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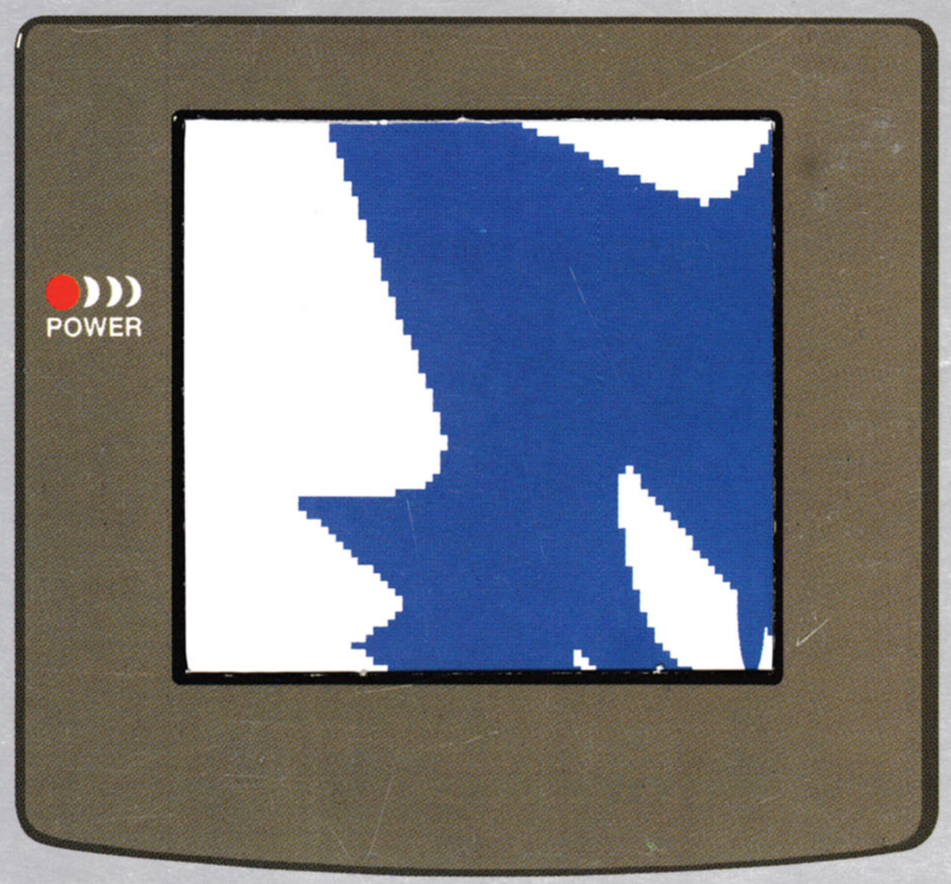

ALSO INSIDE:

THE NOMAD SOUL • TRICK STYLE • POINT BLANK 2 • SOUL FIGHTER • FIGHTING FORCE 2 • STREET WARS • BRAVEHEART • DESCENT 3 • MECHWARRIOR III • OUTCAST • APE ESCAPE • KINGPIN: LIFE OF CRIME • X-FILES • RAT ATTACK • CUTTHROATS • ABOMINATION • SYPHON FILTER

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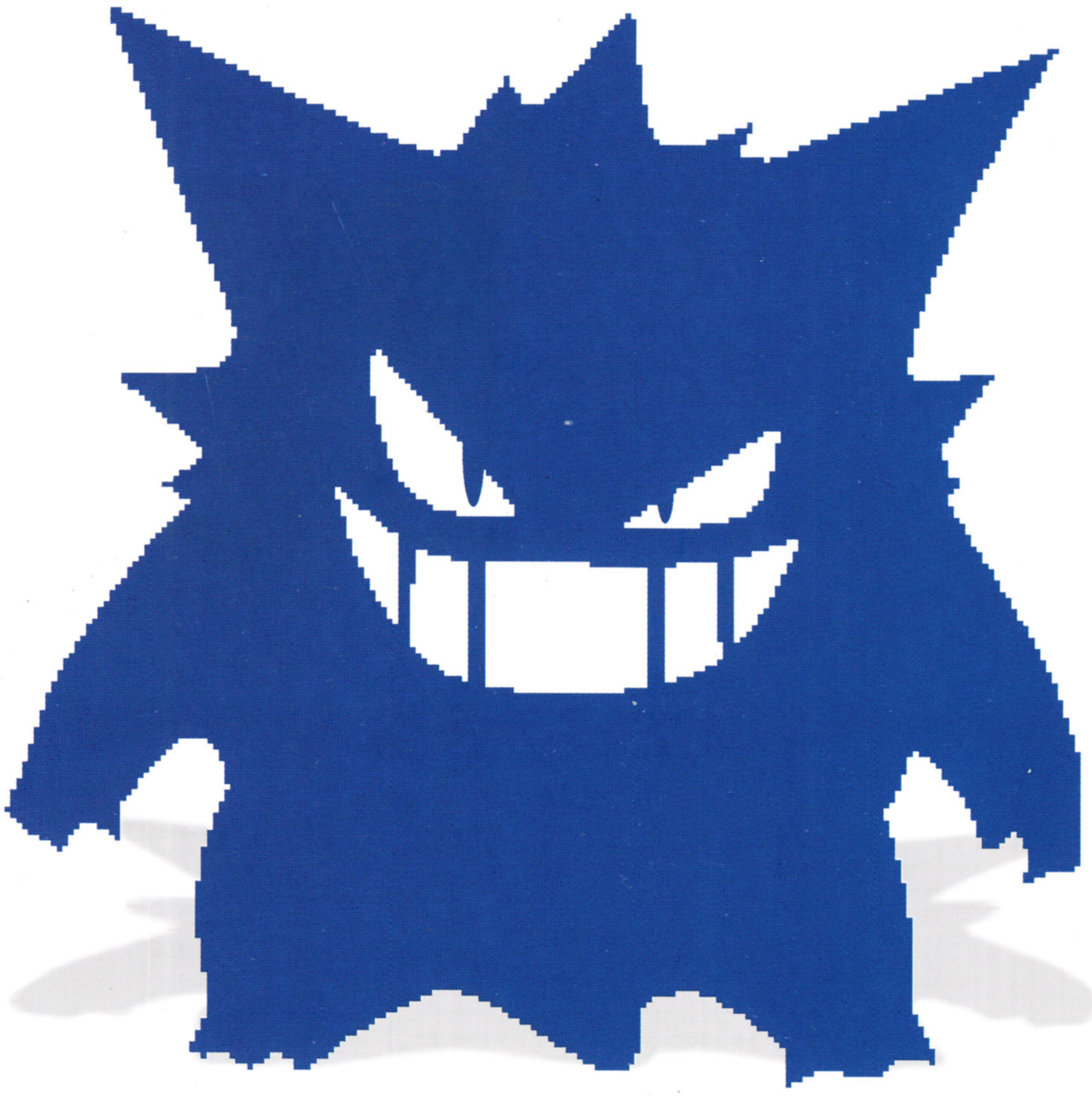
RAPIDE PUBLISHING

How can one video game save a company?

Without the *Pocket Monsters*, Nintendo would have had a bad couple of years. The *Pokémon* series of games have single-handedly revived the Game Boy in Japan thus reviving Nintendo's flagging fortunes. Having sold more than 12 million units in just over two years, *Pokémon* has allowed Nintendo to post impressive profits despite the abject faliure of the N64 in Japan.

Well, now the Pokémon are on their way here and are threatening to take over a playground near you. Welcome to the Pokémon, the latest 'mad fad' from Japan...



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Dreamcast

INCONTROL

CONTROLALPHA REPORTS/FEATURES

024 The Nomad Soul

Formerly known as *Omikron*, not a great deal has been heard about this game yet, but by all accounts it will be a classic. It's going to be huge, have loads of depth and encompasses an entire planet. What more could you want from an RPG?

030 Trick Style

Skateboarding has never been represented very well in videogames; *720°* is probably the sport's highpoint in the video game world. If that's the case then it's long due for a makeover. Cue *Trick Style* and its futuristic take on skateboarding...

035 Collect, Nurture, Battle and Trade

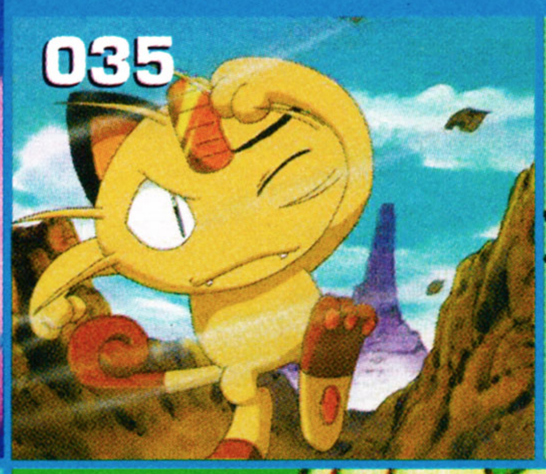
In a special 16 page supplement, Total CONTROL takes a look at the phenomenon that some say has saved Nintendo. The *Pokémon* games have sold more than 12 million copies in Japan in two years, and they're coming to the UK this autumn. Welcome to 1999's maddest fad...

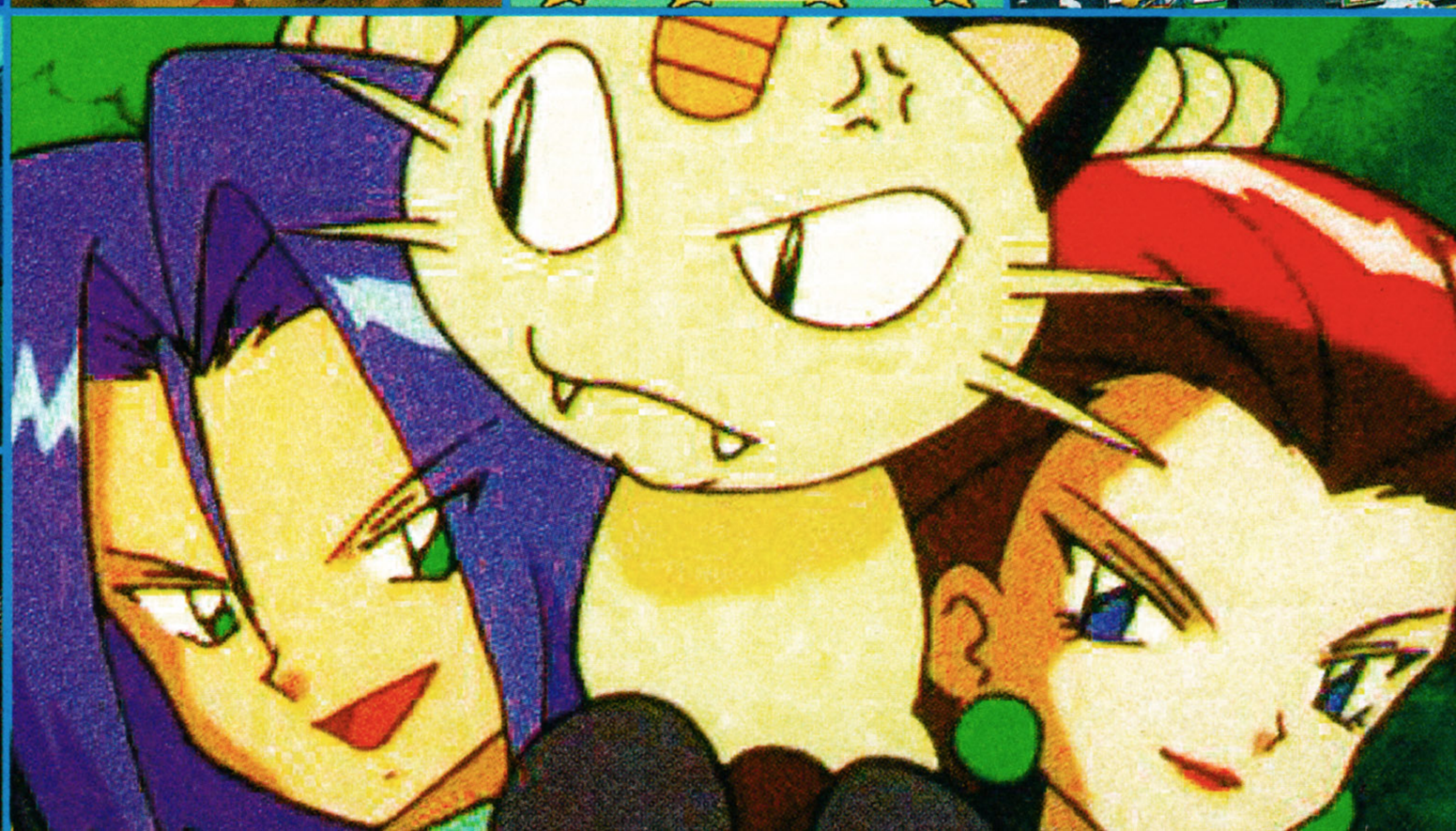
062 The History of the PlayStation

It's been described as the most significant machine in the video game industry's history. Sony have sold more than 50 million units worldwide and have brought this medium into the mainstream. In celebration of this, we look back at the events that shaped Sony's PlayStation.

110 Home is Where the Heart is [PART 2]

In the second part of our 'bedroom programming' series, we take a look at total conversions and the game that has inspired more than any other – *Quake II*. This month: the work of Matt Stevens and his total Star Wars conversion...





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INCONTROL

BETALOOKS

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060 WWF Attitude
061 Need For Speed: High Stakes

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075 Super Mario Bros Deluxe
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088 Kingpin
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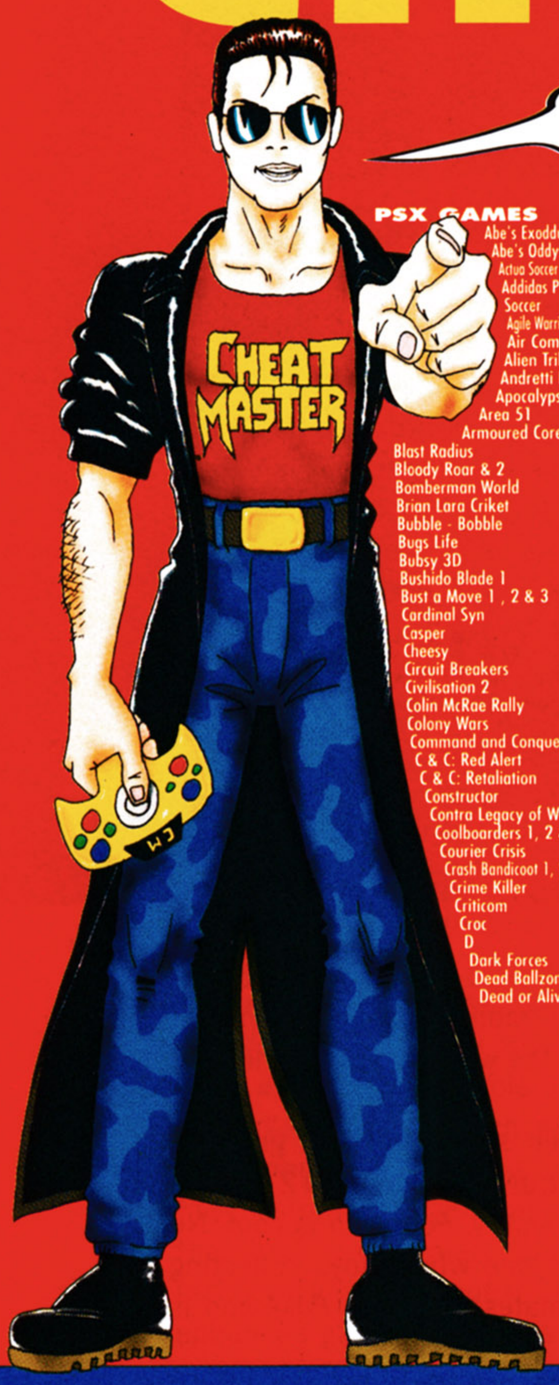

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Abe's Oddysee
Actua Soccer 1, 2 & 3
Addidas Power Soccer
Agile Warrior F-111X
Air Combat
Alien Trilogy
Andretti Racing
Apocalypse
Area 51
Armoured Core 1 & 2
Blast Radius
Bloody Roar & 2
Bomberman World
Brian Lara Criket
Bubble - Bobble
Bugs Life
Bubsy 3D
Bushido Blade 1
Bust a Move 1 , 2 & 3
Cardinal Syn
Casper
Cheesy
Circuit Breakers
Civilisation 2
Colin McRae Rally
Colony Wars
Command and Conquer
C & C: Red Alert
C & C: Retaliation
Constructor
Contra Legacy of Wars
Coolboarders 1, 2 & 3
Courier Crisis
Crash Bandicoot 1, 2 & 3
Crime Killer
Criticom
Croc
D
Dark Forces
Dead Ballzone
Dead or Alive
Death Trap Dungeons
Destruction Derby 1 & 2
Diablo
Die Hard 1, 2 & 3
Doom
Driver
Duke Nukem : Time to Kill
Duke Nukem : Total Meltdown
Dynasty Wars
Eliminator
Excalibur 2555 A.D
Extreme Tennis
Fade to Black
Felony 11-79
Fifa '96, '97, '98 & '99
Fighting Force
Final Doom
Final Fantasy VII
Formula 1, '97 & '98
Formula Karts
Forsaken
Frogger
Future Cop: LAPD
Gex, 3D & Enter the Gecko
Ghost in the Shell
G-Police
Gran Turismo
Grand Theft Auto & London 1969
Gunship
Gu-Sun Oyoyo
Hercules
Hexen
Impact Racing
Independence Day
International Track and Field
J. Mcgarth Supper Cross
Jersey devil
Jonah Lomu Rugby
Knockout Kings
Kula World
Lemmings 3D
Libero Grande
Loaded
Lone Soldier
Lucky Luke
Machine Hunter
Magic Carpet
Magic Gathering Battle Mage
Marvel Super Heroes
Max Power RAcing
MDK
Mech Warrior 2
MediEvil
Metal Gear Solid
Micro Machines v3
Mobile Suit Gundam
Monopoly
Mortal Kombat 3 , 4 & Trilogy
Moto Racer 1 & 2
Nagano Winter Olympics '98
Need for Speed 1, 2, 3 & 4
NHL '97, '98 & '99
NHL Breakaway '98
NHL Face-off '97 & '98
Nightmare Creatures
Ninja
Nuclear Strike
Pandemonium 1 & 2
Parappa the Rapper
Pitfall 3D
Porsche Challenge
Power Move Pro Wrestling
Poy Poy
Premier Manager '98
Rage Racer
Rapid Racer
Rascal
Rayman
Rebel Assault 2
Reboot
Resident Evil 1, 2 & Direct Cut
Ridge Racer Type 4
Rise of the Robots 2: Resurrection
Riven : The Sequel to Myst
Road Rash & 3D
Rockman X3
Rogue Trip
Rugrats
Samuria Showdown 3
Shellshock
Silent Hill
SimCity 2000
Skull Monkey
Small Soldiers
Soul Blade
Soviet Strike
Spice World
Spot goes to Hollywood
Spyro the Dragon
Steel Harbinger
Steel Reign
Street Fighter 2 Collection
Street Fighter Alpha 2
Street Fighter Alpha Ex Plus Alpha
Street Racer
Suikoden
Syphon Filter
Tekken 1, 2 & 3
Tempest X3
Tenchu
Tennis Arena
Test Drive 4, 5 & Off Road
Tetris Plus
The Lost World
The Raiden Project
Theme Hospital
Theme Park
Three Lions
Tiger Shark
Time Comando
Time Crisis
TOCA 1 & 2
Tokyo Highway Battle
Tombraider 1, 2 & 3
Tommi Makinen Rally
Top Gun
Total Drivin
Tunnel B1
Twisted Metal 2 & 3
V - Rally
Victory Boxing
Vigilante 8
VR Powerboat Racing
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War Games
War Hammer : Dark Omen
Warhawk
WCW Nitro
WCW Thunder
WCW Vs the World
Wild 9
Wing Over
Wipeout & 2097
World Cup '98
World League Soccer '98
Worms
WWF in the House
WWF War Zone
WWF Wrestlemania
X-Men Children of the Atom
Zero Divide 2

N64 GAMES

Aero Fighters Assault
Automobili Lamborghini
Banjo Kazooie
Beetle Racing Aventure
Blast Corps
Body Harvest
Bomberman 64
Chopper Attack
Cruis'n the World
Cruis'n USA
Diddy Kong Racing
Doom 64
Duel Heroes
Duke Nukem 64
Extreme G 1 and 2
F1 Pole Position
F1 World Grand Prix
Fifa 98 & 99
Fighters Destiny
Forsaken
Glover
Golden Eye
GT 64 Championship Edition
Hexen
International Super Soccer
ISS '98
Killer Instinct Gold
Lylat Wars
Mace : The Dark Ages
Mario Karts
Mario Party
Micro Machines 64
Mischief Makers
Mission Impossible
Mortal Kombat 4
Mortal Kombat: Trilogy
Nagano Winter Olympics '98
Penny Racers
Quake 64
Rampage Universal Tour
Rogue Squadron: Star Wars
San Francisco Rush
Shadows of the Empire
Snowboard Kids
South Park
Space Station
Star Wars: Racers
Super Mario
1080 Snowboarding
Top Gear Rally
Top Gear Overdrive
Turok 1 and 2
Vigilante 8
V-Rally
Wave Race
WCW Vs NWO World Tour & Revenge
Wipeout 64
World Cup '98
WWF War Zone
Yoshi's Story
Zelda

PC GAMES

Abe's Oddysee
Age Of Empires
Alien Trilogy
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Andretti Racing
Baldur's Gate
Caesar 1 and 2
Cannon Fodder
Carmaggedon
Carmageddon 2
Championship Manager 97/98
Championship Manager 2
Civilization 1 and 2
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Command & Conquer
Command & Conquer: Red Alert
Commandos & Behind Enemy Lines
Croc
Deathtrap Dungeon
Descent 1 and 2
Destruction Derby 1 and 2
Die Hard Trilogy
Doom 1 and 2
Duke Nukem 1, 2 and 3D
Duke Nukem 3D; Atomic Edition
Earthworm Jim 1 and 2
Fifa '96, 97, 98 & 99
Final Doom
Final Fantasy VII
Flight Unlimited 1 and 2
Formula 1
Formula One Grand Prix
Forsaken
Gex
G - Police
Grand Theft Auto & London 1969
Half Life
Hercules
Hexen 1 and 2
Jedi Knight
JImmy Whites 2
Judge Dredd
Jurassic Park
Klingon Honor Guard
Lemmings 2 and 3D
Mass Destruction
MDK
Men in Black
Mortal Kombat 1, 2, 3 and 4
Mortal Kombat Trilogy
Moto Racer
NBA Live 95, 96, 97, 98
Need For Speed 1, 2 and 3
Nightmare Creatures
Nuclear Strike
Outrun
Pandemonium 1 and 2
Pitfall
Populous 3
Premier Manager 1 and 3
Quake 1 and 2
Railroad Tycoon 2
Rainbow Islands
Rally Cross
Rayman
Resident Evil 2
Road Rash
Rogue Squadron: Star Wars
Roll Cage
Roller Coaster Tycoon
Screamer 1 and 2
Screamer Rally
Settlers 3
SimCity 2000 & 3000
South Park
Syndicate Wars
Test Drive 1, 2, 4 and Off Road
The Hunt for Red October
Theme Hospital
Theme Park
Time Commando
TOCA Touring Car Champ & 2
Tomb Raider 1 & 2
Turok
Ultimate Soccor Manager 1, 2 & 98
Unreal
Vigilante
Wipeout 1 and 2097
World Cup '98
Worms 1 and 2
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X - Wing

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Doom
WWF Warzone
Resident Evil 1

ESSENTIAL ADVICE

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EDITORIALOPINIONS

Words from the wise...

NICK JONES

Editor

nick@rapide.co.uk

This month was better than we'd expected for games. We were pleased to see games of the quality of *Kingpin*, *Outcast* and *Dungeon Keeper 2* all released in a traditionally barren time for games, especially 'triple A' titles such as these. This bodes well for the winter months when the majority of companies release their best software; I can hardly wait...

But it wasn't these games that stole the spotlight this month – their state of the art graphics were eclipsed by the simple charm of a Game Boy game. Yes, it's true, as roughly 12 million Japanese school kids and around 2 million of their US equivalents will testify, *Pokémon* is cool. No flashy 3D graphics just classic some RPG gameplay that will hook anyone who enjoys collecting things. And swapping thins with their mates. And fighting with their mates. In short, *Pokémon* is the ideal toy for the playground of the nineties.

It just goes to show, and this point has been made countless times before, that while cutting edge games are well and good, the true key to success in designing a video game is that it has to inspire the imagination of whoever plays it – young or old. A great video game, or at least one that appeals to the masses, doesn't really take place on a screen or even in 'cyberspace' but in the mind of the person playing it – you can't get any more imaginative than that...

CHRIS LEONARD

Senior Staff Writer

chrisleo@rapide.co.uk

Being the new boy on the team and coming from UPC, I'm still finding my feet as far as consoles are concerned. Major upheavals and two straight deadlines over a couple of weeks – first on UPC and then here on TC –have been pretty stressful, and I was sorry to see Justin leave. I just hope everything calms down over the next few months and I can catch up on the latest console as well as PC news.

No matter what people say, I still like my PlayStation (which is actually one of the early versions and still works perfectly!) and the games on it. *Tenchu*, for instance, is heavily flawed but still a terrific idea and plays well. It seems people are writing the machine off but there's plenty of life left in her yet. Mind you, I can't wait to get my hands on the office Dreamcasts at long last so I can see what all the fuss is about.

"I FEEL LIKE A KID IN A SWEET SHOP – SO MANY DELICIOUS, SUCCULENT... SORRY, I STARTED SALIVATING A BIT THERE"

It seems all these new consoles are being released and games are just getting better and better, and now I can experience them all on TC. I feel like a kid in a sweet shop – so much choice, so many delicious, tempting, succulent... sorry, I started salivating a bit there. Anyway, I was impressed by the month's biggest release, Kingpin, but felt it was a little too O.T.T. But then again, one of my favourite films is The Wizard Of Oz...

CRAIG VAUGHAN
Contributor

I've just bought one of those new fangled DVD players to sit next to my video recorder under my TV – and mightily impressed with it I am too. It has set me wondering whether it might be the next innovation in computer gaming. On the PC, DVD players are already commonplace, and Sony have already made it clear that their PlayStation 2 will have a DVD drive at its heart. Even the ever reluctant Nintendo seem to have accepted that CD, rather than cartridge, is the way forward. As well as being another giant leap forward in the fight against piracy, the format offers massive storage capabilities and the ability to seamlessly mesh digital quality video footage with in-game action.

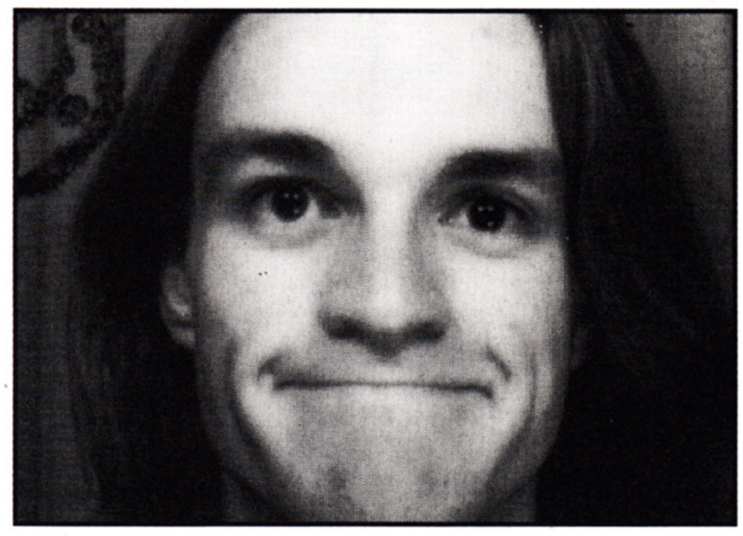
Hollywood have already seen the potential to further blur the edges between gaming and film production with many movies already sporting DVD ROM extras not available to those with stand alone DVD players, but which are readily accessible (on the same CD) to those with a PC. Meanwhile, Psygnosis – who, you may remember, were one of the first companies to tinker with CD ROM technology – are about to release the PC's first DVD enhanced game, Lander. Whilst the game itself has received mixed reviews (I loved the retro gameplay), the potential is already obvious. It may still be early days, but here at Total CONTROL we're tracking the fledgling format with increasing interest.

CLIFF SMITH
Senior Staff Writer

The end of the millennium has bought many changes to the world. Peace in Northern Ireland, war in Kosovo, the birth of Posh Spice's baby and the death of Screaming Lord Sutch. As the end of the year and of the century approaches, things are bound to get crazier and crazier. It's been a month of big changes here at Total Control as well. Looking at it one way, we're losing an editor, a designer and a writer. But then looking at it another way, we're gaining a new editor, a new designer, and new writer. Half full or half empty? You decide.

One thing isn't going to change, though. Total CONTROL will still bring you all the news, previews and reviews of the best games in the world, whatever format you play on. The magazine has gone from strength to strength since its launch, and has gained respect throughout the games industry for honest, unbiased opinions on every aspect of gaming. Under Nick's editorship I'm certain it will continue to do so.

This month, I've got beta looks on *Cutthroats* and *Need For Speed: High Stakes*, and reviews of *Braveheart*, *Descent 3*, an Austin Powers trivia game, and the latest *Tomb Raider* adventures. The Hard Stuff section features a special report on PC graphics cards as well as a selection of expensive gadgets to drool over.



SIMON PHILIPS
Editor – Total N64

After the high that was last month's *Star Wars Episode One: Racer*, it's gone all quiet on the N64 front again. The lack of games has made been particularly obvious, what with the quality of the PC titles in the office this month. The truth is that, so far, this has been the worst year for the N64 in its three-year history; two triple-A titles in six months (both of them Star Wars tie-ins) and devoted N64 owners making like rats and heading to the good ship PlayStation en masse where quality budget titles, not to mention the likes of *Ridge Racer 4* and *MGS*, have cleaned up on the console front.

Nintendo have failed miserably to capitalise on the success that *Zelda* brought to the format over Christmas and the New Year. Even a consistent release schedule over the first half of '99 would have been a good thing but the lack of third party support has proved to be Nintendo's achilles heel yet again.

With a bit of luck, however, the later part of the year should be the N64's finest. We now know that their won't be any NCL titles this year (Nintendo HQ are concentrating on Project Dolphin software), but the line-up from Rare should prove nothing short of stunning. Their games alone – *Jet Force Gemini*, *Twelve Tales*, *Perfect Dark* and *Donkey Kong 64* –are reason enough to keep your N64 well dusted down. There should also be one or two decent third party games on the way, staringt with *Quake 2* which will be out by the time you read this...

Roll on Christmas... My God, how Nintendo need it...

WILL ADKIN
Staff Writer

In an attempt to compete with the forthcoming consoles from Sony and Nintendo, there has been talk of Sega's plans to release a Dreamcast Version 1.5, a newer and more powerful machine that will offer full backwards compatibility but will also allow it to play much newer and more advanced software than that of the original Dreamcast.

It'ss an interesting concept, but there must be a more consumer-friendly way of providing upgrades for consoles? Consoles that have been designed with upgradable potential are far more attractive than those that do not; they promise extra life and new features that extend the capabilities of the machine to new levels. The N64 is a good example: at the time of its release the N64 had much more potential than any of its competitors. New advances in technology allowed rumble and RAM expansion packs to be easily installed, while Sony had to jump on the bandwagon and release and market an entirely new controller to compete.

Already a new Dreamcast is available in Japan that offers a faster modem than the original. It is, in my opinion, a very risky move of Sega's to push this notion. Do people really want to buy a console that they know will be out of date within a few months and have to buy the next model? If this was to be done they would need to make sure that upgrades could be added to build upon the existing system, keeping the old consoles up to date.

Perhaps a safer move would have been to have promised backwards compatibility between the Dreamcast and any future system that Sega may make. But it seems that Sega may be hoping to upgrade their machine when PlayStation 2 and Dolphin hit, bringing it closer to the competition. Whatever happens, it will be interesting to see how it works and whether or not they do make a move that is as drastic as rumours suggest

NICKJONES
e-mail: nick@rapide.co.uk

PlayStation 2 heads the 'hot topic' list this month, and, surprisingly, there has been quite a reaction against Sony's console, despite the fact that only a few details are known about it. It seems that many of you remain sceptical of the console's promised power, the cost of programming the thing, and whether it will change the industry. From Total CONTROL's point of view, we will try to remain impartial to the subject, report the facts and form opinions based only on those facts. Talking of facts, it was recently announced that PlayStation 2 would be making its first public appearance at the Tokyo Game Show this autumn, along with the first playable software. Naturally, Total CONTROL will be there to bring you all the latest news on the PS2, and maybe even Nintendo's Project Dolphin...

Mad Katz

Control Yourself is sponsored by Mad Katz. Every letter printed in its entirety will win a choice of the following peripherals: a memory card, a mouse, a rumble pack, or a PC controller – just remember to tell us which you want on your letter. The 'Mad Letter of the Month' will be a bundle for PC, N64 or PlayStation, depending on his or her system. The three bundles on offer are: PlayStation –a steering wheel, a mouse and a memory card; PC – a Panther XL joystick rollerball combo (ideal for Quake-style games); N64 – a steering wheel, a rumble pak and a memory pak. Oh yeah, and you get to see your name in Total CONTROL as well...

Mad Catz Peripherals – By Any Means Necessary

Now that we have some prizes to give away, please don't forget to indicate your preferred format somewhere on your letter. You'll find that winning an N64 pad doesn't do you a lot of good if your only system is a PC.

If you'd like to comment on this month's issue or raise some issues of your own, please don't hesitate to write to us at the following address:

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CONTROLYOURSELF

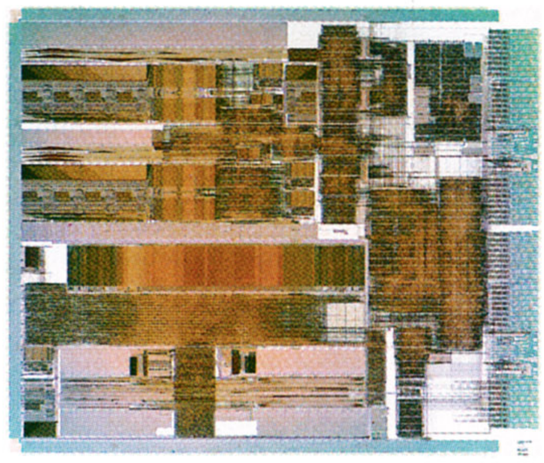
You're about to spend **100 pages or so listening** to what we've **got to** say, but what do **you think?** Write to us now, have **an opinion!**

MISSING THE POINT?

Dear TC,

I'll get straight to the point: I wrote in to express my views on Sony's "new form of digital entertainment". (?!?) What are Sony really trying to do? Are Sony making a console with a couple new features, or are they creating a whole new format – hand-held, console, PC and PSX2? I mean, when you look at their ideas, you have to wonder whether Sony have forgotten the whole point of consoles? What I think Sony are trying to do is to 'expand horizons', to create something stunning and innovative (something they're not very well known for). Unfortunately, while Ken Kutaragi and the rest of the Sony crew were in their 23rd Century world dreaming of "the future of interactive entertainment", someone forgot to say: 'Wait a minute, isn't this meant to be a console?' Also, once again it looks like Sony have forgotten the price of overcharging. Surprisingly, Sony could end up in the same boat as the Saturn, as its Emotion Engine is extremely hard to program (thus increasing the amount of time it will take to program a game for the console) and, unlike the Saturn, the cost of making games for the format is diabolical (from what I've heard), so only a handful of massive (and rich) developers will be able to afford "production of software" for PSX2. Basically, Sony are being too ambitious. Is the gaming public ready for what Sony has to offer? I think there's been too much speculation on whether Sony COULD create something like the PSX2 and not enough speculation on whether they SHOULD create something like PSX2.

"WHAT ARE SONY REALLY TRYING TO DO? ARE SONY MAKING A CONSOLE WITH A COUPLE NEW FEATURES, OR ARE THEY CREATING A WHOLE NEW FORMAT – HAND-HELD, CONSOLE, PC AND PSX2?"



Of course, Sony's failure isn't what we should be worrying about. As far as I'm concerned that would be a good thing, as it would give Sega and Nintendo the fair share of the market they deserve, but it's their success which worries me. If the PSX2 is a huge success like the PSX was, then history may very well repeat itself

DON'T BELIEVE THE HYPE

Dear TC,

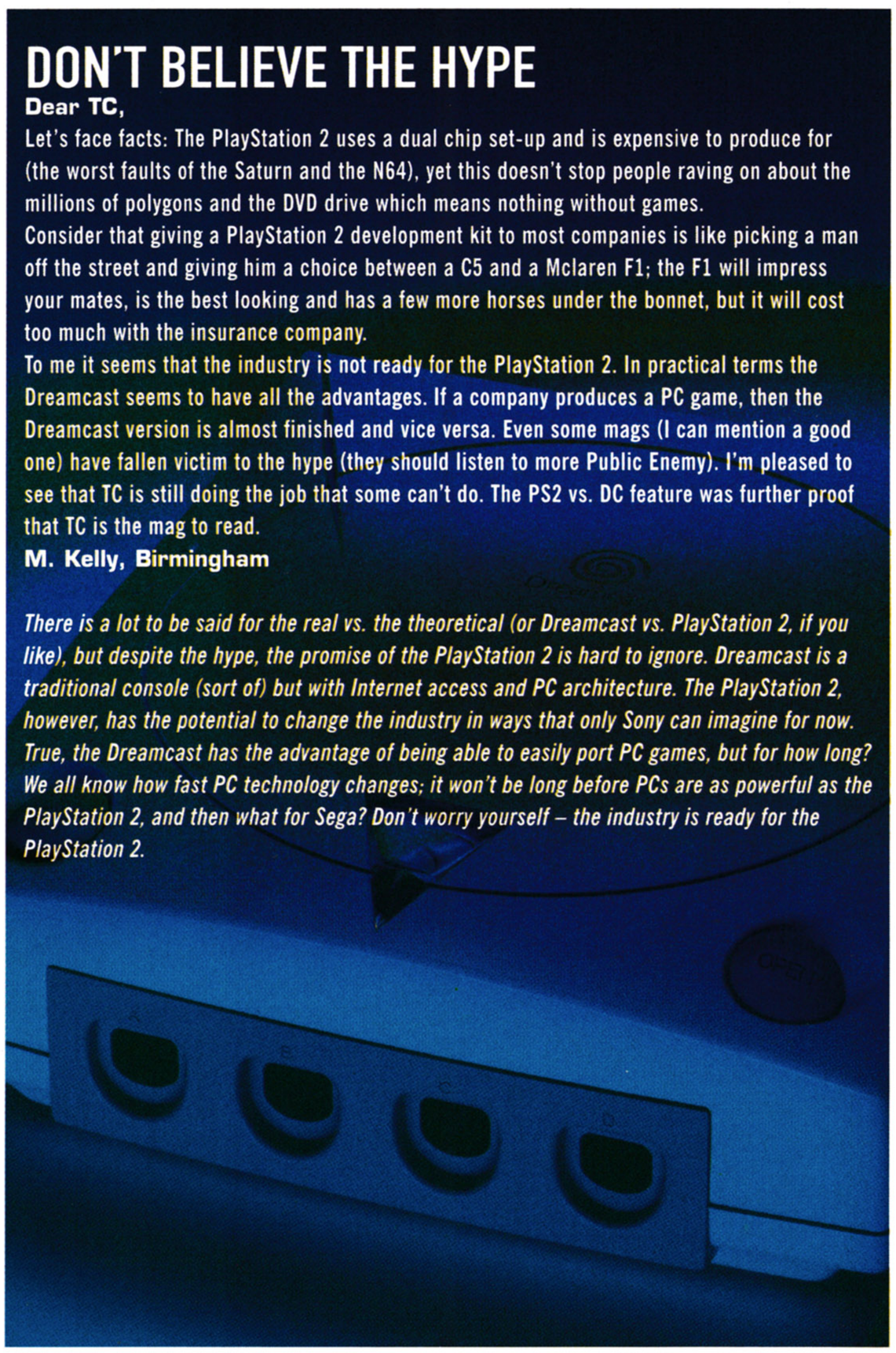
Let's face facts: The PlayStation 2 uses a dual chip set-up and is expensive to produce for (the worst faults of the Saturn and the N64), yet this doesn't stop people raving on about the millions of polygons and the DVD drive which means nothing without games.

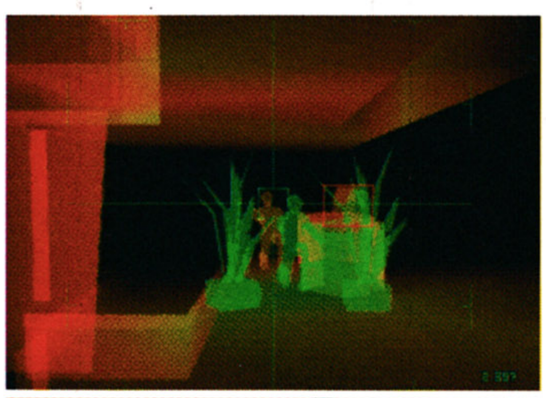
Consider that giving a PlayStation 2 development kit to most companies is like picking a man off the street and giving him a choice between a C5 and a Mclaren F1; the F1 will impress your mates, is the best looking and has a few more horses under the bonnet, but it will cost too much with the insurance company.

To me it seems that the industry is not ready for the PlayStation 2. In practical terms the Dreamcast seems to have all the advantages. If a company produces a PC game, then the Dreamcast version is almost finished and vice versa. Even some mags (I can mention a good one) have fallen victim to the hype (they should listen to more Public Enemy). I'm pleased to see that TC is still doing the job that some can't do. The PS2 vs. DC feature was further proof that TC is the mag to read.

M. Kelly, Birmingham

There is a lot to be said for the real vs. the theoretical (or Dreamcast vs. PlayStation 2, if you like), but despite the hype, the promise of the PlayStation 2 is hard to ignore. Dreamcast is a traditional console (sort of) but with Internet access and PC architecture. The PlayStation 2, however, has the potential to change the industry in ways that only Sony can imagine for now. True, the Dreamcast has the advantage of being able to easily port PC games, but for how long? We all know how fast PC technology changes; it won't be long before PCs are as powerful as the PlayStation 2, and then what for Sega? Don't worry yourself – the industry is ready for the PlayStation 2.





Zelda 64: Only availible on N64, unluckily for Joan Paelo

MAD LETTER OF THE MONTH

EVOLUTION, NOT REVOLUTION

Dear TC,

I've just been reading your letter of the month for the June issue, and it brings up a few points I'd like to address.

The writer is constantly complaining about too much evolution and too little innovation in games. Well, I'd like to ask him what's wrong with evolution in gaming?

A lot of the innovation in gaming has been misplaced, and in the rush to innovate, a lot of what makes games really great has been lost.

Think back to the birth of gaming. I can remember being five years old playing on my brand new 16k Spectrum; the sense of wonder I had watching low-res 8 colour graphics then… but what I really remember is being drawn into the games I was playing, despite the lack of 'eye candy'.

A few years later, I owned an NES. The graphics were better and the games were still immersive – titles such as *Mario 3* even now stand out as great moments in gaming.

The Super NES and Megadrive were then released. *Mario World*, *Mario Kart*, *Sonic*, *Shinobi* – all games that drew you into the gaming world; games you could lose whole weeks playing. *StarFox*, with its comparatively simplistic 3D, had a cinematic air to it, a spectacle that was so much more than the sum of its different parts.

Then innovation took hold. Developers spent so damn long writing amazing 3D engines that the essence of what made a game great was often lost. In an attempt to innovate, the gameplay was forgotten in the effort to create the 'next big thing' in gaming.

Maybe if developers stick to what worked for so long – as companies like Rare and DMA do – and evolve these aspects of gaming by adding the 3D effects and surround sound on top of a sound base of proven gameplay, we would have less 'also ran' titles.

On another subject, I would like to ask you about the PSX2. According to your supplement in the June issue, the chipset for this machine costs £300 to produce and can't even be produced reliably yet as the technology is still not there to mass-produce the processors. Have you heard any more on this issue, or is Sony just rolling its PR machine out and setting a release date it cannot possibly achieve?

Carl Lidzy, via e-mail

It is true that both innovation and evolution are both essential factors in the design of any game and should not be viewed as separate aspects. Where would a game like Half-Life *be without* Doom*? Half-Life both evolves the ideas seen in* Doom *and innovates in a number of areas. It is very rare that a whole new genre is created; when it does it usually results in a giant leap forward in both of these areas.*

As far as your query about the production of the PlayStation 2 goes, according to Sony, production of the Emotion Engine chipset has begun in earnest and they will start assembly of the machine in October. No word on a price, however.

***Doom* was little more than an evolution of *Wolfenstein 3D* – much the same as *Half-Life* is to *Quake II*. They're all great.**

(although I doubt it), only this time Nintendo would fall as well and, who knows, after claims that the Emotion engine is three times more powerful than the mighty Pentium III, Sony may very well be looking to destroy Microsoft and Intel. Then who? Panasonic, Compaq, Sharp, JVC, Hewlett Packard? As Sony get richer and more powerful, the list of disposable companies gets larger. This probably won't happen, but just say it did; what would things be like?

Well, for a start, Sony would charge ridiculous prices, and as they would be the only computer company around, we would be forced to buy it. And as with the PSX, the PSX2's popularity would ensure games with 99% graphics 'n sound but with 1% originality and gameplay – most of them with a number between 3 and 9 at the end of their title. Basically, the majority of the gaming public would be displeased, and the only happy people

"SONY MAY VERY WELL BE LOOKING TO DESTROY MICROSOFT AND INTEL. THEN WHO? PANASONIC, COMPAQ, SHARP, JVC, HEWLETT PACKARD?"

CHOICE CUTS

Would one super-system lead to greater innovation/originality, as all the developers (Sony, Sega, etc.) would have to prove that they are the best on that system through game design rather than hardware? It would certainly make it easier to choose a system as there would only be one to have. Would this be a good thing, though?

One system with all the world's best developers working on it? What do you think?

What has happened to the Motorola Blackbird? This featured in issue 1 but didn't receive a mention in your supplement. What is the state of play with this machine? Is it now dead?

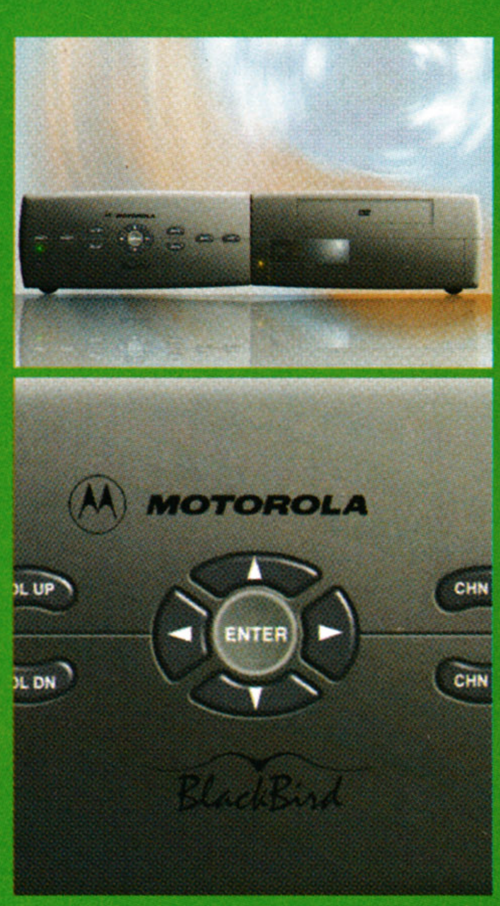
Michael Sung – via e-mail

The Blackbird is a particular brand of DVD player that uses VM Labs' NUON technology. As far as we are aware this is still going ahead for a summer release in the US, and the rest of the world later. The reason we didn't feature it in our supplement? Simple, the supplement featured the three machines that will compete in the next 'console war'. NUON, we feel, will be more of an oddity than anything else. It has CD-i written all over it…

I would like to ask you why your magazine has no reviews of old games such as the classic games of Nintendo and Sega?

Daniel Mclean – via e-mail

Retro is cool as long as it stays there – in the past. Total CONTROL deals in the present and the future.



AN EXPENSIVE HABIT

Dear TC,

As is my experience of gaming (quite a bit), I have found that games in Britain and the Republic of Ireland are considerably dearer than America and Japan. Why is this is? Is it because of taxation, or greediness on the retailers' part? Also, games in Ireland are dearer than Britain due to the strength of sterling over the punt. This just causes extra annoyance for gamers in Ireland. Console gamers have the most to fork out – in particular N64 gamers, who each pay £50 for a new game and £30 for a 'budget' game (I hope this will not be the case with the Dreamcast). PlayStation owners come in second, paying £45 for most games, although prices do differ, and a far more reasonable £20 for budget games. PC gamers (such as myself) have the easiest time, paying an average of £30-£45 for games, and £20 and under for budget games. Publishers and retailers should get their act together and start charging a more reasonable price for games.

Generally, you'll find that almost everything in the British Isles is more expensive than in the US or Japan. It's just the price we pay for our 'high standard' of living. As far as publishers charging a more reasonable price for a game? Well, if people weren't willing to pay £50 for a game then they wouldn't sell them for that price.

would be biased idiots like Simon McSweeney and, shockingly, Steve Takle, who I thought was a sensible man until he admitted to thinking that the PSX2 being the only console was a good thing (which it clearly isn't). MAYBE if Sega and Nintendo put the likes of *Zelda*, *Shenmue*, *Perfect Dark*, *Metropolis* and other of their great games on the console it wouldn't be so bad, but, thinking realistically, it's not going to happen.

Anyway, on a closing note, I honestly hope the PSX2 isn't a big success, for the sake of MULTI-FORMAT gaming and because I think Sega and Nintendo deserve some credit for a change. Especially Sega. With the Saturn's failure sticking in everyone's mind, they've got the toughest task of making the Dreamcast a success, and I for one will happily purchase one on its release. Well, that's all I have to say... for now... but in the mean time, keep up the good – no – excellent work.

Joan Paelo – via e-mail

Don't worry, however successful the PlayStation 2 is, there will always be a place in the market for the likes of Sega and Nintendo. Whatever happens in the hardware market, Sega will continue to produce their brilliant arcade software, and certainly Nintendo's future seems secure with a successor to the Game Boy on the way and a deal with Matsushita (by the way, a bigger electronics firm than Sony) that will see their Project Dolphin technology incorporated into Panasonic DVD players. But let's not right them off just yet...

As far as Sony's plans for the PlayStation 2, I think that it's missing the point somewhat to say that "someone forgot to say: 'Wait a minute, isn't this meant to be a console?'" and that PlayStation 2 will be something more, something that hasn't been done before. Or at least that's what they say...

BACKWARDS THINKING

Dear TC,

After reading so many articles on the specifications of the new PlayStation, it seems to be a vastly superior machine compared to the Dreamcast – Sega must be kicking themselves. Then again, look at the N64 compared to the current PlayStation; a supposedly twice as powerful machine which is still producing inferior games.

Upon reading about the confirmation of backward compatibility, a thought occurred to me. Who, out of all the current PlayStation owners, will be keeping their old PlayStations after the new one's release? I, for one, will be trading in or selling my old PlayStation, but how many other people will be doing the same? There may be a glut of PlayStations in second-hand shops everywhere. As for a new name for the machine, how about P2 or PS2?

Barry Lofthouse, Bolton

"UPON READING ABOUT THE CONFIRMATION OF BACKWARD COMPATIBILITY, WHO WILL BE KEEPING THEIR OLD PLAYSTATIONS AFTER THE NEW ONE'S RELEASE?"

PS. Who else found Ridge Racer Type 4 too easy? Still a class game, though...

HUNCHBACK IS BACK

Dear TC,

I have an idea for a section (which would be about one page) where people write in and say what their first games machine/games were and what they think about them now. You could also ask a few people in the industry. I think it's a great idea and hope you do it in the future. If you do, I'll be the first person in it.

My very first games machine was, I think, a ZX Spectrum 128K, an ugly grey tape deck machine which did rather well sales-wise, started off many games companies and was a classic. My first game on it was *Hunchback* by a company I don't think is going anymore.

Hunchback was a brilliant sideways scrolling game, and one of the first ever platform games. Other games I played on the Spectrum were *Movie*, *Super Hang On* by Sega, and even a *Mario* game! I think the Spectrum is a classic machine which I'd give 8/10 for funness.

Mathew Wood, Denbighshire

Retro gaming is something that we'll be touching on next issue but, more importantly, is 'funness' a real word? Oh, and by the way, Hunchback was published on the Imagine label, a subsidiary of Ocean, which was recently bought out by French publishers, Infogrames.

Established brand games will no doubt be at the forefront of PlayStation 2's launch titles

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REPORTAGE

CHRISLEONARD
e-mail: chrisleo@rapide.co.uk

Nothing absolutely ground-breaking has happened in Reportage this month, although that's not to say there's no exciting news. It turns out that no one is sure when Sony's development kits will be available, which could be a cause for concern about the PlayStation 2, but then the story about it being classified as a supercomputer is a great piece of publicity.

It seems that as Sega start hyping their make-or-break Dreamcast console and Nintendo have caused a few ripples with their planned Dolphin console, Sony are keeping very quiet. This could be because they're building up to something, or even waiting to see how the Dreamcast fares. Needless to say, we'll be drip-fed more information about the PS-Y (as Sony have termed it) over the coming months.

Another interesting story features Demis Hassabis. It seems that following our main story last month with the court cases in America, he's spoken out in an interview with a newspaper about the increasing amounts of gore seen in video games. It seems that the world of video games is about to go through a major upheaval over the next six-twelve months, and our beloved pastime could be changed in ways we can't imagine. Certainly it seems that as the machines get better and graphics get more realistic, video game developers will have to be more responsible about how violent games are. Imagine what playing *Kingpin* on the PS-Y would be like and you may understand why there are calls for concern. Then again, we could all be playing Care Bear games on our next-gen consoles. Time will tell.

PLAYSTATION 2 'ON SCHEDULE'

Sony report that PlayStation 2 has entered production and is on time

Sony has announced that production of their new PlayStation console is proceeding as planned and development kits will be with companies before the end of the year. Production of the CPU (the Emotion Engine) has already begun by Toshiba. This will be followed by the commencement of production of the console itself in October.

The company has also announced the development of a new laser device that can read both DVDs and CDs – previously a dual

HASSABIS CALLS FOR AN END TO VIOLENCE

Influential developer sees a peaceful future for games

Following the current US court case in which American parents are blaming film, video and computer games for recent high school shootings, it seems the controversy surrounding violence in computer games is now spreading to the UK. In a recent interview with The Independent on Sunday, Demis Hassabis, creator of *Theme Park*, has argued that in future violent games like *Doom* and *Quake* will be produced in lower numbers as the games industry tries to appeal to a wider audience than now. In the interview he argues that as the technology involved in games becomes more sophisticated, the games themselves will be also become more sophisticated and hence rely less on violence. Hassabis is currently working on three titles that combine elements of strategy and simulation and feels the industry will have to experiment with cross-genre games that are more complex and intellectually demanding and less based on cheap and gratuitous thrills.

He claims that, "The Holy Grail in the industry now is to reach a mass market in the same way that music and cinema do." He claims this means creating games that are not aimed at the stereotypical male teenager locked away in his bedroom blasting at anything that moves, but games that can appeal to older games players as well as people of both sexes.

Computer companies are aware of this image problem with games, and while characters like Lara Croft, Mario and Sonic have all helped, the biggest games these days do seem to rely on violence as their hook. With the growth of DVD, the nature of games will change, Hassabis argues, as consumers who use DVD for films and music will not be interested in blowing the heads off people. It seems that Hassabis wants everyone playing his inoffensive strategy games, but then perhaps he does actually have a point...

FGN online

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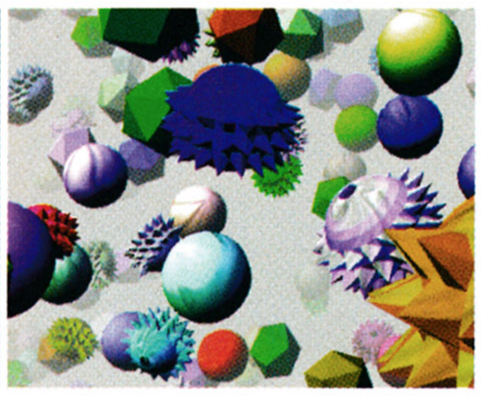
FGN Online – www.fgnonline.com

laser system was used in order to read the formats in DVD players. The new technology produces lasers in both wavelengths and according to Sony will "help reduce the number of components in CD and DVD drives and improve their reliability". It certainly seems that the inclusion of such a device in the PlayStation 2 would significantly lower the cost of the console.

As expected, PlayStation 2 will also makes its public debut at this autumn's Tokyo Game Show, along with playable code and an announcement of the first games. One of the early games is expected to be the sequel to *Metal Gear Solid*, and Hideo Kojima (the creator of the series) has all but confirmed this fact in an interview in a US magazine.



A number of companies have officially confirmed that they will be developing for the console. It's hardly a surprise that Electronic Arts will be developing and have stated that they are impressed by the technology and have up to ten titles in development. ArtDink are developing their latest train/city sim title for the console, *A-Train VI*. *A-Train IV* was one of the original games for the first PlayStation and is part of a highly popular series in Japan. Finally, 3DO has signed as a developer for PlayStation 2, although no details of games have been made available.

Also, according to an interview in a US newspaper, George Lucas is said to be 'definitely interested' in developing for Sony's new console. He has apparently been 'bugging' Sony for a development kit for some time now. Whether Lucas has a Star Wars game planned for the console (or something else entirely) was not specified, but he has never been one to shy away from the adoption of new technology. Could Lucas be planning what Sony term as a 'new form of digital entertainment'?

THE US GOVERNMENT HAS CLASSIFIED THE PSY'S CPU AS A SUPERCOMPUTER AND THEREFORE TOO POWERFUL TO EXPORT OVERSEAS

And in an interesting article in the New York Times, the US government has classified the PlayStation 2's CPU as a supercomputer and therefore 'too powerful' to export overseas. It seems that there are fears that the technology could be dangerous if it got into the wrong hands – particularly the Chinese military. According to US law, supercomputers may not be exported to 'sensitive' countries; the fear is that they will be used to improve a country's military capability.

This doesn't just apply to the PlayStation 2 however, and high end PCs (that are expected at the end of the year) will also fall into this category. Apparently no decision has been made on the matter, but the Department of Commerce is looking into it. All we know is this is some kind of major endorsement for the power of the Emotion Engine – 'Powerful enough to run the Chinese army' as an advertising slogan anyone?

BALDUR'S GATE SET FOR DREAMCAST RELEASE

Sega owners set to experience RPG classic

While BioWare are concentrating on their imminent new PC, PlayStation and Dreamcast title, *MDK2,* and making sure that it's completed in time for Dreamcast's US launch, Sega themselves will handle the Dreamcast port of the PC smash hit *Baldur's Gate*. Bioware originally developed this for the PC, but they're unable to spare the time or personnel to do the port. BioWare has announced that Sega could make a number of changes to the game for the Dreamcast version but have not revealed the nature of these changes. BioWare founder and joint-CEO, Greg Zeschuk, expects Sega to do a "phenomenal job" of porting from PC to Dreamcast. He explains, "We did actually have an option to do the Dreamcast version of *Baldur's Gate,* but we decided it wouldn't be in BioWare's best interest." By developing *MDK 2* for Sega's machine, the developers had the experience but found they would simply have too much on their plate. "When the chance of *Baldur's Gate* for Dreamcast arose, BioWare was already developing three large games, and we didn't want to spread our resources too thin by starting another project."

While some may have reservations about a possible multiplayer mode, Bioware are more than happy to see Sega implement such an option on the Dreamcast version. Being the only current internet-compatible console, the Dreamcast would be ideal, and coupled with as good a game as *Baldur's Gate*, Sony and Nintendo owners should be green with envy.

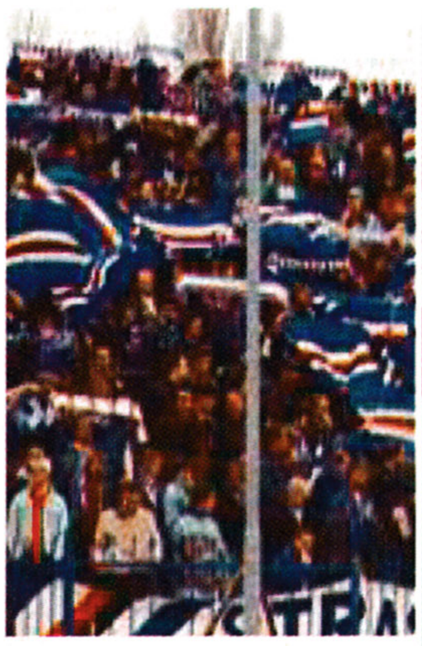
AN APOLOGY

INFOGRAMES

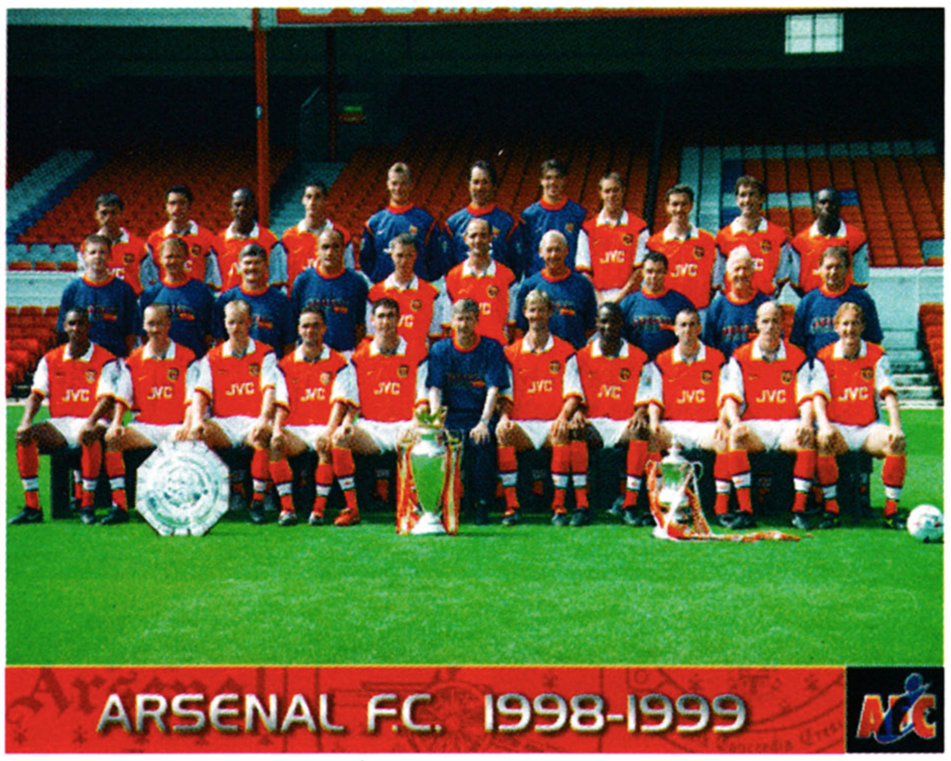
"Due to a misunderstanding last month, a preview copy of Constructor Street Wars' was reviewed as finished game code in our June edition. We at Total Control pride ourselves on our balanced and fair coverage of all games, and would therefore like to withdraw all references to the product, its developers and the game's publisher Infogrames that appeared in that article. TOTAL CONTROL would also like to take this opportunity to unreservedly apologise to both Infogrames UK and its readers for this inaccuracy.
Please note that a review of final code of Constructor Street Wars appears on page 77 of this issue."

DREAMCAST SUFFERS FROM BAD OMENS?

Sega announce their latest sponsorship deal



Sega will sponsor Serie A strugglers Sampdoria



After signing a multi-million pound deal with Arsenal, Sega is continuing its soccer sponsorship strategy, with Italian club UC Sampdoria being the latest team to agree to wear Dreamcast logos on their shirts next season. The sponsorship began on July 1st, although both parties have decided not to give any details of the monetary amounts involved; it will certainly be more than most of us will see in our lifetime.

Sega Europe's CEO, Jean Francois Cecillon, explained why the company is specifically targeting soccer fans. "The main Sampdoria fan profile is aged 16-30, and this matches our customer base," he said. "Together with Sampdoria we will launch our new Dreamcast product throughout Europe. Sampdoria is one of the great names in Italian football, and we are delighted to have concluded our first Italian sponsorship deal for our new Dreamcast console with Sampdoria and its President, Enrico Mantovani." It's a pity then, that Sampdoria suffered the ignominy of being relegated from Italy's Serie A league last season, less than a decade after winning the Italian Championship and getting to the European Cup final the following year. Let's hope that Arsenal can achieve success next season or the omens could be really bad for Sega's machine.

64DDS UNLEASHED WORLDWIDE?

Nintendo peripheral might reach Europe after all

No, this isn't the latest size of implants, but the N64 peripheral might finally be released. It's an optical disk drive that allows internet access and all manner of other facilities. Recently, Nintendo flatly stated that the peripheral will not be released outside Japan, but now it seems they're 'reconsidering' this statement and could feasibly release the 64DD in the US and Europe. Apparently, it will all depend on how well the peripheral performs in Japan. According to a Nintendo spokesperson, "Once the 64DD and distribution services are established in the Japan market, we will review our options. If we believe such a product can be supported by the US or European marketplace, we may reconsider launching in other markets." Until now no official mention had been made as to whether it would be seen outside of the US. *Mario Paint* and other 64DD projects like the *Zelda: Gaiden* add-on currently under development may yet be seen in your living room, although admittedly not for a while. All will apparently be revealed at the upcoming Nintendo-only Spaceworld event. As far as a possible sequel to *Zelda* is concerned, it seems we'll still have to keep hoping and praying.

TITUS SEEK CONSOLE DOMINANCE

N64, Game Boy, PlayStation and Dreamcast all to see Titus games

Fresh from E3, publishers Titus have announced details about a veritable feast of new products to be released in 1999. First up there's *Blues Brothers 2000*, a 3D action adventure as Elwood Blues, fresh out of prison, tries to recruit the members of his band in an effort to bring blues and soul to the N64 and Game Boy Color.

Channel 5 hits *Xena: Warrior Princess* and *Hercules* both get games on the N64 with much 3D hacking and slashing action, with both characters featuring in a new Game Boy Color game. All your favourite mythical characters are playable, each with their own abilities and special powers.

Imminent on the N64 and soon to appear on all consoles is *Roadsters*. Instead of a normal racing game where you earn money for upgrading your car by winning races, *Roadsters* will see you betting on your expected success in order to win cash. There will be 30 cars, eight drivers, ten tracks, four-player mode, and four game modes.

Finally we have *Superman* on the N64 and Game Boy. Lex Luthor and Brainiac have kidnapped Lois Lane and Jimmy Olsen to a virtual Metropolis. Superman must conquer this virtual dimension, defeating the evil bad guys on the way. All his powers are present for use over fourteen levels, two and four player modes and a wide range of locations in what could be a 'super-b' superhero game.

N64 OWNERS GETTING ONLINE

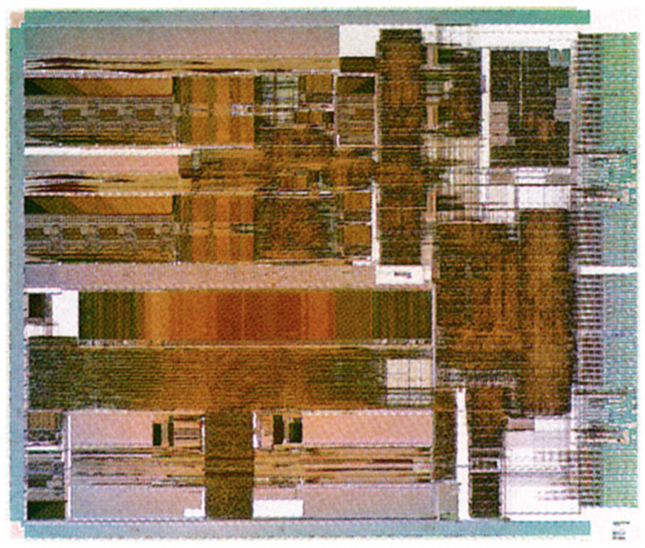
The first software-based modem has been announced

SURF Communication Solutions Ltd.

It seems that the first internet facility for the N64 won't be Nintendo's 64DD but instead a software modem from the Middle East. Israeli company Surf Communication Solutions has been working alongside Nexus Telocation Systems and announced completion of their new software modem technology for the console. "Recognition of our status as a technology developer by Nintendo is a great achievement for Surf. We believe that this project can also pave the way for future projects with Nintendo, a world class leader in video games," said Amnon Gavish, the company's CEO. Further details are unavailable at this time, and Nintendo was unavailable for comment at the time of going to press.

TRUE OR FALSE

PS-Y could cause threats to national security



EMOTION ENGINE

17mm x 14.1mm (240mm²)
10.5M transistors
Design rule: 0.25µm
Drawn gate length: 0.18µm

It's so amazing that it might, just might be true. The New York Times has reported that the Emotion Engine, the internal mainstay of the PlayStation 2, may be classed as a supercomputer too powerful for export to from the West and Japan to Communist China. It turns out that the US Department of Commerce is considering the possibility of restricting the shipping of the machine to The People's Republic. The American government apparently considers China a "sensitive" country (In other words it can't be trusted), as its military may find some benefit in the new technology. While the machine will surely not be powerful enough for use in the Chinese military, surely the American government would consider one of their stealth bombers being shot down over Serb territory a more pressing matter. Not surprisingly Sony has issued no official comment on the matter as yet which has fuelled rumours that are beginning to circulate that this may have been publicity stuff engineered by Sony. This is as yet unconfirmed, so the Chinese public can probably start saving their money again.

WILL IT NEVER END?

Is the PC going to see the most innovative game since Doom?

This year's E3 saw the unveiling of what will be coined a truly revolutionary game. Based on the world of Fantasia as seen in the films and the book, you must stop the evil 'Nothing' from destroying all that you know and love. Called *The Real Never-Ending Story* (*TRNES*), it will apparently allow the player unrivalled freedom on their quest. The game will certainly have a beginning and an end, but what happens will be entirely up to you. You will be able to decide what you do and when, and even how you interact with the game's characters. This sounds incredible enough, but *The Nomad Soul* from Quantic Dreams (see elsewhere in this issue) also boasts this freedom.

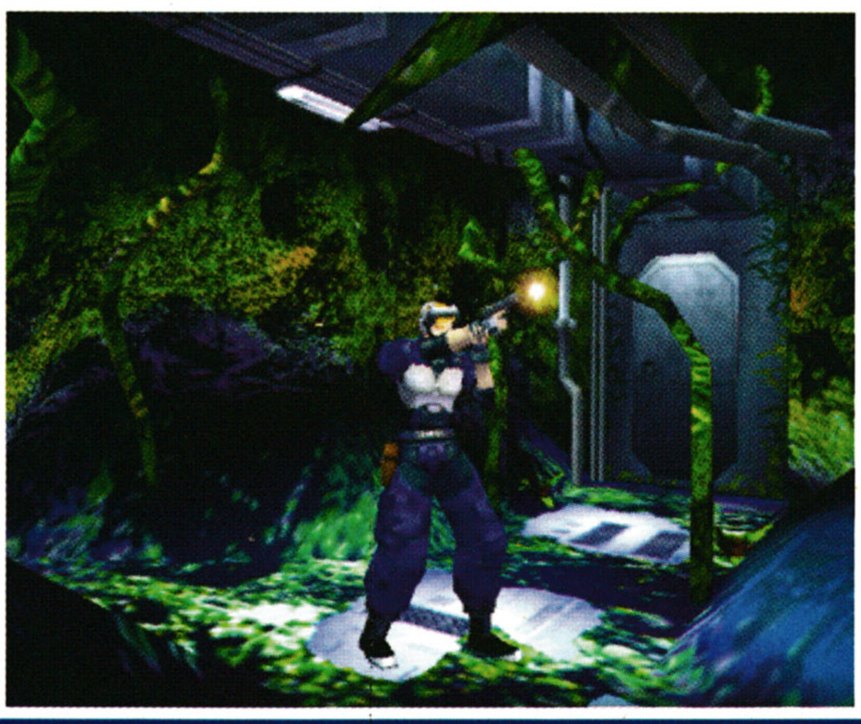
A new 'buzzing' emotion-based dialogue system promises the closest yet to real-life conversations, letting the player decide what to say and how to say it instead of wading through loads of text. A never-before-seen MonsterEngine allows unparalleled detail and rendering on all landscapes. Bear in mind that this has all come from the PR team and no one's seen moving code, but if the game actually supports what is claimed about it, they might well be right about this interesting prospect. This autumn could see a straight fight between *TRNES* and *The Nomad Soul* to decide which will be the most non-linear and 'intelligent' game yet seen on the PC.

We've all heard similar claims before, but *TRNES* may well have what it takes to go all the way

RESIDENT CARRIER OR PERHAPS CARRIER EVIL?

Jaleco defend their new game from plagiarism accusations

Games nicking ideas from one another has always been a feature in this industry, yet Jaleco are getting quite upset about claims made about their new Dreamcast title, *Carrier*. Comments in the press that dismiss this game as a *Resident Evil* (AKA *Bio-Hazard*) clone have upset Jaleco. A spokesperson stated that, "*Bio-Hazard* has become a representative title for this genre of games." They objected to the dismissive attitude shown by the press towards early screens seen of the game. "By looking at a screenshot or hearing a sound that may appear to be similar, people are always associating the horror-action-adventure game with Capcom's *Bio-Hazard*. However, *Carrier* has its own storyline, concept and theme, as well as its own effects which makes it unlike any title in the *Bio-Hazard* series." While Jaleco are very defensive towards their forthcoming game and reject their claims, they're also complemented by such a comparison. The only way either side will be proved right is by seeing finished code, except that a release date has yet to be confirmed. Jaleco is planning to release the game before Christmas '99, though.



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August 26th

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MORE MUSIC 2 YOU

Codemasters' popular Music program to get a sequel

Codemasters has decided to publish a sequel to the European hit title, *Music*. Like the original, it will be developed by Jester Interactive, and surprisingly enough will be called *Music 2000*. Apparently it will feature new elements suitable for the casual user as well as those more familiar with *Music*. While the possibility of a microphone facility for sampling hasn't been ruled out, a four-person jamming 'session' conducted in real-time will be included. Gavin Morgan, managing director of Jester Interactive, has said, "To address the current market, *Music 2000* is now even simpler to use, and made more immediate with *Music Jam*, yet we acknowledge the more musically-minded sector and have increased the software's potential with such benefits as MIDI compatibility." *Music 2000* will be available in Europe from November this year for both PlayStation and PC.

NEC JOIN UP WITH NINTENDO

Another electronics giant signs with Project Dolphin

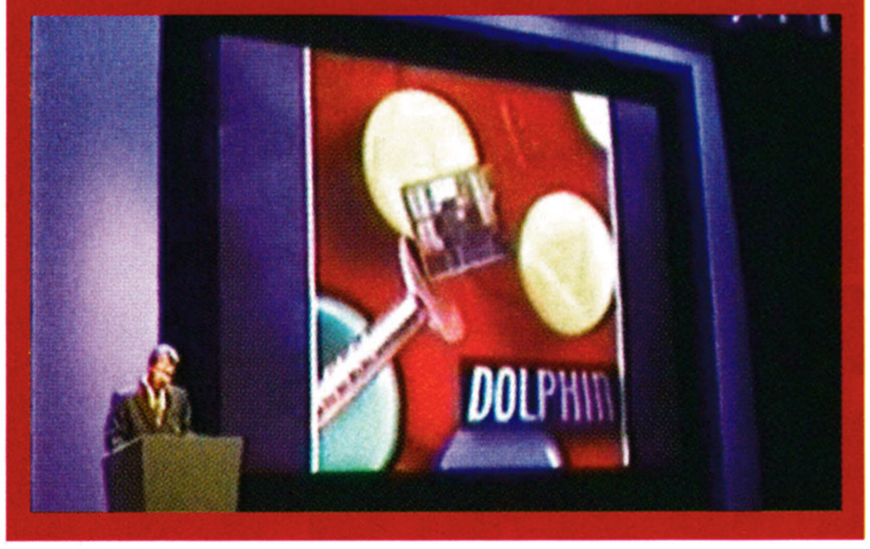
Japanese electronics giant and producer of the Dreamcast's Power VR chipset, NEC have entered into a partnership with Nintendo to produce ArtX's graphics processor for Project Dolphin.

Associate vice-president of system integration at NEC, Junshi Yamaguchi, says that, "NEC will ramp its 0.18-micron process to put as much as 16MB of memory on the graphics processor being designed by Nintendo and ArtX", making the chip potentially many times more powerful than the Dreamcast's Power VR technology.

Although the amount of memory that the chip will exploit has yet to be confirmed, it will use at least 8MB and as much as 16MB of on board embedded DRAM. A direct comparison with the PlayStation 2's Graphics Synthesiser is favourable – it has 4MB of embedded DRAM but also has the ability to draw on the machine's main RAM.

Nintendo have also announced four members of a new 'dream team' that will develop software for the Dolphin. Retro Studios, Left Field Studios, Rare and Nintendo Software Technology will be the companies responsible for exploiting the potential of the new hardware. They will, of course, be joined by NCL, who will also develop their own software. It has yet to be confirmed if the resulting software will be games or demos (such as was used to unveil the PlayStation 2), but an announcement should be made soon.

It has also been revealed that Shigeru Miyamoto is working on the design of the console's controller as he did with the revolutionary N64 pad. The only details that have emerged however, are that it will feature analogue buttons along with an in-built rumble function.



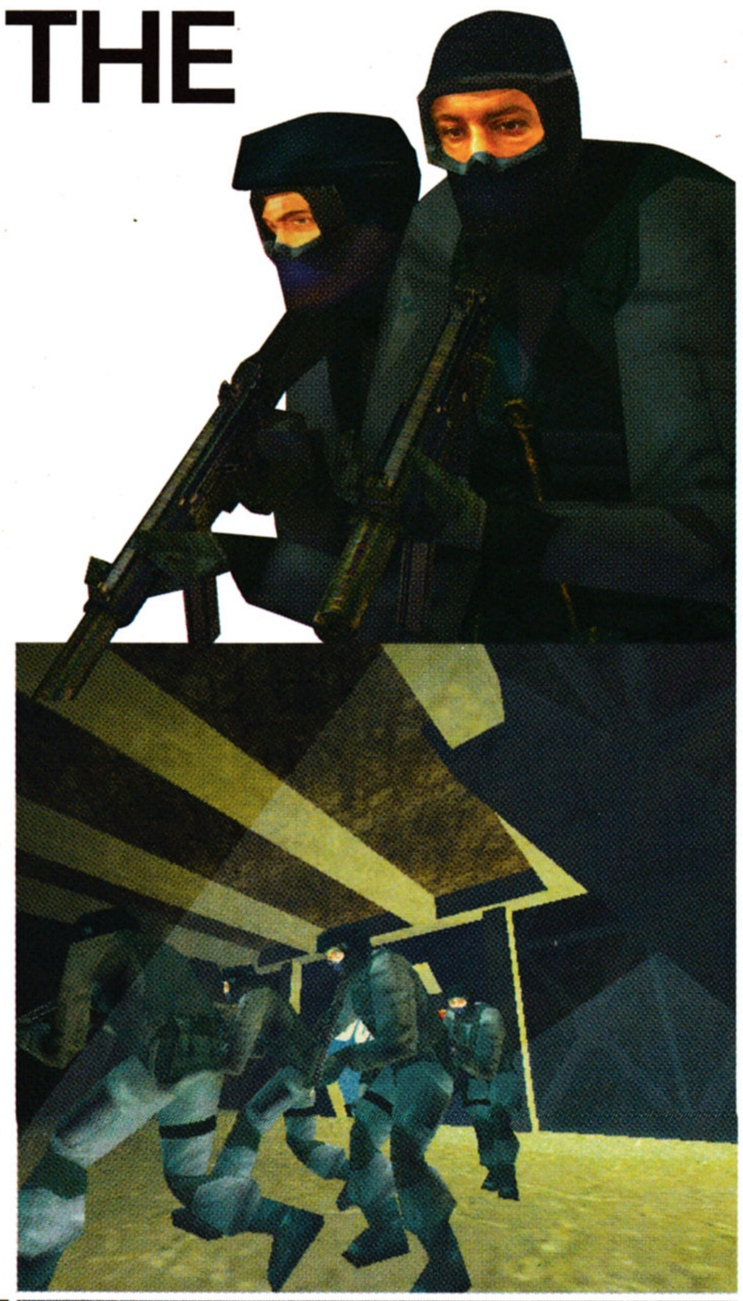
PORT OVER THE RAINBOW

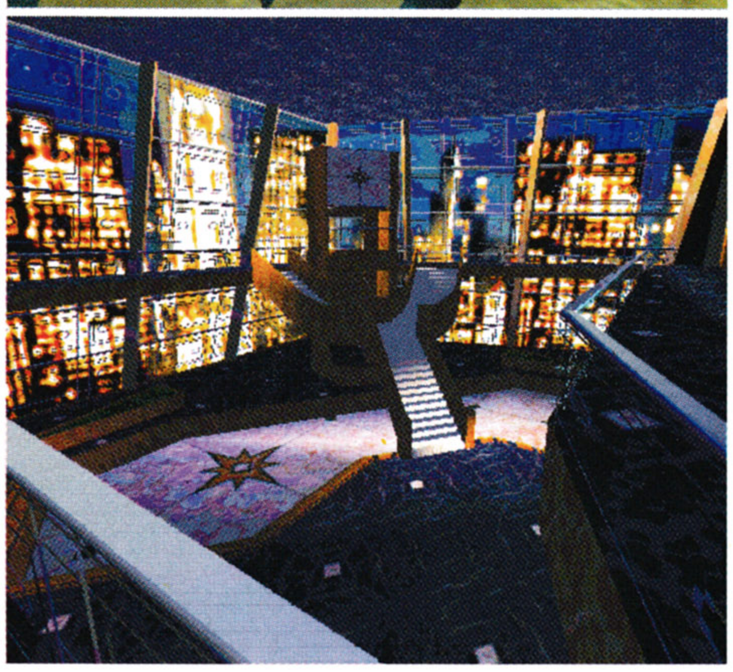
Take 2 gear up for Rainbow Six PlayStation release

Tom Clancy's *Rainbow Six* has proved a huge success on the PC. Essentially it's a strategic first-person shooter with much more of an emphasis on strategy. Players need only take a few shots and they are down, so gamers are forced make full use of every resource and team member to achieve their objectives.

The PlayStation version has been in the works for some time now, but the playable code still seems a long way off completion. The game makes full use of the analogue controller – one pad for direction and the other for looking – and almost all of the buttons are used too, which gives you a surprising amount of control over your team. At the moment the main area of concern seems to be the graphics. The PlayStation has not had a lot of joy in this genre, but visuals do not count for everything with a game like this.

With a release date set for late October, *Rainbow Six* could turn a few heads when it get closer to completion.





***Rainbow Six* is unquestionably a good game, but will it go down well with console owners?**

DRAGON VALOR

TAKE ARMS AGAINST KEBAB-BREATHED MONSTERS

Namco's forthcoming *Dragon Valor* looks set to blow apart the RPG genre with a superb new game. It seems that dragons are terrorising several peaceful worlds and you, coming from a family of dragon slayers, have to venture forth into these worlds, meeting NPCs, completing sub-quests and getting strong and powerful enough to take on the mighty dragons.

Each dragon is like an end-of-quest boss, and they are truly stunning with polygonal graphics and a terrifying size. Defeat each one and you'll find that your character is forced to take a bride from the newly-freed lands and retire. It's an odd development in RPG games – what do you do after your character that you've developed and trained decides to retire? Simple, you carry on as their descendent. Cool, eh?

CHARTANALYSIS

Week ending June 12th

CHART REPORTAGE

With early worries that the two new Star Wars games would under-achieve, neither seem to be doing too badly at the moment. The quite excellent *Episode 1: Racer* debuts at number one in the all-format top 20, while the far-from-bad *Episode 1: The Phantom Menace* manages to make the PC top spot. How long the titles actually remain this high will be far more important to LucasArts and Activision.

Sony's range of Platinum titles are going from strength to strength, competing strongly with today's mainstream successes on a multi-format level – indeed four of the top five selling games are members of this very prosperous club – but then few could argue against them deserving to be there. What Sony need to do is to release a second, cheaper range of budget titles for the not-so-prestigious titles in the PlayStation's arsenal – perhaps a £10 gold range to help shift their other games yet further? The standard in the current range is a bit high for some of the more antique titles. TC

MOST WANTED

NINTENDO 64

RESIDENT EVIL 64
Capcom

The game looks absolutely stunning at this stage. A massive cart allows for everything that you saw in the PlayStation and PC versions and more. Very cool.

PLAYSTATION

THE NOMAD SOUL
Eidos

Formerly known as *Omikron*, PlayStation owners may want to start taking an interest in this potentially stunning game by turning to our Alpha Report only a few pages from here.

PC CD-ROM

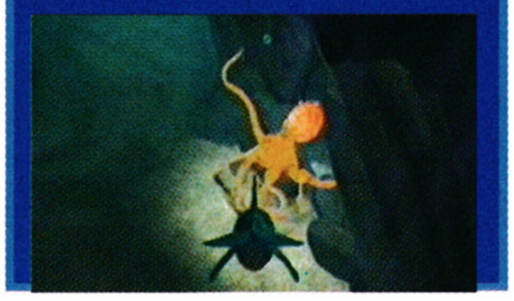
C&C TIBERIAN SUN
Westwood

The sequel to the ground-breaking strategy game is now over a year overdue. They must be doing something to it, so it should turn out quite special.

DREAMCAST

ECCO THE DOLPHIN
Sega

At this early stage, this game does look absolutely stunning. It's like a portal into an underwater world… or something. Anyway, we reckon it's going to be very good.



RECOMMENDED

NINTENDO 64

F1 World GP 2
Nintendo

It shares a lot in common with the first game, but don't let that bother you. If you want a break from all that pod racing nonsense, look here for relief.

PLAYSTATION

Ape Escape
Sony

We've all had fantasies about chasing groups of insane monkeys through time with a big net, and now we can actually do it in the comfort of out own home. Joy is me.

PC CD-ROM

Outcast
Infogrames

Beating off some seriously stiff competition, Infogrames' epic parallel world adventure was every bit as good as we'd hoped for. Sort out your life before you start playing this.

DREAMCAST

Monaco Grand Prix Racing Simulation 2
Ubisoft

Earning a respectable score a while ago, if you haven't bought this great simulation on import by now, here's another reminder.

TC PLAYLIST

Nick

1 Outcast
Infogrames ..... PC

2 Kingpin
Interplay ..... PC

3 Ape Escape
Sony ..... PlayStation

4 Champ Manager 3
Eidos ..... PC

5 Pokémon Yellow
Nintendo ..... Game Boy

Will

1 Outcast
Infogrames ..... PC

2 MechWarrior 3
Hasbro ..... PC

3 Kingpin
Interplay ..... PC

4 Dungeon Keeper 2
EA ..... PC

5 Star Wars: Episode 1: Racer
Nintendo N64

Chris

1 Tenchu: Stealth Assassins
Activision ..... PlayStation

2 Kingpin
Interplay ..... PC

3 Championship Manager 3
Eidos ..... PC

4 Hidden & Dangerous
Take 2 ..... PC

5 PaRappa the Rapper
Sony ..... PC

Cliff

1 Braveheart
Eidos ..... PC

2 Hidden and Dangerous
Take 2 ..... PC

3 Kingpin
Interplay ..... PC

4 Team Fortress Classic
Valve Software ..... PC

5 Ape Escape
Sony ..... PlayStation

ALLFORMATS

Produced in association with ELSPA

01 — NE

STAR WARS EPISODE 1: RACER

LucasArts/Activision N64/PC **TC Score 91%**

Bursting straight into the number one spot, it's good to see that some of you take our words to heart. Early worries that the game wouldn't live up to predicted sales remain to be seen, as it will need to hold its position in the top five for some time to do so. As the N64's biggest release since *Rogue Squadron* though, there must be a lot of Nintendo owners who have been waiting for a decent game for so long, so this should sell very well for a while.

02 — 02

GRAN TURISMO

Sony/Platinum PlayStation **TC Score 92%**

Holding its place at number two, and deservedly so, Sony's breath-taking racing simulation will be finding a place in every games collection that it has not yet found already. With so many people calling this the best game ever, you'd be a fool not to blow £20 to find out for yourself.

03 ↑ 06

TOMB RAIDER II

Eidos/Platinum PlayStation/PC **TC Score N/A**

Maybe it's not that surprising that the infamous Lara Croft finds herself back in the top five – boys will be boys and all that crap – but with games like *Soul Reaver* and *Shadowman* on the way, you really should be saving those pounds for the big events.

04 — NE

FINAL FANTASY VII

Sony/Platinum PlayStation/PC **TC Score 95%**

The best RPG in the world ever? Some would even say the best game full stop. Whatever your angle, you can't say that you're a true computer game fan without sampling Square's epic adventure. It is true to say it isn't everyone's cup of tea, and the fact that it sold so many on release explains its position at number four.

05 ↓ 03

GRAND THEFT AUTO

Take 2/Platinum PlayStation/PC **TC Score 80%**

Surprisingly overtaking its much more recent mission pack, Take 2's controversial hit is still selling strong on budget. It's good to see that you still put gameplay over graphics too, but just wait 'till you see *GTA 2*.

06 — NE	STAR WARS EP. 1: THE PHANTOM MENACE	LucasArts/Activision	PC
07 — NE	GTA: LONDON 1969	Take 2 Interactive	PlayStation/PC
08 ↓ 04	FIFA '99	Electronic Arts	PlayStation/PC/Nintendo 64
09 ↓ 08	CRASH BANDICOOT 2	Sony/Platinum	PlayStation
10 ↑ 15	BRIAN LARA CRICKET	Codemasters	PlayStation/PC
11 — NE	STAR TREK: BIRTH OF THE FEDERATION	Microprose/Hasbro	PC
12 ↓ 05	CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 3	Eidos	PC
13 ↑ 14	WWF: WARZONE	Acclaim	PlayStation/N64/Gameboy
14 ↓ 07	METAL GEAR SOLID	Konami	PlayStation
15 ↓ 12	THE RUGRATS	THQ	PlayStation/Game Boy Color
16 ↓ 13	V-RALLY	Infogrames/Platinum	PlayStation/PC
17 — 17	TOMB RAIDER III	Eidos	PlayStation/PC
18 — NE	PREMIER MANAGER '99	Gremlin	PlayStation/PC
19 — RE	WORMS	Infogrames/Platinum	PlayStation/PC/Game Boy
20 — NE	MECHWARRIOR 3	Microprose/Hasbro	PC

FORMATS

PlayStation

01 ↑ 01	Metal Gear Solid	Konami
02 — NE	Brian Lara Cricket	Codemasters
03 — 03	FIFA '99	Electronic Arts
04 ↑ 05	The Rugrats	THQ
05 — RE	Tomb Raider III	Eidos

Nintendo 64

01 — NE	Star Wars Episode 1: Racer	LucasArts
02 — 02	Rogue Squadron	LucasArts/Nintendo
03 ↑ 04	Zelda	Nintendo
04 ↓ 01	Castlevania	Konami
05 — 05	Mario Party	Nintendo

PC CD-ROM

01 — NE	Championship Manager 3	Eidos
02 — NE	Star Trek: BOTF	Hasbro
03 ↓ 01	Champ Manager 3	Eidos
04 — NE	Star Wars Episode 1: Racer	LucasArts
05 — NE	MechWarrior 3	Hasbro

Full Price Console

01 — NE	Star Wars Episode 1: Racer	LucasArts
02 ↑ 04	FIFA '99	Electronic Arts
03 ↓ 01	Metal Gear Solid	Konami
04 ↑ 05	The Rugrats	THQ
05 — RE	Brian Lara Cricket	Codemasters

In a parallel world, **humanity lives in a virtual utopia,** yet their city hides a dark and evil secret with only one person **capable of destroying it: you!**

The Nomad Soul

Format: PC/ PSX • Publisher: Eidos Interactive • Developer: Quantic Dreams
Style: 3D Action Adventure • Players: One

There seems to be a vogue in the nineties in Hollywood films for showing how evil and destructive technology, more specifically computers, can be. *The Lawnmower Man*, the *Terminator* films, *The Matrix* and the forthcoming *The Thirteen Floor* all show how computers can be used for evil purposes and subvert what we think is real. *The Nomad Soul*, previously called *Omikron*, will perhaps be the first computer game to specifically address this theme.

It's being developed by French newcomers Quantic Dreams and is set on a world called Phaenon which is under threat by an evil force; except no one seems to be aware of the fact. As well as the game world being so large, covering an entire planet, the player will have almost unlimited freedom to do what they want, take over people's bodies (A feature that was thought up before Messiah was), and basically live in an entirely contained world. Before we get into this though, perhaps a little background history is in order.

The Story So Far

As mentioned, *The Nomad Soul* is set on the world of Phaenon. Thousands of years ago, the Demon Astaroth and his evil hordes were engaged in a war with the human population. They were led by Kushulainn, a mighty warrior armed with the sword Barkaya'l which contained the

THE PLAYER WILL HAVE ALMOST UNLIMITED FREEDOM TO DO WHAT THEY WANT, TAKE OVER PEOPLE'S BODIES AND BASICALLY LIVE IN AN ENTIRELY CONTAINED WORLD

The Nomad Soul

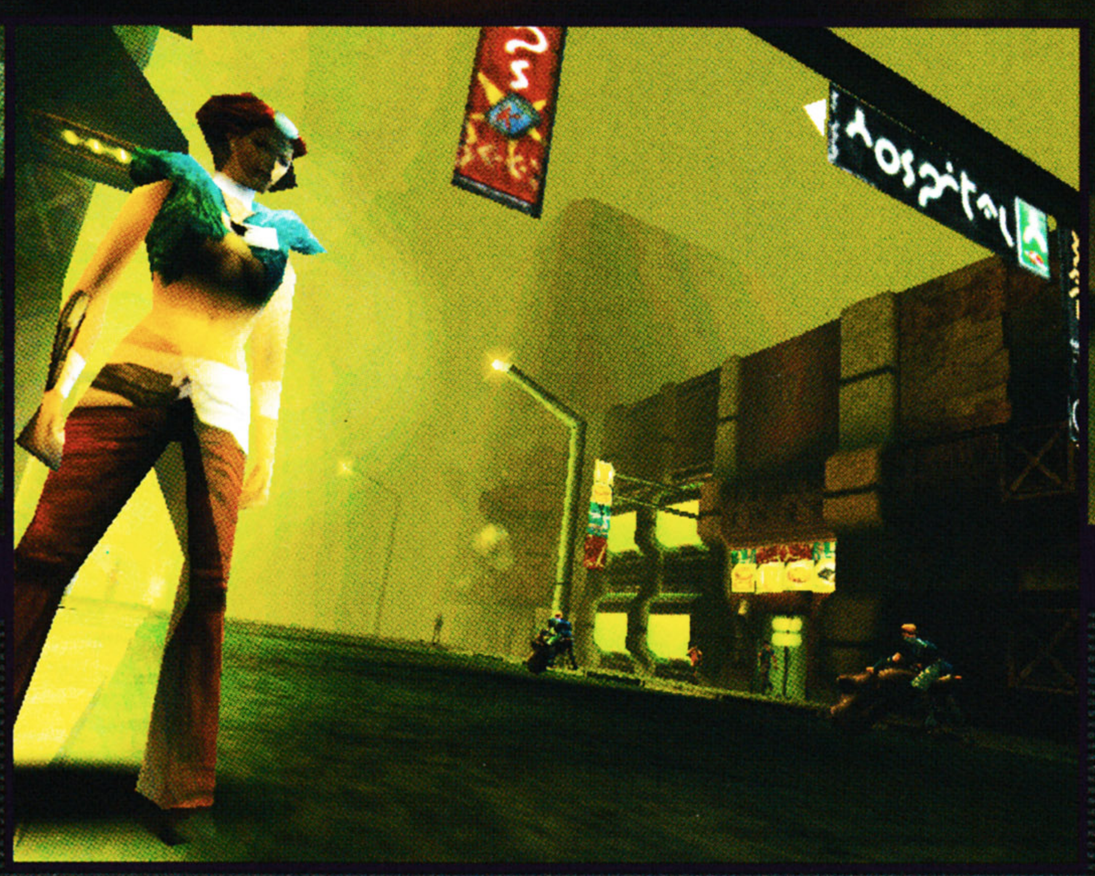
souls of the ancient wizards. Eventually the evil hordes were defeated and Kushulainn engaged in an epic duel with Astaroth that lasted seven days and seven nights. All that remained of this fight was a prone Astaroth and no sign of Kushulainn or his sword. The humans caged the demon and threw him into a lava lake, burying him in the bowels of the planet. Kushulainn meanwhile had retired to the land of Makahaleel where he waited with his sword for the inevitable releasing of Astaroth. Over time men forgot about Kushulainn, Astaroth and their deadly battle, leaving only a few preserving their memory in legends and myths.

Cut to the present day, and Phaenon is suffering from a huge ice age, making it uninhabitable outside of the worlds' five cities. Called Karamao, Moscoviensq, Sraosa, Yerubabel and Omikron, each is self-sustained and isolated, having no contact with the others. It turns out that Omikron is presided over by a computer called Ix. All data from the galaxy is collected by Ix's sensors and which it uses to look after and sustain the human population. Ix is installed in the heart of Omikron, and when men were excavating to build it, they uncovered Astaroth in his cage which allowed him and his demons to possess them and disperse into the city. Astaroth had grander ideas though and took control of Ix, built a reservoir of souls with which to raise his strength and stole them from the humans of Omikron via a computer game that hooked the populace. Makes you think about the National Lottery doesn't it?

ONE OF THE GAME'S MOST INTERESTING AND INNOVATIVE FEATURES IS THE VIRTUAL REINCARNATION

Anyway, the humans of Omikron enjoy a technically advanced and hence opulent decadence. There are two corporations that run the city, Tetra Inc and Khonsu Ltd, and are above the law, although no one even knows who runs these two huge conglomerates. Life is reasonable easy for the citizens of Omikron and hence they don't worry about such trivial matters, not even the fact that due to over-population anyone over 40 is retired to the planet of Euralys. It doesn't even seem strange to people that no one is ever heard of again when they go to this planet.

The only people who are aware of what's going on are The Awakened, a secret underground society trying to stop Astaroth; think of Laurence Fishbourne' s team in The Matrix and you'll get the idea. In fact, as I'm wiring this I am starting to draw some parallels... That's beside the point, because you now enter the scene as a policeman, with no clue as to what's going on and a blissful unawareness of the danger that threatens Omikron.



Be A Free Man (Or Woman)

So now you know about the background to

VOZ STARDUST

One coup for the developers was the involvement of David Bowie in the project. Not only is he composing the music with Reeves Gabrels but he's also seen in the game playing with his band and as a separate character called Boz, the leader of The Awakened. His wife Iman also features as a character.

The preliminary sketches are very detailed indeed

the game, and probably want to know about the game itself. Well, a new 3D graphics engine is used which imposes no graphical restrictions on where the player can go or what they can do, or even what you can interact with. You'll be able to walk around Omikron's streets or if you're a little lazier can drive anti-grav vehicles, and with over 300 objects you can interact with, there must be almost limitless possibilities to experiment with. Omikron is a near utopia and there are shops, homes, official buildings, bars and so on, all of which you'll be able to enter. Quantic Dream are aiming to make the world of *The Nomad Soul* as close to the one you and I know as possible, and hopefully this idea will be fully realised.

Obviously if you enter someone's house without being invited, they'll be pretty angry, and the game will allow you to talk to them, calm them down or even pick a fight. With motion-capture movements you can engage in effective hand-to-hand combat or simply kill people with lasers. By talking to people though, you'll pick up information about tasks to complete, the game's storyline or more importantly, information about yourself because you don't know where you came from or what your purpose is at the beginning of the game. *The Nomad Soul* will feature over four hours of spoken dialogue and about 1200 possible responses either from yourself or other characters, of which there will be 140 with the ability to talk to you. It seems if you don't want to continue with your quest and simply want to explore the city and talk to people, you can. An intriguing idea I'm sure you'll agree. Perhaps the most impressive aspect of these characters in *The Nomad Soul* is the facial real-time motion capture, a video gaming first. While the characters in something like *Kingpin* are motion captured in their movements, their mouths don't move when they talk. It will be truly amazing if Quantic Dreams can pull this off and you'll see people actually talking to you.

One of these characters you'll meet in The Nomad Soul will be none other than

A NEW 3D GRAPHICS ENGINE IS USED WHICH WILL IMPOSE NO GRAPHICAL RESTRICTIONS ON WHERE THE PLAYER CAN GO OR WHAT THEY CAN DO, OR EVEN WHAT YOU CAN INTERACT WITH

It must be really cold outside if this guy's face has turned blue like this!

David Bowie and his wife Iman. As you'll read elsewhere in this feature, Bowie and long-time collaborator Reeves Gabrels have composed an album's worth of music tracks which will form the game's soundtrack, as well as their new album released just before the game. David Bowie and his band even play in some of the bars in Omikron, and such is the game's freedom, if you like his music you can go into a record shop, buy his CD and then take it back to your apartment to listen to it. How cool is that?

A Bhuddist Computer Game?

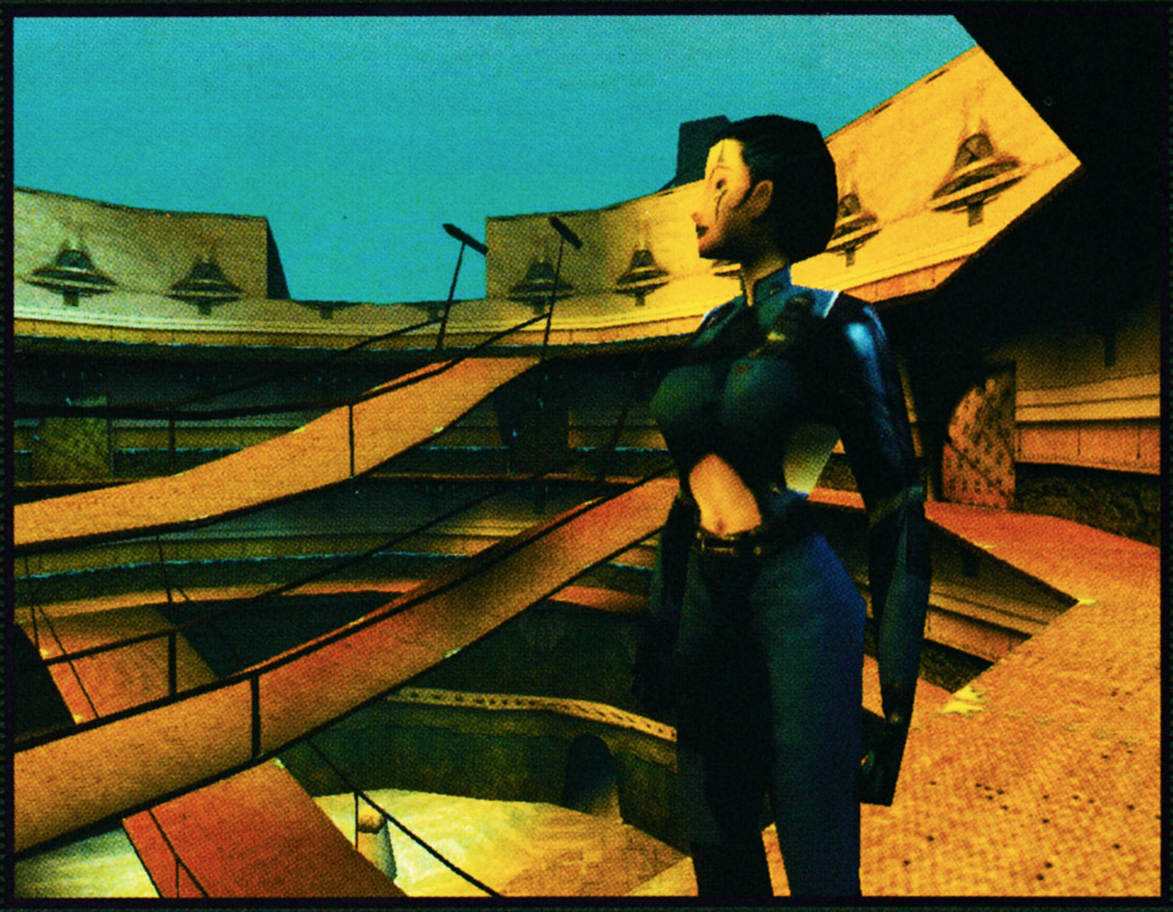
Within the game Iman is a dangerous bodyguard, while Bowie is a very important character called Voz, the Virtual Being and the leader of Awakened. Not a lot is known about him but him and his followers will probably hold the key to the purpose of your existence.

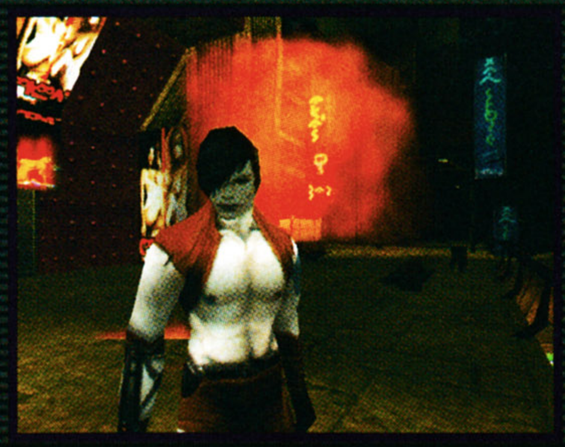
You may think that it's strange that your character has no awareness of their past or their self, yet this may be because you are not actually the person you're controlling. Confused? Well one of the game's most interesting and innovative features is Virtual Reincarnation. In order to move around the city, you must place your soul into someone and then control him or her. In the much-delayed *Messiah*, you'll be playing a cherub, a proper character who can control other people, buy won't actually be invincible. In *The Nomad Soul* you are a spirit and hence cannot die. What will happen is that when you control a character you can walk, talk, investigate, drive vehicles and get into fights. If your body is killed though, your soul will leave it and transfer into the body of the first person to touch you. You will then control them, but as you progress through the game you'll learn a spell which will let you do this whenever you want. This feature comes in very handy at certain parts of the game and could allow you access to previously restricted areas. The possibilities will allow some interesting situations; say a certain male character you must question isn't proving very co-operative, how would you get him to talk? Beat him up? Blackmail him? Pay him? How about going to a bar, taking over the body of a lap dancer and then using all your womanly features to seduce him and get the information that way? How explicit the game will be in this respect isn't clear but it shows how open the game is to the player's decisions. Apparently every problem in the game will be solvable if the player applies what they know about the real world (On Earth) and experiments with possible solutions. An intelligent and highly advanced concept for a computer game, and one which could well herald a new era of ultra-realistic computer games in the near future.

QUANTIC SHEEP

The developers of Omikron, Quantic Dreams are based in France having been formed in 1997. Consisting of many experienced artists and programmers from companies such as Ubi Soft, Cryo and Infogrames, Eidos obviously have a lot of faith in this group after buying the rights to Omikron after an early demo.

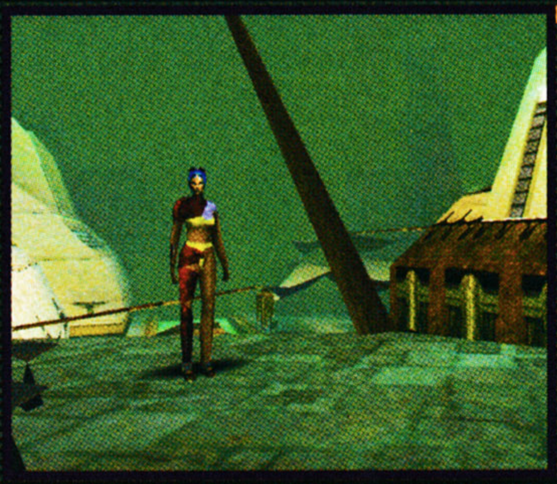
quantic dream





A Tantalising Prospect

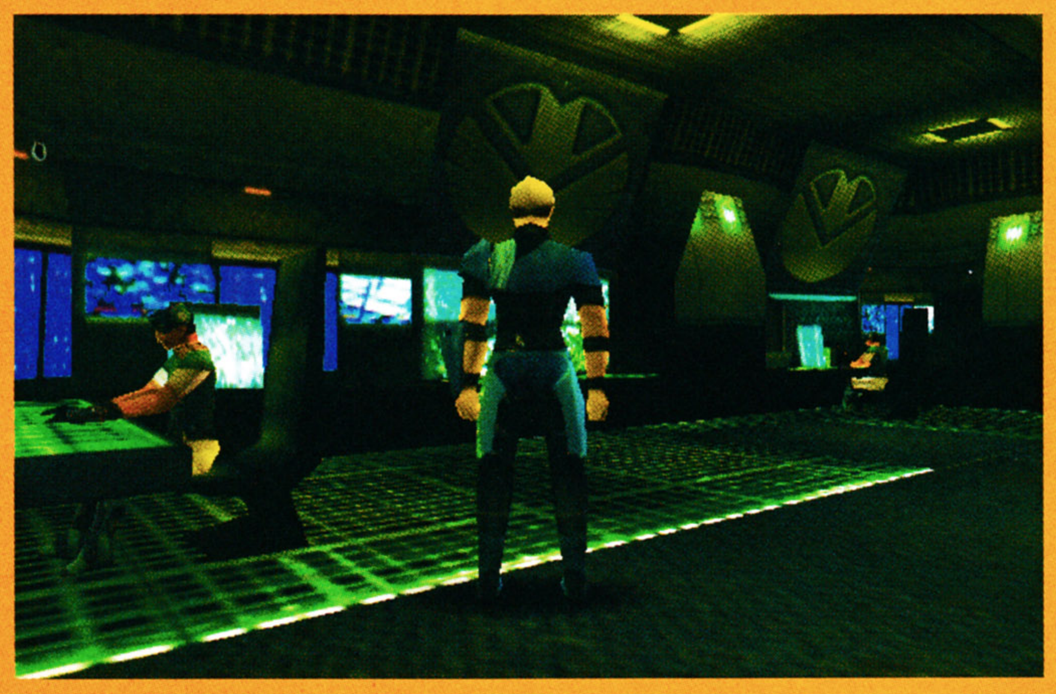
So there you have it, sadly, we didn't have playable code at the time of writing so you can't be told what *The Nomad Soul* is like to play. Judging by screenshots and movies we've seen it's looking crash hot at the moment, the storyline will be totally engrossing as it slowly unravels, the freedom allowed to you and your actions will be unprecedented and the features like the Virtual Reincarnation will be revolutionary. We can't wait for *The Nomad Soul* and soon you too will be able to experience what could be a groundbreaking new game. It looks like Eidos will have another huge hit on their hands come October.



It seems pretty lonely sometimes

MORE THAN MUZAK

The soundtrack written by David Bowie and long time collaborator Reeves Gabrels consists of eight brand new songs as well as instrumental music. So detailed is the game's world that it'll be possible for the player to buy the Bowie music and take it home to their 'virtual' apartment to listen to it.



The Nomad Soul Questions For David Cage

TC: Can you please tell our readers a little bit about Quantic Dream?

DC: Quantic Dream is a French videogame company based in Paris. The company started two years ago and now employs about 36 people. *The Nomad Soul* is our first game as a developer, but all the people in the team have been in this industry for several years.

Our main goal at Quantic is to develop original concepts and try to make them look and feel different. The company's skills cover a wide range, from design and graphics to high-end technologies or writing of strong interactive scenarios.

I am CEO of Quantic Dream and game designer of *The Nomad Soul*.

TC: Is it right that you were originally a musician and wrote the story for *The Nomad Soul* intending it as a novel. Why did you decide to develop it as a computer game?

DC: *The Nomad Soul* was actually written to be a video game from the start. I worked on a novel before and really enjoyed the experience of writing. When I saw the first real-time 3D engines with textured maps coming, I was just amazed by the incredible potential of this new media. This was a new way of telling stories, the most powerful you can imagine.

TC: Where did the idea for *The Nomad Soul* come from?

DC: Being a huge game fan since I was young and working in this industry as a freelance musician, the idea to link my two passions came naturally .

With a couple of friends, we just wanted to make the game we were dreaming of; a game where you could go anywhere and do whatever you want; a game with a real story (without any princess to rescue), with real actors, suspense, action and a strong esoteric side. This is *The Nomad Soul*.

TC: Have any games or films influenced the look and feel of this game?

DC: It is always difficult to say what your own influences are. For Loic Nomard, our Art Director in charge of all the graphics, he comes from Brittany (French Atlantic coasts) and has strong Celtic influences. Stéphane Elbaz, our lead Graphics artist, comes from North Africa, bringing traditional Arabic flavours.

Regarding myself, I suppose American movies have influenced me (*Blade Runner*, *Brazil*, *Dune*, *Star Wars*), as well as authors like Frank Herbert, Clive Barker and Dan Simons.

TC: *The Nomad Soul* is quite philosophical and seems to have the feel of a Greek Odyssey. Is this what you were aiming towards?

DC: I never thought of it that way... but yes, I read a lot of Greek books when I was younger and was really fascinated by mythology.

I was more aiming for the esoteric side than for any philosophical feel, although I really think that games in the coming years will need to have something to say. They could become an incredible way of expressing feelings, beliefs and ideas, just like movies.

TC: The world of *The Nomad Soul* is truly epic in size and scope. If the player can really talk to any characters, enter any buildings and do anything they want, how difficult has this been to achieve?

DC: Incredibly difficult. With the goal being to give complete freedom to the player, we had to develop technologies allowing the player to do whatever he wants in a huge real-time 3D world. Different passers-by in the streets, the enemies in the shooting sequences or fighters in the fight sequences, different sizes of settings (from rest rooms to huge snow levels), 150 3D characters, hundreds of outside and inside settings, tons of animations and sound effects.

Our main problem was the amount of data we had to deal with (more than ten Giga) and to keep control over thousands of lines of code written by ten programmers.

TC: With the game allowing freedom in how the player progresses, how long would you expect people to take to complete it?

DC: The game should take about 40 hours to be completed, depending on the player's skills.

TC: Considering how large this game is, will it be playable on both low spec PCs and the PlayStation? Have you designed a new 3D engine for *The Nomad Soul* or used existing technology?

DC: Yes, all the technologies used for *The Nomad Soul* were developed specially for the game by our team. Our needs were too specific to use any engine available on the market, and we thought that having our own strong technology was one of the primary assets of a young company. We will continue with this policy by working on new engines and tools within our R&D department.

TC: The Virtual Reincarnation feature will be a computer gaming first. What was the inspiration behind this and how will it work? How important will it be in the game?

DC: Virtual Reincarnation really is the core of the game. It is not a 'gadget', it is the centre of the story. Each character will have his own skills that the player can make evolve by different means. At several points in the adventure the player will have to take on a specific body to reach his goal.

The inspiration for this is probably somewhere between science fiction and religion (two very near fields, anyway). Although I don't believe in God myself, I am fascinated by Jesus' history, Buddhism, Zen and sects in general. It is really interesting to study man's beliefs and what he can invent so as not to be scared by death. This may sound quite serious for a videogame, but I believe that the future of games is to propose meaning as well as instant fun.

TC: One feature Eidos are proud to advertise is the involvement of David Bowie. How did this come about and to what extent is he connected with the game?

DC: David Bowie was really involved in the game development. The process of getting him on board and working with him has been much easier than anybody can imagine. I think that we met at the right moment, as David was really looking for a project like The Nomad Soul, with solid art and designs, deep content and strong technology. Technology used in the game allows us to have real actor performances in real-time 3D and tell a real story.

David was looking for something new, and we were looking for someone who would

want to be involved and can imagine both a being from a parallel dimension and what reincarnation could be like. I think that David took on enough different personas in the past to know better than anybody how it feels to be someone else.

TC: Are you pleased with the contribution he's made?

DC: David, Reeves Gabriels and Iman were absolutely perfect. It would be difficult to be happier than we are. The songs are great, their involvement in the game has been far more than what we could have imagined, and from a personal point of view working with them has been a wonderful experience. The last thing we wanted on the game was videogame graphics or videogame music. We succeeded in having unusual visuals for a game, and David and Reeves made unusual music.

TC: What were the inspirations for the sometimes risqué costumes?

DC: We thought that life in Omikron was a life of pleasures – very superficial. The government makes life easy to control minds and become more powerful by keeping everybody asleep (any similarity with existing governments is pure coincidence...). So we thought that people would have plenty of time to spend on the way they looked, that they were not afraid of nudity. (Omikron being under a crystal dome, temperature is artificially maintained at 28 Celsius).
Costumes were imagined by Loic Normand and Stéphane Elbaz, based on their own influences – mid-Celtic, mid-Arabic. France is a country of meeting for different cultures, and I suppose that it played a role in the global design of the game.

WE CAN'T WAIT FOR THE NOMAD SOUL AND SOON YOU TOO WILL BE ABLE TO EXPERIENCE WHAT WILL BE A GROUNDBREAKING GAME

TC: How close are you to completing the game? Is there anything that you wanted to include but haven't been able to?

DC: Of course, like any developer. But *The Nomad Soul* represents the last four years of my life, and it is time for me to start something else. The game is now three months from the master version, and most of the features we planned to have three years ago are implemented.

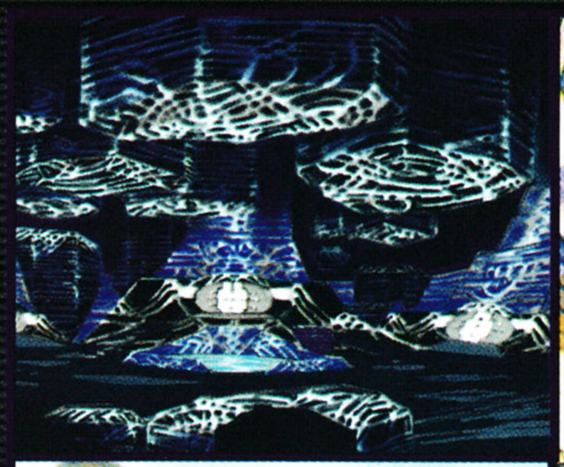
TC: Is the game turning out as you imagined?

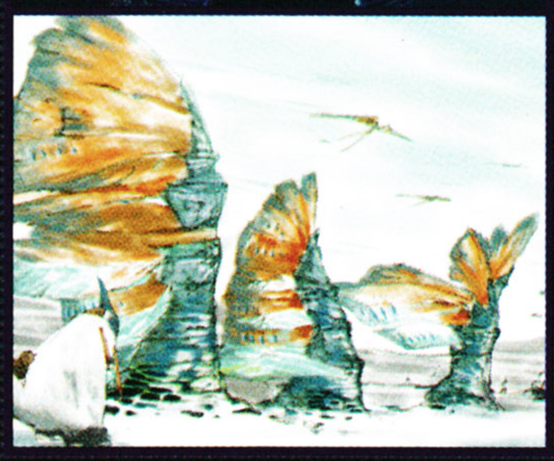
DC: The game is really close to what I imagined, and knowing the complexity of a development like that, I am really happy that we didn't loose focus on what our goals were.
When I designed the game four years ago, most of it was impossible to do at the time. Four years later, technology makes my dream possible.

TC: Do you have any plans for a possible sequel? If not, what will be your next project?

DC: Usually, after a long development like *The Nomad Soul*, the last thing developers want to hear about is a sequel. This is not the case with me. I would love to work on a sequel, because we see *The Nomad Soul* as a first step in a new direction, and I am impatient to make the second step.
We don't want to make a classic sequel where we will just change the graphics; I would like to work on a real sequel with new concepts and a new engine. It could take place ten thousand years after the first episode, in a different city, a different planet or a different dimension. The only common points with *The Nomad Soul* will be the player's freedom, a solid and mature story, and Virtual Reincarnation.
We have different new projects in mind. We will decide after *The Nomad Soul* which ones we want to start.

David Cage, thank you for sparing the time to answer these questions. TC





Some of the locations will be breathtaking if these are anything to go by

Trick Style

This summer sees the launch **of a brand new console on UK soil.** With some strong titles on the horizon, how do third-party **developers Criterion Studios plan to make** a name for themselves with *Trick Style*?

Format: Dreamcast, PC

Publisher: Acclaim

Developer: Criterion Studios

Style: Futuristic Racer

Release: November '99

The hype behind the Dreamcast is not what it was six months ago, and now the focus has moved to the PlayStation 2 and Project Dolphin, both of which are still relatively unknown and yet to be vindicated. In many ways this is to be expected; in an industry that consistently focuses on the games of the future, contemporary or imminent games can seem outdated by the time they reach the shelves. At E3, however, Sega more than demonstrated the potential of their machine. The spectacular line-up of titles had many highlights, and one of the most promising was Acclaim's forthcoming racer, *Trick Style*.

Developed by Criterion Studios, makers of the fabulous PC titles *Sub Culture* and *Redline Racer*, *Trick Style* blends elements of *WipEout* and *Cool Boarders* to bring us what could well become one of the Dreamcast's most lucrative racing titles.

You may have heard of the game before as '*Velocity*'.

THE EMPHASIS WILL BE FIRMLY PLACED ON PERFORMING STUNTS AND RACING, BUT THERE WILL BE MANY SPECIFIC AGGRESSIVE MOVES AT YOUR DISPOSAL

It's a hoverboard game, similar in a way to a recent PlayStation title known as *Streak*. Players race through various circuits on boards that never touch the ground, just like the famous scene in Back to the Future Part 2, and they do this at incredible speeds. The name change represents a shift in focus of the title. Just like *Cool Boarders* (and every other board racing game), you can perform various tricks and stunts along the way, but unlike before where the feature was included to give the player points or a few different game modes, here they can be used to your advantage in many different ways. A game like this is bound to have shortcuts, but to find them you will need to master many different flips and spins. If a low bridge is approaching, you can jump into luge mode and fly feet first under it on your board without getting knocked off. If you face a glass window ahead, a well-timed barrel roll gives you the opportunity to smash through board first, removing a time-threatening hazard. One other very interesting feature is the combat – there are no projectile attacks here, but you can make your opponents' lives more difficult by throwing some more aggressive board attacks in their direction. The combat element remains tightly under wraps – it seems that the emphasis will be firmly on performing stunts and racing – but there will be many specific aggressive moves at your disposal for competitors who may be slowing you down. Of course, there are plenty of opportunities to raise points by simply showing off to suit the less aggressive section of the games-playing public.

Sounds of the future

Set in the distant future (the year 2260 to be precise), the world is a distant shadow of its former self. In this new and prosperous future, population

Night time races are nothing short of spectacular

Stunts don't just look good and score points – they are required to take the courses' many short cuts

DREAM ON

Thinking of buying a new games PC this summer? Maybe you'll want to think again. Competing with a P400 can't be easy, but we have been promised that the Dreamcast version will look totally identical in every way to the PC incarnation. Dreamcast owners will have the added bonus of a guaranteed consistent 30fps, while the speed of the game on the PC will of course vary significantly depending on your individual spec. At the moment the PC version is further along the way than the Dreamcast, but Acclaim are still confident that *Trick Style* DC will make the Dreamcast launch.

centres have undergone dramatic changes due to global climatic shifts. Cites are now vast, sprawling metropolises, spreading for miles in three dimensions. The antiquated landmarks remain, but now they are dwarfed by the giant futuristic complexes that have risen around them. Automation has gifted the human race with an abundance of leisure time, and in this languid state people begin to look for more and more exhilarating kicks. One underground section of society has begun hosting illegal races of high velocity, anti-gravity surfing through the streets, subways and overhead walkways in four of the world's major cities – Future London, Aerial Tokyo, Neo-Manhattan, and a newly uncovered city near Cairo. The detail in each course is incredibly impressive – the futuristic version of New York City, for example, whisks you through Central Park, over the Brooklyn Bridge and down into an incredibly detailed subway system. Each course is huge in size as well as detail. There are many different routes through them, most of which you won't notice until you learn to perform and use some of the more spectacular stunts. Courses are not just confined to where the markers dictate: straying from your path and finding shortcuts is encouraged this way – to go far in the game they are compulsory – so performing stunts is just as important as taking corners or using your air brakes well.

Get board

The variety is not only confined to the courses. Each can be played in very different ways depending on the style of board that you pick. All hoverboards can travel at incredible speed over any surface with frictionless results, but some are very different to others. There are three main types of board to pick. The turbo board is the best choice for those of you who want a *WipEout* style game – incredibly slick, it allows you to race at breakneck speeds over any terrain. The stunt board is totally controllable, offering extreme manoeuvrability, and is also lightweight. The last board is the heavy impact board, which is extremely steady and the best choice for multiple contact or combat situations. As you may expect, by choosing different boards the optimal route through the course changes accordingly, as does the style of

game that you will be playing. Further variety is drawn from the choice of characters on offer. There are nine in total, and each not only has a unique set of abilities and strengths (some excel in durability, others in stability, and others in speed), but their own background stories differ as well. All of the characters will have certain trademark moves, specific and unique to each, which will presumably mean that there will be areas through the cities that are only accessible to certain characters. The opposition has some very advanced AI too; they will learn from their opponents' individual racing styles and adjust their own accordingly. What you will notice is that they all have a unique style – Acclaim are hoping to move away from the pre-set racing paths that many racing games have for the opposition.

An impressive seven different game modes have been promised including relay modes, tag games, luge games, freestyle and standard circuit races. There will also be a mode called 'point to point'. Here you will drop various nodes around one of the open tracks which set the many points that the opposition must reach and then race the track accordingly. Effectively this gives you an incredible variety for checkpoint races in every city. You can customise them as you want and race in them against AI or human opponents. The other game mode is the 'velodrome training session', a huge sprawling skate park that houses loads of individual practice areas. There is even talk of opening this area over the Internet, effectively giving you a virtual skating arena in your home where players from all over the world can log in and practice stunts together on the half-pipe, or run a practice race around the inside of the arena. There is also talk of a joint Dreamcast and PC game server, so owners of the game on either platform will be able to play the game together. If this does happen, it would mark a significant join between the worlds of PC and console owners. Split-screen multiplayer modes are still up in the air – a two-player game looks extremely likely, though a four-player mode may be too much for the hardware to handle. The variety of internet games will no doubt compensate for this, though.

BY CHOOSING DIFFERENT BOARDS, THE OPTIMAL ROUTE THROUGH THE COURSE CHANGES ACCORDINGLY, AS DOES THE STYLE OF GAME THAT YOU WILL BE PLAYING

Sitting pretty

Trick Style has been dubbed by some as the best looking game ever – it could certainly turn out to be the best looking Dreamcast game to hit the UK this year. The detail of the surrounding cities is absolutely stunning; the backdrops often open up to show the city stretching far back in the distance or right down below you. As well as impressive level design and beautiful textures, the lighting effects (which have been extremely impressive on almost every Dreamcast game so far) are fantastic – energy trails and engine glows look to distort the world around you and fill the screen with incredible colour. There are other effects like transparency

This must be every skater's dream – hover boards and a gigantic skate park. There is even talk of making a park on-line so you can just log on and skate

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that also add to it, though you'll only notice these intricacies subconsciously as the screen whizzes past you at such speed. All of the characters have been animated by hand so that they never look to be defying gravity (that is left to the board), but the way in which your character moves around on the board puts every other game that has attempted to mimic any previous form of board racing to shame. This is a technically astounding game, and you'll be happy to know that it is all pulled off at a consistent 30 fps. It looks as if the Dreamcast is only beginning to hint at its potential.

Luckily, after including breath-taking graphics, a multitude of game modes and some extremely varied playing styles, Criterion seem to have also managed to include multiple signs of some very promising gameplay. Unlike the floaty and unresponsive controls of *Streak*, *Trick Style* has a true and dedicated engine that gives an uncanny illusion of the real thing (not that we know exactly what the real thing would be like, only that this is much more like what you would expect). The board actually hovers, but not always at a set height; it dips down on impact but consistently feels that it is withstanding the gravitational forces applied to it. Your character has a lot to do with this and moves as if he or she really is feeling the speed and force. The collision spheres around the characters and boards are also extremely accurate, giving you true interaction with every other object in the game, be it scenery, other players or any of the other incidentals. This level of accuracy is extremely important for the stunts, and, as you would expect, there are going to be some very close calls during most races.

Follow me

Trick Style has comes as a surprise since it's been kept so tightly under wraps by all involved. To generalise, you could call it *WipEout* with *Cool Boarders* characters, but that doesn't do it justice at all. The versatility and flexibility provided by the use of actual boarders brings a whole new level to what would probably have turned out to be a pretty damn good game even without it. Taking into account everything that has been promised so far, we're pretty much assured of an absolutely stunning game. Criterion look like they have everything in place to take this autumn by storm, and we'll be hot on the trails of this one as it reaches completion. Expect more info very soon.

TOTAL CONTROL

THE LATEST VIDEO GAME FAD FROM JAPAN — GOTTA CATCH 'EM ALL!

COLLECT, NURTURE, BATTLE, TRADE

HOW THE POKEMON PHENOMENON SAVED NINTENDO

CONTENTS

Pokémon: What are they? Where have they come from? Why should they interest you? Well, the latest craze in Japan and America (and possibly in the UK after October) is Pokémon.

You see, the Pokémon phenomenon stems from a zany RPG on the Game Boy, released a few years ago in Japan, which became a huge fad, and the Pokémon craze has exploded in the States recently as well. Here are the facts:

- 12 million copies sold in Japan and 1.3 million units in America since launch.
- The cartoon is the highest rated kids show in both Japan and the US.
- More than 400 million Pokémon trading cards have been sold throughout Japan. Trading cards are sold out across the US.
- Game Boy sales have risen 250% since the launch of Pokémon
- Pokémon: The Movie was the second highest grossing movie in Japan 1998 with a distributing revenue of 4.15 billion yen.
- Nippon Airlines has six aircraft in its fleet with full Pokémon liveries.
- The final of the National League of Pokémon was broadcast live on TV Tokyo.
- There are over 11,000 websites dedicated to Pokémon.
- The industry is worth £2.3 billion in Japan.

GOTTA CATCH 'EM ALL!

Are you a Pokéholic?

DO YOU WALK DOWN THE STREET CLUTCHING YOUR GAME BOY, COMPLETELY UNAWARE OF THE WORLD AROUND YOU?

HAVE YOU, LACKING FRIENDS TO TRADE POKÉMON WITH, SWAPPED HALF YOUR GAMES COLLECTION FOR NUMEROUS COLOUR CODED POKÉMON CARTS IN ORDER TO 'CATCH THEM ALL'?

COULD THE INSIDE OF YOUR HOUSE PASS FOR A POKÉMON MARKETING CAMPAIGN, PUT OUT BY NINTENDO?

DO YOU OWN AT LEAST ONE EXTRA GAME BOY, WHICH YOU ONLY BOUGHT FOR THE PURPOSE OF TRADING?

If you answered 'yes' to most of those questions, then it's time to come clean. You have been well and truly sucked in by the appeal of Pokémon. You are an addict, and we'd say you'd need help – if it weren't for the fact that you are no doubt incredibly happy. Pokémon may be a merchandiser's dream, but the sheer quality of most aspects of the Pokémon experience certainly makes up for its commercial nature. Nintendo have definitely hit the big one this time, and they deserve every penny they can suck out of our pockets in reward for releasing this superb game. Well. Kind of...

It may surprise you to hear that the *Pokémon* craze is now coming up to four-years-old – the original RPG for the Game Boy was released in late 1995. The original concept was admirable in its simplicity; the idea of an RPG that would appeal to the completist nature of the role-player so much that it would totally immerse them in its world. The gamer would then be forced to buy more and more compatible products in order to get the most out of the system. Instead of killing monsters, in this RPG you would collect them. Not only this, it would become your goal to collect them all, even though not all the monsters were indigenous to your particular cartridge.

Development team GameFreak put out two versions of the same game initially – a *Red* version and a *Green* version. This was the original Japanese release of the *'Pocket Monsters'* RPG; it made it to the US in late-1998 as merely *'Pokémon'* (do we need to explain how to pronounce it now?), and for reasons of marketing the US *Green* version was repackaged as *Blue*. Since then the game has been a phenomenal success in Japan and the USA, and the craze is about to hit the UK at any moment.

Here's how the system works: You wander the world, catching Pocket Monsters, or Pokémon, from the different areas that they inhabit, storing them in 'Pokéballs', from which they can emerge whenever you are in a new battle. They aren't called 'Pokémon' because of their size – in fact some of them can be as tall as buildings according to their stats – they are called this because of the means by which they are stored in the balls which you apparently put in your pocket. You control the monsters via a standard RPG menu system, and you can even personalise each one by teaching it attacks of your choice, though they learn attacks as the grow in levels – and some Pokémon will evolve to other forms. There are 150 known monsters, plus an extra secret one (more of that later), and as you collect them their data is stored in an encyclopedia called a Pokédex (or 'Pokémon Zukan' in the Japanese version). Some of the Pokémon in the *Red* cartridge are not in *Blue*, and vice versa. Others can only be acquired by making choices between a selection on offer – you can then only get the ones you didn't choose by trading with friends

THE ORIGINAL CONCEPT WAS ADMIRABLE IN ITS SIMPLICITY; THE IDEA THAT AN RPG WOULD APPEAL TO COMPLETIST NATURE OF THE ROLE-PLAYER

Catch 'im!

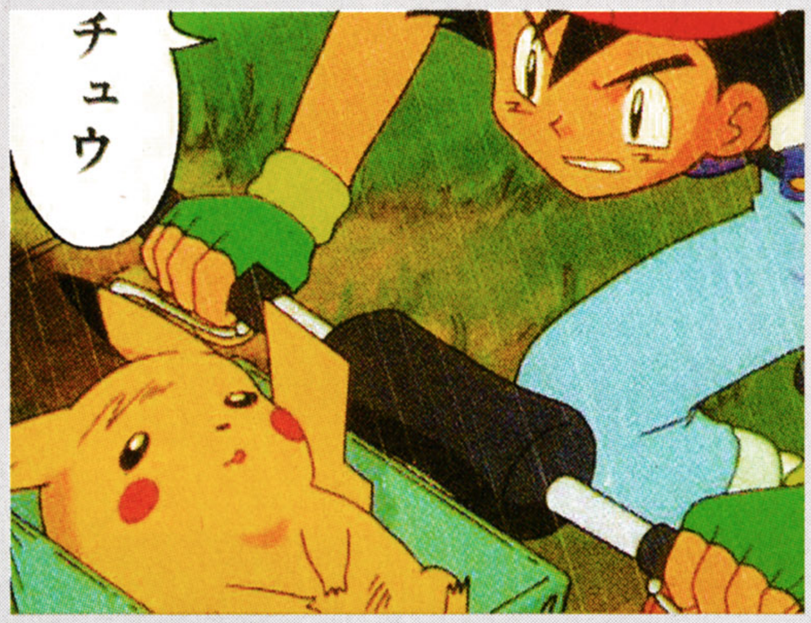
Name: Pikachu
Pokemon number: 025
Type: Electric
Our Pokédex entry: Pikachu's name is made up of two Japanese sound effect words – 'Pika' being the sound of electricity, while 'chu' is the sound a mouse makes.

He may look inoffensive, but he stores energy up in his cheeks which enables him to electrocute opponents at will.

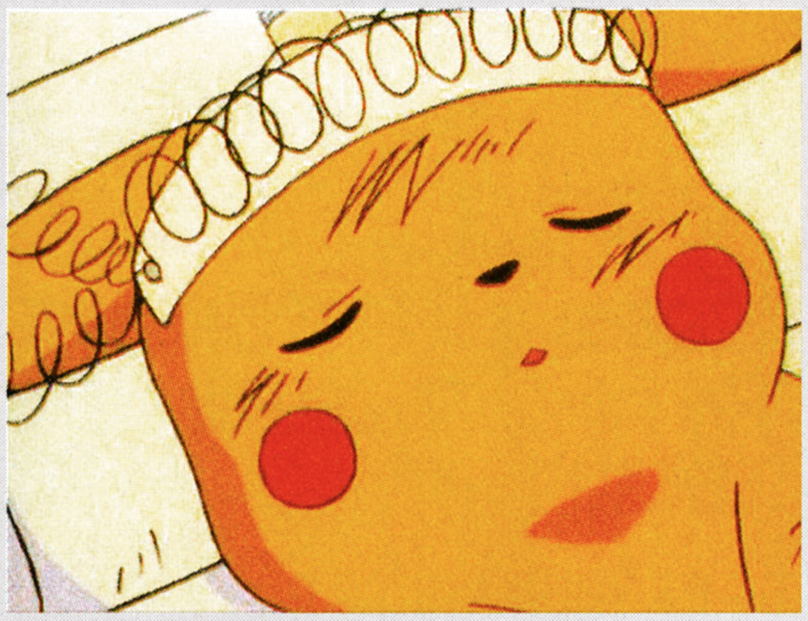
Anime appearance: Ash/Satoshi's starter Pokémon, given to him in the first episode by Professor Oak/Okido.

Poké-parodies

It has become somewhat of a trend for the Pokémon TV series to make blatant film and anime parodies. Here are just a few we've spotted...



The first episode brings with it the first in-your-face film reference. If Spielberg had the time to watch Pokémon, he would probably sue...



That's right, wheel in the injured Pikachu from the exact same angles as they wheel in Rei in Evangelion episode 1...

A scene from 'Mewtwo Strikes Back'. Apparently, Star Wars is very popular in Japan...

A psychic energy detector? A PKE meter, perchance?

Team Rocket in outrageous drag, lampooning Utena – a popular anime series...

This episode would have been aired round about the time that Titanic was on in the cinemas...

via the use of a link cable. If you so wish you can challenge your friends to Pokémon battles by linking your Game Boys together.

Thanks to the interactivity of Pokémon, people have been brought together as a result of their fandom and their combined obsession has lengthened the life of the craze indefinitely. Sheer genius. Since the initial release of *Pocket Monsters*, Nintendo have faithfully put out more and more products in an attempt to bankrupt the fans that they hooked in the first place. But could this be a bad thing? The first spin-off was yet another version of the game - *Pokémon Blue* – which had new designs for the monsters and new Pokédex entries. After that came the Pokémon anime, which is still airing in Japan, the US AND Britain (if you have Sky, that is). The show is now incredibly popular, and not undeservedly; it has to be the best example ever of a game committed to video. Of course, there was that unfortunate incident with the episode

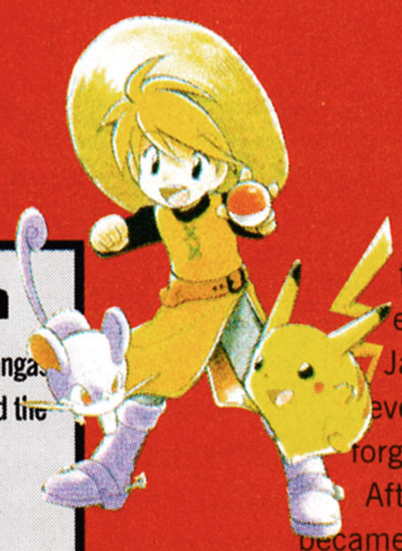
Versions of Pokémon

In Japan, there are four versions of Pokémon. The originals, *Red* and *Green,* were released in the US as *Red* and *Blue*. However, the US releases differ from the Japanese in that they use the Pokédex entries and monster designs from the Japanese *Pokémon Blue* cartridge, which came out after the original two. Most recently there was the Pikachu version – as yet this has not been released in the West. All *Pokémon* cartridges were designed for the original Game Boy. As far as the future goes, a sequel is planned for *Pokémon*. This will appear in the form of two cartridges – *Gold* and *Silver*. Both versions will be designed for use on Game Boy Color, though apparently will also be compatible with the original four cartridges, i.e. you'll be able to trade Pokémon between all six versions. You'll also be able to breed Pokémon in *Gold* and *Silver* – each one that you catch will be identified by gender. Not only this, but there will be an extra 100 Pokémon, bringing the total to 250 altogether. These new Pokémon will not be downloadable to the original games. If you're thinking this might cause problems, you'd be right; Nintendo have put back the release of *Gold/Silver* to November in Japan because of compatibility problems.

Japanese packaging (left) is far more dramatic than the US version (right)

Poké-tat

There is an unbelievable amount of merchandise available for Pokémon fans. Most of it is Pikachu related, so if you were after a plush Pikachu to sit on your bed then you won't have to look far. Products available vary from the sublime (Team Rocket figures!) to the ridiculous – check out this Pokémon chocolate with free trading card included, and the Pokémon pogs. There is even Pokémon orange juice available in London that is nearly £2 per can. Naturally though, all this tat remains irresistible to the completist. If you were looking for something a bit more substantial, there are the Pokémon albums released by Pikachu Records – so far these only cover the Japanese songs from the anime series, but they are a must if you are a fan. The collected album, 'Pokémon Songs Collection', even features some free trading cards from the WOTC game.



that caused those epileptic fits in Japan, but everyone's nigh on forgot about that now. After the anime became popular, Nintendo released yet another version of *Pokémon* – the *Pikachu,* or *Yellow* version. This has new monster designs, and certain elements of the show are incorporated into it. As Pikachu had swiftly become the most popular Pokémon and was by now the mascot of the series, in the Pikachu version you have him as your starter Pokémon, and as long as you keep him in your party he appears on the screen following you. You can even talk to him, and his mood will vary depending on how you treat him. As of yet it has not been translated for Western audiences, but a release is planned for sometime in the summer. As well as the original games and the anime, there have been numerous *Pokémon* products that have become phenomenal in their own right. The most obvious of these would be the card game released by Wizards of the Coast that kids in America are currently getting into fights over – and no, we don't mean Pokémon battles here. See the boxout for more details, but basically the card version of *Pokémon* utilises all the collectability and interactivity of the original Game Boy game, while being different enough to work on its own merits. And bringing things around full circle, GameFreak have developed a Game Boy version of the card game, which is yet to be translated. Other spin-offs include the *Pokémon Stadium* games for the N64, which allow you to plug your Game Boy cartridge into a joypad add-on and download your Pokémon data so that you can fight in full 3D. For the full low-down on all things Pokémon, read the categories that appeal to you as detailed in this article. Do beware, though: get hooked on *Pokémon* and you could find yourself purchasing the lot... TC

OF COURSE THERE WAS THAT UNFORTUNATE INCIDENT WITH THE EPISODE THAT CAUSED THOSE EPILEPTIC FITS IN JAPAN, BUT EVERYONE'S FORGOT ABOUT THAT NOW

Poké-man...ga

There have been numerous Pokémon manga (Japanese comics) released in Japan and the West. Here are two examples of popular series doing the rounds at the moment.

The first, 'Electric Tale of Pikachu', should be available in import comic shops across the country. This is a translated release of a Pokémon manga which follows a separate story to the anime, though US publishing house Viz have since put out a new manga from the same artist which is more closely based around the anime storyline. The second manga, 'Pokémon Special', is a Japanese only release, and is set two years after the end of the game. Oddly, the story we found follows the exploits of the rival to the main character from the RPG – you might like to think of him as Shigeru (Gary) from the anime, even though he has been renamed as 'Green' – one of the preset names you could give him originally.

Poké spin-offs

So far, the following extra *Pokémon* games have been released.

Pokémon Stadium 1+2

These two releases allow you to download your Pokémon from the Game Boy game in order to fight battles in full 3D. You can fight against friends or against the computer in a tournament. *Pokémon Stadium 2* is basically an update of the original with all the same sections as well as extra sub-games.

In the original only 40 Pokémon were eligible for battle, whereas the sequel allows you to fight with any of them. Both games also allow you to store Pokémon in the N64 cartridge, and download your game into the N64 so you can play it on the big screen.

Pokémon Snap

Another 3D *Pokémon* game, where you roam around the environment trying to get snapshots of Pokémon in the wild. Any that you photograph are added to a file. You are also rated on how good your pictures are. A bit pointless, this one...

Pikachu Genki de Chu

A 3D virtual pet Pikachu for the N64. It's quite an ingenious little invention, though. Your Pikachu is displayed in various environments throughout his day, and you can actually speak to him via the use of a microphone. It might sound a bit naff, but if you love Pikachu and can speak basic Japanese, we'd recommend it.

Pokémon Pinball

A pinball game for the Game Boy Color, which is also compatible with the monochrome GB. It combines all the joys of catching Pokémon with pinball. You fire your Pokéball round the table, and any Pokémon that you catch are added to the Pokédex.

Pokémon Card GB

A Game Boy Color game which is based directly on the Wizards of the Coast Pokémon collectable card game. You are a Pokémon trainer in a basic RPG, and instead of fighting with Pokémon, you go about collecting cards to add to your deck, which you can then use in battles.

Poké-cards

Fans of Wizards of the Coast will need no introduction to the pedigree that the Pokémon collectable card game (CCG) has. For those that aren't, Wizards make Magic: The Gathering, the runaway CCG craze that was translated to the PC last year. In the meantime, Wizards have written the Pokémon CCG for the Japanese market (and since translated it for North America). The step is an obvious one – what else was Magic, after all, but a game about collecting monsters, powering them up and sending them into duels? The Pokémon CCG has had huge success in America both as a game in its own right and as an entry level CCG, but has reportedly caused friction between Wizards and collectors' stores due to the immense difficulty in getting hold of a pack!

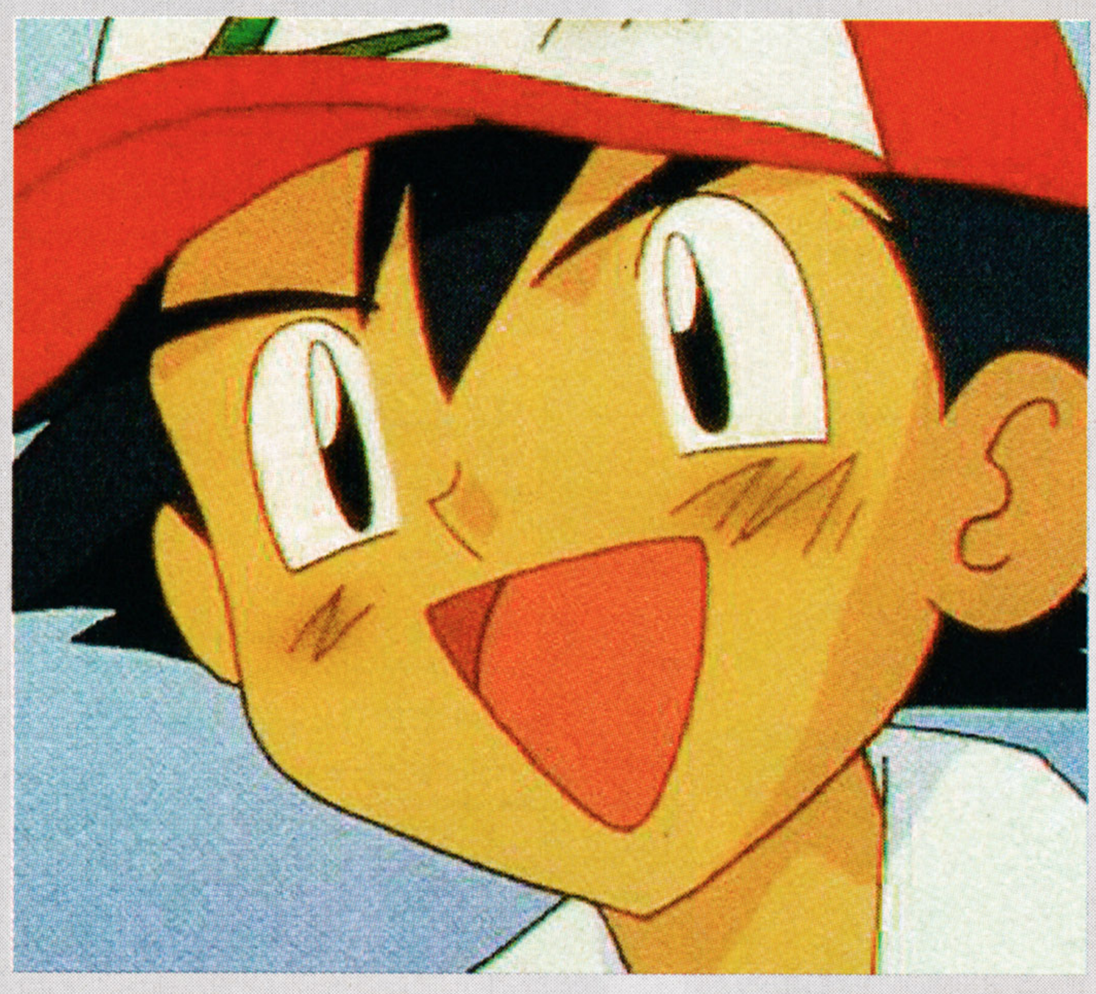
Poké-cinema

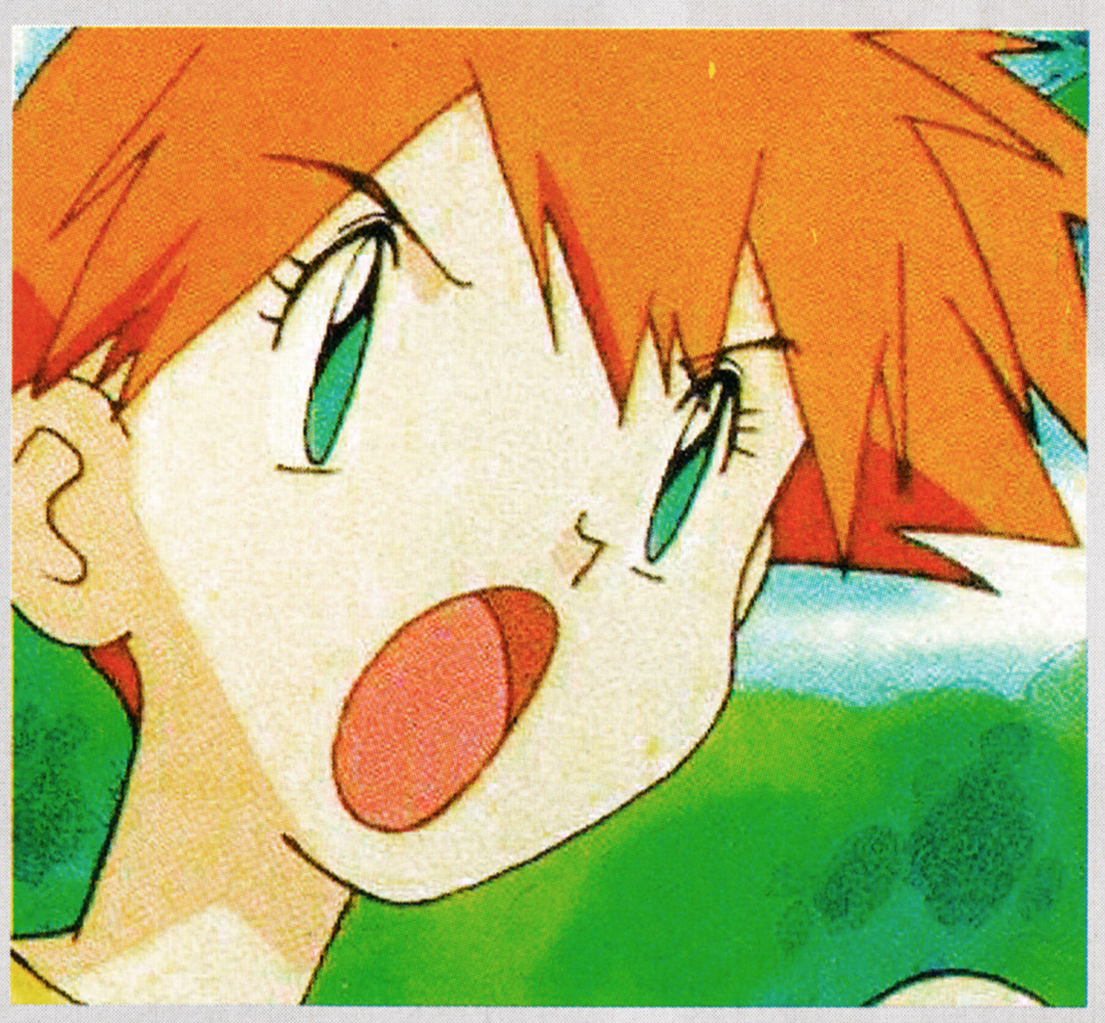
Two *Pokémon* features have made it to the big screen, and both are planned for Western release. The first was a half-hour feature called 'Pikachu no Natsu Yasumi' ('Pikachu's Summer Vacation'), which was aimed at very small children. The second is 'Mewtwo no Gyakushuu' ('Mewtwo Strikes Back'), which is a very dark affair in the context of the series and is a full length widescreen movie. It's rather excellent too. Both these films are now available on video. By the time you read this, a sequel to 'Natsu Yasumi' should be out in Japan, as will the second full-length feature 'Maboroshii no Pokemon X' ('Visionary Pokemon X') .

Catch 'em!

Anime File: Ash • Japanese name: Satoshi

The main character in the anime series, he is a 10-year-old Pokémon trainer who dreams of defeating all the Pokémon gym leaders in order to become a Pokémon master. He is a bit over-excitable and prone to making mistakes. However, things tend to go right for him in the end, no matter how much his companions tease him for not catching many Pokémon. His constant companion is Pikachu, who is more of a friend than a pet.





Anime File: Misty • Japanese name: Kasumi

A girl who teams up with Ash after he accidentally destroys her bike. She has become his friend since, but they often argue; she is always demanding that he pay for a new bike. Misty was once one of the leaders at the Water Gym, so she mainly fights with Water Pokémon. She carries a fishing rod so that she can catch new Pokémon in the various locations that the party visits.

POKÉMON THE GAMES

Collect, Nurture, Battle, Trade...

The Games Of Pokémon

The world of the Pokémon **isn't only restricted to the Game Boy** – there a series of games based around the Pokémon on the N64 as well. Here is an indispensable **guide to the games of the Pokémon...**

Pokémon Red/Blue/Gold/ Silver

This is where it all began. These are the basic *Pokémon* games on your Game Boy, where the whole fad started. The Pokémon are the cute creatures wandering around the world of an RPG. You are a young Pokémon trainer and must first choose a tame Pokémon from your mentor, Professor Oak. You can then go out into the world aiming to capture all 150 varieties of wild *Pokémon* and train them, helping them evolve through several stages until they become the most powerful of their variety.

Preventing you from doing so you are various characters who set puzzles you need to solve, as well as rival trainers. To defeat these, your Pokémon must beat theirs in turn-based combat where each Pokémon uses its own particular special powers. It sounds simple enough, but there's far more to this little game than that, as the phenomenon's success shows.

The different colours of the game cartridges affect the types of Pokémon you'll come across on that version; each one contains about 140 of the total, so to get all 150 you'll have to access other colours as well. This is achieved by linking up with other players' Game Boys and exchanging Pokémon (some higher evolutionary levels can only be reached by training Pokémon in other colour cartridge games). It's very simple to play and yet highly addictive, as you'll soon find out, so start dusting off your old Game Boys.

Pokémon Yellow

With the fad reaching epidemic proportions in Japan and now the US, the favourite Pokémon of most fans seems to be a little yellow character called Pikachu. This special yellow version of the Pokémon game, which is soon to be released in Japan, is the same game as the previous versions but with a few important differences.

The first is that you can choose to have Pikachu as your first Pokémon, collected from Professor Oak's house. During the game, as you travel about capturing *Pokémon,* you'll be able to look at Pikachu as he follows you and listen to the noises he makes.

The second difference is the new ability you'll have to print out stickers of your collected Pokémon using the Game Boy printer. At least this way you won't have arguments about who has which Pokémon.

Pokémon Snap

Already available in Japan and being released as you read this in the US, *Pokémon Snap* is one of the first new Pokémon games for the N64. Unlike the original Pokémon games, you can now not only see Pokémon in 3D, but in their 'natural' habitats as well!

The aim of *Pokémon Snap* is to travel around Pokémon Island and take photos of

Pokémon in their native environment. There are guided safaris through seven different environments, and you must take photos of these creatures as you are driven through. It sounds simple enough, but you only have 60 exposures per trip and are given scores depending on how good your photos are. Points are given for getting Pokémon to pose, for getting several to pose together and so on. To help you, there are 'pester' balls which drive Pokémon out of hiding, food to tempt them, and even a Poké Flute which makes certain Pokémon dance for the camera.

We reviewed a Japanese version of *Pokémon Snap* back in issue eight and were a little disappointed with it, giving it 50%. Mind you, with this score it's best to bear in mind that Pokémon hasn't caught on in the UK (yet!), and we really didn't know what to expect. Maybe if it's ever released here we'll do a proper review, but at the moment it seems that this will only happen if the original *Pokémon* cartridges are as successful here as in America and Japan.

Pokémon Pinball

Being released very soon in the US for the Game Boy, *Pokémon Pinball* is arguably one of the weirdest pinball games we've ever seen. Apart from being based on Pokémon, this game's main selling point is the rumble cart. It was the first game be fitted with a little

rumble pack on the cartridge, and makes very good use of it.

The basic aim of this game is to release and capture Pokémon by hitting certain parts of the table and then train them by hitting other parts. There are over 100 Pokémon to collect and store in the Pokédex (similar to the one on the original games).

We reviewed an import of this in the last issue, and even though everything was in Japanese, still gave it a score of 83%. While we felt that the game was very playable and the flipping, not scrolling, screen wasn't too obtrusive to our enjoyment, the obvious limitations concerning longevity applied to what is basically a pinball sim.

Pokémon Stadium

This is where the Pokémon fad starts to get a little confusing to non-Japanese or American citizens. Released in the US in March 2000 for the N64, *Pokémon Stadium* is a 3D, effects-filled beat-'em-up extravaganza that involves those Pokémon you've lovingly looked after on your Game Boy. Where this gets confusing is that by the time it's released, there'll be two versions floating around; the original Japanese *Pokémon Stadium,* and then its sequel, which will be the game released in the US and maybe over here as well.

This game is basically a chance for you to pit your most powerful Pokémon against your friends to see whose is the best. Up to four players can enter and download their Pokémon onto the N64 straight from their Game Boy cartridges. There will also be a learning play mode for new *Pokémon* players, a research mode where you can see your Pokémon in 3D, and a Mini Game Club in which there are nine sub-games. We weren't impressed when we featured it in our first issue, but then we didn't really have a clue what was going on. Hopefully we'll eventually get an English language version, but it probably won't be for a while yet. TC

Pikachu Genki De Chu

This has to be the oddest Pokémon game to be seen yet – a 3D version of that old fad, the Tamagotchi, but starring Pikachu himself. You have to rear, train and look after this poor creature, as well as up to 130 other types of Pokémon.

What makes this oddly-named project so exciting is the new voice recognition software used with your N64 designed for controlling the Pokémon; by speaking into it, you'll be able to command Pokémon to do certain tasks. Depending on your tone of voice, the little critters will also show emotions and behave accordingly – if you shout it'll skulk off, but if you speak in a soothing tone it'll be happy and want to play and dance.

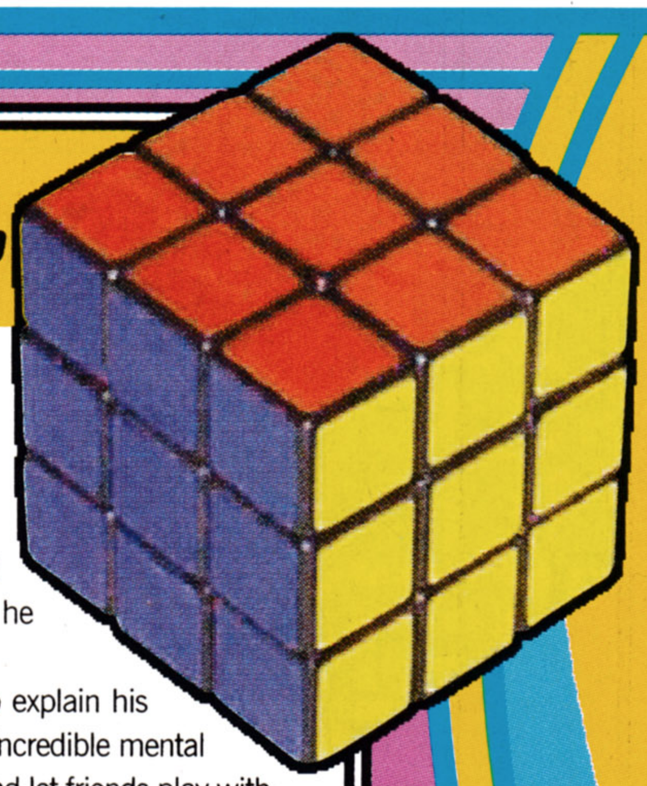
Don't start getting excited about this project just yet, as it won't even be released in Japan until next year. Obviously Nintendo expect Pokémon to be around for a long while yet!

MAD FADS: A BRIEF HISTORY

A MAD FAD

What is a fad? The latest, most expensive must-have toy of that year's Christmas? A craze that sweeps a nation or nations without warning? A flash-in-the-pan of a toy that seeps into your subconscious, making you go out and buy whatever it is? It's probably all these things and more, and each new fad can be spotted a mile off when tabloids expose stories of kids robbing each other for the latest craze. Pokémon threatens to be the latest fad imported from America and Japan, but what, like all the other fads we've endured over the years, actually makes these things so obsessional and appeal to so many people in the first place?

Don't be square, man!



Fads have been around for centuries, if not millennia, but not being able to speak from experience, I can't comment about what these fads were. In more recent times though, after the Hula-Hoop of the fifties, it seems that the modern trend for fads began in 1974 when the first working prototype of a Rubik's Cube came into being in Budapest. At the time, Erno Rubik was a lecturer at the Academy of Applied Arts and Crafts in Budapest. Little did he know what he was about to unleash on the world...

It apparently arose from him preferring to use 3D objects to explain his classes; he wanted something aesthetically pleasing but also an incredible mental challenge. Rubik demonstrated his 3X3X3 cube to his students and let friends play with it. The effect was instantaneous and the compulsive interest of friends and students in the

FADS HAVE BEEN AROUND FOR CENTURIES, IF NOT MILLENNIA, BUT NOT BEING ABLE TO SPEAK FROM EXPERIENCE, I CAN'T COMMENT ABOUT WHAT THESE FADS WERE

Cube caught its creator completely by surprise. Three years later, the first signs of the Cube's world dominance were appearing, as everyone in Hungary became addicted. After appearing at international toy fairs from early 1979, sales of Rubik's Cube exploded as the West caught on to one of the 20th Century's strangest fads (a safe guess of numbers sold would easily top 100 million).

It's hard to imagine now how a small cube with coloured squares adorning the 3X3X3 sides could have been so addictive – all you had to do was move the squares around until all like-coloured squares were on the same sides – yet people of all ages and backgrounds would become absorbed in trying to solve the puzzles. Perhaps the success was due to its simplicity. All the most addictive and successful puzzle games have the key ingredients of simplicity that anyone from a five-year-old to your eighty-year-old granny could play, while at the same time being fiendishly difficult (*Tetris* is one example why the Game Boy was so successful). In these two ingredients, the seeds of addictiveness are sown. Sadly, after this technicolour cube dominated the world in 1983, sales plummeted and it was discontinued before a minor resurrection in 1991 that saw it back in the shops.

A MAD FAD

We all **like to consider ourselves sensible**, down-to-earth, not too easily swayed by silly little things. So how come we all **go crazy once or twice a year** over whichever toy becomes popular and then forget about them **two weeks later?**

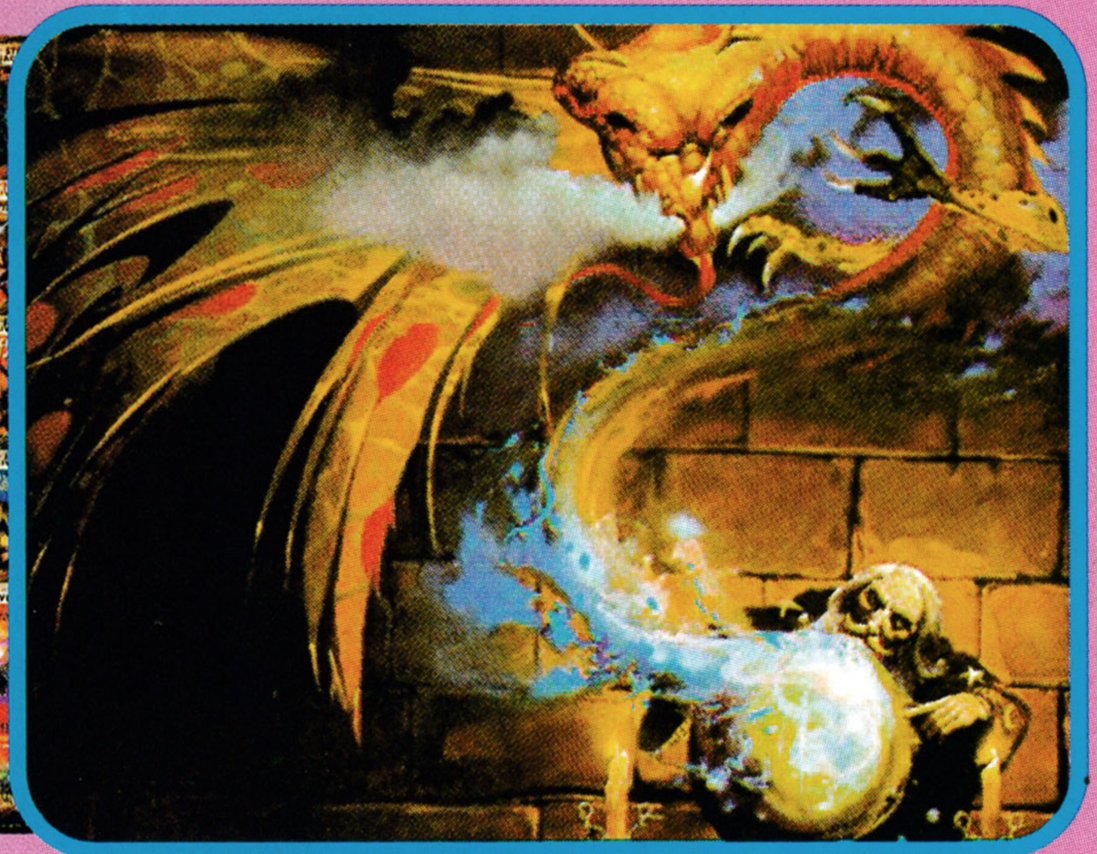
IF YOU WANT MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE FADS MENTIONED HERE LOOK AT THESE WEB SITES:

Rubik's Cube: www.rubiks.com
Footbag: www.footbag.com
Fighting Fantasy: www.fightingfantasy.com
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: www.dvnc.net/kramer/ntnew.htm
Transformers: www.transformers.com
Mighty Morphin Power Rangers: www.prc.simplenet.com/
Tamagotchis: members.tripod.com/~soma_2/index.html
Furbies: www.favoritetoys.com/

Playing footsie

The Rubik's Cube, while one of the most famous fads of the last twenty or thirty years, certainly isn't indicative of what constitutes a fad. About the same time as Mr Rubik had his idea, two Americans, John Stalberger and Mike Marshall, started getting into an ancient Asian and North American sport that involved trying to keep a small malleable bag in the air for as long as possible while only using particular parts of the body. This sport became known as 'hacking the sack', hence the name 'Hackey Sack', which is the brand name of the bags and owned by Wham-O inc. Now widely called 'footbag', it really took off in the late seventies and eighties and is now both an individual or team freestyle sport as well as a volleyball-style game. Most fads, like Transformers and the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, go underground when their time in the mainstream is over, but then others retain popularity and even expand on it. Footbag definitely falls into this latter category and has its own worldwide governing body. While it's proved to be memorable and enduring, footbag must still rate as one of THE most difficult of all fads to master, even more so than the Rubik's Cube. It's great on beaches when you want to impress the ladies, though...

Anyway, at about the time that Rubik's Cube had reached its peak and footbag was beginning to spread, two little-known British authors called Steve Jackson (where is he now?) and Ian Livingstone (you might have heard of him – he set up Eidos), started a series of books: the Fighting Fantasy series. They're still going strong and are read by almost all kids at school at some point or another. You must remember the names like 'The Citadel of Chaos', 'Freeway Fighter', 'Seas of Blood' and, of course, most people's favourite, 'House of Hell'. The 'Choose Your Own Adventure' books by these two were massive hits, even though they weren't the first of their kind. Their themes and variations in location, time and place meant that each was distinctly different. Looking back, they were written for even the slowest of readers and were too easy if you cheated (who honestly never read them without pen, paper and some dice to hand?), but at the time they were immense fun and captivated the imaginations of an entire generation of twelve-year-old boys. Now they simply gather dust in the children's section of your local library.



MAD FADS: A BRIEF HISTORY

A TURTLE-Y EIGHTIES FAD!

So the seventies and eighties saw fads involving cubes, bags, books and God knows what else. They all had similar traits in that they were all easy to understand and yet much harder to succeed in. Well, it could be argued that the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (TMNT), or 'Hero Turtles' in the UK, are another fad of the eighties, except they share almost nothing in common with the fads mentioned above and instead are closer to the GI Joe and Action Man figures or Barbie. These examples are all institutions that have survived for years, but the TMNT, on the other hand, only achieved mainstream popularity for a little while before disappearing back underground.

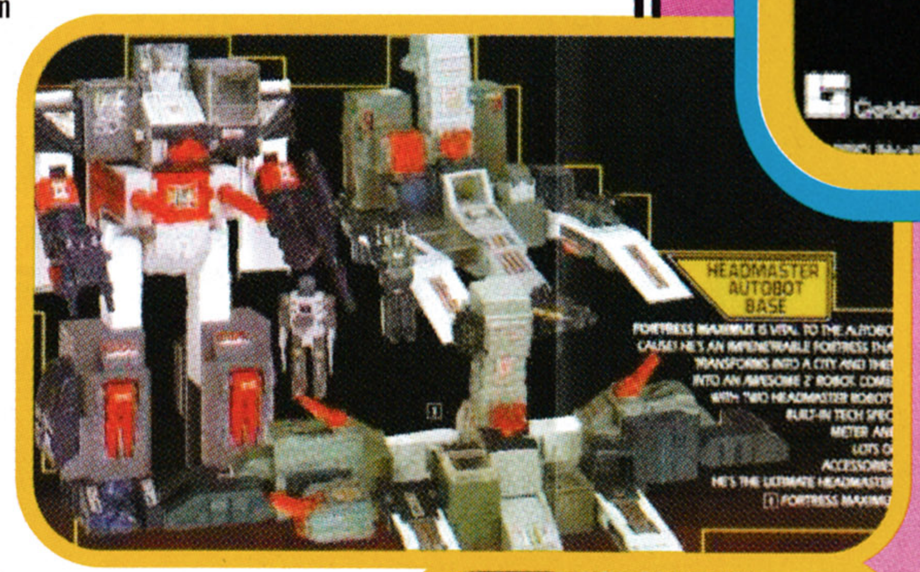
They were first thought up way back in 1983, and after a period of brainstorming and modifications turned into the four heroes in a half-shell that we all know and love. Michaelangelo, Donatello, Leonardo and Raphael were destined to become heroes to a generation of young kids within a few years of their move out of the underground comic scene. While the first issue of the comic was a small-scale affair, within a few years books, miniatures, action figures and even a TV series led to huge world-wide success of the four mutant ninjas.

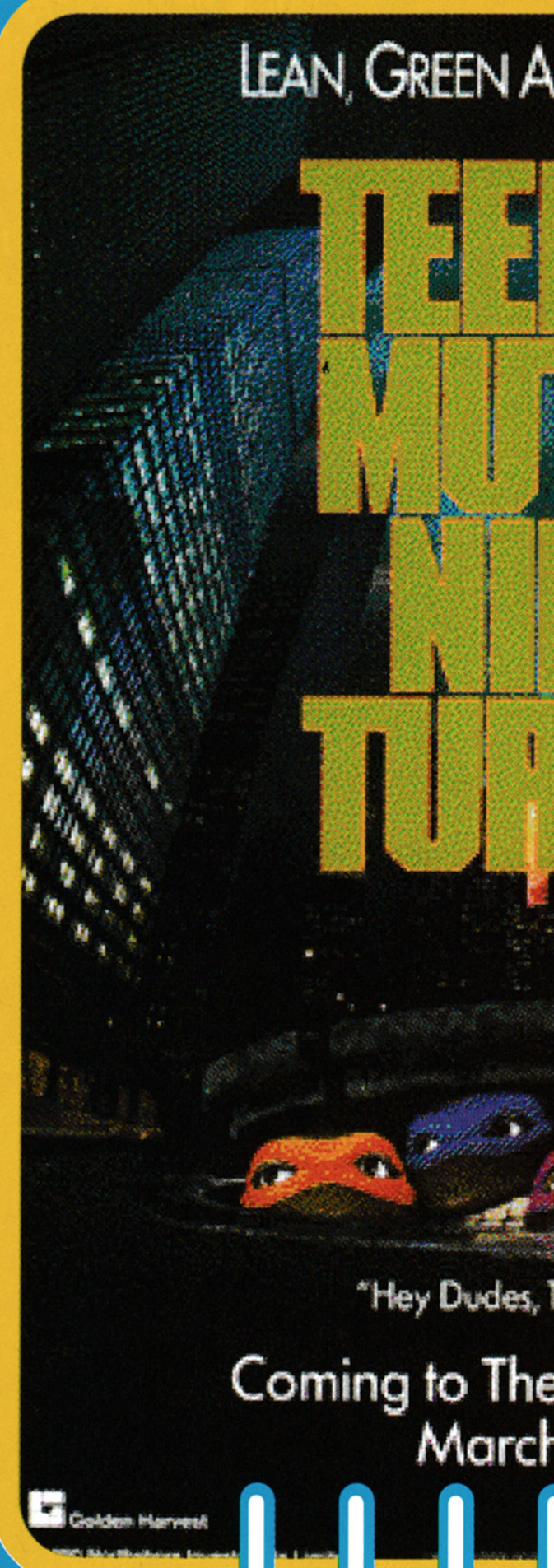
The crowning glory of the TMNT fad was undoubtedly the release of the first of three live-action motion pictures in 1990. It was at this point that every child had to have the turtle toys and the fad reached its zenith. You couldn't move in toy shops for those damn Turtles in cuddly toys, talking toys, action figures, fancy dress suits, and for a while the kids loved it. By the time of the release of the second Turtles film ('Secret of the Ooze'), the turtles were a long-distant memory in most people's minds. Such is the life of a fad: You're every kid's obsession one day and consigned to the back of the cupboard the next.

Not all fads are everyone's favourite one day and then thrown on the rubbish heap the next. Some actually start a new lease of life when most people have forgotten about them. Do you remember the Transformers, the 'robots in disguise'? Thought you did. So how would you feel if you knew a whole community has formed on the web, made up exclusively of fans of the original TV series and comic books, who even discuss plot points and the various sub-plots seen in the Transformers universe?

The Transformers are big robots with the ability to change into recognisable objects like guns, tape players and articulated trucks that fight for the safety of the universe. On one side are the evil Decpticons; and on the forces of good, led by Optimus Prime, are the Autobots. The toys were ace, and great fun was to be had changing your Transformer into its disguise and back, but the TV series? This was poorly animated, had bad scripts and was never a big ratings winner. What seems to have happened is that since 1984, when they appeared in an ad for Marvel comic books, they've grown and grown until sadly their main fan base, the kids, moved on and only the hard-core fans on the web seem to keep their memory alive.

So all these fads of the eighties involved comic books, cartoon series and action figures, but as we move into the nineties in our loosely chronological order, we experience the Mighty Morphin Power Rangers (MMPR). These really do seem to have died a death after the release of the not-too-bad movie. The first of the six series of MMPR started in the autumn of 1993 in the US, but little did we know at the time how much of threat to our society these bloody characters would pose (not!). At the height of their popularity the MMPR were being imitated by kids (as well as a few drunken students) in school playgrounds up and down the country, and papers like the Daily Mail were up in arms about our violent school kids. Certainly the TV series was harmless enough as six Californian kids saved Earth from evil every episode. Luckily, the popularity of the series died down after a couple of seasons and didn't increase any further, otherwise we'd all be wandering around in garish one-piece MMPR suits! Thankfully the Earth was eternally saved from an unspeakable horror – by the TV company ending the series!





THE RUBIK'S CUBE, WHILE ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS FADS OF THE LAST TWENTY OR THIRTY YEARS, CERTAINLY ISN'T INDICATIVE OF WHAT CONSTITUTES A FAD

FROM TAMAGOTCHIS TO FURBIES

So now we move into the mid to late nineties, and we come to perhaps the scariest fads of recent times; first the Tamagotchi, and then, last Christmas, the Furby. Everyone remembers these two fads, probably because they were the most recent, but the official Tamagotchis are the same the world over, though nowadays there are hundreds of variants and pale imitations. Basically a Tamagotchi is a small key fob-sized electronic creature that you 'feed', 'clean', 'exercise' and so on until it dies. Because these things acted like little creatures and had to be looked after 24 hours a day, many people became obsessive about them and actually suffered a mourning process when theirs died. Now it seems pretty sad, but a few years ago they were the in-thing to have on your key ring.

Furbies are a 3D version of Tamagotchis, only scarier. These looked like little owls and, again, had to be fed, watered, played with and generally kept healthy. Sensors in their skins meant that when stroked or patted they responded in their own language (it had about 200 words). Perhaps the most unsettling thing about these freakish toys was their ability to talk to one another. If you sat several down together, they'd all have a conversation without prompting – for all we know they could've been plotting to take over the world!

Both these crazes, like all the others, have died down in popularity, and people and our culture have moved on. There are still fans and people into all these things, as my research for this article on the internet testifies, and I'm sure that many of you can think of others that have been left out. The point of this feature was to show that no matter how popular fads become, they'll always end at some point. But as we enter a new millennium, it seems that Pokémons have already taken over in the US and Japan and now look set to do the same here. You have been warned!

Failed Fads

While these fads mentioned have all been successful and made their inventors a lot of money, there have been just as many that have bombed without trace. Frisbee has been very low-key for years, and last year a great new 'team sport' called 'Ultimate Frisbee' was being touted as the next big thing. The shell-suit came and went in the mid-eighties after being labelled a fire hazard, and who could forget the Global Hypercolor T-shirts? People bought them thinking they were cool because they changed colour, until they realised why the colour changed...

SUCH IS THE LIFE OF A FAD: YOU'RE EVERY KID'S OBSESSION ONE DAY AND CONSIGNED TO THE BACK OF THE CUPBOARD THE NEXT

BUT WHAT ABOUT...?

While many of you are reading this feature, you're probably thinking about other crazes like Yo-Yos, GI Joe, Garbage Pail Kids and so on. Well, in researching this piece we discovered that those mentioned were the only ones everyone remembered, so in the interests of fairness we only included them. Mind you, if you can think of any others, why not write in and let us know?

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LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER

He's got no chin and a lust for the blood of succulent virgins. Read our plasmotic review, suckers!

STUNNING NEW SHOTS!

WIP3OUT

Psygnosis haven't dropped the ball again thank God – it's quick, sexy and smooth

ON SALE NOW!

SHADOWMAN

Following on from Eidos' *Legacy of Kain*, **Acclaim stake their claim** for a piece of the **3D action adventure pie...**

Shadowman has been creating a lot of ripples since its announcement last year. The long-awaited title based on the adult comic book series pits you in the role of Mike LeRoi, an ex-hitman who has recently passed over to the Deadside following a fatal car accident. You find yourself resurrected by voodoo priestess Mama Nettie following a vision of an apocalyptic invasion led by five eternally dammed souls who plan to open the gates between the world of the Liveside and the Deadside. Now reborn, you take on the role of both your former self and that of the Shadowman as you cross between the worlds of the living and the dead.

THERE IS A STRONG AND DISTURBING PLOT LINE, EVEN DESPITE THE 3D ACTION ELEMENT, AND THE SOUNDTRACK HAMMERS THIS HOME IN A VERY REAL FASHION

From the general graphical style, similarities between games such as *Akuji the Heartless* or *Heretic II* could be made, but Shadowman draws far more inspiration from the recent *Legacy of Kain* in playing style and *Silent Hill* in terms of atmosphere. There is a strong and disturbing plot line, even despite the 3D action element, and the soundtrack hammers this home in a very real fashion – imagine *Silent Hill* or *Resident Evil* but with a much greater element of 3D action and adventure.

Spirit level

The game is said to be split 50-50 between platform/puzzle solving and action-based gore fests. The 20 levels are non-linear, you do have tasks to complete before you reach others, but sections can generally be completed in any order, leaving levels very open. Graphically they are extremely open too. Iguana UK has created its own unique VISTA (Virtually Integrated Scenic Terrain) game engine which allows the background to be drawn far into the distance and without fogging, even on PlayStation and N64 formats. Each location on the Liveside is home to one of the five dammed souls, each real-life serial killers such as Jack the Ripper, and you move through the Florida Everglades, London Underground and many more during the 20 or so levels.

Shadowman is set for a multi-platform success, pushing the technological restraints of the hardware for each format. The chilling atmosphere combined with plenty of action and exploration is a fairly unique mix which we'll be looking forward to with great anticipation. TC

APPARENTLY...

- "From its beginnings in the dank real world of the Louisiana swamplands, *Shadowman* takes players on a spectacular and shocking three-dimensional, non-linear adventure between the worlds" –Acclaim press release
- "There's a mystery at the heart of the game, the answer to which will blow your mind and make you wonder if you're really playing a game at all" – Guy Miller, Project Manager

SECOND HAND

One novel feature is the ability to use both hands, giving you the advantage of being able to do two things at once. For example, you could hold a weapon in one hand and use the other to interact with objects such as doors or levers at the same time, hold and use two different weapons simultaneously, or shoot with a weapon while also holding another item such as a flashlight. The fact that there are 50 weapons and items in the game alone gives a lot of variety for combinations.

INFORMATION

FORMAT	N64, PC, Playstation
PUBLISHER	Acclaim
DEVELOPER	Iguana
STYLE	Arcade Adventure
RELEASE	October
PLAYERS	One

SUMMING UP

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- Spectacular graphics across all three systems. Unique game engine allows levels to be extremely open with a huge draw distance.
- Strong plot set in two very different worlds. Two-hand system should have a good influence on the gameplay.

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- As with all third-person 3D romps, the camera controls are always a worry. At this stage though, the impression is promising.

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It's sure to be a good game and it certainly has the potential to be a great game. However, if it is flawed in any way, the strong competition of Eidos' *Legacy of Kain* could reap the rewards.

RAT ATTACK

Mindscape are close to releasing **what could be one of the best multiplayer** arcade games on the PlayStation since Worms...

INFORMATION

FORMAT	PlayStation
PUBLISHER	Mindscape
DEVELOPER	Pure Entertainment
STYLE	Arcade Action
RELEASE	September
PLAYERS	1-4

SUMMING UP

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- A four-player arcade game is bound to be a great laugh, yet this game promises to be just as good for the solo player.
- Rat Attack is really hectic and great fun, with what seems like a perfect learning curve.

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- This style of game might not be to everyone's tastes.
- The camera position can sometimes irritate and restrict your view.

=

It promises to be a superb game and should be a big hit for Mindscape as long as a few minor faults are ironed out.

Capture the rats with your 'net'

Anyone who's played the *Bomberman* games, or even *Worms*, will be overjoyed to hear that they'll soon be able to play the latest arcade game that'll have up to four friends spitting blood at each other after a night out. *Rat Attack* promises to be a weird and wonderful game with the disposal of rats the main priority.

Over forty years ago, two lab rats, Washington and Jefferson, were launched into space. However, contact with their probe was lost after Washington chewed through a cable. It seems that aliens found these two and took them back to their own planet. Being benevolent sorts, they messed around with the two rats' genes and turned them into super-beings. Were Washington and Jefferson thankful? Did they intend to use their new-found powers for the good of mankind? What do you think!?

It seems that the terrible twosome have been duplicating and mutating our rats with a view to taking over the world and destroying everything in sight. All that stands in their way are the Scratch Cats, a band of superhero cats that can stop the threat of mutant rats. Fortunately, these cats are able to use Eraticators and Destructors in their quest.

Why, you dirty rat!

As the player you must run around each of the game's 50+ levels, drawing a containment field around the rats and then dumping them in the Destructor. Get rid of a certain amount of rats before they destroy the level then you move onto the next, and every so often you'll also have to destroy a boss. This also seems simple enough and is very easy to pick up. What could be the best bit about *Rat Attack* is that there's so much more to it. Switches on floors can set off fans or traps which can kill rats; teleporters enable you to reach certain parts of levels; Duplicators and Mutators increase the number of rats in the levels; and there are also tons of power-ups and anti-power-ups for you collect and avoid. The learning curve seems like it will be spot on, with Professor Rex Julius giving you a briefing before each level, letting you know what to expect, as well as gradually unveiling all the tricks and traps you'll need to master to progress.

This game is terrific fun to play with some cleverly designed levels. The full game promises loads of single player as well as multiplayer levels (in locations as diverse as a haunted house, gardens, in space and many more), several multiplayer game modes, eight different Scratch Cats to play as and ten types of rat. Oh, and there are also the bosses, including the Bulldog Beefy Bennett and the showdown with Washington and Jefferson. With all this to get you excited, I haven't even mentioned the catchy music. This game really promises to be something really special when it's released very soon. TC

SWITCHES ON FLOORS CAN SET OFF FANS OR TRAPS WHICH CAN KILL RATS; TELEPORTS ALSO PLAY A PART

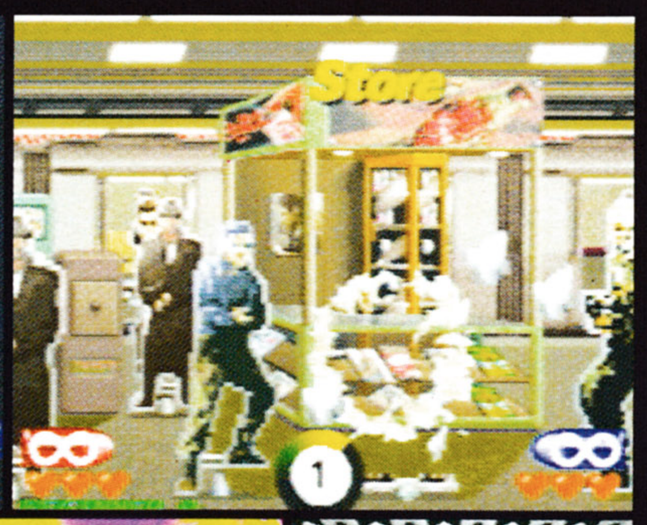
THERE'S NO NEED TO GET CATTY

The eight rats you can choose from all have their own stats for things like speed, strength and Eraticator power, as well as some pun-laden names. They range from the martial artist Hai Jinx to the feminine feline Muffy Dupont, and included in these are two secret cats that have to be earned before you can play as them.

Hai Jinx | Sparky | Manx | Muffy Dupont | Smokey | Bob Cat

POINT BLANK 2

No, it's not the long-awaited **sequel to the classic Lee Marvin film,** rather the **much-anticipated follow-up** to the classic PlayStation game...



INFORMATION

FORMAT	Playstation
PUBLISHER	Namco
DEVELOPER	Namco
STYLE	Arcade Shooter
RELEASE	August
PLAYERS	1-2

SUMMING UP

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- It's simple yet fast and frantic with a superb learning curve that'll drag you in and hook you.
- New levels and new challenges with the same cute graphical style.

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- It isn't a great leap forward – will it really be worth buying if you already own the original?

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If you don't own the original then you'll have no excuse not to buy this. However, if you do, will it be worth the extra money?

Early on in the PlayStation's life, there was a game from Namco that capitalised on the new light gun phenomenon and subsequently found a place in the hearts of anyone who played it. That game was called *Point Blank*, and it was one of the most playable and addictive games on the PlayStation. All it involved was pointing your light gun at the targets on the screen and pulling the trigger. Each level centred around a single screen with its own specific timed challenge. Complete one within the time limit and you moved onto another. Complete one skill level and move onto another more difficult one. Simple, yet damn hard with it.

So why was it so flippin' addictive? *Time Crisis* was the first light gun game for the PlayStation that was a faithful reproduction of the arcade game, but Point Blank was simply in another class. That superb blend of kindergarten simplicity coupled with maddening difficulty levels ensured that many a night was spent firing infra-red beams at TV screens all over the country. It was easy to complete, but that wasn't the point: it was the pure pleasure derived from successfully blowing away a line of targets or hitting the bouncing ball with one shot that ensured satisfaction.

NOW NAMCO ARE PUTTING THE FINISHING TOUCHES TO POINT BLANK AND, BOY, DOES IT PLAY WELL

Kill 'em all!

Now Namco are putting the finishing touches to *Point Blank 2* and, boy, does it play well. To be brutally honest it isn't very different from the original, but then that's not the point (geddit? The 'point'!); the gameplay in the original was perfect and couldn't be bettered. What Namco have done for this sequel is change the individual sub-levels and added an endurance mode where you have to complete ever more difficult levels without failing. Levels include hitting disappearing targets, killing a certain amount of animals, shooting certain numbers of targets within time limits, saving the little hunter guy from the first game - this time against flying aliens and barrels rolling down hills – and also hitting a can to keep it up in the air. The difference won't be immediately obvious, but there are new challenges in there and new games not seen before, as well as some real old favourites. Obviously, the two player mode is also included in this sequel, meaning you and a mate can go head to head on most, if not all of the game's levels. The single player mode on the original was superb, but the two player game was actually even better. Now, with more people owning light guns, this sequel will allow you and your mates to prove once and for all who's the best shot on some new levels.

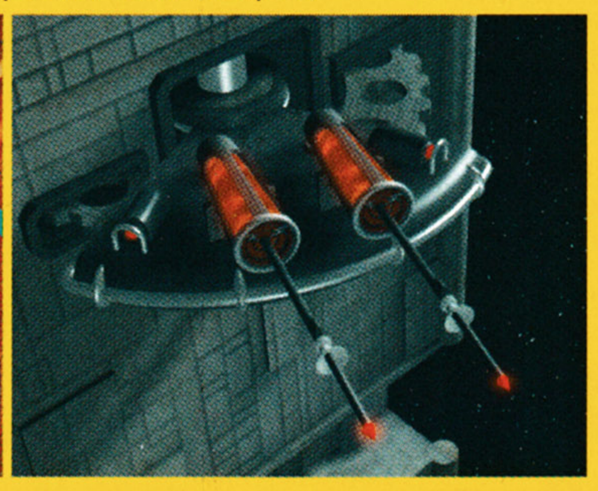
Coupled with *Time Crisis*, *Point Blank* was a game that no self-respecting PlayStation owner could do without – it was like the *Bust-A-Move* games, which are also immensely playable yet didn't prove to be an immediate smash-hit. In the years since its release though, the original has built up quite a fan base, and hence when this superb sequel arrives it will definitely be a hit. Now you'll have no excuse not to TC

ABOMINATION

When a lethal plague ravages **the world and undead monsters** stalk the city streets, the result is an Abomination...

ALIEN INVASION

Microprose had some classic games back in the glory days of the Amiga. One of the very best was UFO: Enemy Unknown, a turn-based combat and resource management game involving an international force called X-Com, fighting invading aliens. For playability it took some beating, and I often still play it on my trusty A1200. The follow-up game, X-Com: Terror From The Deep, was similar but had better animation and a couple of tweaks to the combat system. X-Com Apocalypse took the squad combat system and attempted to graft it onto a huge real-time cityscape, with only partial success. X-Com Interceptor attempted to add a space flight simulator but unfortunately couldn't compete with Conflict Freespace.



INFORMATION

FORMAT	PC
PUBLISHER	Eidos Interactive
DEVELOPER	Hothouse
STYLE	Tactical Combat
RELEASE	September
PLAYERS	1-8

SUMMING UP

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- Low minimum spec, proven gameplay style, almost infinite replay value.

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- Violent and bloody, no in-game map view.

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Could take off in a big way, especially online.

Outnumbered and outgunned

If the screenshots of *Abomination* remind you of something else you might have played, don't worry: the game you are thinking of is probably one of the Microprose *X-Com* titles, and there is a reason for that. Members of the development team for *Abomination* worked at Microprose on titles including *UFO: Enemy Unknown* and *Terror From The Deep*, and the similarity is intentional. *Abomination* is like a real-time version of the early *X-Com* games, with the same isometric 3D style and easy-to-use menu systems, but adding the fast-paced excitement of real-time combat and highly effective enemy AI.

Abomination starts in a plague-ravaged city in a near-future America, where you control a *Syndicate*-like four-man team selected from a group of highly trained, genetically enhanced soldiers. Your mission is to destroy the evil Brood, who are responsible for the disease which has wiped out most of the population. Equipped with an arsenal of weapons both contemporary and futuristic, you must fight the zombie-like army of the Faithful, who worship the Brood and seek to spread their evil influence throughout the world. You can pick the equipment that each squad member will carry, and in combat a menu system offers a high degree of control over the actions of each soldier.

The game is made up of carefully structured missions, with a storyline which slowly unveils the Brood's vile plan to destroy humanity. The story takes you from the ravaged American cityscape to Siberia, the jungles of Peru and an alien underworld shaped by unearthly biotechnology. The maps for each mission are randomly generated from more than a million possible combinations, offering almost unlimited replay value. Like the *X-Com* games, you can discover alien technologies and weapons which you can use, but in Abomination this comes with a price, as your soldiers may end up more like the enemy they are fighting.

THE PLAYER HAS COMPLETE FREEDOM TO ROAM THE SEAS LOOKING FOR EXCITEMENT AND ADVENTURE.

The pre-rendered backgrounds and animated sprite characters are simple enough to run on a low spec machine but still feature light-source shading and a realistic physics system. Grenades can be bounced down stairwells and explosions have shockwaves which will blow people off their feet. There are more than twenty-five thousand frames of animation resulting in some highly realistic action. The game will feature a wide range of multiplayer options for up to eight players, including an unusual play-by-email system. There is a fairly high level of death and gore in *Abomination*, and the Cthulu-like horror of the story may not be suitable for younger players, but the gameplay is superb and highly addictive. TC

From city streets to bio-engineered alien habitats, you have fight for your life.

SOUL FIGHTER

With all this **reaving and fighting** going on, it seems there's no peace to be had **being a soul these days!**

Our first Dreamcast Beta Look comes with the console's eagerly awaited release just two months away by the time you read this. If Sega are to avoid a repeat of what happned to the Saturn they need quality titles to back up the machine's undoubted hardware credentials. Step forward *Soul Fighter* – a game under development in France but with a very Japanese feel.

When the gameplay was first described to us, it was likened to the classic arcade machine *Golden Axe*. After a few minutes spent at the controls, I see no reason to argue with that, although *Soul Fighter* only supports one player at a time. There'll be three characters, each of which will be familiar to you if you've ever played an RPG or fantasy beat-'em-up. There's the muscular hero, hulimng man mountain and buxom, sword-weilding wench. Lots of collectable weapons are available. Combat will be based on stringing together combos although don't expect *Tekken*-style joypad dexterity as a requirement. Most combos will require no more than two buttons at most and rely more on timing. Although simple in execution, we're promised the enemy AI will allow them to identify favourite moves and defend against them. This will hopefully force players into varying their attacks and learning all the moves.

Watch your back

The big grabber however is the backdrops. Delivered in 16 million colours and moving at a rate of 500,000 polygons a second it looks absolutely gorgeous. An early contender for the game to show off your new console to those green-eyed PlayStation owners. Each of the main characters has around 100 motion-captured animations and five end-'o-level fatties make for a visual delight. The version we played had yet to have a lot of the enemy AI implemented and some of the moves weren't working. It's clear though that the emphasis is on an arcade blast and as such don't expect too much subtlety. If an old-fashioned hack-'em-up with ultra-modern visuals is high on your list of priorities, this could be the reason you bought a Dreamcast in the first place! TC

IF AN OLD-FASHIONED HACK-'EM-UP IS HIGH ON YOUR LIST OF PRIORITIES, THIS COULD BE A GREAT BUY

SOUL SEARCHING

Souls seem to be a favourite subject of games developers at the moment...

Soul Reaver

Platform: PlayStation/PC

Idea: Vampire consumes souls to survive during his quest for vengeance on his former master.

The Nomad Soul

Platform: PC

Idea: David Bowie writes and stars in strange adventure where you play a soul migrating from one body to the next as each one dies.

David Soul

Platform: Cool 70s telly

Idea: Starsky & Hutch is having a bit of revival at the moment, and here it!

INFORMATION

FORMAT	Dreamcast
PUBLISHER	piggyback Interactive
DEVELOPER	TOKA
STYLE	Hack 'n slash
RELEASE	September
PLAYERS	One

SUMMING UP

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- Great looking characters and backgrounds show off the Dreamcast's potential

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- Although the look might be futuristic, the gameplay is definitely lodged in the past

=

Retro games with modern facelifts straddle a fine line between seen-it-before apathy and classic-granted-a-new lease of life enthusiasm

The standard of the graphics is as high as anything else on Dreamcast

CUTTHROATS

Become the **terror of the Spanish Main** and send your foes to Davy Jones' locker in this **fun new game from Hothouse.**

Cutthroats, from Bristol-based developers Hothouse, is a complex but easy-to-play strategy game set in the early seventeenth century, in which the player takes on the role of a pirate captain sailing the Caribbean in search of wealth and infamy. Starting with one small ship, a few cannons and a minimal crew, your task is to prey on the ships and colonies of half a dozen competing European nations. By acts of skill and bravery, you will steadily build up your own pirate fleet, recruit an experienced crew of ruthless brigands, and amass a huge horde of treasure, which you can then bury at a spot marked with an 'X'.

Unusually for a strategy game, the gameplay is open-ended, and the player has complete freedom to roam the seas looking for excitement and adventure. There are no missions to complete or specific goals to achieve other than the amassing of wealth. The simulation of the working economy of the Caribbean means that you can set your own goals, and play the game almost indefinitely. If you wanted to be dull, you could survive in the game by honest trading from port to port, but where's the fun in that? Attack, loot and pillage, it's what pirates do.

THE PLAYER HAS COMPLETE FREEDOM TO ROAM THE SEAS LOOKING FOR EXCITEMENT AND ADVENTURE.

The game is played out over three different maps. The main map shows the whole of the Caribbean, with its many towns and colonies marked with pins. This is the map you use to set your course. A clever system of filters allows you to identify which towns are friendly or British or supply rum, and an overlay shows the prevailing wind. The time scale for voyages between various ports is compressed to speed up the game.

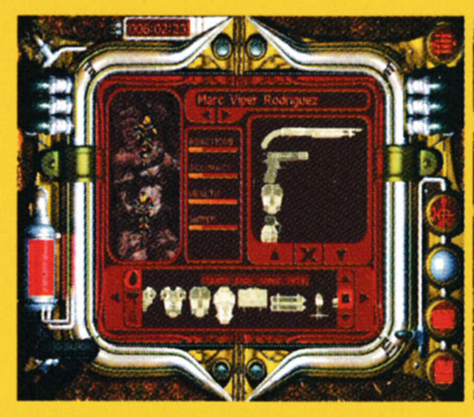
Once you set sail, any encounters with other ships take place on another map with a much larger scale, where you can take direct control of your ship, raising flags to signal to the other ships, and manoeuvring in the wind to gain the advantage. If you choose to attack, then the action moves to a third view, an isometric battle screen viewed from above. Here tactics become important, as you try to bring your cannons to bear on the enemy while avoiding their guns. If you are successful you can board and loot, and possibly add the ship to your fleet. Raids on towns are also done in this view, with nice 3D representations of the colonies, complete with AI controlled characters.

Cutthroats looks deceptively simple. It may not have the flashy graphics of most recent games, but nonetheless it is an impressive piece of programming. It is a very complete game with clever little features all over the place. It has a fine balance of strategy and action, and I believe it will be a big success. TC

While the graphics remain largely functional, they do give the game an authentic 1700s feel

HOTHOUSE

Based in Bristol, Hothouse were formed in 1996, and the company now employs nearly fifty people. They are partially owned by UK games publishing giant Eidos Interactive, who have a minority stake in the company. Eidos published the first Hothouse title, *Gangsters: Organized Crime* in December '98 for the PC. *Abomination*, also previewed in this issue of Total CONTROL is a strategic squad combat game due for launch this autumn.



INFORMATION

FORMAT	PC
PUBLISHER	Eidos Interactive
DEVELOPER	Hothouse
STYLE	Strategy
RELEASE	August
PLAYERS	One

SUMMING UP

+

- A well made, clever game with a lot of nice ideas. Combines a balanced mix of strategy with action.

–

- Graphics not too challenging. History angle may bore some people.

=

An extremely playable game that it would be easy to get hooked on.

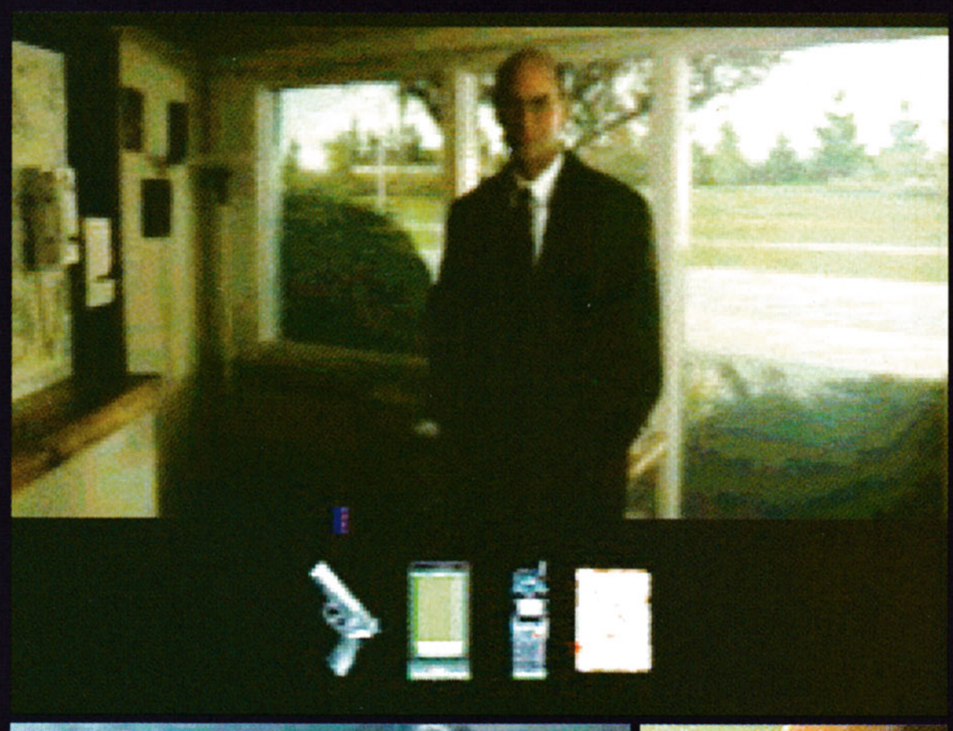
THE X-FILES

After enjoying huge success on the PC, Fox Interactive have decided to release The X-Files on the PlayStation, making it **the first game on this platform** to consist entirely of FMV...

INFORMATION	
FORMAT	Playstation
PUBLISHER	Fox Interactive
DEVELOPER	Fox Interactive
STYLE	Adventure
RELEASE	Autumn
PLAYERS	One

PERILS OF TYPECASTING

While the game isn't filmed by the crew of the series, the actors playing Mulder, Scully and their boss, Skinner, are all present. Mulder and Scully appear both at the beginning in the prologue and at the end in the climatic moments of the game. Skinner, meanwhile, helps you begin the investigation and gives you some background info but then has to leave for Washington again. These appearances will all help add to the atmosphere of the game.



Everyone knows about the X-Files and the adventures of Mulder and Scully as they battle against a huge government and alien conspiracy. Well, last year PC owners were treated to a puzzle/adventure game based on the TV series but with you trying to find the heroes after their mysterious disappearance. Imagine an interactive episode with you as the hero – you have to visit the game's locations questioning various characters and picking up vital items of evidence. By piecing all the clues together you could then discover Mulder and Scully's whereabouts and hopefully rescue them before it's too late. It got a lukewarm reception from reviewers, but the games-buying public seemed to love it, pushing it to the top of the charts.

Now, over a year later, PlayStation owners are being treated to this epic adventure. It will come on five CDs; a pretty hefty amount,but this is simply because of all the FMV in the game. In each location you'll be able to move the cursor around with the joypad, and depending on what it changes to you can perform certain actions like talk to people, look at objects, pick them up, open doors and so on. You'll even be able to get involved in gunfights using this system. By moving the cursor to the edge of the screen you can turn or move around locations, and this will work very well – think of *Myst* or *Riven* and you'll get the picture.

THIS IS A PUZZLE/ADVENTURE GAME BASED ON THE X-FILES BUT WITH YOU TRYING TO FIND THE HEROES AFTER THEIR MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE – IMAGINE AN INTERACTIVE EPISODE WITH YOU AS THE HERO

By questioning various people and reading any paperwork you come across, the full picture of what happened to Mulder and Scully will become clear, and while the manner in which you conduct your investigation will be entirely up to you, characters within the game will sometimes give you help. For those who are really stuck, there will even be an Artificial Intuition feature that's like a little blue light in the corner of the screen. This will sometimes light up or show a location that holds an important object you might have missed.

A Tough Case!

The controls will be very simple and easy to use, but what may let the game down will be the loading times between screens. Every time you go into your personal digital assistant (PDA) to decide where to travel to or check your notes and e-mails, the PlayStation has to load in the relevant screens. This is a minor fault, but one which could get very annoying after prolonged play. Certainly this style of game isn't fast-paced and frantic, so a leisurely gap between scenes won't put potential buyers off, although your average X-Files fan probably wouldn't mind if you had to swap CDs every two minutes as long as it was still the X-Files...

A complaint of most console games these days is that they're too easy for hardened gamers and, while fun, are short-lived. *The X-Files* is certainly not going to be accused of this as it seems identical in structure to the PC original, a product designed for hardened adventure fans. It'll certainly be a challenge and will get those brain cells working overtime – a rare treat on any console, let alone the PlayStation. This is looking to be a superb adventure when it's released, so trust no one – we'll bring you a review very soon. TC

SUMMING UP

+

- It looks and feels like an X-Files episode, which'll have fans wetting themselves.
- The controls are very easy to master yet the puzzles are tricky – a good mix.

–

- Loading times between scenes still need to be optimised a little bit.
- What's to bring you back when it's completed? Nothing at the moment.

=

An innovative PlayStation title which will provide a challenge and looks good, but it simply might not be everyone's cup of tea.

While the quality of the FMV isn't up to PC standards, it is still very good for PlayStation

FIGHTING FORCE 2

Fighting Force are back, **or at least one of them is,** as Core look to banish the 'one game wonder' tag **once and for all...**

The original *Fighting Force*, for which Core hired then-unknown model Kelly Brook to play one of the characters during the promotional build-up, was billed as *Final Fight* for the 90s. The relentless onslaught of foot and fist fodder from Capcom's famous coin-op entered the third dimension. Unfortunately their intelligence didn't and what started out as a highly promising title was soon revealed to to be a nice looking but terribly tiresome case of repeating the same moves over and over to defeat one set of baddies, go through a door and repeat ad nauseum.

The sequel however bears little relation to the original other than the title, or so we're told. *The Fighting Force* monicker has been retained due to the game's strong brand status in the US. Other than that, the only discernible carry-over is the main character Hawk who made up one quarter of the hero contingent of the original. Mace, Smasher and Alana are consigned to the graveyard of games characters past while Hawky boy seems to have reinvented himself as some sort of special forces type dude.

Force feedback

The main difference in terms of gameplay this time around is the number of weapons. In the original such things consisted mostly of pipes and sticks with the odd gun or rocket launcher from time to time. Even then however, many bad guys could take a rocket full in the face and still have enough left in the power bar to administer a further kicking. This time there'll be a whole arsenal of shotguns, rifles, machine guns and even a sniper rifle complete with zoom site. Hand to hand combat will still play an important role however, so don't throw away those knuckledusters just yet.

THE METAL GEAR SOLID SCENARIO WITH EMPHASIS ON ARCADE ACTION IS AN EXCITING PROSPECT

The original *Fighting Force* had two major weaknesses. One was the limited attack moves available to the player and the other was the crap AI of the bad guys. The first problem has clearly been addressed for the sequel. As fot the second we don't yet know. Nevertheless the *Metal Gear Solid* scenario with emphasis on arcade action gameplay is an exciting prospect. TC

GET A GUN, INCREASE THE FUN!

One of the big improvements over the original is the addition of loads of new weapons. Hand to hand combnat will still play a major role and ammo will be scarce. However with so many weapons to choose from you won't have to get your fists anywhere near as often as you did in the original. Especially look out for the exploding arse bomb!

INFORMATION

FORMAT	PlayStation
PUBLISHER	Eidos
DEVELOPER	Core Design
STYLE	Action
RELEASE	September
PLAYERS	One

SUMMING UP

+

- You get to kick punch and shoot everything in sight

−

- All you seem to have to do is kick punch and shoot everything in sight

=

If the action is balanced with decent enemy AI and more depth than the original *FF* this could be a hit.

While *Fighting Force 2* retains many of the ideas seen in the original, you will now have to employ a bit more thought

WWF ATTITUDE

From the same team **that brought you WWF Warzone,** we see if Iguana are about to rumble or fumble **with their latest title...**

Wrestling games have been around for a very long time, since way back in the days of the NES. Acclaim are one company who have always had strong ties with the sport – more then ten years now – but wrestling games have always had a very firm cult image. With recent successes, however, they are slowly moving into the mainstream – you no longer need to be a fan of the real life phenomenon to get the best from the computer incarnations.

WWF Attitude is Acclaim's latest attempt, modelling itself very strongly around their previous wrestling title, *WWF Warzone*. Produced by the same team, you should be expecting a game that has many similarities and plenty of new features too.

There are over 40 wrestlers in the game, including such famous faces as The Rock, Stone Cold Steve Austin, The Undertaker, D-Generation X and Triple H, but whilst all of these characters will be there

WWF ATTITUDE EXCELS IN ITS VARIETY; THERE ARE NINETEEN TOTALLY SEPARATE GAME MODES TO MASTER

complete with all their own trademarks, there will also be fifteen fictional characters created by the team, known as jobbers (i.e. space-fillers who enter the ring and get the crap beaten out of them). There are obvious reasons why no names were signed up to play this role, but their cinematic value seems self-evident enough. Just like previous WWF games, you can still create you own wrestlers, but now this has been seriously enhanced with options to chose not only your costume and appearance (eyes, nose, mouth and hair) but gender, strength, endurance, taunts and entrance, and even customise their own move set.

Changing times

WWF Attitude excels in its variety; there are nineteen totally separate game modes to master including Specialty Matches, Survivor Series and King of the Ring. The career mode allows you to play as an individual or tag team and work your way to the title over a full season wrestling in various TV show events ranging from Sunday Night Heat to pay-per-view events. There are an incredible 400 moves in the game too. Some are generic and available to each character, while others represent specific signature moves, trademark finishing moves and taunts that are unique. Also present are a wealth of weapons including a bedpan, stop sign, baseball bat and even a briefcase. Several others also return and are all accessible all the way through a fight.

Graphically it looks superb; the motion capture seems extremely good despite looking a little too sharp, but everything else seems to be well in place. *WWF Attitude* is a game that will have just as much appeal to wrestling fans as it will to the rest of us, and those who loved *WWF Warzone* will be looking forward to this one even more.

TC

TELE-TUBBIES

One thing that wrestling games have been moving towards is creating an excellent illusion that you are watching a TV show. The ring intros and close-ups as the wrestlers speak their trademark lines to each other across the ring is superb. The commentary is voiced by both Jerry "The King" Lawler and Shane McMahon, and there is a lot of it: the 32 Meg N64 cartridge has dedicated Super Compression techniques that allow it to use as much as the PlayStation version, and with the game running at 30fps with extensive motion capture and photo realism, it's as close to watching the TV as the genre has got so far.

INFORMATION

FORMAT	PlayStation
PUBLISHER	Acclaim Entertainment
DEVELOPER	Iguana
STYLE	Wrestling
RELEASE	September
PLAYERS	1-2

SUMMING UP

+

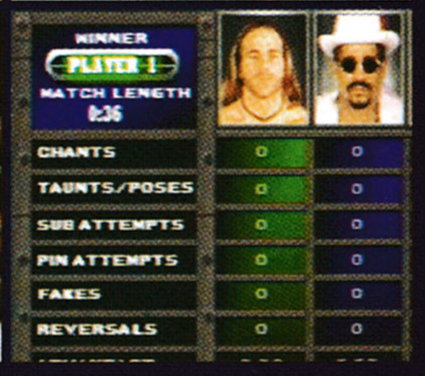
- Excellent photo realistic graphics running at a consistent 30fps.
- A wealth of game modes and a ridiculous amount of characters and moves to learn.

−

- May not have the skill or depth of some of the competition.
- Like boxing, wrestling games are usually confined to a specific market.

=

Definitely has the potential to become the best game in its field, but hopefully Iguana will be doing that with gameplay, not figures.



"It's the best sports-entertainment out there, this is the WWF, baby"

A WORLD OF NEW CARS

The vehicles featured in *Need for Speed: High Stakes* include some of the finest performance cars in the world. The line-up is truly international, but strangely includes no Japanese manufacturers. The full list has the Germans represented by the M5 and Z3 from BMW and Mercedes' CLK GTR and SLK 230, as well as the Porsche 911 Turbo. American cars are the Camaro Z28 and Corvette C5 from Chevrolet, and the Pontiac Firebird. Italian style is present in the form of Ferrari's stunning 550 Maranello and F50 and Lamborghini's Diablo SV. The British entries are the awesome McLaren F1 GTR and the lovely Jaguar XKR.

INFORMATION

FORMAT	PC/PlayStation
PUBLISHER	Electronic Arts
DEVELOPER	Electronic Arts
STYLE	Racing Sim
RELEASE	Out Now
PLAYERS	1-2

SUMMING UP

+

- Stunning graphics, good handling and performance, a great selection of ultra-realistic supercars and well-structured gameplay

−

- Nothing really new or original, just old ideas done better. Multiplayer features a bit limited

=

A good and highly realistic driving game which could prove to be a winner.

Cars can now be damaged in crashes

NEED FOR SPEED: HIGH STAKES

The latest version of Electronic Arts' **top driving game offers more cars,** more tracks and **more speed than ever before...**

Need for Speed: High Stakes is the latest in a successful series of racing games from Electronic Arts. Previous games in the series have featured some of the world's fastest road cars, and *High Stakes* is no exception. The development team has collaborated with some of the world's top sports car manufacturers to produce accurate representations of vehicles such as the Lamborghini Diablo SV, the BMW Z3 and the Porsche 911 Turbo. All eighteen of these cars are available at the start of the game, with more options available when you have the money. The game includes the option to download new car models from the internet, so you will be able to race new supercars as and when they become available, .

Car damage modelling is included for the first time, affecting both the appearance and handling of your car. This plays a big part in the gameplay. Rather like *Gran Turismo*, the game features a working economy, and you will need to earn money from racing to repair your car and keep it tuned up and competitive. This is a nice idea, since the more carefully you drive, the less money you are going to have to spend on repairs. In another leaf out of *GT's* book, there are upgrades available that you can buy with your winnings to make your car even faster. You own the car that you race, and you can lose it. In the High Stakes Challenge you race for 'pink slips'; lose the race and you'll be walking home.

The game features nineteen new and exciting courses in some exotic locations and a range of game modes, including the Hot Pursuit mode from the previous *NFS* game. You can choose to be either a police driver trying to catch speeding motorists, or a speeding motorist trying to elude the police. Watch out though, because this time the boys in blue have a helicopter to help catch you. Other race modes are Career, where you select a car to start with and then race for money, and Classic mode with simple racing against the computer.

Need for Speed: High Stakes is a good-looking game, with superb accelerated graphics featuring realistic lighting effects and reflection mapping. The car models are very realistic-looking and the 3D environments are gorgeous. This latest instalment is the best of the series, with more features and challenges than ever before. With new cars available for download, this one could run for a long time. TC

NFS: HIGH STAKES IS A GOOD-LOOKING GAME WITH REALISTIC LIGHTING AND REFLECTIONS

the history of PlayStation

Love it or hate it, you can't help but admire what Sony have achieved with the PlayStation. As first attempts at a games console go, this hasn't been a bad one. In four short years the console has almost single-handedly rewritten the industry that we work in and brought it kicking and screaming into the mainstream.

yStation

With sales of the PlayStation recently reaching the 50 million mark, Total CONTROL decided to take a look back at the events that shaped a gaming phenomenon...

the PlayStation

SONY PROVED THAT THE RIGHT PRODUCT WITH THE RIGHT ATTITUDE COULD TAKE VIDEO GAMING TO THE NEXT LEVEL

PlayStation was born on December 3, 1994. This was the day that Sony's first games console took a whole marketplace by storm. Many, more experienced companies had tried to launch next generation consoles before it, but all had failed. Just when it looked as though the next generation gaming dream was doomed to failure, Sony proved that with the right product, the right attitude and the right marketing, videogames could take that life-saving step onto the next rung of the evolutionary ladder. And as it left the 3DO, the Jaguar and (eventually) the Saturn all floundering in its slipstream, the PlayStation effortlessly claimed its crown as the 'King of the Games World' and within months had breathed life back into a dying hobby.

With this one console Sony has not just revolutionised the games industry, but expanded it to proportions that no-one would have thought previously possible. The PlayStation has become a cultural phenomenon. It has made games playing cool, it has redefined the boundaries of home entertainment, and it has never failed to deliver the quality and fun that it promised from day one.

But how did it all come about? Where did it all begin? Read on and you'll be amazed at how long the little grey box in your home took to come to fruition, and how long a Japanese electronics giant held on to a dream of market domination.

This is the Story of the PlayStation.

1948: Tokyo Telecommunications Engineering Corporation

Akio Morita and Masaru Ibuka had been working together for years in Japan, developing heat-seeking weapons for the military before the end of World War II gave them the opportunity to divert their attentions to far less dramatic projects. They formed TTEC to concentrate on the development of transistor technology for miniature radios, and in 1958 they changed their company name to Sony.

Sony – The Early Days

As an electronics company, Sony continued to grow and grow. Manufacturing televisions, radios and VCRs, they were always at the

Successful marketing made the PlayStation and its merchanise desirable

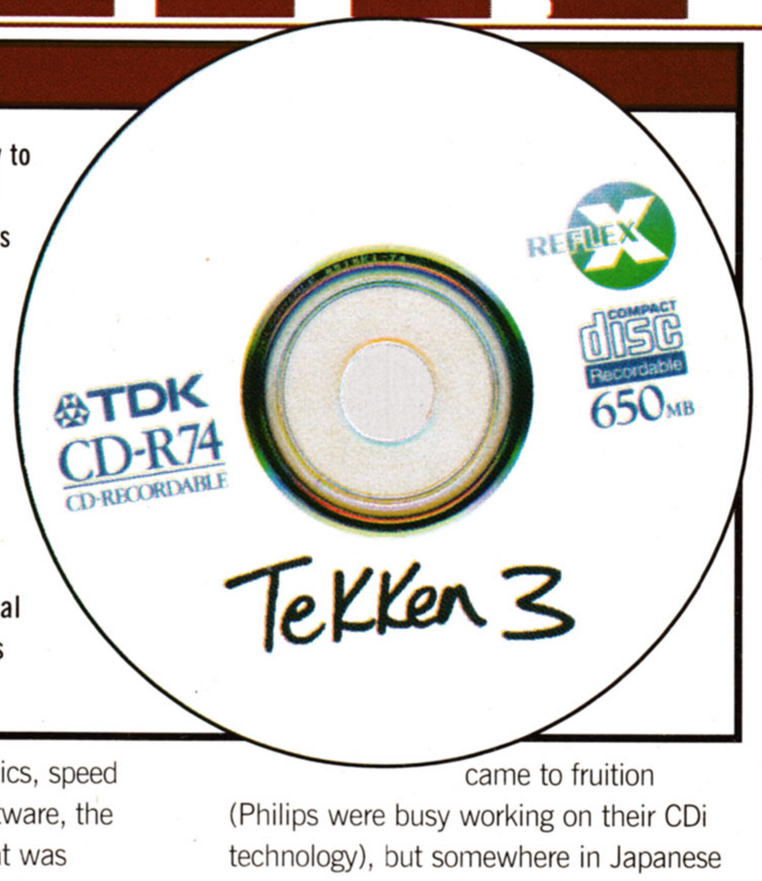
Station

THE CURSE OF PIRACY

• Every single PlayStation contains a security chip that will only allow your console to read discs that contain the right country password (Japanese NTSC requires the Japanese code, etc.). This has been introduced by Sony for a number of reasons in order to: guarantee that the software you play on your console is of the highest standard (the titles being developed with your television in mind); stop a worldwide blitz of pirate copies, again bringing down the quality of a game (audio, visuals, etc.).

• The subject of piracy is always a relevant one and always seems to be on the verge of bringing down the industry. While that will never happen, the PlayStation has been the target of pirates for several reasons. The PlayStation has become the easiest computer to pirate games for since the tape-to-tape recordings on the Sinclair Spectrum. The CD-ROM format is extremely easy to copy, and indeed Sony themselves make a rather good range of CD burners (what message this sends out to software publishers isn't exactly clear). A CD writer, a PC and a small program (known as a 'crack') are all that is required to copy a PlayStation disc. To play pirate games on a PlayStation a special chip is required to bypass the security, and it is possible to get 'chipped up' for as little as £10.

• Retailers get around the legalities of this because the primary function of the chip is that it allows gamers to play imported games from the US and Japan – in itself not an illegal activity. However, removing the cover of your PlayStation does invalidate the warrantee.



vanguard of modern technology. Most importantly, they developed an image manipulation system called System G, which was used extensively to produce swirly wraparound effects on the majority of music and sci-fi television shows in the seventies. A member of the team behind this system was one Ken Kutaragi, who was to become the driving force behind Sony's eventual dominance of the videogames arena. Even at this time he expressed an interest in the growing computer games revolution that was beginning to appear. But unfortunately Sony did not heed his advice and missed out on entering early into a market that eventually became presided over by the likes of Namco, Taito and Atari as the creation of seminal games like *Pong*, *Space Invaders* and *Galaxians* took the world by storm.

Sony's first attempt to grab a slice of the videogame action failed dismally when in the mid-eighties they became involved in the production of the MSX computer standard. Also supported by other Japanese electronics giants like Toshiba, Panasonic and Sharp, MSX failed badly. It couldn't compete with the popular Sinclair Spectrum and Commodore 64 home computers. They finally realised that they had missed the boat big time as Nintendo rolled out their NES console system.

Despite the success of Atari's VCS system years before, the Nintendo Entertainment System was the first simple plug in and play console to really infiltrate homes the whole world over. With the further help of software produced by arcade giants Namco alongside their own popular games like *Donkey Kong*, Nintendo didn't take long to establish themselves as the videogame kings. Sony, meanwhile, could do little but wait in the wings and bide their time.

DISASTER STRUCK. ONE DAY BEFORE THE 1991 SCES, NINTENDO PULLED OUT OF THE CONTRACT WITH SONY

The Nintendo Years

Sony finally saw the perfect opportunity to gain a foothold in the expanding and dynamic video games market in 1990, when they entered into a fateful liaison with Nintendo.

The success of Nintendo's NES system had been overshadowed at the end of the eighties by the arrival of a fantastic new 16bit console from Sega – the Mega Drive. Boasting fantastic graphics, speed and an impressive array of software, the Mega Drive had redefined what was expected by the consumer from home consoles. It became the benchmark. And whilst Nintendo tried to combat it with their own 16bit system (the Super NES or SNES), they had to admit that whilst sales went well in Japan, Sega were miles ahead in sales as far as the rest of the world was concerned. Then Sega announced that they would be launching a CD-based add-on drive for their system – The Mega CD. Nintendo, afraid of being left behind, quickly opened discussions with Sony to help develop their own Sony system. It seemed a wise move. After all, along with Philips, Sony had invented the CD. Ken Kataragi and his System G team showed Nintendo the work they had done so far and a deal was struck. Sony looked to be entering the games arena hand-in-hand with arguably the biggest player in the marketplace.

Disaster struck. One day after Sony proudly announced its future plans with Nintendo at 1991's Summer Consumer Electronic Show, Nintendo pulled out of the contract and announced instead that it would be working with Philips on the CD drive. Of course, this project never came to fruition (Philips were busy working on their CDi technology), but somewhere in Japanese research labs a furious and determined Sony continued with the development of their spurned system. And so the PlayStation proper was conceived from the ashes of the Super Disc project.

All Alone

Without Nintendo, Sony faced what would seem like an impossible task in bringing the PlayStation to market. As a company they had no games heritage. There was no arcade division to rely upon for killer software, and no in-house development team. They did attempt to produce a couple of games for the Mega Drive and Mega CD systems, but these were pretty poor and did not really do anything to enhance their games reputation.

They also had no real experience in a fast growing and incredibly competitive market. But what they did have was a new machine that wouldn't now be bogged down by a dated heritage (the SNES was looking extremely long in the tooth by now), a shit-hot marketing division and the backing of a megacorporation who had finances necessary to invest all the muscle their new project needed.

Not only had Nintendo made a

Four of the early PlayStation games that established the console in the hearts of games players. L-R: *Alien Trilogy*, *Cool Boarders*, *Crash Bandicoot*, *Resident Evil*

mistake in turning down Sony's PlayStation CD drive, they had also pissed off arcade developer Namco's boss, Masaya Nakamura, some time earlier by forcing him to sign a particularly stifling contract. Nakamura filed a lawsuit for monopolistic practices against Nintendo, but he was later forced to withdraw it. As a result, Namco were more than happy to bring their arcade background and technologies to Sony, and, of course, Ridge Racer.

Sony quickly signed up the development services of Psygnosis before going out and acquiring them outright, a union that brought in seminal releases like *WipEout* and *Destruction Derby*. Very soon the list of experienced and respected teams that were requesting development kits for the console was growing beyond all expectations as more and more publishers quickly picked up on the PlayStation 'vibe'.

The Japanese giants were moving quickly and shrewdly, and before the rest of the games world knew it, a new age was dawning.

***Tekken*, *WipEout* and *Worms* were all big sellers in the first days of the PlayStation and continue to sell on Platinum**

March '94

It was in March 1994 that the world actually got to witness the power of PlayStation for the first time. Obviously what was on display was little more than an exhibition of the technological capability – the PlayStation itself had still not been designed to fit into the slick grey box we have today. In fact, it looked more like a PC; but onlookers gasped in awe as Sony employees manipulated a dinosaur head before their very eyes using only a joypad. The dinosaur was a T-Rex, and this may be the inspiration behind the working title for the PlayStation 2, currently under development. The level of realism was astounding. This demonstration became so legendary that a full-bodied version of the T-Rex was actually included on the Demo Disc 1 that accompanied the first PlayStation units into the market a little later.

PLAYSTATION WAS LAUNCHED IN JAPAN DECEMBER 1994. BY THE FOLLOWING MAY IT HAD SOLD 1 MILLION UNITS

The first PlayStation unit proper was launched in Japan on 3rd December 1994, and by May of the following year over 1,000,000 units had been sold. In the UK we had to wait until September 29th 1995 to get our hands on the PAL version of the console, but as with other territories, the 32bit wonder console proved to be unstoppable, selling over 50,000 units within a month.

Simply put, the PlayStation game console has proved to be the most successful next generation console bar none. Figures on March 5th 1999 showed that more than 50 million PlayStation game consoles had shipped world-wide, becoming an accepted part of the home entertainment set-up in most houses in the 20th Century, but what about the future? What will a new millennium hold for the 'Station?

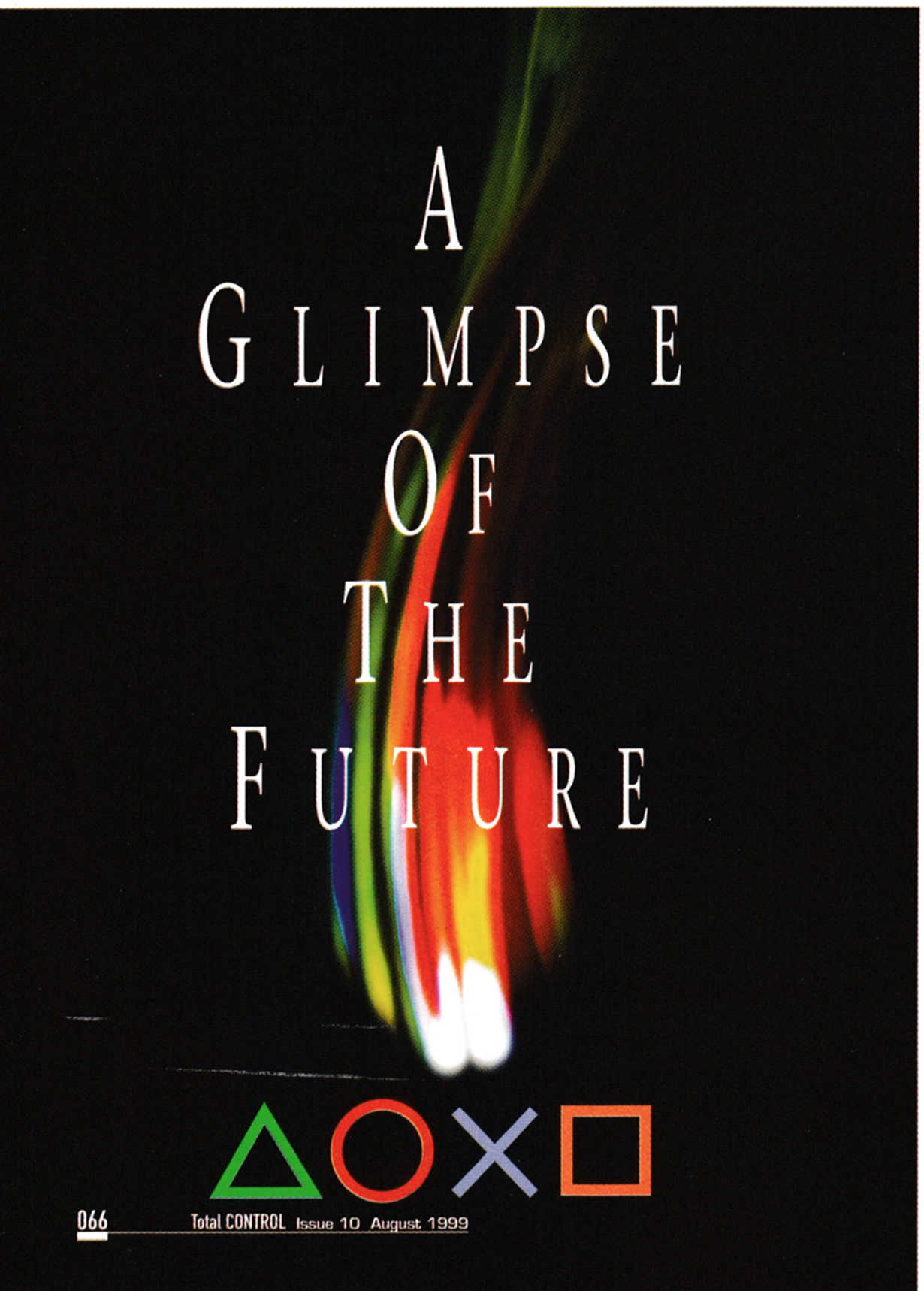
The immediate future of the PlayStation is assured, and the fact that the machine still continues to outsell the Dreamcast in Japan points to the fact that the PlayStation will remain popular long after the launch of Sony's next generation console. And while there is a market, software publishers will continue to exploit it – PlayStation has the potential to be the first format that will continue to sell as well as it has for many years to come.

The Next Generation of PlayStation

March 1999 saw the unveiling of Sony's next generation console. Along with the announcement came the promise that Sony would not be abandoning the original PlayStation, and the fact that the new machine is backwards compatible points to this being true. The boundaries have changed, however, and Sony are not aiming at just the videogame market that they helped to inflate. For example, Ken Kutaragi has stated that the next generation PlayStation will target people who use mobile phones, a different (potentially more wealthy) market than the original PlayStation went for.

This autumn's Tokyo Game Show will see the unveiling of the machine to the public for the first time, and we will also see some of the software that Sony have in mind for the console's release in March 2000 in Japan. What form this will take initially is hard to judge, especially because of Sony's promise to invent a "new form of digital entertainment". However, it is highly likely that Sony will take the 'safe' route initially and release videogames with an established reputation; we are thinking *Tekken 4*, a *Gran Turismo* game and probably a number of Square titles, possibly even a *Final Fantasy* game.

From here it seems that the success of PlayStation 2 is guaranteed, but there are a few factors that have to be taken into account. While Sega are currently struggling to establish the Dreamcast in Japan, Nintendo have announced that their own next generation console will be ready in time for the PlayStation 2's worldwide launch. Although Nintendo haven't been forthcoming with details on the console, it seems to be in direct competition with Sony's new machine. And, of course, we all know that you can't write off a company that is as experienced and aggressive as Nintendo. One thing's for sure: the consumer will be the one to win out. The next few years are going to be very interesting... TC



PlayStation

Specifications

Main CPU

- R3000A 32bit RISC chip @ 33.8mhz
- Manufactured by LSI Logic Corp.
- Operating capacity: 30 MIPS
- Bus Bandwidth: 132 Mb/sec
- Instruction Cache: 4 KB
- Data Cache: 1 KB
- Clock: 33.8688MHz

The main PlayStation CPU is licensed from SGI. It's a powerful little chip which wipes the floor with everything but the N64 and forthcoming next-next generation consoles. It has a very high bus band, which means it can perform extremely well with lots of colours and fast moving animations. Besides this though, the PlayStation has another four processors doing various jobs to take the load of the main one: a 66 MIPS high speed matrix processor for calculating 3D polygons (1.5 million flat-shaded polygons/sec, 500,000 texture-mapped and light-sourced polygons/sec); a graphics processor for displaying 2D sprites at 60 frames per second; a CD quality sound processor; an 80 MIPS Data Expansion Engine for decompressing graphics and sound data from the CD-ROM.
The sheer amount of data that can be handled by this weapons grade processor array means that the PlayStation is particularly hot on 3D games. But then you knew that already.

Data Engine (MDEC)

- Clearing capacity: 80 MIPS
- CPU, direct bus connection
- Also compatible with JPEG, H.261 files

This data engine is invaluable in the workings of the PlayStation – it helps cut down loading times as compressed data can be loaded from the CD. It offers high quality, full screen video and also decompresses graphics into the PlayStation's VRAM.

Memory

- Main RAM: 2 Megabytes (16Mbits)
- Video RAM: 1 Megabyte (8Mbits)
- Sound RAM: 512 Kilobytes (4Mbits)
- CD ROM buffer: 32 Kilobytes (256Kbits)
- OS ROM: 512 Kilobytes (4Mbits)
- RAM cards: 128 Kilobytes (1Mbit)

This may not look like a lot of RAM, especially if you have a PC. However, the PlayStation can store data in compressed form to be uncompressed during gameplay so the actual amount of RAM does not affect the running of the PlayStation.

Sound Capabilities

- ADPCM audio source
- 24 Channels
- 44.1KHz sample rate

Digital effects include:
Pitch Modulation

- Envelope
- Looping
- Digital Reverb

The PlayStation is superlative at recreating CD audio, but it does not have a lot of kick in creating its own sound. This, of course, causes no problems at all when the CD sound is of such high quality. The PlayStation also contains its own reverb unit which can be utilised in many ways – simply chuck in your favourite CD to try this out. If you want a real insight into the PlayStation's sound capabilities, play *WipEout*, or alternatively get yourself a copy of Codemasters' superb music creation suite, *MUSIC*.

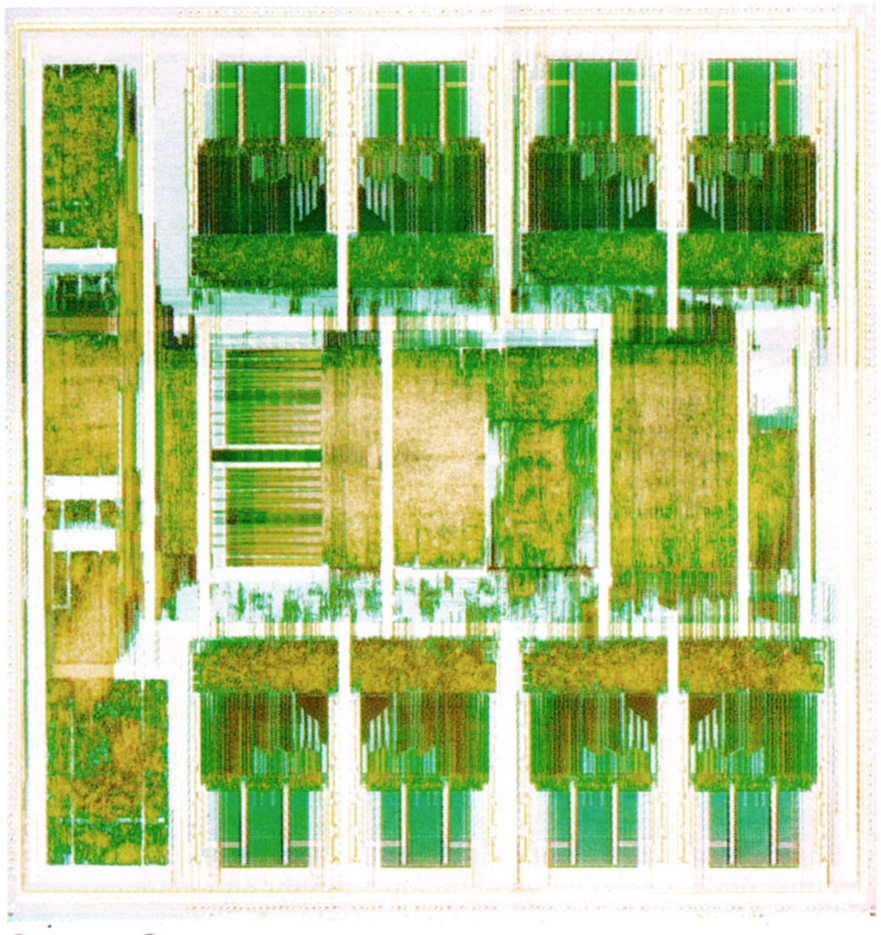
CD-ROM Drive
Data Transfer Rate (DMA TO RAM):

- 150 KB/sec. (Normal)
- 300 KB/sec. (Double speed)
- Maximum Capacity 660 Megabytes

Features:

- Audio CD play
- XA Interactive Audio

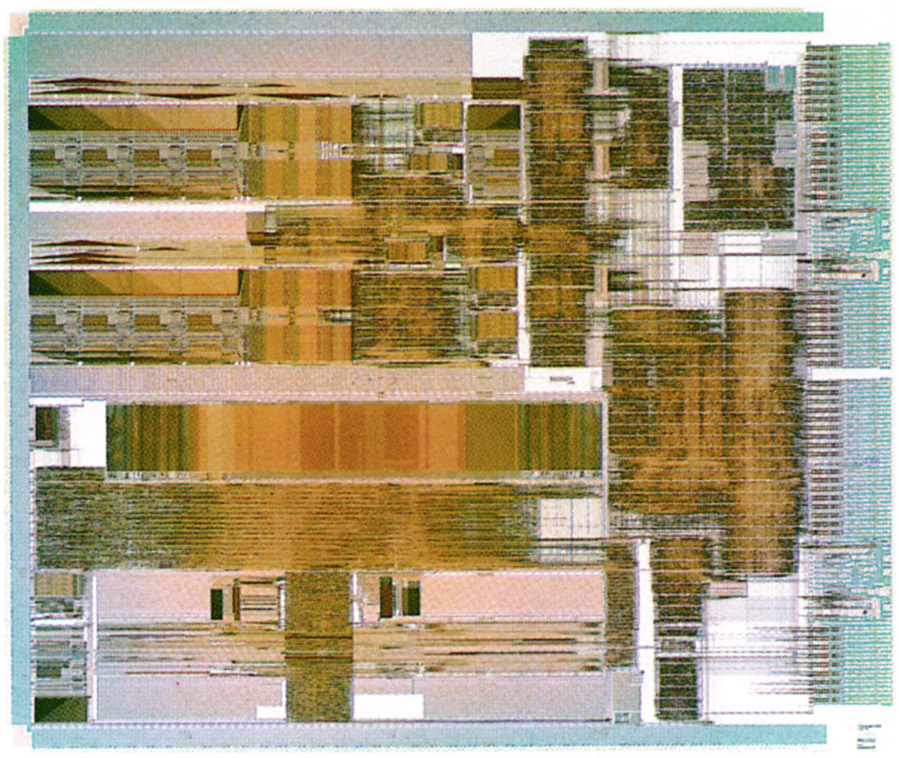
CD ROMs are pretty boring, we know. Especially when you're waiting for a game to load. Bear in mind though, that this is where it all starts, so it's lucky the PlayStation has one of the fastest CD-ROMs of all of the consoles.



GRAPHICS SYNTHESIZER

16.6mm x 16.8mm (279mm²)
42.7M transistors
0.25µm

©Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.



EMOTION ENGINE

17mm x 14.1mm (240mm²)
10.5M transistors
Design rule: 0.25µm
Drawn gate length: 0.18µm

©Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

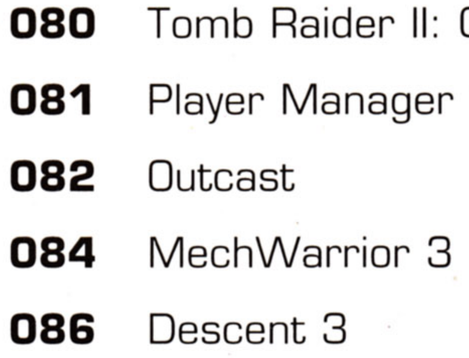
Above: the guts of the 'next generation PlayStation'. The combination of both the Graphics Synthesiser and Emotion Engine promises to be explosive

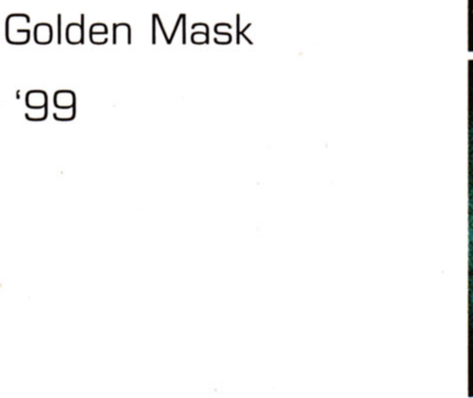
QUALITY CONTROL

CHRISLEONARD
e-mail: nickw@rapide.co.uk

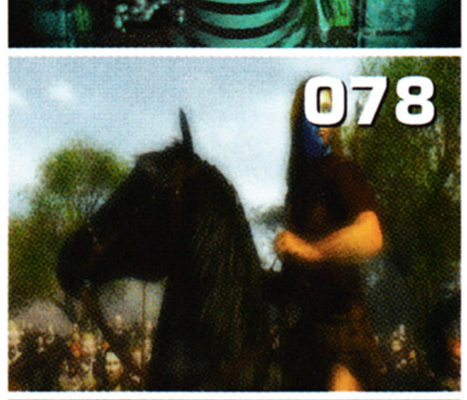
After we all feared a slow month games-wise, the office was deluged with some top drawer games – *Kingpin*, *Outcast*, *Braveheart*, *MechWarrior 3*, the long-delayed *Dungeon Keeper 2*, and *Descent 3*. *Kingpin* was at first pretty shocking but, worryingly, Will seemed to become a bit blasé about the incessant swearing and hugely over-the-top blood and gore. Thankfully, he disappeared off to Glastonbury just as we reached crisis point with our editorial content. Will also saw *Outcast* and was blown away by its epic scope and intelligent and involving gameplay, and *Braveheart* was also an impressive if ultimately over-complicated strategy game. We're all in favour of intelligent and challenging games at Total CONTROL, but sometimes it seems you can go a bit too far in this respect.

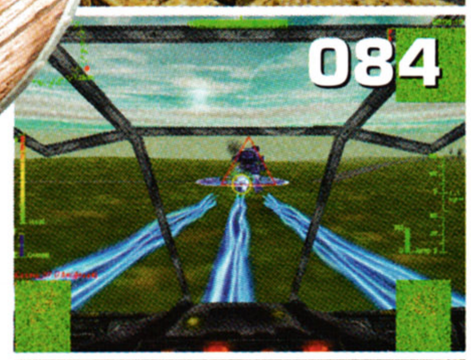
The other two games mentioned above were both well-received, although heated arguments ensued over whether *MechWarrior 3* was really better than the recent *Heavy Gear 2*, and everyone knew what to expect from the fun *Dungeon Keeper 2*. Something's just occurred to me, though: these games are the biggest and best we've reviewed this month, and yet they're all on the PC. No console game came close this month, and judging by this month's reviews, the PC is THE platform for games. I'm sure this is a one-off and the consoles will make a comeback next month. Maybe...





070 Ape Escape
072 Dungeon Keeper 2
074 F1 World GP 2
075 Super Mario Deluxe
076 Austin Powers: Operation Trivia
Lucky Luke • Obelix
077 Street Wars
078 Braveheart
080 Tomb Raider II: Golden Mask
081 Player Manager '99
082 Outcast
084 MechWarrior 3
086 Descent 3
087 Syphon Filter
088 Kingpin
090 Charlie Blasts • Lode Runner
091 World Driver Championship





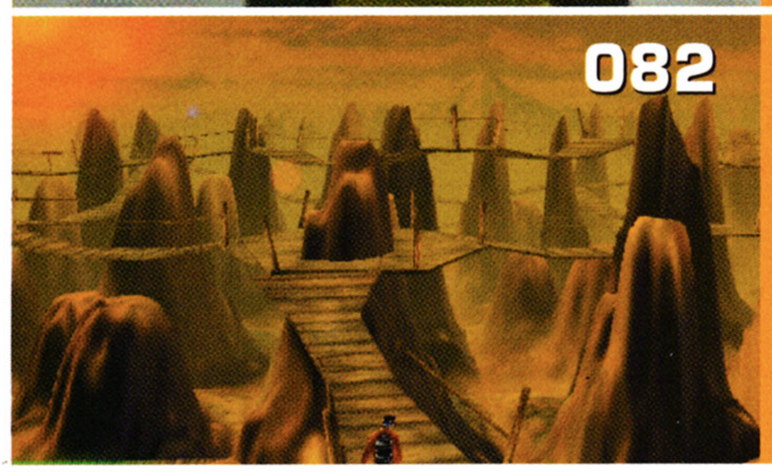
90+ AWARD
Be sure to look out for our prestigious 90+ award, but don't expect to see it on every other review. We don't endorse games in this manner unless they really warrant it.

Ape Escape

Monkey see, monkey do. That's exactly what happens when a bunch of monkeys escape from a laboratory and decide to conquer the world. It's up to you to save the human race from enslavement in Sony's cutesy 3D platformer.

Formula One World GP 2

The follow up to argubly the best N64 Formula One racing game. Will the sequel iron out the flaws from the original and make this a racer to rival those seen on PlayStation?



Outcast

Infogrames have promised a real time game world, an epic storyline and some ground breaking action-adventure style gameplay. How can *Outcast* possibly live up to our high expectations?

VERDICT RATINGS

0 – 25

Generally speaking the games falling into this category are so pig ugly that not even their own mothers could care less about them. Perhaps the problem is that the programmers felt the same way? Please consider any game receiving a rating this low to be hazardous to your mental health – we're not scoring it this badly for fun you know! You wouldn't believe the grief we get from publishers for giving out these scores, but we're here to serve you, nobody else.

26 – 50

A below average game, but one which at least has some redeeming features. Certain aspects of these titles might be on a par with those scoring more highly, but if a game scores below 50% you can assume that it is flawed when seen as a complete package. Die-hard fans of a particular genre might still enjoy these games, but as a general rule you'll be better off saving your money. We might get sent games for free, but you don't, and we won't forget that.

51 – 75

Any game that achieves a score of over 50% should be considered an above average title worthy of your attention – especially if you're a fan of the genre. Most of these titles will not disappoint, they probably just lack that certain something that separates a good game from a great game. Please note that as our method of scoring is different to those in other magazines, a similar score in another publication might not represent a product of comparable quality.

76 – 100

These are the games that make buying the systems they appear on worthwhile. A lot of games players have access to more than one format nowadays, and these games are the reason why. Games achieving scores of 90% and above in particular can be considered highly recommended. We won't be giving out scores that high too often, so if you're thinking of purchasing a game that we've seen fit to endorse in this way, what are you waiting for?

INFORMATION

INFORMATION

INFORMATION	
PLATFORM	PlayStation
PUBLISHER	Sony
DEVELOPER	Namco
STYLE	Beat-'em-up
RELEASE	£34.99
PRICE	Out Now
PLAYERS	1-2
ANALOGUE	No
DUAL SHOCK	Yes
SAVE GAME	Memory card

This is where you can find out everything you need to know about the game reviewed. The information box is different for each format and includes everything from the release date and price to more specific details such as how many blocks it will take up on your PlayStation memory card or whether the game takes advantage of your Nintendo 64 Rumble Pak. Note that the PC version of the box will occasionally contain both the minimum and recommended specifications required to run the game.

TAKING CONTROL

TAKING CONTROL

TAKING CONTROL

You need only watch the intro sequence to understand just how special *Tekken 3* really is. With all the style of a Hollywood blockbuster, it grabs you by the throat and draws you in to the whole experience. The first play is equally satisfying; silky smooth animation, plenty of impressive moves and a great selection of very different characters. Everything here has been polished until it shines.

What did we think of the game after 20 minutes or so? Needless to say there are games which might seem like a waste of time for the first hour or so but which reward perseverance. By the same token there are those that seem great when you test them for ten minutes in your local software emporium but can disappoint once you've played them at home for a longer time. This is our way of warning you about games where your first impressions may not be reliable enough to base your purchasing decision on.

OTHER FORMATS?

OTHER FORMATS?

OTHER FORMATS?

PC ●○○○○

Namco have not released a game on the PC to date. We would love to think that *Tekken 3* could be the game to buck the trend, but it's extremely unlikely.

N64 ○○○○○

Although a few of Namco's minor titles have made it to the N64, Sony's deal means that there is as much chance as no chance of *Tekken* appearing on the N64.

The review you are reading may not be for a game currently confirmed for release on your machine. However, Total CONTROL is a genuine multi-format magazine. This means that at every opportunity we will be keeping you fully informed of any developments affecting you and the machines that you own. The Other Formats boxout is a prime example of this, a probability rating of 1-5 indicates what we consider to be the likelihood of the featured game ever appearing on your machine, while the accompanying text explains our reasoning or that of the company concerned.

VERDICT

VERDICT

VERDICT

GAME NAME	Tekken 3
GRAPHICS	95
SOUND	92
PLAYABILITY	95
OVERALL	94
Out of 100	

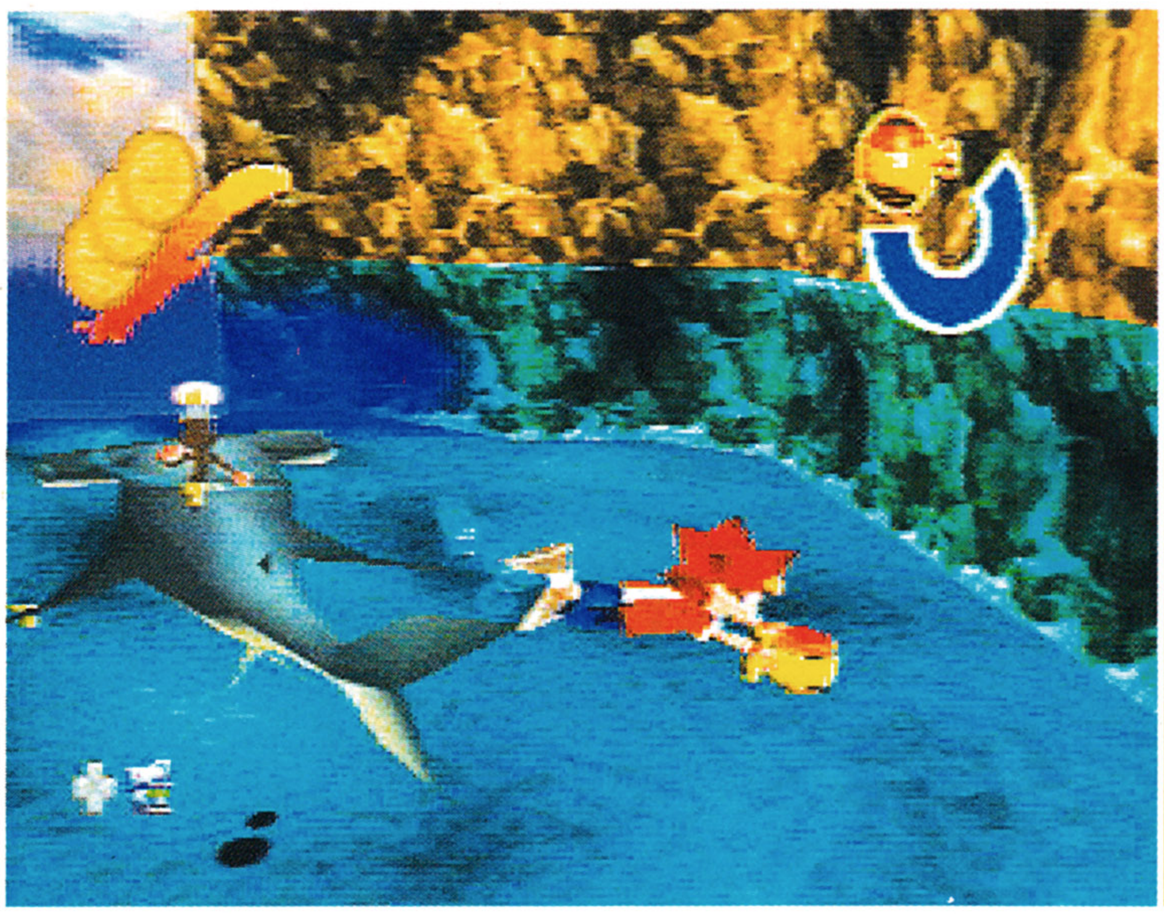
With scores given in three categories before arriving at a final score you can see exactly where the game's strengths and weaknesses lie. Don't necessarily expect the overall score to be a mathematical average of the other three though, the playability rating will generally carry a lot more weight than the other two. And how important the scores for sound and graphics are will vary according to the style of the game reviewed. It's also important to note that we at Total CONTROL have different ideas about percentages than many of our competition; see the diagram and explanations on the left for a breakdown of exactly how scores are awarded in Total CONTROL. Ignore the verdict box at your peril!

TAKING CONTROL

There's no getting away from the similarities between this game and Planet of the Apes – time travel, world domination and, of course, monkeys. I'm amazed that it's never been done before. When you first start playing the game you'll notice how similar it is to almost every 3D platformer on the PlayStation, but then the gadgets start to kick in and the gameplay takes a twist for the better...

Ape Escape

What happens when **monkeys escape from captivity and decide they want to rule** the world? It could happen, you know... all it takes is **a talking monkey and a time machine...**



INFORMATION

FORMAT	PlayStation
PUBLISHER	Sony
DEVELOPER	SCE
STYLE	3D Platformer
RELEASE	Out Now
PRICE	£34.99
PLAYERS	One
DUAL SHOCK	Yes
ANALOGUE	Required
SAVE GAME	Memory Card

Try as they might, PlayStation developers can't seem to match the quality of 3D platformers that Nintendo's N64 has enjoyed. It has not been for the want of trying; *Gex 3D*, *Croc*, and more recently *Spyro* have all tried to emulate the success of *Banjo-Kazooie* et al with certain a degree of success, but mostly a hefty slice of failure.

Well, *Ape Escape* is not the game that will change all this, but it is the closest thing that the PlayStation has to a Nintendo platformer.

The story is a delightful one of evil monkeys escaping a laboratory and travelling back in time to rewrite history and become the dominant species on the planet (if only it was really true...). You play the role of Spike, a friend of the scientist whose time machine it is, and you have to follow the monkeys and return them to the present.

The basic premise of *Ape Escape* is to capture a certain number of monkeys per level. This is done by using your 'time net', a device that will transport the monkeys back through time to the present day. Obviously you'll have to get up close enough to them to use it, and this is where the cunning comes in. You could try the head on approach

RETRACING YOUR STEPS BACK TO EACH LEVEL TO CAPTURE EVERY MONKEY ON THE COURSES GIVE THE GAME A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF REPLAY VALUE, BUT THIS WILL ONLY APPEAL TO THE HARD-CORE AMONGST YOU

and launch yourself towards the critters, but more often than not they just turn tail and leg it. They may also decide to punch you, shoot you, or even jump into a UFO! No, you'll have to use more stealth if you are to get some of the more aware monkeys, and you can sneak up on them fairly successfully by using the crawl function, although more covert techniques will be needed later on.

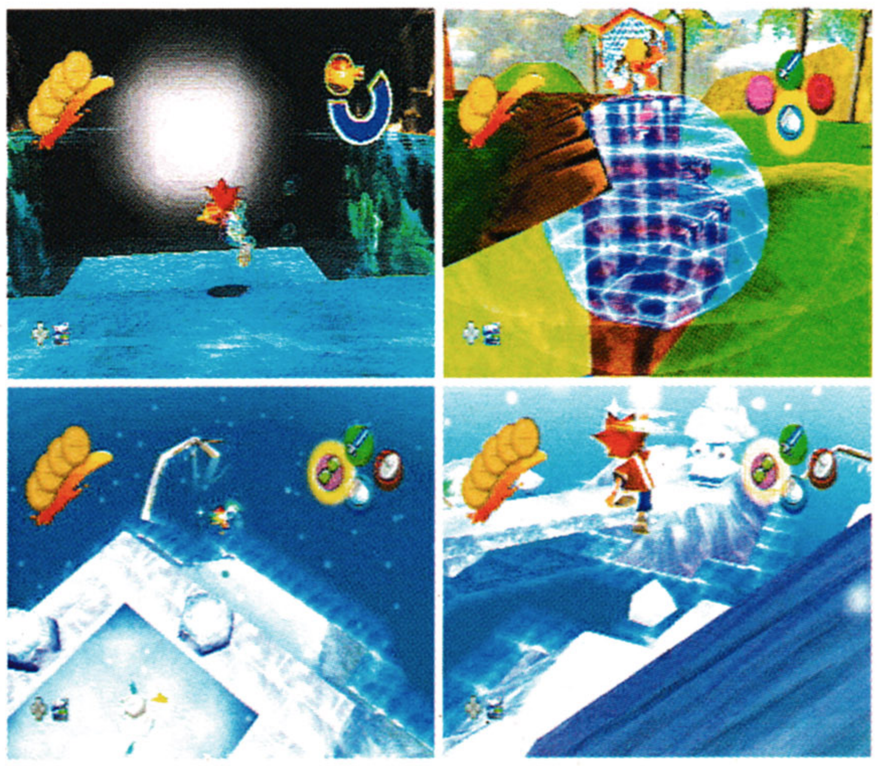
All weapons and gadgets (and there is an imaginative selection on offer from hula-hoops to remote controlled cars) are controlled using the right analogue stick. Depending on the weapon you are using, your action on the analogue stick will change. Using the net, for example, is fairly straightforward: pushing in the direction you want to use it will result in… you using it in that direction! However, if you are using the slingshot, you'll have to prime it by pulling back on the stick; releasing the stick will fire the bolt. There are plenty of different gadgets that are introduced at points in the game, and each one must be learnt if you are to capture the monkeys.

Run Away!

There is too much here that has been seen before, though. The level where you enter the mouth of a giant turtle is straight out of *Banjo-Kazooie*, and once inside the level takes on an all-too-familiar *Zelda 64* look (the part inside the fish's belly). There are plenty of similarities – the control method is the main one – and it's not too difficult to see where the developers got their 'inspiration' from.

Unfortunately, where *Ape Escape* really falls down against the likes of *Banjo-Kazooie* is that it just doesn't last long enough or show enough variation. Monotony will set in fairly early on in the game, although it does attempt to engage you via the introduction of new gadgets. The trouble is that the ideas hinted at are rarely expanded upon to their full potential. The rowing boat, for example, is controlled by rotating both analogue sticks. As would be the case in a real rowing boat, this is also used for turning, and rowing faster on one side causes the boat to move in that direction. Now this is brilliantly implemented but is not used to its full potential – it's merely used as a device to cross areas of water that could otherwise be crossed by swimming. Where are the white water rapids? Where are the time trials in the boat? This continues throughout the game and is the main disappointment; *Ape Escape* is full of Rare-esque ideas but it doesn't implement them with the panache that Rare would have.

Retracing your steps back to each level to capture every monkey on the courses gives the game a certain amount of replay value, but this will only appeal to the hard-core amongst you. The overall feeling is that *Ape Escape* had the potential to be a great game but it just doesn't go nearly far enough. It's up there with the best on the PlayStation, but it won't win any N64 lovers over to Sony's machine. **Nick**



Unfortnately, not much thought has gone in the level settings

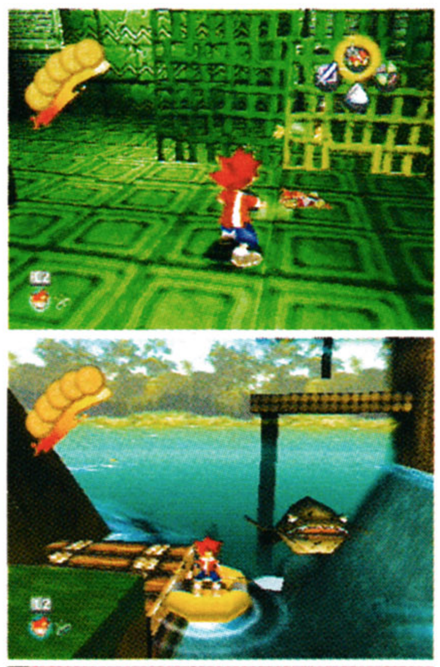
DIG THAT MONKEY RADAR

By far the coolest gadget on offer is the monkey radar. Using the right analogue, you can move the dish around – a strong beeping sound means that there's a monkey in that direction. Once discovered, you can go to a live feed and find out everything about the monkey in question!

OTHER FORMATS?

PC ○○○○○

Can't see this ever being released on PC in any form whatsoever.



The T-Rex is pretty impressive

VERDICT

GAME NAME	Ape Escape
GRAPHICS	70
SOUND	60
PLAYABILITY	79
OVERALL	79
Out of 100	

TOTAL CONTROL 90+ AWARD

DK2 shows torture can be fun

Dungeon Keeper 2

Bullfrog rarely put a foot wrong – **the sequel to the classic '97 cult hit** is here at last and looks set to follow the steps of its predecessor into the **PC hall of fame...**

In the crazy world of computer games today, few companies really manage to make a name for themselves even with the most consistently high quality titles. Bullfrog are one of few exceptions. You may have heard of a few of their previous titles – *Populous*, *Theme Park*, *Magic Carpet*, *Syndicate* and, of course, *Dungeon Keeper*. Each title and their respective sequels all share a common similarity – innovation. Each brought a new and original game idea and built upon it until the end result was nothing short of spectacular, and their sequels never disappointed. This is the reason *Dungeon Keeper 2* has been so eagerly awaited by so many. The question is: how have Bullfrog managed to improve on their massive '97 success?

Dr. Evil

In *Dungeon Keeper 2* you once again take on the role of Evil, using your power to mould and shape a dungeon in an attempt to build up an unstoppable army of violent, backstabbing, generally unpleasant creatures. This time the plot is much more structured and you do have a ultimate goal. You must storm the underground dungeons collecting scattered gems from each Lord of the Land. Once achieved, you will be

TAKING CONTROL

Because the viewpoint is not standard isometric, it is stretched at the top to show a trapezium area of the level – the look is initially confusing. There is so much detail crammed into the world and so much more going on than before, which makes it perhaps more confusing to get to grips with than it should be. However, those of you that have played the first game will adapt to the sequel without much trouble and, as before, the early levels are essentially for training. *DK2* is well put together, and from the first fifteen minutes has all the trademarks of a superb game

INFORMATION

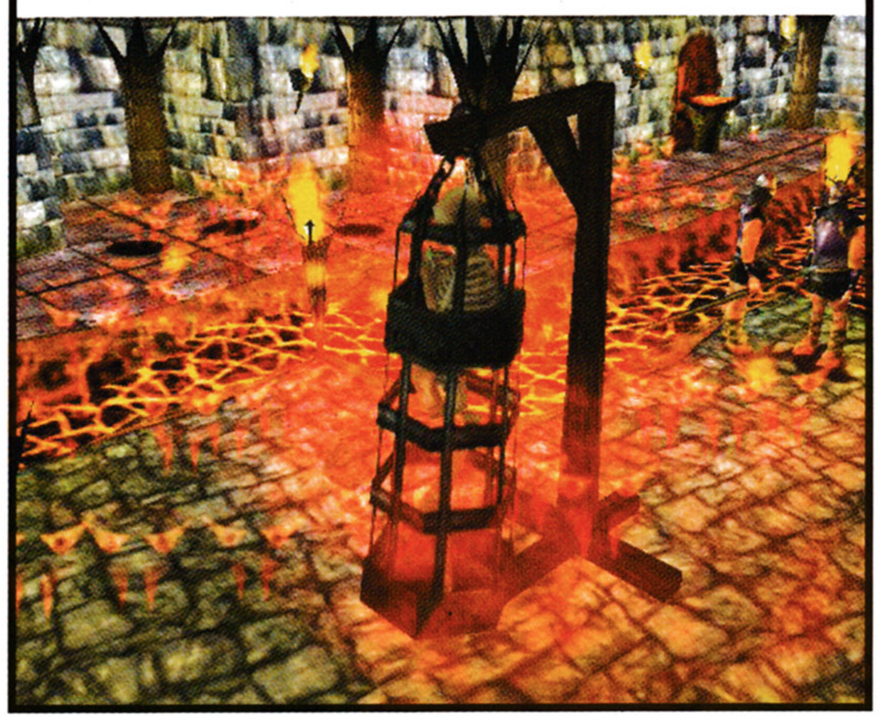
FORMAT	PC
PUBLISHER	Electronic Arts
DEVELOPER	Bullfrog
STYLE	Strategy
RELEASE	July
PRICE	£39.99
PLAYERS	1-4
PROCESSOR	P166 P266
MEMORY	32MB 64MB
DISK SPACE	258MB
3D ACCELERATOR	Optional

FIRST BLOOD

A lot of focus has obviously been placed on the first-person mode. Using the possession spell you can 'become' any of your creatures and have access to their unique abilities. The Dark Elf, for example, has a unique sniper mode allowing him to pick off enemies from a distance. Other creatures can cast their own spells such as heal or raise the dead. You can also group creatures from this mode and lead an attack on an enemy stronghold. This is often necessary as you can only pick and drop creatures on claimed territory, and by asking them to follow you, attacks can be made deep within the enemy base.

MULTIPLAYER

Like any game, *Dungeon Keeper 2* is best played with other opponents, of which up to four can play at once. It can be excellent, but the AI of the computer controlled opponents is exceptionally high too, so if you want you can play games against the computer and not miss out the fun if you don't have Internet or network options.



able to open a portal to the sunlit world above you and do battle with the heroes of good on their own ground. The Horned Reaper now plays a much different role; unlike the first game, you never have any amount of control over him. The two of you maintain an uneasy alliance that has become necessary since he is the only creature with the power to hold all 20 gems and open the portal. Occasionally you are able to summon him, after which you simply sit back and watch as he single-handedly demolishes anything in his path, including your own creatures on occasion. If you don't treat him well, he can prove as much of a threat to you as he can to your enemies.

Although it is possible through the use of the possession spell, you generally have no direct control over the minions in your dungeon. You can pick and drop creatures around the levels. If there is a task that suits them waiting nearby they will see to it, but each creature acts independently of you. The Imps form the backbone of every Dungeon. They are your workforce and will dig out any areas that you select. They also lay floor tiles (which is necessary before you build rooms), mine and collect gold, reinforce your walls, retrieve unconscious enemies to take them to the prison, and now will also retrieve unconscious allies to take them back to their lair before they perish. Unlike the first game, Imps are created with mana instead of gold. Mana is collected by your dungeon heart and is the life-force of your dungeon. You gain more as you claim more floor tiles and it is spent on your imps, magical traps and on spells. The room list is just as impressive now: new additions such as the Casino and Combat Pit take the place of the Scavenger Room. All of the creatures that you can tempt into your dungeon excel in different areas – some will not accept physical work at all, others will lose interest after time, and others will simply be unable to perform the task at hand. The tasks in question include spell and room research, trap and door development, and guard duty. Most of your other creatures should be confined to the training rooms. Creatures will no longer be able to reach their full potential in the training room – the combat pit is necessary for them to advance over level 4, and only actual combat can advance them over level 7.

Brain stew

Dungeon Keeper 2 is essentially the same game as it was before. There are many improvements, but the overall effect is not as influential as we had hoped. Perhaps the best new element is the level structure. The original did not offer a huge challenge; almost every level could be won by biding your time and waiting for your creatures to reach a high experience level. Now this is a much less plausible solution. The game makes you think much more and pushes you to experiment with every item, trap and spell. The structure of your dungeon makes a big difference to your potential success – resisting the temptation to expand quickly is often wise as you leave many areas exposed and highly vulnerable. Of course, the big difference is the graphics, which are at times absolutely stunning, but at the same time the irregularity of the rooms and walls as well as the number of pyrotechnical effects and the distorted viewpoint can make it initially confusing.

THE STRUCTURE OF YOUR DUNGEON MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE TO YOUR POTENTIAL SUCCESS – RESISTING THE TEMPTATION TO EXPAND QUICKLY IS OFTEN WISE AS YOU LEAVE MANY AREAS EXPOSED AND HIGHLY VULNERABLE

Rather than taking the game to a whole new level, Bullfrog have built on and around the existing idea. The end result is a game that is every bit as good as the original was at the time of its release. Newcomers who enjoy a bit of strategy will lose large potions of their life after they buy it, and while fans of the first game may be disappointed at the lack of any major advances in the gameplay, few could argue that the first game was better, and they will enjoy this every bit as much and probably more. Bullfrog have done it again with *Dungeon Keeper 2*. It's a classic game that no fun-loving strategy fan should go without. **Will**

The use of lighting is impressive. While the game runs smoothly with a graphics card, software can slow the frame rate right down

SOFTWARE VS 3D

The software renderer is nothing short of spectacular. The textures look almost as crisp as they do when running in hardware mode, and most of you will have trouble separating the pictures shown here (all grabbed in software mode) with the others on the page. The problem is that this takes a serious toll on the frame rate, so unless you have a ridiculously high speed processor, you will need to turn a lot of the effects off to bring the game back into playable limits.

OTHER FORMATS?

N64 ○○○○○

Not likely considering the lack of conversion of any similar game to this platform. If you want something similar, hold out for *C&C*, which is as close as you'd get to this on the N64.

PlayStation ●●●●●

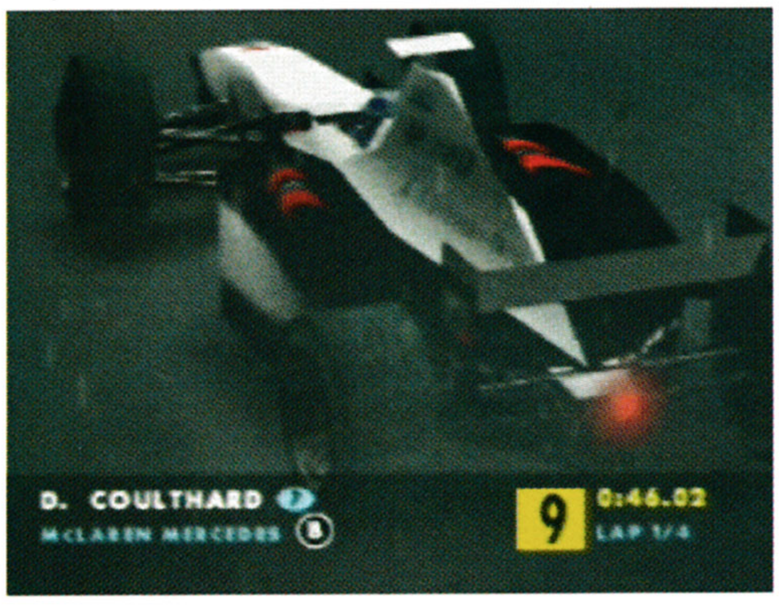
Like Bullfrog's *Populous: The Beginning*, a conversion to the PlayStation has been in the works for quite some time this should be released by the end of the summer.

Dreamcast ●●○○○

There has been no announcement so far, but there is no reason why *DK2* shouldn't make it over to the Dreamcast at some point in the future. We'd certainly love to see it happen.

VERDICT

GAME NAME	Dungeon Keeper 2
GRAPHICS	92
SOUND	93
PLAYABILITY	91
OVERALL Out of 100	92



Formula 1 World Grand Prix 2

TAKING CONTROL

The temptation to simply floor it and rely on barriers and other cars to slow you down into corners just doesn't work. Concepts such as braking and a good knowledge of every bend are important to grasp. The track tutorial which details each corner of each track with a drive-through and commentary will help.

INFORMATION

FORMAT	N64
PUBLISHER	Nintendo
DEVELOPER	Paradigm
STYLE	F1 Sim
RELEASE	Out Now
PRICE	£44.99
PLAYERS	1-2
RUMBLE PAK	Yes
SAVE GAME	Battery back up
EXPANSION PAK	Not supported

You can't edit drivers' names

Unless I'm **mistaken,** I've seen and played this before... **I am much mistaken!**

It's been a sad season for Brits in F1, what with Damon Hill announcing his retirement, David Coulthard failing to win a single race and Michael Schumacher leading the driver's championship at the time of writing. World Grand Prix 2 will at least give you the opportunity to rectify matters in some small way, but whether it improves sufficiently on the original is the big question. First up, all the teams are updated to the 1998 season but there's no edit option, which is instantly annoying. It means Ralf Schumacher is still with Jordan, the Tyrrell team is still there and there's no BAR. Also, as with every other official F1 licence, Jacques Villeneuve's name cannot be included because he holds a separate trademark for it. You might think this sounds a bit petty, but a game setting itself up as an F1 simulation is aiming directly at fans of the sport, who in turn will want everything as up to date as possible. A simple name editor would have instantly erased all these problems, including that of Villeneuve's absence, with no effort at all. As it is, Williams' first driver is simply called 'Williams' and appears only as a shadow in the driver profiles section where you can view mugshots and Grand Prix stats for all the other drivers.

THERE ARE A FEW AIDS LIKE STEERING AND BRAKE ASSISTANCE IF YOU WANT THEM, BUT OBVIOUSLY SUCH OPTIONS ARE STRICTLY FOR WIMPS

Aside from that, the range of options is impressive – single races, full GP season and the cool challenge mode where you get to experience real scenarios from the 1998 season. For example, David Coulthard was leading at Imola with two laps to go when he had a gearbox problem. With Schumacher 20 seconds or so back, you take over and have to maintain the lead to the end without overheating the gears. This makes a nice challenge and good diversion from the serious business of racing.

Winning formula

The racing itself is challenging, but somehow it just fails to capture that feeling of actually driving a car. The physics aren't quite right, and this lets the simulation down.

V-Rally owners looking for a new challenge had better be warned that *World GP 2*, like its older brother, is still very much a simulation rather than an arcade driving game. You have to think about things like slowing down and keeping to the racing line to

get the best time possible. There are a few aids like steering and brake assistance if you want them, but obviously such options are strictly for wimps. Once you get to grips with the car you can go in and tinker with the set-up. This element is very well done indeed, with front and rear wing, gear ratios, fuel load and tyres all adjustable.

The graphics are reasonable. The teams are all recognisable, although the fogging and resolution make the weather look fairly bleak no matter what the conditions. The problem is it's just not different enough to the original. It's better in most respects, but only slightly. The collisions are better, the in-car view is now much smoother and more playable, and the front end has been jazzed up. However, the options are all the same, and even the graphics don't look any different. Although it's certainly the best F1 simulation on the N64, the bottom line is 50 quid is too much to be expected to shell out for a few tweaks. If you don't own the original and you're an F1 fan this, though far from perfect, is your best option. If you have the original though, think very carefully before parting with your cash. Put it this way – if this were a PC game it would be a freely downloadable patch designed to correct issues which should have been addressed in the original anyway. **Miles**

REAL LIFE DRIVING

While the N64 has a glut of futuristic racing games, there is little to shout about in terms of cars on roads. *V-Rally* attempted to rectify the situation and was, to a certain extent, a good attempt. However, it is only really the F1 games – this game's predecessor and Ubi Soft's *Monaco Grand Prix*, that have come close to the playability and speed of the PlayStation's equivalents. If you want 'real' racing then this is about as good as you'll get – or you could wait for *Ridge Racer 64*...

OTHER FORMATS?

PlayStation ○○○○○

You've already got F1 from Psygnosis.

PC ○○○○○

The PC already has plenty of F1 games, and with *GP3* coming ever closer, all bases are very much covered.

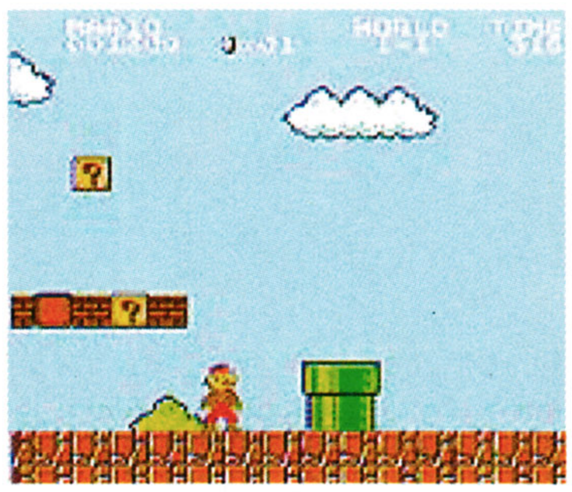
Dreamcast ●●○○○

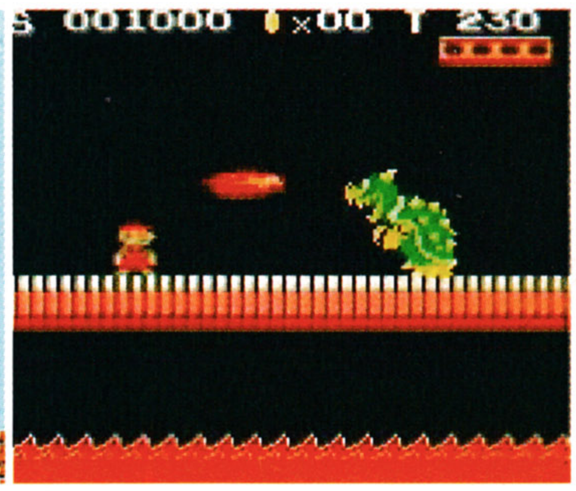
Not impossible, but there's *Monaco GP* already.

VERDICT

GAME NAME	F1 World GP 2
GRAPHICS	70
SOUND	72
PLAYABILITY	75
OVERALL Out of 100	72

Super Mario Bros. Deluxe





Not a remake of the original Game Boy version but a conversion of the 1985 NES title that started it all. *Super Mario Bros. Deluxe* is a classic title with one of the most prestigious histories a computer game could hope to have.

You already know the basic formula of the game – the conversion is very strong, but some parts of the levels have been changed to accommodate the Game Boy Color. There are loads of new features and bonuses: once a level has been competed you can access it in the challenge mode where you must collect a number of red coins, find one of Yoshi's eggs and complete the level with enough points to beat the high score. Achieving each of the above will earn you other bonus features. There is also a calendar feature, pages and pages of artwork, a number of stickers that can display personalised messages and much more, all of which can be outputted on the Game Boy printer.

INFORMATION

FORMAT	Game Boy
PUBLISHER	Nintendo
DEVELOPER	Nintendo
STYLE	Platform
RELEASE	Out Now
PRICE	£19.99
PLAYERS	1-2 (Simultaneous)
GAME BOY COLOUR	Required

THIS IS A CLASSIC TITLE, EASILY RANKING AS ONE OF THE BEST GAME BOY COLOR GAMES

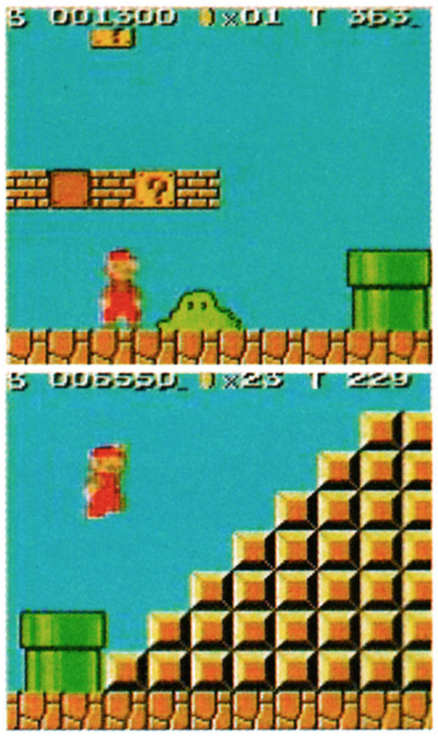
VERDICT

GAME NAME	Super Mario Deluxe
GRAPHICS	84
SOUND	93
PLAYABILITY	89
OVERALL Out of 100	89

Want two play?

There is also a simultaneous two player option. This is essentially a race to the finish, but there are several new types of blocks and buttons that can hinder your opponent's progress. If you do well enough in the single player game, you can race against Boo The Ghost instead.

Like *Zelda DX*, *Super Mario Bros. Deluxe* is a must-buy for any self-respecting Game Boy Color owner, and especially anyone who has not played the original. Although it does not play quite as well as *Super Mario Land*, which was designed specifically for the format, this is a classic title with an immense replay value, easily ranking as one of the best Game Boy Color games released so far. **Will**



Classic Mario action – you can't go wrong really

Lucky Luke

French cartoon hero on GB

Yep, it's another Infogrames Game Boy Color platformer. Set in the Wild West, this sideways scrolling romp has more diversity than most of its ilk. The twelve levels differ quite a lot: some have a typical platform style, demanding use of your pistol, fists and dynamite plus various other objects that you you'll find; other levels see you attempting to stop trains, evading rampaging buffalo and other obstacles on a stagecoach ride.

The gameplay is very strong and the levels are surprisingly big. There is actually quite a lot of challenge here, especially on its hardest difficulty setting, and the variation means that the game manages to hold your interest for a while. Although passwords are given every three levels, once you have completed them they pose little challenge again – this is a game where certain strategies have guaranteed success in each difficult area.

Lucky Luke is one of the better Game Boy platform titles, but it has trouble standing out in comparison to the sizeable competition. Although it's a bigger game, it's not as good as *Bugs and Lola*, Infogrames' previous platform title, but fans of these games won't go far wrong with this. **Will**

INFORMATION	
FORMAT	Game Boy
PUBLISHER	Infogrames
DEVELOPER	Fernando Velez
STYLE	Platform
RELEASE	June
PRICE	£19.99
GAME BOY COLOR	Required

VERDICT	
GAME NAME	Lucky Luke
GRAPHICS	78
SOUND	82
PLAYABILITY	75
OVERALL	75
Out of 100	

Asterix and Obelix

More **cartoon platform** action

Asterix and Obelix is far from original: it's a sideways scrolling platformer, allowing you to take on the roles of either of the two main title characters as you bash your way through hordes of Romans, jump over precipices and the like.

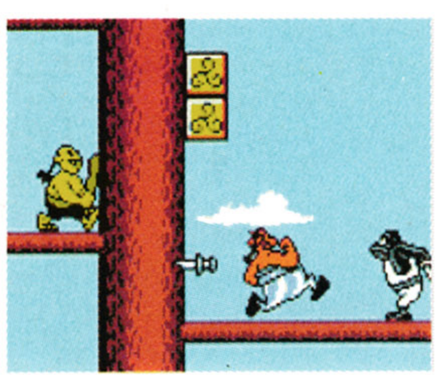
Simplicity can often be a positive selling point in a game like this, but the simple controls and lack of variation present here do not work in its favour. The big and colourful sprites suggest a game more akin to *Bugs and Lola*, with you being allowed to interact with the scenery and other objects much more. The enemies are similarly basic.

The animation is of a high standard, but generally this game doesn't stun graphically. The soundtrack and general presentation, though, is consistently impressive.

Basically *Asterix and Obelix* is a moderate game that plays very well but has not received enough attention in its development, and the end result is yet another run-of-the-mill platformer. **Will**

INFORMATION	
FORMAT	Game Boy
PUBLISHER	Infogrames
DEVELOPER	Infogrames
STYLE	Platform
RELEASE	June
PRICE	£19.99
GAME BOY COLOR	Optional

VERDICT	
GAME NAME	Asterix and Obelix
GRAPHICS	73
SOUND	90
PLAYABILITY	70
OVERALL	70
Out of 100	



It's basic stuff, really

Austin Powers Operation: Trivia

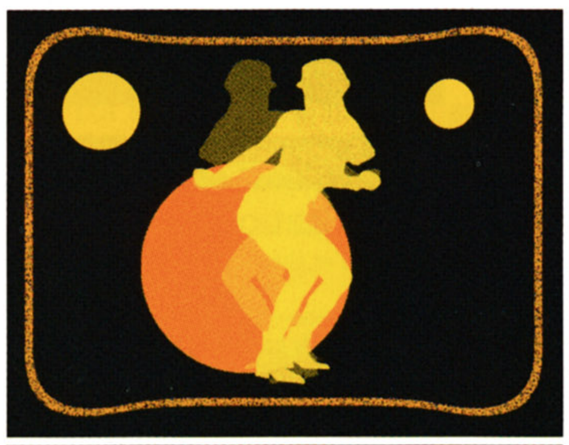
Shagadelic, baby! **Test your Powers of trivia knowledge** in this movie **tie-in quiz game** from Sierra Attractions...

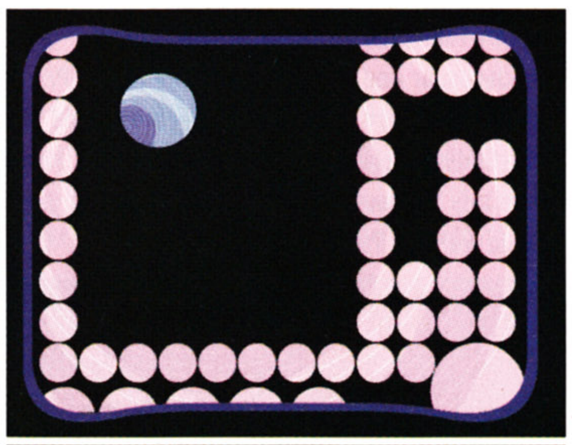
The popularity of all sorts of general knowledge quizzes, from the eighties yuppie-quiz *Trivial Pursuit* to the traditional pub quiz night, proves that almost everyone loves to test their store of otherwise useless information. One of the most popular computer quiz games is *You Don't Know Jack*. Berkeley Systems, the people responsible for that success, are behind this movie tie-in quiz. As you are no doubt aware, the second Austin Powers spy-spoof, *The Spy Who Shagged Me*, starring Mike Myers as the international man of mystery, fashion photographer and super-spy, is due out soon, and this game is timed to coincide with the release of the film.

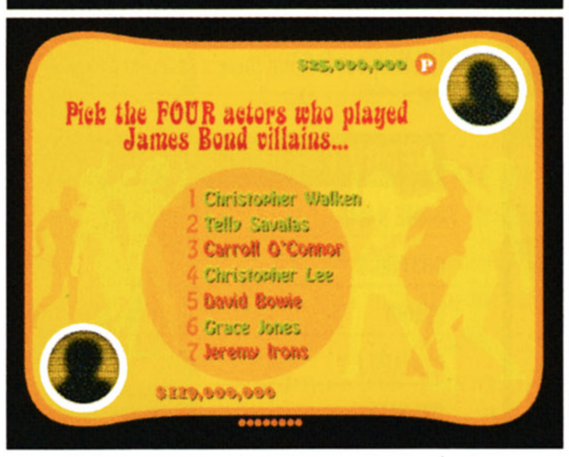
The style of the game is very similar to *You Don't Know Jack*, with lots of *Shockwave*-like animations with a sixties-psychedelic style. There are a number of different quiz formats, from simple multiple choice to linked chains of questions. Many of the voice-overs are provided by Myers, including many movie quotes. The questions cover a number of topics, but mostly relate to the Austin Powers movies, as well as to showbiz in general. Unfortunately, quite a lot of the questions are about American TV shows which will not be familiar to European audiences. There are enough questions like this to be annoying and spoil the enjoyment of an otherwise well-made product. Since Austin Powers himself is supposed to be English, you'd think they could have managed a localised version. **Cliff**

INFORMATION	
FORMAT	PC/Mac
PUBLISHER	Sierra Attractions
DEVELOPER	Berkeley Systems
STYLE	Quiz game
RELEASE	July
PRICE	£24.99
PLAYERS	1-2
PROCESSOR	P90 or PowerPC
MEMORY	16MB 32MB
DISK SPACE	50MB
3D ACCELERATOR	Not required

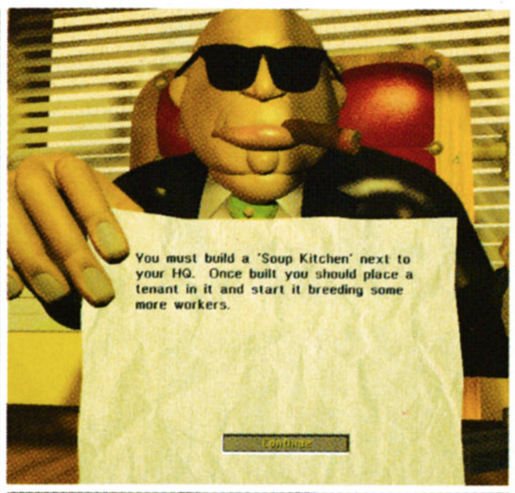
VERDICT	
GAME NAME	Austin Powers
GRAPHICS	69
SOUND	61
PLAYABILITY	57
OVERALL	61
Out of 100	

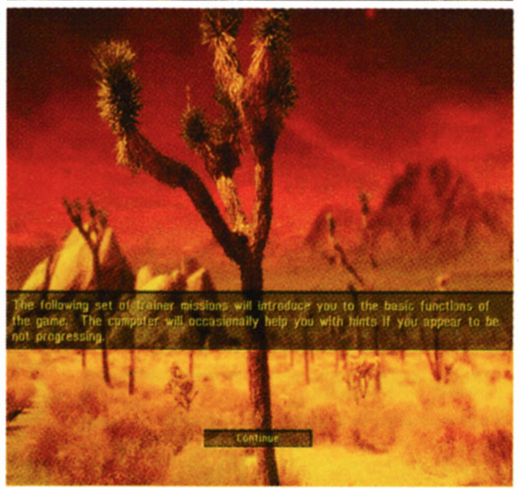






With a graphics style from the sixties, ***Austin Powers*** certainly looks the part





Street Wars

Seen *The Godfather*? **Fancy yourself as a bit of a Mafioso?** Now's you chance to prove it, tough guy!

The follow-up to *Constructor 2* is an odd sort of affair. Due to a clerical mix-up, we received code we fully believed to be reviewable last month, but it turns out this was an unfinished preview version. The resultant review you can therefore disregard. This time, however, we've definitely got the whole thing, so hopefully things will look a little more positive.

You begin the game as a small-time crook with the aim of becoming the next Don. The first few levels act as a tutorial which takes you through the control interface and explains the various functions and skills required to progress through each level. The aim is to become the sole gang leader in each of four increasingly large and tricky cities. To do this you'll need to buy up land and build up various businesses. These in turn will produce various resources. You'll start out with a soup kitchen which can be set to produce either workers (to build new stuff), new tenants (to occupy buildings and pay rent) or to pay rent itself. Workers will construct new buildings or can be put to work in factories to build more specialised items. They can also be turned into other types of character. For example, Fixers will repair things, protect your neighbourhood and even sabotage opposing gangs' properties. It costs three workers to create your first Fixer. When the gang war begins to hot up, Gangsters can be created to bump off the opposition. You've also got to watch out for city hall, pay your taxes on time and keep plying the cops with cash to stay off your case.

IT TRIES TO BE A COMBINATION OF *SIM CITY*, *C&C* AND *SYNDICATE* BUT ENDS UP BEING MORE OF A MISH-MASH

Street and sour

The representation of a city is very stylised but looks quite nice, especially when you start to upgrade your buildings. The gameplay, however, lacks direction. It tries to be a combination of *Sim City*, *C&C* and *Syndicate* but ends up being more of a mish-mash. The gangster elements are cool, but it's not a gangster game as such. Most of the time you're busy making sure tenants are happy and generally keeping an eye on everything.

The tutorial gets you started, although it could do with being a little more helpful. It tells you what to do but not actually how to do it, and the interface isn't the most intuitive when you first start to play. Once you get into it, however, you'll discover a reasonably fun RTS. Plenty of ideas, but it doesn't really stand out in any department. **Miles**

GANG BANG

Eidos' unambiguously titled *Gangsters* is the only other recent PC game to cover this particular area, but it's not the sanitised cartoon view of organised crime as peddled by *Street Wars*. If you can tell your Capones from your Corleones, you might want to try it out. Be warned though, it's complicated and very tough to get into. For those with less demanding requirements, Street Wars will provide a simplified gangland experience.

TAKING CONTROL

It takes a little while to get to grips with the irksome control method, but when you do things start to fall into place. It's still hard to keep track of everything that's going on however, and it can be awkward to cancel commands after they've been made.

INFORMATION

FORMAT	PC
PUBLISHER	Infogrames
DEVELOPER	Studio 3
STYLE	Real time strategy
RELEASE	August
PRICE	£34.99
PLAYERS	1-8
PROCESSOR	P166
MEMORY	16MB
DISK SPACE	140MB
3D ACCELERATOR	Not supported

caption caption caption

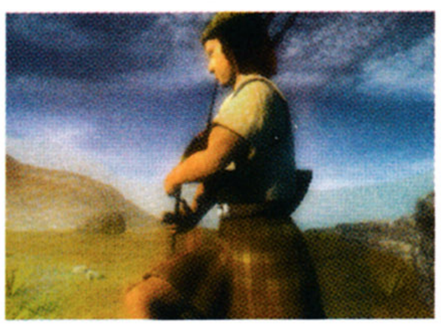
VERDICT

GAME NAME	Wages of Sin
GRAPHICS	70
SOUND	72
PLAYABILITY	75
OVERALL Out of 100	77

Braveheart

TAKING CONTROL

The first impression of *Braveheart* is that it is incredibly complex. There are lots of different screens, all with lots of buttons on, and it is not immediately apparent what it is all about. The tutorial takes you through the basics of raising an army, fighting a battle and conquering territory, but for the intricacies of managing the day-to-day economy of your clan, you need to read the 95-page manual pretty thoroughly.



FMV is pretty standard stuff. Although we think it's the first to have kilts...

INFORMATION

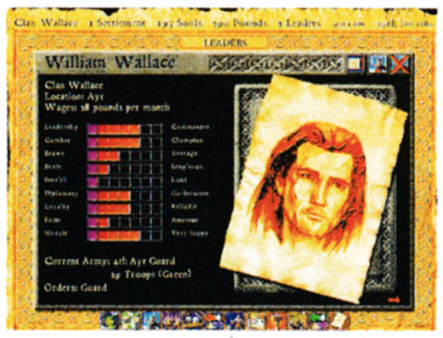
FORMAT	PC
PUBLISHER	Eidos Interactive
DEVELOPER	Red Lemon Studios
STYLE	Strategy/Combat
RELEASE	July
PRICE	£39.99
PLAYERS	1-12
PROCESSOR	P200 P233
MEMORY	32MB 64MB
DISK SPACE	200MB
3D ACCELERATOR	Supported

Unite the clans and **fight for your freedom** in this impressive **new title from Eidos.**

William Wallace is one of Scotland's greatest heroes. In the last years of the thirteenth century, he led a popular revolt against the oppressive rule of the English King Edward Longshanks, and united the clans in a bid to win freedom for Scotland. He was eventually betrayed and executed by the English, but his legend lives on. His exploits were recreated in the 1996 film Braveheart, directed by and starring Mel Gibson. Now his story is being told once more, in the form of a new strategy game from Glasgow-based developers Red Lemon Studios. The game puts you in charge of a Scottish clan, occupying one small town in the Highlands, and from these humble beginnings your goal is to unite the country, overthrow the English, and possibly even take the throne of England for yourself. How you do this is up to you. The game is extremely versatile, and the tactics of diplomacy, warfare and trade are all routes to victory.

I CAN THINK OF NO OTHER GAME CURRENTLY AVAILABLE WHICH COMBINES STRATEGY AND COMBAT MORE EFFECTIVELY

A lot of good ideas have been crammed into *Braveheart*



Red Lemon have certainly done their homework, but then being based in Glasgow I guess they didn't have far to go. As far as is possible, all the details in the game are historically accurate. All the clans and their leaders are accurately portrayed, with the right tartans as approved by the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs, the body which regulates the use of clan emblems. The level of technology is appropriate to the era, as are building designs, weapons and trades.

As leader of your clan, you control every aspect of village life. Via on-screen controls you allocate people and resources to produce food,

MEANWHILE, IN JAPAN...

There is one other game which might be able to rival *Braveheart* for it's combination of strategy with 3D battle action. *Shogun: Total War* from developers The Creative Assembly seeks to do much the same job with feudal Japan that *Braveheart* does with Scotland. The game's major selling point is a battle system which can put up to five thousand AI controlled troops on screen at once. Like *Braveheart, Shogun* also has links to a popular film, in this case Ran, by legendary Japanese director Akira Kurosawa. Shogun will be available some time this winter on the PC. It will be interesting to compare the two games.

The 3D landscape is impressive and works best with large battles. Its shortcomings are revealed, however, by smaller ones

clothes, weapons, buildings, everything that your village will need. This is the major part of the game, and the amount of detail included is impressive, in fact it may be a bit overwhelming. It is all too easy to overlook some tiny detail, and to lose the game without ever really knowing why. There is an auto-management option to make life a bit easier, and you can bias the system towards military, social or economic goals. Fans of the *Civilization* and *Sim City* style of gaming should feel right at home with the micro-management of a Scottish clan.

From Russia with maps

One of the main objectives of the strategy game is to create, arm and train a powerful army. Although it should be possible to win the game by purely peaceful means, the focus is clearly towards a military solution. To this end the game has a unique aspect which sets it apart from other strategy games, namely a 3D battle screen. *Braveheart* has a graphics engine that shows the landscape, buildings and people to a high level of detail. The map is apparently based on Russian spy satellite data obtained through some shady dealing, and is geographically accurate to within about fifty metres. The animation of the soldiers is motion captured, and the fight scenes do look good, but it is impossible to tell in advance how well trained or equipped your foes are, and in the confusion of battle it is very difficult to tell what is going on. The amount of information available during a battle is minimal. There is no map as such, just a 'radar' screen in the top corner and some buttons to move your men into simple formations. The system isn't particularly intuitive, and your first few battles are going to end in disaster until you learn how to fight them properly, although this is often the case when the English take on the Scots.

Although it is good for big set-piece battles, the computer-generated landscape isn't really sufficiently detailed to use more than the most basic battlefield tactics. You can attempt to ambush your foes or position archers on higher ground, but by far the most effective tactic is to simply move into range of the opposing army and then charge. Given the amount of detail in the rest of the game, I found the 3D battle system to be awkward and clumsy to use, and a bit of a disappointment.

By Jove they've done it

It is often the case that when developers try to cram too much into a game, the result is a bad compromise, a mish-mash of ideas which fails to do anything well. With a title as broad based as *Braveheart* this was always going to be a risk, but I think that Red Lemon have actually pulled it off. It is possible to play it purely as a strategy and micro-management game and to ignore the 3D battles altogether, and if you do that the game rivals even the mighty Civilization in it's depth and level of complexity. Alternatively you can leave the towns on auto-management and simply fight a military campaign, using the 3D battle map. Although there are strategy games that do this side of things better, such as Eidos' own *Warzone 2100*, it is playable and could eventually be quite rewarding. However, I can think of no other game currently available which combines strategy and combat more effectively. **Cliff**

OTHER FORMATS?

PlayStation ○○○○○

Although there's little in the game that the PlayStation couldn't handle, there are no plans to develop a version of the game on this format.

N64 ○○○○○

Braveheart could never be translated to the N64 for a number of technical reasons

Dreamcast ○○○○○

Certainly a technical possibility, but Eidos have made no announcement of any plans for this conversion.

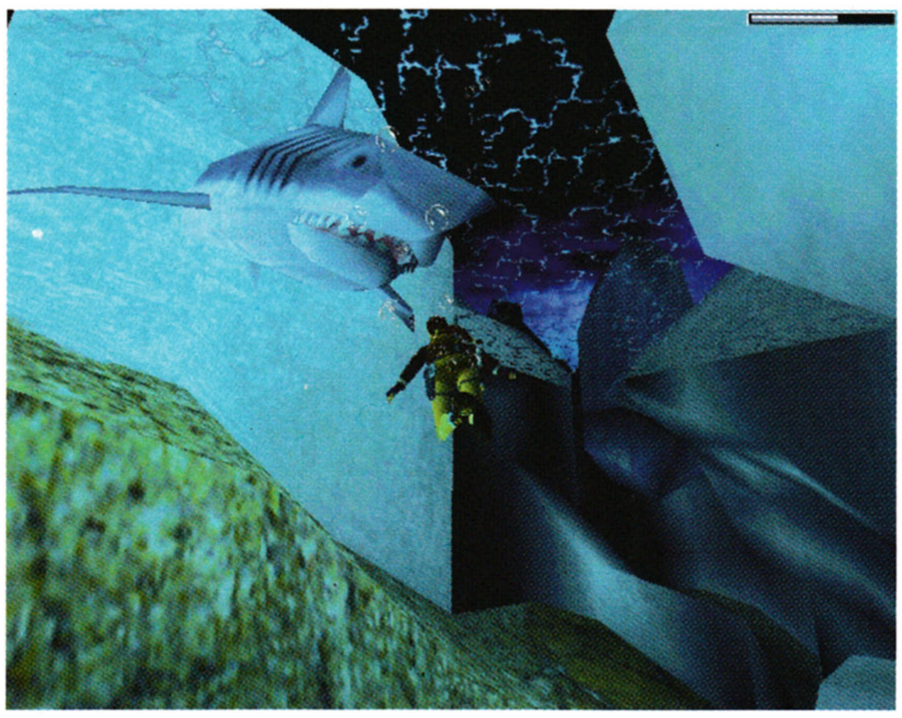
***Braveheart* never attempts to glorify war**

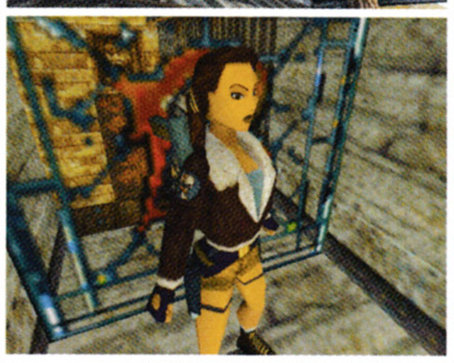
VERDICT

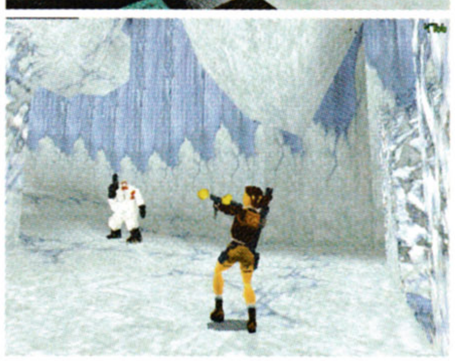
GAME NAME	Braveheart
GRAPHICS	86
SOUND	72
PLAYABILITY	78
OVERALL Out of 100	82

Tomb Raider II: Golden Mask

Ever wondered **what Lara Croft gets up to between adventures?** The answer is 'more adventures' apparently.







With *Tomb Raider III* barely six months old, and the arrival of *Tomb Raider IV* with its brand new graphics engine scheduled for some time later this year, it seems perhaps a bit odd that Eidos and Core would choose to release additional levels for the ageing *Tomb Raider II*. However, the game is being re-released as part of the Eidos Premier range, and you must remember that just a year and a half ago this game was getting some of the highest review scores ever seen, far higher than the disappointing *TR III* ever managed. This release is a real bargain, since you do get two disks, one containing the full *Tomb Raider II* game and the other with the four new levels, all for less than fifteen quid.

The four new levels are set after the end of *Tomb Raider II*, and find Lara exploring an abandoned gold mine on the Bering Sea inside the Arctic Circle. She is looking for the Golden Mask of Tornarsuk, apparently a 'greater spirit' of the Inuit people. She has to fight her way through Russian mercenaries and snow leopards and dodge huge deadly snowballs, all the while wishing she'd bought some warmer trousers.

History repeating

The design of the new levels is of the same standard as the original game, with as much detail as it is possible to get using enormous blocks and a limited texture palette. There are plenty of enemies to fight, but the AI controlling them is still fairly stupid – they will often run round in circles until you administer a mercy killing. The vehicle-driving feature of *TR II* is also used in Golden Mask, as is the expanded list of weapons.

Unfortunately, the new levels also suffer the same flaws that typified *TR II*. The levels are very linear, and there is generally only one correct way of doing them. There are places, in the first level at least, where if you don't do it the correct way, you can end up hopelessly stuck and have to reload or start again. With its blocky terrain, limited camera views and simplistic gameplay, *Tomb Raider II* is starting to look pretty dated against the likes of Infogrames' *Outcast* and even Eidos' own *Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver*. Okay, fifteen quid isn't a lot to pay, and you do get a lot of game for your money, but I'd only recommend it for true Lara fans or those few who have never played *Tomb Raider II*. **Cliff**

JUST A YEAR AND A HALF AGO THIS GAME WAS GETTING SOME OF THE HIGHEST REVIEW SCORES EVER SEEN

TAKING CONTROL

Tomb Raider II is a very easy game to get to grips with. The controls are simple, and the elementary blocky graphics make most of the puzzles self-explanatory, usually of the pull-the-lever-to-open-the-door variety. Most gamers will have played one version of *Tomb Raider* or another, and should be amply familiar with Lara Croft's athletic abilities, as well as the sight of her bum.

INFORMATION

FORMAT	PC
PUBLISHER	Eidos
DEVELOPER	Core Design
STYLE	3D Adventure
RELEASE	Out Now
PRICE	£14.99
PLAYERS	One
PROCESSOR	P90 P120
MEMORY	16MB 32MB
DISK SPACE	2.24 MB
3D ACCELERATOR	Supported

VERDICT

GAME NAME	TR II: Golden Mask
GRAPHICS	61
SOUND	56
PLAYABILITY	71
OVERALL Out of 100	68

LARA LIVE

The latest 'live' Lara Croft is the aptly named Lara Weller, a twenty-four year old former swimwear and lingerie model. Lara, who took over the role from Nell McAndrew, made her debut appearance at E3 in Los Angeles last month. Measuring 5' 8" with brown eyes and brown hair, Ms. Weller certainly looks the part.

Player Manager '99

While the PC has the world's best **football management sim** in Championship Manager 3, the PlayStation so far has only had Premier Manager **as its best such game...**

Now let's not mince words – if you don't like football management games then you might as well turn the page because nothing you'll read here will change your mind. If you're still reading then I'll cut to the chase – this is nowhere as good as *CM3* on the PC, and with two exciting management titles coming from Eidos and Codemasters for the PlayStation, the omens don't look good for this game.

Player Manager Ninety Nine (*PMNN*) is the latest soccer game from Anco, and hence its heritage lies in the classic Kick-Off games. Personally, I never liked *Kick-Off* and preferred *Sensible Soccer* instead... but that's another story. *PMNN* is a pure football management game with the 'player' part arising from you being an average 30-year-old footballer starting his first management job. The game starts in July 1998, and you can now begin your new career.

The most amazing thing about *PMNN* is that there are almost as many stats as seen in *CM3*, and they're all fitted onto one CD. Okay, they aren't as accurate as the PC game (John Scales has 28 international caps and fifteen goals?!), but they do help to get you involved as you pore over them. The problem arises from your PlayStation taking several minutes to update the stats each day, which really slows the game down.

All the teams from the playable English, Scottish and Italian leagues are present, as well as thousands of other players from all over the world. You can even use one of 96 possible tactics or design your own, build your stadium, and even control the training schedules. So what's wrong with this game, then?

Well, for a start, come match day you have a choice of three ways to watch it– via a commentary like in *CM3*, through a scanner (the worst choice) or actually watch the entire match. Don't worry, they're not in real time but last about ten minutes each. While the AI isn't the greatest when you watch matches, it is a passable, if not impressive effort at presenting them. What really lets the game down and dissuades me from recommending it is the amount of time needed to play the damn thing. The loading times are excruciating and really slow the game down– I spent an entire weekend playing the game and only managed to reach January 1999! If these had been better optimised then I would definitely have given this game a high score as it's in-depth, challenging and very involving. It's probably the best management game yet on the PlayStation, but I feel that Codemasters', and to a lesser extent Eidos', efforts will be better when they're released. **Chris**

THE LOADING TIMES ARE EXCRUCIATING AND REALLY SLOW THE GAME DOWN – I SPENT AN ENTIRE WEEKEND PLAYING AND ONLY GOT AS FAR AS JANUARY 1999

GEORGE GRAHAM

PMNN comes with an autograph of George Graham on the cover, presumably because he approves of this game. I don't know what his personal views on it are, but he does pop up with the occasional helpful message.

If statistics are your thing over graphics then you'll enjoy this

TAKING CONTROL

At first I was expecting to be able to play in matches, but once I got over my disappointment and got used to the loading times – which took a while – I did actually start to enjoy it.

INFORMATION

FORMAT	PlayStation
PUBLISHER	Infogrames
DEVELOPER	Anco
STYLE	Football Management
RELEASE	Out Now
PRICE	£34.99
PLAYERS	1-2
ANALOGUE	Yes
DUAL SHOCK	No
MEMORY CARD	15 Blocks

One way to watch matches is via this 'radar' mode

OTHER FORMATS?

PC ●●●●●

This is being released simultaneously on two formats, but if you own PC, get CM3 instead.

N64 ○○○○○

Never. There are probably too many stats to fit on the cartridge and, besides, this won't be released on the Nintendo anyway.

Dreamcast ●○○○○

Maybe, as most PC games will get converted, but at the moment no one can say for sure.

VERDICT

GAME NAME	Player Manager '99
GRAPHICS	65
SOUND	30
PLAYABILITY	70
OVERALL Out of 100	69

Outcast

TOTAL CONTROL 90+ AWARD

Despite strong competition in the PC games market, Infogrames may well find themselves leading the **pack with their epic summer** release...

TAKING CONTROL

After what is a very strong contender for the best PC intro ever, the stage is set brilliantly. Sadly, you can't alter the controls or graphics options mid-game, so there is a lot of quitting out until you find a suitable setting. It is admittedly slow to begin with and the conversations can go on, but this is a very important part of the game. It doesn't throw you in too far over your depth, and you can't help but be amazed at the complexity of the world you find yourself in, the stunning graphics and the brilliantly voiced conversations between you and the other characters in the game.

How does a game rise to the rank of an epic? The classification is slightly different for computer games compared to films. It could be the development time, the style of game, the storyline, the size of the game and a number of other different things that rise it above the rest and rank it as one of the most memorable and potentially influential games ever. It's hard to say exactly why, but *Outcast* is certainly an epic title for all of the reasons above and many, many more.

Set in the year 2007, the game revolves around the deployment of a probe through uncharted space to a place that is believed to be a parallel dimension. Seconds before the probe's destruction it sends back images of an intelligent lifeform moving towards it. The ensuing disaster releases an unforeseen backlash of energy, creating a wormhole between their world and ours. As it slowly begins to suck the Earth through the hole, the decision is made to send a team of experts across to the alien world and dismantle the probe, thus saving the Earth. You play the role of US Navy S.E.A.L. Cutter Slade, called in to accompany a team of scientists on a journey to this other world known as 'Adelpha'. You wake in a bed without your team in a village inhabited by the Talans, an unknown lifeform indigenous to the planet. Referred to as the 'Ulukai', your visit has been long prophesised amongst their kind as their saviour to the evil forces that have turned them into a slave race. Your only option is to accept their offer to find and retrieve five sacred Mon in return for their help in locating both the rest of your team and the probe.

THE WORLD IS ABSOLUTELY HUGE AND HOUSES ITS OWN UNIQUE ECOSYSTEM – EVERY CHARACTER HAS HIS OWN POSITION IN THE SOCIETY

Another world

And so you are entered into the world of *Outcast*, a place where many of you will stay for much longer than any of your friends or family would

RIDERS ON THE STORM

One of the many creatures that you need to get to know in Adelphe is known as the 'Twôn-Ha'. This two-legged beast is as friendly as it is valuable to you on your travels. You need only to purchase a rag drenched in its parents' sweat and it will then become tame. They can be easily mounted and travel much faster than you, making those long treks all the more bearable. Unfortunately, you cannot use any items such as the binoculars while you are riding a Twôn-Ha and they are scared home by the sound of battle, so you cannot use them to charge into a fight.

INFORMATION

FORMAT	PC
PUBLISHER	Infogrames
DEVELOPER	Appeal
STYLE	Adventure
RELEASE	Out Now
PRICE	£39.99
PLAYERS	One
PROCESSOR	P200 P300
MEMORY	32MB 64MB
DISK SPACE	430MB
3D ACCELERATOR	Not Supported

The detail to be found in the game world is incredible

like. You begin with the task of completing a few simple trials designed to get you used to the controls and are then thrown straight into the most vast and detailed world ever created inside a computer. As you move around you must talk to its inhabitants to find out exactly what it is you are supposed to do. Some will be more helpful than others, but most will point you to an alternative source of information if they cannot provide it themselves. To begin with the game is very much centred around the retrieval of data. There is a lot of travel involved to meet all who can help, but this is a very important part of the game, giving you the opportunity to learn the locations of every major site before things start getting too hectic. The world is absolutely huge and houses its own unique ecosystem. Every character has his own position in the society, though most are workers, farming materials to keep the enemy soldiers strong. Part of your task involves gaining the trust of those around you, which is done by occasionally helping out those in need. Only when they as a whole come to see you as the true Ulukai will they be convinced to move against their masters, denying them materials and in so doing weakening their forces.

To begin with it can be incredibly complicated; as you talk to certain Talans they often direct you in multiple directions and instruct you to meet numerous others. Luckily, the important parts are automatically logged on a notebook so that you will always have a direction in the game. Because you are trying to help this race, you need to learn of their unique social structure, culture and history. With the level of detail here, that is no mean feat in itself. There are so many different and new terms to know, but these too are also logged and accessible at any point. If things seem to be going too slowly you can try moving to the next world, a place that is just as big in size, but difficult and more complicated in its structure. You then enter and interact with a group of Talans with the same cause but an entirely different objective and eco-system than before. Here you can try to disrupt the flow of taxes in an urban rather than rural environment, and if you do start doing this the size of your notepad gets almost unmanageable. Fortunately, most objectives are separated between each world. Having seen and known the size of both these worlds, the notion that there are a further three in the game will make you realise that at least the next year of your social life has just disappeared. Big? That word fails to put the scale of *Outcast* across.

TEXTURES BLEND BEAUTIFULLY INTO EACH OTHER AND THE GAME DRAWS THE WORLD FAR, FAR INTO THE DISTANCE. THE WATER EFFECTS ARE ALSO THE PERHAPS THE BEST SEEN SO FAR

Trading places

Numerous items from the research station that imploded following the energy backlash have already found their way through into Adelpha. The main objects of interest include health packs, ammunition and weaponry. Many of these have been taken as sacred objects by the Talans and hidden in homes or stashed under lock and key, so you need to search around to find them. However, there are many Talans (known as 'recreators') who will replicate your supplies providing you can supply them with enough raw materials found freely around each world. There are six main weapons in the game, most of which can be upgraded to make them more powerful, give them a larger ammo capacity or use new features like a sniper mode. Combat is perhaps not as advanced as it could have been, but you need to think a lot about attack. Bullets travel very slowly, and weaker guns need to impact many times to take an opponent down, so it can be very strategic. The only slightly disappointing part of this is the AI of the enemies when they are under fire. Often they seem fairly unintelligent, but then this is the role that has been written in for them in the game.

Graphically *Outcast* can be incredible – that is, if you have a high enough spec PC to run it. The specs given by Infogrames (shown elsewhere) are misleading –you really need at least the recommended spec to play, but then if you have you will be amazed. The voxel engine removes all of those annoying polygon joins and gives every item a very real and organic look. Textures blend beautifully into each other and the game draws the world far, far into the distance. The water effects are also the perhaps the best seen so far. The graphics are matched by the audio – the speech is brilliantly voiced, the sound effects are incredibly authentic and the orchestral soundtrack gives it a true movie-like quality

To boldly go

Not since *Frontier* has such an epic game been unleashed upon the PC market. *Outcast* is a masterpiece in every field that it is entered into and will be talked about for many years to come. However, it is certainly not a game for everyone. It is very complicated, and if you are looking for fast paced action it should probably be best avoided. But those of you who want to immerse yourself in a whole new world should be prepared to stay there for some time. This will be a long-remembered title, and if you have a PC powerful enough to play it you are strongly recommended to buy this piece of videogaming history. **Will**

ITEM EYES

Of the many objects that you can find, the binoculars will be one of the most useful. Using them you can zoom in on an area that is out of the normal draw range to check whether you are heading in the right direction or if there will be any trouble ahead. They also have an x-ray mode, allowing you to see through buildings and other obstacles to pick out lifeforms. The other items that can prove extremely useful include a holographic projection of you to draw enemies away from a position, a Proton Phase Shifter (PPS) that allows you to become momentarily invisible, a teleporter device and explosives, amongst several others.

The camera angles give the game a cinematic feel

OTHER FORMATS?

N64 ○○○○○

There is no way that the N64 is capable of running *Outcast*, especially considering the limitations of the cartridge.

PlayStation ○○○○○

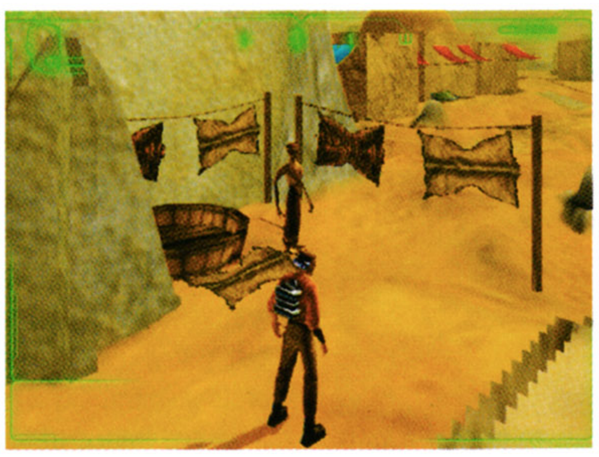
That would be a technical feat to behold – there is no chance of a conversion at all.

Dreamcast ●●●●●

Amazingly, this game is getting a full Dreamcast conversion. How or if the game will differ is yet to be announced, but if it is pulled off to good effect this will surely be a very influential game for Sega.

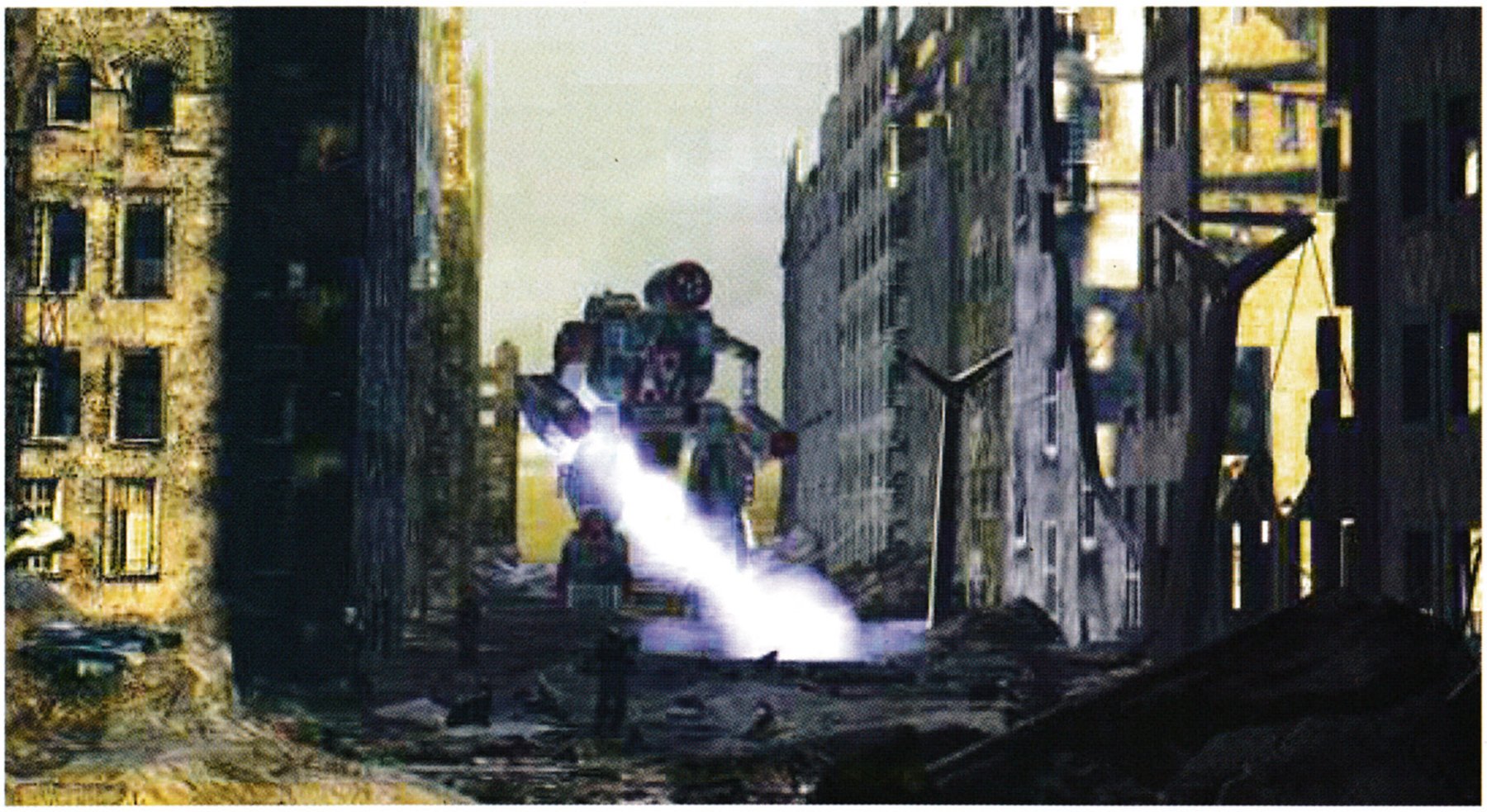
VERDICT

GAME NAME	Outcast
GRAPHICS	95
SOUND	94
PLAYABILITY	93
OVERALL Out of 100	94



MechWarrior III

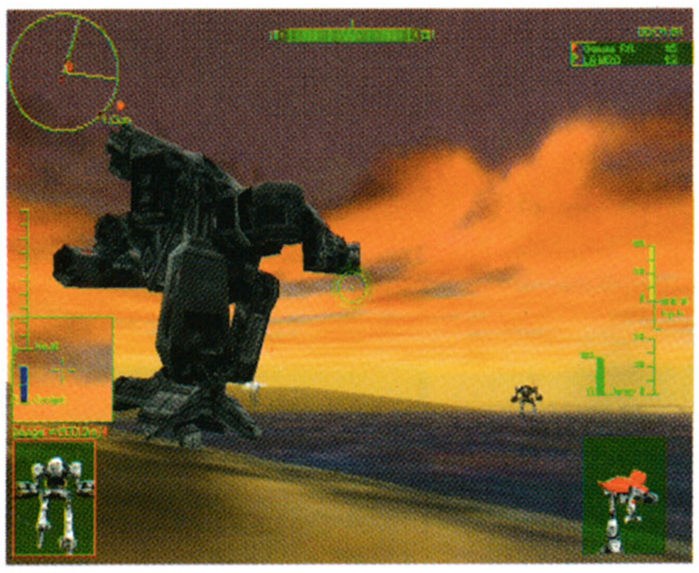
TOTAL CONTROL 90+ AWARD



TAKING CONTROL

I've been looking forward to this game for well over a year now, so my hopes were high. The detailed training missions are a must for newcomers and experienced *MechWarrior* fans alike. Much of the commands are very similar, but there were a few problems with the default controls. This game starts very strongly, the missions blend into each other very well, and apart from the unfriendly customisation screens, it is an instantly enjoyable experience.

The stunning *MechWarrior II* **has long been awaiting a sequel. Will this prodigal game carry as much weight as its content?**



BOILER SUIT

Just like before, you need to pay close attention to the heat generated by your weapons. You can group your weapons in any way, usually by their type, and then cycle through, firing each one individually or one group at a time. Doing this raises the heat of your Mech, which will eventually cause you to automatically power down – not helpful in a fight, but you can override it at the risk of causing internal ammo explosions or destroying yourself completely. You also have two shots of fluent cooling which reduces heat rapidly, and you can cool off in rivers and lakes.

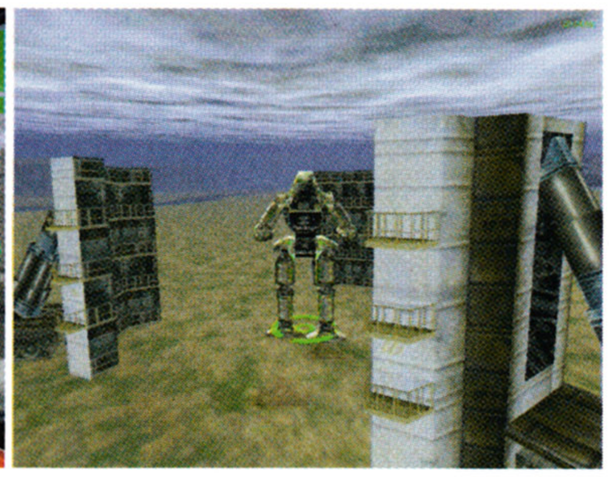
INFORMATION	
FORMAT	PC
PUBLISHER	Hasbro Interactive
DEVELOPER	Microprose
STYLE	Robot Simulation
RELEASE	Out Now
PRICE	£34.99
PLAYERS	1-8
PROCESSOR	P166 P200
MEMORY	32MB 64MB
DISK SPACE	90MB
3D ACCELERATOR	Optional

When you base a title around an existing theme you need to make sure you do it right, and when there is that much game infrastructure already out there, it's a shame to let it go to waste. The *MechWarrior* series is based within the BattleTech universe, a huge, highly intricate world in which clans of soldiers fight their epic struggle from within the relative safety of their 100-ton BattleMechs. If you've played any of the previous games before you'll have a good idea of what to expect with this third instalment, but newcomers will be in awe of the incredible level of detail that has been crammed into this game.

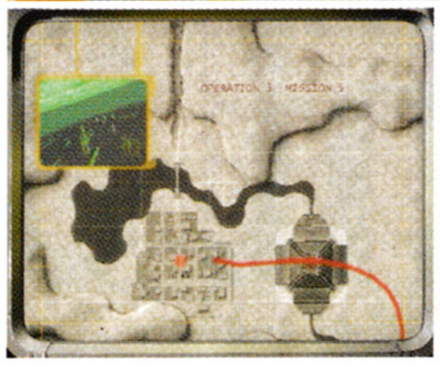
Return of the Mech

The year is now 3058, and the houses of the inner sphere have banded together in an unlikely alliance to eliminate the remaining rebel clans. The plot of *MechWarrior III* revolves around the termination of Smoke Jaguar clan. After a series of successful raids on their home world, the remaining members have taken refuge on the planet of Tranquil. Your objective is to join a dangerous military drop on the planet co-ordinated with a number of other Alliance teams with the overall objective of destroying various military installations and leaving before the remaining members of the Smoke Jaguar clan arrive. Your first briefing takes place en route. As you hurl towards the planet, contact is lost with the other drop ships and you find yourself alone on the planet with your defenceless mobile field base.

This is where the game begins proper. You continue with your objectives as planned while your superiors in the Mobile Field Base struggle to regain contact with HQ and the other remaining teams that are already on the surface. The game is split into a number of campaigns with various missions in each. Your Mobile Field base features in every level and adds a new dimension to the game. Using it you can refit and repair your Mech at any time, but because of its vulnerability and the need for you to shut down your Mech for a limited period of time, you must choose the occasion carefully.



Although the in cockpit view is impressive, you don't realise the detail of you mech untill you view it from outside



There is so much in this third instalment that did not feature in *MechWarrior 2*, much of which stems from ideas seen in the *Mercenaries* mission pack and the *MechCommander* spin-off, but here they seem to fit together perfectly. You have no other form of resource apart from the materials that you leave on the battlefield. By targeting specific parts of your enemies you can avoid damaging their most vital and advanced systems, leaving them safe for salvage later. Of course, this means that they are operational for longer and pose more of a threat while you are in combat. Later in the game you can join up with the other MechWarriors who have survived, and you can direct both them and your MFB around the level using a handy *Battlezone*-style interface. Between levels you can fully customise your Mech and those of your lance-mates in almost every way imaginable, which gives each mission a phenomenal amount of diversity.

DESPITE THE LEVELS OFTEN BEING VERY SPARSE AND EMPTY, WHEN THERE IS DETAIL IT IS HIGHLY IMPRESSIVE – A DAMAGED LEG, FOR EXAMPLE, WILL HAVE ITS EFFECT ON THE ANIMATION OF YOUR MECH

Robot Wars

Unlike *Heavy Gear 2*, the magic in *MechWarrior III* is the illusion that there is a battle of epic proportions going on around you. Much is this is due to the excellent soundtrack, the spot effects of weapons fire and the thuds of each step, and also the speech, which is performed in a similar but far more extravagant way to the second game. At times your superiors even manage to crack the Smoke Jaguar scramblers and relay their com channel through your Mech, allowing you to predict enemy attacks. The graphics also add to the realism. Despite the levels often being very sparse and empty, when there is detail it is highly impressive – a damaged leg, for example, will have its effect on the animation of your Mech; from the external view you'll notice yourself dragging one leg behind you. Pyrotechnical effects and smoke are also excellent, and it's surprisingly low-spec considering the level of detail.

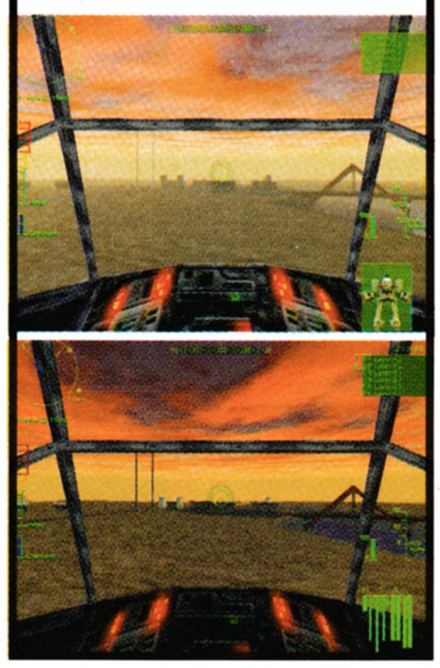
MechWarrior III is not without its faults. One of the best features of *MechWarrior 2* was its feeling of complete control over the machine – now it seems slightly overcomplicated; the inclusion of so many newer, more extravagant features do not have as much impact on the game. Those of you who choose to spend ages customising your Mechs will not benefit as much now, so the whole idea is easily overlooked. Also, almost all of the missions are best suited to the biggest and strongest machines, and you are given access to these very early on so you never feel tempted to try out the smaller, faster Mechs with better fight capabilities. Perhaps it would have been better if there was no option to restart missions, so the destruction of a Mech meant that it would be out of operation for the rest of the game.

It's difficult not to feel biased when reviewing a game like this – *MechWarrior 2* was a personal favourite for a long time, and this third instalment adds to it brilliantly. For fans of the previous games or those who like the general idea, you can buy this game with the knowledge that you are buying the best of its class, but, like flight sims, this genre is not everyone's cup of tea and *MechWarrior III* is in no way a perfect or universal game. Though there are numerous ways to improve upon it, the negatives are greatly outweighed by the positives, and the vast majority of you won't regret spending your £35 on this superb game. **Will**

Using too many weapons can force you to shutdown

SOFTWARE VS 3D

Generally MechWarrior 3 is technically impressive. Running in 3Dfx it looks excellent, but the software renderer imitates this surprisingly well. As long as you have a relatively high powered processor this is an extremely good looking game, with or without a graphics accelerator, as these compatible screenshots show.



You need to learn how to use all of the readouts on your HUD very quickly

OTHER FORMATS?

N64 ○○○○○

Not even close to likely, and there is little in the way of an alternative except perhaps for the forthcoming *Battlezone 64*.

PlayStation ○○○○○

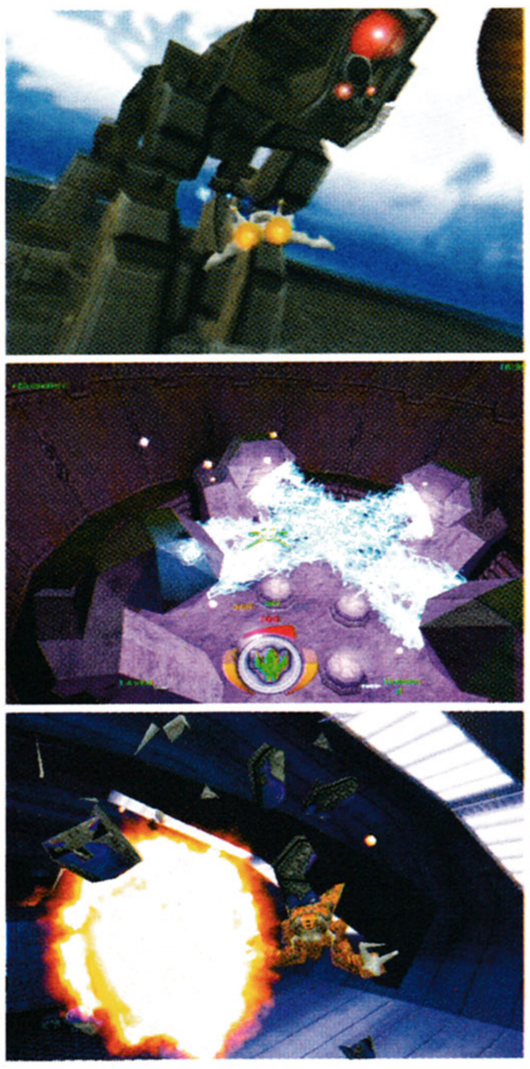
There is far too much detail here for a decent PlayStation conversion, but *MechWarrior 2* has been around for a long time now.

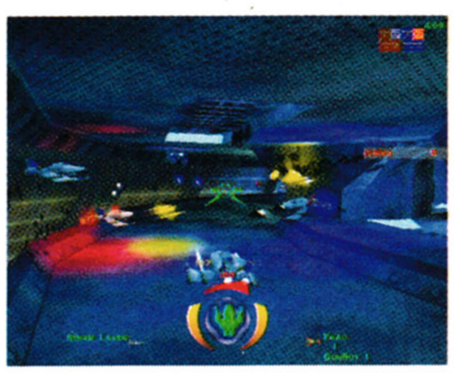
Dreamcast ●○○○○

It would be surprising if a simulation of this detail made it to a Sega machine, but if a console conversion did go ahead the Dreamcast would be the most likely and capable machine to accommodate it.

VERDICT

GAME NAME	MechWarrior III
GRAPHICS	90
SOUND	94
PLAYABILITY	91
OVERALL	90
Out of 100	





Real time lighting is used impressively throughout

Descent 3

Some were led away gibbering, **others died of motion sickness,** but there were people who could handle Descent. **Now even they face a challenge.**

TAKING CONTROL

The *Descent* games have always been in the 'moments to learn, a lifetime to master' category, and *Descent 3* is no exception. The controls are simple, the ship responds well, and the GuideBot makes navigation a doddle. The only problem you have is fighting your way through hordes of hyper-intelligent robots and a series of puzzles more cunning than a really cunning thing.

INFORMATION

FORMAT	PC
PUBLISHER	Virgin Interactive
DEVELOPER	Outrage
STYLE	3D Tunnel-Blaster
RELEASE	June
PRICE	£39.99
PLAYERS	1-16
PROCESSOR	P200 P300
MEMORY	32MB 64MB
DISK SPACE	200MB 500MB
3D ACCELERATOR	Required

Call me weird, but I really enjoyed *Descent*. It drove some people nuts and made others sick, but I thought it rocked. The first title, released in 1995, was one of the first 3D games feature an eight-player network option, and the first to be really playable over the Internet. It introduced many new ideas including light source shading, texture mapping, 3D morphing, directional sound effects and asynchronous network play. It was also released on the PlayStation, and was an early hit on that platform.

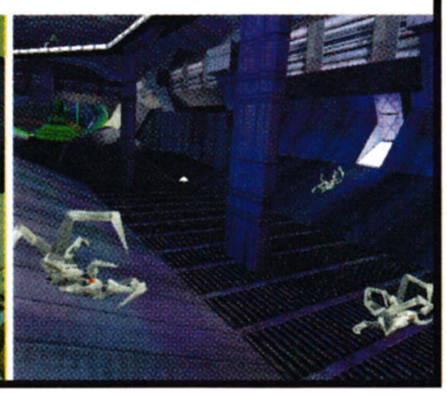
Descent 2, released the following year, was an enhancement of the original game, with new weapons, levels and enemy robots, and extra features like a working headlight, afterburners and the Guide-bot to help you navigate the tunnels. It became one of most popular internet games and introduced capture the flag matches. *Descent 3* carries on that tradition of innovation.

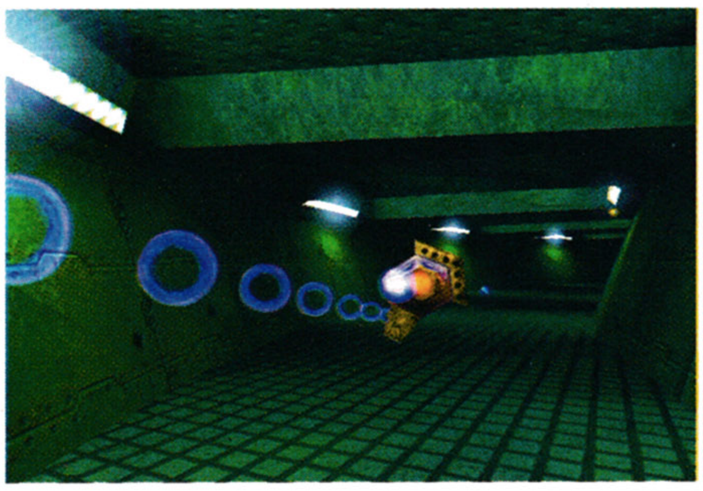
Although the essence of the gameplay in *Descent 3* is much as it was in the previous games, a lot of work has gone into the new game, and that always impresses me. Little details, like the initial set-up screen which evaluates your system and quickly configures the game to make the best use of your available hardware.

Outrage's new Fusion graphics system combines the

ROBOT WARS

Descent 1 **and** ***2*** **were famous for their enemy AI, and** ***3*** **is no exception. Enemy robots have personalities and exhibit uncannily lifelike behaviour. They fight together in groups, protecting their leaders and employing clever tactics to outwit and ambush you. You will see them hide behind cover and snipe at you, while others attempt to get behind you and attack your blind spot.**



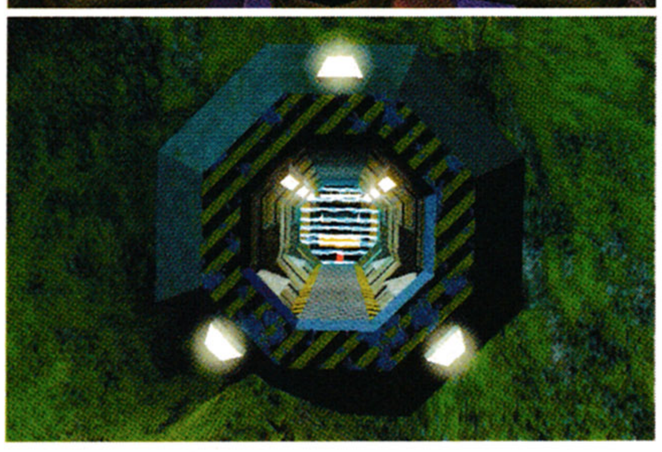


power of two 3D engines, seamlessly fused together to provide the playing environment. One engine generates the tunnel environments so familiar from the earlier games, while the other does the outdoor terrain and buildings using a progressive meshing system to allow large maps to be drawn quickly and smoothly. You can fly from one environment to the other, and you will never spot the join. This has given the designers a lot of scope for imaginative level design. Instead of the lookalike tunnels of the earlier games, *Descent 3* has eerily-lit corridors of all shapes and sizes, filled with luminous mists, hissing

THE GAME IS MADE UP OF STRUCTURED MULTI-PART MISSIONS WITH MULTIPLE OBJECTIVES

steam jets and reflective surfaces. Special effects such as lightning, force fields and animated textures on view-screens add a realistic atmosphere.

There is more to the gameplay than just blasting robots. The game is made up of carefully structured multi-part missions, with multiple objectives and some devious puzzles requiring patience and imagination. The missions are rated for success or failure, but also score points. You get a higher score for toasting more robots, so the option is always there to play it again and try for more points. As a multiplayer game, *Descent 3* should prove to be just as popular as its predecessors. It is Internet-ready straight out of the box, and a level editor may be included to allow fans to create their own games. I think this deserves to be one of the biggest games of the year. **Cliff**



External locations now feature in the game

OTHER FORMATS?

Playstation ○○○○○

Although the original *Descent* was an early hit on the PlayStation, *Descent 3* is way beyond the capabilities of Sony's old grey box.

N64 ●○○○○

The installed files for *Descent 3* fill 500MB of disk space, which is nearly ten times the size of the biggest N64 cartridge.

Dreamcast ●○○○○

Although it has not been utterly ruled out, the developers currently have no plans to convert *Descent 3* to the Dreamcast.

VERDICT

GAME NAME	Descent 3
GRAPHICS	85
SOUND	84
PLAYABILITY	91
OVERALL Out of 100	88

Syphon Filter

After a successful tour of duty abroad, **does *Syphon Filter* still has what it takes** to break into the European market?

Despite a generally good reception, import versions of *Syphon Filter* have been criticised for a lack of originality and outdated graphics. Taking elements from *Tomb Raider*, *Metal Gear Solid* and even *Goldeneye*, *Syphon Filter* pits you in the role of a government agent on the trail of a deadly virus (the Syphon Filter) and its creator.

Shared wealth

The levels share the distinct graphical style of the earlier *Tomb Raider* games – textures are generally poor, and despite a few very nice touches and strong animation, it can't compete with today's best. What it does do well is mimic the atmosphere and style of *MGS*. The rolls and tracking of your enemies are performed very realistically, the game world is hugely diverse and takes place over a number of varied and well structured levels. Each has a specific play style too; in some you can play an all-out action game, while others are better suited to stealth and long-range targeting. The variety of weapons available is equally impressive, more akin to a typical first-person shooter.

Following on from its excellent presentation, most people will feel disappointed by the game itself – it lacks the cutting edge and flowing gameplay of its many inspirations. The control system can at times give an excellent illusion of having grip on the game, but it's often cumbersome and frustrating when you get it wrong, and it's not a game that is easy to pick up. But aside from this, *Syphon Filter* is a very enjoyable game that provides an entertaining and long-lasting challenge. The game is essentially the same as the import version reviewed in Issue 6, and it won't disappoint any fans of third-person action adventure titles. **Will**

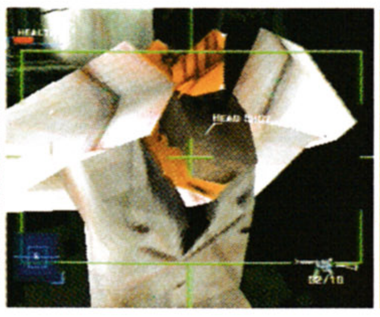
INFORMATION

FORMAT	Playstation
PUBLISHER	Sony
DEVELOPER	989 Studios
STYLE	Action Adventure
RELEASE	Out Now
PRICE	£39.99
PLAYERS	One
DUAL SHOCK	Yes
ANALOGUE	Yes
SAVE GAME	Memory Card

***Metal Gear Solid* anyone?**

VERDICT

GAME NAME	Syphon Filter
GRAPHICS	74
SOUND	72
PLAYABILITY	80
OVERALL Out of 100	80



Kingpin: Life of Crime

TOTAL CONTROL 90+ AWARD

TAKING CONTROL

It doesn't take long before you find yourself turning to the dark side, hitting women with crowbars and putting down and out street punks out of their misery with your double-barrel shotgun. Umm, of course we don't enjoy this mindless violence and foul-mouthed rancour – it's frankly vulgar and distasteful – but most of you probably will, and you'll find this game is instantly cool from the very beginning.

INFORMATION

FORMAT	PC
PUBLISHER	Interplay
DEVELOPER	Xatrix Entertainment
STYLE	First-Person Shooter
RELEASE	Out Now
PRICE	£39.99
PLAYERS	1-16
PROCESSOR	P233 P300
MEMORY	64MB
DISK SPACE	639MB
3D ACCELERATOR	Required

Half-Life, *Quake III*, *AvP* **and the rest – who needs *Kingpin*?** Or perhaps more to the point, with *Kingpin*, **who needs the rest?**

Doom and *Quake II* became massive successes for their excellent playability. *Half-Life* rose above them because of an exceptional movie-like atmosphere and strong weapons, while *Aliens Vs Predator* rose as a strong challenger via its phenomenal variety and pant-filling tension. A far greater percentage of first-person shoot-'em-ups become known as classic computer games than in almost every other genre. The genre has seen an exceptional spread of titles in its relatively short life, and it still remains the one with perhaps the highest degree of potential than any other. *Kingpin's* contribution is relatively unique. While it plays in a similar way to many other games of its type, it feels as if it's in a class of its own. Of course, there have been many titles about gang warfare before, but very few that have adopted the style of films like *Menace 2 Society* to such an extent as this.

Set in 1930s Chicago, *Kingpin* pits you in the role of an out of luck street punk known in the game only as 'thug', a title more than apt for someone of his stature. You start the game after narrowly surviving a beating by a small group of Nicki's goons. Nicki is the local mob boss, and you take it upon yourself to see him and his empire fall to its knees. Despite the historic setting, Xatrix have allowed themselves a fair helping of artistic licence by using an 'alternate dimension' storyline which means that many of the weapons are slightly more advanced. You won't find any laser guns here, but heavy mini-guns, flame-throwers and rocket launchers all make an appearance, and the clothing and style of the language is far more modern than the time period might suggest.

TO SAY THAT KINGPIN EXCELLED GRAPHICALLY WOULD BE AN UNDERSTATEMENT – THIS IS MOST DEFINITELY ONE OF THE BEST LOOKING GAMES I HAVE EVER PLAYED

'Hey man, don't talk to my bitch'

After the first five minutes, the one thing that will stand out is the speech. Surprisingly, foul language has rarely been used in computer games, but Kingpin seems to make up for this by including some form of profanity in every one of its many lines. You can talk to every character in the game using one of two buttons representing positive and negative responses. A positive line might be something like 'Hey baby, what's up?' or 'Hey, know anything good?' While a negative opinion would be more along the lines of 'What the f**k did you just say to me?' Or 'I will f**king bury you!' Combinations of each can be used to extract important information, force people to help you out, or buy or trade items. You can attempt to steal from the bodies that you

GANG, BANG

Like *Half-Life*, opportunities arise for you to enlist the help of others during each level. By talking to and paying various characters money, they will follow you around and back you up whenever you face heavy competition. You can communicate with them, instructing them to remain in a certain area or to hold a position, while others will have special abilities that you require, like opening safes, for example.

leave, working up impressive amounts of cash as you progress which can then be spent in the various 'porn-o-matic' shops that stock weapons, mods, ammo, health and armour. Although the range of weaponry is not that spectacular, the mods that you can buy do add a lot of variety. Some weapons can even be silenced, allowing you to take people out without attracting the attention of others. Care is extremely important; you must make good use of the creep button to progress, and even on its easiest setting you don't need to take much of a beating before the lights go out. Body parts can be targeted, just like in *Half-Life*, but the advanced damage models in *Kingpin* mean that damaged areas actually show on your enemies (and allies); limbs can be blown away, heads and torsos separated – this is most definitely not a game for the faint of heart.

To say that *Kingpin* excelled graphically would be an understatement – this is most definitely one of the best looking games I have ever played, a statement made even more striking when you consider that this is an updated version of id's *Quake II* engine. The spot effects for liquid and fire may not be of the highest quality, but the detail in the textures and the other characters is second to none. It's also extremely quick and keeps up a high frame rate on a relatively modest spec machine. *Quake III* may be the master of pyrotechnics and visual effects such as translucency fogging and reflecting, but it's

TO SAY THAT KINGPIN EXCELLED GRAPHICALLY WOULD BE AN UNDERSTATEMENT – THIS IS MOST DEFINITELY ONE OF THE BEST LOOKING GAMES I HAVE EVER PLAYED

MULTIPLAYER

The multiplayer mode in *Kingpin* is just as cool as the main game. There is no incredible map list and some of them are very contained with no open areas, but it can still be excellent. The teamplay option is arguably the best, with two rival gangs battling it out, but because of the relatively low-key weapons (no sniper guns, trip mines or BFGs) it is a fairly average affair, and *Team Fortress Classic* looks most likely to last the test of time.

going to have to go some to beat *Kingpin* overall. The single drawback of this detail is the loading times, which are very obtrusive. Like *Half-Life*, the game is split into a number of chapters, each divided into separate areas that require extra data to be loaded, but the areas are much smaller here and the loading times more than twice as long. The game is also smaller than Valve's masterpiece, but it will take just as long to complete on its toughest setting due to the higher difficulty.

Gang related

In the first-person hall of fame, *Kingpin* is certainly right up there with *AvP* and *Half-Life*. Each are very difficult to separate, and fans of the genre would be best advised to buy all three – there really is not enough to chose between them. Admittedly, *Half-Life* remains the best structured of them all. *Kingpin* is very linear, and though the character interaction gives it an extra edge, the interaction has little influence apart from the bodyguard aspect. The plot is also much weaker, but even without the spectacular graphics and coarse gangster talk, it is still a very strong recommendation.

If you want a game to show your mates how cool PC games can be, this is the one to buy. It's packed full of dark humour, has a superb Cypress Hill soundtrack, excellent playability, and contains some of the most spectacular graphics you'll see for a long time. It will certainly be an office favourite for many, many months to come. **Will**

OTHER FORMATS?

N64 ○○○○○

Not very likely. The coarse nature of the game would never make it past a Nintendo censor in this reality, but *Quake II* is coming, and so, we are promised is *Half-Life*.

PlayStation ○○○○○

The PlayStation wouldn't be able to handle the graphics that make *Kingpin* what it is. Like the N64, *Quake II* is the closest and nearest alternative.

Dreamcast ●○○○○

If this did ever happen, it would do the image of the Dreamcast no end of good, but then a conversion would most likely be accompanied by a serious degree of censorship.

VERDICT

GAME NAME	Kingpin: Life of Crime
GRAPHICS	95
SOUND	94
PLAYABILITY	91
OVERALL Out of 100	92

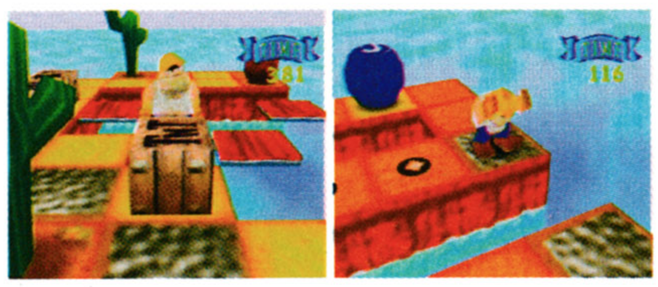
The lighting and texture mapping is some of the most spectacular ever seen in a video game

Charlie Blast's Territory

Basic graphics, basic gameplay

A **mysterious puzzle** game explodes onto N64

Puzzle games have had their day. Or have they? When done well, this can be the most compelling and addictive of all genres. The thing is, most of the good ideas have been taken and what remains are rehashes. People are still doing *Tetris* games for crying out loud! Charlie is a builder with a problem: he's faced with level after floating level made up of squares, TNT and a bomb. His job is to line up the TNT with the bomb, then detonate it in order to create a domino effect, destroy all the TNT and blast him onto the next level. It's hard to describe in words and sounds complicated, but it's not. Far from it, in fact. Like any puzzler, it's addictive for a while. For 50 quid though, you'd be forgiven for expecting more variety, better graphics and some snazzy presentation. This would be ideal budget fodder at £15. At full price? Forget about it. **Miles**

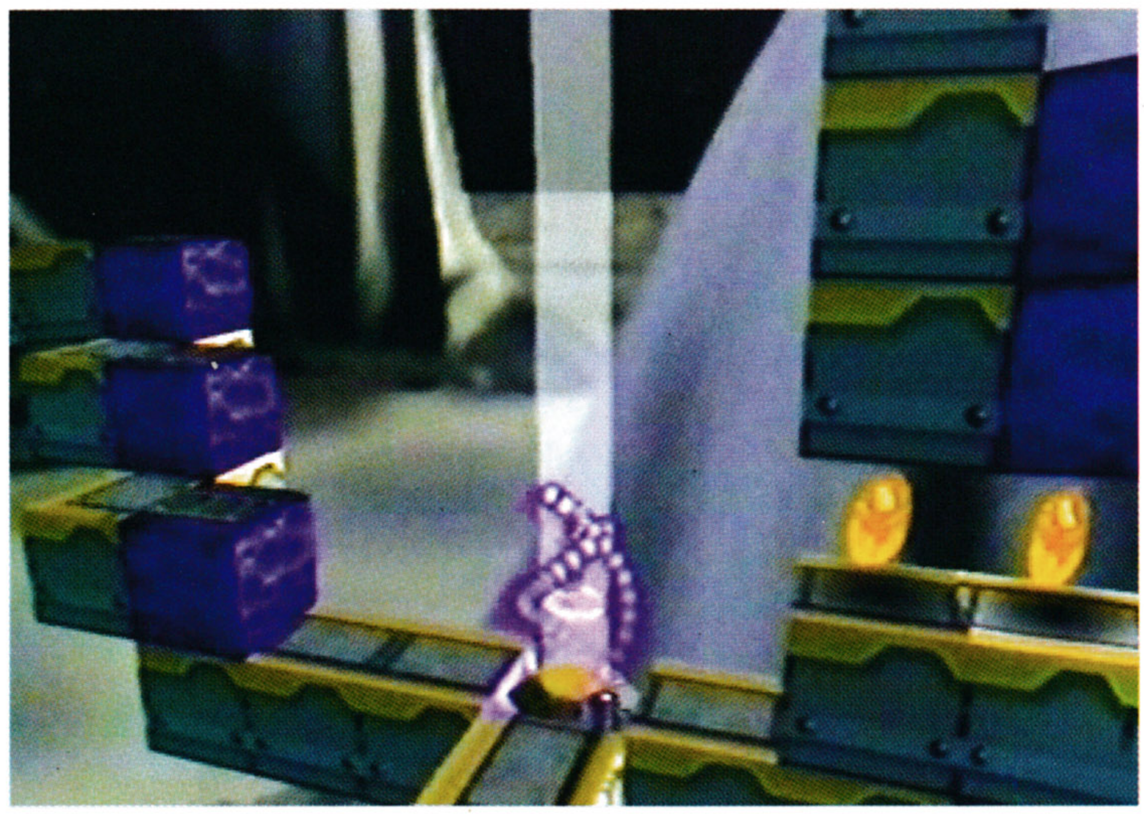


***Blast's* is frustrating rather than challenging**

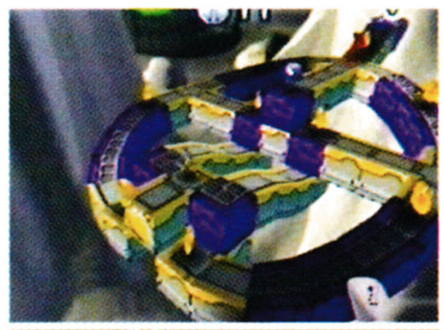
INFORMATION	
FORMAT	N64
PUBLISHER	Nintendo
DEVELOPER	Kemco
STYLE	Puzzle
RELEASE	Out Now
PRICE	£44.99
PLAYERS	1-4
SAVE GAME	Battery back up
RUMBLE PAK	Supported
EXPANSION PAK	Not supported

VERDICT	
GAME NAME	Lode Runner 3D
GRAPHICS	48
SOUND	69
PLAYABILITY	39
OVERALL Out of 100	40

Lode Runner 3D



The classic 2D puzzle game **makes a return in brand new** 64-bit clothes. Is this a worthwhile return to the gameplay **over graphics concept?**



Lode Runner 3D is an above-par remake of the ancient 2D puzzle game. Like any reasonable game of this type, the concept is simple, but the gameplay can at times be incredibly complex. The basic goal is to traverse a series of 3D worlds collecting every gold coin on each before a portal to the next is opened. The controls are simple; as well as movement, you can activate objects such as lifts or transports, drop any mines that you may have collected, or destroy certain blocks in front of you. Because you cannot destroy blocks directly below you, this can be complicated in itself as they will eventually regenerate and kill you.

Picking up

There are a myriad of hazards and objects that need to be used in unique ways; the later levels have enemies that cannot be destroyed directly, and you must use mines or lure them onto a destructible block to evade them. Graphically you can't complain too much. A high-res mode would have helped significantly, and, frustratingly, the frame rate can drop too far, which shouldn't have been a problem considering the lack of any need for complex graphics.

At its best this is a very frantic, tense and brain taxing puzzle game that has an extreme amount of longevity and is easy to pick up and play for a universal audience, but this is ultimately a game that struggles to hold your attention. Difficult levels can put you off it for a long time, and it lacks the pull that most puzzlers have to draw you back to it again and again. That said, this is a more than reasonable game which will find a happy place in most collections. **Will**

INFORMATION	
FORMAT	N64
PUBLISHER	Infogrames
DEVELOPER	Big Bang Software
STYLE	Puzzle
RELEASE	July
PRICE	£34.99
PLAYERS	One
SAVE GAME	Battery back up
RUMBLE PAK	Yes
EXPANSION PAK	No

VERDICT	
GAME NAME	Lode Runner 3D
GRAPHICS	48
SOUND	69
PLAYABILITY	72
OVERALL Out of 100	65

World Driver Championship

The N64 is starved of it's own equivalent **of the PlayStation's Gran Turismo,** the closest being the appalling GT64. Now, though, Midway has a **new potential rival to GT's excellence**

If you've played *Gran Turismo* (and let's be honest, who hasn't?), then you'll know all about the gorgeous graphics, the superb realism in the car handling, the ability to tinker under the bonnet; it's all there. Oh, and tons of playability to boot – no pun intended!

Now, after the abject humiliation that was *GT64*, Midway has produced what it reckons is the Nintendo equivalent. How wrong it is. *World Driver Championship* (*WDC*) features 30 cars, like Porches, Corvettes, Nissans and so on, with the emphasis on like. Manufacturers licences haven't been secured and hence, even though the names have been changed, you can immediately tell what the cars are supposed to be. These are then organised into different teams by phoney manufacturer, any of which you can join in the championship mode.

The championship mode is the main feature of *WDC* and allows you to race on ten tracks in places like Las Vegas, Germany, Rome, Sydney and Japan; they are mirrored for variety, dependent on the particular contest (rather like *Gran Turismo*). To advance through the game and join better teams you must achieve success in these cups. Because the teams have mechanics, however, you can't fiddle with the engine yourself, which really lets the game down and makes it feel like an arcade title; a point not helped by the actual arcade mode (revealing Midway's heritage, I feel).

The best, but not good enough...

There are also training, time trial and split-screen two player modes for longer life span. What really lets this game down, though, is not the graphics, which are pretty good, nor the options, which are plentiful, but that most crucial of ingredients in a racing game: the car handling physics. It's almost impossible when you try and drive properly (as in *Gran Turismo*) with gear changes and racing curves, instead it seems that a lot of practice is in order to get the hang of *Ridge Racer*-style powerslides. Call me silly, but if I play a 'realistic' driving game I expect some need for the use of manual transmission and driving line; to me WDC feels like an arcade game. A pretty good arcade game, but it's still no *Gran Turismo*.

In essence, this is without a doubt the N64's best GT racer by a long shout, but then again if you want realism, you're better off checking out F1 World Grand Prix 2 and if you want arcade thrills go for *Diddy Kong Racing*, *Mario Kart 64* or even *Star Wars: Racer*. **Chris**

TAKING CONTROL

It's nicely presented, and ensures you can get into the racing without any fuss. The problems start when you begin racing and promptly spin off at the first corner. You have to bear in mind that this game will take loads of practice before you can actually win any races.

The replay mode is as exciting as you would imagine

OTHER FORMATS?

PC ○○○○○

Midway isn't known for its PC games, and to be honest there are too many great racers to warrant this being released on the PC.

PlayStation ○○○○○

Not a chance. Do the words *Gran Turismo* or *Ridge Racer 4* mean anything? Midway would be foolish to do such a thing.

Dreamcast ○○○○○

Being Nintendo's arch-rivals, I can't see *WDC* ever being released on Sega's baby.

AVOID LIKE THE PLAGUE

The N64's previous GT racing game was called *GT64* and to be frank, it was an embarrassment. It looked bad, played awfully and was generally a pitiful excuse for a game. You're certainly better off with *WDC*!

INFORMATION

FORMAT	N64
PUBLISHER	Midway
DEVELOPER	In-House
STYLE	Sports Car Racing
RELEASE	Out Now
PRICE	£49.99
PLAYERS	1-2
RUMBLE PAK	Yes
SAVE GAME	Memory Pak
EXPANSION PAK	Not supported

VERDICT

GAME NAME	World Driver Champ
GRAPHICS	80
SOUND	70
PLAYABILITY	75
OVERALL Out of 100	75

READERSHIP SURVEY

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Exeter
EX4 4EP

Thank you for you time and support

ABOUT YOU

1) Name _____

2) Your Age (tick Box)

- ☐ Under 15
- ☐ 15-17
- ☐ 18-24
- ☐ 25-34
- ☐ 35-44
- ☐ 45-54
- ☐ 55-64
- ☐ 65+
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

3) What is your gross annual income?

- ☐ Less than £10,000
- ☐ £10,000 - £15,000
- ☐ £15,000 - £20,000
- ☐ £20,000 - £30,000
- ☐ £30,000 - £50,000
- ☐ £50,000 - £75,000
- ☐ £75,000 - £100,000
- ☐ £100,000 and above

4) How would you best describe your occupation?

- ☐ Employed full-time
- ☐ Employed part-time
- ☐ Self-employed
- ☐ Student
- ☐ Unemployed

5) Do you work in the computer games industry?:

- ☐ Yes - Go to question 5b
- ☐ No - Go to question 7

5b) If you answered 'Yes' to question 5, which of the following best describes the type of company you work for?

- ☐ Game Developer
- ☐ Game Publisher
- ☐ Game Distributor
- ☐ Chain Retailer
- ☐ Independant Retailer
- ☐ Mail Order Company
- ☐ Marketing
- ☐ Magazine Publisher

6] Do you make purchasing decisions within your company?

☐ Yes ☐ No

6a) If yes, what size annual budget are you responsible for?

_____

YOU AND YOUR GAMING SYSTEMS

7] Which of the following machines do you own and how long have you had them?
(Please indicate the number of years that you have owned the system next to it).

- ☐ PlayStation
- ☐ PC
- ☐ N64
- ☐ Game Boy Color
- ☐ Dreamcast
- ☐ Sega Saturn
- ☐ Megadrive
- ☐ SNES

8) Which of the following machines do you plan to purchase during the next 12 months?

- ☐ PlayStation
- ☐ PC
- ☐ N64
- ☐ Game Boy Color
- ☐ Dreamcast
- ☐ PlayStation 2
- ☐ Nintendo 2000
- ☐ Macintosh

9) On average, how many hours per week do you spend playing computer/videogames?

- ☐ Less than 2 hours
- ☐ Up to 4 hours
- ☐ Up to 6 hours
- ☐ Up to 8 hours
- ☐ Up to 10 hours
- ☐ Up to 20 hours
- ☐ More than 20 hours

10) During the last 12 months, how many games have you bought?

- ☐ None
- ☐ 1-2
- ☐ 3-6
- ☐ 7-10
- ☐ 11 or more

On average, how many of the above games are budget games?

_____

How many are second-hand?

_____

11) During the last 12 months, how many times have you bought a game within six weeks of it first going on sale?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Once
- ☐ Twice
- ☐ Three times
- ☐ Four times
- ☐ More than five

12) What was the last full-price game that you bought?

_____

13) How long have you been playing videogames?

- ☐ 6 months
- ☐ 7 months to 1 year
- ☐ 1-2 years
- ☐ 2-4 years
- ☐ 4-6 years
- ☐ More than 6 years

LEISURE ACTIVITIES

14) Which of the following leisure interests do you regularly engage in? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Videos
- ☐ Clothes
- ☐ Music
- ☐ Going to Pubs & Clubs
- ☐ Magazines
- ☐ Buying & Using Electrical Goods
- ☐ Playing a team Sport
- ☐ Watching a Team Sport
- ☐ Going to the cinema

Reader Survey

15) How many videos have you rented in the last month?

- ☐ None
- ☐ One
- ☐ 2-4
- ☐ 5-8
- ☐ 9+

16) How many music CDs have you bought in the last 12 months?

- ☐ None
- ☐ 1-5
- ☐ 6-10
- ☐ 11-15
- ☐ more than 15

16a) What type of music do you prefer?

_____

17) How often do you shop for clothes?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Once a week
- ☐ Once a fortnight
- ☐ Once a month
- ☐ Every couple of months

THE MAGAZINE

18) What made you buy Total CONTROL?

In order of influence:
1= Most influential
7= Least influential

- ☐ The front cover
- ☐ An advertisement
- ☐ Cover price of £2.70
- ☐ Editorial style
- ☐ Editorial content
- ☐ Every couple of months
- ☐ Number of pages
- ☐ Design/Layout

19) How often do you buy this magazine?

- ☐ Monthly [subscription]
- ☐ Monthly [bought from shop]
- ☐ Every other month
- ☐ Once in a while
- ☐ First time purchased

20) Will you buy the next issue?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe
- ☐ If not, why not?

_____

21) How many other people read your copy?

- ☐ One
- ☐ Two
- ☐ Three
- ☐ Four
- ☐ Five or more

22) Please mark the following features out of 5.

1= Poor
7= Excellent

- ☐ Cover
- ☐ Reportage
- ☐ Letters
- ☐ Alpha Reports
- ☐ Beta Looks
- ☐ Features
- ☐ Quality Control
- ☐ Net Total
- ☐ Hard Stuff
- ☐ Easy Way Out
- ☐ Foreign Office

23) Which of the following appeal to you most?

1= Most appealing
4= Least appealing

- ☐ Editorial style and content
- ☐ Design
- ☐ Price
- ☐ Size (no. of pages)

YOU AND MAGAZINES

24) How much money do you spend on magazines each month?

- ☐ £2-£5
- ☐ £6-£10
- ☐ £11-20
- ☐ £21-£30
- ☐ More than £30

25) Which of the following magazines do you buy?

- ☐ Arcade
- ☐ Official PlayStation Magazine
- ☐ Edge
- ☐ C&VG
- ☐ Gamesmaster
- ☐ Station
- ☐ Total PlayStation
- ☐ Official Nintendo Magazine
- ☐ Play
- ☐ PlayStation Plus
- ☐ PlayStation Power
- ☐ PlayStation Solutions
- ☐ PowerStation
- ☐ Essential PlayStation
- ☐ Total N64
- ☐ N64
- ☐ 64 Magazine
- ☐ PC Gamer
- ☐ Ultimate PC
- ☐ PC Zone
- ☐ PC Gaming World
- ☐ PC Format
- ☐ PC Home
- ☐ PC Review
- ☐ PC Answers
- ☐ Others (please specify)

26) Which is your favourite?

_____

27) Why?

_____

28) Which of the following lifestyle magazines do you read?

- ☐ FHM
- ☐ Loaded
- ☐ Maxim
- ☐ GQ
- ☐ Sky
- ☐ Front
- ☐ Empire
- ☐ Bizarre
- ☐ Esquire
- ☐ Q
- ☐ Others (please specify)

29) Which is your favourite?

_____

30) Why?

_____

Thank you for your time.

BACK ISSUES

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Prince Naseem Boxing alpha • *Perfect Dark* beta • *Resident Evil: Code Veronica* beta • *Force 21* beta • *Donkey Kong 64* beta • *Dino Crisis* beta • *Star Wars: Racer* review • Legacy of Kain review • *The Phantom Menace* review • Electronic Entertainment Expo report • *Suitable for all?* feature • *Heavy Gear 2* review

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ISSUE FIVE
FINAL FANTASY VIII

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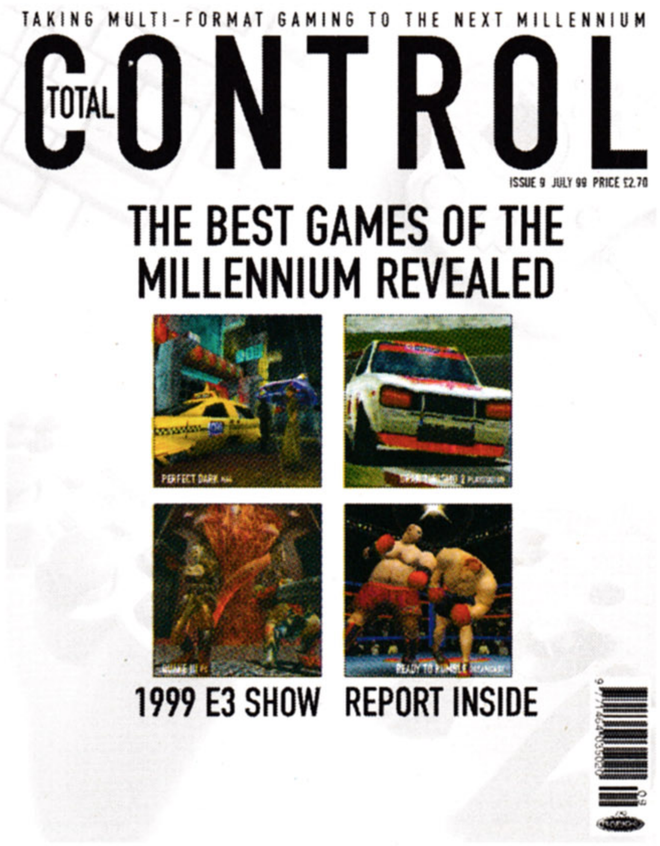

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STEVEBROWN
e-mail: steveb@rapide.co.uk

It's girl power on the Internet this month, with news of a huge all-female *Quake II* compo with top prizes and the summer launch of a new website dedicated to women's gaming issues. Although there is little doubt that the games industry is currently male dominated, from development to publishing and the, ahem, industry press, it is a great misconception that girls are not interested or do not play games. However, while games development remains male dominated, it is important that more female groups grow and shout about their wants. Things are only going to change if they are recognised more as an influential voice, and the internet is undoubtedly the best forum for this. This particular group is looked at in a new section for this month, Building Site, which will examine sites currently under construction. Also this month we show you where to get new parts for your *X-Wing*, new cars and maps for *GTA London* and extra single-player levels for *Half-Life*. There are some exciting new demos to download, including two of the Star Wars flavour, and this month our Top Ten Demos section will be more informative, with file sizes, genre and publisher details. Our application this month is the always-useful *Winzip*, and in *Game Over Man* we look at the fast-approaching solar eclipse in Devon and Cornwall, plus sites covering all aspects of eclipse science, viewing, travel and accommodation. We still aren't getting many reader sites, so start sending them in, or making them if you haven't yet tried using your webspace.

HOT OFF THE WIRE

Female Frag Fest '99

In what promises to be the biggest catfight on the Internet, female gamers are to slug it out at *Quake II*. The contest will be sponsored by Logitech and held on the HEAT games network. Winners will enjoy prizes such as trips to New York with beauty treatment, dinner and a Broadway show thrown in. The top prize is a Dreamcast with three games. It's going to be one hell of a fight, so hitch up your skirts, sharpen your nails and head over to www.femalefrag.com now.

Dreamcast Web-Wizards

The upcoming war simulation, *Rune Caster*, developed by Noishia, is a fantasy fighting game for the Dreamcast. Players are cast as wizards who must defeat all other opponents to become the head mages of the town in which the battles are set. A huge selection of characters is promised for the title, each with special attributes, spells and attacks. Because of the wide character choice, the game will fully support network play using the Dreamcast's modem and the Sega network.

iomega SEGA

Game on... and on... and on...

The life of the Game Boy has been extraordinarily long, mainly due to the innovative add-ons Nintendo regularly market for it with such success. They have recently announced that their versatile and ever-popular handheld will soon be upgraded with Internet capabilities. By early next year the software will be available in Japan to link your pocket buddy to a wider world of gaming friends. Owners will be able to exchange data with others and download new game characters, with extra features yet to be announced. Presumably some hardware peripheral in the form of a slot-in modem will be necessary. There is no news yet on UK availability or price.

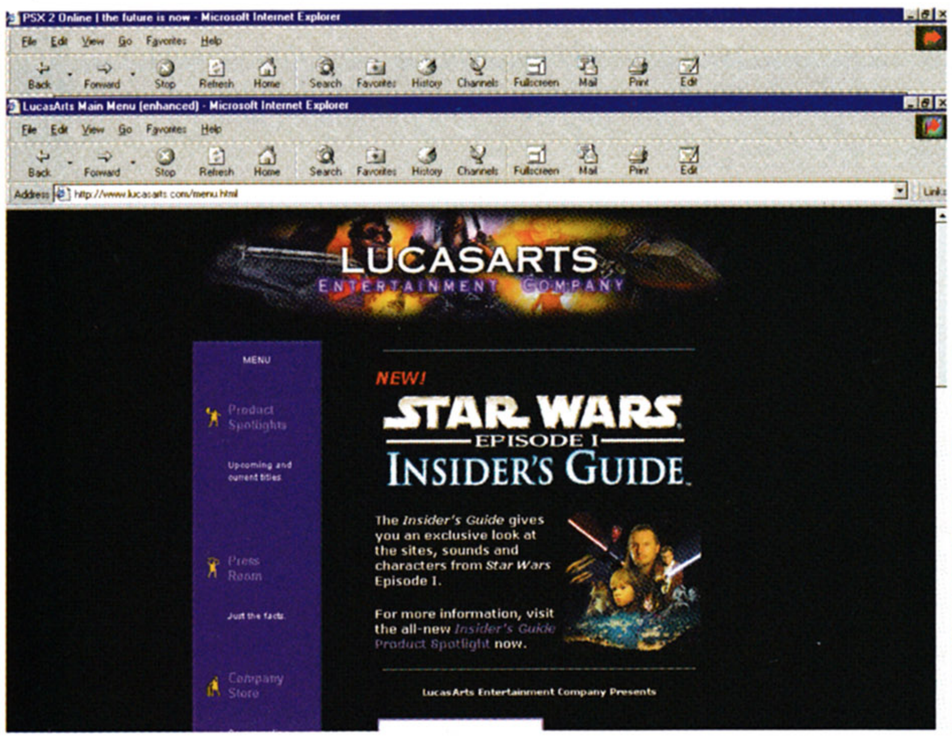
Zip it up!

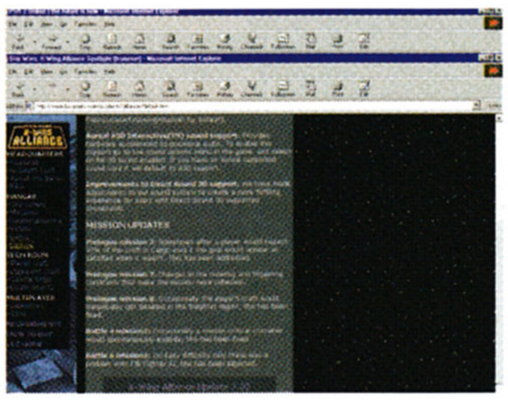
Two months ago we brought you news of a Zip drive with Internet capabilities for the Sega Dreamcast. New information (and a first picture of the actual drive) is now available. The zip drive will allow players to store large quantities of data downloaded from the Dreamcast HEAT games network, including cheats, save games, extra levels and characters. It will also be used to store email and news files. New ports on the drive will allow the connection of a keyboard and mouse to virtually turn your console into an Internet-ready PC. The hardware should hit the shops later this year.

DOWNLINK

Patch Up Your X-Wing, www.lucasarts.com

Have you just bought the fastest hunk of junk in the galaxy? Has your R2 unit blown its motivator repairing your X-Wing on the fly? It sounds like you need to patch up your Alliance with LucasArts by accepting their apologetic online patch that should blow your blues into hyperspace. *X-Wing Alliance* received widespread critical acclaim, but the previous 2.01 update caused hassle for many, especially foreign language version users. The 2.02 patch is just out and will correct all bugs, glitches and AI problems. Extras include the ability to record and view flown missions and the addition of enhanced Direct Sound 3D support.





Steal Some New Cars, www.take2games.com

Rockstar are to release some additional maps for *GTA: London 1969*. The map pack will be free to download and take the player back a few years to London 1961. There will also be new missions, cars and special features included. One of the maps will be multiplayer only for internet play. The free download will be available from July 1st.

Chronic New Half-Life Levels, www.radioactivesoftware.com

By mid-July there should be some very good news for all fans of *Half-Life* who want some further single-player action. Radioactive Software are working on a mini-series of new levels, known collectively as *Half-Life: Chronicles*. The player will be able to explore new storylines as well as branches from the original plot. The website is already up with information and screenshots, although there are no downloadable levels at time of writing. A full version of *Half-Life* will be required to play the levels and it must be patched to version 1.009 or more.

TOP TEN DEMOS

(All demos can be found at www.avault.com or www.gamespot.com)

Need For Speed: High Stakes
Genre: Racing
Size: 14.4MB
Publisher: EA

Braveheart
Genre: RTS
Size: 100MB
Publisher: Eidos

Star Wars Episode 1: The Phantom Menace
Genre: Action/Adventure
Size: 33.7MB
Publisher: LucasArts

Star Wars Episode 1: Racer
Genre: Racing
Size: 16.3
Publisher: LucasArts

F-22 Lightning 3
Genre: Flight Sim
Size: 33.6MB
Publisher: Novalogic

Breakneck
Genre: Racing
Size: 15.3MB
Publisher: THQ

Shadow Company
Genre: Action/Strategy
Size: 32.4MB
Publisher: Interactive Magic

Hell-Copter
Genre: Arcade/Flight Combat
Size: 28.5MB
Publisher: UbiSoft

Ancient Conquest
Genre: RTS
Size: 33.2MB
Publisher: Megamedia

Peacemaker
Genre: Arcade/Flight Combat
Size: 24.3MB
Publisher: Kuju

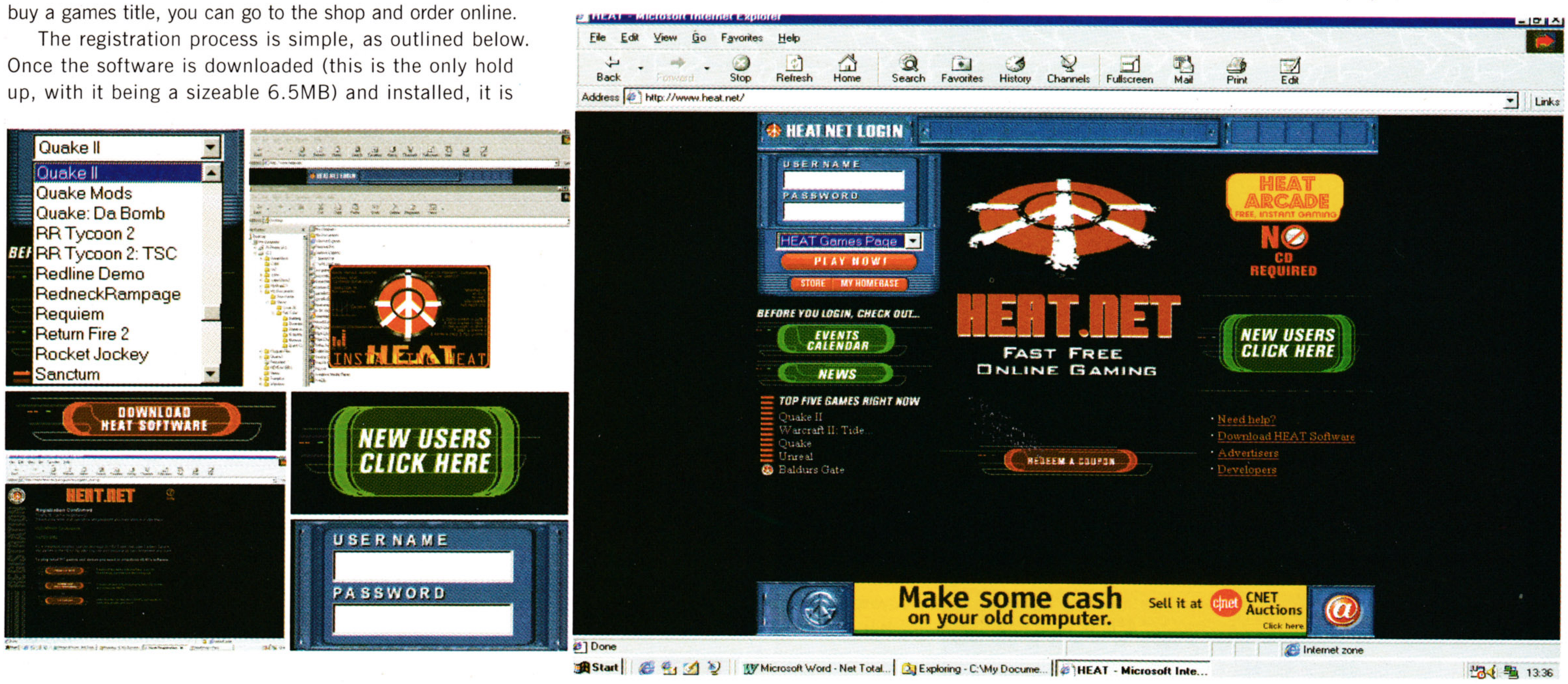
NETWORK FOCUS

www.heat.net

The HEAT games network is one of the largest free networks on the internet. There are over 120 popular games to choose from (as long as you have the full versions) and always plenty of opponents to find. You are able to personalise your own homebase according to your game and opponent preferences, and there are plenty of chat-rooms to organise games. There are also a good variety of arcade games that can be played without paying for any software. If you want to buy a games title, you can go to the shop and order online.

The registration process is simple, as outlined below. Once the software is downloaded (this is the only hold up, with it being a sizeable 6.5MB) and installed, it is quick and simple to log on, easy to find games and easy to launch into them for quick action. If the game needs patching, the files will be automatically downloaded and the title updated before play. Ping rates were average to good for *Quake II*. The best thing about HEAT is the sheer number of supported games, many of which are not supported by the common game browsers. Give it a go – it's free, so what have you got to lose?

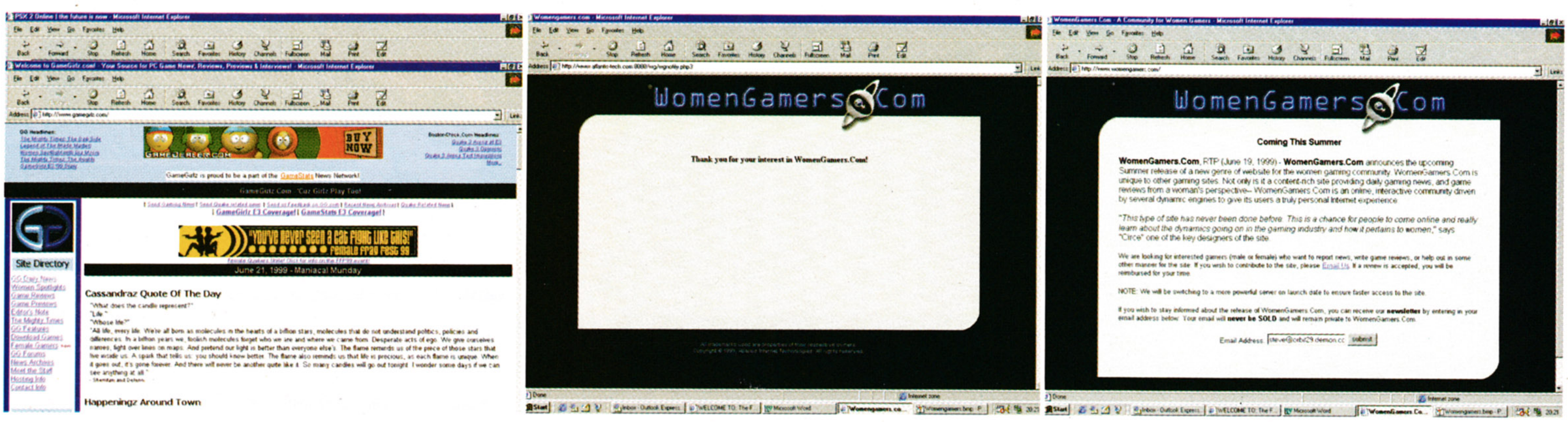
1. Go to the HEAT homepage (see above)
2. Click on 'New Users Click Here'
3. Choose user name and password
4. Click on 'Download HEAT software
5. Save the file to your hard drive
6. Run the HEAT software to install it
7. Log on to the HEAT network with username and password
8. Choose a game to play and launch into it



BUILDING SITE

www.womengamers.com

This summer will see the launch of a new game site devoted to the fairer sex (although having said that, I have seen girls pull off some dirty tricks to frag some ass in *Quake*). The site promises to be full of the usual essential info, such as daily industry news and the latest previews and reviews, but all from a female perspective. It also promises to give its users a genuinely personal internet experience using "dynamic engines". I imagine this means that you will be able to set preferences and will receive news and info based upon the replies put into an initial questionnaire form field. The site hopes to grow into an interactive community of online female gamers. Circe, one of the key site designers (and the namesake of a mythological witch-goddess), claims that, "This type of site has never been done before. This is a chance for people to come online and really learn about the dynamics going on in the gaming industry and how it pertains to women". The designers want input of all kinds from both women and men, particularly in the form of news and reviews. They even promise to reimburse you for your efforts. Although they claim that their type of site has never been done before, www.gamegirlz.com has been going strong for a long time now, offering very similar services. Whether they become sisters in arms or bitter rivals remains to be seen.



APPLICATION FORM

TOTAL CONTROL

Name Winzip

Size 943KB

Present Wage Unlimited free trial

Expected Wage $29.00

Job Description:
You will be required to neatly pack large numbers of files into very small packages for dispatch and also to unpack similar ones received.

Why do you feel that you are suited to the job?

I have had several years of experience in just such work. I started fairly small in a DOS environment, requiring detailed commands, but now I require only very simple direction to unpack files exactly where you want in a Windows environment. I am a very fast worker and can handle vast numbers of files. I can gather files from wherever you are keeping them and even add extra files to packages at a later date. Depending upon the type of file, I am able to compress them considerably for much more convenient storage or dispatch. Many files on the internet are kept in compressed packages these days, and I can automatically unpack and run them if you so desire. I recognise all kinds of packing types from ZIP and ARJ to LHA and CAB. You can reach me in many locations in the Windows workplace, whether you are in Windows Explorer, Internet Explorer or My Computer. You can simply drop files on me and I will automatically stuff them into the required package.

Please leave an address where we may contact you:
www.winzip.com

GAME OVER, MAN

With the August 11th around the corner and Total CONTROL's fortunate Devonshire location, we thought that it was time to remind you of the approaching celestial darkness that is bound to strike fear in the hearts of simple West Country folk. For those outside the counties of Devon and Cornwall of a more scientific or trippy persuasion, there is plenty of online information about the eclipse, how and where to view it, the scientific explanations, and travel and accommodation.

www.eclipse.org.uk

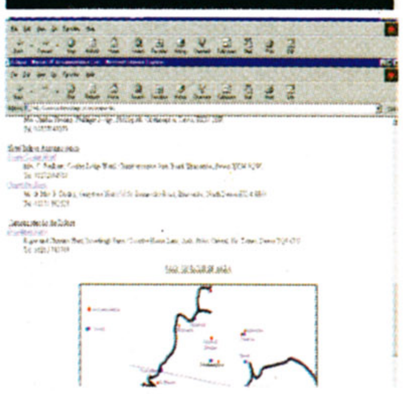
This is the official UK eclipse site and has details on practically everything you need to know about it, with pictures of past eclipses, the science behind them, safety advice, news, and even T-shirts to order for that summer tourist look. The safety section is of importance, as there will be plenty of unofficial viewing glasses down here and you want to make sure you are protecting your eyes with more than a piece of sooty glass.

www.hermit.org/Eclipse1999

This site is excellent for more local news on the eclipse, giving detailed maps of the full eclipse's path and updated long-range weather forecasts for the 11th August. If it's cloudy then there are going to be a lot of disappointed stellar tourists down here. There are links to local accommodation and even details on boat charter to escape the crowds and see it all from the ocean wave. Not ones to blow their own trumpet, this local site also generously list some future eclipses. Of course you will have to be fairly young now to catch the next full solar eclipse in the UIK in 2090.

www.myrtle-cottage.co.uk

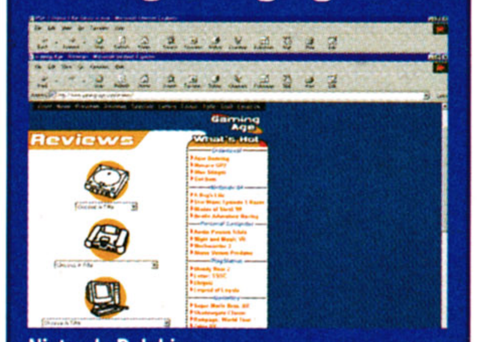
This quaint-sounding site gives a very good listing of local accommodation for the eclipse. There are full details of facilities, availability, directions with maps and photographs of the buildings. The prices vary but are very reasonable at the low end, from £10 to £15 a night. And those nasty national rags accuse us of taking advantage of the visitors we're going to have!



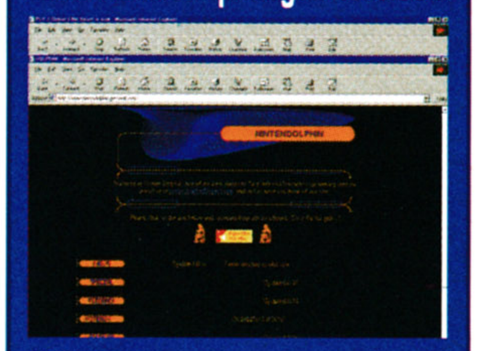
Quick-Click

PlayStation 2:
www.psx2online.com

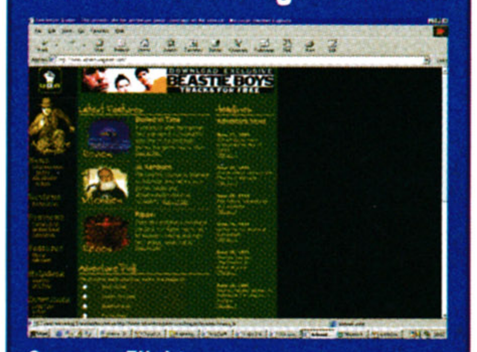
Multiformat News 'n' Reviews:
www.gaming-age.com



Nintendo Dolphin:
www.nintendolphin.gen-next.com



RPG Info:
www.adventuregamer.com



Summer Flights:
www.all-destinations.com

Alien Search:
www.setiathome.ssl.berkeley.edu/

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Having words with... PRINCE NASEEM

'The Prince' Naseem Hamed, the indestructible force from Sheffield, has taken time out from preparing **for his next defence of the World Featherweight** title to talk to us about his career and involvement with Codemasters' *Prince Naseem Boxing*...

Q. Why did you begin boxing? How old were you?
Hamed: My father took me to the gym when I was eleven years old– my older brothers, Riath and Nabael, were already training. From the first day I walked into the gym, I knew it was for me.

Q. Who are your idols and role models?
Hamed: Muhammed Ali is definitely my boxing idol; the impact he had on boxing, sport and people all around the world is unbelievable. When I was a kid he inspired me, and he continues to inspire me today.

Q. You've won all 32 fights in your career with an impressive 29 KOs. All fighters must surely lose at least one fight in their careers, so is there anyone who could possibly beat you?
Hamed: To succeed you must have a positive attitude – in my mind I am unbeatable.

Q. Which has been your best fight, the one you're most proud of?
Hamed: All my fights have been great. I can't single out one being greater than all the others. They have all had significant impact on my life and career in their own ways.

Q. Are there any set routines you go through before bouts?
Hamed: I have no set routine – my training programme varies from fight to fight. I like spontaneity.

Q. Pound for pound, who is the best boxer in the world today? (Apart from yourself, of course!)

Hamed: You know British is best, and Lennox Lewis is the man who can.

Q. When and where is your next fight? Who is it against?
Hamed: My next fight will be in September/October in America, although the exact opponent and date are yet to be finalised.

Q. What are your plans as far as your career is concerned?
Hamed: I want to unify the featherweight division and then move up in weight to win different world titles at different weights.

Q. Receiving an MBE from Prince Charles must have been a very proud moment. Where do you keep your medal?
Hamed: It was a great moment in my career to receive such an honour, and I keep it at home.

Q. Do you play computer games in your spare time? Do you have any particular favourites at the moment?

Hamed: Yes, I have got two PlayStations; one in my house, and the other is set up in my Range Rover. Generally, I like to go for games that test my reflexes, so I go for driving games like *TOCA 2* and *Colin McRae Rally*.

Q. Are you pleased with Codemasters' new game based on you? What do you think of your likeness in *Prince Naseem Boxing*?

Hamed: It's coming along really well and reflects the way you have to think in the ring. To beat your opponent you have to out-smart him, not simply launch a frenzied attack. The model of me is looking good. The programmers have managed to make the character move and throw punches just like I do in the ring, so I can't ask for anything else.

Prince Naseem, thank you for speaking to us.

The Entertainment Industry's 1st Choice

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PROGRAMMER Midlands up to £30k
A leading developer and publisher of sports related products are looking for junior and senior programmers for newly signed projects. C++ skills a must. **R2187**

PROGRAMMER Midlands up to £22k
Proficient in C++ and ideally knowledge of 3D. Training will be given on the use of in-house software tools. **R2220**

LEAD PSX PROGRAMMER Scotland £high
Experienced PSX programmer to work on an innovative new project. Must have at least 1 published title and 2 years console experience. Must have strong C and Strong R3000 assembler knowledge. Low level GTE/GPU a must. **R2249**

PSX PROGRAMMER Manchester upto £30k
Must have low level programming experience and worked with GTE Direct. Knowledge of RISC and fundamental ability of 3D. A fun environment, whilst producing high quality work. **R2214**

PSX 2 LEAD PROGRAMMER North £neg
A leading developer working on licensed products looking to build a new team for their next PSX 2 release. Must have extensive console programming experience with a 'can do' attitude. Able to work as part of a small team backed by a large corporation. **R2110**

3D PROGRAMMER North £neg
Working on the latest football game for a major publisher in an open plan easygoing environment. Must have excellent 3D programming skills, C++ and Direct X. **R2185**

PSX 2 LEAD PROGRAMMER North c£30k + benefits
Managing a team of 5 people, at least 1 game under belt, PC and PSX. Recruitment responsibility, guide and motivate team, working with project manager and lead artist. **R2089**

PSX PROGRAMMER North up to £30k
Low level programming experience required to work in a fun environment producing high quality sports titles and cartoon style games. **R2214**

N64 PROGRAMMER North £neg
To work on an original game starting soon. Must have good console knowledge an experience of 3D. **R2204**

LEAD PROGRAMMER London up to £30k
An established company run by experienced games developers, must have prior knowledge of console development. A medium sized company publishing for a major player. Must have a passion for the games industry. **R2254**

"AAA" PROGRAMMER London £high
A High level of C++ programming skills and knowledge of WIN 32, A.I, Real - time 3D programming / Maths, Neural networks and artificial life systems. **R2225**

TRAINEE PROGRAMMER London £neg
Degree essential, but experience not. Must have a first class university background. "O" and "A" Level results must be shown on CV. **R2207**

AUDIO PROGRAMMER Home Counties up to £35k
Responsible for audio technology R & D i.e. creating effects, filters, comp codecs and managing 3D audio h/w and s/w. Development of audio technology on PC, PSX, N64. Experience in digital audio/MIDI programming and BSc in CS, EE or related subject. **R2132**

JNR PROGRAMMER Staffs c£22k plus Bonus
A young and bright programmer, able to work on own initiative, or a very bright graduate. A small company with large corporation backing plus lots of creative freedom. **R2238**

Z80 PROGRAMMER Leamington Spa up to £18k
Working on colour Gameboy project. A good team player, industry experience essential. Moving onto C programming for next project. **R2213**

ARTISTS

ARTIST London up to £25k
A leading developer of console based games employing 45 staff in a relaxed atmosphere, are looking for 2D Bitmap artist to work with level builders to provide level designers with textures. **R2256**

LEAD ARTIST London c£30k + Bonus
Working on a 3D Action adventure game. with an interest in horror. Experience of 3DS Max and Photoshop with a creative understanding of lighting. Front-end graphics, sound, ability to draw, liaison with programmers. At least one published title. **R2147**

ARTIST Southcoast £neg
A small but highly successful company working on an Internet 3D-chat environment is looking for a high quality 2D texture artist . Working primarily on PC with plans for PSX 2 and Dreamcast. **R2240**

LEVEL BUILDER London up to £25k
Experienced in all aspects of level building, with level editor knowledge, must have worked with 3D computer graphics packages. **R2257**

INTERACTIVE DEVELOPER Midlands up to £25k
Our client, a major production company has been contracted to work on FMV sequences for leading interactive computer games companies. Your skills will include fluency in MAYA and/or Director and the ability to demonstrate a passion for game and TV production. **R2178**

3D ANIMATOR Midlands £neg
Our client, a major art resource for games and TV are working on 2 exciting new ventures, with Edgemont and Fleetway. They are developing the world's first rendered comic to much acclaim, as well as animation sequences, TV Adverts, Box Cover Artwork and are about to commence work on a fully rendered feature film. Must have excellent 3D animation skills and be a great team player to work on very high profile animations. **R2218**

ANIMATORS Midlands up to £26k
A leading developer and publisher of sports games requires experienced and junior animators to work on their latest titles. An informal, laid back and relaxed atmosphere. **R2212**

ARTIST South West £neg
A highly regarded developer of 3D action adventure games with a fantasy angle are looking for and extremely good modeller with a brilliant imagination. **R2188**

LEAD ARTIST North £neg
An ideal opportunity for an individual looking for their next career move, experienced in 3DS Max with good character and world modelling skills. A key member of the team, involved in all aspects of management from scheduling to recruitment and trouble-shooting. **R2114**

HEAD OF GAME DESIGN Scotland c£40k+
Formed within the past 4 years, our client has a highly acclaimed management team enabling them to secure significant investment to fully realise the company's potential and attract the industry's most impressive client publishers. You will be responsible for the complete creative control of a game and must have a clear understanding of game/TV production, design, story and characterisation, 3D level design with creative scriptwriting skills. **R2198**

LEAD ARTIST Scotland £Excellent
A highly experienced 3D artist to take the senior position on a new project. Excellence in both 2D plus 3D packages, 3D studio Max, Character Studio and Photoshop. Ability to manage others, excellent communication skills. **R2247**

ANIMATOR Scotland £neg
A creative plus imaginative individual, bursting with talent, experienced in character animation with a healthy interest in computer games. A graduate with knowledge of a current 3D package. **R2196**

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ANSWERS

Games are a serious business!

Regency Hill Interactive

Sports Designers

One of Europe's leading design software publishers who specialise in the development of computer and video games are looking for two talented and creative individuals to work on a growing range of well known sports software. Knowledge of the current computer game market, excellent written and spoken communication skills and Windows '95 experience are all essential.

Package: Excellent, but not quite Alan Shearer level!

Playstation Programmer

With experience of Playstation programming you will be working within a unique and highly creative environment, have excellent C skills and enjoy being part of a fast track, motivated team. To succeed you will need a genuine passion and enthusiasm for a broad range of computer games.

Package: A rootin' tootin' salary based on experience.

Development Programmer

A rare opportunity to join a major, young and dynamic company in computer and video game development. This newly created, high profile senior management position will take responsibility for the day to day management of internal production teams via the producer and QA team, reporting to the Games Design Director. You will be able to show in depth knowledge of the game development and the production process, excellent time management skills and be an outstanding communicator.

Package: Jaw-dropping!

Game Designers

Assisting in the design of games and monitoring these through development stages ensuring quality and game play are of the highest level. Our client continues to double its profitability year on year by employing the best designers, they're perfectionists with the ability to break-down every detail of a project and then put it back together in an enhanced format. If you want to be the best and work with the best this is the opportunity you've been waiting for!

Package: Superb - with a great future in your tiny chaffing hands!

Programmers

We currently have numerous opportunities with a high profile developers for candidates with excellent C and C++ programming experience. You should have good vocational experience or alternatively be a recent graduate in Computer Science, maths, Physics etc. A passion about gaming with experience of using DirectX Strong DirectX or console are the cheats required to gain entry.

Package: Excellent, if you feel you need remuneration for this great first rung of the ladder opportunity!

Opportunities

Lead QA Manager - c £22K
Technical Manager - c £35K
Internal Producer - c £35K
Games Designer x 2 - c £25K
C/C++ Programmers x 4 - £18K-£27K
Games Designers x 3 - c £28K
Development Manager - c £38K
Sales Manager - £28K

Contact

Send, fax or e-mail your CV, with current remuneration details, in the strictest confidence to Paul Young or Kelvin Dale-Greaves at:
e-mail: kelvin@regencyhill.demon.co.uk

Kiln House
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Fax: 01568 797190

HARDSTUFF

CLIFFSMITH
e-mail: cliff@rapide.co.uk

As promised, I've got something a bit special for you PC owners this month. All the major graphics card manufacturers have recentiy released powerful 2D/3D graphics cards using the Advanced Graphics Port (AGP) socket found on new PC motherboards. Naturally, all of them are claiming that their cards are the fastest, best value, have the most features etc., so to help you decide which one is the best for you, we've put them all to the test. Which is the best? Read on and find out.

Since this month has been a bit of a PC special, next month I'll try and put something together for all the console gamers out there. Several companies have just announced their new product catalogues for 1999-2000, so I'll be going through them and picking out the best items to test.

Finally, as you may have heard, I'm leaving the Total Control team this month to take on a new job as Reviews Editor on Ultimate PC, the magazine I used to work on before we launched TC. I will still be contributing occasional features to Total Control however, including the regular Hard Stuff section. I love playing with all these expensive toys way too much to give it up.

MAVICA FD91 DIGITAL CAMERA

Company: **Sony** Price: **£949** On sale: **OUT NOW** Format: **N/A**

I have an infallible test to identify a classy gadget when it comes the office: If the boys on Ultimate PC immediately come over and try to borrow it, then I know I'm onto a winner. As soon as they saw this Sony digital camera, they scuttled over in full blag mode – and I'm not surprised.

As a photographer, I've always treated the majority of digital cameras with a kind of amused condescension. I thought they were okay for snapshots, but useless for serious photography. The Mavica has changed my mind. It has features that I would normally only expect to find on the better SLR film cameras, including spot metering and aperture or shutter priority, with a lens capable of a useful f1.8. The quality of the final image is very high, especially in the optional BMP mode, which fills an entire disk with one shot. The zoom is quick, quiet and powerful, and the electronic viewfinder is bright and clear. The built-in LCD screen is also very good, with a full range of options accessible through on-screen menus.

Naturally, the Mavica also has some features only found on electronic cameras, including the ability to record MPEG movie segments with sound, up to sixty seconds long.

Some people think Sony's use of standard PC floppy disks as a storage medium is a mistake, but I disagree. Disks are cheap and plentiful, and most people can lay their hands on dozens of the things. The camera can store up to thirty-five images to a disk, so just keep a few spares in your pocket.

4 OUT OF 5

FORCE RS

Company: **Act Labs** Price: **£??.99** On sale: **OUT NOW** Format: PC/N64/**PlayStation**

The Act Labs Force RS steering wheel controller is an interesting design. It is the first high-quality force-feedback wheel to be designed with multi-format use in mind. On the back of the device there is an interchangeable module, which will be available in PlayStation, PC, Nintendo 64 and possibly Dreamcast formats. To use the wheel with a different format, simply change to the appropriate module. Although currently only the PC format modules are available, the others will be out soon.

This is one of the most solidly constructed games controllers I have ever seen. Built on a steel chassis and using many metal components, the Force RS is not going to wear out in a hurry. Although the styling of the case is a little bit drab, the wheel itself is large, comfortable and covered in real leather. I'm thinking of nicking it and fitting it in my car.

Unfortunately, the mechanical stuff inside doesn't work quite as well. The force-feedback motor is very powerful, but it feels very rough. You can feel the rotors turning as you fight against the motor. I don't know whether the Microsoft force-feedback wheel uses a completely different kind of motor, but both it and the Saitek R4 are much smoother.

The Force RS is a good, well-made wheel, and the multi-format approach is a good idea, but they need to work on smoothing it out.

3 OUT OF 5

RIO PMP300

Company: **Diamond** Price: **£149.99** On sale: **OUT NOW** Format: **PC**

The Rio portable MPEG audio player is a new type of personal stereo which doesn't use tapes or CDs to store your favourite tunes. Instead, you download MP3 encoded files from the internet into your home PC, then transfer the files into the Rio via a parallel port link cable. The unit has 32MB of memory on board, which is good for about sixty-five minutes of stored music (about the same as a CD). Additional Flash cards can be inserted, which provide more storage, offering a compact way of carrying your favourite music. The unit comes with easy-to-use software enabling you to drag and drop tracks into the Rio. There is also software for converting CD tracks into MP3 format for use in the gadget, which is just as well, as most of the downloadable music I was able to find was uniformly rubbish.

Despite the dubious value of the songs, playback quality is extremely good, perhaps as good as a CD, and the supplied in-the-ear headphones aren't bad either. The controls are simple, just what you would find on a portable CD player, although the Rio does have some useful features such as an equaliser and the ability to play intros. At a ton and a half, the Rio isn't cheap, but it may well come down in price. If some electronics manufacturers have their way then we will soon be buying everything over the Internet, so this little toy could be the wave of the future.

4 OUT OF 5

TECHWORKS TFT

Techworks, best known for their memory upgrades and 3D graphics cards, are about to launch their first flat-screen TFT monitor. The TFT400 has a fourteen-inch screen capable of displaying 262,144 colours at a resolution of up to 1024x768. The screen is exceptionally bright with a wide viewing angle of 130 degrees horizontal by 120 degrees vertical. It can handle all VGA, SVGA and XGA modes in full screen. It is compatible with all PCs, and with a simple adapter can also be used with Macintosh computers. Although fourteen inches doesn't sound like a lot, TFT panels have a wider picture area than CRT tubes, so it is approximately equivalent to a fifteen-inch conventional monitor.

NEW SAITEK

Saitek, manufacturers of high quality games controllers, have just announced their 1999-2000 product range, and there are a number of tasty new items in their catalogue. The SP550 is a PC joystick with six fire buttons, hat switch and throttle, plus one unique feature. Part of the base separates to make a four-button gamepad with an eight-way D-pad and two triggers. This eliminates the need to unplug your joystick, plug in a pad and then muck about with the Control Panel for fifteen minutes every time you change games. The SP550 comes with its own easy-to-use set-up software and quick start guide.

Pick a card, any card...

Bewildered by bump mapping? **Puzzled by polygons?** Foxed by filtering? **Don't panic –** Total CONTROL is here to help...

The growth of the PC as a games format, and the subsequent development of 3D graphics technology, has led to a bewildering array of graphics accelerator cards becoming available. These add-on expansions can dramatically enhance the game-playing power of any PC – in fact some games require the use of an accelerator card to play at all. The problem is, which one do you choose? If you believe the hype on the side of the box then every accelerator card is better than all the rest, leaving most gamers bewildered and confused by the range of features on offer. To help you decide which card you should spend your hard-earned cash on, we have carried out an independent and unbiased survey of five of the latest graphics accelerator cards from some of the biggest names in the industry. Using the superb 3DMark 99 Max Pro benchmarking software from Futuremark Corporation, we compared each card's performance in an exhaustive range of tests. We also played a number of 3D games on the cards, including *Quake III*, *Descent 3* and *Half-Life* (of course!). Here's what we found...

VOODOO BANSHEE

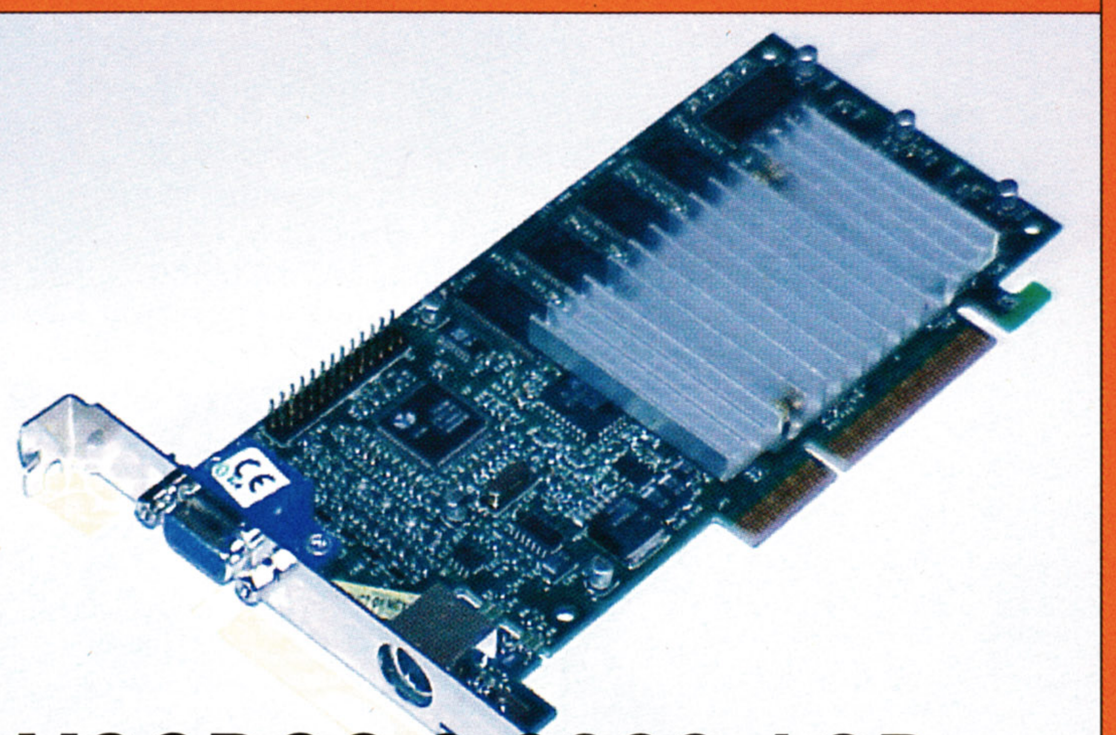
Company: **Power GrafX** Price: **£79.99** On sale: **OUT NOW** Bus slot: **AGP** Memory: **16MB**

We included the Power GrafX in this test series to serve as a sort of baseline. The card uses the popular 3Dfx Voodoo Banshee chipset, a version of the Voodoo 2 incorporating a 2D accelerator. Cards using this chipset have been around for about six months and have now been succeeded by the Voodoo 3. We weren't expecting it to do very well against such high-powered competition. However, as the test results show, this budget priced 2D/3D card is definitely no slouch. In fact, in a couple of tests it out-performed cards with twice the memory and costing nearly twice as much money. As a budget gaming accelerator, the Banshee chipset is hard to beat and plays most of the older 3D games like *Quake II* just as well as more expensive cards. It is only the newer games, such as *Quake III*, *Descent 3* and *Aliens Vs Predator* that give it a problem, with occasional hangs and pauses. The Banshee chipset does not handle 32-bit colour at all and is only capable of screen resolutions up to 1200 pixels, so most of our tests wouldn't run on this card. Nonetheless, the Power GrafX is highly recommended for lower spec systems or those with a tight budget.

3DMARK SCORES

800x600, 16-bit: 2,345 3D marks
800x600, 32-bit: N/A
1152x864, 16-bit: 1,937 3D marks
1152x864, 32-bit: N/A
1600x800, 16-bit: N/A
1600x800, 32-bit: N/A

3 OUT OF 5



VOODOO 3 3000 AGP

Company: **3Dfx** Price: **£149.00** On sale: **OUT NOW** Bus slot: **AGPX2** Memory: **16MB**

The revolutionary Voodoo chipset from 3Dfx transformed PC gaming with its super-smooth 3D graphics. Games such as *Quake II* would never have been the same without it. The Voodoo 2, released last year, added more memory and higher performance, with the option of linking two cards together for even more power.

3Dfx are now selling cards under their own brand name, and they have launched the Voodoo 3 range of 2D/3D cards in both PCI and AGP formats in a range of memory sizes.

The major advantage with the Voodoo 3 card is going to be product compatibility. Because of 3Dfx's standing in the market, every developer of 3D games will feel obliged to include support for what is certain to be a very popular card. The Voodoo 3 is very good at what it does, scoring top marks overall in the 16-bit tests, even at the highest resolutions. However, as the test results show, it is not without limits.

The Voodoo 3 won't handle 32-bit colour at all, which reduces the colour palette available, but it does handle high-resolution screens quite well. It lacks many of the advanced features available on the other cards, such as single-pass bump mapping and anisotropic filtering, and only the 3000 models have TV output. This is a shame, because developers love to make use of new graphics capabilities. If they start to optimise their games for cards like the powerful Matrox G400 or ATI Rage Fury, 3Dfx could be left behind despite their reputation. So, although the Voodoo 3 is one of the cheaper cards in our test, it may be the one with the shortest future.

3DMARK SCORES

800x600, 16-bit: 2,578 3D marks
800x600, 32-bit: N/A
1152x864, 16-bit: 2,589 3D marks
1152x864, 32-bit: N/A
1600x800, 16-bit: 2,563 3D marks
1600x800, 32-bit: N/A

3 OUT OF 5

THE TEST CONDITIONS

The comparison tests were carried out on a machine which we hope reflects the average home PC. The specification we used consisted of an Intel Celeron A 333MHz MMX processor with 32KB of L1 cache and 128 KB of L2 cache, 64MB of RAM, DirectX 6.1 (build 4.06.02.0436) and AWARD BIOS version 4.51PG. All the cards tested were AGP slot versions.
Although some of the cards may perform better on faster machines, we felt that it was more important to reflect what the average buyer could expect to get out of these cards. The better card should still outperform its rivals even on our testbed PC.

RAGE FURY

Company: **ATI Rage Fury** Price: **£149.99inc. VAT**
On sale: **OUT NOW** Bus slot: **AGP** Memory: **32MB**

ATI have long been one of the biggest manufacturers of graphics cards for home computers. Their latest offering is the 128-bit 32MB Rage Fury card – and it is quite a beast. It is the board that powers the graphics of the new G3 Apple Macintosh, and it is also available for the PC in AGP 2 format. It bristles with features, such as hardware MPEG-2 decoding for DVD movies, an S-Video output for connection to a TV or VCR, and support for ATI's TV Wonder add-on television tuner card. On the software side, the Rage Fury offers full support for DirectX and OpenGL, and 32-bit colour (true colour) rendering, something which the Voodoo 3 doesn't do.

In terms of performance, the Rage Fury is a good all-rounder. It may not be the fastest overall, but it offers good results with every sort of rendering operation at all screen resolutions. It comes second only to the Matrox G400 at the highest screen resolutions. If you can't quite afford the G400, then the ATI Rage Fury would make a very good alternative.

3DMARK SCORES

800x600, 16-bit: 2,577 3D marks
800x600, 32-bit: 2,552 3D marks
1152x864, 16-bit: 2,200 3D marks
1152x864, 32-bit: 1,753 3D marks
1600x800, 16-bit: 1,772 3D marks
1600x800, 32-bit: 1,329 3D marks

4 OUT OF 5

XENTOR32

Company: **Guillemot** Price: **£179.00 inc. VAT** On sale: **OUT NOW**
Bus slot: **AGP** Memory: **32MB**

This is a card I was expecting to do well. Guillemot's Maxi Gamer brand have previously made some of the better Voodoo-based accelerator cards, but since 3Dfx have decided to market their own products, Guillemot have moved over to the new Riva TNT2 Ultra chipset. The Xentor32 is the most expensive of the products on test, but it is very well made. Instead of a big aluminum heat-sink to dissipate the heat from the processor, it actually has its own little cooling fan. Nice touch. Unfortunately, that build quality isn't carried through into graphical performance. Although the blurb on the back of the box makes great claims for the chipset's performance at screen resolutions up to 2048x1536, the 3DMark program crashed repeatedly trying to run a 1600x1200 benchmark on this card. I don't think this was a fault with the testing software, as Half-Life, normally a very stable program, also crashed repeatedly when played on the Xentor, and Descent 3 would not even start. To be fair, this may be a problem with the driver software rather than the actual hardware, but this was a brand new boxed retail product, so it should really have the latest drivers included. This is a big disappointment, as I normally have nothing but good words to say about Maxi Gamer products.

3DMARK SCORES

800x600, 16-bit: 2,555 3D marks
800x600, 32-bit: 2,526 3D marks
1152x864, 16-bit: 2,368 3D marks
1152x864, 32-bit: 2,224 3D marks
1600x800, 16-bit: Unable to test
1600x800, 32-bit: Unable to test

3 OUT OF 5

3D BLASTER SAVAGE 4

Company: **Creative Labs** Price: **£99.00** On sale: **OUT NOW**
Bus slot: **AGP** Memory: **32MB SDRAM**

This is sold as a budget solution to 2D/3D graphics acceleration, and at just under a ton for a 32MB card, it is certainly cheap. The 3D Blaster is based on the Savage 4 Pro chipset from S3, who are well-known for their SVGA 2D graphics boards. The advertising and packaging blurb for the 3D Blaster promises state-of-the-art graphics at a low price. But having tried it out, I would have to say that if you are looking for a cheap 2D/3D card you'd be better off with the Techworks Power GrafX or a similar Banshee-based card.

The test results started off well enough, with the card providing 800x600 resolution performance comparable with the other cards on test. However, things went downhill from there.

Despite back-of-the-box claims that the card would provide 3D acceleration at resolutions up to 1920x1200, when I ran the benchmark software at 1152x864 it crashed repeatedly, freezing up in the middle of the first-person game test. I then tried to run *Half-Life* on it, and found that although the game loaded and ran, all the textures were corrupted and the game was unplayable. Creative Labs are well known for their Soundblaster sound cards, which are pretty much the industry standards. This graphics card does not live up to their reputation.

3DMARK SCORES

800x600, 16-bit: 2,573 3D marks
800x600, 32-bit: 2,325 3D marks
1152x864, 16-bit: Unable to test
1152x864, 32-bit: Unable to test
1600x800, 16-bit: Unable to test
1600x800, 32-bit: Unable to test

2 OUT OF 5

MILLENIUM G400

Company: **Matrox** Price: **£179.00inc. VAT**
On sale: **OUT NOW** Bus slot: **AGP2X** Memory: **32MB SDRAM**

After the capable workhorses from 3Dfx and ATI, we move up a price bracket to Matrox's new baby, the awesome Millennium G400. This is the one card I was really looking forward to testing – and I was not disappointed. The results speak for themselves. In almost every category, the G400 was either first or a close second, and consistently performed brilliantly, especially at the higher screen resolutions. Even at 1600x1200 resolution and 32-bit colour, its performance was almost unchanged. The G400 chipset actually has more features than our benchmark program could test, such as specular lighting and environment-mapped bump mapping (more realistic than emboss bump-mapping). For gaming purposes, the card performed flawlessly, running everything I could throw at it with ease. Some developers are building features into their games specifically to take advantage of this card's unique capabilities. One notable example is *Jump Runner*, a new space game from Glass Ghost.

The G400 also features the unique ability to display on two monitors simultaneously, or a monitor and a TV using a simple adapter cable. If the performance of the G400 is simply not enough for you, Matrox also produce the G400 Max, with even more memory and even faster processing. If you want the very best in graphics performance then this is the graphics card to go for.

3DMARK SCORES

800x600, 16-bit: 2,508 3D marks
800x600, 32-bit: 2,491 3D marks
1152x864, 16-bit: 2,513 3D marks
1152x864, 32-bit: 2,472 3D marks
1600x800, 16-bit: 2,477 3D marks
1600x800, 32-bit: 2,374 3D marks

5 OUT OF 5

3D MARK 99 MAX PRO

The benchmark software used in this comparison test was *3DMark 99 Max Pro*, kindly supplied by Futuremark Corporation. This excellent software is rapidly becoming established as an industry standard for the evaluation of 3D hardware performance. Its suite of programs are designed to evaluate the performance of 3D rendering hardware by running a battery of graphics routines, and then displaying the results in an easy-to-read graphical format. The results can be saved to a database, and then uploaded to the company's website. Results of these tests are available on-line, so you can see at a glance which card has the best performance. Based on these results, the program can scan your computer system and recommend the best graphics card to suit your hardware configuration. Check out their website on www.3dmark.com for more information and free downloads.

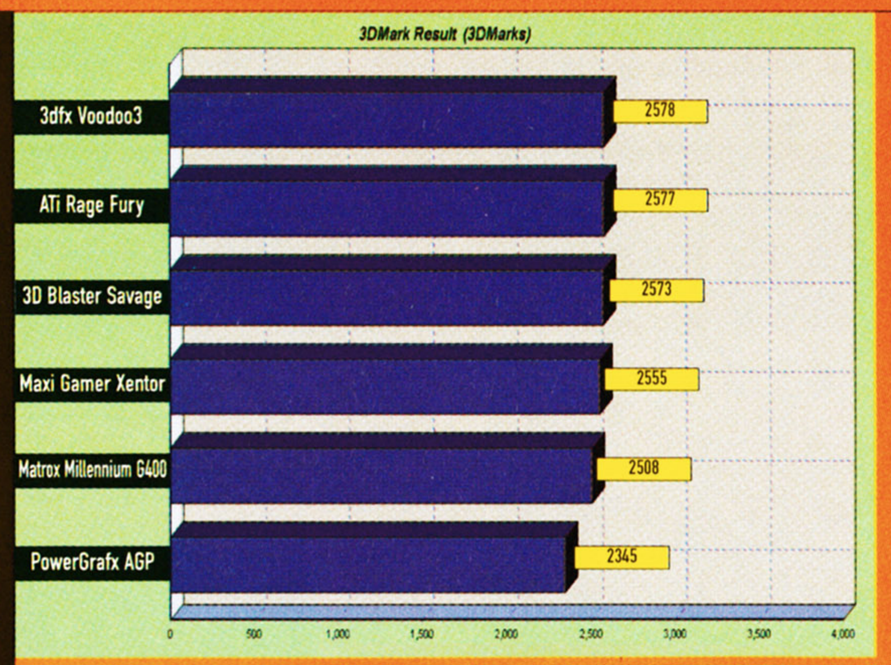
3DMARK™ 99 MAX

UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

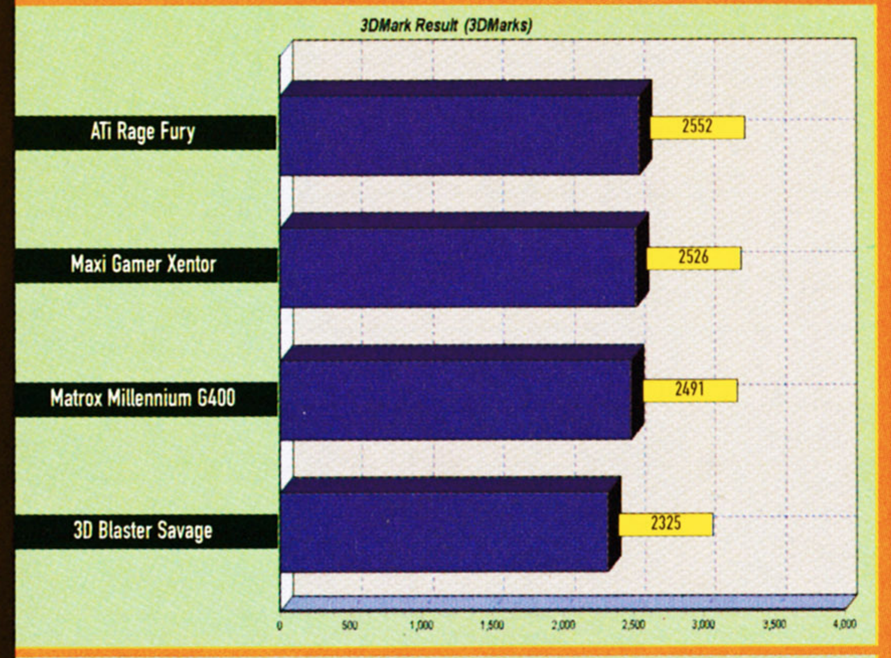
Displayed here are the results of our tests using Futuremark Corporation's 3D Mark 99 Max Pro software. Each of the 3D cards was put to three tests, at three resolutions and at both 16-bit and 32-bit colour depths. As stated on the previous page, the Matrox Millennium G400 was the clear winner in almost every test, closely followed by the Rage Fury.

3D MARK

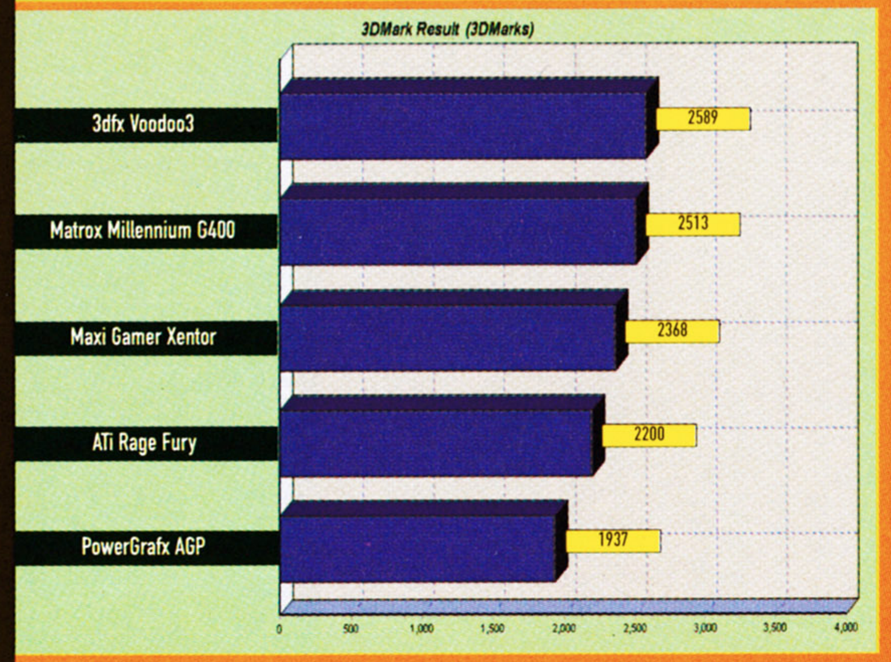
800x600x16



800x600x32

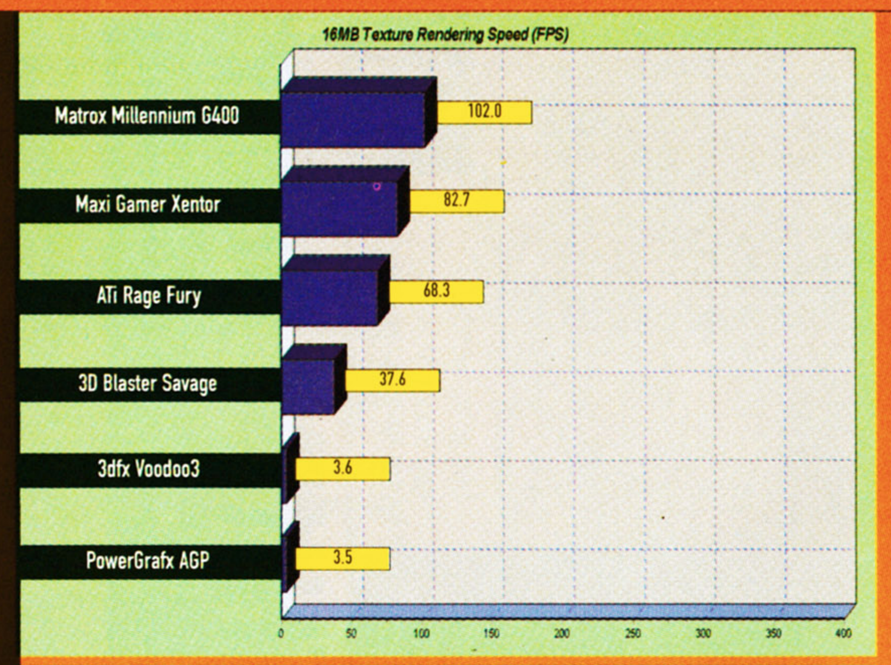


1152x864x16

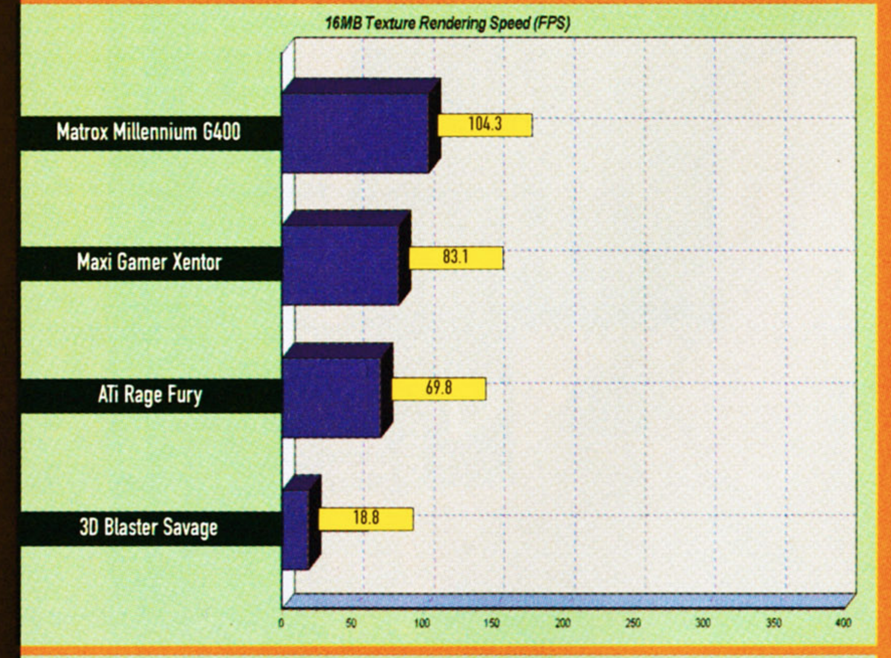


TEXTURE RENDERING SPEED (FPS)

800x600x16



800x600x32



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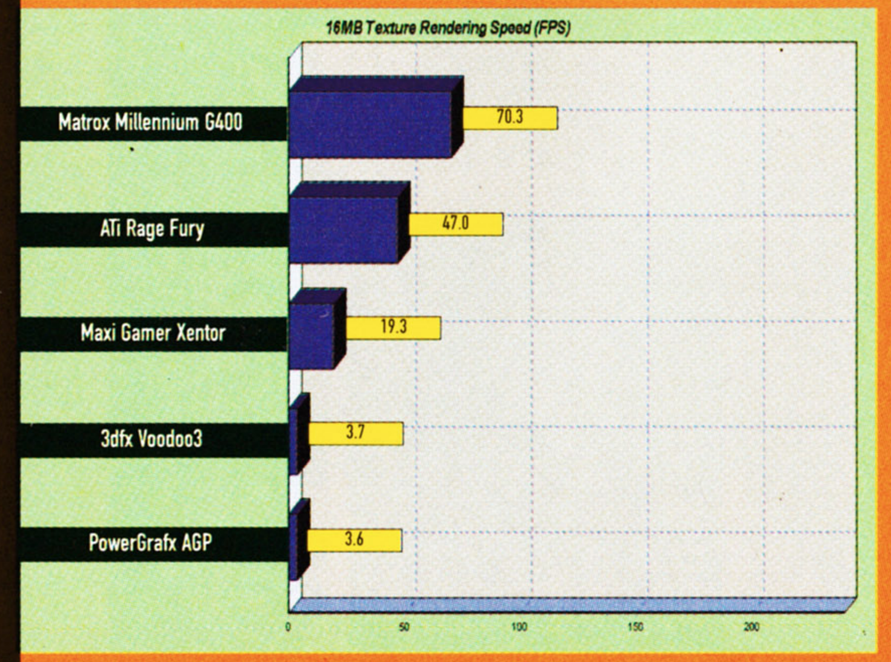
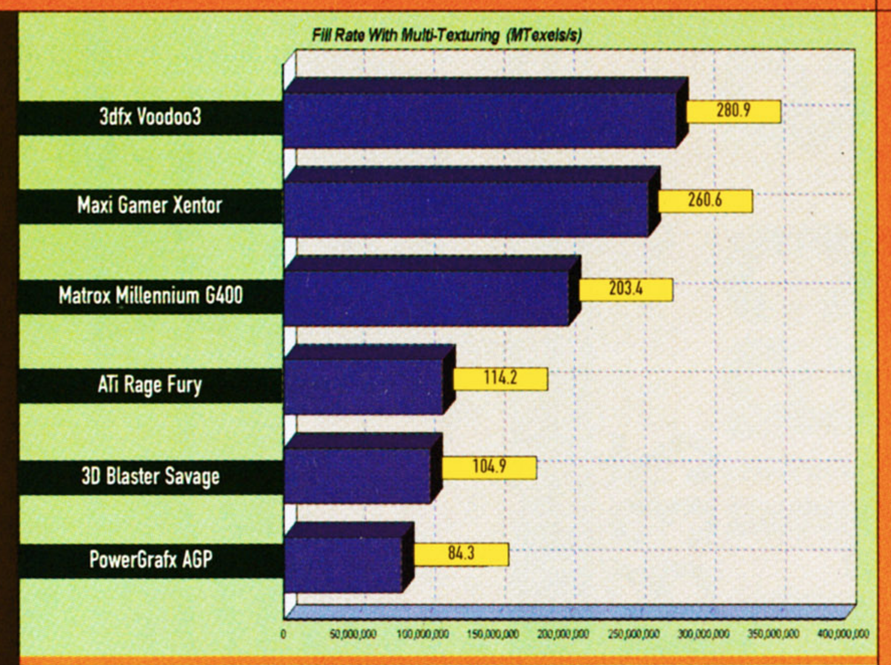
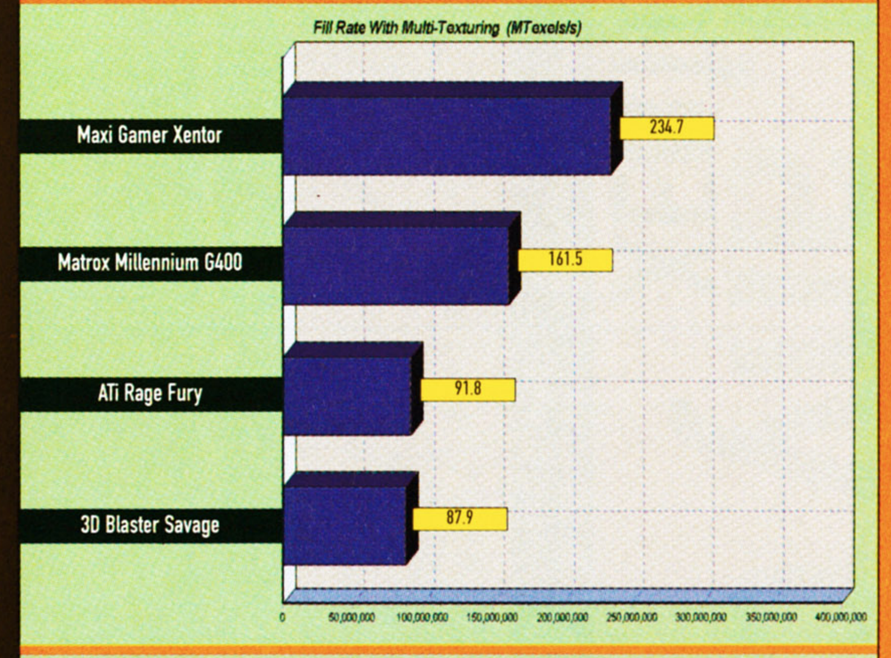


FILL RATE WITH MULTI TEXTURES

800x600x16



800x600x32



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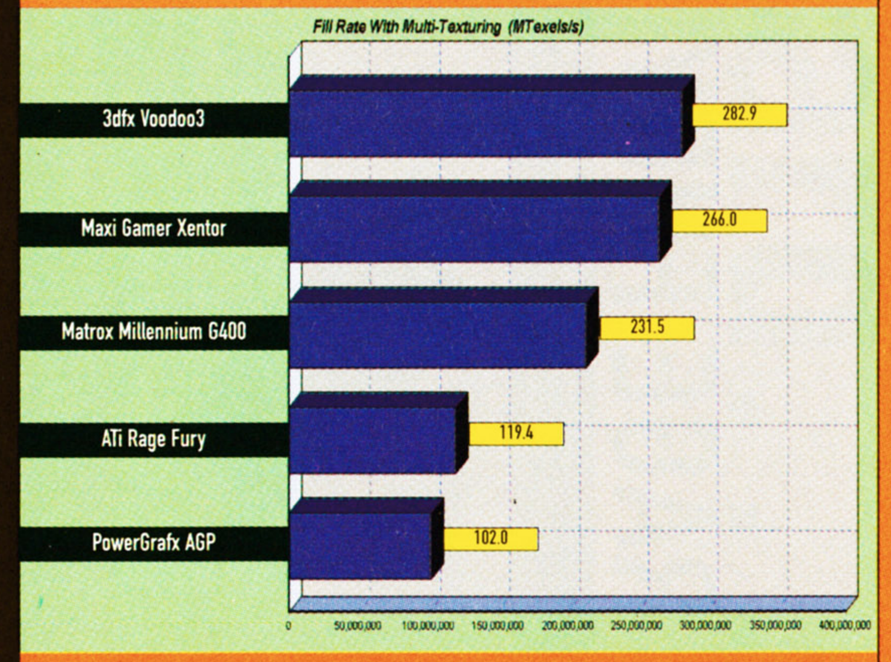

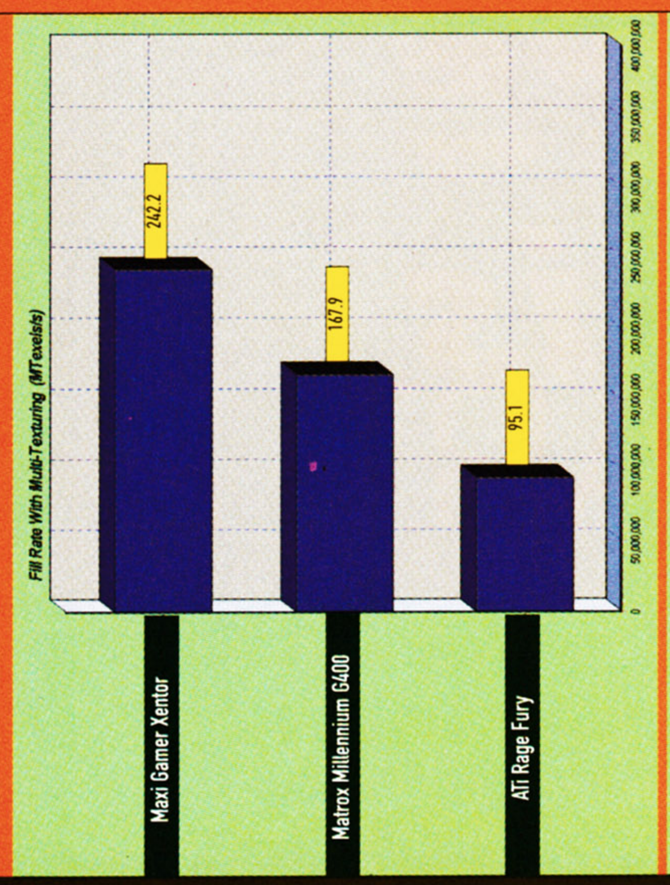

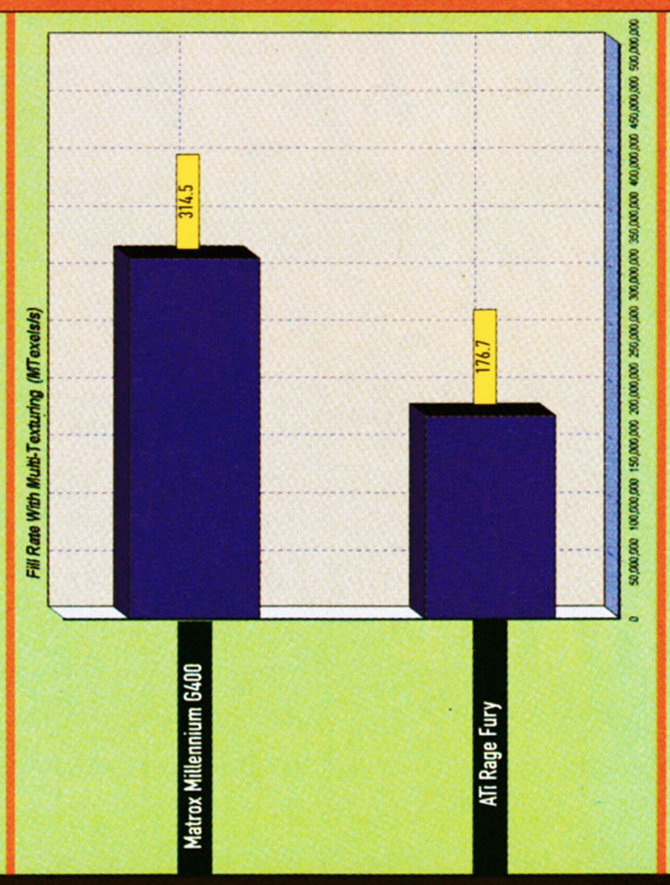

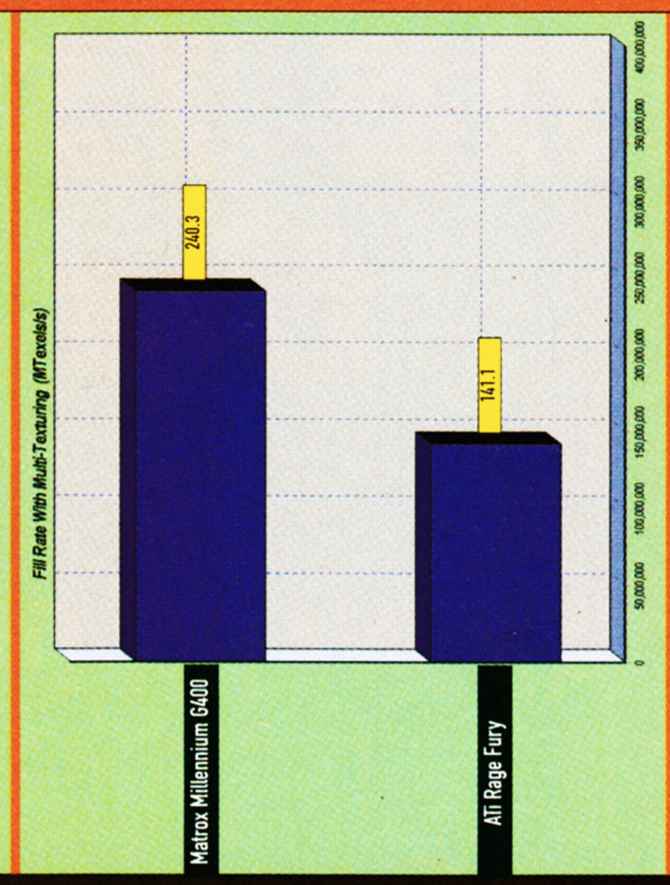

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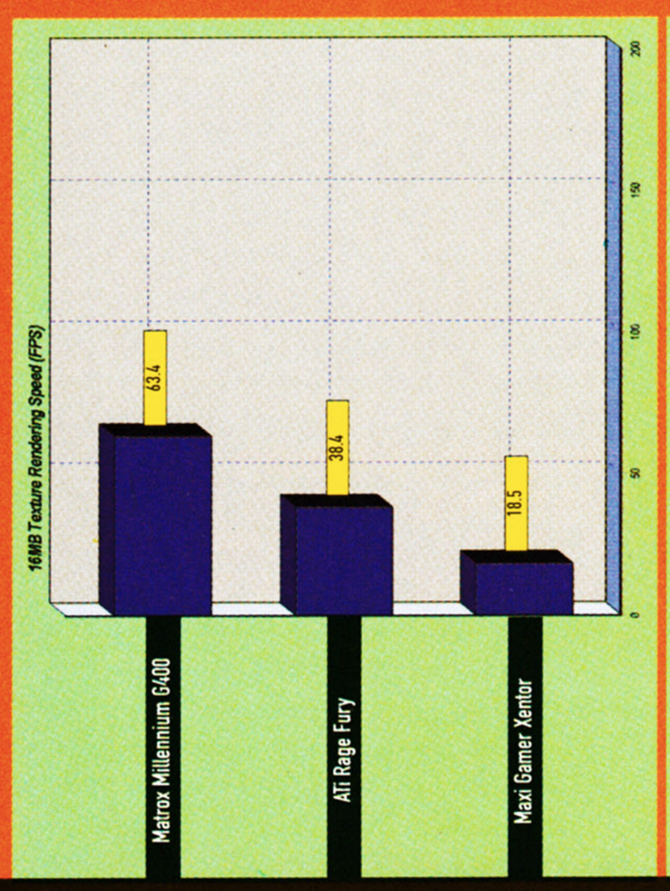
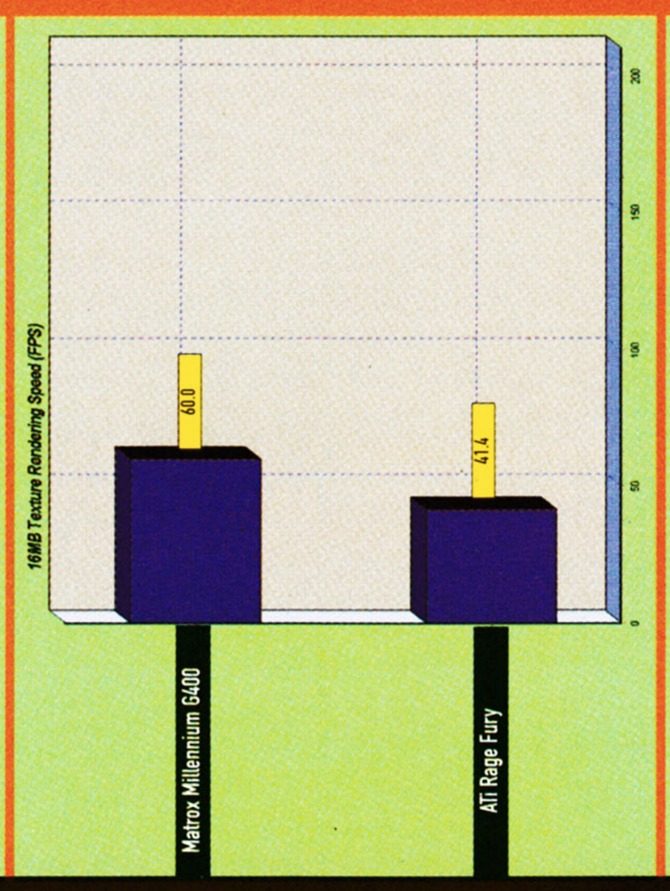
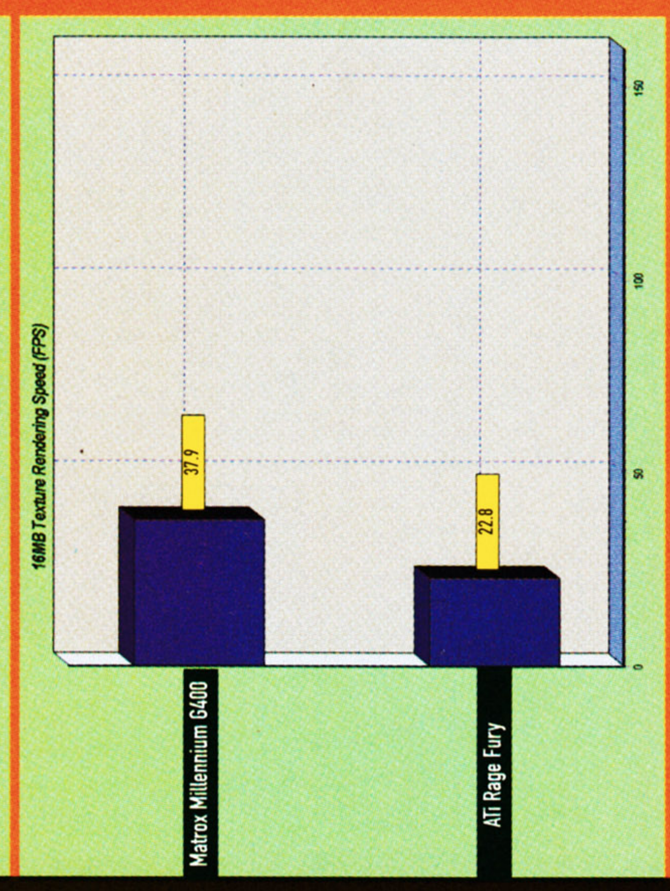


1600x1200x16



1600x1200x32



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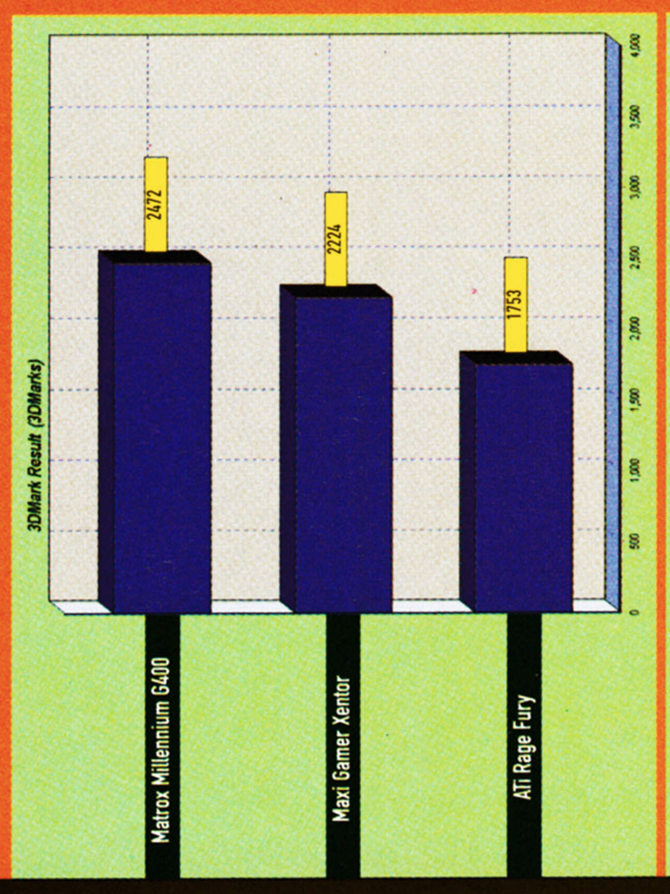

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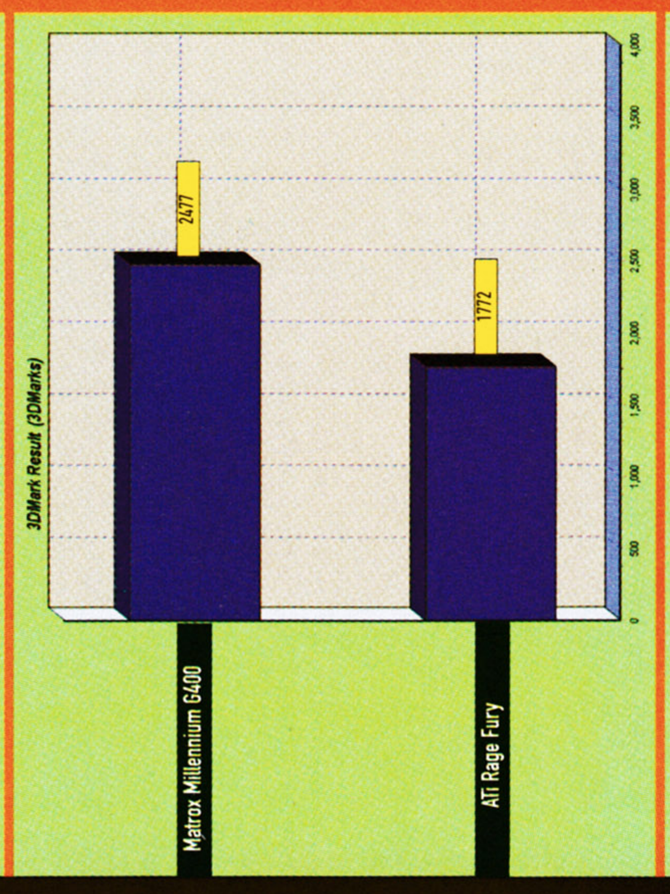

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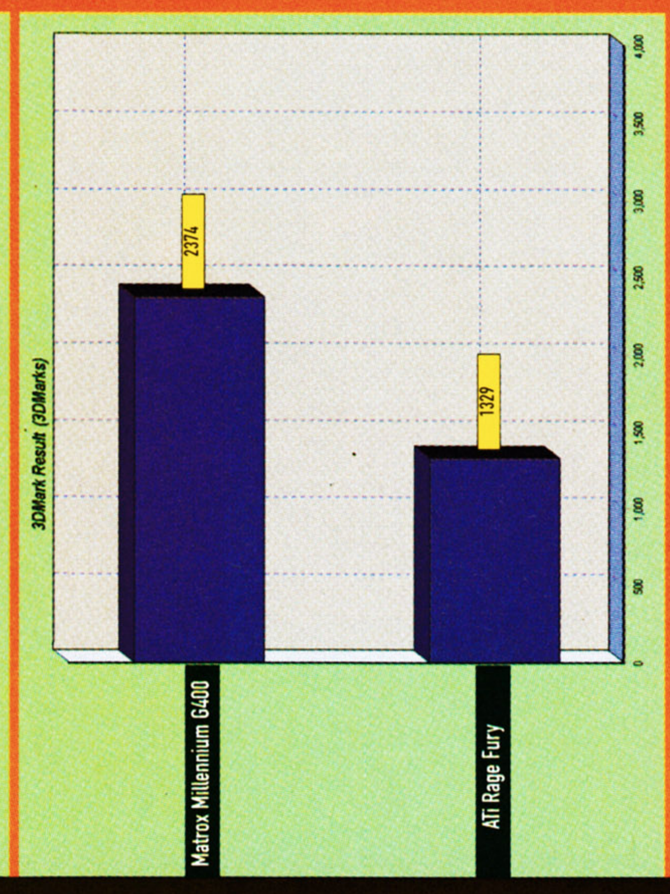

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Home is where the heart is PART 2

STAR WARS QUAKE

USE THE FORCE

It's powered by the ***Quake II* engine** and it's set in the **Star Wars universe**. It doesn't get any **better than this.**

Matt Stevens is the man overseeing the development of what is surely the most anticipated total conversion ever, *Star Wars Quake*. He has a wonderful sense of timing too, with film frenzy at a peak and a flood of related games on the horizon. You couldn't accuse Stevens of jumping on the merchandising bandwagon though, because his project was born back in 1997, as he explains: "I was just beginning to discover the joys of creating custom models for *Quake*, without a clue as to how important or how large the editing community would become in just a couple more years. After a time, I came across a group creating a Star Wars total conversion, and thinking that this would be an interesting thing to do for a while, I offered my services to the team. They were kind enough to accept me, and the first step down the long and twisted road that would lead to the present day was taken. This original team did some work over the course of the next few weeks, and then a very well-written article appeared on the 'PlanetQuake' website warning against the dangers of creating copyright-based conversions.

"I CAME ACROSS A GROUP CREATING A STAR WARS TOTAL CONVERSION, AND THINKING THAT THIS WOULD BE AN INTERESTING THING TO DO FOR A WHILE, I OFFERED MY SERVICES TO THE TEAM"

Coupling this with the so-called 'Foxing' (shutdown) of the Aliens total conversion by 20th Century Fox, the team's project leader decided to halt our conversion. Being ignorant and stubborn, I was determined to carry on, so I grabbed up some of the members from the original team and set about creating *Star Wars Quake*".

Stevens soon realised that determination alone wasn't going to be enough to get the project finished: "If I'd known what I was getting myself into, I admit that I probably wouldn't have carried on, at least not at that point in time. My experience in conversion development was 100% model-based (which is to say very little), and I had no notion whatsoever of how to lead a virtual team. But we started anyway, with no plan, and no goals, except to 'make a Star Wars total conversion'. Through a combination of luck and a few minor miracles, we did manage to get some real work done, and while we weren't making quite the progress that we should have, those early days were quite a lot of fun".

Unfortunately for Stevens, and fans of the film and *Quake*, those days didn't last: "With no plan or clear

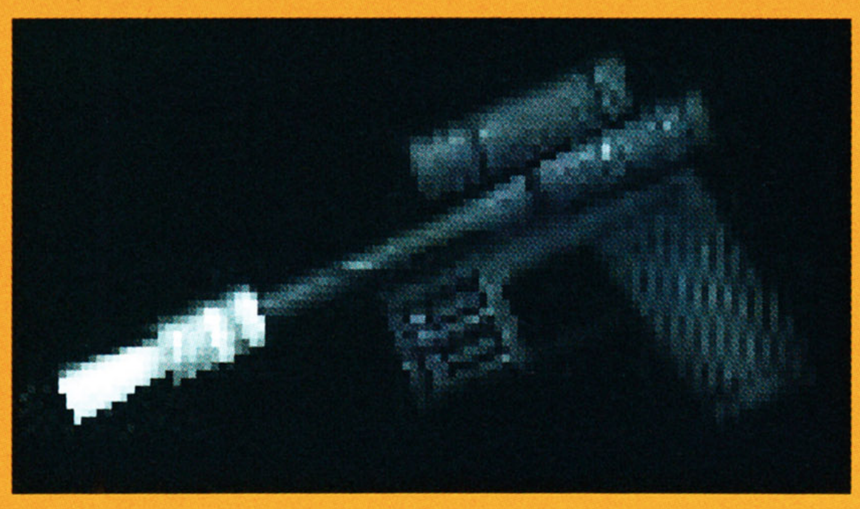
s where the heart is

A WORLD OF WEAPONS

The ***Star Wars Quake*** **website** is packed with information on the game's **story, cast and weaponry**. Here's the best of the **current arsenal on offer:**

Beamtube: While the last beam tube produced by Timms was an ancient form of what would become blaster technology, its constant fire rate was accomplished through a unique series of 'quickdrain' energy cells stored in a backpack worn by the user. Recently, several technicians of the Timms team, pressed for money, decided to seek out a new application of this old technology. Their work resulted in the creation of the Emperor-5 Beamtube, a significantly updated version of the old technology. The basic design is the same, but the weapon is now extremely lethal, firing a constant beam that is able to quickly cut through any armour or energy shields the target might be carrying. Against organic material or unshielded electronics it is nearly as lethal as a light sabre.

Pistol: While most Republic, and now Imperial, soldiers favour the lighter and quicker-firing DH-17 model, many of the younger Imperial officers have taken to replacing their standard issue side-arms with DL-44s as defensive technologies continue to improve. Delivering shots nearly equivalent in power to that of a standard rifle but draining the power pack after only twenty-five shots, a soldier must have nerves of steel to be able to take the time to aim the weapon, but it's popularity continues to grow nonetheless.



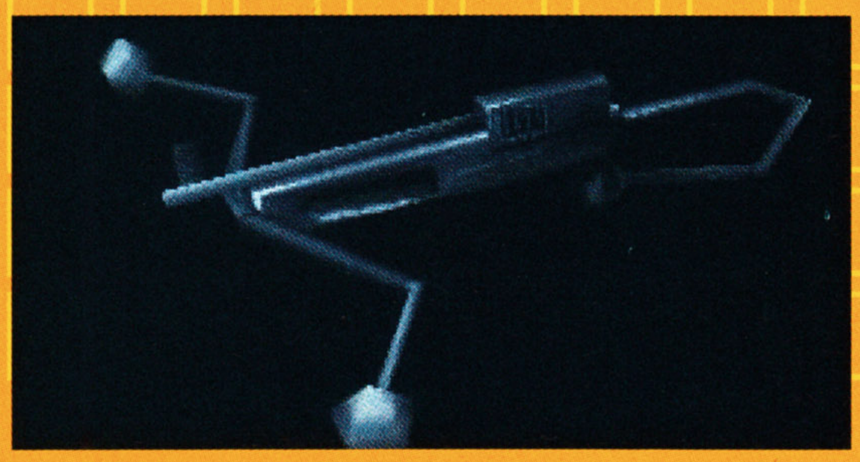
M-tube: This shoulder-mounted behemoth fires standard concussion missiles and is capable of taking out most small to mid-sized vehicles in addition to its obviously disastrous anti-personnel capabilities. Housing small repulsor lifts to cut down on recoil and a sophisticated targeting system to aid in firing accuracy, the PLX-2M has become immensely popular in surface-based military actions, and has also been in high demand by smugglers and bounty hunters wishing to get that added edge.

Sniper: The standard name in sniper rifles, Xerrol's latest offering is probably its best to date, combining the quickest-possible fire rate for so powerful a weapon with an extremely accurate aiming system and the ability to fire a condensed blaster bolt that is able to punch through any type of armour. While normally used only by surface-based special forces units or assassins, it has been rumoured that the Empire is now forming a special unit of elite snipers to protect its more valuable data and track down the most hated enemy.

goals, the team fell apart. Several members left because of their concern that the project would never be finished, and a few others were called away on other matters. This left a much smaller team hacking away. Over the next few months we expanded our knowledge base enormously, and the team became more organised".

It was at this point that the seemingly jinxed project faced

Bowcaster: Developed by the Wookie people, these weapons have been dismissed by most other races due to the incredible strength required to cock the bowcaster, and the fact that damage inflicted was not much greater then that of a standard blaster rifle. Some, however, took interest in the fact that the bowcaster fired a physical projectile along with a blaster bolt, and began to do a little experimentation and modification to this ancient weapon. The end result was a powerful rifle that was able to not only cause significant damage to an opponent, but also form an excellent solution to the rapidly-spreading personal energy shields. Since the bolt fired by the bowcaster is both projectile and energy, it causes damage to the target by punching the projectile though the shield while wearing the shield's strength down with the bolt's energy.



HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS

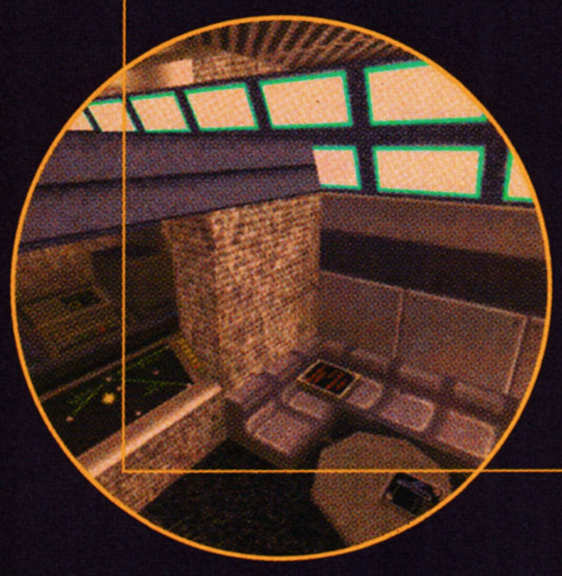
Home

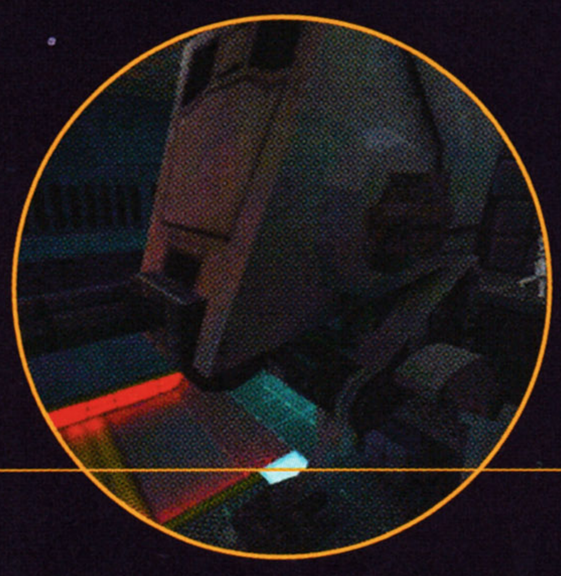
its greatest hurdle, which was later to prove its biggest asset: "Because of our slow progress, the release of *Quake II* was rapidly approaching. Initially we thought we'd be able to complete our conversion prior to id's masterpiece hitting the streets, and that folks would still play it even though *Quake II*'s graphics far surpassed those of *Quake* and our conversion. Unfortunately, it quickly became apparent that we weren't going to finish in time, and worse, the release of the sequel had killed off any interest in the original or conversions of it. Finally, we decided to port from *Quake I* to *Quake II*".

Stevens shies away from recalling details of the chaos and devastation that followed, as if merely remembering those dark days would invoke new problems for the project, but he sums up the team's dilemma: "It was probably the most trying period of all. Most of the team members left, and I seriously considered quitting several times myself. The problems stemmed from learning to use *Quake II*'s new features, waiting for *Quake II* compatible development tools, and the fact that it was faster to create something new for *Quake II* rather than to port it over from the original. This all piled on us to create a nearly intolerable situation, and out of frustration we eventually ended up scrapping almost everything from that entire first year of development and starting from scratch".

Ironically, rather than destroying their morale and killing off the project, the decision proved that every cloud has a silver lining, as Stevens explains: "Those months of hell burned everyone out, but they also showed us just how punishing development could be, and as a result we became more determined to finish the project. Team members still came and went, but the team was much tighter, and much more professional (see 'Young Jedi' box-out). That closeness and professionalism resulted in better work, and

STAR WARS QUAKE IS ALREADY SHAPING UP TO BE ONE OF THE LARGEST AND MOST COMPLEX CONVERSIONS EVER CREATED



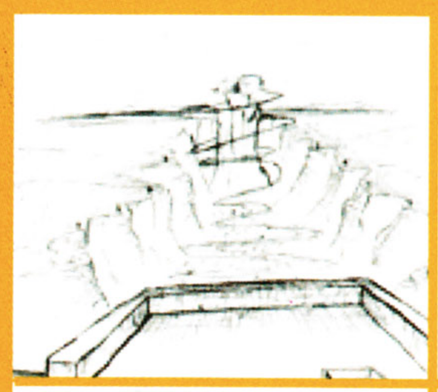


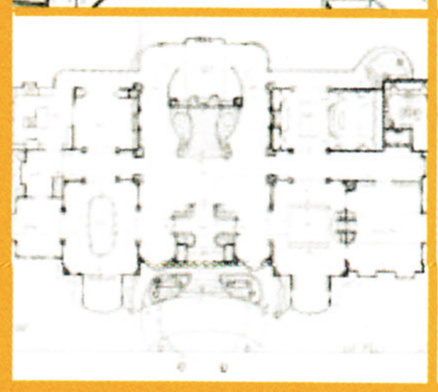
IDEAS CENTRAL

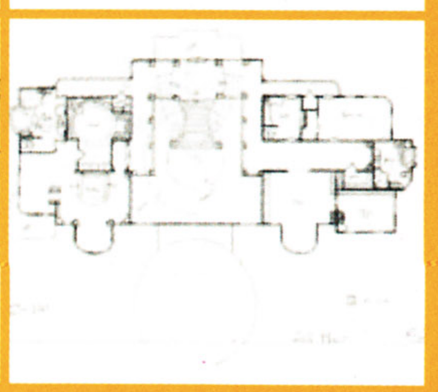
A massive amount of **time and effort** has gone into the **concept and design stages** of the game's development. After much arm twisting, **Red Knight was gracious** enough to give **Total CONTROL an exclusive peek** at some 'work in progress'...

The Star Wars universe is filled with some instantly recognisable characters, but it is also blessed with a host of new creatures who you'll have to size up if you're to make any real progress. Friend or foe, only you can decide...

The game sees the welcome return of R2-D2 and the Jawas:

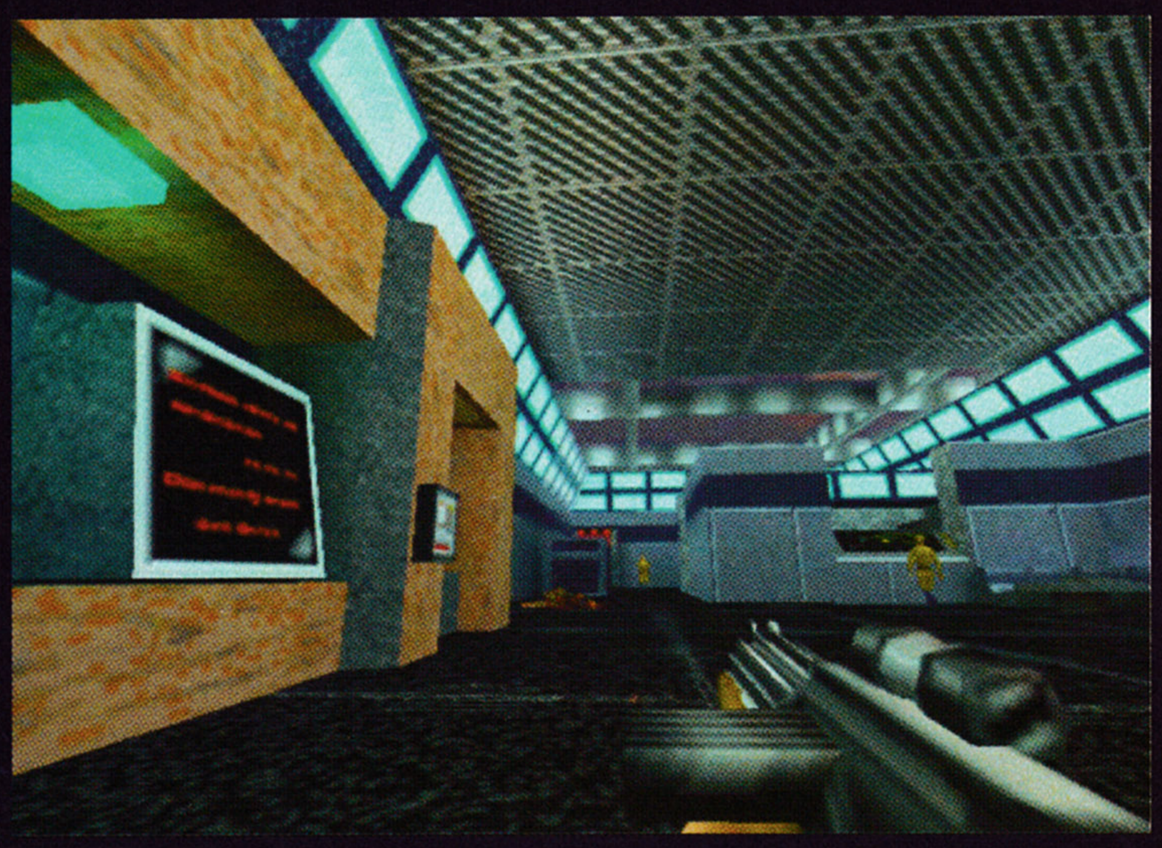






The single most important aspect of the game is the level layout, which has been planned in meticulous detail, as can be seen from these sketches:

where the heart is



signalled the creation of the professional development environment that we should have had from the start. Once we'd kicked *Quake II* around and gotten comfortable with developing for it, we really began to see what the team could do (see 'Ideas Central' box-out)".

Although still some way from completion, *Star Wars Quake* is already shaping up to be one of the largest and most complex conversions ever created. Stevens reflects: "At the moment we're tinkering with the 'Force', which is an incredibly complex addition to the game. We're not just giving you collectable power-ups to enhance your character's abilities, we're making you earn them by learning from experience (see 'A World of Weapons' box-out). To begin with your powers are neutral, verging on the Light side, but how you develop them is up to you, because we've included the ability for you to be tempted by the Dark side, or given a chance for redemption back into the Light! Also, each of the powers have different 'levels', which you obtain as you use them. A very simple example: when trying

"TO BEGIN WITH YOUR POWERS ARE NEUTRAL, BUT HOW YOU DEVELOP THEM IS UP TO YOU, BECAUSE WE'VE INCLUDED THE ABILITY FOR YOU TO BE TEMPTED BY THE DARK SIDE"

to levitate yourself for the first time, you won't succeed. With more experience you'll rise a few inches, and eventually – after a period of time – you'll have full control over the ability."

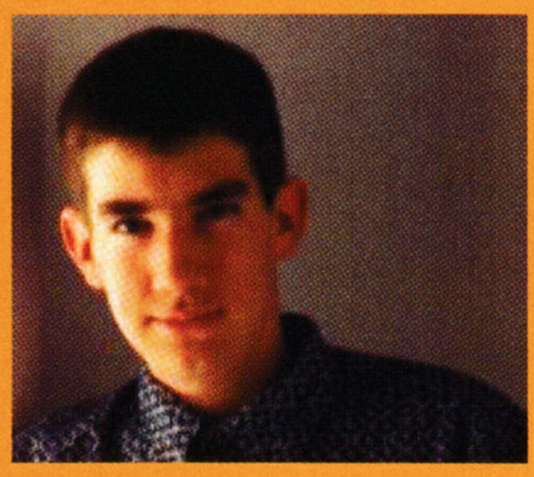
With the mammoth project nearing the climax of its development cycle, we didn't dare mention the prospects of porting the code to make use of Valve's *Half-Life* engine, but left Stevens reflecting: "While it's been a long and sometimes difficult journey, the end result is shaping up beyond anything we could have hoped for, and I can definitely assure you that once we've finished it, *Star Wars* will be a very complete and enjoyable experience – believe me, you'll be able to feel the Force".

To check out the latest information on this promising title, why not try the superbly comprehensive http://swtc.telefragged.com/, which includes massive amounts of details on the continually evolving plot, characters and Star Wars universe. TC

...TO BE CONCLUDED NEXT MONTH

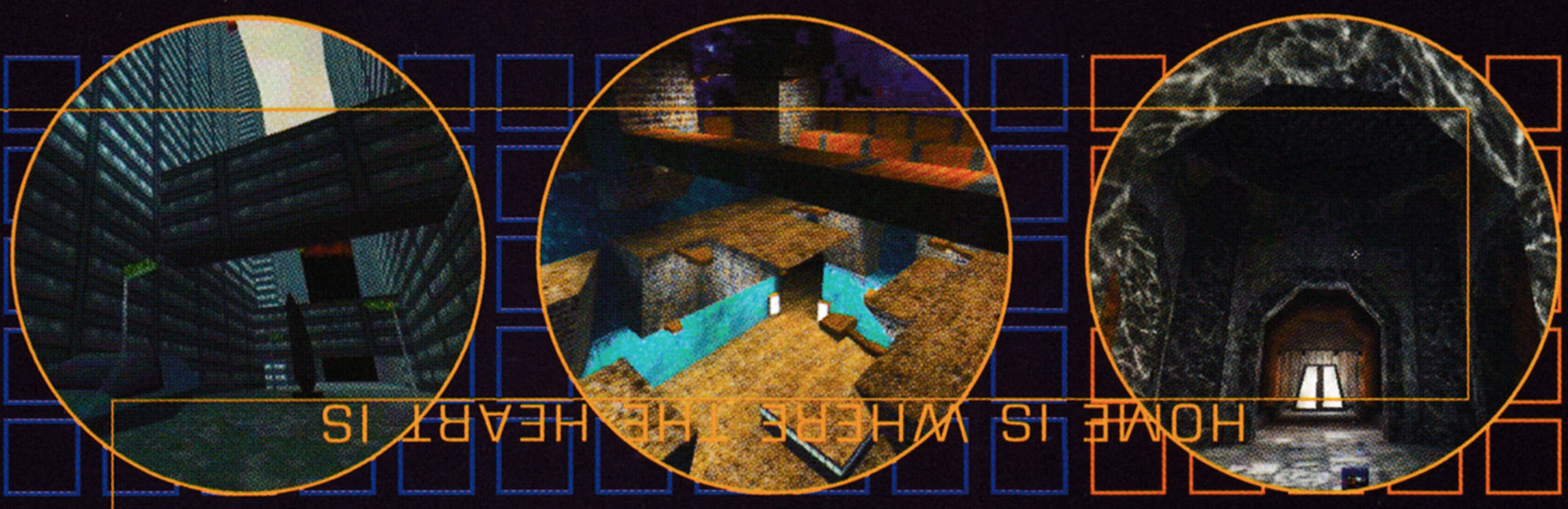
YOUNG JEDI

Although his obsession with Star Wars takes up most of his time, Matt Stevens paused his 300th viewing of the movie to chat about life, the (Star Wars) universe and everything.



Name: Matt Stevens (Alias: The Red Knight)
Age: 18
Job: Project leader of the *Star Wars Quake* total conversion and editor of the *Half-Life* editing site 'Wavelength'.
Total CONTROL: So, why start a conversion of *Quake II*?
MS: Well, I'm combining my three main loves: computing, *Quake* and Star Wars. I'm also looking for an 'in' to the games industry, and my work on the Star Wars conversion has gone a long way towards helping me realise that dream, putting me in contact with a large number of people already in the industry, and giving me a decent amount of experience in just two years.

Total CONTROL: Give us a rundown of a typical day in your hectic life...
MS: A typical day involves tackling the daily mountain of email, a lot of time spent organising assignments, checking over existing work, working with team members to solve problems, and doing a little development work myself. When put like that it sounds like I spend all day twiddling my thumbs, but that lot can easily eat about six to eight hours every day. When I'm not working on the game, my time is divided between earning an honest living and writing for Wavelength. All in all, I've got a pretty good life, which I really believe has been enhanced by my continual involvement in my work on *Star Wars Quake*.



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We've managed to dig up cheats for *Requiem*, *Star Wars: Racer* and *South Park*, amongst many others, this month, but if you've been having trouble with a game that has not been listed on this page, feel free to contact us via letter or e-mail to the address printed elsewhere on this page. Please remember to be specific if you need help progressing past a certain point in the game.

Q 'I'm really desperate for cheats for *Beast Wars* on PlayStation. I know it's a below average title, but I'm a big Transformers fan and would love to play the game without dying due to the dodgy controls.' Christopher Caudery – Aylesbury

A Try a few of the following: Pause the game, hold L2 and press U, D, L, R, T, X, S, for a weapon power-up, or U, D, L, R, T, X, X, T, R, L, D, U for a level skip. After these are imputed, release L2, then immediately press Start for them to work. Alternatively, you could hold R1+R2+L1+L2 and press O, X, T, O, O, X, S at the options screen to find some hidden characters.

Q 'I really desperately need some tips for *Colony Wars: Vengeance*. I don't want to use the cheats, but the mission where you have to smash asteroids into a mining installation is making me tear my hair out in frustration. Please help!' - Neil Simpson – via e-mail

A This is one of the game's most difficult missions, and it has a five-minute time limit. Ignore the three League Lance fighters that are in the level as you launch, and also the four sentry guns in the four corners of the installation. If you want you can dispatch an offence pod towards one of the sentry guns, which may help take some fire off of you. You must heat the asteroids using your lasers, then tow them with your grapple gun. By wrapping the grapple line around the installation you can ensure the needed collisions. This must be done five times, creating five collisions. You may find the gap in the rear of the installation can be used to zigzag through to explode asteroids. Make sure you keep moving or you will draw more fire. The mission is completed after the installation explodes.

If you're stuck on a particular part of a game, have been looking for specific codes, or just want general advice, send your request via letter or postcard to: Easy Way Out, Total CONTROL, Rapide Publishing, 1 Roman Court, 48 New North Road, Exeter, Devon, EX4 4EP, or via e-mail to will@rapide.co.uk, and I'll do my best to answer them all.

Trouble finishing that last level? **Haven't quite found all of those hidden secrets?** Whatever trouble you may be having, these pages are here to provide **you with some form of remedy.**

PC CHEATS

Aliens vs Predator

To activate the cheat mode press ~ + [F12] during game play to display the console. Then, enter one of the following codes while playing as the indicated character to activate the corresponding cheat function.

Character ..... Effect ..... Code
All ..... Create CPU controlled Alien ..... alienbot
All ..... Create CPU controlled Marine ..... marinebot
All ..... Create CPU controlled Predator ..... predobot
All ..... All weapons and ammo ..... giveallweapons
All ..... God mode ..... god
All Create light aura (repeat for brighter) ..... light
All .... Player invisible to all opponents ..... observer
All ..... Display level coordinates ..... showcoords
All ..... Display frame rate showfps
Predator Replenish energy supply ..... gimme_charge
Marine ..... God mode ..... freakoftheuniverse
Predator ..... God mode ..... skullcollector
Alien ..... God mode ..... theonedeadlycreautureevercreated
Alien ..... Become final Xenomorph ..... winneroftheonegreatbattleoftheuniverse

Army Men 2

Cheat mode:
Press Backspace to enter the message mode, then type '!when all else fails...' to enable the cheat mode. You can now enter one of the following codes to activate a cheat.

Effect on left, ... Code on right
Vulcan gun ..... a better tomorrow
Mines ..... acme discs
Armageddon ..... armageddon
Sniper rifle ..... beautiful nikita
End of Phoenix ..... cliche ending
Healing ..... doctor doctor
M-80 ..... fourth of july
Air strike ..... geronimo!
Explosives ..... gnomish inventions
Sniper rifle ..... god of gamblers
Lose mission ..... i give up
Grenades ..... i have a rock
Flight ..... jumpjets
Stealth mode ..... ninja arts
No rocket launcher .... no rocket launcher
Paratroopers ..... paper dolls
Flaming Sarge ..... phoenix!
Mine sweeper ..... pooper scooper
Aerosol spray ..... roach spray
Medical kit ..... rubber cement
Magnifying glass ..... ruby ray
Invincibility ..... santini
Disguise ..... shrink wrap
Disguise ..... smorfs
Grey disguise ..... metal sheeting
Full map ..... spidey senses tingling
Commit suicide ..... suicide kings
Overwhelmed by enemies . surprise party
New background sound ..... techno
Win mission ..... veni vidi vinci
Flame-thrower ..... village people
Reconnaissance flights ..... watchtower in the sky
Highlighted men promoted to five stars patton's speach .....
Flak jacket ..... aluminum foil
Bodies not scattered or melted become zombies .... night of the walking dead
"Go Bruins" message ..... ucla
Mini-map objects blink faster .. warp 6

Carmageddon II

Enter the following codes during the game:

Code ..... Effect
TILTY ..... Pinball mode
WATERSPORT ..... Underwater ability
LEMMINGIZE ..... Stupid pedestrians/zombies
STIFFSPASMS ..... Mutant corpses
WOTATWATAMI ..... Greased tyres
SMARTBASTARD ... Completes the race
BIGDANGLE ..... Mutant Tail thing
WETWET ..... Credit bonus
TINGTING ..... Free repairs
STOPSNATCH ..... Timer toggle
MOONINGMINNIE ..... Lunar gravity
CLINTONCO ..... Hot-Rod
FASTBAST .... Turbo pedestrians/zombies
STICKYTYRES ..... Wall climber
GOODHEAD ..... Pedestrians/zombies with stupid heads
EVENINGOCCIFER ..... Drink driving
TIMMYTITTy ..... Time bonus
POWPOW ..... Opponent repulsificator
ZAZAZ .. Pedestrian/zombie Annihilator

NEW WAY OUT

Gangsters: Organised Crime

Go to the lieutenant's screen and hold down D+A+R+T at the same time for an extra $1000. You can repeat this as often as you like, but beware because the opposition receive extra money as well. On the same screen, type I LOVE HANSON (caps with spaces) and press Return to get an extra $50,000 in your bank.

Half-Life

Before you can use the following cheats you must rename the Half-Life executable file (hl.exe) to 'hl-dev-console'. Now, when you load the game you can access the menu and press the new console icon in the top-left corner. Now press ` to access the console and enter any of the following codes:

/GOD – .....God mode
/NOCLIP – ..Fly and pass through walls
/GIVE (and then any of the following)
.....weapon_357
weapon_ 9mmAR
weapon_ 9mmhandgun
weapon_ .....crossbow
weapon_ .....crowbar
weapon_ .....egon
weapon_ .....gauss
weapon_ .....glock
weapon_ .....handgrenade
weapon_ .....hornetgun
weapon_ mp5
weapon_ .....python
weapon_ .....rpg
weapon_ .....satchel
weapon_ .....shotgun
weapon_ .....snark
weapon_ .....tripmine
item_ .....airtank
item_ .....antidote
item_ .....battery
item_ .....healthkit
item_ .....longjump
item_ .....security
item_ .....sodacan
item_ .....suit
ammo_ 357
ammo_ 9mmAR
ammo_ 9mmbox
ammo_ 9mmclip
ammo_ .....ARgrenades
ammo_ .....buckshot
ammo_ .....crossbow
ammo_ .....egonclip
ammo_ .....gaussclip
ammo_ .....glockclip
ammo_ mp5clip
ammo_ mp5grenades
ammo_ .....rpgclip

Rainbow Six

During a game press ` and enter one of the following codes:

TEAMGOD – .....Team god mode
AVATARGOD – .....Player god mode
STUMPY – .....Stumpy mode
CLODHOPPER – .....Big feet and hands
MEGAOGGIN – .....Mega head mode
BIGNOGGIN – .....Big head mode
5FINGERDISCOUNT – ..... Restore ammo
NOBRAINER – .....Turns all enemy AI off
DEBUGKEYS – .....Debug keys enabled

EASYWAYOUT

TURNPUNCHKICK – .....Change players from 3D to 2D
1-900 – .....Heavy breathing
EXPLORE – .....Victory conditions on/off

Redline

During the game hold G + O + D to display the command line. Now enter one of the codes from below:

//Code on left .....//Description on right
IMMORTAL .....God mode
MORTAL.....Turn off God mode
RETICULE .....
Gives you a smart reticule that turns red when over a target
CAMERA.....
.....Third-person view when on foot
TARGETS .....
.....Targeting for weapons (on foot only)
DMDAMAGE .....
.....Deal out double damage on foot
RADAR.....Gives you radar on foot
CW.....All car weapons
CA .....Max car ammo levels
STONEAGE.....Puts a running person in place of the car
CAROFF .....No car geometry
CARFLIP .....Flip the car geometry
WHEELSOFF.....Toggle on/off car wheels

NEW WAY OUT

Requiem

At any point during the game, press ENTER to access the console. Now type in CSMILTON and press ENTER to activate the cheat mode. Press ENTER again for the console and type any of the following codes:

Cheat Code .....Effect
CSYHWH .....Toggles God mode on/off
CSSHROUD .....
.....Gives you full armour and health
CSHEALTH .....Gives you full health
CSESSENCEGives you unlimited essence
CSAMMO .....Gives you full ammo
CSGUNS .....Gives you all the weapons
CSVANISH .....
.....Kills all the creatures on the level

NEW WAY OUT

Star Wars: Episode 1 Racer

To get some extra money, press [Shift] + [F4] + 4 at the screen where POD parts are purchased. This cheat can only be used five times.

Thief

These codes will only work with *Thief* v1.33
Mission Skip = CTRL + ALT + SHIFT

Open the dark.cfg file in your *Thief* directory and add the lines: 'cash_bonus' to give yourself lots of money and 'starting_missionx' to start on the mission number that you replace 'x' with.

PLAYSTATION CHEATS

Crash Bandicoot: Warped!

Access the *Spyro The Dragon* demo:
Press Up(2), Down(2), Left, Right, Left, Right, Square at the title screen.
Hot Cold bonus level:
Go to Level 14 and ride about half way through the level to find alien crossing sign on the left-hand side. Run into the sign to be transported to level 31.
Eggipus Rex bonus level:
Go to Level 14 and take the yellow gem ride. Continue until you reach the area where the huge dinosaur chases Crash. Allow the second pterodactyl to capture Crash to reach level 32.
105% completion:
Collect all relics and gems, including those from the Hot Cold and Eggipus Rex bonus levels. The relics that are collected must be at least gold or platinum. Then, approach Crash's sister, next to the save spot, to find another clear gem. Take the gem to view a very nice fireworks display and finish with a 105% completion status.
Instant Uka Uka:
Press Triangle + Circle + X + Square. This may only be done once per life.
Five lives location:
Begin game play on level 14 and take the yellow gem ride. Go all the way to the end and use a double jump over the yellow gem. Then, use a double jump to cross over the steel wall to find five lives.

NEW WAY OUT

G-Police

During the mission briefing hold L1 + R2 + Square and press Left for invincibility or Hold L2+R1 + Circle and press Left for all weapons and unlimited ammo. Note that when these are activated you will not be able to pass the current mission.
Try typing the following as passwords in the menu:
Secret missions ..PANTALON (Enter the training menu to access six secret missions)
Fast civilian traffic .....BENIHILL
Enable sirens.....WOOWOO
Bonus camera angle.....SUPACAM
Level 1.....SXYLAAAA
Level 2.....KJOXAAAA
Level 3 .....UIXZAAAA
Level 4.....MKFHRFAA
Level 5 .....WHLTMIAA
Level 6 .....YITSRFAA
Level 7.....UWCQAAAA
Level 8 .....MYKXQFAA
Level 9.....YIOQMIAA
Level 10 .....CJWGRFAA
Level 11 .....IKFNIVDA
Level 12 .....GVFSAAAA
Level 13 .....MGIZAAAA
Level 14.....EIQGRFAA
Level 15 .....QSTZMIAA
Level 16.....EEIQRFAA
Level 17 .....CHYRAAAA
Level 18 .....UGZKAAAA
Level 19 .....KFPGRFAA
Level 20 .....YCQGNIAA
Level 21.....ICZINIAA
Level 22 .....WHCIAAAA
Level 23.....KTUWQFAA
Level 24.....YQVWMIAA
Level 25.....IQEZMIAA
Level 26 .....EGXTVCAA
Level 27 .....SRPIMIAA
Level 28 .....CRAUVCAA
Level 29 .....ODHDWCAA
Level 30 .....CPZRMIAA
Level 31 .....YOVYMIAA
Level 32.....YAXTRFAA
Level 33 .....CRZOVCAA
Level 34 .....QOAPRFAA
Level 35 .....OPLRMIAA
This cheat was requested by Kasumi from Taito, Japan.

NEW WAY OUT

Knockout Kings

Regain energy:
Hold L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 when given a choice to hit the heavy or speed bag between fights. Two to eight points of energy will be regained, depending on how long the buttons are held.
Fight as a bear:
Press Right + Square, Right + Triangle, Right + Circle, Right + X at the main menu. A sound will confirm correct code entry. Select any boxer to fight as a bear.
Big head boxers:
Press Left + Circle, Left + Triangle, Left + Square, Left + X at the main menu. A sound will confirm correct code entry. Note: This code may only be enabled on custom created boxers.
Taunt opponent:
Press R1 + R2 + X.
Easy victory:
Begin a bout in career mode and knock your opponent down while simultaneously pressing Start. Choose to lose the fight. The game will place the loss on your opponent.

Max Power Racing

GTI cars:
Select arcade mode, then highlight the Rome course and press L1, Circle, R1, Square, L2, Square.
Performance cars:
Select arcade mode, then highlight the UK course and press R1, Square, L1, Circle, R2, Circle.
R/C cars:
Select arcade mode, then highlight the USA course and press Square, L1, R2, L2, Circle, R1.
Max Power track:
Select arcade mode, then highlight the Peru course and press Circle, Square, R2(2), R1(2).
All tracks:
Select arcade mode, then highlight the Africa course and press R1, R2, R1, L1, Square, L1.
Reversed tracks:
Successfully complete all thirty tracks to race any of the tracks in the opposite direction.

Rollcage

Try out the following passwords:
All easy difficulty tracks: .....EEFNIEBA
All hard difficulty tracks: .....EEFPHMBC
All expert difficulty tracks: ..HEMPCMDD
All hard difficulty and mirrored tracks:..
.....EADNCMAH
All expert difficulty tracks, bonus car, mega time trial, mirror mode, all deathmatch modes .....HHMPNEED
Air horn:AIRHORNS (press Select during game play)
Development team high scores:.....
.....BESTLAPS
Ultimate cheat mode: MAXCHEAT (ignore the invalid password message)

NEW WAY OUT

Tiger Woods '99

Go to the 'Edit Name option on the player select screen and enter the following codes as player names:

PUMPZ – .....
.....200% terrain elevation increase
MAXIMUMZ – .....
.....400% terrain elevation increase
OLD_SCHOOL – .....Flat terrain
Change voices:
Hold Up or Down, then press X, Square, Triangle, Circle, L1, L2, R1, or R2 to increase or decrease the pitch of the comments made during the game.

NEW WAY OUT

Tomb Raider III

During the game press the following:
Gain all secrets and keys:
L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2
Gain all weapons, medi-kits, flares and save crystals
L2, R2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, R2, R2, L2, R2, R2, L2 , L2, R2, L2, L2, R2
Level Skip
L2, R2, L2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, R2, R2, R2, R2, L2
Racetrack Key
R2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2

NEW WAY OUT

WWF Warzone

View FMV sequences:
Enter the following code when "Press Start" appears on the opening screen. Hold L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 and press Down + X, Left + Square, Up + Triangle, Right + Circle. Release L1 + L2 + R1 + R2, then press Down + X, Left + Square, Up + Triangle, Right + Circle. Repeat the entire code again, then press L1 + L2, R1 + R2, L1 +L2 + R1 + R2. The phrase "Movie 1" will appear to confirm correct code entry. Press X to view this movie, or press Up + X to view the next FMV sequence.
View FMV sequences (alternate):
Press Up + Triangle, Right + Circle, Down + X, Left + Square, Left + Square, Left + Square, R1 + L1, R2 + L2, R2 + L2 at the title screen. The phrase "Movie 1" will appear to confirm correct code entry. Press X to view this movie, or press Up + X to view the next FMV sequence.
View unlocked :
Press L1 + R1 in the elevator to list the hidden features and modes that have been successfully unlocked as described below. Note: When unlocking the cheats, do not change difficulty settings during the challenge.
Extra Gold:
Win the WWF title in challenge mode with Goldust under the medium or hard difficulty levels. Then, hold L2, R1 or R2 while selecting Goldust on the character selection screen to more costumes, including the MarilynDust and DustyDust versions.
Extra Cold:
Win the WWF title with Stone Cold under the medium or hard difficulty levels. Then, highlight Stone Cold on the character selection screen and press L2, R1, or R2 for additional costumes (black vest and jeans; Austin 3:16 T-shirt and jeans).
Angry crowd:
Start a match with no CPU players and just leave the wrestlers standing without moving or wrestling. The crowd will get extremely angry, and J.R. and Vince will add some funny commentary.
Easy ring out:
When the match begins, simply climb down from the ring – your opponent will always follow. Get your opponent to follow your wrestler around outside of the ring to run the timer down. Do not get too far away or your opponent will climb back into the ring. Once the timer reaches four or five seconds, quickly hit your opponent repeatedly until he becomes stunned. Jump back on the mat with only a second or two to spare and your character should win by a ring out.
Easy attribute points:
Earn attribute points for a created character in the usual way. Choose to edit your custom character and save. Load the created character again, then leave the "Create A Wrestler" screen.

EASYWAYOUT

Immediately enter the "Create A Wrestler" screen again and choose to make a character. The new character should have the same amount of attribute points as the saved character. Save the new character under a different file.
Take a full bar of health from opponent:
Start any match, except for a cage match. Stun your opponent, leaving enough time for your wrestler to climb the turnbuckle. Wait until your opponent gets up, then do any move off the top. If you connect with a hit, your opponent will be stunned again. Climb and repeat as needed while your opponent is stunned

N64 CHEATS

NEW WAY OUT

Beetle Adventure Racing

Cheat option:
Begin game play in one player championship mode on the Coventry Cove track. Locate the shortcut near the barn with two haystacks. Intentionally drive into the haystack closest to the track and hit the flower box hidden inside. The word "Groovy" will confirm correct trick entry. Successfully complete the race. A 'Cheats' selection will now appear on the options screen.

NEW WAY OUT

Chameleon Twist 2

Alternate costumes:
Collect all twenty coins and defeat the boss in any level. Then, press Start at the level selection screen to access a new "Costumes" option.
Alternate backgrounds:
Successfully complete the game and save. Restart the game to view alternate backgrounds after leaving any menu.

NEW WAY OUT

Forsaken

Level select:
Press A, R, Z, Up(2), C-Up, C-Down(2) when "Press Start" appears on the opening screen. The phrase "Missions Open" will appear to confirm correct code entry. Any level and battle mode may now be accessed.
Invincibility:
Press A, Z(2), Up, Left, Left-C(2), Down-C when "Press Start" appears on the opening screen.
Turbo crazy mode:
Press B(2), R, Up, Left, Down, C-Up, C-Left when "Press Start" appears on the opening screen. The phrase "Got it" will be spoken and a message will appear to confirm correct code entry.
Psychedelic mode:
Press A, R, Left, Right, Down, C-Up, C-Left, C-Down when "Press Start" appears on the opening screen.
Wire-frame mode:
Press L(2), R, Z, Left, Right, C-Up, C-Right when "Press Start" appears on the opening screen.
Gore mode:
Press Z, Down, C-Up, C-Left(4), C-Down when "Press Start" appears on the opening screen. The phrase "Gore mode" and a sound will confirm correct code entry.
Paused opponents:
Pause game play and press R, Z, Right(2), C-Up, C-Left, C-Right, C-Down.
Unlimited main weapon:
Pause game play and press A, R, Z, Right, C-Up, C-Right, C-Down(2).
Unlimited secondary weapon:
Pause game play and press B(2), Z, Left(2), C-Up, C-Left, C-Right.
Unlimited Solaris missiles:
Pause game play and press B, L(2), Z, Up, Down, C-Up(2).
Unlimited Titan missiles:
Pause game play and press A, B, L, Up, Up, C-Up(2), C-Left.
Unlimited weapon energy:
Pause game play and press L, Z, Left, Right, Down(2), C-Down(2).
Invisibility:
Pause game play and press A, Z(2), Up, Left, C-Left(2), C-Down.
Instant kills:
Pause game play and press B(3), L, R, Left, Down(2).
Unlimited Stealth Mantle:
Pause game play and press Up(4), Right, Down, C-Left(2).
Battle mode:
Successfully complete the game and save to a controller pak. Load the saved game and press B to return to the selection screen. Battle mode contains three options – one for each of the three main levels.
Change ships between missions:
Use the following steps to change your ship between missions in single player mode. After starting a single player game, enter multiplayer mode. Choose the desired ship, then press B to exit. Select single player mode from the main menu, and answer "No" when prompted about a new game. Game play will resume with the ship that was selected in multiplayer mode.

NEW WAY OUT

Goemon's Great Adventure

Four player mode:
Insert controllers into all four ports and begin game play using controllers one (and/or two). Collect forty-four hands from various levels. Then, press C-Right + Start on controllers three and four.
Alternate costumes:
Unlock the four-player mode, then go to the "Prediction" house to access new costumes for each character.

Micro Machines 64 Turbo

Change into objects:
Pause game play and press Down(2), Up(2), Right(2), Left(2). A sound will confirm correct code entry. Enter the code again to return to normal.
Behind car view:
Pause game play and press Left, Right, C-Left, C-Right, Left, Right, C-Left, C-Right. A sound will confirm correct code entry. Enter the code again to return to normal.
High bounces:
Pause game play and press C-Left, Right(2), Down, Up, Down, Left, Down(2). A sound will confirm correct code entry. Enter the code again to return to normal.
Turbo mode:
Pause game play and press C-Left, C-Down, C-Right, C-Left, C-Up, C-Down(4). A sound will confirm correct code entry. Enter the code again to return to normal.
Slow CPU racers:
Pause game play and press C-Right, C-Up, C-Left, C-Down, C-Right, C-Up, C-Left, C-Down. A sound will confirm correct code entry. Enter the code again to return to normal.
Debug mode:
Pause game play and press C-Left, Up, Down(2), C-Left, C-Right(2), C-Up, C-Down to enable debug mode. The following debug functions may now be used:
Instant win
Press Z + C-Down during game play. Note: This cannot be done during the time trials.
Change camera angle
Hold Z and press Up, Down, Left or Right during game play.
Zoom camera view
Hold Z and press L or R during game play.
CPU control of car
Hold Z and press C-Left during game play.
Destroy all cars
Hold X + C-Up + C-Right + C-Left during game play.

NEW WAY OUT

South Park

Try entering the codes below as passwords:

Code:	Effect:
BOBBYBIRD	All cheats enabled
THEEARTHMOVED	Level select
ASSMAN	Invincibility
FATKNACKER	All weapons
FATTERKNACKER	Unlimited ammunition
OMGTKKYB	All characters in multiplayer mode
ELVISLIVES	Officer Barbrady
CHEATINGISBAD	Mr. Mackey
PHAERT	Phillip
RAFT	Terrance
DOROTHYSFRIEND	Mr. Garrison
LOVEMACHINE	Chef
CHECKATACO	Wendy
FISHNCHIPS	Pip
KICKME	Ike
ALLWOMAN	Mrs. Cartman
GOODSCIENCE	Mephisto
STARINGFROG	Jimbo
HAWKING	Ned
OUTRAGE	Big Gay Al
MAJESTIC	Alien
SLAPUPMEAL	Starvin' Marvin unlocked
VEGGIEHEAVEN	Skinny mode
MEGANOGGIN	Big head mode
PLANEARIUM	Pen and ink mode
SCREWYOUGUYS	View credits

WipEout 64

Unlimited energy:
Hold Z + L + R and press C-Up, C-Down, C-Left, C-Right, C-Up, C-Down, C-Left, C-Right during game play.
Unlimited ammunition:
Hold Z + L + R and press C-Down(2), C-Left(2), C-Right(2), C-Up during game play.
Unlimited time:
Hold Z + L + R and press C-Up, C-Right, C-Left, C-Down, C-Up, C-Right, C-Left, C-Down.
Cyclone weapons power-up:
Hold Z + L + R and press C-Left, C-Right, C-Down, C-Left, C-Right, C-Down, C-Up at the main menu. This power-up doubles the damage caused by your weapons.
Velocitar track:
Hold Z + L + R and press C-Left, C-Right, C-Up, C-Right, C-Left at the main menu.
All ships:
Hold Z + L + R and press C-Down(4), C-Right, C-Up, C-Left at the main menu.

DREAMCAST CHEATS

Marvel vs. Capcom

Fight as Lilith:
Highlight Zangief at the character selection screen. Then press Left(2), Down(2), Right(2), Up(2), Down(4), Left(2), Up(4), Right, Left, Down(4), Right(2), Up(4), Left(2), Down(4), Right, Down. Lilith will appear below War Machine.
Fight as Roll:
Highlight Zangief at the character selection screen. Then press Left(2), Down(2), Right(2), Down(2), Left(2), Up, Right, Up(2), Right(2). Roll will appear to the right of Mega Man.
Fight as Shadow Lady:
Highlight Morrigan at the character selection screen. Then press Up, Right(2), Down(4), Left(2), Up(4), Right(2), Left(2), Down(2), Right(2), Down(2), Left(2), Up(2), Right(2), Up(2), Left(2), Down(5). Shadow Lady will appear below Gambit.
Fight as Red Venom:
Highlight Chun-Li at the character selection screen. Then press Right, Down(4), Left, Up(4), Right(2), Down(2), Left(2), Down(2), Right(2), Up(4), Left(2), Up. Red Venom will appear above Chun-Li.
Fight as Orange Hulk:
Highlight Chun-Li at the character selection screen. Then press Right(2), Down(2), Left(2), Right(2), Down(2), Left(2), Up(4), Down(2), Right(2), Up(2), Down(4), Up(4), Left, Up. Orange Hulk will appear above Ryu.
Fight as Gold War Machine:
Highlight Zangief at the character selection screen. Then press Left(2), Down(2), Right(2), Down(2), Left(2), Up(4), Right(2), Left(2), Down(4), Right(2), Up(2), Left(2), Down(2), Right(2), Up(5). Gold War Machine will appear above Zangief.
Full pause screen:
Press Start to pause game play, then hold Y and press X.
Selecting special partners:
Note: The following codes must be entered while holding Start before the special partner selection screen appears.
Unknown soldier: Hold Weak Punch
Lou: Hold Medium Punch
Arthur: Hold Weak Punch + Medium Punch
Saki: Hold High Punch
Ton-Pooh: Hold Weak Punch + High Punch
Devilot: Hold Medium Punch
Anita: Hold Weak Punch + Medium Punch + High Punch
Pure and Fur: Weak Kick
Michelle Heart: Hold Weak Punch + Weak Kick
Mighty Thor: Hold Weak Kick + Medium Punch
Cyclops: Hold Weak Punch + Weak Kick + Medium Punch
Magneto: Hold Weak Kick + High Punch
Storm: Hold Weak Punch + Weak Kick + High Punch
Jubilee: Hold Weak Kick + Medium Punch + High Punch
Rogue: Hold Weak Punch + Weak Kick + Medium Punch + High Punch
Psylocke: Hold Medium Kick
Juggernaut: Hold Weak Punch + Medium Kick
Iceman: Hold Medium Punch + Medium Kick
Colossus: Hold Weak Punch + Medium Punch + Medium Kick
US agent: Hold High Punch + Medium Kick
Shadow: Hold Weak Punch + Medium Kick + High Punch
Sentinel: Hold Medium Punch + Medium Kick + High Punch
Secret character quick select:

There are certain tasks that when completed will unlock the secret characters in arcade mode without entry of a cheat code. The tasks are listed in the FAQ. If these characters are challenged and defeated, they may be selected by moving the cursor to where they would appear when their cheat code is entered. For example, for Roll go to Megaman and press Right. This quick select method may be saved to the VMS.
Name changes:
Enter xxxxxxx as a name to have the game change it to 'SIN'. Enter AAA as a name to have the game change it to 'CAP'. Enter MMM as a name to have the game change it to 'MOT'.
Switch starting character:
Hold Weak Punch + Medium Punch + High Punch at the versus screen to switch the character that first starts the match with the second character selected.

Sega Rally 2

All seasons:
Press Up, Left, Down, Right, B, A, B, Right, Down at the title screen. All tracks, including the Secret Rally track will be unlocked.
All cars:
Press Up, Down, Up, B, A, Left, B(2), Down at the title screen.
Change frame rate:
Press Up, A, Down(2), Left, Right, B(2), Down at the main menu to change the frame rate to 60 per second. A sound will confirm correct code entry. Press Up, A, Down(2), Left, Right, B(2), Up at the main menu to change the frame rate to 30 per second.
Less detailed tracks:
Press Y or R when making a choice on the track or mode selection screen. The track will be less detailed and the race timer will appear on the right side of the screen while the game's display rate is increased.
Alternate car colours:
Press L when making a choice on the car selection screen.
Control replay camera:
Press A, Y, or X to change the replay view. Use the D-pad to rotate the camera angle. Press B to return to the normal replay angle. Press Down while in the driver's view to switch to a behind-the-car view.
Control car preview camera:
Use the D-pad to change the view of the cars at the car selection screen.

Virtua Fighter 3tb

Fight against Alphabet character:
Highlight Akira on the character selection screen and press Start. Then, highlight Lau and press Start. Finally, highlight Pai, hold Start and press X.
Fight as Alphabet character:
Highlight Akira on the character selection screen and press Start. Then, highlight Lion and press Start. Then, highlight Pai and press Start. Then select any character and press A.
Fight as Silver Dural:
Press Start + X + A at the character selection screen in training mode.
Fight as Gold Dural:
Press Start + Y + A at the character selection screen in training mode.
Arcade backgrounds:
Select team battle, normal or training mode. Then, intentionally allow the timer to reach zero on the stage selection screen.
New training mode backgrounds:
Select training mode, then hold Start and press A at the stage selection screen.
Alternate stage backgrounds:
Hold Start + B at the stage selection screen.
Slow motion replay:
Press B before the instant replay begins.
Alternate costumes:
Hold Start and select a fighter at the character selection screen.

GAME BOY CHEATS

NEW WAY OUT

Frogger

Cheat mode:
Intentionally run out of lives during game play. Then, press A, B, A, B, Select, Start at the high score screen. A cheat option will now appear on the main menu

NEW WAY OUT

Montezuma's Return

Unlimited lives:
Enter ELEPHANT as a password
All doors unlocked:
Enter SUNSHINE as a password
End password:
Enter 6JYBSPPJ as a password to begin game play just before the final boss
Level passwords:
NQXZJ9?K 2N4ZQWZM

The Legend of Zelda: Link's Awakening DX

Free bow:
Purchase the bow and press A + B + Start + Select and save the game as the rupees appear from your hand. Continue the game with the bow and your rupees.
Bomb-arrow:
Configure the bombs and arrows as two button items, then press A + B to shoot.
Easy money:
In level three, the boss will taunt you and say that you will never find him. To get unlimited rupees, get to the boss, but do not ram the wall with the Pegasus Boots. Kill the blobs that fall on the screen for easy money.
Cheaper purchases:
Select an expensive item from the counter and begin payment. As your character's money is being deducted, quickly press Start + Select + A + B, then save and quit the game. Reload the saved game to keep the item and most of the money used to purchase it.
Heart piece locations:
Refer to the game map as a grid with 1 to 16 going left to right and A to Z going up and down. The heart pieces are located at the following co-ordinates:

1: 1-K	4: 3-G	7: 15-C	10: 8-A
2: 2-I	5: 15-M	8: 14-M	11: 2-A
3: 5-E	6: 9-H	9: 7-H	12: 7-I

Always have Marin:
Complete the first three levels and get Marin as a follower. Use the teleport hole to travel to the animal village. Move to the left, then press Select just when you are about to enter the next screen. Your character should move across the screen. Marin will now remain in your party for the duration of the game.
Stealing:
Your character can steal from shops by taking an item and standing above the store keeper. As he looks towards of the top of the screen, use the door to leave the shop. Note: Your character will be branded a thief and may never return to the same shop. However, the game can be saved and reloaded if your character is killed by a store keeper, which allows the store to be re-entered without penalty.
Bonus seashells:
Find exactly five secret seashells, then go to the Seashell Mansion. Enter, then walk right until finding the water flowing up a big pipe. Another bonus shell can be found by doing this with exactly ten seashells. Note: Return to the Seashell Mansion with twenty seashells to obtain a level two power sword. This sword can shoot when your character's life is full.
Flight:
Obtain the Boomerang and the Rooster. Throw the Boomerang and pick up the Rooster. The Boomerang should hover below you. You cannot get attacked by normal enemies but you may attack them.

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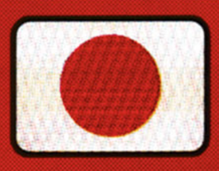
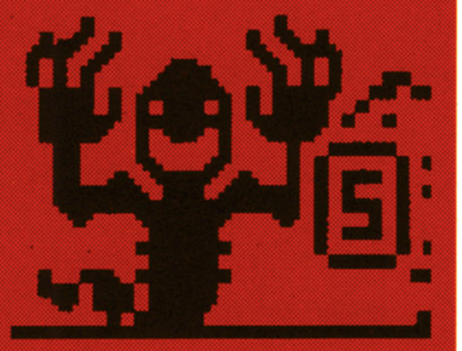


NICKWHITE
e-mail: nickw@rapide.co.uk

So, the European and American release of the humble PocketStation seems increasingly unlikely. This could be due to a demographic trend showing that the innovative device would provoke little interest, although the immense fad culture that erupted around the far less constructive Tamagotchi would prove otherwise. The potential rescinding of the PocketStation release is yet another facet of the dismaying case that European gamers are getting something of a raw deal in the gaming scene, with their desires and needs second-guessed by corporate panels, and not the cash-holding punter. Console releases are perhaps the most telling evidence, with European gamers having to wait, in the case of the impending Dreamcast, almost a year for a PAL version. Some would claim that development and conversion takes up the time, yet if the European market was taken as seriously as it should be, we'd have been enjoying the Dreamcast for months. The delay between games is also a testament to this fact, with delays averaging six months for titles such as Silent Hill or Tekken 3. Some consoles are released in Japan that never even see the light of day on these shores. There are over five million PlayStations alone in the UK, so when will Nintendo, Sony and Sega realise the untapped potential of Europe

Nick White

Email: Nickw@rapide.co.uk



Nick White is Reviews Editor for *Total Dreamcast* magazine – to be launched September 1999.

FORE

USED DREAMS

Sega to promote Dreamcast rentals

Sega of America have announced that the US Dreamcast will be available to rent before the official release of the machine. An as-yet-unannounced rental and retail chain will have exclusive rights over the Dreamcast and up to three finished US titles.

Sega have stated that the company in question would be a major nationwide chain. At time of going to press, net rumours hint that Blockbuster Video, the well-established global video rental company, appear to be the most likely candidate for the promotion. PlayStation and N64 consoles currently rent in the US for $15 per five evenings, so a similar price is expected for the Dreamcast should Blockbuster be confirmed.

NO ANNOUNCEMENT HAS BEEN MADE, BUT SONIC ADVENTURE, SEGA RALLY 2 ARE LIKELY TO BE INCLUDED IN THE PACKAGE

No announcement concerning which three titles are to be available has been made, but Sonic Adventure and Sega Rally 2 are highly likely to be included in the package, along with CART Racing, Dynamight Cop, Power Stone or a few others.

An exact date remains unconfirmed, but a Sega spokesperson stated that the promotion would be in effect before mid-July.

CURRENT PLAYSTATION TO GET NINTH FANTASY

Final Fantasy IX to appear on PlayStation but not on PlayStation 2?

Digicube, a subsidiary of Square of Japan, have stated that *Final Fantasy IX* will be appearing on the current PlayStation system and not on the PlayStation 2 as some people had been expecting. Square are currently investigating the best time period to release the title so that it won't conflict with the other triple-A titles or the release of the next PlayStation. They also hinted that they are looking into an early 2000 Japanese release.

With the huge market for *Final Fantasy*, there is obvious concern that this move is an indication of a delay in the development of PlayStation 2, but other rumours suggest that Square are developing an exclusive PlayStation 2 RPG, perhaps even moving away from the *Final Fantasy* brand name.

A Square spokesperson was stated as saying, "Square has made no announcement on the sequel to *Final Fantasy VIII*."

***Final Fantasty X* seems likely**

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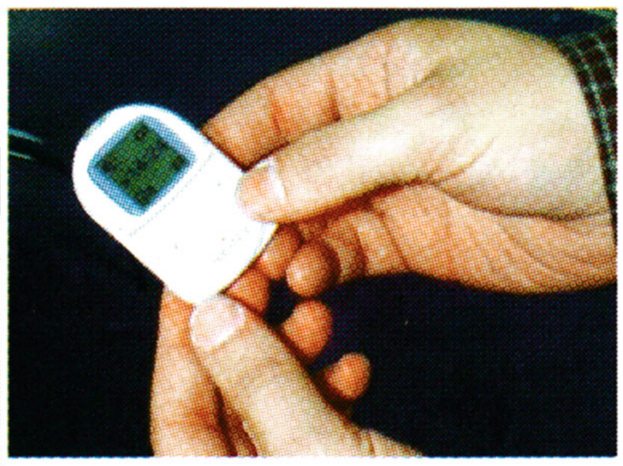
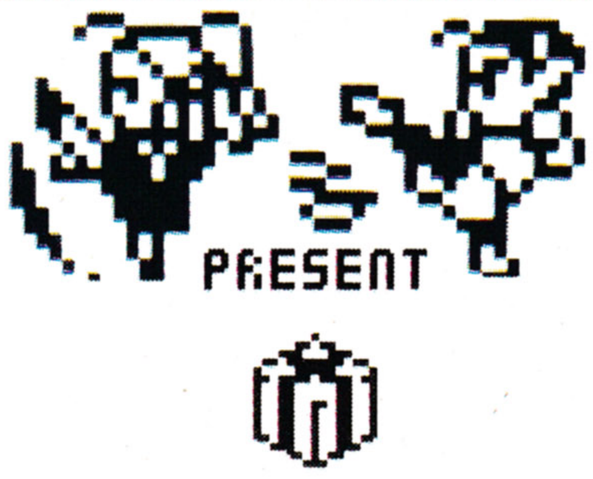
POCKETSTATION: THE NEXT GENERATION

PocketStation set to cause diminutive stir on PlayStation 2

The humble PocketStation seems not to have been the shining white hope that Sony were portending. Whilst a quantifiable success in its native Japan, where most innovative gaming add-ons are warmly received, the outlook is uncertain for a US or European release for the PocketStation this side of the PlayStation 2 launch – potentially a viable market lost. The PocketStation is by no means abandoned, however: Sony are choosing PlayStation 2 as the format to fully integrate and exploit the PocketStation. Details are scant, but the potential of the PocketStation and the diversity and raw power of PlayStation 2 should make for a dynamic and ingenious combination, especially if somehow employed in unison with potential on-line capabilities.





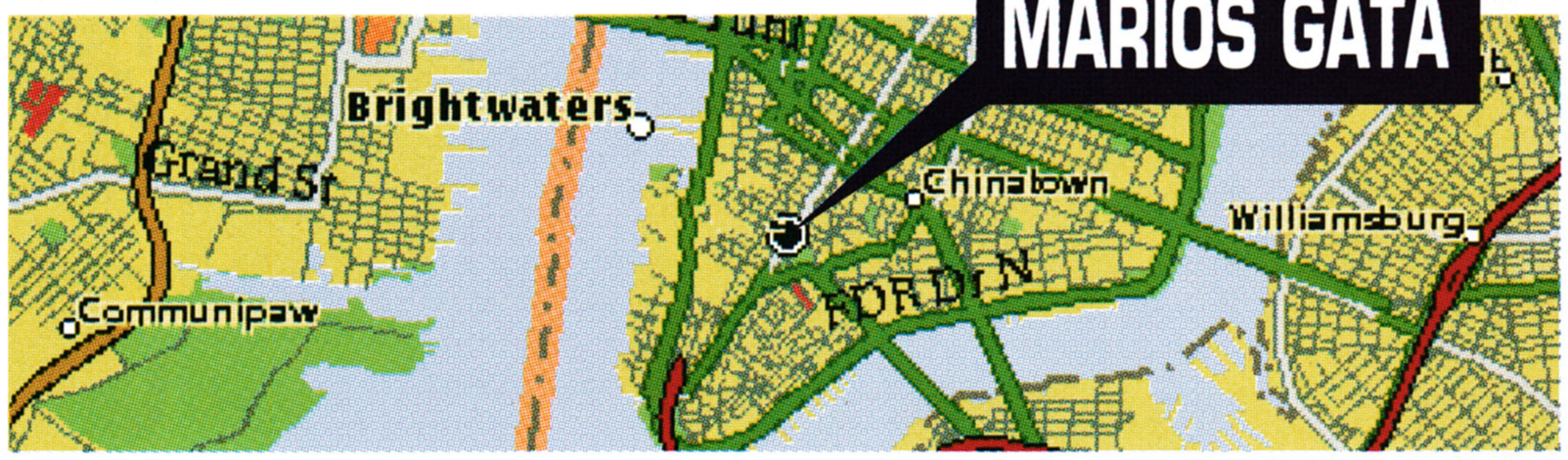
VERONICA GOES SURFING

Dreamcast Resident Evil: Code Veronica to be internet compatible

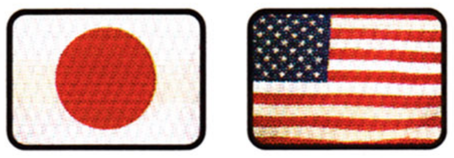
The impending *Resident Evil: Code Veronica* is set to be compatible with the on-line feature of the Dreamcast, an unusual choice given that titles such as racers or first-person shooters would make a more logical choice for the on-line experience. Initial reports indicate that the title will offer downloadable gameplay files such as new and improved weapons. Hopefully new scenarios and some manner of deathmatch skirmish will also be under review. Anticipation for both the Dreamcast and the game itself have increased considerably in light of this announcement, making the future for Sega a little less unstable.

CORPULENT, MOUSTACHIOD PLUMBER STREET

Nintendo's icon Mario to have street named in his honour.



Pleasing as it is to see videogames entering the mainstream collective without rebuke from the moral majorities, matters have taken a turn for the esoteric with Mario's latest accolade. Awards for pie eating and questionable facial hair have been eschewed for real estate. The crazy Swedish have taken the mushroom-imbibing plumber so dearly to their hearts that they have named a street in Kungsbacka after him. Entitled 'Marios Gata', the name change was a result of the Scandinavian company Bergsala, who hold the distribution rights for Nintendo for the region. Bergsala's director, Owe Bergsten, said, "Mario is an important part of Nintendo's success in Sweden, and naming a street after him is a good way of showing our appreciation." Plans for a sewage dump entitled 'Sega Mega-CD Tip' have not yet been approved.



CALL ME SOMETIME, YOU OLD GAME BOY

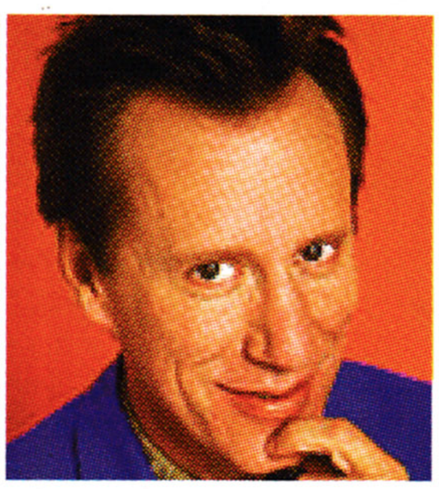
Game Boy software to link with cellular phones

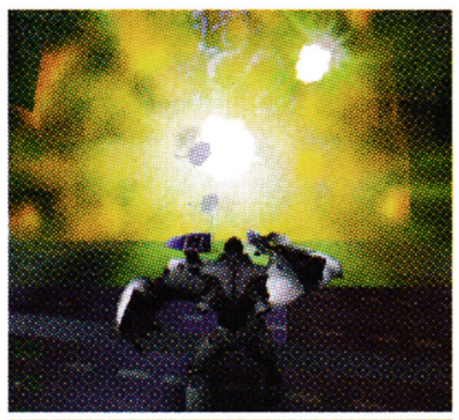
Gaming is becoming a culture based on diversity. No longer do we want our consoles to provide us with untainted hours of social life-sapping pleasure, we also want our consoles to link to the internet, be DVD compatible and bring us breakfast in bed. Nintendo of Japan haze seized upon this market trend and plan to create Game Boy software that will be compatible with cellular phones, as well as Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corporation's Personal Handyphone System, or PHS. The PHS is a lightweight portable wireless telephone that functions as a cordless phone in the home and as a mobile phone elsewhere. Nintendo of Japan president, Hiroshi Yamauchi, revealed that the software would be released sometime in the year 2000. He also touched on the fact that development of the next-generation Game Boy was "progressing". Quite how this will be practically applied remains to be seen, but some form of data transfer via cellular phone connection may not be too far off the mark.

FANTASY FILM GETS STAFF

Voice casting for Final Fantasy film confirmed By Squaresoft

After many months of conjecture and speculation, Squaresoft have finally released details concerning the voice actors for the digitally animated Final Fantasy film. Judging by the pantheon of actors, the film is opting for a low-key feel. Rest assured that Pee Wee Herman is not going to be making any contribution to the movie. Conformed names thus far include Alex Baldwin (Basinger-puller), James Woods (B-movie king), Donald Sutherland (gravel-voiced suave), Steve Buscemi (Tarantino-geek cool), Ving Rhames (Christ knows...) and Ming Na Wen (erm...). The film is currently in production at the Honolulu studios of Squaresoft and should see an American release in mid-2001.





YOU ARE ZERO. WHO IS NUMBER SIX?

Slave Zero takes manic Mech action Dreamcast-ward

Vast Mech robots seem to be a mainstay of Japanese culture. Barely a game or animé can pass without some reference being made to these colossal fighting robots. Rumours have even been heard of Mech toilet tissue in Nippon. *Slave Zero* brings the mythos of the Mech to the powerhouse Dreamcast, thanks to Accolade. The game is an all-out 3D action extravaganza, seeing you as the pilot of a prototype Mech, the eponymous *Slave Zero*. Played in third-person view, the game eschews the much-favoured first-person. Accolade promise four-player split-screen intensity with the potential of twelve players over the modem. Gameplay should be fluid and intuitive and the graphical detail looks to be some of the finest of the Sega paragon. A USA release is mooted for autumn, with a hopeful European release soon after.

STARCRAFT, STAR BRIGHT

Real-time sci-fi smash makes unexpected N64 debut

Real-time strategy is not a genre one would expect to see on the more arcade-focused N64. Blizzard Entertainment think different and are taking the commendable stand of releasing last year's PC hit, Starcraft. Three different species engage in conflict that will determine the fate of a galaxy, allowing you to control one of the three species, each with unique missions, personalities and units – Humans, The Protoss (technically advanced aliens) and Zergs (like the film Aliens). Similar to Command and Conquer, the graphics will be 2D with the usual resource management included. The only downfall of this title will be the lack of multiplayer support, with only the claustrophobic split-screen as a viable option.

GAME GRRRLS

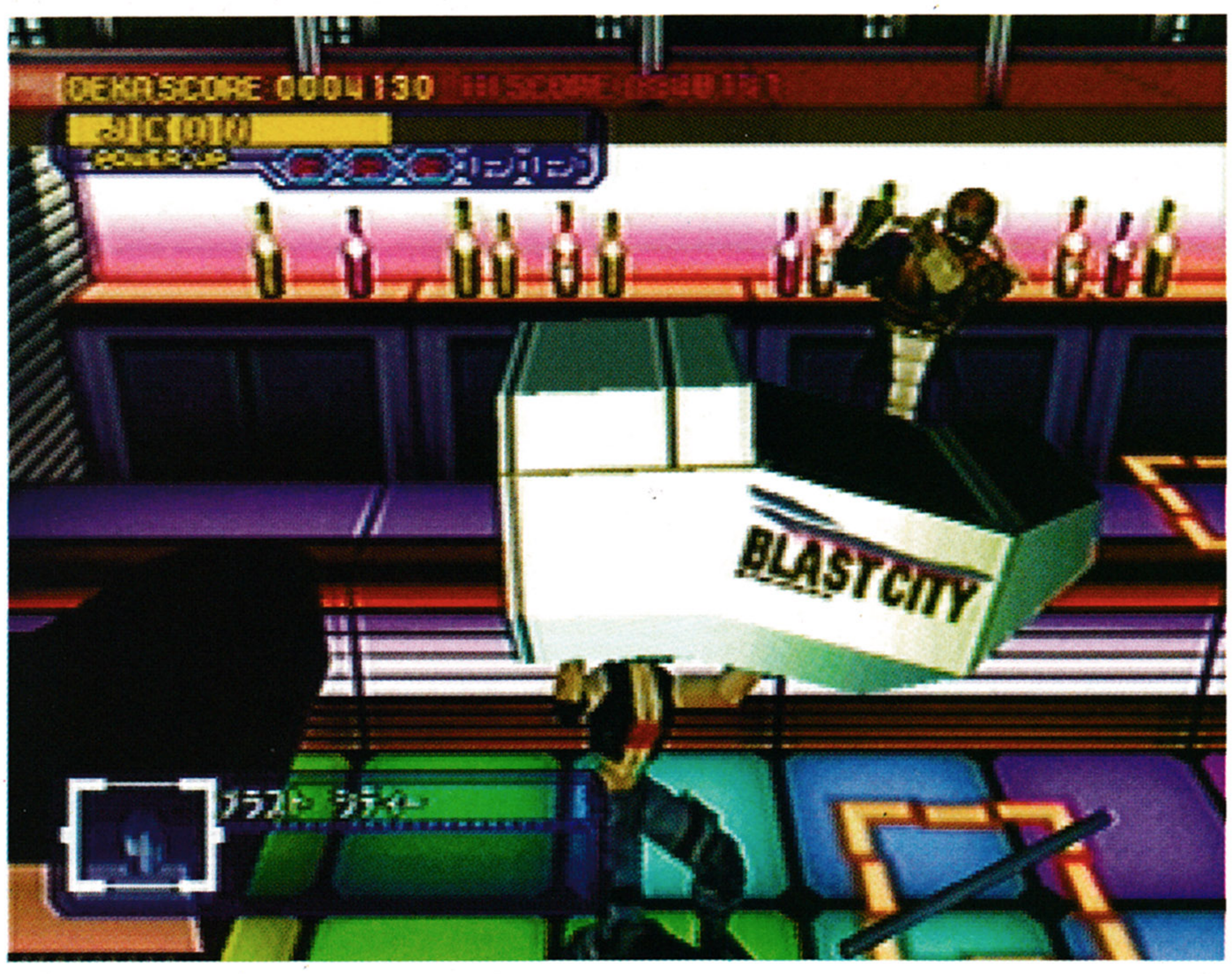
Specialist game site dedicated to the female gamer takes off

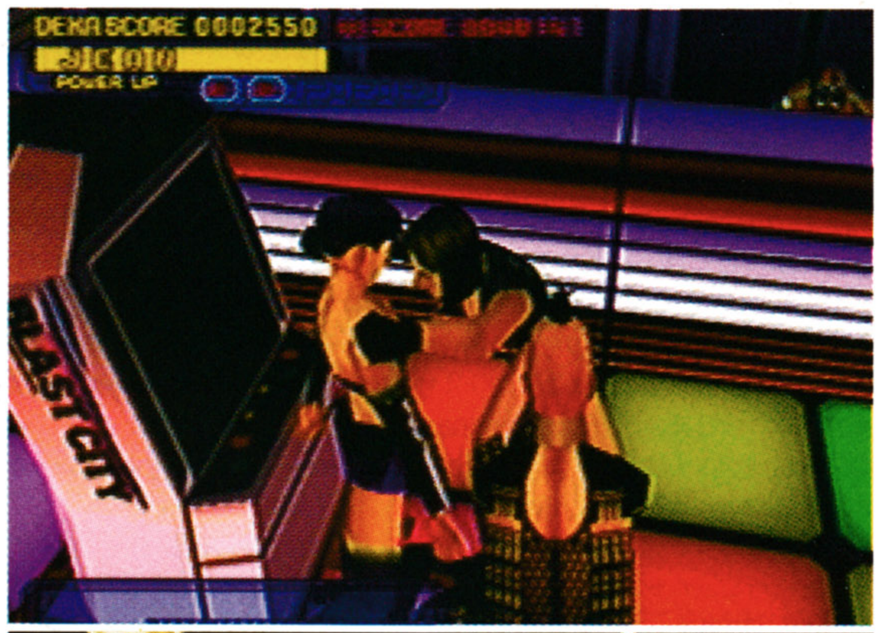
Female gamers are something of an overlooked demographic, with them only accounting for around 5% of the gaming populous. The reasons of why and wherefore are subjective topics, ranging from console design to the number of excessively violent games on the market. Tetris, however, is equally as popular with men as it is with women (Freudian psychologists claim that it appeals to innate anal retention in the 'tidying of the blocks') and the Oddworld games gained a cult following amongst female gamesplayers. There is a voice of feminine gameheads out there to be heard, and it has finally found a home – www.womengamers.com. The site provides specialist coverage of the diverse world of games with a female slant. The chances of it logging up with sad/debased males gamers after dates has not yet been addressed.

Abe has proved to be as popular with girls ads with guys. Something about the psychology of cleaning?

DYNAMITEDEKU2

Save the generic president's **daughter in this free-roaming 3D scrapper,** boasting moves that inflict more pain than **a Bananarama reunion concert...**





It is an incontrovertible fact of video gaming that president's daughters are cannon fodder, suitable only for kidnap, petty larceny and extorting a huge ransom from the president (cast your mind back to *Time Crisis* and *Die Hard Arcade* on the antecedent Saturn for proof). Again, the president's daughter is hostage, held by a guerrilla terrorist organisation upon a pleasure cruise ship. Cue three grizzled and hardened troops to alleviate the situation, as well as cause some disfiguring damage on the way. Should be more fun than the Portsmouth to Calais P&O crossing...

MAYHEM IS PARTLY DUE TO THE INTERACTIVE SCENERY, SUCH AS SUN LOUNGERS, EXCERCISE BIKES AND LEGS OF MEAT, ALL OF WHICH CAN BE MANIPULATED WITH HARMFUL INTENT

Hit the Deku

Anybody familiar with the host of area-based 3D fist-fests such as the seminal Streets of Rage series will feel immediately at home with *Dynamite Deku 2*, automatically setting brains to low-level function and eyes to maximum ogle. The ostensible aim is to hurt. Not your average hurt that can be inflicted from a stinging nettle or carelessly zipped-up trousers, though. *Dynamite Deku* offers the kind of turn to make even Ghengis Khan wince in distaste, with the crunching of bones and potential compound fractures commonplace.

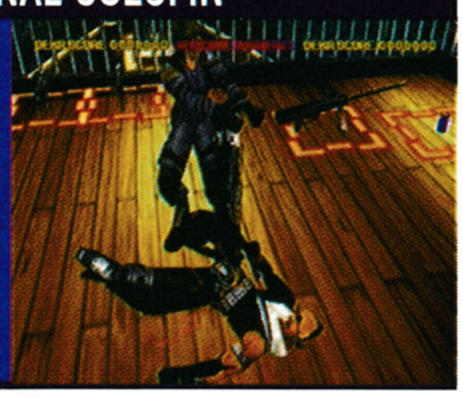
The first thing that will enrapture, however, are the sumptuous visuals; slick animation and character design, dazzlingly clear backgrounds and impressive real-time cut scenes attest to the power and capability of the humble Dreamcast, with the Naomi technology effortlessly flinging polygons around like an adept pizza chef. As is the fate of many similar games in the genre, diversity is lacking and longevity is virtually ignored in *Dynamite Deku 2*, seemingly created for the short-term adrenaline fiend as opposed to the more sober savant who requires depth and scope from their titles.

Enemies are sufficiently varied to maintain interest, ranging from the corpulent chef to the gun-toting dominatrix and the Ninja-Turtle wannabe. Each foe attacks in a limited manner yet possesses surprisingly cunning AI, almost seeming to second-guess your attack strategy. Enough enemies are present on screen to cause mayhem and carnage of the highest degree. Such mayhem is partly due to the interactive scenery, such as sun loungers, exercise bikes and legs of meat, all of which can be manipulated with harmful intent, as can the wealth of firearms littered around, such as rocket launchers and a mobile nuclear device. The amount of moves available is limited in comparison to titles such as *Tekken 3*, but suffice for the game whilst looking suitably painful.

The game is also disturbingly short, with three mission variants on the ship, each with varying locations, yet little else to offer when all is said and done. Like a mayfly, *Dynamite Deku 2* is well conceived but can be easily dealt with in a day. If you listen closely, you can hear the game itself whispering, "Rent me...borrow me..." **Nick White**

I COULD CRUSH A SPINAL COLUMN

The most gruesome fighting moves can be accessed by grappling your foe and hitting the four main action buttons. Legs will crack, necks will splinter and spines will emit a sickening crunching noise that defies nature. All very satisfying in a Ted Bundy context.



INFORMATION

FORMAT	Dreamcast
PUBLISHER	Sega
DEVELOPER	Sega
STYLE	3D Arcade Fighter
RELEASE	Out Now
PRICE	£50
PLAYERS	1-2
VMS	Yes
ONLINE	No

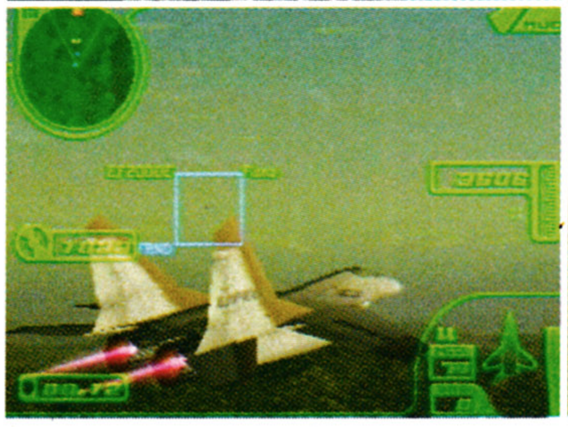
TAKING CONTROL

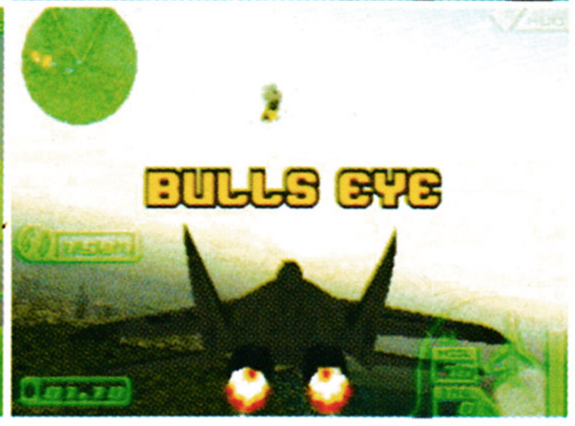
Initially, it is all too easy to be enthralled by the visual splendour of the title, disregarding the somewhat limited and linear structure of the game proper. Each foray further into the game reveals new scenery to rupture organs with and weapons to employ. Interest will soon falter, though.

VERDICT

GAME NAME	Dynamite Deka 2
GRAPHICS	84
SOUND	71
PLAYABILITY	64
OVERALL Out of 100	54

ACECOMBAT3





Namco's arcade flight sim series gets a third installment

Although this can hardly be described as a flight sim, it is about as close as you can get on the PlayStation. *Ace Combat 3* is an arcade-style flight game set in the not-too-distant future. The game engine never attempts to simulate accurately– it is most similar to the one seen in *Colony Wars: Vengeance*– but then it never attempts to do anything less. Your plane twists and turns extremely smoothly, you skim off the surface if you get too low, and despite a still feature, gravity has minimal effect.

Plane and simple

There are multiple planes available to you which are easily equipped with a selection of missiles and chain guns. Missions are moderately varied –most involve destroying a set number of air or ground targets – and the learning curve is generally very good. What stands out about *Ace Combat 3* is the spectacular graphics. The texture mapping is of high quality; cities look superb, especially in some night-time missions, and frame rate is always high.

What *Ace Combat 3* does lack is depth. The gameplay is generally simple: you have rudder and throttle controls, weapon and target selections and a map, but the game really needed more options such as chaff or ECM facilities to avoid the need for evasive manoeuvres, which could have been done easily with a shift key on one of the shoulder buttons.

The game comes on two CDs, allowing for a lot of detail in the arcade-style briefings that relay the plot. As this is in Japanese, working out the mission objectives is often difficult. But generally this is a very good game that regular import buyers should definitely consider saving for. **Will**

INFORMATION	
FORMAT	PlayStation
PUBLISHER	Namco
DEVELOPER	Namco
STYLE	Air Combat
RELEASE	Out Now
PRICE	£50
PLAYERS	One
DUAL SHOCK	Yes
ANALOGUE	Yes
SAVE GAME	Memory Card

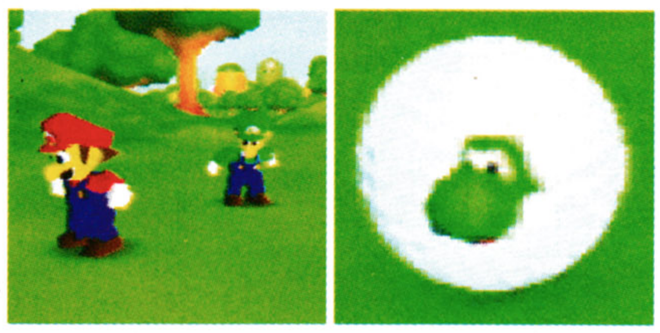
VERDICT	
GAME NAME	Ace Combat 3
GRAPHICS	93
SOUND	83
PLAYABILITY	80
OVERALL	80
Out of 100	

MARIOGOLF

INFORMATION	
FORMAT	N64
PUBLISHER	Nintendo
DEVELOPER	Camelot
STYLE	Cartoon Golf
RELEASE	Out Now
PRICE	£50
PLAYERS	One
RUMBLE PAK	Yes
SAVE GAME	Battery back up
EXPANSION PAK	No

N64 owners hoping that Mario would transform video golf as he has the platform and racing genres are in for a big disappointment, I'm afraid. The graphics are unclear, shot selection is limited and it's far too difficult to judge exactly where you must hit the ball. In the end you will find yourself just clicking the button and leaving the computer to line everything up. The game makes no real distinction between a good shot and not-so-good shot, other than the familiar Nintendo characters taunting each other when things don't quite go according to plan. It tries to introduce cutesy Mario-esque elements but they don't really work – the fruit machine-style club selector between holes is silly and you soon get the impression you're simply going through the motions so Mario and his friends can have a day out on the golf course.

If you're still desperate for a piece of the action, however, at least wait for the official PAL release. The Japanese version is full of menus you won't have a hope of understanding. Perhaps when the English translation arrives we'll discover loads of new options to improve matters. Until then though, unless you're a Mario nut with a considerable grasp of written Japanese, leave well alone. **Miles**



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VERDICT	
GAME NAME	Ace Combat 3
GRAPHICS	93
SOUND	83
PLAYABILITY	80
OVERALL	45
Out of 100	

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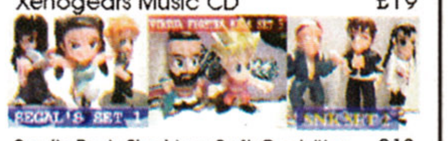

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OUT OFCONTROL

CHRISLEONARD
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Well, as you know, I've moved magazines, had two deadlines crossing over each other, and I'm still in a daze. I haven't been able to play the best stuff, but *The Nomad Soul* promises to be one of the best games ever! A bold statement, I know, but I have a feeling in my nostril hairs that it's gonna be something just a little bit special.

Now everyone's calmed down after E3, the games companies are getting on with the business of actually letting us see code. *Kingpin* and *Outcast* were both high quality products, while I found *Point Blank 2* a lot of fun. What really gets my juices going, though, is *Driver*; it has to be one of the most fun driving games I've ever played – even more so than (dare I say it) *Mario Kart*.

Take your pick from *The Nomad Soul*, *GT2*, *Quake III* and a whole host of others that'll be keeping you up late into the night for a long time to come. I don't think anyone will know where to look with hundreds of games across all formats that will push the boundaries of what we thought were the limits of technology.

NICKJONES
EDITOR

Obviously, Justin's departure will be a great loss to both Rapide Publishing and to Total CONTROL but, as they say, the show must go on – leaving me to pick up where he has left off.

The coming weeks will see further changes to the Total CONTROL staff and Cliff's departure to our sister mag Ultimate PC is just the beginning. Good luck to you and your new editor – a word of advice, just keep him away from plugs and import Dreamcasts...

Next month should be an interesting one as the Sega marketing machine moves into top gear in the run up to the UK Dreamcast launch. We'll be telling you exactly what we think about the prospects of Sega's console and the games that will be released between the launch and Christmas.

Aside from this we'll have news on the biggest releases this autumn and winter including *Gran Turismo 2*, *Quake III* and *Tekken Tag Tournament*.

Oh, and by the way Justin – good luck and we'll miss you...

WILLADKIN
STAFF WRITER

It's been the strangest month we've had at Total CONTROL – three members leave, an office change, a trip to Glastonbury and a fantastic selection of games in for review. This month I have played four of the most spectacular PC titles of '99, all of which rank very highly in my all-time list. *MechWarrior 3*, *Dungeon Keeper 2*, *Kingpin* and *Outcast* have all lived up to very high expectations.

The PC looks like it could be in for an exceptionally strong summer, but sadly the story is not quite the same for console owners. Next month though, the paltry selection of high quality titles will be bolstered by *Driver* and *V-Rally 2* on PlayStation, and *Quake II* on the N64. Hopefully these will mark the end of a dry period for both consoles and the flow of games will pick up again, just in time for the UK Dreamcast launch, no doubt.

However, this month has been overshadowed by the departure of Justin. Cheers mate, and best of luck in your new job.

CLIFFSMITH
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Yes, it's been quite a month. Our esteemed Editor Justin has moved on to other things, our designer Ruth has been headhunted by Total PlayStation, and I am returning to my old mag Ultimate PC in the role of Reviews Editor. If that wasn't enough, to top it off I was recently involved in a bizarre honey-I-shrunk-the-kids type accident, leaving me only two feet tall. However, neither this mishap nor my new duties on UPC will deter me from continuing to write the Hard Stuff section each month. I have enjoyed my time on Total CONTROL, and I will still be contributing the occasional feature or two, but it is time to move on to new challenges, as they say. I hope you will join me in welcoming Chris Leonard as he takes over my post as Senior Staff Writer, and congratulate Nick on his well deserved promotion to the Editorship of the best multi-format games mag you can buy. I would also like to wish Justin the best of luck in his new job. We'll all miss you.

SCORE<1> HI-SCORE SCORE<2>

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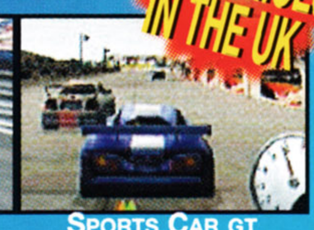
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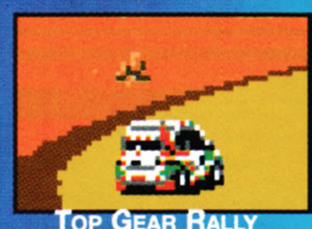
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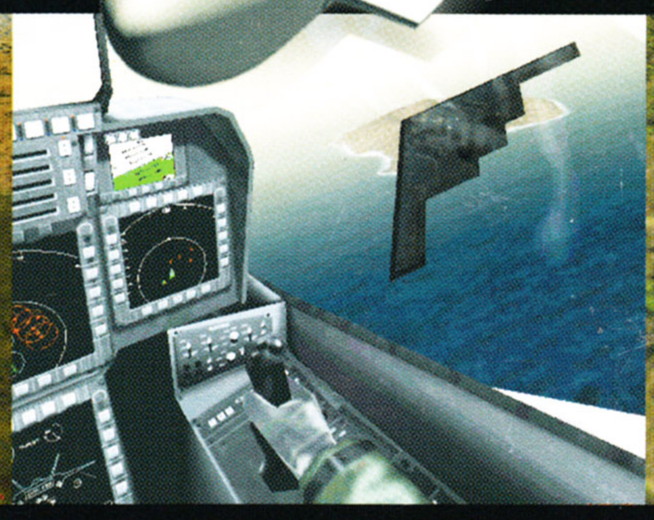

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