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One player's guide starts on page 60

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FEATURES • FEATURES • FEATURES

6 DAVE PERRY SHOWS US HIS WORM

After coding the wondrous *Aladdin* in just 90 days, Dave Perry went on to set up his own company, Shiny Entertainment. Dave talks to MEGA exclusively about *Earthworm Jim*, the project that could give rise to the greatest console game of all time. The fun starts on page 6.



18 THE GREAT DISCOUNTING WAR

Cartridge prices are now lower than ever. But what exactly is the reason for plummeting prices? And is it Sega we have to thank for it? Dave Roberts probes the industry to find out why the once contentious issue of high cart prices now appears to be non-existent.

60 VIRTUA RACING PLAYER'S GUIDE

Paul Mellerick stops driving everyone mad and channels his energies into a different sort of driving. Now you too can fail to impress everyone with your "I can finish VR" anecdotes. Oh, and don't forget the last part of our *Sonic 3* solution on page 54.



EXCLUSIVE PREVIEW SYNDICATE

In conjunction with the obscenely talented guys at Bullfrog (if you aren't familiar with them now, you will be by the end of the issue) MEGA is more than just a little proud to bring you an exclusive first look at the game that sent ripples of excitement through the Amiga games market last year. If you like your games to be hard edged, then this is just the thing you've been waiting for. To find out just what makes *Syndicate* so damn playable, turn to our four-page feature starting over on page 14. Go on, you know you want to...



GAMES FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE OF MEGA...

And you thought the Ronco Fluff-Away was an efficient device. Well, it's not a patch on this little box, which tells you about all the reviews and previews we have this month...

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Utterly, utterly dreadful.

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Itchy & Scratchy. Absolutely nothing like Simon & Garfunkel... Honest!

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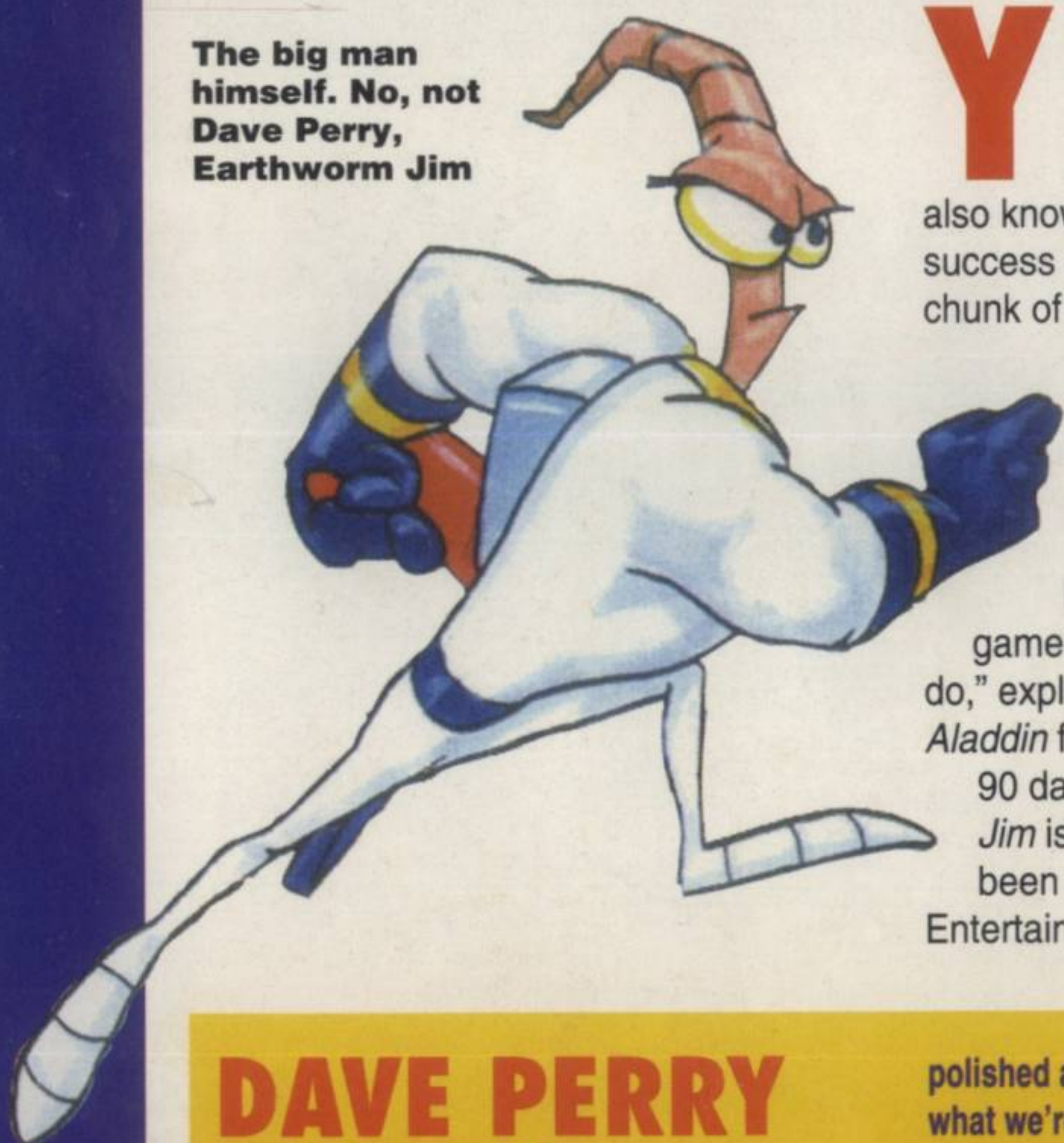
Six pages packed with news • games information •

EAT D



For this month's lead news story we hand over to our man in California, Neil West, who invites you to meet Earthworm Jim, the game character who could turn out to be 1994's biggest seller. He's a character who has been designed from scratch to "inject some originality back into the world of video games". Neil talks to Jim's manager, David Perry...

The big man himself. No, not Dave Perry, Earthworm Jim



Yeah, David Perry. You'll recognise his name from the credits of *Aladdin*, *Cool Spot* and *Global Gladiators*. You may also know that after the money-mongous success of *Aladdin*, David and a large chunk of the *Aladdin* team left Virgin to go it alone. Shiny Entertainment was the result and Earthworm Jim is the company's first creation.

"This is a labour of love – we want this game to be the best we can do," explains David. "We did *Aladdin* from start to finish in just 90 days, whereas *Earthworm Jim* is the only project we've been working on since Shiny Entertainment was formed."

And boy does it show. Without daring to judge a game before it's actually finished, it would seem that the love and craft gone into the creation of this game makes it pretty damn certain that if you thought *Aladdin* was smart, you're gonna love this.

STICKING HIS NECK OUT

So what's it all about then? Well for starters, it's a platform game. A controversial



This is Peter Puppy. Tickle the cute puppy and he turns into this

DAVE PERRY SPEAKS – AGAIN!

Not content with merely having a quick gander at the *Earthworm Jim* screenshots, we decided to annoy Mr Perry once more by bombarding him with questions he's probably already been asked a million times...

Why did you choose the name Shiny for your new company?

"Well, obviously we're tremendous fans of REM's Shiny Happy People, but if you look up shiny in the dictionary, it's defined as

polished and glistening; that's what we're trying for here."

Is your new "animation" technique purely for use on specific 16-bit platforms, or will it be used on more sophisticated machinery such as Saturn and Project Reality?

"No, it's adaptable for the Saturn system and everything, we're going to be using it for years. I have spent a ton of money getting this software done. The software will have paid for itself with one title because it eliminates external animation. The result is that I can use it in the game, sell the game and it will be better than anything that is out there now. Other companies are all trying to match Digicell because they see it as the

point to which they have to get. I've seen a lot of what other companies are working on and they're getting close, but no-one has surpassed *Aladdin*."

Did you ever think about selling the Digicell process when you left Virgin? You could have made wedges of cash...

"I could have made a ton of money, I

gossip • gimmicks • software house profiles • quick competitions

IRT!



The best thing about Jim is that he carries a big laser gun around, unlike Aladdin, who threw fruit(!)

choice of genre for sure (the world needs another platform game like Paul Mellerick needs to enter a Miss Bikini competition) and one that will inevitably lead to accusations that Perry and Co are merely cashing in on an old game structure. (*Cool Spot*, *Aladdin* and *Global Gladiators* unquestionably came from the same stable.) But MEGA, for one, doesn't have a problem with this; the world will always welcome platform games, so they might as well come from the best in the business, and the success of *Aladdin* proves that you guys agree. Besides, any accusations of unoriginality should be aimed at the licence-churning AN Othersoft, and not a company that is truly sticking its neck out

"We want this game to be the best we can do"



Sadly, the bad guys aren't in place yet, but this illustrates the high standard of graphics in the game

in an attempt – as David declares – to "inject some originality back into the world of video games". Jim is the brainchild of Shiny animator Doug Tennapel, and although a TV spin-off of the game looks increasingly inevitable, Earthworm Jim has been designed as a *game* character first and a *merchandisable* character second. His every mannerism, physical peculiarity and mission in life lends itself to making him a great video game star. Armed with a blaster gun and with the aid of an alien robo-suit that occasionally takes matters into its own hands, Earthworm Jim runs, jumps, climbs and even bungee jumps his way around a series of hostile planets in



Turn Over



Never have rocks looked so rocky and moons looked so, er, moony. Sorry to go on about it, but Mega Drive graphics have never looked so good

Princess What's Her Name. Insert "phwoar, not bad for a cartoon character" type comment



Oh no! Jim has been attacked by lots of household objects. Er...



Dunno what's going on here but it looks like Jim's laser can go all bendy and stuff. Maybe it's a lasso

could have sold the technology over and over, but I'm not selling; the process is something you'll see in our games and our games alone. Everybody here has signed confidentiality agreements, so even if they did leave, they couldn't talk about it or remove the software. It's a Shiny concept and it's going to remain here."

Are you signed up to produce Saturn games for Sega?

"I won't sign anything until I see some hardware. When I worked on the Genesis the development hardware was changing all the time. You'd rip your game to shreds trying to debug, only to find out you were getting a new development system in a week. We'll hire a

guy to bring us up to speed on the Saturn – when we get a decent development system."

Will Earthworm Jim have a TV show? How about toy deals?

"Talent and television industries have already contacted us and I have Arnold Schwarzenegger's attorney on a retainer. If Jim takes off, we're looking toward theme park attractions and, if we can, a feature film. It just seems to me that there's a lot of lame stuff out there and people are dying for something besides Biker Mice From Mars. I mean, Disney called us up and asked us to create a character for them, what's going on there? I mean, Disney has a whole department that does nothing but think up that stuff. I

guess all they're churning out are squirrels and crap.

Think of it this way, Disney artists are the best animators in the world but they don't know anything about pixels, they don't know what a palette is and have never tried to program something in six frames. For them it's this huge learning curve and they just need to be taught."

Did you expect *Aladdin* to be as big as it was?

"I expected it to be big, but I never expected all the hype that surrounded that announcement. Disney really got behind the product. I mean,

they had this huge Disney-like theme park production with a laser light show. Michael Katz was there, Nakayama, the president of Sega, was there, Richard Branson, the head of Virgin, was there – there were all these people who just came to see this game. It was very exciting."

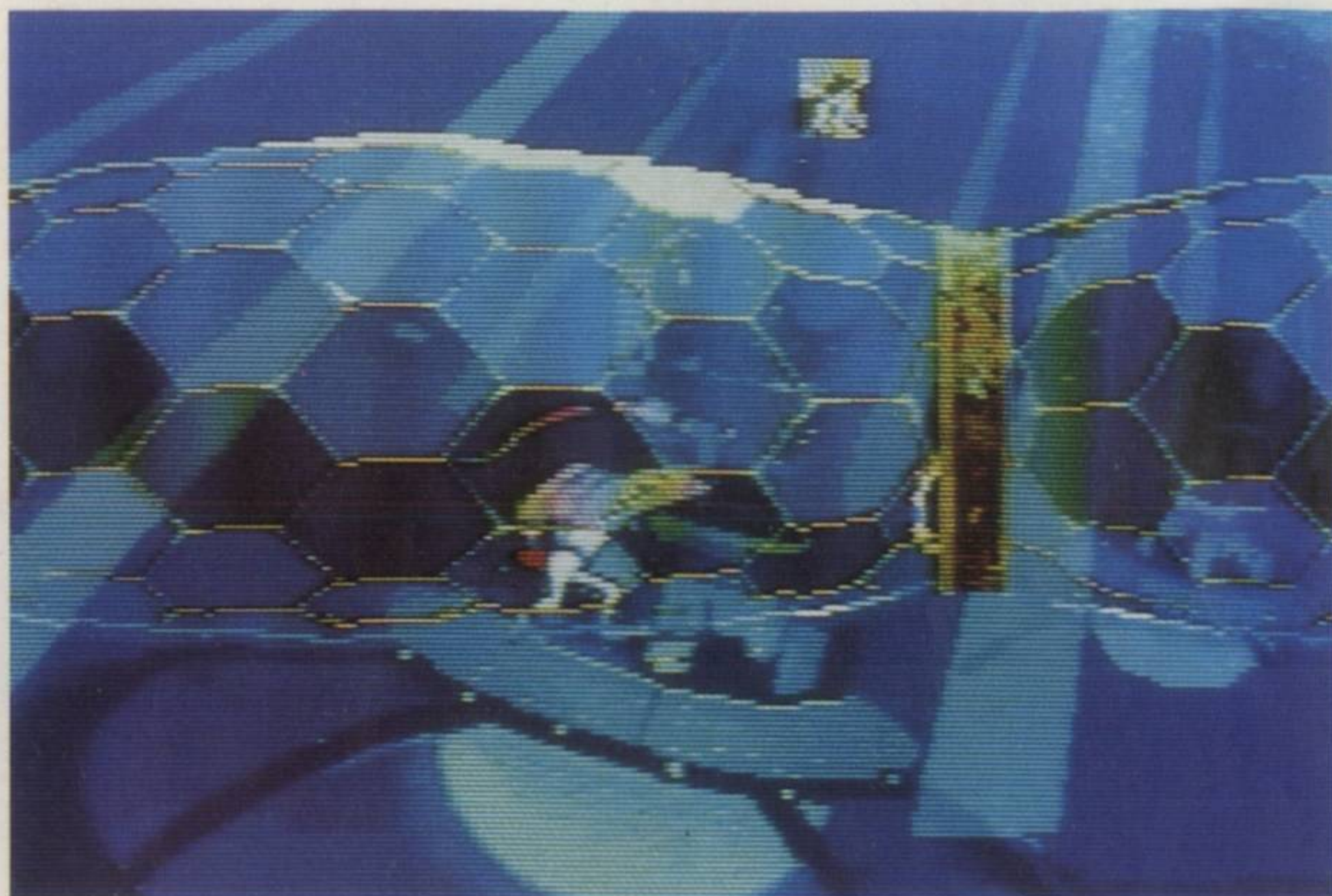
Can you quote any numbers on just how much that game netted you?

(Laughs) "I can't quote an exact figure but it made me a ton of money. I mean, that was the whole idea. As a result of that project, Shiny is a very stable company."

Everyone knows that after *Aladdin* you left Virgin to form Shiny. Was that your plan all along?



Mega City



Look, details about the game and all its intricacies may be scarce, but at least these shots show the variety of backdrops the game is set against

a bid to rescue the mysterious Princess What's-her-name.*

INTRODUCING ANIMATION

While at Virgin, the team developed a unique computer animation process called Digicell. It was this programming tool that enabled the gob-smacking animated

Professor Psy-Crow is neat. But there's weirder to come



moves and characters in *Cool Spot* and *Aladdin*. But now Digicell is old news as Shiny Entertainment presents "animation", an animation process that looks set to leave *Aladdin* looking like an old 8-bit title. It's the level of smooth animation that the team has been able to cram into its games that has always kept them one step ahead of the crowd, with *Global Gladiators*, *Cool Spot* and (of course) *Aladdin*, but this new technique is breaking boundaries yet again.

MORE BAD GUYS

However, before you start animating characters you actually have to come up with some characters to animate. The



Blimey, look at the size of that beam. Jim shows off with his gun

A lot of people are watching you, aren't you worried that you might not be able to come through with the goods?

"When I got back from the winter CES, I wondered if we were going to be able to produce a great game, but when everybody got in here and I was walked around I was just amazed at the quality of work going on. If *Earthworm Jim* isn't a success, we'll just pick up a licensed title and recoup the loss, but that isn't going to happen. *Jim* will sell. If it was to sell anything less than 200,000 units we'd just hang our heads in shame."

And with that we left Dave to fiddle with his worm a bit more and count his money, while we did much the same, albeit with different quantities.

"Absolutely. I originally intended to sign with someone really big, like Sega, Sony or Disney, but everyone set up all these rules and laws like you have to call it this or you have to move here, and I just didn't want to do that. I tried to see if I could get anyone else to back us, so in the end I went to Playmates. For me, that was really attractive; I mean, these guys make toys for Universal and Paramount. That means that these people already have an enormous respect for Playmates, much more so than Virgin would ever gain; they're our "big brother" if you like. Shiny is owned by myself 100% but by working together with Playmates we can really kick some butt."

A LIKELY STORY...

Here, for your delight (and for more than a little explanation of the outrageously strange plot) is the storyboard outlining just how Jim became the heroic figure that he so obviously is. It's a soaring tale of mud, mayhem, and a bit of alien intervention.



Left: As you can see, Jim was just a regular worm until an alien space suit fell on him

Right: Endowed with mighty powers, Jim embarks on a mission to kill the birds who have terrorised worm-kind for generations



bad guys in *Earthworm Jim* are designed to make a big impact.

"OK, so you remember playing Sonic right?" asks David. "Of course you do, but - other than Robotnik - what bad guys did you come up against? Most people can't remember... err, a bee. And that's about it." He's got a point you know. "Now don't get me wrong, I'm not saying that *Sonic's* a bad game, I'm just saying that there's loads of room for a wider range of stronger characters to fight against."

Earthworm Jim will be released by Playmates this autumn, and MEGA will be bringing you more news of the game's development up to that point. In the meanwhile, feast your eyes on these visuals in the knowledge that all these characters move as well as they look.

* "What's a bloody earthworm doing in a robo-suit?" you'll probably be asking. Well, it's all too complicated to explain here, but suffice it to say that the finished version will make perfect sense as Jim's mission is explained in the game's intro sequence.



Is there no end to Jim's talents? He can shoot downwards as well as from side to side



Ah, I was right. Here's Jim using his lasso thing against someone who's probably called Tyre Bloke



There are some very talented animators at Shiny Entertainment. Just look at this comical scene



Upward shooting too? Next you'll be telling us Jim can get chopped in half and become two living worms

Sonic 3 cheat discovered

Yes, beyond all hope, Paul "Paul" Mellerick has managed to work out the never-before-seen *Sonic 3* level-select cheat. He did it like this: He sat at his desk, the phone rang, a mystery reader said "I've got the *Sonic 3* cheat for you", and Paul wrote it down. What a stroke of bloody genius. And here it is...



When the big Sega logo at the start of the game starts to fade and the big rendered Sonic zooms out of the screen at you, quickly tap the D-pad in the following order:

①, ②, ③, ④, ⑤, ⑥, ⑦, ⑧

It'll take you a while to get it right because you have to do it very quickly indeed, but persevere. When you get it right you'll hear a funny little noise, then when you reach the title screen with START and OPTIONS written on it, press ④ and you'll see a Sound Test option. Enter this and voilà, you've got a complete level select to mess around with. There are a couple of levels on there that don't actually exist in the game. Very odd.

SHINING FORCE CD

Not a lot to say about this one really, only that *Shining Force CD* is about to come out in Japan, which is all very well for the Japanese but us poor old Brits won't be able to understand it. Still, at least there's a good chance that it will soon be out in the States and then we can review it for you. In the meantime, enjoy the screenshots.



Looks pretty much the same as any other RPG doesn't it? Ah well...

Here's a luvverly bit of artwork from the game. As usual, it's all in typical Japanese style

URBAN STRIKE

All striked out? Had Kilbaba up to the eyeballs? Then you'll not even be remotely interested in EA's *Urban Strike*. But rather than get all "Oh no, here we go again" about it, bear with us for a moment. All brand new missions are provided, as you would expect, and this time you have to uncover and destroy a threat to the US.

Also, there's a souped-up chopper to fly, a separate transport chopper, and a tank to drive around. Jolly good, but still nothing drastically new. But the good news is that you can now enter buildings, at which point the on-screen view zooms in to the interior. The levels are based on real American cities like Las Vegas and are treated accurately right down to San Francisco being a bit foggy and all that, although sadly, you're not likely to get a chance to blow up Neil West's apartment.

All in all it sounds like EA have gone all out to add yet another veneer of quality to the latest in the Strike series, so keep your eyes on our previews pages. The game's due for a US release in October and the few people who have already seen it reckon it's going to be an absolute stunner. Anyway, we've run out of information now so all that remains is to talk nonsense for a bit until we ultimately reach the bottom of this little boxout. That should occur just about... Now. Phew!



We could complain that it's more of the same, but the fact is...



... the first two games were brilliant, this retains all of the best bits, and there's loads of new stuff too!

EA SPORTS TOURNAMENT CLUB

It was only a matter of time really, and now it's become a reality. After years of building up an obscenely large following of fans for their games, Electronic Arts, purveyors of fine quality sports sims, have formed a club which keen gamers can join to take part in a variety of challenges on their favourite sports titles. It's called the EA Sports Tournament Club and club membership costs £8.99 while competition entry fees start at £7.99. The regional heats have begun already but they're carrying on into August. They take place on Saturdays in London, Manchester and Birmingham.

The top eight players from the regional heats then get the opportunity to take part in an all expenses paid National Finals Weekend where they can win prizes totalling £2,000 across all the four game formats (that's *Madden*, *NHL*, *FIFA* and *PGA*). The ultimate champion will get prizes worth £2,500. Additionally, EA plan to set up local clubs, so if you want to find out more about this exciting challenge, give EA a ring on 051 420 4831.

In the meantime, keep practising, because there's always some smart arse (like Paul Mellerick for example) who'll stay awake for days at a time just to get better than you are. No, really. Some people are that sad.



FUN AND GAMES

Tradewest, the company that brought us the Battletoads, have now handed over a new product to Sony. It's called *Fun And Games* and will be "an entertaining mix of games, activities and art and music packages". It's being squarely pitched at the younger market and, to be honest, looks a whole lot better than a lot of the shabbily constructed "Edutainment" titles we've seen on the Mega Drive so far.

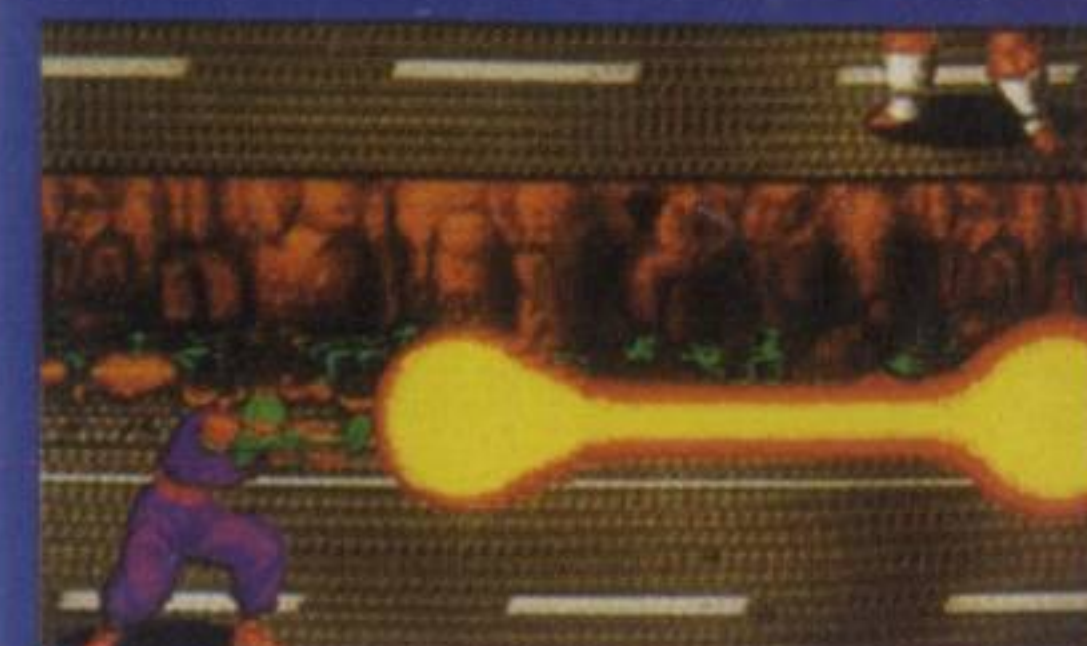
The cart includes the Dynamite Drawing Board, and art package with many basic features, but which also has lots of ready defined images so that children can create pretty tidy pictures with ease. There's a magic music machine with lots of different instruments and sound effects to play with. *Stylin' Stuff* is a curious little game in which the player has to dress up a mannequin with a variety of different clothes. *Mix 'n' Match* enables you to create a number of weird and wonderful creatures and people in a vaguely indentikit fashion, and finally, *Arcade Avenue* includes three simple arcade games; *Space Lazer*, *Whack-a-clown* and *Mouse Maze*. We'll let you know the price and a firm release date next issue.



Fun And Games from Sony. Not much good for us steaming great roister-doistering blokes, but it'll be absolutely hootsome for the young 'uns

DRAGON BALL Z

Like the world needs another beat-'em-up. Still, this coin-op was quite a success so now it's been ported over to the Mega Drive. We have no idea how good it'll be, but here's a screenshot to whet your appetite.



Another beat-'em-up. Oh good

DYNAMITE HEADDY

A pretty looking game this, but frankly the plot sounds a bit girly. It takes place in True Land, where all dolls live in peace. Hopefully, it'll contain at least a little bit of violence though. More news soon.

Actually, the plot may be a little on the poncey side, but judging by the size of this boss-type bloke, it'll contain more than its fair share of action. We shall have to wait and see



And cor blimey guv'nor, will you take a look at the size of this dog thing? It takes up almost the whole screen. Can't quite figure out what's going on though. Needless to say, we'll tell you more soon



Right, well I've said quite enough about this game for the moment so I thought I might tell you all about the holiday I had the other week. It was fab. I went to Barbados and they had thi... (Snip!)



YET MORE LUNAR-CY!

Having reviewed *Lunar The Silver Star CD* back in issue 18, RPG fans out there will be thrilled to know that Japanese mags are already talking about *Lunar 2*, called *Lunar - Eternal Blue*. It sounds like some sort of sci-fi porny film but is, in fact, just more role-playing fun with a whole heap of cutesy Japanese characters and a load of Anime style in-betweeny scenes. Enjoy the screenshots, and make sure you get next month's MEGA for a bit of an update.



It's strange that RPG fans take to fantasy games with cute characters rather than realistic beastie-type things

As you can see, it's RPG action in a fairly traditional sense. But then, that's what the punters like

ANOTHER OUTRUN OFFSHOOT

"Will the *Outrun* saga never end?" we ask ourselves. First there was *Outrun* in the arcades, which was, to all intents and purposes, the *Virtua Racing* of its day. Then there was another game, then another, and in the meantime they appeared on home consoles and were (how would you say?) crap. However, things may just be about to change.

The latest game to hit the arcades is *Outrunners*, a more lighthearted affair altogether, in which the player gets to drive all manner of vehicles from 4x4 buggies to Ferraris, all drawn in a suitably cartoony fashion. What's more, it's a split-screen two-player game. Well,

now, it's being converted to the Mega Drive, and if you take a look at the screenshot, you'll see that it's actually looking pretty good. We don't even have a release date for it yet, but stick with us for more info.



AN APOLOGY

MEGA would like to make an apology to Mean Machines Sega for reproducing a piece of illustration from an issue of their magazine without first seeking their authorisation. It is not MEGA's policy to infringe the copyright of other magazines and we will ensure that no part of this or any other magazine will be reproduced within the pages of MEGA.

Outrunners on the Mega Drive. Maybe this series isn't dead after all

Win Sonic 3 solution!

Last month we told you about a great new *Sonic 3* solution coming out in book form from Titan Books. For those of you who weren't around last month (shame on you) it's called the Official Sega Mega Drive *Sonic 3* Play Guide, it costs just £7.99 and it contains a full-colour complete solution to the game, with a staggering 4,000 colour screenshots to illustrate it. And the reason we're telling you about it all over again is because we've got ten copies to give away absolutely free. All you have to do is send cheques of £1 made payable to Andy Dyer, and the first one drawn out of a hat gets the book. It's brill isn't it... (It's cold in prison you know - Jon) Hmm... all right then. Just send your name and address on a postcard to the "Damn, I could have made a bloody fortune" Compo, MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW. That's all there is to it. No questions to answer, no silly sketches to draw, no crosswords, now! Just your name and address. Fab or what!

This *Sonic 3* player's guide could be yours for the price of a stamp and the time it takes you to write a postcard. Now that can't be at all bad can it?



HEAVENLY SYMPHONY F1

As if the world needs another racing game after *Virtua Racing*. But hey, let's not forget that real racing fans out there might just be looking for something a little more, well, technically accurate, so with any luck, this F1 game might turn out to be just the thing. Not only does it use highly detailed scenery when the race is actually in progress but it also extensively uses FMV, to bring home the atmosphere of real Formula 1. And by the looks of things there's a whole load of options in there as far as choosing your car and maintaining it goes, so we may be looking at a strategic winner.



A racing game that may appeal to those who like more realism



IMPROVED ACTION REPLAY CART

Datel is a company which has been around for donkey's years. And to be honest, these chaps are more than just a bit good at what they do. Anyone who owns an Action Replay cheat cartridge will know exactly what we're on about, but for those of you who don't already own one, a new up-grade, The Action Replay 2, has just arrived.

By plugging it into your Mega Drive and plugging the game cartridge into it, you can enter up to 100 different cheat codes simultaneously (which is frankly a bit over the top, but there you go). But, if the cheat codes for the game you own haven't been worked out or printed in a magazine yet, there's also a feature enabling you to quickly and easily work out your own simple codes to give you infinite energy, lives and level selects on most games.

The Action Replay 2 is friendlier than ever and it also acts as a universal adaptor, so you can play a whole host of foreign carts on your British Mega Drive too. It costs a very reasonable £49.99 and if you want to know more about it, simply call Datel on 0782 744707. Sorted, or you soon will be!

The Action Replay 2. The original was fabulous enough, but now there are more features than ever



My, what a sleek and gorgeous looking thing the Saturn is. Now if only Paul Mellerick was half as attractive. Ah well...

STOP PRESS! VIRTUA RACING CHEAT DISCOVERED!

Just after our fab four-page *Virtua Racing* tips section had gone to press, we received a call from **Neil Crayne** of Kingston Upon Thames. He told us how to access the Mirror Mode in the game, and now we're gonna tell you.

When the Sega logo appears press and hold **3** and **4**, then keep them pressed and press **0**. Hold it all and press START. Now, when you get to the options screen, the Mirror Mode is available. Hurrah!

Saturn hardware finally unveiled

What can we say about Saturn that we haven't said a thousand times already? It's coming, it's going to be good, but we haven't exactly seen much of it yet.

However, now, at last, we can see what the machine actually looks like in the, er, flesh as it were. Nice isn't it? As you can see (and as reported in the last issue of MEGA) it contains both a cartridge port and a CD player. And just to finally clear up any confusion, first will come the Mega Drive 32 add-on, which will be cartridge only but will take advantage of the Mega CD's capabilities (if you own one of course), then comes the Mars, which will effectively be the Mega Drive 32 and Mega Drive in one all-new box (this'll be for people who don't already own a Mega Drive), and finally, the Saturn will arrive containing similar, but more powerful, hardware and the CD drive. Anyway, enough of all this drivel. We'll report on it again when we receive more exciting and definite news of what we can expect the software to be like. Oh, and more importantly we'll be digging around for more news of the Mega Drive 32.



Ooh, look, it's all silvery and luvverly. Can't wait to stroke it

PICK 'N' MIX

Whenever the everyday drudgery of reviewing games gets to me, I simply sit down at my computer and start fiddling with screenshots. This month's strange hybrid game is *Virtua Sonic*. It's fairly self explanatory really, in that it's *Sonic* and *Virtua Racing*. Um, er, that's it really.



And there we have it. They may be fast, but it's not advisable for our heroes to take up Formula 1. Poor old Tails. Three minutes silence? Nah!

THE Qs IN THE NEWS

Look, The Qs In The News are a right old nightmare to think of each month, and quite frankly we'd much rather print a picture of someone attractive in its place, so please do tell us if you think it's crap or not. In fact, while we're on the subject, why don't you write in to tell us where you think MEGA can and can't be improved? We are, after all, here to please you. Now, answer these questions and scoot over to page 90 for the answers.

1. Who's the boss of Bullfrog, the company which is doing *Syndicate*?
2. Which fizzy drink does Fido Dido promote?
3. Which actor played the young Indiana Jones in the film *Indiana Jones And The Last Crusade*?
4. Spot the odd one out:
 - a) The Channel Tunnel
 - b) A group of motorway repair men
 - c) Nintendo's *Project Reality*
 - d) Paul Mellerick
5. A total of how many courses does *Virtua Racing* have?
6. What does RBI stand for?
7. What does NBA stand for?
8. What aircraft are flown in *Tomcat Alley*?
9. Who's the Captain in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*?
10. Which famous Black Sabbath track features in *Rock 'n' Roll Racing*?
11. Who's the side-car passenger in *Chuck Rally*?
12. Whose Whirlwind Snooker is featured in this issue?
13. Which famous Disney character says "Gawrsh!" a lot?
14. *Nobunaga's Ambition* is the follow-up to which game?
15. How long is a piece of string?

16. Which game is this bit of screenshot taken from?



17. Which game is this bit of screenshot taken from?



18. Which game is this bit of screenshot taken from?



19. (Hang on, this bit normally takes a rather more bizarre slant - Jon)



20. Which game is this minuscule portionette of grabtastic action from? (That's better - Jon)



THE CHARTS

Contains no active lipozomes, no nanosphere complex, void of any real vitamins and minerals, and 100% joke free... the charts!

OFFICIAL TOP 20

This month Last month Game name MEGA rating

1. (01) **FIFA Soccer** M 94%
There's a bit of a sports feel to the top of the charts this month, with golf, footy and basketball.
2. (NE) **PGA European Tour** M 83%
A new entry for an excellent golf sim. (This is a bit boring, Josse - Andy)
3. (02) **Sonic 3** M 90%
Sonic still sells by the bucketload. (Write something stupid, go on - Andy) (Bog off - Josse)
4. (03) **Aladdin** M 94%
Beautiful to watch and fun to play, *Aladdin* is a game we unreservedly recommend.
5. (NE) **NBA Jam** M 93%
More sport, this time two-on-two basketball. (Pants! - Andy) (Go away, Dyer - Josse)
6. (04) **Sensible Soccer** M 94%
(Pants! Pants! Pants! Pants! Pants! Pants! Pants! Pants! Pants! Pants! - Andy)
7. (NE) **Zool/J Pond 3** M n/a
(Oh yes, very clever. You're determined to ruin this aren't you? - Josse) (Pants! - Andy)
8. (11) **Jungle Strike** M 93%
Wreak airborne havoc on enemies of the USA. (Pants! - Andy) (Not listening to you - Josse)
9. (09) **Micro Machines** M 92%
Racing fun (Pants!) from the clever people at CodeM(Pants!)asters.
10. (RE) **Bubsy the Bobcat** M 78%
(Are you going to stop this now? - Josse) (All right - Andy) *Bubs...* (PANTS!)
11. (NE) **Haunting** M 80%
12. (NE) **X-Men** M 80%
13. (NE) **Ren and Stimpy** M 63%
14. (13) **Sonic 2** M 94%
15. (NE) **Sonic 2/Bubsy** M n/a
16. (RE) **Batman Returns** M 70%
17. (08) **Mortal Kombat** M 82%
18. (NE) **Pacmania** M 70%
19. (10) **Street Fighter 2** M 92%
20. (RE) **Alien 3** M 80%

JAPANESE TOP 10

1. (10) **Aldark CD** M --%
2. (03) **Phantasy Star IV** M --%
3. (05) **Puyo Puyo** M 90%
4. (09) **Lunar** M 86%
5. (NE) **Microcosm CD** M 79%
6. (NE) **J League Soccer** M --%
7. (01) **Dream House CD** M --%
8. (NE) **Montana NFL '94** M 43%
9. (04) **Sonic CD** M 89%
10. (06) **Mortal Kombat** M 82%

AMERICAN TOP 10

1. (NE) **Sonic 3** M 90%
2. (01) **Mortal Kombat** M 82%
3. (02) **Joe Montana '94** M 43%
4. (04) **NHL Hockey '94** M 92%
5. (NE) **FIFA Soccer** M 94%
6. (03) **John Madden '94** M 95%
7. (05) **Eternal Champions** M 71%
8. (NE) **PGA Tour Golf II** M 91%
9. (08) **Tecmo Basketball** M --%
10. (NE) **ToeJam & Earl 2** M 92%

MEGA CD TOP 5

1. (05) **Night Trap** M 84%
2. (01) **Ground Zero Texas** M 89%
3. (RE) **Rage in the Cage** M 89%
4. (03) **Lethal Enforcers** M 91%
5. (RE) **Time Gal** M 81%



Official charts compiled by Gallup and sponsored by ELSPA. Import charts compiled by Gamesville. Call 'em on 0293 541 953.

Charts updated weekly appear on Teletext (Digitiser, p 471) on Channel 4.

IMPORT TOP 20

This month Last month Game name MEGA rating

1. (NE) **Virtua Racing** M 92%
(Listen, if you don't stop, I'll leave. I'm warning you - Josse)
2. (02) **Bare Knuckle 3** M 72%
(Better now? All calmed down? Well, maybe I can carry on then - Josse)
3. (NE) **Tom Cat Alley CD** M 69%
Of all the import games available, this one in particular is... (Pants!)
4. (NE) **Jurassic Park CD** M 84%
(You just had to say it. I'm trying to do my job, but you have to say pants - Josse). (Pants!)
5. (02) **NBA Jam** M 91%
(Well I've had enough - Josse) (PANTS! PANTS!) (Write yer own charts - Josse)
6. (NE) **Genghis Khan** M 78%
(Er... Pants? Hello? - Andy)
7. (NE) **Cliffhanger CD** M 48%
(Anybody there? Anybody at all? - Andy)
8. (NE) **Pink Panther** M 31%
(Nobody? Right then. PANTS PANTS PANTS PANTS PANTS PANTS PANTS...)
9. (NE) **Mutant Hockey** M 69%
(... PANTS PANTS PANTS PANTS PANTS PANTS PANTS PANTS PANTS PANTS - Andy)
10. (NE) **PGA Euro Tour** M 83%
(Happy now? Eh? Finished? Good - Josse) (PANTS! - Andy) (Jesus - Josse)
11. (NE) **NBA Showdown** M 60%
12. (NE) **Sub Terrania** M 86%
13. (NE) **NHL '94 CD** M 92%
14. (08) **Lethal Enforcers CD** M 88%
15. (06) **FIFA Soccer** M 94%
16. (NE) **J League Soccer** M --%
17. (01) **Sonic 3** M 90%
18. (NE) **Snow Bros.** M --%
19. (NE) **Hook** M 66%
20. (NE) **Chuck Rock 2** M 79%

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NEW

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NEW

ADVANCED CHEATFINDER

Action Replay has always allowed you to input not only the thousands of cheats found in the cheatbook supplied or from the huge number of cheats published in magazines each month or from the thousands of built-in codes - but the feature that has always put Action Replay ahead of any other cheat system is its unique game trainer (cheatfinder) feature. Now the game trainer is even better with improved game cracking routines plus new menu systems which make cracking open your games now even easier.

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SYNDICATE

In the first of a series of behind-the-scene looks at a Mega Drive game in the early stages of development, we bring you an exclusive and in-depth progress report on *Syndicate*, a title which was voted best game of 1993 on the Amiga. Paul Mellerick braved the wilderness of Guildford (somewhere in Surrey, apparently) and came back with bucketloads of screenshots for everyone to look at...



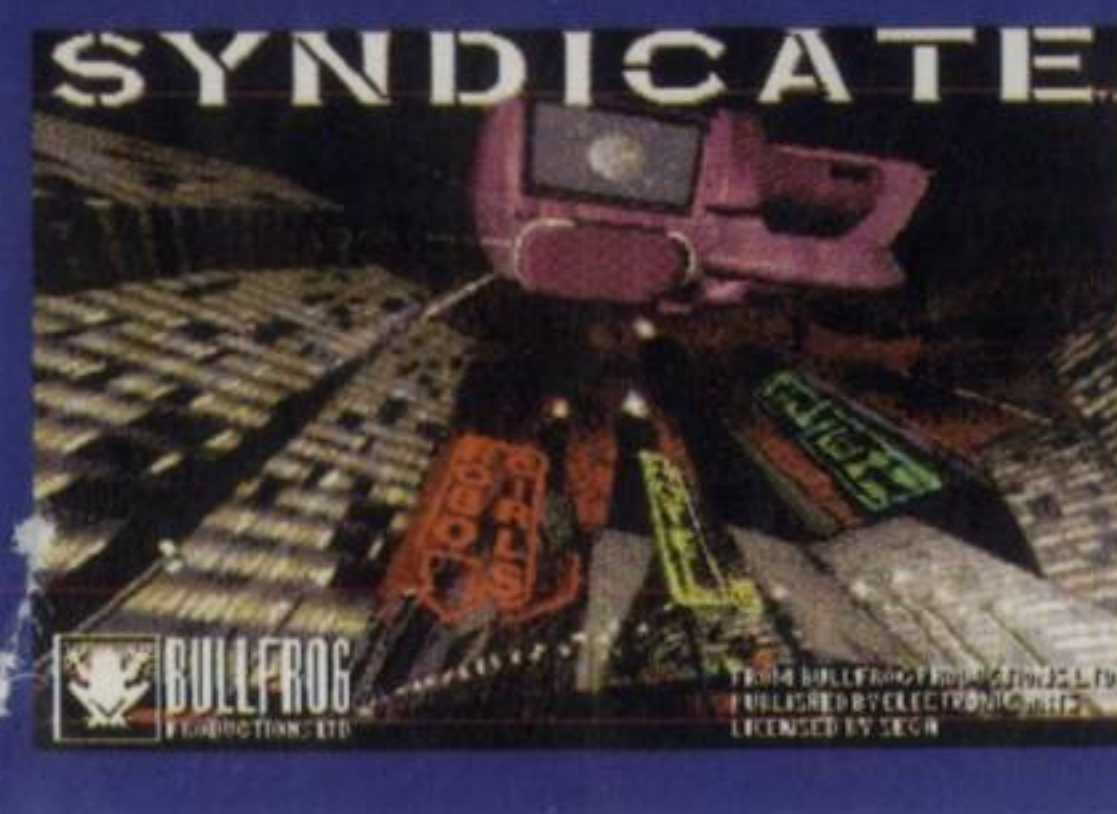
Once you've locked on with your sight you can be assured that your bullet (or whatever ammunition your weapon uses) is going in the right direction



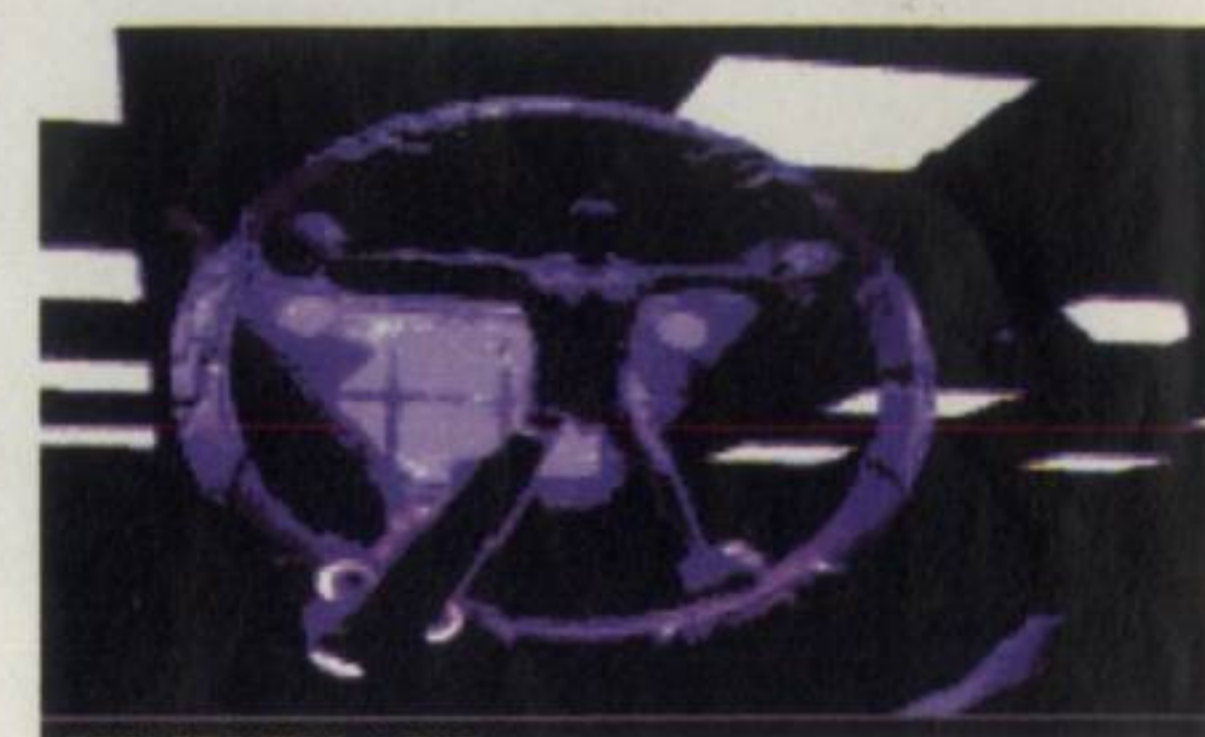
If you're getting bored with the game, you can always blow up the phone booths for a laugh. Well, it made me giggle anyway

DETAILS, DETAILS

Name: Syndicate
Development company: Bullfrog Productions
Release date: August/September '94
Size: 16 M-bit cartridge



Want to know what's going on? Then watch the intro sequence



I don't really want to know what they're doing to his leg

ATE



The rendered sequence at the start of the game is very smooth and impressive

The long intro sequence sets the scene for the entire game, and it's a real surprise that the whole thing has actually been kept in



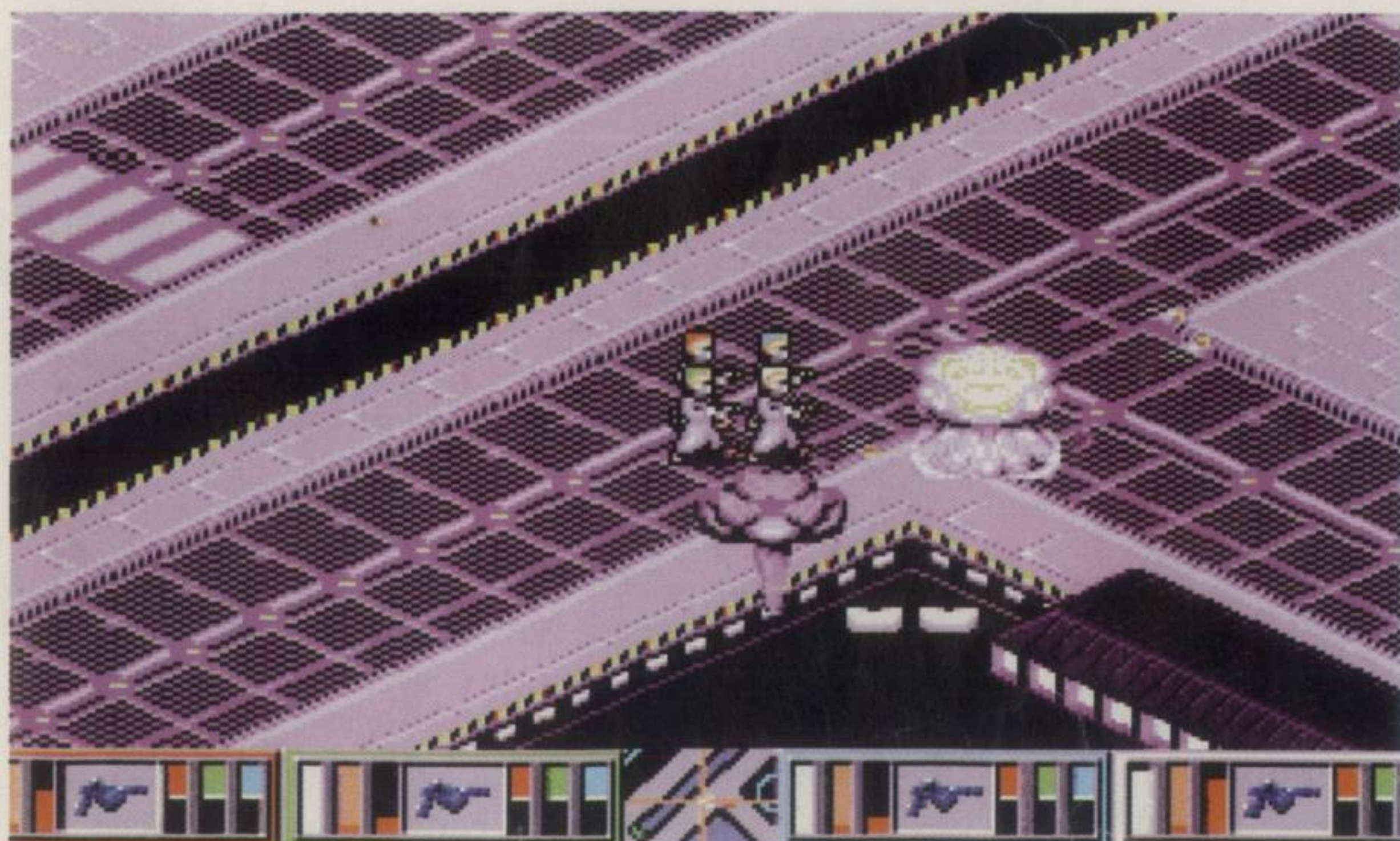
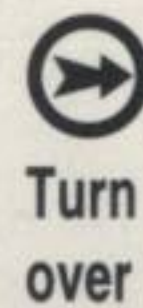
Doesn't look like your average Mega Drive game does it? Why? Because it isn't. Although *Syndicate* was a major critical and commercial success for the Amiga at the middle/end of last year, there can't be many people who thought that a Mega Drive version would be just around the corner. What with all those missions, all the tactical and strategic information and all that artificial intelligence, nobody thought the game would be ripe for a conversion. Well, just be glad that someone from Bullfrog knows just what the Mega Drive can handle.

And just in case I'm not coming across loud and clear, let me just say THE MEGA DRIVE VERSION OF SYNDICATE IS GOING TO BE JUST AS BIG, AS COMPLEX AND AS GOOD AS THE AMIGA VERSION. There, I feel a bit better now.

A TOP GAME

But just *what* exactly makes *Syndicate* such a top game? Let me set the scene... the game is set way into the future, in a world (Earth) without governments (stop cheering at the back), where everything is run by syndicates, of which there are eight. You are a high-flying wanna-be-successful executive in one of these syndicates and as such do what you're told when you're told to do it. Because you're an executive, however, you don't actually have to get your hands dirty at all, as you can delegate your "missions" to your workforce.

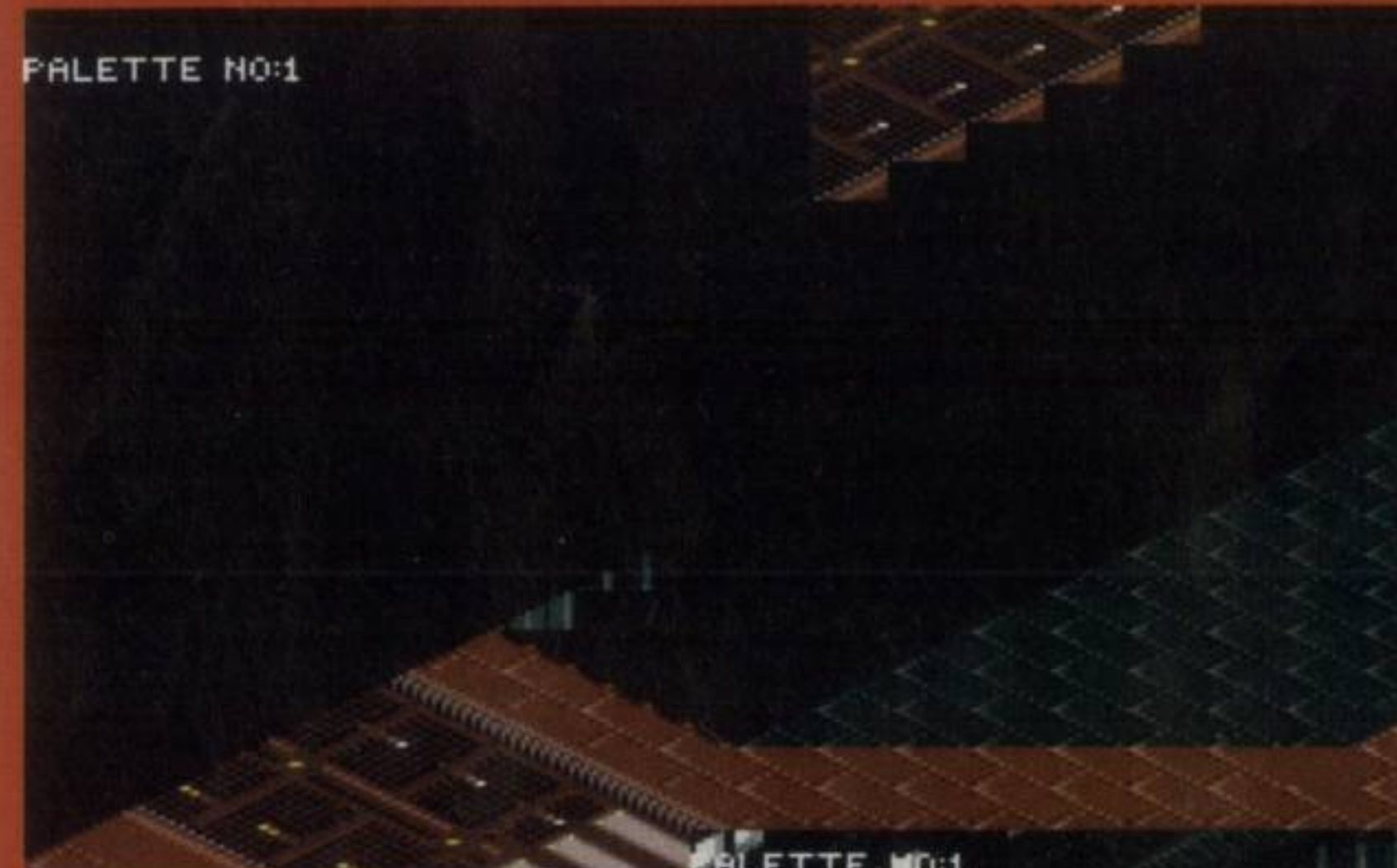
Your workforce, don't forget this is a highly technologically advanced future, consists of cyborgs – living syntheses of organic tissue and "hard" mechanical parts. By controlling the movement and



Although you can split your team up and give them different priorities, the first few missions are best handled with a full squad of cyborgs

PLANE AND SIMPLE EVERY TIME

Ever wondered just exactly what a Map Editor actually is? Well, we did we, so we decided to find out exactly how you go about defining maps and things for a game as graphically intense as *Syndicate*. What you see below are the five main layers of the same gaming screen. Each of the layers serves a certain purpose so that the characters know exactly how to react when they come up against a certain object. It's a tough and complex task, and imagine doing this process for 50 separate levels that are completely different from the Amiga version.



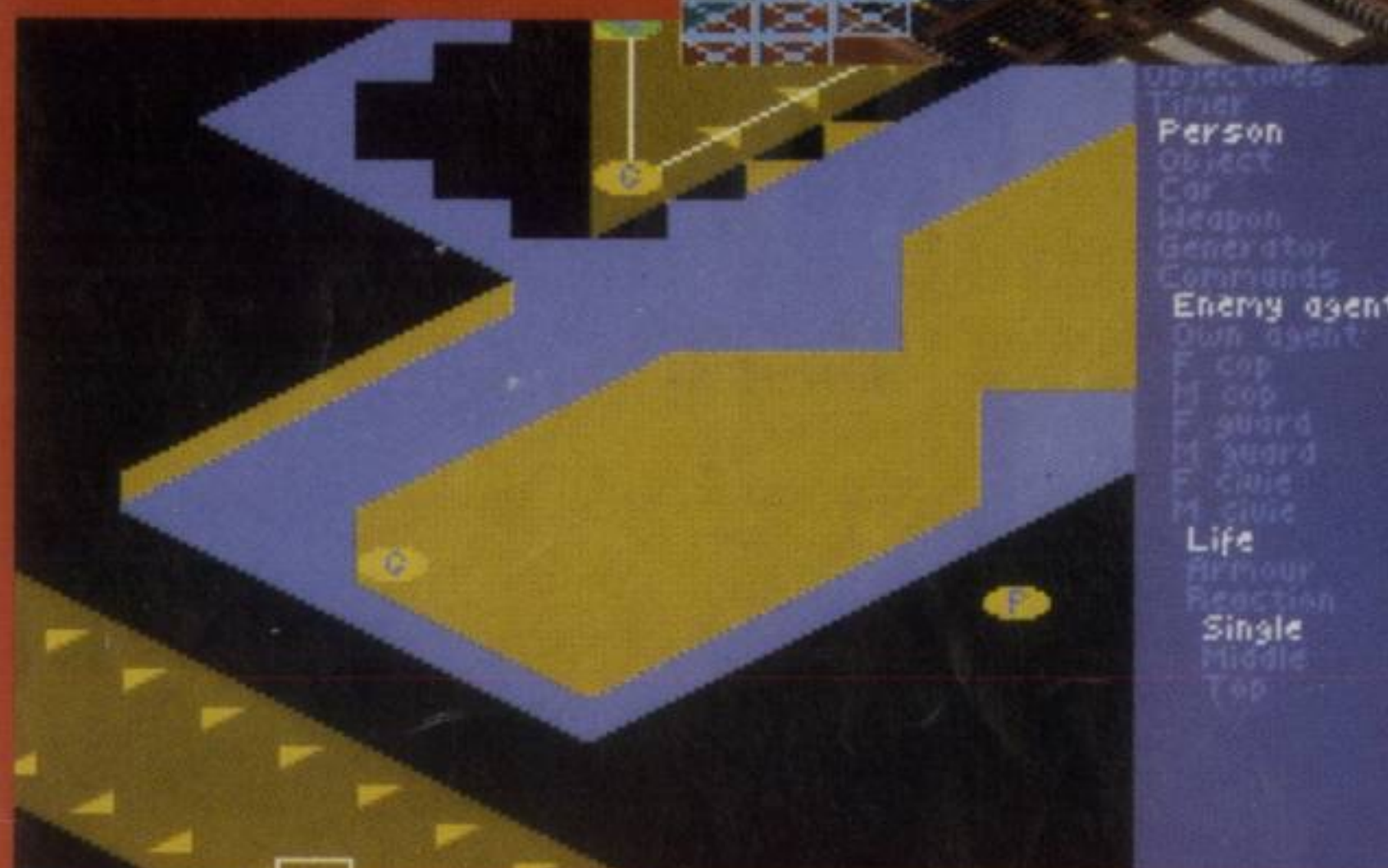
Of course the first two areas are the most important for a 3D game like this, and they are the foreground and background. It's from here that you get the feeling of depth and realism that you want in a game like this

With the foreground in, which determines where you can walk and where you can't, you can then introduce a background (like this building). Ah, but what about the sprites, how do we stop them walking into the walls?



Well, that's where the collision part of the map editor comes in. You see, these paths (the coloured bits) tell the game just what's what and what's not as well

The last parts of the level make up the priorities. After all the above information has been sorted out, this part of the editor tells the game how to display the character in the correct way, so you can still see him when you should, etc.



So what's this bit then? Well, this is the Artificial Intelligence part of the game, where you can determine the aspects of the enemy agents; what they do and how they act. Useful eh?

WHO ARE THESE BULLFROG PEOPLE THEN?

Ever heard the term "god game"? If you have, then you probably also know that it applies to games like *Populous*, *Populous II* and *PowerMonger*. What you probably don't know is that Bullfrog invented the term (and, indeed, the genre), and programmed the three games I've just mentioned as well. But hold on, *Syndicate* isn't a "god game" is it? Well no, it isn't, but it's thanks to the AI (Artificial Intelligence) engines of games like *Populous* that they can create games like this. And the success of *Populous* (the game is available on 20 different formats, and has sold over three million copies worldwide) has also helped a bit financially.

However, Bullfrog are more than aware that they can't keep bringing out various clones of *Populous* and expect the public to keep on buying them, and that's why with games like *Syndicate* and the soon-to-follow *Theme Park* they've taken the same basic theme of *Populous* and come up with some stunning new gaming ideas. You've got the all-out action strategy simulation of *Syndicate* to be shortly followed by the all-out business simulation of *Theme Park*. This not only gives you the chance to create and run your own rides and stalls but even lets you do absurd things like add salt to the chips that you sell, so that you can then get the punters to buy more drinks and as such make you more money. As you can see, Bullfrog are definitely programmers for the Nineties.



Populous is the game that started it all, and what an amazing game it is too. I mean, who could turn down the chance to rule over that many people with just a few icons for company?



Using the same sort of principle and a new artificial intelligence engine, PowerMonger took the whole concept another step down the line. Oh, and it's a really top game too



From here you decide where to go, and you can also see how much money you've got and how many territories belong to you



There's not a lot of night life around here at the moment is there? Still, you could always walk into a club and blow up some innocent bystanders

actions of these cyborgs you can complete your missions and usually blow away some enemy agents while you're at it. But there's a lot more to the game than just simply shooting agents.

When you start the game you have got very little money and only a few cyborgs with even fewer weapons, so you need to "research" for new ideas. This is the main strategic part of the game, where you need to spend the money you accrue from completing missions on researching newer and more powerful weapons. These weapons will enable you

to complete the harder missions in the game. You can also upgrade your cyborgs from the slow lumbering pieces of machinery you start with.

RESEARCH IS THE KEY

Spend too little time on research, and missions will become incredibly hard. Spend *all* your money on it, however, and you won't be able to afford to buy the products you've just researched. But how do you get hold of money? Well, once you've taken over a city by completing the mission you can then

BULLFROG BANTER

Once I'd finished playing *Syndicate* (the Bullfrog team had to drag me away), I decided to put on my investigative journalism hat, and ask Cathy Campos, Bullfrog's PR person, some deep and probing questions...

Syndicate is a violent game, in both concept and action; are you worried about the level of violence in games in general and what do you think about classification?

"I think gamers and children, in general, are able to distinguish between fantasy and real life. Cartoons such as Tom & Jerry are very violent, but I am sure no one really thinks it's real. Personally, I think that as graphics become more realistic and as technology can create what seems like a real-life violent situation, then it could be a problem. I think classification is an excellent idea. If we do not become self-regulating, then it may be imposed on us, better control stays within the industry."

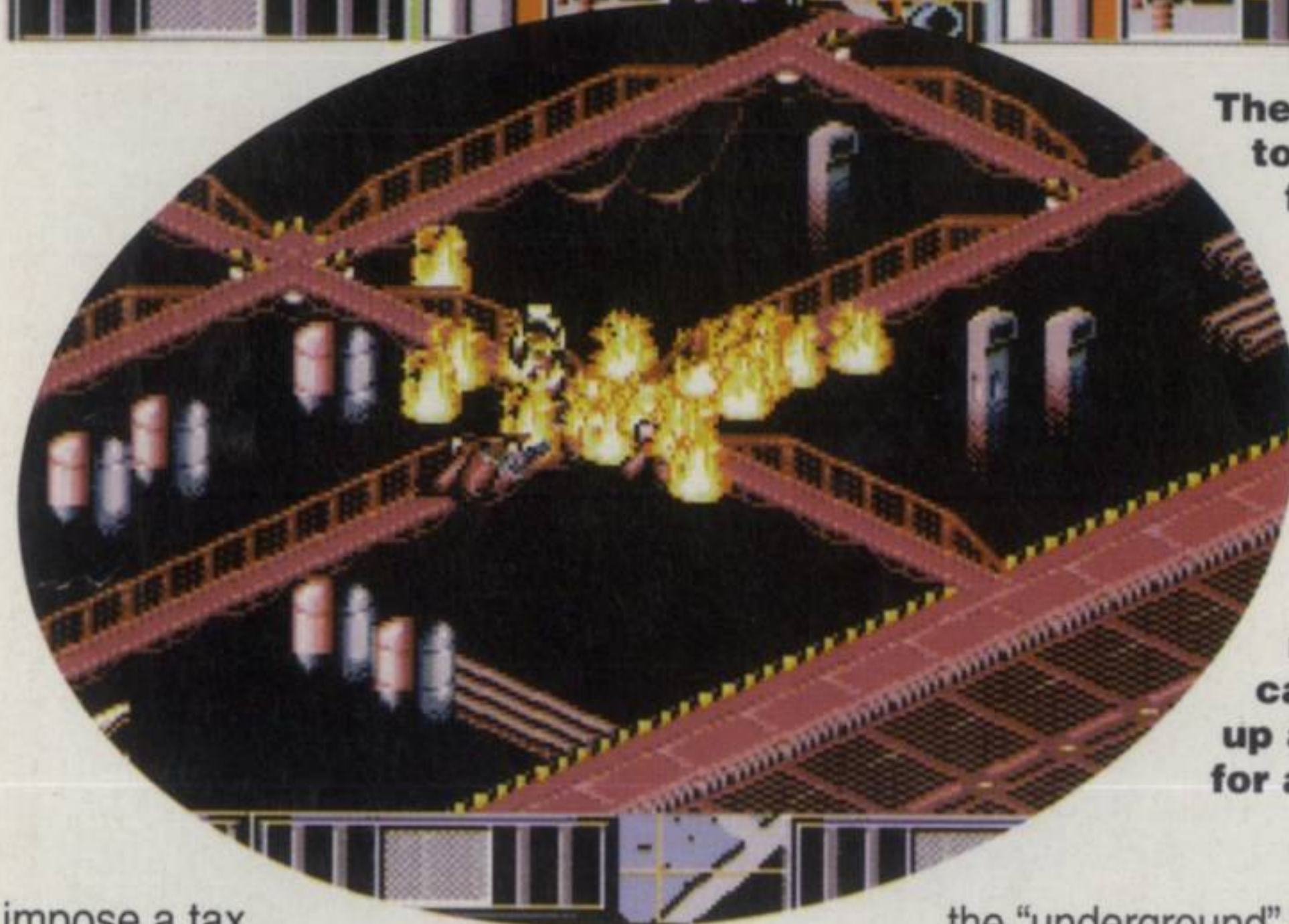
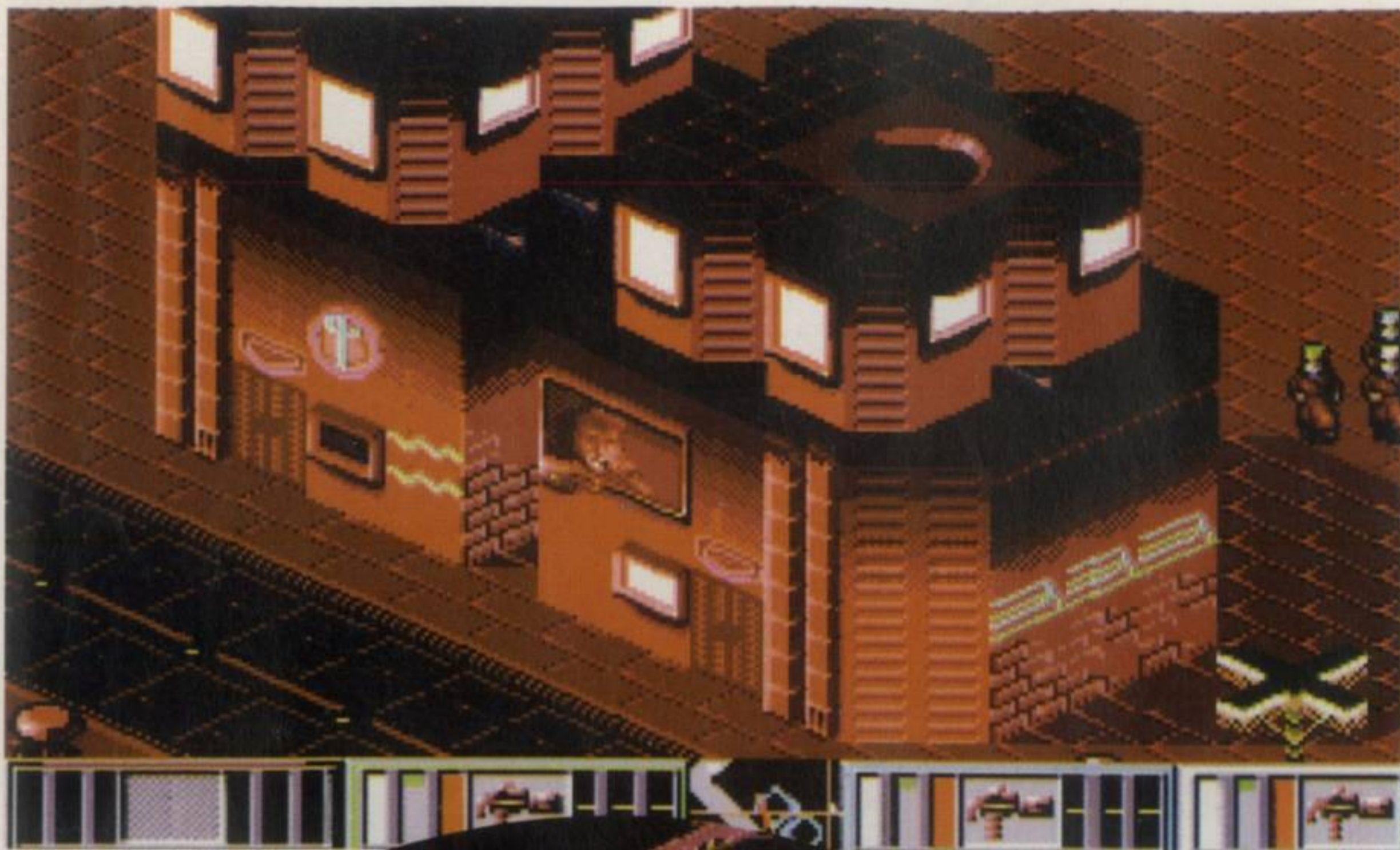
Syndicate isn't exactly an "ordinary" Mega

Drive game. What made you decide to do a Mega Drive version?

"There are several reasons why we decided to do a Mega Drive version of *Syndicate*. We have never produced an ordinary game on any format. We just thought that *Syndicate* was an excellent game, which we felt would transfer well to the Mega Drive. We also got a lot of calls from console users asking if we were planning to develop console versions of *Syndicate*, so you could say that public demand reinforced our conviction that *Syndicate* would prove to be a big hit on the Mega Drive."

Shortly after *Syndicate*, I believe you'll be releasing a version of *Theme Park*. Are there any plans to convert any other titles to the Mega Drive?

"As you know, Bullfrog are very keen to adapt a game to a format, meaning that we will substantially alter aspects of a game if we think it will enhance the playability and overall design of the program. So long as we think a program will be a good game on a console, or if we think we can change it so that it will be a good game on a console, then we will continue to convert our programs for the Mega Drive."



The attention to detail is so fab that even the advert on the side of the building includes some animation

If you're fed up with the mission, you can always blow up all your agents for a bit of a laugh

impose a tax on the population. Place it too high though (100% tax is considered a bit much in most cities), and the city will revolt, overthrow the syndicate (you) and then you'll have to do that mission all over again.

As you can see, the complex nature of the game starts off very early and gets even more complex the further you get. And it's this sort of thing that makes the game just so interesting and a real breath of fresh air for Mega Drive gamers. But don't be put off by the amount of simulation and thinking involved, because unless you can control and use your cyborgs properly you won't even take over any cities in the first place. A real match of arcade skills and thinking power, that's *Syndicate*.

As you can see from the screenshots, the graphics for the game are very dark and industrial and this sets

Syndicate and *Theme Park* are ultimately extensions on the *Populous* theme. How much further do you realistically think you will be able to take the "god game" concept?

"Apart from the fact that all three programs vastly expand the horizons of artificial intelligence in computer games and are all environment simulators, I don't see all that much similarity between the three programs. Our aim is to produce programs which are both realistic and fun to play, our limit is to try and get as real as the real world."

the "underground" feel of the game very well indeed. And even at this stage of development (there are still a few months left to go on the project) the game is very playable. However, with 50 missions to complete, there's still a lot of work to be done on the graphics, and some of the collision detection is still a bit ropey.

IN CONCLUSION

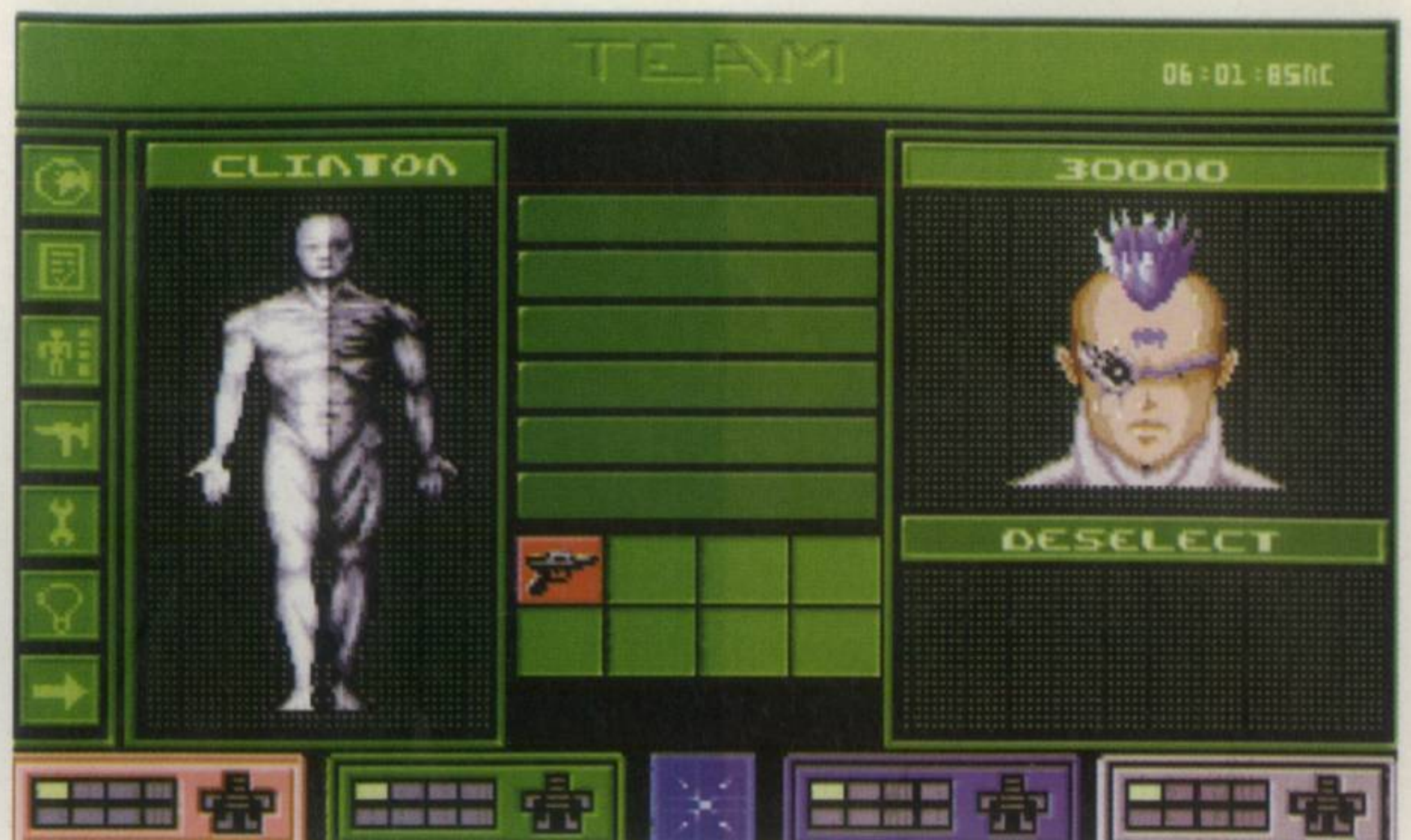
We at MEGA are really looking forward to receiving the final and playable version of *Syndicate*, but we've still got a couple of months to wait. In the meantime, take a look at the screenshots of the game, get very excited about playing it and keep buying MEGA until you can find out exactly what wonders Bullfrog have worked.



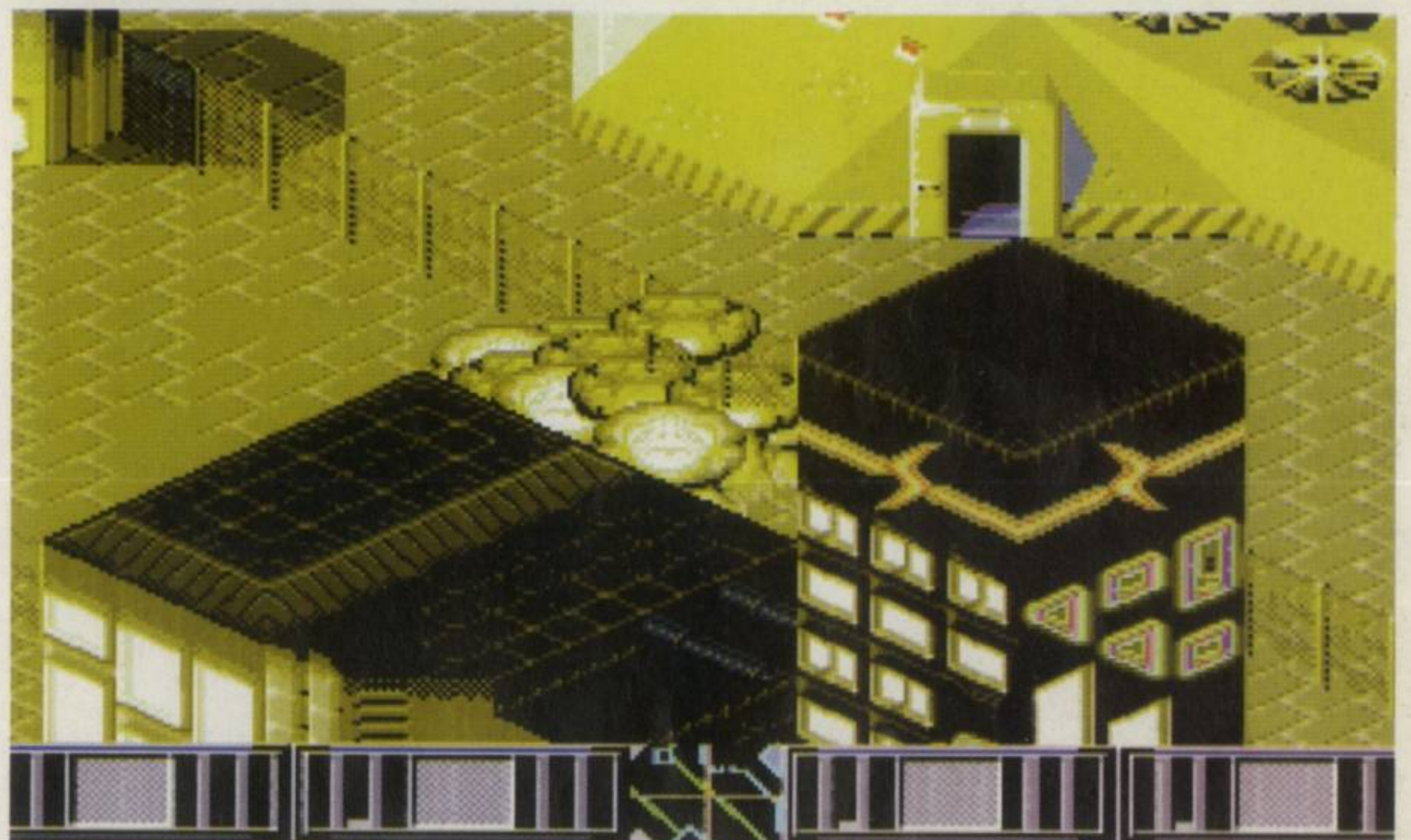
Just so you know, the enemy agents are in black



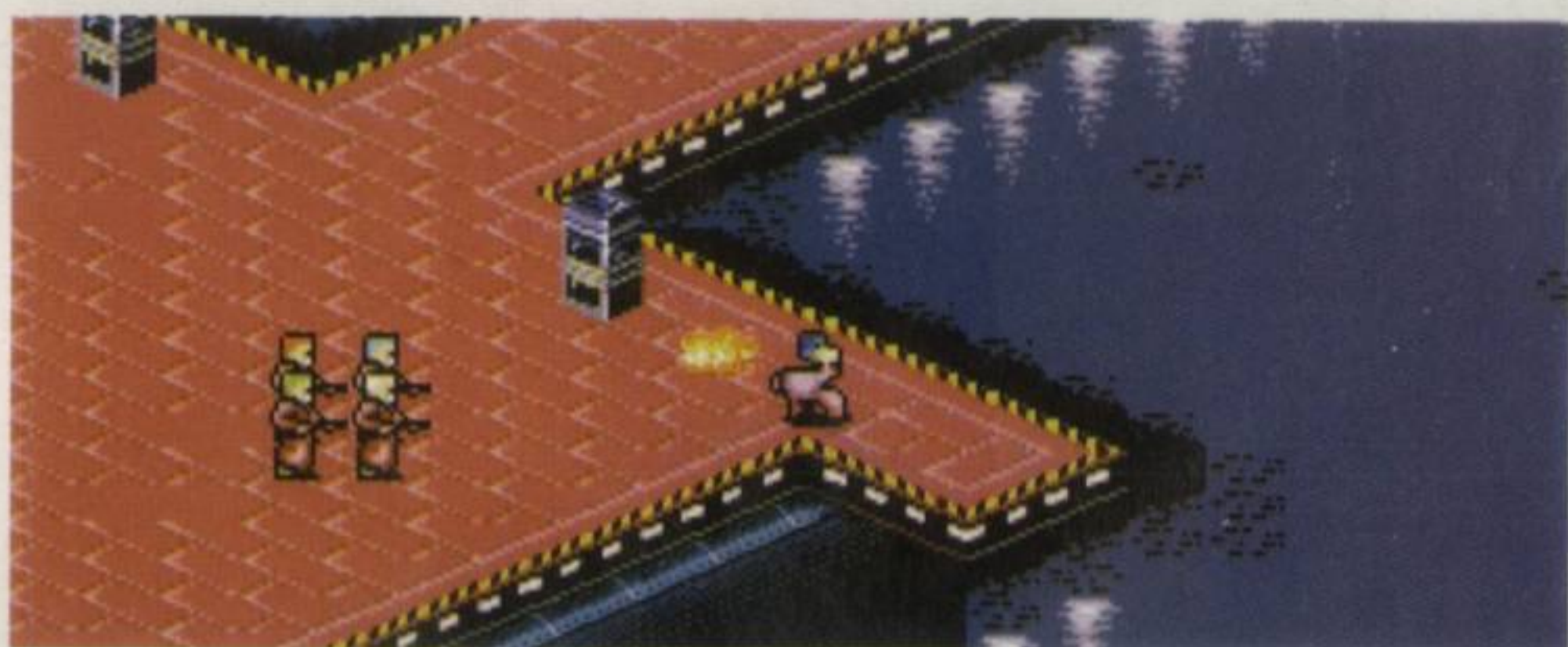
Ooh, that's a big explosion. Goodness, my ears are hurting now



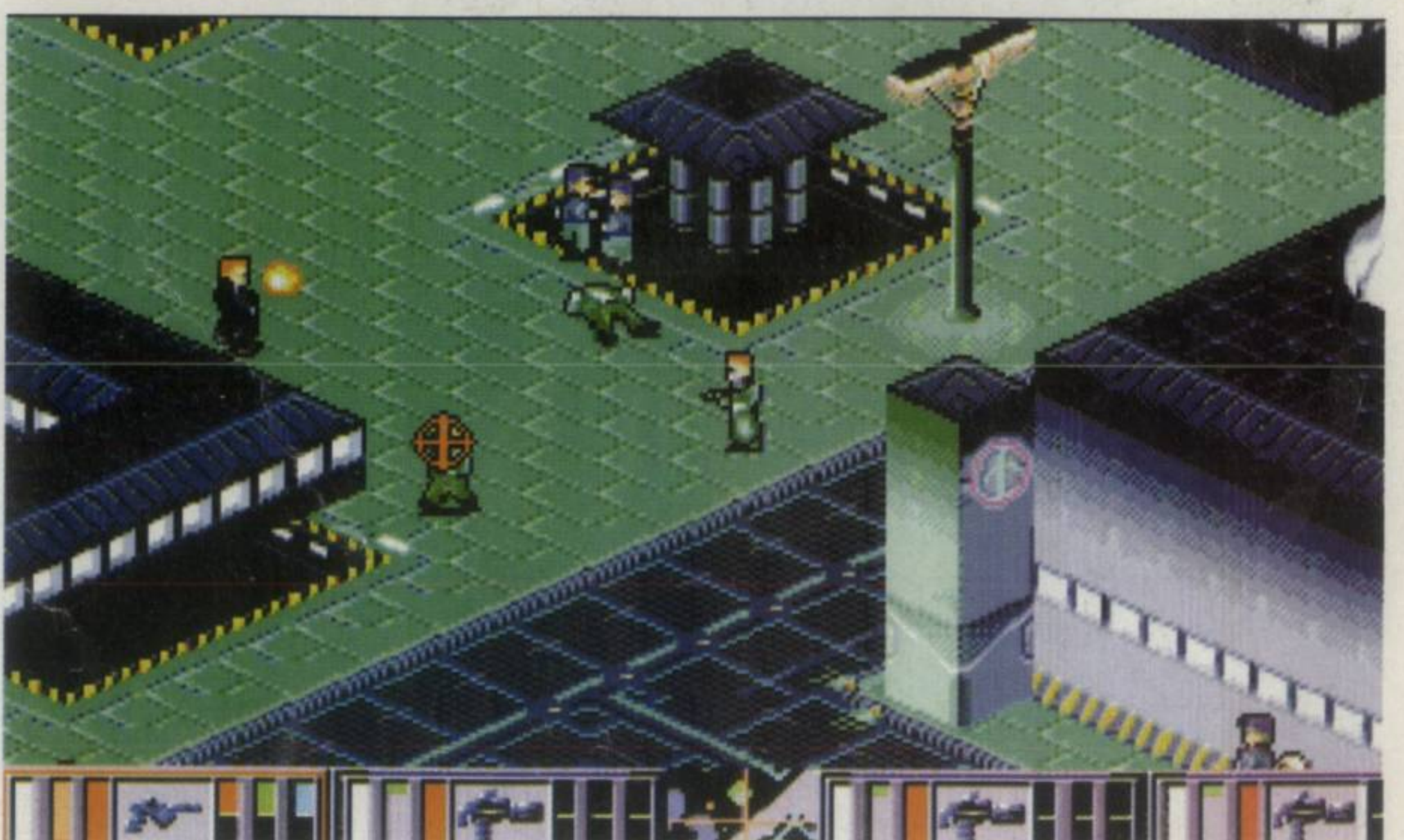
Select your cyborg and then equip him with all the weapons he could ever want to own. Do something about that haircut though, it's a bit naff



Ooer, what's going on here then? Well, we tried to get through the fence, but blew ourselves up instead. Sorry about that



Wouldn't you like to go down by the river and relax? Well tough, because you're here to shoot people so just get on with it

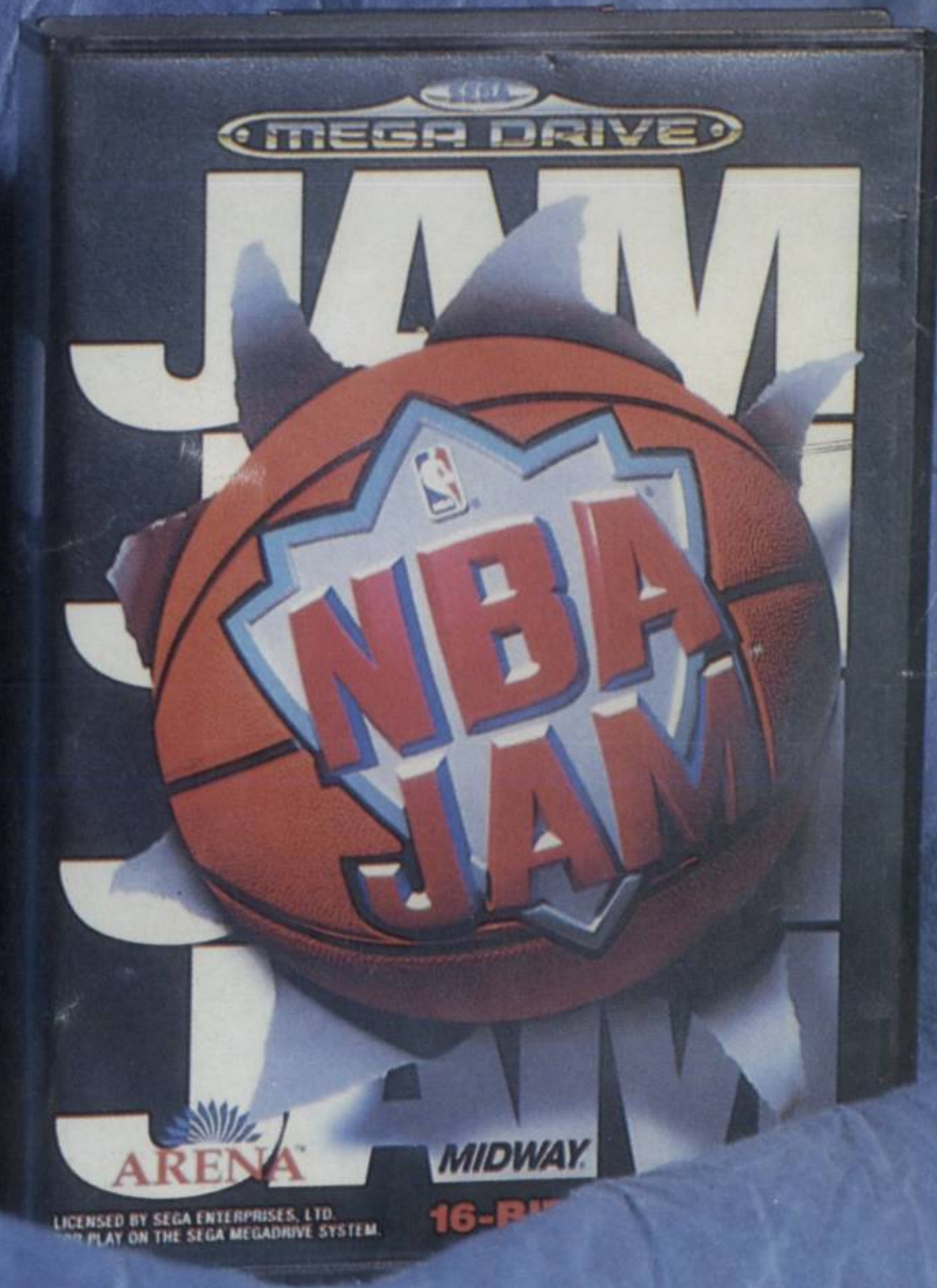
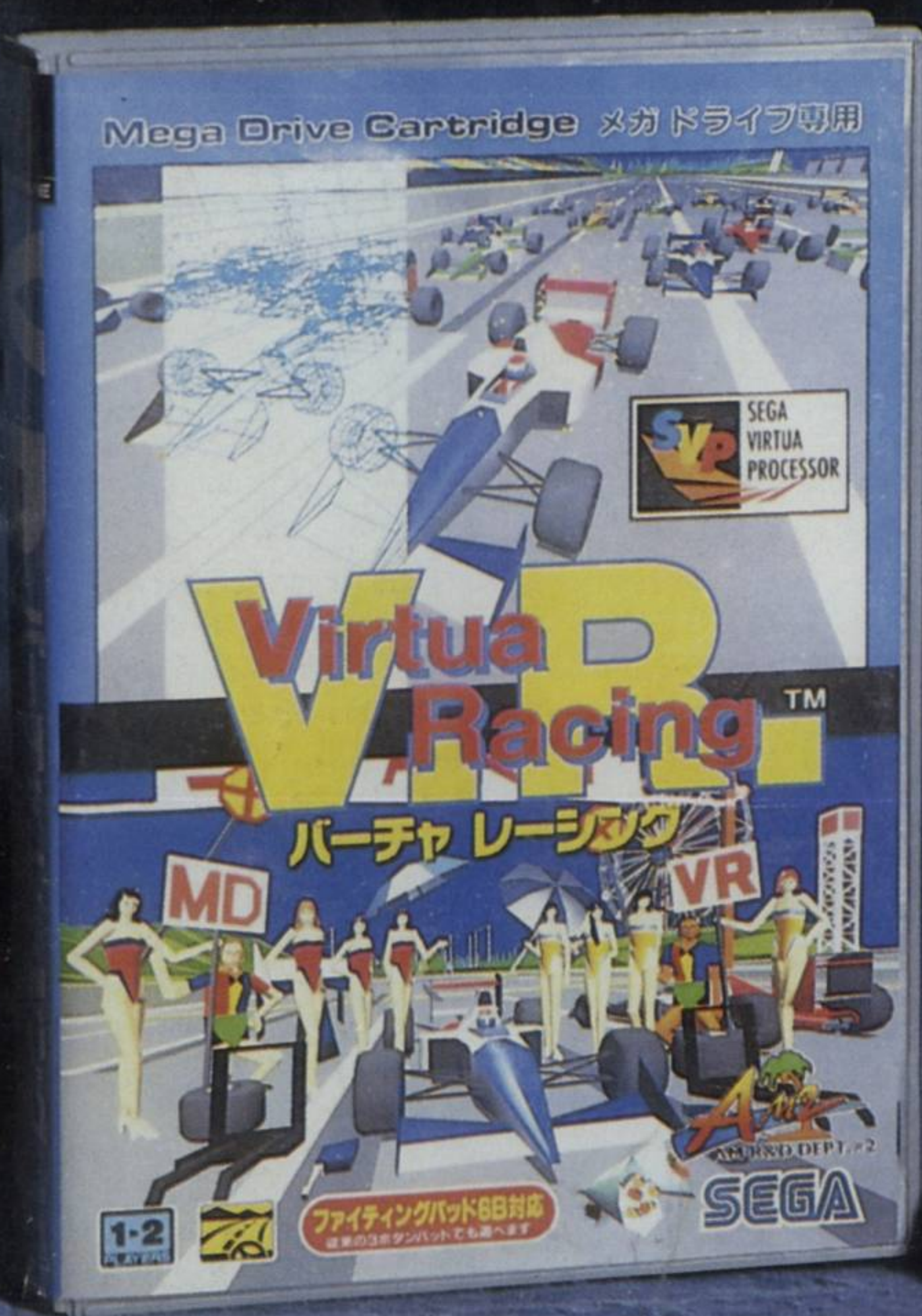


Now then, now then, let's just all calm down and see what all the fuss is about... ZAPP!... Now that wasn't very friendly was it?

Discounting Feature

The cost of carts is falling even though recommended retail prices are on the rise. In fact, gamers are benefiting from greater reductions than ever. But why? Dave Roberts talks to software retailers to find out how such hefty discounting is possible...

T D



Three carts, three very different pricepoints. *Sonic 3* was priced at £60 but could be bought for as little as £45. *NBA Jam* was pitched at £50 and stayed there, while *Virtua Racing*, with its special SVP chip, is priced at £70 and no doubt will be discounted. What on earth is going on?

THE GREAT SCOUNTING WAR

Pricing has always been a contentious issue in the Sega market. Right now it is in the spotlight for a very unusual reason; prices are coming down... sort of.

Publishers' RRP's are as high as ever, indeed with bigger and bigger carts appearing all the time, they are actually getting higher. But at the sharp end, in the shops, prices are plummeting as a vicious discounting war drives the cost of gaming away from second mortgage territory towards a more realistic level. And all this, remember, takes place to the backdrop of an on-going Office of Fair Trading investigation into the whole thorny subject of cart prices.

BAULKING AT HIGH PRICES

The story so far: Games are expensive. The best now come with 16 Meg of action but with £60 RRP's. An increasing number of consumers – possibly including you – have started to balk at paying such a high price for their games. They may not be turning their backs on Sega, but they are being ultra-selective with their purchases, waiting for a handful of gotta-get-it releases every year rather than nipping into the local shop every Saturday and just seeing what's around. This has made for an extremely competitive market place where price is the battleground.

DISCOUNT WAR...

Our Price kicked things off with the launch of their £10-off-chart-carts offer, Virgin then introduced the same offer and

soon everyone was piling in with cuts that would make a Tory councillor wince.

The whole issue was brought sharply into focus when *Sonic 3* was announced with a price tag of £60 but came out on day one of its release at £45. Since then, *NBA Jam* has managed to more or less maintain its full price status but it is very much the exception rather than the rule.

The competition is now so intense and discounting is now so entrenched at retail that, as Tony Pickup, managing director of the 77-store Future Zone chain, predicts, "It will be a very



Future Zone, CodeMasters and Sega represent three very different sides of the cart pricing issue



long time before we see any new releases or any chart product selling at full price".

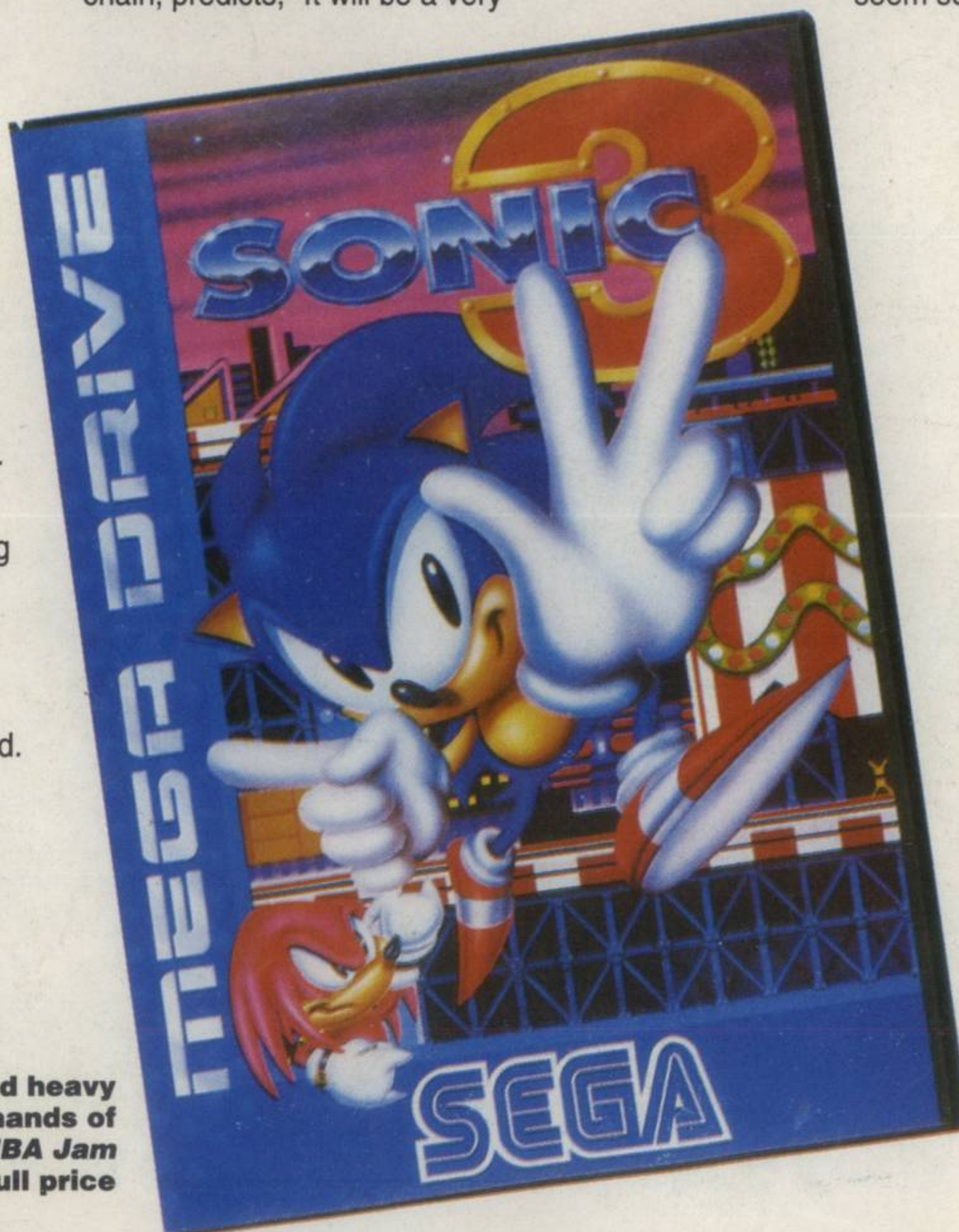
Hoorah!...ish. There is, sadly, something of a cloud to this silver lining, because while it makes a pleasant change for hearts to be light rather than pockets, retailers themselves are very concerned about the situation.

... AT THE RETAILER'S EXPENSE

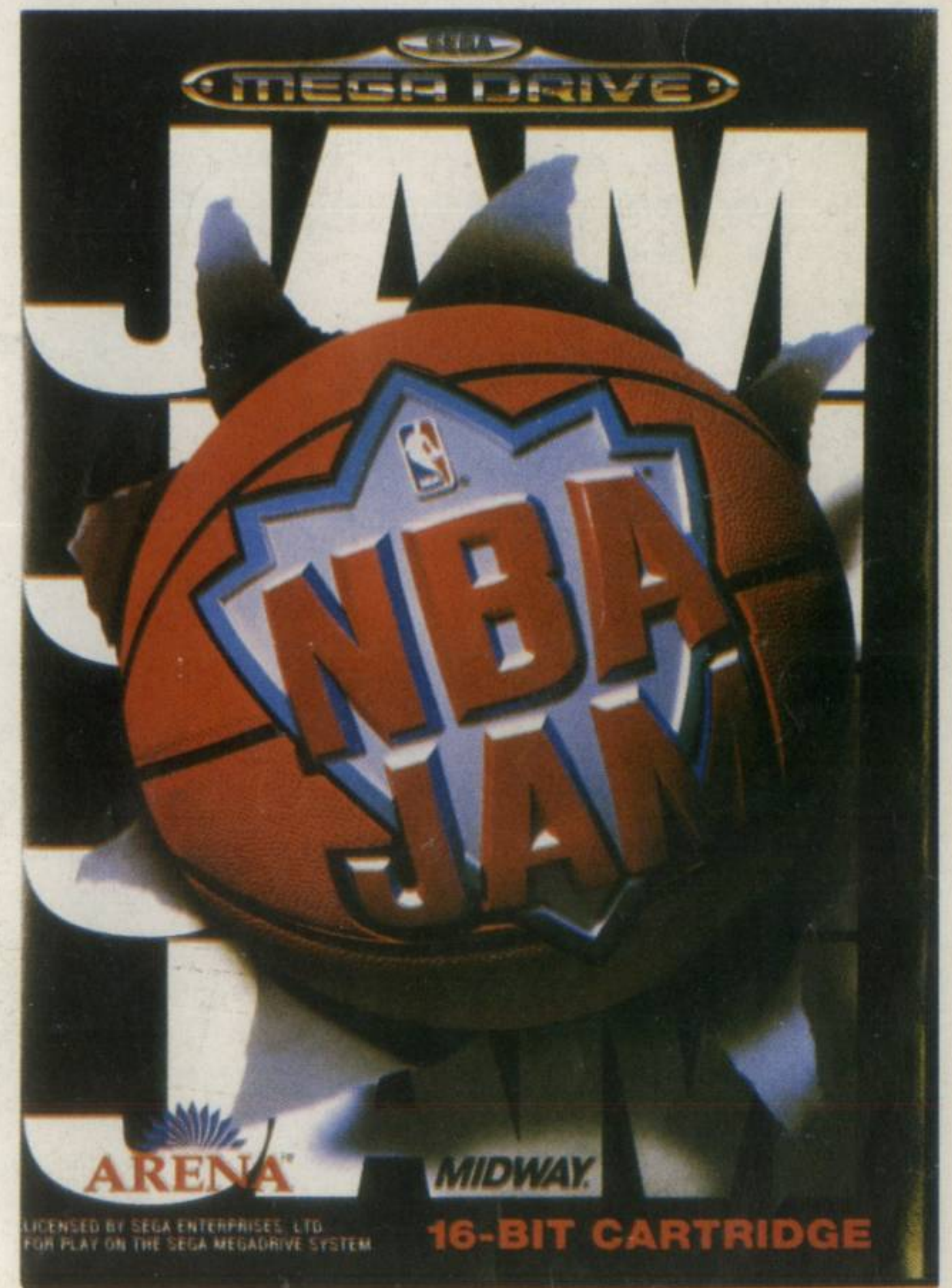
They, you might well point out, are the ones that started it all and seem set to keep it going

for months and months, but nevertheless they're very upset. They claim that with a £10 to £15 discount, they make practically nothing on a Mega Drive cartridge. The result could be that many independent stores go bust and some of the larger High Street chains abandon the market. This would still leave specialists such as Future Zone and Game Ltd, but it would severely shrink the size of the games

Turn Over



Sonic 3 experienced heavy reductions at the hands of the retailers. NBA Jam appeared at full price



Discounting Feature



Bob Faber, senior vice president of 3DO

business, bringing it into the hobbyist arena rather than the mass market.

A leading Sega publisher (who chose to remain anonymous) voices another concern: "The High Street's like a mini Yugoslavia at the moment. From the outside it just seems so complicated and you think 'well surely there must be a way of sorting this out', but on the inside it's this vicious battle where it's every man for himself.

"We're very worried about the situation because what you'll find is that sales are concentrated almost entirely into the top ten, it will kill off back-catalogue almost completely and that will limit the customers' choice in a big way."

SEGA NO WORSE OFF

At the heart of the problem is the price that Sega charge for the manufacturing of Mega Drive carts. After finishing the code, publishers (including Sega Europe) have to pay Sega of Japan around £12 to £15 for each unit manufactured. It's hard to say how much carts actually cost to produce but even if it's £5, Sega may be making over 200 per cent mark-up every time they manufacture a cart.

The firm has argued that gamers are demanding better games and that better games mean bigger games with bigger cart chips which push the price up.

Possibly, slightly, but the cost of hardware is decreasing all the time due to falling chip prices, so how expensive can software chips be? Sega aren't saying.

The high prices are made to seem even higher when compared with the increasingly large £10 to £20 "budget" ranges. A natural reaction is to wonder how these games can be sold off so cheaply. The truth is that the budget range has been bolstered by an overstock problem that saw several million unsold and ageing cartridges blocking Europe's retail channels last year and meant that retailers were

Surely with a game like *Virtua Racing*, sharp discounts are a good thing?

buying less and less new product. Sega had to get them moving and so cut the prices on a substantial number of them. The same motivation drove the firm towards compilation kings Telstar, which are now offering two-for-one Mega Drive packs for around £35. The effect in both cases is to increase public cynicism about the legitimacy of the established full price.

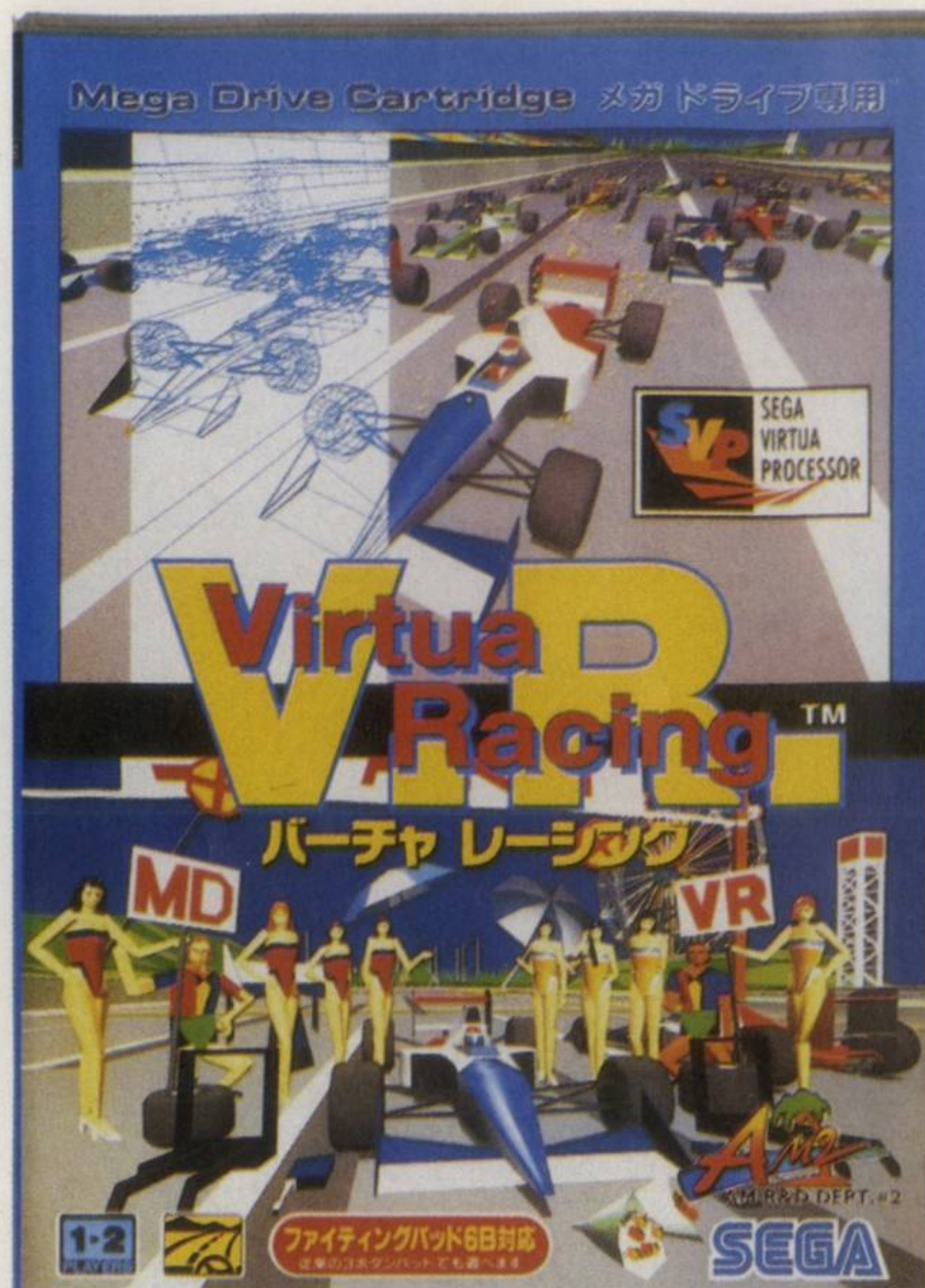
MONOPOLISTIC PRICES

Bob Faber, senior vice president of sales and marketing at 3DO – the company that wants to topple Sega with its new 32-bit CD platform – has no doubt that prices are kept artificially high by what he describes as monopolistic prices. He

believes that publishers should be allowed to buy their chips wherever they can get the best price, that anyone should be allowed to build Mega Drive carts and that the ensuing competition for what is a very

big business would drive prices down.

He comments: "When you start looking at \$100 for *Virtua Racing* you start to get beyond a level that is anything like reasonable. That sort of money for a video game is simply outrageous. It creates an atmosphere of cynicism and suspicion amongst consumers, and there is no need for it."



Publishers' RRP's are actually getting higher all the time

GENUINE VALUE FOR MONEY

One publisher that has consistently come up with good games at reasonable prices (such as *Micro Machines* at £34.99) is CodeMasters. It should come as no surprise to learn that CodeMasters is one of the few firms in the world that manufactures its own cartridges.

Managing director Richard Darling offers: "We have extra flexibility provided by our own manufacturing and



CodeMasters seem to have a policy of producing reasonably priced carts

THE OFFICE OF FAIR TRADING

The OFT has been examining the workings of Sega and the pricing of its products for over a year now.

At the start of '94, the investigation took a significant step forward when it handed the matter over to the more powerful Monopolies and Mergers Commission, which can actually recommend legislative changes to the Department of Trade and Industry.

The interest of these government bodies was sparked by what has been described as "a massive number of complaints" to the OFT from the general public, retailers and publishers.

The MMC is due to submit a report to the DTI in October.

THE SHOPS SPEAK

We wanted to know exactly how the retailers feel about the current discounting situation, so we asked the managers of four High Street stores (ones which are currently imposing substantial discounts on computer games) how they felt about the whole pricing issue. This is what they had to say...

"My overall view is that there are very, very few titles that can justify a £50 to £60 pricepoint. Generally, prices are too high and if people charged more realistic rates, then we wouldn't have this problem, because there would be more traffic going through stores and enough customers for

everyone without having to resort to desperate price-cutting tactics.

"I think that A+ products could come out at around £35 to £40 but there would only be ten of those at the most. The rest would be £25 to £30, or possibly even less.

"Certainly it's difficult to imagine people being happy about paying more than £50 when they've seen top titles like *Sonic 3* at £44.99. They'll think 'well if they didn't want me to pay £50 for *Sonic*, how dare they ask me for £50 for anything else?'"

GERRY BERKLEY
Games Manager, HMV

Discounting Feature

CDS CONTINUE TO COST MORE

Many thought that the arrival of the Mega CD might herald a new era of more reasonable prices. It hasn't. In all but a few cases, CD games are just as expensive as cart games and even the exceptions are not priced at anything like the level of music CDs.

Sega's European boss, Nick Alexander, concedes that the production cost of a CD is about ten per cent of that of a cart (most estimates actually put the cost of the manufacturing of a Mega CD, including packaging, at under a pound) but still insists that the £50-plus pricepoints are justified.

EA pass CD savings on to the consumer

He explains: "The development costs are, on average, five times higher than on cart but the real drawback at the moment is that potential sales volumes are limited because of a limited installed base."

"Typically, a good title might do 500,000 on cartridge and only 50,000 on Mega CD. When you combine those factors, the production costs of CDs are actually 50 times more per unit."

Another reason for the high prices, however, is based more on greed than on logic. Firstly, Mega CD represents new technology. Manufacturers always charge more for new technology and customers expect to pay more for new technology. This means that the Mega CD is currently enjoying a period during which it can quite simply get away with charging high prices.

Secondly, if you can get a nice shiny CD that plays fast, visually stunning games, loads of video footage and a rockin' soundtrack for £15 to £20, how is it going to look if the same company is charging

£60 for a couple of vaguely interesting looking sprites slugging it out in a game which is of the same standard as hundreds of others before it? Cheap CDs would make the expensive carts look very, very dodgy by comparison.

Alexander claims that as the installed base of CD machines increases then the low manufacturing cost will begin to play a part and prices will start to fall.

There is an argument that says lower priced CDs would make the hardware platform more attractive and so would actually help build an installed base more quickly, but it's not an argument that has convinced Sega, not yet.



Sega's Nick Alexander justifies £50 CD prices



Should CD games really be cheaper?

they don't want to. High Street prices are falling at the moment but that is despite, rather than because of, Sega and their third parties.

FIGHTING FOR A SHARE OF A SHRINKING MARKET

And they are not falling from concern for the consumer or any desire to offer real value for money, they are falling because after a period of phenomenal growth, the games market is now in something of a hiatus between the glory days of the Mega Drive and the arrival of a truly mass market next-generation console.

Simply, people aren't buying as many games as they were, and retailers are fighting harder and harder to retain their share of a shrinking market. That

is why your local games store is offering the best new releases at £10 to £20 off and while the discounting is welcome, it's actually a sign of a market that is in something approaching a crisis and is not being helped one jot by publishers' insistence that games should sell at between £50 and £60. All the reductions

that you are getting are being taken out of the retailers' margin; Sega and the rest still charge stores just as much as ever

for the product. If Sega carry on, however, it might just be *them* that end up paying a very high price indeed.

Turn over the page to find out exactly why Sega are imposing bigger RRP's on carts than ever before...



The Codies J-Cart offers cheap four-player fun

we use that to try and give the consumer value for money.

"That doesn't always mean

publishing low-price carts. We'd never go to the shockingly high levels of some publishers (£65 to £70) but we will release premium price products. The difference is

we will build something in that means it is genuine value for money.

"There will be a J-Cart series of products, for instance, which will be cartridges with two joystick ports built into the back of them, enabling four players to participate and eliminating the need to buy a four-player adaptor."

The first game will be *Tennis All Stars*, and it looks likely to retail at around £50. A standard four-player adaptor costs between £25 and £30 and so the value for

money is undeniable. And if CodeMasters can do it, the question has to be, why can't everybody else?

After listening to a series of embarrassing silences punctuated by the odd flimsy excuse over the last few years, the real answer might just be that

With a £15 discount, retailers make practically nothing on a cart

While discounting is welcome, it's a sign of a market approaching crisis

"I think it's a result of the market being smaller and everyone having to fight very hard for their share. It's also a question of having to maintain credibility with customers by offering realistic levels of pricing."

DAVE KING

Games Manager, Virgin

"I hope that the NBA Jam launch proved a point; that some titles can take a premium pricepoint and if no one cuts, then the product will still sell."

PAUL LLOYD-ROACH

Operations Director, Game Ltd.

"We at Future Zone aren't in favour of a price war, but now that there's one going on, we'll win it. If discounting is the way people choose to be measured, then we're not interested in matching anyone, we'll simply beat them."

"This is going to go on for some time, and the likelihood is that it will squeeze out some independents and frighten off some of the department stores."

TONY PICKUP

**Managing Director
Future Zone**

THE CASE FOR THE DEFENCE

Despite the discounts retailers are having to impose to stay in the computer games market, Sega's RRP's are as high as (if, no higher than) ever. Here are the reasons why...

1 EXCHANGE RATES
Sega – and the whole European games market for that matter – are at the mercy of international exchange rates. And during the last couple of years the mighty Japanese yen has shown no mercy whatsoever. In 1993 it rose by 35 per cent and knocked official price cuts right off the agenda.

The story goes something like this. Sega Europe have to buy their carts from Sega of Japan and they have to pay in yen. In 1992 if Sega of Japan charged 2,106 yen for a cart, that would have cost Sega Europe £10.

Now, if Sega of Japan charge 2,106 yen, it costs Sega Europe £13.50. Sega of Japan aren't actually charging any more for the goods, but Sega are paying an extra £3.50. Their profit margin has been squeezed and the last thing they want to do is sell on to retailers at a lower price.

The other interesting exchange equation is a comparison of retail prices in the world's two biggest markets; the US and Europe. In the States, the average price of new Mega Drive software is \$40. At current exchange rates this works out at £33.50. It has to be pointed out, however, that this is not a completely fair comparison, and this is why...

Firstly, the UK price includes a 17.5 per cent cut for the Government. Secondly, US retailers traditionally take a far smaller margin than UK stores. As Sega's president, Nick Alexander, points out: "Over there it's the norm to pump up the volume and settle for low margins. Over here, heavy discounting such as we're seeing now is newsworthy." So there you have it.

2 VALUE FOR MONEY
The theory here is that while you might pay more for a video game than in the US, the challenge of completing it coupled with (hopefully) addictive gameplay will bring you back time after time. This means you will rack up hour after hour of enjoyment for your money and in the end the time/cost ratio will even out with that of a movie or album.

There are a few Mersey-tunnelish size holes in this one. Firstly, try telling it to someone who bought *Revolver* in '66, *Exile on Main Street* in '72 or even *Nevermind* in '91. Did they, perchance, play them to death for weeks after they bought them and is there not just a remote possibility that they still dig them out for a quick blast now and again?

Secondly; the movies. Well yes, they do only last a couple of hours or so but, contrary to rumours, length doesn't guarantee enjoyment. A film may be over in 120 minutes but its impact and the enjoyment gained from it can last an awful lot longer. Whole lives have been based around *Spinal Tap* and, sad but true, entire wardrobes were inspired by *Saturday Night Fever*.

Finally; *T2 – Judgement Day*. This is



A cart should keep you playing. T2, sadly, fails to give value for money

a bit specific perhaps, but you get the point. Some games are, frankly, rather duff and sometimes after parting with your hard-earned (perhaps the licence grabbed you or you may foolishly have trusted a review from a less reputable source than dear ol' MEGA) you will find yourself with a game that couldn't provide nano-seconds of vague interest let alone hours of enjoyment.

3 PRODUCTION COSTS
State-of-the-art technology, multimedia studios, cutting edge development tools, er, silver clothes, jargon, keep using long words and hope no one understands.


Games, you see, are technology and technology costs big bucks. Besides, every time you make a game you have to invent all sorts of incredibly expensive machines that go beep just to make sure it's better than the last one.

On top of all that, CD games mean that you also have to incorporate video production costs and book studio time for the soundtrack, etc. That is why games, complicated, high-tech games, cost more than music or film.

Yeah, right. And The Stone Roses are in and out in an afternoon and Primal Scream buy their own drugs.

As for the movies? When was the last time you settled back to enjoy the latest £100 million game after paying about a fiver for the privilege?

4 MARKET FORCES
If the prices were unfair, people wouldn't pay them. Well guess what? All the evidence suggests that high prices are putting people off regular purchasing and that Mega Drive owners are saving their money for one or two real biggies per year.

This makes for a very, very tough market and will ultimately mean restricted choice and limited variety as a few brave companies gamble on getting an *NBA Jam* and the rest opt out in case they end up with *TOYS*. 

SEGA SAY...

Well actually Sega say very little. They can't really, as Retail Price Maintenance was made illegal in 1973 and so Sega have to be seen to be totally disinterested in the price at which retailers sell their products. Their every utterance will also be examined in detail by the ever-mindful Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

All Sega Europe's usually ebullient president, Nick Alexander, would offer in the company's defence was that "if customers are getting what they want for £15 less, I would imagine they are very happy".

There's no doubt, however, that privately Sega are concerned about high prices tarnishing their image with the general public and, although these cuts cannot be attributed in any way directly to themselves, they will take some credit as the price reductions are seen on the High Street as *Sega* price reductions (even though Sega themselves are selling the product at exactly the same high price they have always sold at and the retailers are cutting their own margin in order to offer discounts).

Sega are being a little more pro-active in other ways. The introduction of the Mega Drive 32 peripheral has been partly inspired by a desire to keep away from the £100 price points that would have been inevitable if the 32-bit hardware chips required to play *Virtua Fighters* and games of that ilk had been included in the software every time.

Now, Sega are keen to point out, Mega Drivers can make one payment for the hardware improvements and then buy games that support it at more reasonable prices. (OK, £60 is a lot, but it's better than £100.)

One senior source told us: "At £100 you are not looking at a mass market, you are looking at a specialist market, a hobbyist market – that's not something that interests us. Mega Drive 32 means those sort of price tags can be avoided and the next generation of software will be affordable."



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This month, in the frantic search for a question, we ask "know any good conspiracy theories?"

SIXTEEN REVIEWS

26 MARKO'S MAGIC FOOTBALL
A small boy named Marko defeats his various enemies with his ever trusty football. It's how kids learn in Brazil.

30 PETE SAMPRAS TENNIS
Tennis games are ten a penny, but this one comes in the form of a J-Card. What's that then? Eh? Turn to page 30 to find out.

32 STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
New crew, new ship, new effects, new sets and the same stupid plots. Good, bad, indifferent? Find out on page 32.

34 TOMCAT ALLEY
Nothing to do with cats, actually. Or alleys. More a sort of huge fighter plane extravaganza than a pet show.

36 AX-101
They said it couldn't be done, but here's a game you can finish during an interval of Brookside, and you won't even miss a second of your favourite soap.

37 NBA ACTION
Basketball fun with the guys from the NBA. Drive to the line. Jam it in! Um, put it in the hole thing!

38 DARK WIZARD
More CD-based role-playing tomfoolery. Insomniacs rejoice!

39 SHADOW OF THE BEAST 2 CD
It's like the old game but on a... no, hang on. It's a new CD-based edition of an old game.

40 INSTRUMENTS OF CHAOS: STARRING YOUNG INDIANA JONES
The star of this game is like old Indy, but younger, for some reason.

41 FIDO DIDO
Remember Cool Spot? Well this bloke's the European equivalent of that bloke. But is the game as good?

42 SENSIBLE SOCCER CD
It's a new CD based... no, done that. It's like the old game but on a CD, which means lots and lots of CDage, or something.

43 SHADOWRUN
Something of an oddity, this one. Let our friendly reviewer explain. Please.

44 ROUND-UP
This is the part of the reviews section where you will find the worst and most obscure games currently available.

ANDY DYER

"Well, it's funny you should ask me that, because, um... no, I don't." Andy you see, only knows one thing; games. And what's he picked as his game of the month? "*Marko's Magic Football*, for its ability to induce foul language."



"Gorgeous to look at, but it gets annoyingly difficult towards the end"



MARKO'S MAGIC FOOTY - PAGE 26

PAUL MELLERICK

Paul wasn't prepared to answer this month's question, but he did say that his game of the month was Top Car Annie. He must mean *Tomcat Alley*. He never could spell. He told us that he'd only picked this game cos "it's the best of a bad lunch".



"Very frenetic, very nicely shot, but just too darn repetitive"



TOMCAT ALLEY - PAGE 34

JOSSE BILSON

"Ah, yes. I think you'll find that plants are controlling the Earth's economy from the Kew Botanical Gardens, and that very soon we - I mean *they* - will emerge to take their place at the head of society. And my game of the month is *Star Trek*."



"If you're just a normal person, you'll get bored of this fairly quickly"



STAR TREK - PAGE 32

JON SMITH

"No, I'm not going to answer that question. I have nothing to hide, as my lawyer, who takes a very dim view of this sort of damaging speculation, will make clear. Oh, and *Pete Sampras Tennis* is my fave game of the month."










"The built-in four-player option bumps up the score quite substantially"



PETE SAMPRAS TENNIS - PAGE 30

REVIEWS

QUICK KEY

-   Does this import game come from the US or Japan?
-  How many people can play the game?
-  How many skill levels are there in the game?
-  A good one this, how many lives do you have? Important too.
-  Is there a battery back-up or password system?
-  How many stages do you have to play?

MARCO'S

"Good morning, I'd like a weapon with which to save the world from being overrun by sludge monsters."

"Certainly Sir, we have guns, missile launchers and grenades. What do you fancy?"

"No, no. Actually I had my eye on that football over there."

Andy Dyer sighs then gets on with the review...



This is a map of the play area. It's quite big really and contains 13 levels, the first 10 of which are fairly easy and the rest of which are bloody hard

The bloke on the right is, allegedly, a scientific genius. But if he's so bloody clever, why hasn't he invented some hair restorer which works, or bought some contact lenses for that matter? Yeah, tell me that eh?



There's something very strange about this bloke. He has a tiny head, but if you kick the ball at him, he swallows it whole and his head goes all big and round. But that's all he does. Nothing else. He serves no useful purpose



This is the training area. It's Marko's back yard and it's full of targets so that you can practise all your moves. You can kick the ball at three different heights, head it, jump on it, crouch and do a running kick

One morning, a very long time ago, a bored pig farmer thought it would be quite a laugh to slaughter one of his pets, inflate its bladder and kick it around a bit with a few of his mates. Whenever the bladder ended up at the far end of the field, the pig farmers would shout "oink" and a point would be gained. During heated bouts, the farmers would often punch each other's lights out and the cry of "chicken" would go up. Even back then the English were looked upon as more than a little strange for playing this game, and

the Americans especially had a hard time getting to grips with it.

So it was that in order to popularise it, the National Bladderball League changed the name to football, introduced words such as "goal" and "foul" into the game and once again tried to sell the idea to the rest of the world. And it worked, apart from in America, where they simply said "Gee, isn't that a bit of a faggot's game?" and proceeded to reinvent rugby but with loads of protective pads in it.



This pony-tailed wench appears all over the place, and when you get near her she takes a photograph of you. "Why?" I hear you cry. Well, she's a restart point you see, and when you die, you only go back to the last girl you met

MAGIC FOOTBALL



THE WORLD CUP

Football grew and grew in popularity and with the advent of the video-games industry, all the couch potato fans with their 40 tabs a day and 12 pints a night lifestyle could actually begin to participate in the game from the comfort of their own armchairs. Still the Americans were unconvinced. Try as we might to sneak some soccer games into the States and take them on their blindside, all they could offer was, "Soccer sims huh? Hell no, let's design another baseball sim".

So one day, a small chap wandered up to America and said, "Psst! Wanna buy a World Cup competition? Think of the marketing opportunities. And the best part is, even though you're crap at soccer, you get to play anyway because you're the host country. Neat huh?".

"Wow, that's incredible," replied America. "We'll take two."

"Hmm..." said the small bloke, finally realising the extent of this country's inability to understand, and handed over the contract. All of a sudden, soccer was the biggest thing in the US and all



over the world (but for some reason



... Haaaa, whooo, hooo, heee, haa... (Paul, why don't you kick his teeth in? - Jon) (He's not worth it - Paul)



How did this picture of Paul Mellerick get in here? Ha, haaaa...

all the English people went a bit quiet and sheepish over the course of 1994), and video game after video game was suddenly thrust into the market.

This is just about the point at which Domark came in. A game designer working there (who coincidentally happened to be a direct descendent of a certain pig farmer) went to the

management and said, "Ere, oi've aad this great oidea for a game loik! Why don't 'ee make a footie game about this bloke what 'as got to save the earf from a terrible slime-related tragedy and he aint got no weapons but a special football?".

"Ah," said the management. "Very well done master Grumbleweed. Your idea is monumentally stupid on two counts. For one thing, during the year in which football's single most important event takes place, you propose releasing a game which, as such, has no football action in the traditional sense. And second,

your outline sounds very much like a game called *Soccer Kid*, which appeared on the Amiga and SNES quite some time ago. Your idea, it would appear, is, while very, er, zany, just a little unoriginal and spectacularly misses the whole point of 1994 in respect



... Waaa, haaaa, haaaaa, hoo, hooo, he, haaaa, did you hear that Jon?...

of the whole soccer thing. Bigger off!"

Understandably miffed, the designer showed them a working version of his game which he'd knocked up the night before. "You see," he said grinning like a Cheshire Pratt, "It's got a gert load of 'orrible slimey things in it. Hur, hurr!".

"Yes, we see," said the management, slightly irritated by the man but at the same time very suddenly realising that the game was just a bit smart. "Leave it on my desk and I'll get back to you on it."

"Urr, oi thank 'ee very much," said the bumpkinesque gamester as he contentedly wandered out of



Heh, heh... Ahem. Sorry. Here's a ghost. Normally, meeting spirits would be frightening beyond measure but Marko simply kills them with his ball. Mind you, it could be worse, he could meet up with Mellerick. Waaaah, haa...



... I said, where did that picture of Paul come from? Heh, hee, heeee...

the management's office whistling a poor rendition of "Blackbird, oi'll 'ave 'ee".

CLASSIC GAMEPLAY?

The management immediately picked up the phone, pressed the direct line button to The Boss (not Bruce Springsteen you understand, but the large, intimidating and rather sinister Boss of Domark) and explained what had just happened.

"It was Grumbleweed who designed this thing you say?" said The Boss in a tone that could put the willies up a marine.

"Yes Sir," said the management.

"Then stop wasting my time, the man's a



Turn over



(Jon, could you get Andy to fill this caption in when he gets back from the dentist? - Paul) (I'll do it - Jon)



For those unfamiliar with this sort of thing, the technical name for it is "workman's arse". Very unpleasant

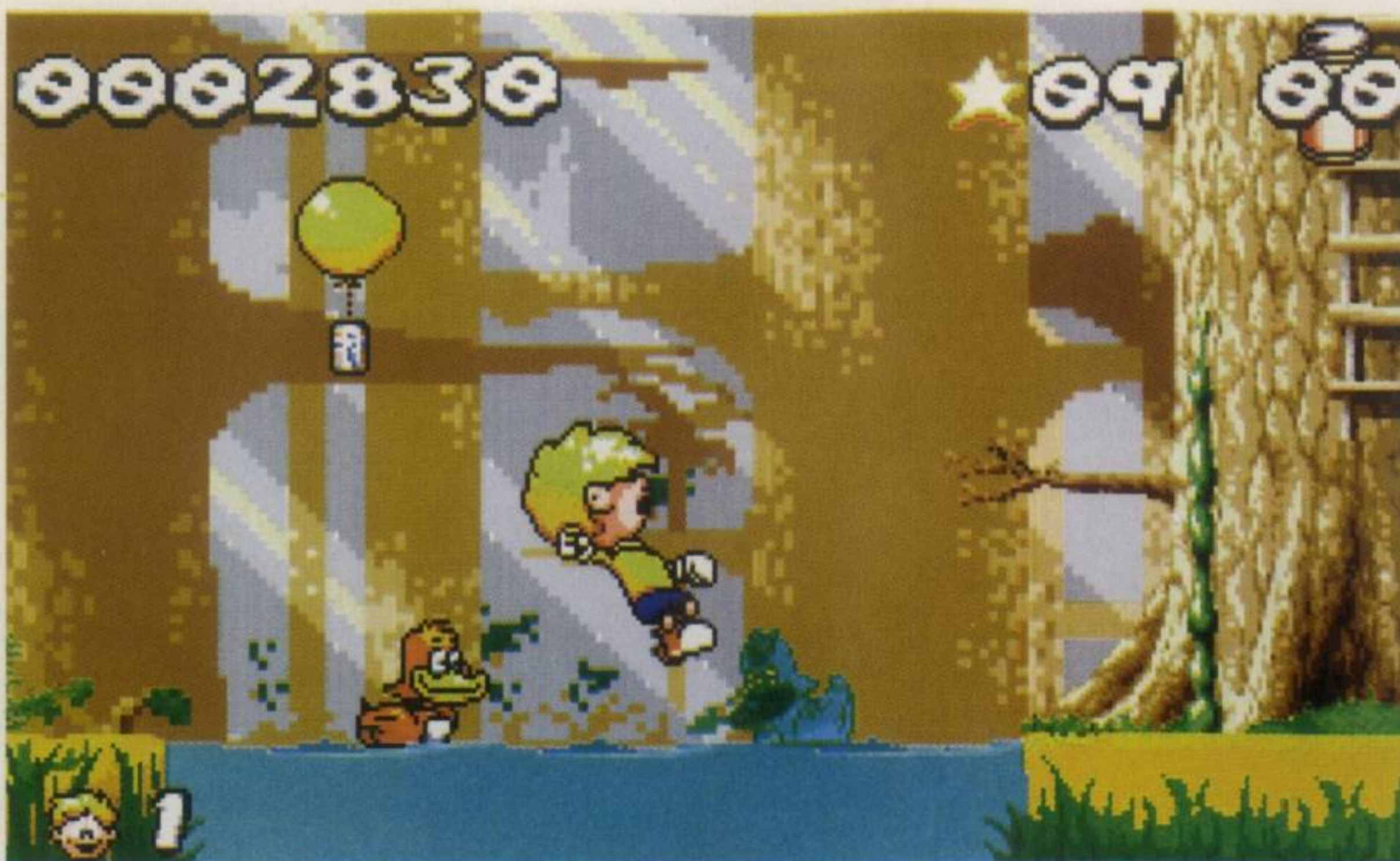
fool!" snapped The Boss. Things were not looking good.

"But," said the management, "we've been thinking. For a start, the game's a whole lot better than *Soccer Kid* ever was. This little Marko chap can do a whole heap of things with his football and no doubt if we do ever release it, a magazine not unlike MEGA will show its readers all the moves by using a series of little cut-outs. But anyway, the point is that he's got all these moves and you tend to find that each different level brings a different challenge, most of which can keep you guessing for a while until you realise which of Marko's moves will get you out of a specific situation. It seems to contain the classically good

gameplay in which you're stumped at various points, but once you've cracked that bit, you wonder why you didn't think of the solution before. What's more..."



The circus level is where things start to get a bit tricky. Not only do you get a load of vicious clowns wandering about but there's also a whole heap of baddies from the previous levels in there too. (Psst, Andy's back - Paul)



That green thing on the right is a shaft of sludge. It sort of rises up through the ground and as you can see, if Marko touches it, he gets sent flying in the air and, in this case, falls into a duck pond. What a disaster!

"I'm getting bored," hissed The Boss. "The last person who caused me to yawn ended up coding Edutainment titles for the low-end PC market."

QUALITY GRAPHICS?

"Gulp," gulped the management, "the thing is, the game is also gorgeous to look at. Not only are the levels well designed, but the graphics are of a quality rarely seen and the animation is subtly stunning. Each time you play you notice a new piece of animation that you didn't see before. Actually Boss, the bottom line really is that this is a sort of platformer of quite intriguingly good quality, but which has a football theme which while it doesn't tie in directly with the World Cup will undoubtedly ride the wave of current soccer popularity both here and abroad. It's a winner."

"Hmmm," pondered The Boss, "it

does sound rather engaging. What about difficulty? I, um, assume... well, the usual?"

"Oh yes Sir," beamed the management. "Most of the levels are nice and straightforward and then it gets annoyingly difficult at the end, so there's no danger of a decent difficulty curve sneaking in."

Each level brings with it a completely different challenge

"Excellent," boomed The Boss, "that'll piss the punters off no end. We'll do it."

"Thank you Sir. And what should we pay Grumbleweed?"

"Pay him? PAY HIM? He's an idiot, we'll have him killed once we've got his

files," screamed The Boss.

The management were disturbed. "But his next game might be even better," they said.

"Good point, go ahead and check it out then. Good day."

Minutes later young Grumbleweed had been summoned into the management suite of Domark. "Liked your game Grummers," said the management, "what are you working on next?"

"Well," grinned Grumbleweed, "it's moi pet project actually. Oi've been workin' on it for years. It'll be a turnip farming simulation."

"Oh dear," thought the management, "time to call Slasher McGinty."

© Andy Dyer



(OK Andy, you can finish it off - Jon) Mnfn, grfmphg. Mfprglemnf nfm mnfg gsmnrgfw ngmm. Aw, mumfngrk!



PUBLISHER: Domark

PRICE: £44.99

RELEASE: June '94

CARTRIDGE: 16 Mbit

CONTACT: Domark 081 780 2222



Just a friendly game of one a side I'm afraid



There's only the one skill level



You start with three lives but you can collect more



There's a password system, but not a password for every level



More than 12 levels, er, but not many more; 13 actually

GRAPHICS 9

SOUND 7

GAMEPLAY 8

GAME SIZE 7

ADDICTION 8

"Not totally original but it's all so satisfyingly polished that you'd be a jerk to complain. Dodgy difficulty curve but all in all it's a belter"



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Game Review

"Pete Sampras is endorsing this game," we told Jon Smith. "Sorry, who?" "Pete Sampras, the world's number one tennis player." "Oh, right... er, Pete who?"

PETE WHO?

All right, so he's not as famous as McEnroe, doesn't have Borg's messianic charisma, or even Becker's amusing piggy features, but he is the best tennis player in the world. And that's official. If you don't believe me, just check out some of these facts.

1. 1993 International Tennis Federation Tennis World Champion.
2. World ranking number one singles player.
3. Winner of Wimbledon, US Open, Australian Open and tons more titles.
4. Served over 1000 aces in 1993.

5. Youngest ever US champion in 1990, aged 19.



A laugh, a smile and a lot of money

Not bad eh?

PETE SA TENNIS

During these times of commercial cynicism it really is a source of constant wonder and comfort that more and more high achievers from all walks of life, and especially it seems, sport, are taking time out from their busy schedule to commission or contribute to the production of "product" for us mere consumers to buy. Take Pete Sampras – or "who?" as he's often known. Touring the world and playing a physically and emotionally demanding sport like tennis at the top level and desperately striving to maintain a number one seeding would leave most of us with little time for anything else, but Pete, bless his little cotton sports socks, isn't too busy to take part in the development of a computer version of his beloved livelihood. I'm touched – I really am.

FOUR-WAY FUN

In fact, all-round nice guy that he might well be, I bet it was Pete's original idea to incorporate the cart's



major selling point. Not only is *Pete Sampras Tennis* a game, it's its own four-player "multi-tap". The J-Cart, as it's known, has two additional joystick ports for four-way fun. This apparently costs next to nothing to add, and the savings have been passed on, again because Pete put his foot down no doubt, to you. Now why didn't I think of that? Because I'm not as clever as Pete, obviously.

BASIC GAME ENGINE

It's certainly a worthy innovation, and one that we all agree is a top idea, but as far as new slants on the now traditional tennis format go, that's as far as Pete and his team of top developers got. In fact, deep down *Pete Sampras Tennis* has one of the simpler tennis engines around. Within the usual three dimensional view, you have two types of stroke (a lob and a "normal" shot), augmented, as is traditional, with a certain amount of directional control from your joystick. Push Up and Right, for instance, and the ball shoots off to the top right corner of the court if you're playing up, while the same direction will produce a drop shot towards the right-hand side of the net if you're playing down the screen.

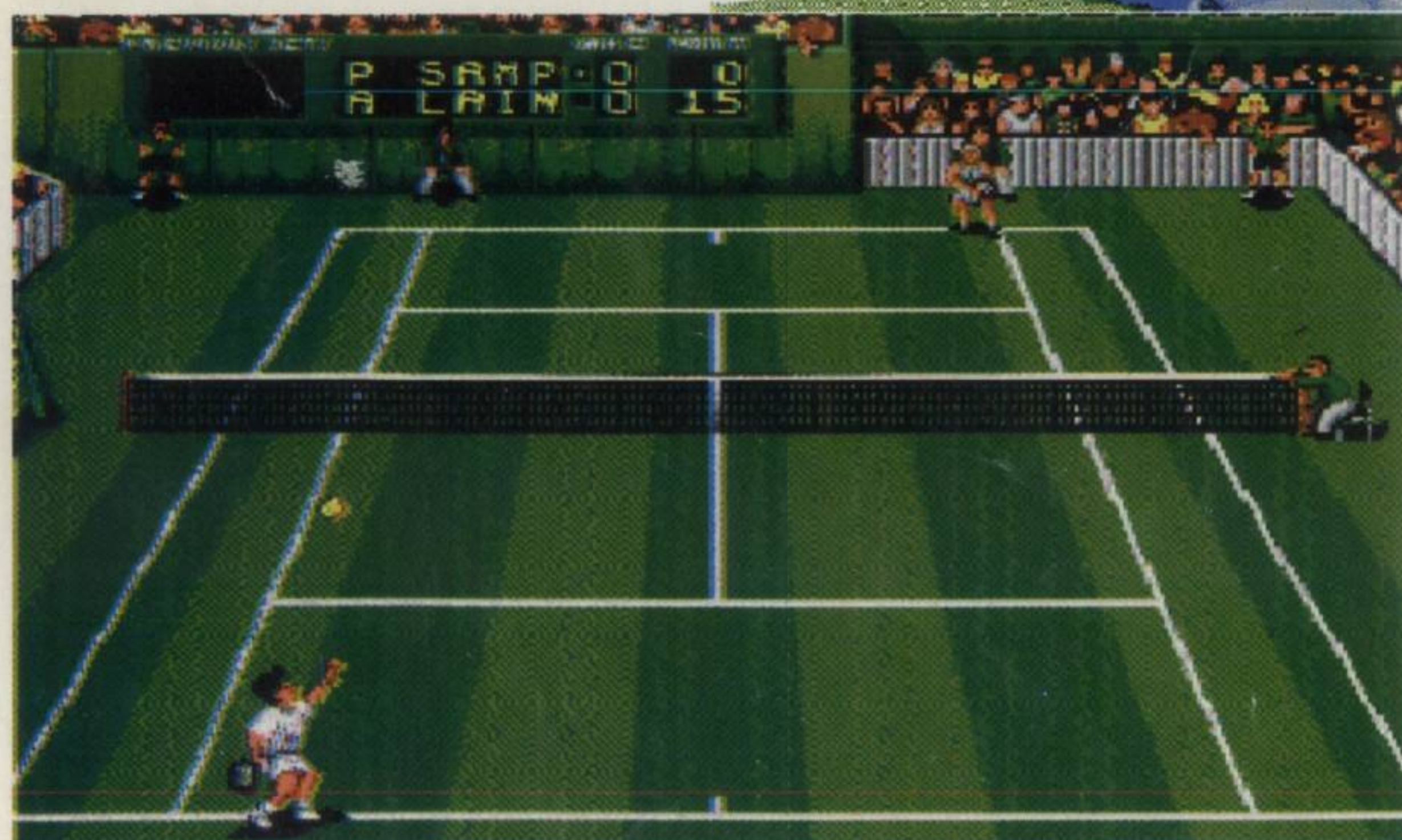
The amount of control is also affected by your player's position relative to the ball, and the timing of your swing. Catch the ball early in your swing, for example, and it's far easier to send the ball off to your racket side than the other way. Similarly, catch the ball on the rise and it's far more likely to shoot off up into the air. So far, so usual...

CHEAP 'N' CHEERFUL

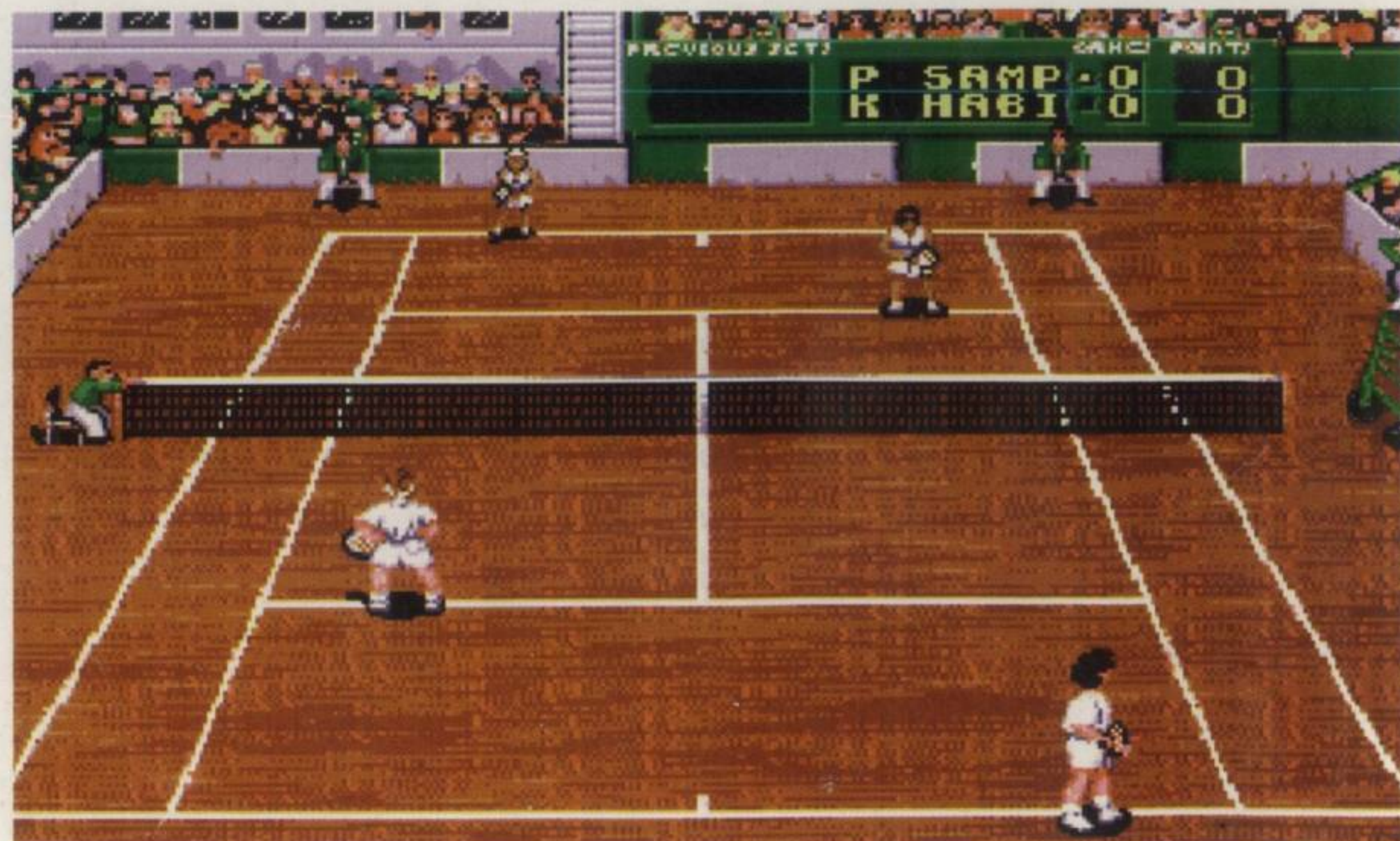
Graphically, it's probably most polite to describe *Pete Sampras Tennis* as cheap 'n' cheerful, but as the men at CodeMasters would doubtless point out by pointing at *Micro Machines*, there's nothing wrong with that. The players, despite their painful-looking wooden-horse-style hobbling, are fairly mobile and responsive, although it would have been nice to see a bit more depth to the graphics. Why not have two different swings for the two different shots, for example? It might be just icing on the cake, but what's a good cake without its icing? Yeah, a pudding.

THE MORE THE MERRIER

So, yes, it's a fairly basic, no-frills tennis game with a less than legendary licensee, but you can't help coming back to the cart's major plus, the built-in pad



Sampras to serve, having lost the first point of the match to a lowly ranked woman in a blue dress. We can't be having that



The different courts in the game – clay, grass and hard – play at different speeds. The hard court is the quickest, while clay and grass aren't

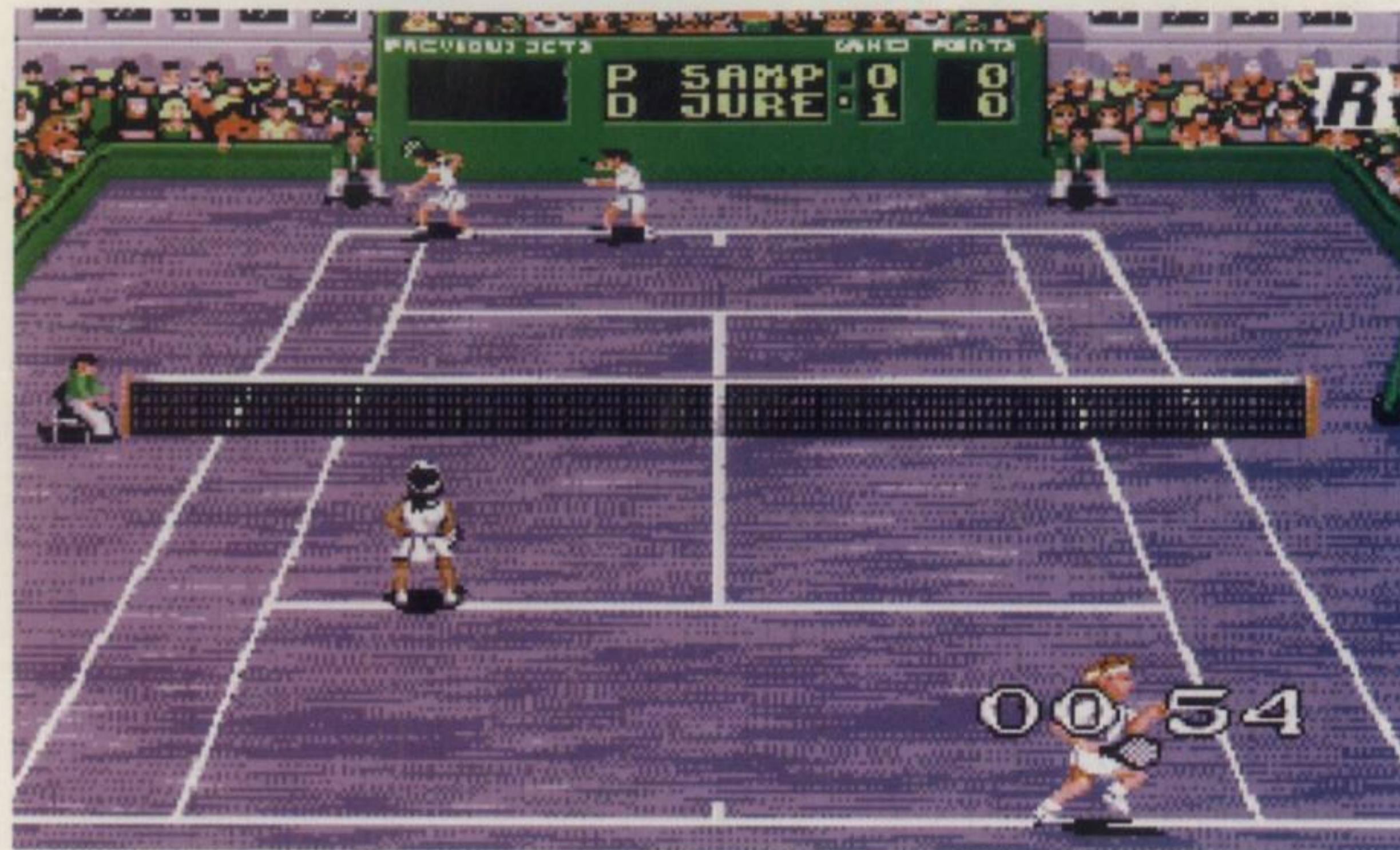
MPRAS

SMART CART

Pete Sampras Tennis is just the first of many titles from CodeMasters that will appear on the rather nifty, four-player J-Cart thingy. Thanks to CodeMasters' brainwave of bolting a couple of ports on to the game board itself, we can look forward to inexpensive four-player action in (deep breath) rugby, soccer, American football, ice hockey, basketball and *Micro Machines 2*. I think I'm going to wet my pants.



The J-cart in action, yesterday. "It's amazing," said one onlooker



Torvill and Dean (top) undergo a stunning transformation to re-emerge on the sports scene as Britain's leading Tennis Dance Team

ports. A game like tennis is obviously suited for two-player action, but what comes as something of a surprise is how much fun a game of doubles can be. The court is fairly small, so given a modicum of organisation any team of two can keep rallies going for quite a long time, either against a computer controlled pair or human opponent(s). Obviously the will to win is only strengthened by being part of a team, and as the game unfolds you'll get plenty of opportunities to berate your partner and ridicule your opposition in almost equal measure. The more the merrier may be a cliché, but in this case it's also very true. The fact that this game includes not only a four-player option but the free means to use it, bumps up its score by at least 10%.

© Jon Smith



Ah, good old blighty. Good old Wimbledon in fact. Set inside the Houses of Parliament, it's now the world's most prestigious tennis tournament

There's a short tutorial option to familiarise you with the controls. It's not really necessary, but it's a nice touch I suppose



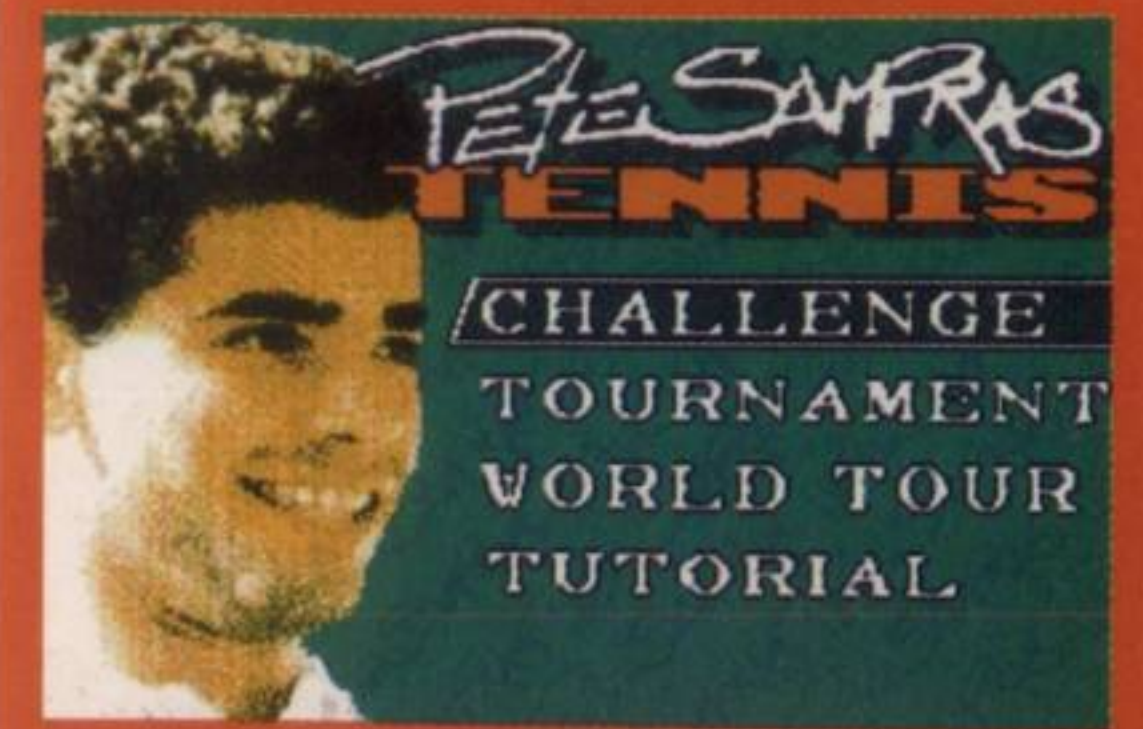
You can replay any dramatic dives



At tense moments in the match your player may decide to have a friendly chat with the umpire



It's that lady in blue again, but now she's two games to love up against the men's world champion. What a gal!



PUBLISHER: CodeMasters

PRICE: £44.99

RELEASE: June '94

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: CodeMasters 0926 814132



One to four players can take part, using the J-Cart adaptor



No skill levels as such, but some players are obviously better than others



You don't die playing tennis!



You get passwords in the tour mode



There are 30 different players and 33 different venues

GRAPHICS 7

SOUND 8

GAMEPLAY 9

GAME SIZE 7

ADDICTION 9

"It's a fairly simple and far from breathtaking tennis game, but the J-Cart bumps up the score a fair bit"

88 PERCENT

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION



In case you don't know what this is, it's a Romulan, and, at the very start of the game, him and his lot are going to cause you all sorts of problems

Even with such novel elements as half way convincing special effects and planet-scapes and a brazenly, shamelessly wigless captain, Star Trek remains the same deeply stupid and easily plotted show that it always was. Think about it. Invent a problem, any problem. Strange anomalies in the sensor readings around a previously undiscovered star, for instance, or a race of hyper intelligent gas clouds that suck

the energy from the Enterprise's batteries. Now begin the programme. The problem emerges, and is defined by some further made-up scientific Bunkum, usually spouted by Data, or previously, Spock. Stretch this bit for about half an hour, adding some human interest angle to uncover this week's focal crew member's personality. Next, preferably after "beaming down" to at least one planet, wrap the whole thing up with an

equally meaningless and ad-hoc solution to the problem, usually involving Geordie (Scotty) and a new-fangled machine. Simple really, and more than good enough to suck in a fair portion of the world's more anal escapists.

PANNING AROUND

Whatever it is about the programme that sucks these people in, it's clearly marketable enough to spawn a computer game, and the format adopted presents the sort of front end that could conceivably be backed up with different plots to make what would basically be a different game each time. What you've basically got is a menu system in – wait for it – graphical form. You pan around the bridge, looking at the various command centres and accessing them with the touch of a button. Once into a system, you're generally confronted with a more straightforward text-driven multiple choice approach.

The main exceptions to this rule are the tactical computer, which gives access to a map grid and weapons control in



Down on the planet you get a chance to shoot people. Great

quite a fun shoot-'em-up space battle section, and the communications system, which shows any verbal exchanges that take place. The transporter is the only way to get to the other main part of the game, the missions.

Put together an away team and trudge around alien landscapes

NO REAL LEEWAY

As you zoom around space, you'll receive

various messages and orders, giving a venue for the latest mission. As each mission is completed the plot is slowly revealed. Smart, eh? Well, yes and no. While the front end gives the impression of almost infinite flexibility and you can travel to any of the many planets within

SENSORS



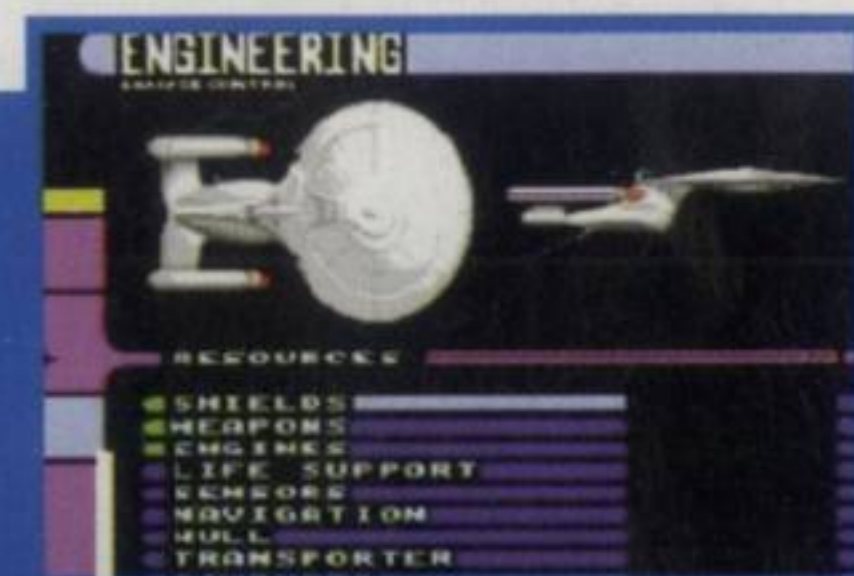
Check out the place at which you've just arrived

COMPUTER



The train-spotters amongst you will love this bit

ENGINEERING

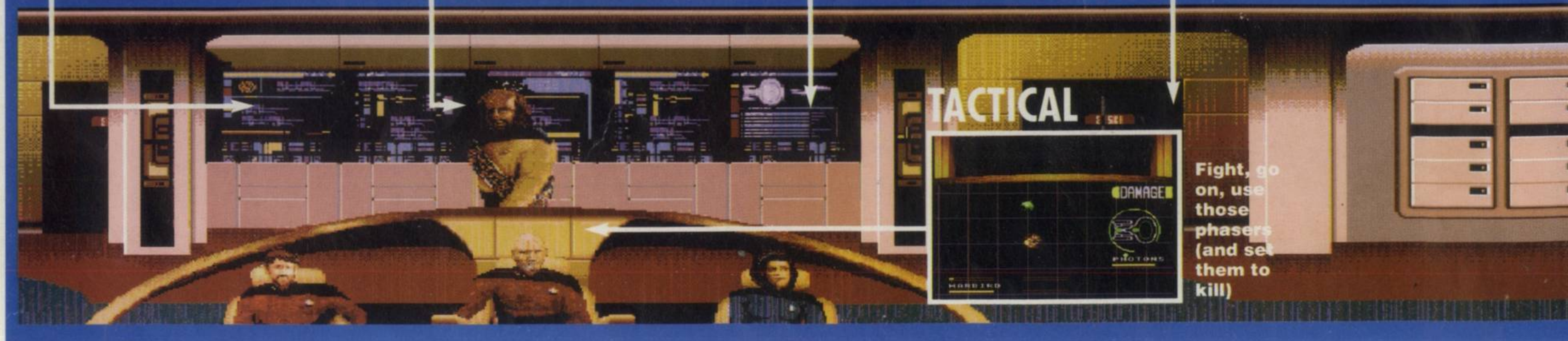


This is where you can repair your ship damage

TRANSPORTER



Who wants to go down to the surface of the planet?



Josse Bilson has never been much of a fan of Star Trek the television show. So he wasn't expecting great things of the game of the series...

NERATION



Yet more people for you to, ahem, interact with, probably

range, the game gives no real leeway. Until you've finished the current mission, it's impossible to beam down to any other planet and, bar the odd rogue Klingon, nothing happens.

AWKWARD MISSIONS

This wouldn't be a problem if the missions were as well thought out and engaging as the rest of the game. Unfortunately, they're not. If something can be both a game's weak link and its bottleneck, then these missions are. Taking the form of isometricish, sometimes puzzly epics of aimless wandering, they both look and feel dated. You, in your role as captain, put together an away team and trudge around the alien landscape, either solving "puzzles", usually a question of finding some objects and putting them somewhere else, or



Possibly the best, and most famous, bit of the Enterprise is the transporter room. Everyone on three... one... two... three... ENERGIZE!

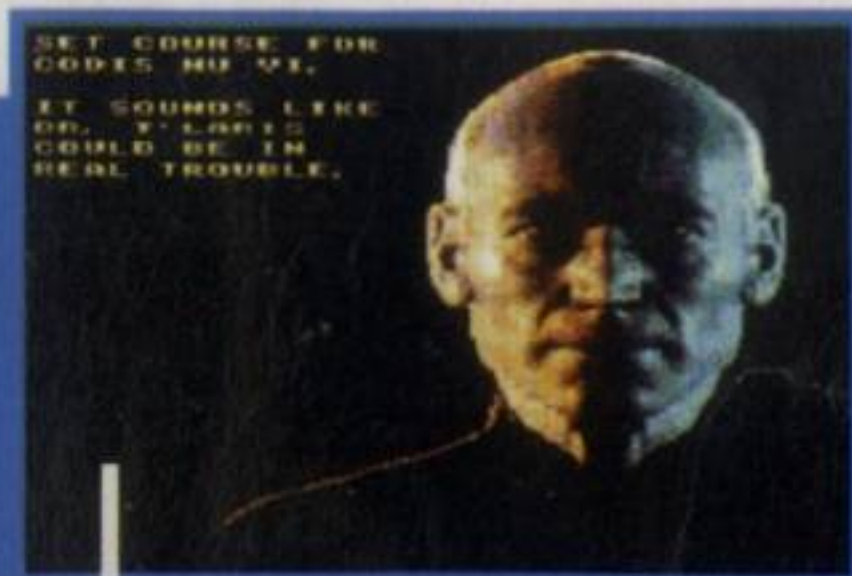
simply searching for trapped miners in a huge, largely featureless mine or some similar needle/haystack arrangement. If you're the sort of person who enjoys making maps, then it won't be a problem. If, however, you're normal, the chances are you'll get bored fairly quickly. Add to the size of the missions the fact that each time an away team member is injured, all your personnel are automatically beamed back up to the ship and can then only

beam down to the very start of the mission, and you start to realise how tediously awkward it all is.

The saddest thing about *Star Trek* is that given just that little bit more flexibility, or missions involving enough to actually make you want to complete them, the innovative bridge system could have shone through as part of an excellent bridge between action and adventure.

© *Josse Bilson*

CAPTAIN



And what have you got to say to me this time?

COMMUNICATIONS

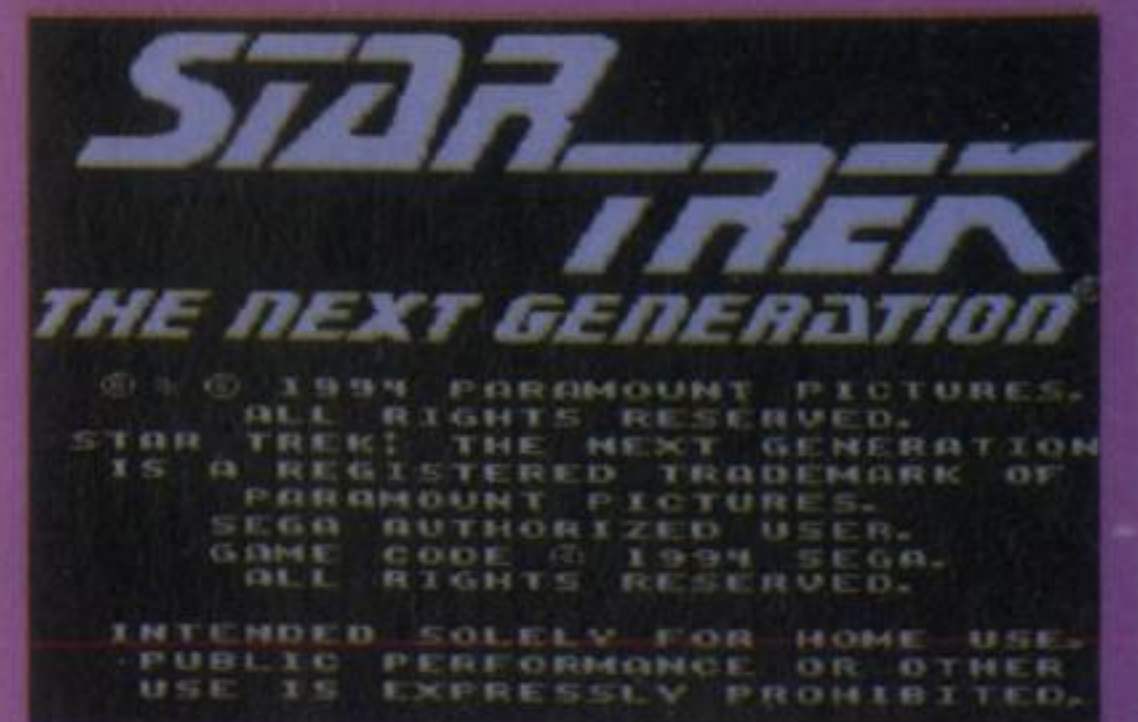
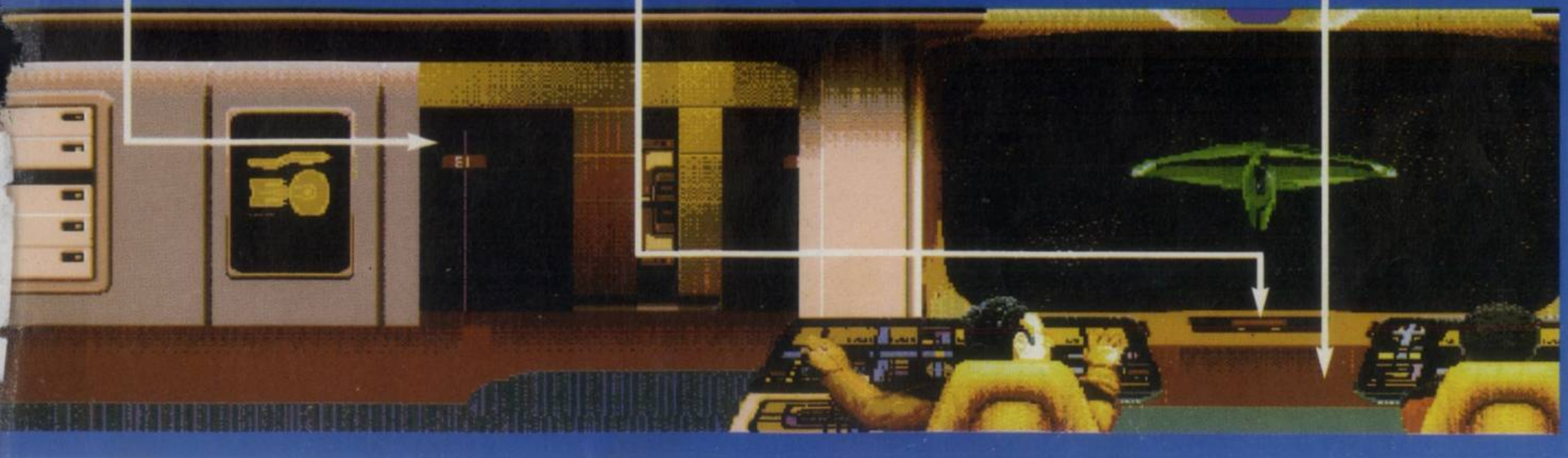


You can use this bit to speak to all sorts of weird people

CONN



Set course and... er, what's the word? Engage



PUBLISHER: Sega (Import)

PRICE: £45

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 16 Mbit

CONTACT: Video Games Centre
0202 527314



Just the one player



Nope, no levels of skill as such in this game



If the Enterprise is badly damaged or too many crew members get hurt, that's your lot



Save the game in the Captain's Log



Ooh, tons and tons of levels

GRAPHICS 7

SOUND 7

GAMEPLAY 6

GAME SIZE 8

ADDICTION 7

"Very atmospheric, and probably enjoyable to real Trekkers, but a bit of a disappointment for the rest of us"



70 PERCENT

WHO'S LURKING IN THE SHADOWS?

You are Shadow 5 and your wingman is Shadow 3. And because this is the Nineties, you're allowed to have a female pilot along for the ride. But just in case you're confused as to who's who, here's a quick rundown of the characters in the game.



This overbearing guy is your commander and he doesn't take any stick. Listen to what he has to say because he's the boss



This is your pilot, his name is Dakota and he's your typical jock pilot. He's good, but you see that woman below...



... he fancies her, but she's a bit of a hard nut to crack. Thankfully, she's a top pilot and your wingman (wingwoman?)



And this is the guy who does your job in the other plane. He's a bit quiet so we don't really know much about him, except, of course, that he's got a moustache

TOMCAT

Can you imagine what it's like to be a Top Gun? Paul Mellerick has to imagine it, because with hair like his they'd never let him fly a Tomcat



Just what exactly is an interactive movie? Ever since the dawn of CD gaming we've been dribbling at the prospect of playing a film, making decisions along the way and altering the plot. Sounds exciting doesn't it? Well, it is, but when you look at the logic behind it, you're going to need a serious amount of film to be shot to give you enough choices to make it all worthwhile. And then you're going to have to make it interesting. *Tomcat Alley* gets it about half right.

ALL ACTION NO TROUSERS

You all know the film *Top Gun* right? It's got that Tom Cruise bloke in it and it's all about flying F-14 Tomcats and being lads and getting the job done and all that. Very commendable, but the only reason we all went to see it when it first came out (and if we're being honest here, when it gets repeated on the telly we all watch it) was to watch the flying sequences. Almost every young boy has aspirations of being a pilot when he grows up; flying big machines is what men do. And this is where *Tomcat Alley* comes in.

Unfortunately, you don't get to pilot this particular fighter, but you do get to blow things up, which is something at

least. You play the targeting and navigation bloke while your mate up front is piloting the thing. The object of the game is to complete missions by taking out enemy aircraft, telling the pilot where to go and protecting your wingman (see the WHO'S LURKING IN THE SHADOWS? boxout over on the left). Easy in theory and, thanks to the gaming set-up and controls, easy to use, but by no means an easy task.

You will have noticed from the screenshots that the game is all FMV (and it's full screen as well) and the main gaming screen is as if you were looking straight out of the window. From here you make all the gaming decisions and then get ready for action. But this isn't just a straight shoot-'em-up, because you're in charge of navigation as well as weapons. This means you will



need to plot waypoints, use the radio when you have to and even take some pictures for reconnaissance purposes.

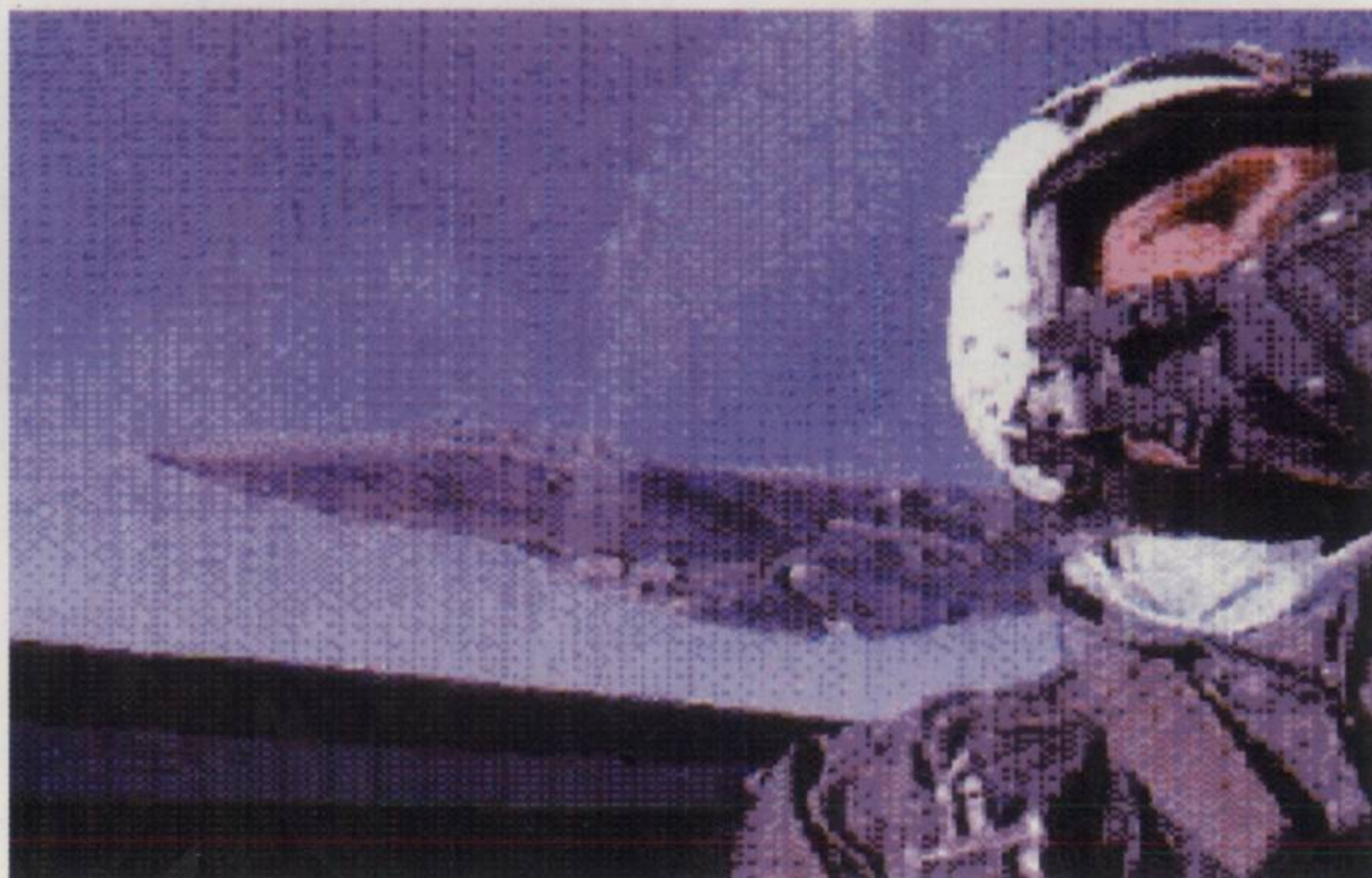


Apparently this is an explosion. I can't remember, but it looks nice

Once you've familiarised yourself, you can then plot your first waypoint and get ready to engage the enemy.

CHAFFING HELL!

But the enemy doesn't like being engaged (or married for that matter) and most definitely doesn't want to get shot down. This means their craft move around the screen very quickly. Using your air- or ground-based weapons systems (from the main screen you select which one is appropriate for the terrain and/or mission) you must lock on to them with your targeting computer and then let go with one of your missiles. The supply of missiles is, of course, limited. And if you take too long or miss the shot, you'll not only lose sight



I don't know, this guy's supposed to be a top pilot-type bloke but he can't even spot a F-14 Tomcat right outside the window. Where is he looking?



This is the main gaming screen; from here you do all the action



Complete the first mission and watch as the bomber you've just hit explodes all over the place

ALLEY



See that button? That's your launch button that is. Press it for a laugh

of the fighter, but he'll most likely end up firing at you. And the only way out of that is to do some fancy flying. Alternatively, you can use your chaff, i.e. fool missile guidance systems so they don't hit you.

FAST BUT REPETITIVE

As you can imagine, this is all pretty hectic stuff and because this tries to be a film as well as a game, there are loads of changing camera angles and the whole thing is very frenetic and also very nicely shot. For the first few goes you really are blown away by the speed at which everything moves. The full-screen FMV is very welcome (and we all know that the Mega Drive isn't capable of 256 colours or fabulously high resolution, so I'm not going to comment on the quality of the picture) and the speed at which everything moves is great. I don't know how they've done it, but it's the fastest I've ever seen and really breathtaking at times. The way the action shots are linked together also gives the impression that you are not only watching a top Hollywood action film but you are having an effect



Enter your bearings into the computer and away you go



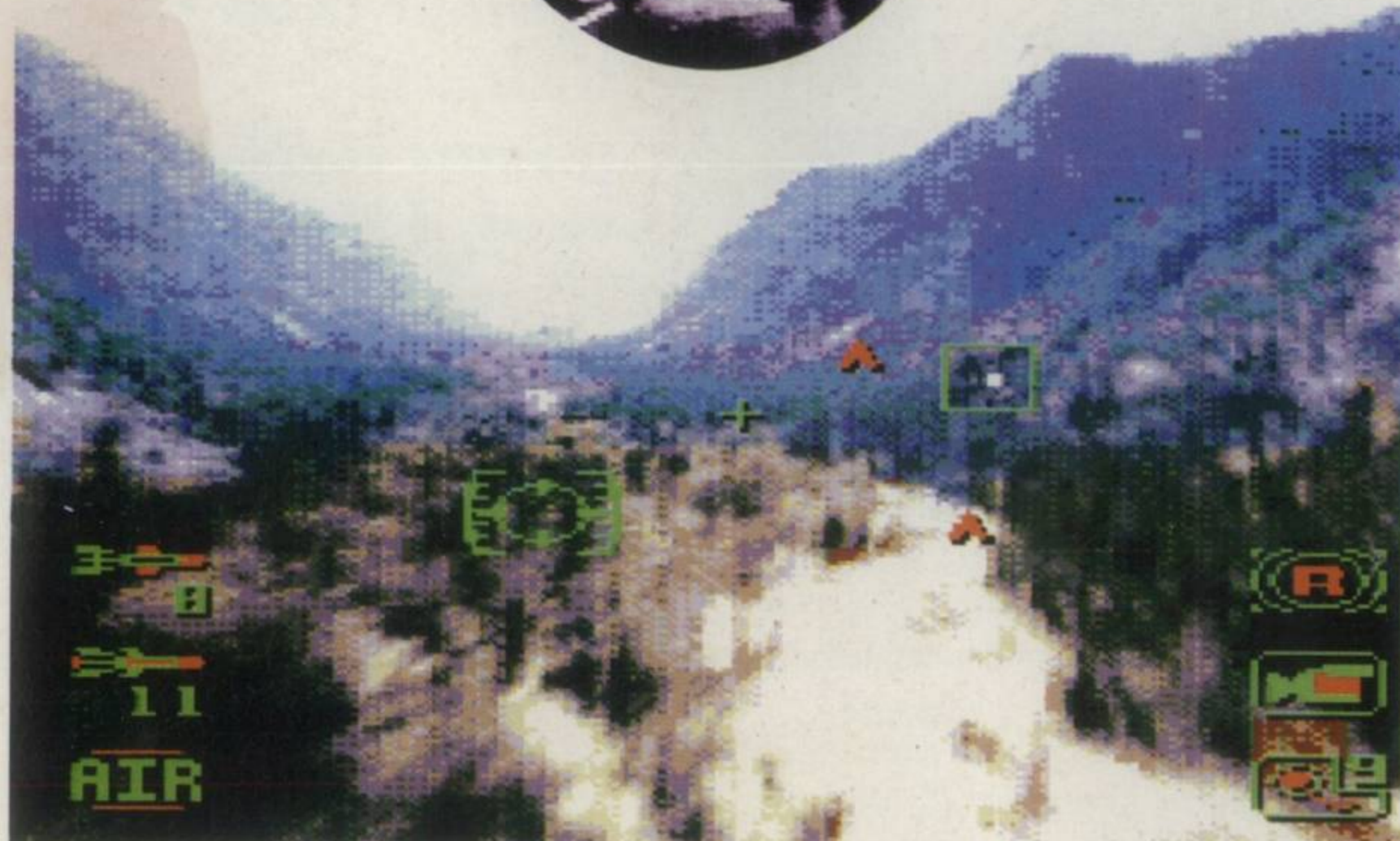
Avoid an attack (by using your chaff) and you get to see the missile fly past you and zoom off into the distance. Phew! Safe for the time being anyway

on the outcome of the scenes.

However, as I pointed out earlier, that's the real problem with this type of game; it's just too darn repetitive. Now this isn't really the fault of bad programming, it's just the design of the game. You play the first couple of missions, marvel at all the action and then play some more. But by the third mission you've seen most of the action already. Yes the terrain is different, but all the action shots are the same and because there are only two outcomes to every decision (you either blow up the enemy, or get blown up yourself) you get bored very quickly.

With the basic icon-only gameplay the only real skill needed is when you're chasing a fighter, and even that gets slightly samey the 500th time you do it. The missions do get harder, with more aircraft to "take out" and the need to switch between weapon system in mid-mission, but a couple of goes is all you need to suss out what to do. Also, with a save game facility, you don't even have to do early missions again. Maybe some strategy elements or some more film footage would have helped? But as it stands we're just left with something that will look good in a shop window, but will only give you a few hours of enjoyment. If only someone could cross graphics like this with the gameplay of *Thunderhawk*. Now that would be some game.

© Paul Mellerick



See that green square (no not the one with a sight in it)? Well, that's an enemy fighter; place your sight over it and then fire one of your missiles



Select one of the icons and the screen switches to inside the fighter



To break up the all-out shooting action a bit, here's a Top Gun-style shot. Not bad eh?



PUBLISHER: Sega USA (Import)

PRICE: £50

RELEASE: Out now

MEGA CD: You'll need a CDX Pro adaptor to run this on a British Mega CD

CONTACT: Dream Machines
0429 869459



Just the one player



There are just the two levels of skill: Easy or Hard



You've only got one life



When you die enter your initials to save the game



Mmm, not quite sure how many stages, but there are quite a few

GRAPHICS 8

SOUND 9

GAMEPLAY 4

GAME SIZE 5

ADDICTION 6

"Visually exciting and breathtaking at times, but the gameplay has been left behind on the aircraft carrier"



69 PERCENT

AX-101

Andy Dyer sits down for a game of this during his lunch hour then wonders what to do with the remaining 20 minutes



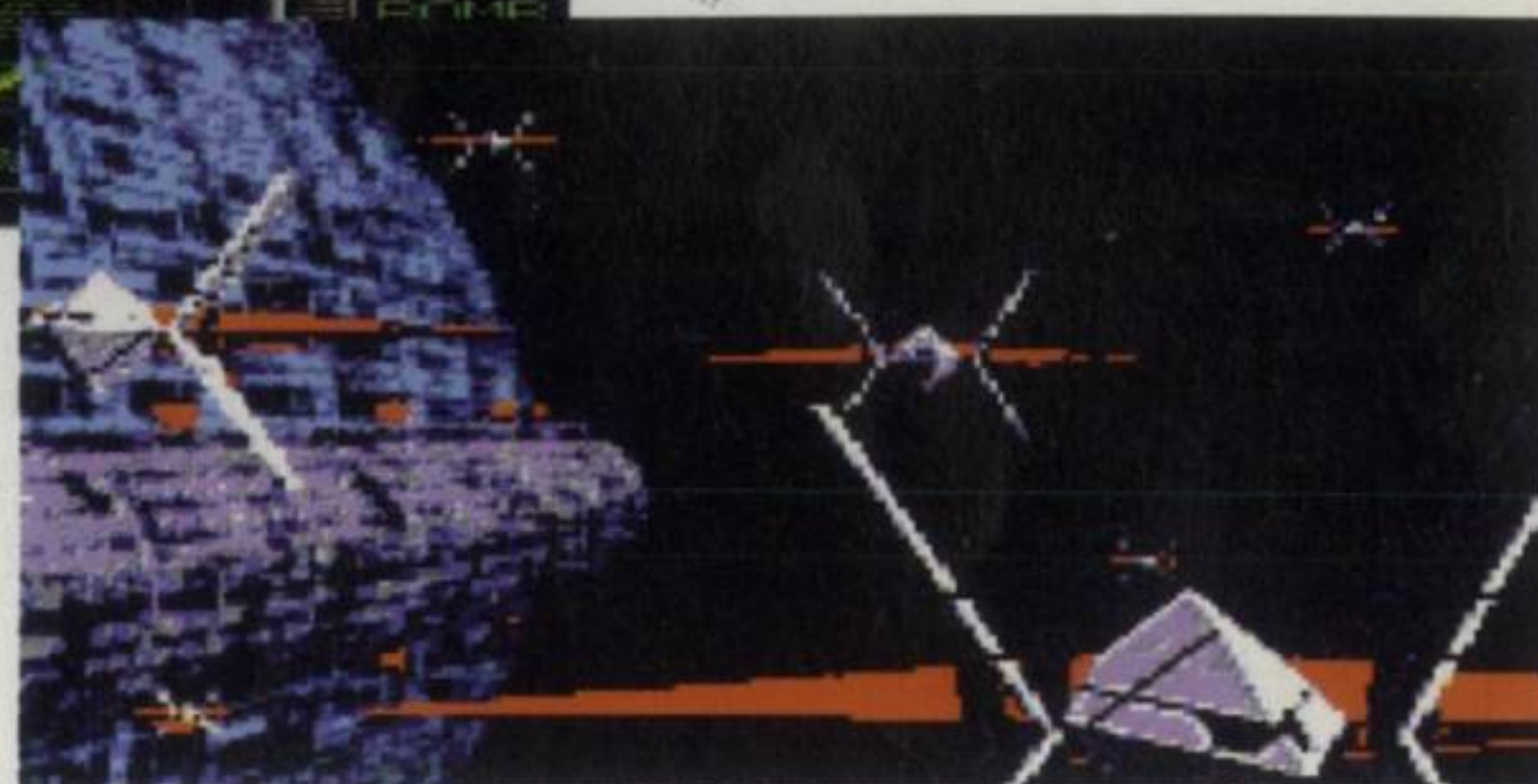
Left: A whirly thing and a blobby thing. Shoot them, and then wait for some more to appear. Rivetting isn't it?

There are many things you can do to earn a little extra cash for yourself. A paper round will provide a few quid a night. Maybe a bit of DJing at a local club will bring in quite a few sponds. There's even consultancy work of various kinds, which can be very lucrative. As for real full-time jobs, a solicitor (if he's a good one) can charge ludicrous hourly rates. But there's nothing more monetarily beneficial than becoming an on-site AX-101 salesman. It works like this...

BUGGER OFF

You contact people with Mega CDs and convince them to buy a copy of AX-101. You go around their houses and hand over the game while taking the £60 payment for the game. Then you stick around while they play it. In less than an hour, they'll have finished the game, flown into a rage, flung the CD back at you and told you to bugger off. So you'll have the game and £60 for an hour's work. Not bad eh?

But let's look at the other side of this situation. Just how racked off would you be if you'd spent £60 on a game



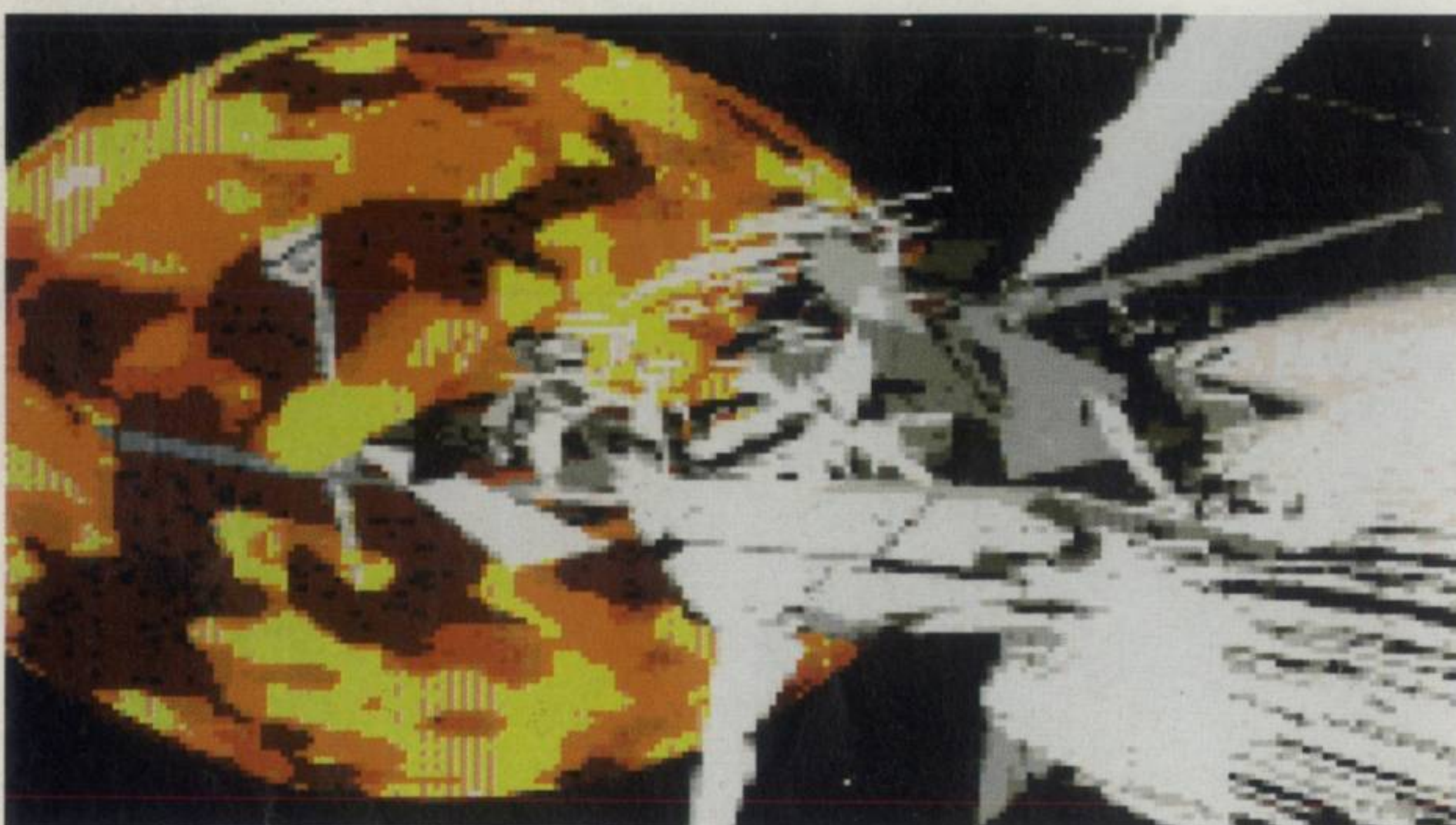
Below: This is one of the in-between scenes. Much the same as the actual game but no interaction at all.



Move the crosshair over that small enemy and shoot it a bit. Jings!



Do the same with this one. It's a strategic little adventure isn't it?



Under normal circumstances I'd be miffed about seeing the death screen. Not so with AX-101. It means I don't have to play the thing any more

and seen absolutely everything in it within an hour, including the rather disappointing end sequence? Mightily annoyed I would imagine. So how come this is what's going to happen to anyone who buys the game. Let's look at the game structure.

FOR CRYING OUT LOUD

It's full of rendered backgrounds which smoothly scroll past you in much the same way as those in *Silpheed*. Over the top of this, sprites are displayed and you control a crosshair in order to aim and shoot at them. So, it's another plain old shoot-'em-up in interactive movie's clothing. But that doesn't mean to say that the shoot-'em-up has to be crap does it? What I want to know is, in all the months the game was being developed, did no-one perhaps suggest that it might be just a little too easy? For crying out loud, games should be bloody playtested.

You see, developers employ playtesters not only to spot bugs, but to work out a decent difficulty curve. Now, sadly, console games quite often suffer from limited longevity, but never to this extent. Really, I exaggerate not when I say that having unwrapped the game and put it in the Mega CD, it was substantially less than an hour before I'd seen the end sequence.

I'm not overly angered by all of this to be honest. I'm baffled by it more than anything and more than just a little disappointed. With the right graphics workstations, almost anybody could knock up visuals of this standard, but it takes a special sort of idiot to come up with a piss-poor product of this desperate ineptitude.

© Andy Dyer



PUBLISHER: Micronet (Import)

PRICE: £59.99

RELEASE: Out now

MEGA CD: You'll need a CDX Pro adaptor to run this on a British Mega CD

CONTACT: Video Games Centre
0202 527314

- One player only (at least it limits the mental torment to one person)
- Three skill levels: easy, easier and easiest
- One life, three continues
- Passwords or battery back-up? Naw, none of that
- Stages? Not nearly enough

GRAPHICS 7

SOUND 7

GAMEPLAY 1

GAME SIZE 1

ADDITION 1

"It took me longer to write the 400-word review than to finish the game. Nuff said, I think"

04 PERCENT



The Wimbledon defensive wall was never this well disciplined

Josse Bilson's quite happy to have his Boom Sakalakad and his rim shaken, but can another basketball sim set him on fire?

Just a couple of months after the Mega Drive basketball bandwagon rolled into town, MEGA have dredged up yet another contender for the crown.

NBA Action is another well-formed and interesting basketball game that benefits from an official NBA licence. Rather than the crazy-bonkers action of *NBA Jam* or the street-wise pretensions of *Barkley: Shut Up and Jam*, this is much more a straight sim like, say, *NBA Showdown*. So how does it differ from the mainstream?

The chief difference with *NBA Action* is the way in which the game is viewed. Now I'm not saying that Americans just sit on their big fat arses all day watching TV

NBA ACTION

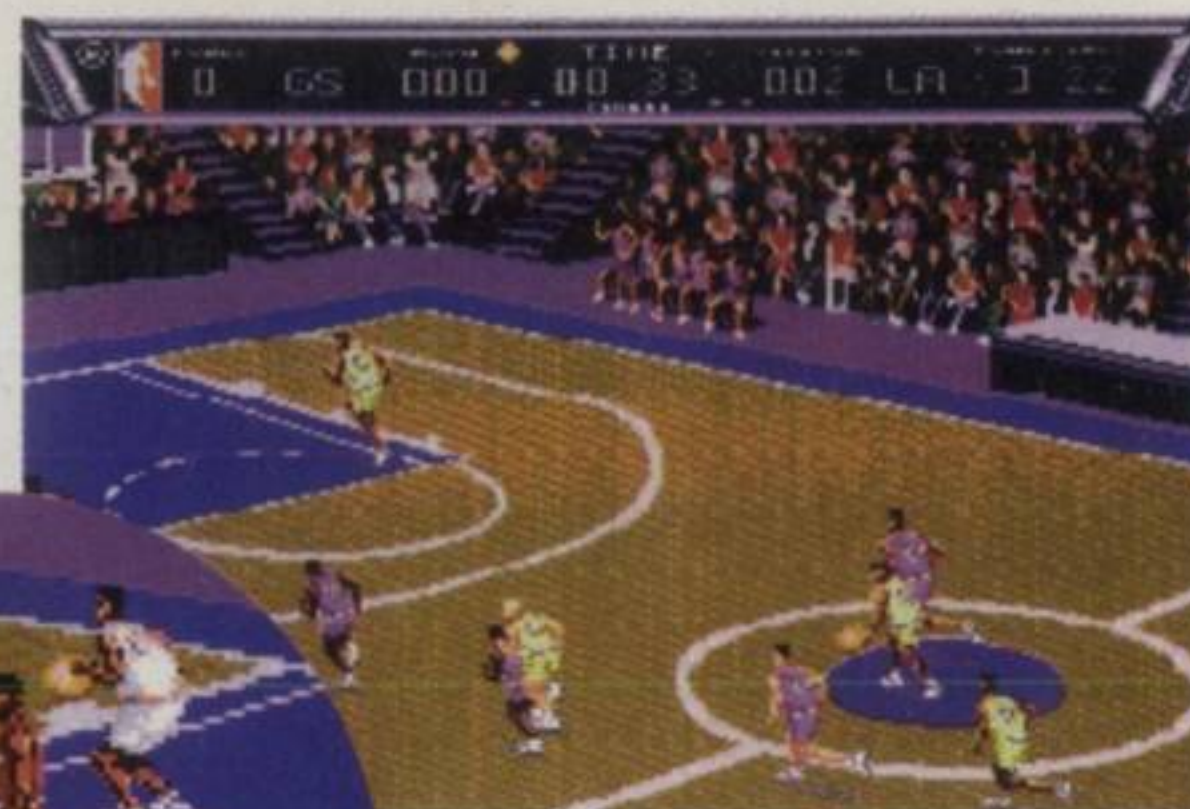


Pete Myers, brother of Mike, slams it in. Not!

(even though they do), but the alarming thing is that this game, while under the pretension of being a basketball sim, is actually a watching-basketball-on-the-TV sim. It's true. All the action is monitored from a single point up on a TV camera gantry somewhere high up above the half-way line. The screen pans round to follow the ball from one basket to the other just like any cameraman worth his salt would.

DISCONCERTING SWIVELLING

All this swivelling is a little disconcerting. For instance, when you've attempted and failed a three pointer and the CPU opposition claims the rebound, they'll attack, shuffling around under their own basket, then accelerate down the court like a startled llama once the Mode-7-wannabe graphics get under way.



The players don't like the spinning either

I'd like to be able to say that you get used to it after a while, but you don't because it's crap. I can honestly say that all this swivelling has disconcerted me and I'm not feeling myself right now. (Then who are you feeling? - Andy) (I knew you'd say that - Josse)

The designers have also played on the TV theme by importing NBC's sports commentator, Marv Albert, but his voice and the range of samples in no way live up to the enthusiasm of the *NBA Jam* quips... "He draws the foul" isn't in the same league as "He's on fire".

FULL-SIZE SPRITES

Speaking of leagues, as we were, I'd better tell you that you can choose to play a 20, 40 or full 82-game season on *NBA Action*, but you'd be better off sticking to the occasional exhibition mode because the slow, jerky sprites and all that swivelling will doubtless do your head in.

The few nice touches like the on-screen ref, up-to-date stats and ten full-size sprites don't make up for disappointing gameplay, and I only got to see ten of the claimed 14 "special" jams, because it was making me feel ill. It's not such a bad game in its own right, it's just bad because *NBA Jam* is on the shelves.

© Josse Bilson

ANAL RETENTIVE'S CORNER

Any sports game with a licence that wants to hold its head up high in the hugely crowded market must include a whole Guardian Sports Section full of options and stats. I suppose that's the part of our culture that helped Fantasy League Football get so popular - you know, anal retention, facts and figures. *NBA Action* can walk tall because it's got just the right amount of depth of detail, and it's bang up to date. All the figures for the '93/'94 roster are there, and the current form figures are continually updated. Not bad, eh?

TEAM	PLAYER	PTS	REB	AST	STL	BLK	FG%	FT%
BULLS	GRANT	10	10	10	10	10	0.0	0.0
	PIPPER	10	10	10	10	10	0.0	0.0
	DAVIS	10	10	10	10	10	0.0	0.0
	ROCKEY	10	10	10	10	10	0.0	0.0
	DAVIS	10	10	10	10	10	0.0	0.0
PACERS	DAVIS	10	10	10	10	10	0.0	0.0
	ROCKEY	10	10	10	10	10	0.0	0.0
	PIPPER	10	10	10	10	10	0.0	0.0
	GRANT	10	10	10	10	10	0.0	0.0
	PIPPER	10	10	10	10	10	0.0	0.0

TEAM	PTS	REB	AST	STL	BLK	FG%	FT%
BULLS	100	270	100	100	100	0.0	0.0
PACERS	100	270	100	100	100	0.0	0.0

This is one of the better looking stats screens to grace the Mega Drive...

... whereas the others all seem to speak for themselves



You can just feel the crowd being whipped into a frenzy. Hmmm



PUBLISHER: Sega Sports

PRICE: £44.99

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 16 Mbit

CONTACT: Dream Machines
0429 869459

One or two players, or up to five if you buy the adaptor

Choose skill or nob teams from the '93/'94 NBA season

Yes, all the players are alive, just

The game's got a battery back-up memory thing

20/40/82 game season or exhibition matches

GRAPHICS 8

SOUND 6

GAMEPLAY 5

GAME SIZE 7

ADDICTION 6

"This is a worthy but unspectacular sports sim spoilt by swivelling"

69 PERCENT

DARK WIZARD








PUBLISHER: Sega (Import)

PRICE: £49.99

RELEASE: Out now

MEGA CD: You'll need a CDX Pro adaptor to run this on a British Mega CD

CONTACT: Telegames
0533 880445

-  One player, but four characters in the game to choose from
-  No skill levels, but the further you get the harder it is
-  Just the one life
-  Use the CD RAM to save your games, if you want to that is
-  There is one (very big) planet for you to explore

Ever wondered why RPGs have such a bad reputation? Surely with top games like *Landstalker* and *Shining Force* for the Mega Drive, *Zelda* for the Nintendo consoles and a whole array of top-quality PC titles, there's more than enough evidence to show that they are in fact a good idea. Well yes, that's true, as long as you stick to those top-quality games. However, when you get something as initially complex and mind-numbingly boring as *Dark Wizard* you do start to remember that RPGs can be the worst sort of games ever invented.

HUH! WHERE DO I START?

This isn't through any fault of the genre, it's just the different ways in which people interpret the game. In *Shining Force* there are loads of battles to get through and even more people to talk to, and *Landstalker* is one hell of a huge game. *Dark Wizard*, however, has no such attributes; yes, it's big, but the battle sections are way too complex (and they apparently make up about 90% of the game) and this means you just don't want to play it.

I always start off playing RPGs as

Deeply philosophical, that's what Paul Mellerick is. Or at least that's how this game made him feel when he played it

objectively as possible, realising that I'm actually going to have to read the instruction manual in order to get anywhere, but *Dark Wizard* is so battle-orientated and text complex that I took one look at the manual, got very puzzled by the whole thing and decided just to try and play the game. BIG mistake!



I couldn't get anywhere. I moved all my characters around for the impending (or is it never-ending?) battle, and then got stuck. I looked at the manual, played around with all the menus and tables, of which there seem to be hundreds, and after ten minutes managed to move a bit more. This went on for a

good few hours and then I just gave up.

NO FUN HERE MISSUS

Forgive me if you don't agree with what I've said, but I thought games were supposed to be fun. Yes, I can appreciate that there are lots of statistics and figures to be had in the game. Yes, there are also loads of enemies, loads of places to visit and loads of battles to fight, but unless you're a tedious person with no friends and feel the need to stay inside for hours on end in case the sun's ultra-violet rays give you skin cancer, you won't get much out of this game. Can't say fairer than that can I?

© Paul Mellerick



This is a battle screen. You'll see a lot of these as you play the game



Er, Quentin? Am I supposed to be scared of someone called Quentin?



If you're a little short on patience, try using the amazing Ring of Fire, which, amazingly, produces a ring of fire and destroys any surrounding enemies

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	8
GAMEPLAY	1
GAME SIZE	7
ADDICTION	2

"A tediously complex and potentially sleep-inducing RPG, just when we thought RPGs had seen the light"



45 PERCENT



SHADOW OF THE BEAST 2

Josse Bilson gets to grips with the latest CD tune up from Psygnosis...

Watch any of the bands furiously posturing on Top Of The Pops, looking ever so slightly embarrassed to be upstaged by the dry ice machine, and you'll get much the same feeling of disappointment, and yes, pity, that you'll experience should you choose to spend any of your time with *Shadow Of The Beast 2*. This CD is a predictably tarted-up rehash of a fairly mediocre adventurey, puzzley, platformy experience from last year's Mega Drive roster.

MILDLY IRRITATING

In this case the dry ice takes the form of some rather silky animated sequences and lots of excruciatingly mistimed and badly acted speech. The animation sequences stream from the CD each time you move into a new area or enter a building, and although some of them are superbly atmospheric, they soon become nothing more than mildly irritating delays. As for the speech, well, I suppose it's quite funny, at first.

The hitch here is that the Archers-meets-Tolkein style dialogue isn't meant to be amusing. Oh no. It's meant to be deeply mysterious and menacing, which it's not. Equally annoying is the usual



It's just you and your trusty mace against this morphing snot monster. Unfortunately he can move, but should you choose to attack him, you can't

delay while the speech is streamed from the CD. The action stops, a dialogue box appears and once you've had more than enough time to read the contents of the box, the CD finally pipes up and reads the whole lot for you again, slowly. Even more disconcerting is the fact that you're the proud owner of the sort of booming American voice last heard on video trailers, while everyone else has some sort of Norfolk-Eastern European exchange student accent.

UNRESPONSIVE HERO

The game itself doesn't really deserve this sort of attention. The puzzles aren't really anything of the sort, as the dialogue basically gives you any solutions, and the control of your character really doesn't cut it. If a game's going to engulf you in nasties, as *Shadow* does, it would be nice if it also provided you with a more responsive hero. Hit out in one direction for instance, and it's extremely difficult to move at all, let alone do any tricky stuff like turning around or ducking. It's not really that much fun waging an endless war of attrition against endless hordes of angry natives, and if it's no fun, then why bother? Eh? What's even more of a shame is that given the quality of the in-game graphics and animation *Shadow of the Beast 2* really is the classic case of mutton dressed as lamb.

© Josse Bilson



This is a bit more like it. In your local you can buy axes and potions



Not so much "little house on the prairie" as "shack in the wasteland"



A fiendish system of goblin switches. A native obliquely hints at "something to do with the lower switch". Tricky



Of course, the last thing you want to be doing is getting trapped in a pit with a huge wild blackcurrant



PUBLISHER: Psygnosis

PRICE: £44.99

RELEASE: May '94

CARTRIDGE: Mega CD

CONTACT: Psygnosis 051 709 5755

- Just the one player
- No skill levels as such
- Just the one life, but you've got up to five continues
- Nope, strangely enough, there are no passwords
- There are just lots of different places, really

GRAPHICS 8

SOUND 7

GAMEPLAY 5

GAME SIZE 8

ADDICTION 6

"Typical of the sort of bolt-on CD additions we're growing accustomed to. The game itself? Dated, slow and frustrating"



58 PERCENT

Game Review



The idea is to collect whatever's in the boxes. Or, like Indy, ignore them



Or you could just stand around on platforms and shoot up dead bodies



It's bloody great, you can blow up London Bridge and everything!



PUBLISHER: Sega US (Import)

PRICE: £45

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: Dream Machines
0429 869459



INSTRUMENTS OF CHAOS STARRING YOUNG INDIANA JONES

Oh yeah, great. I may be innocent, but I'm not dumb enough to fall for another formulaic platter whose cover artwork doesn't even try to look like the hero. Starring "Young" Indiana Jones – what's all this? Where's Harrison Ford? And no Sean Connery. Dear me.

French intelligence intercept a message from German radio – they're building a Doomsday Zeppelin – and send "Young" Indy on a mission; a mission across three continents that he'll never be able to complete because it's designed so bloody badly. It's one of the most frustrating things when a game is unplayably hard for all the wrong reasons. There's little hope of completing this game because the baddies are simply so numerous.

There's some lovely animation – the well-defined Indy sprite moves smoothly (though it's no *Aladdin* or *Jungle Book*), but you rarely see this because he's

Josse Bilson's young to the point of being child-like in his innocence, so we thought it'd be a good idea for him to review this

constantly being pushed back by a snake or a scorpion that hasn't even hit him. The collision detection's dire, Indy can jump about eight feet in the



air, then land on what the computer decides is an evil enemy agent's head, but is in fact some point in mid air just above his ear. Argh!

PAH!

The detailed sprites and foregrounds are

complemented by four-directional scrolling parallax backgrounds, but it's one of those situations where true beauty is obscured by blind rage at the



The camel trains are refreshing in a game full of bonkers idiocy

lack of playtesting. Young Indy can walk along in the Egyptian desert, and if you hold the direction down, you'd expect him to gain momentum smoothly, but no, he just suddenly starts sprinting, and then falls slap bang into a bomb hole. Actually the holes are very useful when the best-planned part of the game rears its head. Storms whip up periodically, and blow the intrepid agent back from where he's just come. His only refuge is to hide down a hole until it's blown over. Pah!

Other pointless levels include bombing raids on the gearworks of London Bridge (surely they mean Tower Bridge) and a lake in Tibet that can only be traversed by jumping across ice floes. The problem is that a fish no bigger than a Mars Bar jumps out of the lake and knocks Indy in (always head-first) to his death. It serves him right for going to a freezing country in nothing more than shirt sleeves. Fool.

© Josse Bilson



There's only one In-di-ana, one In-di-ana... ad lib to fade...



There are three levels of difficulty, which are all too hard



You can select between one and nine lives



No battery back-up, no save-game facility, no restarts, no patience left



Four acts, then a finale

GRAPHICS 8

SOUND 5

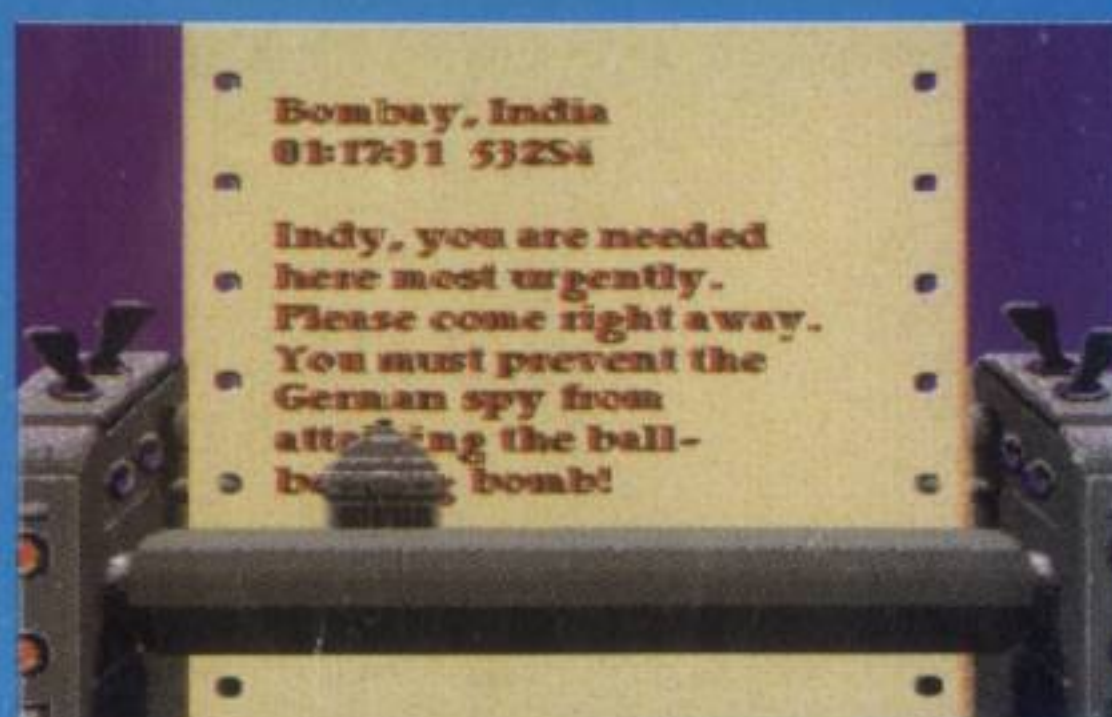
GAMEPLAY 3

GAME SIZE 6

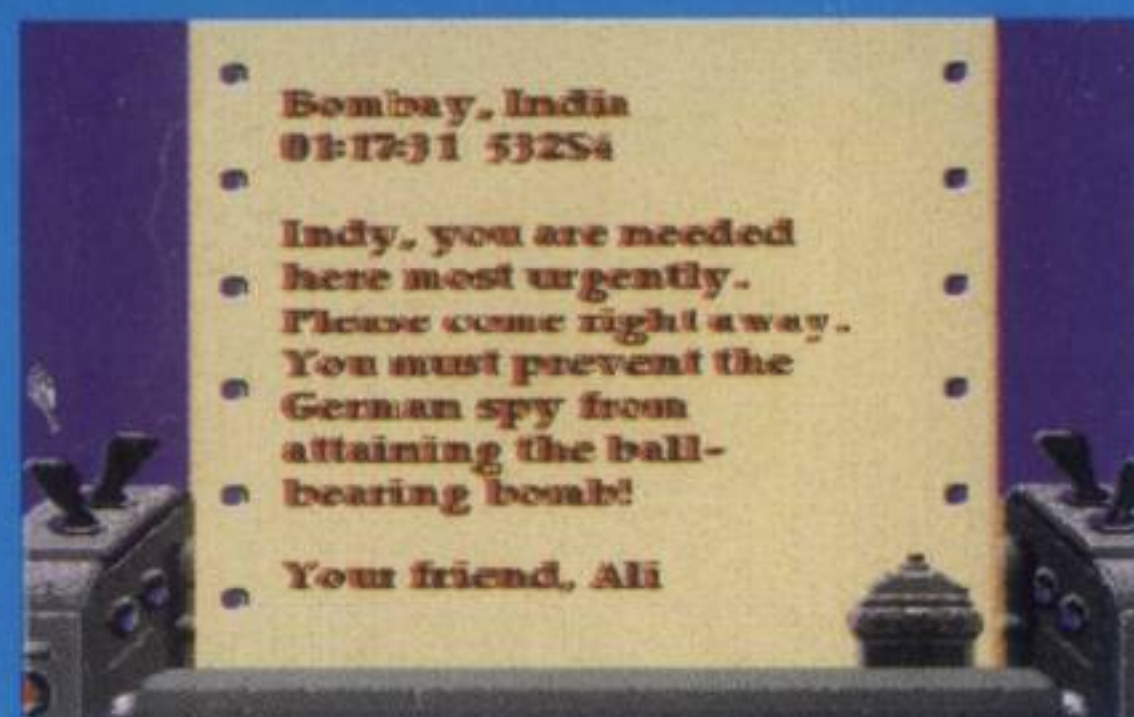
ADDICTION 2

OVER TO THE VIDIPRINTER

Perhaps it's just me, but the idea of Des Lynam or Steve Rider reading out Young Indy's missions as they come in on the vidiprinter is too much to bear and I appear to have wet myself.



I'm sorry about this whole vidiprinter thing. It's not funny...



... but you can just imagine his voice... "Indy nil, Sheff Utd four"

"There is no point in buying a game that you can't play"



50 PERCENT



Actually, the animation isn't all that bad in the game. It just plays badly



Look, sorry if there's a lack of action here, but that's what the game's like

First thing Monday morning, after a heavy weekend, and what do I get? A nice cup of tea, an overstuffed footstool and orders to relax? Nope, I get to review *Fido Dido*, the very latest thing in mediocre platform games from the States. Thanks a lot.

CHEESY AMERICANISMS

Still, let's look on the bright side. The one thing this game's not going to do is



At least the pontoon bonus game has gambling in it. Best part really

FIDO DIDO

Andy Dyer tries desperately to say "dude" without sounding stupid... and fails

surprise you in any way. From the packaging to the graphics to, well, everything, this doesn't deviate disturbingly from the very middle of the road, tried and tested, "let's make some easy cash" norms. If you have the slightest acquaintance with the world of console games, then you'll just know that with a licensed cartoon character such as Mr Dido here, you will get a platform game, with themed levels, bonus stages, and excruciatingly cheesy Americanisms. Hence the act of dying is considered "uncool!" while as you start each level you're subjected to the usual exhortations to "party on dude!". It's all a bit tiring really and the game itself does little to disarm you.

THOUGHT BUBBLES

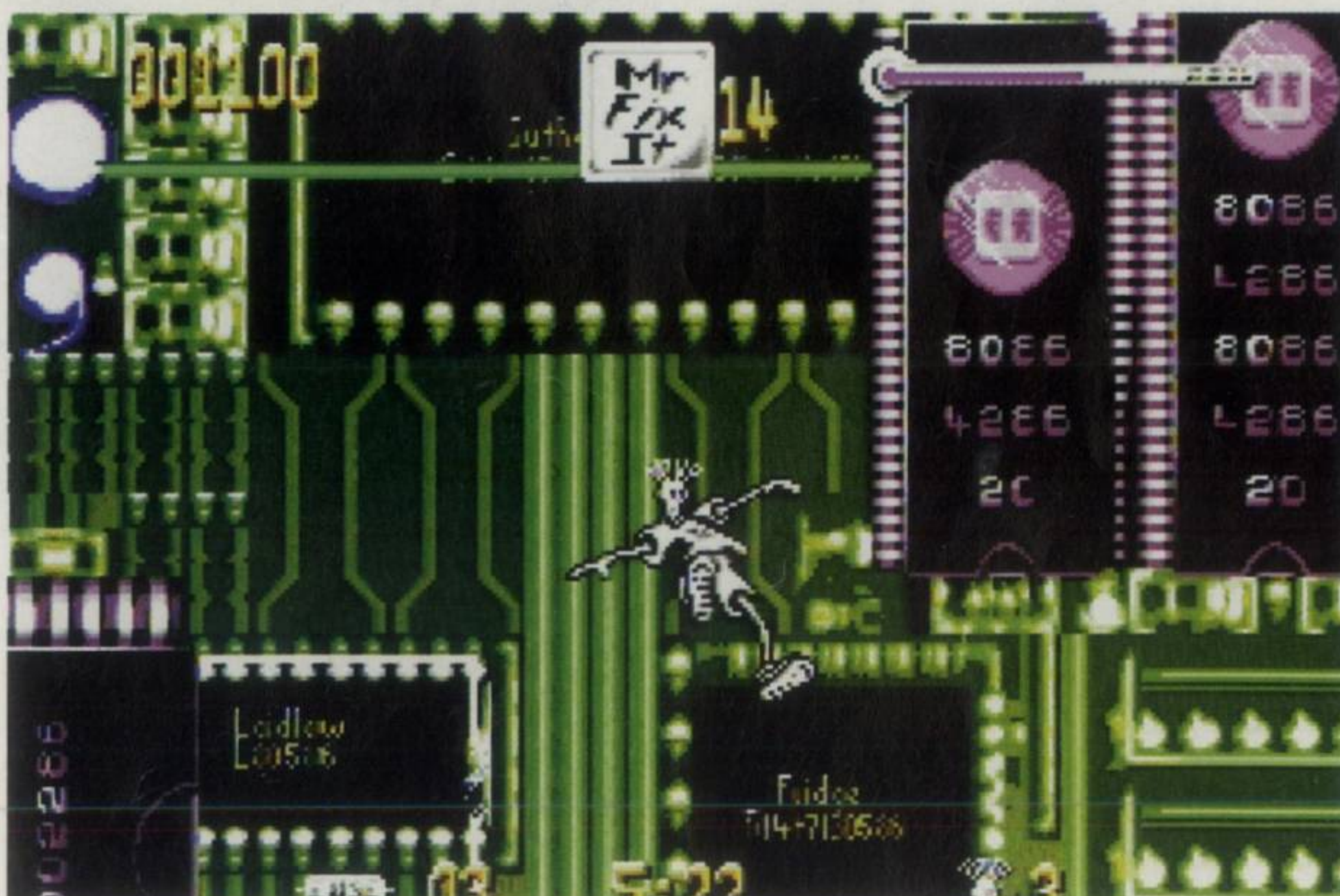
Specifically, *Fido Dido* is a search-and-use platformer, with each level giving



The game's so dull we thought we'd show you a screenshot from the intro sequence. Artist falls asleep, Fido Dido begins adventure

you a different mission based on an identical premise. Objects are offered up at various points in the level and need to be picked up for use elsewhere. When you need to use an object, a thought bubble appears above Fido's head and tells you so. On the way you have to avoid various baddies who are fairly predictable in looks and movement. Let's face it, it's a bit on the poor side. The graphics, although fairly promising, are spoiled by poor animation, and the gameplay is the very definition of mediocre. If nearly as much thought had gone into the programming as probably went into the licensing deal, then things just might have been very different indeed.

© Andy Dyer



This isn't very exciting either, but believe me, when you've been playing for ages, you'll get surprisingly excited about the green colour scheme



Once again, we suffer a brown screenshot utterly lacking action



PUBLISHER: Kaneko (Import)

PRICE: £TBA

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: Kaneko 081 202 3434

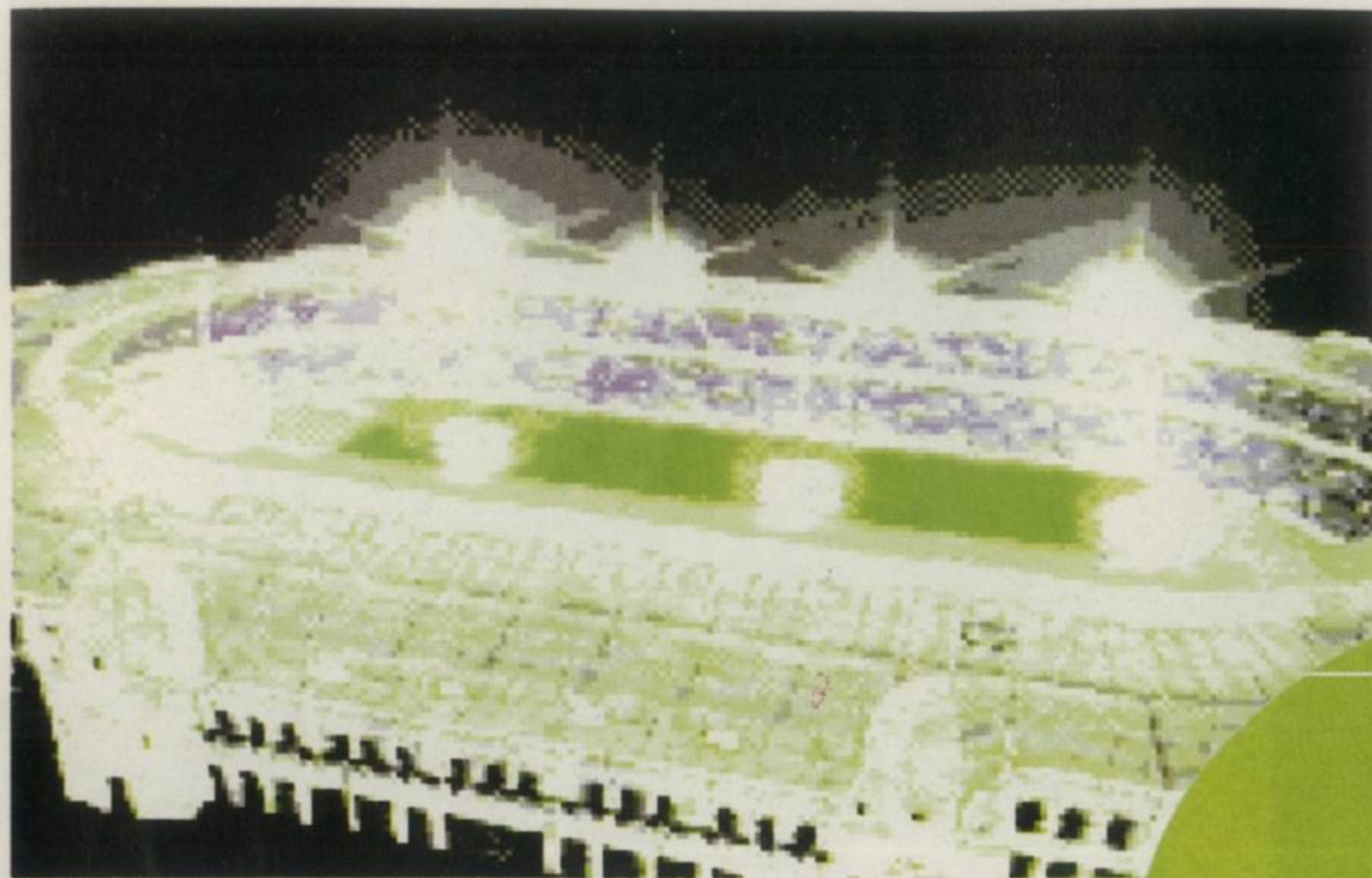
- Just the one player
- There are three difficulty levels, ingeniously called Easy, Normal and Hard
- You've got five lives
- There is, indeed, a password system
- And there are six stages to get through

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	6
GAMEPLAY	5
GAME SIZE	6
ADDICTION	5

"A definitive example of the kind of stagnant character-based formula games that are more and more frequently produced in the States"

55 PERCENT

Game Review



Right, you know what the game looks like, so we'll show you a nice big picture of the FMV game intro sequence instead

This CD release makes no improvements to *Sensible Soccer's* gameplay. The game mechanics have not been tweaked, the menu system is still exactly the same and when you're playing the game it's visually indistinguishable from the cartridge version. This, unusually enough, is a good thing. *Sensible Soccer*, you see, is as close to perfection as any game, on any system, anywhere, could be.

DAMN NEAR PERFECT

Why? Well, for a start there's the beautifully balanced gameplay; quick enough to thrill, while easy enough to control to be absorbing. You've got three buttons on your joypad (trust me on this one), each of which does a different thing... well, a different kick at least. There's a hoof, a medium pass/h hoof and an along-the-ground-side-of-the-foot sort of pass. In the "beginner" level the hoof always heads towards the opposition's goal, no matter which way your player is heading, while in the "normal" mode only your three or so star players have this

handy ability. Switch to "advanced" and things get a bit tricky. Unless a star player is in possession, the ball now refuses to stick to your feet, preferring instead to trickle off into touch at every opportunity. It's nowhere near as complicated as it sounds – a couple of plays is all you'll need to get the basic hang of things – but the real beauty of this game is the amount of technique you can pick up with practice.

On top of the superb engine, you're given a ridiculously large amount of tournaments and leagues to play in, against a pleasingly abundant selection of opponents of all levels, up to and including international standard, effectively giving more difficulty levels than you could possibly ever want. Not bad, eh?

CD EXTRAS

The CD version adds some smooth but ultimately superfluous footage of stadiums and bags more atmosphere, courtesy of the crowd noises which were



Er, I could be wrong, but I think that means a goal has been scored



It's lovely; it's fast, playable, funny, exciting, addictive, realistic and above all, I can beat everyone at it

recorded at real matches. The crowd sings, ooooooohs! and cheers wildly, although it inevitably has jarringly slow reactions. Best of all though, take a look at the price. If you've got the cart, then there's absolutely nothing worth shelling out for here. If you haven't, and you've got the hardware, get this.

© Paul Mellerick



My, that's a very nice stadium!



PUBLISHER: Sony

PRICE: £35.99

RELEASE: June '94

CARTRIDGE: Mega CD

CONTACT: Sony 071 734 5151

One or two players at any one time, but up to 64 in a tournament

Three levels of skill, from Easy to Advanced

Lives? Don't be silly

You can save your progress in the cups and tournaments offered

Levels? Eh?

GRAPHICS 8



SOUND 9



GAMEPLAY 10



GAME SIZE 9



ADDICTION 10



"Simple really; it's the same top game, it's got amazing sound and it's cheaper. What more do you need to know? Buy it!"



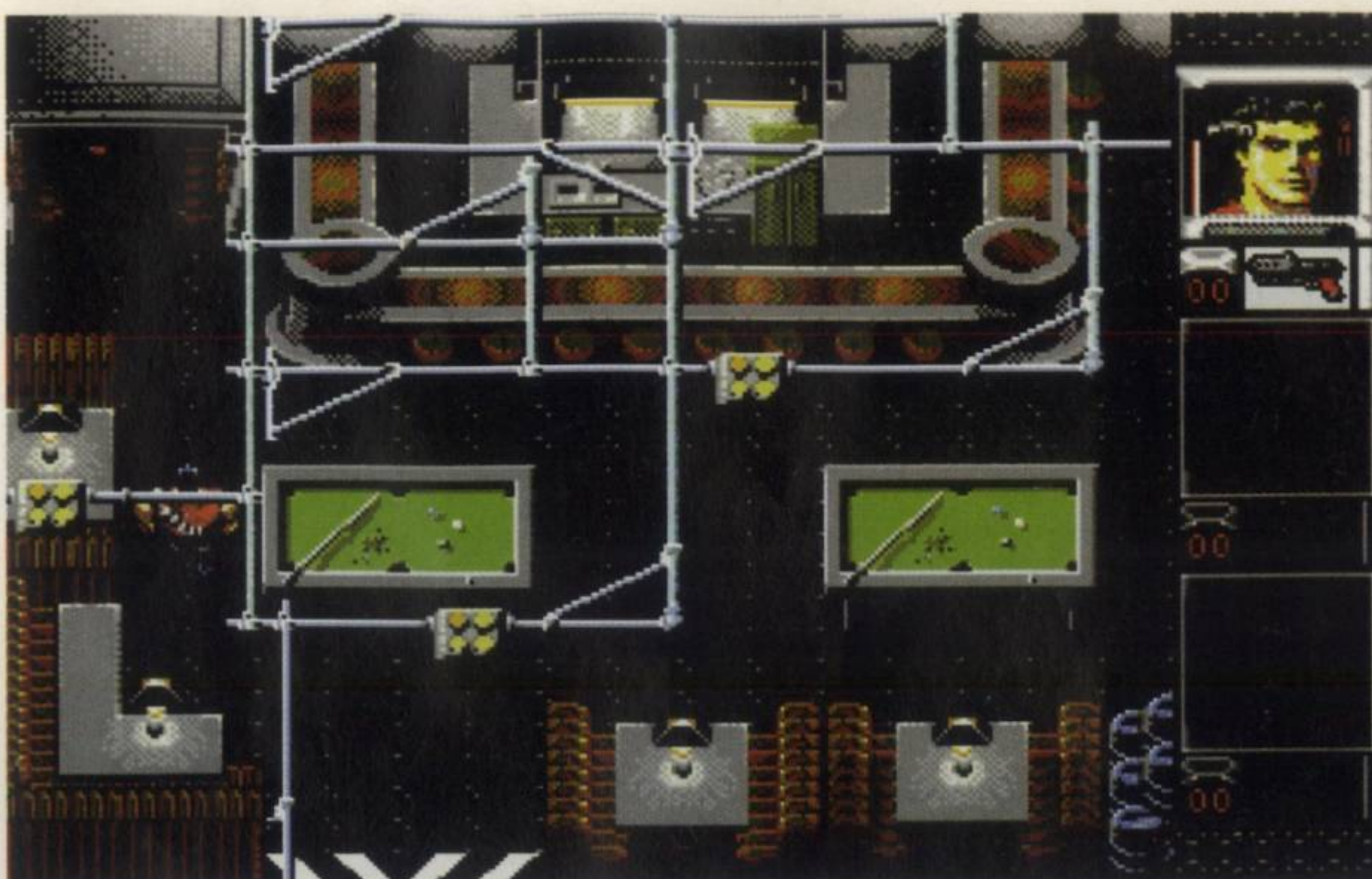
SENSIBLE SOCCER CD

This game is every bit as good as the cart version, and it's cheaper. Paul Mellerick reckons if you've got a Mega CD player, you should get this. Simple!



94 PERCENT

Who can tell us the inner mysteries of the phenomenon which is known as Cyberpunk? Why, our very own Paul Mellerick of course



Early on in the game you'll see this place quite a lot, because it's in here you'll find your first Mr. Johnson, and he'll give you a few jobs to do

SHADOWRUN



What would an role-playing game be like without loads of menus? Crap, that's what



Now we can get on with the serious business of buying some weapons



By "jacking" into kiosks placed around the levels, you can bring up all sorts of services, like calling a taxi to take you to other parts of the city

So just exactly what is Cyberpunk? Well, it's a bit hard to explain, but it's a sort of futuristic, technologically advanced society ruled by large corporations and controlled by computers. It's a place where criminals are hackers who can tap into computer systems to retrieve information. It's also a time where bio-mechanics are common place and it's not such a bad thing to have a metal plate in your head (because it prevents your brain falling out when you get hit by a portable particle laser). And it's also what playing *Shadowrun* is all about.

PLAGIARISM PARADISE

And hey, if we're all honest, everyone likes looking at the future, figuring out what kind of technology will be the next "in" thing and seeing how society will cope with it. And if you do, you may well like this game..

But then again you might not. Why? Because as with most things in life there

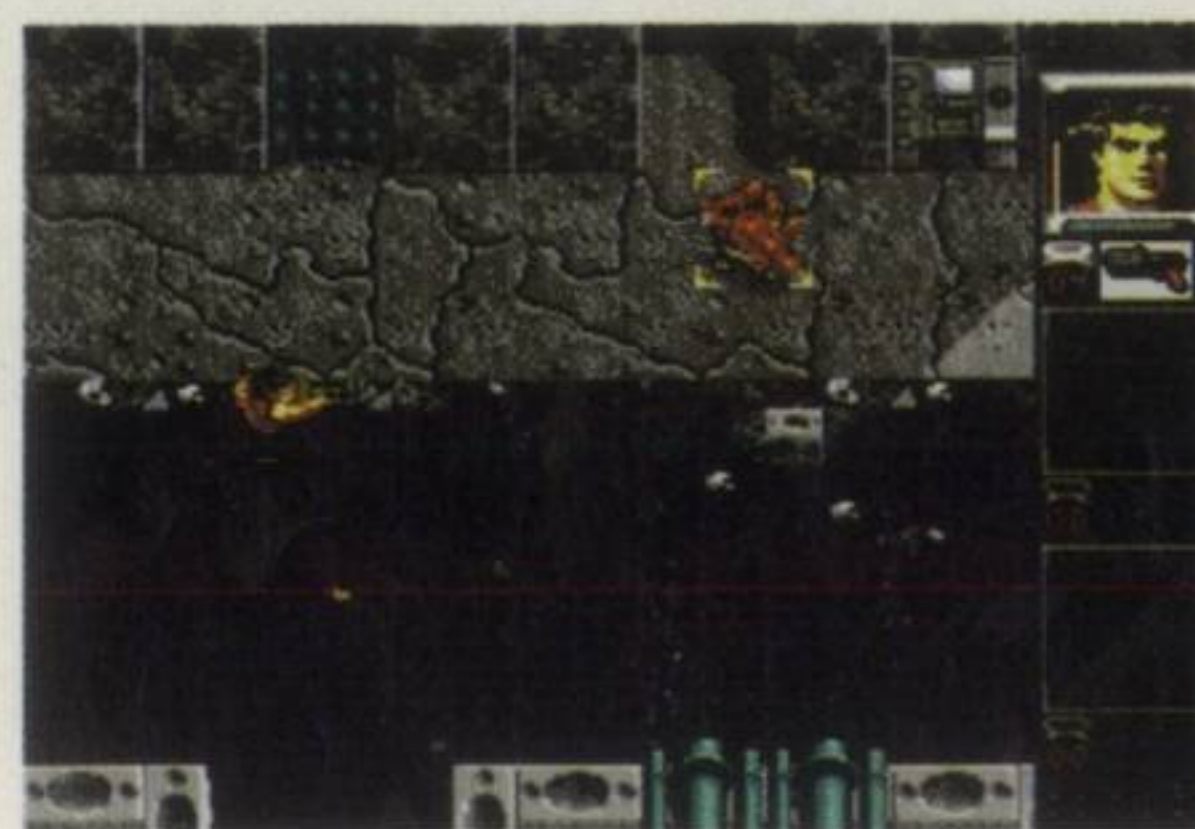
are a couple of problems. Apart from the not-very-good-really graphics and the OK sound, it's the basic game structure that's a little daunting. Although this could definitely be pigeon-holed as an RPG, it doesn't play as easily as something like *Landstalker*. In fact, it's stupidly hard.

It's not hard because it's difficult to control or anything like that, it's just hard because the game tries to introduce too much to you in a short space of time. Not only do you have to get to grips with the number of menus available to you, you also have the jargon to understand and get to grips with. And with terms like icing, cyberjacking and "running the matrix" and a not very comprehensive game manual, you've got a real job on your hands.

TOO DAMN HARD, MATEY

Don't get me wrong, there's plenty of detail (too much, I'd argue) and there's also a lot of playability here, but the game is trying to be too purist towards its influences and as such comes across as way too complex. If you're either a pastmaster at RPGs or a devout Cyberpunk, you'll definitely get a kick out of this, but for the rest of us it all appears too hard and too daunting. One for the fans methinks.

© Paul Mellerick



On the street, you'd better stay in the shadows and very much out of sight



PUBLISHER: Sega (Import)

PRICE: £45

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 16 Mbit

CONTACT: Telegames
0533 880445



Just the one player



There are no levels of skill as such, it's just bloody hard



You've got sort of infinite lives really



There's enough space for two saved games



You're in the town of Seattle, which has five sections

GRAPHICS 7



SOUND 7



GAMEPLAY 7



GAME SIZE 8



ADDICTION 7



"You really have to appreciate the scenario of the game to get the most out of it, otherwise you're left with just an OK-ish RPG"

79 PERCENT



Once more into the deepest depths of gaming we go, as we bring together this month's titles which are too obscure or too awful to stand alone. Your guide on this brave voyage? Paul Mellerick, of course



This is Goofy's amazing invention and it's a sort of extendible-arm-and-grab system. It's also the only weapon you've got in the game



And here's Goofy's only means of transportation... a wheel



And here's another wheel with another bloke on it



Which game shall we play today?



Aladdin set new standards in animation. Goofy doesn't



Who needs a pen and some paper when you've got a Mega Drive and a spare £40 floating around, eh?

This month's MEGA is so packed full of top reviews and big names that we've had to relegate four of the crappier import games to this little corner of the magazine. And we really have got some appalling titles for you this month. So without further ado, let's start things off with a look at *Super Battleship* from Mindscape (USA).

We've all enjoyed the odd game of Battleships on a rainy Sunday afternoon, when the only thing on the TV is Songs of Praise, but do we really want a console version of this classic pen-and-paper game? Granted, there's a souped-up variant to give added value, but even that's just a poor man's strategy game and attention grabbing for about three minutes at the most. Anyway, enough about this, if you even think about buying a "battleship" game, you must be a couple of sandwiches short of a picnic in the first place. Let's move on...

Don't you think it's odd the way some companies release games in America and then don't release them officially? Maybe the Americans buy more crap than we do, I don't know? The reason for all this Anglo-American social comment is *Grind Stormer* from Tengen (USA). And guess what? It's a vertically-scrolling shoot-'em-up. Now I know we haven't seen a vertically-scrolling blaster in a while, but there's a good reason for that. This sort of stuff is just too boring and has been done too many times before. There are already loads of highly-explosive shoot-'em-ups around for the Mega Drive, but this doesn't just score lowly on originality; it's also very dull. The pace of the game is too slow, and the "alien" ships are too predictable and easy to kill. The game also has one of those annoying power-up features so that once you've got your selected weapon up to full power, there's just too much going on to see anything else. NEXT!

NOBUNAGA'S AMBITION

PUBLISHER: Koei (Import)

RELEASE: Out now

MEGA SAYS: More strategic mastery from Koei. You'll either like it or you won't.

75%



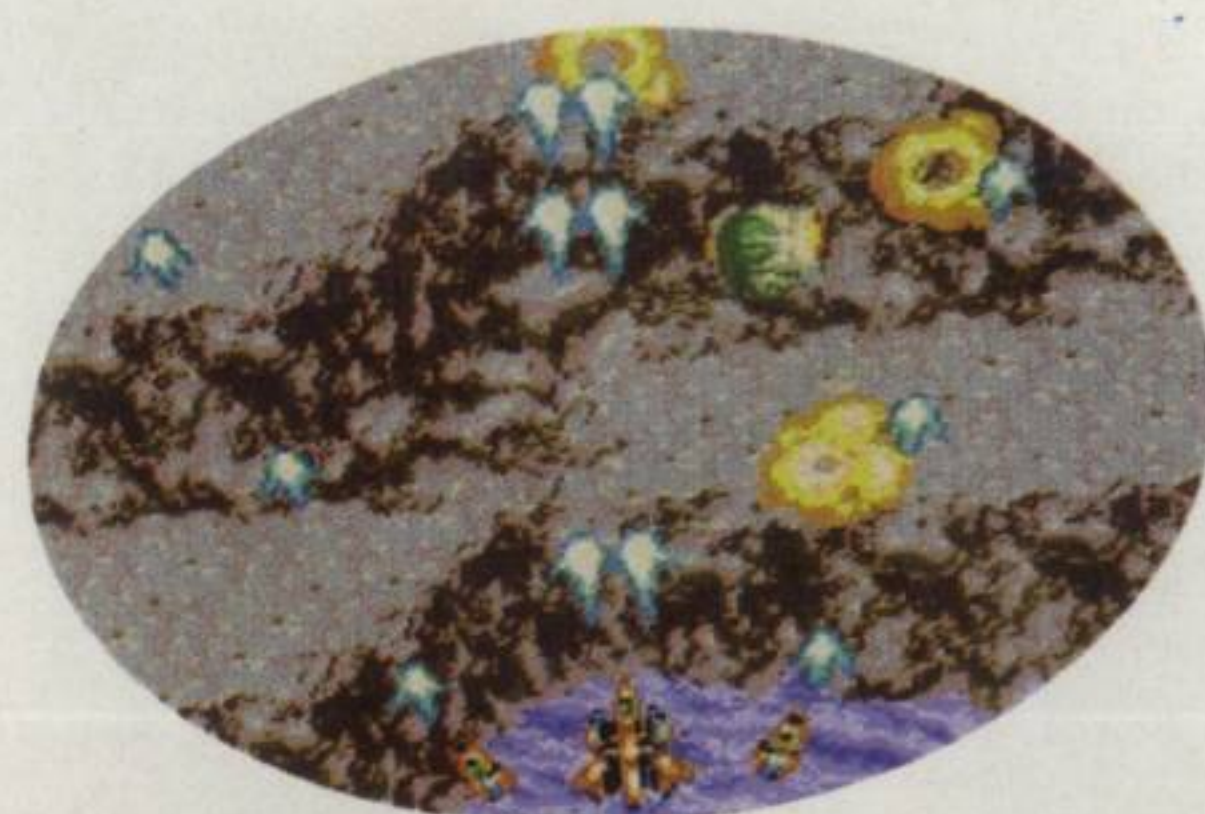


Shoot-'em-ups, eh! Loads of big metallic ships (mostly alien ones) for you to blow up and then of course there are loads of weapons for you to collect, which in turn mean loads of BIG explosions for you to watch...

Oh dear! After having my faith in Disney licences restored by *The Jungle Book* last issue, Disney and Absolute have once again cast a shadow over the Mega Drive platform genre, with *Goofy's Hysterical History Tour*. (Gawrsh! That sounds similar to something else doesn't it?) It's your typical silly Goofy plot with loads of silly and wacky "baddies" for you to take out as you travel from left to right in a very slow fashion. It's slow to respond to the control pad as well; it just isn't very enjoyable at all. The levels are all pretty samey, there are four worlds to get through, and, well, I think you probably know the rest, because you'll have seen and done it all before!

And finally this month, we've got another one of those war simulators. It's not particularly bad, it's just a bit obscure. However, this type of game continues to be popular in America, so

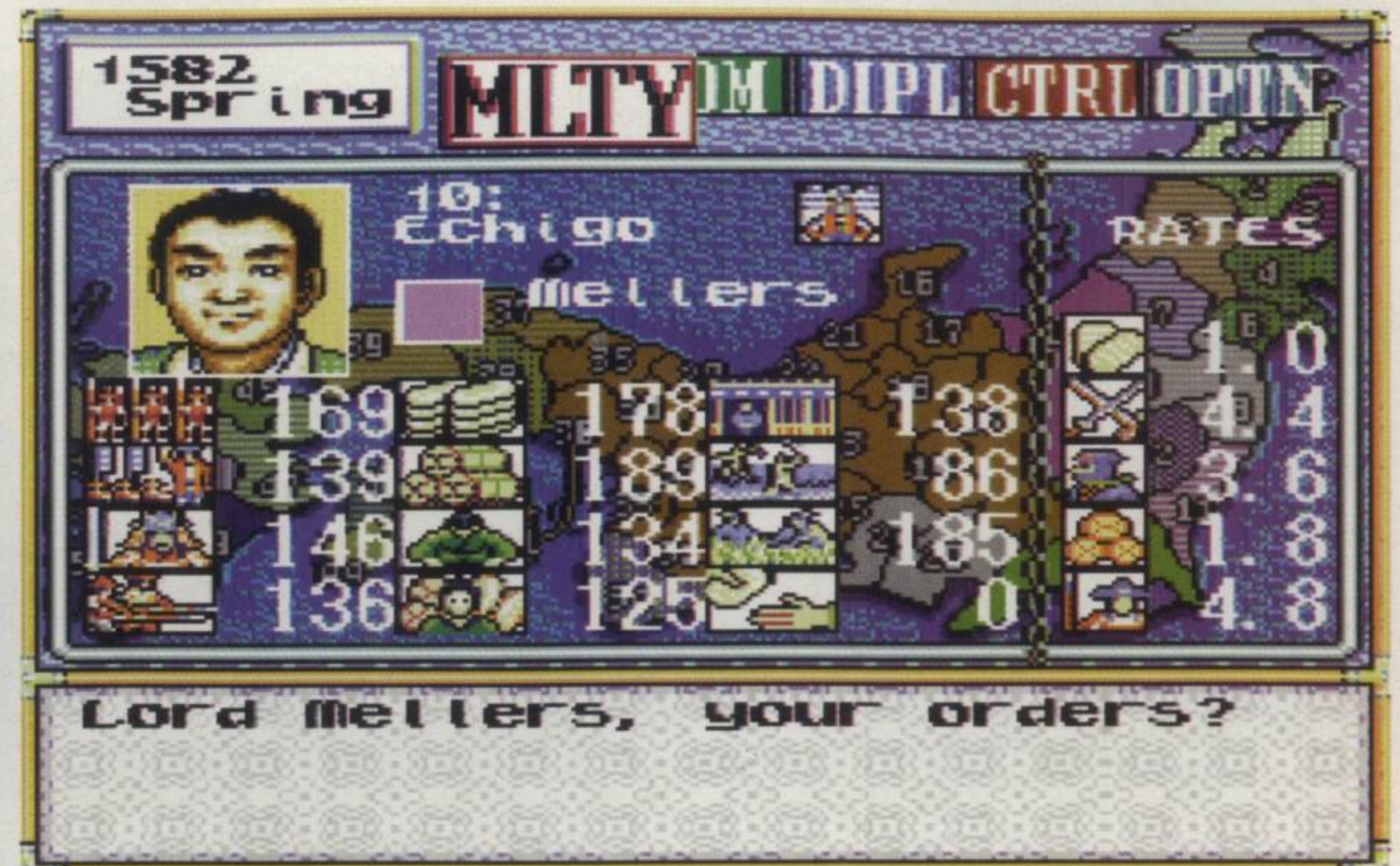
as long as they keep coming out we'll keep reviewing them. Again it's by Koei, but this time it's called *Nobunaga's Ambition*. It's set in 16th century Japan where nobody seems to have a clue what's going on, but there's a lot of fighting. It's all structured in the same professional Koei manner (as are *P.T.O.*, *Aerobiz* and *Ghengis Khan II*) and although it's a bit complex on the statistical side of things, a couple of hours play and a good read of the manual should sort out any problems you'll encounter. As I've said before though, if you like war sims, you'll love this, and if you don't, you won't – an obvious statment I know, but one which is very applicable here. And that's it for now, but don't forget to come back next month for more examples of what *not* to buy someone for a birthday present.



Ooh, BIG weapons and even BIGGER explosions. Exciting, huh?



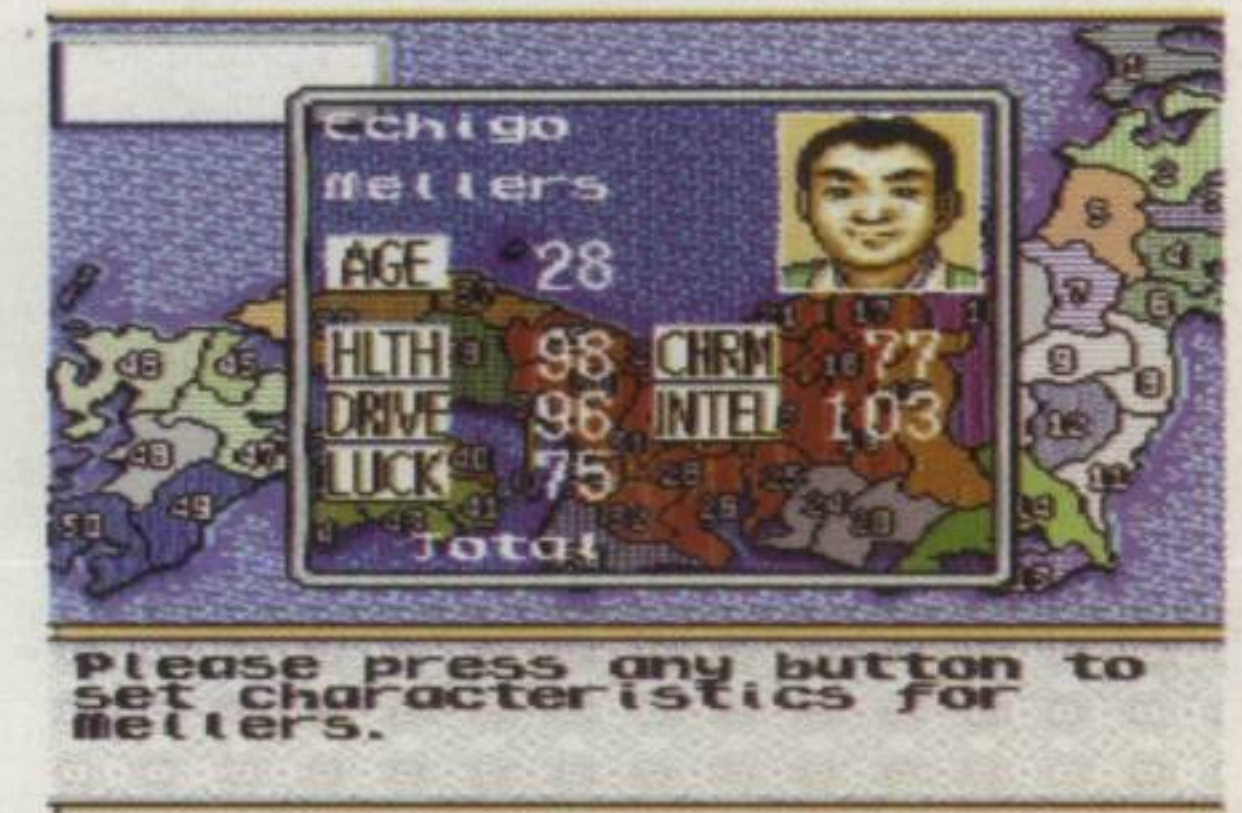
Here's a map of Japan. You must unite the country and make it strong



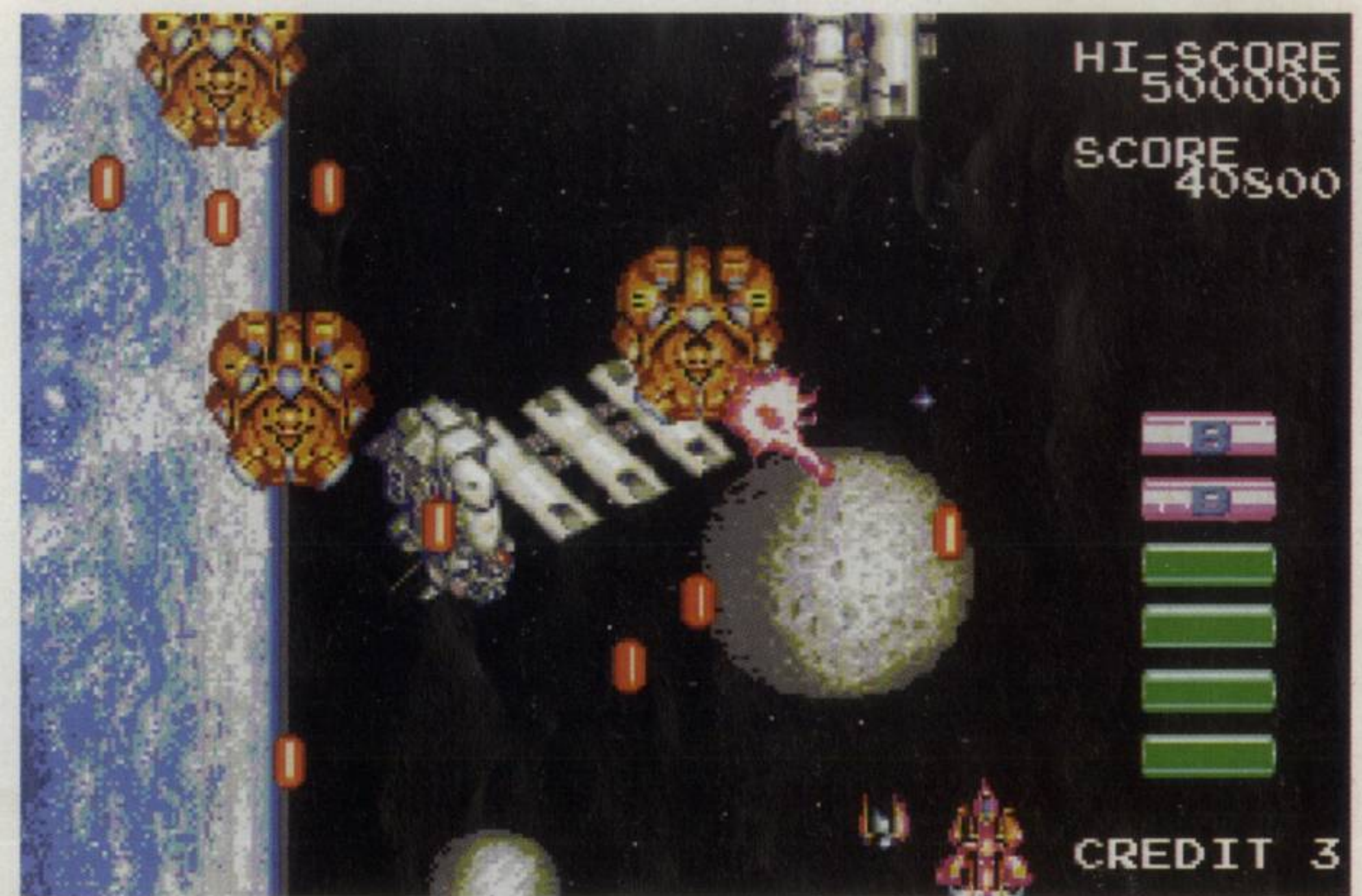
Er, I'm not sure exactly what all those figures and things mean, but I bet they do something really important in the game and could drastically alter things too



Wow! Look at that power-up, I bet that does something really cool



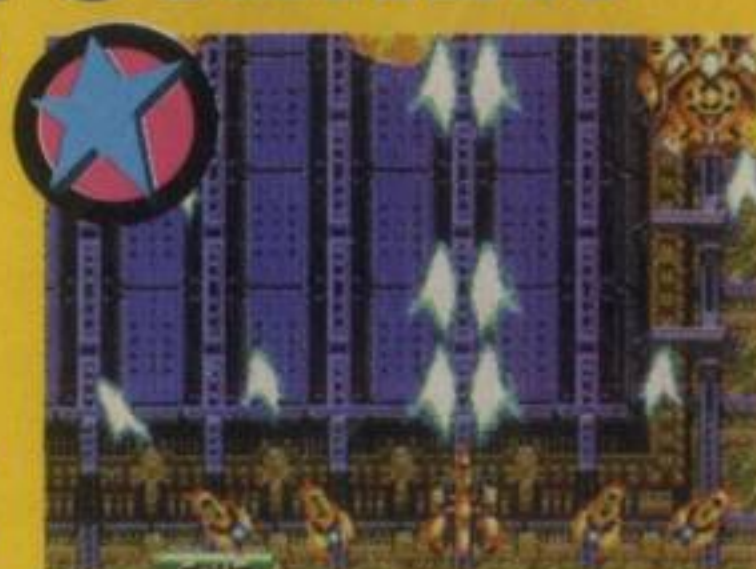
Set your own characteristics before you start the game



Hidden in *Grind Stormer* is a game called *V.V.* It's the same game, you just collect the power-ups in a different way. No big deal, really

GRIND STORMER

PUBLISHER: Tengen (Import)
RELEASE: Out now
MEGA SAYS: To call it a poor man's shoot-'em-up would be an insult to poor shoot-'em-ups". **39%**



SUPER BATTLESHIP

PUBLISHER: Mindscape
RELEASE: Out now
MEGA SAYS: Seriously folks, if you want to play Battleships, buy a pen and a pad of paper instead. **21%**



GOOFY'S HYSTERICAL TOUR

PUBLISHER: Absolute (Import)
RELEASE: Out now
MEGA SAYS: Incredibly unoriginal. A bit of a misfit really, much like Goofy himself. **39%**



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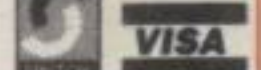
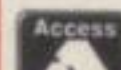
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It's the 21st issue of MEGA, and Josse Bilson brings you the biggest, best-est, never-been-21-before-now-I've-got-the-key-to-the-door-est MEGA PLAY ever! Phwoar, eh?

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TURTLES: THE HYPERSTONE HEIST



That looks far from pleasant. Use our level select to avoid any stages featuring robots with extendible arms

NBA JAM



Big Al Gore goes up for the two pointer while his team mate, Geordie from Star Trek: The Next Generation, "looks" on. That last bit's a lie

To change one of the players into President Clinton, go to the bit of the game where you enter your initials then enter AR and simply highlight K but don't enter it. Press and hold START then press Ⓐ.

To change one of the players into the Vice President, enter your initials then enter NE and simply highlight T but don't enter it. Press and hold START then press Ⓑ.

Finally, to change one of the players into the programmer, enter your initials then enter MJ and highlight T but don't enter it. Press and hold START then press Ⓐ.

Strong Defence:

On the Tonight's Matchup screen tap Ⓒ five times and on the fifth press keep it held.

Juice Mode:

On the Tonight's Matchup screen tap Ⓒ 14 times then press Ⓑ and X (you need a six-button pad for this).

George Jenkinson, Kidderminster

F22 INTERCEPTOR

If you want unlimited fire-power, invincibility and a whole bunch of other things, simply press buttons Ⓑ and Ⓒ simultaneously during your game, and an options screen will appear. If you don't, don't.



Invincibility and infinite ammo? Makes it a bit boring, surely?

Here, by popular request, is a neat and tidy, and, I think you'll agree, rather attractive little tip-ette for this top Mutant Ninja Turtles game:

Wait for the Konami logo to appear, then press Ⓒ, Ⓑ, Ⓑ, Ⓐ, Ⓐ, Ⓐ, Ⓑ, Ⓒ quickly before the logo appears. Press START, then, when the title screen appears, press Ⓐ, Ⓑ, Ⓑ, Ⓒ, Ⓒ, Ⓒ, Ⓑ, Ⓐ and START. An option screen appears, and you can now select any stage. A complicated procedure, true, but well worth it.

Tony Sutton and Bill Obviouslymadeupname, Tipton

Castlevania

Use the usual Ⓐ, Ⓑ, Ⓒ, Ⓓ, Ⓔ, Ⓕ, Ⓖ, Ⓗ, Ⓘ, Ⓜ and Ⓝ on the title screen to gain access to a level select, while at the same time gaining 30 lives and switching the collision detection off.

Chris Biggar/Leo Kenny, Lancashire



Thirty lives worth of hacking slashing fun. Hoorah for that

MEGA MEDIC JACK NICKLAUS POWER CHALLENGE

Q I'm a bit puzzled by why I can never hit the ball as far as the green on Jack Nicklaus Power Challenge. Am I doing anything wrong?
Tim Turner, Bristol

A Like on any golf course or golf game, there are long and short holes. You should be able to get on or near the green on most. To get more swing, use the Power Bar and go into the Over Swing Zone. Press Ⓐ then press it again when you're back to the hit line.

JAMES POND 3

TAZ-MANIA

You can't read this until you've made a "Taz being angry" noise. Go on. No, better than that. Louder! Oh, that'll do. OK, so plug in two controllers, and when the title screen appears, simultaneously press **A**, **B**, **C** and **START** on both. Begin a game, and when you're ready to skip a level, pause the game and press **A**, **B** and **C** together again.

To become invincible, once again pause the game and press **B**. To turn the invincibility off again, pause and press **A**. Clever, eh?



Aaaaah! Come on, all together. It's Taz and family relaxing at home. Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah!



This is the screen you'll get if you use our cheat. Fantastic. Yawn

To start the game with 87 levels cleared, all agents rescued, all cheese mines destroyed, three stiltonium machines destroyed, five lost treasures, six lives, the maximum five energy units, each and every life, and a partridge in a pear tree, use this long and stupidly involved symbol code on the password screen: Blue Skull, Red Moon, Red Moon, Red UFO, Green Rocket, Yellow Cake, Red Star, Blue Hand, Red Moon, Yellow Bottle, Red Book, Green Heart, Green Mushroom, Yellow Dog, Red Fish, Blue Mushroom, Red Boot, Red Fish, Blue Sweet and Red Pick. You'll now start in the Lair of the Mush Beast.

Chris Biggar and Leo Kenny, Lancashire

MEGA MEDIC ROCKET KNIGHT ADVENTURES

Q Dear Mega Medic, help, help, help! Maybe it's just me being a bit crap, but I got *Rocket Knight Adventures* for Christmas and I still can't get off the first level. Any help at all would be appreciated.
Ravi Patel, Walsall

A I can't imagine what you're having trouble with, but I take it you've mastered the rocket control, yes? Well, the first problem you'll come up against is the mid-level metal snake boss. Hit him in the head and his body will flash to show he's being injured. When he dives out of the water, stay inside his coils for safety.



Inside the Fort sections, follow the arrows. When the fire comes, it's always in blasts of three. Get as far forward as you can and duck for safety

until the screen stops shaking.

To defeat the Fort boss, follow his pattern of attack - it goes centre, left, then right - and concentrate on hitting his head. He'll drop a pair of spiders, avoid them and wait for him to drop a big red spider. Attack the red one and you'll destroy the lot. Continue attacking the boss's head, and watch out for his tail, which will come crashing through the wall. When you've finished him you've finished the level.

Just in case that's not enough help, here's a code to give you infinite continues: FFFB0D0005. Oh, and here's a tip. Level two starts with an imposing-looking metal boss. Simply swim across the bottom of the screen, power up, aim for his big red nose and shoot. Simple. Next!



Nasty boss man. Must... kill. Sorry, lost it for a second there



Some brightly armoured pig beasts running about

MICRO MACHINES

Yo! Nuff respekt to a pretend English Irishman Mr JJ McAuley of Old Aberdeen. He's the dude with nuff knowledge to lay down these codes for you, man. He said, and I quote: "I just had to share it with you all."

Infinite Lives: **A**, **B**, **C**, **X**, **Y**, **Z**, **0**, **1**, **2**, **3**, **4**, **5**, **6**, **7**, **8**, **9**
Extra Grip: **A**, **B**, **C**, **X**, **Y**, **Z**, **0**, **1**, **2**, **3**, **4**, **5**, **6**, **7**, **8**, **9**
Faster Car: **A**, **B**, **C**, **X**, **Y**, **Z**, **0**, **1**, **2**, **3**, **4**, **5**, **6**, **7**, **8**, **9**
Tougher Game: **A**, **B**, **C**, **X**, **Y**, **Z**, **0**, **1**, **2**, **3**, **4**, **5**, **6**, **7**, **8**, **9**
Even Tougher!: **A**, **B**, **C**, **X**, **Y**, **Z**, **0**, **1**, **2**, **3**, **4**, **5**, **6**, **7**, **8**, **9**

Mr JJ McAuley, Aberdeen



What? It's tiny cars, racing on a pool table. What's wrong with that?

Ren & Stimpy



Ooh look, Ren and Stimpy. Not since Tom And Jerry have we seen this type of pointlessly violent "entertainment". What it's doing to your head, that's what I want to know. Actually, I don't want to know, so don't write in, eh?



Ren & Steempee, more like. Here are some level-select codes for what can only be described as an average game spiced up only by the inclusion of Powdered Toast Man and some wonderful sound samples.

Level	Code
2	8B20000 - 004C4SR
3	8900004 - 884C2SI
4	831000B - D8N6250
5	832000H - TB424SM



Golf, eh? What a laugh; hitting a ball round a field for four hours

TOEJAM & EARL



Bugger me if it isn't an obese alien life form balancing on a large pink bubble. I've always wondered what that would look like. And now I know. Ah, but what would a Greek-style hero look like pacing around a room?

Doesn't it always happen? As soon as the sequel to a game appears, all manner of codes for the original game weave their way out from the woodwork. Here are the locations for all the spaceship parts:

- Level 2: Four squares down, three squares across
- Level 6: Five squares down, seven squares across
- Level 10: Two squares down, six squares across
- Level 12: Six squares down, five squares across
- Level 15: Two squares down, two squares across
- Level 17: Two squares down, seven squares across
- Level 20: Seven squares down, two squares across
- Level 21: Six squares down, seven squares across
- Level 23: Two squares down, four squares across

And here are the lift locations:

- | | | |
|-----------|--------|----------|
| Level 1: | 3 down | 5 across |
| Level 2: | 3 down | 6 across |
| Level 3: | 4 down | 3 across |
| Level 4: | 6 down | 2 across |
| Level 5: | 6 down | 2 across |
| Level 6: | 3 down | 7 across |
| Level 7: | 6 down | 4 across |
| Level 8: | 6 down | 7 across |
| Level 9: | 6 down | 4 across |
| Level 10: | 6 down | 5 across |
| Level 11: | 6 down | 7 across |
| Level 12: | 3 down | 7 across |
| Level 13: | 1 down | 6 across |
| Level 14: | 4 down | 5 across |
| Level 15: | 5 down | 3 across |
| Level 16: | 1 down | 5 across |
| Level 17: | 4 down | 6 across |
| Level 18: | 3 down | 2 across |
| Level 19: | 6 down | 7 across |
| Level 20: | 2 down | 7 across |
| Level 21: | 2 down | 6 across |
| Level 22: | 6 down | 4 across |
| Level 23: | 2 down | 3 across |

ECCO THE DOLPHIN



Look out for the net Ecco! Oops, too late. Not that bright really, are you?

The "ultimate" password for Ecco is here. And when I say ultimate, I mean ultimate. Simply type in the password LIFEFISH and press START and you've got all the air you need to breathe through any level.

LHX ATTACK CHOPPER

Incoming! You want to know the last level code for this helicopter offensive? You do? Are you sure? Well, just tap in CA1AR4G. OK? Chris Barry, Northern Ireland



More flying "fun" for all you gamers, courtesy of MEGA. You lucky, lucky people

GODS

The all-seeing, all-knowing Jon Smith threw back his head, roared a guttural laugh and let flee a nugget of information, booming loud as though it were a thunderclap. "Level codes," he spake... "Level codes for Gods on the Mega Drive." "Cheers," we mumbled, cowering in his wake.

Level	Code
2	NASHWAN
3	COYOTE
4	FOXX



Well, blow me if it wouldn't look exactly like this. The educational world of video games is boundless

POPULOUS 2

And here, without further delay, are some rather super duper tips for this omnipresent overseer of games. Type in the following codes for an added advantage.

- HUMANOID:**
Tons more Mana
- WIBBLE:**
All FX in current game
- EXPERIMENT:**
Maximum experience
- NOT HALF:**
Next game is 999



Die mortals! Die! Ahem - I mean live long and prosper, citizens

PUGGSY

Fancy discovering whole new worlds at no extra cost to yourself? Well, here are the codes to access them...

- The Cove: 377 501 370 673 776 111 750 561 240
- Red Woods: 377 501 570 673 777 131 700 521 244
- Star Lake Fall: 377 503 570 653 775 135 700 101 244
- Splinter Town: 337 503 570 656 724 531 750 041 244
- Badger Mill: 117 403 570 656 725 531 700 001 344
- Pyramids: 117 413 540 654 627 531 700 001 304
- Dark Blade Forest: 112 413 500 650 635 535 700 001 304
- Diamond Mines: 152 453 500 650 635 535 740 105 314

- Dark Skull Castle: 340 453 500 650 635 535 763 105 314
- Fire Heart: 242 453 500 650 634 535 760 005 114
- Aztec Temple: 200 453 500 650 636 575 763 115 114
- Racrock Forge: 200 453 500 254 716 571 633 115 154
- Raclantis Docks: 240 653 100 254 314 561 223 117 114

Bonus games for extra lives are also to be found in Aztec Temple and Racrock Forge levels.



Can't defeat a particular boss? Well, explore a secret level instead

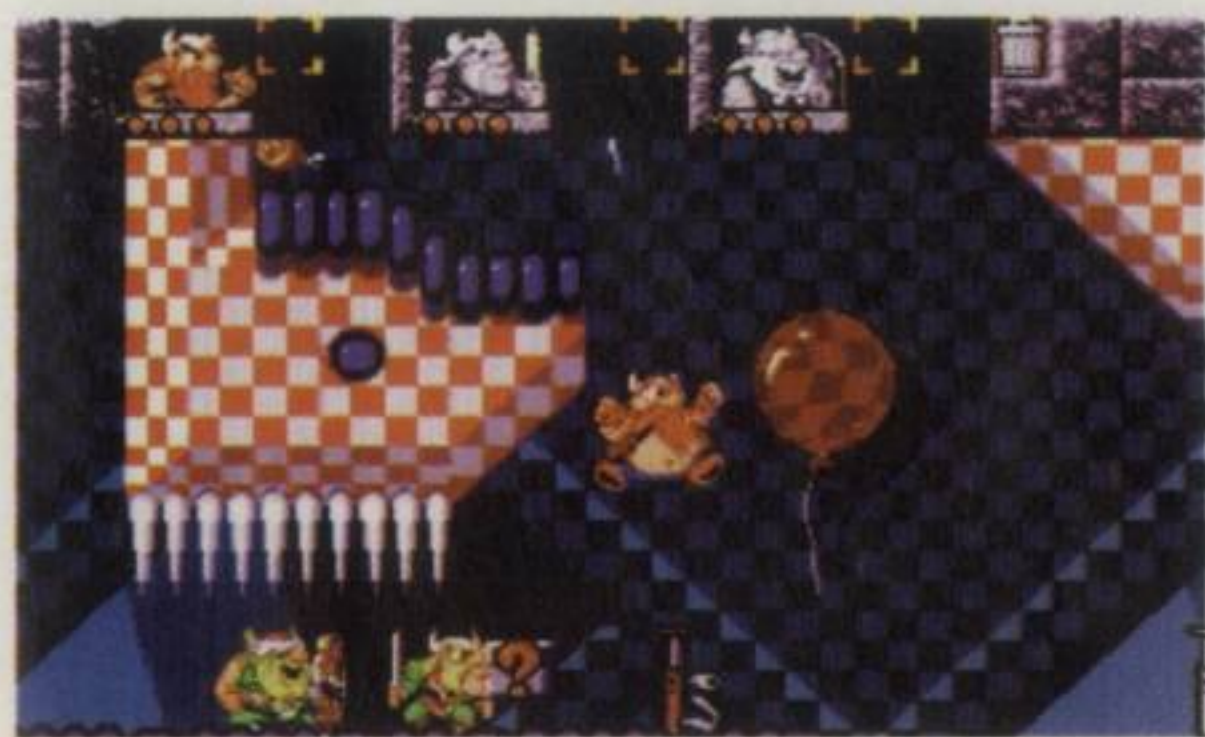


Would you buy a used car from this alien? Granted, he looks honest enough, but does he know anything about motors? Does he, at the end of the day, exist? No, he doesn't, does he, so shut up

The Lost Vikings

What with this being a totally brilliant game and everything, I've been finding it very difficult to do anything else over the last week or so but work out a list of passwords for it, and provide a full guide to the various exploits of Eric, Olaf and Baleog. Hope y'all enjoy it.

2	GR8T
3	TLPT
4	GRND
5	LLM0
6	FL0T
7	TRSS
8	PRHS
9	CVRN
10	BBLS
11	TR33
12	VLCN
13	QCKS
14	PHR0
15	C1R0
16	SPKS
17	JMNN
18	SNDS
19	TMPL
20	TTRS



Some Vikings, lost, yesterday



Some Norsemen, misplaced, blah blah

TOP TIPSTER

This month's top tipster is **George Jenkinson** from sunny Kidderminster for his delightful *NBA Jam* codes. This utterly fantastic game is livened up even further by the inclusion of some famous folks, and a whole bunch of new modes.

For your troubles, George, you receive the cart of your choice, as long as it's not *Virtua Racing* because that's ridiculously expensive. Please, please, please remember to state which game you'd like to win when you send your cheats in, otherwise, if you do win, you'll have to wait. OK?

Get sending all your tips, cheats, and suchlike to MEGA PLAY, MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW.

The Action Replay and Game Genie are cheat devices that slot into your Mega Drive and which the game cart slots into the top of, like a converter. By entering codes like those printed below, you can alter all sorts of game attributes. The Action Replay costs £49.99 from Datel Electronics (0782 744707), while the Game Genie is £44.99 from Hornby Hobbies (0843 225555). And they're fun. No, really they're a whole bundle of fun, and anyone with any sense will smile at them.

ACTION REPLAY CODES

Bonanza Brothers

FFC05 70007 - Infinite lives for player one
FF6C3 D0006 - Infinite lives for player two

General Chaos

FF031 90005 - Infinite medics for player one
FF031 B0005 - Infinite medics for player two

MiG-29

FFC56 F0004 - Infinite AS-7 missiles
FFC56 D0003 - Infinite AS-8 missiles
FFC56 B0003 - Infinite AA-7 missiles
FFC56 90002 - Infinite AA-8 missiles
FFC56 70007 - Infinite 57mm rockets
FFC56 50005 - Infinite cannon rounds
FFC57 30014 - Infinite chaff
FFC57 1001E - Infinite flares

Terminator

FFFF2 F0000 - Reece goes ice skating

Zero Wing

FF00F D0002 - Infinite lives

Zombies Ate My Neighbours

FFFAAF000A - Infinite energy

GAME GENIE CODE

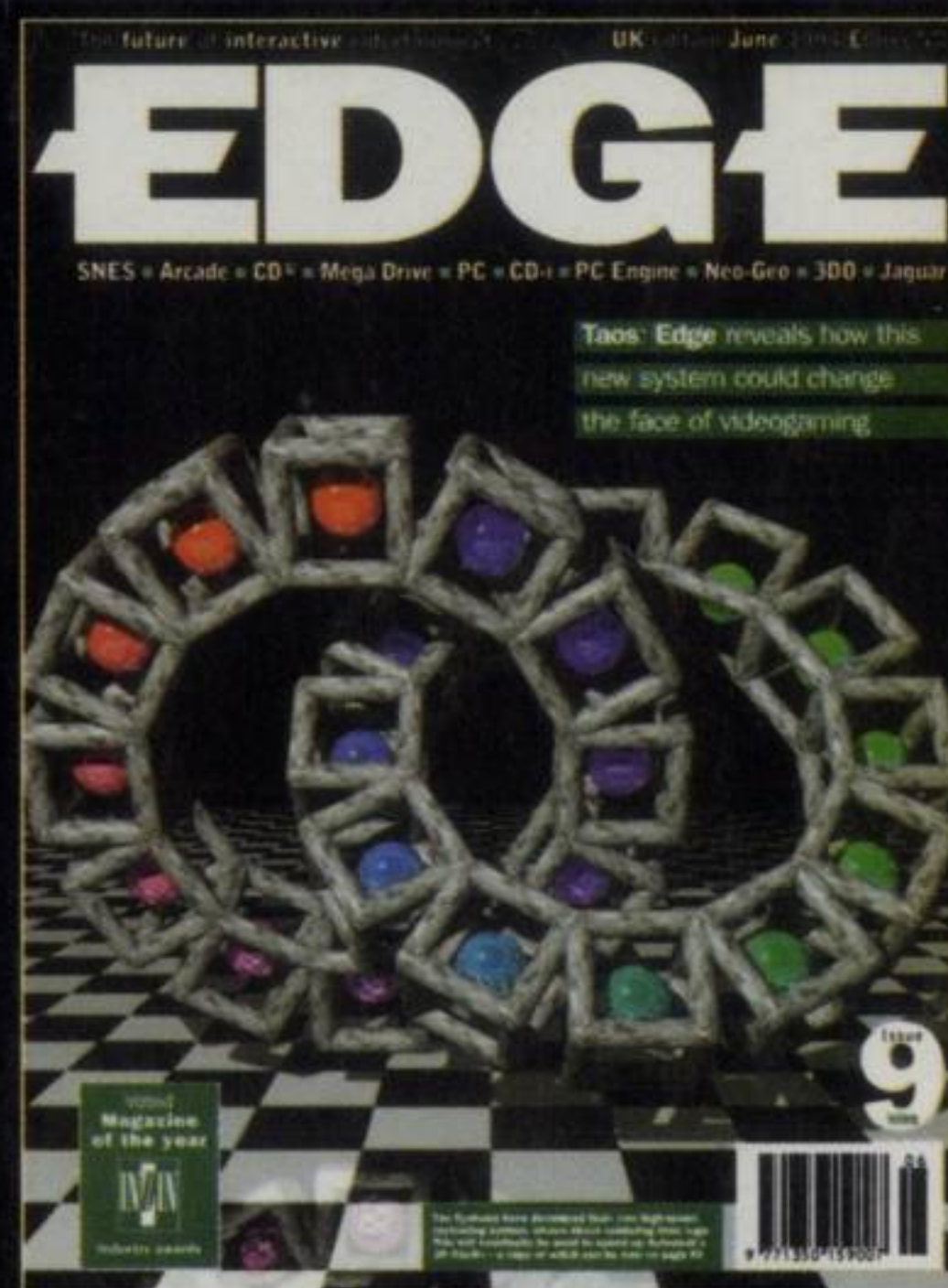
Shinobi 3

CJSA EA7G - Infinite energy
AX6T AA2E - Infinite credits
AT3A EA72 - Infinite shurikins
AT1T EA4E - Infinite ninjitsu items
CBTT AG48 - Start with 99 lives
CBTT AAC8 - Start with one life

X-Men

A3YA AA32 - Protection from most hits
BDBA CA34 - Protection from falling
ACJT CAGA - Protection from spikes
B5BA CA7T - Lose no mutant power when falling
ACKT CAFT - Mutant power does not regenerate
TCKT CAFT - Mutant power regenerates faster
ACKT CEFT - Mutant power regenerates much faster
ACKT CJFT - Mutant power regenerates to full

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ARE

This is the corner of the mag where Paul Mellerick invites you to devise your own game challenges, discover crazy cheat cart codes and uncover weird programming features. All contributions are welcome!

And why do we invite you to contribute such seemingly silly and insignificant pieces of information to this section of the magazine each month? Because silly or not, these challenges and codes help spice up tired old carts. So, let's get to it...

WACKY CHALLENGES

Do we still like these wacky challenges? That's a question I ask myself at the start of every month as I sit down and look through your letters. After sorting through the hundreds of letters, all strange in their own way, the only answer I can conclude is a big and hearty YES. Keep 'em coming and we'll keep printing them.

WEIRD AND WONDERFUL HAPPENINGS

We've got a bit of an odd selection of happenings this month, but then again, if they weren't odd, they wouldn't be weird would they? Mmmm... Anyway, don't forget to write in and tell us if you find anything odd in a game, and if it's weird and wacky enough, you could end up winning something for yourself. And if you don't write in and tell us, next month you could be looking at a big blank space in the magazine, where the weird happenings section is right now. And if you bought a mag and found a box with nothing in it, you wouldn't be very pleased would you? I didn't think so, so get writing.

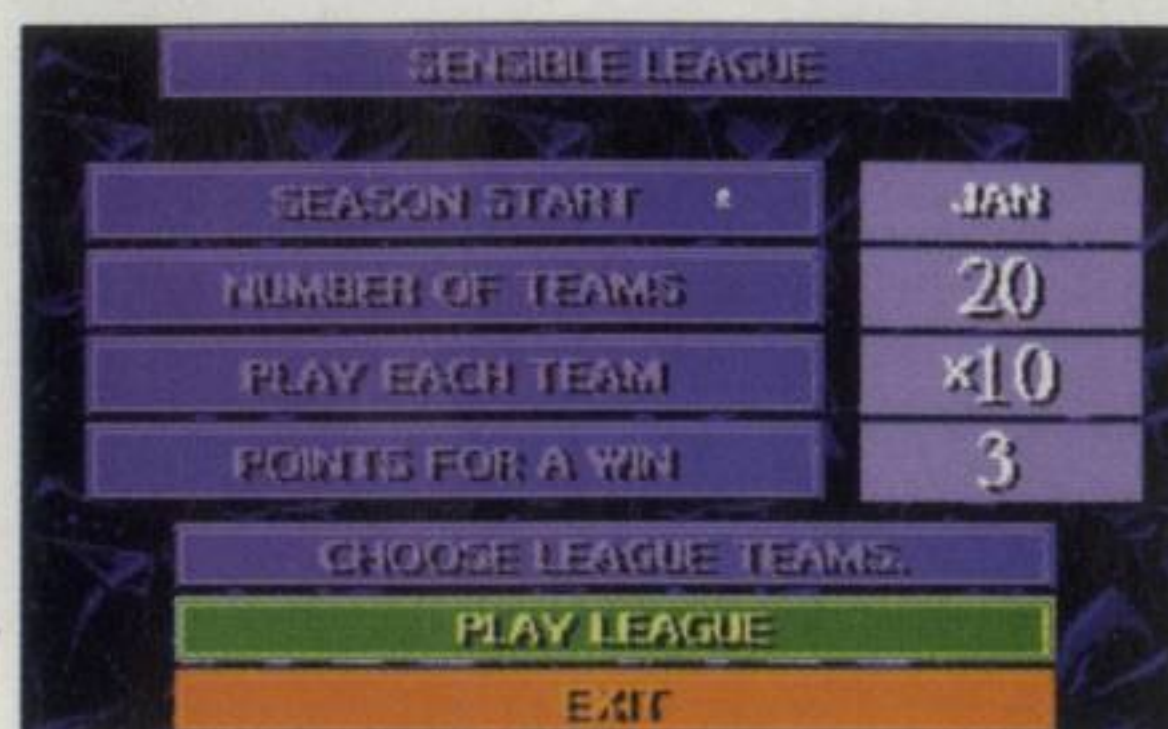
1 **GROUND ZERO TEXAS**
Not very weird this, but a strange thing that has definitely got me stumped. At any point in the game, press START and get to the options screen, where you can continue or restart one of the levels. Now press ④, ⑤ and ⑥ together and a number will appear in the bottom left-hand corner. Don't know why, but it's a bit strange anyway.

David Wilcox, Knottingley, W. Yorkshire



1 **SENSIBLE SOCCER**
Longevity is a word often used in reference to sports games, and with this challenge it's more than appropriate. The challenge is simple; set up a league (on any level) and put 20 teams in it. Play each of the teams ten times (that's 190 matches for anyone who didn't already work that out) and set the game time at three minutes. Now get through a whole season scoring more than 1000 goals without conceding more than 40.

David Dodden, Dunblare, Perthshire



I'm actually sad enough to have tried this challenge, and I'm telling you, it's a bit hard

2 **SONIC 3**
A very popular little challenge this one, or so the number of letters we have received suggests. Start the game with both Sonic and Tails, and then take control of Tails. Now see how far you can get through the levels as Tails, carrying Sonic around for the ride.

A P Haigh, Ash, Aldershot



Sonic doesn't seem too happy about being carried all over the level, but it makes for quite a tricky challenge



2 **STREET FIGHTER 2**
Odd this, but you're going to have to be pretty good if you want to see it. Select the Hyper Fighting tournament and play as Ken. Now, when you've finished the game, use the ③, Z, ③, X, ④, Y, ⑥ and ⑦ cheat and you will see that the picture of Chun Li changes colour. Spooky, but not as spooky as something I've just thought of.

Martin Hurst, Totton, Hants

CRAZY CODES

Things are a bit bare on the Action Replay front this month, but this is more than made up for by the amount of Game Genie codes we've got. Don't forget, that after you've gone away and played with these codes for a while, you should try to come up with some of your own. If they're good enough, you could win a nice free cartridge of your choice, not to mention getting your name printed in Britain's best-selling Mega Drive mag. This month's winner, for his top Wiz 'n' Liz Game Genie codes, is **Vince Lambert** from Spalding in Lincolnshire. He has

3 **STREET FIGHTER 2**
This challenge is a teasing one, relying very much on your ability to hear, rather than see, what's going on. Set up a normal one-player tournament and then, as you're about to start, turn the television off. Now play using only a pair of headphones (plugged in of course) and, er, a joypad.

Jonathan Carroll, Cathgart, Glasgow



Select your player, and then, just as your fight is about to start, switch off your television set

4 **ROYAL RUMBLE**
If you haven't got any friends, then this is gonna be a good challenge for you. Select a two-player Royal Rumble, but don't have a second person playing. (Shouldn't be a problem if you've got no friends!) Your job is to protect the other character from being

3 **LANDSTALKER**
This is more of a weird tip than a weird happening, but it's still strange nonetheless. Play the chicken toss game in the casino and afterwards jump on the back of a chicken. Now jump into the gap from which the chickens run out and you will be able to run around a blank screen with some Dahl hidden in it.

Paul Graham, Ballymena, N. Ireland



chosen *General Chaos* as his game, and it's on its way to you as we speak Vince. Hope you like it. As for the rest of you, get sending in those codes. It'll only cost you the price of a stamp and you could end up winning a cart.

ACTION REPLAY CODES

Street Fighter 2

0004E C4E75 - No Music
00058 84E75 - No fireballs or Sonic Booms
Matthew Hankinson, Warrington

Sonic 3

FFFE0 900FF - Sonic breakdances
Darrell Woodcock, Ramsgate, Kent

GAME GENIE CODES

Wiz 'n' Liz

AAEA AAB2 - Can only see backgrounds
A39A AAB2 - Rearrange all spells
A29A AABR - No rabbits on second round of the level
A38A ABAT - Land of Pum in a blank screen
Vince Lambert, Spalding, Lincs

Taz-Mania

AGGT AAGC - Anything Taz eats makes him blow up
A5EA 0A30 - Taz ice skates across the ice level
Matt Ellis, Warrington

Golden Axe

SA4A BET2 - The @ button won't work
P Callis-Smith, Withernsea

Street Fighter 2

AADA AAN0 - Everyone looks like Ryu
AAEA AE00 - Player one hasn't got a shadow
GLGT AABC - Characters keep jumping to the right
Thomas Tuza, Luton



How many Ryu's are there?



Protecting the second player is a very tough task indeed

thrown out of the ring while you deal with ALL the computer-controlled wrestlers.
Stephen Brown, Cockermouth

5 MADDEN NFL '94

You'd be forgiven for thinking that the idea behind this challenge is to show just how crap at a



The result may be a little on the dull side, but the game's exciting



4 FIFA INTERNATIONAL SOCCER

Ooh, what an amazing shot. So near and yet so far. Let's see that shot again as it misses the goal and ends up in the crowd. Silence as we enter the instant replay option? Hold on, why won't the replay show the ball going past the goal and into the crowd. Now that's weird.

Vincent Revie, Southport

game you can be. However, by playing any game, play-off or league, and trying to finish the game as a 0-0 draw, you're going to have to be pretty tough defensively and very shrewd in offense.
Martin Hurst, Calmore, Totton

6 SHINING FORCE

Although one of the main ideas behind this game is to talk to people and persuade them to join your band of merry men (and women), we want you to try to complete the game with just your original members. In other words, complete it using the first eleven people to join the Shining Force.



Why don't we get more challenges like this for other RPGs? Come on you lot out there, get thinking

7 SONIC 3

We've already printed a *Sonic 3* challenge in this issue, but the game is very popular and both challenges are good, and anyway, I compile the pages so it's up to me what I put in them.

Right, enter the special stage and hit one of the star spheres so that you bounce off it and are propelled backwards. Now keep running backwards and collect all the blue spheres.

Jim Watson, Abroath



"I'm running backwards with Sonic, I'm running backwards for balls." My, what a boring caption this is

8 LHX ATTACK CHOPPER

Not a very crazy challenge this one, but definitely a toughie.

Select the Very Hard level and use the Apache helicopter. Now go to the options menu and select the circling view and try to complete the first five missions using only this viewpoint.

Irvin Edwards, Pwllheli, N. Wales

9 GROUND ZERO TEXAS

How do you turn a one-player game into a two-player game? Well, you can mess around and try to get one player to press the buttons and one to control the pad, or, as with this game, you can plug two pads into the Mega Drive, then get one player to control the switching between cameras and the other to control the shooting and camera shields.

David Wilcox, Knottingley, West Yorkshire



It's the hidden two-player version of *Ground Zero Texas*. Wow!

10 LANDSTALKER

Ever walked around a town or village and seen a dog? Ever walked up to it and talked to it? Don't bother, it'll only say "Woof! Woof!". Ever tried to pick one up? Well, that's the challenge. Yep, find a dog and in one minute see how many times you can pick it up and put it down. We recommend trying this in Gumi. Oh, and apparently the record to beat is eight times.

Edward Nicholas, Berkhamsted

A WINNING SMILE

So another month of ARENA is almost over, and I hope I've given your life some sort of meaning. And if, along the way, I've made you smile, or even laugh, then I consider my job done. (Er, Paul, haven't

GAME OVER

SONIC 3

If you're reading the magazine backwards, you'll already have seen the second half of our *Sonic 3* solution (starting on page 54), but how about checking out the end sequence? Yep? Well, here it is...



The final boss destroyed...



... Robotnik's dream is shattered



But did you get all the emeralds?

you forgotten something? - Andy) Er, don't think so... oh, yeah, this month's Electronic Arts cart winner. This month's winner is (big fanfare) **David Wilcox**, from Knottingley in West Yorkshire, for his comprehensive *Ground Zero Texas* challenge and weird happening. Please get in touch with us David and we'll sort out your prize. If anyone else out there would like to go for the star prize, send your challenges, happenings and stuff to ARENA, MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW.

A BUNCH OF FIVES

And that's exactly what we want from you. We want your list of five favourite in-game anything's. This could be your top five baddies, top five explosions, top five title screens... whatever you like really, the list is endless. Of course the wackier they are the better. Send them in to us at ARENA at the above address, and if any of them are good enough, we'll print them next issue.

SONIC 3

PART 2 Trouble with the latter stages of *Sonic 3*? Read last month's guide to the first half of the game but can get no further? Here's Josse Bilson with the concluding part of our complete solution...

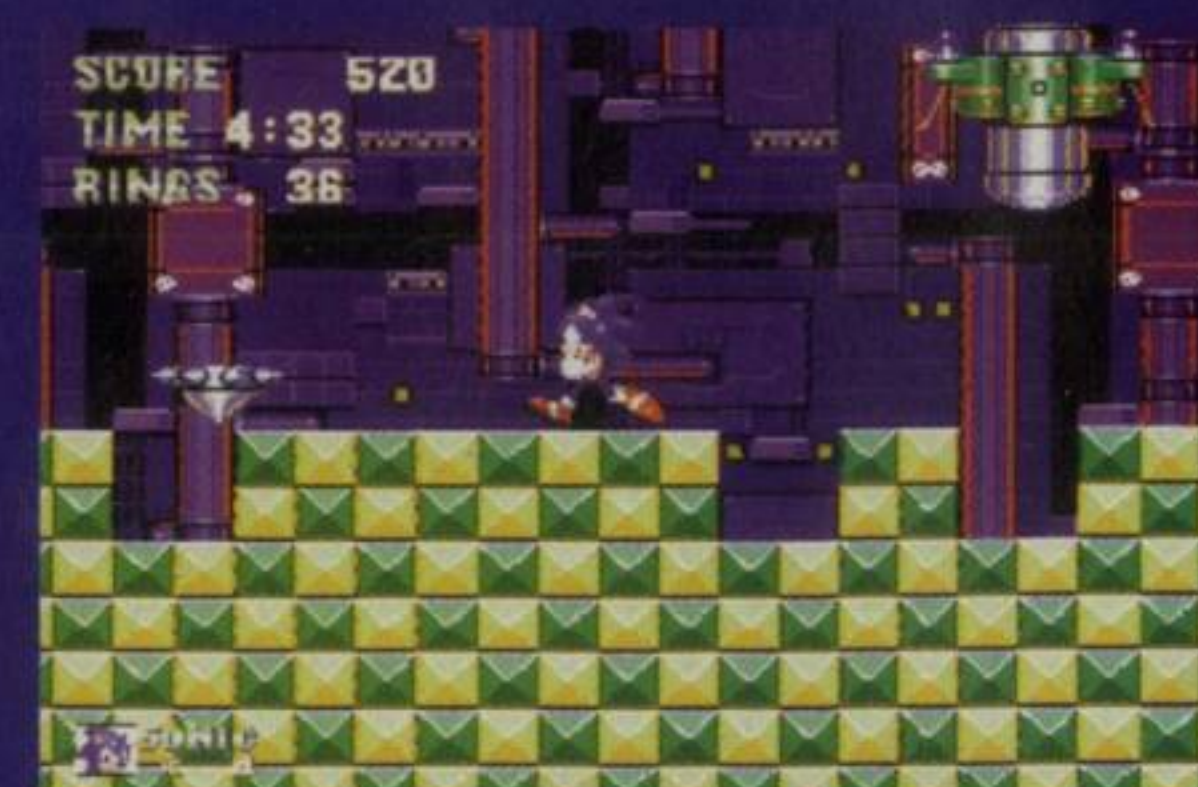
Last month's six-page guide to *Sonic 3* should have seen you safely through the first three zones, so this month we open up, especially for you, the rest of the game. Yes, we take you right through to the very end. God, we're good to you.

As is the norm with any game, there are a couple of general playing tips which you need to get to grips with. Get used to the way Sonic moves, learn to recognise those wide open sections where you can really let Sonic go (and those parts where it's wise to tread carefully) and always, always collect any rings that you can reach. This might all seem a bit boring, but at the end of the day it means that you've got both a good, easily salvageable life insurance policy and easily attainable extra lives. Don't knock it...

ZONE FOUR – CARNIVAL NIGHT, ACT ONE



Always explore any ballooned avenues, as they often lead to a power-up. This time, Sonic's stumbled upon a bubble that will come in useful later on

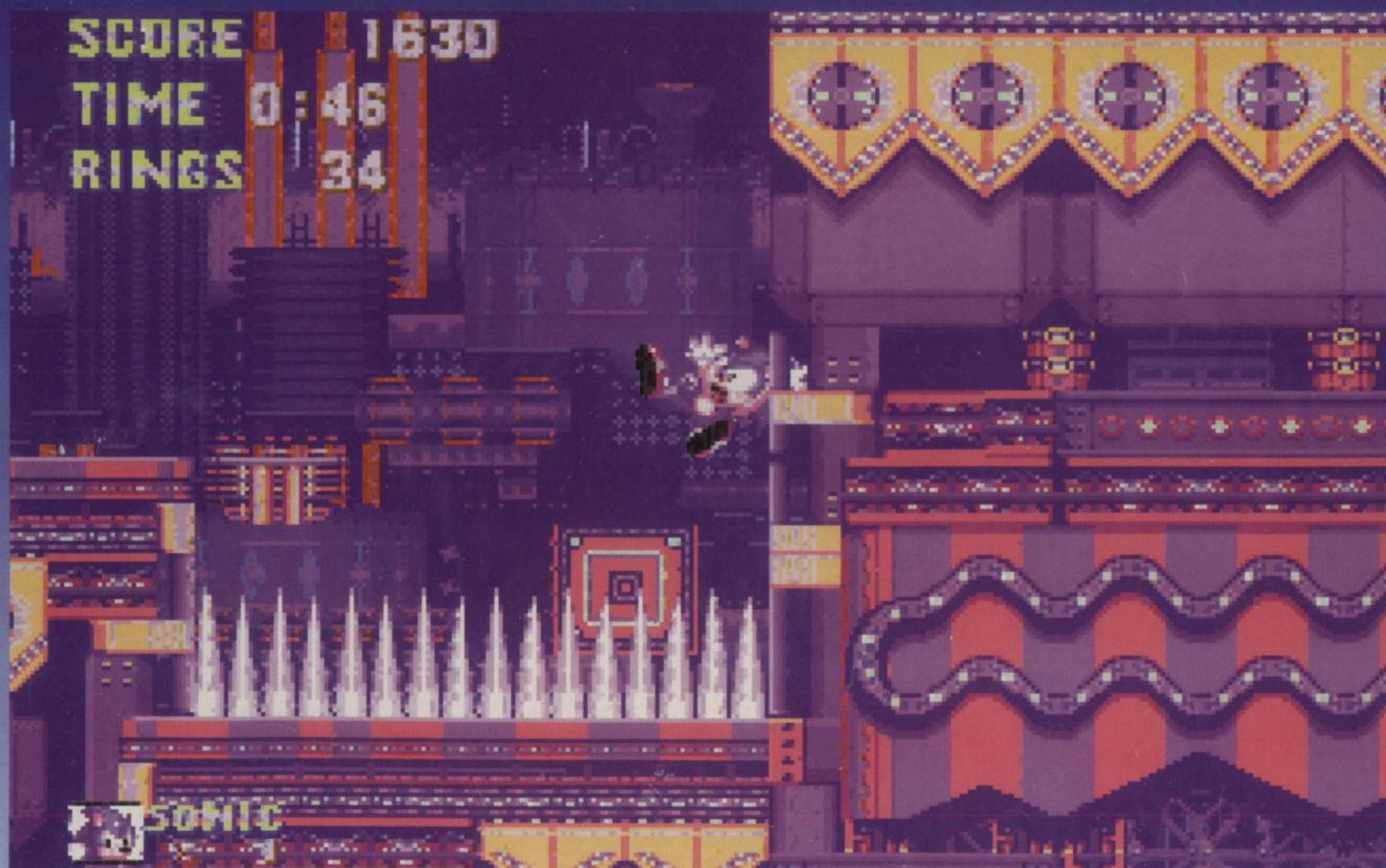


This is one of the more awkward bosses, but it's still a tad easy

Carnival Night Zone is where *Sonic 3* really kicks off. Compared to its predecessors this level is huge and complex, far too huge and complex for me to hold your hand all the way through, in fact. You'll just have to put up with a few pertinent pointers and some general tactics, I'm afraid.

There are lots (and I mean lots) of hidden areas in the fair, but this time, they're more cunningly hidden. Look out for parts of walls above ground level (especially below the large candy bar-style poles and on large enclosed curves) that give way beneath Sonic's feet. Try to run as far up the side of all areas as possible.

Also unique to Carnival Night are



No, no, no. You're missing the point Sonic. Or rather you're not. The Carnival Night Zones are particularly spiky

ZONE FOUR –

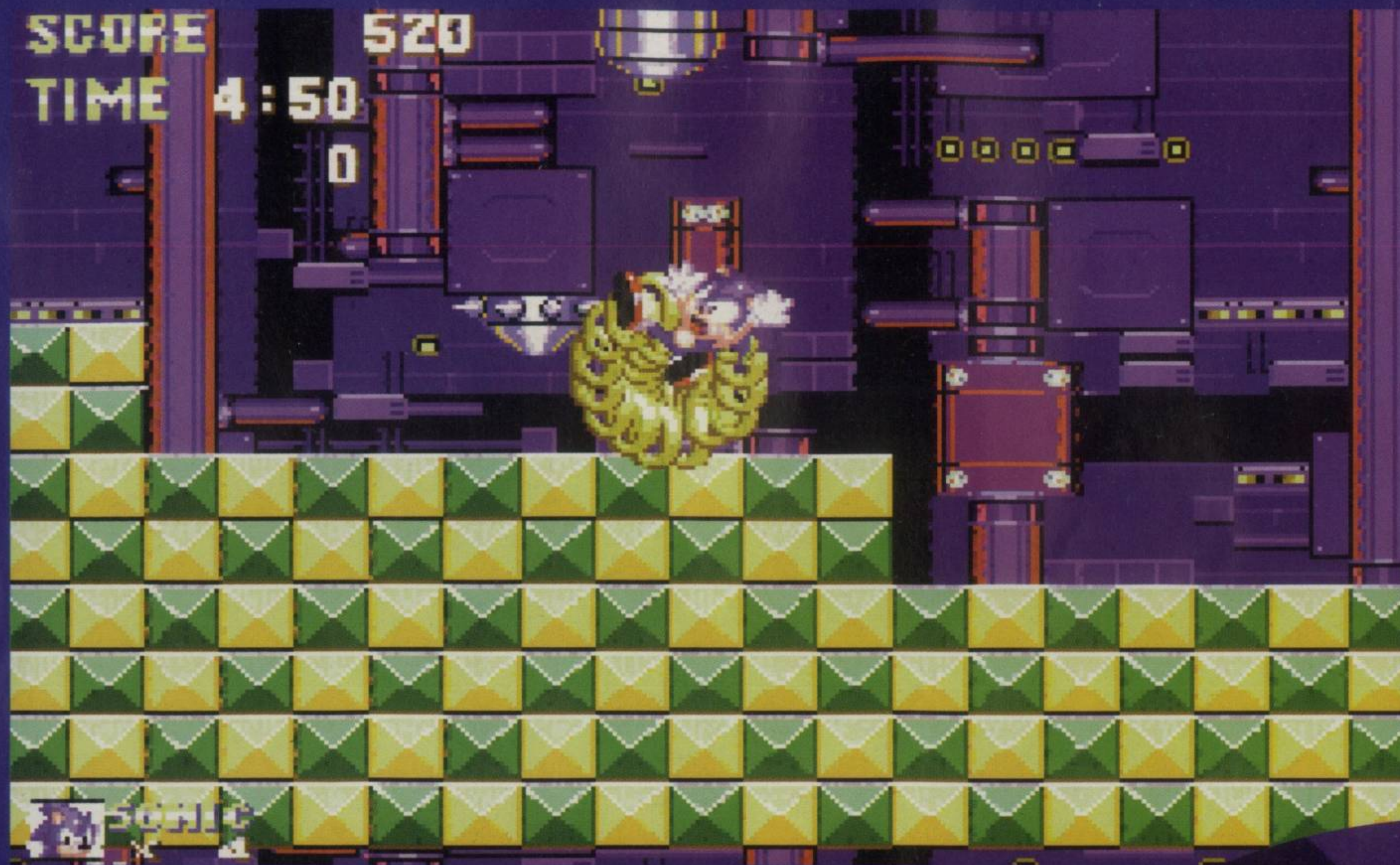
Act Two is pretty much more of the same as Act One, but there are a couple of bits that you should look out for.

When Knuckles turns off the power, head all the way to the right to pick up the bubble. Then go back, smash the floor and head downwards until you see more smashable floor. Hit these blocks to let the water out and head down again.

Underneath the first barber-shop bar that you come to there's an extra life, which you should collect. The easiest way to get underneath is to run up the bar and tap jump



Don't forget to look underneath these rather nifty bars



As an insurance policy, always make sure you have plenty of rings when you reach a boss

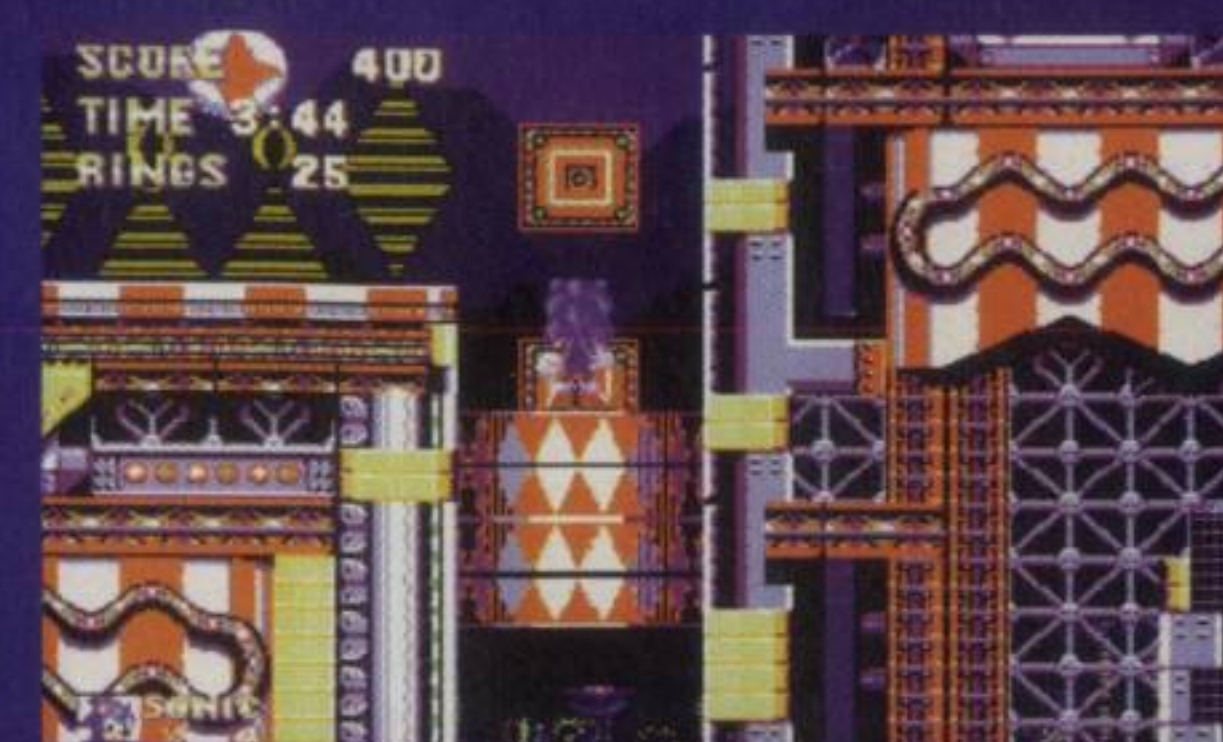
cannons, wheels, barrels, balloons and anti-gravity pads. To use a cannon just hop in and press jump when it's pointing in the right direction. Wheels can also give a good long launch, although they're a lot less controllable. Run in the direction in which the wheel is rotating until you get some speed up, and again press jump. You could go anywhere, but who cares?

There are two types of barrels; movable and moving. The moving ones serve the traditional platform function while the movable ones can be coaxed out of position by pushing **⬅** and **➡** on the control pad, although they do have varying limits to their movements. To get underneath a barrel, jump off as it's on its

way down and run under when it comes back up. The other features are straightforward enough. Balloons not only give you an extra bounce, but if popped underwater, they provide a useful oxygen bubble. Anti-gravity pads act in much the same way as the fans, which you should already be familiar with.

The end-of-act boss is nothing to be scared of. When he launches the spiked pad, attack the machine itself. You can even stand on top of the pad, but it's probably not as good an idea as keeping out of its way and concentrating on hitting the boss. He gives off the odd spark, but his bark's worse than his bite. You should be able to see him off fairly easily.

Sonic Solution



Move the barrels by throwing your weight around a bit



You can bounce off these. Odd



Be selective about your power-ups. If you've got a fiery one, don't get a bubble

CARNIVAL NIGHT, ACT TWO

when Sonic is underneath. Another 1-up is waiting for you beneath the bottom row of a series of descending anti-grav pads, but this time you'll need to get under the barrel on the left-hand side. This level is fairly linear, so it should only be a matter of time until you reach three rotating pillars and a switch beyond them. Turn the lights back on and carry on until Knuckles sends you to meet the boss.

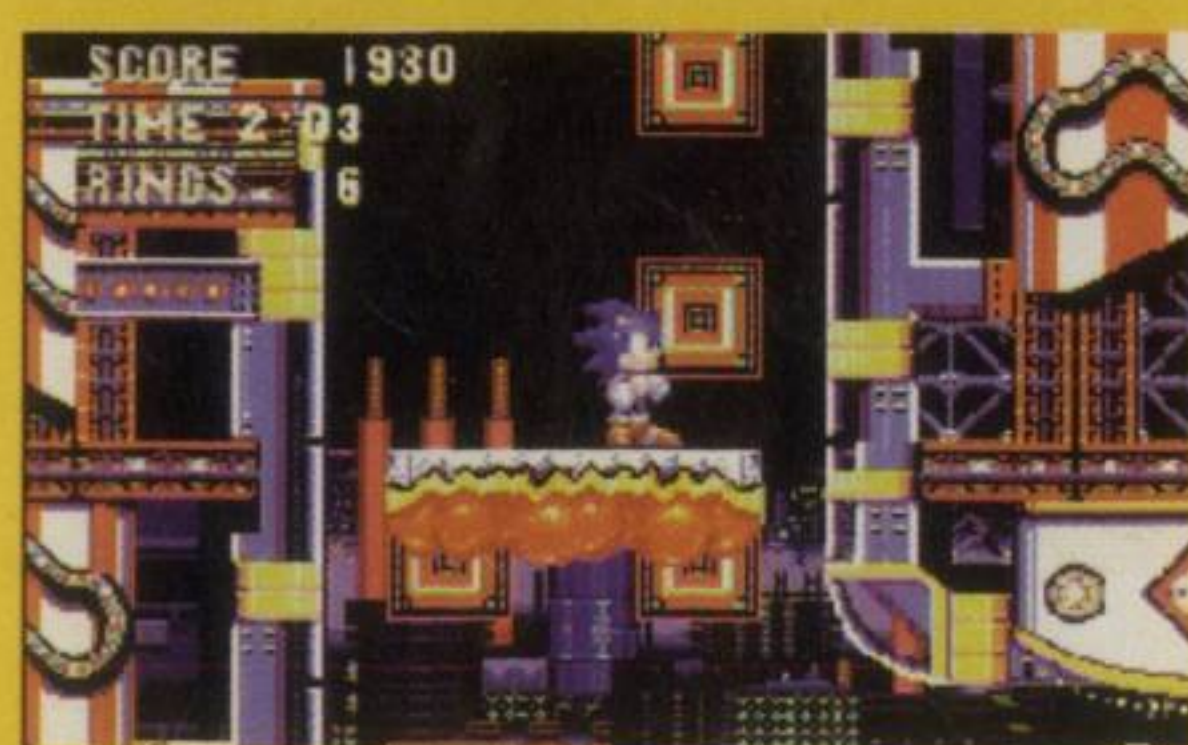
This time Robotnik returns with a dastardly ball-bearing blasting lightning vortex machine, and Sega have done their homework

in making the end-of-zone bosses harder as the game progresses.

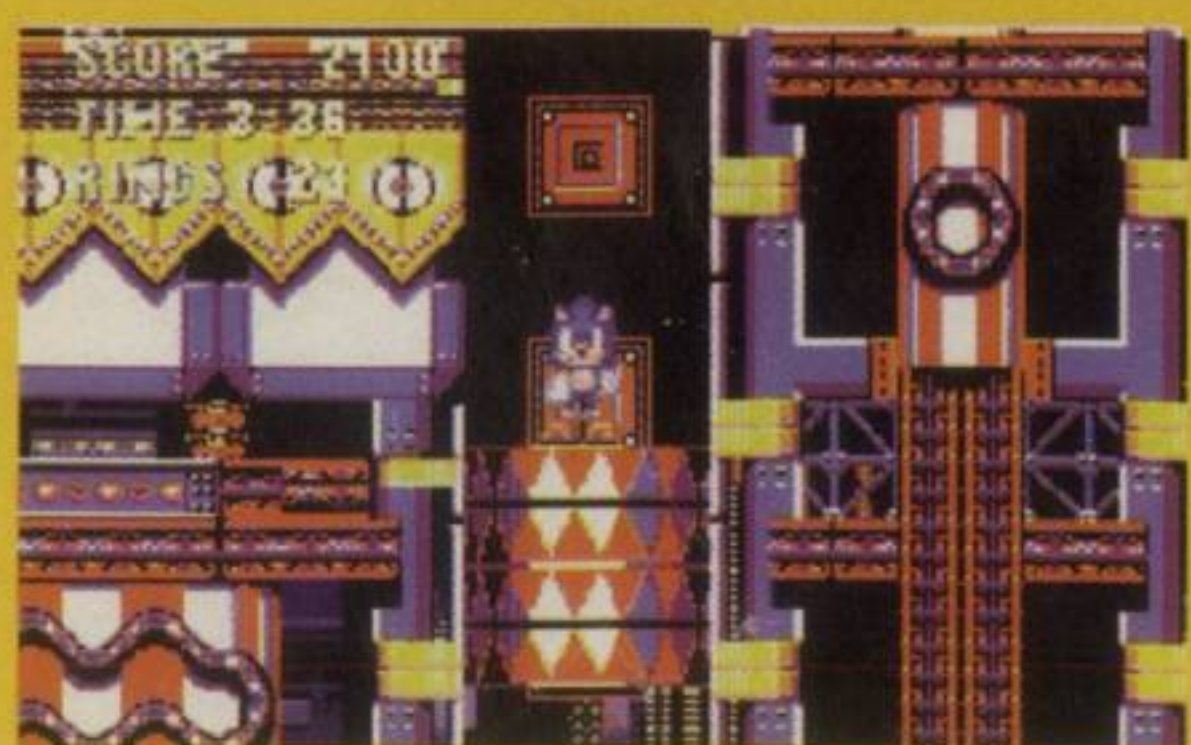
When Robotnik drops the ball, move as far away from it as possible and get ready to walk away from the magnetic vortex. If he drops the ball next to you and you're at the edge of the screen, just jump over it and run to the other side. Then, when the light show ends, move in close to the ball, wait for Robotnik to move down to retrieve it, and attack! If you've positioned yourself properly, you should hit the ship right between the generators. Well done, now turn the page and start Zone Five.



Just after Sonic meets Knuckles (yet again) he has to smash the floor to progress, but don't forget to get the bubble to the right first



Wait until these platforms "inflate", jump up and repeat to gain height



If you go underneath this barrel, you'll find spikes. So don't

If you find yourself going through one of these pinball alleys, it means you must be on the right track. You can't go back, anyway



Sonic Solution



A completely non-interactive piece of snowboarding action. What could be better? Well, yeah, it's boring, but it's very safe



Don't ask me *why* these strange platforms are scattered around, but don't look a gift horse in the mouth, bird in the hand, look before you leap...



Hang on a minute, this bit's just a case of sitting back and watching as well. Find the ice block to get to the next segment of the zone

ZONE FIVE – ICE CAP, ACT ONE

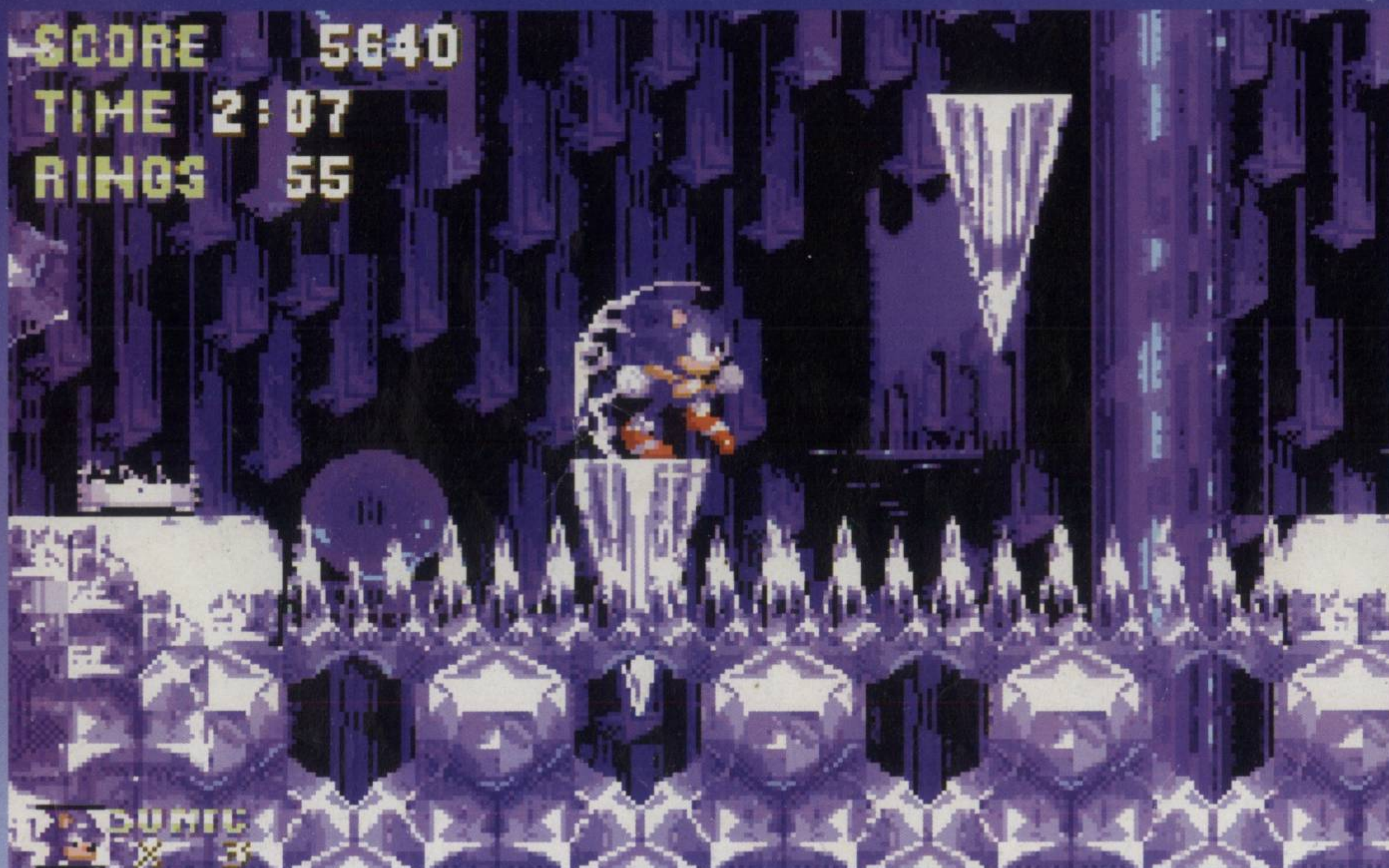
If you're playing as Sonic (and let's face it, you really should be), you get to watch some top-notch snowboarding. Maybe Sony should have had a look at this before releasing *Cliffhanger*?

To get past the first part of the level, go to the second set of steep slopes and jump just as Sonic is towards the end of the fourth one. Run left, activate the restart and push the ice block to the right. Once it's moving, jump on board. Your next serious obstacle will be a couple of sliding ice columns. Get on the right-hand column and, when the gap appears, drop down and run to the right immediately.

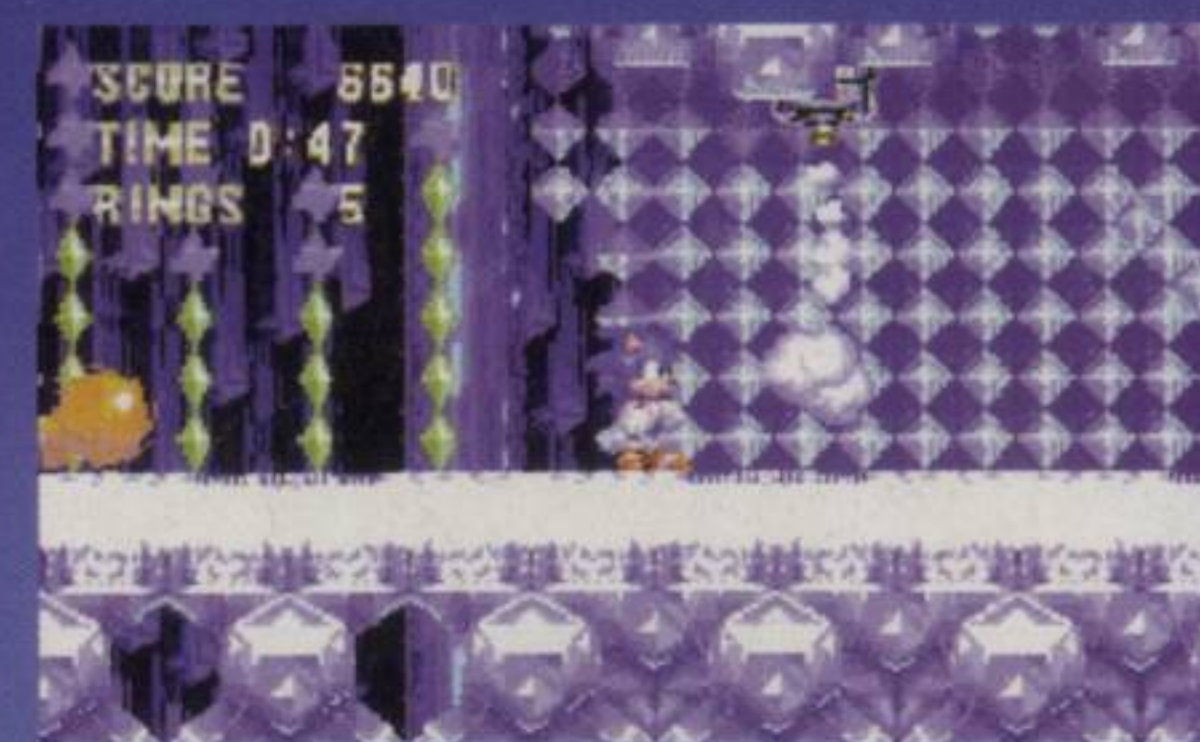
Next up after the falling icicles is a series of platform swings. Run into the railings to make them move, and jump on

to the nearest ledge when they reach the top of their swing. The last ledge you reach is placed just below the next part of the level and conceals a spring. The best way to get over the chasm is to run towards the spring and jump just before you reach it. You should then be bounced upwards. Get it wrong, and it's back to the start of this little section.

From here it's nothing more than a short skip to the ice-collecting end-of-act boss. Once again, it's easy to avoid and even easier to kill. When it first appears and spins around the screen, you'll be perfectly safe in either corner. When it comes towards the ground and launches the snowballs, hit it a couple of times and then concentrate on avoiding the falling snow. Simple.



Go to the edge of the spike pit, wait for the icicle to fall, and jump on it. Wait, jump, wait, jump, etc... boring



See those gas-shooting nozzles? It's probably best to avoid them

PUBLISHER: Sega

PRICE: £59.99

RELEASE: February '94

CARTRIDGE: 16 Mbit

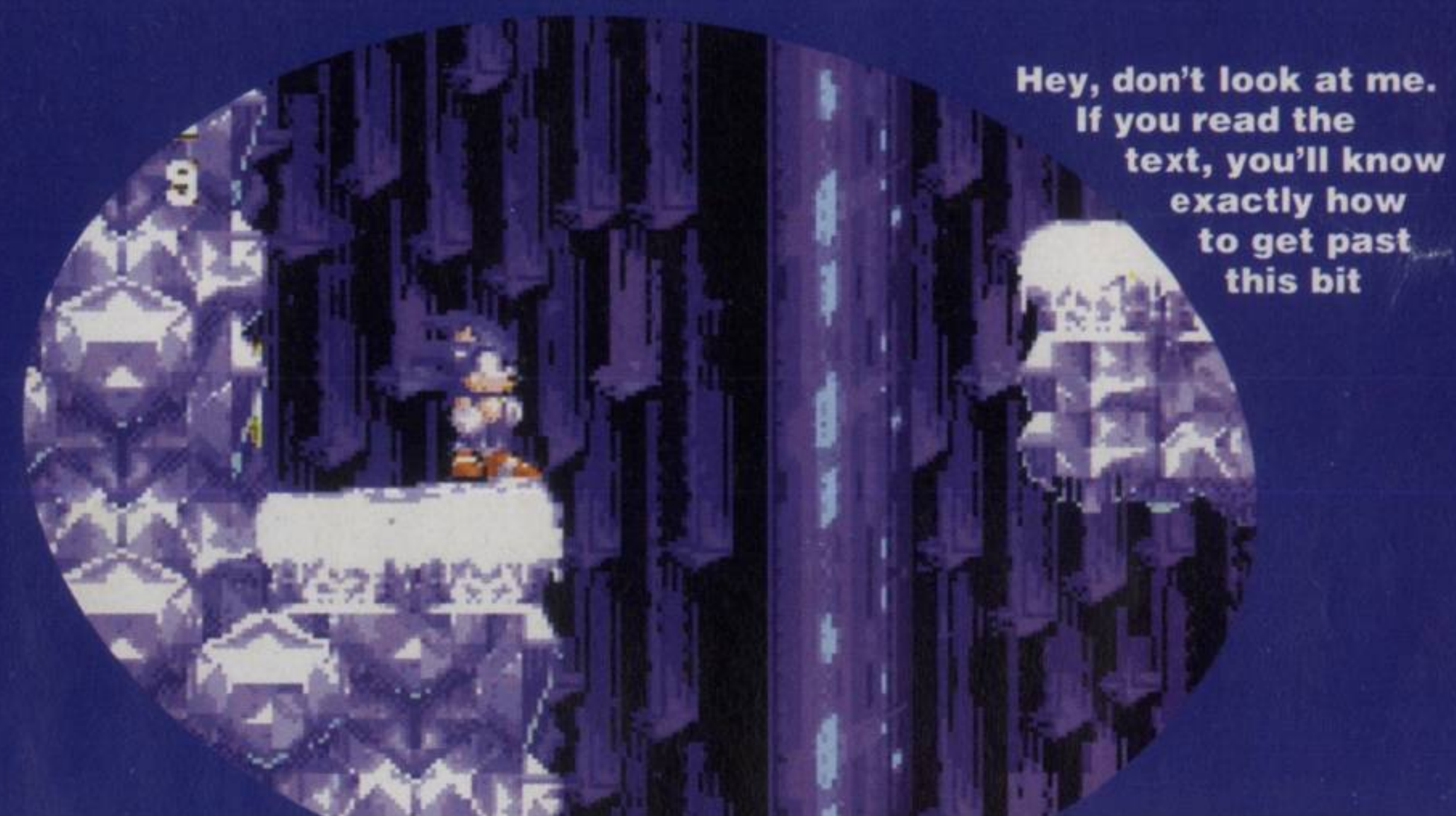
MEGA SAYS: Without drastically changing the gameplay, this is probably about as good as *Sonic* can get. There are as many new bits and pieces in the game as Sega could possibly have put in. It's another one of those essential purchases.

90%



Hang on. I told you about this bit on the previous page didn't I?

Hey, don't look at me. If you read the text, you'll know exactly how to get past this bit



This is where you'll find your second wall-smashing, slope-sliding ice block. Never, ever pass up a restart point. Got it?

SCORE 5840
TIME 2:22
RINGS 66



That's it Sonic, head for the corner. The boss'll never touch you there. In fact, if you're feeling pretty lucky, stay alive until the clock reaches nearly ten minutes and then kill him. Finish on 9:59 and you'll get a bonus

ZONE FIVE – ICE CAP, ACT TWO

If I was a betting man, I'd be fairly confident putting a fiver on this being our little blue mate's favourite section of the game. All his old favourites are here – loops, ramps, long sinuous tunnels – and it's generally the speediest section of the game.

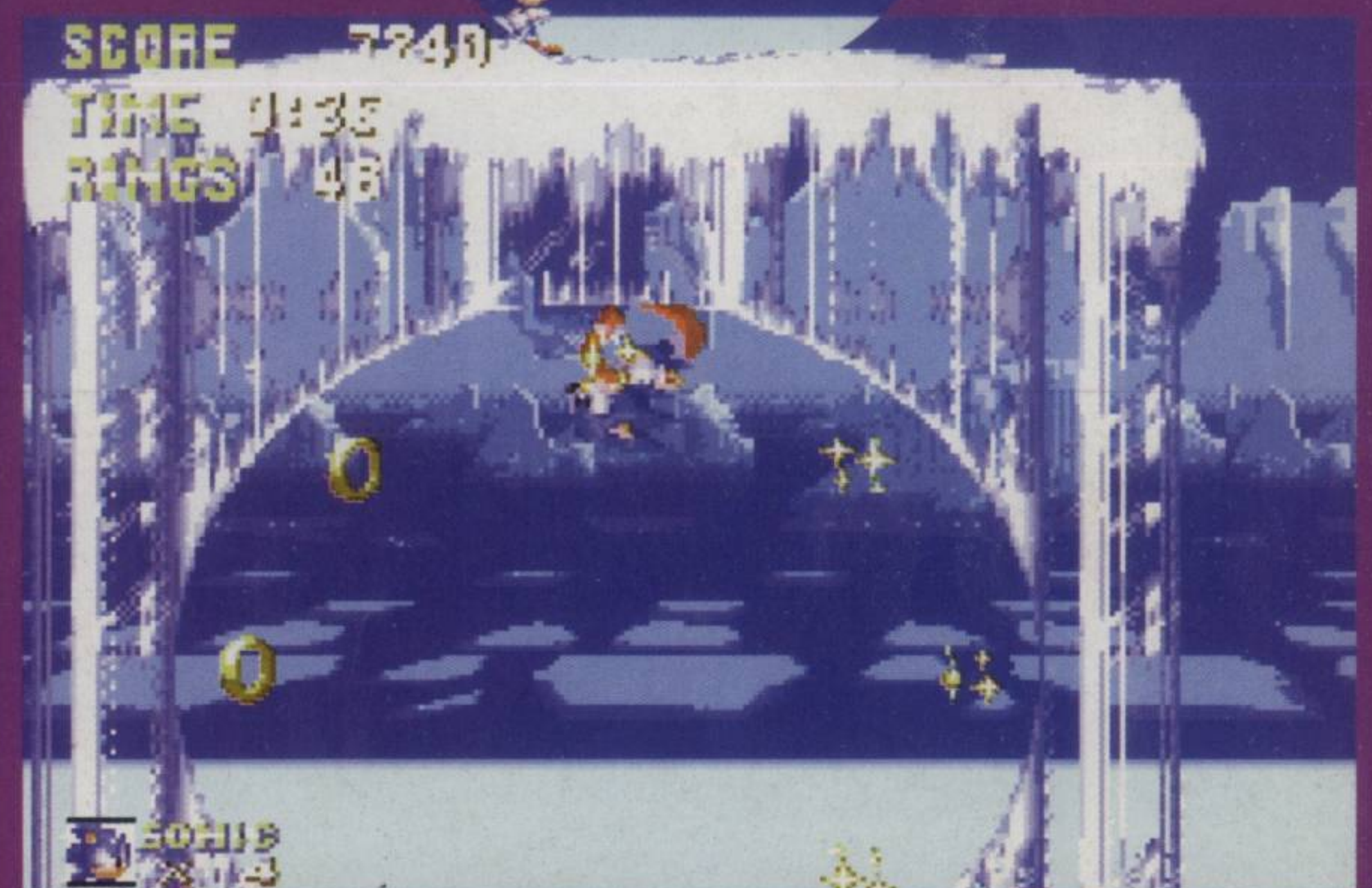
At the start of the level concentrate on building up a good head of speed and hitting the ramps until you end up by the extra life to the top right of the screen. Hit the switch and again head right until you find yourself underground. Head right over a series of floating platforms until you reach a cliff face. Drop into the water and bounce up the cliff using the spring at the very foot of the cliff. Carry on right, avoiding the deadly Robotnik monitors, and use the trampoline you find there to reach another trampoline just slightly to the left. If you carry on from trampoline to

trampoline, you should eventually reach one that catapults you towards three groups of two columns of rings. Land below them and head right to reach one of those spooky golden doughnuts. Afterwards, surprise surprise, head down and to the right.

The end-of-zone boss is the mother of all freezers. When it comes towards you, jump on to the platform and attack it. Its pattern of attack is simple enough. As a general rule the middle, downward blast of freezing gas comes between the side blasts, so when you've attacked once, jump off to the side that's just finished blasting. Jump back on to the platform as soon as the central cloud disappears.

Alternatively, stick to one side, but keep well clear.

If Robotnik's so clever, why doesn't he get a big gun instead of this stupid thingummybob? Eh?

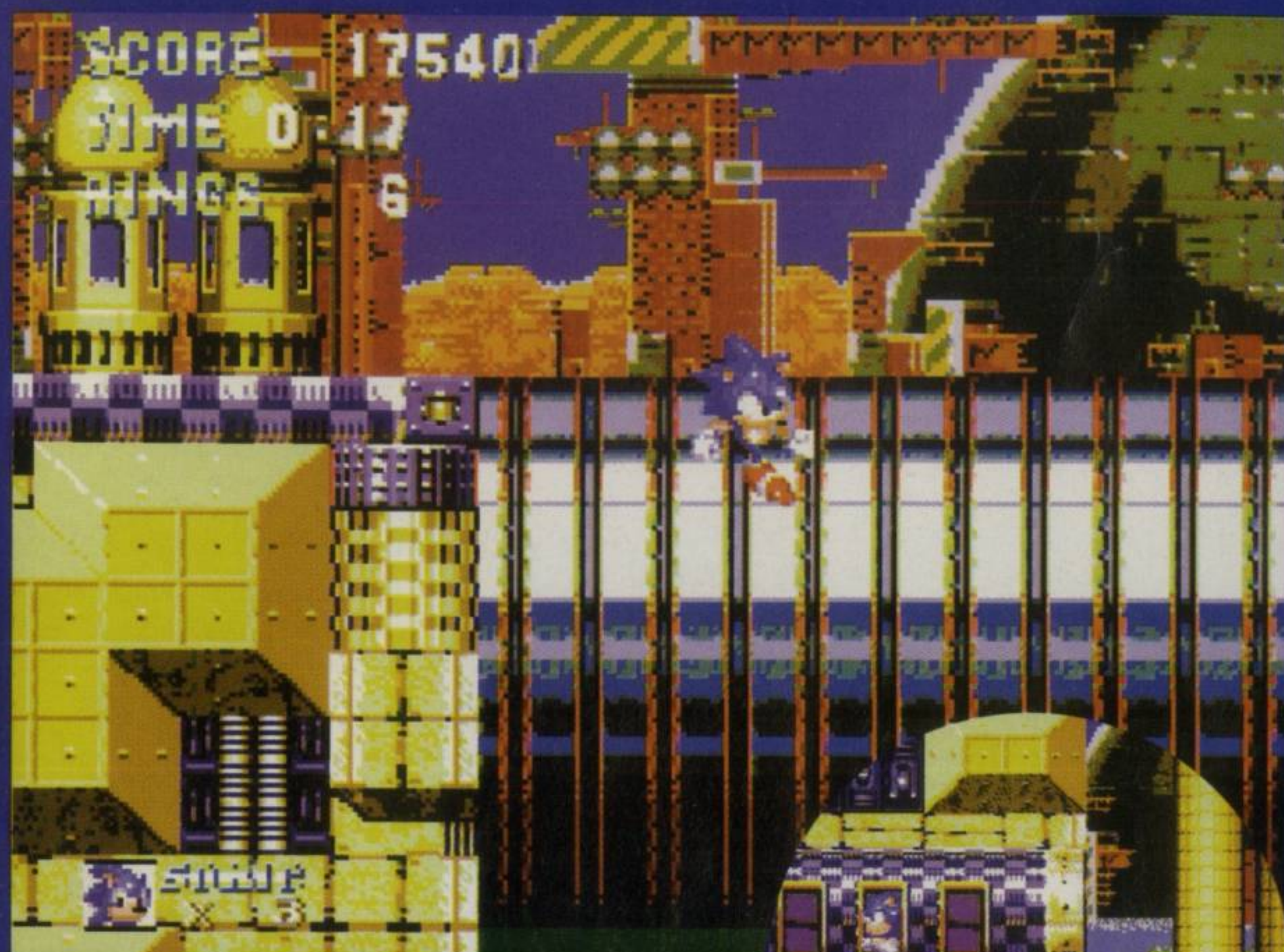


Ah, this is a bit more like it. Loops, loops and more loops. Whenever it looks as though Sonic could go fast, that's exactly what he should do



These trampoline thingies are quite good fun. You should jump straight up twice to see what's around before veering off in any direction

Sonic Solution



Be careful going over these steel rods. You can take it easy to avoid the nasties



ZONE SIX – LAUNCH BASE,

Complete Act One of Zone Six (see below) before you read this boxout. Done that? Right, it's time then for you to complete the game...

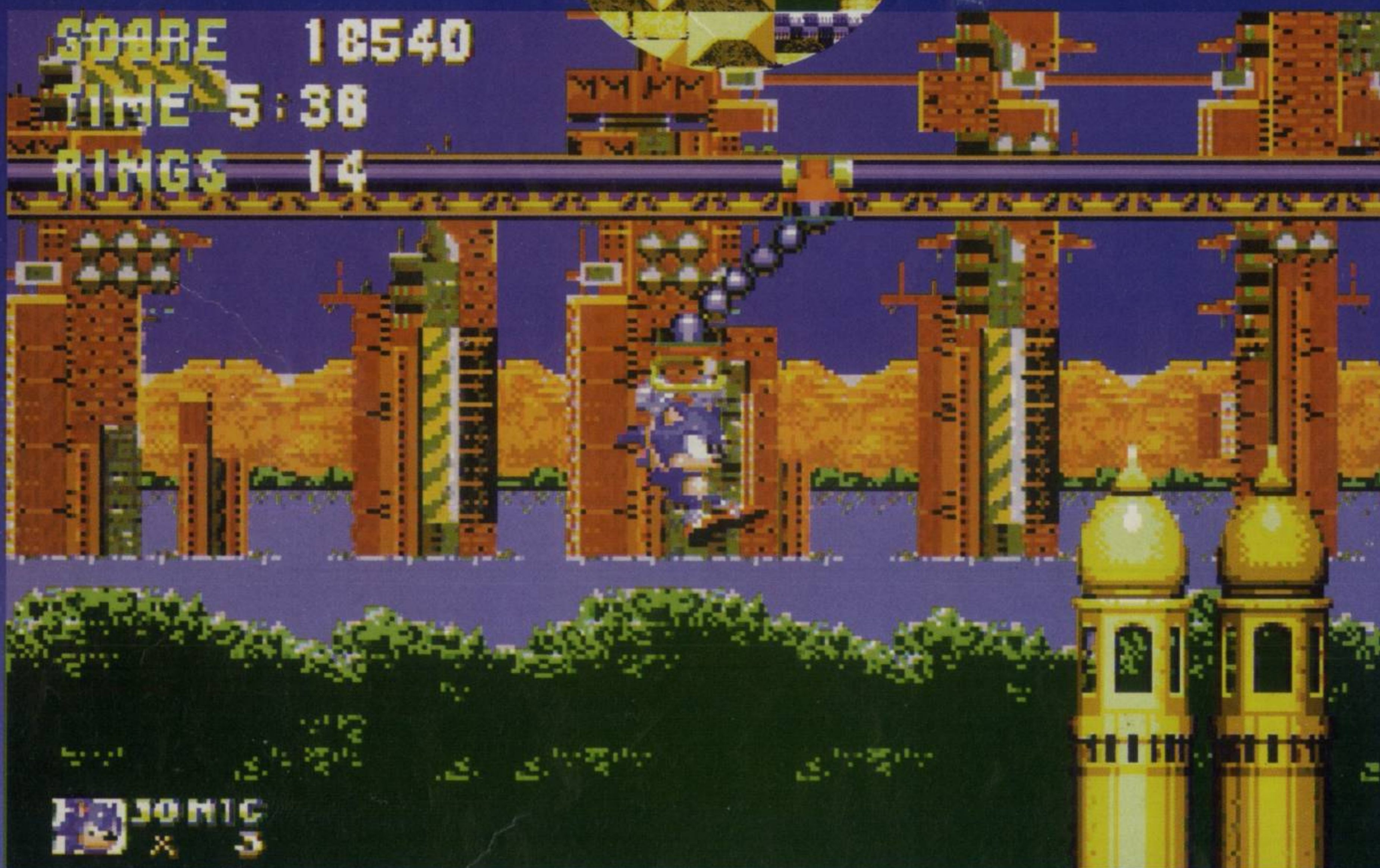
This act is much the same as the one you've just completed, and it's easier and more linear than it looks, until you run into Robotnik again that is. The final boss is easily, and rightly, the hardest thing in the whole game.



Robotnik's split-level swing-bin cannon ball machine. I ask you



The most satisfying moment in the game. Knuckles' come-uppance



You can control the direction of these powered death slides, although there's no real reason to. Sigh

ZONE SIX – LAUNCH BASE, ACT ONE

The secret rooms on this level are hidden along windowed purple corridors. Particularly worth checking out are the walls beneath the large steel cylinders which you'll come across. The second one you reach is above this zone's crystal warp, for instance. Although the level looks complex it's actually fairly difficult to go too far wrong or miss anything. Things to look out for are the little red and green switches that move the black and red doors and ceilings, supermarket money, tube-style elevators and strangely convoluted screw lifts. No, really.

Also scattered about the pointlessly hi-tech landscape are boxes that when

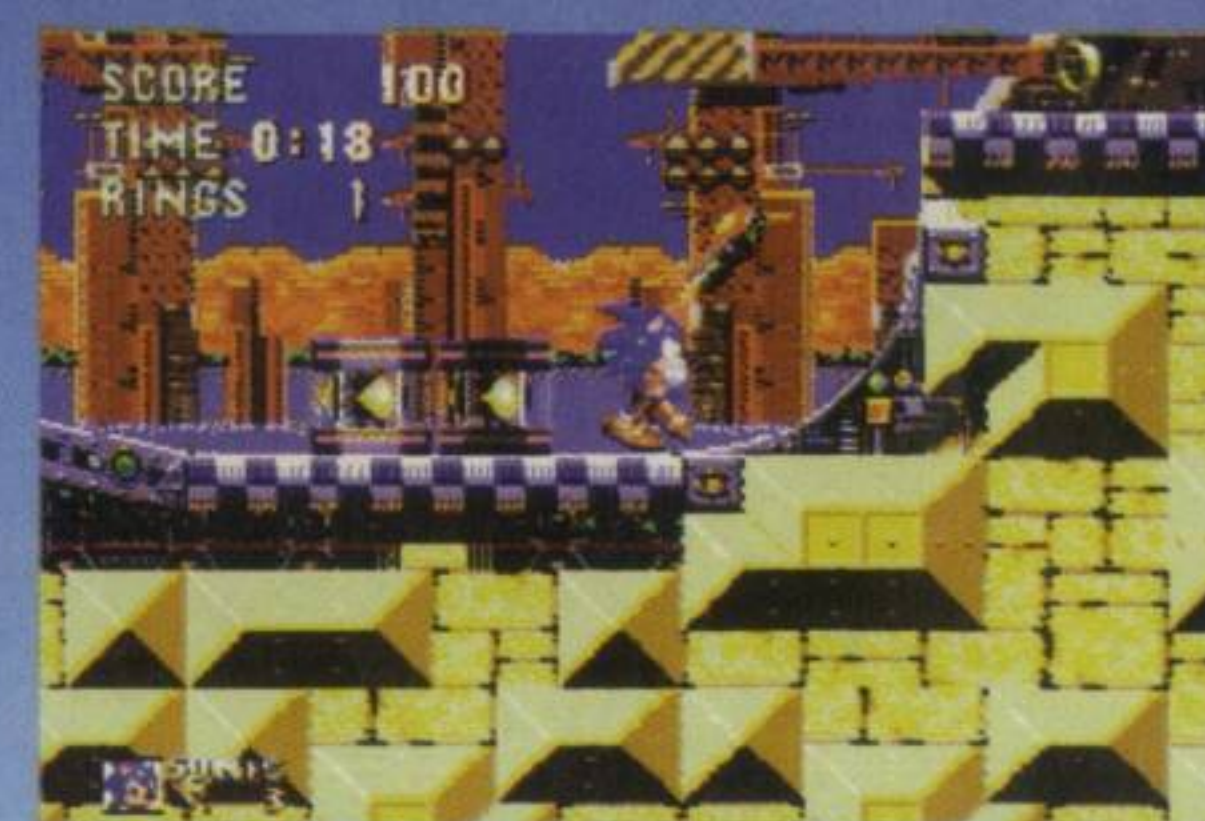


The easiest boss ever, nearly. This watch gone mad is a formality

Arf arf, eh? Good old Knuckles. I'm glad he enjoys himself so much throughout the game, the grinning pink (Snip! – Andy)



Here's a launch base building collapsing, yesterday



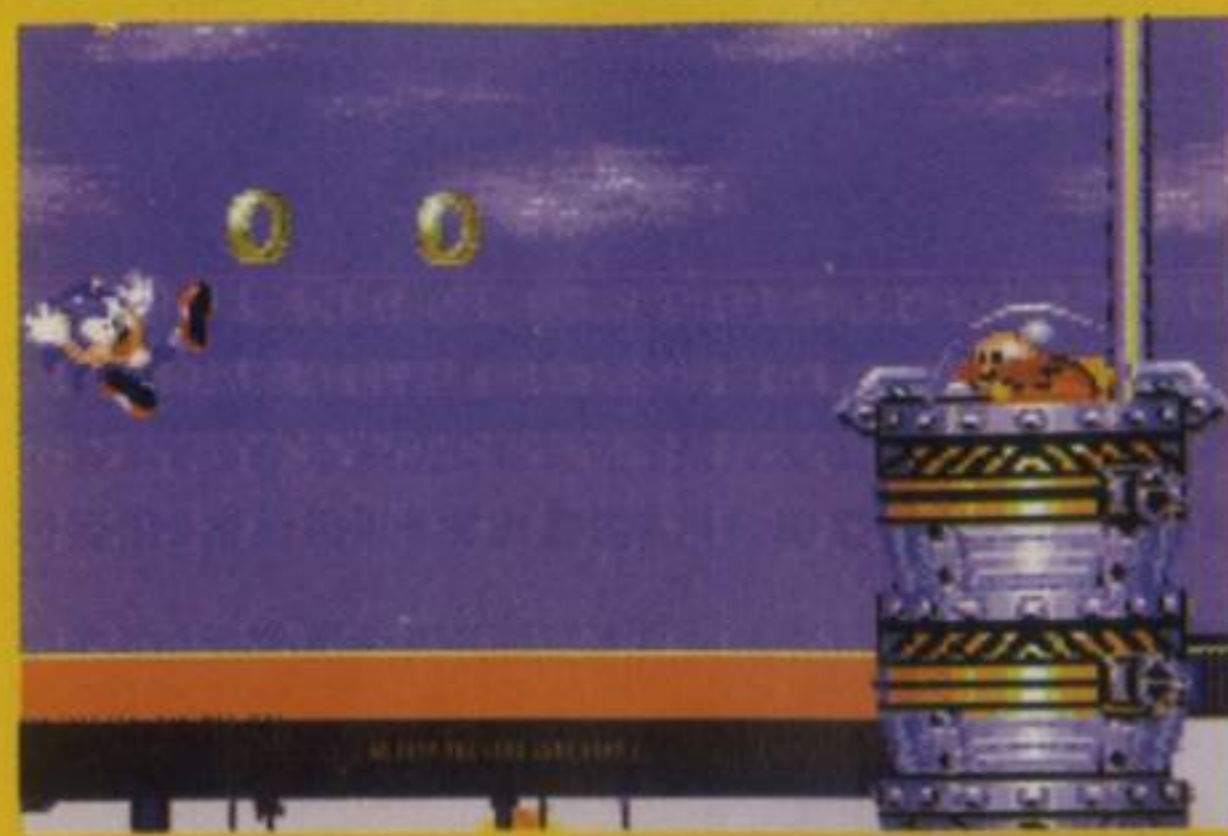
So much as touch these boxes and an alarm will summon a mechanical green bird. Obviously

ACT TWO

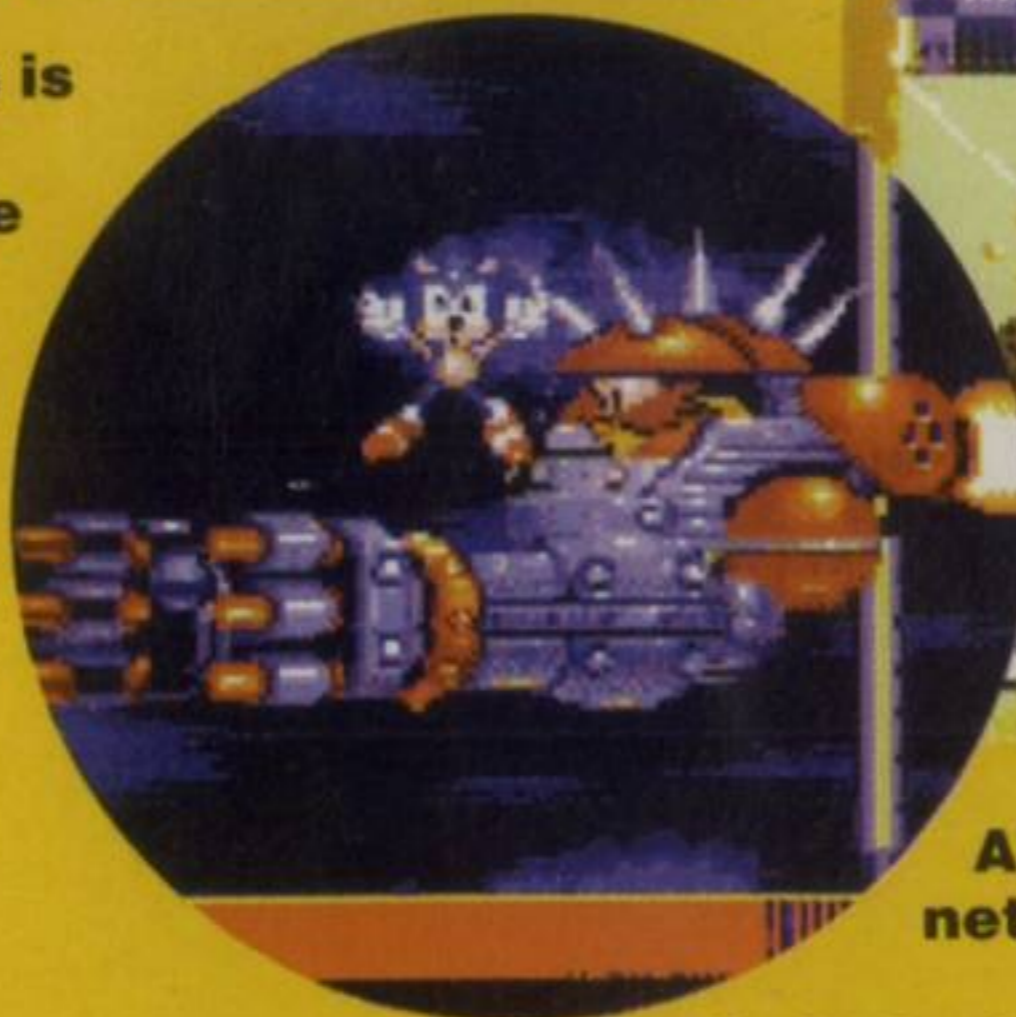
ship that's been provided. Have a quick chuckle at Knuckles and sit back until you, again, come face to face with the rotund, evil, and despicably ginger mad man.

Once again, this is a boss with two incarnations. When Robotnik's machine comes up, jump on it a couple of times and get off before the small spiked ball can hurt you, and hit it once more when he comes down. Repeat this until the machine has been completely destroyed.

Next up, Robotnik reappears with a huge pair of mechanical arms. He'll come from the right and then the left. As he does so hit his windscreen, avoiding the hands below and the spikes above. When he reappears, keep well out of the way and wait for him to come down. Stay behind him, as he can get you on the way back up, and jump over the spikes. It's tricky, but remember - only eight hits and you've done it, you've completed *Sonic 3*!



The final boss is easily the trickiest in the entire game. And so it darn well should be



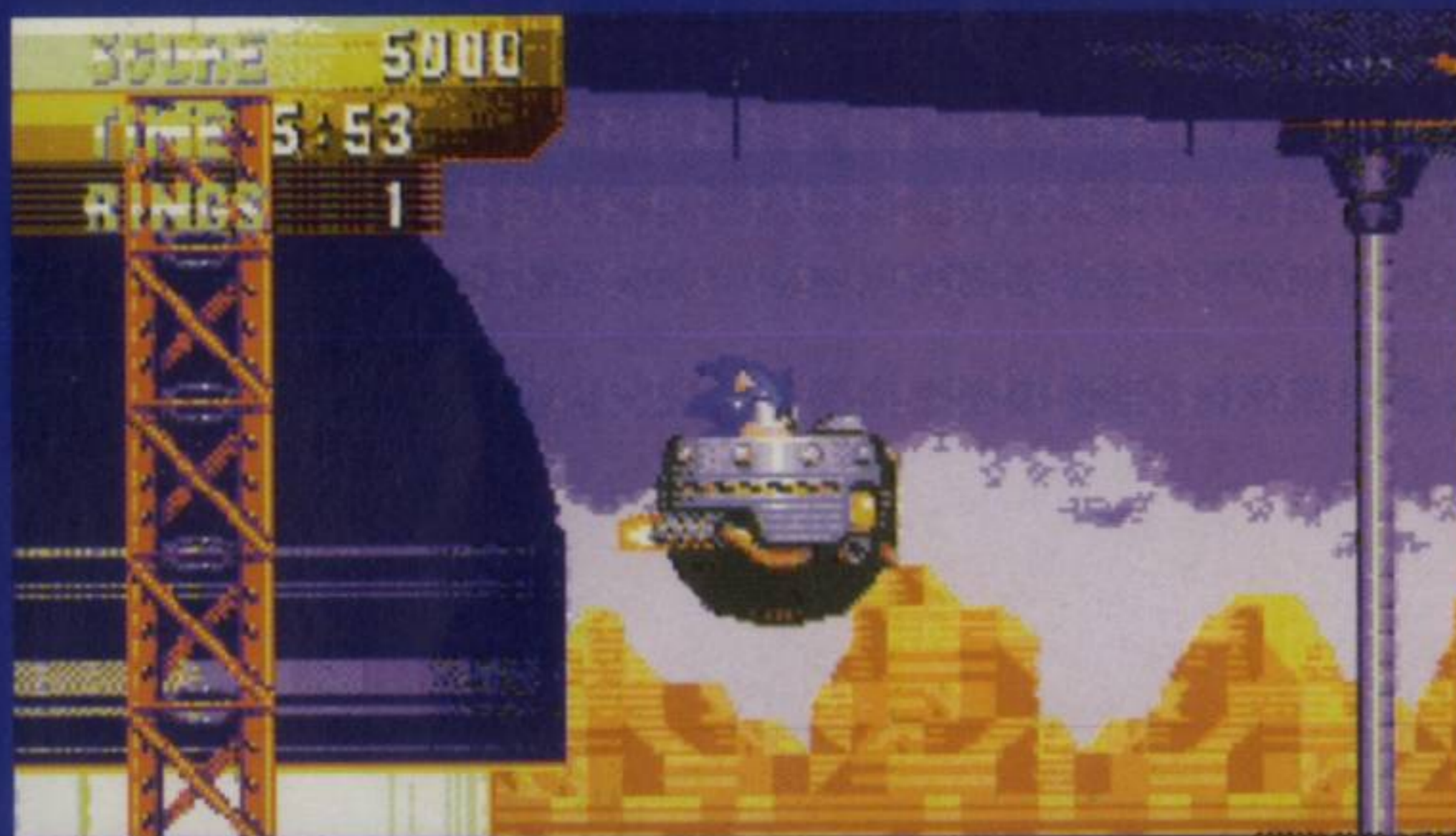
Above: Sonic learns what it's like to be flushed through the sewerage network. He's lucky not to end up on a British beach

Left: Let's have a big hand for Robotnik! Oh, he's already got two

triggered slap Sonic into motion, and little figure-of-eight tubes which do much the same thing.

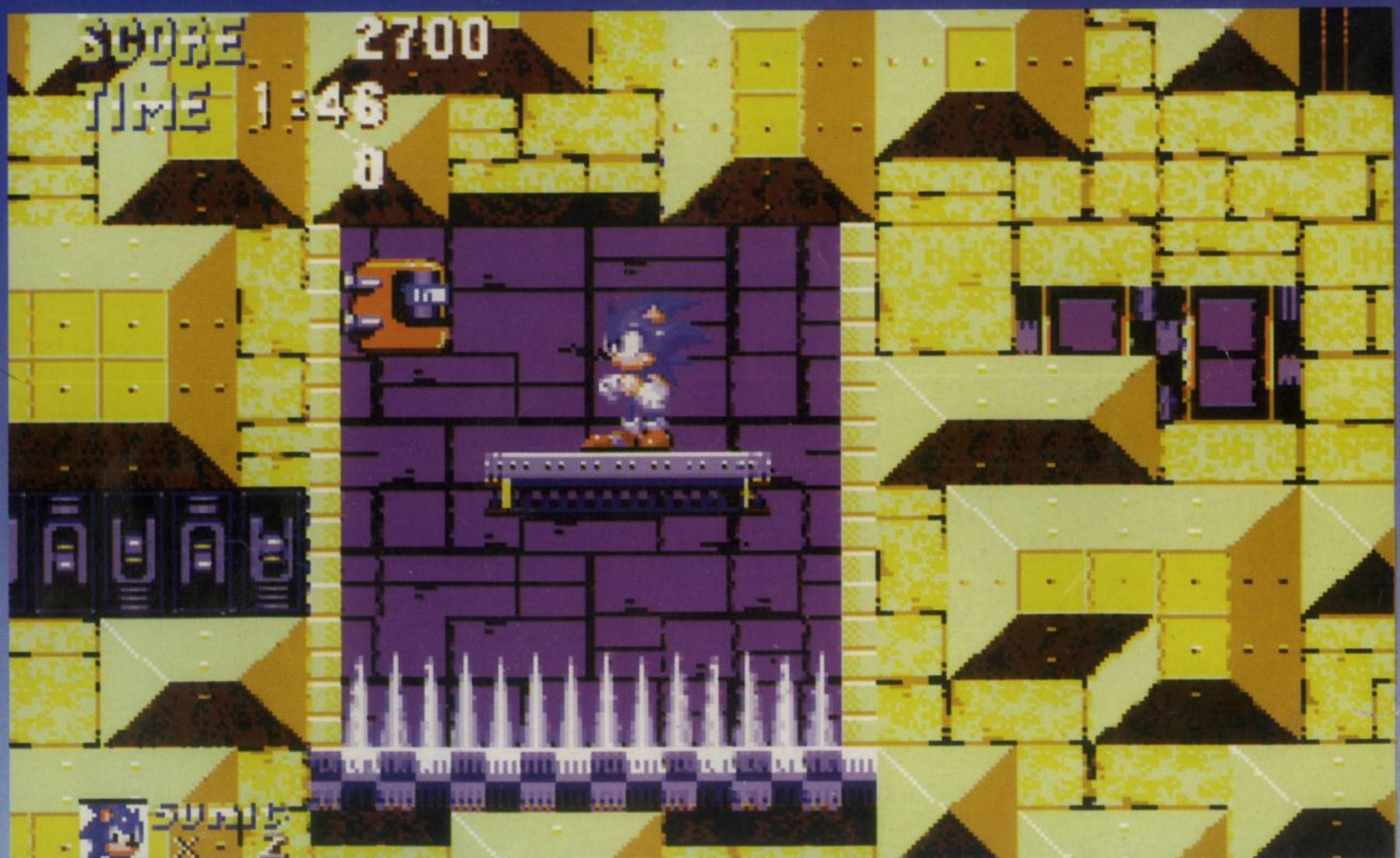
Eventually you'll reach Knuckles, who'll do his by-now-fairly-tedious "you can't move, wot a laff" routine and destroy the buildings you've just come through. Ignore him and carry on as before and you'll quickly come across Robotnik shifting (hi-tech) boxes around for his own diabolically dastardly reasons. Just a couple of steps on you'll find this act's attempt at a boss. Defying the unwritten laws of game design logic, this is one of the easiest bosses in the whole game. Just stay out of the way towards the corners until its mechanical arms retract, nip in, hit him and retreat again. About two hits gets rid of one of his arms and after that he's not only harmless but virtually defenceless as well.

You're now on to the last act. The yellow boxout at the top of this page explains how to finish the game.



Above: Sonic rather naively jumps into a strange space pod. This time he's lucky, as it takes him to see Robotnik's latest and toughest machine

Below: Every so often you'll see one of these platforms. At first they all have ring monitors but later they sprout spikes



Towards the end of the zone you'll find a switchable floor but no switch. Run left, over two Robotnik monitors

ACTION REPLAY CODES

What, that's not enough for you? You want some cheats as well? All right then, here's the latest Action Replay codes to get you through the game quickly. FFFE1 20005 for infinite lives, FFFE2 10063 for infinite rings and FFFF8 10007 to start with seven gems.



It's an Action Replay screen... of that there is no doubt

VIRTUA RACING

Zoom! Zip! Crash! Bang! Boom! These and all sorts of other racing related sounds could be heard from around the corner, as Paul Mellerick played Virtua Racing for days on end to bring you these top tips. What a love, eh?

MODES GALORE

So you've got four different ways in which to view the racing action in *Virtua Racing*. Right? But which one is the best? Well, you'll soon notice from the screenshots over the next four pages that my own personal favourite mode is view three (or button Y on a six-button pad). View two is also OK (if you like the traditional view of things) but I don't recommend views one or four. View one, the driver's eye view, is too in-your-face, and view four, as if from a helicopter or something, is just there so you can show all your mates how good *Virtua Racing* is.



Some people prefer the traditional Pole Position viewpoint (view two) as seen here, but me, I prefer...

... the third mode, which is very similar to mode two, except it allows you to see that little bit more of the track



Before we get into the actual nuances of each of the tracks, there are several general racing tips which we need to cover. The first one which needs mentioning is to do with gearboxes. Although there's only a difference of 2 km/h in top speed between the automatic (328 km/h) and manual (330km/h) gearboxes, when you need to slow down for corners it's better to shift down through the gears and then accelerate back up instead of just deaccelerating and then hitting the button again. However, while you're learning the track it's advisable to stick to the automatic gearbox so that you don't have too much to think about. When the track becomes second nature, it's then preferable to use the manual gearbox.

Once you've got used to the track and sussed out which gear you need to be in to take which corner, you'll then be looking for any small fraction of extra time you can get, and in this game every hundredth of a second counts. For that extra little bit of a speed you should really be looking to slipstream cars as you go past them. The closer you get to a

car, the more you'll benefit. And that benefit can be anything up to an extra 10 km/h, pushing your top speed up to 340 km/h. Don't get too close though, or you'll be the victim of a nasty spin out, which will lose you precious amounts of time. It's a very tricky thing to perfect, but essential for getting your lap time down.

Zip past the cars (careful, you don't want to touch them) and get that much needed boost of speed



Another top gameplay point to note is the way in which the car reacts to oversteer. Sling the car into a corner at full speed and the wheels will lock up. This will mean you lose the racing line and probably spin right off the track. The only way to combat this is to repeatedly touch the steering as you go into a corner (although you still need to be on the "racing line" for it to work best). This puts the car back on the right line and will still allow you to accelerate out of the corner. Practise this and you can really get those lap times down.

And that's about it for general gaming advice, except to say that lots of practising is the only way to achieve victory in *Virtua Racing*... uh, and, of course, having access to the following three pages of top driving tips.

PUBLISHER: Sega

PRICE: £69.99

RELEASE: June '94

CONTACT: Sega 071 373 3000

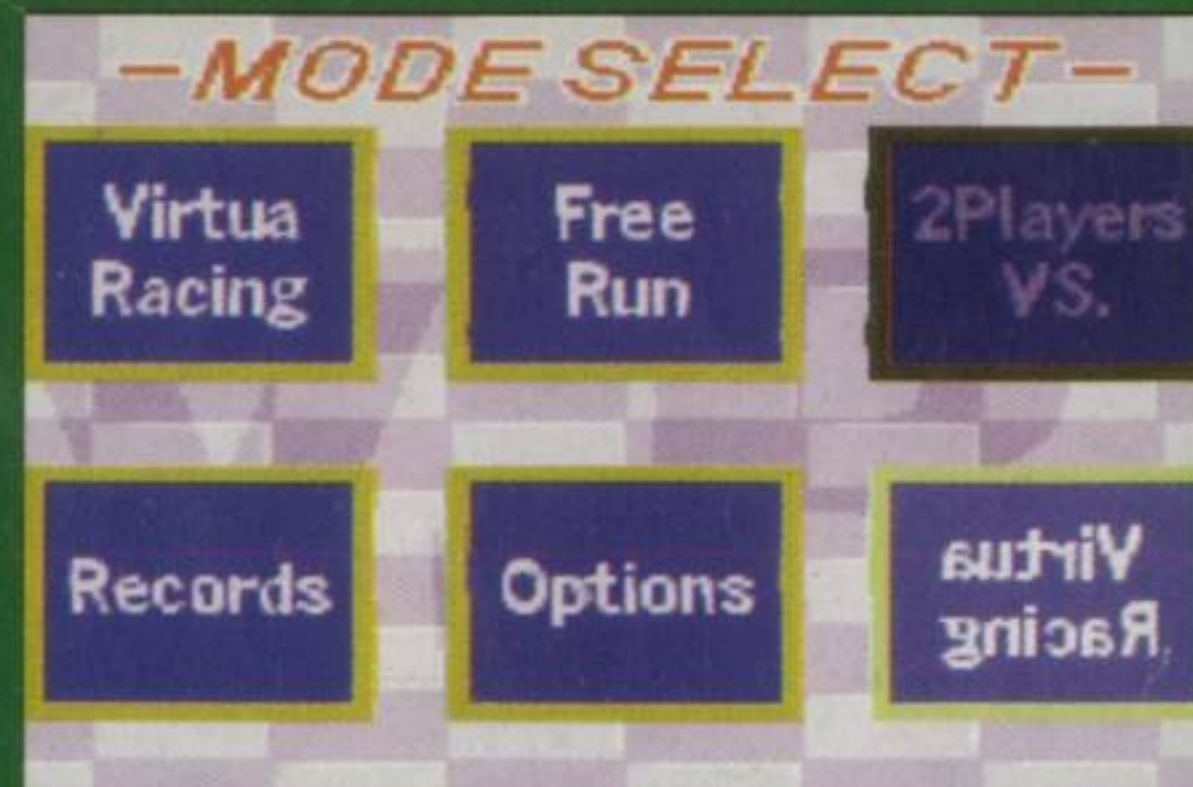
MEGA SAYS: A technical marvel, this is the coin-op crammed into a Mega Drive cart. Split the cost with a mate and buy it.

92%

WHAT'S A MIRROR MODE THEN?



Well, you've done it then? Finished first on all three tracks



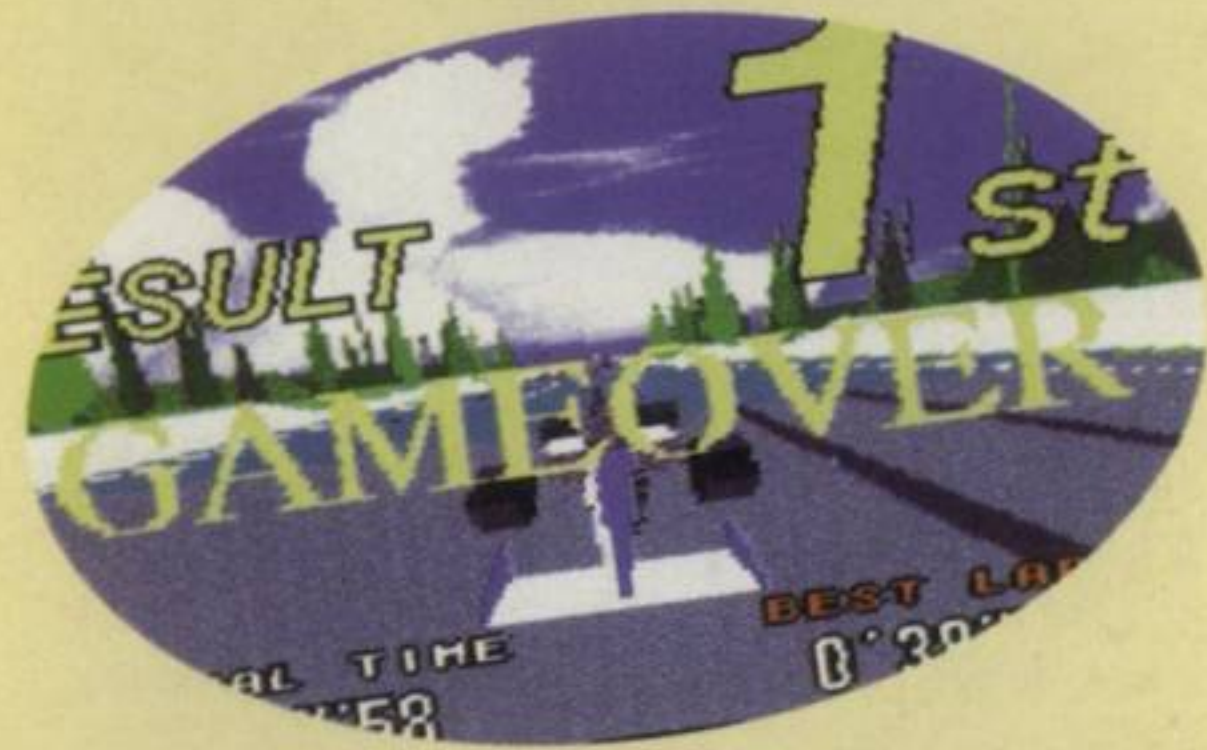
Now you've got to do it all again, but this time reversed

We all know about the supposed "Mirror Mode" in *Virtua Racing*, where you get the chance to race the tracks backwards. But just how do you do it? Well, it takes a bit of work and a lot of skill. All you need to do is finish first on all three tracks making sure that you're not playing on Easy mode. You should notice a little trophy in the top left-hand corner of the level-selection screen. Get all three trophies, go back to the main menu screen and you can then select a reversed *Virtua Racing*. Simple, or what.

BIG FOREST

BEGINNER

A beginner's level in every respect, this is really just a good excuse to put your foot down almost all of the way. There's one tricky series of corners (5, 6, 7) on the map on the right) but the rest of the course can be taken at full pelt. You're looking for a lap time as near to 40 seconds as you can get on your initial lap, and somewhere around 38.50 seconds for your other laps. Follow our map round from 1 to 10, suss that tricky bit, and then get down to work.



1 Get the revs high and then get ready to shift quickly through the gears. You should be changing into 7th when you leave



10 There you go, one lap gone and you're already in fourth place, and the third place car is right in front of you. Good, only another four laps to go and you'll have finished!



9 When you've got control over the car again, shift back up into 7th and you can then accelerate back up to full speed



8 Move over to the left-hand side of the track and then swing in right on the apex of the corner. Don't oversteer though



7 6th gear gives you the right amount of speed to get round the corner without spinning out, but keep in 6th for the final corner



2 Right, you're up to full speed, and the first corner is approaching fast. But you're in the wrong place, move over to the left to take the corner correctly



3 Swing into the corner at full speed and you can then come out the other side. Remember not to oversteer or you'll end up riding the bank on the side and losing time



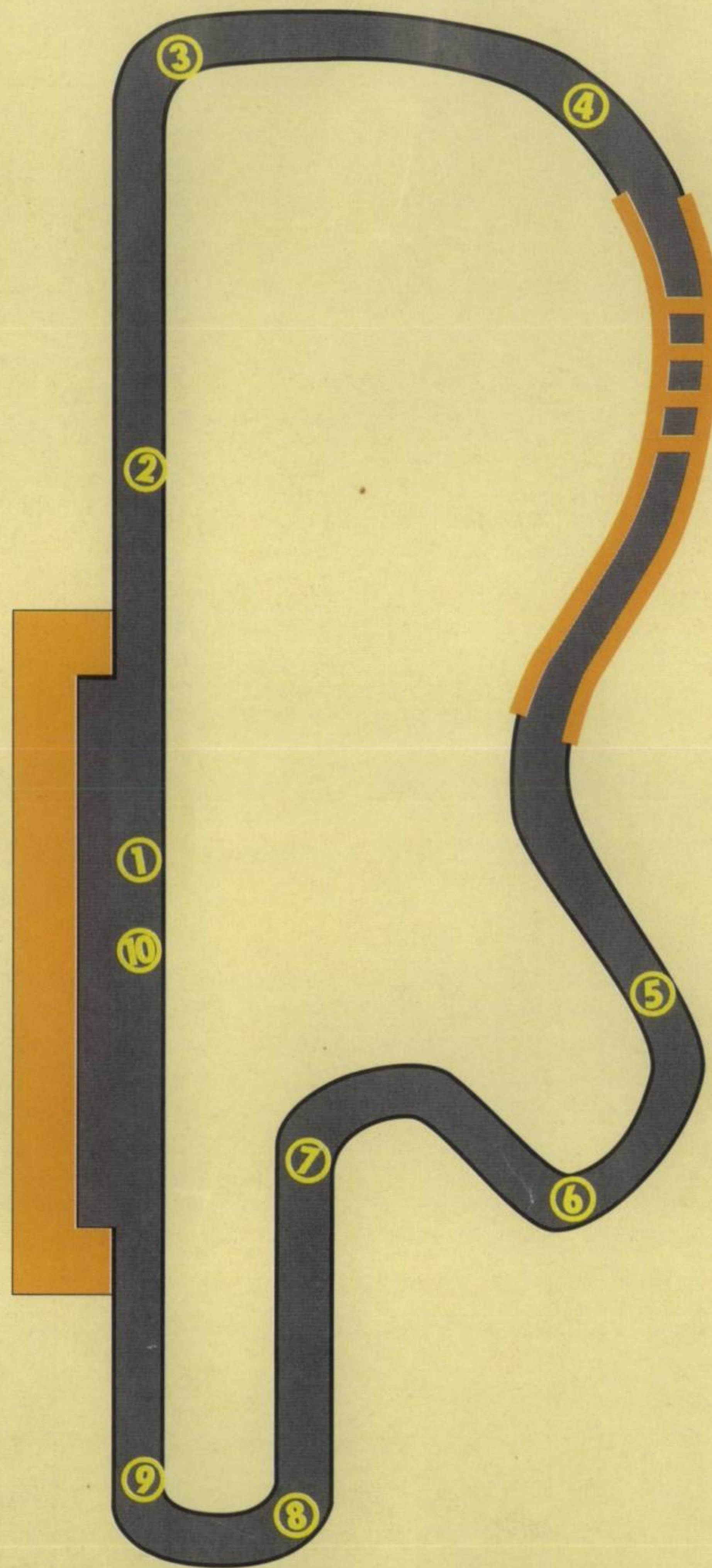
4 Move into the bend on the first part of the bridge and then move with the road; there's nothing too drastic, but do make sure you use the slipstream to good effect here



5 You're approaching the only real problem part of this particular track. Take the inside line on the first corner and then keep on the right-hand side



6 You can then move over and prepare to throw your car into the bend. Oh, and don't forget to shift down into 6th gear



Virtua Racing Tips

BAY BRIDGE

NORMAL

For some reason, I don't like this track. In fact with all its twists and turns, I reckon it's worse than the Expert track. Still, never mind. You really will need to find the best line on this track and then still expect some quick twists and turns. You will also need to slow down for some corners (a quick shift down into 5th gear is usually enough) and then accelerate back up. The initial lap time you're looking for is around the 42.50 second mark, with the rest of the laps as near to 39.00 seconds as you can get.

Attain these times and you're well in with a chance of coming in first.



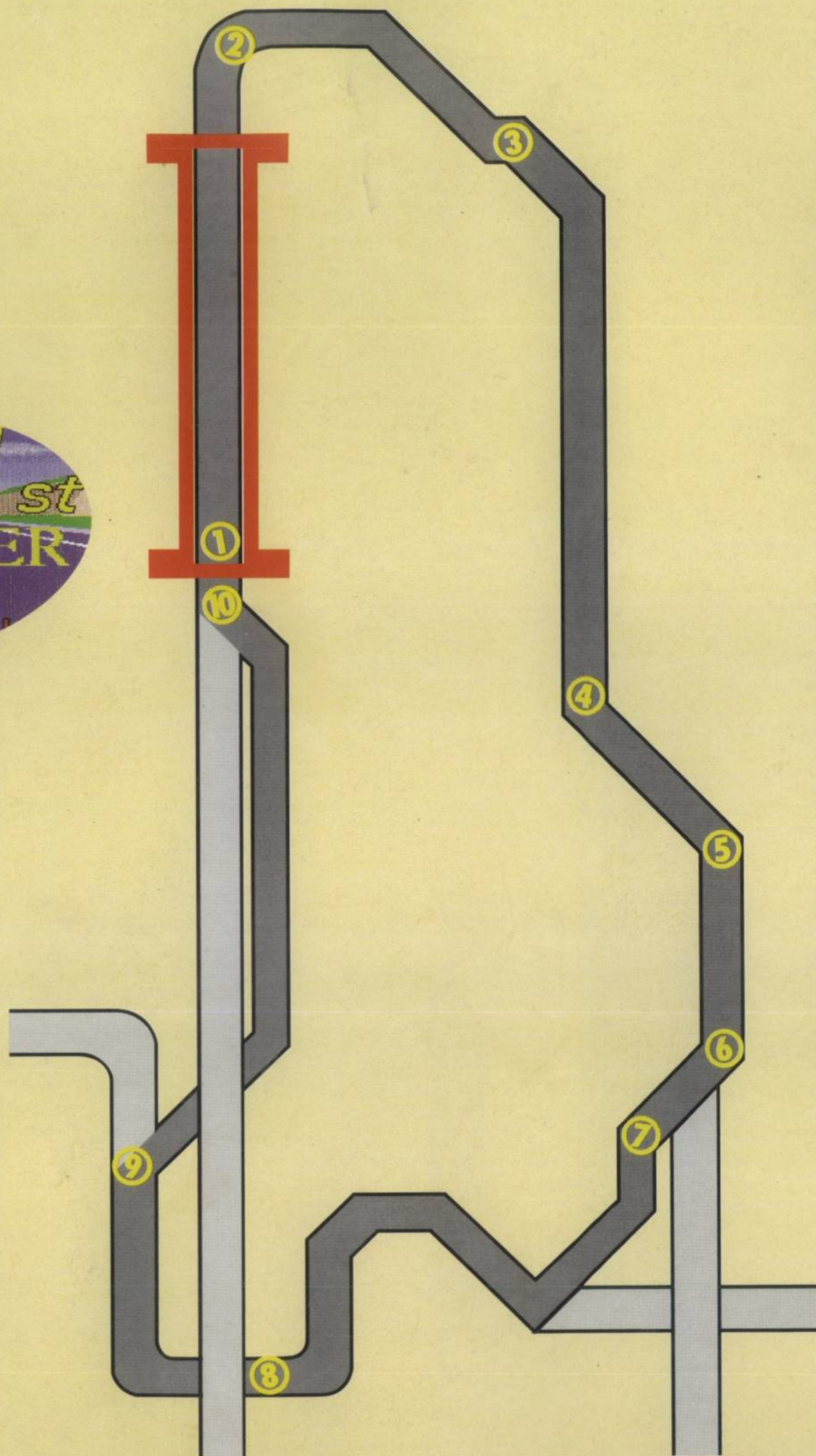
① For some reason, no matter how good you are at the game, every car apart from yours has a really good start from the grid



⑩ If you've done everything like me, you can get yourself a top lap time and be in second place. And you'll catch the leader on the next corner, no problem



⑨ Once you hit the arrows you can then fly up that sort of slip road bit and then hit 7th gear and head for the finish



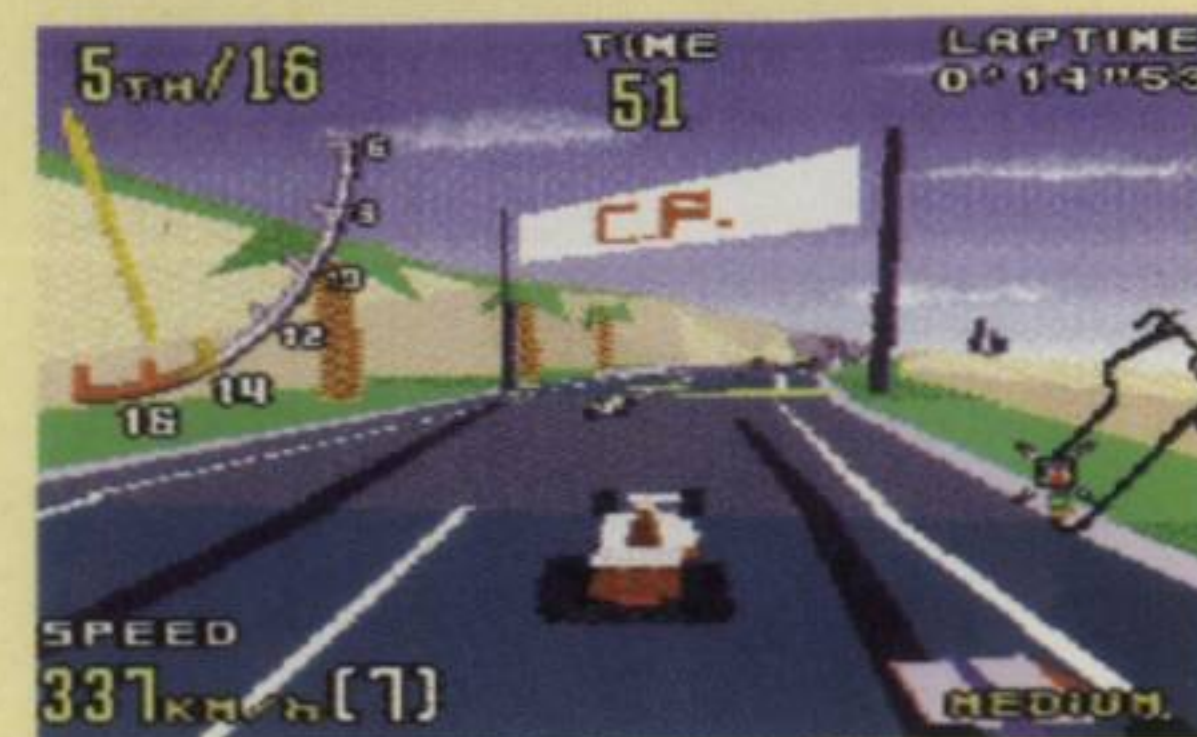
⑧ The final series of not-very-tight bends are very slippery and should be taken at full speed in 6th gear so that you don't slide about



⑦ Don't take this corner too quickly or too harshly, and don't worry if you get overtaken here, because you can catch up



② You can take this corner at full speed, but don't put a full steer on it or you'll lose control. Also, watch out on the first lap for the sheer number of cars around



③ A little chicane this, and if you're not ready for it, you'll end up in a real mess over by those trees. Just come from the right-hand side and then steer right as it turns



④ By now, on your first lap, you'll have caught the leading cars and can overtake them on this straight. Then you can get ready to negotiate the upcoming corners



⑤ Shift down into 5th gear here for some grip and then move quickly back up to 6th for the next corner. Try not to go on the grass, and avoid those signs

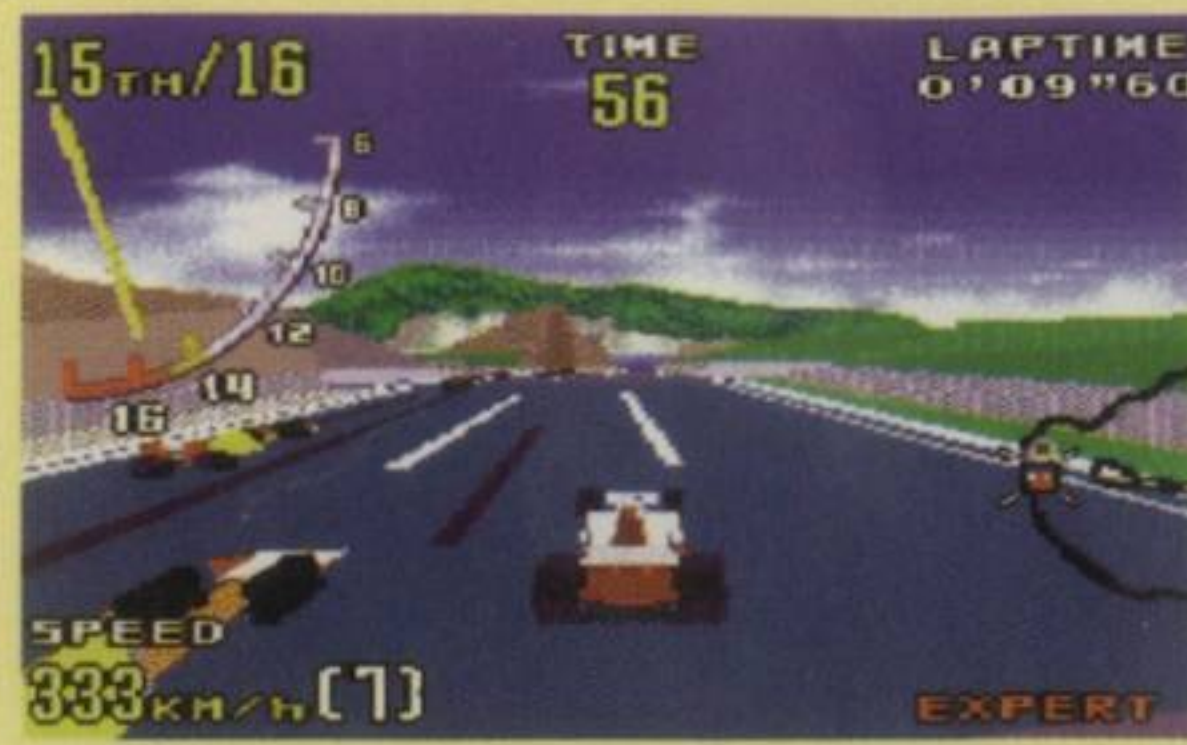
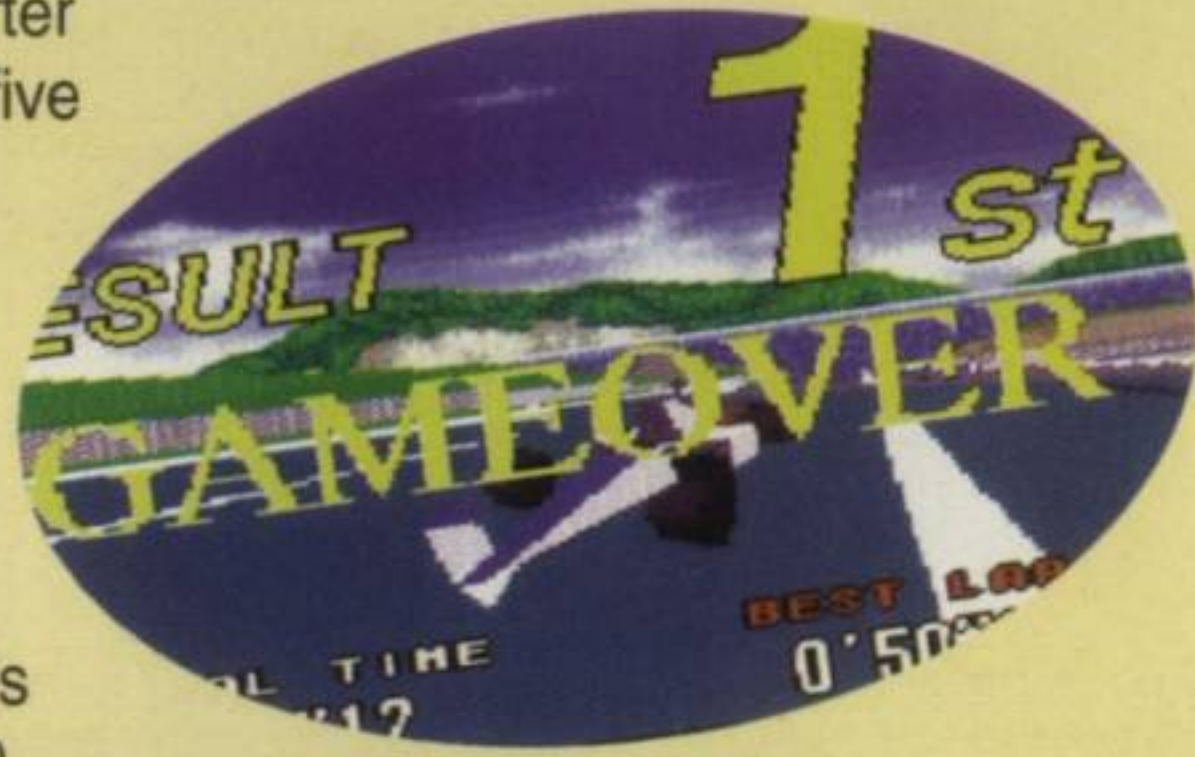


⑥ You really do have to be careful on this corner or you're going to put yourself in real trouble when you get to the next bit

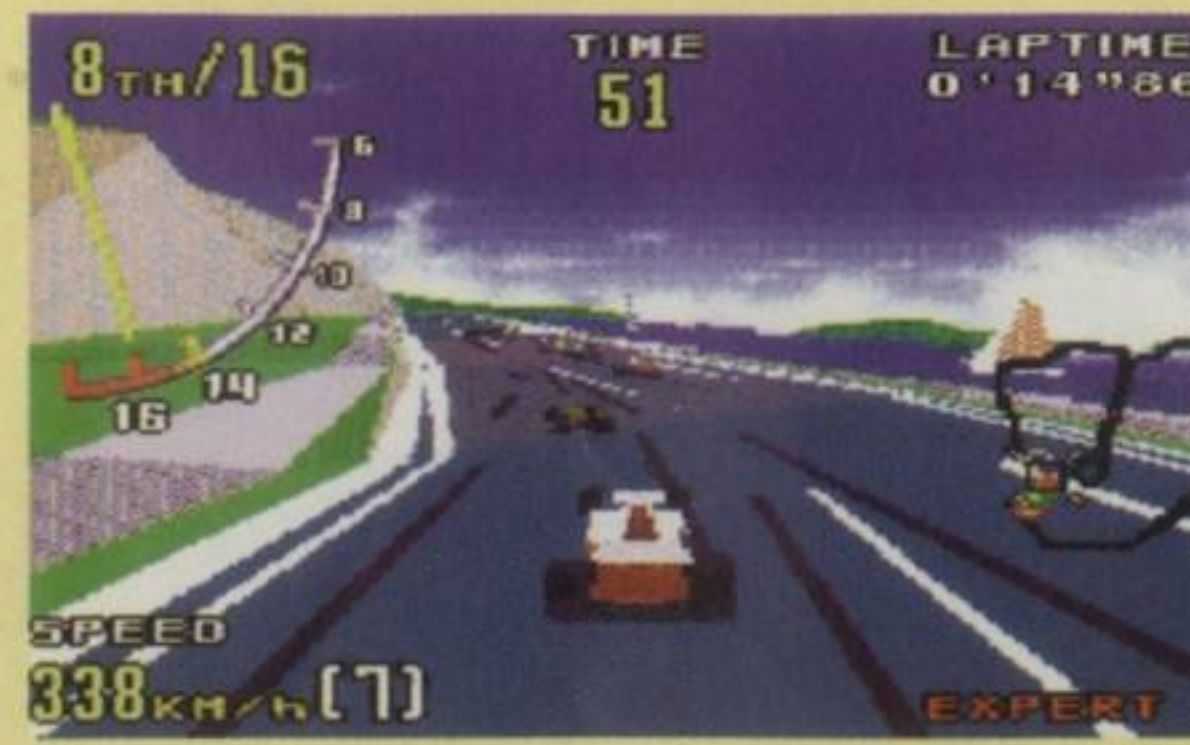
ACROPOLIS

EXPERT

I suppose the reason this is called the Expert track is because it's so damn hard not only to get in the lead, but to stay there as well. There are a couple of major bits which you MUST get right in order to stay ahead, but the rest of the track is fairly simple and can be taken at full speed (in fact, I really like it when you drive through the canyon bit). An initial lap time of 53.00 seconds followed by laps of close to 50.00 seconds after that should get you in the lead and keep you there. And after you've done the five laps, consider *Virtua Racing* finished, except for the mirrored tracks. Find out how to access this mode on page 60.



② The first few corners are no problem at speed, it's just the other drivers tend to get in the way a lot; watch them and move



③ The first sharp corner takes you down by the river (where the air is still and the grass is green). Again, watch for the oversteer



④ Prepare for this corner by getting as far over to the left as you can and then swing in hard and touch the steering to keep the line



① Just why do I always start last on the grid? I really hate it when racing games do this (Get on with the tips Paul - Andy)



⑩ That's it, lap finished, top lap time achieved and first place is yours. Now just stretch that lead and you can then get to play all the tracks in Mirror Mode



⑨ You then get to drive through this sort of canyon thing and, if you get the racing line right, you can do this at full speed



⑧ Shift into 5th gear as the corner hits and then slow down so you don't spin. Then speed out of the corner and change back up to 7th



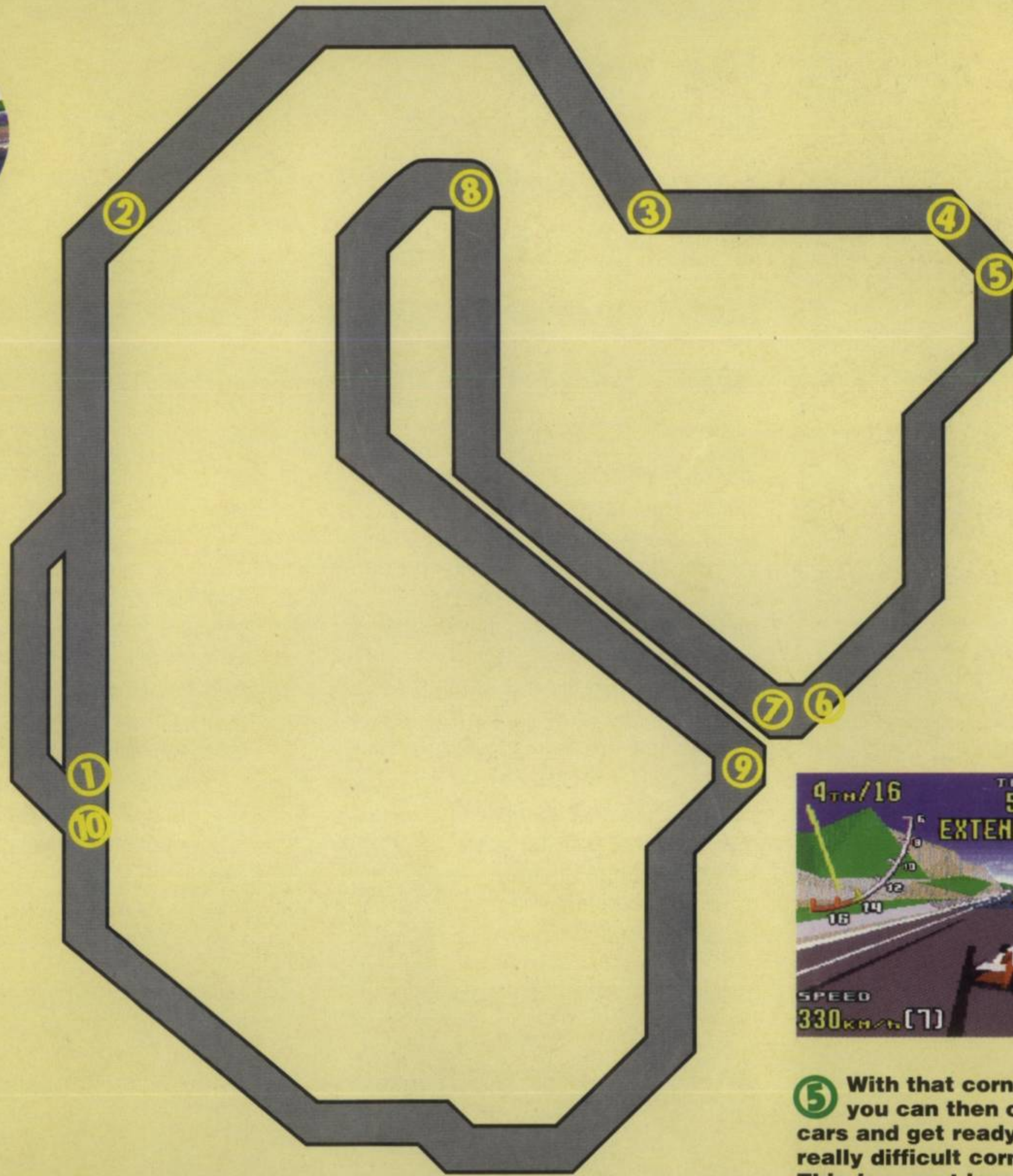
⑦ You can then steer back on to the straight part, shift back up to 7th gear and get ready for a real pain of a hairpin turn



⑤ With that corner out of the way you can then catch up on some cars and get ready for some really, really difficult corners and stuff. This is expert level, after all



⑥ This is the worst corner on the whole course and needs to be taken at speed in 6th gear from the left-hand side of the track



DRIVING GAMES

With the recent arrival of *Virtua Racing* on the Mega Drive, Josse Bilson takes a look at the whole driving game scene, rating every release along the way...

ZOO-ooo-OOOOom-AH! is probably the sort of thing that a quality racing game might cause you to shriek with its literally, um, racey, gameplay. Unfortunately, the Mega Drive, although the grateful recipient of several racing classics, also "boasts" a number of games that are far more likely to induce a deeply bored sigh (a sort of "aaaaaaahhhhhh" if you will) than an apoplectic Murray Walker shriek or fatal James Hunt style cardiac arrest. (Stand up *Double Clutch*, *Outrun*, *Outlander*, *Super HQ*. Now leave the building.) Still, let's concentrate for the main part on some of the better games that have



Outrun (left) looks fine, but compared to the splash made by the coin-op, it received a very muted reception. In contrast, the *Road Rash* series got rave reviews

emerged from the genre since the Mega Drive's appearance.

The vast majority follow in the ancient but evolutionarily viable footsteps of *Pole Position*, the Atari coin-op classic, in that they retain the 3D perspective in one of two forms.

The *Pole Position* perspective is from just behind the car and has become the classic formula for racing games. Adopted originally for nearly all the carts available, this view has now become more and more associated with the more accessible, arcadey titles such as *Outrun*, *Lotus 2*, *Road Rashes 1 and 2*, and the derivative *Skitchin'*.

Skitchin' was a peculiar idea. Still, we liked it



Virtua Racing is now the new standard by which all racing games, and indeed games in general, will be judged. It's a hard act to follow...



It's not surprising then that games which adopt this perspective have been the first to embellish on the simple "be the fastest" gameplay, with such features as arm flailing, weapon wielding violence in the *Road Rashes* and *Skitchin'*, track tailoring in *Lotus's* case, and vehicle upgrading in all cases.

Those with a yearning for a less immediate but more challenging simmy experience are probably better off looking at the first-person, from the cockpit, perspective. Carts like *Super Monaco GP 2* and *Hard Drivin'* are far more exacting tests of your racing skills and tend to concentrate on attempting to reproduce the dynamics of an actual car and placing you in as realistic an environment as possible.

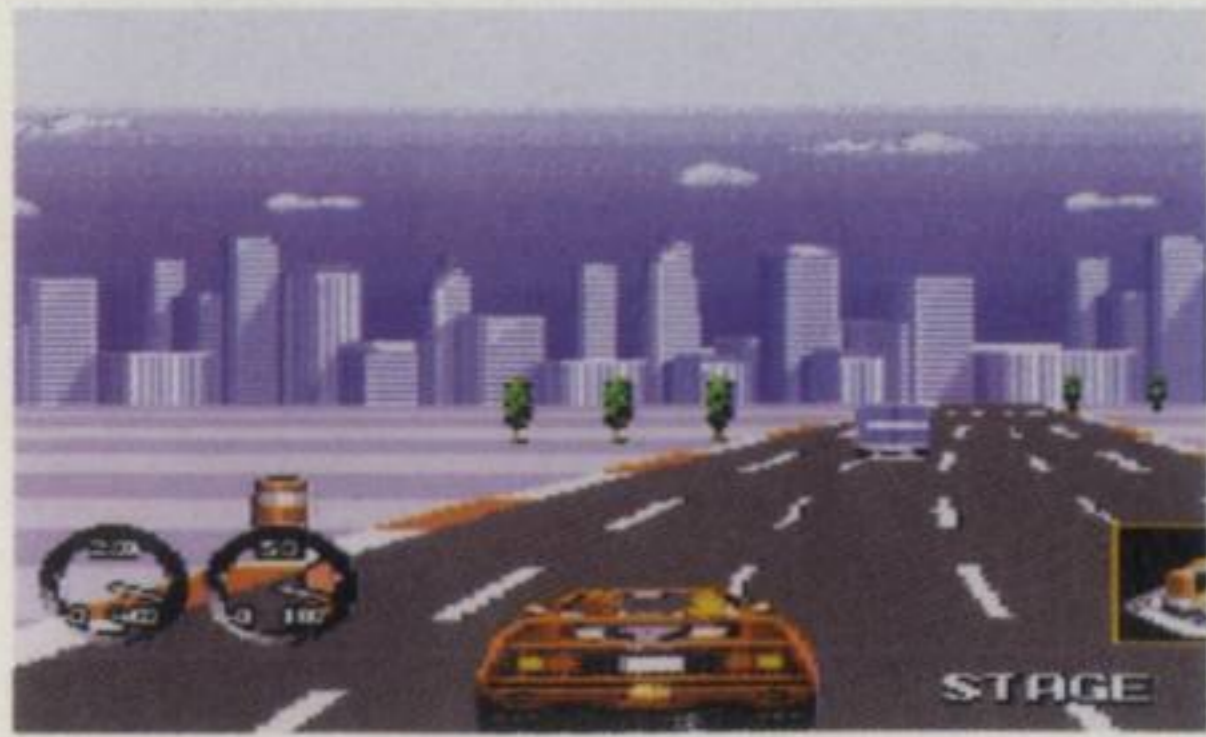
Now, of course, there's *Virtua Racing*, which combines the best of both worlds and wraps everything in the most



More motorbike leaning fun with the original *Road Rash*



Super Monaco GP set a standard that many still fail to emulate



Turbo Outrun was a slight improvement on the first outing



Lotus's head-to-head racing helped lift it from the pack



Not unusually; beautiful car, shame about the game

stunning polygon world yet seen on any home system. You want first person perspective? Well, have it then. Behind the car, above the car? Whatever. You want a realistic feel to the car that doesn't preclude speedy, all-action racing fun? It's there. Race your mate? Okey dokey. Price tag apart, it really is very difficult to criticise *Virtua Racing*. Where we go from here is anyone's guess, but if it gets any better than *Virtua Racing*, you won't find me complaining.



Hard Drivin' was more like hard work, if you ask me

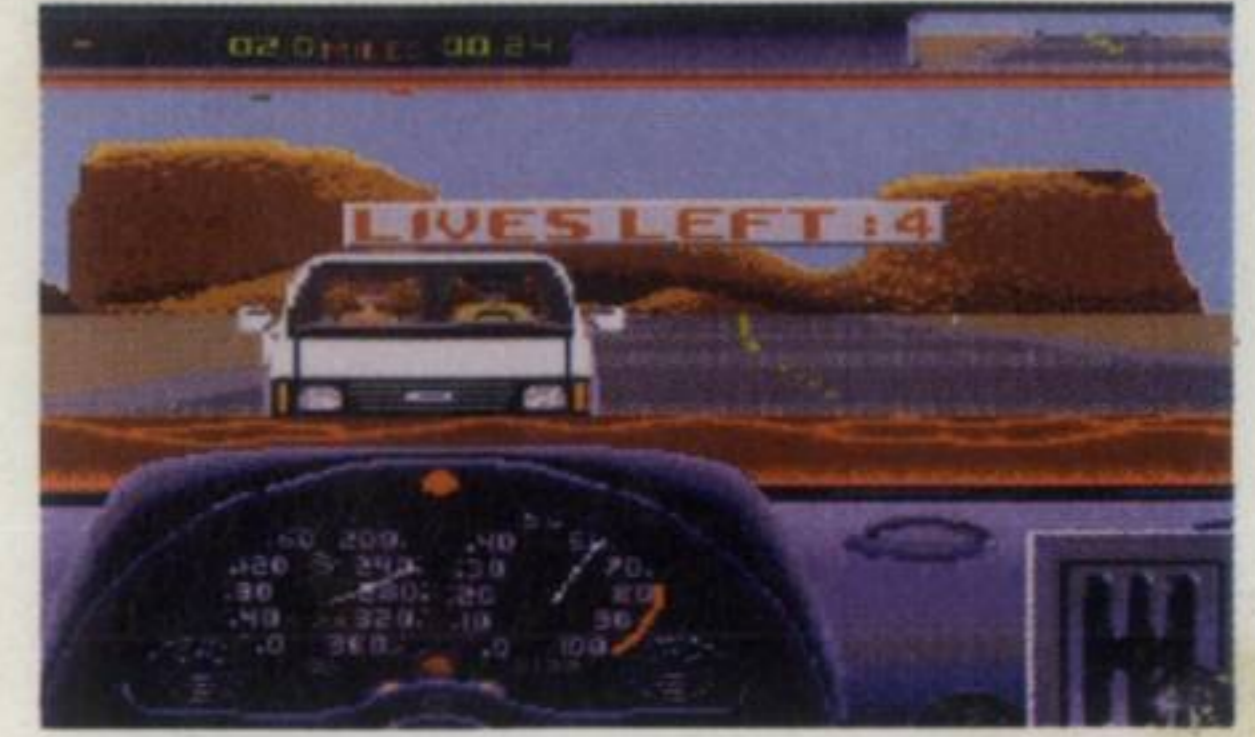
CHRONOLOGICALLY SPEAKING

It's not called the Mega Drive for nothing you know. Over the years it's been showered with driving games, some good, some reasonable, some terrible, and one called *Outlander*.

GAME NAME	RELEASE DATE	MEGA RATING
Super Monaco Grand Prix	March 1991	90%
Road Blasters	June 1991	57%
Outrun	September 1991	45%
Road Rash	September 1991	85%
Hard Drivin'	November 1991	50%
Turbo Outrun	February 1992	53%
Test Drive 2	May 1992	65%
Super Monaco Grand Prix 2	July 1992	91%
Lotus Turbo Challenge	December 1992	83% (Issue 3)
Road Rash 2	January 1993	92% (Issue 4)
Super HQ	January 1993	44% (Issue 4)
Micro Machines	February 1993	92% (Issue 5)
Outlander	March 1993	20% (Issue 6)
Out Run 2019	April 1993	45% (Issue 7)
Jaguar XJ220	June 1993	52% (Issue 9)
F1	August 1993	90% (Issue 11)
Lotus 2	December 1993	78% (Issue 15)
Nigel Mansell's World Championship Racing	April 1994	80% (Issue 19)
Virtua Racing	April 1994	92% (Issue 19)



Road Blasters was one of the first in a long line of disappointing CD titles



Test Drive 2 could be accused of taking simulation too far



Super HQ disappoints with its unbalanced mix of speed and action



F1 doesn't look that great but it doesn't half shift. No, honestly

SECOND BEST

Probably the only game to rival *Virtua Racing* for sheer fun is from another stable of racers altogether. Take one of the Ds away from your average racing game and you'll end up with something a bit like the top-down, tiny spite action of *Micro Machines*. You might of course end up with the top-down, crawling tedium of *Double Clutch*, but the less said about that the better. Converted from an ancient, award-winning 8-bit NES cart, *Micro Machines* succeeds with an admirable balance of speed and control, giving superbly competitive racing.



It's a simple formula, granted, but *Double Clutch* shows exactly how wrong any game can go. *Micro Machines* was the original and is still the best. The game has been around in one form or another for donkey's years

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MEGA CONFIDENTIAL

HELLO FOLKS

Another month, another free newsletter. I could write on here about all the stuff that's in the newsletter, but instead, here's an amusing story. I've just heard from a friend who works on a Nintendo mag that Nintendo have announced a revolutionary new Virtual Reality system for under £100, and going to make the market even more uncertain because their Project Reality system has been received with much excitement. Here...

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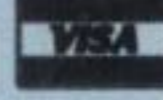

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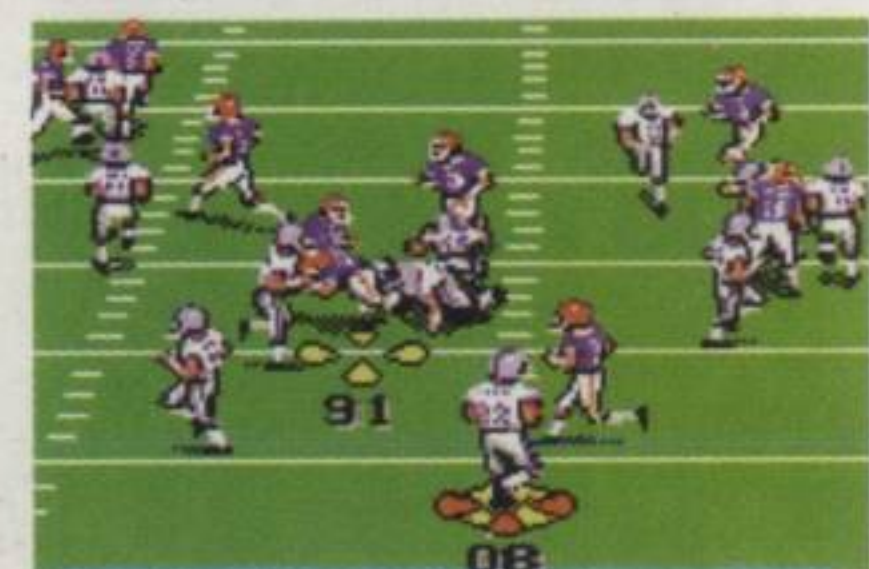
Looking for a new game to add to your collection? Well, you've come to the right place, because over the next eight pages not only do we tell you what we think the best games of all time are, but, with the inclusion of over 250 reader ads, we also give you the opportunity to get hold of most of them at bargain prices. Oh, and we give you a good few tips for them as well!

TOP 100 MEGA DRIVE GAME POSITIONS

Afterburner 2	94	Mega Turrican	85
Aladdin	3	Micro Machines	11
Alien 3	64	Mid-29	86
Another World	83	Mortal Kombat	47
Aquatic Games	100	NBA Jam	8
Asterix	54	NHL Hockey '94	14
Blaster Master 2	95	PGA Tour Golf 2	18
Boxing Legends of the Ring	49	Populous 2	79
Bubba 'n' Stix	48	PowerMonger	58
Bubsy	84	Quackshot	26
Castle of Illusion	66	Rainbow Islands	37
Chakan	52	Ranger X	77
Chaos Engine	15	Revenge of Shinobi	89
Columns 3	67	Road Rash 2	17
Cool Spot	28	Rocket Knight Adventures	60
Cyborg Justice	99	Rolling Thunder 2	82
Davis Cup Tennis	27	Rolo to the Rescue	31
Decap Attack	96	Royal Rumble	40
Desert Strike	42	Sensible Soccer	6
Dragon's Fury	98	Shining Force	33
Dune 2	69	Shinobi 3	59
Ecco the Dolphin	24	Side Pocket	57
ESWAT	88	Skitchin'	45
Ex-Mutants	80	Sonic 2	36
F1	19	Sonic 3	5
F-15	53	Sonic Spinball	44
Fantastic Dizzy	61	Speedball 2	74
FIFA International Soccer	6	Street Fighter 2	4
Flashback	9	Streets Of Rage	51
Gauntlet 4	29	Streets Of Rage 2	25
Ghouls 'n' Ghosts	72	Strider	87
Golden Axe 2	71	Sub Terrania	38
Golden Axe 3	41	Super Kick Off	76
Greatest Heavyweights	81	Super Monaco GP 2	43
Hellfire	16	Taz-Mania	70
International Rugby	75	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles:	
James Pond 3	30	The Hyperstone Heist	56
Joe Montana 3	91	Terminator	93
John Madden Football '94	1	Terminator 2	63
Jungle Book	21	Thunderforce 3	97
Jungle Strike	12	Thunderforce 4	46
Kid Chameleon	90	Tiny Toon Adventures	32
Krusty's Super Fun House	92	ToeJam And Earl	73
Landstalker	20	ToeJam And Earl 2	13
Lemmings	23	Ultimate Soccer	78
Lethal Enforcers	35	Virtua Racing	2
LHX Attack Chopper	68	Winter Olympics	65
Lost Vikings	22	World of Illusion	50
Lotus 2	62	X-Men	39
Mean Bean Machine	10	Zombies Ate My	
Mega-Lo-Mania	34	Neighbours	55

1. MADDEN NFL '94 (INC. JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL, JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL '92 AND JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL '93)

Publisher: EASN • Price: £49.99
Reviewed in Issue 14 of MEGA



Although Madden '94 is quite different in terms of graphics to the other three previous games, it's still basically the same game. But with the addition, finally, of a league, the sponsorship of the NFL (so you get all the real teams), more plays, and loads more stats, this is the definitive version of the game.

MEGA says: For two-player head-to-head action this is simply unbeatable, and now with the addition of a league and proper play-offs, the one-player game is so much better as well. Some people might like the old graphics compared to the new ones, but that's only a minor niggle.

TO SWAP: Madden NFL '94
Swap for NBA Jam - 0705 385171

FOR SALE: John Madden '93

£15 - 0709 367513

£25 - 0926 422160

£25 - 0732 356447

FOR SALE: John Madden '92

£8 - 081 841 2492

£15 - 031 447 6457

FOR SALE: John Madden

£15/Swap - 0676 532514

2. VIRTUA RACING

Publisher: Sega • Price: TBA
Reviewed in Issue 19 of MEGA



There's not much you can say about this game which hasn't been said already, except that (even knowing the game was to incorporate the super DSP chip) nobody expected it to be quite this brilliant. The graphics are amazing - they move so well it's frightening - and the gameplay is almost identical to that of the arcade coin-op.

MEGA says: The split-screen mode is cool, the one-player mode is cool, the graphics are cool, the sound is cool... you get the picture.

3. ALADDIN

Publisher: Sega • Price: £44.99
Reviewed in Issue 14 of MEGA



Just when you thought that all platform games were the same, along comes this. Using every trick in the book, inventing a few more and then adding some of the best graphics and sound ever seen or heard in a game, this is going to give you hours and hours of enjoyment. This should sell loads because of the film tie-in, but for once both the game and the film are amazing.

MEGA says: With the arrival of games like this, the boundaries of platform games are now really being pushed to the limit.

FOR SALE: Aladdin

£30 - 081 692 8097

£30 - 0202 490276

TO SWAP: Aladdin

Swap for Sensible or FIFA Soccer - 0788

510709

Swap for Populous - 081 318 2903

4. STREET FIGHTER 2: SPECIAL CHAMPION EDITION

Publisher: Sega/Capcom • Price: £59.99
Reviewed in Issue 14 of MEGA



Not the amazing force of a game it is on the SNES, simply because there are so many good games for the Mega Drive already. However, this is still the best beat-'em-up ever and it's also an amazingly playable game that anyone, no matter how incompetent, can enjoy. With that special Turbo mode, the chance to control all the bosses and the bonus Elimination match-up to play, you're never going to get bored, and that's a promise.

MEGA says: This 24-Mbit game is a polished, playable and spot-on conversion of the arcade machine. It's a bit on the pricey side, but you'll still be playing it this time next year.

FOR SALE: Street Fighter 2

£45 - 0935 78705

£35 - 0730 816414

£30/Swap for Robocop Vs Terminator -

0327 359093

£40/Swap - 0983 280853

£30 - 0778 343297

5. SONIC 3

Publisher: Sega • Price: £59.99
Reviewed in Issue 18 of MEGA

Sonic's back (again) and there's yet another new character. Knuckles the Ant-eater is tricked by Dr Robotnik into thinking that Sonic is trying to steal the Chaos Emeralds (not our Sonic surely). This sets us up for another Sonic platform adventure of the calibre we've come to expect. The graphics are nicer, the levels three times larger and the whole thing is full of Sonic-isms.

MEGA says: If you like Sonic, and you want the best Sonic game there is, you're going to have to pay for it.

FOR SALE: Sonic 3

£35 - 0730 816414

TO SWAP: Sonic 3

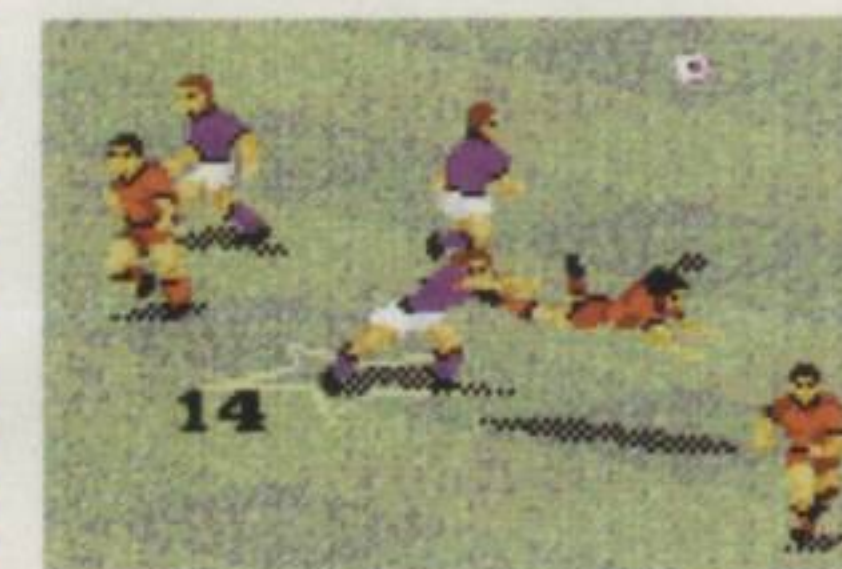
(Jap) Swap for NBA Jam - 041 771 9055

WANTED: Sonic 3

0225 706304

6. FIFA SOCCER

Publisher: EA Sports • Price: £49.99
Reviewed in Issue 15 of MEGA



After almost three years the Mega Drive finally gets a top football game. It's all here; a league, international championships, fantastic gameplay, great graphics, superb sound and loads of atmosphere.

MEGA says: EA Sports come up with the goods once again and with that lovely 4-Way Play adaptor you can even get three of your mates to play at the same time. But wait, what about the other fabulous footy game below?

FOR SALE: FIFA International Soccer

£25/Swap - 0449 79289

£20 - 021 557 3215

WANTED: FIFA International Soccer

0983 280853

0952 812684

£20/Swap - 0375 842611

6. SENSIBLE SOCCER

Publisher: Sony • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 15 of MEGA



Yep, we thought long and hard about this, but we couldn't separate the two games. And the reason? Well, even though they're both football games, they go about

the task in different ways and are both good in different ways. Sensible Soccer is a faster-paced, even arcade, game with some seriously good gaming options. So we've decided to give them both the same position in the TOP 100.

MEGA says: If you're going to buy a football game, it has to be one of these two. Try them both and see which one best suits your gaming needs.

WANTED: Sensible Soccer

0952 812684

8. NBA JAM

Publisher: Acclaim • Price: £49.99
Reviewed in Issue 18 of MEGA



It's been said "that you cannae change the laws of physics", and while that may be true it doesn't mean you can't mess about with the laws of basketball. And that's exactly what NBA Jam does brilliantly. There are no confusing stats to get in the way, just pure arcade action and loads of fun. And with that lovely simultaneous four-player game it's fun for all the family.

MEGA says: And they said basketball was dead. Well, they didn't say that exactly, but if they had done, they would have been wrong.

WANTED: NBA Jam

041 771 9055

Will pay up to £30 - 0279 417801

Will pay up to £40 - 0778 343297

9. FLASHBACK

Publisher: US Gold • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 9 of MEGA



Stick some nice animation into a game, and most people will tend to get very excited about it, ignoring the rest of the game completely. With Flashback though you can sit down, watch the animation and then get completely involved in a great arcade adventure.

MEGA says: This is in many ways a perfect game. It's absolutely amazing to look at, it sounds brilliant, it's tough, involving, easy to control and thoroughly addictive.

FOR SALE: Flashback

£30 - 0799 527925

£30 - 0677 424781

TOP 10 MEGA CD GAME POSITIONS

Double Switch	7	Lethal Enforcers	4
Dragon's Lair	10	Lunar the Silver Star	6
Dune CD	8	Silpheed	3
Final Fight	5	Sonic CD	2
Jurassic Park	9	Thunderhawk	1

TOP 10 MEGA CD GAMES

There's still no movement in this month's Mega CD games listing, which means that there's really nothing much to be said in this little intro paragraph. Perhaps you should turn your attention to some other part of this section instead? You'll find three new entries in the Mega Drive listing, loads of reader ads, and a splattering of new tips in the TIPS LIST.

1. THUNDERHAWK

Publisher: Core • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in issue 13 of MEGA



Take one look at the amazing graphics for this game and you'll see that the CD (as a machine to blow everyone's socks off) has finally made it. But it's not only the graphics that make this game stunning. With non-stop adrenaline-pumping shoot-'em-up action you're gonna get a real kick out of this. You really are going to love it. MEGA says: Although we've all been blown away by the graphics, there's an immensely playable and addictive game in here too.

2. SONIC CD

Publisher: Sega • Price: £44.99
Reviewed in Issue 13 of MEGA



We all expected it to be good, and it is. The game is still very much *Sonic* but it now has some depth. To finish this you're actually going to have to play the game. Oh, and the graphics on the special stages are stunning. MEGA says: Ever since everyone who bought the original *Sonic* finished it in a couple of days we've wanted a *Sonic* game with a challenge. Well, we had to wait for the CD version to provide it, but at least it's finally here.

3. SILPHEED

Publisher: Sega • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 13 of MEGA



Touted as the most amazing graphical game yet to appear on the CD, *Silpheed* has been slightly upstaged by *Thunderhawk*. Still, the speed and realism of this space shoot-'em-up can't be overlooked. Addictive, fun, and stunning to look at. MEGA says: If this and *Thunderhawk* are the shape of things to come, we're in for a real treat.

game as a whole is a bit more fluid.

MEGA says: There are five new courses in the game and all the idiosyncrasies of the individual Mega Drive controlled players, but you may feel a bit miffed if you have got *PGA Tour Golf 2* and buy this expecting a wildly different game.

FOR SALE: *PGA Tour Golf 2*
£25 - 0935 78705
£16 - 0709 367513
£25/Swap - 0603 737583 (after 5.15 pm)
£20 - 0887 840 356
WANTED: *PGA Tour Golf 2*
0642 469427
0952 812684

19. F1

Publisher: Domark • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 11 of MEGA



While *Super Monaco GP* wins hands down on realism and looks, *F1* beats it into first place for speed and playability. And if you think you can handle more than the normal speed of the game, there's always the turbo mode. With all the 16 Formula One courses, battery back-up for ten games and a simultaneous two-player game, *F1* has all the right ingredients to make it a top ten game, and indeed, that's where it is.

MEGA says: Thrills, spills and a lot of crashes. That's what's in store for you with this game. For speed freaks and Ford Fiesta owners alike, this is a must buy.

20. LANDSTALKER

Publisher: Sega • Price: £49.99
Reviewed in Issue 14 of MEGA



Our hero Nigel must combat all manner of strange beings and solve intriguing puzzles if he's ever going to find King Nole's treasure in what has got to be one of the most eagerly-awaited games ever. A large, brilliant and new-style RPG that will appeal to experienced gamers and novices alike. Superb! **MEGA says:** Paul has actually been playing this for ages, and he doesn't usually like role-playing games. So that's a recommendation if ever there was one.

WANTED: *Landstalker*
0642 469427

21. THE JUNGLE BOOK

Publisher: Virgin • Price: £44.99
Reviewed in Issue 20 of MEGA



A lovely film turns into a lovely game. It sounds too good to be true, but in the Disney tradition everything turns out brilliantly in the end. The graphics are astounding and that doesn't mean just the main character animation; the background and foreground graphics are excellent and

there's a top platform game (with a bit of a challenge) to play as well.

MEGA says: They don't come much better looking or with better gameplay than this... but then again, *The Lion King* is due out for Christmas...

22. LOST VIKINGS

Publisher: Virgin • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 16 of MEGA



Imagine, if you can, a three-character-orientated puzzling platform game in which you must control each of the abilities of the three sprites in order to get them out of each level. Now add some incredibly top puzzles, some cool graphics and the odd bit of humour and you've got a game that taxes the old grey cells, takes a while to play through and is a real blast while you're doing it. Welcome to *Lost Vikings*.

MEGA says: When this came in, it took Jon days to leave it alone, and if that's not a recommendation, we don't know what is.

23. LEMMINGS

Publisher: Sega • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 2 of MEGA

This game has got 180 one-player levels, 20 two-player levels and addictive puzzling gameplay that's going to keep you stumped for an incredibly long time. Excellent use of a password system and an easy control system make this a must for all gamers.

MEGA says: It's addictive, brain teasing and once you get into it, you'll be reluctant to get out again.

FOR SALE: *Lemmings*
£15 - 0494 482835
£23/Swap - 0676 532514
£20 - 081 304 3191
£15 - 0763 241506
TO SWAP: *Lemmings*
0225 706304

24. ECCO

Publisher: Sega • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 6 of MEGA

Once in a while a game comes along that is just that little bit different to the rest. It may be cute, it may even look nice, but its real pulling power is the gameplay. Such a game is *Ecco*. You've got to help out your fellow dolphins (and help yourself) in this deep underwater adventure. There are puzzles to solve, routes to find, dangers to avoid and even some shooty bits.

MEGA says: It brings a whole new realm of gameplay to the Mega Drive. It's tough, beautiful, and an absolute joy to play.

FOR SALE: *Ecco the Dolphin*
£20 - 081 692 8097
£30 - 0799 527925
£20 - 021 459 7576
£18 - 0582 713284
£20 - 051 356 4738
TO SWAP: *Ecco the Dolphin*
0225 706304

25. STREETS OF RAGE 2

Publisher: Sega • Price: £44.99
Reviewed in Issue 4 of MEGA

You won't find a better beat-'em-up on the Mega Drive (except for *Street Fighter 2* of course) and it's even better than some arcade ones too. Improvements on the original include two new characters (Max and Skate), a head-to-head mini game, amazing graphics and playability as well.

MEGA says: You won't find it tough

enough if you play on easy level with loadsa continues. So if you're a hotshot gamer, do yourself a favour and play the game on hard level with only a couple of continues.

FOR SALE: *Streets of Rage 2*
£15 - 0273 563697
£20 - 081 304 3191

26. QUACKSHOT

Publisher: Sega • Price: £39.99

Yes, it's another platformer; yes, it's another Disney licence; yes, it's a bit of a clone of *Castle Of Illusion*; but none of that matters one little bit. Why not? Because *Quackshot* is excellent fun. This is the game that *Fantasia* should have been. It looks lush, sounds lovely, and it's action-quacked (sorry) from start to finish.

MEGA says: It's quite an old game now, but we still think you should get it!

FOR SALE: *Quackshot*
£20 - 051 531 7284
£15 - 031 4476457
£20 - 081 304 3191

27. DAVIS CUP TENNIS

Publisher: Domark • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 12 of MEGA

We've waited ages for a tennis game which will knock our socks off - well here it is. It's fast, intricate, and it has a lovely technical learning curve and a stonking two-player option.

MEGA says: Definitely more of a two-player game than a single-player-against-the-computer one, this will bring out the real competitor in you.

28. COOL SPOT

Publisher: Virgin • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 9 of MEGA

This ultra-cool, cute and loveable little dude sits brilliantly inside this fabulous platform game.

MEGA says: Playable, cute, large, difficult game with a great soundtrack.

FOR SALE: *Cool Spot*
£20 - 0935 78705
£30 - 0799 527925
£20 - 0202 490276
£19 - 0482 640558

29. GAUNTLET 4

Publisher: Tengen • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 13 of MEGA



What an amazing coin-op *Gauntlet* was. Many a misspent youth has been spent shoving ten-pence pieces into the mammoth arcade machine. And now those days are back. And by adding three different modes and using the four-player tap for maximum hilarity, it's even better than ever. **MEGA says:** A top arcade game gets the conversion treatment and actually ends up being better than the coin-op.

30. JAMES POND 3: OPERATION STARFISH

Publisher: EA • Price: £49.99
Reviewed in Issue 14 of MEGA



The first *Pond* was OK, the second was OK as well, but a bit better than the first. *Pond 3* is loads better than the second and very good to boot. There is large Mario-style gameplay in the usual platform style, but with loads to do and lots of levels to do it in, this is another seriously good platformer for the Mega Drive.

MEGA says: Andy hates the other two *Pond* games, but he loves this one. Looks like it's third time lucky for old Jimbo.

31. ROLO TO THE RESCUE

Publisher: EA • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 5 of MEGA



Platform games can be found in abundance on the Mega Drive, but with the exception of *Sonic*, you won't find a cuter, more loveable character than Rolo. Then, when you find out his Mom has been kidnapped, you're pulled in and there's no way out unless you finish the game.

MEGA says: Cute graphics and lovely sound we've had before, but there is more to this game than that. There are loadsa secret rooms, puzzles to work out, and bosses to defeat.

32. TINY TOONS

Publisher: Konami • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 8 of MEGA



Cute, big and easy to play, this platformer has got it all. With a password for each level, seven different "worlds" to get through, loads of characters from the cartoons and some nasty end-of-level bosses to defeat, this scores very highly in all gameplaying areas.

MEGA says: Fast, colourful, cute, playable... the list of qualities in this game is endless.

FOR SALE: *Tiny Toons*
£20/Swap for *Sonic CD* - 051 531 7284
£20 - 071 237 2354
£20/Swap for *Shining Force* - 041 959 5684

33. SHINING FORCE

Publisher: Sega • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 10 of MEGA

We all complain when games are too easy to finish and we also complain that the hardest games to complete, RPGs, are boring. Well if you're of that ilk, you should definitely check this out 'cos you're in for a surprise. It's got cute characters, a do-the-right-thing storyline and gameplay most games can only dream about.

MEGA says: Very soon we're going to have to stop taking the mick out of role-playing games, because they're getting quite good now.

34. MEGA-LO-MANIA

Publisher: Virgin • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 6 of MEGA

Ever wanted to know why a "God-game" is called a "God-game"? Well just take a few minutes of the murder, mayhem and madness on offer in *Mega-Lo-Mania* and wonder no more. Their lives are in your

hands (cue evil laugh) and you can do whatever you want. There's more to this, however, than killing a few people. It's an intense strategy game which, if you're not careful, will make hours pass by like minutes.

MEGA says: Although heavy strategy like this won't appeal to the more *Sonic*-minded among you, if you're after a bit of brain-bending, then this should suit you down to the ground. Every little detail is great and the gameplay is very smooth.

FOR SALE: *Mega-Lo-Mania*

£20 - 081 304 3191

£20 - 021 459 7576

£25/Swap for *Fantastic Dizzy* - 0782

626488 (after 5 pm)

TO SWAP: *Mega-Lo-Mania*

0225 706 304

35. LETHAL ENFORCERS

Publisher: Konami • **Price:** £64.99

Reviewed in Issue 15 of MEGA



It's amazing how a perfectly good first-person perspective shoot-'em-up can be turned into a classic game just by the addition of a small Dirty Harry light gun. The coin-op was great fun because of the gun, and thanks to Konami you can now re-live that arcade experience on the Mega Drive.

MEGA says: The gun is very cool (and a lot cheaper than the Menacer) and the two-player simultaneous game is a real hoot.

FOR SALE: *Lethal Enforcers*

£40 - 0560 321553

36. SONIC 2

Publisher: Sega • **Price:** £39.99

Reviewed in Issue 2 of MEGA

This game has fast, smooth colourful graphics, top sound and playability that would make most game programmers' eyes water. Even if you do finish it, you've still got the two-player races and all those time challenges to have a go at.

MEGA says: You might find it too easy to finish, but it does leave the original game sobbing in a dark, damp corner.

FOR SALE: *Sonic 2*

£10 - 0823 663168

£20 - 051 475 0828

£18 - 0202 490276

£25 - 081 514 2547

£15 - 0778 343297

37. RAINBOW ISLANDS

Publisher: Taito • **Price:** (see importer)



Already hailed as the best 16-bit computer game of all time, *Rainbow Islands* has come to the Mega Drive and, miraculously, has got even better. The impossibly addictive platform action is the same as ever, the amazingly cute graphics are as sweet as ever, and the devilish, fiendishly hidden bonuses are as devilish and fiendishly hidden as ever. And with Mega Drive's *Rainbow Islands* you get a whole extra game on top! Well, it's more of a variation than a completely different game,

true, but the extra, harder version extends the life of a game which was already practically immortal, and makes it just about the best value-for-money investment you'll ever see in an arcade platformer.

MEGA says: If you've got a UK Mega Drive, this game alone makes it worth buying a Jap adaptor. Seriously beautiful, incomparably playable and addictive.

FOR SALE: *Rainbow Islands*

£50 - 0207 489111

£45 - 0202 490276

38. SUB TERRANIA

Publisher: Sega • **Price:** £44.99

Reviewed in Issue 20 of MEGA



It's been a while since we've had a decent shoot-'em-up for the Mega Drive, and although we usually get tired old ideas and tired old gameplay, *Sub Terrania* is different. Using some clever touches (such as a ship that reacts to inertia) and a puzzle-solving element, the game is enthralling and adrenaline pumping at the same time. It's a shame then that there are only nine smallish levels in the game.

MEGA says: An almost perfect example of a thinking man's shoot-'em-up. Neat, twisting, playable but just too damn small.

39. X-MEN

Publisher: Sega • **Price:** £39.99

Reviewed in Issue 9 of MEGA

Although superheroes are popular sources of games, the games themselves usually end up being dire little platformers. This is a platform game, but thanks to the ingenious use of the characters and the team effort needed to play the game, it lifts itself above the rest.

MEGA says: Paul loves this game for two reasons; 1) He's a big X-Men fan, and 2) the game is fab. So, if it's good enough for him, it's good enough for everyone else.

40. ROYAL RUMBLE

Publisher: Acclaim • **Price:** £49.99

Reviewed in Issue 14 of MEGA



Wrestling may not be the most "honest" sport in the world, but with up to 12 people in the ring at once, it's entertaining if nothing else. And, thankfully, this captures the fun element of that competition.

MEGA says: Two-player, one-player, tag-team and Royal Rumble - it's all here and jolly good fun it is too.

FOR SALE: *Royal Rumble*

£32/Swap - 0983 280853

41. GOLDEN AXE 3

Publisher: Sega Japan • **Price:** £39.99

Reviewed in Issue 12 of MEGA



Completely replacing *Golden Axe 2* (and *Golden Axe* for that matter) this takes the

old formula, improves on it slightly by updating the graphics, adding some more sound and giving you four characters to choose from. The classic gameplay is still here and although it hasn't changed very much over the years, the feeling at MEGA is that it doesn't have to.

MEGA says: Well, it's one of Andy's fave games and it's a classic. It's not one to fight your next door neighbour's pit bull terrier for, but it's definitely worth a play.

42. DESERT STRIKE

Publisher: EA • **Price:** £34.99



Yes, OK, so it's in extremely poor taste, but you can't deny that *Desert Strike* is one of the most excellent pieces of blasting fun that the Mega Drive's ever played host to. Sometimes it can feel like you're fighting the entire war yourself, what with missions to complete, hundreds of enemies to blast and all manner of stuff to rescue with your helicopter's all-purpose winch. But even if you're not the xenophobic type, you'll be hard pushed not to have a great time with this action-packed shoot-'em-up.

MEGA says: Never mind the plotline, go out and get yourself enlisted today. This is a great game, and that's what matters.

FOR SALE: *Desert Strike*

£30 - 0799 527925

£20 - 071 237 2354

43. SUPER MONACO GP 2 (INC. SUPER MONACO GP)

Publisher: Sega • **Price:** £44.99

Super Monaco GP was the most popular driving coin-op before *Out Run*, and the staggering graphics were thought by many to be completely impossible to simulate on a Mega Drive. And, indeed, they were, but disappointment turned to joy within seconds of loading this cart into the slot - the graphics may only be all right, but the gameplay is astonishing. *Super Monaco GP2* is superb, definable control, high-speed adrenaline-pumping driving action, and it also has a bit of strategic depth to keep things interesting after the first few days.

The sequel improves significantly on the earlier game especially in the area of car handling, but with something that started off as fab as *Super Monaco GP*, that's still just window-dressing.

MEGA says: This comes close to *F1* from Domark (although Paul Mellerick actually prefers *SM GP2*), but in the speed and playability departments *Super Monaco GP2* can't really touch it. Mind you, you'd have to go a long, long way to find any other driving game to better this.

FOR SALE: *Super Monaco GP2*

£18 - 0709 367513

£20/Swap - 071 916 4647

44. SONIC SPINBALL

Publisher: Sega • **Price:** £44.99

Reviewed in Issue 15 of MEGA



Although some people were quite cynical

GLOBAL GLADIATORS

• As soon as the Sega logo appears, press \odot , \square , \triangle and \times in a rhythm four times before it fades away. Now choose your starting level, the number of lives you want, and whether you want the photo freeze on.

• Start the game and as soon as you appear on the level, pause it. Now press \odot , \square , \triangle , \times , \odot , \square , \triangle , \times and \odot . The game will call you a cheater and then congratulate you on finishing the level. Unpause and you're on the next level.

• Pause and press \odot three times, \square three times, \triangle four times, \times and \odot . You'll hear the word "cheater", a growl and you'll get an extra life.

GOLDEN AXE 2

• Fight the first boss holding \odot . Release \odot at the campfires, but don't attack anything. Continue with 200 magic units.

• Press \odot , \square , \triangle , \times and \odot on the title screen, select options, keep holding \odot , hit \square and \triangle again, move to exit, keep holding \odot and hit \square and \triangle until you get to character select. Hold \odot and hit \square and \triangle . Now pick your level.

GOLDEN AXE 3

• When choosing a character, move the cursor to the character you want to play, and quickly press \odot four times, \square once and \triangle six times. A number should appear in the middle of the screen, which you can change to select your starting level.

GREEN DOG

• Here's a level skip. Pause the game, then press \odot , \square , \triangle , \times , \odot and \square again.

• Choose the hard difficulty setting and listen to any track on the sound test for over a minute. The game will start itself with 99 continues and you'll be playing on "Yeah Right" level.

• Play through level one to the columns with prizes in their tips. Blow up the last one and you'll see a robot woman dancing.

HOOK

• On the very first level, carry on until you receive the power of flight from the fairy, and fly across the gap. Fly through the cave, and collect the 3-Up. Your power will run out and you'll die. Repeat this until you have enough lives.

HUMANS

• Here are some level-select codes: Level 20 - WDFGNXGRRMPN Level 40 - NSFLKXCBJDWF Level 60 - YNTBXYJYNWLK Level 80 - XPMNWKJFNQZC

IMMORTAL (THE)

• On level four, put a ring on each hole and then walk round in a clockwise direction until the exit appears.

• In the room with the three pentagrams, place one gem on the right hole of the first pentagram, one on the left hole of the next, and one in the centre of the last one.

• Wait until the level name appears then hold \odot until the game appears. The game is paused. Release \odot for invincibility.

INDIANA JONES

• When the Sega logo disappears and the Lucasfilm logo appears, press \odot , \square , \triangle , \times , \odot , \square , \triangle , \times and \odot for a level select.

JAGUAR XJ220

• Go to options and enter your name as MAR. Now go back to the menu and choose the World Tour option. Pick your country and when you are starting the race, wait until the lights turn green and then pause the game. Press \odot , \square , \triangle , \times and \odot together and you'll qualify and win races.

JAMES POND 2: ROBOCOD

• Collect the objects on the roof at the start in this order: Cake, Hammer, Earth, Apple, Tap for ten minutes of invincibility.

• To skip to the exit pole on any level (having done the CHEAT cheat above) pause the game and press \odot , \square , \triangle , \times . Unpause and you've completed the level.

• On the sports level, collect the items on the tennis ball in this order: lips, ice-cream, violin, earth, snowman for infinite lives.

• On the title screen hold \odot and \square and \triangle , then press \odot for a level select.

• At the start of the game, jump over the first two doors and then run up the staircase. Go right as far as you can. Jump up onto the ramparts of the right tower until you come to the roof. Jump onto the roof, run left towards the wall and you'll get an extra life.

JAMES POND 3

• At the password screen, enter Red Cheese, Yellow Mouse, Green Cat, Blue Dog then Red Book and click on the "door" icon, and all the routes will be open to you as you move around the map screen. Once this cheat has been activated, go to "Options" on the title screen, pull \odot , hold down \odot and press \odot at the same time, and a new group of options appears underneath the usual set.

JOE MONTANA 3

• Enter the code by the side of the team you wish to play as, then add YNTSKBC.

DLB - Bears CDB - Bills
HCB - Cowboys SDB - Dolphins
ZLB - Eagles 4LB - 49ers
XTB - Giants QDB - Raiders
RLB - Rams 6LB - Redskins
VLB - Saints TLB - Vikings

JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL

• Get to the quarter finals: 0465100. Get to the semi-finals: 0075121, 0076310, 1111111 or 3333333. Get to the Superbowl: 0475121, 0476314, 0633253, 0673125 or 0631573.

JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL '92

• At the end of the final, when the display of the pitch is shown, press \odot , \square , \triangle , \times , \odot , \square , \triangle , \times , \odot , \square , \triangle , \times , \odot , \square , \triangle , \times , \odot . The screen will display the fireworks.

• Choose the team you'd like to play as in the finals by using the following codes: Buffalo (vs SF) - BXMMC6M1 Chicago (vs Denver) - CGBJYLC1 Dallas (vs Miami) - BONT6XN7 LA (vs Miami) - CNYGOYHL Miami (vs SF) - B6KKGYOL New Orleans (vs Kansas City) - B2709V41 Oakland (vs Washington) - CDLLB7LM SF (vs Denver) - B3DFN05K Washington (vs Oakland) - CZSK2TMR

KID CHAMELEON

• At the end of Blue Lake Woods one, don't touch the flag. Climb on the last block, and press \odot while holding jump and special to warp to the last boss.

KLAX

• Press \odot and \square , \triangle , \times , \odot and \square on the title screen to make it tougher.

• On levels 6 or 11, try to make an X with the tiles to teleport you straight to level 49.

LAKERS VERSUS CELTICS

• To get to the final as the Bulls with a 3-1 lead, enter 087 ROS.

LHX ATTACK CHOPPER

• Here are the codes for VERY HARD. Majestic Twelve - CBAAEC, Anterior Nova - CBACIEC, Reindeer Flotilla - CBACQHC, Phoenix - CBCAYGC, Rainbow Veil - CBAAAVA, Chess - CBACUUA, Lobster Quadrille - CBACQXA, Hen House - CBCEYWC, Desert Two - CBCEBFE, Flaming Arrow - CBCEJEE, Plain Aria - CBCEBCE, Lobster Quadrille - CBCEZGE, Reindeer Flotilla - CBCEBVG, Flaming Arrow - CBCEJUG, Hen House - CBCEBCE, Lava Lamp - CBCEZGW, Anterior Nova - CDCEANE, Gemini - CDCEIME, Chess - CDCEQPE, Binary Rainstorm - CDCEYQE, Freedom Train - CDCEA9G, Arc Lite - CDCEY-G, Anterior Nova - CDCEBNA, Reindeer Flotilla - CDCEJMA, Hop Toad - CDCERPA, Olympic Torch - CDCEZOA, Lobster Quadrille - CDCEB9C, Grand Theft Hokum - CDCEJ7C, Flaming Arrow - CDCER7C.

LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE

• Enter MANSELL on the password screen and you'll qualify every time.

• Enter SLUGPACE for infinite turbos.

MARVEL LAND

• Enter the code TRIDENT for the last level.

MAZIN WARS

• To play just the one-on-one boss section of the game go to the options screen and select Music 18 and Sound FX 72.

MEGA-LO-MANIA

• Here are the codes for some epochs: 2nd - YABDQCYXSL, 4th - UKBDIFXSH, 6th - QUBDQYFJAV, 8th - MECDMAMYXSQ, 9th - EKFDCEBSBYS.

• Final level code: JDDVBVJONH

MICRO MACHINES

• For infinite lives press \odot , \square , \triangle , \times , \odot , \square , \triangle , \times and \odot .

• To increase your vehicle's grip press \odot , \square , \triangle , \times , \odot , \square , \triangle , \times and \odot .

• To increase the impact of the collisions press \odot , \square , \triangle , \times , \odot , \square , \triangle , \times and \odot .

• For more speed press \odot , \square , \triangle , \times , \odot , \square , \triangle , \times and \odot .

MORTAL KOMBAT

• Press \odot , \square , \triangle , \times , \odot , \square , \triangle , \times and \odot on the options screen. The words CHEAT ENABLED will appear and you can enter a hidden options screen.

MUTANT LEAGUE FOOTBALL

• Here are some passcodes: Play as: Against: Code: Stammers Slayers CNL111111Y Razors Slayers 1CK111111H Vulgars Dragons 4CK111111L

NHLPA HOCKEY

• Get a couple of players in the sin bin and then pause the game and enter the Edit Lines mode. Now change all your players and go back to the game. When the sin bin time is over, the player(s) will come back onto the ice. You can now have up to seven players on the ice at one time.

• Choose the All Stars West as your team and go to the Edit Lines menu. Change your team to the following: RW - Housley, RW - Yzerman, C - Reonick, LW - Fedrov, LD - Chelios. Now you should always win.

PGA TOUR GOLF 2

• To play from the amateur tees in a tournament or skins challenge, do this: Select Tournament Play or Skins Challenge. Save your game on the first tee. Return to the Clubhouse and select practice round playing from the amateur tees. Restore your game on the first tee. From the second hole onwards play will start on the amateur tees.

PHANTASY STAR 2

• Continually turn the status screen on and off during travel to avoid being attacked.

• Megoid is gained at level 35 by Rolf. Nasar is gained at level 30, by the Doctor.

• Once you have all the Nei items, go to Lutz for the Neisword.

POPULOUS

• Here are some level-select codes: 100 - CALEOLD, 200 - EOAMPMET, 300 - BILQAZOUT, 400 - BADMEILL.

• For six continues press \odot , \square , \triangle , \times , \odot , \square , \triangle , \times and \odot on the chapter one screen.

QUACKSHOT

• In Transylvania, collect the one-up, finish the level, call the plane, go back to the start and repeat to maximise out your lives.

RAINBOW ISLANDS

• Press \odot , \square , \triangle , \times , \odot , \square , \triangle , \times and \odot on the title screen for full power-ups.

• On level one, collect all the diamonds in sequence from red to purple and kill the boss to access a bonus screen.

RANGER X

• Go to the options screen and press \odot , \square , \triangle , \times , \odot three times quickly. You should hear a tone. This allows you to select "Easy".

• Pause the game and press \odot , \square , \triangle , \times , \odot , \square , \triangle , \times , \odot then \odot . When the background music starts up, press \odot to skip to the next level.

REVENGE OF SHINOBI

• Select 00 shirikens at the start and wait for the two zeros to merge into an infinity symbol for infinite shirikens.

RISKY WOODS

• Play the game and get killed. Enter your initials on the high-score table as EOA and you'll get a level select.

ROADBLASTER FX

• Press \odot on the title screen and press \odot on the joystick to move to Options Mode. Press \odot to enter the mode and then place the cursor on "Players". From here you can activate these cheats: For a level select, press button \odot six times, \square , and then

4. LETHAL ENFORCERS

Publisher: Konami • Price: £54.99
Reviewed in issue 15 of MEGA



There are several advantages that the CD version has over the cartridge game; price, speed and music. But it's the same game, and a top one too. Blast those enemies as they come on the screen, and work through the ranks of the police force as you deal with crime in your own special way. MEGA says: A top CD and a real hoot. And it's £10 cheaper than the cartridge version. Not bad.

5. FINAL FIGHT

Publisher: Sega • Price: £44.99
Reviewed in Issue 8 of MEGA



The arcade gameplay in this game moves this CD conversion instantly into classic status. Including as much fighting action as you could ask for and a simultaneous two-player option, this should satisfy the appetite of any CD gamer. MEGA says: Fight, fight and then fight some more (if you're still alive). It looks good, plays like a dream and should quieten those Mega CD critics.

6. LUNAR THE SILVER STAR

Publisher: Working Designs • Price: £44.99
Reviewed in Issue 18 of MEGA



When the Mega CD first appeared, the Japanese started working on some incredible RPGs; they were popular over there but unfortunately they were never translated. Lunar is one game, however, that made it over here. A classic RPG with a fantasy scenario involving cute children with big eyes and loads of monsters, this is one game you'll lose several weeks of your life playing. MEGA says: Using the CD storage space to its best abilities, this RPG is a real treat.

7. DOUBLE SWITCH

Publisher: Sega • Price: £49.99
Reviewed in Issue 18 of MEGA



about the prospect of a Sonic pinball game, Sega have come up with an ingenious and very imaginative little game, which is still very much a Sonic game as well as a fun pinball game. However, it's not as spectacular as the platform games and there are only four tables to complete. MEGA says: Good fun, but what's with only four tables? Still, you can always go back and try to beat your top score.

45. SKITCHIN'

Publisher: EA • Price: £49.99
Reviewed in Issue 18 of MEGA



If you're after a new game, but want something a bit different from the usual stuff, try Skitchin'. A cross between rollerblading and Road Rash, this street-wise race game sees you racing across America, beating up other Skitchers, and hanging on to as many cars as you can. The higher element of strategy over Road Rash is welcome, but the game loses something of the in-yr-face action of its relative. MEGA says: Road Rash addicts who can't get enough will die for this. The rest of us will just enjoy playing it for a while.

46. THUNDERFORCE 4

Publisher: Sega • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

The sequel to the sequel of the conversion of the coin-op looks prettier than ever before, but gameplay wise it offers nothing more than Thunderforce 3. If anything, the groovy graphics get in the way of the action - there's too much going on on-screen at any one time. MEGA says: Looks great, lots to blasting action, looks great and, er, nothing really that could be described as particularly different from its predecessors. It's a great-looking game though.

47. MORTAL KOMBAT

Publisher: Acclaim • Price: £49.99
Reviewed in Issue 13 of MEGA

Another stunning and very popular coin-op gets the conversion treatment and loses very little in the progress. Obviously the graphics aren't as sharp as they were, but they're still good. The playability is cool and with all the death moves intact, this will satisfy any fight fan's appetite. MEGA says: A cool beat-'em-up, but it's too easy in one-player mode. FOR SALE: Mortal Kombat £35 - 0935 78705 £30 - 091 386 4528 £25/Swap - 0375 842611 £30 - 0677 424781

48. BUBBA 'N' STIX

Publisher: Core • Price: £49.99
Reviewed in Issue 19 of MEGA



Games don't come much more bizarre than a platform puzzler starring a kid and a stick. Luckily though, this is an intelligent kid and a very pliable and friendly stick, and so if anything gets in Bubba's way, the stick can handle it. And

with some very ingenious puzzles, lots of ways to use the stick and the usual comedy graphics which Core always do so well, this is destined to be enjoyed by many people.

MEGA says: Although there are only five levels in the game, they are long and very tough indeed.

49. BOXING LEGENDS OF THE RING

Publisher: Electro Brain • Price: £44.95
Reviewed in Issue 16 of MEGA



Boxing games don't usually hit the mark, because they are either badly programmed, try to do too much, or don't incorporate enough stuff. Boxing Legends, however, has all the punches you'll need, some top middleweight boxers and a comprehensive but easy-to-use control system. MEGA says: The two-player option lets you get rid of some pent-up aggression.

50. WORLD OF ILLUSION

Publisher: Sega • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 3 of MEGA



This game is way too easy in one-player mode, but for its brilliant two-player game it earns this position. It's gorgeous, hard, interactive fun. MEGA says: Don't for a moment think about buying this unless you've got a mate to play it with. FOR SALE: World of Illusion £30 - 0420 86704 £19 - 0582 713983 £15 - 051 356 4738 £14/Swap - 0923 242719 £15 - 0763 241506

51. STREETS OF RAGE

Publisher: Sega • Price: £34.99
If every third Mega Drive game that gets released is a beat-'em-up, how come hardly any of them are any good? Thankfully, that's a question that Streets Of Rage doesn't have to answer, because it's great stuff. Lovely backdrops, loads of athletic fighting moves, excellent two-player action and an imaginative approach to special weapons (the police car firing rockets from half-a-dozen screens back and still managing to pick off the bad guys with pinpoint accuracy, for example) all go together to make this one of the best games in the genre. MEGA says: This is well worth more than a passing look. FOR SALE: Street of Rage £10/Swap - 0375 842611 £20 - 051 475 0828 £18/Swap - 0603 737583 (after 5.15 pm)

52. CHAKAN

Publisher: Sega • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 6 of MEGA
A spooky platform hack-'em-up, that although initially confusing, quickly becomes very addictive. MEGA says: Very nicely done, but similar to lots of other stuff already on the market.

All you long-term Mega Drive owners will have seen it all before, but you newbies should check it out.

FOR SALE: Chakan £16 - 021 459 7576
WANTED: Chakan 0767 260708

53. F-15

Publisher: Microprose • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 12 of MEGA



This game is definitely the best flight sim on the Mega Drive and as such gets its place here above all the rest. MEGA says: Very technical and very realistic, if you like flight sims.

54. ASTERIX

Publisher: Sega • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 14 of MEGA



Cartoon characters don't come with much more of a cult following than Asterix, and so a game starring this Gallic hero was bound to happen. Yes, of course it's a platform game, but it's a good one so that's OK. Having the option of controlling Asterix or his sidekick Obelix is a good idea and there's that lovely little clock ticking down as you play the game. At times things do get a bit frustrating, but Asterix is still very playable. MEGA says: Very cartoony, very wacky and good platform stuff, but just too average compared to some of the Mega Drive's other software. WANTED: Asterix 0504 811622

55. ZOMBIES ATE MY NEIGHBOURS

Publisher: Konami • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 14 of MEGA



Some games are strange and some are really strange. Zombies (for short) is way above strange and borders on the surreal. Select your character, rescue your neighbours and kill those zombies. Very much a kitsch version of Gauntlet, this is just as manic and just as much fun. However, there are 55 levels and tedium may well set in after a while. MEGA says: Very good fun and much like Gauntlet, but, unfortunately the levels are all a bit samey.

56. TURTLES: THE HYPERSTONE HEIST

Publisher: Konami • Price: £35
Reviewed in Issue 7 of MEGA
Now that Konami are in the Sega business we can look forward to some cracking games. They've started well with a conversion of the coin-op game Turtles. Graphically cool, it plays well and sounds

good too. The action may be slightly repetitive, but the cartoon tie-in and general ease of play make this a great game.

MEGA says: OK, so it's no Streets of Rage 2 beater, but the action is thick and fast. A few good moves as well as some special ones make this game great fun. FOR SALE: Turtles £20 - 0628 73440

57. SIDE POCKET

Publisher: Data East • Price: £35
Reviewed in Issue 2 of MEGA

A novel coin-op conversion. You can try to beat the one-player game, play a mate, or show off your skills in the trick game. Smart graphics, great sound and fun gameplay go to make a welcome breath of fresh air. MEGA says: We all luv a game of pool, and this beats paying 30p a go down the pub nearly every time.

58. POWERMONGER

Publisher: EA • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 5 of MEGA

If you're looking for some serious head-scratching stuff and you like to dominate, PowerMonger could be for you. MEGA says: This game is very in-depth and very tough. FOR SALE: PowerMonger £20 - 0732 850 576 £20 - 021 459 7576

59. SHINOBI 3

Publisher: Sega • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 13 of MEGA

This is so much better than Revenge of Shinobi that although it isn't exactly a great leap forward in gaming terms, it's still a stonking game. Don't expect anything but ninja-related platform action and you won't be disappointed. MEGA says: If you like ninjas, platforms and you reckon you're a bit of a hard geezer, this game is most definitely for you.

60. ROCKET KNIGHT ADVENTURES

Publisher: Konami • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 12 of MEGA



This is a top-class platform game and there's no doubt that newcomers Konami definitely know their games. With some very nice graphical touches, difficult stages to think about and some very original ideas, this is a constant surprise the more you play it. MEGA says: It's easy to slag off games for not being very original, but what do you say when a game is? Er... see what we mean, we're lost for words.

61. FANTASTIC DIZZY

Publisher: Codemasters • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 13 of MEGA



These Codemasters chaps can do no wrong. After the success of Micro Machines they've taken little Dizzy (the egg that made them famous) and come up with this lovely Mega Drive game. Use all your arcade adventure skills to solve the

With improved production and actors like Corey Haim and the lovely Deborah Harry, *Double Switch* is basically a more polished *Night Trap*. The gameplay is the same, but the pace is pumped up, and the fun element is straight from the Benny Hill School of Comedy.

MEGA says: Those wanting more *Night Trap* thrills will have their appetite more than satisfied by this.

8. DUNE CD

Publisher: Virgin • Price: £49.99
Reviewed in Issue 14 of MEGA



Very spooky and moody, *Dune* follows the film very closely, which is a real bonus. It's a character-interactive RPG in which you've got to talk to everyone, remember that information and act upon it. A first class role-playing game which uses the CD's capabilities to produce some nice flying effects, loads of speech and some mean and moody FMV taken from the film.

MEGA says: A classic RPG that intrigues and then rewards your efforts. Satisfying and difficult too.

9. JURASSIC PARK

Publisher: Sega • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 18 of MEGA



You'd think that a big licence like this would go straight for the gaming jugular (all platforms and weapons), but instead it goes for a more gentle approach, taking place after Dr Grant and everyone have escaped from the island. It throws you right in at the deep end and, using your brain and some arcade skills, you've got to complete your mission.

MEGA says: A change of pace from most CD games, but not a role-playing game as such.

10. DRAGON'S LAIR

Publisher: Readysoft/Sega • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 18 of MEGA



Arcade fans have waited ten years for this game to look reasonable on some format or other, and the first format to achieve this is the Mega CD. Colourful, fast and very smooth, this game does everything the Mega CD is good at. But this is *Dragon's Lair* we're talking about, and that famous "restricted" playability is still there.

MEGA says: Everything the arcade machine was, including the, ahem, gameplay.

but hey, it's not as if you have to shovel money into the thing, so who cares? You certainly won't be seeing the end of this one during the same day you buy it, and that's even with infinite continues. The graphics and sound are practically flawless, as brave Sir Arthur scuttles his swathe through legions of platform-placed zombies, monsters and vultures.

MEGA says: *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts* is the business – and the tough difficulty tuning guarantees decent value for money.

FOR SALE: *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts*

£10 – 081 841 2492
(Jap) £20 – 0533 363723
£14 – 0202 490276
£20 – 081 304 3191
£20 – 071 237 2354

73. TOEJAM AND EARL

Publisher: Sega • Price: £19.99

Multi-player action doesn't get a lot more entertaining than this. ToeJam and Earl are two of the grooviest aliens you could ask to have a close encounter with, which is part of the reason why it's such a pleasure to help them out on their quest to rebuild their crashed spaceship. The rest of the reason, though, is the superbly manic and zany action which takes place as our two heroes career around the screen, causing havoc wherever they go. After a few plays, the lower levels tend to drag a bit (there's no password option), but this game is both original and insane.

MEGA says: Another OK game, which becomes completely essential when played with someone else.

FOR SALE: *ToeJam & Earl*

£13 – 0709 367513
£20/Swap – 0702 470802
£8 – 081 841 2492
£18 – 0202 490276

74. SPEEDBALL 2

Publisher: Virgin Games • Price: £34.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA



This game is Mega Drive violence at its most extreme. Nominally a future sports sim, *Speedball 2* is actually football meets rollerball meets bare-knuckle boxing in a frantic and immensely brutal festival of blood and guts. There's also plenty of room for skill and strategy, which means that for an all-round sporting experience this is hard to beat – especially in two-player mode.

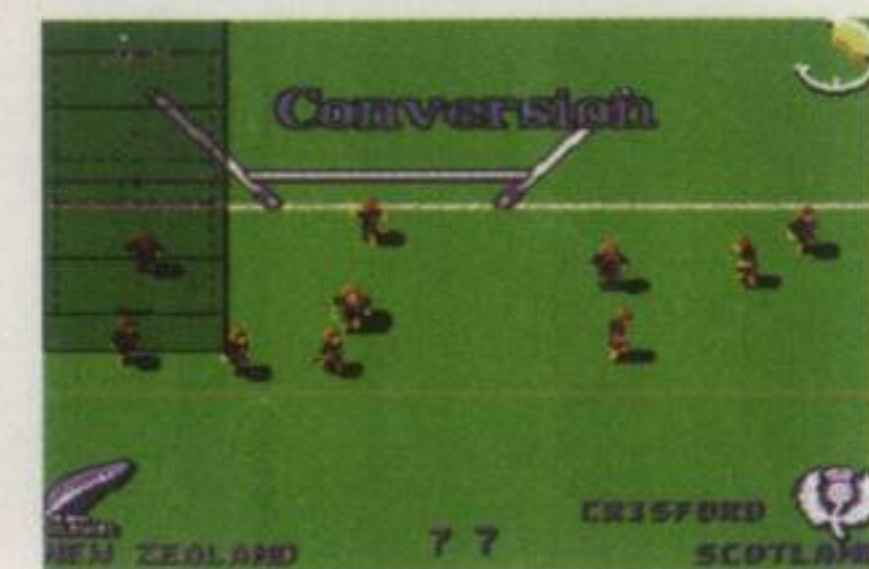
MEGA says: Very much an arcade sports game (rather than the more tactical approach favoured by, say, *John Madden Football*), *Speedball 2* is about as good as arcade sports games get.

FOR SALE: *Speedball 2*

£18 – 091 5847989
£15 – 051 475 0828
£20 – 0782 626488 (after 5 pm)

75. INTERNATIONAL RUGBY

Publisher: Domark • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 11 of MEGA



Rugby isn't the first sport that springs to mind when you think of console games, but

thanks to Domark, all you rugby players can not only get your fix of the action, but you can enjoy it as well. With all the international teams you could dream of, a World Cup tournament, friendlies, the obligatory two-player game and more stats that you could shake a large mathematician at, *International Rugby* will satisfy a lot of people.

MEGA says: A lot of people may be put off by the fact that it's rugby, but don't worry; the game is not overly difficult to understand, so you can enjoy a good old romp in one- or two-player mode.

76. SUPER KICK OFF

Publisher: US Gold • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 6 of MEGA

The greatest football game of all time (ask anybody to name a football game and they'll most likely say *Kick Off*) turns out to be a rather good console game after all. With enhanced graphics and a dead simple playing method, *Super Kick Off* ends up relegating the likes of *Euro Club Soccer* and *World Cup Italia '90* to the lower divisions.

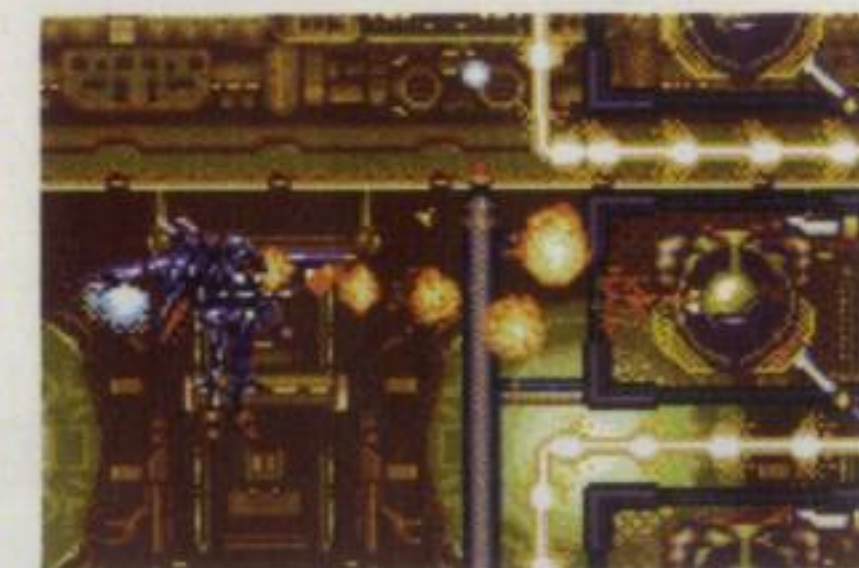
MEGA says: It plays well and there are loads of options in there too. To get the best out of the game though, you'll have to play this with another person. Check out *FIFA* and *Sensible Soccer* first.

FOR SALE: *Super Kick Off*

£20/Swap – 0449 79289
£20 – 081 304 3191
TO SWAP: *Super Kick Off*
0225 706304

77. RANGER X

Publisher: Sega • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 10 of MEGA



With no big licence behind it or even the privilege of being a coin-op conversion, you could be forgiven for categorising *Ranger-X* as just another dull shoot-'em-up. Well don't, because with the help of some lovely original gameplay and graphical touches, you can't help but be drawn into the proceedings.

MEGA says: Don't categorise this without trying it. It's a tough and original blaster that gets more exciting and challenging the more you play it.

78. ULTIMATE SOCCER

Publisher: Sega • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 11 of MEGA



Another playable and fun football game for the Mega Drive. And there are more options in here than, er, well, a thing with a lot of options. Using the well-practised *Madden*-style viewpoint and some very quick and bouncy scrolling, this is a top-quality game by any standards.

MEGA says: A good all-round footy game.

WANTED: *Ultimate Soccer*
0952 812684

79. POPULOUS 2

Publisher: Virgin • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 12 of MEGA

As this enters the Top 100 it pushes out

the original *Populous* (there can only be one God game and this is it). *Populous 2* improves on the original in all areas, and there is more than enough for everyone who couldn't get enough of *Populous*.

MEGA says: It's a real toss up between this and *PowerMonger*, but we think the latter comes out just ahead. But hey, if you're rich enough, why don't you buy them both?

80. EX-MUTANTS

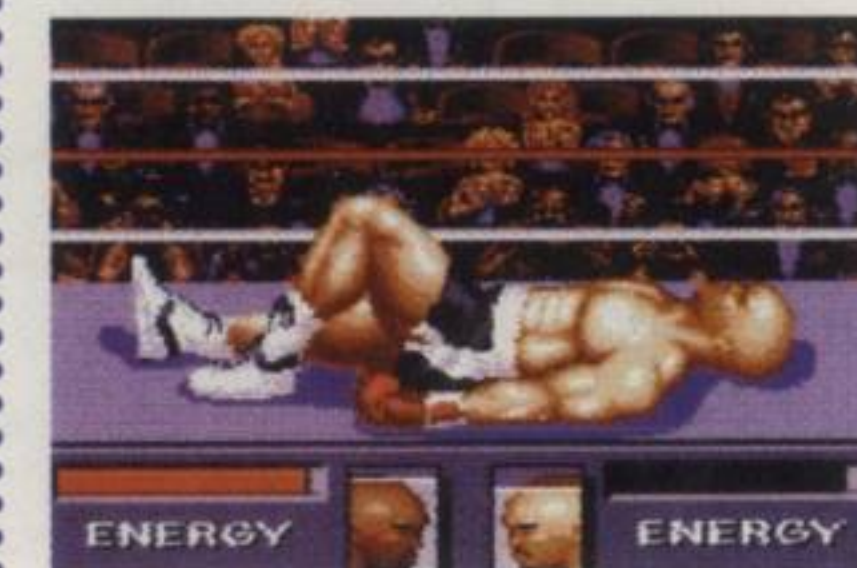
Publisher: Sega • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 6 of MEGA

This is another platformer with more than a hint of shoot-'em-up in there somewhere. A nice-looking game due to the comic book tie-in, but again, it's nothing to set the originality fires burning. It is very playable though, and fairly tough in places.

MEGA says: Although the comic book is not that well known, the game *does* succeed on its comic book feel. It's not the most original game in the world, but it is surprisingly tough, and thanks to some clever options, you won't finish this one in a night.

81. GREATEST HEAVYWEIGHTS

Publisher: Sega • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 17 of MEGA



For some reason, the sport of boxing seems to be the in-thing at the moment in terms of gaming. But when you see this game you may well be struck by a touch of déjà vu. The reason is simple; the graphics engine and main set-up are from a game called *Evander Holyfield's Real Deal Boxing*, but its gameplay has been drastically altered, which is a good thing. The game moves at a fast pace and there are plenty of boxers to fight, tournaments to enter and even the choice of eight all-time heavyweight boxers.

MEGA says: The one-player mode becomes rather tedious after a while, but the two-player bash gives the game some life.

82. ROLLING THUNDER 2

Publisher: Sega • Price: £39.99

A direct copy of the arcade version, this basic shoot-'em-up does what every shoot-'em-up should do – makes you come back for more.

MEGA says: Simple, and some may say boring. But stick with it for a while and you'll find a highly playable, spot-on arcade conversion.

83. ANOTHER WORLD

Publisher: Virgin • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 6 of MEGA

This game has got gorgeous graphics, puzzling gameplay, and it's even quite difficult at times. It's also got lovely presentation, brilliant movement and controllability and a plot most novel-writers would die for. *Another World* is a fabulous game because of all these ingredients.

MEGA says: Great game, but once you finish it you'll never come back to it.

FOR SALE: *Another World*

£20/Swap – 0449 79289
£20 – 021 459 7576
£20/Swap for *Jungle Strike/Mortal Kombat/Landstalker* – 0702 75568

84. BUBSY

Publisher: Accolade • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 12 of MEGA



Ever since the appearance of *Sonic*, platform games with characters behind them are the norm. And the characters don't get much weirder than a bobcat called Bubsy. With the usual protect-the-world-from-nasties plot, jumping around platforms and big scrolling levels, you couldn't really use the word original to describe this. It is playable, however, but just not as smooth as *Sonic*.

MEGA says: A polished and very playable platformer that would have gone down a storm about a year and a half ago, but these days it just isn't top-grade enough stuff.

FOR SALE: *Bubsy*

£20 – 0935 78705
£25/Swap for *Mortal Kombat* – 0978 757636

85. MEGA TURRICAN

Publisher: Data East • Price: £44.99
Reviewed in Issue 20 of MEGA



Sometimes the only thing that really matters when you're playing a game is what we call the fun factor. Now this doesn't apply to everything, because although a game may be fun to play, it can also be awful in other respects. This isn't like that, with no pretensions to being anything other than what it is. A fine romping shoot-'em-up to give your life a much-needed fun boost.

MEGA says: A polished little number and we all like a good shoot-'em-up don't we?

86. MIG-29

Publisher: Domark • Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 9 of MEGA

The more they say you can't do something, the more you try to do it. At least that's the way it works with flight sims on the Mega Drive. This famous PC sim has been simplified for the Mega Drive, but still provides you with a great flying experience.

MEGA says: Although this is a great achievement, as a game, it does fall a bit flat along the way. It is in no way your typical console game, but it's definitely worth a look from the more cerebral among you.

FOR SALE: *MIG-29*
£16 – 021 459 7576

87. STRIDER

Publisher: Sega • Price: £19.99



Amazing graphics, superb sound, lovely animation and some of the biggest and baddest enemies you'll ever meet, are the ingredients of *Strider*. Pretty simplistic

platform-leaping beat-'em-up is the order of the day here, but *Strider* does it better than most, and it does it looking better than almost anything. Oh yeah, and the "running down the side of a mountain" sequence is just about worth the cost of the cart all by itself.

MEGA says: You'll finish it in two days, but if you want something which will show your friends the power of the Mega Drive, this is one of the games that'll make them go "gosh, wow" the most.

FOR SALE: *Strider*
£20/Swap - 0702 470802
£10 - 0202 490276
£20 - 0628 73440

88. ESWAT

Publisher: Sega • **Price:** £34.99

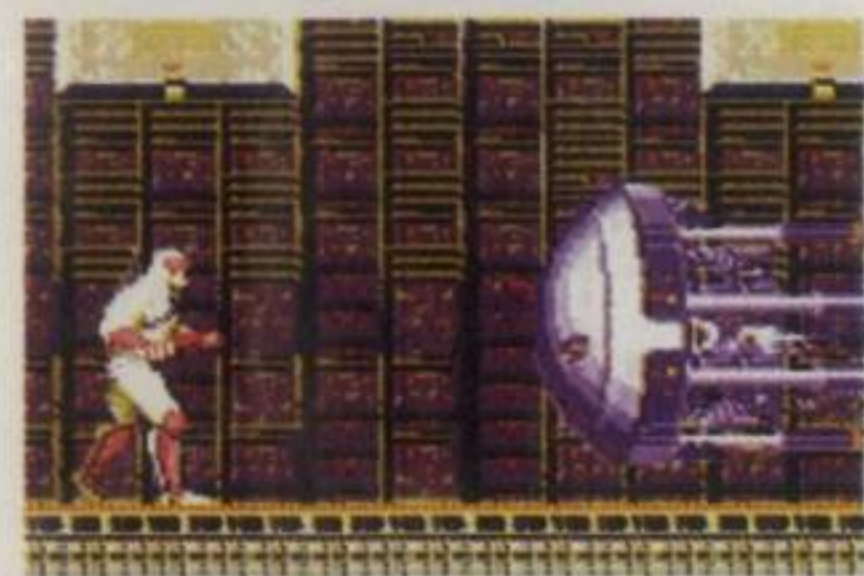
Bearing only the slightest resemblance to the coin-op of the same name, *ESWAT* luckily manages to be an even better game than its arcade counterpart. It's got a bit more to it than the coin-op's limited beat-'em-up formula, and although it's still no *Sword Of Vermillion*, there's just about enough thinking to keep you interested to the very end.

MEGA says: There are literally dozens of this type of game around, but this is one of the relatively few which are actually worth having. Pretty simplistic, but still involving and addictive.

FOR SALE: *ESWAT*
£10 - 0202 490276

89. REVENGE OF SHINOBI

Publisher: Sega • **Price:** £19.99



Revenge Of Shinobi, the excellent follow-up to the popular arcade beat-'em-up, looks great and sounds excellent, and although you'll have seen the format a hundred times before, this one's so well done that you can forgive it any lack of originality.

MEGA says: *Revenge of Shinobi* is super stuff, with top special effects and very special gameplay.

FOR SALE: *Revenge of Shinobi*
£10 - 081 841 2492

90. KID CHAMELEON

Publisher: Sega • **Price:** £34.99

Kid Chameleon is an ultra-cute platform thang with lots of really neat touches, but it's too easy and not all that exciting. Sega hyped this game almost as much as they did *Sonic The Hedgehog*, so they must have been more than a bit disappointed with its lack-lustre performance sales-wise. The game isn't at all bad, and remember - you don't have to be great to be good.

MEGA says: This is a bit old now, but if large cutesy platform games are your thing, then *Kid Chameleon* might be the game for you.

FOR SALE: *Kid Chameleon*
£18 - 0202 490276

91. JOE MONTANA 3

Publisher: Sega • **Price:** £39.99

Reviewed in Issue 3 of MEGA

The only serious threat to the *John Madden* crown comes back for a third time. It's got a league, three different viewpoints and a zoom-in mode. However, it's not as playable or friendly to use.

MEGA says: Sega try again to top *Madden*, but they fall just short. However,

this is definitely worth checking out if American football is your thang.

FOR SALE: *Joe Montana 3*
£15/Swap for *Road Rash 2/Super Monaco GP2* - 0685 878493

92. KRUSTY'S SUPER FUN HOUSE

Publisher: Flying Edge • **Price:** £39.99

Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

The Simpsons always threatened to invade the world of Mega Drive games, but they arrived about six months too late to cash in on the height of the hype. Luckily for Krusty, his game is good enough to make a good impression in its own right. There are lots of puzzles, lots of gameplaying fun and lots of cartoony graphics in here.

MEGA says: *Krusty's* is one of a rare breed of game: a licensed title that manages to combine a big name with a more than decent game.

FOR SALE: *Krusty's Super Fun House*
£20 - 051 531 7284
£18 - 0202 490276

93. TERMINATOR

Publisher: Virgin • **Price:** £39.99

You're really enjoying yourself, you're marvelling at the lush graphics, you're being blown away by the non-stop all-action platform shoot-'em-up gameplay, you're blasting through the fourth level and... er, then you finish it.

MEGA says: Lovely game, but there's not nearly enough of it.

FOR SALE: *Terminator*
£15 - 071 916 4647

94. AFTERBURNER 2

Publisher: Sega • **Price:** £34.99

The arcade version of *Afterburner* threw the player and his lurch all around a hydraulic cockpit while simultaneously flinging huge graphics at the screen so fast that all you could do was wrench the joystick around wildly, keep your finger locked on the trigger and hope for the best.

Mega Drive *Afterburner* recreates the feel of the coin-op perfectly, except that you'll have to get someone to come round and jiggle your chair for you while you play. You never know though, you might enjoy it enough without the jiggling.

MEGA says: *Afterburner 2* (ie *Afterburner*) is excellent short-term blasting, but it's thinner than gold plating on a window, and there are plenty of other shoot-'em-ups that'll give you bigger thrills. Try *Hellfire* or *Aero Blasters* first.

WANTED: *Afterburner 2*
0236 431897

95. BLASTER MASTER 2

Publisher: Sunsoft (Import) • **Price:** £40

Reviewed in Issue 12 of MEGA

A traditional shoot-'em-up in the sense that you've got to wipe out everything you come across, this one works better than the rest of the pile for having a bit of strategy thrown in. It's very similar in pace and difficulty to *Ranger-X* and well worth a look if you're bored with the normal shoot-'em-up.

MEGA says: As the Mega Drive gets on a bit and more software comes out, games are getting stranger and stranger. Some work, some don't. This one does.

96. DECAP ATTACK

Publisher: Sega • **Price:** £39.99

Decap Attack (originally released as *Magical Hat Turbo Adventure*) may at first glance make you go "yuck". But if you persist past the first 20 seconds, you'll suddenly discover that you're having a brilliant time, thanks to the rollicking platform escapades that make up this wonderfully tasteless game.

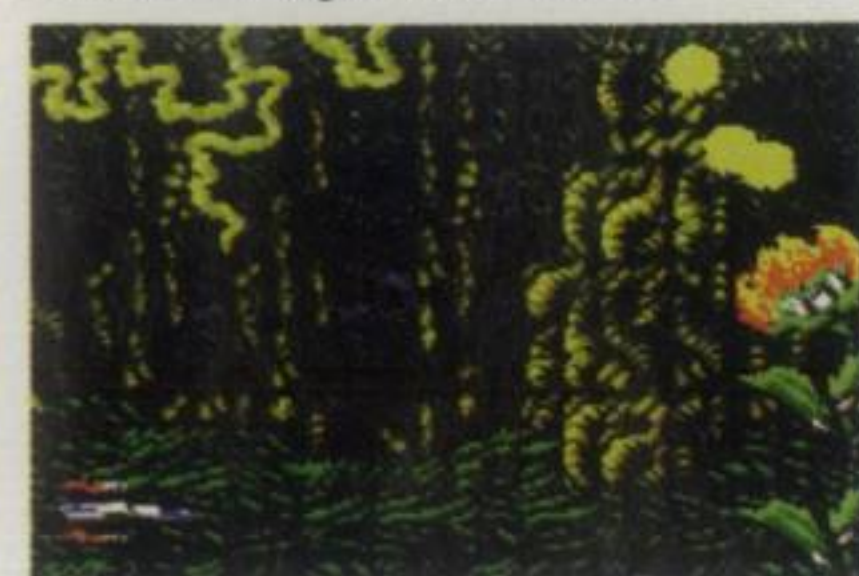
Controlling a character who can chuck his proper head and who has an extra, telescopic, head in his ribcage is simply great fun, and the cheesy music complements the gameplay perfectly.

MEGA says: Ropeyish graphics, but don't let that put you off this funny platformer.

FOR SALE: *Decap Attack*
£18 - 051 531 7284
£20 - 071 237 2354

97. THUNDERFORCE 3

Publisher: Sega • **Price:** £35.99



Of course, with *Thunderforce 4* now available, it might seem a bit ludicrous to rush out and buy this. But if you don't, you'll be missing out on some of the best blasting mayhem this side of, er, anywhere. You'll also be missing out on the chance to make your mates go "Wool!" at some of the best visual effects on the Mega Drive.

MEGA says: *Thunderforce 3* is an incredibly slick and gorgeous blaster which is perhaps slightly better to look at than play, but that's probably because it's just so bloody wonderful to look at. You shoot-'em-up fanatics will love some more of the same, but those new to the genre would be better off checking out *Hellfire* or *Aero Blasters* first.

FOR SALE: *Thunderforce 3*

£18 - 0202 490276
£18 - 0582 713284

98. DRAGON'S FURY

Publisher: Tengen • **Price:** £39.99

Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

This is the best pinball game you can so far get for the Mega Drive. Get a copy today, or miss out on...

MEGA says: ... classic pinball action which shouldn't be missed.

FOR SALE: *Dragon's Fury*
£20 - 0935 78705
£18 - 0202 490276

TO SWAP: *Dragon's Fury*
0225 706304

WANTED: *Dragon's Fury*
£20/Swap - 0375 842611

99. CYBORG JUSTICE

Publisher: Sega • **Price:** £34.99

Reviewed in Issue 9 of MEGA

Walking along level after level of other Cyborgs, beating seven shades of shimmering metal out of them and then repeating the process may not sound like the best game idea in the world, but thanks to some fabulous gameplay and graphics, it soon turns into a really good romp.

MEGA says: A fab off-the-wall beat-'em-up which has the very nice addition of allowing you to take the bits from the Cyborg you've just beaten up and use them as part of your own armour. It's a novel idea and a very playable one too.

100. AQUATIC GAMES

Publisher: EA • **Price:** £39.99

Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

James Pond is back. This time, however, he's taking part in the Aquatic Games. Work out the best tactic for each event and get those gold medals. Lovely graphics and some taxing events make this a fun game, especially for the younger gamers.

MEGA says: It's button bashing all right, but not as we know it.

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ALEX KIDD

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ARIEL THE LITTLE MERMAID

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ART ALIVE

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BART VS THE SPACE MUTANTS

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EL VIENTO

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GHOSTBUSTERS

£14 - 0202 490276

GREENDOG

£14 - 0202 490276

GUNSTAR HEROES

£25/Swap - 0375 842611

HARD DRIVIN'

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THE IMMORTAL

£15 - 0582 713983

£18 - 0582 713284

INDIANA JONES

£10 - 0763 241506

JAGUAR XJ220

£30 - 081 514 2547

JAMES POND 2

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JEWEL MASTER

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KLAX

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LUNAR THE SILVER STAR

£35 - 0442 69378

MARBLE MADNESS

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(Jap) £7 - 0608 677213

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MONSTER LAIR

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Swap - 0634 379488 (after 4.30 pm)

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£15/Swap - 0923 242719

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PHANTASY STAR 2

£35 - 051 356 4738

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£15 - 0458 835271

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Swap - 0777 704674

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- Complete solution to *Sonic 2*

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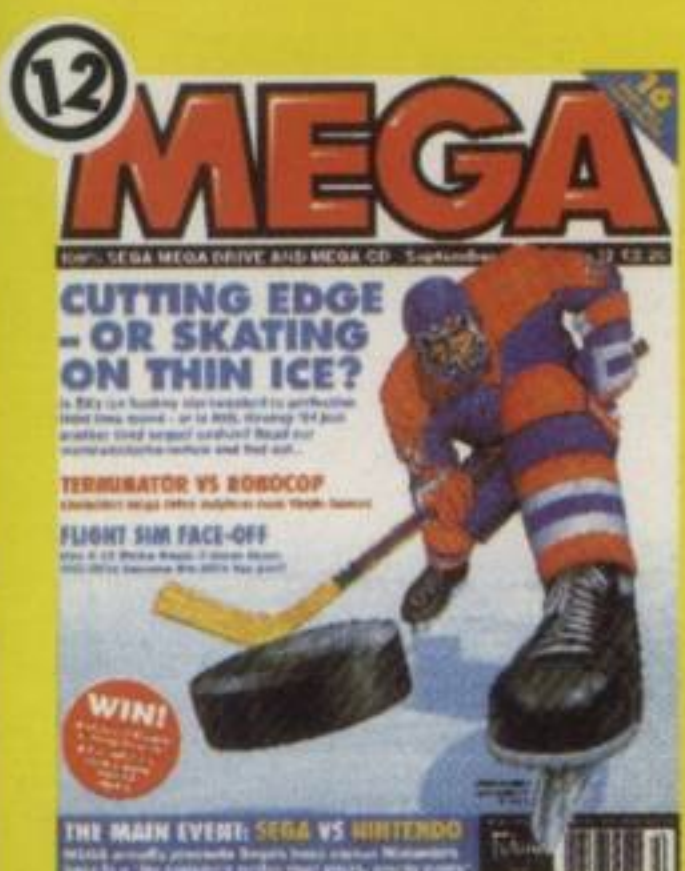
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- Film licence feature
- Reviews of *Street Fighter 2*, *Aladdin*, *Asterix*, *Landstalker*, *James Pond 3*, *Zombies*, *Dune CD*, *Madden '94*



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CHUCK



RALLY

To kick off this month's previews section, Paul Mellerick poses a couple of questions... What's the best Mega CD game around? That's right, *Thunderhawk*. Remember where it came from? Yep, Core Design. Want to know what they're up to at the moment? Good, cos we're about to tell you

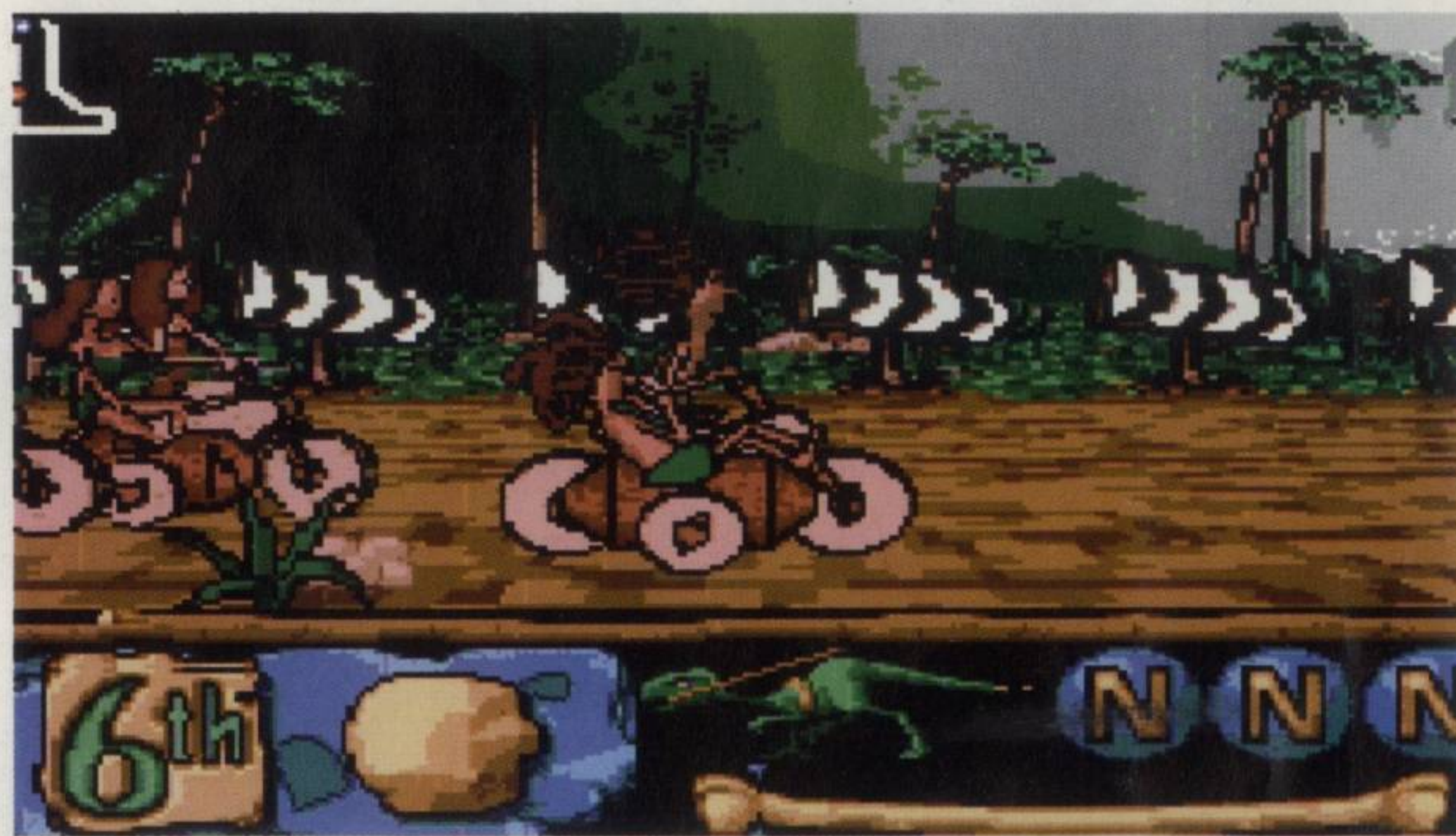
You may not know a lot about the people at Core Design because they don't release that many games for the Mega Drive or Mega CD. When they do release something, however, they simply let the titles speak for themselves; *Thunderhawk*, *Bubba 'n' Stix*, *Chuck Rock* (and *Chuck Rock 2*), and although it was *Thunderhawk* that pushed them into the limelight, they are not the sort of company to rest on their laurels. And to prove it, they are releasing *Chuck Rally* for the Mega CD and *Skeleton Krew* for the Mega Drive.

Chuck Rally Mega CD • July

Chuck Rock, it has to be said, is a bit of a top bloke. Not content with being every man's idol, he also has a good looking wife and kid too. And just like every top caveman, he admires Cliff Richard (a top

"rock" bloke). So when Chuck finds out about a Boulderdash bike race, where the first prize is the chance to play live with the man himself, he's more than a little excited. What all this means for us is that we get a chance to speed around loads of tracks, hit people around the head with clubs and generally have a fun time.

There are going to be eight main courses with three levels of difficulty to



Heh, heh! Guess what? This isn't a screenshot of the game, it's the demo



Look at the size of that thing!



Another lovely demo shot this



"Time for some fun," said Chuck Jr

& SKELET



In the cavern level, everything looks very spooky indeed. Brrrrrr!

choose from. And with each difficulty level there's a completely different track, so we've got 24 tracks in total. And although there are various obstacles and traps to avoid on the levels, it's really the other racers you need to worry about – there's no way they're going to let you get past them without a fight and that's why you brought Chuck Jr along for the ride, because Chuck Jr likes hitting people with his club. Although the game is only something like 60% complete, everything moves really well and you can see that the tracks are all brilliantly detailed and retain that *Chuck Rock* sense of humour.

The scaling is, of course, fabulous and adds a real feeling of depth and realism to the game. The speed of the game is a bit slow at the moment, but as soon as all the levels and routines have been put in, everything should be brought up to a breathtaking speed. For the time being, take a look at the screenshots and get ready for the ride of your life.

Skeleton Krew Mega Drive • August

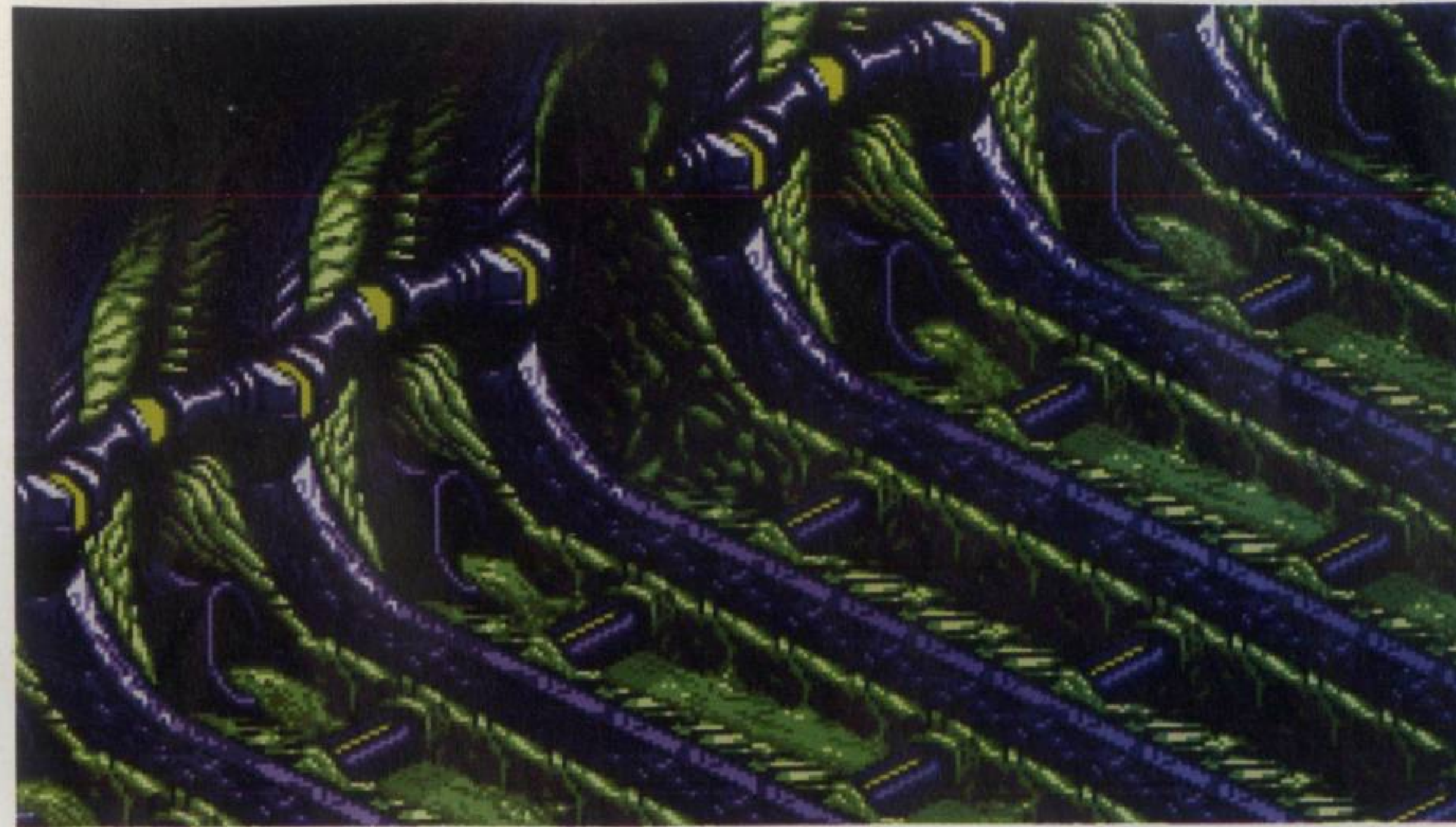
Don't for a moment think that only CD owners are going to be getting all the latest Core fun, because here's *Skeleton Krew* on the Mega Drive.

You know the viewpoint that you get

in games like *Landstalker*? You know that 3D-type perspective? Personally, I think it's brilliant, and so when I found out that not only was *Skeleton Krew* a top shoot-'em-up but that it also used this viewpoint, I was more than interested. And then after seeing it in action, I was well impressed. But there's more to this game than just action. *Skeleton Krew* is very much a character-based concept in a real comic book style, and everyone likes comic books don't they?

There are three members of "Da Krew"; Joint (BIG bloke), Spine (cool and in charge) and Rib (a real femme fatale). And in typical save-the-world style you take charge of one of the three characters and then take out as many Psykogenix mutants as possible on your way to defeating the evil Moribund Kadaver. Your mission takes you around the solar system (from Earth to Mars to Venus) and you're going to have to blow away a lot of people as you go. Thankfully, you're more than ready for the task, with hi-tech Exo-skeletons and weapons to match all ready and waiting to be used.

As you can tell from the storyline, there's not much of a let up in the action, and with some impressively sized levels, lots of big explosions and the usual Core polish, we reckon this is going to be one hell of a shoot-'em-up.



When animated, all the sludge in *Skeleton Krew* moves very convincingly

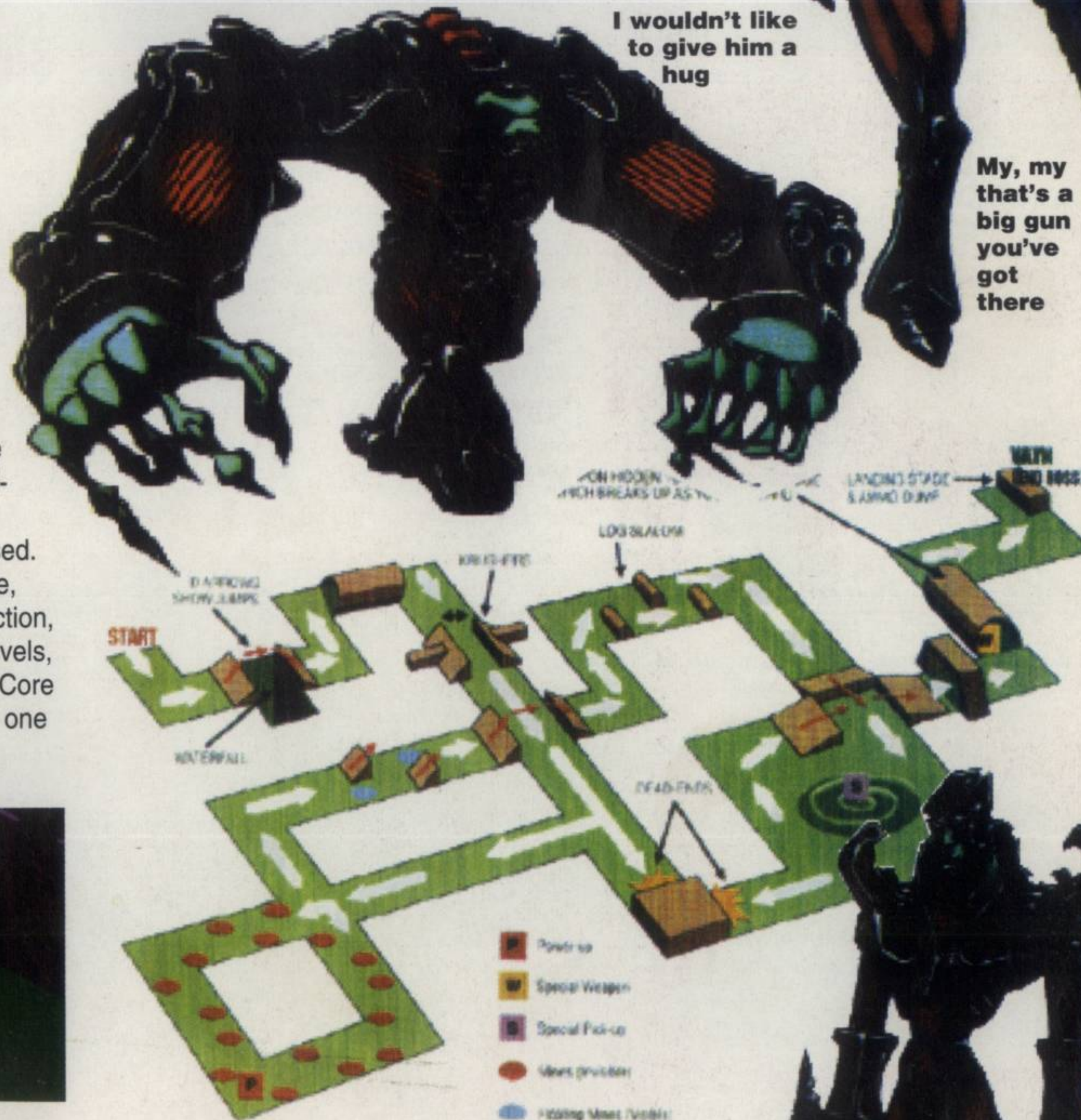


This is the lift level, and sludgy it is too



I wouldn't like to give him a hug

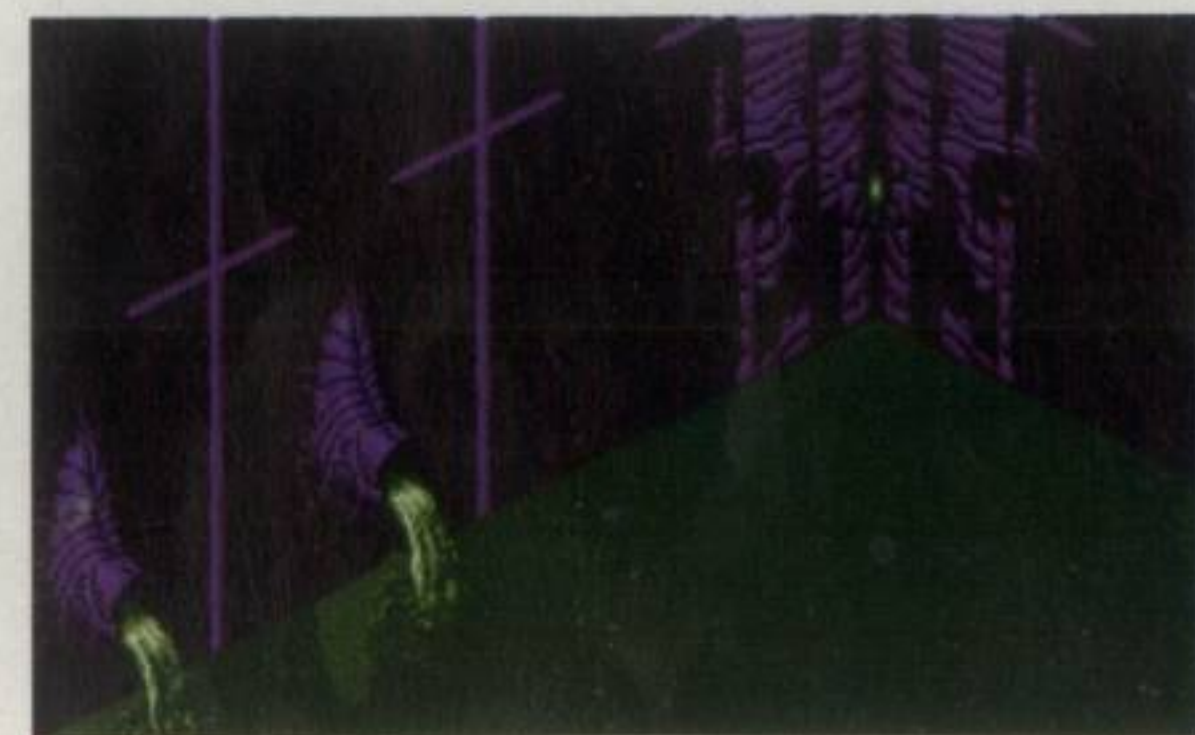
My, my that's a big gun you've got there



D'you want to spill my pint then?



Chuck! Where are you?



Er, yes, very nice I'm sure

ON KREW

ACCOLADE'S LINE-UP

They're hot, they're happening, and we at MEGA are very excited about them. What are they? Accolade's four latest projects of course...



Hey, Bubsy's got a new costume



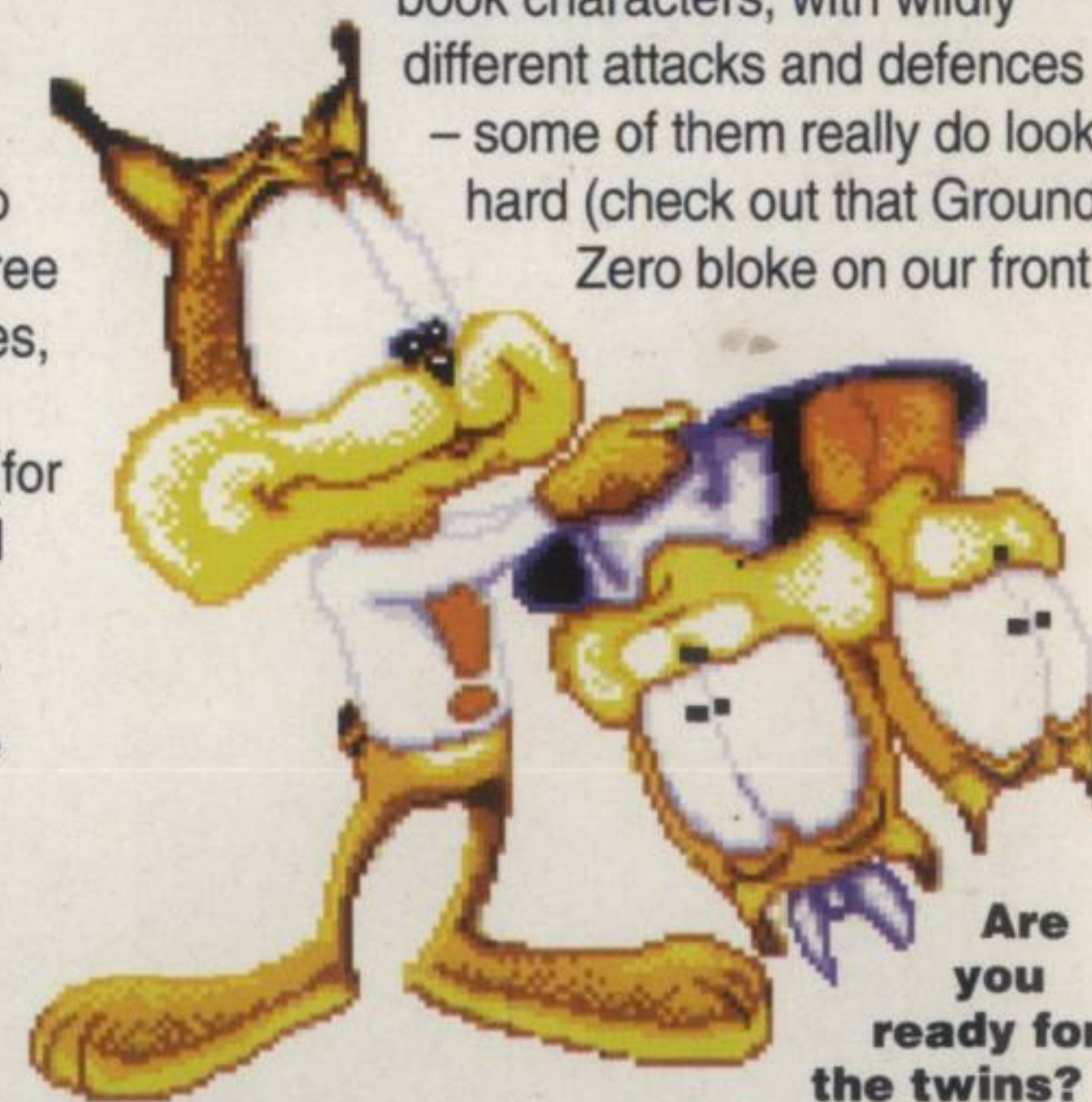
more than just racing involved here, and with loads of tracks, some devastating weapons and plenty of characters to choose from, this could be a fine little game. We'll hopefully have a review of it in the next issue, so look out for that.

the game still has a bit of a way to go. However, we've got plenty of screenshots for you to look at.

The New Breed • September

But what else is there? Well, there's a nice little beat-'em-up called *The New Breed*. Yeah OK, so it's not the most innovative concept in the world but there are going to be some nice features in this game. For a start, all the characters are designed and animated on those Silicon Graphic Workstation thingies. As a result, there are some stunning graphics as well as some graphical trickery which makes it look like there are more than the normal number of colours on screen.

The actual characters look pretty stunning as well. They are basically comic book characters, with wildly different attacks and defences – some of them really do look hard (check out that Ground Zero bloke on our front



Are you ready for the twins?

Busby 2: Still No Pants! • September

Now while *Combat Cars* is potentially a nice little game, it's Accolade's other games that we're really excited about. For a start, there's *Bussy 2: Still No Pants!* (yes, we're mystified as well, but that is the correct name). Yep, Bussy's back and this sequel is one large game.

In much the same way as *Sonic 3*, this game is something like twice as large as the previous game, and there are loads more frames of animation.

There are also going to be three mini sub-games, which act as bonus rooms (for extra lives and things), and plenty of other things to spice up the proceedings.

The game only contains a couple of levels at the moment, and although they played nicely, the overall feel of

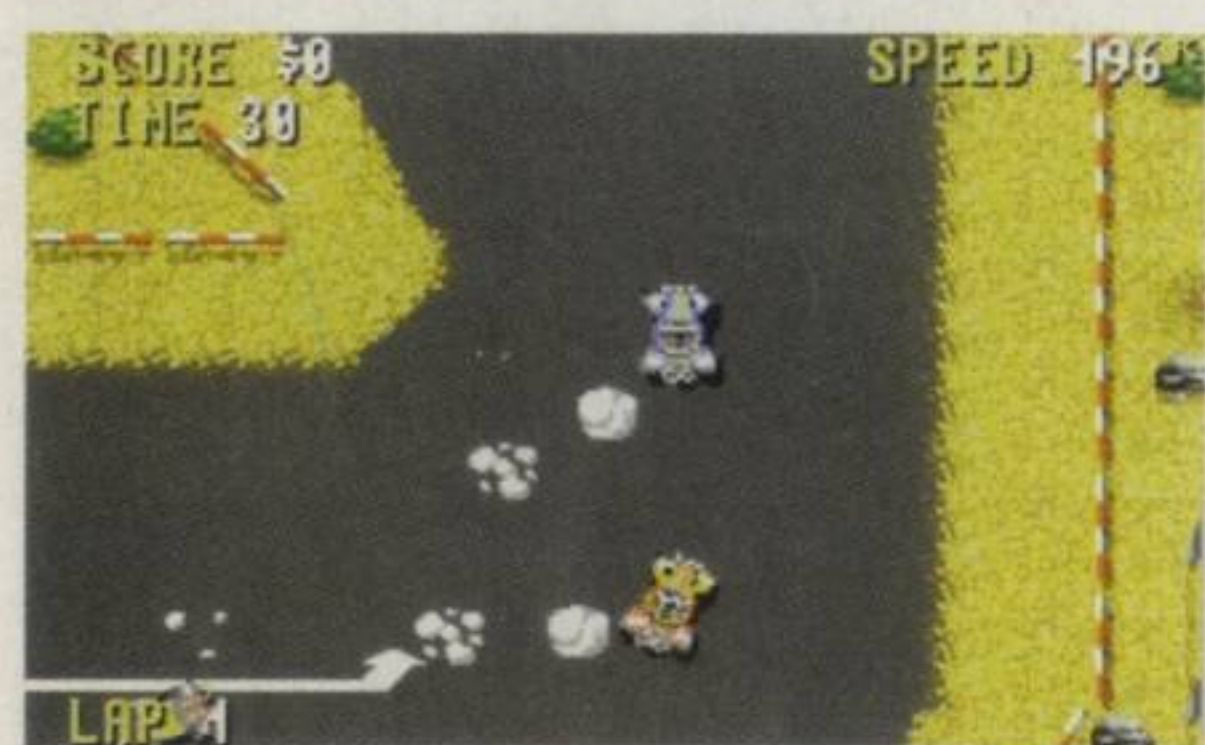


This is the "Frogger" type bonus game in *Bussy 2*, and it's a bit of a laugh we can tell you

As well as featuring straightforward previews in this section, we occasionally like to take a sneaky look at games which are in the much earlier stages of development. So when we found out that Accolade had four top game releases lined up for the next few months, we thought we'd tell you about them.

Combat Cars • July

The first of Accolade's autumn releases will be a simple overhead racer, entitled *Combat Cars*. As you'll probably have guessed from the name though, there's



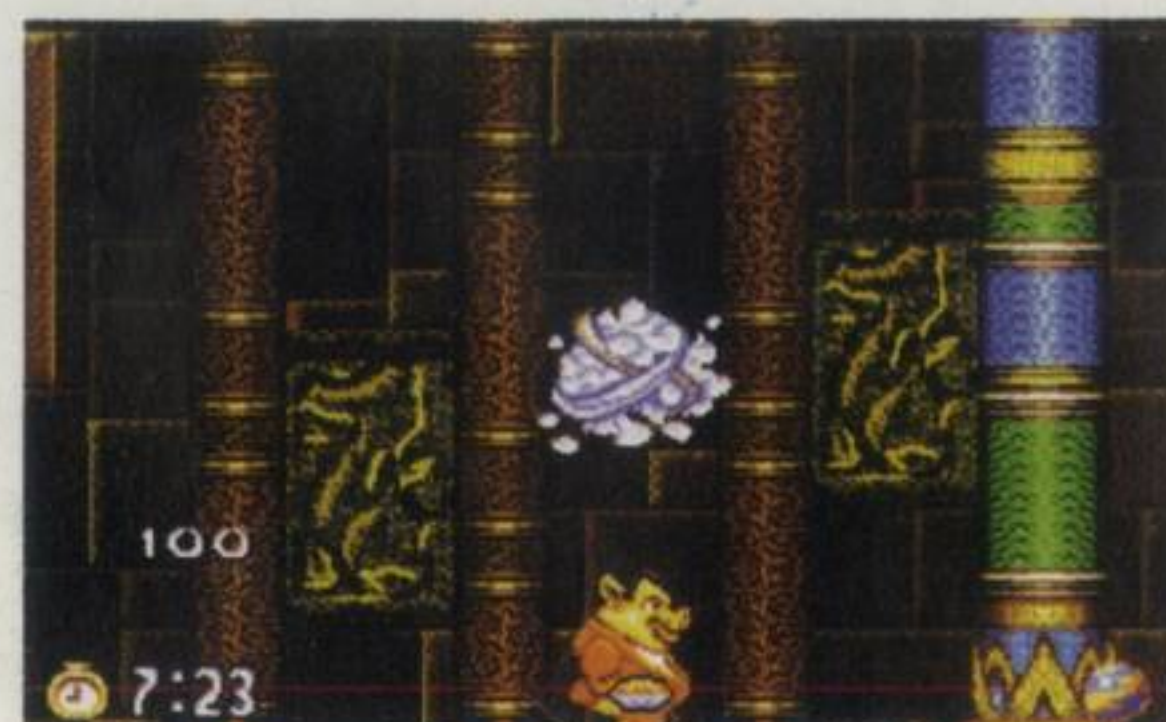
I don't know about you, but I really like overhead racers like this one



Check out the shop if you need to buy some, ahem, equipment



And what would a racing game be without a two-player mode? Well, crap for a start. Luckily, *Combat Cars* has one, and it looks cool as well



Here's Bussy in his usual "spinning attack" pose. Very pretty, huh?



Am I seeing things or is that a flying penguin up there?

AUTUMN



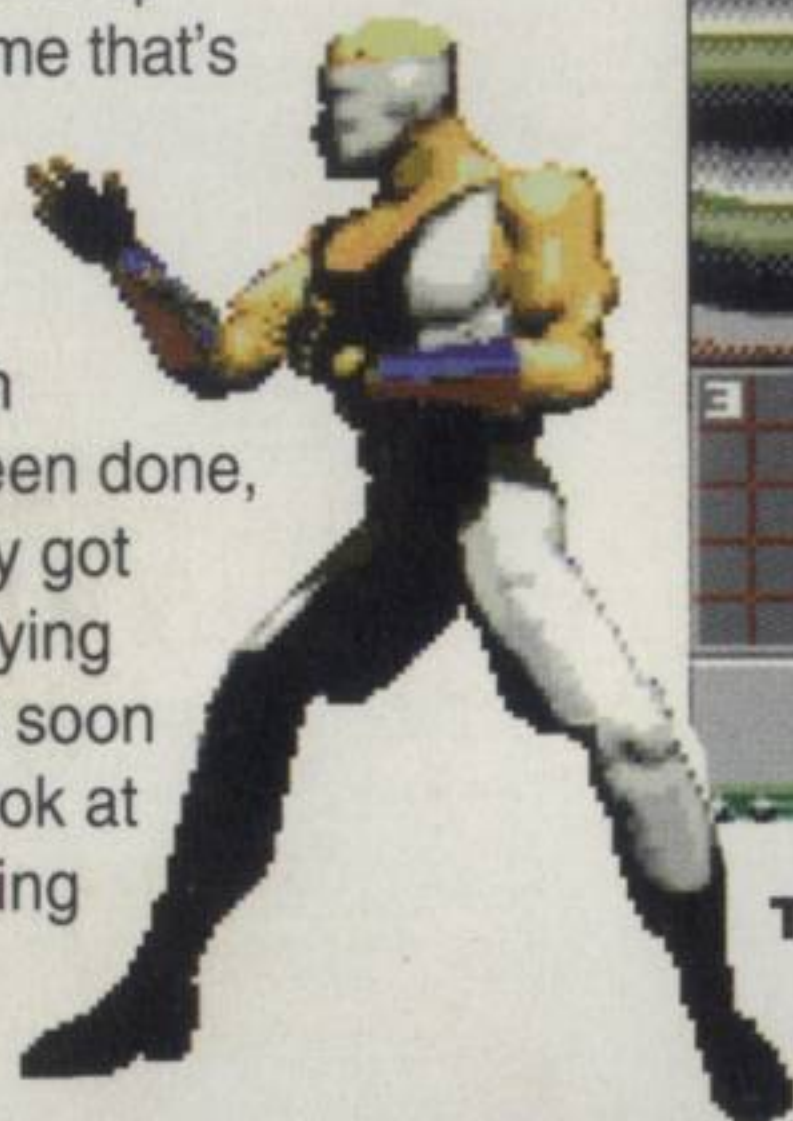
The New Breed. Not much to look at here, except a couple of fighters

cover to see what we mean). As you can see from the screenshots, it's only basic graphics at the moment, but we'll come back to this one soon because it's shaping up very nicely indeed.

Fire Team Rogue • November

And that leaves us with one more Accolade game to mention, and boy is it a biggie. The game is *Fire Team Rogue*, and if your mind can grasp a gaming idea that's a combination between *Starwing*, *Zelda* and *Street Fighter 2*, then you're about halfway there. Yep, it's time to unite game genres and come up with a totally new game that's not only massive but massively addictive as well.

As yet, not much programming has been done, that's why we've only got screenshots of the flying part of the game. As soon as we get a better look at how things are shaping up, however, we'll let you know.



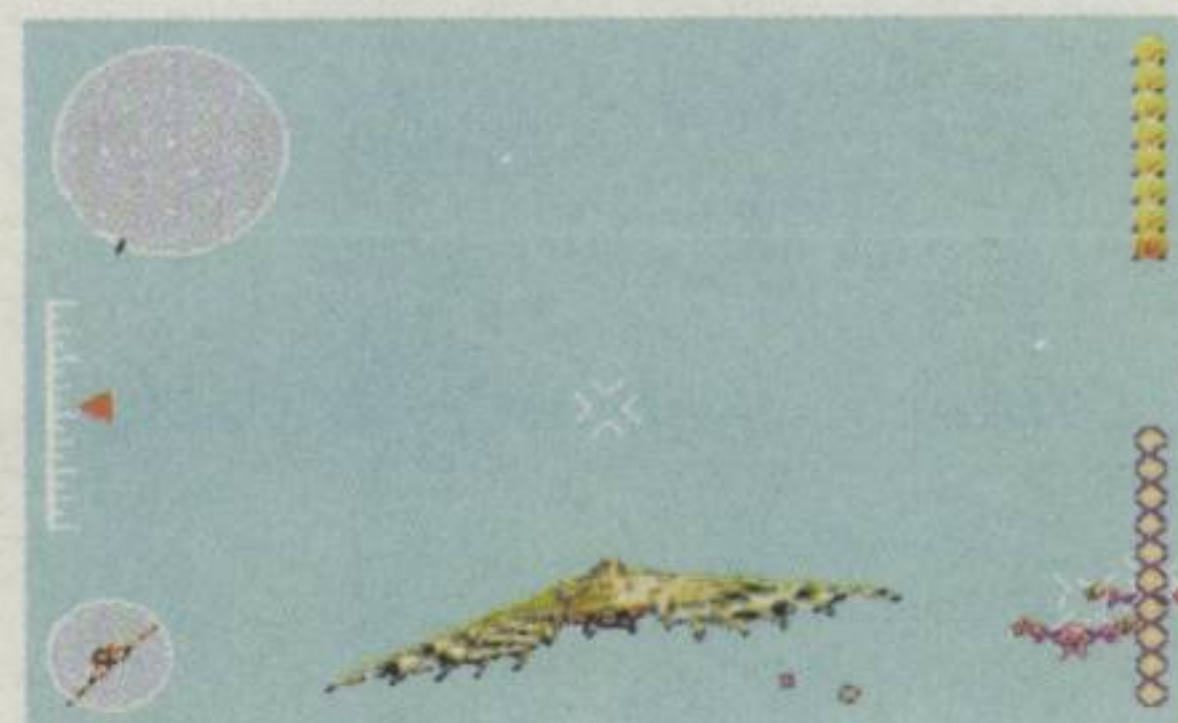
This is a very early version of the game, which explains the lack of background detail. When finished, you'll be able to move in and out of the background to avoid attacks from the other fighters



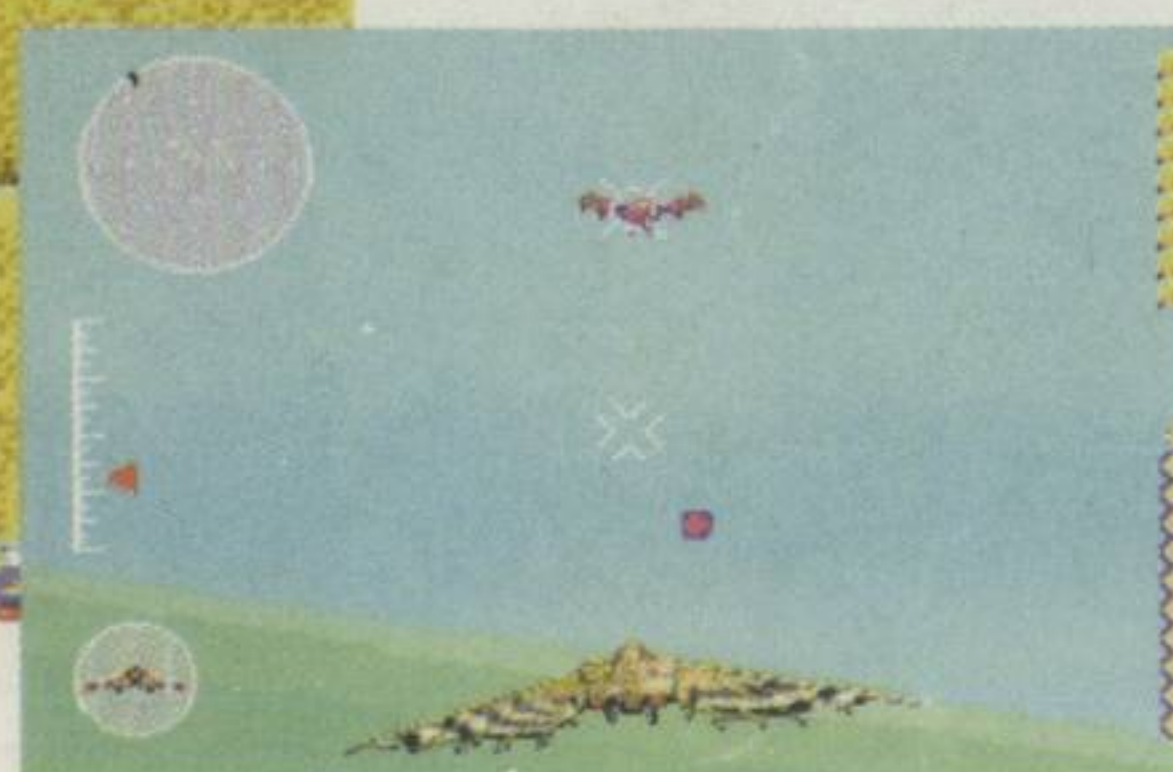
There are plenty of frames of animation to marvel at as well, and when all the other characters have been put in, we're sure the game will really come alive. Who's going to be your favourite character?



One of Bubsy's cool new toys is the Portable Hole. Using this he can get out of some very dodgy situations



This is the flying bit...



... from *FireTeam Rogue*, but there's going to be a lot more to the game than this

UP 'N' COMING

With all these software companies changing their minds about release dates a month or so after we've reviewed their games, you may be forgiven for forgetting which games are great and which ones are appalling. That's where this column helps, because not only do we tell you the latest release dates for these games, but we also tell you the issue in which they were reviewed (if, indeed, they have been), and the score they received.

MAY

Bubba 'n' Stix - Core

Reviewed in Issue 19 - 84%

For those who want something more from a platform game, check out the puzzles, wit and good animation in this title.

Lost Vikings - Virgin

Reviewed in Issue 16 - 91%

Take all the fun of *Lemmings* and then slow it down a bit, add some ingenious puzzles, some funny characters and a sense of humour and you've got one of Jon Smith's favourite Mega Drive games.

Virtua Racing - Sega

Reviewed in Issue 19 - 92%

With a confirmed price tag of £69.99, this is the Mega Drive's most expensive cartridge ever. But hey, you've got to pay the price for new technology and you get a fantastic little game into the bargain.

Tomcat Alley (CD) - Sega

Reviewed in this issue - page 34

Another one of those visually breathtaking games, but the gameplay is left behind.

Dracula Unleashed (CD) - Sega

Reviewed in issue 19 - 57%

Another of those FMV detective type games. The Gothic scene is set very well, but the FMV is very dodgy indeed.

Jurassic Park (CD) - Sega

Reviewed in issue 18 - 84%

Taking place after the end of the film, this search-and-find puzzle game makes for a refreshing change in terms of gameplay.

Terminator CD - Virgin Interactive

Reviewed in issue 16 - 67%

Basically a tarted-up version of the cartridge game with some very stunning music and special effects but not much else. A bit of a disappointment frankly.

Mortal Kombat CD - Acclaim

It's *Mortal Kombat...* on CD.

JUNE

Streets of Rage 3 - Sega

Reviewed in Issue 20 - 72%

A bit of a let down in terms of the improvement that *Streets of Rage 2* was over the original. More of the same action really, and just as easy to finish as it ever was.

Dune 2: The Battle for Arrakis - Virgin

Reviewed in Issue 16 - 80%

A completely different game from the one you can get for the Mega CD, but still a fab strategy game. Hooray!

World Cup USA '94 - U.S. Gold

This game is alleged to have more options than I could possibly list in this whole column. U.S. Gold sensibly decided to include the ability to alter the teams taking part in the World Cup, so you can play as the English team after all.

ITCHY & SCRATCHY

"If I had an itch, would you scratch it?" sang Paul, in a desperate attempt to prove that he can be funny after all. (You what? - Andy)

Acclaim • July/August

Are you ready for some madcap cartoon platform humour? Sounds exciting doesn't it? Ever watched The Simpsons? Ever seen the tongue-in-cheek parody of violent cartoons like Tom & Jerry? If you have, then the names Itchy and Scratchy (Bart and Lisa's favourite cartoon characters) will be very familiar to you; if you haven't, then I've just told you everything you need to know about them anyway. Well, not quite everything.

You see, just like the Tom & Jerry cartoons that we all love, Itchy and Scratchy hate each other, and will stop at nothing to cause each other all sorts of (very funny) harm. Their cartoons contain all the obligatory laughs; bomb-in-the-mouth tricks, heads getting slammed in doors, and even some classic mallet-around-the-head stuff. And that's it. Yep, that's the whole

story; just a simple tale of cat and mouse, with the cat usually coming off worse. And you may be glad to hear that the game is the same kind of thing.

Because this is a game, however, there has to be an ultimate goal to reach. The game has seven levels for the player (you play as the mouse, Itchy) to get through, and each level has a main boss character which is piloted by Scratchy (in a similar way to the Dr Robotnik boss). Scratchy isn't just waiting for you at the end of the level though, he's chasing you all the time, and the only way to get rid of him (yep you've guessed it) is to hurt him with all the different types of weapons lying around the place. Not only do the weapons slow him down (he's a cartoon cat, so he'll never actually die) they also give the game an excuse to throw in some comedy; you know the sort of thing, hit him with an axe and he'll split in



Mind you don't scratch anyone with that thing, Itchy



Get caught by Scratchy, and various "comic" things will happen to you



Just exactly what is that thing behind Itchy?



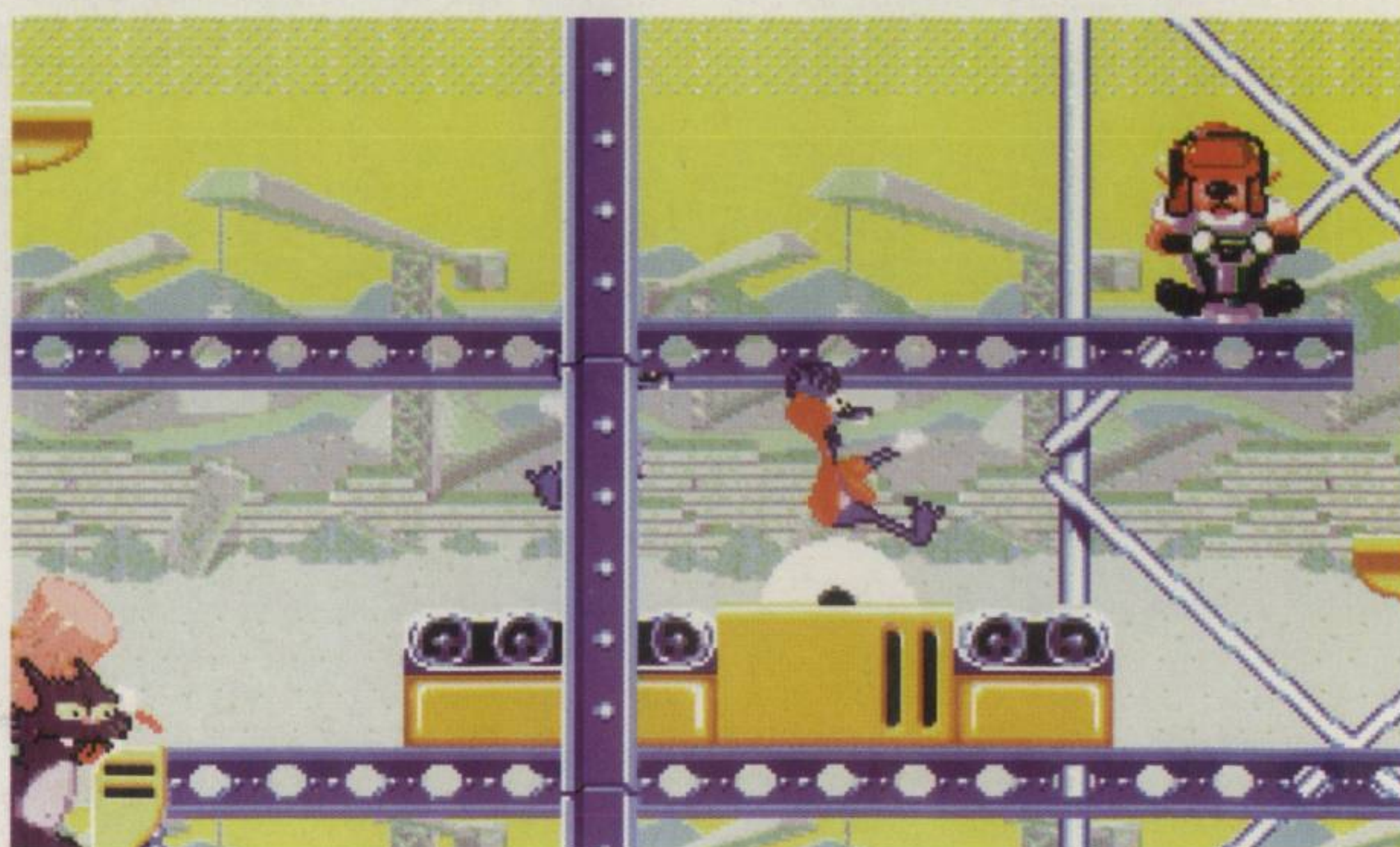
From one of the more complete levels you can tell that there's going to be one hell of a lot of stuff going on. So keep Itchy on the move, or else



At the moment there's only one end-of-level baddie, and this is it

two or whack him in the face with an oar and give him pancake features.

The game is still in the early stages of production; the graphics are in place, but apart from Itchy and Scratchy themselves, very little else is going on. The question is, does the gaming world actually need another cartoon character based platform game? We'll let you know in a couple of issues time.



And here we are on what can only be described as the "industrial" level, with lots of steel, a workman (for some reason a dog) and a buzz-saw!

UP 'N' COMING

JUNE

Jungle Book – Virgin

Reviewed in issue 20 – 90%

If you haven't yet seen our *Jungle Book* review, then you should turn to page 77 now and order a copy of our last issue. We bagged the world exclusive review, and in it we attempted to give you every little piece of information that we could lay our hands on.

Marko's Magic Football – Domark

Reviewed in this issue – page 26

Our mate Marko is a bit of a keen footballer, and he's also an all-round good egg. So when he discovers an Earth-threatening plot involving all sorts of dodgy slime and chemicals, he jumps to the rescue.

Pete Sampras Tennis – CodeMasters

Reviewed in this issue – page 30

The main man Pete has now added his name to the game, but we don't care about that; all you need to know is that it's a good tennis games and it's the first four-player game to come with the J-Cart.

Prize Fighter (CD) – Sega

Reviewed in issue 18 – 48%

It was a good attempt at adding some atmosphere and intensity to a boxing game. It's just a shame they left the gameplay out of the final version.

Double Switch – Sega

Reviewed in issue 18 – 81%

The sequel to *Night Trap*, and a break from the tradition of sequels being very poor. A high tongue-in-cheek level of action provides some of the fun as well.

Dragon's Lair – Sega

Reviewed in issue 18 – 80%

The old (in fact, very old) coin-op gets the Mega-CD treatment and doesn't come off too badly either.

Another World 2 (CD) – Virgin

Not only do you get the much improved and superb looking *Another World 2* on the CD, you also get the first game thrown in for free. Now that can't be bad.

Soul Star (CD) – Core

So when you've brought out a game like *Thunderhawk*, what do you do next? Well, you program a space shoot-'em-up of course. Doh!

JULY

Battlecorps (CD) – Core

Although the graphics engine (a poncy expression meaning what it looks like) is similar to that of *Thunderhawk*, this game is going to be drastically different. Check out the preview just over there on the left.

Speed Racer – Accolade

There seems to be a lot of this turn-cartoons-into-games malarkey going on, but *Speed Racer* has a cult following already, so this could be a hit.

LOOKING FORWARD...

The following games won't be out for quite some time, but they're well worth a quick mention nonetheless.

Theme Park – Electronic Arts – October

Cannon Fodder – Virgin – November

Elite – Sony – November

Jimmy White's Snooker – Virgin – November



What sort of beasts await you in the cavern? Well I'm not sure what they are really



With plenty of lava pits all over the place you've got to be careful where you stand. Some of that lava stuff is a real pain to wash off, you know

Core • July

Fancy being part of an élite fighting group and having your own BIG machine to play with? Hmm, thought you might...

So, *Battlecorps* then eh? We did a small preview of this game back in issue 18, but since then the release date of it has been postponed. Core assure us that the delay is due to the fact that they've done more work on it. We weren't sure whether to believe them or not, so we asked to take a look at the game in its current state of development. Looks like our suspicions were unfounded, doesn't it? Sorry Core.

It's basically a 3D shoot-'em-up with large levels, loads of enemies and even more explosions. I could tell you some more about the game (you can read issue 18 if you're really desperate for information), but I want to show you lots of screenshots instead.

The finishing touches (what, more work?) are currently being put to the game and then hopefully it will hit the streets in the summer. We think it's going to be one tough tactical shoot-'em-up, so get ready; it's going to be a scorching summer.



Spectacular explosions are the order of the day in this game



The "wibbly sprite effect" gives the game a realistic underwater look



Underwater once more, and these sprites really are impressive



Even up this close the detail on some of the sprites is amazing

BATTLECORPS

If you thought *Thunderhawk* was a top shooter, you should get ready for this to blow you away



Wa-hey! Explosions galore in this scaling frenzy



The action really heats up, and so does your main gun

ROCK 'N' ROLL RACING



So who came first then?



Pick your car carefully



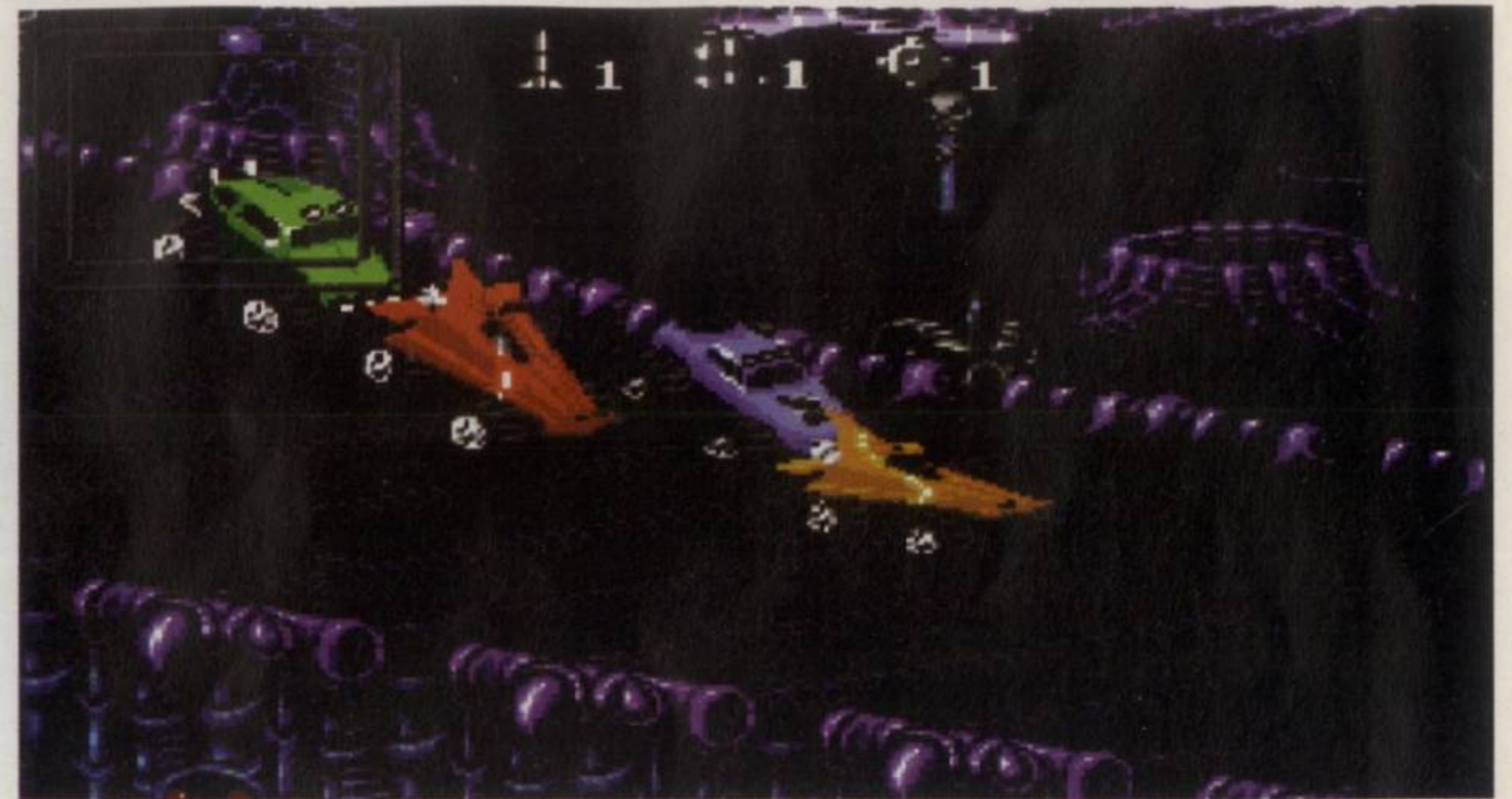
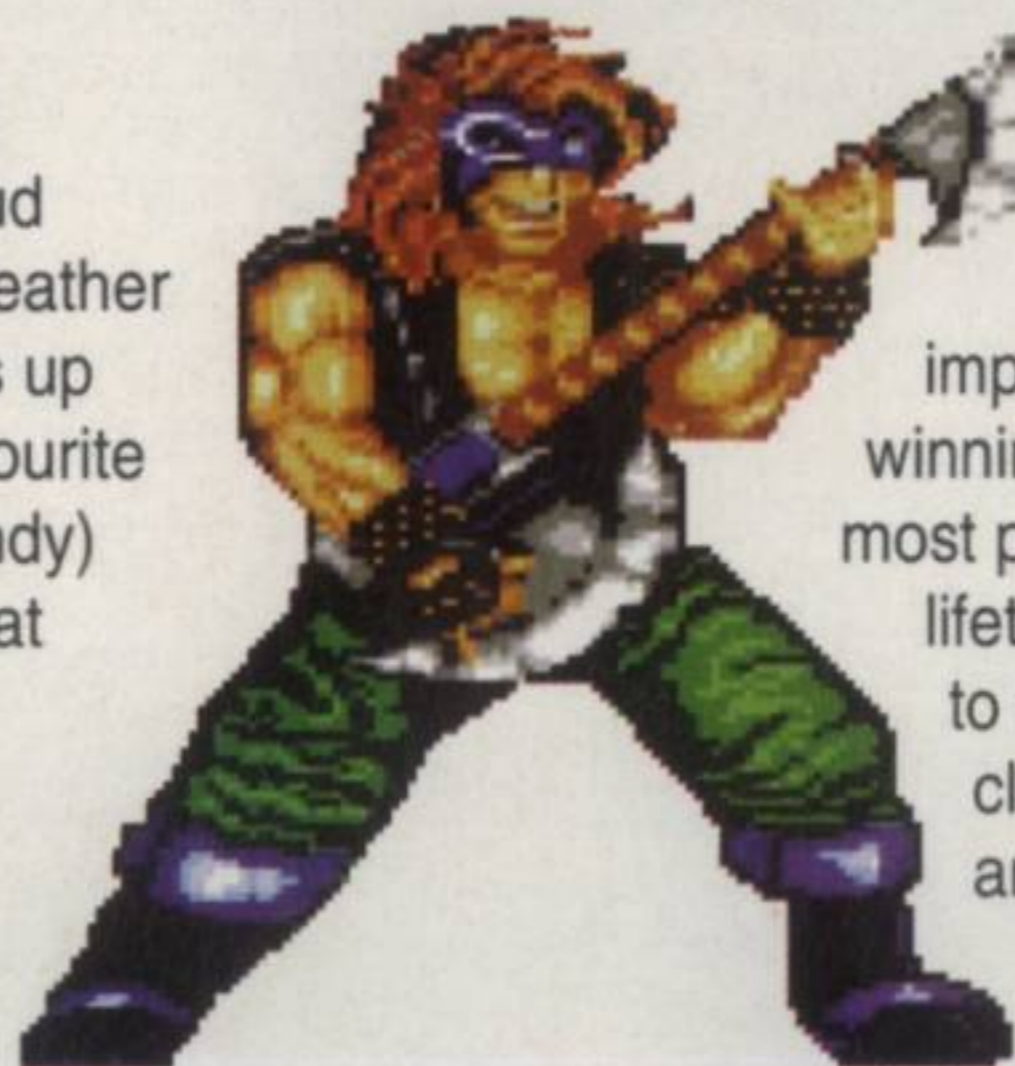
I could do with some weapons

For some reason, Andy Dyer thinks this will be Paul "rock bloke's" favourite game

Virgin • July

Rock 'n' Roll, eh. All leather jackets, loud music and stupid leather trousers with laces up the sides. (They're your favourite trousers they are, Paul - Andy) But what on earth has all that got to do with racing cars around a track? Several things, actually.

For a start, this isn't any ordinary racing game;



There are plenty of different tracks for you to race on and also plenty of obstacles to watch out for, as well as the other cars

this is one hard piece of software. The cars are heavy, the drivers are tough and the weapons are... well, they're weapons. But why "Rock 'n' Roll"

racing? Because of the sound you idiot! As you race around track after track, improving your car and winning more money than most people ever see in a lifetime, you get to listen to top Rock 'n' Roll classics, like *Paranoid* and *Born to be Wild*.

There's also a two-player split-screen

mode and enough tracks to keep you more than satisfied. It's due out soon, and we will, of course, give you the complete rundown on it as soon as we can.



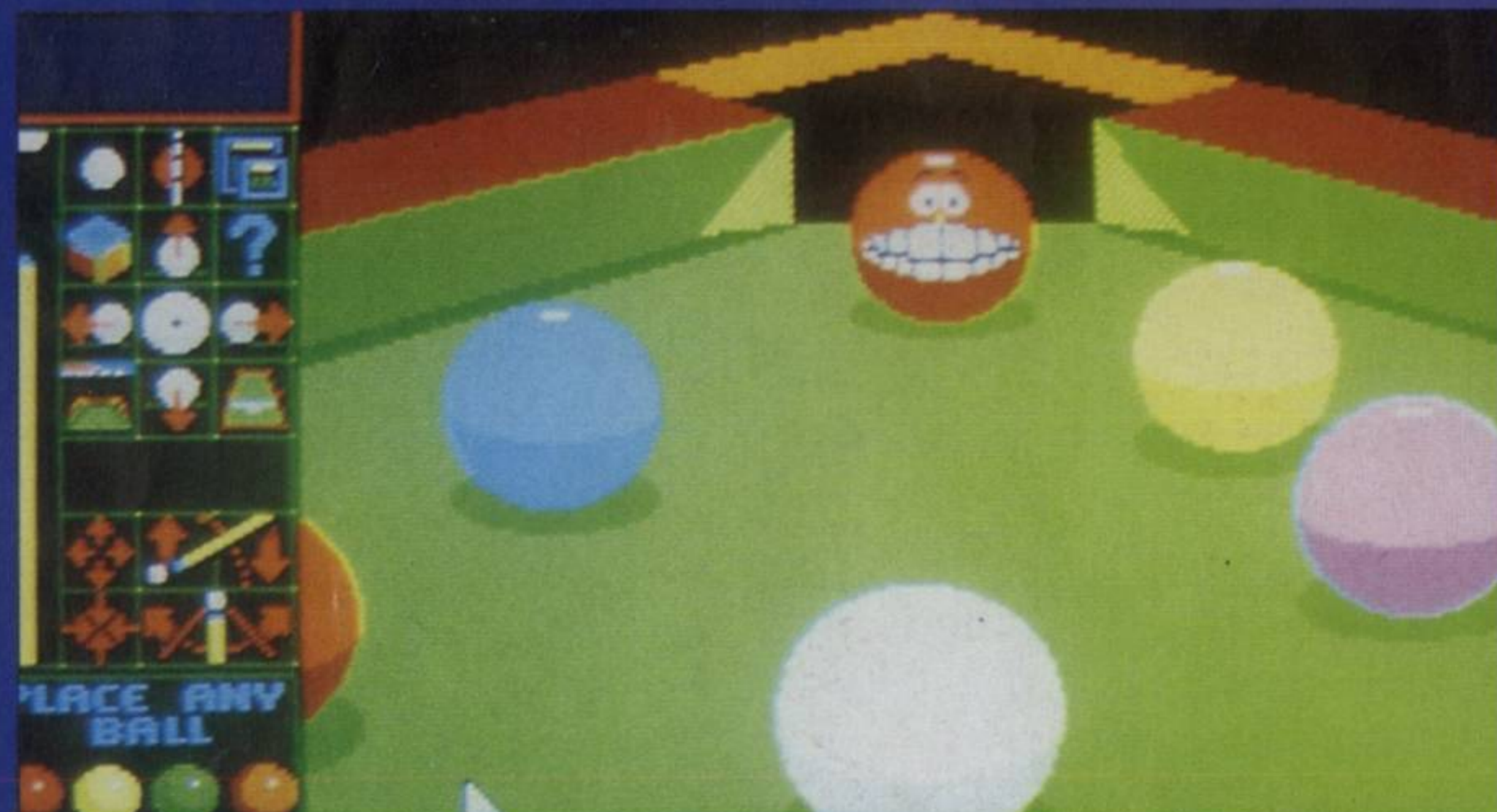
Go on! You can take him

Virgin • September

"I've never seen balls move this fast," said Jim

Ever seen *Jimmy White's Snooker* before? If you know someone who's got an Amiga, then you're probably more than familiar with this amazing simulation of the game called snooker. There's nothing much to tell you about the game; it's just a really good interpretation of snooker and that's it. The one thing worth noting, however, is that the 3D ball movement which was good on the Amiga, is even faster on the Mega Drive. We'll show you a few screenshots now and then in a couple of months' time we'll take a more in-depth look at the game. But this one is shaping up very nicely and could be a big Christmas hit.

JIMMY WHITE'S SNOOKER



Stop the ball smiling at you by smacking it into the corner pocket



To make things easier, the whole game is controlled by a pointer



Wow! Smash! Crash! Bang! Zoom!

THE U.S. GOLD DREAM TEAM

Ever fancied being the manager of a football team? Bet you have. And if you could manage the best 11 players in the world and be in with the chance of winning some top prizes, you would be more than interested, right? Yep, thought so.

Well, World Cup '94 fever is just about to reach its peak and thanks to MEGA, U.S. Gold and HMV you can now take part in a little World Cup all of your own. The idea is simple, walk into any HMV store from May 17 and purchase (or pre-order) a copy of *World Cup USA '94* by U.S. Gold. Do this and you will automatically receive an entry into the competition. That's the easy bit over with, now it gets a bit more complicated.

Once you've got your competition entry you will notice a list of 528 players from teams who will be playing in the real World Cup. From these 528 you must pick (and name) a team of 11 players. You must have one goalkeeper, four defenders, three midfielders and three forwards. Oh, and you must make sure that you choose at least nine DIFFERENT nationalities as well, with a maximum of two players from the same country.

Once you've done that, you can then sit back and enjoy the World Cup. But how do you win? Well, every player in your team can score points for you depending on how they play in

Would you like to go to the Coca Cola Cup Final? Or win a pair of season tickets to see your favourite footy team? Or HMV vouchers to the value of £100? You do? Well, read on...

real life. And at the end of the competition, the manager who scores the most points is the winner. And these are the four ways in which you can score points:

- ① A defender will score you four points if his team concedes no goals in a match.
- ② But a defender will get two points deducted if his team concedes a goal in a match.
- ③ All players receive three points when they score a goal.
- ④ In penalty shoot-outs you score a point if your player scores a penalty, and you also score a point if your keeper saves one. No points are deducted for not saving one though.

And that's it. The closing date for all this malarkey is Thursday 16 June, 1994, so you're going to have to work fast. If you're interested in taking part, get yourself down to your local HMV store immediately and then what you can come up with. Good luck.



Left: And here we have a lovely match about to start between the team in red and another team wearing mainly yellow

Below: And in a weird sort of tie-in with the Dream Team concept, here we have a screenshot of the game showing the team selection part of the game. Very apt

PAUL MELLERICK'S PANTS XI

If you want an example of exactly what you need to do, our footie man Mellers (he supports Leicester City apparently) has compiled his very own team. Here are the PANTS XI:

Number	Position	Name	Country
001	Goalkeeper	Goycochea	Argentina
104	Defender	Koeman, Ronald	Holland
		(The Dutch are renowned for their defensive qualities)	
141	Defender	McGrath	Rep. of Ireland
139	Defender	Irwin	Rep. of Ireland
		(A couple of familiar names who are very strong defenders)	
138	Defender	Nilsen	Norway
259	Midfield	Signori	Italy
		(An attacking midfielder who is this year's top scorer in Italy)	
332	Midfield	Limpar	Sweden
272	Midfield	Ekoku	Nigeria
		(This guy has gone down a real storm over here this year)	
386	Forward	Klinsman	Germany
		(Known as Killer Klinsman to his friends, allegedly)	
401	Forward	Baggio, Roberto	Italy
		(A real talent and worth something like £10 million)	
434	Forward	Kanchelskis	Russia
		(He may be Russian, but he plays brilliantly for Manchester United)	

Brazil

- 1 F. Danino
- 2 J. Diniz
- 3 F. Santos
- 4 M. Pablos
- 5 G. Villares
- 6 G. Oliveria
- 7 P. Carvalho
- 8 J. Cova
- 9 F. Cardoso
- 10 P. DaSilva
- 11 O. Rphaelli
- 12 F. Gusmao
- 13 A. Fernand
- 14 L. Monez
- 15 B. Sosna
- 16 M. Mirek
- 17 J. Bernet
- 18 A. Parc
- 19 D. Blotfeld
- 20 P. Ignacio
- 21 A. Guzman
- 22 P. Branco





Our illustrious editor (that's Andy Dyer, that is) once again reads all your letters, cobbles together a few likely answers and has the odd self-indulgent chuckle along the way...

SOME SIMPLE QUESTIONS

Dear MEGA,

1. Will *Microprose Grand Prix* be converted to the Mega Drive or Mega CD?
2. The same question regarding *Elite* or *Elite 2*.
3. Will *Cannon Fodder* be compatible with the Sega Mouse?
4. Where can I get a Sega Mouse?

Until next time...

David Mellinson, Longwood, Huddersfield

Dear David,

1. There have been lots of rumours that this will appear, using the SVP chip to handle all the graphics and stuff. As yet, however, nothing has been confirmed.
2. Just when I'd given up hope, along comes *Elite* from Sony. Due in the autumn of this year. Hoorah!



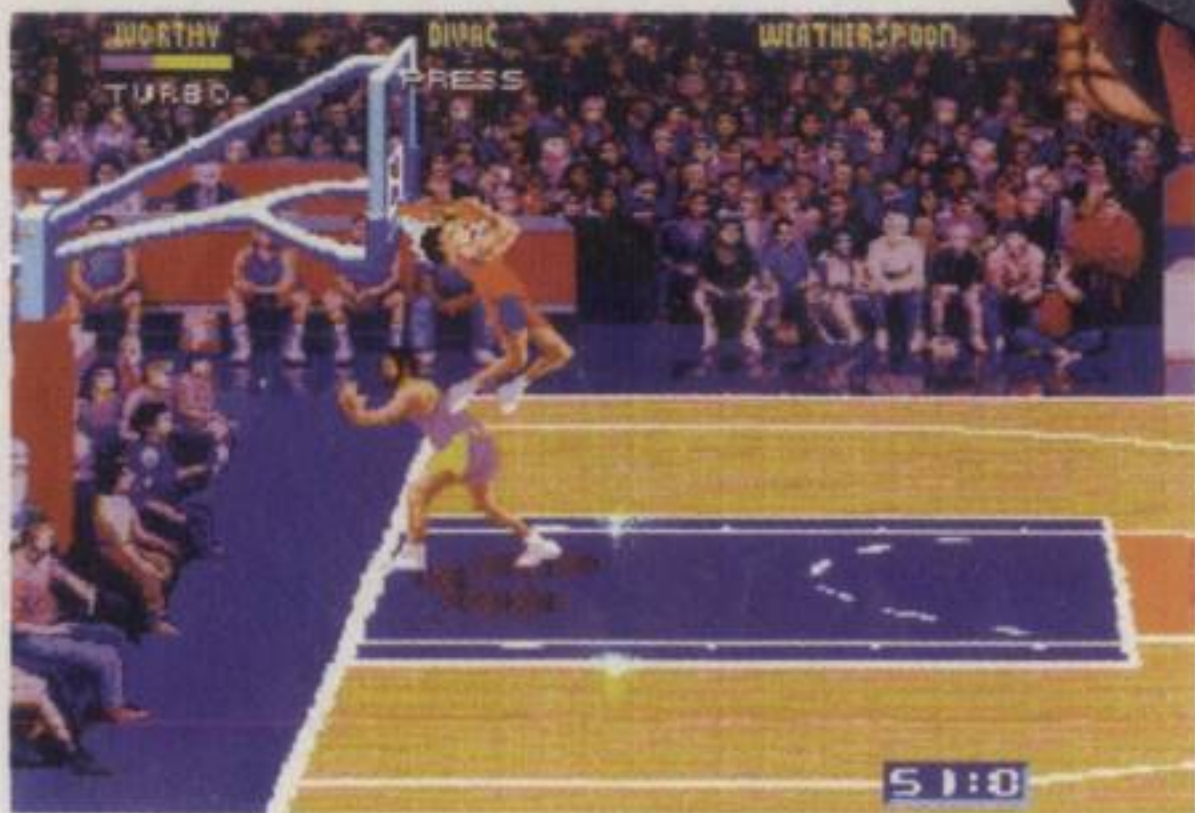
Cannon Fodder. A fab game, regardless of mouse compatibility

3. Possibly, but the game is a long way off yet, so we don't know for sure.
4. Try Sega (071 373 3000) or ask any console dealer if they can get you one. **Andy**

CAREFUL WITH THOSE JOYPADS

Dear MEGA,

After reading your in-depth review on the latest four-player frenzy for the Mega Drive, namely *NBA Jam*, in your March issue, and dribbling uncontrollably over the praise you were giving it, I was all ready to go out, hard-earned

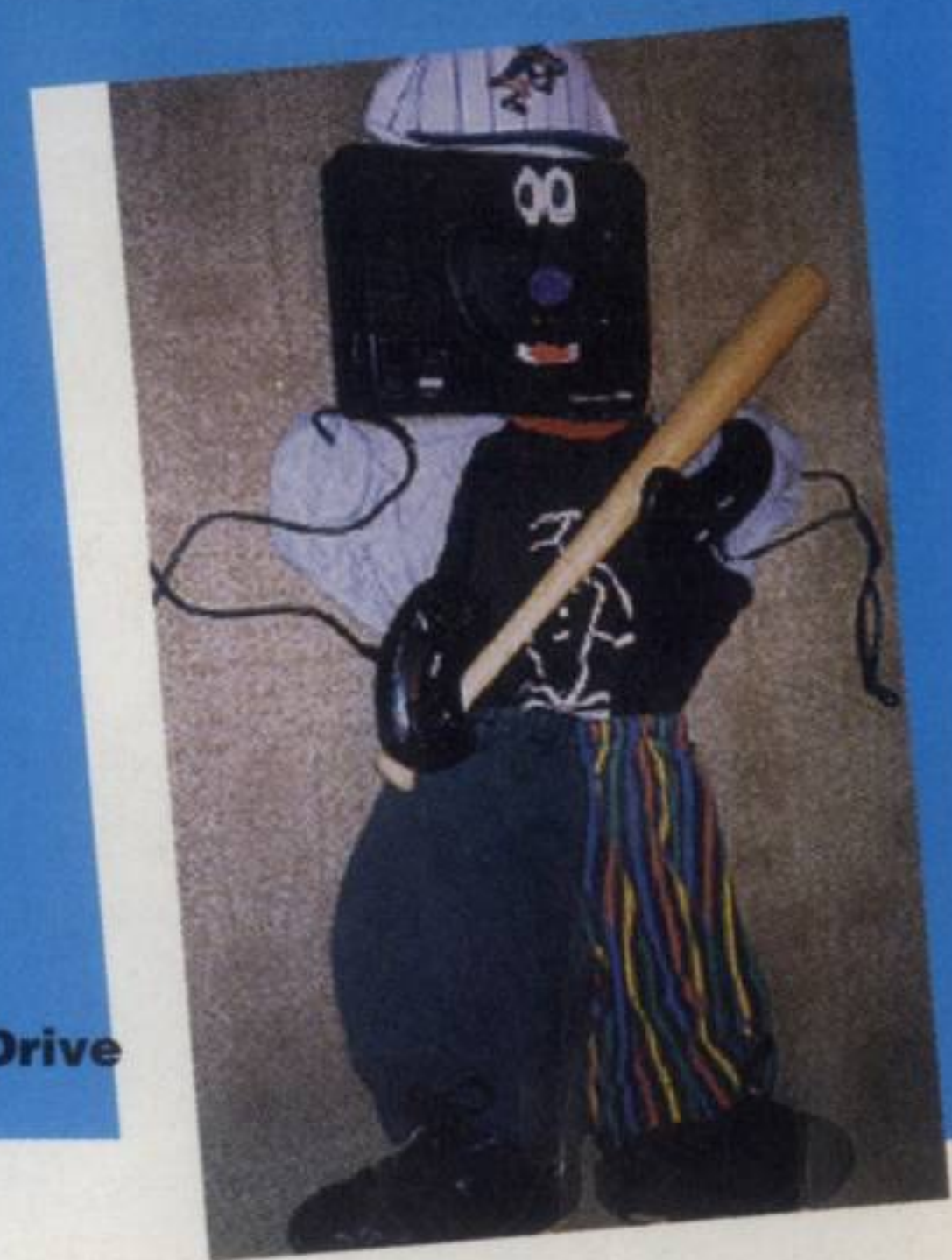


A great one-player, top two-player and astounding four-player game

EXCERPTS FROM THE DIARY OF A STUNT MEGA DRIVE

See that Mega Drive over there? That's either a sad attempt to dress up a console as Bull Durham, or that bloke out of *Field of Dreams*, or maybe it's even Madonna out of *A League Of Their Own*. The fact is, we don't know because we, er, mislaid the letter which went with this and the other photos we received. So if this is yours, write in and tell us yer name and address plus descriptions of the other pictures you sent us and you'll get a prize.

And as usual, anyone who wants to send anything into this compo, or any other section of MEGA MOUTH for that matter, write to: **MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW.**



A baseball playing Mega Drive

cash in hand, and pay willingly in exchange for what looks to be the next big Mega Drive hit. I was shocked, as you can imagine, when right next to the huge 91% that you gave *NBA Jam*, was an interesting article on four-player games. Reading this brought me back down to earth with a resounding thud, so resounding in fact that it compelled me to write a letter of disgust.

I can't condone some of the recent game prices, so you can imagine my horror when I read, and I quote, "Please note, however, that Sega's device (their Multi-Tap unit) is not compatible with EA's 4-Way Play adaptor". As I am an owner of the brilliant *FIFA International Soccer* but not yet, thank heavens, an owner of their 4-Way Play adaptor I was amazed to see that unless I bought a Sega Multi-Tap and an EA 4-Way Play adaptor I would not be able to play either game with three other people. This, I think, is a disgrace, as buying *FIFA International Soccer*, *NBA Jam*, both adaptors and a couple of control pads would cost £170!

I extend my utmost gratitude to MEGA for bringing this latest rip-off-the-customers-plot to the attention of their

readers, as I think that this, combined with the continuous rise in game prices, is cause for some serious action to be taken against the makers of these game. Some serious ass-kicking needs to be carried out, and you can quote me on that. **Andrew Garbett, Stourbridge, West Midlands**

Dear Andrew, You're not the only one to feel this way about the four-player adaptor situation, but to be fair to both Sega and Electronic Arts, the adaptors were developed without either party knowing what the other was up to, and so the rip-the-consumer-off bit is a tad unfair. In fact, Sega have decided that in future all their own four-player games will be both Multi-Tap and EA 4-Way Play compatible, but that's no help to you with *NBA Jam*.

Enter a company called Fire, who make joysticks and things. Their latest invention is a four-player adaptor that's compatible with both the Sega and EA games. This means that you can buy Sega or EA games and by using just the one adaptor, have your multi-player games. The adaptor costs just £34.99 and you can give Fire a ring on 0302 851325. Hope that helps. **Andy**

SOME MORE SIMPLE QUESTIONS

Dear MEGA,

1. Will *Sim City* ever come out on the Mega Drive?
2. And what about *Sim Fairground*,



You can use Fire's new four-way adaptor with both Sega and EA games

will that ever come out?

3. Will there be a *FIFA Soccer 2*?

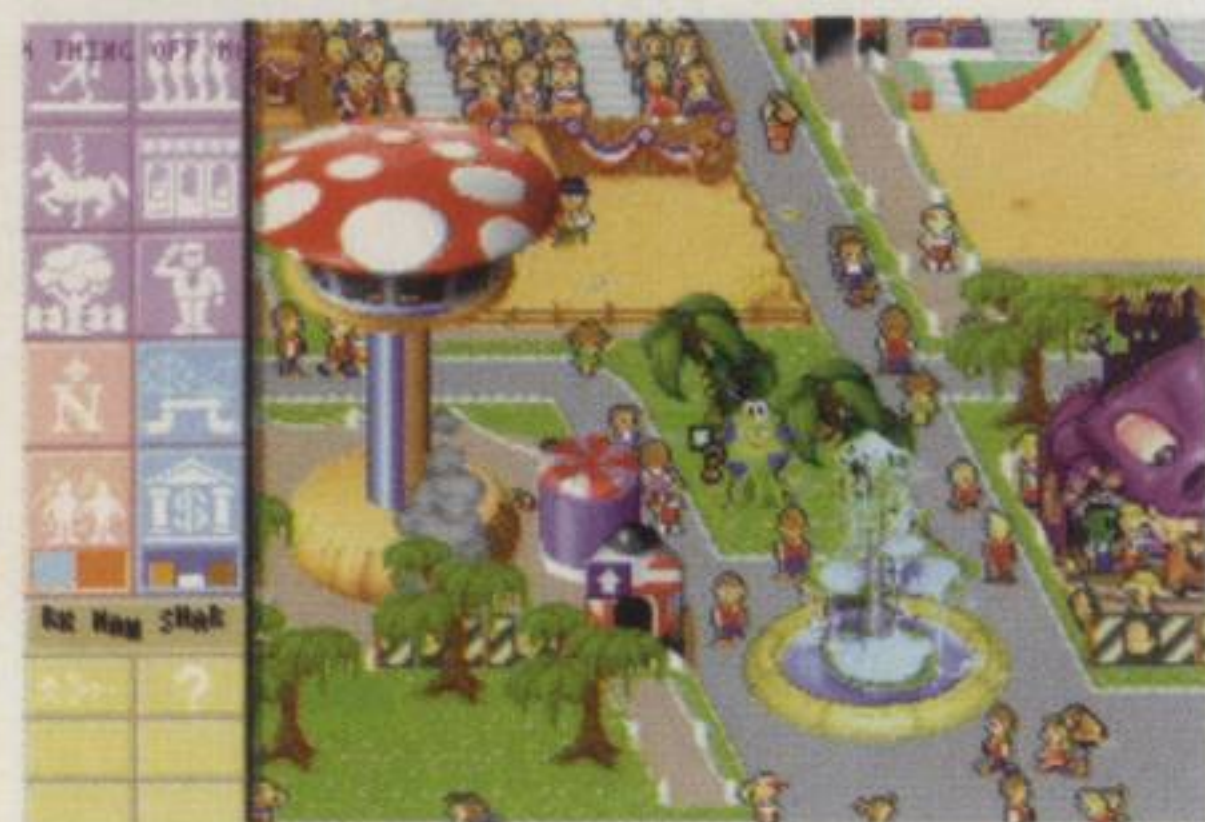
4. Will there be any soccer management games?

Steven Curran, Gloucester

Dear Steven,

1. I doubt it we'll see *Sim City* on the Mega Drive, because the game is getting on a bit now, and the new improved *Sim City 2000* has already hit the streets for the PC. Unfortunately, there is no news on a conversion of that either.

2. Er, *Sim Fairground*? Don't you mean *Theme Park* from Bullfrog? If you do, then good news. Electronic Arts will be bringing the game out in the autumn of this year, so hoorah for them.



Bullfrog's *Theme Park* will soon be on the Mega Drive. Not bad, eh?

3. Let's think about this. *John Madden*. Top game, three sequels. *EA Hockey*. Top game, two sequels. *FIFA International Soccer*. Top game...? What do you think?

4. Soccer management games aren't considered big enough business by most software companies who do them for Amiga and PC formats. Make them change their minds by writing to them and telling them you want one. You'll never know until you ask. **Andy**

WHY DO I HAVE TO WAIT?

Dear MEGA,

When reading a review of any game in your fab mag, most of the games then appear in the shops a month after. Sometimes though, especially with exclusives, the wait is even longer. What I don't understand is that if a game is finished, why not release it? For instance, if *Sensible Soccer* had been released a few months before *FIFA International Soccer*, surely it would have sold more.

Andrew Teacher, Ilford, Essex

Dear Andrew,

You may think that the answer to this is completely obvious, but it isn't. There are all sorts of reasons why games aren't released as soon as they are ready. They are: 1) by giving a magazine the review beforehand, the software company can build up the excitement for the game; 2) the company might decide to wait for a traditionally good selling time ie. Christmas; or 3) there might even be some problems shipping enough games into the country. **Andy**

TOP 100 TRICKERY

We've had quite a few letters lately from people getting very confused about the Top 100 part of the mag. Here are some examples:

"After all those months of articles in MEGA, after all the hype and build-up supported by you lot, it (*Street Fighter 2: SCE*, that is) gets snubbed by *John Madden Football*."

Kevin Jones, Dumfries, Scotland

"Why should *F1* go in at number 10 and the game it replaced, *SMGP2*, fall to number 25? Are you saying that all the game between 11 and 24 are now better than a game you rated above them the month before?"

Dave Caines, Kingswood, Bristol

"There was the new *Sonic 3* in at position number 4 and *Sonic 2* has dropped to number 33. Blimey, I thought, but times change. Now where's the original *Sonic*?"

Gerry Ross, Perth

Oh dear, everyone's very upset that their fave game has been moved around or even dropped out of the Top 100. OK, let's explain once again what we're trying to achieve with the Top 100.

Primarily, it's a buyer's guide. Imagine you've got a Mega Drive and nothing else. You buy MEGA and look at the Top 100 to choose a game. We suggest that you choose *Madden* because it's fab, then you choose *Virtua Racing*, then *Aladdin* and so on down the list. This way you get to play the best of each genre and get the most out of your Mega Drive. You see *Sonic 3* is at number four and we think that after playing that you won't really want to play

ARNE'S SOMEWHAT SERIOUS BIT



Dear MEGA,

I am what I suppose an advertiser would call a "mature" gamer, ie. 27 years old. My first home computer was the venerable Acorn Atom, but I graduated to a C64, then on to an Atari ST, then to the Amiga 500. I now own a Mega Drive, but work exclusively on PC compatibles.

The upshot of all this is that I was there right at the start of the home computer/computer gaming boom. I have watched the gaming scene with mixed feelings for the last ten years and would now like to offer up a couple of my own opinions on the state of gaming in the Nineties.

1. IT IS FAR TOO EXPENSIVE.

I find it rather strange that the cost of a new game for the Mega Drive is now rapidly approaching the cost of the console itself! £60-plus is horrendously overpricing what is, when it comes down to it, simply a game (pause for angry cries of ONLY a game - gaming is my LIFE!). OK, so the publishers throw the old development costs argument around, but I have a suspicion that this is a simple excuse. Case in point - arcade conversions. A great deal of development time must go into designing graphics/levels/AI (artificial intelligence) routines for beasties etc., so when a company shout out (rather proudly at that) that the graphics have been ported directly from the arcade machine (or home computer if it is an Amiga or PC convert) on which the levels have already been designed and the baddies "habits" programmed, does the price come down because of the cut in development time? I don't think so - in fact (don't cynicism protectors now) they would probably bump up the price a little for the privilege of having arcade-perfect graphics/style/gameplay. Without lapsing into a "good old days of gaming" style, I remember popping out into town on a Saturday, looking through the C64 magazines, and if I saw a good game, it was possible to obtain it without months of saving or robbing a post office.

We all accept that games are overpriced (or do we? Is there anybody out there, apart from Sega, EA, Virgin etc., who doesn't think that game are overpriced?). However, it is so hard to do anything about it because the only appropriate action to take is not buying the games, but then it's us who lose out.

2. NEW GAMES

One of your most common complaints about the games themselves seems to be one of originality, or lack of it. Tired old platformers/unimaginative shoot-'em-ups/dull arcade conversions seem to be on the increase.

The factor that seems to be suffering (apart from a few shining examples) is good old playability. The graphics don't need to be perfect, the plot believable or the sound superlative (though all these count towards it) for a game to be, for want of a better word, addictive. The games designers are, in general, running short of ideas - and this is perfectly natural. Apart from a few people with the talent for designing good, playable games, originality will become scarcer and scarcer. But there is already a massive store of excellent games, waiting to be transferred to the Mega Drive.

Well, that's enough from me, congratulations on a fine magazine. Where other mags try to come across all "matey" and "youthful" they only seem to be puerile. You have hit the right mix of whatever it is pretty well. Buy yourselves a pint and pretend it's from me!

Graham Thorpe, Sleaford, Lincs.

Dear Graham,

Phew! There's not much I can say to all of that, except maybe the point you make about arcade (or Amiga/PC) conversions. Yes, I'm sure there are a lot of games converted straight over in terms of level design etc., but I'm sure there are equally as many problems in the way the Mega Drive deals with them. Although most arcade games already have the "guts" in place, the game still needs to be programmed, and the programming team need to spend time (and money) getting the game as close to the original as they can.

You make a valid point about gameplay, but don't forget the amazing playable and innovative games around today, *FIFA*, *NBA Jam*, *Lemmings*, *Madden*... the list is endless. I don't think we're running out of ideas, I just think there aren't enough programmers who can risk coming up with them. And besides there were some pretty awful games around for the Spectrum and C64 if I remember... **Andy**

STRAIGHT TO THE POINT

• Have you done the review of *Batman Returns* for the Mega Drive?

Ryan Hilary, Richmond, Surrey

Yep... oh, right I see, you want to know when we reviewed it. Um, it was in issue 3, page 42 and it got 40%. **Andy**

• Any news on a Mario-ish game (ie. *Great Giana Sisters*) for the Mega Drive?

B. H. Roundbarrow, Colerne, Wiltshire

The *Great Giana Sisters* was an old C64 rip-off of *Super Mario Bros.* and Nintendo stopped them bringing it out, so I doubt anything like that will appear on the Mega Drive. **Andy**

• What happened to the Japanese course in *F1*, it was in your review but not in the final game?

Lots of people, all over the place

Domark say that they couldn't fit in all the tracks without increasing the cart size and that would have meant putting the price of the game up, which they didn't want to do. **Andy**

• How can the 16-bit Mega Drive handle a 24-Mbit game like *Street Fighter 2: Special Champion Edition*?

Lee Houghton, Leicester

The Mega Drive is a 16-bit machine, which means it can handle 16 bits of information in one go. A 24-Mbit game has 24 Mbits of

information to give the Mega Drive. They are, therefore, two completely different things and incompatibility isn't a problem. **Andy**

• Is there any news of a chess game coming out for the Mega Drive?

Geoff Kirtlan, Wirral, Merseyside

Apart from *Chessmaster 2000* which was due out sometime last year in the States but never made it, we don't know of any chess games in offing. It's a shame, but there you have it. **Andy**

BLAGGED!

Once again, we wearily trudge into the part of the mag in which our beloved readers concoct some half-baked tales of woe and misery in order to get a free cart. It's sad, it's desperate, it's pathetic, but it's popular, so here we go again.

"Nearing the end of my quest I pause for recollection as a tide of overwhelming emotions sweep over my shivering form. Accusations fly hand in hand with putrid lies, their swollen flesh pulsating with a sinister ambience as I stumble against wave after wave of constantly shifting despair. Riotous images race past my eyes of snarling minions, their clawed fingers straining to snatch at the very orbs with which I view them. As fatigue becomes my newest foe my knees buckle and the grimy puddles rush to welcome me with their numbing embrace."

Well that steaming great pile of guff was from **Andy Brown** of Newton Abbot. It turns out that this tale is merely a flowery description of his monthly trip to the newsagents to pick up MEGA. Sad, but not as sad as the rest of the BLAGGED! letters we got this month so Andy wins a cart. And here are some more pitiful submissions.

"I am in the process of making a revolutionary machine which, when complete, will produce perfect top-notch, brewery standard Guinness. However, I still need one vital component."
N Rendhava, Sydenham

A game cartridge perchance? Oh dear...

"I am Captain Games Be Quirk of the Farlip Exercise."
Richard Coley, Slough

Enough of this crap! But keep 'em coming (if you really must). **Andy**

another Sonic-type game for a while so that's why *Sonic 2* is at number 33. And although *Sonic the Hedgehog* (the original) is a classic game, it's been superseded by the other two games. This also explains the situations with *F1* and *SMGP2*. Although that wasn't as severe because Paul liked *SMGP2* a lot, and I liked *F1* a lot. Don't forget that the whole thing is a team decision.

So there you have it, that's why we don't put percentages in the Top 100 and that's what happens when new games enter the chart. You don't have to buy the games in that order of course, but we think it's the best buyer's guide around, so there. And if you remember back to our first issue, the whole idea of the Top 100 is to cause arguments. **Andy**

WILL THESE QUESTIONS NEVER END?

Dear MEGA, I've been reading your splendiferous mag ever since the days of that smelly git Neil West (Who? - Andy), and I thought that being the great bloke you are (Shucks! - Andy), you could answer a few of my questions:

1. Is there likely to be a follow up to *Sensible Soccer*?
2. I heard that *Kevin Keegan's Football Manager* game might be coming out for the Mega Drive, is this true?
3. Will *Sonic Cart* ever appear for the Mega Drive.
4. As role-playing games are very



Kevin Keegan's Football Manager. Not yet scheduled for Mega Drive

popular in Japan, will we soon be seeing *Landstalker 2*?
Jonny Oliver, Berkhamstead, Herts.

Dear Jonny,
1. Ah, er, well there's going to be a special World Cup edition of *Sensible Soccer*, and a CD version too, both within the next couple of months. And although Sensible are working on a follow-up for the Amiga, called *Sensible World of Soccer*, there's no news of a Mega Drive version.

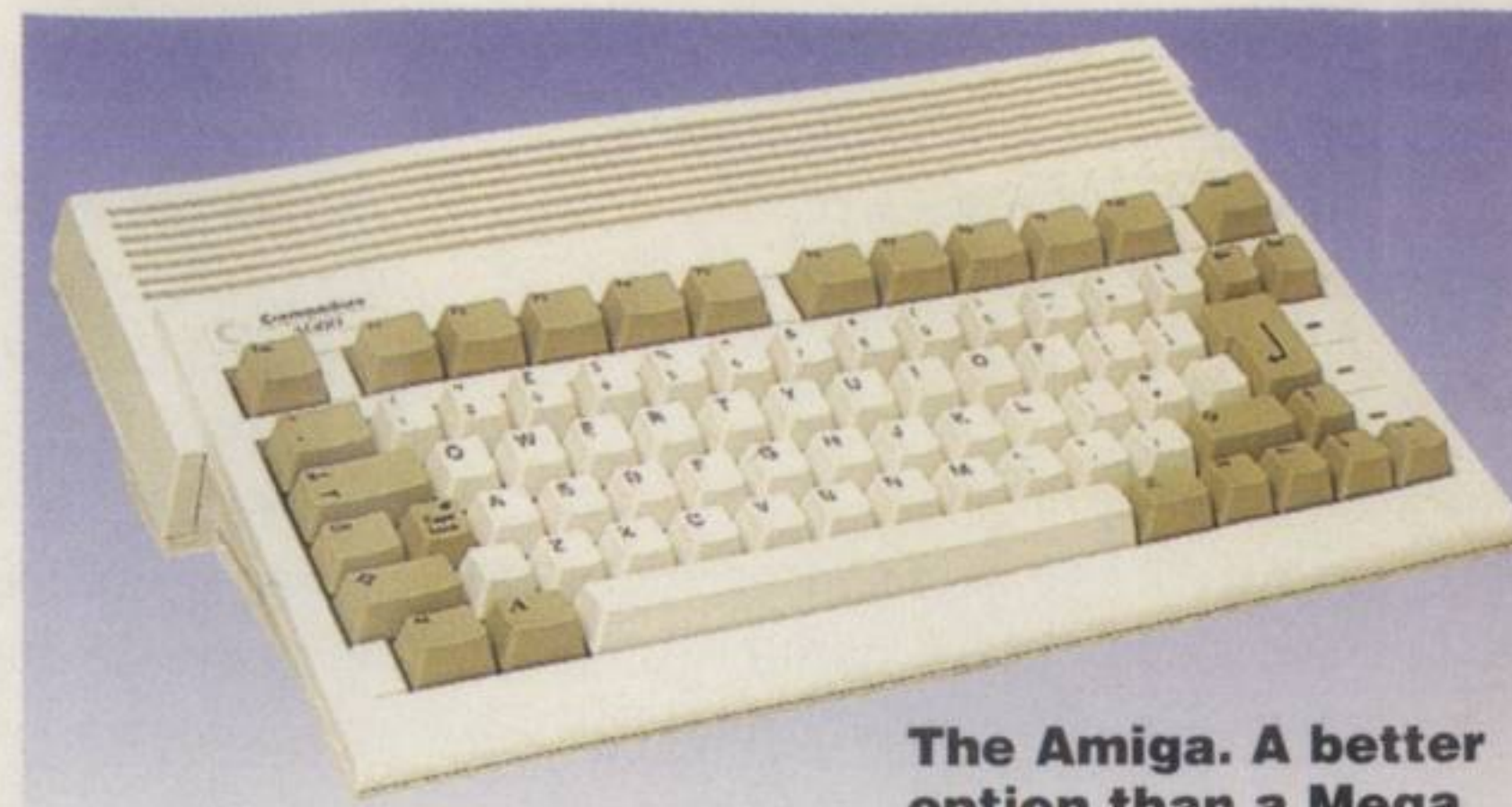
2. No, it isn't.
3. *Sonic Cart*? Oh, you mean the Game Gear racing game thingy don't you? There's no news as to a Mega Drive version, but if the Game Gear one is really popular, who knows?

4. There's no information as to whether there will be a *Landstalker 2*, but Sega have got a few top RPGs lined up for later in the year to satisfy your appetite. **Andy**

A NIGHTMARE OF A GAG

Dear MEGA, My friend said that last year a Nightmare on Elm Street game was released on the Mega Drive, but it was so gory that it was banned on its first day on sale. Is this true? If it is, do you know where you can still buy it?
Chris Wilkinson, Sheffield

Dear Chris, Right, just sit down and think about this for a minute. A Nightmare on Elm Street game? Yeah, that's plausible I suppose. And it came out a year ago you say. Well, if you look through the back issues of MEGA I don't think you'll find any information on it (and we do cover every game around). I think you've been had, ole boy. Next. **Andy**



The Amiga. A better option than a Mega Drive, or, er, not?

STATISTICS, STATISTICS

Dear MEGA, I am writing about the extortionate prices Sega (and Nintendo) are charging for their games. I own an Amiga 500 and my brother owns a Mega Drive; he gets MEGA every month and I get Amiga Format. After reading review after review I can safely say that there is virtually no difference between games on the Mega Drive and on the Amiga, except the prices.

I decided to compare prices for the Mega Drive Top 5 (compiled by Gallup) and the comparative Amiga game. The prices come from the latest Special reserve ads in Amiga Format and MEGA. Here goes...

MEGA DRIVE

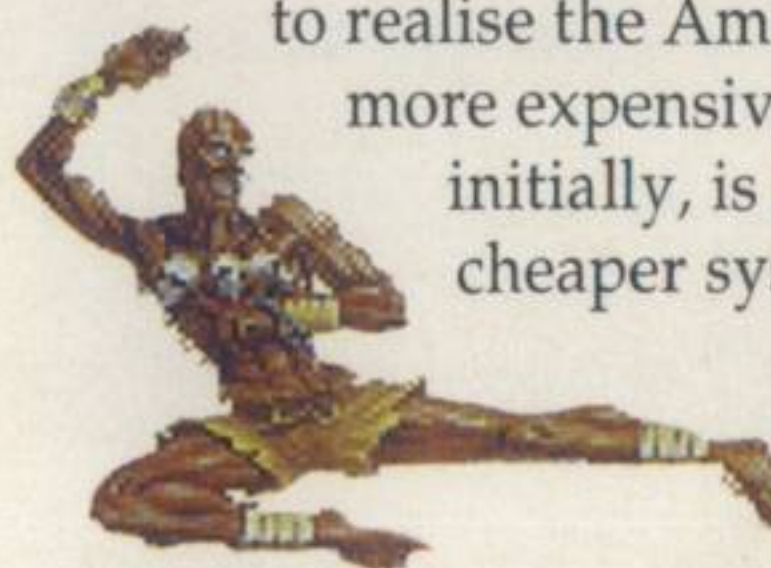
<i>FIFA Soccer</i>	£36.49
<i>Aladdin</i>	£39.99
<i>Sonic Spinball</i>	£39.99
<i>Street Fighter 2</i>	£47.99
<i>Mortal Kombat</i>	£42.49
TOTAL	£206.95

AMIGA

<i>Sensible Soccer</i>	£12.49
<i>Zool 2</i>	£16.99
<i>Pinball Fantasies</i>	£18.49
<i>Street Fighter 2</i>	£10.99
<i>Mortal Kombat</i>	£20.49
TOTAL	£79.45

This is a massive difference of £127.50, which is a lot of money by anybody's standards. I also considered that fact that the Amiga is a more expensive piece of equipment than a Mega Drive so I compared the price of an Amiga 600 with six games (that you get with the machine) plus the five games above with a Mega Drive 2 and six games and the five games. The total cost for the Mega Drive is £336.95 and for the Amiga it is £259.45, still £77.50 cheaper.

To conclude, if Sega are to compete with the vast number of new and old Amiga users, they MUST, MUST, MUST cut the cost of games, otherwise more and more people are going to realise the Amiga, while



more expensive to buy initially, is a much cheaper system to keep buying for over a long period of

MEGA STAR

Dear MEGA, While flicking through April's edition of MEGA, I noticed a small snippet informing us that PC company,

Microsoft, are doing a deal with Sega to provide a range of non-violent games for the Saturn. They're aimed specifically at female gamers, and what's more they're going to be interactive soap operas!

Now this isn't necessarily wrong but if Sega really wants to bring in the female gamer, then why don't they listen to what the public actually want. I would have thought that instead of trying to segregate male and female gamers, they should make an effort to appeal to both sexes equally as much.

For instance, why not include more strong

female characters in games (namely platformers and beat-'em-ups) instead of a brave hero (usually male) battling through level upon level of baddies and bosses to rescue a princess? A bit of role reversal wouldn't go amiss. As for interactive soap operas. Oh, please.

Now I can't speak for every female gamer in the land, but I feel just a little insulted that Sega really don't seem to be thinking very deeply about what would appeal. I love a good beat-'em-up just as much as the next person, in fact the more violent the better! However, I couldn't think of anything worse than settling down to a few hours of Barbie, or an exciting interactive soap opera.

I don't want to come across as a whingeing girlie, crying "it's not fair"; that's not my aim. But please Sega, and other companies, just use a little common sense, it'll go a long, long way.
Tish Lane, Middlesex

Dear Tish, I don't know, personally I'm quite taken with the idea of an interactive Brookside. I've always fancied that Margaret a bit anyway. Seriously though, it does seem as if software companies don't know how to attract girls to the world of console gaming and so the only thing they can come up with are silly Barbie-type games. Sega, however, have done their bit with games like *Alisia Dragoon* (a very tough woman, and an OK game) and... er... oh dear, point taken.

Thanks for writing into us Tish, and sharing your point of view. And because you've made such a valid point we have made you this month's MEGA STAR, and for that you win yourself a game of your choice. Let us know which particularly violent piece of software you would like and we'll get it off to you as soon as possible. **Andy**



In truth, Zool simply isn't anywhere near as good as Sonic. It's true

time, and thus will desert the greedy ships of Sega and Nintendo.
Kevin Lewis, Salisbury

Dear Kevin,
Oh dear, I bet you're going to be an accountant (or something equally exciting) when you grow up. Those set of figures and things may look correct, but let's sit down and look at them properly. Firstly, let's look at the games you chose.

Why pick FIFA against Sensible on the Amiga? Maybe because you know that the Mega Drive version of Sensible poos on its Amiga cousin from a great height. Then comparing Aladdin with Zool 2? That's like comparing Manchester United with Swindon Town! And although Sonic Spinball is a pinball game, it's not really in the same vein as Pinball Fantasies (which I agree is a top game). And finally, as you well know, the Mega Drive versions of Street Fighter 2 and Mortal Kombat are literally a thousand times better than they are on the Amiga.

I guess the point is that the argument you're putting forward is made for the right reasons, and yes, Amiga games are generally cheaper, but there are so many reasons for buying a Mega Drive, and so many other reasons for buying an Amiga, that a straight either/or option is ultimately pointless. And besides, soon a new wave of machines with competitively priced software is just around the corner, and these will represent much better value than either yours or your brother's machines. In the end, you have to look on all these systems as different, and decide which one fulfils the highest number of your needs. **Andy**

WE AIM TO PLEASE

Dear MEGA,
At last a magazine has reviewed the numerous pads around for the Mega Drive. I am referring, of course, to the brilliant joystick round-up in issue 17 of MEGA. The round-up was very informative and I have since bought the Sega six-button pad which scored nine out of ten, and am very pleased with my purchase. I am a bit of a driving/bike game fan and I own: Lotus 1, F1, Road Rash 2 and Super Hang-On. In your review of joypads you did not feature the Free Wheel. I realise that a steering wheel is not very practical for platformers or beat-'em-ups, but could you please tell me whether the Free Wheel is any good

for the above car games, and whether there is a motor bike equivalent?

On a totally different note, when companies such as EA or Virgin release a game, how do Sega make their money? Do they take a percentage of the total earnings from the game or does the software company pay an amount to Sega before they can release it? Or do they have a completely different system?
David White, Cranbrook, Kent

Dear David,
We did try to cover every new pad in the feature, but the Free Wheel wasn't available at the time. It is, however, out now, and it is very good for all of the games you mentioned. It won't, however, be to everyone's tastes, and it's a bit awkward to get to grips with. Try before you buy.

Every company, including Sega Europe, pays a certain amount of money for each cart it makes (something like £12) to Sega Japan. They then sell on to a distributor at a profit, then the distributor sells to a shop at a profit and then the shop sells it to you, at another profit. And that's how they make their money. **Andy**

RHYTHM IS THE KEY

Dear MEGA,
As letters to your mag are in prose all the time, I thought for a change I'd write in rhyme.
I could write "you are the best" for many a day,
Even though there is no point cause you know it anyway.
There is one thing though that puts me in a rage,
Your annoying, unfunny excuse for a charts page.
As is common with letters such as this,
A lot of sucking up won't go amiss.
If your efforts doing MEGA don't go down in history,
It will be the all-time greatest mystery.
So with achievements as illustrious as yours,
I think you deserve a round of applause.
Why do programmers use so much FMV,
When the picture is so poor and grainy.
They might as well wait until the Saturn is out,
Or till some other good hardware's about.
An animated sequence like Son of Chuck CD,
Seems like a better idea to me.
Now quickly on to the violence debate,
Politicians and senators are people I hate...
Rob "Tennison" Nethersole



Dear MEGA,
Just a quick note to set the record straight. In your STREET FIGHTER WHO? section which was newly appointed in issue 19 of your excellent magazine, you included two martial arts which are non-existent. I am a black belt in Karate and Tang-soo-do and have never heard of the martial arts, Kom-men-tre and Koh-ching. Never mind, next time try to get your martial arts straight!
Paul Lilley, Peterborough

Ooh look, a peripheral on a sort of shiny red blanket

Dear Rob,
I hate to cut you off in your prime Rob, but your "poem" did go on a bit. Still, it's nice to know that someone appreciates us enough to compose a poem, and I must congratulate you on making FMV rhyme. Sort of. **Andy**

ALWAYS KEEP YOUR RECEIPT

Dear MEGA,
I am writing to tell you how the huge corporations that are dominating the software market don't give a damn about the lowly consumers of their products, which, I might add, are overpriced and often inferior in the first place.

After reading your reviews of FIFA International Soccer and Sensible Soccer, I decided to try both of them in my local games store so as to decide which, in my mind, was the better of the two. I plumped for the faster, more playable Sensible Soccer and borrowed £30 from my flat mate and rushed my copy back to my flat.

However, my copy was still not the perfect game I desired. So I borrowed the latest edition of a football encyclopedia from the University library and spent most of the next day programming in all the Premiership teams and altering the rest of the teams to the correct names (I know this sounds sad, but I wanted this game to be as perfect as possible). Anyway, I then spent the next six weeks playing and thrashing my mates, then the unthinkable happened.



Problems with Sensible Soccer? You'll need to speak to Sony then


Dear Paul,
Hee, hee. Ho, ho. Ha, ha. Some people just can't grasp the concept of a joke can they. You see, a joke takes something realistic and makes it absurd. Ron Barr is a commentator, so his special martial art is Kom-men-tre (or commentary, if you say it properly) and John Madden used to be a football coach, hence Koh-ching (coaching). You see the way we took both their professions, mixed in a bit of inspiration, added some comedy, made up a funny grab of the "game" and then you did the rest. Or as in your case, failed to do the rest. Next time, use your head before you waste a stamp, hey? **Andy**

Somehow the battery back-up had been reset and all my altering had been wiped. I was furious. I gave my mates the Spanish Inquisition, but none of them knew anything about it. I didn't bother to re-program it all again so I just changed the details of Leeds United (my fave team) and left it at that. Then it happened again; all the data disappeared once more. So off I went, entered all the information again, and then guess what? Yep, the battery back-up reset itself again. More than a little annoyed, I scoured the instruction booklet for an address to which to send the game back (it was still under its guarantee period) and so sent it back, recorded delivery of course, to Sony Imagesoft in London. Trouble is, they sent the game back, unfixed, saying that without some form of proof of purchase they were not legally bound to do anything.

The point to all this is that huge software companies expect us gamers to spend all our cash on overpriced games just for them to turn around and tell you to sod off when anything goes wrong with the game.

Yours "annoyed at the way consumers are treated"-ly
Andrew Davenport, Northfield, Birmingham

Dear Andrew,
I decided to do a bit of investigating on your behalf and it seems that somewhere along the line, something went wrong. I spoke to Sony about your problem and they said that any faulty game (as long as it's not been damaged by yourself) will be replaced without any quibbles at all. So they don't know why your copy was sent back. I also spoke to Sensible

Software to see if there would be any problem with changing ALL the details and putting them on the battery back-up, and they said it wouldn't affect the battery back-up. So, the best thing to do is send your game back to Sony again at this address: 13 Great Marlborough Street, London, W1V 2LP. That should sort things out for you. **Andy** 



The issue's over and the MEGA team celebrate, jubilant at the prospect of starting a new and endlessly exciting issue. Hooray! they all cry. (Oi! I said, "Hooray! they all cry" - Andy)

**MEGA
ISSUE 22
ON SALE
THURSDAY
16 JUNE**

Guess what we'll be doing next month. Yep, that's right, we've decided to stick to our usual brief and give you the best, most objective coverage of the ever-onward-blink-and-you-miss-it Mega Drive scene. For starters, we've got our usual in-depth feature. As it stands we can't really say what we're looking into, but we can assure you that this is something you don't want to miss. You'll be both stunned and shocked by what's revealed in the harsh glow of the MEGA spotlight. Probably.

REVIEWS

Besides this we've got the really important bit; the reviews. There's yet more footy action as World Cup fever continues to mount, with the arrival for dissection of both *Kick Off 3* and *Ryan Giggs Champions*. Own goals, or stunning 30-yard drives of Mega Drive footy action? We'll let you know... On top of this we'll be tapping away and gazing intently at the latest offering from Core design, *Soulstar CD*, a game that promises to fully exploit the Mega CD's capabilities. It's a hard life.



Not sure which player is Ryan Giggs, but look out for the review next ish

THE AS ON THE BACK PAGE

You all know the routine by now. Turn to page 11, write down the answers to the Qs in The News, then come back here to tot up your score. There are no prizes or anything like that; it's just for fun.

1. Peter Molyneux
2. 7-Up
3. River Phoenix
4. Paul Mellerick, because he's the only one who's been seen working (albeit rarely)
5. Three, plus three mirror image ones
6. Runs Batted In
7. National Basketball Association
8. F-14 Tomcat
9. Jean Luc Picard
10. Paranoid
11. Chuck Jnr

12. Jimmy White's
13. Goofy!
14. Nobunaga and his Ninja Force
15. Oh dear. That's a bit stupid isn't it? Have a free point on us
16. Young Indy
17. Fido Dido
18. Pete Sampras
19. Marko's Magic Football
20. Star Trek

1-8 points: You are a festering carbuncle on Satan's sulphurous bottom.

9-14 points: You are a horribly inflamed pus-filled pimple on the face of someone rather unpleasant.

15-17 points: You are a minor blemish.

18-20 points: You're a beauty spot.



Cannon Fodder. A rather violent little game from Sensible Software

PREVIEWS

And we're not just offering you the present either. We take our usual peek into the future of Mega Drive gaming with an **EXCLUSIVE** look at *Cannon Fodder*, the already-classic Amiga game from those guys at Sensible Software and see how it's shaping up. But that's not all, we'll also have early looks at *Micro Machines 2* and *Psycho Pinball* from CodeMasters. And on top of all that we just might have a sneak look at one of the biggest games of the



Micro Machines 2. All the playability of the original, but lots of new stuff

year. We're not sure whether we can get this yet, negotiations are under way as we speak, but the only way to find out if we get it is to buy the next issue.

And don't forget MEGA will have all this plus the best tips for the newest games, AND the latest news, compos and all sorts of other stuff. You'd be a fool to miss out. No, really.



BIG DAY OUT

The MEGA team is still on for its summer outing and you, the readers (well, one of you anyway), will be joining us. And this is how...

Over the next few issues we will be directing you to a particular English city, where the memorable event will take place. And if you can find us on our Big Day Out, you'll get some fantastic prizes as well as share a pint or two with the team (probably). But before any of this can happen you're going to have to track us down, so without further ado, here's this month's clue.

A trip around the M25 might be in order. But do you go north around the top of London, or south, around the bottom. Oh, and my fourth is in Stourbridge but not in Cullompton. Keep these clues handy because in a few issues' time, you'll need to solve the puzzle to win anything.

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