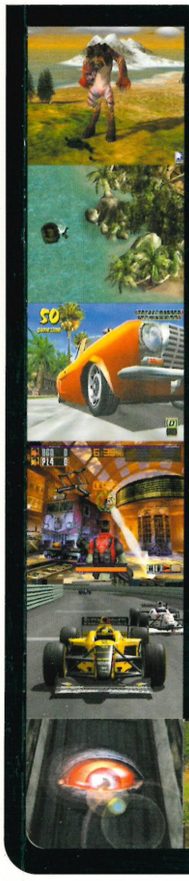
THE UK'S BIGGEST UNOFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

JANUARY 2001 ■ Issue 17

dcm@quaynet.co.uk

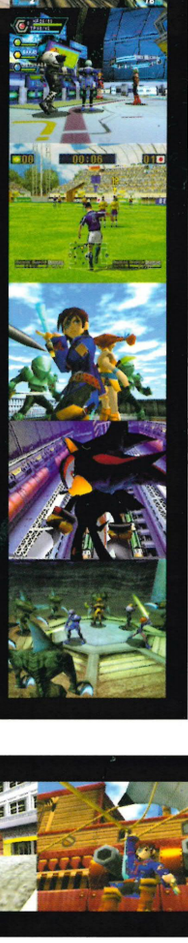
dcm
DREAMCAST MONTHLY

140 GAMES REVIEWED INSIDE!



2001
THE BEST IS YET TO COME!

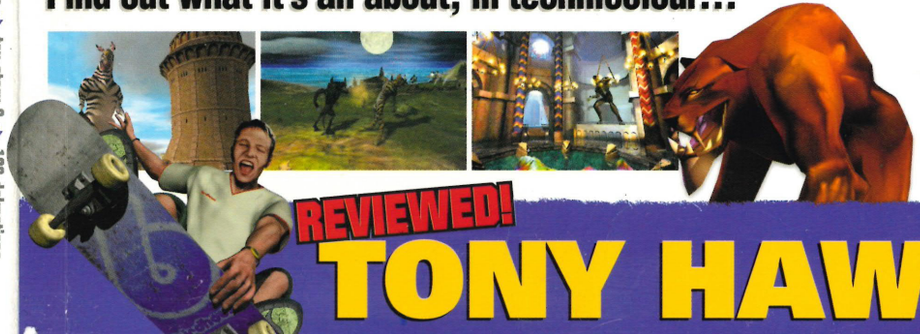
▶ The best games coming your way in the new year...



No exclusive free mouse mat? (UK Only) Please consult your newsagent.

BLACK AND WHITE

Find out what it's all about, in technicolour...



ALSO INSIDE!

DVD Special • Tomb Raider Chronicles
Resident Evil 3 • Toy Story 2
Capcom Versus SNK • Dino Crisis
Mr. Driller • Sega GT

REVIEWED!
TONY HAWK'S 2

The chairman of the board returns!

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Issue 17 January 2001

REVIEWED res evil 3 ⇩ dino crisis ⇩ tomb raider chronicles ⇩ sega gt ⇩ tony hawk's 2 ⇩ kao the kangaroo ⇩ mr. driller ⇩ super runabout ⇩ sno-cross ⇩ toy story 2 ⇩ 102 dalmatians

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CONTENTS

ISSUE 17 ■ JANUARY 2001

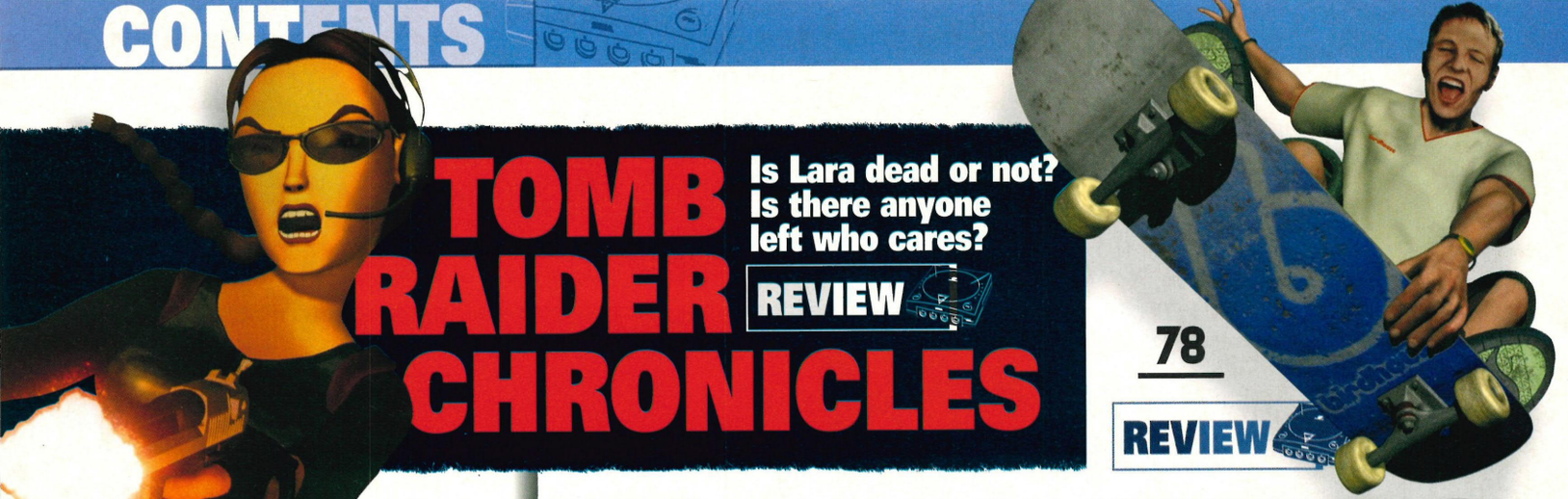
2001 The Best Is Yet To Come... 110

Curb those fears of a miserable Dreamcast new year in one fell swoop...

BLACK AND WHITE 8

One of the most adventurous God sims ever goes under the dcm microscope.

CONTENTS



TOMB RAIDER CHRONICLES

Is Lara dead or not? Is there anyone left who cares?

REVIEW

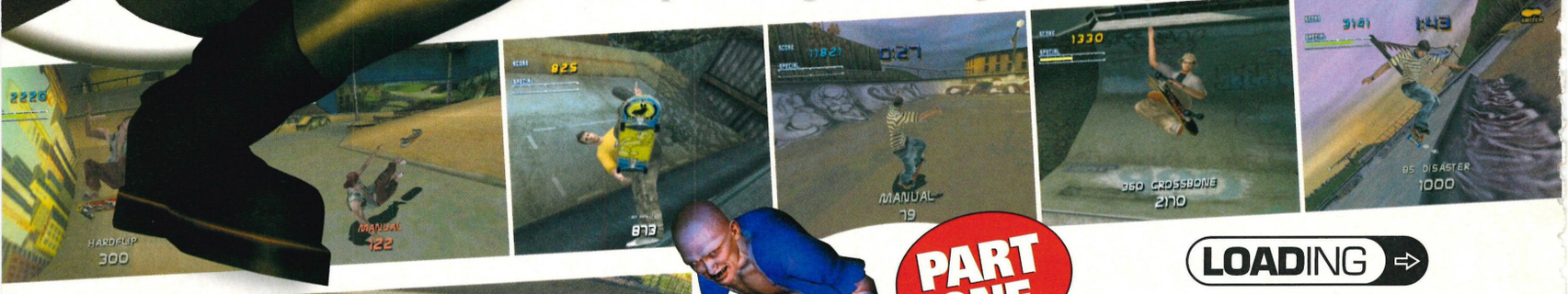
78

REVIEW

58

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2

And you thought the original was good...

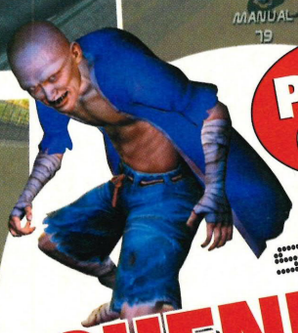


SEGA GT

70

REVIEW

It's no MSR or Ferrari beater, but it's get a damned sight more cars on offer.



PART ONE

Swat Solution

SHENMUE

Complete Disc One in the first of our two-part complete solution!

92

LOADING

PHANTASY STAR ONLINE

28

First play on the biggest RPG revolution since Shenmue.

Swat Solution

TONY HAWK'S 2

All eight skate parks mapped and blown open. It's the ultimate solution...

100

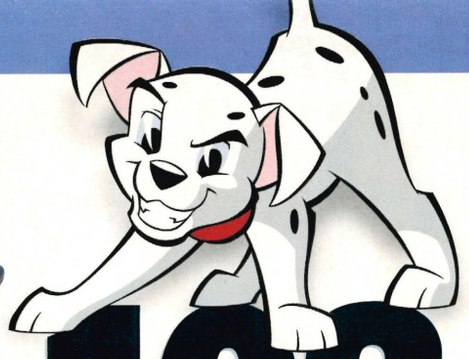
IN NEED OF DVD?

A selection of the best DVD's on offer this year.

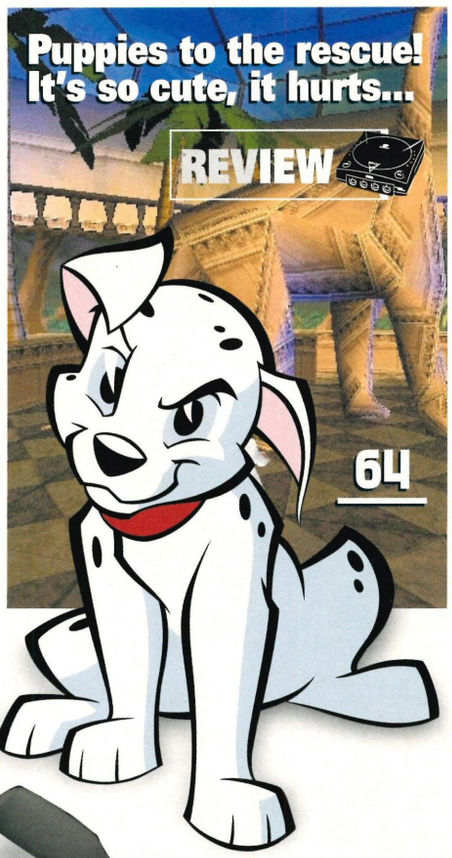
LOADING

DUCATI WORLD

Let's hope it doesn't crash as much as Carl Foggarty... 40



102 DALMATIANS



dcm dreamcast monthly

PREVIEWS

Aqua GT 32
EOS 39
Heroes of Might and Magic III 34
Rainbow 6 36
Speed Devils Online 38

LOADING PREVIEWS

Ducati World
Carl Foggarty eat your heart out! 40
Phantasy Star Online
Your ultimate RPG Phantasy 28

REVIEWS

102 Dalmatians 64
Cute, cuddly and not that bad...
Capcom Versus SNK 48
2D Fighting at its best.
Dino Crisis 54
Survival Horror. Rehashed for DC.
Kao the Kangaroo 84
Cute 3D platformer. Sick bags out...
KISS: Psycho Circus 68
Rock-crazed first-person shooter.
Lodoss War 50
Strategy RPG. Get your thinking caps ready.
Mr. Driller 82
Perplexing puzzle fun. Can it top Tetris?
Resident Evil 3: Nemesis 46
More survival horror - kick some zombie arse...
Sega GT 70
Sega's answer to Gran Turismo - oh dear.
Sno-Cross 74
Snow-mobile racing action...
Super Runabout 76
A bit Crazy Taxi, a bit GTA...
Surf Rocket Racer 56
Get your Jetskis out for the lads...
Tomb Raider Chronicles 58
Has Lara finally had her day?
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 78
The ultimate skater, the ultimate game.
Toy Story 2 62
To the bargain bin and beyond!

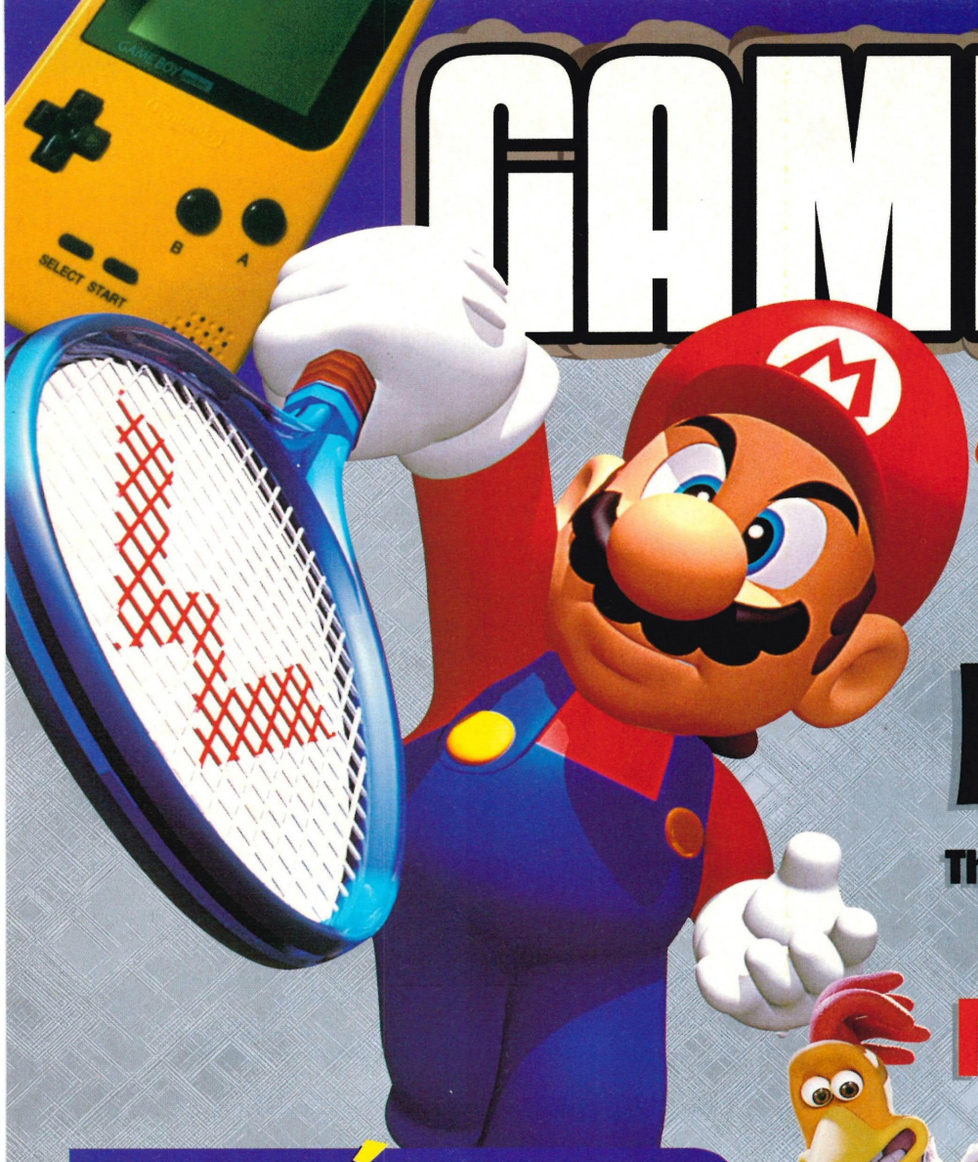
FEATURES

2001 The Best is Yet to Come
All the best games coming your way nect year 110
Balck and White
Loadsa hype, but do you know what it's about? .. 8
In Need of DVD?
Some of this Chrimbo's best DVD's 26

REGULARS

Cheat Code Central 88
dcm Directory 116
Forum 14
Newscast 20
Next Month 130
Stop Press 16
Subscriptions & Back Issues 128
SWAT Interactive 90
SWAT Solution: Shenmue Part 1 92
SWAT Solution: Tony Hawk's 2 100
The Last Word 129

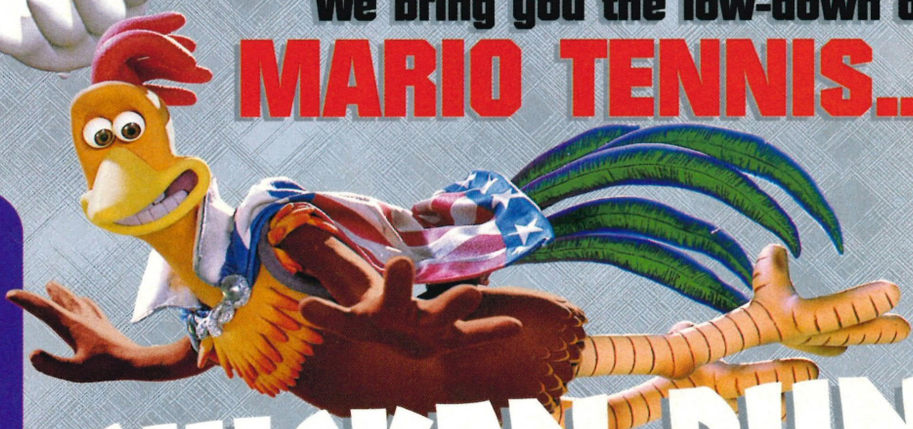
GAME BOY POWER



HE'S BACK!

The moustachioed maestro returns in a laugh-a-minute tennis game! We bring you the low-down on

MARIO TENNIS...



POKÉMON THE TRUTH

We separate the facts from the fiction in a great Pokémon feature. Tip or rumour? Find out in Game Boy Power;

CHICKEN RUN

Major coup or feathered disaster? We bring you the reviews you can trust...

ON SALE 4TH JANUARY

ALSO FEATURED...

HARVEST MOON 2 • MONKEY PUNCHER • VIGILANTE 8
MEN IN BLACK 2 • ANIMORPHS • BLADE • THE GRINCH
WARRIORS OF MIGHT AND MAGIC 2 • THE MUMMY
TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING 2 • AND LOADS MORE!

January 2001 • Issue 17

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DREAMCAST MONTHLY
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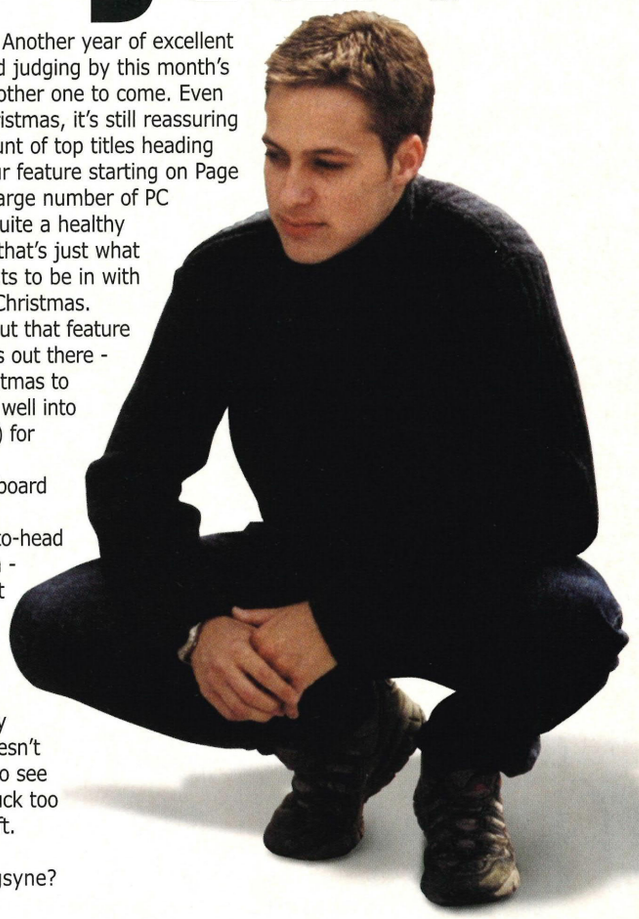
happy new year!

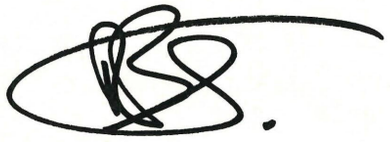
So that's it for the Year 2000. Another year of excellent Dreamcast gaming gone, and judging by this month's cover, it looks like there's another one to come. Even after such a strong Sega Christmas, it's still reassuring to know there's a huge amount of top titles heading our way in the new year - check out our feature starting on Page 110 for more. There might be quite a large number of PC conversions among them, but there's quite a healthy amount of originality on offer too, and that's just what the Dreamcast needs this year if it wants to be in with a chance of seeing another successful Christmas.

Of course, you don't need to check out that feature to see there's loads of top-quality games out there - there's been enough released over Christmas to keep even the most avid gamer playing well into 2001. Take Quake III Arena (9/10, #16) for example. Not only is it a bang-on PC conversion thanks to its mouse and keyboard capability, but it's online too. Sega isn't allowing Dreamarena users to go head-to-head with PC and Mac players just yet though - there's a warm-up period so you can get to grips with the game.

On the subject of Quake III, it couldn't have escaped your attention that there's a rather nice mouse mat taped to the cover of this issue. We only thought it fair since the Sega Mouse doesn't come with one, and we wouldn't want to see your tracker balls getting covered in muck too quickly. Just count it as a New Year's gift.



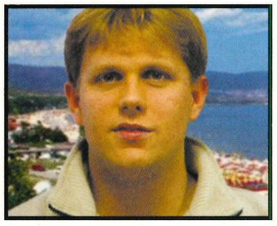
Anyone for a quick verse of Auld Langsyne?



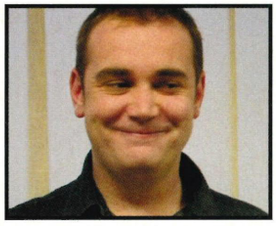
Russell
Editor Dreamcast Monthly
russell.barnes@quaynet.co.uk

the dcm team

Cool, calculated and as cunning as a fox in foliage. The dcm team play the crap games so you don't have to...



Richard Grace
Group Art Editor
Richard is continuing to do sterling design work on Dreamcast Monthly. Credit to him is also due for the excellent mouse mat that addorns this very issue (if you haven't got a Mouse, why not?).
Game of the month
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2
Still playing Quake III
Last heard saying
"Designing a mag is like making love to a beautiful woman..."



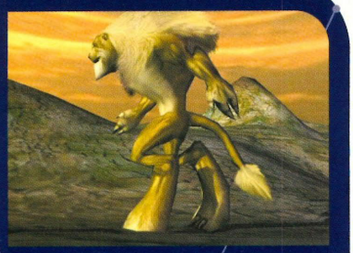
Saul Trewern
Deputy/*Solutions Editor*
There's no doubt Saul's good at Tony Hawk's 2. This month he's been playing it solid so he can bring you the excellent review and solution later on in the magazine.
Game of the month
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2
Still playing Quake III Arena
Last heard saying
"Tony is my life. I too can now fly like the great bird".

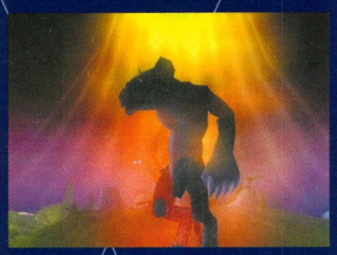
Ian Osborne
Sub Editor, Contributor
Miserable Osborne has spent much of this month winging like an old granny. One look at his face could tell you that (and break a mirror at 50 paces). He's been subbin' like a trooper, though.
Game of the month
Toy Story 2
Still playing UEFA Dream Soccer
Last heard saying
"Learn to spell, Russell".

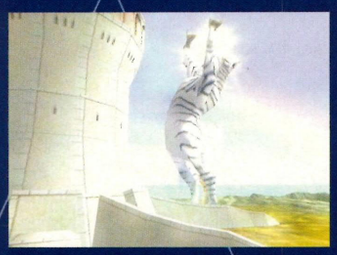
Simon Brew
Freelance Journo
Simon is our big feature specialist. This month you can enjoy huge features on both Black and White and all the best games coming our way in the new year. He's also been winging about money.
Game of the month
Capcom Vs SNK
Still playing UEFA Dream Soccer
Last heard saying
"Pay me - pay me now!!!"

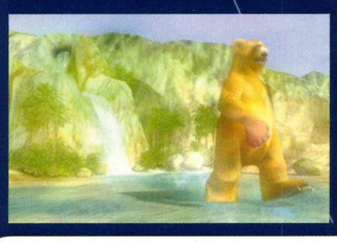
Greg Howson
Freelance Journo
Greg hasn't actually been with us this month. He is, in fact, on his honeymoon with his lovely new bread-knife, catching some rays and whatever else it is you do. Answers on a postcard...
Game of the month
Wouldn't you like to know!
Still playing Doctors and Nurses
Last heard saying
"Hi, I'm not here to answer the phone right now..."

Publisher: Sega ■ Developer: Lionhead
Released: Mid-2001 ■ Genre: God Game

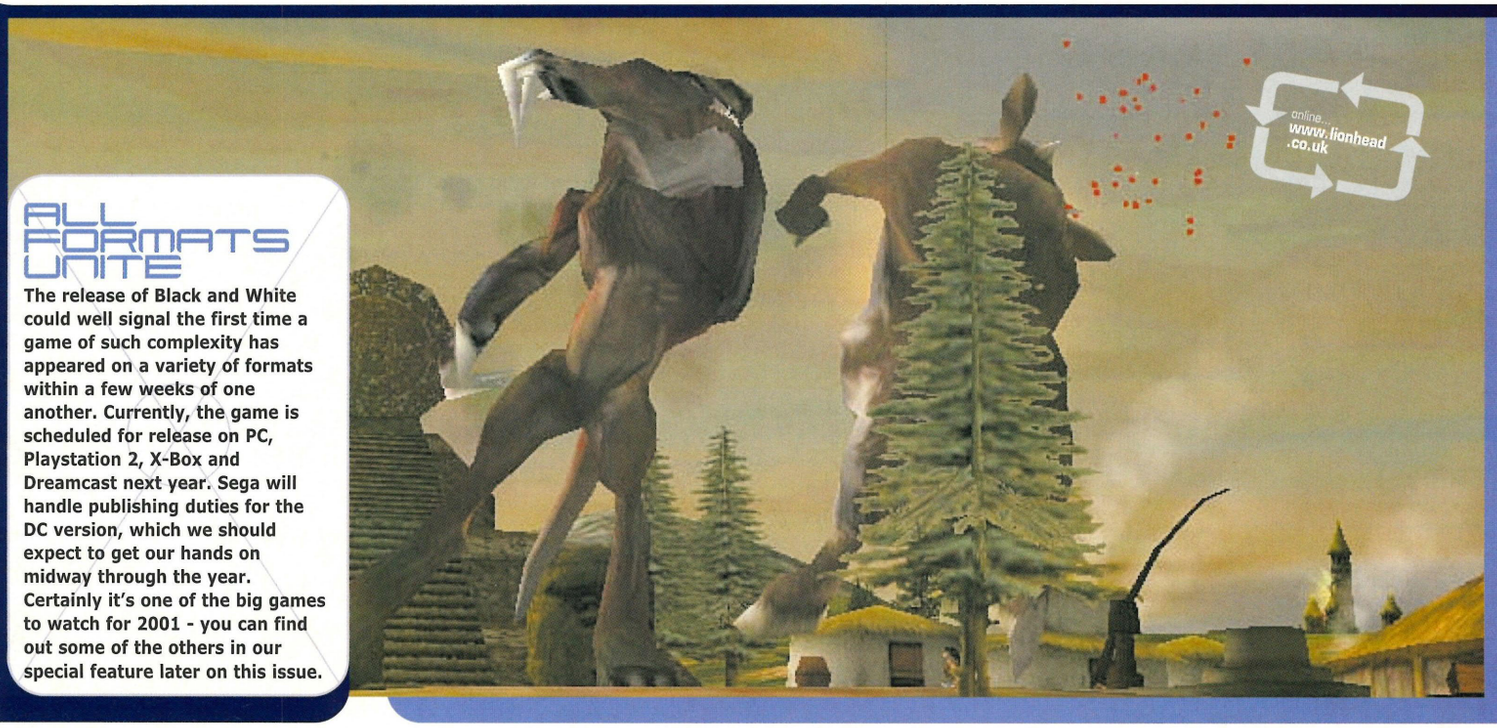








BLACK AND



ALL FORMATS UNITE

The release of Black and White could well signal the first time a game of such complexity has appeared on a variety of formats within a few weeks of one another. Currently, the game is scheduled for release on PC, Playstation 2, X-Box and Dreamcast next year. Sega will handle publishing duties for the DC version, which we should expect to get our hands on midway through the year. Certainly it's one of the big games to watch for 2001 - you can find out some of the others in our special feature later on this issue.

THE HYPE MACHINE

From demonstrations at the announcement of the X-Box console through to magazines packing their pages with picture and picture as they're gradually spoon fed through, it's clear that Black and White is generating a high level of interest in the industry. Part of the reason for that, clearly, is that if Lionhead actually manage to pull this one off, then we really are staring at a game that could redraw the rules.

However, where there's hype, you'll always find a cynic, and truth be told some voices are beginning to question whether a decent game is sitting underneath all the fancy multimedia stuff. Us? To be honest, we're finding it hard to get to grips with exactly how the game will work in practice, and whilst we're not willing to add our names to the gripers, we're cautious in our praise as well. The marketing campaign has certainly done its job in raising awareness through the roof, and a good first week sale is virtually guaranteed. What happens beyond that we'll simply have to wait and see...

WHITE

IT'S BILLED AS ONE OF THE BIG, TRIPLE-A TITLES OF 2001. BUT WHAT IS IT ACTUALLY ABOUT? WE TAKE A LOOK AND FIND OUT...

If you buy into the hype, the gaming world is on the verge of seeing something spectacular. It's a game that will change everything. It plays like nothing you've ever seen before. And it's coming to Dreamcast in the middle of next year. Yet what actually is Black and White? And why should we be so excited?

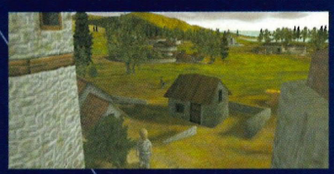
Good question, and so we went in search of the answer. But first, we ought to tell you about the man who spawned Black and White, which might explain why it should be so special. It's the brainchild of Peter Molyneux, a bit of a legend in the gaming industry thanks to his work on influential titles such as Theme Park and Dungeon Keeper. More fundamentally, he as good as invented the God game genre with the immortal classic Populous (which has since spawned two sequels). And now, through his new company Lionhead, he's reinventing it for a new millennium. Or some guff like that.

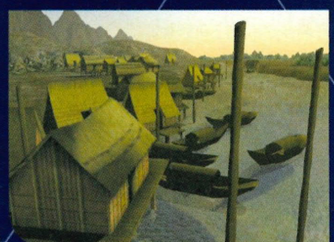
THE STORY

And so we inevitably move on to the comprehensive back story to the game. You kick off y'see as an all powerful sorcerer king, overlooking a lovely little island. It's a peaceful place - pretty much like Birmingham, really - except for the fact that nobody really understands the profound difference between what's right and what's wrong. They panicked when they had the birds and the bees explained too.

Unfortunately, all good things and all that, you arrive. And screw it all up. It's not for any good reason either; it all seems to start off just because you're a bit fascinated by the perfection of it all (think of a nice, harmless BBC nature documentary but without the animals humping). You draw your power too from the innocent village folk, and if they think you're cool and worship you, you get more power. Hate your guts,

> YOU DRAW YOUR POWER TOO FROM THE INNOCENT VILLAGE FOLK, AND IF THEY THINK YOU'RE COOL AND WORSHIP YOU, YOU GET MORE POWER. HATE YOUR GUTS, AND YOU'RE UP SHIT CREEK





Even the scenery evolves around you. Be good and it'll be pretty. Be bad and it'll be grim

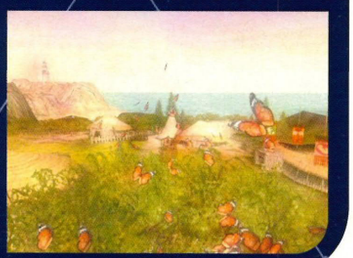
AND IT'S ALREADY WINNING AWARDS

At E3 2000, Black and White only went and won the award for best game of the show. And here's the adjudication of Aaron John Loeb, no less. It's okay, we didn't know who he was either. Apparently he was chairman of the Game Critics Awards.

"When the Game Critics Awards began four years ago, Peter Molyneux had just departed from Bullfrog to found Lionhead Studios and begin work on a game called Black & White. Four years later, Black & White concludes its E3 presentations as the Best of the Show. With its amazing graphics and diverging storyline based on how good or evil the player manages to be, Black & White is destined to be one of the classics."

Coo It also won Best PC Game and Best Original Game. Not bad for a game that was still a year away from release...

Black & White



and you're up shit creek. The lifeforce you grab off them y'see is what powers your spells, and you need spells to win the game. Mind you, quantity isn't everything.

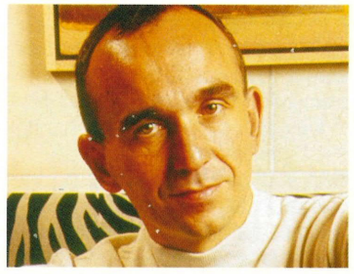
Attract the adoration of certain groups, and you gain extra powers. Zulus, for instance, will offer you exclusive battle spells,whilst Egyptians offer building skills. Not a stereotype in sight here, guv'nor. Anyway, eventually these sorcerers twig on to the fact that there are other sorcerers, and the big scrap begins, bringing down peace and harmony in the process. A sight not a million miles away from deadline day in the DCM office.

To facilitate the fighting, the sorcerers, loving souls that they are, hurl spells at one another. Then they bred up Titans, which are big sod off creatures made from previously little creatures. Thus, all of a sudden an innocent looking sheep could be transformed in a lethal weapon. Something that hasn't happened since, er, Worms World Party. And all hell breaks loose.

> CONTINUALLY BE A DEVIOUS, NASTY LITTLE SHIT, AND THE WORLD WILL GO DARK AND GLOOMY, WHEREAS DO YOUR BIT FOR CHARITY AND BE A LOVELY HAPPY KIND OF SORCERER AND THE WORLD IS LIGHT AND HAPPY

OVER TO YOU

And this is where you come in. With the help of your personal horrible creature, as loyal as a dog is to its owner (assuming you own a loyal dog), you must harness the power of the various villagers (presumably through the influence of said creature) and pretty much kick arse. Only in a more sophisticated way. But how you go about things will have a direct effect on how the Black and White game world will evolve. Continually be a devious, nasty little shit, and the world will go dark and gloomy (not unlike the Black of the title), whereas do your bit for charity and be a lovely happy kind of sorceror (all similarities with our office end here) and the world is light and happy (which, presumably, is where the White bit comes in.



Peter Molyneax - Managing Director of Lionhead Studios

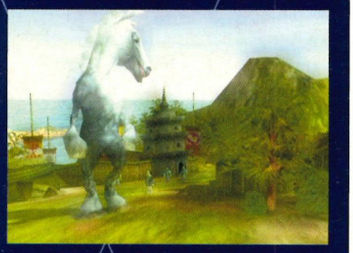
NOT UNLIKE TRUE LIFE, TO SUCCEED YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO BE A LITTLE BIT NICE, AND A LITTLE BIT OF A BAST 03

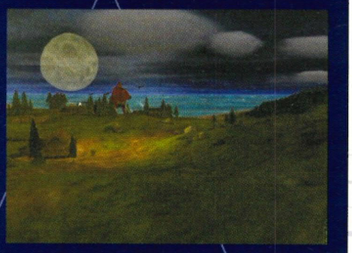
It looks like someone bashed this dude with a very large ugly stick, I mean spell.

Cunning, ain't it?).

Success though isn't likely to be found at either of these extremes. Not unlike true life, to succeed you're going to have to be a little bit nice, and a little bit of a bast. Balancing your power ain't easy either, and you'll need to work out what's best at what moment in time to keep sitting on top of the world, looking down on creation. Which sounds like an age old Carpenters song to us.

What excites us about Black and White, and we don't mind admitting it, is the thought of a game genuinely revolving around you. Not you personally as in the person reading this at this precise moment in time, we mean you in the sense of the person playing the game. No offence. There's some fairly sophisticated artificial intelligence work going into the coding, and let's be frank, it's going to have to be damn smart to keep the thing fair. It also raises queries about the incentive to carry on. The full





plans for the single mode are ambiguous at the moment, but if the world is constantly changing, then it's unclear whether those who fancy a set objective with a start, middle and an end to each level are going to be satiated (argue amongst yourselves whether this is good or bad). This evolutionary element then is as ambitious a task as we've seen a programming team set themselves in recent memory, but if they pull it off, this could be the nearest we get to a game that's alive in its own right. It could all be toss, though, so naturally we reserve our pernickety judgement.

But hats off for the level of innovation that's gone into this. A case in point is the way you cast your spells, and we're interested to see how this converts to console controllers. The idea is that instead of pressing, for instance, button a to perform a certain spell, the game will recognise the gestures you make with the controller. This is clearly designed first and foremost for mouse control, where a quick shake here and there is easier to pull off. We're assuming that the game will support the forthcoming Dreamcast case on this one, but are intrigued how they will cater for those bereft of such a device. How exactly do you translate an innovative control system like that to a couple of knobs and a few buttons?

The graphical quality is fantastic, but it's the mood and emotion that's particularly stirring

> WHAT EXCITES US ABOUT BLACK AND WHITE, AND WE DON'T MIND ADMITTING IT, IS THE THOUGHT OF A GAME GENUINELY REVOLVING AROUND YOU

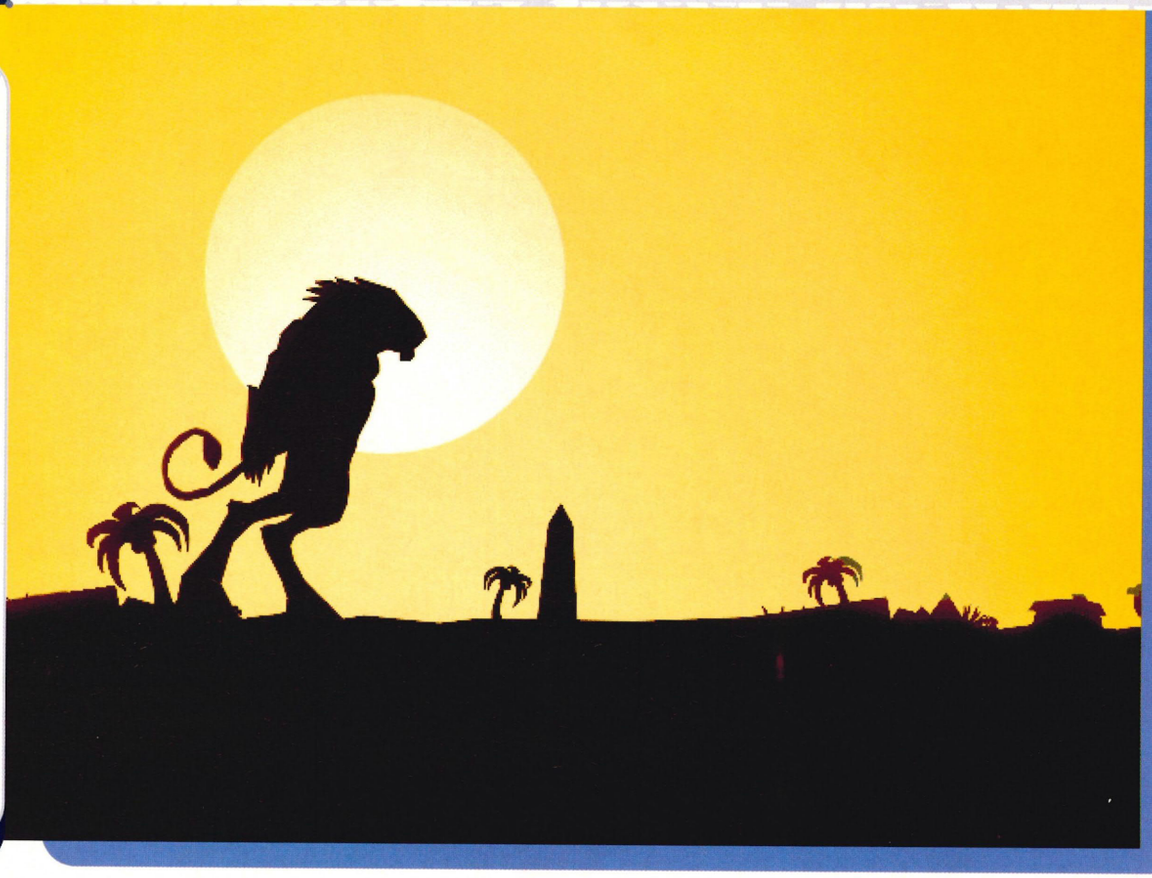
SO THEN

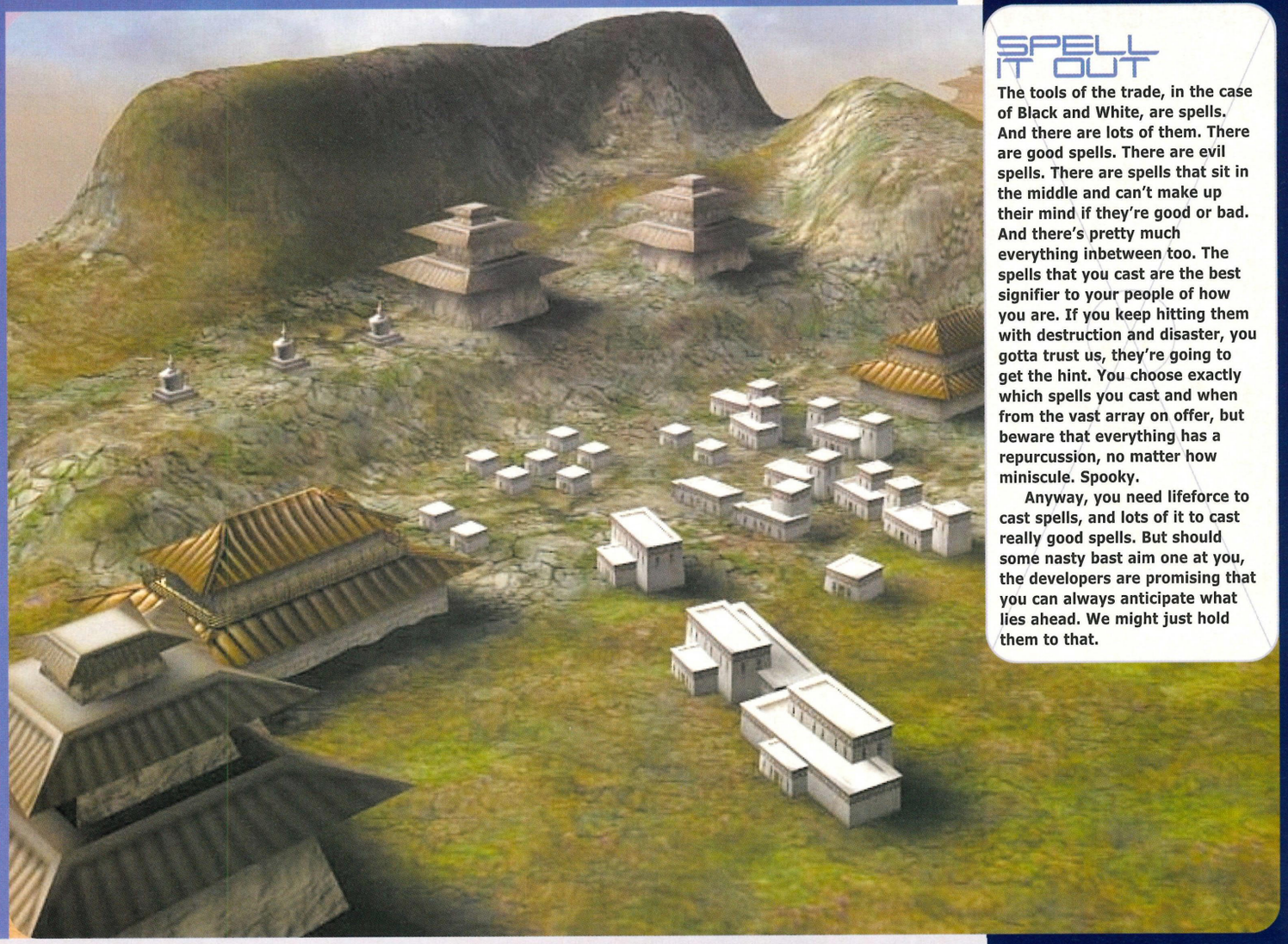
So far then so fine and dandy. The game has ambition, the game is packed with ideas and the game is keeping people interested (to the point where we devout one of our very special boxouts to the building hype elsewhere in this sparkling feature). But what nobody seems to be able to get to the root of is the game itself, and we don't think we're alone in our concern over this (certainly there are pockets of worry generating in the PC press). For month after month we've been wooed with some genuinely excellent demonstrations of various

LIONHEAD

PERSONALITY

In the words of the Lionhead team themselves, "playing Black & White will be like taking a huge personality test. The results will reflect the sort of games player you actually are. And the way you choose to control your land is reflected in the game by a corresponding evolution of your own territory". Which means if we took the personalities of the DCM team into account, the world would be a very twisted place indeed....





There are several distinctly different world locations within the game.

SPELL IT OUT

The tools of the trade, in the case of Black and White, are spells. And there are lots of them. There are good spells. There are evil spells. There are spells that sit in the middle and can't make up their mind if they're good or bad. And there's pretty much everything inbetween too. The spells that you cast are the best signifier to your people of how you are. If you keep hitting them with destruction and disaster, you gotta trust us, they're going to get the hint. You choose exactly which spells you cast and when from the vast array on offer, but beware that everything has a repurcussion, no matter how miniscule. Spooky.

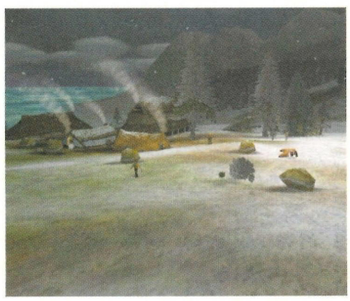
Anyway, you need lifeforce to cast spells, and lots of it to cast really good spells. But should some nasty bast aim one at you, the developers are promising that you can always anticipate what lies ahead. We might just hold them to that.

facets of the game, yet we know of nobody who, even after all the time it's been in development, who has sat down and had a game.

Now let's be fair; you can argue that Black and White is such a massive undertaking that if you play it during development you really won't feel the benefits of what it has to offer. It's hardly a racing game where you can play the first couple of tracks. And as for the increasingly long gestation period, well Peter Molyneux delayed his last opus, Dungeon Keeper, by several months just to get everything absolutely right (after much debate, it was generally agreed that was the right thing to do in light of the very good but flawed finished product).

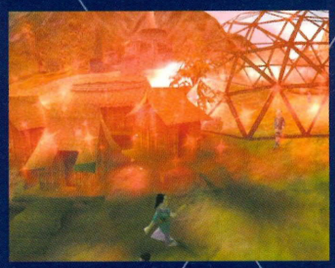
Technically, it's clear even now that we're going to have few complaints. The constantly evolving 3D world certainly looks the business, and you only have to checkout the screenshots and artwork around these pages to appreciate that some deep work has already gone into things. You can expect fancy bump mapping effects, along with some rather spanky and realistic looking water, topped off with in game creatures of striking detail. In short, at the very least, your jaw should drop at the sheer look of the thing.

> HOW EXACTLY DO YOU TRANSLATE AN INNOVATIVE CONTROL SYSTEM LIKE THAT TO A COUPLE OF KNOBS AND A FEW BUTTONS?



As for the game? We really are going to have to play wait and see here. Despite the slightly cautious outlook of this preview, we're as excited as any of you about Black and White, and can't help but be sucked in by the thought of what could potentially lie ahead. Let's not forget too that Black and White is set to be capable of online play, which will simplify the game slightly into a battle between various players (as opposed to the more open ended outlook of single player mode). Along with Daytona and Unreal Tournament, Dreamarena could be seeing a few more punters this time next year.

But we do reserve our right to be cautious and not go into gush overload until we see more substance. But for now, we're content to know that the enormity of all of this could lead to the finest game of 2001. And if all else fails, we've always got Crazy Taxi 2 to look forward to...



dcm@quaynet.co.uk forum

THE LETTERS SECTION'S REALLY HOTTING UP, WITH YOUR TOP THOUGHTS ON ALL THINGS DREAMCAST. IF YOU'VE SOMETHING TO GET OFF YOUR CHEST, WRITE TO FORUM AT DREAMCAST MONTHLY, 22 STRAND STREET, POOLE, DORSET BH15 1SB. OR E-MAIL US ON DCM@QUAYNET.CO.UK. WIN THE TOP LETTER AWARD, AND YOU TAKE HOME A BRAND-NEW GAME!

dcm letter of the month

HERE'S LOOKIN' @ONLINE...

Dear DCM,

I've been thinking about what games should be updated for online play on the Dreamcast. This is what I've come up with:

• Command & Conquer: Westwood's epic wargame can be played over networked PCs and even with two PlayStations via the much-neglected link cable. Can you imagine how good a two-player online version would be? The update could offer more than two players, offering co-operative, team and every-man-for-himself scenarios.

• Dogfight: Remember the old Microprose flight sim with no missions, just dogfighting? And you could pick planes from any point in aviation history? It was great watching an F-16 flying rings around a Sopwith Camel, but failing to bring it down because its heat-seekers didn't work on prop-driven engines.

• Board Games: No laughing at the back. A decent compendium of chess, draughts, backgammon and more would be great for over-the-wire play.

• Bomberman: Can't think why no one has done this already. I mean, we've got Worms World Party [someone is - check outhe news: Ed]...

• Beat-'em-up: Isn't it time we had a fighter where up to (say) eight opponents were thrust into a Roman-style amphitheatre and left to battle it out, with computer-controlled lions, tigers and bears thrown in for good measure? Sierra has snatched the Gladiators licence, so how about it?

These are just my thoughts - what do you guys think?

Andrew Simmons, Newcastle-Under-Lyme

dcm: We think they're excellent ideas, especially turning Gladiator into an online fioghting game. Maybe in one-player mode you could build youor character, investing money won in the arena in weapons and training, eventually making enough to buy your freedom? How about chariot racing sub-levels too? The possibilities are endless.

Here's a few suggestions from us too:

• Casino: With a referee as a virtual banker (no sniggering), players could compete against each other in a series of money-orientated missions - reach X amount of cash, win a set figure on each of several games, etc.

• Battlecars: The old Spectrum game had you installing weapons on your car and smashing the hell out of the opposition. Vigilante 8 was never quite the same. The online potential of this is obvious.

• Trivial Pursuits: With the computer as a Question Master, players could compete against each other online. Getting questions that are fair to all nations would be a problem, though.

What do the readers think? Have you guys got any thoughts on this? Any games you'd like to see updated with online action catered for? Drop us a line...

SAD READERS

Dear DCM,

You've got some of the most pathetic, sad readers ever (but only a couple of them). I don't think I've been through one of your magazines without seeing a letter from some stupid little turd saying his Dreamcast is God's gift and that the PS2 is the biggest pile shite ever. For a start, have any of these people ever seen a PS2? They're not shit - far from it. When Dreamcasts were first released I laughed at the line up of games. The only ones worth owning were Sonic Adventure and Soul Calibur, but as time went on and games started getting better, I went out and bought one. It had two games with it; Soul Calibur and Virtua Tennis, they were both top-notch games. What I'm trying to say is the PS2 is getting off to terrible start, but the Dreamcast didn't get off to a flying start either.

Richard, Hull

dcm: Most readers won't have seen a PS2, 'cos they're rarer than rocking-horse manure. That's the problem. You're right about the Dreamcast launch being less than 100%, but the PS2 launch is the worst ever. No consoles on the shelves and every game a sequel or an update. Embarrassing or what?

ANY PORT IN A STORM

Dear DCM,

Is it just me, or are all Dreamcast games ports of PC or PlayStation games with better graphics? The really good games on the Dreamcast are Crazy Taxi (arcade port) Half-Life (PC port), Hidden and Dangerous (PC port), House of the Dead 2 (arcade port), Tomb Raider TLR (PSX port) Tony Hawk's Skateboarding (PSX port) and Quake III (PC port). Although all of these games are great, it's still basically the same game. If Sega can create games like Shenmue and Soul Calibur, why do they have to resort to pumping out old PlayStation and PC games when they could be concentrating on getting some games that will drag people into buying a Dreamcast?

Cheers, Rob

NINTENDO RULE!

Dear DCM,

I read in you letters section (Issue 16) that you thought Sega could re-establish itself as leading console manufacturer if it got the right push. What a load of CRAP! Sega has NEVER been in the lead, purely because of Nintendo. In the '80s, when you released the

QUESTIONS, QUESTIONS...

Dear DCM,

I have three questions, if you would be nice enough to answer them...

1. Half-Life is a great game, probably one of the best games I've ever played, but that was on the PC. I've also got Quake II which is also good (not quite as good as Half-Life). Which is why I'm wondering if it's worth buying Quake III on the Dreamcast? I mean, is it worth £40 if you've already got Quake II and Half-Life? Oh, and by the way, BFG stands for [we know: Ed].

2. What do you know about the trouble Eidos Interactive is in concerning debt?

3. Most the games for the Dreamcast are really good, but will there still be new releases coming out in a year or even two?

Kyle Mathieson, Ross County, Scotland

dcm: Taking your questions in order...

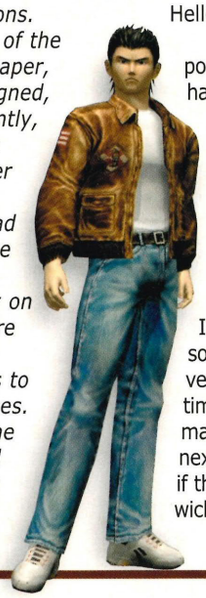
1: It's up to you - read our review and then decide whether you want another first-person shooter or a completely different game like Ferrari 355 Challenge or Shenmue. Most of the DCM team say go for something else, but it really isn't for us to say how you should spend your money.

2: They've lost money this year, mostly because the PS2 didn't explode onto the scene as it was expected to, but they're not in trouble. Let's face it - Lara's a licence to print money.

3: Yes.

dcm: People port games from other formats for two reasons. Firstly, because with much of the work already done, it's cheaper, The games have been designed, and perhaps more importantly, marketed on other formats already. Would Tomb Raider TLR be as successful if it featured Fred Bloggs instead of Lara Croft? These are the games people hear about from their friends who play on other formats, and therefore want on their Dreamcasts. Secondly, games take ages to develop on modern machines. We're only now reaching the stage where games started on PC, PSX and Dreamcast on the same day are released together.

SILLY MUE...



Hello

I bought Shenmue, possibly the greatest game I have ever played, and finished it three days later. What I am curious about is I never got to meet Ling Sha Hua, fall off a building with a sailor or watch a number of scenes I saw in films I downloaded from the Internet. Did they cut some bits out of the English version for rush release in time for Christmas, or maybe they will be in the next game? It doesn't matter if they did, because it's still a wicked game.

Anonymous, e-mail

dcm: Shenmue isn't a totally linear experience. Certain actions in the game affect the way things turn out regarding the plot - maybe you just didn't do the things necessary to trigger the events you describe. Check out Saul's ace playing guide which starts this issue for more information on Shenmue.

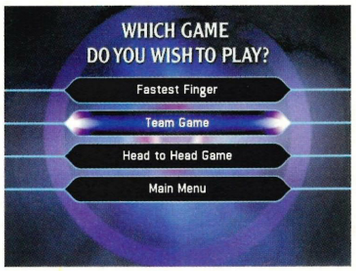
THE PRICE IS RIGHT...

Dear DCM,

I think I've had the best luck when it comes to finding the cheapest games around. Take a look at some of these: Mortal Kombat Gold, Free. Who Wants To Be a Millionaire, £24.99. Resident Evil 2, £26.99. Sega Bass Fishing, around 45 swappits in a Swappit Shop [wonder hat that is? Ed], and my mate also got Chu Chu Rocket for absolutely nothing, with free next-day delivery! And guess the price of my console? £149.99, with three games, controller, leads, Internet disc, etc. You can't complain about those prices!

Tim Borthwick, Langholm, Scotland

dcm: That just goes to show there are some cool bargains to be had if you shop around. Yes, £40 for a game is expensive, but let's face it - who pays that for every game they buy anyway?



SG1000 [Hey - we're an independent mag. Don't assume we work for Sega: Ed], Nintendo stole the show with its first console, Famicom, which I think was the AVS in Europe and US [No, NES: Ed]. Sega had a good try with the Genesis [Mega Drive here: Ed] in '89, I think, but Nintendo flushed it down the bog with its stonkingly-good SNES. The Saturn in the '90s was trounced by the N64 and PS1, so do you really think you can min against Nintendo's Game Cube and PS2? Don't get me wrong; I think the white box is fantastic, but can you seriously put Shenmue and Crazy Taxi against Zelda and GoldenEye/Perfect Dark? Maybe, eh?

David Brookes, Sheffield

dcm: Wow - we've got to admire your bravery. You're right - Nintendo stole the show with NES and Sega was playing catch-up, but the Mega Drive very nearly did catch up with the SNES, despite coming from way behind. The SNES was released too late, a mistake repeated with the N64. Can we be sure the Game Cube will be released on time? And with the PS2's launch problems and X-Box still a year away, Sega might yet clinch the top spot. Maybe 'RE-establish itself' was a little over-enthusiastic on our part, though...

WIN A GAME OF YOUR CHOICE EVERY MONTH

gameplay.com

Another month, another lucky reader winning our prestigious Letter of the Month award. As well as a free game of your choice from Gameplay, we're also giving away a six-month subscription to the magazine. What more could you wish for?

For your chance to be the proud owner of the game of your choice, and a six month subscription, simply write to us with your usual trials and tribulations – it couldn't be easier! Letter of the Month winners receive the game at the top of their wish list, and it's sent to you courtesy of those lovely people at Gameplay, bless 'em.

Make sure you include your full name and address and the name of the game you would like to win or you'll be kicking yourself for a week when you don't. Don't just sit there – get writing!

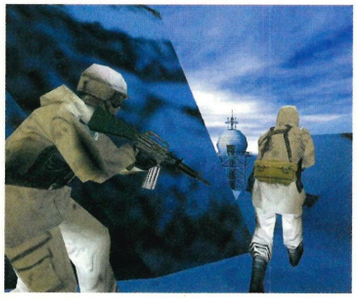
...PLUS! A SIX-MONTH SUBSCRIPTION TO DCM

STOP PRESS!

Publisher: Take 2 Interactive ■ Developer: Red Storm
Genre: Action Strategy ■ Released: 2001

RAINBOW SIX: ROGUE SPEAR

The original isn't even with us and we're already talking about the sequel!



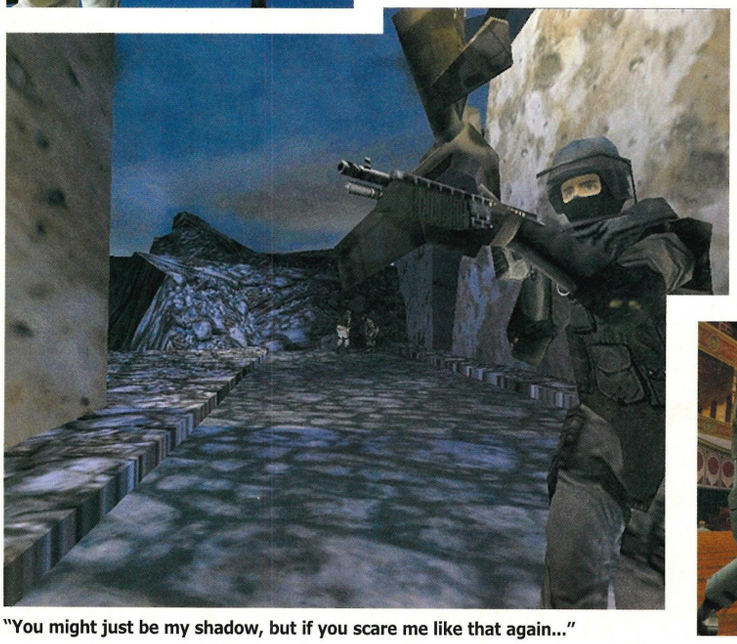
Getting soldier sims out on the Dreamcast seems to have caused more than a few headaches. Hidden & Dangerous, glorious though it is, took a long time to arrive, and only recently did Spec Ops 2 ship in the States whilst we're still waiting for Spec Ops 1 (you can read our preview of that elsewhere in this issue)! Perhaps that will change with the upcoming release of Rainbow Six: Rogue Spear, a game inspired by the Tom Clancy book but drawing greater influences from 'soldier' sims such as Spec Ops and Hidden & Dangerous.

We'll do the bad news first. It appears Rogue Spear won't be playable online. Okay, even though Quake III has turned up, we do appreciate the majority of Dreamcast software falls into the same boat, but we can't help thinking if a game as sophisticated as Quake III can be played adequately, surely that should set the goalposts for everyone else?

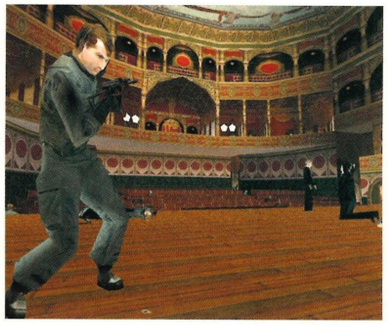
As with its predecessor, Rogue Spear is a rather successful marriage of straight-out action with some tactical thought behind it. Rewarding the slow-laboured approach far more often than charge and fire, you're once again positioned as a member of the Rainbow anti-terrorist group.

a game inspired by the Tom Clancy book but drawing greater influences from 'soldier' sims like Spec Ops and H&D

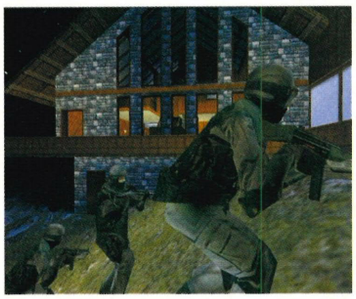
To successfully get your way through the single-player game, not only do you have to think one step ahead of the opposition at all times, you also need to have pretty-much planned out your tactics for the level in



"You might just be my shadow, but if you scare me like that again..."



There's nothing more enpowering than a big gun...



advance. Truth be told, it can be fairly tense stuff, especially when you realise you're going to bugger it up major league if you carry on as you are and quickly have to come up with another set of cunning and devious tactics. You can tell why we died so much.

Mission Madness

Each mission kicks off with the traditional briefing, giving you a degree of intelligence about the opposition, but leaving you to decide on little details like which weapons to take into battle, which route you're going to take through a level and which members of your motley crew you want to take. All of these have key bearings of your success, although it's not so tightly dictated you can only succeed by getting the choice absolutely right.

The team members at your disposal, as you'd expect, have various differing skills and talents to bring to the mix. For instance, whilst the more traditional sniper always comes in useful, you could end up kicking yourself for not bringing a lock-picker along. As you do. So eventually you toddle off on your mission, updating orders as and where necessary, and you hit battle. This is where you need to react quickly and well, as the opposition aren't particularly pleased to see you and have little trouble puncturing your key arteries on your behalf. They're nice like that. All in all, a rather potent little mixture of tactical planning a bit of action. Yum yum.

The Dreamcast conversion of the game is actually nearly complete, so we hear, with a US release scheduled by the time you read this. That doesn't necessarily mean the UK edition will follow immediately, as the first Rainbow Six game may be given a couple of months on the shelves to itself before the sequel is wheeled on. Time is ticking on, though, and the PC original has celebrated its first birthday (with a piss-up round town, natch), so here's hoping they don't keep us waiting too long.

As for potential problems? The omission of online gaming. Bah. The developers haven't left multiplayer action out of the mix altogether, and we're hearing that split-screen play will be facilitated for up to four players (hopefully not at the expense of the frame rate), but you could argue that they've thrown us a kipper when we actually wanted a tasty piece of salmon.

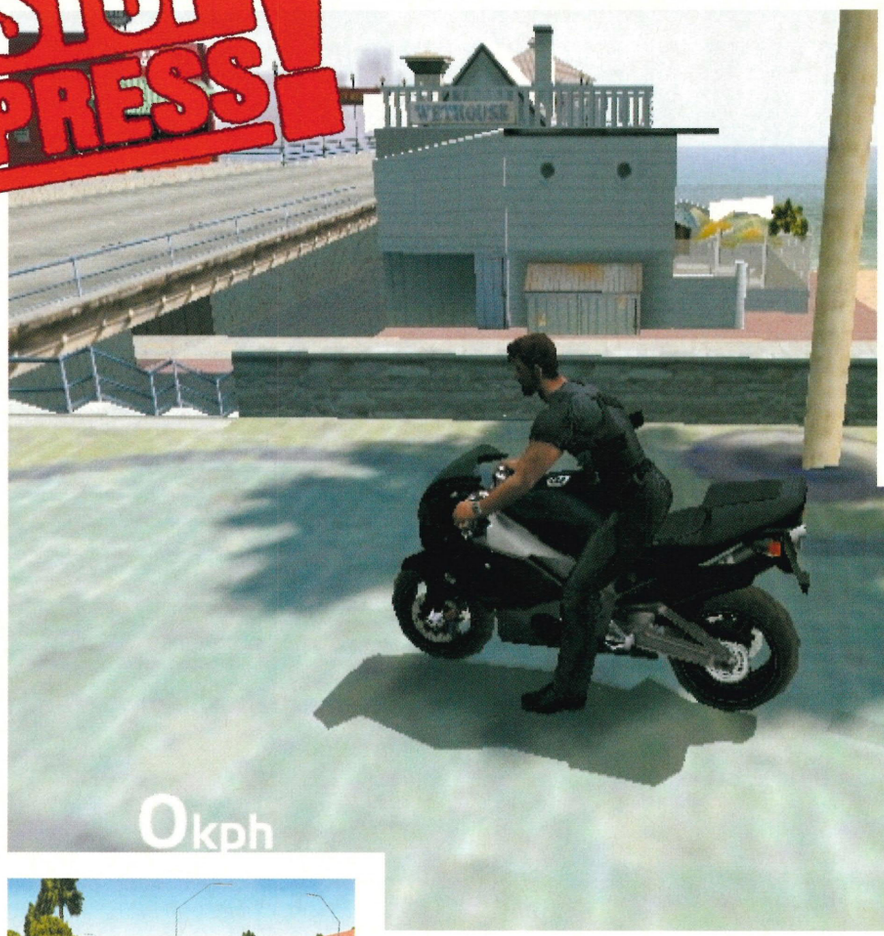
Rogers fart had everyone rolling around with laughter - even the chopper pilot fell foul

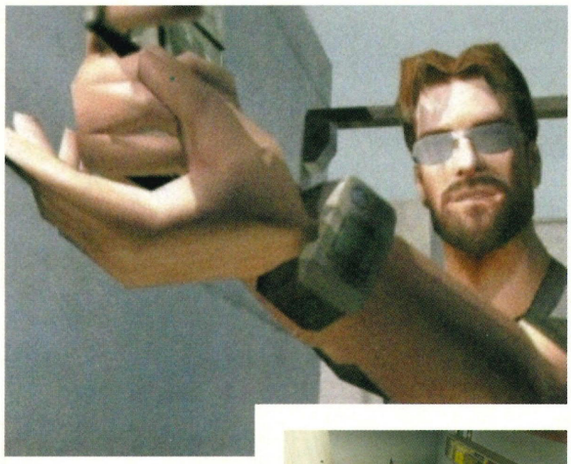
you need to pretty-much plan out your tactics for a level in advance

control system, really. Despite the occasionally very slow nature of the game, it's a title that calls for fast reactions in the heat of the battle. Chances are you may need to switch team member, select a weapon, aim and fire all in a split second, and we hope that the control system facilitates that properly. The idea of playing it with a gamepad isn't exactly filling us with joy at this moment in time. And then there's the

If all goes well, Rogue Spear should at the very least offer a different option for those who have played Hidden & Dangerous to death and are looking for a fresh challenge. Certainly, we had a lot of fun with the PC version, and whilst it's a belated conversion, it is the kind of title that could - control system depending - work quite nicely on the Dreamcast. How well it'll turn out we'll simply have to wait and see...

STOP PRESS!





There's nothing like a smokey burn-out!

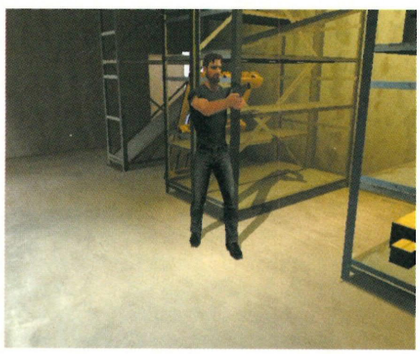
Publisher: Sega ■ **Developer:** Sega ■ **Genre:** All sorts! ■ **Released:** Summer 2001

HEADHUNTER

Illegal trading of human organs? This sounds like a job for the 'Headhunter'...

It's not the first time we've discussed Headhunter in these pages, but as it's shaping up to be one of the best games of the year, we figured you were well overdue an update. Especially to all those new Dreamcast owners out there who are joining us for the first time.

So Headhunter, then. It's a game that's not due to hit the shelves until the Summer, and it takes place in a rather large city-sized playing area, where you take on the none-too-pleasant role as a bounty hunter. You heartless brute. Your mother always said you'd do anything for money, but then perhaps she didn't anticipate a future where the most lucrative outlet for organised crime is by illegally trading human organs. Presumably the owner of said organs has long since ceased the need to use them. We know one or two people who fall into that category (anyone wanna buy Russell's brain?).



"Put that vital organ down on the ground!"

Sightseeing

Anyway, you travel around the said city on a motorbike (or you can even walk it should you have a fitness fad half way through the game) with plenty to look at as you travel, in what is a mixture of a few genres. The biking bit can make for some cool driving fun, especially as an online racing variant of the game will be playable on the Internet. Then there are the combat (which we haven't seen a fat lot of so far) and exploration elements to the game. Certainly the size of the city means you've got a fair bit of mooching around to do, and we're banking on the usual array of baddies and weapons to be thrown into the cauldron too.

you travel around the city on a bike, or you can walk should you have a fitniss fad halfway through the game

The racing side isn't the only part of the game that's going online. Sega should also be serving up an online battle game, plus the old favourite of being able to download new weapons and characters to your trusty old VMU.

As we said, the game isn't due until the summer, but in the interim we've managed to get our grabbing paws on the latest screenshots, and we've thoughtfully decorated our page with them to optimum design effect. As for the game? Clearly it could go either way. Ambitious in scope, has it set its sights too high by trying to mix up so many genres, or are we staring another Sega classic straight in the face but have just drunk too much to realise it? Time will tell, we guess. So whilst we're waiting, we're off for a couple more jars down the local...

Publisher: Fox Interactive ■ **Developer:** Redstorm Interactive
Genre: Action Adventure ■ **Released:** Late 2001

The graphics are very faithful to the franchises roots. Basic, but fluid we're sure.

ROSWELL CONSPIRACIES

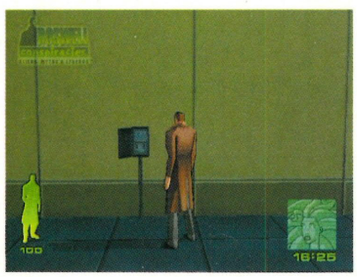
Area 51, sourcers and greys. Definately sounds like a conspiracy to us...

Guess what? There are strange alien creatures roaming the Earth, even as you read this. And we don't mean Michael Barrymore. We're on about genuine, Outer Space beings who have humankind on the menu. Heard it before?

So have we. And yet the tired old plot is being wheeled out again for the admittedly-intriguing-looking TV-show tie-in Roswell Conspiracies, which features a group of special agents as part of The Global Alliance investigating said aliens. You can't beat Scooby, Shaggy and The Mystery Machine, we reckon, but there's no accounting for taste. Anyroad, said agents are located in Roswell, and hence you have the cunningly-entitled game, Roswell Conspiracies. Cool eh? These agents come from the highly-trained groups like the rozzers, army and even the good old FBI, but soon discover that their enemies, the aforementioned cretins from outer space, are disguised as all sorts of weird and wonderful things.

You get to join the action by taking on the role of either Sh'Lainn Blaze (parents must have been a bit worse for wear at the Christening), or the more sensibly-monikered Nick Logan, both of whom have their own unique special abilities which must be pooled in order to complete the perilous tasks that lie ahead.

Fortunately, you have help in saving humankind, with some rather funky, extremely technologically advanced weaponry at your disposal. But don't get fooled into thinking this is merely an action game. Oh no! For the developers have only gone and chucked in elements of brainpower and adventure into the proceedings...



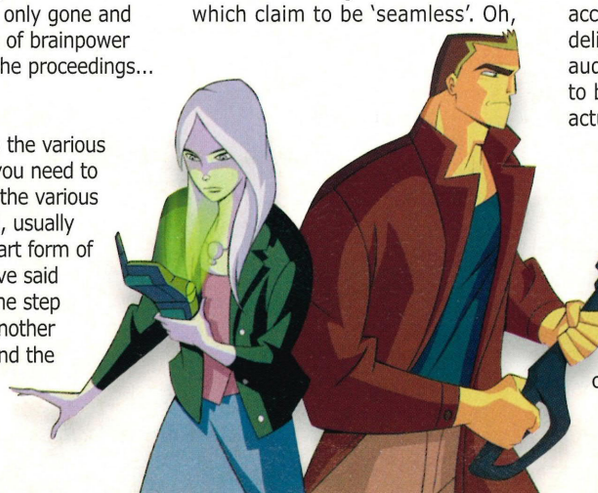
"No, just a Big Mac please. Thank you.

Alien Antics

Thus, as you explore the various levels of the game, you need to uncover clues about the various aliens hidden around, usually through the ancient art form of solving a puzzle. Solve said puzzle, and you're one step closer to capturing another one of the critters, and the world will thank you for it. You move around the levels by walking or running, and you can hang from platforms, climb up things and jump where necessary, as you'd expect from this type of thing.

There are a grand total of 40 levels planned for the game's final release too, which should keep you out of mischief for a bit, and the ongoing storyline will be advanced through cut scenes which claim to be 'seamless'. Oh, and the press materials also warn you to avoid human bystanders to keep from being detected. At least that's what is says here.

Effectively what we're looking at here is a third-person action adventure with a fairly distinct graphical style. Certainly the game doesn't seem to be bursting with innovation and new ideas from what we know of it so far (partly accounted for by the fact it's being deliberately aimed at a younger audience), but seeing as it's likely to be well into 2001 before we actually see a finished product, Roswell Conspiracies could still have a few tricks of its own hiding up its sleeve somewhere. Once we receive more information, we'll give you one of our customary and lovingly-created updates. Fair enough?

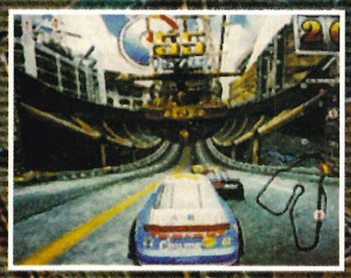


newscast

bringing you the latest news from around the world

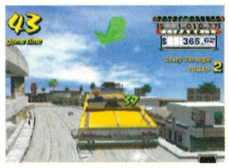
SEGA TALK 2001

And it looks damn cool too!



Crush those doubts right now. There had been a degree of cynicism surrounding the Dreamcast, suggesting that once the current crop of wonderful titles was on the shelves of Woolies, that'd be it and we'd be faced with a barren 2001. Well down with the cynics, we say, as Sega has started to confirm some of the games we'll be looking at next year. And it's enough to make you change your trousers.

We've already talked Daytona, currently pencilled in for an Easter release with confirmed online play. You could easily argue it's the highlight of the next few months on any format, it's that exciting. And you should already know about titles such as Black & White (big preview this issue if you need to play catch-up), Phantasy Star Online and, er, Sonic Shuffle. Here are a couple of others to throw into the pot, and you can find even more in our special 2001 preview feature towards the back of the magazine. We really do spoil you.

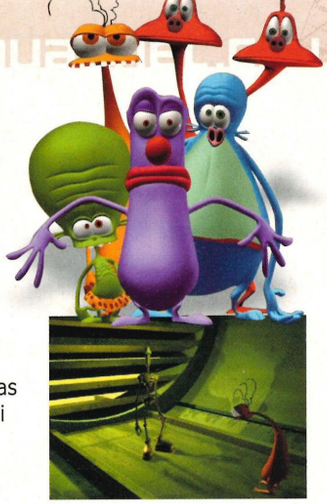


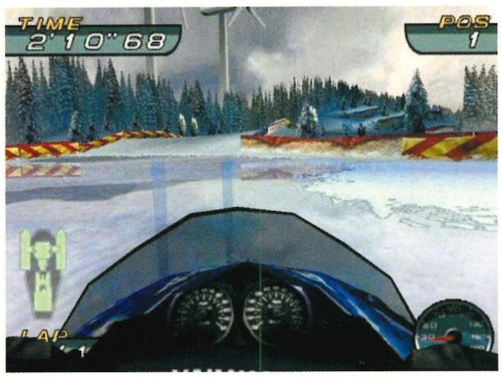
CRAZY TAXI 2

But how about Crazy Taxi 2?! Work is well under way on the long-anticipated but only-just-confirmed sequel to one of the finest creations of 2000. This time round, the game is set in a New York-style environment, promising to be a bit more mature than the original (which could or could not be a good thing). It will, however, incorporate characters from the first game, although there will be new faces and apparently some more of those rather spanky mini-games that caused us to tear our hair out. To the point where we're all now bald. Developed with the Dreamcast clearly in mind, what isn't clear yet is whether online gaming will be supported, but this time round Sega aren't porting over an arcade version and bolting bits on. Summer 2001 is when we expect to see it.

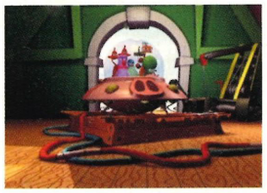
UBISOFT SNAP UP CRAVE TITLES

Expect games. And soon...





Sno-Cross is reviewed on Page 74, but don't get too excited



The uncertainty facing Crave Entertainment has been resolved, with Ubi Soft inking a deal with the publisher to distribute their titles in the UK. Quite a few games are affected, many of which were due for launch around November but have now either been pushed out just before Christmas or are waiting for the New Year.

Ubi Soft is a long-time supporter of the Dreamcast, and the new deal means it has nearly 20 new games heading to the format in the first third of the year alone. Titles included in the Crave deal include the long-awaited (and hopefully now on sale) Ultimate Fighting Championship, Solider of Fortune, Sno-Cross, Tokyo Highway Patrol 2 (on which we've already bestowed a disappointing 5/10) and Aerowings 2. It's a bit of a departure for the Ubi folk, as previously they've been focusing more on family, morally-redeemable titles. Quite how Ultimate Fighting Championship fits into that strategy is anyone's guess.

Other titles the French giant is bringing to the DC include the intriguing Stupid Invaders, the long-awaited Speed Devils Online (which you can read more about elsewhere this issue), Heroes of Might & Magic 3 (ditto) and, er, Donald Duck. We've updated all the new release dates into our calendar which you'll find in a couple of pages time. In the meantime, a hearty cheer for Ubi Soft, and here's hoping some of these titles make the all-important jump from 'plenty of potential' to 'essential purchase'.

SONIC ADVENTURE 2!

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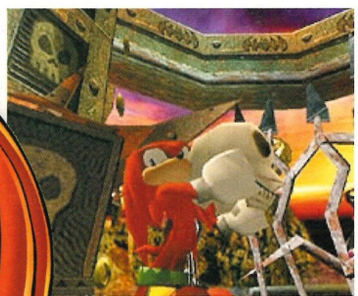
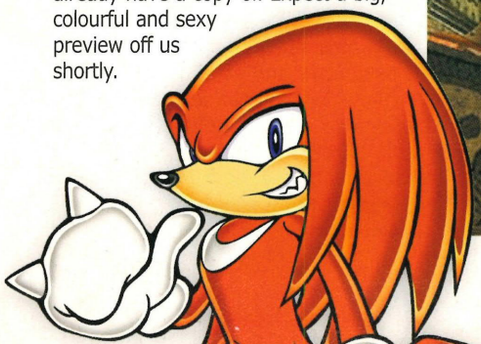


Okay, this one was no big secret, and it continues to power towards a release towards the end of 2001 (do check out the rest of the news for details of Sonic 3). Not to be confused with the, er, 'less interesting' Sonic Shuffle, this promises to build significantly on the excellent-but-flawed launch title which we'd wager most of you already have a copy of. Expect a big, colourful and sexy preview off us shortly.



BOMBERMAN ONLINE!

But every format has a Bomberman game', we hear people whine. Fair point too. But with what other format can you play the thing online?! Clearly taking a leaf out of Chu Chu Rocket's book, which despite the simplicity of the game (and, er, the fact it was free) enjoyed a lot of success as an online game, we think the marriage of the Internet and Bomberman is inspired and long overdue. Mix in the fact that the game will apparently support up to ten players at time, and we think we can safely say they have a winner on their hands. Clever them. Hopefully we should see this one by the Summer as well, and we'll bring you more shortly.

UPDATED MEGADRIVE GAMES!

You can read more about these elsewhere in the news section, but as well as titles such as Ecco 2 and Toejam & Earl we've discussed previously, it seems Shinobi and Streets of Rage are the next to head for the Dreamcast. Cool!

SHENMUE 2

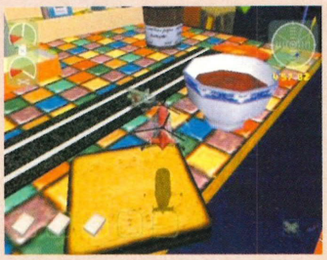
Confirming that it'll appear on Dreamcast, with Japan due to get the game first late in 2001, Shemue 2 will appear on six - count 'em! - GD-ROMs, as opposed to the four of the original game.

MORE VIRTUA FUN

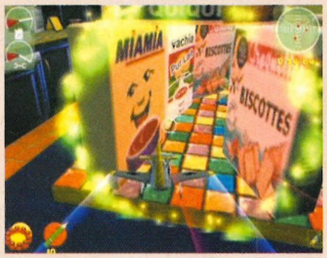
We're expecting official confirmation on these two shortly, but the long-awaited Virtua Fighter X should be coming to Dreamcast soon. It's the latest in a franchise with a long and well deserved pedigree, and certainly should show some of the pretenders to its throne a thing or two. And then there's Virtua Striker 3. But that's less exciting.

DOING THEIR BIT

New game for £4.99



Toy Commander was cool. The follow-up will be cheap



Just in time for Christmas comes a bit of a charity gesture from Uncle Sega. Remember Toy Commander? One of the earliest titles on the Dreamcast? Hmmm, fair enough. You can educate yourself on it over in our directory section. Well the spin off/follow up/cash in successor, Toy Racer, will be out in time for Chrimble, priced at a staggeringly-generous £4.99. A mere fiver! Let's just hope they ain't doing it because it's crap, eh?

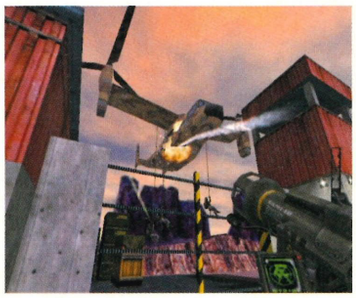
However, the generosity of Sega doesn't stop there. Because out of that fiver, they'll be donating cash to charity. Which will no doubt shame all you hard-hearted people into buying it. At worst, it'll be a cheap way to keep the kids quiet for a bit, eh?

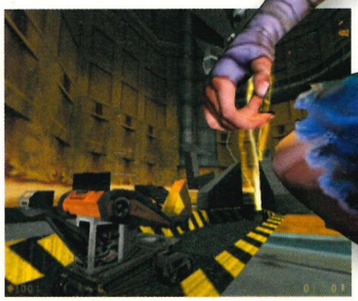
SLIPPAGE CENTRAL

Don't expect until 2001...

Every Christmas it's the same. False promises that they'll have their games on the shelves in time for Yule, leaving us with our hopes suitably perked, only to resign ourselves to having something to spend our gift vouchers on early next year. If someone would buy us some.

This year's casualties? Half-Life is currently in January, most of the Crave titles now being published by Ubi Soft are in January or February, Speed Devils Online has shifted to February, joined by European Super League. Phantasy Star Online we already knew about, but we're guessing we should be grateful that big titles such as Jet Set Radio, Shenmue and Quake III did make it to the shelves. Unlike Gran Turismo 3 - hee hee!





MEGADRIVE CLASSICS ON DC? We certainly hope so!

The Dreamcast Internet community was jabbering with particular relish at the rumour emanating from Sega HQ that Dreamcast versions of two rather wonderful Mega Drive games were in the works. The titles in question were Shinobi and Streets of Rage, both of which were excellent beat-'em-ups of their day, and ripe in our opinion for a loving update. Further rumours suggest the folks behind Crazy Taxi are the ones who have got their paws on the projects. We hope so, and will tell you more when we can.

TYPING THE DEAD

You won't believe this...

Already out on PC and strongly rumoured to be coming to Dreamcast is the latest batty idea from the Eastern side of the world. Mixing House of the Dead 2 with, er, a typing tutor, the idea is that instead of shooting zombies down as they come into view, you type out the letters that appear on them as they walk along. Only when all the letters have been typed will they fall down and die. You need the DC keyboard to play it, and you also need to overcome the fact that you've rarely heard a dafter idea. But it's actually supposed to be rather good. More on it soon...

GET A JOB!

Not really. It's just a new Sega game...

D'you know, Sega could finally be getting the hint and giving us some bargain-tastic deals in the forthcoming months. Take what is tentatively referred to as the Real Life Career Pack as a case in point.

The pack consists of three separate games, each of which look rather tasty in their own right. And they're all coming in one pack, at the cost of one full-price game. And no, this isn't one of those shitty Arcade Classic compilations that appear from time to time. This actually looks like the real deal.

The three games? Things kick off with the Crazy Taxi-style Emergency Call Ambulance. The aim is predictably simple; you must take injured people to hospital as fast as possible, whilst not injuring them further with displays of reckless driving. Who - us?

Less promising is Brave Fire Fighters, which we need to find out more about before we can get excited. At the moment, we hear it's a bit of a shooting game, although replacing bullets with water from a hose. The idea, then, is to, er, put out the flames. You'd already guessed that, we suspect. Rounding things off is Jamba Safari. Again, not much explanation required, as you try and catch endangered animals without, ahem, accidentally blowing their heads off or something like that.

The pack, typically, comes out in Japan first, and so pending the usual translation work, we're looking at a release around summertime.

WILL WE JAM?

New Sega game could come to DC...

Over in Japan, word is hitting the street of a rather spiffing-looking new arcade game by the name of Sports Jam. Don't ask where we just got the word spiffing from, we don't know either. The idea is that the game revolves around eight sports, serving up a grand total of eight minigames based on them. Sounds a recipe for disaster, doesn't it? That's what we thought, but we have to admit we're ever-so-slightly intrigued.

It's the games, y'see. There's a bit of basketball, for instance, long shots in football, ice hockey one on one style, a spot of American football, trying to score a home run in baseball, hitting a target with a golf ball (with a bit of putting too), one-on-one ice hockey, as well as a chance to play goalie. And that's not all. In short, it seems to be a mixture of the more exciting bits of a variety of sports, in a The-Best-Sports-Game-In-The-World-Ever kind of way.

Here's the snag. The Dreamcast conversion hasn't yet been confirmed, but our insider spies tell us it's a very distinct possibility. And we want to play it. More news in 2001, we hope.

A GAMING HOTSHOT?

You might get the chance to prove it

But not quite in the way you think. The reason for this cryptic opening? Segagaga, a codename for a forthcoming simulation from the creators of Crazy Taxi and Virtua Tennis. Not a bad curriculum vitae really, is it?

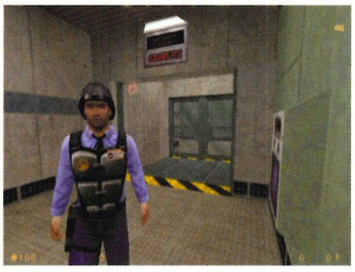
And it could get even better. For the new game is supposedly a simulation of the videogame world, where the aim is to run the biggest, most successful software company in the world. And then get bought by infogrames. You even get to talk to peasants like us. But you probably won't. Miserable sod.

The game isn't due for release in Japan until next year, and we'll bring you an update then. Looks like it's going to be a busy year...

All good things come to those who wait. Not long now folks - January with any luck.

HALF LIFE

Where the hell is it?



Picture the scene. There we were, happily putting the touches to a huge players' guide to Half Life, a game we had been sent by Havas' PR person on the understanding it was coming out in November. Little did we know a press release was sent around delaying the game until early next year, and nobody bothered to send it to us. We weren't happy chickens, putting it mildly.

So here's the facts. The version of Half-Life that we (and presumably every other Dreamcast magazine) got to see, we were cast-iron told was reviewable and the finished code. The delay was caused by developers Gearbox wanting to "polish all aspects of the game and to fine-tune gameplay", and the release date seemed to shift from Early 2001 to January, when a further, perhaps more helpful, press release was issued two days later. Again, this was to "polish all aspects of the game and to fine-tune gameplay".

Bottom line? What was a fantastic title pre-Christmas is now a fantastic title post-Christmas. We've been able to polish all aspects of our playing guide and to fine-tune the, er, words, and save for us running around learning new swear words as we filled a suddenly vacant block of pages close to deadline last month, everything in the world is calm again. At least Quake III made it out on time...

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO...

Messiah?

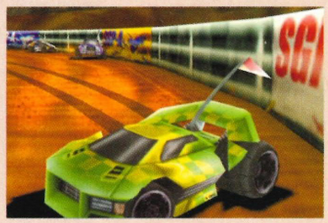
A cautious 'still on the schedules' is all we could get on Virgin's disappointing yet ambitious PC title. When we know more, we'll tell you.

Alone in the Dark 4?

The rumour mill says that we won't be seeing a Dreamcast version of this one, but the official word at the moment is that it's just been pushed back until around Easter time and is still set for release.

European Super League?

The game, to our understanding, is all but complete, it's just behind-the-scenes stuff and tweaking that has led to the latest DC footie title being pushed back to February. But it's definitely still happening.



Stunt GP?

Following on from our recent preview, it seems we won't be seeing much of Stunt GP just yet, with the game due early in 2001 but not a moment before. Don't worry, though. We can wait.

Phantasy Star Online?

Originally delayed from its pre-Christmas launch, the giant online role-playing game will now appear on 23rd February. Cool!

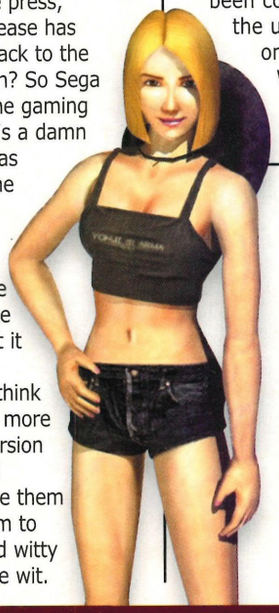
VIP?

We were expecting to have heard more on Ubi Soft's game of the Pamela Anderson TV show by now. Leave this one with us and we'll have more next month, although the earliest we hear for release is March...

TRUCK ON!

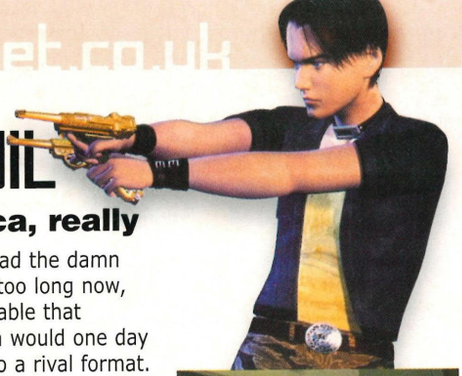
It's running late, but WILL be online

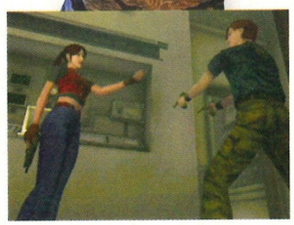
Hardly the recipient of ecstatic reviews over in Japan, 18-Wheeler Pro Trucker is nonetheless getting a cautious thumbs up from the press, although the UK release has now been pushed back to the Summer. The reason? So Sega can implement online gaming into the fun, which is a damn good excuse as far as we're concerned. The game? It's the one where you drive a damn big truck (complete with huge steering wheel in the arcades), and whilst it ain't a Daytona or Crazy Taxi, we still think it'll be good fun. As more details of the UK version come through, we'll thoughtfully package them up and present them to you in a concise and witty way. But without the wit.



MORE EVIL

Or more Veronica, really





Okay, we admit we've had the damn thing to ourselves for too long now, and it's perhaps inevitable that Resident Evil Code Veronica would one day find itself winging its way to a rival format. In this case, the PlayStation 2. But wait! This is accompanied by some good news. Capcom are enhancing the game for PS2, and re-releasing it again on DC with said enhancements in place, predominantly taking the form of more story elements that deadlines prohibited from being included in the first release. And so we look forward to Resident Evil Code Veronica Complete. It's due out in the States around Easter time, and whilst a UK release hasn't been confirmed, we're expecting it follow the usual Capcom approach and end up on our shelves not too long after. We suspect you'll be a bit pissed off if you bought the first release, though.

MEGA US BUNDLE

Over in the States, Sega is to start bundling what it calls the Sega Smash Pack with the consoles. Nothing to do with instant mashed potato, it actually means you get a Mega Drive emulator with no less than ten games for it in with the package. Those games? Sonic, Wrestle War, Shining Force, Phantasy Star 2, Columns, Streets of Rage 2, Revenge of Shinobi, Golden Axe, Altered Beast and Vectorman. Predictably, no news at all on whether us poor UK people will get it, but we hope to have an update soon...

SAMBA DE HUNDREDNOTESO

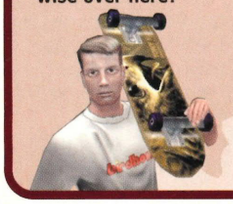
You want Samba, you gotta pay big bucks

As widely expected, Sega has confirmed (and you know this by now as it should be sitting on a shop shelf) that the long-awaited Samba De Amigo with the maracas set will set you back a cool £99. Ouch. However, early speculation that you'd only be able to buy the game through Dreamarena fortunately proved not to be true, and it'll be on shop shelves, albeit in limited supply. We do urge you, though, if you want this particular title, to buy it when you see it, as Sega aren't producing that many of the maracas set. Don't say we didn't warn you.

overseas news

TONY HALF PRICE

Hmmm. Tony Hawk's 2 arrives in the US, and the prequel is cut in price by 50%. Tony Hawk's 2 arrives in the UK, and what do you think? Perhaps a similar price cut would be wise over here?

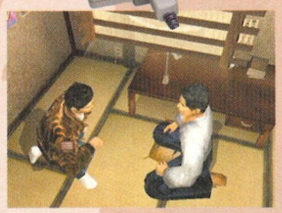


NO CUT YET, SAYS SEGA

Sega has denied rumours in America that it's to cut the price of the console to $99 (effectively £65-70). The machine currently sells for $149 over there, which is still about a third cheaper than our consoles. Not that we're jealous. Hmmph.

DREAMCAST LAUNCHES IN INDIA

Sega is launching its console into a new territory, with India the latest country to benefit from the technology. The company expects to sell around a million units there by the end of 2002, with bargain Internet access being one of the main selling points.

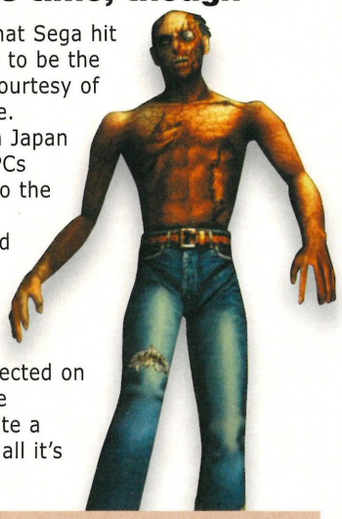


SHENMUE TOPS US CHARTS

Despite the launch of the PlayStation 2 and the continuous onslaught of Pokémon titles, Shenmue topped the all-formats US charts, beating off two Pokémon games, a Zelda sequel, Bond, and Tony Hawk's. Hopefully a sign of things to come, especially as the only PlayStation 2 title weighed in at a lowly Number Nine. Boo hoo.

MORE DC ON PC

New hardware this time, though



Last month we reported that Sega hit House of the Dead 2 was to be the first title to head to PC courtesy of a deal with Empire Interactive. However, latest rumours from Japan suggest that a new card for PCs could well give them access to the full catalogue of Dreamcast titles. It seems this card could be endorsed by Sega, and would increase the user base for Dreamcast games enormously in a very short space of time. Nothing is expected on the shelves until Easter at the earliest, though, so we've quite a wait before we find out if it's all it's cracked up to be.

RELEASE DATES

Here's DCM's guide to those upcoming games - remember that release dates tend to change very often, so don't blame us if they can't get the bloody thing out on time. Unless you're mean.

Pod 2	Imminent
Star Wars Demolition	Imminent
Stupid Invaders	January
Gunbird 2	January
Worms World Party	11 January
F1 Racing Championship	12 January
Ducati World	19 January
Heroes of Might and Magic 3	19 January
Speed Devils Online	19 January
Vanishing Point	19 January
Buzz Lightyear of Star Command	26 January
Road to Eldorado	January
Tokyo Highway Patrol 2	January
Starlancer	January
Half-Life	January
Sno-Cross Championship Racing	January
Soldier of Fortune	January
Aerowings 2	January
Donald Duck	January
Phantasy Star Online	23 February
European Super League	February
Ubi Soft Tetris	February
Waverunner	February
Commandos 2	March
Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver 2	March
Matt Hoffman Pro BMX	March
Grandia 2	March
Evil Twin	March
VIP	March
Conflict Zone (aka Peacemakers)	March
Unreal Tournament	March
Dragon Riders	April
Virtual Pool 3	April
Daytona USA	April
Alone in the Dark 4	April
Star Wars Super Bombad Racing	April
Prince of Persia	Early 2001
Stunt GP	Early 2001
Fighting Vipers 2	Early 2001
Black & White	Easter 2001
Combat Flight Simulator	Mid 2001
Motocross Madness	Mid 2001
Age of Empires 2	Mid 2001
18-Wheeler Pro Trucker	Summer 2001
Headhunter	Summer 2001
Crazy Taxi 2	Summer 2001
Sonic Adventure 2	Late 2001
Sega Bass Fishing 2	Late 2001
Samba de Amigo 2000	Late 2001
System Shock 2	2001
Outtrigger	2001
Sonic Adventure 3	2002
Shenmue 2	2002
Sega Tetris	TBC
Rainbow Six Rogue Spear	TBC
Resident Evil Code Veronica Complete	TBC
Sega Marine Fishing	TBC
Seaman	TBC
Worms Pinball	TBC
Skies of Arcadia	TBC
Agartha	TBC
Gun Valkyie	TBC
World's Scariest Police Chases	Canned?

sequel watch

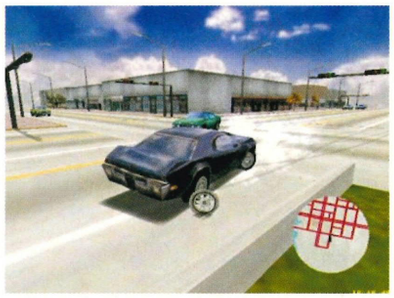
Shenmue 2

Don't believe the rumours. Sega has confirmed the sequel to Shenmue will definitely appear on Dreamcast, although it's still quite a way off yet, with not even a Japanese release planned for around 12 months. Bah.

Gigawing 2

More news on a sequel we're not overly excited about, but are willing to change our minds. This old-fashioned-style shoot-'em-up will now cater for four players simultaneously.

But being as we had a dog of a time trying to fathom out where we were when there was only one player on the screen, we're keeping our excitement in check for now.



Driver 2

Okay, the original didn't appear on the Dreamcast, but talks are still under way regarding a Dreamcast version of the sequel. Nothing has been confirmed, but early murmurings look positive. And that's all we've got to tell you at the moment. Which is why we stuck it here.

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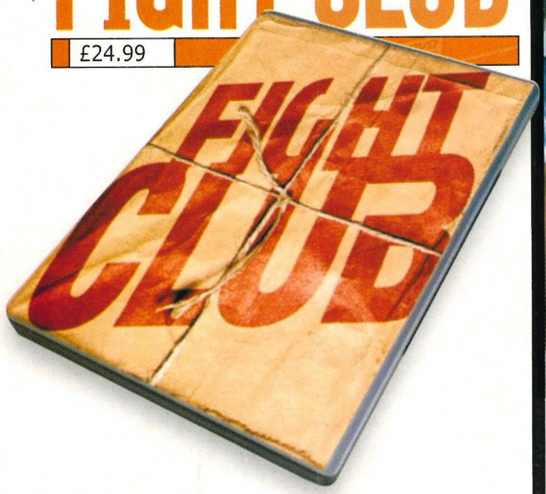
in need of dvd?

FIGHT CLUB

£24.99



What better way to kick off your DVD life than by spending just over two hours in the company of Mr Pitt and Mr Norton as they both make probably the finest film of their careers. That it's backed up by a splendid double-disc set (albeit one deleted scene and three commentary tracks lighter than the American release) is even better. Disc One covers the film and a commentary track, whereas the second disc comes complete with plenty of behind the scenes gubbins, including artwork, interview and deleted scenes. Hell, they've even thrown a better-than-usual booklet into the mix too. You guys...

EXTRA FEATURES:

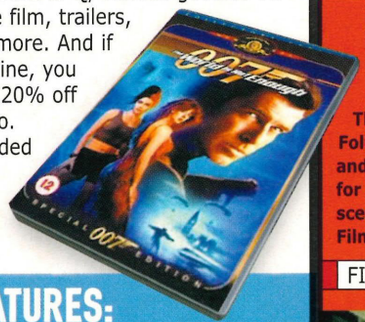
- Commentary with David Fincher, Brad Pitt, Helena Bonham-Carter & Edward Norton.
- Music.
- Deleted/Alternate Scenes.
- Behind the scenes with Multiple Angles.
- Cast & Crew Bios.
- Ed Norton Interview.
- Trailers & TV Spots.
- Internet Spots.
- Art Gallery.
- Original Artwork.
- 18-page colour booklet.

FILM 5/5 DISC 5/5

THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH

£19.99

Okay, so the film wasn't anything special, but if it's pure home cinema you're looking for, then a spot of Bond pretty-much fits the bill. Virtually all the Bond films are now available on the market, with the rest on sale by Easter, and for your £19.99, you get very weighty special editions packed full of extras. On TWINE, for instance, you get a commentary track from the film makers, a tribute to Q, various goodies on the making of the film, trailers, music video and more. And if you buy them online, you can save at least 20% off the retail price too. Shame they included a trailer for the shit PlayStation game though.



EXTRA FEATURES:

- Audio Commentary Featuring Director Michael Apted.
- Second Audio Commentary featuring Production Designer Peter Lamont, Second Unit Director Vic Armstrong and Composer David Arnold.
- 'The Making of The World Is Not Enough' documentary.
- Music Video By Garbage.
- Original Theatrical Trailer.
- Collectable Booklet.
- 'Bond Cocktail' Documentary.
- 'Bond Down River' Documentary.
- Tribute to Desmond Llewelyn.
- PlayStation game trailer.

FILM 3/5 DISC 5/5

THE MATRIX

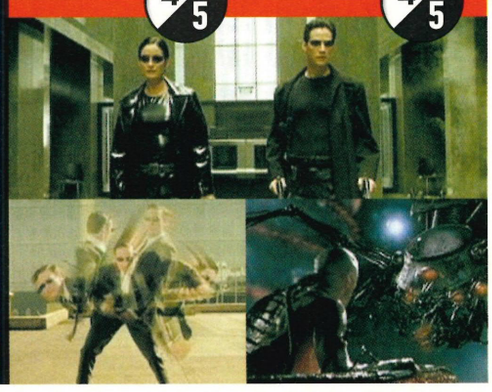
£19.99

Not a lot we can tell you about this that you don't already know. It's the Keanu Reeves film that isn't shit. And the disc is cool. There. Can I have my cheque now please?

EXTRA FEATURES:

- HBO First Look Special: 'Making The Matrix'.
- Follow The White rabbit and Take The Red Pills for behind the scenes goodies.
- Filmographies.
- Scene Access.
- DVD-ROM Features: 'Are You The One?' Challenge, Screenplay Storyboard, Genre Essays. 'Do You Know Kung Fu?'
- Original Website.

FILM 4/5 DISC 4/5



It can't have escaped your notice that Sega has put together a tasty little bundle featuring the console and a fully-featured DVD player for under three hundred notes. And by way of celebration, this month and next we're going to round up some discs you can spin on the thing. This month, we look at a few gems you can buy on this side of the channel...

GLADIATOR

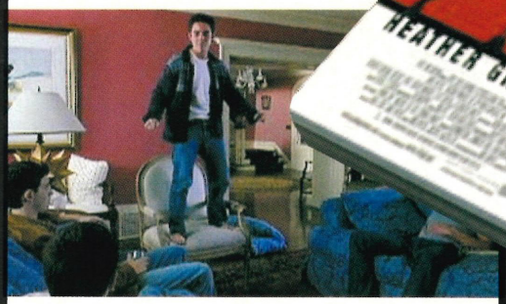
£24.99

Another two-disc set, the first of which is heaving with Ridley Scott's action-packed epic, which sees Russell Crowe battering the shit out of everyone. Okay, we've simplified the plot, but you get the picture. Superb quality sound on this one, along with that impressive list of extras we've kindly put into a list for you just over there. Oh, and the film's damn fine. But we're kinda guessing you probably already knew that. You're all too clever for us.

EXTRA FEATURES:

'Making of Gladiator': HBO First Look (25 mins).
Deleted Scenes with optional director's commentary.
'Gladiator Games - Roman Blood Sport': Learning Channel Special (50 mins).
Hans Zimmer Profile - The Making of the Music.
Pietro's Treasure Chest:
Best of deleted footage montage.
Spencer Treat Clark (Lucius) Production Journal.
Original Storyboard Comparisons & Conceptual Art.
Photo Gallery.
Trailers.
Production Notes.
Cast and Crew Bios.
Director's Commentary

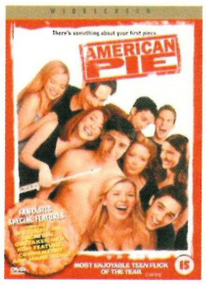
FILM 5/5 DISC 5/5



AMERICAN PIE

£19.99

A damn funny and very, very crude film. Which meant we split our sides laughing, so cheap that we are. Four American High School friends decide they need a bit of action by their Prom night, paving the way for a comedy that kicks arse out of that Something About Mary Thing. The disc's extras aren't brilliant, with tatty outtakes and not much behind-the-scenes stuff, but there's enough there to warrant a purchase.



EXTRA FEATURES:

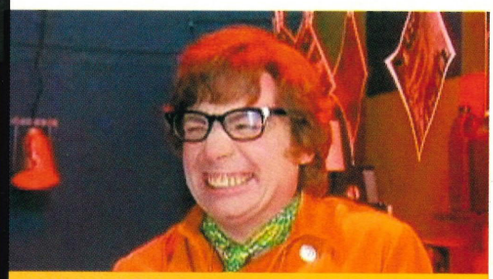
Spotlight On Location.
Feature Commentary.
Outtakes.
Theatrical Trailer.
Interactive DVD-ROM
Options.
Classic Quotes.
Production Notes.
Cast and Filmmakers' Notes

FILM 4/5 DISC 2/5

AUSTIN POWERS: THE SPY WHO SHAGGED ME

£19.99

What do we need to tell you? The rather splendid sequel to another already-impressively amusing movie comes on a DVD with an enjoyable, if not essential, smattering of extras.



EXTRA FEATURES:

Feature length Commentary.
Cast & Crew Biographies.
Theatrical trailer.
Cameos.
Music Videos.
Behind The Scenes.
Deleted Scenes.
Hidden Menu: What If God Was One Of Us?
Just The Two Of Us.
Classic Evil Schemes Gone Awry.

FILM 4/5 DISC 3/5

THREE KINGS

£19.99

A fantastic workout for the speakers, and actually one of the most thought-provoking action movies we've seen in years. Starring George Clooney and Mark Wahlberg (who would later reunite for the thuddingly awful Perfect Storm), the film is set around the end of the Gulf War as American soldiers hunt for Iraqi gold. With suitably diverting extras, this is a strong all round package, although rightly it's the film that steals the show.

EXTRA FEATURES:

Two Audio Commentaries: David O. Russell; and producers Charles Roven & Ed McDonnell.
'Under The Bunker' Behind The Scenes Documentary.
Tour of Iraqi Village Set.
Director's Video Journal.
Interview with Director of Photography Thomas Sigel.
Stills gallery.
Deleted Scenes with Optional Commentary by David O. Russell.
Hidden Bonus TV Spot.
'An Intimate Look At The Acting Process With Ice Cube' featurette.
DVD-ROM features: Gulf War Weblinks, Enhanced Assmap, Entire Original Theatrical Website.

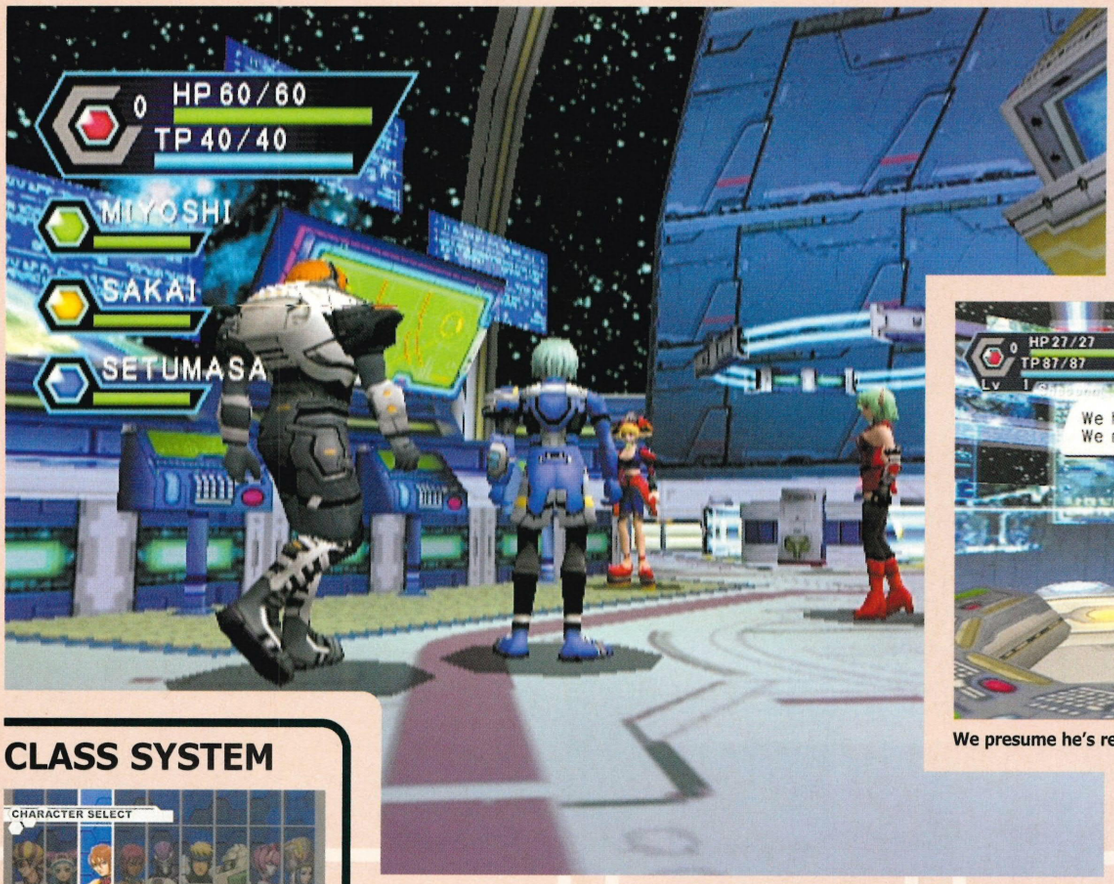
FILM 5/5 DISC 4/5

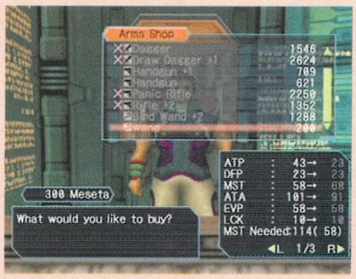
Publisher: Sega ■ Developer: Sonic Team
Released: January 2001 ■ Genre: RPG

online... www.sega europe.com

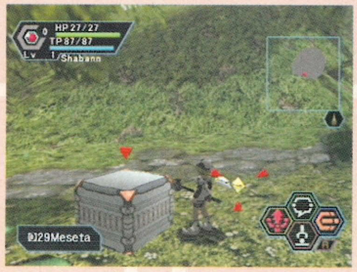
phantasy star online

Is this the most ambitious RPG ever? DCM sharpens its swords and prepares for battle...





We presume he's referring to his rather unique dress sense...



phantastic!

CLASS SYSTEM

There are three character classes on offer. A Hunter is deadly in close combat and trained in the art of using the photon saver (can't wait to find out what that is). A Ranger is a long-range weapons expert who's good for scouting and exploration. Remember Aragorn from Lord of the Rings? Finally, the Force is a mysterious maestro, and basically the game's excuse to get a magician-type bod into a sci-fi game.

You can create up to nine characters, choosing from three races (human, newman and android), two sexes (obviously) and even adjust their height, weight, skin tones, hair style and colour and face types.

This one's the mother of all ambitious projects. It's an RPG in the truest sense of the word, where you play a single character. Other members of your party are played by other human beings, just like a dice-and-paper game of Dungeons and Dragons. With the advent of online play, the videogame RPG has at last grown into a true role-playing experience, with each gamer playing a role, and the characters interacting with each other in a useful and intelligent way. Isn't this so much better than controlling all the characters yourself and having the game control the character-to-character interaction? Now the individual adventurers can develop their own personalities and individual traits instead of being little more than elaborate chess pieces under the command of a single player. Here you can swap and sell items between yourselves, share information and team up for combat. Of course, this will involve bartering and negotiating between characters' human controllers, and is no longer a simple case of pooling and sharing like in single-player RPGs.

The role-playing is realistic as a gamer is more likely to get precious about his one-and-only character. What happens, for example, when his hits are low? Can you rely on your team to fight on, risking their lives, or will they run away and leave you in it? Throwing a single character into a suicide mission might be the sensible thing to do, but who's gonna do it? Not an issue when one person controls the entire party, but a potential nightmare scenario now, with individual egos and selfish desires getting in the way of the teamwork. These questions were at the heart of every pencil-and-paper RPG, but it's only now they're even raised in videogame role-players.

So how does this online gaming work? Well, the game's a series of missions - 50 in all. Gamers get a degree of choice about which order they tackle them in, and so should team up with other gamers who

THIS ONE'S THE MOTHER OF ALL AMBITIOUS PROJECTS

THE CLASH OF STEEL

All the combat in Phantasy Star Online is in real-time, and you can't even pause during battle. Your fighters start with two attacks, Strong (high on damage, low on accuracy) and Normal (vice versa). You also get the chance to use a Technique, the game's spell system in all but name.

When you're about to strike, a series of red triangles locks onto your target foe. Hammer your attack button, then sit back and watch. Defence (parrying, dodging) is automatic and governed by your skill level.

Combat is real-time, and can't be paused. So think quick and act quicker...

cookin' in the incredible world of Phantasy Star Online? Well, we couldn't go online with our preview version but we did battle our way through some serious monster-mashing mayhem in one-player mode. Let's see how it shapes up...

At the moment, the intro sequence is a little bland, with its tedious mix of CGI and text captions, all set to a tinny Japanese instrumental. Even when the explosion wracks the city, you get a happy little de-de-dah-dah and no sound effects. Lucky it's pretty short and doesn't keep you from the game for long...

The text's a little slow, but maybe that's to prevent online conversations, with both parties writing what they say 'on the fly', being much slower than the rest of the game. No matter. As soon as you find yourself on board Pioneer 2 and teleport into the principal's office (why didn't they call him a captain?), you realise what great care has been taken in creating the game worlds. The ship is beautifully organic, with people going about their business in a pseudo-realistic way its internal buildings and features looking like they were put there for a purpose, which may or may not concern the player. RPGs with towns and areas that look like they were built with the game in mind do nothing for the atmosphere, so it's full marks to the Sonic Team for that one. The inspirations for the game environments are numerous, but Pioneer 2 is a futuristic ocean of concrete and steel - a sort of cross between Blade Runner and Birmingham.

WITH THE ADVENT OF ONLINE PLAY, THE RPG HAS AT LAST GROWN INTO A TRUE ROLE-PLAYING EXPERIENCE

share their immediate goals. How do you do this? By logging on to the 'lobby' servers where up to 12 gamers can congregate and chat, that's how! There are another 50 missions available for the one-player outing, and more missions to download off the net.

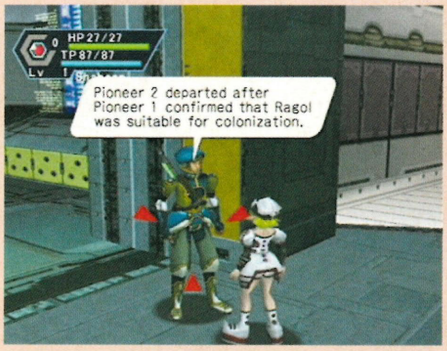
World Party

Of course, all of this incredible online action and multiplayer interactivity would be so much puff and wind if the game environment wasn't up to scratch. So what's

TRANSLATION TRIBULATIONS

When playing online RPGs with gamers from all over the world, one potential bugbear is the language barrier. How do you say, 'Swap your sword for my shield' to a Frenchman who doesn't understand English? If your German pal says, 'Kannst du mir verraten, wo ich den heiligen Edelstein finde?', what's he asking for? Well, Sonic Team has minimised this problem in two ways. Firstly, sentences are constructed from a word bank, which allows instant translation into other tongues, and basic commands like Attack and Run are slaved to symbol buttons, meaning they can be communicated in any language.

Oh, and by the way, the German guy mentioned earlier wants to know if you've found the sacred gem. Whatever that is...



The Spice Girls reform and get blasted into Outer Space on the Pioneer...

When you've explored the ship, spoken to those nearby (in a standard RPG sort of way) and bought or sold equipment in the stores (anyone get the impression we'll be returning here quite a lot?), you teleport onto the planet and find yourself in a forest. This is suitably lush, with beautiful green trees and rich vegetation.

So now we've seen the first two environments, how do they hang together? Very well, actually. They're 3D free-roaming (obviously), but they manage to avoid the twin pitfalls of building acres of wasted space and looking like they're only there for the player to explore, thus failing to create a believable world. The forest outside the dome is especially praiseworthy, with pathways clearly marked out so you don't get lost (the real-time map in the corner of the screen helping enormously too), but without looking like Kew Gardens. Who wants to adventure in a world that looks like it was built from a kit?

Alien Encounters

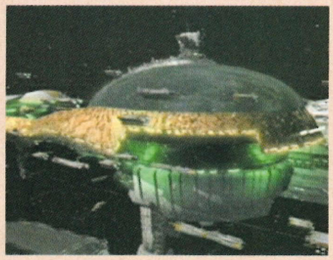
Your first encounter with the enemy is a real culture shock for those used to turn-based RPGs, or even Final Fantasy VII and VIII's 'recovery time' system, whereby a character can strike when he's good and ready, but afterwards must wait a set time before he can strike again, depending on his dexterity and the attack used. Here you fight real time, Zelda style, walking around your foes, striking with your weapon (or whatever - different buttons offer different options), taking the claw strikes on your delicate lil' bod. Chances are you lose this fight, especially if you pause to look in the instruction manual - the game carries on in a smaller screen with the pause information around it. In this game, you must do your thinking BEFORE battle. Don't think it's too arcadey, though - tactics can still emerge, especially when fighting multiple foes and trying not to get surrounded. How this pans out as you progress, fighting badder baddies and big bosses, remains to be seen but from what we've played, it could be pretty positive.

So overall, what we have here is a game which promises the planet in terms of online gaming, and offers interesting variations on the RPG theme in single-player mode. Can it really supply the same thrills when on your own? We suspect not, and as it stands, the combat system can get frustrating at first. Still, the opening sections form a reasonable tutorial, and the game's not out until next year. Next month we'll lift the lid on the online aspects of the game, how they pan out and what they offer the player. Will Phantasy Star Online live up to expectations? Stay tuned...

YOUR FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH THE ENEMY IS A REAL CULTURE SHOCK

The teddy bear's picnic got off to a bad start...

SETTING THE SCENE



So what's the plot? Well, the Earth is dying and the human race is looking for a new home world. When a suitable planet is found (and named Ragol), the Earth government sends a colony ship, Pioneer 1, to establish the first settlements there. The assorted scientists and military men who made up the ship's crew quickly build a huge domed city.

When Earth receives word that the first-footers are well and the planet is inhabitable, they send another craft, Pioneer 2. This one's crewed by more civilians and fewer soldiers. Bad move. As it approaches the planet, it detects a huge explosion and loses contact with the city. As one of the few warriors on the Pioneer 2, you're sent to the planet's surface to find out what went on and to report back to the mothership...

Sega is staying tight-lipped about how the rest of the storyline unfolds, but rest assured what you learn from this, the first quest, opens up the game, introduces side plots and sub-quests and generally gets the ball rolling.

Publisher: Take 2 Interactive ■ **Developer:** East Point Software
Released: Early 2001 ■ **Genre:** Driving

aqua gt

Will this wet water wacer float our boat?

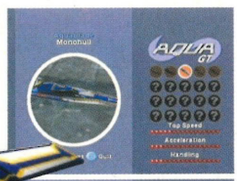
Take 2 doesn't seem to be pushing this one very hard - we didn't even get a press release with it, and at the time of writing, it's not mentioned on their web site at all. Perhaps this is not surprising. Aqua GT (please, no Barbie Girl jokes) looks set to become one of those mediocre motorers, the sort of game that's fine for an afternoon but never looked remotely likely to set the world on fire. The sort of game that's reduced in price to around £25 a month after its release. The sort of game that inspires review comments like 'a definite try before you buy' or 'nothing really wrong with it, but not much right with it either'. We might prove mistaken, of course, but that's how it's looking at the moment...

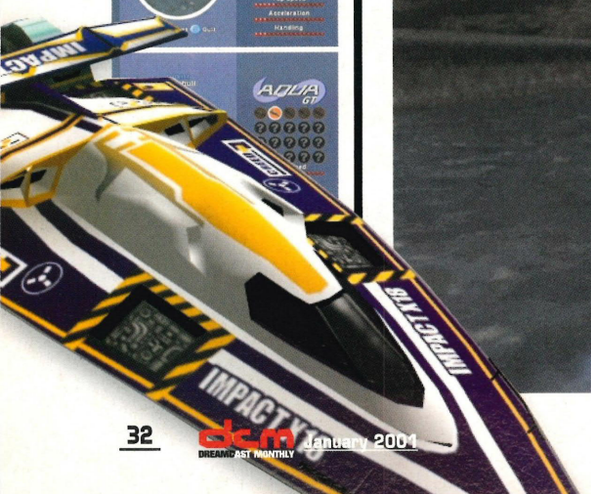
Two things are very clear from playing our near-complete preview version Aqua GT. Firstly, the boats are incredibly shiny. They really look the nuts with their decorative sponsorship logos and huge truck-off tail fins. The second thing you notice immediately is the tracks. Instead of opting for the traditional open water offshore courses, the game has you racing through rivers

> "aqua gt could well find a niche for itself in the rapidly-crowding world of dreamcast drivers"

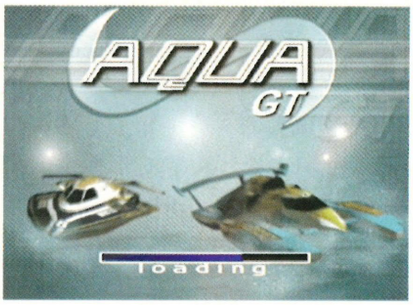
PICK YOUR BOAT

The game offers a series of boats, all with their own stats and strengths. Here's some of the starting line-up...

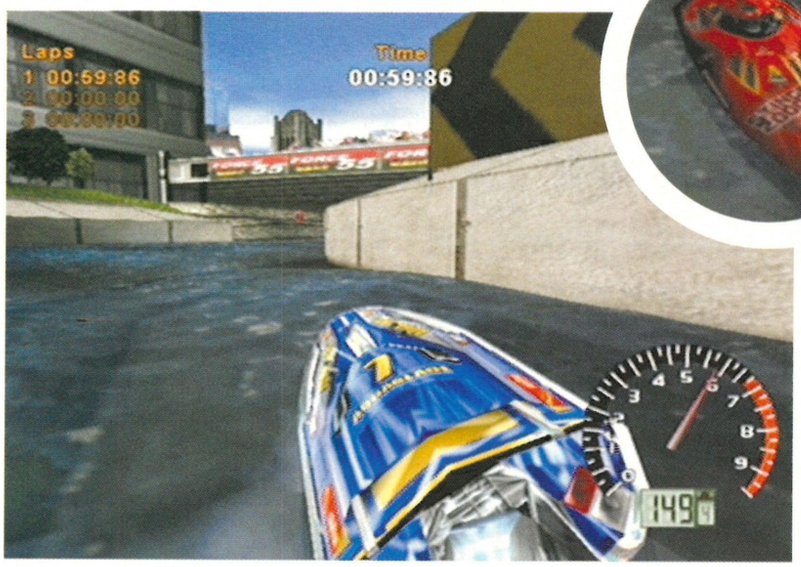




We ddin't think the floods were getting this bad...



Cool lens flare. Well, if you're into that sorta thing.



in several major European cities. You'll never see a real powerboating course like this, and if you've ever seen a real powerboat crash, you know why - a course build like this would be a death trap. Of course, there's nothing wrong with arcadey interpretations of real-life sports, though some might feel the tracks give the impression they were written for a road racer and flooded at the last minute. At high tide, the tracks are wide and overtaking's easy, but when you race that circuit again at low tide later in the game, they're narrower and harder.

On course

One thing that's definitely not last-minute is the course design. It's an interesting blend of straights and bends, offering opportunities to gain precious seconds by taking a chicane in the straightest possible way and punishing those who live with one finger on the accelerator. This is exactly how it should be, and a welcome change from games whose antiseptic courses look like they were built with Scalextric.

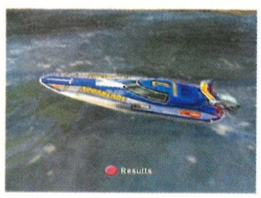
The boat's handling is likewise good, but very arcadey. Don't expect a rogue wave to flip you into the air and send you cartwheeling over the lip of the track and into one of the excellently-drawn trackside features. It won't. That's not to say the game's easy - it's just not a simulation. But then, no one ever said it was.

So what will change between now and the final code? Probably not very much. We hope they take a look at the lap times achieved by your opponents, though. We know this is an arcade game, but at the moment, you usually qualify in last place and then win the three-lap race with times that should put you right off the pace. It's only a minor niggle, but it's a niggle nonetheless.

> "the boat's handling is likewise good, but very arcadey"

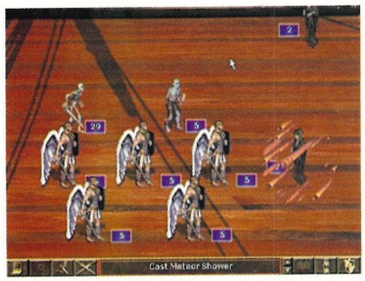
We reckon the developers will work hard on putting in a decent wake for the boats too. We know that in real life splashing around is inefficient and a smooth cut through the water essential for speed, but we could do with a little more spray and froth behind the boats.

So there we have it. 'Unassuming' is this game's middle name, but it seems well focused on its aim of being an arcade-style racer with little attention paid to the real world - a sort of Ridge Racer on the water, if you will. It looks unlikely to steal Ferrari 355 Challenge's crown, but as a straightforward racer programmed with the younger gamer in mind, it could well find a niche for itself in the rapidly-crowding world of Dreamcast drivers.

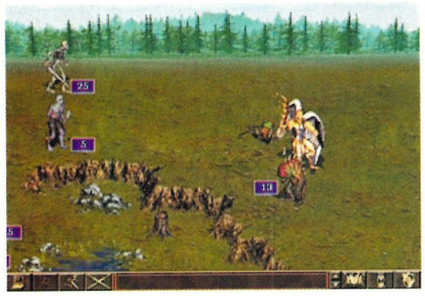


The boats all look very nice.

Publisher: Ubi Soft ■ Developer: 3DO
Released: Early 2001 ■ Genre: Strategy



Strategy games mostly look shite, but play well.



online... www.ubisoft.com

heroes of might and magic III

WHERE ARE THE REST?

The more perceptive of you will have noticed the number 3 in the game's title, and correctly have come to the conclusion that this ain't the first instalment in the HOMM saga. It is, however, the first time the series has made it across to the Dreamcast, but the previous games have been on computers only...

Meet a strategy game where you have to take it in turns... literally...

As a departure from the usual all-out blasting fare of even the purest advocate of the Dreamcast would have to admit that for strategy and role playing games, the console has been, until recently, a bit of a no-no. Taken on its arcade merits, and arguably the DC is a match for anyone. But attempt to get serious, and you'll end up nervously suggesting a game of Virtua Tennis instead as you desperately try to conceal that copy of Evolution that's busy gathering dust.

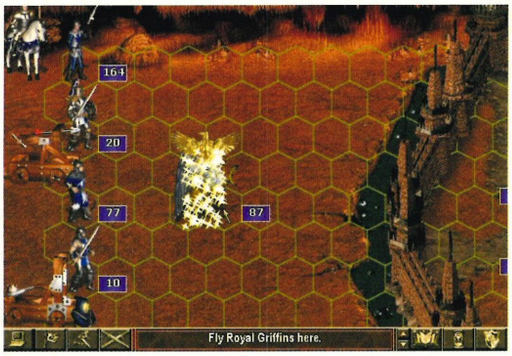
At least, that was how it used to be. Barely an issue or two ago, we were finally treated to Shenmue, an absolutely awesome, life gobbling piece of software that's broken new ground in the adventuring genre. It took a 10/10 off us, and we didn't even stop to ask for change. Don't forget too the imminent release of the mighty and ambitious Phantasy Star Online. But spare a thought for a game that could potentially get lost in the scrum of it all; Heroes of Might & Magic III.

A conversion of a widely respected PC game, HOMM3 (okay, it's lazy, but I ain't typing the full name out over and over) takes up the story of one Catherine Ironfist (Queen of Enroth, wherever that is). Catherine's dad has just carked it, so off she pops to the funeral, complete with military escort. The funeral's taking place in Erathia, but when she gets there, the place has only been ravaged and is falling into the hands of unscrupulous, not very pleasant individuals. Who smell. Anyway, our Catherine can't keep her beak out of anything, so promptly musters up the local armies, reclaims the capital city and then finds out what really killed her dad. Poisoned wine. Teach her not to buy that cheap shit off the market next time.

The Game

There's plenty more plot, but we're guessing you want to know about the game by now. It's a serious, turn based strategy war game, frankly. You've guessed it action fans, this ain't your page. You join the action by taking control of a bunch of Heroes in the land of Ethrania, where various battles are still taking place and much is left to be

The PC series is well respected, let's hope they do us proud in the DC version...



Ouch. That's gonna leave a mark...

discovered. You progress through the game by conquering towns (which then become part of your overall territory), although you'll then be susceptible to attack from the enemy. Finding the various treasures and artefacts that litter the place though won't do you any harm, and can certainly add to the resources at your disposal.

There are plenty of facets to HOMM3 that extend beyond the usual drill of explore, attack and defend. For instance, as you come to a town centre, that's as opportune a moment as any to recruit new members of your happy gang. Magic spells too play an important role in the game and can turn a losing position into a victory if you can arm yourself with the right one (and you can learn spells in the aforementioned town centres), and you can turn yourself into a bit of a Del Boy by doing a bit of trading in the towns too.

The main crux of things though is the strategy game itself. Effectively what we've got is a game of conquest, with plenty of trimmings on the side. Boasting characters above and beyond the usual cartoony heroes we're used to (sorry Sonic) and a huge in game world to seize control of, the game is an immense undertaking for the player, and may well turn out to be one of the most engrossing titles we've seen recently (apart from Shenmue of course - rather unsporting of Sega to completely move the goalposts there...). Things really hit top gear though when you've managed to amass yourself a huge army and battle commences - just take a look at the battlefield screenshots and it'll give you some idea of what you're dealing with here. It's not your usual charge and fire, as you can probably tell. Throughout, you're going to be making decision after decision, and the turn based structure dictates that decisive and prudent tactics are more likely to reap rewards than cobbling something together half way through a big scrap. Throw in the mixture of managing your resources, expanding your territories whilst not leaving your current land open to attack, and your brain could have a fair bit of work to do.

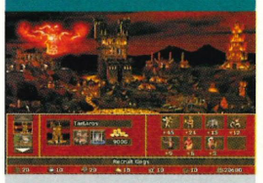
> "there are plenty of facets to homm 3 that extend beyond the usual drill of explore, attack and defend"

Brainey

There's little doubt that HOMM3 is one of the more cerebral games on the Dreamcast, and will reward the player who's willing to spend a solid amount of time with the game. The pacing is no doubt likely to put some off, but then lands the game direct in the path of those who prefer using their noddle to their knuckles. If that makes sense.

It's sitting on the schedules for a release early in 2001, meaning our all encompassing review will be arriving with you shortly. And if the finished product converts well to the Dreamcast, then dreary January and February could be well taken care of. That, or you'll have thrown another forty sheets down the toilet, but we're banking on UbiSoft and 3D0 giving us something worthwhile to stretch our grey matter with. Which is good. Because we've won Who Wants To Be A Millionaire now...

SPELL IT OUT



Those spells then can turn the balance of the game for the player who uses them right. There's a fair armoury to choose from too, although you'll have to earn the right to use some of the more complex. Oh, and they're divided into foru categories too; Air (which includes Lightning Bolt and Fly), Earth (examples - Summon Earth Elemental and Resurrection), Fire (fire balls, disrupting rays) and Water (frost ring, protection from water). And we've only scratched the surface there...

Publisher: Take 2 Interactive ■ **Developer:** Red Storm Entertainment
Released: Q1 2001 ■ **Genre:** Strategy/First-Person Shooter

online... www.take2europe.com

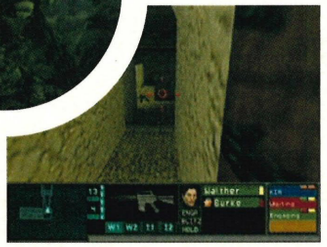
rainbow six

You're a member of Rainbow. A top-secret military organisation assembled to fight the rise of international terrorism. It's a tough job, but somebody's got to do it...

HARDWARE HEAVEN

Your average special forces member is rather tooled up, and Rainbow Six gives you the opportunity to try out some of the latest real-life hardware. Everything from standard sub-machine guns to pistols and grenades are catered for, with many different makes and models for each. Your men have the ability to carry a primary and secondary weapon (usually a machine gun and a pistol) plus slots for extra kit which is where you can load up your grenades, demolition kits, electronic kits and loads of other stuff which is essential to the mission at hand. You can also load your men up one by one so the amount of kit you have in the field is amazing. Of course, this makes things complicated, but we never said playing Rainbow Six was going to be easy.

Mission successful. We rescued the hostages and killed some foreigners.

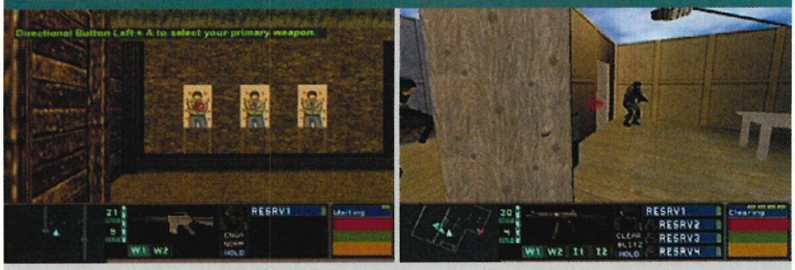


Lucky that there's an auto-aim option for tricky situations like this.

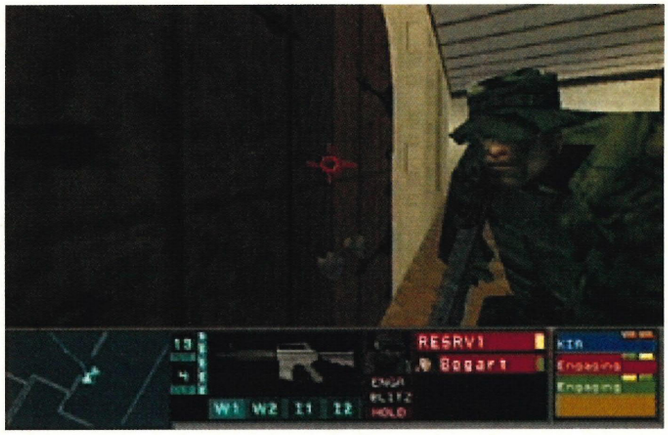
As a departure from the usual all-out blasting fare of first-person-shooters, Rainbow Six offers a more cerebral approach to the genre, in that mission planning comes as high on your list of priorities as good reactions and a natural ability to pop a cap in the proverbial ass [he means shoot-'em-up skills - Ed]. It's been a long time coming, but it seems as though the extra months the Dreamcast version has had in development were worthwhile, as from what we've played so far, Rainbow Six is shaping up to be the Dreamcast's only thinking man's shooter. And seeing as we're all so damn intelligent at dcm, it's right up our alley.

The general premise is to take full control of an active squad from the Rainbow organisation, and take them through numerous missions that usually involve some kind of terrorist organisation. Many of the missions are based on assaulting buildings and freeing hostages, but you also have to defuse bombs and assassinate the odd drug baron or two. Within the mission themes there's a vast amount of

BOOT CAMP



Rainbow Six is about as far away from a pick-up-and-play game as you can possibly get. The controls are complicated and the gameplay incredibly challenging, which is why there's an extensive Training Mode to get your teeth into.
There are four main training options: Fire and Movement, Room Clearing, Hostage Rescue and Open Training. Within each different option you find a wealth of training missions that really do help you when playing the game. So make sure you train first, otherwise you're going to be leading your team blind and you don't want to be responsible for their deaths, do you?



Your team has a number of different uniforms, all for different environments.

variety in the gameplay, making every mission feel totally new, even if it does have a similar theme to the last. You see, the position of your teams, the amount of enemies, the kit you take along, the environment and the mission. You then go on to choosing a team and its kit, and finally to the actual planning stages. This is the most complex part of the mission planning, as you have to set routes and objectives for the different routes you plan all make every level of Rainbow Six unique. And it's this planning that makes Rainbow Six itself unique compared to other Dreamcast first-person shooters.

> "It seems as though the extra months the Dreamcast version has had in development were worthwhile"

Pays to plan

Before you get anywhere near the action segments of the game, an extensive mission-planning section must be undertaken. Well, you can actually load a default plan, but this somewhat defeats the object. First off you start with a wealth of intelligence reports, all presented in a military fashion, with voice-overs giving you some useful information on the background of the teams under your control. Things can get really deep here as there's a hell of a lot that you can order your teams to do in the action segments without you being anywhere near them.

Even in the action segments you have a great deal of control over your team through numerous joypad commands. In fact, these are going to take an age to get used to as we filled up both sides of an A4 sheet after writing them down from the in-game options (we didn't get a manual, you see). If you don't trust the CPU to take care of tasks for you, it's easy to just swap between the teams you physically control and complete the tasks yourself.

At the moment, Rainbow Six is shaping up to be something pretty special in the gameplay department, but we can't help but worry about the visual situation. Rainbow Six appeared on the PlayStation a while back with some of the worst graphics we'd ever seen, and although the Dreamcast version improves on this ten-fold, the in-game graphics still don't seem to be up to much. The environments, though detailed, still need work in the lighting and texture department and some of the enemy movement leaves a lot to be desired. So too does the enemy AI which, in a game like this, should really be spot-on to provide that realistic feel that the game is trying to produce. Still, there's time yet. As long as the AI is sorted and the visuals touched up a little, it's possible Rainbow Six could become the Dreamcast thinking man's Quake III. Only time will tell...

RAINBOW INTEL

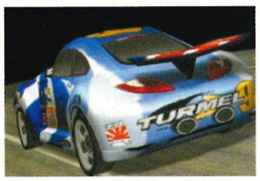
Although not wholly important to your mission planning, you have access to a massive amount of background intelligence on the people places and organisations involved in the mission. Not essential, but being privy to all of this information really helps add to the feeling that you're part of some kind of elite force. Which can only be good.

Why does every military organisation have to have somebody called Chavez?

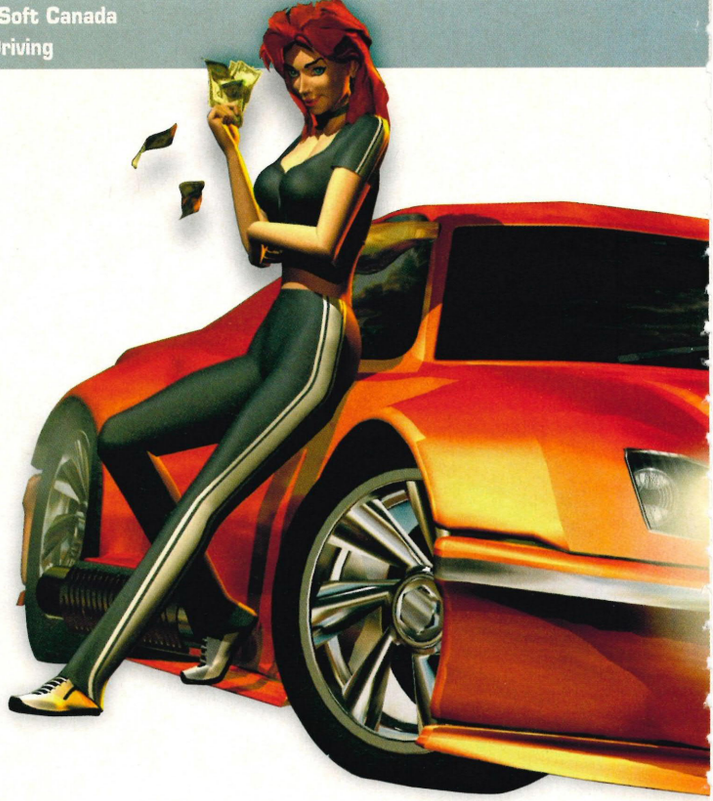
Publisher: Ubi Soft ■ Developer: Ubi Soft Canada
Released: February 2001 ■ Genre: Driving

speed devils online

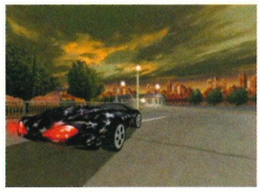
online... www.ubisoft.com

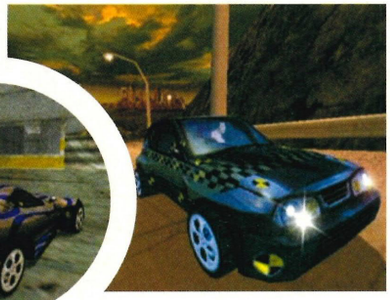


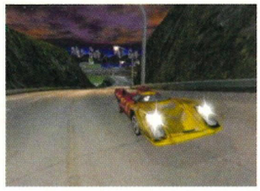
Speed Devils Online is the first DC internet racer

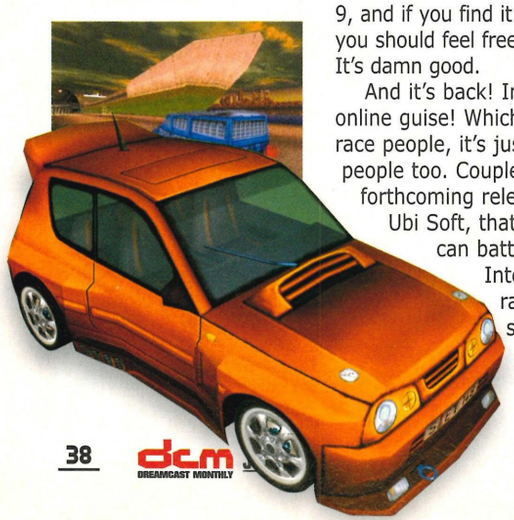


Race all over the world with gamers from all over the world...









Oh, you youngsters. We can hear you mumbling out there, wondering what this Speed Devils malarkey is all about. It's a racing game that involved you zooming around various increasingly strange tracks (weaving in and out of dinosaur's legs, that kind of thing) in the race for the finish line. We gave it a 9, and if you find it in a bargain bin, you should feel free to splash out on it. It's damn good.

And it's back! In a cunning new online guise! Which means? You still race people, it's just you can race real people too. Coupled with the forthcoming release of Pod 2 from Ubi Soft, that's two games you can battle out over the Internet. Life has rarely been finer. Or something.

The press release tried to confuse us with long words and a huge list of features, and it took our finest pruning skills to find the bare essentials. And here they are. The money side of things seems to be stronger, with you putting your hard-earned into custom vehicles, new paint jobs, repairs or even have a wager on the next race. Oh, and the other drivers are just as likely to have a wager with you too. It's not clear if they'll kneecap you if you take their money, but we'll find that out in due course.

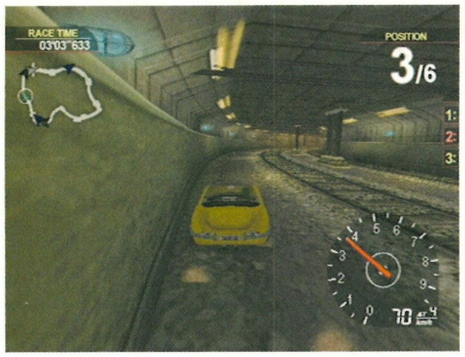
> "the structure has been enhanced for online gaming, with special tournaments and world ranking tables"

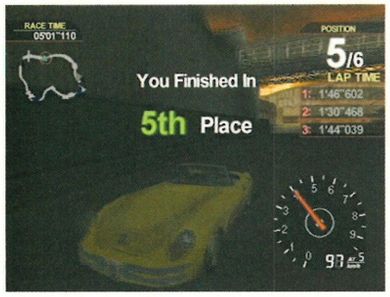
The structure has been enhanced for online gaming, with special tournaments, world ranking tables and such like, as well as the ability to jump into an existing race or set up one of your own. You can, as you'd expect, send rude messages to specific opponents too. Just deny it when they accuse you of it, and don't under any circumstances tell them we made you do it. We'll deny it too.

Track Tracking

The 15 tracks from the original game are included, as well as a new industrial level which can be played in varying weather conditions, and the car behaviour has been suitably tweaked. You can alter tyre type, you can play nitro levels with tanks, and choose from 22 cars across four classes. Oh, and each track has the usual bevy of short cuts and stuff like that.

So far, so hmmm-that-sounds-quite-good-actually. The biggest stumbling block the game faces, though, is the online side of things. It's no coincidence that there aren't many driving games you can play over the net, although Daytona and Pod 2 are on the starting grid too. The reason? Few games require a more steady connection than a racing game, which is won or lost outright in a few seconds. Just the tiniest hint of lag, and you could very well be stuffed. And that, boys and girls, is where this game will stand or fall. The core of it all, the game itself, we expect to be a nicely-evolved (if hardly a revolution) version of an already-enjoyable game. It's down to them technical Internet folk to get things all sorted. Otherwise Speed Devils Online could well become That-Bastard-Overtook-Me-Because-Of-That-Bastard-Lack-Of-Connection-Speed Devils Online. We're sure you'll agree with us and Ubi Soft that the former is the preferred option...





eos

Publisher: Titus Software ■ Developer: Player 1
Released: Early 2001 ■ Genre: Driving

Titus snatch the prize for the shortest game title ever, but does EOS look set to win anything else?

This one looks quite promising in an 'ok, so it's not Ferrari' sort of way. Indeed, if a few minor niggles are addressed, it could prove a quite promising little arcade racer.

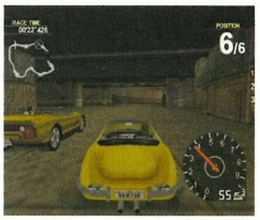
Let's get the negative out of the way first, and then get down to the nitty-gritty. Warning signs anticipating humpbacks, tight bends and other such hazards are always welcome, but not right in the middle of the screen, blocking your view. Also, the opponents take no evasive action if they're heading straight for you, making the game's AI look weak. Even on the grid, if you leave the accelerator alone someone will drive straight up your bum. They drive worse than Russell!

Tightly Tuned

Right, now we've got that out of the way, let's look at what might go right for the game. The shiny cars look cool, though strangely reminiscent of Titus' other Dreamcast racer Roadsters. The tracks are very testing, with obstacles and intrusions that are likely to spin your car in spectacular fashion should you mess up, though the mean and moody graphics sometimes make them a little indistinct. It's good to see the other drivers are able to make mistakes too. There's nothing worse than 'competing' against racers that never get anything wrong, with your own maximum speed boosted to compensate. At the moment they're a little over the top in this respect, driving into walls like, erm, Russell, but we're sure this will be tightened up in the finished version.

Overall, EOS (Evolution of Speed, if anyone's interested) is on the right (ahem) track. It will be interesting to see how it pans out over the coming months.

Farmer Giles wasn't happy with cars driving through his field

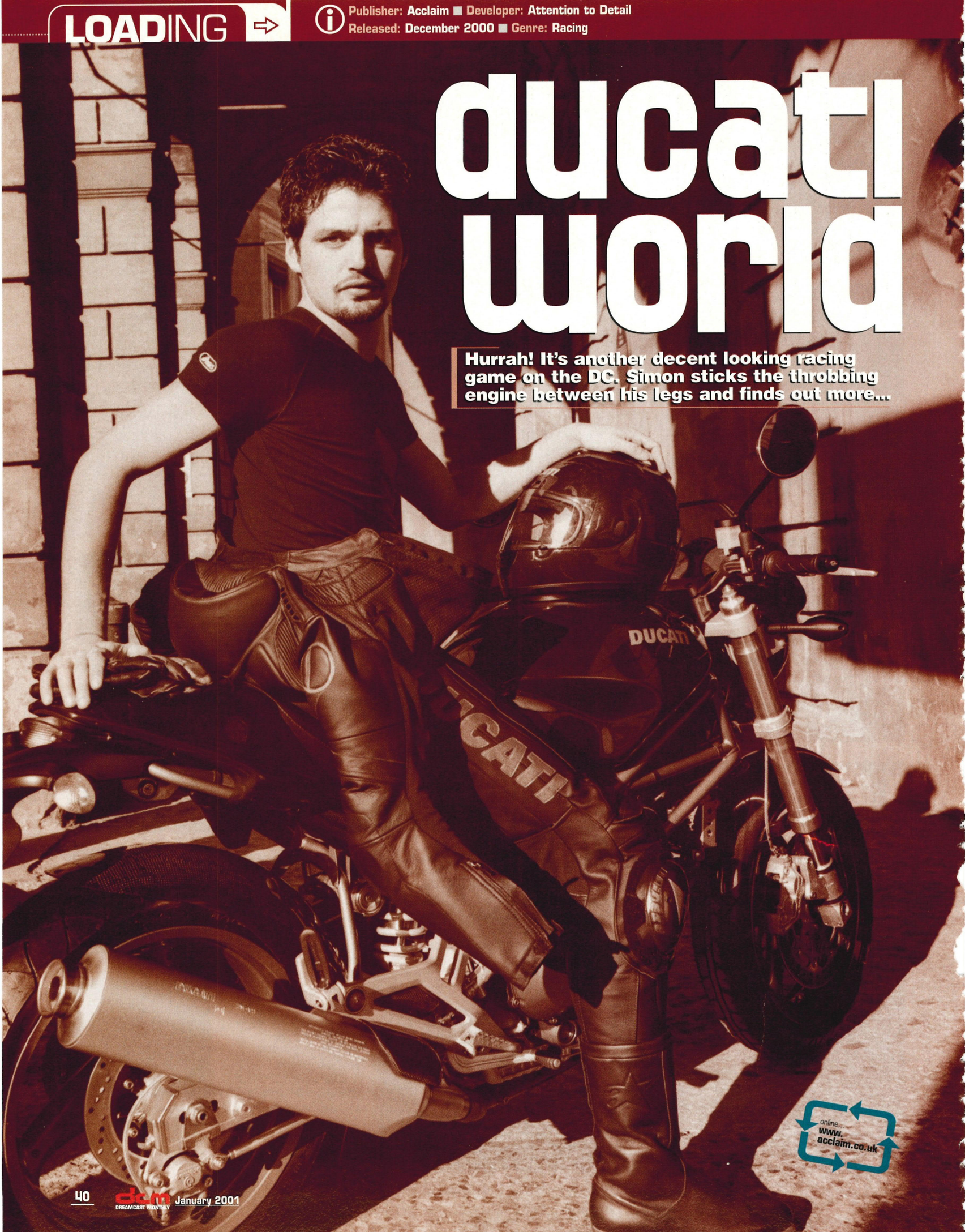


No we haven't accidentally used a Crazy Taxi shot!

Publisher: Acclaim ■ Developer: Attention to Detail
Released: December 2000 ■ Genre: Racing

ducati world

Hurrah! It's another decent looking racing game on the DC. Simon sticks the throbbing engine between his legs and finds out more...



online... www.acclaim.co.uk

easy rider

The last time we were given a biking game on the Dreamcast, it frightened us. Not for nothing did Jeremy McGrath Motocross 2000 receive a 2/10 in a feature entitled Keep the Receipt. And yet despite the fact that the same publisher is at the helm, the next attempt to bring a decent biking game to the DC seems a lot more hopeful. And, surprisingly enough, it's called Ducati World.

You don't have to be much of a Sherlock to work out the signficance of the Ducati licence here. The game is packed with their bikes past and present, and serves up a serious, albeit playable biking game that aims to ride the balance between simulation and fun. We're going to let them tell you about it shortly, but there are some grand ideas in DW that are worth highlighting.

WE HAD A TINKER WITH THE PSX VERSION AND ARE THUS HIGHLY SMUG TO REPORT THE DC LICKS IT ALL OVER

Our favourite has to be the two player game, where the winner takes the other person's bike. Sounds like a bit of a pisser if you've spent a couple of weeks getting it up to scratch, but life can be cruel like that. Whilst you can opt for the quick race option, it's the full Ducati Life option that gives the game its longevity, and whilst the vehicle choices on offer don't worry Gran Turismo or Sega GT too much, the key thing is that they should handle well, and be fun to ride. Ahem.

The game is underpinned by the engine that powered the two Rollcage games (which alas only appeared on PC and Playstation), and they were known for the fast speeds and reasonable detail they managed (some would argue they ran too fast, but then they'd be wussies). Whatever, it provides a solid foundation for DW.

Eight unique tracks are included in with the game, over which you can run league races, classic races or challenge races. The more you win, the more moolah you accumulate and the more you can fine tune your bike so you stand more than a cat hell's chance of winning next time around. Predictably, not every race can be accessed from the start, as the learning curve dictates that you must pass a variety of tests to earn different grades of licences. And as some races demand a certain licence level, it's not something you're going to be able to shirk too easily. Bah humbug.

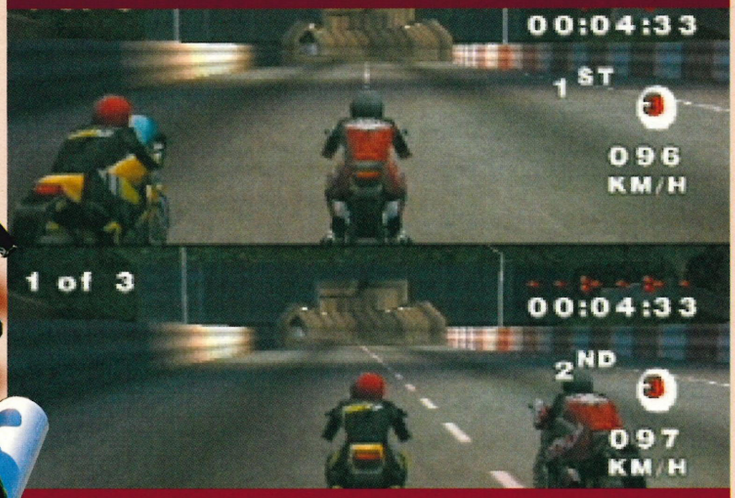
Before we sign over to our intimate Q&A session, we should make a point about the visuals. We did, in one of our weaker moments, have a quick tinker with the Playstation version of the game, and are thus highly smug to report that the DC licks it all over and then spits on it a bit. Shenmue it ain't, but for a racing game, Ducati not only looks good, but from the code we had a play with, runs quite smoothly too. We were still shit at it though.

JUMP IN QUICK

The developers have been quick to point out that Ducati World is effectively two games in one. That's not quite true, but what they're getting at is that you don't have to do the Ducati life career option if you don't want to. The Quick Race will leave you with a more simplified gaming experience, with the added advantage of letting you get to the good stuff that little bit quicker.

Ducati make the worlds best bikes. They're fast too

attention to detail

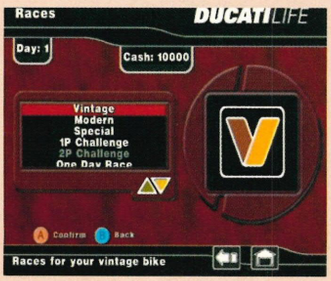


HEAD TO HEAD

As you'd expect, one of the best ways to play a game like this is in multiplayer mode. No exceptions here, especially with the added incentive of getting your opponent's bike as a prize at the end of it all. Certainly should make Head to Head mode that little bit more interesting...!

LOTS OF DUCATI

They weren't kidding when they said they'd packed plenty of Ducati bikes into the game, with over forty of the throbbing engines making up the in game vehicles. And for those into a little bit of history, a quick trip over to the Ducati museum will even let you swot up on what's what.



Call us nosey. Call us interrogative. Call us irritating. But when we had the chance to put the MD of developers Attention to Detail on the spot, we didn't have to be asked twice. His name was Chris Gibbs. And it still is, last time we checked...

dcm: So who are you, and what have you done before? Any Dreamcast stuff?

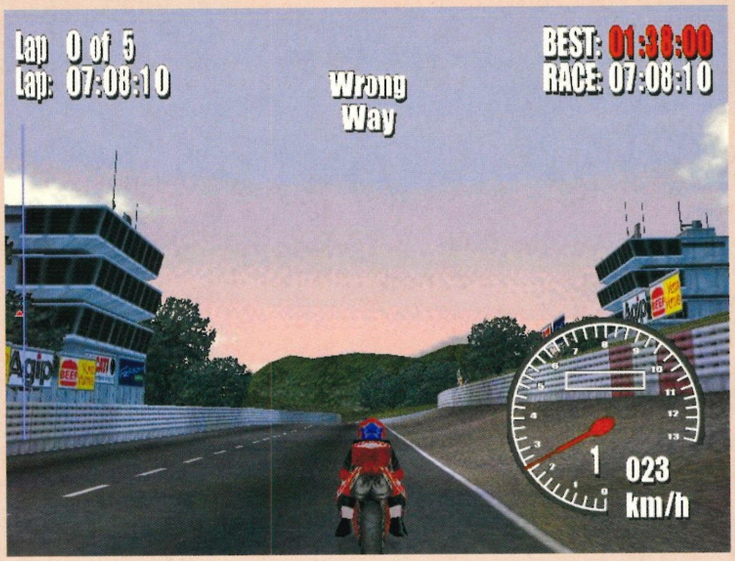
CHRIS: Attention To Detail have been developing computer games for well over thirteen years now. Our earlier titles include Super Sprint for the Atari ST, Night Shift for PC, ST and Amiga, Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis for similar gaming platforms, through to more recent titles like Rollcage 1 and Stage 2 for the PSX. The last title that was launched from the ATD stable was the highly successful Sydney 2000, the Official video game of this year's Olympics. This arrived on the Sega Dreamcast, which looks particularly stunning, as well as the PSX and PC within Europe.

dcm: Okay then, tell us a little about Ducati World.

CHRIS: Ducati World has been a collaboration with not only the publisher Acclaim, but also since day one with Ducati themselves. What has occurred is the convergence of the publisher, which has an extremely well oiled (no pun intended) distribution infrastructure and marketing ability, a motorcycle manufacturer which is perceived within Europe to be the Ferrari of the motorcycling world and finally Attention To Detail, which is renowned for developing one of the fastest and smoothest racing engines seen within publishing circles for a number of years.

dcm: But the Dreamcast isn't exactly bursting with quality motorcycle games, and the last game on a bike was the awful Jeremy McGrath's Motocross 2000. What do you learn from the opposition, and from poor games like that?

CHRIS: To be honest with you we have not paid too much attention to what else has been developed in this genre for the Dreamcast. Of course we have taken the odd look at product x and title y, but right from day one we have been pretty much focussed on what we are trying to deliver. I have never been one to diss or have a go at other publishers or developers products, because no-one when they start a project goes out with the intention of making a bad game. What we have done in the past at ATD is go out with the objective of finding out what we think will make a good racing game, and home in on the elements that appeal to us as members of the team. We did this years ago on Super Sprint, and more recently on Rollcage and Rollcage Stage 2. A common theme that runs through all the previous products and now Ducati World is to retain an Arcade Simulation driving or riding experience. Thus, not to lean too much to the simulation mode making the product too clinical, whilst ensuring that there is a strong element of fun. It is the marrying together of these two different modes that has made the other titles such a success.



dcm: What opportunities and restrictions did the Ducati licence hold?

CHRIS: There were no real restrictions due to the fact that as a group all three parties working on the project were in agreeance with what we were trying to achieve as an end result. Ducati gave us access to all of the technical data that they had accumulated over the last 50 years or so This meant we had information on the 'Cucciolo' which was their very first bike launched in the 50's, through to the 'Monsters' and even Carl Fogarty's highly tuned piece of racing kit. This information was supplied to us via Ducati Corse's Technical Director, Corrado Cecchinelli. Basically it means that the physics models for the 40 plus Ducati bikes is second to none.

dcm: You've based the Ducati games on the Rollcage engine. As Rollcage hasn't appeared on the Dreamcast, how tricky was it to convert across and keep the trademark speed and fluidity in place?

CHRIS: We did have a PC version of Rollcage and this helped in developing the DC version. However, we still needed to apply DC specific optimisations to get the most out of the machine.

dcm: Any plans for a DC Rollcage?

CHRIS: Whilst I would love to personally see the game on this format we have to remember that Sony Psygnosis own the rights to Rollcage and therefore it is extremely unlikely to come out on a competitive platform.

dcm: Ducati World seems to be a game bursting with options. Can you talk us through some of the better ones?

CHRIS: We could go on all day about the features that are on offer and the fact that the product has taken a lot of its inspiration from the likes of Gran Turismo. There are the look and feel of the tracks, combined with the numerous different ways these can be raced when competing against a fellow player. There are all of the options that are available to the player that they can adopt when fine tuning a machine, or perhaps upgrading a second hand bike. Then there is racing head to head against a mate in order to nick (as a result of racing) his prized possession. I really could go on, but one option that I personally like is screaming up the drag strip on Fogy's bike on the second licence tests, but seriously, as a dev team we are particularly proud of the fact that we think the ride of the bikes sit firmly on the sweet spot between arcade thrill and the realism of a purist's simulation. We are also pretty chuffed at the sheer number of Ducati's we have crammed into the code.

dcm: What are the key challenges in keeping racing games fresh?

CHRIS: It is important to give the player a fresh motivation for playing a racing game - it is simply not good enough to offer 'beating the best time' as the main game objective. With Ducati you are challenged with collecting as many cool bikes for your own garage, which open up new types of race and gives you a real sense of achievement.

dcm: And how do next generation consoles raise the goalposts?

CHRIS: The next gen machines allow us to give everything in the game more detail and more complexity. This can be used to deliver realism, special effects, believable characters, beautiful environments etc. However, in themselves the next gen formats do nothing to offer fresh experiences for racing games - this is the job of the developer: to envisage new twists to the racing game genre that give the gamer a different gameplay mechanic, or a different motivation and set of rewards for playing the game.

dcm: Finally, what are your future plans? Do you have any more Dreamcast games in the offing?

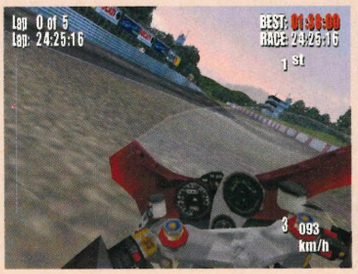
CHRIS: At the moment we don't. It will be interesting to see how DC performs this Christmas and whether publishers ask to put our new crop of games onto the DC platform.

dcm: Will there be a Ducati sequel?

CHRIS: I very much hope so... but that would be telling!

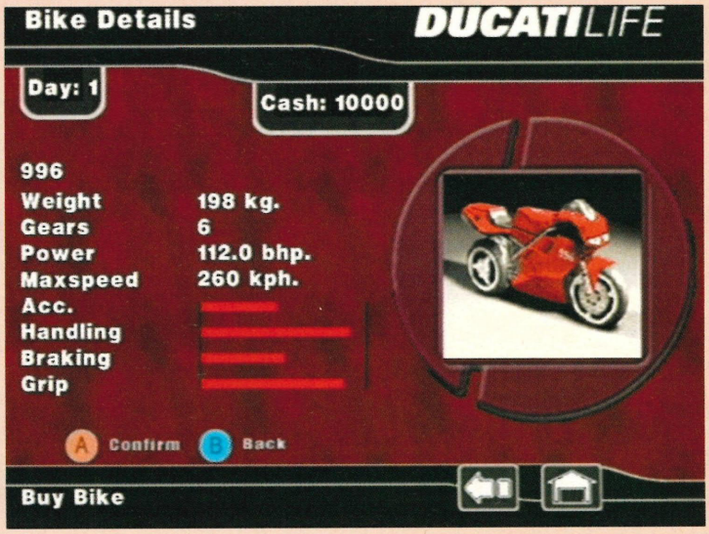
And with that, he promptly exited the room before we could extract another syllable. Until the next time, boys and girls...

DUCATI NOT ONLY LOOKS GOOD, BUT FROM THE CODE WE HAD A PLAY WITH, RUNS SMOOTHLY TOO. WE WERE STILL SHIT AT IT THOUGH



THIS IS MY LIFE

By far the best way to play the game is using the Ducati Life Campaign feature, which challenges you to work your way from absolute novice through to biking genius. With a finite amount of cash (which can be replenished by winning races), you must buy a bike (either new, vintage or second hand), along with helmet, leathers and upgrades, and then choose which races to enter (assuming you're properly qualified). In other words, you have to work for a living. Bah.



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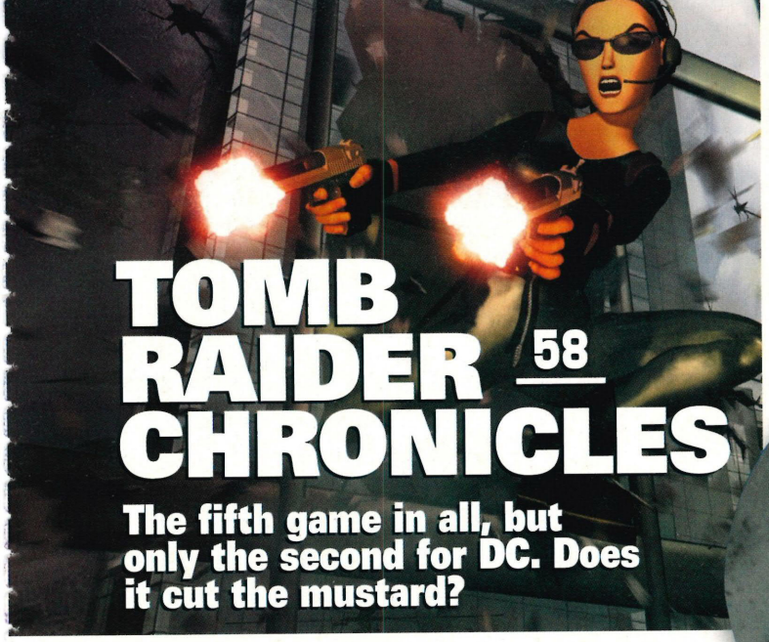
REVIEW CONTENTS

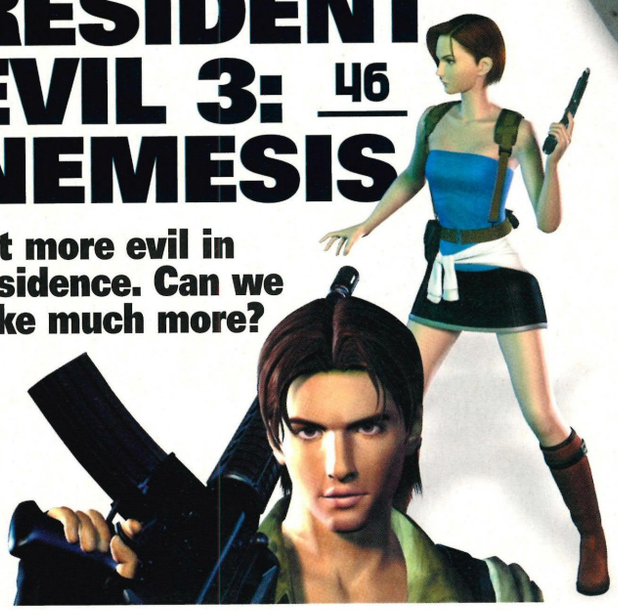


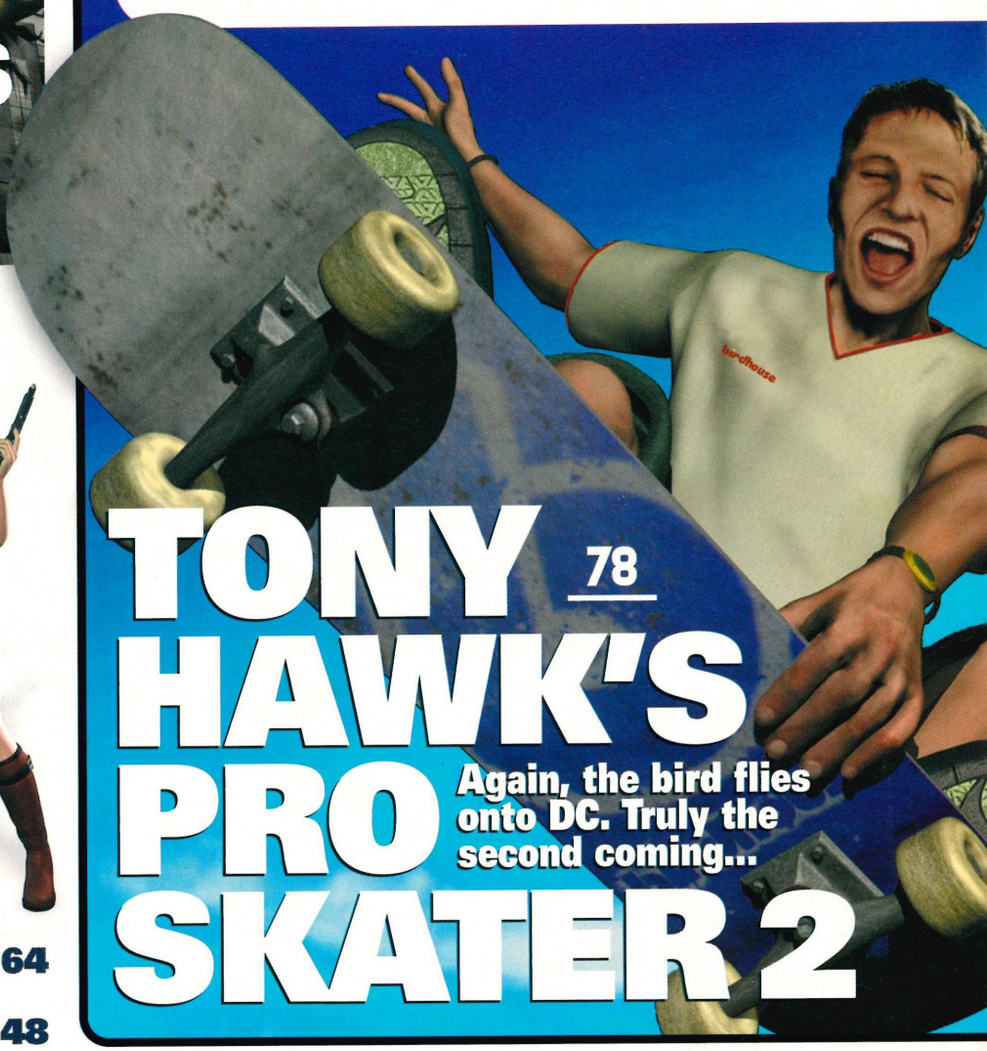
TOMB RAIDER CHRONICLES 58

The fifth game in all, but only the second for DC. Does it cut the mustard?

RESIDENT EVIL 3: NEMESIS 46

Yet more evil in residence. Can we take much more?





TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2 78

Again, the bird flies onto DC. Truly the second coming...

102 DALMATIANS 64
Cute, cuddly and for kids.

CAPCOM VERSUS SNK 48
2D Fighting at its best.

DINO CRISIS 54
More PSX rehashed survival horror.

KAO THE KANGAROO 84
No awards for this 3D platformer.

KISS: PSYCHO CIRCUS 68
It's not Half-Life, but it's not bad.

LODOSS WAR 50
One for the Strategy/RPG fans.

MR. DRILLER 82
It might not be Tetris, but it's still addictive.

SNO-CROSS 74
Decidedly average snow racing.

SUPER RUNABOUT 76
Arcade havoc. It'll keep you going till Crazy Taxi 2.

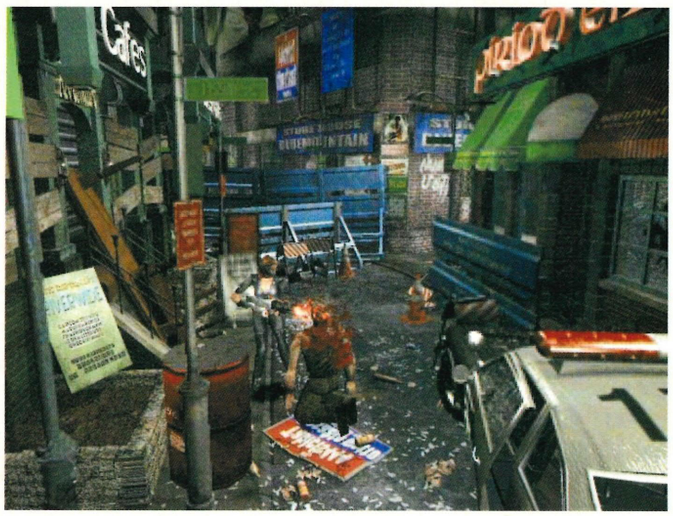
SURF ROCKET RACER 56
Jet skies are fun, but is this?

TOY STORY 2 62
Already brimming the bargain bins.

SEGA GT 70

After the delights of Ferrari and MSR last month, Sega GT is decidedly average.

Publisher	VIRGIN INTERACTIVE	Developer	CAPCOM	Genre	SURVIVAL HORROR	Peripherals
Available	OUT NOW	Players	1	Price	£39.99	



"And that's for dribbling on my shoes you zombie scum monkey!!!"

RESIDENT EVIL 3

online... www.capcom.com

The zombies return to Raccoon City, but is this third outing for the Resi series ace undead action or just flogging a dead horse?

monster mash

Resident Evil. Zombie-zonking mayhem, blood-curdling action, terrifying enemies, perplexing puzzles and fit birds in tight miniskirts as main characters. Once the words 'Resident' and 'Evil' on a game cover almost guaranteed a huge mark from the reviewer, but do we really need this, a near-direct port of a year-old PlayStation game? I'm the first to defend companies who convert their classics to our wicked white box, but surely porting an ageing title from an inferior machine is going too far? Let's lift the lid and see if the cash cow has been milked once too often...

The storyline (always a cool part of a Resi game is set between Resident Evils 1 and 2, with STARS cop Jill Valentine retiring from the force. She's trapped in the ever-miserable Raccoon City (how many hassles can one town take?), zombies created by the Umberella Corporation's T-Virus are all around and she's got a hair appointment in the afternoon. Luckily, she teams up with Carlos, who doesn't care if she's having a bad hair day. Together they gradually unveil the secrets behind the Umberella Corporation...

Russell says... "Capcom? Cash converters more like!"

Anyone who's ever played a Resi game will be well familiar with the way the action unwinds. Jill gets to her feet as a veritable legion of zombies stagger towards her in true B-movie style, ie. slower than Russell's car on cold mornings and with their arms outstretched as if they were going to give you a nice, warm hug.

"The pink might hide the blood, but I'm just not sure."

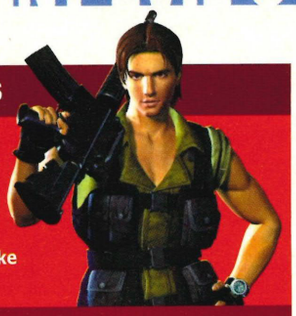
Visual Violence

It's at this point in the game PSX veterans of the Umberella wars notice two things about the Dreamcast Resi 3 'update' - firstly, that the graphics have been improved, and secondly, that these improvements don't go nearly far enough. As you would expect from a Dreamcast game, the

SATURDAY NIGHT AT THE MOVIES...

As well as being technically splendid, the intro sequence to Resident Evil 3 is also well directed and worth watching, a rare combination these days. The zombie threat is outlined, as you see hoards of undead creatures tear apart a police roadblock and storm a hospital. It's as gruesome as ever, but as usual for a Resi game, it raises more questions than it answers. Which is where you come in...

JILL AND CARLOS



The main characters in this outing are Jill Valentine, who returns from the first game, and Carlos, a mercenary who initially works for Umberella. Anyone else think Jill looks like Jamie Lee Curtis?

Same old game, same old menu.

visuals are more rounded, and feel more organic. Signposts and minor features that would be pained onto the PlayStation's polygons are built separately here, taking advantage of the Dreamcast's better processing power. Likewise, the flames look more realistic, and the lighting effects more polished. It all goes tits-upwards when you, as the buxom Ms Valentine, turn your body to spray the malevolent monsters with a lead shower. You just turn on the spot without moving your legs, as if poor ol' Jill was on an invisible turntable. She tends to walk through rather than around fallen foes too. This might have been okay on the 32-bit PSX, but on a next-gen 128-bit wonder machine, it's just not acceptable.

Likewise (and perhaps unsurprisingly), the basic gameplay remains the same. The puzzles were never all that well tied in with the game world, though claims that they're illogical are wide of the mark. After all (and here's a fictitious example - we won't spoil it for you), finding a set of metal cutters to cut a chain from around a statue's neck might let you retrieve the medallion hanging from it. This could be the exact shape as a hole in a treasure chest - put the medallion into the hole to open the chest and retrieve a more powerful gun. The clues are there, and there's nothing illogical about it. After all, I once played an adventure where you had to sit in a sofa and wait for someone to let you out of the first room. If you didn't do it, you couldn't get out. Now THAT'S illogical, and impossible to work out to boot. The puzzles in Resi are, however, pretty unrealistic. After all, who puts a gun in a treasure chest, fashions a stupidly-exotic key, and then hangs said key around the neck of a statue in such a way that you had to cut it off to get it? This may or may not be a problem, depending on how you like your game puzzles, but if you've played the PSX game, expect the same here.

More of the Same...

And herein lies a second problem. One of the main criticisms of the second and third Resi games on the PSX is that they were too damned similar to what came before. Sure the plot's changed, more baddies were added, they grew bigger and generally got a graphical make-over. Even so, many (and I mean 'many') moaned they were so similar it was hardly worth buying a sequel. And now we get the this sequel which not only plays like the previous games, but has also been ported almost intact from a weaker machine!

When it was first released, Resident Evil was one of the most original and exciting games to hit the consoles. This ageing Dreamcast release, however, really does over-milk a cash cow that should be radically overhauled or put out to pasture. I mean, who wants BSE? Resident Evil: Code Veronica showed how good a dedicated Dreamcast Resi game could be, so who needs this dodgy rehash of a game that was already too similar to its predecessors when first released a year ago? It's not that it's a bad game. It isn't. Nor is it that we mind an established game being brought to the Dreamcast. We don't. It's just that porting a game from a machine with a fraction of the DC's processing power and giving it little more than a lick-wash in the improvements department is simply unacceptable. And lazy. So don't do it again... ■ *Ian Osborne*

ALL CHANGE

At the start of a new game, you get to choose which costume the delectable Jill will wear. This is one of the few enhancements offered for the Dreamcast version - and what a difference it makes! Bet the costumes with short skirts are most popular. Other enhancements include watching shells fall to the ground as you shoot and the slaving of the health meter to the VMU.

dcm **6**

VERDICT Lazily ported PlayStation game. A resi 2 & 3 double pack would be great value at £40, but one ported game doesn't cut it.

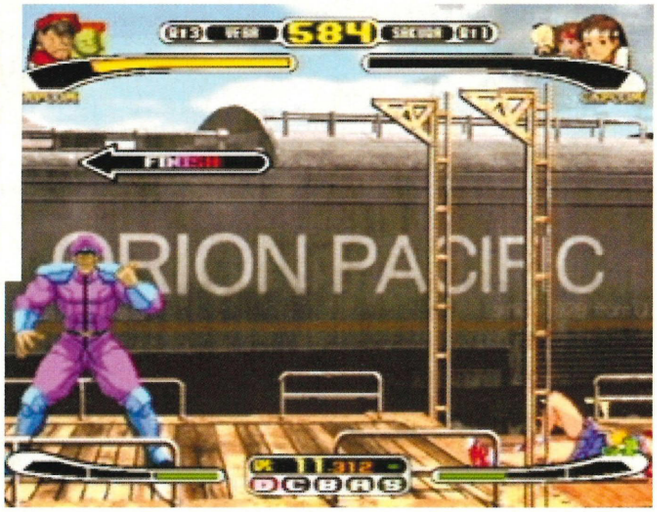
ALTERNATIVELY...

Code Veronica • *Issue 10 • 9/10*
Resi that isn't PSX port. You know which one to get.

COMING SOON...

Soul Reaver 2 • *Eidos*
Dark and dangerous plot, Dreamcast dedicated.

Publisher	VIRGIN INTERACTIVE	Developer	CAPCOM	Genre	BEAT-'EM-UP	Peripherals
Available	DECEMBER	Players	1-2	Price	£39.99	



M. Bison plumps for a lovely blue and violet number for the winter season

CAPCOM VERSUS SNK

Two dimensions for sure, but bloody playable too. Looks, it seems, can be deceptive...

online... www.vie.com

two become one

It could almost be an essay question. 'The 2D fighting genre is dead and buried, with little more than tired retreads of glories gone by to pick from anymore. Discuss.' And we'd like to present you with our response. It's called SNK Vs Capcom.

To be fair, it's Capcom that has held the genre together after giving it its finest moments in the guise of the various Street Fighter titles. Sure, they've gone into overkill recently, but few would argue that the SF games they have been releasing haven't been playable. And then there's SNK, whose games we don't seem to see too many of over here, but trust us, they're more than adept at the 2D fighter themselves. Pool them together, and you get a game that raises the stakes still further. Ladies and gentlemen, SNK Vs Capcom.

Rich says... "Another 2D fighter, give me Soul Calibur any day"

Simple But Effective

The premise is as simple as you'd expect. Picking from the elite of the fighters from SNK's and Capcom's respective games, you set up your bouts and fight. As usual, each player has special moves and combos at their disposal, some of which you can pull off from Day One, while others need a little more practice.

Interestingly, the game introduces a ratio system to even out the bouts. Effectively, you're given four tokens with which to buy your characters for the fight. You can spend that on four one-token value characters, who are the weakest in the game (although that's a point that's open to

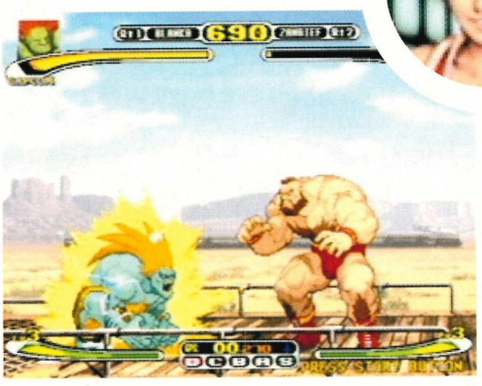
SECRETS

As you play the game, it tots up special points as you go along which serve to unlock the various options (over 70 of them) in the Secret Mode, which you can access off the main menu. What kind of secrets can you get? As well as enhanced versions of the existing character roster, you can uncover new fighters and other extra goodies. And there are so many secrets to unlock, you can bet your bottom dollar it's going to take you a fair bit of time to find them all...

Sagat rocks. We can still hear 'Tiger Uppercut!' now

debate anyway) or you can buy maybe two single-token fights and one double-token. It's your call, really, and unsurprisingly it does add a certain amount of strategy beyond the usual pick-your-character screen, even if it doesn't level things out quite as it should.

You choose from Training, Versus and Arcade Modes. The latter takes you into the plot-driven side of things, which varies depending on whether you play on the side of SNK or Capcom (and yes, you do have to choose). The bottom line is still fighting your way through various bouts until you come up against a mighty baddy at the end of the game, and truth be told, it isn't too tricky to get to the end in an hour or so. What prolongs the longevity in single-player mode is the incentive to go back and uncover the various secrets, and to challenge yourself to win using various lesser fighters. It certainly kept us going for a while.



Unfortunately, the superb presentation of the game up to the fighting isn't carried through to the bouts themselves. Up until the first punch is thrown, the game displays some of the liveliest menu and opening screens we've seen, yet when the preamble to the arena you're fighting in has played out and you're left with the same, generally tatty looking 2D sprites on your screen, you can't help but be a little disappointed. Still, stick with it, as to the credit of the game, you generally don't give a monkey's about the graphics within minutes of picking up the joypad.

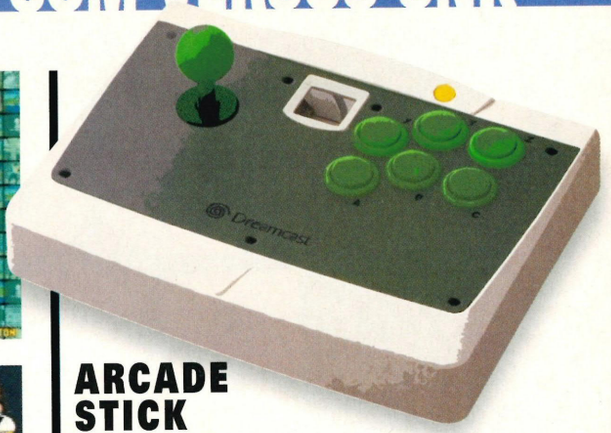
Power Punching

The reason for this? Excellent gameplay, pure and simple. Say what you like about 2D fighting games, but when they work, they offer some of the finest console entertainment on the market. And in combining the talents of the two market leaders in this field, instead of the result being an untidy mish-mash, they've actually gone and delivered the finest 2D fighter in recent times. Certainly it's not at the cutting edge of gaming, and in their own ways Soul Calibur and Power Stone 2 are finer achievements than this. But that's missing the point. This is a fighting game for dedicated fighting games fans, who'd gladly swap the bells and whistles for top class gameplay.

The controls are kept as simple as always, with the two triggers, four buttons and the analogue stick used to control the action. Various combinations of all of these together have a habit of unleashing some rather tasty moves on the opposition, and some time spent on the practice arenas will certainly help you bring these moves out.

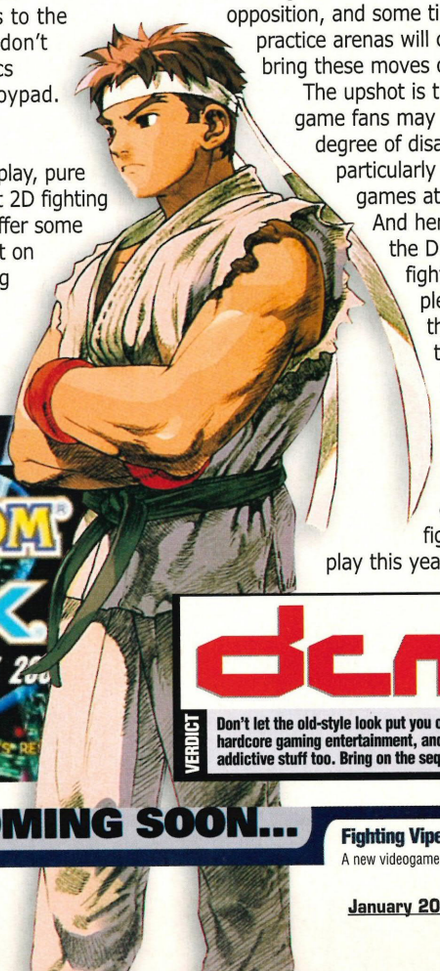
The upshot is that new fighting game fans may well encounter a degree of disappointment, particularly if they like their games at the cutting edge. And herein lies the beauty of the Dreamcast. In the fighting genre, there are plenty of other titles they can try, leaving the more serious player left with this. In short, everyone's a winner. Don't be put off by the screenshots - this is one of the better fighting games you'll play this year. ■ *Simon Brew*

> "say what you like about 2d fighting games, but when they work, they offer some of the finest console entertainment on the market"



ARCADE STICK

Arcade fighting games require the arcade stick, frankly. At least if you're serious about your fighting games. Okay, the joypad in this case is flexible enough to handle the action, but when things genuinely get serious and the Turbo Mode is enabled, every split second counts and Sega's mighty peripheral is just the ticket. Trust us.



dcm 8

VERDICT Don't let the old-style look put you off. This is hardcore gaming entertainment, and mighty addictive stuff too. Bring on the sequel...

ALTERNATIVELY...

Power Stone 2 • *Issue 12* • *9/10*
This is another winner bearing the Capcom name.

COMING SOON...

Fighting Vipers 2 • *Sega*
A new videogame scrap, due early next year.

Publisher	SWING! INTERACTIVE	Developer	NEVERLAND	Genre	ARCADE ADVENTURE	Peripherals
Available	NOW	Players	1	Price	£39.99	

LODOSS: RECORD OF LODOSS WAR

In days of old, when knights were bold - they crapped out of the windows 'cos toilets weren't invented. But is this latest swords and sorcery epic a romantic, swashbuckling tale or another low-flying turd?

Ring a-ring a-roses...

SPLAT!

Needless to say, getting surrounded by enemies like this often offers the same results - your death. If you look like being surrounded, aim for the weaker warriors and carve a path through them into open space. Then run, tackling them a few at a time instead of all at once.

the monster mash

GOING EQUIPPED

Equipping the various items you find along the way is a cinch. Your character is shown wearing the items you've won so far, with a box for various pieces of equipment such as armour, helmet, weapon, shield and magical bits and pieces such as a necklace and rings. You can discard that which you don't need. Also on this screen are the stats for your character.

Anime gets everywhere. The whole world seems to be watching badly-animated Japanese cartoons, whether it's the latest kiddie rip-off of Blade Runner or a Manga minger with a more 'adult' theme, ie. an unhealthy obsession with white knickers.

Scores of games show intense anime influences too. This one certainly does. Lodoss: Record of Lodoss War (stupid title) is based on a 13-part anime series, which in turn is based on a series of novels.

Those who remember Diablo on the PlayStation will feel right at home here. With its RPG-lite attitude and action-orientated adventuring, this pretty-much IS Diablo. Except it's on the Dreamcast. And hasn't got a multiplayer option.

The evil goddess is resurrected, only one man has what it takes to bring peace and harmony - let's skip the plot. The developers certainly did. The intro sequence is very good from a technical point of view and features some great Blood Omen/Soul Reaver-style voice-overs, but says little of interest. I mean, how many tales of long-ended wars can we gamers stand, furnished with endless shots of over-muscled warriors raising their swords to the sky and ancient dragons flying past (cue inevitable lightning). No great originality in the intro, then.

Say it with flowers - give her a triffid.

> "those who remember diablo on the playstation will feel at home here"

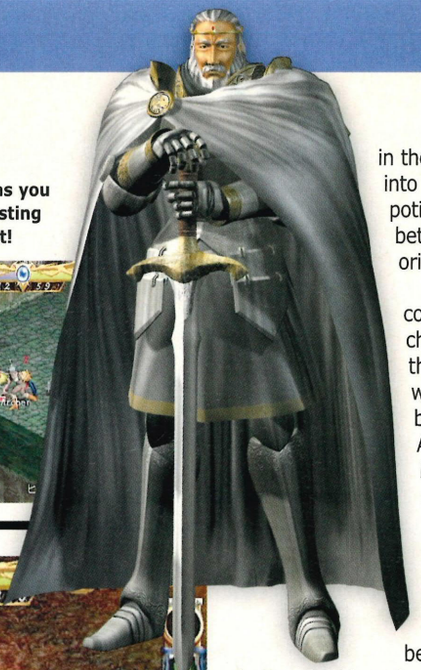
First Impressions

Thankfully, the game's considerably better than the plot. Like most good games, the tutorial is integrated into the game itself instead of being bolted on as an option. Here you learn how to manipulate your environment as the old codger's mates set you a series of tasks such as opening a treasure chest, learning to attack and equipping armour. The user interface is splendid, and allows much better ease of use than the game's, erm, 'inspiration' Diablo. The analogue stick moves you from A to B, the D-pad operates your menu and

MAPPING THE MAYHEM

Whilst you explore, a map appears in the bottom-left corner of the screen. It's drawn as you go, helping you to identify unexplored areas as well as finding your way back to interesting spots. It's unintrusive, and an invaluable aid to your quest. Don't leave home without it!

Sometimes the battles can get really heated.



in the middle of a battle and tuck into a leg of lamb and a health potion and expect to come out the better for it, but this is an action-orientated game after all.

The game's RPG elements come not from developing your character as a person, but from the items he finds along the way. For example, you win a buckler in the training section. A buckler isn't something that keeps your belt together and stops your trousers falling down - it's a small, lightweight shield. It's not a particularly good shield, but it's better than nothing. Later in the game you find a better shield, and then an even better shield, and so on. Naturally this improves your defence (it would be a pretty lame shield if it didn't), but the game works out all that nauseating number-crunching for you - don't expect a traditional stats-heavy RPG here.

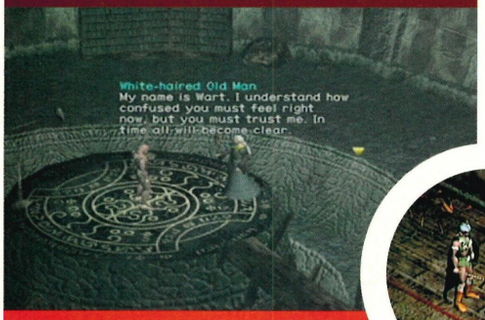
The combat is far from traditional too. Instead of the take-it-in-turns options-led battles favoured by most role-players, here you have to swing for your foes arcade-style. A common bugbear in this sort of game is the repetitive nature of the fights - walk up to your enemy, strike him until he falls, walk up to the next enemy, strike him until - you get the picture. It's more boring and repetitive than a night in at my house. Lodoss War isn't blameless in this respect, but an element of strategy does creep in when you've played it for a few minutes.

"the background storyline is hackneyed and unoriginal, covering every rpg cliché in the tome"

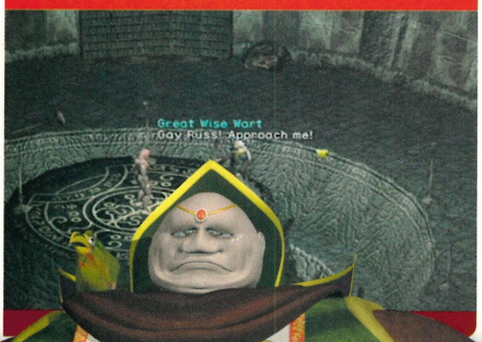
the buttons carry out various tasks such as attacking and picking up items. The menu system allows several items to be displayed at once, meaning they're a cinch to find in the heat of battle. Diablo often saw you die because you couldn't get to your health-restoring item soon enough, but here you just equip it in your side menu as soon as you get it, enabling you to binge on hit points whenever you like. Naturally, this is unrealistic - you don't sit down

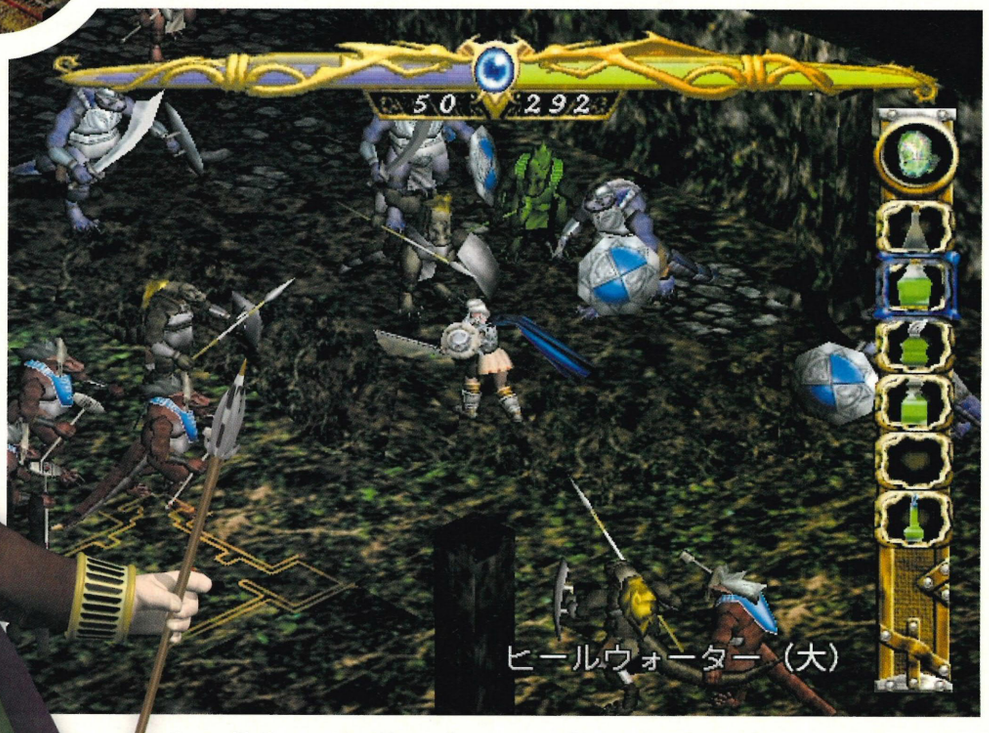
Simon says... "It's good but I'm waiting for Phantasy Star Online"

RESURRECTION



When the hero is brought back from the grave by the imaginatively-named White Haired Old Man, you get to choose his name. 'A new life deserves a new name', after all. The hero, of course, becomes your playable character so before you call him Arse Bandit or Love Spuds, remember you've got to live with that name throughout the game.





Even with the graphics this small, no expense is spared on the detail.

The magical effects are well cool when you see them move.

You soon get to realise some baddies can be killed more easily if you adopt certain tactics, use certain weapons, etc. It's hardly Virtua Fighter territory, but it's a big improvement on, say, Gauntlet Legends, which was little more than an exercise in button-tapping, and would suit experts at transmitting Morse code down to the ground.

Sightseeing

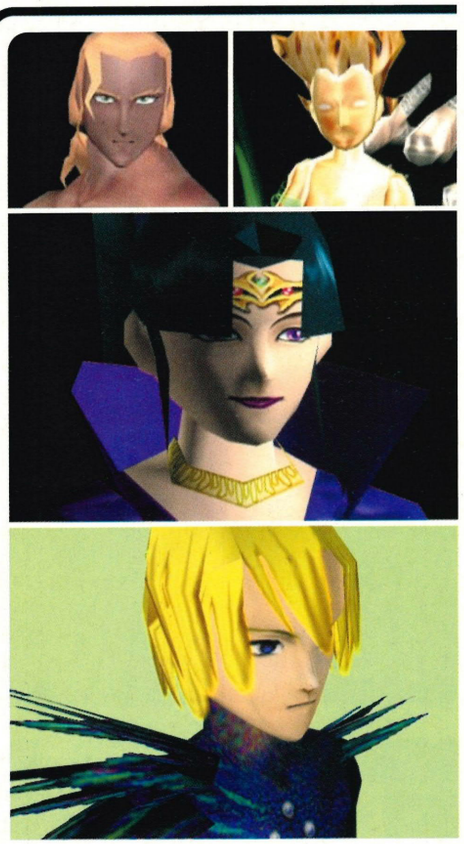
Overall, the graphics are of a good quality. They're intricate and well drawn and animated, but retain just enough of an edge to prevent the game looking like a Toytown tussle or a junior artist's CV. The war zones really do look like war zones, and not the baddie's castle in a Disneyland-style theme park. The enemies all animate well, even when there's dozens of them on the screen, and although small (they had to be to facilitate the battles) they lose none of the detail you've a right to expect from the Dreamcast. The magical effects are dazzling in their detail too. The main man looks completely knob without his equipment. He's like a cross between a tailor's dummy and an artist's doll. This only affects the initial training stage, though - as soon as he's dressed, you're impressed. The small graphics allow for some serious rucks, but this can become confusing. Still, that's the gamer's problem - finding space and staying on the move at all times reaps rewards, though expect to die young a few times until you get the hang of it. Oh, and save your game regularly too. Those save stones are put there for a purpose, y'know...

Unfortunately, the game does have a few niggles. As stated before, the background storyline is hackneyed and unoriginal, covering every RPG cliché in the tome. Here at DCM we avoid clichés like the plague - if only the developers had done the same. After the intro sequence the storyline unfolds really well, its bite-sized pieces retaining the game's focus and ensuring it never becomes confusing. It gives a genuine sense of progression too. It's a pity that by the time you get to the interesting bits (which isn't long after the training rooms) you've already filled a couple of barf bags.

...Not to mention a few coffins. The game's other major fault is at the beginning it kills you far too quickly. It's true that the medicine bottles (refillable from healing wells) are refillable as you go, but even with full potion skins you sometimes die a hideous death far too easily. This is because when your hit point max is low (which it is at the start of the game) your life force can be quickly drained before you notice. You do get a danger warning, but for the first few battles, this is too little, too late. Not good.

Despite these minor niggles, Lodoss: Record of Lodoss War (still a stupid title) is a fine game that will keep you busy for hours. It's a game to really become engrossed in rather than play for five minutes at a time, and if you've got the patience to endure a few early deaths and an initial premise that's more worn than Russell's underpants, the rewards are there. This is definitely one of the better RPGs on the Dreamcast. ■ *Ian Osborne*

I hope he uses a good deodorant...



COLOURFUL CHARACTERS

On your travels you find a host of weird and wonderful characters to talk to, interact with or slice into dog meat. They're all interesting and well drawn. We won't ruin the game for you by telling you exactly who's who and what they do for the storyline, but we will treat you to some fine artwork.

VERDICT

dcm 8

Not perfect by any means, but a brave attempt at snatching the RPG crown. We've yet to see a traditional-style role-player reach this standard.

ALTERNATIVELY...

Gauntlet Legends • *Issue 12* • *4/10*
It smells like the bogs on a British Rail Train.

COMING SOON...

Soul Reaver 2 • *Eidos*
RPG progression and chilling voice-overs.

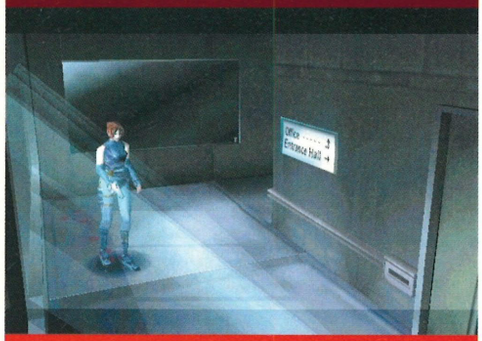
Publisher	VIRGIN	Developer	CAPCOM	Genre	SURVIVAL HORROR	Peripherals
Available	OUT NOW	Players	1	Price	£39.99	

DINO CRISIS

online... www.vie.com

When it arrived, Dino Crisis sent ripples of excitement through the gaming industry. So why has the Dreamcast fared so badly with this one? Simon walks with the dinosaurs...

A CASE FOR LESS



Perhaps its time that Sega reconsidered the pricing policy on Dreamcast games. Even when Dino Crisis first hit the Playstation all those months ago, you could pick the thing p for thirty notes. It hardly seems fair that not only do we get a lazy conversion, we also have to pay an extra tenner for the privilege! This is just the kind of game that should be sitting at a £20-25 price point, where it would make a far tastier deal.

excavated

Richard says... "Are those dinosaurs are motion-captured?"

Don't blink, you read the title right. Whilst the Playstation are enjoying the second instalment of Capcom's Dino Crisis saga, we're still puzzling over why we've only just got episode one. Still, it's finally here, and surely in the time it's taken to get it across to the Dreamcast, substantial work has been done to make it look and play the bee's knees, right?

You've got to be joking. Right from the intro sequence with its blocky text and pixelated graphics, it's fairly clear that this is a lazy port, more about getting the game onto another format and earning a few quid than enhancing a title and rewarding owners of a cutting edge console with a game to match. Shame on them, we say, because

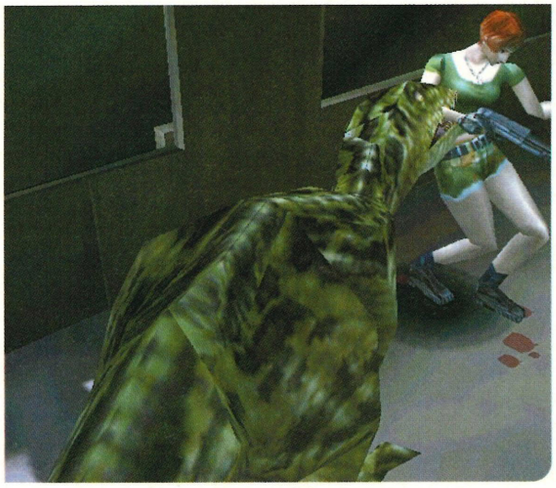
Capcom have previously rewarded the Dreamcast with top quality entertainment, and it's a pity they've decided to skimp a little here.

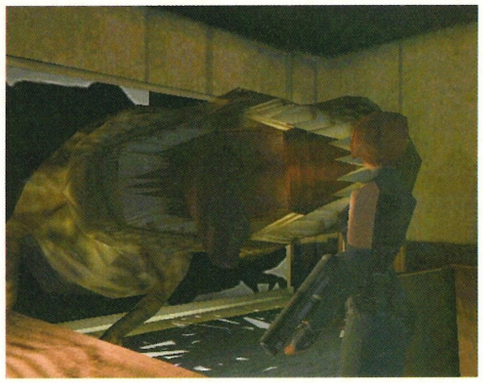
Nobody's Home

Initial niggles aside, it's quickly onto the game itself. Taking a leaf out of the Resident Evil style, Dino Crisis is more adventure than action (although the reverse is true of the sequel) in which you're sent as part of a team to investigate

NEED SOME HELP?

Should you find Dino Crisis a trickier than usual challenge, then you won't have been the first. Fortunately, Capcom have bolted in an 'Easy' mode, which seems to reduce the action elements more than anything, although you're still going to have to fight off those dinos when it comes to the crunch...





The T-Rex used it's beer and fag breath attack

a research project taking place on an isolated island. Unfortunately, as you step onto the island, everything seems deserted, leaving an abandoned research facility and not a fat lot else. Even more unfortunately, those initial impressions, admittedly unsurprisingly as there's a big-sod-off dinosaur sitting on the game cover, prove to be untrue. The island y'see appears to be infested with dinosaurs. Who seem to want to eat you.

The game follows the formula of letting you explore, and then jumping to a cut scene when some important plot development is taking place. It's infested with other characters, with whom you can and must interact, and have a tendency to find themselves dino fodder with alarming regularity. The camera angles and lighting add suitably to the mood too, and generally the whole thing has a cinematic feel to it. Credit too to the designers for being able to chuck in the occasional unexpected shock to keep you on your toes too.

Gameplay? You go through the usual routine of exploring, fighting off the dinosaurs (or adopting our usual tactic of simply pegging it as fast as our nimble feet will carry us), solving puzzles and generally trying to find out what's happened at the research facility, specifically to the man behind it all. And to be fair to Dino Crisis, it hasn't stood the test of time too badly at all. There's easily enough to keep you entertained for a good few nights here, and those new to the game won't be blown away, but will at least be entertained.

Trouble Ahead

As for the rest of us? Ah, that's where the troubles start to kick in. Usually when we comment that we've seen something before in a game, we don't mean it as literally as we do here. For we suspect that the more serious gamers amongst you (of which we'd guess a majority of our readership fall into this category) will have either played this game before, or one of the many derivatives of the genre since it was originally released.

And so sure, the game has lots of nice neat touches, and the puzzles are generally above average, and the story behind it all is intriguing. But the fact remains that Dino Crisis looks old, plays old and is old.

Which leads us on to the inevitable question - just what benefit is there to a Dreamcast version? Well from what we can tell, virtually none. Okay, Capcom may have tightened up the graphics slightly, but they're still way below standard for the Dreamcast, and certainly offer no incentive to those who own the game on a different format to upgrade. From start to finish, this rarely feels like a Dreamcast game, and betrays its Playstation heritage.

And that's a shame. Because at the heart of it, Dino Crisis is a perfectly enjoyable action adventure. Okay, it doesn't scale the heights of the Resident Evil series from which it's clearly derived, and so if it's a shoot out between this and Code Veronica then the latter wins no contest. As let's face it, as soon as the promised Playstation emulator hits the shelves, we won't need underwhelming PSX portovers such as this.

Which leaves Dino Crisis, once one of the tastiest feasts on the market, as the kind of thing you'd wrap in cellophane, stick in your fridge, and only pull out when you fancy a bit of a snack. Capcom, you make bloody good games, no argument. But this is lazy. And you know it. ■ *Simon Brew*

ALTERNATIVELY...

Code Veronica • *Issue 10 • 9/10*
The best action adventure of its ilk on the Dreamcast.

COMING SOON...

Code Veronica Complete • *Capcom*
You can read about this in this month's news.

Publisher	UBI SOFT	Developer	UBI SOFT	Genre	DRIVING	Peripherals
Available	OUT NOW	Players	1-2	Price	£39.99	

Warm weather caused a sudden drop in the sea level.

SURF ROCKET RACER

The Dreamcast is riding the crest of a wave, but is this Jetski jaunt a beach or a washout? Time to climb into that wet-suit...

A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE

There's a range of viewpoints on offer. The one in close to the rider blocks too much of your view ahead, but the others all work well enough.

wave racing!

What a pretentious title. Although at least partly based on a real-life, serious sport, 'Surf Rocket Racers' sounds like one of those dodgy flying-skateboard efforts people used to throw out to save having to get the physics true to reality. In actual fact, the sport simulated here is Jetski racing.

First impressions of this little number are pretty good, with well drawn Jetskis, the usual choice of characters with varying speed, acceleration and handling ratings, a good water effect and pleasing, if a little sanitised, scenery. The handling of the Jetskis is realistic, though very arcadey. Still, there's nothing wrong with that - not every game has to be Ferrari 355 Challenge. The background music's awful, being a constantly-looped pain in the ears, but that's nothing new now, is it?

When you get into the game, however, serious flaws emerge. Take the Challenge Mode. You're racing five other racers, but also the time limits. You have to reach a checkpoint within a certain time or you're out, wherever you are in the field. This is basically to compensate for not making the AI challenging enough - when you see checkpoints in a console game, you can bet your foes are little more than mobile markers. That's certainly true here. Still, you gain seconds on your timer if you make it over the jump ramps, which is cool, and gain yet more time if you perform a stunt while in the air, which is even cooler. The tricks are simplistic in execution, which is a good thing - the Championship Mode is a race, not a freestyle event, and the cunning stunts shouldn't (and don't) detract from this. Take care, though - try a stunt without gaining enough air and you fall, losing vital time.

Richard says... "Wave Race (N64) was great, this is too average"

Wet Weekend

The main problem with the racing, though, isn't the lifeless opponents. It's the racing itself. You just hit the accelerator and steer. Any difficulty offered by the course comes in

the form of rocks, buildings and other such constructs sticking out of the course. Hit one of these and you're brought to a standstill. This would be okay if it only happened every now and again, but the tracks are littered with 'em. How frustrating can you get? All is not lost if you do come a cropper, though, as you're significantly faster than the others - they just make fewer errors. Not zero errors, mind - just fewer. It's not all doom and gloom. Finding the right line through the course (ie. the straightest) is challenging and fun, but the game would work pretty-much the same if the opponents weren't even there.

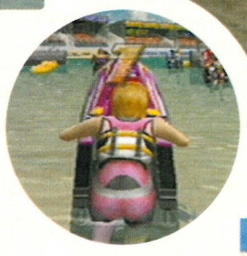
Of course, there's more to this than just a racing game. There's also the trick challenges. The first few see you throwing yourself off Niagra Falls (!), trying to jump a long distance, hit a series of targets off the jump or whatever. These are pretty good fun. As you learn to handle your craft better, you find yourself just itching to get that little bit higher, further, faster on the tricks. In fact, Hawk's 2, Trick Style and Dave Mirra's Freestyle BMX? Why buy it for the obstacle courses when there's so little going for this mode anyway? In other words, why buy it at all? ■ *Ian Osborne*

OODLES OF OPTIONS

There are several modes of play on offer in Surf Rocket Racers:

- **Championship**
Get through the primaries and try to win the finals. A basic race.
- **Tricks and Techniques**
Show your stuff in a variety of challenges. Acrobatic freestyle.
- **Hazards and Obstacles**
Pop the balloons on the course and try to get the top score.
- **Time Attack**
Race for the best time.
- **Vs Battle**
Split-screen one-on-one racing.

Beautiful rainbow - pity the water looks polluted.



"the main problem with the racing, though, isn't the lifeless opponents. it's the racing itself"

the single-rider tricks action offers a degree of competitiveness the racing completely fails to give. How ironic! Even so, it's no match for, say, Tony Hawk's, a superlative tricks and flips offering in which you compete against yourself for better points.

And the Hazards and Obstacles Mode? Race on the (bog) standard courses found in the Championship Mode, only popping balloons as you go. It's pretty boring, really...

Surf Rocket Racers is the eternal also-ran. It's not baaaaad, there are a few moments to be had in it, but it's up against some superb drivers. Why would you buy this for the racing when there's Ferrari 355 Challenge, Le Mans 24 Hours and Speed Devils? Why buy it for the tricks and stunts when there's Tony

Make these jumps for extra time.

Obstacle race - burst the balloons as you go.

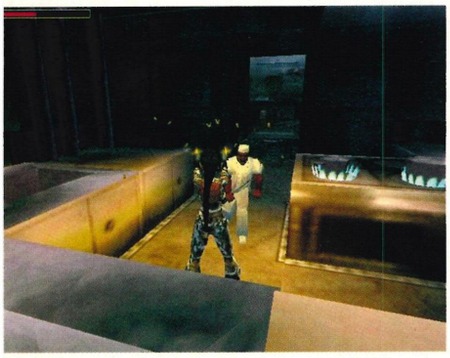
ALTERNATIVELY...

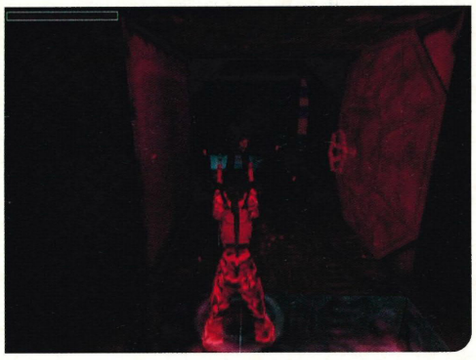
Sega Extreme Sports • *Issue 15* • *6/10*
Thrills and spills of extreme events. Except it wasn't.

COMING SOON...

Championship Surfer • *Mattel Interactive*
Beach bum sports sim, this time on surf boards.

Publisher	EIDOS INTERACTIVE	Developer	CORE DESIGN	Genre	ACTION ADVENTURE	Peripherals	
Available	OUT NOW	Players	1	Price	£39.99		

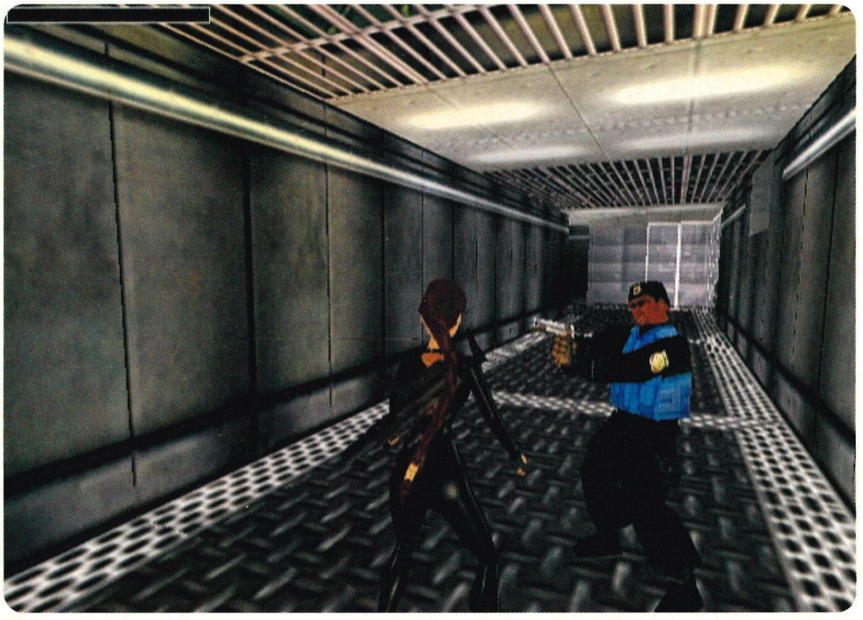




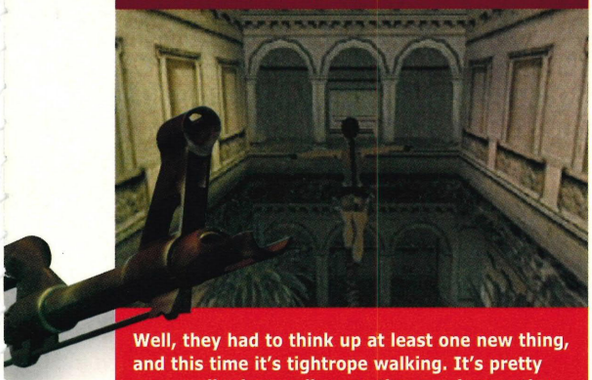
online... www.eidos.com

TOMB RAIDER CHRONICLES

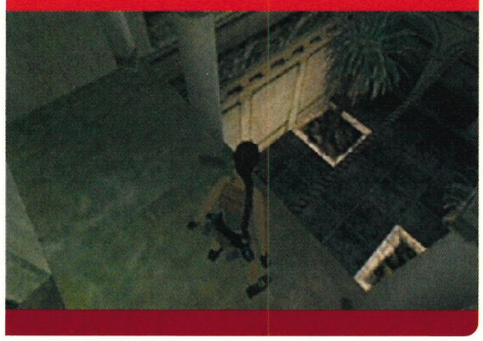
She's back, but not by public demand, says Saul, who reckons the world would be a far better place without Lara Croft and her ever-increasing chest measurements...

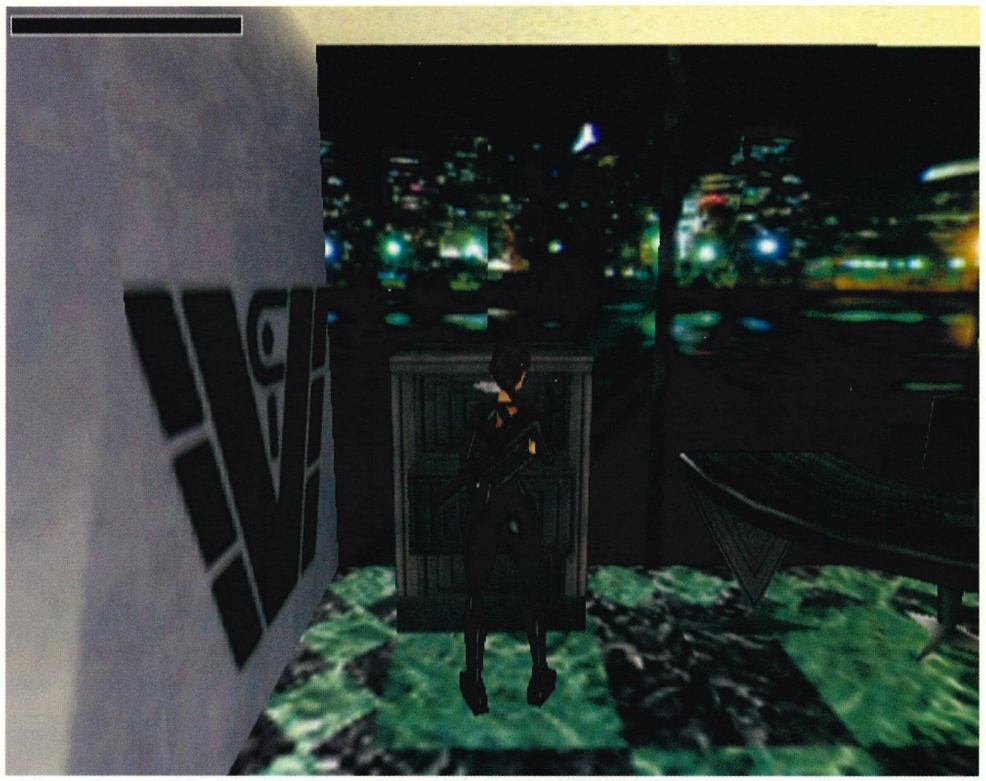


TIGHTROPE WALKING



Well, they had to think up at least one new thing, and this time it's tightrope walking. It's pretty easy really; just walk up to the rope in question, hit Action then push forward to start walking across the rope. Lara wobbles at random, and you have to push left or right to keep her balanced. Which is all well and good, but it's all a little easy after the first few goes, so the whole exercise becomes redundant.





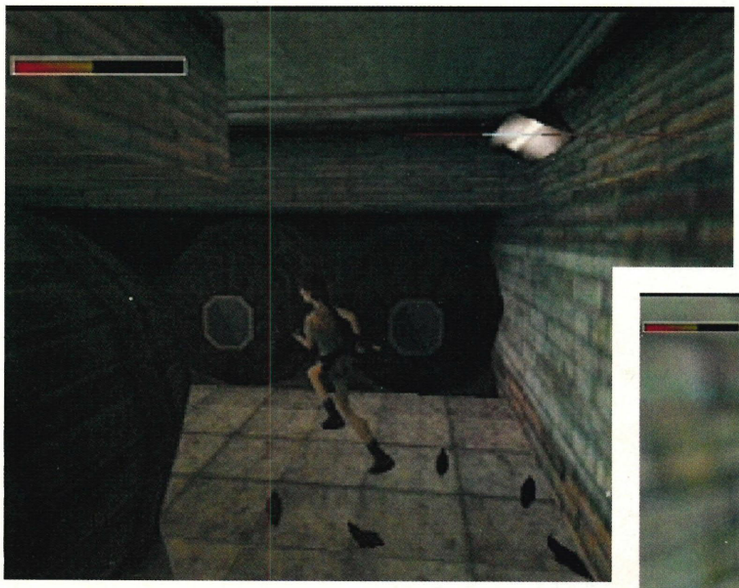
in loving mammary

One minute you're living life to the full in the knowledge that Ms Croft has bought her plot, or at least gone missing in action, and the next the devastating news hits you like a ton of ancient masonry falling on your head; they've only gone and brought her back, and get this, just in time for Christmas. If I weren't so naive, I'd think Eidos and Core were trying to cash in on a lifeless, dull and way-past-its-sell-by-date formula for the fourth Yuletide in a row. Hold on, a minute, I'm a cynical bastard actually, and this is exactly what has happened. Lara's back in a brand-new, exactly-the-same adventure that no doubt will sell faster than gold reindeer shit this Christmas. Still, if there's one consolation, it's that, as far as we know, Lara is still dead. Which can only be a good thing. I'll explain...

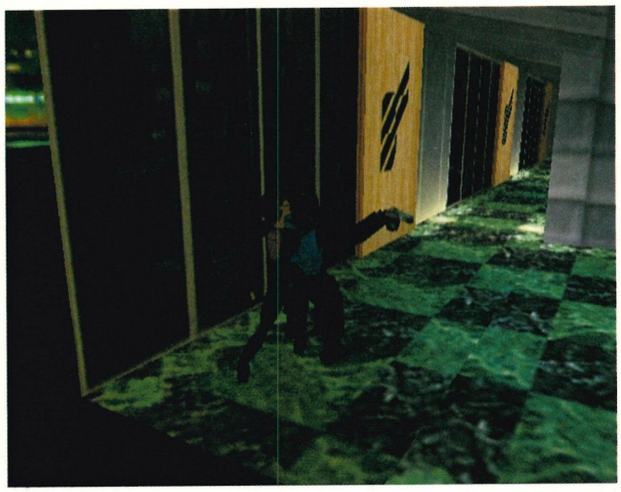
Tomb Raider Chronicles takes place (in a sense) just after Lara's memorial service. Four of her closest friends have gathered to share fond memories of their favourite feminine adventurer. Such a lovely girl. Big tits too. Needless to say, as each of the friends start to recount their story of one of Lara's adventures, the game regresses back to that time, and you gain control of Lara herself.

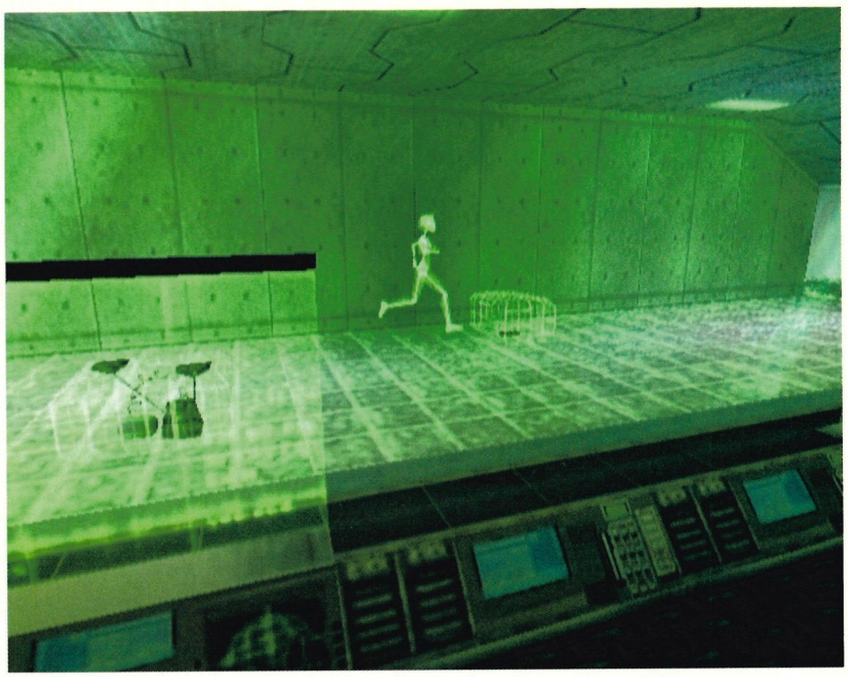
Tomb Raider Chronicles offers four different adventures, all from Lara's past, but when it comes down to it, they're all exactly the same as each other apart from the four different environments. Which are the streets of Rome (yawn), Ireland, a Soviet submarine and a high-tech office in London. Though she might as well be in Milton Keynes; you'd still follow the same find 'key, item, open door, solve puzzle to open door' route as any of the levels in Tomb Raider Chronicles. In fact, any Tomb Raider game for that matter. For real Tomb Raider fans, this isn't going to be a problem as they've obviously been desensitised to the repetition. But for the non-Lara obsessive, frustration and boredom will never be far away as the deviously-designed levels, poorly-engineered puzzle-solving, pointless treasure-hunting and a control system spawned on a Core office night out (probably) begin to apply severe pressure to your patience after just a few minutes of play.

Russell says... "christmas tradition should be fun, this isn't"



She faced tigers and bears yet Lara can't stand a few rats. Hmmmm





Hide you're guns for the X-ray machine on the final story. Total Recall anyone?

LASER SIGHT

The laser sight first appeared in Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation, and it's been kept in for Tomb Raider Chronicles. It's not worth much in a fire-fight as the gun action is too random, but you can use the laser sight to blow locks off of doors or hit certain targets that are specific to continuing through a level.

POINTLESS ACROBATICS

Lara's a nimble little thing; it's just a shame that her athleticism can't be exploited full due to those dodgy controls. Anyway, one move that will excite the Lara fan club is here acrobatic handstand followed by a leg-splitting manoeuvre whenever she climbs up onto anything. Lara fans may appreciate it, but for the rest of us, it just wastes time. Lucky, then, that you can avoid all of this pointless time-wasting by using the analogue stick instead of the D-pad when climbing.

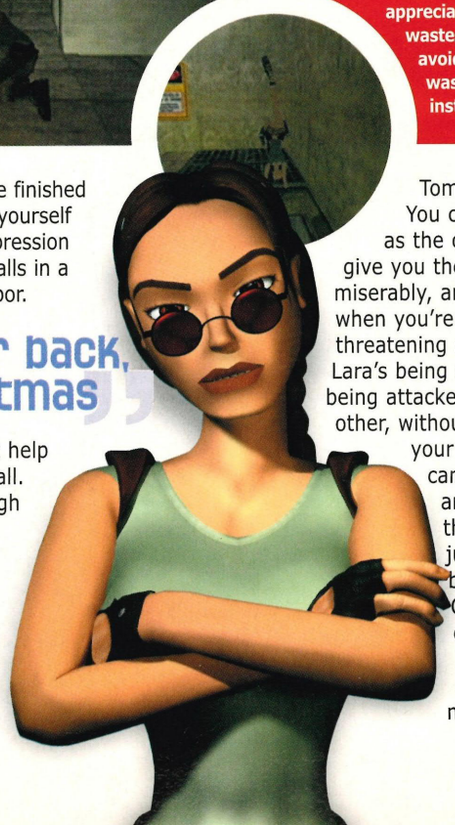
Bazzokarookas

Even from day one - Tomb Raider on the PlayStation - the games have had suspect controls and lazy camera movements. Now, after five PlayStation outings, five PC ports and two Dreamcast games, you'd think Lara could easily run around a corner without bouncing from wall to wall, using her chest as an impact cushion. But no, Core has decided to go with the 'it is broke, but we still won't fix it' approach, leaving players of Tomb Raider Chronicles to tame a highly erratic Lara Croft. The problem is that rarely does Lara do exactly what you ask of her.

Want to do a sideways jump? Should be easy, just hit jump and the direction you want to go. Often though, Lara will dive forward, or just rotate, or do something miles away from what you wanted her to do. And this usually means falling a few stories or rolling into an enemy's sights or offering yourself as a free plate of Lara-flavoured Winalot to that vicious Rottweiler waiting for you. Very annoying indeed. After a while, the mistakes become less frequent, but even by the time you've finished the game you still find yourself doing an Ollie Reed impression and bouncing off the walls in a seemingly drunken stupor.

> "they've only gone and brought her back, and get this, just in time for christmas"

The camera doesn't help the control system at all. In fact it feels as though Core are is using the same five-year-old, inherently-flawed camera from the original PlayStation game. A Box Brownie could do a better job than the camera in Tomb Raider Chronicles at times. You constantly lose track of Lara as the camera sluggishly tries to give you the best view and fails miserably, and it always seems to happen when you're in the middle of some life-threatening situation. Isn't it enough that Lara's being shot at from one side and being attacked by a vicious dog from the other, without the camera playing up and your losing sight of Lara.? The camera fails in getting Lara around the levels as much as the control system, with jumping being a particular bane of Tomb Raider Chronicles. Oh, and every other Tomb Raider game ever. In the whole entire universe. Like. That's right, Core have made absolutely no



The inventory system has changed since the first game, where it was complicated.

LARA'S DEAD, LONG LIVE LARA

At the end of the previous game, we witnessed Lara being crushed/trapped by a collapsing tomb. No body has been found, but it's presumed the lithe adventurer is pushing up daisies (we wish). Anyway, Tomb Raider Chronicles is a retrospective of four of Lara's adventures, so the pervs out there will be happy to know that one of the stories contains a young Lara. The biggest worry, though, is that there's talk of Lara coming back for a whole new series of games. Now if these are sufficiently different, it could be quite exciting, but they've been trying to tell us that all of the Tomb Raider games were sufficiently different since Tomb Raider II. So until they prove us wrong, I'd rather Lara stayed as worm-food.

improvements to Lara's jumping credentials, meaning that death is always just around the corner as most of the tougher jumps (and there are plenty) take you two or three tries to complete. Trial and error is the key with a bit of luck as the lock - not a gameplay style that endears me to play on, I'm afraid.

Warthog Whammies

Still, this is the Dreamcast version we're talking about, so it's bound to look the business, isn't it? Well, actually no. It's seems a minimal amount of time and effort has been spent on polishing the graphics for the Dreamcast version. I mean, what's the point, why even bother using the Dreamcast's graphical power when the games going to sell anyway? With this attitude, we get to look at poorly-textured scenery that at times resembles the blur witnessed on many an N64 game. Just look at the walls and doors for proof of this; many of them look terrible. Overall, the levels just get by and are admittedly far better looking than the PlayStation version, but then this isn't hard. The 3D engine isn't as strong as it should be either, with a frame-rate barely higher than the PlayStation and some incredibly dodgy graphical glitching. For example, we managed to jump Lara from a coal pile straight onto a wheelbarrow. Did she land on top and jump off? No she went straight through it and got stuck. This sort of thing may be sorted for the final version, but the code we played was slated as final. So we'll see.

Of course, Lara fans are in for a treat as her tits seem to be even bigger and she's got a new wardrobe with one set of clothes for each level. The game starts with a cut scene (all the cut scenes are top-notch, by the way) of Lara at the opera in a slinky blue dress, as the action ensues and the game starts proper, she dons her usual crop-top-and-shorts apparel, which is a disappointment (I don't give a toss personally), as I'm sure Lara stalkers would have loved to played with her in that dress. Ahem. The three later stories see Lara in different clothes, including a tight PVC cat-suit that's bound to set certain pulses racing. Bear in mind, though, LARA ISN'T REAL! You sad gits.

> "For the non-Lara obsessive, frustration and boredom will never be far away"

Which is probably my problem with the whole idea. The nation took Lara to their hearts for the first couple of games. Which is fair enough, as having a heroine instead of a hero was novel. But Core has milked the idea for so long that being a Lara fan is just short of being a star stalker. There's no denying that once upon a time, Tomb Raider games were captivating and Lara was a genuine star, but that time is gone, and for Lara to re-emerge will take more than re-running the same old gameplay mechanics and barely improving the visual side of things. It's rumoured that the next game starring Lara will be something completely different and new, but for now, only buy Tomb Raider Chronicles if you're a creature of habit or a sucker for punishment. ■ *Saul Trewern*

dcm **5**

VERDICT: **Same old, same old. Plays just like every other Tomb Raider game, which is fair enough - if you're not bored senseless by them, that is.**

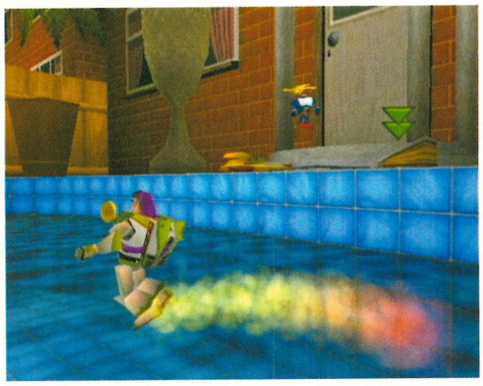
ALTERNATIVELY...

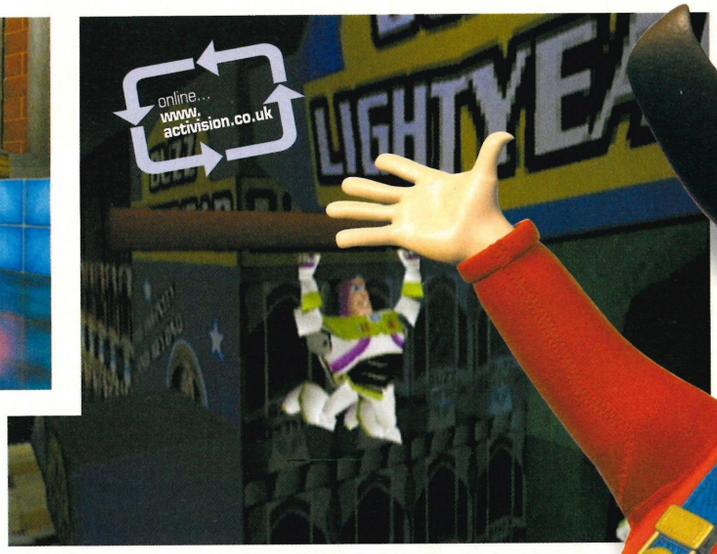
Soul Reaver • *Issue 6* • *9/10*
Graphical masterpiece through and through.

COMING SOON...

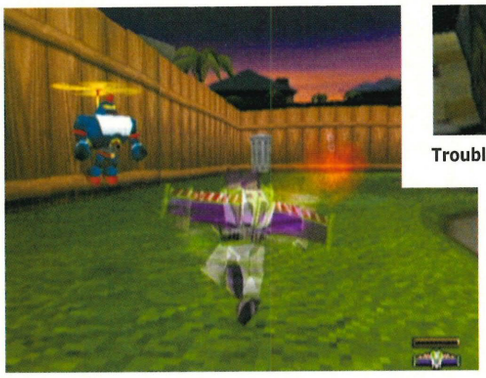
Soul Reaver 2 • *Eidos*
Gothic vampire darkness with better visuals than the original.

Publisher	ACTIVISION/DISNEY	Developer	TRAVELLER'S TALES	Genre	PLATFORM	Peripherals
Available	OUT NOW	Players	1	Price	£39.99	





Trouble in the toystore, as Buzz meets himself - over and again...

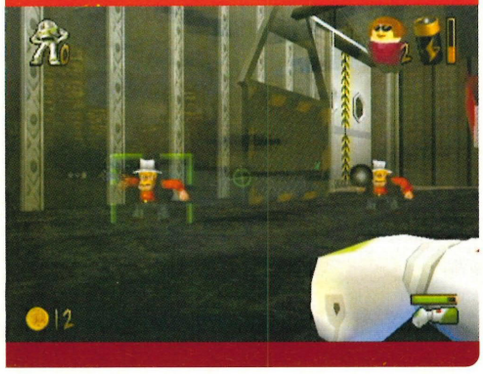


TOY STORY 2

Have you got what it takes to rescue your cowboy chum from the evil toy collector?

FIRST-PERSON FROLICS

When you use Buzz's laser arm, the perspective switches to first-person for targeting. It's great fun and really useful, but remember while firing, you're rooted to the spot and therefore vulnerable.



to infinity and beyond

Saul says... "3D platform games aren't my bag, but it's still good"

Was it the cutest film of all time? The greedy, evil toy collector snatched Woody, Andy's favourite toy, and it's up to space hero Buzz Lightyear (another of his fave playthings) to rescue him. It turns out Woody is a spin-off from a 1950s cowboy puppet TV show Woody's Round-Up ('He's the rootinest, tootinest cowboy in the whole Wild West'), and the collector needs him to complete a series of figures, which he intends to sell to a museum in Tokyo. It was laugh-a-minute, but with some thoughtful and poignant moments too. Oh, how we cried when Jessie sang her song about the little girl that owned her, who grew up and grew out of playing with dolls, and eventually gave her to the charity shop. We've not looked at our teddy bears in the same way since, except Simon Brew, who never stopped playing with his anyway.

Now the film has produced scores of spin-offs of its own, one of which is

Feed the fat sod his coins for an extra token.

FIND THE SHEEP

Most levels see you finding five something-or-anothers on behalf of a character you meet. Here Buzz finds a sheep for Bo-Peep.

Hey, what's cookin'?

this game, released to coincide with the movie hitting the video shelves. It's a natural choice for a game - the characters and animations were created using computer-generated graphics, so a game just couldn't help but look the part. But is it any good?

There's a Snake in my Boot...

Yes it is. Very good. In fact, it's one of the best free-roaming 3D platformers on the Dreamcast, combining excellent variety with impressive visuals and a superb level design that stops you scraping through every stage by the skin of your teeth, but without making you resent having to go back to levels you've already got through once.

Let's take that last point first - the level design. The game's 15 levels stick to the film's storyline like bubblegum sticks to your shoes, and the gameplay's tighter than Russell's wallet when it's his turn to buy the beers. Starting at Andy's house, instead of offering a linear level structure or letting each completed level automatically open later ones, here you have to buy entry to further stages with pizza tokens. And how do you get the pizza tokens? By completing tasks within each stage. There's the main level objective (eg. in Andy's house it's trashing an evil robot toy), but also through sub-tasks. Although no individual sub-task is essential to progress, you ignore them at your peril. Go straight for the exit every time and you not only miss out on some great gaming, but you also run hopelessly short of tokens and find you have to go back and snatch ones you missed anyway. Sub-tasks include finding five something-or-others for somebody-or-other, beating a character in a race, filling Hamm the piggy-bank's coffers and a finding the special mystery token hidden on each level. They don't re-set when you hit the exit, so if you've found the five worker toys for the foreman in the construction yard or given the body part to Mr Potato Head, you can't go back and do it again for an easy, cheesy second token.

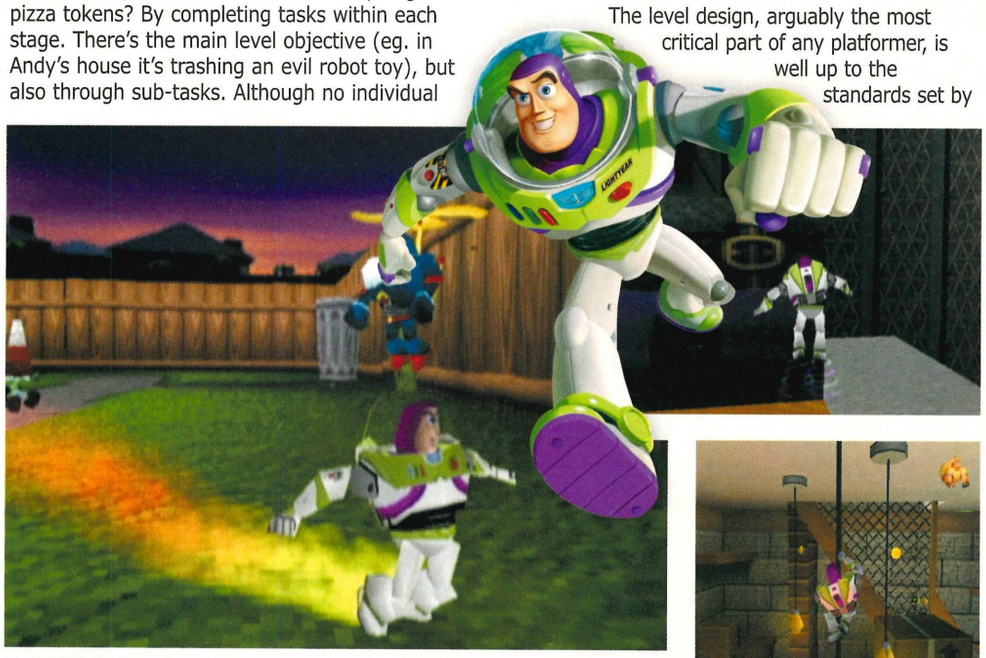
> "the game's 15 levels stick to the film's storyline like bubblegum sticks to your shoes"

Man of Many Moves

Buzz is replete with all the moves you'd expect from a Space Ranger. His main attacks are the stomp, the spin and the energy-dependent wrist laser, but other power-ups such as a grappling hook, moon-spring boots and rocket-powered running shoes which you need for some of the races.

The level design, arguably the most critical part of any platformer, is well up to the standards set by the main man. For example, many stages have you platform-pounding your way upwards, climbing a tree or a partly-built building in a construction yard. While falling off takes you all the way back to the beginning (booooo), when you reach a certain stage, you get to press a button or flick a switch or whatever to activate a device to help you back up it again (hurrah!). Let me explain. In the tree, you come across a rope which you can lower. Fall off beyond that point and you can climb back up again to where you found the rope. The building in construction has a lift. At several points during your ascent, you can belt a button and have the lift rise up and down to that particular point. Far better than just re-appearing there, wouldn't you say?

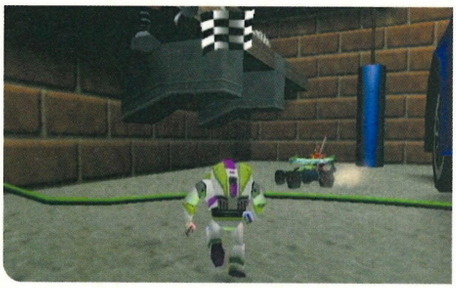
Toy Story 2 isn't without the occasional graphical glitch and although visually it's pretty good, it doesn't make huge leaps from the PlayStation version that preceded it. If you've completed it on the PSX, don't bother with this. If you've never played it before, though, it's a real treat. ■ *Ian Osborne*



It didn't take long for Buzz to realise that last night's curry was a mistake...

TOP TIPS

Many levels also include a race of some sort. Beating the remote-controlled car in the garage is easier if you keep blocking him when he tries to overtake.



dcm **7**

VERDICT: **Arcade free-roaming platform action to a high standard, but don't bother if you've already played the PSX version to death.**

ALTERNATIVELY...

MDK 2 • *Issue 7* • *9/10*
Sleek and serious, rather than cute and cartoony.

COMING SOON...

Buzz Lightyear • *Activision/Disney*
Based on the forthcoming cartoon series.

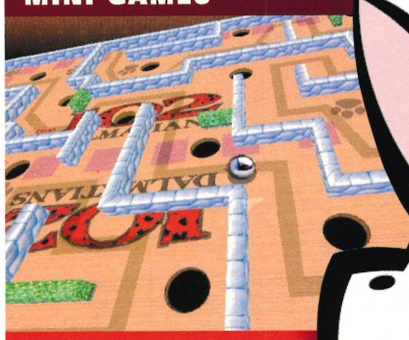
Publisher	EIDOS	Developer	CRYSTAL DYNAMICS	Genre	ACTION ADVENTURE	Peripherals
Available	OUT NOW	Players	1	Price	£39.99	

102 DALMATIANS: PUPPIES TO THE RESCUE

online... www.eidos.com

It's a dog of a game. Literally.

paws for thought

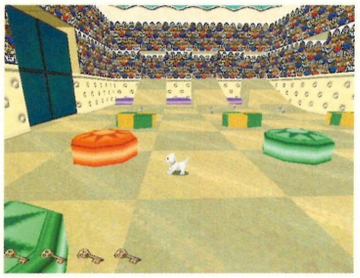


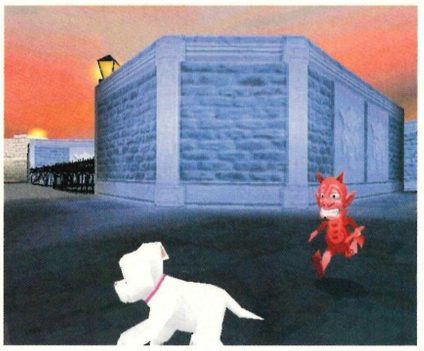
MINI GAMES

Breaking up the 16 levels in the game are six minigames, which reward you with a puppy to save at the end of them. The rules are fairly clear for each one, and they include guiding you way through a maze, and lighting up all the indicators on a pinball table. Quite a lot of thought has gone in here, and they do break up the gameplay nicely. So that's good, then...

Remember that old saying? Never judge a book by its cover? It's getting to be fairly apt around the DCM offices. Take a few issues ago when Frogger 2 arrived, and it was passed from reviewer to reviewer like pass the parcel, finally going to the one who never makes the tea. Namely me. And since that turned out to be a rather fine game, they've been trying to get me back and fob me off with crap ever since. They thought 102 Dalmatians would do the trick. And once again, they were wrong.

But let's face it, you've got to see the point. Easily one of the most undemanded film sequels ever (and beaten heavily by The Grinch at the US box office), the movie itself will no doubt clean up amongst the ankle-biters (so long as they're fed up with Pokémon by now) and Eidos clearly want a slice of the cake. So along with Chicken Run, they've

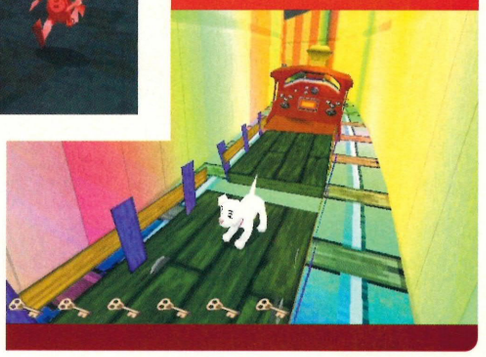




Bury the old bag! Bloody Glen Close...

TAKE A HINT

Along the way, you bump into friendly folk such as Tibs who can help with the initially confusing things such as, er, how to ride the train. Mighty handy for the kids, though, as if they're stuck there's usually some friendly advice at hand, meaning they won't have to disturb your mid-afternoon nap.



TRAVEL OPTIONS

Sometimes, it's just too far a walk for a little puppy like yourself. So if your paws are in need of a pause, why not hop on a bus or train to take the hassle out of your journey? You lazy bast...

Russell says... "Another 3D platformer, another dissapointment."

launched two games direct into the kiddie market, which at first glance could be mistaken for cash-ins on popular licences. But only by explaining why you have to do this, but if you really want to know, take your sprogs down to your local fleapit and find out.

The Game

What matters more is that you play a dog. A little Dalmatian to be more precise, and the action is viewed in third person, with the camera choosing the best angle to view the canine version of your good self. And we'll come back to the camera later. You're placed on a series of increasingly difficult levels (although none are really going to tax you for too long), with the aim of destroying Cruella's toys by, er, barking at them, and rescuing puppies. The levels take in blocky recreations of the likes of Trafalgar Square and Piccadilly Circus, although thankfully without the vomit stains and empty beer cans. The missing puppies are locked in crates, so to rescue them you have to do a kind of bounding run into their prison and break it down. You're a dog with an awfully big headache within a couple of minutes of this, but it seems to do the trick.

"despite appearances to the contrary, the game really does come across a little too linear"

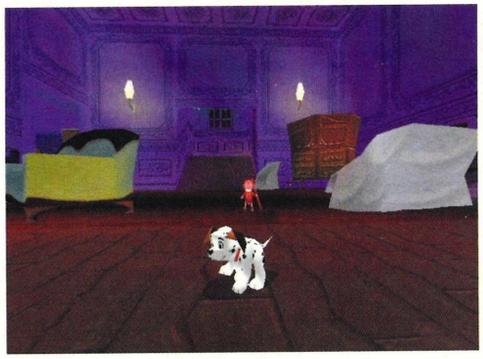
cynical bastards. And then we found out that they'd bolted a good game on the side. You could have knocked us over with a puppy's tail.

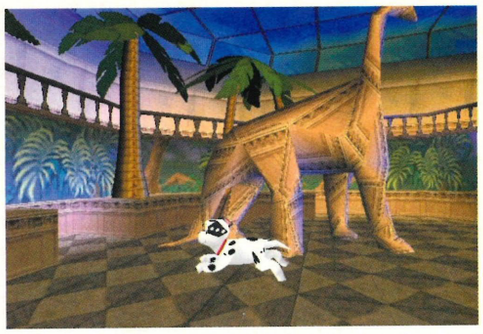
Without wishing to spoil the film, which we're sure you're all gagging to see (who wants to see Charlie's Angels anyway?), the plot involves you as a puppy, destroying dodgy toys made by Cruella de Vil and rescuing puppies from crates. Space and lack of interest prohibit us from

There's plenty to see and do, but there's little enjoyment for older kids

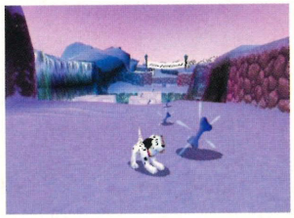
Throughout your adventures you come across a variety of helpful characters who chirp in with advice and a bit of conversation (an icon corresponding to a joypad button pops up if there's someone you can talk to). Most of the time this is stuff for the nippers, about how to use an object or how to finish off various bits of a level. Occasionally, you see Waddlesworth, a bird who marks a checkpoint and thus allows you to save your position.

It all sounds very simple, and it pretty-much plays that way too. Controls are restricted to movement, a bark (which is a kiddie version of a fire button) which you need to destroy the toys and, er, blow off manhole covers, the aforementioned crate-busting tumble, jumping and an action button. And yet whilst it hardly breaks innovative ground, for a game aimed at youngsters there's quite a bit nestling away in 102 Dalmatians. Old hands aren't going to be impressed at the fairly linear, reward-led gameplay, but nonetheless the target audience will no doubt appreciate exploring little secrets and unlocking extra bones (which serve a not dissimilar function to the rings in Sonic). You see unattainable parts of a level early on, to be filled with a sense of satisfaction when you finally manage to get there, and heck, you can even travel around by little trains and buses should the fancy take you. That or you're too lazy to move your furry arse and travel by paw.





Very cute, but the dinosaur just isn't Jurrasic Park...

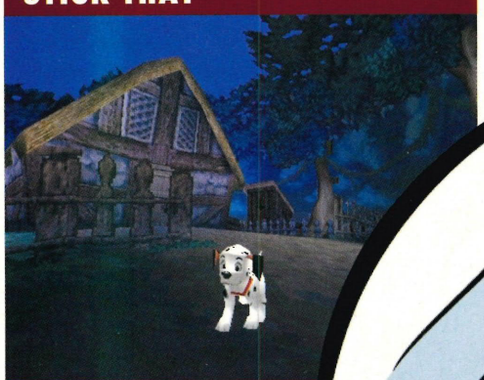


"what costs 102 dalmatians a higher score is the price"

Whilst it's far from an all-out raging masterpiece, and certainly never endangers a quiet wander into the essential purchase bracket, you can't help but feel a little grudging admiration for what Eidos has put together. But that you can't after all that ignore the various flaws that frustratingly drag the whole thing down.

It's a well know fact that dogs can breathe in space.

STICK THAT



Throughout the game, as you complete the various tasks thrown in your direction, you get rewarded with a sticker. This you can then place in your virtual sticker book, and collect them all to be rewarded with a surprise scene. Cool.

The scenery is basic, but there's no denying that kids will love the primary colours

The Paw Bits

For starters, despite appearances to the contrary, the game really does come across as being a little too linear, with a predominantly unpopulated world save for things that are likely to have some influence on your task, or at the very least offer some form of bonus. Okay, this does encourage you to explore, knowing that 99% of the time there's a reward at the end of it, but it robs the game of any real element of surprise. Thus, by the time you've worked out just how tricky it is to be presented with the Game Over sign, you quickly realise that challenging this ain't. Okay, once again we're dealing with a young age range here, but we suspect that anyone over eight is going to need a little bit more to steer their attention away from Game Boy Pokémon.

Perhaps more of an issue for us, though, was the occasionally clumsy camera, with some really nasty angles chosen just when you need to make one of those ever-so precise jumps that really pisses you off when you screw it up for the tenth time running. Grrrrr. You can use the trigger buttons to rotate the camera, but to get exactly what you need when you need it can quickly become something of an art form.

> "We suspect that anyone over eight is going to need a little more to steer their attention away from Game Boy Pokémon"

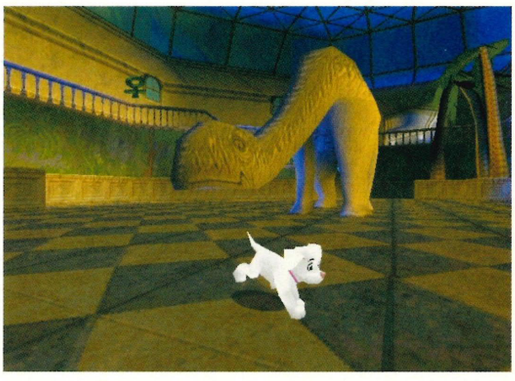
Graphically, the game is no major shakes either, with the representations of the characters being good enough rather than something special. The little cut scenes that appear here and there are better, and we're sure that kids familiar with the film will appreciate the way that the main characters keep talking to you throughout. It helped us out too as we were lonely. They were the only ones who understood our problems. Sniff sniff.

The Bottom Line

Unfortunately, what costs 102 Dalmatians a higher score is the price. Forty quid can get you Sonic. It can get you Space Channel 5. It can get you every single game on the format, many of which offer much more advanced and long-lasting entertainment than this. Sitting at a more kiddie-friendly £25, we'd have had little hesitation in awarding this a 7/10; the higher price designates it a good, solid 6.

And yet overall, cash aside, our feelings towards the game were generally positive. Particular credit has to go to the steady learning curve, which never leaves you tackling something you simply don't know how to do (facilitated in some part by the straightforward nature of the majority of the puzzles). Perhaps it's a little too simplistic in places, and certainly does little to shift Dreamcasts off the shelves, but if you do have young kids who aren't infatuated with Pokémon, 102 Dalmatians may at least give you the chance to put your feet up for a bit and let them do the work. And that's exactly how it should be. Hmmph. ■ *Simon Brew*

There's nothing worse than being chased by a water pistol wealding rat. Nasty.



VERDICT

dcm 6

Better than we expected, although saddled with an excessive price tag. Fun for very young children, though.

ALTERNATIVELY...

Chicken Run • *Issue 16* • *6/10*
Eidos again, with a reasonable interpretation of the film.

COMING SOON...

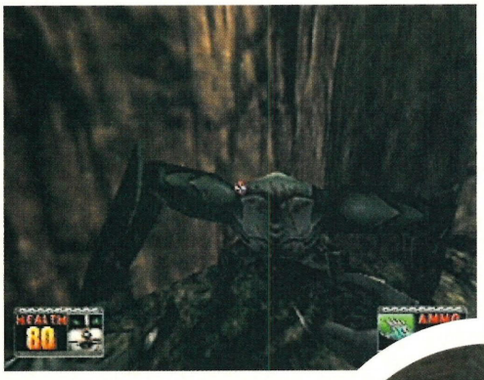
The Grinch • *Konami*
Will it do on the Dreamcast what it did at the box office?

Publisher	TAKE 2 INTERACTIVE	Developer	THIRD LAW/TREMOR	Genre	FIRST-PERSON SHOTER	Peripherals
Available	OUT NOW	Players	1	Price	£39.99	

KISS: PSYCHO CIRCUS

In which stadium rock heroes Kiss star in an all-action FPS that luckily, says Saul, doesn't actually include any Kiss music. Let's rock - or not, as the case may be...

Here's the basic drone/spider creatures. How original.



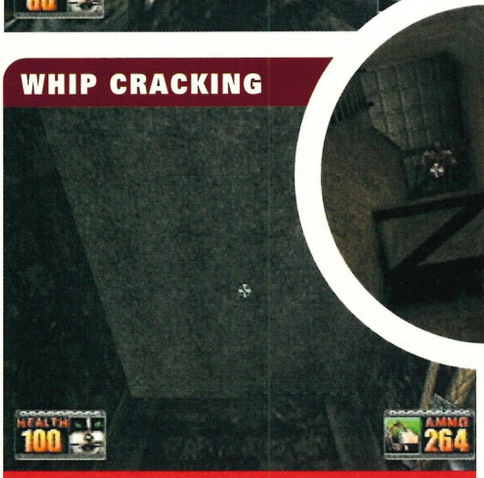
bogus journey

Okay, I admit it, the extent of my Kiss knowledge is limited to say the least. I know they wear make-up on stage and they've got long hair. I also remember God Gave Rock & Roll To You at the end of that most excellent film, Bill & Ted's Bogus Journey. That, though, Kiss fans, is as far as I can go on the Kiss: the band, front. But don't worry - I can tell you a hell of a lot more about Kiss: Psycho Circus.

Russell says... "Any game with psycho in its name is perfect for Ian."

Luckily for me, the music of Kiss hardly features in Psycho Circus, with developers Third Law Interactive and Tremor Entertainment preferring to just concentrate on the band members as characters in a technically competent first-person shooter. I say technically competent, but at the start I thought that I was in for a lot more than that. But although the 3D engine is nothing short of stunning when just moving around the levels, it starts to fall apart at the seams when the hardcore combat kicks off. If only things didn't start to chug and jerk when the enemies poor onto the

WHIP CRACKING



The one original aspect of the gameplay Psycho Circus offers is the whip that, as well as being a weapon, allows you to haul yourself up to areas that you can't reach without it. Although not a groundbreaking feature, it does split up the key-and-switch searching style of the basic gameplay.

These warp mirrors are found at the end of levels.

You'll be engulfed in plasma when you find an item of importance

screen, the Psycho Circus 3D engine would easily have been up there with Half-Life and Quake on the Dreamcast, but seeing that it can only hold itself together when things are calm, Psycho Circus finds itself trailing far behind.

Dismal Details

The graphics themselves, especially the environments, are very well drawn with some of the best texture mapping seen on the Dreamcast. And although the whole scene in Psycho Circus is very dismal, and variety is an issue that obviously hasn't been dealt with on the levels, there's a great deal of detail and intricacy to take in. The lack of variety in the feel of the levels is a problem, though, with the Circus-style level the only one that attempts to move away from either the Gothic feel or 'caves and tunnels' look. Some nice visual touches litter the game, but then again, some dodgy graphical touches raise their ugly heads too. Starting with the latter, I could mention the cut scenes that kick in whenever you find a weapon. The camera pans out from your character, showing him engulfed in plasma as his body is charged with the energy. Psycho Circus also deals well with long-distance perspective with some excellent view across chasms or into long halls. On the downside, though, the water effects are positively 16-bit, and the basic enemies are uninspiring to say the least.

> "It starts to fall apart at the seams when the hardore combat kicks off"

Up Our Street?

With Half-Life and Quake III on the Dreamcast doorstep, and Unreal on its way up the garden path, any other FPS is going to have to be something special to even get on the driveway. Psycho Circus, sadly, doesn't even make it into the cul-de-sac due to the fact that it's no more than a first-generation FPS á là Duke Nukem and the like. Okay, graphically it may surpass the Duke, but gameplay-wise it really can't cut the mustard with the latest PC/Dreamcast FPSs. The gameplay is just too linear, there's a complete lack of a coherent story in the game, the weapons are limited and uninspiring and the action itself becomes mundane as well as heavily frustrating.

The goal is simply to get to the exit of each level, whilst blasting the giblets out of a range of demon dogs, spider-like creatures and the odd big boss. All the enemies act like simple drones, with just the barest hint of intelligence. At first this is fine. You get to grips with the weapons (of which there are five basic and one special for the different characters) and for a while the relentless monster-bashing is a whole load of fun, but this type of soulless and brainless action soon grows tiresome. So too does the old-school key and switch hunting that allows you to progress through the levels. One nice touch is the inclusion of an energy whip that you can fire onto flashing hoops and then drag yourself up. This opens up new areas in a level that can only be reached using the whip. The problem is you have to do this to progress, whereas it would have been better if the areas reached by the whip were extras that you could go back to find.

MARSH GAS

As we've already said, most of the bad guys in Psycho Circus are pretty boring, but there are a few of interest. First up are the gasbags. These are little flying creatures that have a belly-full of green gas that they like to eject in your general direction. Get hit by one of these fart-missiles and you lose some energy. Also of interest are the fatladies. Why? 'Cos a fat birds always funny, innit?

Old Hat

If Psycho Circus had been a Dreamcast launch game, the mediocre gameplay would have been enough to carry the problems with the 3D engine. As it stands, it's up against some stiff competition that it really doesn't stand a chance against. I'm not some PC fanatic that dreams of Quake and would rather visit a gaming website than www.swedishshavenhaven.com either. Even with the dubious licence, which thankfully is very subtle within the game, I have given Psycho Circus as good a run as the PC three. And although enjoyable at first, tedium sets in quite shortly, and the lack of interesting weapons and variety in levels, coupled with that basic search-and-blast action, just isn't enough to impress at this stage in the Dreamcast's life. I'll save the best to last, though; it doesn't have any kind of multiplayer mode whatsoever! Kiss: Psycho Circus, like its namesake, is dated. And any amount of make-up can't make up for that. ■ *Saul Trewern*

dcm **6**

VERDICT **The action is old, and a great 3D engine is let down by slow-down at the slightest hint of stress.**

ALTERNATIVELY...

Quake III • *Issue 16* • *9/10*
The best first-person-shooter, until Unreal perhaps

COMING SOON...

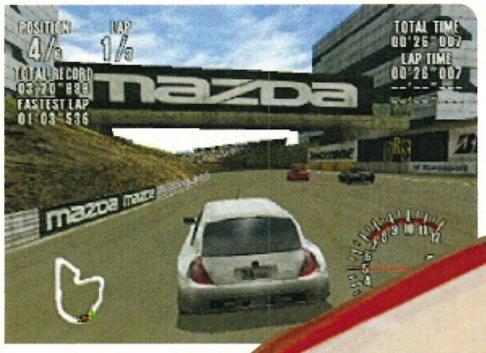
Half-Life • *Havas*
Amazing action, story and all-round gameplay.

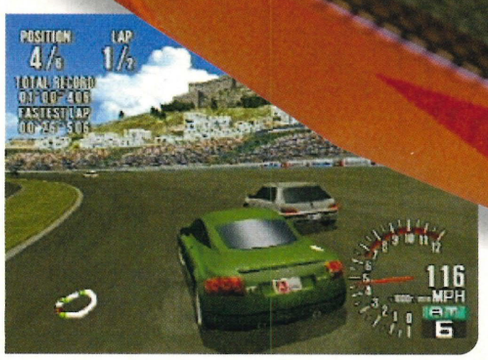
Publisher	SEGA	Developer	IN HOUSE	Genre	DRIVING GAME	Peripherals
Available	OUT NOW	Players	1-2	Price	£39.99	

SEGA GT

online... www.sega-europe.com

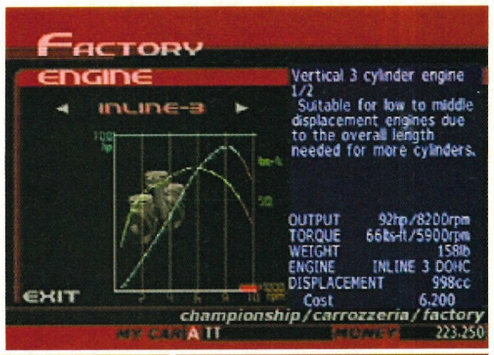
In which Sega and Sony pull up to the starting line for a high-speed, rubber-burning, one-on-one race to the finish. Saul fires the starter pistol...

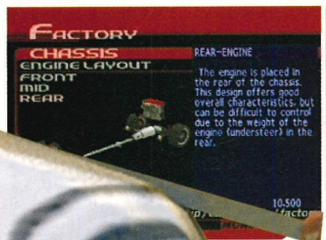


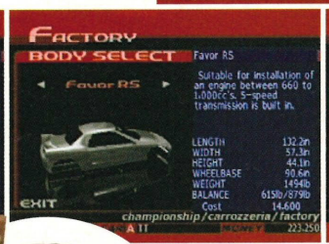


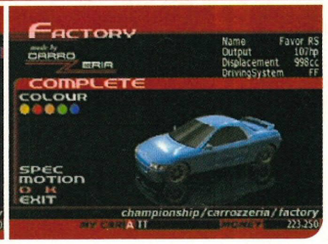
THE CARROZERIA

As well as offering over 100 cars to control, Sega GT also gives you the option to build your own car in the Carrozzeria. First of all, you need some cash (lots), and then you need to choose an engine. After this, decide whether you want a turbocharger and then place the engine at either the front, middle or rear of the chassis. You then need to choose a drive type and a body style before you can manufacture the car and race it. It doesn't get any deeper than this, but there's still the opportunity to make some decent cars, especially when you earn your factory licences that allows you to build bigger and better cars.



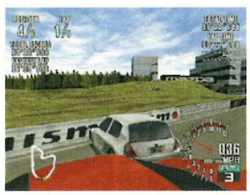


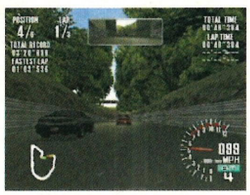


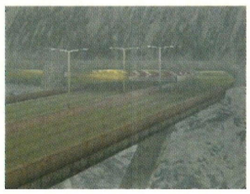


sega go touring

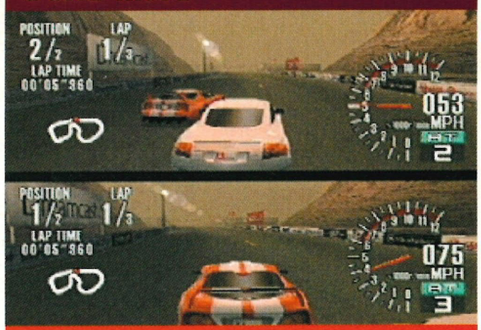
It may be a Renault Clio, but this baby certainly packs a punch.



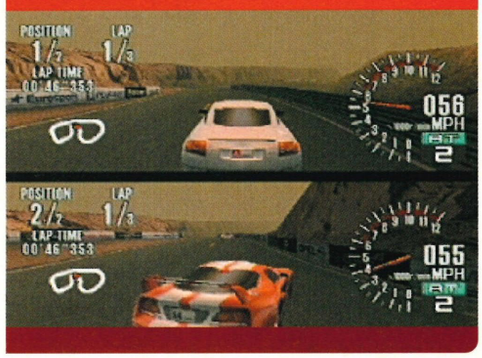




DUAL RACE



The two-player mode is actually very impressive in that it manages to keep the exact same feel and speed of the one-player game. This, of course, is because the one-player game isn't that fast, but still, a Dual Race offers plenty of action and the graphics hold together very well. The only difference between this and the one-player game, in fact, is a small amount of fog in the distance that is obviously put there to hide the scenery being drawn, but this is forgivable as it doesn't detract from the action at all.



Russell says... "It ain't MSR but nearly gives GT a run for its money"

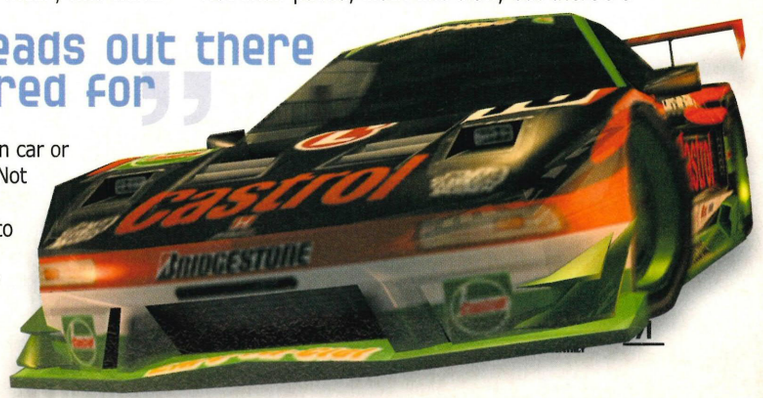
If one genre made the PlayStation as popular as it is, it's the racing game. It's testament to the Dreamcast, then, that over the last few months we've been treated to several titles that outclass anything Sony's machine could ever come up with. I'm talking primarily, of course, about the immense Ferrari F355 Challenge and the beautiful Metropolis Street Racer. Two games that, in their own way, capture the spirit of racing. Two games that pump you so full of adrenaline that sleep isn't an option and two games that, frankly, piss all over the racers that the PlayStation has dolled out over the last five years. Sega's in-house driving sim pedigree spans the likes of Virtua Racing, Sega Rally and Daytona. They also had a hand in both MSR and Ferrari, publishing the former and developing the latter. Sega GT is a thoroughbred Sega steed, and it delivers the kind of crunching horsepower you'd expect. It's no one-horse race, though.

With over 100 cars to choose from, Sega GT is well short of Gran Turismo 2's 500, but doubles that of MSR. This, of course, isn't of importance as when it comes down to it, if you've got this many cars, a portion of them will be left to gather dust and never leave the showroom. I mean, who wants to drive some 1000cc Suzuki town car or some dodgy Fiat Family Saloon? Not me for one. I'm interested in the variety of car that you don't use to take the dog to the forest in on Sunday afternoon, and thankfully Sega GT has plenty of high-speed sportsters and souped-up roadsters of which to get behind the wheel. The European angle is covered by the likes of beautifully curvaceous Audi TT and a 16v Renault Clio. The Americans put in a show with thundering beasts such as the 8000cc Dodge Viper and the classic Ford Mustang, whilst the Japanese show us all how it's done with the likes of the Nissan Skyline and the unbeatable Honda NSX. This is just a small selection of the fuel-injected, turbo-charged action on offer, so basically, the petrol-heads out there are well catered for.

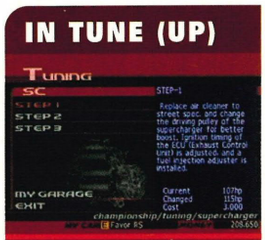
Slow coach

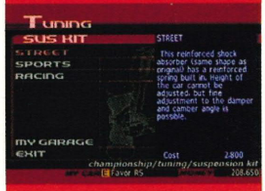
Of course, you could have every half-desirable car in the world in a game, but if they all drive like Citroen 2CVs, the point would be missed. And sadly, it seems Sega may have missed that point, but only just. Why? 'Cos Sega GT is slow. Not snail-paced, sloth-like slow, but there's a

"the petrol heads out there are well catered for"

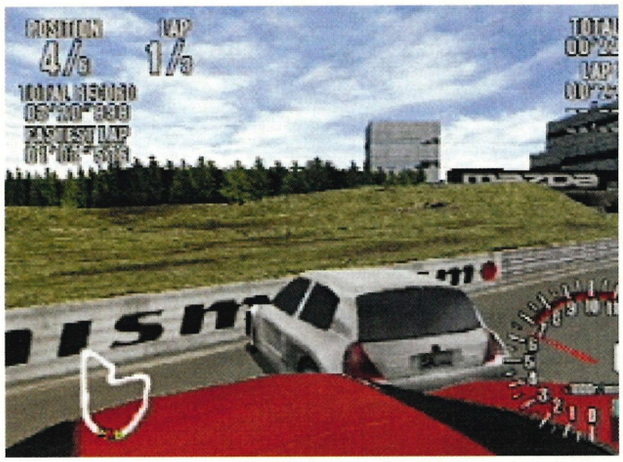


IN TUNE (UP)

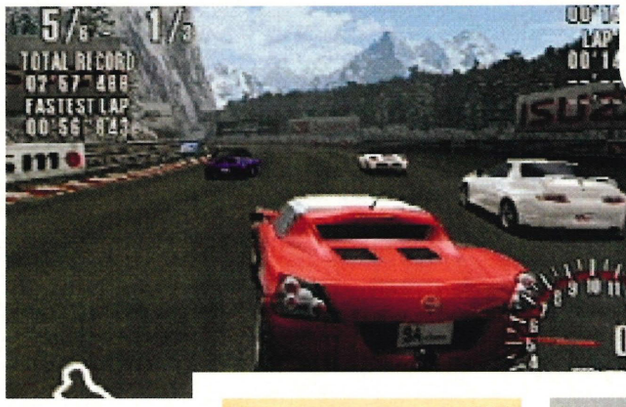




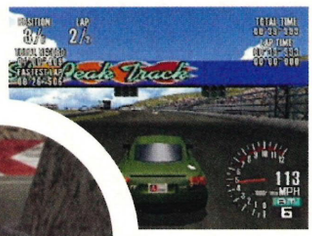
In trying to cover all aspects of car racing, Sega GT has an extensive car-tuning option that allows you to buy parts and change settings for the usual stuff such as engine, drivetrain, suspension, brakes and tyres. You can also buy yourself some racing wheels and reduce the cars weight by peeling unwanted parts off. This section truly makes a difference to your car's handling, but be careful, as just bolting on all of the best parts may result in your car becoming an uncontrollable beast. A good tip is not to save anything until you've got your car just right.

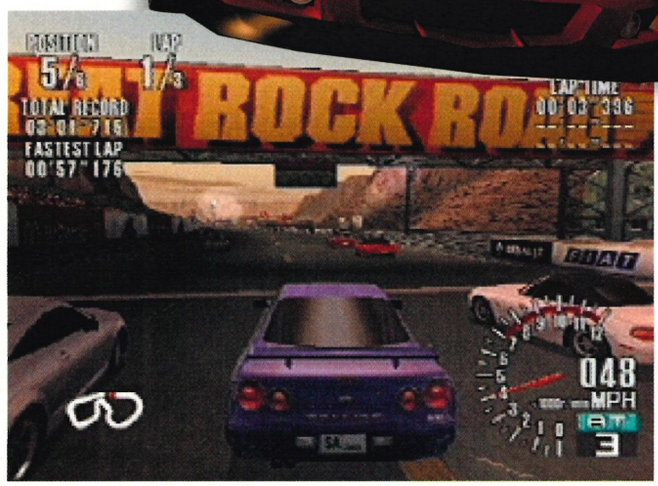


There's no car damage and the crash physics leave a lot to be desired.



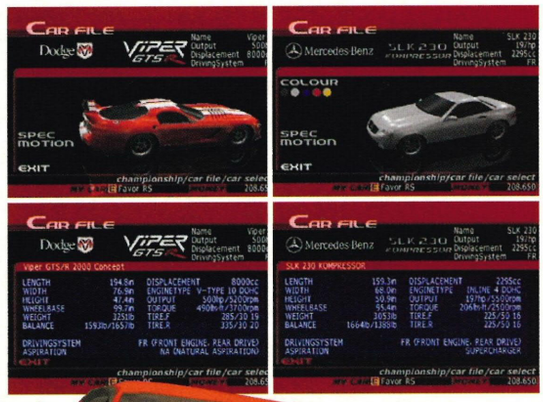
This makes an appearance in MSR and looks far better.





THE CAR FILES

Sega GT caters for the real car enthusiast in the Car File, by giving you details and specs on all of the best cars in the game. If you're not a petrol-head this section is best left well alone as most of the stats won't mean a thing to you. Still, it's a nice touch anyway.



certain lack of oomph missing that the likes of Ferrari and MSR show with ease. The lack of speed is most evident in acceleration, with most cars feeling like they're trying to pull away on an oil slick. As soon as you get up into fourth and fifth gear, though, the problem almost vanishes as the corners loom up on you, requiring some quick thinking on the driver's part. Often clipping a corner or barrier, or sliding the back end out too far slows you right down, and it takes you an age to get going again.

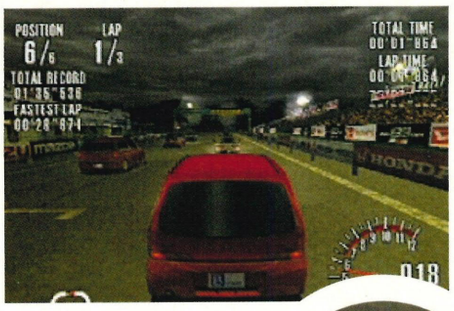
The speed factor isn't Sega GT's only problem either. The car handling, although competent, isn't as engaging as it could've been. Many of the cars act as though they're driving though some invisible cloud of syrup gas, as they sway from left to right in an almost slow motion fashion. You get used to this feel, though, and after a few hours of play the handling system shouldn't bother you. It's just the simple fact that driving any of Sega GT's cars, isn't as much fun as the high-speed thrills of MSR or the realistic nature of Ferrari. Don't go away thinking the handling is bad; it's just that Sega GT has some stiff competition that it's failed to beat.

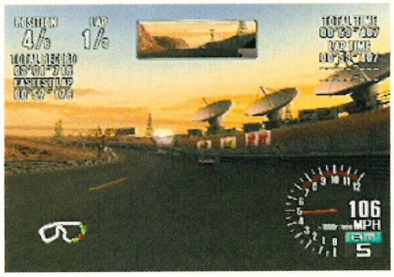
Structurally Sound

Sega GT also has some stiff competition in the game structure departments, from MSR on the Dreamcast, and of course Sony's Gran Turismo. Instead of trying to out do the best (á là MSR), Sega GT tries to ape the best bits of the Gran Tursimo structure. Which is all well and good, if it was improved on. Alas, Sega have come up with an unbalanced structure that confuses as well as annoys. The basic idea is that to enter the different races and competitions, you have to pass certain licence tests (which are much easier than Gran Turismo), and also have the correct car. The licences aren't a real problem, but having the right car is. There's various classes, based on engine displacement, whether your car is original and even what type of air intake it has.

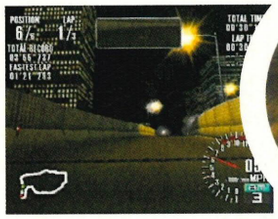
"sega gt has plenty of high speed sportsters and souped-up roadsters of which to get behind the wheel"

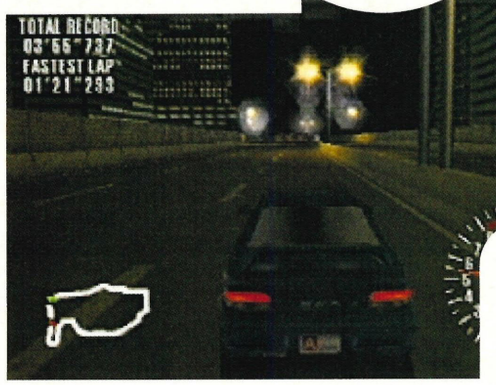
This is where things get confusing as you have to keep constantly returning to your garage to change cars. If you haven't got the one you need you must visit the dealer and buy one. If you have enough cash, that is. You start the game with just 10,000 credits to buy yourself a nice motor. There's actually only two brand-new

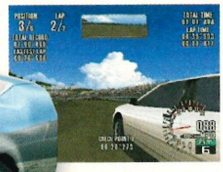




The mountain races present some of the best scenery. Is there anybody out there?







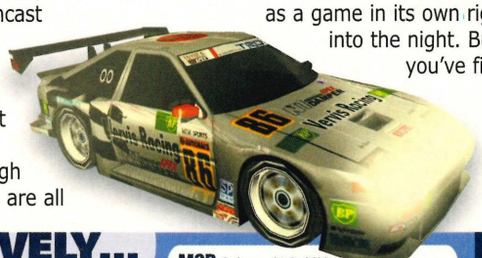
Again, you can see from the night courses that the visuals don't match those of MSR.

cars you can afford, but visit the used car showroom and you get yourself a car fast enough to win the novice cup. Which in turn gives you a wedge of cash to start buying better cars. And so it goes on; find a race that you can enter, win some dosh, buy a different car for a different race and try and win more cash. It's not all races as there are a few time trial competitions, and some speed challenges as seen in MSR Which is all well and good, if it wasn't for the fact that you never really know which car you should be using for which race.

Renaissance Years

We're at a stage in the Dreamcast's life that could be described as the renaissance years, in that visually, Dreamcast games are looking better than ever. Within the racing genre, check out the incredibly solid workhorse that is Ferrari or the pizzazz-filled showcase of the beautiful MSR. Sega GT, I'm afraid, doesn't match either game in either the workhorse or flashiness departments. It's still a good-looking game, but things like lack of detail in the car models and bland backgrounds just aren't up to scratch with what we expect from Dreamcast games now. The track design is of note, as there's a nice variety in complex and challenging courses that serve to prolong the game. The environments too, though not without there problems, are all well drawn and there's a nice amount of detail as the camera sweeps around the track at the start of a race to give you a general idea of what you're facing. All of this isn't enough to take Sega GT up to the dizzy graphical heights of MSR, but is more than enough to impress your non-Dreamcast-owning mates.

So Sega GT doesn't live up to the impeccable pedigree that Sega has in the racing game market. Which is not down to it being a bad game in any way. OK, it has its problems with game structure, a few handling nuances you have to get used and a certain lack of speed, but as a game in its own right it keeps you playing into the night. But only, I'm afraid, after you've finished your sessions on MSR and Ferrari, as it's be these games you pick up before Sega GT even gets a look-in. ■ *Saul Trewern*



LICENCE TO DRIVE

There are four classes of licence to obtain on Sega GT, that give you access to all of the different races. You can take licence tests with a number of different vehicle manufacturers and within the licence section there is also the opportunity to enter a Works Cup for the different makes on offer. To do this, you must beat the record time on each licence test, which is not easy. Still, when you win a Works Cup, you're given access to factory cars that are otherwise unobtainable in the car dealer section. So it's worth persevering, as this is the only way to get the fastest and best-looking cars in the game.

You get to choose the colour of every car you buy.

VERDICT

dcm 7

A solid racing game but a few flaws and a lack of graphical flair let it down slightly. Isn't the Gran Turismo beater Sega were hoping for.

ALTERNATIVELY...

MSR • *Issue 16* • *9/10*
Amazing structure with great graphics and gameplay.

COMING SOON...

Grand Prix 3 • *Hasbro*
More simulation-heavy, but as playable as Ferrari.

Publisher	UBI SOFT	Developer	UDS	Genre	DRIVING GAME	Peripherals	
Available	OUT NOW	Players	1-2	Price	£39.99		

online... www.ubisoft.com

SNO-CROSS CHAMPIONSHIP RACING

Sno-cross is a minority sport, but can this game appeal to the masses? Time to chill out...

yellow sno

Simon says... "This could've been quite interesting. Sad really..."

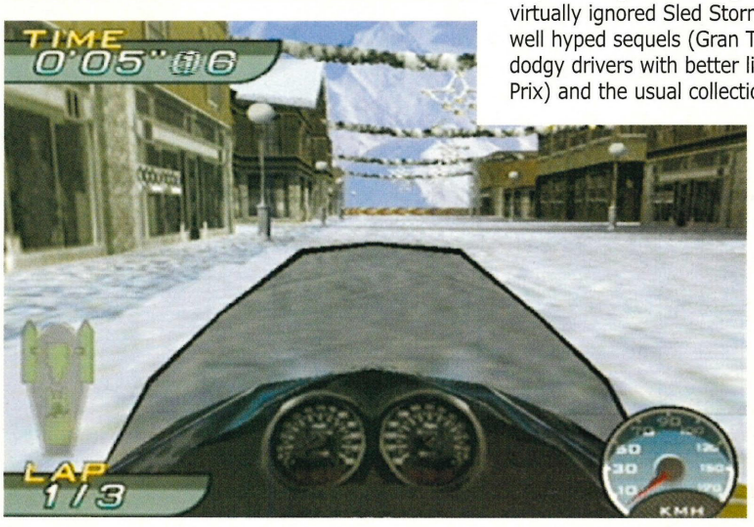
Any of you former PlayStation owners out there remember Sled Storm? No? You missed a goodie. Being based on such an obscure sport, it was never going to give Gran Turismo a drive for its money, but the reviewers raved about it. Not that it did much good - PlayStation gamers being what they are, they virtually ignored Sled Storm and splashed out on well hyped sequels (Gran Turismo 2, WipEout 3), dodgy drivers with better licenses (F1 World Grand Prix) and the usual collection of half-arsed kart efforts (Speed Devils, South Park Rally). You see, the populist PSX wasn't the console for a game based on an obscure sport. It never had a chance, despite playing like a dream. A Sno-Cross game can only work on a purists' machine, where the real hardcore gamers hang out. A machine that delivers great gameplay to gamers who appreciate it. A machine whose owners check the reviews and demand the best, and wouldn't dream of splashing out £40 on the strength of a licence alone...

...Hold on, I think I just described the Dreamcast. We've always claimed our dream machine is a real console gamer's games console, for the purists not the part-timers. Perhaps Sno-Cross would be better at home on the big white wonder. Which is where Sno-Cross Championship Racing comes in!

The team has taken great pains to get the right balance between speed and playability. The machines are fast (very fast), but don't think you can get away with just hammering the accelerator and steering. The three different leagues on offer ease you into the game's realistic physics model, starting you on a light snowmobile (500cc) and moving on to the heavier, more powerful 600cc and 700cc machines. They're licensed from

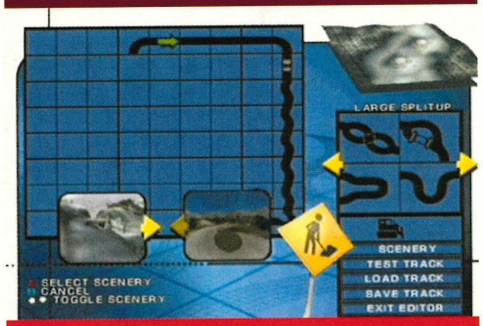
SNOW EXPENSES SPARED

Developer UDS spared no expense in getting the feel and physics of Sno-Cross Championship Racing right. The entire team (pictured here) spent three days in the most northern part of Sweden talking to Sno-Cross professionals, riding machines, taking photographs and building a library of sounds. Hope they packed their Winter woollies!



The own-eye view is pretty thrilling on the short term.

DIY SNOW SPEEDING



Also included in the game is a snazzy track editor. It's not the most versatile one we've ever seen, but it's easy to use and the tracks you create look good in the game (they don't mess the trackside graphics, for example). It's a neat little bonus to the game as a whole.

It's just like the San Marino Grand Prix!

genuine snowmobiles, if anyone's interested. How accurate the physics model really is I don't know - I've never even seen a real snowmobile, let alone driven (ridden?) one, but I do know how the in-game machine handles on the snow.

Frozen Frolics

There's more to driving one of the buggers than allowing for inertia on the corners, though to say it calls for a whole new set of driving skills would be an exaggeration. Adapt what you already know about corner approaches and racing lines and you'll do fine. The game seems a little generous when it comes to crashes and spins, and that's probably wise. These sleds are hard enough to control as it is, without every mistake sending you spinning across the powder, ending up so disorientated you've no idea which direction you're pointing. Having to repair damaged parts before the next race in the Championship Mode is a nice touch. You qualify for the next race if you come third (out of a mere four!), but you really need to place higher to earn enough dough to keep your toboggan going. Trash your runners and the sled lists as it runs, steering itself to a degree, depending on how damaged it is. Cane your engine too hard and your opponents leave you eating their sleet right from the start; you can forget catching up, unless someone makes a mistake.

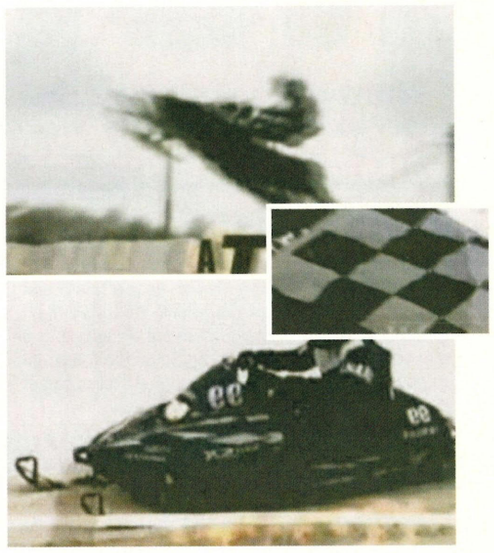
Which brings me on to my next point - driver behaviour. It's good that your (three) foes can make mistakes, though to be honest, they behave more like mobile markers than rival racers. The heart of this game is getting know how to control your sled and keep it pointing in the right direction, taking the corners without banging your runners and swinging the back out then hammering home the accelerator to power out of bends rather than stealing a few seconds by taking the apex a little tighter or braking at the last possible second without overshooting into the gravel trap. It's none-the-worse for this too.

The graphics are cool, the powder spray from your, erm, caterpillar wotsit at the back of the sled giving a real winter sports feel, and the polygons zip along at a fair old rate, though with only four racers, so they damned well should. The engines sound like they're constantly struggling, but with big, heavy machines like these, that's probably very accurate. They could've done a little more with the background tunes, though.

The real reason why Sno-Cross Championship Racer got a mediocre mark is the track design. They're so antiseptic you could perform open heart surgery on them. Where the PSX's Sled Storm offered multiple routes, short-cuts, high-octane chicanes and challenging features, the courses here look like the first thing you come up with when you start designing. Reality is no excuse either - the locations are styled after real places, but the tracks themselves aren't. With a little more attention to detail in this respect, the game could've been pretty cool (!), but as it stands, it's an interesting change from the usual tarmac-and-tyres racer, but no more. ■ *Ian Osborne*

ICE INTRO

The intro sequence, cutting real-life Sno-Cross footage with game graphics, works pretty well in a 'been there, seen that' sort of way. It certainly sets the snow-bound scene, though - I almost reached for my coat!



VERDICT

dcm **6**

Sterile tracks let down what could've been a neat little number. An amusing aside from the usual driving game, though...

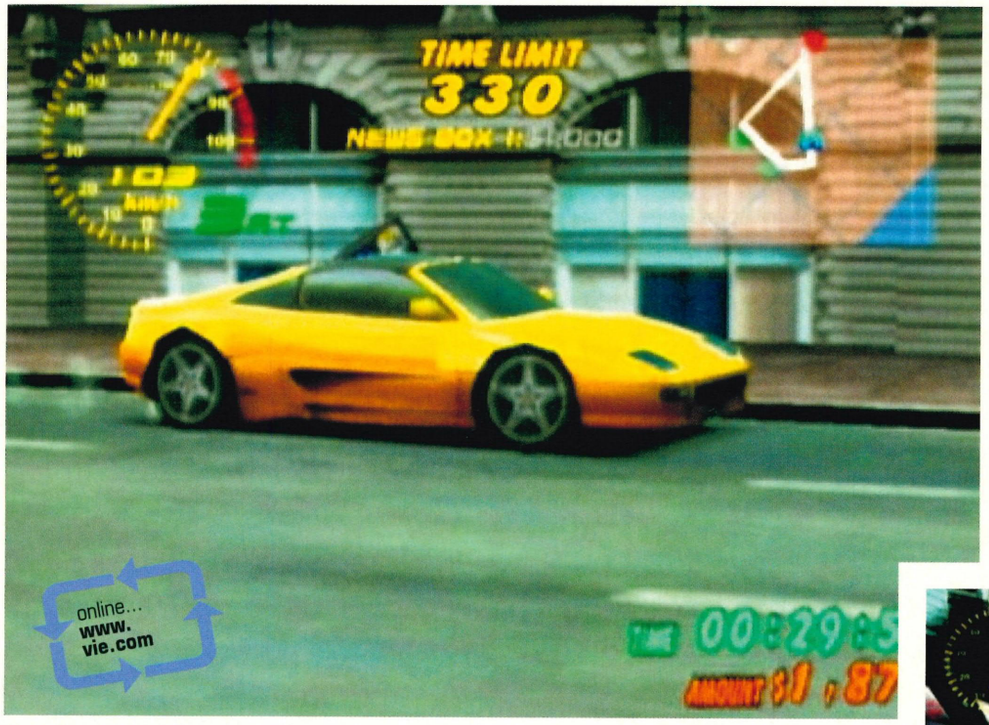
ALTERNATIVELY...

Hydro Thunder • *Issue 3* • *7/10*
Hydro Thunder works well without being a blockbuster.

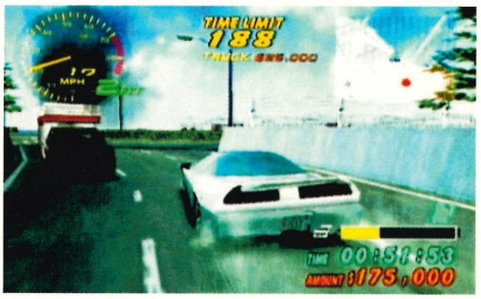
COMING SOON...

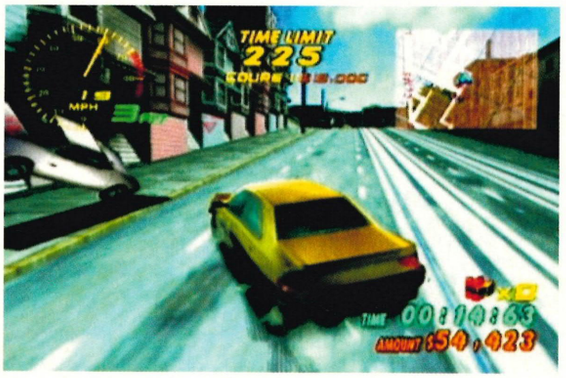
Championship Surfer • *Mattel*
More obscure sports mayhem, this time from Mattel.

Publisher	VIRGIN	Developer	CLIMAX	Genre	DRIVING	Peripherals
Available	OUT NOW	Players	1	Price	£39.99	



Very nice wheels. I bet you could do a lot of damage in one of those babies...





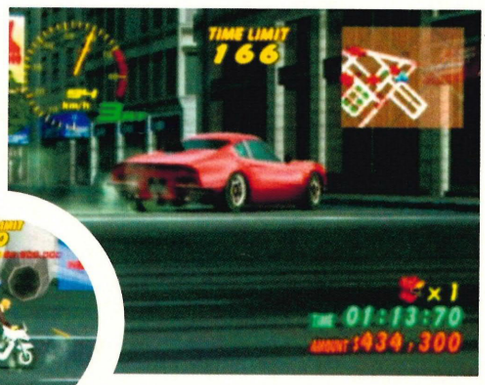
SUPER RUNABOUT

We were suspicious. No fanfare. No big party to launch it. No excited early word. But we were surprised...

OFFICE SPACE

The core of the game management is controlled from an office. Spinning around said office leads you to the offshoots of the game, including the garage, missions, audio and visual options and er, a couple of strange folk lounging around. The not-particularly-impressive cut scenes at the start of the game explain their involvement...

got a new motor?



This is how it works. You drive one of a selection of cars around San Francisco, performing various missions and earning cash in the process. A kind of Crazy-Taxi-meets-Grand-Theft-Auto if you like. Can I go home now? Thought not...

Super Runabout, then. A bit of a nice surprise, really, being the latest in a bit of a line of arcade-style driving games to appear on the Dreamcast. The set-up is, if you hadn't guessed, fairly standard. You're the driver for hire, taking on missions as diverse as collecting bombs and making hot dogs for visiting dignitaries (it's certainly the first driving game we've played where the words 'got the lettuce' appear on screen). And that's just the first two levels. Once you pick your mission, you choose the vehicle to undertake it.

Again, usual rules apply. High speed usually equals low control and a car that's too easy to damage, whilst a bike is tight enough around the corners but no good when you hit the straight. Oh, and taller vehicles seem keen on falling over, which costs you valuable seconds.

How it Works

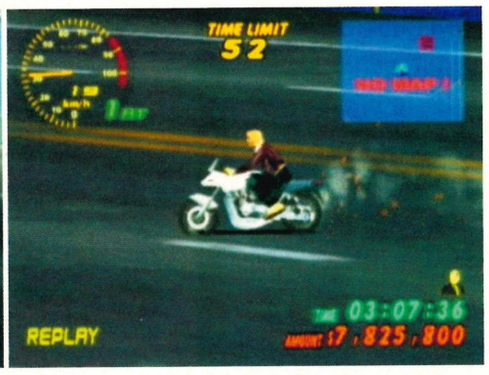
Kicking off then with the objective, a time limit and a map, the missions predominantly take the form of collecting objects and taking them somewhere else. To succeed, you need to combine map-reading skills with tight driving - not an easy combination. You quickly learn which game is the

Richard says... "the name suggests a game based on ian odball"

For ultimate distruction the tank is a must. Oh, yeah!

CHOOSE CAREFULLY

Vehicles are the crux of the game, and you need to tailor each one to each mission you're given. Generally, the more pick-ups you need to complete the level, the more turns and twists you have to undertake, which more often than not means you're going to have to sacrifice some of that speed for more control. But it's not always as simple as that. Usually, when you've got everything you need to finish the mission, you end up having to dash over the other side of town to drop whatever it is off. You regret not having acceleration then. Our advice? Do some urgent work in the garage to upgrade your motors...



major influence on this one as soon as you hit the accelerator, with jumps, fast speeds and various tight turns to negotiate. Step forward, Crazy Taxi. Right down to the lack of fixed routes and people fleeing over the streets, you can't help thinking back to Sega's masterpiece.

But that's no bad thing. It takes a minute maximum to orientate yourself with Super Runabout, and from then on you're free to enjoy yourself. Which you will. At its best, it's a game that's simply good fun to play, and you end up playing it for a while.

It's hampered to an extent by its ambitions, though. The San Francisco scenario is a traditional favourite for driving games, and with good reason. Nicely represented, the trouble here is that the game can't always keep up when your foot hits the floor, with the graphics lacking the fluidity that Crazy Taxi proved possible. It's easy too to get lost in the camera angles when you're trying something as simple as reversing, and at first it's simply too easy to flip some of the vehicles over.

Perhaps the major omission is some form of multiplayer mode. There's little doubt that this is the kind of game you'd love to dig out when your mates come round, but as it stands, you have to take it in turns to play it. Bugger.

error is your best tactic for success.

And when you hit the streets, you can't help noticing the world going on around you. Say, for instance, a car (usually with the help of your bumper) takes a bit of an ambitious jump - it's just as likely to career into the nearest lamppost as you are. Rozzers stand in the road. Pedestrians walk along. Other cars wait patiently to turn right. In short, you can't help but immerse yourself in the surroundings. Perhaps the controls verge on a little too touchy at times, and the simplest things manage to bugger up a plate of glass in a shop window, but it's still a fine little world in which to play.

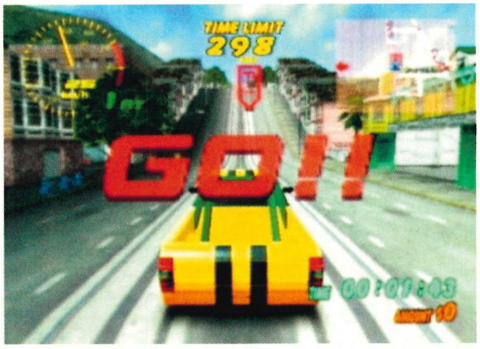
That's when it creeps up on you. Despite the fact that it's behind the opposition in terms of quality and feel, the game keeps tugging at your arm until you realise that this is actually damn good fun. The jumps and corners can be extremely satisfying, and when you manage to put foot to the floor and get a bit of speed going, you might even forget the fact that you're dinner's in the oven/you were supposed to be at the pub half an hour ago/you need to pee (delete as appropriate). Don't go expecting speed bursts when you're driving the bog-standard bike, though. Bastard thing couldn't overtake a milk float.

It's no classic, certainly, and you'd have to question the wisdom of spending 40 sheets on it. But for an above-average piece of arcade entertainment, Super Runabout fits the bill. As simple as that. ■ *Simon Brew*

"It's certainly the first driving game we've played where the words 'got the lettuce' appear

Good Wins Out

Still, it's the positives that ultimately come shining through. By earning your money, you can upgrade your car and fine-tune it for optimum performance, and as you progress through the game you unlock extra vehicles. It does add a tactical edge, having to weigh up the mission with the transport you want to use, even if trial and



"Alright, I'm going! No need to be rude...

VERDICT

dcm 7

A good, fun arcade driving game, that's not got an original bone in its body, but plenty of limbs from other titles.

ALTERNATIVELY...

Crazy Taxi • *Issue 6* • *9/10*
Still the arcade driving daddy of a game.

COMING SOON...

Crazy Taxi 2 • *Sega*
It's gonna have a San Francisco level. Yipee!

Publisher	ACTIVISION	Developer	TREYARCH	Genre	SPORT SIM	Peripherals
Available	OUT NOW	Players	1-2	Price	£39.99	

TONY HAWK'S

the birdman returns

online... www.activision.co.uk

dcm RECOMMENDS

Is it possible to improve on perfection? Saul seems to think so, and he should know - he hasn't stopped playing Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 for over a month now...

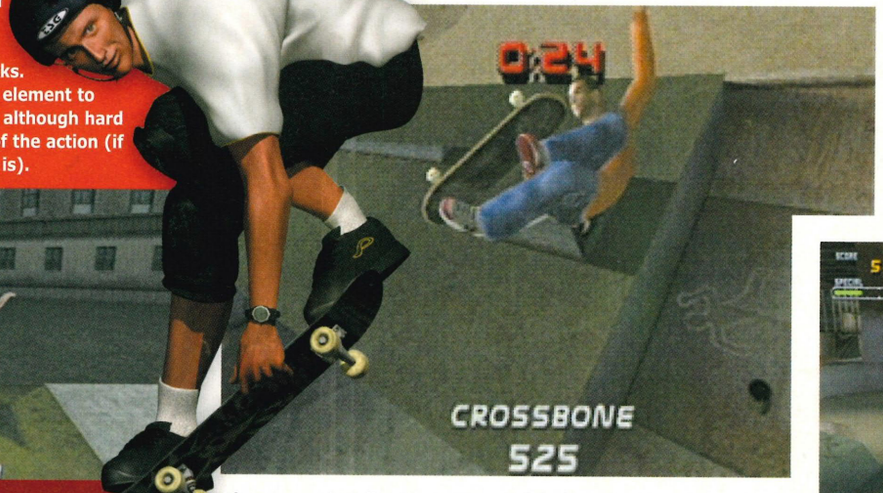
I think that I'm supposed to start with how the original Tony Hawk's game sold millions and was the surprise hit on the PlayStation in 1999. I'm then supposed to go on to say how the Dreamcast version of the original usurped it with a graphical facelift and a higher frame-rate.

After this, convention would have it that I tell you how much of an improvement the PlayStation sequel was over the original. And to close my opening paragraph I'd tell you that the Dreamcast version of Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 (THPS2) wipes the floor with the PlayStation version. But I think all that you really need to hear from this opening paragraph, is that THPS2 well and truly rocks.

The developer of the Dreamcast version, Treyarch, has of course improved over the

MANUAL LABOUR

We covered this new move in detail in last issue's Loading feature, but for those of you who missed it, let us explain. The Manual is a new move in THPS2 that is basically either a front or back wheelie. It's easy to activate by just tapping Down then Up or vice versa. It's purpose? The Manual is used to link tricks and grinds in order to keep your score multiplier going. After ending a long grind, you may have a score of 2000 with a x6 multiplier. Jump straight out of the grind and you end up with 12000 points. Jump into a manual, though, and steer to another grind and you start that with your x6, which you can then keep increasing by doing bigger tricks. The Manual adds a whole new element to the Tony Hawk gameplay, and although hard to master, is an integral part of the action (if you want to be any good, that is).



The camera handles the extreme tricks amazingly well.

PRO SKATER 2

TONY TWO-PLAYER

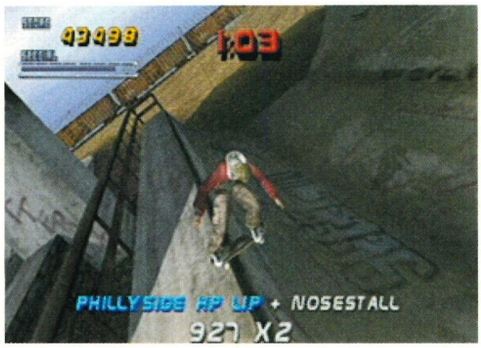
First things first; the game engine handles the two-player split-screen games magnificently, with the only real problem being that the screen is split in half. But this is unavoidable. There are five games on offer, three of which are from the original game (Trick Attack, Horse and the superb Graffiti). The two new games are Tag and Free Skate, which basically speak for themselves. THPS2 is primarily a one-player game, but if you've got mates around who don't want to take it in turns, these multiplayer games can be a whole lot of fun.

Richard says... "much better than the first, but I can do it for real"

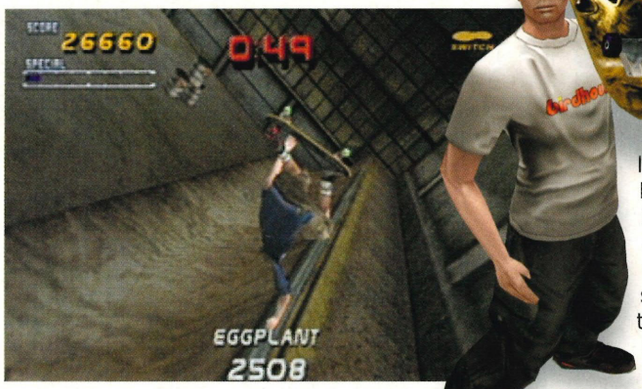
PlayStation version of THPS2, but like the original Dreamcast version, the improvements are technical rather than gameplay-biased. First of all, you're amazed at just how good THPS2 looks. The graphics are a step up from the Dreamcast original and a million miles away from the 32-bit offering. Everything from the lighting and shading to the number of polygons that have gone into the characters is truly astounding. Every level is a graphical masterpiece, with textures from heaven and a ridiculous attention to detail. Take, for instance, the graffiti at the Venice Beach location or the fountain found in Pennsylvania. Everything is drawn and realised brilliantly, making THPS2 a real sight to behold.

> "treyarch has, of course, improved over psx version of tony hawk's pro skater 2"

The 3D engine is basically a tweaked version of the Dreamcast version, and it handles the ridiculous amount of graphical detail almost faultlessly. The skaters glide around the levels with grace and the trick animations that will truly amaze you. There's no hint of slow-down or glitching and the frame-rate holds its maximum at all times, meaning that THPS2 is fast. Very fast. In a moment of no-holds-barred abandon, we set up the PlayStation version to test how strong the Dreamcast's 3D engine was against it. The result? Well if you like skating through air that's denser than that of Venus, go for the PlayStation game. If you want an Earth-based atmosphere feel, the Dreamcast is the one to go for. Compared to Treyarch's effort, the Neversoft PlayStation game feels like you're skating through syrup, and once in the air, you'd be forgiven for thinking that the skaters have a severe case of rheumatism in the way they move.



There's always a hidden rail to find. This one's near the roof.



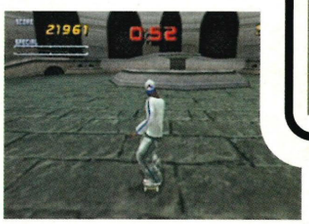
Now, until you've played the Dreamcast game you won't notice this, but put the two next to each other and you can see just how good a job Treyarch has done with perfecting the 3D engine.

Pushing the Envelope

On the technical side, THPS2 has pushed the envelope to breaking point. The gameplay stays the same as that of the PlayStation. Which is fine by us, 'cos the sequel improved over the original ten-fold. The gameplay challenges for each level have doubled, meaning you get ten tasks to complete before getting 100%. The tasks include the usual score grinds or doing special tricks. Most of them take an age to complete as you often don't know what you're looking at. For example, the Venice Beach level asks you to grind the Venice Ledge, but finding it takes you ages. Instead of winning videotapes for completing tasks as in the original, you're awarded hard cash, which serves to open up later levels. Like the original, though, the structure allows you to get new levels without fully completing the previous ones. This means that you can go back to the early levels when you're a bit more competent and complete the harder challenges, which in turn helps in opening up even more levels.

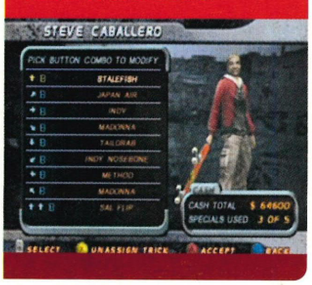
THPS2 offers eight levels altogether, which is one less than in the original game. Still the quality of the environments makes up for that missing level. Three of the eight are competitions that take place on real skatepark-style environments rather than the outside 'street' feel of the other five. Instead of having to complete challenges in the competitions, you take part in three one-minute challenges (although they've been made much harder) plus some of the regulars from the original. On top of this, there's several tasks to complete that are specific to the level you're playing. These include collecting a number of certain items, finding special gaps, grinding special

> "you can see just how good a job treyarch has done with perfecting the 3d engine"



MO' MONEY

The money you earn for completing challenges serves to open up later levels, but you can also spend it on your skater. New tricks can be bought and assigned to your preferred button combination (in fact any tricks can be reassigned), new boards can bough but most importantly for the Career Mode is the fact that you can buy extra stats points for your skaters. When your stats are maxed out you certainly notice the difference in your skater's performance, and often you're able to reach areas on a level that you couldn't reach before.


STEVE CABALLERO
PICK BUTTON COMBO TO MODIFY
B
B
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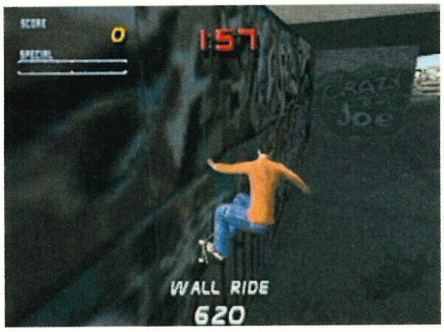


Can't get up that set of steps? Why not ride up along the the wall instead?

heats that are scored as in the normal levels, but also looked upon by judges. This means that you need to vary your run and try not to fall off, as your final score isn't just dependant on how many points you get on your run. These competitions serve to break up the gameplay and are also something to aim for. As structures go, THPS2 is near perfect and you find yourself (clichéd as it is) playing into the night just to earn that extra bit of cash so that you can see more of the levels. And that is what good gaming is all about.

Experience Unmatched

Everything is in place, then. A superb game structure, great graphics and a 3D engine that holds everything together with the greatest of ease. Do I really need to add that actually playing THPS2 is a gameplay experience that is almost unmatched on any format? The control system eases you into things, and it's not long before you start pulling off some of the amazing tricks on offer. Just as you think you've grasped it, you find something that takes the game to a whole new level. You keep improving and the better you get, the more enjoyable the game becomes. This is as much down to the sheer spectacle of the on-screen action to the cunning level design on offer. At first glance, the levels look basic, but after extensive play, more and more features reveal themselves. Every level is full of challenging gaps and grinds that have to be completed to 100% the game, and there's hidden areas galore. Just skating around searching for everything a level contains is fun in itself, but when you're truly competent, a whole new skating world opens up as you belt around the levels tricking off everything in sight and attaining the kind of scores you'd think impossible when you first start playing. The best thing, though, is that when you reach this skill level, the sky is the limit and you still won't find yourself getting bored.

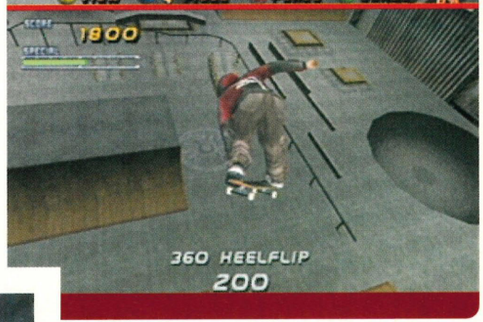
Even with the eight basic levels, THPS2 feels barely finite, but when you add to the mix the amazing Level Editor where you can build your own personal skateparks and the Create Skater option where you can, uh, create a skater, THPS2 becomes the first infinite game ever. Don't be surprised if you're still playing in a year's time, even if you've completed the game within a few months.

I've gushed for the entirety of this review, but there's nothing I can find to fault THPS2. I can't even dis the soundtrack with its cool blend of indie, rock and pseudo hip-hop that fits the action perfectly. So often publishers and developers alike skimp on sequels by churning out the exact same game as the original, just with new levels. You could accuse Activision of this tactic, but the fact is that the gameplay and graphics have bean tweaked and the new levels truly are astounding, so the only accusation you can level is that somehow they've made what I considered a perfect game even better.

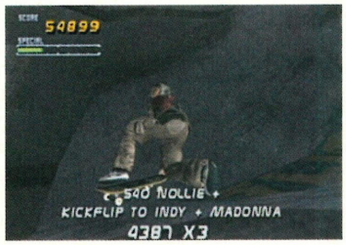
■ *Saul Trewern*

CREATE-A-PARK

We've now had chance to get to grips with the Skatepark Editor in THPS2, and can testify it's the easiest-to-use level editor we've ever got our hands on. The results, if you spend enough time, are astounding as there's literally so much you can put into your park. Everything from different-shaped half-pipes and railings to kicker ramps, trees, park benches and signs can be used to create your ideal skating area. Don't expect startling results straight away, though. It takes a great deal of thought to build the perfect skatepark, but being as though the actual planning and building is so much fun, it really doesn't matter that you waste hours on the editor.



They're not only good skaters, they're rock too. Look, sheet glass doesn't even hurt.



dcm 9

VERDICT: Beautiful, challenging, addictive and cool. One of the Dreamcast's best game's to date. You'll be playing it for years to come...

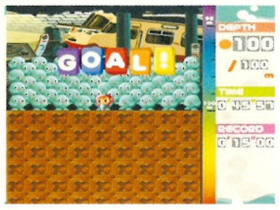
ALTERNATIVELY...

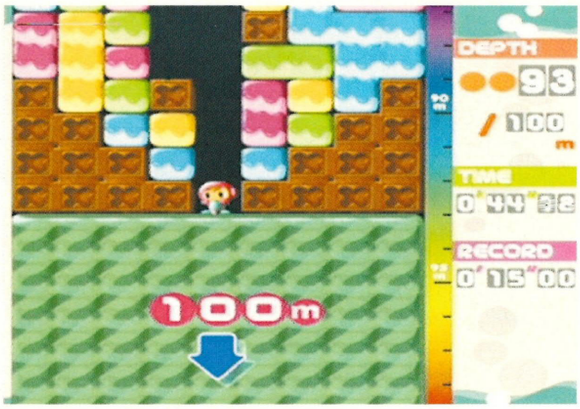
Dave Mirra BMX • *Issue 15* • *7/10*
Raggedy around the edges, but a good trick session.

COMING SOON...

MTV Skateboarding • *THQ*
Not yet with us, but don't count on it being a Tony beater.

Publisher	VIRGIN INTERACTIVE	Developer	NAMCO	Genre	PUZZLE GAME	Peripherals
Available	OUT NOW	Players	1	Price	£29.99	





This is the level end - you've made it to your target, in this case 100m.

MR. DRILLER

Is he a manic miner, a dynamic dentist or just the star of a suitably-weird Japanese puzzler? Let's check out Namco's pneumatic number...

online... www.namco.com

driller thriller

Russell says... "An ok puzzler, but a little unfair on you at times."

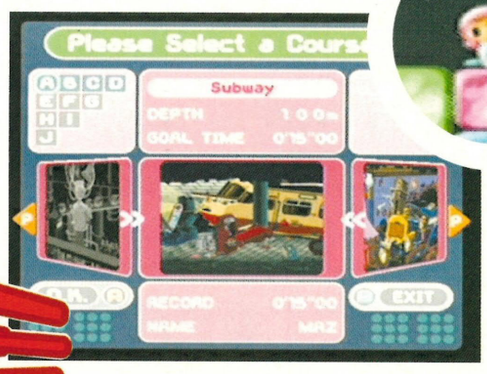
Japanese puzzle games are invariably weird, and Mr Driller is no exception. Based on the ancient (ie. Eighties) arcade coin-op Dig Dug, you play a geezer that looks like a baby in a rompa suit. The aim of the game is to use your enormous drill to zip your way downwards to your goal without running out of air or getting crushed by a falling block. Why you're doing it is anyone's guess, but since when did puzzle games need a plot? Was Tetris an all-out confrontation against the evil Falling-Block Empire? Does Klax see you storing tiles in ever-prettier patterns in order to win the 'Who's got the flashiest warehouse' competition? Nope, no storyline is no problem here.

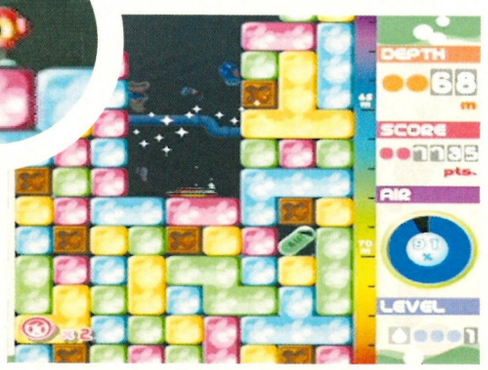
Converted from the coin-op, the gameplay is as beautifully simple as any puzzler. Starting at the top of the vertically-scrolling screen, your task is to drill your way through the coloured blocks one at a time. As a block disintegrates, anything supported by it and it alone falls. If it falls on your head, you're squashed into a large, flat pizza. If it falls on a similarly-coloured piece, they disappear. It's entirely possible to drill through the single-square brown blocks marked 'X', but it takes time and air to do this, so it's best not to if you can help it. Oh, and talking about air, it's a good idea to aim for the oxygen bottles as you go to replenish your supply.

> "Mr. Driller is a fine conversion of the coin-op, with every detail accounted for"

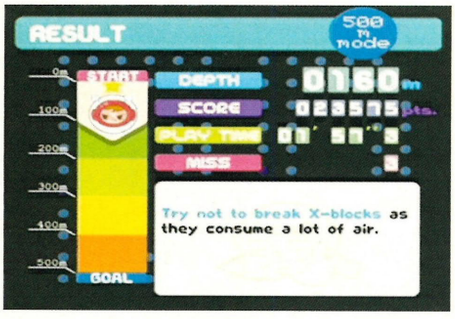
Mining Madness

Mr Driller is a fine conversion of the coin-op, with every detail accounted for. The graphics are colourful and cute - they don't push the boat out too much in terms of detailed renders and high polygon counts, but

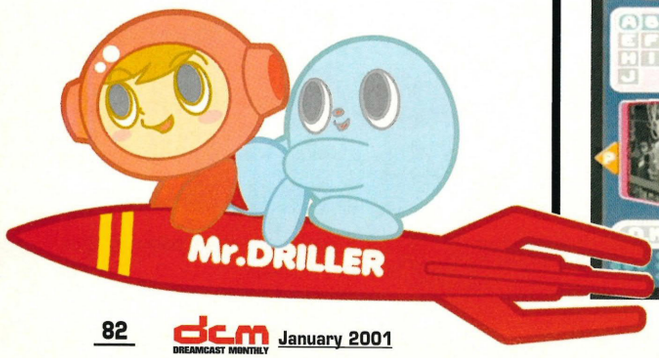




TOP TIPS



When you lose in Arcade Mode, the game offers you a tip. Don't get excited - they're usually pretty obvious.



MINING MODES

There are three main modes in Mr Driller:

ARCADE MODE:
Drill to a given depth, which depends on your chosen skill level.

SURVIVAL MODE:
Drill through a seemingly-endless series of blocks. How long can you last? It's basically the Arcade Mode with just one big level.

TIME ATTACK MODE:
Clear each course in record time. It's the Arcade Mode against the clock.

GOING DOWN

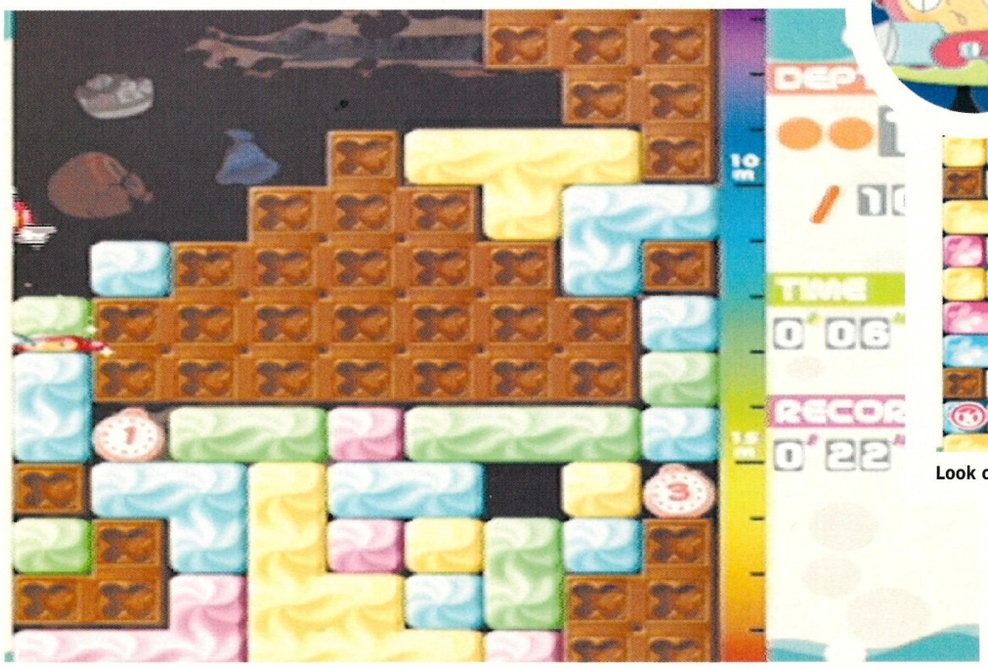
Bust the yellow block below you in the first shot, and only the blue and green blocks to your right fall. Everything above them is supported by the long, thin green piece resting on the 'X' block. Take a look at the second shot to see what we mean...

what the heck? The visuals are as good as they need to be, and any more would be too much. Same story with the sonics and general presentation. So what about the gameplay? Well, one thing's for sure - Mr Driller is F-U-N! At least in the short term anyway, but we'll come on to that later. The digging is fast and frantic, the blocks wobble nicely before they fall, leaving you ample time to get out of the way, unless you've drilled yourself into a dead end, which is your own fault anyway. Without the falling oxygen levels, the game would be easy - just look at what the blocks will do when you drill and act accordingly. Alas, depleting air supplies make this untenable. Instead you must think on your toes and work as quickly as possible, making sure you don't suffocate or make a wrong move and get crushed. It's this balance of speed and forward planning which makes the game so enjoyable - in the short term.

Brief Encounters

So why did such a fun game only get six out of ten? Why does this driller thriller lack longevity? Alas, it's that old bugbear, that bane of coin-op conversions, that torpedo that's sunk many a console interpretation of an arcade game. There just isn't enough here to keep you happy. If you get sick of a coin-op, you stop putting money into it. So what if you only played for an hour or two? As long as you enjoyed those hours, you're happy. Not so with a console game - you've got to splash out £30 in one go before you even start to play. And for that much money, you expect a little lastability, which Mr Driller simply hasn't got. The coin-op mode (Arcade) lacks variety, and the additional modes (see boxout) are just tweaks on the Arcade Mode. There's no Story Mode challenge, where you complete a set of tasks based around the Mr Driller arcade game. There's no Against-the-Foe Mode where you must out-dig a computer-controlled opponent, hopefully squashing or trapping him as you go, or maybe scoring points by digging so fast he goes off the top of the screen. And most damningly of all, there's no hint of a multiplayer mode. None at all. No two-player Co-operative Mode, where you combine to grab a set number of objects. No Competitive Mode where you dig against each other. There isn't even a Tetris-style Split-Screen Mode where achieving something in your own dig throws up a cluster of heavy-duty 'X' boxes on your opponent's side. Multiplayer mining could really have added something here, turning a short-lived driller into an after-the-pub thriller, and its absence is absolutely ridiculous. And that's why it only got six out of ten. ■ *Ian Osborne*

> "multiplayer mining could really have added something here, turning a short-lived driller into an after-the-pub thriller"



In the time attack, you can get time power-ups that reduce your overall time taken.

Look out for oxygen power-ups.

dcm 6

VERDICT **Great in the short term, but lack of multiplayer modes seriously reduces its long-term appeal.**

ALTERNATIVELY...

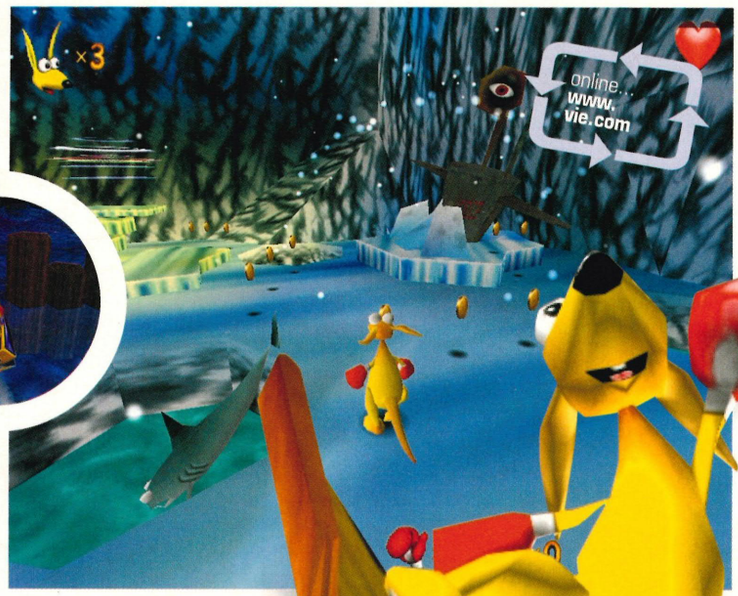
Bust-a-Move 4 • *Issue 12 • 7/10*
Few advances on its predecessors, but good fun

COMING SOON...

Sonic Shuffle • *Sega*
Pulsating mini-games in Sega's latest Sonic sensation

Publisher	VIRGIN INTERACTIVE	Developer	TITUS INTERACTIVE	Genre	PLATFORM	Peripherals
Available	OUT NOW	Players	1	Price	£39.99	

Aha! The good old floating-platforms-in-the-sky-for-no-reason level. A real classic.



KAO THE KANGAROO

All the evils of the videogame world merge to create a cliché-ridden epitome of money-grabbing commercialism. "And that's just the ridiculous title", says Saul...

cynically commercial

I know!", said Lex from marketing to Tarquin in advertising. "Let's make a platform game that plagiarises every example of the genre we can think off, and doesn't do the job half as well, but, and here's the clincher, Tarquin darling, the star of the game is a Kangaroo called Kao who wears boxing gloves. Kao, get it? Knockout the Kangaroo 'cos he's wearing boxing gloves. Give us a snort..." "Oh Lex", says Tarquin, "that's so last year". Cynical, yes, but from the second Kao The Kangaroo boots up, the stench of expensive aftershave, Patrick Cox shoes and large, round meeting tables with Evian dispensers hits you like a punch from a Pugilist Marsupial, and the pain resonates for as long as you continue to play. Kao The Kangaroo is not a game made by gamers for gamers, it's a game glued together from clichés that the suits upstairs think might sell to the kids this Christmas. And it will; I mean, they should know, they probably have an 'A' Level in marketing between them.

> "the camera apes that of crash, but doesn't do the job half as well"

Ian says... "been there, seen it, done it, got the 'y'-fronts"

How Nice

Cynicism aside, though, Kao is actually a fairly amiable game. Everything is in the right place gameplay-wise, and the graphics team have done an amiable job making Kao look, um, nice. But this is part of the problem. Should everything be in the right place, and is nice-looking what we really want? Especially when the Dreamcast has many nice-looking, formulaic games that can be picked up in bargain bins two months after they've hit the shelves. If Kao is the first platform game you've ever played, none of this will matter, but I'm betting that 99% of you reading this have played platformers before and will be amazed at how obvious and downright cheeky Kao is.

I mean, it's no testament to a game's originality when after two minutes of playing, you've already predicted several of the events that follow. "I bet there's an ice level", cries an onlooker behind me. I reply, "I bet that green energy warp takes me to a bonus level". In return, "Wonder if you get an extra life when you collect a certain amount of coins?".

BOXING BONUSES

Most of the levels in Kao have some kind of bonus section that's usually reached by entering a warp. Once on a bonus level, your job is usually to collect as many coins as you possibly can without biting the dust. Watch out, though; even from the first one, these bonus levels are bloody hard, and you won't get a sackful of coins without a bagful of frustration.

Okay, so here's a great looking and original(ish) level. There, I said it...

"Where's the lava level?", someone adds. Of course, there is an ice level, there is a lava level, collecting coins does give you extra lives and you'll never guess where I ended up when I entered that energy warp thingy...

This, of course, was first impressions, and although we managed to predict much of the game's content, I still imagined we'd find something new, something interesting. Alas, I was wrong. I'll admit I haven't played all of Kao, but from the levels I've played so far (and I'm sure I won't be picking it up again), there really isn't a hint of originality. The camera apes that of Crash but doesn't do the job half as well. After just a few minutes I found my view obscured by a huge leaf that really didn't need to be in the way. Hitting and holding R1 brings the camera closer into Kao, which helps but doesn't cure the symptoms of a dodgy camera with hardly any player control. The gameplay apes that of Spyro, Mario and Sonic in that you have to collect set numbers of items (in this case coins), perform jumps across varying types of platform, avoid traps (generally of the something with spikes-on variety) and solve simple puzzles. None of the gameplay features match those of Kao's peers, though, and for most of the time you feel like one of George Romero's zombies just hulking forward and going through the motions.

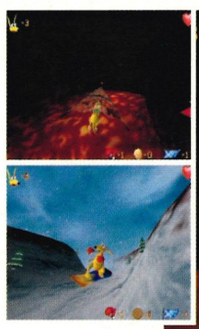
Original Annoyances

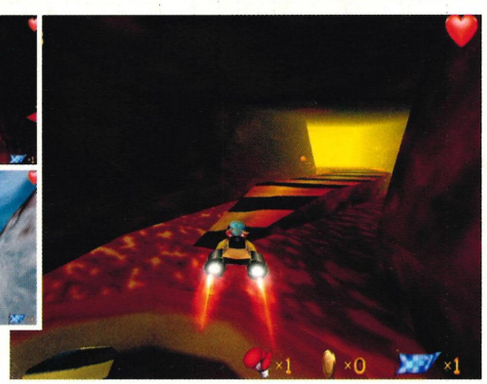
It doesn't help that even with so much source material to revise, Kao also comes with some extremely annoying gameplay nuances that it can call its own. For a start, it's too damn hard. The camera makes jumping perilous to say the least, and the fact that there are no restart points on a level is disastrous. One mistake and it's all the way back to the beginning, only to reach the same place and cock up again. Very frustrating indeed, and yet it could so easily have been avoided. Also, something else that could have been avoided is the linear nature of Kao. There's a map screen, but it's simply a flow chart of different levels, one directly after another. Some of the levels do have slightly different routes themselves, but these are usually just of the bonus section variety, which is ripped straight from Crash Bandicoot. By far the biggest problem that Kao causes itself, though, is the fact that I have no idea why I was playing. There's a total lack of story. No cut scenes, no reason why one level comes after the next and not a bloody clue why the main character is a kangaroo with boxing gloves. Did my version not have the narrativium that will accompany the version that hits the shops, or do Lex and Tarquin think that as long as the kids can jump, punch and solve the odd puzzle, a reason isn't needed?

Despite its flaws, Kao as a game isn't a total disaster. Short-lived fun can be had, and it's in no way a graphical washout. It's just that any originality is replaced by cynical commercialism of the type that threatens to devour mainstream gaming. Of course, I could be mistaken; maybe Kao The Kangaroo isn't a blatant rip-off of every decent platformer that's come before it. Maybe it's a homage to the fun and exhilaration that the likes of Crash, Mario, Sonic and Spyro hold so close to their pixellated hearts. Maybe it's a Leon to the original Nikita. But then again, I doubt that very much. After, all a kangaroo in boxing gloves? That's so last year darling... ■ *Saul Trewern*

TAKE A RIDE

Like the Crash Bandicoot games, there are several vehicles and items you get to use throughout Kao. The first one you come across is the hang-glider, but there's also a snowboard and some kind of spaceship flying thingy to speed around in. Although these are a welcome addition to Kao, they still don't add that much-needed hint of originality the game so badly needs.





VERDICT

dcm 4

If lack of originality in a game doesn't bother you then Kao is A-OK. If you've any scruples though, leave this dodgy kangaroo in the bush.

ALTERNATIVELY...

Rayman 2 • *Issue 6* • *9/10*
More original and playable than Kao.

COMING SOON...

Donald Duck: Quack Attack • *Ubi Soft*
Platformer from the people behind Rayman 2.

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GAMES REVIEWED!
volution, Silpheed, X-Squad,
heme Park World, Madden NFL
nd rated
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worth of prizes to giveaway, including a PS2,
Gladiator DVDs, games and books.
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ling Gladiator, Buffy
and Perfect Storm
FREE! DOUBLE-SIDED 2001 CALENDAR
FREE! HUGE 2001 CALENDAR POSTER
WIN A PS2™!
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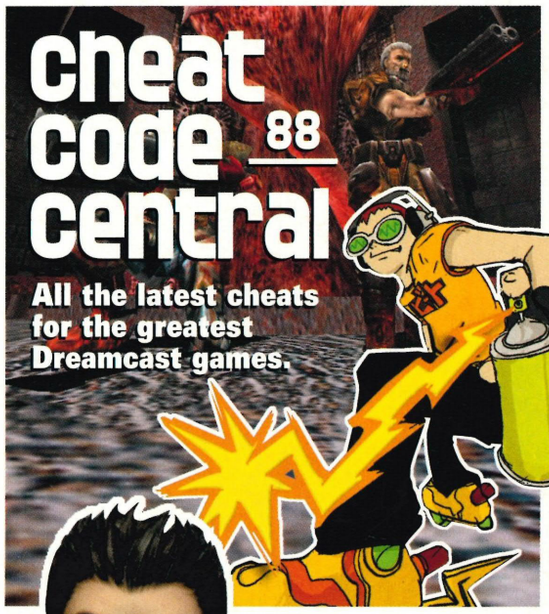
swat contents

solutions, walkthroughs and tactics

Although you may have completed many games, how often can you say you know every inch of every level? I'd say none. But Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 is different. It's a game that requires in-depth knowledge of every pixel of the environment before you can start to be even competent, so we've been hard at work to bring you the definitive THPS2 guide this month. Every challenge on every level has been carefully explained for you, so it won't be long before you can access the final levels, which is where things really hot up. Alas, we haven't been able to give you a gap checklist, as there's so many gaps in THPS2 that we just haven't got the room. Still, I think the maps and tips will suffice. Also this month we've embarked on a digital life as Ryo, the young protagonist of the fantastic ten-scoring Shenmue. This game really is the pinnacle of console gaming, so if you haven't got it yet, be ashamed of yourself. For those of you who have seen the light, check out the first half of our complete and oh-so in-depth Shenmue walkthrough, starting on Page 92.

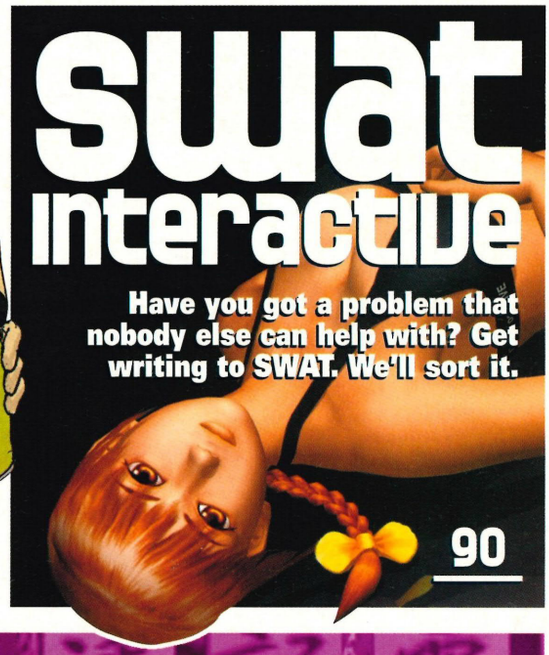
Watch out for more top guides next month...
The SWAT Team

Saul
Solutions Editor
saul.trewern@quaynet.co.uk



cheat code central 88

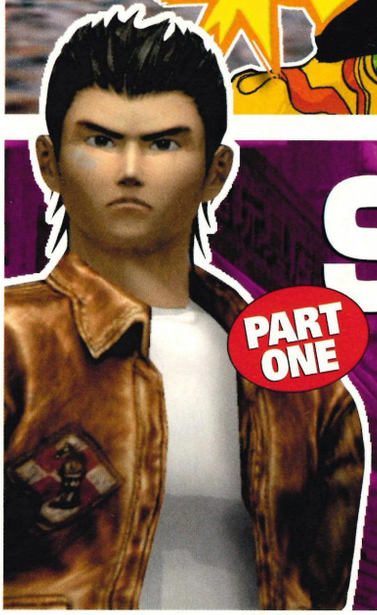
All the latest cheats for the greatest Dreamcast games.



swat interactive

Have you got a problem that nobody else can help with? Get writing to SWAT. We'll sort it.

90

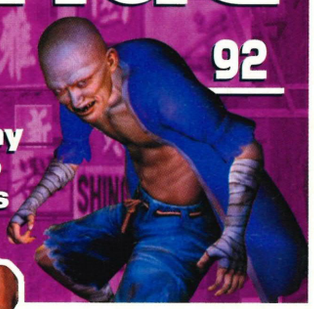


PART ONE

shenmue

In which we show you the way through life as Ryo, the star of Shenmue. There are many trials and tribulations to overcome, but then life's like that; let SWAT be your strength.

92



TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2

100

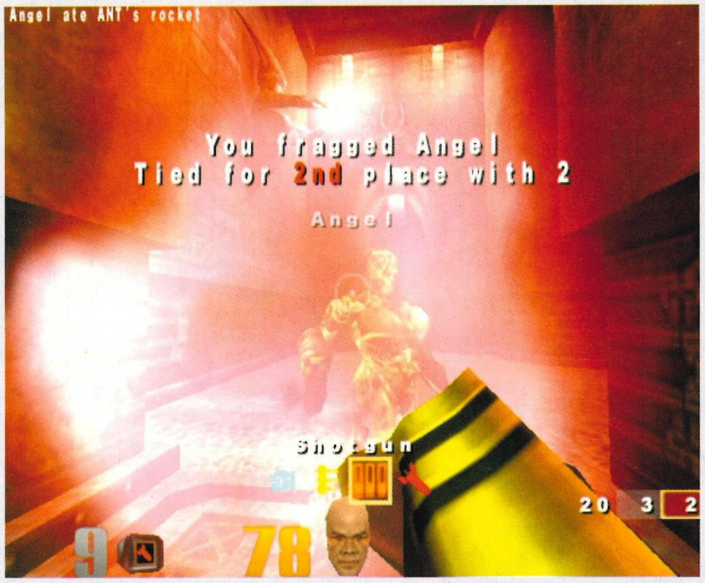
Avoid tearing your hair out in frustration as we trick 'n' grind every level of this year's most playable Dreamcast game; Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2.

CHEAT CODE CENTRAL

get the most from your dreamcast games with dcm's cheats, hints and codes...

quake III arena

There's a cheat mode available but no easy way of getting it. You must play through the game on any level and complete it to be awarded a VMU game. Complete this and you'll be awarded a cheat, depending on which level you completed the game in the first place. There's a different cheat for all five levels.

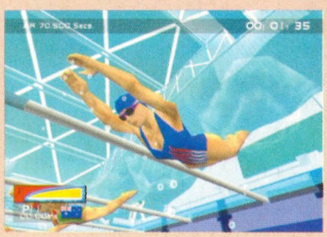


sydney 2000

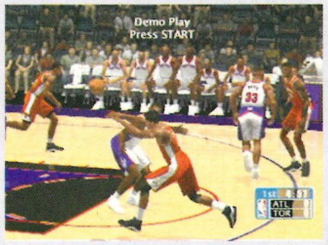
Fully trained athlete

At the main menu screen on Olympic mode highlight arcade and enter the following code, and your athlete will be 100% trained;

⇦ ⇦ ⇨ ⇨ ⇧ ⇩ ⇦ ⇨ ⇦

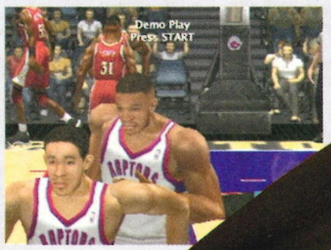


nba2ki



Extra teams

To unlock the SegaNet, Mo Cap and Sega Sports teams go to the options and select Codes. Now enter 'vc' (in lower case) and return to the team selection where you should find the teams added.



silent scope

Cheats

Select arcade mode and enter any of the following cheats before you select a level;

Arcade mode

Hidden mode
⇨ ⇩ ⇨ X ⇧ X X Y ⇩ ⇨ ⇩ ⇨ X Y

Night mode
⇧ ⇨ ⇩ ⇦ ⇧ X Y

No crosshair
⇨ ⇨ ⇨ X

Interrupt mode
⇩ Y ⇧ X Y ⇩ ⇨ ⇩ ⇨ X Y

Mirror mode
⇦ ⇦ ⇨ X ⇩ ⇩ ⇧ Y ⇧ ⇨ ⇩ ⇧ ⇦ ⇩ X

No scope
⇨ ⇩ ⇨ X ⇨ ⇩ ⇨ X

Pink mode
⇦ ⇨ ⇨ X Y

Story mode

Exchange energy block for time
⇧ ⇧ ⇩ ⇩ ⇦ ⇨ ⇦ ⇨ A B

Exchange time for energy block
B A ⇨ ⇦ ⇨ ⇦ ⇩ ⇩ ⇧ ⇧

kao the kangaroo

To activate the following cheats go to the map screen and hold down both trigger buttons before entering the code you require.

Action	Code
Unlock next level	⇧ ⇧ ⇦ ⇩ X
Unlock all levels	⇧ ⇩ ⇨ ⇦ ⇧ X
Extra checkpoint	⇧ ⇨ ⇩ ⇦ A
Extra glove	⇩ ⇨ ⇦ ⇩ A
Extra life	⇩ A ⇧ ⇦ A
Unlimited checkpoints	⇧ ⇨ ⇩ ⇨ ⇦ A
Unlimited gloves	⇩ ⇨ ⇧ ⇨ ⇦ B
Unlimited lives	⇩ ⇦ [b] ⇦ B B
Unlimited energy	⇩ B B A ⇧ ⇦ ⇨

shenmue

If you want to get yourself some cool Shenmue artwork just pop one of the discs into a PC and you'll see the artwork and also some wallpaper files.

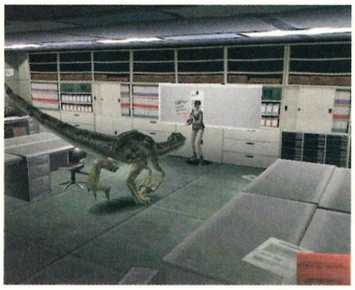
dino crisis

DDK door passwords

Password	Door
Head	Chiefs room
Newcomer	Main entrance
Laboratory	B1 Hall
Energy	Computer room
Waterway	Rest Station
Doctor kirk	Parts storage room

Codes & numbers

Paul Baker's ID	59104
Parts Storage computer code	364204
B1 Library computer code	3695
Chief's Vault combination	705037
Management Office safe combination	0426
Lounge Safe combination	8159
John Doyle's ID	57936
Gas Experiment room code	7248



Security Pass room code	0392
Security Pass computer code	31415
Stabiliser Design access 1	0367
Stabiliser design access 2	0204
Stabiliser Experiment room case combination	1281

Extras

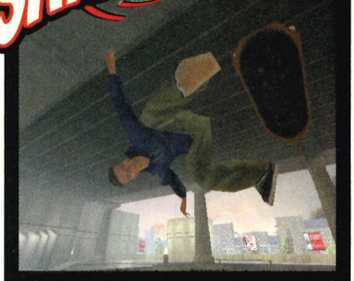
Extra outfits

Beat the game in less than eight hours to get yourself a whole new set of clothes.

Prehistoric outfit

After getting the two extra outfits from beating the game once, complete it again and you'll be awarded a caveman style outfit. Look at your weapons and you'll find a little surprise there too.

mtv SKATEBOARDING



Cheat mode

Enter 'PASWRD' as your name when you enter 'Lifestyle' mode and you'll have access to all the costumes, skateparks, boards and skaters.

jet set radio

Play as Potts the Dog

You must play through the game once and open up all of the characters. Now play again and complete the Monster of Kogane before taking on Benten Boogie. After chapter two you'll be challenged by the Noise Tank gang and if you win you can then play as Potts.

Play as Goji Rokkaku

You must first unlock Poison Jam, Love Shockers and Noise Tank, then get yourself a Jet Ranking on the Grind City satages.

Play as Love Shockers

Get a Jet rating on every Shibuya-cho stage.

Play as Noise Tank

Complete every Benten-cho level with a Jet rating.

Play as Poison Jam

Get yourself a Jet ranking on the Kogane-cho Story level.

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Air Force Delta	Flag to Flag	Magforce Racing	Roadsters	Time Stalkers
Armada	Four Wheel Thunder	Metro. H'way Battle	San Francisco Rush	TNN M'sports H Heat
Blue Stinger	Furfighters	Millenium Soldier	Sega Bass Fishing	Tokyo Extreme Racer
Buggy Heat	Gauntlet Legends	Monaco Grand Prix	Sega Rally 2	Tomb Raider 4 & 5
Bust a Move 4	Generator	Mortal Kombat Gold	Seventh Cross	Tony Hawk's
Carrier	Get Bass	NBA 2K	Shadowman	Toukon Retsuden 4
Chao Adventure	Giant G. Wrest. 1&2	NBA Showtime	Shotuko H'way Battle	Toy Commander
Choo-Choo Rocket	Giga Wing	NFL 2K	Silver	Toy Story 2
Climax Landers	Godzilla Generations	NFL Blitz 2000	Slave Zero	Trickstyle
Cool Boarders Burrn	GTA 2	NFL QB. Club 2000	Sonic Adventure	UEFA Striker
Crazy Taxi	Gun Bird 2	Nightmare Creat. 2	Soul Calibur	Ult. Fighting Champ.
Cueball	Half Life	Omikron	Soul Fighter	Urban Chaos
Daytona USA 2	Hardcore Heat	Pen Pen Triicelon	Soul Reaver	Vigilante 8 - 2nd Off.
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Deadly Skies	House of the Dead 2	Pop 'n' Music	Space Channel 5	Virtua Striker 2
Dino Crisis	Hydro Thunder	Power Stone 1 & 2	Speed Devil	Virtua Tennis
Dynamite Cop	Incoming	Psychic Force 2012	Star Gladiator 2	V-Rally 2
Dynamite Deka	Jet Set Radio	Quake 3	Street Fighter 3	Wacky Races
Ecco the Dolphin	Jimmy White 2	Rainbow 6	Street Fighter 3 WI	Wild Metal
ECW Hardcore Revol.	Jojo's Bizarre Adv.	Rayman 2	Street Fighter Alpha	Worms:Armageddon
Elemental Gim. Gear	King of Fighters 99	Ready 2 Rumble 1&2	Super Speed Racing	WWF Attittude
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SWAT interactive

THE LETTERS ARE COMING IN THICK AND FAST AND WE ANSWER AS MANY IN AS WE CAN BUT WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO POST PERSONAL REPLIES. IF YOU E-MAIL US YOU MIGHT GET LUCKY BUT OTHERWISE, IF IT 'AINT HERE, WE CAN'T HELP.

Send all SWAT correspondence to the address below:

SWAT Interactive, DCM
Quay Magazine Publishing,
22 Strand Street,
Poole, Dorset
BH15 1SB

TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING

Dear swat,

Being a bit of a skater myself I've been caning the pants off of Tony Hawk's Skateboarding ever since it came out on the Dreamcast. To tell the truth, as much as I love the game, I'm not very good at it, although I have completed most of it. The reason I'm writing though, is to see if there's a cheat that will unlock everything the game has to offer, before I get my hands on Tony Hawk 2. I want to have the original done and dusted so I can flog it or exchange it for the sequel, so please tell me how I can see everything before I see the last of it.

Dan Black, Fawley.

swat: Good thinking Dan, you won't be needing the original once you get the superb sequel, no matter how great it is. So to see everything the game has to offer just use the following treat then move on to one of the best Dreamcast games ever, Tony Hawk Skateboarding 2.

Hold L at the Pause Screen and hit: B, Right, Up, Down, B, Right, Up, X, Y

CHU CHU ROCKET

Dear swat,

Being a bit of an old git, I remember the superb Nights on the Sega Saturn from years ago, and think that it was one of the most amazing pieces of game programming ever. The AI of those little creatures (I've forgotten what they're called) you nurtured was amazing and I really like the whole idea of them. Which is why I was chuffed to hear that these creatures make a secret reappearance in Chu Chu Rocket. How do I get to see my little friends again though?

Kev Hooper, Norwich.

swat: To get those cute little Nightopians you must Complete all 25 Mania puzzles. We've yet to see then though so we're not sure if you get to care for them and see them evolve like you did in Nights.

DEAD OR ALIVE 2

Dear swat,

I've had Dead or Alive for a while now and think that it's the best beat-'em-up ever. Yep, that's right, better than Soul Calibur (he said it, not us - Ed). I was playing the other day though, and cam across something odd during a replay. I was fiddling with the joy-pad and all of a sudden the replay frozen and the camera started panning around the characters in a sort of Matrix style. What's this all about then? Is my copy buggered or is it meant to do that?

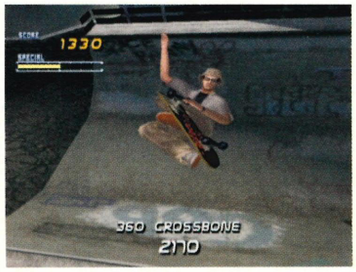
Tony West, Harrogate.

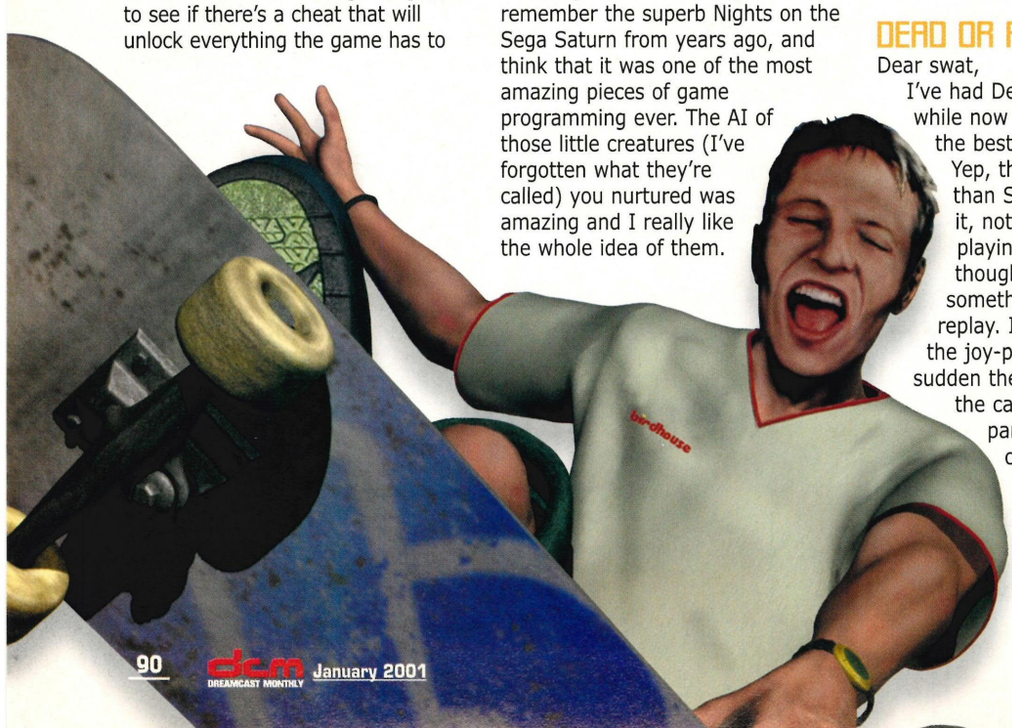
swat: This feature is supposed to be in the game Tony. You're supposed to hold 'Y' and 'B' and then push up and right on the analogue pad to make it happen.

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2

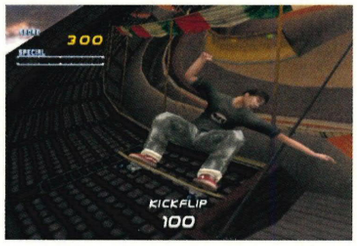
Dear swat,

Can't wait for Tony Hawk Pro Skater 2 as I'm such a huge fan of the first game, which I completed





ages ago with some amazing scores. Anyway, to boast isn't why I'm writing. I actually want to know what all this 'Manual' malarkey is that everyone is talking about on Tony 2. What's it all about and how does it radically change the gameplay as everyone is saying.



swat: We explained the 'Manual' in full in last months Tony Hawk Pro Skater 2 'Loading' feature but if you missed that we'll explain again. The 'Manual' is either a front or rear wheelie that's activated by either tapping up then down, or down then up. On it's own it's a low scoring trick but you can actually use it to link up massive combos. Say you come of a big grind with a long multiplier, go into a manual before you land and the multiplier will hold until you do another trick. In theory you can keep doing this to infinity getting massive multipliers and gigantic scores. It 'aint easy though.

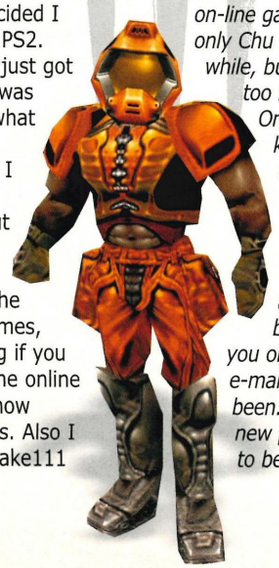
DC NET

Dear swat,

Last weekend I was deciding on what Games Console I wanted for Christmas and I decided I wanted the all new PS2. However my friend just got a Dreamcast and I was very impressed in what it had to offer as a Games Console. So I brought your magazine to find out more on the Dreamcast and I was impressed by the Console and the games, but I was wondering if you could tell me how the online system works and how online gaming works. Also I liked the look of Quake111 Arena and I wanted to know what the theme of the game is and what's the mission I have to take out. Reading the letters in the Christmas issue of your magazine I would agree that the Dreamcast is going to be a hit over Chrimbo and all ready my friends are changing there minds to get a Dreamcast rather than a PS2. Thanks for taking time to read my letter. Keep up the good work and I will be looking forward to your next issue. Will there be another free gift - how about a demo disc? Look forward to hearing from you and I think the DREAMCAST is going to kick the PS2 ass! I am sure you agree!!!!

Alex, E-mail

swat: The Dreamcast on-line system requires the DreamKey disc that comes bundled with new Dreamcasts. This will get you onto Sega's Dreamarena site, which acts as a portal to the whole of the internet. Being a games console there are a few drawbacks at the moment though. It's quite slow and some of the fancier animated sites won't work, although Sega are seeing to this with constant new versions of the Dreamkey. It's also not as versatile in that you can't download information and images to a hard disc but one advantage is that save games, and cheats can be downloaded to a memory card. The on-line gaming is just taking off with only Chu Chu Rocket available for a while, but Quake III is coming. So too is Unreal and Phantasy Star On-line, which promises top kick-start the Dreamcast internet revolution. As for Quake as a game, it's a superb action packed first-person shooter, which doesn't come with much of a story line, just plenty of big gun action. By the way, you obviously have a PC as you e-mailed us so where have you been. It's not as if Quake is a new phenomenon. Anyway, glad to be of help Alex.



SWAT scores

We still haven't beat 139 on Pin Crasher but we've had another to match that immense score so well done to David Bates from Surrey who'll be the first to receive one of our brand new Swat Scores prizes. That's right, we've been working hard to get you lot some decent goodies for your high scoring efforts and we've come up with a free DC-X disc for Dreamcast. This cool little item from Future Console Design allows you to play import games on your UK Dreamcast so you can get your hands on most of the best games earlier than everybody else. Which is just right for the hardcore gamers that send their scores in to us. Anyway, the top score for each challenge every month will win a CD-X. Also of note this month, is a frikkin amazing score for Tony Hawk Skateboarding. We're not quite what sure of the level it was done on but Robert Williams from Suffolk has scored a massive two minute run score of 464898. He sent a Polaroid and we've had it analysed by our contacts at MI6 and it seems to be kosher. On that note we're closing the Tony Hawk challenge but don't worry as next month we're starting on the sequel. Check out the new challenges for details.

VIRTUA TENNIS (PIN CRASHER)

Position	Name	From	Score
1.	David Bates	Surrey	139 points
2.	Donna Winter	Aylesbury	128 points
3.	David Holland	Chelmsford	105 points

FERRARI F355 CHALLENGE

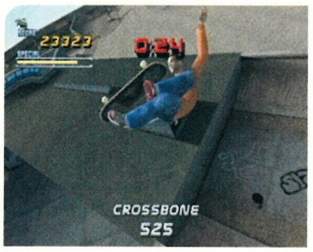
Position	Name	From	Score
1.	Kevin Coulson	Cheshire	2'31"568 (Motegi 4laps)
2.	Henry Wilkinson	Torquay	2'33"674 (Motegi 4 laps)
3.	Colin Davis	Bristol	4'23"287 (Sugo 3 laps)

TONY HAWK SKATEBOARDING

Position	Name	From	Score
1.	Robert Williams	Suffolk	464,898
2.	Gavin Wallace	Sheffield	246,732
3.	Jamie	Kent	211,431

new challenges

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2



We're going to keep things simple and take it a level a month. This month then, we want your highest two-minute run scores for the first level (The hangar). Why not check out this months Tony Hawk 2 guide or tips on the best places to score. Anyway, don't forget that photographic evidence, otherwise you won't get a look in no matter how high you say you've scored.

SHENMUE (SPACE HARRIER)

We had to get some kind of Shenmue challenge in Swat Scores but it's not exactly the high score sort of game is it? Thanks to the arcade though, there's a couple of classic arcade games that really are great fun to play. This month then, we want your highest scores on Space Harrier. Play it as much as you like, just make sure you send a photo of your score as proof.

Important **We will only accept original photographs as proof of score. We do not except any form of print out as these can easily be doctored. We know 'cos we've got Photoshop.**

Send all SWAT SCORES entries to: SWAT SCORES, DCM, Quay Magazine Publishing, 22 Strand Street, Poole, Dorset BH15 1SB

Publisher: Sega ■ Developer: Sega
No. of players: 1 ■ Genre: FREE

shenmue

[WALKTHROUGH] PART ONE

Coming on a total of four disks, Shenmue is easily the biggest game ever to hit the Dreamcast. Managing to create a whole new genre in the process, it's also the most original to grace a home console in many years. This is the first of a two part guide that takes Ryo closer to discovering the mystery behind his fathers death. There's much to do and mucho arse to kick - so get playing...

Disk One

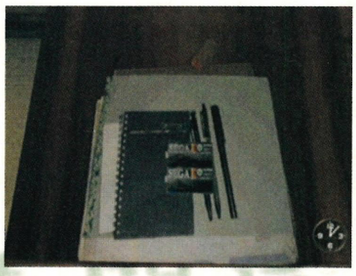
In the Beginning - December 3rd 1986

After waking from a bad dream at 8:55, search through your bedroom for things that might come in useful. There's a music take on the desk next to the lamp entitled Shenmue. Search each of the drawers in the same desk. The first draw holds a cassette player. Now you can listen to any of the tapes you pick up on your travels. In the second drawer down you discover a photo of your friends, and the final drawer holds another music tape - Sha Hua. You find nothing in the wardrobe or the cupboard in the right wall, so leave your room for a cut scene with the Hazuki Residents' Housekeeper Ine-San.

Say a prair for your Father and vow to avenge his death. Don't forget the matches either...

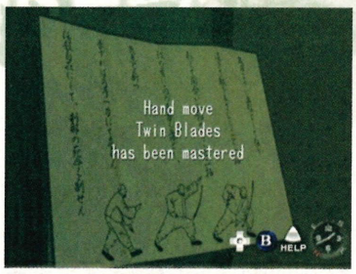
She'll give you your ¥500 for the day. In future, she'll leave it by the door. She'll also tell you that Fuk-San is in the Dojo around the side of the house - you can speak to him later. For now, go down the hall to the right of your bedroom door (when you're back's to it) and ignore the brown door on the right. Go instead through the last sliding door which leads to Fuk-San's room. On the desk there you find a scripture. This is an instruction for a special move called Shadow Reaper. Open your inventory screen and click on it to master the move. There's nothing else to see here for now, so leave, ignoring the next door along (Ine-Sans room) and enter the lounge.

You find a TV in here. Open the cabinet below to discover a Saturn. You can't actually do anything with it, but that's what you get for finding something that isn't due to be invented for another ten years! Open the left drawer in the cabinet on the other side of the room to find a pack of



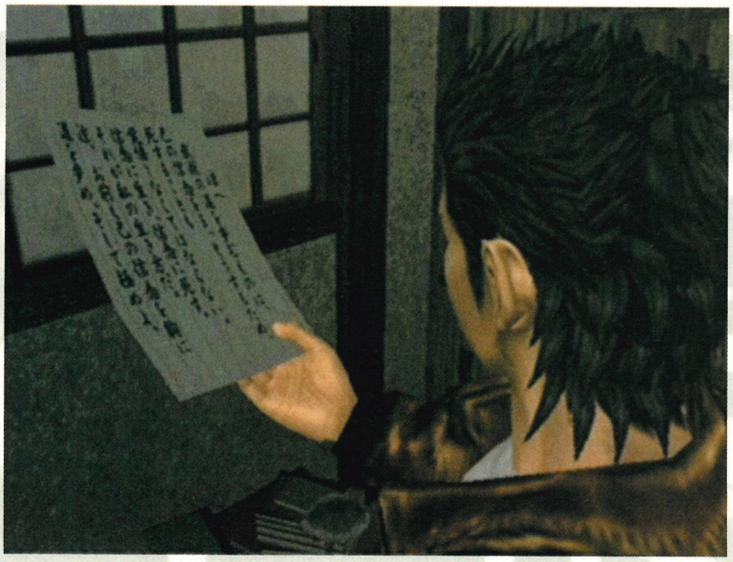
two C-sized batteries. There's nothing else to find here, so leave the room back to the main hall and enter the next room along, which is the kitchen. Look at the food on the table to trigger a flashback. Should you talk to Ine-San again; she tells you to go and talk to Fuk-San again, but he can wait a little longer.

Leave the kitchen and go right, round the hall until you come to a brown door. This is the bathroom. Ignore it and use the sliding door opposite instead - this is the altar room. You can say a prayer for your father here and also find a box of matches too. Search through the drawers here to also find some candles, they come in useful later on. Leave the altar room by the rear door and look in the wicker basket in the back hall to find another scripture. Look at it from your inventory screen to master the Twin Blades move. Go through the door at the other end of the back hallway to enter your father's room.



Read the note he left you on the desk and then search the small drawer there to find a rusted old key - it's bound to come in useful later on. Now leave the room through the opposite sliding door and walk back round the main hallway until you reach the entrance hall. Search in the cupboard under the phone to find the flashlight. Now leave the house and walk around the stone path until you see the large tree in the corner of the garden. Get close to see another flashback featuring Ryo and his father, then enter the Dojo to talk with Fuk-San. Once your little chat has ended and you're back in the garden, have a look through your notebook (by pressing X). Make sure you're totally up to speed with everything that's happened so far and leave through the gate to make your way to Yamanose.

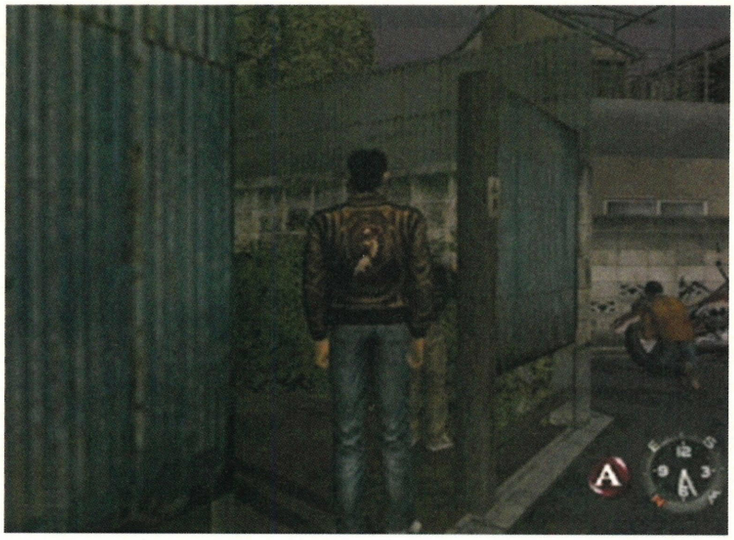
It's not exactly acurate history this, but the rest of the game is faithful to 1986...



As you walk through this small section of street a cut scene will begin as you approach the temple. Here you meet a small girl called Megumi - she's been keeping an orphan cat here since its mother was run over a few days ago. After a while you're prompted to choose between two types of food you discover at the temple - select the dried fish and the kitten eats. Megumi goes onto say that it was a black car that killed the kittens mother and a local, Mr Yamagishi, was also hurt in the incident. Megumi says he lives near the candy store - that should be your next port of call. Leave the temple and continue down the path into Sakuragaoka.

Keeping the Kitten

Though it has no bearing on the outcome of the Shenmue, you can help to care for a kitten whos mother was run over by the black car on the day of the incident. You'll fist meet up with Migumi who will introduce you to the little kitty. Look after it first by selecting the Dried Fish when the cut-scene ends and you're asked to choose between two types of food. After this, you can purchase Dried Fish and Milk from the Tomato Store on main street Dobuita and return to pet and feed the cat at least twice a day. Eventually it will grow strong enough to leave its little box and a nice little sub-plot springs from your caring for the cat - bless...

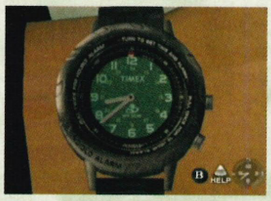


You may be met with a cut scene featuring a poor-sighted old lady near the Abe Store. She's trying to find the Yamamoto Residence. While you look around she waits in the Sakuragaoka Park - it's just opposite the road leading to Dobuita and the park. Go back to her and you take her to the door. Go back past the Abe Store and round towards the other entrance to Dobuita. The last house on the right belongs to Yamagishi-San - talk to him and then carry on along the path into Dobuita. If it's getting late, however, don't bother for now. Simply have a browse in the Abe Store or go back to the house and wait for eight o'clock to come - this is the earliest you can retire to bed for the night.

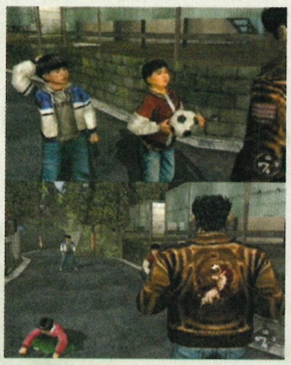
Get Your Dojo Working

Early on Day Two you can walk around the side of the house towards the Dojo for a cut scene with Fuk-San. He's practising a move called Pit Blow. He invites you to demonstrate it for him - agree. To perform the move, simply press forward then X in the same way you would perform a Virtua Fighter or Soul Calibur move. You can do it a few times should you agree to continue, but doing it just once is enough to master it. Once you've finished he mentions that you can spar with him any time. Try taking him up on it the next morning, but more about that later. Don't forget that you can come back to the Dojo to train at any time. There are many other training locations in Sakuragaoka and Dobuita - they're all indicated on the maps later on...

Time for Bed



Should you stay out too late looking around Dobuita your alarm sounds and you're automatically brought home to your room. Should you want an early night, however, the earliest you can kip down is eight o'clock - simply press the action button while looking at your bed. You're met with four options: Save, Training, Sleep and Settings. There is a section later on in the guide devoted to training for Free Battles, but all the other options are completely self explanatory.



Your First QTE

Quick Time Events are scripted action scenes that occur at set points during the game. The first one you come across happens on the second morning on the game as you pass through Yamanose. A few kids are kicking a ball around as you walk by and you must tap the A button when prompted to stop anyone from getting hurt. It's short and sweet, but a good indication of what there is to come...

FREE BATTLE

Free Battle is the closest you're going to get to playing a new version of Virtua Fighter for some time to come, so take the time to master its many intricacies...

Moves List

Key

A	A Button
B	B Button
X	X Button
Y	Y Button
←	Tap away from the enemy
→	Tap towards your enemy
→+A	Tap direction and button simultaneously
A+B	Press buttons simultaneously

Arm Attacks

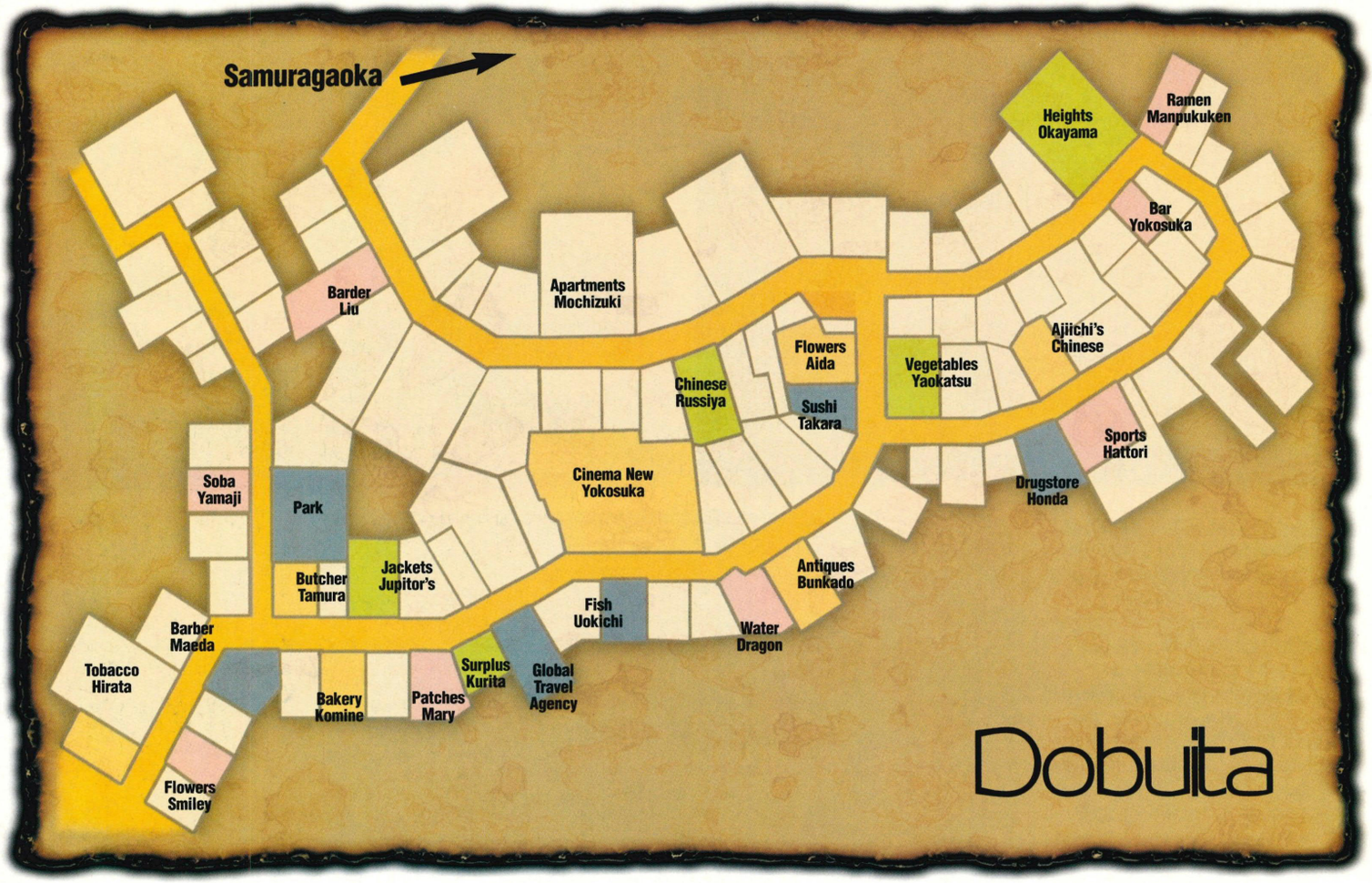
Tiger Knuckle	X
Pit Blow	→+X
Twist Knuckle	←+X
Elbow Assault	→, →+X
Upper Knuckle	←, ←+X
Sleeves Strike	→, L+X
Rain Thrust	←, →+X
Big Wheel	X+A
Twin Hand Waves	→+X+A
Back Fist Willow	←+X+A
Avalanche Lance	→, →+X+A
Katana Mist Slash	←, ←+X+A
Mistral Flash	←+A
Twin Blades	←, →, →+X
Rising Flash	→, ←, ←+X

Throw Attacks

Overthrow	B
Sweep Throw	→+B
Vortex Throw	←+B
Mist Reaper	→, →+B
Demon Drop	←, ←+B
Shoulder Buster	→, ←+B
Tengu Drop	←, →+B
Darkside Hazuki	B
Back Twist Drop	B
Tiger Storm	←, →, →+B, B
Arm Break Fire	→, ←, ←+B

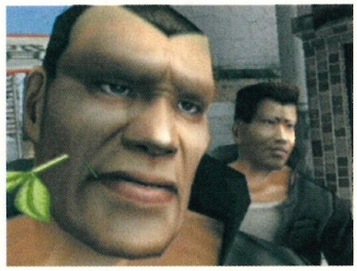
Leg Attacks

Crescent Kick	A
Trample Kick	→+A
Side Reaper Kick	←+A
Against Cascade	→, →+A
Surplice Slash	←, ←+A
Thunder Kick	→, ←+A
Hold Against Leg	←, →+A
Brutal Tiger	→, ←+X+A
Dark Moon	←, →+X+A
Cyclone Kick	←+A
Windmill	←+X+A
Shadow Reaper	←+Y+A
Twin Swallow Leap	←, →, →+X+A
Crawl Cyclone	→, ←, ←+A
Mud Spider	←, →, →+A



Dobuita is quite a vast area, so keep one eye on the map we have provided to help you find the many people and places we mention in the following section.

Your first port of call is the Aida Florist - Nozomi works there. It's at the opposite end of town, so go left from your entrance point (next to Game You), past Tom at the Dog Stand and keep going past the Tomato Mart till you reach the florist on the left side of the street. Talk to her and she tells you Tom spoke to the people in the black car. Back-track to his Hotdog Stand and speak to him - he's cagey at first, but he soon gives you some information.

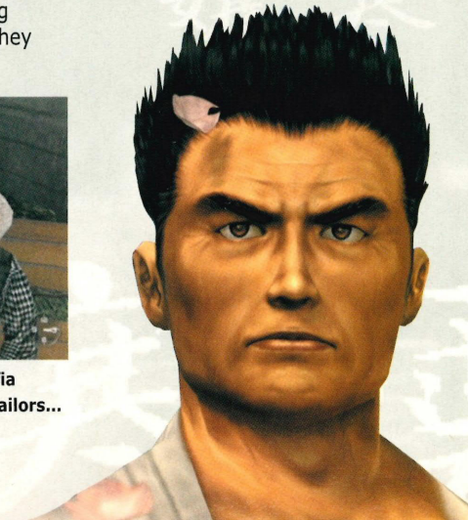


Your next objective is to find and talk to some Chinese people to see if they know anything - speak to the man in the camouflage jacket and cap (Kurita-San) opposite Tom's Hotdog stand, he helps you out. The Ajiichi Restaurant is your next stop - it's on the back street at the other end of town - better get going. As you reach the Tomato Mart again (the Ajiichi is on the small street to the right) you'll likely meet with two thugs looking for trouble. This QTE battle is the first of many, but easy to complete. Afterwards, take the right by the Tomato Mart and you find the Restaurant on the left, just round the corner - go inside.

Talk to the owner Tao-San and his wife inside and you learn about the Three Blades. Check out our map to find the locations of each of the Three Blades member's premises. Mary's Patches and Embroidery should be your first port of call. It can be found just opposite Tom's Hotdog Stand. Once you've spoken to the proprietor there, move onto Liu-Sans Barbers right down the far end of the main street. After talking to Liu-San and his wife, you need to visit the Park that's situated in the side street leading to Sakuragaoka near the Game You Arcade. Talk to the old man on the bench there and he tells you of Lan-Di's possible connections with the Chinese Mafia. He also hints that sailors in Dobuita might know more. Visit Tom at his Hotdog Stand - he'll tell you where they like to hang out...

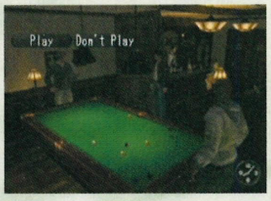
After hinting about Lan-Di's mafia connections, he'll mention the sailors...

If it's still relatively early in the day for you, you're gonna have to find something to occupy your time for a while - there's nothing else to do but wait for most of the bars in Dobuita to open at seven pm. Once open, go into Bar Yokosuka round the far side of the back street of Dobuita. Talk to the barman in



there and he points you towards MJQ Jazz Bar a few doors down - go there next. Talk to the barman in there next and then go and chat with the two men playing pool. After a chat, and a go at the bet (see Pool Challenge boxout), they point you towards the Heartbeats Bar - that's your next stop.

Pool Challenge



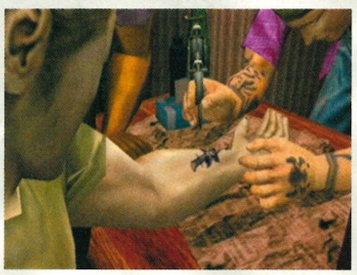
After a brief chat with the men playing pool in the MJQ Jazz Bar they'll challenge you to a ¥1000 trick shot bet. To pot the ball you must first press A to get a first person perspective on things. Now tap (and we mean lightly tap!) the D-pad right 17 times before pressing A again to take you shot. If you've done this correctly the ball goes in every time - it's a tricky shot, but not when you know how! Still, you don't win any money, but they do point you in the right direction.

Look for Heartbeats on the map - it's in the back street in Dobuita down the steps directly opposite the Motorbike Shop. As soon as you get down the steps you're faced with a QTE with two thugs. Take them out, then continue into the bar itself. After the cut scene take on all the attackers in the toughest QTE so far. They tell you about Charlie at the Motorbike Shop just opposite, but now it's time for one last word with Tom at the Hotdog Stand before you go home to bed.

Next day, go to the Motorbike Shop opposite Heartbeats and speak to the man tinkering with his bike - his name is Ono-San. Once you've got everything you can out of Ono-San, move down the main street and speak to both Tom at his Hotdog Stand and Kurita-San in the camouflage gear - he'll tell you about the Jacket Shop - go and talk to Tsuruoka-San there, it's just opposite. Once you've finished, walk up to the vending machine near Liu-Sans Barbers and offer to buy the worker from Ajiichi a Coffee. If he's not there, simply try again tomorrow. Kill some time until after seven pm by training in the car park by Game You.

When the evening comes, walk around outside the Game You until a cut scene starts. Once you've followed the thug into the car park you were training in earlier, a Free Battle will start. Once all the thugs heads have been suitably stoved, visit Game You and talk to the two men on the arcade machine. They tell you about the Tattoo Parlour - go there now and talk to the man inside (Okayama Heights). It's right up the other end of town on the back street. Once he's told you to come back tomorrow at two pm, go home for the night - there's a busy day ahead of you tomorrow!

In the morning go down to Sakuragaoka and visit the park where you may find the two thugs you QTE'd earlier causing trouble for a little boy - this will be your first Free Battle. Though they are both quite easy to defeat (and you have to take on many more enemies at the same time later on), you find the larger of the two thugs has quite powerful attacks - take care of him first. Once the battle is over make your way into Dobuita ready for your visit to the Tattoo Parlour at two pm.



Kill some time on the run-up to your two pm appointment, then make your way up to the Parlour and speak to the Tattooist inside. He points you to the back room and Ryo waits with his hand on the door ready for you to swing it open. As soon as it does a quick QTE occurs - make sure you get it right the second time should you be cut with Charlie's knife first time. Once the cut scene has ended, leave the building to meet up with Nozomi for another cut scene. The rest of the day is clear, so train in the Dojo at home or play some games in Game You.

Learning Free Battle Moves

Learning Free Battle Moves There are numerous points throughout the game where characters make new moves known to you. Take time to practise any new moves in the various parks and areas allotted to training. You can watch the strength of your moves increase on the Moves Scroll screen (from your inventory), or by pressing the Right Trigger while practising.

The next morning you automatically go to the Dojo and spar with Fuk-San. Practise all your moves on him, but make sure you win. After the cut scene that follows you meet up with Ine-San outside - she'll give you a letter written in Chinese. Walk through to Sakuragaoka and a cut scene will start featuring a young boy and a group of thugs. Beat them all in Free Battle, then press A in a quick QTE at the end. Afterwards, walk through to Dobuita using the route you used at the start of the game (past Mr Yamagishi's). When you exit, turn left up the main street and you see a cut scene with the young boy you just helped. He tells you of his Grandmother's place, the Russiya China Shop.

Antiques Shop

As marked on the map for Dobuita, the Antiques Shop has an excellent selection of new moves for you to choose from. The prices range from reasonable to bloody expensive, so make sure you can afford them before you splash out on anything too fancy.

Training

It's vitally important to spend at least a few hours per day training and practising your moves. As you progress through Shenmue, you notice the difficulty in your free battles increases quite sharply. You immediately start to notice the strength of your attacks increasing from battle to battle, so keep ahead of the enemy and train regularly. In Ryo's room (where you can save and choose to sleep for the night), you can also select a Training option. From here it's possible to concentrate your training on Hand, Leg and Throw Attacks and even on individual moves. Use this to help increase your stats on a day-to-day basis to make sure you keep sharp.

Next, go and talk to Kurita-San in the camouflage and speak to him, afterwards walk round to the far end of the main street where you find the Russiya China shop - go inside and speak to Xia-San. She explains about the letter and tells you about a phone number that's on the back along with a selection of code words. Leave the China Shop and walk down to Tom at his Hotdog Stand and talk to him, he'll tell you where there's a payphone - it's right at the end of the main street on the right.

Pick up the phone and dial 0468 615647. When he says 'Father's Heaven', say 'Nine Dragons'. He then goes on to say 'Mother's Earth', to which you should reply 'Comrades'.

Once the man on the end of the phone hangs up, talk to the old lady behind the counter, then pick up the phone book and Ryo looks through it. Turn on your heels and walk down to Ton at his Hotdog Stand - he tells you how to get to the harbour. Now go back once more to the end of the street and wait at the bus stop. You might have to stand there for a couple of minutes, but the bus will soon come. Simply jump on, pay your fare and Disc One is complete. Make sure you save your game before swapping disks, then do so when prompted.

NEXT MONTH

Come back next month for our detailed conclusion to this epic adventure. We'll cover every aspect of the main game itself, and also go into detail on the workings of the Shenmue Passport Disc. Make sure you also keep an eye on our Newscast section at the front of the mag for news on the forthcoming sequel - Chapter Two...

Publisher: Activision ■ Developer: Treyarch
No. of players: 1-2 ■ Genre: Sports Sim

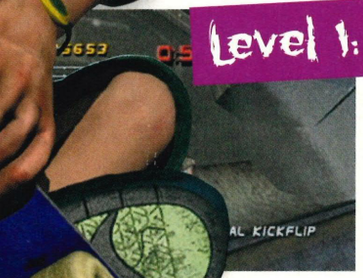
tony hawk's pro skater 2

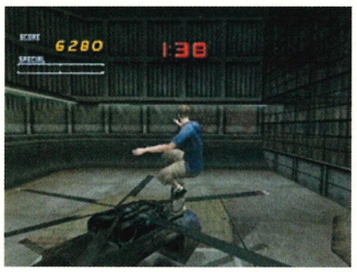
[LEVEL GUIDE]

Busting tricks, planting lips and gnarly grinds come easily with a little help from our Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 level guide. Every level and every challenge completed for you, SWAT style...

Combo Nation

Throughout this guide we talk of linking runs with manuals and tricking. This is the best way to score points on Tony Hawk's 2, as by manualing you can keep building your score up with multipliers, which progressively multiply your points as you go. When we describe certain runs, we'll tell you to trick and manual, but it doesn't matter what trick you do or how many tricks you fit in before you reach a certain area, as long as you land every trick with a manual, thus keeping your score rolling onwards and upwards.





Level 1: The Hanger, Mullet Falls, MT

Basic Challenges

Points Challenges

The points challenges are set very low on the first level, so it won't take you long to reach the Sick Score of a measly 75,000 points. The best areas to score from air tricks are the first large half-pipe and in the wind tunnel you open by grinding the prop on the wall of the first half-pipe. Work up some 720 combos on these areas and you clear the first two score challenges easily. Also good for points is the quarter-pipe that surrounds the perimeter of the hangar. From the start, transfer the half-pipe and land in a manual, then start grinding the lip around to the left. Keep tricking as you go and if you're feeling brave, jump down for a few manuals and back up to continue your grind. If you keep your balance you can make it around the perimeter completely. As you reach the end try jumping the starting run in to squeeze a few more points from the section of half-pipe in the corner. If you're still a little shy of the Sick Score try transferring the half-pipe a few times for some good easy pointage.

Collect S-K-A-T-E

Collecting the letters couldn't be easier here. Just head straight for the half-pipe as you enter the level and hold **Y** to grind the bar across it for 'S' (if you perform a nose

grind you complete another challenge too). Head for the quarter pipe on the wall and trick to get the 'K', then use the wing of the plane to jump and get the 'A' (you should get a Hang Time Gap too). Head for the quarter pipe on this wall and jump to the right to smash through the glass and get the 'T' at the same time. Now head past the chopper and use the small pipe in front of the closed doors to get the final letter.

Find Secret Tape

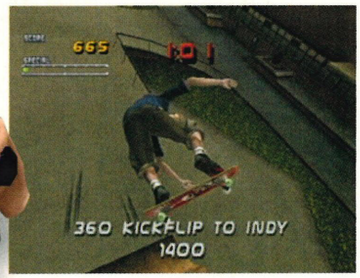
The tape can be found beyond the closed doors where you collect the letter 'E'. To open the doors, simply grind one of the chopper blades completely. It's best to use the small ramps that enclose the chopper and grind straight onto the blade tip without jumping. As soon as you've done this, the chopper will take off and crash, opening the doors for you. Now go outside and collect the tape from above the quarter-pipe.

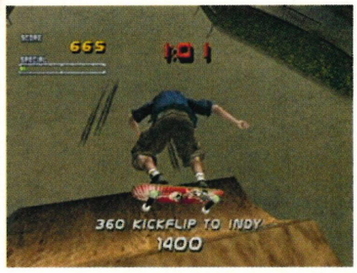
Nose Grind Over Pipe

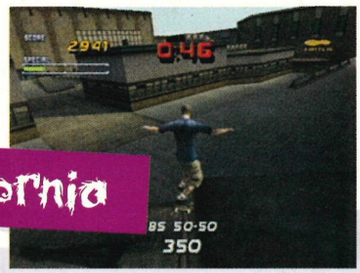
It took us a while to figure this out, but it's about the easiest challenge here. The 'pipe' in question is the first half-pipe which has several curved bars traversing it. Just nose grind one of these to complete the challenge.

Hit Three Hangtime Gaps

Not too much effort required here. The first gap is across the half-pipe at the start. Just jump it completely and hit the quarter-pipe on the wall at an angle to the left so that you land in line with the plane. Use the wing of the plane to jump and you'll get the second gap then break through the glass into the next area. Now just use the small ramp in front of the chopper to jump it completely. Land safely on the ramp on the other side and you'll get your third Hangtime Gap.







Level 2: School II, Southern California

Level Specific Challenges

Barrel Hunt

Tap left as you enter the hangar then go right into the half-pipe. Get the barrels here and leave to the right for the second set of barrels near the wall. Do a U-turn and skate past the plane to get the third set near the wall, then jump through the glass into the section with the chopper for another set of barrels. The final set can be found by the doors where you collected the letter 'E'.

Collect Five Pilot Wings

From the start, head to the right and jump across the half-pipe as close to the wall as possible. Hold **Y** to grind and you'll get the first wing on the large prop, which also opens up a secret room. Trick on the quarter pipe on the wall then jump straight back across the half-pipe. The second wing is across the run in to the level, so hit the pipe on the left and swing over the gap to the right to get the wing and land safely. Make sure you're going fast and use a low angle to clear the gap. As you land, head over to the plane where against a wall you see a small ridge. Grind it to get wing three then head to the half-pipe on the wall. Trick to the left and as you smash the glass you'll get the fourth wing. The fifth wing is just above the ramp on the centre wall to the left of the chopper. Grind the lip to collect the wing.

Basic Challenges

Points challenges

The only place to score good vert points on this level is immediately to the right in a high, makeshift half-pipe that's made out of two separate quarter-pipes. At the start of a run use this area to bust some big air moves, making sure to pull some lip tricks off on the side with the roof. When your points start to deteriorate here, head back to the starting point and turn towards the planter in the section. Skate up to it and ollie into a grind then at the end, ollie out into a manual. Keep the manual going until the steps then ollie onto the handrail down the steps. Jump out to the right about halfway down and land in a manual, or directly on the picnic tables. Whatever, you want to grind the first table, jump and continue grinding the second. Jump from the table into a manual and head left slightly where you'll see more rails. Grind the up rail then ollie across a grind the down rail jumping into a manual when you land. Ollie onto the first bench then the second and manual out into the yard to the left. From here, you can end this mammoth run how you like. The school yard is choc-full of this type of huge run so make sure you've got your manuals off to a tee, as that's the only way you're gonna score big at school.

Collect S-K-A-T-E

From the start, head down the slope to the right just past the bell. Grind the low wall to get the 'S' then go left at the bottom and up into the raised area in the middle. Use the quarter-pipe to get the 'K' then head down and to the left after landing. Go past the lockers and jump onto the rail down the steps (this is actually a Roll-Call rail and has a hand in opening up the gym). Get the 'A' (your first 'A' at school) then head over to the right where you'll find the 'T' above a ramp on the wall. After collecting the 'T' head to the right of the Porta-Cabins and you'll see the 'E' waiting for you across the yard on the wall.

Find Secret Tape

Head down the slope to the right at the start and get yourself onto the raised area. Use the quarter-pipe where you collect the letter 'K' and keep straight on landing. Making sure your speed is up, head down towards the end and skate down the pieces of wood that attach to a sloping brick plant structure. Boneless from the lip of this structure and you should reach the roof in front. Keep going and either attempt to jump across to the next roof or just to the flagpoles and grind the rest of the way. On the way across you'll get the Secret Tap. Drop down from the roof and you'll find a secret area, which contains some cash you'll need to 100%, the level..

Level Specific Challenges

Wallride Five Bells

This is an easy task, but practise your wall rides first so that you don't end up faffing around actually trying to hit the bells once you've located

them. Use the small ramp to the right at the start to reach the bell above it, then go down the slope to the right. Head across the centre raised platform and through the little tunnel with the lockers to locate Bell Two then use then head down the steps where you collected the letter 'A'. Turn tight at the bottom and you'll see Bell Three on the far wall. Approach it slowly and go out to the right before pulling in hard left to get your wall ride in. Bell Four is a little harder as you have to ollie onto a low platform before wall riding over a small structure to get the bell. Stay close to the wall and leave your ollie until the last minute to get enough height to clear the structure and get the bell. The final bell is down the slope from the rail down the steps (with the letter 'A') and then around the corner on the wall to the left. It's easy to wall ride as there are no obstructions.

Collect Five Hall passes

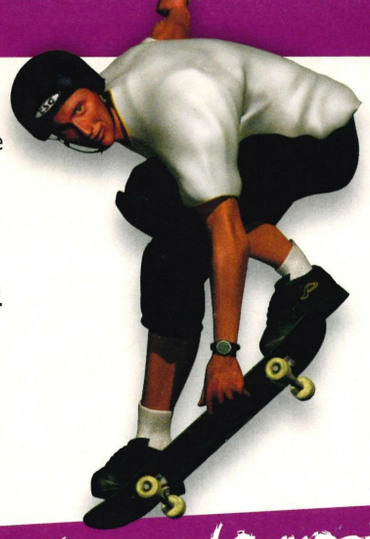
Grind the low wall in the sloping tunnel to the right of the stairs near the start to get the first pass then as you exit the tunnel head past the right of the picnic tables and do a boneless (⇧ ⇧ **A**) to get the height for the second pass. The third pass is to the left in front of the gym doors. Grind the rail leading up the slope and ollie at the end to get the pass then continue your grind on the other side for some decent points. Pass Four is located around the corner to the left above the small quarter-pipe there. After this head across the yard and you'll see the final pass above the brick outcrop structure there. Grind the lip to reach it nice and easy.

Kickflip TC's Roof Gap

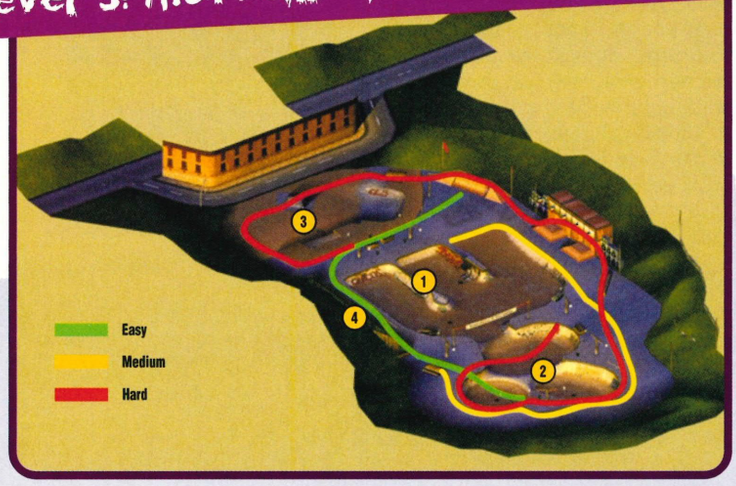
Head to TC's Roof Gap on the map and get some tricks going in the yard there to help increase your speed. Once your bar is yellow use the small ramp to get to the first cabin then kickflip (⇦+**X**) to the next one to beat the challenge. Yep, it is as easy as that.

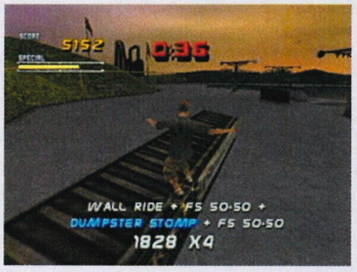
Grind Three Roll Call Rails

The first Roll Call rail is directly in front of you at the start. Jump into the rail that follows the stairs down and grind it all of the way to the bottom. Roll Call Rail Two is around the back of the gym to the left. Use the small ramp just in front of the rail and ollie onto it. Grind to the end then head off right, but to the left of the Porta Cabins. Go up the slope and head for the slope with the stairs on the other side of the rail. Use the slope to get to the top the turn around and grind the rail downwards for the third Roll Call Rail. If you want to open the gym doors you should reverse this route and get the third Roll Call Rail before the timer reaches 1'47". To make it in time go right down the slope at the start then left when you hit the bottom to bring you out at the top of Roll Call Rail Three. Grind it all of the way and you should get a message saying the gym is open, so head on over there and get yourself fit.



Level 3: Marseilles, France (Competition)





The first of the competitions is no walkover, but the nice mix of vert and street sections make it the perfect opener in the competition series. Most of the runs rely on the use of a low rail next to a tree section that you can't transfer across. The three runs we've detailed are proven, but remember to add as many trick variations as possible and balance those manuals. You don't want to bail when you're up to a x15 to win the last heat, do you?

Green

This is by far the easiest run but if you can finish it; with lots of tricks stuffed in, you'll get a great start to every heat. From the start, trick and go into a manual then grind the two small bins and land in a manual. Roll over to the left and trick onto the low rail then throw a few more tricks along here to gain speed before transferring to the edge to the right. At the end ollie off and either manual immediately and jump into the bowl or grind the picnic table before manualing and then jumping into the bowl. Make sure you hit the bowl in a manual then traverse the vert and finish in a handplant for a 40-grand plus score.

Yellow

When you reach the picnic table just before the bowl at the end of the Green run, grind them then manual and grind the rail that circles the bowl. At the end of this rail manual over to the next one the circles the bowl and grind around that before jumping off and going into a manual on the flat area. Try and fit in as many tricks and manuals as possible now as you head over to the edge of the pool for a grind to finish the run. You can keep this run going longer and grind or lip-trick in the pool, but by the time you reach the pool you're pretty wobbly, so it's best to get out of the combo fast.

Red

This run, in effect, has no limits, but towards the end you're going to be very unsteady so it's best to end it where we tell you. If you're feeling confident, though, try going backwards along the green run after you've finished grinding the rails around the bowls. You may just make it back to the start of this run for a complete circuit of the park that makes up just one combo. Anyway, from the start grind the bins but go left as you branch from the green run then grind the edge there and ollie to the rail. When you get off the rail manual across the street section using the picnic tables as you go then manual to the rails that traverse the top of the ramp at the start. Manual out of this area and use the small jump in front of the building to wall ride, then hit **A** to ollie out of the wall ride and to the roof of the hut. Keep grinding and drop down to the bins for a Stomp bonus then manual over to the two rails surrounding the bowls. Ollie and manual out of the second rail then jump down into the bowl area and manual until you reach the lip for a handplant. Don't push the handplant too hard though, as you don't want to lose the massive score you've just accumulated.

Park Tips

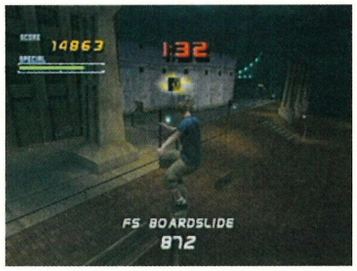
1. This pool area is a safe place to earn so big air points as there's not much chance that you'll miss the ramp and bail. The only problem when using this area as a half-pipe is that it takes a while to get from one side to the other, and you only have a minute for each run. As for grinding, this area is again a safe bet. Use your manuals when you have to jump out of a grind and you're onto a winner, but try not to grind around the knob on the centre wall as you'll lose speed and probably bail.

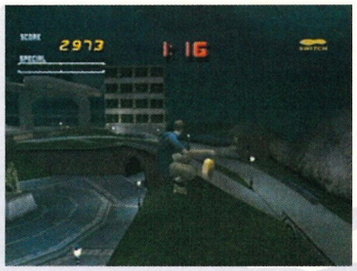
2. These three bowls are the perfect place for caning your vert tricks. Enter fast and hit the very hard to

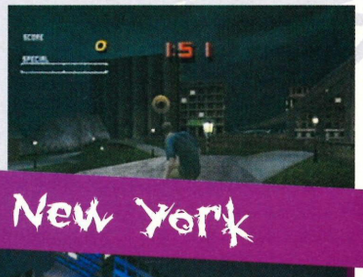
get as much height as possible. Look for an average of four tricks whilst in the air. The safest way to do this is to pump out three flip tricks and finish with a quick grab. Try and stay in one bowl at a time as you have more time in the air due to the fact that the sides are so close together. Forget manuals too, as you can score big enough points from the vert tricks if you keep your speed up. Don't forget to bust a few lip tricks though. Most handplant variants can be held to nearly 6000 on a times three which is handy especially if the timer is running out.

3. There's not much we can say about this flat street area. If you're going to spend time here, though, make sure you link all of your tricks with a manual, as simple tricks on their own ain't worth diddly squat.

4. There's a secret area to be accessed here. Skate along the grass near the fence and you see a small stick holding up a lamppost. Skate through and the lamppost will fall, smashing the fence down. This reveals a whole in the ground, which you should drop into to reach the secret area. There's not much to do as there's only a few grinds and no vert action, but you have to come here at least once to get the cash that awaits you if you want to 100% the level.







Level 4: NY City, New York

Basic Challenges

Points Challenges

There's a stupid amount of points to be had by grinding the wall just to the left of you at the start. Keep it going around the corner and bust as many tricks as you possible can until you get close to the ramp at the end. If you're still quite steady ollie off to the left and manual across the grass to reach the rail. Grind the rail then manual across to the park bench then manual to the rail next to the water (where you collected the 'T'). Finish the run off by hitting a trick off the concrete half-pipe against the building. Joey's is also good for points although there's no real half-pipe. Use the small quarter pipe behind Joey's sculpture for speed and bus some big air off of the wall of Joey's itself. Transfer the canopies for extra points here. Brooklyn Banks is also a good points earner as it packed with rails and air opportunities, but still no real half-pipe so you're going to have to work pretty hard to get that Sick Score of 150,00, whichever way you look at it.

Collect S-K-A-T-E

Hop onto the wall to the left at the start and grind along it. Jump the gap to get the 'S' then try and ollie over to the inside ledge of the wall so you can get the 'K' easily. This is hard so it's an idea to just come out of your grind and skate along the top of the wall to get the 'K'. Anyway, drop down to the left after the 'K' and collect the 'A' by using a boneless to the right of the statue. Head out under the tunnel and grind the railings by the water for the 'T' then hit the half-pipe against the building for the final letter.

Find Secret Tape

The secret tape is found in the Brooklyn Banks area of the level, which is only accessible after collecting the five subway tokens. You can reach it either by traversing the train tracks from the subway platform or by wall riding the wall at the end of the street you start on, and jumping up on top of the wall. Once in the correct area skate up the winding concrete ramp sticking to the right as you go. Grind the leftmost bar on the right at the top and jump to the bar jutting out on the left. Grind along here and ollie at the end to get the secret tape.

Level Specific Challenges

Ollie The Hydrants

Head straight along the wall on the left at the start (grind it for loadsa money) then when you reach the end go left. Cross the street and you'll see the fire hydrant plain as day. Ollie it and turn around heading back down the street towards the roadblock with three signs. Just to the right of you'll find the second fire hydrant in front of the high rise building so ollie it. Now head back past the starting point and turn left. You find the last fire hydrant at the end on the left of this street.

Collect Five Subway Tokens

It'll only take you a few seconds to get these tokens if you follow our route. From the start, turn around 180 degrees and go down the path that's no on your right. Turn right

opposite the ramp on the building and skate up the rock. Launch yourself off of the edge to get your first token then when you land go to the left slightly and grind the bridge to get token two. Now head over to the rail on the left of the sloped path (manual for more points but don't lose too much speed) and grind it for token three then cross the road at the top and use the ramp to get token four. When you land skate straight across the road and use the wooden ramp to reach token five hanging in the air over the grass.

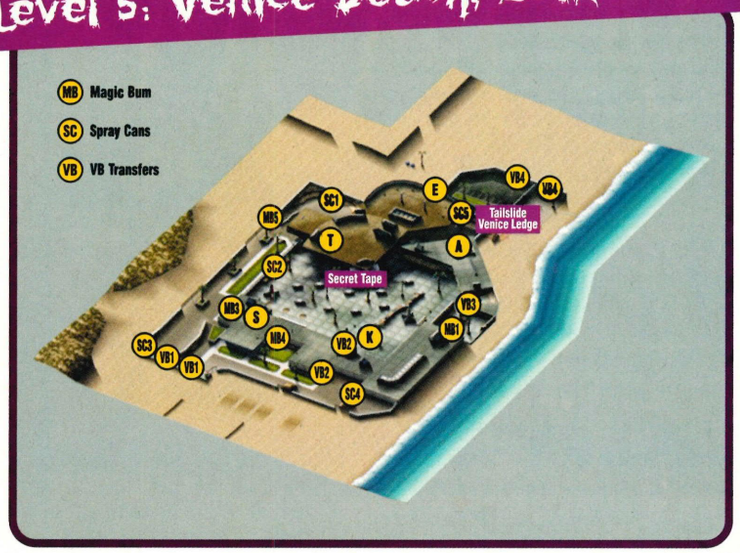
50-50 Joey's Sculpture

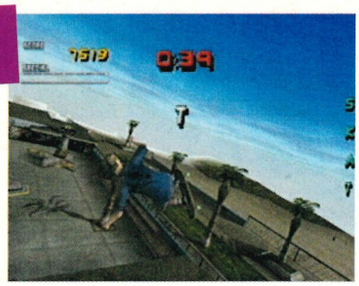
Turn right from the start and you see an enclosure with two slopes leading down to Joey's Palace. Joey's sculpture is directly between these two slopes and it forms a steep downwards grind. The best way to get onto it is to grind the rail that goes past the top of the sculpture then ollie onto it just as you reach it. To do a 50-50 grind you simply need to hold **Y** without pushing any directions on the D-pad.

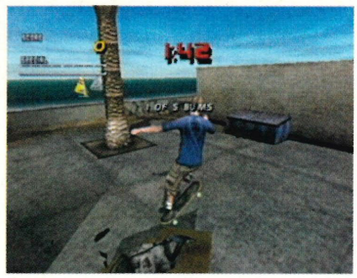
Grind The Subway Rails

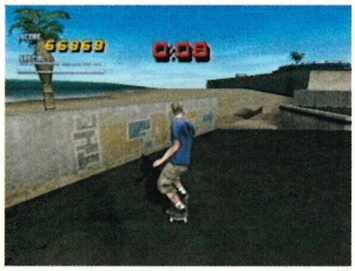
This is one of the most dangerous and hardest to execute single grinds in the whole game. Before you can reach the subway you have to collect the five subway tokens first. Once this is done use the escalator to the right of the two small ramps in the road near to the start point. Once you're at the subway platform skate to the edge and turn around. Wait for the train on this side to pass you then skate back towards the escalator and jump onto the rail to the right. Grind the rail on the left of the right track (you'll see what we mean) all of the way down to the bottom until you get the message telling you that the challenge is complete. If a train appears, hop to the right hand track and grind then ollie back over after the train has passed. Otherwise it could get quite messy.

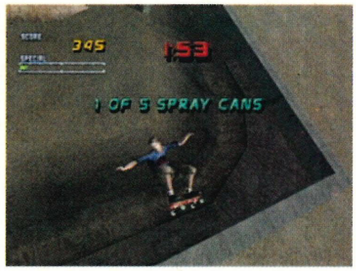
Level 5: Venice Beach, California











Basic Challenges

Points challenges

Venice Beach is a point scorer's dream with opportunities for some massive air plus some great grind sessions. We advise you to stay away from the pit area in the centre when you're trying to beat the score challenges, though, as there just isn't the same big points opportunity as the rest of the level there. Use the walls at the perimeter from the start for big grind points. If you jump onto the chain-link fence in front of you at the start you can grind that completely then continue onto the edge of the building. Ollie off when you reach the end and manual before busting a huge trick or handplant on one of the quarter-pipes there. Alternatively, keep the manual going to the perimeter wall and carry on down to the end where there's a few ramps to end your run. The wooden bowl area at the start is a good area for big points, especially if you enter it from a grind and manual along the perimeter wall. The best place for busting air though is the half-pipe set where you find the first magic bum and also VB Transfer 3. This is particularly high scoring as when you've finished tricking, you can grind your way out and onto the rooftops for some extra pointage.

Collect S-K-A-T-E

From the start, use the small concrete mound in front of you to launch yourself onto the chain-link fence. Grind the fence (tricking to build points) and jump onto the room at the end to collect the 'S', then turn left across the rooftops and ollie the gaps to get the 'K'. jump down to the inner area and head to the wooden quarter-pipe to the left. Jump over it and back onto the rooftops and you see the letter 'A'. Spin around and use the ramp on the corner of the roof to get to the next rooftop where you find the 'T' above a quarter-pipe then jump to the lower roof with the cables to collect the letter 'E'.

Find Secret Tape

This one's easy but you need good ollie, speed, air, and hangtime stats before you can reach it. It can be found above the cable in the centre of the street area in the middle of the level. To reach it just use the table to the left of the first rail underneath the cable and time a perfect boneless off of it. Easy.

Level Specific Challenges

Ollie The Magic Bum 5x

Jump down the small set of steps in front of you and head forwards until you see the wooden quarter-pipe. Go to the right of the pipe and enter the area with the half-pipe and you'll see the first Magic Bum. Ollie him then leave this area and go past the wooden quarter-pipe. Turn right and go down the stairs to find Magic Bum number two. Now head back to the start and do a wall ride to get up the small set of stairs then turn left and follow the fence down to find another Magic Bum. The fourth bum can be found around the corner to the left, in the small grassy area with the Venice Beach banner going over the top. Ollie him and head back past the start where you'll find the final Magic Bum sleeping next to the fence on the left. Ollie him to clean up Venice Beach once and for all.

Collect Five Spray Cans

Turn left at the start and head down the wall into the bowl shaped area to get the first Spray Can then come back to the start and jump onto the left fence before jumping down to the box to the left to collect Spray Can Two. Now wall ride up the first set of steps at the start and head left, along the right-hand side. You get Spray Can Three above the quarter-pipe at the end here. Turn right and jump the wall before skating down to the end (past the Venice Beach banner) and transferring the two half-pipes there to get can four. Opposite the quarter-pipe you just transferred too is another quarter-pipe. Use this to transfer over the roof to the right and enter the main open area of the stage. The fifth Spray Can is found past the wooden half-pipe and down the slope where you found the second Magic Bum.

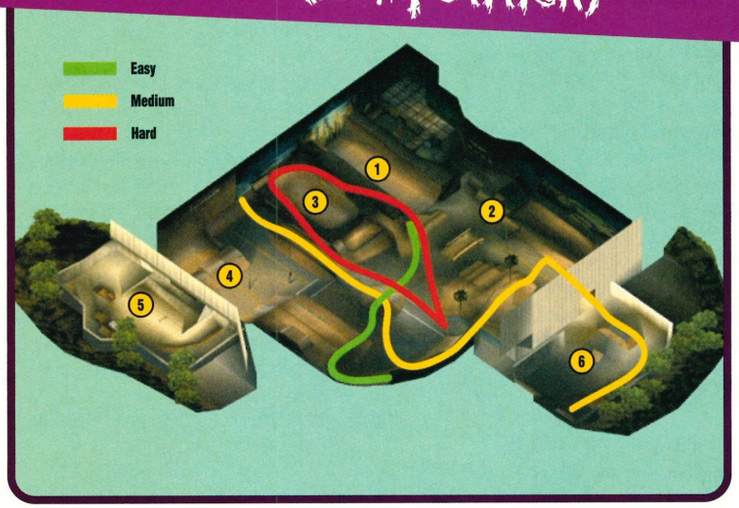
Tailslide Venice Ledge

Venice Ledge can be a real bitch to get too as the timing is hard, and landing in the sand will cause you to go back from the start. Anyway, from the start head left into the wooden bowl area and head for the topmost right hand corner (about two o-clock as you enter where the graffiti says 'CRUZ'). Jump out of the bowl and over the wall, holding **Y** for a wall ride or roof grind if you need to. You should now be on a narrow path. Follow it around and pass the wall then go left. Then head over to the quarter-pipe by the wall. The low wall past this is Venice ledge so jump onto it and do a tailslide all of the way to the bottom to beat the challenge.

Hit Four VB Transfers

This is one of the hardest challenges we've encountered so far, so be prepared. The first transfer is to the right of the start point. Grind the wall on the right to build up some speed then drop down before the ramp where you collected the third spray can. You have to hit the left of the ramp at a sever angle to land on the second ramp along. Make sure your speed is at max and try to ollie from the left-hand corner of the launch ramp. To get the second transfer head down to the two ramps where you collected Spray Can Four and use the single ramp there to transfer the roof. To bust too much of an angle though, or you wipe out. VB Transfer three is around by the first Magic Bum. When you pass the bum trick on the ramp against the wall, then come back and transfer to the right from the ramp in front of you. Now skate across to the other side of this half-pipe and trick then when you get back to the side you just landed the transfer on grind the lip to the right. You're now onto the rooftops. Head left to reach the area where you found Magic Bum Two. You can now either grind the high wall and jump down to the path with the small ramp in the sand, or get down to where the bum was and use the half-pipe to transfer over the wall. Whichever way you choose, be precise as if you land in the sand you'll be transported back to the start. Skate back down the path to the concrete area and launch yourself off of the ramp against the wall and to the left. If you had enough speed you'll reach the ramp over the wall on the higher level for the final transfer.

Level 6: Skatestreet, Ventura (Competition)



Skatestreet is the skater's plywood dream. It's a purpose-built skatepark filled with massive air opportunities and some of the best grind sessioning you're ever going to encounter. The combo runs in this park are almost infinite but we think we've chosen the most efficient ones for you. You score some huge points from these runs but don't neglect that massive half-pipe behind you at the start. There's some big air and some big points to be had on the vert in Skatestreet too.

Green

From the start, trick down the steep run in and land in a manual. Head for the large fun box slightly to the right and trick over it keeping your manual going then manual up the slope in front of you. If you've enough speed ollie from the top of the slope, fitting a trick and some rotations in before landing on the edge of the wood that lead to the wall. As you grind to the wall ollie out of it and on to the bar that runs along the wall in an upwards slope. Whilst grinding the bar hold **Y** and keep jumping to score extra points and multipliers from wall rides. Keep wall riding when the bar ends and either let yourself drop before you hit the side of the huge quarter-pipe or keep jumping from your wall ride to get higher in order to land on top of the ramp. If you let yourself drop you're in for about 40,000 but if you go for the top of the ramp you can pump your score to plus 60,000. Just make sure you don't hit the side of the ramp though you'll bail and lose all of your points.

Yellow

Both the medium runs start from the same place, which is the large 'Ride The Wave' quarter-pipe opposite the start run-in.

1. Start the level by tricking to gain speed then bust a handplant move at the highest point of the 'Ride The Wave' pipe. You won't be able to link but you'll score big points and increase your speed more. Now as you start down the ramp jump into a manual and keep tricking and manualing over the large fun box. Making sure you're still linked by a manual ollie onto the rail in the centre of the runway in front of you and keep grinding and tricking along it. For extra points you can jump to the wall on the left and continue your grind or the box on the right. Either way, make sure that you jump out and into a manual then either use the small ramp for a handplant or the larger section against the wall for a huge air trick. Make sure that you don't land on top of that small ramp though.

2. Instead of handplanting the 'Ride The Wave' ramp skate up to its centre then grind down the slope to the left. As you grind towards the end of the ramp ollie and trick onto the hanging pipe there. About halfway down ollie and trick again and as long as you're not going to fast you land on a small handrail below. Grind it and come out into a manual. You've now got to choices. You can either use the speed that you've built up to get some big air and buts three or for tricks for at least a 40,000 score, or you can grind to the right and finish the run with some tricks and manuals in the outside area.

Red

Oddly, this is one of the toughest runs we could find, but it doesn't score the best. However, it looks great and it's one you'll want to impress your mates with. If you want to score big though, try coming backwards along the route of our Yellow Run One, and performing a handplant before you start this run. After handplanting the 'Ride The Wave' ramp, trick and manual across to the starting run in. Still manualing go up the slope and trick and manual at the top, before moving left to grind the rail. Halfway down the rail there's a board to the left that forms part of the pool. Ollie over to it and continue your grind. Don't jump at the end, just let yourself drop instead. You'll now be grinding the perimeter lip of the pool area. Grind the top half then when you start back on yourself ollie out and land in a manual to the right before quickly jumping onto the rail on the right. Grind for a while and ollie down to the centre rail that makes up part of Yellow Run One then ollie out and manual before the fun box. Now just keep tricking and manualing until you reach the 'Ride The Wave' ramp where you should have enough speed to but a wicked handplant and end the run.

Park tips

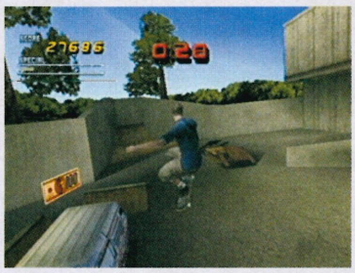
1.This half-pipe is the best place for air on the whole level, but don't spend to long here as the judges will start marking you down. The steepness of the vert allows you to get some good speed up which translates to big air, which in turn translates to big pointage. Perform at least four tricks a time when you're up to speed and try and make everyone a 720 rotation at least.

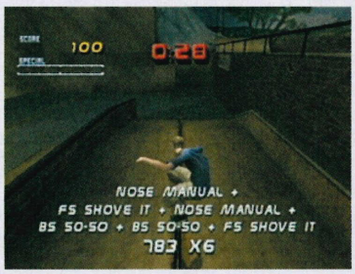
2. Although this tricky little area can be lot of fun, it's not big on points, so we suggest that you don't stray here to often. If you do end up here though, avoid the small ramps to the left as they are harder to land on. Instead, get some air going in the small half-pipe ore use the edges to start some big combo runs out of the area. Avoid going upstairs totally as there's just no points to be had.

3. This pool is useful as you can score some decent air points but it's also good for grinding and handplanting. Mix and match your moves here when playing a competition as the judges will award you a better score at the end. When you're finished in the bowl grind out of it and manual onto one of the rail surrounding it to start a decent trick run.

4. Use the raised wooden area to the right of this to build up some multipliers before jumping into this ridiculously high half-pipe. Although logically you'd think the best height and tricks would come from the wall side of the half-pipe, save your best for the other side as you'll launch better from its lip. If you want to stay in here for a while, avoid the side of the half-pipe that's closest to the wall as this acts as a run out area.

5&6. Although you'll want to open the two secret outside areas, they don't hold much in the way of pointage, still, they're worth look.. The best of the two areas is the Van Secret Area (5) which is opened by grinding completely the curved bar that joins the two ends of the large half-pipe at Point One on the map. To open the Rail Secret Area (6) grind the 'Ride The Wave' ramp and ollie onto the suspended rail (Yellow Run Two) then grind it all the way to the end.



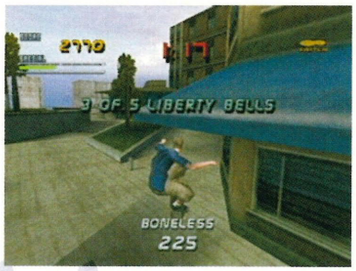


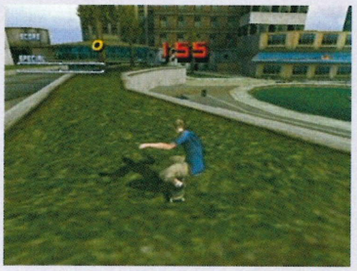
Level 7: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

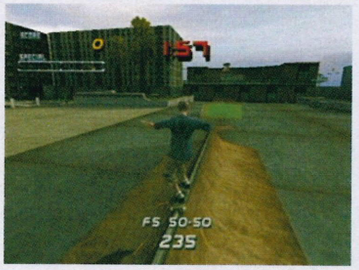
Basic Challenges

Points Challenges

This is a hard level to score points on at first as it's so tight in most places. There's steps walls and benches all over the place that just seem to get in your way constantly. Learn to use them to your advantage though and you're laughing. Make sure that you grind everything then and don't forget about wall-rides, especially when you're in the fountain area. Directly in front of you at the start is a long path with great grind opportunities either side and the fountain area is cool for picking up some big points on the grind front. As for air, well you're not going to get any to speak of until you open the skatepark section. This is easy enough. Just grind the cable leading from the walkway right at the end of that first path. Make sure you're going fast and if you make it high enough up the cable the telephone poles will smash the fence blocking the skatepark down. Once in the skatepark make good use of the small but perfectly formed half-pipe to the right and avoid going for too many lip tricks as they seem to be much tougher than normal. You'll usually go straight into a grind instead of a handplant etc. There's some good opportunity for grind combo's here though. Just be careful as there's many a wall to skate into that will rob you of your score.







Collect S-K-A-T-E

Stay to the right of the wooden grind/ramp at the start then cut over to the left and jump up onto the area with two trees, just at the point where the wall curves up. Skate across the grass then ollie onto the inside edge of the wall and grind. Do a few tricks to increase your speed and ollie off of the end to collect the 'S'. On landing head left and you see two semi-circle concrete structures in front of the awning. Use the one nearest you to jump up and grind the edge of the awning to collect the 'K' then drop down onto the wall below for the 'A'. Continue the way you're going after the 'A' and ollie or wall-ride up the steps. Now grind the left rail of the walkway on the side of the building and jump about halfway up to get the 'T'. After this jump up the small set of steps opposite the walkway and head up the path. Turn around and grind the low wall on your left with the benches in the inset areas. As you reach the end jump onto the grass and keep tricking for speed then head for the 'E'. At the edge of the wall do a boneless to reach the letter.

Find Secret Tape

Go directly forward from the start and you see a raised grassy area to the left of the fountain. Ollie onto it and skate through the middle of the grass. As you near the end cut across to the right where you'll see a wire joining the corner. Grind this wire all the way up to reach the secret tape. You won't be going fast so you need to keep jumping to get your forward momentum. Beware though, this will make balance more difficult

Level Specific Challenges

Drain The Fountain

Ollie onto the wooden grind/ramp at the start and trick to gain speed. Roll off of the edge and boneless at the top of the small ramp to clear the gap. As soon as you land do a small ollie onto the handrail down the steps and grind. Cross the path at the bottom and aim to do a Boneless just as you hit the top of the small slope that makes the sides of the planter in front of the building. If you haven't got enough height to get onto the building try holding **Y** as you might just be able to grind the railings and jump onto the roof that way. Once on the roof skate through the valves to drain the fountain.

Collect Five Bells

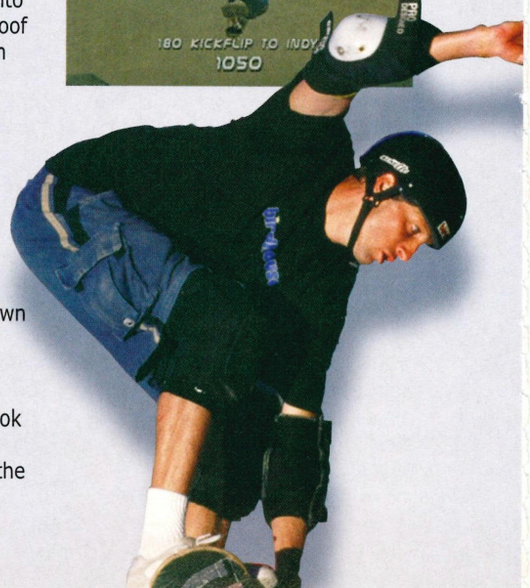
Go slightly left at the start and grind the wall with the benches there. At the end you get Bell One. Go to the right from the first bell and jump up the low wall. Skate across the grass to get the second bell then drop down and use the first concrete semi-circle to launch up and get Bell Three near the awning. Now, skating away from the awning look to the left for bell four and Boneless to reach it then follow the path around until you see the stairs. Grind up the centre rail and use the ramp to reach the final bell. If you can't get it from here, head back to the start point and use the ramp coming the opposite way.

Bluntside The Awning

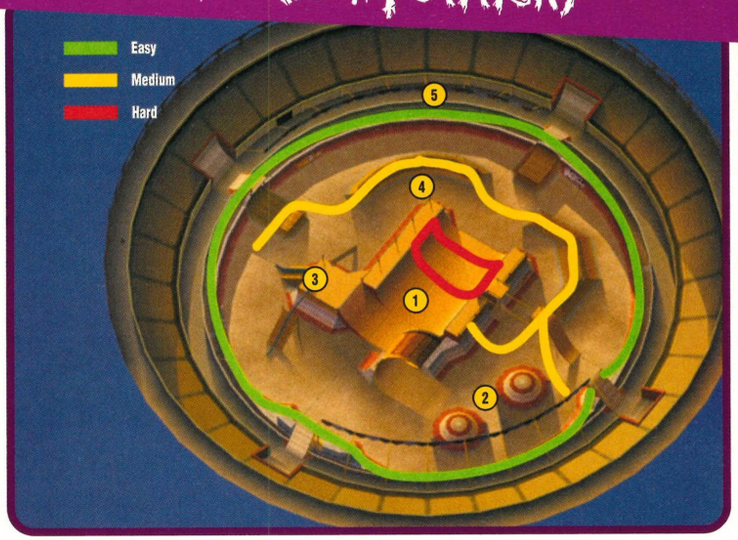
This one is easy. Just head for the concrete semi-circle you used to reach the letter 'K' and Boneless to the awning ledge. Land in either a FS or BS Bluntside and make sure you take it to the end of the awning to complete the objective.

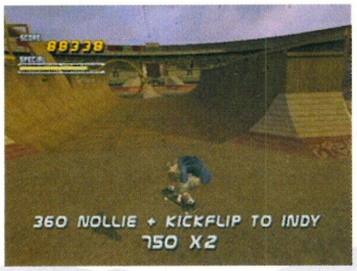
Liptrick Four Skatepark Lips

To complete this challenge you first need to have opened the skatepark itself. To do this grind the rail on the walkway where you collected the letter 'T' and continue grinding up the wire that leads to the telegraph pole from the corner when the rail levels out. If you have enough speed you'll get high enough up the wire that your weight will bring the line and the telegraph poles crashing down through the fence into the skatepark. Once you've finished with your vandalism head into the skatepark for those lips. Use the rail on the right to reach the half-pipe to do your first lip trick then get over to the concrete section and do the remaining three liptricks.



Level 8: The Bullring, Mexico (Competition)





The last level takes us to Mexico where we encounter the biggest half-pipe the world has ever seen, and get this, it's in a bullring. Yeah, you heard right and old Toro even puts in an appearance as he runs around a trench on the perimeter of the level. Jump in the trench and skate towards the bull and ollie onto him for a unique 'Bullplant' and don't worry about skating through that turd, it won't knock you off and it makes a stinky farting sound, which is a laugh for a while. As for runs, the size of the area makes it hard but we've detailed a few that should give you some good points.

Green

This is a short run but will earn you top points right at the start of your run. Ollie from the top of the run in ramps and go straight into a manual. Try to land about halfway down the ramp for maximum speed. When you reach the opposite side grind to the right then drop back down to a manual. Now when you reach the opposite lip, bust a nice liptrick to round of the run. Of course, you can keep going for as long as you like by grinding on the lips but it does get very tricky so we suggest a maximum of two grinds. Experiment though, and it might pay off.

Yellow

This is just a basis of a run that can lead you into lots of areas so it's not long but it will set you up with some decent pointage. Start at the small fun box with the spine and grind it then trick and manual to the large wooden spine. Wall ride or grind the lower section the right then get up to the top of the spine. Ollie off and manual to the blue spine in front and grind that. Watch your tricks here as you don't want to jump off before the end. When you reach the end manual and either go to the outside perimeter wall to continue your grind or head to the right and use the vert on the back of the half-pipe for a nice grab and spin.

Red

This isn't so much as a run but bar the half-pipe the outside perimeter is the best points scorer on this level. Jump up into a grind and just keep grinding the perimeter. Ollie to the ground and manual every time you see an obstruction then jump back on to continue your grind. Listen out for the bull running around the trench to the right though, as even when grinding it will knock you flying. When you hear it close, ollie off into a manual and then get straight back on to continue your grind. This run can go on for ages, just make sure you finish it cleanly when your skater starts to get too wobbly and unstable. Also if you use one of the ramps to get into the stands, there's another perimeter run that's a little easier to score on as you don't have to worry about El Toro.

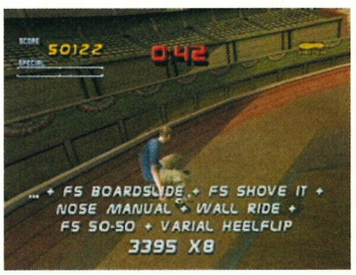
1. This huge half-pipe offers some of the biggest air opportunities in the entire game, so make good use of it by busting as many mid-air tricks as you possible can. Make sure you use the triggers to spin as 720s are possible every time you take to the air meaning that plus 20,000 scores are incredibly easy to come by. Don't forget lip tricks either as with the stats your skater should have now, you'll be able to hold them for ages. As for the loop-de-loop, it doesn't score very well so don't make a point of using it, but it is a nice way to exit the half-pipe and head out onto other areas of the course.

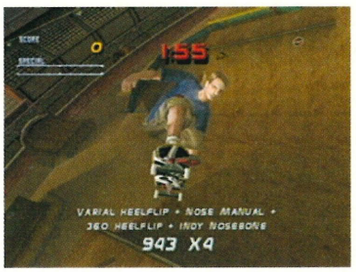
2. These white and red humps are best left well alone as the landing is just too unpredictable. Half the time you find yourself bailing in the dirt and losing your points. Use them as kickers when you pass them but don't spend time trying to score big points off of them.

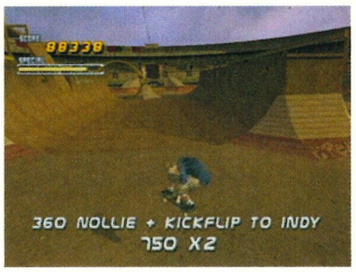
3. There's a little inset ramp on the half-pipe that leads to these three rails. Although they're fun to use getting any good combos using them is hard although it is possible to manual up the left one and ollie onto the right hand one for a nice little run. Try and manual as you reach the bottom of the grinds and you can start a decent combo but you're going fast, so take care.

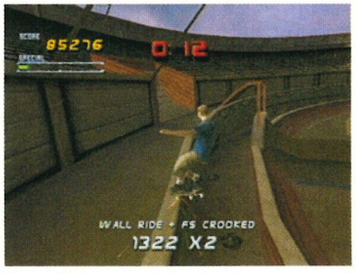
4. When using these long spines to grind trick across the top of them as much as possible, but be careful not to jump off of them completely as they are curved. Also in the area surrounding the half-pipe, make good use of the vert ramps that surround the backside of the pipe. These are always useful when jumping out of a grind on the spines to finish your run off cleanly.

5. You can reach the stands area by either jumping into a wall-ride when grinding the low perimeter wall or using one of the four kicker areas around the wall. Once up here make good use of the safe grinding opportunities and when you want to exit use the ramp opposite the run in on the half-pipe and you should be able to land in a grind. If you miss your grind remember to hold **A** before you land to avoid bailing.









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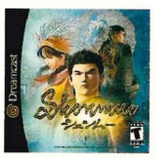

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Listing of USA and Japanese release schedule

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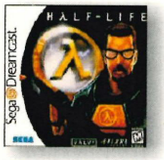

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2001

The Best Is Yet To Come....

You know that bumper Christmas we've just had, with quality Dreamcast games everywhere you turn? Well it doesn't stop there - check out some of the highlights of 2001...

The Best Is Yet To Come... 2001

1 GRAND PRIX 3

The Best Is Yet To Come...

From HASBRO
When EARLY 2001

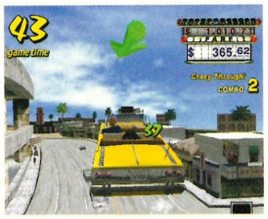
A game we're looking forward to so much, we've already given it a front cover. This is the conversion of the PC game, famed for being a painstakingly accurate and agonisingly playable simulation of a Formula One season.

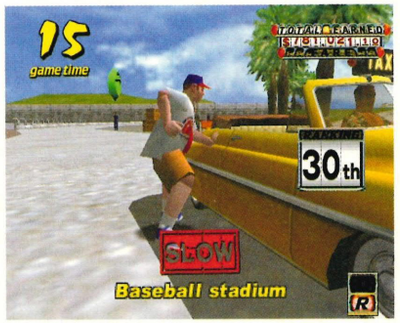
The good news has started rolling in already too. The much-voiced criticism of the stats of the PC version being out of date looks like being addressed, as do the worries about fitting the full complexity of one of the more complicated games on the market onto a console. Suffice to say, from what we've seen things are shaping up very nicely indeed. If only they could add online play, everyone would be a winner, baby. Ahem...

2 CRAZY TAXI 2

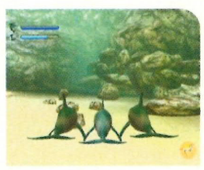
The Best Is Yet To Come...

From SEGA
When SUMMER 2001





Announced barely days before this feature was put together, and already one of the most hotly anticipated games on any format next year, CT2 looks to better still one of the top five Dreamcast games of the year. Unlike its predecessor, this one is being written directly for Dreamcast (rather than converting the arcade game and bolting bits on, which we though worked quite well ourselves), and new cities will be included for you to practice your driving skills. New York is a definite, and we're hoping for San Francisco. Suffice to say, we can't wait.

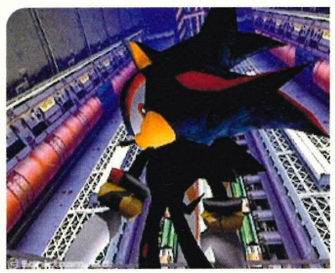


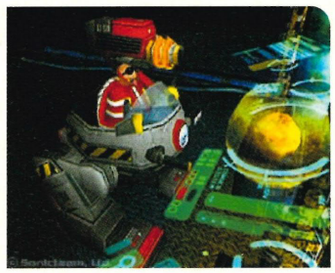
3 ECCO THE DOLPHIN 2

The Best Is Yet To Come...

From SEGA
When LATE 2001

Hmmmm. It's tricky for me to enthuse too much about Ecco, as I've never really been a fan of the series. Still, it is a strong Sega franchise, and those who do love the game (and they're numerous) won't have been disappointed by the 9/10-scoring Ecco game that appeared earlier in the year. The sequel is being worked on, but details are very sparse in coming through. Nonetheless, it's still a major game for 2001, and you can look forward to a more comprehensive update next year within the pages of our mighty organ.





4 SONIC ADVENTURE 2

The Best Is Yet To Come...

From SEGA
When LATE 2001

Okay, Sonic Shuffle will be a nice diversion when it arrives in the first half of the year, but the massive, killer app title is clearly Sonic Adventure 2, and from what we've seen this is going to be something immense. Already confirmed are the inclusion of a mysterious other hedgehog, the appearance of nasty Doctor Eggman, more moves for Sonic and the inevitable return of popular characters such as Knuckles. Expected to be an adventure in every sense, this is one of Sega's huge titles for 2001, and don't they know it. Expect lots of coverage closer to the release date. Just don't get us any medication if we start talking about this weird Eggman bloke again, okay?

5 SKIES OF ARCADIA

The Best Is Yet To Come...

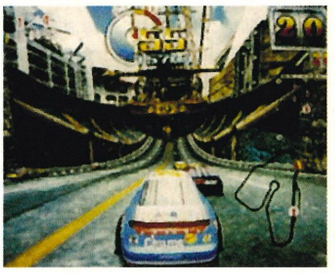
From SEGA
When EARLY 2001

We've talked about this one before, and with good reason. Quality role-playing games on the Dreamcast are still too rare a breed for our liking, with very high scores already being racked up in territories that it's already been released in. It genuinely is a mix of the old role-playing game standards with a brand-new world packed with plenty of ideas. Sounds bullshit, but it is true. Honest. It's also got beautiful graphics, a wholly convincing game world and the ability to rob days off your life. Bit like the boss and his Anna Kournikova scrapbook. Not long to wait for this, so best not go spending those gift vouchers too quickly...

6 DAYTONA USA

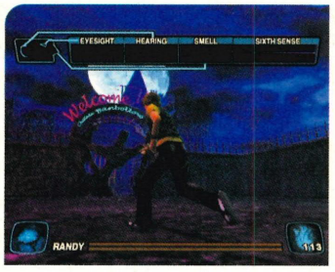
The Best Is Yet To Come...

From SEGA
When APRIL



For us, this could just be the most eagerly anticipated game of next year. Think we're kidding? Just ask anyone who's had the pleasure of playing Daytona in the arcades, especially when there are a row of cabinets linked up. In a nutshell, this is a silky-smooth racing game on tracks packed with cars, and offers some of the finest driving game gameplay we've seen in recent times.

What makes the promised Dreamcast conversion even more drool-inducing is that Sega are to offer an online gaming function. There's no question that where Daytona is concerned, this is a major, major asset, and considering the game in single-player mode barring any hiccups is already a must-buy, the multiplayer aspect is just the icing on an extremely creamy, succulent and downright tasty cake. Yum yum.



7 ILLBLEED

The Best Is Yet To Come...

From SEGA/JALECON
When TO BE CONFIRMED

On the rosters for 2001, this is one that could go either way. It promises to be another of those crosses between action, adventure and horror that Resident Evil pretty much does to most people's satisfaction. However, the premise is intriguing (and not a million miles away from the movie House on Haunted Hill). The challenge is to spend 24 hours in a haunted house, which holds a deep and deadly secret for you to uncover. It's from the people who brought you Blue Stinger (but don't let that put you off), and has the potential to be a nice distraction in the middle of the year. And it'll stop us doing some, ahem, extra research on the Internet during those long and lonely nights...

8 OUTTRIGGER

The Best Is Yet To Come...

From SEGA
When AFTER EASTER

Aside from the fact that they're all fantastic games and they're all coming to or already on Dreamcast, what have Quake III, Half-Life and Unreal Tournament got in common? Answer - they've already appeared on other formats. Which opens up a window of opportunity for the rather tasty-looking Outtrigger, a first-person action game that's already raising a few eyebrows months before its release. Again, this is a title that you can play alone, with friends, or online, and promises fast, furious and addictive blasting action. We hope it lives up to its promises, because frankly, this is a genre where the competition is very stiff. Certainly one to keep an eye on, though.

9 PHANTASY STAR ONLINE

The Best Is Yet To Come...

From SEGA
When JAN/FEB

How's this for an ambitious idea? A role-playing adventure game with umpteen quests to undertake, and the chance to team up with players from across the globe (breaking down language barriers through a variety of symbols) in a massive online world? What if we threw the fact that the almighty Sonic Team were behind it? You'd be excited, right?

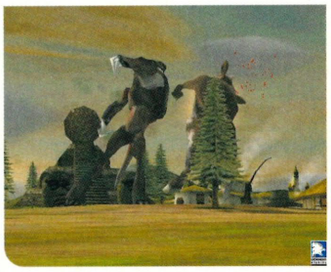
And so you should be. Phantasy Star Online is easily the most ambitious online game in the Sega cannon (and arguably one of the most daring online gaming projects on any format), mixing high-quality graphics with the necessary pace to keep a global audience captivated. It's a complicated game, which is probably why it missed its original Christmas release deadline, but with a launch across the globe planned in all territories within weeks of one another, this quite literally could be the game the world has been waiting for. Even if the game underneath it is passably good (and early reports are much more favourable), this is still a game with some substantial shelf life to look forward to...

10 BLACK & WHITE

The Best Is Yet To Come...

From SEGA
When SPRING

We don't want to guff on too much here, owing to the fact that a big preview can be found elsewhere within this month's pages, but suffice to say this is another game that can justifiably be classed as 'ambitious'. If it works, it's going to be a stunner. And one way or another, we're going to be talking about it for months...



The original was PC only, and it's nice to see Eidos not limiting the fun to them this time round. Graphically beautiful, Commandos 2 looks set to be a very tough cross of action and strategy, arguably with a little bit of puzzle game thrown in. Taking control of a crack team of various backgrounds and skills, you're going to need to draw on the reservoir of talent at your disposal (and there ain't much) to pull off some daring, fiendish and bloody difficult missions. The original was very linear in how you could solve said missions (hence the puzzle game element), and whilst the difficulty level is likely to be unchanged, it looks like you'll get some much-needed extra freedom this time around. Whatever, this is a major game coming across several formats this Easter, and it's right that the Dreamcast should be one of those formats.

Unfairly dismissed as just a Tomb Raider clone in some circles when it originally appeared, the first Soul Reaver made it over to the Dreamcast several months ago now, and whilst it hardly sent the charts alight, it's a very good mystical action adventure that earned a coveted 9/10 of us. Aren't we nice?

The sequel? That continues the adventures of Raziel as he jumps through parallel worlds on his new quest, with improved graphics and hopefully with similarly intriguing yet cunningly addictive gameplay. Not too many details have been forthcoming so far, but rest assured this is a major sequel, and not a game to be ignored...

11 COMMANDOS 2

The Best Is Yet To Come...

From EIDOS
When EASTER

12 SOUL REAVER 2

The Best Is Yet To Come...

From EIDOS
When EASTER

13 UNREAL

The Best Is Yet To Come...

From INFOGRAMES
When MARCH

To a rousing chorus of boos and hisses, Infogrames pushed the release of DC UT back to March recently, leaving an open path for Quake III to clean up Christmas. But dismiss this at your peril. UT - arguably the best PC game of 1999 - is one of the finest multiplayer games of recent times, and fans of the first-person action genre are split between this and Quake as their champion.

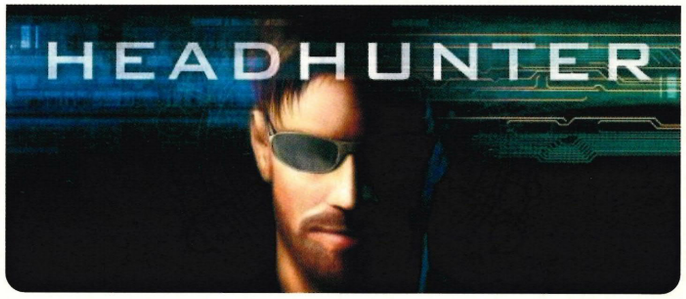
And by learning of the company it keeps, that pretty much tells you what you need to know. Superb in single-player mode (although one or two of the options have been removed for the DC release), utterly essential with more than one player, this isn't just an important game, it's also a damn good one. If they can keep the lag rates down and the frame rates up, this'll be another potent presence in the DC's bulging sack. Er, if you get what we mean.

14 HEADHUNTER

The Best Is Yet To Come...

From SEGA
When SUMMER

Expect your Summer holidays to be seriously enlivened by this juicy-looking title, which is already being classed as one of Sega's top titles of 2001. The game is set in the future, with the illegal trading of body parts being rife. Wouldn't get much for the boss, mind. But don't tell him. Anyway, you get to play a bounty hunter on the prowl, allowed to roam loose around the game city in a mixture of combat and racing, with a hint of adventure too. Details aren't forthcoming beyond that, other than those in the know are getting quite excited about it. And so are we. Hee hee.



15 AGE OF EMPIRES 2

The Best Is Yet To Come...

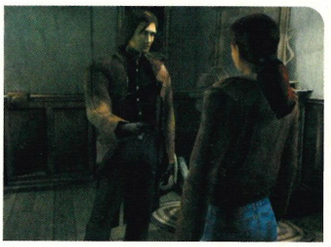
From KONAMI/MICROSOFT
When SUMMER 2001

Long ago, Konami and Microsoft inked a deal that allowed Microsoft to publish Konami games on PC, and Konami to publish Microsoft games on consoles. And those games have been a long time coming, with the likes of Combat Flight Simulator and Links Golf appearing finally due for release mid-2001. But it's Age of Empires 2 that's the gem amongst them, generally being regarded as one of the deepest and most engrossing strategy games on the PC. How well will it transfer to the Dreamcast? That's anyone's guess at the moment, but once again if they pull it off and stick online gaming into the pot too, then we could very well have a hit on our hands. It could be crap of course. But we doubt it.

16 ALONE IN THE DARK 4

The Best Is Yet To Come...

From INFOGRAMES
When EASTER



Hmmm. As we went to press, this one wasn't going either way, with rumours of the game's demise being unconfirmed. Us? We hope it appears, as this is a high-profile game resurrecting a quality gaming franchise of yesteryear. Hell, we even gave it a front cover back in August as a gesture of our puerile excitement. Mixing in elements of action, adventure and a drip of horror, the problem could be that Resident Evil has stamped over its territory. But with the next RE instalment (aside from the Code Veronica update) still in rumour stage, we're left looking forward to AITD4, and hoping that it lives up to its promise.

17 SYSTEM SHOCK 2

The Best Is Yet To Come...

From TBC
When 2001

Anyone who played this gem on the PC is happy already. The rest? Probably blissfully unaware of just what a fantastic action adventure System Shock 2 proved to be. The Dreamcast conversion has been ongoing for some time now, and definitely won't be published by the ever Dreamcast-shy Electronic Arts (who handled the PC version). Nonetheless, it is still on the schedules for 2001

We know it too. There's not a lot new about Bomberman, that age-old classic of running round a maze, planting bombs, getting out the way and hopefully blowing the opposition to smithereens. Hell, the game is nearly 20 years old in concept, and yet every console has a version of it, for one very good reason. It works, and works well. The twist this time, as the game title gives away, is that it's going to be playable online, which certainly induced an unsavoury level of froth around our mouths. Which could be the free toothpaste we were sent. But we suspect not.

19 BOMBERMAN

The Best Is Yet To Come...

From SEGA
When AFTER EASTER

18 VIRTUA STRIKER 3

The Best Is Yet To Come...

From SEGA
When LATE 2001

Not yet officially confirmed, yet extremely likely, Sega's sequel to the lacklustre Virtua Striker 2 is shortly to get its coin-op debut, with the rumour mill suggesting a release late in 2001 as a distinct possibility. And one way or another, this is shaping up to be an improvement. Genuine arcade football games are few and far between, and whilst Sega have clearly focused on multimedia aspects, some reworking of the game itself could finally let out the what was frustratingly restricted by the 4/10 scoring previous edition. More news throughout next year, hopefully.

AND THEN THERE'S...

We just picked 19, but there are plenty of other potentially strong titles bubbling under that could well be worth your notes. They include Samba De Amigo 2000 (which we've omitted purely because it looks like Sega isn't giving the original a big push over here, meaning the sales figures are unlikely to be impressive), the delayed Half-Life, the interesting-looking 18-Wheeler Pro Trucker (early word is that it's good, but not great) and the return of Sonic the Hedgehog in Sonic Shuffle, an intriguing-looking cross of Sonic and board game.

Driver 2 is still rumoured, by the way, and the release lists also have Infogrames' conversion of the hit film La Femme Nikita. Sega Marine Fishing should let you get your rods out again (oh you know what we mean), whilst Seaman (and keep the smutty comments to yourself) allows you to communicate with your Dreamcast via microphone.

Expect early in the year all the Crave titles being distributed by Ubi Soft (more on those elsewhere this issue), more football antics with European Super League (currently pencilled in for February), the appearance at last of footie management game Giant Killers, NBA2K1 for the basketball fans (although don't expect a UK appearance for the awesome NFL2K1) and Motocross Madness for those who like their bikes.

And still we've barely touched the titles gracing the white box over the forthcoming 12 months. Some surprises are still being kept from us, some less desirable objects are no doubt festering away, but nonetheless, the Dreamcast, backed by a fantastic recent software line up, is still going strong. So yah boo sucks.

dcm directory

AERO WINGS 6

Publisher ■ Crave Entertainment

Players: 1-2 ■ Reviewed: Issue 3

Being the first flight sim to grace the Dreamcast format, you'd expect its creator to go all out and try and set a standard high enough to make competitors quake in their boots. Alas, Crave opted for the 'bang it out for Chrimbo' approach, leaving quality as a mere afterthought. Basic graphics and bog standard gameplay awaits.

AERO WINGS 2 8

Publisher ■ Crave Entertainment

Players: 1-2 ■ Reviewed: Issue 15

This is certainly the best console flight sim we've seen, and it's perfect for all you budding Tom Cruises. Make sure you've got plenty of time to get to grips with it, however - there's much more than just top-quality dogfighting on offer. The Top Gun of combat flight sims...

ARMADA 7

Publisher ■ Acclaim

Players: 1-4 ■ Reviewed: Issue 5

Kill enemy ships to collect money to buy weapons, and become the best fighter pilot since Hans Solo graced our screens. Your eyes might need looking at after a while though - the graphics could leave you seeing stars. This will be one of those misunderstood games that no one thinks about buying and all we can say is – pity.

BANGAI-O 8

Publisher ■ Virgin Interactive

Players: 1 ■ Reviewed: Issue 15

A 2D, blast-from-the-past-style shoot-'em-up that's action-packed and fun to play. It doesn't exactly update the 2D shooter for the latest generation of consoles, but it's a great window on what you can do with today's technology and yesterday's gaming fashions. Well worth a blast. Ahem.

BLUE STINGER 8

Publisher ■ Crave Entertainment

Players: 1-2 ■ Reviewed: Issue 3

In Sega's efforts to ensure all genres were covered on launch day, Blue Stinger was on call to cover the action/adventure end of the operation. It's no Resident Evil, but what it offers is a strong, character driven game with all the elements to make it a reasonable back catalogue title. Just forgive the slightly dodgey controls first...

BEST OF THE BEST

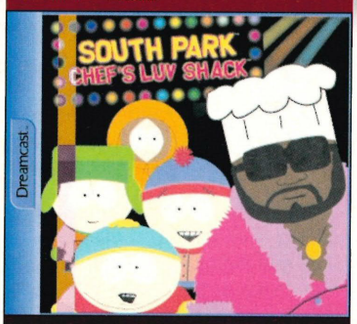
Shoot-'em-up

HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2 8

Four things. Big screen, HOTD2 and two light guns. Guaranteed happiness whatever the weather. Pinpoint accuracy is the order of the day as well as that good old family game 'Who can shoot the face off the axe wielding zombie the quickest'. Those winter evenings really will fly by, though the crappy voice acting will get on your tits from the off.

CHEF'S LUV SHACK 6

Publisher ■ Acclaim



Players: 1-4 ■ Reviewed: Issue 3

All the voices of the crazy South Park crew are there, perfect cartoon animation and the comedy that made the series such a success. But... It's just a bloody quiz game with a few mildly amusing sub-games stuck on the side. In its defence, it's a great way to end an evening down the pub and it's cheaper too...

CHICKEN RUN 6

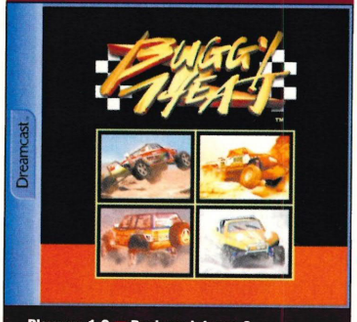
Publisher ■ Crave Entertainment

Players: 1 ■ Reviewed: Issue 16

Chicken Run is a mix of puzzles and mini-games, which complement the core 3D platform-style action. The main beneficiaries of this game will be children - especially those who've seen the film. The rest of us will enjoy a fun if limited and juvenile take on Metal Gear Solid.

BUGGY HEAT 5

Publisher ■ Sega



Players: 1-2 ■ Reviewed: Issue 3

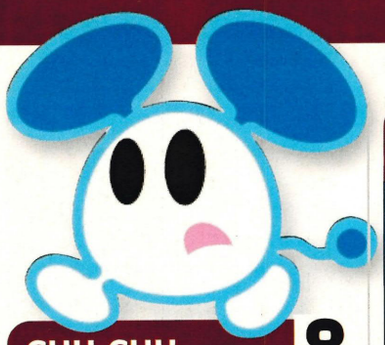
Surely Sega wouldn't rely on the new technology behind Dreamcast to sell a hunk of junk masquerading as a game? Graphically uninspired and fundamentally flawed in both control and challenge. Sega look back on this and hang their heads in shame. 'Why did we put our name to this pile of poo?' they'll say.

BUST-A-MOVE 4 7

Publisher ■ Acclaim

Players: 1-2 ■ Reviewed: Issue 12

Playing Bust-a-Move 4 is kind of like picking up women - either you've got it, or you ain't. As the title suggests, the series has been with us for quite some time now and enjoys a status comparable to Tetris in its addictiveness. If you like your puzzle games, you're going to love this. 'Nuff said.



CHU CHU ROCKET 8

Publisher ■ Sega

Players: 1-4 ■ Reviewed: Issue 10

Though the graphics are as plain as they come, it doesn't matter one bit because the gameplay here is tremendously addictive and it's online! Gameplay is everything; remember that. Approach Chu Chu Rocket as you would your woman – not much to look at, but she's always there when you want a bit of fun. Ahem...

DEADLY SKIES 6

Publisher ■ Konami

Players: 1 ■ Reviewed: Issue 6

Graphically dull, the action takes place at a snail's pace and there are features in the import version that have been stupidly taken out over here. Aviation enthusiasts will be pleased with the wide range of jet fighters on offer, but there's nowt else to keep you occupied for long. Check out Aero Wings 2 instead...

DEEP FIGHTER 8

Publisher ■ Ubi Soft

Players: 1 ■ Reviewed: Issue 12

It might be a little low on instant thrills and spills, but it poses an excellent long-term challenge. The story is complex, the FMV sequences are well scripted and it's excellent simulation-style of gameplay makes it like an underwater Wing Commander style sci-fi opera. Entire weekends should be lost immersed in the challenge it poses.

CRAZY TAXI 9

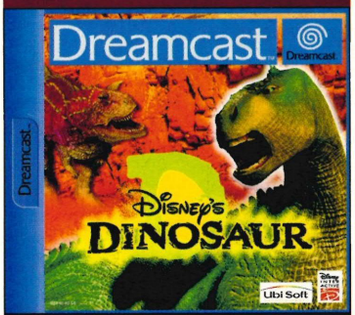
Publisher ■ Sega

Players: 1 ■ Reviewed: Issue 6

Crazy Taxi doesn't just mirror the arcade version perfectly in gameplay and graphics, it has added game modes for extended longevity. Steer your cab round heavy traffic with haste and precision and your tips will come flying in. Deal with angry punters and deliver the vicar to the church on time. Pure, unadulterated quality gaming, without question.

DISNEY'S DINOSAUR 6

Publisher ■ Ubi Soft

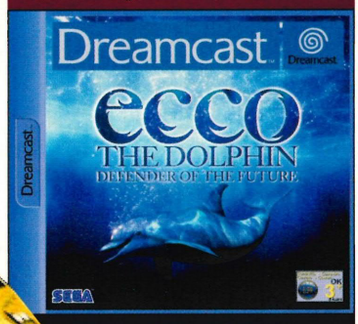


Players: 1 ■ Reviewed: Issue 16

This top-down puzzle-based adventure sees you controlling three different dinosaurs, helping the team on their journey using different skills to progress in the Fur Fighters vein. The environments are more restrictive than the graphics imply, so you see that old bugbear 'invisible walls' coming into play. Good in places, but ultimately let down by stupid puzzles.

ECCO THE DOLPHIN 9

Publisher ■ Sega

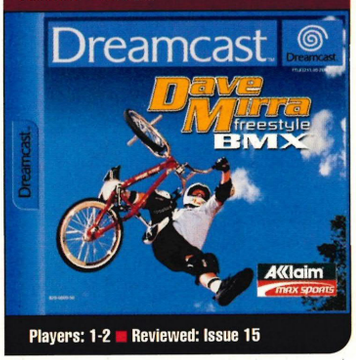


Players: 1 ■ Reviewed: Issue 9

Just when you thought that all the Dreamcast titles were arcade, PC or PSX conversions, in comes a truly unique title. Defend the future from an evil force that's trying to turn the tranquil ocean to chaos. Boasting some stunning graphics and captivating gameplay, Ecco will have you glued to your screen for ages.

DAVE MIRRA'S FREESTYLE BMX 7

Publisher ■ Acclaim

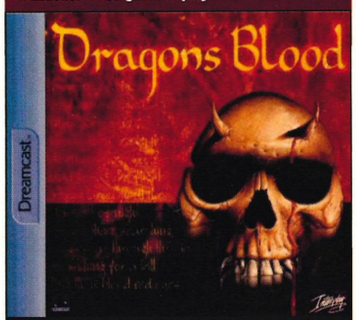


Players: 1-2 ■ Reviewed: Issue 15

This is quite a pleasant surprise as a decent game amongst some truly mediocre recent extreme sports releases. Fans of Tony Hawks will enjoy the game, though it doesn't offer quite the same challenge and longevity. There's a satisfying mix of stunts, tricks and wicked tunes to keep you playing, but it needs a bit more juice.

DRAGON'S BLOOD 7

Publisher ■ Virgin/Interplay



Players: 1 ■ Reviewed: Issue 10

Those who persevere will discover a tidy, atmospheric game which sports some beautiful touches hiding behind a veil of unfriendliness. The mist which enshrouds the combat system never quite lifts, even when familiarity develops. This, coupled with play mechanics which fall short of current benchmarks, serve to bar Dragon's Blood from the hall of true classics.

ECW HARDCORE REVOLUTION 7

Publisher ■ Acclaim

Players: 1-4 ■ Reviewed: Issue 7

Although it's streets ahead of the rushed-out PlayStation port WWF Attitude, it's still obvious the game engine was written for a less powerful machine. There are plenty of moves and weapons that cause serious physical pain, like cheese graters, shovels and ladders. It won't be long however, before another Dreamcast grappler blows it out of the ring.

DEAD OR ALIVE 2 8

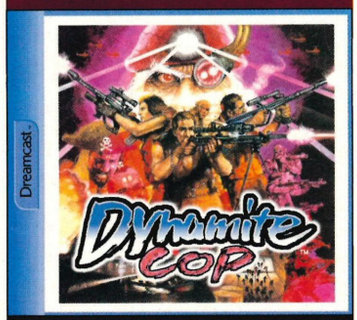
Publisher ■ Acclaim

Players: 1-2 ■ Reviewed: Issue 13

It's great to see DoA 2 continuing to drag the genre into the 21st century. Featuring the most advanced graphics seen yet, Tecmo have delivered a near-ultimate display of sex and violence - no complaints there, then. Though sadly lacking the longevity to challenge the mighty Soul Cailbur, it's a game that cries 'buy me', and indeed you should.

DYNAMITE COP 6

Publisher ■ Sega

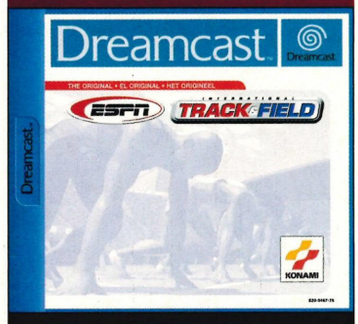


Players: 1-2 ■ Reviewed: Issue 3

Another terrible embarrassment for Sega. Though there's an abundance of different moves and combos on offer, there just isn't enough to keep any player entertained for more than a couple of hours. Multiplayer mode might warrant another bash, but half an hour later you're going to be done. Don't cause your wallet any unnecessary pain.

ESPN INT. TRACK & FIELD 8

Publisher ■ Konami

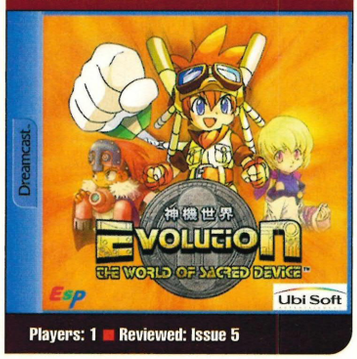


Players: 1-4 ■ Reviewed: Issue 15

Konami is well known for its excellent sporting efforts. Track & Field is no exception, with its silky-smooth animation and cleverly-designed control methods. Sure, there's a shed-load of finger numbing button bashing to be done, but there are plenty of clever little touches and extras to keep interest high. Excellent aesthetics and playability...

EVOLUTION 4

Publisher ■ Ubi Soft

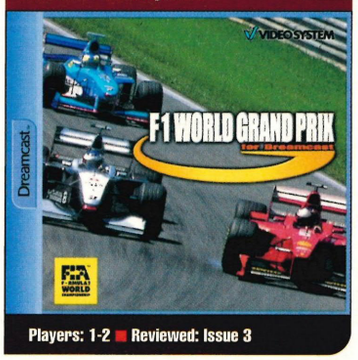


Players: 1 ■ Reviewed: Issue 5

It's frustrating to see old-style role playing games when the Dreamcast gives developers the opportunity to deliver games like Shenmue (and even then they can't get it right). So, it received the not-so-good score of four out of ten, a pity as some gamers like the traditional RPG formula, but the best is surely yet to come...

F1 WORLD GP 6

Publisher ■ Video Systems



Players: 1-2 ■ Reviewed: Issue 3

Video Systems have had several successes on the PSX and N64 but F1 World GP on the Dreamcast really isn't going to join those ranks. There are several reasons for this, but the biggest and most unforgivable is the slowdown that occurs with heavy traffic. The Dreamcast is capable of so much more - check out its sequel.

F1 WORLD GP 2 7

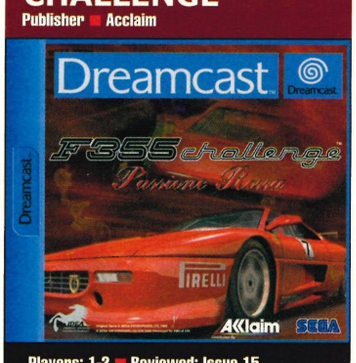
Publisher ■ Konami

Players: 1-2 ■ Reviewed: Issue 15

Though the driving engine is difficult to tame, it's realistic and fun to drive once you've learnt the ropes. Graphically, F1 WGP2 is solid and very appealing, though overall it doesn't quite have the same addictive qualities of Ferrari or the wow factor of Metropolis. Oh, and why the hell is it based on the bloody '99 season?!

FERRARI F355 CHALLENGE 10

Publisher ■ Acclaim

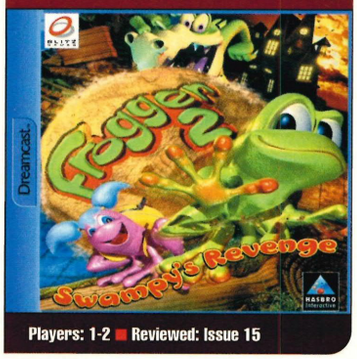


Players: 1-2 ■ Reviewed: Issue 15

Ten out of Ten. Reviewing is a serious business around these parts, one of trust and integrity. After hours and hours of deliberating and cogitating in which the whole dcm team was involved (admittedly down the pub), it was agreed that a perfect ten was the only score this superb racer deserved. Passione Rossa.

FROGGER 2 7

Publisher ■ Blitz



Players: 1-2 ■ Reviewed: Issue 15

Considering we weren't expecting a fat lot from this game, we're quite happy to eat our words. It took some time to adjust to the simple and repetitive style, but it soon had us smiling. Though it appeals to a younger age group, its difficulty is more suited to older gamers. Frustrating.

FIGHTING FORCE 2 7

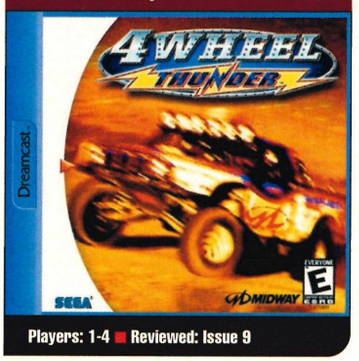
Publisher ■ Eidos

Players: 1 ■ Reviewed: Issue 4

While not as easy on the eye as luscious Lara Croft, Hawk Manson offers some sharp moves and a cool first-person mode. Though a scrolling beat-'em-up at heart, FF2 also incorperates some adventure elements to keep you on your toes. It's not gonna win any awards, but it's got enough to keep fans of the genre happy.

4 WHEEL THUNDER 7

Publisher ■ Midway



Players: 1-4 ■ Reviewed: Issue 9

This Midway title puts Sega's Buggy Heat to shame. There are loads of game modes to choose from, as well as some multiplayer mayhem. You'll no doubt notice its similarity to Hydro Thunder, with the most obvious giveaway in the name. Four play split-screen is fast and fun - if you like big wheels then you're laughing.

FUR FIGHTERS 8

Publisher ■ Acclaim

Players: 1-4 ■ Reviewed: Issue 10

With six cute, fluffy characters, an evil kidnapping bear and a whole host of cuter babies to rescue Fur Fighters might come across 'kiddy' in appearance. You couldn't be further from the truth though, as each is armed to the teeth with firepower and tactical abilities. Throw in some excellent multi-player 'fluffing' and you're laughing...

GAUNTLET LEGENDS 4

Publisher ■ Midway

Players: 1-4 ■ Reviewed: Issue 12

The original in 1985 was 2D and it rocked. This one is 3D and it doesn't - so much for progress. One to four players can take up the gauntlet and battle their way through millions of enemies using a small selection of moves and spells. It's repetitive, unattractive and ultimately pants. Steer well clear.

GTA 2 8

Publisher ■ Take 2 Interactive

Players: 1 ■ Reviewed: Issue 9

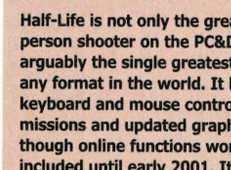
Run over pedestrians, drive on the wrong side of the road, steal a truck load of cars. The humour's straight out of the gutter and the superb soundtrack adds extra appeal. Simply put, this game offers the kind of addictive gameplay that stops you from ever wanting to put down your controller, and that's what gaming's all about, right?

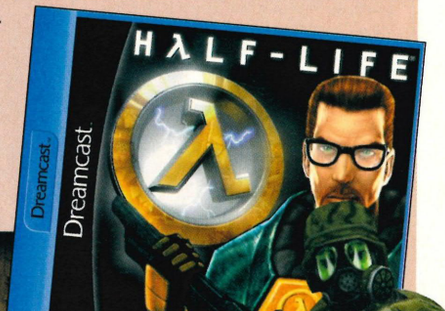
HALF-LIFE 9

Publisher ■ Havas

Players: Online ■ Reviewed: Issue 14

Half-Life is not only the greatest first-person shooter on the PC&DC, but arguably the single greatest game on any format in the world. It boasts keyboard and mouse control, extra missions and updated graphics, though online functions wont be included until early 2001. It all adds up make it as essential to your Dreamcast as electricity.

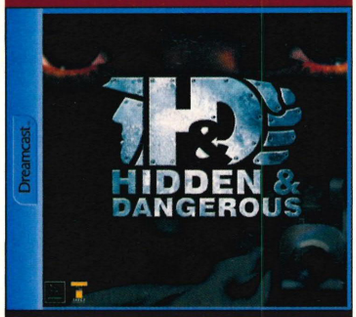




"as essential to your dreamcast as electricity"

HIDDEN & DANGEROUS 8

Publisher ■ Take 2 Interactive



Players: 1 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 13**

You're probably under the impression that diamonds are the hardest thing on the planet. This has all changed with the release of H&D - by far and away the toughest thing known to man. With five first-class missions of WWII strategy, team management and first- and third-person action, it might be combersome, but it's an instant classic.

HYDRO THUNDER 7

Publisher ■ Midway

Players: 1-2 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 3**

With the DC over-run with various types of driving games, Midway had to come up with something different. Super cool graphics and sound FX sets HT off on the right foot, but with only one game mode and frustrating track sections it can be a mixed bag. Moments of near genius and gameplay lunacy - weird.

INCOMING 7

Publisher ■ Infogrames

Players: 1-2 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 1**

Incoming represents the upside of direct PC ports. It's good looking, very playable and probably more suited to a console anyway. With stripped-back gameplay that's light on its feet and heavy on visual action, Incoming's a cheery bimbo who's so pretty you can't help but love her. Shame about the split-screen slowdown though...

JET SET RADIO 8

Publisher ■ Sega

Players: 1 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 16**

Jet Set radio is an all-out assault on your visual senses. The game is packed with detail and hilarious comic moments, and is often as enjoyable to watch as it is to play. It's not perfect, however, with annoying controls and an overall lack of variety. It still kicks ass, though.

JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL 8

Publisher ■ Virgin Interactive

Players: 1-2 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 3**

Though Jimmy White's doesn't test the Dreamcast's power, the ball physics are spot on, and the graphics genre-leading. The game suffers a little without the aid of a mouse, but play still runs smoothly enough using all the buttons on the pad instead. Pretty darn entertaining - not unlike Jimmy himself.

JO JO'S BIZARRE ADVENTURE 7

Publisher ■ Capcom

Players: 1-2 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 7**

Based on the classic Street Fighter series in terms of both look and gameplay, it quickly veers off into new territory and becomes a genre-blurring adventure. One minute you'll find yourself in a simple one-on-one bout against a human opponent and the next minute you'll be playing poker in a swanky casino. No, really.

LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER 9

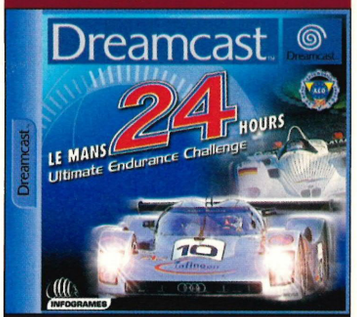
Publisher ■ Eidos

Players: 1 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 6**

Thanks to a good DC conversion, the graphics, chilling storyline and sound effects add to the gameplay to bring this title to life. Expect loads of puzzles and a constant plot movement that really sucks you in. Stop the praise now, it's sickening. If you've never encountered Soul Reaver, now is a good time to introduce yourself...

LE MANS 24 HOURS 8

Publisher ■ Infogrames



Players: 1-4 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 15**

While not a simulation in the Ferrari F355 Challenge mould, Le Mans is a great choice for those looking for a serious racer without too much technical baggage. Top-end graphics, cool control and a huge challenge await those who think they're hard enough to handle it. Perfect for all racing fanatics...

LOONEY TUNES SPACE RACE 6

Publisher ■ Infogrames

Players: 1-4 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 15**

You start by laughing your proverbial socks off at the Loony Tunes humour, and admiring the excellent cartoon-style graphics, but soon you tire of that and realise this is pretty uninspiring fare. All your favourite Loony Tunes are here, along with the vocal talent behind the characters; shame the game's such a bore...

MAKEN X 7

Publisher ■ Sega

Players: 1 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 12**

It's a bizarre videogame hybrid of the first person shooter and action/adventure genres. This one's going to appeal to Manga fans, though it can be repetitive at times. Japanese school girls and S&M villains will keep interest high to a point, but there's nothing to keep a player coming back for more once you've completed the game.

MARVEL VS CAPCOM 7

Publisher ■ Virgin Interactive

Players: 1-2 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 3**

On a console well known for its leading 3D fighters, 2D battles on. The 15 cartoon super heroes will take a splendidly long time to master and there's no shortage of big spangly moves. An all-new four-player tag-team option is also a great bonus making this a bit of a marvel (and a Capcom too)...

MARVEL VS CAPCOM 2 8

Publisher ■ Virgin Interactive

Players: 1-2 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 10**

There's plenty more characters thrown into the ring, and the controls have been altered to make them a lot more intuitive on the Dreamcast's pad. Capcom have really excelled themselves here - even if you're not really a fan of the genre, it's worth checking out from your local games rental emporium...

MDK 2

9

Publisher ■ Interplay

Players: 1 ■ Reviewed: Issue 7

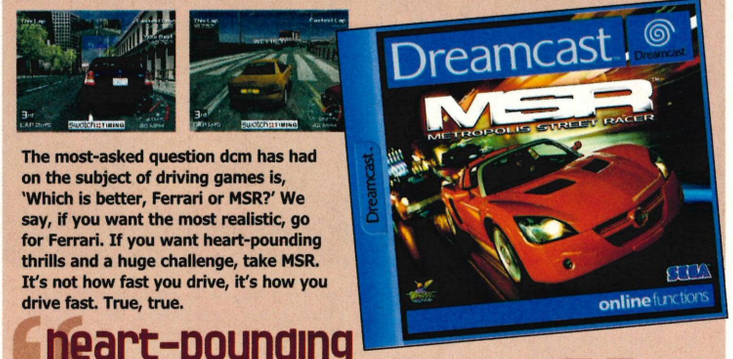
The first MDK title was good, but this one's better. Not only do you get to control the old hero Kurt, but also Max and the mad inventor Dr Hawkins. All the weapons from the original are still there, with some new ones for good measure. One of the DC's best blasters, and a barrel of laughs too...

METROPOLIS STREET RACER

9

Publisher ■ Sega

Players: 1-2 ■ Reviewed: Issue 16



The most-asked question dcm has had on the subject of driving games is, 'Which is better, Ferrari or MSR?' We say, if you want the most realistic, go for Ferrari. If you want heart-pounding thrills and a huge challenge, take MSR. It's not how fast you drive, it's how you drive fast. True, true.

"heart-pounding thrills and a huge challenge"

MIDWAY'S GREATEST HITS: 1

6

Publisher ■ Midway

Players: 1-2 ■ Reviewed: Issue 12

These games could well be older than you. It's also possible that, unless you can actually remember them from the first time around, you're not going to be interested by them now. Perfect for a walk down memory lane, but none of the titles are enough to keep most of you whipper-snappers amused for five minutes.

M/SOLDIER EXPENDABLE

7

Publisher ■ Infogrames

Players: 1 ■ Reviewed: Issue 1

Expendables aim was to recreate the best elements of classic shooters like Ikari Warriors and Commando, and it just about does the job. Deep it ain't, and it could have been prettier, but there's plenty of heavy blasting action to disperse life's little stresses. Get a mate to fight alongside you and you've got yourself a winner...

MOHO

5

Publisher ■ Take 2 Interactive

Players: 1 ■ Reviewed: Issue 16

MoHo takes the classic Running Man concept and throws it further into the future. Race, fight and skilfully manoeuvre your convict in a bid for survival around numerous prison environments. With excellent graphic effects and interesting gameplay you'd expect the game to excel. Unfortunately, a misjudged learning curve and short challenge spoils everything. Bummer.

MORTAL KOMBAT GOLD

4

Publisher ■ Midway

Players: 1-2 ■ Reviewed: Issue 4

As far as fighters go Soul Calibur still fills the top spot. As for the lowest position, there's a war on. How do you decide which is the worst of two games with no redeeming features? Well, somehow MKG manages to succumb to Psychic Force 2012, but all this means is that it's less exceptional at being crap.

NBA SHOWTIME

4

Publisher ■ Midway

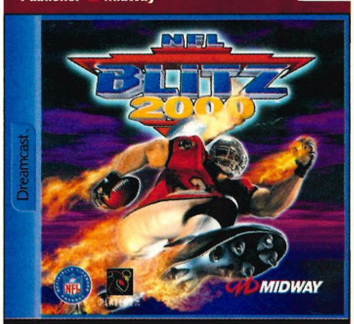
Players: 1-4 ■ Reviewed: Issue 4

There's plenty of simple button bashing fun and multiplayer modes, but unfortunately the game hasn't been ported to suit console players. There's a distinct lack of options and the graphics are substandard. With four players the game really comes to life, otherwise there's just no pulse. You're much better off With NBA 2K anyway.

NFL BLITZ 2000

8

Publisher ■ Midway



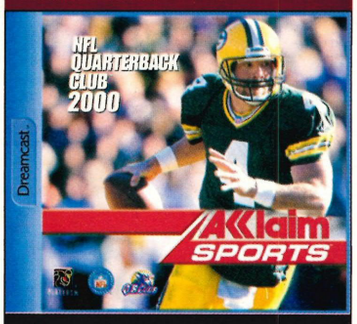
Players: 1-4 ■ Reviewed: Issue 4

A splendid arcade style title that does away with complicated plays and lets you straight into the action. The control system mirrors this simplicity, using only three buttons for a wide variety of actions. Graphically uninspiring, but smoothly flowing gameplay compensates. As any toothless player will tell you, it's beauty on the inside that counts...

NFL QUARTERBACK

7

Publisher ■ Acclaim



Players: 1-4 ■ Reviewed: Issue 4

Where Blitz 2000 is a big dumb (but good) blocker, Quarterback is a more sophisticated, well, Quarterback. Exhibition, Playoff, Season, Historic Sim, Custom Sim and Practice modes allow you to recreate all the game's complexities to an impressive degree. So if you're looking for a hard-core sim, this one's for you.

NHL 2K

7

Publisher ■ Sega

Players: 1-4 ■ Reviewed: Issue 5

NHL2K is an impressive hockey game which should find favour with enthusiasts as well as more arcade-minded players. It's easy to pick up, but tough to master. It's good in single-player Tournament Mode and has plenty of multiplayer fun to boot! Groovey...

PEN PEN

6

Publisher ■ Infogrames

Players: 1-4 ■ Reviewed: Issue 3

If mutated penguin racing is your game, this'll be right up your street. Just for the record there are seven Pen Pens, twelve tracks and a multiplayer mode for those willing to come out of the closet. Maybe we just don't get it. There might be a hidden message, like that song: Lucy in the Sky, with Diamonds...

PLASMA SWORD

5

Publisher ■ Virgin Interactive

Players: 1-2 ■ Reviewed: Issue 12

Ultimately, another lazy attempt at a 3D fighting game with slightly different characters and slightly different moves. There's nothing particularly wrong with the combat system, but it's been done so many times before, there's nothing new to speak of. No flare, no spark, no punch. Unoriginal games suck - no fun to be had...

POWER STONE

8

Publisher ■ Eidos

Players: 1-4 ■ Reviewed: Issue 1

If you don't already know, it's a one on one fighter with a difference. A series of three gems appear periodically around the screen. Grabbing them (or beating them out of your opponent) enables you to unleash super attacks. Backgrounds are also highly interactive and there's a large arsenal of weapons to be found...

POWER STONE 2 9

Publisher ■ **Eidos Interactive**

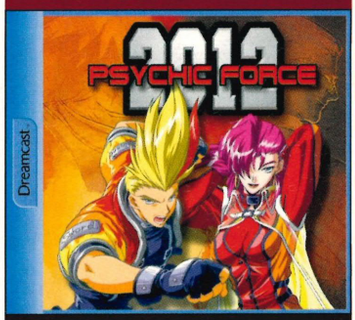
Players: 1-4 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 13**

Though keeping the key principles underpinning its predecessor, Power Stone 2 actually feels quite different to play. It features a much more vigorous camera system keeping everyone within frame and the action speedy. With an incredible array of weapons at your disposal, PS2 is the most interactive fighting game you'll see. Put simply, this kicks arse!

"put simply, this kicks arse!"

PSYCHIC FORCE 2012 4

Publisher ■ **Acclaim**



Players: 1-2 ■ **Reviewed: 4**

Awkward, ugly and quite frankly, crap. A bench-mark in failure. As much fun as stepping in doggy doos, slipping up, and then falling in it. Are we getting through? Its main achievement was being voted the worst game on the Dreamcast in '99 - we're ashamed that it's no longer the lowest...

QUAKE III: ARENA 9

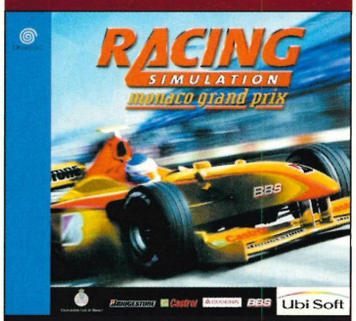
Publisher ■ **Sega**

Players: 1-4 Online ■ **Reviewed: 16**

The biggest and best deathmatch arenas, the most evenly-balced battle of brawn and brains. Quake III is the biggest online PC game to date and the DC version is no couch potato in comparison. Featuring all the graphics, all the action and four-player split-screen and online functions. God damn it - it's good. Make sure you get a mouse and keyboard, though...

RACING SIMULATION: MONACO GP 7

Publisher ■ **Ubi Soft**



Players: 1-2 ■ **Reviewed: 1**

The lack of a license means true F1 fans might feel a little lost, but there are plenty of redeeming features. Simulation Mode is impressively realistic and Arcade Mode instantly playable. A pretty good start as the Dreamcast's premiere sim, but F1 World GP 2 is top, until GP3 that is...

RAILROAD TYCOON II 8

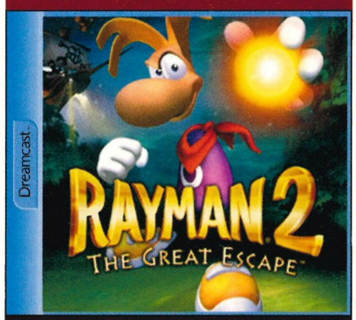
Publisher ■ **Take 2 Interactive**

Players: 1 ■ **Reviewed: 14**

An interesting and cerebral strategy sim that might be a little too unwieldy to be a classic, but it's by no means po-faced. Making money from building and running a railroad has been made a real pleasure. You might want to turn the music off, though; it smells like one of Saul's di-hydrogen fartoxide trumps. Lethal.

RAYMAN 2 9

Publisher ■ **Ubi Soft**



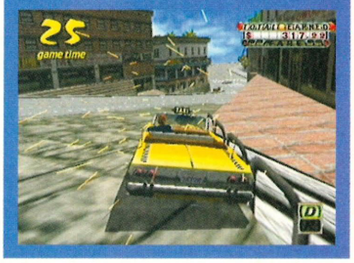
Players: 1 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 6**

This may be some people's idea of a cutesy platformer but we say otherwise. What Sonic Adventure was lacking (which wasn't a lot), Rayman 2 more than makes up for. Stunning graphics blend easily with constantly evolving gameplay. The puzzles, tasks, bosses and sheer variety will keep you amused through the course of the game.

BEST OF THE BEST: Driving

CRAZY TAXI 9

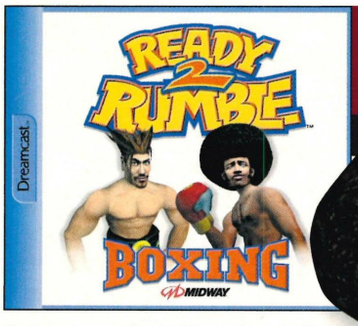
Barring Soul Calibur, Crazy Taxi is very possibly the best arcade to DC conversion we've seen. It comes replete with extra modes, scenarios and even an entirely new city to raz around. If you like your driving action as crazy as they come then this is for you, if not give Colin McRae or V-Rally 2 a go.



READY 2 RUMBLE BOXING 9

Publisher ■ **Sega**

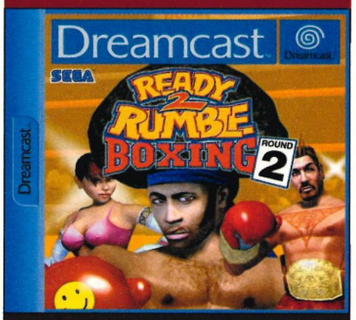
Players: 1-2 ■ **Reviewed: 3**



Each cartoon animated boxer is superbly presented and full of character, making competitive bouts that little bit more personal. In Championship Mode you get a gym and three characters to train. But look, this game's just way too big to be summed up here, so we suggest you check it (and its sequel) out...

READY 2 RUMBLE: RND 2 8

Publisher ■ **Midway**



Players: 1-2 ■ **Reviewed: 16**

Big things were expected from this sequel, but it failed to deliver anything new in the terms of gameplay. It stayed close to the original, but managed to somehow dumb down the gameplay even more. Besides, we've seen it all before, and Ready 2 Rumble: Round 2 is a pugilistic pony that only has the proverbial one trick - its comedy stylings. Which just ain't enough.

RED DOG 6

Publisher ■ **Sega**

Players: 1-4 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 9**

Red Dog dumps you into a vague, future based fracas and leaves you to make your way through the game with the occasional mission objective and tank upgrade in your path. This is kind of like dating the prettiest girl in school. She look great, but when it comes down to the nitty gritty, she just doesn't 'put out'.

RE-VOLT 8

Publisher ■ **Acclaim**

Players: 1-4 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 4**

The PlayStation version was at best unremarkable but 96 'extra bits' have made all the difference here. There are 20 cars altogether and a wealth of weapons including fireworks, turbos and electrical charges which drain your opponents' batteries. There are slight glitches with the handling, but a big bag of original touches puts Re-Volt on a good footing.

RESIDENT EVIL 2 — 7

Publisher ■ Virgin Interactive

Players: 1 ■ Reviewed: 5

The Umbrella Corporation is still up to its old tricks and you need to sort 'em out. Need we say more? Get yourselves a copy if you've never before experienced what is 'Res Evil', though we recommend Code: Veronica for a propper DC fright fest - PlayStation conversions just don't turn us on that much.

SEGA BASS FISHING — 8

Publisher ■ Sega

Players: 1 ■ Reviewed: 3

This is undoubtedly the most comprehensive, realistic and enjoyable fishing game ever. Arcade Mode involves catching as many bass as you can in one of three areas: Lodge, Cape and Inlet. Original Mode allows you to take part in the SBFA Amateur Tournament, including five stages set during morning, noon and evening. SBF really is 'this big'!

RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA — 9

Publisher ■ Eidos

Players: 1 ■ Reviewed: Issue 10

If you love jumping out of your seat with fright, coupled with immersive and action-packed gameplay, you can't go far wrong with Code: Veronica. We were glad the adventure carried onto a second disc, as we never wanted it to end. This is easily the best Resident Evil; anyone for another?

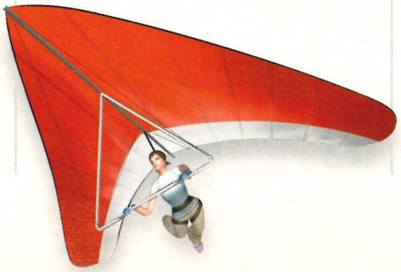
"this is easily the best resident evil"

SEGA EXTREME SPORTS — 6

Publisher ■ Sega

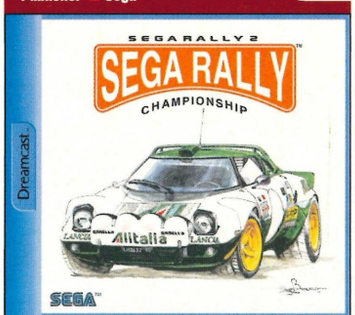
Players: 1-2 ■ Reviewed: 15

From the hair-raising drops of the Himalayas to the volcanic island of Maul, SES is an undeniably pretty game. All the most extreme sports are catered for, including Bungee Jumping, Quad Biking, Snow Boarding, Hang-Gliding and Mountain Biking, and the racing is quite unique - it's let down by simple controls and average playability. Bummer.



SEGA RALLY 2 — 8

Publisher ■ Sega



Players: 1-2 ■ Reviewed: Issue 1

Sega's flagship racer is everything you'd expect, with heaps of cars and tracks and gloriously sharp graphics. There are loads of nice touches, including ostriches running across the tracks and onlookers playing chicken with your car. Slowdown, although rare, is evident and there could have been more of a challenge, but this will always remain a classic.

SAN FRANCISCO RUSH 2049 — 7

Publisher ■ Virgin Interactive

Players: 1-4 ■ Reviewed: 14

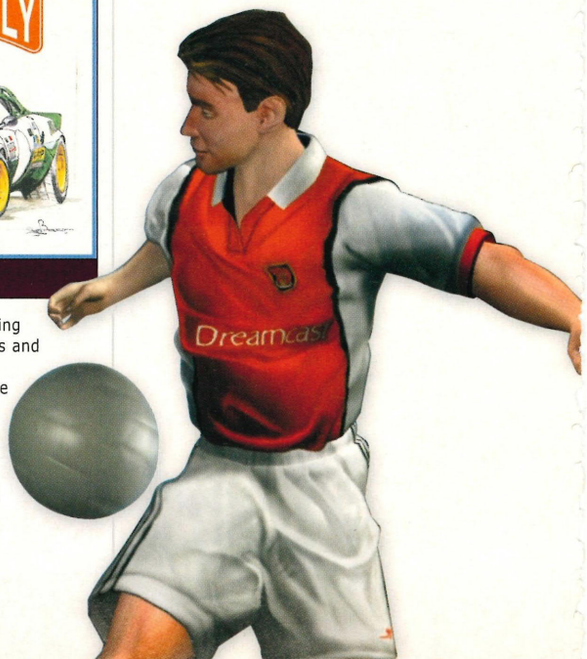
Tired of those oh-so-serious racing games where engine-tinkering takes precedence over powersliding? SF 2049 might just be what you're looking for. Each course is packed with short-cuts which you must explore to help open later courses and cars. Faults include poor collision detection and artificial intelligence, though some good four-player modes make up for it.

SEGA WORLDWIDE SOCCER 2000 — 8

Publisher ■ Sega

Players: 1-4 ■ Reviewed: 4

It's a cool marriage of the SWWS series' arcade style and Silicon Dreams' more sophisticated approach. While a quick start option allows you straight into the action, all the options are there. With intuitive controls and genre-leading graphics, SWWS is a staple footy fodder. Check out SWWS 2000 Euro and UEFA Dream Soccer for more...



SEGA WORLDWIDE SOCCER 2000 EURO 7

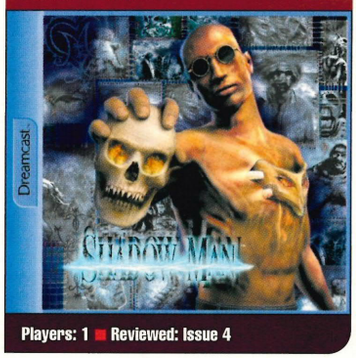
Publisher ■ Sega

Players: 1-4 ■ **Reviewed: 9**

It's not going to convert those who had major problems with the previous version, but it does reward those who enjoyed SWWS 2000 and are looking for something a little more. It's good, and it's better than Sega's last attempt, but for another forty quid we'd have expected something a little more than this. Where's ISS?

SHADOW MAN 9

Publisher ■ Acclaim

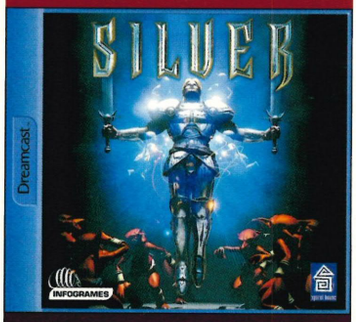


Players: 1 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 4**

Play the lead in this macabre adventure where you've been given the chance to atone for your sins by saving mankind from impending doom. Armed with various weapons and devices you can blast your enemies and look them up in FBI files. With quicker response times and less slugging around than on opposing formats, SM is one hot cookie.

SILVER 7

Publisher ■ Infogrames



Players: 1 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 10**

Silver is a competent RPG, but no masterpiece. The game construction is good, the scenery beautifully rendered and the voice-overs well acted. It's great to see developers using the Dreamcast's power to offer gamers something other than a tweaked PlayStation offering, but fiddly flaws and an overall lack of outstanding characterisation means it falls short of greatness.

SILENT SCOPE 7

Publisher ■ Konami

Players: 1 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 16**

A surprisingly playable conversion of the snipertastic arcade game. Use the left shoulder button to activate the scope and the right one to shoot - simple, but very effective. What's there's great, but you'll be bored long before you've got your money's worth. Great for a couple of nights' rental, though...

SONIC ADVENTURE 9

Publisher ■ Sega

Players: 1 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 1**

Sega's flagship 'hog returns in his first 3D adventure, with splendid success. Aside from Sonic there are five characters to control, each with their own tailored abilities. Despite unfortunate technical glitches, including an irritating camera, Sonic has firmly recaptured his post at the forefront of platform and adventure gaming - bless 'im.

SOUL CALIBUR 9

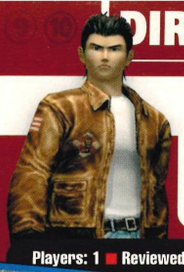
Publisher ■ Sega

Players: 1-2 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 1**

Probably the best beat-'em-up in the World. No, just kidding, this IS the best beat-'em-up in the World, and by quite some distance. Soul Calibur is simply the most playable, challenging and graphically awesome game ever! If you haven't already got it, well, why we bother.

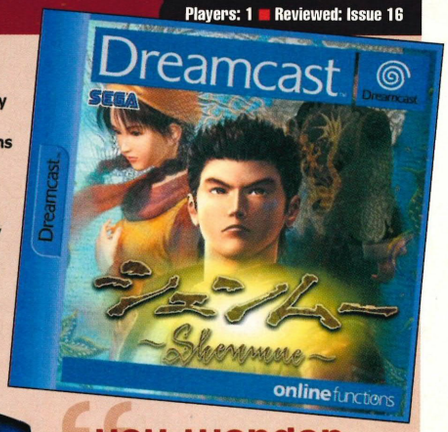
SHENMUE 10

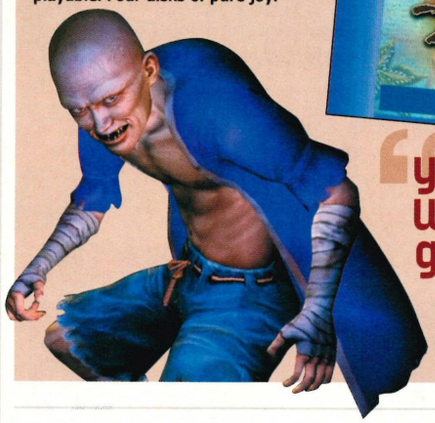
Publisher ■ Sega



Players: 1 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 16**

The game of life. Wake up in the morning, feed the cat, drink a can of Coke and unravel the sinister mystery of your father's death. Real-time gameplay featuring all the interactions of a fully-functioning mid-Eighties Japanese community. Spend some time there and you wonder why every game can't be as good-looking, involving and as remarkably playable. Four disks of pure joy.





"you wonder why every game can't be as good-looking"

SLAVE ZERO 7

Publisher ■ Infogrames

Players: 1-4 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 5**

Take control of a 60-foot biomechanical war machine in order to put an end to an evil dictator's cunning mission to take over the city of S1-9. Loads of destructive weaponry, 13 levels of action packed slaughter and great graphics to salivate over. Four players can have a bash at Deathmatch, but only if you're hard enough...

SNOW SURFERS 6

Publisher ■ Sega

Players: 1-2 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 2**

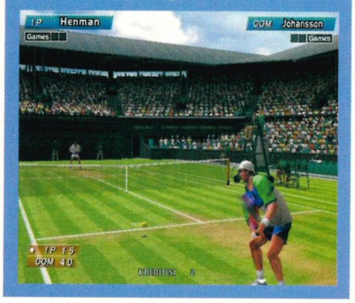
Following the success of the PlayStation trilogy, the Dreamcast should have taken Cool Boarders to another level. Unfortunately something has gone very wrong, and the UK version was renamed Snow Surfers as a result. There are seven courses altogether – pretty meagre compared to Cool Boarders 3's 36. Amusing for a while, but too flawed to be fun for long.

BEST OF THE BEST

Sport

VIRTUA TENNIS 9

You wont find a more enjoyable game even if you can't stand strawberries and cream. It offers real players, amazing sub games and a challenge unmatched in the videogame tennis world. It's easy to play, but near impossible to master, so be ready to break a few pads in your quest to become number one in the world. Only the best for the captains table!



SOUL FIGHTER 7

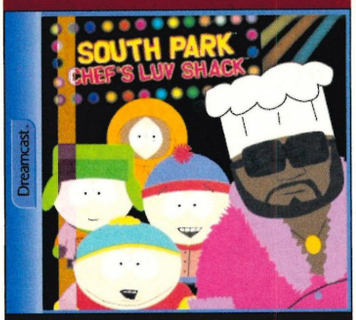
Publisher ■ Mindscape

Players: 1 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 3**

The disappointment of Dynamite Cop left the Dreamcast in need of a decent scrolling fighter. Enter SF. Choose either a warrior, a magician or a girlie, ignore the sketchy plot and kick some arse. The lack of a two-player mode is a real downer, but there's plenty of challenge, which goes some way to make up for it.

SOUTH PARK RALLY 7

Publisher ■ Acclaim



Players: 1-4 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 12**

Postponed and held off, SPR was released to a lukewarm reception. As well as offering the majority of the South Park cast racing around in amusing carts, the game has some nifty tracks, amusing voice-overs and a selection of crazy weapons. Dodgy controls and questionable longevity hold it back however.

SPACE CHANNEL 5 8

Publisher ■ Sega

Players: 1 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 13**

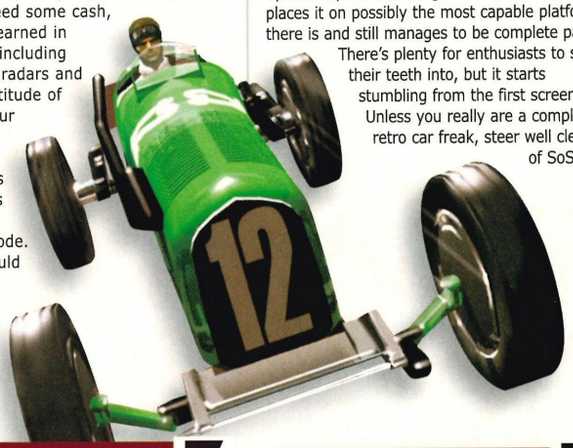
Ulala's sexy moves and revealing attire put the likes of Lara to shame, while the soundtrack is the best of recent times. You might not be particularly keen on the dance/music genre, but SC5 could convert the Pope. It's quite short, but devilishly sweet and features the best end sequences we've seen for some time.

SPEED DEVILS 9

Publisher ■ Ubi Soft

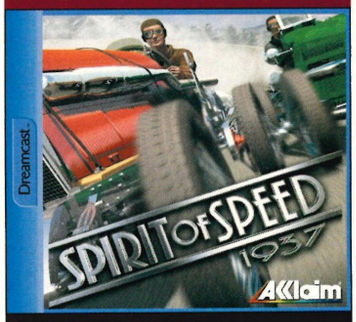
Players: 1-2 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 2**

Speed Devils is an American muscle-car racer with a twist. To progress through the game you'll need some cash, which can be earned in several ways, including busting police radars and winning a multitude of bets set by your opponents. There are 12 cars, 13 tracks and a fabulous split-screen multiplayer mode. What more could you want?



SPIRIT OF SPEED 1937 3

Publisher ■ Acclaim



Players: 1 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 13**

Spirit of Speed takes a great idea for a game, places it on possibly the most capable platform there is and still manages to be complete pap. There's plenty for enthusiasts to sink their teeth into, but it starts stumbling from the first screen. Unless you really are a complete retro car freak, steer well clear of SoS.

STAR WARS EPISODE 1: RACER 6

Publisher ■ Activision

Players: 1-2 ■ **Reviewed: 13**

Although it's quicker than shit off a shovel, the courses are sparse and the graphics lack detail. With 21 courses around eight Star Wars worlds, it's not like the game's a couch potato, but it's the mountain of minor annoyances that makes this a slouchy racer. Check out Star Wars Racer Arcade at your local Sega Park...

STAR WARS JEDI POWER BATTLES 6

Publisher ■ Activision

Players: 1-2 ■ **Reviewed: 16**

The cash-converting force that is LucasArts continues its run of Star Wars 'classic moments' with a Light Saber marathon roughly encroaching on the story of Episode 1. The hack n' slash gameplay offers short-term enjoyment, but this is by no means the greatest Star Wars game. Not that there's actually been one outside the PC, anyway...

SUPER MAGNETIC NEO 7

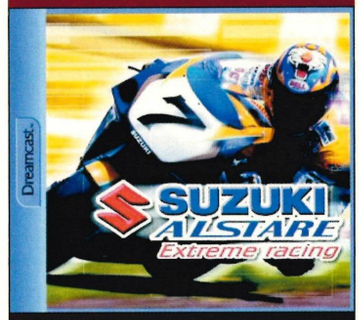
Publisher ■ Crave

Players: 1 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 14**

Though the game is true 3D, the environments don't allow the same free-roaming experience offered by, say, Sonic Adventure. This doesn't make it restrictive, simply more single-minded in its design we'd say. Though cute and appealing to the younger gamer, it is a tricky little bugger to beat leading us to conclude that it's just too short...

SUZUKI ALSTARE 7

Publisher ■ Ubi Soft



Players: 1-2 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 3**

Developers Criterion had one main objective here: to make the fastest, smoothest racing game around. The game manages to blend top-drawer arcade action with a very realistic edge drawn from Suzuki's considerable input. The helmets and bikes are modelled from the real things, the tracks are entirely fanciful. Handling is over-simplified, but the speed is totally pure.

BEST OF THE BEST:

Puzzle

CHU CHU ROCKET

Just the fact that this is the worlds first online console title is enough to 'rocket' Chu Chu to the top of the pile, but luckily it's a damn fine puzzle game too. It might have pants graphics and an uninviting name (or was that the other way round - Ed?), but once you pop your Chu Chu cherry, you just can't stop. Goodbye early nights, hello huge phone bills!

STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3 6

Publisher ■ Virgin Interactive

Players: 1-2 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 3**

It holds very little over the PlayStation version, aside from small graphical tweaks and a bundle of extra game modes. There are hundreds of moves, but some are a little awkward to pull off. If you're a big fan of the genre and 2D doesn't bother you this will certainly keep you happy. Otherwise, leave well alone.

STREET FIGHTER III: DOUBLE IMPACT 7

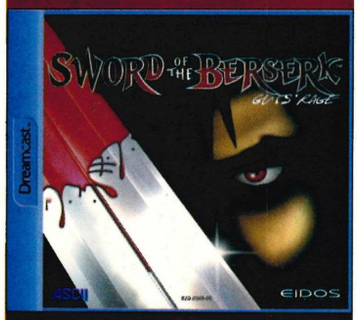
Publisher ■ Capcom

Players: 1-2 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 7**

If 2D fighting is your bag, there's no doubt that Capcom's latest scrapper is good. The only original characters left are Ryu and Ken and a secret appearance by Gouki. The truly weak point is the lack of a long term challenge. World Tour Mode is sorely missed here, leaving nothing much more than Arcade and Versus modes.

SWORD OF THE BERSERK 4

Publisher ■ Eidos

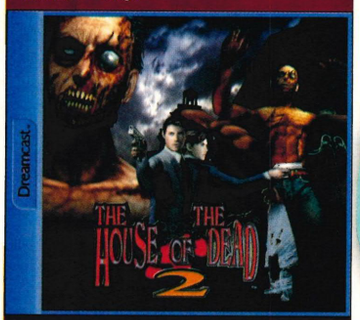


Players: 1 ■ Reviewed: Issue 9

Enter some gory 3D sword-swinging action. Sword of the Berserk should've been a cool game, but it's so lazily designed you'll probably give up out of sheer boredom long before you complete it. It's too flat, too samey and too bloody boring. You can't fault it technically, but its level design doesn't match its programming standards.

THE HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2 8

Publisher ■ Sega



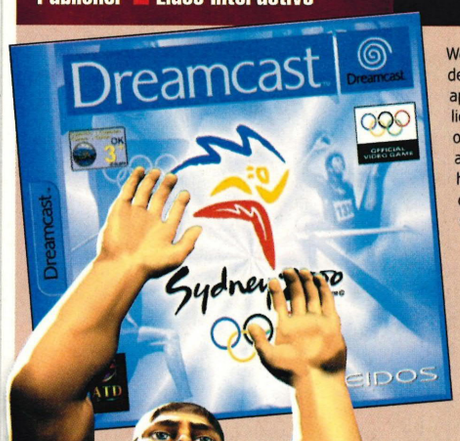
Players: 1-2 ■ Reviewed: Issue 1

Sega's classic arcade shooter has been brilliantly converted to the Dreamcast. There are no discernible graphical differences and all the gory violence remains. You must take out the monsters and look after the innocent people to find the quickest route to the evil inventor, Goldman. Still the sharpest shooter around.

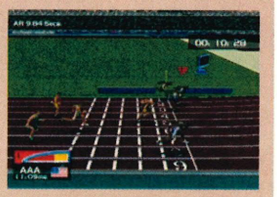
SYDNEY 2000 8

Publisher ■ Eidos Interactive

Players: 1-4 ■ Reviewed: Issue 13



Well, with a credit due to the developers (Attention to Detail), it appears that, for once, the official licence has offered more than a logo on the opening screen. They've done a grand job of bringing 12 of the hottest Olympic events to the comfort of your own home, with style, grace and excellent playability.



"for once, the official licence has offered more than a logo"

THE NOMAD SOUL 8

Publisher ■ Eidos Interactive

Players: 1 ■ Reviewed: Issue 8

A cool soundtrack which is written and sung by David Bowie kicks things off. Nomad Soul offers a well-defined adventure and a deep insight into a dark and futuristic world, a functioning virtual community and lots of groovey technology. The puzzles work logically and the graphics are beautifully cinematic – a must for fans of the genre.

TIME STALKERS 3

Publisher ■ Sega

Players: 1 ■ Reviewed: Issue 11

As they come. The battle scenes bore, the randomly-generated dungeons are devoid of life and the text is verbose to the point of being turgid. Publishers take note - random dungeon geomorphs don't make the game play differently every time, they make it play the same all the time. So there.

TOKYO HIGHWAY CHALLENGE 6

Publisher ■ Crave Entertainment

Players: 1-2 ■ Reviewed: Issue 3

Pick one of 24 cars and race along Tokyo's streets at night. Sounds great, and for a while it is, but as you make your way through 134 different opponents, the action all becomes samey. Winning and losing is determined by a time-lag system: fall too far behind and you've lost and vice-versa. Graphically good, but lacks depth.

TECH ROMANCER 5

Publisher ■ Virgin

Players: 1-2 ■ Reviewed: Issue 9

It looks like a traditional fighting game, with the same graphics and finishing moves – shame you're the one being finished. It certainly looks the business and will be instantly familiar to fans of the genre, but therein lies the problem: there is nothing here that you haven't seen before, or seen better.

TEE OFF 8

Publisher ■ Acclaim

Players: 1-4 ■ Reviewed: Issue 5

Whether you've just got back from the pub or you want a quick round, Tee Off is satisfyingly tasty enough for your gaming palette. It has loads of game modes and plenty of nice-looking characters to get to grips with. Four player is almost too competitive, so be careful not to lose your closest friends over it...

TOKYO HIGHWAY CHALLENGE 2 5

Publisher ■ Crave

Players: 1 ■ Reviewed: 14

THC 2 is still obsessed with street racing around Tokyo (funnily enough), and there's still little variety in scenery. By its very nature, THC2 was always going to err on the side of tedium. The night-driving angle also means there's never going to be much traffic to deal with, so what's the bloody point?

BEST OF THE BEST

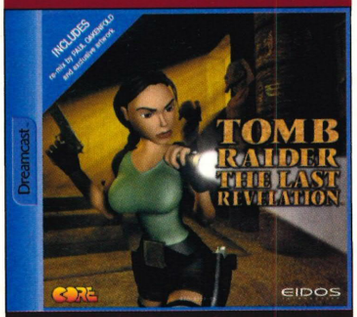
Action

MDK 2 9

With massive levels, heouge guns and hilarious characters MDK 2 is a sure-fire hit if you like your action thick and fast. With three controllably characters each with their own abilities and quirky personalities you're guaranteed a whale of a time while you kick fat alien ass. Shoot first, ask questions later.

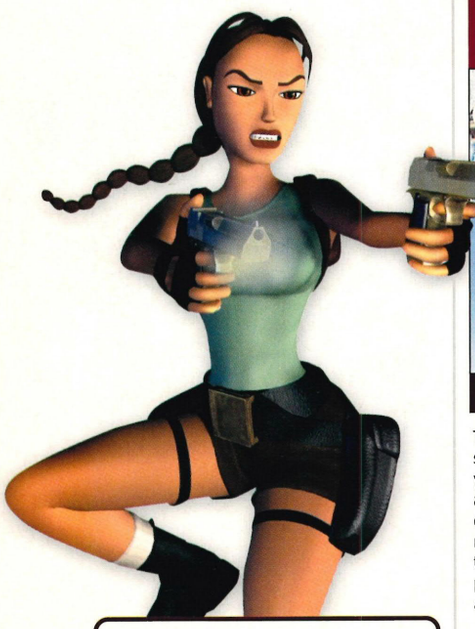
TOMB RAIDER: THE LAST REVELATION 8

Publisher ■ Eidos Interactive



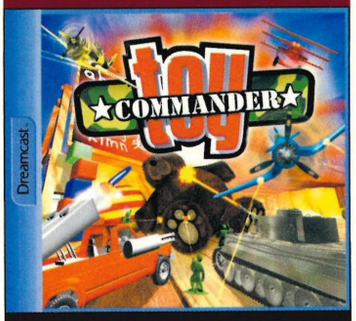
Players: 1 ■ Reviewed: 7

Tomb Raider is a classic series. With games this involving nights can turn to day before you realise you've missed an entire night's kip. Tomb Raider: TLR offers Dreamcast fans one of the high points of the series with good presentation and gameplay. Watch out for Tomb Raider Chronicles though, it could be the grand finale the series needs...



TOY COMMANDER 8

Publisher ■ Sega



Players: 1-4 ■ Reviewed: Issue 2

Lead your toys through increasingly tricky tasks to prove you're still the boss. And toys being toys, normal rules don't apply: you can survive massive falls and collisions and even drive up the walls. In gameplay terms there's a bit of everything, from frantic Mario Karting to Tomb Raideresque exploration. A splendid compound of everything you love about games.

TRICK STYLE 9

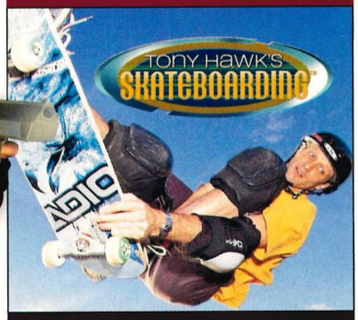
Publisher ■ Acclaim

Players: 1-2 ■ Reviewed: Issue 2

A stunning Dreamcast debut. Criterion have lifted boarding to a new level. There are nine cyberpunks to control, five boards available from the start and more can be earned by beating the bosses. There are loads of top-notch courses and a comprehensive two-player mode is the icing on the cake.

TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING 9

Publisher ■ Crave

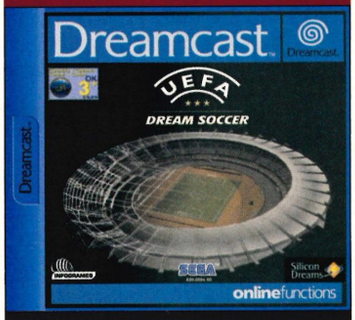


Players: 1-2 ■ Reviewed: Issue 12

Tony Hawk's Skateboarding positively steam-rolled the PlayStation market over a year ago. The Dreamcast version gave Tony a complete graphical overhaul, smoothing off those jagged PSX edges and taking the rendering into true next-generation territory. Thankfully, though, the fast-paced, unbelievably intricate and highly addictive gameplay remained firmly intact.

UEFA DREAM SOCCER 8

Publisher ■ Sega



Players: 1-4 ■ Reviewed: Issue 16

Third time lucky for Silicon Dreams, as they finally a deliver a footie game the Dreamcast can truly be proud of. With mind-boggling graphics and the excellent UEFA licence, you know you're in for a treat. It still has its problems, keeping it short of the PSX's ISS Evolution, but this is mighty good fun and no mistake.

UEFA STRIKER 7

Publisher ■ Infogrames

Players: 1-4 ■ Reviewed: Issue 2

In pure gameplay terms it can't better ISS Pro, and you might find the controls slightly awkward at first, but it does have its moments. Shooting has been made easier and the game flows well. But let's not sell it short - it's a great looking game that offers a quite deep yet still highly enjoyable sporting experience.

URBAN CHAOS 5

Publisher ■ Eidos

Players: 1 ■ Reviewed: Issue 14

Escapades from the Lara Croft stable, from Eidos, the home of the action/adventure genre. Ill-conceived controls and non-player characters with AI that's artificial but shows no sign of intelligence is just the beginning. When you can't put one foot in front of the other rather than into a bad guy's teeth, you know you're onto a loser...

VIGILANTE 8: SECOND OFFENSE 6

Publisher ■ Activision

Players: 1-4 ■ Reviewed: Issue 5

The best feature by far is the multiplayer, where up to four of you can slog it out – it's stress relief if nothing else. However, it simply lacks soul. Graphics are good, there are lots of characters to choose from and a whole host of weapons for the taking, but it hasn't got what it takes to make the grade.

VIRTUA ATHLETE 2K 3

Publisher ■ Sega

Players: 1-4 ■ Reviewed: Issue 13

From the same team behind Decathlete on the Saturn. Decathlete was great, Virtua Athlete, on the other hand, is a complete and utter pile of arse. It demands little skill and uses a graphics engine so poor, 32-bit PlayStation games like International Track & Field still manage to top it. What a waste of time and money!

VIRTUA FIGHTER 3TB 7

Publisher ■ Sega

Players: 1-2 ■ Reviewed: Issue 1

Perhaps the weakest of Sega's flagship games, Virtua Fighter 3tb seemed to suffer somewhat from hurried development and testing. Even though it was a launch title, beat-'em-ups have since progressed leaps and bounds. Basically, Virtua's generally a solid title, but it's dramatically dwarfed by the likes of Soul Calibur.

VIRTUA STRIKER 2: VERSION 2000.1 — 4

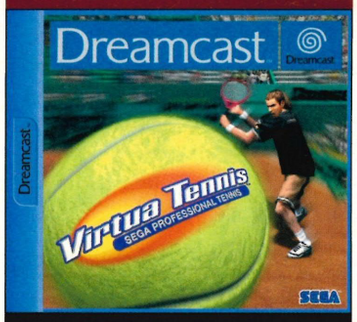
Publisher ■ Sega

Players: 1-2 ■ **Reviewed: 5**

Virtua Striker has always been welcomed with open arms in the arcades and with the Dreamcast around it's an easy cash in to make by releasing this title. Although this is a flash example of what the DC can do it hasn't got a pick-up-and-play philosophy. learning curve? What learning curve? Looks good. Plays bad.

VIRTUA TENNIS — 9

Publisher ■ Sega

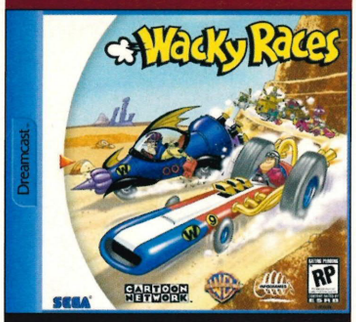


Players: 1-4 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 12**

Without doubt, the best tennis game we have ever played. It doesn't matter if you're a fare weather fan or a hardened tennis junky, Virtua Tennis has got the lot. From the earliest days of video games, tennis has played a major role and it seems fitting that this is the pinnacle.

WACKY RACES — 8

Publisher ■ Infogrames



Players: 1-4 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 10**

Wacky Races is a great karting game full of invention and humour. It manages to succeed in being both fun and a great challenge. With so many modes to conquer and bonuses to unlock, decent gameplay and excellent graphics, let us hope that Wacky Races will herald a new generation of karting games. Or maybe not.

WALT DISNEY WORLD QUEST: MAGICAL RACING — 4

Publisher ■ Eidos

Players: 1-4 ■ **Reviewed: 14**

Though targeted at younger gamers, MRT is too hard and dreary for kids to enjoy. Disney might be well know for its animation at the cinema, but this DC effort has fallen decidedly short of expectations. Basic backgrounds, foggy multiplayer modes and pop-up in the middle distance spells doom for MRT.

WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE — 5

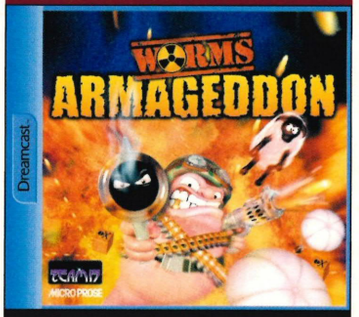
Publisher ■ Eidos

Players: 1-4 ■ **Reviewed: 15**

Though WWTBAM? accurately re-creates the show, with Tarrant's vocal talents and screens taken directly from the popular quiz, the limited questions (2000 in all) soon get you down. It might be accurate, but where's the risk in gambling on that £250,000 question when you know you're going to win sod all anyway?!

WORMS ARMAGEDDON — 8

Publisher ■ Hasbro

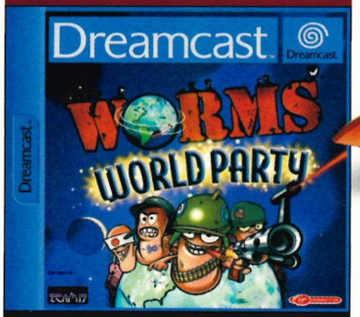


Players: 1-4 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 4**

With more weapons, redesigned terrain and extra game modes, this classic title is best on the Dreamcast. All the usual options are there allowing you to name your own worms, set a time limit on the completion of each move and, of course, choose your team's special weapon. Watch out for an online version by Christmas 2000...

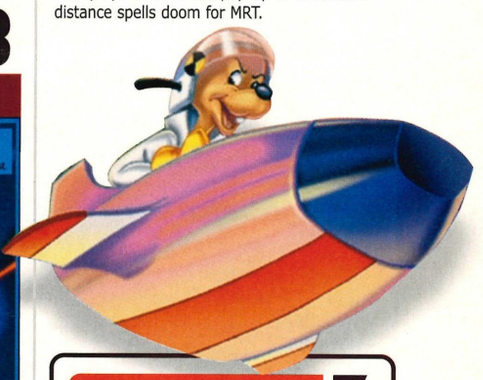
WORMS WORLD PARTY — 8

Publisher ■ Virgin



Players: Online ■ **Reviewed: Issue 16**

Those crazy worms have turned... online! Though there might not be terrific advances in the formula, the timeless playability coverts perfectly to online play. Whilst they're going to have pull something new out of the hat for us to buy another one, this will do very nicely for now thank you very much.



WWF ROYAL RUMBLE — 7

Publisher ■ THQ

Players: 1-4 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 14**

Royal Rumble is a much cleaner game than its rather lacking cometition, with fast and smooth animations, solid controls and action no longer limited to the ring. Great in multiplayer, if a little limited in single-player, but certainly the best yet. Keep your eyes peeled for more wrestling titles on the way though - things could be better.

ZOMBIE REVENGE — 7

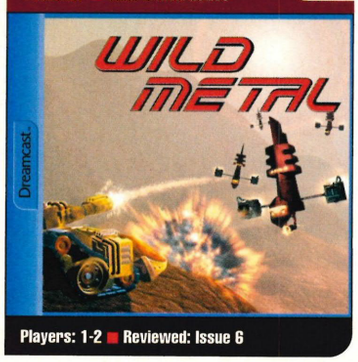
Publisher ■ Sega

Players: 1-3 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 6**

Although there's plenty of cool weapons for you to get hold of in this scrolling scrapper, it hasn't quite got the 'umph' we expected. The action is rather repetitive and the voice acting in cut-scenes is among the most laughable you'll witness. A complete lack of long-term challenge is the deal breaker - such a shame...

WILD METAL — 8

Publisher ■ Take 2 Interactive



Players: 1-2 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 6**

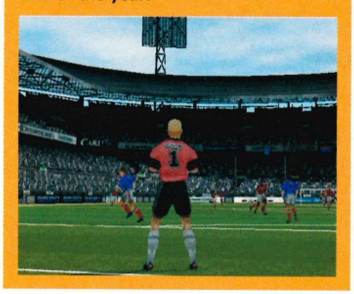
Combining the right amount of strategy with the perfect sprinkling of action, this game has a little of everything. Action takes place in very desolate environments and you choose from many uniquely designed battle tanks to take on the various enemies you encounter. After around... oooh... ten minutes play, you'll be hooked.

BEST OF THE BEST

Football

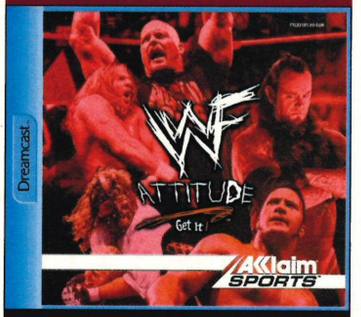
SEGA WORLD-WIDE SOCCER 2000 EURO EDITION — 7

Let's get one thing straight; it's not ISS Evolution, though it gives it a bloody good go. The graphics are great, the animation is good, but it's slightly let down by a less than God-like control system. If you're a bit of a footy connoisseur, try before you buy, but the chances are you already have. Expect the new version by the end of the year.



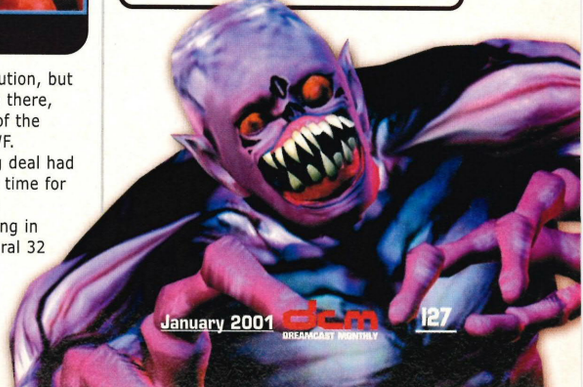
WWF ATTITUDE — 6

Publisher ■ Acclaim



Players: 1-2 ■ **Reviewed: Issue 4**

Should've been a wrestling revolution, but it's far from it. All your faves are there, and you can also recreate most of the specialist match types of the WWF. Unfortunately, Acclaim's licensing deal had almost expired and there was no time for improvements from its port from PlayStation to Dreamcast, resulting in substandard graphics and a general 32 bit feel.



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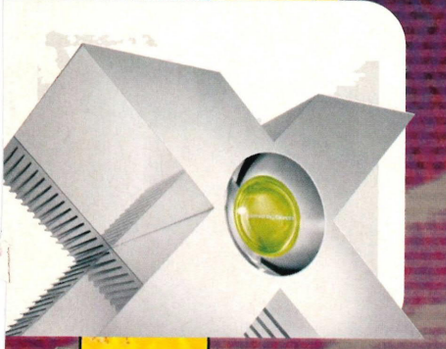

So that was Christmas, and how nice it was to see the Dreamcast looking easily the most attractive console to buy this Yuletide. And we don't mean in the physical sense. When you consider that Toys R Us at one stage had the console and DVD player, along with some software, for £249, you can understand why we've got quite a few new readers this month. And you're all very welcome.

But as regular readers know, this is the bit where we get to vent a bit, at the back of the magazine where we think noone is looking. And so we're going to talk prices. Not hardware - we've little complaints in that department. No, we're talking about the fact that so many games are still sitting on the shelf for £40.

If nothing else, let the PlayStation Platinum range serve as an example here. The idea there is that once a game has been on sale for a year, provided it's got a decent level of exposure and good enough sales figures, it's wheeled out again for £19.99. Then, when people are choosing which console to buy, they notice that there's software they can actually afford, and go out and buy it. Parents in particular can't help but be swayed by the attractive software prices in the admittedly more mature (in the age sense) PSOne market.

Now in some ways we've been lucky. Many stores take it upon themselves to slash prices, and hence many crap DC games have found their way to the bargain bin quite quickly. Occasionally, the odd gem such as Power Stone slips through too. And that's going to happen whatever Sega do.

But now is the time for them to strike whilst the iron is hot. Over in the States, Sega have set up a special budget label and crammed it with titles such as Sonic Adventure, House of the Dead 2 and Crazy Taxi. That's something that needs to happen over here quite quickly. That Sega have survived the onslaught of the PlayStation 2 thus far is to their credit, and down to some fabulous, headline gobbling games. But for the incoming double whammy of X-Box and Gamecube, they're going to need every weapon they can get, and once again the software is their joker. So slap your back catalogue on the table, we say, and give the casual punter a slightly less expensive way to try out some of the joys of 1999 and 2000.

And then? Well maybe they'll sell some more software...

Alan King

Videogames Journalist

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D - 04
Daytona USA 2
Dead or Alive 2
Deadly Skies
Dino Crisis
Dynamite Cop
Dynamite Deka

E - 05
Ecco the Dolphin
ECW Hardcore Revolution
Elemental Gimmick Gear
Episode One: Racer
Evolution
Evolution 2
Expendable

F - 06
Fighting Force 2
Flag to Flag
Four Wheel Thunder
Furfighters

G - 07
Gauntlet Legends
Generator
Get Bass
Giant Gram All Japan Wrest.
Giant Gram All J. Pro Wrest.2
Giga Wing
Godzilla Generations
GTA 2
Gun Bird 2

H - 08
Half Life
Hardcore Heat
Hidden and Dangerous
House of the Dead 2
Hydro Thunder

I - 09
In Nippon Budokan G. Gram
Incoming

J - 10
Jedi Power Battles
Jet Set Radio
Jimmy White 2 Cueball
Jojos Bizarre Adventure

K - 11
King of the Fighters 99

L - 12
Legacy of Kain - Soul Reaver

M - 13
Magforce Racing
Maken X
Marvel vs Capcom
Marvel vs Capcom 2
MDK 2
Magforce Racing
Metropolitan Highway Battle
Millenium Soldier:Expendable
Monaco Grand Prix
Mortal Kombat Gold

N - 14
NBA 2K
NBA Showtime
NFL 2K
NFL Blitz 2000
NFL Quarterback Club 2000
Nightmare Creatures 2

O - 15
Omikron

P - 16
Pen Pen Triicelon
Plasma Sword
Pop 'n' Music
Power Stone 1 & 2
Psychic Force 2012
Puyo Puyo

Q - 17
Quake 3

R - 18
Rainbow 6
Rayman 2
Ready to Rumble Boxing 1&2
Redline Racer
Resident Evil 2
Resident Evil: Codename V.
Revolt
Rippin Riders
Roadsters

S - 19
San Francisco Rush
Sega Bass Fishing
Sega GT
Sega Rally 2
Seventh Cross
Shadowman
Shotuko Highway Battle
Silver
Slave Zero
Sonic Adventure
Soul Calibur
Soul Fighter
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South Park
Space Channel 5
Speed Devil
Star Gladiator 2
Street Fighter 3
Street Fighter 3 W Impact
Street Fighter Alpha
Super Runabout
Super Speed Racing
Suzuki Alstare Extreme Racing
Sword of the Berserk

T - 20
Tech Romancer
Tee Off Golf Enter
Test Drive 6
Time Stalkers
TNN Motorsports H'core Heat
Tokyo Extreme Racer
Tomb Raider 4 & 5
Tony Hawk's
Toukon Retsuden 4
Toy Commander
Toy Story 2
Trickstyle

U - 21
UEFA Striker
Ultimate Fighting Champ.
Urban Chaos

V - 22
Vigilante 8 - 2nd Offense
Virtua Fightr 3TB
Virtua Striker 2
Virtua Tennis
V-Rally 2

W - 23
Wacky Races
Wild Metal
Worms:Armageddon
WWF Attittude
WWf Royal Rumble

Z - 26
Zombie Revenge

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RACE OFFLINE 4	HUGE ONLINE MATCH 5	6	RACE OFFLINE w/ MARC 7	RACE VOLCANO 8 BEST LAP 1:24	9	10
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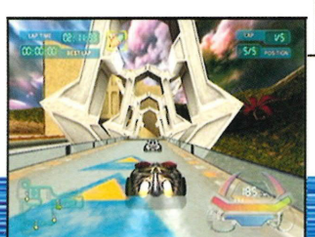

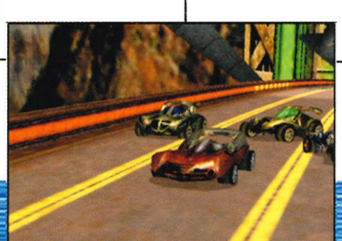

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