minutes of playing the game, the consistency and realism of the engine becomes apparent, as you know when these spins will occur. Correcting these spins or avoiding them altogether is another matter...

#### FAULTLESS...KINDA

The thing that may put people off GPL is the difficulty. Even after 2 days of playing the game, I was still struggling to produce a clean lap at any circuit, although there was a constant visible improvement, giving a feel for a good learning curve. Within a few weeks most will have got the hang of it, but the ques-



BABY YOU CAN DRIVE MY CAR...DADADADADA



<b>AVAILABLE:</b> Now
<b>CATEGORY:</b> Retro Racing
<b>PLAYERS:</b> 1-Multi
<b>PUBLISHER:</b> Sierra
<b>PRICE:</b> \$79.95
<b>RATING:</b> G
<b>REQUIRED:</b> TBA
<b>DESIRED:</b> PII, 3D Card, Wheel & Pedals
<b>SUPPORTS:</b> Steering wheels, 3DFX and Rendition 3D cards

#### PLUS

Great AI, great visuals,  
great driving model...

#### MINUS

Folks just after a quick fix  
may find it a bit 'simmy'.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
91	90	93

#### OVERALL

# 92

The new standard in old  
racing simulations.

# Enemy Infestation

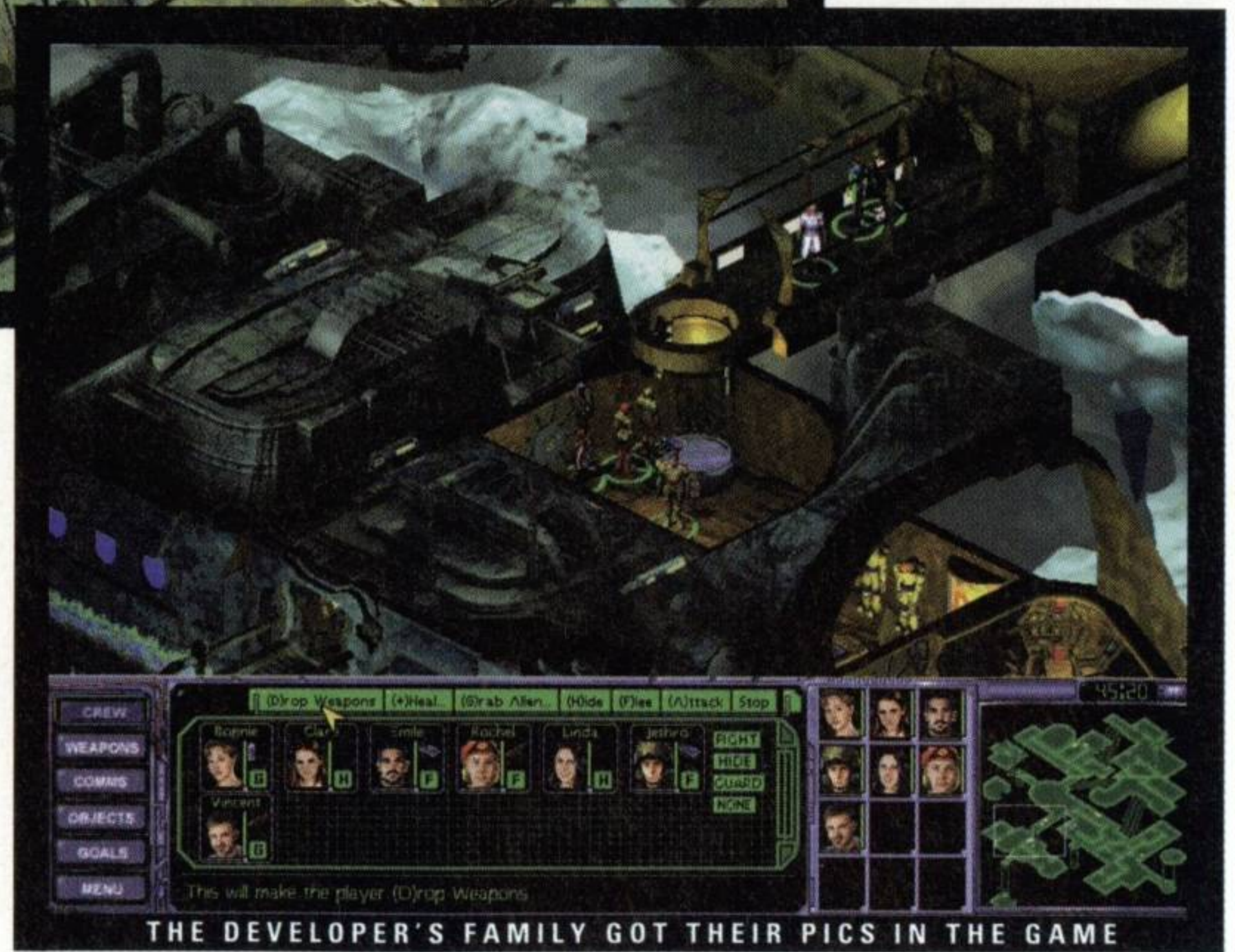
Kevin Cheung investigates the latest effort from Australian developers, Microforte.

The fate of an ancient race of aliens is coming to a desperate end. Their last hope for survival is to randomly shoot their offspring into space in shuttle pods in the hope that at least one of them will survive the perils of space, land on a habitable planet, and then maintain the continued existence of their species. Noble as this story may seem, one of these alien pods happens to land on a planet being colonised by humans. Taking up the role of the humans, your job is to rip the shreds out of these aliens, who have begun to take over your colony. And here I was feeling sorry for the aliens.

## A CASE OF TRYING TO DO TOO MUCH.

However, *Enemy Infestation* isn't exactly what you'd describe as an action-packed adventure. It has a fairly slow pace, and the amount of preparation and running back and forth requires much patience. Unfortunately, the patience and preparation can actually pay off too well. Once you figure out your team's abilities, you can develop a system to optimise your exploration and alien-killing methods, which takes a bit of the fun out of the game.

"From a design perspective, there are problems in character and item management. Put simply, it's just not very user friendly. It's like playing multi-player *Diablo*, except the control interface adopts a few C&C-ish features that inconveniently spread the action commands all over the control panel. Granted, you can use some of the hot-keys, but it doesn't fix the suspect item-detection control, which makes it very difficult to highlight a weapon, object, or person that is hidden behind a door or wall. It



THE DEVELOPER'S FAMILY GOT THEIR PICS IN THE GAME

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Action/Adventure
PLAYERS: 1-Multi
PUBLISHER: Ripcord
PRICE: \$79.95
RATING: TBA
REQUIRED: P166, 16MBRAM, Win 95/98, 4xCdRom
DESIRED: P200 mmx, 32MBRAM, 8xCdRom
SUPPORTS: MMX

**PLUS**  
Great atmosphere, lots of suspense, and nice easy-going action.

**MINUS**  
Dodgy control interface and horrendous voice-acting.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
82	75	78

**OVERALL**  
**80**  
A game that probably would have been better if it didn't try to combine the gameplay of so many other games. Enjoyable nonetheless.

## SCI-FI DIABLO?

You initially take control of a few human survivors within a large three-dimensional environment that remains in three-quarter perspective. These environments are highly detailed and very atmospheric, ranging from the *Star Trek* designs of space-ship interiors to organic features reminiscent of *Aliens*. Each character has a set of abilities such as weapons training, bio-genetic research, and so on which are crucial in completing the goals set down for the level. With these abilities in mind, your goals involve such things as gaining access to computer terminals, 'destroying' aliens, and rescuing stranded colonists.

The kind of gameplay offered here is something of a cross between *Diablo* and *Myth*. Each character must be individually managed. Exploration can be tense thanks to the well-constructed atmosphere; and when it comes to tonking it out with the aliens, placement, preparation and strategy are of vital importance. While it's nothing particularly new, it is quite involving and enjoyable.

becomes more so frustrating that the ceilings that disappear once you've explored a room will re-appear, even though you are practically assured that no aliens will be appearing there in future.

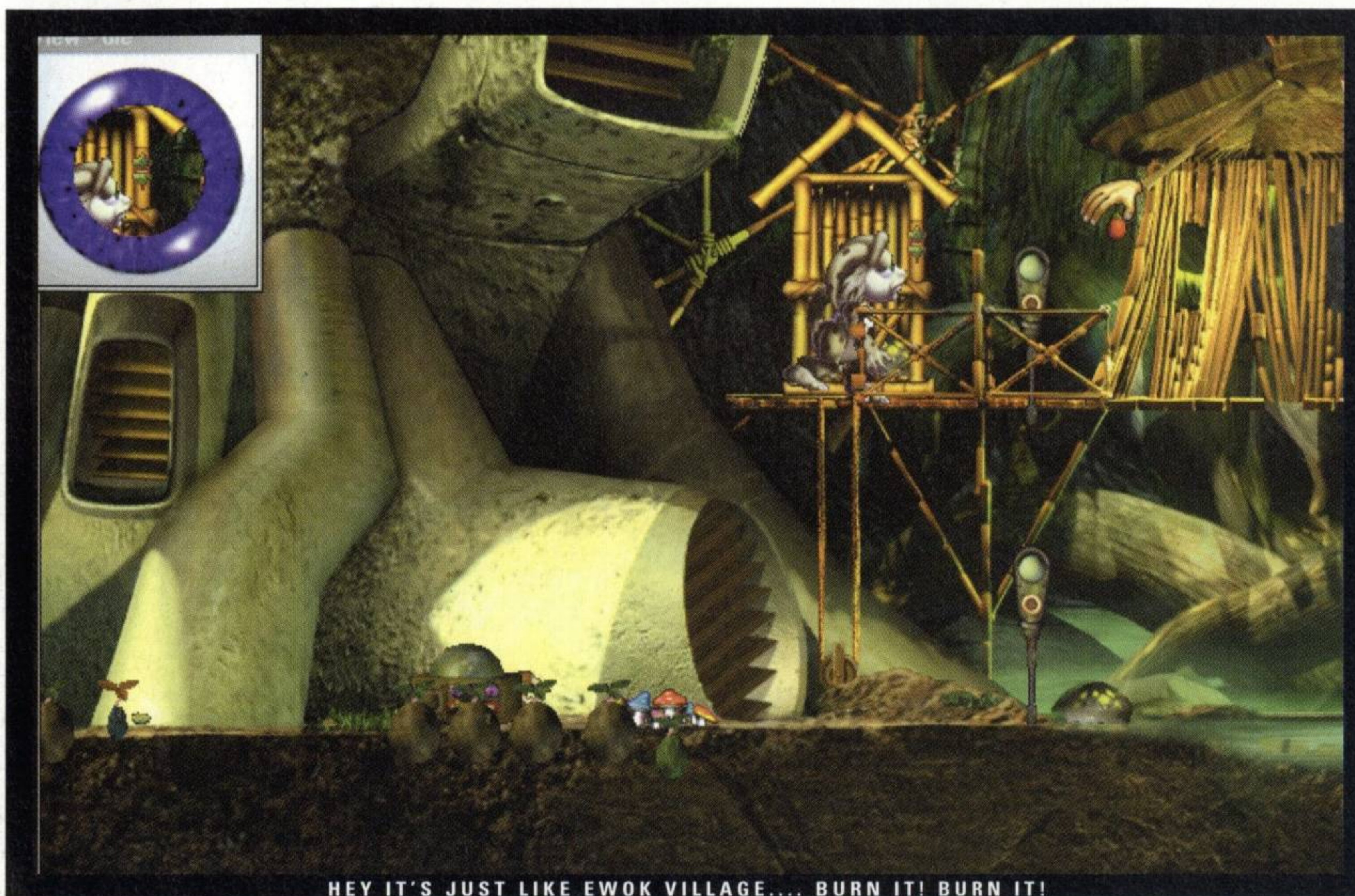
As an overall product, the slower pace is a nice change from the heavy-action games; and the immersive sci-fi atmosphere and problem-solving will appeal to most casual gamers. Despite a few problems in the design department, *Enemy Infestation* is an enjoyable game that offers great entertainment.





# Creatures 2

Carbon-based life meets Silicon-based life as Cam Shea starts a family in Albian cyberspace...



down to a very complicated web of IF/THEN statements. For instance, IF player moves into said designated area, THEN attack. As gamers demand greater realism in non-player characters (NPCs), AI coding becomes exponentially more complex and unmanageable, as the NPC has to have a reaction for every possible action. Traditional AI attempts to mimic lifelike behaviour in a pre-programmed manner.

Cyberlife is one of a handful of companies leading the way forward into a new paradigm of realistic NPCs. The Creatures games are revolutionary because rather than having sets of instructions for every situation, they attempt to model the underlying biological structures and processes that give rise to complex, novel behaviour in living beings. No action is pro-

## WHY YOU LITTLE... I'LL SMACK YOU GOOD... DOH!

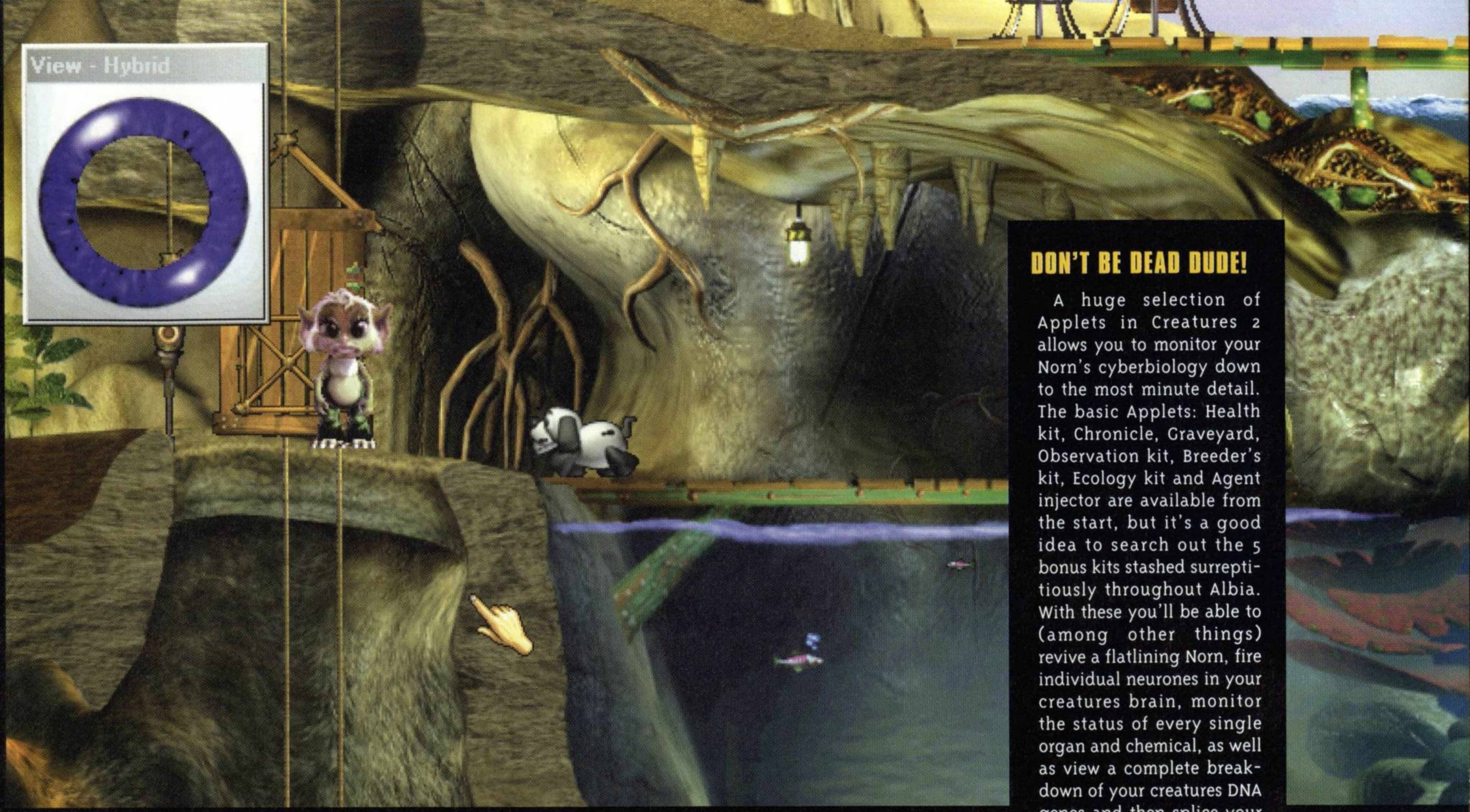
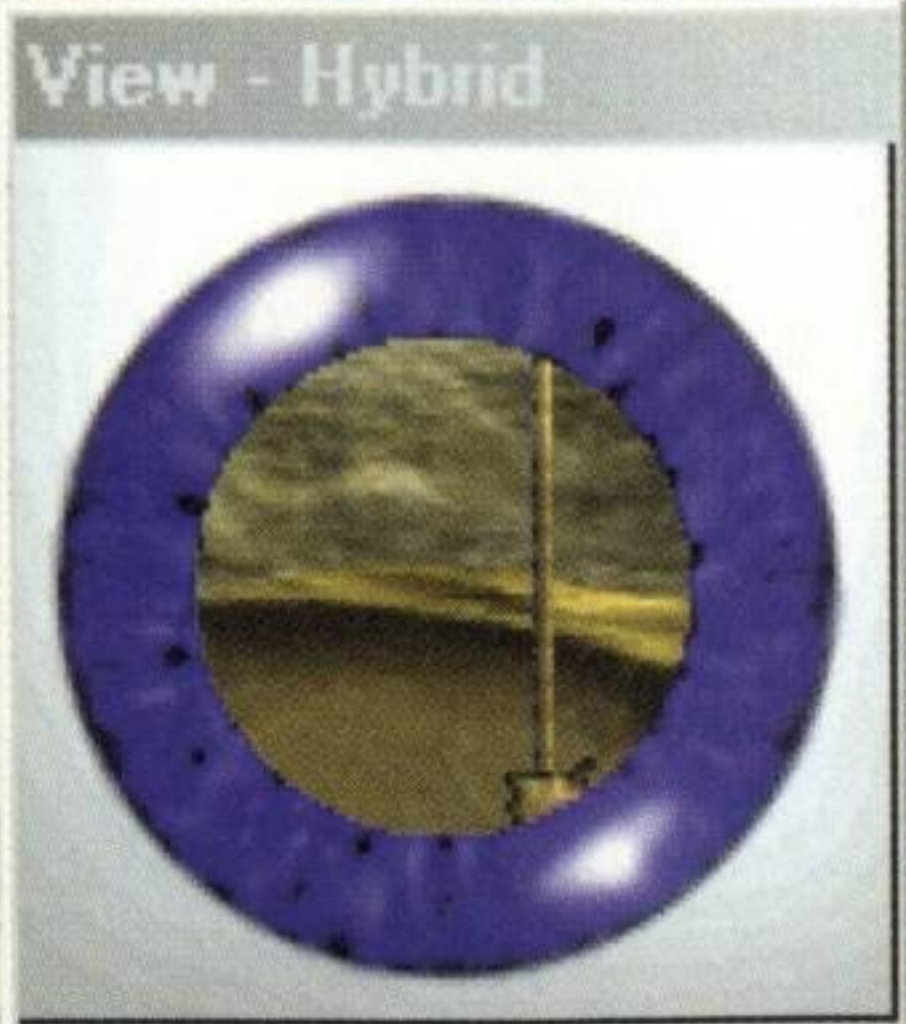
The reality of Albia is soured somewhat as Creatures 2 regularly pauses to save, freezes up occasionally, and whilst tracking a Norn, the screen scrolls slowly and awkwardly. Accurately rewarding or punishing your Norn can also be frustrating. The method of clicking over either its head or backside is cumbersome and simply isn't effective. In a wide variety of situations, you become ineffectual. In order to learn, Norns need to associate the reaction with the action. Also, trying to pick up an object or push an elevator button whilst a Norn is in the way can often result in an accidental spanking. Having separate hotkeys for patting, spanking and various actions (where the creature/object closest to the hand is the recipient) would certainly help Albia shine



Believe it or not, but the cute little Norns in Creatures 1 & 2 are helping forge the future direction of game development. The technology behind Creatures represents a new and perhaps inevitable avenue in creating truly believable worlds. You see, the traditional construction of AI (artificial intelligence) in a game is, at its core, based on simple principles. It basically boils

programmed - all actions are emergent from the system. This approach has been coined AL (artificial life) and has the potential to be more adaptable, more efficient and more realistic than AI.

Creatures 2 places you in the 2D virtual world of Albia. Albia is much bigger than in Creatures 1 and is rendered in lush 16 bit colour. Albia now experiences



### DON'T BE DEAD DUDE!

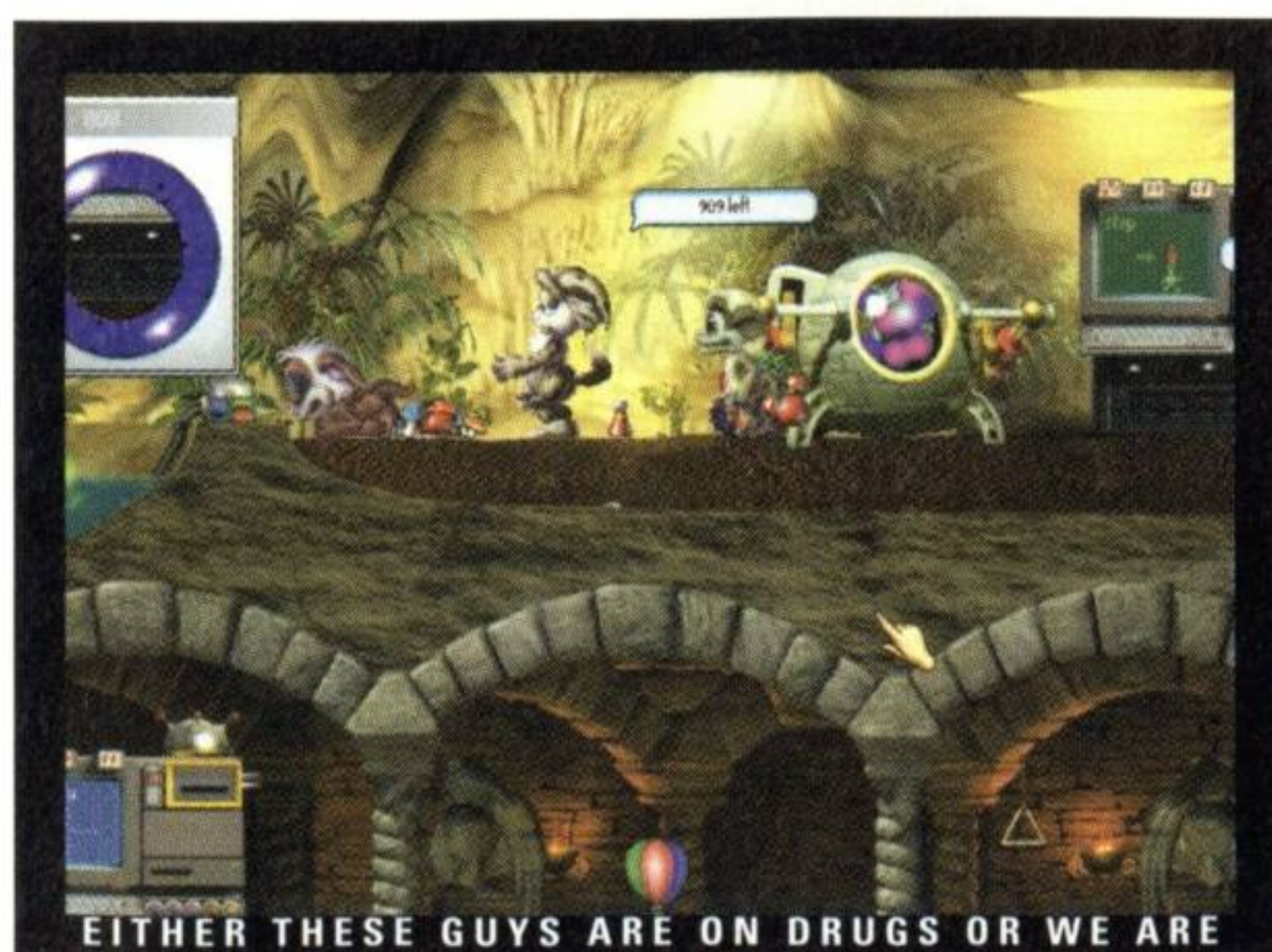
A huge selection of Applets in Creatures 2 allows you to monitor your Norn's cyberbiology down to the most minute detail. The basic Applets: Health kit, Chronicle, Graveyard, Observation kit, Breeder's kit, Ecology kit and Agent injector are available from the start, but it's a good idea to search out the 5 bonus kits stashed surreptitiously throughout Albia. With these you'll be able to (among other things) revive a flatlining Norn, fire individual neurones in your creatures brain, monitor the status of every single organ and chemical, as well as view a complete breakdown of your creatures DNA genes and then splice your creatures genes with that of a particularly fruity Ettin.



seasons, and has a complex ecosystem of plants and animals. Along with Norns and Grendels, there's a third species called the Ettins. They're weird but innocuous little things, and cross breeding between three species will be interesting to say the least. Oh, and your favourite Norns from Creatures 1 can be modified and imported into the all new and improved Albia.

### NORNS GET A LESSON IN AI SOPHISTICATION FOR THEIR SECOND OUTING...

Each Creatures 2 Norn has new brain lobes and neurotransmitters in their 1000 strong neural network



(compare it to 1,000,000,000,000 in a human brain!) resulting in increased intelligence and learning capacity. As in Creatures 1 you're able to teach your Norn all sorts of concepts using the learning machines. However, Norns can now communicate more effectively. They can learn more words, including the ability to express how they are feeling. Teaching your first generation of Norns thoroughly is important so that they can then teach their offspring words and concepts whilst you take a less active role (and play god).

Norns now have actual internal organs, as well as improved digestive and immune systems. Within each Norn are 256 different chemicals (40 new ones) that can combine in unpredictable ways. Norns have reproductive systems and digital DNA - now with over 550 genes. Breeding is analogous to real life - half the genetic code from each parent. Also, there's a random crossover feature built in, so mutations can (and do) occur. Mutations can result in all sorts of alterations - some positive (more efficient sensory processing), some negative (a deaf and blind Norn). It's the long term evolution of Norns, Grendels and Ettins that will be most interesting. In fact, the Creatures community on the internet is an excellent vehicle for accelerating Norn evolution, and I'm immensely curious to help discover the secrets of such an unprecedented genetic experiment.

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Life Simulation
PLAYERS: 1-Multi
PUBLISHER: Mindscape
PRICE: TBA
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P166, 16 MB RAM, 300MB HD space
DESIRED: P200+, 32MB RAM, 16 x CD ROM

### PLUS

Genetics up close and personal. Lack of structure makes for a nice change of pace.

### MINUS

Need to spend a lot of time with this one! Interface needs work.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
84	83	90

### OVERALL

# 87

Behind the cute facade of Creatures 2, lies a rigorous artificial life sim.

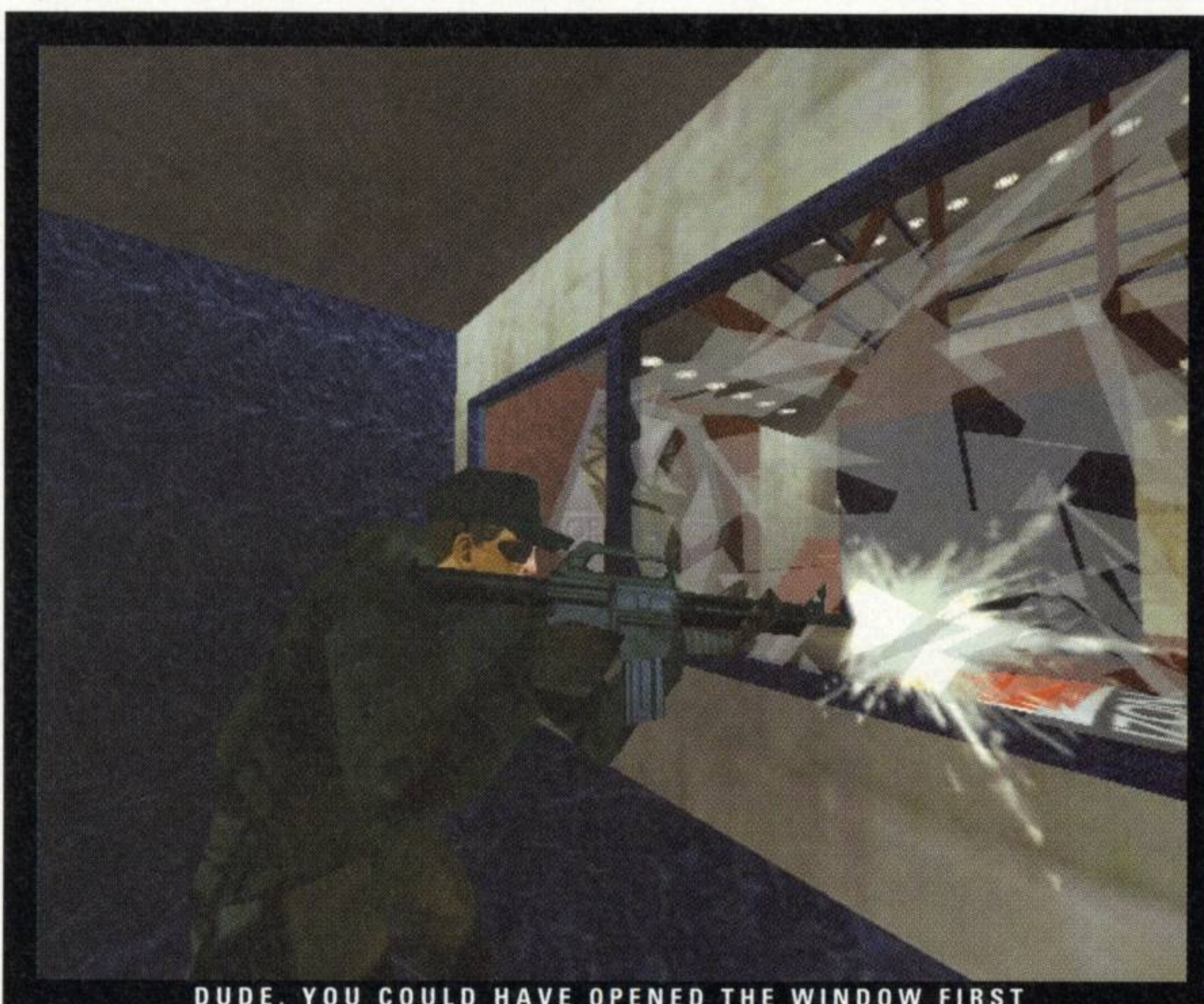
# Tom Clancy's Rainbow 6

Matt Bauer gets the girl, kills the baddies, and saves the entire planet... Na... he just reviewed Rainbow 6... close enough.



The Year is 1999 and international terrorism is out of control. What is needed is an organization with the resources and the authority to fight terrorism wherever it flourishes. Rainbow Six is the name of this elite group of soldiers and your involvement in the project is separated into two main parts. Firstly you are briefed on your mission and must create an appropriate team and strategy with which to complete the objective. Choices for your troops include standard all-purpose soldiers through to explosive and recon' experts.

Now the real fun starts. Executing your strategy is where the meat of the game lies as you control the lead member of one of the units in a 1st or 3rd person perspective. Initially, the graphics look pretty spectacular, as the sky, background buildings and scenery look great. On closer inspection of the foreground, however, simple sprites such as trees and bushes are much too pixelated. Also, in some outside scenarios, there is a sharp 90-degree corner between the "grassy" surface and an impassable section of the forest.



DUDE, YOU COULD HAVE OPENED THE WINDOW FIRST

## BANG... YOU'RE DEAD!

Red Storm have tried to make Rainbow Six as realistic as possible. A single bullet is usually an instant kill, (although it is advisable to pop a few rounds into every terrorist just in case) and the AI makes terrorist reflexes so fast that you could be hearing through your third ear before you have a chance say "Red October". This will really keep you on your toes and force you to take every corner slowly and carefully. On the down side, the AI can be a little buggy as well. Neither the goodies nor baddies seem to react much to gunfire. Terrorists and team members alike can sometimes happily continue looking for danger while somebody mere

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Action
PLAYERS: 1-16
PUBLISHER: Red Storm
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: TBA
REQUIRED: P166mmx, 16MB RAM
DESIRED: P200mmx, 32MB RAM, 3D accelerator

**PLUS**  
Great weapons and many diverse locations.

**MINUS**  
Slightly buggy AI. Graphics in places could have been touched up.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
72	82	77

**OVERALL**  
**80**  
Great fun, and a good challenge that will keep you interested for some time.



## LET'S GO SHOPPING...

Your next step is to equip your team with armor, camouflage, secondary items and oh yes... weaponry. Heckler and Kosh, silenced Berretas and M-16 are just a few of the weapons to choose from. I'm glad to say that they haven't forgotten about one of my old favorites, the 12 Gauge shotgun. After separating your soldiers into up to 4 units, you are presented with a simple map of the area of attack. This is where the real strategy comes into play, as you must plot the movement, speed and actions of your units through each environment.



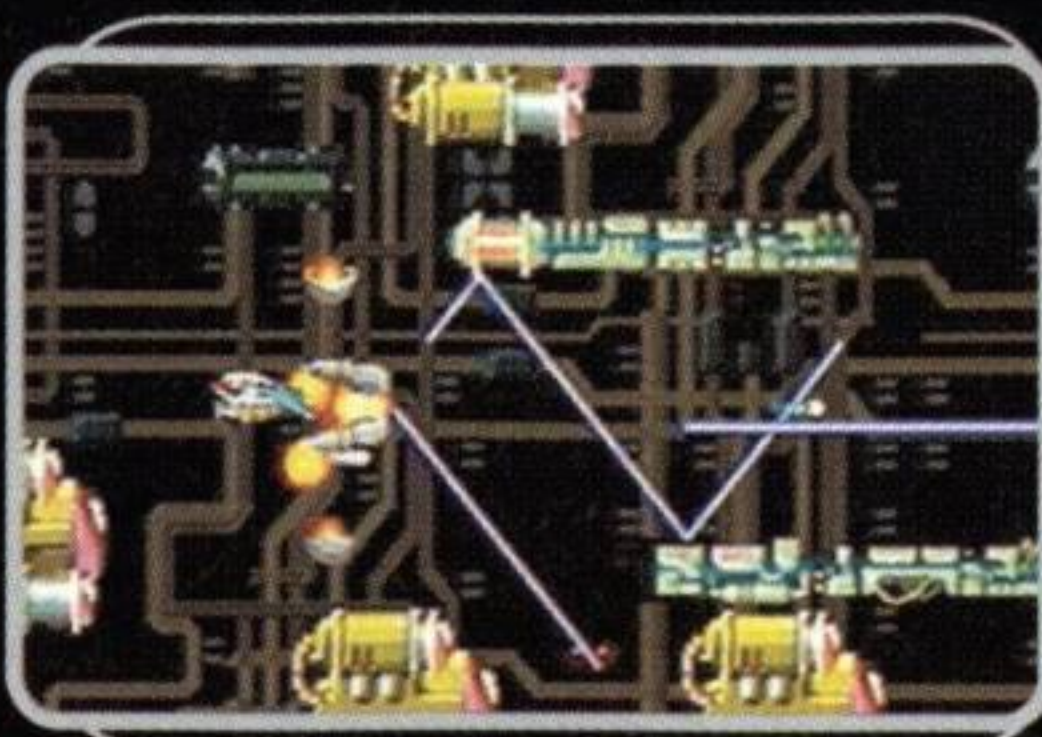
meters away has just had three red-hot armor piercing bullets rip through their now lifeless body.

While obviously the game is not perfect, Red Storm Entertainment has still translated this cool story into a pretty darn fine computer game. Giving a good mix of strategy, action and realism (not to mention a great soundtrack), Rainbow Six is heaps of fun as long as you have the patients to learn the interface and maybe play some of the missions over and over again as it gets pretty damn hard. Finally, Internet and LAN multiplayer options (for between 2 and 16 players) will ensure Rainbow Six's longevity.

□□□ □□□□□□ □□□

The beginning of the 22nd Century, the people of Earth had developed a peaceful and prosperous civilisation. Suddenly THEY appeared. Arriving through the inter-dimensional pulse. They invaded all forms of life, minerals and electronic devices. Existing as a parasite, they multiplied rapidly. They have ravaged nearby planets and have chosen Earth as their next target for colonisation.

# R-TYPES



□□□ □□□□□□ □□□

G 8+

Virgin INTERACTIVE

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# Quake 2: Ground Zero

Now running around looking for a health pack, **Dan Toose** got more than he bargained for with Ground Zero.



A few months back, the Quake 2 playing populace of the world get all sweaty and excited about the release of the first Quake 2 mission pack, The Reckoning. Unfortunately, the Reckoning was basically an overly easy single player experience, with some great deathmatch maps, that unfortunately have still yet to get any real support online.

Rogue did a mission pack for Quake 1, and now have come up with what has to be one of the best add on titles ever to be released, in Quake 2: Ground Zero.

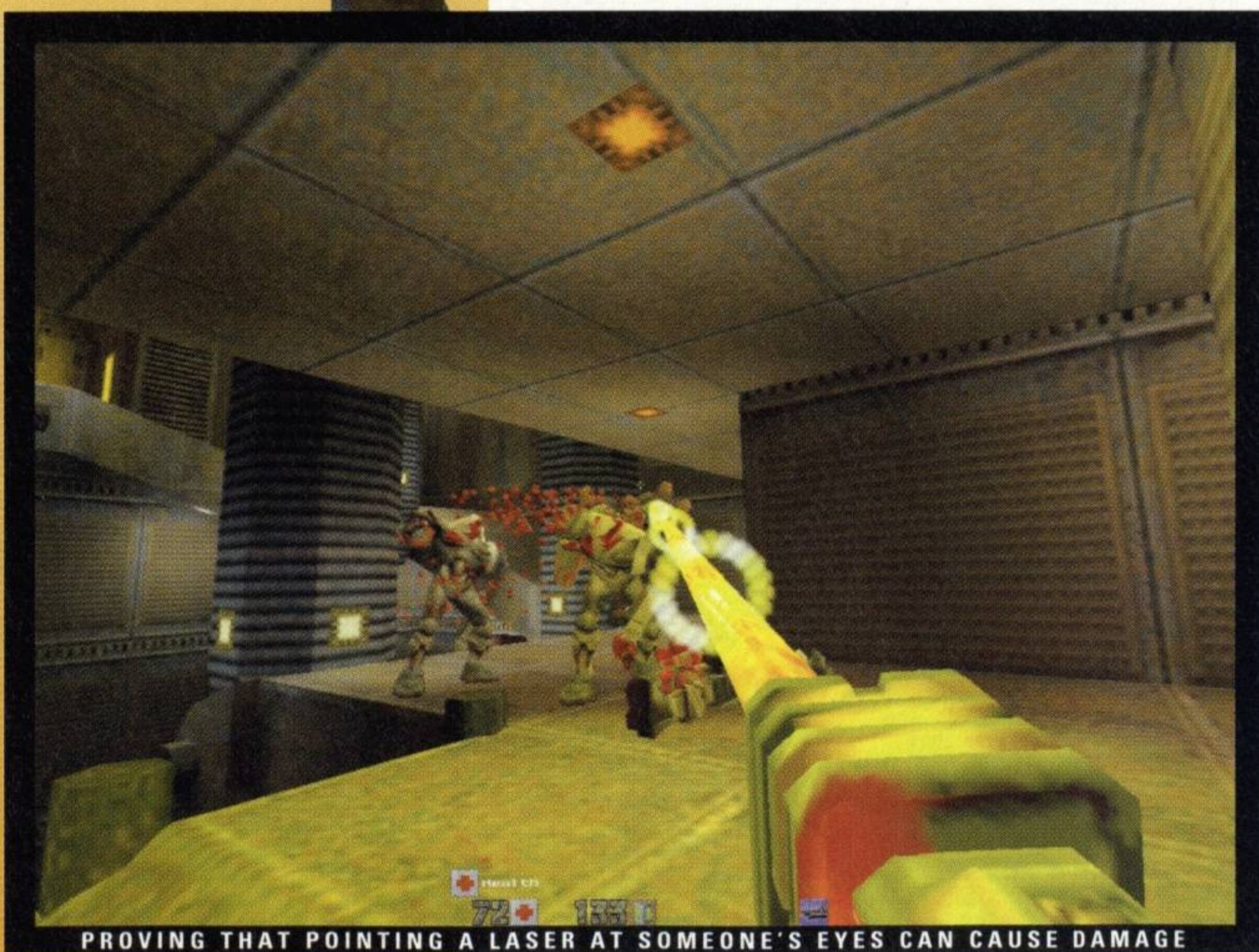
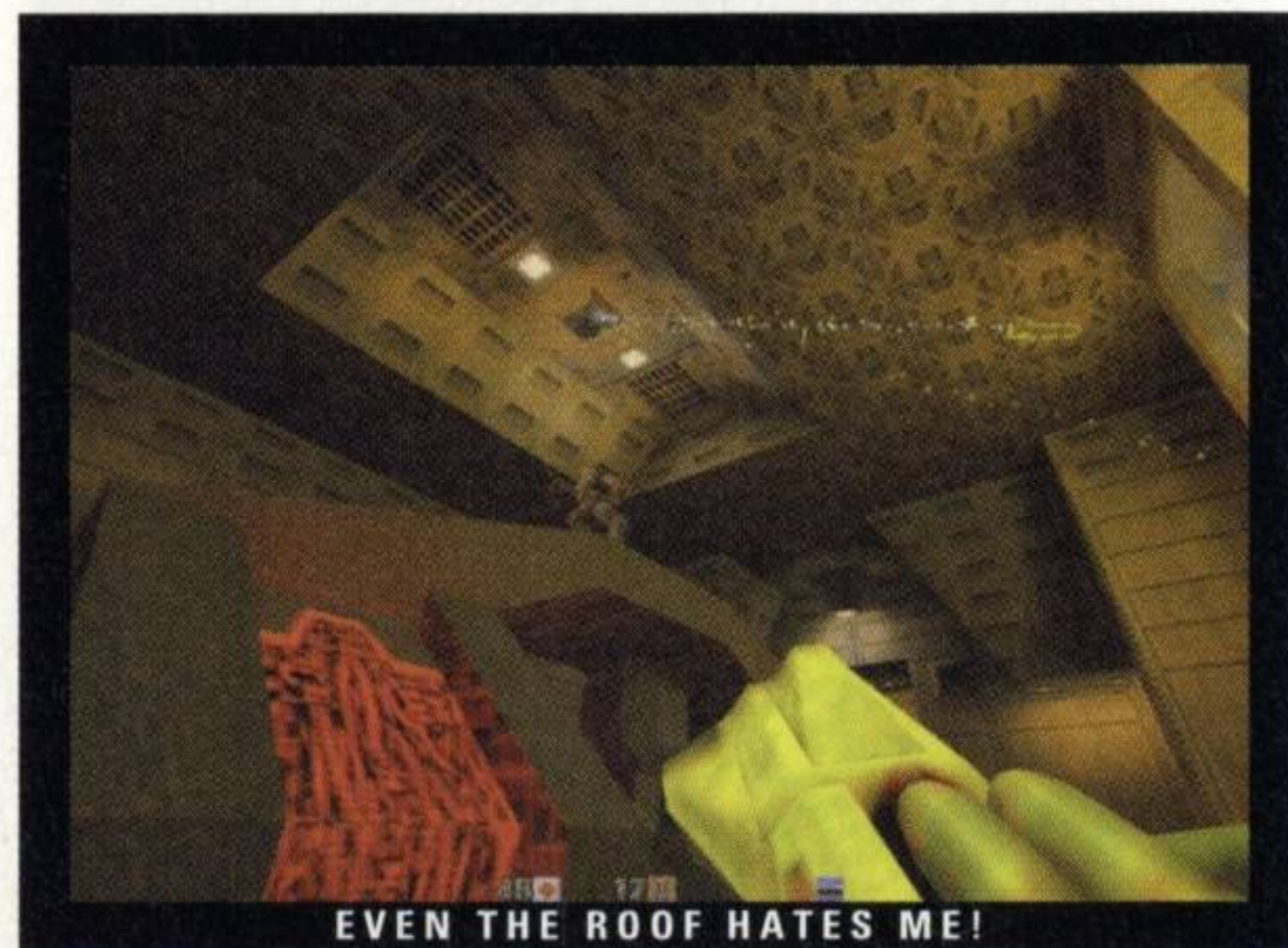
As a single player game (or co-operative if you're into that sort of thing), Ground Zero is set on the alien world Stroggos, just like Quake 2. The aim of the game is to shut down whatever force is pulling your carrier ship out of orbit, into the planet. I'll humbly admit that the same low quality token FMV in GZ, that I'd already seen in Q2, and Q2: The Reckoning, made me doubt I was in for anything special... Good thing I was wrong.

#### THE INTENSITY IS BACK!

Rogue are perhaps the first group to realise what every 1st person shooter since Doom (or perhaps Hexen) has lacked... Intensity and challenge due to hordes of monsters. The first few levels of GZ won't push a Quake 2 veteran to have to do anything special, but about five levels into the game, it suddenly gets VERY hard. Not only have Rogue thrown lots of monsters your way, they also have designed the maps and the monster placement to ensure that you are always putting yourself at risk by going forward. The major factor in this improvement has to be the introduction of defense turrets. Mounted into the walls and ceilings, turrets can pop out and fire either blasters or rockets at you.

#### SMARTER THAN THE AVERAGE STROGG

The monster AI seems to have been tweaked a bit, as monsters now seem to make the smart decision when it comes to picking their position compared to Q2 and



Q2: The Reckoning. The AI still isn't up to the standard of Unreal, or the alpha of Half-Life that we've seen, but combined with the map design, it is good enough to make even the best players have to take great care not to get wiped out if playing on hard skill setting.

To top off the beautiful new maps, GZ also has the sort of boss monster that Quake 2 should have had in the first place. The boss is not alone, meaning you can't just focus on it entirely.

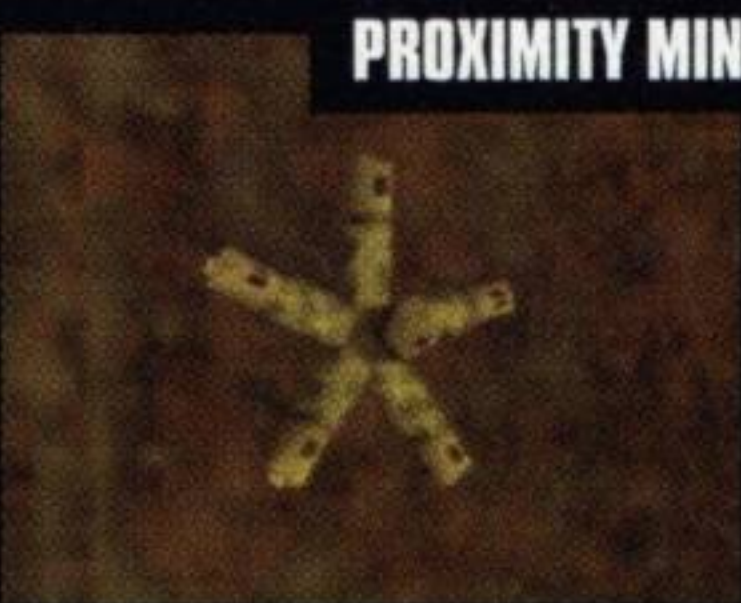
After the lack of challenge in single player Quake 2 and The Reckoning, I never thought I was ever going to enjoy the game as a single player experience ever again... but I have with Ground Zero thanks to Rogue's understanding of what is needed to challenge a fan of the game. An ace player will still finish it in a couple of days, but that's always going to be the case. The fourteen deathmatch maps also include a few brilliant maps that should keep any multiplayer Quake 2 head gibbin' on for months.



ETF RIFLE



PLASMA BEAM



PROXIMITY MINE



TESLA

## NEW GUNS?

Actually, several of the new weapons aren't that new at all...

### ETF RIFLE

This projectile weapon fires flachette into your targets, and is essentially the nail-gun from Quake 1. Really only good against lowly grunts.

### PLASMA BEAM

A constant, intense laser beam that basically burns up anything it touches. Not quite as powerful as it looks.

### PROXIMITY MINES

Like a grenade, except it can stick to any surface. Anything that comes into a close proximity to the mine causes it to explode.

### TESLA

Similar to the proximity mine, except that rather than just blowing up, the Tesla pumps a steady stream of electricity into anything that comes close.



BLACK WIDOW



DEADALUS



MEDIC COMMANDER



CARRIER



STALKER

## NEW FACES

### DEADALUS

A beefed up version of the Icarus. He comes with a power shield, and fires more powerful blasters.

enforcers and gunners, and naturally can revive dead units... making him a total pain.

carrier also can gate in flyers, and basically takes a hell of a lot of ammo to kill

ground and the roof to avoid gun fire.

### MEDIC COMMANDER

More firepower, can gate in grunts,

### CARRIER

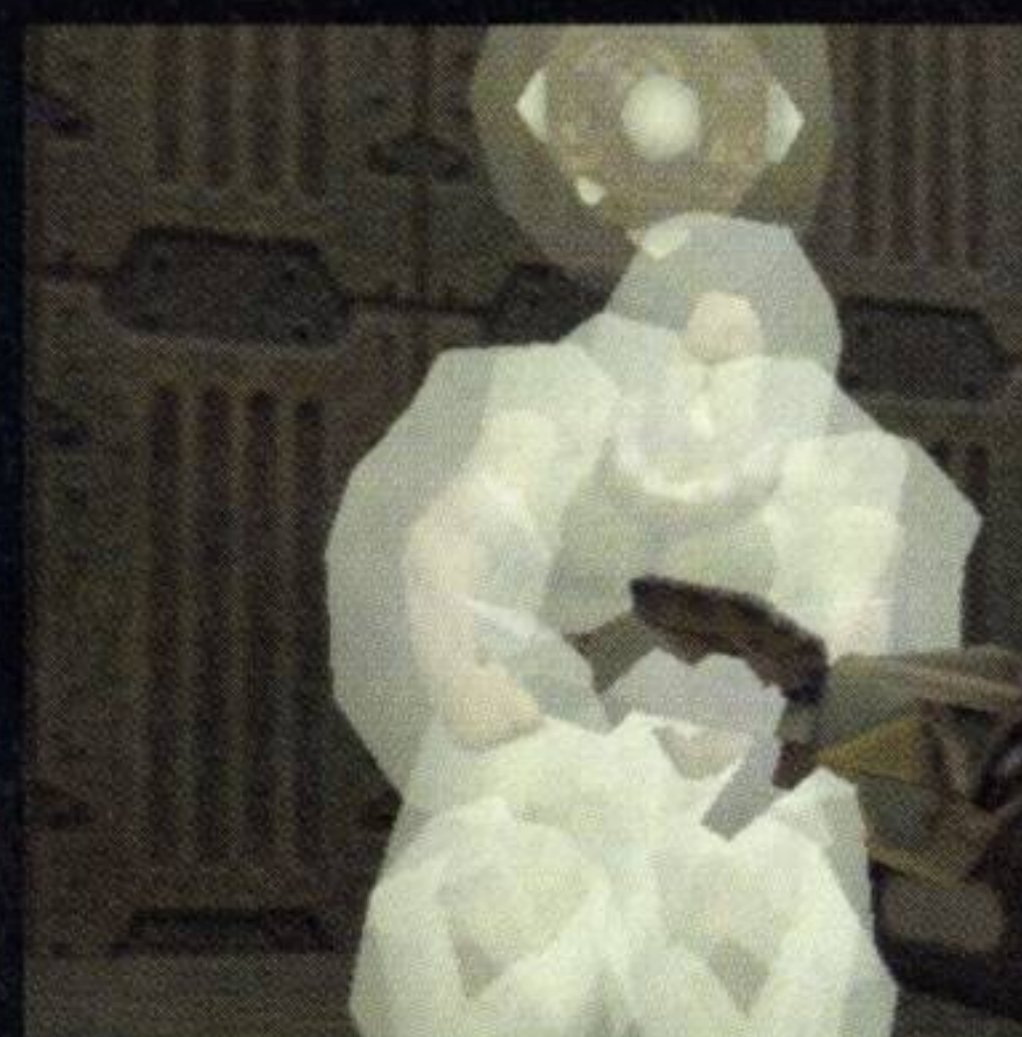
Armed with a railgun, twin chainguns and a grenade launcher, the

### STALKER

Spider like cyborgs that can walk on the ceiling, and quickly hop between the

### BLACK WIDOW

A two part, mean bitch of a boss! The second version fires darkness spheres!



THE SPHERES



DOPPLEGANGER



IR GOGGLES



A-M BOMB

## TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Rogue have created a range of new powerups that should prove very interesting for those who play Ground Zero maps in deathmatch

### THE SPHERES VENGEANCE

While the vengeance sphere is with you, it will strike out at an enemy once you reach 25% or less health

sight till you get a kill. Also reduces damage taken by half.

### HUNTER

If you die while you have this, the sphere then hunts down and kills the person who killed you!

### DOPPLEGANGER

Produces a dummy version of you to fool people into attack it instead of you.

### IR GOGGLES

Causes any creature or item to become bright red, regardless

of the light level in the area.

### A-M BOMB

Takes a while to detonate, but it kills any nearby creature when it does, and literally shakes the entire level.

### DEFENDER

Fires at enemies in



AVAILABLE: Now

CATEGORY: Quake 2 add on

PLAYERS: 1-many

PUBLISHER: Activision

PRICE: \$49.95

RATING: MA15+

REQUIRED: Quake 2

### PLUS

Better AI, better maps, more of a challenge all round.

### MINUS

Only for Quake 2 die hards. A bit More-of-the-samey.

VISUALS 93 SOUND 86 GAMEPLAY 91

### OVERALL

# 90

An excellent mission pack, that will actually challenge players rather than just give them a few new corridors to run down.

## R-Types

PlayStation

**AVAILABLE: NOW**  
**CATEGORY: SCROLLING SHOOTER**  
**PLAYERS: 1 - 2**  
**PUBLISHER: VIRGIN**  
**PRICE: \$79.95**  
**RATING: G**

A long time ago in the mid 80's, when we all listened to Duran Duran, and "Parallax Scrolling" was all the buzz in the video games industry, a little known Japanese company called Irem unleashed R-Type, arguably the greatest side-scrolling shooter in its time. Irem and Virgin have now revived this classic to bring us R-Types, featuring arcade perfect conversions of both R-Type, and its imaginatively titled sequel, R-Type II.

With no less than 8 levels, and 3 stages per level in each game, there is plenty here for even the most hardened shooter fanatics. The levels are well varied with a large number of obstacles, and huge bosses of varying difficulty await your arrival at the end of each stage.

Picking up all the power-ups is the ultimate key to this game. An endless amount of continues is rarely helpful, as a continue puts you in the middle of the action, but at a loss of all power-ups which you have collected. Equipped with the most basic laser, passing a



stage in this manner is close to impossible.

Getting through this game is no easy feat, even in the 'Normal' difficulty setting. What earns this game its 'classic' status, and is rarely replicated in most modern releases, is that a high level of difficulty rarely gets to the 'frustrating' stage, and you must have that 'one more go'.

If you are one of the people who pride their Namco Museum collection, or you need to see what gaming old-timers are always raving on about, then, with the possible exception of the equally appealing Raiden Project, R-Types is the best of its kind. A worthy addition to your PlayStation library.

PETER JANKULOVSKI

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
70	72	91	84

## Rage of Mages

PC

**AVAILABLE: OCTOBER**  
**CATEGORY: RPG/STRATEGY**  
**PLAYERS: 1-MULTI**  
**PUBLISHER: MONOLITH**  
**PRICE: TBA**  
**RATING: G**  
**REQUIRED: P133, 16MB RAM, WIN 95/98**  
**DESIRED: P200, 32MB RAM**

Interestingly, Rage of Mages was developed in Russia, and was a huge hit over there. No, not because of all the vodka they drink, but because Rage of Mages is an addictive RPG with strategy overtones. Though all the character creation, items, quests and monsters are traditional RPG fare, the control system works more like a game of Starcraft. You can select your warriors on the screen and order them to spread and attack, stand their ground, defend, cast spells or retreat - all with hot keys and a bit of clicking and dragging. This means you can have four different warriors exploring four different parts of the map at the same time, the small "fog of war" map in the corner, showing you their progress so you can jump to either of them at any time. Simply control-clicking on a warrior and sending him to a spot on the map will instruct him to attack any monsters he encounters on the way, so you can concentrate

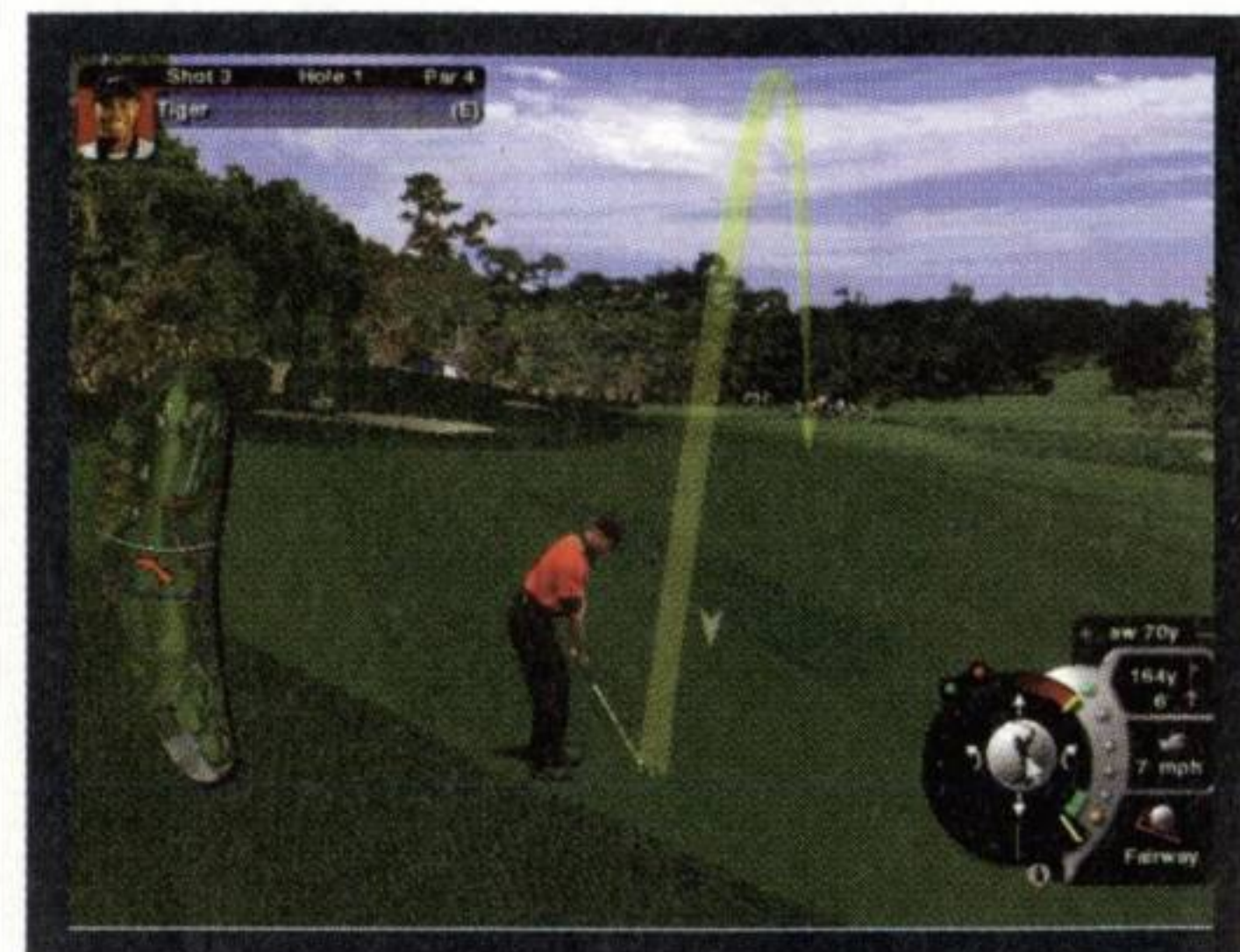


on casting spells from your mage's spellbook or whatever it is you need to do, and not worry too much about his welfare.

Each mission is played out on a small map, and the main town is revisited after every mission. At the main town, you can train yourself in skills, buy new armour, weapons or magical items, and then visit the inn where you can meet other adventurers and receive new quests. Though the monsters you stumble across are varied, and the terrain different, each mission does almost feel like a random generated map - it always has the same dimensions. Regardless, Rage of Mages is extremely addictive and top fun.

ELIOT FISH

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
84	83	82	83



## Tiger Woods 99

PC

**AVAILABLE: NOW**  
**CATEGORY: GOLF SIM**  
**PLAYERS: 1-4 (MULTIPLAYER)**  
**PUBLISHER: EA SPORTS**  
**PRICE: \$49.95**  
**RATING: G**  
**REQUIRED: P133, 32MB RAM, WIN95/98**  
**DESIRED: P200, 64MB RAM, 3D CARD, 28.8 MODEM FOR MULTIPLAYER**  
**SUPPORTS: 3D CARDS (GLIDE)**

So you need to add a new lease of life to an ageing game franchise. You sign up a big name (the biggest, actually), introduce a new hype word, and claim that you have revolutionised the genre. Well, EA have done exactly that with their latest PGA Tour Golf implementation, Tiger Woods 99. And it almost lives up to its big name.

For starters, this is one of the first golf games to support 3Dfx. There's an all new 3D environment in terms of the 3 courses provided in the box, but EA have strangely opted to stick with flat 2D textures with all other game elements. Zoom in and you notice trees, spectators and golfers become annoyingly pixelated - this isn't supposed to happen with 3Dfx.

While the physics model is generally good, there is a lack of consistency as you occasionally notice the 2D golf ball does not flow quite as you would expect. "Flash Draw" (Hype word alert!) ensures that rendering scenes does not take longer than a put, and to EA's credit, works rather well.

The new analog "Pro Swing" feature, an alternative to the traditional 3-click method, is confusing at first, but will be likened to by hardcore fans. But a real-time golfer having a swing while you play the shot would have helped greatly.

Sound is of typical golf quality, with the standard customary golf course effects. The commentary tops off the entire TV-style presentation, but most will be reaching for the "Off" button.

While Links LS still remains the better golf simulator choice, non-hardcore golf fans will feel right at home with Tiger Woods 99, which shows signs of greatness, but due to a few hick-ups, doesn't quite get there.

PETER JANKULOVSKI

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
74	71	79	76





## Bomberman Hero

**Nintendo 64**

**AVAILABLE: NOW**  
**CATEGORY: PLATFORMER**  
**PLAYERS: 1**  
**PUBLISHER: HUDSON SOFT**  
**PRICE: \$59.95**  
**RATING: G**

When did the Bomberman series ever stop being about awesome multiplayer gameplay, and about average adventure-ish platforming? This has to stop! We must rally together and storm the Hudson Soft headquarters to beat some sense into their programmers' heads! Bomberman Hero is another 3D platformer using the elements of classic Bomberman, much like the previous Bomberman 64. This time around, Bomberman can jump, hang off ledges and do a few new tricks with his bombs - like throw four at once. The levels alternate between 2D-style platforming, and 3D-ish swimming/flying bits, though the aim is the same in both - collect the gems and powerups. The game is certainly nice to look at, with some suitably freaky Japanese influences... obese chickens, odd robots, strange creatures and big, colourful bosses. The visuals are nice and sharp for once, and the frame-rate is good meaning it's a joy to cruise around from platform to platform without having to take slow-down into account with your timing. Something about Bomberman Hero is reminiscent of puzzle/platformers from SNES games, probably in it's simplicity and yet addictiveness of the gameplay. There's certainly nothing difficult here, yet there's the odd moment when you have to retry a section of a level to figure out exactly what it is you're meant to do.

The atmosphere of the game is appealing to anyone who enjoys Bomberman and the cute/freaky Japanese aspect to it, but the gameplay leaves a lot to be desired. Though the levels are varied and interesting enough to keep you playing, there isn't much of a challenge and to make matters worse, there's no multiplayer option. This is purely a single player game, and an average one at that. Shame. Bring back the Bomberman we know and love!

ELIOT FISH

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
79	72	69	69



## Colin McRae Rally

**PC**

**AVAILABLE: NOW**  
**CATEGORY: DRIVING**  
**PLAYERS: 1-2**  
**PUBLISHER: CODEMASTERS**  
**PRICE: \$89.95**  
**RATING: G**  
**REQUIRED: P166, 16MB RAM, WIN 95/98**  
**DESIRED: P111, 64MB RAM, 3D CARD**  
**SUPPORTS: FORCE FEEDBACK, WHEELS, 3D CARDS**

It's been a bit of a wait for the PC version of Colin McRae Rally, and in the meantime we've been able to see how awesome the game is on the PlayStation and wondered if the PC version will be even better. Well, after powersliding through a CMR Championship, I can happily tell you that this is as good as the PlayStation version (no surprises there), and there are some improvements and would you believe drawbacks to this PC version. "Drawbacks?!" I hear you cry? Well, yes. Let's talk about that first. Whereas PSX owners get a constant frame rate, the PC version of CMR seems to be

fairly erratic, with frame rates dropping in some sections of the track, and then smoothing out to what seems like a gorgeous blend in other sections. It seems the 3Dfx support in CMR is not as consistent as it should be, as other cards besides the Voodoo2 performed better. Despite this, the game looks fantastic - simple yet perfect for what you want it to be, which is a solid racing experience.

As far as Rally driving games go, Colin McRae Rally is one of the best ever. The cars feel awesome to drive, and the realism is palpable. Add to that some fantastic tracks and a tonne of options (even a Rally School training mode) and you have a must buy for PC driving game fans. You want awesome sound in your PC games? CMR has some of the best driving game audio you'll ever hear - from the crunch of your chassis to the sound of grit spitting off the tires. Though CMR is more on the sim side of things (so, authentically, there are never other rally cars on the track), it's still a PC driving game experience for arcade nuts and simmers alike.

ELIOT FISH

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
90	92	92	92

## Mortal Kombat 4

**PC**

**AVAILABLE: NOW**  
**CATEGORY: FIGHTING**  
**PLAYERS: 1-2**  
**PUBLISHER: MIDWAY**  
**PRICE: TBA**  
**RATING: MA 15+**  
**REQUIRED: P133, 16MB RAM, WIN 95/98**  
**DESIRED: P166, 32MB RAM, 3D CARD**  
**SUPPORTS: GLIDE, DIRECT3D, GAMEPADS**

Maybe now, thanks to 3D accelerators, we'll see more quality fighting game conversions on PC... Midway have always released PC versions of their fighting games, and we've also seen Streetfighter, Virtua Fighter and Last Bronx too. However, there's always been a problem with achieving a smooth flowing game on the PC - and of course, fighting games are just better suited to gamepads and big TVs.

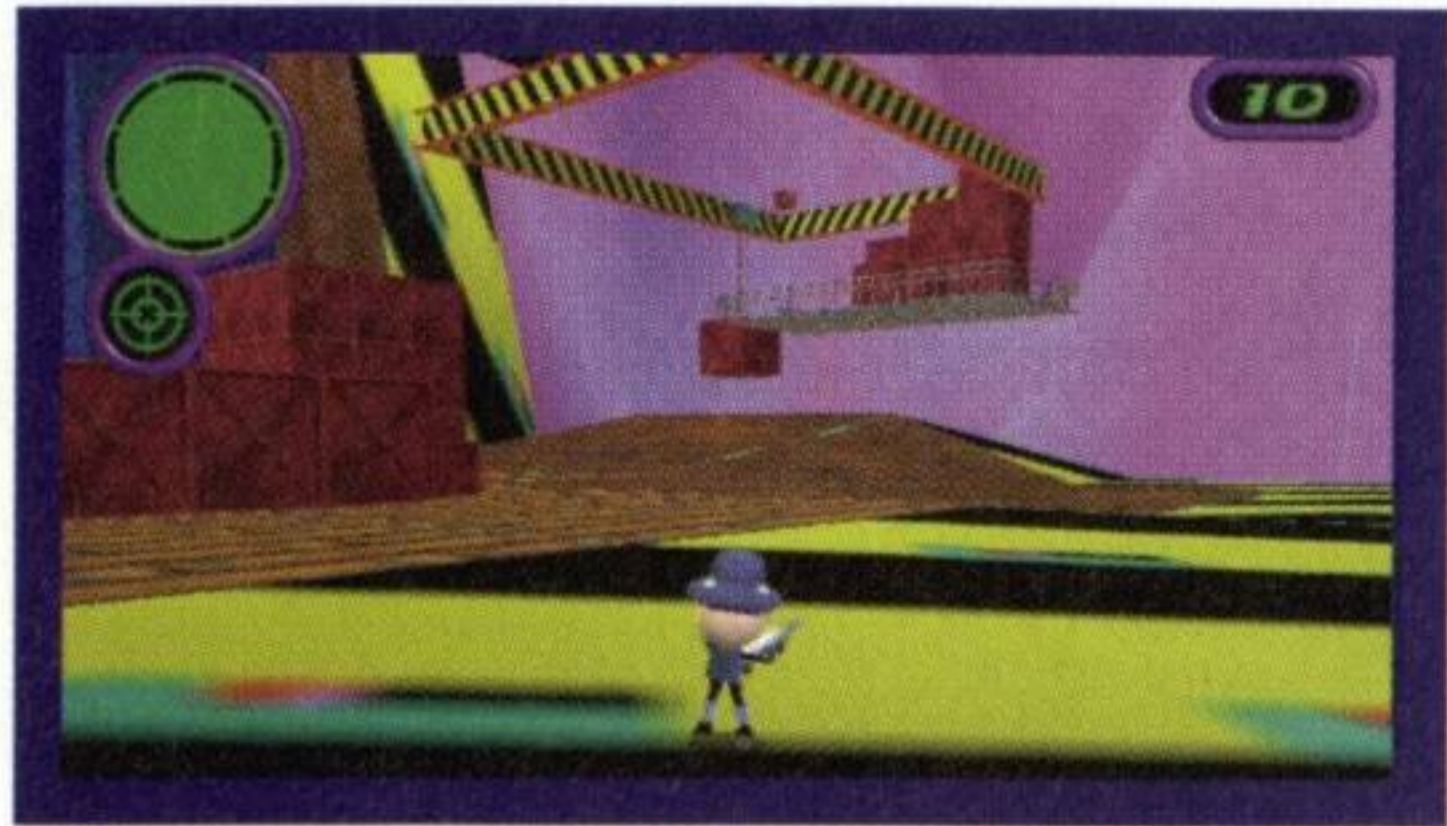
Mortal Kombat 4 on PC is a success due to 3D acceleration, whilst in software mode it's a horrible chuggy mess. Using Glide or just plain old Direct3D, this game flies! The animation is so fast and smooth, you'd be forgiven for starting to enjoy the game. Mortal Kombat fans will be in seventh heaven, with a high-res fast game of Mortal Kombat with all options attached. Of



course, the fighting game nut will not be entertained for too long, as the gameplay mechanics behind Mortal Kombat leave a lot to be desired. Mortal Kombat 4 is certainly the best MK game yet, but the fighting is so mechanical that a lot of gamers will be hungering for something more. Oddly, though there's no doubting MK4 is a pretty looking game on PC, the game characters do not have that smooth rounded look like they do in the arcade, appearing more like jagged blocks of polygons with textures wrapped around their heads. Possibly the polygon count was reduced to speed up the gameplay, and if that's the case then it works a treat because this is the smoothest and fastest fighting game for PC yet.

ELIOT FISH

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
85	77	80	80



## Hedz (Head Extreme Destruction Zone)

PC

**AVAILABLE: NOW**  
**CATEGORY: 3RD PERSON SHOOTER**  
**PLAYERS 1-8**  
**PUBLISHER: HASBRO INTERACTIVE**  
**PRICE: TBA**  
**RATING: G**  
**REQUIRED: PENTIUM 100, 16MB RAM**  
**DESIRED: PENTIUM 166, 32MB RAM**

What can be said about a game where you play an alien who dresses up as a human and battles other aliens dressed as humans.

The premise is simple — aliens abducted humans from different times in earth's past and process them into hedz, full-body masks. Each has a different look and abilities, ranking from an eskimo with a snowplough to a 1930s gangster complete with sub-machine gun — all up 225 different hedz to collect.

As you defeat other headhunters you gain their masks to add to your collection. This is important as each of your masks can take only so many hits before being destroyed. You can keep five hedz on quick keys and collected hedz are stored in your backpack where it costs money to use them.

The game has 20 levels with a bright cartoonish design, each with secret doors, lifts, lava and other effects. To get to new sections it's important to shoot down headhunters and collect the keys they carry. Sound effects are OK, but the background music is repetitive.

There are heaps of powerups around, and the AI is intelligent enough to try to collect them itself, so move fast.

It's possible to save anytime and there is a handy in-level summary that tells you how many hunters you've defeated and keys you've collected. The only feature that felt lacking was an overhead map.

As you move around the camera angle shifts to keep the player in view — this can make it hard to see opponents, particularly when backed into a corner. The controls are simple and customisable.

Mostly the attraction is playing with the heads, and the abilities, not the replay value. If you're looking for a fun few hours diversion Hedz is worth a look.

JACINTA THOMLER

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
67	64	60	63



## U.F.O.

PC

**AVAILABLE: NOW**  
**CATEGORY: FLIGHT SIM**  
**PLAYERS: 1**  
**PUBLISHER: GREMLIN**  
**PRICE: TBA**  
**RATING: G8+**  
**REQUIRED: PENTIUM 133, 16MB RAM**  
**DESIRED: PENTIUM 166, 32MB RAM, 3D ACCELERATOR**

These days it's all 'advanced physics model' and 'behaves just as in real-life' when it comes to sims of the latest military hardware. U.F.O., or Flying Saucer as it is subtitled, defies known physics, placing you in control of a state-of-the-art flying saucer.

You have superior technology, an abduction ray that scans brainwaves for information (3 million Americans weren't wrong) and the craft itself, capable of instant movement in any direction.

The game begins with the player's (human) character stealing the saucer from Area 51 and develops through well-designed cartoon

interludes. Along the way you gain access to more alien technology and weapons as you pilot the saucer in 20 missions across earth and the solar system. The plot is loosely based on rescuing your flatmate and saving earth from an alien threat whilst fighting off the bad guys — the US government's Advanced Security Agency (the ASA).

Flying Saucer is a difficult game to control, with the UFO capable of many unique manoeuvres that require a deft hand on the keyboard and joystick. Some default command keys are very awkward to use however controls are customisable and can be mapped to a programmable joystick for optimal control.

The tutorial is excellent and the ingame voiceovers a real hoot as the ASA attempts to recapture the saucer. The visuals and game effects are good, but not up to the standard of other current sims.

Flying Saucer probably won't be a big seller but anyone who's dreamt of piloting a UFO should keep an eye out for it, it's unique!

JACINTA THOMLER

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
80	78	84	81

## Cruisin' World

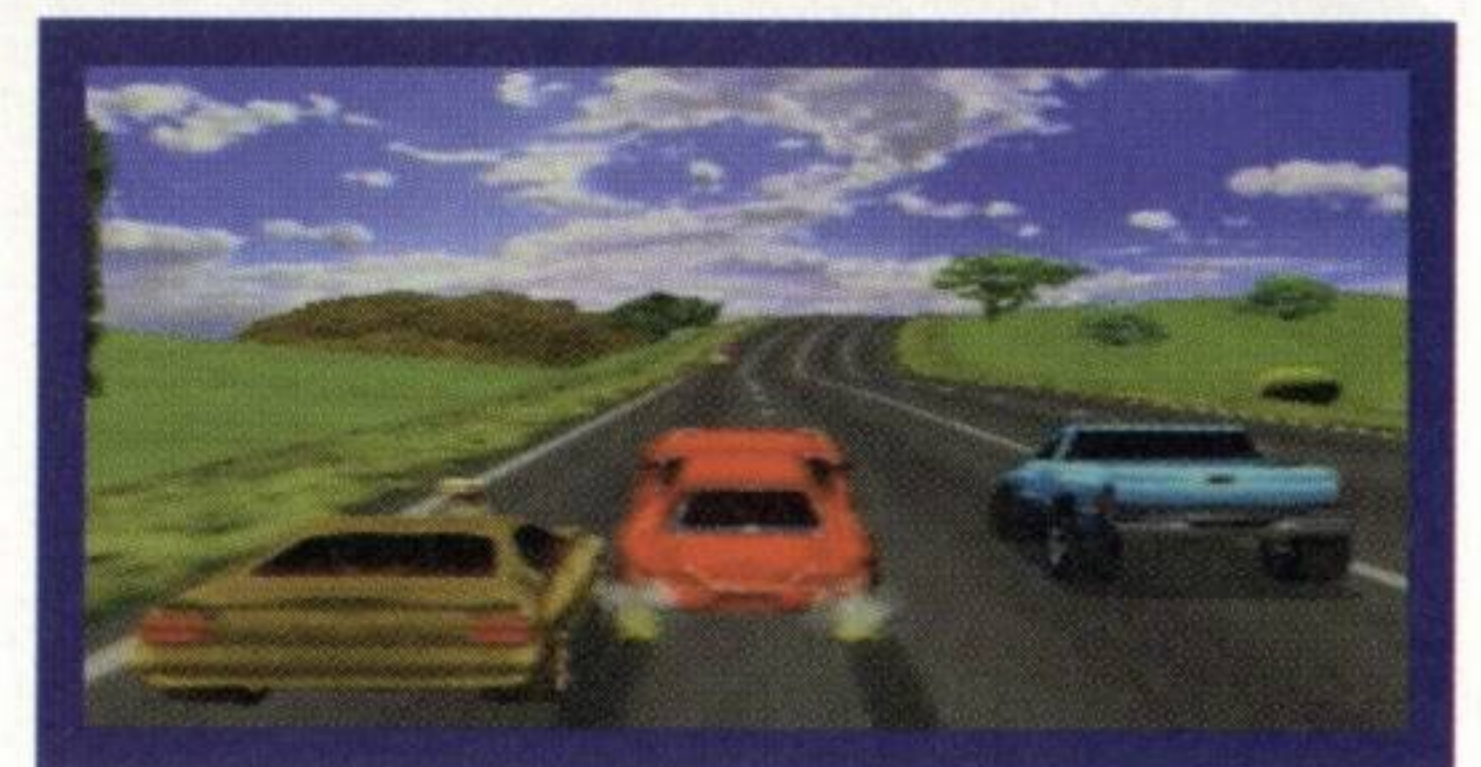
Nintendo 64

**AVAILABLE: NOW**  
**CATEGORY: RACING**  
**PLAYERS: 1-4**  
**PUBLISHER: NINTENDO**  
**PRICE: TBA**  
**RATING: G**  
**SUPPORTS: RUMBLE PAK, SAVE GAME**

When this one arrived in the office, I literally couldn't get anyone to review it, sheerly on the basis that it was the sequel to one of the most shocking games on the Nintendo 64 to date. I held the cart in his direction. Why a sequel was made I have no idea, but to my surprise, the sequel is actually significantly better than Cruisin' USA.

The frame rate has been upped quite a bit since Cruisin' USA, and this will go down well with pretty much everyone. What won't go down so well is the pop-up, which could have been made less of a problem by making the tracks a bit twistier, or maybe even just coding more efficiently. I can't understand how a more complex game like Wipeout 64 can have a complex 3D track and have less pop-up than this.

As the name would imply, you drive through various locations around the world, including Egypt, France, England, Mexico, China, and



yes... even Australia! There are thirteen locations in all, and the course you drive at each location changes, depending on whether you're in Championship mode or Cruise mode.

The best feature of Cruisin' World is the multiplayer aspect, which actually is more fun than the 2 player split screen multiplayer options of some otherwise better racing games.

The crashes are considerably better than before, the music is better (although still not soundtrack material), and the game is more fun all round. Those who require a bit of a sim element in there though should forget about Cruisin' World, as the driving model is totally arcadey, and things like road surface seem to have no effect on the game.

Not a bad racing title if you're after a four player multiplayer car game, but if you want a good one player game... look elsewhere.

DAN TOOSE

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
71	80	68	69

# IT MAKES THE REST LOOK TAME

# S.C.A.R.S

"Whiplash action and killer graphics provides gripping replayability. Nine tracks, completely unique environments and alternative routes keep the pace frantic".



It's here! The racing game that makes the

others look like a drive in the park. Half animal, half machine these cars are ready to rip the roads to shreds. In a no holds barred adrenaline charged speed fest, you can take on 4 players on split screen on the PSX and N64 with multi player mayhem on the PC. Staggering 3D graphics and sheer driveability make S.C.A.R.S. a game that will really leave it's mark.



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# SoulCalibur

NAMCO

Mover of loose change, Tim Levy reviews SoulCalibur, sequel to last year's immensely successful Soul Blade on PSX.

BY TIM LEVY

The art of Bash-U-Up (martial arts) has been emulated by countless fighting video games in the past. Most games have borrowed from authentic martial arts and often incorporated a few other 'fantasy' moves (No matter how hard I try I just can't seem to make my sonic booms to work). In 1996, Soul Edge (a.k.a. Soul Blade) was released in the arcades and was not only the first 3D weapons based fighting game, but it was almost a true historic recreation of real fighting techniques. It also introduced side step-

The only real new players are XiangHua the cute athletic Wu-Shu expert armed with a Chinese double-bladed long sword, and Ivy, the British vixen with a sword that doubles as a whip for some horribly painful looking moves.

All the characters have had a wardrobe change and have both summer and winter outfits to choose from (press either A or B buttons whilst selecting the character).

The character making the strangest return is the

now seems a little easier than before and is realistically paced so that one joystick press to the left or right means one step. This is great for side stepping an attack and then counter attacking, though keep in mind the opponents weapon swing - especially with horizontal attacks. To run, the control move is double tap on the joystick. It will take the character a couple of steps to wind up to 'running speed'. Once at speed you can control direction by continuing to hold the joystick in the required direction. Running opens the character up to do other types of attacks such as flying kicks and sliding foot-sweeps. This is also entertaining in that you can now perform a sort of midair jousting tournament in two-player mode.

The graphics although good before, are now excellent with shading of the polygons taken to a new level. The frame rate has also been improved and is best witnessed with throws (A or B + G). Camera work is still at the standard of Soul Blade and it is a nice



ping moves, player controlled replay camera and took a leap forward in accurately showcasing authentic weapon katas and techniques. Soul Edge went on to receive a conversion to the PlayStation which was released out here as Soul Blade last year.

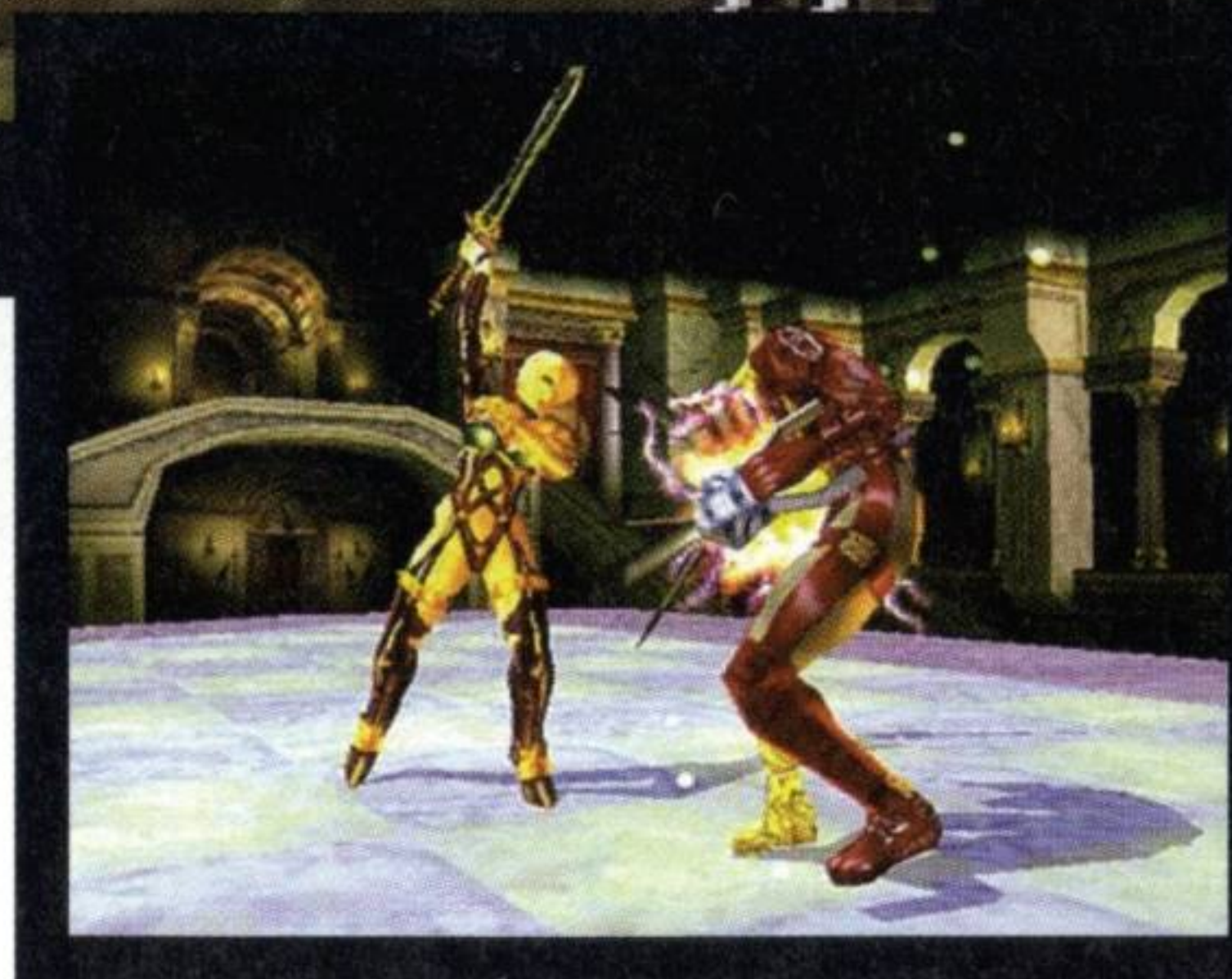
All the characters from Soul Edge are here in one guise or another, with the exception of Cervantes. Some of the "back as somebody else" characters: Mitsurugi the samurai is back as Arthur, the blond haired Samurai; Rock the ugg boot-wearing axe wielding neanderthal becomes the axe wielding steroid meathead called Astaroth (he looks quite like Humungus from Mad Max II). Other characters have endured history without a change of identity: Voldo the love child of Edward Scissorhands and Frankenstein; Taki - the agile Ninja girl; Hwang the broad sword action man and Sophita the beautiful yet deadly short sword exponent making a return bout.

character that was once Seigfried, the noble knight, who unfortunately has become possessed and zombified by a demonic blade named SOULCALIBUR (Soul Edge) - which according to the games premise is "reawakening and chosen warriors must unite to seal its twisted desires." Twisted desires huh? So what does a sword, albeit an evil sword desire? Maybe it wants to meet a nice female sword and settle down to have a few little daggers and watch them grow into two-handed battle swords. But whatever its desires are, they definitely aren't good.

Moving the character around in the third dimension

bonus to be able to zoom in (A) and zoom out (B) at the finishing move replay.

The sound effects are excellent and you could easily be fooled into thinking that you are listening to some B grade Kung Fu movie. All the cha ching's, urghh's, ya's, sieee's and all the slashing and bashing sounds



effects definitely enhance the game play in a major way. The sound track is of epic proportions and lends a stoic heroic Spartacus sort of feel to your ears. Now blend the sound effects with the soundtrack and you've got a winning combination.

The computer AI has also been improved. Many a time the computer has won the round by doing a low kick whilst avoiding a high attack or by side stepping and countering.


Once defeating all the computer opponents, you get to duke it out with Inferno who changes weapons each of the three rounds to become a fiery version of Arthur, Astaroth and Voldo. After defeating Inferno, you get to witness one of the most disappointing endings around. With any luck the PlayStation release will have better endings or at least have more thought put into it. In any case the games longevity lies in the two-player mode.

As all the characters are unique with varying combi-

nations of speed, agility, weapon range and technique, it will take a considerable amount of time to master the countless moves and combinations. Add to this the overall stylish thematic feel, the colourful array of charismatic characters, the true to life moves, the awesome sound effects and great graphics, it leaves you with a fight sim that leaves other fight sims back in 1995.

Hours of fun **9/10**  
<http://www.namco.com/>





# Neon Genesis Evangelion

# Evangelion

Tapes 1-4

BY MAX AUTOHEAD

OK. Walk into the Next Media offices, and you'll find people with Neon Genesis Evangelion on the brain. Kevin Cheung covered this series earlier this year, but unfortunately at the time Neon Genesis was only available on import. But the damage had been done; some of the editorial staff of Next Publishing had become hooked, obsessed actually, with an intensity I hadn't seen since the Giant Robo series. Logging onto the net, Neon Genesis was everywhere. This is a low budget television series that has made over \$800 million dollars in Japan in Video sales alone. There are two feature movies that have been released, and Neon Genesis Evangelion merchandise sales are exceeding \$400 million with music CDs, models and trinkets being pumped out by the score. Round the world it's creaming pants and it's set to do the same here in OZ, with the release of the full series on 13 tapes about to be released through Madman Entertainment (in conjunction with Siren Entertainment), as well as a screening on SBS, the first Anime Television series to be screened on full on that channel.

My biggest problem up to this point has been purposely keeping myself away from Neon Genesis Evangelion till I could get my hot little hands on the entire series in one hit. So was it worth the wait? Oh yes....and here's why

#### THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE DON'T KNOW IT

At the end of this millennium, a huge meteorite hits the planet earth. Half of Humanity is wiped out as polar ice-caps melt and the world is thrown off its axis. World governments are thrown into chaos as the ocean levels rise, engulfing major population centres. But something even weirder is happening in the background. The world is being invaded by aliens, "Angels", frightening beings with the capacity for large scale destruction. They're here on Earth "to be at one" with a new being called "Adam", if this happens, humanity will be wiped out in an event called "the third impact".

To combat this, the United Nations has rubber stamped a new organisation called NERV; a biotech based weapons company entrusted with protecting

the remaining human population, as well as bioengineering the new race of humanity to come. Their primary line of defence? A bio weapon called the Evangelion units; huge fleshy weird looking giant "robots" that merge with their pilots, all of whom happen to be fourteen years old and with serious psychological problems. The Evangelion Units are the only weapons that have any hope of penetrating the "AT" fields of the aliens, but there's a tremendous cost involved.

One of the best thing about the Evangelion series is the characters within the world. On the surface, like the world itself, the characters seem normal and well adjusted. But the cracks soon start to materialise fairly early on in the story.

In the first episode, were introduced to the hero of the narrative, Shinji Ikari. He's fourteen years old and hasn't see his father for a decade. He's the "third child", ie, one of the special individuals that have any hope of piloting the Evangelion Units. He's come to Tokyo Three, the fortress city of NERV, in the hopes of meeting his father. His arrival coincides with the



return of the "angels" to the planet Earth. Almost immediately, Shinji is thrown into a strange and often violent world of conflict and covert war.

He gets to meet his dad, Gendo Ikari, a strange and obsessed man who heads the NERV operations. He probably the most ruthless and insane characters that I've encountered in Anime, and his initial encounter with his son is guaranteed to shock you. The supporting characters such as Misato Katsuragi and Ritsuko Akagi

experience a cycle of violent personality changes; in

Misato a "cute" and "brainless" veneer masks a cold and calculating personality. Rei Ayanami is

the other pilot in the first few episodes, a fourteen year old girl who freaked me out with her monotone voice and "assassin" personality type, who bleeds on pillows and keeps bloody bandages in plastic bags.

Watch the initial psychological disintegration of Shinji, and you'll encounter an element that you might recognise in yourself. Cuts all too close to the bone.

**CRITICS WARNING: NEON GENESIS IS ADDICTIVE**

How did this low budget, "made for TV" anime become the juggernaut that it is today? Simple answer? It has a brilliant and fantastic storyline, with amazing characters who pull you not only into their

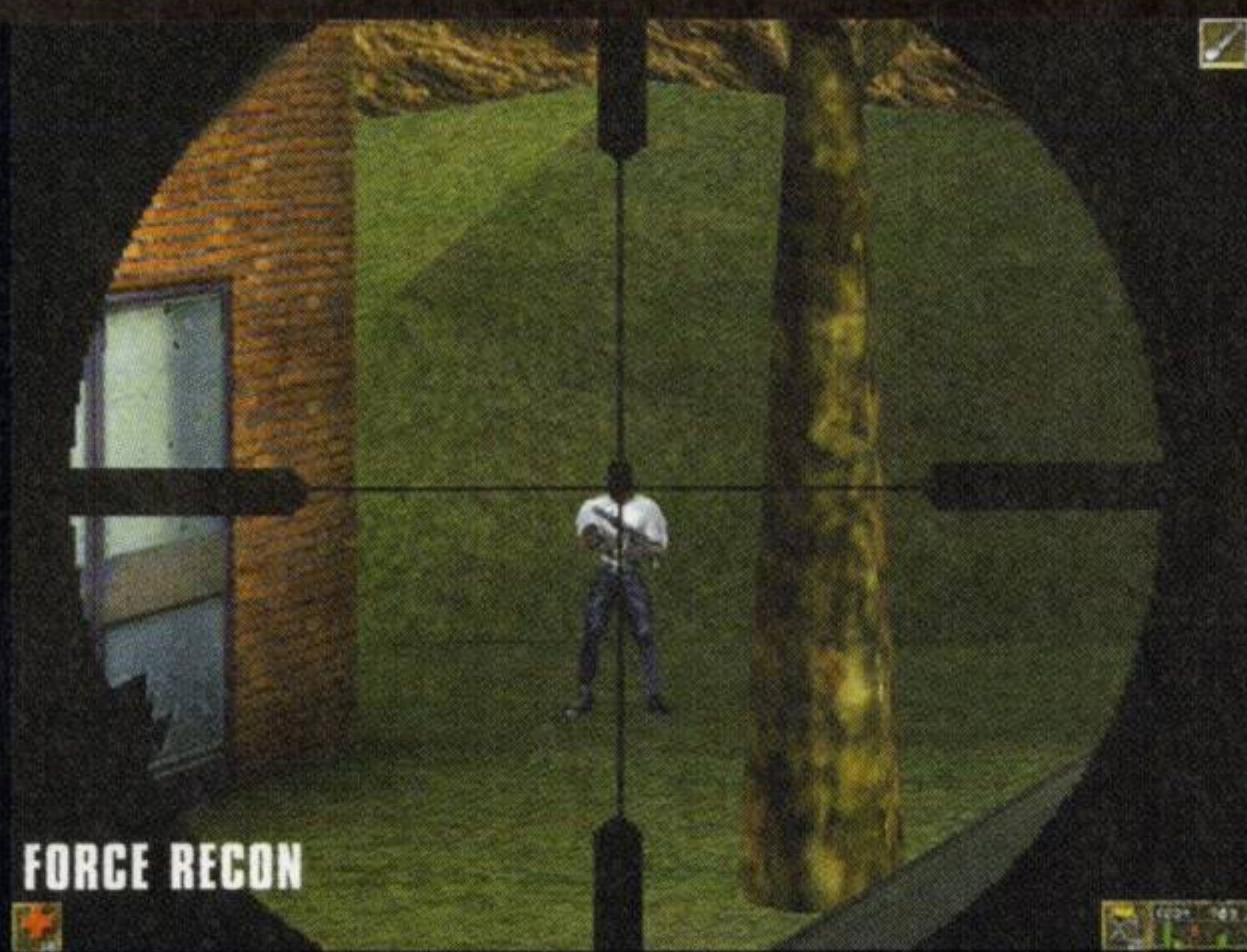
world, but into their psyche as well. From the moment that I inserted the first Evangelion tape into my VCR, I was glued. Its one of those well crafted, intelligent series that only comes along once every blue moon, to totally stun you and reinforce to you why you ever got into anime into the first place. It's an extension of the possibilities opened in the medium by such greats as Macross Plus and Akira. This is an anime must see for all of you. Watch out for the screening of this series on SBS during the last quarter of this year.

**10/10**

**Rated PG. From Madman Entertainment**



# Total Conversions



FORCE RECON

When it comes to Quake, Quake 2, Unreal, Jedi Knight and all the other big PC first-person shooters, most gamers have only experienced the single-player game and maybe deathmatch if they've been hanging out on the net. If you've delved a little deeper, you may know of mods such as CTF (Capture The Flag), TF (Team Fortress) and RA (Rocket Arena) - but if you're a real freak then you've probably explored the world of TCs or Total Conversions. Put simply, TCs are brand new games based on the original game engine which has been hacked and edited by devoted fans and clever programmers. Usually TCs are a transformation of the original game world into another popular theme - like X-Men Quake, Star Wars Quake or even Metroid Quake 2, though some more original gamers have made new games of their own creation. Here are a bunch of TCs you can begin your search with...

## QUAKE 1 & 2 AIRQUAKE

Turning Quake into a totally different game, AirQuake put you in the cockpit of aeroplanes, helicopters and inside tanks or even SAM launchers - with absolutely no players on foot. Essentially it's Quake-gone-modern-war combat, with all new physics, weapons, models, maps and gameplay. There is currently an AirQuake2 in the works for Quake 2 players. <http://www.planetquake.com/ikq/airquake.htm>

## QUAKE RALLY

Quake Rally is another completely original TC concept, which requires the player to race around a map in a car of their choice, blowing their opponents to bits and performing mid-air rolls and huge jumps. Like AirQuake, Quake Rally involves all new physics and models - just take a look at the cars! <http://impact.frag.com>

## GHOST IN THE SHELL

A whole new game based on the Ghost in the Shell anime. Player models, weapons and mission objectives as featured in the movie. It's still early stages yet though. <http://www.quake2.com/ghost/news.htm>



AIRQUAKE

## UNREAL

### Force Recon

Here's a military-style marine TC for Unreal, which requires you to complete mission-based levels in hotels, airports and other real-world environments. A bit like Spec-Ops. <http://www.unrealnation.com/forcerecon/>

### MANHUNT

This TC for Deathmatch enhances the gameplay with having a "hunted" player who has to survive against

a whole team of "hunters" - of course, the hunted player has better weapons, traps and a headstart in the map. Funky ideas like "blood loss" affecting your character's performance sets Manhunt apart.

<http://www.planetunreal.com/manhunt/>

### Jedi Knight

## PAINTBALL

As most other shooters are transformed into fantasy themed TCs, Jedi Knight ironically gets a conversion into something more real-life based - Paintball! Though still in progress, this looks like a fun conversion, pitting teams against each other in a variety of arenas.

<http://www.jediknight.net/mcp/pb.htm>



QUAKE RALLY



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**GT Interactive**  
**1900 957 665**

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## NHL '98

SNES

### Secret Teams and Bonus Points

Hold L + R when you turn the game on. Continue to hold these buttons during the loading sequence. When you reach the screen that shows the Stanley cup press START (keep L+R held now!). When you reach the set-up screen release everything. A voice will say "EA SPORTS!". Now you can create a perfect player or play with the EA SPORT or THQ teams!

## Jersey Devil

PSX

### Unlimited Extra Lives

At the beginning of the game,

get the extra life on top of the fountain. Now pause the game and check your status. Unpause the game and there will be another extra life on top of the fountain. Keep on doing this for unlimited extra lives!

## Hot Shots Golf

PSX

### Left or Right-Handed Golfer

When choosing a golfer, press R1+R2+L1+L2+Select+Start+X. This will change the golfer to opposite hand.

### Mirror Courses

Highlight a course at the course selection screen, then hold L1 + L2 and press X.

### Sound Test

While playing with 2 or more players press the four "Shape"

buttons on the other controller and you will hear the game's sound, one for each button.

## Crime Killer

PSX

### Passwords

#### Level Password

##### Level 2

Circle, Square, X, Triangle, Square, Triangle, Square

##### Level 3

Circle, Circle, Square, X, Triangle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle

##### Level 4

Circle, Circle, Square, Triangle, Circle, Circle, Square, Triangle, Square, X

##### Level 5

Triangle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Square, Triangle

##### Level 6

Square, Triangle, Square, Triangle, Circle, Square, X, X, X, Triangle

##### Level 7

Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Square, X, Triangle, Circle, Circle, Circle

##### Level 8

Square, Triangle, Square, X, Triangle, Square, X, Triangle, Square, X

##### Level 9

X, X, Triangle, Circle, Square, X, Triangle, Square, Triangle, Circle

##### Level 10

Circle, Triangle, Circle, Circle, Square, X, Triangle, Circle, Circle, Circle

##### Level 11

Square, Triangle, Square,  
Triangle, Circle, Circle, Square,  
Triangle, Square, Triangle

## Level 12

Square, Triangle, Square,  
Triangle, Square, Triangle, Circle,  
Square, Triangle, Square

## Level 13

X, X, X, Triangle, Circle, Circle,  
Circle, Square, X, X

## Level 14

X, X, X, X, Triangle, Circle,  
Square, X, X, X

which appears. Unfortunately they will not work in Campaign Mode.

PILE IT ON: Add resources

Q40: Research everything

GREEBLIE: Complete research on the current project

WALL2WALL: Max population

LEO: Show resources/military units in enemy territories

BIGBRO: View any territory

CHARISMA: Be friends with all computer players

donkeys: Any unit which shoots missiles will now shoots Jeeps  
morningafter: Removes the fog of war from the whole map

gimmiegimmie: Allows you to build everything, even without a Command Center

unclejohn: God mode

chaching: Score an easy \$10,000

mrmsculse: Upgrades your armor

bigsofty: Downgrades your enemy's armor

coffee: Upgrades your speed

Square O O S O X X O X

## LIBYA

Square X X X O Square O X Square

## CHANNEL ISLANDS

O O X Square Square Triangle

Square Square O

## GRENADINES

Square Square O Triangle O

Triangle X Triangle Triangle

## LOUISIANA BAYOU

X Triangle O Square O O O X

Square

## CHINA, NEAR BEIJING

O Square Triangle X Square

Triangle Triangle Triangle Square

## SAUDI ARABIA

Triangle Square O X Triangle O O

X Square

## ARCTIC CIRCLE

Square Square Triangle Square

Triangle Square Triangle X

Triangle

## NEW YORK CITY

X X O Triangle X Triangle Square

X Square

## OMAHA DESERT

O Square O X Square X Triangle O X

## W.O.P.R. MISSIONS:

### FLORIDA KEYS

O X O O X O X X O

### IRIAN JAYA

Square Triangle X Triangle X O

Square X Triangle

### NEW ENGLAND

X Triangle O X X O O Triangle

### RUSSIA

O O Square Square O X Triangle X X

### BRUSSELS

X O X Triangle Triangle Square O

X Triangle

### SOUTH AFRICA

Triangle Triangle X X Square

Square X X O

### HONG KONG

Square X O Triangle X X Square O

Triangle

### MEXICO

Square O Triangle Triangle X O X

X O

### BERING STRAIT

X O Square Triangle O X Square X

Triangle

### KREMLIN

Square O X Triangle Square

Triangle Square O O

### POLYNESIA

Square O Triangle X Square O X

Square O

### CONGO

X O

Square Square Square X O X O

### WASHINGTON DC

O Triangle O O Triangle Square X

Triangle Square

### TOKYO

Triangle Square Triangle O X

Square O O Square

### View All FMV's

Before the title screen hold R2 and keep on pressing the start button and you should see all of the FMV's!



## Level 15

X, Triangle, Square, X, X,  
Triangle, Circle, Square, X, X, X

## End

X, Triangle, Circle, Square,  
Triangle, Square, X, Triangle,  
Square, Triangle

S-MART: Skirineen appears immediately

SQUISH: Win scenario

## Wargames

### PC

#### Cheat Codes

While playing press T then type in any of the codes at the message prompt which appears

eyeofgod: Allows extra level of zoom on lower-level machines

saladtossed: Choose any mission (enter the code, exit the current mission to the Main Menu, press the CTRL+H+W keys

simultaneously, then click on Load and a mission)

twobyfour: Builds any unit (for example, twobyfour dragoon for a Dragoon Tank)

hermes: Speeds up ordering of units

beer: Downgrades your enemy's speed

shaft: Upgrades your firepower

shank: Downgrades your enemy's firepower

## Wargames:Defcon 1

### PSX

#### Passwords

Enter these passwords on LEVEL GRIDS.

#### NORAD MISSIONS:

##### CZECH REPUBLIC:

O X O O X X O X O

##### RUSSIAN URALS:

X X O X X X X O O

##### CAIRO, EGYPT:

O Square X O O Triangle O X

Square

##### CAMBODIA

Triangle X O O X X Square Triangle O

##### SWISS ALPS

## Z

### PSX

Level Select

To unlock every level, enter the password: Triangle, Triangle, X, Circle, Triangle, Triangle, X, Circle.

## Deadlock II

### PC

#### Cheat Codes

While playing press CTRL+F12.

Enter these codes at the prompt

# CHEAT MODE

## Constructor

PC

### Cheat Codes

These codes will only work if you are playing the game in 100 %

complain840: Turn off complaints with alt+c  
cadets552: Add cadets and mob bribes with alt+p (cadets) alt+m (bribes)  
maps751: Access to all maps on easy

to "Chrome." Go back all the way to the Start screen, then re-enter. A new Silver Driver will be available in Exhibition, Time Trial and 2 Player modes.

GH44: Invincibility  
DDB4: Time Limit Off  
DD6D: Episode 1  
DF6D: Episode 2  
D46D: Episode 3  
D76D: Episode 4  
Do6D: Episode 5  
D96D: Episode 6  
D16D: Episode 7  
D66D: Into the Canyon 1  
DC6D: Episode 8  
DA6D: Into the Canyon 2  
D26D: Episode 9  
D36D: Into the Canyon 3  
DE6D: Episode 10  
FD6D: Episode 11  
FF6D: Episode 12  
F46D: Episode 13  
F56D: Episode 14  
F66D: Episode 15  
GooD: Episode 16  
Food: Ending Sequence



DOS (ie shut down from Windows95/98). Enter them at the map and player select screen then press enter. You will hear a tone if you entered the code correctly. Press "C" during the game to activate the codes.  
worker902: Buy workers any time.  
gangster822: Convert workers into gangsters  
weapons473: Buy all weapons  
tenants127: Access to all tenants  
fences673: Access to all fences  
loans039: Unlimited loan  
estates131: Purchase an estate with no council interference.  
houses738: Access to all houses  
build909: Instant build, hold ctrl when placing the building.  
actions674: All undesirables actions on easy  
gadgets337: Access to all gadgets  
missions824: Turn off council missions by pressing alt+i

## F1 World Grand Prix

N64

### Gold Racer

Select Driver Williams in Exhibition mode. Edit his surname to "Pyrite" using your Control Stick. Exit back to the Start screen, then re-enter. A new Gold Driver will be available in Exhibition, Time Trial and 2 Player mode.

### Hawaiian Bonus Track

Select Driver Williams in Exhibition mode. Using your Control Stick, edit his surname to "Vacation." Exit all the way back to the Start screen, then re-enter. You'll find a bonus track after the European Grand Prix.

### Silver Racer

Select Driver Williams in Exhibition mode. Using your Control Stick, edit his last name

## Spec Ops

PC

### Invincibility and Reset Mission Time

To become invulnerable, press ALT+SHIFT+V and access your inventory. You will have the viewmaster. Use it and the screen will flash blue, your ranger will jump and the time will reset giving you the time that the mission started with.

### Level Select

Move the Savedata.txt file out of the Spec Ops directory to access all missions.

## Super Bubsy

PC

### Cheat Codes

Type in these while playing the game.

## Need For Speed II SE

PC

### Play at Night

Hold down the N key while the race is loading.

### Roadrage

When you are in the main menu type in ROADRAGE. While racing, honk your horn to make the car in front of you crash.

### Rush Hour

On the main menu, type RUSHHOUR. While the playing, the cars around you will honk constantly.

### Screenshots

Press F10 while playing.

### Slippery Tracks

Type SLIP at the main menu for more mayhem.

### Overhead Camera

While the game is loading, press and hold B+Right Shift 6 times. After the camera zooms to the car at the beginning of the race, press and hold these 6 times again.

### Faster Engine

To upgrade all vehicles to the Pioneer engine, enter the password "PIONEER".

### Ford Indigo

Type "RED RACER" at the main menu.

### Chase Mode

At the main menu screen type in the word CHASE. During the race, if you get close to a car then continue driving the car will follow you.

### Auto Pilot

At the main menu screen type SLOT

# WOLFEIN

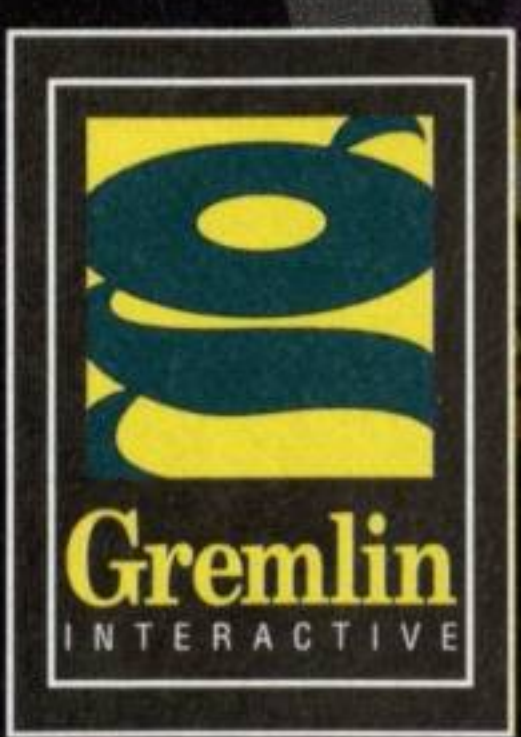


BEAT EM UP



RUN EM OVER

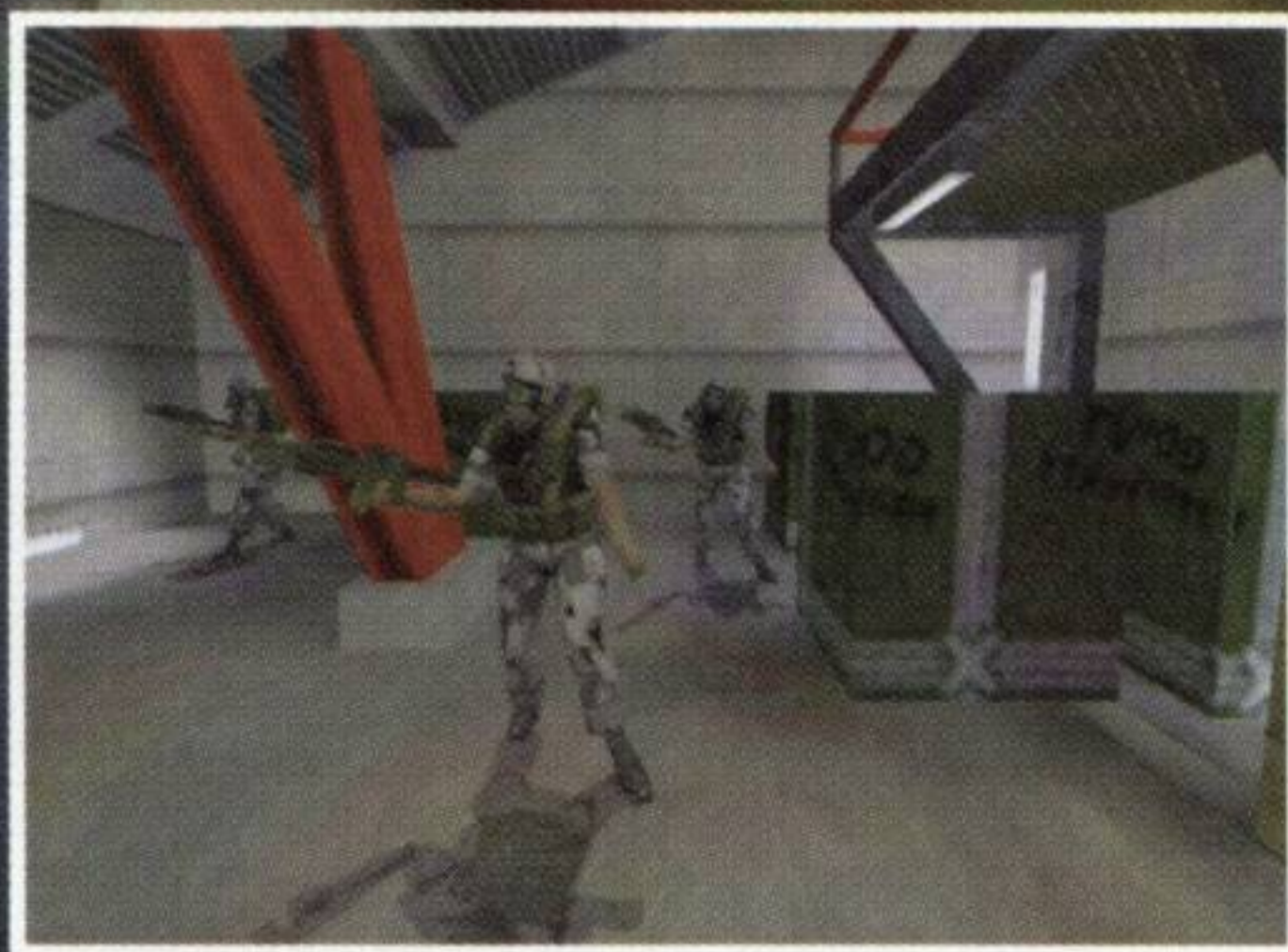
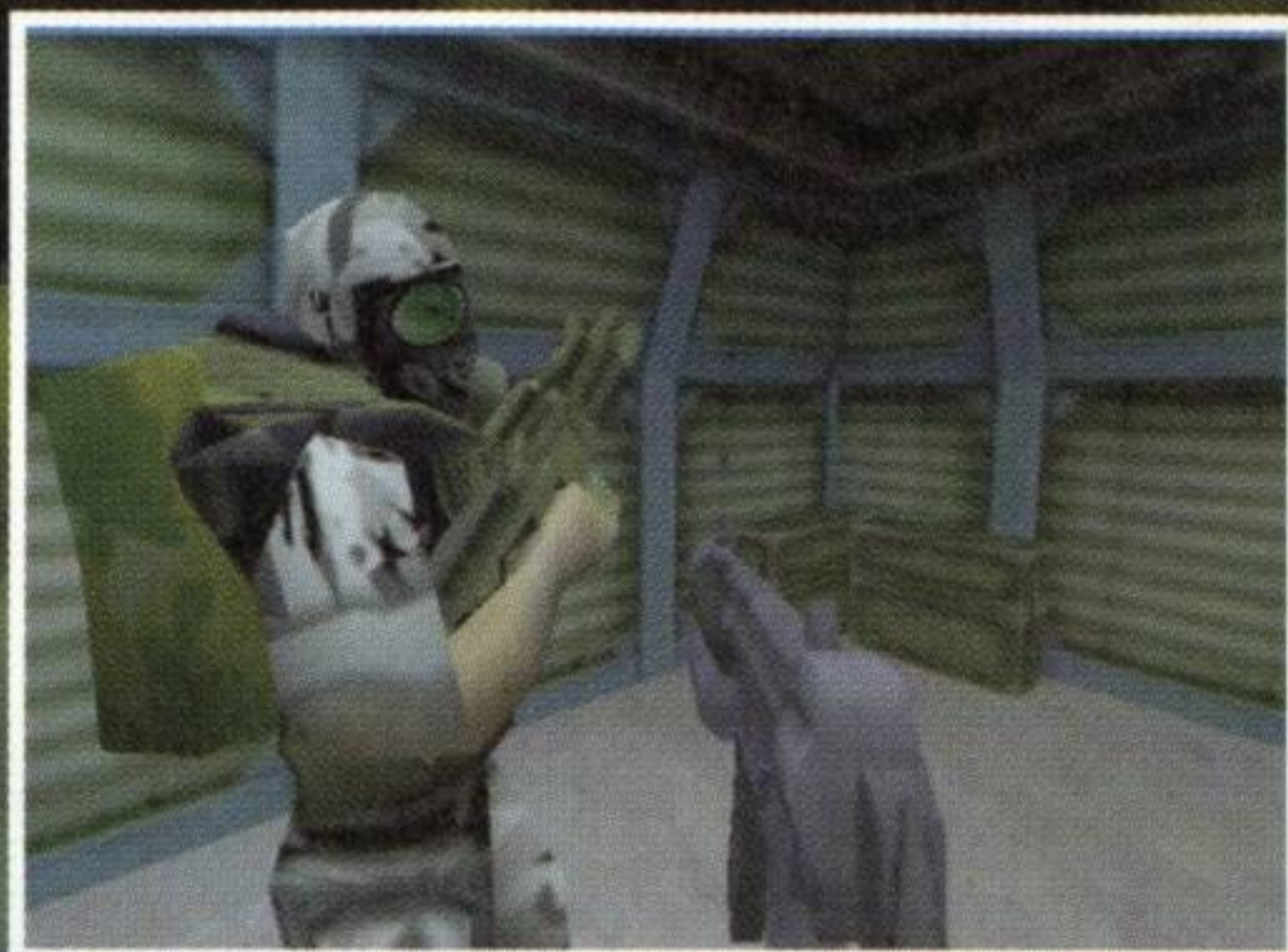
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# NEXT ISSUE . . .

## HYPER»



# HALF-LIFE

After playing the alpha version of Half-life single player, this has shot to the top of the Hyper wishlist! We'll either have a full review or another update on what looks to be the hot contender for PC game of the year!

## LETTERS

### HYPER Letters

78 Renwick St.  
Redfern, NSW 2016  
Fax: (02) 9310 1315  
E-mail:  
freakscene@next.com.au

### DREAMY

A few simple questions.... The Dreamcast looks and sounds amazing. I was just wondering if the machine will have some of the graphical abilities of the N64, like anti-aliasing Mipp-Mapping or Bi-linear interpolation I mean these effects give the N64 amazingly smooth graphics and I feel it would be a major step back to not cater for them. Sure the machine is capable of higher texture resolutions which will make pixelisation but won't be as good as mipp-mapping. Now onto the questions

1. The analog pad on the Dreamcast's controller looks like its in an awkward position. So is it? Will it hurt my thumb if I play it for long periods of time?

2. While on the subject analog is obviously the future so why the hell does dreamcast have a d-pad?. I mean it's stupid!

3. Why is it taking so long for Sega to bring the Dreamcast out here.

4. Last but not least. I have a feeling the Dreamcast will not have a modem over here because it would be too much hassle to set up a service like Heat Net as we don't have the same huge user base as America or Britain.

### HEATH

Heath,  
The Dreamcast has all the visual features you mentioned, AND better texture definition, meaning it won't look quite as blurry as on the N64. One thing that we have noticed though is that the way Power VR (and thus Dreamcast) handles texture detail is heavily affected by distance. A better way to describe it is to say that if you look at the ground in a 3D game, and look at the area just around you, the texture detail will be great. Looking further away, you'll notice a point where the detail visibly drops, and as you move forward, you can actually see a line of detail at a constant distance ahead of you. We can only assume that Sega are trying to address this, it does remain to be seen how well

they will do it.

1. The Saturn analogue pad was easy to use, and this pad looks like it would feel very similar. There shouldn't be a problem.

2. Try playing a fighting game with an analogue pad, and you'll soon know the answer. Some games just feel better, and are easier to control with a digital pad. It would be stupid NOT to have one.

3. Like every other console developed in Japan, they concentrate on getting the Japanese release first, then the US release, then Europe/PAL territories (that's us). Put simply, to alter the production lines to create PAL machines rather than NTSC machines is not a financially successful move in the early months of a console's release, since the company is trying to make as many machines as possible in order to meet demand in the NTSC markets first.

4. There seems no reason why the modem would not be there in the PAL machines, but your general gist there is certainly a valid prediction. England might get an online service and we may not... time will tell

### OPINION PLEASE SENSEI...

Dear Hyper

Could you help me, because I am completely puzzled. I just can not see what the big deal with the Tekken series is?

The reason for my confusion is that like countless other individuals in this country, I am involved in martial arts. Several styles of Chinese Wu-Shu to be specific. So naturally I like fighting games, but I also look at them more critically.

Firstly I must say that the creators of this series must know absolutely nothing about real life fighting styles. The player profiles in the manual claim that the characters are from different schools of combat, yet their basic stances are all nearly identical! Law is a clone of Bruce Lee, his movies copied from the film Enter The Dragon and Lei is modeled after Jackie Chan in looks and his technique is a mish-mash of moves from several of Chan's films. Even Lei's "Five Animal" style in Tekken 3 is lifted straight out of Jackie's early film Spiritual Kung Fu.

In comparison, the Virtua



SONIC ON THE DREAMCAST

Letter of the month

### TO THE "DUDES"

Dear Hyper,

I was just thinking that it'd be great if you had a section where people, namely us, could write in and express our ideas on what would make a great game. Just to start you off, here's what me and my friend thought up. It would be a 3D fighting game, but with famous sports personalities as characters. It would include people such as Ronaldo, Michael Jordan, Greg Norman, Mike Tyson and Michael Schumacher. They would have special moves relating to the sport they play and also perform gruesome fatalities like Ronaldo performing a bicycle kick on his opponent and knocking his head into the back of the net, or Tyson jumping on his opponent and biting his ear. They would also have their own home ground, such as on the soccer pitch for Ronaldo, race track for Schumacher, basketball court for Jordan etc. So, what do you think?

**CHRIS SOUTHAM**

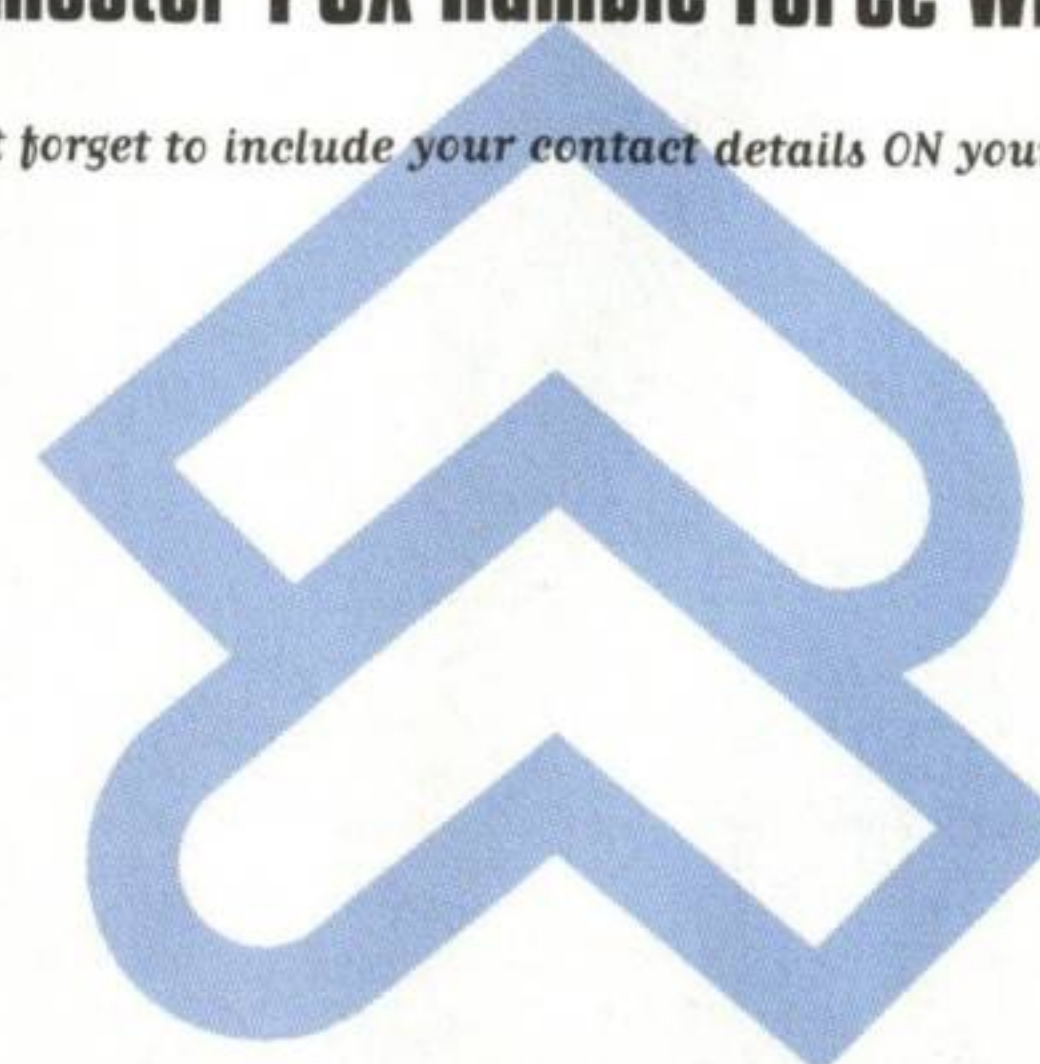
Woodvale, WA

*I think you just made me laugh more than all the other letters this month... well done! Seriously, um... please no. However, maybe your game concept idea isn't too bad, we'll talk to some of the companies in the industry and see if one of them might sponsor a "game idea of the month" thing. Please note, that if we did do this, there'd be a word count to go by, so don't start writing some 10,000 word epic, because we don't have time to read something like that, let alone print it. There'd be a set amount like 340 words or something, but don't all of you start sending in such things until we announce we'll actually do a column on it, otherwise we'll have very little we can do with your submissions!*



This month's letter of the month wins a **Gamester PSX Rumble Force Wheel.**

Don't forget to include your contact details ON your letter.



Fighter series as well as the great new title Dead or Alive contain characters whose strikes, throws and combos are all accurate depictions of real systems. The game play in the above two titles is also miles above the Tekken series, as they require a combination of lightning fast reflexes and skillful use of the correct techniques, making it a must to have real skill to be victorious as bashing buttons would get you nowhere. The Tekken series on the other hand is filled with unrealistic cheap moves and a hopeless method of defense, which is extremely pale in comparison to the redirection of opponents force and hold techniques of Dead or Alive.

I don't claim to be a martial arts master, but I have enough experience to tell if a combat game has been carefully made with a lot of thought and accuracy or if the makers have rented a few chopsuey flicks, ripped off anything that looks good and then thrown together a fighting game based on it.

I just thought I would bring this to your attention as I am so outraged by the endless fraternity of clue less nerds that hail Tekken 3 as "King of Fighting Games", like they really know what they're talking about. I would like to hear your thoughts on this as I

value the opinion of the writers of your magazine and buy my games based on your reviews.

### ANGRY GRASSHOPPER

P.S. I know this is a long shot but what are the chances of Dead or Alive coming out on PC. *Grasshopper,*

*Bit of a contradiction in that one Grasshopper. Claiming that the Tekken games aren't realistic, yet going on to point out how a couple of the characters are based on well known martial arts experts and their styles. My personal call is that I feel that Virtua Fighter 3 is the best fighting game so far, but there have been other games that have had individual elements that VF3 lacks. Take the ability to run in any direction (like in Ergheiz, Bushido Blade), or even just walk/move in any direction (Soul Calibur, Tobal).*

*I don't think ANY fighting game is particularly realistic at all. Real fights usually involve a few solid hits, which leads to someone going down, and then the person who landed the hit finishes off their opponent. The thing is, that's not much fun in a video game. The point about stances seems a little odd, as most characters in most games hold themselves the same way, but it's the actual moves themselves that usually define the way we think of the character.*

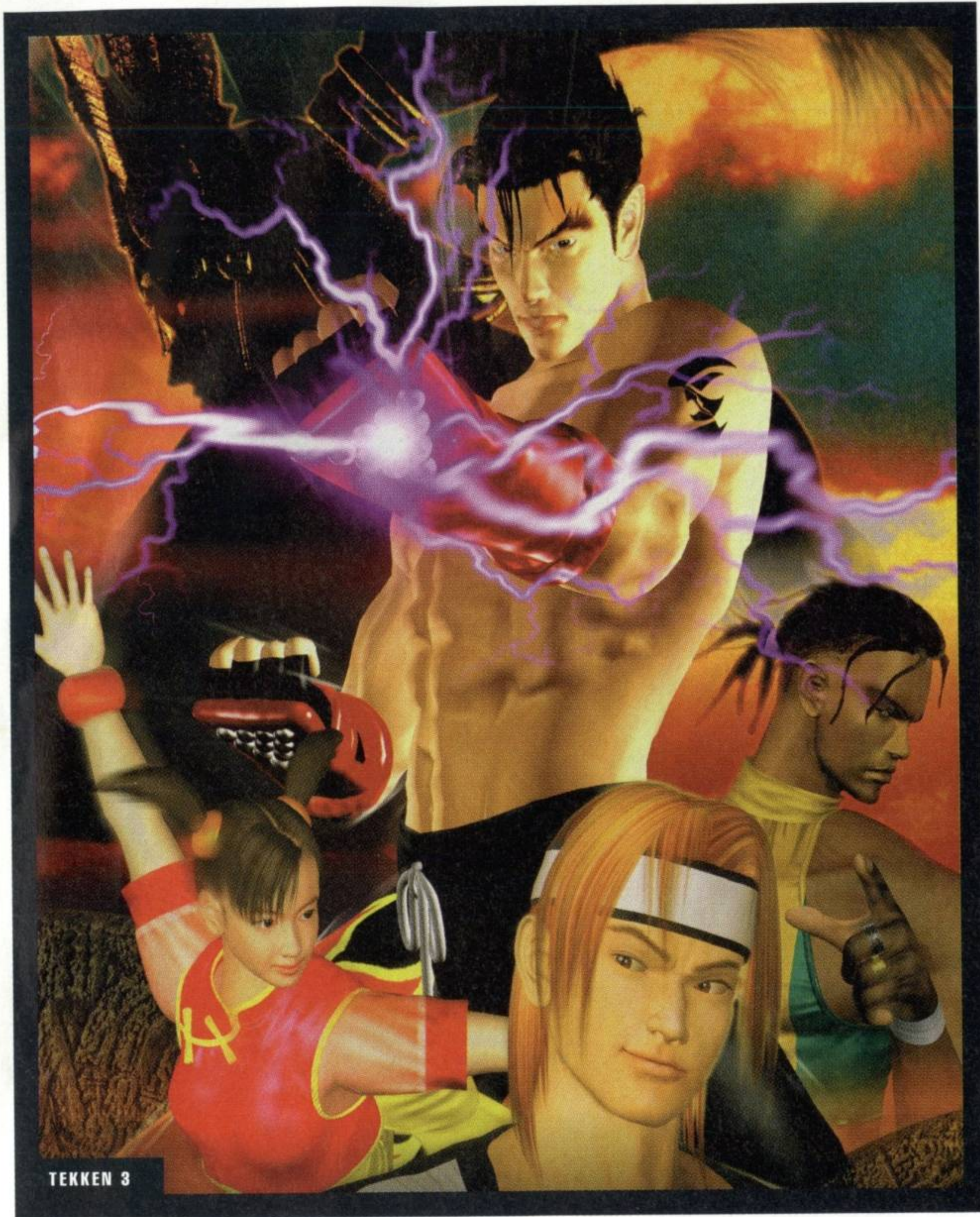
*There's arguments for and*

*against almost every introduction to fighting games. For example, the counter button in Dead or Alive. On one hand, Great! You can pull off a counter without doing some awkward movement, which is encouraging, and results in a more natural looking fight. On the other hand, it turns the whole thing into a scissors, paper rock scenario, which at the high speeds involved in this game, becomes guess work a lot of the time.*

*Street Fighter games are also a testimony to the concept that realism isn't necessary to make a highly enjoyable fighting game. It's really an issue of personal taste when it comes to which game mechanics are good. Some people think that the 10 hit combos in Tekken 3 are great, but I for one prefer a game like VF3 where performing a combo where you get any more than 3 or 4 hits is very difficult. P.S. We very much doubt it. There's been no word from any distributor to suggest it will happen.*

### STRATEGICAL RELEASES

To the Hyper crew I'm sorry but I can't help at thinking that playstation owners are missing out. Age of Empires, Myth, Settlers, Civilization, Starcraft for example. All great strategy



TEKKEN 3

games, all only on PC. What do the PlayStation owners get? Enough fighting games to sink a battleship and enough racing games to warrant an RTA investigation, all while the PC is being overrun with first person shooters. What ever happened to variety?

That's not to say the games are bad but why does a great game on the PC turn lemon when it is converted to PlayStation? Is it because of system restrictions, lack of effort or is there more to it?

PC owners get a lot of games PlayStation owners don't and vice versa. It's just a pity a few of the publishers working on the PC and PlayStation don't release more games for both.

- A few questions
1. It's only early, but, Resident Evil 3?
  2. Any PC/ PlayStation conversions on the way?
  3. What happened to Maximum Force (G-Con 45)?

**ANON**

Anon, It mostly has to do with the system restrictions. The PlayStation has a very small amount of RAM, and re-coding these games to not be so RAM dependant can be problematic. There's also the element of money. Very few console owners buy consoles to play strategy games, and thus, I guess the other side of the coin is that some PC owners grumble about the lack of good fighting games on PC. Each system has genres that it's strong in, and ones they are weak in.

Hate to say it, but if you want the best strategy games, you have to own a PC, and that's all there is to it.

1. Too early for any conclusive info as yet. Maybe Capcom will disclose something at ECTS (which is happening between our deadline and when this mag reaches you), but historically they show their stuff at the Tokyo game show or E3 first. First word we

heard that the Dreamcast would get Resident Evil 4, not 3, but we find this stupidly hard to believe considering how little time there is to the Dreamcast launch.

2. A certainty for PlayStation considering how successful the first two were, but there's no way to tell with the PC considering RE2 has yet to make a show on the PC.
3. It came out... it sucks very hard.

**PRETTY HARD**

Dear Gods, Upon reading the letter of the month in #58, I promptly fainted. When I awoke, I realised that no it hadn't been a dream and yes I had found someone with the same views as me on mainstreamers and their effect on gaming. The idea of a person buying a gaming system of any kind because it appears as a status symbol to them, sickens me. And that comment in the response about how

Mainstreamers have actually improved the image of gaming! What crap! I never cared about what the rest of society thought of gaming anyway. If you like it, do it! I believe that us Hardcores should round up these mainstreamers and send them back to the bushes from whence they came. We have put up with them for long enough. Hardcores Unite!! And now some questions

1. Is there any talk at all about Diablo on N64?
2. What about Dungeon Keeper?

Thanks for your time

**ARCHIE**

P.S Tell Kevin Cheung that he's not the only one on the planet with appalling Quake skills and it's the bane of my life.

Archie, I think you may have the wrong idea about the mainstream gamers. They don't buy it because it's a status symbol, they buy it for a reason very similar to your own. They see it as fun. The difference is that their perception of what games are fun will be greatly different to yours, and as to how important gaming is to them. You're actually more likely to find a hardcore gamer thinking of their console as a status symbol... Sure, owning a PlayStation is common, but owning a Japanese one for example isn't, and it generally shows the owner knew about the system before it was locally released. Maybe you have met a mainstream gamer who thinks of their console as a status symbol, but that really is just a sign of immaturity, rather than the mindset of all mainstream gamers.

My response to LOTM in 58, "What crap!?" My statement was spot on. The mass media doesn't pick on gaming like it used to, and it's because of the widespread acceptance of gaming as a normal hobby. Just because you don't care about this doesn't have any bearing on the validity of my statement.

I really hope you don't give new gamers some sort of "hardcore is better than mainstream" attitude, because not all hardcore gamers share your "us & them" attitude, and you're

basically misrepresenting the rest of the gaming enthusiasts. This whole "I'm hardcore" attitude which we're seeing in the letters now seems like far more of a status symbol than anything else. Gaming is a hobby, and just because someone starts before someone else, doesn't make them a better person. How about showing a new/mainstream gamer what's so cool about some of the great games of the past, rather than what an elitist snob some gamers turn into, over what it meant to be something we do for fun. To answer your questions...

1. No, Starcraft is the only Blizzard title scheduled for an N64 release.
2. No. ElectronicArts made an announcement some time back that they wouldn't be releasing any non-sports titles on the Nintendo 64. Bullfrog are the developers but EA publish all Bullfrog titles.

**WHERE DOES IT RUMBLE?**

Hello. You Rock. I have a great big list of things to say, the least of which is not to encourage you to do a great big thing on the OLFC. That would be cool!! Now, the questions:

1. Should I get Wipeout 64 or F-Zero X?
2. Can you please tell us lucky sods who have subscriptions when the poster issues and the cheats, hints and playguides thing comes out, cause now I never go to the newsagent?
3. Where can I get the LX4 Tremorpak (rumble pak without batteries) from?
4. Could you include things like this in the hardware guide?

Your magazine is the best in the world!!! Bie Bie from **KIDFINKS A.K.A BILL PAGE** S.A. Kidfinks, We're already putting something together on it as you read.

1. We've yet to play a final version of Wipeout 64, although we do have an alpha version which looks really solid. Personally, I love the Wipeout games, and enjoy Wipeout 64 far more than F-Zero X... but we'll wait for the final version to come out before we make a call there. There's mixed opinions here



in the office as to which game is better.

2. Okay, I'll make sure I announce it in my editorial from now on.

3. There are so many stores that store console peripherals that doing a list would take forever. However, the distributors are Livewire in Wollstonecraft, NSW.

4. No, simply because we can't print an accurate list of what is really out there at any given time. However, if you tell your local games store who the distributor is and that you want to buy a certain product, they should get it in for you.

#### WE'RE ONLINE?

Hi to all at Hyper,

I have been looking through all of my old Hypers to see if there has been a review of Ultima Online, but I could not find one (unless I missed that issue). and since that has to be the best game for PC ever released I was hoping Hyper would do a huge review on the soon to be released second age of Ultima Online. A poster of Ultima should be in the issue too.

from **CARPET**

P.S. Thanks for the CD of 'Mysteries of the Sith' which I won a few months earlier.

**Shagpile,**

Basically, the game was available on import for a while, and some people had it, but there was no Australian server. Then there was an Australian server, but then the game was old. We'll definitely do a review on the UO Gold release, as there'll be no confusion as to whether or not the game is going to be locally supported.

#### MORE OFLC GRIPES...

Dear Hyper,

I've read the article on violence in N64 Gamer and I think that all the censorship board should be killed (running them over Carmageddon-style comes into mind). Who cares if House of the Dead in the arcades had to have a curtain around it, if some 8 year old kid played it and crapped themselves over it, it's THEIR FAULT. Not the arcade, not Sega, not even their parents... well, they may be blamed a little for letting them play it, but still, what's the use of censorship? I'm 13 and my parents don't really care how violent games I play are, as long



WIPEOUT 64

as I can handle it. If the OFLC would LISTEN to people saying "stuff ratings on games, no-one bothers about them anyway", instead of them saying to us "look, we don't want Australia's youth grabbing a rocket-launcher and going down to the shops blowing the crap out of anything that moves, then assuming they'll get extra points", gamers wouldn't have to put up with ridiculous censorship (MK1 on SNES, Crusin' USA, Postal etc.). I might grab Dad's BFG and go

downtown now, and blow up anything that moves. Then I'll fire up my Red Eagle and run down a few pedestrians, while any damage I get can get repaired at a touch of a button. I might also grab a few of my friend's heads and rip them off.

What does the censorship board think we are!? A bunch of trigger-happy, head-ripping, pedestrian-killing murder machines?! As far as I'm concerned, the censorship board can get stuffed and stick their heads up a dead bears

bum, where they might be appreciated.

**MARTIN KIDD**

**Martin,**

Is your life that much worse now that there's a curtain around House of the Dead at the arcade? I can't believe the amount of angst some of you hold against an organisation of which you know virtually nothing about. The OFLC WANT an R rating, it would make their job easier, but there's some bunch of fascists out there that lobby against it.

The OFLC passed games like Carmageddon... why are you STILL complaining? In the past couple of years a grand total of four titles got banned, and they all sucked anyway.

I don't want to see another letter complaining about the OFLC until a good game gets modified or banned in Australia, otherwise, worry about something that is actually affecting you.

We'll be doing an OFLC feature soon.

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## SWAP

**I would like** to swap my playstation with 10 games (1 is Time Crisis), GunG Con 45, 2 controls for a N64 2 controllers, 3 games, one must be 007 Goldeneye. If you are interested call Michael Moore after 4pm on 02 9665 8897

**Will swap my Sega Saturn** in new condition, turbo control pads, cables, VF2 game and demo disc (Sega Flash vol. 7) for a PSX (PAL) with control pad and memory card and RFU cable and 1 game (preferably Croc or GEX 3D). In good condition. Call matt on 08 9791 2580 WA only.

**I would like** to swap my Sony Playstation, one controller, one memory card all in good condition less than twelve months old for a Nintendo 64 with one controller and if possible some games. Call Kristian on 02 9543 0104

**I will swap** my copy of Quake 64 (mint condition) with box and manual for a copy of Duke Nukem 64 (preferably with box and manual). Call Daniel on 02 9558 3297

**I will swap Super Mario 1,2** and Donkey Kong on gameboy for any 64 game or sell for \$20 each or all for \$50. Call James on 02 4871 2182.

**Tomb Raider** and Z (strat game) for P.C. Swap for Carmageddon or TNFS S.E. Call Anthony on 03 9434 4628.

**I will swap Monster Trucks** (PC), Virtual Springfield (PC) and Command and Conquer (PSX) for any 3 of the following Playstation PAL games: Oddworld, Hercules, Gex 3D, Croc, Final Doom, Klonoa-Door to phantomile or

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**I will swap** Command and Conquer for Age of Empires, Beasts and Bumpkins, Warcraft 2, Myth, Dark Reign, Starcraft, Total Annihilation, Red Alert, Dungeon Keepers, Netstorm or Gettysberg. Call 07 5485 1895

## WANTED

**Any Resident Evil** Directors cut saves on memory card with Chris or Jill with the rocket launcher and unlimited ammo. Look, I want it and to me money is no object!! Ring me first on 08 8258 0382 and tell me and send me the memory card and I'll transfer it onto mine and send it back with your cash.

**1 SNES Console** & Controller (1 or 2) and MK2 for SNES. Will buy separately or together. Call Mali Davis on 02 6680 2158.

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**Any Mega drive** games, especially any in the Road Rash series. E-mail me at karatekid3@hotmail.com

**Banjo Kazooie** for under \$40. Must be in good condition.

Contact 08 9342 8115 Perth only  
Fatality guides for MK2, MK3 and MK Trilogy. Call Dale after 5pm 02 9607 6917

**Sega Saturn.** Must be in good condition. No games wanted just the console and one control. Will pay \$75. Call Peter on 02 4932 5229.

## PEN PALS

**Hi, my name is William.** I am 13 yrs old and I am looking for a male penpal around the age of 12-19. I am interested in N64 and PC's with 3D fx. I enjoy playing C&C Clones, Starcraft and other strategy games. I also enjoy the internet. If you want to write to a Kiwi games freak then write to me at: PO BOX 4512, Kamo, Whangari, New Zealand.

**A letter was posted at** Kunurra post office on the 22nd June. The postcode is 6743. Unfortunately I have lost this letter, but still have the envelope which has no return address. This person was a good RPG fanatic and wrote an interesting letter. Would you please write again and include your address. Write to Frances, PO BOX 1195, Penrith, NSW, 2751.

**Please Write!** My name is Blake. I'm 14 and I live in Brisse. I'm lookin for someone (M/F) who owns a Playstation and has interest in music, especially Grunge, Hard Rock etc, you get the idea. I'll answer all ya letters so get your pen a movin! PO Box 36, Wellers Hill, QLD 4121

**Hi,** I'm looking for a person (m/f - any age) that is interested in PIZZA! Call me on 02 94811111. My name is one large Supreme Pan.

**Hi my name's Peter.** I'm 14 year old and looking for a penpal between 12-16. I love my Playstation and N64's. If you want to write to me write to Peter Wood, 29 Coane St, Warners Bay, NSW. 2282

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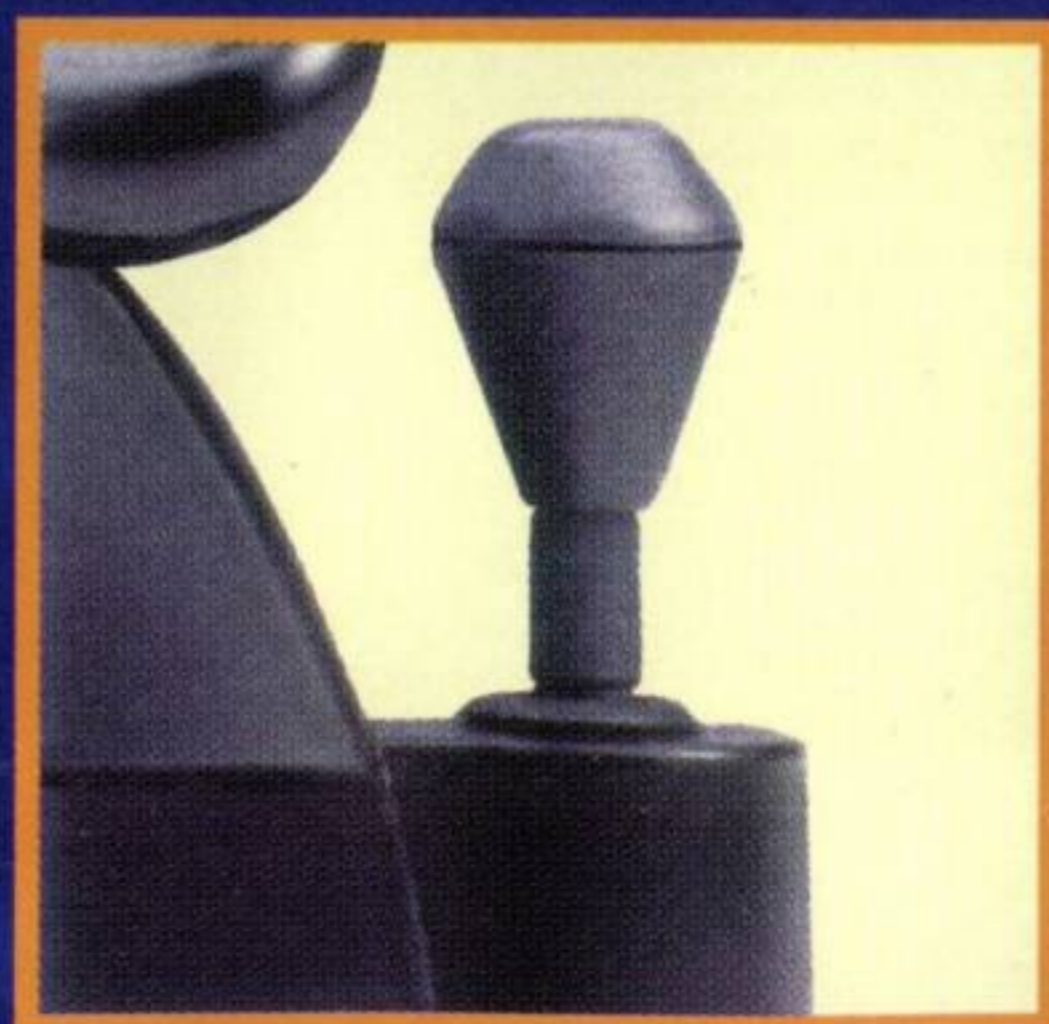


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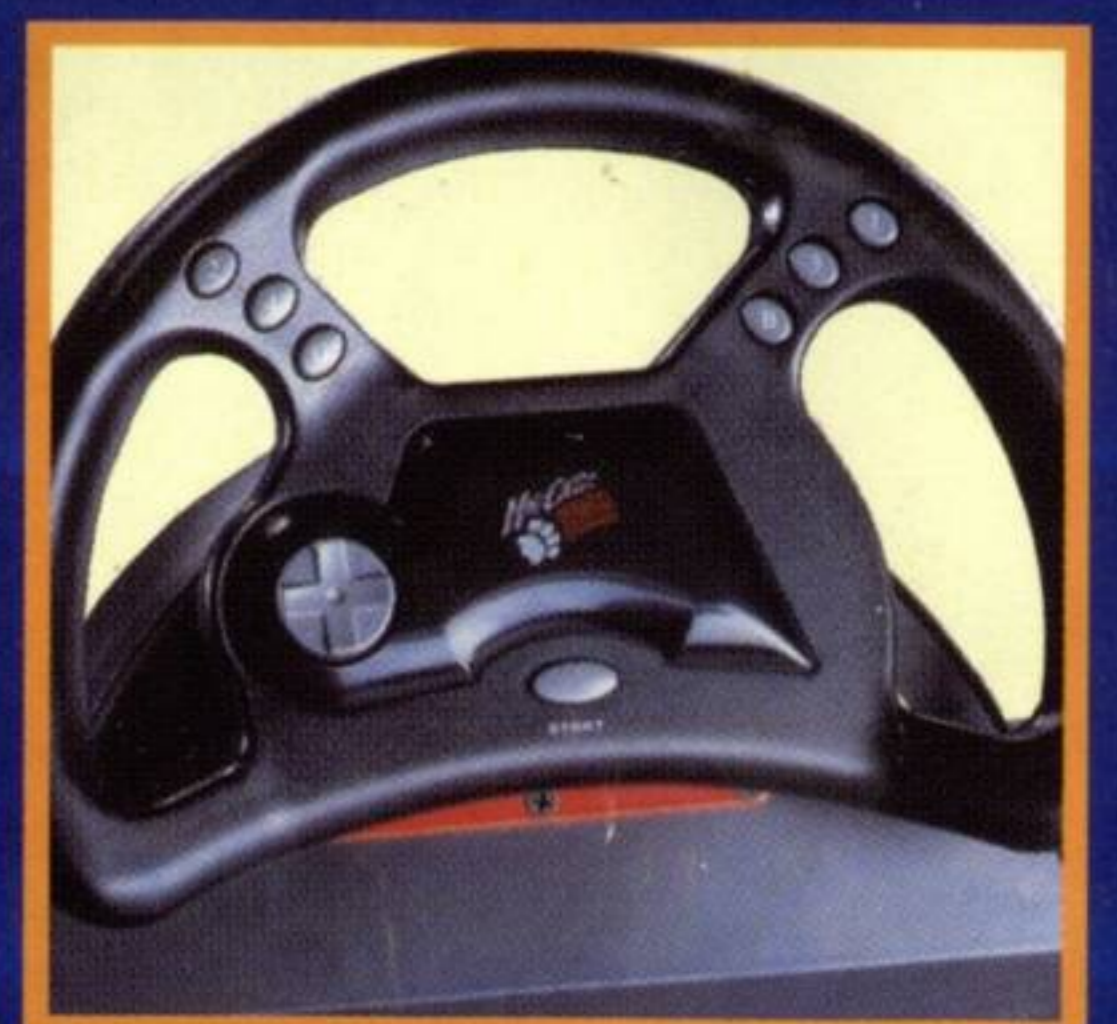
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