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DC-UK

DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

DC-UK

03

SOUL CALIBUR ■ HYDRO THUNDER ■ FIGHTING FORCE 2 ■ FURBALLS

THE FISH ISSUE

DOES MY BASS LOOK BIG IN THIS?

We go in search of Sega's bass, and find a load of pollacks

RETURN TO THE FORBIDDEN PLANET

Sega's Saturn wasn't all bad. Honest...

AMERICAN DREAM

Dreamcast conquers the US – 500,000 sold in a fortnight!

REVIEWED

Hydro Thunder
Sega Bass Fishing
F1 World GP
Buggy Heat
Suzuki Alstare
Marvel Vs Capcom
Jimmy White's 2: Cueball

Pure Soul

Soul Calibur reviewed in full

The greatest fighting game in the world ever!

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POWER STONE™

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Dreamcast UK 9/10

An all-out action game where anything goes. Power up for the first true 3D-action fun!

"Massively addictive, cleverly realised and simply beautiful to look at, Capcom's Power Stone is truly a jewel in the Dreamcast's crown" Edge 9/10*

"Power Stone is probably the closest any game on a home system has come to the coin-op quality that video games has always strived for" Arcade 6/6*

- Jaw-dropping graphics with fast-paced gameplay!
- Loads of special interactive moves - climb a pillar, lift a chair or even run up a wall.
- Find the fantastic weapon power-ups....a bazooka, a Molotov cocktail, a flamethrower plus more!
- Collect the power stones to increase your fighting power.

Dreamcast

* Import/NTSC version reviewed

LOOKING FOR THE BEST 3D ACTION GAME ON DREAMCAST?

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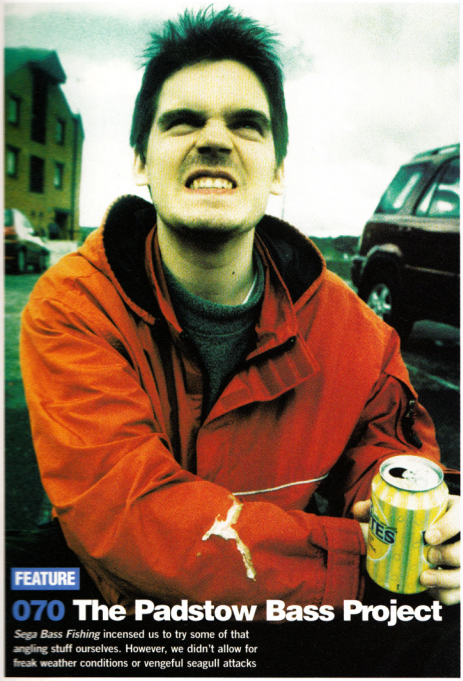

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Sega Bass Fishing incensed us to try some of that angling stuff ourselves. However, we didn't allow for freak weather conditions or vengeful seagull attacks

FEATURE

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CASPAR FIELD
EDITOR

Twenty-two years ago, back in the mists of my memory, my old man bought me a toy that changed my life. That Binatone *Pong* console, still nestling somewhere in a cupboard at my house, started a chain-reaction of videogame playing that I just cannot stop. Through an Atari 2600, a ZX Spectrum, an Amiga, a SNES, a PlayStation and an N64, plus dozens of other machines owned by friends (including an Apple II with *Pinball Construction Set*, which was bloody brilliant), I must have played thousands upon thousands of games. And now I have Dreamcast.

When Mario first strolled into the third-dimension, when Lara sashayed into view, and as *Wipeout*'s ships plummeted forth, they all hinted at the potential of 3D. And with Dreamcast, a console has finally arrived with the power to create solid, believable worlds, populated by realistic characters. Sega's machine is delivering the kind of videogame experience I've been dreaming of for over twenty years, with games that are more beautiful and more awe-inspiring than ever before.

This month's cover star is *Soul Calibur*, created by Namco, one of the world's most respected developers. Breath-taking, both visually and conceptually, it takes not just fighting games but videogames as a whole to a new level of excellence. Battering away at my Spectrum while playing *Way of the Exploding Fist* back in the '80s, my friends and me could never have imagined such wonders would ever happen. But they have. Right now, there's only a few short weeks until *Soul Calibur* hits the shelves: read our glowing review on page 010. The countdown has begun: prepare to be amazed ■

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The team

We work so darned hard on this magazine that we dedicate an entire page to ourselves. And rightly so, we reckon

KEITH STUART
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

> Keith's month has been entirely made up of watching really dull films and getting very drunk. The Thomas Crown Affair and South Park were saved only by the fine figures of Rene Russo and Wendy Testaburger, plus the fact that he can't remember the plots because he was completely ratted.
Favourite seafood: Green-lipped mussel

ESTHER WOODMAN
DEPUTY EDITOR

> The highlight of Esther's month has been the new shower curtain she bought from Habitat. It has shells on it, and goes really well with the grouting. It's worth keeping in mind that she recently gave up smoking, and if anyone should not happen to admire her new shower curtain she'll bite their ears off.
Favourite seafood: Winkle

STEPHEN LAWSON
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

> This month, Stephen attended the UK breakdancing championships and lost his pants. Thankfully, the two episodes are unrelated. He also wants it to be made known that he wants to start a band. His lack of any musical talent has hampered his progress so far, but he's hoping that no-one will notice.
Favourite seafood: Monkfish

LEE HART
WRITER

> Lee has bought himself four new pairs of trousers, bringing the total to seven, and with his new-found fashion freedom, he's become rather outspoken and has reduced all of us to tears on more than one occasion. But, oddly, since the Man Utd match against Chelsea he hasn't said a word.
Favourite seafood: Fish fingers

CHRISTIAN DAY
ART EDITOR

> Chris has been regaling us with humourous stories of when he visited Staines this month. Oh, how we laughed. Other than that, he's been going to the gym, eating a lot of baked potatoes and has been seen trying to sneak a look up Jennifer Lopez's hotpants. It's a poster, you fool.
Favourite seafood: Tuna

KARL JAQUES
DEPUTY ART EDITOR

> This month, Karl went to Swansea and met Bob Geldoff and Spandau Ballet's Tony Hadley. We're not sure what they were doing there, though. Sadly, this has done nothing to lift his mood this week after waving his main squeeze off to Uni. However, taunting Lee about that Man Utd game has cheered him up considerably.
Favourite seafood: Michael Fish

Feeling SuperSONIC?

The world's favourite computer game hero is now a movie star!

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

OUT ON 1ST NOVEMBER 1999!

THE MOVIE

The prayers of millions of Sega game players have been answered. Everyone's favourite hyper hedgehog returns in an animated spectacular that will blow its U.K. counterparts right off the planet. Speed, buddies, romance, humour, high-tech and cool blue attitude combine to form A.D.V. Films' ***Sonic the Hedgehog!***

PG

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG IS AVAILABLE TO BUY FROM ALL GOOD VIDEO RETAILERS AND MAIL ORDER FROM A.D. VISION ON 01248 421000

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D-M@IL

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

First of all, congratulations on a brilliant first issue that more than lives up to the high standards set by your sister mag N64 Magazine and the classic Super Play, and wipes the floor with your rather lacking competition.

Secondly, a question – on page 121 you said that you'd been using the Japanese browser for a while. How did you get it to work in the UK?

Third and finally, I think it would be better if you actually rated your import reviews so that we can compare the NTSC and PAL versions.

Olly Dean, via email

Being huge fans of Super Play, we're pretty chuffed by the comparison, so thanks. Our Japanese browser runs on a specially converted Dreamcast, which sadly isn't available to the general public. It's hard to know what everything does, because it's written in Japanese (obviously), but it gives an idea of what the UK version will be like.

I am emailing you to complain about false information in **DC-UK**. The review of *Virtua Fighter 3tb* was supposed to be the final UK version, but it's not. I have spoken to the people at Sega and they've informed me that there is no such thing as horizontal borders, especially the size you stated. Also I have played on the UK Dreamcast and watched the video showing *VF3tb* and there are no vertical borders on that. Also every launch game so far including *Sega Rally 2* and *Virtua Fighter 3tb* have a 60Hz option. Stop reviewing Japanese games!

Imo24, via email

What, even in our import section? Japanese games don't have borders, by the way. Sega supplied us with what it guaranteed were final PAL versions of VF3tb *and* Sega Rally 2. *If any changes have been made between that 'final' version and what goes on sale, that's Sega's problem. And from what we've seen, every launch game doesn't have the 60Hz option, sadly.*

On page 26 of your launch issue, you asked how much the *The House Of The Dead 2* arcade machine costs. The following prices are from Deith Leisure (Sega Amusement Europe Limited):

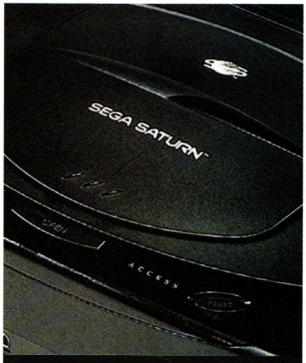
House of the Dead 2 £3750

House of the Dead 2 Super Deluxe £9495

Their home page is **www.sega-amusements-europe.com**. Do I get any free stuff for that then?

Adam Fogerty, via email

No, but thanks all the same. Makes Dreamcast look cheap, doesn't it?



"Would you be prepared to exchange **a secondhand Dreamcast for a secondhand Saturn?**"

John Gunn

We are a group of 13 year old girls and would love it if you could show Karl on your Webcam all the time. He is cute.

The biggest Steps fans in the world, via email

We think so too. That's why we gave him a job, cheeky little cutie that he is. And the Webcam is exclusively trained on Karl these days just for our readers' pleasure.

I was wondering if **DC-UK** has considered introducing a music reviews section as Sega's super console can play music CDs? This seems to be an aspect of the Dreamcast that you haven't touched on yet. Hey! you could even get your readers to write music reviews for you! What a great idea! If this isn't star letter material, then paint me red and call me a rock.

Chris Stephenson, via email

Mail of the month

I recently bought a copy of your magazine, and one thing I noticed was that on the Charts page under *Sega Rally 2*, you wrote, "but given the choice, we'd go for a secondhand Saturn and a copy of the original game." Did you really mean that? I've got a Sega Saturn with *Sega Rally, Sonic Jam, Duke Nukem 3D* and *Virtua Fighter 2*, and was wondering whether you would be prepared to exchange a secondhand Dreamcast for a secondhand Saturn? I've been looking forward to the release for a year, and saving up for it would take just as long again, seeing as I only work once a fortnight because of school.

John Gunn, Bourne

Much as we'd like to take that Saturn off your hands, we're a bit short of secondhand Dreamcasts at the moment. So we'll have to send you a free one instead. Sorry about that.

Caspar Field

Winner baby, yeah!

Mr Gunn is a very lucky boy indeed, as we found another Dreamcast lurking behind the sofa. That's it, though, folks.

Dear Mr Rock,

You're dead right that Dreamcast can play music CDs, but we haven't gone overboard about it because you have to play them through your TV, which sounds pants, frankly. But if its reviews you want, turn to page 124 for Stephen Lawson's completely irrelevant hip-hop column.

When I read the first issue of your magazine I noticed that you seemed to have used the PlayStation as the benchmark for the Dreamcast to follow. I own a PlayStation and acknowledge its huge success in bringing console gaming to the masses. I understand why the N64 was not used in this comparison as the format hasn't seen the same amount of success, so it would be pretty poor to think that the Dreamcast may not even do as well as Nintendo's floundering console. But I think this is a complete underestimation of the Dreamcast to compare it to the aging PlayStation. The Dreamcast has so much more potential than either of these two, that it could revolutionise the console market, bringing it closer than ever to the PC market with its Windows CE and Internet facilities. Sega's new machine represents a new age for console gaming and will make it more popular than ever before. I, for one, will be buying one the moment I have raised the necessary funds.

Justin Klim, via email

All my friends are avid PlayStation or PC owners and are very quick in trying to put down the Dreamcast. One gripe I hear from them often is that the Dreamcast, unlike the PlayStation2, still looks like a computer game and not like real life.

You see, at the launch of the PlayStation2, Sony said that with its new console gamers wouldn't be able to tell the difference between a picture and a

PlayStation2 game. They later changed that to saying that games would look no different to a Full Motion Video. Well sorry Mr Sony and Mr PlayStation fan, but so far none of the game demos from this 'wonder box' have looked any different to games like *Soul Calibur* and *Shenmue* on the Dreamcast. I think the PS2 has been given a tad too much over hype. I know you guys are a Dreamcast mag, but tell the truth, don't you think I'm right?

John, via email

We don't want to become caught up in an argument about whether Dreamcast is better or worse than PlayStation2, because both machines have their plus and minus points. However, you're right in saying that none of Sony's next-generation games have matched the hype about PS2's 'Emotion Engine' chip (see our industry insider's column on page 065 for more). Next year is going to be an interesting battle between the two, and with Shenmue and its other titles, we have every confidence in Sega, and believe Dreamcast will be a massive success, worldwide.

I have been into videogames ever since the PlayStation came out, and have owned every single console ever. Over this time I have become increasingly aware of huge delays between NTSC and PAL releases. Therefore I have often purchased games on import.

However I have not had my PlayStation chipped, and have no plans on doing this to my Dreamcast. This is due to the risks involved (ie, loss of warranty, etc). So, like many people, I have resorted to disc swapping, which is very easy when you know how.

Do you have any plans to publish an article on the subject of Dreamcast disc swapping, or do you know if it is impossible? If you did, I am sure it would help many Dreamcast owners like myself.

Lee Hawley, via email

There's a rumour on the Internet that you can disc swop American games into Japanese machines, using a demo disc given away on a magazine (although it clearly wasn't intended for that purpose). We'll keep you updated.

I have come up with a revolutionary idea, which means that people won't have to spend their money on Dreamcast keyboards so that they can send emails, etc. How about inventing a new language which only includes the letters a, b, x and y? This means we could send emails by just using the Dreamcast controller! But then again, perhaps not.

Daniel Campbell, Oxford

Yeah, perhaps not...

I have to say, the letters section in your first issue was a bunch of sycophantic crap. Apart from that, I thought the magazine was great. A point I would like to raise is a minor one but important none the less. Looking through all the official advertising and promo stuff, we get to see illustrations of some hip chick surfing the Dreamcast Europe site using her Dreamcast. Anyone who has half-a-brain about Web stuff knows that you cannot actually get into that site without Macromedia Flash support, which is also not supported on the Dreamcast (the same goes for any kind of plug-in, including Java applets). Your own site has Flash used in it! Won't be a great deal of use to a Dreamcast owner.

People who want to use the Dreamcast for Web

"Sega has a great machine, but it **cannot sell it on the ticket of full capability Web browsing**"

Glenn Russell

browsing should know the (at least initial) limitations, rather than having to listen to the drivel that was splashed across your pages last month in the letters section about how wonderful everything is. These technologies are constituent parts of almost every site on the Web. Sega has a great machine, I'd take it over anything Sony anytime, but it simply cannot sell us the machine on the ticket of full capability Web browsing. Address it and tell us the truth, but don't deceive us...

Glenn Russell, via email

Actually, the European and American browsers do support Flash and Javascript. It's the Japanese one that doesn't at the moment. Sorry about the drivel, just a little excited by one of the finest game machines ever made, that's all. Won't happen again.

Congratulations on the first issue and also a big congratulations to the majority of your staff for hating Man United.

I'm writing to ask a question concerning the Windows CE compatibility – does this mean that maybe some of us bedroom programmers could come up with some software, games, or Internet goodies? I don't mean any of that super graphical stuff, but simple games or applications (I'm thinking along the lines of *Tetris*, *Space Invaders* or *Pac Man*), or would they need a special Dreamcast development kit?

Colin Billington, Birkenhead

Rumour has it that a home development kit for the VM unit could be on the way pretty soon, which would be fantastic for everyone interested in this side of things. However, unfortunately, you're going to need a full (as in a whopping £5,000 full) DC development kit to code for the console.

Please can you help. I have seen an advert in your magazine along with others that Simply Games is selling Dreamcasts for £170 with games at £30. this seems very good value, and there's more: if you don't like the games you can send them back for an exchange or a full refund and you don't even have to pay the postage – it seems too good to be true. I know that it's not your job but is it possible to find out if this company is legit? I feel that as they are advertising in your publication that you are partially responsible to make sure that there not deceiving any of your readers.

John Borromeo, via email

Future tries hard to only allow legitimate advertisers use its magazines, and that's the case with Simply Games. The deals do seem great value, but we've looked into things and it does all seem genuine. Let us know if you encounter any problems.

Recently me and a mate went to Sega World. It was amazing, with *HOTD2* and *Sega Rally 2* pulling in the crowds, but there was one game that caught our attention most and it was so popular we only got one go each after queuing for almost an hour. The game was called *Dancing Stage*. It's the first ever dance sim where you actually get to dance the moves shown on screen. It's done using pressure pads on the floor in the shape of two d-pads, the commands come up on screen accompanied by some great tunes (including a remixed Relight My Fire) and you have to hit the corresponding pad with your feet and without realising it you're dancing.

Anyway the games had been developed and published by Konami for a playstation release in early 2000. I reckon if we can persuade Konami to bring it out on the Dreamcast it will be a great hit and it will really give the developers a chance to see what Yamaha's AICA synthesizer can do.

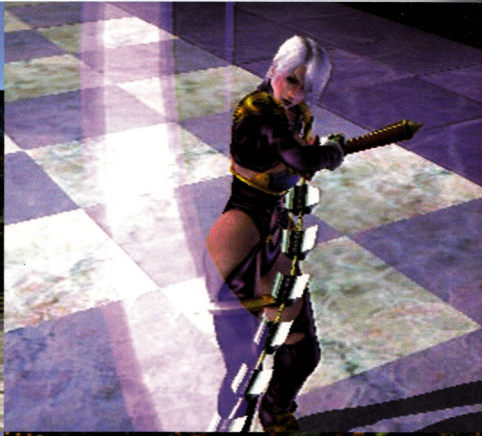
Peter Tweedie, Woking

Konami has just released Pop 'n' Music 2 *for Dreamcast in Japan, so* Dancing Stage *isn't completely ruled out at this point in time. Here's hoping.*

I am just writing to comment on the letter that was sent in by Colin Bailey in issue 01 of your magazine. Just because he has put in a good word in for Dreamcast, doesn't mean that he should win one. Well, that's what I think anyway, but you obviously don't.

Edward Ward

Sour grapes, Edward? We thought Colin's letter was the best of the bunch, actually, and it's our decision, so nyer.



What's the score?

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

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

THE COMPLETE REVIEW

Soul Calibur

Sharper to play and more beautiful than we ever imagined, this is Namco's finest hour. All kneel before the greatest fighting game the world has ever seen

Well, it has finally happened. There was an announcement last spring, and a few screenshots released. Jaws dropped, sweat cooled, minds fixed on one word: desire. Fast forward to today and Sega has to accept a simple truth: it has been out-programmed and out-performed. *Soul Calibur* has arrived.

Its creator Namco was instrumental in sowing the seeds of PlayStation's early success. It takes more than a few demo machines scattered among gurning club-goers to sell a new machine to the mass market. You need great games. Luckily for Sony, Namco obliged with *Tekken* and *Ridge Racer*. Without those two titles, it might all have been so different...

So, welcome to *Soul Calibur*, Dreamcast's turn for the Namco treatment. And we'll say right here, right now, that ▶

- Publisher: Sega
- Developer: Namco
- Price: £39.99
- Release date: November 22
- Players: One to two
- Extras: Rumble pack, 60Hz option
- **For:** Beautiful visuals, massive Mission mode
- **Against:** Lacks Internet option of Japanese version

CountDown

You've heard of counter moves. In essence, they are a special kind of block that stun your rival for a vital fraction of a second, giving you an opening to land one on your opponent. Many fighting games feature these moves. Most, however, require a different move for each character, meaning that they are only used by ultra-savvy adepts. With *Soul Calibur*, counters are an important part of play. Hold the block button down, and you do exactly what its name suggests; you adopt a defensive pose, and that's it. But if you tap block and hold left or right, you get a split-second moment where any blow is met with a parry. Sounds easy? It's not, actually. It's the sort of thing that you'll never truly perfect. Getting it right, and launching a massive attack on your momentarily prone rival, is one of the most satisfying videogame moments ever.

► it is an outright triumph, regardless of which console you own. Sega is (rightly) basking in the knowledge that *Calibur* has been re-worked from its arcade game roots exclusively for Dreamcast. There are drawbacks, however. Play *VF3tb* and *Soul Calibur* side by side, and you'd be forgiven for assuming that the technology behind both is separated by years, rather than months. Namco's beat 'em up has the effect of making many Dreamcast games played before – or, indeed, after – seem faintly inferior. It's not a mere eye candy issue: there's more to *Calibur* than that. Much more.

Question: What, in a nutshell, is the problem for next-generation fighting games? Answer: the relatively short-term appeal of their oneplayer modes. *Soul Calibur* – like its dimensionally-challenged compatriot, *Street Fighter Alpha 3* – defies this obvious critical assumption with a huge, RPG-tinged Mission mode. Think of *Gran Turismo*'s vast GT option, with its countless challenges and sub-games, and apply the same expansive approach to a fighting game (see Soul Searching). That's what Namco has wrought in *Calibur*. The only downside for us Western gamers is that the Internet modes haven't survived the transition from the Japanese version. Shame. Otherwise, the scale of the Mission option alone is enough to secure *Calibur* a place at the top of the charts.

Dumping another beat 'em up convention, the move lists are large but not in an incomprehensible, Mensa members-only sense. Many fighting games encourage players to recall button sequences – almost as if you and your opponent take turns to execute ten-string combos like tetchy parrots armed with expletives. The majority of *Calibur*'s chained attacks, however, are rapid, three move affairs. Basic similarities in the button combinations used for various attacks are shared across all the combatants, built on the core controls of high and low attacks, plus kick and dodge. Unlike so many lesser beat 'em ups, you feel genuinely in control.

Like its predecessor *Soul Blade*, the premise behind *Soul Calibur* is that it is a weapon-based fighting game. Usually, when a beat 'em up attempts to offer a little sword-play, the execution is far from convincing. The weapons appear to be clumsy extensions of the character. When blades clash, the fighters may as well be whipping each other to death with peacock feathers, for all the sense of weight they confer.

Not so with *Soul Calibur*. When Siegfried's hefty sword clashes with Nightmare's sabre, the resounding clang and spray of sparks is almost tangible. It's not just the impact that lends this clash its sense of realism – ►

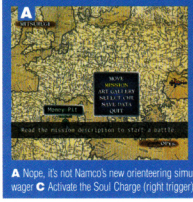
"*Soul Calibur* is a triumph and Sega can derive kudos from the fact that it **has been written exclusively for its machine"**

"**Sega has to accept** a simple truth: it has been **out-programmed and out-performed**"

01 Hairy and capable of inflicting massive axe wounds, Rock is a beast
02 When Nightmare swings his sword to the ground, you have a perfect opportunity to take advantage of his immobility

Soul Searching

The Mission mode is essentially a wide selection of mini-games, all of which are variations on the traditional fighting game. Success in the missions is rewarded with credits, which can then be used to unlock frames in the game's Art Gallery. In turn, some of these contain secrets like new twoplayer stages and character costumes. There are further bonuses, such as the ability to play back fighters' vocal samples so that you can marvel at Namco's lip-synching.



A Nope, it's not Namco's new orienteering simulation. The map screen gradually reveals more and more missions for you to tackle **B** In this stage you can gamble the credits you've won in a double-or-nothing wager **C** Activate the Soul Charge (right trigger) and you go all hyperactive **D** Watch out for the strong cross-winds threatening to blow you off the level **E** First to take 16 hits loses, simple as that

01

02

03

▶ it's the characters reactions, too. As both swing their blades, they genuinely look as if they're wielding several kilos of cold, hard steel. Dreamcast's expansive RAM and razor-sharp processor have been piled high with the most detailed motion capture and animation ever seen in a videogame.

Carrying through the theme of realistic control, every character in *Soul Calibur* is able to arrest an opponent's pounding combo with a swift kick in the pants. It's this balance that makes the game so damn compelling. Each fighter has extensive defining statistics, like range, speed and power, which soon become apparent after play. Taki, for example, is fast and agile, capable of making somersaults over and around her opponents. Her fine-bladed dagger, however, gives her limited range. In a

01 Nightmare feels the force of one of Taki's swift and deadly attacks
02 Welcome back to the stage of history. Just in time to watch Cervantes whup final boss Inferno
03 No-one ever told Mitsurugi not to play with six foot lizards

"When **swords clash**, the resulting clang and spray of sparks **is incredible**"

"With *Soul Calibur*, **Namco has set a new standard** – one that everyone in the Dreamcast **world must now aspire to**"

fight against Mitsurugi, armed with his large Katana sword, you must use her agility to sneak in quick combos and kicks, before retreating to a safe spot. An adeptly-controlled Mitsurugi, by contrast, would aim to use his range advantage to keep her at bay, using stabbing and uppercut moves to punish her attempts to get in close. Of course, you don't notice this at first, because you're too busy with the beat 'em up newcomer's ritual of hammering every button, claiming credit for every lucky attack as if it's an away goal at Old Trafford. Once you master the subtleties of the control system, though, you'll rave about how truly strategic bouts can be.

Namco's approach runs deeper, still. As an almost-3D game played on a predominantly 2D axis – like *VF3* or *Tekken 3*, dodge moves and all – *Soul Calibur* would be fantastic. However, its introduction of true eight-way movement is a huge evolutionary step for the genre. You can move in and out of the screen, back-and-forth, or at diagonals. Tactically, it makes a lot of difference. As your opponent can move in any direction, at any time, you never know where their next step will take them. The standoffs that can occur at the start and toward the end of a bout are tense and exciting. All good fighting games, when played by experts, feature similar moments, but *Soul Calibur* is infinitely better in this respect. Standoffs are an active, integral part of play, rather than a side effect of individual technique. Did we mention that each fight takes place on raised platforms, where being knocked over an edge can lead to a round-losing ring-out? Or the fact that it plays brilliantly with analogue control? We have now.

We don't really need to go on and on about how stunning *Soul Calibur* looks, because you can plainly see that for yourselves. What you can't discern is a crisp 50 or 60fps update. But it has that, too. We could wax lyrical all day about how well it plays, the intricacies that mark it as the most tactical, absorbing fighting game ever. We could even say, "If you only buy one game this year, *Soul Calibur* should be it," but the momentous two-digit rating at the end of the next paragraph removes the need to do so.

With *Soul Calibur*, Namco has set a new standard – one that everyone in the Dreamcast world must aspire to. In every respect, from its breath-taking visuals to the seemingly endless array of game modes, *Calibur* is polished to the deepest sheen. And so, try as we might, there's no other way to say it: you simply cannot miss this game ■

James Price

DC-UK 10
HIGHEST CALIBUR

Secrets

In *Soul Calibur*, even the secrets have secrets. By playing the arcade mode, for example, you can unlock all but one character – ultimate boss Inferno – from your first game. You do that by completing the game with every different character. By playing the adventure mode, you can open up other things (and the means to unlock Inferno). From third costumes to play modes, from new stages to art galleries, the hidden stuff keeps on coming. There's even an Exhibition mode. Open it, and you can later win character performances. Select a fighter, and they perform a stunning dance of moves, which, if Sega has any sense, will be used in a TV ad campaign. If Sega use the ones with Masi and Kilik waving their weapons, before fading to a black screen with "*Soul Calibur* – only on Dreamcast" emblazoned on it, everyone will be determined to buy a console this Christmas. And its name won't begin with 'P' or 'N'.

GO THERE!

SOUL MEN
Read our exclusive interview with *Soul Calibur*'s creators.
PAGE 068 >

TRUMPS
Soul Calibur features some great characters. Admire their vitals.
PAGE 064 >

TOP SECRETS
Inferno too hot to handle? Distracted by Taki's bum? Help is at hand.
PAGE 112 >

Hydro Thunder

Boats, ramps and secret routes. Midway should have the perfect recipe for a watery arcade racer

Think of racing games and you think of Tarmac. Sometimes mud, perhaps, sometimes even snow. But the chances are you're thinking of dry land. Boats aren't usually high up on the list of things people want to control in videogames. In fact, I have the list in front of me and they come in just below elfin maids and only slightly higher than monkey doctors. Which perhaps explains why there's only one really excellent console example of the boat racing genre – *Wave Race 64* on the N64.

So Midway had its work cut out with *Hydro Thunder* – a Dreamcast conversion of its admittedly well-received arcade game. In form, it's a standard racer: choose a vehicle, choose a track and race. Every so often you'll come across a boost icon – drive through it, press and hold the A button and you'll receive a, yes, speed boost. When you finish all three easy tracks in third place, you open up the medium tracks and boats. Finish these and you get the three hard tracks. Then there are some bonus ones. And that's the game.

Except, this being a kerr-azy arcade racer, you don't just hammer round a lake really very fast. You get to jump over ramps for a start. Not just little ramps, but huge great ones that have you leaping over bridges and rocky canyons. And there are waterfalls to plummet down, and slides to skid along. And there are caves, and secret routes and tunnels. There's so much going on that you sometimes forget you're supposed to be in a race.

In terms of handling, *Hydro Thunder* is okay rather than impressively realistic or side-splittingly OTT. You do notice waves and swell, etc, and when the boat splashes down after jumping a ramp, the deep splosh and accompanying deceleration are spot on. However, while the water physics engine nudges at realism, it never gives you the feedback you get from *Wave Race* – you're never minutely altering your speed and tactics depending on the pitch and roll of an incredibly accurate water surface. More importantly, it's only in the last three tracks that you ever have to think about braking – most of the time you just put your finger on ▸

- Publisher: Midway
- Developer: Eurocom
- Price: £39.99
- Release date: Out now
- Players: One to two
- Extras: rumble pack
- **For:** Fast-paced arcade fun
- **Against:** Lacks any depth, or options

More options?

Hydro Thunder suffers from a few vital omissions...

Strangely, Midway has not embellished its home conversion of *Hydro Thunder* with all the usual stuff you would find in a console racer. All you get is the basic Arcade mode – there's no Time Attack, no Championship and no in-depth support for your VM. It's a shame, as a few extra options would have added to the depth and longevity of the title.

"If you're prepared to **accept *Hydro Thunder*'s excesses** you'll enjoy rocketing through these bizarre circuits"

01 We have lift off! Boats don't really do this, do they? Oh what the heck
02 The dramatic scenery lends the game a little plausibility. It needs it
03 Red boosts are the Holy Grail of each course. Grab 'em when you can

Hidden pleasures

The key tactic in *Hydro Thunder* is known as 'find the secret routes or you'll come in sixth'. Each circuit has at least two hidden alternatives to the main circuit. Sometimes they are passageways behind waterfalls (**A**), sometimes they are cunningly disguised ramps, built into scenic objects (**B**). These furtive thoroughfares add a little variety to the watery tracks, and place extra demands on your reflexes and driving skills. Indeed some are only accessible by using the turbo jump technique (see Tips next issue for an explanation). They're worth it. Hidden pleasures are always the sweetest...

01 "Look mummy, a flying boat!" "Oh Johnny, have you been sniffing Tip-ex again?"
02 There are some great Hollywood stunt moments in the game. Like this huge drop in the Greek Ruins track which has you plummeting madly down a long slide
03 The twoplayer mode is slick and fun. It involves racing against another boat, rather than just speeding about looking for hidden crevices

▶ the accelerator and keep it there. Not exactly a varied racing experience.

Actually, in a lot of ways this isn't really a racing game, it's more of a driving test. The other boats never really provide that much of a challenge – they are merely annoying objects that sometimes get in the way of your real aim: to pick up all the boosts and discover the secret routes. This state of affairs is made all the more annoying by the fact that when other boats do swing unavoidably into your path, the impact often just shunts them forward, so they get a free boost while you slow down. It's incredibly frustrating and unfair.

But *Hydro Thunder* somehow manages to be fun, despite its failings. The landscapes – ranging from slithery canyons, to paddy fields, to Greek ruins to a flooded New York – are well drawn and packed with detail. Eurocom certainly has an eye for Hollywood stuntery and knows how exciting it is to just miss hitting a helicopter while in mid-jump, or to career through a waterfall to find a hidden route (each track has a couple of these, so you have to stay alert). If you're prepared to accept the game's excesses, and its slaphappy gameplay, you'll enjoy rocketing through these bizarre circuits, admiring the luxuriously smooth frame rate and bathing in the constant brain-numbing action.

Oh yeah, and then there's the twoplayer split screen mode. This option gives you a much better taste of boat vs boat competition than the oneplayer game and is, again, great fun – especially as you now have to compete for boost balloons (each one disappears as soon as a player collects it), so things get pretty vicious. And thankfully, there's little appreciable slow-down.

So *Hydro Thunder* is a tough one to call. The gameplay is scrappy in places – the physics are dodgy, the other boats hardly come into the oneplayer mode, and you can't turn back if you miss something like a boost or secret, which is rubbish – especially as there's no restart option. On the Medium and Hard circuits missing one boost means failure, so it's agonisingly frustrating to have to go through the whole front-end if you mess up.

But there's a lot of fun to be had. The courses are imaginative, there's stuff hidden all over the place, and careering over ramps into the great unknown always provides an exhilarating rush. With a little tidying up this could have been a must have title. As it stands, it's a buy-it-if-you're-feeling-flush-and-can-stand-a-few-imperfections title. A guarded recommendation, but a recommendation all the same ■

Keith Stuart

"The **twoplayer split screen** mode is great fun and gives a much better taste of **boat vs boat competition** than the oneplayer game"

2nd opinion

With memories of *Wave Race 64* slooshing about, is this a match?

Water-based racing games are pretty rare beasts. Actually, water-based anything games are few and far between, so *Hydro Thunder* scores just for novelty value. That doesn't make Midway's game a throw-away title. The feeling of skimming along rivers at high speed is fantastic, although it cannot match sitting on the massive bass rumblings of the coin-op version (see page 115). Unless you want to take part in some serious hi-fi rearrangement, that is.

Caspar Field

DC-UK 7
WET AND WILD

01 Player Two has saved a little booster energy – a clever tactic, as your rocket jets take a couple of seconds to power up again if you run out of booster fuel

02 Sometimes it's necessary to stray from the water to pick up boosts and find secrets

03 The locals around Sellafield remained convinced that the nuclear powerstation nearby hadn't harmed the environment at all

"The courses are imaginative and **careering over ramps into the great unknown** provides an exhilarating rush"

Sega Bass Fishing

Hake! I've cod a new fishing game. Fancy a skate over to my plaice for chum angling action?

Sega Bass Fishing is an arcade angling game played with a plastic fishing rod peripheral. There, we've said it, and from that minimal description the majority of you will already have decided whether you're going to like this game or not.

The trouble with fishing is it inspires such conflicting emotions in people. To most of us it's an inherently amusing sport involving grown men sticking their tackle into water for hours on end in the hope that an ugly, stupid creature will decide to chomp on it. In fact, to call it a sport is almost as laughable as calling Steve McManaman an England international; surely it's just a cunning excuse for blokes to get away from their wives for the day? Well, not according to dedicated anglers who consider it time well spent as they stand in filthy British waters fiddling with maggots. To them it is a noble art and a Nietzschean microcosm of man's eternal (and futile) battle to control nature. Or something.

Whichever camp you're in, both fishing enthusiasts and fishing sceptics would probably agree that trying to recreate the experience in a videogame is one of the worst ideas since Salman Rushdie woke up one morning and thought, "I know, I'll write a book dissing the Ayatollah!" However, there is no reason for religious fundamentalists to take to the streets burning copies of *Sega Bass Fishing* (although the publicity wouldn't do it any harm) because it's just, well, a fishing game. And, what's more, it's a very good one.

Originally a coin-op with the no messin' moniker *Get Bass*, Sega has produced a near-as-dammit polygon perfect conversion for Dreamcast. The arcade version was enlivened considerably by the fishing rod attached to the cabinet which brought a great deal of realism to the battles of strength and will with the scaly creatures. Thankfully, this has also been replicated for Dreamcast-owners in the shape of an excellent rumbling rod peripheral that will be bundled with the game (see the Mmm... nice rod box).

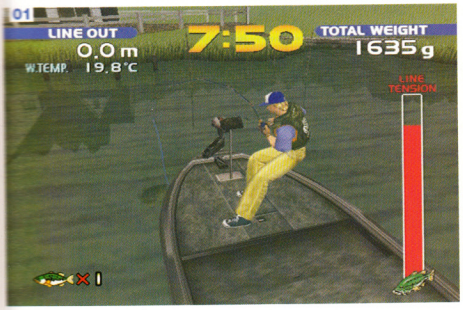
A spot-on port of the arcade game does present a problem, however, namely that, with limitless continues and no 50p shortage to worry about, you can finish it in about ten minutes. ▶

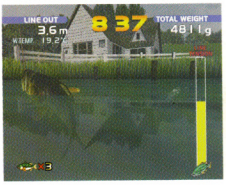
> "It has more **longevity** than an afternoon in a canal where you're more likely to catch a **brown trout** than a rainbow one"

One moment

Most of the time your catches will consist of big bass, medium bass and small bass, but occasionally you will see the Giant Haystacks of the bass world lurking in the murky depths – the Super Bass. These monsters will have the rod jumping around in your hands like a hyperactive child who's consumed too many 'E' numbers. It's worth the effort to reel them in though, as they can weigh anything up to 10,000g. Oh man, that's Super Big!

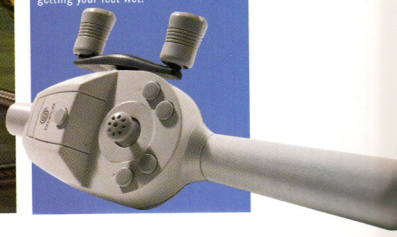
- Publisher: Sega
- Developer: In-house
- Price: £39.99 or £59.99 with rod
- Release date: November 5
- Players: One
- Extras: Fishing rod controller, VM
- **For:** Original and surprisingly addictive
- **Against:** Limited appeal, repetitive gameplay



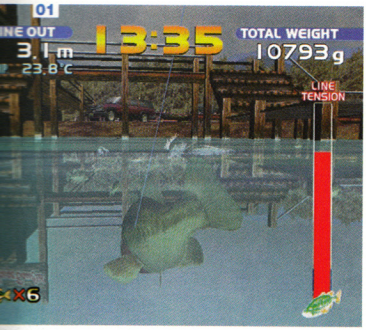


Mmm... nice rod

While the joypad is a perfectly acceptable means of playing *Sega Bass Fishing*, to get the most out of the game we would advise any prospective buyers to cough up the extra 20 notes for the game bundled with the fishing rod. This fantastic peripheral really brings the fishing to life. From propelling the rod forward to cast your line, battling the rumbling feature that sees the rod jerking around in your hands as the fish tries to escape and using the reel to bring home the bass, it's the closest you'll come to real fishing without getting your feet wet.



01 Take the strain, there's a big boy on the way
02 Choose your lure wisely, young fisherman, as different baits are suited to different conditions
03 "Leave me, man (cough). I'm finished, you go on without me..."
04 "Who's laughing now smart-arse? See how well you fish with no fingers"



01 When the line tension gets too high, release the reel for a second before continuing the struggle
02 The bass are superbly realistic, even down to the fact that they're extremely stupid creatures
03 Observe **DC-UK**'s impressive two-in-one fishing technique

Prospective anglers needn't worry though, as Sega has wisely added a Consumer mode (more of which later) that gives the game more longevity than an afternoon by a canal where you're more likely to catch a brown trout than a rainbow one.

As far as gameplay is concerned, it is simplicity itself. You choose a casting point, select a lure then cast your line. The camera switches to a nifty underwater view as you drag the line through the water trying to attract bass. When a fish bites you must reel it in, taking care to manoeuvre your catch so the line tension doesn't reach breaking point. With the fish reeled to the boat your angling alter ego scoops the creature out of the water and you have successfully got bass. And that's it. There is no more. Admittedly, extra depth is added by all the different lures available and the weather, time of day and fishing locations all influencing the effectiveness of your bait. But, essentially, gameplay merely extends to casting, waiting, reeling then repeating the process ad infinitum. The surprising thing is just how compulsive and entertaining this simplistic business is.

Even confirmed anti-anglers will find it very difficult to resist its lure, especially in the comprehensive Consumer mode. This has the format of five seasons of competitions where you have to win tournaments to progress from a lowly amateur to a professional fishing master. Playing against a load of accomplished CPU anglers, points are awarded for the weight of bass you manage to catch within the time limit. It's not enough to just have one successful tournament as the cumulative weight at the end of the season determines the winner.

"The water effects are totally convincing, particularly underwater, and the bass are so realistic **you can almost smell them"**

Winning in Consumer mode, however, is much easier said than done. Unlike the Arcade mode where the bass throw themselves at your hook like lemmings off a cliff, it is far more difficult to catch the blighters in Consumer. To be successful requires an increased attention to tactics and lure selection and a considerable amount of patience. After the fast-catching thrills and spills of the Arcade mode it is easy to become frustrated with the fickle nature of the fish in Consumer. But considering that waiting around and using your nous are two of the most important skills in real-life fishing, the Consumer mode is obviously a more accurate reflection of the sport. It may not have the immediacy of the Arcade mode, but for people who become absorbed in the art of fishing it is the only way to play.

Graphically the game is more impressive than a Great White's gnashers. The water effects are totally convincing, particularly underwater, and the bass are so realistic you can almost smell them. The sound effects are also

2nd opinion

"The Japanese import of *Get Bass* was one of the first Dreamcast games I played. It was also probably the first DC game I really enjoyed. The inclusion of the rod controller was an inspired move on Sega's part, and it really does add an extra dimension to the game. The underwater scenes are beautiful and the bass AI is pretty realistic, ie, the fish are ugly and stupid. I would thoroughly recommend this game over a real-life expedition on the high seas. After all, sea sickness is very bad."
Stephen Lawson

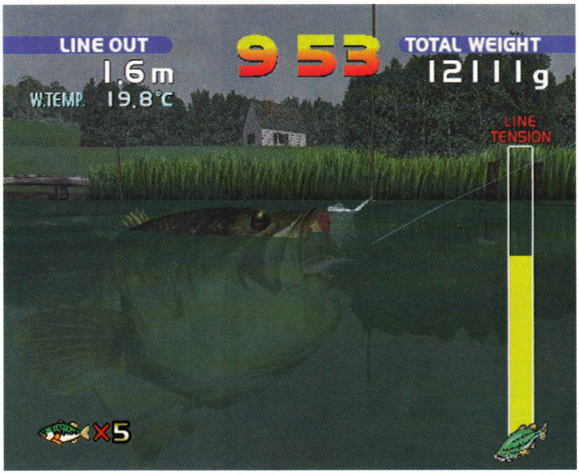
GO THERE!
DC-UK GET BASS
Find out what happened when we went fishing.
PAGE 070 >

DREAM-CASTERS
What would a couple of real-life fishy types think about *Bass Fishing*?
PAGE 041 >

incredibly authentic and when a catch is splashing and writhing through the water the quality of the aesthetics is almost good enough to necessitate the purchase of wellies and a sou'wester.

Getting bass is more enjoyable than you would think videogame fishing could possibly be. The only drawbacks are it's simplistic – and therefore repetitive – gameplay and the fact that as a fishing sim it will only have a limited appeal to angling sceptics. It's a shame the fishing is limited to bass because different objectives (such as big game fishing on the high seas) would have enhanced the game considerably. A twoplayer, split-screen fish 'em up would also have added an extra dimension to proceedings. As it is, *Bass Fishing* is an unexpectedly entertaining title and if you're open-minded enough to give it a chance you might just get hooked ■

Lee Hart



DC-UK 7
TOP OF THE BASS

F1 World Grand Prix

Armed with a proper licence, Video System's detailed F1 game revs into pole position on the grid

As last month's review of *Monaco GP* demonstrated, Formula One racing games need an official licence like Michael Schumacher needs £1 million per fortnight for sitting at home nursing his broken leg – it isn't strictly necessary, but nobody in their right mind would turn their nose up at it.

- Publisher: Video System
- Developer: In-house
- Price: £39.99
- Release date: November 5
- Players: One to two
- Extras: Steering wheel (available separately), rumble pack, 60Hz option
- **For:** Detailed and challenging simulation
- **Against:** 1998 drivers

Video System is a veteran of the official Formula One game market, having published the acclaimed *F1 World Grand Prix* on N64, and its more recent, slightly updated sequel, *F1WGP 98*. Both titles were developed by US simulation specialist Paradigm, a company best known for producing accurate 3D models of objects such as trees and outhouses for military flight simulations, so they were as authentic and detailed as possible. This Dreamcast version was developed in the UK without Paradigm's assistance, but it builds on the foundations of the original 64bit title to produce one of the most realistic driving simulations you could ever wish to play.

Unlike *Monaco GP*,

F1 World Grand Prix offers no arcade mode for nervous drivers. Instead there's an excellent system which eases you into the simulation side of things by offering computer assistance for everything except the steering. If you're not a master of one of the previous versions you can simply follow the racing line marked out on the track, learning where the braking points are and watching which gears you need to select going into and out of each corner. It's a slow process, but you'll eventually be able to keep up with the pack after switching off most of the AI help. Of course, you can use automatic gears, automatic braking and even automatic acceleration if you really don't want to put in the hours of practice necessary to complete a lap without burying your car in the tyre wall, Michael Schumacher-style, but unless you think that winning while the computer does everything for you except steer your car is a worthwhile achievement, you'll want to learn the full, complicated simulation side of things. And the good news is that it is worth persevering with.

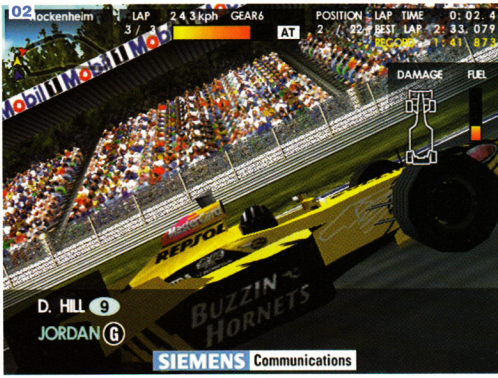
The pit options are a different matter. As you'd rightly expect, you can

> "There's **a system** which eases you into the sim side of things with comprehensive **computer assistance**"

2nd opinion

"F1 games always walk a dangerous tightrope between realism and playability, often falling apart while trying to accommodate both. *F1 World GP* straddles these two worlds reasonably well, offering plenty of options and set-up menus for both newcomers and F1 old hands. However, this is a pretty heavy sim and takes a while to get into, even with the computer assistance switched to max. Perhaps an arcade mode would have been a good idea. Or perhaps anyone who thinks that should be playing a different game..."

Keith Stuart



03:1 The Monaco street course is beautifully realised but the detailed trackside ephemera causes quite severe slowdown

03:2 Damon Hill pulling into the pit lane – a not uncommon sight

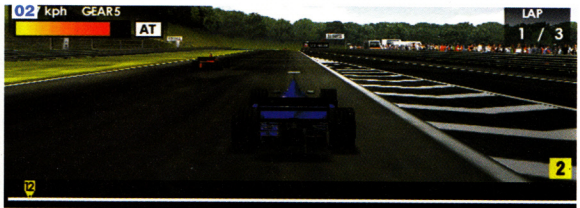
03:3 *F1 World Grand Prix* is the first game to have a full crew of mechanics for the pitstop animations

fiddle with every aspect of your car's performance, from gear ratios to brake balance, although messing around with too many of the sliders results in a car that either spins off the track at the slightest provocation or refuses to turn fast enough to get through the gentlest of corners. During practice sessions, a telemetry screen is available, showing a bewildering array of stats based on your performance on the previous lap. You're supposed to use this to make informed decisions as to when you start tuning your car, but the only people likely to understand it properly are genuine Formula One mechanics. The game is much more enjoyable if you just leave all that complicated stuff to the computer pit crew.

When you're ready to take on a full race, you can opt to go for the Friday and Saturday practice and qualification sessions, or just jump straight to the grid on Sunday for anything from three to 72 laps. If you try for the longer distance you'll have to make pit stops for fuel and tyres, as will the computer drivers, and you can ▸

Look, mum – no wheels!

With damage turned on, it's easy to knacker your car with just a couple of missed braking points. Knocking the wheels off is far more difficult, although they do eventually part company with your car after a few good shunts. You won't win the race, but it makes for a great replay.



► simulate events in each race exactly as they happened during the 1998 season. For example, if it started raining halfway through a race in 1998, that's what will happen in the game, so you'll need to change to wet weather tyres. Drivers who crashed, broke down, or pulled a Damon Hill and dropped out of the race will do so at exactly the same point as they did a year ago, and the only new variable thrown in is how well you cope with what's happening around you. There's an awful lot to take in – lapping Minardis, keeping an eye on the fuel gauge, staying a safe distance away from Jean Alesi, etc.

So it certainly isn't a game for the kind of player who just wants to reel off a few quick laps before EastEnders. Even if you ignore the customisation on the car, you won't see the best of *F1 World Grand Prix* unless you're prepared to put in hours of practice and really get to grips with the incredibly sensitive analogue braking and acceleration. It's strictly for hardcore Formula One fans, and that's where the official licence makes all the difference. Stepping into Mika Hakkinen's shoes to relive the

01 The cars are all spot-on recreations of the 1998 vehicles – except the evil cigarette advertising has been replaced
02 The twoplayer game is a sparce, dull affair with no CPU opposition
03 Until you get used to the handling, scenes of carnage will be quite a regular occurrence
04 Eddie Irvine following sheepishly behind Kaiser Schumacher as per usual

GO THERE!
EXPERT WITNESS
Find out what the pros think of *F1 World GP*
PAGE 042 >

1998 championship battle is far more involving than taking the role of some anonymous driver in a multicoloured vehicle that looks vaguely like a McLaren. These cars look exactly like they do on television (bar the tobacco advertising, which has been completely removed – even the Marlboro triangle is missing from the Ferraris). The lack of 1999 driver data can be annoying at times, and there's no option to put the drivers who moved at the end of last season into the correct teams, but apart from that, *F1 World Grand Prix* is the real thing.

It's also a visual treat, right down to the astonishingly detailed tracks which include every familiar landmark, such as the working Ferris wheel at Suzuka. Considering that this is a first-generation Dreamcast title, Video System has done an impressive job of making the game look the way it does – there is the occasional bit of slowdown when a large stand looms into view from around a corner, but none of the pop-up that plagued *Sega Rally 2*. The cars are chunky and solid, you can see the driver's head getting pulled from side to side by the G-force when you take a corner, and there's an excellent impression of speed on some of the longer straights. Sadly, *F1 World Grand Prix* on Dreamcast loses one of the best visual tricks from the original N64 version – the way that the camera shudders and bumps around when you drive over a kerb – but some neat rumble pack support just about makes up for this unfortunate omission.

> "**Drivers who crashed, broke down** or dropped out of a race in 1998 will do exactly **the same in the game**"

A token twoplayer mode enables you to race against a friend, but because there are no other cars for you to contend with, a single mistake usually means that you forfeit the match. Even with a catch-up option which blesses the trailing car with improved performance, you'll need to find an opponent of around the same standard as yourself if you want to have a decent competition.

Whether it's the racing game for you depends on just how keen you are on Formula One. If you're a veteran of F1 games on other systems, you'll soon feel at home with the pedantic realism of *F1WGP*, and the additional analogue controls add a new dimension (and plenty of extra difficulty). It's as close as you're likely to get to driving the real thing, at least until the inevitable sequel. But for those who are just looking for a racing videogame, *F1WGP* might just prove too complicated to be truly enjoyable. As long as you're prepared to spend a large chunk of your spare time getting to know it, you won't find a more involving 'serious' racing game for quite a while ■

Martin Kitts

DC-UK 7
ON THE PODIUM

Buggy Heat

It's *Sega Rally 2* as re-enacted by dune buggies and heavy duty monster trucks. Let's off-road!

- Publisher: Sega
- Developer: CRI
- Price: £39.99
- Release date: Out now
- Players: One to two
- Extras: 60Hz, Internet
- **For:** A good-looking and original take on the racing template
- **Against:** Slow turning speeds and limited depth

One day, videogame creators will run out of things to race. As the peculiar *Pen Pen* proves, that day is still some way off, but even so developers are already being forced to explore ever more esoteric niches in order to come up with an original race game concept. *Buggy Heat* does not feature teams of harassed mums attempting to push their toddlers around Tesco in record time, but it does present some kind of alternative to the deluge of F1, road race and rallying sims already lined up for Dreamcast.

The buggies in this case are the kind of hulking 4x4 off-road vehicles which would cause the Fast Show's Baz and Lyndsey to cream their combat pants. Only three are strictly speaking dune buggies, with the rest of the automotive cast consisting of vicious Land Rovers and monstrous pick-ups sporting the kind of bull bars you wouldn't wish to see speeding towards you on a zebra crossing. There's also a bizarre shocking pink convertible which looks like a refugee from Ubi Soft's *Speed Devils*, but variety is the spice and all that.

They may all handle slightly differently from each other, but there is one trait common to all the vehicles which distinguishes *Buggy Heat* from most other racers. Load the game, select a steed, begin a championship in Normal Mode, grip the accelerator trigger, and you're motoring effectively down the first strait. So far, so straightforward. Then you'll attempt to make the hard left turn onto the beach on the first corner of the USA circuit and most likely find yourself sliding uncontrollably into the nearby ocean with waves lapping gently at your hubcaps. You'll indignantly protest that you pushed the stick left, which you did. Except these buggies have the turning circle of a planet. Whenever they turn they also brake and whenever they brake at speed they also slide. Spending the majority of the debut lap with your vehicle pointing the wrong way can be frustrating, but it's simply a case of learning and mastering a different steering style to *Sega Rally 2*.

Once the handbrake turn is perfected you can actually take most

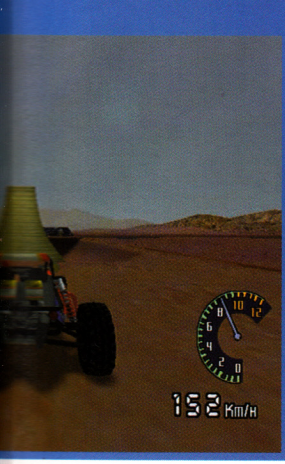
> "**One simple mistake** can send your buggy into a spin which **will cost you the race**"

Low-level bum

01

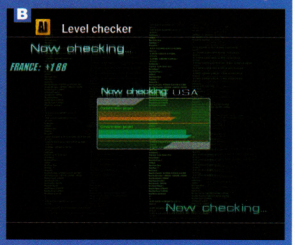
02

03



Like every modern game worth its salt, *Buggy Heat* has a few extras to play with. Probably the most interesting of these is the AI Level Checker, which monitors your driving performance in the oneplayer game, and rates your, um, intelligence. *Buggy Heat* is also one of the first UK games with Net compatibility, allowing you to upload your times to a national league.

B



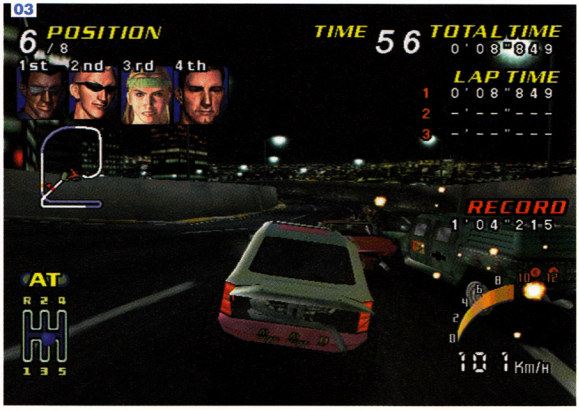
A This, believe it or not, is the training mode. Training mode for what? Driving over ramps at very high speed without touching the steering control? Tricky one this; hold the accelerator on full. And that's it

B Hmm... This isn't a lot more exciting. God knows what the Dreamcast is up to while it does this, because it takes ages to complete

corners without releasing pressure on the accelerator, but it's generally best to err on the side of caution. One simple mistake can send your buggy into a spin which will cost you the race and possibly wreck the chances of progressing through a championship. This, then, is the unresolved dilemma of the game: while *Buggy Heat* offers an alternative style of driving which potentially allows for some truly outrageous powerslides, you're almost forced to drive within certain constraints lest you run the risk of repeating the same old tracks ad infinitum. Combined with the constant struggle to make the whole game seem like it's being raced at any decent kind of speed, playing *Buggy Heat* is a trying experience. It's possibly true to the reality of truck racing, but, unfortunately, this doesn't make for a hugely exciting game.

CRI has definitely shown some imagination with *Buggy Heat*'s track design, and the good-looking environments tally with the graphically impressive nature of the game as a whole. You get tarmac in the USA, ▸

01 It's a shame that *Buggy Heat* doesn't support fourplayer games, because the twoplayer can be a hell of a lot of fun
02 The amount of detail in the open framed buggies is amazing – as is the way all the suspension parts move around as you bounce down the track
03 A sudden loss of gravity brought the race to a momentary standstill



01 It might not look it, but the in-car Motion view is one of the easiest to play – and you get to watch the driver in action. Not bad!
02 Sega's car parking simulation seems unlikely to be a hit with the kids
03 The all-tarmac Japanese track is the last to be unlocked, and features some of the longest straights in the game, making it the fastest by a long way

▶ sand drifts in Egypt, snow in Russia and, for some unknown reason, a great deal of fiendish U-turns in Peru. Most surfaces do react differently to the pressure of your tyres and often the best line around a particular bend isn't immediately obvious.

The tracks take some mastering but with a little persistence even Peru can be tamed. The disappointment is in first discovering that the Japan track unlocked by completing Hard Mode is easier than most of the existing circuits, and secondly that these six tracks are all that you're going to get. More difficult championship modes don't mean new, challenging tracks, they mean CPU opponents with entirely unfair powers of acceleration and a spot of inclement weather. If you complete Expert Mode you'll be rewarded with – sing hosanna! – an extra colour scheme for your buggies. If you complete Expert Mode in first place (and believe us, you will have tired of *Buggy Heat* long before this) all you'll get is one extra vehicle, the incredibly underwhelming Beelzebub Buggy, which is a fairly pointless acquisition given that you've just proved that you can beat all of the tracks with the vehicles that are already at your disposal. The splitscreen twoplayer mode is satisfying enough, though, and the catch-up option does compensate in some way for the absence of additional CPU opponents.

Nevertheless, *Buggy Heat*'s lack of longevity is there for all to see and rather than creating extra tracks, CRI has instead invented an additional feature which originally sounds intriguing but in practice smacks of desperate last-minute pub brainstorm. Basically, by completing endless Time Trials you train the game's artificial intelligence to imitate your personal driving style. The idea being that you can put your car into autopilot and find out how it performs in an actual race, or even race against yourself. We didn't have the patience to discover how long it took for this option to be of any use – two hours of watching the autopilot vehicle trundle haplessly into the cordon on the first bend were painful enough.

There are several factors that make *Buggy Heat* worth recommending as a racing game, but it's just too limited and frustrating to offer a long-term alternative to *Sega Rally 2*. The unique racing style is refreshing, but at times it can feel like you are racing clapped-out London buses through treacle. Surely the search for niche racing genres must end soon, before gamers are confronted with Double Decker Syrup Challenge ■

Sam Richards

"Complete Expert Mode and you are rewarded with – sing hosanna! – an extra colour scheme for your buggies"

DC-UK 6
SLIGHTLY OFF-ROAD

VIOLENCE IS THE FIRST ARTICLE OF MY FAITH

"...THIS IS LOOKING SWEET. THE VISUALS ARE LUSH, THE ACTION'S IN YOUR FACE AND IT'S MIGHTY TASTY TO PLAY..."
PLAYSTATION PLUS

"BE AMAZED BY THE LEVEL OF DETAIL AROUND YOU. THIS IS A FIGHTING FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH. A 200% IMPROVEMENT OVER THE ORIGINAL."
4/5 C&VG

FIGHTING FORCE 2™

PlayStation screenshots shown here.

GO UNDERCOVER AS HAWK MANSON. THE GOAL IS SIMPLE: INVESTIGATE AND ELIMINATE. AS WEAPONS SPECIALIST AND CLOSE COMBAT EXPERT, YOU HAVE THE ULTIMATE IN KILLING TECHNOLOGY AT YOUR DISPOSAL. EVALUATE AND RESPOND WITH STEALTH, FIREPOWER OR SHEER BRUTE FORCE - WHATEVER IT TAKES. NO COMPROMISE. NO COME-BACK. LIVE WITH THE PRESSURE.

CORE

PlayStation

Dreamcast

EIDOS INTERACTIVE

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Suzuki Alstare Extreme Racing

We've had rally cars, hoverboards and speedboats. Now can you handle a two-wheeled mean machine?

- Publisher: Ubi Soft
- Developer: Criterion Studios
- Price: £39.99
- Release date: November 12 (TBC)
- Players: One to two
- Extras: None
- **For:** Decent graphics. Acceptable racing action
- **Against:** Lazy PC conversion. Rubbish twoplayer mode

For some reason, motorbike games have never really captured the public's imagination like those of the four-wheeled variety. Despite the proliferation of arcade biking games, complete with enticing full-size hogs to operate, the only truly successful motorbike titles were Sega's *Hang On* games back in the mid-'80s.

This contrast in automotive fortunes is probably down to the fact that more people own, and aspire to own, motorcars rather than two-wheelers. But considering the fact that videogames are the ideal medium for living out unlikely fantasies (such as shooting zombies in the face and mucking about with hedgehogs) it's strange that the opportunity to bomb through the streets at 200 mph on a motorbike has proved less than alluring.

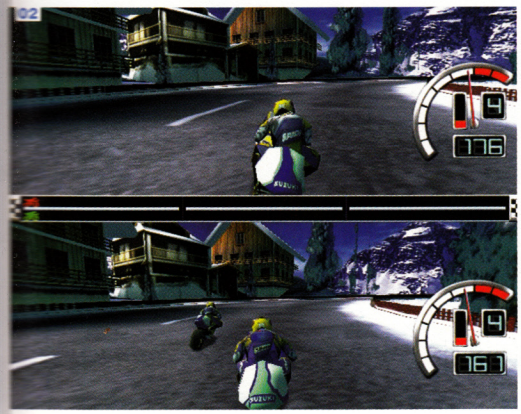
Despite this lack of public enthusiasm, the message still hasn't permeated through to games developers who keep stubbornly churning out biking games as if they sell like hot cakes. First to don leathers and helmet on Dreamcast is *Suzuki Alstare Racing* from developers Criterion Studios (who made the lovely futuristic hoverboard racer, *TrickStyle*).

Suzuki first appeared last year as the mediocre PC title *Redline Racing*. Fortunately, the conversion to DC has involved more than just a name change; the Suzuki licence has enabled the game to include six of the company's speedbikes (see 'I'm a bike, ride me' on page 033) and the number of tracks has also been increased. However, while the arcade racing is far better suited to DC than PC, the gameplay remains the shallow, unsatisfying experience of the home computer version.

Upon loading it's immediately obvious from the bland, user-unfriendly menu system that this game has been regurgitated with a sparsity of tender loving care. In a market awash with

> "The gameplay remains the **shallow, unsatisfying experience** of the home computer version"

01 The annoyingly twisty-turny roads of an English country village
02 It's almost impossible to race in the twoplayer mode, as you'll spend all your time staring in disbelief at the pop-up
03 The replays look nice, but only last about 30 seconds, unfortunately



racing games all trying to outdo each other with ever more elaborate options and gameplay embellishments, the lack of things to do in *Suzuki Alstare* is extremely disappointing.

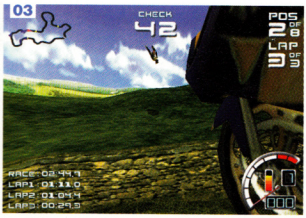
The only mode worth bothering with is the catchily titled Main Game which provides a season of races within three increasingly difficult championships, each containing three sessions of competition. You begin in the Novice championship and must win all three sessions to qualify for the Reserve championship. If you triumph in the Reserve sessions the final challenge of the Team championship is unlocked. This championship/session structure works admirably and eases the player into the game with a well-judged learning curve. One unfortunate aspect of the system is that, if you mess-up on one of the tracks you can't just try again but have to go through the entire session without any hope of winning. This daft state of affairs is sadly typical of the lack of thought put into the game's menus and options.

When you've finally ploughed ►

I'm a bike, ride me

There are six Suzuki bikes to ride in the game. You start off with the puny GSX-R600 and access the increasingly powerful machines as you progress through the racing sessions. Unfortunately, the increase in power is the only discernible difference between the bikes. They handle the same, look almost identical and the engine sounds are indistinguishable from each other - despite the increase in speed and horse-power.

Basic modifications can be made to the machines by changing the power, steering and braking settings but that is the extent of the possible alterations. Compared to other racing games where, at the very least, you can change your vehicle's design and colour (or, in the case of genre leaders like *Gran Turismo*, buy new parts and alter everything down to the most minor detail) the modifications in *Suzuki* are far too limited.



01 Fancy lens flare effects do not a good game make
02 The expansive tracks, where you can really open the throttle, are easily the most enjoyable
03 Motorbike in the foreground, rider soaring away in the background. Admittedly, not textbook bike racing but, my, how we laughed

▶ through all the unwieldy gubbins (and chosen your leathers from a selection of three that all look the same) you'll be able to straddle a throbbing Japanese beast and take to the road. The races take place on 12 tracks which are accessed at regular intervals as you progress through the game. The courses are spread across a range of diverse areas including mountains, cities, beaches and countryside and take place at different times of the day (a good excuse for some nice lighting effects).

The tracks are mostly well-designed with a good variety between narrow, twisty/turny courses and expansive high-speed routes. They are also quite pleasant graphically, with picturesque landscapes whizzing by with only minor glitching. There's a considerable amount of pop-up though, especially in the highly-detailed city tracks where some of the buildings are only drawn as you're going past them.

Despite all the effluence surrounding the gameplay, when you actually get involved in the biking action *Suzuki* goes up a few gears. If you're expecting a realistic motorbiking simulation you've come to the wrong place, but for simple arcade frolics it's surprisingly good fun. The sensation of speed is impressive, particularly with the later, more powerful superbikes, and the action is pleasingly frenetic. The racing is usually close with seven computer riders poised to capitalise on any mistakes, and the lack of realistic handling means you can throw your machine around with an enjoyable disregard for accepted physics.

"The sensation of speed is impressive, particularly with the later, more powerful superbikes, and the action is pleasingly frenetic"

This goodwill is tempered by inconsistent collision detection which sometimes lets you hurtle straight through an opponent like a ghost rider, and other times sends you careering off your bike from only the slightest of touches. The gameplay is also let down by the repetitive nature of the races which have absolutely no flashes of inspiration (such as alternative routes or jumps) to add a bit of variety to the racing monotony.

When you add a diabolical twoplayer mode (with no CPU opposition and some of the worst pop-up we've seen in a long time) to the mix, it all adds up to a dissatisfying package that could be the dictionary definition of the word 'average'. The best bits of the entire game are the spectacular crashes that see your hapless rider catapult into the distance like Superman with broken limbs. And when the most entertaining aspect of a racing game is the moment of graceless failure as man and vehicle part company, it really is time to worry ■

Lee Hart

DC-UK 5
FIVE-STARE RACING

SEGA

Luxuries:

1. Bread
2. Water
3. Air

Essentials:

1.

2.

3.

Life is about priorities. Dreamcast, the world's most powerful games console, is here. So are 3 of the finest software titles ever created. Sonic Adventure, Sega Rally 2 and SoulCalibur are just part of a strapping software line-up, with new games released every week. Turn off your heating. Have your stomach stapled. Play on your Dreamcast.

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Jimmy White's 2: Cueball

Fancy going head to head with The Whirlwind? Now's your chance. Rack 'em up

- Publisher: Virgin Interplay
- Developer: Awesome Developments
- Price: £39.99
- Release date: October
- Players: One to two
- Extras: None
- **For:** Realistic snooker sim
- **Against:** Dreadful loading times

Patience is a virtue. Which means, unfortunately, that you have to be a bloody saint to play Jimmy's little game. It has a loading time of at least three days (give or take), and that's not just when you switch the thing on, either. Dull, dull, dull. And we're not talking about a multi-layered, multi-levelled, complicated plot with a cumbersome arsenal of weaponry here, either. It has just two main areas and yet you're still waiting around, picking your nose and humming the theme tune from Happy Days while you wait for the doors to open. Well I was, anyway. And another thing, it would appear that nothing has been done to improve this from the original PC version, which is a bit lazy.

Now that's

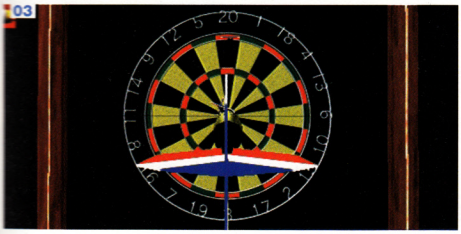
over and done with, we can get on with chalking our cues. Choose either Pool or Snooker and you'll be transported to the corresponding room. Whatever you do, avoid the demo mode, it's a surreal waste of space, flying around the room as a bee. The snooker room is a delightful gentleman's club-type of experience, all wood panelling and bookshelves, and you can hear the strains of something by Tchaikovsky – it's all terribly well-bred. For your added amusement you can also partake of a little draughts or, should you wish, play darts on the board tucked away discreetly to one side. Both games are simple to master, with one and twoplayer versions of each. And you might as well play a few frames of snooker while you're here. If you're the type that likes to watch, you can hit the demo mode and see the master at work as Jimmy clears up.

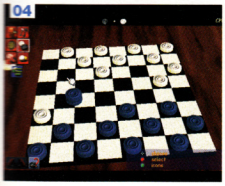
When it's your turn, you can – again – play a one or twoplayer game. You'll find it takes ages to set up your shot and that it's far more long-winded than real snooker, what with adjusting cue

> "The snooker room is a delightful **gentleman's club experience,** all wood panelling and bookshelves"

2nd opinion

As Esther pointed out (in her own inimitable way) *Cueball* is actually a rather good game. As with all titles of this ilk, it can't possibly match the enjoyment of actually playing the games down the boozer, but it has a fair old stab with a sharpened cue. The slow loading times are a problem and the joypad isn't as user-friendly as the mouse in the PC version. Still, unless some bright spark comes up with a cue peripheral this is about as good as console snooker/pool sims can get.
Lee Hart





01 Set up for a cracking break, care of Mr White
02 Play yourself at pool, but don't complain when you lose
03 Bored of snooker? Have a game of darts instead, then
04 It's strangely addictive moving small blue discs diagonally across a board

"You can play Archer MacLean's *Dropzone* **which is a nice touch** in an otherwise straight pool sim"

strength, checking the table-top view, adjusting the spin... You can be there for over five minutes per shot if you're not careful, which can prove tedious.

Anyway, you've had enough of this room for now, haven't you? So move out, let the disc load (twice, if you please) and you're into the pool room. You've moved down the social strata when you hit this side, as your pool table is in a bar, complete with 'Twirlitzer' and fag machine. The first thing I'd recommend is for you to go to the Twirlitzer and turn that hillbilly redneck line-dancing shite off. Again, you've got a couple of games to keep you busy besides the pool itself. Head on over to the one-armed bandit and play with a seemingly limitless supply of quarters. And after you've won the jackpot, you can play Archer MacLean's 8bit classic *Dropzone*, which is a nice touch for the retro-minded among you.

The pool game is much the same as snooker, so it's just a matter of which one you prefer out there in the real world. Pit yourself against Jimmy himself for a bit of excitement or someone a little lower down the pool-hall of fame if you play like a girl. Like the snooker, it looks and sounds good (nice clunking noises when you pot one of those shiny balls), but it can also be quite tricky to set up your shots.

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

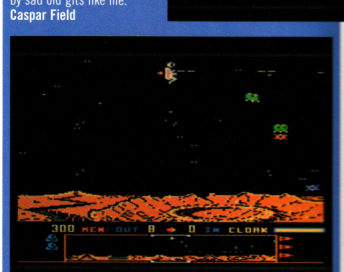
Esther Woodman

DC-UK 6
A FINE SET OF BALLS

Rose tinted gaming

Archer MacLean has been around in the videogame industry for a long time. Back in 1984 he created *Dropzone*, a spin on Eugene Jarvis' fabulous *Defender*. Taking the home computer market by storm, *Dropzone* is now fondly remembered by sad old gits like me.

Caspar Field



GO THERE!

TOYS
Get yourself a real dartboard and chuck a couple of arrows.

PAGE 122 >

At some point last month, someone much further up the food chain than me decided it would be a simply ripping idea to send four of us city kids, armed with nothing more substantial than a Peter Storm cagoul, go deep sea fishing in Padstow to discover if catching bass off the coast of Cornwall is as easy (or as much fun, for that matter) as Sega makes it seem (see page 020). Now, as far as we're concerned, fish comes in yellow boxes with a picture of a nice cheery man with a big beard on it, and the only person with fishing experience on the team is Steve, who once dangled a piece of string with a bit of cheese on the end of it into a lake and, surprisingly, didn't manage to catch anything. Technically speaking, we weren't off to a particularly good start.

Nevertheless, Keith, Stephen, Nick and me piled into a lime green people carrier which Keith proceeded to drive very badly indeed, unaccustomed, he said, to the girth of such a machine. However, despite Keith's driving, Steve's map-reading skills, the sexual innuendos and the fact that none of us could hold a tune, we managed to make it to our hotel just in time to make last orders at the nearest public house.

GET BASS!

In May, you fool. Give Mike's mate Phil Britts a call on 01841 533293 to organise your own trip

After dragging ourselves out of bed (one each, mind, there was no filthy shenanigans on this trip) at some ungodly hour in the morning, we set off for the harbour, dressed neatly in our brand new macintoshes and sturdy footwear, trying out seafaring expressions we've managed to pick up from Swallows and Amazons in order to blend in seamlessly with the natives. "Me hearties" began to wear a bit thin after about 30 seconds, so we moved onto a more general "Arrr" (said, you understand, in a piratical growl).

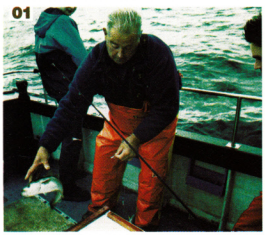
Once at the harbour, we meet our skipper, Phil, and first mate, Mike who – despite being genuinely nice blokes in every other way – ignored our parochial humour, eyed our waterproofs nervously and scoffed at our plans to catch bass. Bass aren't around this time of year, you see, they're only around in these particular waters in May. This was a problem – the whole reason we'd run up an enormous bill at the hotel, spent near-as-dammit four hours getting here and injected serious amounts of cash into the local economy was to catch these bloody fish. And now we'd lost our credibility as investigative journalists and, more to the point, were feeling very silly indeed. Not that Mike and Phil seemed to care about our fragile egos – once they'd pushed us aboard, they just started up the boat (the Blue Fox, if you please) and chugged out of the harbour, chuckling in a most un sea-dog-like way. In fact, I would go as far as saying that it reminded me very much of a land-lubbery giggle.

Very soon after, I had to stop sulking in order to listen to what Mike was telling us. The general idea, seeing as we wouldn't be getting any flipping bass, is that we would be catching some mackerel fairly close into land, then we'd move out about ten miles to catch some pollack (a big white fish from the cod family – common as muck, apparently. Picks up the wrong fork at dinner and everything), and then even further out to use the mackerel as bait to catch some ray (squished flat fish like plaice – deeply impressive to take home). But let me underline the fact that this was just The General Idea.

We stopped in the middle of all of this watery stuff for Mike – a kind of grown-up Tweedledum – to show Keith, Steve and I what to do with our rods, and how not to get the hooks embedded in ourselves (tricky, that one). This particular spot of salt water had been chosen for us by Phil, with the help of some particularly techy equipment in the cabin. There are two sonars – the newest of which, when it detects movement down below (oo-er) actually displays little fish, a DGPS (differential global positioning system) that maps your position to within four foot (it was originally used in cruise missiles), and a VHF radio. He also had an older GPS system, and an older sonar that uses thermal waves to find those slippery characters – our Phil was obviously not one to take chances on all of this new-fangled jiggery-pokery.

Our rods had three hooks on them, all attached to bright feathers and the whole thing was finished off with a chunky lead weight. We let down the lines and made sure that the feathers were moving about in a provocative, "I am not a feather, but your lunch" type of way, and before you could so much as say "Ahoy, there, cap'n", we were reeling the buggers in all over the place. Piece of piss – even easier than sitting in our games room and plucking out the pixelated versions. The techniques we had to use on board the Blue Fox were identical to those in *Sega Bass Fishing* – waving the rod up and down a bit, reeling it in a ▶

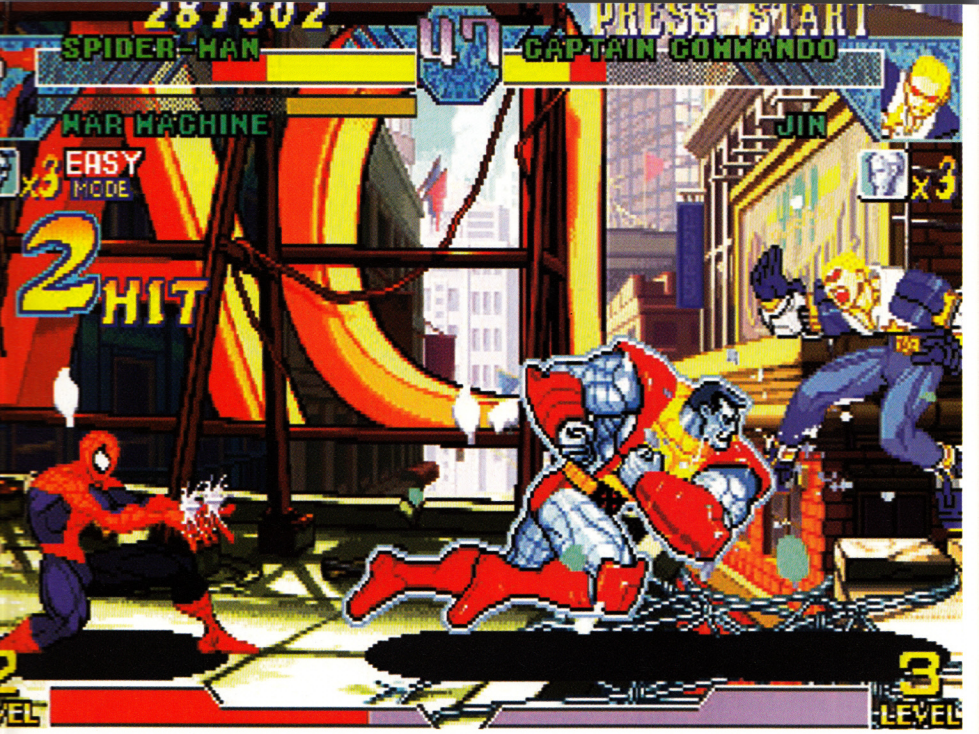
"THE ONLY PERSON WITH FISHING EXPERIENCE ON THE TEAM IS STEVE, WHO ONCE DANGLED A PIECE OF STRING WITH A BIT OF CHEESE ON THE END OF IT INTO A LAKE"



01 Steve's first fish! It's a bit of a wriggler, mind

02 Our vessel for today – the Blue Fox. It comes equipped with jolly sailor-types, too

03 The point at which Steve finally cracks up. He's puked up five gallons of stomach lining, and he's just been dumped on by a very full seagull



Marvel Vs Capcom

It has to be amazing – your chance to kick ass with your childhood heroes. But is it really up to scratch?

- Publisher: Sega
- Developer: Capcom
- Price: £39.99
- Release date: October 14
- Players: One to two
- Extras: 60Hz option
- **For:** Great characters, super-powerful moves
- **Against:** It's all a bit dated

Expectations for *Marvel Vs Capcom* have been understandably high in the UK. After all, *MVC* has been built on solid *Street Fighter* foundations, and it boasts an admirable number of desirable attributes. For one, it's a 2D fighting game, but it offers outlandish special attacks that a 3D equivalent couldn't hope to deliver. It also retains the tag team system pioneered by its arcade and Saturn-based predecessor. Rather than choosing a solitary fighter, you can pick two. With the option to switch fighters at any time during battles, the chances of a metaphorical 'scissors vs stone' confrontation – with one player greatly out-powered and bound to lose – are greatly reduced. And it's the tactical use of this option that makes *Marvel Vs Capcom*'s familiar 2D beat 'em up bouts just that little bit more interesting than other games'.

It hardly needs to be highlighted, but *Marvel Vs Capcom*'s cartoon protagonists are a bit of a draw, too. Comics have suffered during the videogames boom, with coins being lifted from the pockets of Marvel, DC, et al and shovelled into coin-ops and the bank accounts of games publishers. But all your favourite Saturday morning cartoon characters are here for you to control, and they look fantastic, too. Each one has a string of impressive special moves adapted from the traditional *Street Fighter* games. For example, the same button combo that powers Ryu's fireball sends Wolverine lunging across the screen, titanium claws ripping your opponents asunder.

Just as everything looks positively gleaming, and you're tempted to use words like 'halcyon', you start to realise there's not much more to *MVC* than a great cast of characters. Okay, its screen-sized special moves demand your attention, but somehow, its many 'right' elements just don't add up. After completing it a couple of times, or even after a few bouts, it leaves you with a feeling of 'Was that it?' And, more specifically, 'What was that?'

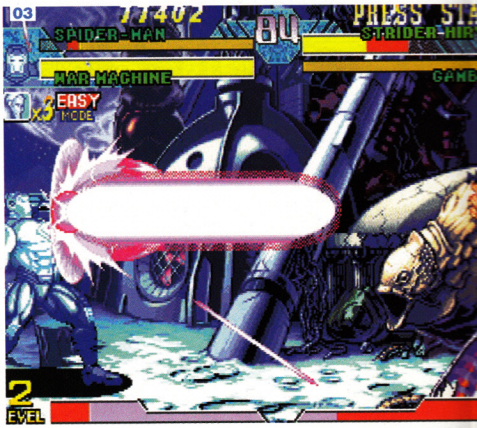
> "All your favourite **Saturday morning cartoon superheroes** are here for you to control, and **they look fantastic, too**"

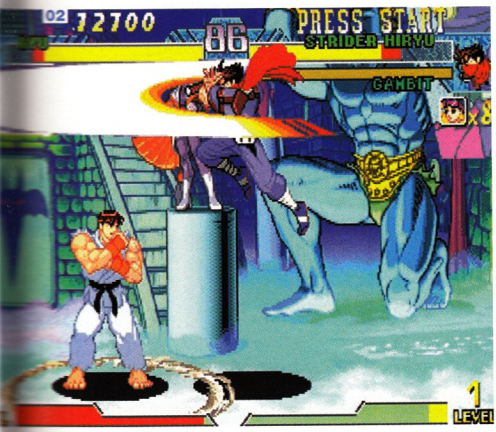
In an attempt to offer unbridled, fantasy-fighting mayhem, Capcom has created an unwieldy monster. To all but the die-hard, know-all-the-moves obsessive, *Marvel Vs*

2nd opinion

After a certain Namco game turned up, *MVC* seemed old hat

"I've always been a fan of 2D beat 'em ups, but somehow it feels like we're grinding to the end of an era. Now that 3D fighting games like *Soul Calibur* have finally matched the responsiveness and speed of the 2D old schoolers, there seems little incentive to play games like *Marvel Vs Capcom*, no matter how pretty they may be. Sacrilege or truth?"
Caspar Field





01 The Big Payback: Spidey puts the boot in his arch-nemesis Venom
02 Traditional *Street Fighter* special moves look bigger and better than ever
03 The characters look fantastic, but background scenes are just as impressively detailed

Capcom is too over-the-top, and lacking all-important balance. Unlike the *Street Fighter* games, its effective screen area scrolls vertically, too. By performing a certain kind of jump, you are launched into a bitmap stratosphere, your opponent's position indicated by an icon at the base of the screen. While this technically allows the kind of mid-air confrontations that Manga films feature ad nauseam, and should therefore offer dynamic, gravity-defying excitement, it actually robs *MVC* of more much-needed immediacy. It's all *Street Fighter*'s fault, really. When you pick up the pad and play your first *Marvel Vs Capcom* round, it's too easy to make the assumption that the two are kindred spirits, and can be tackled as such, but that's far from being the case.

As desirable as enormous, character-dwarfing attacks may seem, it's worth remembering the old 'too much of a good thing' adage. *Marvel Vs Capcom*'s eclectic, damage-dealing animations are outstanding, but they have an odd desensitising effect. If the Corrs (or, if you would prefer, Boyzone) performed naked on Top of the Pops every week, would people continue to find them so attractive? It'd be like, "Oh, cover them up, will you? I'm trying to eat," after a week or two. You mark our words. Likewise, there's just no mystique attached to *Marvel Versus Capcom*'s graphical excesses. It just gets really familiar, really quickly.

Hardcore Capcom fans will, undoubtedly, be aghast at the lowly figure we have awarded *Marvel Vs Capcom*. And we'll understand their indignation, we really will. The fact is, however, that the vast majority of UK Dreamcast owners will probably play *Marvel Vs Capcom* once or twice, before dashing back to the shop to trade it for something else. But it won't be because they hate it, because it's really not that bad. It's just that there are better, more refined games out there to be played. And amen to that ■

James Price

DC-UK 6
NEVER A MARVEL

Retro wonder

Capcom has released dozens of 2D beat 'em ups over the years, all to at least reasonable critical acclaim. Well, okay, we all went bananas when *Street Fighter II Turbo* came out – it's only now that we're onto the 58th iteration that our enthusiasm has started to wane. (Can't wait for *Street Fighter Alpha 3* next month, though...)

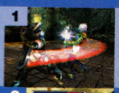
Back in the Saturn days, the machine's powerful 2D performance, meant that a landslide of Capcom's scrappers headed Sega's way. Best of these was *X-Men Vs Street Fighter* (shown left), which made use of a special 4Mb memory expansion pack, allowing for more graphics and faster loading times (shown below).

Charts

Which import titles are scaling the dizzy heights of success this month?

CEX Direct import top ten

Still deprived of a proper UK chart, as Dreamcast hasn't been out long enough yet, here are the top ten best-selling Japanese imports at CEX Direct

1 

Soul Calibur

Publisher: Namco Developer: In-house

Namco's masterpiece is so good, we gave it a ten. Everyone in the **DC-UK** office loves it, and, obviously, you lot do too. Can't blame you, it's fantastic. For the full review, go to page 010 now – should you need any more proof of its brilliance ■

2

House Of The Dead 2

Publisher: Sega Developer: In-house

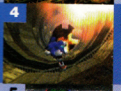
Packaged with the lightgun, *The House of The Dead 2* has been a consistent hit on import. Arcade perfect in every way, Sega's zombie-shooting fest has the unnerving ability to glue your attention to the screen harder than, um, super glue ■

3

Power Stone

Publisher: Capcom Developer: In-house

After a two month reign at the top, *Power Stone* drops to the number three slot. If *Street Fighter* defined the 16bit beat 'em up, then *Power Stone* arguably does the same for the 128bit age. Check out **DC-UK 02** for our full review ■

4 

Sonic Adventure

Publisher: Sega Developer: In-house

Sonic Team's rollercoaster ride of a game moves back up one place. By now you should be able to buy the PAL version (update reviewed in **DC-UK** 02), and we reckon it's well worth investing in – for *Sonic* die-hards and newbies alike ■

5

Toukon Retsuden 4

Publisher: Sega Developer: Sonic Team

The inclusion of this simulation of Japan's version of WWF in this month's chart is something of a mystery to us. Apparently these games are Big In Japan. Funty, that. Bet it won't be here next month, though. Eat it, you black trunk-wearing freak! ■

6

Frame Gride

Publisher: From Software Developer: In-house

Wee men in hulking mechanical suits; the Japanese love games like this. *Frame Gride* is a bit like the *MechWarrior* on PC series stripped of all subtlety and strategy, with more of an almost arcadey beat 'em up feel to gameplay. Weird ■

7

Marvel Vs Capcom

Publisher: Capcom Developer: In-house

It seems you can't resist the chance to live out your childhood fantasies, then. To be fair, we're all the same here at **DC-UK**, even Esther admits to having Wonder Woman fantasies, presumably before Linda Carter turned to porn in order to pay the bills ■

8

Cool Boarders Burrrn!

Publisher: UEP Systems Developer: In-house

The popular *Cool Boarders* series goes all next-gen. But will it just be more of the same? What is it about snowboarding sims, anyway? Oh, yeah – they're cool. It's going to be called *Snow Surfers* over here, so you won't be embarrassed to ask for it ■

9

Blue Stinger

Publisher: Sega Developer: Climax

You must be desperate for a decent 3D adventure for your Dreamcasts, but *Blue Stinger* isn't really it. If you've already bought this and been disappointed, don't worry, the wonderful *Shadow Man* is on its way – check out our review next month ■

10

Air force Delta

Publisher: TBC Developer: Genki

We like this, which makes it depressing that we have to wait until January for the PAL version. Until then, the import one will do. The original development name for *Delta* was *Flight Shooting*, which says it all, really. Top gun stuff ■

Charts supplied courtesy of CEX Direct. Call 0171 916 8440 to order. For other import companies, see classifieds

Top 5 most requested games

CEX customers' most anticipated releases

1. **Virtua Striker 2 ver.2000.1**
   Publisher: Sega Enterprises
2. **Ready 2 Rumble Boxing**
   Publisher: Midway
3. **Biohazard Code: Veronica**
   Publisher: Capcom
4. **Shenmue**
   Publisher: Sega Enterprises
5. **D2**
   Publisher: Sega Enterprises

DC-UK's list of love

The three games most responsible for making us grin this month

Soul Calibur

The import version had us propping our eyes open with matchsticks. Now we can actually read what we're supposed to do in the Mission mode, the whole team has moved their beds into their lounges so that they can keep playing. November 22 is the date – we recommend you get some sleep in before *Soul Calibur* takes it all away.

Suzuki Alstare Racing

Just to prove all you sceptics out there that a five out of ten game can be worth playing, we've included Criterion's motorbike racer. It's not the greatest game in the world by any means, but has an undeniable addictive quality once the bikes get up to speed, bombing down narrow roads.

Sega Bass Fishing

A game we like so much half the team travelled to Cornwall to investigate its authenticity (see page 070). It's expensive at £60 including the rod, but well worth the investment. Only real downside is that Sega changed the name from the Japanese version's *Get Bass*, meaning that we cannot implore that 'You've gotta *Get Bass*'. Oh well ■

Dreamcasters

So what do fishmongers think of Sega's supercool new console?

This month we decided to carry on our fishy theme by calling on the help of two local fishmongers. Jonathan Needham and Mike Richmond work in The Fish Market in Bath, one of the country's leading seafood retailers. They are a cheery duo, renowned for helping customers with recipe ideas and advice on preparation, although frankly, all we wanted them to do was to pose for a photo. But no, there they were telling us to pour lemon on our oysters, and pan-fry our hake. Before we knew it, we were rifling through their library of cook books for variations on Marie Rose and nodding sagely at advice on how to check if your fish is fresh (still flapping, apparently). And just for us, they took time out from their fishy business to lend their hands to *Sega Bass Fishing*.

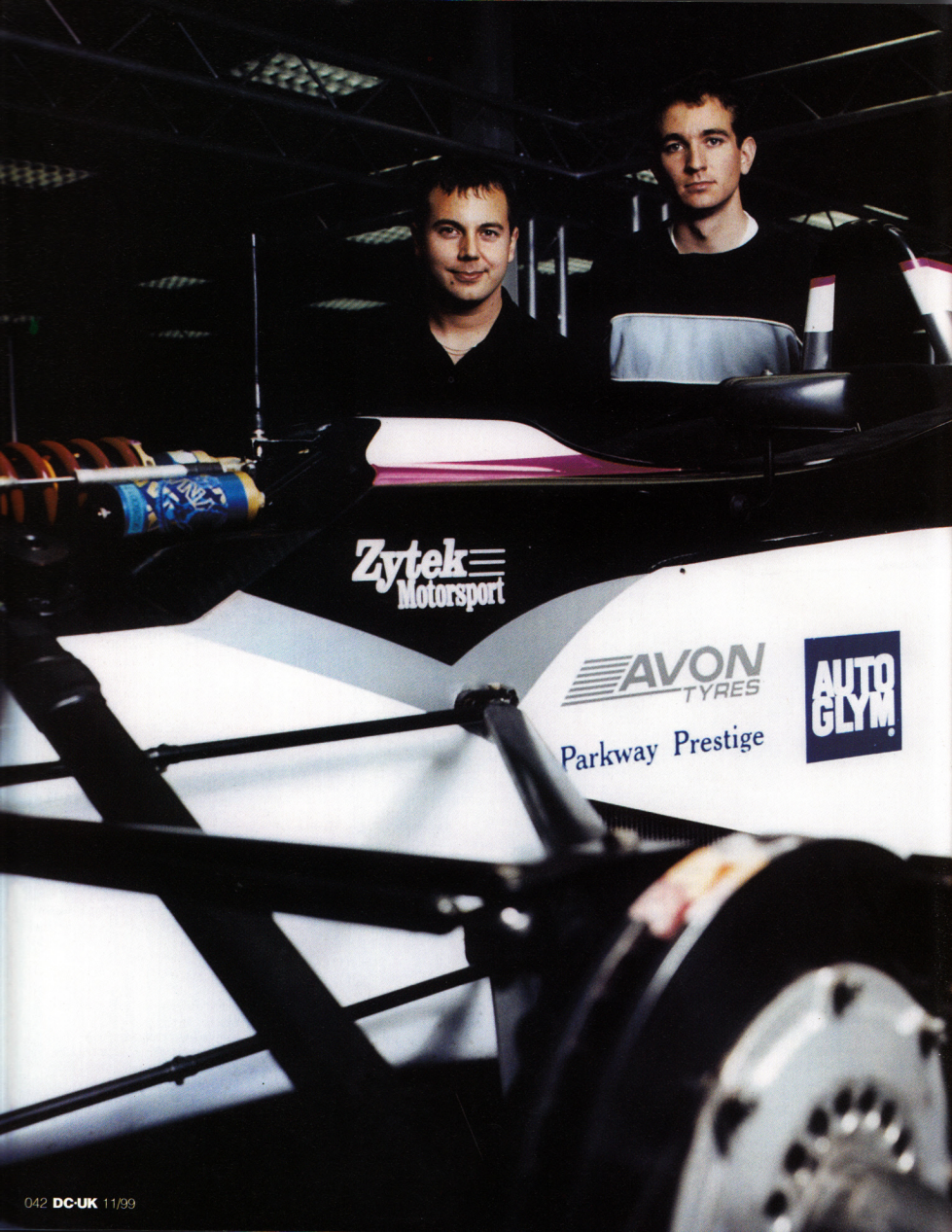
> Jonathan is a keen fisherman himself, and leapt at the chance to try out *Sega Bass Fishing*. As soon as we've settled down in front of the TV, he grabs the rod controller authoritatively and waits impatiently for the game to load. As the game begins, there is a hushed silence while Jonathan gets the hang of the rod controller. He puts his professional knowledge to good use by teasing the lure along the sea-bed to catch the eye of the bass. He soon hooks a whopper, at which point he discovers that the controller rumbles. "It shakes and everything!" he exclaims, "This is wonderful – I could do this for hours!" He promptly loses the fish.

Then it's Mike's turn, who has the irritating luck of a novice – he's neither a fisherman nor a gamer, but he's plucking the blighters out of the water with absolutely no effort at all. He's getting advice and encouragement from his colleague, which he's studiously ignoring, and probably for the best, too, as those bass can't get enough of him. "I'm really impressed with it," says Jonathan, while Mike reels in the biggest bass yet, "This is just like when you go fishing for real – you think you're going to catch everything, and what happens? Nothing!"

> **"As far as the rod goes**, with the actual thing shaking when you **catch something, that's great"**

Mike decides to change the lure to something a little more 'sexy', and, oddly, chooses one that's cross-eyed and stumpy... Whatever turns you on, Mike. He gets a bite almost immediately, though, so we shouldn't question his technique. After about ten minutes, he gets a bit bored, and says that he would have enjoyed it more if there were different types of fish, and that "it'd be more exciting if you could move up to big game fishing, like shark". And your overall impressions? "It's interesting how they put this together – where you can actually see the lure, which is brilliant. This is great for people who want to learn about fishing. As far as the rod goes, with the actual thing shaking when you catch something, that's great."

At which point, the fishmongers take their leave, but not without infusing the **DC-UK** games room with an odour all their own. No offence, lads, but next time we'll go to your place ■


Zytek
Motorsport
AVON
TYRES
Parkway Prestige
AUTO GLYM

OLIVER GAVIN & JAMIE DAVIES VS F1 WORLD GP

Video System claims its new Formula One game is the most realistic yet. But will two professional drivers agree?

Photography: Nick Wilson

PROFILE

■ Oliver Gavin and Jamie Davies currently drive for the F3000 team, European Formula Racing. F3000 is widely regarded as a stepping stone to F1 – the cars are less powerful, of course (450bhp as opposed to 800bhp), but the chassis are similar and the international F3000 competition takes place on the same circuits as the more high-profile sport. Davies has been racing since he was 12, beginning with karting and then moving up through the Vauxhall Lotus and F3 competitions to F3000. Oliver Gavin has been racing for eight years, his career so far including a stint in Touring Cars as well as F3 and Vauxhall Lotus. He also drives the Safety Car at all F1 events.

Jamie Davies and Oliver Gavin are pretty good men to come to when you're testing the authenticity of a racing game. Although currently competing in F3000, both have tested F1 cars for McLaren and Benneton, and have experience on all the F1 circuits. They're also big videogame fans: Jamie has a tooled-up Pentium III at home and insists that F1 GP 2 and Colin McRae Rally are the only driving titles to get anywhere near realism. It looks as though F1 World GP will be in for a mauling if it doesn't come up to scratch.

After playing the game for a few minutes, reactions are rather downbeat. "The handling seems sensitive at low speeds, but then becomes unresponsive at high speeds, which is wrong," complains Ollie. "In reality it's consistent. In fact, it's more sensitive at high speeds due to the downforce." "It's so twitchy," agrees Jamie. "There's too much oversteer. I touch the controller and the car is all over the place."

However, Video System is apparently working on the handling to address this problem. In any case, having belted round Silverstone in expert mode with manual transmission on, positive comments start to emerge. "Actually it's quite good," concedes Ollie, "I just braked and went down a couple of gears too early, and got some wheel spin, which is realistic. The scenic detail around the track is also very accurate." Indeed, it's so accurate that, while coming out of the Church bend at Silverstone, Jamie points out a few bumps on the track which are actually present on the real thing. "The speed is technically correct, too," sums up Jamie, "although the game looks slower than real life. I was coming out of straights at 290k, which is right for F1."

Finally, both agreed that the game would be much better with a steering wheel, complaining that it was difficult to make precise movements with the analogue controller. "Having said that, some ten year old could probably just pick up the controller and bury us," concedes Jamie. "By the way, when's *Colin McRae 2* coming out?" ■

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Mortal Kombat Gold	£ 32.99	r.r.p £39.99
NFL 'QBC 2000'	£ 32.99	r.r.p £39.99
Plasma Sword	£ 31.99	r.r.p £39.99
Re – Volt	£ 32.99	r.r.p £39.99
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Shadowman	£ 32.99	r.r.p £39.99
South Park Rally	£ 32.99	r.r.p £39.99
Streetfighter Alpha 3	£ 31.99	r.r.p £39.99
Vigilante 8 2nd Offense	£ 31.99	r.r.p £39.99
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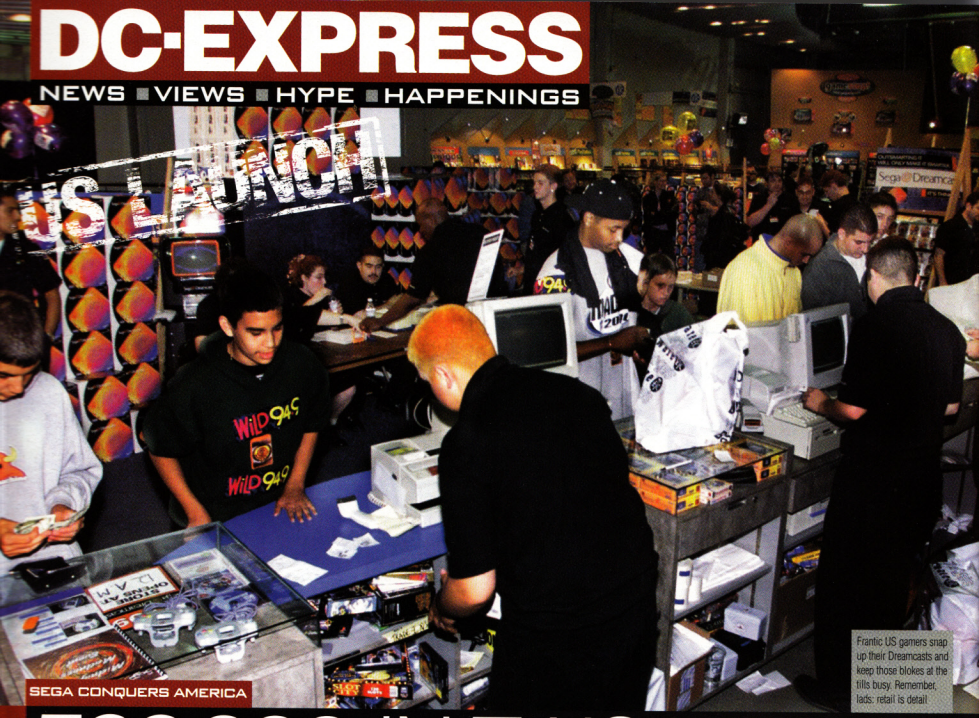


Frantic US gamers snap up their Dreamcasts and keep those blokes at the tills busy. Remember, lads: retail is detail

SEGA CONQUERS AMERICA

500,000 IN TWO WEEKS!

American gamers go Dreamcast mad after a beautifully choreographed launch, with yet more of those PlayStation records smashed into little pieces in the process

Over 500,000 Dreamcast units have been sold in the US after just a fortnight on the shelves. To put this amazing figure into perspective, it took PlayStation four months and N64 two months to get into as many American homes. Even the number of pre-orders – a whopping 300,000 – put Sony's machine in the shade; PlayStation attracted a third of that figure.

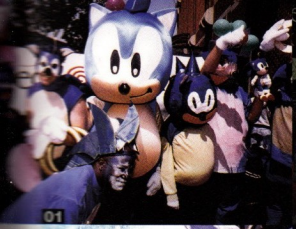
From the very beginning signs were good for Sega. Around 400 retailers around the country opened at 12am on September 9 so gamers could get hold of their Dreamcasts as soon as the clock struck midnight. Sega has calculated that it sold a whopping $97,904,618 worth of consoles within the first 24 hours of launch, beating the opening day takings of Phantom Menace, which took a piffling $28m. Incredibly, Sega was forecasting sales of one million consoles by the end of the year, which now looks like a drastic under-calculation. The company's accountants are probably now scurrying back to their calculators with all the excitement of young children legging it to the ice cream van for a Screwball.

To give the launch a little media cache Sega also made sure it organised plenty of photo-opportunity events and surprises. At the huge Software, Etc store in San Jose, California, celebrities Donna D'Errico and Verne Troyer (aka Mini Me) were on hand for the midnight opening to meet lucky gamers who queued for hours to get hold of their sexy consoles as soon as possible. Outside the store, ladies of the Sega Assault Tour – a mobile Dreamcast exhibition centre hauled about the country in huge juggernauts (see Assault Course) – handed out Sega goodies to the waiting masses. A few days before in San Francisco, Sega had also organised a competition for Dreamcast fans: whoever turned up to the mobile assault truck wearing the best Sonic costume would get their machine free. Rest assured, there were a lot of people hanging around dressed in cack-handed spiky helmets and blue tights. But then, it was San Francisco so they probably dress like that all the time.

As for software sales, *Sonic Adventure, Soul Calibur, Ready 2 Rumble* and *The House of the Dead 2* had all made it into the multi-format top 20 by the end of September, with sales of Namco's amazing beat 'em up apparently standing at almost one per console. Sega of America is understandably ecstatic with Dreamcast's performance so far, and the hype generated is bound to carry good vibes across the atlantic for the European launch. If it's anywhere near as well stage-managed as the American premiere, Sega's international return from the shadowy planet of Saturn will be all but complete ■

EVERY SILVER LINING HAS A CLOUD...

But the US launch didn't go completely smoothly. A fault in one GD-ROM stamper at a



01

03

01 & 02 See – we didn't make it up. Sega America's dress-up-as-Sonic competition was incredibly well attended **03** It's Mini Me again. His transatlantic love for all things Dreamcast knows no bounds **04** American packaging for hardware **05** SOA also arranged a 'spud-dive' to win a DC – that's a lot of mashed potato there

02

04

05

ASSAULT COURSE

For the past few months, Sega has been travelling up and down the US giving avid gamers a chance to try out Dreamcast for themselves. The Mobile Assault tour, as it's known, is a convoy of massive trucks filled with Sega demo units and young girls who pile out the back and hand out Sega T-shirts and dog tags to anyone who can't run away quick enough. The 46ft trucks are visiting 39 cities on the tour, stopping at all the places American kids hang out, ie, skateparks and malls.

Sega Europe has yet to organise a similar tour, although if they did it would probably be a rusty Ford Transit driving around Tooting Bec with a broken Saturn and some Dreamcast balloons. Only kidding

single software duplication centre meant that a small batch of games and Web browsers were defective. Although Sega of America did not comment on the nature of the fault, a Future Publishing employee who bought an import copy of *Ready 2 Rumble* found that the game continually froze on the main menu screen. Sega has assured American gamers, however, that the fault has now been fixed.

But there was one more small hiccup. A small number of punters who pre-ordered their Dreamcasts through Sega's online service did not receive their machines, as expected, on September 9. By way of apology, Sega of America has arranged to send those unfortunate gamers a complimentary copy of *Virtua Fighter 3tb* to make up for the inconvenience. Hopefully, it won't crash ■

TOO HOT TO HANDLE?

BEFORE THE END OF 1999	HOW FIRED UP SHOULD YOU BE?
Evolution	
Fighting Force 2	
NBA 2000	
NBA Showtime	
NFL Blitz 2000	
NFL QBC 2000	
Red Dog	
Shadowman	
Snow Surfers	
Soul Fighter	
South Park Rally	
Street Fighter Alpha 3	
Worldwide Soccer 2000	
Worms: Armageddon	
WWF Attitude	
V8: 2nd Offence	

HOT IN 2000	HOW FIRED UP SHOULD YOU BE?
Airforce Delta	
Big Bang	
Chu Chu Rocket	
Crazy Taxi	
D2	
Deep Fighter	
Eternal Arcadia	
Ferrari 355 Challenge	
Furballs	
GTA2	
Hidden & Dangerous	
Hostile Waters	
Knights	
MDK 2	
Metropolis Street Racer	
Midnight GT	
Off Road	
Resident Evil 2	
Resident Evil Code: Veronica	
Shenmue	
Slave Zero	
Space Channel 5	
Stunt GP	
Stupid Invaders	
Virtual On Oratorio Tangram	
Zombie Revenge	

BOARD THE EXPRESS

01 *Shenmue*'s new motorbike-riding sections were publically advertised by this gorgeous beast. And the bike (boom-boom!)
02 *Virtual On Oratorio Tangram* is Sega's new online champion, and is thought to support a new Dreamcast link cable, and will come with an optional, custom controller
03 *Resident Evil Code: Veronica* (aka *Biohazard* in Japan), was amazingly cinematic to play
04 Warp's long-overdue *Tomb Raider*-style adventure, *D2*, was given a fresh airing at TGS. It was originally unveiled the day after Dreamcast, back in May 1998

DC GETS BIGGER IN JAPAN

TOKYO GAME SHOW

September's TGS saw Dreamcast do more than hold its own against Sony's expensive and distant PlayStation2, with a stack of amazing games

Everything is Big In Japan. The shops are big, the roads are big and videogames are bloody huge. So huge, that there are two Tokyo Game Shows every year to promote all the new titles. And oddly enough, Makuhari Messe exhibition centre where TGS is held is absolutely massi... Oh, you know.

We bravely traversed the globe (in Economy, mind) to be there on September 17 for press day, in order to bring you the low-down on the hot new games from Sega and others, which we've shown overleaf. However, the night before TGS, Sega held a press conference at its Tokyo headquarters at which several interesting nuggets of Dreamcast magic were unveiled.

These were as follows: Zip and DVD drives are on the way (see page 055); Sega is considering making a Dreamcast camera; DC has gone down a storm in America (see 046-047); *Resident Evil Code: Veronica* looks fabulous; No Cliché's follow-up to *Toy Commander* is called *Agartha* and features "massive online elements"; and that *Shenmue* will contain an online help service and league tables, plus a 3D playback feature for your performance on *Ferrari 355 Challenge* in the arcade (see page 053). Oh, Sega Europe promised 100 games by September 2000, and Sega America promised a dozen Internet games next year, too.

Showing off

At TGS itself, many had been expecting it to be Sony's big day, with the public unveiling of PlayStation2. However, all the (unbiased) journalists **DC-UK** spoke to were nonplussed by Sony's big games. None looked much beyond Dreamcast's power, despite the billions of Yen Sony spent on its new machine. PlayStation2's one key advantage is that it plays DVD movies. Except Dreamcast is going to do that soon, too. PS2's big disadvantage is that it has no modem, and it will cost ¥39,900 when it goes on sale in March, which means at least £300 when it comes to the UK for Christmas 2000.

Meanwhile, Sega stunned the crowds with dozens of new titles for DC, which we've grabbed from a video being distributed at TGS. *Shenmue* continued to impress, with a usable motorbike revealed, plus a wacky forklift truck race. Add a perfect home conversion for *Crazy Taxi*, plus a mountain of other games, and this was a great TGS for Dreamcast ■

"Sega stunned the crowds with **dozens of new titles for Dreamcast**. Meanwhile, *Shenmue* continued to impress"

FREAKY DANCING

SPACE CHANNEL 5

The rhythm-action craze continues with Tetsuya Mizuguchi's spaced-out groovathon on Dreamcast

Coming from Tetsuya Mizuguchi (the fella in the main picture above), producer of the *Sega Rally* games, *Space Channel 5* is something of a, um, diversion. Taking a cue from Sony's innovative *Pa Rappa The Rapper* and *Um Jammer Lammy* games, *Space Channel 5* is a rhythm-action game in which you play the heroine Ulala. She must dance and blast her way through waves of invading Meroliens (cool aliens with big pointy antennas on their heads).

Although his game was a big success at TGS, when **DC-UK** met Mizuguchi-san, he was a little nervous about how it would be received in the West. We reassured him there were more than enough stoned students in the UK and beyond to ensure that *Space Channel 5* would go down like a fresh packet of Rizlas after a big night out. It's zany, crazy and we loved it. Oh yes ■

On the Web:
www.spacechannel5.com

MORE CREAM FROM THE TEAM

SONIC BOOM

Sega's dream team announce more DC releases

With *Sonic Adventure* finally released in Europe, all eyes at TGS were on the game's creators, Sega's famous Sonic Team. And true to form, the group did not disappoint and announced a slew of new titles for Dreamcast.

First off the block was *Chu Chu Rocket*, (see top-left) a manic puzzle game that combines the relentless pace of *Bomberman* with gangs of little fellas reminiscent of those found in DMA's classic *Lemmings*. In *Chu Chu*, you must guide a stream of these critters around a grid so that they end up at your base. And that's pretty much it. Except that there's a load of critter-eating monsters out to foil your efforts, and *Chu Chu* supports fourplayer games, online play and is fiendishly addictive. It will be available as a limited edition pack with coloured DC joypad in Japan (bottom-left).

Much more significant than *Chu Chu Rocket* was the announcement that Sonic Team has been hard at work on *Phantasy Star Online*. Essentially a massive Internet-based RPG, the new *Phantasy Star* updates a classic Mega Drive series of the same name. Little more is known about *PSO*, although a couple of seconds of footage were shown on a videowall at TGS, and drew gasps of amazement. Vast cities and detailed jungles were flown across. This could be one of 2000's biggest games.

Apart from the release of *Sonic Adventure International* in Japan (which is the same as the version we're getting over here), Sonic Team's final big announcement was the completely hatstand arcade maraca 'em up, *Samba de Amigo*. (For more on that and the other new Naomi coin-ops see page 052.) With these three new games, 2000 is looking bigger and brighter by the day – thanks Sonic fellas ■

LITES

BUY! BUY! SELL! BUY!

A Japanese brokerage company named Nomura Securities will soon be offering Japanese Dreamcast owners the chance to manage their stocks and shares online. Later this month, the company is releasing a GD-ROM which provides access to its stock trading Website, Home Trade – currently attracting over 50,000 PC subscribers. Hopefully confused gamers won't run up billion yen debts thinking the stock market software is just a very realistic sim.

GO AND GET A HALF-LIFE

A Dreamcast conversion of *Half-Life*, the fantastic first person shoot 'em up initially released on PC, has been confirmed. Sega revealed the exciting news at the Tokyo Game Show, but would not be drawn on a release date, citing "the end of next year" as a vague ETA. The game, which won PC title of the year in various publications, revolves around a bunch of scientists accidentally creating a portal between our world and a world inhabited by mucus covered monsters with great big tongues and electric death rays and stuff. Whether or not we'll also see a range of multiplayer levels is uncertain – but as the PC version's online spin-off, *Team Fortress Classic*, was one of the best things to happen to the Internet since Pamela Anderson and Tommy Lee's yacht video, you should keep your fingers crossed.

THE DREAMCAST TOKYO GAME SHOW DEMO TAPE

20 OF TOKYO'S BEST

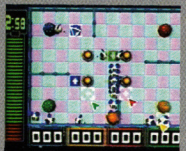
As Sega failed miserably to supply the press with screenshots of its new games at the Tokyo Game Show, DC-UK has employed devious tactics to bring these Dreamcast gems to the public gaze. We've taken the DC demo video (as shown below) that was given out at the show and taken screen dumps of all the best games. So although the quality isn't up to our usual skyscraping standards, you still get to see the hottest new titles. Cool, hey?

The majority of the games on these two pages are headed for Europe, and we're looking forward to all of them. Most impressive of all the games we played was Capcom's *Resident Evil Code: Veronica*, with its scrolling, true 3D world to explore, with *Crazy Taxi*'s tail-sliding antics following close behind. *Chu Chu Rocket* was frantic to say the least and... Oh, never mind – read on.

> CRAZY TAXI

UK release: Spring 2000. Sing Hallelujah!

We didn't think it would be possible, but *Crazy Taxi* on DC is a polygon-perfect arcade conversion. Every detail, every car, every street is in there, smooth as you like. Pelting around the streets of San Francisco, you must deliver punters to their destinations as the time clock counts down ■



> CHU CHU ROCKET

UK release: Here's hoping

One of Sonic Team's new games, *Chu Chu Rocket* is a bonkers puzzle game that has hooked everyone who's been lucky enough to play it ■

> ANIMASTER

UK release: No hope

With nothing to go on other than the video footage, we must admit defeat about this one. Looks like *Pokémon*-meets-a-racing-game ■

> BERSERK

UK release: Maybe, baby

Looking somewhat like a distant relative to Konami's *Castlevania 64*, ASCII's *Berserk* features free-roaming hack 'em up action. Gathered a reasonable crowd at TGS ■

> ZOMBIE REVENGE

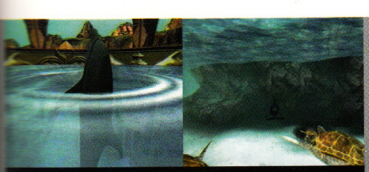
UK release: Spring 2000

Another spot-on transfer from the Naomi original, *Zombie Revenge* looks as atmospheric as ever. Batter your messy way through hordes of zombies with fist, gun and drill ■

> JET SET RADIO

UK release: Unknown

Utilising a new graphic technique that makes 3D polygon graphics take on the appearance and quality of a trendy 2D cartoon, *Jet Set Radio* is one of the most interesting games we've seen in ages. Right now, little else is known about the game, but we've already marked it on the hot-in-2000 list. Expect an update from us soon ■



ECCO THE DOLPHIN
UK release: Mid 2000

In development somewhere in darkest Hungary, the new *Ecco* game is incredible to watch. The eponymous dolphin swims with such grace that you have to remind yourself that it's a game, not a movie. Presumably, *Ecco* will be getting up to his old saving the ecosphere antics ■

DENSHA DE GO!
UK release: Unlikely

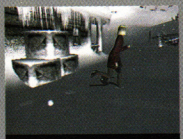
Already a smash-hit in the arcade, on PlayStation and everything else in Japan, Taito's train sim is coming to DC. Thrilling stuff, as ever ■

ETERNAL ARCADIA
UK release: Late 2000

As we reported last month, Sega's new RPG is the cause of much excitement in Japan, due to its amazing visuals and novel storyline. The game features flying pirate ships and the search for hidden treasure. Expect translation difficulties to delay this title until late next year ■

ROOMANIA #203
UK release: Er...

This, believe it or not, is a room mate simulator, for all the lonely gamers out there. Lee's already ordered a copy ■



D2
UK release: Possible

Warp's take on the survival horror genre is due to appear this December in Japan ■

SHENMUE
UK release: Late 2000

Leaving aside the niggling doubts that *Shenmue*'s latest delay have caused in our minds, the new sections of the game which were demoed to us in Tokyo are nothing if not interesting. Motorbiking is now part of the game system, as is forklift truck racing, and the graphics just look better and better. Many came away from TGS thinking that *Shenmue* is the kind of title they were expecting on PlayStation2. Emotions in games? You'd better get a Dreamcast ■

MAKEN X
UK release: Maybe in 2000

Firstperson sword fighting with adventure bits on top. Out in Japan next month ■

BASEBALL TEAM
UK release: Very unlikely

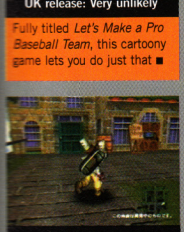
Fully titled *Let's Make a Pro Baseball Team*, this cartoony game lets you do just that ■

VIRTUAL ON
UK release: Yes please

Sega's red-hot robot fighting game is a powerful new online game that will also support a new DC-to-DC link cable ■

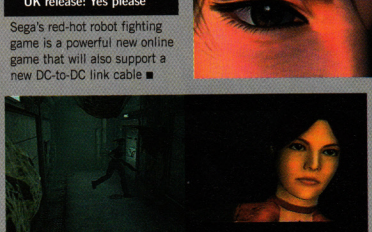
GODZILLA MAXIMUM
UK release: Please God no

An unwanted sequel to DC's worst game to date. Amazingly, the graphics are better yet the control system is still awful ■



EVOLUTION 2
UK release: 2000, perhaps

With Ubi Soft set to release the original version of Jap RPG *Evolution* this Winter, it seems possible that we'll get this sequel, too, although it may depend on sales ■

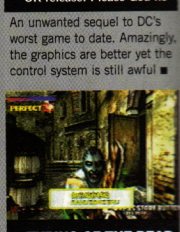


RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA
UK release: Autumn 2000

At first glance this looks little more than a tarted-up copy of the PlayStation *Res Evil* games. However, when you see the game in action, the true 3D environments change everything. *Code: Veronica* is incredibly cinematic and absorbing, and features some fantastically detailed settings ■

EVERYBODY'S GOLF
UK release: Unconfirmed

Already a popular PlayStation release, *Everybody's Golf* on Dreamcast is smooth and slick – as you might imagine. Sega Europe is unsure whether to bring it here. Go on fellas! ■



TYPING OF THE DEAD
UK release: Hmm

You're probably not going to believe us, but this is *The House of The Dead 2* played on a DC keyboard. To fend off the zombies, you must type out words or hit keys ■

BITES

LET ME BE YOUR PHANTASY

Sega's Sonic Team is working on a Dreamcast installment of the epic RPG series, *Phantasy Star*. Four titles have so far appeared in the hugely acclaimed collection – one on the Sega Master System, and three on the Mega Drive. Importantly, the new version, entitled *Phantasy Star Online*, will support online gaming, allowing small groups of players to get together and attempt the mammoth quest as a clan – as in recent PC RPGs like *Baldur's Gate*. However, the game will also include a single player mode for those who don't want to pay massive phone bills. No details about plot or characters have been released, but as the game is not due out in Japan until at least Autumn 2000, this is not surprising. More info should emerge over the next few months, however.

DOUBLE WHAMMY FROM CAPCOM

Capcom has officially announced two forthcoming DC conversions of arcade beat 'em ups. *Street Fighter III W Impact* is a combination of the first two *Street Fighter III* arcade titles, complete with fresh character animation and a possible online component. As yet it's not clear whether this Internet element will just be a case of uploading your high-scores to a dedicated Website, or whether the game will offer online multiplayer fighting.

Next up is *Kikaio* – or *Tech Romancer* as the coin-op was re-named in the west. This is an anime-influenced robot battle game where players choose from a dozen differently styled battle droids and then engage in weapon-based or physical metal-on-metal hardcore fighting action. As usual for Capcom's fighting fare, there is a variety of game modes, combos, and special moves – anyone who has seen *Street Fighter EX Plus Alpha* will also recognise *Kikaio*'s use of 3D characters against a 2D background. Both games are due for a January release in Japan.

SEGA'S SUPER MODEL BACK IN PUBLIC EYE

NAOMI BARES ALL

A *Quake*-style shooter, an ambulance racer, a toy-based fighter and a big game hunter all announced for Dreamcast's arcade cousin

Sega has revealed four new Naomi-based arcade games set to be launched in Japan. The Naomi hardware – a souped-up version of Dreamcast (see page 115) – is also becoming increasingly popular with other developers who are licensing the technology for use in their own games. Capcom and Namco have Naomi titles on the way.

Out of Sega's forthcoming line-up it is perhaps *Out Triggers* which has attracted the most attention so far. It's a firstperson shoot 'em up in which you play a member of crack anti-terrorist squad, InterForce. Devotees of *Quake*, *Half-Life* and co will immediately recognise the gameplay – simply run around shooting bad men with a variety of weapons, while picking up health bonuses and ammunition. To make participation more intuitive, Sega has provided two controllers: a standard joystick for moving and shooting, plus a trackball for looking around. The most interesting element of the game, however, is the network option. More affluent arcade centre owners will be able to link four cabinets together, allowing players to participate in co-operative blasting action. Hopefully the almost inevitable Dreamcast conversion will include similar facilities for multiplayer fun.

On a more offbeat note, Sega's *Jambo Safari* has just been launched in Japanese arcades. Here, players choose from a selection of four big game hunters before clambering into a jeep and driving around the grasslands of Africa looking for animals. When a giraffe, gazelle or whatever has been spotted (there are around 200 different species to catch), you have to try and lasso them, and then drag them towards your jeep by pulling on the gear stick. Finally, you cast a net over the wretched beast to bag it; the

> "The idea behind *Emergency Call Ambulance* is to **pick up casualties** at the scene of light-hearted accidents and take them to **safety**"

Above: *Out Triggers* could be the first Quake-style shoot 'em up for Dreamcast – unless id Software really is working on a DC version of *Quake III: Arena*. It's unlikely to offer a rival to *Samba de Amigo*...

more you ensnare, the more points you get. Gameplay then, is a cross between *Bass Fishing* and... erm... a driving game. Not the most politically correct theme perhaps – it'll probably be Sega Bull Fighting next.

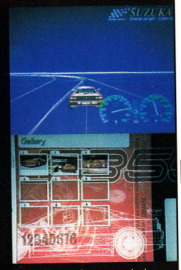
Staying on the barmy ideas theme, Sega has also recently revealed *Emergency Call Ambulance* – a fast-paced comedy paramedic sim. Created by in-house team, Software R&D#1, the game is similar to last year's fantastic *Crazy Taxi* except here you have to race round a variety of American cities in an ambulance instead of a taxi. The idea is to pick up casualties at the scene of light-hearted road accidents (no blood and guts – this is a fun game, after all), and take them to a safe place. As with *Taxi*, the action is fast and furious with mishaps happening all over the place. Again a DC conversion is assured.

Last on the Sega Naomi list is *Toy Fighter* – a beat 'em up with – get this – toys that fight each other. Shown off at the Tokyo JAMMA arcade show last month, the simple character design and *Tekken*-like gameplay failed to convince many attendees, but the target audience is seems likely to be children, rather than hardcore gamers.

But it's not all Sega, Sega, Sega. Capcom is also developing its own Naomi game. *Spawn* is a 3D beat 'em up which, like *Out Trigger*, supports the network feature, allowing four players to kick ass at the same time from four arcade cabinets. From what we've heard, it's based on the same 3D graphics system as *Power Stone*, which means detailed environments and tight gameplay. It's about time Capcom moved on from its, admittedly, impressive use of colourful Marvel heroes, to darker, more modern protagonists. *Spawn* fits the bill. We'll provide more details when we get hold of them.

Elsewhere, Namco has two Naomi titles planned – a sequel to *Time Crisis* and a footie game (more on that later) – while Tecmo is of course soon to unleash *Dead or Alive 2* onto a ready and willing public. It seems Naomi has become THE arcade technology of choice – mostly because it's comparatively easy to develop for, it's powerful, and games can be converted to Dreamcast with little extra effort. Naomi also saves companies like Namco and Capcom from having to develop their own high-end arcade technologies, which is a costly endeavour. Naomi, in effect, rocks ■

FERRARI UPDATE



Sega has revealed a new version of its innovative Naomi arcade game *Ferrari F355 Challenge*. Shown to the public for the first time at the JAMMA arcade show in Japan, this update drops the three monitor set up of the original (see **DC-UK 01**), but adds support for network play, so up to eight players will be able to race each other. Sega hasn't confirmed whether the home conversion of the game will also include an online multiplayer mode.

Just as interesting is the addition of VM compatibility. Players will now be able to insert a VM into the side of the arcade machine before racing. When the game is over, they can take their VM home, load up a special GD-ROM (being given away as part of *Shenmue*) and then upload the VM data. This data takes the form of a complete race replay featuring a 3D car model driving on a wireframe track. The display shows braking points, gear change points and racing line, allowing gamers to analyse their technique and make appropriate alterations. You can also upload the data to an international performance table on the WWW.

It's an inspired set-up, further validating the cool VM unit, and uniting the three elements of Naomi, Dreamcast and Web access ■

DREAMTIME

THIS MONTH OWAIN BENNELLACK MEETS A DEAD FRENCH EXISTENTIALIST WITH A GRASP OF VIDEOGAMING

A Dream Death

Poised between success and destruction, caught in the making of my fate, my dream state enables me to evaluate my predicament outside of ordinary time. "Don't play this modern game," whispers Jean Paul Sartre, "You cannot act out fate in advance; your action *is* your fate.

"Let me tell you about a game I played as a child," he continues, "I used to challenge myself to cross our living room stepping only on the brown diamonds in the flooring. I would leap over yellow polygons to make it. With short legs, I had to use a series of running jumps. This has been the basis of my philosophy." "Oh really," I say. "I played the game for a week, until, at last, I landed a foot firmly to the right of a diamond, and hyperventilated into a bag for five minutes."

I'm poised between success and failure, not measuring my jump like *Tomb Raider* but about to twitch into an old-fashioned quick death like *Berserk* or *Defender*.

"Ironically, as real lives surrender to meaninglessness, games have abandoned chaos and chance," Sartre opines. "Instead of three lives, today's gamers can survive 30 hits before they expire. Games were once do or die. Now they are do and die a little bit."

I'm poised between death and destruction, like an Oxford Street shopper who steps into the road to escape the crowds and doesn't know how closely he avoids being hit by a bus. "Bon voyage," says Sartre. Without time to breathe, I let fate and me collide ■

RUMOUR

Rumour: The rumbling rod controller packaged with *Sega Bass Fishing* also works with *Soul Calibur*.
DC-UK: Hilariously, this is true – we've tried it. Simply waft the rod around and the onscreen fighter moves his or her sword accordingly. It's not a particularly sensitive control method (there is a short delay between your waft and an onscreen weapon waft), and moves are limited to side swipes and downward chops, but it's excellent fun, nevertheless. Caspar got so excited while testing this out that he took a massive swing and almost put the rod through our games room window. Crazy fool ■

Rumour: Yu Suzuki is currently developing two driving games, one of which may be a new version of classic arcade racer, *Outrun*.
DC-UK: This one was floating around at the Tokyo Game Show, but has prompted no official comment from Sega... Yet. Considering Suzuki-san's track record with driving games, though, it wouldn't be entirely inconceivable that he should return to the racing genre after the gruelling excesses of *Shenmue* ■

Rumour: The Dreamcast release of DMA Design's crime caper sequel *Grand Theft Auto 2* has been delayed.
DC-UK: Unfortunately this is true, release has been pushed back to next year ■

Rumour: Like some kind of collective eager beaver, Sonic Team is already working on a sequel to the massively popular *Sonic Adventure*.
DC-UK: This has been flatly denied by Sega, and considering Sonic Team is already working on *Phantasy Star Online*, *Chu Chu Rocket* and *Samba de Amigo* it seems a unlikely. However, other rumours indicate that there may be a spin-off title in the workings, starring one of Sonic's little friends. This doesn't exactly leap into the bed of plausibility either, quite frankly ■

■ © Sega of America

DREAMCAST GROWS UP?

DVD IN 2000

The availability of DVD and Zip peripherals for Dreamcast promises to unleash even greater power in Sega's super-console

Sega's dual counter-strikes to Sony's multimedia abilities were confirmed at its pre-Tokyo Game Show conference in Tokyo. Add-on devices which will bring compatibility with Digital Versatile Disc (DVD) and Iomega's Zip format are set to appear sometime in 2000. But don't panic, because neither peripheral bears the doomed mark of the 32X. Sega has wised up since then and knows it can't afford to run the risk of awakening that particular hardware demon.

Already an international standard in the PC and Macintosh worlds, Zip is essentially a much larger, much faster floppy disk. Capable of storing up to 100Mb of data (about one-tenth of a GD-ROM, but you can write information onto them), Dreamcast's Zip drive (shown here for the first time) will come equipped with another PC standard: USB (Universal Serial Bus). This little acronym will allow all sorts of cunning devices to be connected to Dreamcast, including (potentially) printers and scanners.

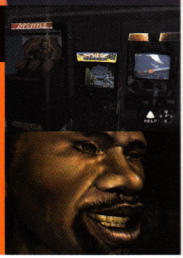
Less is known about Sega's strategy with its DVD peripheral. What is certain is that the add-on will have to feature movie playback, in order to match PlayStation2. Sega would be foolish to start using DVD to store game data, as it would split the Dreamcast market in two, confusing publishers and public alike. However, it would seem inevitable that the DVD drive will sit underneath your Dreamcast, as does the Zip drive. You're just going to have to be careful not to knock them all over ■

> "Dreamcast's Zip drive will be **capable of storing up to 100Mb of data** – sort of **like a mini hard drive**"

YOU WON'T WANT TO READ THIS, BUT...

SHENMUE IS DELAYED

Sega's monster game in the making pushed back to Spring 2000 in Japan. European release unlikely before next Winter. Damn



The Japanese launch of epic RPG title *Shenmue* has been delayed until Spring 2000. Although Sega Enterprises has given no official reasons for the slip, it is thought that the game's wildly ambitious design – which includes hundreds of non-player characters with unique personalities – has drawn out the development process. The game was due to be released at the end of October this year.

While Sega will no doubt be keen to downplay the importance of this news, the delay is a real blow for Dreamcast. Sales of the machine have levelled out in Japan and a game of this scale would have provided a much-needed boost. UK release will no doubt now be pushed back to Winter 2000 at the earliest. A bitter disappointment ■

NEW GAMES ON THE WAY

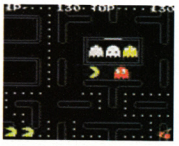
RAGE RETURNS

The creator of *Expendable* and *Incoming* announce three more releases for DC

UK-based developer Rage has announced three new projects for Dreamcast, and supplied us with some fresh screenshots. *Midnight GT* (top right) is an urban driving game where players compete in the Midnight League – a nocturnal series of circuit and point-to-point rally races set over 12 different street environments. The League mode offers eight cars including 2WD, 4WD, RWD and FWD models, as well as fully customisable gear ratios, suspension, etc. The two arcade modes feature cars like the Alfa Romeo Dardo, Ferrari Modulo and the Honda Vivo. Sounds like an interesting mix of immediate *Ridge Racer*-style gameplay, with a dash of *V-Rally*.

Rage is also converting its off-road racing game, imaginatively titled *Off Road* (centre), to Dreamcast. Offering ultra-realistic handling and physics, the game allows players to race against the clock or other cars over a series of muddy tracks. Time trial, championship and arcade modes are all included as are loads of upgradable vehicles. Could this be the off-road racer *Buggy Heat* should have been? Maybe.

Away from driving games, Rage is also bringing across its PC strategy title *Hostile Waters* (bottom) to Sega's machine. Like *Command and Conquer* the game gives you control over a fleet of war machines including tanks, planes and boats, but here you can actually get inside the units and pilot them yourself. Set in the near future, the aim is to stop a cabal of war-hungry dictators breaking up world peace. It's about time someone added a bit of much-needed depth to Dreamcast's arcade-heavy line-up. Release dates for all three titles are yet to be confirmed ■



TECH SPECS

Processor	16bit
Dimensions (WxHxD)	130mm x 80mm x 30.5mm
Weight	145g (195g with batteries)
Screen resolution	160 x 152
Colour palette	4096
Maximum colours onscreen	146
Battery life	40 hours
Other features	World Clock
	Calendar
	Horoscope
	Alarm

THE GAMES	STYLE
NeoGeo Cup Plus	Soccer
Pocket Tennis	Er... Tennis
Turf Masters	Golf
Pac-Man	Arcade
Metal Slug: First Mission	Arcade
Crush Roller	Arcade
King of Fighters R2	Fighting
Samurai Showdown	Fighting
Fatal Fury First Contact	Fighting
Puzzle Bobble Mini	Puzzle
BioMotor Unitron	RPG
NEO Mystery Bonus	Gambling
NEO Dragon's Wild	Gambling
NEO Cherry Master Color	Gambling

Left: The DC-compatible NeoGeo Pocket Color will come in a variety of colours and designs, with classic games such as *Pac-Man* available from launch

POCKET MONSTER

NEOGEO RIDES AGAIN

16bit and compatible with your Dreamcast, new boy NeoGeo Pocket Color rocks

Move over Nintendo, there's a new (game) boy in town. SNK, one of Japan's longest serving coin-op and game companies, has released its 16bit hand-held machine, the NeoGeo Pocket Color. Fortunately, it shares nothing with SNK's rusty old NeoGeo console apart from the same name. And at £59.99 the Pocket Color is a easily better value that Nintendo's ageing handheld, the Game Boy.

At this point, you're probably wondering why we're talking about a new SNK handheld console – groovy as it undoubtedly is – in **DC-UK**. Well, here's the catch – NeoGeo Pocket Color is compatible with Dreamcast. Thanks to a special link cable that will soon be made available, SNK's ultra-hardcore *King of Fighters: Dream Match '99* (currently only available on import) can interact with its new portable cousin, *King of Fighters R2*. Characters which you've spent quality time training can be exchanged between the two versions. More games utilising the feature are soon to follow.

Using the Pocket Colour is a comfortable experience, due to its great ergonomic design, ie, it fits in your hands properly. Rather than using a d-pad as on the Game Boy, SNK's unit is fitted with a dinky eight-way joystick (with clicking microswitches – remember them from the Amiga days?), which is designed to work with the company's broad range of fighting games.

Of the release titles we've sampled, the Pocket version of classic scrolling shoot 'em up *Metal Slug: First Mission* is worth investing in. All the sports games are a good laugh (not the most in-depth summary, but true), with golf 'em up *Turf Masters* a surprise delight. *Pac-Man* has gone down a storm in the office, as has *Puzzle Bobble Mini* (aka *Bust A Move*), and SNK's fighting games are always guaranteed to make you grin. All are priced at £24.99.

All that gameplay would be wasted if the Pocket Color didn't cut the technical mustard, but happily the 16bit processor and crisp colour screen are far superior to Game Boy Color's, making SNK's handheld the most powerful pocket console on the market. If the software keeps on coming in reasonable quantity and quality, then the NeoGeo Pocket Color deserves to be a success for SNK ■

WHO ATE ALL THE PIES?

A SMALLER BREAKFAST

Our man on the street, Dylan Davies, tests positive for food in Big Breakfast Dreamcast starvation shocker! Read his exclusive story...

To some television is the Holy Grail; not me, though. To me TV is a dull procession of docu-soaps and ugly weather girls. However, when a phone call from Channel 4 offering me a chauffeur for the morning, a go on the new Dreamcast – and a barbecue – in return for appearing on the Big Breakfast it was hard to say no. There was a catch, however: I couldn't eat for 24 hours prior to the broadcast. The idea being, offer a starving man food or Dreamcast and see which he plumps for. As an 11 year old I took part in a sponsored famine and within two hours of leaving my mum's house I was crying for food. Time has passed and living with starvation didn't seem that harsh at university. Twenty four hours without food would be easy. Awakening at 5am on Monday wouldn't.

Monday 6am

I've made it on time and I'm now being briefed at Planet 24 studios. Famine is forgettable when you're tired and surrounded by chirpy people. Yes, everyone in TV land is as expected: polite, but in a great hurry. TV is as boring as I had thought; it involves standing 'there' and not touching 'that' for a couple of hours until rehearsals start. And rehearsals just seem to involve people wearing headphones, carrying clipboards saying, "Johnny stands here. He turns to you and says..." This became the mantra for the next 60 minutes, until a different bloke with a clipboard appears. It's Johnny Vaughan and I can't help but stare.

Don't get me wrong, I've met a lot of famous people, from pop stars to directors to comedians and artists and, yes, they are just people. In fact, living in Manchester, I regularly had to ask Coronation Street stars to move out of my way in busy pubs. The point is, I'm not phased by, or feel the need to stare at the rich and famous. But there are TV celebrities and there are TV celebrities in full make-up. Now, I once believed TV make-up was a bit of dust to stop facial shine on the boys and a bit of slap for the girls. No. Don't get me wrong, I'm a fan of Johnny Vaughan, but he did look like candy floss – candy floss halfway through a drag metamorphosis. Enough to keep a man out of the army for life. It was so hard not to laugh, but it would have been rude, so I formed a tight-lipped smile and nodded politely until he left.

Now the twist in this situation was a submission of urine for medical analysis, to prove on-air that we had indeed not eaten for 24 hours. Anyone can claim they haven't eaten for a day and, understandably, the folks at the Big Brekkie wanted evidence. As I hadn't eaten for 24 hours, this wasn't a problem. But, suddenly, after make-up). Now I was free to spend the next two hours watching the show, eating food to camera during cutaways and meeting Terry Gilliam.

> "I offered **Lisa Tarbuck** my winkle water, but she **declined politely**"

Wee, madame?

So that's the long and short of it. Television: people in make-up wearing headphones. On a plus point, though, my winkle-water was now a star, so I offered it to Lisa Tarbuck who declined politely. So what have we learned?

a lifetime of service, my wee-wee let me down. I had tested positive for food. Outrage. Whatever they were testing for it wasn't food and naturally I protested with the verve of a British athlete. I now understand the pain of being labelled a fraud in front of the nation. Vaughan explained that my hose water had been checked three times, and I was out. Fair enough, I thought, as this made for better TV than watching the back of my head playing *Sonic* all morning, as I was manhandled off set by Vaughan (a shorter man in

1. Appearing on television is like renting a car – just get all the mileage out of it you can.
2. Never, ever, trust anyone with your urine.

Show over and I'm chauffeured to ECTS via everywhere. My wee travelled in a separate car.

Thanks to Chris, Clifton, Little Julius and all at Planet 24. (My man-water will be appearing at the Shaftesbury Theatre, London from September 25 1999 to October 23 2027) ■

DREAM TEAMS

EVERY MONTH TOTAL FOOTBALL'S GARY TIPP BRINGS YOU THE LATEST ON THE SEGA SPONSORED FOOTIE TEAMS

Fast times at Highbury High

Twelve months ago Arsene Wenger's highly-paid cosmopolitan all-stars were suffering from a World Cup hangover. Heads were sore, energy levels were down and many early season performances were not far short of inducing tense, nervous headaches in fans and deep-thinking French managers alike. The harrowing experience of losing out in the silverware stakes three times to Man United didn't help things much either.

But last season's sobering disappointments have seemingly helped to concentrate the mind. The swift replacement of Nicolas Anelka with the world-class left-peg of Davor Suker and the nippy Thierry Henry, has engorged a penetrative front-line with fresh blood. To this end, there's been no repeat of last season's early splutter and Arsenal's rich blend of shoulder-dropping superstars and ankle-tapping foot soldiers have, by and large, kept the Highbury faithful happy. The annual Charity Shield victory was duly accepted and Arsenal's Champions' League form has been extremely promising, with kudos earned from battling draws away at Fiorentina and Barcelona.

Yet scratch the surface and you may find something rotten in the state of Islington. For starters a few too many Premiership defeats have already been tabled, plus Emmanuel Petit's knee injury has exposed a lack of quality through the spine. A problem which has been exacerbated by Patrick Vieira's continued problems with keeping his dummy in his gob. Still, at least Man United aren't doing very well... Oh.

As of next month we'll also be following Saint-Etienne and Sampdoria's progress on the Continent ■

DREAMCAST WEATHER MAP

HIGH PRESSURES AND COLD FRONTS OVER THE LAST 28 DAYS

STORM FRONTS

The earth-rocking events in the Dreamcast world this month

JAPAN: GIDDY GAME SHOW

150,000 gamers can't be wrong: the Tokyo Game Show was the place to be between September 17-19. Although Sony chose the event to parade its bizarre-looking PlayStation2 hardware, Sega held its own, revealing dozens of new DC games and a few Naomi treats. Among the more exhilarating offerings were *Space Channel 5*, a bizarre dancing and shooting game with the sexiest heroine since that girl with the rucksack and teeny shorts, *Crazy Taxi*, a near-perfect home conversion of the arcade hit, and of course *Shenmue*. On Naomi, we witnessed freaky treats like *The Typing of the Dead* (in which you quickly type in the correct words to kill zombies) and *Emergency Call Ambulance*, as well as more orthodox fare like *OutTriggers* and *Toy Fighter*. Third party support for both Naomi and Dreamcast was plentiful, too. What a show.

EUROPE: PRELAUNCH FERVOUR

As we write, DC is yet to be launched in the UK, but you're probably reading this with a brand-new console in front of you. Electronics Boutique has reported unprecedented demand and plans to open many of its shops at 12:01am on October 14, allowing gamers to get their hands on one ASAP. Meanwhile, Blockbuster has set up a Dreamcast rental package for those who want to try before they buy.

US: AMERICA LOVES DREAMCAST

With 500,000 sales and counting, American gamers have truly taken Dreamcast to their collective breast. Even a slight problem with the duplication process, which saw a few thousand games and browsers go out with faults (ie, they wouldn't work) hasn't dampened the Stateside appetite for 128bit gaming action. Predictably *Soul Calibur* has proved the most popular game, with sport sims *Ready 2 Rumble* and *NFL 2K*

HALF-LIFE LIVES

The classic first-person shooter, *Half-Life*, is coming to Dreamcast! News of this rather momentous conversion plan was revealed at the Tokyo Game Show. Check out page 060 for more PC titles set to roll over to Dreamcast...

VM TO GO

Sega of America has made available its first downloadable VM game. US-based Dreamcast owners who log onto **www.dreamcast.com** can now get their hands on a simple American footie game. It's not much cop though.

TAKING THE MICKEY

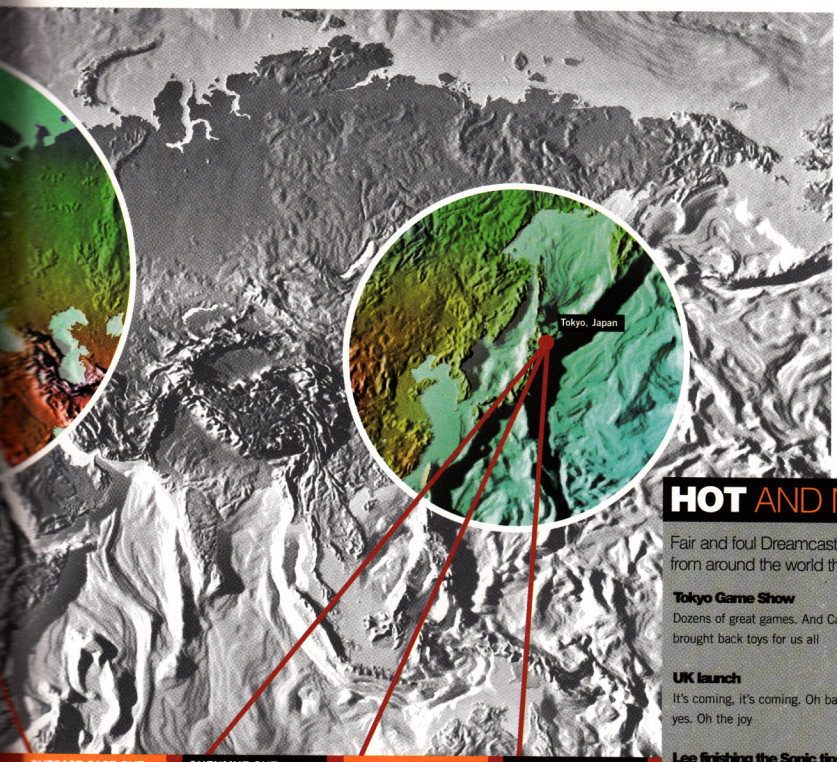
Sega will soon have a huge exhibit at the Innovention pavilion housed within Disney World's Epcot centre. The stand will be packed with Dreamcast demo pods and may show off new Internet features. Ooh.

TAKE 2 TAKES OVER

Take 2 Interactive has purchased legendary Scottish development studio DMA Design from Gallic publisher, Infogrames. At the moment, the famed code house is putting the finishing touches to *Grand Theft Auto 2*.

KEY

Commercial suicide · Delay · Crap · News flash · Movie tie-in · Sex · Cunning stunt · Bad language · Partnership · Oops



OUTCAST CAST OUT

Infogrames has abandoned its plans to port the PC adventure *Outcast* over to Dreamcast. Apparently it would take too long to rip out the game's voxel-based engine and replace it with a DC-friendly polygon one.

SHENMUE OUT

Yu Suzuki's potentially epoch-making adventure has been delayed until Autumn 2000 in Japan. The game was due to arrive later this year. Have Suzuki and co set their ambitions too high with this huge game? Let's hope not.

PHANTASY IN

Sega's Sonic Team is working on a new Dreamcast rendition of classic RPG series *Phantasy Star*. *Phantasy Star Online* will allow players to get together over the Internet and slay dragons, elves and pixies in groups.

MORE EVIL

Capcom has delayed *Resident Evil: Code Veronica* in Japan, but to make up for it, is set to release a modified DC version of *Resident Evil 2* in December. Grrrrrragh?! That's a zombie expressing astonished delight.

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

HOT AND NOT

Fair and foul Dreamcast happenings from around the world this month

Tokyo Game Show
Dozens of great games. And Caspar brought back toys for us all

UK launch
It's coming, it's coming. Oh baby, yes. Oh the joy

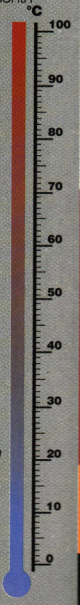
Lee finishing the Sonic tips
"That f***ing frog" he says, referring to Big the Cat's adventure

PC Conversions
Half-Life – yey!
Suzuki Alstare – boo!

Virtua Striker's new title
Virtua Striker 2 ver.2000.1. Erm, that's catchy isn't it?

Slippage
Shenmue, *MDK2* and *Code Veronica* have all been delayed. Dammit

Sea sickness
You should have seen Stephen's face. Green, it was. Green!



FROM PC TO DC

One of Dreamcast's least understood assets is its ability to run a special version of Microsoft's Windows CE operating system. While you cannot slap a copy of *Word* in the DC and rattle off a letter, developers can, with relative ease, have their PC games running on Dreamcast. Windows CE is a very basic set of the tools that help PC games to play, re-written to run on Dreamcast. Sega has claimed that some PC games have been made to work on DC in under two weeks – a process called 'porting'.

The similarities don't just end there. The artwork being made for the very latest PC games is very similar to that being made for Dreamcast, meaning that even if developers don't employ WinCE, they can re-use large amounts of the work they've already done. Handy, huh?

Here then, are some of the finest upcoming PC games which are likely to wander Dreamcast's way. All are possible, and all are worth waiting for. Here's hoping... ■

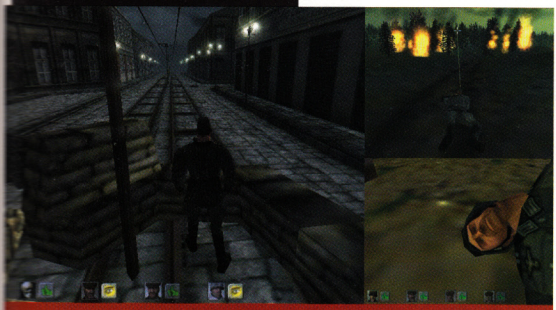
01> GALLEON

> **The talent:** Confounding Factor (No previous titles)
> **Estimated release:** Late '99 (PC), mid 2000 (DC)
> **So what is it?**
Galleon is a thirdperson platform game/adventure. Think *Tomb Raider*, but with far more fluid animation, swashbuckling action and ambition
> **Why should I feel excited about it?**
Confounding father Toby Gard created Lara Croft, and was an instrumental part of the Core team that produced the first *Tomb Raider*. After a split with the company, shortly after the original *Raider*'s release, Toby signed up with Interplay to produce *Galleon*
> **How would its arrival benefit DC?**
Think of what *Tomb Raider* did for PlayStation's profile
> **Likelihood of conversion:** 5/5. It's pretty darn likely ■

02> BLACK AND WHITE

> **The talent:** Lionhead Studios (No previous titles)
> **Estimated release:** Late '99 (PC), late 2000 (DC)
> **So what is it?**
Black and White is a strategy game with more good ideas than, for example, a suggestions box in an office populated by Einstein, Newton, Aristotle and Tony Hart. Oh, and utterly stunning aesthetic values, too
> **Why should I feel excited about it?**
After his split with Bullfrog, game design maestro Peter Molyneux founded Lionhead and began work on *Black and White*. Having created *Populous*, *Theme Park* and *Dungeon Keeper*, Molyneux's creative nous is beyond question. *B&W* is, without a doubt, one of the most hotly-tipped PC titles of the year. It also promises to be an online game of the highest order
> **How would its arrival benefit DC?**
The arrival of an A-list strategy game would do no harm, as you can well imagine, to the dedicated gamer's perception of the Dreamcast. What's more – unlike first-generation PlayStation and Saturn strategy conversions – it looks simply beautiful. That could well help it pique the curiosity of gamers who are traditionally suspicious of more involved titles like these
> **Likelihood of conversion:** 3/5 – Electronic Arts (Black and White's publisher) has so far proved reluctant to commit to DC, which is a stumbling block. That may change, however ■

03> HIDDEN & DANGEROUS



> **The talent:** Illusion Softworks (No previous titles)
> **Estimated release:** Out now (PC), Summer 2000 (DC)
> **So what is it?** You control a squad of up to four soldiers, performing secret WW2-based missions using a simple strategy interface and third or firstperson hands on control
> **Why should I feel excited about it?** Don't be intimidated by the game's use of stealth. *H&D*'s tactical vein will make it tricky for the gaming newcomer to master, but the atmosphere it creates will ensure you play it until you do so. Its missions and excellently-crafted environments have an authentic feel. From escorting a rocket scientist through occupied Prague, to a desperate defence of a narrow peninsula, *H&D* is distinctive and innovative
> **How would its arrival benefit DC?** Kudos aplenty. From its sniper rifles to its sheer freedom – you can jump in and drive cars, or steal machine gun emplacements – *H&D* is at the forefront of tactics-tinged shoot 'em ups. If Illusion can sort out a working fourplayer online option, it wouldn't harm DC's Web credentials, either
> **Likelihood of conversion:** 5/5 – Illusion has stated that it wants to do it. Take Two has said it wants to publish it. Which makes it pretty much inevitable. Good ■

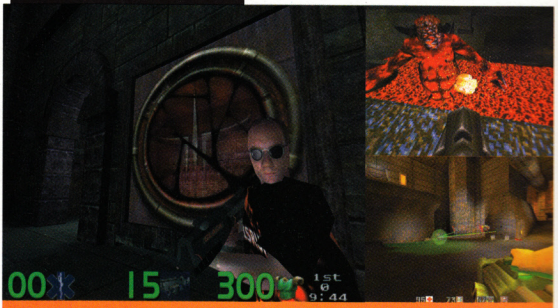
04> DRIVER

> **The talent:** Reflections (*Destruction Derby 1 & 2*)
> **Estimated release:** Out now (PC), mid-2000 (DC)
> **So what is it?** *Carmageddon* with subtlety and poise; a fully 3D *Grand Theft Auto* on the right side of the law. In *Driver*, you play the role of a driver. And you drive; often quickly, and away from lots of police cars
> **Why should I feel excited about it?** PlayStation owners went ape for it, and PC users are about to do the same. Despite some of the most laughable FMV sequences we've seen in ages, *Driver* has atmosphere in spades. And cool handbrake turns
> **How would its arrival benefit DC?** It's a great game. Not classic, but great – a solid eight that would delight many Dreamcast owners
> **Likelihood of conversion:** 4/5 – There's even going to be a Game Boy version. Surely it's a cert? ■

05> FLYING HEROES

> **The talent:** Illusion Softworks (*Hidden & Dangerous*)
> **Estimated release:** Late '99 (PC), late 2000 (DC)
> **So what is it?** Well, this is the funny thing. It's an arcade-tinged flying game, with loads of weird and wonderful craft to attack friends or CPU-controlled foes with
> **Why should I feel excited about it?** It's by Illusion Softworks, the company that caused such a stir a few months back with *Hidden & Dangerous*. Illusion's exemplary debut. The company is made up of a talented bunch of East Europeans, and Illusion appears unfettered by the bureaucratic, purse-led, trend-obsessed values that, sadly, drive many good developers elsewhere. Rumour has it that they have a Midas touch. But *Flying Heroes*, not time, will be the proof of that
> **How would its arrival benefit DC?** If it's of the same calibre as *Hidden & Dangerous*? Massively. If not? Well, it can hardly hurt.
> **Likelihood of conversion:** 4/5 – Illusion obviously want to develop this game for Dreamcast ■

06> QUAKE III: ARENA



> **The talent:** id (*Wolfenstien, Doom, Quake* and *Quake II*)
> **Estimated release:** Late '99 (PC), mid to late 2000 (DC)
> **So what is it?** A remarkably simple, but soon-to-be widely copied premise. *Quake III: Arena* is a firstperson shoot 'em up with an onus on multiplayer. When you're not online against human opponents, you can pit wits against CPU-controlled 'bots' in a variety of themed tournaments
> **Why should I feel excited about it?** *Quake* and *Quake II* helped popularise online gaming, and refined the *Doom* blueprint for how firstperson shoot 'em ups should play in their singleplayer modes. *Quake III* instead concentrates on permutations of multiplayer deathmatches. From capture the flag to everyone-for-themselves gib-fests (as our peculiar PC friends call them), *Quake III* is well on its way to becoming Dreamcast's online game of choice
> **How would its arrival benefit DC?** As if we need to spell it out. If any game is going to really test the stability and capacity of Sega's embryonic online gaming networks, this will be it
> **Likelihood of conversion:** 4/5 – Palms to be greased first, we feel ■

07> TEAM FORTRESS 2

> **The talent:** Valve (*Half-Life*)
> **Estimated release:** Mid 2000 (PC), late 2000 (DC)
> **So what is it?** An ambitious attempt at a generational leap for the online firstperson shoot 'em up. Or, if you'd prefer, the closest to an enjoyable war you'll ever get, without any of that nasty Saving Private Ryan-style intestine juggling
> **Why should I feel excited about it?** Well, it's another one of those multiplayer games. Over the next few years, online gaming will begin to seriously compete with its traditional, reclusive counterpart. *Team Fortress 2* promises to monkey around with firstperson shooter basics, offering a far more immersive, involving style of arcade action on your console. From storming buildings with machine guns, to fighting a desperate retreat with sniper rifles, it could revolutionise its genre in the same way that *Half-Life* did. Its use of intelligent graphics 'scripts' – where it liberally translates player animation to make it look more dramatic – will make it a favourite, too
> **How would its arrival benefit DC?** "More players good, less players baaaad," as Orwellian, Dreamcast-owning sheep might chant
Likelihood of conversion: 4/5 – Hopeful, but will European 33.6 modems cope with the strain? ■

08> GRAND PRIX 3

> **The talent:** Geoff Crammond (*F1GP 1 and 2, Revs, Stunt Car Racer*)
> **Estimated release:** Late '99 (PC), late 2000 (DC)
> **So what is it?** Potentially the most realistic, minutely-detailed F1 simulation, on any format, since Geoff Crammond wrote *F1GP2*
> **Why should I feel excited about it?** See above. At present, Dreamcast lacks a top-notch racing game. *Sega Rally 2* is very enjoyable, but hardly essential Dreamcast software. A fully-featured *GP3* – with, perhaps, the addition of an accessible arcade mode – could make DC the envy of other console formats
> **How would its arrival benefit DC?** We've OD-ed on fighting games. So who doesn't relish the prospect of an truly authentic spin in an F1 car?
> **Likelihood of conversion:** 2/5 – As soon as Microprose is convinced that a market exists for it ■

09> ROLLERCOASTER TYCOON

> **The talent:** Chris Sawyer (*Transport Tycoon*)
> **Estimated release:** Out now (PC), late 2000 (DC)
> **So what is it?** Well, you're a tycoon, right? And you build rollercoasters, see? Simple, n'est pas?
> **Why should I feel excited about it?** The 32bit consoles got conversions of Bullfrog's *Theme Park* just after their launches when, to the surprise of certain critics, it enjoyed a fair amount of success. And *Rollercoaster Tycoon* is, practically, a 1999 reiteration of *Theme Park*. If the programming bods can come up with a simple-to-use interface, the marketing souls will mutter about 'mainstream penetration' and other such publishing Holy Grails
> **How would its arrival benefit DC?** There's nothing else like it, really. Apart from *Theme Park 2*, that is
> **Likelihood of conversion:** 3/5 – A few loop-the-loops to be negotiated before it arrives ■

10> SILVER

The talent: Ex-Tribe staff (former Ocean in-house development team)
Estimated release: Out now (PC), early to mid-2000 (DC)
So what is it? It's an RPG that, according to its developers, was in development a long, long time before *Final Fantasy VII* was released. Hmmm… so now what do you think that sentence suggests *Silver* resembles, exactly? That should just about put you in the picture
Why should I feel excited about it? It's a solid (if a tad unspectacular) RPG adventure of Western origin. While *Silver* lacks the touch of sparkle, class and the sheer size that SquareSoft's adventures often feature, Dreamcast is still currently under-represented in this genre, so there is a definite gap in the market for it. We don't reckon that *Silver* would be able to top the charts, but it does have sufficient quality to enter them in the first place
How would its arrival benefit DC? It would make a refreshing change to talk to characters in games before we kill them
Likelihood of conversion: 4/5 – Infogrames, owner of Ocean, is rather keen on Dreamcast, or so we've heard. Keep your eyes peeled ■

11> ULTIMA ONLINE

> **The talent:** Origin (*Wing Commander* series, *Ultima* series)
> **Estimated release:** Out now (PC), late 2000 (DC)
> **So what is it?** *Ultima Online* is an online RPG. You connect up to the Internet, start up the game, and the Origin servers allow you to enter the world of Britannia. And then you can talk with other people in the game. And go off adventuring. And do exciting stuff like that

> **Why should I feel excited about it?** As a genre pioneer, *Ultima Online* demands the attention of truly hardcore gamers. For the rest of us, it's woefully complex. It takes ages until you get any decent amounts of money, strength for your feeble character, or status. And, to be honest, it's a bit too much hard work for the first few weeks of play. It's the sort of game you either love or detest with a wild-eyed passion

> **How would its arrival benefit DC?** Over 300,000 people pay a subscription fee of $10 a month in the States to play the PC version. But that's America, and they're a bit odd, frankly. How many Dreamcast owners would spend the same amount of time, money and effort? Origin is no-doubt wondering about that right now
> **Likelihood of conversion:** 3/5 – The more Dreamcast sells, the more likely it is that Origin will convert it ■

12> MIDTOWN MADNESS

> **The talent:** Angel Softworks (*Motorcross Madness*)
> **Estimated release:** Out now (PC), mid to late 2000 (Dreamcast)
> **So what is it?** Probably the best arcade-style racing game ever developed for PC – and, arguably, one of the finest, most ambitious driving games ever created
> **Why should I feel excited about it?** The Chicago Edition – the version now on release for PC – offers, as its name suggests, a map of Chicago to race on. It's absolutely stunning to look at. From realistic traffic to sunsets, snow to pedestrians, it offers a working simulation of the Windy City. With amazing police chases, stupidly high-speed races through rush hour traffic and incredible visual detail, there's no two ways about it: Sega must sign this game
> **How would its arrival benefit DC?** Properly publicised, it would be the racing equivalent of *Soul Calibur*. We're not kidding, you know
> **Likelihood of conversion:** 3/5 – Or even less so if Microsoft has it pencilled in as a possibility for the touted X-Box console ■

13> DUKE NUKEM FOREVER

> **The talent:** 3D Realms (*Duke Nukem 3D* – shown above)
> **Estimated release:** Early 2000 (PC), late 2000 (DC)
> **So what is it?** A firstperson shoot 'em up starring the pugnacious Duke himself – a popular, un-PC, PC favourite
> **Why should I feel excited about it?** Years in the making, *Forever* ranks highly on many PC gamers' wish list

The original *Duke Nukem* is, rightly, regarded as a minor classic of its day, typified by its varied scenery and – for the time – immersive maps
> **How would its arrival benefit DC?** Duke is no Lara Croft, but he's certainly a marketable commodity. And the game might actually turn out to be brilliant, too
> **Likelihood of conversion:** 2/5 – The PC version isn't finished yet ■

14> COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2

> **The talent:** Codemasters (*TOCA 1&2, Micro Machines* series, *Colin McRae Rally*)
> **Estimated release:** Early 2000 (PC), mid 2000 (DC)
> **So what is it?** It's the sequel to what many critics reckon to be the best rally simulation ever created for a home format. The original *CMR* was utterly fantastic
> **Why should I feel excited about it?** Because *Colin McRae Rally 2* would be the game *Sega Rally 2* should be, but isn't. Incredible scenery, excellent physics, superlative track design – it will offer the lot. You may wonder how we can make such sweeping statements when the PC version isn't even out yet – but we can, and for good reason: Codemasters just doesn't get things wrong with driving games. And if, by some infinitesimally perverse, and unlikely chance that it does, we'll eat our copy of *Tokyo Highway Battle*. Urgh
> **How would its arrival benefit DC?** Great driving game + great fighting game = Sega success and more great games, basically
> **Likelihood of conversion:** 4/5 – It must happen. Sega is probably sending notes saying, "We love you, Codies!" as we write ■

NUMBER THREE

TRUMPS

The stars of the greatest beat 'em up ever pucker up for your playing pleasure

Soul Calibur is massive. It's not just the lightning fast gameplay or the fact that you can duck and dive your way all over the vast 3D arenas that make Namco's monster title such a hit. It's the characters. There's Isabella Valentine and the way she yanks back her Ivy Blade, letting it land with a satisfying slap on her lycra-clad buttocks. Who could forget Voldo, the lapdancing gimp in his crushed velvet arseless chaps? And the first time you see Nightmare swing Soul Edge with a crash to the ground, you can really feel the weight of that behemoth blade.

Finally, there's the lovely Taki. We recommend you play Taki in her alternative costume – you know, that spray-on pink number that accentuates her sumptuously rendered posterior. Three times a lady, indeed ■

DC-UK DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Background

History: Recognise this chap? He was that pirouetting lunatic seen in Namco's Tekken series.

Vital Statistics

- **Birth Place:** Unknown
- **Age:** Unknown
- **Height:** 6ft 7in
- **Weight:** 126lbs
- **Blood type:** O
- **Weapon:** Katana
- **Weapon name:** Murasama
- **Style:** Mugai Nimatsu

YOSHIMITSU

DC-UK DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Background

History: Was once a human, but a Grand Priest transformed him and sent him to find Soul Edge.

Vital Statistics

- **Birth Place:** Unknown
- **Age:** Three
- **Height:** 6ft
- **Weight:** 190lbs
- **Blood type:** Unknown
- **Weapon:** Sword and shield
- **Weapon name:** As Sword and Some Shield
- **Style:** Mixed Ninjutsu

LIZARD MAN

DC-UK DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Background

History: Has a thing for Mina. Was dismissed from the DPF for leading his troops to their death.

Vital Statistics

- **Birth Place:** Chi-Ri-San, Korea
- **Age:** 36
- **Height:** 5ft 7in
- **Weight:** 137lbs
- **Blood type:** AB
- **Weapon:** Chinese Sword
- **Weapon name:** Blue Thunder
- **Style:** Hwang's Long Blade

HWANG SUNG KYUNG

DC-UK DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Background

History: Used Soul Edge to resurrect his father, who he killed as a child. Then realised he was mad and his dad was still dead.

Vital Statistics

- **Birth Place:** Holy Roman Empire
- **Age:** 19
- **Height:** 6ft 5in
- **Weight:** 110lbs
- **Blood type:** A
- **Weapon:** Zweihander
- **Weapon name:** Requiem
- **Style:** Self-taught

SIEGRIED SCHTAUFFEN

DC-UK DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Background

History: His adopted son Bangoo has been kidnapped by Ikaridmen, so he's come to rescue the lad.

Vital Statistics

- **Birth Place:** London, raised in the New Continent
- **Age:** 38
- **Height:** 6ft 6in
- **Weight:** 187lbs
- **Blood type:** Unknown
- **Weapon:** Battle-axe
- **Weapon name:** Apocalypse
- **Style:** Self-taught

ROCK

DC-UK DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Background

History: Was brought back from the dead by a Grand Priest to find Soul Edge.

Vital Statistics

- **Birth Place:** Unknown
- **Age:** 3
- **Height:** 2ft 4in
- **Weight:** 209lbs
- **Blood type:** None
- **Weapon:** Giant Axe
- **Weapon name:** Knock 'Em Dead
- **Style:** Gilkis

ASTAROTH

DC-UK DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Background

History: Her Mokkori-maru blade contains shards of the destroyed Soul Edge. Wants to destroy Soul Edge.

Vital Statistics

- **Birth Place:** Japan
- **Age:** 25
- **Height:** 5ft 7in
- **Weight:** 117lbs
- **Blood type:** A
- **Weapon:** Ninjatou
- **Weapon name:** Rekke-maru & Mekki-maru
- **Style:** Musou-tatsin-ryu

TAKI

DC-UK DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Background

History: Proud owner of Soul Edge and a supernatural but deformed right hand. Devours souls for fun.

Vital Statistics

- **Birth Place:** Unknown
- **Age:** Unknown
- **Height:** 9ft 6in
- **Weight:** 209lbs
- **Blood type:** 136lbs
- **Weapon:** Soul Edge
- **Weapon name:** Soul Edge
- **Style:** Memories of Soul Edge

NIGHTMARE

DC-UK DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Background

History: Kilik was discovered at the door of the Temple as a baby and trained by Edge Master. Has an Evil Seed in him.

Vital Statistics

- **Birth Place:** Unknown
- **Age:** 19
- **Height:** 5ft 6in
- **Weight:** 136lbs
- **Blood type:** A
- **Weapon:** Rod
- **Weapon name:** Kali-Yuga and Dvapara-Yuga
- **Style:** Secret Art of Ling-Sheung Su Style Rod

KILIK

DC-UK DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Background

History: Wields her sword and performed a ritual where a supernatural hand possessed the blade.

Vital Statistics

- **Birth Place:** London, England
- **Age:** 26
- **Height:** 6ft
- **Weight:** 128lbs
- **Blood type:** AB
- **Weapon:** Snake Sword
- **Weapon name:** Ivy Blade
- **Style:** Unknown

ISABELLA VALENTINE

OUR INDUSTRY INSIDER SPEAKS OUT

ABSOLUTELY **FACT**

FEAR IS THE PATH TO THE DARK SIDE

Dreamcast sold over 400,000 units in its first week on sale in America. A sign of sure-fire success, or proof that Americans are so stupid they bought Dreamcasts by mistake because they thought they were huge burgers? Don't get ketchup on the disc, Jim-Bob! A better test of Dreamcast's staying power will come from the more discerning British gamer. *Soul Calibur* has massively boosted Dreamcast sales in Japan, and it'll no doubt do the business when it comes out here for Christmas.

If it arrives by Christmas, that is. After all, Dreamcast was only the single most important event in Sega Europe's rollercoaster history, and Sega managed to make a spectacular pig's arse of the September 23 launch date. If Sega had a pound for each momentous reference to September 23 made across the media, it could've bought Sony, axed all PlayStation production, taken the entire population of Wales on holiday to Ibiza and eradicated Third World debt with the change.

The launch date shambles was inexcusable – Sega only had ten months since the Japanese release to get it right, for gawdsake! For all the promises that "we've changed" and "learnt from our mistakes", it still seems like Sega can't quite help making the odd blunder here and there. Have you checked the odds on Arsenal being relegated this season? Might be worth a fiver on that one. Still, Dreamcast's here now. So what happens when PlayStation2 hype starts? Or rather when it starts to get even bigger – seeing as that steady corporate march has already started, with everyone from Games Exchange to Clinton Cards desperate to cash in on those Sony-backed cash-printing opportunities.

PS2 is not to be feared. The box my trainers came in looks better than its 1982 Ford Escort ventilation system design, with just as much amusement coming from its predictable release games – *Tekken*, *Gran Turismo* and *Ridge Racer*. Emotion Engine? The only emotion contained in that obvious pile of sequels is suicidal boredom. So what about PS2's Internet access? Oh right, they forgot to mention that no one has even invented the technology yet. Something about upgrading to custom networks and cable modems – why don't they just put tin foil on our ears and beam the games right into our minds?

Sega's Megadrive used to be as commonplace as PlayStation, but then Sega blew it by releasing the Saturn – an over-complex, expensive and ugly black machine. Is there a pattern emerging here? ■

'Dave 2000'

"PS2 is not to be feared. The only 'emotion' contained in its obvious pile of sequels is suicidal boredom"

DAVE PERRY

He's tall, handsome and rich – so why the hell is he still making videogames? **DC-UK** explores the paradox that is Dave Perry

This is hell. Virgin Interplay has taken a tiny room at ECTS and filled it with demo consoles playing incredibly desirable games *like Marvel Vs Capcom, MDK2* and *Messiah*. But it's 28 degrees in here, and there's no air conditioning. No air even. Like we say, this is hell.

The ironic thing is, the room is done up like a church to celebrate the 'Christ-like' resurrection of Virgin Interplay after a dodgy 1998. There are mock stone walls, stained glass windows and, bizarrely, a crucified shop window dummy. Everything stinks of sweat. There's no room to move. This is perhaps what happens when you take God's house in vain. Strangely, though, when **DC-UK** finds Dave Perry he is as relaxed and jovial as ever, his laconic Irish-meets-Californian drawl strangely calming. The mad bastard is actually happy to be here...

How are you doing?
Great. I love ECTS, I've been here every year. It energises us again, it gets us all fired up and wanting to go back and kick butt. When you're in California, in a little office by the ocean, and you're looking out the window at the waves and the sun, you start thinking, "Do I really have to stay in here until midnight again?" But when you see people's reactions to the game it makes you want to give them more, because you want more reaction next time – it's like a drug, it really is. It should be mandatory for all teams to come to a show like this.

How did you get into games?
I started off a long time ago in school before you could buy games, writing game code for magazines. In those days you'd buy the magazine and type the entire program in yourself. I wrote those programs for a long time, and then WH Smith started stocking games on the high street, and suddenly there were games everywhere and it went crazy. So I decided, hey, I'm going to stay in this business. I had a choice between doing that and being a dentist.

At the time dentistry sounded like a fun job to me. I don't know why. I now realise that after being a dentist for one year you'd just go crazy. Awful job.

You've never been tempted to write a dentist game, then?
No, but that would be cool, wouldn't it?

In five years, what do you think the big thing in games is going to be?
Freedom. That's what gamers will want. And you're gonna taste it in some games and feel terribly restricted in others. Take soccer sims. If you're playing a soccer game, you can run up and down the field all you like, but there's this little white line that goes around the pitch and that's the edge of the world, it's like a wall to you. You can't go and kick the manager, or dribble the ball off to the changing room, which you should be able to do, right? And you want to see how the world would deal with this, what the crowd would do. The minute you realise you have that power, that will change gaming. Freedom will be like a drug to some people once they start to get used to it.

What impresses you about Dreamcast?
One of the smartest things Sega did is put the modem in the machine. They were bullshitting on that for such a long period and then finally they agreed to do it. The way the console industry works is, whoever has the best machine in the eyes of the schoolkids, tends to win. So now when a PlayStation2 kid and a Dreamcast kid are arguing, the Dreamcast kid has an angle. He can play games against people around the world 24 hours a day – and Sony has admitted they're not going to have a modem. So why isn't Sega maximising on that? The success of any new videogame console is often based on arguments between kids. Sega needs to teach kids how to win that argument ■

PROFILE

■ **Name:** Dave Perry
■ **History:** Dave Perry was born in Ireland, and then he moved over to Britain to work for a number of developers before setting up Shiny Entertainment in 1993. The company's key titles include *Earthworm Jim, MDK* and the forthcoming *Messiah*, which may well receive a Dreamcast conversion. Shiny is based in Laguna Beach, California, just yards from the ocean...

"Freedom. That's what gamers will want. **And you're gonna taste it in some games**"

■ Photography **Nick Wilson**

"We're pretty confident that we used **all of the hardware's performance.** But developers usually think that **in the early days of a new console...**"

TERUAKI KONISHI
SHINOBU NIMURA

Meet the videogame veterans behind *Soul Calibur*, the greatest, most beautiful fighting game in the world

Photography **Hiroki Izumi**

Locked away from the searing lights and noise of the Tokyo Game Show, two of the most talented developers in the world sit opposite **DC-UK** and drop a bombshell that echoes around the room for several seconds. "Seven months." Once the dust settles, it starts to sink in that *Soul Calibur*, the masterpiece that has rocked Dreamcast's world, was completed in the same time most developers spend choosing their game's name.

To be fair, they had already produced an arcade game of the same name, but it bears little resemblance to the Dreamcast *Soul Calibur* we've fallen in love with. Whatever, faced with the game's senior project director Teruaki Konishi (wearing spectacles), and its lead programmer Shinobu Nimura, **DC-UK** wastes little time getting over the shock. There's a lot more to talk about yet.

Soul Calibur has been widely acclaimed as the best Dreamcast game to date. Did you expect it to go down so well?
While we were making *Soul Calibur*, we felt fairly confident of success, although until it was actually released, we were maybe 50 per cent positive and 50 per cent uncertain. But really the success of *Soul Calibur* hasn't come as a surprise to us at all.

The original arcade machine was far less powerful than Dreamcast. How much data could you take from the coin-op version?
Although we used some of the same motion capture, we recorded some new sequences for the Dreamcast version as well. Also, since Dreamcast lets characters move more precisely than the arcade machine, we had to rework all of the animation for the Dreamcast version.

What does the Tekken team reckon to Soul Calibur – are they any good at it?
We work just next to each other. Our team and the *Tekken* guys have a good rivalry with each other. They're pretty good at playing our game, but they can't beat us. But then the *Soul Calibur* staff can't beat them at *Tekken*, either.

Since the machine was new to you, was it difficult to make Soul Calibur for Dreamcast?
Since we spent time analysing Dreamcast's hardware performance, and settling the game's objectives in advance, the development made unexpectedly rapid progress. It took about seven months from studying the hardware to the final version. We're pretty confident that we used all of the hardware's performance. But developers usually think that in the early days of a new console, and later have to change their minds...

Now you've had time to reflect on it, which aspect of Soul Calibur are you most proud of?
It's really difficult to say, because we devoted so much time to make all aspects great. Maybe it's that the game can be enjoyed by players of all levels, from beginners to experts.

What was your inspiration for the game – do any of the team take part in any real-life martial arts, or anything like that?
We started out by making some really cool 3D character models and weapons, as a trial game. Then we thought about how they'd really suit an action game, and we said, "Well, how about a fighting game?" That's how *Soul Calibur* was born. As for real-life martial arts, some staff do take part in Kendo (Japanese fencing), Syorinji-Kenpo (Chinese martial arts) and so on. *Soul Calibur* was probably influenced by all of those.

Have you been able to take a break since finishing the game or are you already working on something else?
After completing a Japanese version, we had to do the American version straight away. Now we're making the PAL version. And after finishing that we're going to take a long holiday.

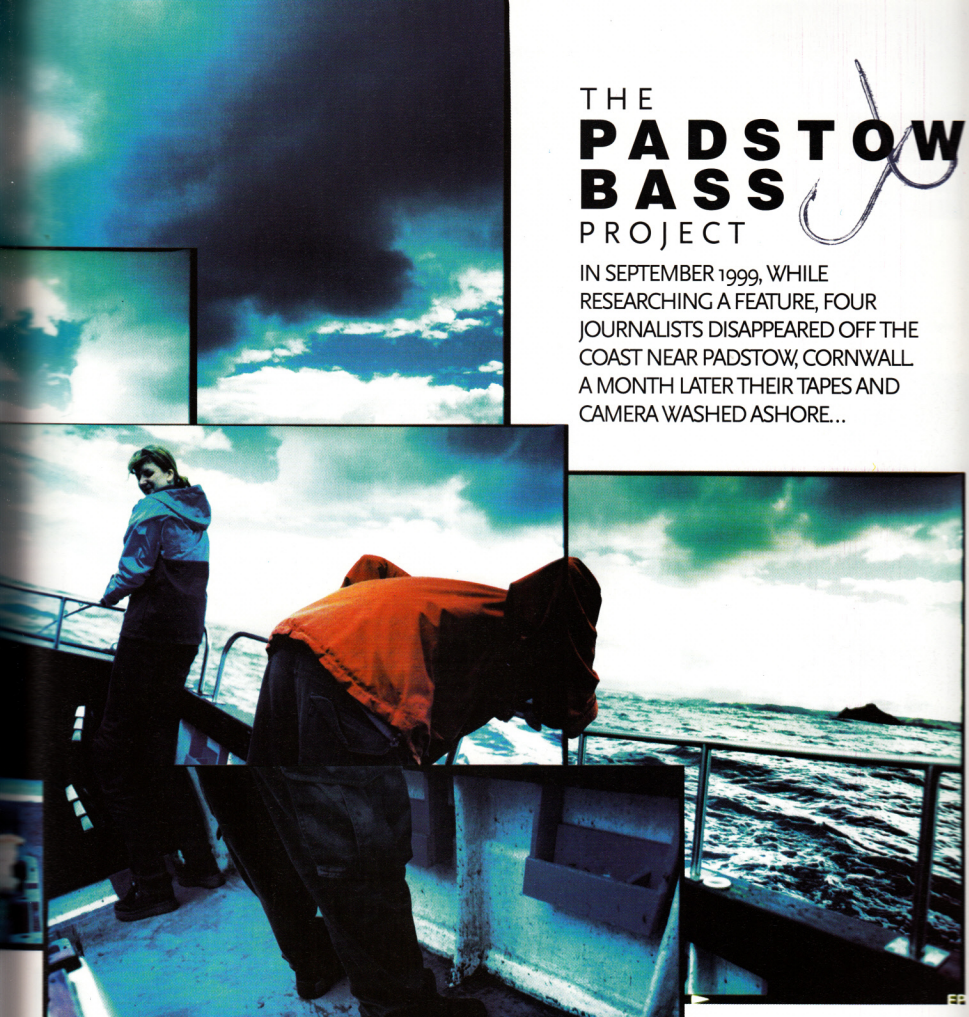
Finally, if you could make Soul Calibur again, what would you change?
We're totally satisfied with the gameplay, but if we could have had longer to create the game, we would have added a few more different characters with different weapons in their hands. But that's it ■

PROFILE

- **Name:** Teruaki Konishi
- **Title:** Senior project director
- **Age:** 29
- **History:** Pedigrees don't come much finer than being a member of the original *Tekken* coin-op development team, although Konishi-san started out in 1989 in the sales department. Since then he's worked on *Soul Edge* (aka *Soul Blade*), and now *Soul Calibur* for both home and arcade. Likes to play Internet games in the little spare time he gets.
- **Name:** Shinobu Nimura
- **Title:** Lead programmer
- **Age:** 33
- **History:** Another long serving Namco staffer, Nimura-san worked on several of the company's older coin-ops after joining in 1991, before going on to join the *Soul Edge* team. He's worked on every version since, and counts cycling among his hobbies.

THE PADSTOW BASS PROJECT

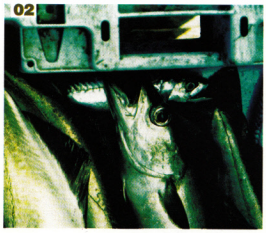
IN SEPTEMBER 1999, WHILE RESEARCHING A FEATURE, FOUR JOURNALISTS DISAPPEARED OFF THE COAST NEAR PADSTOW, CORNWALL. A MONTH LATER THEIR TAPES AND CAMERA WASHED ASHORE...

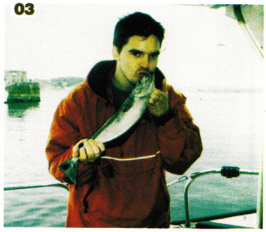


■ Words: **Esther Woodman**
■ Photography: **Nick Wilson**

Keith proudly shows off his catch. Looking a bit pale, isn't he? That's because his hand is stuck inside a dead fish

01 Keith reels in another pollack, and very professional he looks, too
02 Slippery customers, these. So we killed them
03 Minutes earlier, Steve was throwing up. Minutes later, he'd slipped it the tongue





Kiss my pollacks

► bit, letting it out a bit... it's not rocket science, but we were beginning to feel rather pleased with ourselves. By the time we'd got ten or so of the blighters wiggling about on the bottom of the boat, it was time to head out to deeper waters to catch us some meaty fish.

As we moved off, Mike explained that, given the right equipment and bait, we could quite easily have caught some shark in these waters. This was not the best time to tell us – we were in a boat about the size and shape of a public toilet, Steve had begun to go an unattractive green colour and we'd all got several pints of beer and a couple of bottles of red wine sloshing around inside us from the night before. They showed us photos of their most recent sharking trip – a haul of bloody massive sharks (type unspecified, but they were the ones with those big fins on the back and really sharp teeth) and told us that they had spotted a Great White off the coast of Cornwall earlier on in the year. Unfortunately for them, the only people who believed them were the biologists back on shore. Unfortunately for us, though, they didn't look as though they were pulling our legs. Steve's face, at this point, went through many unpleasant shades, and he spent the next three hours bent over the rail making pretty patterns in the water with his breakfast.

Despite having fabulous natural ability, Mike and Phil were keen to dissuade us from catching too many fish – they only wanted us to catch as many as we were going to eat. And actually, that was fine by us, we weren't really in the mood for slipping about on a boat covered in fish guts. Even in competitions, they said, they'd throw back the vast majority of fish that they caught, which is dead gentlemanly of them, I must say. It's weird to think of fishing as a kind of blood sport – none of us had even considered what it would be like to watch these things gasp for their last breath around our feet, and it's not at all nice.

01 Keith catches three mackerel at the same time. Blimey

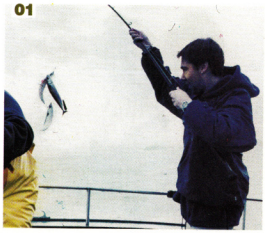
02 Mike waves to us, as the Blue Fox makes good its escape from The Padstow Four

03 If you'd heard what he'd just suggested to me, you would have pulled the same face, too

04 Poor little Steve tries not to hurl for the seventh time. And fails, by the way, but we left that picture out

You tend to be anaesthetised from all of this if you don't have to make a living from it – polythene packaging disguises the guts and suffocation of your dinner entirely. And this is where *Sega Bass Fishing* as an experience comes into its own – there's no mess and no guilt. You feel like a hero for landing the biggest fish of the day. And you can sit back smugly, because your sandal-wearing, hairy-faced vegetarian mates aren't liable to ostracise you when you play Sega's version either. Unless they're particularly hairy and have extremely big sandals.

Let's get back to the slaughter. After about an hour of chugging along the waves at 12 mph, which doesn't seem very fast on dry land, but it was fast enough for us old sea-dogs to be flung about in a most graceless manner, we'd reached our second destination of the trip. By this time, Nick had suspiciously stopped taking photographs, had asked for water and was sitting by the cabin looking very sorry for himself. We



were now above a shipwreck, where it's relatively easy to catch fish, because little fishies like playing around in them. Fools. Which is one of many reason why I don't understand why fish are called brain-food – so far we'd managed to catch shedloads of mackerel with bits of fake feather, and this time we were out to catch big fat pollack with nothing more appetising than bits of coloured plastic. I mean... dur.

Nick had now joined Steve and was patently showing off by trying to lure the pollack up from the sea-bed through the contents of his stomach alone. Keith and I just about managed to hang on to the contents of our stomachs, while desperately trying not to listen to the wet slapping of dying mackerel or the cheery noise of sick against sea water.

It's at these moments in life that one has to think of one's Queen and country and just bally well get on with things. We'd been given our newly-baited rods to catch the pollack, and we were damned if we were going home empty handed apart from a couple of tiddlers. Keith made us proud by reeling in loads of the buggers, one of which was like *this* big. Phil commented that it was a 'Bloody Hell Pollack'. Thinking this was some nautical term I had not yet read about in Angler's Weekly (cracking read, by the way), I pulled my serious scrutinising face and asked what the non-angling explanation for that was. I was told that a 'Bloody Hell Pollack' was a little bit smaller than a 'Jesus Christ' one. Cheers, then.

Michael helped me haul up my first pollack (I've got bony girl arms, you see), which I was most impressed with, I must admit, cos it was a big gruesome-looking fella. We managed to catch a fair few by moving the boat up and down over the wreck, although what I thought was the largest ever fish in the world (ever!) turned out to be part of the wreck itself, and Mike decided that even a strapping lass like myself couldn't haul five tons of barnacled boat to the surface. Shame.

By this point we were getting quite blasé about it all. I mean, despite the pitching of the boat, the sounds of retching in the near distance, being completely covered in fish scales and slipping about in fish entrails we could have been in our living rooms playing the virtual version. Observing that we were lapsing into nonchalance, Mike and Phil decided that we should move on to the last leg of our trip, and catch ourselves some ray. Unfortunately, this was also the moment that Steve and Nick started a small mutiny, and because us fishing folk are a democratic lot, but against our better judgements, we decided to turn back to calmer waters inland just for the sake of a little peace.

This part of the journey took us about 45 minutes, and Michael used the time to his advantage by filleting all the fish we'd caught so far. He picked up the largest pollack (by squeezing his thumb into its eye socket. Brrr) and, with his big sharp knife, he cut behind the gills, and just in front of the tail. He then slid his knife up the side of the fish, avoiding all of the bones, and ended up with a big flap of flesh. He repeated this on the other side, whipped off the skin on top, and chucked the remaining inedible bits of fish into the sea for the scavenging gulls. The meat we'd got left was pretty much indistinguishable from what you would pick up at the supermarket, and looked almost ready to chuck in the frying pan. Mind you, it was still a bit icky, though. The mackerel can't be filleted as cleanly – they're smaller and by this stage, rigor mortis had set in, so they're dead stiff (oh the mirth), so Mike just cut them in half. I was totally engrossed with the speed and skill with which he was cutting up our catch and, unfortunately, after a while, so were the others. I had to move very swiftly up to the cabin to avoid bits of sick flying into my face. Honestly, you can't take them anywhere.

JAQUES ON POLLACK

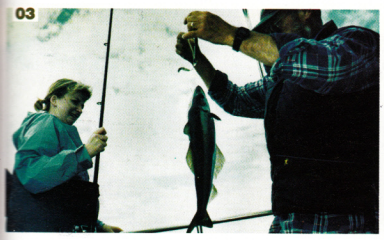
"Its scientific name is Pollachius virens, but it is now known more commonly as pollack, coalfish or coley. The pollack is greenish brown on its back, and a bit paler on the sides. It can reach up to 130cm in length, but is usually found to be around 30 to 110cm, weighing anything up to 32kg. It is a member of the cod family, and tastes quite similar, although it can be quite watery in comparison. This month we mainly ate it pan-fried, with a little parsley and lemon." Cheers, Karl

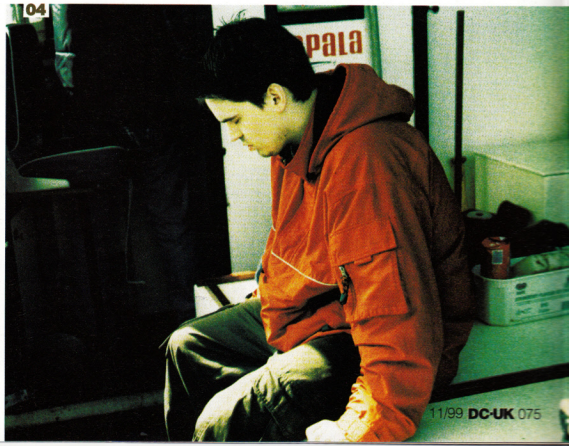
We stopped a little way into the harbour but didn't stay for very long, and caught very little. Well, nothing actually. And for fear of Steve and Nick's good health, we pulled into Padstow harbour half an hour later, missing out on three hours of good fishing time. We waved goodbye to our friendly hosts for the morning, who were so cheery – bless 'em – that they pissed themselves laughing as soon as we'd turned the corner. Two seconds after we'd put our feet on dry land, Steve managed to cheer up considerably and persuaded us to all get some fish and chips. But the luck of the gods is not yet with young Stephen, because within five minutes he, his chips and his can of Lilt were shat on from a great height by a seagull. It was probably the finest comedy moment since Richard Madeley went to Waitrose.

We reckoned that this was probably the best time for us to leave, so off we popped, into our bright green van, trying not to look too much like Fred, Daphne, Velma and Shaggy climbing into the Mystery Machine and started the journey back to Bath with our dustbin-liner full of freshly-killed fish. And from here on in, there's not a lot to report apart from things that aren't necessarily fish-related. Steve's luck, you'll be glad to hear, changed on the way home when he managed to snaffle a free portion of fries from Wimpy. We divided up our fish, and I cooked my share of it the next day at a dinner party where it went down to much critical acclaim.

And so, at the end of the day, would we rather play *Sega Bass Fishing* or go out in a real boat, in real water, with a real rod, catching real fish? Let's look at it this way: basically, our day out consisted of extremely bad weather, muscle-ache from reeling the fish in, bruises in our sides from the rod, several litres of vomit, four hangovers, that dreadfully unstylish apparel, sarcastic quips from our skipper, the unexpected trauma of having to deal with our first kill, and having to stare into the depths of hell, via a pollack's mouth. Oh, and that humourous bird poo attack. Crikey, that's a tough one ■

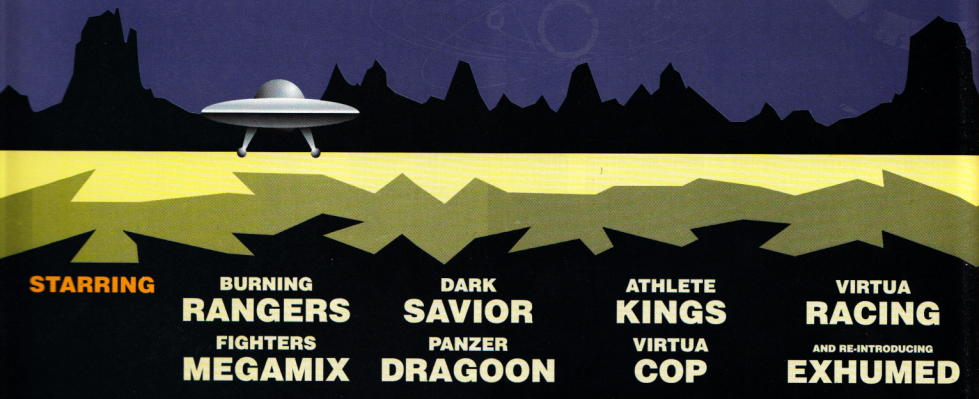
"WE'D BEEN GIVEN OUR NEWLY-BAITED RODS, AND WE WERE DAMNED IF WE WERE GOING HOME EMPTY HANDED APART FROM A COUPLE OF TIDDLERS"





RETURN TO THE FORBIDDEN PLANET

IN DCUKSCOPE



STARRING

BURNING RANGERS

DARK SAVIOR

ATHLETE KINGS

VIRTUA RACING

FIGHTERS MEGAMIX

PANZER DRAGOON

VIRTUA COP

AND RE-INTRODUCING EXHUMED

ANYONE REMEMBER THE SATURN?

You know, that strange, 32bit chunk of black plastic that Sega tried to convince the world was better than Sony's PlayStation? The one that died an unceremonious death a couple of years ago and was buried in a crude, unmarked grave? Ah, you see, now you remember.

It would be foolish to forget, however, that the Saturn wasn't without its fans. Or some great games. Despite it having crude 3D power and being notoriously difficult to program – and therefore lacking the amount of shelf-filling software dished out to Sony's machine – it did have something of a cult following – especially in Japan, where it thrived on a diet of excellent 2D beat 'em ups and RPGs. (It also gained something of an underground following as a machine to playback dodgy discs of pornography. Oops.) That cult following continues to this day, particularly among the hardcore gaming community which cherishes 2D rarities, such as the Japanese version of SNK's hectic shoot 'em up, *Metal Slug*.

Bearing that in mind, and remembering that Sega managed to sell several million Saturns, so the games can't have been that bad, we thought it might be a good idea to take a look at the finest and most original Saturn gaming moments. Having dusted down ten of the best, we ask ourselves what if these lost classics could be translated to Dreamcast, complete with all the 128bit finery it offers?

What improvements could we expect? Could it be that the Saturn was consigned too early to the black hole of obscurity, taking with it a galaxy of videogame stars?

Please fasten your seatbelts, down your drinks and extinguish all smoking materials as we travel through space and time on our return to Saturn: the forbidden planet. ▸

DIRECTED BY **DEAN MORTLOCK**

BURNING RANGERS

Developers: Sonic Team

➤ What was so good about it?

This might sound a little strange, but *Rangers* wasn't actually that good. In a desperate attempt to try to claw back some of the PlayStation-bound "Graphics tarts" (ex-Sega marketing manager Andy Mee's words, not ours), Sega instructed Sonic Team to develop an all-singing, all-dancing 3D adventure game with all of the usual lighting effects and tomfoolery we've now come to expect. The thing is, though, the Saturn (bless it) wasn't really up to the job and everything ended up looking a bit messy, jerky and vaguely unplayable.

Why bother with a conversion?

The game was a hit with a lot of die-hard Sonic Team fans who, frankly, would have bought anything the team made, but the gameplay was not without its merits. Playing a futuristic fire-fighter, the object was to put out fires within a time limit and, occasionally, rescue the odd trapped civilian from the flames.

Dreamcast could take *Burning Ranger*'s central plot premise, which is basically quite sound, and add to it a game engine that could finally realise the potential of Sonic Team's ideas.

Anything similar on Dreamcast?

If it's 3D adventure games you're looking for, then *Sonic Adventure* should keep you quiet for a while. But one the reasons we'd like to see *Ranger* re-made is because its concept is so unusual.

Did you know?

The original name for *Burning Rangers* was '*Firefighter*', for obvious reasons.

Chance of conversion:

2/10 – which is pretty slim.

With the Sonic Team currently working on the highly-anticipated *Phantasy Star Online*, there seems little hope of us ever seeing a sequel to *Burning Rangers* on Dreamcast ■

FIGHTERS MEGAMIX

Developers: AM2

➤ What was so good about it?

Virtua Fighter 2 was then and still is one of the finest 3D fighting games ever, and although *Fighting Vipers* wasn't anywhere near as good, it did include some excellent ideas – primarily an enclosed arena to fight in and the occasional weapon. *MegaMix* welded the best parts of both together, and then topped the result off with some half-decent lighting effects. Add to that tons of hidden modes and characters and you suddenly had one of the best fighting games of all time.

Why bother with a conversion?

Imagine all of the *Virtua Fighter 3tb* characters mixed with any others that happened to be passing through, graphics of the quality of *Soul Calibur*, a host of new options, hidden stuff and almost endless gameplay. Come on, it sounds too good to be true.

Anything similar on Dreamcast?

Plenty, as the beat 'em up is still one of the most popular game styles in Japan. *Virtua Fighter 3tb* is a fairly good home conversion and *Soul Calibur* (Namco) looks and plays like one of your most beautiful dreams. Also look out for Capcom's classic 2D beat 'em up *Street Fighter Alpha 3*, and 3D wünderkind *Power Stone*.

Did you know?

Among the hidden characters in *Fighters MegaMix* were the car from *Daytona USA*, a lump of meat and a palm tree. Now who says that programmers don't have a sense of humour? Albeit not a very good one, but a sense of humour nonetheless.

Chances of conversion:

5/10 – reasonably feasible.

The *Virtua Fighter 3tb* game engine has been proven to work on Dreamcast, but Sega would need to release at least one more successful beat 'em up before turning its attention to a compilation ■

DARK SAVIOR

Developers: Climax

➤ What was so good about it?
It was a 3D role-playing game with complete freedom of both movement and the view around you. It was also, for the most part, a tense adventure with you aboard a large cargo ship being stalked by a large multi-limbed alien. Graphics, gameplay and plot all fused together perfectly to form one of the finest gaming experiences ever released on Saturn.

Why bother with a conversion?
Climax is the master of the anime adventure (having previously developed the equally superb *Landstalker* for Mega Drive) and Dreamcast could come into its own with beautifully drawn locations and obvious VM downloads such as mini-games and character development.

Anything similar on Dreamcast?
Think *Blue Stinger* mixed with the very best bits of *Resident Evil* (lots), *Dynamite Cop 2* (very little) and *Fighting Force 2* (some) and you're getting close to what Climax could achieve with a Dreamcast version.

Did you know?
Climax is not to be confused with Climax Graphics, who is responsible (in every sense of the word) for the less-than-average *Blue Stinger*.

Chances of conversion:
7/10 – fairly likely
Sega and Climax are old buddies, with a history going back many years and, judging by the popularity of previous Climax games, the chances of a new *Dark Savior* are quite positive ■

PANZER DRAGOON

Developers: Team Andromeda

➤ What was so good about it?
Technically, *Panzer Dragoon* was little more than a limited, on-rails shoot 'em up (much like *Lylat Wars* on the N64), which had you riding on the back of a flying dragon, blasting enemies from the sky. You didn't have a vast degree of movement and replay value was low, but it looked beautiful. The perfect answer to those who seemed to think that the Saturn was only good for 2D beat 'em ups, *Panzer Dragoon* managed to impress most people who played it – even if you could complete it in a day or so.

Why bother with a conversion?
A Dreamcast sequel (which old school Sega fans are seriously hoping for) could bring to life the fine graphic style of *Panzer Dragoon*, which mixed medieval and futuristic themes. Also, the VM would be perfect for nurturing fledgling dragons, Tamagotchi-style.

Anything similar on Dreamcast?
Incoming (Rage), *Red Dog* (Argonaut) and *Toy Commander* (No Cliché) are all 3D shoot 'em ups in the shops now, or will be soon.

Did you know?
One of the development team's key members left to work with Polyphony Digital Inc., the creator of *Gran Turismo* and the recently released *Panzer Dragoon* clone, *Omega Boost*.

Chances of conversion:
4/10 – looks fairly dodgy.
A lot of the key Team Andromeda staff have moved on to pastures new ■

ATHLETE KINGS

Developers: AM3

➤ What was so good about it?
Plenty. A wonderfully silly take on Konami's button-bashing sports game, *Track and Field*, Sega's game was a crazy classic. Despite the fact that it had ridiculous caricatures of almost every known sportsperson, *Athlete Kings* (and its lesser sequel *Winter Heat*) were acutely playable.
At only eight, the number of events was fairly small and it only supported twoplayer games, but we loved it.

Why bother with a conversion?
Ready 2 Rumble on the sports field, anyone? Sounds great already, doesn't it – but add a few more events, offering full-fourplayer gaming, and it becomes unmissable. We'd also hope for a few portable button-bashing mini events for the VM.

Anything similar on Dreamcast?
Nothing at all, but if you're looking for an excellent cartoon-based sports game, then you should look no further than the brilliant *Ready 2 Rumble* from Midway (reviewed in DC-UK 02).

Did you know?
This, *Winter Heat* and *Die Hard Arcade* were all taken from Sega's Titan arcade board, which was actually a beefed-up Saturn, much like Naomi is compared to Dreamcast today.

Chances of conversion:
6/10 – we're reasonably hopeful.
After the pounding glory that is Midway's *Ready 2 Rumble*, an update for *Athlete Kings* has got to be an idea bubbling in the darkest recesses of a few Sega brains ■

VIRTUA COP

Developers: AM2

➤ What was so good about it?
Lightgun games had, until *Virtua Cop*'s release, been rather flat and two-dimensional, as they'd all been sprite-based. Sega took its ground-breaking Model 1 arcade technology (used to such great effect in *Virtua Racing*) and created a whole new gun game.

This one came with definite three-dimensional connotations. The best bit was being able to shoot different parts of the bad guys' bodies and them reacting accordingly. For example – hit them in the leg and they buckled forward; hit them in the chest and they were flung backwards.

Why bother with a conversion?
With the success of the two *House of the Dead* games, Sega would be foolish to give up on this old-timer. The latest Naomi technology would mean a) the finest shooter yet, and b) a simple arcade-to-Dreamcast conversion. With added character personality (saved via the VM), bigger, better weapons and almost endless routes and mini-games, we're surely looking at one of the games in development for 2000. Aren't we?

Anything similar on Dreamcast?
The twitchy-fingered amongst you can console yourselves with the arcade-perfect *The House of The Dead 2* conversion until the inevitable rumours start to leak about a third *Virtua Cop* game being on the cards.

Did you know?
Like *Virtua Fighter*, there was a mode in *Virtua Cop* that allowed you to play with large-craniumed characters. Unlike *Virtua Fighter*, though, '*Virtua Cop Kids*' was never to see the light of day, and, considering *VC*'s content, you can sort of understand why.

Chances of conversion:
9/10 – highly desirable.
It's a grand idea. We know it, you know it and Sega knows it. Sega will need more grade-A titles for next year and they could do a lot worse than *Virtua Cop 3* ■

VIRTUA RACING

Developers: AM3

➤ What was so good about it?
The Saturn version? Nothing. But the original arcade game was a wonderful mixture of gameplay and graphics – one of the first true 3D racing games that showed the future was drawn with polygons. Atari's *Hard Drivin'* had pointed the way, but Yu Suzuki's *Virtua Racing* was the game brought 3D to popular attention. Unfortunately, the Saturn version was a slow, half-arsed chump knocked out by Time Warner.

Why bother with a conversion?
Why bother, indeed. A strange choice for a Dreamcast update, you may think. Delve a little deeper into that noggin of yours and the reality bursts forth. To start with, you could have all of the original tracks, but in arcade perfect beauty. The joy of *Racing* was that its courses were so cunningly designed, that they were completely absorbing in a twoplayer game, even in the ropy Mega Drive conversion. Add to that fourplayer split-screen competitiveness and tons of new tracks, and you'd have one of the best Dreamcast driving games possible. Controversial maybe, but true.

Anything similar on Dreamcast?
Well, yes and no. *Sega Rally 2*'s okay and *Racing Simulation* (Ubi Soft) is fun for a few hours, but until the arrival of *Metropolis* from Bizarre, that elusive consummate driving game is still hidden from view.

Did you know?
That thanks to a 'friendly' relationship between the bosses of Sega Europe and Time Warner at the time, Sega gave Time Warner the licence to produce *Virtua Racing*. Odds on that Sega still regrets that one, eh?

Chances of conversion:
1/10 – incredibly slender.
This one is pure wishful thinking on our part, because it's the one game from Sega's history that we would really love to see updated. Oh go on, Sega, just for us – we'll be your best mate, honest ■

EXHUMED

Developers: Lobotomy

➤ What was so good about it?

It appears to be just another 3D firstperson shoot 'em up to you, but back in the Saturn era, Exhumed was highly regarded. Graphically outstanding, with superb lighting effects and fast, smooth-scrolling effects all over the place, its non-linear and challenging gameplay meant there was enough to keep you busy playing for months.

Why bother with a conversion?

The unusual Egyptian theme, which ran through the architecture, the weapons and the enemies (impressively scary baddies dressed as ancient gods), was novel. Some of the later levels pushed the Saturn to its limit – if the same could be done with Dreamcast, then we'd surely have here the definition of the modern 3D adventure. There would also be the chance to create some multiplayer deathmatch levels too, exploiting Dreamcast's online capabilities.

Anything similar on Dreamcast?

Sega has been quite cagey when it comes to discussions about the popular genre of firstperson shoot 'em ups, as there doesn't appear to be many confirmed at the time of writing, other than *Half-Life*. Rumoured games in development, though, include all the other major PC hits like *Unreal*, *Alien Versus Predator* and *Quake III*.

Did you know?

Lobotomy Software was originally going to release *Exhumed* through BMG Interactive, but after Sega Europe saw an early version it snapped up the rights. Lobotomy went on to produce two excellent Saturn conversions with *Duke Nukem 3D* and *Quake* before quietly disappearing.

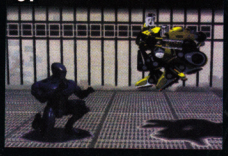
Chances of conversion:

0/10 – as in absolutely ziltch. Seeing as Lobotomy has now disbanded, an update of *Exhumed* is nigh-on impossible. Shame ■

THANKS BUT NO THANKS

For every Morecambe there has to be a Wise. For every Newquay there's a Bognor Regis. For every... Oh, you get the idea. Here are five old crusty Saturn games that, no matter how much one pleaded and scraped at Sega's trouser leg, will never see the light of day on Dreamcast. Why? Because, frankly, they're a bunch of arse.

01



01 RISE OF THE ROBOTS

Imagine Metal Mickey in a fight with one of those 'oh so trendy' IKEA metal cylinders that posh folk have in their kitchens and call bins. Complete with a scary mutated Meccano set as a referee. If you can imagine such a scene, you're getting close to the true horror that was *Rise of the Robots*.

02

02 ANY OF THE FIFA GAMES

Oh yes, everyone bought them, but while the PlayStation versions gradually improved, the Saturn conversions appeared, oddly, to go in completely the other direction. The last one, *Road To The World Cup* was an utter travesty of football – a bit like England versus Poland, then.

03

03 EARTHWORM JIM 2

"I know," said a Virgin Marketing Manager, "Let's take the Mega Drive version of *Earthworm Jim 2* and copy it straight across to the Saturn with – get this – no serious improvements whatsoever." He was then, unsurprisingly, taken out and shot. But the idea? It survived, fed on lost souls and grew.

04

04 THE CROW: COA

This was the very pinnacle of pap. The very example of excrement. *Crow: COA* simply couldn't be any worse. It was unplayable, dull and little more than a pathetic *Resident Evil* clone (but without the zombies, atmosphere or playability), it was wisely avoided by the masses.

05

05 VIRTUA FIGHTER KIDS

Cheap and cheerful (£30), this was *Virtua Fighter 2* with bulbous-headed children replacing frowning adults. In Japan, maybe, but in good old Blighty? No way, old chap.

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FIGHTING FORCE 2

Core's inaugural DC title is an all-shooting, all-fighting 3D adventure. Can you feel the force?

The original *Fighting Force* was released to an underwhelmed reaction two years ago on PlayStation. It's intentions were noble – to update the classic 2D scrolling beat 'em up gameplay of *Double Dragon* and *Streets of Rage* and bring it crashing into the 3D '90s – but its execution left a lot to be desired. Core aim to put that right with *Fighting Force 2* which promises to banish all negative memories of its predecessor.

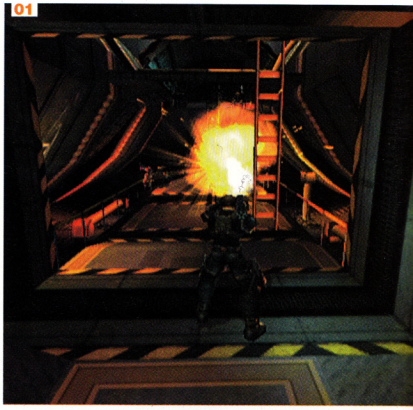
The story carries on from the end of the first game with the evil Dr Zeng vanquished by the *Fighting Force* team. However, the sinister Nakamichi corporation has taken over the doctor's scheme by creating an army of cyborg soldiers and there's only one man who can prevent their goal of global domination: Hawk Mason.

Unlike the original where there were five characters to choose from, this time it's just Hawk. While this restricts the gameplay variety of having a quintet of characters all with different moves and weapons, focusing on one strong, central protagonist never did a game any harm – as Core's other big franchise has proven (the *Tomb Raider* series with a certain Lara Croft).

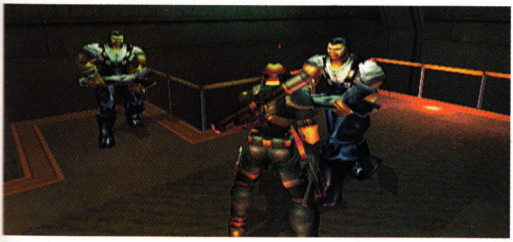
The gameplay has also been refined for the sequel and, though the all-action fighting and blasting of the original remains at the forefront, there is a more tactical edge to the carnage this time. Exploration and stealth now play a part in proceedings and you'll have to use your nous as well as your trigger finger to battle through the expansive, free-roaming levels. At least one thing's for sure: it'll be better than the first one ■

FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Eidos
- **Developer:** Core Design
- **Origin:** UK
- **Weapons:** Big
- **ETA:** November



01 Big explosions are all well and good but who cleans up afterwards?
02 "Eat my flames, you dirty slags!"
03 Hawk Mason has a big weapon and he's not afraid to use it



"The **sinister Nakamichi corporation** is making a bid for world domination with an army of **cyborg super soldiers**"

LANDING SOON

RED DOG

Tanks! Fourplayer gaming! Big things being blown up! But where's the dogs?

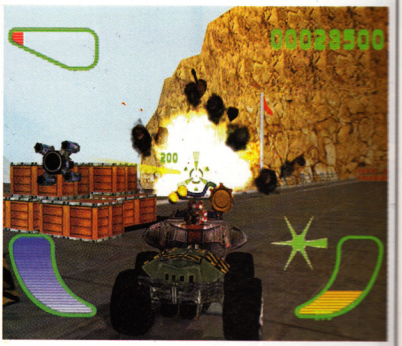
With eager comparisons to Argonaut's classic SNES shoot 'em up *Star Fox* being thrown from left, right and even occasionally the centre, the pressure on *Red Dog* to be mind-numbingly amazing mounts by the day. Happily, with the game's release now set for mid-November, DC-UK took delivery of a preview copy of the game.

With many of the enemies yet to be placed in their final positions, the version of *Red Dog* we had seemed a little desolate at times. However, the tank you use to blast through the game with is packed with detail – in both graphic and game terms. Its animation system allows for the wheels to articulate over the rocky landscape with considerable finesse. The control system allows you to lock the tank in a strafe mode, rolling from side-to-side as you blow away your alien foes.

All being well, the next issue of **DC-UK** will carry the full review of *Red Dog*, complete with its full fourplayer mode. In the meantime we'll leave you with these screenshots. Pretty, aren't they? ■

FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Sega
- **Developer:** Argonaut
- **Origin:** UK
- **Tanked:** Up
- **ETA:** November



Just like in Irem's ultra-hard, ultra-classic shooter *R-Type*, *Red Dog* features a floating sidekick-thing, which helps you annihilate the baddies. Disappointingly, there's no actual dogs in the game. Grrr

LANDINGSOON

WORLDWIDE SOCCER 2000

Footie games are like sweets: you can never have too many. Next up, *WWS 2000*

01 The goalie is there, he's just hiding behind the wall like a big jessie
02 Italian players? Diving? Never!
03 This is what's known in the trade as a 'crowd scene'
04 Unusually, Emmanuel Petit is just about to foul someone

Silicon Dreams has been making footie games since the onset of the 32bit wars with titles such as *World League Soccer* and *UEFA Champions League*. The developer's latest attempt sees the jump to 128bits with an update of the renowned *Worldwide Soccer* brand – one of the few diamonds released on the Saturn.

WWS 2000 will have to go some to match the quality of *UEFA Striker* which has kicked off Dreamcast's football market in fine style and the imposing shadow of *Virtua Striker 2000.1* also looms large on the horizon. However, at this stage things are looking rather promising. The gameplay is fast and fluid with an enjoyable end-to-end arcadey feel and the matches run at a constant 50/60 fps with little hint of slowdown.

Graphically, the game is a bit of a mixed bag. While the stadiums have been beautifully rendered (and are, perhaps, the best yet seen in a footie game) the players still need a bit of work. At the moment they appear rather blocky and their faces seem to have been modelled on the Chuckle Brothers (particularly Seaman with his comedy 'tache).

One thing *WWS 2000* will definitely have over the opposition are the skill moves that *UEFA* lacked. With a load of fancy tricks on offer the game should satisfy the Maradona in all of us. Whether it's the genius Maradona circa 1986, or the drug-addled waster of '94 will be revealed soon ■

FINEPOINTS
- **Publisher:** Sega
- **Developer:** Silicon Dreams
- **Origin:** UK
- **Pass:** And move
- **ETA:** November

03

04

FIRSTCONTACT

VIRTUA STRIKER 2 VER.2000.1

The big daddy of arcade football games is Dreamcast-bound. Time to get excited

Amid the plush realms of modern-day videogame arcades, shining like a beacon through the hordes of underage smokers wearing puffa jackets, is the King of all coin-op football titles – *Virtua Striker*. With superlative graphics and slick footie action, it has seen off all competition in the arcades over the years and is now about to kick off on its console competitors.

As a straight port from the Naomi version of *Virtua Striker 2* (which uses the same technology as Dreamcast) *VS ver.2000.1* will be an arcade-perfect conversion. This means DC will be playing host to the best looking football title ever on a home system.

Glorious stadiums and realistic players come as standard in the *Virtua Striker* series but it's the small, almost incidental touches that will have you licking your lips like a dehydrated shipwreck victim. The way the ball reacts to the pitch, bobbling and bouncing over the ground, is unique to football videogames which always depict the ball as if it's being played on a billiard table. Also, when the players kick the ball it actually looks as if their feet are making contact rather than being propelled by the power of suggestion.

On the downside, the game doesn't have a licence so there'll be no real-world competitions and players. However, it's events on the pitch that really matter and in that department *Virtua Striker ver.2000.1* promises to set a new standard ■

FINEPOINTS

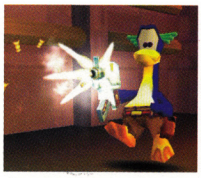
- **Publisher:** Sega
- **Developer:** In-house
- **Origin:** Japan
- **Exit:** My goal
- **ETA:** TBC

The arcade *VS 2 ver.2000.1* was plagued by instances of slowdown with a number of players on screen at one time. Hopefully, this maggot in the Golden Delicious will be rectified in the DC version.

FIRSTCONTACT

FURBALLS

It's those sticky balls of fur your cat throws up transformed into cute game characters. Groovy



Every new console needs a cute 3D platformer, right? You know, furry little creatures running around colourful polygonal landscapes, occasionally negotiating life-threatening gaps, avoiding the inevitable obstacles of doom and generally jumping about the place as if they're wearing bionic springs for shoes. You disagree? Well, the Mega Drive and SNES had *Sonic* and *Mario* respectively, the PlayStation has a bandicoot named Crash while the Saturn and the N64 had... Er, *Sonic* and *Mario* respectively. (And Dreamcast already has an episode featuring Sega's blue mascot.)

Yet *Furballs* is different. Very different, in fact. You see, whereas Mario (and Sonic for that matter), might jump on enemies' heads in order to neutralise them, the cute innocent-looking beings in *Furballs* simply shoot them off. What's more, once the skull is bouncing around the floor, there's little to stop you from some entertaining, albeit deranged, target practice. In a realistic environment this may have raised a few eyebrows, but given that all of the action occurs within the confines of a cartoon-like world, *Furballs* is unlikely to undergo a harsh BBFC treatment. It's not just action, though.

Throughout the varied levels you'll encounter several puzzles, which brings us to *Furballs*' next immediately differentiating facet: you control six characters. At certain points throughout the levels, a portal-like structure allows you to swap identity, the reason for behind which is that each character possesses unique skills and some of the puzzles can only be solved by exploiting these abilities.

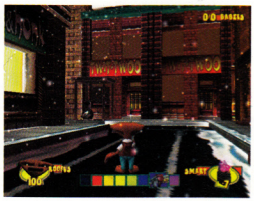
At ECTS the game looked reasonably advanced, both in technical and gameplay terms although the team explained they still have a little way to go on some of the later levels. But already the multiplayer mode was up and running and very entertaining it proved, too. We hope the finished product is no less enjoyable ■

01 A small dog in a hard helmet with a big gun. Followed by a floating cameraman, naturally
02 You'd be frightened, too, if you had two creatures pointing their extra long green appendages at you
03 The little racoon-thing's impressive weapon can't save him from having a painful-looking laser shot up his bum
04 Kitty blasts the opposition into submission

FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Acclaim
- **Developer:** Bizarre Creations
- **Origin:** UK
- **Cartoon:** Carnage
- **ETA:** April 2000

"All of the action occurs within **the confines of a cartoon-like world**"



LANDINGSOON

PLANET OF THE APES

Battle against over-educated primates in this adaptation of the gorilla-phobic sci-fi series

Who could ever forget Charlton Heston's closing speech in *Planet of the Apes*, where he surveys the destruction mankind has reaped upon itself? "You maniacs, you blew it up! God damn you! God damn you all to hell!" he cries. Pity it's been somewhat undermined now by Mr Heston's championing of America's archaic gun laws even though they have been responsible for the random slaughter of hundreds of innocent citizens in mass-murder shooting sprees. Erm, anyway, now you can relive the excitement of landing on a future Earth ruled by preening primates, in Fox's forthcoming 3D action adventure.

Yep, here you play Ulysses, an astronaut who unfortunately goes through one of those tears in the space-time continuum that litter the universe. He finds himself on the planet of the apes and it's your job to get him off. So to speak. Throughout the adventure you converse with dozens of amiable apes (the game includes thousands of lines of dialogue) as well as solve puzzles and fight murderous monkeys.

Fox is promising an epic adventure, taking in the spirit of the films and the original book by Pierre Boulle. The visuals look impressive, with lots of real-time shadows and clever lighting. It would have been nice to play one of the chilling chimps instead, though. Just so you'd get the chance to spank Charlton Heston with your big old hairy hand. ■

FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Fox
- **Developer:** Visiware Studios
- **Origin:** US
- **Monkeys:** Take over the world
- **ETA:** Mid 2000

Planet of the Apes promises a *Tomb Raider*-style experience combining fighting, puzzle solving and exploring. Fight the monkeys! Fight them and their big furry heads and crimson arses!

LANDINGSOON

VIGILANTE 8: 2ND OFFENCE

More mad, mechanical machinations from the master of mangled motors

01 "Arrgh! My car has been encased in lime jelly"
02 The several twoplayer modes should provide hours of gladiatorial fun
03 In an untelevised episode of popular childrens' programme Portland Bill, the loveable lighthouse keeper buys a second hand Mustang, mounts a machine gun on top and goes on a three day killing spree. Sadly, TV bosses were unimpressed

Despite sounding like a really crap Jean Claude Van Damme film ('Vigilante 8 – he was a man driven to the edge by rage. Now someone must pay'), Activision's *V8: Second Offence* is actually an arena-based driving combat game in which eight cars try to demolish each other with a variety of exotic weapons. As the '*Second Offence*' part of the title might give away, this is actually a sequel – a sequel, in fact, to a great PlayStation game. Here though, the designers have added ten new selectable drivers to the previous eight as well as various power-ups and play modes.

It's the power-ups that provide the most interest. Although the range of vehicles – taking in buggies, trucks and muscle cars – sticks close to the '70s line-up of the original title, there's now a new set of upgrades allowing for better snow, ice and water handling (yes, you can make your car float). It's even possible to turn your vehicle into a hovercraft – which is apparently useful for jumps. Interestingly, you can pick up the weapons of any cars you destroy, and these are instantly morphed onto yours – so what you get is a completely customised automobile. Max Power readers will love it.

V8: Second Offensive is also set to support Dreamcast's fourplayer facilities. A range of multiplayer modes includes three on one bullying and 'every man for himself'-style warfare. Single players get games called Quest (possibly involving a linear championship), Brawl (possibly involving simple arcade battles) and Desperado (possibly involving Antonio Banderas and Salma Hayek battling evil bandits in Mexico). Finally, twoplayer modes take in co-operative and vs options, so there's plenty of variety to be had – despite the relatively lightweight nature of the gameplay.

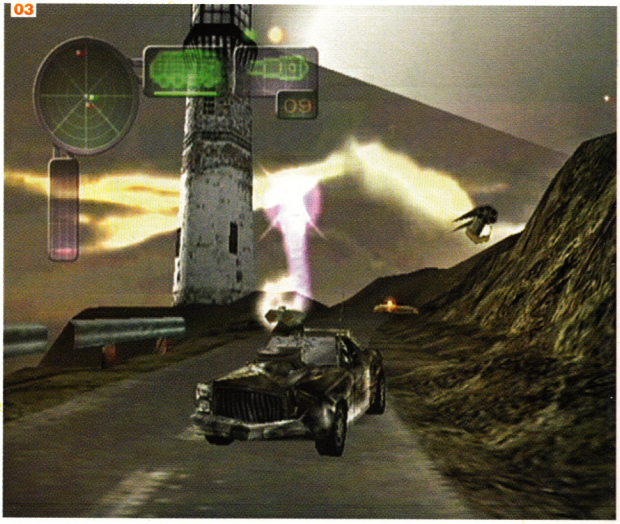
So *Vigilante 8: Second Offence* is all set to be just as much mindless fun as its predecessor. Admittedly it doesn't look pretty (see the perfectly square buildings), but as long as the engine can cope with throwing eight vehicles around the screen while they blast seven shades of cattle dung out of each other no one will care. Get down ■

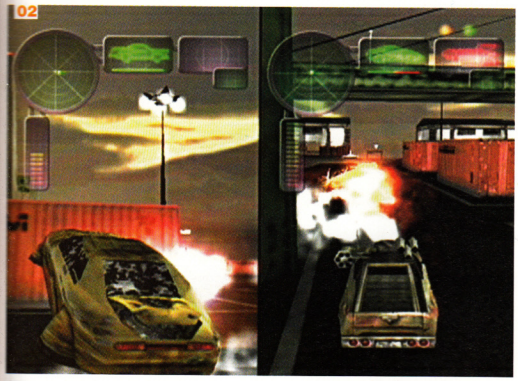
FINEPOINTS

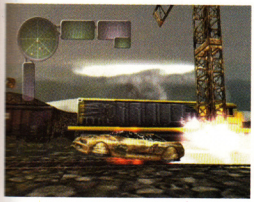
- **Publisher:** Activison
- **Developer:** Luxoflux Crop
- **Origin:** US
- **Mirror, signal:** kill!
- **ETA:** November

01

03







"Interestingly you can **pick up the weapons** of any cars you destroy, and they are instantly **morphed onto your car**"

FIRSTCONTACT

SOUTH PARK RALLY

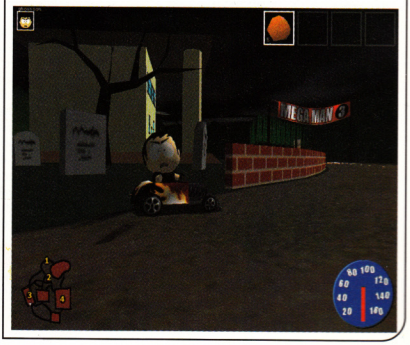
Dude, if some ****ing **** wrote a rally game based around South Park, I'd be like, "Hey ****! It had better ***ing not be a ****ing hopeless **** up of a ****ing cash in!"

Well, it had to happen. This is *South Park Rally*, a *Mario Kart*-style racer based around the controversial cartoon series. Here players race around a variety of familiar areas such as South Park Forest, Big Gay Al's Big Gay Animal Sanctuary and the town itself, in a variety of ridiculous vehicles. Cartman gets his police tricycle, Chef gets his ugly station wagon and Stan's gun-crazed uncle gets his combat jeep. And just in case you forget you're playing a heavily licensed racer, there are apparently hundreds of new soundbites created by Matt Stone and Trey Parker. Should be plenty of opportunities for foul-mouthed fun.

In keeping with racer tradition, there are head-to-head as well as single player modes, and, stretching that *Mario Kart* influence just a little further, you'll be able to pick up weapons throughout the game. This being a *South Park* racer though, expect Mexican staring frogs and chocolate salty balls to crop up as projectiles rather than differently coloured turtle shells. So to sum up, you get Parker and Stone soundbites, crazy vehicles and wacky weapons. "This game is for mature audiences," claims a note on the Acclaim Website. Somehow, we doubt it ■

FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Acclaim
- **Developer:** Tantalus
- **Origin:** US
- **Respect:** My authoritah
- **ETA:** Christmas



LANDINGSOON

NBA SHOWTIME

Shoot and dribble without having to clean up afterwards. We're talking basketball, by the way

01 "Eat my dunk!" Scottie Pippen soars through the air with the greatest of ease
02 It's only two-on-two but it makes for exciting b'ball action
03 John Stockton is an NBA midget: he's a mere 6ft 2 inches

With *NBA 2000* (see opposite) providing an accurate simulation of basketball, the less realistic end of the market is being catered for by *NBA Showtime*. From the makers of the original wild and crazy *NBA Jam* titles, *Showtime* continues the tradition of fast-paced, two-on-two action with the kind of outlandish moves even Michael Jordan wouldn't have attempted in his heyday.

Like Midway's previous DC release, *Ready 2 Rumble Boxing*, the emphasis here is firmly on playability. As a straight conversion of the hugely popular *NBA Showtime* arcade game, the immediacy required to tempt fickle punters with pound coins burning holes in their pockets has wisely been retained for the home version. The simple but effective control system of the arcade game

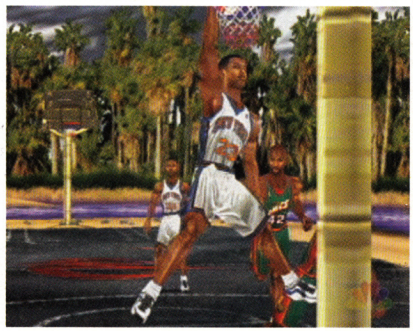
> "Loads of spectacular **skill moves have been included**"

remains, with one button for shooting/jumping, one button for passing/stealing and a special Turbo button which gives your player a speed boost to the hoop.

Loads of spectacular dunks and skill moves have been included, as well as sweet spots for long-distance three-pointers and an 'on fire' mode which sees the ball catch fire if you score three baskets in a row. Other daft basketball game options will feature, such as a Big Head mode where the players all look like Mr Mackey (South Park's school counsellor), plus hidden courts and characters.

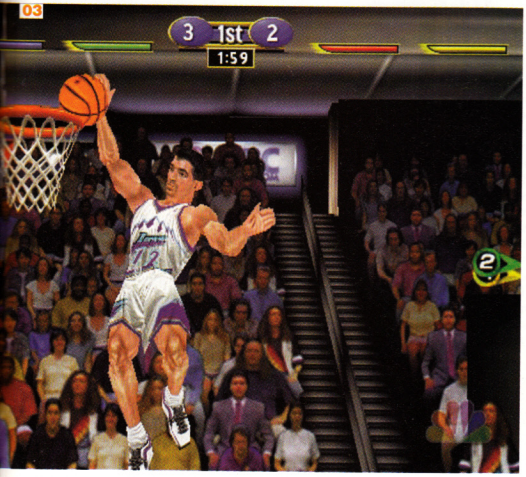
Realism does sneak into the mixture in the shape of all 29 NBA home courts and over 175 NBA players, as well as the sounds you expect from the sport: sneakers squeaking, players grunting, crowds chanting and – best of all – the satisfying rustle as the ball drops through the hoop.

For basketball purists, *NBA 2000* is probably the game that will satisfy your dunking needs, but for sheer accessible entertainment value, *NBA Showtime* might just prove the more enjoyable of the two ■



FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Midway
- **Developer:** In-house
- **Origin:** US
- **Basket:** Case
- **ETA:** December



FIRSTCONTACT

NBA 2000

For those whose dunking knowledge isn't restricted to a biscuit/cup of tea interface

Basketball is increasing in popularity year-after-year this side of the pond (especially with 'the kidz'), and we can expect to see a flood of titles heading our way from our generous American cousins. Lining up for the Dreamcast tip off with *NBA Showtime* is Sega's own hoop dreams release, *NBA 2000*.

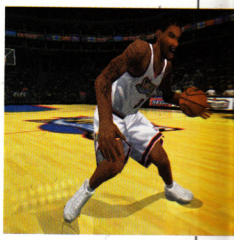
Boasting the official NBA licence which allows them to include all the real players, statistics and 1,500 motion captured animations (including players' trademark moves), it looks set to be the most realistic b'ball sim yet. This realism will be heightened by the inclusion of special 'plays' and tactics designed by NBA coaches specifically for use in the game. Advanced AI techniques are also being developed to ensure players perform like their real-life counterparts (ie, Dennis Rodman always fouls and Shaquille O'Neal always dunks) and teams play in the style of the actual NBA teams (ie, Chicago Bulls always win).

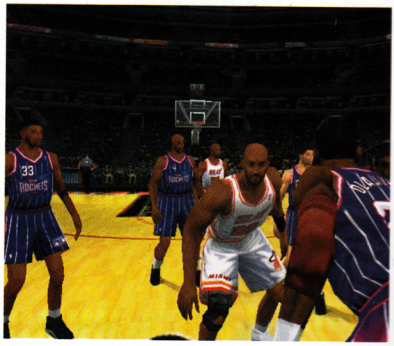
Graphically, *NBA 2000* is looking top banana. The players are so well-modelled you can even see Rodman's tattoos. Courtside ephemera has also been included with anxious coaches pacing up and down the sideline and disgruntled fans leaving the stadium if their team is getting spanked.

Of course, all this incidental gubbins won't mean a thing if it ain't got that swing (gameplay), but if *NBA 2000*'s playability comes anywhere near the standard of its presentation, Sega could well have a three-pointer on its hands ■

FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Sega
- **Developer:** Visual Concepts
- **Origin:** US
- **Tall man:** Big Balls
- **ETA:** December





NBA 2000 is more detailed than a manx cat. From the players' individual hairstyles and tattoos to the lush kits and perfect stadiums, everything from the NBA world has been painstakingly recreated. Nice

LANDINGSOON

WORMS: ARMAGGEDON

They burrow beneath your garden and pop out when it rains. But now they also attack each other with machine guns

01 Watch out, worms, it's the bridge over the river 'Die'. Get it?
02 The cartoon style visuals add to the comedy. Look it's a planet made of cheese! Cheese, I tell you!
03 This appears to be the 'Ibiza foam party' weapon. Simply drop it on an opponent's worm and its IQ plummets as the poor creature tries to cop off with anything in the vicinity. Very nasty, indeed

Who'd have thought a simple turn-based strategy game based around homicidal invertebrates would become a smash hit, appearing on just about every videogame machine since 1995 and – along with its sequel – selling upwards of three million copies. But that's exactly what *Worms* has done. So its no surprise to find Team 17's award-winning game appearing on Dreamcast.

Worms Armageddon is officially the second sequel to the original game, and is, apparently, to be the last in the series. In many ways it looks to be business as usual. You control a team of worms, your opponents (up to three of them) control teams of worms and you all take it in turns to hurl bombs at each other, or shoot, or call in air-strikes – anything to blow-up someone else's worms, or knock them into the water where they drown. The skill is to make sure you don't get your own worms squished in the process – you see, it's *Worms*' cunning mix of tactics and extreme violence that gamers find irresistible.

So what does this new incarnation offer? Well, apart from the improved visuals, you get new single player and multiplayer missions, so it's not all just head-to-head battle. Predictably, there are also tons of new, eccentric weapons to play around with, including Aqua Sheep, Bridge Bombs, Holy Hand Grenades and Concrete Donkeys, so even old hands will find something fresh to amuse them. Finally, *W:A* adds ten new power-ups (which land on the ground as crates and can be picked up by the nearest worm). The jetpack, laser targetter and double damage crates will perhaps have most effect on the game.

So, new weapons, new game modes, new power-ups and new graphics (*W:A* can generate 16 billion different random landscapes, you know) – will this be enough to ensure the *Worms* success story continues? Perhaps. No doubt worms will be as playable and addictive as ever, and all the new features will certainly have fans of the series sharpening their worming skills in expectation. The question is, will a 2D game get noticed amongst all that 3D eye candy out there? Well, considering this is likely to be the only Dreamcast game to offer a concrete donkey as a weapon, *W:A* shouldn't have too many problems getting noticed ■

FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Hasbro
- **Developer:** Team 17
- **Origin:** UK
- **Worms:** Turned
- **ETA:** December

"It's *Worms*' mix of tactics and extreme violence that gamers find so irresistible"

FIRSTCONTACT

STUNT GP

The creators of Worms serve up a crazy stunt-filled racer, for your driving pleasure

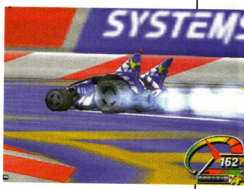
Beneath the glamourous elite of racing games – the Formula One simulators, the flashy arcade conversions – there lurks another sub-genre, a sub-genre of bright colour palettes, crazy cars and a complete lack of all that 'ultra 100% realistic front wheel physics dynamics' rubbish. It is the comedy racer. Think *Micro Machines*, *Super Mario Kart*, *Circuit Breakers*, or more recently *Speed Devils* and *Buggy Heat*. Think *Stunt GP* from team 17, the creators of *Worms: Armageddon*.

Yes, right. *Stunt GP*, then. It's a remote control car game. There are 16 cars to choose from, but each one is upgradable using nine different components, so there are actually around a million combinations. And you race these frisky little muthas around 24 circuits filled with loop-the-loops, jumps, spirals, corkscrews and all manner of mad obstacles, so you're forever flying about in the air like some crazy goose. But with wheels instead of feathers. There are also several game modes to choose from, including Arcade, Championship, Freestyle (where you perform stunts for points in a sort of elongated half-pipe) and Twoplayer. You can even upload your times to a Website and download the 'ghost' cars of other players to drive against in the Time Trial mode. Interesting, eh?

We saw this game at ECTS last month and although it doesn't quite have the looks of *Hydro Thunder* or *Sega Rally*, it's a good laugh and has plenty of gameplay hidden beneath its happy-go-lucky exterior. No one has quite mastered the whole comedy racer scene on the Dreamcast as yet, so this could well be one to watch. But, Team 17, we were most disappointed to discover that the little cars don't have worms driving them. Surely an oversight? ■

FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Hasbro
- **Developer:** Team 17
- **Origin:** UK
- **Stunts:** Cunning
- **ETA:** Spring 2000



The circuits in *Stunt GP* are designed to encourage loads of stunt-pulling, ramp-jumping and loop-the-loop-looping. Vehicles range from standard buggies to A Team trucks

LATESTSIGHTING

METROPOLIS STREET RACER

Bizzare Creations has failed miserably to live up to its name with its amazing, ultra-realistic racer

01 Having seen both *GT2000* and *New Ridge Racer* on PS2, **DC-UK** can confirm that *MSR* looks better than either. Hooray!
02 That's a famous bit of London, that is
03 Bizarre is denying that you'll be able to pull up at Pizza Hut and order a take-out

Last issue we mentioned that Liverpudlian developer Bizarre Creations (also working on *Furballs* – see page 088) was striving to rectify the problems that had plagued its much-anticipated driving game, *Metropolis Street Racer*. Since then, we've received these new shots of the game, which prove that it's in the fast lane of the road to sweet success.

Set in downtown San Francisco, Tokyo's Shibuya district, and around central London, *MSR* is takes videogame realism to new extremes. At Sega's ECTS party a rolling demo of the game gathered large crowds, all marvelling at the incredible effort put into recreating the three settings.

> "It's possible to recognise **individual shops and restaurants**"

Pelting along towards Picadilly Circus, it's possible to recognise individual shops and restaurants that you know. Hundreds of detailed texture maps have been created to ensure everything looks as realistic as possible, and all three areas can be raced through in both day and night.

Also evident from the TGS video we picked up (see page 050) are some of the licensed cars that will feature in the game. Honda's new S2000 convertible has joined TVR's Chimera, as has an Alfa Romeo 156 (which should please Sega marketing manager Giles Thomas – interviewed **DC-UK** 02 – as he drives one). We're expecting a Lotus Elise in the game, too, as that's Bizarre boss Martyn Chudley's chariot of choice. All very tasteful and refined, which goes for *MSR* as well ■

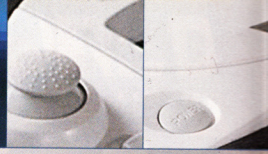
FINEPOINTS
- **Publisher:** Sega Europe
- **Developer:** Bizarre Creations
- **Origin:** UK
- **Amazingly:** Amazing
- **ETA:** Spring 2000

01

03

02

Dreamcast™



Games Console Carry Bag

This heavily padded, reinforced, water resistant, *lockable Games Console Carry Bag will safely store the Dreamcast Console, two Dreamcast Controllers, all the leads and several games. It has a detachable shoulder strap and a carry handle for ease of transportation and adjustable inner compartments.

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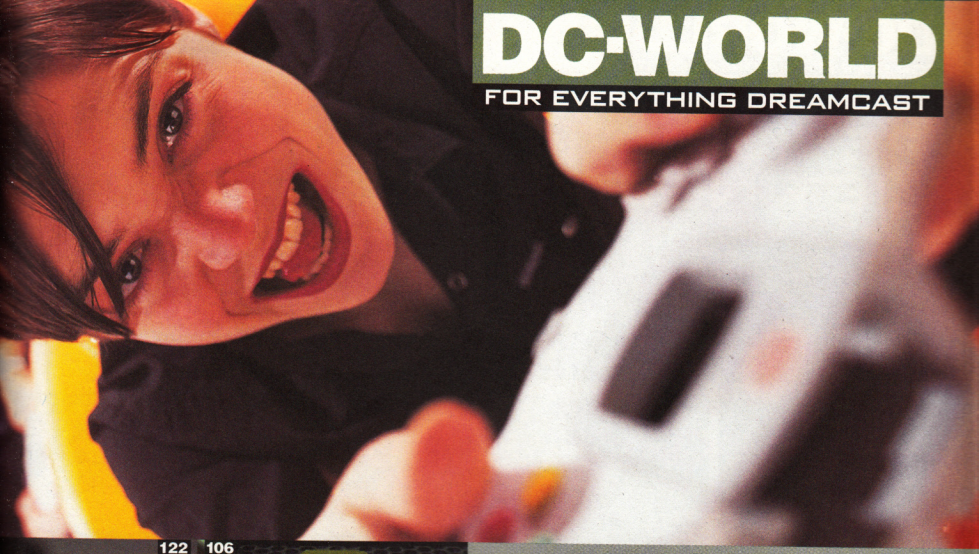

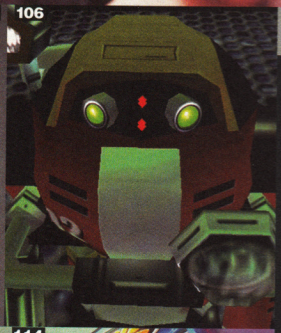

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REVIEW LISTINGS

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

PERIPHERALS

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

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

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

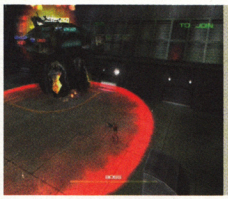
BLUE STINGER

■ ISSUE #02 ■ REVIEW SCORE: 3/10

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

Essentially, *Blue Stinger* is an arcade game with elements of adventure games like *Tomb Raider* and *Resident Evil*. Unfortunately, apart from some nice graphics, it has none of the class those two games displayed. *Blue Stinger* is not a next generation game ■

■ Publisher: Activision ■ Developer: Climax Graphics
■ Price: £39.99 ■ Players: One
■ Extras: None
■ **For:** A familiar and popular genre. Some decent graphical touches
■ **Against:** Frustrating. Unoriginal gameplay



EXPENDABLE

■ ISSUE #01 ■ REVIEW SCORE: 6/10

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

Taking its inspiration from classic shoot 'em ups like *Ikari Warriors* and *Gunsmoke*, *Expendable* pitches you and a friend (should you have one) against hordes of enemy droids. Yes, it's as simple as that ■

■ Publisher: Infogrames ■ Developer: Rage
■ Price: £39.99 ■ Players: One to two
■ Extras: None
■ **For:** Good graphics. An enjoyable blast. Big guns
■ **Against:** Old hat. A bit repetitive

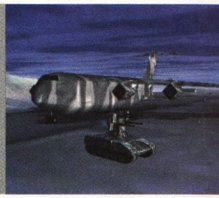
INCOMING

■ ISSUE #01 ■ REVIEW SCORE: 5/10

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

With the exception of *UEFA Striker*, Rage Software has seemed content to simply rehash PC titles for Dreamcast. *Incoming* is similar to its cousin *Expendable*, in that it looks great and is fun for a while, but at the end of the day, it's a little shallow for most ■

■ Publisher: Sega ■ Developer: Rage
■ Price: £39.99 ■ Players: One
■ Extras: VM
■ **For:** Beautiful explosions and backgrounds. Kill! Kill! Kill! Loads of vehicles and weapons
■ **Against:** Lack of depth. Missions too similar



MONACO GP

■ ISSUE #02 ■ REVIEW SCORE: 6/10

"*Racing Simulation – Monaco GP* is a competent attempt at recreating Formula One, combining an accessible arcade game with a detailed simulation mode and an enjoyable twoplayer option. But the proceedings are a little soulless and unrewarding at times."

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

■ Publisher: Ubi Soft ■ Developer: In-house
■ Price: £39.99 ■ Players: One to two
■ Extras: None
■ **For:** An enjoyable arcade game and detailed simulation mode
■ **Against:** A bit soulless and unrewarding

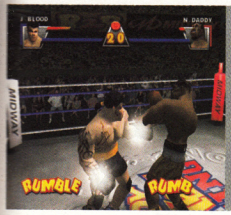
POWER STONE

■ ISSUE #02 ■ REVIEW SCORE: 9/10

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

When *Power Stone* first touched down in the DC-UK games room, productivity hit an all time low. It really is that good. The 3D fighting areas look impressive and the characters are baby-bottom-smooth and chunky. The freedom of movement suddenly available to you propels the beat 'em up genre light years ahead of *Tekken* ■

- Publisher: Eidos
- Developer: Capcom
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- Extras: VM mini-games, rumble pack
- **For:** Original, easy to play and fantastic to look at, too
- **Against:** You'll see everything within two weeks



READY 2 RUMBLE

■ ISSUE #02 ■ REVIEW SCORE: 8/10

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

One of the best Dreamcast beat 'em ups and the greatest boxing game since Nintendo's *Punch Out!!* series, *Ready 2 Rumble* is also one of the funniest and most enjoyable games we've played. The rythmn-action based training system is incredibly well conceived and without it *R2R* would lose much of its long-term appeal ■

- Publisher: Sega
- Developer: Midway
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- Extras: 60Hz option, rumble pack
- **For:** Hilarious box 'em up
- **Against:** Not enough modes

SEGA RALLY 2

■ ISSUE #01 ■ REVIEW SCORE: 7/10

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

Our review of *Sega Rally 2* in DC-UK 01 caused quite a stir among the game's loyal fans (see DC-UK 02 for an update on the PAL version, which scored the same). The conversion from arcade to home is a good one and there are loads of new options and extras. It's just not quite the classic racing game some of you might have been waiting for ■

- Publisher: Sega
- Developer: in-house
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- Extras: None
- **For:** A playable and intuitive introduction to rally driving with some nice touches
- **Against:** Lacking in handling complexity

SPEED DEVILS

■ ISSUE #02 ■ REVIEW SCORE: 7/10

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

***Speed Devils* is definitely one of the most original racing games of late. The game features many welcome additions to the genre, including the ability to place bets on your races. The arcade mode is a little shallow, but the real game lies within the championship mode, where you can buy motors and give them between-race tune-ups ■**

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

SONIC ADVENTURE

■ ISSUE #01 ■ REVIEW SCORE: 9/10

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

***Sonic Adventure* has everybody's favourite hedgehog whizzing about in a giant, colourful 3D world with familiar *Sonic* gameplay, and items scattered around the landscape. This time Sonic's adventure is just that: an adventure with classic RPG elements thrown in the mix. It's a pleasing blend and another classic game from the *Sonic* team ■**

- Publisher: Sega
- Developer: Sonic Team
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One
- Extras: Internet mode, 60Hz option
- **For:** Great graphics, new RPG elements, six games for the price of one
- **Against:** Not as ground-breaking as hoped

PERIPHERALS

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

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

KEYBOARD Sega has already introduced this handy peripheral in Japan, and a British version will be available soon after the Dreamcast's launch. It should prove invaluable if you plan to spend a lot of time surfing the Net but can't be bothered to enter all those long URL addresses using the cursor/joypad/onscreen-keyboard combo. Also good for writing those emails, of course – a facility that Sega's online service will be providing. Expect to pay about £20 ■

REVIEW LISTINGS

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

CONNECTIONS

TELEVISON Sega is currently encouraging developers working on the UK versions of their games to support the Dreamcast's 60Hz option – this allows our lazy European PAL machines to run games at the NTSC rate of 60 frames per second (see page 116 for an explanation of what all this means), rather than the slower PAL rate of 50 frames per second. To take advantage of this feature you'll need a dual standard TV, one that can understand both PAL and NTSC signals. Most modern televisions do this, but if you're thinking of buying a new one to play your Dreamcast games on, make sure you check with the shop whether it's dual standard or not ■

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

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

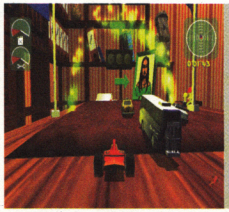
HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2

■ ISSUE #01 ■ REVIEW SCORE: 8/10

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

It was great in the arcades and it looks just as good on Dreamcast. Sega's pant-wettingly scary shoot 'em up, *The House of the Dead 2*, now comes with a special mode, featuring new weapons and power-ups. Great to look at and lots of fun to play, especially with one of your mates. This is what lightgun games are all about, and Sega's are among the very best ■

- Publisher: Sega
- Developer: In-house
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- Extras: Rumble pack
- **For:** Arcade perfect. Addictive. Multiple routes
- **Against:** Not exactly mentally challenging



TOY COMMANDER

■ ISSUE #02 ■ REVIEW SCORE: 7/10

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

Reminisce on the days of your childhood, in this strange release from No Cliché, in which you get to pilot over 30 toys, such as helicopters, cars and tanks. It's a bit like a huge, exclusively next generation version of *Micro Machines*. Its only major flaw is the fact that it is too difficult ■

- Publisher: Sega
- Developer: No Cliché
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to four
- Extras: VM
- **For:** Loads of toys. Loads of missions
- **Against:** Tricky handling. Frustrating missions

TRICKSTYLE

■ ISSUE #01 ■ REVIEW SCORE: 9/10

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

Criterion Studios has done a sterling job of creating a unique future sport sim. It doesn't matter that the hoverboarding stunts could never happen; the boarders' movements on their decks are ultra-realistic and based on real physics. It looks amazing, and it's a thrill to rocket through the futuristic city streets ■

- Publisher: Acclaim
- Developer: Criterion
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- Extras: VM mini-game. Widescreen mode
- **For:** Triumphant combination of two game styles. Looks fantastic, plays even better
- **Against:** Disappointing twoplayer game

UEFA STRIKER

■ ISSUE #02 ■ REVIEW SCORE: 8/10

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

After a marathon footie session with *UEFA Striker*, our resident football nut Lee Hart emerged from our humid games room, sweat dripping from his brow, declaring, "It's good." He always has been a man of few words. But deep inside he's happy; Dreamcast has a great football game in *UEFA Striker* ■

- Publisher: Infogrames
- Developer: Rage
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- Extras: 60Hz option
- **For:** A cracking game of football, what more do you want? Blood?
- **Against:** No manual skill moves

VIRTUA FIGHTER 3TB

■ ISSUE #02 ■ REVIEW SCORE: 7/10

"Unless you deeply despise fighting games – and maybe, even then – *Virtua Fighter 3tb* is an essential purchase. Super-smooth, fast, and with an attractive tactical vein, it's a beat 'em up par excellence."

The Muhammed Ali of fighting games, we called it. *Virtua Fighter 3tb* was once the best beat 'em up in the arcades. But at home it seems slightly lacking. Having said that, *VF3tb* is a bare bones fighter that's geared towards the hardcore player. Sadly, the PAL conversion has been poorly handled, causing us to mark it down ■

- Publisher: Sega
- Developer: In-house
- Price: £39.99
- Players: One to two
- Extras: None
- **For:** Strategic approach to fighting. Polished and tight gameplay
- **Against:** Not enough options

DROP US A LINE

GET INTO DC-WORLD – IT'S PACKED WITH GAMES, TIPS AND TOYS. SEND US A LETTER AND JOIN OUR WORLD

CAST YOUR VOTES

We want to hear from you, because what you think is important to us. So we want to know your views on Dreamcast and, more importantly, the games – are they as good (or as bad) as we reckon they are? Are they as easy to play/look as good/sound as good as you would expect from such a fantastic console? Tell us what you think. If you bash out 150 words on a game of your choice, and send it to any of the addresses shown on the bottom of the page, we'll print it here in DC-World. The one that we reckon shows the most potential will get something DC-UK-related from our office.

Secondly, there's the classifieds – sell your hardware, buy some software, try and find a back issue of some ancient gaming magazine and meet like-minded individuals. Simply email us at **dcuk.classifieds@futurenet.co.uk**, and state what you want us to say ■

MORE GAME STUFF

We've told you what you can buy now, and we've told you what you'll be able to get hold of in the not too distant future, but there's still loads more games – there's all those coin-ops Sega is famous for, for a start. We bring you the latest reviews of the greatest arcade games, so you don't go wasting beer tokens on sub-standard one-arm bandits (see page 114).

And, unfortunately for all of us, there's a ton of games that we can't get our hands on in the UK as yet. But don't go and sulk, because every month we bring you news of the latest in Dreamcast software to arrive Stateside or Japanside (hustle along to page 116). And if we're lucky, and we've been good little Dreamcasters, these'll be arriving in your local games emporium quite soon, so it's worth keeping your eye on them ■

YOU NEED HELP

You'll find plenty of tips and cheats in DC-World – everything on how to get to the next level pretty smartish to how to help Big catch Froggy (page 106).

However if there's something we've missed out, then don't hesitate to ask us. We'll try to help you as best we can in our Q&A section on page 104. Just mail or write to us at the address shown on the bottom of the page and we'll do our level best to address all problems.

And then there's that other important bit – the Internet – flick through to page 120 to get the best Net advice, and some cool pages for you to point your browser at. If you've got a Dreamcast-related page, or have found a really good one, let us know ■

EXTRAS

Have you missed a review? Never fear, just turn back a page or two to get our complete review listings so far. You can see at a glance whether a game is brilliant or bollocks (in our humble).

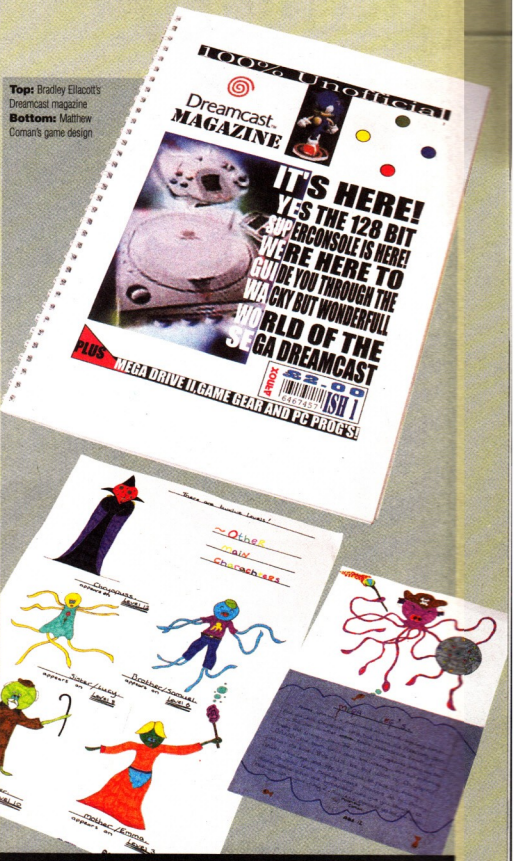
Then make your way over to page 122 for the best toys with which to re-enact your favourite gaming moments. Lastly, you can flip to page 124 to check out what we've been doing this month in order to bring you another slice of gaming history. And then there's only just about time to cram in Steve's completely irrelevant hip-hop column and to tell you what we've got in store for you next month ■

Thought of anything yet? Drop us a line at one of the following...

E-MAIL: dcuk@futurenet.co.uk
FAX: 01225 822744
WRITE:

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

Top: Bradley Ellacott's Dreamcast magazine
Bottom: Matthew Coman's game design



THE BIGGEST FANS IN THE WORLD?

PROBABLY. THE KIDS SHOW US WHAT LOYALTY IS ALL ABOUT

Hidden away among all the letters that we received this month were these two creative masterpieces – a magazine written by Bradley Ellacott, and an adventure game designed by Matthew Coman. Possibly two of the most ardent Sega fans ever.

Bradley's mag rivals our own – it's got reviews, news and even a wordsearch to keep you entertained. For just £2 (he undercut us, the little sod) you can pick up your own copy - write to Bradley at Newton, Boyton, Launceston, Cornwall, PL15 9RL.

Matthew's game, *Mega Legs*, is a cute caper involving an evil character called Chyropuss who has wantonly stolen the Freedom Jem (sic), the lack of which turns Tobblestone Town "dark and creepy". It is up to the eponymous hero (an octopuss) to save the day. Any publishers interested? ■

ASK AUNTIE ESTHER

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

> I enjoyed the magazine and am looking forward to getting a Dreamcast, but I need to know if there is a cheat for *THOTD2* to turn the green gore into blood. I don't want to know what the cheat is – just whether there is one.

Rich, via email

From what I've heard, once you complete the oneplayer game, the red blood mode becomes available in THOTD2*'s option menu. Good luck, because it's really hard to beat!*

> I recently purchased your magazine (which is excellent) and enjoyed watching the video. I learnt much about Sega's excellent Dreamcast, such as the incredible speed and graphics of its games. I also noticed that on the case of Dreamcast it states, 'Designed for Windows CE'. I then searched through your magazine but failed to find more information about this. Does this mean that Windows can be used as an operating system? Is it capable of word processing?

Andrew Easter, via email

Right now, you can't run any 'serious' applications on DC, although, if we're lucky, maybe Sega will release some software like that if the keyboard sells well. The Windows CE that's used by Sega is a heavily cut-down version which is designed to let developers port games over with relative ease. However, there's a 20-30 per cent decrease in performance if they use WinCE, so most programmers are re-coding their games.

> I was reading your September issue, when I stumbled across page 73, where it says that our TV's are slower (50 fps) than our American rivals (60 fps). Do you need a dual standard TV for the games to run at 60 fps? Or is Sega making games to run at NTSC rate on our PAL TVs?

Shelagh Johnston, via email

Most modern European tellies can support both 50 and 60 fps through their main SCART socket (around 70 per cent according to Sega), so we reckon that any TV bought in the last three to five years should be fine. The 60Hz option (see **DC-UK** *02 for more) is incredibly simple to operate, and one of the best things to happen in Euro gaming – ever.*

> I would appreciate any information you could give me regarding this Dreamcast DVD upgrade. Is it a completely new system, or is it going to be an upgrade for the current system? Keep up the good work – looking forward to the next issue.

Shane Williams, via email

Cheers, Shane. Sega has only just admitted that it's developing a Dreamcast DVD system (see page 055), and there's little information available. We think that an external drive is the only solution, because while Dreamcast's GD-ROM drive can be removed, it would cost millions of pounds to upgrade that way. Expect a street price of around £99 if and when a DVD drive is released.

> I can't wait for Dreamcast's launch, and was wondering if Core Design was developing for the console. If so, is there any chance of a Dreamcast *Tomb Raider* game? I know Core has some exclusivity deal with Sony, but doesn't that expire soon?

Also, has Codemasters signed up with the Dreamcast yet? Games like the *Toca* series and *Colin McRae* would be fantastic on Dreamcast. I'm sure a 128bit *Micro Machines* certainly wouldn't harm Dreamcast's chances of success either – especially if it were to make use of Dreamcast's online multiplayer capabilities.

Stephen Strang, Derbyshire

We reported last issue that Core was developing Tomb Raider *for Dreamcast, but since then the Derby-based developer has loudly denied any existence of the game, and it should know best. However, there's no escaping the facts that Core has a DC development kit, that it used to be good mates with Sega and that its deal with Sony expires at the end of 1999. We shall see. As for Codemasters, see our PC ports feature on page 060.*

> Just a quick note to ask the following: If I bought an American controller and VM unit, would it work with my UK Dreamcast?

Craig, via email

We have Japanese, American and English Dreamcasts in the office (it's a tough life in the media. No, really), and we regularly swop controllers and VMs between them with seemingly no problems at all.

> How fast is the built-in modem? I've heard rumours that it's 56k and also 43k, so which is it?

Oliver Leeds, via email

Look at the information bar on the next page. This will be printed every month, so that you can easily check up on things like this. Let us know if there's anything you'd like added.

> As far as I can see, Dreamcast does not yet have any storage system (although I believe a Zip drive is a possibility for the future). Therefore, I presume that emails will have to be devoid of attachments, such as graphics, sound or video, and that it will not be possible to store old emails in a filing system.

I may be missing the point, but I was also under the impression that patches would become available for games that could be downloaded from Sega's Website. How can this be done without a storage system? Again, I may have missed something with regard to storage, but I would be grateful if you could clear this matter up.

Roger Winstanley, Oldham

Sega's way of putting Dreamcast patches on the Internet is to hide extra levels in its games, which can only be unlocked by downloading VM files. These are only going to be released at certain times, such as Christmas (there's supposed to be a secret Yuletide section in Sonic Adventure*). Once the Zip drive is released, we'd expect some new Internet downloads to be announced.*

> I am going to New York soon, and was thinking about buying a Dreamcast there and bringing it back to the UK.

Would you be able to give me some information about what I would need to buy to enable me to play it when I get back to the UK, ie, an adaptor plug and any other information you feel necessary.

N Farrugia, Surrey

Well, the most important thing you need is a UK-to-US power convertor, otherwise your pristine new Dreamcast will be rapidly fried when you plug it in (as a certain inept member of the **DC-UK** *team recently discovered). Try Tandy or your local import game*

"ONCE YOU COMPLETE THE ONEPLAYER GAME, THE RED BLOOD MODE BECOMES AVAILABLE"
Auntie Esther

"ARE THERE ANY ONLINE GAMES COMING OUT LIKE QUAKE III OR, BETTER YET, KINGPIN?"

Daniel Took

stockist. You also need to make sure that your TV can support a 60Hz signal, or buy a convertor.

> I have read your article in **DC-UK** 02 regarding the SCART lead option instead of the standard TV cable. Does DC have a SCART socket in the back of the unit, so you can use a standard SCART-to-SCART lead, or is there a special lead that you have to buy, like the audio-to-SCART lead you need when you're connecting your television up to your stereo?

If it is a special lead is there any chance of you sending me one? I have bought both copies of your magazine and intend to buy the rest because they are superb.

Jason Reid, via email

Sega's own SCART cable retails for a hefty £29.99, which is pretty expensive for something which (we think) should have come as standard with the machine. There should be plenty of alternatives from other peripheral manufacturers, all of which should be a lot cheaper. If your TV has a SCART socket, it's worth getting a cable, as the picture quality is massively improved over an RF or Composite connection.

And as to sending you a lead... only if you send us 30 quid, you cheeky beggar – flattery will get you nowhere. Some people, eh?

> I'm surprised that no-one is interested in Dreamcast's Internet capabilities, so here are my questions:

1. Do you know what Dreamcast's email format will look like? Will it be MYNAME@Dreamcast-Europe.com, for example?
2. Are there any online games coming out like *Quake III* or, better yet, *Kingpin*, where you can have 16 players slaughtering the hell out of each other?
3. Why did you decide to use the 1-10 marking scheme instead of 1-100 per cent? I think 1-10 isn't very accurate because if you give a game an 8 that could mean anywhere from 80 to 89 per cent and that's the difference which makes me buy a game or not.
4. And finally, has Sega sorted out Dreamcast's problem in which, so I am told, it can't play any animations or see Flash graphics?

Thanks for your help and keep up the good work especially with the unbiased markings and things.

Daniel Took, via email

Here are some answers:

1. We've checked with Sega Europe, and the format will be as follows: yourname@uk.dreamcast.com

2. Half-Life has just been confirmed for 2000 (see DC-Express), and the rumours about Quake III: Arena *just refuse to go away.* Kingpin *seems less likely to appear on Dreamcast, because it's just so goddam rude.*

3. The problem with marking out of 100 per cent is that it causes huge arguments about whether a game is worth 88 or 87 per cent, when really it's impossible to say. And although both are driving games, if Sega Rally 2 *had scored 75 per cent and* Speed Devils *76 per cent, the two are so different to play that it wouldn't be fair to rate one higher than the other.*

4. The original Japanese Internet browser Dream Passport was extremely limited in its capabilities. However, its follow-up has been much improved, as is the European version, Dream Key. Flash is definitely supported.

> I have reserved a UK Dreamcast but will not be able to buy a DC keyboard until christmas. I just wanted to know whether you can use the controller for the Internet or not. Also I want to know if you need a keyboard to access the online gaming feature.

Matthew Smith, via e-mail

We haven't had the opportunity to sample the UK Internet browser in time for this issue, but it's bound to be like the Japanese version, in which you can get by fairly well without using a keyboard. It's not a perfect substitute by any means, but the Japanese software features a 'virtual keyboard', which is similar to entering your name on a game's high-score table. Slow, but useable. And no, you won't need a keyboard to access Dreamcast's online games when they arrive.

Could you tell me if Sega are releasing coloured DC controllers?

Tony Eckersley, via e-mail

When Caspar went to Japan in May '98 for Sega's New Challenge Conference, where Dreamcast was originally unveiled, there were a selection of coloured controllers on display – lovely pastel jobbies, mainly. But those have failed to materialise over here as yet, which is odd given that both Nintendo and Sony have made a feature of their coloured pads. We'll let you know if Sega changes its mind, but in the meantime you'll have to stick to grey, I'm afraid.

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// HARDCORE HARDWARE INFO

DREAMCAST

> **Processor:** 200MHz Hitachi SH-4. It's a Reduced Instruction Set (RISC) design, which makes it a lot more powerful than a 200MHz Intel Pentium would be. The Hitachi chip is great at delivering basic geometry data to Dreamcast's PowerVR chip (see below) – the building blocks of 3D graphics. Because of their high power, both the SH-4 and PowerVR chips are linked to a cooling system that's connected to a fan on the right-hand side of the console. So don't cover the vent!

> **Graphics chip:** Power VR 2DC (codenamed CLX-1), capable of up to four million polygons per second. Performance is nearer to three million when all the available effects (like real-time lighting) are switched on. There's also texture compression built-in, which means that highly detailed surfaces can be drawn in games. And although it's related to a PC graphics card, it is definitely not upgradable, as it's soldered onto the circuit board.

> **Storage:** Unique Yamaha 1000Mb GD-ROM drive, making the discs currently pirate-proof. Runs at 12 times standard CD speed.

> **Audio:** Yamaha's AICA audio chip features 64 sound channels, complete with in-built support for samples and surround sound effects.

> **Memory:** Dreamcast is piled high with Random Access Memory (RAM), with 16Mb for game data, 8Mb for graphics data, and 2Mb for Audio. That's as much as PlayStation and PlayStation2 have when added together.

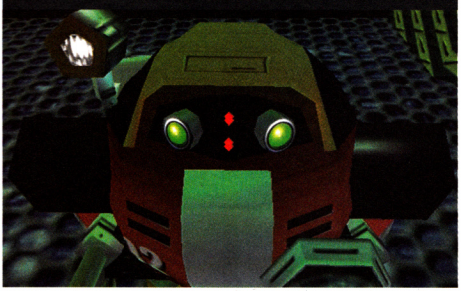
> **Video output:** Standard resolution for Dreamcast is the highest available on current televisions: 640x480 (although European TVs can support 800x600, Dreamcast is an international system). This is delivered at either 50 or 60 frames per second, which is why things move so smoothly compared to older consoles.

> **Modem:** European Dreamcast's ship with a 33.6kbps modem, which roughly means that it can communicate on the Internet at around 0.003Mb per second. So, not much. However, most PC users have coped fine with this speed for years. American Dreamcasts come with a faster 56kbps modem (around 0.005Mb per second), and we reckon the European version should have been specified the same. There is a fix, however.

The DC modem is upgradable, which you do simply by pulling it off the side of the machine (go on, have a go, we know you're dying to), and slapping a new one on. If we're lucky, future versions could include a cable modem, which would be capable of much faster speeds – as in 0.3Mb per second – so long as you're connected to a cable network, of course.

SONIC ADVENTURE

PLAYER'S GUIDE E-102, BIG THE CAT & SUPER SONIC



At last. After weeks of blood, sweat and tantrums **DC-UK**'s definitive *Sonic Adventure* guide finally comes to an end with solutions to E-102's and Big the Cat's adventures. Plus, as an extra special bonus we tell you how to finish the game completely in the hedgehog's ultimate guise of Super Sonic.

So make yourselves comfortable, wipe your sweaty hands on a younger sibling's face and let's finish this monstrous beast.

E-102

The objective of E-102's action stages is to shoot everything in sight and free the cute little animals Dr Robotnik has enslaved within various monsters. The stages are played against the clock and you must complete them before the time runs out or you will expire. Fortunately, you gain a few extra seconds every time you release an animal, so the time limits shouldn't pose too many problems.

01 STAGE 1 – Final Egg

After being switched on by your evil creator, walk round to Robotnik and go through the door to begin the first stage. This is just a short training level to familiarise you with the targeting system. You can aim at as many targets as you like before the laser turns blue and then release the fire button to blow them away. On this section simply blast all the dummies as quickly as possible then blow up the final Sonic dummy across the gap to complete the first stage.

02 BOSS – E-101

Go down the stairs and over to Robotnik who wants to test you in a battle against a fellow robot, Mr E-101. This is the first of many tediously easy boss battles; just avoid his homing missiles and fire continuously at him.

03 After proving yourself against E-101, Eggman adds you to his elite group of robots and orders you all to capture Froggy, Big the Cat's amphibious pal.

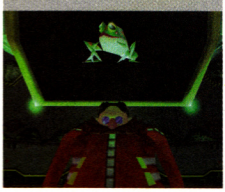
You find yourself in Station Square. The word on the street is that Froggy has been spotted on the Emerald Coast, so head through to the swimming pool area, blast the barricades and trundle onto the beach to begin the next level.

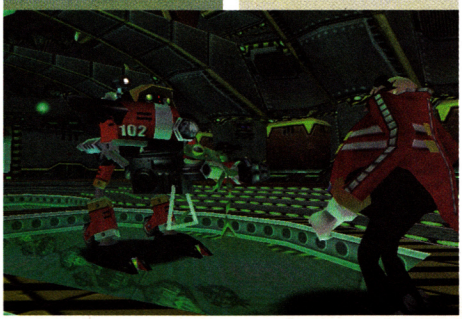
04 STAGE 2 – Emerald Coast

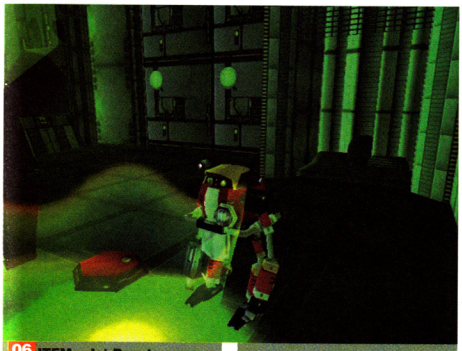
Blast everything you see (even deckchairs) to free the animals and follow the set path through the level. At the end of the stage you will grab the frog and complete the mission.

05 Tikal's spirit appears and you are transported back in time to the Floating Island. Walk up to the Master Emerald shrine and watch the mad little Chaos singing and dancing. After this marvellous interlude you're returned to the Egg Carrier where, having found the frog, you rapidly become doctor's pet. Eggman is after Froggy because the little blighter has picked up Chaos the water monster's tail and, to add insult to injury, swallowed an Emerald.

Following the cut-scene showing E-101 being reconstructed, take the door on the right and go through to the prison area. Observe the heart-warming scenes as E-102 releases Amy and Birdy then go back to the room you started from.







06 ITEM – Jet Booster

From the hub of the Egg Carrier, facing the three doors, head to the right and up the steps until you reach a door on your left. Go through and drop down to collect the Jet Booster which gives you a new hovering move. Use the springboard to bounce back up to the ledge and leave the room. Back in the main room, jump into the yellow lift to reach the ship's deck and a scrap with the hedgehog, himself.

07 BOSS – Sonic

Seeing as it's E-102's game, the roles are reversed for this battle, with the hedgehog becoming a complete pushover. Avoid his spinning attacks and give him a taste of your laser. After five hits Sonic is beaten and Amy has to step in to save his spiky rear.

08 E-102's new friends turn him from the dark side and, as he flies down from the Egg Carrier, he recognises it is the dastardly Robotnik who is the enemy. What's more, he comes to the stunning realisation that all of Eggman's robots, including himself, are actually androids built around innocent little creatures. With this in mind, E-102 resolves to fight his fellow 'E' numbers and free the animals encased within them.

Upon landing in Mystic Ruin, head up to Tails' house and pick up the Wind Stone. Take it to the cave and place it on the pedestal to access the next stage.

09 Stage 3 – Windy Valley

Trundle along shooting monsters (taking care not to blast the bridges away while you're standing on them) and use your hovering move to cross the big gaps. At the end of the level you'll meet E-103 for a boss battle.

10 BOSS – E-103

C'est difficile? Erm, non. Blast him repeatedly before he can target you and the fight will be won in a trice. The creature trapped inside E-103 is now free. Hurrah!

11 STAGE 4 – Red Mountain

Go up through the newly-formed cave in Mystic Ruin and along to the Red Mountain access area. Shoot the monkey and enter the next stage.

Ho-hum. Remember these words: Blast. Everything. In. Sight. When you reach the big lava pit area shoot the stone pillars and they will drop down to become handy stepping stones which you can use to reach E-104.

12 BOSS – E-104

It's just too easy. Keep lasering his metal carcass and E-104 will be whupped no messin' and the cute lil' animal within will be free to go about his daily business.

13 ITEM – Laser Blaster

You flashback to E-101 being rebuilt and decide to return to the Egg Carrier to free the creature trapped inside him. Get on the boat below Mystic Ruin station to reach the Carrier which has crashed in the sea. Use the lifts and springboards to reach the deck and take the yellow lift down to the ship's interior. Go to the room on the left (directly opposite the one which contained the Jet Booster) to find the Laser Blaster which upgrades your firing power and range.

Head back to the central hub and take the middle one of the three doors to begin the final stage.

14 STAGE 5 – Hot Shelter

Go through the doorway and waste everything around you. Carry on straight ahead and drop down the shaft then hover into the highest entrance where you'll pick up an extra life. Fly across to the ladder, climb up and blast everything before springboarding up to the exit.

Past the doors, go along the bridge and activate the button to swing the bridge around to the next room. Zoom off the travelator then waste the monkeys on the right, blast the droid ahead of you and dodge the spiky balls. Launch off a second travelator and hover over to the platform to reach the high speed cargo station.

Shoot the boxes and step on the red button where the pincers can grab you and carry you to the next room. Blast everything in here then step on the button and quickly trundle down to the green platform so another set of pincers can grab you. You'll end up on the moving cargo runways. Waste everything in front of you and jump over two sets of spiky balls then hover across to the runway on your left and shoot the contents of the yellow carriages. Keep swapping between the two runways until you reach the front carriage where a red button will bring your journey to an end.

SONIC ADVENTURE

PLAYER'S GUIDE E-102, BIG THE CAT & SUPER SONIC

Jump to the platform, leap over the spiky balls and drop down the hole and then hover down picking up various bonuses and shooting monkeys. At the bottom, blow up the boxes and waste more simians then use the travelators to reach a showdown with the gigantic E-105.

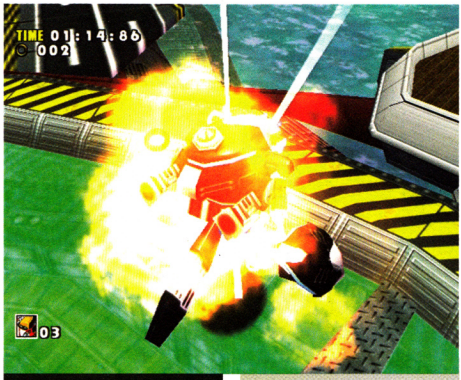
15 BOSS: E-105

This robot may be big but don't worry, because he's also piss-weak. Let rip with your lasers and dodge his missiles while trundling along the circular moving platform. He will be beaten in no time and the rescue of the imprisoned creature from inside his sweaty circuits will be accomplished.

16 BOSS: E-101 mkII

Take the lift back up to the deck and, after the cut-scene, follow E-101 to the front of the ship for the final battle. E-101 has been rebuilt with super-tough front armour so you can only hurt the robot if you shoot his rear. To achieve this, obliterate the missiles he fires and when he swoops toward you, quickly dodge behind him and blast his back end. After two or three hits he will take to the aerial platform and fire laserbeams at you, just zoom around in a circle avoiding his onslaught and when he comes back to ground level finish the bugger off. It takes four hits to beat him.

As E-101 dies, a white bird is freed from the metal shell that imprisoned him. The sight of this bird triggers a Robocop-style flashback in E-102 as he remembers images from his life before Robotnik turned him into a machine. In an emotional final scene, E-102 lies down and self-destructs to release the little bird that is his true self. Ahhh.



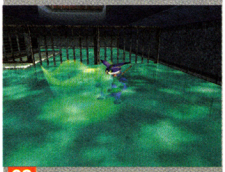
BIG THE CAT

All of Big's action stages require him to catch his pal Froggy through the medium of fishing. However, 'frogging' may be a more apt description because Froggy (as his name suggests) is less your gills and scales type creature and more your green, eaten by the French kind of beast. Froggy has done a runner having had a funny turn by swallowing a Chaos Emerald and having Chaos the water monster's tail attached to him (it could happen to anyone). It is your job as Big the Cat to retrieve the amphibious pest. Over and over again (sigh).

01 You begin in Station Square. Follow the road to the left and you'll see Froggy hop under the parked car and into the sewer. Lift the car using B and drop down the manhole. Walk round to the right until you reach a box then jump onto it and over to the elevator which takes you to Twinkle Park. Enter the Park to begin the first stage.

02 STAGE 1 – Twinkle Park

Start off by spanking the monkey with your rod, so it can't disturb you while you're busy fishing, then stand at the side of the pool and cast off. It's up to you whether you want to get your eye in by catching some fish or go straight after the frog. Either way, once you catch Froggy the stage will end.



03 ITEMS – Lure and Lifebelt

Leave Twinkle Park and go behind the building and then into the sewer to collect a special Lure upgrade. As you leave, pick up the Ice Stone on your left and head for Mystic Ruin. Go up through the cave and place the stone on the pedestal to open the Icecap. Follow the path to the body of water and pick up the Lifebelt which enables you to walk underwater (until your oxygen runs out, of course). Cross the water and then use the ladder to reach the next stage.

04 STAGE 2 – Icecap

Pick up the rock and chuck it onto the ice to break it open and reveal a pool. Drop into the water and walk through the tunnel into a bigger pool area. 'Hurry up!' music will start to play as you're about to drown so quickly head for the gap at the top right and you'll springboard up to a higher platform. Use the rock to shatter the ice and sink down past the dinosaur skeleton to find another Lure upgrade.

Go back to the first ice pool and Froggy will be there swimming around. Needless to say, catch the green swine to finish the level.

05 ITEMS – Power Rod and Fishing Lure

Leave the Icecap and go back to Mystic Ruin. You will encounter Tails who is holding Froggy and, after you make a desperate lunge for the amphibian, he will hop away again. Before pursuing him take a detour to the forest area to collect a couple of special items.

Get off the minecart and drop into the forest. Follow the river upstream to Big's shack and lift up his bed to discover the Power Rod which increases your casting range. The lure is a bit more tricky to find. Follow the branch of the stream furthest left and you need to take the second path you see on the right (an explorer will be standing there). From here, take the second path on your left and you should see a gap in the trees. From

here go down the hidden passage to find the Fishing Lure.

Now, head back to Mystic Ruin and take the train to Station Square where you will see Froggy hopping into the hotel. Follow him through to the beach for the next stage.

06 STAGE 3 – Emerald Coast

Oh dear. This stage is the stinkiest pile of festering faecal matter ever deposited on God's Earth. It begins easily enough as you kill the monkeys and cast off near the stone support (on the right as you enter the level) but it's with the line in the sea that your problems start.

Froggy, the complete and utter sod, swims round in a circle and unless you get the line perfectly inside his turning curve he will just ignore it. This isn't too difficult once you get a feel for the casting distance but, wait, there's more. When you do attract his interest you have to keep the line floating in clear water; if you snag it on the sea bed or on the island foundations, Froggy will come to a complete halt and just stare at the lure in a hypnotic trance. When you do manage to cast the line in his turning curve and keep it snag-free the frog will probably come and investigate. However, even with all the lure upgrades and the Power Rod, there is no guarantee the bugger will bite.

It took us five hours (yes, FIVE HOURS!) to catch the little pest. During this time he nibbled the line on countless occasions but refused to bite no matter how many obscenities were hurled at him. Of course, you may be lucky and the frog will bite within minutes. On the other hand, you could be sitting there for the rest of your life with a long, white beard and fingernails scraping on the ground.

Our advice is, if he doesn't bite within the first half hour then give up. It simply isn't worth the hassle. No-one will think any less of you if you fail to complete Big the sodding Cat's adventure. We're getting paid (not enough) to be driven to the brink of madness, you're not, so go and do something more valuable with your time. Life's too short to waste it trying to catch a videogame frog with a bleeding fishing rod.

If you insist on trying to catch him the only help we can give you is to keep the line as close to the surface and as close to the beach as possible (without snagging it), then cross everything that you're physically capable of crossing. Good luck.

07 ITEM – Fishing Lure

If you ever catch darling Froggy, E-102 will immediately come and nick him. Sheesh. After a cut-scene you'll be on the Egg Carrier. Head over to the three doors and take the one on the right. Go through to the prison area and in the first cell you will see the final Lure power-up. Jump on the button to open the cell and collect it.

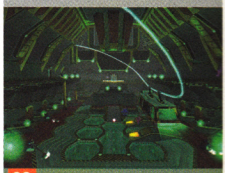
Now, go back to the three doors and take the middle one to enter the final stage.

08 STAGE 4 – Hot Shelter

Go through the doors, along the path and over the water to reach the drainage room. Big will spot Froggy and you can use the red button to drain all the water and bring the amphibian into the room. All you have to do now is catch him.

You probably finished Emerald Coast a gibbering wreck, rocking back and forth in the corner with drool seeping out of your mouth – after this stage you'll be on a plane to Japan brandishing a crowbar. Whoever designed Big's adventure has a lot to answer for; there are no skills or tactics involved, it is only pure luck that decides whether you catch the frog in ten minutes or ten years. And that is simply no fun.

Thankfully, this stage is not quite as infuriating as the last because you're not as limited in the area you can cast off in. However, it is still teeth-grindingly frustrating and unless luck is on your side you could be in for another long wait.



09

Praise be! Give thanks to the fiery sun lord! There are no more fishing stages to punish us with. Yes, the fishing is indeed no more and you can come out from behind the sofa. After finally grabbing our favourite frog, Big is whisked off to the Floating Island. Just walk up to the Master Emerald to watch the ensuing cut-scene, after which the baffled cat will be returned to the Egg Carrier.

Step on the floor pad next to where Tikal's spirit is hovering and you will summon the Egg Monorail. Get inside the front carriage and then you'll be taken up to the deck for a showdown with Chaos.

10 BOSS: Chaos 6

Make your way to the circular green area and Chaos will force the Emerald out of Froggy's stomach and use it to become Chaos 6. The aquatic monster will then swallow the frog and reclaim his tail. With Froggy trapped in the monster's stomach it's up to you to get him back once and for all. This is well-easy; just cast your line at the target in Chaos' stomach and the frog will be pulled safe-and-sound into your arms.

With Froggy back to normal and without the urge to scarper, you can go over to Tails' plane and fly back to the forest. Then strangle the green freak for all the grief he caused you. ▶

SONIC ADVENTURE

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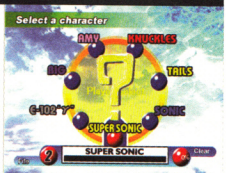
SUPER SONIC



With the adventures of all six characters completed, Super Sonic becomes available at the character selection screen. The only objective in this final part of the game is to become Super Sonic for the ultimate face-off with Perfect Chaos. To turn 'Super', Sonic must have all seven Chaos Emeralds and 50 rings. When he has them he transforms into a yellow speed demon who can travel over water and obliterate anything that gets in his way. However, for every second he's in this guise he loses a ring and when all 50 are gone he returns to the common or garden Sonic. Kind of like Bruce Banner and the Incredible Hulk but without the ripped kecks.

After the set-up scenes, run up through the Mystic Ruin cave and over the bridge to the, re-non-floating, Floating Island. Go round to see Knuckles and Robotnik lying prone on the ground and the echidna will tell you that Chaos has returned and taken all the Emeralds.

Tikal's spirit appears and transports Sonic back to the scene of the Master Emerald aflame. Run to the temple and you will see Tikal trying to stop the tribal chief and some warriors from getting to the Master Emerald. They barge past and their bad manners are punished as Chaos appears and wastes them all. Run up to Tikal and follow her as she goes toward the Emerald. Once there, you are returned

to Mystic Ruin.

You're then woken by Tails who mentions the Chaos Emerald that is left in his plane, the Tornado. Take the minecart to the rainforest and drop down through the canopy. A flow of water appears and carries the Emerald away from the plane's nose. Chaos now has all seven Emeralds. Curses.

A cut-scene shows Chaos laying waste to Station Square and turning into Perfect Chaos. He then blows Eggman away with one dismissive blast. That'll teach him. Tikal appears and tells Sonic he must stop Chaos and trap him inside the Master Emerald, she then conjures the seven Emeralds away from the monster. Sonic's five fellow adventurers show up and Tails tells the hedgehog he should use the Emeralds to become Super Sonic and finish Chaos off once and for all.

Sonic transforms into his well-hard yellow persona and the fight is on. Oh, mama.

BOSS: Perfect Chaos

You begin with 50 rings and as long as you don't let the number drop below 50 you'll remain as Super Sonic. Fortunately, there are loads of rings to be found on the ramps to keep your total topped up, but you still have to be quick as you will lose one ring every second. Because the fight is on water if you do revert back to plain old Sonic you will pop your cork because only Super Sonic has the pace to travel over the wet stuff.

You also need to be quick in order to hurt Chaos as you have to zoom up through his body and burst out of his head. If you're not going fast enough you will flop down without reaching his brain. There are travelators on the ramps which will give you a speed boost and be sure to avoid Chaos' water attacks that slow you down.

Hit him three times and Perfect Chaos will return with even more power and firebolts to shoot at you. Hit him three more times in this incarnation and the battle is won.

This final battle may sound tough but it's actually not too difficult. Just keep using the ramps to collect rings and zoom off the travelators, head straight for Chaos while dodging his (rather feeble) attacks and burst through him six times in total. The biggest worry is losing all your rings and transforming back to Sonic, but if you're quick enough this shouldn't be a problem.

With Perfect Chaos destroyed he reverts back to his initial, puny form. As Sonic and his pals look on, Tikal and a group of chao circle Chaos and take him away (to trap him in the Master Emerald presumably). Sonic notices Eggman skulking away so the old bugger will return to cause mischief again, no doubt. As Tails turns to speak to his pal he sees Sonic running off into the horizon.

And that's your lot, you've finished, completely. Bring on the dancing girls and the juggling dwarves. Ta-Daaaaa!

THE END

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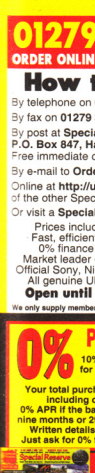

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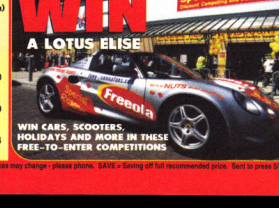

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TOP SECRETS

SOUL CALIBUR, READY 2 RUMBLE, SEGA BASS

SOUL CALIBUR

Publisher: Sega
Release: November

CHARACTER PROFILES

Obtain all the pictures in the first collection in the Museum to unlock this option which allows you to see each character's profile.

SURVIVAL EXTRA

Obtain all the pictures in the second collection in the Museum to unlock this option which allows you to play an alternative survival mode.

EDIT INTRO

Obtain all the pictures in the third collection in the Museum to unlock this option which allows you to edit the game's opening movie.

SELECT WEAPONS

Obtain all the pictures in the fourth collection in the Museum to unlock this option which allows you to choose different weapon graphics.

ALTERNATE COSTUMES

Press Y at the character selection screen to change the fighters into their alternative costumes.

VICTORY POSES

Each character has three different victory poses. After winning a scrap press X, Y, or B during the replay to select one of the three poses.

REPLAY CAMERA

During a replay press B to switch which character the camera is focusing on. You can then pan around and zoom in and out on the defeated fighter's body.

PLAY AS CERVANTES

Beat the game with all the starting and secret characters and this will unlock Cervantes. The pirate will now be available from the character selection screen.

PLAY AS UNKNOWN SOUL

To play as the Unknown Soul version of your character hold the right trigger when you select them and your character will become translucent.
NOTE: This only works after Cervantes has been unlocked.

PLAY AS INFERNO

Obtain Xianghua's third costume from Mission Battle mode then beat the Arcade game with Xianghua in her third costume (selected by pressing Y+A). Now you'll be able to play as the final boss, Inferno.
NOTE: You must have all of the pictures in the collections before you can unlock Inferno with Xianghua.

NEW TITLE SCREEN

Beat the game with Inferno to get a new title screen.

SECRET DOJO MISSION

Finish all the missions including the Extra Missions unlocked after completing the two Chaos stages. Now, on the mission select screen go to the Eastern map and move your pointer over to the Korea area to find the secret mission. You won't be able to see it when you land on the secret area but you will hear the 'zip' noise that is heard when selecting any normal mission.

There are five stages in this secret location.

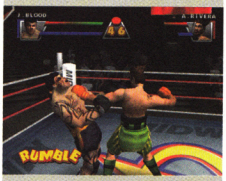
SECRET SWAMP MISSION

Finish all the missions including all the Extra Missions unlocked after completing the two Chaos stages. Now, on the mission select screen go to the Western map and move your pointer over the middle of the upper right area of the screen (near Poland) to find the secret area. You won't be able to see it when you land on the secret area but you will hear the same 'zip' noise as above.

There are two stages in this secret location.

READY 2 RUMBLE

Publisher: Sega
Release: October



RECOVER ENERGY

While your opponent is on the canvas rotate the analogue stick to build up lost energy.

TAUNTS

During a fight hold X+A or Y+B to taunt your opponent like an errant Naseem Hamed.

ALTERNATIVE OUTFITS

Press X+Y when you're selecting a boxer and your fighter will be wearing a different costume.

CHANGE CORNERMAN VOICE

At the character selection screen press X + any direction on the d-pad to toggle cornerman voices.

EASY MONEY

Place a bet on a prize fight and if you emerge victorious place your winnings on a second fight. If you think you're going to lose just quit the match and try again. Keep doing this as often as you like and you'll soon have more dishonest readies than Don King.

SELECT FIGHTING ARENA

In twoplayer mode while selecting a boxer, press the left trigger to fight in the two tier arena and the right trigger for the championship arena. Pressing L and R together selects the gym.

UNLOCK ALL CLASSES AND FIGHTERS

To unlock Bronze Class enter your gym name as 'Rumble Power'.
To unlock Silver Class enter your gym name as 'Rumble Bumble'.
To unlock Gold Class enter your gym name as 'Mosma!'.
For Champ Class enter your gym name as 'Pod 5!' – this also unlocks all the hidden fighters.

SEGA BASS FISHING

Publisher: Sega
Release: October

BONUS BAIT

Finish all five Professional Tournament levels in the Consumer mode and you will receive a bonus bait – Sonic the Hedgehog.

BONUS PALACE LEVEL

Finish the first two tournaments in Consumer mode and it will open up the Palace area in the final stage of Arcade mode.

BONUS FALLS LEVEL

Finish the last two tournaments in Consumer mode and it will unlock the Falls area in Arcade mode.

EXTRA PRACTICE LEVELS

Beat the game once in Arcade mode and it will unlock three new levels in Practice mode.

CHANGE LURE COLOR

In Consumer mode press up or down on the d-pad to toggle the colour of your lure. Probably pointless, but it might just make the lure more attractive to the fishies ■

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COINING IT

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Below: Players are required to bring their own stale sandwiches and rubbery snacks for in-flight consumption

AIRLINE PILOTS

Developer: AM R&D 1
Release: Out Now

We've all been there: 30,000 feet up on our way to food poisoning and heat rash somewhere in the Med, bored out of our skulls because mum forgot to pack the comics, wondering whether any real food will turn up. And then you ask to see where the pilot sits, firing up fantasies that one day you too might steer an aeroplane.

Fast forward to 1999 and those childhood dreams have been answered, in part, by Sega. Okay, so there's been loads of flight simulators for PC, Amiga and God knows what else, but unless you're a techno geek with a Mega Yoke Speedthrust 8000 and an oooge Pentium, then nothing can touch AM1's *Airline Pilots*. Well, apart from the real thing. Obviously.

Developed in conjunction with JAL (Japan Airlines), *Pilots* is a three-screened arcade monster, employing the same multi-board Naomi malarky as stablemate *Ferrari 355 Challenge* (see **DC-UK** 01). And that's not all that the two machines have in common, as *Airline Pilots* features a similarly bewildering array of controls to wrestle with. These, however, are also part of its appeal – as there are 'real' switches for the flaps and landing gear, plus a split throttle for the engines. And of course, there's an aircraft yoke control to contend with.

Another similarity between *Airline Pilots* and *Ferrari 355 Challenge* is the extreme delicacy that's required to successfully navigate their courses. *Pilots* certainly isn't *Afterburner* – this is civil aviation, after all, and uncivil behaviour will have you out of the skies in no time.

The game is split into training and expert modes, and it's worth spending some time with the former option before jetting out into the wide blue yonder. A series of green oblongs outline the necessary course, demanding gentle coaxing of the yoke and teasing of the throttles to pull you through. Just like Nintendo's *Pilotwings* on SNES and N64, it sounds deadly boring in black and white, yet proves surprisingly addictive.

Whether we'll see a Dreamcast conversion of *Airline Pilots* (roll out the videogame magazine cliché), remains to be seen. Even though a single-screen version of the game has surfaced in Japan, without all the fancy controls a lot of *Pilots*' appeal might be lost. But then again, we thought that about *Sega Bass Fishing*, too ■

Above: Midway's powerful, bottom-rumbling *Hydro Thunder* has been rumoured to be an effective cure for severe constipation. Honest

HYDRO THUNDER

Developer: Midway
Release: Out Now

With all the bass related jokes that have been flying around the office this month, it's hard to explain that *Hydro Thunder*'s coin-op appeal really is all about bass, but of the low and rumbling, not wet and elusive type. That's because right underneath the cabinet's shapely seat is a large subwoofer, conveniently placed to convey to the player the sensation of a powerboat on full-throttle. Straight into your bum.

Hydro Thunder is just the latest in a long line of Atari and Midway coin-ops that run on a PC-based system (Midway actually employed 3Dfx's Voodoo technology to power the game's graphics). Previous famous PC-powered names include *Gauntlet Legends* and the *San Francisco Rush* series, the latter offering the same kind of outrageous arcade gameplay as *Thunder*, except with cars.

Sinking into *Hydro Thunder*'s seat before grasping the meaty accelerator level with your right hand, there's a slight feeling that this is a poor relation to Sega's own arcade games. However, once a track and craft have been selected (and it's worth, at this point, flicking the control wheel around to the Extreme section, just to hear the machine cry out, "You're crazy!"), and the race is about to begin, all such doubts evaporate.

Slam the power over to full, and so long as the arcade owner has been generous with the volume setting, you're treated to a throaty grumbling from down below (insert bad curry pun here). Lord knows how big it is, but that woofer alone makes it worth the pocket money to try out *Hydro Thunder*'s coin-op version. Better still, once you've skimmed around the courses and collected a few nitro packs, there's a rather tempting Knight Rider-style red button on the throttle that just has to be pressed. This kicks in the boats' nitrous injection systems, sending them hurtling forward at a huge rate of knots. Understated it is not.

Other than that, arcade *Hydro Thunder* is more or less identical to the Dreamcast version – although the DC's resolution is slightly better. There's a twin-cabinet version to race against mates on. However, once you've purchased *Thunder* on DC, you can practice finding all the secret routes in the game at your leisure. All you really need is a 500 watt subwoofer to sit on and there'll be no difference at all ■

NOT THE SAME CABLE

DC-UK'S REGULAR DELVE INTO THE SHADOWY WORLD OF IMPORT GAMING

EGG

Developer: Hudson Soft
UK release: Not known

Also known as *Elemental Gimmick Gear*, *EGG* is an RPG. Now, as we all know, the role-playing game needs to communicate with its player, in order to convey trifling details like plot, dialogue and puzzles. Alas, to all but the most hardcore, experienced import gamer, the Japanese character set is a bit of an impediment to understanding.

To be worth your while as an import title, an RPG written in another language must offer blinding set-pieces, gameplay that transcends cultural and linguistic boundaries to speak a universal tongue, and look pretty. *EGG* is once, twice, three times a loser on that particular scorecard. While its mixture of hand-drawn art and rendered material in its cut-scenes is pleasant, its in-game visuals make it look like a tawdry PlayStation port. Was it really developed specifically for Dreamcast? Somehow, we doubt it.

Its basic premise is simple to grasp. You control a man in a mechanised suit. (Incidentally, veteran gamers will be perturbed by the fact that it looks like *Magic Knight*. Remember him?) You converse, explore and partake in combat sequences – but its tiny bitmap characters are far from expressive. If you lack the requisite Japanese communication skills, it's almost like playing a version of *Pac Man* where power pills speak in Esperanto for five minutes before you can eat them. Sound like fun? Thought not. *EGG* might have an incredible plot and sharp scripting that makes mere aesthetic concerns seem trivial – but, prior to a possible English conversion, you just can't tell. And we doubt it ■

GUNDAM SIDE STORY

Developer: Bandai
UK release: Early 2000

Bandai's reputation as a producer of games has long been tarnished by mediocre, even terrible, releases. *Gundam Side Story*, though, is really rather good. With its plot roots firmly entrenched in the *Gundam* video series, strong visuals and surprising depth, it comes as no surprise to hear that it is confirmed for Western release during the first months of the new millennium. Those desperate for a fix of semi-strategic robot combat before that point will be gladdened, however, to hear that *GSS* favours English text. Once you've become accustomed to the controls, you'll find it surprisingly approachable for an import title.

Actually, describing the protagonists of *Gundam Side Story* as robots is a bit of a crass generalisation. They are, in fact, wee people clad in heavily armed and armoured mobile suits. Using the d-pad to move around the game's generally attractive environments, you can manipulate your suit's head with the analogue stick. This arrangement proves a mite confusing at first; indeed, your initial battle will probably involve a static war of armament attrition with a similarly stupid CPU-controlled counterpart. When you get to grips with the control of your mobile suit, it's startling to find how tactical later battles can become. You can even use 'wingmen' of sorts, and use terrain to your advantage.

Those looking for cheap arcade thrills might be advised to look elsewhere; *Gundam*'s pretensions make it far more complex than a trigger-happy first go might suggest. At present, it's a remarkably unique Dreamcast game – we're prepared to give it a provisional thumbs up. Blimey, and it being a Bandai game, too. Remarkable stuff ■

They're mad for big robots in the Land Of The Rising Sun, as proven by the plethora of Mech shoot 'em ups released every month over there. Here in blighty we're fortunate enough not to see many of these games as they're, well, poo. GGS is an exception, so look out for it's appearance on our shores early next year

COOL BORDERS BURRRN! (SNOW SURFERS)

Developer: UEP Systems **UK Release:** November '99

Considering the popularity of the snowboarding genre, it was inevitable UEP would return with another *Cool Boarders* title. Renamed *Snow Surfers* for its forthcoming UK release, *Cool Boarders Burrrn!* has all the hallmarks of the series so far, but does little to extend the franchise in new directions. Indeed this is a scrappy installment in a series which may have started the whole genre, but has certainly not provided its highlight moments.

The set-up will be immediately familiar to PlayStation owners, who encountered the first three *CB* titles. Single players choose from Freeride (downhill race against the clock) or Superpipe (freestyle trickery), while two players get Match race. You then choose a character from six stereotyped groovy young snowboarders, before finally selecting a board and circuit. Victory in any of these opens up new tracks, etc, etc.

Although the Freeride tracks are well drawn and impressive in size and scope, they are certainly not polished in terms of gameplay. Often it's difficult to tell where you're supposed to be heading, with scenic objects, hills and sloping cavern entrances obscuring the route. Even more annoying, areas which look like they lead to alternative routes, often just have you plummeting down steep ravines, or running into dead ends – a complete course design no-no. And the inclusion of objects which have to be blasted through by pressing a 'guard' button is just silly: it's like making a football game in which the players have to avoid anti-personnel mines.

Elsewhere, the Superpipe invites you to perform tricks to gain points, but the control system continually fights against you, ruining the experience. The twoplayer mode is pretty good fun, though. All in all, this is a typical addition to the series. It looks good in places, and there is a keen understanding of the sport, but good points are buried beneath some poor design, really terrible Californian commentary, and an unreliable control system. There will be better examples of this genre, believe us ■

01 Snowboarding at night ranks alongside skydiving without a parachute in the realms of stupidity

02 The stunts are nowhere near 'radical' enough to match the quality of those in *Trick Style*

03 The PlayStation versions of the game were tripe and, unfortunately, this is little better

ESSENTIAL INFO

> READ THIS FIRST
TO PLAY IMPORT GAMES, YOU NEED TO ENSURE THAT YOU HAVE THE NECESSARY TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT TO ACCESS THEM

> DO YOU OWN: A Japanese or American Dreamcast, or an add-on device that allows you to play games from either country?
> WHY THIS IS NECESSARY: Have you heard of the term 'territorial lockout'? In essence, this is a feature within the European Dreamcast that prevents games from NTSC regions from running. All consoles – from the antiquated Mega Drive, to the ageing PlayStation – have this nasty trick hidden in their metaphorical sleeves. Sega, like other videogame giants, is loathe to condone the existence of the import scene. To get around this, you either need an NTSC machine, or an add-on device that fools the Dreamcast into thinking that it can play any game. Which, of course, it actually can. The latter does not exist yet but, traditionally, thirdparty manufacturers tend to start working on these add-ons after the launch of a new console.

> DO YOU OWN: A TV capable of displaying an NTSC signal?
> WHY THIS IS NECESSARY: Before you rush out to buy an NTSC Dreamcast, you should take a long, hard look at your TV. Is it a dual-format model, capable of displaying both NTSC and PAL signals? If it's more then four years old, the chances are that it isn't. If it's a low-budget portable, it's also unlikely to fit the required bill. The best way to find out is to ask the manufacturer. If it's a PAL-only model, you'll need to buy a new TV. Plug an NTSC Dreamcast into it and, at best, you'll get a grainy, stretched and, above all, visually unpleasant black-and-white picture. At worst, you'll get a mess of rolling lines.

> DO YOU OWN: A step-down transformer, and either a SCART or S-video cable?
> WHY THESE ARE NECESSARY: If you buy an NTSC Dreamcast, the retailer in question will prompt you into buying these, too. It's a good idea to consent to both. Japan and the US use different voltages to the UK, and plugging your Dreamcast straight into the mains will kill it forever. A 'step down', as they are known, regulates the voltage to a DC-friendly level.

A SCART or S-video cable is needed to link your TV and Dreamcast. If your TV is happy with NTSC signals, you will have sockets for one or both on top-range models. Generally, people argue that SCART offers a better quality of image, so opt for that if you have it. Some would even argue that bronze, silver or gold-plated versions of these – costing anything from £20 to £60 – offer an even better standard of picture. But do you really want to take things that seriously?

NOT THE SAME CABLE

DC-UK'S REGULAR DELVE INTO THE SHADOWY WORLD OF IMPORT GAMING

IMPORT ROUND-UP

GIANT GRAM

Developer: Sega
UK release: Possible 2000

While the relentless pomp and histrionics of mainstream wrestling remains almost entirely divorced from the realm of human activity known as sport, videogame interpretations of it are becoming almost palatable. The wrestling simulation is no longer the arse-end of the beat 'em up spectrum; it's now a valued sub-genre. *Giant Gram*, a kind of sequel to the little-known *All Japan Pro Wrestling* for the Saturn, is a good tip for conversion and release in the UK and US. Why? Because it is very, very accomplished.

The little things in life matter. *Giant Gram*, almost belying the unsubtle nature of its inspiration, is packed with inspired touches. Like other wrestling games, it pinches control methods and moves from its more traditional fighting counterparts. In a rare moment of insight, though, Sega has also included on-screen prompts and hints during bouts. This helps *Giant Gram*'s fights offer more than just button bashing. Presented with perfectly valid suggestions, you find yourself riding a learning curve that is part Simon Says and part on-the-job training. You might loose the cheeky thrill of pulling off an enormous move by mistake, but playing rather than pummelling the pad makes a real difference. Other developers, take note.

For fans of wrestling, this is an essential import. If Sega wishes to convert it, though, it has one big problem to address. *Giant Gram* is great to look at, splendid to play and replete with options. But, lacking a full quota of recognisable Western fighters, many fans will find it hard to identify with it, and might opt for Acclaim's forthcoming *WWF Attitude* instead. View it purely as a fighting game, though, and it represents yet another top beat 'em up for Dreamcast ■

PATA PIES

Developer: Ka.Non
UK release: Unlikely

We interrupt this review to bring readers an important announcement: you have five minutes to save the Earth! To achieve this considerable feat, you must find, and convince, a deaf, mute, drunk Japanese man with rampant leprosy to recite the lyrics to Nirvana's Smells Like Teen Spirit. This magazine will explode in ten seconds...

Actually, that's a lie. Well, obviously. But if, even for an instant, you have ever relished an insurmountable, incomprehensible challenge like that, go buy *Pata Pies*. This is the kind of import game that bewilders even the most hardened Western gamer. It's like reading a version of Stephen Hawking's A Brief History Of Time abridged by Tara Palmer-Tompkinson.

With indeterminably long stretches of text dialogue punctuated by Manga-style pictures, its presentation and plot-based niceties are almost entirely impenetrable. So, for that matter, is just about everything else.

You might be able to divine how to play *Pata Pies*' odd sub-games. You may make a (quite natural) assumption that it uses your VM in some arcane way. And, hell, you might even clear a large path through the expanding map that allows access to its weird arcade sequences. But not once will you have the vaguest glimmer of what is going on. Really. A Japanese-English phrasebook will avail ye not. *Pata Pies*, resolutely cute and utterly beyond comprehension, alludes to greater things. You'll just never know what they are. You know that saying about the anticipation being better than the actual event? Well, they lied ■

01 Look! It's a couple of... things! And blow me if they're not dancing!

02 Don't you know anything? This is obviously the part of the game where you get to do stuff

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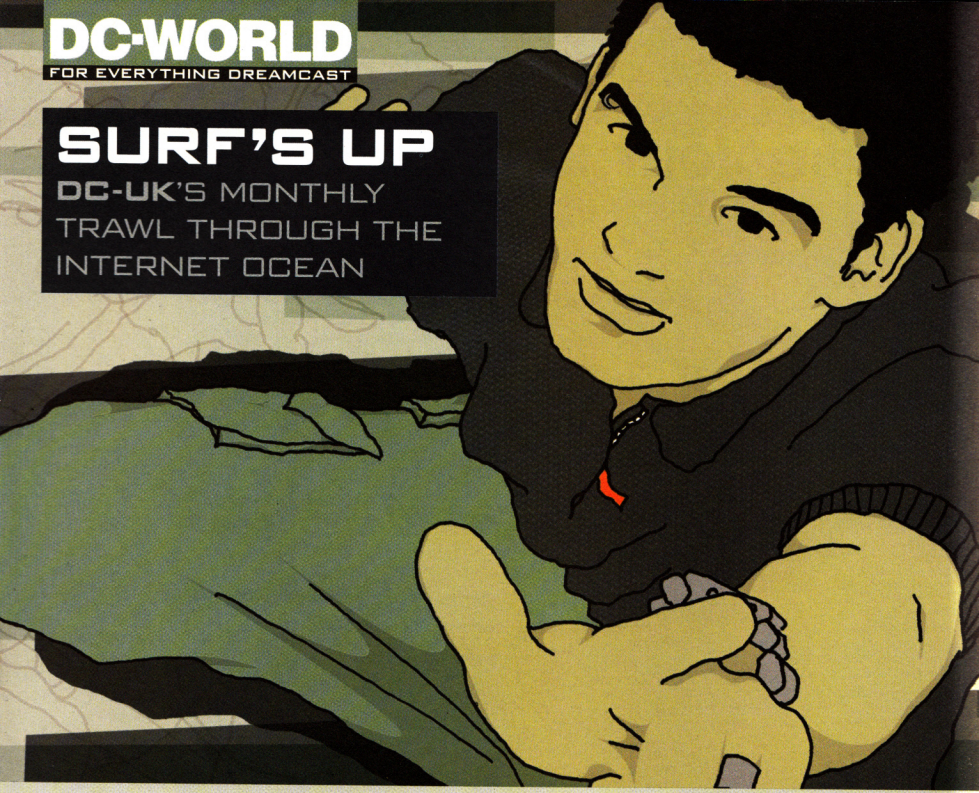
PlayStation, N64, Dreamcast and PC news, previews and reviews updated daily and delivered to your mailbox.

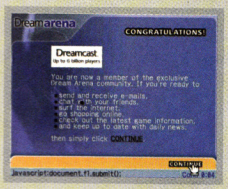
SURF'S UP

DC-UK'S MONTHLY TRAWL THROUGH THE INTERNET OCEAN



// UK BROWSER

Dreamcast Arena



> For those of you yet to buy a Dreamcast and then rush home and plug it straight into the Internet, this is what you'll see when that beautiful day arrives.

This is Dream Arena, the introductory service all UK DC owners will discover when they insert their Web browser disc into the drive and choose to go online. From this cute little area, you'll

be able to select a number of services such as email, Web surfing, chat and shopping, and it's all easily navigable due to the lovely icon-driven display. Incidentally, the disc itself is to be known as Dream Key, rather than Dream Passport – the Japanese moniker. Not sure why they felt the need to change it, but there you go.

We'll have a longer report on the Dreamcast online experience, including any sites which specifically support the console next month...

// AMERICAN BROWSER

Dreamcast Network

> The US browser has been online for over a month now, and Sega of America is piling on the content. Over there, the home site is known simply as Dreamcast Network, and is already providing most of the functions that have been promised by Dream Arena.

Recently, SoA added a downloadable VM American footie game which takes up 111 memory blocks on a VM unit, and is

apparently not up to much. Hopefully practice will make perfect however, as SoA is planning further ventures into this territory. We will no doubt see similar developments with the UK browser.

Hilariously the browser disc comes with a warning: "The Internet is a very large community and like any large community, there are places that are inappropriate for children." Sega is obviously eager to deflect any law suits of the, "my son is addicted to kinky porn and it's all your fault" variety.

NEWS ONLINE

There's a massive wealth of Dreamcast information on the Internet, but how do you sort the good from the bad, or worse, the ugly? Simple. Just consult DC-UK's definitive guide to worldwide Sega news.

> Site #01: SEGA EUROPE

News straight from the horses mouth, so to speak. Nice, pretty site with some groovy design. Good for official announcements and press releases relevant to the UK gamer, but, erm, not much else to be honest. Could be a little more up to date as well. However, **www.dreamcast-europe.com** is about to change all that. Meanwhile point your browsers at:
www.sega-europe.com

> Site #02: SEGA OF AMERICA

Crowded, over-stylised and picture-heavy site with one or two snippets of useful info. US Dreamcast users will already have swapped to using the console-only alternative **www.dreamcast.com** (see left), which is much more readable in its layout. At least this site has a passion for the national Sega 'scene', though.
www.sega.com

> Site #03: SEGA2000

Could regret that millennial title next year when everyone is sick to death of Y2K, but never mind. Has the look and feel of a fanzine rather than an online magazine: it's not very pretty but it's packed with interesting stuff and very open to reader interaction (often in the form of reader reviews). Contains all the usual news, previews and reviews, plus cheats and a whole extra section dedicated to RPGs.
www.sega2000.net

> Site #04: SEGA X

Again all the usual stuff, but this one includes a few interviews, short features and a lengthy download section for character art and demo movies. Certainly one of the more stylish and easily navigable offerings.
www.segadreamcast.net

> Site #05: DREAMCAST HQ

Another slick, well-designed site with good use of icons and a saucy little *Dead or Alive 2* bikini pic in the top right hand corner. Other than that, has news, reviews, previews, etc, plus a few (slightly out of date at the moment) features and the occasional contest.
www.dreamcast-hq.net

> Site #06: SEGA WEB

Lots of screenshots and photos on the menu page make this one more approachable than most – as does the friendly tone of the writing. Decent mix of international news. The forum is slightly over-ambitious with far too many topics to keep up with, but at least it's lively and relevant. Our favourite.
www.segaweb.com

> Site #07: MAGIC BOX

You may get writer's cramp typing in the URL, but it's well worth it. Magic Box is THE source for Japanese news and pics, covering Dreamcast and Naomi as well as other platforms not worth mentioning here. Forget reviews, forums, etc, this is pure unadulterated videogame fact. Consume, now.
www.geocities.com/timessquare/castle/5534

> Site #08: DREAMCAST IGN

Very up-to-date news, attractively laid out and filled with decent, opinionated writing. Previews are good, too, and there's a lot of reader interaction (Q&As, letters, etc). A little lacking in reviews at the moment, but they're probably waiting for the US NTSC versions.
http://dreamcast.ign.com

// SITES FOR SORE EYES

STUFF WE'VE BUMPED INTO ONLINE WHILE CARRYING OUT 'LEGITIMATE RESEARCH' FOR THE MAGAZINE

WATCHED IT! (www.geocities.com/televisioncity/1011/index.html)
A compendium of sites dedicated to defunct childrens' TV programmes

MONTY PYTHON (www.montypython.net)
'She turned me into a newt!... I got better' and all that rubbish

SPACECHANNEL5 (www.spacechannel5.com)
Insane Website dedicated to forthcoming rhythm action game

BUBBLEWRAP (http://fathom.org/opalcat/bubblewrap.html)
'The world's best bubblewrap homepage'. Are there actually any others?

BABELFISH (http://babelfish.altavista.digital.com/cgi-bin/translate)
Simply type in a rude phrase and Babelfish automatically translates it into another language! Such as French! Literally minutes of fun

// READER SITES

SEND IN YOUR OWN WEB PAGE AND IF WE LIKE IT, WE'LL MENTION IT. HERE ARE SOME WE'VE ALREADY RECEIVED...

DC REALM (http://dcrealm.cjb.net)
Dreamcast fan site created by Michael Voong and Gabrielle Rail

MACH FOUR (www.machfour.co.uk)
Lots of cool wallpaper, put together by Morgan Gibbons

DREAM EON (www.geocities.com/timessquare/corner/8621)
Steven Pepperells fab site – reviews, news and pretty graphics.

// ESSENTIAL INFO

A quick guide to the most common Internet terms...

BANDWIDTH
> The speed (the rate at which information can be transferred) of a connection between two computers on the Internet.

BROWSER
> A WWW client – the software that runs on your computer and allows you to access the World Wide Web.

CLIENT
> The Internet is based on a client/server model of information exchange. The client is the software you run on your computer. You tell the client what you want and it then requests this information from the server programs that are on the Internet and translates the response into readable text and graphics.

ECOMMERCE
> A catch-all term referring to the business possibilities offered by the Internet. Online shopping is the most obvious example.

FTP
> File Transfer Protocol – the standard by which computers can transfer data of all types from one machine to another. Originally FTP required a dedicated piece of client software, but nearly all the browsers can now deal with it themselves.

HTML
> Stands for Hypertext Markup Language, one of the key elements of the World Wide Web. HTML is a set of commands that tell a browser how to display the information on a Web page – what size to make the text, where to put the picture, and so on.

HTTP
> Hypertext Transfer Protocol – the standard by which browsers (Web clients) request information from a Web server, via a URL.

HYPERLINK
> By using hyperlinks, the author of a Web page can connect parts of that page to any other on the Web. The reader simply clicks on the link to be taken to that information.

ISP
> Stands for Internet Service Provider, a company that allows access to the Internet. Your computer connects to the ISP's system via a modem and telephone line. Normally, the ISP servers also handle services such as email.

LATENCY
> The bane of Internet gamers, latency refers to the time it takes for information to travel across the Net between your computer and the server.

MODEM
> A device which allows one computer to connect to another via a telephone line, translating data to and from electronic impulses that are sent through the line.

PROTOCOL
> In terms of the Internet, a protocol is a set of standards that allow different computers and software to communicate with each other.

SEARCH ENGINE
> By connecting to a search engine Website, you can quickly and easily find the Websites you're interested in.

SERVER
> The server is the program that runs on an Internet computer system and responds to requests for information from clients running on other computers. There are different types of server – Web servers and email servers.

URL
> Stands for Uniform Resource Locator, the part of HTTP that specifies exactly where a specific page or other piece of WWW information can be found.

WWW
> Stands for World Wide Web, the set of protocols that have made the Internet so popular. The WWW allows information to be stored as Web pages, which are normally organised into Websites – collections of pages about the same subject – which are in turn stored on specific Web servers.

Been to any good sites recently?
You send 'em, and we'll print 'em

E-MAIL: dcuk@futurenet.co.uk
FAX: 01225 822744
WRITE:
DC-UK
Future Publishing PLC,
30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW

POWERED DOWN

YOU WANT TO RECREATE SOUL CALIBUR WITH A PLASTIC SWORD, YOU DO

CLOCKWORK FISH

When you've put down your rod controller in *Sega Bass Fishing*, there's still fun to be had with all things aquatic. Take little Jeffrey here – okay, so he's not exactly a perfect replica of a bass, but he shoots around your bath like a demon. He comes in a range of different liveries, too, so there's no excuses for bathroom tedium. The only thing is that there's a lack of authenticity, in that he doesn't flap around at your feet when he's out of water, gasping for breath in his death throes and spitting blood from the wound in his mouth. And this lack of realism makes for a much more pleasant experience all round, thank cod.

Cute, plastic, clockwork fish: £2.50

SPIDERMAN BUMP 'N' GO

"Spiderman, Spiderman, does everything a spider can..." This much is true, although we've never seen a spider rev up a Kawasaki 1100, and burn some serious rubber. *Marvel Vs Capcom* is pretty cool, admittedly, but nothing beats owning your own personal Spidey, who will race around the living room on his colour-coordinated motorbike. Best of all he can be removed from the bike, which means that small sticky children won't be able to play with him because of his small moving parts (fnarr), so Spidey is all yours. Yours, we tell you.

Spidey bike: £6.99

CRUSADER SWORD

We all had one of these when we were kids, but in those days we used to pretend we were battling with Excalibur. But no more round table frolics for us, oh no. Now, we want to make believe that we're swishing the blade as a character out of *Soul Calibur*. It feels a lot more plasticky than we remember, and we could have sworn our ones were adorned with precious gems, but at only a couple of quid or so, you can't go wrong. Pick up the matching shield to get the complete effect, and pretend to stab yourself by thrusting it under your arm. Hours of fun, guaranteed.

Sword: £2.25

WINMAU DARTBOARD

If you're lucky enough to be able to play the superb *Jimmy White's 2: Cueball*, then you'll find that snooker is only the half of it. Head on into the pool room and you can have a go at darts. But, of course, nothing beats the real thing, so alternatively you could stuff a couple of pillows up your top, drink copious amounts of ale, light up a Lambert & Butler and re-ennact famous moments from the darts championship, such as... er... when those fat blokes chuck arrows at a small round board and wobble their collective jowls with the effort of it all. It's not the most strenuous of sports, but you can't beat a bit of Bully.

Dartboard: £11.99

POWERED DOWN

THIS MONTH, IT'S STEPHEN'S TURN TO TELL YOU WHAT WE DO WHEN YOU'RE NOT WATCHING

TEAM DIARY

This month I had hoped to destroy the shameful stereotype of Scots people and journalists all being alcoholic wasters. In hindsight, it's obvious I had no chance. But there really could be no better job than one that involves non-stop partying, playing games and listening to the latest music before it hits the shops (perhaps with the exception of being personal assistant to Heather Hunter). Not convinced? Then read on... ■

14/09 After the madness of Issue 02's deadline, the office seems eerily quiet – that's when we're not having soundclashes with the young people on Internet Works. We've been listening to new albums by Dynamic Syncopation and The Cinematic Orchestra courtesy of the lovely Vez at Ninja Tune. Cheers, mate. Very good. Well, at least me and Keith think so.

Esther's not here today. I miss her and her crazy cake-eating antics. I've a bit of a head on me today. Drinking wine, Beamish Black and Drambuie with my old man last night, whose visiting from Glasgow with my mum. Bad idea to mix my drinks. Walked out of the hotel bar and straight into the back of a taxi. Literally.

I'm worried about Keith. He's getting worse. On Friday, in the epicentre of a turbulent deadline, he got down on his hands and knees, spread-eagled himself over the **DC-UK** Scalextric track and insisted, "I'm a tunnel. Enter me!" Needless to say, nobody obliged the spontaneous man passage. Him and Lee were filmed for Sky TV show Gamers today, so you should be able to check the lovely lads out in real-time soon. If you have Sky TV, that is.

01

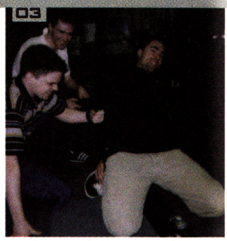
27/09 I was at the UK Breakdance Championships at Brixton Academy last night, interviewing the World Champion DJ crew Scratch Perverts for XFade magazine. It was great; all the old funky '70s breaks, some gravity-defying spins, plus a suitably triumphant set by the world champs. My mate Kela, who used to draw all the cartoons for my fanzine The Message, has recently been recruited as the Perverts' human beatbox and it was great to see him get such an enthusiastic response from the crowd.

Didn't get back to Bath till after one this morning, so I'm a bit knackered today. Christian just got his brand-spanking-new, silvery G4. It's lovely and he's chuffed. Karl got a new G3, which he's called Passion Fruit 2. Strange man. It's starting to get busy here again, so we can probably expect more off-beat antics from Mr Stuart soon. Can't wait.

02

29/09 I swear I'm never going out drinking with Keith again. We supped the demon drink till 4:30 this morning (as tee-totaller Lee watched on) and had to get up for work at 8:00. I feel so bad. And he had the audacity to walk in here as fresh as a little daisy. We'd been playing pool with Lee and Esther. Esther and I had a 5-1 lead, but then the lads came back to equalise. Next week they will be ours. Oh, yes.

01/10 Another late night last night. Cas, Lee, Keith and me finished work around 22:30 and went for a pint.



03

Then I made a textbook error and agreed to go back to Cas and Keith's place for some late night drinking and games action. Cas whupped us all in a *GoldenEye* deathmatch, taunting Keith until Mr Stuart was compelled to fling his controller to the floor and go for Caspar in a petulant rage. Most amusing. Between deathmatches, wrestling and games of the Super NES classic *StarFox* we lost track of time and finally crashed at around 4am.

Woke up on the futon this morning with a knock at the lads' back door. Thought it was burglars at

01 Esther locked in the games room with her crap '80s album
02 Despite the OTT Sony sponsorship, the Breakdance Championships was funky-fresh
03 Lee and I prepare to enter Keith's man-tunnel. Scary stuff
04 The Likely Lads: Karl, me and Keith sporting our new hairdos, courtesy of our friends at Hacketts. Cheers, guys. Note Karl's Leeds training top – hideous, we know, but they had just gone top of the table

STEPHEN LAWSON'S COMPLETELY IRRELEVANT HIP-HOP COLUMN

This month it's been back to the old skool for your resident hip-hop junkie. The term old skool is a contentious one in hip-hop, so if you must use it, use it sparingly and, unless you are Afrika Bambaataa's illegitimate child, never in reference to yourself. You see, some people class anything from before the '90s as old skool, but hip-hop historians believe the new skool era began with Run DMC. You could even argue that it was the introduction of samplers that changed the sound from cheesy in-house bands to loops and sampled beats. So now you know. Laters.

VARIOUS ARTISTS

> Droppin' Science

Since my trip to the Breakdance Championships in Brixton I've come over all shelltoed Adidas and this compilation has been the soundtrack to my retro fixation.

Cold Chillin' was a New York label run by legendary producer Marley Marl. Droppin' Science is a collection of Marley and his label mates' finest moments from the mid

to late '80s. It is, quite simply, the shit. Buy, enjoy and learn.

Hot wax? 🔥🔥🔥🔥🔥

DYNAMIC SYNC.

> Dynamism

Ninja Tune is shaping up to provide Mo Wax with serious competition as finest purveyor of beats this side of the Atlantic. Already this year the left-of-field label has dropped DJ Vadim's accomplished From Russia With Love LP (worth investigation, pop pickers), and now we have Dynamism. This record is a lesson in how to make an album; it's varied

and well paced with a great blend of instrumental and vocal tracks.

Hot wax? 🔥🔥🔥🔥

first, but it turned out to be the builders, come to work in the basement. Caspar apparently got out the wrong side of bed, came downstairs and saw a strange workman in his living room, grunted and went back upstairs for a shower, slamming doors and swearing loudly. Funny, funny.

05/10 We're on deadline and things are hectic again. Today Keith and I went to Hacketts for a hair cut – and a beer. On Monday morning Karl came in with a lovely short back and sides and we were jealous of the 'fact' he had two 'ladeez' perched on his lap in a local night club on Saturday night. The man is a lady magnet. He's on top of the world because Man Utd. lost 5-0 to Chelsea and Leeds beat Watford 2-1, pushing Man United off the top of the table.

A tacky '80s compilation album has materialised on Esther's desk and she's been threatening to play it on the **DC-UK** sound system, so we've had to lock her in the games room for now.

Oh, and Activision quoted my review of *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding* on the game's box. Things are looking up. Take care of each other and have a nice month ■

04

TASKFORCE

> New Mic Order

This debut set from dedicated microphone terrorists Chester P and Farma G, and producer Mark B (yes, that name again) has been available for some time now, but it's so nice I had to big it up somehow. The beats are varied and original, providing the perfect backdrop for Chester and Farma's weed-induced flows. In fact, the production is some of Mark's finest to date and quite a departure from his usual sound.

Hot wax? 🔥🔥🔥🔥

MIX 'N' MATCH

BODY PARTS

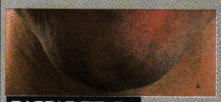
THE MOST HIDEOUS PART OF THE ENTIRE MAGAZINE. KIDS, WE WARN YOU: DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME...

So that you can build a better picture of the team – hey, even get to know us (God forbid that you would ever be so unlucky), we've decided to give away a little part of ourselves every month. That's right, just cut out and keep the different shots of sections of our ugly mugs and, one day, you'll have a **DC-UK** team of your own to treasure.

However, if we were in your position, we'd opt for the far more interesting route of gathering together the various noses, eyes, ears and other bits that will be coming your way. And eventually you'll be able to create a bastardised photofit of 'Mr Dreamcast' with which to scare young children. Who knows, one day we might even give something away to the most horrific/hilarious/handsome (well, maybe not the last) **DC-UK** photofit you can create.

It's strange, but people don't seem to go for chins. No, the eyes are the windows of the soul and mouths can be pouting and sensual, but chins are crap. Ours are particularly bad, but we thought it best that we prepare you for the horror of next month's noses. Feel free to mail us and let us know whose is your favourite and whose is most foul ■

THIS MONTH: THE CHINS



CASPAR FIELD
EDITOR

HATS OFF TO CASPAR FOR HIS JIMMY HILL/DESPERATE DAN HYBRID. LEE LOOKS LIKE HE'S IN THE MIDDLE OF A FACE-LIFT, WHILE KEITH'S BOTTOM INTERFACES WITH A RED-HOT POKER

LEE HART
STAFF WRITER

STEPHEN LAWSON
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

KARL JAQUES
DEPUTY ART EDITOR

KEITH STUART
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

ESTHER WOODMAN
DEPUTY EDITOR

CHRISTIAN DAY
ART EDITOR

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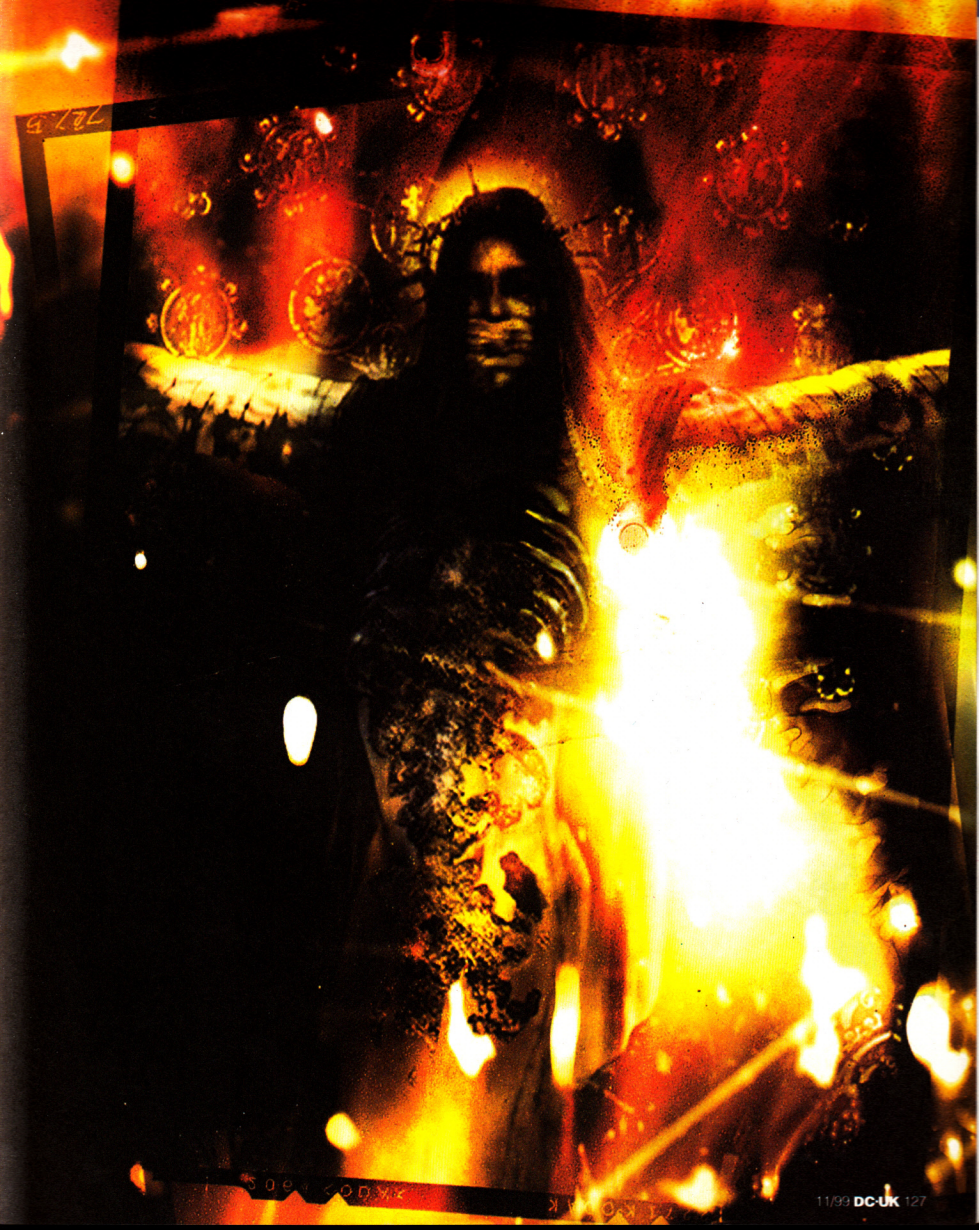

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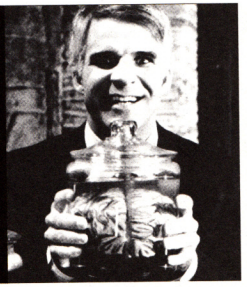


Entertaining yourself as a disembodied brain would be a tough job – unless you had five Dreamcast games with you, that is...

ALISTAIR McNALLY

ART DIRECTOR, VIDEO SYSTEM

Apart from a few high-profile developers like Peter Molyneux and Shigeru Miyamoto, most game-making folk are anonymous creatures who rarely leave their darkened rooms to face the bright glare of publicity. We feel it's our duty to give these nocturnal creatures the recognition they deserve for their tireless work in satisfying all our gaming needs.

One such type is Al McNally, the art director for F1 specialist Video System. At the moment he's spending his time flitting between the company's base in Kyoto, Japan and the Manchester office in good old Blighty, overseeing the design of *F-1 World Grand Prix* on both Dreamcast and PlayStation2.

Al's been toiling away in the industry for over a decade, having started out as an artist at Argonaut before moving on to work at Psygnosis and as an animator for Manga.

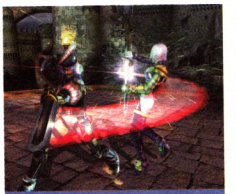
Consequently, his experience of games stretches back to when they were sprite-based and men had mullets.

"There have been so many games I've enjoyed playing over the years that selecting a handful for particular mention is nigh on impossible. *Spindizzy* and *Driller* on the C64 were two ridiculously clever yet simple to play puzzle games. *Damocles* on the Amiga: a game way ahead of its time that took the player out of small gaming environments and into a far larger, richer space. Another awesome game was *Final Fantasy II* which I played for three straight days until completion. And I can't leave out *Galaga* in the arcades – the game that ruined my education."

But enough misty-eyed remembrance. This is 1999 and what we really want to know is which games are getting Mr McNally all hot and bothered on Dreamcast? Read on ■

■ Power Stone

"*Power Stone* is one very pretty game with some great environments. The thing that stands out for me is that the entire look of the game is solid and coherent. Everything matches and blends, from the character models to the palettes of the textures on each level. This is something which unfortunately is lacking in an awful lot of games these days."



■ Soul Calibur

"The thing that impresses me most about *Soul Calibur* is that the character designs have been translated to 3D so well. The animation is fluid and charismatic which, in the context of over-the-top fighters, is exactly what you want."

■ The House Of The Dead 2

"This is great in one or twoplayer mode. It might not have much depth but for a quick and easy blast you can't beat it. I particularly like it when you blow away the top of a zombie's head and see his eyeball fly off... Nice."

■ Marvel Vs Capcom

"Old skool 2D fighters aren't to everyone's taste but *Marvel Vs Capcom* breathes life into the genre. The characters are all beautifully drawn and there are some nice additions such as fourplayer battles and the tag team mode."

■ F-1 World Grand Prix

"I think it's the best F1 racing game yet, with the most outstanding visuals on any platform. I'm proud we managed to create such a good game with a new team in a new country on a new platform from scratch in just ten months."

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