

● SILICON

MAGAZINE

**FREE
TAKE ONE**

Feb. 2000 • Episode 18

Front Mission 3

There goes a great Wanted article

D2

D2 for the M2? Nope, D2 for the DC.

ECW Hardcore Revolution

More than just a different Attitude.

Ace Combat 3: Electrosphere

Warning! Bandits at 6 O'clock!

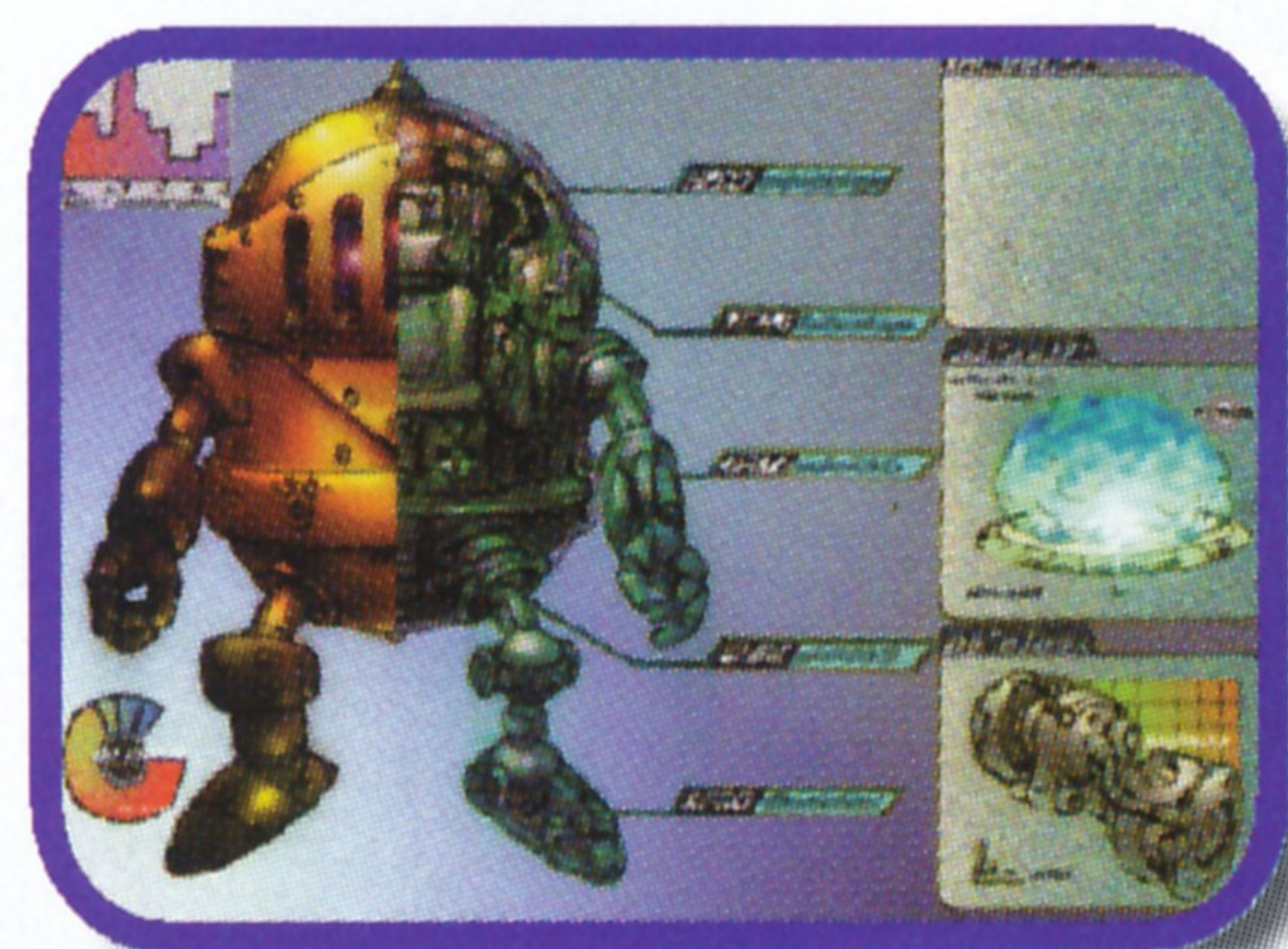
Vanguard Bandits

Leading the charge in the next wave of strategy RPGs.

we've found
a way to beat Sega's
newest RPG

EGG™

ELEMENTAL GIMMICK GEAR



Sega Dreamcast



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SPV uses the following products to design SM:

Software:

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Hardware:

Apple Power Macintosh 8600/300, 17" Apple Studio Display, Hewlett Packard Color Laserjet 4500N, Smart and Friendly 426 CD Rewritable, Iomega 100 MB Zip drive, Epson Expression 636 flatbed scanner, Nikon Coolscan II film scanner, Ascii AV Selector, Asante Friendlynet Ethernet Hubs, JVC S3500 SVHS VCR, Granite Digital SCSI Cabling

Silicon Magazine is BPA Audited.

Accessing: The State of The Game

The •SM 1999 Retrospective

Game of the Year:

Soul Calibur is the best example of what the next millennium (or should we say this millennium?) systems can truly achieve. This game has set the standard for all upcoming games.



Best DC Game:

Soul Calibur is the best example of...ah, hell it just kicks ass!

Best PSX Game:

Driver tied with *Final Fantasy VIII*. Which one took top honors? Both, and we can do that because it is our list :P

Best N64 Game:

Winback is simply an amazing piece of software that all 64 players need to own.

Most Ground-Breaking:

NFL 2K cost Sega millions, and your cost of admission is a reasonable, \$50.

Most Addictive:

SNK vs. Capcom Card Clash is simply impossible to put down. Thank goodness we are supposed to be playing games at SM, otherwise we would have been fired for playing this one constantly.

Most Outrageous:

GTA2. 'Nuff said.

Most Jaw-Dropping:

Soul Calibur had no real competition here. With visuals better than any console game to date, this one should have come with a little drool bucket.

Biggest Sleeper:

Medal Of Honor gives you a chance to shoot Nazis. What's not to like?

Best Sports Title:

NFL 2K tied with *NHL Face Off 2000*. *NFL* is the best-looking football game we've seen and *NHL* the best playing hockey game. We just can't limit ourselves to one sport.

Best Fighting Title:

Soul Calibur wins more awards than Michael Jackson wins Grammys.

Best Action Title:

Legacy Of Kain: Soul Reaver sucks...souls, in a good way. :)

Best Racing Title:

Need For Speed Presents: V-Rally 2 was so much more than we thought it would be.

Best Driving/Car Combat Title:

Driver was the engine behind much of GT Interactive's 1999 revenue as it was not known for idling on store shelves.

Best RPG:

Lunar: Silver Star Story Complete is old school, and that's the way (un, uh) we like it.

Best Puzzle Title:

The New Tetris is just that, new. Maybe that is how they came up with the name?

Best Strategy Title:

Vandal Hearts 2 blew the competition out of the water with this one.

Best Shooter:

Thunder Force V? Do not throw the controller.

Best TV Ad:

Battle Tanx 2 shows that the people at 3DO have a sense of humor, and law suites be damned. Lever (the makers of Snuggle fabric softener) will be ready for part three next year.

Buzz-phrase we wish would die:

60 Frames Per Second is a phrase we're not

going to use in the future. With 128 bit systems, all games should be 60FPS, period. (Ok, so if a game has a low frame rate we might mention it.)

Most Stuff In the Box:

Lunar: Silver Star Story Complete delivers a big glossy box, a cloth map, "making of" CD, sound track and a multidisk game. Working Designs; top that, we dare you!

Best Soundtrack:

Thrasher: Skate & Destroy's killer soundtrack can be summed up in four words: Run DMC.

Best Original Music:

Soul Calibur takes the Grammy.

Most-Delayed-But-We're-Still Happy it hit:

Lunar Silver Star Story Complete was in the works before Alex was even in diapers.

Top Import Pick:

Bust a Move 2, import it.

Best Looking Box:

Shen Mu has yet to hit the states, but the box is still the best of the best.



Best Print Ad:

Ape Escape was the run away victor here. Let's just say the apes with the bananas convinced us to see things his way.



Noticed: The Details That Matter



When we received a box marked Big 'Ol Bass at the SM office, we were expecting a game with Billy Jo Jim Bob, a gun rack, and a six-pack of beer. Imagine our surprise when plugged the game in only to discover Fisherman's Bait 2.

Of course, this shock was NOTHING compared to the fact that the rumor that we reported months ago, that the ASCII fishing rod (which comes packed with the excellent fishing simulation Bass Landing) was actually compatible

with Big 'Ol Bass. When we tried this controller (the best PSX fishing controller, in our humble opinion) with the best PSX arcade-styled fishing game (Big Ol' Bass), it added up to the total arcade fishing experience.



- The battle sequences are fun to watch even if you've seen them before

Vanguard Bandits

Platform: Playstation • **Publisher:** Working Designs • **Release Date:** April • **Stage:** 60%

Working Designs is well known for extravagant packaging, incredible translations, upper echelon RPGs, and a twisted sense of humor. If our early impressions are any indication, Vanguard Bandits will have no problem keeping these traditions up.

This title centers on the land of Cretia, the "New World" of an ancient civilization. (The America to the Old World Europe, if you will). As explorers blazed trails across this land, the perils of society soon followed and with them, war. War spread across the land, disrupting everything until the mysterious archeological discovery of the towering mechanized giants or Mechs. These Mechs proved to be the irresistible force that conquered each splinter faction and brought all of Cretia's people together under one rule. However, even this empire seems doomed to failure as its internal struggles make a second Cretian War almost inevitable. It is at this time that you take the role of Bastion, a young Mech commander on the run from the Imperial Army. Controlling an army of Mechs, you fight for your life and unravel a tangled history that could salvage the empire or destroy it forever.

Like most Working Designs games, the plot is vital to Vanguard Bandits. The dialogue flows throughout the game and serves to flesh out each character. You can rest assured that there are no cookie cutter bad guys or heroes in this game. Working Designs' trademark rapier wit is also present making the one-liners

spouted during each battle a must read. While this may rub some die-hard translate-it-word-for-word-types the wrong way, we prefer the occasional Austin Powers inspired, "Judo Chop!" and the Yoda-esque ramblings of an aged Mech commander to a drab, "This is the way" quote during battle.

The gameplay in VB allows you to control a number (sometimes a large number) of Mechs in a turn-based strategy situation. Similar to the "tactics" games (Tactics Ogre and Final Fantasy Tactics), you move sprite based characters about the battlefield. Once you engage in battle, they are replaced with 3D polygon Mechs. Since almost every Mech is unique, these battles are a treat to watch. However, Working Designs looked far enough ahead to realize that this might not always be the case and allows you to turn off the 3D battles and replace them with a simpler (and faster) battle summary screen.

Even in its early stages, Vanguard Bandits is shaping up to be a great strategy RPG. Regardless of what one impatient editor said last issue about Silhouette Mirage ("Despite the fact it took so long to hit the streets..."), we think that if Working Designs' games continue to be this good; we will have no problem waiting a few extra months to get them. Want more? The retail version of Vanguard Bandits will feature a playable demo of the RPG we are most looking forward to in 2000, Lunar 2: Eternal Blue. •SM

Coverage:

Giving you an in-depth look at the cutting edge of videogaming.



- The battlefield can be rotated via the controller



- If a picture is worth 1000 words, the above screens are worth 6000



- The opening animation shown above in its Japanese form gives a hint of what is to come

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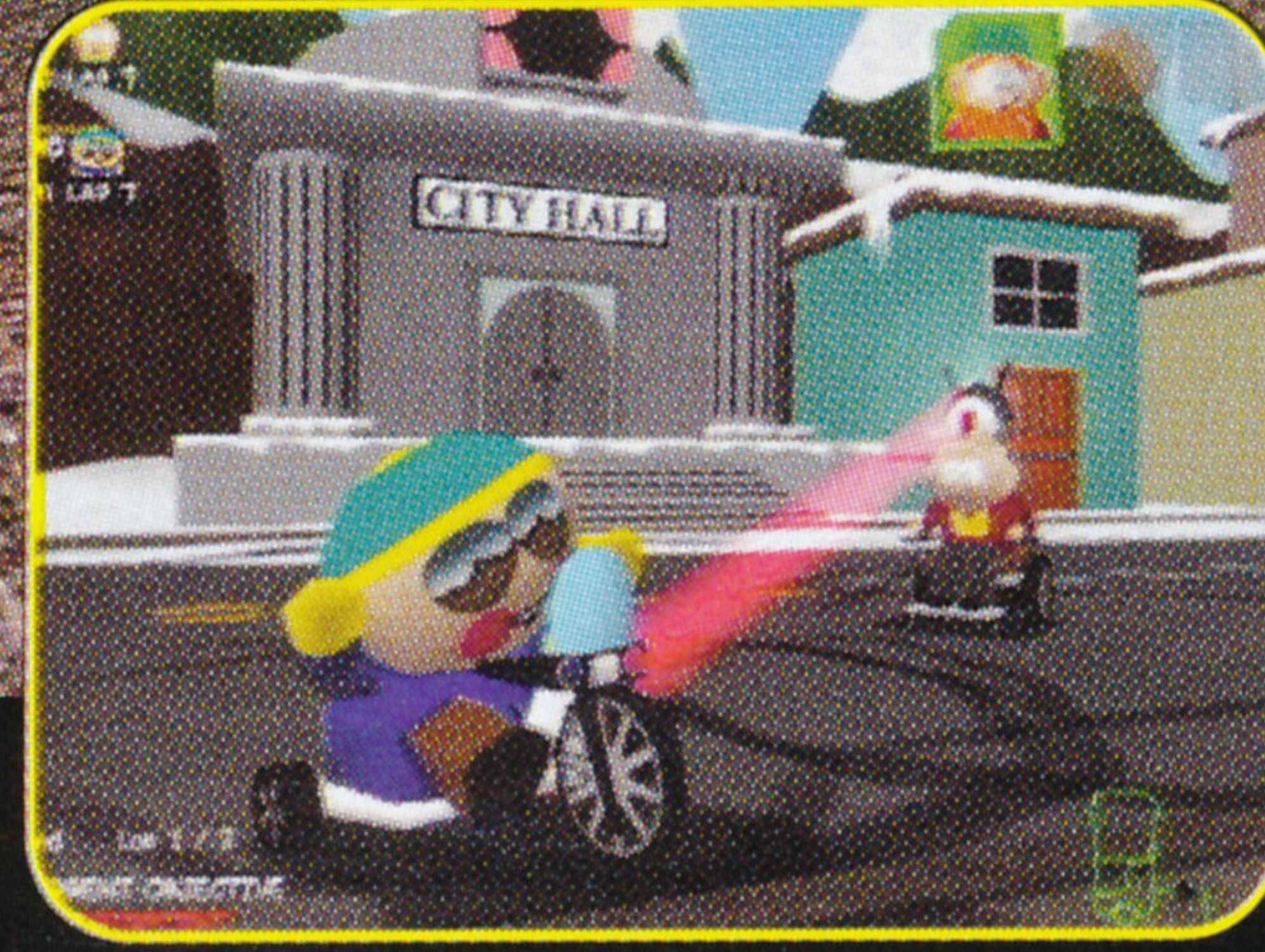
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Sega
Dreamcast



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Wanted From Japan

Biohazard 2 Value Plus

Platform: Dreamcast • Publisher: Capcom • Release: Now • Stage: 100%

Mission:

To fill you in on some great games that will never see an U.S. release.

Amount of Japanese required to play:

Some. Almost all text is in Japanese, but the voice-overs are in English. Still we've all played RE2, right?

Amount of Japanese needed to enjoy fully:

Extensive. All text is in Japanese.

Reason(s) the U.S. will probably never see this game:

Resident Evil 2 is an older title, but that doesn't explain the recent N64 version, does it?

Best hope for an U.S. release:

The Resident Evil thing takes off and people actually like this game!

Closest U.S. relation(s):

Resident Evil 2 (PSX/N64), Resident Evil 3 (PSX), Carrier (DC)

A proven best seller, a hot new system, a bargain price, and a taste of the next step in a highly anticipated series. If this isn't a recipe for a smash hit, Silicon Magazine doesn't know what is. Rumored to be an apology to Japanese players for the delay of Biohazard: Code Veronica, Biohazard 2 Value Plus is just what it sounds like, a low priced Dreamcast version of the now classic survival horror title. Included in this package is an extremely long (over one hour) demo of the highly anticipated Biohazard: Code Veronica.

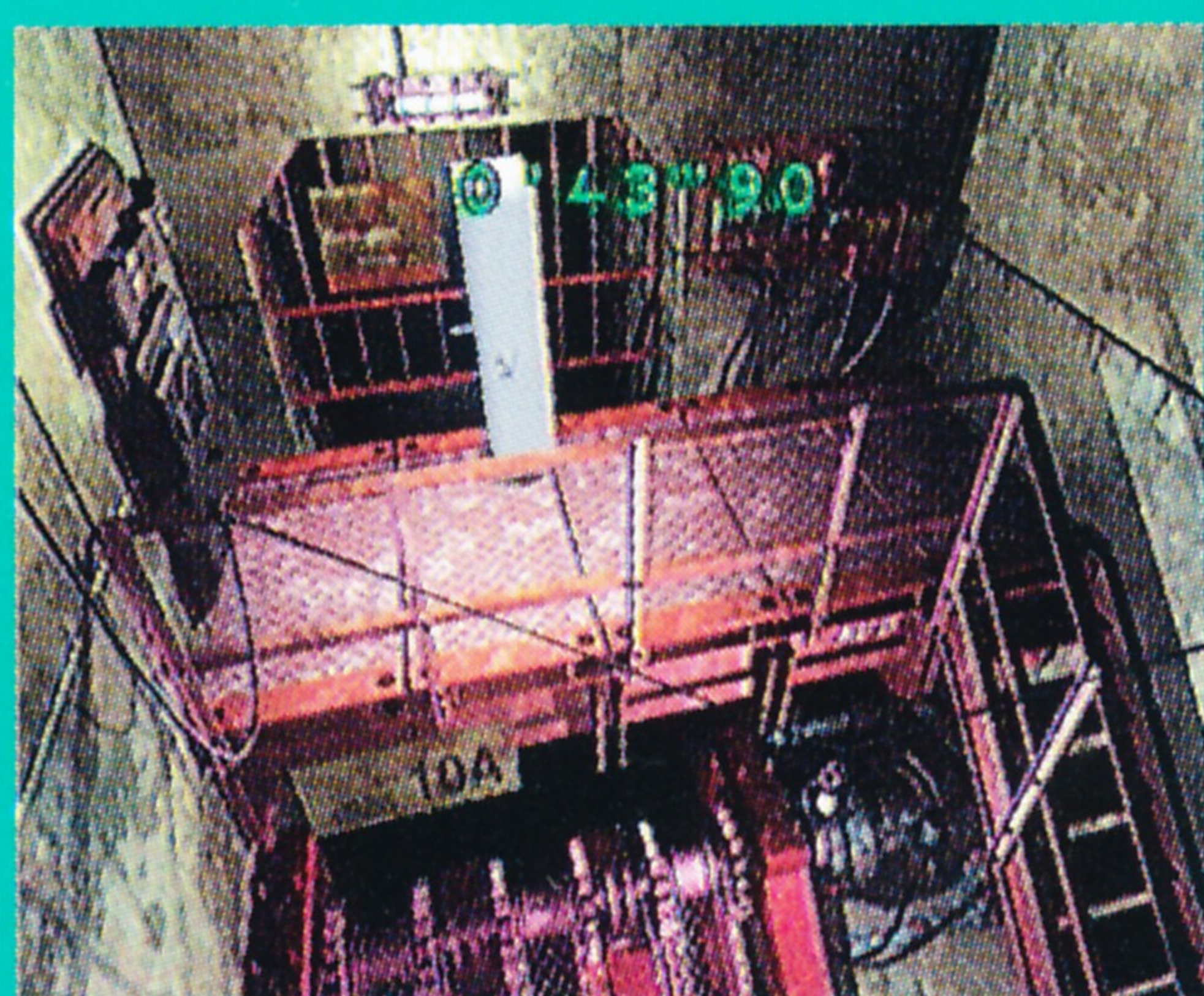
This collection includes the full version of Biohazard 2; complete with all of the extra modes unlocked. It is a nice change to be able to fire up a game of Resident Evil 2 and select either the 4th survivor, Tofu (just what it sounds like) or the arranged version all from the get go.

This Dreamcast version is easily the best looking rendition to appear anywhere, including the PC translation. It is so good looking, in fact, that you can pick out graphical glitches that were not even noticeable in the previous releases. This is the only conceivable reason we can think of that would cause Capcom to not want to release this title in the U.S.

Some people would pick up this

title for the demo of Code Veronica alone and they would not be disappointed. As we mentioned earlier, the demo is extremely lengthy and features the hands down best CG intro to grace the Dreamcast in its short lifespan. The demo does exactly what it is supposed to do (that is it hints at what the full game will offer and makes you ravenous for more).

SM does not understand why Capcom chose not to release this title (rumor has it that they will release it stateside later this year). Hey Capcom; put Resident Evil 2 at a price point of \$30, and you have a guaranteed million seller. It should have been available 9/9/99 when Dreamcast launched. •SM



• From Left to Right: Tofu (bean curd) Mode, Normal Game, Survivor Mode

Available In The U.S.

Bust a Groove

Platform: Playstation • Publisher: 989 Studios • Release: Now • Stage: 100%

Mission:

To fill you in on some great games that are out and you probably don't own.

Reason(s) you probably don't own this game:

You are afraid your girlfriend will whip you at this game (and trust us, she will).

Best hope for a sequel:

Actually, it already has one (see SM 14). Bust A Groove 2 is out in Japan and with the re-opening of Enix of America; we may even see it here.

Closest U.S. relation(s):

Parappa The Rapper, Umjammer Lammy

hardcore gamers out there only needed to hear "dancing simulation" before they turned up their noses and headed in the opposite direction of Bust A Groove. Doing so is a mistake.

BAG is simply one of those games that you have to try to fully grasp just how fantastic it is. This is usually the problem, because it seems that every gamer, get a bad case of the "just one more round" syndrome once they sit down and play this title. Getting a turn in is almost impossible! Luckily it includes a 2-player mode. Not only does this allow other gamers the chance to actually play, but also makes for a fantastic party game.

The key to any successful music based game is the soundtrack and

Bust A Groove excels in this category. The majority of catchy J-Pop (Japanese Pop) tunes from the original version are intact. This soundtrack will have you humming along almost immediately.

The gameplay of BAG is excellent. It is rhythm based, requiring you to input a sequence of button presses and make sure the final button is pressed exactly on the forth beat. However, you are given some assistance as each beat is flashed on the screen in the input box, allowing even the most tone deaf among us (that would be people like editor Ryan Smith) to count along with the song and hit the beat. As the game progresses and you complete each

press successfully, you build combos. After you complete a successful combo, your character "freezes" and begins a new combo with progressively more complex inputs required that are worth even more points.

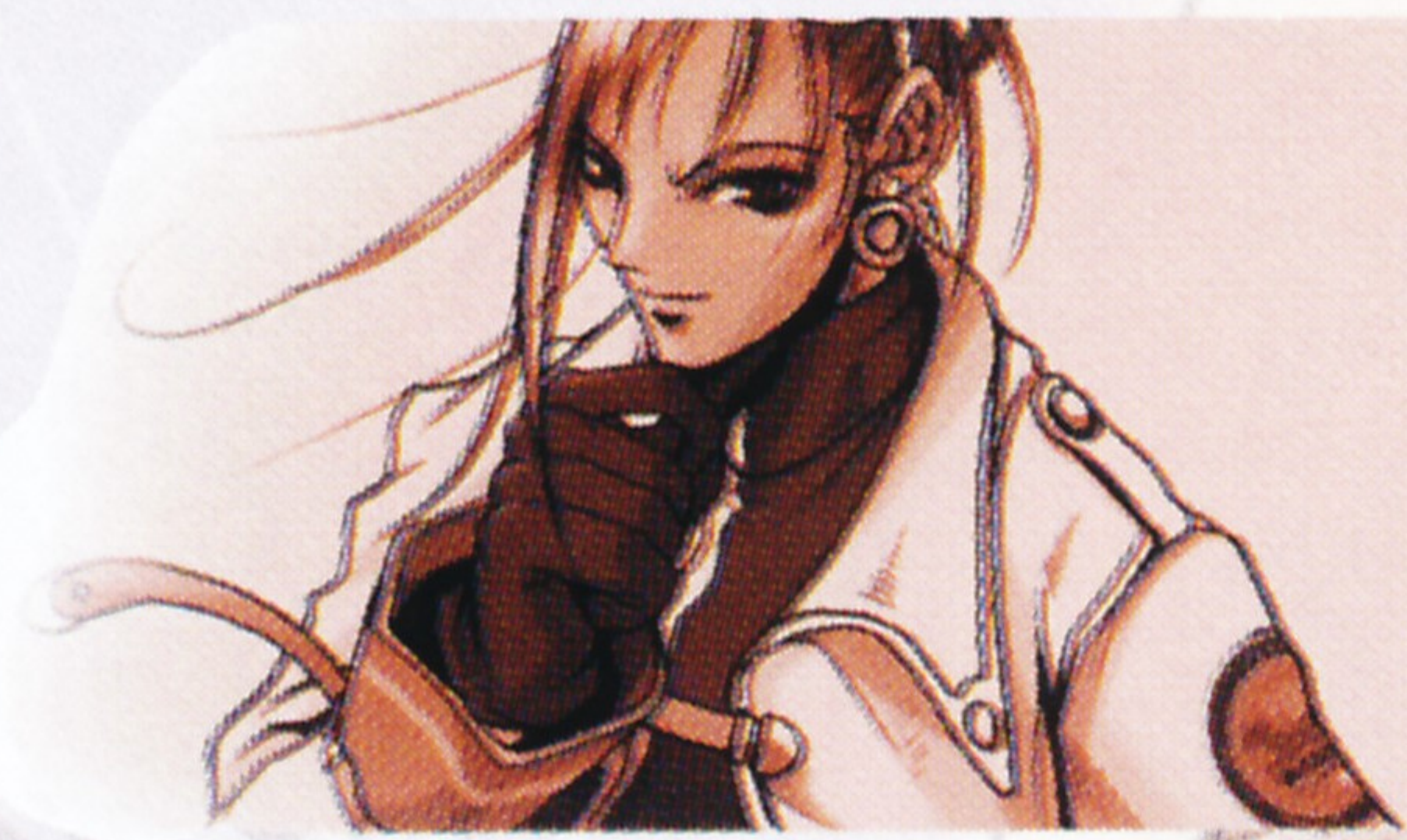
It is virtually impossible to explain the intricacies of Bust A Groove in this article, but some of the highlights are the tons of secret characters, the ability to attack your opponent, backgrounds that react to how well you are doing, and round-ending "Fever Times" that serve as the ultimate taunt. BAG is one of the freshest, most unique titles available on the Playstation. •SM



• Even though BAG has been out for some time, the visuals still impress

INDUSTRIAL SPY

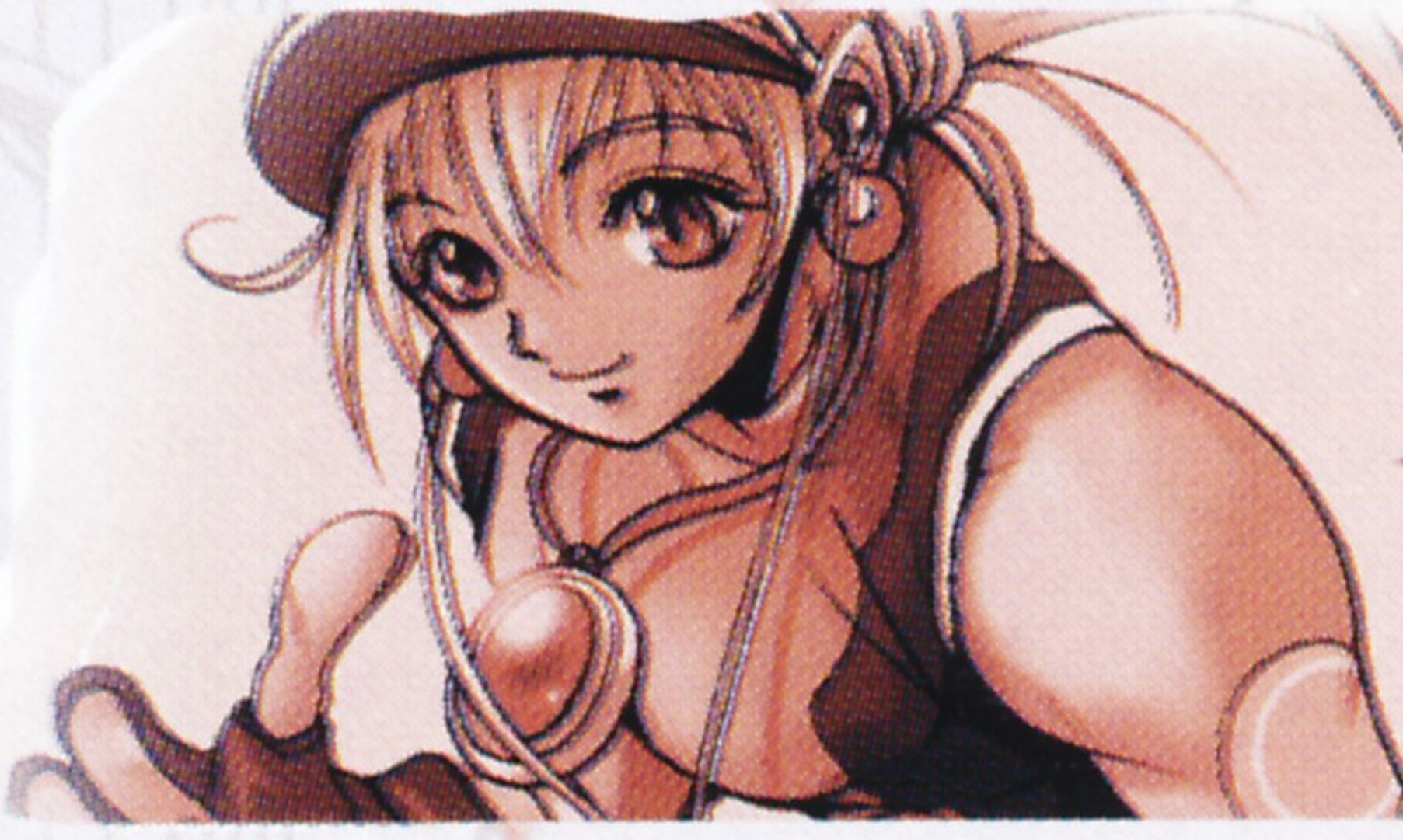
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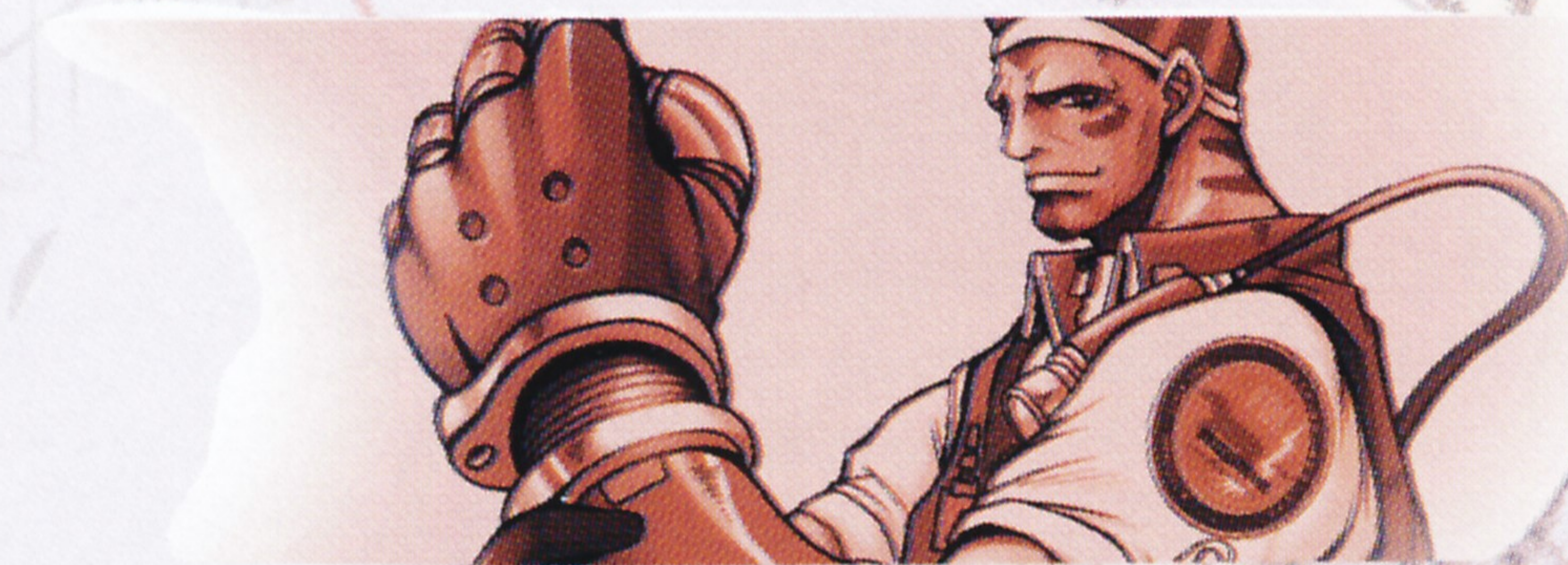
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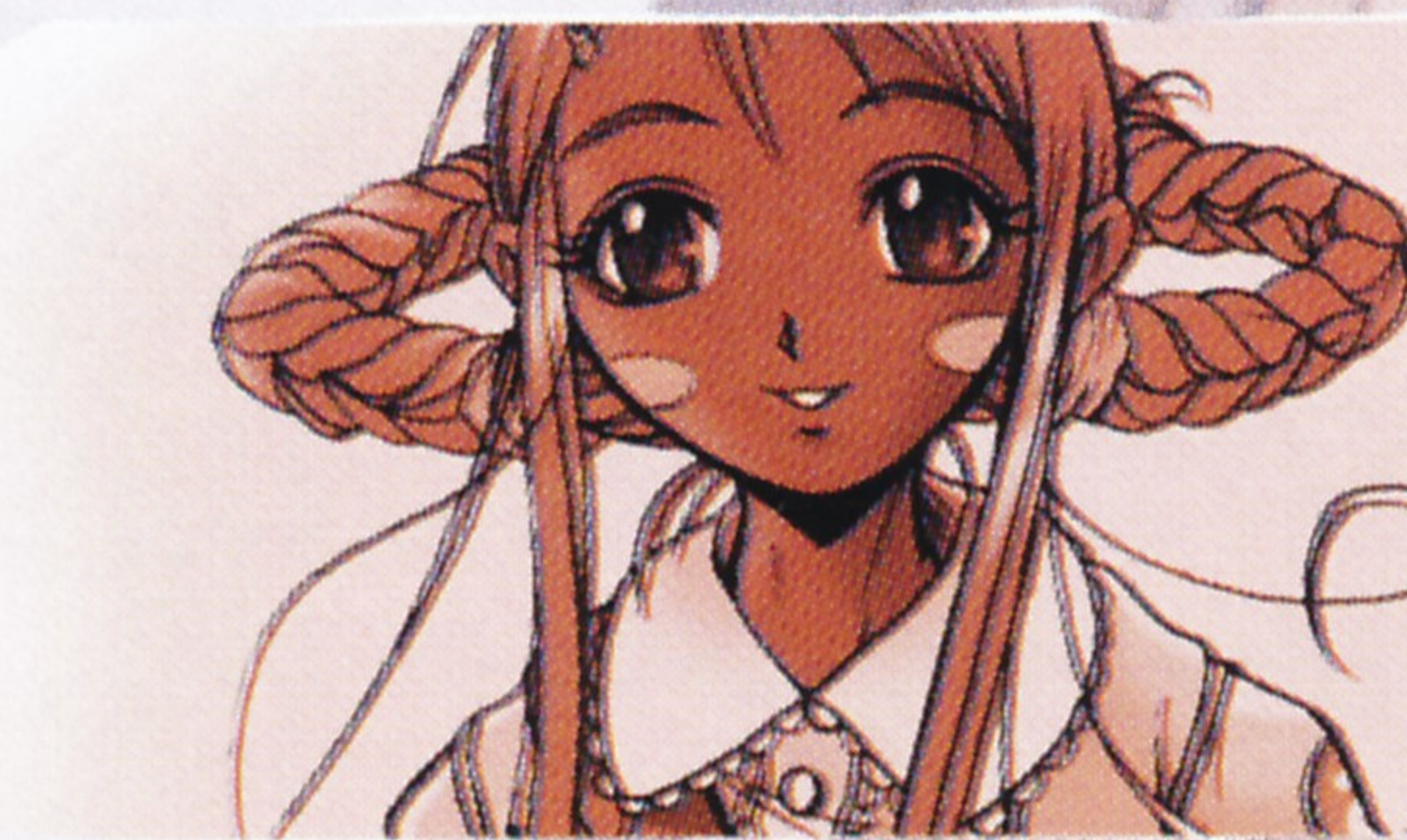
ARCH873521SPY954



LURIA83521SPY955



VLAG83521SPY956



KLEO873521SPY957



FALL873521SPY958



NAME: Jeffrey K. Saunders
CODE NAME: Suggests
SPECIALITY: All Skills
AGE/SEX: 25/Male
NATIONALITY: U.S.A.
HEIGHT: 6'5"
WEIGHT: 229lbs.

This young man was once part of the elite US Army Intelligence. After an incident at Army Intelligence that forced him to question their methods, he entered Blitzstrahl so that he could make his own decisions about right and wrong.

Just like his nickname **SUGGESTS**, he is the ultimate agent, able to utilize any and all skills.

As the new millennium approaches, the world is getting more chaotic. While large enterprises are taking over the nation, a group of Industrial Spies call "ESPION-AGENTS" were formed to steal secrets from these enterprises. Their goal is to stop the enterprises from gaining more power and therefore control of the nation.

Get ready for the first Spy simulation game for the Sega Dreamcast.



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Sega © Dreamcast™

NEC



BUZZ: For The Insider

From The Mid-Winters Night Dreamcast Department: How much is Sega making from each Dreamcast sold? In response to questions posed by NSSB, Sega of America responded with, “\$1”.

Just when you thought the defective GD-ROMS at the DC launch were a fluke, reports from Japan are stating that a undetermined number of disk3 of Sega’s Shen Mue Chapter 1 are defective. However, if you encounter problems, you should be able get a replacement from Sega of Japan. (How importers will contact them is beyond us.) On the other hand, over 250,000 copies of Shen Mue were sold in the first week alone. Not a bad showing.

Treasure announced they would be producing a compilation that will include popular 16-bit Treasure game titles for SNES and Genesis. One of those games will be Gunstar Heroes, and actually, Gunstar Heroes itself would be enough to make us happy. :) The Buzz around town makes this title a definite possibility for Working Design’s first DC game!

So, what can we expect from D2 when it finally reaches our shores? According to Warp, “Some of the scenes that have sexual references will be edited out. Also, we increased the game’s difficulty since the Japanese version was quite easy even for average gamers.” Great, we are ready for a more difficulty, but not any adult scenes, huh?

Was the DC shortage and Sega of America’s announcement of this “shortage” real or not? SM smells a tickle me Elmo charade.

Soul Calibur has broken the one million copies sold mark (worldwide) and to celebrate, Namco has put up some brand new VMU games to download. Check them out at <http://www.namco.co.jp/>

Sega has announced they have secured Bob Cole and Harry Neale (the voices of Hockey Night In Canada) as their play-by-play announcers for NHL 2K.

The NGP connection: Success announced that they are porting Rainbow Cotton to Neo Geo Pocket Color and that the NGPC version will have linkup features with the Dreamcast version

Guilty Gear 2 is on its way! The game features new characters that are bigger, crispier, more colorful, and use over 7500 frames of animation. Most of the characters from the original Guilty Gear are returning. However, the “death move” that allowed characters to kill their enemy with one hit has been removed.

The sales of the Dreamcast reached over 500,000 units in Europe in less than 2 months making it the fastest selling console ever in Europe.

Konami has officially delayed the release of Castlevania: Resurrection for the DC from this winter until next fall.

Taito announced that they would be porting Puzzle Bubble 4 (that would be Bust A Move) to the DC.

ESP’s new RPG Ouka Houshin is set in a world of the same name. You will play the role of a young girl who is training to become a fairy.

Winky Soft (no, we are not making that name up) is working on a Strat/RPG called Spirit Machine Rayblade. It will feature a combination of adventure, strategy, and

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dating elements.

Virtua Cop 2 is making a reappearance! However, there is some argument of whether this title will be an arcade perfect port or a port of the Saturn version. Either way, it is coming to the DC at a bargain basement price.

InterAct has gotten the go ahead to be an official DC peripheral producer. Priceless. Moreover, Mad Catz made the grade by becoming an official peripheral manufacturer, too.

Hudson Soft has announced a DC RPG called Runjeid. It will have the distinction of being one of the first Dreamcast online RPGs.

From The Get The Insulin Ready Department: Just when you thought Pikachu could not get any cuter, the latest Japanese Pokemon titles include a BABY Pikachu that evolves into “regular” Pikachu after a time. Gee, we wonder what its first word will be?

From The Ongoing, Never-ending, Still Continuing, Ever-Enduring, Forever Persisting, Ad Infinitum, Let’s-Just-Get-It-Over-With Playstation 2 Hype Department: Electronic Arts is backing the Playstation 2 with a vengeance. Rumor has it that they have over 10 games in the works for the system, 4 of which will be released at the PS2 launch next year. Expect to see the sports franchises, WCW wrestling and Need For Speed.

Capcom of Japan has confirmed that they are working on Dino Crisis 2, Oni Musha the Demon Warriors and Street Fighter EX3 for the PS2.

Konami has confirmed that they are working on a PS2 snowboarding game.

Koei of Japan has officially announced Shin Sangoku Muso (known as True Dynasty Warriors in US) is a sequel to the Romance of the 3 Kingdom fighting game.

Enix’s first Playstation 2 adventure game will be called O Story or Love Story. It is scheduled to be released as a 2 DVD-ROM set. You play the main character that is a young man who died at an early age in an accident. With the help of some angels, you become a ghost and search for your true love.

Square has announced a new Playstation 2 title called Type-S (or Driving Emotion Type S, we have gotten conflicting reports). It will be a racing simulation title that will feature real cars and real courses.

Will the Playstation 2 hit North America on September 30? According to some big name retailers, it will and for a minimal down payment (ranging from \$20.00 and up) they will reserve you one. The final price is still under debate with guesses raging from \$300 to \$400.

If you are in Japan between February 18th and 20th, check out Makuhari Messa in Chiba, Japan. The Playstation Festival 2000 will be taking place and over 20 playable PlayStation 2 games will be running on 500 PlayStation 2 units! The event is open to the public on the 19th and 20th.

From The Do It Like A Neo G.O. Department: UEP systems is working on Cool Boarders Pocket for the NGPC and it will link up with the DC version of CB (in Japan anyway).

SNK Gal Fighters for the NGPC is scheduled to release in

Japan in January; the game is being developed by Yumekobo and will feature SNK favorite femmes Mai, Yuri, Athena, Leona, Whip, Akari and Sai. Also expect to see new characters and other old favorites.

From The Mark The Calendars Guys! Department: Zelda producer Miyamoto commented that a new Dolphin Zelda game would be coming out in 5 years. On a more time sensitive note, he also mentioned he was working on a new version of Zelda for the upcoming Game Boy Advanced handheld system, which is scheduled to launch in Japan next August.

Atlus is working on Brigandine 2 for the Playstation. Rumored to be a double CD set, this strategy RPG is due out March 2000 in Japan.

From The 70 Million Playstation Owners Can’t Be Wrong Department: Sony has confirmed that Gran Turismo 2 can only be completed 98.2% due to production problems. Funny, that didn’t stop other game magazines from giving it a perfect “10”.

Namco announced a new Playstation RPG Kamurai Shinlai. It takes place on a planet with 6 different countries: Earth, Fire, Light, Sky, Life and Dark.

Final Fantasy VIII looks like it will break the sales records FFVII set in the U.S. Just another day in the smash hit department for Square EA.

Taito will release the shooter RayCrisis for Playstation this February. It will feature PS exclusive ships not found in the arcade version.

Bandai has announced that they will release a sequel to the Strat/RPG Space Battleship Yamato (AKA Starblazers) for Playstation this spring and it will be called Space Battleship Yamato: Soldiers of Love. Too bad the U.S. is still waiting for someone to release the first title here.

Natsume will release the US version of Farmer Fantasy, (or as Natsume calls it, Harvest Moon) this May. While the premise will stay the same, this game will be TOTALLY different than the N64 version.

Enix has just released Valkyrie Profile for Playstation. Made by the creators of Star Ocean. A new addition to this RPG is the Item Creation System. This is where you collect different items and Valkyrie (the lead character) then turns them into MP (Material Points), which can be used to create more powerful weapons and accessories.

Breath of Fire IV is on its way to appearing on the Playstation. The story is about two continents separated by the ocean of mud. After generations of war, an unstable peace was achieved a few years before the game takes place.

Mortal Kombat: Special Forces is not dead for the Playstation (the N64 version has been abandoned). However, it sounds like it will be watered down from its previously epic scale.

From The Play That Funky Music White Boy Department: Namco has released a new music entertainment game called Quest for Fame, and the music is provided by none other than Aerosmith! And it’s Japan only. :(

Konami announced Playstation and Dreamcast ports of their music game Pop’n Music 3. In Japan only, of course.



This is WHY you bought the Sega Dreamcast.™

Four player action is now available on the Sega Dreamcast.™ Save the universe from the Armada, a single-minded biomechanical entity living in the data banks of hoards of self-replicating ships.

GAME FEATURES:

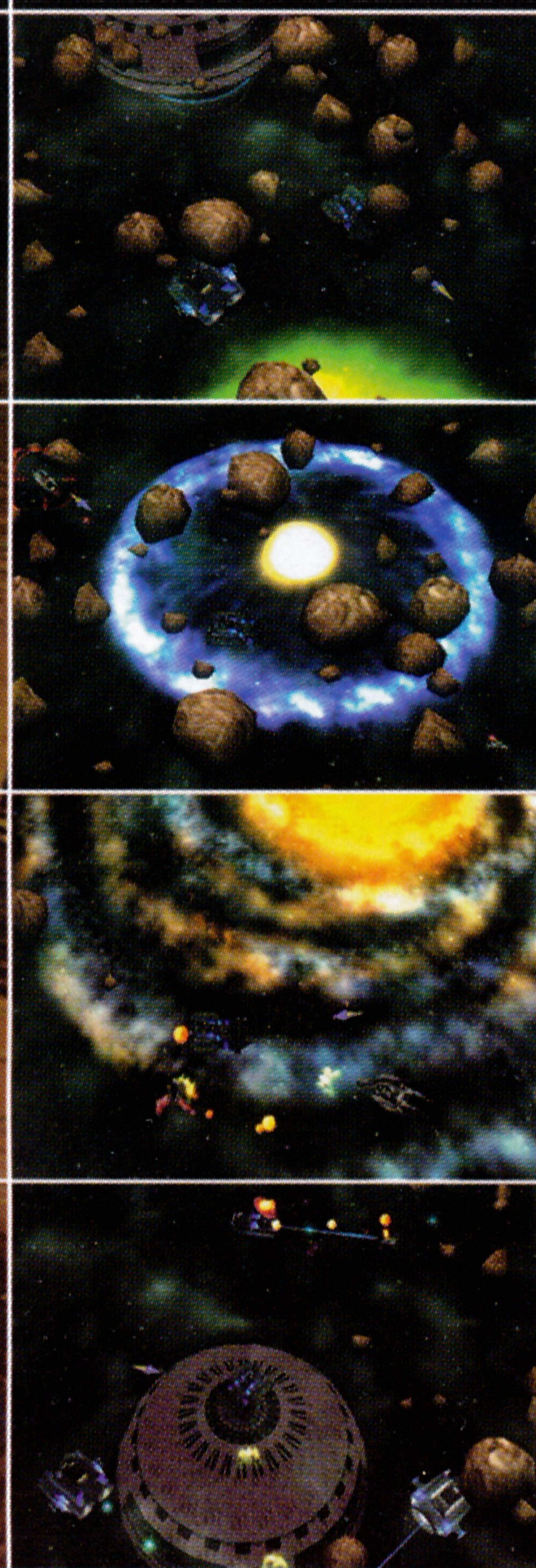
Join forces as four players
compete simultaneously

Continually replay each of the
many regions with new and
unique enemies and challenges

Use the VMU to store your character's
increasing inventory and skills;
and swap with other players



NOW AVAILABLE



☒ Action ☒ Adventure ☒ Mystery ☒ Horror
☒ Sword big enough to send hideous mutant
monsters back to hell in tiny pieces

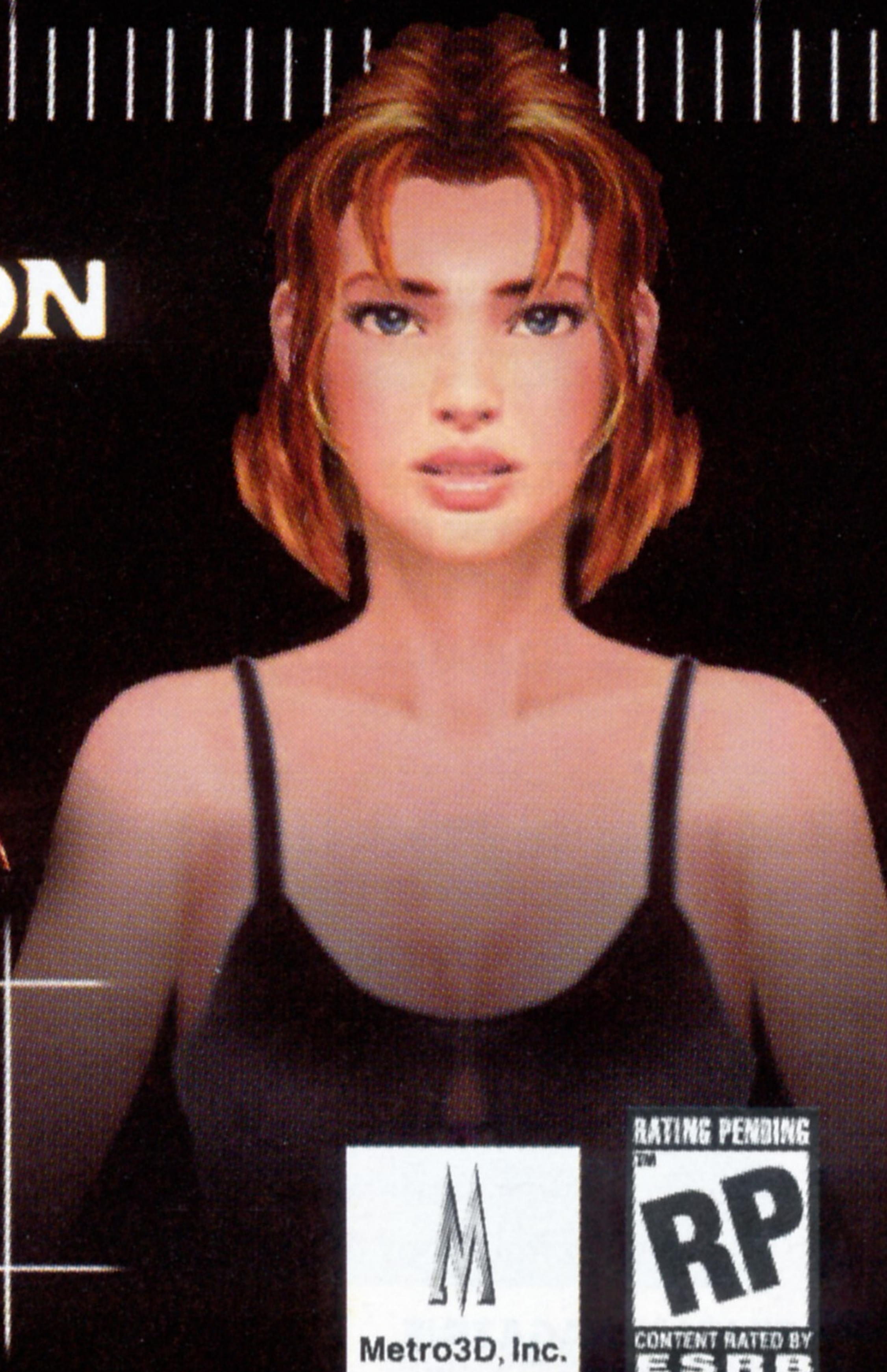
A wicked disease is transforming your people into horrible mutants. Battle the warped forces of evil magic with the power of science (and an enchanted blade). You are the last chance for humanity's survival before the Vampire Lord conquers it all in this Gothic Action/RPG.

- Watch the game world change as your character gains experience
- Utilize the VMU to store inventory and skills; and swap stuff with other players
- Deep engaging story line with real-time combat
- Replay modules over and over, with inhabitants who remember your past deeds

COMING SOON

DARK ANGEL

VAMPIRE APOCALYPSE



Sega Dreamcast

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www.metro3d.com



Dark Angel: Vampire Apocalypse ©1999, Metro3D, Inc.™

Ogre Battle 64: POLC

Platform: Nintendo 64 • **Publisher:** Atlus • **Release:** April • **Stage:** 55%

For the uninitiated, Ogre Battle is a genre defining turn-based war simulation that has always been a favorite with console gamers. As a final Nintendo 64 effort, Atlus has pulled out all of the stops.

Featuring a 320 Megabit cartridge, the visual presentation should not be hampered by memory limitations. A very rare and desirable feature is the ability to save on the cartridge itself (as opposed to saving on the

memory packs). In addition to multiple endings there should be over 50 hours of gameplay.

Putting the long overdue Perfect Dark aside, the N64 horizon was looking awfully bleak in 2000 until Atlus' announcement of Ogre Battle 64: Person of Lordly Caliber.

Answering the prayers of many hardcore 64 gamers, this title is poised to make a serious splash.



Roadsters

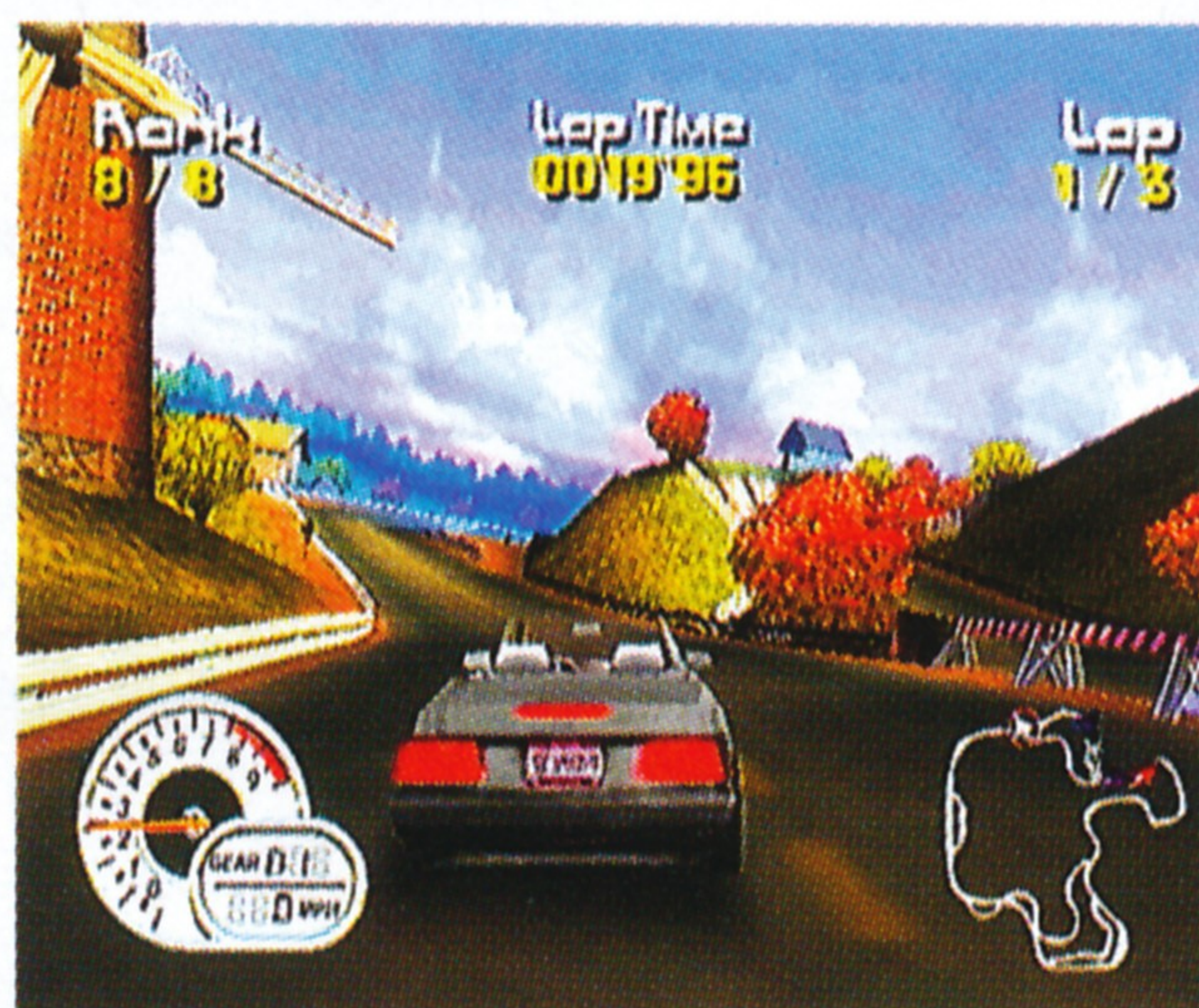
Platform: Dreamcast • **Publisher:** Titus • **Release:** March • **Stage:** 70%

Even when considering the youth of the Dreamcast, the number of driving titles is only now starting to approach the level we would expect at the launch of the system. Aimed at titles like Infogrames Test Drive 6, Roadsters looks like it will be able to give the competition a run for the money.

Like the N64 version, all of the playable vehicles are convertible Roadsters. The selection of cars is varied, but all of the

names are those of major brands like Alfa Romeo. The control is along the line of an arcade racer with speed the primary reward for the time spent learning the ropes of controlling the cars. Other highlights include ten races, eight drivers, and four modes of gameplay.

Graphically, this is obviously the best version to date with the highest resolution visuals sporting the brightest color.



Front Mission 3

Platform: Playstation • **Publisher:** Square • **Release:** April • **Stage:** 75%

After years of begging Square to bring over the Front Mission games, FM3 is finally on the release schedule in the states. A strategy Role Playing Game that takes place on earth in the distant future, FM3 puts you in charge of a variety of huge humanoid robots or Mechs.

Each Mech can be equipped with a variety of weapons including flamethrowers, missiles, machineguns, and cannons. As you

snake through this world filled with intrigue, you must track a missing MIDAS bomb. By following clues in both real life and on the "Network" (a visual based internet), you must try to find who has stolen this incredible weapon that has all the power of a nuclear attack with none of the life-altering residue. The Front Mission series is typical of what we expect from Square: it's top shelf stuff.



4-Wheel Thunder

Platform: Dreamcast • **Publisher:** Midway • **Release:** April • **Stage:** 80%

After conquering the aquatic setting with Hydro Thunder, Midway (with the help of Kalisto) has set its sights on firmer terrain. 4-Wheel Thunder puts rubber to road, or mud as the case may be, and hopes to show everyone just how well a monster truck title can be done.

Even in this early stage the first thing we noticed about 4WT is the sheer amount of detail that is incorporated into the tracks.

Flocks of birds fly by and jets streak the sky during outdoor races while Jumbotrons flash and stadium lights glare on the indoor tracks. Plenty of tracks and competitors are already gracing this title and with tons of short cuts and ramps, nothing booms arcade racing on the Dreamcast like 4-Wheel Thunder.



Star Wars: Jedi Power Battles

Platform: Playstation • **Publisher:** LucasArts • **Release:** March • **Stage:** 60%

Jedi Power Battles looks like it might have what it takes to be the definitive Star Wars game that we were hoping last year's Phantom Menace was going to be.

JPB is focused on arcade action (as opposed to Phantom Menace's adventure driven plot), and allows two people to play simultaneously. What's really neat is that in the two player mode there are not only more enemies to fight, but they are a lot tougher

than they would be in a single player game. There are five Jedi Knights to choose from (Qui-Gon Jinn is strongest with the force, Obi-Wan Kenobi's skill with the lightsaber is unmatched, Mace Windu is well rounded, Plo Koon possess the most physical strength and Adi Gallia is quick on her feet) and each plays vastly differently from the rest. In total there are ten levels.

And yes, Darth Maul is here, too.



WWF Smackdown

Platform: Playstation • **Publisher:** THQ • **Release:** April • **Stage:** 75%

"You had better get ready to bow to the master." The infamous Degeneration X tag line takes on a whole new meaning when you see the latest wrestling offering from THQ, WWF Smackdown. THQ not only snagged the WWF license, but they also have the muscle of the best wrestling engine behind it, shaping it to be the master of wrestling videogames. With the power and playability of the Toukon Retsuden engine

coupled with graphics so detailed that you can literally see The Rock do the People's Eyebrow, WWF Smackdown is looking to take no prisoners in its quest to be the best.

With a stable of up-to-date wrestlers from the hottest tag team on the planet, Matt and Jeff Hardy to M.I.A. Stone Cold Steve Austin, you can definitely smell what THQ is cooking, and we want some.



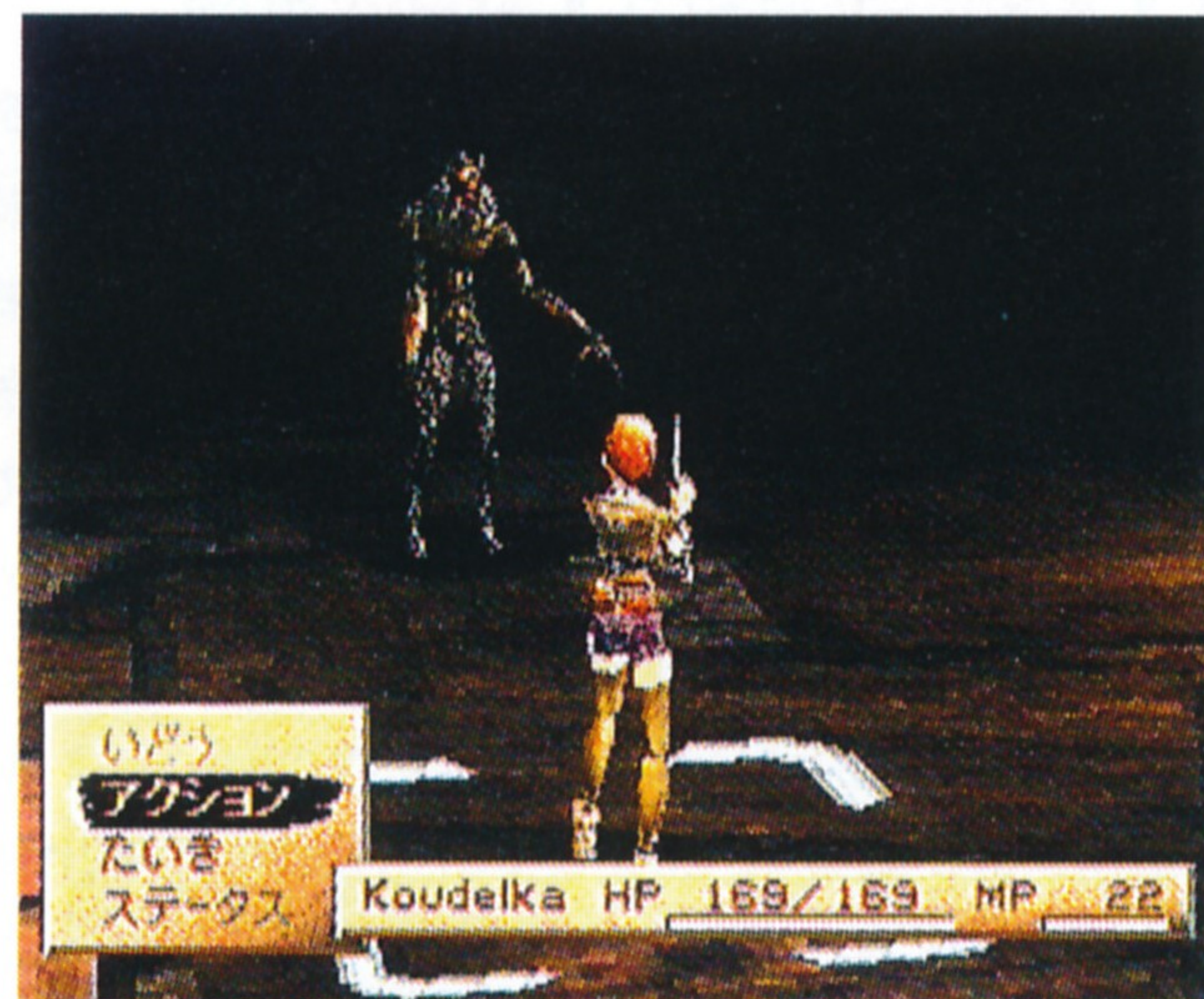
Koudelka

Platform: Playstation • **Publisher:** SNK • **Release:** March • **Stage:** 99%

Koudelka has been generating some amazing import buzz for the last couple of months. Thankfully, it will be hitting U.S. shores within the near future and here is an overview of what you can expect.

The gameplay is a cross between Parasite Eve and the stereotypical Survival Horror title. The story revolves around the main female character, Koudelka. Combat takes place in turned based fashion that

really makes this title feel more like a RPG than action title. Not that we are saying Koudelka doesn't have action, from the moment we put this title in our Playstation, we were on the edge of our seat. Creatures straight out of mythology and some that only exist in the programmer's minds stalked, chased, and hunted us. We'll keep an eye on Koudelka. (Trust us, with that outfit she is wearing, it won't be a problem.)



Gauntlet Legends

Platform: Dreamcast • **Publisher:** Midway • **Release:** April • **Stage:** 50%

The nightmare is always the same. Hordes after hordes of shrieking ghosts are advancing in on you and it seems that for each one you take down with your trusty bow, two take its place. As the mass of undead warriors overtake you, your final words echo through the dungeon, "Archer needs health badly! Archer needs health NOW!"

Midway has brought the classic arcade

action of Gauntlet kicking and screaming into the year 2000 and is now doing its best to squeeze all of the excitement into the Dreamcast and make good use of those multiple controller ports that grace the system. 2D excitement, 3D Characters and 4-player pandemonium could add up to just the type of game Dreamcast owner have been waiting for.



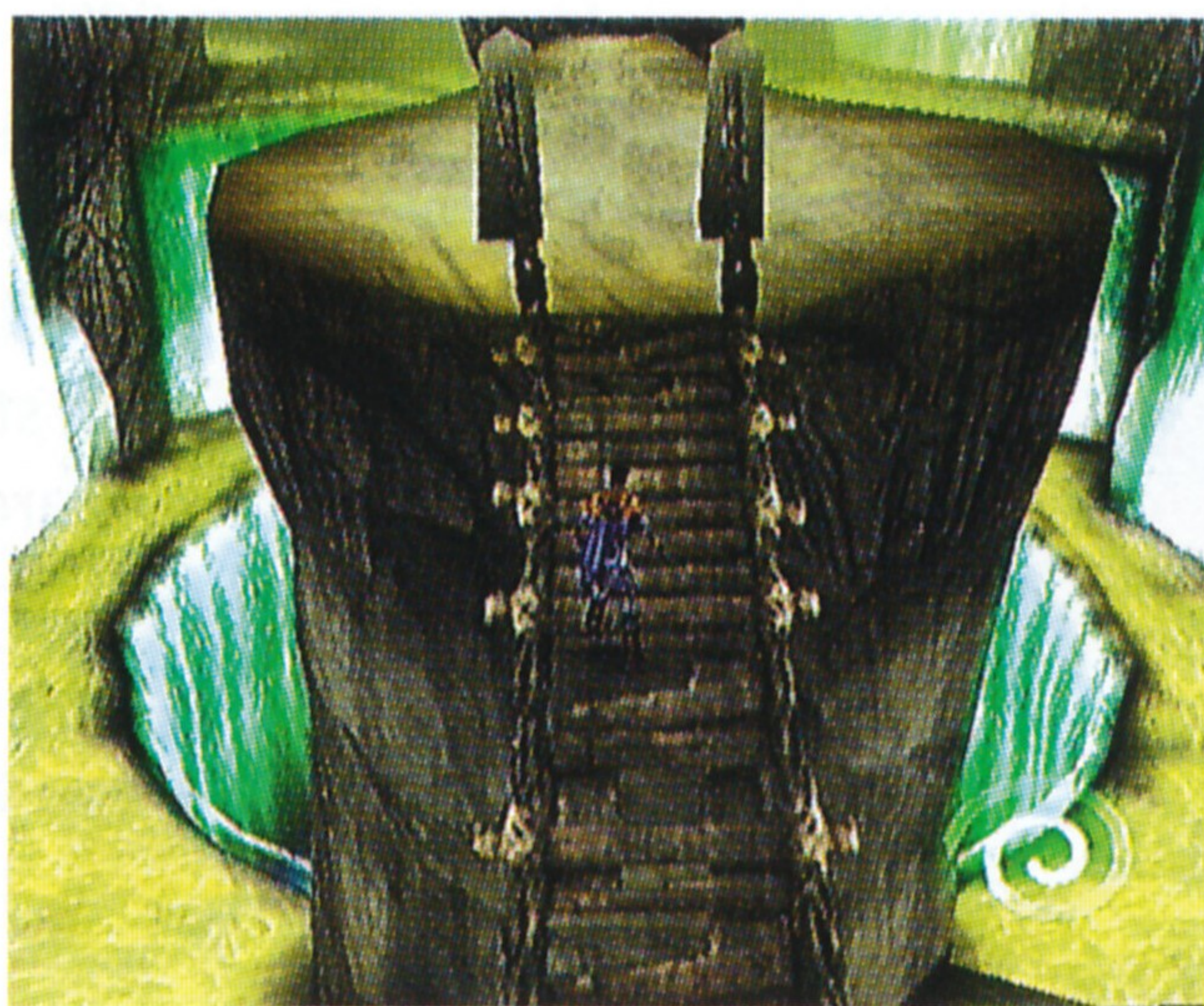
Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver

Platform: Dreamcast • **Publisher:** Eidos • **Release:** February • **Stage:** 90%

Pop quiz hotshot, you have a chance to re-release one of the last year's best games on a next millennium system, what do you do? What do you change, what do you alter, what do you improve? Well hotshot? Unlike Speed 2 where almost everything that was right about the first movie was changed in the sequel, Eidos and Crystal Dynamics have chosen the Star Wars trilogy route and changed only one major element for this

release; the graphics.

And this improvement is simply jaw dropping. While the plot and gameplay are mirror images of the Playstation version (darn them for making us wait for a sequel) the images in the Dreamcast version of Soul Reaver are like looking into a magic mirror. Ogle these screen shots and save your pennies, LOK: SR for the DC is coming.



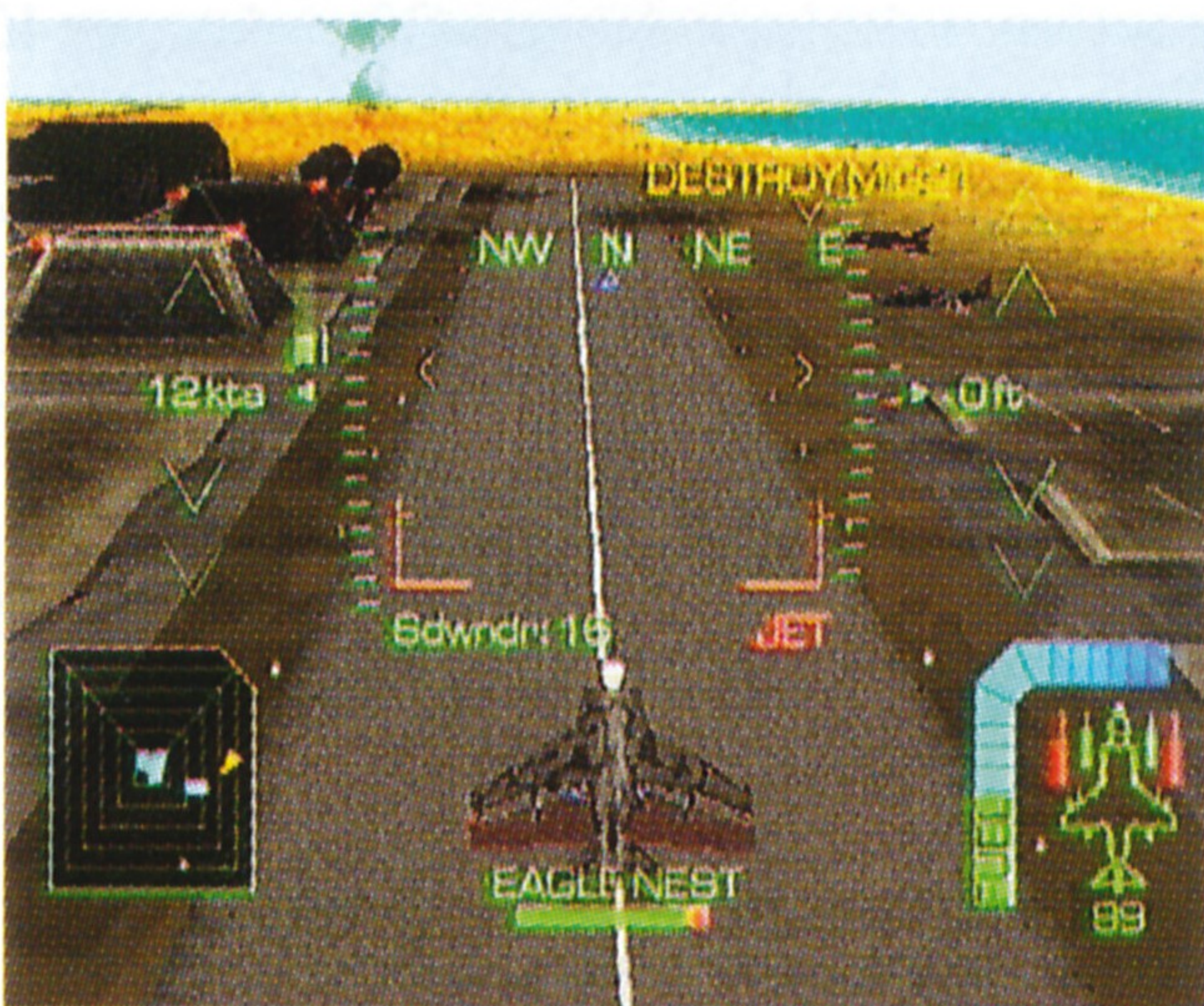
Eagle One: Harrier Attack

Platform: Playstation • **Publisher:** Infogrames • **Release:** March • **Stage:** 85%

An underground terrorist attack group has detonated an electromagnetic pulse device in the air over Hawaii, which has destroyed all lines of outside communication. The President responds by sending a Marine Corps task force led by you, the United States Marine Pilot Eagle One.

Using four different aircraft, including the the powerful Raven for those who are luck enough to gain all bonuses, one must

complete air-to-air and air-to-ground missions to regain all five islands in the chain to emerge victorious. Along with one-player mission based play, Eagle One also includes two-player cooperative, head to head or dog fight action that allows players to choose aircraft, weather, and location of the battles. Similar to Namco's Ace Combat series, EO:HA is looking good, and if you like these kinds of games, this is a title to watch.



Resident Evil: Code Veronica

Platform: Dreamcast • **Publisher:** Capcom • **Release:** March • **Stage:** Unknown

After hours of playing what is possibly the most anticipated DC game thus far Resident Evil: Code Veronica seems like it will live up to the high expectations the RE series carries with it. As a joint effort between Capcom and Sega, we would expect nothing less.

The visuals are smashing. While the backgrounds are nothing special, both the main and enemy characters are some of the best looking we've yet seen and the FMV

sequences (minus the Leonardo DiCaprio wanna be) while mostly eye candy are flat out amazing.

SM has been covering Jaleco's competing Carrier for the past eight months now, and you're probably wondering, "Which game is better?" Since RE isn't completed, it is still too early to say (it's that close). The fact remains that both are A+ titles and without a doubt worth owning.



Rayman 2

Platform: Dreamcast • **Publisher:** Ubi Soft • **Release:** March • **Stage:** 80%

Considering the huge number of games we see on a daily basis, the following scenario is telling of what to expect from Rayman 2. During the preview process we had an observer actually walk by the monitor running Rayman 2, do a double take, turn around, come back, sit down and watch the game for over an hour. The surreal look of Rayman 2 can be summed up in three words; Bea-uti-ful.

Once we got past the smashing visuals, the solid gameplay helped precipitate the use of phrases like, "The total package," "Sweet," and "You've been playing all day. Unless you want that controller bonded with your forehead, you're going to let me play." If this title continues to develop like it has to this point, Ubi Soft will be poised to deliver something remarkable.



MDK2

Platform: Dreamcast • **Publisher:** Interplay • **Release:** April • **Stage:** 75%

Dear Interplay,

After watching and playing your upcoming game MDK 2 for the Sega Dreamcast, we have one simple request. We want the suit. We know you're thinking, "The suit is not real, it's just a game." However, after many hours of analyzing MDK 2, we've decided that moves like that can't look that realistic without using motion capturing, or a similar process, thus the suit must be real. Give up it

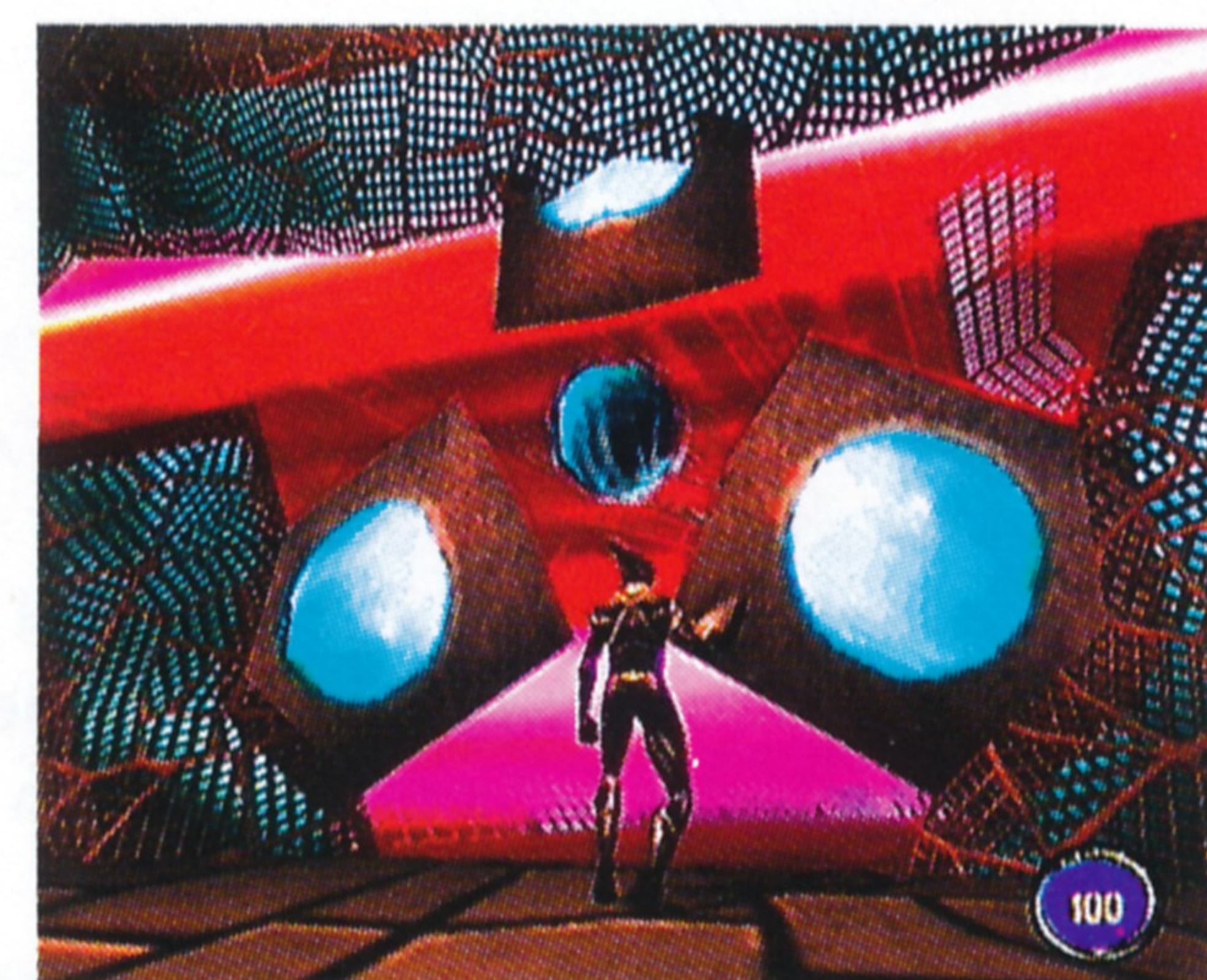
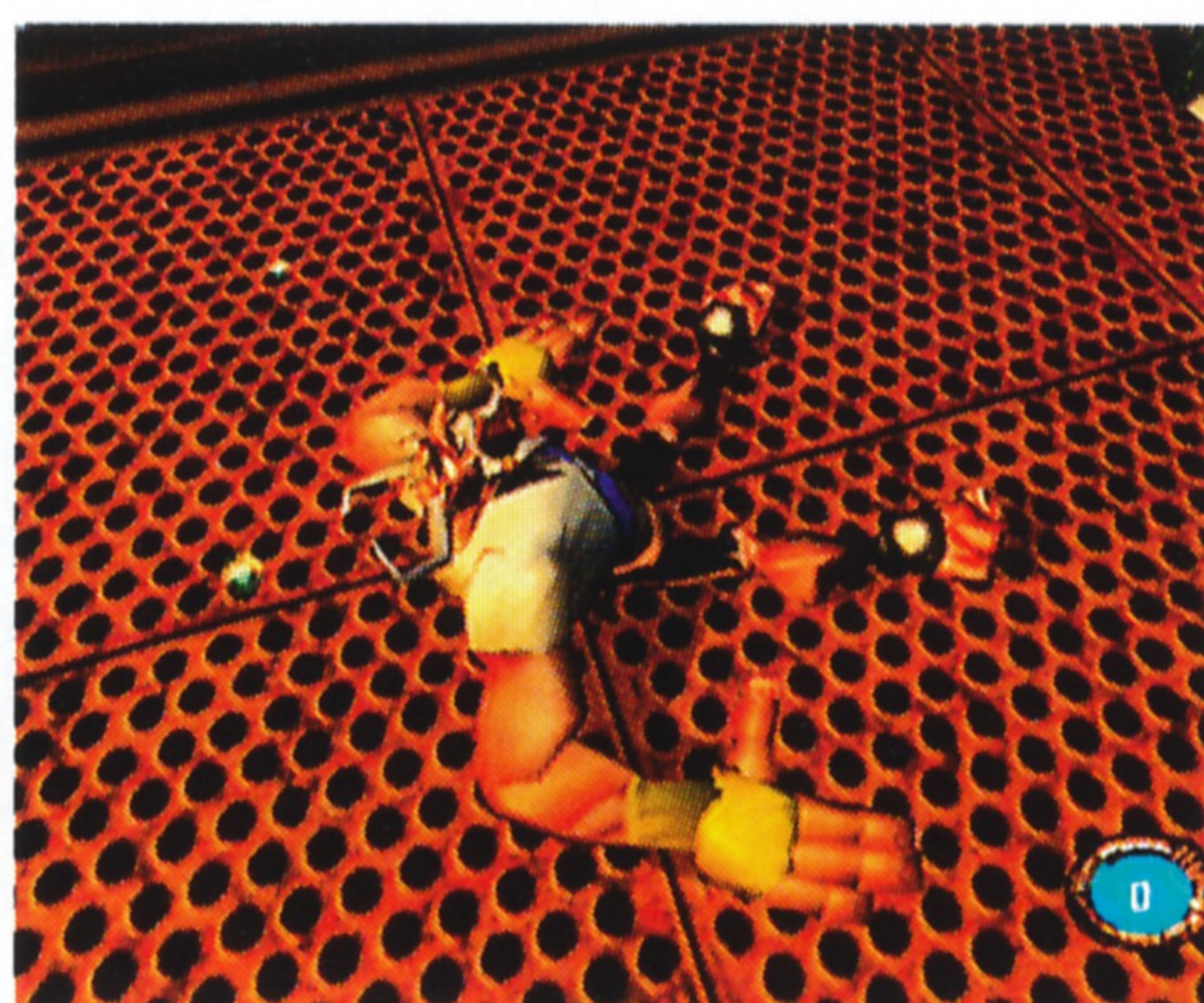
and nobody gets hurt.

Regards,

The SM staff

P.S. It just occurred to us that if the suit were real, nothing would stop you from using its sniper powers and chain gun to kill us all. Please disregard this letter.

P.S.S. If the suit is real, please kill editor John Price first. This was all his idea.



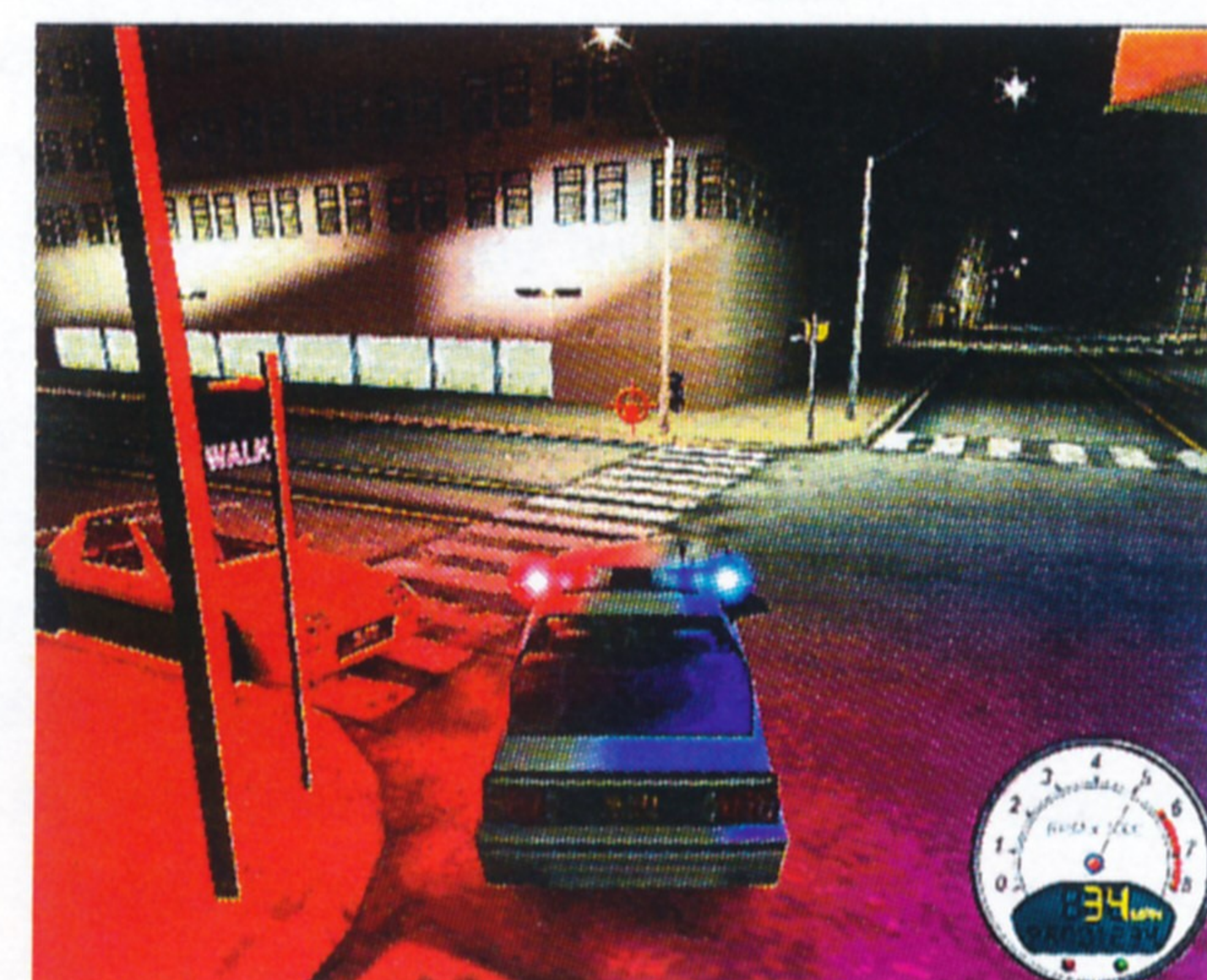
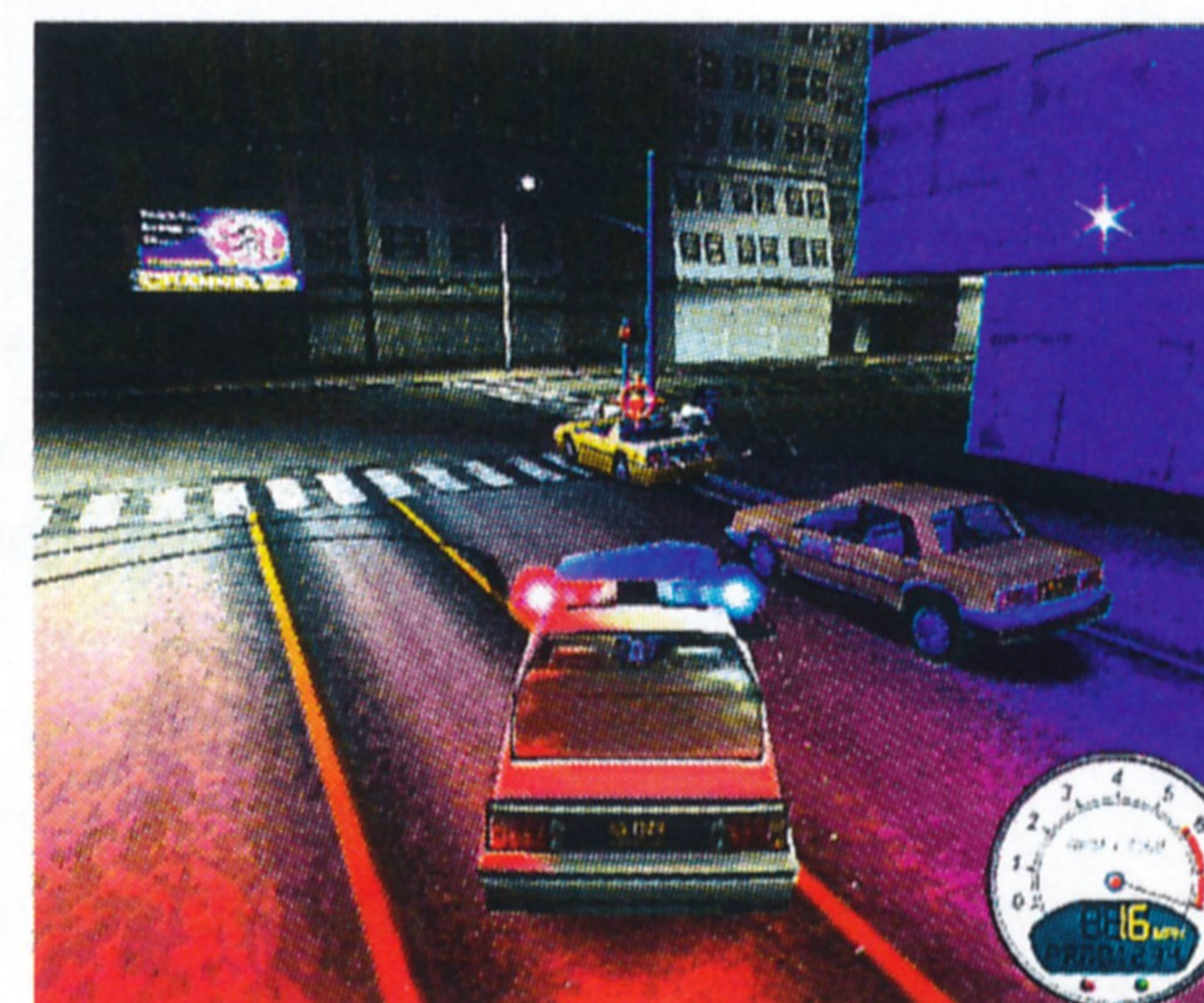
World's Scariest Police Chases

Platform: Dreamcast • **Publisher:** Fox Interactive • **Release:** May • **Stage:** 50%

For the uninitiated, WSPC is based upon the Fox television's "scariest" series. In the game you take control of one of two selectable cops who are assigned to a unit making a series of documentaries. This game is so much like the show that it even starts off with a warning: "Due to the graphic nature of this game, viewer discretion is advised."

There are over 75 missions in total, and very few of them are even slightly derivative.

More than just driving around and destroying public property, a story line builds around criminal power groups (right winged paramilitary groups, Triads, and street gangs) as the game progresses. There are also unrelated DUI chases and domestic disturbances thrown in for good measure. With some intense visuals, and solid gameplay SM thinks this license is being well utilized.



Duke Nukem: POTB

Platform: Playstation • **Publisher:** GT Interactive • **Release Date:** Q3 • **Stage:** 40%

Even though Time To Kill sold really well, many gamers felt the series was about to run out of steam. While still very early in its development cycle, Duke Nukem: Planet Of The Babes doesn't break much new ground, but looks to fulfill many fan's wishes.

The graphics engine is undergoing a serious overhaul, and all of the visible textures are higher resolution than any previously in the series making for a cleaner

look. In the past, getting Duke to make many jumps was a frustrating task. With refined control, critical jumps will be easier to do.

Possibly the most important new feature is the fact that telling the story, and getting the player involved will be a major focus. Further more there will be a total of 23 levels in the story mode.

This is GT's last Duke title before Rockstar takes over the license.



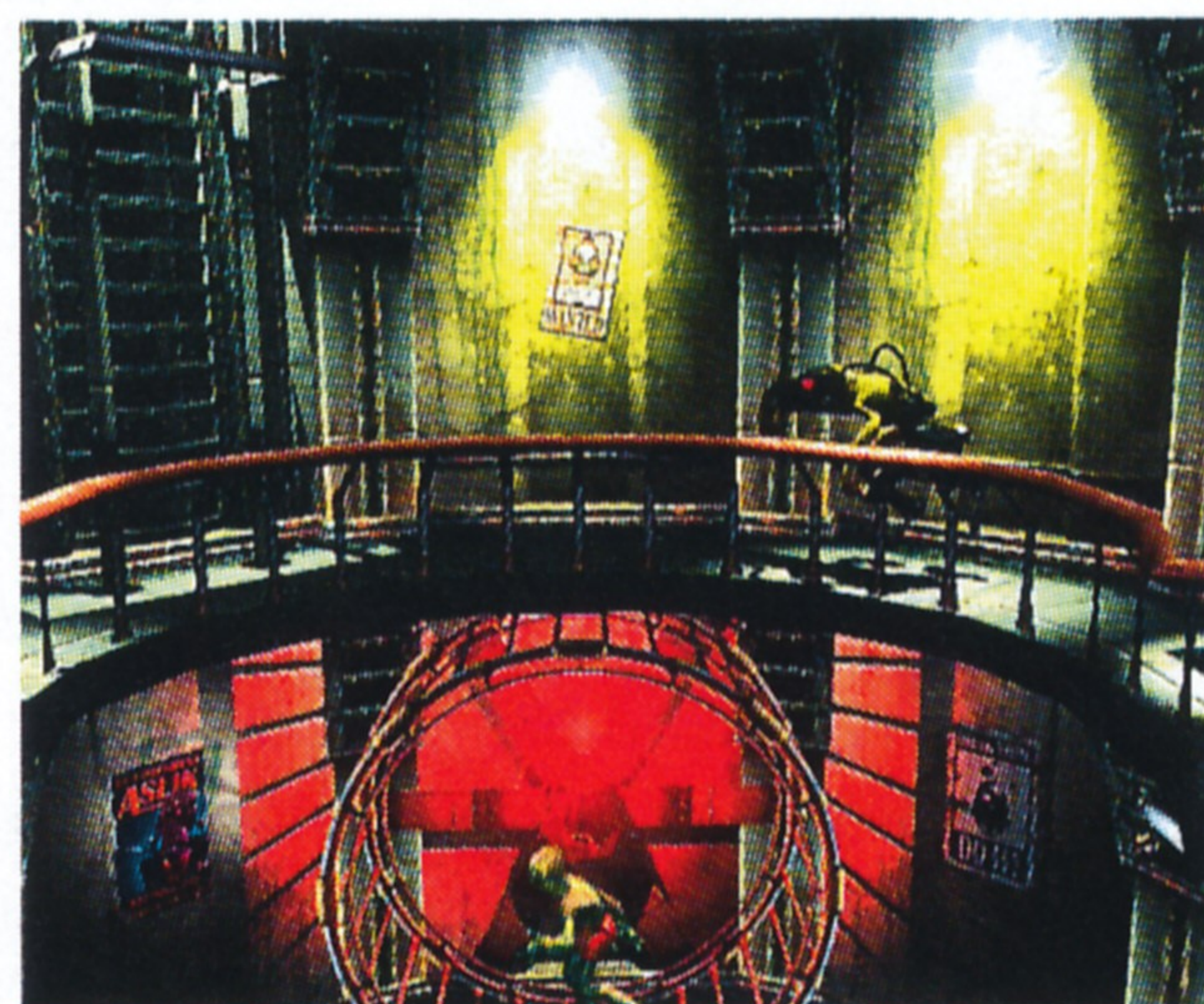
Munch's Oddysee

Platform: Playstation 2 • **Publisher:** GT Interactive • **Release Date:** 2000 • **Stage:** 10%

We're huge fans of the Oddysee/Exodus games, and were thrilled to get a glimpse of MO for the Playstation 2. While Munch is the main character this time around, Abe is also an important part of the story. Both characters are playable, and have different abilities. Some objectives will require you to switch between the two characters (MO is still a single player game). Sligs, Slogs, and Vykksers scientists from the previous games

are back again with the the single minded goal of stopping you at all costs. The best news? Bats are history.

At roughly 10%, MO has some of the best visuals we've ever seen, and according to our source at MO's developer Oddworld Inhabitants the final visuals will be even better than the screens we're currently running. You can start breathing again.



D2

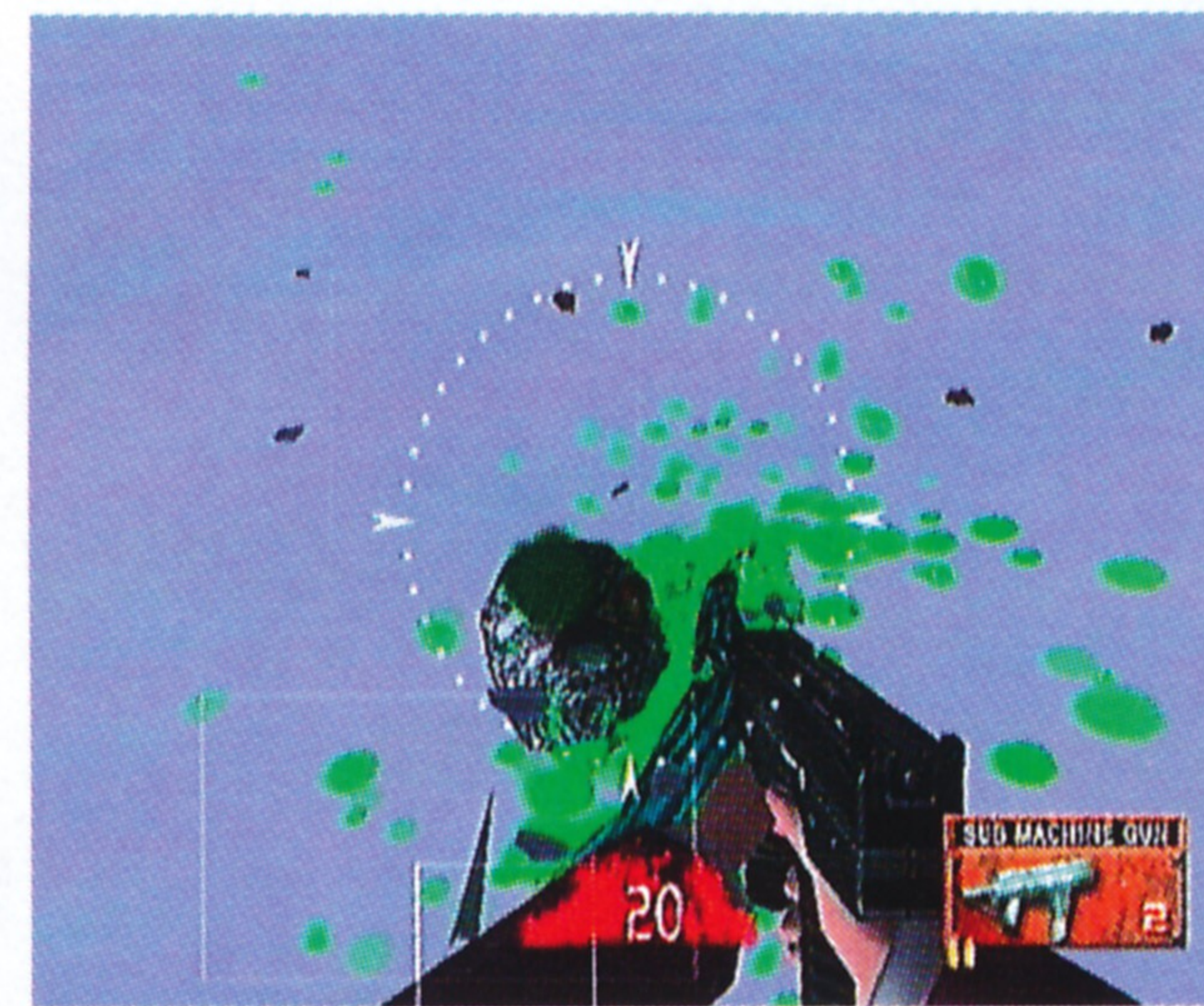
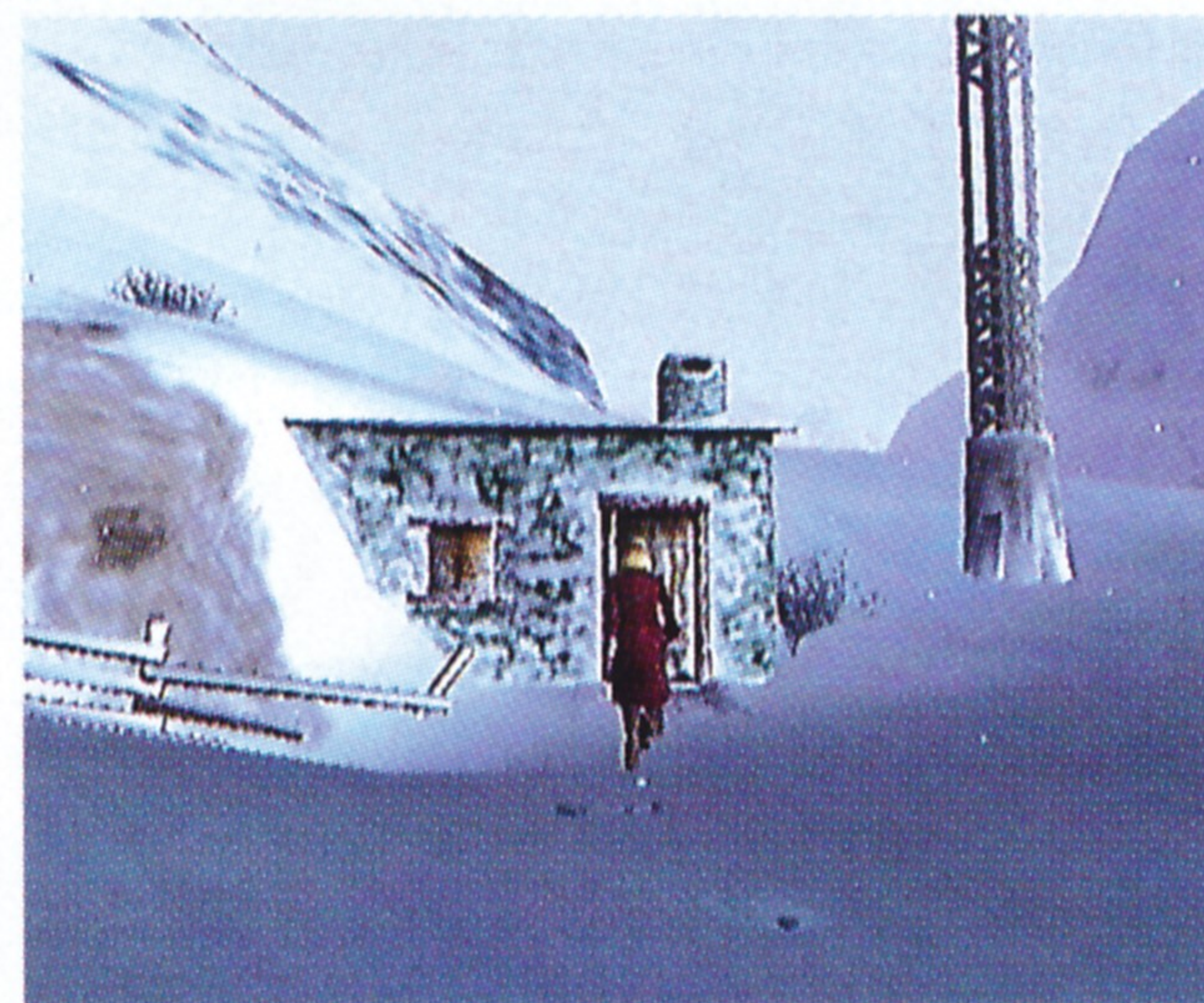
Platform: Dreamcast • **Publisher:** Sega • **Release:** May • **Stage:** 99%

Americans have no idea of what they're missing. The SM staffers have lost much sleep over the Japanese D2, and not just while playing. It's difficult to rest after witnessing the horrific imagery that occurs with regularity in this title. Although much will be edited out of the U.S. port, it's still guaranteed to scare the hell out of you.

Laura returns for this compelling sequel that combines RPG elements, puzzles,

exploration, and first-person battles without losing clarity. Boss fights are as intense as they come, and the CG quality graphics enhance the effect in every area of gameplay.

Silky-smooth cinemas move the plot along in a way that rivals major motion pictures. Don't miss this 4 disc adventure in May. Just remember; go to bed with the lights on. It helps, really.



Grand Theft Auto 2

Platform: Dreamcast • **Publisher:** Rockstar • **Release:** April • **Stage:** 70%

Take the most over the top game of 1999, add some DC quality visuals, and you have a game we're looking forward to. GTA2's story line is little changed from previous incarnations. You are still an up and coming gangster who must rob, kill and over throw mob bosses to earn respect and make a name for yourself. Gang warfare and (yep you guessed it) stealing cars are all in a day's work.

The often-maligned Dreamcast controller makes this title's RC-style gameplay a joy to handle. Additionally, the VMU will add to the gameplay. As of right now, Rockstar is not telling us exactly what it will do, but they assure SM that the final results will be very interesting. If you're thinking about getting into the series this may be the version to look into as it will be the most polished to date.



Shen Mu

Platform: Dreamcast • **Publisher:** Sega • **Release:** 2000 • **Stage:** 99%

After what seemed like ten years of waiting, Shen Mu was finally released in Japan. Cutting to the chase, this title is an RPG of the highest caliber, and was worth the wait. Sega has not officially announced it for the US yet, but SM thinks it'll launch in September to combat Playstation 2's release.

Everything from the voice acting, and sound effects to the graphics are of the best quality, and Sega would be wise to simply

subtitle the conversations as the Japanese is beautiful, and the voices so full of genuine emotion.

Playing Shen Mu is like being the director of a movie. Everything in this game looks exactly like the screens to the right (yes those are in-game graphics), and the flow from scenario to scenario is masterful. Shen Mu is a must buy whether you import it or wait for the eventual domestic release.



Armored Core: Master Of Arena

Platform: Playstation • **Publisher:** Agetec • **Release:** March • **Stage:** 99%

It is hard to believe that this is the third in the series of the Armored Core games. Armored Core: Master Of Arena is the final Playstation version of this mech-based action series before it steps up to Playstation 2.

Packaged as a 2CD set, AC: MOA is optimized for link cable usage. There is no need to buy a second copy of the game when you can just invite a friend and their Playstation over and take them on head to

head. The single player mode is two-fold, since you can play the regular one player mission based game or take on a computer-controlled mech in an Arena battle. With plenty of new challenges, and innovations, Armored Core: Master Of Arena will make fans of the series ecstatic and new comers will instantly enjoy the fast paced action that awaits. Agetec has pulled a rabbit out of the proverbial hat.



Retrospect

Dreamcast

Carrier Jaleco

Behold, the first must own game of the new millennium. When SM first laid eyes on Carrier last year, we knew Jaleco had something very special. Amazingly, this title has even surpassed our already high expectations.

A special forces team, called SPARC, is sent to investigate some strange occurrences aboard the aircraft carrier, Heimdal. Just before touching down on the carrier, the anti-aircraft guns suddenly come to life and send the copter carrying the SPARC crew, including the main character Jack Ingles, crashing to the deck of the ship. It is at this time that you realize that the problems are not being caused by someone, but instead something. This thing, known as ARK, is infesting the crew and it is up to you to find a way to stop it.

While Carrier has its feet placed firmly in the survival horror arena, it accomplishes something that no other

title thus far has been able to. It makes you think, react, and play outside the Resident Evil mind frame. Carrier achieves this in a number of unique ways. The first is the inclusion of a visual scanner that allows you to scan characters to see if they are infected with the ARK virus. This adds a bit of true first person perspective to a typically 3rd person genre and virtually eliminates unavoidable surprise attacks when used properly. The scanner can also be used to search for invisible enemies, hidden traps, and concealed objects. If you don't use it in this way, you are simply not playing (or enjoying) the game completely.

Carrier also puts a myriad of questions to you during the game. How do you kill a boss that even grenades do not harm? What do you do when you are suddenly up to your chest in water and are being attacked by an enemy you can't even see, much less kill? The answers to all of these questions are relatively simple, but Carrier does cause you to stop

and think instead of mindlessly shooting first, shooting later and shooting a little more before worrying about answering any questions. And for once in a survival horror game, the questions, or problems, are logical. For example, you will never have to find the fuzzy kitten emblem and attach it to the snuggly dog statue. Instead, you will need to find the 4-digit passcode to unlock a security elevator to descent further into the ship.

The story is one this title's many strengths and if it seems a bit confusing at times, don't worry. When it only feels like you are getting half the story, the fact is, you are. When you are left scratching your head wondering what happened to everyone as the credits roll (great credits, by the way), fear not. Carrier does more than just give you a simple written epilogue; it gives you a whole new adventure in the shoes of SM's newest pin-up girl, Jessifer Manning (there is just something about a woman in body armor that we like, a lot).

The core of Carrier, the control and gameplay fit together perfectly and run like a well-oiled machine. As much as Carrier blew us away, it is not flawless. The majority of the voices and lip-syncing look and sound straight out of a Hong Kong action flick and some of the dialogue could have been more fluid. One pivotal moment, we call the infinite "Colonel" scene, loses some of its impact due to the fact it resembled the steamroller bit from Austin Powers to the point that we were too busy laughing to take it seriously. However, the things that Carrier does right more than overshadow any of these minuscule hiccups.

Excellent controls, top-notch graphics, and haunting sound effects are just a few of the elements that help make Carrier the best survival horror title on the market, and an amazing DC experience. Silicon Magazine *fully* recommends a purchase.

•SM Rating: 94



• Carrier's got big explosions, cool bosses, and rooms filled with weird plant life



• The two playable characters are Jack and Jessifer, respectively

KICK
SOME
VIRTUAL
BUTT



Compose a strategy
in the training mode



Compete with actual
K-1 fighters



Kick some tail in four
different modes

K-1 GRAND PRIX

K-1 Combines Karate, Kenpo, Kickboxing
and Kung-Fu in a Single Class Competition.

The new millennium brings a new breed of K-1 tournaments.
K-1 Grand Prix offers more realism, more options and more
challenge than any other game of its kind.



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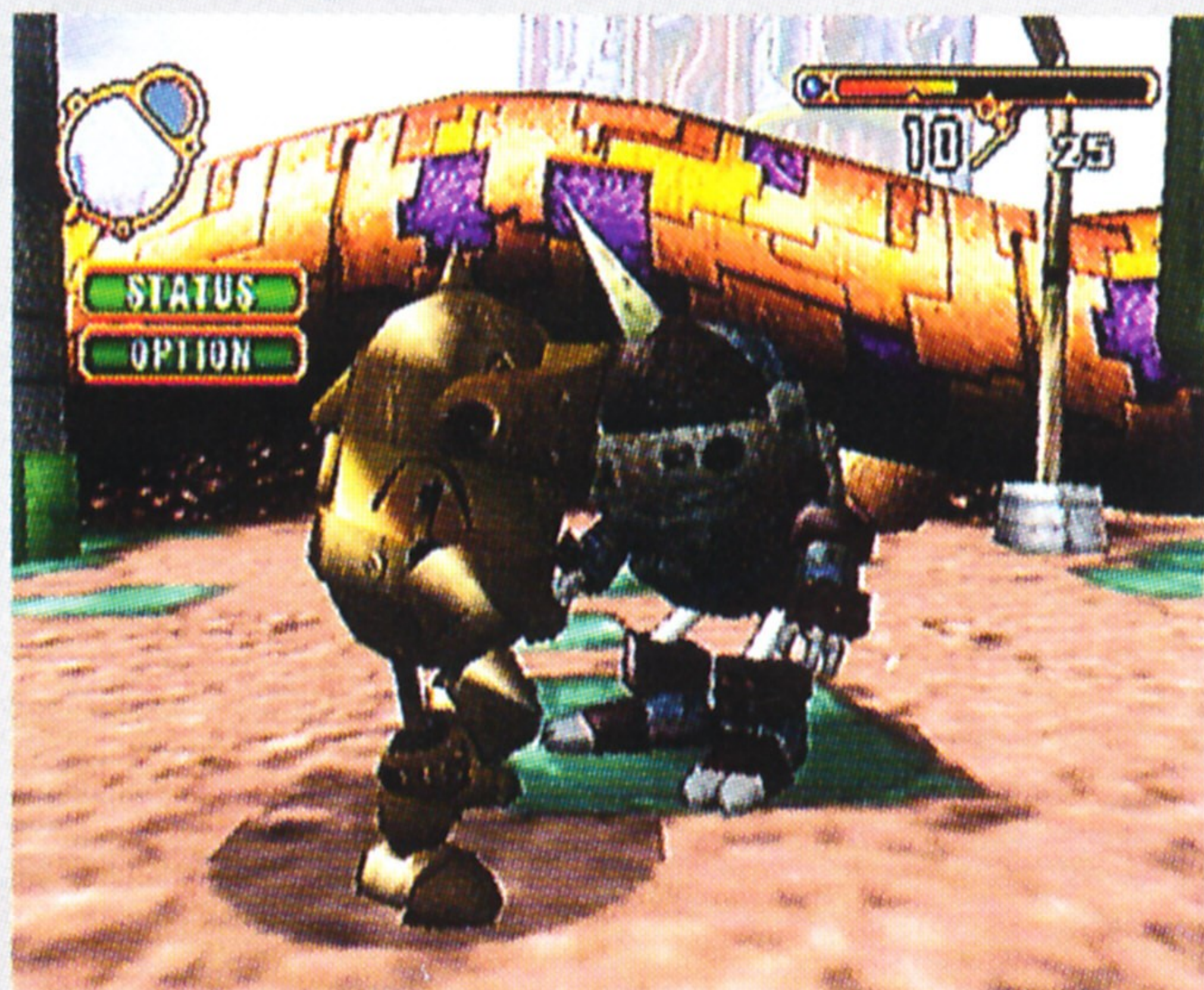
E.G.G. Vatical

Please excuse the casual nature of this review. A friend of editor Wade Monnig e-mailed him the following questions, "How is Elemental Gimmick Gear? Top-Down Action RPGs are my favorite! Should I get it?" This was the response.

If action RPGs are your favorite, by all means pick up this title! E.G.G. was originally developed for the Saturn. With the exception of the CG/Anime intro, almost everything that is done in E.G.G. could have been done on the Saturn. Some of the graphics look great, but none are particularly mind blowing. Most of the battles are top-down-swing-a-weapon-kill-a-monster affairs, however when you meet up with a boss, the fight switches to a 3D battle that is pretty impressive.

Overall, the game is fairly well done with plenty of power-ups and no shortage of action. However, the text translation is Vatical's first try at a RPG and it shows. The dialogue is stiff and sometimes sentences are not quite phrased correctly. Luckily it never gets to the point where you have a problem following the story or knowing what to do next. E.G.G. is a solid first effort as long as you are not expecting anything groundbreaking or extraordinary in either the graphics or gameplay department.

•SM Rating: 76



Wild Metal Rockstar Games

Wild Metal gives you a tank, a slew of ammo, and plenty of enemies to destroy. What more could a red blooded American boy want? Developed by the bad boys at DMA Design, Wild Metal gives the armored division a definite arcade twist.

Wild Metal offers some pretty impressive alien landscapes. Three different planets in all and none of them are what you would call hospitable. The vehicle graphics are very arcade-like with their appearance reflecting their abilities. While they're not extremely exciting to look at, there is often a lot of action going on without any slowdown. Once you start playing, you will notice that there are two buttons designed to control the camera.

The first one is for lowering the angel of view and the second for raising the angle. It is a good thing they included them too, because you will use them a lot. Pretty soon, you'll wonder why they didn't call this title, Wild Camera, because a good portion of time is spend setting up the view so you can see where to shoot instead of actually taking the shot. This problem isn't helped by the fact that rotating the turret of the tank also swings the camera along with it.

While the camera is this title's biggest flaw, the two-player Deathmatch is its saving grace. In a Deathmatch, at least you know that your opponent is having the same issues you are. Wild Metal is simply an arcade blaster with the albatross of an unruly camera hung around its neck.

•SM Rating: 62



Fighting Force 2 Eidos

A far cry from Lara or Raziel, Eidos' smug-faced Hawk Manson draws mixed reviews in his solo adventure, Fighting Force 2. Fans of the original, brace yourself: There is no two player mode, and the Double Dragon-style brawls have been replaced by a more "infiltrate, find keys, kill bad guys" style of gameplay. The result is a mixed bag, with exceptional atmospherics and completely interactive environments, but gameplay that is marred by some silly mechanics.

Control is hampered by a glitchy camera. Also, "jump" and "roll" are performed using the same button, which leads to stupid mistakes that cause Hawk to get hit. Some inconsistencies in level design will evoke frustration, like invisible walls that prevent Hawk from jumping over a knee-high ledge, or the lack of one that would have prevented him from falling five stories to his death. The low-intelligence enemies may make players chuckle, but they hardly provide a challenge, even in expert mode.

A few standout qualities save FF2 from a dismal score. Picking off enemies from a distance is a snap with the sniper mode, which has Hawk holding his gun sideways like a gangsta. A large variety of weapons can be utilized to destroy enemies as well as just about anything in the highly interactive environments.

In general, FF2 is a senselessly entertaining action game that breaks no new technological ground. Rent it before you purchase.

•SM Rating: 65



Playstation

NBA Shootout 2000 989 Sports

The initial release date for NBA Shootout 2000 was delayed for several months because of some quality issues. 989 opted to try and fix these problems rather than release a questionable product. It seems this title could have used another month or two of refinement. Take the new create-a-dunk feature for instance. We were able to adjust every possible aspect of a dunk, and were able to create awesome moves that any NBA superstar would be jealous of. Although an extremely creative feature it quickly lost its appeal, and that's the story of NBA Shootout 2000.

The gameplay was shaky at best. We quickly took note of the iffy ball physics. At times the ball would bounce off the rim and around the court normally, other times it would bounce off the rim and appeared as if it was being launched into orbit. The game controls are also a problem and can be best described as sluggish. The AI is the one highlight in this title. It knows to get the ball to the team's superstar, or find the open man (the AI truly shines on offense). It's unfortunate though that the above average AI is overshadowed by its lack of clock management, whether ahead or behind late in the game. Oh well, there's always next year.

•SM Rating: 69



Romance of The Three Kingdoms VI Koei

The Romance series has always improved with every release and the latest incarnation is no exception. While keeping the winning formula of old, Koei has listened to its fans and made some substantial improvements. Now each character has more personality and style, which gives you more to like (or hate) about each one. Every opportunity has been taken to immerse you in the history of ROTTK; Koei even seized the chance to show each character and a brief biography during the game's save and load times, a classy innovation.

ROTTK6 has not lost one bit of the depth that has made it known as the most hardcore simulation title on the market. What they have done is taken away the hours of micromanagement that was required once a large empire was established. Now, instead of worrying about the small details of day-to-day operations, you are focused on the critical objective of conquest. Almost every aspect of the battles have been improved. The artificial intelligence is sharper and the addition of controlled duels makes the whole experience more interactive.

ROTTK6 makes you feel like you are making history instead of just observing it. It even shows you what the real life counterparts of the characters in your control were able to accomplish in the same time period as you. While the type of depth involved in this simulation is not for everyone, strategy and history buffs should pick this title up without hesitation.

•SM Rating: 82



Jackie Chan: Stuntmaster Midway

Ever feel like throwing someone onto a smoking grill and beating them with a fish? Silly violence is the norm in Midway's Jackie Chan: Stuntmaster.

Everything screams Chan, from the "save your grandfather" plot to the interactive environments. Jackie's weapons include brooms, trash can lids, dead fish, and fisticuffs. As if that weren't enough, his surroundings provide creative ways to stop adversaries. Kick a support beam to cause a platform to

Retrospect

plummet, or topple boxes toward enemies. These tactics work as well here as they do in the movies.

The madness begins when Jackie's grandfather instructs him to deliver a mysterious package to the Shaolin Temple. As always, thugs come along and ruin everything. The game opens level by level, and allows players to go back to previous areas. Style determines score, and that depends on how creative the player is in stopping enemies.

The voiceovers emulate the personality of Jackie's films. Confronting a group of thugs, he may say, "I don't want to hurt any of you," and then he'll shout, "Somebody call a ambulance," as he whips their butts. The 3D gameplay stays in a fixed plane. Characters animate impressively, especially Jackie, but lack detail. Levels are bright and colorful, and useable objects stand out well.

The Oriental jive music gets annoying after awhile. However, the "goosh" of a dead fish or the "clang" of a metal pot upon an enemy's head satisfies the ears. Stuntmaster is a single player title that should please Chan fans and action gamers alike.

•SM Rating: 75



Railroad Tycoon 2 Take 2 Interactive

It was only a matter of time before the hugely popular PC title Railroad Tycoon II took the plunge into the console market. To help make it just as popular on the PSX, Take 2 Interactive has put in some extra time and care to make sure the transition was a smooth one.

This game takes micro-management to the next level. Expect to spend many a night playing this one if you want to complete one of the grand scenarios. Fans of simulation style games should find plenty of management duties to keep them busy and at the same time be very entertained. Although complex at times, we were truly amazed at the true-to-life financial market system implemented into the scenario play. This elaborate money system included the selling of stocks and bonds, margin buying, and even hostile takeovers. Casual gamers should not shy away from this one because Railroad Tycoon II also includes a Sandbox mode for non-

competitive play that allows for unlimited time and money. This mode was definitely a favorite.

Not since playing with toy trains as kids has building a fantasy railroad been so much fun.

•SM Rating: 85



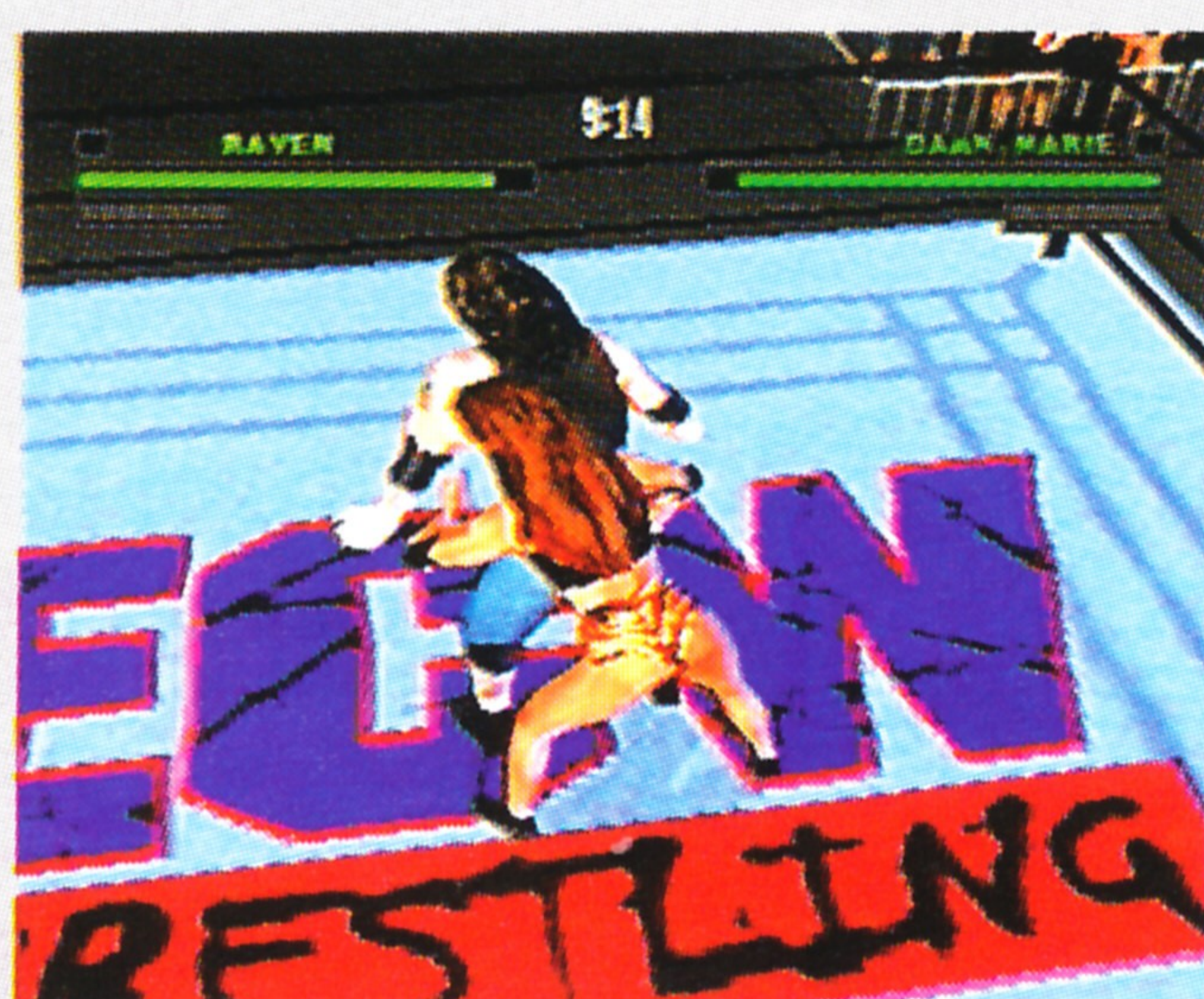
ECW Hardcore Revolution Acclaim

ECW is wrestling on the edge. All of the recent talk in the WCW/WWF about hardcore or extreme wrestling started in the ECW. In fact, most of the hottest new tickets in these leagues earned their wings in the ECW. Acclaim is serious about bringing a true to life ECW game with all the blood and adult themes to the Playstation and they even have a Mature rating from the ESRB to prove it.

Following in the steps of franchises like the Madden series, ECW keeps its predecessor's engine (WWF Attitude) and builds upon it. If you enjoyed the previous game, you can jump right in and feel right at home. However, if you disliked the earlier offering, rest assured you are not going to like this one either. Some features such as barbed wire matches and a legends mode, that allow you to play as classic ECW wrestlers, are new to this title, but are not especially earth-shattering. Some changes, like the use of one-man commentary by ECW's Joey Styles, actually felt like a step backwards.

With a good improvement in speed, a more adult attitude, and the inclusion of all the ECW wrestlers like Raven and "Mr. Ton-of-nicknames" Rob Van Dam, there are more than a few reasons to check this title out. You may want to catch ECW on TNN this Friday night and see what Hardcore is all about.

•SM Rating: 83



Ace Combat 3: Electrosphere Namco

Fire up the afterburners and light up the sky in this hotly anticipated third installment to Namco's beloved Ace Combat series. You'll need a Dual Shock to experience maximum adrenaline as both sticks are used to pilot the fighters and survey the war-torn scenery. Maverick and Goose would be proud.

To bring down the Neuwork rebels, gamers will utilize 21 planes and 14 weapons across missions that will test their mettle in many creative ways. Knocking out buildings in the path of a blimp carrying a deadly chemical, flying a recon mission where the goal is to capture enemy installations on film, and day/night dog-fights are all part of the job.

The graphics are quite crisp and that make targets spotting easier. The planes look edgy to a critical eye, but SM believes that most gamers will be too engrossed to notice. Explosions sounded incredible, as did the passing of nearby aircraft. Noticed was the lack of significant load time. The game is huge, but moves from menu to gameplay without a hitch. Unfortunately, the anime presentation was removed from the American translation. Because of this, the game has lost the feel of being a much larger story involving identifiable characters.

Overall, there are no glaring flaws that hamper the intended experience. AC3 is a solid title that deserves a place in every gamer's collection.

•SM Rating: 90



Deception 3: Dark Delusion Tecmo

When gamers complain that the U.S. never receives any mature games directed at the over 17 audience, we always correct them and point them in the direction of the Deception series. The Deception games have taken gothic horror and bloodletting to unbelievable degrees and Deception 3 is no exception.

The whole look, sound, and feel of Deception 3 is amazing. The characters and the costumes they wear look straight out of the Victorian age and the graphics themselves are finely detailed. The music is magnificent and when it comes to

setting a dark mood it blows everything this side of Castlevania away.

If you have never played a Deception game before, the basic idea is to set traps and kill the enemies before they kill you. While not quite as unrepentant in its violence as the earlier games, the gore is still present and just as prominent. More importantly, the gameplay is still as twisted and fun as it has always been. Still we did have a few issues with the gameplay. Viewing where each trap is set and telling when to activate it can be a problem due to the camera. Also, the lack of voice-overs draws you out of the story while everything else is working to pull you in.

D3 doesn't stray far from its past formula, but the improvements are enough to warrant a recommendation (as long as the sight of a little blood doesn't make you queasy).

•SM Rating: 84



Crusaders Of Might and Magic 3DO

The popular PC Might and Magic series has made the leap to Playstation courtesy of 3DO. Unfortunately, it comes in a stripped-down package that focuses on not-so-epic action.

The 3D engine must be a dated one as jerky scrolling often causes the player to lose sight of the action. This makes lots of jumps nearly impossible and leads to many deaths that bring back horrific Deathtrap Dungeon memories. Other control issues emerge from the extensive button layout. It's easy to accidentally use a health potion when the character doesn't need it, or cast an unwanted spell that backfires and damages the player. Laughable enemy AI makes things even more unbearable.

Although level design is deep and creative, the visuals are a serious detriment. Animation is limited, and the sound is downright terrible. The CG cinematics are exceptional, but that increases the feeling of shoddiness one gets when it's time to control the action.

3DO is a respectable publisher, and it's surprising they would release a terrible conversion like this. COMAM fans will not be pleased, nor will anyone else. Avoid this game.

•SM Rating: 40

Decrypted: Codes and Cheats

Legend:

U=Up

D=Down

L=Left

R=Right

Jet Force Gemini (N64):

Cheat mode

At the character select screen, press the Analog-stick Right 3 times, then press the Analog-stick Left to highlight and select Lupus. When the game begins, press C-Right 3 times, C-Left, C-Right 2 times, C-Up 3 times. If you entered the code correctly, you will hear the sound of Lupus barking. Press A to select an item then Press B to drop the item at Lupus' location.

Donkey Kong 64 (N64):

Camera:

Use Tiny and enter the stone building in the main hub. Use the camera to photograph the fairies hidden in the game and unlock the Mystery Menu options.

DK Theater:

Photograph two fairies with the camera to unlock the DK Theater option.

DK Bonus Stages:

Photograph six fairies then find Rambo the rhino, and Enguarde the swordfish to unlock their bonus stages.

Original Donkey Kong:

Use the Gorilla-Grab on the lever in the Frantic Factory area to play the original Donkey Kong. Successfully complete all four stages twice and collect the Nintendo Coin. Finally, find and photograph six fairies to unlock the original Donkey Kong option at the "Mystery Menu".

Jetpack:

Collect at least fifteen Banana Medals and visit Cranky to play the Jetpack game. Earn 5,000 points in the game and collect the Rareware Coin. Finally, photograph six fairies to unlock the Jetpack option at the "Mystery Menu".

Boss Battle:

Photograph ten fairies to unlock the Boss Battle option at the "Mystery Menu".

Krusha:

Find and photograph fifteen fairies to unlock the Krusha In Multi-Player.

Cheat Mode:

Photograph all twenty fairies with the camera to unlock the Cheat Mode option in the "Mystery Menu". This will allow you access to unlimited items.

Restore watermelon meter:

When low on health, get next to a "Tag Barrel", jump into the barrel and back out to replenish your watermelon meter.

Test Drive Off Road 3 (PSX):

Enter the following cheats as your name:

Stunt mode:

TURN TRICKS

Sumo mode:

YOKOZUNA

All Cheats:

ZAKARY X

All divisions:

SAD CLOWN

All tracks:

LEAD TO ROME

All upgrades:

MAD HOOKUP

Fighting Force 2 (PSX):

Semi-Ultimate Code:

At the "Press Start" screen, hold L1 + L2 + R1 + ▲ + X + L. Then, select Start Game. When you start the level, you will have invincibility and infinite ammo. Note: Using this code will disable the option to save.

Vigilante 8: Second Offense (DC):

Interceptor Missiles:

Attack 1: U, U, D, Machine Gun

Attack 2: U, U, U, Machine Gun

Attack 3: U, U, R, Machine Gun

Bull's Eye Rockets:

Attack 1: U, D, D, Machine Gun

Attack 2: U, D, U, Machine Gun

Attack 3: U, D, R, Machine Gun

Sky Hammer Mortar:

Attack 1: D, D, D, Machine Gun

Attack 2: D, D, U, Machine Gun

Attack 3: D, D, R, Machine Gun

Bruiser Cannon:

Attack 1: D, U, D, Machine Gun

Attack 2: D, U, U, Machine Gun

Attack 3: D, U, R, Machine Gun

Roadkill Mines:

Attack 1: L, R, D, Machine Gun

Attack 2: L, R, U, Machine Gun

Attack 3: R, L, R, Machine Gun

Brimstone Burner:

Attack 1: R, L, U, Machine Gun

Attack 2: R, L, D, Machine Gun

Attack 3: R, L, R, Machine Gun

Tomorrow Never Dies (PSX):

Unlock all missions:

At the main menu, press Select (2), ● (2), L1 (2), ●, L1 (2). If entered correctly, you will hear a sound.

View all FMV sequences:

At the main menu, press Select (2), Circle (2), L1 (7) to unlock all FMV sequences under the "Movie" selection in

"Options": If you entered the code correctly, you will hear a sound.

Fifty med kits:

Pause the game and press Select (2), ● (2), ▲, Select. If you entered the code correctly, the game will automatically return from the pause screen to normal game play.

All weapons for current mission with full ammunition:

Pause the game and press Select (2), ● (2), L1 (2), R1 (2). If you entered the code correctly, the game will automatically return from the pause screen to normal game play.

Successfully complete current mission:

Pause the game and press Select (2), ● (2), Select, ●, If you entered the code correctly, the game will automatically return from the pause screen to normal game play.

Test Drive 6 (DC):

Enter the following cheats as your name:

All cars:

DFGY:

All tracks :

ERERTH

Short tracks :

QTFHYF

\$6,000,000 :

AKJGQ

All challenges:

OPIOP

No challenges:

OPOIOP

Disable checkpoints:

FFOEMIT

Enable checkpoints:

NOEMIT

Roadsters (N64):

All codes are case sensitive and are entered by renaming any character to the given name.

All classes:

Gimme ALL

One Million Dollars:

EasyMoney

R.C. Cars:

Car Radio

Hover cars:

Skywalker

High-resolution mode:

Extra rez

Turok: Rage Wars (N64):
To unlock all the cheats in the cheat menu (at the title screen, press Z to display the cheat menu), you must accumulate 2000 frags with all of the characters. A quick and dirty way to do this is to save a game with a character that has over 500 frags then copy that character into the three other slots on the memory card. Now, start a game and load all four of these characters to the game. Viola! You now have 2000 total frags and all the cheats.

Harvest Moon 64 (N64):
Here are some hints and tips to get the most out of this great RPG.

Summon the Forest Spirit:
Throw a vegetable in the pond located in the forest by standing on the bridge and pressing A. A spirit will then appear and ask for your wish.

Go to Moon Mountain without a bridge:
Go to the tree behind the construction workers house. Press A on the side of the tree that is closest the river. Your character should climb the tree and hop off on the mountain.

To make the girls happy, give each girl the things she that loves:
Ann: wool and corn.
Karen: tomatoes and berries
Elli: strawberries
Maria: spring cabbage.

Get married:
Select one girl. Proceed to dance with her at every festival, give her presents (every day if possible) and just be nice to her. When the affection heart turns red or pink, go buy a blue feather from Rick's Tool Shop. Then give the feather to her. If she accepts, you will be married on the following Sunday.

Have a child:
To have a child, do not stay out late or talk to other girls and continue to bring her gifts. After one month, you should notice a difference in hear. After another 2 months, you should have a child.

Get Divorced:
We have no idea. We just made this up to see if you were paying attention.

Medal Of Honor (PSX):
All codes must be entered at the Password screen.

Enable Noah in Multiplayer:
BEACHBALL

Enable Bismarck the Dog in Multiplayer:
WOOFWOOF

Enable Evil Col. Muller in Multiplayer:
BIGFATMAN

Enable Gunther in Multiplayer:
GUNTHER

Enable Otto in Multiplayer:
HERRZOMBIE

Enable Velocoraptor in Multiplayer:
SSPIELBERG

Enable Werner von Braun in Multiplayer:
ROCKETMAN

Enable William Shakespeare in Multiplayer:
PAYBACK

Enable Winston Churchill in Multiplayer:
FINESTHOUR

Enable Wolfgang in Multiplayer:
HOODUP

Everyone speaks English (American Movie Mode):
SPRECHEN

Rapid-fire:
ICOSIDODEC

Reflecting shots:
GOBLUE

The following cheats only work after you complete a mission and replay it.
Infinite Ammo:
BADCOPSHOW

Invincibility:
MOSTMEDALS

GameShark

Gran Turismo 2 (PSX):
Unlock All Road Tracks in 1P Mode:
800F364E 0083

Unlock All Rally Tracks in 1P Mode:
800F3656 0027

Unlock All Road Tracks in 2P Mode:
800F3658 0015
Unlock All Rally Tracks in 2P Mode:
800F365A 0006

Unlock All Tracks in Time Trial:
800F3652 0017

Road Tracks Complete/Unlock Arcade Credits & Extra Cars (GS 2.2 or Higher Needed):
50000A02 0000
801C93F8 0505
301C940C 0005

Tons of Money:
801D0FC8 E0FF
801D0FCA 05F5

Money Never Decreases:
80017A42 2400
80017D4A 2400

Have All Gold Licenses (GS 2.2 or Higher Needed):
50003CA4 0000
801CA758 0400

South Park Rally (PSX):
All Cheats:
800A338C FFFF
800A338E FFFF

All Races:
800A3390 FFFF

All Tracks:
800A3394 FFFF
Infinite Credits
8009C33C 0005

South Park Rally (PSX):
All Cheats:
800A338C FFFF
800A338E FFFF

All Races:
800A3390 FFFF

All Tracks:
800A3394 FFFF

Infinite Credits:
8009C33C 0005

Silhouette Mirage (PSX):
All Options & Secret Mode Enabled:
8001002AFFFF

Infinite Credits:
3001006F0009

All Options Enabled:
3001007300FF

Need For Speed Presents: V-Rally 2 (PSX):
Infinite Checkpoint + Lap Time:
800C52E80F0F

Unlock All Cars:
800C6A1CFFFF

Unlock All Tracks & Modes:
800c6A1EFFFF

Infinite Credits:
30017C7F0003

Max Championship Points:
300c691000ff

All codes and cheats are tested on beta software and may or may not work, but they should. :)

Quantum Fighterpad InterAct Dreamcast

The Quantum Fighterpad differs from the standard Dreamcast controller in a number of ways. The layout of six buttons on the face is the most obvious difference. The two additional

buttons on the face of the Fighterpad are digital versions of the analog left and right buttons. Now, instead of having the lag that comes from needing to press the analog buttons all the way down to execute a move, you have the all or nothing of digital. InterAct

put the analog buttons on the rear of the controller for all the games that require them and for players who prefer using them. Another variance is the fact that you can program in combos, including delay times, and assign them to any button. The hard plastic digital

direction pad was a point of much debate. Our reviewers either loved or detested it immediately. We recommend a test drive to see if the feel of the digital pad is to your liking. Overall, the Fighterpad performed like a champ.

•SM Rating: 84



Dreamcast DreamBlaster Mad Catz

Sega's Japanese lightgun works beautifully, but one school shooting later, and the American gaming public is deprived of its release. (We do not intend to trivialize the

Columbine shooting, but should an entire gaming nation have to pay for it?)

There seems to be no way to calibrate this unit with House of the Dead 2. On our three testing televisions, the signal was not picked up on the calibration screen and we had

to play with the default settings. To its credit, the DreamBlaster worked pretty well with HotD2, however if another gun game comes out and the calibration is off, you may be out of luck. Also, the trigger is a little stiff, and will lead to a sore index finger. While the cheat features (automatic

fire/reload) work well, the indicator light is too bright, and can be distracting.

HotD2 needs a gun. The bad news is all of the guns currently available have calibration issues. With that said this unit might be worth a look.

•SM Rating: 65



Dialogue: Smart Mail From Smart Gamers

send us a letter: dialogue@siliconmagazine.com

Let me start off by saying you guys have a great mag. I personally enjoy reading it every month. This is only the second time I have ever written any magazine in all my years of playing games.

I wanted to touch upon a subject that is filled with speculation and rumors. I do not trust the big wigs at Sony for honest opinions on this matter. The subject is game converters and mod chips for the PSX system. It is said by Sony that modding a system is now illegal under the new Millennium law, while others say that it does not mention anything about that in there. The use of a converter to play import games is also not mentioned in there anywhere. I have read letters in other mags about this subject and mags like PSM say that's a joke. I know I am not the only one wondering what the deal is with converters and mods. We true, diehard gamers have been playing import games when PC Engine, Mega Drive, and Super Famicom were the hottest systems out there. In many cases you had to use a converter to play them or mod your system. Now we are hearing, "No, you cannot mod a system to play imports." What the hell is a GameShark? If you enter the right codes, you can play import games.

I know you guys have the power to dig this info up and that is why I am writing you. I hope you are able to clear this up once and for all. We gamers would like to know your opinion on this matter and a real legal opinion as well.

Stan
Baltimore, MD

•SM- It is legal to sell, buy, and use items like

external and internal mods. You may have noticed that the latest version of the PSX (the 9000 series) had the I/O port on the back of the system removed. Sony says to save money, but we think it's to avoid all "enhancement" devices. Would Sony go through this effort if they knew their lawyers could stop the sale of them altogether? Nope. Someday a game company (besides Sega) will figure out it is a waste of time to use territorial lockouts.

I won't start by telling you how good of a job you people are doing; you probably already know that. I read in your last issue about the DC mod chip. I am drooling! Where can I get it? Price? How about a list of "must own" import games? MORE I NEED MORE!

Craig
Absolute-0@worldnet.att.net

•SM- The Dreamcast mod chip will just be hitting stores as you read this. SM cannot recommend that you purchase or install one, especially without any feedback at this point. We do know that the chip and installation will run about \$50. You should be able to pick one up once retailers decide that it is both the real deal and dependable.

As for must have import games, the strength of the U.S. DC market far outweighs the strength of the Japanese DC market. If a game is so good that you would want to spend \$80 to import it, chances are ten publishers are already lined up to translate and bring it to the U.S. If you really want to play import DC games, we suggest a Japanese or Korean DC without the modem. You should be able to pick one up for less than \$130. That way you won't void your

warranty or take any of the risks associated with the modding process. If you're willing to spend \$80 for a import game, the extra money for the import hardware shouldn't hurt too much. ;)

I have a question that maybe you could help me with. I'm new to Playstation (and loving it!) and I just bought is Midway's Atari's Greatest Hits Volume 1. Recently, I read SM's article on InterAct's UltraRacer controller, and wondered if it would work with Tempest? Also, are there any plans to make a ball roller for Centipede and Missile Command?

Michael Lemane
graphics@tifco.com

•SM- Nyko makes a trackball that can be used with Centipede and Missile Command (we'll review it in Gear next month). In the mean time go to www.Nyko.com for more information. The UltraRacer will work with Tempest, and it does a pretty good job.

I'm always glad to get a new copy of your mag. I feel I must pay special homage to the latest issue. I'm one of those types of individuals that never reads the instruction manual until I absolutely have to. I made my usual round of game and accessory hunting today, and picked up the latest issue of Silicon Magazine and purchased a Pelican GT2 steering wheel.

I got home and promptly set up the wheel and put in Gran Turismo to check out my new toy. I started the game at default "NegCon" settings and wasn't very pleased. I went to the options menu and selected the calibration screen to adjust the sensitivity and tweak the other

settings. Off to the track. I'm still not pleased so I spend quite some time going from race to options menu for calibration purposes. I just couldn't get this device to work properly. At one point I decided that I could never get the performance out of a steering wheel that I could from the Dual Shock. They're interesting, but hardly capable of the performance needed for those license tests in Gran Turismo. I even told myself that if I were playing against someone using the Dual Shock and the other person using a steering wheel, I could run laps around them. I gave up and decided I would add this new wheel to the growing list of interesting, but useless gaming peripherals. By this point, I'm tired of messing around with games so I decide to read Silicon.

I get to the last page and lo-and-behold; my wheel is rated with a review. I read that Pelican even assigned a name to the calibration feature (Traction Control System) and that it greatly improves the playability of Gran Turismo in the simulation mode. Out comes the wheel and off to the instructions I go, to learn how to set the wheel up. Alas! I'm finally able to get pleasing response using the steering wheel. Thanks Silicon, for the usefulness of your fine magazine.

Marty
MartyLK@webtv.net

•SM- We're blushing. Thank you for the great letter!

Send in your art for inclusion in •SM's Fanfare section!



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Sega Dreamcast



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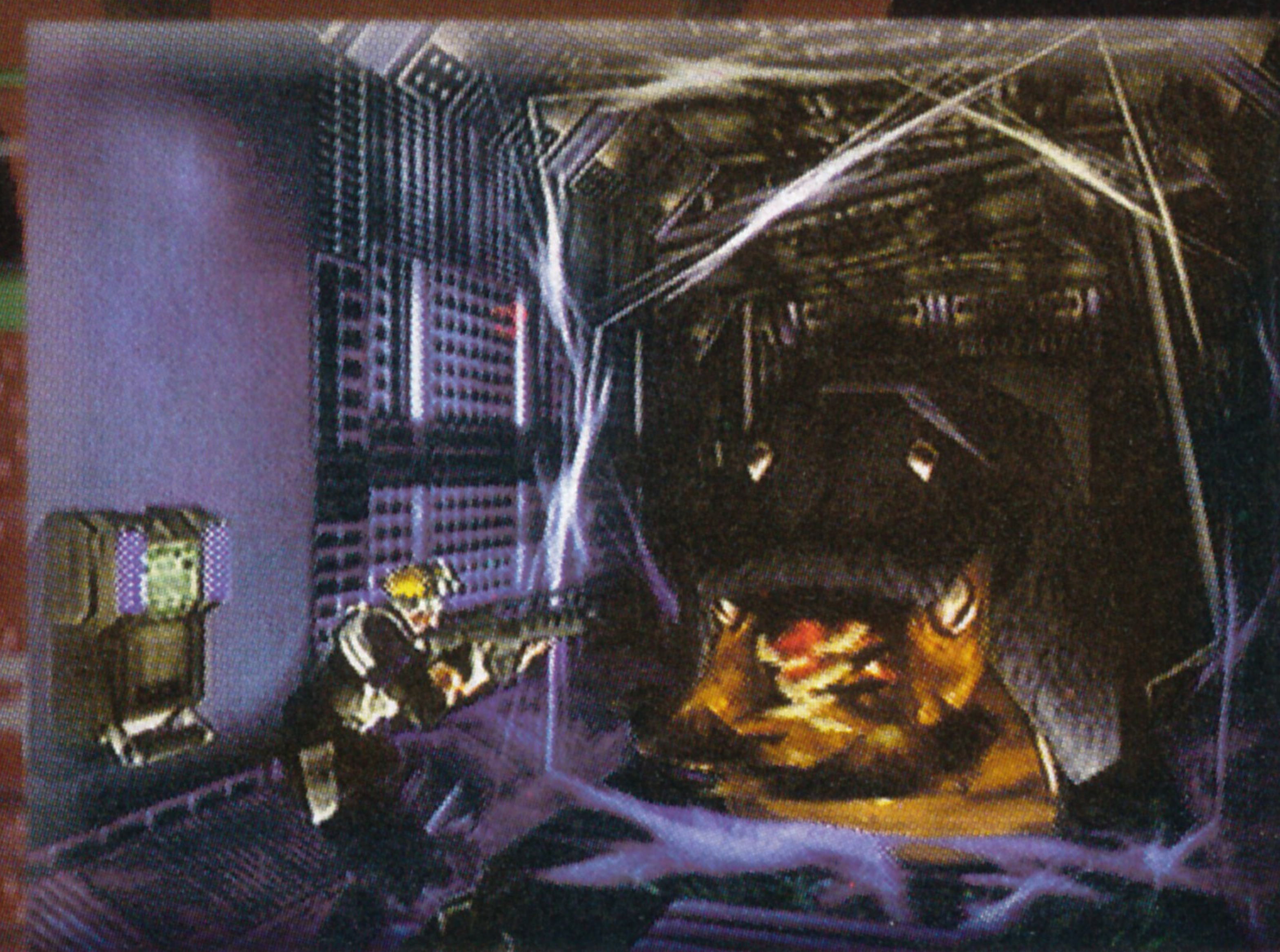
In the 21st Century terrorism reigns supreme in an ever eroding environment. Aboard the Heimdal Aircraft Carrier, survival is all that matters! It's a new world now – a savage, deadly wasteland where you save whoever is still alive and to hell with the dead.

Vying for control of Earth, the Southern Cross bombs the Heimdal, setting free ARK – a prehistoric organism. When ARK attacks, it implants itself in humans making them hideous, monstrous drones that carry ARK seeds and infect others determined to eliminate ALL of humanity. ARK breeds, mutates, and insanely lusts for the end of human life.

Even if it looks human, you could be screwed 'cause it may be an ARK drone. Who is friend, who is foe?

You are part of an elite unit chosen to isolate and destroy ARK on the Heimdal Aircraft Carrier before it reaches land. You must fearlessly blast your way through a gloomy labyrinth of hallways, flooded control rooms and security levels, battling sinister mutants, while gaining clues and power as you advance.

You never know what's lurking in the murky water or around the next corner. Meanwhile, ARK is gaining power after attaching itself to the nuclear core of the Heimdal. Sheer wit and brute force are all that can save you now.



"Carrier is light years ahead of the competition in both game play and graphics."

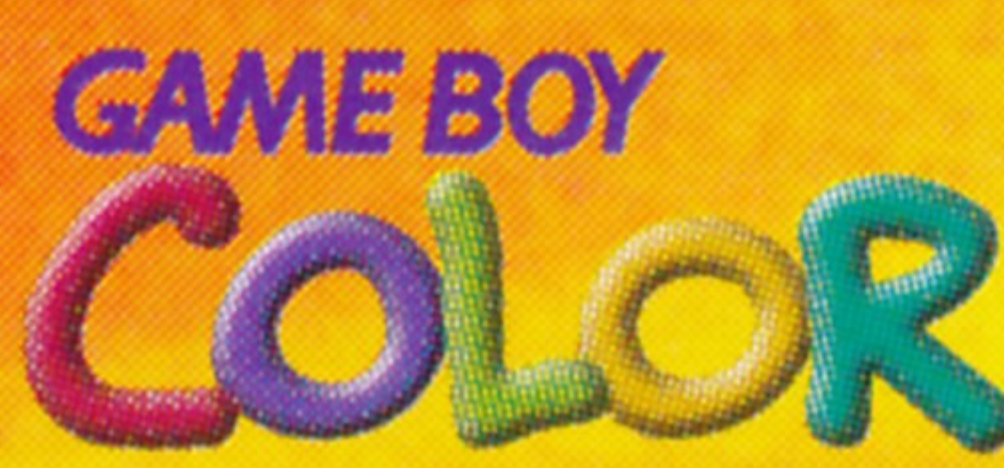
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