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DC-UK

DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

DC-UK 05 FIGHTING FORCE 2 ■ RE-VOLT ■ ZOMBIE REVENGE ■ VIRTUA STRIKER 2000 THE PARTY ISSUE

36 GAMES REVIEWED

We're first: **Fighting Force 2**
Worldwide Soccer 2000
Chef's Luv Shack
Re-Volt Revolution
Worms Armageddon
Evolution

GAME FOR A LAUGH

'99s top titles.
With beer. And hats

EXCLUSIVE

How Nostradamus predicted 40 future Dreamcast stars – including
Shenmue
Resident Evil Code: Veronica
Eternal Arcadia
Metropolis Street Racer

MILLENNIUM MEN

Eight game gurus discuss Dreamcast in 2000 and beyond

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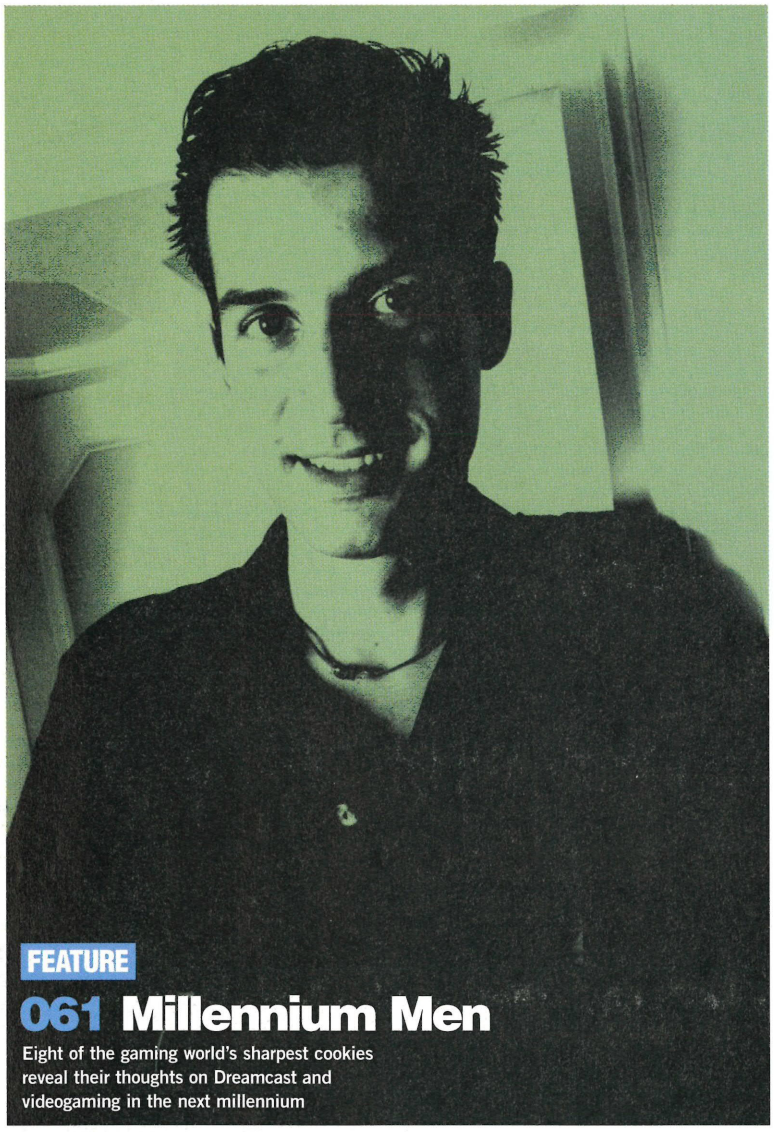

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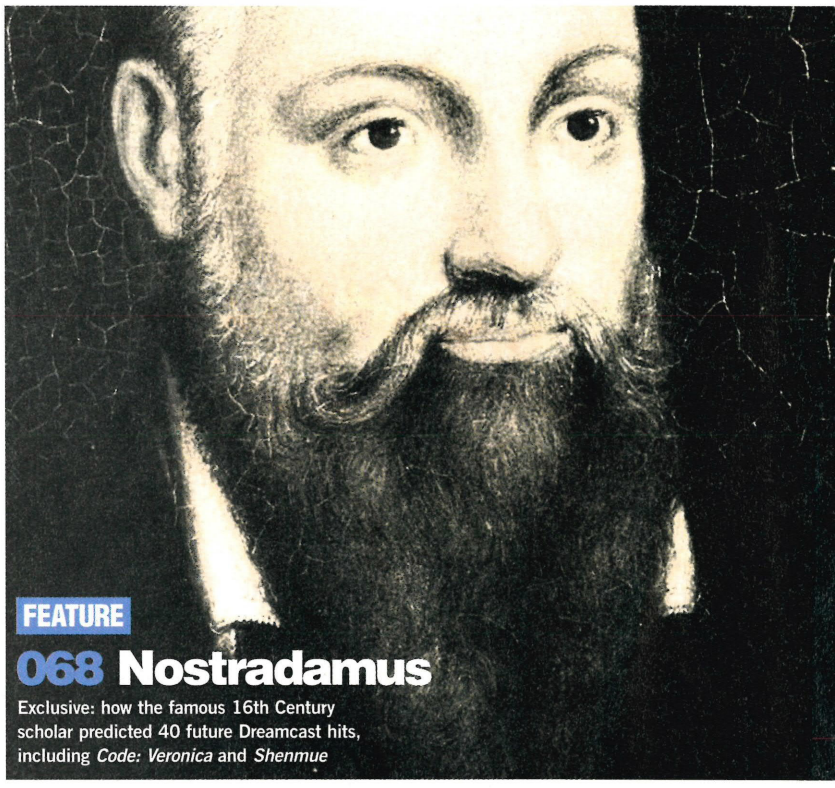
Eight of the gaming world's sharpest cookies reveal their thoughts on Dreamcast and videogaming in the next millennium



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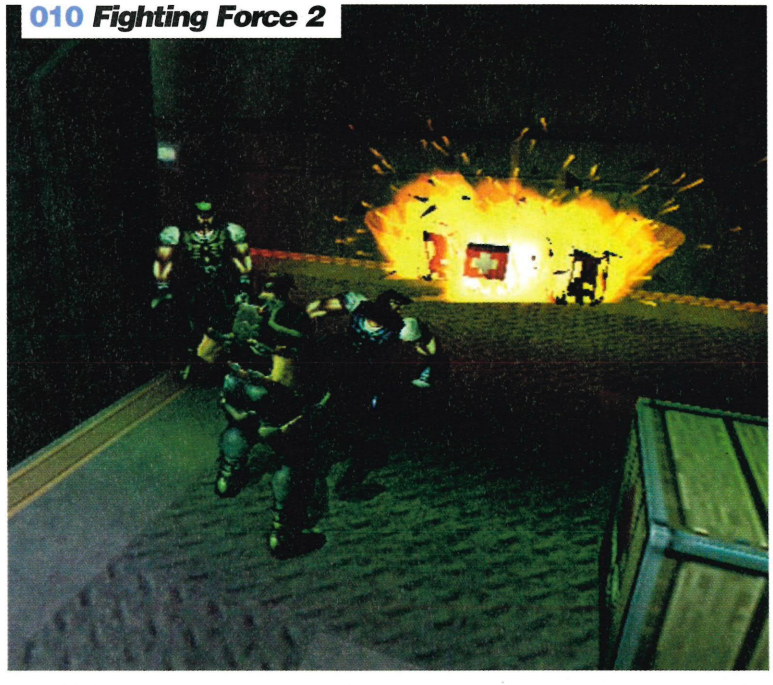

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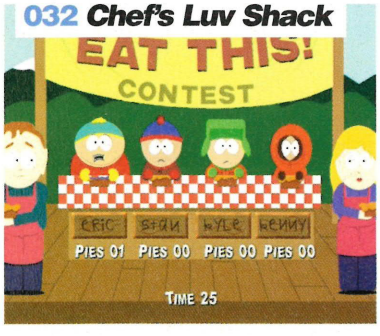

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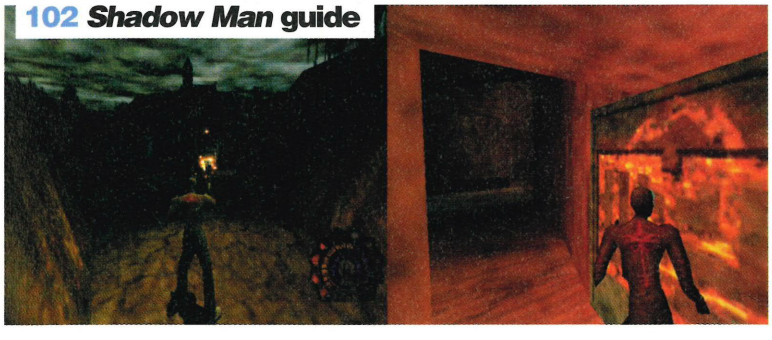

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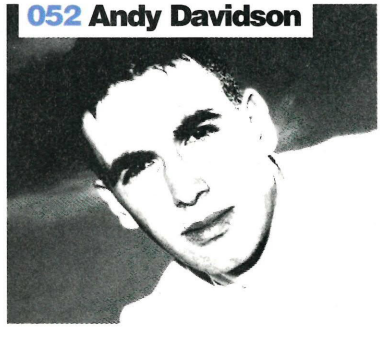

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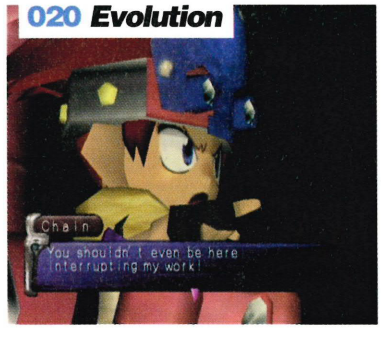

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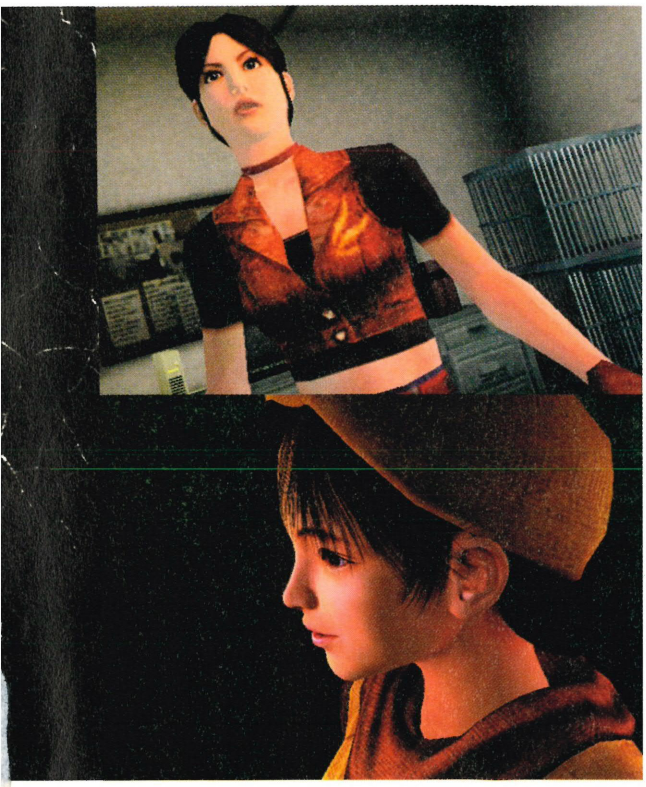

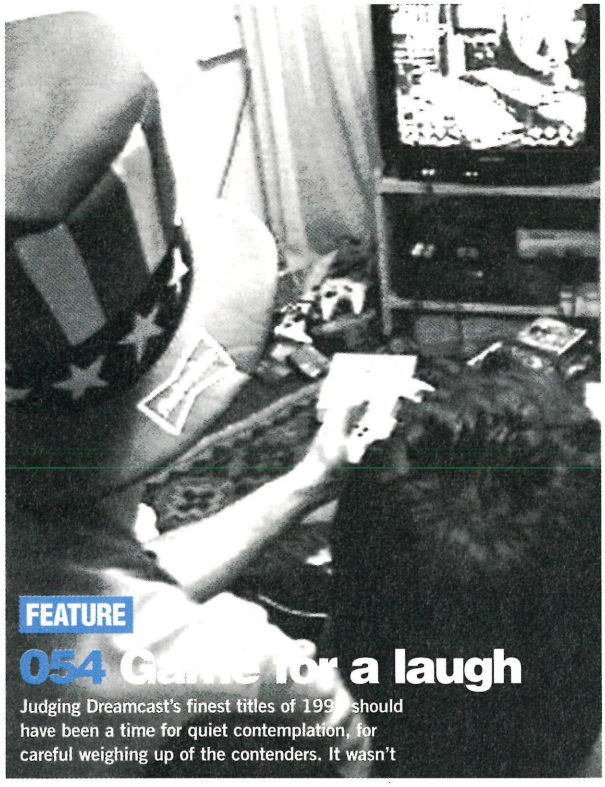

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054 Game for a laugh

Judging Dreamcast's finest titles of 199[illegible] should have been a time for quiet contemplation, for careful weighing up of the contenders. It wasn't

CASPAR FIELD
EDITOR

Well, we couldn't resist it. With the 2000th year – since someone started counting – about to commence, **DC-UK** has gathered its mighty forces to deliver what we consider a vintage issue of the magazine. And we've only made five of them so far.

In particular, we have three prime cuts of videogaming wisdom for you. Our Dreamcast release of the year 'ceremony', Game for a Laugh, nearly cost us our livers to produce. (Hope it makes sense, because it didn't at the time.) We've also gathered eight leading videogame gurus to be our soothsaying Millennium Men. And exclusively this issue, we reveal that Nostradamus predicted 40 of Dreamcast's most exciting new games. Turn to page 068 for the full, astonishing exposé.

If you've just bought a Dreamcast, or have one waiting under the Christmas tree for you, then check out our full review listings on page 094. They're the only ones around. However, if, like us, you were looking for a final killer game for '99, you'll be disappointed. There isn't one. Unless you count Sega's epic *Shenmue*, of course, which has had its Japanese release brought forward to December 29.

You will, no doubt, be reading an awful lot more about *Shenmue* over the coming months. You may even read a review – elsewhere. *Shenmue* is anticipated to be an immersive, emotional experience, the very game Sony should have for PlayStation2, but hasn't. For that reason, **DC-UK** will only pass judgement on Sega's opus when it has an English language version sometime later in the year. Others may not prove so wise.

2000 is set to be Dreamcast's year, packed with dozens of videogame delights. For the clearest, sharpest, and most entertaining view of what's hot and what's not, there'll only be one place to look. Right here.

Happy New Year ■

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Contacts

Editor **Caspar Field**
Associate Editor **Keith Stuart**
Deputy Editor **Esther Woodman**
Art Editor **Christian Day**
Deputy Art Editor **Karl Jaques**
Production Assistant **Stephen Lawson**
Writer **Lee Hart**

Contributors

Words **Owain Bennellack, Jes Bickham, Dave 2000, Dylan Davies, Ant Grimley, Martin Kitts, Dean Mortlock, Nostradamus, Gary Tipp**
Pictures **Rick Buettner, Louise Parker, Tobias Richter, Nick Wilson**

Production

Senior Technical Coordinator **Zoë Rogers**
Production Manager **Lou Reffell**
Ad Design **Sarah Orchard**
Print Services Coordinators **Beccy Stables, Emma Muddimer**
Group Prod Manager **Judith Green**
Pre-press Coordinator **Rachel Spurrier**
Colour Scanning **Simon Windsor, Mark Gover, Jason Titley**

Display Ads

Advertising Manager **Clare Harper**
clare.harper@futurenet.co.uk
Senior Sales Executive **Ian Jones**
Advertising phone **01225 822868**
Advertising fax **01225 732282**

Classified Ads

Classified Advertising **Amar Hussein**
amar.hussein@futurenet.co.uk
Classified phone **0207 3172600**

Management

Publisher **Jackie Garford**
Publishing Director **Robert Price**
Foreign Licensing **Chris Power**
Managing Director **Jane Ingham**
Chief Executive **Greg Ingham**

Subscriptions

Future Publishing Ltd
FREEPOST BS4900, Somerton, Somerset, TA11 7BR
Customer services
01225 822510
Customer order line
01225 822511
Fax **01458 274378**
Email **subs@futurenet.co.uk**

Sega Europe

Phone **0181 995 3399**

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Contact

Future Publishing — Your Guarantee Of Value

DC-UK
Future Publishing
30 Monmouth Street
Bath, BANES, BA1 2BW

Phone **01225 442244**
Fax **01225 822744**
Email **dcuk@futurenet.co.uk**

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The team

This is probably the last time you'll ever see pictures of us looking presentable. And this was the '70s, goddamit

KEITH STUART
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

> As a small mucky person, no-one thought Keith would be much cop in the kitchen, but he surpassed himself this month by cooking a romantic candle-lit dinner for Stephen. Possibly to make up for having guessed the ending of Sixth Sense ten minutes into the film. And then telling everyone.
Favourite baby food: Hazelnut yoghurt

ESTHER WOODMAN
DEPUTY EDITOR

> VPL is something that has plagued Esther throughout most of her life. But this didn't prevent her from going to New York this month and spending lots of money on tight-fitting clothing (and a Stetson hat). Was last seen trying to fit an entire bagel into her mouth while avoiding the joggers in Central Park.
Favourite baby food: Guinness

STEPHEN LAWSON
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

> On special occasions, Stephen has been known to wear these pyjamas to impress the ladies in the bedroom department. Has it worked? "Eh, not so far," he admits in his impenetrable Glaswegian brogue, "but I'm thinking of adding a pair of blue underpants as an added attraction." That should do it.
Favourite baby food: Haggis

LEE HART
WRITER

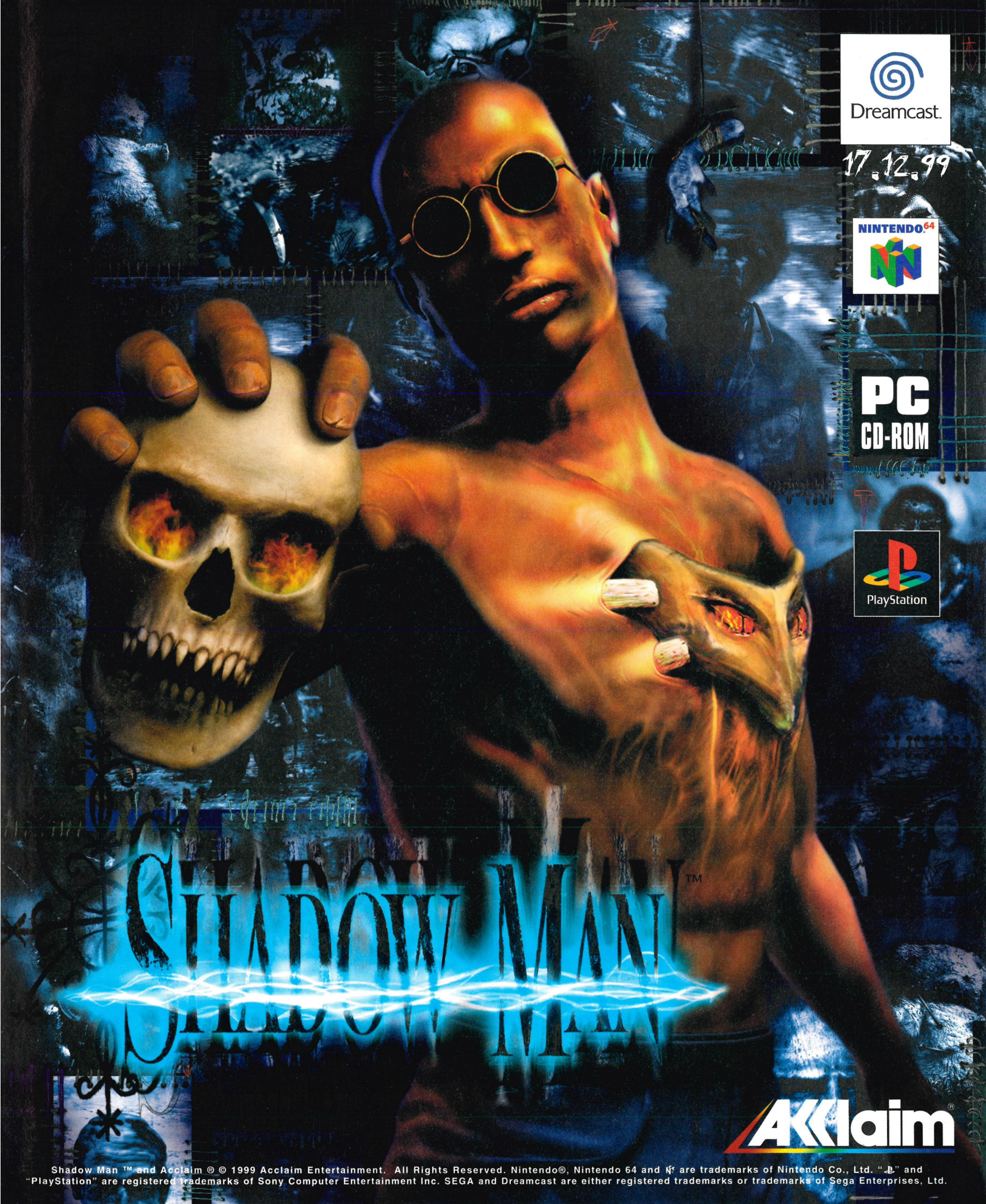
> From an early age, Lee has never been opposed to a bit of nudity ("In its right place, mind."). And, if you're very lucky, he can sometimes be found wandering nonchalantly around the **DC-UK** office in nothing more substantial than a pair of Clark's Birthday shoes and a winning smile.
Favourite baby food: Ham baguette

CHRISTIAN DAY
ART EDITOR

> Here, Chris is modelling the tartan trousers that were de rigueur for a toddler in '75. Unfortunately this was taken in '76 when they were terribly passé. Chris was ostracised by his peers in the playground, and hasn't been able to play hopscotch since without getting a tear in his eye.
Favourite baby food: Farley's rusks

KARL JAQUES
DEPUTY ART EDITOR

> Karl's asymmetric trouser look never really took off outside of Leeds, but in that part of the country he's known to this day as One Flare Boy. The newly-discovered knowledge of this, paired with a disturbing dream in which he was chased by a celebrity chef, has meant for a deeply unsettling month for our Karl.
Favourite baby food: Cornish pasties



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D-M@IL

Rant and rave, mumble and moan, **scream and shout:** This is your chance to **set us, Sega and everyone else on the planet straight.** Letters and emails to the addresses below. **Read on...**

Firstly, can I ask why people bother to write in slagging off Dreamcast (be it the games, or its Net access) when they've not even used one? I've used my DC to access the Net, and have had no problems. Secondly, please can you tell me if Konami will be making an *ISS* game for Dreamcast? Multiplayer *ISS Deluxe* on N64 was fantastic, and I'd hate the fourplayer capability of DC not to be used in a DC *ISS 2000*, or whatever the next release will be.

I still reckon that had Konami released a PC version of *ISS*, the FIFA series would not have become the chart-dominator it is now. Robbie Williams has put me off *FIFA 2000* for my PC, no matter how good the game is.

Thirdly, delays. Not only was DC delayed, but now its games are too. *UEFA Striker* and *The House of the Dead 2* are just two, but all this waiting is annoying. Also, if you reviewed a final PAL product in *Soul Calibur*, why do we have to wait a month to buy it? Presuming that you reviewed it on the day before your issue went to the printers, does it really take that long to get it in the shops? What state do you receive the game in?

Rob Franklin, via email

Because Soul Calibur *was released in Japan back in August, it meant that the translated review code was available in good time to make the issue. With some games we have to make allowances for minor changes that happen before they hit the shelves. However, sometimes titles slip for production reasons that are beyond the software companies' control – and* UEFA Striker *was one of these titles. The reason* The House of the Dead 2 *was delayed was because of massive international demand for lightguns.*

I'm writing in reply to Marty Greenwell's letter in issue 04, I think he's right about that BT and email thing (not being able to write emails offline), but the thing is, you can – if you own *Sonic*, that is. It's simple, just use the game's email. Though saying that, there is one small catch: your game-mail address is used and not your main one, but just write your proper address at the bottom if that bothers you. It might be a little more grief, but you will save money on your bill.

Rory Game, Reading

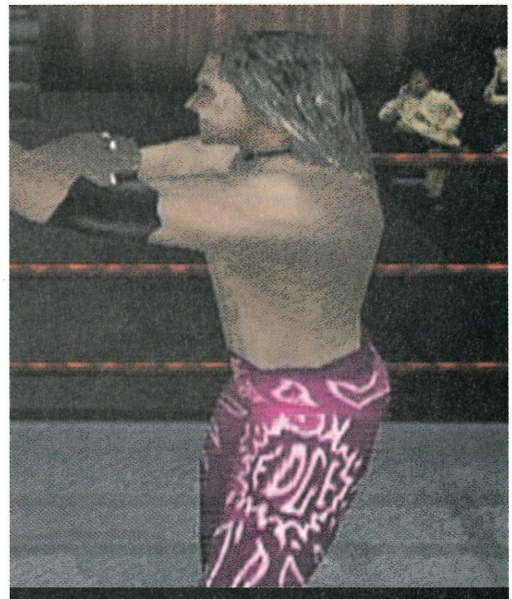
Imagine my surprise when, after following a strange primal instinct to go to Currys at lunchtime, I discovered a copy of *Soul Calibur* on the Dreamcast shelf. After regaining my composure, I snatched the case from the shelf and sprinted up to the counter frantically waving and screaming at the shop assistant, demanding an explanation.

It turned out that "the delivery came in yesterday" and they "didn't check the release schedule", but now they realised what a mistake they'd made, they would hide it away until Friday so as not to get into any trouble. I forked out the cash and quickly tucked the precious booty into the inner recesses of my jacket lest I should be mugged on the way back to the office.

Now I'm sitting at my desk and trying to figure out a plausible sounding illness that I can fake in order to go home and start beating people up with swords and giant battle axes, etc.

Simon, via email

Try an appointment with the dentist – Caspar uses that excuse all the time.



"I've read your review of *Toukon Retsuden* and I'm disgusted... To compare Japanese wrestling to **WWF is ridiculous**"

Kevin Bryce

Mail of the month

If you put a Dreamcast disc into a PC, you get pictures and files that you can look at. I tried *Sonic Adventure* and got pictures of all the characters and then tried the DreamKey disc and found pictures of all the hardware. Do you know if any other disks have pictures on them?

Also, I am worried about the amount of software that Sega is sending to the media. It appears that no-one is getting any. Digitiser (a very good teletext games page) has announced that it has not received many games. Also several TV programmes that feature or are made for games have only had a couple of titles. If Sega continues like this, the public will only be able to know about the games from you, the great **DC-UK**.

Karl Buckland, via email

Much as we'd like to have the entire Dreamcast-owning population buying **DC-UK**, *it's true that other magazines do exist, and that us and everyone else has had problems obtaining software from Sega. However, Sega has been damn busy getting Dreamcast off the ground, so we haven't complained about it too loudly. The situation is improving by the day, however. We'll be talking to one of the Digitiser blokes next month to find out exactly what he does think of Sega's new machine. Stay tuned.*

Winner baby, yeah!

This month's prize is four top Dreamcast titles, courtesy of mail order company Software First (**www.software first.com**): *Soul Calibur, Re-Volt, Fighting Force 2* and *Worms Armageddon*. Enjoy!

I have just read you're review of *Toukon Retsuden 4* and I am disgusted by it. It seems to me you haven't done any research on the art of Puroresu, because you claimed the Japanese have now found the razzmatazz of American Wrestling. This is very wrong and an insult as pro-wrestling has been happening in Japan for well over 60 years, and to compare it with the WWF is ridiculous.

I am not sure if you knew this, but pro-wrestling in Japan is very well respected and is classed as a sport (and rightfully so). There are no soap opera story lines like you get in America, and the wrestlers are treated as sports stars by the public and media. A man called Shoi 'Giant' Baba who was a wrestling hero in Japan recently passed away. At his funeral 28,000 fans from the public went and paid their last respects. This is amazing and proves that wrestling isn't treated like some fake sport in Japan, like it is over here.

Now onto the game. I thought your views were totally wrong, and I didn't understand them. This game is the greatest wrestling game of all time, and is much better than *WWF Attitude*. All the wrestlers perform the moves they use in reality (*Attitude* can't boast of this), the wrestlers look like they do in reality, and the gameplay is second to none.

I admit that you really have to follow New Japan Pro-wrestling to enjoy *Toukon Retsuden 4* to the fullest, but even your average wrestling fans would love this game.

Kevin Bryce, London

Having attended the original launch of Warp's adventure game D2 in Japan, which was filled with 15,000 screaming kids, it's fair to say that nothing can prepare you for the passion of Japanese fans – of anything. Sorry you didn't agree with us over Toukon Retsuden 4, *but we just found it sluggish and boring.*

I am writing to you because I can't get an Internet connection with my Dreamcast, which I bought on October 14, and since I tried several times and it simply won't work.

I live in Luxembourg and I know there is no Sega server here but in Dreamkey you can select "external line" and I tried to put in the access code for Germany, the UK and France but none worked. I always get an error message saying I should check whether my modem is connected to my phone line properly. I know the phone line is working because I use it with my PC to go online and as a standard telephone line.

I understand that Sega is not offering free Internet access in Luxembourg because it's such a small country, but I want at least to be able to register and afterwards hopefully to use my account with a local service provider.

Can you help me in any way?

Claude Hastert, via email

Move to a bigger country.

Being a day one owner of a Dreamcast I'm beginning to have doubts about my new choice of machine. Why? Well how about the complete lack of triple A software before Christmas other than *Soul Calibur*; the fact that there are no original titles on the way; and PC conversions – what happened, did they get lost in the post or some other Sega type excuse? And then the Internet access is pathetic compared to even the cheapest PC, so come on, give us some positives in the next issue, as PS2 is looking so tempting already.

In your reviews you never compare games to those on other platforms, I see why after pitching *Sonic* against *Mario 64*. And as to your question about swapping old systems for a DC, well no I'd rather have my PlayStation or N64, after all DC has no equivalent game in terms of gameplay to *Jetforce Gemini* this year, does it?

Keith, via email

One of the team invested (heavily) in a copy of Jetforce *the weekend before writing this, and they've been sorely disappointed. Aside from it costing £50, the multiplayer mode is deadly boring, while the main game is almost entirely devoid of soul. Of course, you could always save up £60 for* Donkey Kazooie 64 *instead. Or spend £40 on* Shadow Man *for Dreamcast.*

Sonic Adventure *should never be compared to* Mario 64, *which is why we didn't. The two games are vastly different in premise, dealing with different gameplay styles. Just because they're both 3D updates of 16bit rivals doesn't mean that they're comparable now. We regularly discuss PlayStation and N64 titles in our Dreamcast reviews – you're obviously confusing us with another magazine.*

"Imagine my surprise when after following a primal instinct to go to Curry's **I discovered a copy of *Soul Calibur*"**

■ **Simon**

Pardon me of my English, because I come from Portugal and there are some writing errors. I am asking if you could make a **DC-UK** magazine in Portuguese. I don't think that's hard because your magazine sells well in my country; there is no bookstore without your wonderful magazine. It is not difficult to read yours because I understand English, but it would help if your mag came in Portuguese, that way I could know much more about the news, reviews and previews.

Pedro Filipe, via email

According to a certain Portuguese-born member of the Edge team, Spanish is fairly comprehensible to your people, which is handy because Future has just licensed ***DC-UK*** *to a company in Spain. If you can find it, look out for DC Magazine, which should be out by the time you read this.*

Did all you people out there know that the Dreamcast lightgun supports the Internet? It's true – just point the gun at the screen and watch in wonder as it controls the pointer then use the trigger as the A button. Shoot off the screen to get the side menus up, and the d-pad is the scroller.

I have a question which has been bugging me for ages: will there be a memory card which will be able to support MP3 songs?

Andy Hendrick, via email

It will be interesting to see how the upcoming Zip drive (see ***DC-UK 03****) works with Internet technologies such as MP3. There's loads of scope for creative software to go with the add-on, such as music creation packages which would allow people to swap the tracks they've created via the Web.*

And we're all looking forward to some software which will enable the home creation of VM games. Now that would be cool.

As a seasoned game player it's come as a total surprise to me that my thumb joints are starting to 'freeze' while playing certain games. It's not just me either, my best friend has also noticed that her thumb joints are giving up. We reckon the design of the game pad is the cause, and not the fact that we're 30-something.

Then again, it's maybe just us and the fact that we tend to play games like *Ready 2 Rumble* and *Soul Calibur* for hours at a time. Has anyone else encountered the same problem?

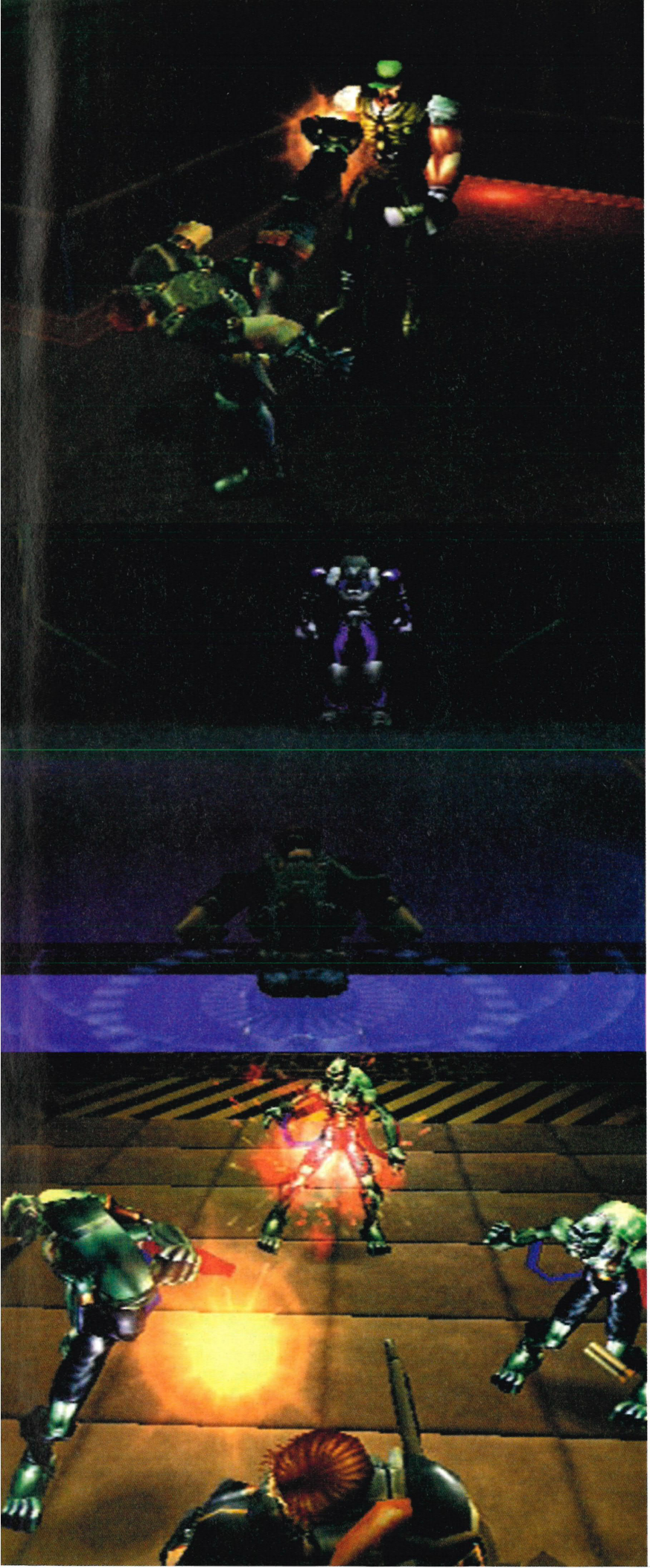
Dog 'n' Fran, via email

Christian and Karl have both suffered from sore thumbs, but that's mostly due to excessive nose-picking. Of course, we're trying to wean them off this terrible habit at the moment.

WRITE TO:

DC-UK
Future Publishing,
30 Monmouth Street,
Bath, BANES,
BA1 2BW

Fax:
01225 822744
Email:
dcuk@futurenet.co.uk



What's the score?

DC-UK is committed to delivering the most honest, accurate and comprehensive Dreamcast review section anywhere, anyhow. That's why (in case you hadn't noticed) we've placed our reviews right at the front of the magazine; so you can get the information you need in the time you have.

As you'd expect, we aim to employ only the most experienced, knowledgeable, best-dressed reviewers in the country (well, maybe not the last bit). This being almost the 21st Century, and you people being intelligent sorts, we mark out of ten, as it is the clearest, fairest method of scoring. And, since halfway between nothing and ten is five, so five is an average mark. That doesn't mean a game isn't worth investing in if it scores a five, only that it's, well, average. While we're at it, as this issue features our first ten, that doesn't mean that a game is perfect, just that it is incredibly good. Incredibly, incredibly good, even.

FIRST UK REVIEW

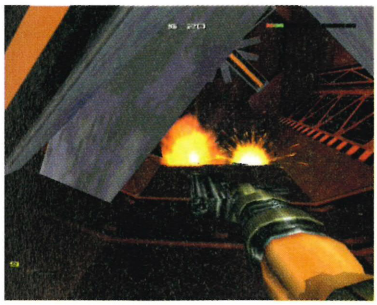
Fighting Force 2

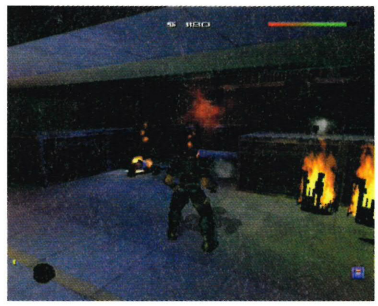
Can Core's sequel to the unremarkable *Fighting Force* pack a meaner punch?

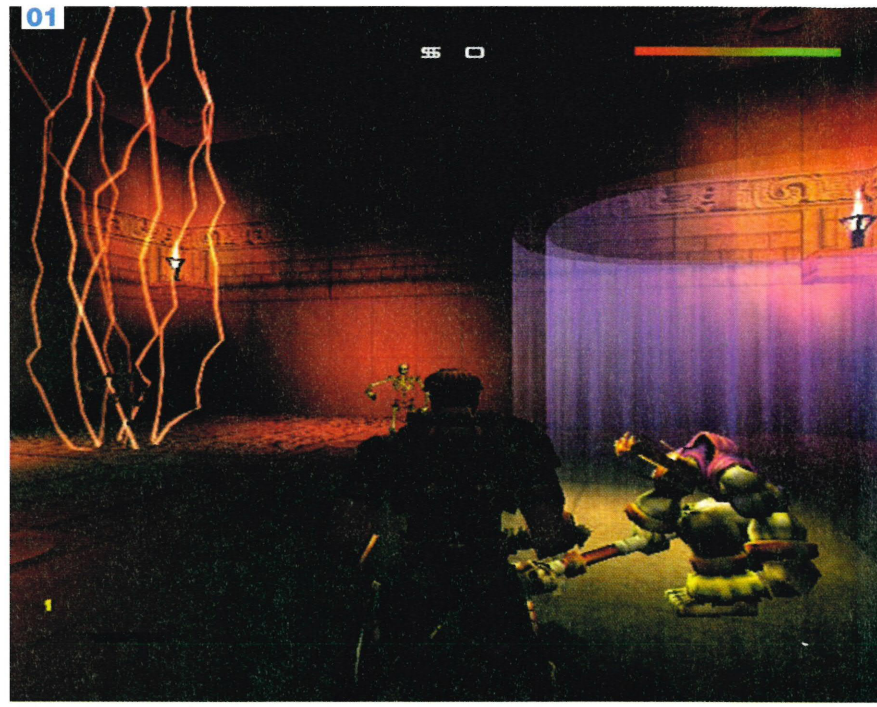
Back in the distant past, when *Pac-Man* was still the king of the arcades and Mario was just a chunky handful of red and blue pixels, a game called *Double Dragon* introduced us to the delights of the scrolling beat 'em up. Set in realistic urban levels, the object of the game was to batter the crap out of a succession of cartoon thugs, using whatever objects came to hand. Capcom's *Final Fight* and Sega's Mega Drive classic *Streets of Rage* took the genre about as far as it could go, with the addition of bosses, more weapons and different characters, and the original *Fighting Force*, a moderately successful 3D update on the PlayStation, failed to add anything new. Game over.

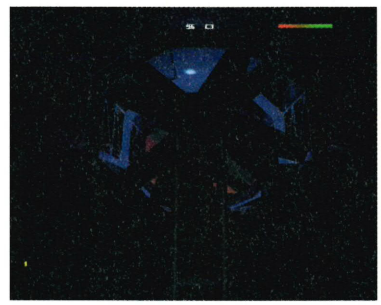
Well, not quite. *Fighting Force 2* sets out to reinvent the tired old format by cross-breeding it with Lara Croft and the *Tomb Raider* series. So while you still get to inflict pleasingly large amounts of grievous bodily ►

- Publisher: Eidos
- Developer: Core
- Price: £39.99
- Release date: December
- Players: One player
- Extras: 60Hz mode
- **For:** Simple to learn. Satisfying violence
- **Against:** Awkward movement. Little depth. Very tough









"The more you use your fists and feet to deliver bone-snapping attacks, **the more your Rage meter rises"**

▶ harm on the usual collection of over-muscled bad guys, you now have to use your brain as well as your button-stabbing fingers. You can jump, roll, climb ladders and do all the things you'd expect from a modern platform game hero. The environments are huge, consisting of rooms connected by corridors and lifts, so there are even a few puzzles for you to solve.

Unsurprisingly the solution to most of the problems you'll face, as you guide Hawk in his quest to rid the world of the evil Nakamichi Corporation, is violence. After all, the hero of the game, a survivor from the original *Fighting Force*, is a man with 36-inch biceps and a 20-inch neck. You'd hardly expect him to be a rocket scientist. So when you're faced with a locked door that needs to be opened or a spinning blade that needs to be stopped, finding the nearest control panel and punching it to pieces usually does the trick. Other areas can be accessed by killing everyone in the room, and it's this ceaseless combat that puts some meat on *Fighting Force 2*'s bones.

Enemies usually attack in groups of up to four, making circular formations and taking turns to try and punch your lights out. They aren't particularly smart, though. Once they've had a pop at you, they tend to stand still and wait for their mates to save them from the inevitable reprisal. After a few seconds of inactivity, assuming they're still alive, they wake up and launch another attack. It might not sound particularly enthralling, since you don't have to use the same tactical nous you would in a traditional beat 'em up, but sheer weight of numbers and a good, solid feel to the blows make up for the game's lack of depth in other areas. Hawk's impressive range of moves are all accessed by simple button combinations, with the d-pad used to flip around 180° to share the punishment amongst everyone who wants some. The more you use your fists and feet to deliver bone-snapping attacks, the more your Rage meter rises, until you eventually get a few seconds of *Power Stone*-like super fighting ability. In this mode, you can flatten almost anyone with a clean hit.

But it can get very difficult at times. The enemies that play fair, freezing after an attack so that you can dish out a few lumps in revenge, have some vicious back-up in the form of armed guards. These guys are lethal shots with everything from machine guns to grenades, perfectly capable of removing half of your energy bar before you can get close enough to chin them. Before even attempting to take them on, you'll have to search for secret areas and smash a few crates to reveal weaponry of your own. The most sensible course of action is to dispose of

01 The jungle stage boss summons some undead help from his skinny mates. That's not fair!
02 Shoot the barrels behind the martial arts expert to make him go up in flames. It's much safer

2nd opinion

"I'm not quite as sold on *Fighting Force 2* as Martin is, but compared to the grimly terrible *Soul Fighter* this is a joy. I would have liked a little more puzzling, and perhaps it would have been nice if the many computers that are scattered through the game had more use. Rather than beating up guards for keys, you could have had to decode passwords on the systems to open doors – that kind of thing.

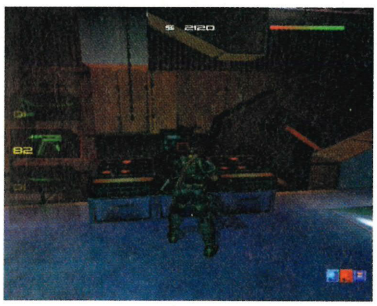
However, there's no doubt that this is a lot of fun when you get into it. Discovering the weapons and trying them out is just as enjoyable in *FF2* as in the old classics which inspired it."

Caspar Field

the more dangerous snipers and shotgun guards before turning your attention to the lesser minions. One error of judgement can easily lead to a premature death and a trip back to the start of the level, and with only three continues to play with, there's little room for any mistakes.

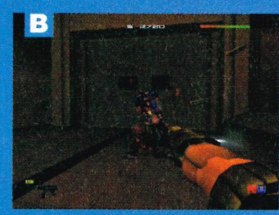
There are nine levels to battle through, each divided into three or four smaller sections, with a boss waiting at the end to rob you of what little strength you have left after making it that far. The bosses make what came before them seem like a walk in the park. The Tank Factory guardian, an electrified cyborg with metal wings and a variety of almost unavoidable attacks, had us weeping when, time after time, it made off with our last remaining continue. Frustrating simply isn't the word for it.

Fighting Force 2 is linear, simplistic and annoyingly tricky, but we've grown rather fond of it all the same. Like the games that came before it, it supplies satisfying violence on an industrial scale and lets you behave in a pretty despicable manner to some pretty ►



Crate balls of fire

Break open a crate and you might just find a weapon – essential for whacking the big fellas. Simply hold both triggers to flip into a firstperson view, line up the red dot of the laser sight, and plug away. Plus, when you're out of ammo you can kill people by chucking the empty gun at them ■



A Flamethrower: a rare and powerful gem of a weapon **B** Machine gun: these come in several tasty varieties, from the common street Uzi to the heavy duty terrorist special **C** Grenades: stand well back and cover your ears. **D** Rifle: go for the head shot every time. Lethal

► despicable villains. It also gives you the opportunity to smash up everything you see, because unlike most games, the scenery is fully interactive – if you see a cupboard, a piece of machinery or even a vehicle, you can beat it up until it explodes. You can even go into a bad guy's office, attack his desk with an axe (after you've killed him, naturally) and empty a shotgun into his computer. It's ideal therapy after a tough day at work or a few failed attempts at that damned cyborg boss.

So although you'll inevitably be disappointed if you expect something groundbreaking from Core's first DC title, approach it as the shallow, visceral piece of entertainment that it really is and you'll have plenty of fun with it. It's no *Shadow Man*, but it's far more interesting than *Soul Fighter*. Now all we need is *Streets of Rage 3D*. How about it, Sega? ■

Martin Kitts

01 Limbering up for some high-kicking Jackie Chan action. Whoever did the motion capture for this must have been double-jointed
02 Funny how barrels of explosive chemicals always contain emergency medical kits
03 Hawk gets a shot from an electric cattle-prod, right where it hurts

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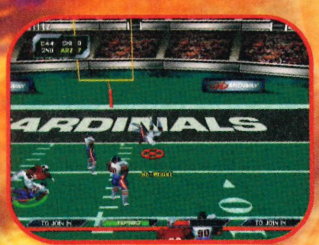

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Worldwide Soccer 2000

UEFA Striker has taken the lead early doors, is *WWS 2000* good enough to equalize?

- Publisher: Sega
- Developer: Silicon Dreams
- Price: £39.99
- Release date: Out now
- Players: One to four
- **For:** Excellent passing/shooting system. Loads of competitions
- **Against:** Lack of pace and ease of tackling make the game a bit disjointed

After *UEFA Striker* kicked off Dreamcast's football season with a comprehensive victory, the next name on the fixture list is a continuation of Sega's *Worldwide Soccer* brand which was so popular on Saturn, although the failure of that machine meant it never received the kind of *ISS* recognition that it deserved. Developed by Silicon Dreams which has a long history of making football games (including *UEFA Champions League* and *Michael Owen's World League Soccer*) *WWS 2000* is out to challenge *UEFA Striker* in the big Christmas grudge match.

As with *UEFA*, all the usual footie competitions are available for your gaming pleasure. Sega doesn't have the official licences or correct titles but it's easy to work out which tournaments represent the World Cup, Champions League and Premiership etc. There are also Custom League and Cup options for creating personalised compos which could result in Bradford City facing the mighty Barcelona if you're feeling subversive enough.

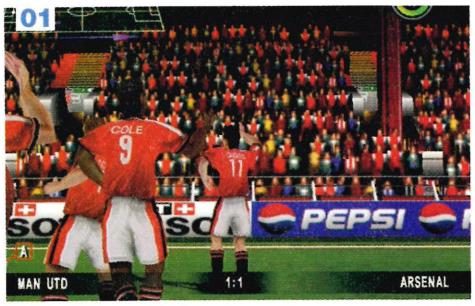
Speaking of teams, there are loads of the blighters in the game, including all the top club sides from nine countries (America, Holland, England, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Scotland and Spain) plus 32 international teams. Annoyingly, only the British-based players have their proper names while the others are saddled with comedy monickers such as 'Ryvaldoh' and 'Batistoota'.

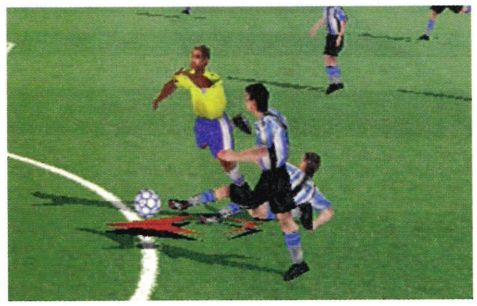
Graphically the game is also a bit of a let-down. While the stadiums are beautifully rendered with fantastic levels of detail and accuracy (see Executive Box), the players' appearance fails to match the same lofty standards. There has been little effort to match the looks of the polygonal sportsmen with their real-life counterparts and they all seem like different-sized versions of the same ugly, misshapen character model (probably Iain Dowie's). Their movement isn't too impressive either as they have an ungainly running style that looks as if they're trying to sprint on ice into a

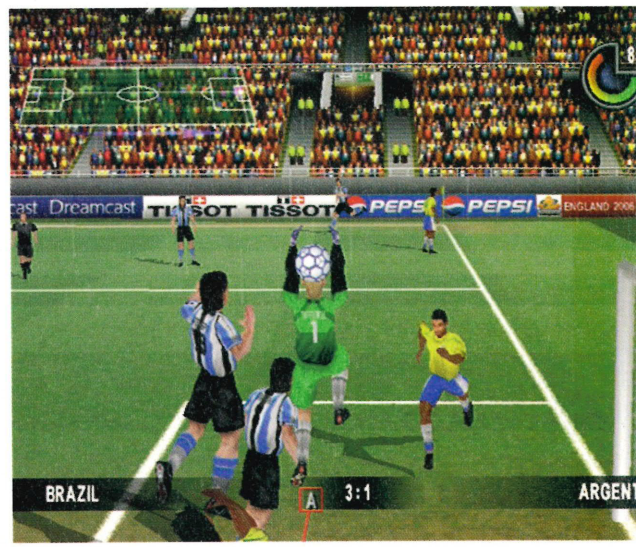
> "While the stadiums are beautifully rendered, **the players' appearance fails to match**"

2nd opinion

It's definitely the wide range of shooting options that saves this game from footie sim mediocrity. Curling the ball round the keeper and into the top left hand corner of the goal is supremely satisfying – not just because it looks good, but because the after-touch feature gives you so much personal control. Elsewhere though, the difficulty in keeping possession can make for scrappy mid-second division-style encounters. Imagine David Beckham playing for Bristol City and you've got WWS 2K.
Keith Stuart







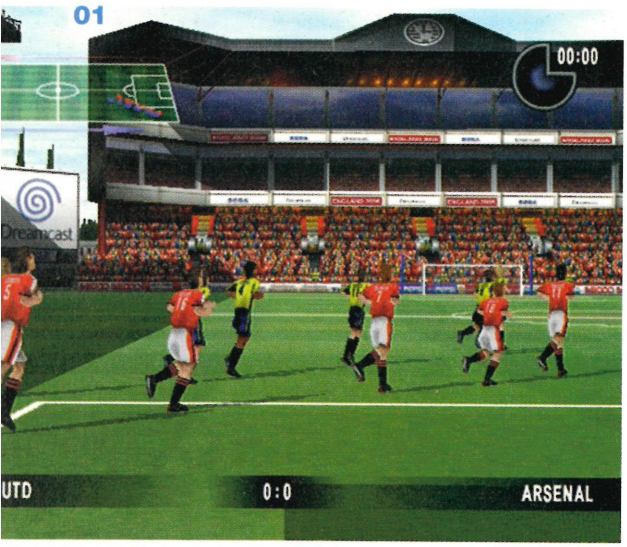
01 United celebrate their equaliser before going on to shaft the Arse' big-style
02 You can fiddle around with the different camera angles and positions like this venerable *Sensible Soccer* top-down view. However, the side-cam remains by far the best to play with
03 Rivaldo prepares to bury one for Barcelona. Except in this game he's operating under the cunning codename Ryvaldoh. It sure fooled us
04 Ronaldoh leaves the Argies for dead before being mercilessly cropped by the dirty get Simeone

force ten hurricane.

But enough of this presentational ephemera, the most important thing, and what you're all no doubt dying to know, is how well the thing plays. Refreshingly, *WWS* aims to be a true football simulation which, rather than utilising the fast and furious gameplay we're used to, reflects the intricacies and tactics of the sport.

You're unlikely to be successful if you enjoy hurtling the players around like headless chickens and trying to score by belting the ball from one end to the other with as little build-up as possible. The game's emphasis is on constructing moves and it actually makes you work to create openings; resulting in tight, realistic matches rather than relentless box-to-box goalfests that so many football videogames are guilty of becoming.

There's a good sense of player control with different strength kicking, heading and chesting moves available, plus some great manual skill moves (which *UEFA* lacked) such as drag-backs, Cruyff turns, step-overs ▶



Executive Box

There are ten stadiums in the game including the Nou Camp (**C**), Wembley (**B**) and, erm, Coventry City's Highfield Road (**A**). Eh?

▶ and shimmies which are perfect for bamboozling opposing players but, realistically, aren't always guaranteed to come off.

The crowning glory of the game is the total analogue control over passing and shooting. *WWS 2000* takes the age-old concept of aftertouch to a whole new level as the analogue stick enables you to fully manipulate the ball by changing the bend, dip and height of the strikes. This ability to influence the flight of the ball is a fantastic system which truly evokes the sensation of curling a football, without ever allowing your player to boot the kind of illogical banana shots that even Roberto Carlos would struggle to achieve.

Unfortunately, the superb passing and shooting can't completely atone for *WWS 2000*'s fatal flaw: its incredibly slow pace. Admittedly, most football videogames run at ridiculous speeds that would kill the players after about five minutes if applied to real-life, and the reason for *WWS*' dawdling tempo is undoubtedly part of its noble attempt at simulating real matches that don't actually move at 100 mph. However, the game over-compensates in its search for realism, resulting in a somewhat laboured and pedestrian kickabout.

It's also far too easy to dispossess the opposition and the matches can often become disjointed with a constant stream of tackles disrupting the flow. In fact, the gameplay is reminiscent of the *FIFA* titles except instead of being ridiculously quick, *WWS* goes to the opposite extreme and proves disappointingly slow.

Despite its chronic lack of pace, *Worldwide Soccer 2000* is still an enjoyable game of footie, and with its passing/shooting system it has an excellent basis for future improvements. *WWS* has certainly given *UEFA Striker* a good run for its money but after a competitive 90 minutes, Infogrames' title remains the Dreamcast football champ. At least until *Virtua Striker 2* gets booted up ■

Lee Hart

DC-UK 7
IN THE PLAY-OFFS

01 Man U and Arsenal trot out for another Highbury battle. Notice the subtle, subliminal Dreamcast advertising?
02 You have no control of the action replays but the game provides lovely TV-style shots from every conceivable angle
03 The players in the wall are more concerned with protecting their nobs than blocking the shot so just make sure you get it over them

GO THERE!
TRUMPS
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TOYS
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Evolution

It's the first RPG for DC, but is it adventurous enough to keep you occupied until *Shenmue* lands?

- Publisher: Ubi Soft
- Developer: Sting
- Price: £39.99
- Release date: December
- Players: One
- **For:** The first RPG released in Europe. A very Japanese game indeed
- **Against:** Poor use of game system. More original touches needed

***Evolution*, in a perfectly-formed nutshell, is your bog-standard Japanese role-playing game. Played one before then, have you? Of course you have, so you'll know exactly what I was going to say over the next 700 or so words, so there's actually no point in me carrying on with this review. Is there? Tum-de-tum...**

Oh, you're still here, are you? I've just been informed that there is actually a small minority of the gaming public that has never played a role-playing game (or an RPG as we lovingly like to call it), so for the benefit of you lot, here's a brief idea of what to expect from an average RPG:

1) You will control a small human (usually a child or a student) with enormous, wide eyes, no sense of colour-matching (please note hair and clothing) and a frightfully poor grasp of the English language.

2) You will be sent off on any number of ludicrous missions, the purpose of which is to 'prove yourself' and rescue treasure/maidens/wizards/other small large-eyed child things.

3) You will fight numerous (too numerous, some people might argue) battles against strange objects and creatures that wouldn't look out of place on a 1960s Doctor Who set.

4) You will buy one, complete it and then buy another one that looks and plays identically to the one that you just completed. This pattern will continue until either the machine breaks, you run out of cash or you die... Whichever happens first.

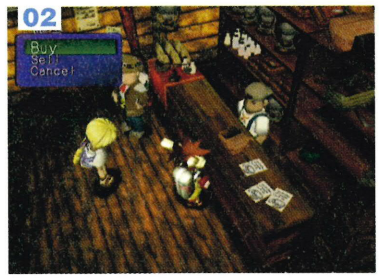
So there you have it. It's all true, of course, and I should know, because for a good few years now I have been that man. Although there's nothing particularly wrong with role-playing games (in fact, I'd go so far as to say I've actually quite liked a few of them over the years), like any gaming genre, there are a few classics and a lot of paler imitations.

By a neat link, the latest pale imitation in the gaming world (and the first on Dreamcast) is this one, *Evolution*. Yes, it's the first role-playing game on Dreamcast. Yes, it looks utterly gorgeous from the tip of the central character Mag's hair to the lush grass

"It looks utterly gorgeous from the tip of the central character's hair to the **lush grass beneath his perfectly polygonised feet"**

PCgamer

We found it utterly hilarious that your initial partner Linear is equipped with a frying pan for a weapon and has among her armour such blow-thwarting items as an oversized dress, casual sandals... And to protect her little blonde bonce? Why, a frilly ribbon, naturally.



"The main point of interest is that the **mazes are generated randomly**"

01 The translation has been handled quite well but there are occasional grating Americanisms
02 As is the tradition in RPGs, you go to the local shop to stock up on extra goodies. A word of warning: the shopkeeper won't haggle
03 The introduction of call girls is a brave but controversial step into the '90s for the RPG canon

beneath his perfectly polygonised feet, and yes, it's rather fun to play for an afternoon or so. But other than that, you can expect dull gameplay, boring battles, a weak story line and gameplay that limps along like an apologetic OAP who has entered the London Marathon 'by mistake'.

The first problem is giving a game like this to someone who's just completed *Final Fantasy VIII*. Okay, there is, as the nerds are already no doubt chanting (myself included, I'm sure) only one *Final Fantasy VIII*, so comparisons are possibly a little cruel, but *Evolution* is so painfully average that a tractor beam is currently attached to the 5 key on my keyboard.

The main point of interest with *Evolution* is that the mazes are generated randomly. You pick up a mission in your town (choose from ▶

Did you spill my mead?

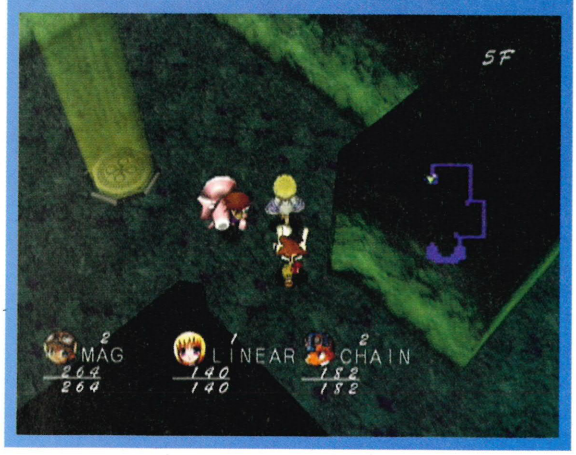
From the sigh you're bound to exhale at your first battle to the painful groans uttered when you discover that *Evolution*'s first boss closely resembles a Hoover, you're sure to be at least a little bit despondent at the game's battle system.

It's standard turn-based fare, but the ability to move forward (where you get increased attack strength, but are more susceptible to damage) or backwards (into a defensive position) provides a more original slant on the ritual batterings that occur at almost every possible opportunity.

Randomly speaking

The main section of *Evolution*'s gameplay centres around the various ruins and temples that you're sent off to explore, nick treasure from and sell to the local museum. Each location is made up from around ten levels and each one's randomly-generated for a unique gaming experience each time you play.

In theory, this equates to wandering around tedious rooms and bumbling along corridors of ridiculous length. Oh, and whatever tomb, ruin or temple you choose to explore, the sad fact is that almost all the maze graphics look the same. As Marge Simpson would say, "Hmmm..."



"Expect dull gameplay that limps along like an apologetic OAP who has entered the London Marathon 'by mistake'"

► one of half-a-dozen ruins to begin with), stock up on supplies, pick your team and it's off you go. Each ruin is made up of around ten floors and each floor is littered with tentacled monsters, treasure chests and – get this – they're never the same the second time you enter them.

Which is all very well, if you would actually desire to enter any of the ruins for a second time. The problem is, though, that you probably won't. You'll play through the mazes, defeat the boss at the end and then go off to the next ruin. Going back is never an option and making them randomly-generated just gives the game a messy and disorganised feel.

It's not quite all doom and gloom, however. *Evolution* is playable enough for a while and does everything needed to qualify for that previously mentioned average score. But there will be better role-playing games around the corner for Dreamcast (including the much-anticipated *Phantasy Star Online* from Sonic Team and, of course, a little game by the name of *Shenmue*) so it basically boils down to a) whether you actually like role-playing games, b) whether you have stacks of money to throw around and c) whether you have the patience of a boozed-up virgin groom on his wedding night and can't be bothered to wait for the forthcoming attractions. If you can answer yes to all of the above then you should probably invest in *Evolution*, but just don't expect a truly evolutionary videogame – despite the promising title ■

Dean Mortlock

01 Craftier enemies will use magic and potions rather than simply smacking you on the head
02 Beware the gigantic sheep of doom, they'll send you to sleep and interfere with your privates
03 Your trusty butler has the unique monicker Gre Nade. Put his first name and surname together and it spells 'grenade', don't you know?

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Re-Volt Revolution

Far from being a *Micro Machines/Mario Kart* clone, Probe's novelty racer puts a fresh spin on the genre

The first time you load up *Re-Volt*, you might expect it to be a simple *Mario Kart*-style racer. But from the moment you smack your vehicle into an unavoidable wall, lose your bearings and head the wrong way down the track, with absolutely no idea where all the CPU cars went, you know you have a game that revels in its ability to kick you in the pants for the slightest mistake.

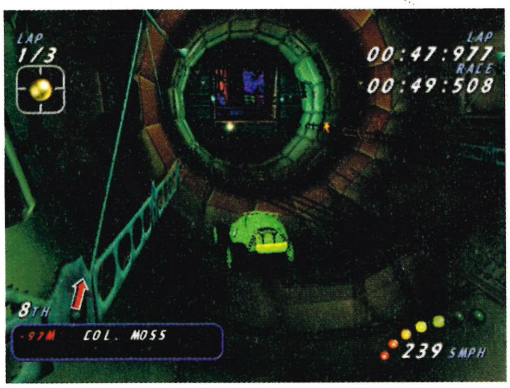
It's a bit of a shame really, because if it wasn't for the radical and unforgiving course design, *Re-Volt* could have been a classic. The tracks double back on themselves, often making you turn around a marker and go back the way you came. Because they're designed to look like real, everyday things such as suburban streets, museums and city rooftops, the 'tracks' aren't marked out at all. You can drive just about anywhere you like, as long as you hit all the invisible waypoints. Direction markers pop up on the screen every few seconds to tell you where to turn, although on the later courses such as the confusing rooftop levels, there are so many blind corners and dead ends that it's hard to tell which route the computer wants you to take until you've learned your lesson by crashing into every wrong turn along the way.

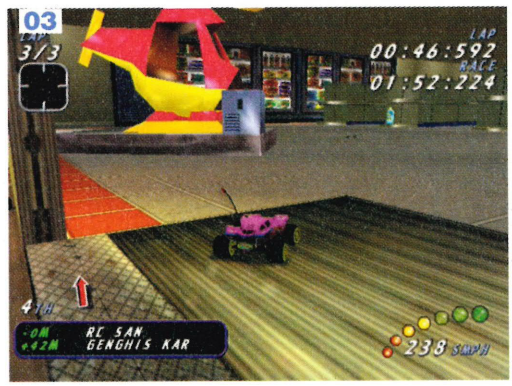
It's a pain to control too. The cars you get at the start of the game handle like barges at high speeds and spin out when you release the throttle, but the designers still saw fit to put jutting walls next to almost every corner. If you try to take a tight turn at full speed, you wind up stuck in a corner and you're forced to reverse. If you ease off the speed, you run the risk of flipping your car around and you're forced to reverse. Surprisingly, it's better to use the d-pad rather than the analog stick, at least until you've earned a vehicle that doesn't have the turning circle of the QE2.

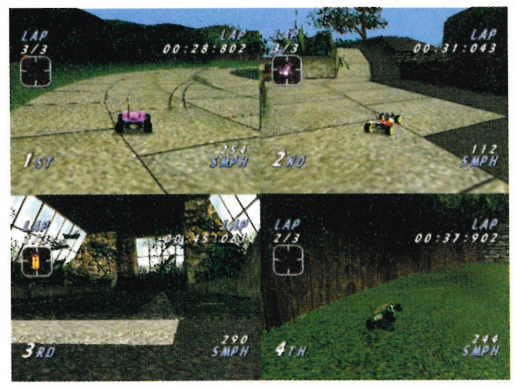
The extreme difficulty setting actually presents your best chance of victory against the computer. The other cars are as prone to making mistakes as you are, and you'll often find groups of them bashing away at solid walls, hopelessly lost. They also race 'for real' when they're off the screen, so you won't find them cheating to catch up ▶

> "*Re-Volt* is a game that revels in its ability to **kick you in the pants for the slightest mistake**"

- Publisher: Sega
- Developer: Probe
- Price: £39.99
- Release date: Out now
- Players: One to four
- **For:** Great vehicles with plenty of variety
- **Against:** Confusing tracks. Slightly too tricky handling



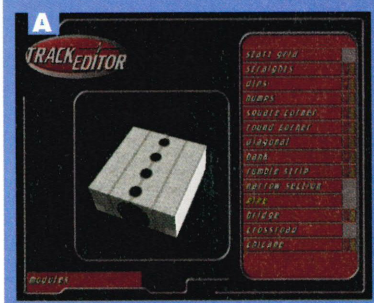


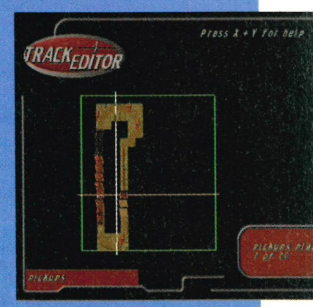


01 BigVolt, the 4WD monster truck, will send the other cars flying when it ploughs into them
02 RC Bandit comes from behind. That's programmer humour for you, though
03 The weapon icons are hidden along the aisles of this supermarket course

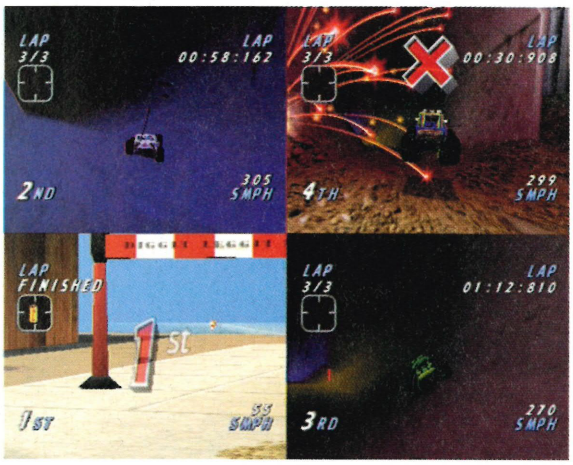
Home cooking

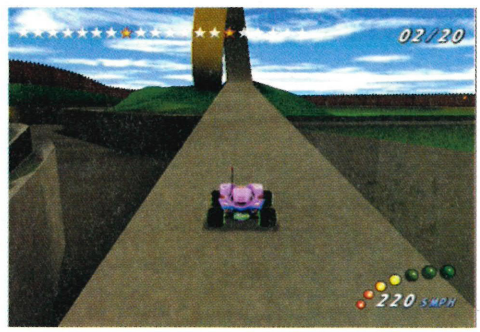
If the game's standard courses aren't difficult enough for you (yeah, right), you can use *Re-Volt*'s excellent track editor to make some real nightmare courses for you and your chums to romp around on. It's simple to use, and there's plenty of fun to be had devising tracks with treacherous hills that the heavier computer cars can't climb and jumps that throw the fastest cars into oblivion. Show them no mercy, is our advice.





A Choose a track segment from the many on offer. Sadly you can't use any of the scenery from the built-in levels
B You can raise any part of the track to create hills, jumps or even mountains for your cars to race on
C Test it out to make sure it's actually possible to complete a whole lap. Some of the cars will have trouble with that gradient





01 Taking to the air costs you in speed but your car makes a cool buzzing noise as its wheels spin at double speed
02 The rocket looks a lot more powerful than it actually is. In fact it's virtually useless
03 There's a star hidden at the top of that loop for people with fast cars

▶ with you if you build up a good lead. Patches of oil and tyre tracks leading to nowhere mark out battles between unseen opponents on a previous lap, which is a nice touch. Collecting the icons dotted around each course gives you a random weapon, such as turbos, fake power-ups and a magnetic field which sucks in nearby cars. Some are more useful than others; the rockets and the giant steel ball usually do you more harm than good, but a well-placed oil slick can win you the race.

However, give it some time, learn the course layout, and you'll find a better-than-average racing game. The fantastic visuals are ample incentive to make you devote your spare time to uncovering everything *Re-Volt* has to offer. In fact, the more you play, the more accessible the game becomes. There are 28 cars to unlock, each with its own set of performance pros and cons, each more suited to certain tracks and tasks than others. After finding all the standard electric models, you'll graduate to the petrol-engined versions. They go like the clappers and they tend to have more stable handling than their battery-powered cousins.

"*Re-Volt* is worth investigating, and deserves to be applauded for doing things its own way and not just ripping off *Micro Machines*"

The courses can be played mirrored or in reverse (or both), which does add some longevity, but you'll need to have a Rain Man-like memory to learn all the variations. There's also a stunt course, complete with jumps, half-pipes and a terrifying loop. The object is to retrieve 20 stars from some particularly tricky locations, a task for which you'll need to have found the best cars. The ones you start with don't have the speed to make some of the jumps or stick on the loop, so they tend to spend more time lying on their backs than they do on the track.

In oneplayer mode, you can have up to 11 computer opponents for a truly manic contest. But what you gain on the swings you lose on the roundabouts, so to speak. The trade-off for having so many cars on screen at the same time is a loss in frame rate, with a full complement of cars causing the more graphically complex environments to shudder and jerk in a most un-DC way. Stick with a more manageable seven opponents and the game is fast and smooth almost everywhere.

Re-Volt is worth investigating, and it deserves to be applauded for doing things its own way and not just ripping off *Micro Machines*. It's technically impressive, it's far more realistic than any other similar racer and it looks great. Just don't expect anything like *Mario Kart*, and be prepared to put up with some frustrating moments before you see the best it has to offer ■

Martin Kitts

DC-UK 7
HIGH VOLTAGE

GO THERE!
EXPERT WITNESS
Find out what the winners of Robot Wars thought of *Re-Volt*.
PAGE 036 >

TOYS
Race a remote controlled car for real in our magic grotto.
PAGE 116 >

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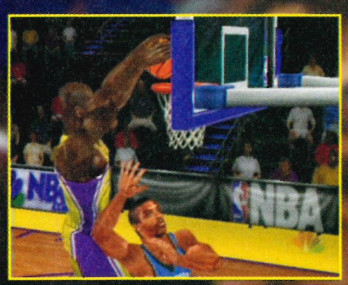

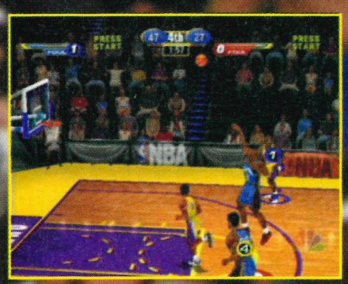

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Worms Armageddon

The invertebrate garden-dwellers are back and this time they're angry. But still 2D

- Publisher: Hasbro
- Developer: Team 17
- Price: £39.99
- Release date: Out now
- Players: One to four
- **For:** Long term challenge. Great multiplayer. Loads of weapons. Donkeys
- **Against:** Unappealing 2D visuals. Oneplayer missions are too fiddly at times

As the rest of the videogame industry struggles inexorably towards realism, one title stands defiant in its surreal ludicrousness: *Worms*. Since the release of the original edition in 1995, through a PC sequel, a couple of add-ons and a PlayStation conversion, the title has remained in cartoon, 2D and silly. It's so 2D and silly, in fact, that Sony Computer Entertainment America – in all its infinite wisdom about gameplay – was reluctant to grant it a licence in the States. Just not 3D enough, apparently. As if trash like *Phantom Menace* is somehow better because it uses polygons. Ironically, when *Worms* was released in the US it won the Sony Developers award that year. Go figure, as our American friends are prone to say.

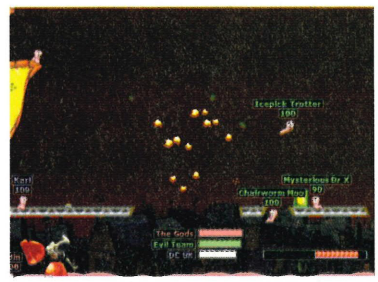
Anyway, *Worms Armageddon* released earlier this year on PC and now on Dreamcast, is the third true title in the series – and definitely the last. Well at least in 2D. For those who have never played, the rules are simple: you control a platoon of four worms and your mission is to kill the worms controlled by your opponent(s) – whether human or computer. There are dozens of weapons available (all with different abilities and specific uses) and each worm takes it in turn to select one and then attack an enemy invertebrate with it. The game goes on until only one team survives.

The skill of course is in selecting the right weapons for the right jobs and then firing them at your opponents accurately, and part of the fun is in finding out what each weapon is capable of. The good news here is that *Worms Armageddon* now boasts over 60 pieces of 'military' hardware, bringing back all the old favourites and including some truly surreal new stars. The concrete donkey, which drops from the sky taking great chunks of scenery with it, is now legendary (see our interview with Andy Davidson on page 054), but up there with everybody's favourite ass is the Sally Army woman, who wanders aimlessly along the landscape banging her tambourine until she meets an enemy worm at which point she explodes. Then there are the moles (who burrow into the ground and kill worms who have tunnelled to 'safety'), the bananas, the carpet bombs, the homing pigeons (prone to fly off in the wrong direction) and the holy

"The rules are simple: you control a platoon of worms and your mission is to **kill the worms controlled by your opponents"**

2nd opinion

"Like Keith, I'm not put off by the sight of two dimensions. Many of my favourite games have been 2D: *Bust-a-Move 2*, *Bubble Bobble*, and *Arkanoid* being just a few. It shouldn't matter what a game looks like; it's all about how enjoyable it is to play. *Worms* is a great laugh in multiplayer and its gameplay is simple to pick up. The real fun and depth is in developing more and more strategic and dastardly ways to wipe out your opponent's worms. And who can resist a game with concrete donkeys?"
Stephen Lawson



"The skill is in selecting the right weapon for the right job, and part of the fun is finding out **what each weapon is capable of"**

Scheme scene

To add a touch of variety to the multiplayer deathmatches, Team 17 has added a number of schemes which you can pick before you play to theme the event. Animal Farm, for example, uses the various animal-based weapons, while Kung Food offers only close combat options and Sniper gives players guns but no explosives. It's rather similar to the excellent 'choose weapon' option in the N64 classic, *GoldenEye*.

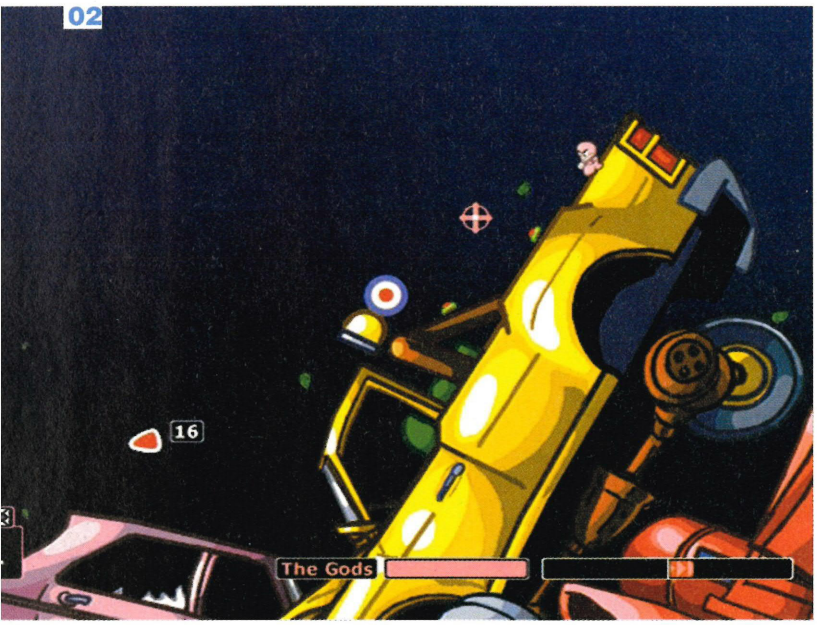
Incidentally, there are seven bonus schemes to collect which give access to new multiplayer levels filled with the madder, more powerful weapons. You get these by completing the training mode and working your way through the single player missions.

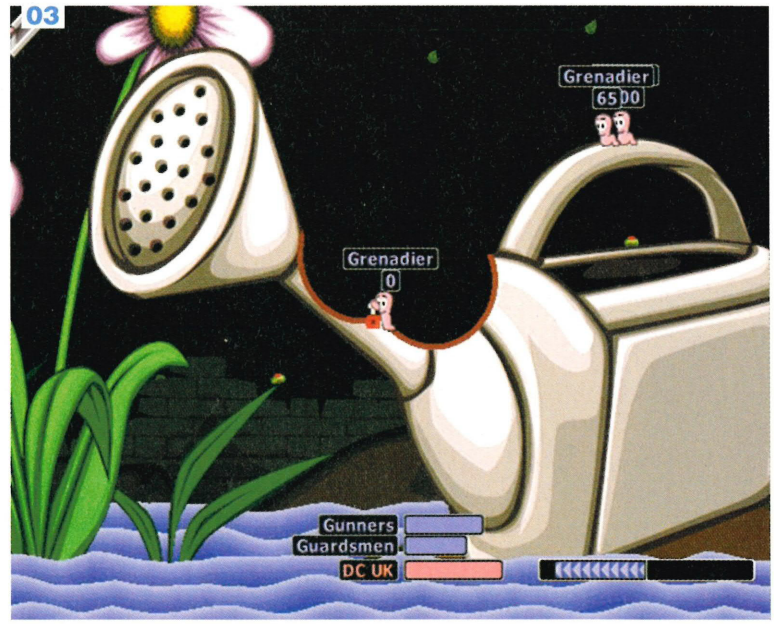
hand grenade. It's a weird, brutal and tactically diverse selection that'll take you ages to master.

Adding more longevity is the inclusion of 33 single player levels. In *Worms* the oneplayer mode was essentially a multiplayer game, but against computer-controlled opponents. In *Worms Armageddon*, you actually get a series of missions. These are usually based around getting from one side of the scenery to the other while killing enemy worms and picking up weapon drops and utilities (although occasionally you'll have to protect/assassinate one specific worm or pick up a specific crate, etc). However, as in the classic puzzle game *Lemmings*, you often get very limited equipment, and the challenge is figuring out exactly how to use your meagre supplies to progress. Not only is this ▶

"A range of training missions eases you into professional worm fighting"

01 The final training mission has you repeatedly shooting a granny with every weapon at your disposal. Let's hope the Daily Mail doesn't get wind of this
02 The bazooka is a favourite weapon as it has a good range and incurs a lot of damage
03 Taking out a gang of worms gathered in one area is one of the game's most satisfying moments





01 **DC-UK** worms its way to another victory
02 In this training level, you get a few extra seconds for every target you shoot. The longer you last, the better grade you are awarded
03 Backgrounds range from the post-apocalyptic, to the bizarre, to the just plain ridiculous. It's hard to take war seriously when it takes place on a large watering can

► an absorbing mental work-out in its own right, but it teaches you how to use things like the ninja rope, jet pack, super sheep and skunk bomb with consummate skill – which in turn adds more options to your multiplayer repertoire. There's also a range of training missions, designed to ease you into the world of professional worm fighting. A nice touch.

But okay, *Armageddon* looks silly and it's 2D – which is perhaps why the series has never been popular with hardcore game journos (ironic considering many of them constantly berate modern graphics-obsessed titles for their lack of gameplay and longevity). However, and that is a huge however, there is a real tactical depth on offer here, especially in multiplayer mode. After just a couple of turns each, you and your friends will all form very different strategies, based on favourite weapons and individual skills. You'll get more and more exact, more experimental, more in tune with this Dali-esque combat theatre. Finally, you'll discover that lobbing a grenade across the entire level only to see it bounce into a crater containing three of your enemies is one of life's more pleasing experiences.

> "**This being a 2D game**, many of the single player missions require **pinpoint accuracy**, real skill and **supreme patience**"

Of course, it could be argued that all of this was true of the original *Worms*. Indeed it could be further argued that *Armageddon* may not do quite enough for those players who are only interested in the multiplayer levels and who already own *Worms* – while the new weapons are fun, they don't radically alter the gameplay. Beware also, if you don't like to have your manual dexterity challenged – this being a 2D game, many of the single player missions require pinpoint accuracy, real skill (especially with ninja rope swinging) and supreme patience. I had to attempt some of the stages a dozen times before I managed to find the exact angle and exact microsecond to swing across the screen and land on the minute platform surrounded by mines. Although the challenge always seems to hover on the right side of the addictive/maddening border, some may find themselves pushed over by repeated failure.

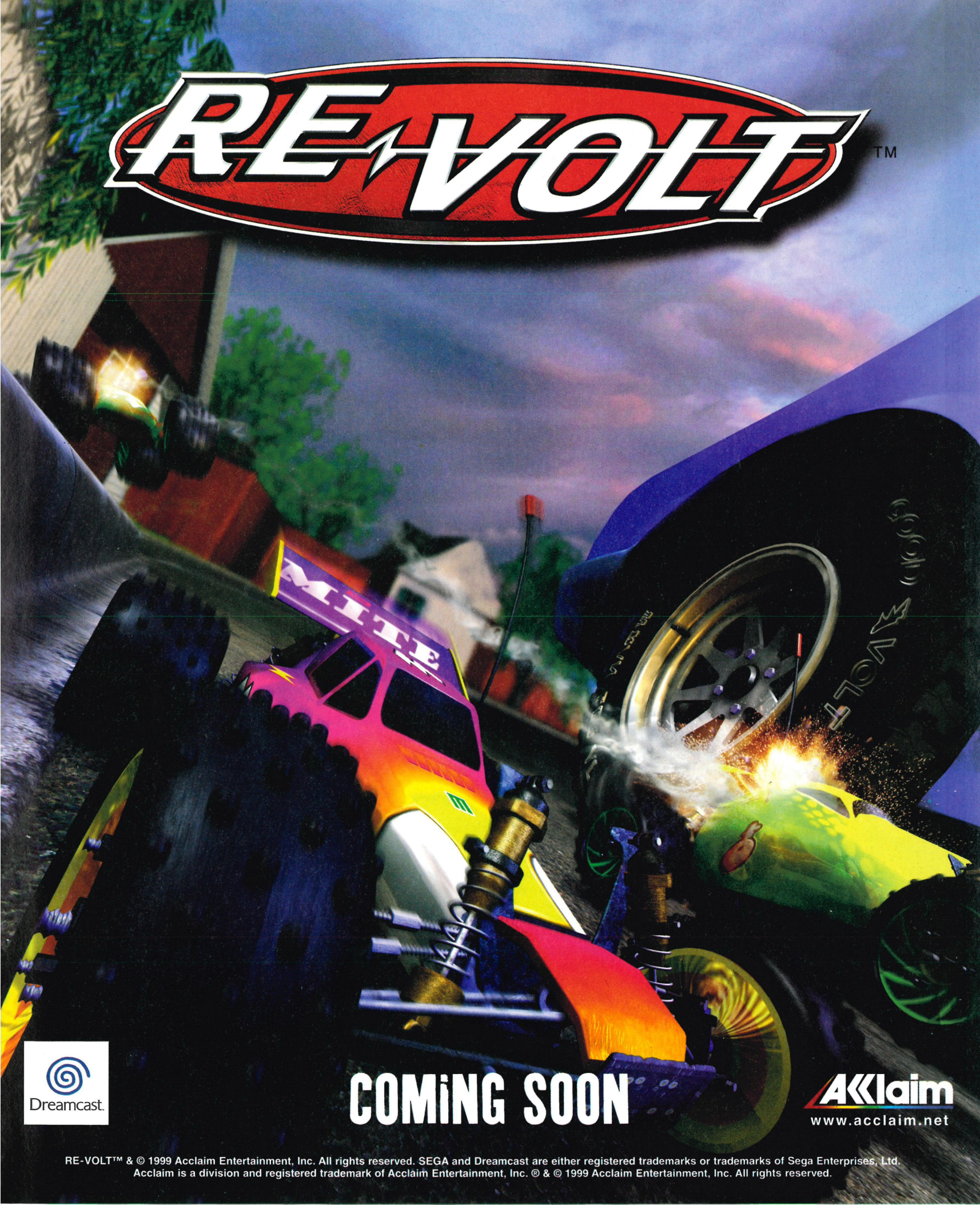
However, for anyone new to the series, looking for a decent long-term challenge and an addictive multiplayer blast, *Worms Armageddon* should definitely not be ignored. You just have to get past the rather lacklustre Teletubby-bright presentation, the repetitive speech, that fair-to-middling 2D art and the derision of your fellow Dreamcasters plugging away at *Soul Calibur*. It's worth it ■

Keith Stuart

DC-UK 8
SPINELESS TIMELESS

GO THERE!
FACES
We chat to the man behind the concrete donkey, Andy Davidson.
PAGE 052 >

TOYS
Touch wiggly worms without the fear of a sticky hand.
PAGE 116 >



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Chef's Luv Shack

Stan, Cartman, Kyle and Kenny pit their wits against South Park's answer to Nicky Campbell

- Publisher: Acclaim
- Developer: In-house
- Price: £39.99
- Release date: December
- Players: One to four
- **For:** Enjoyable mini-games. Great fun in fourplayer mode
- **Against:** Limited longevity. Not enough questions in quiz

Hello children! And how are you today? This reminds me of a little song... Gonna make love to my woman... Oh, I do apologise. For about a year now it's been nigh on impossible to escape the filthy clutches of South Park. If you're not quoting Chef, you'll be singing a ditty originally crooned by a talking poo, or you'll be perfecting your Cartman screech or your Kenny mumble. Over the last year, many of you will have pretended to have a small puppet with a big hat on one hand, or have ended sentences with an odd-sounding 'Okay', mmmkay? Or maybe that's just me. But if you, like me, believe Mecha Streisand to be one of the finest moments of comedy this century, then, baby, do we have a treat for you.

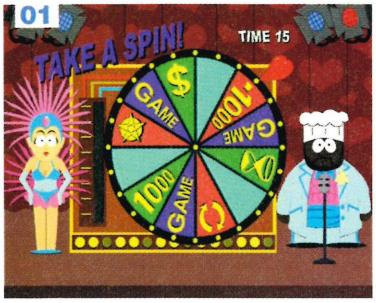
Luv Shack is a gameshow, and your host, as if you hadn't guessed, is the affable and extremely sexy Chef, who comperes the proceedings in his own inimitable style – a sort of Barry White on heat. It's a game best played between four of you, but you can be sad and lonely if you so wish (though this isn't half as much fun as the multiplayer option). Choose the amount of rounds you wish to partake in (up to eight), choose the boy you wish to play as (Cartman is by far the funniest) and get playing. Each round has four multiple choice questions, which you have to answer correctly to win your 500 points. If you muck it up, you lose 500 points. Every so often you will go to a game round, where you'll get to play a South Park variant of a classic videogame – *Donkey Kong*, *Pong*, *Asteroids* and *Galaxian*, to name but a few (see South Park Elementary for more information).

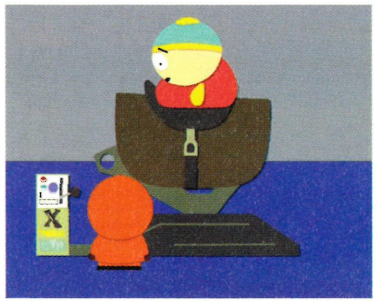
"Spank the Monkey is a game where you have to remember in **which order Mr Mackey has spanked the monkey's four arses**"

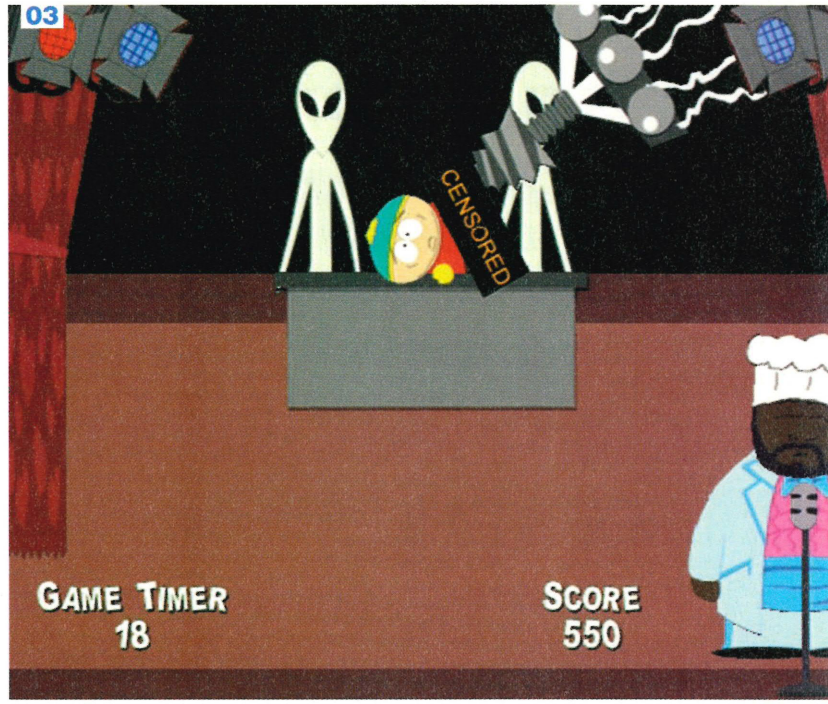
What is different about all of this is the South Park flavour – let me give you a taster from just one round. Let's choose a category... How about 'What a Dump!' Enter Chef with his question: "Baby's first poo has a very special name. What is it?" Ooh, tough one... At this point you're given four possible answers; get it right, and your little boy will be very happy indeed (even Kenny). Other categories for you to choose from, go from the supposedly out of place 'Great Singers from the Baroque Era' through to the bizarre 'America loves Chicken' via the frankly

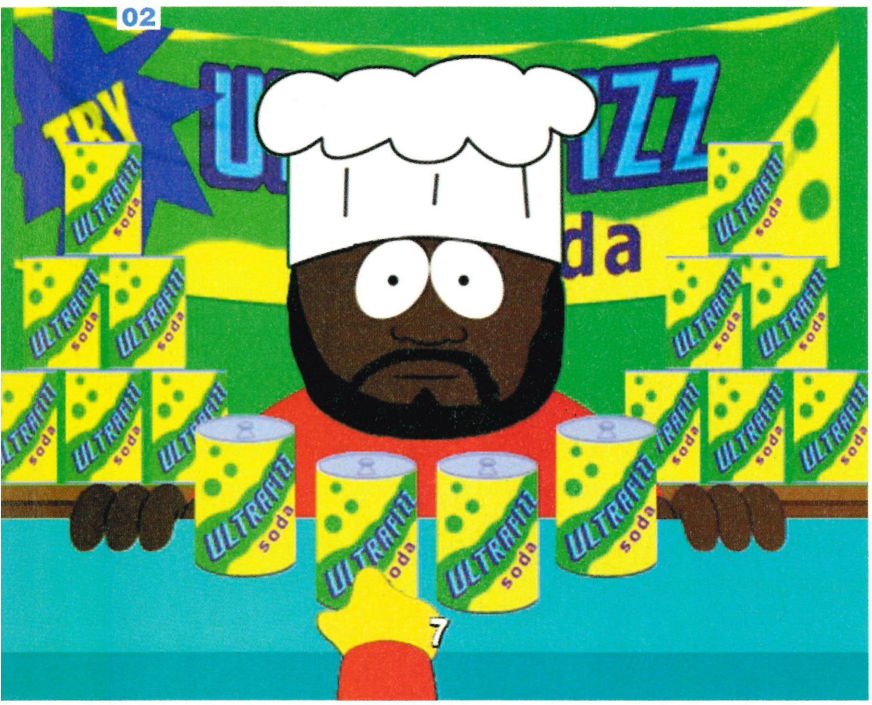
2nd opinion

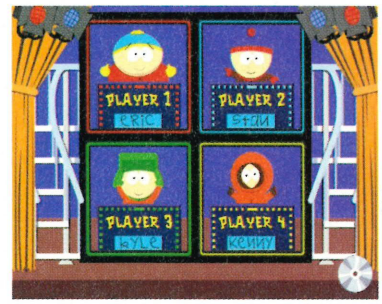
"I thought the first series of South Park had its moments, but recently I've grown tired of the foul-mouthed brats. So I was surprised to find that *Luvshack* is a real laugh, especially the mini-games. As a oneplayer game it will lose its appeal and the jokes will get stale really quickly, but the fourplayer mode is almost as much fun as games like *Mario Party* and *Track and Field*. If you like South Park, you'll probably love this – just don't expect the honeymoon period to last very long."
Stephen Lawson











01 Take a spin on the Wheel of Fortuitousness; all the thrills and spills of Wheel of Fortune with a cool chef replacing the gangly Scot
02 The mini-game Soda Shake is like Russian Roulette with cans of Ultrafizz instead of guns
03 In one round you can assist the Greys in giving Cartman an anal probe

anal 'My Fart Will Go On'. So you see, it's all innocent fun and games.

Speaking of games, let's have a look at one some of the minigames that crop up during the show. 'Spank the Monkey', anyone? Don't look at me funny, it's a memory game where you have to remember in which order Mr Mackey has spanked the monkey's four asses. Simple. 'Frog Toss'? It's chucking frogs onto lily pads. Good clean fun, Madam. And then there's my favourite, 'Asses in Space'. This is *Asteroids* with a Terrence and Philip theme, where you blast bottoms into bits from your flatulent spaceship. Exquisite. Meanwhile, when you're not tossing frogs, whacking zombies and chucking pizzas, you have the added bonus of doubling your points in 'Double Down', where you can teach youngsters how to gamble (start 'em young, that's what I say), or, if you're lucky, you can play the 'Wheel of Fortuitousness!' Similar to that other famous Wheel, but with a better name and decent prizes.

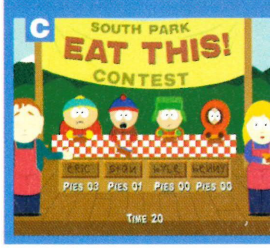
***Luv Shack* is** possibly the most diverting and genuinely funny game I've ever had the pleasure of playing. Although there are glitches at the moment, we are assured that these will be ironed out by the time of the game's release, so it seems hardly fair to mention the loading times and the occasional hiccups in the characters' speech. What did annoy me, though, was that when you answer a question wrongly you aren't told the correct answer, although I suppose this has something to do with the longevity of the game – there are only so many questions, and you could easily end up learning all the answers.

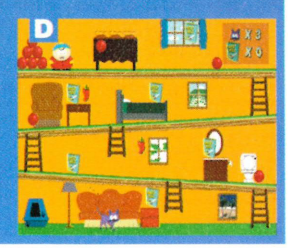
Whether it's worth the initial financial outlay really depends on your opinion of South Park. Presumably proper grown-ups will find *Chef's Luv Shack* unimaginably tedious and puerile, but what do they know anyway? After all, Cartman's mum's a grown-up and she was on the cover of Crack Whore Magazine, mmmkay ■

Esther Woodman

GO THERE!
TOYS
Make friends with South Park's obnoxious but lovable brats.
PAGE 116 >

South Park Elementary





Luv Shack's best moments take place in the old school-style game rounds. Here are four mini-games that had us splitting our sides.

A Snow Forts – This is like a fourplayer *Pong* where you have to aim the red ball at your opponents' snowmen
B Bees at the Picnic – Here you have to shoot the bees just like in Namco's *Space Invaders*-inspired *Galaxian*
C Eat This – You have to bash alternate buttons à la *HyperSports* and *Track and Field* to fill your brat with pie
D Bad Kitty – Go on, have a guess which classic Nintendo game this is based on. Clue: Mario's debut. Come on!

Charts

The games that have rocked your Dreamcasts this month.

Dreamcast top ten

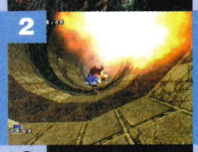
ChartTrack

Courtesy of ChartTrack, it's the official UK sales chart. Sega's zombie blaster sits rightfully at the top with *Sonic* breathing down its fetid neck. Nice

1 House of The Dead 2

Publisher: Sega Developer: In-house

As far as gun-based games go, it doesn't get much better than this. Well, except for that Russian roulette scene in The Deer Hunter. But anyway, *The House of The Day 2* is top of the charts and, frankly, it deserves its prime position ■



2 Sonic Adventure

Publisher: Sega Developer: Sonic Team

Sonic's staying power has kept him in the top five since Dreamcast's launch, and it's hardly surprising considering the spiny blue geezer's legacy. How many of us bought a Mega Drive just to play *Sonic The Hedgehog*? Quite a few, we reckon ■

3 Ready 2 Rumble

Publisher: Sega Developer: Midway

It's the game that encouraged scruffy school kids to play truant down their local EBs. And no wonder, *Ready 2 Rumble* is a next-gen gem, with a great twoplayer mode and some of the greatest characters ever seen in a videogame. Let's get ready... ■

4 F1 World Grand Prix

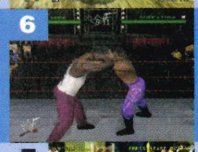
Publisher: Sega Developer: Video System

F1 World Grand Prix's placing above *Sega Rally 2* in this month's chart probably means that you lot are hungry for some more Dreamcast racing action. Well, this detailed and challenging Formula One title should keep you busy well into 2000 ■

5 Sega Rally 2

Publisher: Sega Developer: In-house

There are a few decent racers out there on Dreamcast, but *Sega Rally 2* was always bound to be a favourite. While it may not have the depth of a *Gran Turismo*, *SR2* is accessible and looks pretty darn nice, too, despite skating cars and dodgy pop-up ■



6 WWF Attitude

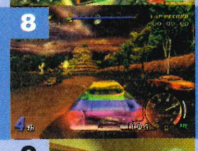
Publisher: Acclaim Developer: Acclaim Sports

Esther's favourite excuse to ogle sweaty men in tight trunks and tights is actually not such a bad game. For hardcore fans of WWF it's a must-have, but non-fans might find it a bit slow, lardy, brash and American. Mr Ass, anyone? ■

7 Power Stone

Publisher: Eidos Developer: Capcom

Capcom's beautiful and original fighting game slips to the back of the top ten, probably due to an influx of new titles, rather than a lack of respect on your part. We hope it's down to that. If not, Auntie Esther will be putting you over her knee ■



8 Speed Devils

Publisher: Ubi Soft Developer: In-house

If you're after a quick fix of wacky off-the-wall racing you could do worse than taking *Speed Devils* for a spin. It's original and a right old laugh to play, but there aren't many tracks to roll around, putting a question mark in its longevity ■

9 Toy Commander

Publisher: Sega Developer: No Cliché

No Cliché's wildly original toy-based romp is marred only by a fidgety control system and some extremely frustrating missions. Will you still be clamouring for some hot toy action this time next month? Depends what's in Santa's sack ■

10 Blue Stinger

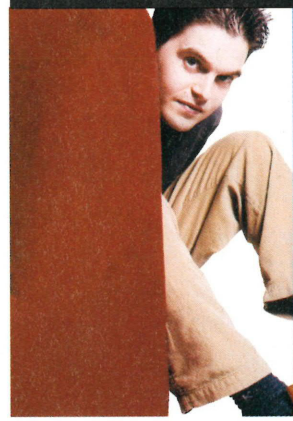
Publisher: Activision Developer: Climax Graphics

The worst Dreamcast game so far clings tenaciously to the top ten. Die you bastard, die! Why won't you go away? Why do you lot insist on wasting your spondoolies on this pap? Will Flash Gordon survive the rockslide? Find out next month ■

Chart Track Ltd. Tel: 0181 741 7585 www.elspa.com © Elspa

Easy money

What DC gear we'd buy with £100 of our own cash



Stephen

Well, for my money it'd have to be *Soul Calibur*. I fell in love with the Japanese import months ago and I can't wait to get into the missions in the PAL version (my Japanese isn't up to much, y'see). I'd also plump for the hefty slab of gaming pleasure that is the Arcade Stick and take on all comers – to the death. That'd leave me £25 which I'd spend on a night out with the missus.

DC-UK's list of love

The three games most responsible for making us grin this month

Chu Chu Rocket

Sonic Team's latest release is available on Japanese import (see NTSC page 110), and if you have a Japanese Dreamcast we implore you to get it. Now. We haven't enjoyed a 2D puzzle game so much since the days of *Super Bomberman* on the SNES.

Worms Armageddon

Keith and Stephen can't get enough of this. They assure us it takes strategy and no end of cunning to be good at it. You should have seen their faces when the kids came round and trounced them effortlessly (see opposite).

Red Dog

Now Dreamcast is armed with a decent fourplayer deathmatch, Caspar has insisted on fragging us all, cheeky grin on his face, in the games room. Much to our frustration. Bastard ■

Dreamcasters

What do 'the kids' think of the most powerful console in the world?

This month we stole round to the bosses' house and abducted their kid, Tom, and a couple of his mates for an afternoon of Dreamcasting. The children didn't seem to mind too much, but we think mum and dad might have something to say to us P45-wise. Tom, Amelia and Theo are all nine years old and are all, despite their tender years, very much into gaming. Amelia couldn't make it back to the office for a quick game, but the two boys were more than happy to offer their thoughts on the latest Dreamcast releases.

> *Worms Armageddon*

The lads sit down to play a couple of rounds of *Worms Armageddon*. Tom likes *Worms* a lot, "We've got this at school. It's only a demo, though. Is this the full version?" This is obviously a young man who knows his videogaming. What are your favourite games, then? He mentions *FIFA*, *Mario Kart* – and he has *Worms* for Nintendo, "but it's rubbish". So when did you start gaming? "Well mummy [that's the boss] had a Sega and she gave it to me when I was three. Now I've got a PlayStation and an N64." Lucky old Tom.

Theo and Tom start playing. Theo begins by blasting one of Tom's worms into the sea and cheering loudly, but then goes oddly silent when Tom blasts him with a mortar. "This is really cool," says Theo, while he's trying to figure out where to throw his skunk. Theo wins the first round, and then it's onto the next – Tom is not one to give up. He starts off defiantly firebombing Theo. Theo responds by drilling through Tom's head (via the worms, you understand). When Tom starts dropping behind, Theo tries to offer some help, "You could drop a grenade on me..." Tom whacks him on the head with a baseball bat. "Or you could just whack me on the head with a baseball bat." Tom wins round two.

> *Fighting Force 2*

The boys then move on to *Fighting Force 2*, which neither have played before. "It's amazing how Sega has made such a good console cos all its old ones are rubbish," states Theo, happily unaware of English laws on slander. Tom is finding his way around the controls and asks if this is "like *Tekken 3* for PlayStation." Er, no. Still, he finds his way around with the confidence of a seasoned gamer while Theo shouts encouragement as to which punch to employ, until Tom seems to have run out of baddies to thump. After a while he breaks the silence that has pervaded the games room. "It's a bit weird," he says, "There aren't many places to go. You're stuck after you've beaten all the people up." Suddenly Theo points out an as yet undiscovered doorway which makes Tom change his mind. On his second attempt, he races round quickly beating up his opponents. "Those big blokes look hard but they're easy." A game of *UEFA Striker* later – the score 2-1, with a winning goal in extra time from Theo – and we're getting peeved phone calls from mum and dad, so it's off home for tea.

Favourite game for the under 12s?:
Fighting Force 2 ■

> "It's amazing how **Sega has made such a good console** because all its old ones are rubbish"

THANKS
GRANT

TEAM BEHEMOTH
VS RE-VOLT

The winners of Robot Wars seemed the perfect candidates to take *Re-Volt* for a test run. So what did the experts think?

PROFILE

Team Behemoth comprises of Edward Pritchard, his two sons, Michael and Anthony, and their friends Kane Aston and Jonathan Henley, who wasn't able to come. Anthony is presently studying Model Design and hopes to work for BBC visual effects. Michael is studying Business and IT, and is looking to moving into Computer Engineering when he has completed his course. Kane is studying Computer Science, and you can check out his Webpage (**www.kanenet.co.uk**) where he details the construction of Behemoth.

Anthony is excited. "We've got every single console ever made!" he blurts. He's sitting at a table looking intently at the TV screen while Re-Volt is loading. On either side of him are his brother Michael and friend Kane. Looking on from the other side of the table is his father, Edward. And just behind the boys, nestled in the corner, is a sleeping (they left the batteries at home) Behemoth, fresh from its success on Robot Wars. Even when resting, it is a truly impressive beast. Underneath that exterior, it has enough power to tow a fully-laden Land Rover. The boys began work on Behemoth back in February '98 with parts from an old electric wheelchair and a Sodastream (among others). This first version got through to the semi finals of the programme's second series. The robot sitting in front of us, though, is the second incarnation, which has been rebuilt for series three using Titanium.

Every single console, then? Surely not. "We've got a PlayStation, N64, SNES, NES, Saturn, Mega Drive, Master System..." Anything else? "...Three PCs, a Game Boy, a Neo Geo..." And who pays for this wealth of consoles? Anthony and Michael look sheepishly towards their father, who is sitting in the corner pulling at a loose thread on his jumper.

Surprisingly, none of them have played Dreamcast before – "We're getting one for Christmas, though" – although they do have a copy of *Re-Volt* on PC and it's their favourite game ever. So we're off to a good start. One of their other passions is remote control cars, so they see *Re-Volt* as the best of both worlds.

Anthony explains that he loves the sound of the cars, especially the petrol ones you unlock later in the game. While he's talking, he calmly thrashes Michael then Kane, swiftly followed by his reluctant father. "The PC version supports up to eight players," he says, "So I don't know if we'll get this. The graphics are better, though." Michael loves it, too: "This is an excellent game – brilliant in multiplayer." Kane agrees that "It looks and sounds realistic, and controls just like a remote control car." They continue gaming for another hour, until it's time to leave. The boys have displayed a tenderness towards Behemoth the likes of which I haven't witnessed since Short Circuit. That is, until they have to heave its vast 82kg bulk back into the car for the journey home. Heavy metal indeed ■

WAR

SUCCESS AT SNOOKER CAN SERIOUSLY DAMAGE YOU

JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL, NOW ON DREAMCAST™. THE MO

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NING:

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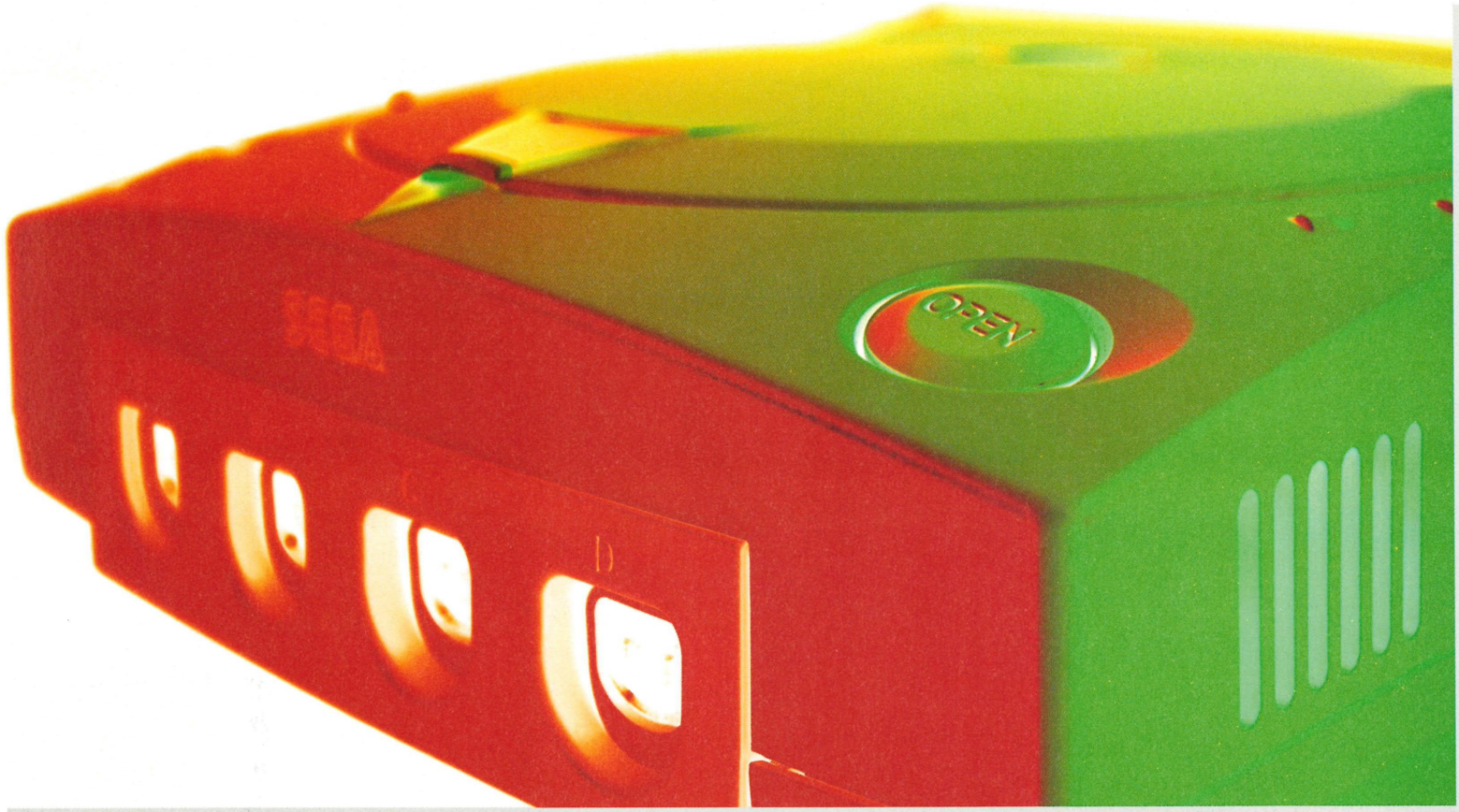


CHRISTMAS CRACKER

Game retailers can make up to half their yearly sales in the few weeks before Christmas. But is Dreamcast the present they reckon everyone will want to unwrap this time around?

Santa is on commission. While innocent children in rural areas dream of steering their new bikes through off-white Christmas slush, sinister suits plot to sell them Mega Mega Organ Rovers – cheap plastic figurines with pop-out offal interiors that'll be old news before the turkey's finished. Thankfully, there's also Dreamcast. The most exciting thing to happen to Christmas since pieces of coal headed a child's Yuletide wish list, Sega's box of tricks is the hippest toy on the high street. Sorry, we mean the hippest cutting-edge interactive Internet gaming appliance on the high street.

Whatever, Christmas will be an important test for Sega. So far, Dreamcast has flown off the shelves – albeit with a slight lull before *Soul Calibur* – and punters are happy. Now the console is competing in the most open pre-Christmas toy market that anyone in the industry can remember. When retail toy buyers formulated their Christmas strategies in January at the New York Toy Fair, shifting mountains of Star Wars tat at the close of 1999 seemed feasible. But relatively speaking – bar completists with attics stuffed full of shrink-wrapped paraphernalia – Star Wars has flopped. So during the summer, for the first time in living memory some of the biggest names on the high street changed their plans. It's a signal that everything from Dreamcast to Levi's Flat Eric has a shot at getting to the top of the seasonal tree.

Retailers are confident of Dreamcast's place, though. "We're fully supporting Dreamcast," says Doug Bone of retail giant HMV. "The demand and support from launch has been very strong." Like all retailers, Bone won't be drawn on the exact number of consoles he expects HMV to sell over Christmas. But, boosted by *Soul Calibur*, he says Sega's machine will have a good run well into the New Year. "Demand slowed down after launch, but it does with every machine, to be fair," says Bone. "There is more momentum kicking in again. Sega has got a sufficiently strong head start to build up a very healthy user base by the time Sony's next console gets here." Oh, and incidentally, he told us that buying selected Dreamcast titles at HMV over Christmas will get you a handy CD wallet worth £9.99.

Meanwhile, at one of HMV's biggest high street rivals, Virgin Megastores, Bart Saunt makes a blunter assessment of the importance of this Christmas season for Sega. "It's do or die," he says, arguing that the tailing off of Dreamcast sales – and the fact that Sony is shifting seven times as many of the cheaper PlayStation – means that Sega has to work harder to push its message home. "Now is the real challenge," says Saunt. "Japan did the work that sold the first 100,000 units by designing a stunning game console. Sega Europe's marketing plans now need to convince the consumers."

Virgin is helping the cause with its two games for £70 promotion throughout Christmas (which doesn't apply

■ **The console is competing** in the most open pre-Christmas toy market that **anyone in the industry can remember** ■

GORY TOY STORY

No-one knows who'll win the fight for must-have status this Christmas. Here's **DC-UK**'s assessment of the toys making a bid for top of the tree, all available without leaving your Dreamcast, from **www.etoys.co.uk**

WWF ACTION FIGURES £5.99
WWF and *ECW* aren't just computer wrestling games, you know. The kids love the bloodless violence of the cable sport, and Hamley's expects the figures to fly off the shelves. A fully operating ring is also available for £14.99.

THE RUBIKS CUBE £6.99
Even more déjà vu-inspiring than the return of Sonic to our TVs. If you were good at the cube the first time, you can dazzle the kids anew. If you're too young to remember it, we hate you.

STAR WARS FIGURES £6.74
Most stores still say these will do reasonably well – perhaps because they've got stacks of them out back.

POKEMON £9.99
He's nine inches tall and he's furry. Not one to take to the playground perhaps, but it will impress both girlfriends and ironic twenty-somethings everywhere. Probably.

FINGERBOARD RAMP £17.99
In 1998, the UN made millions of tiny skateboards for a race of baggy trousered pygmies believed to live in the heart of Madagascar. Then they realised someone had lied. Now they're off-loading them onto the kids. This ramp is great for 'getting some air', we believe.

Also rans: Levi's Flat Eric, Lots of Legs (a fluffy caterpillar), Furby Babies, Barbie (as always).

JINGLE BELLS

What do our wise men think will get the cash registers ringing this Christmas?

DOUG BONE, HMV
1. Soul Calibur
2. Sonic Adventure
3. Ready 2 Rumble

BART SAUNT, VIRGIN
1. Sonic Adventure
2. Sega Rally 2
3. Ready 2 Rumble

WILL GUYATT, PINK PLANET
1. Soul Calibur
2. Ready 2 Rumble
3. UEFA Striker

to the *House of the Dead 2* gun pack, by the way). Saunt says Dreamcast will earn more space in Virgin's stores as the software range grows.

Pink Planet Games Exchange is a fast growing independent retailer with shops all over the West of England and like many 'indies' it's worried stock supply problems mean it won't get a fair share of the Christmas pudding. "It seems they're supplying the big boys and neglecting us," says Pink Planet's Will Guyatt. "I'm sure the more Dreamcasts we got, the more we'd sell. We're pretty much selling out. Some of our customers are travelling over 20 miles to our other stores to pick them up."

Guyatt, an unabashed Sega fan, says Dreamcast is making waves. "It's definitely selling to our expectations," he says. "The kids are less uncertain now too. Our best move was getting demo pods into our stores. *Ready 2 Rumble* brought a lot of people in and *Soul Calibur* is definitely going to kick it off again."

Pink Planet is already selling games for just £34.99, with *Ready 2 Rumble* at just £29.99. Guyatt says Pink Planet has plenty of secret plans to take on the heavyweights as Christmas nears. "Because we're a smaller company, we can pretty much roll out an idea in a couple of days, whereas EB had to work out its plans in a board room back in May," he says.

That's Christmas for you. Peace and goodwill to all men (and women) – and guerrilla warfare on the high street. May the most cunning retailer win ■

■ We're pretty much selling out. Some of our customers are travelling over **20 miles to our other stores to pick them up ■**

TOO HOT TO HANDLE?

COMING SOON	HOW FIRED UP SHOULD YOU BE?
Armada	2
Crazy Taxi	5
Deadly Skies (aka Airforce Delta)	4
Furballs	4
Grand Theft Auto 2	4
MDK 2	4
Metropolis Street Racer	5
NBA 2000	3
Red Dog	4
Resident Evil 2	3
Soul Reaver	3
Tee Off Golf	3
Vigilante 8: 2nd Offence	2
Virtua Striker 2 ver.2000.1	4
Wild Metal	2
Zombie Revenge	3

COMING NOT QUITE SO SOON	HOW FIRED UP SHOULD YOU BE?
Big Bang	4
Chu Chu Rocket	3
Croc 2	4
Dead or Alive 2	5
Deadly Pursuit	3
Hidden & Dangerous	4
Planet of the Apes	5
Sega GT: Homologation Special	5
South Park Rally	4
Space Channel 5	5
Street Fighter III World Impact	5
Stunt GP	3
V-Rally 2	3
Virtual On Oratorio Tangram	4

COMING FROM A LONG WAY OFF	HOW FIRED UP SHOULD YOU BE?
Black and White	5
Castlevania Ressurrection	4
D2	3
Half-Life	5
Ferrari 355 Challenge	5
Jet Set Radio	4
Max Payne	4
Power Smash (aka Virtua Tennis)	4
Shenmue	5
SNK vs Capcom	4
Take the Bullet	3

BOARD THE EXPRESS

RUMOUR

Rumour: Midway is working on a Dreamcast version of classic arcade driving game *Spyhunter*.
DC-UK: Well, someone close to Midway told us this, but made us promise not to tell. We did tell. We're sorry ■

Rumour: Team 17 is considering releasing a special Online version of *Worms* for Dreamcast. A *Worms 3D* is also on the boards.
DC-UK: Hmm, kind of true. Team 17 is currently talking to Sega bout the possibility of creating a multiplayer *Worms* title, but nothing conclusive has been decided yet. As for *Worms 3D* – there are almost definitely going to be further titles, but 3D will only be employed if the gameplay works. We can't say where we heard this. Yes we can. A little monkey told us ■

Rumour: Namco is releasing a version of classic arcade-style racing game *Ridge Racer* on Dreamcast next year.
DC-UK: Not conclusive. Namco is working on a new Dreamcast game set for release early next year – and apparently it will be part of a series already introduced to gamers on PlayStation or in the arcade. No other details are known at present. Namco has also announced that it will be releasing at least 2 to 3 games on Sega's console every year. Which is, let's face it, great news ■

Rumour: Japanese developer Genki – responsible for the 'not very good really' driving game *Tokyo Highway Challenge* – just can't leave Dreamcast alone; it has another title in development.
DC-UK: It's true, Lord help us, it's true. The curiously named *Super Magnetic Nuenue* will be released in Japan in February 2000. We visited the company's Website (**www.genki.co.jp**) to find out more, but came away empty-headed. Sorry, handed. It's a really nice Website though ■

CONTROL FREAKS

Sega of Japan release fruity pads to coincide with millenium celebrations

Not content with the pale grey numbers, Sega of Japan has announced a sexy range of Millennium joypads that will be available in four semi-transparent colours: lime green, smoke, blue and, ahem, passion pink. As we went to press there was no word on whether these pads will be released here, but it's bound to happen in the near future.

In conjunction with the release of its shoot 'em up *Virtual On: Orotario Tangram*, Sega is also releasing the DC Twin Stick and Battle Cable. These peripherals have been designed specifically for use with the game; the Twin Stick being a double joystick for ultra-precise control and the Battle Cable enabling two DCs to be connected together for twoplayer shoot 'em up scraps ■

CHU CHU ROCKET

Sonic Team's addictive puzzle game touted for special low-price release

With Y2K promised to be the year that Dreamcast's online gaming comes to life, DC-UK can reveal that madcap puzzler *Chu Chu Rocket* is being considered for a special, low-price release (possibly around the £30 mark). The game's fourplayer mode is Internet compatible, meaning you can compete online against three other players.

Because *Chu Chu Rocket* is technically undemanding compared to a firstperson shoot 'em up like *Half-Life*, Sega's network should be able to support large numbers of Dreamcasters taking their first steps into the online gaming world. *Rocket* is also simple enough to encourage people to make the step, where a *Quake*-style game might not be.

Also being considered to take part in the first wave of online titles is delayed tank blaster *Red Dog* (see page 082). It's thought that the game was originally destined to support online play, but this was at first dropped when the title was scheduled for a '99 release. With *Red Dog* now due in March, there may well be time for the Internet modes to be reinstated.

The question mark hanging over all of Sega's online plans is whether its network systems really will be able to cope with the added load of multiplayer gaming. **DC-UK** experienced difficulties connecting its Dreamcast to the network as recently as late November, a problem which simply should not be a factor. If similar setbacks plague the launch of Dreamcast's online gaming, they could be enough to destroy players' interest – for good ■

01 Soon you could be filling your Chu Chu Rocket for the special price of £30
02 *Chu Chu* would be a great laugh against other player online
03 *Red Dog* may also be considered for online play. Bring it on!

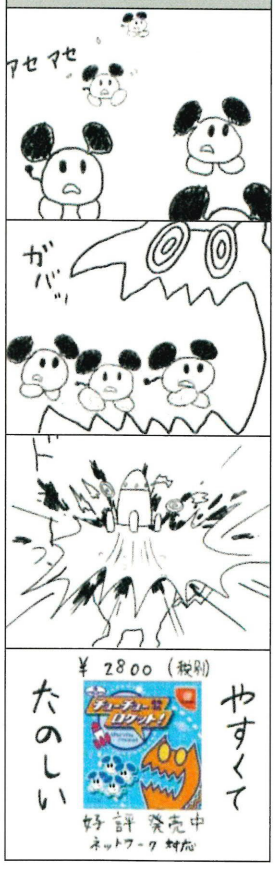
LITES

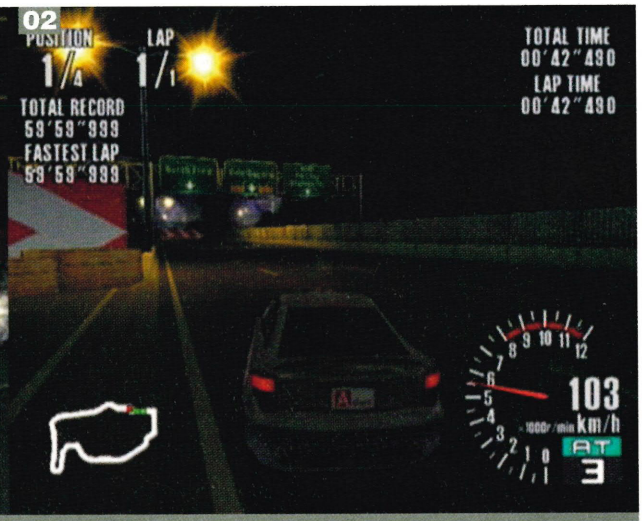
CHU CHU COMMERCIAL

Goddamit, those crazy Japanese fellas have done it again. Released via the Internet (**www.sega.co.jp**), and, we presume, on Nipponese television too, the commercial for Sonic Team's new puzzle game *Chu Chu Rocket* is a work of art.

Featuring line drawings of the game's hapless mice being munched by a greedy cat or escaping into the Chu Chu Rocket, the cartoon commercial loops twice, backed by a bizarre but surprisingly sing-a-long theme tune. As the cat cheerfully chomps the mice into a bloody mush, it quickly dawns on you that this is one of the funniest adverts around.

If Sega has any sense, it will run this advert, unchanged, in Europe. Which means that it probably won't. However, we will put our plea in now, anyway: Giles Thomas (Sega Europe's Marketing Manager, see **DC-UK 02**), if you're reading this, give us our *Chu Chu Rocket* commercial. Er, please? ■





SEGA GT HEATS UP

Sega's *Gran Turismo*-alike is looking greater by the day

Last month we pulled news of Sega's top secret driving game *Sega GT* from our magic hat and now, like an occult sect of videogame sorcerers, we've conjured up some sexy screenshots from the game. Judging by these images it seems Sega's aim to create an ultra-realistic driving simulation that leaves *Gran Turismo* eating dust is well on course.

The replays are almost television quality, with incredibly detailed tracks and cars featuring lighting effects that match anything seen in the *Gran Turismo 2000* PlayStation2 demo. The in-game shots obviously aren't up to that graphical standard, but they're still way in advance of any other driving game currently on the market.

One worrying aspect of what we've seen so far is the number of cars involved in the races. While the replays show anything up to six motors zooming around the tracks, the actual in-game screens only feature four vehicles. If their are only four cars in the finished version it would be a huge disappointment as we were hoping for tight racing action with a multitude of motors all battling it out for the lead.

However, it's still quite early in development so there's no need to be unduly concerned at this stage. Sega will surely include a load of opposition cars to race against. With *Sega GT* due in Japan on February 17, you can be sure we'll be updating you regularly over the next few months ■

01 The replay views are extremely impressive, especially the lighting effects in the night stages
02 Our only real concern is the shortage of CPU-controlled cars. So far we've only seen four cars racing simultaneously

■ The replays are **almost television quality**, with incredibly detailed tracks and some **impressive lighting effects** ■

MO' MOTORS

Infogrames has confirmed that *V-Rally 2* will be racing onto Dreamcast this summer

The sequel to Infogrames' top-selling rally game *V-Rally* is coming to Dreamcast – and we have the pictures to prove it. *V-Rally 2* was originally released on the PlayStation and PC last year to much acclaim, thanks to its impressive range of vehicles and authentic rally courses.

The new DC version will include 84 tracks spread across 12 countries, 24 cars, a track editor and a fourplayer mode. Predictably, there will also be a visual overhaul with new handling and physics, new special effects and improved dynamics. Looks like all your rally prayers are about to be answered ■

LITES

DREAMCAST IS KING

Time Digital, Time Magazine's sister publication dedicated to technology, has awarded Dreamcast its machine of the year award for 1999. Sega's console earned the accolade because of its revolutionary design, its great software line-up and its online component. Sega's machine beat a new Panasonic video recorder as well as an MP3 player to win the award. Well done, Dreamcast ■

UK FUMBLES ITS BASS

Sega UK has announced that the release of *Sega Bass Fishing* will be put back from December 10 to 'early 2000'. According to a recent press release, this is to allow for 'greater ship-out of stock to UK retailers prior to the game's launch'. It could be that too few *Fishing* controllers – due to be bundled with the game – have been manufactured. Meanwhile, **DC-UK** has learned that the UK version of the controller has had one of its microswitches removed, meaning the stick can now only detect up and down movements, and not left and right. Unfortunately, this means that British gamers won't be able to use the rod to play *Soul Calibur* (see Rumours issue 03). Rats ■

SONY GOES TOO FAR

According to a news piece posted recently on **www.asiabiztech.com**, Sony Computer Entertainment is already hard at work on a third PlayStation. The new machine will apparently be 1000 times more powerful than PlayStation2 – a console that some developers allegedly did not feel was a large enough performance leap over the original PlayStation. So that's nice then – PlayStation2 is merely a stop-gap, a half-measure, a half-wit, even. Perhaps the marketing slogan will be something along the lines of 'Do not overestimate the power of Playstation2' ■

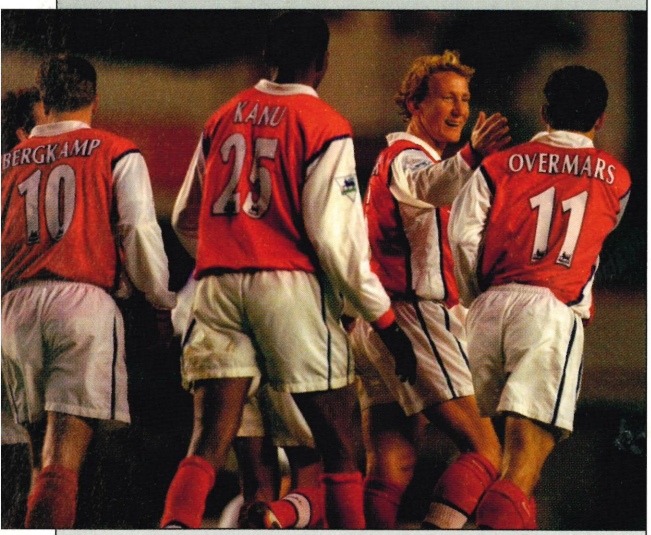
DREAM TEAMS

The Arsenal's having a few problems, and Saint Etienne aren't laughing, either. Looks like it's up to Sampdoria, then...

Lagging behind

Goodbye Champions' League – hello UEFA Cup. Rumour has it in the changing rooms of the Bath and District Sunday League that if Arsenal keep failing in European competitions then eventually they will find themselves in the last sixteen of the Somerset Cup.

However, the Gunners' semi-convincing performance in the UEFA Cup against an inexperienced and ineffectual FC Nantes would suggest the silverware that matters will stay in the West Country for the time being. The Wenger boys, as they shall now be known, will undoubtedly face sterner opposition in the next round, with some fancy-dan team in black and white stripes called Juventus to be avoided at all costs. With not-insubstantial team selection problems in midfield caused by the team's now almost-legendary trademark indiscipline (Vieira, Ljunberg) and the odd stretched knee ligament or two (Petit), the Premiership remains a real concern for the Highbury faithful. Add to this the new trend of shipping a goal a game, and the God-given right for the Wenger Boys to finish in the top three may be under threat – especially as David O'Leary's Leeds do not seem to be willing to give up without a fight ■



First class samp

Despite kicking a ball about in the Italian equivalent of the Nationwide Division One, Sampdoria are having a successful time of it in the Luigi Ferrari stadium this year. Recovering commendably from the aftershock of having David Platt as your manager, the club from Genoa (not called Genoa) are challenging at the top of the table. This is due in no small part to their impressive away form, where they have been efficient to the point of being very efficient.

Long gone are the days of Roberto Mancini, Gianluca Vialli and Attilio Lombardo, but at least the Samp fans have something to let off flares about. "Ou en sommes-nous au Saint-Etienne?" Well, after last month's saucy revelation that Sega's French team have adopted a hard-core porn actress as their club mascot, it probably comes as no surprise that they are lacking penetration up-front. When a team starts losing as many games as it is winning, the phrase 'mid-table mediocrity' soon follows – and unless a symbolic finger is quickly pulled out of a metaphorical arse, then the end of the season won't come too soon for Saint-Etienne's fans ■

Gary Tipp writes for Total Football

SPAWN STRIDES OUT

Cult comic book character set to raid Dreamcast, after Naomi jaunt

Capcom's arcade shoot 'em up, *Spawn: In the Demon's Hand*, is definitely coming to Dreamcast. Although Capcom itself is yet to make an official announcement, Todd McFarlane, who designed the dark anti-hero on which the game is based, has made it quite clear that the title is bound for Sega's console sometime next year. And he should know – he's the executive producer.

As the screenshots below may suggest, *Spawn* is a thirdperson shoot 'em up putting you in control of the eponymous undead warrior, or one of the graphic novel's other 13 misfits. The coin-op original, which runs on Sega's Naomi hardware, offers a multi-stage oneplayer game, a fourplayer deathmatch, or a two player vs two player co-operative team battle. It's not clear yet whether the home version of the game will provide similar multiplayer facilities. What is clear is that – this being a Naomi conversion – we can expect a near-as-bejimminy perfect conversion in terms of visuals. Hurray for the Yanks and their obsession with dark comic book heroes that comment on the unease and tension bubbling beneath the fetid crust of American society ■

"I am Spawn, you will fear me and my skintight lycra." America's darkest hero fights crime, despite an inconvenient pact with the devil

CAN YOU TELL WHAT IT IS YET?

Dull VMs are so passé – get this month's stylish look by customising your memory unit with a pretty picture

Not a lot of people know this but it's possible to get rid of the dull VM image in Dreamcast's File screen and place a pretty picture on the memory unit. For the Rolf Harris's out there who want to create a fancy VM composition just follow this simple process:

1. Take one blank VM (if it's not empty copy the files to another unit) and select the 'Delete all (memory reset)' option.

2. The icon menu appears and you can choose between 128 images (one for each Dreamcast bit) to put on your VM.

3. Having selected an icon you enter the colour screen where the VM can be painted 32 different shades.

4. Voilà! There will now be a bright, attractive VM in the File menu and your lovely image will also appear on the actual VM screen ■

GREAT VIDEOGAME THINGS: THE POWER-UP

Videogames would be pretty dull without spectacularly powerful pick-ups

Back in the beginning, what you started a game with, you ended it with and there was nothing in between. You couldn't pick up an extra powerful blaster in *Space Invaders*, or a really long bat in *Pong*; you were just expected to muddle through with what you had.

When the videogame business started to take off in the early '80s, however, designers realised they'd need new tricks to differentiate their essentially imitative games from the pack. Namco's *Space Invader* clone *Galaxian*, for example, not only added aliens that dropped from the screen, it also allowed you to use two gun bases as one powerful weapon. Indeed, it was in the realm of the shoot 'em up – where only the intricate details separated titles – that the power-up really developed. The multiple weapons system employed in *Nemesis* is legendary, as is the pod in *R-Type* which could be used as an aft or forward firing weapon, offering total protection. To this very day, picking up new, more powerful weapons is a tactical must. It's also fun. Where would the likes of *Quake*, *Half-Life*, *OutTrigger*, *GoldenEye*, etc, be without their grenade launchers, shotguns and proximity mines? We'd be back with the Space Invaders.

And of course, after *Pac-Man* made power pills an intrinsic part of a brand new game style, power-ups extended into every corner of the industry. So you had *Spy Hunter* putting oil slicks into driving games and Miyamoto filling his *Mario* platformers with a massive array of weird magical objects (mushrooms to make Mario bigger, feather to fly, red flower to shoot and so on). The power-up not only provides bigger weapons, and a stronger character, it also opens up new gameplay possibilities, challenging the player in new areas. In some titles – Sega's own *Altered Beast* for example – powering up became the main focus of the gameplay – something you can trace right through to *Power Stone* today.

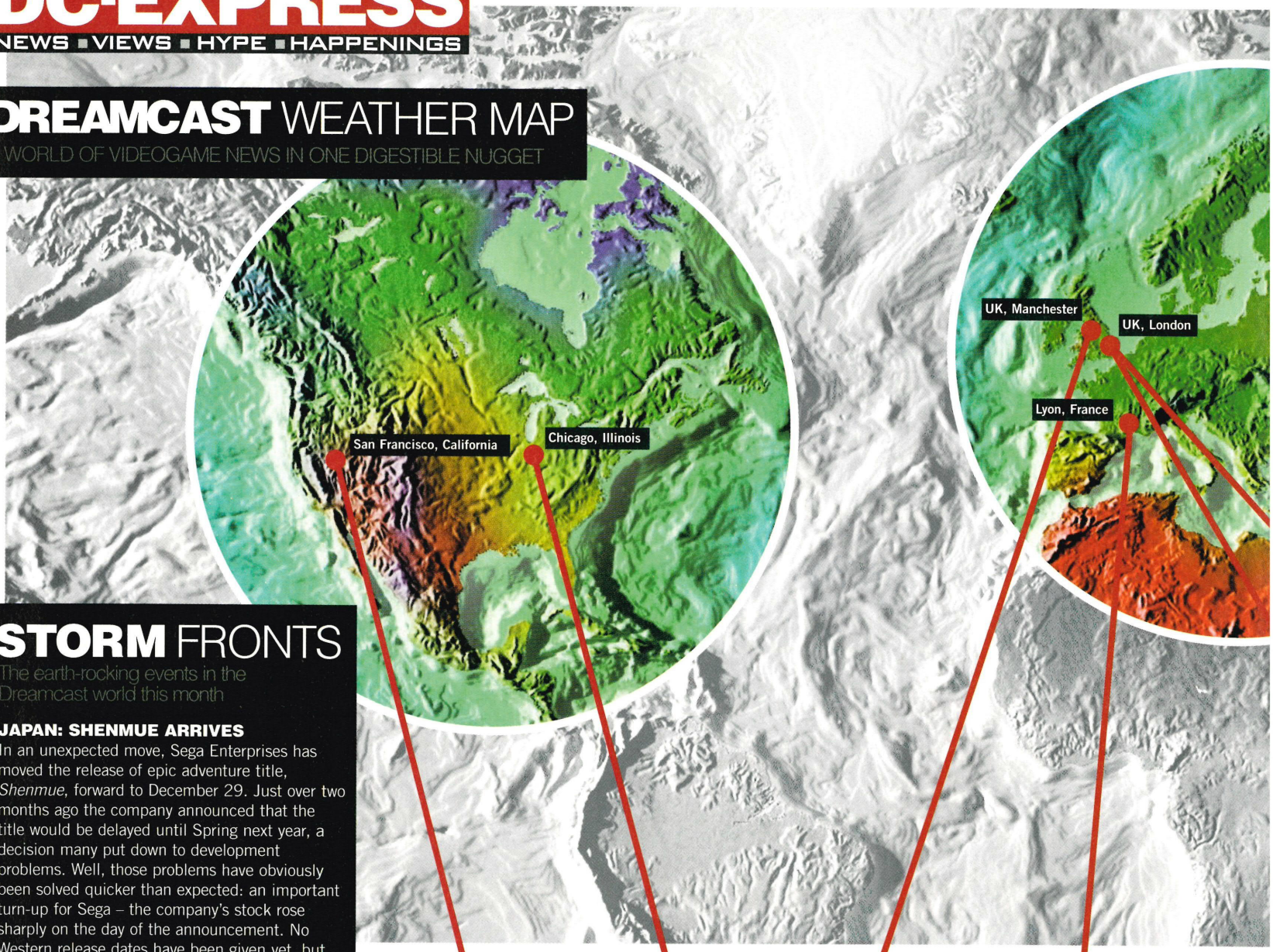
As an object to pick up, to interact with (rather than just shoot), the power-up represented gaming's first stumbling step toward 'reality'. Games like *720°*, *Xenon 2* and *Forgotten Worlds* took that further by introducing power-ups you had to buy with currency picked up during play – a feature *Shenmue* takes to its logical conclusion. Here, as in life, the player has to earn money by actually working.

So what's left for this most essential of game design features? What can be done that *Mario Kart*, *Ghosts and Goblins*, *Sonic the Hedgehog*, etc haven't done already? In this age of ultra-realism, does the power-up even have a place? When was the last time that you walked down a street, saw a glowing box on the pavement, picked it up and were suddenly imbued with the ability to fly? Do military complexes really leave chainguns and ammo lying around all over the place? Does it matter? Videogames will always have one foot in fantasy, that's what they're there for and the power-up is part of this. End of story ■

■ The power-up not only provides **bigger weapons**, it also opens up new possibilities, **challenging the player in new ways** ■

DREAMCAST WEATHER MAP

A WORLD OF VIDEOGAME NEWS IN ONE DIGESTIBLE NUGGET



STORM FRONTS

The earth-rocking events in the Dreamcast world this month

JAPAN: SHENMUE ARRIVES

In an unexpected move, Sega Enterprises has moved the release of epic adventure title, *Shenmue*, forward to December 29. Just over two months ago the company announced that the title would be delayed until Spring next year, a decision many put down to development problems. Well, those problems have obviously been solved quicker than expected: an important turn-up for Sega – the company's stock rose sharply on the day of the announcement. No Western release dates have been given yet, but hopefully we won't have to wait too long to see this most anticipated of games.

AMERICA: MILLION SELLER

Sega of America has announced that one million Dreamcasts have been sold in the states since September 9. The figure has been reached six weeks before corporate experts reckoned it would, a significant achievement considering that the Christmas rush hasn't even started yet. A buoyant SoA was quick to spurt out comparable sales figures for other popular consumer items. Apparently it took PlayStation one-and-a-half years to sell as many units, and the iMac six months. Bizarrely, Sega also boasted that "it took Tyco Toys' much-sought-after Tickle Me Elmo doll more than five months to reach one million units sold". So now we know Americans are quicker to part with their hard-earned cash for state-of-the-art videogame consoles than for sinister cuddly toys that shake around a lot. Thank God.

UK: AWARD THRILL

DC-UK has been nominated for the Magazine of the Year award at this year's Indin – a glittering ceremony organised by the videogame industry every year. We'll let you know if we win next month. Keep your fingers crossed.

GET SWIRLED

Sega of America is releasing a free puzzle title in the states. *Sega Swirl* is a single and multiplayer game combining elements of *Bust-A-Move*, *Tetris* and *Columns*. Sega is thinking of distributing the game on demo discs, either bundled with Dreamcasts or placed on the cover of the US Official Dreamcast Magazine.

WHAT A RUSH

Midway is porting its arcade hit *San Francisco Rush 2049* over to Dreamcast. The game, set in a futuristic version of, yes, San Francisco, features five tracks filled with hidden shortcuts, and seven cars – based on prototypes, sportsters and retro classics. No release dates or pics have been released yet.

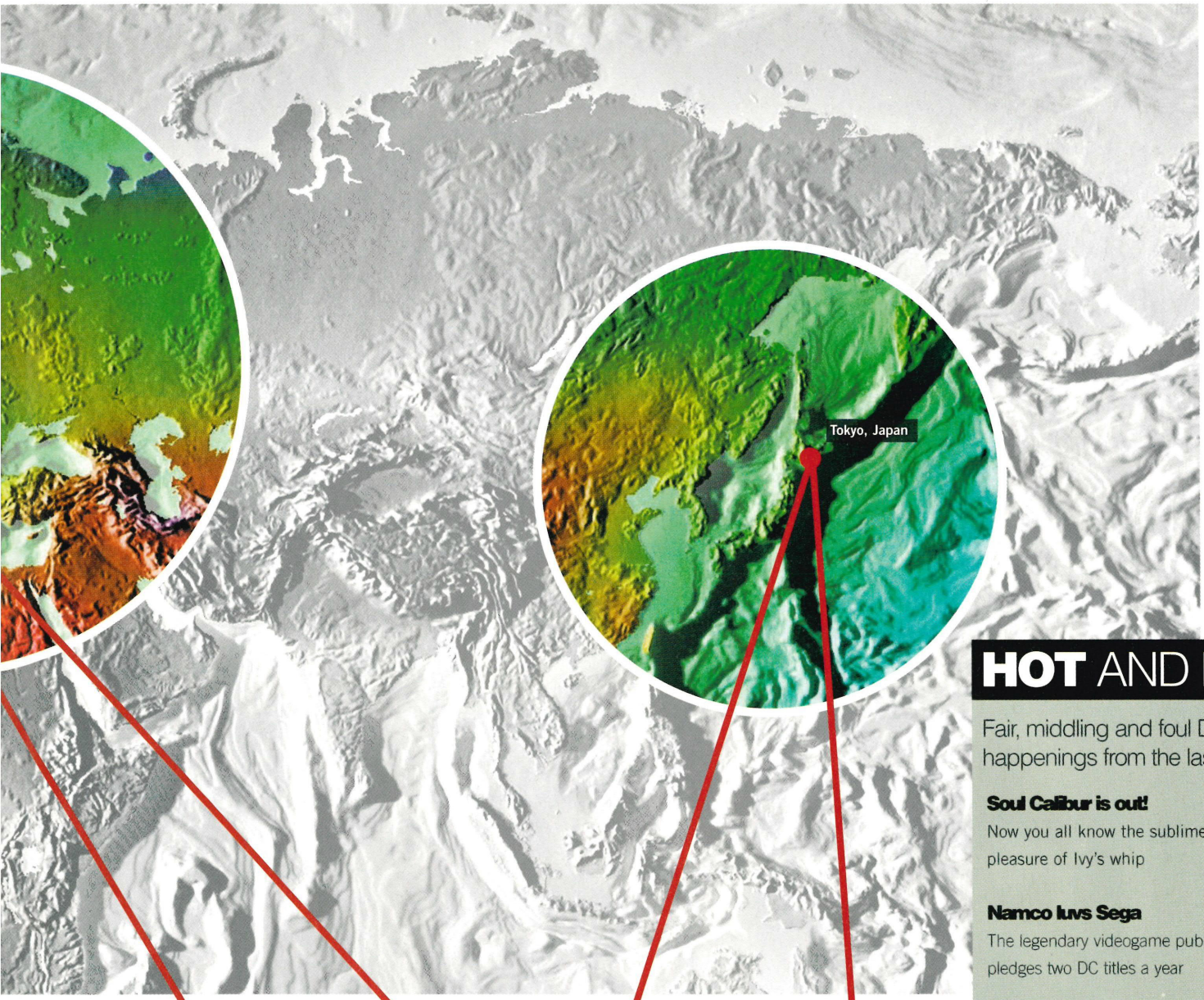
WET DREAM

Cult developer Zed Two is to release a version of its hugely addictive and well-regarded water puzzle game *Wetrix* on Dreamcast. *Wetrix* will feature one and twoplayer modes, a PAL 60Hz option and VM support. The game is due for release in early 2000. Caspar was addicted to this on the N64, you know.

GT BOUGHT

Infogrames has bought the slightly smaller US publisher GT Interactive for $135 million (£83 million). Considering Infogrames' support for Dreamcast, this should increase the likelihood of top-selling GT titles such as *Driver*, *Unreal* and *Abe's Oddysee* receiving conversions to Sega's console.

KEY



SURFER CHIC

Sega Europe has arranged a 'joint marketing initiative' with snowboard manufacturer Salomon for *Snow Surfers*. The game will now include boards taken from the latter company's winter catalogue as well as trendy clothes from its in-house fashion label, Bonfire. And that'll make the game good, will it?

GET SOUL

Soul Calibur shot into the multi-format games chart at number three in its first week on sale. Beaten only by never-ending football series *FIFA 2000* and *Tomorrow Never Dies*, the Namco fighter racked up over 16,000 sales. Not bad considering it doesn't have a massive licence attached to it.

FIGHT CLUB

Naomi is continuing to attract hardcore thirdparty support in Japan with Capcom and SNK announcing new titles for the arcade format. *King of Fighters 2000* and *Marvel vs Capcom 2* are both set for release soon, and both will no doubt find their way onto Dreamcast. Remember: it's good to fight.

NEW WORLD ORDER

Sega of Japan has released a document outlining its strategy for the year 2K and beyond. Unsurprisingly, online gaming is at the top of the agenda. Sega hopes to set up a 'Network Entertainment Kingdom' connecting arcade, home and mobile entertainment platforms. Sounds intriguing.

HOT AND NOT

Fair, middling and foul Dreamcast happenings from the last 28 days

°C

Soul Calibur is out!
Now you all know the sublime pleasure of Ivy's whip

Namco luvs Sega
The legendary videogame publisher pledges two DC titles a year

Game for a laugh
More *Chu Chu Rocket* than any man can stand. Too bad about the sofa

Nobody Does it Better
We bought the 007 CD. Great. Until Keith's crazed air guitar antics

Sega WWS 2000
Oooh, those long range curling shots. But it's sooooooo slooooooooow

Strictly no fishing
Sega Bass Fishing is delayed again. But we need bass now!

Kids Say The Funniest Things
But not to you Michael Barrymore, you irritating lanky fool

Internet stuff · Cashing in · Sport · Only in Japan · Fight · Cool happening · Sheep · Mad behaviour · Rude · Event

TRUMPS

A selection of the clubs in *Worldwide Soccer 2000* warm up for kick off

Selecting this month's Trumps caused an outbreak of bias and bloodshed in the footie obsessed **DC-UK** office.

Naturally, we had to include our own personal favourites, hence Manchester United for our Lee and Glaswegian Stephen's beloved Celtic. However, Keith has been left sulking in the corner because Man City don't appear in the game and you'll notice the absence of Karl's Leeds United. Leeds is in the game you understand, but we felt we had to exclude it to silence the mouthy Yorkshireman.

The other teams represent some of the biggest names from across Europe, plus the Sega-sponsored trio of Arsenal, Sampdoria and Saint-Etienne, none of which have been performing as well as the mighty Dreamcast that emblazons their shirts. Happy trumping ■

ABSOLUTELY **FACT**

Your favourite game publishers don't like you; they're just after your money – and too much money, at that

Forty pounds is an awful lot of money. My dad has to work for three weeks down the Bavarian cheese mines to earn that much. Mum helps out a bit by entertaining Japanese businessmen in the evenings, but that's beside the point. For £40 you expect a lot of enjoyment, and many modern games simply don't give enough.

Your most loved records will be played again and again for many years (my Vengaboys CD has barely been out of the player), and they only cost £12 or so. In contrast, games age terribly. Yes, even that hazy memory of a game which enthralled you when you were nine years old – play it now and you'll be bored stupid after ten minutes. So how come most games are still simple variations on fighting/driving/exploring? And not only that, but the majority of modern games are rushed out in half-finished states to meet deadlines.

With all the millions spent, and development teams with more members than America has fat teenagers, how is it possible to make a rubbish game? Surely out of all those people at least one would notice that something's wrong? Of course they do, everyone does. The coders, testers and marketers know, and even the smiling bimbos in the PR department get an ominous tingle running down their Prada coats. But after you've spent millions developing *Cow Racer 2*, and it turns out rubbish, there's nothing to do but stick it on the shelves and hope some poor kid wastes his pocket money on it. One of the most successful PlayStation games of 1999 was released early – and bug-ridden – just so the initial sales would fall in the company's financial year and make it look good. Game companies don't like you; they just want your money. Don't get emotionally involved ■

> "Many modern games simply **don't give enough enjoyment**"

More bad news – PlayStation is still out-selling Dreamcast in the UK. The reason is that PlayStation is so cheap it's now an impulse buy on the level of cigarettes and half price lager, with shoppers popping in to Tesco to get some toilet roll, thinking, "Oh go on then, might as well have a PlayStation. It's only £60." Dreamcast, plus game, costs £240 – a significant amount of money to all but the most inbred members of landed gentry. Even Bill Gates would pause before blowing £240 on a games machine.

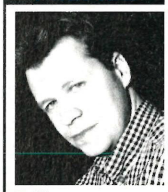
At least Dreamcast is thrashing Nintendo, who is resorting to the genius marketing tactic of putting the N64 in different colour casings, presumably to increase sales of the machine to magpies. And charging £60 for their games just shows how stupid they think we all are. And we worship these companies? Jeez ■

Dave 2000

ADRIAN SMITH

Core Design's Operations Director tells us why all future *Tomb Raider* games will appear on Dreamcast...Well, possibly

PROFILE



- **Name:** Adrian Smith
- **Title:** Operations Director
- **Age:** 33
- **History:** Adrian's brother Jeremy left Gremlin Interactive to found Core Design in 1988. Adrian joined the company three years later and in his position as Operations Director has overseen the development of games such as *Rick Dangerous* and *Chuck Rock* from the 16bit days, to the upcoming *Fighting Force 2* on Dreamcast and PlayStation. Of course, Core's crowning achievement has been the rise and rise of that tomb raiding lass, Lara Croft.

Readers of **DC-UK** issue 02 will remember our exclusive story claiming *Tomb Raider* was rumbling towards Dreamcast. We felt that our information was reliable, but when the mag hit the shelves the shit hit the fan, with developer Core Design and publisher Eidos denying the story – shall we say – vigorously.

With this dark cloud of uncertainty hanging over us we thought it wise to pay a visit to Core, in order to meet one of its head honchos, Adrian Smith, and get the official word on the company's plans for Dreamcast and the possible appearance of the demure Ms Croft.

What do you think the industry perception of Dreamcast is?
I think it's positive because Sega has done everything it said it would do. Sega's taken a pounding from Sony and gone through a hard time but it's looked at what went wrong, refocused and come out with a great console and some fantastic games. When people in the industry see games like *Soul Calibur* their eyes light up and it's a massive motivation for them to get behind the console. I know of lots of developers who haven't announced things yet but they are working on Dreamcast games. I'm very pleased to say I think the future looks great for the platform.

Core has a history of developing for Sega, what's your relationship with the company like now?
It used to be said that if you chopped our legs off it would say Sega in the centre of them. Core probably wouldn't be here today or be as successful as we are today if it wasn't for Sega so we respect the company an awful lot. A couple of years ago Jeremy and I went over to Japan to see our friends at Sega, they showed us their ideas for the machine that is now Dreamcast and we thought it looked fantastic. They've worked hard on it, brought it to the market and we're delighted with the way it has taken off for them. So our relationship's the same as it's always been; our friends remain our friends within Sega and we're looking to work with them and produce great games for Dreamcast.

You've only announced Fighting Force 2 for Dreamcast so far, will you wait to see how that performs before committing to further projects or do you have other games in the pipeline?
Fighting Force 2 will be the first release but we do have other games we're working on that we haven't made announcements about yet. We're still getting our heads into the hardware, finding out what it's capable of and hopefully we'll come out with a blockbusting game for Sega. In the following months there will be several announcements from us regarding the next generation as a whole, both in terms of Dreamcast and Playstation2.

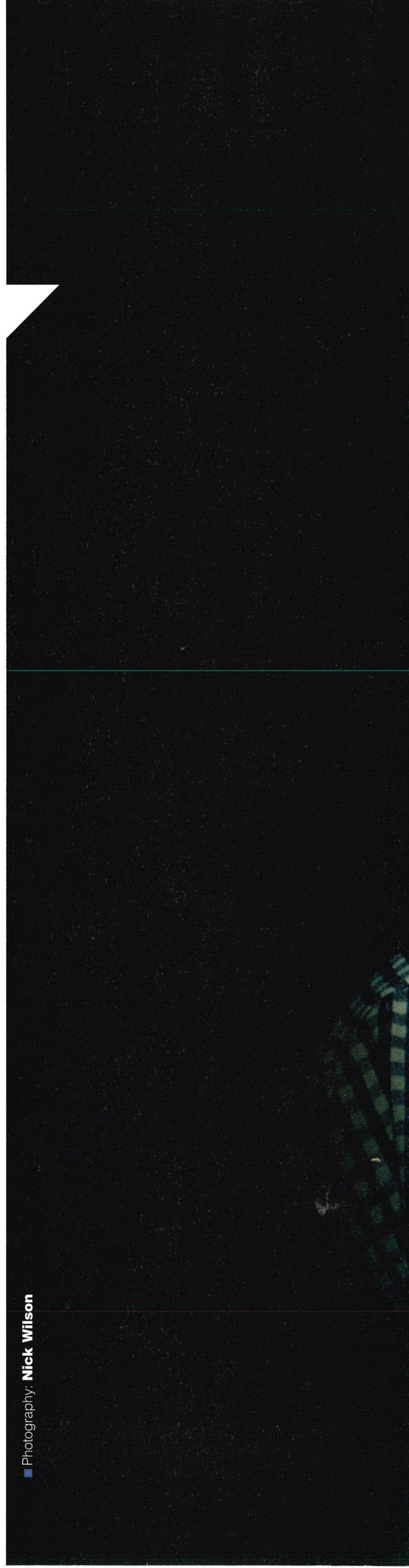
We have a long-term commitment to Dreamcast. It's had a fantastic launch in America and the UK, but the hill will get steeper for Sega as it tries to continue that success and it will need support from Core and other developers around the world producing great software for Dreamcast.

Now for the big question...
No! Stop! I won't answer it [laughs].

Tomb Raider was originally destined to be a Saturn game, what are the chances of it appearing now on Dreamcast?
There's a lot of misunderstanding over why we didn't continue it on Saturn. We felt *Tomb Raider* wasn't really well-suited to the Saturn, and at the time PlayStation with its 3D capabilities was better geared for that type of game. It wasn't an easy decision but we couldn't have gone a lot further with the *Tomb Raider* series on Saturn.

As for the future, it's very open-ended and I'm not prepared to give you a yes or no answer at this stage. Lara was there on Sega, there's a lot happening with next gen consoles and we have to assess what's the best way forward for the series.

Does the exclusivity deal with Sony still apply?
The deal runs out this Christmas, so there are lots of possibilities open to us and I wouldn't rule anything out at this stage. We'll just have to wait and see ■



Photography: **Nick Wilson**

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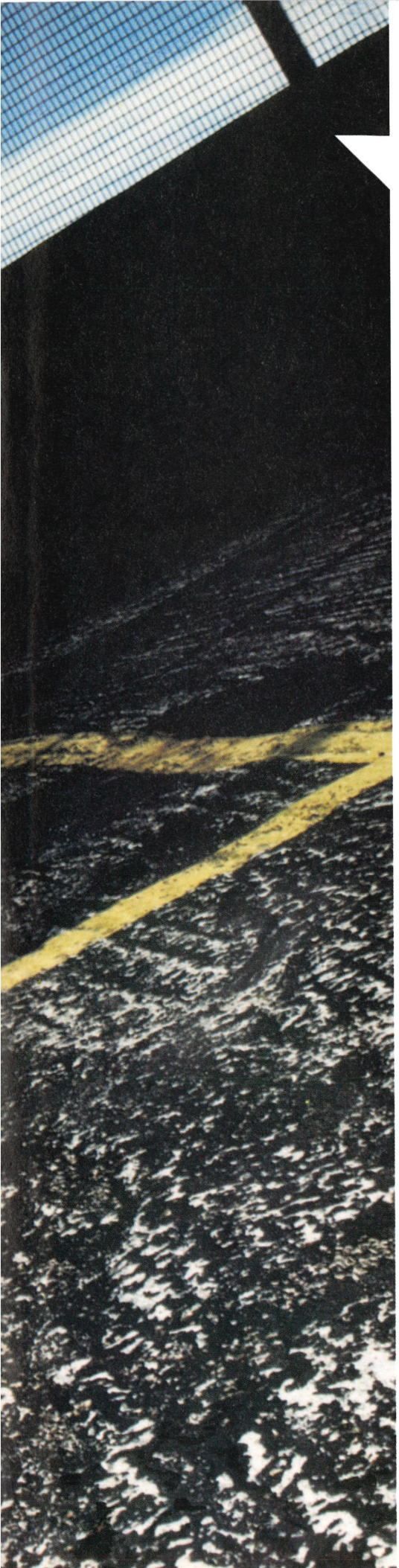


ANDY DAVIDSON

He wrote it to amuse friends at school, but it sold millions. **DC-UK** tracks down the man with the golden *Worms*.

We're sitting in a flat in Bournemouth watching a trailer for Texas Chainsaw Massacre 3. Somehow we're not surprised to find a sizeable collection of horror DVDs here; any mind that could come up with worms fighting with uzis, missiles or exploding sheep was always likely to appreciate the subtleties of the '70s splatter flick. We're also not surprised to find a pinball table in the corner and a Dreamcast in front of the widescreen TV. This, as Lloyd Grossman would surely surmise, is the living room of a true gamer – and only a true gamer could have come up with *Worms*. We're just not sure how Team 17 saw the genius behind the madness. So that's where we begin.

Let's start with the basics. How did a strange idea like Worms get published?
I went to this computer trade show clutching a couple of discs, wandered up to Team 17 and said, "Do you still look at games? This is a bit weird, you probably won't like it." They stuck it on and after five minutes said, "Do you want it published?" I thought it was a wind-up. They said, "We'll sort contracts out next week," and I was sure they'd phone up and say, "Sorry we've been having you on." But they didn't.

Why worms?
Well, when I first started messing around with the game it was tanks, but I wanted to give the participants more character. Back then worms were about the only creature that hadn't been in a game. This was pre-*Earthworm Jim*, of course.

Why do you think Worms was so successful?
Probably because I didn't set out to write a commercial game. I just set out to make something that my mates and me could play, and keep playing – so it didn't have any end, every game was different, and it doesn't take itself too seriously. You need a balance with things. There are a lot of games that try to be films, but games should also be fun, something you and your friends can have a laugh with.

Nowadays most games ideas have to filter through many team members. Has gameplay suffered as a result of this process?
I think that is a real danger as teams get bigger. The best games are the ones with a strong vision behind them, and that usually comes from one person – if you compromise to appeal to everyone you end up with a weak game.

What's the most memorable piece of publicity you've done for Worms?
While we were marketing *Worms 2*, I was interviewed on Sky News and I went off on one about how worms have this violent side – which they do – and how the public has a right to know. And this was back when the mad cow controversy was raging, and there are mad cows in the game, so I claimed the game was doing the public a service by destroying cattle – the newsreader just sat there, totally quiet and staring. The weathergirl was pissing herself.

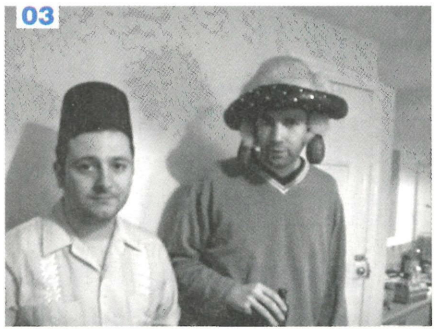
Where do the ideas for the weapons come from – most specifically, the concrete donkey?
When I was a kid, my parents had this concrete donkey in the garden, and I was convinced it was a real donkey that had been concreted over. So I used to get a stone and chip away at its tail, thinking if I cracked through enough, I'd see evidence of the fur. This story came out at the pub one night, and the concrete donkey drew in a cult following, so it just had to go in the game.

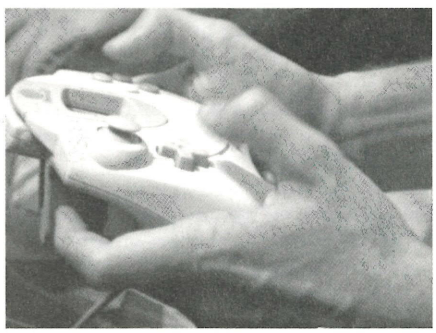
Finally, what's the idea behind your latest game?
It's mainly to develop the philosophy behind *Worms*, where every game is different, and it doesn't have any end. It's a multiplayer experience, and it's going to be 3D. We want to open up new gameplay elements which couldn't be done in *Worms* ■

PROFILE

- **Name:** Andy Davidson
- **Title:** Game Designer
- **Age:** 26
- **History:** Wrote a multiplayer tank battle game named *Artillery* while studying for his A Levels in 1991. After leaving school in '93, he started a rewrite of the game, replacing the tanks with worms and renaming it *Total Wormage*. The following year, he took a demo to ECTS and showed it to Team 17, who immediately snapped the game up, releasing it on the Amiga then on PlayStation and PC to massive success. Since then Davidson has worked on *Worms: The Director's Cut*, *Worms 2* and *Worms Armageddon*. He is currently designing a new game which contains no invertebrates whatsoever.

01 Well, start as you mean to go on, right?
02 Sam's drinking technique was too fast for the human eye





03 Oh dear, another day goes by and still no carpets sold. Come on, Genghis, let's pack up and go home
04 Caspar perfects his Dr Snuggles impersonation

GAME FOR A LAUGH

We wanted to find the Dreamcast game of the year. We wanted top celebrities, and informed comment. Instead we got hats, beer and a wet sofa. Welcome to hell

Words: Dylan Davies **Pictures:** Anyone who grabbed hold of the videocamera

Every year the same thing happens. Winter draws in, the wind gets all Scandinavian on us, and magazine journalists fall short of original ideas. Luckily, here at DC-UK we have crisis measures. We simply blew the dust off our Emergency Winter Article cabinet, smashed the glass and found a faded note saying 'Game of the Year feature'. Easy when you know how.

So we gathered friends and fellow Future Publishing crack hacks to help us squeeze the last blobs of gaming toothpaste out of the year's bumper tube. Unfortunately, unlike toothpaste, the thoughts of Future reviewers only begin to flow after vast supplies of crisps, pizza and adult pop. So we provided them – along with 'comedy' headwear. Rules are rules: no hat, no entry.

The format of this contest was simplicity itself: to avoid putting *Soul Calibur* up against *Soul Fighter* we separated the wheat from the chaff by selecting a preliminary top eight. Don't ask why eight and not ten, we're not sure ourselves. Judgment was severely hindered by over-exposure to bonkers puzzle game *Chu Chu Rocket* (released that day on import), which caused more hours of distraction than two miles of bubble wrap. The sight of a room full of drunken videogame reviewers shouting "chu chu beaver!" (please, don't ask) is enough for a feature itself. But anyway, here is a transcript of the evening, written on alcohol-saturated scraps of paper and backed up by a permanently loaded dictaphone. Take our hand and let us guide you to the Dreamcast daddy, the guv'nor of all things blue and swirly.

VENUE

The Royal Albert Hall was booked, the Palladium politely declined and we're banned from all our local boozers, so we settled for the comforts of Messrs Field, Jordan and Stuart's bachelor pad. Oh how they lived to regret it.

8:50PM POWER STONE

First on the slab is Capcom's colourful kick, punch and throw fest. This is met with warm excitement from the pundits. "The detail of the graphics and the environments make it so addictive," says an already drunk Caspar, setting the inarticulate tone for the evening. "I mean the way it plays – it's like nothing else." Unfortunately, our Dreamcast virgins (yes, people who haven't sample it were brought in as a 'control element' because this is, after all, a serious scientific endeavour), complain that they "Don't have a clue" and continually demand "Which one am I?" The game's lack of immediacy is forgiven, though, because it ain't a simple stand up and fight affair. Ultimately,

01 Matt's desire to applaud João's skills came to a messy end when he failed to cease clutching his lager

02 As laughter echoed around the room, Stephen's mind swirled with troubled memories of the playground, of name calling, of never getting the girl, of...

everyone applauds *Power Stone* not just for being a superb looking take on the beat 'em up genre but for its gameplay style. "It's sort of easy to get into at first, but there are more tactics involved," says our Stephen. However, Ed suggests the gameplay is "Like French kissing a French man." Praise indeed in these modern times.

9:30PM NBA SHOWTIME

From the team behind the fondly remembered *NBA Jam*, *NBA Showtime* takes the basic formula of its 16bit grandaddy and buffs it into a highly polished sheen. Like Naked Twister, it's a party favourite as people form into buddy-buddy two man teams and get on the court. Some time passes and peanuts are thrown before any opinion can be tapped from the judges. What's the game's strong point, Karl? "Everything mate," he answers, "It's just quality, the speed of it... And it's pretty level so it doesn't matter how crap you are, you can still play." Some are more critical, though, suggesting it looks just like *NBA Jam* on the Mega Drive. At this point beers are being absorbed into furniture and a confused crowd cries, "Green isn't turbo!" Caspar starts to get nostalgic: "It's nearly quick enough to start playing like old 2D games, y'know? I wonder if this was motion captured." No-one knows or cares. What is more disturbing is the fact that the players never blink. Despite the advent of hi-res texture mapping, some caffeine-addled coders have omitted any blinking animation, only to leave Shaq, Rodders and that guy from Chicago looking distressingly lobotomised. Everyone agrees that this is pure multiplayer fun but that it lacks real oneplayer depth. "Yeah, yeah it's good. I like the way they didn't make any pretence at realism... Is there any mixer for this vodka? Mixer!" shouts Rob desperately. Despite the growing drunkenness and confusion, everybody feels the Shaq.

"LIKE NAKED TWISTER, NBA SHOWTIME IS A PARTY FAVOURITE AS PEOPLE TEAM UP AND GET OUT ON THE COURT"

10:05PM READY 2 RUMBLE

As people succumb more and more to the demon drink the need to fight heightens and, as the proverb goes, videogames soothe the savage beast. So it's time to don gloves, develop a lisp and box. Everyone with an opinion judges the game by holding it against *Tekken*. "Like a small child it's easy to pick up," says TR disturbingly, "But you're at an advantage if you've played it before. Look at them punching shit out of each other. It's like raw fighting. Compared to *Tekken*, there are less special moves to learn; it's just basic blocking and beating crap out of people."

R2R is popularly considered the best boxing game ever, even including *Frank Bruno's Boxing* on the ZX Spectrum. Everyone laughs childishly when Big Willy is brought out, leading to a string of playground innuendo: bashing,

THE TROOPS

Conscription orders in place, our judges for the night went over the top in fine style

Assembling a crack squad of fools such as this requires a few key components to tempt them from their South American hideouts. Supplies were dropped by helicopter from the local cash & carry. Inventory for the mission was as follows:

Tortilla chips (two bags of)
Crate lager (French, three of)
Cheesy dips (various)
Toy zapper gun (plus ammo)
Discount bubbly (three for two)
Pringles (three tubes of)
Headgear (foreign/furry)

With such a clearly enticing spread, they came. In droves.

CASPAR 'FURTIVE' FIELD
If ever a man was born to lead, this isn't what he'd look like. Gargling tequila a speciality

KEITH 'SPECIAL' STUART
Our associate captain's wildly rampant crisp eating will go down in the annals of idiocy

LEE 'HAPPY' HART
Plucky Hart wandered over the top during the night; was last seen sipping a lager shandy

STEPHEN 'LUCKY' LAWSON
Fumble-fingered production sergeant's aptitude for beer spillage knew no bounds

KARL 'BASEMENT' JAQUES
Art Operative Jaques risked life and limb propping up the wall throughout the night

ROB 'BULLSEYE' BOWEN
Rob's mission (Project Pish) was to contaminate our fine booze arsenal with his cheap lager

ED'S MATE MATT
Infiltrating our randomly selected band was an easy task. Ed's mate Matt nearly failed to make the cut

JANE 'GENTLY' BENTLEY
Having dug her way to freedom from the Edge stronghold, 'Gently' rolled in from the high lands of T3

TR 'MUCKY' MCGOWAN
Cavalry man McGowan broke ranks to join our crew. Caused havoc with his near-toxic 'Elixir'

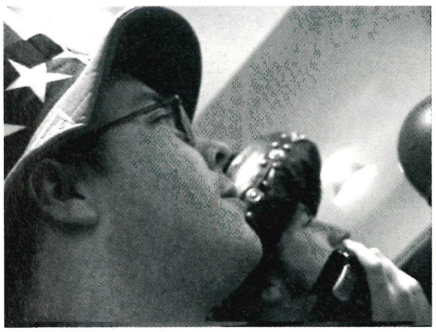
SAM 'ROOKIE' RICHARDS
Arcade's own Private Ryan, Sam's reckless boozing in the face of *Chu Chu Rocket* left us stunned

ED 'BADLY' BALDRY
Fearless adventurer from the far north (well, Bolton), Baldry's cinematic skills impressed us all

JOÃO 'SNAKE' SANCHES
Edge's top man in the field, Sanches' love of fast cars made him the one to beat at *Rally 2*

DYLAN 'DODGY' DAVIES
Your hack for the whole sordid affair. Not anywhere near the Edge, though he'd like to be

JON 'DEEP THROAT' JORDAN
Brought in at the last moment to 'entertain' the **DC-UK** troops. Another man truly on the Edge



01 Lee's off-camera gyrations had the crowd grimly transfixed
02 Keith's affection for alcohol knows no bounds. That's love in those green eyes

03 Clint Eastwood eat your heart out. Those are killer's eyes
04 A wild night of excess was had by all

spanking, giving him a good licking, etc. As Ed's mate Matt puts it, "*Ready 2 Rumble* has a sense of humour that's very rare in videogames. The style is between realism and cartoon... Oh, I've lost." He wanders off. Questions regarding the game's longevity are met with a resounding "Yeah, uh, yeah, uh-huh, yeah". There's a huge pause until someone adds, "You can train up characters, win money to buy equipment which costs different amounts of money depending on which equipment it is." Thanks, mate.

Three games in and people are developing drink problems – booze is going everywhere but the mouth. It's on the sofas, on the floors, in folks' hair. Somewhere in the corner a voice is heard arguing drunkenly, "Leeds is just a bunch of kids, managed by a man who once scored an important penalty for Ireland." It might almost be time for *UEFA*...

INTERMISSION

Before the crowd loses all powers of serious conversation, I ask whether Dreamcast games are being designed and marketed as multiplayer experiences, at the expense of the single player mode. Arcade's Sam Richards swaggers up to the mic wearing a helmet with 'Born to Kill' scrawled across it. "They [single players] should grow up and get cool. They should stop spending their time trying to play oneplayer games. Jesus, if you have a game designed for multiplayer and you're sitting there going uuuuurghrghg [mimes a moron grappling with a joypad] in the oneplayer mode..." Pause. "Spend the time down the pub instead and meet some people." Strange advice from a man who makes his living in the videogame industry, but by now it's too late for serious conversation.

"EVERYONE LAUGHS CHILDISHLY WHEN BIG WILLY IS BROUGHT OUT, LEADING TO A STRING OF PLAYGROUND INNUEDO"

10:53PM UEFA STRIKER

The excitement is unbearable. Picture it: a room full of drunk game journalists with intense team rivalries, slavering for football war. It's ugly. It's the old days of the terraces, ripping the seats out, jumpers for goalposts, etc.

"Isn't there an easier set-up mode?" asks someone, quickly followed by the rest of the room. It's true, *UEFA* isn't the most plug-and-play game ever and loses points accordingly. There follows another half hour of tutorials for the beginners, punctuated by calls of "Which one's little pass?" and the now standard "Which one's turbo? Is it green?" After a while the game commences and I start drawing opinions from the punters. So, what's so good about it, Keith?

"Er, the red button," he says, I think to someone else. "Sorry? Oh, it's great in twoplayer but I've never played it fourplayer. We'll see." To the horror of everyone participating, there's no way of telling which player you are controlling and which player your partner's controlling – they both sport the same coloured ring. This leaves everyone clueless as to who's in possession at any one time. The crowd becomes ugly and toy guns are fired randomly into the fray.

This design error aside, the crowd is agreed that *UEFA* is still a fine game requiring lots of skill to tame it, but further discussion is needed. Is it better than *ISS 64*? "That's a difficult one. It's close. It's a nice fluid, smooth game," replies John. "Liquid football?" I ask flippantly. There follows a lengthy dialogue about other footie games. The word 'depth' keeps coming up. Is *UEFA* the best game of the year? I interject.

"It's the best football game on Dreamcast."

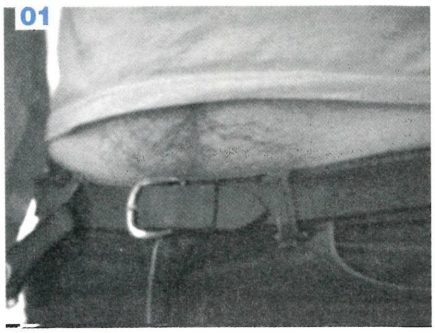
But is it the best game?

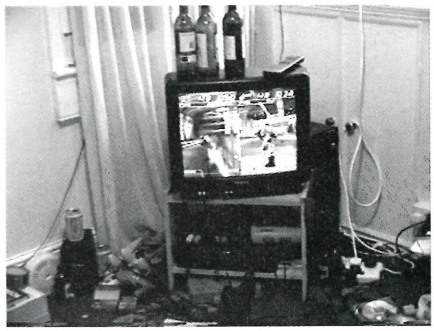
"No."

Then why have we been playing it so long?

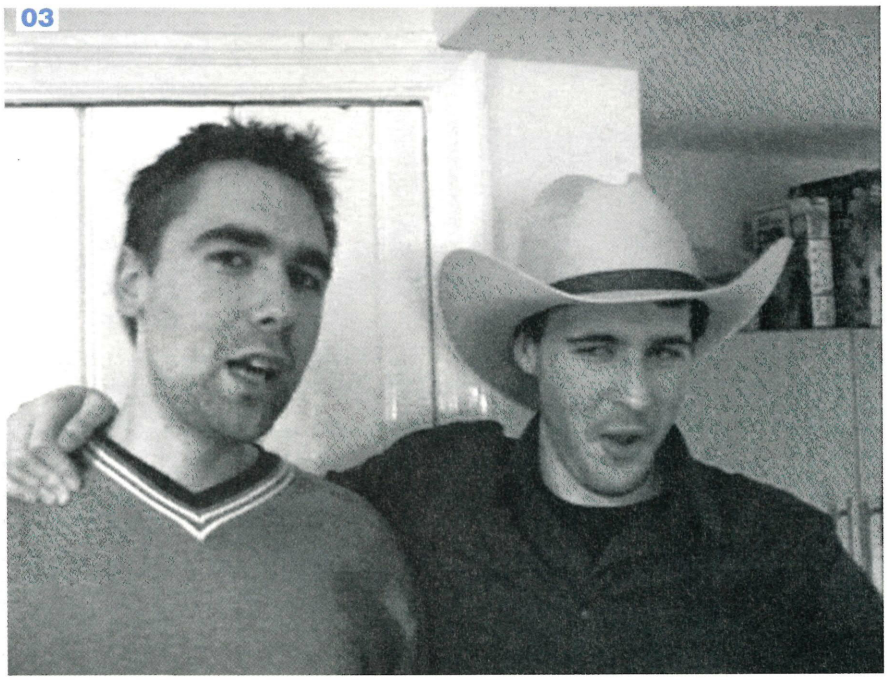
11:46PM SEGA RALLY 2

To celebrate the final of *UEFA Striker* we indulge in three bottles of moderately priced champagne and move swiftly onto *Sega Rally 2*. Now, while trying to avoid turning this piece into a loaded-style boastful booze fest, I must quote Lee who, being a tee-totaller, managed to stay sober all night. Lee, why is this the only driving game in the top ten? "Because Dreamcast doesn't have a great driving game yet, but *Sega Rally 2* is the best of the bunch, probably. *Speed Devils* is fun

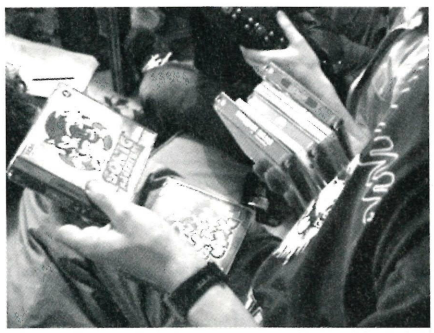




01 Yours truly started the night with no sign of a beer belly. Only two hours later...
02 Projectile weapons weren't limited to the videogame action



03 You're my besshht mate, Keith. Get your hands off, cowboy – you're sacked!
04 Señor Sanches laughed heartily at the crazy gringos



but there's not much to it. The best racing game is *TrickStyle*, but it isn't a driving game." A sensible answer at last.

And he's right – Dreamcast is decidedly short on four wheel fun. *Sega Rally 2* was a flagship title at the Japanese launch last year, but it has dated considerably in its short life. On top of the hovercraft-esque handling ("Drifts more than The Littlest Hobo," says Keith) it suffers from PC-like pop-up, something no other game tonight is guilty of. Caspar is by now very drunk and cantankerous, and finishes the critical mauling: "Looking at the twoplayer mode, it's just not that hot, y'know? Why on earth did they just port the PC code? How long did Sega know Dreamcast was coming out for? Two years? And they still ended up porting the PC code at the last minute. It's just so Sega at the moment. There's still pleasure in nailing a tough stage, for sure, but it's kind of odd that *Sega Rally 2* is out there on its own at the moment with nothing to challenge it. So it's top of a not very high heap. At least we're going to see *Metropolis Street Racer* and *Crazy Taxi*." Not tonight though, chief.

12:07PM TRICKSTYLE

The morose post-*Sega Rally 2* feeling is finally lifted by the arrival of *TrickStyle*. Suggestions that it is just '*Wipeout* with a man on top' are quickly rubbished by Lee, who points out that this is a different game mainly due to the better visuals, the handling and, of course, the stunt-based nature of Criterion's board racer. He then goes on to use the word 'stunt' 27 times in the next minute. Stephen, who is Scottish, drunk and has lost the ability to say a certain word – see if you can spot which one – butts in, "Given the right exposure, it could become Dreamcast's *Wipeout*, although it's not quite up there. I'd say it is original as it comes-bines, comes-behinds, come-bines... No... It's good, it's very original – it come-bines, combines game styles. You just have to look at the 3D engine to see Criterion's created a beautiful game. There's not much you can say against it. No fog, no pop-up." He drops his pint down the sofa.

12:54PM SONIC ADVENTURE

It's late, so the mention of a non-*Chu Chu Rocket*-based adventure does not ring sweet in anybody's ears – although everybody hurriedly agrees that *Sonic Adventure* is a tremendous game. "Yeah, yeah *Sonic* is faultless," confirms Jon. Really? "Except for the dodgy camera view. And that it doesn't have any great multiplayer possibilities. Where's that *Chee Chee Rocket*?" Generally, *Sonic* is applauded for its innovative use of the VM, but criticised for not being based around steering 900 mice into a rocket in under three minutes.

"JUST THREE GAMES IN, PEOPLE ARE DEVELOPING DRINKING PROBLEMS – BOOZE IS GOING EVERYWHERE BUT THEIR MOUTHS"

1:31PM SOUL CALIBUR

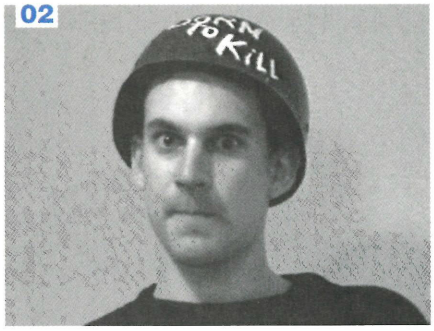
Straight out of the box everyone agrees that *Soul Calibur* is a greater invention than the steam train for two reasons:
It's faster.
It's never crashed.

Sadly, Ed criticises the player selection interface for being extremely poor. In fact, he is harsh enough to suggest it is "arse balm".

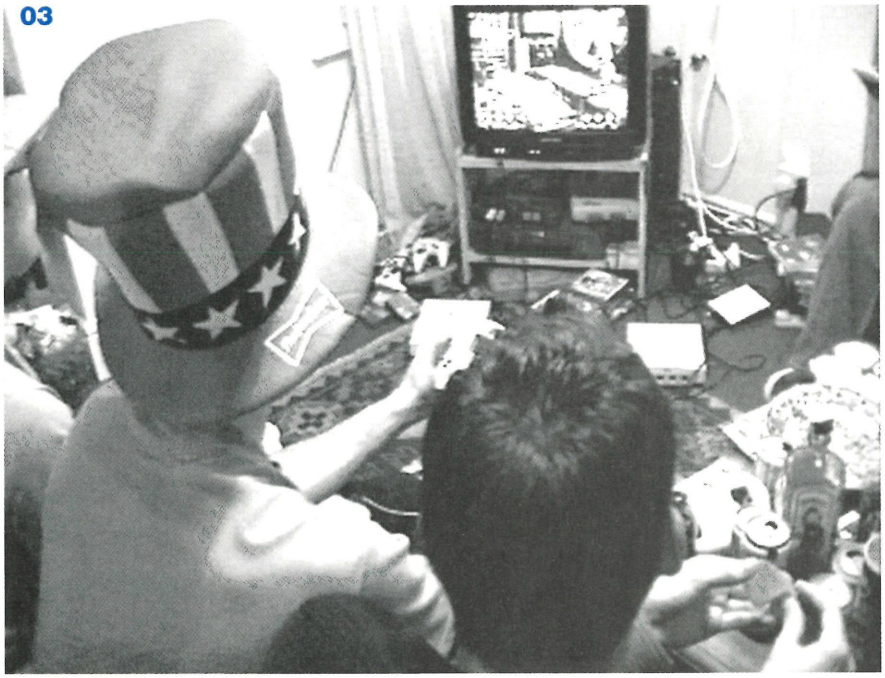
Then it's time to deliberate the merits of the game against *Virtua Fighter 3tb*. "In *Virtua Fighter* you need to analyse the moves to be very good at it, which is boring," says someone in a fez, "*Soul Calibur* – you can take it on any level, two of you can sit down, you've never played a fighting game and you think, bloody hell!"

The game is also applauded for featuring a rich and varied oneplayer mission mode absent in *Virtua Fighter*. People also like to watch *Soul Calibur*, a phenomenon becoming more common in videogames, but still a rare feat. What do you think Caspar? "It's the *Gran Turismo* of fighting games: loads of missions, entertaining for weeks. Simple rules – much like life y'know?" Wow, our very own game Buddha.

Another man who has a lot to say at the moment is the wind-up-and-talk Scot, Stephen. "Even *Tekken Tag Tournament* is going to struggle to compete with this," he enthuses in a



01 Jon. Outraged
02 Too much tequila can do this to a man



03 *Power Stone* gets the thumbs-up. Caspar's stars and stripes hat doesn't
04 Keith's empties quickly piled up

slurred Scots twang "Look at it – it's beautiful, man. You can get into it really quickly as a beginner but the more you play the more you realise how hard Namco's worked on it. It's a deep game. It's *Tekken* for the next millennium."

At this point all we all succumb to Sonic Team's successor to *Sonic Adventure*, *Chu Chu Rocket*, which arrived too late for inclusion in our top games of 1999 as it isn't released until next year (read the preview on page 110, and remember where you heard about it first). Many succumb to unconsciousness, the words "You're stealing my mice!" ringing in their ears...

THE MORNING AFTER

Which game won? We asked ourselves the same question as we all crawled from our homes and hedges. Many were ignorant to the fact that after the previous night's hard work we hadn't actually nailed a champion or even selected categories. Indeed, to our horror, we'd drunkenly praised everything to the point of hyperbole. So we sifted through dirt to find the gold and selected some categories and heroes...

BEST IMPORT GAME: CHU CHU ROCKET

One of the silliest, most fun games ever. Caused arguments all night, shouldn't have been there, but was the most original title of the evening. Anything with a power-up 'chu chu beaver' must win a prize today. And it has Web play too.

"WHICH GAME WON? WE ASKED OURSELVES THE SAME QUESTION AS WE CRAWLED FROM OUR HOMES AND HEDGES"

BEST BOXING GAME: READY 2 RUMBLE

Yes, it is a very specific category, but *Ready 2 Rumble* is a superb game which was bound to be eclipsed by *Soul Calibur* in the beat 'em up category. So it seemed fair to give it its own niche. Excellent in oneplayer or twoplayer modes. Everything Fight Club should have been.

BEST RACING GAME: TRICKSTYLE

Beat *Sega Rally 2* like a red-headed stepchild. Excelled due to its stunt-oriented control method, its sexy graphics and its multi-directional tracks, all the things *Sega Rally 2* failed on, in fact.

BEST BEAT 'EM UP: SOUL CALIBUR

It was a tough brawl between *Power Stone* and *Soul Calibur*, but most agreed that *Calibur* is technically better as the control has more detail and the oneplayer mode more longevity. However, it was agreed that if the characters from both games met, the cast of *Power Stone* would win due to their ability to pick up objects and throw them long distances. But everybody was very drunk at that point.

BEST SPORTS GAME: UEFA STRIKER

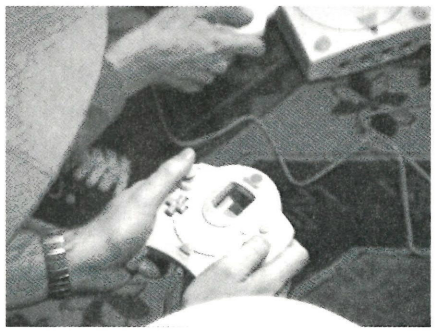
This was the ugliest tie yet in terms of reaching a conclusive result. *UEFA Striker* is considered the better game as it has plenty of depth to keep the fans happy, but as a fourplayer experience it lacks strength. Conversely, *NBA Showtime*, is widely considered to be the most fun multiplayer game of the year, let down only by its limited oneplayer options. Like swings and roundabouts, you must choose your ride ■

GAME OF THE YEAR: SOUL CALIBUR

As a few smart arses pointed out before we started, it was pretty much inevitable that Namco's golden child would win. However, that wasn't going to get in the way of us having a pa... Erm, writing this fabulous feature for your consumption.

But *Soul Calibur* it is. Let's face it, there has never been a videogame this polished, this playable, or this pretty. It's a game to howl at the moon about, to trample grass about, and to fall in love to. Honest.

01



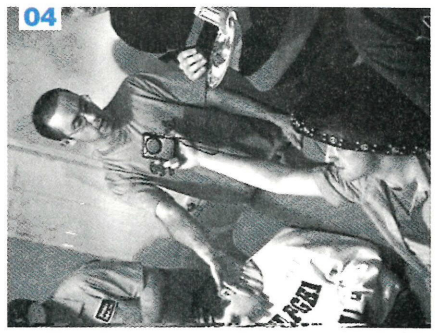
01 Jon just couldn't understand why we wouldn't put *Tekken* on
02 Yee-ha! This is like ridin' the studs back home in Kansas

02

03 "It looks good? No, really? Hmm... I might buy my own"
04 It's good but it's not *Mario Kart*, you know what I'm saying, fella?

03

04



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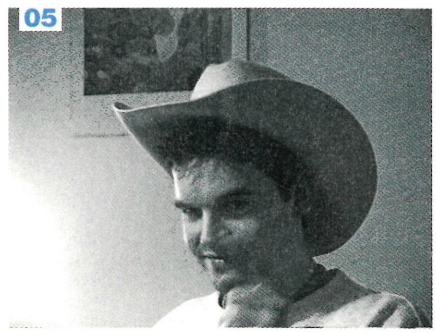
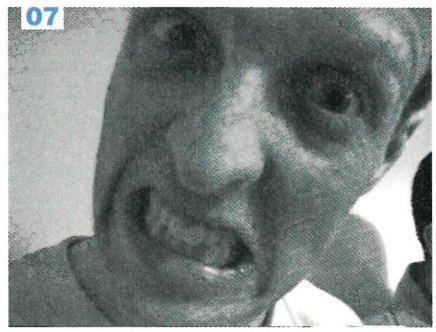


06

05 Howdy. Name's Randy Rogers. I'm gonna make you squeal like a pig, partner
06 TR soon regretted his foolish decision not to wear his dentures

07



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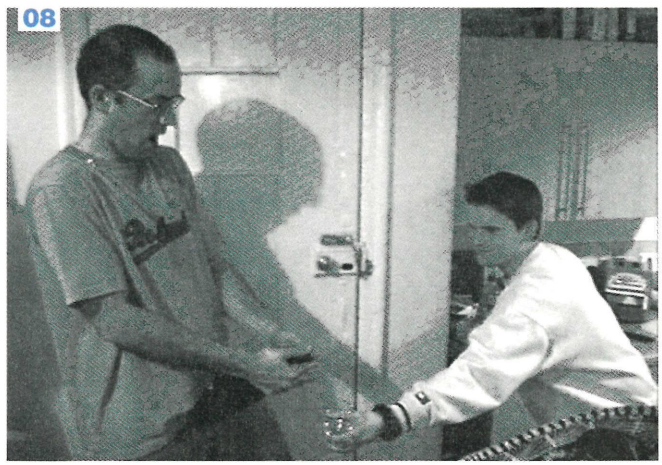

07 Grrrraagh!
08 Look, Chief, if it means getting a rise, I'll tickle anything

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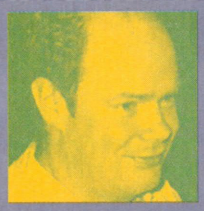
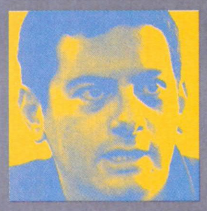
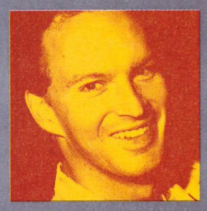


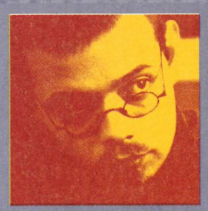



Millennium **Men**

Dreamcast's place in the next millennium is assured, but what new game experiences can we expect from Sega's wonder-box? We asked some of the videogame industry's main players for their predictions

With Sega's brand new 128bit console under the telly, the end of the 20th Century is the most exciting time in years for gamers. Thoughts naturally turn to the future – if gaming has come so far in just 20 years, where will it go next? We decided to ask some top dogs of the videogame industry to reflect on times past and to look forward, particularly to the fortunes of our favourite white-cased box of tricks.

We also planned a NASA-style time capsule (although we can't quite afford to launch it) and asked our specialists what they'd like to put into it, to show our square-eyed descendants the humble origins of their future games. There would be a copy of DC-UK in the capsule too, so when it lands in 20 years we could laugh – or marvel – at the accuracy of these predictions. ▸



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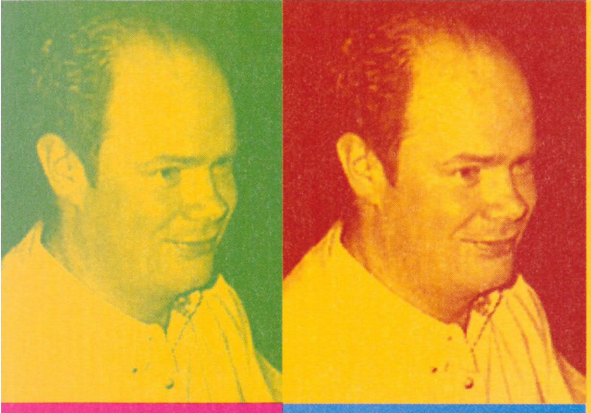


Tony **McCabe**

Lead programmer **Rage Software**

What innovation would you like to see in Y2K?
Game controllers can be moved forward. We make games that sound, look and act extremely realistically, but they are still controlled by pressing coloured buttons. Motion-sensors could be an extremely interesting development, especially for games such as golf and baseball.

Do you have anything radical in the pipeline for DC?
Some of the guys working on our driving titles have Dreamcast dev kits on their desks. I'm not really allowed to say more than that. I think it will take some time before anyone really pushes Dreamcast to its limits – particularly its graphical capabilities.

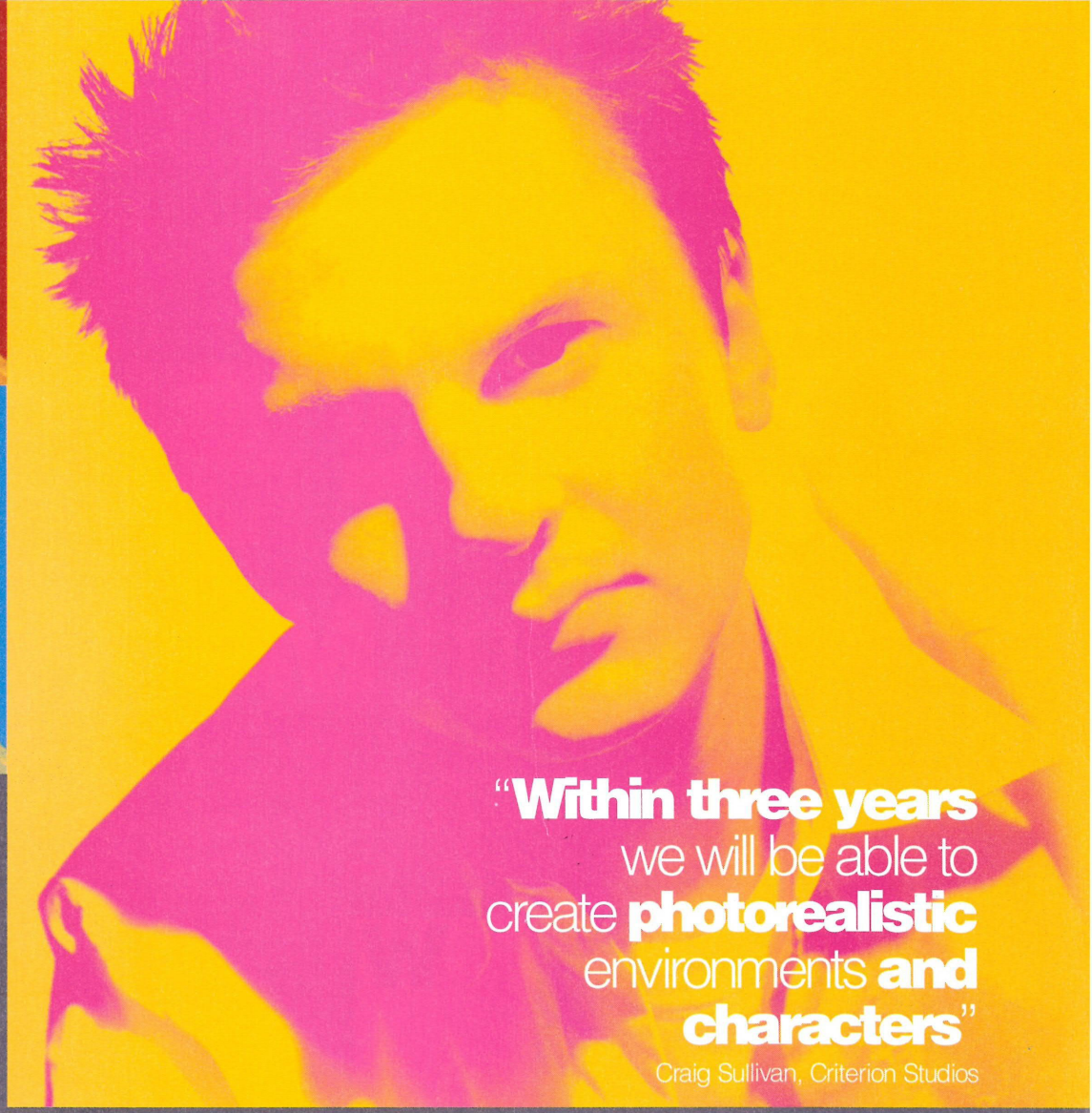
What are you most looking forward to?
Judging by the quality of the first sports games for Dreamcast, there are going to be some very nice ones in the near future. And although I am not entirely convinced by the idea of a bass fishing game, I will certainly give it a go.

What videogame related New Year's resolution will you be making on December 31, 1999?
I imagine that I won't be in any sort of condition to make any resolution apart from 'never again'.

What was the greatest moment in videogames so far?
For me, the Fish and Dagger screen at the end of *Manic Miner* on the Spectrum, which I finally saw in 1995.

And the worst?
I thought that the password entry system for *Dragon's Lair* on the SNES was one of the most painful experiences ever in a videogame.

What's going into our time capsule?
It's not very original, but I guess it would have to be a SNES pad. Most console games are still being designed to work with the same pattern of four buttons on the top and two trigger buttons ■



Craig **Sullivan** Designer **Criterion Studios**

What was your personal best moment in the short history of games?
For me it has to be sitting down to finally play *Mario 64*. It truly bridged the gap between 2D and 3D and without it the industry wouldn't be what it is today.

Where do you see videogames going next?
Within three years we will be able to create photorealistic environments and characters – what we do with them is where it gets interesting. Do we just stick to what the players can relate to easily? Or do we represent something so completely different that it could only exist in a game and use the graphics to totally convince the player it is real? I know which one I'd rather see.

***TrickStyle: 2005* – what would it be like?**
Everything the team initially thought the game would be. With the machines available in five years, there will be no restrictions on the game apart from cost and team sizes. The performance of the machine will no longer be an excuse.

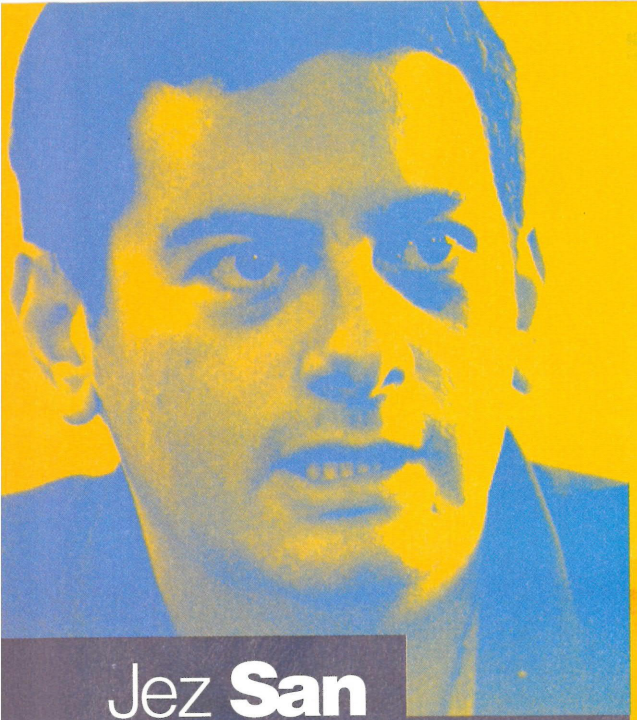
Will games like *TrickStyle* become so realistic that we'll play them instead of their real-life counterparts?
I'm not sure that game simulations can ever replace the real thing because they lack the sense of interactivity and experience. If you have been snowboarding, you will always relate things in the game to how they feel in the real sport; never the other way around.

What are you looking forward to in the meantime?
Shenmue. Sega cannot afford to make anything less than a masterpiece. The development community will get a kick up the arse, and Sega will get the credit it deserves for sticking in there through the rough times.

Anything else Sega should do?
Sort out the Internet side and release some Net play-specific games.

What videogame-related New Year's resolution will you be making this year?
Play more games, play everything!

Finally, a nomination for our time capsule...
At one of last year's trade shows I saw stickers being handed out by a small company trying to break into the industry. They said, 'Been there. Done that.' I thought they summed up everything the game industry has done in the past 20 years. From the birth of games, through 2D, finding our feet with 3D, tapping into the Internet and becoming mass market. Been there. Done that. Nice ■



Jez San

Managing Director Argonaut

Where do you see videogames going in Y2K?
Better, stronger, faster. We can rebuild them. We have the technology. Do you remember Steve Austin or am I just an old fuddy-duddy?

'Course, The Six Million Dollar Man – sounds cheap nowadays. Any specific predictions?
Well, we all know today's high-end consoles and PCs do millions of polygons per second; imagine that will double every two years, so by the end of the next millennium, they'll be quite good. But we can confidently forecast that camera problems will still plague us.

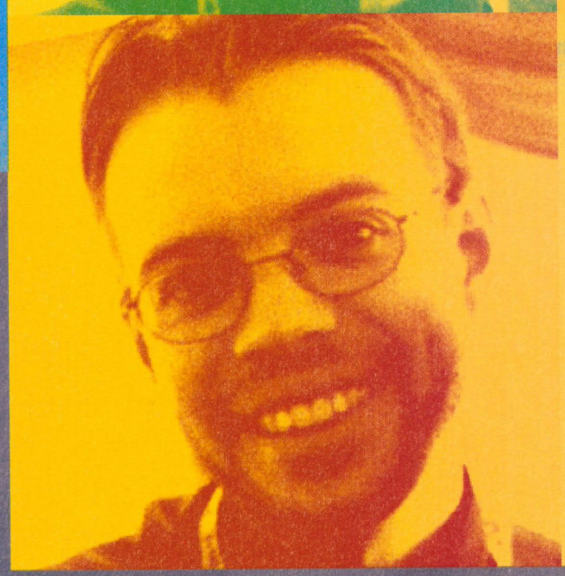
Closer to home, what are you looking forward to on DC?
The new games that we are hopefully going to work on. Already we've seen speeds way beyond Sega's original claims on our experimental Dreamcast engines – six to eight million polygons per second.

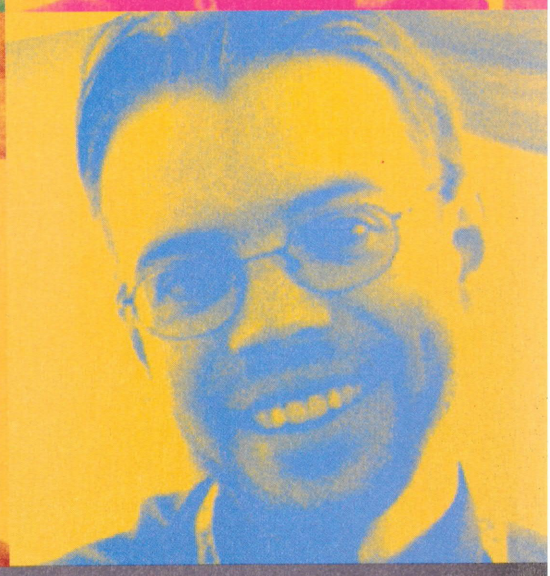
Name games! Will *Croc* be coming to Dreamcast?
We're seriously considering *Croc 2* for Dreamcast and we've already done some substantial work on the project – new worlds and levels unique to Dreamcast – but the final decision is up to Fox Interactive.

What does a videogame mogul do on New Year's Eve?
This particular mogul just got married, so Annabel the moguless and I have been racking our brains for where to go. Annabel thinks it'll be too cold here, so we'll probably fly south for the winter.

If you had to stay in on New Year's Eve with a videogame, which would it be?
PaRappa The Rapper and vodka forfeits, seconded only by *Crazy Taxi*. Actually, I think that my Nissan Skyline GT-R is one of the best videogames of the last few years. I know it's a real car, but it drives, thinks, and feels like a videogame.

Did you dream you'd be a game mogul when you were 16 and thinking about the end of the century?
At 16 I was already working my summers at SilverSoft doing Spectrum and BBC titles. Of course, I had no idea I'd be running a large company employing hundreds of highly skilled people ■





Martyn Chudley

CEO Bizarre Creations

Where are we headed?
Games are going to move towards a kind of cinematic feel, with graphics getting more like the quality we are used to seeing on the Big Screen.

But what about gameplay?
There will probably be a few new genres, but generally the boundaries are also going to be pushed by having better examples of current gaming styles.

Evolution rather than revolution then...
I can't see everybody wearing huge headsets and full-feedback VR body suits, to be honest, until technology gets to a point where there are plug-in electrodes feeding directly into the brain, or burning images directly onto the retina. In November 2004 there will be at least 12 racing games, eight football games and 34 beat 'em ups released.

Is it easier to innovate with a wacky game like *Furballs* rather than the well established genres?
Well, with something like *Furballs* the ideas come easily, but you have to work hard to make them feel right. With a driving game like *Metropolis Street Racer*, you have to try your damndest to make it stand out from the crowd

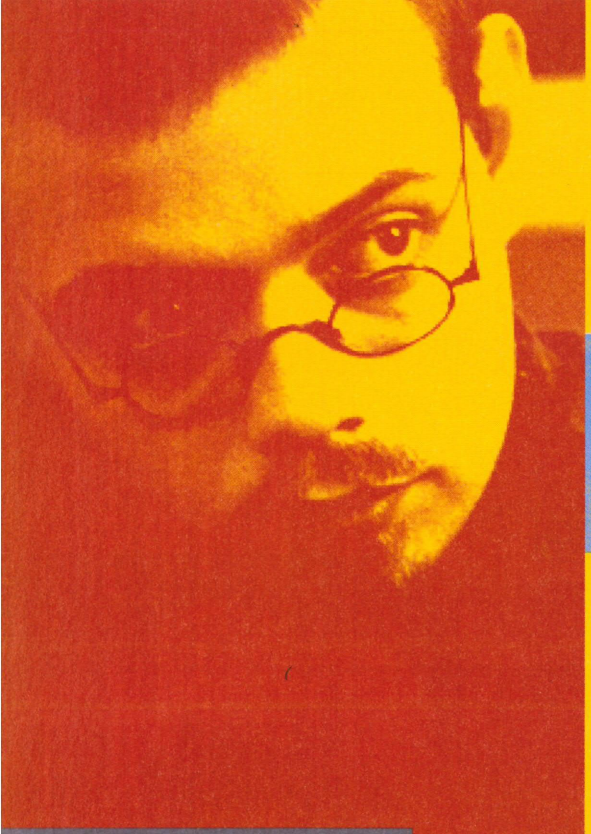
What are you looking forward to in the short-term?
Oh, loads of stuff. *Crazy Taxi*, *F355 Challenge* if it should make it across from Naomi, *Shenmue's Lair*, sorry, *Shenmue*, a version of *Seaman* that we can understand and that can understand us, *Soul Calibur II*, *III* and *IV*, and many more.

You're going to be a happy man. What's your happiest moment from the first 20 years of gaming?
Playing Paul Wokes' *Encounter* on the C64 for the first time. The day the C64 version of *Elite* dropped through the letter box. Completing *Quo Vadis* on the C64 by breaking into the code. Getting an award for *F1 '95* selling 750,000 units – little did we know it would eventually sell four million. Spending the royalties on a Lotus Elise.

Any game-related New Year's resolutions?
To complete *Blast Corps* on Platinum Level, to beat my other half Sarah at *Mario Golf*, to get a perfect on *Guitar Freaks* and to complete *Donkey Kong 64* before we get back to work in January. Oh, and to get *Metropolis Street Racer* finished.

OK. Put just one thing in our time capsule, please.
As the capsule's small, we can't have a classic arcade machine or even a PC with MAME. So it's got to be the classic Atari 2600 *Combat* cartridge. It's small, beautifully formed, and provided us eager young videogamers with hours of addictive single and twoplayer fun ■

■ Photography of Jez San, Martyn Chudley and Toby Gard courtesy of Edge



Toby **Gard**

Creative Director **Confounding Factor**

How are videogames changing as we go into the next millennium?
Videogames are going online. Basically, the American PC gaming style is a good indication of the direction in which gaming in general is heading. Multiplayer online games for our consoles, hopefully with some sort of crossover (technology and story-wise) from single player-type games.

Will *Galleon* bring any of those ambitions closer?
Well, I hope it will up the stakes when it comes to story presentation and characterisation. The challenge will be putting that sort of detail into a multiplayer environment, where people are creating their own stories as they play. Tricky really.

What's getting you excited on Dreamcast?
Shenmue, because it promises to do similar stuff story-wise to *Galleon*, but mostly I'm looking forward to some Internet games appearing. Dreamcast is obviously gasping for some games to take advantage of its modem. I would even love to see some ports of PC multiplayer games, just to get the ball rolling.

Will you be making a game-related resolution on 31 December, 1999?
Hmm, I don't really make New Year's resolutions. But for argument's sake, er, I must stop obsessively buying all new consoles through grey importers just so I can play with them a few months early. It's too expensive and when they come out over here, you can't play British games on them.

Give us something for our time capsule. Please?
How about a picture of a giant Pikachu stomping over Tokyo, just like Godzilla, but with more serious chances of world domination? Does that count? ■

David **Lau-Kee**

Managing Director **Criterion Studios**

Will we be sitting around set-top boxes or TVs on New Year's Eve, 2005?
Well, I'm going to be somewhere up a snow-laden mountain in the Alps, but when I get back to my hi tech ski chalet, there will certainly be some type of entertainment box there hooked up to satellite, cable and phone line feeds waiting for me to come home. It will probably be hidden away under the stairs somewhere – always switched on and always looking for the kind of entertainment I prefer.

How will the games themselves change?
At this point in time, I can envision two main evolutionary tracks developing for videogames. The first track will be towards a 'unified imaging model'. This model isn't actually computer graphics and it isn't video; it takes the best aspects of both mediums and blends them into a new, universal imaging form. The second track is emotional intelligence. Unlike artificial intelligence which is geared towards an arcane problem-solving task, emotional intelligence will be dedicated towards allowing players to 'buy into' the scenarios in the videogames they play. I think by the year 2005, we can probably expect to start seeing the first game character stalkers.

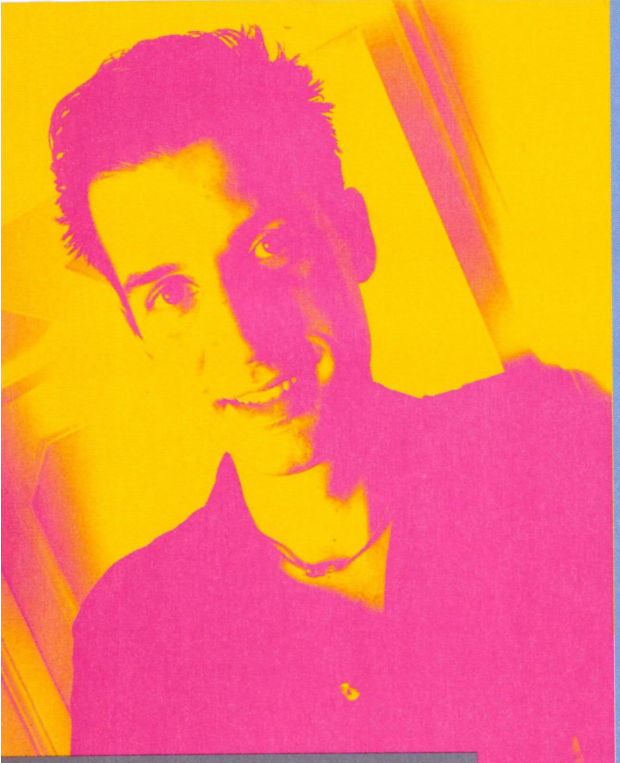
What are you looking forward to in the meantime?
Shenmue.

Yes, yes. What else?
Space Channel 5. It sounds completely ridiculous, but with *Sega Rally* creator Tetsuya Mizuguchi on it, it has to be special. And our own *Deep Fighter*. It's the sort of huge action-adventure blitz that was impossible on any console before Dreamcast.

What were your personal highs and lows during the first two decades of games?
High points include the time I coded up a *Space Invaders* clone on an Ohio Superboard 2 kit computer about 20 years ago. The low was switching it off. The kit had no external storage, and so bang went my masterpiece game.

Will you be making any game-related New Year's resolutions this year?
I'm going to resolve to buy more small-budget or independent games. They don't always have the same level of glitz as the games by the big publishers, but this whole industry was built on quirky creativity, and I would be devastated to see that disappear.

What videogame-related artifact would you like to pop into our time capsule?
Any cartridge, CD or DVD. When all games are delivered to us electronically, it will seem quite quaint that we once bought them on a little disc ■



Dave Perry

President Shiny Entertainment

What for you has been the greatest moment in videogame history so far?
When Miyamoto came and spoke at the Game Developers Conference for the first time. It was great to see him talk to thousands of developers who grew up playing his games.

What was your personal videogame low point?
The big change going from making 2D games to 3D games. I know many people that left the business.

Where are videogames headed?
More freedom to do whatever the hell you want in the game, more controversy and more originality.

What do you most want to see on Dreamcast?
I am waiting for that cool snowboarding game.

Anything in the Shiny happy future for you guys on Sega's console?
Possibly *Messiah* [laughs mischievously].

What should Sega do next to ensure that Dreamcast's future is bright?
Sega needs to get the modem usage up 5,000 per cent and teach people that consoles without modems suck, thus putting pressure on Nintendo and Sony. Either that or take the modem out and bring down the price of the machine as soon as possible.

What game-related New Year's resolution will you be making on December 31, 1999?
To design a game more before we start. We always end up changing ideas and that costs time. We need to sort this out.

What would you launch in the DC-UK time capsule?
Good question. I would put in the Sinclair ZX80. For a lot of us, that got our interest up, got computers into homes and let us make our own games. Thanks, Clive ■

"The future for Dreamcast is online, multiplayer gaming over the Internet"
Mark Maslowicz, Sega

Mark Maslowicz

Third Party Producer Sega Europe

What is the future of games?
The future is online and multiplayer gaming over the Internet. That's certainly the direction that we're heading in with Dreamcast.

Out of everything you have seen on Dreamcast, what are you most excited about?
I'm really looking forward to the Naomi games that are coming to Dreamcast, as they are even better than the arcade versions, due to the extra features. *Zombie Revenge*, *Crazy Taxi* and *Virtua Striker 2* are the first of those. But so many other games will be released next year (well over 100) and the quality level is really high, so it's tough to pick just a few. Metropolis, *MDK2*, *Ecco*, *Resident Evil: Code Veronica*, *World's Scariest Police Chases*, *Stunt Grand Prix*. And there are loads I can't mention yet. I just wish I could name them. The great thing is that we have quality, quantity and a nice variety too.

If the game industry crashed in the next millennium, what industry would you go into?
How can the games industry crash with Dreamcast? But if I had to choose another industry then it would be the music business – vaguely similar and lots of freebies and parties.

What, for you, has been the highlight of videogaming's first two decades?
For me, personally, it's how we've managed to come back from a position when nearly everyone had written Sega off. Even six months ago there were many cynics who doubted that we could do it. We do realise, of course, that this is just the beginning and that next year will be a big challenge for us. But we're definitely up for it.

If you could bring one figure back from human history and show him Dreamcast, who would you choose?
What kind of a question is that? It's straight out of Bill and Ted or Back To The Future. Maybe I'd show it to one of my great-grandfathers and let him abuse the technology so that I could have the money of Bill Gates by now.

Any videogame New Year's resolutions?
To get enough time to actually play more of the games. I haven't had much chance since we've been so busy this year.

What piece of videogame history would you put into our time capsule?
Probably one of the original rubber-keyed ZX Spectrums. That's when things really took off in this country and led to the UK being the hotbed of creative development talent that it is today ■

Time capsule

Videogaming has been part of modern life for over 20 years. With our Millennium Men's objects for inclusion selected, we prepare our time capsule for launch, and predict its reception 20 years hence. We have lift off!

Dave Perry Sinclair ZX80

Present

Released in 1980 by inventor Clive Sinclair, the ZX80 was one of the first affordable home computers and inspired a generation of small boys in bedrooms to begin coding. The result? A UK videogame industry.

Future

Blame for the future dystopia where human existence is controlled by machines is placed squarely on the shoulders of Mr Sinclair. His reputation is only salvaged by the 21st Century's favourite runabout – the Sinclair C5 ■

Mark Mazlowicz ZX Spectrum

Present

After revolutionising the industry with the ZX80, Sinclair produced the legendary ZX Spectrum in 1982. With its vast library of games and simple-to-use BASIC programming tools it dominated the 8bit computer scene.

Future

Following Earth's armageddon and the rise of super-intelligent red-arsed baboons, the only remaining man-made objects are the Spectrum's indestructible rubber keys. Feel their sticky texture and fear them ■

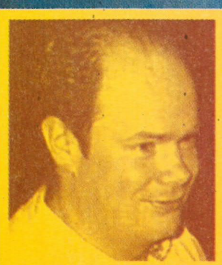
Craig Sullivan 'Been There. Done That.' sticker

Present

Trade shows are overrun with companies forcing unwelcome game-related paraphernalia into punters' pockets. Occasionally they come-up with something interesting and relevant, like 'Been there. Done that.'

Future

All stickers, buttons and other promotional wares have been declared illegal by world leader, Pikachu. Advertising is now restricted to elaborate tattoos on the shaved heads of vagabond children ■



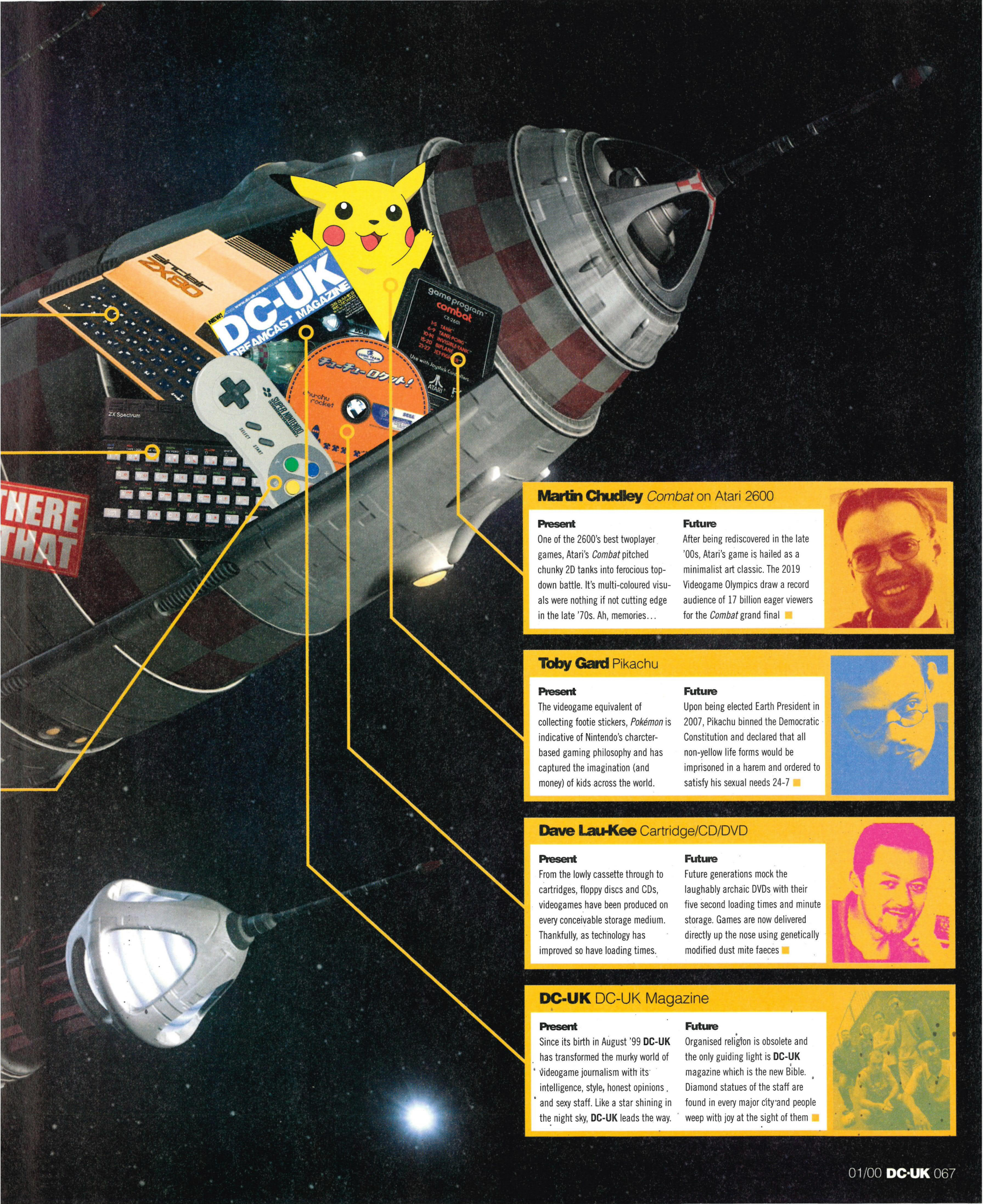
Tony McCabe SNES Pad

Present

The SNES pad is the seminal game controller and the model for every joy-pad that has followed. With digital pad, four buttons and two shoulder buttons, it's a perfect design that no-one has managed to improve upon.

Future

Games are now controlled using tiny analogue buttons attached to the roof of the mouth and operated with the tongue. This advanced gaming technique has also led to a vast improvement in oral sex ■



Martin Chudley *Combat* on Atari 2600

Present

One of the 2600's best twoplayer games, Atari's *Combat* pitched chunky 2D tanks into ferocious top-down battle. It's multi-coloured visuals were nothing if not cutting edge in the late '70s. Ah, memories…

Future

After being rediscovered in the late '00s, Atari's game is hailed as a minimalist art classic. The 2019 Videogame Olympics draw a record audience of 17 billion eager viewers for the *Combat* grand final ■

Toby Gard Pikachu

Present

The videogame equivalent of collecting footie stickers, *Pokémon* is indicative of Nintendo's charcter-based gaming philosophy and has captured the imagination (and money) of kids across the world.

Future

Upon being elected Earth President in 2007, Pikachu binned the Democratic Constitution and declared that all non-yellow life forms would be imprisoned in a harem and ordered to satisfy his sexual needs 24-7 ■

Dave Lau-Kee Cartridge/CD/DVD

Present

From the lowly cassette through to cartridges, floppy discs and CDs, videogames have been produced on every conceivable storage medium. Thankfully, as technology has improved so have loading times.

Future

Future generations mock the laughably archaic DVDs with their five second loading times and minute storage. Games are now delivered directly up the nose using genetically modified dust mite faeces ■

DC-UK DC-UK Magazine

Present

Since its birth in August '99 **DC-UK** has transformed the murky world of videogame journalism with its intelligence, style, honest opinions and sexy staff. Like a star shining in the night sky, **DC-UK** leads the way.

Future

Organised religion is obsolete and the only guiding light is **DC-UK** magazine which is the new Bible. Diamond statues of the staff are found in every major city and people weep with joy at the sight of them ■

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nostradamus: the dreamcast prophecies

He predicted the English Civil War, the rise of Napoleon and the attempted assassination of Reagan, but what Dreamcast games did Nostradamus foresee for the next millennium? **DC-UK** probes the great man's writings for answers

The 'what will be the best games of next year?' feature is pretty much a mandatory event on every mag calendar, but every so often the predictions go awry. Well, here at **DC-UK** we were not prepared to put caution to the wind and just come up with our own suggestions for 2000AD. We went to an expert. We went to 16th Century occultist and prophet Michel de Nostredame who has been credited with foreseeing many of the world's most epoch-shattering events. Surely the man who foresaw the advent of satellite technology over 400 years before Rupert Murdoch ever existed was not completely blindsided by the birth of the videogame? And surely with his appetite for all things millennium-related he would have had his crystal ball aimed squarely at Dreamcast – the only console worth bothering with in the coming century. With this in mind, we scoured Nostradamus' key prophecies for possible videogame connotations. Divided as they are into ten Centuries (chapters) each consisting of 100 Quatrains (or four line stanzas) it was quite a task, and at times it seemed hopeless – the crazed folly of men desperately trying to enliven a derivative feature concept. However, imagine our surprise when we did indeed locate prophecies directly relating to certain Dreamcast titles. Was the great man trying to tell us that these would be the best games of Y2K? We've laid out the evidence over the following six pages. Discover the truth for yourselves...

Words: Michel de Nostredame and **Keith Stuart**

shenmue

publisher: sega
developer: in-house, led by yu suzuki
uk release date: autumn

prophecy

"Throughout Asia, grand prohibition ...blood will flow through absolution of a shadowy young man filled with felony"
(C3 AD60)

01

analysis:

The Gallic prophet gets quite close here to outlining the story behind Yu Suzuki's ambitious thirdperson adventure. No honestly. *Shenmue* revolves around Ryo Hazuki and his quest to avenge the murder of his father by a mysterious assassin. The game actually does take place 'throughout Asia', with Ryo travelling from Japan to Hong Kong and mainland China. And this being an adventure title, blood is bound to flow – indeed *Shenmue* features a special battle mode, allowing you to call on a range of combat moves when confronted by an enemy. Finally, the felony that fills the young man (ie, Ryo) is of course, murderous revenge. Duh.

our view:

This is a project for which the term 'epic' is inadequate. *Shenmue* has apparently taken over 200 Sega staff and $20 million to create, and is still languishing in delay hell after missing a string of Japanese release deadlines. Some blame the hugely realistic environmental system which emulates seasonal and meteorological changes in line with the game's internal clock, some blame the 200-plus artificially intelligent characters who follow their own timetables and agendas. Beyond the impressive stats, though, nothing much is known about gameplay. With all the hype, and all these far-reaching gameplay experiments, is there a chance Yu Suzuki has neglected this area? One thing is for sure, no-one can wait to find out ■

01 The facial animation is absolutely incredible, a good thing as Ryo will spend a lot of his time talking to people

02

02 There are over 200 'intelligent' characters in *Shenmue*, from all age groups and races

03

03 It's Ryo, the lead character. What a handsome beast

04

04 Did you order a delivery? Yes, how much do I owe you, my friend? That'll be ¥17,000 please. Are you taking the piss?

05

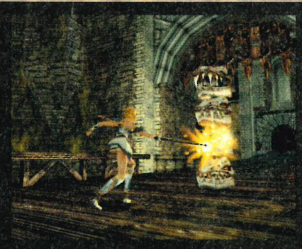
05 Ryo can enter the arcade and play a range of classic '80s coin-ops – just one of the many 'sub-game' diversions

arcatera

German-sourced RPG adventure *Arcatera* is likely to appear through Ubi Soft. It's one of those 'little is known about' games, but if its sumptuous visuals are anything to go by, *Arcatera* is one to watch.
■ ETA: Unknown

black and white

So heavily anticipated by PC gamers that it threatens to develop its own gravitational pull, Lionhead's blend of god game, virtual pet and online world is promised to explode onto Dreamcast sometime in 2000.
■ ETA: Autumn

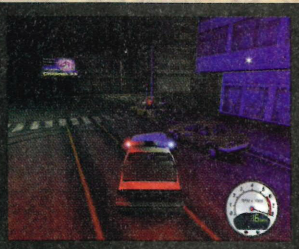


castlevania

The classic Konami horror platformer is now headed for DC. Nothing is known about this sequel yet, but let's hope it lives up to the excellent PlayStation installment rather than the lacklustre N64 one.
■ ETA: Autumn

croc 2

The loveable platform star is coming to Dreamcast after a successful jaunt on Sony's machine. Hopefully developer Argonaut will flesh out the gameplay for this rendition, as well as improving the visuals.
■ ETA: Summer



deadly pursuit

Fox Interactive draws inspiration from the real-life police car documentary for this mission-based driving romp. Everyone wants to indulge in high speed police chases. Now's your chance.
■ ETA: Spring

resident evil code: veronica

publisher: eidos
developer: capcom
uk release date: late summer

prophecy

"Daughter of the Breeze, asylum of the sick. On the horizon the amphitheatre is seen. Prodigy seen, your evil is very near. You will be captured"
(Ch 6100 Dupe)

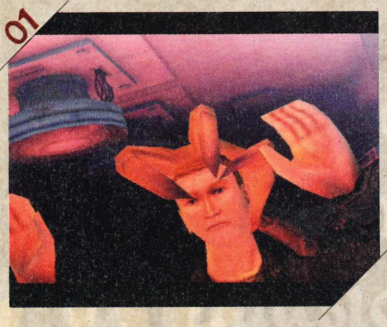
analysis:

The 'daughter' of the first line is obviously Claire Redfield, the heroine of *Resident Evil 2* whose continued search for her brother Chris Redfield takes her across the ocean to Europe in *Code: Veronica* (hence 'of the breeze' – meaning unsettled or on the move). The amphitheatre on the horizon is the secret laboratory she discovers – owned by the Umbrella Corporation, whose hideous experiments created the zombies (the evil prodigy). Finally, at some stage in *Veronica* Claire is apparently captured by Umbrella – an event hinted at in the last line...

our view:

Although the Dreamcast version of *Resident Evil 2* looks as though it may be a slight disappointment, it is difficult to imagine Capcom screwing up this installment. Early screenshots reveal a game oozing atmosphere and filled with the sort of scenic detail we've come to expect from the series – except this time it's all in realtime 3D. The addition of a new firstperson mode for fights (which will perhaps work like the shooting view in *Zelda*), may be questionable, but if the designers can plunder yet more decent shocks and settings from the annals of zombie flick history, this is going to be one brutal, shocking ride ■

01

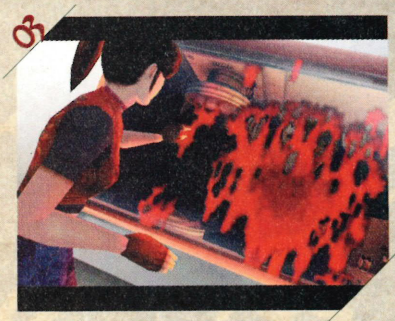


02

01 "No honestly you've got something on your head... Oh hang on, it's the claw of a huge monster. I'll wipe it off"
02 Claire's 'tough love' tactics on stray dogs were considered harsh by her collegues at the RSPCA

03 Claire fails to check that the lid is on properly before shaking her ketchup
04 "I said sit, you stupid dog. Now I'll have to discipline you... With my gun"
05 "And that's for Crystal Maze!" Claire meets Richard O'Brien
06 "Excuse me, have you got this top in a larger size?"

03



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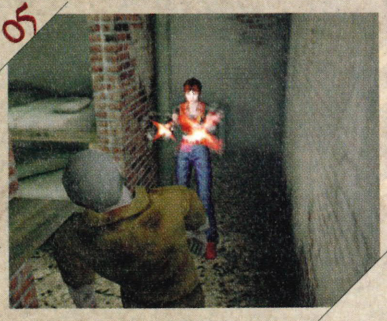


06

dead or alive 2

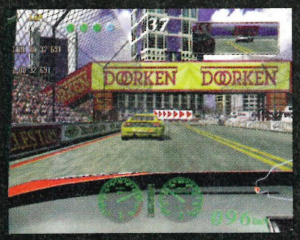
Beautifully presented fighting game, with very noticeable selling point: the female combatants have individually animated breasts. They'll have to be good to tear us away from *Soul Calibur*, though.
■ ETA: November

dee dee planet

Clearly mindful of the cult following which still trails behind Saturn mini-game *Death Tank*, Sega has created *Dee Dee Planet* as one of Dreamcast's first online games. It's a bit like an even simpler *Worms*.
■ ETA: Spring

evolution 2

Not a lot is currently known about this sequel to the admittedly lacklustre RPG title. Hopefully, developer Sting will add some innovative new features to its burgeoning series.
■ ETA: Unknown



ferrari 355

The groundbreaking arcade sim is coming to Dreamcast, minus the two extra 'peripheral vision' screens, of course. Will hopefully support the multiplayer option introduced to the coin-op version (see **DCUK 03**).
■ ETA: Summer

kikaio

Anime-inspired robot beat 'em up from Capcom. *Kikaio* originally appeared in the arcade (it was known as *Tech Romancer* in the West), but didn't do too well. Should fare better on Dreamcast.
■ ETA: Unknown

D2

publisher: sega
developer: warp
uk release date: unknown

prophecy

"The natural girl, so high, not low. The late return will make the aggrieved ones contented. The reconciled one will not be without controversy. In employing and losing all that time"

(C10 Q84)

analysis:

This quatrain has had Nostradamus experts flummoxed for years – which is not surprising as it clearly relates to forthcoming action adventure *D2*, sequel to 32bit vampire romp, *D* (a serious contender for The Worst Name For a Videogame... Ever). The natural girl of the first line is the game's heroine Laura who is constructed from several hundred polygons and therefore does indeed look convincingly natural. The game begins with Laura taking a flight over the Canadian Rockies (hence 'so high'). The plane crashes though, thrusting her into a mystery involving hideous monsters roaming the snowy hills – something Nostradamus has failed to prophecise, which is strange as the aircraft is hit by a meteor, one of his favourite tokens of disaster. The second line ('the late return') alludes to the fact that this sequel has been in development for several years. It was originally lined-up for the Matsushita M2, a 64bit console canned in 1997. According to Nostradamus, those who have been waiting for this sequel ('the aggrieved ones') will be contented with it, but they won't completely forgive the game's developer, Warp ('the reconciled one'), for taking so long.

our view:

The fact that *D2* has been in development for several years does not bode particularly well. Furthermore, although screenshots have been reasonably impressive, they only look passable compared to the visual wonders of *Shenmue*. Nevertheless, the gameplay certainly looks interesting, mixing *Tomb Raider*-style adventuring and puzzling, with an RPG structure. In a similar way to *Shenmue*, when Laura stumbles across a foe the action switches to Battle Mode with a different control method. The story line sounds a bit strange, but then Warp's president Kenji Eno is one of Japanese gaming's true eccentrics. If the horror plot is atmospheric and involving, and the gameplay works this could be the offbeat adventure classic we've been promised for so long ■

01 *D2*'s action will take place in snowy locations on the Canadian Rockies. Best pack a puffa

Half-Life

publisher: havas
developer: valve
uk release date: autumn

prophecy

"Great city abandoned to soldiers. Never was there a mortal tumult so close. O what hideous calamities approach. Except for one offence, there will be no pardons"

(C6 Q96)

analysis:

Here Nostradamus has come incredibly close to predicting the story line for this hugely successful and staggeringly entertaining firstperson shoot 'em up. With his limited understanding of 20th Century technology he could not have perceived that the 'great city' he envisaged was actually a top secret underground research base, where the lead character Gordon Freeman is assigned to take part in some futuristic scientific project. When an experiment goes wrong and hundreds of vicious aliens get warped into the lab, the base is indeed abandoned to the soldiers (well, actually the soldiers kill everybody to cover up the incident, but that's near enough). The hideous calamity Nostradamus mentions is the possibility of a full-scale alien invasion, which Gordon must prevent by travelling to the aliens' home planet and foiling their plans. Not sure about the last line, though.

our view:

Everyone already knows that *Half-Life* is an astounding game – atmospheric, challenging and full of shock moments, hideous creatures and massive weapons. Hopefully, the team responsible for the Dreamcast conversion will fully update the visuals for Sega's console (rather than just cack-handedly porting over the original PC code), and perhaps even add a few new areas, options or weapons for console gamers. It would also be great to see some multiplayer online levels – as this was another fabulous element of the original game. If the team gets it right, this will be a major, major Dreamcast event ■

01 Many of your battles in *Half-Life* will be fought against the soldiers who've been sent to wipe you out

furballs

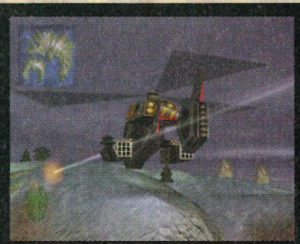
Bizarre Creations combines cutesy creatures with platformer and shoot 'em up elements in this highly individual fluffy blaster. The comic book visuals look great, too. Should at least be interesting.
■ ETA: March

grand theft auto 2

More addictive than a bin bag full of cocaine, DMA Design's joyriding, drug dealing, police slaughtering extravaganza is coming our way. We're happy about this – not least because it should be online, too.
■ ETA: April

hidden and dangerous

'Behind enemy lines' WWII strategy game in which players select four commandoes with various skills and then attack the Hun. Tactical depth and plenty of weapons and vehicles made this a top-seller on the PC.
■ ETA: June



hostile waters

Military strategy game in which you direct a force of tanks, planes and boats against a group of disaffected dictators who want to destroy world peace. Direct control over each craft gives the game an action edge.
■ ETA: Autumn

jet set radio

Boasting one of the most innovative graphics techniques seen in, ooh, ages, *Jet Set Radio*'s 2D-yet-3D visuals cloak a rollerblade racing title. Sega is keeping schtum about it at the moment, but it's a big 'un.
■ ETA: Unknown

alone in the dark 4

publisher: infogrames
developer: darkworks
uk release date: autumn

prophecy

"Bones of the feet and hands buried away. The house remains uninhabited... ...digging in dreams they will be unearthed"

(C1 Q41)

analysis:

Skeletons hidden away in a house that remains uninhabited – this can only be a guarded reference to Infogrames'

massively successful *Alone in the Dark* trilogy, a range of third-person action adventures set in spooky haunted mansions. The original title, which appeared on PC in 1992, was a revolutionary game – the first to mix 3D characters with pre-rendered backgrounds (a tactic later used in *Resident Evil*, which was clearly inspired by this Gallic frightener). The final line of the quatrain hints at an unearthing of the past, which is exactly what Infogrames is planning with *Alone in the Dark 4* – again set in and around an eerie haunted house.

our view:

Although the *Alone in The Dark* series set a precedent for arcade adventures, the games now look severely dated and this installment will have to be spectacularly good to remind gamers where *Resident Evil* got its cue from – especially with *Code: Veronica* looking so amazing. The handful of screenshots released so far by developer Darkworks certainly hint at dark, spine-tingling locations and there is already an epic Lovecraftian feel about the imagery (huge libraries, secret passageways, Gothic architecture, hideous monsters, etc). Those who remember the

01

atmosphere achieved by the first two titles – even with their laughably basic visuals – will already be feeling the hairs on the back of their neck stand on end in trepidation. With all these spooky games on the way, it's going to be a scary year ■

01 This may look like a *Resident Evil* title, but *Alone in The Dark* was shooting zombies way before Capcom got in on the act

eternal arcadia

publisher: sega
developer: in-house
uk release date: unknown

prophecy

"Noise, screams, battles fought in the sky
And brute beasts will be heard to speak"

(C1 Q64)

analysis:

A very vague couplet but one we can easily ascribe to this forthcoming RPG from Sega. *Eternal Arcadia* is set in a kind of alternative 'age of exploration', where galleons, adventurers and pirates command flying boats that drift between inhabited clouds rather than islands. You take on the role of an explorer pirate who's quest to discover new lands and new civilisations (sounds familiar) is interrupted by regular battles with evil pirate battalions (check out the first line of the prophesy). This being an RPG, the game also includes several different intelligent species, many of them taking on the typical Tolkein-esque look of goblins, elves, etc. Could these be the talking beasts Nostradamus refers to? Yes, they could.

our view:

Developed in-house at Sega by an experienced team (the producer previously worked on the legendary *Phantasy Star* series), this is going to be a key title in 2000. The boats themselves look amazingly detailed (each race has its own ship designs, with evil pirate boats apparently resembling World War I battleships) and players can navigate the vast skyscape in full 3D. You can also expect huge nautical battles involving whole fleets and some amazing special attack effects. Let's just hope the plot is compelling enough to match the impressive visuals and interesting setting ■

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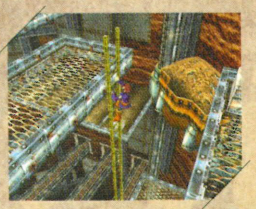
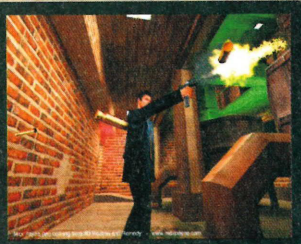


01 The damp conditions on the ship make it a perfect habitat for giant snails. Once you've killed them, you can cook them and eat them with some garlic and cream sauce

landers

Coming from a different Climax to the one which offended us all with *Blue Stinger*, *Landers*' realtime 3D visuals are impressive. This RPG promises to be in line with the company's past classics.
■ ETA: Summer

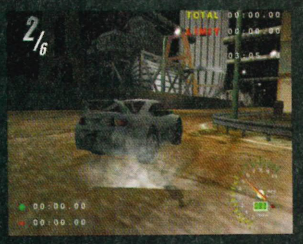


max payne

Dark, violent and highly cinematic thirdperson adventure based around a cop (Max Payne) who's been framed for the murder of his best friend. Cue revenge, blood-letting and drama of biblical proportions.
■ ETA: Autumn

mdk2

Promising sequel to the cult Shiny Entertainment adventure game. Boasts a six-legged robodog amongst the controllable characters, so will probably be brilliant. The spaceship designs are cool, too.
■ ETA: March



midnight gt

Nocturnal urban racer which also features a rally-style point-to-point driving option. Car models come from Alfa Romeo, Honda and Ferrari among others. There are several league and arcade modes, too.
■ ETA: Unknown

off road

As the title suggests this is a racing game set off the beaten track. It looks to be more based around muddy buggies than rally cars, but still promises ultra-realistic handling and a variety of game modes.
■ ETA: Unknown

ecco the dolphin

publisher: sega
developer: appaloosa interactive
uk release date: summer

prophecy

"The great fish will come to complain and implore...
...he will be deceived by those speaking his own language"
(C7 Q35)

analysis:

Another obtuse one from the great French prophet, but it sort of relates to *Ecco the Dolphin: Defender of the Future* – in a 'screw your eyes up really hard and look at it with your head slanted' way. Mega Drive veterans will remember the original *Ecco*, a 2D underwater scrolling adventure with loads of puzzles and some lovely scenery. As that game proved, *Ecco* is indeed a great fish (well, mammal) – skillfully drawn and realistically animated. Although the story for *Defender* is being kept a secret, it is clear many aquatic creatures will be joining the enemy forces against Ecco, which explains the last line. Doesn't it?

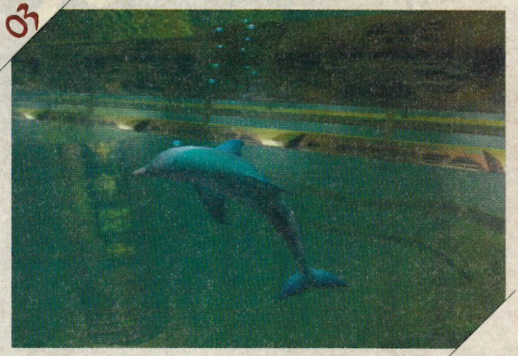
01

02

our view:

It's early doors yet, but judging by the enchanting demo shown off at E3 earlier this year, *Ecco the Dolphin* is going to be truly breathtaking. The underwater landscape is beautifully realised with coral reefs, schools of fish and weirdly organic architecture littering the several massive realms. And this rendition of the game is in full 3D, of course, giving players a vast, realistic environment to explore. Should prove a tranquil alternative to other adventures obsessed with undead monsters, shotguns and survival horror ■

03



01 The game is filled with amazing underwater architecture and machinery
02 "What's that Ecco? Some men have kidnapped little Tommy and taken him to the abandoned oil refinery? Why are you telling me? I'm a turtle"
03 Ecco looks amazing here, but wait til you see it/him/her in motion

metropolis street racer

publisher: sega
developer: bizarre creations
uk release date: march

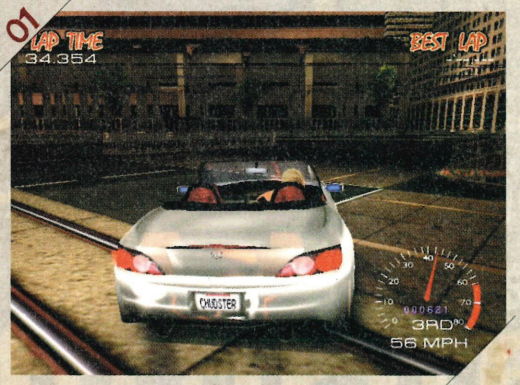
prophecy

"Within the isles a horrible noise...
...they will come to take part in a great league"
(C2 Q100)

analysis:

Understandably Nostradamus had a very limited comprehension of the car racing videogame, and so hid his references to the genre particularly well. Nevertheless, to the trained eye, after a couple of Tizers, this quatrain can be linked to Bizarre Creations' forthcoming ultra-realistic urban driving game, *Metropolis Street Racer*. For a start, two of the game settings are Britain and Japan (or London and Tokyo to be exact) – both of which are islands. The very horrible noise is probably the sound of several different car models, including Mercedes, Ford and Alfa Romeo, revving up on the starting grid. The last line of the quatrain is no doubt hinting that *Street Racer* will feature a comprehensive championship mode. Stop laughing, it's all in there if you look hard enough [sound of Tizer being glugged].

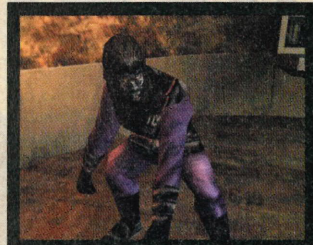
01



our view:

Anyone who is not knocked over by early screenshots of this racer is either dead or on the development team. The accuracy with which Tokyo, London and San Francisco have been modelled – right down to individual shops – is staggering and this surely represents a significant step in the journey toward photorealism. In terms of gameplay, Bizarre Creations has proved its abilities with the excellent *F1* on PlayStation and is sure to come up with the goods here. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine this title not becoming a key release of 2000, alongside *Sega GT* and *Ferrari 355*. Yes sir, it's gonna be a good century for driving games ■

01 In *MSR* most of the vehicles are mass-manufactured giving the game a more street-level feel. This goes well with the *MSR*'s recognisible urban settings



planet of the apes

Thirdperson action/adventure in which players find themselves stranded on a planet run by rabbits. Only kidding. Apes. Puzzles, fights and amazing locations are likely. No sign of Charlton Heston though.
■ ETA: Summer

snk vs capcom

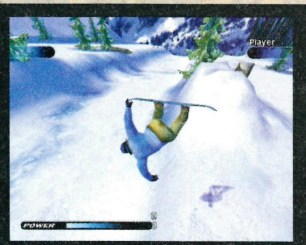
The kings of the 2D beat 'em up genre merge their finest characters into one explosive showdown. Compatability with the Neo Geo Pocket makes this proposition even more interesting.
■ ETA: Unknown

space channel 5

Mad rhythm/action game designed by Tetsuya Mizuguchi. You take control of foxy 25th Century reporter Ulala as she prances through a spacestation like some lithe school girl pop starlet.
■ ETA: Summer

streetfighter iii

Or *Street Fighter III W Impact* to give it its full title. Conversion of the first two *SFIII* arcade titles with some new character animations and possible online features added for good measure.
■ ETA: Spring



supreme snowboarding

Another snowboarding sim, this time from cult Finnish developer Housemarque. *Supreme Snowboarding* promises ultra-realism, loads of courses and various play modes.
■ ETA: Autumn

crazy taxi

publisher: sega
developer: in-house
release date: february

prophecy

"Many will be confused in their waiting...
...some thought well of persisting in waiting
But not much spare time will be given them"
(C8 G1 Dupe)

analysis:

Although it is highly unlikely that Nostradamus, a 16th Century physician and occultist, ever had to wait for a taxi, this quatrain clearly sums up the experience. It also hints at a knowledge of Sega's forthcoming Naomi conversion *Crazy Taxi* – an insane driving game where you pick up passengers, drive them around a huge American city, and drop them off at their destination, before picking up some other poor fool. The fact that you only get a very limited amount of time to grab a punter and get them where they want to go is not lost on Nostradamus, either – check out the last line. The man's a videogame genius. Hang on, we're not just imagining this are we?

our view:

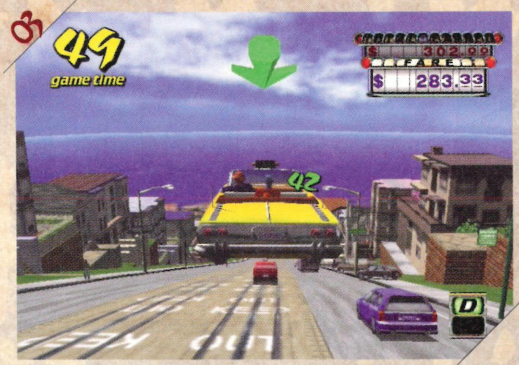
Everyone knows *Crazy Taxi* is a fantastic arcade game. Smashing into other cars, leaping over trucks, skidding into phone boxes and shimmying between oncoming traffic is a frantic, exhilarating trip, and the detailed visuals, lovely character animation and cool music just add to the experience. The question is, will the game have the longevity to make it on console? Anyone who has played the at least superficially similar *Driver* on PC or PlayStation will know how the experience paled after ten or so identical missions. To counteract this, Sega is apparently adding at least another city location to the DC conversion, but will this be enough to make *Crazy Taxi* more than a five-minute-laugh riot? Nostradamus hasn't told us, so we don't know ■

01

02

01 And you thought the Dukes of Hazzard had a monopoly on exciting ways to enter a car
02 Like the smash hit *Driver*, *Crazy Taxi* offers total freedom of movement around the city
03 "Driver, follow that plane!" Ah yes, *Crazy Taxi* is sure to' take off' on Dreamcast. Sorry

03



galleon

publisher: virgin interplay
developer: confounding factor
uk release date: unknown

prophecy

"The strange ship, because of a storm at sea,
will appear at an unknown port...
...afterwards – death and pillage"
(C1 G30)

analysis:

Little is known about the plot of Confounding Factor's forthcoming high seas adventure, but Nostradamus seems to be on the right track here. The story begins with a healer discovering a mysterious ghost ship (the 'strange ship' of the first line perhaps?). Unsure of what to make of the boat and the precious cargo on board the medicine man hires an ocean adventurer named Captain Rhama Sabrier (ie, you) to discover its origins; a quest which takes Rhama and his crew around the world. This being a third-person action adventure, fighting is bound to make up a great part of the action, especially with the high seas of this time literally filled with buccaneers, pirates and ne'er-do-wells. This will account for the 'death and pillage' foreseen by Nostradamus. Sort of.

our view:

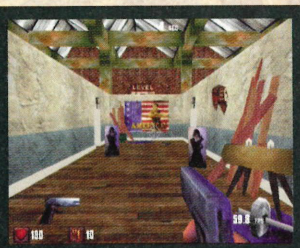
Considering the two men behind *Galleon*, Toby Gard and Paul Douglas, created Lara Croft, hopes were high for this title before work even began on it. The team has spent over two years developing the game, building a huge 3D world and filling it with detailed 15th-16th Century architecture and technology. With character design and animation looking equally promising, success rests on whether the story will be compelling enough to ensnare gamers the way *Tomb Raider* did. The latter relied on claustrophobic, tunnel-like levels to maintain atmosphere and keep the player focused; who knows if miles of ocean can do the same? ■

01

02

03

01 All together now, "The hills are alive with the sound of music, ahhahhhahhh"
02 The diverse scenery should be fascinating to explore
03 "Darling, I'm just off round the world, do you need anything?" "Hmm, a bra would be nice thanks"



take the bullet

Red Lemon's firstperson shooter casts the player as the head of an elite bodyguard unit. After an early sighting led to critical indifference, it's back in the workshop for an extensive overhaul.
■ ETA: Autumn

virtual on

Thirdperson robot combat game, hugely popular in Japan. Run around a huge arena kicking, punching or firing missiles at the other metal bloke. So big, it even has its own controller.
■ ETA: Unknown

virtua tennis

Conversion of the excellent arcade game. Pick from some of the best players in tennis and then play, er yeah, tennis. Amazing animation and intuitive gameplay mark this one out.
■ ETA: Summer

v-rally 2

DC version of the excellent PlayStation and PC rally sim. Unless Codemasters suddenly decides to port over *Colin McRae Rally 2*, this will be the benchmark Dreamcast rally title for sure.
■ ETA: Summer

wild metal

Boisterous tank game from DMA Design. Simply drive around a huge environment shooting other vehicles with a range of powerful weapons. The PC version was a bit of a flop, but don't let that put you off.
■ ETA: Spring

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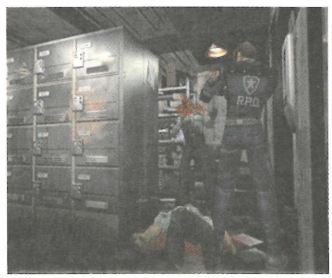
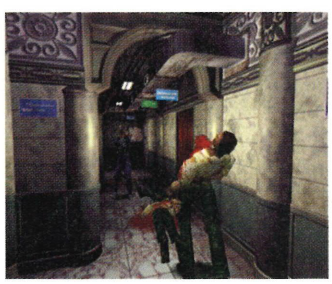
LANDINGSOON

RESIDENT EVIL 2

Capcom's classic survival horror title is lurching your way. Hold your nose and grab a gun





01 The game throws you in at the deep end and surrounds you with zombies from the very first scene
02 Once you get your hands on the shotgun you'll take great delight in separating the zombies' heads from their shoulders
03 The two playable characters, Claire and Leon, meet up at certain plot points for a bit of how's yer father

For the benefit of anyone who died a couple of years ago and has only recently been re-animated with a green complexion and a taste for human flesh, the *Resident Evil* series is one of the biggest franchises in the videogame world. Utilising Capcom's trademark survival horror gameplay, the *Evil* games basically involve running away from zombies, kneecapping any that get in your way, solving a few puzzles and shooting yet more undead cretins in the face. And it's all wrapped-up in superbly atmospheric and cinematic adventures inspired by the films of George Romero.

Resident Evil 2 was released on PlayStation in 1998 to glowing reviews and tumultuous sales which left it second only to Titanic in entertainment industry grosses that year. It was later ported across to PC with no gameplay changes but slightly better visuals and this is the version that's lurching its way onto Dreamcast.

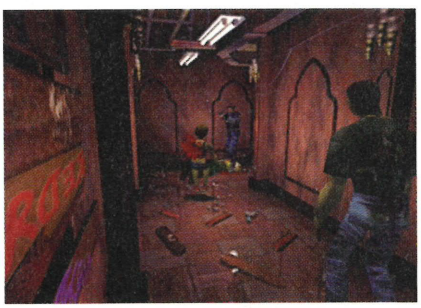
The plot sees you headed toward the zombie-infested locale of Raccoon City and your objective is to get out of there without being consumed by hordes of the undead. You can play as either Claire Redfield, who is searching for her missing brother Chris (star of the original game), or Leon Kennedy, a rookie cop whose introduction to the Raccoon City police force is rather more cannibalistic than he might have imagined.

The characters have separate routes through the game encompassing the same locations but following different story lines which intertwine at vital points. Although the game is not the biggest in terms of hours of gameplay, there's a great incentive to finish it with both characters to uncover the full, grisly story behind events in Raccoon City, and the sinister activities of the malignant Umbrella corporation.

Of course, anyone who has completed *Resident Evil 2* on other formats will not be overly excited by news of its Dreamcast release, especially considering there's nothing new to entice survival horror veterans in for second helpings. However, the game has certainly aged well and for newcomers to the world of *Resident Evil* it's a perfect opportunity to add this classic title to your videogame collection. Just think of it as an aperitif before the main course of *Code: Veronica* ■

FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Virgin Interplay
- **Developer:** Capcom
- **Origin:** Japan
- **Eat:** my flesh
- **ETA:** January



"The **characters have separate routes** through the game with the same locations but **following different story lines**"

FIRSTCONTACT

PLASMA SWORD

Soul Calibur's the current beat 'em up ruler, but Capcom isn't giving up without a fight

Before the free-roaming 3D splendour of *Power Stone*, Capcom's mastery of the beat 'em up genre was restricted to two dimensions with its venerable *Street Fighter* series. The company's previous testing of the 3D fighting waters resulted in a scolded big toe, as *Star Gladiator* was released on PlayStation to a largely oblivious public reaction. Although the game received positive reviews with its true 3D environments and exciting weapons-based gameplay, the title never challenged the dominance of Namco's beat 'em ups.

As so often before, the videogame world is turning full circle with the *Star Gladiator* sequel, *Plasma Sword*, poised for release on Dreamcast and once again it has to battle against the considerable muscle of a Namco beat 'em up masterpiece. It's tempting to presume that the only fighting game which can possibly challenge *Soul Calibur* will be, well, *Soul Calibur 2*. However, that doesn't mean all other offerings in the genre should be dismissed without a second glance. *Plasma Sword* promises to be an extremely accomplished beat 'em up with gameplay and visuals identical to the recently released arcade version.

A more traditional fighting experience than *Power Stone*'s pub brawl action, *Plasma Sword* offers one-on-one scraps with big weapons and spectacular special moves. It may not dragon punch *Soul Calibur* off its pedestal but it will provide a tasty alternative for beat 'em up fans ■

FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Virgin Interplay
- **Developer:** Capcom
- **Origin:** Japan
- **Blood:** Blade
- **ETA:** February

Plasma Sword's coin-op origins are patently obvious from these screenshots. The all-action arcade gameplay will be a welcome addition to Dreamcast's ever-expanding beat 'em up catalogue

LANDINGSOON

SLAVE ZERO

Metal Mickey, Tweakey, C3-PO, it's time for you mechanical mincers to step outside

The time: the distant future. An evil tyrant, Sovereign Khan, has the greatest megacity in the world under his dastardly rule thanks to an army of mechanical monsters. As is always the case with these fascist bully boys, his behaviour soon inspires resentment and a rebel group of elite soldiers has formed to put a stop to his oppression.

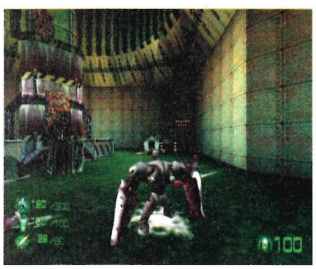
These cheeky subversives have nicked Khan's favourite toy, a gigantic, super-powerful mech named Slave Zero and you must clamber into this robotic shell to fight the dictator and restore peace and liberty.

Gameplay involves strutting through the futuristic environments and blasting the bejesus out of your enemies. The megacity metropolis is an immersive cityscape with traffic going to and fro and civilians doing their shopping while you go about your biomechanical business. Adversaries include rival mechs, tanks, jets, helicopters and freakish end-of-level bosses. You can even blast innocent bystanders if you're feeling like a gun-happy redneck.

With a nifty first-person mode providing the opportunity for *Doom*-style antics and frenetic fourplayer action, *Slave Zero* might interest all the potential Robocops out there ■

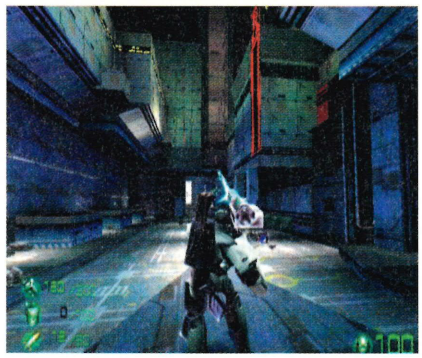
FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Infogrames
- **Developer:** Accolade
- **Origin:** US
- **Robot:** Wars
- **ETA:** February



Mech shoot 'em ups have traditionally been dodgy videogame experiences, marred by poor control and limited depth. *Slave Zero* is certainly impressive visually, let's hope its gameplay will match up

01



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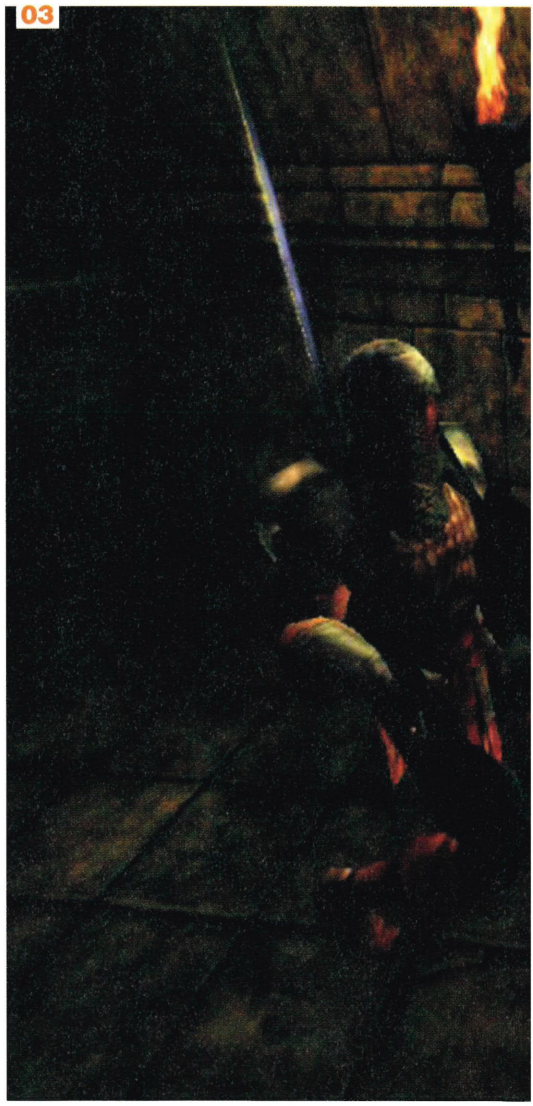
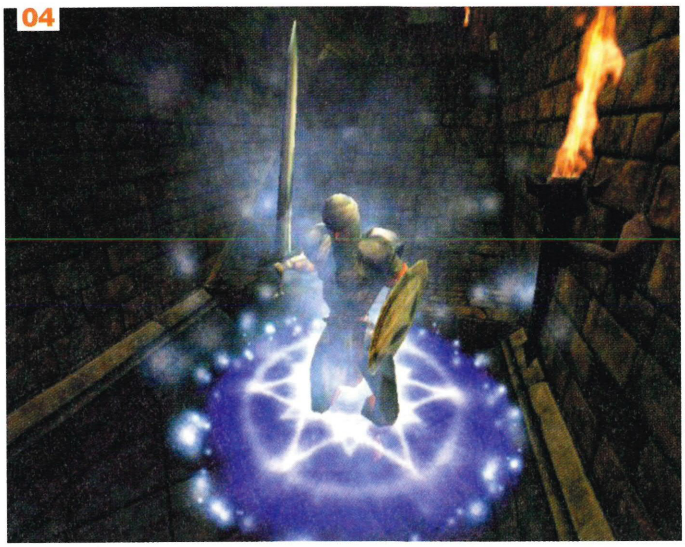
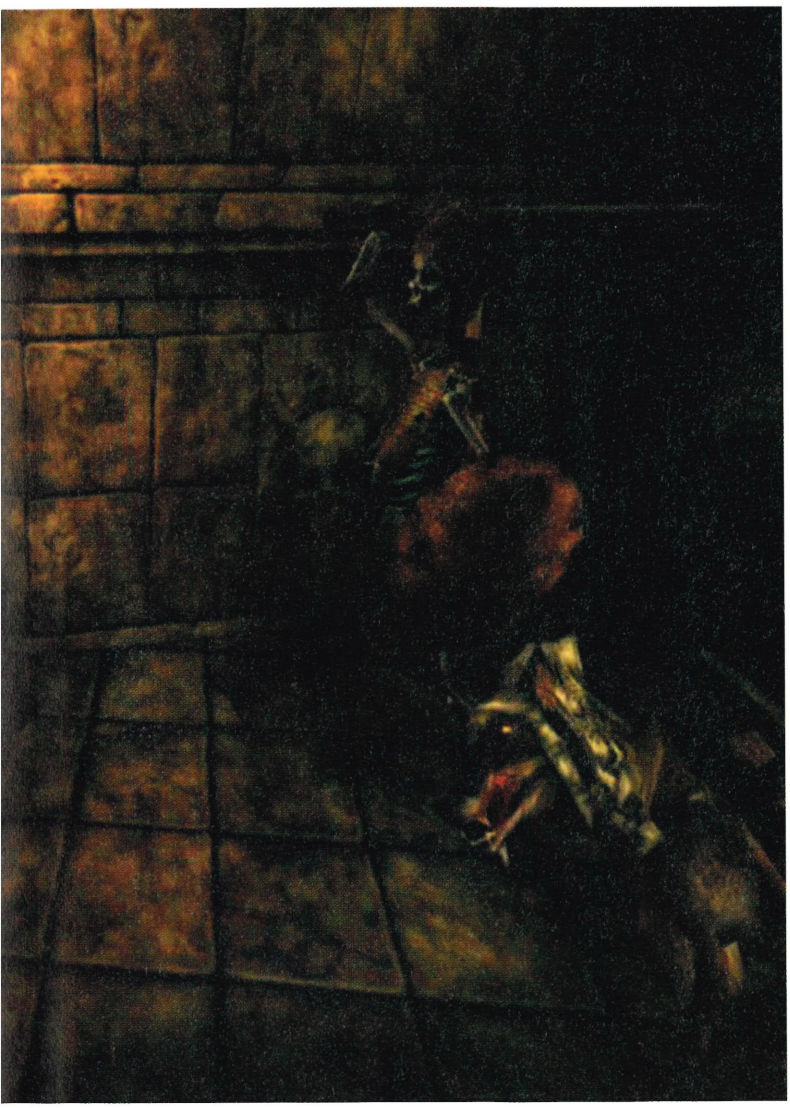


DRAGON'S BLOOD

Hideous creatures, huge weapons, powerful spells. *Dragon's Blood* is a D&D fan's dream


04

"**Hack and slash** your way through a series of **medieval-themed environments**"



So you're living in a mythical fantasy realm, and everything is going OK until this dragon – known simply as 'the great dragon' – bursts in completely uninvited from some parallel dimension and threatens to take over the world. What do you do? Hand over the keys and say, "There you go, hot stuff, help yourself"? No, you grab your sword, your shield and leather jockstrap and you get ready to kick scaly butt.

This is the rather derivative opening to *Dragon's Blood*, an RPG-inspired fighting romp from US developer Treyarch. Here you choose from two different characters – Cynric the Warrior or Aeowyn the Sorceress (guess what their different strengths and weaknesses are) – and then hack and slash your way through a series of medieval-themed environments. Along the way you'll meet eight-foot tall insectoids, hell hounds and dragon knights, all of which use different tactics and weapons to batter you with. There are also three end-of-level baddies to confront, and on beating them you get to equip your character with new abilities and the chance to customise your weapons.

This may all sound a tad familiar, but producer Chris Busse reckons the team has brought its own skewed vision to the whole D&D gamut. "Although many of our characters belong to familiar fantasy species, the visual and social aspects of our interpretations tend to go off the beaten path.

"A classic example of this is our lizardmen. There are two entirely different lizardmen societies in our game: the primitive lizardmen and those that call themselves the Sossians. The Sossians are an advanced culture with in-depth knowledge of astronomy and magic. Although they are a superstitious race, the lizardmen are not just a group of mindless men with scales and tails. Our locations are driven by these characters and, thus, also have a bit of a new look on traditional fantasy."

05

The tactical element of the game is also interesting. It's not just about cracking monsters over the head with swords (à la *Soul Fighter*) – these guys are intelligent and resourceful; you've got to work out their specific weaknesses and exploit them, either with magic or weaponry skill. According to Busse, the fighting system is intuitive yet comprehensive, which again separates it from other lacklustre roaming beat 'em ups, plus the backgrounds are certainly atmospheric and attractive. This could well provide a heady RPG fix before more in-depth adventuring fare gatecrashes the party ■

FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Virgin Interplay
- **Developer:** Treyarch
- **Origin:** US
- **Knights:** of Ni
- **ETA:** February

01 Knight: "Put up your sword and fight like a man, you, you pink blob of pure energy, you" Blob: "Prepare to die! I was a baddie in Star Trek, once you know."
02 The giant antmen make fearsome opponents. Unless you pick up the handy insect repellent
03 It looks like it's combat time as our hero bumps into a skeleton warrior taking his hellhound for a walk after dinner
04 *Dragon's Blood* is rife with familiar D&D imagery – like this attractive glowing pentangle thing
05 Must... not... make... joke... about... monster... having... the... horn... Aargh!

NEWSIGHTING

RED DOG

Argonaut's crimson canine's fourplayer modes should bring *GoldenEye*-style excitement to DC

Where's our *GoldenEye*? Dreamcast has already played host to some of the finest beat 'em ups ever seen, and Y2K looks set to deliver a slew of fabulous driving games – including *Sega GT*, *Ferrari 355 Challenge* and *Crazy Taxi* – but multiplayer shoot 'em ups are relatively scarce. Okay, versions of *Hidden & Dangerous*, *Half-Life* and *Quake III: Arena* are all likely to head Sega's way, but just as Nintendo 64's sales were lifted by Mr Bond's excellent excursion, so Dreamcast needs a gun-toting masterpiece of its own.

There are, erm, were two contenders for this crown, *Red Dog* from Argonaut Software and *Take the Bullet* from Red Lemon, both developed under the financial wing of Sega Europe. The latter of the two places you in command of a team of presidential bodyguards, with a mission to protect and serve your VIP. However, Red Lemon has encountered unspecified difficulties in the development process, leaving Argonaut and its rather lovely *Red Dog* to defend Dreamcast's honour.

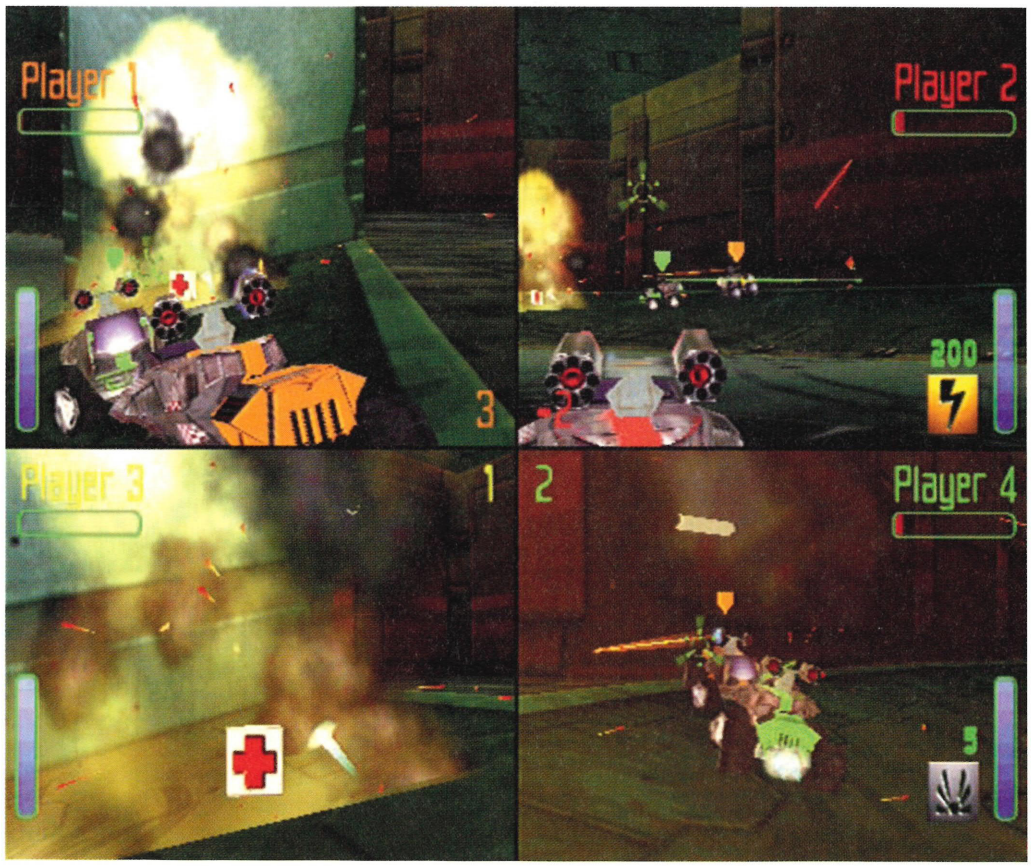
The game has a simple premise: you drive a tank and shoot stuff. However, multiplayer modes of modern shoot 'em ups are fast becoming their most important sections. The latest *Red Dog* preview disc to land in **DC-UK**'s office is packed with over a dozen smooth and playable stages. Because the tanks are almost buggy-like in their handling, the game currently plays like the talented offspring of *GoldenEye* and *Super Mario Kart*, which (as you might expect) is no bad thing at all. Fourplayer games can become hilariously hectic, with plenty of hefty weaponry to knock your mates' tanks from left to right and back again.

As with Rare's forthcoming *Perfect Dark* on N64, *Red Dog*'s multiplayer modes are many and varied, with Deathmatch, Bomb Tag, Team, Tournament and Kitchen Sink options. Well, more or less the last one. The selection of bonus weapons can be altered to suit your fighting mood, as can the colour of your tank. One of the game's nicest touches is that the hue of your tank's laser blasts alters according to its paint job. Details friends, details.

With a couple more months of spit and polish to go, we're praying that *Red Dog*'s oneplayer mode can match up to the manic wonders of its multiplayer – and that the much rumoured online deathmatch option makes it to the final code. Go on Argonaut, you know it makes sense ■

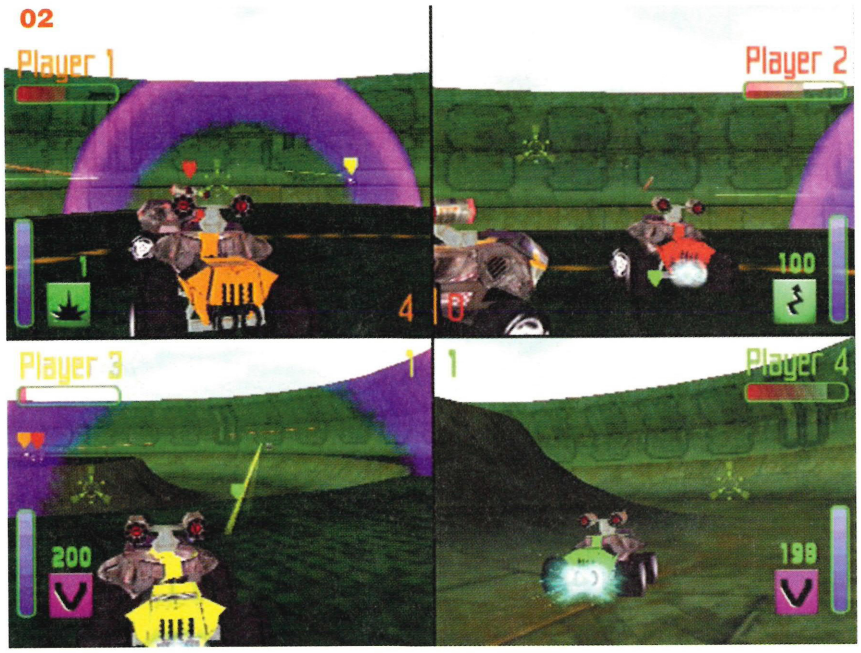
FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Sega
- **Developer:** Argonaut
- **Origin:** UK
- **Dog's:** bollocks
- **ETA:** March

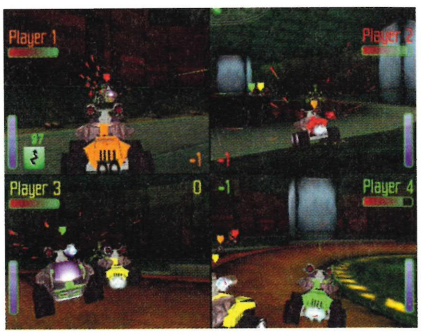


01 Ice, ice, baby. This is currently one of the simpler stages, but that doesn't mean it's not cool. Sorry
02 The super weapon produces powerful, purple shock rings capable of taking out the firing player
03 NCP's new park 'n' blast facility proved popular with the team

02



"The game plays like the talented offspring of ***GoldenEye and Super Mario Kart***"



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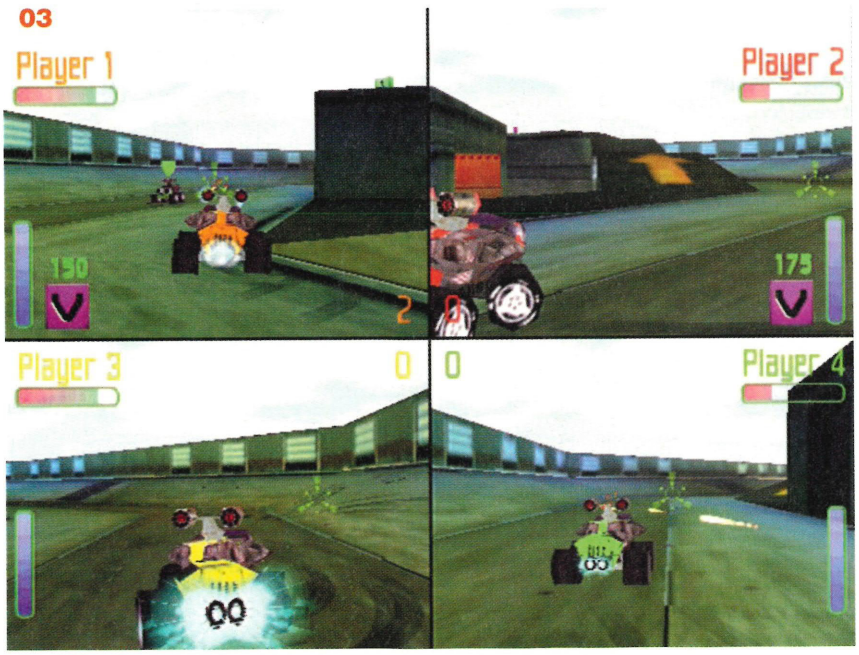


LANDINGSOON

ARMADA

Aliens are out to get us again. Why? They've been watching Jerry Springer on Alien TV

Eleven thousand years in the future, after a mass exodus from Earth, the human race is on the verge of extinction with the remnants of our civilisation being hunted down and wiped out by a bio-mechanical enemy known as the Armada. Six surviving human colonies have banded together to fight these genocidal maniacs and it's up to you to save them from total annihilation.

Armada is a strange mix of straightforward shoot 'em up action and role-playing game that brings to mind the masterful 8bit space epic *Mercenary*. The RPG influence is evident in the interaction with CPU characters who provide you with missions, and also in the development of playable characters. You can choose to play as the commander of each of the six human tribes and as you progress through the game their statistics and experience levels will improve to open up advanced options in the game.

Experience points are gained by blowing away enemies and (in true RPG style) this also provides you with credits to purchase enhancements for your ship. You can buy these parts (such as weapons and shields) from various space stations dotted around the galaxy and use them to build the mother of all spaceships that will blast the evil Armada to kingdom come. Hopefully.

This intelligent mix of traditional interstellar shoot 'em up and strategic elements hasn't really worked since the heady days of *Mercenary* and its sequel *Damocles*. It's certainly asking a lot for *Armada* to recapture the magic of those past classics ■

FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Acclaim
- **Developer:** Metro3D
- **Origin:** US
- **Space:** the final frontier
- **ETA:** January

Despite its RPG overtones and *Mercenary*-like strategy, the actual shoot 'em up action in Armada has more in common with Atari's venerable *Asteroids* as you rotate and thrust while blasting alien scum

LANDINGSOON

VIRTUA STRIKER 2 VER.2000.1

22 healthy young men, jumpers for goalposts. Oh, give over, *Virtua Striker*'s on the way

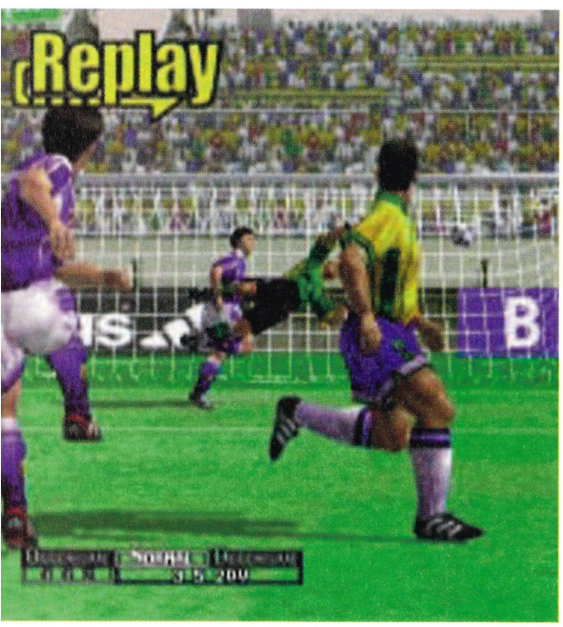
Perhaps the most welcome news since Phil Collins emigrated to Switzerland is that *Virtua Striker* will be appearing on Dreamcast sooner than we had hoped, with the December Japanese release closely followed by the PAL version hitting the net in January. Goooooaaaal!!

Ahem, yes, we are getting a tad overexcited by this imminent arrival, but when you consider it could be the finest football game ever seen on a home system our enthusiasm is more than justified. The Dreamcast conversion boasts gorgeous visuals identical to its Naomi-based arcade parent (which uses similar technology to Dreamcast) and the detailed and fluid animation of the players is a joy to behold. Gameplay is equally alluring and although the game doesn't pretend to be an exact football simulation it certainly manages to capture the feel and the flow of the sport with its simple, intuitive control system.

As well as including the Arcade mode, which comes straight from the *Virtua Striker 2* coin-op, the home version has extra longevity in the shape of new league options and a World Cup-style International Cup containing the cream of the world's national sides. And it almost goes without saying that the twoplayer mode is so good it makes the 1970 Brazil team look like Man City.

Virtua Striker 2 ver.2000.1 seems to have absolutely everything going for it (apart from a sensible title, obviously). If the New Year release suddenly seems an eternity away, just follow **DC-UK**'s simple three-step plan: (1) Get on the blower to Professor Stephen Hawking (2) Become a bona fide physics genius (3) Invent a time machine and travel forward in time to January. You know it makes sense ■

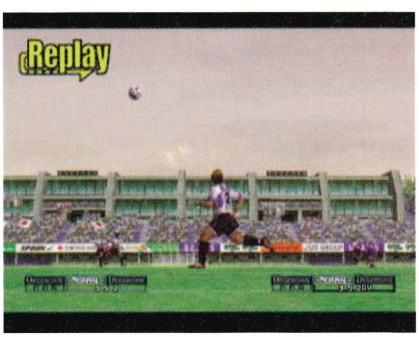
01 If this game fails to live up to the hype we'll be marching on Sega's HG with placards, weeping babies and big guns
02 The detail on the players is incredible, with rounded textures replacing the usual angular, polygonal character models
03 The CPU provides quality opposition but, as with all footie titles, it's in twoplayer mode that the game really comes to life



FINEPOINTS
- **Publisher:** Sega
- **Developer:** In-house
- **Origin:** Japan
- **Football:** crazy
- **ETA:** January

01

> "***Virtua Striker*** has absolutely everything going for it (**apart from a sensible title, obviously**)"



LANDINGSOON

ZOMBIE REVENGE

The zombies are sick and tired of their endless decapitations. Now it's payback time

After the nightmarish debacles that were *Soul Fighter* and *Dynamite Cop 2* it would be reasonable to presume that the scrolling beat 'em up sub-genre was as rotten and lifeless as a zombified corpse. We shouldn't write its obituary just yet however, as Sega is attempting to resurrect the carcass with the forthcoming release of its arcade favourite *Zombie Revenge*.

A spin-off from Sega's great light-gun shooter *The House of the Dead 2*, *Revenge* shares the same setting as its forbear, Woodside City, and includes many familiar locations and undead faces from *THOTD2*. There are nine areas to battle through including dark alleyways, stinking subways and sewers, and there's even a scrap on top of a speeding freight train for James Bond fans. As with *THOTD2*, there are multiple routes through each area and you have the choice of which perilous direction to take. Additionally, rescuing civilians from the undead onslaught can unlock secret areas and bonus items.

Where the two games differ is that, rather than placing a cursor on the zombie scum and blowing them away, in *Zombie Revenge* you'll be getting up close and personal and smelling their fetid breath in thirdperson battles. The gameplay merely involves wasting every monster in sight, but it's such a relentlessly action-packed kill-fest that you'll never get bored. There are three playable characters to choose from, each with their own fighting combos for battering the undead. You can also wipe them out with a vast arsenal of pick-up weapons including shotguns, flame-throwers, machine guns and a cool powerdrill that allows you to perform gruesome DIY manoeuvres on our zombie friends.

The game has already been a massive hit in the arcades and with this perfect conversion we can expect a similar reaction when *Zombie Revenge* is released on Dreamcast early next year ■

FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Sega
- **Developer:** In-house
- **Origin:** Japan
- **Streets:** Of The Dead
- **ETA:** March

Punch the zombies, kick the zombies, pick up weapons and shoot the zombies. In fact, do anything necessary to wipe them off the face of the Earth. But remember: sometimes they come back

LANDINGSOON

RAYMAN 2

The Great Escape, ah, what a film. Steve McQueen, Chuck Bronson, Rayman... Who?

Those of you who have completed *Sonic Adventure* and are impatiently awaiting the arrival of a new platform-based escapade on Dreamcast will be pleased to learn that *Rayman 2: The Great Escape* is heading our way early next year courtesy of Ubi Soft.

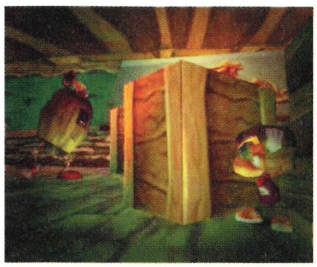
Already released to much acclaim on N64, this sequel to the 2D side-scrolling platformer has negotiated the jump into three dimensions perfectly. And, in doing so, has expanded its traditional platforming gameplay into a free-roaming adventure that will be instantly appealing to fans of Sonic's Dreamcast incarnation.

The game begins with Rayman's world being taken over by Captain Razorbeard and his crew of robot pirates. They have imprisoned the population of loveable little creatures and are busy sapping their captives' powers. Rayman manages to escape and (with your help) sets about freeing his chums and forcing the pirates to metaphorically swab the decks and walk the plank. His ultimate task is to collect the ingredients of a soup that will destroy the baddies and restore peace to his world.

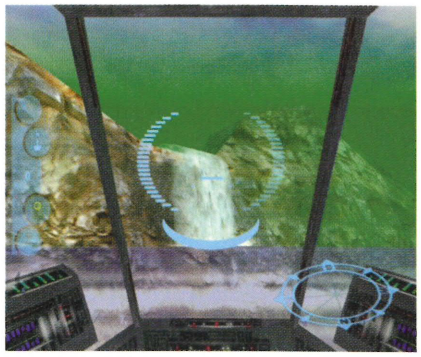
The Dreamcast version takes a massive graphical leap over its N64 and PC cousins, boasting sumptuous visuals which convincingly give the game the look of an interactive cartoon. The gameplay has a non-linear structure with each level offering a wholly different challenge and there's the additional attraction of a load of bonus games and secrets to discover. All of which means *Rayman 2* is shaping up to be among the very best of its genre ■

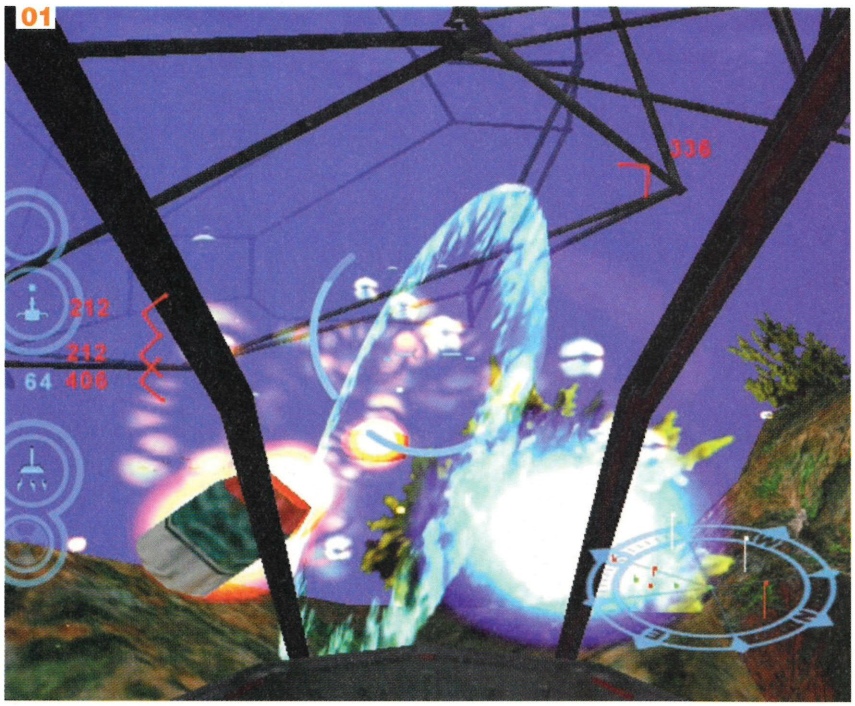
FINEPOINTS

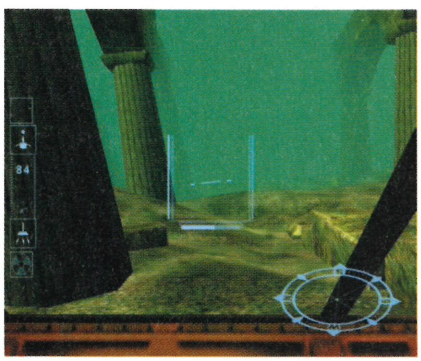
- **Publisher:** Ubi Soft
- **Developer:** In-house
- **Origin:** France
- **Not starring:** Steve McQueen
- **ETA:** March

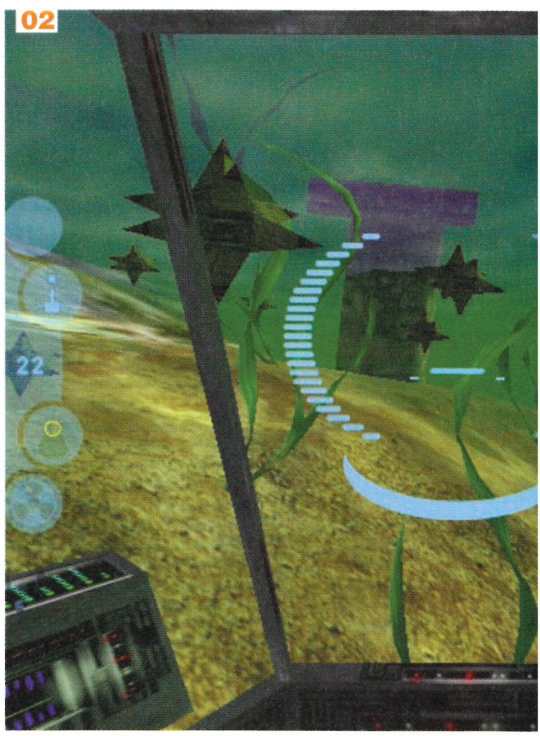


Yes, Rayman is still a rum-looking armless and legless fellow and fans of the original game will pleased to hear that his cool helicopter-ears hovering move has made it into the sequel



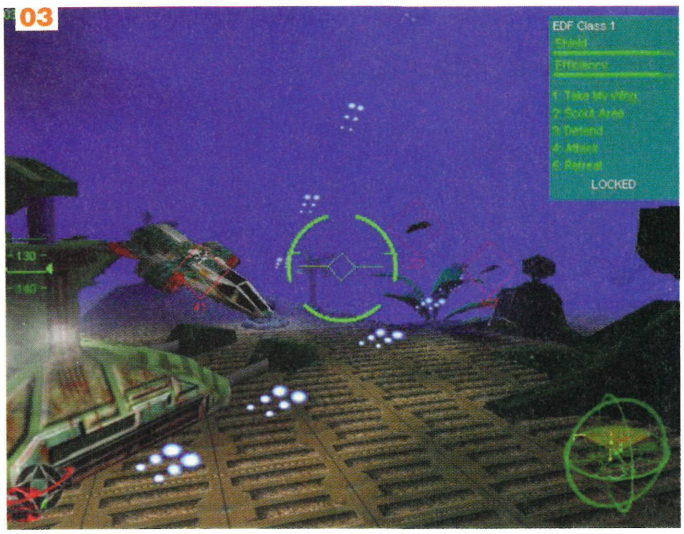






DEEP FIGHTER

Stay out of the water, it's full of nasty things that bite. Unless you're in a sub, of course



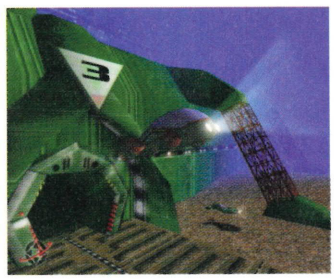
Should you ever fancy emulating The Beatles and experiencing life in a yellow submersible beneath the ocean waves then firstly, you're a very sick individual and secondly, your deranged dreams are about to come true in the shape of Criterion's forthcoming *Deep Fighter*.

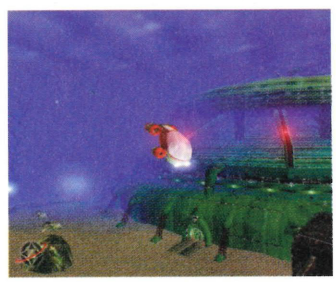
The game is set in the outer reaches of space where war has been raging for over a decade. The action takes place in the underwater environs of a small mining planet supplying the war effort and, as part of the Defence Force, it's up to you to man the submarines and protect the colony from both physical and environmental threats.

Essentially a shoot 'em up, *Deep Fighter* has far more depth (pun absolutely intended) than most games in the genre. Although the main thrust of the gameplay is deep-sea dog fighting action against enemy craft and huge sea monsters, other gaming elements such as puzzle solving and exploration are also planned to come into play.

As Jim Hill of developer Criterion Studios explains: "The game is split into around 50 or so missions and these will vary greatly in terms of objectives and complexity. For example, in an action mission you might have to escort an allied vehicle safely to a designated destination and in the process fend off aggressors using elements of stealth and combat. A more cerebral mission would involve locating and retrieving valuable resources using exploration and precise craft control. These will be combined with missions which incorporate puzzle solving and also basic resource management."

This diverse mix of mission types and mission objectives should ensure the game doesn't suffer from the kind of repetitive gameplay that plagues the majority of shoot 'em ups. When you add a totally convincing underwater world that successfully evokes the game's premise, it seems *Deep Fighter* could be one to watch out for when it sails onto Dreamcast early next year ■





01 There are five subs in the game, plus hidden ones, and each has its own weapons and attack moves. Cue spectacular explosions **02** There are four main environments to explore: Paradise, the lost city of Atlantis, Rockpool and Abyss. Doesn't it look lovely? **03** As per usual, the cockpit view is by far the best for surveying the action and blowing up enemy miscreants

FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Ubi Soft
- **Developer:** Criterion Studios
- **Origin:** UK
- **20,000 Leagues:** Under The Sea
- **ETA:** March

"The main thrust of the gameplay is **deep-sea dog fighting** against enemy craft and **sea monsters**"

LANDINGSOON

TEE OFF GOLF

From the makers of *Everybody's Golf* comes a DC swinger that's headed straight for the pin

Golf may not be the sports sim of choice for the average gamer, but out there, somewhere, there are people who take the virtual sport every bit as seriously as the millionaires in foolish trousers.

For those of you who fit the above bill or are just curious, *Tee Off Golf* from Bottom Up is the spiritual successor to the popular *Everybody's Golf* on the PlayStation. The team which originally worked on that title, Bottom Up, split, half went on to develop *Mario Golf* on N64 and the other half made *Tee Off*. The first thing you'll notice that has been retained from *Everybody's Golf* is the vast head sizes of the characters, featuring possibly the bulkiest anime eyes ever seen in a videogame. In addition to looking excellent, the 12 characters all have individual strengths and weaknesses, including Power, Curl, Spin and the promising looking Luck and Wisdom variables. Up to four players can play a round simultaneously on the five international courses, either in match games, world tours or a space age variety of croquet.

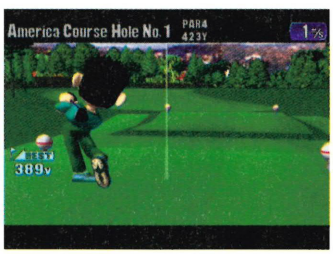
Although the presentation is undeniably cartoony, on first impressions *Tee Off Golf* seems more challenging than *Mario Golf*, as the slightest deviation from the sweet spot causes the ball to trickle impotently a couple of feet from its start point. Much like real golf then.

Sadly the game is currently void of a crazy golf option and the tree collision detection is yet to be perfected. Otherwise, the 3D courses have superbly crisp looking grass and the character design and animation is as good as we would expect from the creators of *Everybody's Golf*.

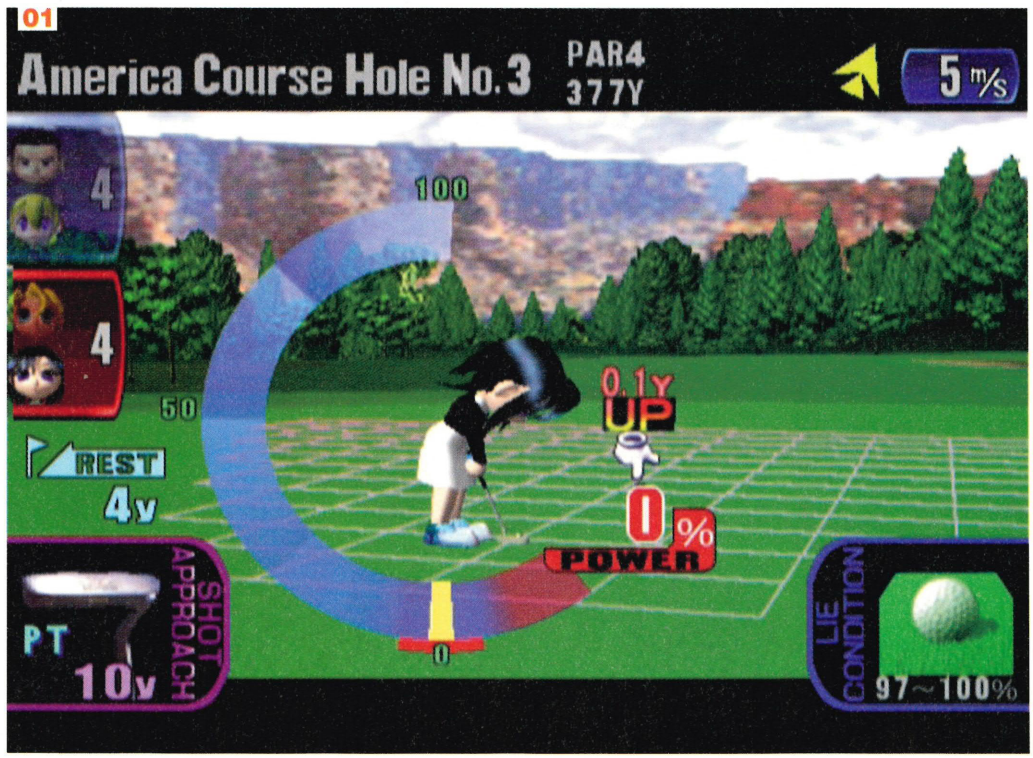
Considering *Tee Off Golf* is the first title of its kind on Dreamcast, it looks very promising indeed ■

FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Acclaim
- **Developer:** Bottom Up
- **Origin:** Japan
- **Get in:** the hole!
- **ETA:** January 29



01 *Tee Off* uses a three-hit power meter similar to the one in *Everybody's Golf*
02 Travel to the home of golf, Scotland, where the 19th hole is the stuff of legend
03 Even Tiger Woods has off-days, you know



"Choose from **match games**, world tours or **space age croquet**"

NEWSIGHTING

STUNT GP

With more stunts and tricks than the average LA pimp, *Stunt GP* is looking superfly

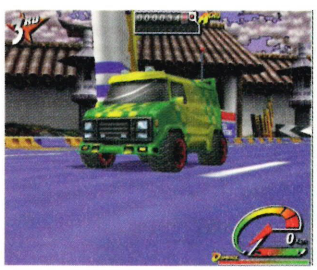
Hasbro, in a baffling, but no doubt hugely important, corporate game of pass-the-parcel, has switched publication of *Stunt GP* from its Microprose label to Atari. To celebrate this game of swapsies, Hasbro has released some new shots of this promising racing game, which we've dutifully printed.

As revealed last month, *Stunt GP* is a remote control car racer offering 16 different vehicle models, split into four separate racing classes. The various single player and two player modes offer 24 tracks to race across, each featuring plenty of ramps, jumps, corkscrews and loop-the-loops. Each time you pull off a cool stunt you're given rewards aka Aeromiles which can be used to buy car upgrades. You can also expect plenty of special effects with smoke and fumes coming out of the exhaust, oh and the headlights work as well – which should be pretty handy in the night courses.

Stunt GP certainly looks like a colourful, fun, little racer with plenty of variety and some nice ideas – hopefully there's a decent enough driving engine in there too. The team is certainly promising some incredibly tuned physics. Only in videogames could this sound attractive ■

FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Atari Games
- **Developer:** Team 17
- **Origin:** UK
- **Size:** isn't everything
- **ETA:** March 2000



Team 17 has gone for the authentic remote-control car look, right down to the big aerial on the back. The striped loop-the-loop in the background hints at a 'fun rather than realistic' trade-off

FIRSTCONTACT

ROADSTERS

Race convertibles on sunny Californian freeways and bet on your races. Sounds cool

You know it must really get to you. Commuting every morning through the smoggy, wreckage-strewn, gangsta-infested freeways of Los Angeles. It certainly seems to have affected Player 1 anyway, a development studio based in the City of Angels; the team's racing game *Roadsters* is a paean to the Californian driving experience – it's all convertibles (at least 12 different models in all), road rage, steep banks and mad jumps. Although the latter may well be poetic licence on our part.

Sounds like a laugh, but at the moment, it looks like the designers weren't sure what kind of racer they wanted to write – so they wrote them all. There's a bit of sim in there (the vehicles come in Street, Sports or Formula grades and can all be customised), the freeway setting gives it a bit of *Ridge Racer* arcade glamour, and finally, the crazy natural disaster obstacles (tornadoes, lava flows, etc) are highly reminiscent of *Speed Devils*.

Perhaps it was this mix-and-match approach that led to critical indifference toward the PlayStation and PC versions released earlier this year. However, if Player 1 can clean up around the edges, add some 128bit shine and provide a decent fourplayer mode (something the team is promising), then *Roadsters* could prove a possible alternative to *Speed Devils*. That's not damning with faint praise, by the way. That's realism ■

01 "Let's just keep driving Thelma. Let's drive over the cliff in a hysterical, pseudo-feminist suicide pact"
02 "Honey make sure you avoid that semi-erect column."
"Don't worry darling, I always do"

FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Titus
- **Developer:** Player 1
- **Origin:** US
- **Convertibles:** a bit girly
- **ETA:** Early 2000

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DC-WORLD

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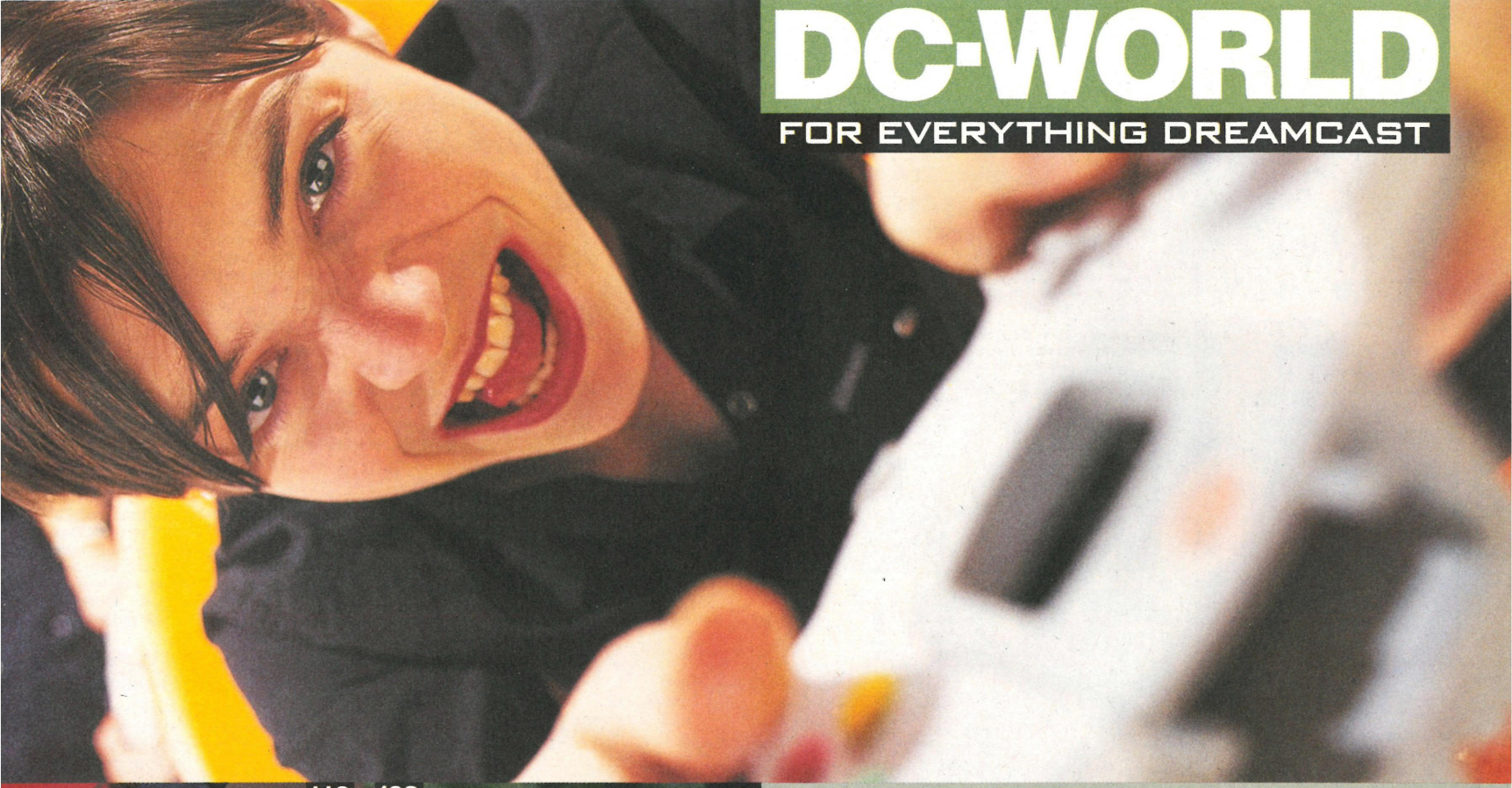

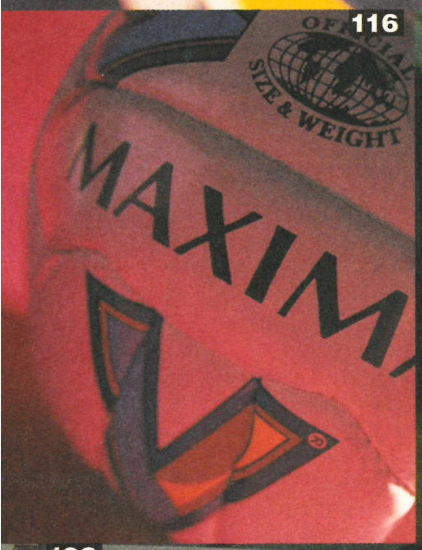

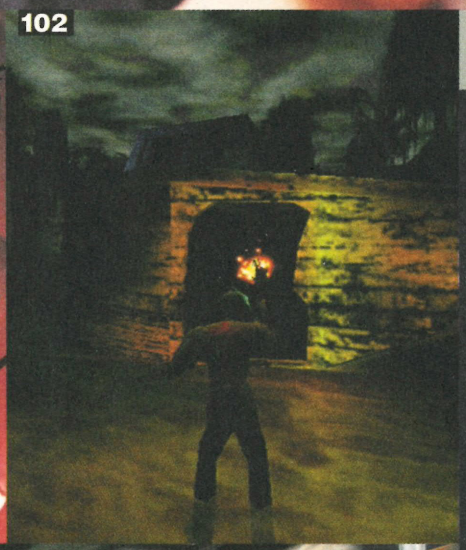

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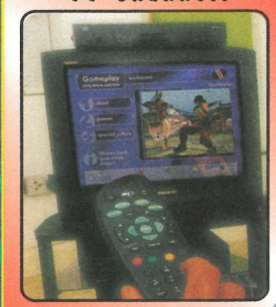

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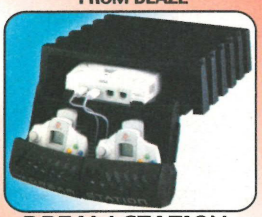

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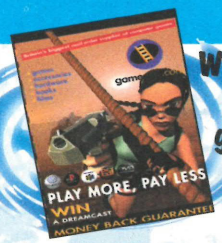

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BLUE STINGER 3/10

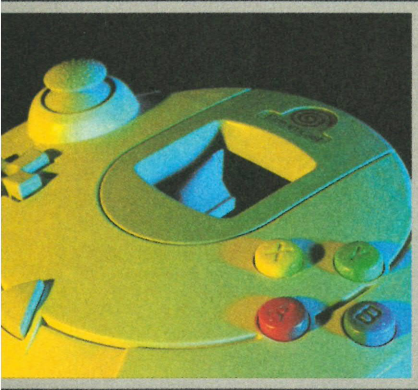
"You get to a stage in *Blue Stinger* where you start to think that it all might either be, a) a poor joke, or b) a bad dream. Sadly, it's neither. Unfortunately, you'll find that the joke is on you if you save up the readies to buy this."

***Blue Stinger* is an arcade game with elements of adventure games like *Tomb Raider* and *Resident Evil*. Unfortunately, apart from some nice graphics, it has none of the class those two games displayed ■**

- **Issue #02**
- Publisher: Sega
- Developer: Climax Graphics
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One
- **For:** A familiar and popular genre. Some decent graphics
- **Against:** Frustrating and unoriginal gameplay

PERIPHERALS

JOYPAD The Dreamcast controller is a hefty, yet comfortable device. On the top it has two direction controllers: one analogue and one digital. In the middle of the pad is the hole through which you'll be able to view your VM screen. Turn the thing over and you'll see that there are two slots at the front. These can hold either two VMs or one VM and one Jump Pack – which vibrates at key moments in a game. There are also two triggers down there by your index fingers, one beneath each prong, which are a bit like those triggers on a Scalextric. There have been complaints that the controller isn't perfect for beat 'em ups, but apart from this, it's a versatile, feature-packed controller ■



VISUAL MEMORY The VM saves game positions and high scores from your games. It has a 48x32 pixel screen, a d-pad, two fire buttons, and a connection port so that two VMs can be slotted together.

It's capable of downloading games from either Dreamcast or from the Internet – *Power Stone*, for example, has three different mini-games that can be stored on the VM. Also, if you attach two together, it allows players to engage in twoplayer mini-games or to swap whatever they've downloaded from their Dreamcast titles. And on top of all this, the VM screen is visible when you slot the unit into a joypad, which means each player has a personal viewing field of their own ■

BUGGY HEAT 6/10

"There are several factors that make *Buggy Heat* worth recommending as a racing game, but it's just too limited and frustrating to offer a long-term alternative to *Sega Rally 2*. Surely the search for niche racing genres must end soon."

***Buggy Heat* has quite a few original features (for example, the Internet high score table) and it looks quite nice, but it's not one of the best racing games we've played. Still, for racing fans it's probably worth investigation ■**

- **Issue #03**
- Publisher: Sega
- Developer: CRI
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- Extras: 60Hz, Internet
- **For:** Good-looking and original take on the familiar racing template
- **Against:** Slow turning speeds and limited depth

EXPENDABLE 6/10

"*Expendable* should provide all the action you wannabe Arnies and Will Smiths need; it's a fast-paced blaster in the old skool tradition. How long these type of exploits can hold your attention nowadays is another matter."

Taking its inspiration from classic shoot 'em ups like *Ikari Warriors* and *Gunsmoke*, *Expendable* pitches you and a friend (should you actually have one) against hordes of enemy droids in a post apocalyptic future. Simple ■

- **Issue #01**
- Publisher: Infogrames
- Developer: Rage
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- **For:** Some nice graphical touches. An enjoyable blast 'em up. Bloody big guns
- **Against:** It's all a bit old hat. A bit repetitive

F1 WORLD GRAND PRIX 7/10

"As long as you're prepared to spend time getting to know it, you won't find a more involving serious racing game. But for those looking for a basic racer *F1 World GP* might prove a little too complicated to be truly enjoyable."

Fans of the Formula One genre will have little to grumble about with *F1 World Grand Prix*. As far as sims go, it's one of the best on any platform. It's marred only by some slow-down and an imperfect twoplayer game ■

- **Issue #03**
- Publisher: Video System
- Developer: In-house
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- Extras: Rumble, 60Hz, wheel
- **For:** Detailed and challenging simulation
- **Against:** 1998 drivers

HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2 8/10

"Play the DC version of *House of The Dead 2* on a large, good-quality television and you may as well be playing it in an arcade... And as a twoplayer game, it's addictive and highly social... A terrifyingly good experience."

***THOTD2* was great in the arcades and it's just as good on Dreamcast. Sega's scary shoot 'em up now comes with a special mode, featuring new weapons and power-ups. This is what all lightgun games should be like ■**

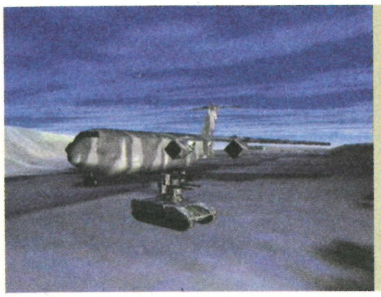
- **Issue #01**
- Publisher: Sega
- Developer: In-house
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- Extras: Lightgun
- **For:** Arcade-perfect, addictive gameplay, and multiple routes
- **Against:** Not particularly mentally challenging

HYDRO THUNDER 7/10

"The courses are imaginative, there's stuff hidden all over the place, and careering over ramps into the great unknown provides an exhilarating rush. However, the gameplay is scrappy in places and the physics are slightly dodgy."

Publishers seem eager to flood the DC market with racing games, and, as it happens, *Hydro Thunder* is a decent variation on the usual race-based speed antics. It's arcadey and fun, but, as you'd expect, a bit shallow ■

- **Issue #03**
- Publisher: Midway
- Developer: Eurocom
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- Extras: Rumble pack
- **For:** Fast-paced arcade fun, imaginative design
- **Against:** Lacks any real depth, or options



INCOMING 5/10

"*Incoming* tries to gloss over the repetitiveness of its gameplay with incredible graphics and a variety of vehicles. It's fun for a while, but unless you're a fan of the genre you'll be bored after the first 20 phases."

With the exception of *UEFA Striker*, Rage has seemed content to rehash PC titles for DC. *Incoming* is similar to *Expendable*, in that it looks great and is fun for a while, but at the end of the day, it lacks depth ■

- **Issue #01**
- Publisher: Infogrames
- Developer: Rage
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One
- **For:** Beautiful explosions and backgrounds. Loads of vehicles and weapons
- **Against:** Missions are too similar. Lack of depth

JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL 5/10

"It's a good pool simulation, let down only by the loading times – and the lack of beer, fag smoke and ripped baize. But it's the only time you'll play against the Whirlwind himself and it's almost worth it just for *Dropzone*."

As with all games of its ilk, *Jimmy White's* can't possibly match playing pool down the boozer, but it is actually a rather good game. The loading times are poor and the joypad isn't as user-friendly as the mouse in the PC version ■

- **Issue #03**
- Publisher: Virgin Interplay
- Developer: Awesome
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- **For:** Realistic snooker sim. Darts, draughts, jukebox and *Dropzone*
- **Against:** Dreadful loading times, crap tunes on jukie

MARVEL VS CAPCOM 5/10

"Hardcore Capcom fans will, undoubtedly, be aghast at the figure we've awarded *Marvel Vs Capcom*, but most of you will probably play this once or twice before dashing back to the shop to trade it for something else."

Okay, so you get to play as your Saturday morning cartoon heroes, as well as some of Capcom's legendary fighters, but *MVC* doesn't quite cut the mustard next to the likes of *Soul Calibur*, or even *Street Fighter Alpha 3* ■

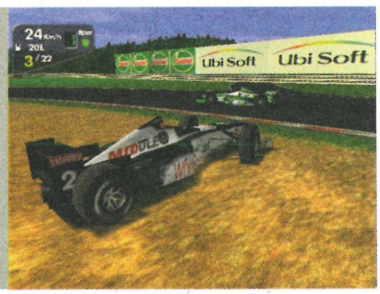
- **Issue #03**
- Publisher: Virgin Interplay
- Developer: Capcom
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- Extras: 60Hz option
- **For:** Great characters, super-powerful moves
- **Against:** All this 2D beat 'em up stuff is a bit dated

MONACO GP 6/10

"*Monaco GP* is a competent attempt at F1, combining an accessible arcade game with a detailed simulation mode and an enjoyable twoplayer option. But the proceedings are often a little bit soulless and unrewarding."

While it may not be the most realistic Formula One simulation to have graced the world of videogames (it doesn't hold the official licence, for example), *Monaco Grand Prix* is a decent take on the F1 racing genre ■

- **Issue #02**
- Publisher: Ubi Soft
- Developer: In-house
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- Extras: 60Hz
- **For:** Fun arcade mode and detailed simulation mode
- **Against:** The gameplay is a bit soulless and unrewarding



MORTAL KOMBAT GOLD 5/10

"Despite its gameplay being decidedly 2D, *Mortal Kombat Gold* is certainly worth a look... The series has lasted so long because these games are good, mindless fun, but it's just *Mortal Kombat*, and we've seen it all before."

Midway's insanely gory beat 'em up is back, this time on Dreamcast, and yes, it's more of the same old, same old. It might be a bit dated compared to *Soul Calibur* and *Power Stone*, but fans will still get a kick out of this ■

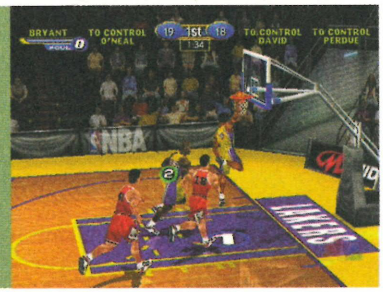
- **Issue #04**
- Publisher: Midway
- Developer: Eurocom
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- Extras: Jump Pak, 60Hz
- **For:** Loads of blood. Easy to play
- **Against:** Dated gameplay. Too easy to beat

NBA SHOWTIME 6/10

"*NBA Showtime* is a straight conversion from the coin-op of the same name... favouring arcade-style two-on-two action rather than a more sober, simulated approach to the sport. Fast and furious gameplay is guaranteed."

Although it lacks any oneplayer longevity, *NBA Showtime* is fantastic in fourplayer. In fact, our lunchtimes have been spent 'slam dunking the funk', getting 'nothing but nylon' and the like. We love it ■

- **Issue #04**
- Publisher: Midway
- Developer: In-house
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to four
- **For:** Great fourplayer action on Dreamcast. Exciting arcade gameplay
- **Against:** Limited challenge. Lack of options



PERIPHERALS

ARCADE STICK This huge slab of a joypad is about the same size and weight as some bathroom scales, and can be perched on your lap or placed on a table in front of your telly. Sporting a proper joystick and six chunky buttons, the arcade stick is designed for those who want to replicate the arcade gaming experience in the privacy of their own home (for extra authenticity you could always put a couple of cigarette burns on it). Best used for beat 'em ups and shooters, the arcade stick retails at around £35 ■

WHEEL Believe it or not, this peripheral has been designed for use with driving games. As well as the five buttons on the front of the wheel, there are two paddles on the rear used for accelerating and braking (or changing gears, depending on how you configure the thing). The stabilisers at the side make it feel nice and solid, but unfortunately there's no force feedback (ie, a jump pak that simulates resistance), which is a pity. The wheel retails for £45 or thereabouts ■

KEYBOARD Sega's dedicated Dreamcast keyboard should prove invaluable if you plan to spend a lot of time surfing the Internet (for completely legal and above the line research purposes, naturally), but can't be bothered to enter all those long URL addresses using Dreamcast's fidgety onscreen-keyboard. It's also good for writing emails, of course – a facility that Sega's online service provides. Expect to pay about £20 for the keyboard – well worth it, if you ask us ■

REVIEW LISTINGS

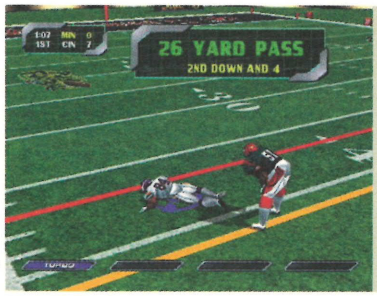
NERVOUS ABOUT PARTING WITH YOUR HARD-EARNED? LET **DC-UK** HELP YOU MAKE THE RIGHT DECISIONS

CONNECTIONS

TELEVISION Sega encourages developers working on the UK versions of Japanese and American games to support Dreamcast's 60Hz option – this allows our lazy European PAL machines to run games at the NTSC rate of 60 frames per second (see page 117 for an explanation of what all this means), rather than the slower PAL rate of 50 frames per second. To take advantage of this feature you will need a dual standard TV, that is, one that can understand both PAL and NTSC signals. Most modern televisions do this, but if you're thinking about buying a new one to play your Dreamcast games on, make sure you check with the shop whether it's dual standard or not ■

CABLES Although every UK Dreamcast comes with a free RF cable to connect your machine to the TV, the picture quality is never too hot through those cheap bits of wire. There are alternatives, however. Dreamcast, for example, has full SCART cable support. SCART is a European technology that splits the image into its component colours – red, green and blue – and sends them to the TV separately, so you get a much clearer, sharper picture. An official Sega SCART lead is available, but cheaper alternatives are around. You can also purchase Dreamcast composite leads which have three jacks – audio left, audio right and video. These provide a slightly better picture and sound than RF, but they're not half as good as a SCART connector.

Finally, there's the S-video cable option. As with composite, S-video leads end in three jacks, but here the video jack splits the TV signal into two parts: colour information (Chrominance) and brightness (Luminance). Like SCART, this gives a sharper picture and prevents colour bleeding ■



NFL BLITZ 8/10

"*NFL Blitz* is the antidote to all those tricky, serious American football sims. There are no technicalities to worry about; you just have to rush to the endzone, by any means necessary. It's a fantastic take on America's finest sport."

***NFL Blitz* should do the same for gridiron as *Ready 2 Rumble* did for boxing; its arcade appeal will convert even those who can't stand to watch the sport on TV. Ideal for anyone who's into instant sports fun ■**

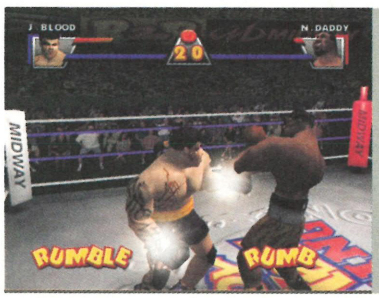
- **Issue #04**
- Publisher: Midway
- Developer: In-house
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to four
- Extras: Vibration, 60Hz option
- **For:** Fast, fun and outrageously violent gameplay
- **Against:** It's a bit shallow

POWER STONE 9/10

"*Power Stone* is one of the most innovative, off-beat releases we've seen in ages. Despite a few niggling issues, it's a superb and original title. Even its lack of single-player longevity is no reason to avoid it. Buy it now."

When *Power Stone* first touched down at DC-UK, productivity hit an all-time low. The 3D arenas look impressive and the characters are smooth and chunky. The freedom of movement propels the genre light years ahead ■

- **Issue #02**
- Publisher: Eidos
- Developer: Capcom
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- Extras: VM sub-games
- **For:** Massively original. Easy to play and great to look at
- **Against:** A little easy to complete



READY 2 RUMBLE 8/10

"*Ready 2 Rumble* is classic US videogaming – enjoyable, brash, bold and noisy. Created by Midway, a company whose history stretches back to the pinball era, *R2R* is one of the finest games to emerge from its parent in years."

One of the best DC beat 'em ups and the greatest boxing game since Nintendo's *Punch Out!!* series, *R2R* is also one of the funniest and most enjoyable games we've played. The training system is especially well-conceived ■

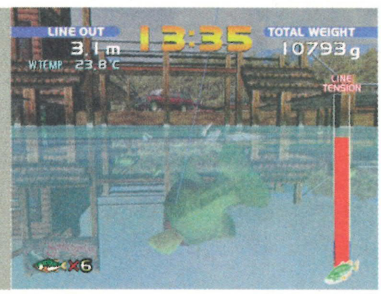
- **Issue #02**
- Publisher: Sega
- Developer: Midway
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- Extras: 60Hz option
- **For:** Hilarious and hugely enjoyable box 'em up action. Instantly accessible
- **Against:** Not enough modes for any serious long-term appeal

SEGA BASS FISHING 7/10

"Getting bass is more enjoyable than you would think videogame fishing could possible be. The only drawbacks are its repetitive gameplay and limited appeal. But grab a rod controller and you might get hooked."

Fishing without the cold, wet weather; no sign of a bite all day; and, worst of all, sea sickness. *Sega Bass Fishing* is innovative and great fun. Unfortunately, the good times peter out quicker than we would have liked ■

- **Issue #03**
- Publisher: Sega
- Developer: In-house
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One
- Extras: Fishing rod controller
- **For:** Original gameplay. Surprisingly addictive
- **Against:** Limited appeal. Repetitive



SEGA RALLY 2 7/10

"*Sega Rally 2* has aged alarmingly since its original Japanese release. It's a fine game – at times glorious, even... But it's hard to avoid the fact that *Sega Rally 2* isn't quite up there with today's best racing games."

Our review of *SR2* caused quite a stir among the game's loyal fans on the Internet. The conversion from arcade to home is a good one and there are loads of new options and extras. It's just not quite the classic we'd been waiting for ■

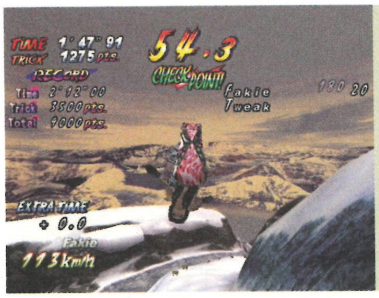
- **Issue #01**
- Publisher: Sega
- Developer: In-house
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- Extras: Online play
- **For:** A playable and intuitive intro to rally driving with some nice touches
- **Against:** Lacks handling complexity

SHADOW MAN 9/10

"The game is a slow-burner, and when it gets hooks into you, you will realise this: *Shadow Man* is bloody great... Acclaim has crafted an enthrallingly dark, original and hugely intricate 3D adventure. It's nigh-on infallible."

Based on a comic series about voodoo warriors and serial killers, *Shadow Man* is Dreamcast's first great 3D adventure. It's like *Tomb Raider* meets *Legend of Zelda* in your worst nightmare. Without the wet bed sheets ■

- **Issue #04**
- Publisher: Acclaim
- Developer: Acclaim Studios Teesside
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One
- **For:** Huge. Plenty to do. Great graphics and sound. Serial killers
- **Against:** Perhaps a bit too big for some people?



SNOW SURFERS 3/10

"Everything about *Snow Surfers* is tarnished with a lacklustre finish... And there isn't much longevity to be had either. If you want a board-based radical sports game involving races and freestyle stunts get *TrickStyle*."

***Snow Surfers* is one of the worst examples of the rash of snowboarding games that publishers are keen to ram down the throats of youths. Don't be fooled, though, and remember: a wise eskimo never eats yellow snow ■**

- **Issue #04**
- Publisher: Sega
- Developer: UEP
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- **For:** Decent graphics. Good twoplayer mode
- **Against:** Shallow, unambitious oneplayer game. No sensation of actually surfing on snow

SONIC ADVENTURE 9/10

"*Sonic* haters may not be persuaded by what is essentially more of the same with knobs on, but the new adventure elements added to the traditional thrills of *Sonic* gameplay will delight fans and newcomers alike."

***Sonic* has everybody's favourite hog whizzing about in a giant, 3D world with familiar gameplay and items scattered around the landscape. It's an enjoyable game with pleasing RPG elements thrown in the mix ■**

- **Issue #01**
- Publisher: Sega
- Developer: Sonic Team
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One
- Extras: VM and Internet options
- **For:** Great graphics. New adventure elements
- **Against:** Not as ground-breaking as we'd hoped

SOUL CALIBUR 10/10

"With *Soul Calibur*, Namco has set a new standard – one that everyone in the DC world must aspire to. In every respect, from its breath-taking visuals to the many game modes, *Calibur* is polished to the deepest sheen."

It's so simple: you have to own a copy of *Soul Calibur*. Buy it right now, invite your sad old PlayStation-owning, Dreamcast sceptical mates round, stick *Calibur* on and watch them squirm. This is one incredible game ■

- **Issue #03**
- Publisher: Sega
- Developer: Namco
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- Extras: Jump pak, 60Hz option
- **For:** Beautiful visuals, massive Mission mode
- **Against:** Lacks the Internet option of the Japanese version

SOUL FIGHTER 4/10

"The graphics are nothing to write home about and the game's appearance fails to convince as a true next gen title. The characters are blocky, the animation is sluggish and the environments are dull and empty."

***Soul Fighter* resorts to the kind of gameplay last seen in classic arcade games like *Golden Axe* – without any of the charm or flair of those games. After just one level you'll be bored to tears. Approach with caution ■**

- **Issue #04**
- Publisher: Mindscape
- Developer: Toka
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One
- **For:** Reasonably intelligent bad guys
- **Against:** There are only six levels. Tired and repetitive gameplay. No twoplayer or real alternative modes

SPEED DEVILS 7/10

"For the most part *Speed Devils* is decidedly enjoyable. It's not perfect, but you only have to look at other consoles' car-based 'games' to realise how worthy an addition to Dreamcast's growing library of racers this is."

***Speed Devils* is a pretty original racing game featuring many additions to the genre, including the ability to place bets on races. The arcade mode lacks depth, but the best lies in the detailed championship mode ■**

- **Issue #02**
- Publisher: Ubi Soft
- Developer: In-house
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- Extras: VM radar
- **For:** Original ideas and great fun to play
- **Against:** Not enough tracks. Lack of competing cars at times

STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3 8/10

"*Street Fighter Alpha 3* plays like a dream. It's a truly arcade-perfect conversion... This has to be the finest conversion of a 2D coin-op ever. If you want the finest fighting 2D hast to offer, few games approach *SFA3*."

Unless you are too accustomed to 3D fighting to be bothered with a 2D beat 'em up, *Street Fighter Alpha 3* comes highly recommended. Capcom's all-stars have never played so beautifully or looked so good on a console ■

- **Issue #04**
- Publisher: Virgin Interplay
- Developer: Capcom
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- **For:** Ken. Ryu. Perfect conversion. Options galore. Blistering speed
- **Against:** 2D. Twoplayer. Too involved. Too tired

READER REVIEWS

- **Game:** Power Stone
- **Reviewer:** Adrian Smith

I bought my Dreamcast and the fantastic *Sonic Adventure*, but I was itching for a good beat 'em up. I had read all the hype about *Power Stone* and the great review you gave it. I had also read the *Virtua Fighter 3tb* review and was put off by the "huge borders, rush job" statement. So, as *Power Stone* was supposedly great and had a 60Hz mode I went for that.

How disappointed can one man be? Capcom had finally released a duffer. Sure, it has great graphics, but the gameplay? Throwing stuff, huge moves and using weapons? That got old after I had played it with my second character. And then the stumper. The first thing I noticed as I turned it on: borders and no 60Hz mode, right after you deducted two points from *VF3tb* for that exact reason (apart from your complaint about a lack of other modes, of course). So when I got my next pay cheque (only £70 a month) I went out and bought *VF3tb*. The borders were exactly the same size as *Power Stones'*. Did I feel cheated? Yes, I have to admit I did. *VF3tb* is simply a much better game than *Power Stone*, even with the borders and lack of options.

If a beat 'em up fan is out there who hasn't bought *Power Stone* yet but wants to here is a mini-review for you. Don't. Buy *VF3tb* instead. Or wait for *Street Fighter* or *Soul Calibur*, otherwise you'll be disappointed ■

REVIEW LISTINGS

NERVOUS ABOUT PARTING WITH YOUR HARD-EARNED? LET **DC-UK** HELP YOU MAKE THE RIGHT DECISIONS

READER REVIEWS

■ **Game:** Sonic Adventure
■ **Reviewer:** Rhys Matthews

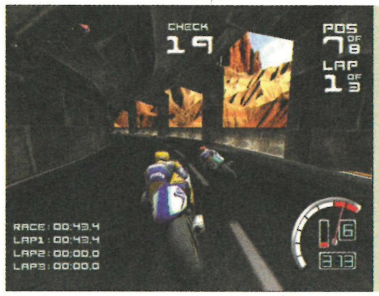
I was a massive fan of the Sonic games on Mega Drive (weren't we all), and so when I heard about *Sonic Adventure* coming out it was pretty much definite that I was going to get a copy. All the reviews I'd read were pretty positive, and so when Dreamcast turned up in my local EB, I invested in a copy of the blue one's latest travels.

The new *Sonic* is an odd one, because it seems like they were trying to just stick to the classic 2D gameplay, but mixing it with 3D graphics. That works pretty well – especially on the really fast sections. I wanted more of the game to be like that, since the sensation of speed is like nothing I've played in 3D before.

All the adventure stuff isn't for me, though. It's nowhere near as interesting as *Zelda* and all those type of games. But maybe that's the point – the talking parts are only instead of all the movie clips you get in PlayStation games, and no-one wants to watch those either. Overall, I do think it's a good update, but it still could have been better ■

GET INVOLVED

Our sparkling reader reviews don't write themselves – we need you lot to drop us a line and let us know your opinions on *Power Stone* (even if they're hopelessly wrong...), *Soul Calibur*, *Shadow Man* and all the rest. If you think we've been too hard or too soft, or even if you think our marks are just right, then write to the usual address, or email us at dcuk@futurenet.co.uk. About 200 words should do the trick. Thanks ■



SUZUKI ALSTARE 5/10

"The best bits of the entire game are the spectacular crashes that see your rider catapult into the distance like Superman with broken limbs. When this is the best part of a racing game, it really is time to worry."

From the company that brought you the wonderful *TrickStyle*, *Suzuki Alstare* is a real disappointment. There's nothing to break up the monotony of the courses and the pop-up is some of the worst we've seen ■

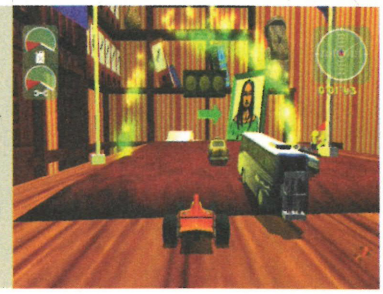
- **Issue #03**
- Publisher: Ubi Soft
- Developer: Criterion Studios
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- **For:** Decent graphics. Acceptable racing action, s'pose
- **Against:** Lazy PC conversion. Rubbish twoplayer mode. Pop-up

TOY COMMANDER 7/10

"*Toy Commander* is an accomplished title but its irritating flaws prevent it from being hailed as a true classic... In many of its missions the game strays from acceptable levels of trickiness into the realms of frustration."

Reminisce on the days of your childhood with this unusual and innovative game/ You can play with over 30 toys, such as helicopters, cars and tanks. It's like a huge, 3D version of *Micro Machines*. Small ones are juiciest ■

- **Issue #02**
- Publisher: Sega
- Developer: No Cliché
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to four
- **For:** Toys. Four players. Over 50 missions. Over 30 vehicles
- **Against:** Handling can be tricky. Missions are highly frustrating



TRICKSTYLE 9/10

"*TrickStyle* has lived up to its hype brilliantly. The radical combination of stunts and racing works better than anyone could have hoped and resulted in a state-of-the-art next generation title. Welcome to the future."

Criterion has done a sterling job of creating a unique future sport sim. The boarders' movements on their decks are ultra-realistic and based on real physics. It looks amazing, and it's a thrill to race through the city streets ■

- **Issue #01**
- Publisher: Acclaim
- Developer: Criterion Studios
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- **For:** Triumphant combination of two styles. Looks great, plays better
- **Against:** Disappointing twoplayer game. Mediocre music

UEFA STRIKER 8/10

"*UEFA Striker* comes close to combining *FIFA*'s in-depth options and *ISS Pro*'s gameplay... For the first *UEFA* game to be this good is a startling achievement and suggests that the sequel will be something really special."

After a marathon session with *UEFA Striker*, our resident football nut Lee emerged from our games room, sweat dripping from his brow, declaring, "It's good." He always has been a man of few words – it's great ■

- **Issue #02**
- Publisher: Infogrames
- Developer: Rage
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- Extras: 60Hz
- **For:** It's a cracking game of football. What more do you want? Blood?
- **Against:** No manual skill moves. Dodgy through-ball

VIRTUA FIGHTER 3TB 7/10

"Unless you despise fighting games – and maybe, even then – *Virtua Fighter 3tb* is an essential purchase. Super-smooth, fast, and with an attractive tactical vein, it's a beat 'em up par excellence. Not quite a 10, though."

"The Muhammed Ali of fighting games", we called it. *VF3tb* is arguably the best fighter in the arcades. It may lack stunning visuals, but *VF3tb* is a bare bones fighter that's geared towards quick, responsive attacks ■

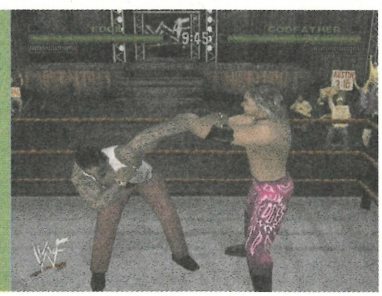
- **Issue #01**
- Publisher: Sega
- Developer: Sonic Team
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One
- Extras: VM and Internet options
- **For:** Great graphics. New adventure elements
- **Against:** Not as ground-breaking as we'd hoped

WWF ATTITUDE 6/10

"Once you've got the hang of the special moves, *WWF* will become more enjoyable, but the sluggish animation and dodgy collision detection spoil things somewhat. It just doesn't offer the speed or feel of *Ready 2 Rumble*."

When Esther was told to review a game featuring a bunch of fat lads in tights and trunks, she was predictably unimpressed. After creating a freakish duo she called Caspar and Keith, however, she came round to *WWF*'s charms ■

- **Issue #04**
- Publisher: Acclaim
- Developer: Acclaim Sports
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- **For:** Lots of options to fiddle with. Create a wrestler
- **Against:** Bad collision detection and slow motion capture animation



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ASK AUNTIE ESTHER

HAVING PROBLEMS? AUNTIE WILL GIVE YOU ALL THE ADVICE YOU NEED

> Just a quick question, who does the illustrations for 'Dave 2000' etc? I love that style and can't think of where I've seen it before.

Al, via email

Our marvellous illustrations are created by none other than our own Christian Day. He's a very talented young man (or so all my friends say) and we'll be giving him extra pocket money as a result.

> How much do the calls we make on the Internet from our Dreamcasts cost? Are they 1p per minute on a weekend and 1.5p on week nights, or are they 50p per minute?

Dav, via email

Dreamcast's Internet service is free of charge, other than the cost of your phone calls. These are charged at the local rate of 4p per minute during the day, 1.5p in the evening (although I don't know what happens if you only stay on for three minutes), and 1p at the weekend.

> I just bought **DC-UK 03**, and as I was taking a casual look through its pages I was astonished to find my favourite column ever appearing for the first time on page 104 of your mag. Oh, I have so many questions to ask you, Auntie dear. Questions that no-one else could possibly answer, because, you see, nobody else cares. At last the lost children of the Dreamcast world have a kindly Auntie who will ever so compassionately put an end to all their sorrows (exact method may vary).

Anyway, here's one that's been bothering me a lot ever since I read through your glorious column. It concerns the letter of Daniel Took, addressing the ever so important issue of the marking system's mathematics. As Mr Took so wisely discerns, there are some intricacies involved in utilising any marking system. Although I might, to a certain degree, disagree with Mr Took that marking a game at 8 could mean anywhere from 80 to 89 (I actually believe that an 8 would mean "anywhere" from to 71 to 80, seeing that 0 would have a special place in the system for a game that has no value whatsoever, and would not imply a 0-9 score, as Mr Took might be suggesting). I have to agree with my learned colleague that the Auntie's response is precise, succinct, sexy and to the point – not leaving any room for questions regarding the issue of rounding marks such as 85 or 86 upward or downward.

Eric Rothman, via email

Well my dear, we simply don't have that problem with '85' and '86', because we don't even ask whether a game is worth that much. If we did mark out of 100 per cent, and there were, say, two football games in one issue, and one scored 85 per cent and the other scored 86, that would suggest that one should be bought and the other shouldn't. However, the difference between the two could purely be a matter of personal taste, and really they'd both be good and both be worth buying. Does that help?

> Please could you tell me if there are any Websites where I can download VM saves from?

Joseph, via email

There have only been a couple so far, available from Sega's Websites in Europe and America. I'm expecting a lot more to appear over the course of the next year.

> I love my Dreamcast as much as the next man, but I am a bit concerned about online gaming. Has anything actually been confirmed? If so, what and when? I understand that even *Half-Life* has no confirmed online mode. Please tell me you have some good news and give us some details.

Clive, via email

Half-Life *definitely does have an online mode, because that's why Sega wanted it to appear on Dreamcast. What form this will take, I'm not totally sure, but hopefully it will be at least a match for the PC version's* Team Fortress Classic, *where two teams of soldiers go head-to-head against each other. The other big rumour that refuses to go away is that* Quake III: Arena *will come to Dreamcast, although I'd expect it to happen sometime late in 2000.*

> Is there some text and audio missing from *Sonic Adventure*? Sonic's ending and Tails' have them running around the Mystic Ruins then they stop and appear to talk (you can see Tails talking very clearly), but no text or audio is present. Is this true of all PAL copies, or just mine?

Daniel Glenfield, via email

I've asked our Lee about this, because he reviewed Sonic Adventure *for us and has played both versions right to the end. He says that you shouldn't worry, because Sonic and Tails both behave the same way in the Japanese game, too. Don't they know that it's rude to whisper?*

> Please could you enlighten me on the mod unit, (for playing foreign games on Dreamcast), featured in Edge 77, apparently made in Australia and for sale on the Net soon. How about some more details: Where do I get one? Where is the company's Website? Is it any good? How much is it? Please re-vitalise my faith in the Web and reply to me. Even better, give me some details I can use. You have heard of Edge haven't you?

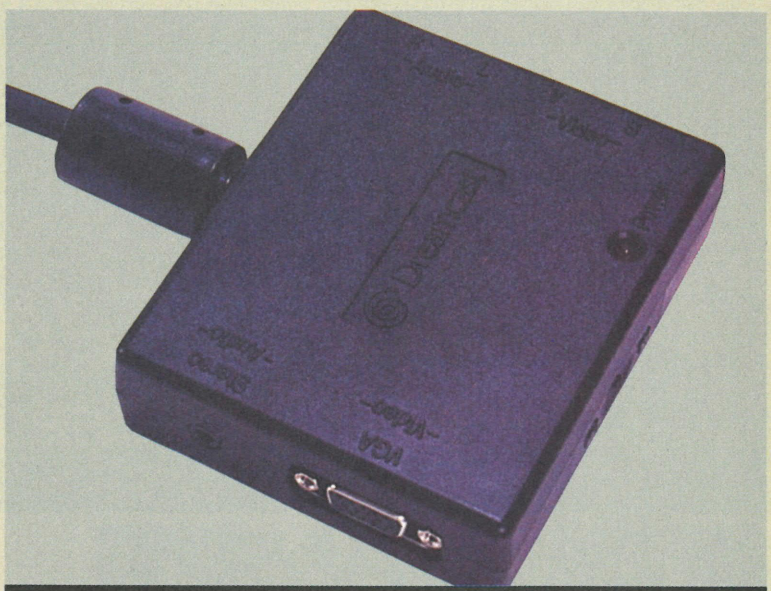
Rob Moss, via email

Caspar's certainly heard of Edge, as he used to be Deputy Editor of it. He's checked with the Edge team and apparently the company that was working on the device you're writing about has gone 'belly up' – ie, bankrupt. I'll let you know as soon as anything new happens on this front.

> I obtained my Dreamcast last March from Japan and the games are way too expensive. Do you know if there is some kind of chip available so I could play British games on my foreign Dreamcast? Your reply would be greatly appreciated.

Erhan, via email

The latest chip I've heard of is a highly complex 52-pin thingy that sits on top of another of Dreamcast's chips. It takes a lot of soldering and fiddling around to install, and right now I probably wouldn't recommend that you bother with it. So don't come



"I MUST SAY, PLAYING CONSOLE GAMES ON A PC MONITOR IS A VERY ODD EXPERIENCE"

■ **Auntie Esther**

"DO YOU HAVE A DEFINITE DATE FOR DREAMCAST'S ZIP DRIVE AND DVD ADD-ONS YET?"

■ **William Reid**

crying to me if your lovely little Dreamcast gets blown up!

> I read in **DC-UK** that *UEFA Striker* was to be released in October, but no matter where I look, I cannot find it anywhere. Why is this the case and when is the new release date?

Mark Rigby, via email

By the time you read this UEFA Striker *should be available from just about everywhere – apart from the local butcher's shop. Probably. Oddly enough,* Sega Worldwide Soccer 2000 *was released before anyone could review it. I wonder why.*

> I am really enjoying my new machine, but I was hoping for some PC conversions, eg, *Rainbow Six* and *Hidden & Dangerous*. Any idea if or when these will be released? Thank you in advance.

Mark Cockburn, via email

Both these games are due to appear on Dreamcast. Rainbow Six *hasn't been given a definite date yet, but I've just heard from* Hidden & Dangerous *publisher Take 2 that this superb WWII game will be released in June. It could be a big summer hit on Dreamcast.*

> Do you know if *Soul Calibur* will have a 60Hz option?

Neil Mackey, via email

Yup, it does. Gosh, that was easy.

> I recently bought a DC but noticed that the usual labels located on the front (where the controller ports are) were not there, eg, SEGA and 'Compatible with Microsoft Windows CE'. Does this mean my Dreamcast is not genuine?

Timothy Wort, via email

Erm... What do they say? Are you sure you haven't been sold an N64 by an unscrupulous trader? The Japanese version of Dreamcast says 'Designed for Windows CE', by the way.

> Do you guys know if the Dreamcast VGA adaptor is available in the UK, or in fact if Madness Gameware's VGA adaptor will work on a UK system? My TV is really pathetic.

Daz, via email

The official VGA box isn't currently available in the UK, but we have a Japanese one and that works fine with both NTSC and UK machines. I have to say that playing console games on a PC monitor is a very odd experience indeed – and don't forget that you'll need a set of speakers, too.

> 1. Will you be giving away cheat books with your magazine?
2. I heard there was a game called *Space Griffon* coming out on Dreamcast. Is this true?
3. Could you please start rating the import reviews?
4. I have £40 to spend on my birthday in March, could you recommend me a game, apart from *THOTD2*, *Sega Bass Fishing*, and *Sonic Adventure*?
5. Do you have a definite date for DC's Zip drive and DVD add-ons yet?

And last but not least...

6. Will *Alien Resurrection* be released on Dreamcast, and if so, when?

William Reid, via email

1. We're looking at doing something a bit more special than that, but I can't tell you any more at the moment.
2. There was a Gun Griffon *released on PlayStation. However,* Space Griffon *has come out in Japan on Dreamcast, but apparently it's not very good.*
3. Caspar doesn't want to rate the import games, as he doesn't think that it's fair, because with many of the Nipponese titles it's hard to understand the Japanese text. Unless they're American games, of course. He'd rather wait for a version that you can play properly and review the finished UK versions instead.
4. By March, one of this month's import games, Chu Chu Rocket, *should be available. Also look out for* Crazy Taxi, Zombie Revenge *and* Metropolis Street Racer. GTA 2 *is due to ship sometime in April.*
5. Sadly, no, because Sega won't tell anyone. Before the summer for the Zip drive, and before next Christmas for the DVD drive, I reckon.
6. Although Fox Interactive has announced a couple of games for Dreamcast, Alien Resurrection *isn't one of them. However, the game's developer is Argonaut, which is making* Red Dog *and probably* Croc 2 *for Dreamcast, so you never know, my darlings, it could happen.*

> Any opinions in the team over which football game to go for – *UEFA Striker* or *Sega Worldwide Soccer 2000*?

Neil, via email

We gave UEFA Striker *an eight in issue two (before it was delayed) and* Worldwide Soccer 2000 *a seven this issue, so that should tell you everything you need to know. See page 094 for our full review listings. Bye!*

ASK ESTHER

DC-UK
Future Publishing,
30 Monmouth Street,
Bath, BANES,
BA1 2BW
Fax:
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Email:
dcuk@futurenet.co.uk

// HARDCORE INFO

> PROCESSOR 200MHz Hitachi SH-4. It's a Reduced Instruction Set design, which makes it a lot more powerful than a 200MHz Intel Pentium. The Hitachi chip is great at delivering basic geometry data to Dreamcast's PowerVR chip (see below) – the building blocks of 3D graphics. Because of their high power, both chips are linked to a cooling system connected to a fan on the right-hand side of the DC. So don't cover the vent!

> GRAPHICS CHIP Power VR 2DC, capable of up to four million polygons per second. Performance is nearer to three million when all the available effects (like real-time lighting) are switched on. There's also texture compression built in, which means that highly detailed surfaces can be drawn in the games you play.

> STORAGE Unique Yamaha 1000Mb GD-ROM drive, making the discs currently pirate-proof. Runs at 12 times standard CD speed.

> AUDIO Yamaha's AICA audio chip features 64 sound channels, complete with in-built support for samples and surround sound effects.

> MEMORY Dreamcast is piled high with Random Access Memory (RAM), with 16Mb for game data, 8Mb for graphics, and 2Mb for Audio. That's as much as PlayStation and PlayStation2 have added together.

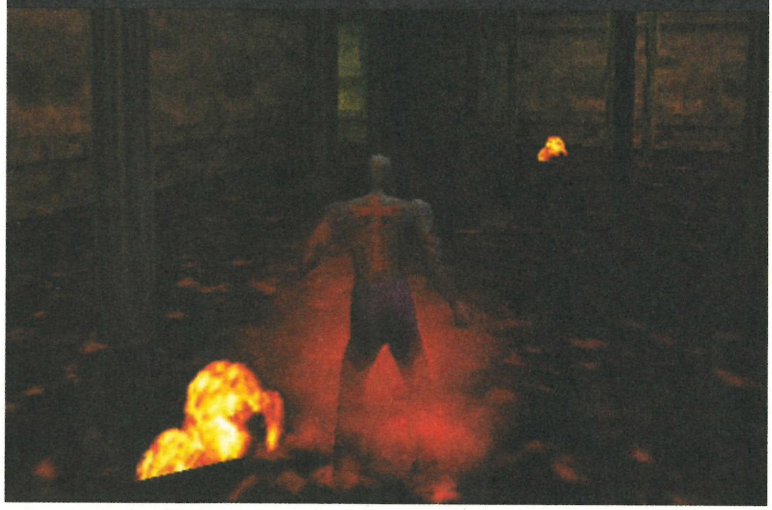
> VIDEO OUTPUT Standard resolution for Dreamcast is the highest available on current TVs: 640x480 (although European TVs can support 800x600). This is delivered at either 50 or 60 frames per second, which is why things move so smoothly compared to older consoles.

> MODEM Euro Dreamcast's ship with a 33.6kbps modem, which means it can communicate on the Net at around 0.003Mb per second – not much. However, most PC users have coped with this for years. US DCs come with a faster 56kbps modem, and we reckon the European version should have been the same.

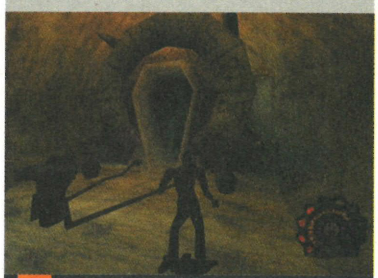
However, the modem is upgradable by taking it off the side and whacking another one on. Future versions could include a cable modem, which would be capable of much faster speeds – as in 0.3Mb per second – so long as you're connected to a cable network, of course.

SHADOW MAN

PLAYER'S GUIDE
THE FIRST 27 DARK SOULS



Shadow Man, then. It's not the easiest game in the world; in fact, it's so bleedin' huge that you may well need all the help you can get if you're going to conquer this brilliant slice of videogame nastiness. And that, of course, is where we come in, with this handy tips guide. We'll take you briskly through the first few levels of the game (although they do hold a lot more than what we've shown here), where to grab a hefty clutch of Dark Souls, and where you can find a few handy extras



A Coffin Gates

Deadside is a vast place, and the Coffin Gates are a means of entry into the various different regions of it. There's a catch, though: each Coffin Gate requires you to have a certain number of Dark Souls before you can enter them. The purple chunks on your Shadowmeter show how many Dark Souls you currently have.

B Dark Souls

Dark Souls throughout *Shadow Man* are housed within strange chrysalis-like pods known as Govi. They're hidden everywhere throughout Deadside, and you are going to need the special abilities that are granted to you by the Gad Tattoos in order to reach many of them. You will find many Govi in Liveside, but you can only gain access to these when you have located the three parts of the L'Eclipser dagger, which enables our Shadow Man to bid a thankful farewell to the murky realms of Deadside and enter our own world.

C Cadeaux

These red shell-type things can be used to add extra chunks to Shadow Man's health meter. You can trade in 100 of them for extra health at the altar of Loa in the Temple of Life, found in the Wasteland.

01 BAYOU PARADISE, LOUISIANA, USA

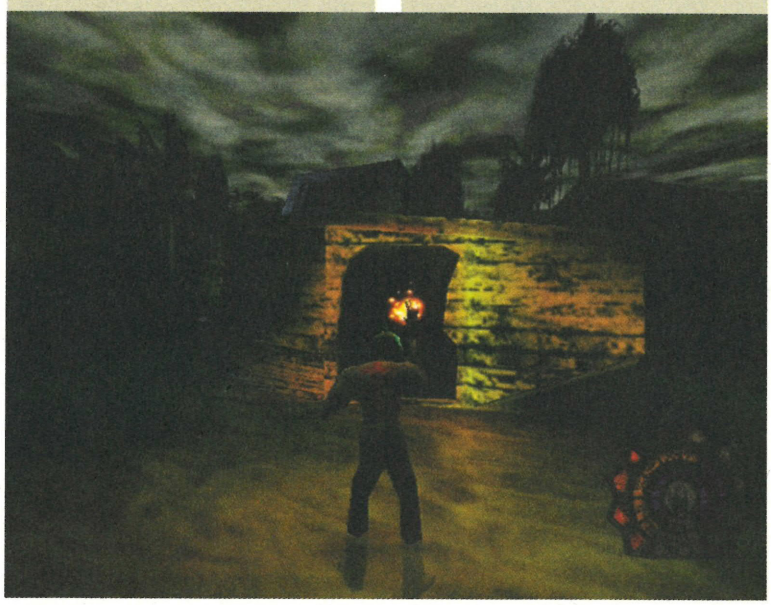
The opening level is a training level, enabling you to get used to *Shadow Man*'s control system. Simply head for the church on the hill, way in the distance, and meet Nettie. She'll give you a pistol – use it to blow the side of the stranded boat for a freebie-stuffed secret area.

02 DEADSIDE: THE MARROW GATES

You'll find Jaunty here, Nettie's Deadside informant (and the only undead Irish snake we know of). He'll dispense advice every time you see him, although, like Nettie's, it's often vague. Carry on until you get to the first Coffin Gate. It doesn't require any Dark Souls, so head through it.

03 PATHS OF SHADOW 1

The first Coffin Gate leads here. Grab the Book of Prophecy on the altar (it's incredibly useful, full of hints and tips about every aspect of the game) and head up the Coffin Gate above.



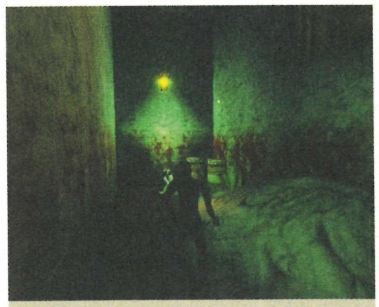
Opposite you'll find your first Dark Soul. Shoot it with the Shadow Gun and collect it. You'll need the Gad Toucher – found in the Temple of Fire – to open the fiery door, so head through the Shadow Gate.

04 TEMPLE OF LIFE

Head straight over the bridge in the next section. At the pool, dive in, find the submerged tunnel and hit the switch. Come back out and you can proceed through the door. Head on to the next section with the canvas walkway. Hit the switch behind the central pillar to extend a rope in a later section. Go up the walkway and the stone ridge immediately on your right, to go through the cave. Go down the passage at the bottom of the slope for a Dark Soul. Head up the rocky ledge on the left to locate a second tent holding another Dark Soul. Go back through the cave, up the canvas walkway and swing across the rope to the cave. Pull yourself up the gap in the rock to find another Dark Soul, then jump onto the platforms leading deeper into the cavern. Jump onto the ledge, shimmy across then jump backwards onto the platform. The altar ahead holds the Asson, a fireball-throwing weapon. Continue through till you're back where you started, head over the bridge, drop down and go through the Coffin Gate.

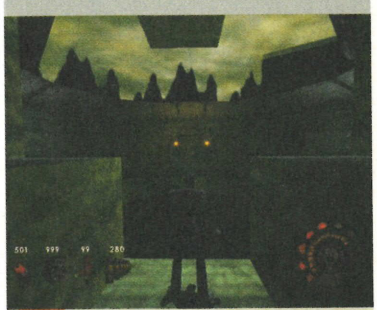
05 ASYLUM: GATEWAY

Continue through and head for the front door of the awe-inspiring Asylum. Jump down to the right onto the pipe, avoid the fire, and carry on through the rooms following, using the platforms and pipes to progress. Explore the area opposite the orange passage for a Dark Soul, then double back and enter the passage. In the corner of the largest room, use the boxes on the floor to get into the passage above. Fall down the shaft to get the Engineer's Key; use it on the two keyholes. Open the large orange door and get the Dark Soul. Run through the orange corridor to get the Dark Soul, then head back to unlock the Asylum's front door. Use the Engineer's Key to get back to the cable car, and step in.



06 ASYLUM: CATHEDRAL OF PAIN

Walk down the left-hand passage, continuing downwards, jump across the coals and grab the Dark Soul. Head back up, go through the other door to the Temple proper (and activate the level warp point), then head back to the Paths of Shadow. Go through the Coffin Gate under the bridge in the Paths of Shadow, open one of the next Coffin Gates for the first part of the L'Eclipser Dagger, and head through the other gate to the Temple of Fire.

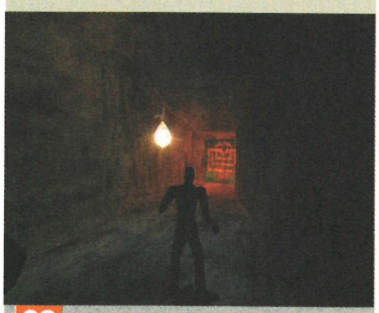


07 TEMPLE OF FIRE: THE GAD TOUCHER

Find the pool, dive in, and swim through to the Temple. Follow the passage to flick the first staircase switch. The doors on the walkway around the waterfalls can be shot, and each contains another switch. Remember to grab the Dark Soul ▸

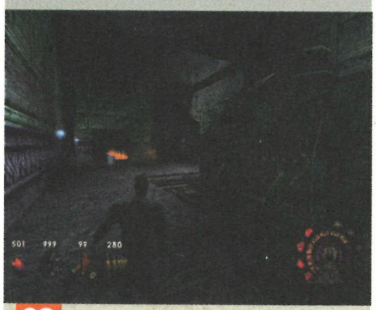
SHADOW MAN
PLAYER'S GUIDE
FINDING THE FIRST 27 DARK SOULS

from the fourth. You can, if you're clever, run from the sides of the step to grab the two Dark Souls either side of the staircase. It takes practice, mind, as you're not meant to get them yet. Grab the Dark Soul at the entrance to the Temple. Carry on through the Temple, minding the scythes and hammers, until you reach the main chamber. Hit the switches around the side, and kill the Sisters of Blood, then step into the middle to receive the Gad Toucher. Push the fireblock to the side, head through, head up the wooden platforms and grab the flaming ledge. Shimmy along and grab the Dark Soul at the end of the corridor. Head back to the main chamber (with the switches) and hop over the flaming ledge. Go on through; behind the fireblock on the left you will find a Dark Soul. Now head back to the Paths of Shadow.



08 PATHS OF SHADOW

Push the fireblock behind where you found your first Dark Soul. You'll find your fifteenth Dark Soul there. Warp back to the Temple of Fire. Head up the slope by the waterfalls with spikes in the ground – push past the fireblock at the top, and open the Coffin Gate there. You'll find the Poigne; these spiked armbands allow you to climb the bloody waterfalls. Head back to the Marrow Gates and climb the very first waterfall you find – there's a Dark Soul at the top. Head on to where you found The Prophecy; there'll be another waterfall on your left, at the top of which is another Dark Soul. Head on back to where you found your first Dark Soul, carry on and unlock the next Coffin Gate.

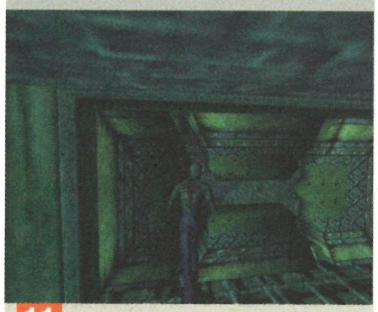


09 ASYLUM: CAGEWAYS 1

Carry on through until you are outside. Use the crates then the rope to get over the walls and enter the tower to collect another Dark Soul. Hop on board the train, use the Engineer's Key then exit the train when your journey is over. Finger your way around the flaming drum to a room with moving cages and a Dark Soul. Go back, get in the cable car, and head to the Engine Block.

10 ASYLUM: ENGINE BLOCK/CONTROL ROOM

Run through to the main area, head for the door on the left and then go through. Swing across the rope to the other side of the room. Find the control room and use the Engineer's Key twice on each valve. You'll stop one of the pistons – but you can't do anything about the others till much later. Head back to Cageways.



11 ASYLUM: CAGEWAYS 2

Open the squashed orange door by the train and find a Dark Soul at the bottom of the slope. Go through the cargo doors when a cage comes out, pull the lever, and head up the stairs to the cage hanging from the rope. When it comes back, jump ahead of it onto the rope and swing like mad. Drop off at the other end, do the same thing – this time behind the cage, and drop down to the crates below. Jump across and grab the Dark Soul. Go through the bloodstained corridor, kill the enemies and grab the Dark Soul from above. Warp to the front door of the Asylum.

12 ASYLUM: GATEWAY 2

Drop down on the pipe and this time go left. Carry on around the flaming drums and through the corridor. You'll find a Dark Soul on the right, past the duppie in the cage. Turn around, have a little explore, and you'll come across another Dark Soul. Turn left at the end of the corridor and go up, then head right for another Dark Soul. Run down the slope, go past the junction. Carry on past the enemies until you reach the metal cable. Walk carefully along and drop down into the cage for another Dark Soul.

You should now have an understanding of how *Shadow Man* works and hold 27 Dark Souls. There are another 93 to be found, and The Five must be stopped, but we'll leave it to you to get that far. Oh, and a little hint: next head for the entrance to Cageways. Open the Coffin Gate nearby and grab the second of the three parts of L'Eclipser ■

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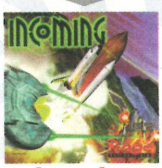

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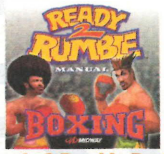

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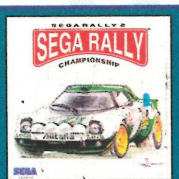

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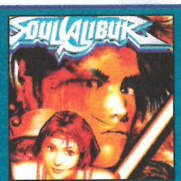

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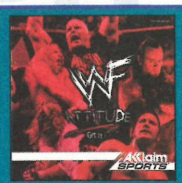

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TOP SECRETS

TRICKSTYLE, SPEED DEVILS AND TOY COMMANDER

TRICKSTYLE

Publisher: Acclaim
Reviewed: Issue 01

For those of you finding Criterion's classy hoverboard racer a bit too difficult here are some secrets that will make your lives a whole lot easier. You cheating little monkeys.

Pause the game to enter the following codes in the Cheat menu:

CITYBEACONS – unlock everything. If the code is successful you will see the phrase 'win everything' to the right. Go back to the main menu and start the game to find you have unlocked all the tracks, tricks and boards in the game.

TRAVOLTA – All the stunts and special moves.

INFLATEDEGO – Give the hoverboarders big heads.

IWISH – Unlimited time for every single race.

TEAROUND – Always win irrespective of finishing position.

SPEED DEVILS

Publisher: Ubi Soft
Reviewed: Issue 02

Punch in these codes during play to access the cheats.

ALL CARS AND TRACKS
Press: B, Right, B, Right, Up, B, Up.

EXTRA MONEY
Press: A, Right, A, Right, Up, B, A.

INFINITE NITROS
Press: Down, Up, Down, Up, A, X, A.

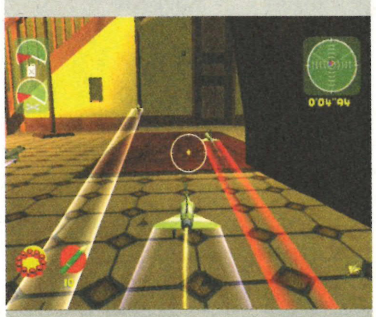
SKIP CURRENT CLASS
Press: Down, Right, Down, Right, A, X, A.

TOY COMMANDER

Publisher: Sega
Reviewed: Issue 02

Missions in *Toy Commander* can range from the simple to the impossible, so these cheats should come in handy. Pause the game to enter these codes and if they're successful you'll hear a chime.

UNLOCK ALL ROOMS
Hold the left trigger and press A, Y, X, B, Y, X.



FULL AMMUNITION
Hold the left trigger and press A, B, X, Y, B, A.

RESTORE ENERGY
Hold the left trigger and press A, X, B, Y, A, Y.

UPGRADE MACHINE GUNS
Hold the left trigger and press B, A, Y, X, A, B.

UPGRADE WEAPONS
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- Sega Bass Fishing
- Sega Rally 2
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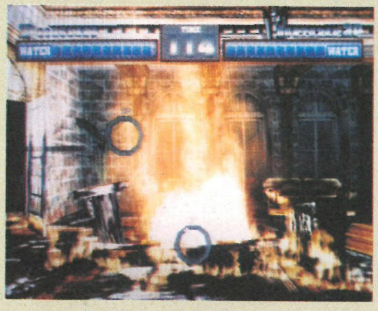


Above: *Firefighters* is yet another crazy Naomi game from Sega. We reckon it'll blaze a trail across the UK arcades and service stations

BRAVE FIREFIGHTERS

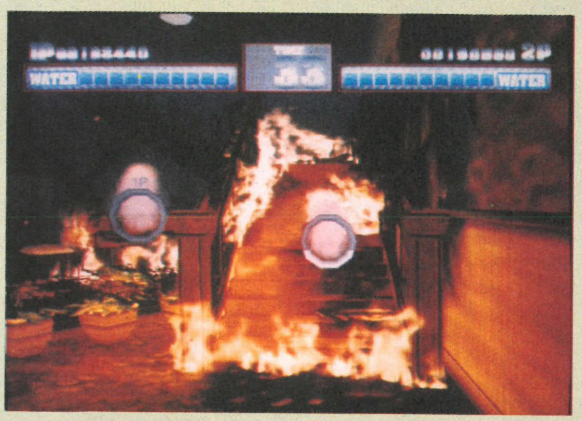
Developer: AM R&D 1
Release: Out now

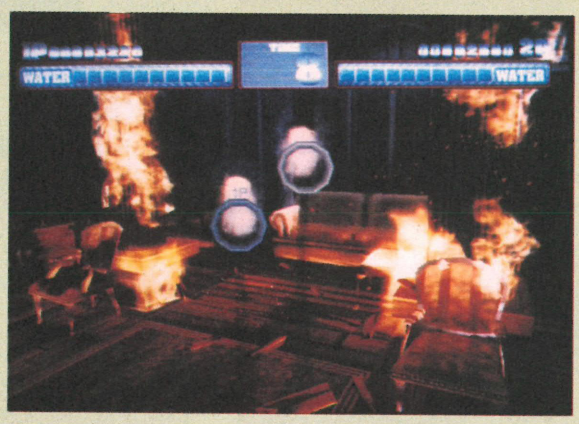
Finally, after years of wondering when a first-person game would arrive that didn't require you to blast either something or someone into dripping chunks, Sega's coin-op boffins have filled the gap. Our Japanese cousins don't even like first-person shoot 'em ups (*GoldenEye* sold in relatively small numbers over there in the Land of the Rising Sun), and maybe that's why *Brave Firefighters* pushes the genre in a long overdue fresh direction.

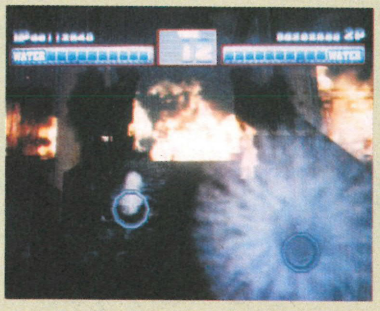
Okay, the basic gameplay hasn't changed – you shoot at things on a screen – but the new clothes wrapped around it make it seem far more interesting than Another Gun Game. So, one or two players must take on the role of firemen and, 'armed' with powerful water hoses, must battle through burning buildings to save innocent civilians from a fiery doom. With water not bullets, obviously.

Needless to say, the whole malarkey is made all the more attractive by having a replica firehose tucked under your arm. And *Brave Firefighters* comes close to inducing joyous whoops when you realise that the nozzle can be twisted to alter the spray on screen; one direction sends a concentrated stream into the flames, while the other drizzles larger areas with a fine spray. Throughout the levels you must judge which style suits each blaze that erupts before you in order to quench it. There's also a pressure gauge to keep an eye on, in order to prevent the water from running dry.

Graphically, *Firefighters* features some of the best videogame flames ever seen, which is quite handy for a game that's all about fire. However, the way the water blasts from the on-screen nozzle, and the manner in which it reacts to hitting the fires is truly astounding. And with such visual wonder backed by gameplay that never stops hurling explosion after floor collapse after hapless victim at you, rest assured that with *Brave Firefighters* Sega's coin-op boys have done good. Again ■







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NOT THE SAME CABLE

DC-UK'S REGULAR DELVE INTO THE SHADOWY WORLD OF IMPORT GAMING

CHU CHU ROCKET

Developer: Sonic Team UK **Release:** March

01

Just what is a developer to do? After years locked away with the responsibility of creating Sega's vast über-game *Sonic Adventure*, it seems the overworked Sonic Team has unwound and created a sleeping monster of a puzzle game – *Chu Chu Rocket*.

The aim is simple: channel mice (chu chu, presumably) from one of four start points on the grid into your base, represented by a rocket – the Chu Chu Rocket. The player with the most chu chus wins. They don't just make this stuff up y'know. Unfortunately where there are mice there are cats. Cats follow the same paths as chu chu, and if you get one in your rocket your score plummets by a third and big boys cry.

Comparisons with 2D puzzlers like *Lemmings* are obvious; the mice stream (very quickly indeed) in a straight line until interrupted either by walls or a direction arrow left by a player's cursor, (three per player at any one time in the game) creating an adjustable path home for the vermin. The fun of the game lies with multiple players trying to steal as many chu chus as possible by leaving contradicting arrows dotted around the board. The game quickly gets its claws into you and you and your mates will soon be developing dirtier and dirtier tactics to steer cats into other players' rockets, while trying to gain the rodent booty for yourselves. At times the gameplay is so frantic you'll be gritting your teeth until they hurt. To add to the ferocity of the action the game has a sackful of power-ups that affect the game's pace, the players score and the fiendish kitty parade.

Graphically *Chu Chu* is like a crisp, stylised *Bomberman* with square top-down levels and polygon characters; nothing too fancy, enabling several hundred chu chus to swarm on screen simultaneously. For your first couple of games the mice and cats will romp around with you looking on helplessly as you struggle to get to grips with the controls, but as no-one else can manage the speed or control system at first, there's no undue frustration and you'll soon grow to love it.

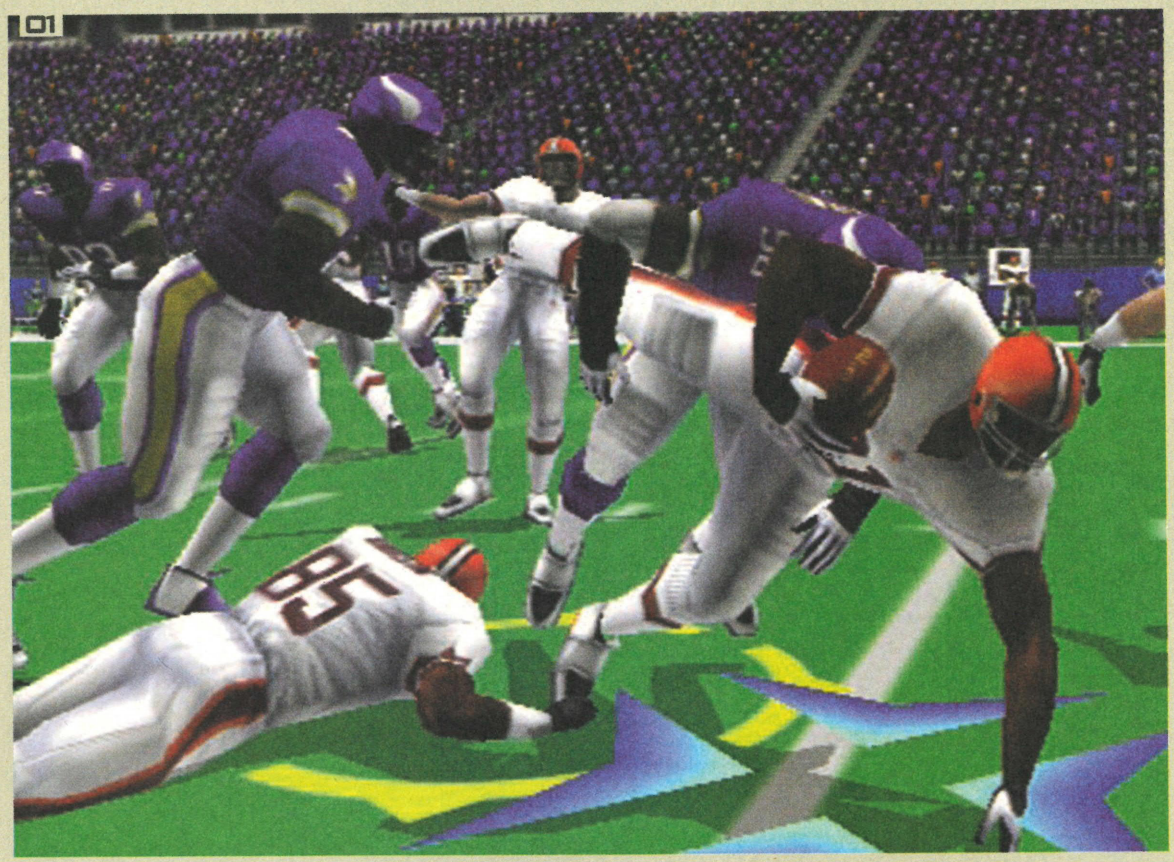
With its addictive and frantic multiplayer mode, *Chu Chu* has created something of a buzz at **DC-UK** in a matter of days. So be fashionably informed and start name dropping *Chu Chu Rocket* now ■

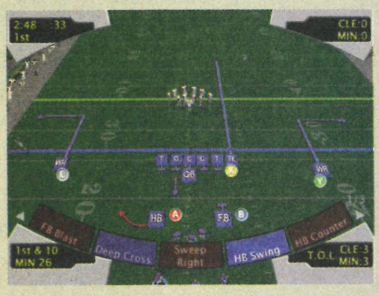
01 When the mice (or chu chu) stream out of their holes, all hell breaks loose

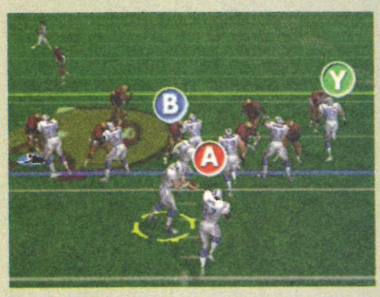
02 Swift positioning of arrows is essential to victory. It's tricky at first but soon becomes second nature

NFL2K

Developer: Visual Concepts **UK Release:** TBC







Since EA is still keeping a low (or non-existent) profile on Dreamcast, there's a chance that gridiron fans might never get to see a 128bit version of the publisher's flagship *Madden* series. But after playing Sega's own officially licensed effort, we (and American football fans in the States) really couldn't care less. *NFL2K* represents a quantum leap from every other football sim we've ever played.

Unlike previous games which had to trade frame rates for artificial intelligence, *NFL2K* is both smooth and smart. The players jostle for catching positions, perform feints and jukes, and break through tackles before collapsing under the weight of two or three defenders. Hits to the body make weaker players collapse, winded; tough running backs can topple linebackers with a hefty shoulder-charge; while a desperate ankle-tap can trip a receiver. The range of animation is breathtaking, and the silky movement allows you to appreciate the overall picture while still having an unprecedented amount of control over the action. *NFL2K* is a game that has the hallmark of a true next gen sports classic.

The intuitive control system means that you don't have to remember anything like as many button combinations as you do in 32 and 64bit football sims, but you can make your team perform in a far more authentic manner. It's incredibly user-friendly throughout, with a training mode easing you into the swing of things via constant verbal feedback from the commentators and pop-up menus to explain what you could have done to avoid a mistake. After playing a couple of training matches, even a total novice will have an in-depth knowledge of the sport. It's almost enough to convert the most stubborn of nonbelievers.

The camera is intelligent enough to pan back when you need to see a wider view of the field and zoom in when you need fine control over a single player. In fact, *NFL2K*'s only real flaw is that while the players look as clear and crisp as you could hope for, the static crowd and cardboard officials on the touchlines leave something to be desired. The game has already been greeted with a string of near-perfect scores in the American press. If the PAL conversion is up to scratch, UK gridiron fans have something to look forward to in the spring ■

01 With visuals as smooth and detailed as this, *NFL2K* looks even more impressive than *NFL Blitz*
02 Controlling the action is easy thanks to an incredibly user-friendly training mode

NOT THE SAME CABLE

DC-UK'S REGULAR DELVE INTO THE SHADOWY WORLD OF IMPORT GAMING

ESSENTIAL INFO

> TO PLAY IMPORT GAMES, YOU NEED TO ENSURE THAT YOU HAVE THE NECESSARY TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT TO ACCESS THEM

> DO YOU OWN: A Japanese or American DC, or an add-on device that allows you to play games from either country?
> WHY THIS IS NECESSARY: Have you heard of the term 'territorial lockout'? This is a feature within the European Dreamcast that prevents games from NTSC regions running. Sega, like other videogame giants, is loathe to condone the existence of the import scene. To get around this, you either need an NTSC machine, or an add-on device that fools the Dreamcast into thinking that it can play any game. Items of the latter type are only just starting to appear, with early 'mod chips' currently not reliable enough for anyone to recommend.

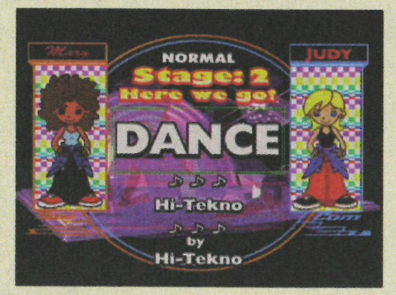
> DO YOU OWN: A TV capable of displaying an NTSC signal?
> WHY THIS IS NECESSARY: Before you rush out to buy an NTSC Dreamcast, you should take a look at your TV. Is it a dual-format model, capable of displaying both NTSC and PAL signals? If it's more then four years old or a low-budget portable, the chances are that it isn't. The best way to find out is to ask the manufacturer. If it's a PAL-only model, you'll need to buy a new TV. Sorry.

> DO YOU OWN: A step-down transformer, and either a SCART or S-Video cable?
> WHY THESE ARE NECESSARY: If you buy an NTSC Dreamcast, the retailer will prompt you into buying these, too. Japan and the US use different voltages to the UK, and plugging your Dreamcast straight into the mains will kill it forever. A 'step-down' regulates the voltage to a DC-friendly level.

You need a SCART or S-Video cable to link your TV and Dreamcast. SCART offers a better quality of image, so opt for that if you have it. Some even argue that bronze, silver or gold-plated versions of these offer an even better picture. But do you really want to take things that seriously?

POP 'N MUSIC

Developer: Konami UK Release: Unlikely



Konami's Beatmania arcade machines are spreading across Japan like a swarm of musically-inept locusts, so it was only going to be a matter of time before one of them was converted to Dreamcast. The first to rear its ugly head is *Pop 'n Music 2* which, after the excesses of sister titles *Dance, Dance Revolution* and *Guitar Freaks*, brings the genre back to basics with straightforward rhythm/action (or Simple Simon) gameplay.

You can play with either five, seven or nine buttons, each one representing a musical bar on the screen, and gameplay merely involves pressing a button or direction in time with the music. The idea is to outplay the CPU musician, so that your performance can be upgraded from the tone deaf 'Bad' to the groovetastic 'Fever!' There's a massive range of musical styles to test your skills against including Dance, New Wave, Techno, Rap, Disco, Classical and even ultra-fast and ultra-difficult Heavy Metal. Some of the tunes are so annoyingly catchy you'll find yourself humming them absent-mindedly until people nearby start plotting your grisly murder.

Although incredibly limited (both in appeal and longevity) we must admit that *Pop 'n Music 2* is quite good fun and is the type of game you'd go back to now and again for a quick and enjoyable blast. Mind you, this is by no means an open invitation for Beatmania titles to flood onto Dreamcast like fleas onto a shaggy canine, but as the first representative of the genre, *Pop 'n Music* doesn't hit many bum notes ■

01 We play with just five buttons, as only an octopus with virtuoso musical skills could succeed with nine

CEX DIRECT IMPORT TOP TEN

The ten best-selling import games at CEX this month

1	> ZOMBIE REVENGE	Publisher: Sega Genre: Shoot/beat 'em up
2	> JOJO'S BIZARRE ADV.	Publisher: Capcom Genre: 2D Beat 'em up
3	> MAKEN X	Publisher: Atlus Genre: First-person swordfighter
4	> DEATH CRIMSON 2	Publisher: Ecole Genre: Shoot 'em up
5	> SOUL CALIBUR	Publisher: Namco Genre: Beat 'em up
6	> SEGA RALLY 2	Publisher: Sega Genre: Racing
7	> POWER STONE	Publisher: Capcom Genre: Beat 'em up
8	> HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2	Publisher: Sega Genre: Shoot 'em up
9	> NFL 2000	Publisher: Sega Genre: US Football
10	> VIRTUA FIGHTER 3TB	Publisher: Sega Genre: Beat 'em up

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TOP FIVE MOST REQUESTED GAMES

CEX customers' most anticipated releases

1	VIRTUA STRIKER 2	Publisher: Sega Genre: Football
2	SHENMUE	Publisher: Sega Genre: RPG/Adventure
3	METROPOLIS STREET RACER	Publisher: Sega Genre: Racing
4	CRAZY TAXI	Publisher: Sega Genre: Racing
5	CODE: VERONICA	Publisher: Capcom Genre: Adventure

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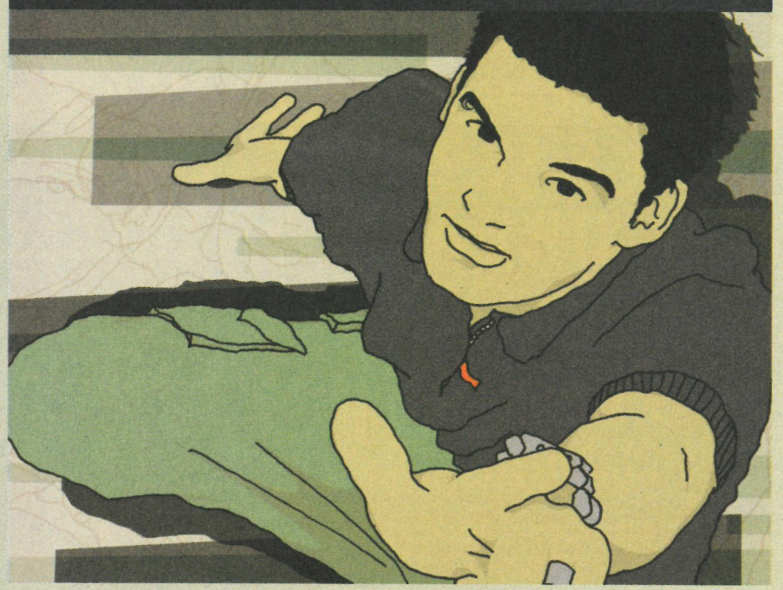
SURF'S UP

DC-UK'S MONTHLY TRAWL THROUGH THE INTERNET OCEAN

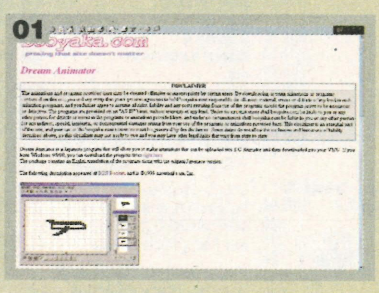


// VM ANIMATION WITH DREAM ANIMATOR V0.50

Find out how to make your own VM cartoons

> **(1)** On your PC or Mac pop along to **www.booyaka.com** and go to the link for Dreamcast Animator. After reading the disclaimer, download the zip file (547k). Unzip the program to your hard drive (unzipping programs are available from **www.download.com**). Three files will be available: danime.exe is the original Japanese version of the program, danim_en.exe is the English version of the program and readme.txt gives information about the English translation. Run danime.exe to install Dreamcast Animator. Start the program and you'll see a grid of squares. This represents the VM screen.

01

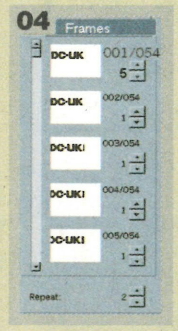


> **(2)** It is useful to plan your VM animation before jumping straight into Dreamcast Animator. Either plan it on paper first or with an art package on your computer. Draw out a grid that corresponds to the pixels on the VM screen or print a screenshot of the Dreamcast Animator program. Transfer or trace your image for animating onto the grid. A good rule of thumb is that if a part of the image to be copied takes up more than half a grid square then colour it in black otherwise leave it white. After planning your image you may need to tweak it by changing a white square for a black one and vice versa.

02

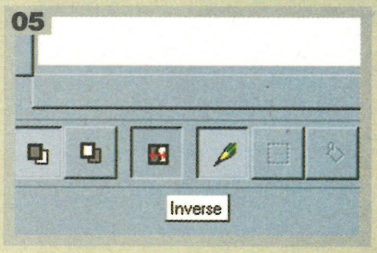
> **(3)** Now you have an image to play with start transferring it to Dreamcast Animator. Having planned it out on paper this process shouldn't take too long. Use the pencil tool and start filling in the pixels. If you make a mistake or want to edit the image then select the white colour to draw with from the bottom menu. At the time of writing, the circle, rectangle and fill drawing tools were disabled. It is hoped that these will be incorporated in subsequent versions of Dream Animator.

04



> **(4)** We will be making a simple scrolling animation where the **DC-UK** logo goes from one side of the screen to the other. Click on the Copy Frame icon in the top menu bar and then on the Paste Frame icon. You will see in the right-hand Frame menu that you have two identical frames of animation. A thumbnail shows what the frame looks like. The numbers denote the number of the frame and how many frames are in the total animation. Also in the Frame menu you can set the length of time that each individual frame takes. You can adjust this easily with the up and down arrows.

05



> **(5)** With frame 2 selected use the large arrow buttons on the sides of the grid to move the frame about. Here we will be moving it to the left by one pixel. Keep on copying, pasting and moving until the image is back in its original position. You can invert the screen so that white becomes black and vice versa. This is good for flashing effects. To do this just click on the Inverse button in the bottom menu. Use the playback button to watch your animation. When you're happy with everything save your animation. The animation will save as an LCD file. This will not work on your VM just yet; it has to be converted.

06

> **(6)** To convert your LCD file to a VMI file that your VM can use, pop online to **www.booyaka.com** again – they have a compiler program that can convert your files. Just head directly along to **www.booyaka.com/games/vm/dc-anim/anim.fcgi**), log in and then click on the link back to the site. Then browse for the animation on your hard drive and click on Upload Animation, and a thumbnail of the animation will appear on the page. Then you can request that it is put in the public animation section for the whole world to see (from this page – see above – you can also look at all the other public animations that other people have done). Now surf back to the site with your Dreamcast and locate the VMI file for download. Enter the Game Mode and press A. All things being well your little animation should be dancing around your VM's display.

Dreamcast Animator was originally created by F. Sahara and then translated from Japanese to English by Riley McArdle. It is available for download from www.booyaka.com ■

03

// "FIND MY TRAINERS!"

Sonic's online challenge

> Sega is running a European online gaming competition in conjunction with Reebok. Contestants simply visit the dedicated *Sonic Adventure* Website (accessible only from the game), download a special version of the Emerald Coast course and then complete it in the fastest possible time. Along the way, participants must also retrieve five pairs of Reebok DMX trainers which Dr Robotnik has acquired through a tenuous sponsorship deal with a sports clothing manufacturer... No that's not right... Ah yes – which Dr Robotnik has stolen from Sonic's wardrobe. Times are automatically uploaded to the Website so that contestants can find out how they're doing, and first prize is a personalised Dreamcast pod and £1,000 pounds worth of Reebok sportswear. The competition is running from December 1 to January 14. Go on, have a go, win some trainers ■

// DO NOT RESIST

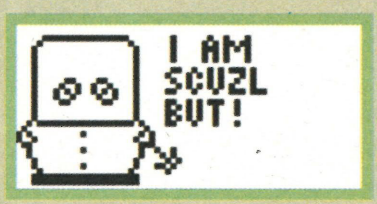
Satirical Sega site back online

> Premiere Sega 'news' site UK Resistance is back online after a lengthy hiatus. For dodgy jokes about zombie sex romps in *Resident Evil Code: Veronica*, disgraced popstars appearing in *Shenmue* and *Sonic the Hedgehog* whoring himself to SNK, there really is only one place to come. Oh and there's a good forum, too. Head straight over to **www.ukresistance.com** before this gem disappears again ■

// VM ANIMATIONS

Cartoons on your VM

> There are loads of VM animations on the Internet. Here are some of the best to be found on the Level Six Website (**www.levelsix.com**).



// SITES FOR SORE EYES

THIS MONTH'S FORBIDDEN PICKINGS FROM THE INTERNET TREE OF KNOWLEDGE. AND WHAT A RIPE OLD HARVEST IT IS

ANAGRAMS (www.wordsmith.org/anagram/index.html) – Enter a word or phrase and this site comes up with all possible anagrams. **DC-UK** magazine, for example, can become 'acid maze gunk'. Oooh.

DIALECTIZER (www.rinkworks.com/dialect/) – Enter any phrase, and then choose to translate it into a variety of dialects, such as redneck, jive or cockney. Unfortunately, there are still no Scots or West Country options.

ALL MUSIC (allmusic.com/) – massive online music encyclopaedia. Once you start, you just can't stop.

VOICE SYNTH (www.bell-labs.com/project/tts/voices.html) – Enter a phrase and this site synthesises it in a variety of silly voices. Hysterical.

// READER SITES

SUPPORT YOUR FELLOW READERS – VISIT THEIR WEBSITES. TODAY!

DREAMCAST WORLD (dreamcastworld.cjb.net) – enthusiastic general Dreamcast site with a decent grasp of what's going on in the world, and nice presentation. Could perhaps do with a few less exclamation marks.

EGO DREAMS (www.egodreams.net) – another well-presented Dreamcast site – slightly short on content at the moment, though.

Got your own cosy little corner of the WWW? Why not send us the URL so that everyone can visit? Oh and it doesn't have to be about Dreamcast – in fact we're getting a bit bored of DC news sites now. If you have a homepage dedicated to anything – be it S Club 7, Jet Li, Pot Noodle, Peterborough FC, Furbies or the process of photosynthesis – send it in. If we like it we'll print it.

> South Park by Sage Ice features Eric Cartman having a run in with a sharp stick. Stan, Kenny and Kyle also make a fleeting appearance, and Cartman's Scuzzlebutt guise is a real treat. Cartoons on your VM? Sweeeet.

> Code Veronica, created by Doug, features a young girl's encounter with a zombie. Fortunately she has a rather large gun; the resulting animation is a tad more disturbing than those in *THOTD2*. It's all good clean fun, well, actually it isn't. Not for the faint hearted.

> Saving the best until last, Sonic 2 is a Just Joe creation and this person could work for Sega – his animations are that good. Swish transitions along with animations of Sonic, Tails and Robotnik. This is some pretty fancy work.

// SLIDE AWAY

Download a game

> Our featured site this month, Booyaka, has recently put a downloadable VM game online. Named *Slide Puzzle*, the 108 bytes program is very simple. It consists of 24 tiles numbered from 1 to 24. These tiles are all muddled up and you have to move them around to get them all in sequence. Later versions of the program will feature pictures and the ability to save the game. Go to **www.booyaka.com** and check it out ■

// ESSENTIAL INFO

A quick guide to the most common Internet terms...

BANDWIDTH The speed (the rate at which information can be transferred) of a connection between two computers on the Internet.

BROWSER A WWW client – the software that runs on your computer and allows you to access the World Wide Web. Quite handy, this one.

CLIENT The Internet is based on what's called a client/server model of information exchange. The client is the software you run on your computer. You tell the client what you want and it then requests this information from the server programs that are on the Internet and translates the response into readable text and graphics.

ECOMMERCE A catch-all term referring to the business possibilities offered by the Internet. Online shopping is the most obvious example.

FTP File Transfer Protocol – the standard by which computers can transfer data of all types from one machine to another. Originally FTP required a dedicated piece of client software, but nearly all the browsers can now deal with it themselves.

HTML Stands for Hypertext Markup Language, one of the key elements of the World Wide Web. HTML is a set of commands that tell a browser how to display the information on a Web page – what size to make the text, where to put the picture, and so on.

HTTP Hypertext Transfer Protocol – the standard by which browsers (Web clients) request information from a Web server, via a URL.

HYPERLINK By using hyperlinks, the author of a Web page can connect parts of that page to any other on the Web. The reader simply clicks on the link to be taken to that information ■

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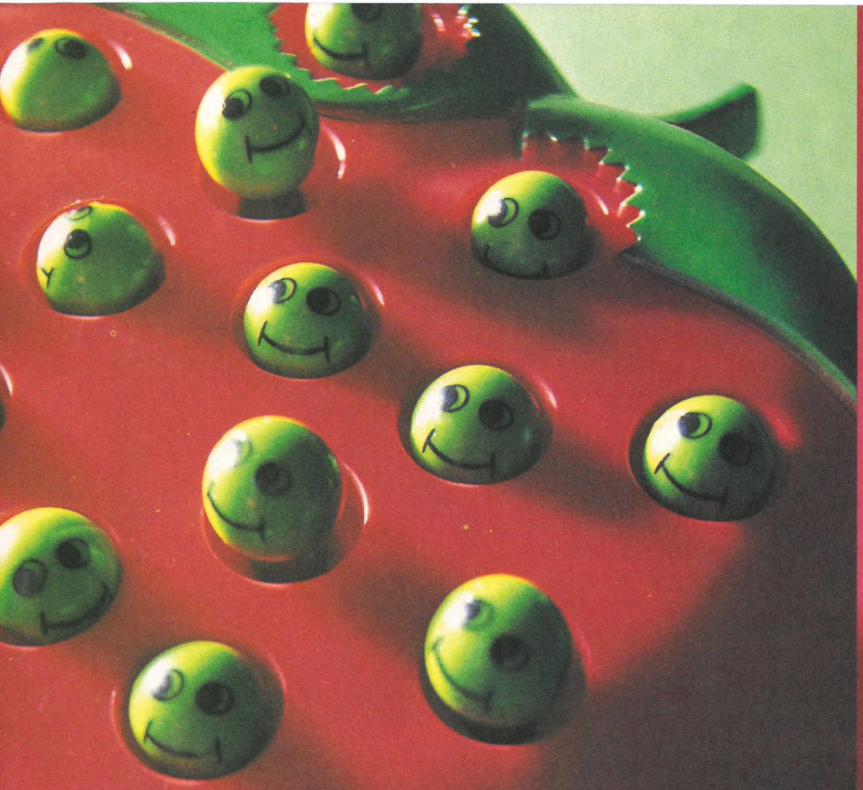
POWERED DOWN

WHAT GOOD WOULD YOUR SECOND CHILDHOOD BE WITHOUT ANY TOYS?

WIND-UP CARTMAN

It seems that South Park merchandise has infiltrated every facet of human life – we wouldn't be surprised if you could buy Kenny-shaped tombstones or Big Gay Al gimp suits. This poorly-painted wind-up fat bloke, however, is at the lower end of the quality South Park gift scale. Mind you, if we take a look at the annoyance factor, it scores very highly indeed – the wind-up mechanism is unpleasantly loud, and the mere sight of Cartman's wobbling lard-ass provokes equally unpleasant impersonations of his foul-mouthed deep south catch phrases by just about everybody. Sweeeeeet.

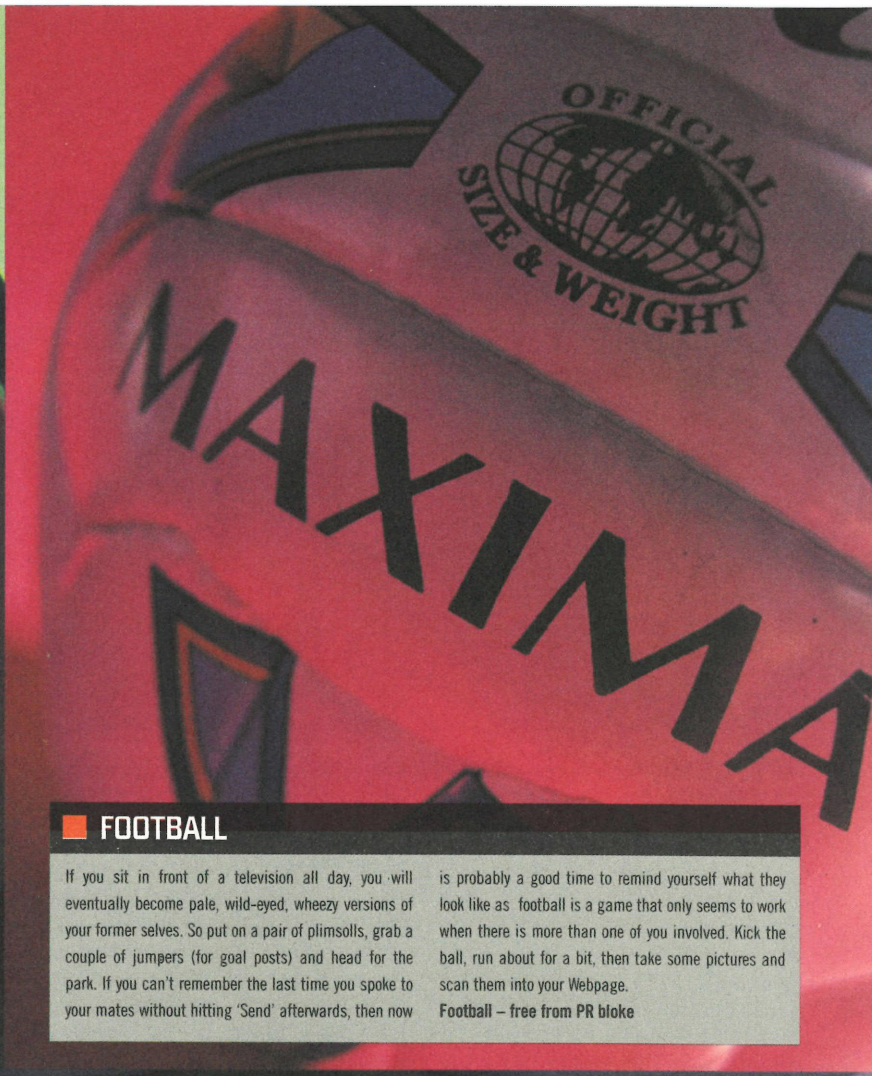
Wind-up Cartman £3.99



WIGGLY WORMS

Okay, so it's a far cry from *Worms Armageddon*, but it says on the packet that, "It's a crazy fun-filled memory game! You've got to be quick to grab your worms!" So it sounded quite exciting at first. You have to grab the worms as they poke their heads out of the big plastic apple, and if their tails are the colour you've chosen, the worm is yours. The first to get all their worms wins. We had immense fun with Wiggly Worms for about, ooh, 30 seconds, but that's probably because our short-term memory isn't up to much these days. Probably best left to small people.

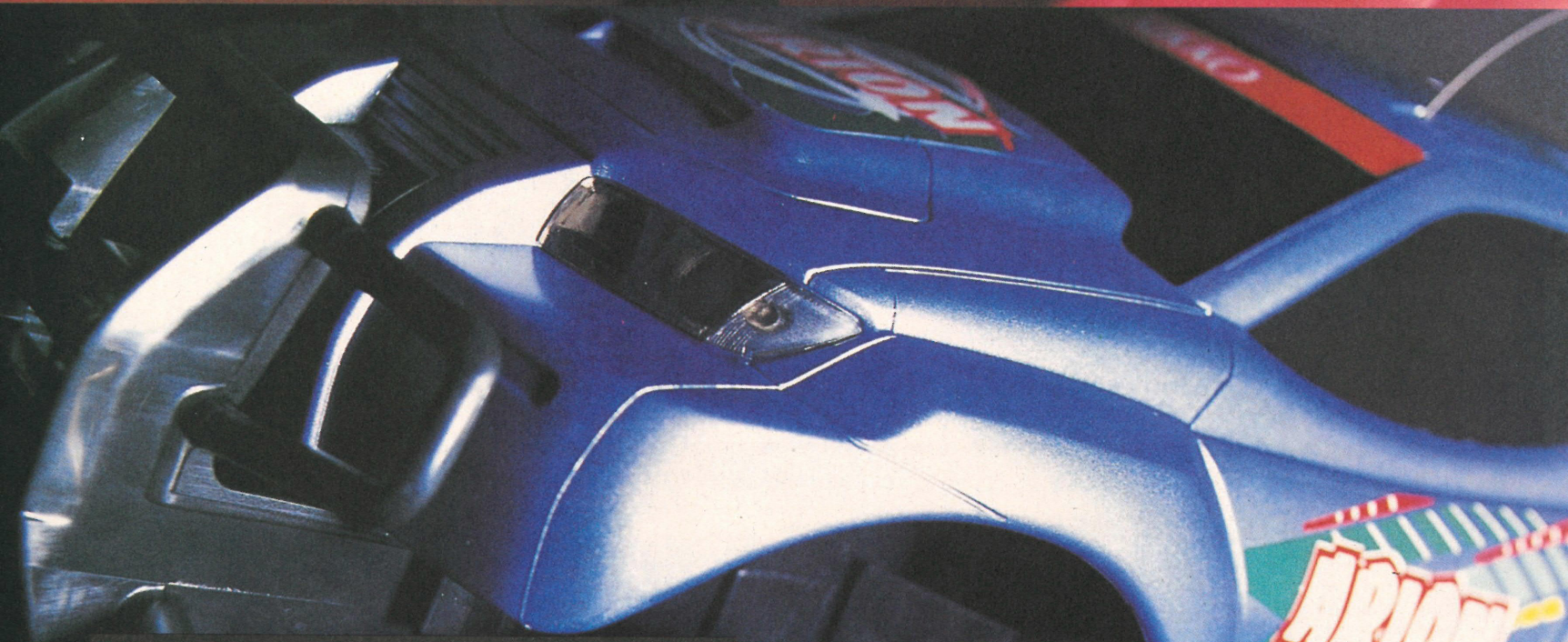
Wiggly Worms £9.50



FOOTBALL

If you sit in front of a television all day, you will eventually become pale, wild-eyed, wheezy versions of your former selves. So put on a pair of plimsolls, grab a couple of jumpers (for goal posts) and head for the park. If you can't remember the last time you spoke to your mates without hitting 'Send' afterwards, then now is probably a good time to remind yourself what they look like as football is a game that only seems to work when there is more than one of you involved. Kick the ball, run about for a bit, then take some pictures and scan them into your Webpage.

Football – free from PR bloke



REMOTE CONTROL CAR

This is probably the best toy we've had in the office since the dartboard. We've been irritating everybody with its incessant whirrings, and it's actually managed to tear us away from *Re-Volt*. You might not be able to race along the deck of the Titanic with this little number, but you can bash into people's ankles with it. Caspar was the only miserable sod, complaining it wasn't a Tamiya, which would have set us back about £250. God knows why he's being such a snob – that's twice as much as he paid for the collection of scrap parked outside his house.

Remote control car £49.99

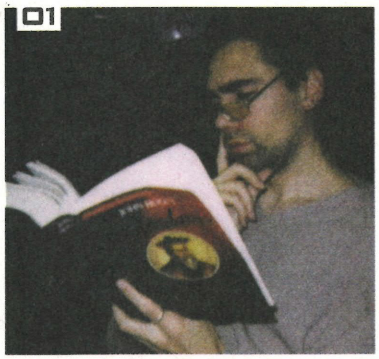
POWERED DOWN

THIS MONTH, IT'S OUR KARL'S TURN TO TELL YOU WHAT WE DO WHEN YOU'RE NOT WATCHING

TEAM DIARY

November has drifted away like autumn leaves in the wind, Christmas is hurtling relentlessly toward us and we've just finished another issue of **DC-UK**: the top banana of Dreamcast mags. Chuffin' nora, it's been a busy four weeks! And in between fiddling with my mouse I've been wearing strange hats and cheering the mighty Leeds to the top of the Premiership. So step inside my house of fun and don't forget to wipe your feet ■

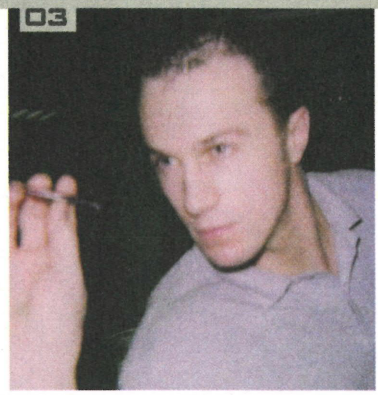
04/11 We always like to celebrate deadline by going out and sinking a few tequilas. Last night was no exception. Within minutes of sending our final page we were in our local boozer. It wasn't too long before both Christian and Lee (both sensible non-drinking young men) left. Funnily enough, it was just about the same time the 'T' word was mentioned. I think I can confirm that tequila certainly does make us happy, Esther especially. Apparantly her flatmate has banned her from drinking anything that's both transparent and alcoholic, which should have served as a warning. The last we saw of her she was perusing the local night club looking for "a man". God help us all.



01

05/11 I'm not at my best this morning. Luckily there isn't much for me to do so the majority of my day is spent in the game room playing *NBA Showtime*. We play in teams of two; Stephen and Keith against myself and Lee (Team North as we are now christened). All the games are tight but inevitably end in defeat for our Stephen and Keith. I imagine their nightmares tonight will be full of such phrases as 'Boomshakalak!' and 'What a debacle!' Poor boys. To exact revenge, Keith asked me to create some more icons for the weathermap. I hate doing icons and I bloody hate Freehand. Don't get me wrong, not as much as I hate Man Utd, but still a strong disliking. Keith knows this and enjoys my suffering. At this point I have to admit that victory is his.

08/11 When will Esther 'Spinster' Woodman ever learn? We warned her that 'The freaks come out at night' and that 'little weird men do little weird things in little weird places' but does she listen? Nope. It therefore comes as no suprise that Esther has 'met' a man over the weekend who spends the majority of his time playing with warlocks. "Freak" we cry. "No," she replies, "marriage material". Today is quiet. Caspar, Christian and Steve aren't in, so this is a good opportunity to choose which feature I want to lay out. I choose 'Millennium Men', as it looks straightforward enough. Keith starts writing his huge Nostradamus feature.

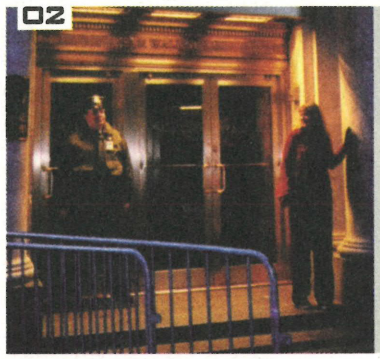


03

11/11 Things are hotting up. Christian's back and between us we've laid out most of the reviews and previews. My feature isn't as straightforward as it first appeared and I spend most of the day on the phone to PAs trying to arrange photoshoots. Keith remains buried in his books. He occasionally raises his head, recites some ancient babble and asks "Does that sound like *Crazy Taxi*?"

17/11 Thank God Esther flies to New York today. That's a whole week of not hearing about it – brilliant. Chris is bored. He's run out of things to do and has started to get restless. I suggest he plays a game on Dreamcast, but being a Bristol boy he prefers to play darts. And Chris being Chris, he can't play in the normal way so he's invented Xtreme Darts; a high adrenalin affair where you throw your darts from the other side of the office. He stops when he nearly takes out a light.

18/11 Poor Keith's still up to his neck in the feature. I don't think even Nostradamus could predict when he's going to finish. Caspar is currently



02

01 Keith searches the prophecies of Nostradamus for news on Man City and finds they're going down with Sheff Utd
02 Esther goes to The Big Apple. Burly security guards shake in their Doc Martens
03 Chrissy Day steps up to the oche and takes darts 'to the max!' Beware his pointy weapon
04 We are top of the league, say we are top of the league! (clap, clap, clap)

STEPHEN LAWSON'S COMPLETELY IRRELEVANT HIP-HOP COLUMN

As the Winter nights close in my mind drifts back to those bitter-cold nights I used to spend in Glasgow, frequenting the 'hip-hop hotspots' with my crew. Man, I miss those guys. I suppose now should be the part where I 'big-up the massive', so big-up Benji, Riz, Wayne, Neil, Joe, Marc, Ewan, Big Jay, Camsie and all other DJs, MCs, breakers and graf artists up there.

The big-up is synonymous with hip-hop, thanks mainly to the risible Tim Westwood and the intentionally funny Ali G. But, fortunately, we're not all wannabe twats, honest. What? ■

PHAROAHE MONCH

> Simon Says

Simon Says encapsulates everything that is great and everything that it is ugly about hip-hop. On one hand we have slamming beats and the dirtiest horns this side of Grimethorpe colliery, but on the other we have sexist lyrics encouraging the ladeez to "rub on your titties" and "feel on their breass-iss-ists" (yes Pharoahe has a lisp). But as he suggests, why mope around in the corner when you get down to this?

Hot wax? 🔥🔥🔥🔥

CINEMATIC ORCHESTRA

> Motion

This blend of jazz-funk and hip-hop has been around for a few months now, but for some reason I neglected to review it. Cinematic Orchestra have created an album that invokes the dusty jazz vibe of Miles Davis' classic Kind of Blue LP in a '90s setting. The exceptional thing about Motion is the fact that it sounds exactly like what it is: a brilliant live band playing jazz/hip-hop, effortlessly and with no pretensions.

Hot wax? 🔥🔥🔥🔥🔥

rigging the sexiest team member poll by voting for himself. We change the set-up so only one vote can be submitted from one computer. He soon falls behind miserably.

19/11 Last night was messy. We all went up to Caspar and Keith's house for what was promised to be the gaming event of the century. Maybe it was if you like hanging about with pissed-up over-excited journos who talk pants even when they're not drunk. Not my idea of a great night.

24/11 Esther's back and she's all New York'd out. She's bought a bridesmaid-type party dress and a Stetson. I don't know if she intends to wear them both at the same time, but I live in fear.

29/11 It's now Monday, the day before deadline. Keith has just finished the captions for Nostradamus and we still haven't decided on the cover. Apart from that things are looking good. As I write this Leeds are back at the top of the Premiership having snatched a 90th minute victory against Southampton. I sit looking forward to our deadline night out. Job's a good'un ■

04 PREMIERSHIP

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
LEEDS	16	11	2	3	29	19	35
MAN UTD	15	10	3	2	35	20	33
ARSENAL	16	10	2	4	28	16	32
SUNDERLAND	16	9	4	3	27	16	31
LEICESTER	16	9	2	5	26	20	29
LIVERPOOL	16	8	3	5	20	13	27
SPURS	15	8	2	5	25	20	26
CHELSEA	14	7	3	4	20	11	24
WEST HAM	15	7	3	5	17	14	24

TEK 9 FEAT. PARISS

> Seven Days (DJ Spinna Remix)

Top NY producer DJ Spinna's remix of Seven Days is a pleasant enough affair, with jazzy beats and a DAISY Age-influenced vocal taking Tek 9's original production back to the early '90s. Perfect for those blunted Winter nights spent by the roaring fireplace (I can just picture the scene now, actually – bottle of bubbly, snuggled up against soft female skin on a sheepskin rug). Ahem. Nice track let down only by nursery rhyme-basic raps. **Hot wax?** 🔥🔥🔥

MIX 'N' MATCH

BODY PARTS

THE MOST HIDEOUS PART OF THE ENTIRE MAGAZINE. KIDS, WE WARN YOU: DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME...

So that you can build a better picture of the team – hey, even get to know us (God forbid that you would ever be so unlucky), we've decided to give away a little part of ourselves every month. That's right, just cut out and keep the different shots of sections of our ugly mugs and, one day, you'll have a **DC-UK** team of your own to treasure.

However, if we were in your position, we'd opt for the far more interesting route of gathering together the various noses, eyes, ears and other bits that will be coming your way. And eventually you'll be able to create a bastardised photofit of 'Mr Dreamcast' with which to scare young children. Who knows, one day we might even give something away to the most horrific/hilarious/handsome (well, maybe not the last) **DC-UK** photofit you can create.

This month we turn our attention to the ears, or if you prefer, lugs – or even the outermost cartilaginous part of the ear as found in mammals, if you want to split hairs. If these beauties aren't enough for you, we could always send round the ear wax we've collected this issue. Perhaps not. Don't forget to send us your 'Mr Dreamcasts' ■

THIS MONTH: THE EARS

CASPAR FIELD
EDITOR

APART FROM KARL'S AND KEITH'S HIDEOUSLY DISTENDED LOBES, WE'RE QUITE PROUD OF OUR LUGS, ACTUALLY – ESPECIALLY 'MISS FUNKY FOX' ESTHER'S. CUTE, EH?

LEE HART
STAFF WRITER

STEPHEN LAWSON
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

KARL JAQUES
DEPUTY ART EDITOR

KEITH STUART
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

ESTHER WOODMAN
DEPUTY EDITOR

CHRISTIAN DAY
ART EDITOR

ONE OF US IS UNLUCKY ENOUGH TO HAVE A SLAPPER LIKE THIS ATTACHED TO THEIR HEAD, WHO?

NEXT ISSUE: THE FOREHEAD

Next issue...

Virtua Striker 2 (ver. 2000.1 or something)

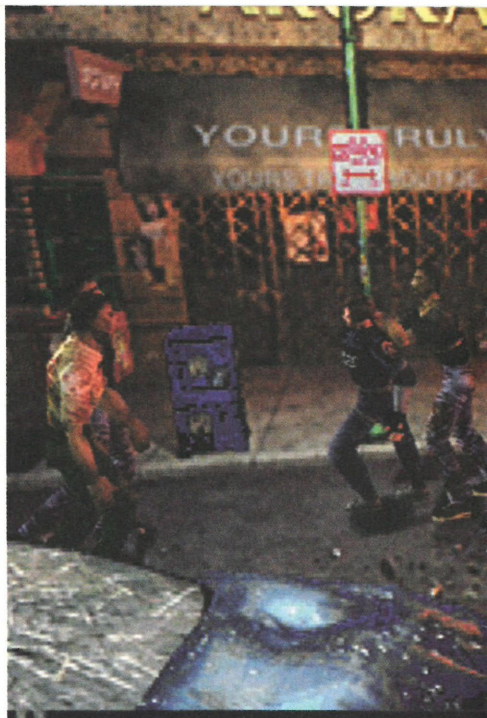
Resident Evil 2

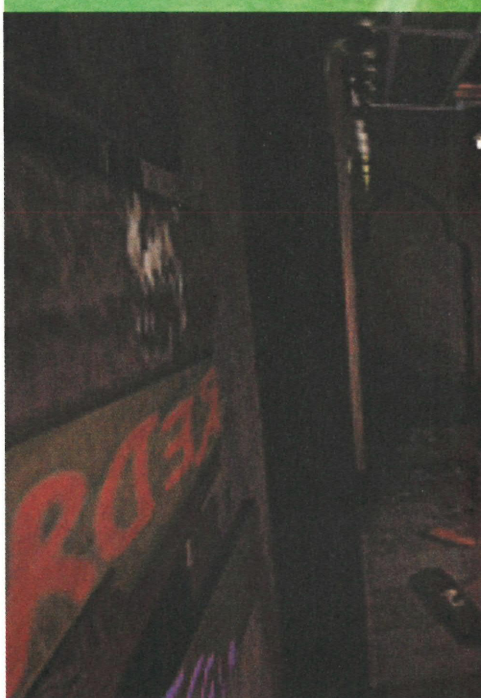
Okay, so they're completely different games, but they both have a two in their names, so that's alright. **Alright?** (RE2's the one with the zombies, by the way.)

Plus: **The finest reviews,** Dreamcast at the movies, and probably **more Chu Chu Rocket**

DC-UK
DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

The Sega Dreamcast source. Release **#06** boarding **Monday January 24**





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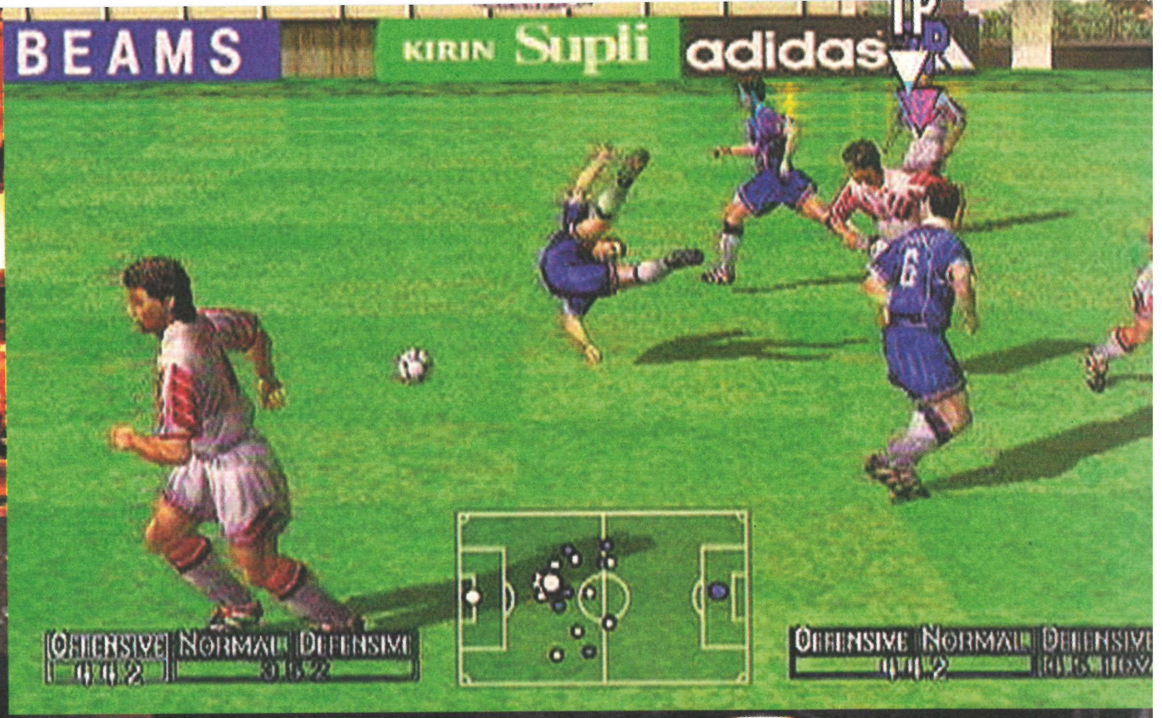
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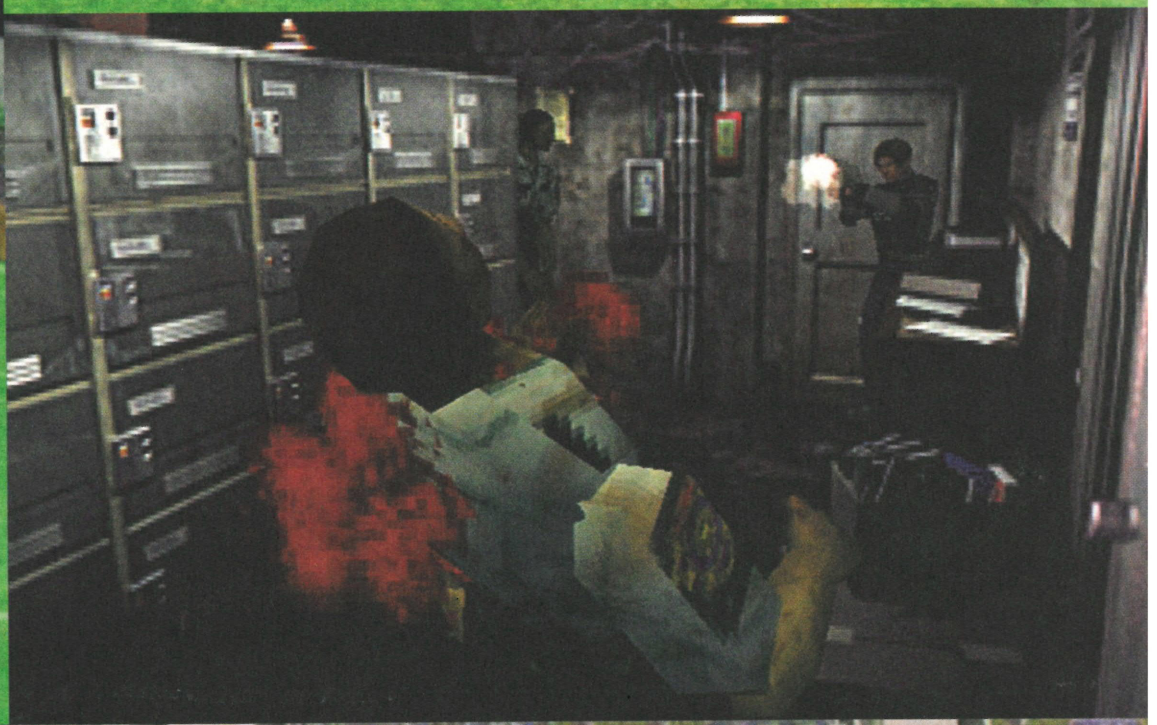
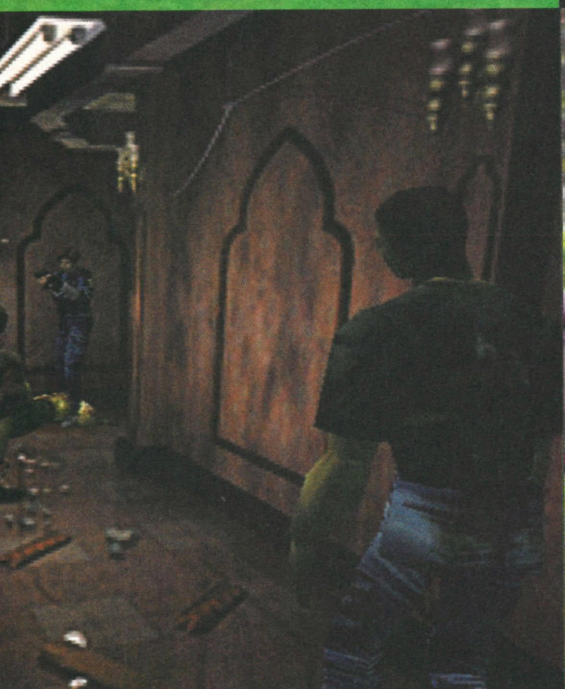
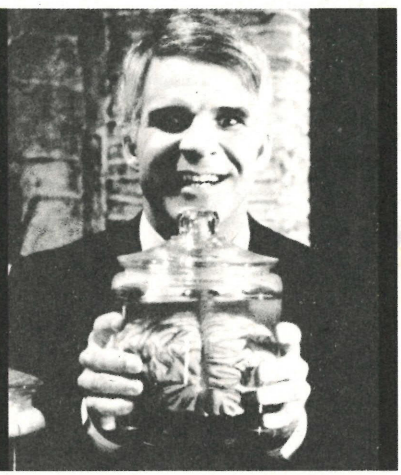




Replay
BEAMS

Brain in a jar

Entertaining yourself as a disembodied brain would be a tough job – unless you had five Dreamcast games with you, that is...



STEVE STARVIS

PR MANAGER (CONSOLE TITLES) AT EIDOS

One of the game industry's biggest clichés is that its PR people are all clueless bimbos (men and women), with as much knowledge of the 'product' (aka games) as your mum. Responsible for making sure that we – and therefore you – rave about the latest titles from whichever company they work for, it's true that some PR people are more clued up about their games than others. Which is where Steve Starvis from Eidos comes into the picture.

So, Steve knows his games, but never intended to work in PR. "I was working as a software analyst (posh term for game tester that seemed to impress the ladies) at Silicon Dreams – US Gold's [now defunct software publisher] internal development house. Then the marketing manager spotted I had the 'gift of the gab' and offered me a job as PR Executive," he says. "The first games I had to promote was *Olympic Soccer*, in which I put a few mates in the Scotland team – they were happy."

He's just moved house ("The first things I unpacked were all my consoles. My girlfriend was ecstatic."), has odd plans for the New Year ("Probably playing *Dance Dance Revolution* naked until the early hours."), and is looking forward to a strong line-up of titles from Eidos in 2000.

"*Resident Evil Code: Veronica* will be massive," Steve grins. "It looks amazing; in terms of the graphic quality I would say the only comparable title is *Shenmue*. It has a very distinctive cinematic look and feel."

He adds that, "Eidos has always had a strong PC product portfolio, therefore there are several titles which would be well suited to Dreamcast. *Urban Chaos* would be an ideal conversion. It offers a unique playing experience, and with the extra processing power that Dreamcast offers, it would look even more menacing."

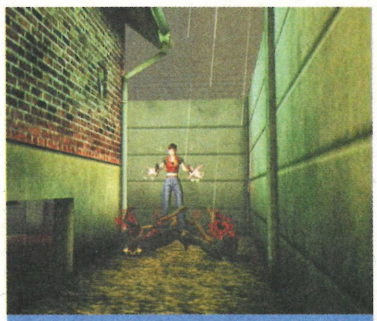
"In terms of a career, I can't see myself demonstrating games to journalists when I'm 50," he admits. "But I honestly believe I couldn't have a better job. And you get used to drunken journos wanting to fight you one minute and then telling you how much they love you the next." Not that we'd know anything about that, you understand ■

■ Power Stone

"In my opinion *Power Stone* redefines the fighting genre. For a long time the fighting game was stagnating with nobody offering any innovation; *Power Stone* was like a breath of fresh air offering gameplay mechanics previously only dreamt of."

■ Chu Chu Rocket

"Completely bonkers! This is the game that is currently occupying all of my spare time. It is one of the best puzzle games I have ever played, right up there with *Super Bomberman* on the SNES."



■ Resident Evil Code: Veronica

"This is the Dreamcast game I am looking forward to the most and not just because Eidos is publishing it. From the early versions I have played it looks awesome and the gameplay is of the highest order – sheer terror!"

■ Soul Calibur

"This game looks the dog's bollocks. If *Soul Calibur* doesn't make people buy a Dreamcast I don't know what will. I get a real buzz showing this game to friends – I obviously then ask them to refrain from dribbling on my carpet."

■ Sega Bass Fishing

"In terms of novelty value this game has no peers. However, friends of mine who aren't keen gamers do think I am slightly strange wrestling with a Super Bass in my living room. In the world of peripherals the Rod is king."

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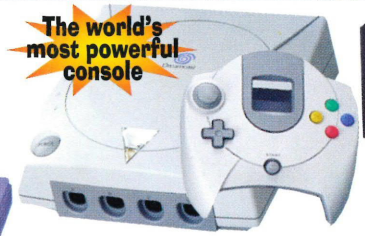

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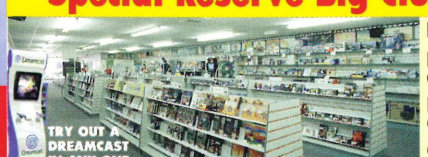

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